The FCM Quality of Life

Reporting System

Technical Report on
Measuring Homelessness

Final Draft Report

February 5, 2004

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A. OVERVIEW

In 1996, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) launched a project to monitor the quality of life in Canadian communities. The Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS) project was initially conceived as a way to measure how changes to the funding structure of federal transfer payments would affect municipal governments. At its inception, the QOLRS project comprised seventeen municipal members. The project has expanded over time and now includes a total of twenty municipalities (See Table 1).

Table 1 FCM QOLRS Members – 2003			
Municipality	**Province**	**Population (2001)**	**Land Area (km2)**
Calgary (City)	Alberta	878,870	702
Edmonton (City)	Alberta	666,105	684
HRM (Halifax Regional Municipality)	Nova Scotia	359,185	5,496
Halton (Regional Municipality)	Ontario	375,230	967
Hamilton (City)	Ontario	490,265	1,117
Kingston (City)	Ontario	114,195	450
London (City)	Ontario	336,540	422
Niagara (Regional Municipality)	Ontario	410,575	1,863
Ottawa (City)	Ontario	774,075	2,779
Peel (Regional Municipality)	Ontario	988,945	1,242
CMQ (Communauté Metropolitaine de Québec)	Quebec	674,700	3,343
Regina (City)	Saskatchewan	178,225	119
Saskatoon (City)	Saskatchewan	196,810	148
Sudbury (City of Greater)	Ontario	155,220	3,354
Toronto (City)	Ontario	2,481,495	630
Vancouver (City)	British Columbia	545,670	115
Waterloo (Regional Municipality)	Ontario	438,515	1,369
Windsor (City)	Ontario	208,405	121
Winnipeg (City)	Manitoba	619,545	465
York (Regional Municipality)	Ontario	729,255	1,762

The QOLRS now contains hundreds of variables measuring changes in social, economic and environmental factors. These variables are structured into 75 indicators which speak to the quality of life in the 20 QOLRS municipalities for the period 1990 to 2002. These municipalities account for 40 percent of Canada's total population, and comprise some of Canada's largest urban centres, many of the suburban municipalities surrounding these, as well as small and medium-sized cities in seven provinces.

These data are currently available to the QOLRS project members at a password-protected website (http://www.fcm.ca/qol3). Several QOLRS municipalities have begun drawing on these data in order to prepare their own separate analyses of local contexts. This system is now an excellent resource for future collaborative efforts involving FCM, other government organizations and other stakeholders.

By providing a method to monitor quality of life at the local level, the QOLRS is intended to establish municipal governments as a strong and legitimate partner in public policy debates in

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Canada. The reporting system is equally important as a tool for community organizations, research institutes, and other orders of government, allowing these to:
- identify and promote awareness of issues affecting quality of life in Canadian municipalities;
- better target policies and resources aimed at improving quality of life;
- support collaborative efforts to improve quality of life; and
- inform and influence decision-makers across Canada.

Preparing Measures of Homelessness

In 2002, FCM was contracted to develop and incorporate new measures of homelessness into the Quality of Life Reporting System. The measures of homelessness described in this report comprise indicators of absolute homelessness and the risk of homelessness. These indicators were developed by the FCM QOLRS Homelessness Working Group (HWG), with municipal members from the Cities of Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal[1], Vancouver and Calgary, and the Regional Municipality of Peel. The HWG also included a representative of the National Secretariat on Homelessness. (See Annex 1 Homelessness Working Group Terms of Reference)

The QOLRS – including the new measures of homelessness - will be used by FCM to deliver a series of reports in 2004 and 2005 addressing various dimensions of quality of life. A "Highlights Report," to be delivered in early-2004, will present analyses of both existing conditions and ten-year historical trends in 20 Canadian municipalities based on a subset of data available from the QOLRS. Subsequent publications will delve into more detail on such issues as income security and social inclusion; cities and the environment; and community safety and security. One of these in-depth thematic publications will address affordable housing and homelessness.

With the inclusion of a series of indicators of homelessness, the Quality of Life Reporting System will provide a strong basis for further work by the National Secretariat on Homelessness and FCM.

New in this Report

The October 15, 2003 Progress Report submitted to the National Secretariat on Homelessness identified several remaining actions to be taken in the preparation of the indicators of homelessness. These included validating the survey results, transforming the data into indicator tables, and integrating these into the overall Quality of Life Reporting System. These steps have now been completed.

This report provides the following new information:
- A more detailed description of the methodology used to prepare the indicators
- Updates to the definitions, limitations and sources for the selected indicators of absolute and relative homelessness, based on an analysis of the data collection results.
- Data tables and charts illustrating the indicators of absolute and relative homelessness
- Recommendations for building on the results of this study.

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[1] *The City of Montreal participated in the process of developing the indicators of homelessness, but was not a member of the QOLRS project.*

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The Value Added of the Process of Preparing Measures of Homelessness

- Design and implementation of an extensive consultative methodology centred on the role of municipalities in contributing to homelessness indicator development.
- Definition of a relevant set of indicators providing quantitative measures of both absolute and relative homelessness
- Design and administration of a municipal survey tool involving 20 municipalities
- Collection of data in support of the indicators
- Acquisition of data at the Census Division/Census Sub-Division level for 20 municipalities from a range of national statistical agencies.[2]
- Recommendations for improving data collection methodology in any future efforts
- Recommendations for options to strengthen measures of relative homelessness using customized statistical tabulations from Stats Can and CMHC

The recommendations identified in this report are the result of a careful reflection on the methodology used to define the measures and collect the data. The data collection methodology developed and accepted by the Homelessness Working Group in 2002 was based on a survey of municipal governments. The review of this methodology identified certain important limitations, identified later in this report. As a result of this assessment, FCM took steps to explore the value of alternative methodologies intended to correct these limitations in any future research.

These recommended actions reflect the need for continuous improvement to the indicators and associated data. One of the study's recommendations is that the measure of absolute homelessness would benefit from further data on shelter usage. Similarly, the measure of relative homelessness would benefit from the participation of academic and community stakeholders in a review of the mix of indicators of the Risk of Homelessness. There are also opportunities to develop a weighted multi-variate indicator or composite index measuring the risk of homelessness, as well as neighbourhood-level analysis of the risk factors in selected "high-risk" municipalities.

