

Street to home

Bulletin 2009/10

This report presents information about people seen rough sleeping by outreach teams in London and those who have used accommodation for rough sleepers in London in 2009/10. Information is from the 'Combined Homelessness and Information Network' (CHAIN), a database commissioned and funded by government (CLG) and managed by Broadway.

Context

Ending rough sleeping

Homelessness organisations, the government and many members of the public agree that nobody should need to live on the streets in the 21st Century.

Over half of England's rough sleepers are found in London. In 2008 the Mayor of London made a commitment to end rough sleeping in London by the end of 2012. The London Delivery Board spearheads this work. The Board comprises senior people from a range of government departments and agencies, NHS London, the probation service, the Metropolitan Police, local authorities and the homelessness sector.

The London Delivery Board has defined an end to rough sleeping: **'By the end of 2012 no one will live on the streets of London, and no individual arriving on the streets will sleep out for a second night.'**

CHAIN is an invaluable tool for outreach workers in joining-up and monitoring their work. Information from CHAIN assists the London Delivery Board in understanding the problem of rough sleeping, taking steps to prevent and respond to rough sleeping and monitoring progress towards the target of ending rough sleeping.

Outreach work and statistics from CHAIN

Outreach teams, commissioned by Local Authorities and the CLG, work during the day and at night across London contacting rough sleepers to help them off the streets. They contact those sleeping on the streets, on buses, in stairwells, in parks and a range of other locations. The figures do not cover hidden homeless groups such as 'sofa surfers' or those in squats.

The statistics in this report are based on information collected by outreach workers and recorded on the CHAIN system over a 12-month period. Outreach workers are experienced in working with homeless people and are able to judge whether or not someone is rough sleeping and how best to help them.

Information presented summarises data about contacts made by experienced outreach workers over a whole year period. This enables a more in-depth look at rough sleeping than the snapshot provided by 'street counts' which are undertaken to monitor levels of rough sleeping on a particular night. CHAIN shows the number of rough sleepers over an entire year whereas street counts show the number seen on one night.



Headline findings

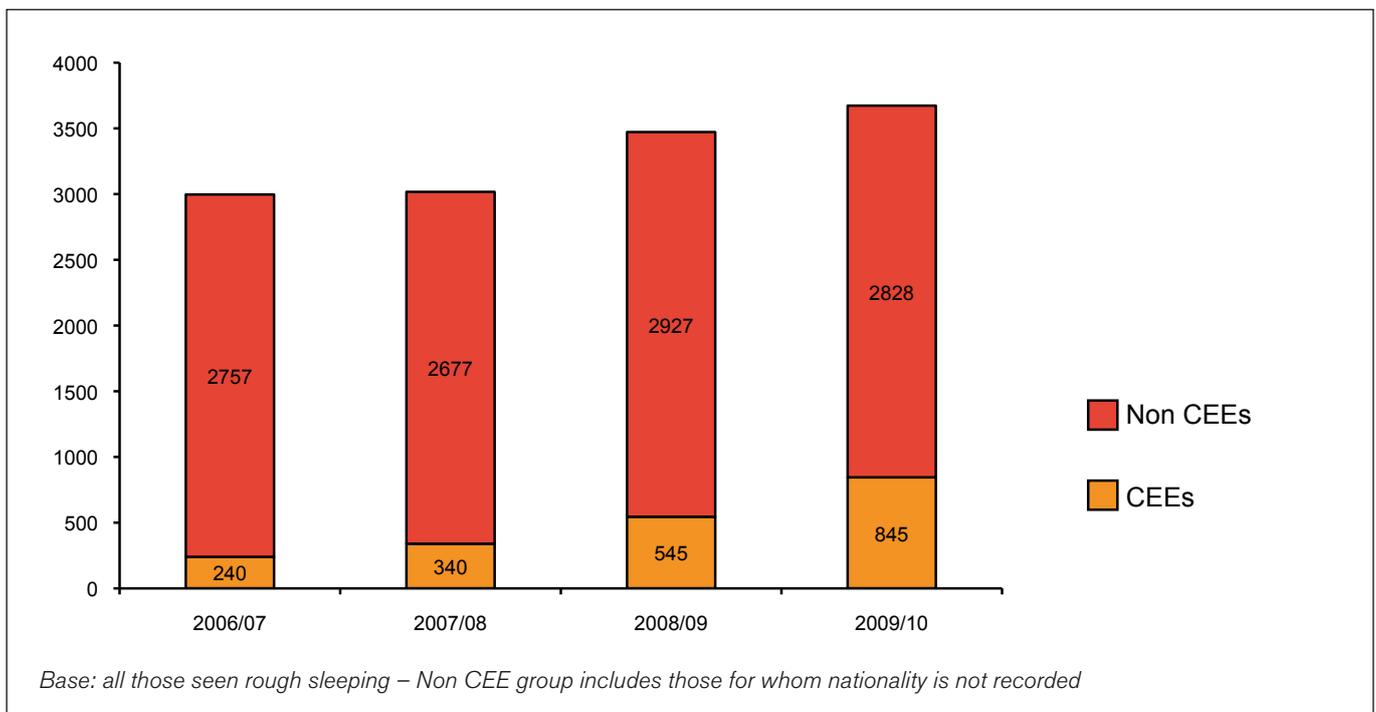
3673 people were seen rough sleeping in 2009/10

- 1744 (47%) of these people were seen just once
- 358 (10%) were seen more than 10 times
- 2226 (60%) of these people were new to the streets
- Nearly half (46%) were seen rough sleeping in Westminster

Just over half (52%) of those seen rough sleeping were from the UK. 26% were from Central and Eastern European (CEE) countries that joined the EU in 2004 and 2007.¹ The 6% rise in people seen rough sleeping between 2008/09 and 2009/10 is accounted for by people from CEE countries. When this group are excluded from the figures the number of people seen rough sleeping has gone down by 3%.

