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A profile of workers in the homelessness support sector

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Outline

- Objectives of the partnership and study
- Context
- Using the Census of Population long-form
- Socioeconomic characteristics
- Limitations
- Next steps

Objectives of the study

- Partnered to study those who worked in jobs that provide services targeted towards homeless individuals in Canada

- Defined the homelessness support sector and created profiles of its workers to help understand the quality of response received by homeless clients

- Highlighted potential next steps for furthering analysis of the homelessness support sector
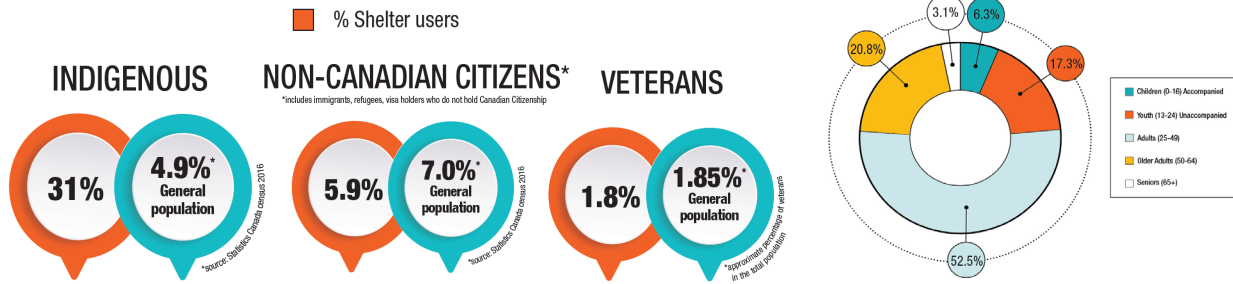
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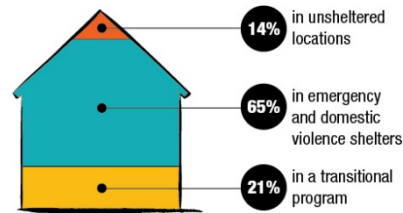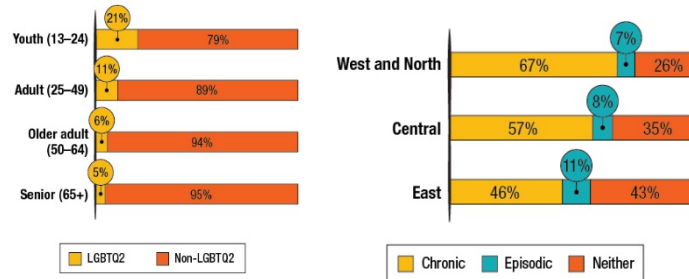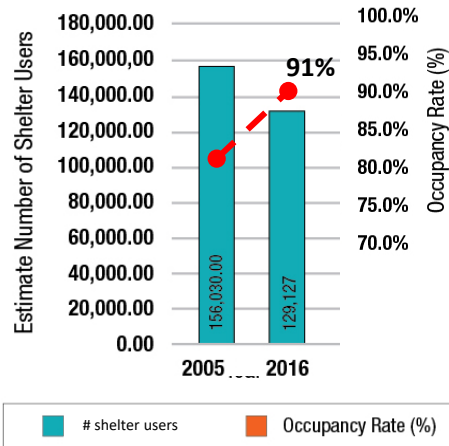
Context

- Importance of understanding homelessness from a systems perspective
- National data on workers who support those experiencing homelessness in Canada is a gap
- This study is a first step towards understanding this group of workers

Methods: Using the Census of Population long-form

- Labour market variables were assessed to create a proxy for the homelessness support sector in two stages:
  1. North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)
  2. National Occupation Classification (NOC)

- Census provides a large sample size for analysing small populations and subgroups

Remember, these questions are only for persons aged 15 years and over.

Note: Questions 36 to 45 refer to this person's job or business during the week of May 1 to May 7, 2016. If this person held no job, answer for the job of longest duration since January 1, 2015. If this person held more than one job, answer for the job at which he or she worked the most hours.

