Summary of key findings

Official statistical definition of homelessness (Table 1.NOR)

Homelessness is defined as: people who do not have their own owned or rented accommodation and are referred to random and temporary accommodation, live temporarily with friends, acquaintances or relatives, are in an institution or under correctional facilities and are to be discharged/released within two months without having their own accommodation, as well as people who sleep outside/don't have a place to sleep.

Latest national estimates of homelessness

- 3 325 individuals, representing 0.06% of the total population (2020)
- 29% are women, 71% are men
- Point-in-time count, based on the Nationwide Mapping Study of Homelessness
- ETHOS Light groups included:
    - ☒ ETHOS 1: Living on the streets, in public spaces
    - ☒ ETHOS 2: Emergency accommodation (e.g., shelters)
    - ☒ ETHOS 3: Accommodation for the homeless (e.g., hostels and women's refuges)
    - ☒ ETHOS 4: People in institutions
    - ☒ ETHOS 5: People in non-conventional dwellings (e.g., caravans, cars or tents)
    - ☒ ETHOS 6: Living temporarily with others in conventional housing (e.g., sofa-surfing)

Legal framework to collect data on homelessness (Table 3.NOR)

There is no legal obligation to collect data on homelessness in Norway.

National homelessness strategy (Table 4.NOR)

- [National strategy for social housing policies (2021-2024): We all need a safe space to call home](#)

Approaches to collect data on homelessness (Table 5.NOR)

- Nationwide mapping study on homelessness: municipalities, institutions and services collect homelessness information over a week (Table 5.1.NOR)
- Annual data on the number of homeless: Estimating of homelessness statistics using administrative data (Table 5.2.NOR)

Table 1.NOR. Official statistical definition of homelessness

Homelessness	In the nationwide mapping study on homelessness, it is specified that homelessness is defined in terms of positions ''in and out'' of the market. Homelessness is defined as it follows: "People who do not have their own owned or rented accommodation and are referred to random and temporary accommodation, live temporarily with friends, acquaintances or relatives, are in an institution or under correctional facilities and are to be discharged/released within two months without having their own accommodation, as well as people who sleep outside/don't have a place to sleep."

Table 2.NOR. Data on people experiencing homelessness

National data, presented according to ETHOS Light Typology

Headline estimate of homelessness (Individuals)	% of total population	ETHOS 1 People living rough	ETHOS 2 People in emergency accommodation	ETHOS 3 People in accommodation for the homeless	ETHOS 4 People living in institutions	ETHOS 5 People living in unconventional dwellings	ETHOS 6 People staying with family/friends
3 325 71% men 29% women	0.06%	66	1 330	Included under ETHOS 2	600	Included under ETHOS 2	997

Type of count: Point-in-time ☒ Flow ☐ Year: 2020

Included in headline estimate: Children (<18) ☒

Temporary accommodation for: Asylum seekers ☐   Refugees ☒   Victims/survivors of domestic violence ☒

Note: Data extracted from percentages; therefore, values are subject to minor differences in rounding. 332 people experiencing homelessness did not disclose, were not sure or did not fit in any ETHOS category.
Source: OECD Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH), 2023; Norwegian State Housing Bank and Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (2020), Nationwide Mapping Study on Homelessness.

Table 3.NOR. Legal framework to collect data on homelessness

Law that governs data collection on homelessness	None.
Legal obligations	None.

Table 4.NOR. National homelessness strategy

National homelessness strategy in place	☒ Yes: National strategy for social housing policies (2021-2024): We all need a safe space to call home ☐ No, but regional and/or local strategies exist ☐ No

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Co-funded by the European Union

Table 5.NOR. Approaches to collect data on homelessness

5.1.NOR. Nationwide mapping study on homelessness

Description

The Norwegian State Housing Bank (in partnership with the Oslo Metropolitan University and the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research) conducts its nationwide mapping on homelessness over a week. Municipal service employees, the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV), health institutions and prisons, as well as NGOs and other private agencies collect information from people experiencing homelessness over a week in autumn.

Type of count generated ☒ Point-in-time ☐ Flow (period)	**Methods** • Service-based method
Lead authority(ies) • Norwegian State Housing Bank • Oslo Metropolitan University • Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research	**Source(s) of information** • Service providers interview people experiencing homelessness directly and then report the data to Oslo Metropolitan University, which analyses the results and publishes them. This is intermediated (allowed) by the Norwegian State Housing Bank.
Scope • National level **Frequency** • Every four years.	**Depth of data** • Sociodemographic characteristics are taken into account and results are disaggregated by: gender, age, marital status, place of birth, etc).

ETHOS Light groups included

☒ ETHOS 1: Living on the streets, in public spaces
☒ ETHOS 2: Emergency accommodation (e.g., shelters)
☒ ETHOS 3: Accommodation for the homeless (e.g., hostels and women's refuges)
☒ ETHOS 4: People in institutions
☒ ETHOS 5: People in non-conventional dwellings (e.g., caravans, cars or tents)
☒ ETHOS 6: Living temporarily with others in conventional housing (e.g., sofa-surfing)

Note: Each ETHOS Light group includes one or more sub-categories of living situations. ETHOS Light groups are considered as "included" in the data collection approach if at least one of the sub-categories is counted.

Notes

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5.2.NOR. Annual data on the number of homeless

Description

The Norwegian State Housing Bank uses data from shelters, social services, evictions, and a selection of municipalities to estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness every year.

Type of count generated	Methods
☐ Point-in-time ☒ Flow (period)	• Administrative Data

Lead authority(ies)	Source(s) of information
• Norwegian State Housing Bank	• Shelters, social services and municipalities

Scope	Depth of data
• National level	• Enumeration

Frequency	
• Annual	

ETHOS Light groups included

☐ ETHOS 1: Living on the streets, in public spaces
☒ ETHOS 2: Emergency accommodation (e.g., shelters)
☒ ETHOS 3: Accommodation for the homeless (e.g., hostels and women's refuges)
☐ ETHOS 4: People in institutions
☐ ETHOS 5: People in non-conventional dwellings (e.g., caravans, cars or tents)
☐ ETHOS 6: Living temporarily with others in conventional housing (e.g., sofa-surfing)

Note: Each ETHOS Light group includes one or more sub-categories of living situations. ETHOS Light groups are considered as "included" in the data collection approach if at least one of the sub-categories is counted.