Working with migrants from CEE countries is a key challenge in ending rough sleeping. Because most rough sleepers from these countries are unable to claim welfare benefits, they cannot access most hostels. Key measures taken to help this group of people off the streets include providing assistance to access employment and providing reconnections services to facilitate a return to their home country. Where CEE migrants (and other EU nationals) who are regularly seen rough sleeping are not exercising their treaty rights and choose not to voluntarily return home, the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) has the authority to administratively remove them back to their home country following an investigation of their situation.

Number of people seen rough sleeping 2006/7 - 2009/10



¹ EU expansion in 2004 and 2007 enabled people from the following countries to come to the UK to work: Poland, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Hungary and the Czech Republic, Romania and Bulgaria. These are referred to as Central and Eastern European (CEE) Countries in this report. People from these countries are subject to various restrictions and most of those rough sleeping from these countries are not entitled to welfare benefits.

Headline findings (continued)

The proportion of young people seen rough sleeping remained low throughout the year - 8% were under 25. Only 3 people under 18 were contacted.

Just under a third (32%) of those seen rough sleeping had been in prison at some point in their lives - this is consistent with the last two years. The proportion of those of all nationalities who had served in the armed forces was 6%. Amongst UK nationals 3% (53 people) had served in the armed forces at some point -this compares with 4% of those contacted last year.

While most people are only seen rough sleeping once or twice there is a small group who are 'living on the streets'. For example, 20 people were seen more than 50 times in the year. Two of these people were in accommodation at the end of the year. In 2009, the Delivery Board created an initiative intended to focus efforts on getting the most entrenched rough sleepers in London off the streets. This project – called the Rough Sleeping 205 (RS205) project - identified 205 of the most entrenched rough sleepers and sought new and innovative ways to assist them. The RS205 project has just been extended so that a further 116 long-term rough sleepers are included in the project and able to get special assistance and attention. Of the 20 people seen more than 50 times in 2009/10, eight were included in the original RS205 list and a further nine are in the recently extended list. Two are included in a similar project to assist those who have a history of leaving hostel accommodation for negative reasons.

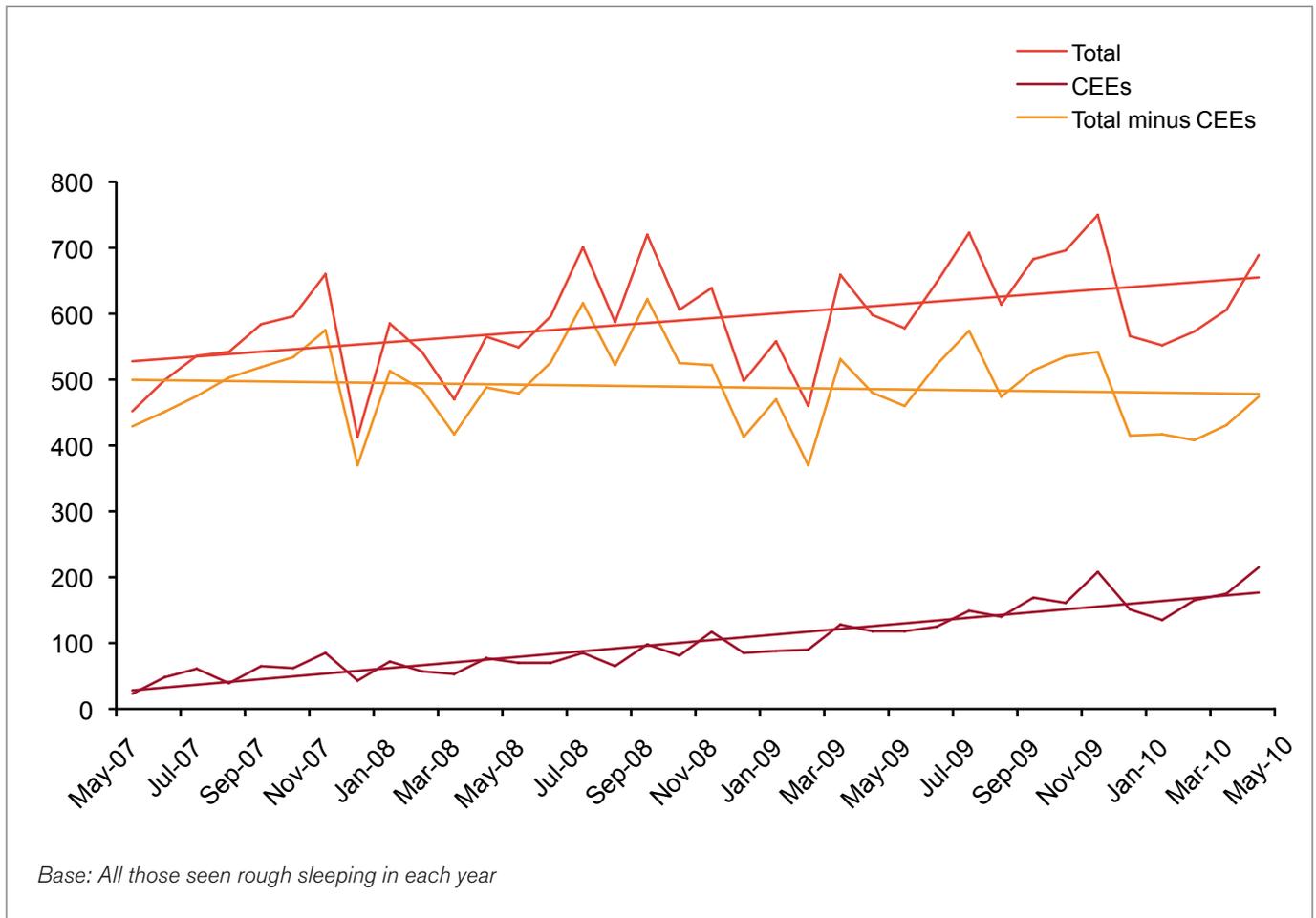
Outreach teams booked 1712 people into accommodation in 2009/10. This was primarily hostels for single homeless people. 326 people were assisted to return to a home area or an area where they could access appropriate services. More people were booked into long term accommodation with the help of outreach workers this year - 247 compared to 176 last year. Many of these moves were into Private Rented Sector accommodation (108). 315 people started tenancies in social rented Clearing House properties, which are allocated to people who have a history of rough sleeping in London.

