

CHAIN ANNUAL BULLETIN GREATER LONDON 2019/20

SUPPORTED BY

MAYOR OF LONDON



CHAIN

This bulletin presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London between April 2019 and March 2020. 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 2019/20 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

10,726



people were seen rough sleeping by outreach workers in London during 2019/20.

- This represents a **21%** increase compared to the total of **8,855** people seen in 2018/19.
- **60%** of these people were seen rough sleeping just once during the period.
- Outreach teams, No Second Night Out (NSNO) and other services supported **4,490** (42%) of these people to access accommodation or return to their home area.

NEW ROUGH SLEEPERS



7,053

people (66% of the total) were seen sleeping rough for the first time in London in 2019/20.

- **24%** of new rough sleepers were categorised as 'unidentified' (people who were recorded without a name and only had one contact).
- **52%** 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%**).

LONGER TERM ROUGH SLEEPERS



New rough sleepers



Longer term rough sleepers

As with the previous year, the numbers of longer term rough sleepers increased at a lower rate than those of new rough sleepers.

- **2,377** people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 had also been seen in 2018/19 (**22%** of the total). This group are also referred to in the report as 'stock'.
- **1,296** people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were those who had returned to rough sleeping after at least a year away (**12%** of the total).
- Compared to last year, the stock group increased by **14%** and the returner group increased by **4%**, while new rough sleepers increased by **28%**.

NATIONALITY



People from a total of 131 different nationalities were recorded rough sleeping in London in 2019/20.

- Just under half (**48%**) of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were from the UK, which compares to **49%** in 2018/19, and **54%** in 2017/18.
- **30%** of those seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were from CEE* countries, which compares to **31%** in 2018/19, and **24%** in 2017/18.
- Romanians continued to represent the single biggest non-UK nationality group, comprising **15%** of all people seen rough sleeping in the year.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND SUPPORT NEEDS



17% of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were women, compared to only 10% in 2010/11.

- **8%** of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were aged 25 or under.
- **34%** of people seen rough sleeping during the period have experience of spending time in prison.
- **40%** of people seen rough sleeping this year had multiple support needs relating to alcohol, drugs or mental health.
- Proportions of rough sleepers with support needs around alcohol (**39%**), drugs (**39%**) and mental health (**47%**) have largely remained stable compared to 2018/19.

* 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

10,726

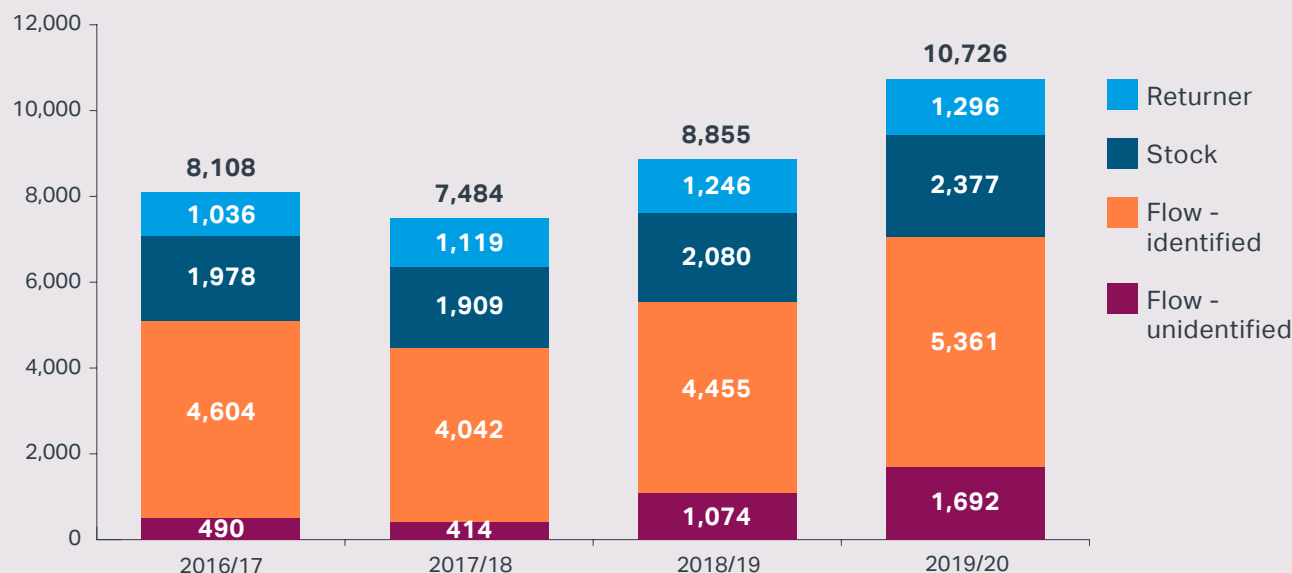
people were seen rough sleeping in London in 2019/20, which is a 21% increase compared to the total of 8,855 people seen in 2018/19. This compares to an 18% increase between 2017/18 and 2018/19, and an 8% decrease between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

7,053

people were seen rough sleeping for the first time this year (also referred to as flow), which is 66% of all people seen rough sleeping in the period. Nearly three quarters (73%) of new rough sleepers were only seen once, and 24% were categorised as 'unidentified'. Just over one fifth (22%) of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 were also seen in the preceding year (stock group). Around one eighth (12%) of people seen rough sleeping were in the returner group, meaning they had been seen rough sleeping in the past but not in 2018/19. The proportion of people in each group is broadly consistent with last year.