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[2] Unlike the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA), the CD/CSD represents actual municipal boundaries.

B. METHODOLOGY

The process of developing indicators of homelessness took place over a two-year period and involved a series of phases.

PHASE 1 Draft Indicator Definition-January to March 2002
- Literature Review (See Annex 2**.** Reference Documents for the FCM Homelessness Indicator Working Group - HWG)
- Definition of homelessness indicators – absolute and relative
- Criteria for indicator selection
- Long List, followed by short list of possible indicators of the risk of homelessness

PHASE 2 – Indicator Feasibility Assessment-April to August 2002
This phase was devoted to finalizing the list of indicators to be included in the measures of absolute and relative homelessness, and to assessing the feasibility of collecting data in support of these indicators.

The final selection of indicator variables was the result of a series of consultations with the Working Group between the months of April and June 2002. The selection process also relied on the criteria established during Phase 1.

Two surveys were administered electronically during the months of April and May in order to narrow down the selection of indicator variables, to assess data availability and to determine data particularities. A long survey was distributed to members of the HWG and a smaller survey was distributed to the remaining FCM QOLRS Reporting Communities. (See Annex 3 a and b).

The following section summarizes the analysis of this feasibility study. (See Annex 4. Survey Feasibility Analysis for the detailed results).

Assessing the Feasibility of the Measure of Absolute Homelessness

Question: Does your reporting community capture data from the following shelters?
All 18 municipalities were asked this question and 16 responded. Shelter data were available, though they were not all captured by a central agency or at the level of the city/municipality. Some coordination effort would be required to access shelter data from shelters themselves or other jurisdictions such as provincial and federal governments. Data gathering would also require a well-designed template to ensure data are consistently captured with all necessary sources and accompanying metadata. Where data were not available, the respondents provided contacts to other organizations (Winnipeg, Regina, Vancouver, HRM, and Toronto, while Ottawa was able to provide assistance on data related to abused women's shelters).

Question: Is Capacity Known?
This question was asked to the six HWG members in the long survey and was intended as a method to gauge how shelter users were counted and to determine the level of consistency. Capacity was known by 5 respondents, though data from abused women's shelters would have to be sought from provincial agencies. The other reporting communities would be expected to have similar knowledge of the shelter capacity and to provide contacts at agencies that have this data.

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Question: Is the number of Turnaways Known?
This question was asked to the six HWG members in the long survey. The question addressed whether it was possible to determine the number of people turned away from the shelter system in order to assess overflow, the number of people who may be forced to find another shelter and those who may be forced onto the street for the night. Based on the responses, it would be recommended that this variable not be included in the absolute measure. However it would be insightful to determine the reasons for the low level of tracking turnaways and to determine best practices to conduct these counts.

Question: Are repeat users tracked?
This question sought to determine if there was a method to calculate chronic homelessness and the number of unique individuals using the shelter system. This question was included in both the long and the mini surveys and resulted in 16 responses. Only one respondent indicated that they could distinguish repeat users (Toronto). The rest could not.

Question: What is the frequency of the counts?
The intent of this question was to assess the how often the counts are done, with the hope that, at a minimum, a yearly indicator could be included in the report. This question was included in the long and short surveys, and resulted in a response rate of 16 of 18. The responses varied considerably, and included frequencies of daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, yearly and every two years. While yearly counts would be possible if daily, monthly or quarterly data were aggregated, a yearly indicator would not be possible for all communities. However, it would be possible to show yearly counts for some reporting communities and other measures of frequency for the remaining communities, properly explained in the footnotes.

Question: Are Demographics Tracked?
The intent of the indicator was to develop an understanding of the changing composition of the absolute homeless population of the shelter system over time. Of particular interest was to understand the increase in the number of families and children in the system overtime. The responses indicated that determining the changing population of homeless sub-groups in the shelter system overtime would not be an easy process, since not all information is consistently tracked. It would be necessary to ensure that questions regarding demographics are clear at the data collection stage, in order to capture as much information as possible. The resulting partial and incomplete demographic picture for all sub-groups in all reporting communities would have to be clearly stated as a limitation of the indicator in the methodology guide and well articulated in the analysis and the foot notes.

Question: Are there any costs related to data capture?
The cost of the data capture process was not well reported in the surveys, and those that did respond reported that they did not know the actual cost. Several responses indicated that staff were dedicated to the task in the city/municipality or in the shelters and that equipment was purchased for the task. Gathering shelter data for the FCM QOLRS would likely require the hiring of a coordinator to develop a data gathering and analysis system. Respondents also indicated that shelters were in need of capacity building and resources to capture data more fully.

Assessing the Measure of Relative Homelessness

Consultants prepared a list of 26 existing indicators and 18 new indicators. The 18 new indicators were identified on the basis of research and analysis of structural determinants of homelessness.

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QOLRS project members were asked to prioritize their preferred indicators using a ranking exercise. Responses were received from 17 municipalities.

The results of the ranking exercise were then incorporated into the final assessment which considered the following factors:
- Relevance of the indicator as a meaningful measure of the structural factors that contribute to an increased risk of homelessness
- Data availability – ease with which data can be acquired
- Possibility of quantifying the desired indicator
- Whether the indicator adds significant value in relation to the other indicators, or if it duplicates any of the other indicators.

While not included in the initial list, 10 respondents identified gross rent spending of over 50% of income as an indicator of the risk of homelessness.

