

# CHAIN ANNUAL BULLETIN GREATER LONDON 2017/18

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CHAIN



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This bulletin presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London between April 2017 and March 2018. Information in the bulletin is derived from the Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN), a multi-agency database recording information about rough sleepers and the wider street population in London. CHAIN, which is commissioned and funded by the Greater London Authority (GLA) and managed by St Mungo's, represents the UK's most detailed and comprehensive source of information about rough sleeping.

Copies of the full CHAIN Greater London 2017/18 annual report can be obtained from the GLA Datastore at <http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

**Percentage figures in this report**

Please note that, in some cases, percentage figures given in this report are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number. This may mean that individual figures in tables and charts do not add up to a combined total of 100%, or that there could be small discrepancies between percentage figures in tables and corresponding pie charts.



# HEADLINE FINDINGS

## TOTAL ROUGH SLEEPERS

7,484 

people were seen rough sleeping by outreach workers in London during 2017/18.

- This represents an **8%** decrease compared to the total of **8,108** people seen in 2016/17.
- **59%** of these people were seen rough sleeping just once during the period.
- Outreach teams and No Second Night Out (NSNO) supported **2,206** (29%) of these people to access accommodation or return to their home area.

## NEW ROUGH SLEEPERS



4,456

people (60% of the total) were seen sleeping rough for the first time in London in 2017/18.

- There were **13%** fewer new rough sleepers in 2017/18 than in 2016/17.
- **54%** of new rough sleepers reported their last settled base as being some form of long term accommodation, including **38%** coming from private rented accommodation.
- As in previous years, the most frequently cited reason for new rough sleepers leaving their last settled base was being evicted or asked to leave by the person they were staying with (**36%**).
- Nearly three quarters (**72%**) of new rough sleepers were only seen once, compared to 72% in 2016/17 and 64% in 2015/16.

## LONGER TERM ROUGH SLEEPERS



People who returned to rough sleeping after at least a year away were the only group to show an increase, with 8% more people in this category compared to 2016/17.

- **1,119** people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were returners (15% of the total).
- **1,909** people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 had also been seen in 2016/17 (26% of the total). This group are also referred to in the report as 'stock'.

## NATIONALITY



The number and proportion of UK nationals seen rough sleeping has risen compared to 2016/17, while the number and proportion of Central and Eastern European (CEE) nationals\* has fallen.

- Just over half (**54%**) of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were from the UK, which compares to **47%** in 2016/17 and **41%** in 2015/16.
- **23%** of those seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were from CEE countries, which is notably lower than the proportions of **30%** in 2016/17 and **37%** in 2015/16.
- Romanians continued to represent the single biggest non-UK nationality group, comprising **9%** of all people seen rough sleeping in the year.

## DEMOGRAPHICS AND SUPPORT NEEDS



**40%**

of those seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were assessed as having a support need relating to drug use. This shows an increase on the proportions of 35% in 2016/17 and 31% in 2015/16.

- Proportions of rough sleepers with support needs around alcohol (**43%**) and mental health (**50%**) are largely similar to those found in 2016/17.
- **85%** of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were male.
- **8%** of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were aged 25 or under.
- There are no significant changes in the gender and age profile of rough sleepers in 2017/18, compared to that in 2016/17.

\* EU expansion in 2004 and 2007 enabled people from the following countries to come to the UK to work: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia. These are referred to as Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries in this report.

# NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEN ROUGH SLEEPING

**7,484**

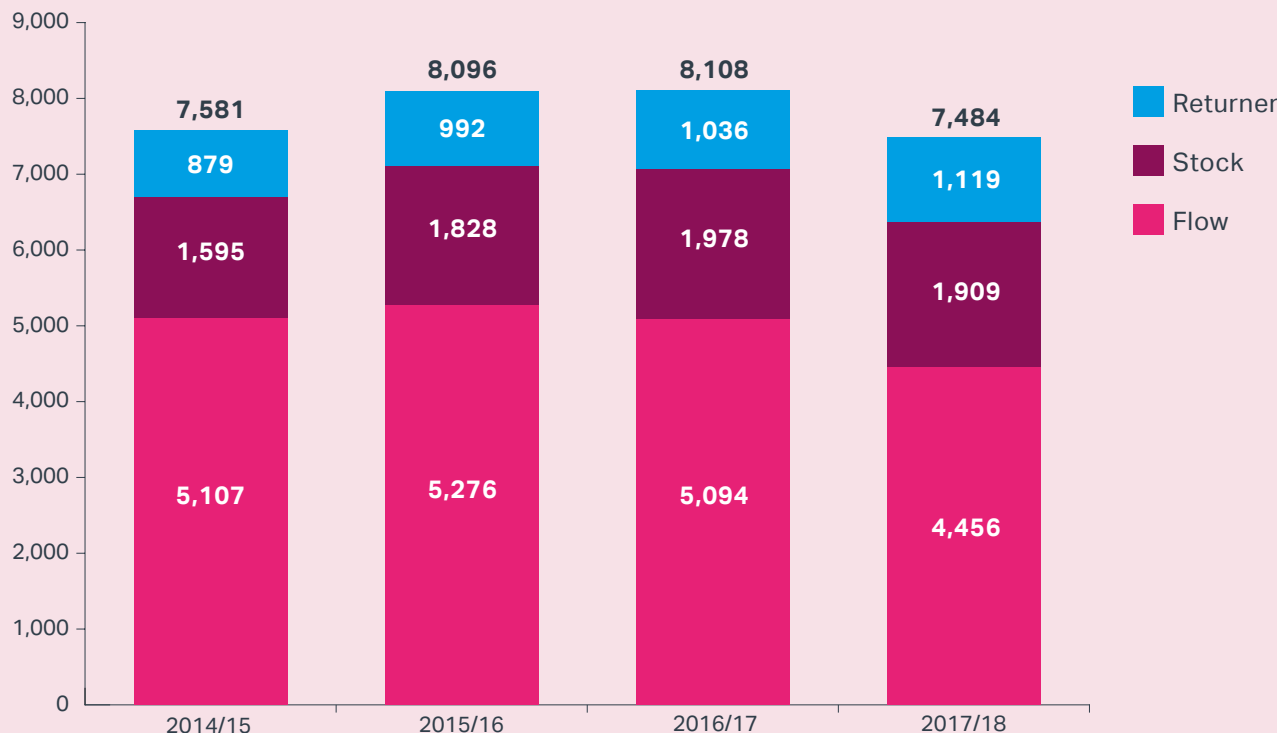
people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2017/18, which is an 8% decrease compared to the total of 8,108 people seen in 2016/17. This compares to virtually no change between 2015/16 and 2016/17, and an increase of 7% between 2014/15 and 2015/16.