Figure (a)

Profile of the number of people seen rough sleeping 2016/17 – 2019/20 using flow, stock, returner model



Category	Description
Flow unidentified	People who had never been seen rough sleeping prior to 2019/20 (i.e. new rough sleepers), who were recorded without a name, and with only one contact.
Flow identified	People who had never been seen rough sleeping prior to 2019/20 (i.e. new rough sleepers), who were recorded with a name, and/or with more than one contact.
Stock	People who were also seen rough sleeping in 2018/19 (i.e. those seen across a minimum of two consecutive years).
Returner	People who were first seen rough sleeping prior to 2018/19, but were not seen during 2018/19 (i.e. those who have had a gap in their rough sleeping histories).

LONG RANGE TREND

Across the last ten years, the number of people recorded rough sleeping on CHAIN has risen year on year, with the exception of 2017/18. Following that year's break in the upward trend, the last two years have shown a return to the earlier pattern.

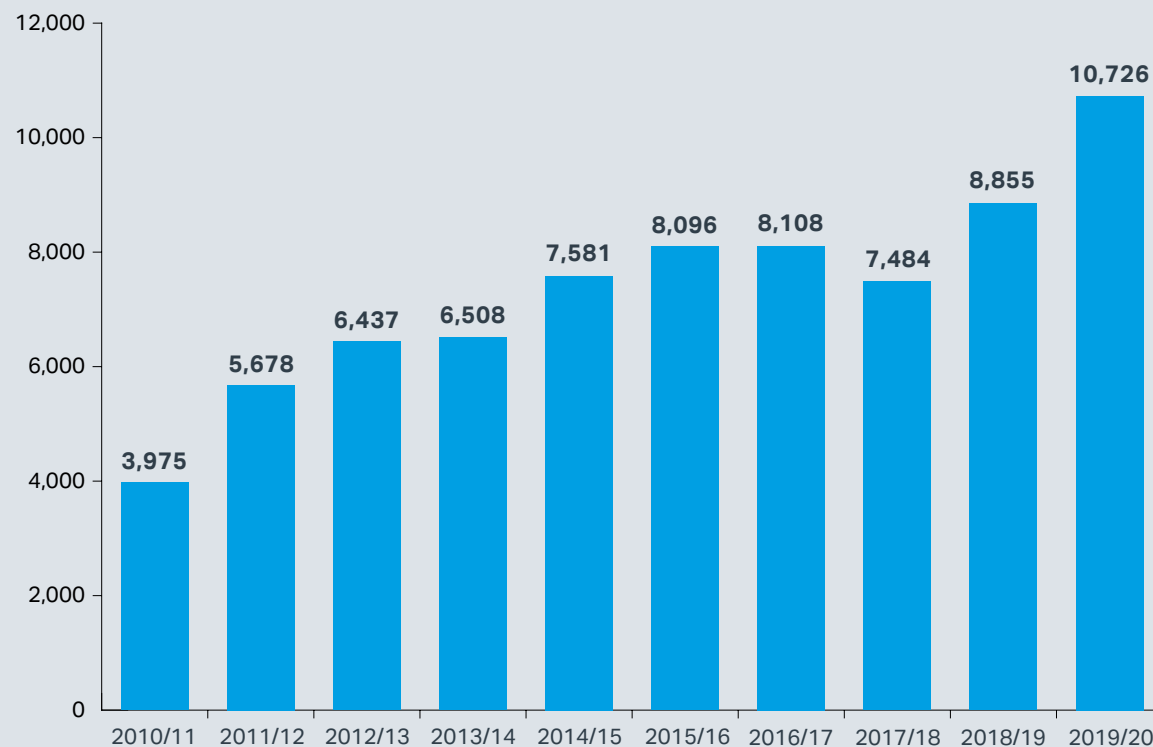
The 10,726 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 is almost 170% higher than the number seen in 2010/11. The 21% increase from 2018/19 to 2019/20 is the largest proportionate increase since that between 2010/11 and 2011/12, which was 43%.

The significant increase in 2011/12 is likely to have been at least in part accounted for by the expanded outreach presence associated with the introduction of No Second Night Out.

Likewise, during 2018/19 significant new funding saw a large increase in the number of outreach services and staff in London, which was further increased during 2019/20. The introduction of bimonthly street counts alongside this new funding is also likely to have had an influence on the figures.

