

# COMPAS Breakfast Briefing Summary



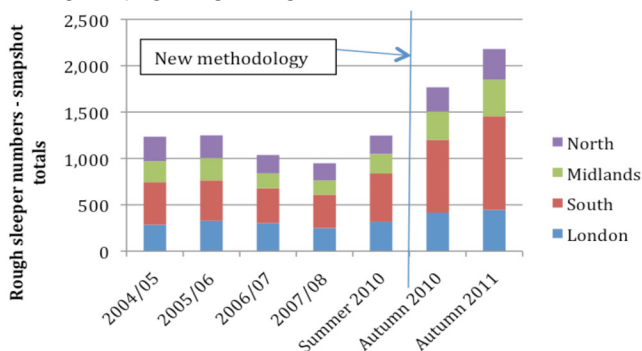
## What shapes migrant destitution and what can be done about it?

**This briefing presents latest evidence on the scale of rough sleeping as the most visible aspect of migrant destitution in the UK.**

### Increasing destitution since 2008

Only 43 local authorities in England make a count of rough sleepers, while 283 make an estimate so some caution is required in quantifying the numbers. However, it is clear destitution has risen across the regions since the start of the economic crisis.

Rough sleeping in England: regional trends, 2004-2012

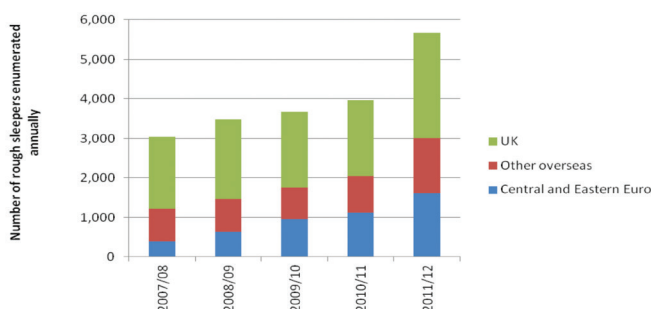


Sources: 2004/05-2007/08 – collated from Audit Commission Best Value Performance Indicators returns; Summer 2010 onwards - DCLG.

### Who are London's migrant rough sleepers?

National rough sleeper numbers rose to 2,309 in autumn 2012. Although this represented a growth of six% compared with the previous year, the rate of growth seems to have slowed: the 2011 figure was a 23% increase on that for autumn 2010, itself a 42% rise on the year before.

Rough sleeping in London 2007/08-2011/12: breakdown by nationality



Source: Broadway 'Street to Home' monitoring reports, supplemented by unpublished data provided by Broadway (see [www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN/Reports/StreettoHomeReports.html](http://www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN/Reports/StreettoHomeReports.html)).

London statistics collated by Broadway indicate a sustained increase in rough sleeping in the capital over a number of years. Broadway's 'CHAIN' data aim to assess total numbers sleeping rough at some point during the year, rather than just a single night's count. The rate of increase in total rough sleepers had sharpened notably in 2011/12, but while there was a further increase (to 6,437) in 2012/13 this was a much less dramatic annual rise of just 13%, compared with 43% the year before. The trend therefore broadly confirms that shown by the local authority counts.

Source: Broadway CHAIN data.

The pattern established in 2010/11 and 2011/12 of just over half of London rough sleepers being non-UK nationals

### London rough sleepers: breakdown by nationality

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
<b>UK</b>	1,811	2,006	1,923	1,922	2,673	3,006
<b>Central and Eastern Europe</b>	396	639	956	1,120	1,611	1,822
<b>Other EU and rest of world</b>	831	827	794	933	1,394	1,608
<b>Total</b>	3,038	3,472	3,673	3,975	5,678	6,437

was maintained in 2012/13. Just over a quarter are Central and Eastern European (CEE) migrants - mainly Polish or Romanian. The remaining quarter divides roughly equally between other Europeans (e.g. Irish) and people from the rest of the world, of which the biggest regional groups are Africans and Asians.

### What is behind the rise in migrant destitution in the capital?

There are now about 1,000 more UK nationals sleeping rough than was the case two years ago. While the range of problems leading to rough sleeping is probably much the same as before, the intensifying competition for affordable accommodation in London, combined with the growing impact of welfare benefit cuts, are likely explanations of the increase.



The large and continuing scale of rough sleeping by non-UK nationals indicates the extent to which destitute migrants have become part of London's homeless population. Those originating from CEE countries probably mainly arrived in the UK as migrant workers or jobseekers. Those from the 'A8' countries that joined the EU in 2004 were, until May 2011, subject to highly restricted welfare entitlements. However, rough sleeping among this group persists, and is augmented by growth in numbers of Romanian rough sleepers whose entitlement to welfare benefits only eased with the ending of their 'freedom of movement' restrictions on 1st January 2014.