Table Summary Assessment of Indicators of the Risk of Homelessness

Indicator	Survey Result	Summary Assessment
Proposed Indicators		
1. *Gross Rent Spending: 50%+*	*10/17*	*A relevant and useful indicator of the relationship between income and shelter costs. Time-series data are available from Statistics Canada. A special request is possible to adjust this variable to exclude high income earning groups to better reflect core need, CMHC developed the algorithm used by Statistics Canada. However, this special request is available for 1991 and 1996 only. 2001 data will be available only by 2005.*
2. *Social Housing Waiting Lists*	*17/17*	*A relevant and useful indicator of the unmet demand for subsidized housing. Some time-series data are available at the municipal level, though not necessarily in a single, centralized place.*
3. *Rental Housing Starts*	*11/17*	*While survey results did not place it in the top five, it serves as the best available indicator of accessible, unsubsidized housing stock. Data are available from CMHC, at a cost.*
4. Food Bank Usage	16/17	Data on food bank usage would not be available to allow for a clear picture of the growing number of food bank users. This is due to the absence of centralized food distribution systems at the municipal level. Instead, the combination of Household Income Spent on Shelter and Social Housing Waiting Lists would serve as an effective set of measures of income inadequacy related to the Risk of Homelessness.
5. Rent Geared to Income Units	12/17	A relevant and useful indicator of the available supply of subsidized housing. Data are not readily available, and require a survey of municipalities, as well as other agencies. Serves a similar purpose to the social housing waiting list indicator while also speaking to shelter availability for lower income groups.
6. Economic Evictions	12/17	A relevant and useful indicator of housing affordability, but data collection will be difficult to impossible.
7. Provision of Mental Health Care	12/17	While it is one of the structural causes of homelessness, we were unable to identify a useful indicator for which

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	Existing Indicators		
			data are available.
1.	*Low Income Economic Families*	*16/16*	*Useful as one of several mutually reinforcing indicators associated with affordability.*
2.	*Vacancy rates*	*16/16*	*Useful as one of several mutually reinforcing indicators associated with housing availability and the state of the housing market*
3.	*Lone-Parent Families*	*11/16*	*Useful as one of several mutually reinforcing indicators associated with poverty, need and vulnerability.*
4.	*Unemployment Rates*	*11/16*	*Useful as one of several mutually reinforcing indicators associated with an inadequate income.*
5.	Gross Rent Spending: 30%+	16/16	May not add any significant value beyond the 50%+ indicator.
6.	Families Receiving Social Assistance	14/16	Serves a similar purpose to the Low Income Economic Families Indicator, as it is associated with inadequate income. In addition, the causal relationship between the number of families receiving social assistance and the risk of homelessness is ambiguous.

PHASE 3   Municipal Survey Design-July 2002 to March 2003

Activities between July and October 2002 were devoted to the design of a data collection tool for the indicator of absolute homelessness. The tool was developed by the HWG and went through six drafts until final approval.

Survey design related to the risk of homelessness took place between December 2002 and March 2003. This included questions related to social housing waiting lists, and was carried out in conjunction with the design of a broader municipal survey on quality of life.

The survey was translated into French following the inclusion of the Communauté Metropolitaine de Québec (CMQ) as a QOLRS member in July 2003. (See Annex 5 for the final version of the survey tool).

PHASE 4   Data acquisition-January to September 2003

Acquisition of data from national statistical agencies began in January 2003. These data were used to populate the risk of homelessness indicators not dependent on municipal data.

Municipal Survey Administration took place between April and September 2003.

Data acquisition took place in the context of a broader exercise in support of the full QOL Reporting System.

During this time, additional customized tabulations were requested from Statistics Canada and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Several of these special orders relate directly to the measure of the risk of homelessness.

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The special order from Statistics Canada is for the years 1991, 1996 and 2001. These data allow for deeper analysis of unemployment, spending on shelter by owners and renters, and the incidence of households living below the Low Income Cut Off for a wide range of demographic groups:

Families	Persons
- All Census Families - Two Parent Families - without children - Two Parent Families - with children - Lone-parent family, male parent - Lone-parent family, female parent - All children 0-12 years of age - All children 0-6 years of age - All children 7-12 years of age - All children 13-19 years of age - Some children 0-6, Some 7-12 - Some children 0-6, Some 13-19 - Some children 7-12, Some 13-19 - Some children 0-6, Some 7-12, Some 13-19	- Total Population in Private Households - Aboriginal Identity population - Total non-Aboriginal population - Visible minority Population - Non-visible minority Population - Total Immigrant Population - Period of Immigration 1997 to 2001 - Period of Immigration 1991 to 1996 - Period of Immigration 1981 to 1991 - Non-immigrant Population - Number of people speaking non-official (English and/or French) language at home - Number of people speaking official (English and/or French) language at home - Unattached individuals - 15+ years - Unattached individuals - 15-24 years - Unattached individuals - 25-34 years - Unattached individuals - 35-64 years - Unattached individuals - 65+ years

The special order from CMHC provided more detail on vacancy rates for private structures with 3 or more units for the years 1991 and 1996-2001. These data provide vacancy rates for five rent ranges.

PHASE 4   Data Validation - October 2003 to January 2004
The final step included validating the survey results and transforming the data into indicator tables as part of the overall Quality of Life Reporting System.

The following activities took place during this phase:
- Survey follow-up: phone calls to all 20 municipalities to confirm or clarify results; additional research to supplement survey results
- Review of survey results: Analysis of data to guide future efforts in survey design
- Clean-up of Municipal Survey Database: Correction of errors, entry of new data and design of queries for export of survey results to data tables.

C. REVIEW OF INDICATORS AND DATA TABLES

This section describes the original indicator definitions, and changes made based on the experience gained during the data collection and review process. Data tables are also provided. Corresponding charts are available in Annex 6.

MEASURING THE CHANGING FACE OF HOMELESSNESS

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis

Definition
The *Changing Face of Homelessness* is a measure of the proportions of the homeless sub-populations in the emergency shelter system, over time. The indicator includes the following demographic sub-groups as a percentage of the total shelter population:
• Single men
• Single Women - including abused women
• Families: Single- and two-parent households with dependants
• Youth: Independent Minors living without a legal guardian
	Changes to Definition:
	The definition remains largely unchanged, with the primary focus on measuring the change in the composition of the homeless, rather than a count of homelessness. However, there were some changes were required upon analysis of survey results:
	• Rather than measuring shelter users, the indicator now aims to measure the number of shelters, by type and the number of shelter beds, by type.
	• Measuring numbers of shelter users of given types was constrained by several factors:
	  • Lack of data on users, especially historical data. Municipalities tend not to track this information. Data were often unavailable even where shelters were surveyed directly.
	  • Where data were available, face-to-face interviews, or at least telephone interviews would have been more appropriate for securing responses from shelter administrators. This was beyond the scope of the project and would have yielded incomplete results.
	