Figure (b)

Long range trend of number of people seen rough sleeping



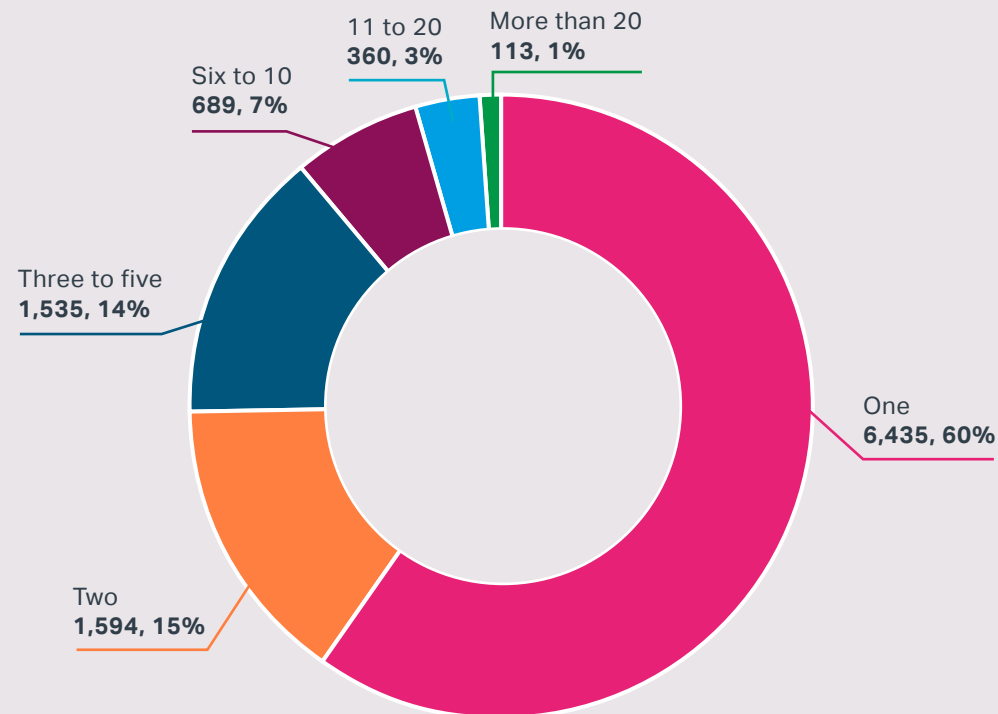
NUMBER OF TIMES SEEN ROUGH SLEEPING

6,435 (60%)

people were seen rough sleeping only once in 2019/20, which compares to 5,270 (60%) seen rough sleeping just once in 2018/19. 75% were seen only once or twice. Around one in twenty people (4%) were seen rough sleeping more than ten times. Three people were seen rough sleeping more than 50 times in the year, compared to nobody with this many contacts in 2018/19, and one person in 2017/18.

Figure (c)

Number of times seen rough sleeping



Base: 10,726 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20

MONTHLY TREND

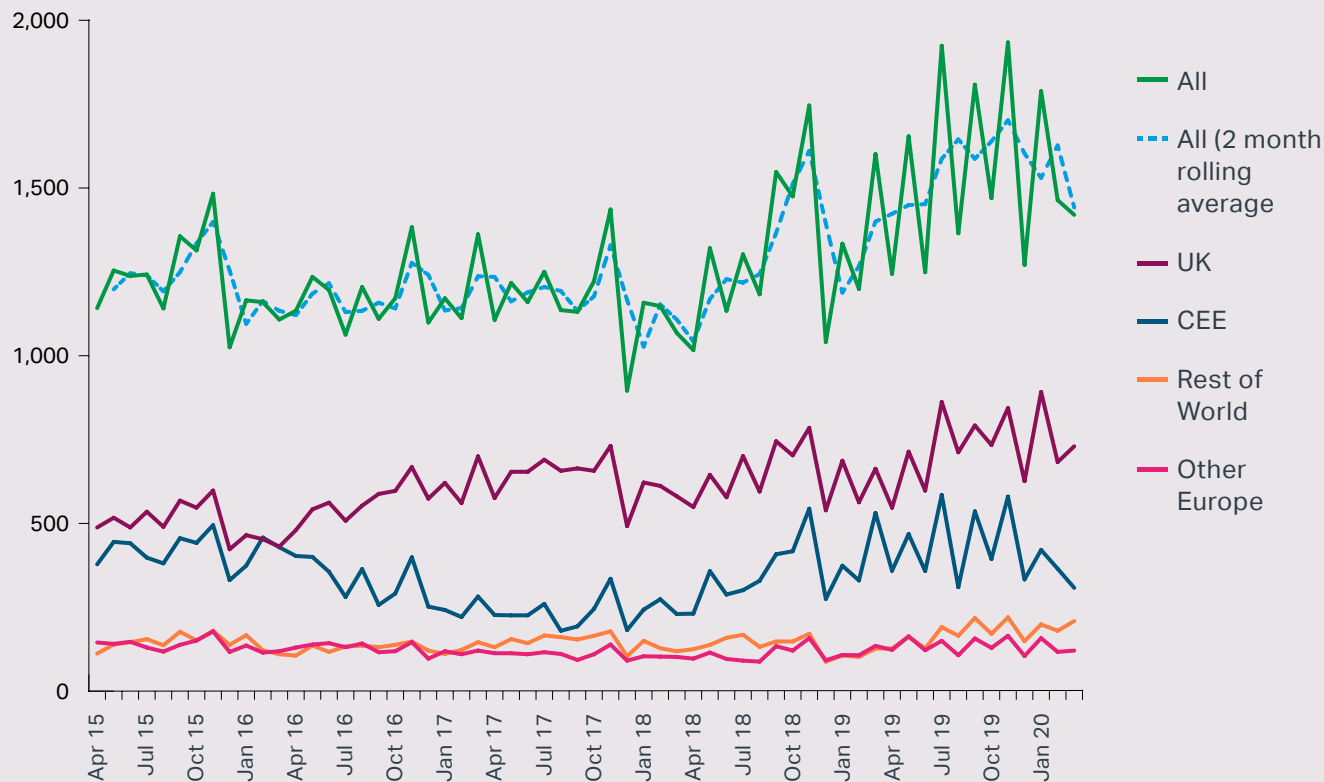
The chart shows the monthly trend in numbers of people seen rough sleeping over the last five years, broken down by nationality group.

