

ENGLISH 4th Semester
Mrs Marie Duverger
28th March, 2019

A cause worth fighting for : HOMELESS PEOPLE

By Angèle Henry & Scarlett O'Mullan



Source : Pixabay.com

Definition of the chosen cause

There is more than one definition of homelessness. According to the National Health Care for the Homeless Council, **“a homeless person is an individual without permanent housing who may live on the streets ; stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle ; or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation.”**

NHCHC is an organization based in the United States of America who wants to eliminate homelessness through health care and housing. It was difficult to find an official definition, but we found that this one showed what are the multiple forms of homelessness.

NATIONAL HEALTH CARE
for the
HOMELESS
COUNCIL

ABOUT POLICY & ADVOCACY RESOURCES TRAINING GET ASSISTANCE CONTACT

Welcome to the National Health Care for the Homeless Council
Quality. Access. Justice. Community.

The Council is a membership organization that connects you with peers, specialists, and resources to eliminate homelessness through health care and housing. Join us if you believe that no one deserves to be homeless, and that we can do something about it.

Learn More

Latest News

#HCH2019 Site Visits Offer an In-Person Look at Homeless Health Care

The 2019 National HCH Conference & Policy Symposium won't only be about learning in workshops, networking, and sharing best practices with the HCH community within the meeting rooms of the Grand Hyatt Washington. You will also have the chance to see our field in-person through site visits to three area homeless service organizations. Stay tuned for details on how to ... More

Upcoming Events

2019 NATIONAL HEALTH CARE FOR THE HOMELESS Conference & Policy Symposium

May 22 - 25
Washington, D.C.

WORKING TOGETHER FOR JUSTICE

2019 National HCH Conference &

Screenshot of NHCHC's website
<https://www.nhchc.org/>

Choice of two texts with opposite views and summary

It was impossible to find two opinion pieces illustrating the pros and cons, so we chose two articles illustrating the vision of two European countries facing homelessness.

HUNGARY

The following article entitled **“Hungary’s ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable”** illustrates the response of Hungary who aims to reduce homelessness, or at least the visibility of homeless people. This article portrays multiple points of view, such as Peter Mudra, who has been sleeping rough for 18 years, or Ilona, a local shop owner, who is happy about the new law. The article states: **“Since Hungary’s constitutional ban on homelessness, unique in Europe, came into effect last month, he has a new concern: the police”** referring to Mr Mudra. The government has already made initiatives to criminalise homelessness ever since 2012, but the previous laws were overturned because they esteemed it **“violated human dignity”**. Homelessness is a growing concern since the price of rents has doubled in the past five years in Budapest.

❖ Discover the article :

“Hungary’s ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable”

FINLAND

“

Finland is the only country in Europe where the number of homeless people has declined in recent years

“

In this article, published by The Guardian, explains how Finland has become a role model when it comes to the issue of homelessness. They believe that the homeless need a stable foundation and support instead of a temporary housing, therefore they have created Housing First, a national program that fights against homelessness.

Although it was part of the French president's project to end homelessness by the end of 2017, it has not produced convincing results. Indeed, the article states : **“The first step in change is the change in attitudes”**, so this leads us to wonder if a change in attitudes is necessary in France, to confirm this idea we realized a survey to gain a further understanding of the public's opinion on homelessness.

❖ Discover the article :

“What can the UK learn from how Finland solved homelessness?”

We thought it would be interesting to show two countries who are unique in the way they respond to homelessness. Indeed, Hungary is the only country in the world to have defined and banned homelessness in its constitution, whereas Finland is the only country in Europe where the number of homeless people has declined in recent years.

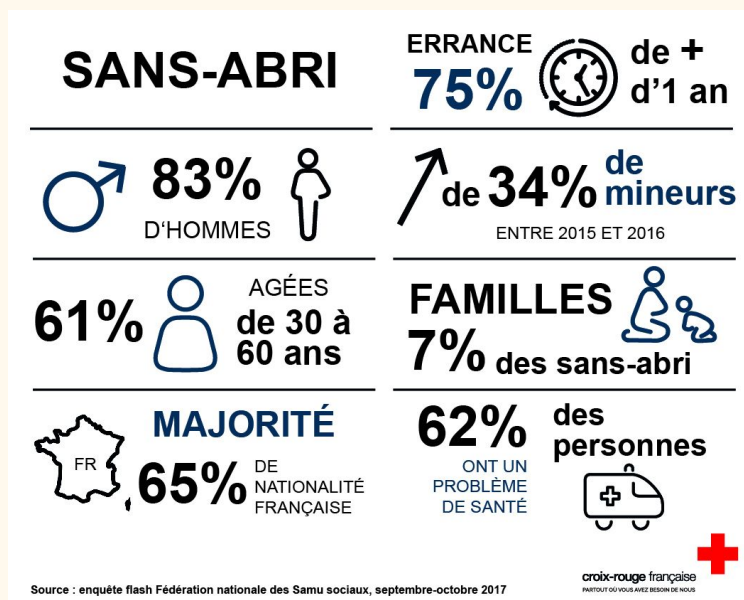
Carrying out a survey or interview to illustrate people's opinions

As part of this project, we realized a survey on Google Forms and on Instagram thanks to the story options. We wanted to get a better insight on our interactions with these less privileged individuals.

