



ONGOING EVALUATION OF THE NEW STRATEGIES TO HELP HOMELESS PEOPLE IN THE CITY OF LISBON

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FINAL REPORT – DECEMBER 2011

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Introduction

The current report intends to present the results of a follow-up research project to a prior investigation (September 2008 – September 2009) set to provide a comparative analysis of the strategies developed to support the homeless populations living in the streets of the cities of Lisbon and New York. The rationale for selecting these two case studies was based on the following set of reasons:

- a) The School of Social Sciences and Humanities of the New University of Lisbon has been collaborating with Lisbon City Hall's "Platform for the Homeless Person", where all the city's most important institutions working for the homeless are represented. In this context, that first project appeared as a natural academic follow-up to these collaborative and socially-oriented efforts developed by our School.
- b) New York City has been acting as a vanguard spatial stage in the domains of social work directed at the homeless population. As it happens for example with the Housing First programs, some of the initiatives pioneered by NYC's social institutions are set to act as important condiments of Lisbon City Hall's social policies specifically directed towards the city's homeless population, hence the relevance of comparing these two cities' policies.
- c) A third reason was the fact that a renowned American scholar – Professor Elliott Sclar from Columbia University's Earth Institute – was, as it happens with the current follow-up, this Project's main external advisor. His presence and knowledge proved to be of the utmost importance in guaranteeing the project's success, by the fact that we ended up benefiting not only from Professor Sclar's theoretical and methodological knowledge and experience, but also from the scientific and academic resources provided by one of the most well-known academic institutions in the world particularly in the fields of poverty and social exclusion – Columbia University.

Considering the previous considerations, this follow-up's main objective was to deepen the knowledge in a central area for the development and implementation of locally-based social policies, thus substantiating our Department's current liaison with Lisbon's City Hall.

Two aspects are still to be of notice in this introduction. Firstly it is important to name the fact that for the fulfilment of the current project's purposes, a trip to the United States was held in the beginning of the project (January, 2010). This trip's main goals were:

- a) To undergo a preliminary state-of-the-art bibliographical research on strategies of support to the homeless;
- b) To meet with the project's external advisor (Professor Sclar) to discuss some relevant theoretical and methodological issues; and
- c) To produce a set of interviews to managers, activists and researchers with interests in/for the field in hand, namely:
 - John McGah, Susie Devins e Júlia Tripp – *Center for Social Policy da University of Massachusetts*;
 - Dennis Culhane – *University of Pennsylvania*
 - Kara Mergl – *Common Ground Community*
 - Ellen Howard Cooper – *New York City Department for Homeless Services*
 - Father John Duffell
 - Seth Lamar – *Times Square Building/ Common Ground Community*
 - James Martin – *ACE-Programs for Homeless*

A final introductory note goes out for the report's structure which will approach the following sequential topics:

- a) First, a theoretical state-of-the-art background on poverty, exclusion and homelessness, deepening the research developed in the context of the previous exploratory project (September, 2008 to September, 2009).
- b) Second, an approach to the concepts and methodologies behind the evaluation of social programs, with specific care for those established in the ambit of homelessness alleviation programs.
- c) Third, an evaluation of the strategies developed to support Lisbon's homeless population, where a comparison between older (shelter-oriented) and newer and innovative strategies (e.g. those based in Housing First Programs) will be produced.

It is this project's intended purpose to contribute to a wider understanding of the reasons for the explanations behind (un)successful stories of general social programs and

especially to those directed at helping those that, at a given point in their lives, have fell under the condition of Lisbon's street dwellers, thus aiming at contributing to improve their lives and experiences.

1. Theoretical background on poverty, social exclusion and homelessness

1.1. Poverty and Human Rights

In the year when we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the signature of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights¹ (2008), M. Ravallion e S. Chen (quoted by World Bank, 2008) published (in August) a new world report on poverty, in which they alerted to the existence of approximately 1.4 billion poor people in the world, meaning an increase of over 40% concerning the reference value (930 million) of 2005. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the number of poor individuals more than tripled (from 7 to 24 millions) between 1981 and 2005. In Sub-Saharan Africa we face an even more dramatic situation. If it is true that the relative rate of poor individuals stood firmly in the proximity of 50% of the whole population of that macro-region, it is also of disturbing veracity that in absolute terms this meant an increase of almost two times².

Looking at 25 years ago the world's poorest regions were in 1984 Eastern Asia, the Pacific and, especially, Sub-Saharan Africa where approximately 13% of the world's poor population (meaning those living below the poverty threshold, at the time established at US\$1 PPP's (Purchasing Power Parity per day)) lived. Twenty years later in 2005 (with a reviewed poverty threshold of US\$1,25 PPP) Sub-Saharan Africa already represented 28%

¹ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was written in 1948 by Eleanor Roosevelt and two juriconsults. Its thirty articles are organized in four important dimensions: *i*) The one concerning the personal prerogatives of all individuals (e.g. the right to life; the right to not be held in slavery or servitude; the right to not be subjected to torture; the right to be recognized and equally protected before the law); *ii*) The dimension of the rights concerning life in society (e.g. the right to not be arbitrarily interfered in what concerns one's privacy, family, home or correspondence; the right to freedom of movement and residence; the right to a nationality; or the right to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution); *iii*) The one concerning the importance of the role of public freedoms (e.g. freedom of thought, conscience and religion; freedom of opinion and expression; and the freedom of peaceful assembly and association; it is clearly explicit in the Article 21 of the Declaration that *"the will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government"*); and finally *iv*) The dimension of the economic, social and cultural rights, where the rights to work, to a just and favourable remuneration, to social protection, to rest and leisure, as well as the rights to a standard of living adequate to the health and well-being of each-self, to special care and attention, to free education, and to the participation in the cultural and scientific lives of each community, among many others, are proclaimed.

² Banco Mundial (Agosto, 2008).

of the world's poverty values. Given that the world's population living under the poverty threshold has diminished more than 500 million people between 1981 and 2005 what we see is a concentration of poverty in Africa. Should this trend maintain itself it is estimated that in the year 2050, 40% of all world's poverty will be found in Africa meaning that, conversely to what has been the tendency in Asia and the Pacific, efforts to alleviate poverty in Africa are not being followed by positive results (Von Braun *et al.*, 2009).

“As mortes sem sentido em Bombaim, os milhares de pessoas em fuga do conflito na República Democrática do Congo, as centenas de milhares de pessoas encurraladas em condições extremas no Darfur, em Gaza, na zona norte do Sri Lanka, e uma recessão económica global que pode empurrar muitos milhões para a pobreza, criam uma plataforma premente para a acção no âmbito dos direitos humanos”³.

Even in the European Union (EU), an important part of the population is still living under a severe social exclusion situation. Still, one of each five Europeans live in a degraded dwelling; each day, approximately 1.8 million people seek help and/or shelter in homelessness specialized centers; 10% of all Europeans live in a house with individuals facing unemployment issues; long-term unemployment is approximately 4% in the EU territory; about 31 million workers (about 15% of the Europe's total labor force) face extremely low revenues; even maintaining a job, almost 8% (17 million workers) are facing low-income and poverty issues; the premature abandonment of school programs by the young population (earlier than completing the basic education studies) is proximate to 15%; digital exclusion rates are also very high given that almost 44% of the EU population is still no able to operate the Internet, or even a computer⁴.

In a moment when we are in front of an overgrowing financial crisis, there is a strong and tangible risk that many individuals, especially the poorer ones and those living in marginalized communities, will have to face even worse living conditions than the ones they are presently “surviving” in. Poverty is, at the same time, a source and a consequence of human right's violations. For many people, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is still nothing but an unfulfilled promise, reflecting the low political will and the small degree of commitment to these issues portrayed by many of the world's States, (regrettably) far bellow the scope of its promises.

³ Words by Irene Khan, the Secretary General of the Amnesty International phrased in a speech in December 10, 2008, during the celebrations of the 60th anniversary of the signature of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (translated into Portuguese).

⁴ European Parliament Resolution of 9 October 2008 about the promotion of social inclusion and the combat to poverty, namely child poverty in the EU (2008/2034(INI)).

Nowadays, there is a lucid notion of the countless failures concerning Human rights promotion⁵. Although governments from different countries have signed treaties, letters of intent, agreements and other kinds of documents, it has been difficult, throughout the six decades ranging from the official signature of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to fight poverty and to establish equal opportunities for everyone. Globally, we are still able to find very poor and excluded populations living in remote areas and remaining unschooled, unhealthy and only scarcely able to exert some form of political or social participation (Von Braun *et al.*, 2009). Official statistics seem to constantly warn us that the “rich are getting richer, and the poor are getting poorer”. According to Azariadis and Stachiski (2005) (quoted by Von Braun *et al.*, 2009: 4) the poorer ones have lower chances to raise out of that situation, which is particularly true for those living with less than \$ 0.5 a month. This happens because of what these authors call “poverty traps” (Von Braun *et al.*, 2009: 4). So, we are here explicitly talking about inequalities and it is unquestionable that “*a desigualdade é uma questão de direitos humanos. O Artigo 1º da Declaração Universal dos Direitos Humanos estabelece que todos crescemos livres e iguais em dignidade e direitos. Para os pobres esta afirmação é uma enorme fraude*” (Sané, 2007: 18)⁶. The economic, social and cultural systems are globally impregnated with flaws and “addictions” that completely undermine the individual, institutional and even political efforts to overcome poverty, and the constant threats to the basic Human Rights.

The Human Rights’ economic, social and cultural dimensions have been particularly neglected. Global (social) concerns such as healthcare, housing or food production and distribution are clear examples of the previously stated. And, as we are all aware of, the different dimensions of Human Rights (e.g. individual, political, cultural, economic or social) establish close causality relationships among themselves. Together, they are able to “*criar sinergias capazes de contribuir para que os pobres assegurem os seus direitos, desenvolvam as suas potencialidades humanas e escapem à pobreza. Devido a estas complementaridades, a luta pela realização*

⁵ The Universal Declaration of Human Rights considered “*que o reconhecimento da dignidade intrínseca a todos os membros da família humana e o da igualdade e inalienabilidade dos seus direitos são o fundamento da liberdade, da justiça e da Paz no mundo*”.

⁶ Ribeiro, E.; Oliveira, I.; Silva, M. (Org.) (2007) – Pobreza, Direitos Humanos e Cidadania, Comissão Nacional de Justiça e Paz, Lisboa.

*dos direitos económicos e sociais não deve ser separada da luta pela realização dos direitos civis e políticos. E elas devem, as duas, ocorrer em simultâneo*⁷.

Several studies have demonstrated the existence of significant co-relations between several Human Rights, such as the right to freedom of expression or the right to participate actively in the political life of the community/country, and the prevention of social catastrophes. Amartya Sen, in his vastly acclaimed work, is one of the authors that drew attention to the great importance of fulfilling the political human rights of the populations, not only in the pursue of political answers to their economic needs, but also to the conceptualization of those same necessities. Those works seem to show that, even with its many imperfections, democracy is still one of the political systems that guarantees to a greater deal the right to a public individual participation.

In one of these authors' seminal works, where he analysed the "Famines", he stated that this phenomenon's existence proves to be harder before the values of democracy, since the presence of a political opposition would not sustain such a situation. Democratic governments are therefore more concerned with the well-being of their people, especially the ones with lesser power and greater needs. Hence, the existence of democracy and freedom of press are fundamental issues to prevent Famines, forcing the governments to act more quickly and thoroughly. Amartya Sen compares the example of the past non-democratic India⁸, of Sudan and of Ethiopia with democratic countries such as Zimbabwe and Botswana, where the famines were avoided merit of fast and efficient public policies. According to the same author, food production faced heavy problems during the 1973 droughts in Madrasta, but the elected government's reaction was effaceable enough to prevent 5 million people to strongly affect by a Famine.

Democratic systems also contribute to a country's political stability, creating great possibilities for political opposition and changing of institutionalized authorities. Between 1950 and 1990, public manifestations were more commonly organized in democratic countries; but even in a smaller number, their effects created far more instability issues in non-democratic regimes, commonly turning into armed revolutions with enormous social, political and economic impacts.

⁷ Relatório do Desenvolvimento Humano (2000:73) (portuguese version of the Human Development Report, 2000).

⁸ We are here talking about a country in which the last famine, in 1943, killed over two million people.

A democratic government can, therefore, unleash a virtuous cycle of development. Political freedom is empowering for the people, making them more aware and participative. It permits to build an increased pressure in favour of the establishment of politics designed to guarantee the same social and political opportunities to every individual and community, and it maintains an open debate for a community-based development. From Indonesia to Mexico, there have been in the last decades several initiatives promoting political openness and the instauration of truly democratic regimes, helping to create a(n) (increasingly) global virtuous cycle of freedom of press, and social and political activism.

The growth and networking of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) is also another important feature in the global transition to democracy⁹, helping to expand a world solidarity network concerning the accomplishment of Human Rights. These organizations are increasingly widening the scope of their activities to extremely important issues such as the civilian and political rights, and the economic, social and cultural rights of the populations, especially of those with greater vulnerability issues. For example, in Argentina a group of NGO's filed a request to the Argentinean Ministry of Health, disapproving the lack of healthcare and medicines to the HIV/AIDS infected individuals, basing their statements in the government's violation of the country's Constitution, which establishes the right to equal social protection to every Argentinean citizen. Another example is the world renowned international movement "*ATD – Quart Monde*" whose work in the issues of human rights; cultural freedom and equality; and the social, economic and political participation of the poor and marginalized populations, has made possible to fight and decrease poverty and social exclusion in several parts of the world.

Basically all Humanitarian Aid is characterized by the establishment of relationships and by a close interaction between the helping agents and the receiving communities, between institutional agents, NGO's and governmental agents, between neighbouring communities (that sometimes face the same problems), and also between, especially more recently, new "non-traditional" potential Development enablers, like the media. These agents' interaction is set to happen at different geographical scales (national, macro-regional and even global) and across different time spans. Therefore, Humanitarian Aid is an open system (and thus a complex one) built upon the establishment of interactions outside of,

⁹ In several countries governed by authoritarian regimes, NGO's have been frequently responsible for the more intense and organized political oppositions to those established powers.

between and within systemic forces that have influenced actions, policies and ideologies across time (Jones e Ramalingam, 2008).

Providers of Humanitarian Aid, whether individual or institutional, are often not aware of this complexity. The non-linearity inherent to poverty and social exclusion at the global scale, with their multiple possible causalities, hardens the prediction of events and the decision making processes happening in different areas of the globe. This is why the cross-sharing of experiences and elements that compose each lower scaled system, both qualitative and quantitative (whether are they environmental, social, economic, political, military, etc.), is so important if one wants to establish wider pictures and more effaceable solutions to assess the success (or failure) of this type of aid (Jones e Ramalingam, 2008).

The previous complexity is particularly relevant once one is trying to establish poverty alleviation programs, where a remarkable connectivity between the aforementioned elements may be experienced. These elements are generally the constituents of systems designated as “*tightly coupled*” (“... *relatively trivial changes in one element or dimension can spread rapidly and unpredictably through the system and have dramatic and unpredictable effects.*” (Jones; Ramalingam, 2008: 10). Therefore, the vulnerability inherent to this theme is demonstrated and so is the fragility intrinsic to the complex systems that constitute the repository of practices of Humanitarian Aid.

1.2. Poverty

There is currently an established perception of the existence of an extreme dichotomy between a “Developed World” and an “Underdeveloped World”, which is built upon the acknowledgment of severe differences and inequalities in what concerns these two worlds’ economic growth rates. The equation that led to this “gap” (and to its progressive enlargement) is complex and fed by multiple possible explanations, variable through time and space (e.g. the specificities inherent to each regional context). Nevertheless, the temporal roots of this reality can be traced back in time until the advent of the Industrial Revolution, whose consequences in all sectors of society are academically well-known and understood. “*A Revolução Industrial e o crescimento económico moderno que se lhe seguiu mudaram a existência das pessoas em todos os aspectos fundamentais: onde e como vivem, que tipo de trabalho ou actividade económica desempenham, como formam famílias*” (Sachs, 2006:75).

As stated by Sachs (2006), this historical “moment” was more than just a technological revolution with great and noticeable impacts in what concerns the rising of industrial production and in the industrialized countries’ economic growth rates. It also meant a deep and perpetually notorious change of social paradigm, once it “*criou uma desigualdade global em termos de riqueza e poder*” (Sachs, 2006:79). From that point on the global order started to be established at different growth rates which by multiplier effect subsisted until our days. Conclusively, it appears that we can say that the “*grandes desigualdades actuais de rendimento reflectem dois séculos de predomínio de crescimento económico extremamente desiguais*” (Sachs, 2006:67).

These inequalities are nowadays much more perceptible, either in result of their own global dissemination and of the worldwide diffusion of knowledge and information, that contributed to the decrease in differences between the “real reality” and the “perceived reality”. Due to both these factors, this problem (of the social and spatial inequalities) is nowadays globally known and an integrant part of the world leaders’ political agenda.

However, a question remains unanswered and it concerns the reasons why certain countries are able to tackle their poverty issues and others are not. Sachs (2005a) states that crops productivity is one of the most determinant factors in this equation. On one side, in certain countries, we continue to see an “attack” on Malthus’ XVIIIth century statements. This classical theorist defended that population growth is indefinitely higher than general food production possibilities (Day and Hall, 2009). According to data from the World Bank (2004) in the last two decades of the XXth century the countries that raised their cereal production more intensively and started to use more fertilizers (per hectare) were also the ones most prominently starting their economic growth trajectories. Conversely, the 22 countries subjected (in the same time span) to economic decline were also the ones with lower food production and land productivity rates. In other words, the latter were generally African countries while the former belonged to the Asian continent. In this last case we were generally in the presence of heavily populated countries, with extensive road networks (with clear positive effects on food transport possibilities), and greater possibilities for crop diversification, all of these aspects being decisive in getting the best out of the so-called “Green Revolution”. On the contrary, African countries are less populated (particularly in rural areas), less accessible, and have less

intensively organized (and highly affected by droughts) agricultural systems. All these aspects combine themselves to undermine the starting-up of a Green Revolution-type management of the agricultural systems in Africa (Sachs, 2005a).

All of the previously stated conditions have ended up revealing an apparent paradoxical tendency (especially for those strongly inspired by Malthus' postulates) where countries more densely populated – and therefore with larger internal markets to release their products into, a greater ability to attract foreign investment, higher public revenues, and more efficient infra-structure networks – have had steadier economic growth rates than those with fewer and poorer inhabitants (Sachs, 2005a).

The spatial and social disparities currently found between countries and world regions, which have been created and widened throughout the last two centuries, are not only perceptible in terms of the unequal distribution of income (either at a national or at an individual level). They are also shaped by the existence of extreme inequalities in what concerns the population's opportunities to access healthcare, education, or food; essential assets for the achievement of a truly dignified and fulfilled citizenship (resources + rights), which would ultimately be translated, at a regional or national scale, in higher levels of Human Development. According to the previously stated, we are now able to conclude that those goals would only be achievable through a global and concerted eradication of poverty and its consequent improvements in the population's life-standards.

Referring to these international and intra-national divergences, Sachs (2005a) states that three reasons may be pointed out to explain why some world regions endure in poverty:

- Geography – Distance towards coastal areas the higher volumes of commercial activities and opportunities are found;
- Politics – Corruption and the wealthening of Governmental agents; and
- Culture – Visible in aspects like gender discrimination in practices, policies and even laws (e.g. in Southern Asia, we often find malnourished women that are part of fairly wealthy families).

So, we come to the point where we are forced to recognize that poverty is nowadays a spatially generalized social phenomenon, target of discussion and analysis by several scientific fields of knowledge. As noticed by Ferreira (2000:11,

quoting Hoeven and Rodgen, 1995) “*a última década do século XX presenciou um renovar da preocupação com a extensão e persistência da pobreza*”.

The characterization of poverty is faced with a high spatial and temporal variability. It is extremely difficult to universally define, quantify and classify this phenomenon. Hence, the concept of poverty should be perceived in an open manner. Each society has its own vision of what poverty means, built upon the influence of its specific life-standards and those of its citizens. Ultimately, poverty can even be approached at an individual level. In the words of Ferreira (2000: 12) “*o problema da pobreza é pois um problema velho como o mundo, assumindo sempre novas configurações e constituindo sempre um desafio para que as sociedades criem mais justiça e solidariedade entre todos os seus membros*”.

Expressing all the previous complications, it is now possible to affirm that the conceptualization of poverty shows itself as an extremely intricate task. This consequently leads to the existence of profound difficulties in the implementation of programs and “solutions” to fight poverty, at various levels of decision. Even if every country or organization uses different indicators to quantify poverty, the study of the phenomenon’s spatial distribution (i.e. the relations between poverty and geography) may prove to be politically useful (International Food Policy Research Institute, 2009).

There are several theories and approaches to this problem. Some are more complex than others and some focus deeper on social issues while others focus specially on economical issues (income).

Researchers and other agents are currently developing intensive efforts to influence national census authorities in order for them to start including in their surveys variables like the *per capita* expenses for each household in order for this to be “crosstabed” with individual characteristics such as gender, age, educational level or housing characteristics. Referring to the design of poverty concentration maps, Bentson *et al.* (2009: 119)¹⁰ say that “*the World Bank has developed a software program called PovMap to automate much of the analysis, reducing the time and technical skills needed to carry out this type of study.*”

Luis Capucha in his PhD thesis – “*Desafios da Pobreza*” (“Challenges of Poverty”) – led us to the two “classic” scientific theoretical approaches to this issue. The first one is

¹⁰ Available at: <http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovMap>

named by the author as the *“perspectiva culturalista”* (“culturalist perspective”), settled through the understanding of the central concept of *“cultura de pobreza”* (“culture of poverty”). Sustaining this “academic tradition” we can find several investigation-action studies, reliant on the utilization of intensive work and investigation methodologies and conceptually based upon micro-sociological terminologies, such as the notions of “way of living” and “life history”. Subjects such as the depopulation of depressed rural sites, the lifestyles of the urban dwellers, or the life-trajectories of socially marginalized groups (like homeless people, delinquent adolescents, ethnical minorities, drug addicts, among many others) are in the center of this perspective’s concerns.

The second theoretical approach to the poverty issue presented by Capucha (2005) is the *“perspectiva socioeconómica”* (“socioeconomic perspective”). The authors whose work has been developed under this academic approach have been especially concerned with terminologies such as “absolute poverty”, “relative poverty” or “subjective poverty”. Methodologically more extensive, this approach aims at counting, explaining, and understanding the specificities intrinsic to the so-called “target-groups” of the active social policies. According to these theorists, every definition of poverty should be designed under thoughtful concerns with the existence and permanence of a “deviant” social condition in which an individual or a social group lack access to a more or less vast set of social services (e.g. healthcare, education, social security, minimum income), with great destabilizing effects to his/her well-being and subsistence.

Crain and Kalleberg (2007) also point out two perspectives, the first one referring to the fact that people are poor due to their individual characteristics, placing the *“focus on the socioeconomic attributes and individual behavioral tendencies of the poor, emphasizing the «culture of poverty» (...)* [and, according to the second one, poverty can be considered] (...) *as a structural feature of a capitalistic economy that is rooted in the institutions of society”* (Crain and Kalleberg, 2007:4-5). The author also asserts that the attribution of the causes of poverty solely to the individual characteristics of poor people is a clear way to “blame the victims”; thus, poverty cannot be credited uniquely to the insufficiencies of each individual but above all to socioeconomic factors.

One can still find another important theoretical line of thought with great concern for the poverty issues. The Marxist Geography theorists insist on the previously referred premises stating that social inequalities and more specifically poverty are inevitable products of capitalistic societies. What is “new” about this theory is that it adds the idea that these problems have an imminent socio-geographic cause, assuming that poverty and

inequalities can be transmitted from “fathers to sons” through a social environment of (un)existent opportunities at the moment of each individual’s birth.

Considering the great amount of literary work produced concerning the theme(s) of poverty since the 1960s, one could assume that it would not be difficult to find a simple but precise, synthetic, and universal definition for that problem. Unfortunately, the opposite seems to be closer to the truth. The above mentioned vast bibliography does little more than create an infinity of rules and regulations that turn the achievement of a concise definition of poverty an extremely hard (if not impossible) task.

Two great questions should be posed at the beginning of every investigation about poverty: “What is it?”, and “How should one define it?” The criteria available to answer these questions are remarkably vast due to the intrinsic complexity of the poverty reality issues. Maybe it should be universally sufficient to categorize poverty as a situation in which people are deprived from the means to ensure their survival and to fulfill their basic need, such as the accessibility to food, clothes, housing, and healthcare. So, according to the previously stated, should we consider a poor individual the one that is not able to satisfy its basic and natural needs?

Trying to answer this question, some researchers consider two different approaches, based on a set of two key-concepts – “absolute poverty” and “relative poverty”. The first one is commonly associated with the ideas of “subsistence” or satisfaction of each individual’s basic need (e.g. food, clothes, shelter). People who crave for these assets can be categorized as facing a situation of poverty. Most authors seem to agree that absolute poverty is a quite universal definition. No matter where in the world an individual who lives below these patterns of subsistence has to be considered as poor.

Nevertheless, for a human being, “subsistence” tends to mean more than just “staying alive” through the simple and plain satisfaction of his/her physiological needs. It also implies the notion of “decency”. As a concept with a very subjective meaning, decency cannot be analyzed outside each specific context. Jean Labbens¹¹, with great pertinence, notices that the “*l’évaluation des nécessités ne peuvent pas être fait seulement sur les nécessités purement*

¹¹ Member of the association “ATD – *Quart Monde*”, he has developed an important work in pointing out (at a worldwide level) the social injustices and several political/economic interventions that tended to neglect the ones “forgotten by the economic progress” (especially the unemployed and the ones with low incomes).

physiologiques. Ne c'est pas uniquement une matière de subsistance, mais surtout une subsistance décente. La décence est une matière social"¹².

As previously described, “decency”¹³ appears itself as clear sociological notion. When drawn in circumscription to the issues of “subsistence”, it enables us to acknowledge the existence of different representations of poverty, according to each society’s specificities and, in the same social context, to multiple historic scenarios¹⁴. Therefore, it is of the greatest importance to consider each context’s specificities. Even doing so, there will still be room for multiple unanswered questions inherent to the establishment of theoretical and analytical boundaries to the problem in hand: for example, should one try to define poverty at the scale of a specific community, of a poor and/or marginalized region, or at a worldwide level? Should one try to quantify the level of poverty according to local or international measures? Whatever are the answers to the previous questions, we can now assert that absolute poverty is directly associated to the idea of “biological survival”, meaning the satisfaction of the so-called “social minimums” necessary to the reproduction of life with a “least of human dignity”. According to the Brazilian author Helio Jaguaribe “*embora este ‘mínimo de dignidade’ esteja parcialmente sujeito a determinações culturais, supõe-se que os requerimentos impostos pela mera sobrevivência física sejam razoavelmente universais, permitindo assim o estabelecimento de uma linha de pobreza coincidente com esses requerimentos mínimos*” (Jaguaribe, 1989:64).

Following the above mentioned complications, and based on the premise that individual and societal poverty is mostly determined by cultural aspects, some authors state that it is more adequate to use the concept of “relative poverty”, once it translates the capacity of satisfaction of each human’s necessities in relation to its social contexts’ life-standard and patterns of development, rather than try to explain poverty solely based on an universal model of socioeconomic deprivation. Therefore, the notion of “relative poverty” allows the researchers and/or policy makers to understand and try to overcome the

¹² LABBENS, Jean – *Sociologie de la Pauvreté: le Tiers Monde et le Quart Monde*, Gallimard, Paris, 1978, pág. 78

¹³ According to Gerry Rodgers “*for everybody and everywhere, decent work is about securing human dignity. The expression of these goals will be different if you are an agricultural laborer in India or a high tech worker in Silicon Valley, but there is a common underlying idea, that people have aspirations which cut across and bring together these different domains*” (ILO, 2001, *Reducing the decent work deficit*, Report of the Director General to the 2001 International Labor Conference, Genève).