**4,456**

people were seen rough sleeping for the first time this year (also referred to as flow), which is 60% of all people seen rough sleeping in the period. Just over a quarter (26%) of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were also seen in the preceding year (stock group). Around one seventh (15%) of people seen rough sleeping were in the returner group, meaning they had been seen rough sleeping in the past but not in 2016/17. The proportion of rough sleepers falling into the stock and returner groups has increased slightly compared to last year, while the proportion in the flow group has shown a small corresponding decrease.

**Figure (a)**

Profile of the number of people seen rough sleeping 2014/15 – 2017/18 using flow, stock, returner model



## Category

## Description

### Flow

People who had never been seen rough sleeping prior to 2017/18 (i.e. new rough sleepers).

### Stock

People who were also seen rough sleeping in 2016/17 (i.e. those seen across a minimum of two consecutive years).

### Returner

People who were first seen rough sleeping prior to 2016/17, but were not seen during 2016/17 (i.e. those who have had a gap in their rough sleeping histories).

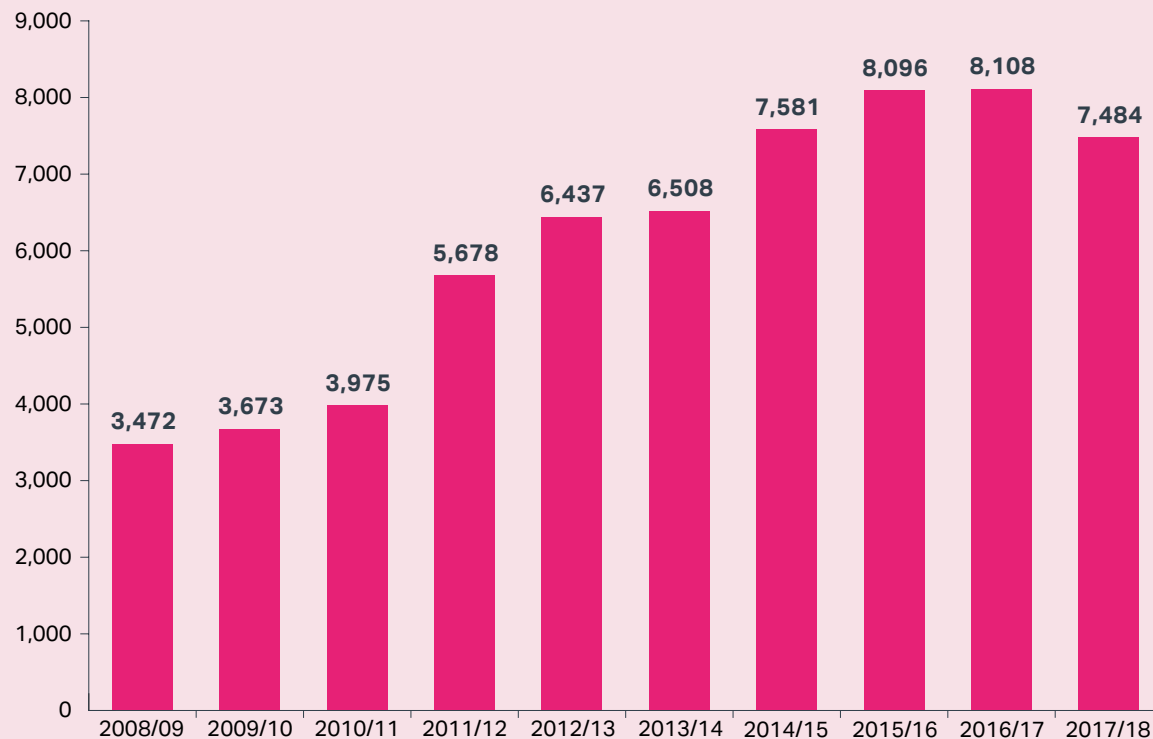
# LONG RANGE TREND

Across the last ten years, 2017/18 is the first year in which fewer people were seen rough sleeping compared to the previous year. The significant increase in 2011/12 is probably partly accounted for by the introduction of No Second Night Out, which is likely to have resulted in more people being found by outreach teams.

