



## Summary of key findings

### Official statistical definition of homelessness (Table 1.NZL)

New Zealand has a definition for homelessness, without shelter, temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation and uninhabitable housing. Homelessness is defined as a living situation where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing are: without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household, or living in uninhabitable housing.

### Latest national estimates of homelessness (Table 2.NZL)

- 102 123 individuals, representing 2.17% of the total population (2018)
- 52.5% are women, 47.5% are men
- Point-in-time count, derived from the Census of Population and Dwellings
- 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.NZL)

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

### National homelessness strategy (Table 4.NZL)

[Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan 2020 - 2023](#)

### Approaches to collect data on homelessness (Table 5.NZL)

- Census of population and dwellings: Census which includes a targeted strategy to include people experiencing homelessness (Table 5.1.NZL)

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Table 1.NZL. Official statistical definition of homelessness

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <b>Homelessness</b>            | Homelessness is defined as a living situation where people with no other options to acquire safe and secure housing are: without shelter, in temporary accommodation, sharing accommodation with a household, or living in uninhabitable housing.   |
| <b>Without shelter</b>         | Living situations that provide no shelter, or makeshift shelter, are considered as “without shelter.” These include situations such as living on the street, and inhabiting improvised dwellings (e.g. living in a shack or a car).   |
| <b>Temporary accommodation</b> | Living situations are considered “temporary accommodation” when they provide shelter overnight, or when 24-hour accommodation is provided in a non-private dwelling that is not intended to be lived in long-term. This includes hostels for the homeless, transitional supported accommodation for the homeless, and women’s refuges. Also included are people staying long-term in motor camps and boarding houses, as these are not intended for long-term accommodation |
| <b>Sharing accommodation</b>   | Living situations that provide temporary accommodation for people through sharing someone else’s private dwelling are considered “sharing accommodation.” The usual residents of the dwelling are not considered homeless.  |
| <b>Uninhabitable housing</b>   | Living situations where people reside in a dilapidated dwelling are considered “uninhabitable housing.”   |

Table 2.NZL. Data on people experiencing homelessness

National data, presented according to [ETHOS Light Typology](#)

| Headline estimate of homelessness (Individuals) | % of total population | ETHOS 1<br>People living rough | ETHOS 2<br>People in emergency accommodation | ETHOS 3<br>People in accommodation for the homeless | ETHOS 4<br>People living in institutions | ETHOS 5<br>People living in unconventional dwellings | ETHOS 6<br>People staying with family/friends |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| 102 123<br>47.5% men<br>52.5% women             | 2.17%                 | 207                            | 69   | 6 339   | Not included                             | 4,938  | 30 171  |

Type of count: Point-in-time  Flow

Year: 2018

Included in headline estimate: Children (<18)

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

Note: The headline estimate includes 60,399 people living in uninhabitable housing.

Source: OECD Questionnaire on Affordable and Social Housing (QuASH), 2023; Statistics New Zealand (2019), Census of Population and Dwellings.

Table 3.NZL. Legal framework to collect data on homelessness

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Law that governs data collection on homelessness</b> | <a href="#">Data and Statistics Act 2022</a>  |
| <b>Legal obligations</b>                                | Although there are no specific legal obligations relating to the collection of data on people experiencing homelessness, the census must take place every five years. Moreover, Māori (the indigenous people of New Zealand) must be engaged prior to determining the data to be collected in the census. |

Table 4.NZL. National homelessness strategy

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>National homelessness strategy in place</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: <a href="#">Aotearoa New Zealand Homelessness Action Plan 2020 - 2023</a><br><input type="checkbox"/> No, but regional and/or local strategies exist<br><input type="checkbox"/> No |
|--|--|



Table 5.NZL. Approaches to collect data on homelessness

| 5.1.NZL. Census of Population and Dwellings   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Description</b></p> <p>All people in New Zealand must fill out the Census questionnaire. Census field collectors also enumerate people experiencing homelessness at shelters and other easily identifiable locations. The census includes a number of questions on the housing situation of respondents. The Census is complemented by information from emergency housing providers.</p> <p>In preparation for the 2018 Census, Stats NZ developed a targeted strategy designed to better reach people experiencing homelessness. This included a number of approaches such as pre-engagement with community organisations; Data collection over several nights (4 to 8 March 2018); Assisted completion events – e.g. barbeques held with community organisations with Census staff on hand to help people complete forms; Field-assisted response on an ad hoc basis to help people complete their forms where they live and specific engagement with non-private dwellings such as night shelters.</p> |  |
| <p><b>Type of count generated</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Point-in-time</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Flow (period)</p>  | <p><b>Methods</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population census</li> <li>• Street count</li> <li>• Service-based method</li> </ul>  |
| <p><b>Lead authority(ies)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stats NZ Tatauranga Aotearoa</li> <li>• Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga – the Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Source(s) of information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General population respond to the questionnaire directly</li> <li>• Some emergency housing providers provided information on the number of people using their services</li> <li>• HUD provided figures on the number of people being supported by transitional housing on Census night.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Scope</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National level</li> </ul>  | <p><b>Depth of data</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key demographic characteristics (age, sex, ethnicity etc.)</li> </ul>   |
| <p><b>Frequency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every five years</li> </ul>  |  |
| <p><b>ETHOS Light groups included</b></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 1: Living on the streets, in public spaces</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 2: Emergency accommodation (e.g., shelters)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 3: Accommodation for the homeless (e.g., hostels and women’s refuges)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 4: People in institutions</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 5: People in non-conventional dwellings (e.g., caravans, cars or tents)</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ETHOS 6: Living temporarily with others in conventional housing (e.g., sofa-surfing)</p> <p>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.</p>  |  |
| <p><a href="https://www.hud.govt.nz/2018-severe-housing-deprivation-estimate">2018 Severe Housing Deprivation Estimate - Te Tūāpapa Kura Kāinga - Ministry of Housing and Urban Development (hud.govt.nz)</a></p>   |  |