A new CHAIN system was launched in May 2010 – improvements made include improved recording about why people end up rough sleeping, what local connection they have and where they were immediately prior to sleeping rough (e.g. prison or hospital). It is hoped that this improved intelligence about new (and returning) rough sleepers will help local authorities and providers of homelessness services better prevent rough sleeping.

People seen rough sleeping

The graph below shows that there is an upward trend in the total number of people seen rough sleeping between May 2007 and April 2010. The green line shows that if people from CEE countries are excluded there is a slight downward trend during the same period.

Month by month trends May 2007 and April 2010 - people seen rough sleeping



People seen rough sleeping (continued)

Number of times seen rough sleeping

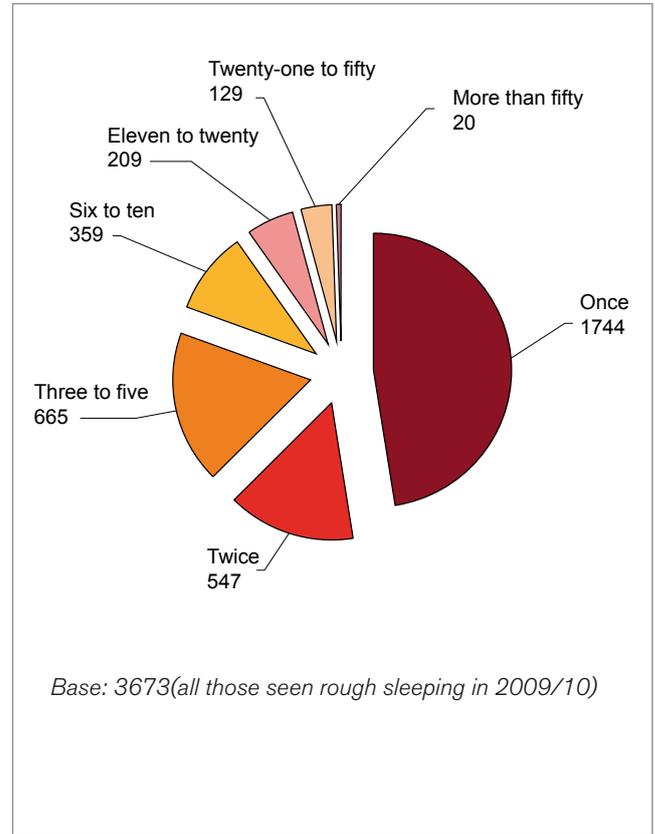
Just under half (47%) of people seen rough sleeping in 2009/10 were seen only once.

Six in ten (62%) of those seen rough sleeping during the year were seen rough sleeping one or two times.

385 (10%) were seen more than 10 times.

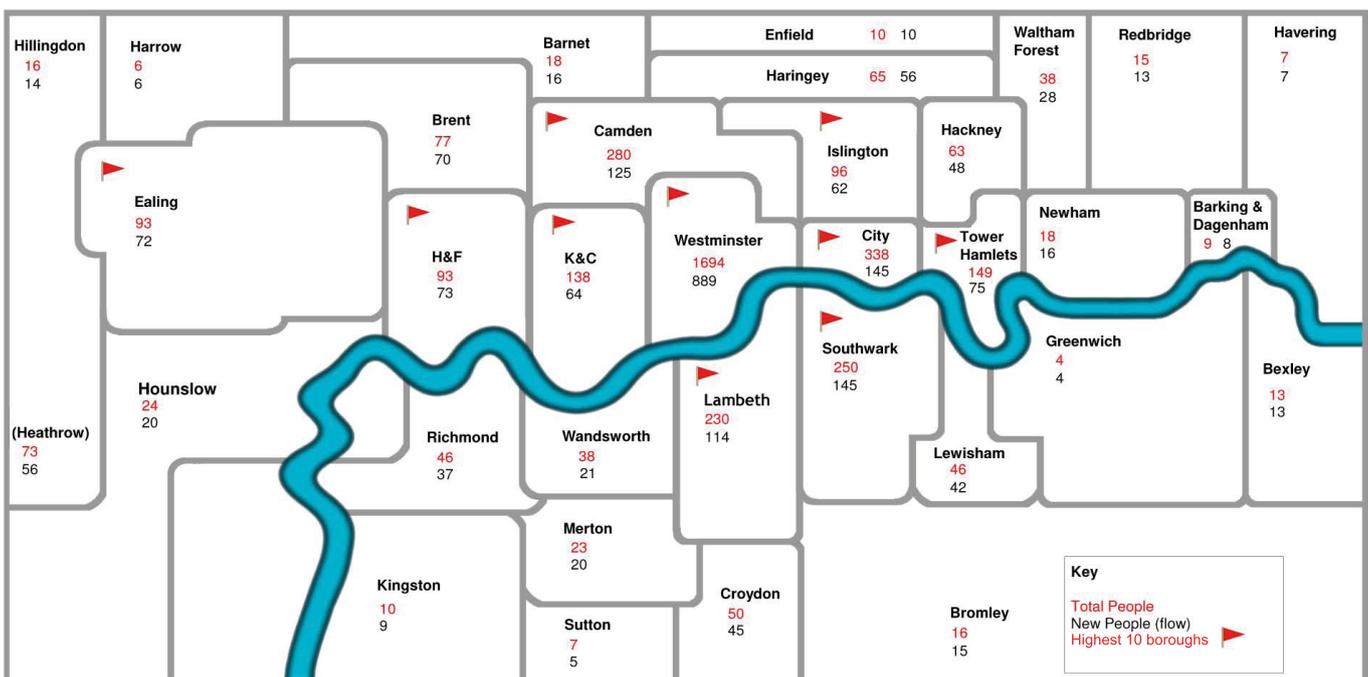
A small group of people were seen very regularly with 20 people seen more than 50 times in the year.

