Infrastructure Canada

Homelessness Data Sources: Community and National-Level Data

Infrastructure Canada
November 04, 2022

Canada

Overview of presentation

Community Homelessness Reports

Data Snapshots

Point-in-Time Counts

Shelter Capacity

Shelter Use Data

Unique Identifier List (BNL)

Objectives:

- Present community and national data sources

- Discuss the unique contributions of each dataset

- How the data sources are used for system planning and service delivery

Unique Identifier/ By-Names List

Uses of the data at a community level:

- To support triage to services
- System performance evaluation
- Advocacy for the policies and resources necessary to end homelessness

What is a UIL/BNL?

- a real-time list of all known people experiencing homelessness in your community that have provided consent
- The list includes data points to support coordinated access and prioritization at a household level and an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow at a system level

Canada

Point-in-Time Counts

Uses of the PiT Count data in the community

- Capture an understanding of homelessness including those who are not accessing services.
- Identify populations that may benefit from targeted services.
- Target community resources to where they are most needed

A PiT count of homelessness has two primary purposes:

- An enumeration, or count of people experiencing absolute homelessness within a community in shelters and on the streets on a given night.
- A survey that provides the community information on the demographics and service needs of people affected by homelessness

Canada

Similar yet…different

- Unique Identifier/By-Name List

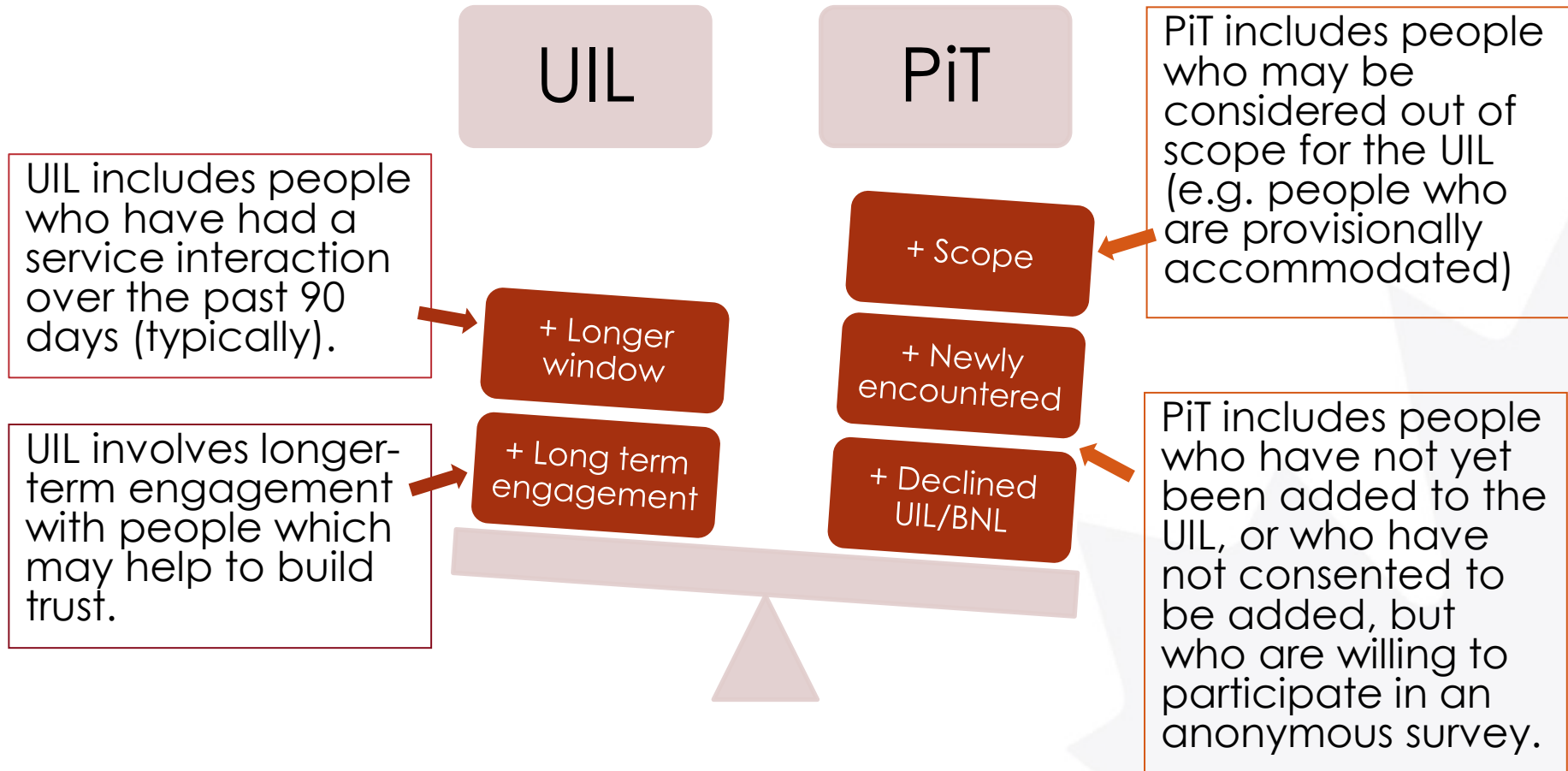 ⬇

  ~240 individuals on the UIL/BNL

- Point-in-Time Count Enumeration

  ⬇

  ~260 individuals found to be experiencing homelessness

What are the factors contributing to the difference in the two estimated number?

Comparing the UIL/BNL & the PiT Counts

UIL

PiT

UIL includes people who have had a service interaction over the past 90 days (typically).

+ Longer window

PiT includes people who may be considered out of scope for the UIL (e.g. people who are provisionally accommodated)

+ Scope

+ Newly encountered

UIL involves longer-term engagement with people which may help to build trust.

+ Long term engagement

+ Declined UIL/BNL

PiT includes people who have not yet been added to the UIL, or who have not consented to be added, but who are willing to participate in an anonymous survey.

Comparing the UIL/BNL & the PiT Counts (contd.)