Problems with access to benefits are nevertheless likely to continue to be an important factor in CEE rough sleeping – for example the need to comply with the 'habitual residence' test and the three-month delay imposed from 1st January on new jobseekers from abroad receiving benefits. But such difficulties no longer fully explain the continuing high numbers, which seem to reflect the reluctance of a proportion of those who are jobless to accept a planned return home, and the fact that many prevention services are still not well-targeted at migrants.

Many of the 'other' nationality rough sleepers will have 'no recourse to public funds' (NRPF) either because they are asylum seekers whose claims were rejected, or they have overstayed their visa or face some other form of irregular and/or undocumented immigration status in the UK. In separate analysis of new rough sleepers from outside the EU recorded by CHAIN during the first nine months of 2013, of the 487 cases about 40% had insecure immigration status. New non-EU rough sleepers also tend to be African (47%) or Asian (38%), with the main country groups being India, Eritrea, Somalia, Iran and Nigeria.

In addition to homelessness, these non-EU rough sleepers are inevitably at high risk of exploitation by people traffickers and/or employers involved in severe forms of labour exploitation. Access to accommodation, even to emergency hostels, is extremely limited without recourse to public funds. Even access to advice is dependent on agencies being willing to work with those who have no legal migration status. Most of the limited accommodation available to this group is provided by charitable bodies operating without public funding; the fact that so many people with NRPF are sleeping rough is in part bound to reflect the insufficiency of such accommodation compared the need.

## What is the picture outside London?

Outside London there is no equivalent to CHAIN data, but a recent study of the effectiveness of the government's 'No Second Night Out' (NSNO) programme revealed some characteristics of rough sleepers outside the capital. The survey covered 2,546 people who slept rough over a six-month period in 20 areas, accounting for about 38% of non-London cases. This in itself confirms the extent to which the 'count' methodology understates the problem. Non-London rough sleepers are much more likely (75%) to be UK nationals. The NSNO programme was found to have successfully taken people off the streets in two-thirds of cases, although given the increase in numbers in the national count this also serves to emphasise how rapidly the problem is growing.

## Beds in sheds?

Another manifestation of homelessness linked to rough sleeping, especially in London but also in certain other places, has been the growth of so-called 'beds in sheds' or structures being used as accommodation without planning permission. These vary from fully equipped accommodation to tumbledown sheds and garages with no facilities at all. DCLG is supporting work to tackle this issue in nine local authorities (mainly London boroughs, but also including Slough and Peterborough). There is little hard evidence of the numbers sleeping in these 'sheds', but the London Borough of Ealing estimates that such occupants in its area may total 60,000, while Slough believes that it has between 3,000 and 6,000 such structures. While commonly thought to house only migrants, and sometimes to be related to people trafficking, these pilot authorities have in fact found a mix of people using the structures, including families with children.

<sup>1</sup>These restrictions are fully explained on the CIH/BMENational housing rights website (see [www.housing-rights.info](http://www.housing-rights.info)).

<sup>2</sup>For discussion of this see chapter 11 of Perry, J. (2012) *Housing and Migration: A UK guide to issues and solutions*. Coventry: CIH (see [www.jrf.org.uk/work/workarea/housing-and-migration](http://www.jrf.org.uk/work/workarea/housing-and-migration)).

<sup>3</sup>Available at

[www.broadwaylondon.org-CHAIN-NewsletterandReports.htm](http://www.broadwaylondon.org-CHAIN-NewsletterandReports.htm)

<sup>4</sup>The housing rights website (see above) has detailed guidance on working with destitute migrants

(see [www.housing-rights.info/people-who-are-destitute.php](http://www.housing-rights.info/people-who-are-destitute.php)).

<sup>5</sup>For more information see <http://naccomm.org.uk/>

<sup>6</sup>Homeless Link (2014) *No Second Night Out – Across England*. London: HL

<sup>7</sup>For a detailed briefing on this issue, see Perry, J. (2013) *Beds in Sheds and Rogue Landlords*. London: Migrants' Rights Network (available at [www.migrantsrights.org.uk/publications/briefing-papers](http://www.migrantsrights.org.uk/publications/briefing-papers)).

### About the speakers

*Sue Lukes and John Perry are both former members of the Housing and Migration Network. John is also Policy Adviser at the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) and manages the housing rights website [www.housing-rights.info](http://www.housing-rights.info) for which Sue ([www.suelukes.com](http://www.suelukes.com)) writes the housing content.*

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