❖ You can find the questions and answers in Annex

The survey was interesting to see if this is an important issue for some individuals. It also allowed us to see how frequently we see homeless people per day. We notice there is a certain degree of discomfort when we interact with these individuals. There is a will to help, however it often excludes the social aspect of homelessness such as isolation.

We also found an infographic of La Croix Rouge that illustrates the homeless situation in France.



We found these numbers very interesting and show that some stereotypes are wrong. It is also interesting to see that homelessness is more common in men than women. This picture also shows the importance of this cause, indeed most of the homeless people have a health issue.

Personal opinion

We both decided to work on this subject because we are confronted to homeless people on a daily basis. Some days we see more than a dozen and we wonder what we can, as relatively poor students, do for them. Since studying in Bordeaux, housing has been a struggle even as students so we can understand how difficult it must be for some people to find a home. Both of us come from rural towns so homelessness was rarer and housing was never an issue for us before.

Scarlett :

I believe homelessness is a cause worth fighting for because we all deserve to have a place to rest our head at night.

We all fear time as humans due to our inevitable mortality and its immateriality, however, homelessness is this daily fear that time is unfair, it seems fast and slow at the same time. I wonder if they feel disgusted at time going by so slowly while people rush past them without even making eye contact. I believe being homeless is one of the harshest things to endure since it must put individuals in a situation of constant fear of time itself. They don't know where they're going to be able to stay at night. It must be mentally exhausting to have to fear nightfall, to be afraid that when your eyes shut from exhaustion someone or something might happen to you while you rest.

On top of that being homeless often leaves you in a state of isolation. You feel denied the right to be considered as a human. Your voice is often ignored or unheard, as your hopes and memories of a better day fade.

Growing up as a young immigrant in France, coming from a country in civil war, I am particularly sensitive to people who have come to this country, such as my parents, in hope for a better future especially for their family. Homeless people are people and they have all sorts of backgrounds. I think there is a common belief that most of the homeless people are some kind of addict or a runaway from their parents, but there are some people who simply hope for a better day.

I think that our interactions with homeless people, or more properly lack of, come from a place of unease as well as the belief that we are incapable to change their life. We are uneasy because our lives seem so easy compared to them. However, we underestimate how a simple conversation can change someone's life.

Angèle :

I think it's a cause worth fighting for because one of the fundamental aspects of human dignity is to have proper shelter and access to basic care.

When I see a homeless person, I give what I can : a smile, some change ... but I have this feeling that it cannot be enough for them. I do my best to help homeless people because I can understand the pain of having the feeling of not surviving because they do not have a place to live.

Furthermore, everyday in living in a city center, we see so many homeless people in the streets that we are no longer paying attention to them. It's not easy seeing someone trying to survive on the streets of the city, and our reactions can range from pity, to anger, to choosing not to see the person at all. It's really hard to imagine what it's like to have no home, to be cold or hungry or sick, to have hundreds of people walk by you each day and pretend you don't exist.

During my gap year in 2016, I joined the association "Secours Populaire" for the operation "Pères Noël Verts" which helped people in difficulty by collecting donations, new toys and gourmet products. I was in charge of collecting donations in exchange for wrapping gifts for people at St. Catherine's Walk. My volunteer experience was not about the homelessness directly, but I felt that I was helping those who needed it on my own level.

I know some associations that are more specifically involved in helping homeless people like La Croix Rouge or Les Robins de la rue in Bordeaux. If I had more time outside of class, I would love to join an association that works to help homeless people. I think it would help them more than giving them the little funds that I have.

Assessment

As we grew more independent as young adults, we were also confronted to more issues, homelessness being one of them. It is difficult for us to understand their needs, although we try do our best whilst still having to care to our own needs.



Source : Pixabay.com

1. Financial Times, “Hungary’s ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable”

25/03/2019

Hungary’s ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable | Financial Times

Hungary

Hungary’s ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable

Critics say constitutional prohibition does not address root of the problem



Peter Mudra, 61, has been homeless for 18 years since he lost his job at a mine in eastern Hungary

Valerie Hopkins in Budapest NOVEMBER 24, 2018

Peter Mudra has been urinated on, stabbed in the stomach by drunken tourists, and had his sleeping bag set alight on the streets of Budapest. But since Hungary’s constitutional ban on homelessness, unique in Europe, came into effect last month, he has a new concern: the police.

“It’s dangerous out here,” he told the Financial Times. “They should try living like this just for one day.”

Viktor Orban’s Fidesz-led government first tried to criminalise homelessness in 2012. After Hungary’s constitutional court overturned those laws within months, ruling that they “violated human dignity”, the rightwing government has now turned to a trusted tactic: amending the constitution itself.

Rates of homelessness may be higher in other European countries, but critics say the move is in line with Mr Orban’s use of a law-and-order agenda to project authority, create enemies and attack vulnerable groups such as refugees. While non-government organisations estimate there are 30,000 homeless people in Hungary, there are only 11,000 beds available.