In the last year, special focus has been placed on assisting 205 of the most entrenched rough sleepers in London. A project – called the RS205 project - has supported Local Authorities to seek new and innovative ways to assist them. Of the 20 people seen more than 50 times in 2009/10, eight were included in the original RS205 list and a further nine are in the recently extended list. Two are included in a similar project to assist those who have a history of leaving hostel accommodation for negative reasons. Two of the 20 people were in accommodation at the end of 2009/10.



Borough distribution (map and chart)

People seen sleeping rough in the year by borough



Base: 3673

Flow, stock returner model

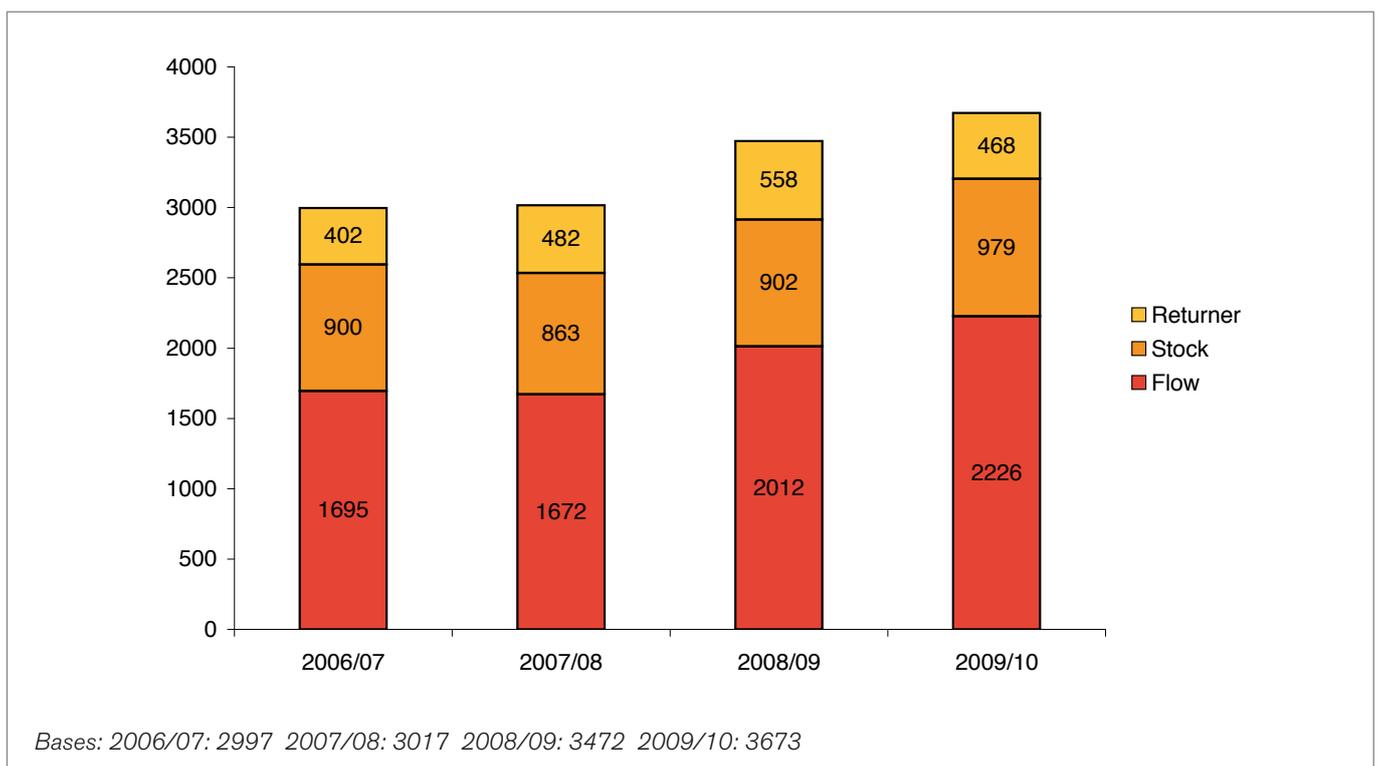
The ‘flow, stock, returner’ model categorises people seen sleeping rough according to whether they have also been seen sleeping rough in previous periods.