The 7,484 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 is the lowest total since 2013/14, although it is still over twice the number seen ten years ago.

**Figure (b)**

Long range trend of number of people seen rough sleeping



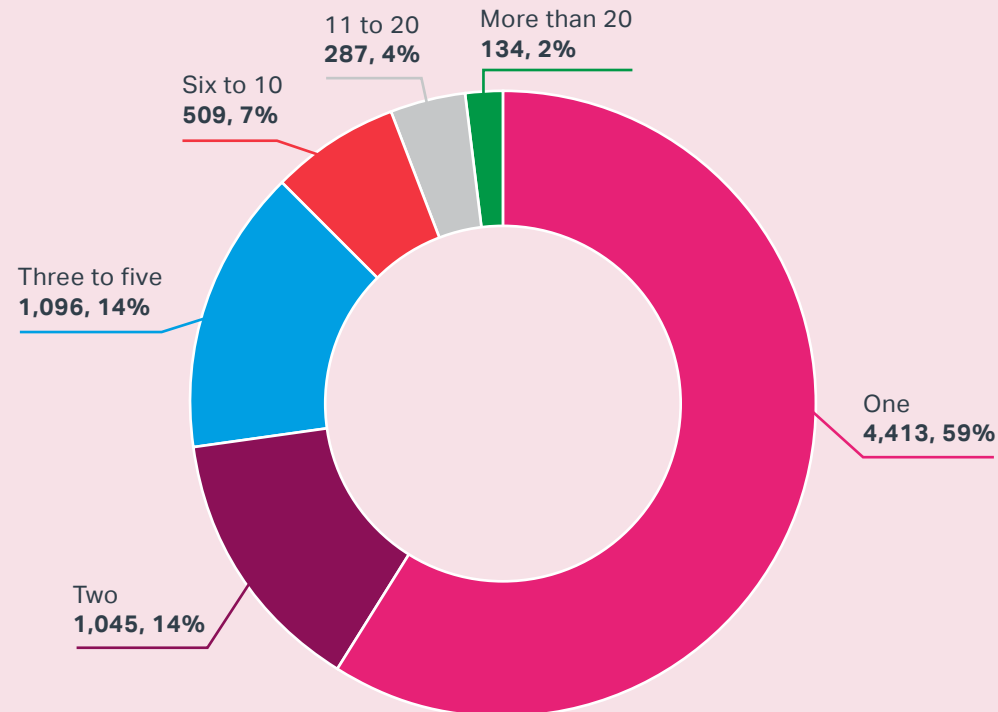
# NUMBER OF TIMES SEEN ROUGH SLEEPING

**4,413 (59%)**

people were seen rough sleeping only once in 2017/18, which compares to 4,801 (59%) seen rough sleeping just once in 2016/17. Around one in twenty people (6%) were seen rough sleeping more than ten times. One person was seen rough sleeping more than 50 times in the year, which compares to five people in 2016/17, and none in 2015/16.

**Figure (c)**

Number of times seen rough sleeping



Base: 7,484 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18

# MONTHLY TREND

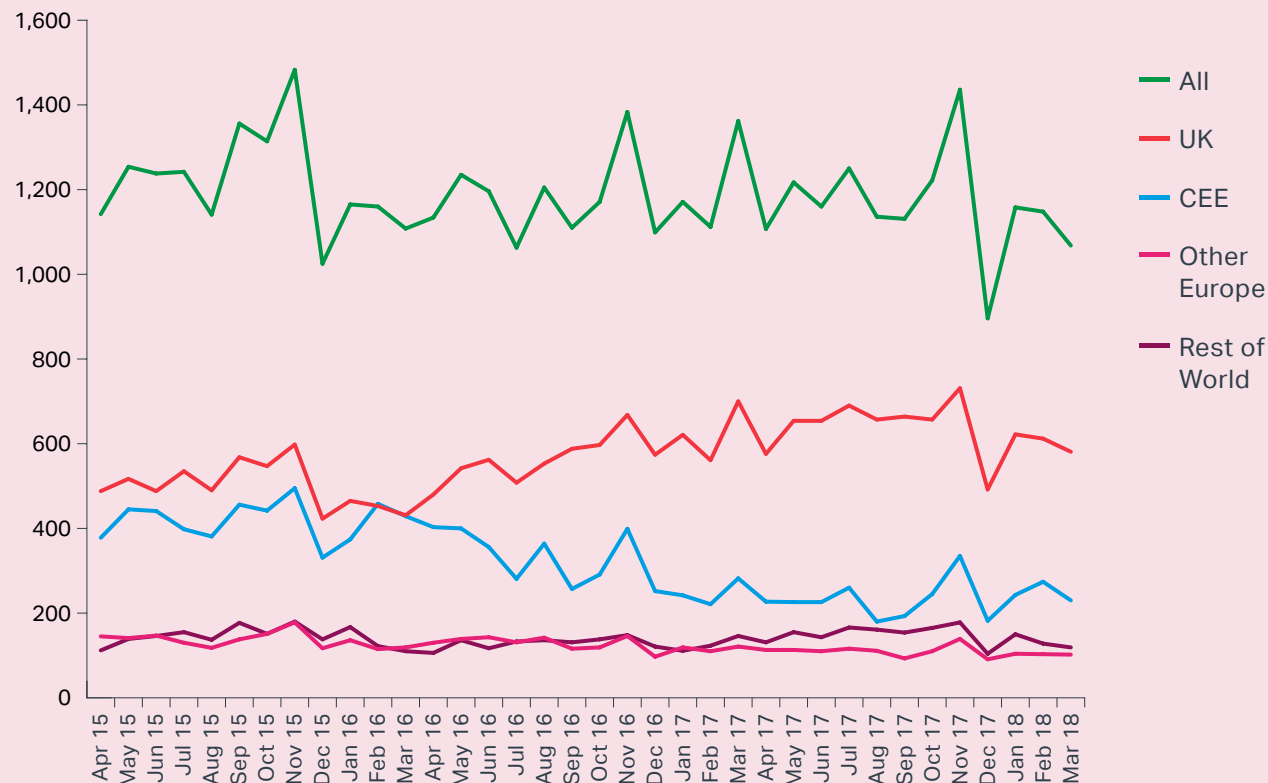
During 2017/18, the month in which the highest number of people were seen rough sleeping was November 2017 (1,436 people), while the lowest number were seen in December 2017 (896 people). The November peak is consistent with previous years, while the December trough also reflects the general yearly pattern.