Mr Mudra, 61, has been sleeping rough for 18 years after the mine where he worked in Miskolc in north-eastern [Hungary](#) closed down and he lost his house in a divorce.

Mr Mudra wears a fork and a spoon wrapped around his right hand as he sits in Budapest’s Blaha Lujza square. His knife, he lamented, was confiscated by the police.

According to the constitutional amendment, police can issue up to three warnings in 90 days to individuals they deem to have taken up “habitual residence in a public space”, before taking them into custody and confiscating their possessions or pets. Police have issued 200 warnings since the constitutional ban came into effect, and taken six people to court.

Mr Mudra can no longer sleep in underpasses and he has already been given a police warning.



Jutka Lakatosne, a volunteer with the group AVM, speaks to a homeless man in Budapest

Mr Orban has a record of changing the law to target groups and institutions out of its favour. In 2017, parliament passed a law that is widely seen as targeting the Central European University, the institution founded by billionaire philanthropist [George Soros](#), which has prompted its announced departure from Budapest. In June, parliament passed a package of laws dubbed “Stop Soros”, which made it illegal to “promote and support illegal migration”. Critics say the measures were designed to silence NGOs and organisations critical of the government.

Critics say the constitutional amendment on homelessness was not accompanied by any attempt to address Budapest’s dearth of subsidised housing or increase funding for shelters.

“It’s not about homelessness, it’s not about poverty, the government wants to show power and the easiest way to do it is to hit out at the powerless

Andras Rakos, Oltalom foundation

“It’s not about homelessness, it’s not about poverty, the government wants to show power and the easiest way to do it is to hit out at the powerless,” said Andras Rakos, of Oltalom, a foundation that cares for the homeless.

The government allocated Ft9bn (\$31m) to care for the homeless in 2018, including support for shelters and church-sponsored charities, said spokesman Zoltan Kovacs.

“There’s no such human right that you can live on the street, because the street is for everyone,” he said. The constitutional ban was important because

“it’s going to be easier for the authorities to keep the kind of order that people are wishing for”, he said.

Ilona Fulop, who owns a shop near where Mr Mudra spends his days, said she was happy the government had taken the initiative to move the homeless out of central Budapest. “They fight, they urinate in public, they leave excrement around and they bring a lot of problems,” she said. “It is better now after the new law.”



A shelter for the homeless run by the Oltalom charity in Budapest

But many Hungarians are unhappy at the crackdown. Forbidding homelessness “is like forbidding the sunset — it’s going to happen anyway”, said Sandor Esik, a lawyer.

Last month, Mr Esik started a petition against the law after watching a Kafka-esque hearing against a 61-year-old woman who lost her home five months ago after her husband died. A Budapest court found that even though the woman had not “intended” to pursue a homeless lifestyle, that did not “exclude her responsibility”.

Housing is a problem in Hungary, especially in Budapest, where only 2 to 3 per cent of housing stock is subsidised. During communist times, homelessness was illegal but there were many government programmes for social housing and work. After the regime collapsed, more than 80 per cent of council housing was sold, said Balint Misetics, a social policy expert with A Varos Mindenkie (The City is for All).

This, combined with a dramatic increase in rents — which have doubled in Budapest in the past five years, according to Mr Misetics — has put more people on the streets.

Recommended

“The lack of attention paid to social housing or the rise in rent prices is extreme and unprecedented when you look at our history or compare to cities in the region,” said Mr Misetics, who added that Hungary is the only country in the world to have defined and banned homelessness in its constitution.

25/03/2019

Hungary's ban on homelessness leaves many people vulnerable | Financial Times

Advocates for the homeless worry that as winter approaches they will be forced to the outskirts of cities where social workers cannot keep track of them. A poster in the Oltalom shelter shows the faces of people who have been reported missing, and workers worry there will be more.

"This law forces people to hide, and when it will be very cold, they will freeze to death," said Jutka Lakatosne, a volunteer with AVM.

Ms Lakatosne has been homeless for 28 years since the fall of communism. She spent three years living in a forest in an improvised tent before moving to a shack in the Buda hills, with no deeds or services. She said the police regularly evict her.

"I am so angry I could explode," she said. "This government says it is a pro-family, Christian government but these policies are not pro-family, nor Christian."

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2. The Guardian, “What can the UK learn from how Finland solved homelessness?”

27/03/2019

How Finland solved homelessness | Interview: Juha Kaakinen | Housing Network | The Guardian

The Guardian



Interview

What can the UK learn from how Finland solved homelessness?

Dawn Foster

The Nordic country is the only EU state not in the midst of a housing crisis. Juha Kaakinen of the Y-Foundation explains how Housing First works

Wed 22 Mar 2017 07:26 GMT

This week's report by EU housing organisation Feantsa has found every country in the EU in the midst of a crisis of homelessness and housing exclusion – with one exception: Finland.

So how has the country done it? By giving homeless people permanent housing as soon as they become homeless, rather than muddling along with various services that may eventually result in an offer of accommodation.

It's an idea is being considered in the UK by communities secretary Sajid Javid. We spoke to Juha Kaakinen, chief executive of the Y-Foundation, which provides 16,300 low cost flats to homeless people in Finland, to find out more:

What is Housing First?