	Several new categories of "shelter" are included in the current table:
	• *Mixed:* Many shelters provide beds for a mix of clients. A shelter may house single men and women or youth in separate quarters under the same roof. A shelter may serve single women, abused women and female-led families under the same roof. Additional research would be required to determine what proportion of beds is devoted to unique categories.
	• *Abused women:* In some cases this falls under the category of "single women", in other cases it falls under "families"
	• *Refugees and Aboriginal:* Additional investigation is required to determine which client group(s) are served by these shelters. i.e. families or singles.

Significance/Uses: • This indicator will provide insight on the changing proportion of demographic sub-populations of the absolute homeless in shelters, recognizing that a comprehensive count of	*No Change to the Significance/Use of the Indicator*

the entire homeless population is not currently feasible. Data will be captured from: Single Men and Women's shelters; Abused Women's and Family Shelters, Youth Shelters, Families and Singles Sheltered in Hotels & Motels, and Families and Singles sheltered in Military Barracks/Houses.

- The indicator will help dispel the notion that homelessness comprises only people living on the streets, namely the idea that it is primarily about single men and those suffering from addiction or mental health issues.
- This indicator will provide policy makers with a better understanding of how to effectively respond to the growing incidence of homelessness amongst a changing mix of demographic sub-populations, especially families with children.

The indicator is also intended to serve as a national baseline for future measures of the absolute homeless population.

Limitations & Notes:	Limitations Revealed as a Result of Data Collection and Analysis
The indicator does not capture the full extent of absolute homelessness in a community as it excludes individuals and families that are: - *Roofless* – stayed overnight in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., a vacant building, a public or commercial facility, a city park, a car or on the street). Currently only a small number of Canadian municipalities conduct street counts and the results of these surveys are also difficult to compare. - Living in housing that is not safe, secure, adequate, accessible, or permanent. - The invisible homelessness – temporarily and/or involuntarily living w/friends or relatives, exchanging favours in return for housing, and etc. At present quantitative measures of the invisible homeless have not been conducted to any significant extent. - *Houseless* – runaways, people who reside in long-term institutions because there is no suitable accommodation in the community in transitional and supportive housing, youth living in care, - The indicator does not attempt to capture people living in transitional housing as they are considered to be in a continuum of care environment on their way to permanent housing. The indicator of absolute homelessness does not serve as a count of homelessness, but will address the composition of homelessness, and changes over time. In recognition of the	- The survey of shelter usage was divided into two parts. Part A requested the names and types of all shelters currently in existence in a municipality. Part B requested more detailed information on individual shelters, including numbers of beds and usage statistics by demographic group. - While the survey results for Part A are strong and generally reflective of the universe of shelters in the 20 municipalities, not all shelters identified in Part A of the survey are reported on in Part B of the survey. Responses to Part B often addressed only a sub-set of shelters identified in Part A. Direct contact with shelters and key informants in the community would be necessary to fill this information gap. - Part B of the survey identifies the year of establishment of individual shelters. However additional research is required to identify shelters that were closed prior to 2002. - While bed counts for shelters of different types are helpful in serving as an indicator of demograpic composition, shelter overflow can dramatically alter the numbers. Where overflow numbers are available, these indicate substantial variations in the actual number of users. However, overflow numbers were provided in a minority of cases, and were generally reliable. - Several municipalities did not report on Abused Women's Shelters, as these are often not considered to be shelters for the homeless.

limitations in measuring the entire homeless population, the Changing Faces of Homelessness indicator will only capture data from the emergency shelter system along with overflow shelters (e.g. motels, hotels, army barracks), inclusive of emergency shelters run by faith-based organizations and other orders of government. This figure will represents the sum of all users of the shelter system identified by each participating municipality.

There are several obstacles to estimating the total homeless population:

- Definitions are unclear. There is a continuum of situations that can be classified as either absolute homelessness, being at-risk of homelessness, or being inadequately housed. There are points in the continuum when the difference between these situations is negligible. There are also myriad possibilities at each point in the continuum, some of which are not easily categorized.
- Measuring the absolute homeless entails logistical, methodological, and political difficulties. For example, street counts have not been conducted by all reporting communities, are often carried out in an unsystematic fashion, and have received much resistance from community leaders. Those who have conducted them would state that the counts are only gross estimates with large margins of error;
- Shelter users may rely on numerous shelter and support services, leading to the double counting of some individuals. Currently, only one QOLRS reporting community tracks individual user in a consistent fashion.
- Data compilation methods differ across jurisdictions; (e.g. some shelters do not capture demographic information, frequency of counts differs, data are not necessarily tracked by municipalities/cities but by shelters, or the Provincial or Federal governments, or there is a lack of consistent time-series data).
- A measure of "turn-aways" is impossible as most shelters to do not currently capture this information.
- Not all communities have the same composition of shelters, which may lead to undercounting of certain sub-groups (e.g. youth).
- An annual measure excludes an understanding of seasonal fluctuations
- The number of dependants is generally counted by FCM QOLRS communities while their age and gender may not be captured.
- Data collection reliant on the Homeless Individuals and Families Information System

- There were unexplained discrepancies in shelter categories in Part A and Part B. For example, a municipality may have indicated a total of 2 men's shelters in Part A, but reported on 3 Men's Shelters in Part B. Telephone follow-up clarified some of these discrepancies, but not all. A comprehensive clarification of these discrepancies would have required direct contact with shelters, supplemented by secondary research.