Both a UIL/BNL and PiT Count can be used to provide an estimation of the number of people experiencing homelessness in a community

UIL/BNL:

- a list of individuals who have consented to have their name and other identifying information included on the list
- The list has information on individuals over a 90 day period
- The data collected for BNL is as required and done so overtime
- The data can be used to measure trends monthly to understand system effectiveness and support real-time system improvements

PiT Count:

- A PiT Count is an event in a community
- The counts are looking at a one-night snapshot of homelessness
- A PiT Count captures non-identifiable data
- A greater degree of non-identifiable data is collected at first contact through the PiT Counts
- A PiT count can be used to update the UIL/BNL

Using the PiT to add to the UIL/BNL

- The PiT Count event is an outreach event that aims to include everyone

- Encounter of new individuals experiencing homelessness, who are not yet on the list

- Opportunity to verify unsheltered numbers

- Possibility to couple the PiT Count with intake for the UIL/BNL

- Opportunity to create a UIL/BNL,
    - e.g. combining PiT Counts and Registry weeks

In general,..

An ongoing UIL/BNL complements a PiT Count

- o It cannot fully replace a count, which is a community-wide engagement event that takes place over a 24hr period

- o A PiT Count collects more detailed data on those experiencing homelessness

- o The count can be used as a means to start, update and add to the UIL/BNL

- o A PiT Count can be used to develop/update benchmarks in communities where systematic data on homelessness is limited, for instance for communities that do not have currently quality UIL/BNL

Shelter Data

- This data is collected through a Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)

  o Such as Homeless Individual and Families Information System (HIFIS)

  o It is a database communities can use to track how people experiencing homelessness interact with the system

- The data is limited to individuals who are in contact with services, and does not include those are living on the streets.

- Communities can use shelter data to:
  o Evaluate the effectiveness of service delivery and of resource allocation (occupancy rates, shelter stay duration, bed turnover)

How are these data used at the national level…

Community Homelessness Reports

Data from the lists are used to complete the Community Homelessness Reports (CHR), which are used to inform on requirements for Reaching Home and provides a complete picture of the state of homelessness at the community level.