The All line, showing overall numbers seen rough sleeping per month, indicates that the annual peak usually occurs in November, when the government's annual street count takes place, while the lowest numbers are usually recorded in December, when winter shelters and Crisis at Christmas come into operation. Peaks and troughs have become much more frequent since late 2018, when bimonthly street counts were introduced as part of the government's Rough Sleeping Initiative. The All (2 month rolling average) line smooths out these variations to give a clearer indication of the ongoing trend.

During 2019/20, the highest monthly total was recorded in November 2019 (1,934 people), while the lowest number was recorded in April 2019 (1,244 people).

Figure (d)

Number of people seen rough sleeping month by month, April 2015 - March 2020



SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION

As in previous years, the borough in which the greatest number of people were seen rough sleeping was Westminster, with 2,757 people (26% of the overall London total). Eight boroughs recorded more than 400 rough sleepers during the year. Of the ten boroughs with the highest numbers of rough sleepers, only Camden and City of London have shown a decrease in numbers compared to 2018/19.

A total of 241 people were seen rough sleeping at Heathrow airport, which is counted separately from Hillingdon, due to the specific rough sleeping issues found there.

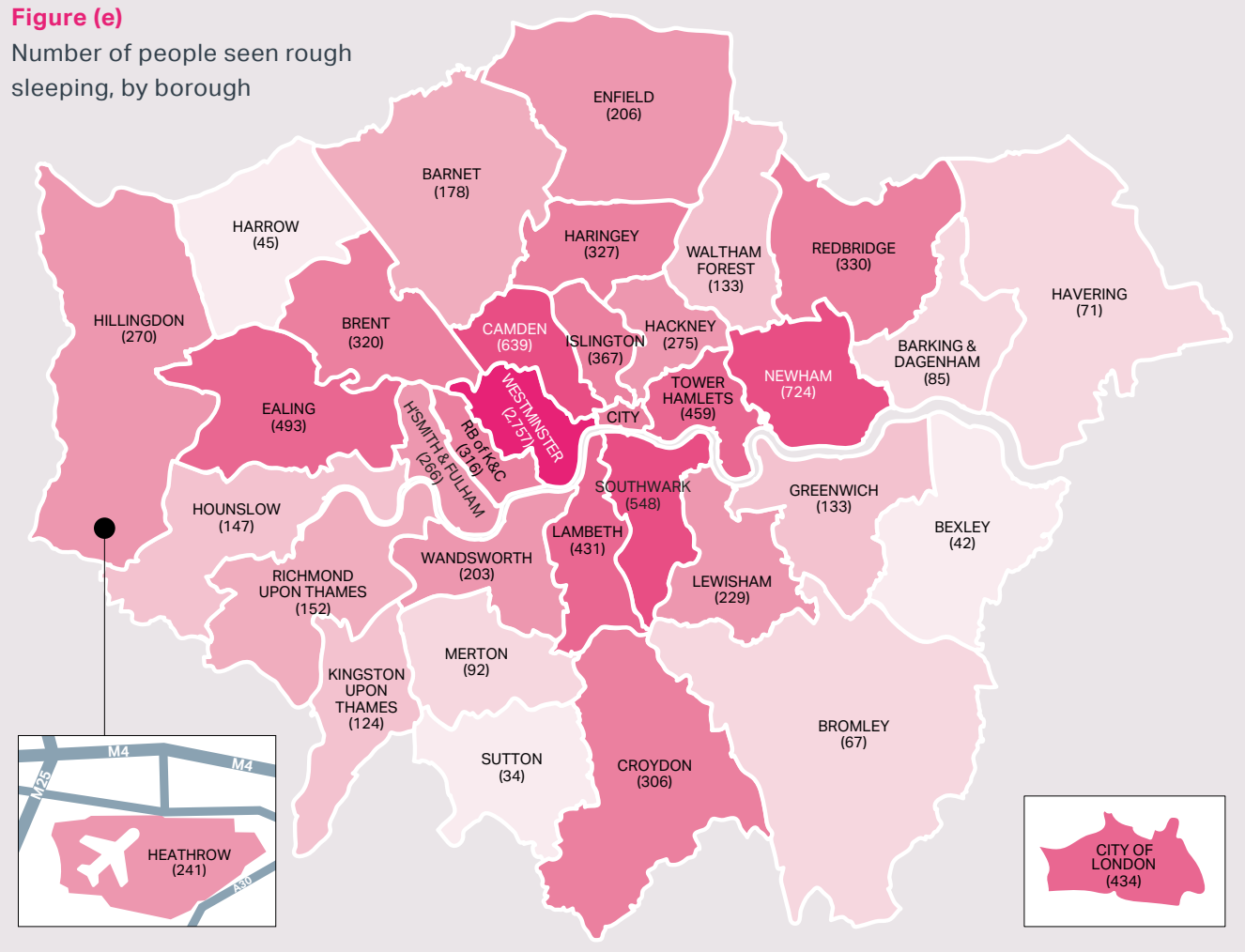
The Mayor of London's TFL Outreach service recorded 183 people rough sleeping on buses during 2019/20, as well as 23 people on the night tube.