¹⁴ According to Amartya Sen: “*Há dificuldade em traçar uma linha num sítio qualquer, e as chamadas ‘necessidades nutricionais mínimas’ têm uma arbitrariedade inerente que vai muito para além das variações entre grupos e regiões*” (SEN, A., *Pobreza e Fomes*, Terramar, Lisboa, 1999: 28); and to David SHIPLER (2008:8) “*The American poor are not poor in Hong Kong or in the sixteenth century; they are poor here and now, in the United States*”.

problems innate to the existence of distinctive outlines of human necessities across the world: for example, in developed societies the regular consumption of fruits and vegetables is understood as an essential feature to a healthy life; on the contrary, in the least developed countries, these nutritional concerns are obviously not (yet) seen as priorities.

The drawing of a “poverty threshold” for a specific social/spatial context allows the researchers to calculate a poverty rate. If it is true that this procedure enables a better understanding of the number of poor people living in that pre-defined social and/or spatial context, we cannot forget that we would still not know “how poor are the poor”. The “intensity of poverty”, meaning the amount of differences that can be found among the ones living under that poverty threshold is not portrayed by the establishment of a simple line of poverty or by the estimation of a poverty rate.

The creation of the “indigent poverty line” came to overcome the previous issue, by means of separating the ones living between this line and the poverty threshold (considered as the individuals who do not amount sufficient income to buy themselves and their families several first necessity goods such as food, clothes or housing), from those who simply do not have enough earnings to access food facing, for this matter, extreme and recurrent situations of famine. These last ones are the so-called indigents.

The establishment of a distinction between the two above-mentioned classes of poverty reveals great political relevance, allowing decision-makers to develop more specific measures to help the poor populations of their territories. It also brought them new doubts and concerns: should they benefit first the ones living under the indigent poverty line, giving them a chance to survive? Or should they concern primarily with helping the ones closer to the poverty threshold, which would prove to bring important results in the reduction of that territory’s poverty rates? These are intricate questions, with important socioeconomic and even ethic aspects to be taken under a very particular, reflective and insightful consideration.

Following the previous concerns, a more adequate and truthful-to-reality way to quantify the poverty levels of each specific context was created. It is the so-called poverty gap which can be defined as the mean statistical distance between the average income of the poor people (over the whole population) and the average distance of income below the poverty line (necessary to reach that value). The poverty gap is, therefore, a way to clearly evaluate the population’s income shortfall from the poverty threshold. It has been establishing itself, from the moment of its creation on, as a vital instrument for the

development of poverty mitigation programs, able to more satisfactorily account for the several sub-groups existent inside the poor populations of a given geographic framework.

We are aware that economic presuppositions are insufficient to truthfully quantify and classify the poor peoples. However we are also alert that the studies on poverty are far from being exact. Thus, we understand that it is necessary to develop analytical procedures in order to achieve at least a small amount of generalization in poverty research and policy-making; nevertheless the attenuation of risks inherent to that simplification should always be a reigning condition in each local or regional study/policy concerning poverty.

“Over half of the population following regions already live in urban areas: Northern and Western Europe; North, Central and South America and the Caribbean; the Middle East and North Africa; Southern Africa; Western Asia; and Australasian.” (Wratten, 1995: 12). Since we are speaking about poverty we could not overlook to mention a recent phenomenon (that appeared in the 1980-90’s) – urban poverty – deriving from the current expanding tendencies of urbanization from all across the world. Cities are increasingly looked at as attractive places, with greater labor possibilities and access to social services than most of the rural sites. But this dream is not always real. Excessive urban concentration of population and economic activities has brought up, in several parts of the world, the awakening of severe poverty and social exclusion problems. *“The urban poor are increasing in number and prevalence of hunger is increasing in urban areas, while the poor are still predominantly rural.”* (Von Braun *et al.*, 2009:46). This has become a mandatory issue in development agendas worldwide noted at an early stage by the World Bank (1991). Concerned about the inevitable loss of average urban wealth due to excessive urban population growth in several countries this institution noted that *“(...) urban per capita incomes in some countries had reverted to 1970 levels and in some countries to 1960 levels”* (World Bank, 1991: 45-46, quoted by Wratten, 1995: 18).

Although these concerns are relatively new to development agendas worldwide research on urban poverty already has a long tradition as an area of interest dating back to early in the XXth century. A pioneer work on this matter was produced by Rowtree and Seebohm (1901, quoted by Wratten, 1995), named *“Poverty: A Study of Town Life”*. More recently, but also referring to the subject in hands, Wratten (1995) documented the challenges intrinsic to the establishment of a conceptual distinction between rural poverty and urban poverty. According to the author this happens first of all because these two definitions carry a high degree of arbitrariness and second due to the fact that *“a dualistic spatial classification may have the undesirable effect of straight-jacketing discussion about the structural causes of poverty and diverting attention from national and international level (rather than city level) solutions”*

(Wratten, 1995: 20). There is no common ground to uniformly determine what a city or a rural village is; criteria to classify these territorial contexts changes over time and across space; different variables are privileged according to each country's intentions and so we find that in some places population numbers are privileged, while in others we see relevance being attributed to variables such as construction density, equipments and infra-structures, non-agricultural population, etc; certain rural villages are ascended to cities only because of their population growth with complete disregard for aspects like changes (or not) lifestyles or the improvement of support services and infra-structures (Wratten, 1995).

Urban poverty may be considered as an atypical expression of poverty once it affects not only those groups that are traditionally poor but larger sets of population unable to keep up with the enduring pace of worldwide urbanization. Cities are increasingly looked at as attractive places, with greater labor possibilities and access to social services than most of the rural sites. Basically "*commercial exchange is more ubiquitous in the urban context. It affects all three aspects of the "trinity of deprivation" identified by Mangen as crucial determinants of poverty in European inner-city areas: the local economy, housing and education.*" (Wratten, 1995, 22). But this dream is not always real, at least not for everyone. Excessive urban concentration of population and economic activities has brought up, in several parts of the world, the awakening of severe poverty and social exclusion problems. Additionally, this population growth tends to create dependency towards governmental policies undermining the actual feasibility of those policy actions (Baharoglu, D. and Kessides, C., [s.d.]).

To Wratten (1995:18) poverty is a two-faced phenomenon each face corresponding to one of the Earth's hemispheres: "*poverty analysis in the North has been concerned with the problems of inner-city or peripheral urban social housing estates, or with regional and sectorial unemployment and income inequality.*" Colonialist analysis considered that all of South's poverty issues could be solved by stimulating urban growth and proceeding with a labor market transition from subsistence agriculture (low productivity) to modern industry (high productivity). The truth is that after decades of implementation the effects of these "modernization policies" fell short from their objectives because, and as also noted by Sachs (2005a), they overlooked the importance of the geographical, political and cultural aspects of development (Wratten, 1995).

Developing countries are the ones with higher urban growth rates. The United Nations (UN) in 1998 predicted that in the time period ranging from 2000 to 2025 these countries' urban population would raise up to 87% with rural population growth not going above 6% (Garret *et al.*, 1999). Looking at these numbers it is inevitable for us to assume

that urban poverty – either at the same or at a different pace – will also grow in causality with the environmental, social and even economic degradation of these unplanned cities (Wratten, 1995). Urban growth will happen mostly due to three factors: rural migration, natural population growth and the broadening of urban borders. Particularly, on rural exodus, which is currently responsible for about half of nowadays' urban growth Baharoglu e Kessides ([s.d.]: 127) states that “*studies of internal migration in many countries reveal that migrants are not necessarily among the poorest members of their original or receiving communities.*”

“City” is a very heterogeneous concept. In an increasingly stratified society, cities must be considered as the most relevant sites for conviviality and social mix. (Baharoglu, D. e Kessides, C., [s.d.]). Once it affects various (and new) sorts of individuals, with different geographical backgrounds, for example the working population (proving that having a job is not anymore a deterministic mean of escaping poverty), immigrants, or the elderly population; urban poverty is considered as an uncharacteristic form of poverty. The profile of the so-called “urban poor individual” is far more diverse than that of the traditionally poor person. This brings out challenges when it comes to the quantification and understanding of poverty and the development of policies to reduce their incidence.

Single-parent families, for example, with women having to step up to an increasing set of social roles, have become common substrates for urban poverty particularly in the so-called critical neighbourhoods or ghettos. Many of these women came from rural areas to find “freedom” from the spouses. Ambitioning to help their children by granting them educational, health and social possibilities these women are thrown into “imprisoning” long-hour jobs, with harsh working conditions and low-incomes. Many of these mothers are not able to feed their children adequately or to educate them properly. The street becomes their “home”, leading them to vandalism and criminality-like behaviours. “*Drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS, domestic violence, female depression and family breakdown, while not exclusive to urban areas, have all been associated with urban poverty.*” (Wratten, 1995:24).

One of the big doubts remaining today is whether urban poverty will increase the global number of the poor and undernourished faster than rural poverty, i.e. if we are currently witnessing a mass urbanization of poverty in general. In spite of the fact that many authors are seemingly leaning towards a positive answer to the previous question tangible evidence on this has been hard to find. Again, we are faced with the problems of data comparability, not only on poverty but also on the economic impacts of urbanization for each country. Using child health indicators (because children are a very vulnerable group) such as child-mortality rates or child mal-nutrition rates instead of revenue and

wealth indicators (hardly comparable between countries) has been pointed out as a possible way to compare rural and urban poverty (Garrett *et al.*, 1999; Wratten, 1995).

Unequal wage growth is also an important issue nowadays especially prejudicial for the least qualified workers and in favour of the economic elites because educational level has risen as an important factor for job promotions and consequently for receiving better wages (Wilson, 1996). Additionally, the current financial crisis also has to be taken into account when we are talking about the escalation of poverty rates. *“Poverty is a dynamic condition – people may move in or out of it, for example, due to major macroeconomic shocks. (...) The informal sector and the casual laborers are particularly vulnerable in times of economic recession”* (Baharoglu and Kessides [s.d.]:129). In times like these, even those individuals with higher educational levels are vulnerable to fall into a poverty “abyss”.

A sign of the previously stated is the fact that unemployment rates are currently escalating to unseen marks in many urban areas. *“Inner-city joblessness is a severe problem that is often overlooked or obscured when the focus is placed mainly on poverty and its consequences (...) the consequences of high neighborhood joblessness are more devastating than those of high neighborhood poverty”* Wilson (1996: xiii). This comes as a warning that it is more desirable to have poor but still working people than those that are in fact poor and simultaneously out of work. The truth is that these two factors are often hand-in-hand allies generating family, health or even criminality related problems.

Unemployment is by itself commonly a result of social exclusion issues like race. In the US the Afro-American population living in urban ghettos has risen about 6 millions in the 1980's. In a study about the *“geographical spread of ghettos”*, in Philadelphia, Cleveland, Milwaukee and Memphis, Jargowsky and Bane (quoted by Wilson, 1996: 14) concluded that *“The exodus of the nonpoor from mixed-income areas was a major factor in the spread of ghettos in these cities in the 1970s.”* Poverty concentration in ghettos has been felt since the Great Depression (1930's) but it has been escalating from the 1970's on. To Douglas Massey and Nancy Denton (quoted by Wilson, 1996: 15) *“concentrated poverty is created by a pernicious interaction between a group's overall rate of poverty and its degree of segregation in society. When a highly segregated group experiences a high or rising rate of poverty, geographically concentrated poverty is the inevitable result.”*

“Historically, Europe and the United States have contrasted sharply in terms of the nature of urban inequality” (Wilson, 1996: 149). America has in fact higher concentrations of urban poverty and racial / ethnic discrimination than Europe, where the classic American ghetto

(physical isolated from its surroundings and with high levels of criminality) is not found in the same proportions. However, European cities have witnessed in the last decades the rise of some of the American cities' social problems even if they happen under different ethnic political, economic and social contours. In line with the situation felt in the US, in Europe we are currently facing a decline of the needs of non-qualified labor contingents to work in the primary and secondary sectors. Technological innovation and the de-localization of companies to areas of lower production costs are leading to unemployment in sectors previously intensive for these countries' economies (Wilson, 1996)

A better knowledge and information about this specific reality is still underway; great progresses in this field of study are expected in the next years, alongside with other complex topics such as the so-called "working poor", or the employed individuals whose salary is no longer sufficient to acquire all their first necessity goods. These working-poor individuals fall into a poverty situation not because they don't have a monthly income but because their revenue is not enough to sustain their basic (first necessity goods) consumption routines. Many examples of this crescent reality are portrayed in the book "*The Working Poor: invisible in America*" by David Shipler (2004).

Even these working individuals are sometimes forced to leave their houses because they are not able to sustain their rents and mortgages and so they end up being customary "clients" of the streets and of institutional solidarity, dependents on a single-daily meal.

At a different level, climate change (heavily approached on the media, on research etc.) is also a conditioning factor for poverty. Poorer countries and peoples are also the mostly affected by environmental change meaning that its consequences will be higher for the 85% of the world's population that live in a developing country. If current trends are maintained the globe's average temperature will increase about 5° C during the XXIst century. The World Bank (2009b) defends that stabilizing this heatening at 2° C even with its high economic implications will still present compensational results. But action will have to be immediate. Noah Diffenbaugh (quoted by Gardner, 2009) refers that "*studies have shown global warming will likely increase the frequency and intensity of heat waves, drought and floods in many areas. It is important to understand which socioeconomic groups and countries could see changes in poverty rates in order to make informed policy decisions.*"

More than two centuries after the advent of the Industrial Revolution its benefits for development still remain concentrated. The same happens with its global implications (environmentally speaking), "*but if countries are willing to act, the economic incentives for a global deal*

exist” (World Bank, 2009b:38). Change will only be possible through transformations on different aspects such as natural resource management, social welfare infra-structures, financial markets regulation, globalization of technological innovations, and better (and less corrupt) policy-making (World Bank, 2009b).

“Economic growth is needed, but growth alone is not enough if it does not reduce poverty and increase the equality of opportunity.” (World Bank, 2009b:39). The world population is rising to an estimated 9 billion persons in 2050. This will put great pressure on ecosystems and natural resources, which will raise competition to access them. This growth will remain an urban phenomenon with great implications for example in what concerns energy and water consumption (World Bank, 2009b).

Developing economies are the ones where these effects will be more noticed *“in part because of their greater exposure to climate shocks and in part because of their low adaptative capacity.”* (World Bank, 2009b:40). The decline of the agricultural working populations and generally of crop productivity levels will result in an outreach of the prices of first necessity goods, with obvious implications for these countries’ population malnutrition and morbidity levels (Gardner, 2009). Although aware of the harmful results of climate change David Lobell (quoted by Shwartz, 2010) is able to find positive outcomes for those that even with unyielding resources are able to have good agricultural productivity levels, maybe even promising enough to lead them out of poverty (due to increasing market prices). However, the tendency is to have higher mortality rates for example because of an also higher prevalence of diseases like malaria or dengue. The distance between the rich and the poor will also stretch, continuing what the World Bank (2009b:42) states to be the case today: *“among affected households, the poor lost 15 to 20 percent of their assets, while richest lost only 3 percent.”* Inequality will not be verified only between regions or social classes but, as it already happens today it will be strongly correlated with gender especially where economic, social, political, educational or financial inequality is already the case.

Empowering women by granting them social and political participation benefits and fighting gender discrimination are seen to be essential aspects for poverty alleviation. As the Hurricane Mitch catastrophe in 1998, or Tunisia’s anti-desertification program have proven women’s sensitivity, resilience and tacit knowledge are assets not to be wasted.

Finally, as important as all that has been previously mentioned, democracy will always appear as a fundamental aspect for development. The will of the people must claim its dominion. Geopolitically speaking *“control of such means gives governments great initial influence*

over the allocation of other resources” and this is the reason why inequality is generally a political induced phenomenon (Tilly, 2007:64). According to the same author, governments are responsible both when they induce inequalities directly through the implementation of policies that explore the most vulnerable and the accumulation and ill-management of resources through actions like land expropriation, corrupt businesses, war inducement, or the un-structuring of social services (health, food, education, security, etc.); and indirectly when they allow or even support for corporative interests to do all the aforementioned.

1.3. Social exclusion

The concepts of poverty and social exclusion are often (mistakenly) used to describe the same kind of realities and problems. Even though, when correctly applied, they enclose different theoretical and analytical objects. The existence of a large amount of complementarities between them is undeniable. Social exclusion seems to implement some dynamism and thematic broadness into the definition of poverty, by means of incorporating the notions of human and social development. “*A eliminação da pobreza enquadrar-se-ia na dinâmica do progresso social, ou progresso na equidade, definido como o incremento do conjunto de necessidades acessíveis a todos numa base igualitária. O desenvolvimento, não meramente o desenvolvimento económico mas o desenvolvimento humano, aumentaria ainda a procura da equidade*” (Ferreira, 2000:39, quoting Scitovsky, 1986:7). Currently, social exclusion is manifested through multiple and diverse aspects. It is a universal phenomenon, present all across the world in every continent, region or country. Once it affects virtually everyone it is vital to lay some attention to the specificities inherent to this sociological concept.

Social exclusion is, therefore, a complex¹⁵, heterogeneous, multidimensional, and universal phenomenon. Its massive dissemination in the economic, political, academic and, specially, media discourses has caused it to gain a dubious and evasive nature, transforming it into a hard concept to work on. It seems to be unequivocal that it is always decisive (to try) to build a complete definition of social exclusion, faithfully adapted to each framework.

Social exclusion does not concern solely to people, but also to territories and social institutions. A given place “*destinatário de medidas e acolhedor de cidadãos*” (Rodrigues, quoted by

¹⁵ “*A noção de exclusão social é saturada de significados, não-significados e contra-significados. Pode-se fazer quase qualquer coisa com o termo, já que ele significa o ressentimento daqueles que não podem obter aquilo que reivindicam*” (Commissariat General du Plan, Governo Francês, 1993).

Miguel, 2007) can function simultaneously as an excluded and excluding reality. Clear examples of this reality are the well-known *quartiers difficiles*¹⁶, socially marginalized territories where we can find a high concentration of “de-structured” families, unemployed or underemployed individuals, and youth delinquency rates, among many other sociological problems. As noted by Serge Paugam “*les individus ont conscience d’hériter d’un statut dévalorisé lorsqu’ils résident dans un ensemble d’habitations (...) dont la réputation est mauvaise (...) se sont inscrits dans la conscience social de ses habitants, à tel point que les nouveaux locataires héritent d’un statut dévalorisé et font l’expérience de la disqualification social*” (Paugam, 2009:157 e 161).

So, it seems that the notion of social exclusion bears an implicit idea of social disaggregation, perceptible at the economic, political, cultural, social, or environmental levels. Anthony Giddens understands this phenomenon as “*as formas pelas quais os indivíduos podem ser afastados do pleno envolvimento na sociedade*” (Giddens, 2008:324). Therefore “*exclusão social significa «exclusão da sociedade» (...), considerando que cada uma das esferas da existência social – da mais pequena à mais ampla, da mais simples à mais complexa – constitui um sistema social. A Sociedade (local, nacional, regional ou global) será, então, constituída por um conjunto de sistemas sociais, alguns dos quais poderão ser considerados como básicos ou essenciais*” (Costa et al., 2008:64-65).

So, the process of social exclusion has clear repercussions in the weakening of an individual’s social and family linkages. Its denial to effectively and peacefully participate in the communitarian and societal dimensions of his life is labelled by Robert Castel as “disaffiliation”, meaning that the mentioned individual does not recognize his/her place in society¹⁷. Disaffiliation can lead to serious “de-linkages” between the individuals and the established social order. If we consider that “*a exclusão resulta das dificuldades de assimilação, de inserção ou de integração, a situação assim definida permite efectivamente definir uma lista de populações diferencialmente excluídas*” (Xiberras, 1996:27).

This is why social exclusion is often related with marginalized groups that constantly jeopardize social security, “*indicando uma falta, uma falha no tecido social*” (Rosanvallon, 1995:204). In fact, “*a temática do conflito permite, em muitos casos, explicar o ponto de*

¹⁶ To know more about the “excluded and excluding” places see Jordan (2003:173, quoting Parkinson, 1994:7-8) which states that “*social exclusion is not confined to particular groups but is concentrated in particular areas. In particular the most disadvantaged have been increasingly concentrated in areas immediately adjacent to the city center. (...) They are also the areas where ethnic minorities (...), unemployed people, single mothers, disabled, (...) living on minimum income concentrated in a limited number of problem neighborhoods (...). Economic growth has gone hand-in-hand with social exclusion*”.

¹⁷ Castel, R., (1998) *As metamorfoses da questão social: uma crónica do salário*, Vozes, Petrópolis.

partida de um processo de exclusão que começa por uma derrota dos futuros excluídos que serão, pouco a pouco, rejeitados pela sua não conformidade com o modelo dos vencedores” (Xiberras, 1996:17).

To Robert Castel, if not taken care of, every social exclusion situation would end up to degrade itself into multiple ruptures, building up from “inside” the excluded individuals and publicly manifesting themselves through their reactions towards family, affective relations, the labor market, and many other personal contexts of socialization. Gladly, it is very hard to find such a situation of exclusion leading to a total absence of relations. Normally, “*não há ninguém fora da sociedade, mas um conjunto de posições cujas relações com o centro são mais ou menos distendidas*” (Castel, 1998:569). Concerned with these issues, some authors advise that “*a relação (laços) entre a pessoa e cada sistema social seja graduada, pelo menos, em «forte», «fraca» e «em estado de ruptura»*” (Costa et al., 2008:77) building for that purpose a set of “statistical” indicators allowing the establishment of clear boundaries for each situation.

As observed by Jordi Estivill “*seria errado pensar que a realidade expressa por este conceito não tem um vasto antecedente histórico. Pois (...), pode-se afirmar que exclusão e excluídos sempre existiram desde que os homens e as mulheres vivem de forma colectiva e quiseram dar um sentido a esta vida em comunidade. O ostracismo em Atenas, a proscricção em Roma, as castas inferiores na Índia, as várias formas de escravatura, de exílio e desterro, de «guetoização», de excomunhão, são manifestações históricas de rejeição, com as quais cada sociedade tratou os indesejáveis*”¹⁸.

Following the Second World War, and roughly until the late 1960’s, re-housing the houseless population (that had fallen into that situation because of the armed conflict) was one the biggest social concerns of most European Governments. We witnessed the development of gigantic urban renewal projects, many of them built upon the scope of vast social housing programs (for example, the “*Habitation à Loyer Modéré*” (HLM) in France), accompanying the gargantuan industrial and economic development initiatives of some of Central Europe’s urban sites. This historical period also gave birth to several social movements and associations (many of them founded under catholic principles) aiming at providing help to those “not swift enough to catch the industrial’s society train”. A well-know social catholic movement that rose during the 1950’s is the “*aide à toute détresse*” group, led by the inspiring Father Joseph Wresinski.

In the 1970’s, the increasing visibility of the social problems generated by the previous phenomena led to renewed concerns about the ones “forgotten” by economic

¹⁸ Estivill, J., *PANORAMA da luta contra a exclusão social – conceitos e estratégias*, Genebra, Bureau Internacional do Trabalho, Programa Estratégias e Técnicas contra a Exclusão Social e a Pobreza (2003:5).

progress. This is the scenario responsible for the genesis of the concept of social exclusion (at least, in Europe). One of the most prominent and pioneer documents devoting its attention to this notion is the book *“Les exclus: un Français sur dix”* written by René Lenoir¹⁹ in 1974, in a socioeconomic context when it was still very infrequent to consider some groups as excluded individuals, such as the physically impaired, the mentally-ill, the alcoholics, among many others.

As portrayed by the book’s title, Lenoir established a set of calculations that enabled him to announce that one out of each ten French citizen’s were living at the margin²⁰ of the two previous decades’ economic growth results, a fact for which he showed great concern. The author pointed out the idea that the wealth crescendo of latter years was not being actively applied on the reduction of the poverty levels thus creating the ones he called the *“handicapés sociaux”*. So, he defended that these individuals had to be benefited by specific social protection policies. He was basically talking about *“une autre France (...) au-delà de l’ordinaire (...) mais qui, malgré sa situation d’exception, est une (...) gangrène menaçant (...) tout le corps social”* (Lenoir, 1974:10 and 36).

Once introduced by Lenoir (and other important authors) the concept of social exclusion started to be extremely influential for social policies of subsequent French Governments, used as a conceptual reference to act upon a *“group of people living on the margins of society and, in particular, without access to the system of social insurance”* (Percy-Smith, 2000:1, quoting Room, 1995; Jordan, 1997; Burchardt *et al.*, 1999).

In the late 1980’s the academic community started to talk about the “new poor”. Poverty began to appear as a characteristic aspect of other than only the ones living at the margin of the social systems (including the labor markets). The (sometimes previously) employed individuals “living” at the bottom of the socioeconomic pyramid started to be deeply impacted by phenomena such as unemployment or poverty; only the most qualified workers seemed to be able to escape this “new poverty”²¹. But from the beginning of the 1990’s on even the more specialized and educated workers started to show an increasing

¹⁹ Former Secretary of State of Social Action in the Government led by the former President of France Mr. Jacques Chirac.

²⁰ Considering the time of the book’s original printing, still at the dawn of the “Golden Thirties” (1974-75), this notion of “margin” must be read under the context of the crisis that was being undergone by the Western economies; in result of the 1973 oil crisis they were facing a transitional (and critical) moment of their economic development process.

²¹ Among other authors, see PAUGAM, S. – *La Société Française et ses Pauvres*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1993 ; and *La Disqualification Sociale: Essai sur la Nouvelle Pauvreté*, Paris, Presse Universitaires de France, 1991.

vulnerability to this hazard. Their auspicious careers, rightfully earned high-incomes, and prospects of a socioeconomic ascending mobility fell under this new poverty's perfidious tentacles. In less than two decades the social questions turned from the "incapable freaks" to the "useless normals" (Donzelot, 1996:59).

This new and rising conjuncture – where unemployment and underemployment, and the loss of social status associated to a primary sociability (inherited from the absence of cohesive social and professional bonds) are common features – has been giving rise to new groups of "excluded" and "marginalized". Consequently, social exclusion has become increasingly harder to define in the last years: *"quelles sont les frontières de groupes à l'identité incertaine (...) ? On ne peut appréhender le champ de la marginalité en l'absence d'une théorie (...) de l'intégration. (...) Sont «intégrés» les individus et les groupes inscrits dans les réseaux producteurs de la richesse et de la reconnaissance sociale. Seraient «exclus» ceux qui ne participeraient en aucune manière à ces échanges réglés"* (Castel, 1996:32). In the last years social sciences have shown great interest in these rising matters, producing many interesting works that approached these topics, some of which will now be mentioned.

For example, Pierre Bourdieu (1993:487-498) describes the physical and mental demise that results from a poverty situation, in what he thinks to be "living on the edge". Gaujelac and Leonetti (1994:4) bring up the perceptions of "inferiority" and "wounded identity" characteristic of these newly excluded. Serge Paugam (1991:6) points out to the "disbelief" that falls over the marginalized individuals, As previously mentioned Donzelot and Estebe (1991:26) talk about "useless normal's", and Robert Castel (1991:154 and 1993:145) speaks of the "destabilization of the stable ones".