Category	Definition	% for 2009/10
Flow	People seen sleeping rough for the first time in 2009/10.	61%
Stock	People seen sleeping rough in 2008/09 and 2009/10.	27%
Returners	People seen sleeping rough in 2009/10 and in a previous year but not in 2008/09; i.e. they returned to rough sleeping at some point in 2009/10 after at least one year when they were not seen rough sleeping.	13%

The proportion of people who are new to the street (‘flow’) has increased slightly in recent years from between 55% and 58% in 2007/08 - 2008/09 to 61% in 2009/10. The new CHAIN system is designed to better record information about where people were staying in the period preceding their first rough sleeping contact to assist in understanding the triggers for rough sleeping. This will assist in determining how to tackle the flow of new rough sleepers onto the streets in London.

The proportion of people who returned to the streets after a period of a year or more when they were not seen sleeping rough decreased slightly. The London Delivery Board have been working with local authorities to ensure that those who most frequently leave hostel accommodation for negative reasons are assisted to break this cycle and maintain their tenancies.

Profile of people seen rough sleeping in 2009/10 - flow stock returner model



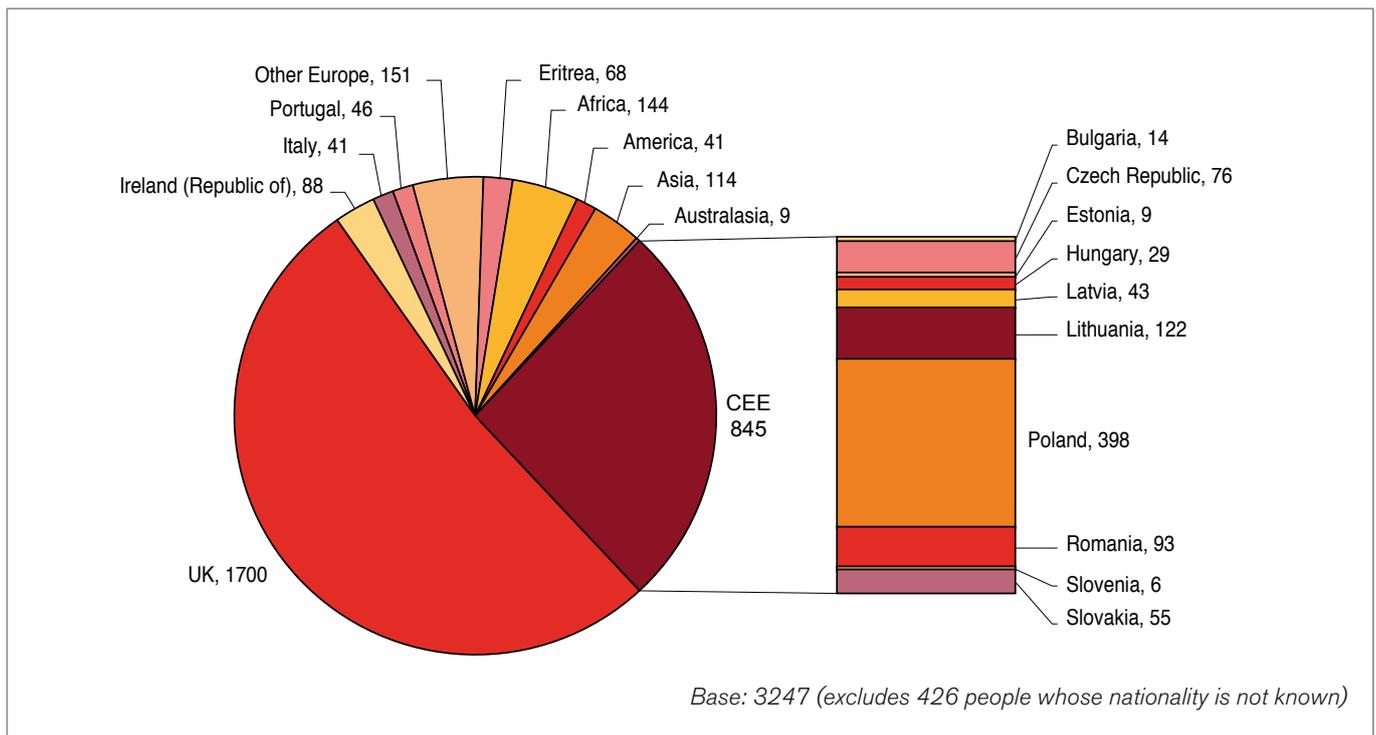
Demographic and support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping

Nationality profile

52% of people seen rough sleeping were from the UK - this is a drop of 6% compared to last year. The overall increase in people seen rough sleeping is largely accounted for by a 8% rise in the proportion of rough sleepers from CEE countries. 7% of the total number of people seen rough sleeping in the year were from other European countries - most commonly Portugal and Italy. The proportion of people seen rough sleeping who are Eritrean has dropped from 4% to 2%. A further 4% of rough sleepers were from other African countries.

Most of the those from CEE countries seen rough sleeping are not entitled to welfare benefits in the UK. There are various initiatives to assist people from CEE countries off the streets. These include projects set up to help people access work and reconnections services to assist people to return home and access support when they do. Where CEE migrants (and other economic migrants) who are regularly seen rough sleeping are not prepared to seek work and will not voluntarily return home, the United Kingdom Borders Agency (UKBA) has the authority to require them to return home following an investigation of their situation.

Nationality of people seen rough sleeping in 2009/10



Nationality	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10
UK	64%	62%	58%	58%	52%
CEE	9%	11%	14%	18%	26%
Other Europe (inc. Italy and Portugal)	8%	9%	7%	8%	7%
Eritrea	3%	4%	7%	4%	2%

Demographic and support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping (continued)

Age and gender profile

The age and gender profiles of those seen rough sleeping have remained stable over recent years.