> Communities had varying levels of progress with meeting Coordinated Access minimum requirements.
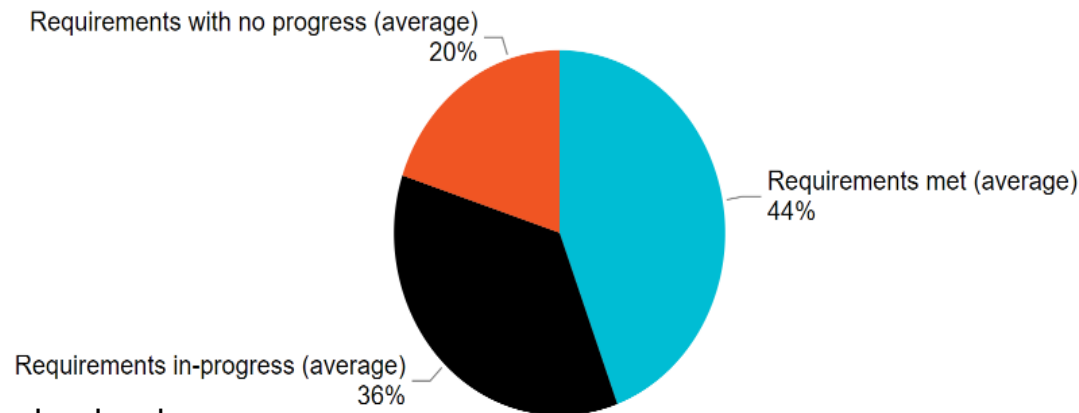> The average across all communities was 51 percent.

As of March 2021 based on CHR self assessment:

- **9 (15%)** met all requirements
- **2 (3%)** had not yet started
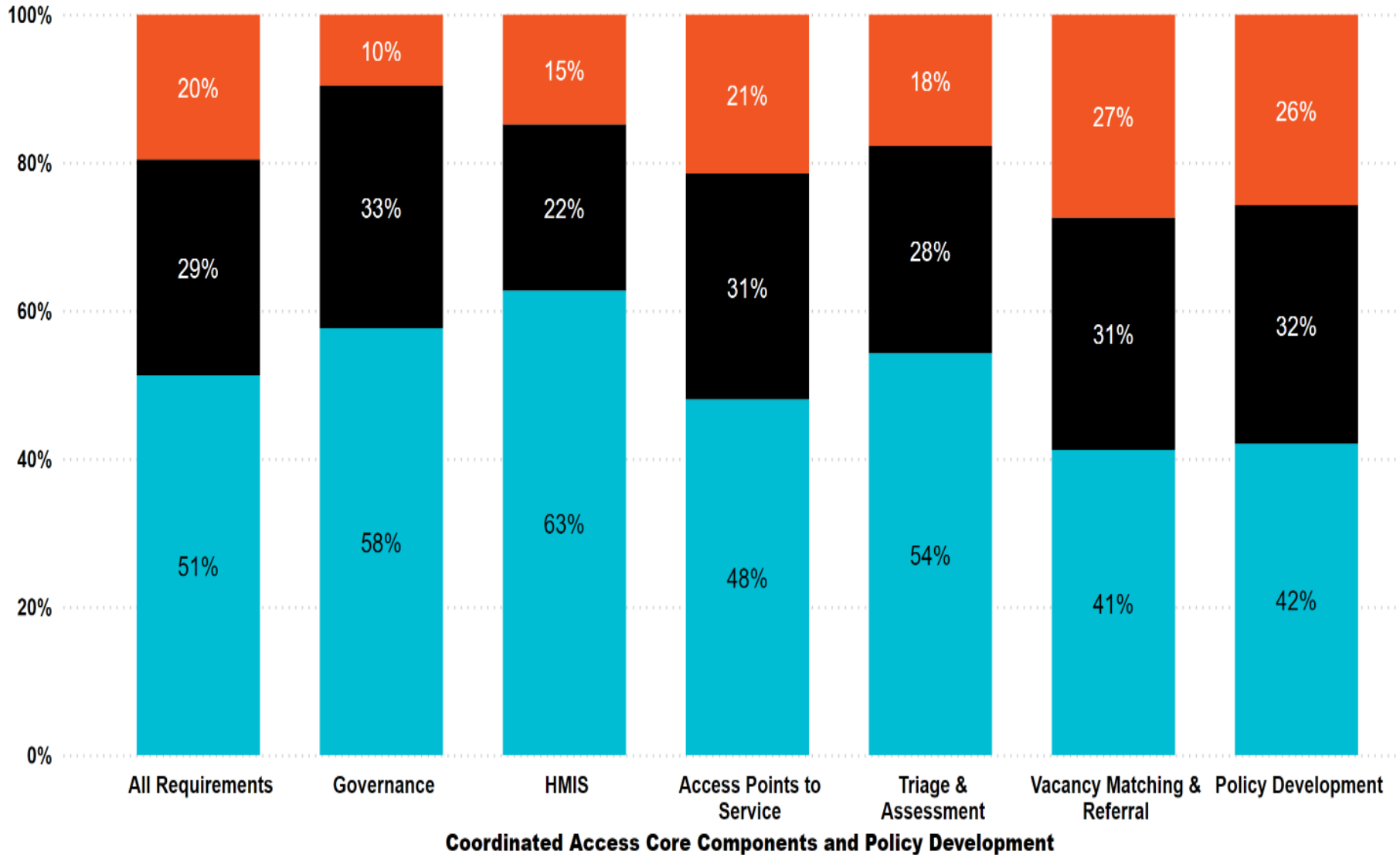- **48 (81%)** made some progress