Top five boroughs

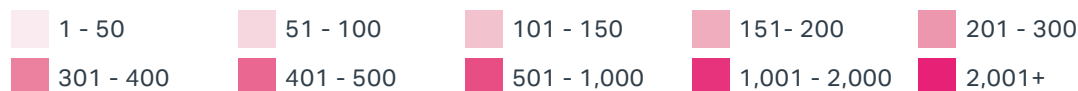
	Borough	2019/20	2018/19
1.	Westminster	2,757	2,512
2.	Newham	724	612
3.	Camden	639	815
4.	Southwark	548	435
5.	Ealing	493	382

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, with a total of 131 different nationalities recorded during 2019/20. The proportion of people seen rough sleeping who were UK nationals was 48%, which is almost unchanged from that of 49% in 2018/19, but lower than the recent peak of 54% seen in 2017/18. The proportion of rough sleepers from CEE countries has also remained virtually static, at 30% in 2019/20, compared to 31% in 2018/19, but is significantly higher than the 23% in 2017/18.

In the past two years (2018/19 and 2019/20), the proportions, of the total number of people seen sleeping rough, accounted for by UK and CEE nationals have returned to the relative levels observed in the early years of the decade (2010/11 to 2013/14). This follows a period (2014/15 to 2017/18) during which the proportions accounted for by these groups diverged; CEE nationals increased and then decreased, while UK nationals decreased and then increased.

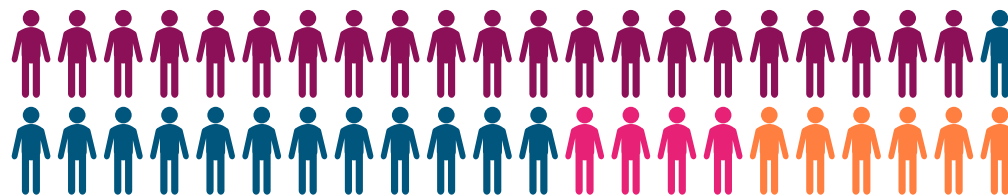
Romanians (1,491, 15%) continue to make up the largest non-UK nationality group, with Poles (828, 8%) making up the second largest non-UK nationality group.

There were a significant number of rough sleepers from non-CEE European countries, mostly those in the European Economic Area, with Portugal (132), Italy (119), and the Republic of Ireland (111) continuing to be the most heavily represented. 651 (7%) people seen rough sleeping in the year were from African countries, and 520 (5%) were of Asian nationality. India was the third most common non-UK nationality overall, with 218 people seen rough sleeping during the year.

The number of people seen rough sleeping whose nationality was not known has continued to increase, with 954 in 2019/20, compared to 701 in 2018/19 and 346 in 2017/18. This is likely to be an effect of the larger numbers of people recorded during street counts.

Figure (f)