All the previous expressions lead us to the existence of a kind of "rootlessness" shown by these individuals towards their work, their community, and even their close relatives and friends. These intensifying de-linkages will ultimately lead them into a situation of social seclusion. It is in this theoretical context that Donzelot and Estebe (1991:27) mention the arrangement of the *"non-social strengths, this class of disqualified"*. Castel (1991) underlines the "absence of perspectives to control the future" and Rosanvallon (1995:203) expresses that *"os excluídos constituem, de facto, quase que por sua própria essência, uma não-classe"*.

The European Union has recently, under the influence of their social cohesion policies, adopted the following definition: *"social exclusion refers to the multiple and changing factors resulting in people being excluded from the normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society."*

Poverty is one of the most obvious factors, but social exclusion also refers to inadequate rights in housing, education, health and access to services. It affects individuals and groups, particularly in urban and rural areas, who are in some way subject of discrimination or segregation; and it emphasizes the weaknesses in the social infrastructure and the risk of allowing a two-tier society to become established by default. The Commission believes that a fatalistic acceptance of social exclusion must be rejected and that all Community citizens have a right to the respect of human dignity” (Percy-Smith, 2000:3, quoting the European Commission, 1993:1).

Whether we choose or not to adopt EU’s definition, we have to understand that it reflects that institution’s vision of the social exclusion phenomenon being therefore extremely influenced by its role as an international political and economic organization. This warns us to be aware that at a global level social exclusion is often considered as a broad-spectrum concept that gathers all the social aspects that deprive a full integration of an individual into his society. Globalization, and the changes imprinted by it in the structures of contemporary societies, can be traced as one of its most prominent inducers (Picture 1): *“Social exclusion is seen in a wider context. In particular it is seen in the context of globalization and the structural changes brought about by globalization” (Percy-Smith, 2000:5).*

Aiming at the reduction of current time’s asymmetries *“entre 2007 e 2015, o Fundo Social Europeu irá distribuir cerca de 75 mil milhões de Euros aos Estados-Membros”*, thus considering social inclusion as a determinant factor (European Commission, 2007). New initiatives have been promoted in this context in the last couple of years namely in:

- 2007, European Year of Equal Opportunities for All;
- 2008, European Year of Intercultural Dialogue;
- 2010, European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion;

This last initiative’s objective is to renew and reinforce Lisbon’s Strategy’s (2000) political statements that envisioned the European Union space as the most competitive economic region of the world, with full employment being reached by the year 2010. Although it has a noticeable economically directed character, this document was fast to acknowledge the need to hamper social exclusion considering it as a pillar for the fulfilment of the abovementioned goals.²²

²² Available at: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/lisbon_strategy_pt.htm

In line with all the previously stated the European Commission (2007:3) defined 4 specific objectives for that European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion:

- *“Reconhecimento – Reconhecer o direito das pessoas em situação de pobreza e exclusão social a viver com dignidade e a participar activamente na sociedade.*
- *Adesão – Reforçar a adesão do público às políticas e acções de inclusão social, sublinhando a responsabilidade de cada um na resolução do problema da pobreza e da marginalização.”*
- *Coesão – Promover uma sociedade mais coesa através da sensibilização do público quanto aos benefícios para todos de uma sociedade onde a pobreza foi erradicada e ninguém está condenado a viver à margem.”*
- *Empenho – Reiterar o forte empenho político da U.E. no combate à pobreza e à exclusão social e promover esse empenho em todos os níveis da governação.”*



Picture 1 – Contexts of Social Exclusion²³

Nonetheless, it is also extremely important to lay some attention and knowledge to the non-international contexts, filled up with their own intense and specific exclusion problems. Particularly, the local scale has been increasingly considered as the ideal spatial framework for the development and execution of programs to fight individual and community-level social exclusion. At the national, regional and local levels of political and socioeconomic decision, and in a so-called social state of right, fully supporter of the

²³ Adapted from Percy-Smith (2000:5).

accomplishment of every person's complete citizenship, an individual is considered as socially excluded if he does not comprise full access to his multiple societal rights, such as the civic rights (e.g. the explicit rights of women and children; the rights to freedom of speech and equal access to information; or the right to privacy), the political rights (e.g. freedoms of syndicalization and of political association; or the freedom to vote in fair and democratic elections), or the Human Rights (e.g. the right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty; the right to have all guarantees necessary for defence in a public trial; the right to not be subjected to interferences with its privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon one's honour and reputation; or the rights to seek and enjoy asylum from persecution in other countries).

As we have already previously noted, social exclusion is a multidimensional phenomenon. Some authors seem to support that education and labor are the most fundamental aspects for social inclusion, since they grant individuals a sense of inclusion, usefulness and belonging to a given society and/or community.

The most basic and also more effective way to address the problem(s) of social exclusion is by means of the promotion of everyone's inclusion. It is fundamental to address every specific case differently, in order to best adapt the answers to each particular situation. It is vital to understand how the phenomenon manifests (normally, it is associated to a certain kind of social stigma), what caused it (understanding that low-income is not always the most important reason) and try to predict its consequences, in a way that anticipates (and thus minimizes) its negative effects.

Given its ever-changing character one must maintain an exceptionally pro-active and vanguardist attitude when addressing social exclusion, either at the individual scale (in order to best promote his inclusion) or in the ambit of the territory (territorial inclusion).

1.4. The Homeless

1.4.1. The Right to Housing

As it will certainly come to our perception throughout the following chapter, being a homeless ("sem-abrigo", in Portuguese) is undoubtedly one of the "*formas mais extremas de*

exclusão social e, por vezes, uma das mais visíveis, aquela em que o carácter de privação múltipla é patente e, por vezes, contrasta fortemente com o meio ambiente em que se apresenta” (Costa, 1998:80).

As we start to speak about the homeless people a clear thought comes to our mind: their greatest need is a home. But, if that seems to be an unequivocal fact, we should not also forget that the lack of a regular dwelling works as a strong inductor for exclusion from many other basic daily activities like receiving mail or maintaining a bank account.

There has been an active production of academic and institutional bibliography concerning “homelessness” and “the right to housing” during the last decades.

One of the first documents to mention these issues was the “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”, produced by the United Nations (UN), already cited during the present report. In its article 25 it is established that every person has the right to a sufficient life-standard to ensure himself and his family good health and welfare mainly in what concerns food, clothes, housing, medical assistance and other necessary social services.

Since the approval of the Declaration in 1948, the right to housing has been successively evoked as an essential Human Right in several other institutional instruments (international conventions, declarations, sets of rules and principles), many of them adopted by the UN²⁴. The “Declaration of Vancouver on Human Settlements”, commonly known as “HABITAT I” (1976) describes a set of National Governments’ responsibilities concerning the completion of the right to housing and its role for the promotion of each country’s Human Development and for the integration of socially and racially marginalized communities. The “Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000” also identifies the importance of the Human Right to an adequate dwelling, and entitles to National States the duty of promoting better life-conditions to populations living in irregular urban settlements, by means of promoting an integrative and effectively planned urban requalification of those critical areas. “Agenda 21”, adopted at the “United Nations Conference on Environment and Development” (known as the “Rio Conference”) gives much attention (Chapter 7) to the relevance of “Promoting Sustainable Human Settlement Development” recognizing that, in least developed countries, National Governments dedicate only about 5,6% of their resources to housing, social protection, and leisure. This document also underlines the need to *“oferecer a todos habitação adequada [considerando que]*

²⁴ For example, the Pacts are international juridical instruments; this means that, once a member of the UN (or any other international legal institution) integrates himself as a “part” (by means of ratifying it) on one of these “Pacts” (this is also valid to several other juridical instruments) it is automatically obligated by the International Laws to respect the conditions imposed by that given document.

(...) o acesso a habitação segura e saudável é essencial para o bem-estar físico, psicológico, social e económico das pessoas, devendo ser parte fundamental das actividades nacionais e internacionais (...). Estima-se que actualmente pelo menos 1 bilião de pessoas não disponha de habitações seguras e saudáveis e que, caso não se tomem as medidas adequadas, esse total terá aumentado drasticamente até ao final do século e além”.²⁵

The “Program of Action of the World Summit for Social Development” (which took place in Copenhagen, in 1995) states that being homeless and having an inadequate dwelling should be regarded as the most profound manifestations of poverty. The referred document also advises about the need to implement severe and urgent measures to reduce world’s poverty rates and *“to protect the displaced, the homeless, street children”* (Paragraph 34).²⁶

“HABITAT II” (which took place in Istanbul, in the year of 1996; twenty years after its first edition, which has already been referred to in detail in the current chapter) maintains and renovates the economic, social and environmental principles of its predecessor. However, the human urban settlements’ situation has gone worse in the twenty years ranging between the two world summits. In the mid-1990’s, official international statistics predicted that, by the beginning of the XXIst century, something like three billion people would be living and working (or, at least, looking for jobs) in urban areas. It was expected that by then the biggest problems *“confronting cities and towns and their inhabitants [would] include inadequate financial resources, lack of employment opportunities, spreading homelessness (...), increased poverty and a widening gap between rich and poor”*.²⁷ Further ahead in the same document (Paragraph 11), it is portrayed that *“more people than ever are living in absolute poverty and without adequate shelter. Inadequate shelter and homelessness are growing plights in many countries, threatening standards of health, security and even life itself. Everyone has the right to an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families, including adequate (...) housing, water and sanitation, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions”*.

Summarily, the “Global Plan of Action of the HABITAT II Conference” confirms, once again, the international legal-status and importance of the Human Right to a dignified home. In this context, it establishes a collection of over one hundred compromises and six hundred proposals to promote international cooperation and unified action towards a global accomplishment of the right to an adequate housing.

²⁵ Cited from: <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Valley/5990/agenda21.html>

²⁶ Cited from: <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N95/116/51/PDF/N9511651.pdf?OpenElement>

²⁷ Paragraph 8 of the Preamble. Available at: http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/1176_6455_The_Habitat_Agenda.pdf

The “Declaration on Cities and Other Human Settlements in the New Millennium” (2001), was adopted in an extraordinary meeting of United Nation’s General Assembly. It revises the “Declaration of Istanbul on Human Settlements” (“HABITAT II”) and the “HABITAT Agenda” (both created in the 1996 Conference), and stipulates a new group of initiatives – designed to better achieve the commitments expressed in the two previous documents – closely influenced by the “United Nations Millennium Declaration”, especially by the ideas developed under the scope of its target “to have achieved significant improvements in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers, by the year of 2020”.

Housing issues have not represented explicit priorities of European Union’s policies, since its creation in the 1950’s. The right to a dignified housing is not even a constituent matter in most of this institution’s main treaties, especially in the former ones. Legally, the EU does not have special attributions concerning the establishment of housing policies in its territory. Even so, it is undeniable that virtually almost all of the Community’s policies (e.g. environment, energy, transports, and economic or social policies) have more or less direct implications in housing conditions and/or related policies in all of EU’s Member-States.

Among the few European documents addressing the right to an adequate housing issue it seems important to elevate, for example, the “European Social Policy – A Way Forward for the Union. A White Paper” (1994: 12)²⁸, which entitles the European Commission (EC) the task of *“propor um plano de acção (...) contra a exclusão social no âmbito de uma política global de luta contra a pobreza e a favor dos direitos humanos (...) e entende (...) que a Comissão deve ir mais além na luta contra as exclusões, atacando directamente, por exemplo, o problema da habitação”*.

Another relevant document is the “European Social Charter”, a Council of Europe treaty, signed in Strasbourg in the 3rd of May, 1995. In its Article 31 it establishes a commitment towards ensuring a full exercise of the right to housing in the European territory by means of implementing measures destined to favour access to housing in a level that allows the prevention and reduction of homelessness, aiming at this phenomenon’s progressive elimination, for example by making the price of houses more reachable to people without enough resources to access them.

²⁸ Available at:

<http://www.europarl.europa.eu/calendar/calendar?APP=PDF&TYPE=PV2&FILE=19950119PT.pdf&LANGUAGE=PT>

In 1999, the Committee of the Regions released an “Opinion: Housing and the Homeless”²⁹ stating that the presence of homeless in the urban areas is one of the most serious manifestations of social exclusion in Europe, and so this should be a major concern for all local and regional administrations. It also invites European institutions to deepen the principles related to the right to housing.

The “European Charter on Housing”, approved by European Parliament’s URBAN-Housing Intergroup (26th of April, 2006), defines housing as a first necessity good, a fundamental social right, a basic element of the European Social Model, and a crucial promoter of human dignity.

On the following year the “European Parliament Resolution of 10 May, 2007” on housing and regional policy³⁰ asserted that the lack of a dignified housing for an affordable price has direct influences in European citizens’ lives by limiting their possibilities to be socially inserted and their mobility in urban and rural areas. It also recognizes that many European cities have serious housing issues such as excessive or insufficient offers (varying according to the region and/or the country), homelessness, accentuated rise of the costs of house acquisition and maintenance; edifice’s degradation, etc. Therefore, it was advised for all EU Member-States to work together in the development of an integrated and holistic approach to Europe’s complex housing issues, for example, by granting their citizens an easier access to adequate (and increasingly improved and renewed) housing.

In the next year (specifically in the 20th of March, 2008) a group of Eurodeputies released a Parliamentary Declaration³¹ through which (Article 116) they acknowledged that the access to a proper housing is a fundamental right and so is the access to a shelter being this last one, in many cases, the first step to an adequate and sustainable resolution for the housing problems of people submitted to extreme social exclusion and poverty. The subscribers of this document appealed to the Council of Europe to adopt a European compromise that resolved the Union’s homelessness problems until the year 2015.

Most international and macro-regional treaties specifically concerned with the global accomplishment of the fundamental human right to an adequate and dignified dwelling have been massively ratified. Yet, before the 1990’s there were few national

²⁹ *Jornal Oficial* n° C 293 de 13/10/1999 p. 0024, consultado em:
<http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:51998IR0376:PT:HTML>

³⁰ [2006/2108(INI)] – Official Journal of the European Union – C 76 E/129

³¹ “*European Parliament Written Declaration on Ending Street Homelessness*” [P6_TA-PROV (2008) 0163]

Constitutions with specific references to this matter. The “Constitution of the Republic of South Africa” (1996) is a clear example of a new paradigm raised in the 1990’s, once it explicitly consecrates South African citizens’ right to housing, obligating the State to ensure the prosecution of universal housing to the country’s population. It also forbade the execution of arbitrary evictions from one’s house.

In Europe, the national Constitutions of countries like Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Finland, the Netherlands, the UK, Portugal, or Sweden have explicit references about the right to an adequate housing. Of the above-mentioned, only the Danish and Swedish Governments seem to actively have guaranteed this right to all these citizens. However, it is possible to find in all of them several programs destined to help lower-income families trying or in need to access a residence. Though aiming at the same objectives, the housing policies of the referenced countries tend to prioritize different measures, inspired by their socioeconomic and cultural idiosyncrasies, such as State’s background of intervention in housing markets, or of financially stimulating or taxing the private sector (“Housing and Homelessness: models and practices from across Europe”, FEANTSA, 2008).³²

The “Constitution of the Republic of Portugal” officialised in 1976 is still currently considered as one of the most progressive documents of such a kind in the entire World. In this legal paper the fact that everyone has the right to wish for himself and his family an adequately dimensioned house in proper conditions of hygiene and comfort, and good enough to preserve each one’s personal intimacy and family privacy is a thoroughly recognized notion (Article 65, Number 1). The State has the responsibility to ensure the fulfilment of this right to all its citizens through territorial planning and management instruments developed either at the national and regional levels (respectively by the State and the Autonomous Regions of the Azores and Madeira Governments’) and at the local scale (by local municipalities). The Constitution also predicts the need to anticipate several responses to upcoming housing problems of different socioeconomic strata of the population. Article 65 (Numbers 2b) and 2c) underlines the necessity of promoting, in collaboration with the autonomous regions governments and the local municipalities, the production of socioeconomically viable housing; and of stimulating private construction of general interest and access to a rented dwelling. The document also reveals notorious

³² Consultado em:

http://www.feantsa.org/files/freshstart/Communications/Homeless%20in%20Europe%20EN/PDF_2009/Homeless%20in%20Europe_Winter2008.pdf

concerns with multiple other aspects like the need to adjust rents according to each family's income; the creation of public financing measures directed at people are trying to buy their own houses; and many other topics on housing legislation and on territorial policies, such as the promotion of self-construction or the creation of housing cooperatives.

For Portuguese citizens who recognize the existence of threats or any sort of incompleteness respecting their constitutional right to an adequate housing, there is a multiplicity of jurisdictional and non-jurisdictional strategies and mechanisms of use. Among the first ones, we can elevate the existence of legally pre-determined financial (or other) compensations for victims of illegal actions like arbitrary evictions or demolitions; excessive, inappropriate and increasingly expensive rents; inadequate health conditions of the rented apartments; or discrimination in the access to housing. There are also various legal mechanisms directed to overcome problems related to homelessness.³³

As we are about to see in the next chapters, many States have designed (at a national level) specific programs to address homelessness. Nevertheless, especially in the last decades, these initiatives have functioned on a local basis, often presenting several permanent and temporary housing measures, together with other social support services (e.g. psychosocial, jurisdictional, or educational). Though displaying several contextual specificities, these programs are normally developed in a way that enables homeless individuals to ascend to a stable economic and psychosocial situation, and to achieve an autonomous capacity to obtain and maintain their own houses.

1.4.2. The problem of the concept of homelessness

The establishment of an unequivocal and universal definition for “homelessness” has always proved to be a hard and intricate mission. “*La définition du sans abri n’a rien d’universelle: chaque pays développe la sienne propre*” (Thelen, 2006:12). Probably, the most effaceable way to try to grant some international standardization to the expression

³³ There are several examples of these policies, not only in Portugal but all across Europe. In France, the right to have a house started to be, at one point, demandable before the French courts. This measure was implemented after hundreds of homeless individuals (and many other social activists, in sign of solidarity with the cause) camped for two weeks (in March, 2007) in the sidewalks along the Saint-Martin Channel. As a result, the French Parliament approved a Law (that came into action in the 1st of December of 2008, contemplating the establishment of legal instruments to help the victims of the following situations: people in need of a house; victims of arbitrary evictions; people or families temporarily living in a third individual's (non-related) house; people living in inappropriate, insalubrious or dangerous dwellings; vulnerable families (living in sub-standard housing conditions) with under-aged and physically disabled individuals.

“homeless” would be to etymologically deconstruct the words “homeless”, “sem-abrigo” (meaning “homeless” in Portuguese) or “sans-abri” (the same word in French). In each of these cases, we can observe that these terms morphological construction is generally the same. For example, the Latin derivations “sem-abrigo” or “sans-abri” are built under equal rules, both of them created through the combination of two words, the preposition “sem” or “sans”, meaning “without” or “excluded of” (like the suffix “less”); and the noun “abrigo” or “abri”, meaning “shelter” or “home”. A “sem-abrigo” (or a “homeless”) is, therefore, a person who does not have a “home”, understood here both as a physical space and as an affiliating place to be identified with. Commonly it is someone who dwells on the streets and/or faces severe “habitat” insufficiencies. Though being an extremely pragmatic and consensual approach, largely utilized with statistical purposes, it does not fully translate the real issues surrounding the homeless, once it accentuates the external or “physical” dimensions of the phenomenon, underestimating the importance of socioeconomic, psychological and even pathological aspects.

It is possible to uncover the existence of a vast and historically inherited semantic field associated with the concept of homelessness. On average, it tends to largely contribute to the stigmatized social understanding of the phenomenon.

As previously stated, the Portuguese word “sem-abrigo” has great similarities with the French “sans-abri” and the English “homeless” expressions. They all portray an idea of “*falta de habitat mínimo, que protegeria o ser humano do frio, do vento ou da chuva que da mesma maneira que a alimentação e/ou o vestuário, assegura uma necessidade essencial à sobrevivência humana*” (Thomas, quoted by Bento and Barreto, 2002:23).

Particularly, the English terminology (“homeless”), by including the expression “home” (and not just “house”) carries an interesting idea of disaffiliation³⁴. So, we can clearly distinguish between the “homeless” and “houseless”, which means nothing but the lack or loss of a physical habitation. For example, degrading historical terminologies such as “hobos”, “tramps” or “bums” still constitute emotional stigmas and burdens carried out by today’s homeless people in the United States (Anderson, quoted by Bento and Barreto, 2002:24). In France (Vexliard, quoted by Bento and Barreto, 2002:24) the same demeaning connotation can be found in traditional expressions like “vagabond” or “clochard” both revealing the idea of the un-usefulness displayed by these individuals for a society that does

³⁴ A disaffiliated individual is the one who cut all or some of his affiliative bonds (either affective, or professional).

not care for them: *“il est certain que l'on rencontrait autrefois parmi les vagabonds une plus grande quantité de malades mentaux, parce que nul ne se préoccupait d'eux. Ils étaient condamnés à l'errance comme individus non utilisables socialement ; en outre, ils n'entraient à l'asile que s'ils se révélaient dangereux pour l'ordre public”* (Vexliard, 1957:196).

In Spain, as in most of Latin America's countries the common term is “sin techo” (“roofless”). In Finland, the word “koditon” (meaning something close to “homeless”) was recently replaced by “asunnoton” (which carries a connotation similar to the expression “houseless”) because the first one carried out a sense of *“having no established relationships – no-one to take care of them”* (Edgar et al., 1999:47). The same conceptual switch happened in Norway from “hjemløshet” to “bostedsløshet”. The Norwegian official documents also refer to the homeless people by using the expression “UFB” meaning “uten fast bolig”, which can be literally translated as “without a permanent residence”.

In Portugal, even though the current terminology is “sem-abrigo”, the traditional concept was “sem-tecto” (meaning “roofless”), following its neighbouring country's (Spain) convention. This expression is still very influential at the academic and decision-making/political levels. Also, debasing terms such as “vagabundo”, “mendigo”, “indigente” “vadio”, or “ocioso” still carry great social significance (Bento *et al.*, 2002:23)³⁵. As noted by Bento *et al.* (2002), the current predominance of the more broadly significant word “sem-abrigo” should be elevated as the beginning of the institutionalization of a new perspective towards the homeless people, particularly noticeable among the political classes: *“Se contrastarmos esta definição [sem-abrigo] com as anteriores de vagabundo, vadio, mendigo, verificamos que ela revela uma profunda alteração do discurso oficial sobre estas pessoas. O sentido pejorativo e responsabilizador dos primeiros é substituído por uma definição que acentua as causas externas do problema”* (Bento *et al.*, 2002:26).

Nevertheless truthfully the negative content patent in all the previously mentioned humiliating terms still survives in (almost) everyone's common sense. We can even risk saying that, up to a certain point, the social notion of homelessness carries an imprinted stamp of individual and social “un-accomplishment”, alluding to a kind of socially-produced good bearing one or many kinds of imperfections. Following this line of thought it is not surprising that in the self-exalting totalitarian political regimes, the homelessness reality (as it is a visible sign of poverty and political flaw) has always been hidden. For example, the Russian Social Encyclopaedia defines the “homeless” in a rather repulsive and

³⁵ One of the few books written in Portugal explicitly concerned with these subjects.

revolting way: “*The most destitute and hopeless segment of the homeless people...beg, rummage through rubbish, steal, become carriers of infectious diseases and originators of fires and create moral discomfort for the members of the public* (Mirsagatova, 2000:34)” (Stephenson, 2006:4).

It seems to be (by now) clearly understandable that the definition of homeless can be applied to everyone absenting a physical shelter. However, this absence should also be analyzed and characterized through its repercussions for the individual’s social exclusion from several other “shelters” or protections, either social, professional, economic, psychological or family related. Ultimately, a homeless is someone facing a socially disrupting situation, explicitly perceptible by not having the necessary connections to himself, nor to his society.

The home, seen as a metonymic territory for every individual, is a determining aspect for the construction of each person’s character. In contrast, the street, as a public space deconstructs one’s individuality. The conflicts between interiority and exteriority, and appropriation and misappropriation are full of consequences, whose results are, in our opinion, imprinted in the dialectics separating social inclusion from social exclusion and being, therefore, key aspects to be thoroughly taken into account when we are attempting to define homelessness.

We are not trying to say that the inaccessibility to a dwelling is not important. But the problems of the homeless extend far beyond the housing issue and it is crucial that we are all aware of this fact. This is why it is essential to draw a clear line between “houselessness” and “homelessness”: It is very serious to not have an accommodation with the minimum housing pre-requisites and conditions but it is far more complex to be homeless, because that situation implies a loss of family and other affective bonds, either in consequence of unemployment, physical violence, or mental-illness, which accumulated end-up “obligating” people to dwell on the streets (Bulla *et al.*, 2004:113-114).

We are talking about continuous ruptures, frequently associated to alcohol or other addictive substances abuse (sometimes not only by the homeless individual but by his family members). Snow and Anderson (1998:77) get to the point of stating that the social world of the homeless can be sometimes perceived as a kind of sub-culture, even if a limited or incomplete one. It’s a “world” not created or even chosen by the ones living in the streets (at least in an initial basis), but a reality to what they were pulled against, without any chance of control. These multiple situations’ victims have an equal destiny: to dwell and survive in the streets and alleys of the most important world cities.

1.4.3. Definitions for homelessness

Due to its multiple causes and consequences, the homelessness phenomenon is a very complex one to approach. Such a conceptual complexity excessively exacerbates the number of existing definitions of homelessness. The attempts to explain and describe this reality often respond to political ideologies or purposes, rather than resulting from impartial, objective and scientifically oriented approaches. So, there is a vast and diverse sort of definitions of homelessness, some of which tend to converge to specific groups or themes such as the unemployed, immigrants, alcoholics, ethnic minorities, victims of domestic violence, war veterans, street children, the mentally-ill, among many others. Transversal to all these perspectives is their tendency to focus on subjective experiences and individual life-stories (sometimes even contributing to the group's stigmatization), rather than being built upon truly structural factors.

The achievement of a universal definition of homelessness would prove to be a remarkable attainment. However, this appears to be an intangible task, given the abundance and socio-cultural diversity of causes and consequences associated with this condition, and the particularities existent within each identifiable group. As we have already referred there is currently an attempt to universalize the distinction between homelessness and houselessness. This seems to be a very important conceptual contribution, making possible to separate not having a house from manifesting multiple disruptions, whose more prominent (but not the only) aspect is the lack of a physical shelter. Yet, several questions are still to be answered, for example, should individuals living in slums, refugee camps, or those victims of environmental catastrophes be considered as homeless?

Springer, (2000: 479) speaks about the infinity of homelessness definitions, concluding that *"there are as many classifications and definitions of homelessness as there are different points of views. A definition of homelessness might refer to a special housing situation, to a special minimum standard, to the duration and the frequency of a stay without shelter, to lifestyle questions, to the use of the welfare system and to the being part of a certain group of the population, to the risk of becoming houseless and to the possibility to move or not if desired"*.

The main thematic focus in virtually every country's definition of homelessness is the existence of one or several housing market inefficiencies. Nevertheless, the way in which each situation is manifested varies throughout different spatial and social contexts.