37 What kind of business, industry or service was this?

Please be specific. For example:
- primary school
- municipal police
- wheat farm
- shoe store
- road construction

Kind of business, industry or service

Kind of business, industry or service

38 What was this person's work or occupation?

Please be specific. For example:
- general practitioner
- fishing guide
- civil engineer
- secondary school teacher

(If in the Armed Forces, give rank.)

Occupation

Occupation

39 In this work, what were this person's main activities?

Please be specific. For example:
- diagnose and provide care
- guided fishing parties
- design and build bridges
- taught mathematics

Main activities

Main activities

Methods: Defining the homelessness support sector
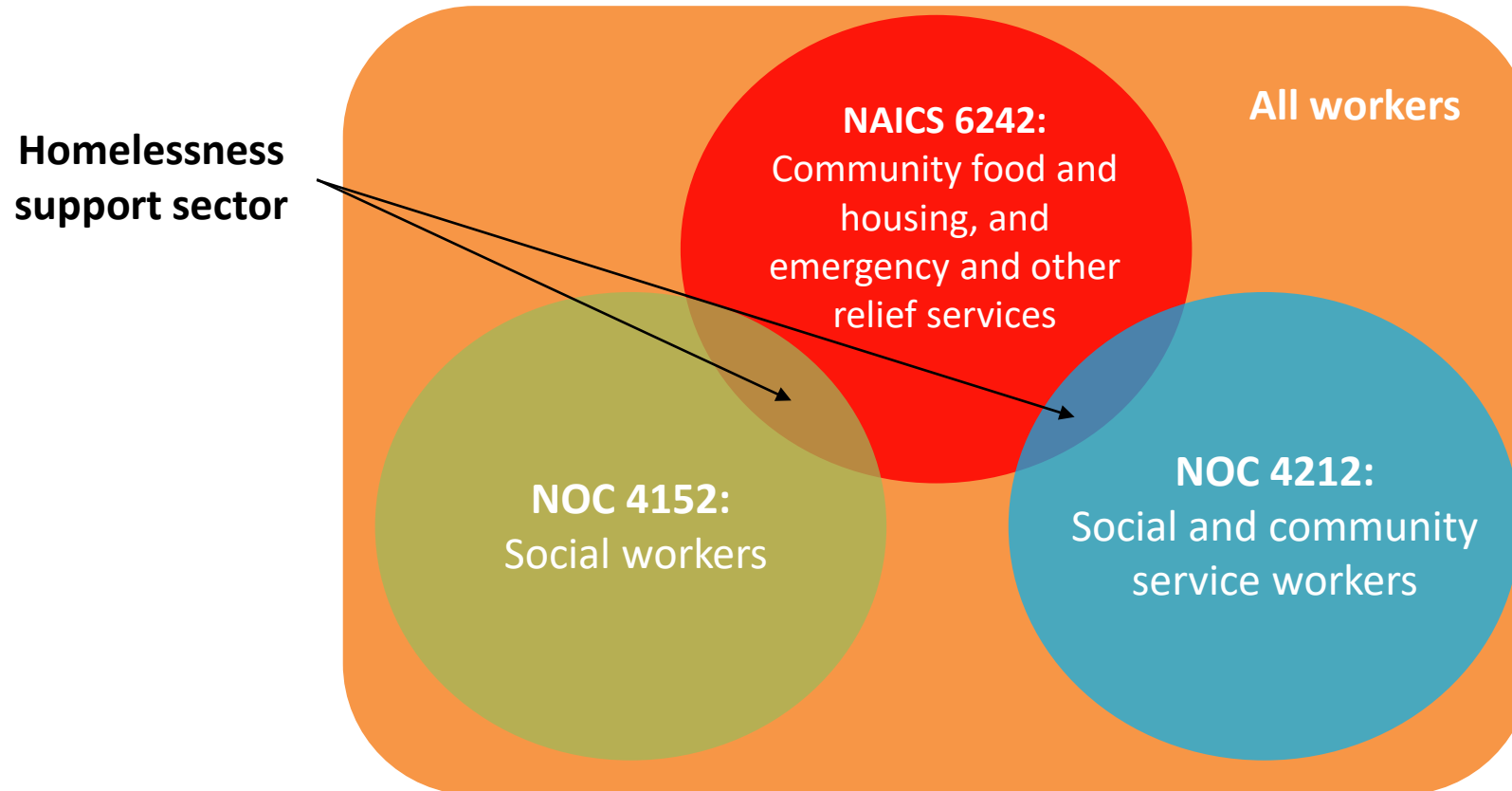
Homelessness support sector workers are mostly located in Ontario and BC