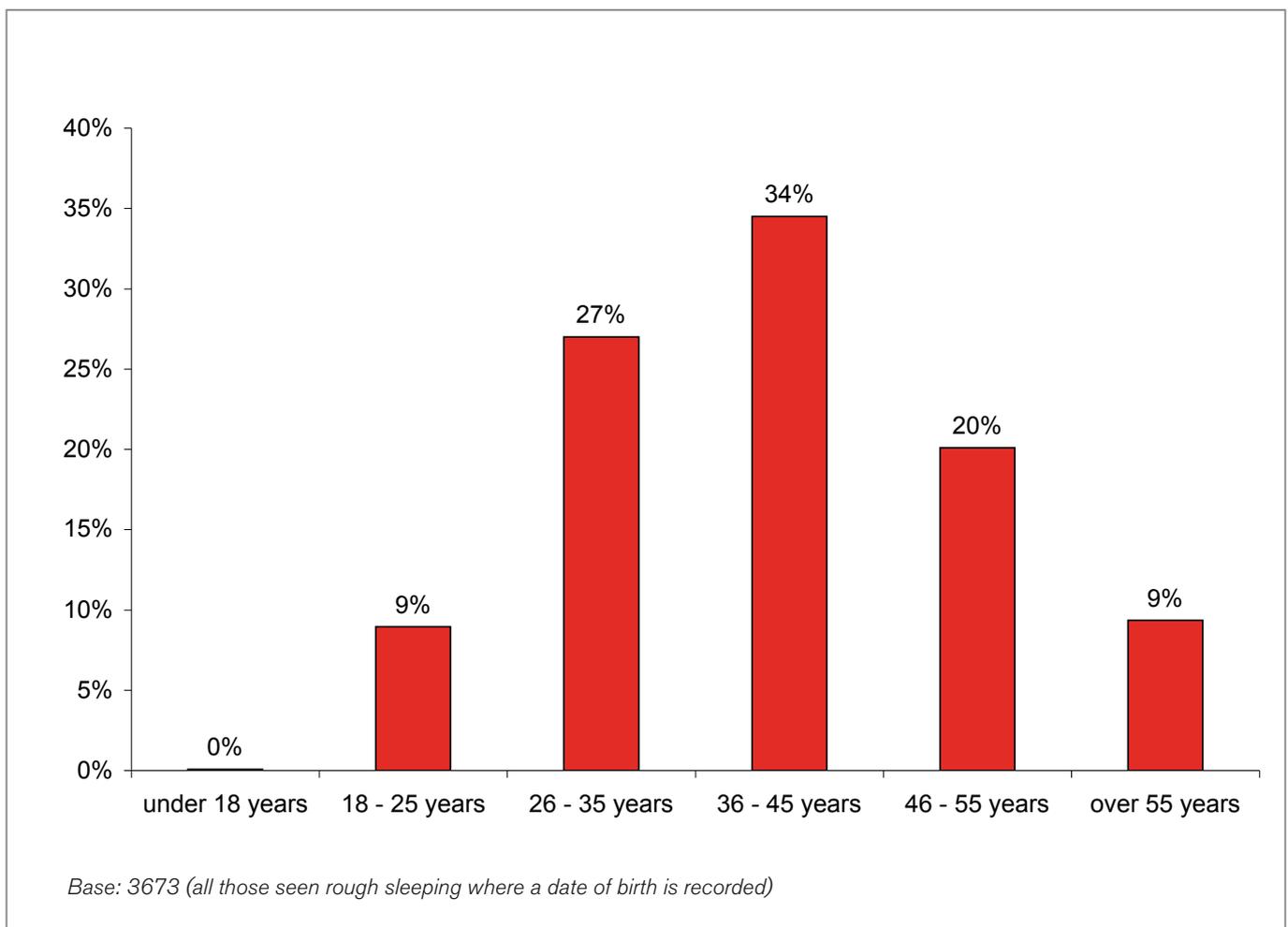
Just over one in ten (11%) of those seen rough sleeping in 2009/10 were women.

Most of those seen rough sleeping are in the 26-45 age group. Less than one in ten (9%) of people seen

rough sleeping were under 25 years old and the same proportion were over 55. 45% of those from CEE countries are aged 35 or under compared to 33% of other rough sleepers.

Only 3 people under 18 were seen rough sleeping. Two were contacted once, the other person twice. This compares with 5 under 18s in 2008/09 and none in 2007/08.

Age profile of those seen rough sleeping in 2009/10



Demographic and support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping (continued)