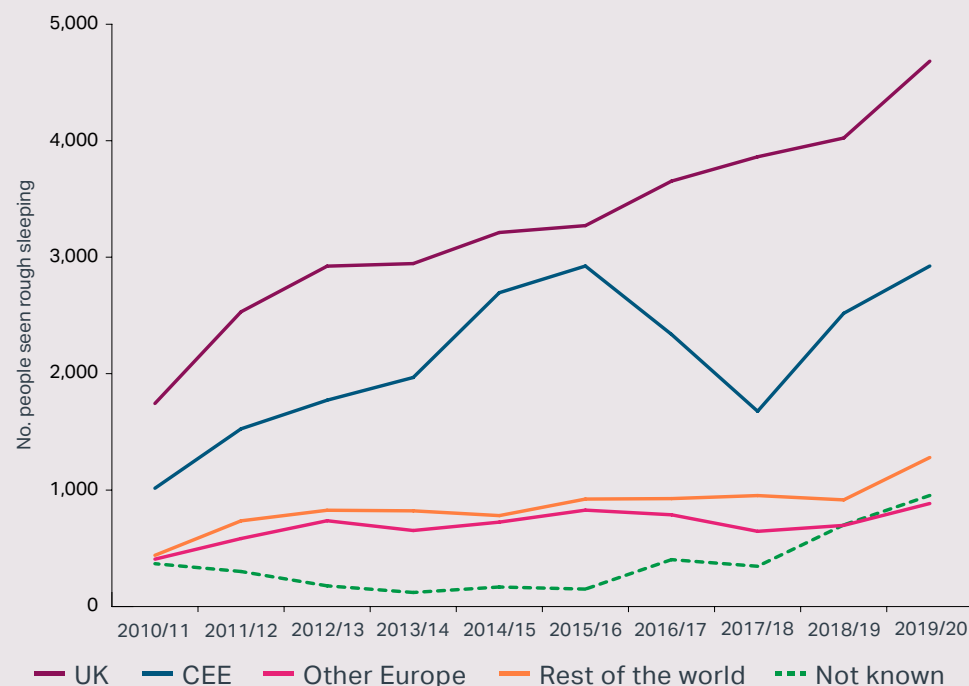
Nationality profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20



UK **4,683** CEE **2,924** Other Europe **885** Rest of the world **1,280**

Figure (g)

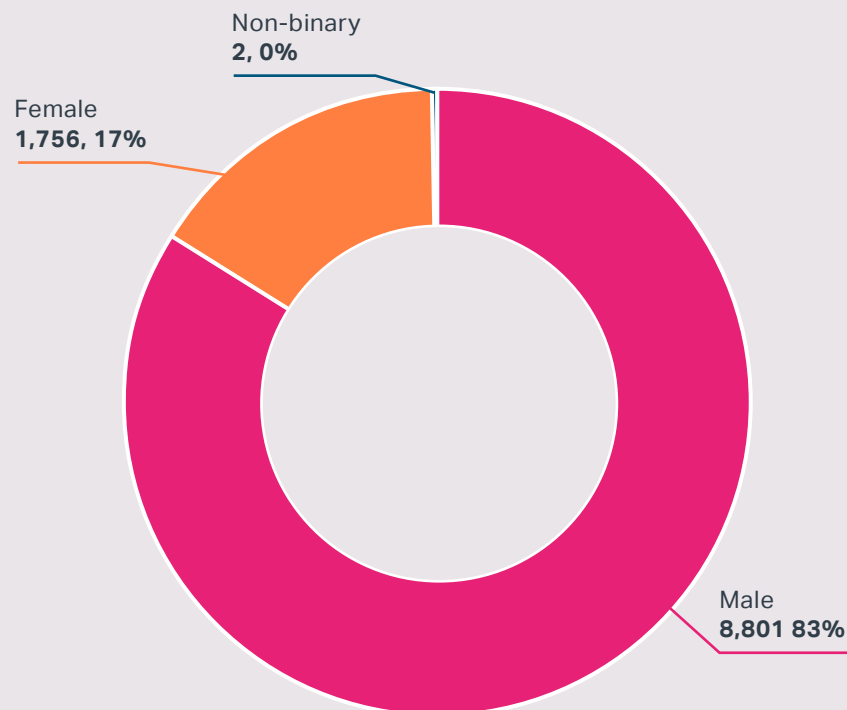
Long range trend in nationality profile of people seen rough sleeping



DEMOGRAPHICS

Figure (h)

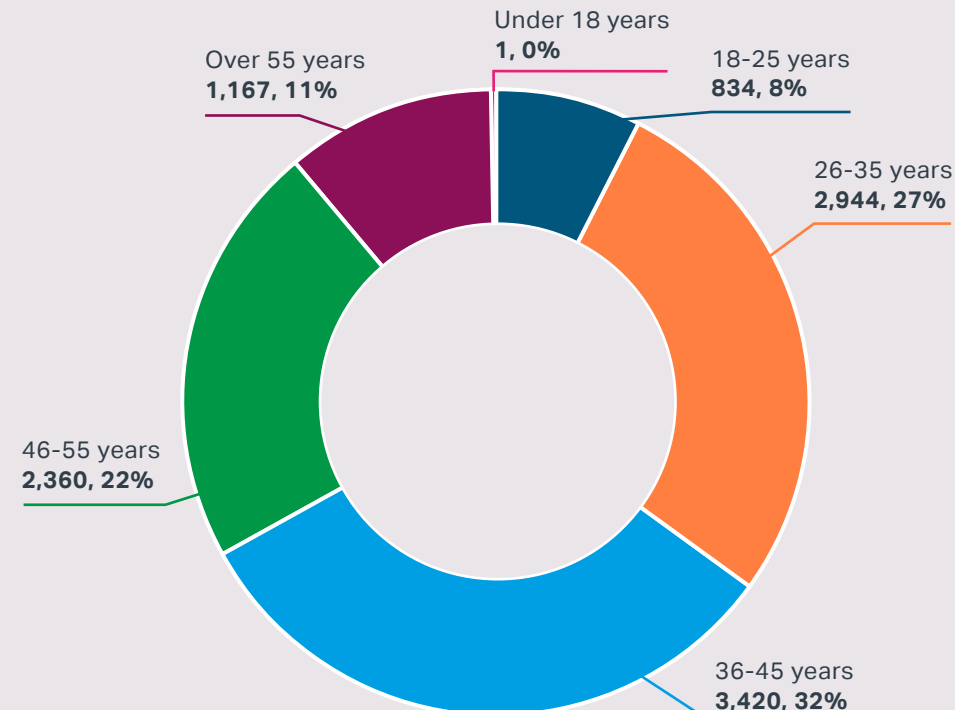
Gender profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20