Distribution of workers by geography, for selected industries and occupations, 2016
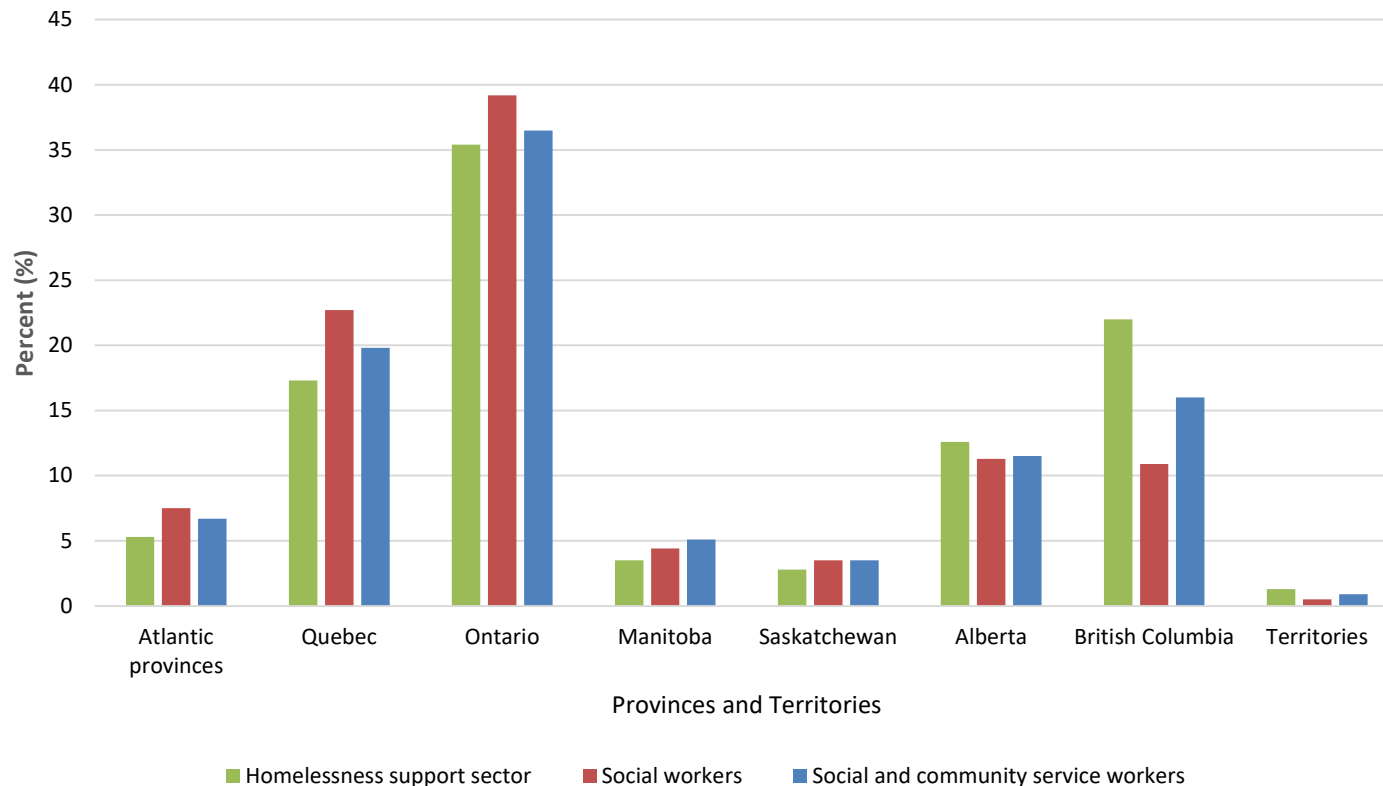
- 6,305 workers were identified in the homelessness support sector
  - Ontario had the largest share (35.4%), followed by British Columbia (22.0%) and then Quebec (17.3%)
  - Counts of homelessness support sector workers were low in the Atlantic provinces and territories
- The majority of shelter residents (81.2%) were located in large urban population centres like Toronto (22.4%), Calgary (11.2%) and Vancouver (10.2%)

