



# Welfare Conditionality

SANCTIONS, SUPPORT AND  
BEHAVIOUR CHANGE


## Understanding EU Migrant Responses to Homelessness



An ESRC large grant



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# 1.0 the Study

## A Comparative study

### Investigating

- Causes of Homelessness
- Housing Strategies
- Policy Responses

### Questioning

- What is the role of agency in the context of constrained choice?
- How do migrants respond to homelessness?

Origin (ethnicity)	N
<b>Romania</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Romania (Roma)</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Poland</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Total EU Migrants</b>	<b>15</b>

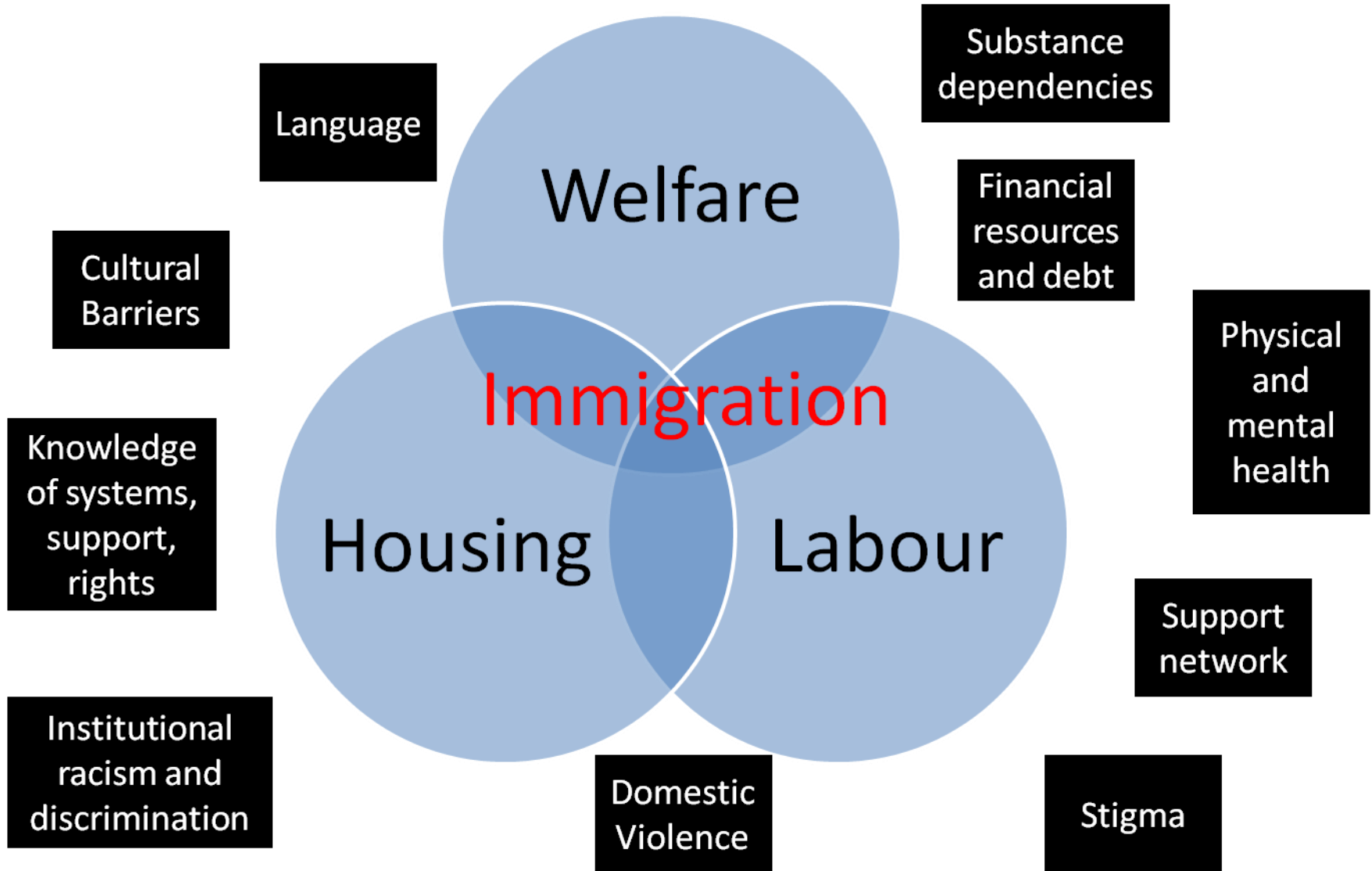
Key Informant Interviews	
	N
Scottish Government	3
Local Authority	2
Voluntary/Charity	6
<b>Total KIs (Scotland)</b>	<b>11</b>

# 2.0

## Causes of Migrant Homelessness



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# 3.0 Conditionality

## Border Control

- Do you need Leave to Remain but do not have it?
- Do you have Leave to Remain but do not have recourse to public funds?
- Do you have temporary admission?