Base: 10,559 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 whose gender was known

Figure (i)

Age profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20



Base: 10,726 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20

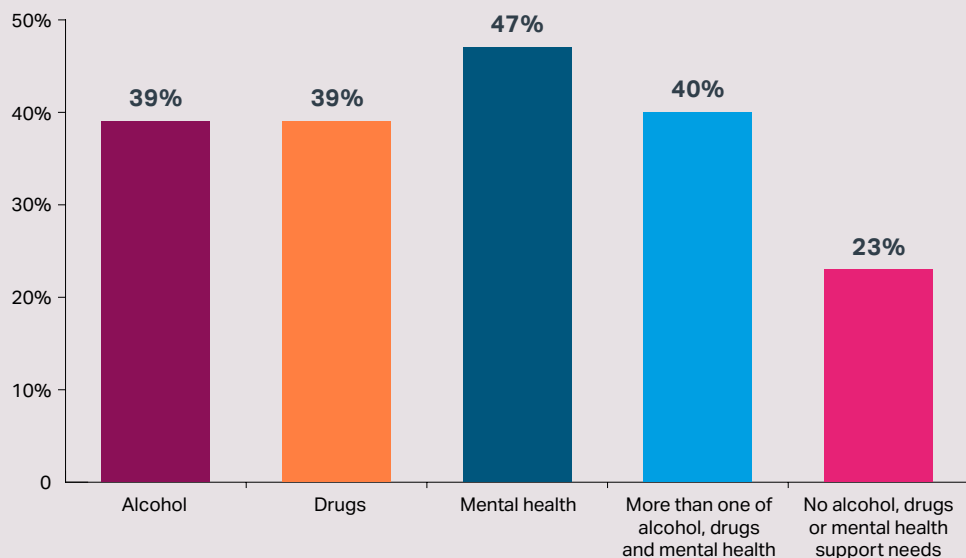
The gender and age profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 shows little variation from that of people seen in 2018/19. The majority of rough sleepers (83%) are male, while four-fifths (81%) are aged between 26 and 55.

However, a longer term trend of note is that the proportion of people seen rough sleeping who are women has risen over the last ten years, from 10% in 2010/11 to 17% in 2019/20.

SUPPORT NEEDS

Figure (j)

Support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20

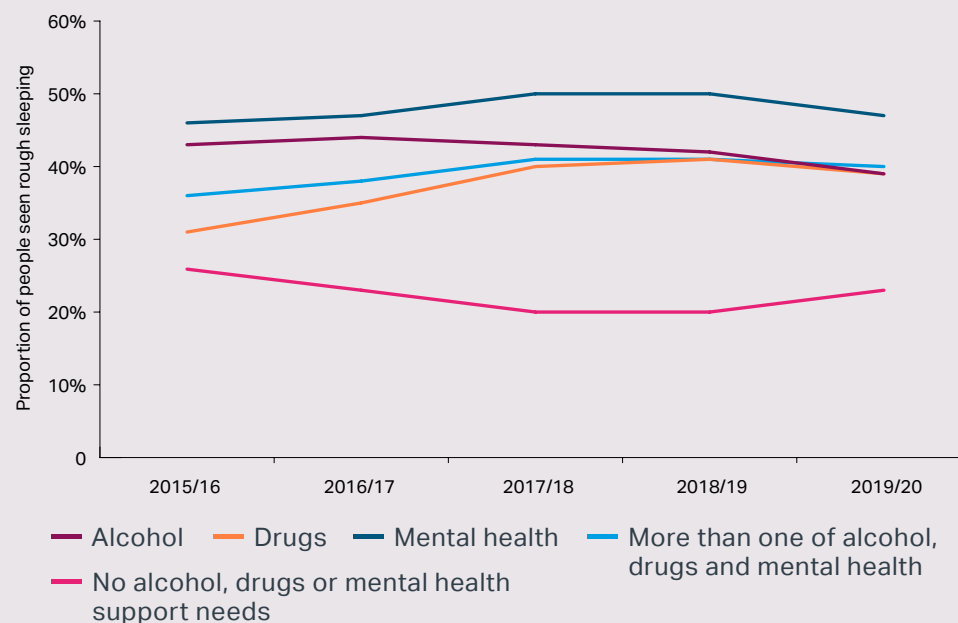


Base: 6,311 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 who had been assessed for at least one of the three key support needs

The most frequently reported support need amongst people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 was mental health, with 47% of those assessed during the period having a need in this area. 39% of people assessed had a support need relating to alcohol, with the same proportion also found to have a support need around drug use. Two-fifths (40%) of those assessed were found to have more than one of the three support needs, while just under a quarter (23%) had no support needs in these areas.