Women led the way in the homelessness support sector

Distribution of homelessness support sector workers by sex, 2016
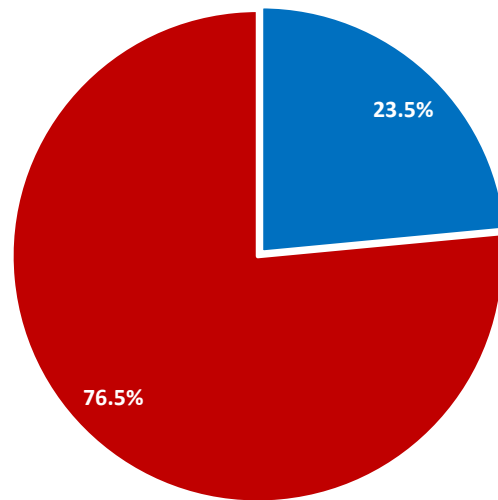
- ■ Male
- ■ Female

Distribution of workers by age, for selected industries and occupations, 2016

- ■ Homelessness support sector
- ■ Social workers
- ■ Social and community service workers
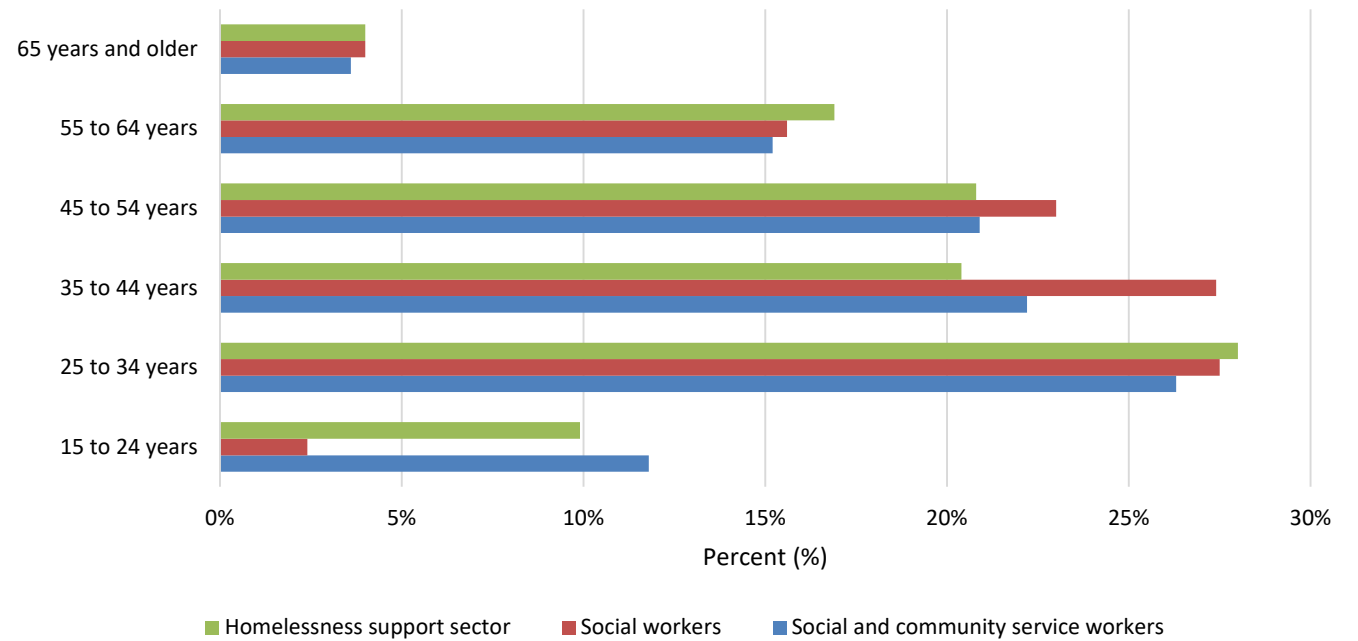
More visible minority, Indigenous persons worked in homelessness support sector