(HIFIS) and other reporting methods are not used by the universe of shelter providers.	
Data Sources: QOLRS participating communities, shelter providers, provincial agencies	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis** • While additional data were not available from HIFIS, HIFIS coordinators were helpful in identifying contacts and validating some of the number collected through the survey • Reports on homelessness prepared by individual municipalities were valuable resources in filling gaps • Supplementary interviews with key informants proved useful in filling gaps

Recommended Actions for Future Work:
- Focus on Shelter Beds, rather than Shelter users
- Rely on secondary sources to fill the gaps, especially Community Homelessness Reports
- Rely on trained interviewers to conduct face-to-face, or at least telephone interviews of municipal staff and shelter administrators
- Interview key informants to field test and validate survey results

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Table 1 Homeless Shelters, by shelter type, 2002/2003

Shelter Type	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
Single men Shelters as % all shelters	19.9%	6.3%	30.0%	25.0%	13.3%	18.8%	16.7%	25.0%	10.0%	30.0%	11.1%	20.0%	28.6%	12.5%	40.0%	21.3%	29.6%	11.1%	25.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Single women Shelters as % all shelters	14.5%	0.0%	20.0%	16.7%	6.7%	43.8%	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	10.0%	0.0%	20.0%	14.3%	12.5%	20.0%	20.0%	11.1%	0.0%	25.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Youth Shelters as % all shelters	14.2%	12.5%	20.0%	8.3%	6.7%	12.5%	16.7%	12.5%	20.0%	20.0%	11.1%	10.0%	14.3%	12.5%	20.0%	15.0%	7.4%	33.3%	0.0%	30.0%	10.0%
Abused Women Shelters as % all shelters	16.7%	18.8%	20.0%	25.0%	13.3%	0.0%	33.3%	25.0%	30.0%	0.0%	33.3%	30.0%	42.9%	12.5%	0.0%	17.5%	0.0%	22.2%	25.0%	10.0%	20.0%
Mixed Shelters as % all shelters	17.0%	56.3%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	12.5%	40.0%	20.0%	22.2%	20.0%	0.0%	12.5%	20.0%	8.8%	37.0%	33.3%	0.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Family Shelters as % all shelters	9.2%	6.3%	0.0%	8.3%	26.7%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	20.0%	11.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	14.8%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	10.0%
Total number of shelters	282	16	10	12	15	16	6	8	10	10	9	10	7	8	5	80	27	9	4	10	10
Single Men	56	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	1	2	17	8	1	1	1	1
Single Women	41	0	2	2	1	7	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	16	3	0	1	1	1
Youth	40	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	12	2	3	0	3	1
Abused Women	47	3	2	3	2	0	2	2	3	0	3	3	3	1	0	14	0	2	1	1	2
Mixed	48	9	0	2	0	0	2	1	4	2	2	2	0	1	1	7	10	3	0	2	0
Family	26	1	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	10	4	0	0	1	1
Hotel/Motel/Hostel	21	0	0	0	4	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	3	0	4	0	0	1	1	4
Other	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source: FCM Municipal Survey Database, Section 03 Part A, 2003

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Table 2 Total Number of Permanent Beds, all shelters - 1991, 1996-2002

Variable	Year	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
Single men	1991	321	102	62	28	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	85	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	39	n/a	n/a	n/a
Single men	1996	534	250	187	28	n/a	n/a	5	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	25	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	39	n/a	n/a	n/a
Single men	2001	2153	1125	327	93	n/a	132	6	79	n/a	n/a	n/a	108	25	31	n/a	n/a	n/a	39	59	100	29
Single men	2002	3963	925	370	78	n/a	210	8	79	n/a	439	n/a	90	25	n/a	n/a	1541	n/a	39	59	100	n/a
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	46	5	3	3	0	3	1	1	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	16	0	1	1	1	1
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	56	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	1	3	1	2	2	1	2	17	8	1	1	1	1
Single women	1991	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
Single women	1996	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	n/a
Single women	2001	306	0	81	14	n/a	102	0	n/a	0	n/a	12	12	43	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	8	34	n/a
Single women	2002	910	0	90	14	n/a	102	0	n/a	0	43	n/a	17	43	n/a	n/a	559	n/a	0	8	34	n/a
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	33	0	2	2	0	6	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	1	15	0	0	1	1	0
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	41	0	2	2	1	7	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	1	16	3	0	1	1	1
Youth	1991	65	17	38	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	10	0	0	0
Youth	1996	91	12	38	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	0	0	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	17	0	24	0
Youth	2001	205	15	38	20	n/a	20	6	26	0	n/a	n/a	6	0	n/a	14	n/a	n/a	26	0	24	10
Youth	2002	781	15	38	20	n/a	35	6	26	0	36	n/a	6	0	n/a	14	522	n/a	29	0	24	10
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	35	2	2	1	0	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	0	1	12	0	3	0	2	1
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	40	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	12	2	3	0	3	1
Abused women	1991	230	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	23	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	50	n/a	0	n/a	0	31	n/a	62	n/a
Abused women	1996	242	64	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	35	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	50	n/a	0	n/a	0	31	n/a	62	n/a
Abused women	2001	510	63	n/a	31	n/a	0	113	42	n/a	0	n/a	36	50	30	0	n/a	0	50	n/a	62	33
Abused women	2002	821	66	83	26	n/a	0	n/a	42	n/a	0	n/a	36	50	n/a	0	358	0	50	n/a	77	33
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	41	3	2	3	0	0	2	1	3	0	2	3	3	1	0	13	0	2	0	1	2
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	47	3	2	3	2	0	2	2	3	0	3	3	3	1	0	14	0	2	1	1	2