<https://www.theguardian.com/housing-network/2017/mar/22/finland-solved-homelessness-eu-crisis-housing-first>

1/4



Juha Kaakinen. Photograph: Juha Kaakinen

Housing First means ending homelessness instead of managing it. The basic idea is to offer permanent housing and needs-based support for homeless people instead of temporary accommodation in hostels or in emergency shelters. Permanent housing means an independent rental flat with own rental contract.

In Housing First people do not have to earn their right to housing by proving their capability to manage their lives. Instead, they are provided with a stable home and individually tailored support.

How has it worked in Finland?

Since 2008 the national homelessness strategy in Finland has been based on the Housing First model, as a result of dedicated cooperation between the state, municipalities and NGOs.

Investments have been made to provide affordable housing and shelters have been

converted into supported housing units. New services and methods of help have been developed to match the multiple needs of individual tenants.

Finland has all but eradicated rough sleeping and sustainably housed a significant number of long-term homeless people. Finland is the only country in Europe where the number of homeless people has declined in recent years.

What has the public response to Housing First been? Was there any backlash?

There was a strong political will to find new solutions for homelessness. There were a few local reactions concerning the location of new service facilities. However, those were mainly overcome by open interaction with the neighbourhoods.

Financially, how does Housing First work?

The key things are affordable housing and support. Extra funding that the state has allocated for flats and services has been an incentive for the municipalities to implement Housing First.

Tenants pay rent and are entitled to receive housing benefits. Depending on their income, they may contribute to the cost of the services. The rest is covered by the municipalities. They provide the support themselves or buy support from other service providers, mainly from the NGOs.

Stable living conditions enable the use of mainstream services instead of using expensive emergency services. This will save money in a long term.

Where there any initial problems that needed to be ironed out?

The focus of the national strategy was clear from the start. The city specific implementation plans included concrete objectives and resources to meet them. Therefore, no major problems were encountered.

There was, however, some work to be done on attitudes. For example, the unconditional housing was hard to accept by some people in NGOs which had previously been working with different set of values.

How easily can the model be replicated in other European countries?

The Housing First model can be replicated even though housing conditions may vary from country to country in Europe. Providing permanent homes for the homeless should be a target instead of temporary solutions.

There is no quick fix to all life situations but a solid base provides the foundations upon which to improve the welfare of the homeless. The first step in change is the change in attitudes.

How much interest have you had in the scheme? Who seems most supportive?

In Finland this has been a national strategy, not a local project. This new approach and convincing results have raised broad interest internationally.

Sign up for your free Guardian Housing network newsletter with news and analysis sent direct to you on the last Friday of the month. Follow us: @GuardianHousing

We made a choice...

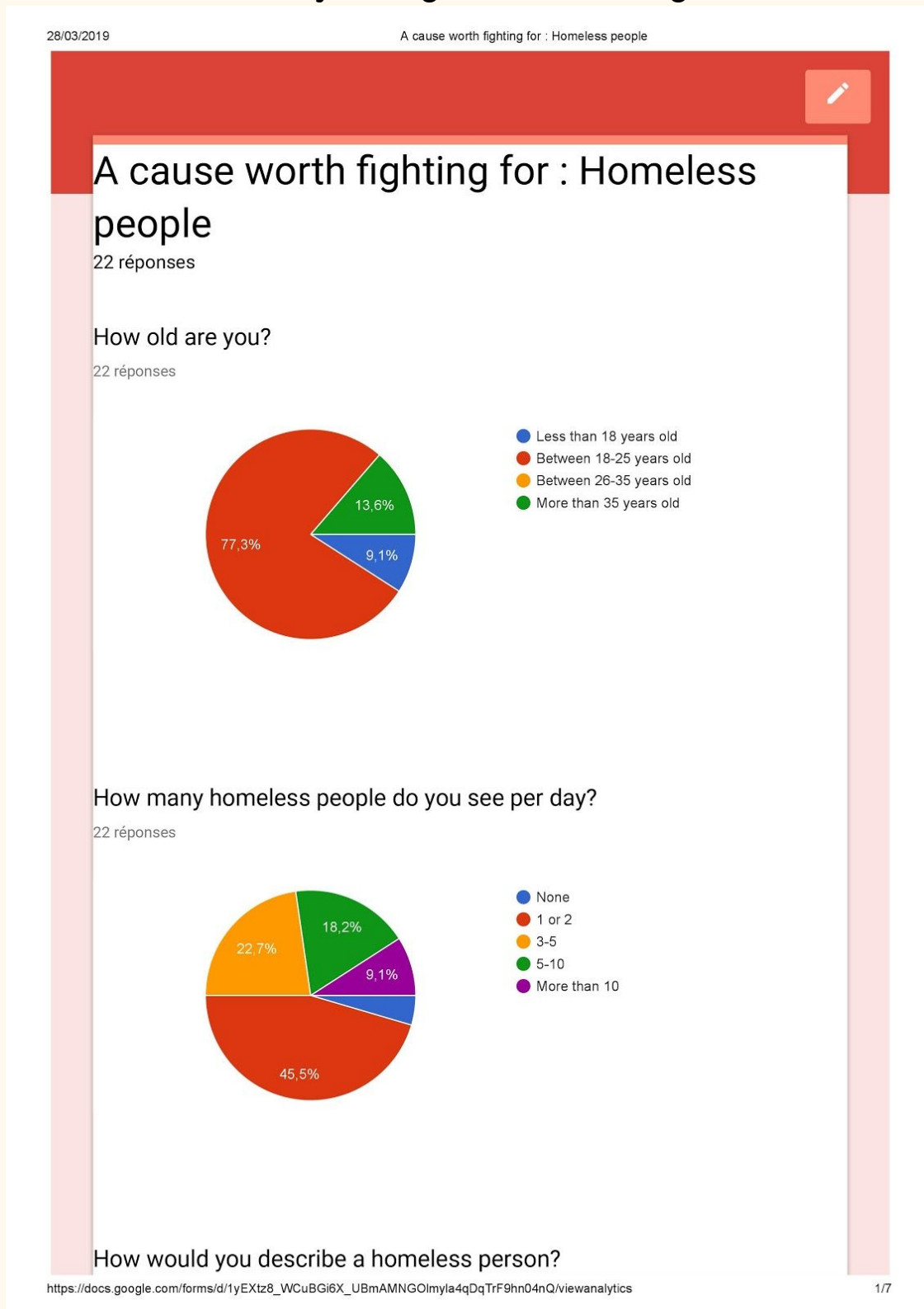
... and we want to tell you about it. We made a choice which means our journalism now reaches record numbers around the world and more than a million people have supported our reporting. We continue to face financial challenges but, unlike many news organisations, we have chosen not to put up a paywall. We want our journalism to remain accessible to all, regardless of where they live or what they can afford.