Figure (k)

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



The proportions of support needs reported for rough sleepers in 2019/20 have changed only slightly compared to 2018/19, with alcohol decreasing from 42% to 39%, drugs from 41% to 39%, and mental health from 50% to 47%. The proportion of people assessed as having multiple needs has similarly changed only very slightly, decreasing from 41% to 40%, while the proportion with no alcohol, drugs or mental health support needs has increased from 20% to 23%.

It is important to note that, while the proportions of people assessed as having these needs may have slightly decreased, the actual numbers have increased.

INSTITUTIONAL AND ARMED FORCES 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.

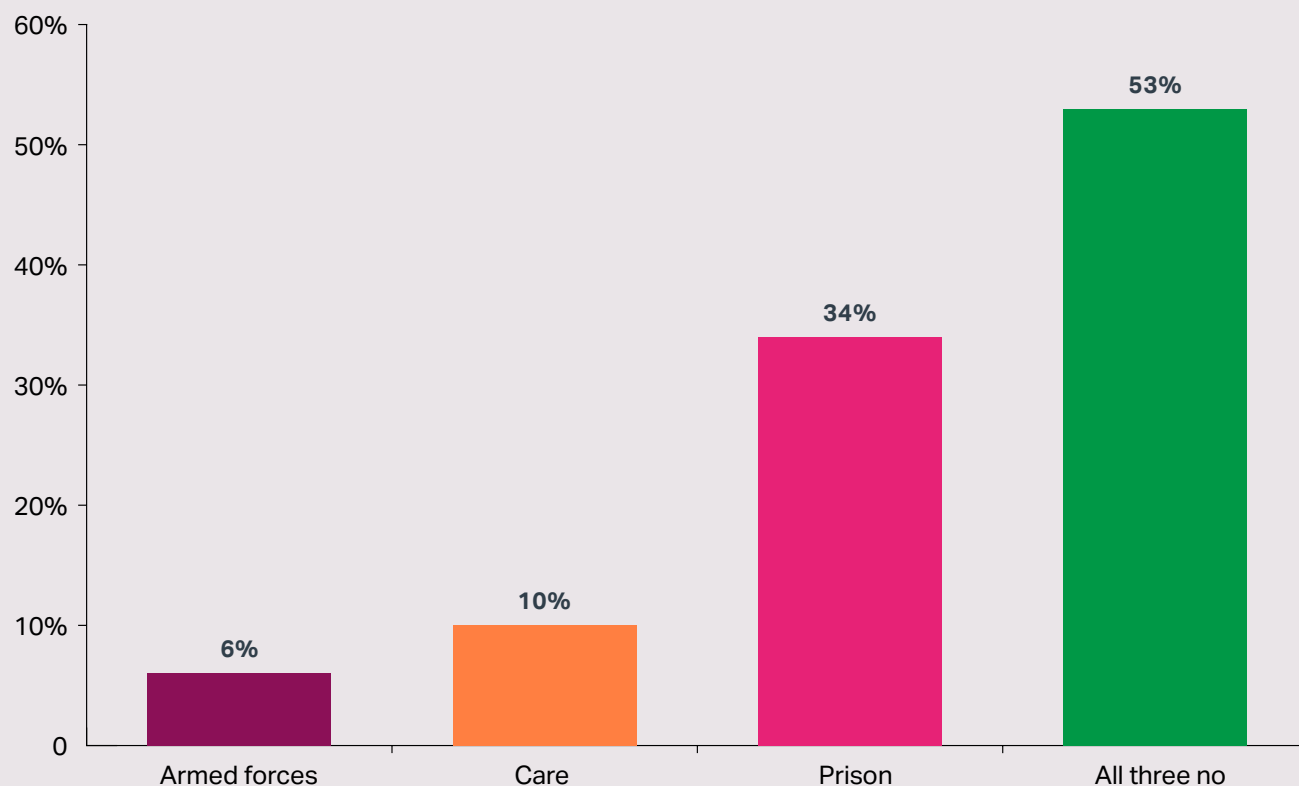
Just over one third (34%) of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 had experience of serving time in prison, while 10% had experience of the care system. Of the 582 people with experience of living in care, 76 were aged 25 or under.

Overall, 6% of people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 had served in the armed forces at some point in their lives. Looking at this in more detail, 2% (129) 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 2018/19.

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 2019/20



Base: 6,013 people seen rough sleeping in 2019/20 for whom one or more institutional history was recorded

CHAIN ANNUAL BULLETIN GREATER LONDON 2019/20

CHAIN enquiries: 020 3856 6007, chain@mungos.org

Copies of this report are available from:

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

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