Category	Year																					
Mixed	1991	167	0	50	n/a	0	n/a	0	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	42	0	n/a	55	n/a
Mixed	1996	292	65	60	n/a	0	n/a	0	20	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0	n/a	n/a	n/a	92	0	n/a	55	n/a
Mixed	2001	1285	475	60	12	10	n/a	172	20	n/a	n/a	99	118	0	40	7	n/a	117	100	n/a	55	n/a
Mixed	2002	2153	669	72	12	10	55	24	20	n/a	50	n/a	119	0	n/a	7	807	153	100	n/a	55	n/a
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	48	5	1	2	2	1	2	1	4	2	3	3	0	1	2	10	4	2	1	1	1
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	48	9	0	2	0	0	2	1	4	2	2	2	0	1	1	7	10	3	0	2	0
Families	1991	53	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	53	0	n/a	0
Families	1996	53	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	53	0	n/a	n/a
Families	2001	142	45	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	0	0	0	0	0	n/a	n/a	60	0	n/a	20
Families	2002	1516	60	0	17	14	10	0	0	0	260	133	0	0	0	0	942	n/a	60	0	n/a	20
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	21	1	0	1	3	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	10	0	1	0	0	1
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	26	1	0	1	4	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	10	4	0	0	1	1
Total Shelter Beds	1991	836	183	150	28	0	0	5	43	0	0	0	0	135	0	0	0	42	133	0	117	0
Total Shelter Beds	1996	1212	391	285	28	0	0	5	55	0	0	0	0	75	0	0	0	92	140	0	141	0
Total Shelter Beds	2001	4601	1723	506	187	10	254	297	167	0	0	111	280	118	101	21	0	117	275	67	275	92
Total Shelter Beds	2002	10144	1735	653	167	24	412	38	167	0	828	133	268	118	0	21	4729	153	278	67	290	63
Total Shelters with Bed Count	2002	224	16	10	12	5	13	6	4	10	10	9	10	7	3	5	76	4	9	3	6	6
Total Municipal Shelters	2002	258	16	9	12	10	13	6	7	10	10	8	10	7	5	5	76	27	9	3	9	6

Source: FCM Municipal Survey Database, Section 03, Part B, 2003

Notes:
0: No shelters falling under this category were known to have been in existence in this year.
N/A: At least one shelter falling under this category was known to have existed in this year, but information on the number of beds was not available..

MEASURING THE RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Definition:
This multi-variate indicator measures several structural factors placing the general population at risk of homelessness. The literature review points to three inter-related structural factors correlated with homelessness:
1. *Housing*, including specific factors such as the availability of affordable rental accommodation, the availability of subsidized housing, rent-to-income levels, and evictions.
2. *Income and Employment*, resulting in an ability to afford available housing, and including factors such as unemployment, employment income, and social assistance benefit levels
3. *Supportive Services*, particularly in response to mental illness, substance abuse, and victimization, and including factors such as psychiatric hospital discharges, provision of mental health care in the community, and children leaving care.

This indicator distinguishes between these structural factors and specific behavioral factors associated with homelessness. Individual behaviour, personality and mental health have a significant influence on the extent of homelessness, and are reinforced by structural conditions associated with homelessness.

The indicator includes several factors associated with the risk of homelessness already included in previous QOLRS reports and will include several new indicators. Relying on multiple indicators reflects the reality that individuals and families are placed at risk of homelessness due to the combination of multiple factors.

- Gross Rent Spending: 50% or more of Household Income on Shelter Costs
- Social Housing Waiting Lists
- Rental Housing Starts
- Incidence of Low Income in Economic Families
- Vacancy rates
- Lone-Parent Families
- Unemployment Rates

Significance/Uses:
- Measuring the risk of homelessness provides an indication of the extent to which factors commonly associated with relative and absolute homelessness are prevalent in the community.
- The indicator is intended to provide a broader understanding of the causes of homelessness by:
  - Focusing attention on factors commonly associated with an increased risk of homelessness; and,
  - Assisting with the design of appropriate and effective responses to relative homelessness to prevent greater degrees of absolute homelessness.
- Measuring the Risk of Homelessness provides an indication of the size of the population that is either invisibly homeless or at risk of homelessness. Factors that serve as proxies for the proportion of the general population living at risk of homelessness include food bank usage and social housing waiting lists.

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- The indicator demonstrates why absolute and/or visible homelessness is an indicator of a much broader quality of life issue - namely housing insecurity -affecting a much larger proportion of the population. This at-risk population includes individuals and families not actually experiencing absolute homelessness, and who have access to permanent shelter, but who are at a point on a continuum which can, under various circumstances, lead directly to absolute homelessness.

Limitations & Notes:
- These indicators cannot be considered as determinants of relative or absolute homelessness but are indicative of variables commonly associated with these.
- The overall homeless population comprises sub-populations with differential factors associated with their state of homelessness, therefore indicators cannot be equally considered as causal factors affecting the entire homeless population.
- Conceptually, being "at-risk of homelessness" includes a risk of living in housing that is not safe, secure, adequate, accessible, or permanent. A certain amount of homelessness is also "invisible", where families and individuals share a single unit. This indicator's variables do not reflect all of these components.
- It is understood that individual behaviour and personality have a significant influence on the extent of homelessness where structural conditions associated with homelessness are in place. Individual circumstances that may act as triggers when combined with structural factors for particular communities are not included here (e.g. leaving the parental home after arguments or abuse; marital or relationship breakdown; or widowhood; leaving care or prison; a sharp deterioration in mental health or an increase in alcohol or drug misuse; a financial crisis of mounting debts; and/or eviction from a rented or owned home). These factors are not addressed due to limitations of collecting consistent and time-series data.
- Quantitative research on the topic of at-risk of homelessness is very limited in Canada.

For several reasons, this indicator does not attempt to quantify the number of people considered to be at-risk of homelessness in a given municipality:
- There is no clear consensus on what distinguishes the absolute from the relative homeless.
- The factors which move people from relative to absolute homelessness vary considerably and are difficult to quantify, as are the number of people with vulnerabilities associated with one or more of these factors.