There typically tend to be seasonal variations in rough sleeping, with the highest numbers seen in summer and autumn, and the lowest numbers in the winter months of December to February, when winter shelters are usually in operation.

The nationality comparison continues the trend observed in 2016/17, with a marked decline in the number of CEE nationals seen rough sleeping, compared to an increase for UK nationals. This is a break from the trends prior to 2016/17, which culminated in CEE and UK numbers reaching parity for the first time in February 2016. The divergence between CEE and UK numbers in this graph reflects the general nationality trend apparent elsewhere in this report.

**Figure (d)**

Number of people seen rough sleeping month by month, April 2015 - March 2018





# SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

As in previous years, the borough in which the greatest number of people were seen rough sleeping was Westminster, with 2,165 people (29% of the overall London total). Seven boroughs recorded more than 300 rough sleepers during the year. Of the ten boroughs with the highest numbers of rough sleepers, five showed decreased totals compared to 2016/17, while the borough with the greatest increase was Ealing.

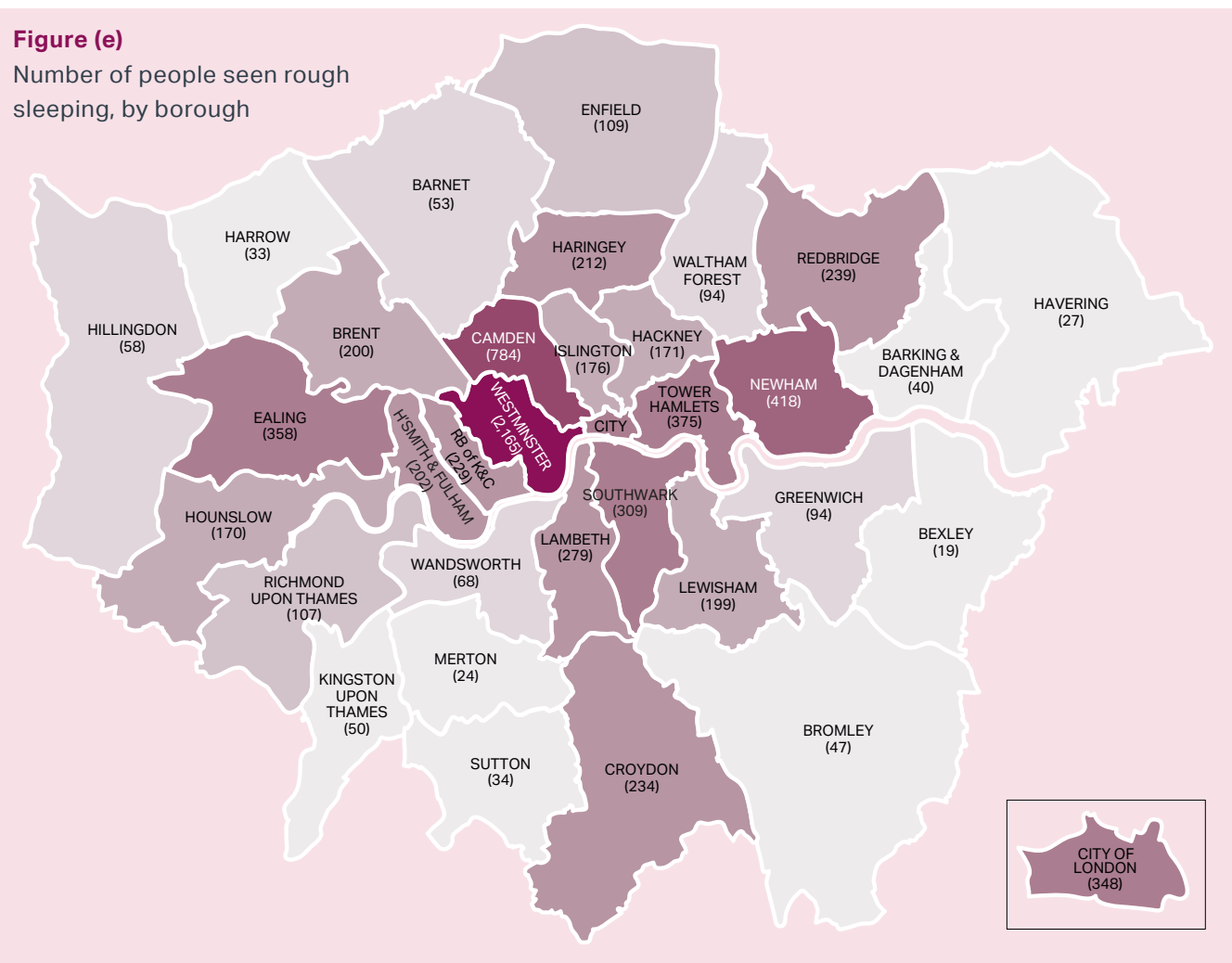
The Mayor of London's new TFL Outreach service recorded 142 people rough sleeping on buses during 2017/18, as well as five people on the night tube.