For this group, on average:

- **44%** requirement were met
- **36%** requirements were under development
- **20%** requirements were not yet started

Requirements with no progress (average) 20%

Requirements met (average) 44%

Requirements in-progress (average) 36%

Results are based on 59 CHRs (56 submitted from Designated Communities outside of Quebec, where Summerside and Charlottetown in Prince Edward Island submitted a consolidated report; and three in the territories). This information therefore represents 60 communities.

Average Progress with Meeting Coordinated Access Requirements by Core Components and Policy Development for All Communities (March 2021)

Average Progress: ● Requirements met ● Requirements in-progress ● Requirements with no progress

Component	Requirements met	Requirements in-progress	Requirements with no progress
All Requirements	51%	29%	20%
Governance	58%	33%	10%
HMIS	63%	22%	15%
Access Points to Service	48%	31%	21%
Triage & Assessment	54%	28%	18%
Vacancy Matching & Referral	41%	31%	27%
Policy Development	42%	32%	26%

Average Implementation Progress (y-axis)

Coordinated Access Core Components and Policy Development (x-axis)

PiT Counts

- By using a standardized methodology across communities in Canada

- The data can also be used to calculate trends at the national level, by having counts in subsequent years

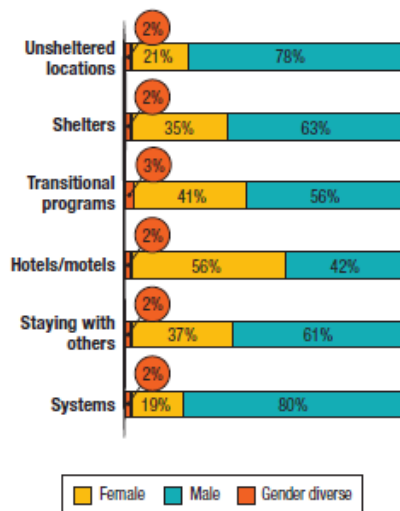- Address national data gaps through the use of a survey
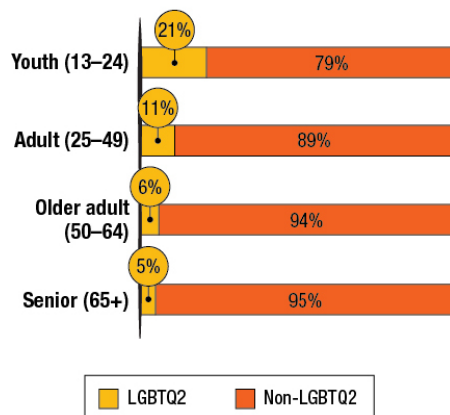
Addressing data gap through the Survey