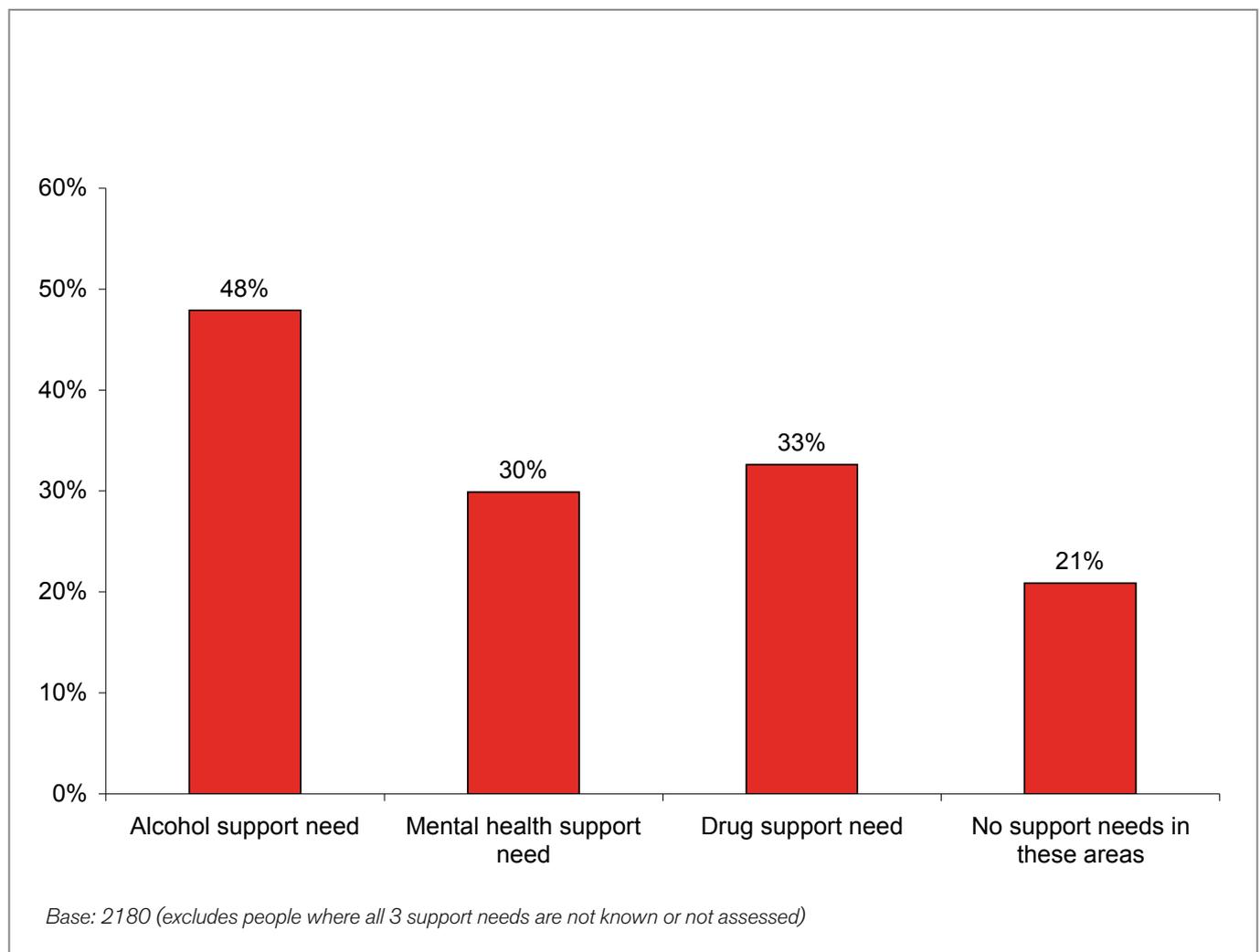
Supports needs, armed forces and institutional history profile

CHAIN records assessments of support needs made by those working with rough sleepers in the homelessness sector. It is important to note that 40% of people do not have support needs information recorded - these are most likely to be those with just one or two street contacts.

A fifth of those for whom support needs information was recorded had none of the problems identified on the form.

The most prevalent support need amongst those seen rough sleeping in 2009/10 was alcohol misuse (48%). Three in ten (30%) of those contacted rough sleeping were assessed as having a mental health support need and a slightly higher proportion (33%) had a drug support need.

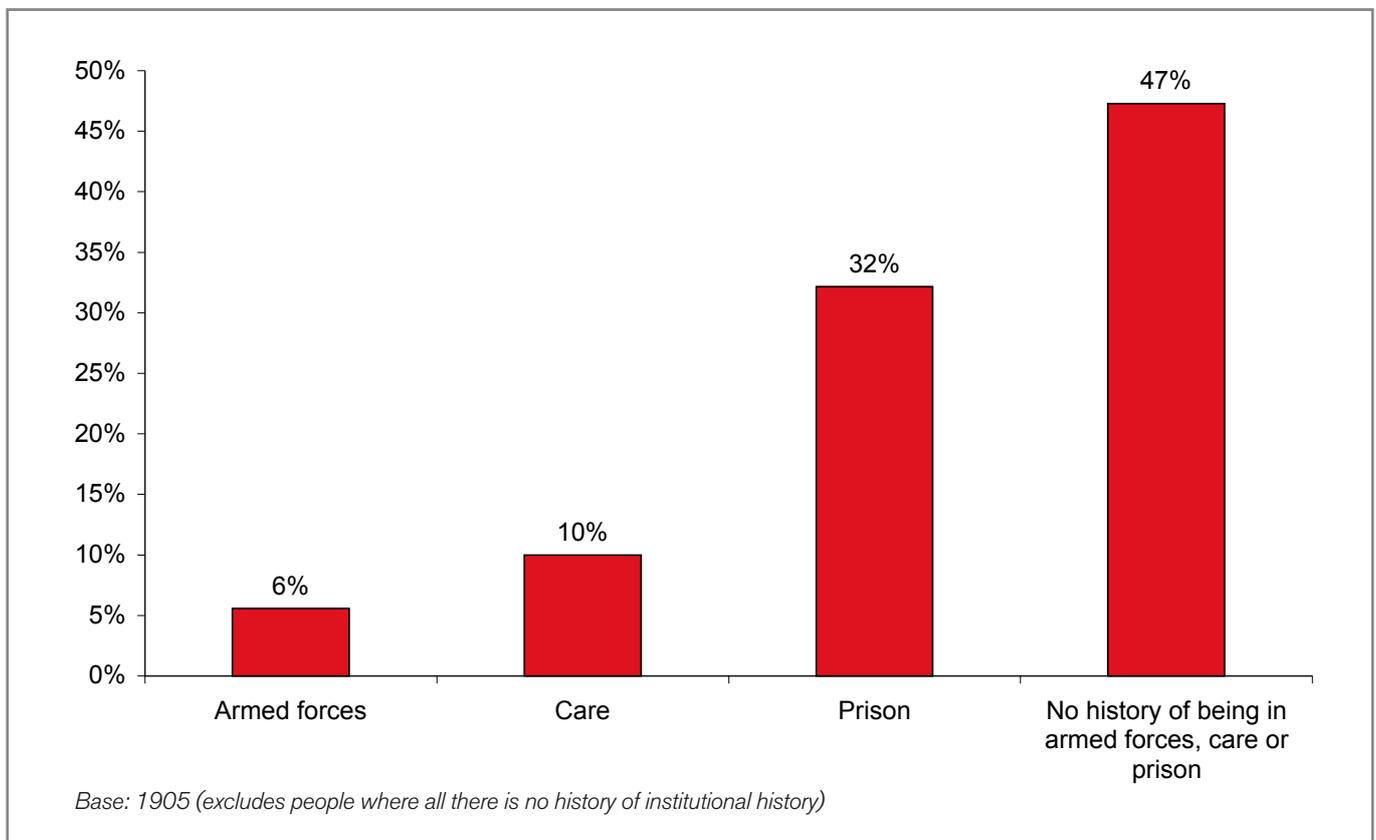
Support needs profile of those seen rough sleeping in 2009/10