According to a report prepared and presented by UN's Center for Human Settlements (2000) (and mentioned in the Proceedings of the "2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research") world States can be classified into three "clusters" (Leginski, 2007: 1-27)³⁶:

- *"high-income, industrial countries, including the United States, Western Europe, Canada, Australia and Japan,*
- *Other industrial countries with economies in transition, including Eastern and Central Europe and the Russian Federation, and*
- *Developing countries, including many in Africa, Latin America, and much of Asia".*

For example, in India and Bangladesh we can find a great number of single individuals and even families sleeping on the streets and in garbage disposals all across these two countries' biggest cities. What seems to be surprising is that, in many cases, they are doing so willingly. It's the example of numerous former rural dwellers that prefer to save most of their incomes and send them to their original rural "homes" and families (to which they intend to come back to one day) rather than spending it on an urban house for their own. The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) attempts to describe the homeless as *"the floating population, [they] are the mobile and vagrant category of rootless people who have no permanent dwelling units whatever"* (BBS, 1999: 3). This is the official (and therefore, the one guiding all statistical studies about homelessness) definition of the homeless in Bangladesh. It is closely associated with the ideas of mobility and migration ("the floating population"), showing that these homeless often have a dwelling, which they temporarily (or so they seem to think) leave for a few months or years.

The Chinese regime, on the other hand, does not tolerate street dwellers. The closest thing to being a homeless in China is to be "blindly floating", a term applied to the unregistered individuals or to those with no statistical record of a house. Normally, these people tend to occupy abandoned or low-quality buildings in the poorest areas of the most important Chinese cities (Zhang *et al.*, 2003).

³⁶ Historical and Contextual Influences on the U.S. Response to Contemporary Homelessness, in *Toward Understanding Homelessness: The 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research*, USA, September 2007.

Beavis *et al.* (1997) studied the incidence of homelessness amidst the Australian Aborigine population. The authors distinguished between the “temporary homeless” and the so-called “chronic homeless”.

In Egypt the quality of each one’s habitation is a criterion to label them (or not) as homeless. People living in marginalized and inadequate dwellings (called Iskan gawazi) are considered homeless. In South Africa (as it happens, for example, in Indonesia) it is very common for street people to occupy the main cities’ abandoned buildings. Ghana is currently facing an escalating incidence of homelessness, especially due to ethnic conflicts happening in the country’s Northern areas. In Peru, urban populations without any vinculum to their houses are officially considered homeless. The same happens in Zimbabwe (Kamete, 2001; Tipple and Speak, 2005).

As underlined by Cooper (1995) it appears that the definitions of homelessness ultimately reflect each State’s political priorities. These institutional visions are extremely influential to each country’s measures to mitigate the problems associated to homelessness.

In the “61st Session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights” (Geneva, 30th of March, 2009) Miloon Kothari³⁷ declared that the worldwide number of street dwellers is estimated to range from 100 to 1 000 million individuals, of which 20 to 40 millions live in the world’s most prominent urban spaces. The notorious magnitude of the two considered statistical interval limits is due to different definitions applied during the counting. As stated by Peressini *et al.* (1995) “*a definition is important because most researchers agree on one fact: who we define as homeless determines how we count them*”. Avramov (1999) thinks that researchers and decision-makers must be extremely careful when comparing data about the homeless. The inexistence of a single and universal definition of homelessness is the clearest warning about the problems surrounding the excessive simplification of the explanations about this phenomenon. A great solution in one place may prove to be a disastrous one in a very different context.

Trying to overcome previous issues, the UN (1998: 50) developed a statistical definition suitable only for “homeless families” – “*households without a shelter that would fall within the scope of living quarters. They carry their few possessions with them sleeping in the streets, in door ways or on piers, or in any other space, on a more or less random basis*”. The latter definition clearly focuses on behavioral aspects suggesting the idea of the homeless as people that wander

³⁷ “Special Rapporteur on Adequate Housing”.

and sleep in the streets, generally carrying out their few possessions with them; it is, therefore, a simplistic but (potentially) universal explanation of the phenomenon.

Numerous countries have developed their own definitions for homelessness. Some of those official formulations include both the institutionalized individuals and those lacking any kind of shelter. It is the examples of India, France or the USA. Particularly, concerning this last example, the definition of homeless as consecrated in the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act of 1987 includes: *“(1) An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary night-time residence that is: A supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelter, and transitional housing for the mentally ill); an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, regular sleeping accommodations for human beings. (3) this term does not include any individual imprisoned or otherwise detained under an Act of Congress or state law. People who are at imminent risk of losing their housing, because they are being evicted from private dwelling units or are being discharged from institutions and have nowhere else to go, are usually considered to be homeless for program eligibility purposes”* (USA, 1994: 22-23).

The two groups identified – the ones dwelling on the streets, and those sleeping in public shelters – are also mentioned in many European countries’ definitions of homeless people. The use of the word “adequate” in the previous classification points out the insufficiency intrinsic to many improvised houses; it is also applicable to the absence of reasonable social and affective relations inside the individuals’ former or current houses. Avramov (1996) presents a broader explanation where he also applies the word “adequate”: *“Homelessness is the absence of a personal, permanent, adequate dwelling. Homeless people are those who are unable to access a personal, permanent, adequate dwelling or to maintain such a dwelling due to financial constraints and other social barriers”* (Avramov 1996: 71).

In the last years, influenced by US and European scholars, the United Nation’s Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS), now known as UN-HABITAT, reviewed its definition of homelessness. Other authors remember that this phenomenon represents the unfulfilment of a Human Right, which can be expressed through various forms. It is clearly the case of Edgar *et al.* (1999: 2) who discriminates between *“rooflessness (living rough), houselessness (relying on emergency accommodation or long-term institutions), or inadequate housing (including insecure accommodation, intolerable housing conditions or involuntary sharing)”*.

The last definition finds a great proximity to the one developed by FEANTSA³⁸. This European institution is devoted to develop spatially transversal ways to approach homelessness related issues in Europe. According to Brousse (2005 :52), the EUROSTAT (influenced by FEANTSA's guidelines) has already managed to develop a rather consensual definition of homeless: *“une personne est dite sans-abri si elle n'a pas accès à un logement qu'elle pourrait raisonnablement occuper, que ce logement soit légalement sa propriété ou qu'il soit loué; fourni par un employeur; occupé sans loyer d'une manière contractuelle ou selon un autre arrangement. En conséquence, elle est obligée de dormir: à l'extérieur; dans des bâtiments qui ne satisfont pas aux critères reconnus communément pour l'habitation; dans un centre d'urgence dépendant du secteur public ou d'organisations caritatives; dans des centres de plus long séjour dépendant du secteur public ou d'organisations caritatives; dans un bed-and-breakfast; dans un autre hébergement de court séjour; chez des amis ou de la famille; dans des squats occupés avec autorisation”*.

In 1998, FEANTSA presented the ETHOS³⁹ (meaning “European Typology of Homelessness”) classification, which recognized four main typologies:

- Roofless: They are the most visible and precarious individuals; it includes the people that sleep on the streets;
- Houseless: Referring to the situations in which, despite having access to emergency or long-term institutions, the single individuals and/or families can still be considered as homeless;
- Living in an insecure housing: Cases where there is a situation of illegal occupation of a property, a house or an abandoned building; people are living temporarily in their friend's house; there is an unstable rental system with consequential risk of eviction from the house;
- Living in an inadequate accommodation: Includes the cases in which the residential space has inadequate conditions for dwelling or is excessively used (too many

³⁸ Fédération Européenne d'Associations Nationales Travaillant avec les Sans-abri.

³⁹ FEANTSA believed that this classification presented itself as a crucial way to promote a clearer comprehension and assessment of homelessness in Europe. The ETHOS four typologies were built around the concept of “home”. In summary FEANTSA considers the existence of three elements constituent of a house, the lack of which designs a homelessness situation. Having a house may be understood as having an adequate housing where a person or a family may exert an exclusive possession attitude (physical element); as a way to maintain privacy and interconnectivity (social element); or as a way to express a legal status occupancy (legal element). This may lead to the definition of four principal conceptual categories of homelessness, the roofless, the homeless, the ones living in a precarious dwelling, or those who inhabit an inadequate housing facility (Spinnewijn, 2005).

residents for the accommodation's characteristics); trailers and boats functioning as houses are also considered as inadequate accommodations.

Springer (2000) notices that these two last categories can be coincident, meaning that an accommodation can be simultaneously insecure and inadequate.

Cooper (1995) discusses the notions of relative homelessness and absolute homelessness, the first referring to the cases in which the persons have an improvised shelter that is not a consolidated house with absolute homelessness being applied to the situation in which individuals have no access to a house, or even a shelter.

In Portugal, the use of the term “sem-abrigo” has been intensively debated in the last years. Seemingly, the tendency is to increasingly attempt to undermine theories that position homelessness as a linear occurrence centered in the intrinsic flaws of the homeless individuals rather than in socio-political causes. It is urgent to promote well-thought and assertive explanations to this social phenomenon. According to Baptista (2005) these can (also) be found encrypted in each individual or family trajectory's.

The previous debate involved a large number of actors and entities. Together, they have been working hard to identify the main problems causing homelessness in Portugal and to develop effaceable measures to inhibit this phenomenon's increase. In this context it is extremely important to point out the creation of an Inter-institutional Group⁴⁰ (May, 2007), coordinated by the Instituto de Segurança Social, I.P. (which can be literally translated to English as the Public Institute for Social Security) and composed by several

⁴⁰ Entities represented in the Interinstitucional Group: **Public:** Health services-related institutions: Alto Comissariado da Saúde (ACS); Direcção-Geral da Saúde (DGS); Escola Nacional de Saúde Pública (ENSP); Instituto da Droga e da Toxicodependência (IDT); Social Security-related institutions: Direcção-Geral da Segurança Social (DGSS); Instituto da Segurança Social (ISS), Instituto Público; Social integration and social equality-related institutions (e.g. immigrants or mental patients): Alto Comissariado para a Imigração e o Diálogo Intercultural (ACIDI), Instituto Público; Comissão para a Cidadania e Igualdade de Género (CCIG); Direcção-Geral de Reinserção Social (DGRS); Defense and Security-related institutions: Direcção-Geral dos Serviços Prisionais (DGSP); Guarda Nacional Republicana (GNR); Polícia de Segurança Pública (PSP); Housing and Employment-related institutions: Instituto do Emprego e Formação Profissional (IEFP); Instituto da Habitação e Reabilitação Urbana (IHRU); Other institutions: Associação Nacional de Municípios Portugueses (ANMP); Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil (LNEC); and **Private:** Solidarity institutions: Confederação Nacional das Instituições de Solidariedade (CNIS); Rede Europeia Anti-Pobreza Nacional (REAPN); Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML); Federação Nacional de Entidades de Reabilitação de Doentes Mentais (FNERDM); União das Misericórdias; and FEANTSA's Observatory.

public and private key-institutions, whose most important mission is to develop a “National Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People”⁴¹.

The Group soon understood the importance of developing a precise and concise definition of homelessness applicable to the Portuguese context, and capable to theoretically support political instruments to be proposed and later implemented. So, the official definition of homeless in Portugal was developed considering the homeless person as the one who, independently of its nationality, age, gender, socioeconomic status and physical or mental health can be found on a condition of both rooflessness (living in the public space, an emergency shelter or any other precarious place) and houselessness (therefore living in a shelter).

The previous pertinent definition of homeless(ness) was developed according to the operational typologies proposed by FEANTSA (mentioned earlier), already internalized by several other European countries.

In conclusion, we can now state that the concept of homelessness is a spatially and temporally diverse one. It is normally a reflection of political national and regional sceneries and timeframes, rather than being expressive of an objective diagnosis of the deprivation status of these persons in that specific context. People who dwell on the streets, under the bridges, or in any other place not considerable as a “home” are transversally looked at as homeless. Yet, the distinction between homeless people and the ones living in inadequate housing conditions is still vague and inconclusive.

1.4.4. Why are people homeless?

Toro and Warren (1999) use two main criteria to define the variations existent within the homelessness phenomenon: i) the homeless people’s life standards; and ii) the period of time that the homeless individuals should be living in the streets to be considered as such. For these authors the definition of homelessness must include not only those living in shelters or on the streets, but also those dwelling in hospitals and prisons that when deinstitutionalized will have no residence of their own to go to. For example, Pereira,

⁴¹ The strategy was presented by the Portuguese National Government in the 14th of May of the present year; it is expected to allow a more accurate coordination of the existing resources, distributing them according to three specific areas of action: prevention, intervention and monitoring.

Barreto and Fernandes (2000) classify homelessness situations into four degrees of vulnerability, intimately related to the length permanence on the streets:

- The chronic, who constantly and repeatedly dwell on the streets, normally holding very low or inexistent incomes; sometimes they are part of social networks or communities comprised of people facing the same situation;
- The seasonal, who despite having an accessible residence sometimes favor living in shelters or even in the streets;
- The temporary, who are facing a homelessness situation due to conjunctural factors; in normal conditions these individuals would have the ability to maintain a stable housing of their own.
- Finally, the total considered the most dramatic of them all, including the ones sleeping on shelters, churches, abandoned buildings, or even the streets. The author talks about deeply traumatized and socially disaffiliated individuals, with no house or even social/human bonds.

Traditional explanations for homelessness were centered on the characteristics intrinsic to the homeless individuals. In the last years, the quantitative escalate of the phenomenon and the increasing heterogeneity of homelessness situations have begun to question these “individual-related” explanations (Pereira, Barreto and Fernandes, 2000). To Bento and Barreto (2002) the previously mentioned studies did nothing more than identifying factors of vulnerability, neglecting the true foundations of homelessness.

Currently the privilege is conceded to more complex explanations (Anderson and Christian, 2003; Clapham, 2003; Sosin, 2003), able to count the myriad of factors (and the complementarities between them) that induce homelessness (Meert *et al.*, 2005 quoting Miguel, 2007). This is why today homelessness is not considered anymore as a socially distinct problem with unique characteristics and causes (Pleace, 1998). The most recent studies tend to conceptualize both the structural and the individual causes of homelessness and to consider the phenomenon’s multiple and diverse expressions as the result of interactions between social and anthropological factors (Anderson and Christian, 2003). The scope of these studies is the creation of a model combining all the risk factors (Tompsett *et al.*, 2003; Clapham, 2003), by including each individual’s traumatizing and disaffiliating life episodes (Miguel, 2007).

According to Shinn *et al.* (1998) one can find four main drivers to homelessness: Persisting poverty; behavioural disturbances; social networks' disaggregation; and loss of access to a house. The structural factors are normally related to societal and economic disruptions (e.g. in the labor or housing markets) and/or inefficient social policies (e.g. health or social protection dimensions) (Clapham, 2003); the individual factors often concern psychiatric disorders, educational or professional deficits, or social and cultural disaffiliation problems (Bento and Barreto, 2002).

Besides all the previous ones, it is possible to identify many other risk factors to homelessness, like conflicts, end of affective relations, physical and/or sexual abuse, lack of qualifications, unemployment, alcohol and/or drug abuse, mental health problems, legal problems (e.g. criminal records; unpaid debts), inexistence of effective social protection networks (WHO, 2005 quoting Clapham, 2003), or institutionalization or death of a progenitor during childhood (WHO, 2005).

Finally, we can still present another approach centered in the explanation of the nature of the problems affecting the homeless, which considers the following possibilities:

- Homelessness as a choice or as a way of living, when there is a conscious decision to reject the life in a conventional house;
- Homelessness as the result of pathological problems like mental-illness, or alcohol or drug abuse;
- Homelessness as the consequence of earlier negative life-experiences, such as domestic violence or economic incapacity to secure a house (ISS, IP, 2005).

Sousa and Almeida (2001) argue that homelessness is intricately related to welfare policies (e.g. tax, housing, labor, education and health policies; these last ones, related to subjects like substance use or mental-health) especially poverty alleviation initiatives. So, the conceptualization and implementation of strategies to prevent homelessness must necessarily begin through deep changes in these political subjects' guidelines.

1.4.5. Ecological viewpoint on the approach to homelessness

Ornelas (1997) asserts that Ecology is simultaneously a scientific paradigm and a set of human values that consider the existence of causality effects between the surrounding

environment and the human behaviour dimensions. Ecology's scope is therefore the study of the relations established between all living organisms (and not only human beings) and the natural resources.

According to that same author, the ecological viewpoint transmits the importance of focusing on the observation of the living individuals in their natural contexts. Given this, the author proposes that it is impossible to separate the two previous realities. This is an extremely valid approach to be used both in theoretical, empirical or socially-induced studies and interventions of any kind.

The ecological viewpoint is based on four principles generally transposable to the human and social sciences' fields of study, and more specifically to homelessness issues. These four main principles are:

- **Principle of the Adaptation:** It concerns each individual's capacity to adapt to his social and natural environments. It is intimately related to the specificities inherent to the natural resources and to their influence on a person's behaviour (Ornelas, 1997). This theoretical principle states that social contexts must be structured according to various analytical layers, each one of them contributing to the comprehension of the effects imprinted into each individual's behaviour by the surrounding social and natural environments (Toro *et al.*, 1991). When applied to homelessness this principle clarifies the existence of several influences of adaptation on that phenomenon, respectively: *i)* socio-cultural influences, suggesting the need to consider the way in which social and cultural factors influence homelessness; Toro *et al.* (1991) suggests that the recent growth of the phenomenon in the US can be explained as the result of diverse and unique cultural manifestations intrinsic to that country's specificities; *ii)* local influences which elevate the importance of accounting neighboring contexts; although the first type of influences (the socio-cultural ones) allow the establishment of a more global approach to homelessness, the consideration of multiple levels of spatial analysis of the phenomenon suggest that local contexts allow us to understand some immediate and important constraints to homelessness events; *iii)* the influence provoked by the way organisms are integrated into their surrounding environments noticing that "adaptation" can be considered as the result of the interactions established between personal and contextual characteristics. According to this line of reason, no policy, service or resource allocated to resolve or minimize the problems inherited from the existence of homelessness situations can be seen as the only

possible solution, just because this phenomenon results from a complex myriad of intertwining factors (Toro *et al.*, 1991);

- Principle of the Cycling of Resources: As seen before the principle of adaptation is predominantly based on a contextual vision of homelessness. The cycling of the resources is supported on a different look on the way the social system's resources are defined, distributed and improved. To adopt this perspective in homelessness research means to constantly procure the best alternatives for homeless individuals (and their communities) and to consider the way in which their non-explored resources and strengths can be more effectively utilized (Toro *et al.*, 1991). This perspective is therefore centered in a deep assessment of each individual's elemental survival resources, which constitute an essential aspect to clarify the way in which communities distribute and share their capacities (Kelly, 2006).
- Principle of the Interdependency: It is related to the existence of mutual influences between the various components of each community and to the dynamic interactions established between them across time. It emphasizes the complexity inherent to the processes of social and individual change and points out the role of the community as the more adequate unit of intervention (Ornelas, 1997). As it happens with the other ecological principles, the rule of interdependency can be applied in multiple analytical levels. For example, according to this principle, to become homeless involves numerous individual and family changes, such as the redefinition of one's family or social relations, or the increasing of one's health problems (Toro *et al.*, 1991).
- Principle of the Succession: This is a particularly relevant rule to be applied when one is studying social environments once it warns researchers about the importance of clearly assessing and defining the systematic changes present in the communities prior to the establishment of any real intervention (Kelly, 2006). Through other words this principle states that social environments and contexts should not be considered as static elements. Ornelas (1997) notices that according to this the main problems and limitations faced by social researchers reside in their (in)capacity to envision and create new contexts. The author defends that the comprehension of the current features of the homelessness phenomenon must be accessed through historical and contextual approaches, able to promote the temporal comprehension of homelessness, including its foundations, main occurrences and consequences / reactions.

We believe to have proven that the ecological perspective can be extremely important in homelessness research, once it emphasizes the contexts in which the homeless are integrated and the complex interactions established between the social, economic and anthropological levels and the resources offered by social and welfare services. Toro *et al.* (1991) assumes that this “man-environment” approach is a valid alternative to more common “man-centered” perspectives.

The ecological perspective suggests various lines of research and intervention. It involves the diversification of objectives and methodologies used to understand the homeless, emphasizing the importance of undergoing extensive assessment procedures (Toro *et al.*, 1991). It believes that social research should be centered in two critical points, the first one being the compromise of taking the necessary time, and accounting for the available resources, to understand how the homeless express themselves and react to social and environmental changes imprinted in ecological systems; and the second one the relevance of these persons’ (and of the organizations working with them) empowerment (Toro *et al.*, 1991).

According to this perspective, homelessness prevention is also extremely important. For example, Toro *et al.* (1991) elevate the need to develop social programs oriented to the people living in precarious housing conditions. This major risk group is approximately 20 to 30 times larger than the homeless individuals themselves (Toro *et al.*, 1991). Understanding the ecological causes forcing people to leave their houses is one of the best ways to prevent an increase on homelessness.

Thus, the ecological perspective also encourages researchers and politicians to ponder the problems affecting the homeless as results of various interactions established between these individuals (and/or their families) and their social and environmental contexts. Implicit in the previous statement is the idea that research and political initiatives relating to homelessness should be implemented in different and multiple analytical levels (Toro *et al.*, 1991).

The epistemological development of an ecological certainty is noticeably based on the acquisition of collaborative skills, to be applied by decision-makers, researchers and any other professionals participating in community projects built to promote the empowerment of homeless individuals (Toro *et al.*, 1991).

For the next years, it is expected that the ecological perspective can work as a stimulus to new and important breakthroughs in what concerns to homelessness research (Toro *et al.*, 1991).

Nowadays, it is already identifiable that this perspective's conceptual interest with homelessness has allowed great progress in public and political answers to this problem. Homelessness is now recognized as a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon, whose mitigation can only be accomplished through the development of articulate social policies, able to overcome the disabilities and flaws of social protection systems and the overwhelming diversity of social and culturally-induced anthropological answers to the ecological contexts (Toro *et al.*, 1991).

Although social actors operating in this area of intervention have a long history of reluctance and/or ineffectiveness in the development of profound answers to this social problem (Dewey, 1946; Fairweather, 1972; Lewin, 1951; Moleiro, 1969; Sarason, 1981; Seidman, 1988; Smith, 1990 quoted by Toro *et al.*, 1991) last years' numerous initiatives have enabled us to believe in great developments for the future.

According to Toro *et al.* (1991) most social sciences are currently aware of homelessness, and developing important *in-situ* research. The anthropological, the social and the natural contexts of homelessness are now being massively approached. The "environments" in which we live, we educate ourselves, and we establish our social networks are already being considered as extremely influential for the ways in which we think or act. For example, many psychologists are now using ecological perspective's postulates in their researches on homelessness (Milburn and D'Ercole, 1991, Morse *et al.*, 1989; Shinn *et al.*, 1991; Shinn and Weitzman, 1990; Toro, 1991; Watt and Milburn, 1987 *apud* Toro *et al.*, 1991).

Fernandes (2002) asserts that each individual, in order to assume its citizenship, must believe he is a part of a harmonious and cohesive community. So, he must feel he is socially and politically well-represented. He must also recognize the usefulness and feel rewarded by his public participation. Instead, many "citizens" do not identify themselves with their social, political and cultural surroundings.

As previously mentioned, the homelessness phenomenon is intimately related to the organizational structures of society (e.g. the distribution of wealth and socio-political powers). These can contribute to or inhibit the growth of homelessness and other poverty or social exclusion phenomena.

The way in which natural and human resources are socially used for the promotion of each citizen's social, economic, and environmental welfare can be an inducer of social added-value, progress and Human Development as a whole. Ultimately, the way in which an individual lives in his society and the lifestyle he adopts, will always turn out to be heavily influential for his life path (Fernandes, 2002).

1.5. Social Inclusion

Earlier on in the current report, and prior to entering the debate on homelessness *per se*, we laid some consideration on the highly recognized concept of social exclusion. As described before it was not until the early 1970's that social exclusion (and therefore also social inclusion) appeared as a conceptual (and also, to some extent, instrumental) mean of providing incentive and support to those excluded from (civil) society whether they were in "*disconnection through legal sanctions, institutional mechanisms or systemic discrimination based on race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and religion (...) [from social goods, thus portraying a] failure of society to provide for the needs of particular groups, such as housing for homeless, language services for immigrants, and sanctions to deter discrimination (...) [also from social productions through the] denial of opportunities to contribute to and participate actively on society (...) [which resulted for the economically excluded in an] unequal or lack of access to normal forms of livelihood*" (Vinson, 2009:6).

Some authors are critical in saying that the formalization of the term "inclusion" must be put in the context of the strengthening of the liberal idea of the capitalist society, being often used as a panacea for economic growth and the wide-ranging improvement of people's life-standard. One could say that "social inclusion" and "Development" are two concepts centered in the augmentation of one's choices and opportunities. Their purpose is therefore to kindle (in a global manner) individual and collective welfare. Dionísio (2007: 33) stands by the opinion that social inclusion may happen by following one of two paths, namely "*o percurso do excluído que pode utilizar os meios que se mobilizam novamente para ele, e o percurso da sociedade, que deve arranjar lugar, continuar a aumentar a permeabilidade do emprego e da habitação*".

Social inclusion is about both individual people and collective groups (e.g. cultural minority groups) but it may also pertain to nations and political/cultural communities. The latter often display self-exclusionary practices – at times representing the positive outcome of self and group (nation/community) expressions – which must be a challenging (even

when not an inhibitor) aspect for societal and human development. The UK Development Trust Association (2008) for example defined inclusion as a set of policies that envisaged the promotion of equal opportunities and the construction of social capital, hence minimizing exclusion (Vinson, 2009:8).

Social inclusion as a goal for policy-making must be approached (by political agents and decision-makers) as a launch pad for the offering of minimum life-standard conditions to a territory's inhabitants by acting as a guiding principle for the establishment of coherent social policies. The latter may be defined as policy practices developed (in conjunction by States and societies) with the objective of granting citizens the fulfillment of their individual (whether abstract or material) rights in very different areas like employment and education, social welfare and security, healthcare, housing, among others (Dionísio, 2007).

According to Dionísio (2007: 49) social policies have become more efficient in the last years, picturing the rise of a new tendency for their implementation: "*São políticas sociais activas, por sua vez orientadas pelo princípio da solidariedade activa; usufruem de dispositivos institucionais mais flexíveis, baseando-se numa lógica de descentralização, de articulação entre a esfera pública e a sociedade civil, com abertura à participação activa de novos actores; baseiam-se cada vez mais numa lógica de parceria; [and] privilegiam uma nova articulação entre o social e o económico na promoção da inserção/inclusão*".

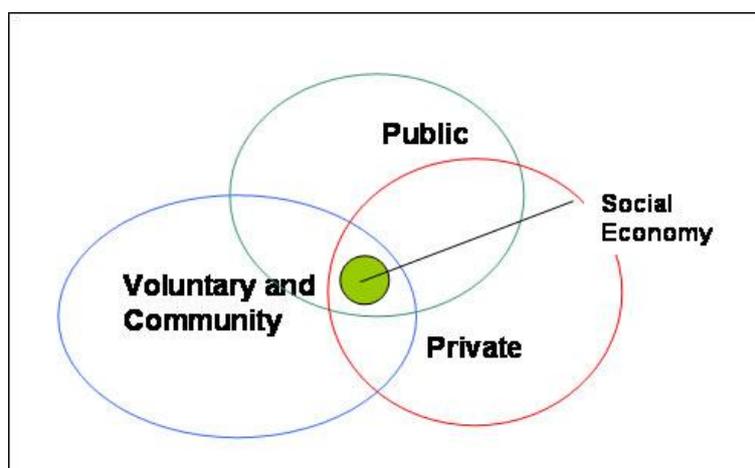
This (new) tendency is one where the promotion of aspects such as collective action and volunteering are valued as crucial aspects for the establishment of both an increasing bridging of civil involvement and bonding of social relations.