- Chronic homelessness
- Shelter use in the past year
- Age of first homelessness
- Experience with foster care / group home
- Indigenous identity

- Racial Identities
- Current Health Challenges
- Newcomers
- Sexual Orientation
- Reasons for Housing Loss

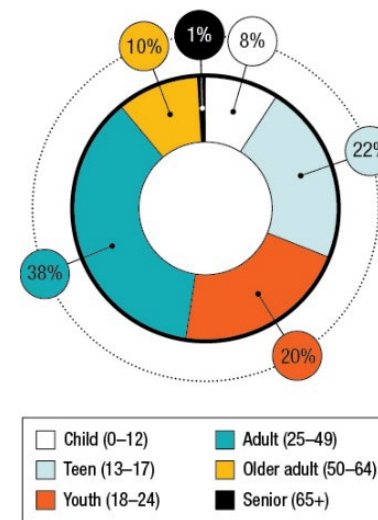# Homelessness in Canada: 2018 Point-in-Time Counts

Experiences of homelessness go beyond shelter use (e.g., couch surfing, rough sleeping, lack of access to shelters in rural communities, etc.). Nationally-coordinated Point-in-Time counts and surveys provide information on homelessness outside of shelters. **One quarter of respondents to the 2018 survey reported that they did not use a shelter in the past year.**

Male respondents were the majority in most overnight locations, with the exception of hotels and motels.

More than one in ten respondents identified as LGBTQ2S. This percentage was higher among youth (21%).
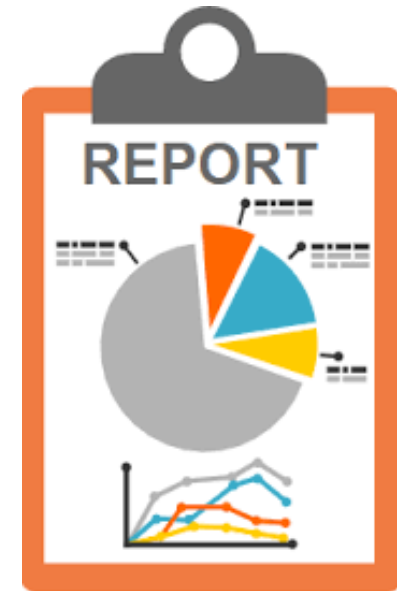

Half of the respondents reported first experiencing homelessness before the age of 25.

Previous counts took place in 2016 and 2018. Timing for the third Count was affected by COVID-19, with the first counts taking place in spring 2020 and the last expected in fall 2022.
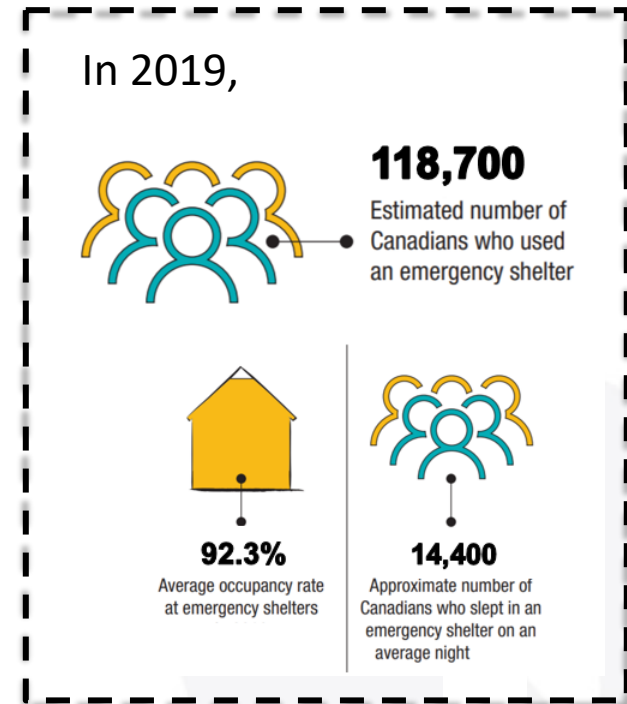
Shelter Data

o Data at the national-level is collected from communities across Canada through HIFIS and HMIS

o The data can be used to conduct analyses on shelter usage, as well as on shelter capacity (e.g. NSS and SCR)