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3. Survey on Google Forms and Instagram



28/03/2019

A cause worth fighting for : Homeless people

22 réponses

He's a human being, like us.

Someone who lacked luck or did something wrong

It depend, some of them look messy and doing bad things at thé street other are really sad beacause they really didnt have the choice of being homeless and it's not because of drugs or alcohol

Dirty

They're usually asking for money, have dogs, look kinda dirty and worn out, sometimes drunk, holding a beer... Once I mistook someone for a homeless person when he was not though so I guess I'm not the best at guessing who's homeless and who's not.

Often sad maybe even hopeless, old clothes and worn shoes

A person who lives in the street, who has no job, no money

Someone in need of a shower, a hug and a trip to the psychiatrist

Looking older than they are

A human being who doesnt have a shelter

Somewhne who doesn't have a place to stay, sleep, shower... Someone poor, who doesn't have enough to eat for instance.

Lonely, tired and cold by night

Not very clean clothes, smiley

It depend, they are all different and there is lot of homeless peoplz

by an inactive person

i can't describe a homeless person it's sad

A person without a home

Sad. Desperate.

Human

Alone

A person with nowhere to call home, no shelter, place of safety

Sad lonely isolated

Do you think there is a type of homeless person?

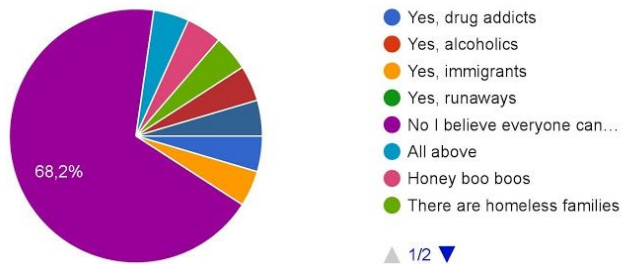
22 réponses

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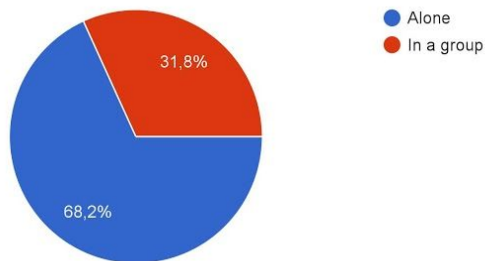
28/03/2019

A cause worth fighting for : Homeless people



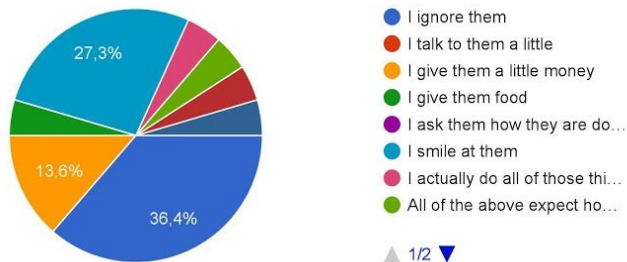
Are they often alone or in a group?

22 réponses



How do you react when you see homeless people?

22 réponses

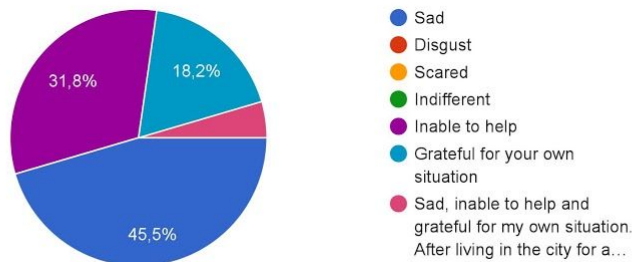


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3/7

When you notice them, how do you feel?