Economically, low rates of involvement in formal economies are still the dominant case in many spatial contexts. Concomitantly, we are nowadays aware that social capital⁴² is a key factor for success in a "post-industrial society". Following the two previous examples one may see that socially excluded people end up representing one of the biggest and structurally threatening financial burdens for governments. In many countries expenditure with "social inclusion" may represent up to 50% of those governments' outflows in diverse sectors like social welfare, healthcare, education, justice, housing and even environment. Given this, it is easy to understand why social inclusion has to be considered as a structural lumber for the governments: It is because of this concept's high dependency on these territories' economic performance. Economies evolve at a low pace, social exclusion tends

⁴² We are here considering social capital as "an economic idea that refers to the connections between individuals and entities that can be economically valuable. Social networks that include people who trust and assist each other can be a powerful asset." (in <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/socialcapital.asp>, accessed in 11 December 2011)

to rise which results in the financial loading of States whose financial efforts will have to mount as well (Vinson, 2009; Development Trust Association, 2006).

A consistent social economy, allowing for economic inclusion is a necessary and fundamental aspect for the process of social inclusion. Social economy is used to describe all economic practices not counted as part of the public-private sectorial dichotomy. “*This includes the activities of the not for private-profit sector, voluntary and community organizations, charitable organizations, mutual societies, cooperatives, social firms and development trusts.*” (Development Trust Association, 2006⁴³) (Picture 2).



Picture 1 - Diagram illustrating Social Economy as an overlapping of sectors

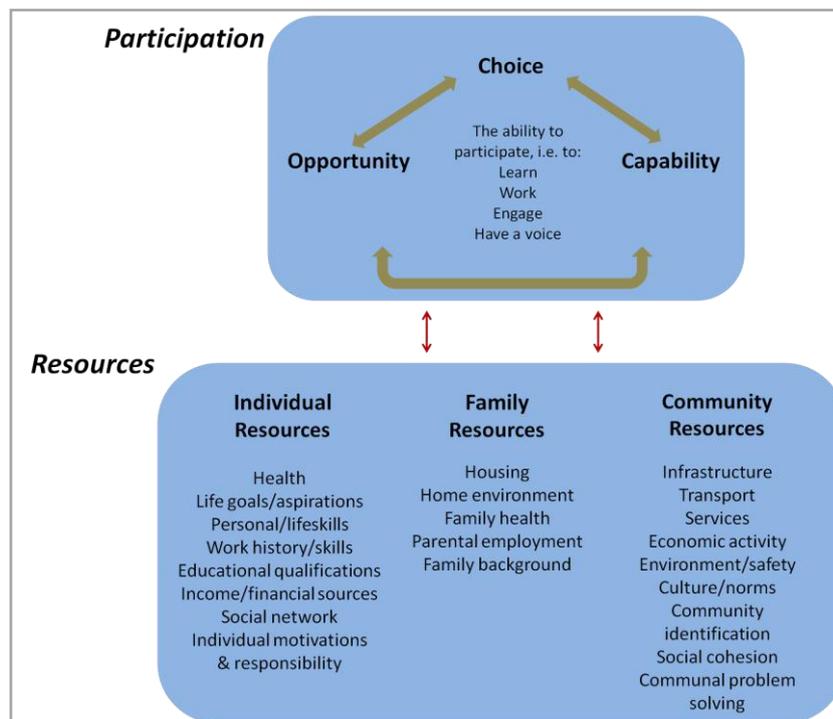
Source: Development Trust Association (2006)

The main goal of social inclusion is therefore to ensure that everyone has the necessary resources, ability and opportunity to: i) educate themselves (access formal or any other type of education); ii) work; iii) engage (with people, services, and in cultural civic and locally-based activities); and iv) have an “active word”, i.e. have the possibility to be influential in universal and social decisions (Australian Government, 2010):

At this point, and given the previously stated, a clarification between the concepts “resources”, “capability” and “opportunity” must be presented. First of all, “resources refer to the skills and assets people have (or various types of capital, including human, social and economic capital) and can be viewed as relating mostly to individuals, families or communities” (Australian Government, 2010:15). As presented in the same document, “capability” refers to the individual or collective capacity to consume and/or make the best use of resources and opportunities to

⁴³ Available at: <http://www.dta.org.uk/resources/glossary/socialinclusion>

achieve a given intended purpose and “opportunity” and also allow citizens to use their resources and capability to accomplish their objectives. Picture 3 shows the interactions between the three abovementioned concepts.



Picture 3 – Conceptual scope of social inclusion

Source: Australian Government, 2010:

http://www.socialinclusion.gov.au/Resources/Documents/SI_HowAusIsFaring.pdf

When fully intertwined, resources and participation – the two main components of picture 2 – are cumulatively catalyzed. “Resources help to support capabilities and opportunities, allowing people to make choices about how they wish to participate in society. In turn, participation such as work, training or connecting with friends, can then help to build people’s resources such as work experience, qualifications or support networks, which assists further participation.” (Australian Government, 2010: 15)

Resources and participation (and of course by means of their interaction) function as an intertwined system that generate the principles of social inclusion. The Australian Government (2010) assumes the following principles:

- To certify that all people with needs have access to healthcare, education and others;
- To assist and support all people to acquire competencies to enable them to work and relate with their communities;

- Governments, organizations and communities must work together to offer more and better services to those in need;
- To effort as much as possible the application of actions to prevent against and mitigate / alleviate social exclusion;
- To “benchmark” on success cases;
- “Fieldwork” (empirical studies) and social action must be set in highly frequented (especially by those in need) places, to understand how all different problems are inter-connected; and
- To promote actions with and for the citizens, which enable them to cope better with their current problems and educate them about other that may appear in the future.

Basically, to be socially included is to be able to have access to all universal rights. In this line of reasoning Ferrajoli (2001, 2004 quoted by Gacitúa-Matió *et al.*, 2009:21) presents the terminology “system of guarantees” introducing it as the “*sets of legal and administrative mechanisms that specify entitlements and obligations related to certain rights and that ensure the fulfillment of those obligations on the part of the state. The philosophical principles informing the notion of social guarantees draw heavily on John Rawls’ (1971) theory of justice*”. These principles are based on protection of freedom(s) and on the access to primary social goods, held under the objectives of attaining universal equal opportunities.

Social guarantees are according to the previously stated a set of techniques that ensure the maximum fulfillment of one’s constitutional rights acting as liaisons between legal (theoretical) declared frameworks and their actual implementation. In other words, this concept transfuses an operational significance to the notion(s) of economic and social rights. Generally, Human Rights must pass through a mechanism that grants them a more tangible (and thus less abstract), more vinculative and less normative character. The just promotion of social inclusion and Human Rights is a key-aspect for the strengthening of democracy and good governance. The logics inherent to the political process(es) intrinsic to these rights have to change. On this matter Gacitúa-Matió *et al.* (2009: 23) state that “*the starting point is not the existence of people with needs that must be addressed, but the existence of people with rights to demand certain actions, services and conduct*”.

Governments must know “their” communities well in order to prepare them for their (inclusive) development-oriented actions. Those groups’ “social features” are the ones whose understanding is the most important for policy-makers once they “contain” multiple assets of those populations, of their social organization, of their history, and also of their

lifestyles, strengths, vulnerabilities and capabilities. Inter-organizational (as well as all kinds of inter-group) relations must be accounted for and prevention and early-planning against risks and crises (whether environmental, social or economic) both within designated territories and also those transferable between contexts (Australian Government, 2009).

When planning a social inclusion program one of the first steps is to establish a diversified work group composed by researchers, policy-makers, academia and statisticians (these last ones because the availability of data and the definition of clear and adequate assessment and evaluation indicators is one of the cornerstones of the establishment of social inclusion policies (Australian Government, 2010).

Examples of interesting and innovative indicators for the recognition of the socially excluded are presented next (Australian Government, 2010):

- Ratio of people who have established by any form some contacts with family and close friends in the week prior to inquiry;
- Ratio of people involved in any kind of voluntary work in the year (twelve months) prior to inquiry;
- Ratio of people with over five years of age who are not proficient speakers of their current country of residence's language;
- Ratio of people who assess themselves as unable to establish conversations with their community members (e.g. neighbors) in matters of personal or common importance.

An effectively organized process of identification of the poorer communities is mandatory. One of the most efficient ways to undergo this process is to acquire data on unemployment. The unemployed are a group that requires close, independent and direct attention in order to enable them to improve their employment and educational situations. To have a job means to tendentially head towards inclusion both at an individual and at a societal level because high rates of employment present direct (production, labor, etc.) and indirect (lower crime rates, less social problems) social benefits. “*A socially inclusive society marked by widespread participation tends, in the view of Putnam (1993), to be high on «social capital»*” (Vinson, 2009:8). The same author affirms that large economic benefits (including higher levels of efficiency on service provision by the public sector, the enlargement of social and economically oriented entrepreneurship practices, the increasing of trust and reciprocity levels, lower expenses related with social cohesion and social conflicts, higher levels of labor capability and productivity, and the shallowness of the pit between the excluded and the rest of the population.

In an environment where stronger relations are established a resilient community is formed. *“Resilient is the ability to «bounce back» after negative experiences and to cope in unknown situations. It refers to individuals’ capacity to withstand stress and adopt positively to change. Community resilience means the capacity of communities to respond positively to crises.”* (Australian Government, 2009:5). Implicit in the previous citation is the notion of stronger and durable relations – whether they are promoted between local community leaders; governmental, religious, cultural or economic agents; teachers; and/or entrepreneurs – through which knowledge and experiences are shared in a collaborative and thus efficient way.

A success story on the previous working ethic happened in Queensland, Australia where several organizations were invited to participate in a focus group workshop. There, each of its representatives was handed out a survey where the levels of inter-connectedness between that company and the remaining agents were assessed. Data was then introduced in computer software that ran a cluster analysis on those relations. This enabled workshop organizers to read if opportunities to intertwine were being efficiently used or not.

Cartographical representation is an extremely relevant auxiliary. Tony Vinson (2007: 79) stated that this *“shows that different kinds of disadvantage tend to coincide for individuals and families in relatively small number of particular places, and that these concentrations of disadvantage tend to persist over time”* (Australian Government, 2010: 79). Low wages, precarious housing conditions, feeble health situations, low educational levels, and high unemployment rates tended to concentrate in areas of high criminality, where (lacking or inflexible) support services would be essential assets for the promotion of social inclusion. Geographical patterns are best understood through the use and representation of census data. In spite of being available only once a decade this data is an important way to monitor development and define future actions (Australian Government, 2010).

The best ways to measure social exclusion, which are also the ones that allow for the establishment of more inclusive actions, have become increasingly more complex by nowadays’ crescent migration flows. One the consequences of this is the fact that for a given spatial context information may get outdated very rapidly. For example, between 2001 and 2006 estimates point out that a total of 40% of the Australian population with over 5 years of age have changed their primary residence. Understanding why these changes have happened is instrumental for the definition of new actions (Australian Government, 2010)

When governmental agents are intending to implement new social inclusion policies it must be their primary duty to, more than artificially trying to induce consensus, be

creative in finding ways to satisfy and make different needs and aspirations compatible. Efficient policy-making must first of all cope with challenges provoked by an ever-increasing diversity. Everyone, regardless of their age, cultural background, language, socioeconomic status, health condition should be able to equally participate in a community's social networks. Embeddedness in a given community may be implemented for example through sports, cultural, festive or other entertainment activities.

Diversity is also a crucial issue on homelessness studies. Due to these individuals' job and housing issues, governmental departments dedicated to these questions are "obliged" to dedicate various resources to help these people and also those that in spite of not being homeless are at risk of falling into that situation (Northern Ireland Government, 2007). In other words, policies that promote equal housing for all citizens are also consequently important for the social integration of these least favored strata of population i.e. a direct relation between the existence of inadequate housing policies and the incidence of homelessness is easy to establish (Feantsa, 2003). Additionally, the inclusion of the homeless must also be initiated in social institutions, closer and specialized in helping these persons, offering other social services such as drug rehabilitation programs.

Children should also be keystone elements of a just and preventive social inclusion intervention since many of today's inhibiting factors for social inclusion (e.g. criminality, low school attainment, and early pregnancies) are deeply intertwined with youthness. Several social and psychological studies have centered their attention on assessing the results of social inclusion programs directed at children in need, many of whom in a pre-schooling age. Results have generally been extremely positive: "*Statistically significant benefits were found in at least two-thirds of the program reviewed. (...) The estimates of returns to society for each dollar invested extended from over one dollar to more than \$17*" (Vinson, 2009:13). Data coming from these studies have shown that these types of interventions with children are best rewarding where higher risks of exclusion are found. As it has already been expressed, employment is extremely important for social inclusion. The fact that in the same family more than one person is unemployed has a negative effect on children growing up in this environment which can lead to up a four times higher incidence of growing up in a poor and socially excluded environment (Vinson, T., 2009).

"Development can be inclusive – and reduce poverty – only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making." (United Nations Development Program, [s.d.]). There is a need to share and cooperate with the most socially disfavored. This underlines the emphasis that must be granted to social

solidarity and volunteering. Without these practices universal provision of social goods would not be satisfied leading us further away from the ambition of the establishment of a full social inclusion for a given society.

1.5.1. Inclusion at different levels

As mentioned earlier Humanitarian Aid programs are also a good way to promote social inclusion especially when they are characterized by the establishment of multi-scalar, diachronically organized and dense networks of relations and interactions between all intervening agents, i.e. an open and thus complex system. We will present next three examples of multi-scalar poverty alleviation programs whose objectives clearly present several interesting commonalities in spite of their different spatial scopes.

The first example refers to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). In the year 2000 at the Millennium Summit world leaders reaffirmed their will to aid world's vulnerable peoples, with a special focus on children. They ratified the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) aiming to promote sustainable development and poverty alleviation (UNICEF, [s.d.]). A total of 189 United Nations member-states affirmed their will to adopt and implement (until the year 2015) the following objectives (Sachs, 2005b):

- Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education
- Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women
- Goal 4: Reduce child mortality rates
- Goal 5: Improve maternal health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development

MDG's are supported by a global partnership settled upon the accomplishment of adequate national strategies and international sectorial support granted by the developed countries (United Nations Development Program, 2010). They are basically a group of tasks that must be completed in order to drastically reduce extreme poverty and its multiple dimensions until the year 2015, an ambitious objective which has never been in "risk" of turning itself into reality as much as it is now. Millions of lives can be saved; millions of people may be inserted in global economic networks, and all this at bearable costs. MDG's

try to apply notions related to the basic Human Rights, especially the rights to healthcare, education, housing and security (Sachs, 2005b).

Currently there is a widespread knowledge that millions of people all across the world are living in situations of extreme poverty, a fact translated itself in unprecedented losses in wealth and public expenses with social services. International cooperation is a fundamental element for the achievement of the MDG's and the general skewing of the pit between developed and developing countries. International aid provided by wealthier countries must be implemented in a way that contributes gradually for the reduction of the least developed countries' dependency on foreign (e.g. political, economic and social) aid (Direcção de Serviços de Planeamento Financeiro e Programação, *et al.*, 2004)

Additionally, the MDG's must be interpreted also as objectives of the poorer countries themselves, i.e. ways to un-hinder their own development. China and India are progressing as no other country is which causes many global challenges; on the contrary, the MDG's are generally fated to fell short of their intentions in Africa (Sachs, 2005b).

At the European level an interesting project, implemented in the scope of social inclusion issues, is the so-called Program for Employment and Social Solidarity (Progress). Managed by the European Commission, its objective is to financially support the accomplishment of EU's objectives for employment and social solidarity, thus contributing for an attainment of the objectives established by the Lisbon Strategy. "Progress" aims at building bridges between the European Union and its individual member states in order to unite efforts to create more and better jobs thus contributing to a more cohesive society. But to define programs and policies one has to understand the internal and external forces to which all these member-states are subject like globalization, technological development and demographic transformations (Comissão Europeia, 2006). This program is financed by the European Social Fund (2007-2013), a follow-up to four earlier programs which had ended a year earlier (2006), to rationalize and restructure financing. It functions as an integrated framework centered in areas and specific groups (Comissão Europeia, 2007).

Divided in five policy sections, Progress will support (Comissão Europeia, 2006):

- The implementation of a European Employment Strategy;
- The implementation of an open method of management in the subjects of inclusion and social welfare;
- The improvement of European population's labor, health and security conditions that enable them to properly conciliate between work and family.

- The effective implementation of the principles of non-discrimination and the transversal promotion of this guiding idea in all European policies; and
- The effective implementation of the principle of gender equality and the transversal promotion of this guiding idea in all European policies;

The success of “Progress” will ultimately depend on the types of partnerships established between national authorities, employers’ organizations, workers and NGO’s. With this program the European Commission intends to promote the coordination and convergence of all sectorial national policies. All 27 member-states and also the candidates to enter the EU and the European Economic Area (EEA) countries are covered by this program (Comissão Europeia, 2007).

A Portuguese example of an initiative developed in this ambit is the National Strategy for the Integration of the Homeless Person.⁴⁴ As made obvious by the program’s designation this is a national-wide strategy to be applied in Portugal between the 2009 and 2015. Its purpose is to promote Human Rights of Portugal’s homeless population by defining prevention, intervention and monitoring measures to be implemented in result of an articulated action between public and private entities that recognizes the complexity and multidimensionality inherent to the phenomenon. These policies and measures act upon an unstable and unpredictable group of people (the homeless) with specific characteristics.

“A estratégia corresponde a um conjunto de orientações gerais e compromissos das diferentes entidades, cuja operacionalização deve ser implementada a nível local, no âmbito das redes sociais locais” (Ministério do Trabalho e da Solidariedade Social, 2009: 6).

This program has been made possible by the creation of an inter-institutional group of organizations (public, national and local; and/or private) that has served as a think-tank on the subject and whose work has been crucial for the prosecution of the strategy’s objectives. One of the most important milestones for the strategy was the creation of a national functional definition for a “homeless person”. The four guiding principles of the Strategy are prevention, intervention, integration, and accompaniment.

⁴⁴ Available at:

http://www.feantsa.org/files/freshstart/National_Strategies/National_Strategy_2009_Portugal.pdf .

2. Evaluation

2.1. Evaluation as a Supporting Tool for Social Projects

In this context, evaluation is seen as a tool to support the strengthening of a social project in order to reveal its systematic, thorough and transparent performance (World Bank, 2009). “According to OECD, evaluations are «analytical assessments addressing results of public policies, organizations or programs that emphasize reliability and usefulness of findings» (OECD 1999)” (Blomquist, 2003:2). This definition presupposes several kinds of evaluation: evaluations at a political level, joint assessments, research studies, quick examinations, monitoring indicators and research related expenses. Each of these types of evaluation may be relevant both for monitoring and for evaluation (Blomquist, 2003).

Albeit frequently conjoined, monitoring and evaluation (*Monitoring and Evaluation – M&E*) are different processes. “Setting goals, indicators and targets for programs is at the heart of a monitoring system. The resulting information and data can be used to evaluate the performance of program intervention” (Khandker *et al.*, 2010: 8). “Effective M&E systems will endure and are based on, among other things, continued demand (a function of incentives to continue the program, as well as the value for credible information); transparency and accountability in evaluation procedures; effective management of budgets; and well-defined responsibilities among program staff members.” (Khandker *et al.*, 2010: 12).

Monitoring and evaluation should be regarded as complementary, for only in that manner can they result in (Khandker *et al.*, 2010):

- *Process evaluation* – examines how operational programs are;
- *Cost-benefit analysis* – compares the cost and the resulting benefits; and
- *Impact evaluation* – quantifies the program’s effects at personal, family and community levels.

Evaluation should be preceded by a plan, and so that nothing is left to chance, it must include (Blomquist, 2003):

- i. The evaluation goals;
- ii. Adequate evaluation methods;
- iii. The strategy for the data collection and the identification of the available sources; and
- iv. A timetable, defining what is to be produced and disclosed.

Any evaluation will face many challenges. Hasenfeld *et al.*, [n.d.]⁴⁵ justify this: firstly, because a great number of agents is involved and policy makers are required to make evaluation useful and important to all; secondly, because it takes place within social, political and economic dynamics; thirdly, because of the differences that exist between what is programmed and what actually becomes operative, due to the limitation of resources, to the unexpected behavior of the actors, to the uncertainty about technological services and to unforeseen difficulties regarding organization and staff. Such problems/challenges far transcend technical aspects: “*The issue at hand is much broader – it is about how the evaluation is carried out, how it affects the program, and what roles the evaluators assume.*” (Hasenfeld *et al.* [n.d.]: 1).

As a rule, the developed evaluation system stores information about the intervenient persons and services. Most social programs try to develop and maintain an adequate management information system (*MIS*), which is a system that records the participants’ actions, providing useful data for posterior analysis and monitoring. (Hasenfeld *et al.*, [n.d.]).

It is possible to distinguish between operational evaluation and impact evaluation. Operational evaluation verifies if the programs have been implemented and whether there is a gap between what was planned and the actual results. It is a retrospect type of evaluation that follows previously defined goals and indicators, in order to help understand what should or shouldn’t be done in future projects. Impact evaluation examines whether the changes in the beneficiary population’s well-being derive only from the intervention program(s) or from other factors. Operational and impact evaluation are therefore complementary (Khandker, 2010).

There is also a distinction between qualitative and quantitative evaluation. For example, qualitative evaluation (that uses unquantifiable data) may help to identify mechanisms through the programs that have an impact, such as enquiries, that support operational evaluation. Nevertheless, this type of evaluation doesn’t allow for the knowledge of what would happen in the program’s absence, whilst a quantitative analysis is very important due to the statistic potential of the program(s)’s resulting impact. The conjoining of qualitative and quantitative methods (or mixed-methods approach) is beneficial for the understanding of the programs’ efficiency (Khandker, 2010).

⁴⁵ Available at http://www.irvine.org/assets/pdf/pubs/evaluation/Eval_Social.pdf

The evaluation of quantitative impacts may occur *ex ante* or *ex post*. *Ex ante* evaluation attempts to measure the future impact of programs and policies. *Ex post* evaluation measures the impact resulting from the program's beneficiaries; it has immediate benefits and it reflects reality, yet this form of evaluation is usually much more costly at monetary level than the *ex ante* evaluation, because it requires data collection of the studied groups as well as other social and economic factors that may have been influential during the intervention. This expense, however, may be mitigated if the necessary data is regularly updated and easily manageable, which will translate into higher levels of efficiency (Khandker, 2010; Regalia, 1999).

Two groups must be considered always: one group that is subject to the program and one group that isn't, the so-called "comparison group" or "control group", that should include persons that share the maximum possible common features with the beneficiaries of the social program and that are in no way affected by the program's policies. The success of an evaluation depends on the choice of a good group to compare (Khandker, 2010).

2.2. Evaluation methodology

Next is an example of a methodology that aims to evaluate the difference in state expense when homeless people remain on the street and when they are transferred to Supportive Housing (*SH*).

Among other reasons, we have chosen to analyze/describe this practical case because at the moment Lisbon's City Council is conducting experimental projects (*Casas Primeiro*) based on initiatives that have been tested in the USA (*Housing First*). We therefore think that whenever possible it will be interesting to present the evaluation methodology of social projects evaluation in the field of support to the homeless population, which constitutes a specific case that has been developed in the USA. Such as previously mentioned in the introduction to this report, the second chapter will be further developed in a subsequent report to this research project.

It is considered that the evaluation may be done in two different methods: the first one, where you collect previously stored data, including those obtained from the Homeless

Management Information System (HMIS); and the second, where you conduct interviews to add useful information to the one that exists in the first method.

The HMIS is a division of the Human Services Information System (HSIS) that exposes only the features that are essential to the evaluation of homeless people. HMIS projects are challenging for four different reasons: firstly, because they place technical requirements on intervenient institutions that often do not disclose or even manage the data; secondly, there are several groups and interests that are different and sometimes conflictive and that must cooperate in elaborating the HMIS⁴⁶; thirdly, these projects treat very delicate data that require privacy protection and that are stored on the database; and fourthly, these projects deal with severe source restriction, especially in a moment of financial crisis. Like we have said before, social evaluation is performed in a dynamic environment and the actual management of the HMIS project should embrace flexibility and reject inertia. This is what differentiates an HMIS project from another computational project (Friedman, D. e Gutierrez O., 2005).

The interview is a very important methodology, used to collect data that cannot be found with researching the available services. When implemented, it should be applied periodically to allow for the understanding of the evolution of the services requirement. In its absence, the exact cost of the services used cannot be calculated.

The cost evaluation takes several years to conclude because after the entrance in a SH it is necessary to wait and see if the subjects' have or haven't a need to consume certain services. The elaboration of a program is a slow task: in the minimum period of a year after entering the SH, it is necessary to wait for more than 100 tenants (according to Metraux, 100 is an insufficient number) to have a controlled use of services (it is recommended that in the first three years the study covers all the tenants). Supposing that there is a register of the services over a two-year period, given the data delay and the time required for the analysis, the cost results won't be available until over six years after the implementation of the plan. To program the study, the existing political and logistical aspects must be

⁴⁶ Gillard (cited in Friedman D., Gutierrez O., 2005: 514) defends that in this type of management projects, the organization is a tridimensional dynamic: "(a) the project office: the HMIS central project organization; (b) intra-organization: the user community within multiple and distinct agencies; and (c) inter-organization: government and funding agencies, advocacy groups, HMIS oversight boards or committees and the community at large".

included. It would be interesting to notice the nature and the extent of the services necessary before entrance in the SH.

One of the first tasks is to define which persons will be studied. They should be voluntaries, informed about the purpose of the study and of the benefits that their contribution will bring to the understanding of the study. This expected consent is under supervision by an Institutional Review Board (IRB) and constitutes a base for the gathering of information that may be lacking from the administrative services.

The need to share information between institutions must not overlook the data protection to ensure the privacy of the participants. This and other reasons determine that there should be at least one IRB. Charitable institutions must know who will be evaluating them and how and in what they can be helped. It is also their job to cooperate in defining data protection measures.

One group composed of homeless people that will not be placed on SH will be compared with another group entering SH in the subject of the use of services and its costs. Defining this control group is a search challenge for similar individuals (for example, in age, gender, life path). If a reliable control group cannot be found, the history of the persons entering the SH must be deepened.

The key to any cost analysis is to access the register of services used by the persons in the SH, which is a lengthy process.

The first disbursement must be destined to the collection of data and later its purpose will be defined. The researchers must be experienced collectors of administrative data and must ensure they are using reliable sources.

Potential sources of information for a cost study:

- i. Homeless services
- ii. Public assistance
- iii. Criminal justice
- iv. Employment
- v. Health and mental health care

A team of experts will permanently monitor all the stages of the process and will be empowered to:

- 1) Combine and manage administrative data in lengthy and diverse databases, as well as ensure their confidentiality;
- 2) Understand such details of the investigation such as the results it will provide and the methodology that will be used to obtain them;
- 3) Know the features of the comparison group and the proceedings that were used in their selection;
- 4) Know the team that will lead the relationship with the homeless persons;
- 5) Know and negotiate the fee to be paid for the access to the sources;
- 6) Define the method to calculate the cost of the services used;
- 7) Analyze the enquiries and the qualitative information. Decide which instruments will be used to collect reliable data and to integrate it with other information.

To determine the cost of the project it is necessary to include:

- 1) The investigating team's participation in the access to the data;
- 2) The cost of the data collection;
- 3) The number of sources;
- 4) The incorporation and definition of the control group (when existing);
- 5) Data comparing;
- 6) Obtaining people's contribution (if necessary);
- 7) Analysis complexity;
- 8) Qualitative data management (when included);
- 9) Presentations and travel;
- 10) Result updating;
- 11) General administrative expenses of the organizations associated to the researchers.