## Top five boroughs

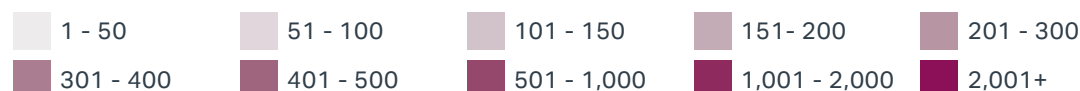
	Borough	2017/18	2016/17
1.	Westminster	2,165	2,767
2.	Camden	784	702
3.	Newham	418	396
4.	Tower Hamlets	375	445
5.	Ealing	358	243

**Figure (e)**

Number of people seen rough sleeping, by borough



No. people seen rough sleeping



# NATIONALITY

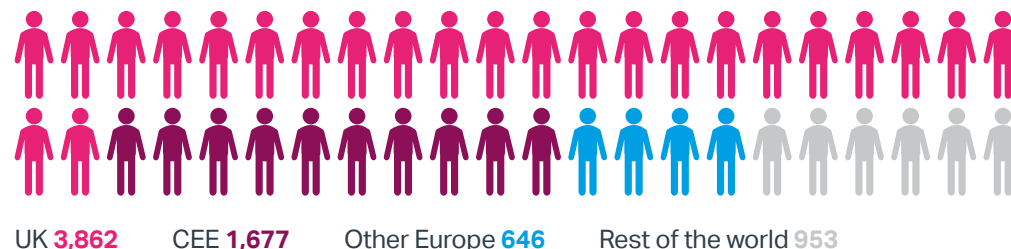
The nationality profile of rough sleepers in London remains diverse, but has shown a continuation of trends first observed in 2016/17. 54% of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 were from the UK, which compares to 47% in 2016/17 and 41% in 2015/16, confirming a trend towards UK nationals increasing as a proportion of all rough sleepers, following an earlier period when this group's proportion was in decline. The proportion of rough sleepers from CEE countries was 23% this year, compared to 30% in 2016/17 and 37% in 2015/16, confirming a trend towards CEE nationals declining as a proportion of all rough sleepers, following earlier years where this group's proportion was on the increase. These changes are also seen in terms of absolute numbers, as opposed to proportion of the overall rough sleeper population, with the number of UK nationals having risen by 6% compared to last year, while the number of CEE nationals fell by 28%.

Despite the ongoing drop in numbers, Romanians (664, 9%) continue to constitute the predominant non-UK nationality, with Poles (561, 8%) making up the second largest non-UK nationality group.

There were a significant number of rough sleepers from non-CEE European countries, mostly those in the European Economic Area, with Italy (126), the Republic of Ireland (119), and Portugal (115) continuing to be the most heavily represented. 458 (6%) people seen rough sleeping in the year were from African countries, and 416 (6%) were of Asian nationality (170 of whom were Indian).