22 réponses



How do you think they feel?

22 réponses

They're ashamed i think.

Sad

It depend

Dirty

Transparent to most people

Invisible, Isolated and rejected by society?

Ignored, sad

Fed up

Probably depends on the situation

I dont know

Alone

Invisible

Excluded, but happy when people notice them

Once again it depend, some people are sad, other disapointed, and others dont.

They are sad by their difficults living conditions

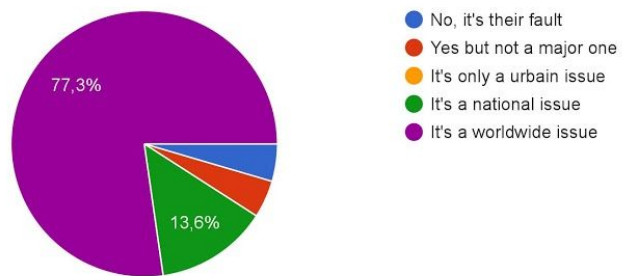
28/03/2019

A cause worth fighting for : Homeless people

bad
Marginalized, invisible
Sad
Hopeless
Alone
Ignored, abandoned, sad, lonely, cold
Isolated

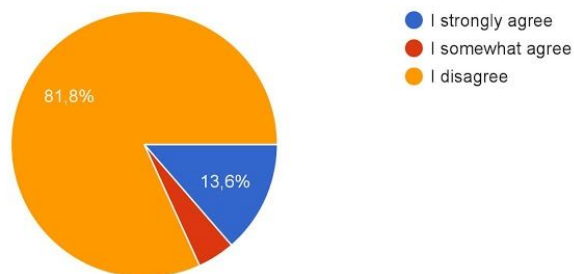
Is homelessness an issue?

22 réponses



What do you think of actions against homeless people?

22 réponses



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5/7

Can you think of any solutions to help homeless people?

22 réponses

Giving to them all the waste of food from restaurants or supermarket. It's a good start.

I don't know

I dont know

Jobs

ERRR

Homeless shelters, more job opportunity, a stricter policy on rent prices that can easily rise

Help them find home and a job, give them a makeover and coach them to find a job

Have a government that does not allow for this to be as much of an issue, i.e like the Scandinavian countries

Have more public showers and water fountains, and force stores and supermarkets to donate food they don't sell

Public buildings like shelters which cost money but can bring some people to act for a cause and have a wage for that

Create "foyers" safe where they can sleep in peace without the worry of their money being stole

Open more centers, more beds... I dont really know...

Helping them re-insert into society, lending empty appartements at a low price

We could gave them place to rest when it's cold outside

- set up restaurants
- social housing without guarantors

build « house » to sleep and eat

Create a "garbage bin" where people can bring food, clothing or hygiene products dedicated only to homeless people.