2.3. Case study 1: The Regional Plan for the Homeless 2009/2011

2.3.1. Brief project presentation

Questions of poverty and extreme social exclusion, including the issue of homelessness, have led to an increased concern of the government of the Autonomous Region of Madeira (ARM). This has generated a need to establish a plan aimed at creating

“a set of measures destined to reduce social risks, to ensure the rights of these citizens and to promote homeless persons’ social (re)inclusion” (RPFH, sd.:7).

The Regional Plan For the Homeless (RPFH) was elaborated with an aim to promote the social inclusion of the homeless persons and to significantly contribute to their quality of life. In order to achieve this general goal, the plan rests on three cross-cutting axis:

Axis 1 – Information, raising awareness, prevention

This axis is directed towards the adoption of measures that allow for the identification of persons at risk and for the possibility to prevent and avoid street situations, for which the creation of intervention mechanisms to maintain social and housing inclusion is necessary.

This axis includes actions that enable a deeper knowledge of the reality and the disclosure of that knowledge to all institutions that work in this field and, subsequently, to all society, this being one of the fundamental ways to prevent such an extreme form of exclusion.

Axis 2 – Qualification of the intervention

In the area of intervention qualification there are measures that “aim to promote and develop institutional articulation as well as create work instruments common to various institutions” (RPFH, sd:20). This plan comprehends a partnership model, that is, all proceedings, whether of intervention or evaluation, must be common to all partners.

This axis also includes qualification measures for the technicians that intervene in this specific area. It is therefore expected to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the services’ intervention and the responses directed at the homeless population.

Axis 3 – Services and responses

Social responses directed at the homeless population are contemplated in this axis. It is thus intended to begin by ensuring “minimal rights inherent to each human person and proceed to create mechanisms to support and promote autonomy and social (re)inclusion of the homeless person” (*idem*). These services aim mainly to create and improve social responses directed to the homeless, guaranteeing the effectiveness and the efficiency of the intervention and of the monitoring of these individuals.

Services contemplated in this axis are:



2.3.2. Goals and targets

The various axis previously presented define a set of goals and targets to achieve. The next table summarizes the group of intervention measures that aim to achieve the goals established in each axis.

<i>Axis</i>	<i>Goals</i>	<i>Intervention measures</i>
Information, awareness-raising and prevention	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To foster the adoption of a single definition of homeless; 2. To promote information of the civil society; 3. To develop the knowledge about this problem. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. To develop actions destined to promote the definition of homeless; 2.1. Social marketing actions; 2.2. Integrating awareness actions; 3.1. Surveying and characterizing the homeless persons in ARM.
Intervention qualification	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To create and develop partnership work tools; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. To apply common information and monitoring instruments;

	<p>2. To qualify the professionals that work in the area of homelessness.</p>	<p>1.2. Providing the partners with health information systems enabling them to act with ARM;</p> <p>2.1. To build a training referential;</p> <p>2.2. To provide training to the technicians that intervene in this area;</p> <p>2.3. Enabling the health professionals to deal with this population;</p> <p>2.4. To promote the cooperation between different health structures and other agents that intervene with ARM;</p>
<p>Services and responses</p>	<p>1. To ensure that all uninstitutionalized persons get an adequate response, avoiding situations of homelessness;</p> <p>2. To ensure the monitoring of all homeless persons, enabling their sustainable social reinsertion;</p>	<p>1.1. To create a local accommodation service that deals with risk uninstitutionalization situations;</p> <p>1.2. To create a partnership protocol with institutions that receive and monitor homeless persons;</p> <p>2.1. To participate in awareness-raising sessions in order to enable integration in social housing;</p> <p>2.2. Performing monitoring actions in housing and/or neighborhood context;</p> <p>2.3. Street team project;</p> <p>2.4. Intervention of the security forces in cases of risk to public integrity caused by the homeless;</p> <p>2.5. Temporary shelter centers;</p> <p>2.6. Proper feeding;</p> <p>2.7. Services to support personal hygiene;</p> <p>2.8. Occupational workshop;</p>

	<p>3. To develop and guarantee conditions that promote every person's autonomy, according to their individual needs, at various levels.</p>	<p>2.9. A space for preventing social exclusion.</p> <p>3.1. Provision health-care to homeless users;</p> <p>3.2. Creating an action protocol in attending to the homeless;</p> <p>3.3. Promoting education for health sessions;</p> <p>3.4. Self-help group;</p> <p>3.5. Promoting psychosocial monitoring of homeless persons;</p> <p>3.6. Employment club;</p> <p>3.7. Selling CAIS magazine;</p> <p>3.8. Fostering the necessary conditions to integrate homeless persons in the work market;</p> <p>3.9. Promoting arts and crafts;</p> <p>3.10. Training and developing personal and social skills;</p> <p>3.11. Developing sport activities;</p> <p>3.12. Adult training and education courses;</p> <p>3.13. Providing temporary social housing for training purposes;</p> <p>3.14. Creating a legal counseling service.</p>
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Source: Based on RPFH, 2009

2.3.3. Plan evaluation and monitoring

This subchapter is particularly important given the project's dedication to the evaluation and monitoring of plans regarding the homeless, since only through good and bad examples can better intervention plans regarding the homeless may be conceived.

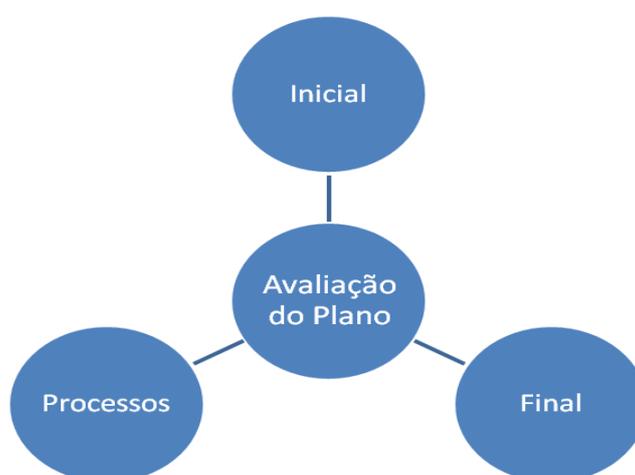
In the case of RPFH, Madeira's Social Security Center is the entity responsible for monitoring the plan. This monitoring occurs on a quarterly basis and is performed through instruments adequate to gather information that allows to determinate whether several defined goals are being achieved or not. This plan also foresees quarterly meetings with partner entities, in order to "explain and debate the *status quo* in the evolution of the

fulfillment of the plan's measures and activities, as well as discuss specific cases and relevant issues" (RPFH, n.d.:34).

Every year a monitoring report will be drawn in order to disclose some *interim* results to the partner entities and to the media.

This plan's evaluation is a fundamental step in the whole process and is considered "an instrument for reflection and development, destined to improve the work that is being done" (*idem*).

The evaluation process is divided in three stages:



Initial evaluation corresponds to the initial diagnosis. This diagnosis is based on data collection (both internal and external data), on the exchange of information between partner entities and on a joint reflection about the issue of homelessness.

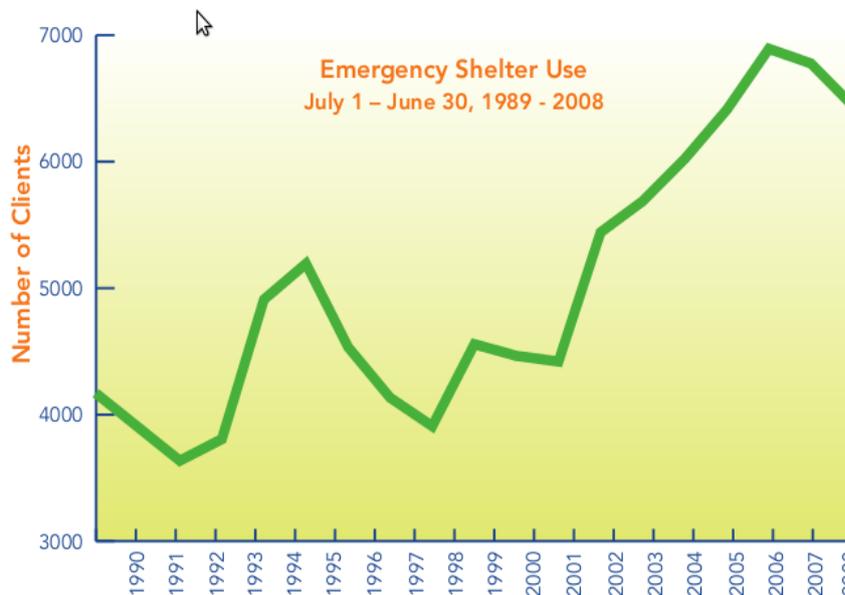
The second stage of the evaluation process is the evaluation of processes which consists mainly in the monitoring of the plan and the assessment of how the measures predicted in the plan are being fulfilled. There is also a provision for an annual report of the activities of the partner entities acting directly with the homeless. This report aims at evaluating the performance of the activities foreseen in the annual activities plan of the previous year.

Finally, the final evaluation, to be performed at the conclusion of the plan, "will be done through the issuing of a plan evaluation report, that is, a report of all the activities performed in the three years between 2009 and 2011. This report should be divulged to the public and constitute a starting point for the elaboration of a future plan" (*idem*).

2.4. Case study 2: Housing First Program of Rhode Island

2.4.1. Brief presentation of the program

The lack of competitive priced housing associated to the economical and financial crisis of the Rhode Island State (USA) has had significant impact on the economic situation of many individuals and families in that state. This juncture has resulted in a growing demand for emergency shelter from the population (graph XX). The graph shows that the population's demand for shelters has grown very much in the last few years. That is due in a large part to the real estate crisis that has affected the country and the state.



Source: Rhode Island Emergency Food & Shelter Board Report, 1990-2008

Over the last few years, this situation has resulted in the elaboration of a set of strategies aimed at supporting the segment of population facing the more severe difficulties. The Housing First Program of Rhode Island (HFRI) emerged out of a partnership between the State of Rhode Island and local community associations, namely the United Way of Rhode Island. This program targeted a group of 50 chronic homeless persons and gave them a house and a set of support services. These individuals had also serial mental diseases or a history of substance abuse.

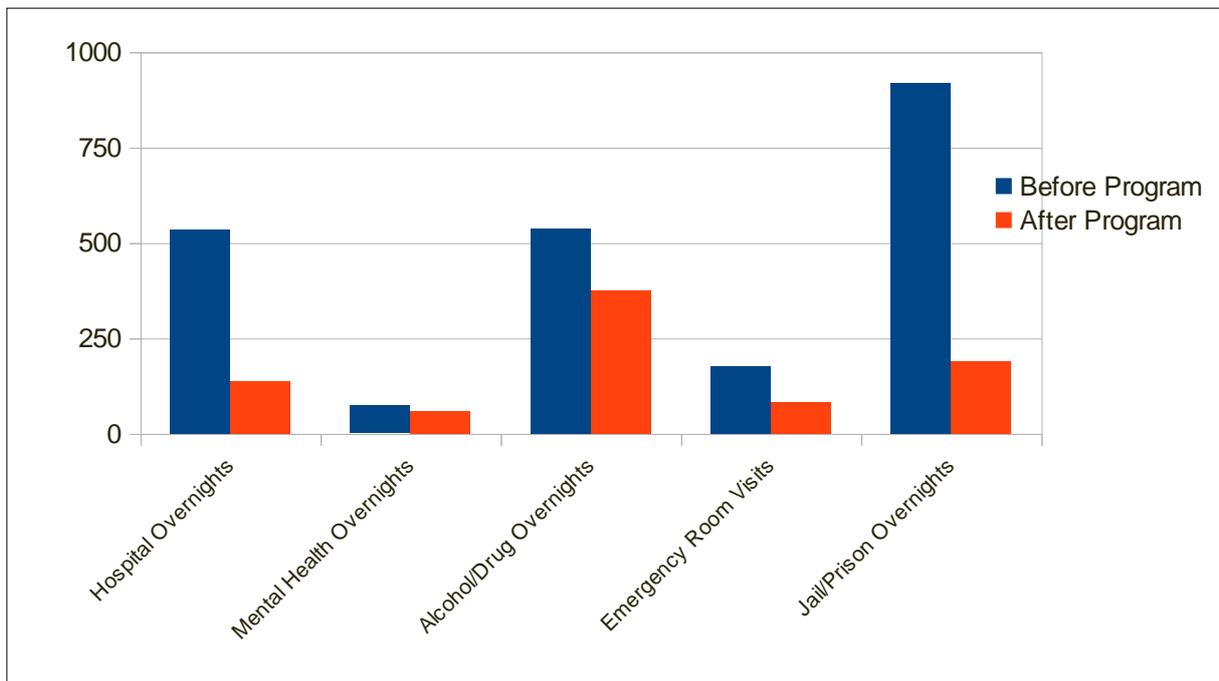
The programs premise was the “Housing First” philosophy, that is, the principle that interventions and social support are more effective if the recipients are in their own house instead of in emergency shelters or even transition homes.

This program was launched in 2006, with the support of United Way of Rhode Island, of Corporation for Supportive Housing and of the State of Rhode Island. The funds management was executed by the Housing Resources Commission. During the first year of this project’s implementation, it supported 50 homeless individuals, adult and single, that were integrated in various subsidized houses. Each of those individuals was homeless for an average of 7.6 years. Two years after the beginning of the Project, 90% of the users was still integrated in permanent support housing.

2.4.2. Project’s evaluation

The evaluation of the previously described Project began in 2006 and ended in 2008. The main tools used were interviews to the programs clients, in a total of 41 base interviews and 63 follow-up interviews.

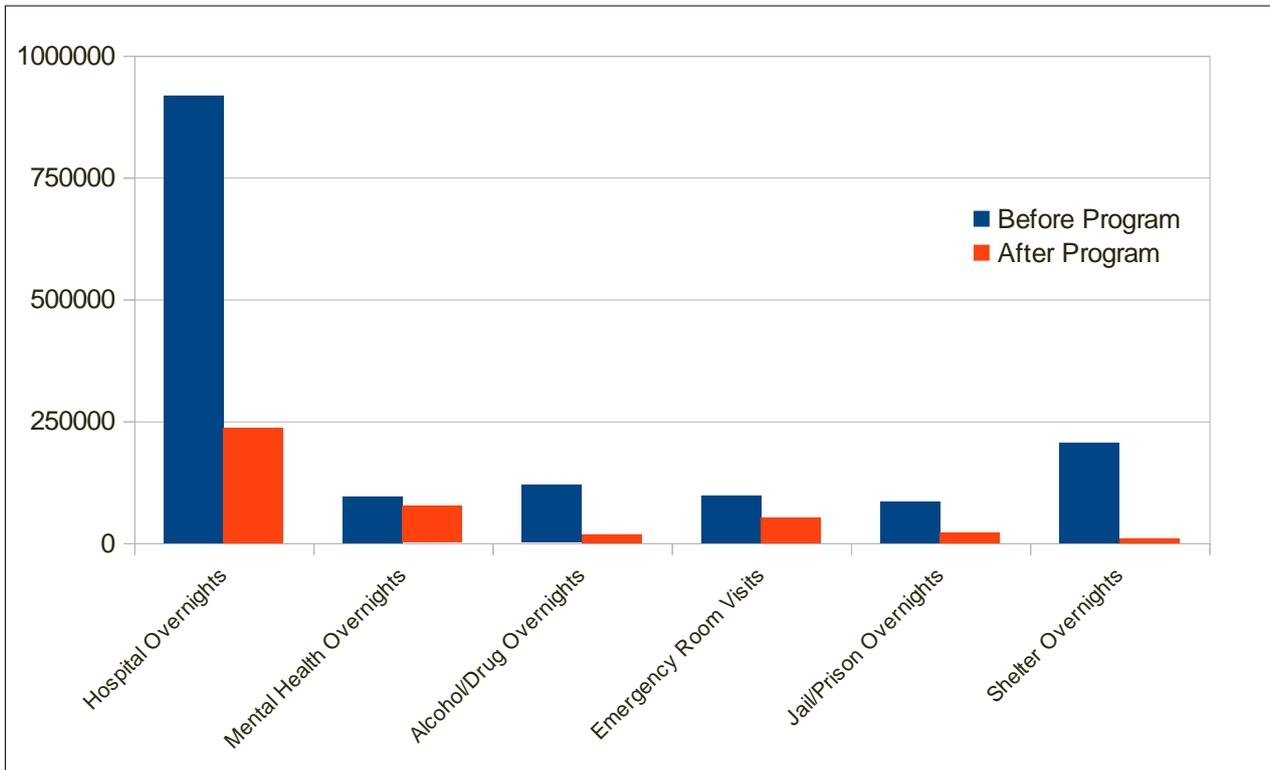
According to the researchers involved in this project, its results were quite positive. In fact, what data shows is that there was a significant reduction in the demand for public



Picture 4. – Demand for public services before and after entering Housing First Program

Apart from allowing for the inclusion of homeless persons, this program also generates remarkable savings for the Estate and for the tax-payers (see picture 5). In fact, as the program unfolded, there was a substantial reduction in the customers’ use of services and in the related costs, resulting in savings to the amount of \$400,000. These savings are

the fruit of the clients' permanence in their new homes. As a matter of fact, returning to the street is very damaging to the individuals' health, both physically as mentally and socially. That would have drastically elevated the costs for tax-payers, since it would have increased the demand for public health services, for punitive services, for shelters, etc.



Picture 5 – Estimated Cost (in \$US) for year before and after entering Housing First Program

Of a total of 41 individuals that were interviewed, 38 have remained in permanent housing, whether on the program itself or in other places, in permanent housing situations. The other elements have met different fates. One has died of an overdose and two are reported missing. Therefore, the success rate is of about 98% which, compared with other programs, represents a truly remarkable achievement.

The users themselves acknowledged the programs' success. Before entering the program, 93% of the users considered their housing conditions to be very unsatisfactory. However, one year after the beginning of the Project, 78% of the users said they were very satisfied and 12% said they were satisfied with their housing arrangements.

Level of satisfaction with housing conditions (%)

	Before the Program	After the Program
Very unsatisfied	93	5
Unsatisfied	2	2
Neutral	2	2
Satisfied	0	12
Very satisfied	2	78

Users also revealed that they had been improving greatly in their physical and mental health, as well as in their social relations. In fact, while they were homeless about half of them had rated their health conditions as bad or very bad and two thirds of the participants confessed that their health conditions had made it difficult to initiate relationships with other persons.

After the beginning of the program, more than half rated their health conditions as good or improved and only one third stated that their deficiencies limited their social relations.

Level of satisfaction with physical, mental and social health (%)

	Before the Program	After the Program
Excellent	2	5
Very good	5	15
Good	15	27
Sufficient	32	32
Bad	34	19
Very bad	12	2

In short, the Housing First Program of Rhode Island has been a true success and even exceeded the results of other similar programs in the country. The project's evaluation demonstrated the advantages that such a program will have on economy, on health and on the social integration of people that without this kind of support would hardly ever change their near miserable life conditions. In effect, the results achieved showed that the HFRI program resulted in significant savings for the state and substantial improvements in the users' physical and mental health.

3. Evaluation of the supporting strategies for the homeless in the city of Lisbon

3.1. Introductory note

As mentioned in the first report, the Homeless Person Platform (HPP) is an institutional partnership, included in Lisbon's Social Network and composed of entities that intervene, whether directly or indirectly, with the homeless. The Platform's geographic scope matches the perimeter of Lisbon's municipality district.

The Platform's mission is to **implement the City Plan For the Homeless**, ensuring the continuity and sustainability of impact and of results and its main objectives consist in:

1. Elaborating its Internal Operation Regulation.
2. Defining an Annual Action Plan and its execution schedule.
3. Elaborating and providing the Local Council for Social Action (LCSA) with progress reports.
4. Defining the production protocol, as well as gathering and systematizing information with the executing entities.
5. Managing the City Plan's IT communication platform.
6. Managing the City Plan's result presentation in the LCSA.
7. Arranging an annual communication event dedicated to the City Plan.
8. Presenting the LCSA with the execution report.

Considering its strategic goal of implementing a new intervention model that focuses on the homeless person, the HPP has directed its activities towards the three intervention axes that the City Plan defines as priorities:

- Axis I – Reorganizing and optimizing the equipment and services network;
- Axis II – Implementing an intervention model integrated in the city of Lisbon;
- Axis III – Qualifying the intervention

It should be remembered that Axis 1 aims for the *integrated management of resources/responses in the city of Lisbon* or in other words “(...) *a group of actions oriented to intersectorial articulation, to the definition and channeling of answers towards the population’s welfare and to the elaboration of plan with specific responses (...)*” (CPFH:41). It should also be noted that this group faced great difficulty in defining structures and responses to the city once it was clear that there wasn’t a true knowledge of the homeless population in Lisbon and of the responses it required. Therefore, apart from the need to deeply understand this phenomenon there is a need to know and reorganize the existing responses.

Its main actions are:

- 1 – The evaluation of the existing responses and the proposal to develop new models;
- 2 – The construction of a plan with emergency responses, with monitoring and insertion;
- 3 – Optimizing the street teams for signaling and monitoring the homeless;
- 4 – Maximizing the benefits of the institutions that distribute food;
- 5 – Evaluating the conditions for reopening public baths;
- 6 – Adaptation of georeference systems to the homeless population – charting the equipments in the city of Lisbon;
- 7 – Identifying the areas where there is a higher concentration of homeless persons in order to establish the location for the Local Support Centers;
- 8 – Implementing an emergency center with an accommodation structure;
- 9- Creating a response of transition homes with the appropriate technical surveillance (in a Housing First logic).

Axis 2 seeks to implement “(...) *an integrated intervention model, with a proactive and preventive nature, directed to the homeless persons of Lisbon, through a different set of actions aiming for the definition of stages and circuits in the integrated network, as well as the assurance of a coordinated and timely intervention, focused on the homeless person, in order to converge and support the needs of the population.*

This is the axis that foresees actions to meet some of the suggestions that are more frequently referred in the Forum and whose relevance appears to have since been confirmed by the reflections and opinion exchanges between the technicians (...)” (CPFH:41).

Next is the enunciation of some of the planned actions:

- 1 – Definition of an integrated intervention model for the city;
- 2 – Creation of a procedures manual for the intervention strategies in risk factors and risk situations;
- 3 – Definition of the model and of the operating role of the process manager or case manager;
- 4 – Definition of the principle guidelines and criteria to become a process manager;
- 5 – Creation of a digital platform (a shared register of entities according to their intervention level, with the variable «on-line vacancies management»);
- 6 – Implementation of the model, with a view to the social and professional reintegration and capacity building of the homeless person;
- 7 – Creation of a website destined to the homeless person, providing on-line information about the existing resources and responses in Lisbon.

Axis 3 – Improving and qualifying interventions, provides for “(...) *training and qualification of agents, leaders and organizations as one of the main pillars of any deep change at intervention level. Such a change is unanimously referred to as necessarily structural and not just consisting of a superficial rearrangement of procedures. Some of the Plan’s main concerns are the introduction of articulation elements and mechanisms, the clarification of good practices, partners’ involvement – at technical and leadership levels – and the institutions participation in an integrated operating model (...)*”(CPFH:42).

Some of the foreseen actions:

- 1 – Training and action program for the intervening agents (e.g. the third sector's management/supervision and enabling model);
- 2 – Capacity building of the technicians to train them to integrated service delivery;
- 3 – Evaluation of the referential good practices;
- 4 – Training the leaders in the field of qualification processes;
- 5 – Raising the health professionals' awareness.

Finally, we must mention that this City Plan is in accordance with the National Strategy, since both were created simultaneously, and considering that one of the members of our group (High Commissioner for Health) was present in both work groups there is a mutual knowledge of work developed. Moreover, the definition of homeless person derived from a synergy between both work groups.

These three axes are intimately connected because the integrated intervention model being defined is articulated with the set of equipments and services proposed for implementation in Lisbon. Likewise, the training directed towards the better qualification of those who deal with the homeless persons should be not only be designed from the training needs in the institutions, but should also be based on the integrated intervention model that has been proposed and should be closely linked to the National Strategy for the Homeless.

During its first year, HPP has prioritized the actions in Axis I, which constitutes a structuring line for the actions in the other two axes (see Table 1). Therefore, based on the diagnosis made when the City Plan was conceived, on the different profiles of the homeless persons and on the criteria of the National Strategy, the HPP has elaborated a proposal defining a network of *ideal* responses, characterized in four different types:

1. Emergency Center, with a welcoming and accommodating response;
2. Temporary Accommodation Centers;
3. Transition Housing;
4. Individual Housing, adopting the housing first model or functioning as a second line response.

Apart from these responses, there are other, not directed towards lodging but aiming to the inclusion of the homeless, and working as a form of support and as a bridge for more autonomous life projects. In this category we shall include social support centers,

occupational workshops, insertion communities that do not include lodging, etc. There are also street teams that in the integrated intervention model may be the interface between the persons that remain on the street and the directed responses.

Table 1 - Axis I – Reorganizing and optimizing the equipments and services network

Axis I – Reorganizing and optimizing the equipments and services network	
Proposed actions	Current status
1 – Evaluation of existing responses and proposal for the development of new models.	Done
2 – Construction of an emergency response, monitoring and insertion plan.	Done
3 – Optimizing the street teams for signaling and monitoring homeless persons.	Proposal has been made
4 – Maximizing the benefits of food distribution institutions.	Proposal has been made
5 – Evaluating the conditions for the reopening of public baths.	Currently being studied
6 – Georeference systems adapted to the homeless population – charting the equipments in the city of Lisbon.	Done
7 – Identifying the areas of higher concentration of homeless persons in order to establish the location for the Local Support Centers.	Done
8 – Implementing an emergency center with an accommodation structure.	Proposal has been made
9 – Creating a response of transition homes with the appropriate technical surveillance (in a Housing First logic).	Proposal has been made

The HPP has also evaluated the existing responses to the homeless in Lisbon and elaborated a data collection instrument and an instruction manual for filling it in. This evaluation took place during the month of May and in the beginning of June 2009. Thirty six institutions were visited, but we shall focus on the results of lodging responses.

This evaluation has permitted to assess the experience of articulating the work developed by the different organizations in the dedicated network.

Table 2 - Axis II – Integrated intervention in the city of Lisbon

Axis II – Integrated intervention in the city of Lisbon	
Proposed actions	Current status
1 – Definition of an Intervention Model for the city.	Currently being studied
2 – Evaluation of reference good practices.	Currently being developed
3 – Creation of a procedure manual for interventions strategies in risk and situation factors.	Depending on the achievement of Action 1
4 – Definition of the model / role functions for the case/process manager.	Currently being studied
5 – Guide of principles and criteria definition for process managers.	Depending on the achievement of Action 4
6 – Creating a digital platform (a shared register of entities by intervention level and of the variable on-line vacancy management).	Under work with GIMAE
6 – Implementing the model aimed at the reintegration and social and professional enabling of the homeless persons.	Depending on the achievement of Action 1
7 – Creating a website to provide on-line information about the existing resources and proposals for the homeless in Lisbon.	Depending on the achievement of Axis 1

Regarding Axis III, the application of this evaluation instrument has allowed for the elaboration of a survey of the training needs in the organizations that deal with the homeless.