## Right to Reside

- Working/looking for work
  - Studying
  - Economically Self Sufficient
- Homeless EU Migrants- no right**

## Habitual Residency

- In UK for ‘appreciable amount of time’?
- ‘Settled intention to live in the UK’



# 4.0 Migrant Responses



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## Limited Value

- Wages/work
- Public assistance/ subsidy
- Charity/ donations
- Illicit activity
- Begging
- Informal support
- Personal resources

## Limit Costs

- Overcrowding/ doubling up
- Hot-bedding
- Illegal housing
- Substandard housing
- Emergency shelter
- Rough sleeping



## No Choice

‘I have no choice. We eat what we have’ (Gabriel, M, Romanian)

‘We have two rooms... we were 9 persons. And we slept like this because the rent was very expensive... What else could I choose, there was no other choice to make’ (Ana, F, Roma)

‘I didn’t want to get straight to the point with that lady from the council, I told myself I should be happy with anything they give me. Not to be picky and make them think you know, this man is too hard to please so we’ll be giving him nothing.(choice) is a luxury I can’t afford. (Ioan, M, Roma)

My wife and my daughter are always telling me that this house is also a good place for us. But for me it’s very hard... for me it’s difficult to climb three floors. With God’s help, I have no other choice’ (Vasile, M. Roma)

## ‘Choosing’ homelessness

‘I worked illegally on construction sites, got a job in a bakery that was\ legal and was working while in the squat. It was comfortable for me because I had everything there. I could have had a flat but needed to send money back home. And having a flat I could not do this. So I stayed in squats but kept the council flat just to keep police at bay’ (Dawid, M, Polish)

‘When I want, I have a problem, ok? I haven’t problem. I love be homeless. This is my choice...I know rules. I know sometimes where I must go. Why I live on street? It’s cheap, easy...When I sleep first time I haven’t choice... But now it’s finish holiday and back to job, yeah? Live on street was good...For one-two months. Adventure. Discovery. I’m tired this life and now back to job... Back to business. Is good life’ (Piotr, M, Polish)

## Administrative Removal (Deportation)

'In the middle of the night, they give me a piece of paper that I'm being deported, I don't have any proof of ID, and I steal in the shop. ...And they gave me a week to get a passport, job seeker - and I did it. I got a passport, the woman in the counsel gave me a passport, and I got the job seekers - I go to the meeting and they give me two months. ..they gave me two months to find work. .., they told me they will have a meeting in one month to the home office, and I must show them what I did to get off the street, did I work, and then they will decide to keep me or not' (Jakub, M, Polish)

## Administrative Removal (Deportation)

'Home office arrested me... I lost this flat... Ask me where I working. I don't working... I haven't job. I talk to home office I live on street. So go from UK because you live on street and you haven't job". That was funny situation, they ask "You have job seek allowance?" [I said:] "I don't need your money. ..I don't go three thousand miles to take your benefits".. I won't take any money from them because I have my honour. ...I prefer not to live on any benefits. People would say that Poles are coming here to live on benefits... Woman from home office speak me: "Better when you take Job Seekers". So better for Home Office when I take money f... Yeah? When I take benefits. When I don't need? No to: "Strange situation (Piotr, Polish, M)

# 5.0 Policy Implications

## How do migrants respond to homelessness?

- Exercise agency in the face of constrained choice
- Migrants (or others) do not choose to be homeless, it is the lack of choice which causes homelessness

## What *should* be the policy response to migrant homelessness?

- **Paternalist**... Override choice?
- **Utilitarian**... Permissive attitude?
- Balance personal choice with public interest
- Requires a holistic/systems response
- Not *only* a housing problem.



## ....And BREXIT?

- **Limiting access to work** will cause greater reliance on the informal economy/support (cash in hand, personal debt) and create opportunities for exploitation in the labour market
- **Restricting access to benefits and assistance** will encourage further de-prioritisation of housing in the face of competing priorities and provides the conditions necessary for exploitation in the housing market

## But... Constitutional ambiguity

- Further devolution of powers to Scottish Parliament for welfare and housing policy (or Independence??) muddies the waters
- Rights imparted by homelessness legislation in Scotland are not being interpreted correctly now- need for official guidance.

“[Migrants] are **a very small group** in terms of homelessness in Scotland.... Scottish Government isn’t in the place of issuing loads of guidance it is very much **local authority's responsibility** for developing their own responses to local challenges in their own context... What were finding on the frontline with migrant homelessness itself isn’t such a huge issue. It’s when it hits into the no recourse to public funds group given the relationship between the UK Government and the Scottish Government. Obviously the UK Government will make changes around access to benefits and eligibility status and **the Scottish Government doesn’t have those powers** to address that... so what’s becoming a problem for some local authorities is where before they were able to house [migrants] now with [increasing benefit restriction] then **you very well may be housed but have no means to be able to pay and support yourself** in that accommodation”

(Homelessness Team Leader, Scottish Government)

## Implications of BREXIT for EU nationals

- Uncertainty for Europeans residing in the UK
- Uncertainty for UK nationals in Europe
- Restrictions on workers from Europe
- Labour shortages
- End of free movement of people
- Border closed (temporarily)?

## BREXIT 'proofing' Advice for EU nationals (Thorntons Law)

- Document/evidence Right of Residence in the UK
- Apply for highest level (Naturalisation, LPR, Certify Right of Residence with EEA Residence Card)

## Insight into BREXIT

- **BREXIT means BREXIT – PM**
- ‘My message today- to EU citizens and their representatives in Scotland- remains simple. Scotland is your home, you are welcome and your contribution to our economy, our society and our culture is valued... A stronger starting point is a clear message from me to EU citizens that where we live or whatever we do, you are welcome here, now and in the future’ – First Minister (July 2016)
- ‘It [residence rights] will, as I say, be a feature of any future negotiation to determine the status of EU citizens within the UK and British citizens within the EU’ – Lord Keen of Elis (Advocate General for Scotland, June 2016)
- ‘There will have to be some form of ID cards for Europeans’ - Home Secretary



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