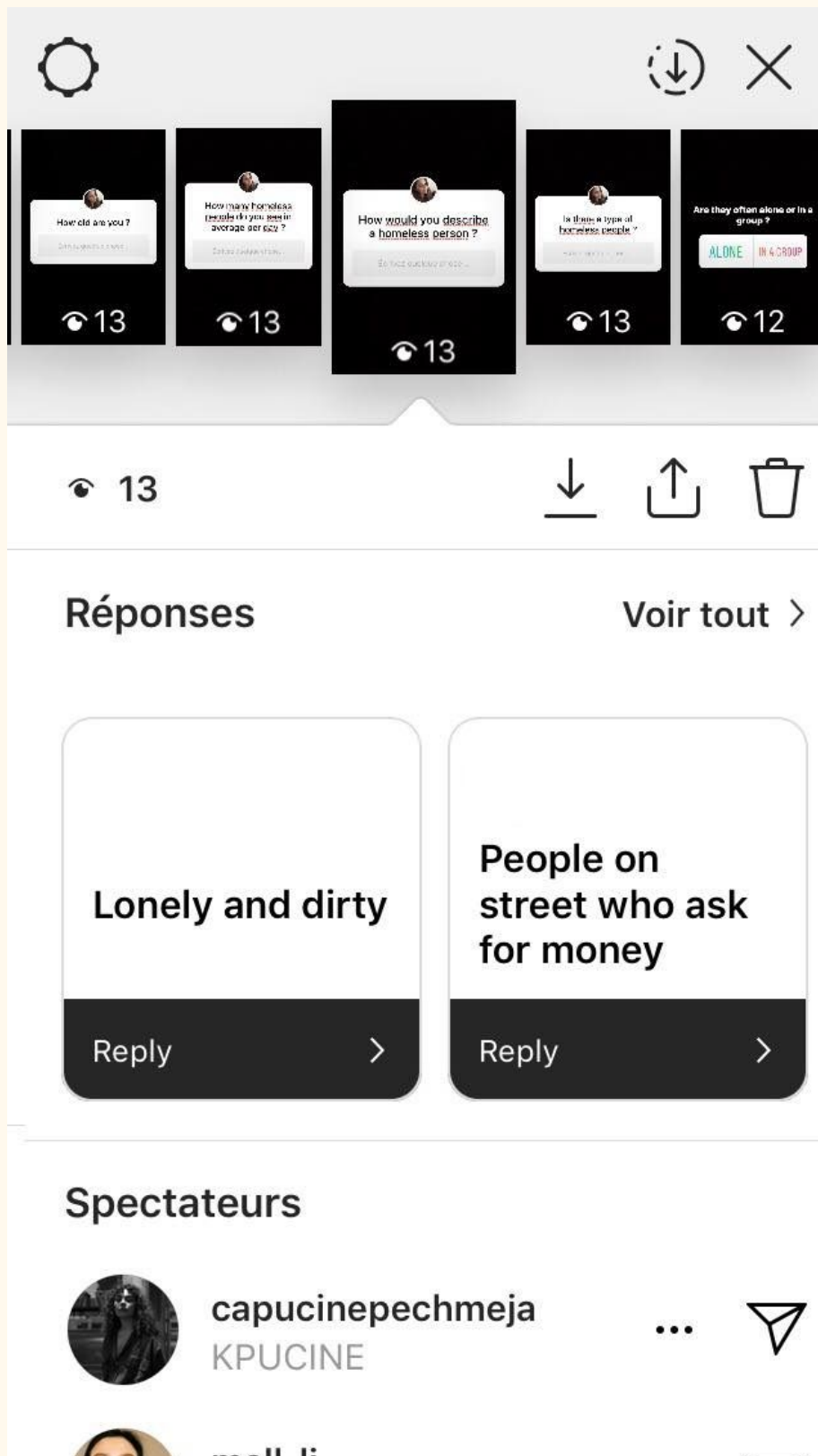
No




Be kind


Associations

Jobs, education, aid in finding somewhere to live, aid until they are able to stand on their own two feet


