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| <b>Indicator</b>                  | <b>Number of homeless persons per 100,000 population</b>  |
| <b>Definition</b>                 | <p>This indicator refers to the number of homeless persons per 100,000 population, for the reporting period.</p> <p>The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD; 2008) groups homeless persons into two broad categories:</p> <p>(a) Primary homelessness (or rooflessness). This category includes persons living in streets or without a shelter or living quarters;</p> <p>(b) Secondary homelessness. This category may include persons with no place of usual residence who move frequently between various types of accommodation (including dwellings, shelters or other living quarters); and persons usually resident in long-term ‘transitional’ shelters or similar arrangements for the homeless. This category also includes persons living in private dwellings but reporting ‘no usual address’ on their census form. (See Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses, Revision 2, <a href="http://unstats.un.org/unsd/censuskb20/Attachment455.aspx">http://unstats.un.org/unsd/censuskb20/Attachment455.aspx</a>).</p> |
| <b>Rationale</b>                  | <p>Homelessness is often a symptom and cause of poverty and social exclusion. It is prima facie a violation of Article 11(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESR) which recognizes the right of everyone to housing, adequate standard of living and continuous improvements of living conditions. Homelessness can also lead to other human rights violations, arising from the homeless person’s consequent vulnerability and lack of security of person. For example, as CESCR notes in its General Comment No. 7, women face “particular vulnerability to acts of violence and sexual abuse when they are rendered homeless”. Persons who are rendered homeless are often unable to exercise their rights to vote and to access basic services. The indicator captures to a certain extent the degree to which the State has maintained affordable housing and, thus, made housing accessible. It is an outcome indicator related to the ‘housing affordability’ attribute of the right to adequate housing.</p>    |
| <b>Method of computation</b>      | <p>The indicator is computed as the total number of homeless persons to the total population multiplied by 100,000.</p>   |
| <b>Data collection and source</b> | <p>The main source of data for this indicator is administrative records of the States (registers) and homeless services (e.g. transitional shelters, health and social security agencies, etc.). Data can also be gathered using population censuses and household surveys at the national and subnational levels.</p>  |
| <b>Periodicity</b>                | <p>In general, data from administrative records are available annually. Population censuses are often conducted every ten years or less, while household surveys are usually conducted every 3–5 years.</p>   |

**Disaggregation**

The indicator should be disaggregated by sex, age, economic and social situation, ethnicity, minority, indigenous, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, migrant, disability, sexual orientation, marital and family status. In addition, disaggregation of indicator by place of residence (region and rural/urban) is useful in assessing disparities in their access to housing.

**Comments and limitations**

Homelessness is often a root cause and an effect of complex social and economic problems. Causes of homelessness can be attributed to diverse and multifaceted factors, including a lack of housing affordability, speculation in housing and land for investment purposes, privatization of civic services, ethnic and armed conflict, and rapid ill-planned urbanization. It is also linked to landlessness in some settings and there is an increasing tendency to criminalize them and the trend of increasing violence towards them (see E/CN.4/2005/48).

General Comment No. 4 specify that States have the obligation to effectively monitor the situation with respect to housing, 'provide detailed information about those groups within . . . society that are vulnerable and disadvantaged with regard to housing.' They include, in particular, homeless persons and families, those inadequately housed and without ready access to basic amenities, those living in "illegal" settlements, those subject to forced evictions and low-income groups'.

The lack of secure tenure and forced eviction are conditions that could lead to homelessness. General Comment No. 4 provides that 'Evictions should not result in individuals being rendered homeless or vulnerable to the violation of other human rights'.

There are several definitions of homelessness ranging from the narrow which includes only rooflessness and houselessness, to a broader definition that classifies persons who are homeless according to their living or 'home' situation. The Special Rapporteur to adequate housing recommends a broader definition of homelessness since a narrow definition is inadequate and does not recognize that an element of social exclusion is part of the experience of the homeless (see E/CN.4/2005/48).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics identifies four categories of homelessness. In addition to 'primary' and 'secondary' homelessness, 'tertiary' referring to people who live in boarding houses on medium to long-term basis and a 'fourth category' constituted by people in housing situations close to the minimum standards (people living in caravans) are added.

The European Federation of organisations working with people who are homeless (FEANTSA) developed a typology of homelessness and housing exclusion called ETHOS. Their definition includes the categories of

rooflessness, houselessness, insecure and inadequate housing. Thus, people living in insecure accommodation (i.e. temporarily with family/friends, illegal occupation of land, no legal (sub)tenancy), people living under threat of eviction and violence, people living in temporary/non-conventional structures, people living in unfit housing and in extreme overcrowding are also included in the definition. (See <http://www.feantsa.org/code/en/pg.asp?Page=484>).

The Eurostat also proposed a working definition of housing deprivation (including homelessness) comprising primary and secondary homelessness. Secondary homelessness include persons living in non-temporary arrangements of shelter provided by a public body or non-governmental organisation, without a tenancy agreement for lack of own home (e.g. dormitory, room or studio in a communal facility, hotel or guesthouse, accommodation temporarily provided by friends or relatives) (See [http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY\\_OFFPUB/KS-CC-04-008/EN/KS-CC-04-008-EN.PDF](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_OFFPUB/KS-CC-04-008/EN/KS-CC-04-008-EN.PDF)).

UDHR, article 25, ICESCR, article 11(1), ICERD, article 5(e-iii), CEDAW, article 14(2-h), CRC, article 27(3), ICRMW, article 43(1), and CRPD, articles 28(1) and 28(2)(d) are examples of provisions relevant to the right to adequate housing.