Table 3 – Axis III – Intervention qualification

Axis III – Intervention qualification	
Proposed actions	Current status
1 – Training and action program to the intervening agents (e.g. management model/monitoring and enabling the third sector).	Needs survey done
2 – Enabling the technicians for integrated services enabling.	To perform in cooperation with the GIMAE
3 – Training the leaders in the area of qualification programs.	To perform in cooperation with the GIMAE
4 – Raising awareness of the health professionals.	To perform in cooperation with the GIMAE

3.2. Responses with lodging

Our report has adopted the expression «shelter center», although the Social Security Director of I.S.S., IP uses a broader concept – Temporary Lodging Center – not specifically directed towards the homeless population, which means *a social response, equipment developed, directed to the accommodation of needy adults for a limited period of time and aiming for the channeling to a more adequate social response*. Its goals are: i) *providing temporary lodging*; ii) *ensuring the satisfaction of Basic survival needs*; iii) *supporting the definition of a life project*. It's aimed at *adult persons in a situation of need, namely the fluctuating population, the homeless population and other groups in a social emergency situation, with a goal to provide temporary lodging, to satisfy basic survival necessities and to support the definition of a life project*.⁴⁷

Next we shall present the main conclusions of the above evaluation, promoted by the HPP and directed to the shelter centers, to the insertion communities with lodging and to the Housing First project, which occurred during the month of May and the beginning of June 2009.

⁴⁷ Consulted at <http://www2.seg-social.pt/left.asp?03.06.05.01>

The following responses were indentified:

- Shelter Centers:
 - Temporary Shelter Center Mãe D'Água, of SCML (CATMA), with 36 beds (6 emergency beds destined to accommodate single individuals of both sexes, with unstable address);
 - Temporary Lodging Center for the Homeless, run by the Salvation Army (CAX), with 75 beds (7 emergency beds destined to single individuals of both sexes, with unstable address);
 - Graça Shelter, run by the AMI, with 26 camas, destined to accommodate single male individuals professionally integrated;
 - Lisbon Night Shelters Association, with 55 beds, destined to accommodate single male individuals;
 - Night Shelter of the Social Support Center of Anjos, of SCML (CAN), with 15 beds, destined to accommodate single male individuals actively searching for a job/professional integration;
 - Temporary Lodging Center of Beato, run by the Vitae Association (CAB), with 271 beds, destined to single individuals, of both sexes, with unstable address;
 - Lodging Center Pedro Arrupe, run by the Jesuit Services to the Refugees (JRS), with 25 beds, destined to accommodate individuals of sexes, single emigrants or families with underage children.

Table 4 presents a summary of the Shelter Center in the city of Lisbon, identifying the financing entities and the capacity/gender ratio, in a total of 503 beds.

- Transition housing:
 - Alcântara Residence of CIC Portugal – Association for Cooperation, Exchange and Culture, with 8 beds, destined to accommodate single male individuals, professionally integrated.
- Housing First:

- Housing First Project, promoted by the Association for Psychosocial Study and Integration – AEIPS, with 50 places for individuals of both sexes and/or families, with mental illness, in individual apartments.

Table 4

Shelter Centers	Financing entities	Number of beds/gender	
		M	F
Night Shelter Association	CDL/ ISS, IP	55	-
Graça Shelter	CML	26	-
Xabregas Shelter	CML+CDL/ ISS, IP	65	10
Temporary Lodging Center of Beato	CML+CDL/ ISS,IP+IDT	246	25
Night Shelter of the Social Support Center of Anjos	SCML	15	-
Lodging Center Pedro Arrupe	CDL/ ISS, IP	18	7
Temporary Shelter Center Mãe D'Água	SCML	24	12
	Partial total	449	54
	TOTAL n.º of BEDS	503	

The shelter centers that welcome the female population are only four: CATMA, with 12 beds, CAX with 10 beds, CAB with 25 beds and Pedro Arrupe Center, with 7 beds, in a total of 54 beds, according to Table 4.

Except for the Pedro Arrupe Lodging Center and CATMA, none of the existing centers has responses for the accommodation of families or single persons with underage children.

As for transition houses, the existing responses are directed only towards male individuals.

The only individual housing response in Lisbon is the Housing First project, which accommodates persons of both sexes and/or families/friends.

After analyzing Responses with Lodging it is clear that there are no emergency shelter centers and only two shelter centers with emergency beds, in a total of 13 beds (6 beds in

Most of the premises/physical spaces were built in adapted locations, therefore revealing some limitations regarding airing and natural light, as well as architectonic barriers to mobility impaired users.

Regarding the type of rooms, none of the shelter centers has individual rooms and the centers with more beds resort to bunk beds. That is the case of CAB, which has rooms with eight beds and notoriously small areas. Also in CAB there aren't enough sanitary facilities and baths for all its 271 users, nor any minimal privacy conditions (doors are absent from the hygiene facilities and from the showers).

As for other shelter centers we have seen that, except for CATMA and CAN, each with three bed rooms, all others have rooms with five or six beds. In these shelter centers, there is more favorable ratio between the number of sanitary facilities/baths and the number of users.

The persons in charge of shelter centers said there are no waiting lists, which is quite an intriguing situation, considering there are 1200 homeless persons, as mentioned in the first report and as concluded by a study promoted by the street teams of several institutions that work in the city of Lisbon.

The Responses with Lodging provide a diversified number of services, namely welcoming, monitoring and referral, as well as psychosocial support, lodging, nourishing, personal hygiene, clothing treatment, occupational activities, legal support, maintenance of the housing space, access to and use of resources and community services. Except for CATMA, Graça Shelter and Night Shelter Association, all other shelter centers provide primary health care, for which they have qualified technicians. These responses, however, use «community resources».

The shelter center's opening hours is limited to night time and users must leave the premises until 9:00 a.m. This is an inappropriate situation for people with health problems, who have to leave and spend the whole day on the street in spite of being ill.

The opening hours issue doesn't apply to other Responses with Lodging – transition housing and housing first, which can be enjoyed by the homeless according to their needs.

All Responses with Lodging have internal regulations and develop their activities accordingly.

As for human resources, we have seen that staff is composed by a technical team, auxiliary personnel and kitchen personnel. If, in an ideal situation, the equipments had to function 24 hours/365 days, the staff would have to be reinforced, resulting in higher financial costs. That is impossible, considering the current economic/financial juncture, since it would imply that the financing entities review their agreements/protocols.

The HPP proposes the creation of an emergency center for the city of Lisbon, with 30 beds and the possibility to remain for a maximum of 30 days (currently, emergency beds are available only for 24 hours or 72 hours in weekends and holidays).

The HPP also worries about the cohabitation of couples and/or families with single persons, proposing the creation of responses to the needs of such groups and, more specifically, to the situations of pregnant women that require a special response.

The HPP also wishes to propose for the creation of a diversified number of other responses, such as transition housing and individual housing, in intent to offer different solutions to such a heterogeneous population as the homeless.

3.3. Primary data: A questionnaire in three municipally financed shelters

In our final report, we have tried to draw the profile of the homeless person that sleeps in shelters financed by the municipality (Table 4), namely analyzing variables such as age, gender and professional status, trying to understand what kind of support is necessary to remove these persons from homelessness.

The questionnaires have been applied in Lodging Center of Beato, Graça and Xabregas, on the 18th, 19th and 20th August 2010, after dinner, between 8:00 p.m. and 11:30 p.m.

The Shelter Center of Beato, located in premises belonging to the municipality of Lisbon, at Rua Gualdim Pais, n.º 97, is managed by VITAE – Solidarity and International Development Association, through the celebration of a cooperation agreement dated December 1st 1999, between CDL/ ISS, IP and Lisbon City Hall. It is destined to homeless persons of both sexes (246 men and 25 women), above 18 years of age. It provides, among other services, nourishing, personal hygiene, clothes treatment, medical and nursing care, methadone administration and psychosocial monitoring/referral. It is open 365 days a year, entrance at 6 p.m. and exit at 9 a.m. next day, after breakfast.

This is the only shelter center in Lisbon that admits homeless persons with drug addictions and it celebrated a protocol with IDT, IP for an opiate replacement program (methadone).

The Shelter Center of Xabregas, located in a building belonging to the Portuguese State, at Rua da Manutenção, n.º 7, is run by the Salvation Army Social Center, based on a cooperation agreement signed between CDL/ ISS, IP and Lisbon City Hall, in 10/26/2001. It provides, among other services, nourishing, hygiene, health care, social guidance and monitoring. It is open 365 days a year, entrance at 5:30 p.m. and exit at 9 a.m. next day, after breakfast. It welcomes homeless persons between 18 and 65 years of age, of both sexes (65 men and 10 women), provided they do not have a drug abuse problem (even if undergoing treatment).

This center requires the payment of 1€ (one Euro) for the meal to all users that have an income (from work, social insertion benefit, retirement pension or other pensions, financial grants for specific purposes given by other entities, etc. The directors of this center feel that this symbolic payment is pedagogical and honors both the services rendered and the persons that benefit from them. Notwithstanding, the non-payment of this amount does not preclude access to the meal (the users may receive a ticket from the center's technicians and later pay their due, or may be fed free of charge after a technical evaluation by the social service technician).

The shelter center of Graça is promoted and financed exclusively by Lisbon City Hall. Is it located in municipal premises, at Rua da Graça, n.º 31, cave, and is run by AMI (Foundation for International Medical Assistance), by means of a protocol dated 11/11/1995. It holds 26 beds and has the same opening schedule as the two centers previously mentioned. It is destined solely to the male population in social and professional integration and provides these men with nourishing, hygiene, social and psychological support and guidance in social and professional integration.

To be admitted in this center, it is necessary to be 18 to 65 years old, to be motivated to perform the activities connected with professional insertion and to be free from any contagious disease or severe mental illness.

This response is an alternate option of lodging, temporary and flexible. The users live in this center for a limited period of time, until their lives are economically stable and they can afford to pay the rent for a room or an apartment. This process works through an

individual empowerment that builds capacities to build a project for a change of life that will facilitate their social and professional integration.

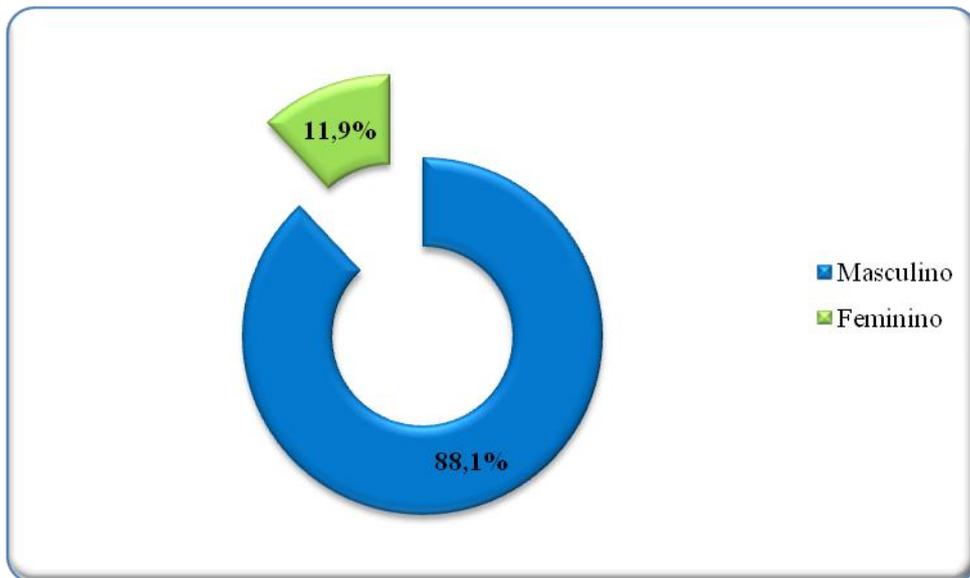
The questionnaire was organized around these features:

- ◆ Social-demographic characteristics;
- ◆ School education;
- ◆ Possession of personal documents;
- ◆ Professional situation;
- ◆ Economical situation;
- ◆ Housing history;
- ◆ Social support;
- ◆ Causes for homelessness;
- ◆ Type of support needed to emerge from homelessness.

<p>Universe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 40.59% of the three shelter centers (SC) participated in the questionnaire 	<p>The universe is composed of 372 users, distributed in this manner:</p> <p>Shelter Center of BEATO – 271 users</p> <p>Shelter Center of GRAÇA – 26 users</p> <p>Shelter Center of XABREGAS – 75 users</p> <p>From this universe, 151 users participated in the questionnaire (40.59% of the universe), represented in this manner:</p> <p>Shelter Center of BEATO – 100 users (36.90%)</p> <p>Shelter Center of GRAÇA – 10 users (38.46%)</p> <p>Shelter Center of XABREGAS – 41 users (54.67%)</p>
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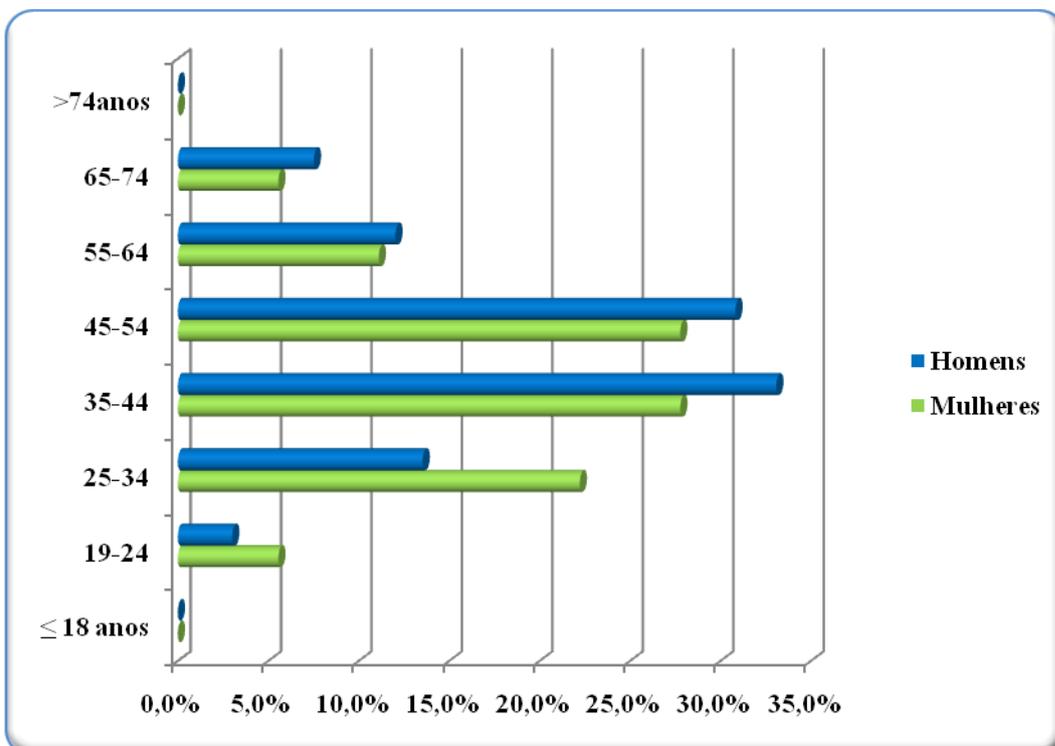
The majority of the participants from this SC is male – 88.1%.

Picture 6 – Gender



Male
Female

Picture 7 – Age/Gender

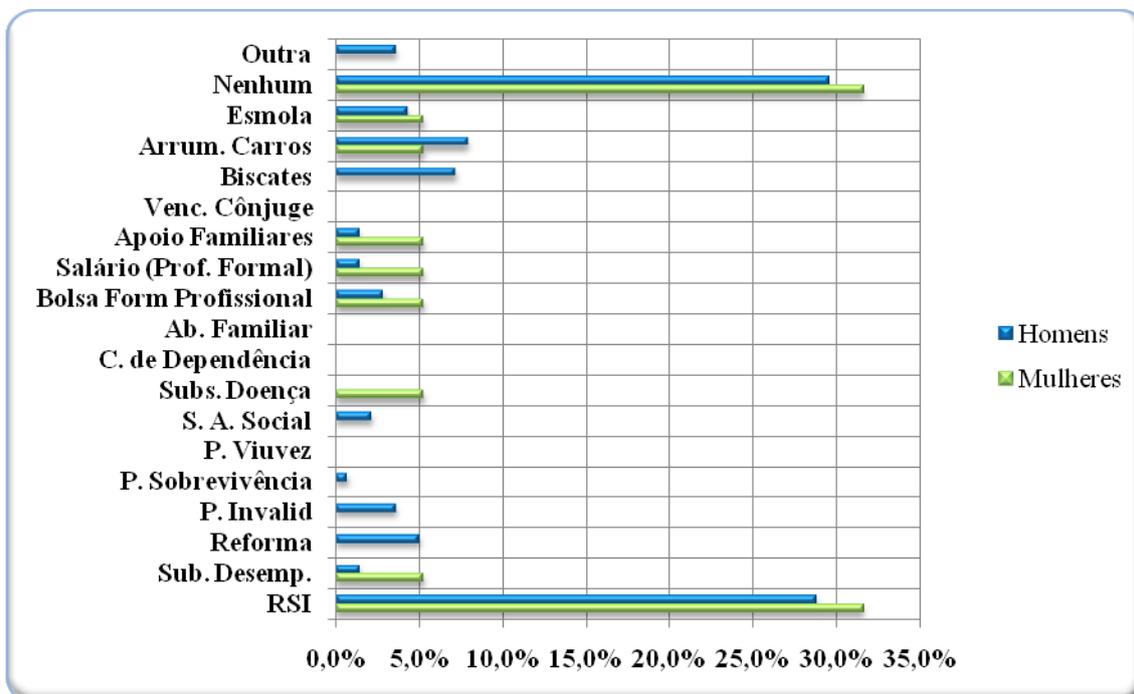


Years of age

Men
Women

Most people are unemployed and long-term unemployment affects both genders.

Picture 11 – Income sources



Graph 6 shows that 30% of these persons (F=31.6% and M=29.5%) have no income whatsoever. Almost the same percentage receives a social insertion benefit.

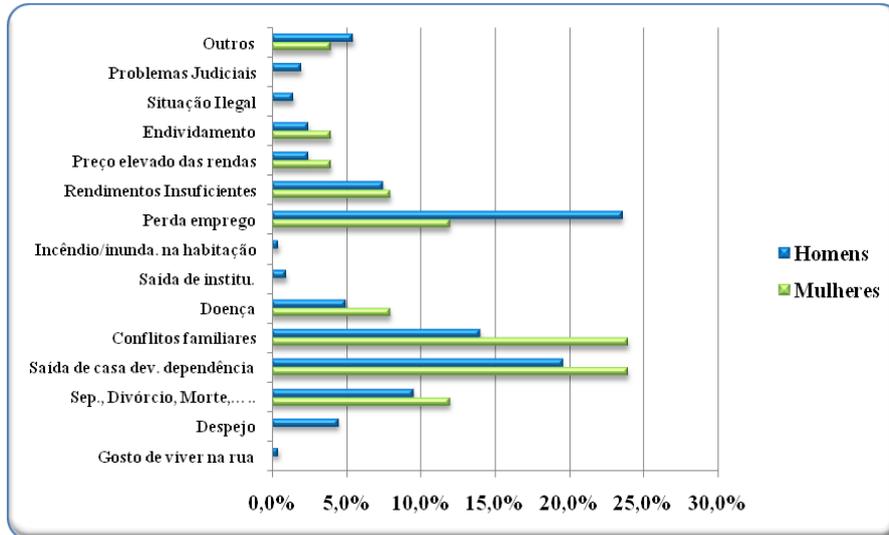
These people's reasons for being on the street are much diversified. In men's case, the main reason is losing their job – 23.6%. For women, the main reasons are family conflicts (24%) and addiction (24%).

It mustn't be ignored that 4.5% of the reasons for being homeless (in the male population) are evictions. Given the current economic and financial crisis, this percentage is likely to be significantly increased due to the rise in unemployment in Portugal and the present and future impossibility to pay rents for rooms or houses.

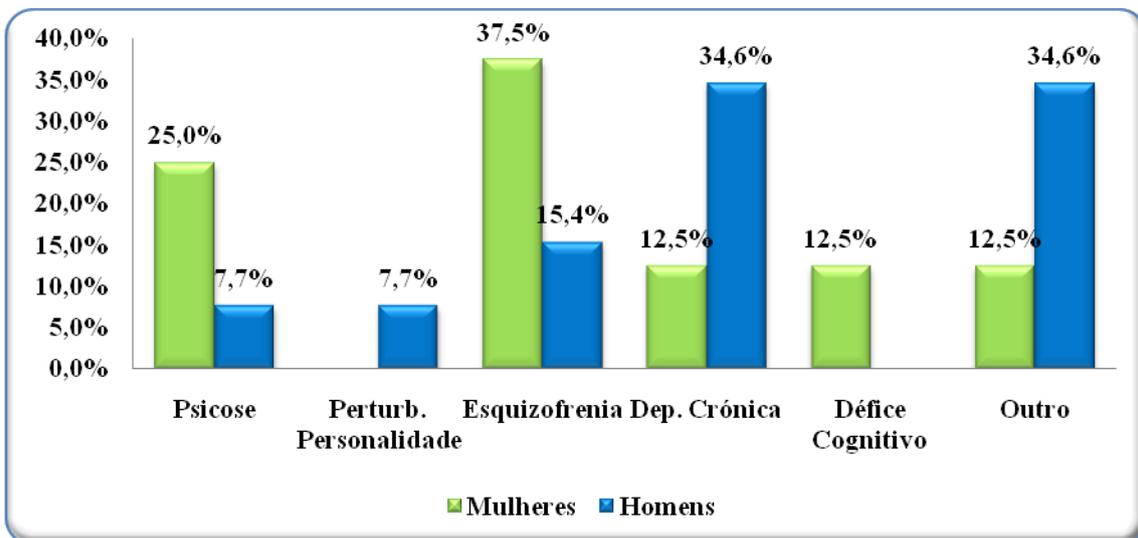
Avramov, Culhane, Jencks, Merino, Snow & Anderson, Tsemberis, among others, frequently say that one of the causes of homelessness may be connected with mental illness. Laura Stivers, however, defends that "(...) *Many researchers argue that people do not become homeless simply because they are mentally ill but rather because there is a lack of housing that meets*

their needs. In fact, homelessness itself might be the cause of some minor mental illnesses, such as anxiety or depression (...)" (2011:38).

Picture 12 – Reasons for being on the street



Picture 13 – Mental health problems



As seen on Graph 8, chronic depression afflicts 35% of men. In women, schizophrenia is the most common mental problems (around 38%).

When asked about the kind of support needed to emerge from homelessness, both men and women mention the importance of having a job (Table 5), the need to have some income to allow them to rent a house or a room. Let us not forget that Graph 6 shows

about 30% of these people have no income whatsoever and just about the same percentage of people receive a social insertion benefit.

Table 5 – Types of support needed to emerge from homelessness

Type of support to emerge from homelessness	Women		Men	
	N	%	N	%
A job	8	20,5	89	31,7
House	7	17,9	34	12,1
Room	6	15,4	38	13,5
A house with more people	1	2,6	4	1,4
Transition housing	0	-	1	0,4
Help searching for a job	2	5,1	6	2,1
Grant to rent a house	2	5,1	20	7,1
Grant to rent a room	6	15,4	31	11,0
Medical support	2	5,1	12	4,3
Psychological support	2	5,1	11	3,9
Social support	1	2,6	14	5,0
Schooling/Training	0	0,0	5	1,8
Others	2	5,1	16	5,7
TOTAL	39	100	281	100

3.4. Secondary data: A City Hall survey in three municipally financed shelters

With a goal to improve social intervention with the homeless population residing in the shelter centers, on March, 10th, 2011, between 7:00 p.m. and 10:30 p.m., Lisbon City Hall has promoted the application of questionnaires to evaluate the degree of satisfaction of the users of Shelter Centers of Beato, Graça and Xabregas.

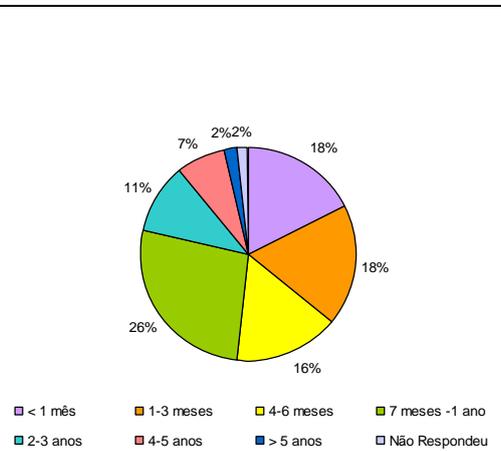
<p>Universe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 33% of the users of the three shelter centers participated in the questionnaire 	<p>The universe is composed of 372 users distributed in this manner:</p> <p>Lodging Center of BEATO – 271 users</p> <p>Lodging Center of GRAÇA – 26 users</p> <p>Lodging Center of XABREGAS – 75 users</p> <p>From this universe, 123 users participated in the questionnaire (33% of the universe), represented in this manner:</p> <p>Temporary Lodging Center of BEATO – 59 users (22%)</p> <p>Temporary Lodging Center of GRAÇA – 18 users (67%)</p> <p>Temporary Lodging Center of Center of XABREGAS – 46 users (61%)</p>
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Permanence in lodging

- The higher percentage of the participants has been in the centers for more than 7 months and for less than a year (26%).

Regarding *permanence in shelter centers*, 26% of the users have been living in the centers for more than 7 months and less than 1 year, followed by 18% users that live there for more than 3 months, 16% that live there for more than 4 months and less than 6 months, and 11% of users, that live there for more than 2 months and less than 3 months.

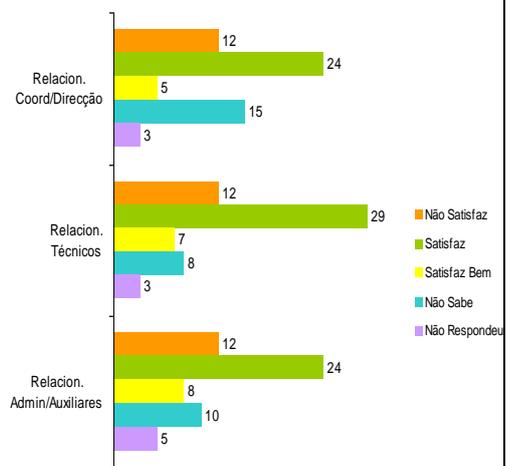
Picture 14 – Permanence in lodging



<p>Satisfaction with sanitary facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not satisfactory in terms of cleanness, privacy and hygiene products supply. 	<p>Regarding the degree of <i>satisfaction with sanitary facilities</i>, the users aren't happy with its cleanness, its privacy or the supply of hygiene products (although in this last category the values for «satisfied» and «not satisfied» are close. However, the users are satisfied with the cleanness of the showers.</p>	<p>Picture 15 – Sanitary facilities</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Picture 15 – Sanitary facilities</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Não Satisfaz</th> <th>Satisfaz</th> <th>Satisfaz Bem</th> <th>Não Sabe</th> <th>Não Respondeu</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Limpeza Sanitários</td> <td>27</td> <td>22</td> <td>2</td> <td>4</td> <td>4</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Limpeza Duche</td> <td>23</td> <td>29</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Produtos Higiene</td> <td>28</td> <td>24</td> <td>3</td> <td>1</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Privacidade</td> <td>34</td> <td>17</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Não Satisfaz	Satisfaz	Satisfaz Bem	Não Sabe	Não Respondeu	Limpeza Sanitários	27	22	2	4	4	Limpeza Duche	23	29	2	2	3	Produtos Higiene	28	24	3	1	3	Privacidade	34	17	2	3	3						
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Privacidade	34	17	2	3	3																																	
<p>Satisfaction with services rendered and human resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction in all categories, specially opening hours and welcoming/relationship with technicians. 	<p>Regarding the <i>satisfaction with services rendered</i>, the users are satisfied in all categories – opening hours, contact between users and technicians, technicians' availability to support the users, responsiveness in welcoming and supporting/referral in problem solving.</p>	<p>Picture 16 – Social service</p> <table border="1"> <caption>Data for Picture 16 – Social service</caption> <thead> <tr> <th>Category</th> <th>Não Satisfaz</th> <th>Satisfaz</th> <th>Satisfaz Bem</th> <th>Não Sabe</th> <th>Não Respondeu</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Horário Atendimento</td> <td>14</td> <td>34</td> <td>6</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Contacto Técnicos Utente</td> <td>13</td> <td>31</td> <td>11</td> <td>2</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Disponibilidade Técnico</td> <td>11</td> <td>28</td> <td>13</td> <td>5</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Capacidade Resposta Atendim.</td> <td>18</td> <td>23</td> <td>12</td> <td>4</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apoio/Encaminham. Problemas</td> <td>19</td> <td>23</td> <td>8</td> <td>6</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Category	Não Satisfaz	Satisfaz	Satisfaz Bem	Não Sabe	Não Respondeu	Horário Atendimento	14	34	6	2	3	Contacto Técnicos Utente	13	31	11	2	2	Disponibilidade Técnico	11	28	13	5	2	Capacidade Resposta Atendim.	18	23	12	4	2	Apoio/Encaminham. Problemas	19	23	8	6	3
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Regarding *satisfaction with human resources*, the users are also satisfied with the welcoming/relationship with the centers' coordinators/directors, with the centers' technicians and with the centers' administrative assistants/auxiliaries.