Provide food and shelter for those who want it









13




13



13






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12

13




Réponses

Nope but mostly are men


Reply >


Spectateurs




capucinepechmeja
KPUCINE

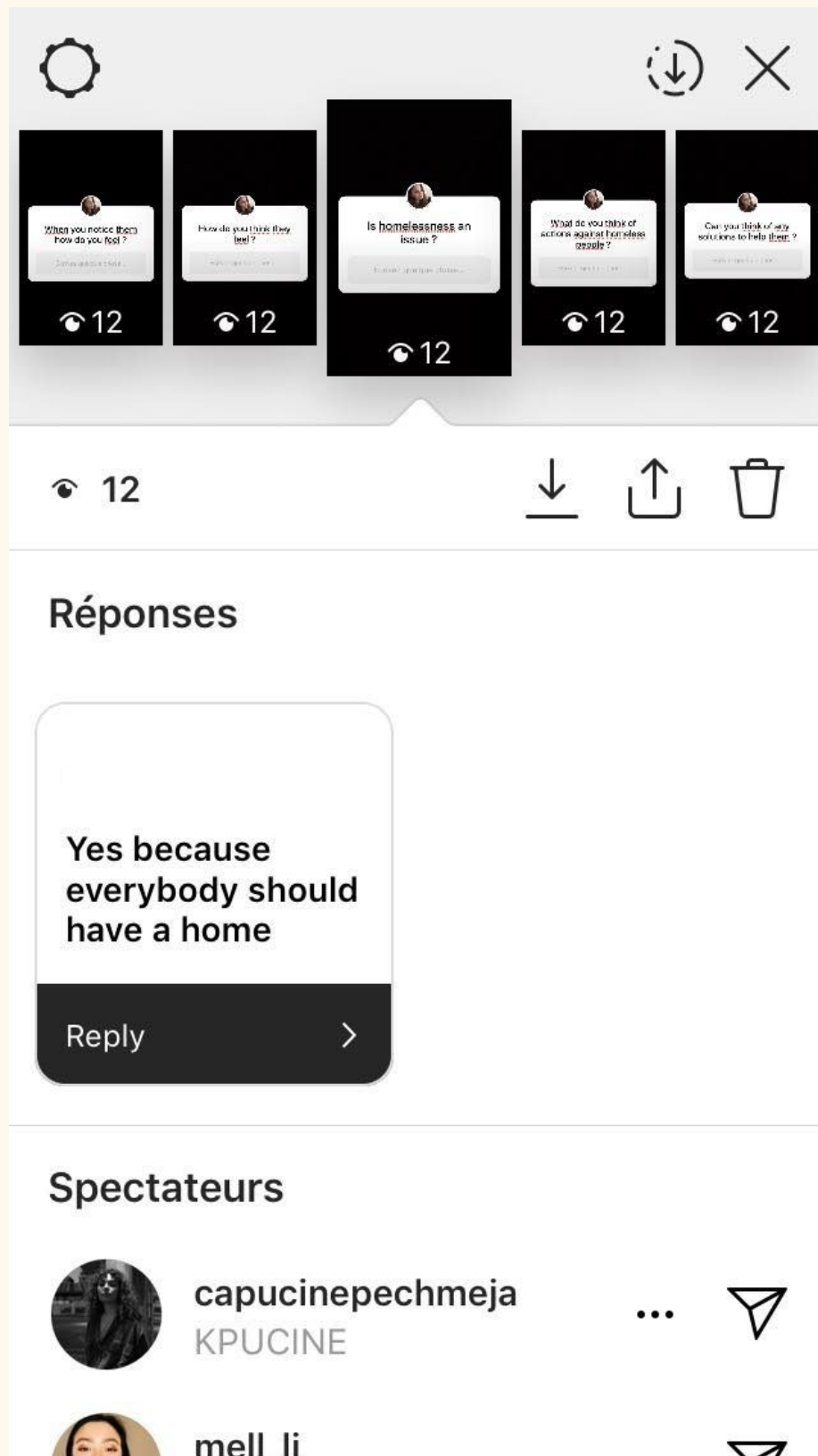
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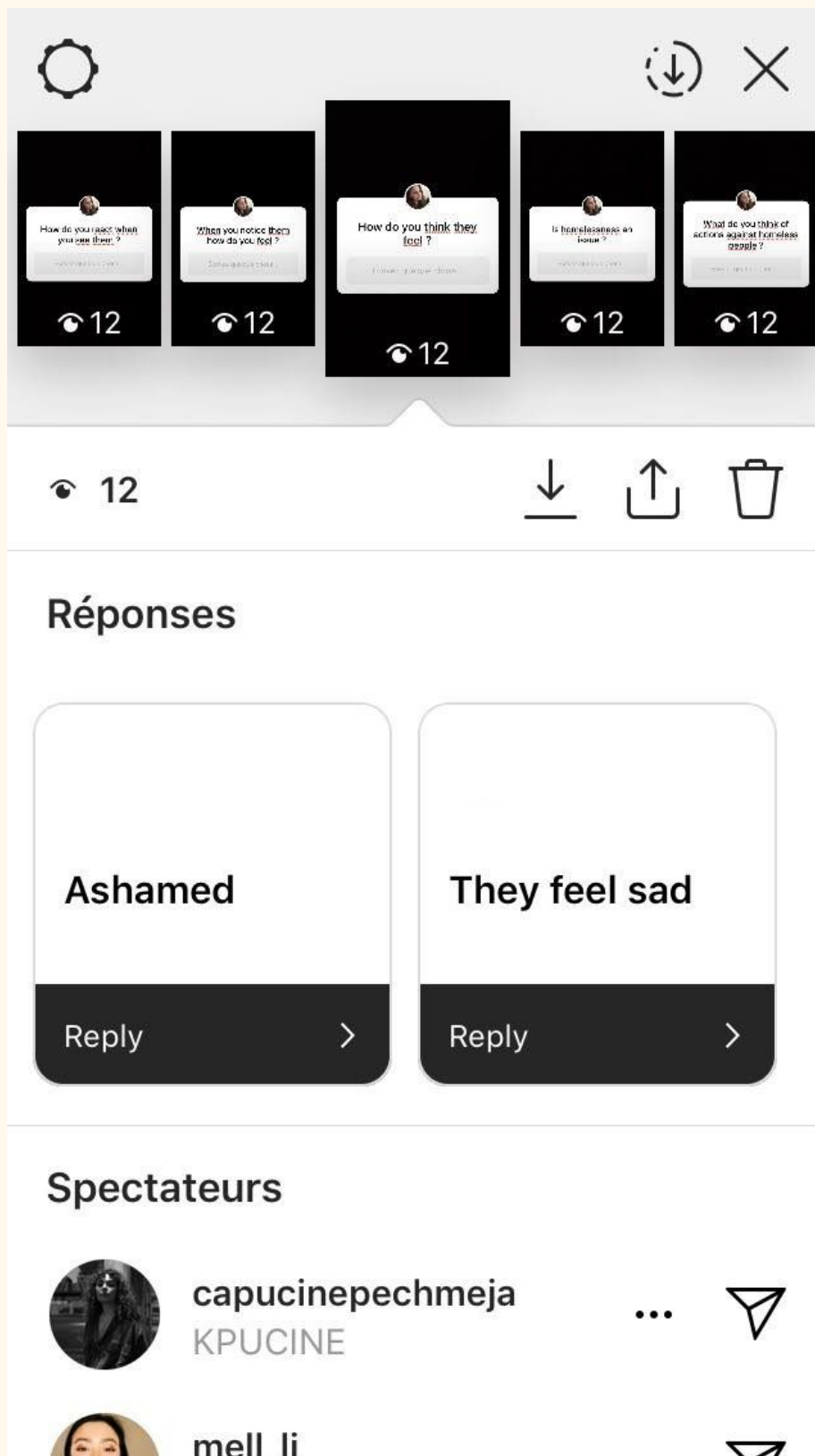








mell_li












Is there a type of
homosex people ?

13

Are they often alone or in a
group ?


ALONE | IN A GROUP

12




How do you react when
you see them ?

12



When you notice them
how do you feel ?




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How do you think they
feel ?

12

12



Réponses


Try to be kind
when I can

Reply >

Embarrassed
because I can't
help them


Reply >


Spectateurs




capucinepechmeja
KPUCINE

...





mell_li



25