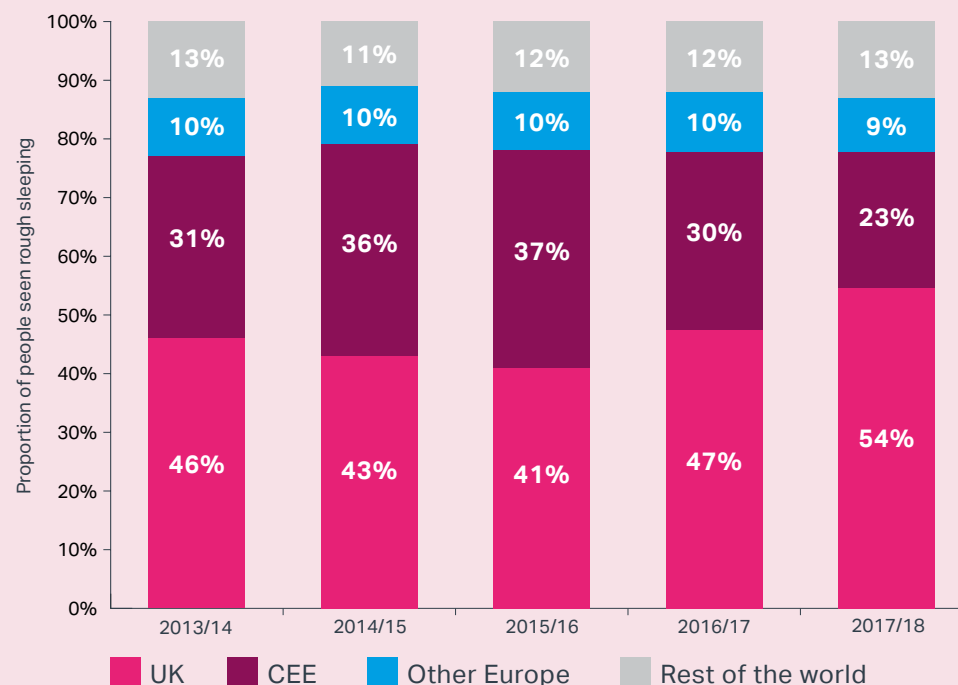
**Figure (f)**

Nationality of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18



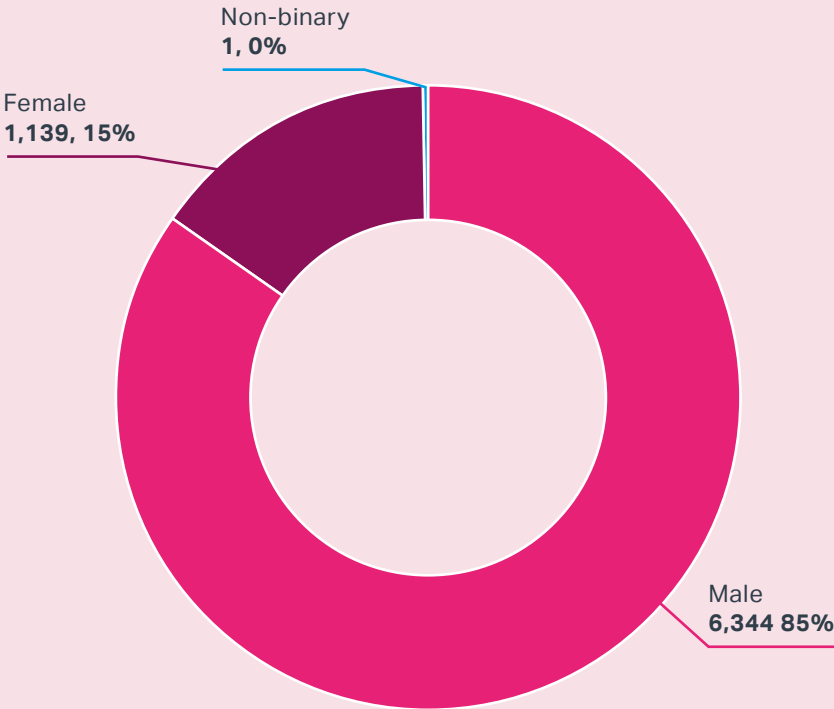
**Figure (g)**

Long range trend in nationality profile of people seen rough sleeping



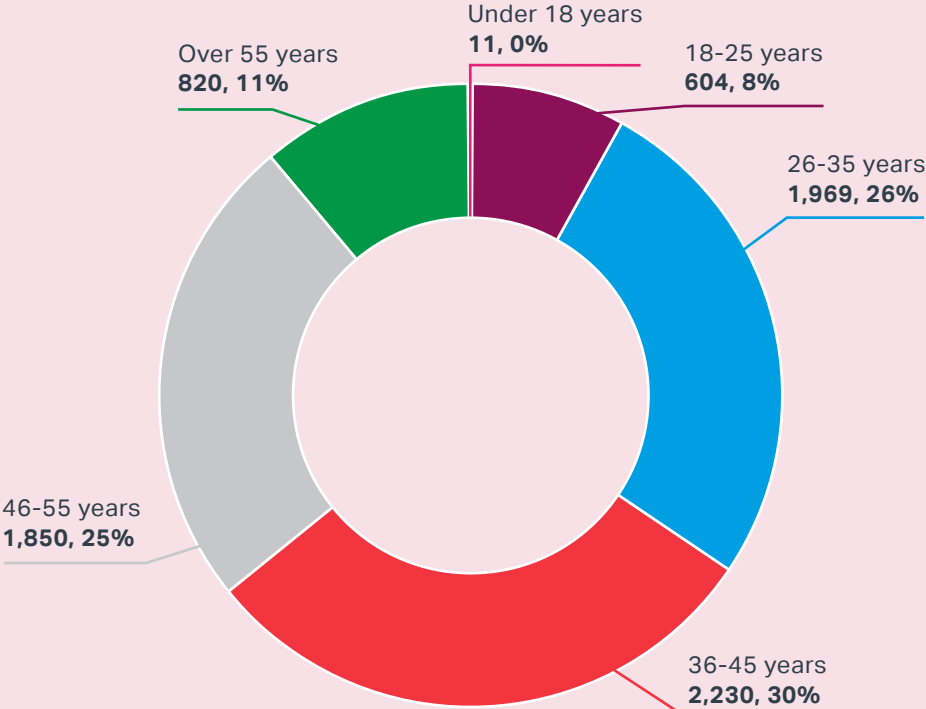
# DEMOGRAPHICS

**Figure (h)**  
Gender profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18



Base: 7,484 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18

**Figure (i)**  
Age profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18



Base: 7,484 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18

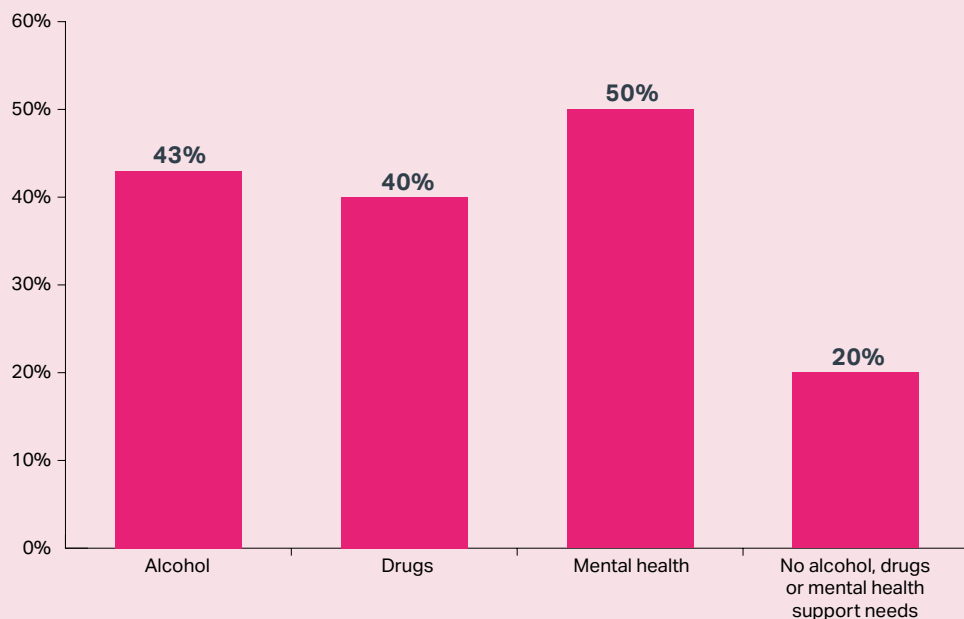
The gender and age profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 shows little variation from that of people