Canada

National Shelter Study (NSS)

- HAT analysts develop the National Shelter Study, which is an annual national analysis using emergency shelter data to estimate the number of individuals using homeless shelters each year, and describes their demographic characteristics

- This report is based on data that is collected from emergency homeless shelters using the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System (HIFIS) and other
  - For the 2019 update, the sample includes most of the largest shelters in Canada, covering over 75% of the approximately 15,599 emergency shelter beds in the country

- Recent publications:
  - The National Shelter Study 2019 update

In 2019,

118,700
Estimated number of Canadians who used an emergency shelter

92.3%
Average occupancy rate at emergency shelters

14,400
Approximate number of Canadians who slept in an emergency shelter on an average night

Shelter Capacity Report (SCR)

- An annual report developed using the information from the National Service Provider List.

- Provides a descriptive account of capacity statistics for emergency shelters in Canada, such as:
  - Number of emergency shelter facilities for each province, territory and community.
  - Number of permanent beds

- The report also provides an overviews of transitional housing facilities and violence against women shelters.

- Publication: Shelter Capacity Report 2020

National Emergency Shelter Capacity Overview

418
Emergency
Shelters

16,009
Permanent
Beds

Recap

- Although the data sources are different, they are all necessary and used in unison to help establish an estimate of the number of people experiencing homelessness and gain further insight into the experiences of homelessness

  - PiT Count has data on sheltered and unsheltered individuals, and looks at more detailed questions, 24hr period

  - The UIL/BNL has data on the inflows and outflows, and can be used to improve the efficiency of service delivery, monthly update

  - Shelter data allows for a national estimate of homelessness among shelter users and look at trends for occupancy rates and shelter duration, varied timeframe can look at the data for a year

Thank you

VERS UN CHEZ-SOI | REACHING HOME
LA STRATÉGIE CANADIENNE DE LUTTE CONTRE L'ITINÉRANCE | CANADA'S HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Questions? Comments

hpd.data-donnees.dpmi@infc.gc.ca

Employment and Social Development Canada

Canada

HIFIS.CA

Point-in-Time Count 2018 Highlights

https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/reports-rapports/pit-counts-dp-2018-highlights-eng.html

National Shelter Study 2005-2016

https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/homelessness-sans-abri/reports-rapports/shelter-study-national-etude-refuge-2005-2016-eng.html

Thank you

hpd.data-donnees.dpmi@infc.gc.ca

National Shelter Capacity

- Shelter Capacity Report 2017 - 2020
- Homeless shelter capacity, bed and shelter counts for emergency shelters, transitional housing and violence against women shelters for Canada and provinces, Employment and Social Development Canada
- National Service Provider List - Open Government Portal

National Shelter Use

- The National shelter study - Emergency shelter use in Canada 2005 to 2016
- Highlights of the National Shelter Study 2005 to 2016

Point-in-Time Counts

- Highlights: 2016 Coordinated Point-in-time Count of Homelessness in Canadian Communities
- Everyone Counts 2018: Highlights - Report
- Report on addiction, substance use and homelessness

Homelessness Data Snapshots

- Homelessness data snapshot: Veteran homelessness in Canada
- Homelessness data snapshot: The National Shelter Study 2019 update
- Homelessness data snapshot: The National Shelter Study 2018 update
- Homelessness data snapshot: Homelessness migration in Canada

HIFIS.CA

VERS UN CHEZ-SOI | **REACHING HOME**
LA STRATÉGIE CANADIENNE DE LUTTE CONTRE L'ITINÉRANCE | CANADA'S HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY

Emploi et Développement social Canada / Employment and Social Development Canada

Canada