- One in five homelessness support sector workers (19.6%) reported being visible minorities
- One in ten (10.6%) homelessness support sector workers reported an Aboriginal identity, which was higher than among the total working population (4.0%)

Homelessness support sector workers were likely to have a trade school, college or non-university certificate or diploma

	All workers	Homelessness support sector	Social workers	Social and community service workers
Total highest level of education (count)	19,956,250	6,305	62,235	155,625
No certificate, diploma or degree, or high school diploma or equivalency certificate (%)	37.5	20.7	3.0	19.1
Trade school, college or non-university certificate or diploma (%)	35.2	44.4	16.2	44.8
Bachelor's degree, graduate degree or certificate above bachelor's degree (%)	27.3	35.1	80.7	36.0

Support sector workers with post-secondary education likely to have studied business, management and public administration

- 5,005 homelessness support sector workers reported having postsecondary education

  - Over a third (37.0%) reported studying business, management and public administration.

  - More than one in four (28.6%) reported studying social and behavioural sciences and law.

- Among all social worker occupations, an even larger proportion (73.9%) reported business, management and public administration as their major field of study

Homelessness support sector workers were more likely to work part-time

- A larger proportion of homelessness support sector workers worked part-time in 2015 (27.8%)
  - Compared to social and community service workers (23.3%), social workers (14.0%) and the total working population (22.5%)
- Females (29.6%) were more likely to work part-time than males (21.6%) in the homelessness support sector
- Part-time and full-time status was reported for the year 2015

Median earnings of homelessness support sector workers were less than median earnings of all Canadian workers

- Median annual earnings for homelessness support sector workers was $32,707
  - Which was lower than social workers ($59,494) and social and community service workers ($37,716) employed in all industries, as well as all workers in all occupations ($38,269)
- The reference period for income was the 2015 calendar year
- One in ten (9.6%) homelessness support sector workers were considered to be in low-income

Limitations of the data and analysis

- Limitation of the labour market variables:
  - Defining the homelessness support sector using NAICS and NOCS likely underestimates the true size of the sector
  - Turnover rates, job vacancies and permanency of jobs in the homelessness support sector cannot be properly evaluated using this method
- Limitation of using the Census:
  - The Census only collects labour data for individuals' primary job when employed during the reference week of Sunday May 1 to Saturday May 7, 2016
  - Work tenure and income are reported for the calendar year 2015 and may not correspond to the job held in the reference week

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Potential next steps for analysing the homelessness support sector

- Integrating tax filer data (e.g. T4) to enhance understanding of employment and income trends

- Census to Census linkages to observe the longevity of employment in the homelessness support sector

- Investigating whether the younger age distribution in the homelessness support sector acts as a feeder group for employment in broader occupation groups

- Incorporating additional information and data from other aspects of the homelessness support sector (e.g. National Service Provider List)

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Thank you!

Questions?

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Daily article (EN): https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190923/dq190923c-eng.htm
Report (EN): https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2019010-eng.htm

Daily (FR): https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/190923/dq190923c-fra.htm
Report (FR): https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75f0002m/75f0002m2019010-fra.htm

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