seen in 2016/17. The majority of rough sleepers (85%) are male, while four-fifths (81%) are aged between 26 and 55, with a fairly even distribution within that age band.



# SUPPORT NEEDS

**Figure (j)**

Support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18

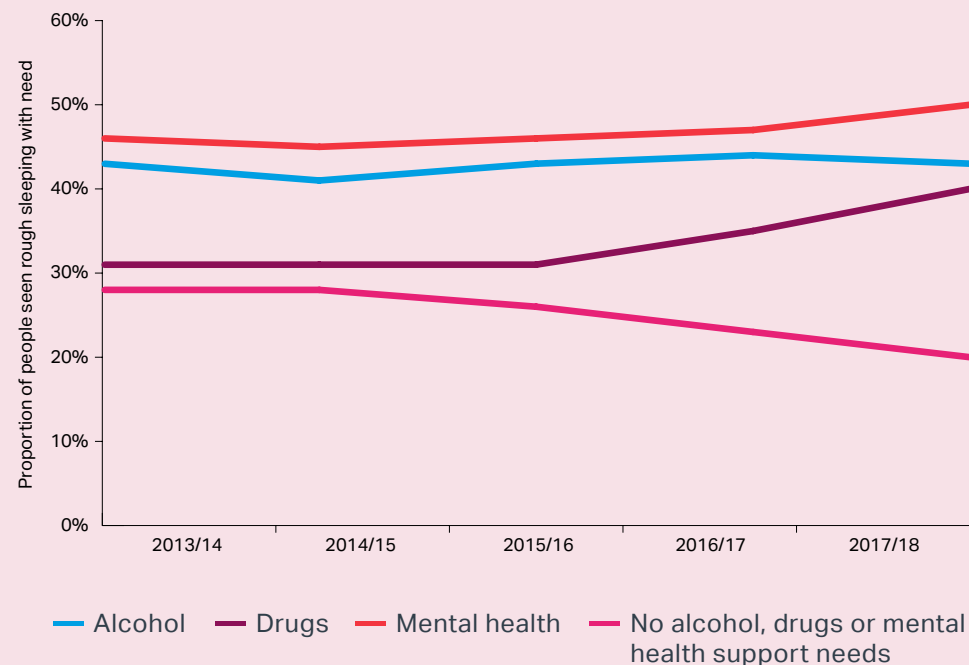


Base: 5,320 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 who had been assessed for at least one of the three key support needs.

The most frequently reported support need amongst people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 was mental health, with 50% of those assessed during the period having a need in this area. Alcohol was the second most prevalent need, at 43%, while 40% of rough sleepers were assessed as having a support need relating to drugs.