Demographic and support needs profile of people seen rough sleeping (continued)

CHAIN records whether a person has been in prison, the armed forces and local authority care at any time in their lives. A third (32%) of people contacted rough sleeping in 2009/10 had been in prison at some point. The new CHAIN system will record more detail about instances where people have left prison and ended up rough sleeping soon afterwards. The proportion of people who have been in the armed forces is 6%. 3% of those seen rough sleeping who are from the UK have served in the armed forces. 10% of people had experience of the care system.

Experience of prison, care and armed forces amongst people seen rough sleeping in 2009/10



	Prison	Armed Forces - all	Armed forces - those from UK only	Care	BASE
2009/10	32%	6%	3%	10%	1905
2008/09	32%	5%	4%	9%	2328
2007/08	37%	8%	5%	11%	1961

Helping people off the streets

Accommodation and moves to other areas

Outreach teams booked in or reconnected 1921 people this year. 326 of these people were reconnected to a home area or an area where they would be able to access services. The number of people booked into medium to long term accommodation by outreach teams in 2009/10 was 247, compared to 176 last year. Of this group 106 moved into the private rented sector.

1352 people arrived in accommodation projects (mainly hostels) reporting to CHAIN in 2009/10 and 1501 people left accommodation projects.

People leaving accommodation were often transferring to another short-term accommodation project such as a hostel or detox facility (38% of moves were transfers).

The same proportion of moves were for negative reasons, including 5% which were to prison. Homeless Link are currently undertaking research in this area and helping organisations pilot new approaches to

reducing levels of eviction and abandonment. The London Delivery Board also has a subgroup looking into this issue. Two years ago the CHAIN research report 'Profiling rough sleepers' revealed that level of abandonment had reduced dramatically over the period of the study (7-10 years) but that less progress had been made in the area of evictions.

A fifth (21%) of moves from short-term accommodation were to medium or long-term accommodation such as the private rented sector or social housing.

Clearing House or Rough Sleepers Initiative (RSI) properties are Housing Association flats across London, allocated to people with a rough sleeping history. The waiting list and allocation of properties is managed by Broadway. Tenancy support is provided to Clearing House tenants via a range of organisations. There are currently 3667 Clearing House Units in London. 309 people started Clearing House tenancies in 2009/10. This is slightly lower than in 2008/09 but higher than 2006/7.

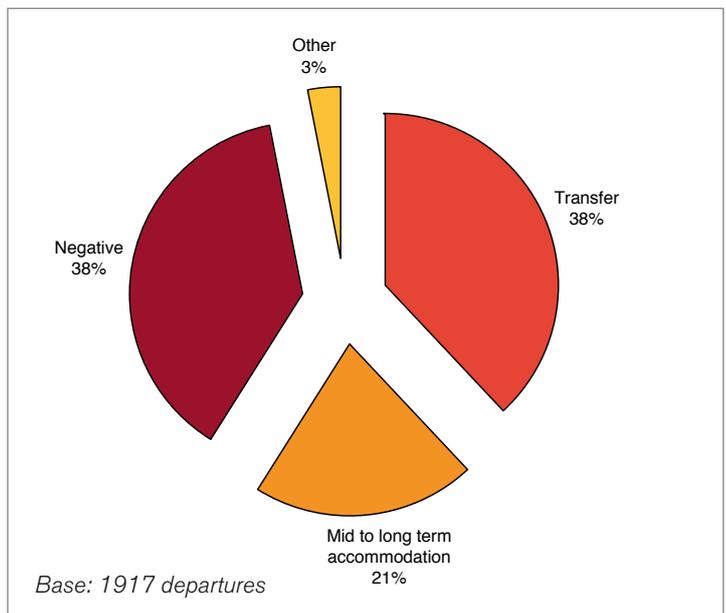
Reasons for moves out of hostel and other short term accommodation reporting to CHAIN

Other = Area outside London, Death, Hospital

Transfer = Clinic, Move to another hostel, Move to other temp accommodation

Mid to long term accommodation = Move to long-term accommodation, Return to home area

Negative = Not known - abandoned, Not known - end of time limited stay, Not known - evicted, Not known - left of own accord, Prison, Return to streets



Publication date: July 2010

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