Measuring Homelessness

Social Housing Waiting Lists

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: The size of the waiting list for social housing, measured in terms of one of the following: • The change in the size of the waiting list over time • The number of households on the waiting list as a % of the total number of available social housing units • The number of households on the waiting list as a % of the vacant units • Estimated waiting time This indicator describes the number of applications for placement in social housing units. It provides an indication of the demand for affordable housing over time. Waiting lists should be compared to something to make them more comparable across municipalities – as a % of available vacant units, as a % of total units, or average waiting time for a unit.	Taking into consideration the need for a more precise indicator, as well as data limitations, the definition was narrowed down as follows: * The number of households on the waiting list for social housing, as a % of total households, 1991, 1996-2002 * Average estimated waiting time, in months, 1991, 1996-2002
Significance/Uses: • Research shows that almost all the people on the list are there because they cannot afford housing in the private rental market. • "Every study that has looked has found that affordable, usually subsidized housing, prevents homelessness more effectively than anything else. This is true for all groups of poor people, including those with persistent and severe mental illness and/or substance abuse" (Shinn, Marybeth et al. 1998. Rethinking the Prevention of Homelessness. 1998 National Symposium on Homelessness.)	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • Not all FCM QOLRS reporting communities have a centralized registry. • Methods of counting and criteria for inclusion into existing lists vary. Reliability concerns were also noted.	**Limitations Revealed as a Result of Data Collection and Analysis** **The Number of Households on the Waiting List** • Waiting list data were not available for all registries within a municipality. The reliability of a municipal response to this question is suspect where only one of several registries provides data. **The Length of Time Spent on a Waiting List** • It is impossible to define a single wait time: o There are typically multiple wait times for individual registries for a given household, depending on the type of household, or the type of unit.

	o Where a municipality has multiple registries, the range of responses is extensive.
	• Showing change over time is difficult:
	o There were very few responses for years prior to 2001.
	o Where responses were provided for earlier years, these did not indicate any change in length of a wait time.
Source: Social Registries and social housing providers.	**No change**

Recommended Actions for Future Work:

- Refocus the question to account for the range of waiting lists – providing minimum and maximum responses is one option; more clearly defining the type of household on the waiting list is another.

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Households on Social Housing Registry Waiting List

Year	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	Québec	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991																	892		1384	
1996		12															1057		2147	
1997		12										582					1023		1979	
1998		15		1957	2709							407			51428		2812		2013	
1999		15		1972	3724				15581			575			55351		4028	2242	847	
2000	366	15		1895					12949	248		562			63481		3503	251	3071	4325
2001	1985	20		2019					13351	289		671			61882		3776	3205	2967	4732
2002	2983	20	n/a	2667	4866	674	4166	3390	12393	n/a	3173	558	500	n/a	66327	n/a	4017	1483	3770	4905

Source: FCM Municipal Survey Database, 2003

Average Waiting Time for Households on Social Housing Registry Waiting List (months) - 2002

Year	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
Min2002	18.0	2	3	n/a	24	n/a	6	36	n/a	60	n/a	2	n/a	12	n/a	84	n/a	12	24	n/a	36
Max2002	54.0	18	12	n/a	60	n/a	60	36	n/a	96	n/a	60	n/a	12	n/a	120	n/a	48	48	n/a	72

Source: FCM Municipal Survey Database, 2003

Notes
n/a: Data not available, either because of differences between the survey question and the municipality's method of compilation; or difficulties accessing data from non-municipal agencies.

Rental Housing Starts

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: This indicator measures the stock of private rental housing, defined either as the number of annual private rental construction starts as a proportion of total housing starts, or as the number of private rental units as a proportion of total housing units.	The definition was narrowed down as follows: Measures the change over time in the stock of private rental housing, defined as the number of annual private rental construction starts as a proportion of total housing starts. Total starts include rental, homeowner, condominium, and cooperative housing types.
Significance/Uses: • Private rental serves as a more affordable and accessible form of tenure for low income individuals and families, or those with inconsistent incomes. • Research has clearly established the impact of strong levels of affordable housing supply on homelessness and core housing need. For the purpose of this report, private rental accommodation serves as the proxy for affordable housing.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • The indicator does not distinguish high-end rentals from more affordable rentals, but assumes that a healthy rental sector is in itself an indicator of accessibility.	**No change**
Source: CMHC Rental Market Survey.	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis** Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Starts and Completions Survey, 1991, 1996-2001

Recommended Actions for Future Work: None

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Rental Housing Starts as Percentage of all Starts - 1991, 1996, 2001

Year	Canada	Rest of Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	23.4%	19.0%	30.5%	3.2%	6.9%	61.2%	9.3%	48.0%	57.2%	49.5%	30.8%	45.4%	22.3%	29.6%	9.9%	0.0%	60.6%	53.2%	23.6%	34.6%	56.1%	11.7%	21.2%
1996	6.5%	7.3%	5.6%	0.3%	5.3%	9.3%	2.1%	0.4%	22.7%	10.5%	1.4%	2.4%	0.2%	30.9%	1.0%	0.4%	4.0%	7.6%	13.4%	0.7%	13.7%	10.0%	2.3%
2001	10.3%	13.4%	8.1%	4.7%	13.2%	29.1%	0.0%	0.0%	21.9%	7.3%	1.8%	6.8%	1.6%	17.4%	0.7%	4.7%	0.0%	5.1%	45.6%	20.1%	3.6%	6.7%	0.0%

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Starts and Completions Survey, 1991, 1996-2001

Gross Rent Spending: 50% or more of Household Income on Shelter Costs

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: Economic Risk reflecting the following factors: • In core housing need • Spending at least 50% of income on shelter • Includes renters and owners Based on the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) definition of risk, called *In Core Housing Need and Spending At Least Half of Income on Shelter (INALH)*. INALH uses the concepts of core housing need and a shelter to income ratio based on spending 50% or more of income on housing. Statistics Canada captures this data. However, a custom order must be requested for this process from CMHC, as CMHC defines the methodology. Core housing need is a term developed by CMHC as part of the National Occupancy Standard. A household is said to be "in core housing need" if: • its housing falls below at least one of the adequacy, suitability or affordability standards, and • it would have to spend 30% or more of its income to pay the average rent for housing that meets all three standards in the local market.	The QOLRS project acquired Core Housing Need data for 1991 and 1996, but was unable to acquire 2001 data. The 2001 data will only be released by Statistics Canada and CMHC in 2005. As a result, the data set for this indicator relies on the total number of households spending 50% or more of total pre-tax income on shelter, and is not limited to Core Housing Need households. Separate data are available for renter and owner households. Note that while the total number of households is different, the trends indicated by both the Core Housing Need and total households spending more than 50% of their income on shelter are very similar.
Significance/Uses: • Households in this situation do not have enough money left over for other necessities such as food, clothing and transportation. If faced with an unexpected expense, they may be unable to make ends meet. Rental arrears or leaving their home may be the only solution. • 'Risk' of homelessness can be defined as households that pay 50 per cent or more of their income for rent, leaving little income for non-shelter expenditures. According to this definition, between 17 per cent and 24 per cent of the renter households in major Canadian cities were 'at risk' based on 1995 data. • People living on the edge economically may be unable to pay their rent if they miss one pay cheque or if their income declines suddenly.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: None identified	**No change**
Source: 1991, 1996 and 2001 Census Statistics Canada and CMHC. Requires CMHC's approval to go directly to Statistics Canada for a special cross-tabulation using CMHC's core housing	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis**