Picture 17 – Human resources

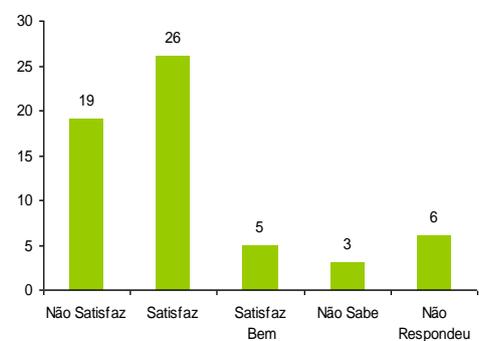


Global evaluation of shelter centers

The majority of users are satisfied.

On a *Global evaluation*, 26% of users are satisfied and 19% of users are unsatisfied. However, 5% of the users are very satisfied with the centers.

Picture 18 – Global appreciation of SC



When asked for suggestions to improve the shelter center, one suggestion received unanimous approval – prolonged opening hours, especially on Sundays and holidays, mainly during winter. The almost majority of users don't understand why they are forced to leave the centers immediately after breakfast, even if they are ill. They are compelled to wonder through the city when they could remain in the center during daytime. In Shelter Center of Beato, some users exit the center, according to the regulations, but remain all day long lying on the doorstep in front of the main door, waiting for the entrance time (6:00 p.m.) to arrive quickly.

Most answers refer other aspects to be improved:

- Cleanness (mainly of beds – clothes and mattresses, and the sanitary facilities);
- Security/surveillance in the rooms;
- Smaller number of individuals per bedroom;
- Room lightning;
- Quality of the meals; and
- Relationship between users and security guards (that have abusive behavior).

One other comment was unanimous between the users of these three shelter centers: the lack of privacy and the feeling of some insecurity. Some said they are stolen from in these shelter centers and must sleep very lightly, thus failing to rest properly.

3.5. Evaluation of the "Casas Primeiro" project

AEIPS (Association for Psychosocial Study and Integration) is cooperating with the official entities in developing a novelty in the area of supported housing: the "Housing First". It began in September 8th, 2009, within a cooperation protocol between AEIPS and Social Security Institute.

It is a new kind of program, an innovation in Portugal, although it has been implemented with success in the USA for some years. Its origins are in New York and its original title is

Housing First. It was fostered by Pathways to Housing, whose director is Professor Sam Tsemberis.

The program grants immediate access to individualized housing for 50 individuals and gives priority to persons who live on the streets in Lisbon and who suffer from mental health problems. Previous participation of candidates in treatment or rehabilitation programs is not required.

The program finances rent, furniture and Basic equipment, as well as water, electricity and gas supplies. The participants contribute with 30% of their monthly income for rent and domestic consumption payment. The program provides support in choosing, obtaining and maintaining an individual, dignified, permanent house that is integrated in the community.

It ensures:

- Access to a house.
- Monthly rent payment.
- House maintenance.
- Personal and housing support services, available 24 hours/day.
- Monitoring in the housing context (a minimum of 6 visits per month).
- Continuous, long-term support.

Homeless persons are supported:

- In searching for and choosing a house.
- In negotiating and contracting with landlords.
- In managing and maintaining the household (cooking meals, cleaning the house, cleaning the clothes, shopping, etc.).
- In obtaining social benefits (identifying and unblocking support such as social insertion benefit, social pension or others).
- In connecting with the community resources and services (supermarkets, transportation, healthcare, sports and recreational centers).

- In personal and health care (identifying priorities and accompanying to the competent service providers).
- In individual projects (defining and implementing professional, educational, training, and sport projects, among others).

An evaluation report (ER) was elaborated about the first year of the project's implementation in Lisbon (October, 2010) and in their authors words “(...) *Given the innovative nature of Housing First Project, its evaluation is also an instrument to validate the model's applicability and potential in a national context, in the field of policies and responses to the homeless population(...)*”, having been “(...) *continuously evaluated at process and intervention results level (...)*” (ER, 2010:3).

Regarding the social-demographic characterization of the program's participants, in terms of gender men are the majority (64%) – Picture 19.

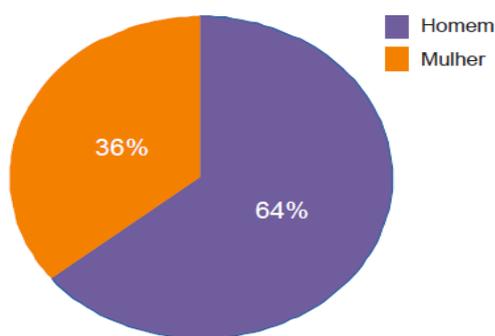


Figura 1 – Sexo

Picture 19 – Gender (source: ER)

Ages range from 18 to 65, with the higher percentage in the age group of 36 – 45 years of age (37.7%) – Picture 20.

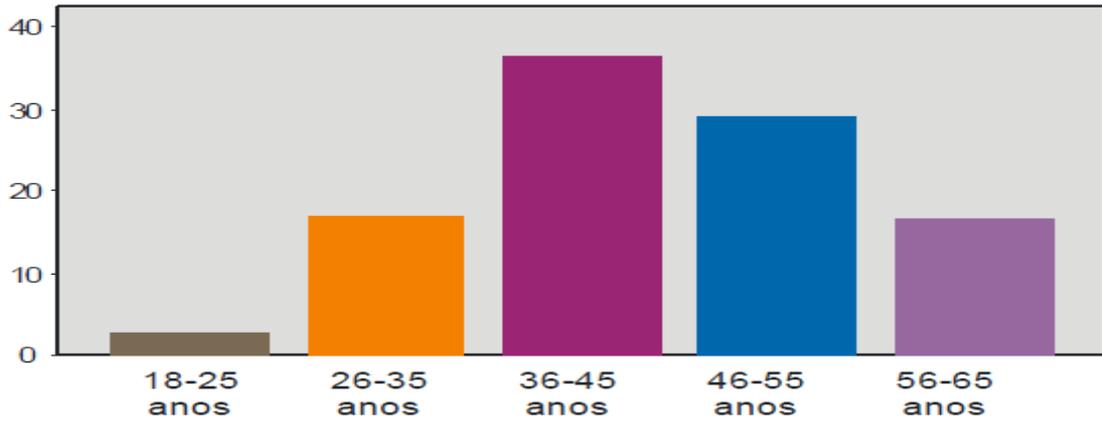


Figura 2 – Idade

Picture 20 – Age Source: ER

Since this program is essentially destined to the homeless with mental health problems, we find that 71% of users have a diagnosis for schizophrenia – Picture 21.

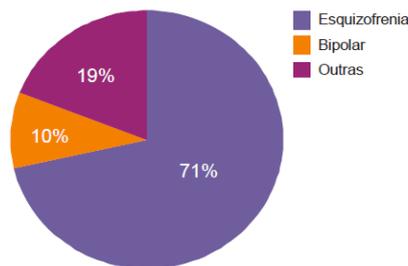


Figura 3 – Diagnóstico

Almost 62% of participants have been homeless for more than six months and 10% have been homeless for more than 16 years – Picture 22.

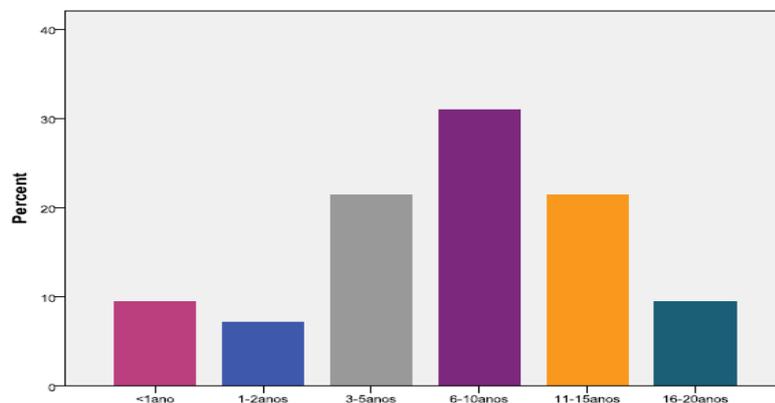
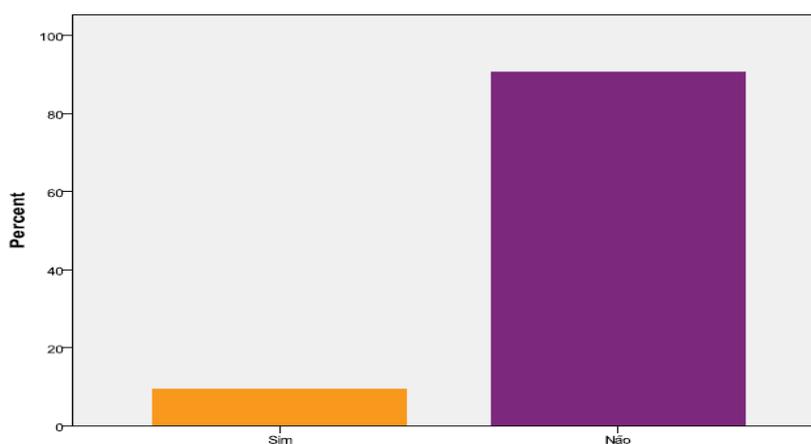


Figura 5 - Anos sem abrigo

Picture 22 – Years of homelessness Source: ER

According to the data on the ER, about 83% of these persons have passed through shelter centers in Lisbon and the evaluation of these responses is not very favorable: “(...) According to what the participants said in interviews and focal groups, lodging centers are not a solution for the homeless. Some participants mentioned that such responses are not adequate for the mentally ill. Others stated that in these centers there are many rules and rigid schedules and no flexibility towards people’s needs (including their incompatibility with eventual working hours, thus making it impossible to have a job). Others, still, said they disliked the given conditions – heavy environment, some insecurity and public health hazardous. For all these reasons, they have chosen to remain living on the streets(...)” (ER, 2010:13).

One of the reasons pointed to adhere to this program “(...) is the fact that they can Access a house, a space they don’t have to share with anyone else (...)” (ER, 2010:18) which can be demonstrated by Picture 23, showing that about 91% of participants keep a stable housing situation.



Picture 23 – Abandoning the house Source: ER

Also worth mentioning is the fact that one of the great reasons for this program’s success are the supporting services it renders to its users and, according to the authors of the ER, “(...) During the first year of Housing First, the project’s team activity was to support the participants in settling in their houses, regularizing their documents, managing the household, using the community resources, accessing health services and care, supporting the development of personal projects at school or job levels, etc. The monitoring was done basically in residential context and in community context, ensuring a continuous and long-term support. In order to ensure 24 hour support, the participants are free to contact,

at night and weekends, via cell phone, one member of the technical team, available to render this support, on a rotation system (...)" (ER, 2010:25).

These individuals' well-being and quality of life have improved substantially on various levels, as can be seen in Picture 24.

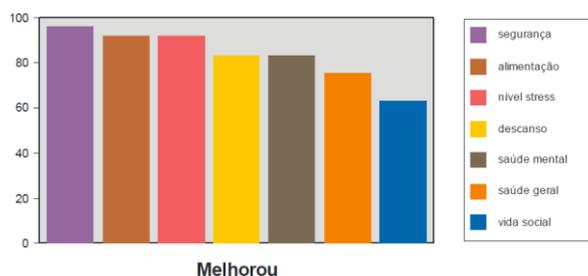


Figura 19 – Qualidade de vida

Picture 24 – Quality of life Source: ER

In the words of one of the participants: *“I now have a place of my own, where I can sleep peacefully and keep my things”. “I’m no longer mugged. I’m protected at home. I go out only with what is essential”. “At home I’m peaceful because I know no one will hurt me”* (ER, 2010:30). One of the improvements mentioned is the fact they can rest more and sleep better (Table 6).

	Melhorou	Sem alteração
Padrão de sono	83,3%	16,7%

Quadro 2 – Mudança no padrão de sono

Table 6 – Changes in sleep pattern Source: ER

One other aspect of the Housing First model that is mentioned in world literature is their value/user ratio. They are more economical than the users in shelter centers or the persons that just remain homeless.

This Evaluation Report says that a *“(...) day/person/cost in this Project is significantly cheaper (17.50€) than the values in hospital structures, in continuous care or in responses of lodging in pensions. We also believe that the project’s cost/benefit ratio is significantly more efficient than that of the temporary night shelter responses (...)”* (ER, 2010:45-46).

	Antes	Depois
112	41,7%	4,2%
Ambulância	45,8%	4,2%
Internamento	45,8%	4,2%
Bombeiros	25%	8,3%
Noite na esquadra	12,5%	-

Quadro 6 – Utilização de serviços de emergência

Table 7 – Use of emergency services

	Antes	Depois
Equipa de rua	83,3%	-
Serviço emergência SCML	79,2%	8,3%
Refeitórios	75%	8,3%
Centros alojamento	83,3%	-

Quadro 7 – Utilização de serviços sociais

Table 8 – Use of social services Source: ER

If we analyze tables 7 and 8 we can see a strong reduction of the use of emergency services and of social services, which obviously translates into a reduction of indirect costs with the homeless population.

4. Conclusions

4.1. Housing First “versus” Shelters

Housing First is a good example of an assisted housing program built to provide an answer to the specific needs of homeless individual with mental issues (Tsemberis, Gulgur e Nakae, 2004).

These types of programs help decision-makers to best frame and implement the precise necessities and objectives of each of its beneficiaries, by not considering them all as part of the same homogeneous platter but by granting individual and directed help to each case. Housing First does not oblige their applicants to adhere to psychiatric or counseling treatments or to compromise to an alcohol or drug abstinence program.

However, probably one of Housing First's most distinctive aspects is the fact that it is based on the concept of "consumer choice". Homeless persons are liberated to choose the sequence and intensity of the services they use. Their only requirement is to agree with a weekly visit from a social assistant being free to choose to be part of a larger structure of support. This intends to dignify their role and capability to participate, thus fomenting their empowerment and self-responsibility. Basically, clinical support is made available but it is not compulsory the same happening with support inclusion services (e.g. employment, education, budget managing, etc.). Also of note is the fact that the support structures are offered in the "territories" where their new dwellings are integrated.

The Housing First model is based on the humanistic premises that everyone is able to maintain his house if given the proper chances and support structures to do so and that having an affiliating place (a "home") is even a critical aspect to promote their "recovery".

The houses available for the program are geographically dispersed, thus hampering the possibility of helping the creation of stigmatized and/or self-exclusionary territories as it is the case with other housing initiatives held in Portugal (like the Social Housing neighborhoods) where a high clustering of multiple social problems is often the norm.

While giving an invited lecture for the plenary session of the opening conference of Lisbon's version of the Housing First program ("Casas Primeiro") (held at the Superior Institute for Applied Psychology) Professor Sam Tsemberis exposed the four elements he considered to be necessary for the implementation of any of these supported housing programs (Tsemberis, 2010):

- To allow participants to choose their dwelling;
- To detach the housing-related services and the remaining services (e.g. clinic support);
- To develop secondary services oriented towards participant's recovery;
- To offer effaceable additional services of economic support and also of social and healthcare assistance.

In this manner, and by individualizing the available support structures people are incentivized to recover their organizational, thus feeling empowered and in control of their lives once again.

As referred in the book “Psicologia Comunitária” (Ornelas, 2008:117), *“a habitação é um direito fundamental e um elemento essencial para o bem-estar e ajustamento social de todas as pessoas com doença mental e outros grupos em situação de vulnerabilidade social, sendo mesmo uma área determinante, sem a qual todos os outros domínios como o emprego, a escola e a participação social, poderão ficar comprometidos”*.

Several studies have shown that models that privilege a fast, direct and less bureaucratic transition from the street to a house are the ones that display higher efficiency levels cumulatively being the ones that have presented greater tendencies for a faster stabilization of participants due to their sense of belonging to a given dwelling and even to the community where their house is inserted in. This goes in line with the opinion expressed by Burt (2008) who expressed his belief that the only way to rehabilitate a chronically homeless person is after this individual has attained a given level of economic stability.

Nevertheless, shelters may still be beneficial as a first mean of strengthening bonds of trust between the homeless and the institutional support structure and, of course, as a way to temporarily satisfy their most basic needs. Additionally, shelters are also important for those that due to the level and the amounts of pathologies they display are not prepared to be led in the path to economic and social autonomy.

Given the scarcity of housing support structures responses available in the city of Lisbon shelters (and, in many occasions, hostel rooms paid by the Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (a church-oriented support institution) are the most used by resources.

However, homeless shelters in Lisbon are generally poorly equipped and their human resources are often scarce for the demand they have. Homeless people are only allowed to spend the night there. Our understanding is that they should also be able to access some form of psychosocial support or counseling that promoted their social inclusion. Being considered merely as “places to spend the night in” homeless shelters are un-affiliating places that grant them no form of empowerment structure (Ornelas, 2008).

These institutional structures should promote their users’ social and personal capability, thus endorsing their autonomy and their processes of personal development and in a broader sense of social inclusion.

Basically, one should note that these homeless shelters congregate a set of problems to which an answer against will always be very hard to provide.

We must acknowledge there is no universal formula to end homelessness. The contours of the phenomenon are always drawn by national, regional or even local specificities. To add complexity into this equation the causes and consequences of homelessness are also generally individual or group-specific. So, a thorough and intricate analysis and evaluation of the pros and cons of previous programs is key aspect for the production of viable conclusions and drawing future experiences.

First of all, diversification of programs is a cornerstone of any consistent homelessness prevention and alleviation strategy. Shelters must be combined with other solutions like supportive housing schemes, housing first programs or any other initiative capable to help people find the path away from their homelessness situation. On single type of program will never be enough to satisfy everyone's needs.

We see that in the last years, ending homelessness has been increasingly considered as a responsibility of local governments. Such has been the case both in the United States and in Europe. The city of Lisbon – as the highest ranked urban center of the country – is where homelessness is more concentrated in Portugal. This points out to the city's focal responsibility to develop innovative and efficient strategies. *“Homelessness cannot be solved by a single agency or organization, by a single level of government, or by a single sector. Everyone should be reminded of the intricacies of homelessness as a policy area, and remember that preventing and ending homelessness will take real coordination, collaboration, and a constant exchange of ideas.”* (Sebelius, 2010 *cit. por* USICH, 2010: 4)

If it is true that, through the course of their life-span, homeless persons tend to become accustomed to being homeless, it is not less true that we (meaning society) must get used to seeing them on the streets.

4.2. Current status of social policies for the homeless in the context of the problems suffered in Portuguese society

Portuguese society currently acknowledges the existence of a number of problems very likely to affect the so-called social policies, that is, a group of strategies, plans, programs and initiatives destined to aid and support the more underprivileged populations. First, it is important to clearly state that, **in this sense, social policies' realization strongly depends on the availability of public financial resources.** In this context, let us consider the direction of current governmental options: pressed by high deficit and public

debt that is close to 100%, the country's government has been forced to make adjustments and reductions in the State's expenditure. As an example, let us mention the suppression of such benefits as Christmas allowance and holiday bonus for public servants and the increase of user charges in health care services. Considering the expenditure's behavior, where no visible signs of contention or reduction of the suffocating weight of the State's financial burden are yet visible, it is fair to predict new cuts and benefit suppressions, as well as probable suspensions of social programs.

In this light, it is urgent to question the future of policies directed towards the most fragile segments of the Portuguese population, including the homeless. If by its own nature the welfare state should be about philosophy and noble goals, and should constitute a pillar of generosity and of community cohesion, it is also true that only a strong allocation of financial resources can sustain its policies, programs and actions. This is where we find the problem of new strategies to support the homeless. This project's practical implementation has focused on two fundamental points:

- a) Analyzing traditional strategies – shelters;
- b) Making a first evaluation (ongoing) of new approaches to the problems and needs of those that lack permanent housing and search for help in the State and in the community's resources, in order to solve the main obstacles to the fulfillment of a motivating and rewarding life project, that is, one that brings happiness to the individual.

Solutions based on previously tested and consolidated approaches within Portuguese policies – **the creation of shelters** destined to receive a members of population that lack resources to finance themselves in obtaining permanent housing – have one important advantage and one disadvantage affecting their long-term success:

- a) Advantage – presently, the solutions that are already known allow us to realistically foresee the type and level of results to be expected and, more important, present **a pricing structure that has been previously reasonably developed**. If we think about the need to reduce and control the costs that derive from applying social policies we will clearly understand the argumentation that favors maintaining the current strategies: known results and more easily predictable costs. Therefore, why take any chances if we already have a Framework of programs with a high level of consolidation? Although it is true that risk tends to be higher in crisis contexts, it is

also true that recessions should impose the search for new answers. The logic is simple: if current policies are financially unsustainable, it is urgent to search for other approaches that can achieve better financial results (in other words, smaller burden on the State's treasury) and simultaneously achieve a higher level of personal and collective satisfaction. This is, after all, the great objective of strategies to support the homeless – promoting integration and creating the conditions to the building of long-term sustainable life projects.

- b) Disadvantage – stems directly from what we mentioned in point a). Although shelters offer an **immediate response and the possibility of very rapid mobilization**, it is unlikely that these structures or institutions can generate continued life projects for its users. It suffices to mention the users' long periods of permanence in these shelters, which contradict the very spirit of policies aimed at helping the homeless: by its nature, a supporting program should end in a reasonable period of time, since its core objective is that its user no longer needs the support. In different wording, **a support program is not a job**. Quite on the contrary, a program should primarily promote the users' access to a group of mechanisms that will facilitate their independence and autonomy. At this point it must be reminded that a user's permanence in a program exhausts means that could be used with a different individual or family in unstable situation. This is also an area where shelters do not provide a fully satisfactory answer, since they represent an allocation of public resources to situations that in the long term are unsustainable for the user. Therefore, we must critically analyze different means of action. In this framework of restrictions and difficulties in maintaining the current scope of social support a new kind of response emerges and will be analyzed in this research project – **strategies based on a Housing First approach**.

4.3. Implementing a Houses First/Housing First strategy in Lisbon

When we started this work we knew what difficulties we would find:

- a) The novelty: just like every other non-experimented approach, Housing First generated suspiciousness within agents responsible for implementing support programs for the homeless. The absence of confidence in new solutions seems to be a feature in consolidated structures. Thus, people who work in this area showed no

particular enthusiasm in debating a strategy that had been imported from across the Atlantic;

- b) The absence of reliable national data: the project team had to face two conditionings. On one side, the existing statistics about the homeless are scattered and their indicators and quantitative values don't always match up (see, as an example, the survey performed in the previous investigation). On the other hand, and since this is a new approach, it wasn't easy obtaining reliable statistic elements to characterize pilot-initiatives in Portugal. For this reason, in this report the Project team presented case studies that provided some interesting elements for analysis, with explaining potential for the reality to be studied – Lisbon and Housing First.
- c) The lack of ongoing evaluation studies (usually, the monitoring of social policies resorts to *ex-ante* and *ex-post* analytical references). Ongoing evaluations are not very common, which makes it difficult to obtain valid readings and perspectives for comparative purposes.

The scientific and human support of the Center for Sustainable Urban Development (Earth Institute at Columbia University in the City of New York), through its Coordinator, Professor Elliott Sclar, was essential for the overcoming of such difficulties. Success in concluding this study is greatly due to CSUD Coordinator's counseling, always totally available to support and advise us during the different stages of the project's elaboration.

The support of Professor Carol Caton (CHPS – Columbia University) was also essential in terms of obtaining a broader view over the homelessness issues. During the visits to New York City there was a constant concern with obtaining elements pertaining to experiences such as Housing First that had been implemented in different cities in the USA. Such data collection gave our team a better understanding of questions, problems, potential, financial resources and human means associated to Housing First strategies. Our case study – Rhode Island – constitutes a mere example of the plethora of elements gathered during the project team coordinator's stays at CSUD. We are pondering the future possibility of critical presentations of other case studies for which we have collected basic information, since more disclosure and analysis of case studies might be favorable to a better understanding of what is truly at stake when choosing an approach based on Housing First principles.

The study being currently presented has allowed us to draw some conclusions about Houses First strategy in Lisbon:

- a) Keeping users in the program: it has been systematically presented as one of the great advantages of this type of solutions and Lisbon's case seems to confirm a tendency often tested in the USA. Of the 50 users in Houses First pilot project, after a few months of implementation, only one had abandoned the project. It is therefore permissible to conclude that **available data point to a high rate of users' permanence in the program, which matches the conclusions of similar initiatives implemented in the USA.** Therefore, *a priori* there doesn't seem to exist any specific feature of the homeless in Lisbon that would influence this strategy's success;
- b) A more favorable table of costs compared with the existing and consolidated solutions: also in this area the pilot program being executed in Lisbon seems to match the Housing First solutions. On a first look, Houses First offers less daily/monthly costs per user than those of other solutions, programs or strategies. In this theme, we are not expecting any surprises. The large number of documents we have reviewed about several initiatives in the USA and in Europe demonstrate a more efficient cost/result ratio in terms of user's support. We may thus conclude that **in a framework of contention and public expenditure control, solutions such as Housing First/Houses First, offering better cost/result ratios, should be considered viable and reliable strategic alternatives.**
- c) Satisfactory results in areas connected with social autonomy and integration: those who study social policies know that solutions based on Housing First have in many cases fostered a better integration in the social and community life of which the user wants to be part of. So, the beneficial effects are the decrease of alcohol chronic consumption, the maintenance of housing, more effectiveness in job searching and fewer costs with health care. In Lisbon's case, it's too early on to establish definitive causal effects. But two conclusions seem to be clear: **the reduction of alcohol consumption and the high maintenance rate of the housing arrangements that are results of the Houses First Program.**

As a general conclusion for our Project we can state that the first results obtained point towards a transfer to the Portuguese social reality of the advantages of

programs based on the Housing First philosophy. Although the Project team is aware of the resistance spots and of difficulties associated to the vaster implementation of these strategies, we believe that betting on programs that offer a home of one's own in short term is a key element and should be taken in special consideration by public decision makers and by entities (private charity institutions, for example) that work in this area and daily face the inherent difficulties.

This is a time for Hope and for Experimenting. These programs' future results, to be evaluated in multidisciplinary research projects, should consolidate and deepen the first analysis made by this study.

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