**Figure (k)**

Long range trend in support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping



The proportion of people seen rough sleeping who were assessed as having a support need relating to drug use has risen over the last two years. In 2017/18, 40% of rough sleepers were found to have a need in this area, compared to 35% in 2016/17 and 31% in 2015/16. The proportion of people assessed as having none of the three support needs has declined, from a high point of 28% in 2014/15 to the figure of 20% in 2017/18. Changes in the prevalence of alcohol and mental health support needs amongst people seen rough sleeping over recent years have been less pronounced.

# ARMED FORCES AND INSTITUTIONAL HISTORY

**CHAIN records information about whether rough sleepers have spent time in the armed forces, prison or local authority care at any time in their life.**

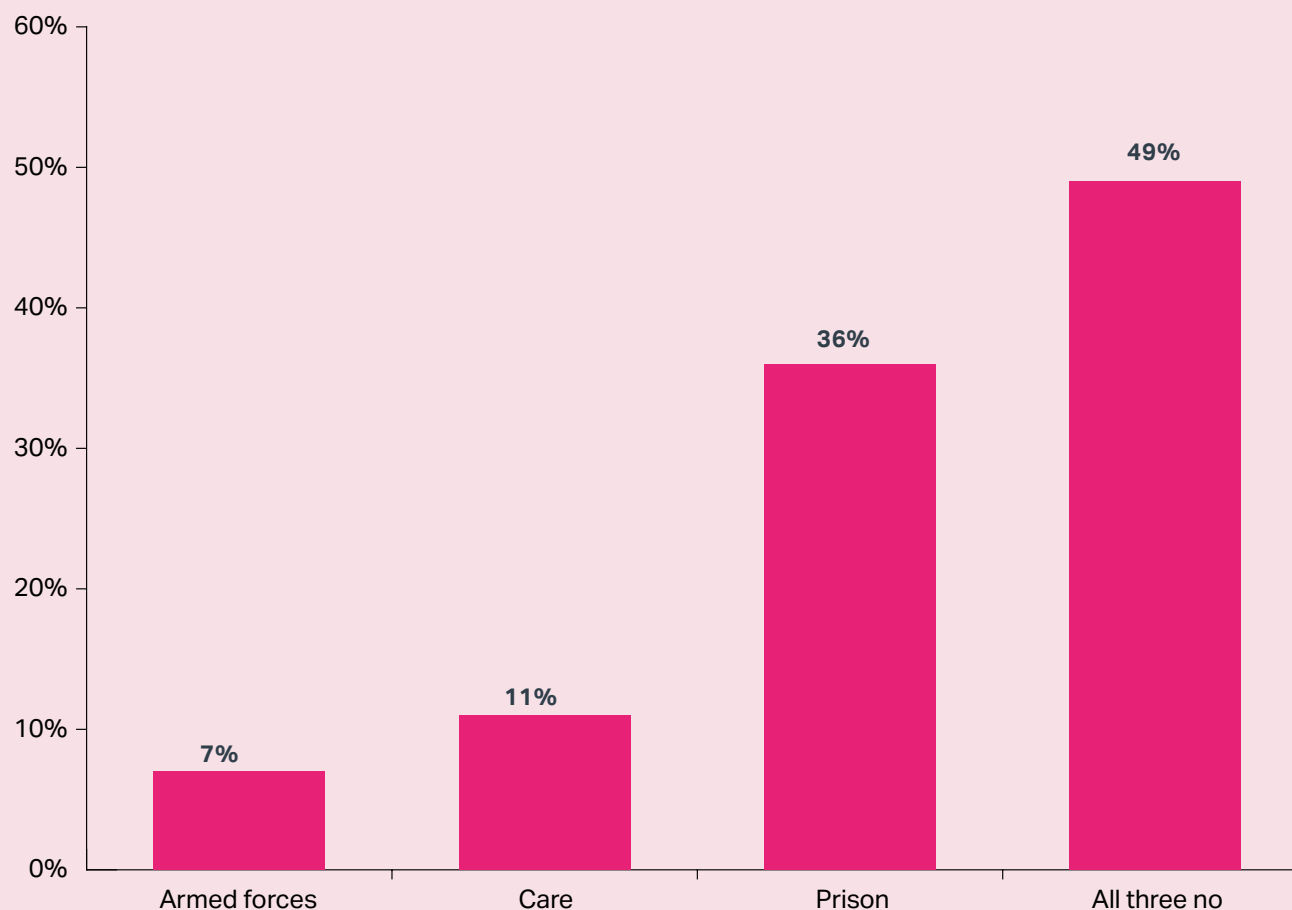
Just over one third (36%) of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 had experience of serving time in prison, while 11% had experience of the care system.

Overall, 7% of people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 had served in the armed forces at some point in their lives. Looking at this in more detail, 3% (135) of people seen rough sleeping in the year were UK nationals who have served in the armed forces.

Proportions of people with experience of the armed forces, care or prison are consistent with 2016/17.

**Figure (I)**

Experience of serving in the armed forces, and spending time in prison or in local authority care, among people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18



Base: 5,178 people seen rough sleeping in 2017/18 for whom one or more institutional history was recorded.

# CHAIN ANNUAL BULLETIN GREATER LONDON 2017/18

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Copies of this report are available from:

<http://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/chain-reports>

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