need affordability indicator.	Original request revised to reflect availability of customized 2001 data in 2005 only. Revised source is Statistics Canada, Census Division. 1991, 1996, and 2001. FCM acquired additional customized data for this variable, allowing for analysis with a wide range of demographic types.

Recommended Actions for Future Work:

- Additional analysis is possible using the customized statistics acquired from Statistics Canada.

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Gross Rent Spending: Proportion of Renter Households Spending 50% or more of HH income on shelter costs

Year	Canada	Rest of Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	16.0%	16.2%	15.6%	15.0%	15.6%	17.0%	12.1%	16.0%	16.2%	16.1%	17.7%	13.7%	12.9%	16.0%	15.8%	17.6%	16.5%	15.1%	19.0%	14.0%	19.1%	16.6%	13.4%
1996	21.6%	21.6%	21.5%	17.0%	19.1%	23.2%	16.0%	23.5%	24.3%	23.0%	23.9%	20.3%	18.8%	21.7%	20.1%	22.4%	24.1%	22.6%	24.8%	19.4%	24.3%	19.9%	20.4%
2001	19.0%	18.6%	19.5%	16.0%	17.4%	22.0%	15.6%	21.9%	23.3%	22.7%	21.2%	17.3%	17.3%	17.0%	21.3%	23.1%	22.2%	20.8%	22.6%	17.0%	22.4%	16.2%	18.2%

Source : Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 Census

Owners Major Payment Spending: Proportion of Owner Households Spending 50% or more of HH income on shelter costs

Year	Canada	Rest of Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	5.4%	5.1%	5.8%	4.8%	4.3%	4.6%	5.1%	5.7%	4.5%	4.8%	5.1%	4.3%	7.8%	4.8%	4.0%	4.6%	5.0%	7.9%	6.4%	5.0%	4.9%	4.1%	8.6%
1996	6.5%	6.3%	6.7%	6.0%	5.8%	5.2%	5.1%	5.9%	5.3%	5.6%	5.9%	4.4%	8.3%	6.0%	3.7%	4.0%	4.8%	9.2%	11.3%	4.9%	5.3%	4.3%	9.8%
2001	6.2%	6.1%	6.4%	5.9%	5.6%	5.0%	4.5%	5.9%	4.9%	5.3%	6.1%	3.9%	7.1%	5.1%	3.9%	4.9%	5.8%	8.6%	11.1%	4.7%	5.4%	4.4%	8.6%

Source : Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 Census

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Incidence of Low Income in Economic Families

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: Incidence of low income is based on Statistic Canada's Low Income Cut-offs (LICO). The LICO is a relative measure, and establishes a dollar figure below which a family is considered to be living on low income. Statistics Canada sets the low income cut-off at 20% higher that what the average family spends on basic necessities (shelter, food and clothing). It can be reported on pre- or post-tax income and vary depending on community and family size. The figures are based on the after-tax LICO because it is considered that this provides a better indication of disposable income. It should also be noted that Statistics Canada does not define LICO as 'the poverty line' and in this case, the LICO is used as a proxy for measuring poverty. It helps to identify trends and the way wealth is distributed and so it refers to people living below LICO as living in "straightened circumstances" (low income situations). LICOs are updated annually by fluctuations in the consumer price index, and periodically by changes in expenditures on basic utilities as reflected in the *Household Income and Family Expenditures Survey*.	The definition of the indicator was clarified as followed: The indicator measures change in percentage of families living below the Low Income Cut Off (LICO), for 1991, 1996, 2001.
Significance/Uses: • Used as a proxy in measuring poverty. • Affordability problems are highly concentrated among low-income renters who fall below Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut Off. • Generally speaking, one shared characteristic of homeless persons is that they have very limited, if any, financial resources. • Low income and inability to pay market rents is likely a particularly major cause of homelessness among families with children, and in cases where employed persons are homeless.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • This table only shows low income <u>families</u>. The patterns of low income among <u>unattached individuals</u> are different. • The definition of "poverty" is subjective, and there continues to be debate over the use of LICO (and the methodology it is based on) as an accurate measure of poverty. • Does not indicate extent or the actual state of poverty (prevalence and persistence of hunger, housing insecurity, and social exclusion).	**No change**
Source: Statistics Canada (Special tabulations).	Source: Statistics Canada, Census Division, 1991, 1996, 2001 FCM acquired additional customized data for this variable, allowing for analysis with a wide range of demographic types.

Recommended Actions for Future Work: Additional analysis is possible using the customized statistics acquired from Statistics Canada.

Percentage of Families with Incomes Below the Low Income Cut Off - 1991, 1996, 2001

Year	Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	13.2	12.6	14.6	19.3	11.6	5.3	14.8	10.4	11.8	10.5	10.9	8.7	15.6	13.4	16.1	11.7	16.3	19.5	9.6	15.3	17.4	6.3
1996	16.3	14.8	16.3	21.3	14.5	7.5	18.5	13.3	14.7	12.5	14.9	13.6	18.6	14.8	17.7	14.3	24.4	24.6	11.8	16	19.4	11.5
2001	12.8	12.3	11.2	15.4	11.9	5.4	16.1	12.4	12.7	9.5	11.4	10.4	13.8	12.2	14.7	11.5	19.4	21.4	8.6	13.2	15.5	8.9

Source : Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 Census

Measuring Homelessness

Vacancy rates

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: An indicator of the extent of choice available to those seeking rental accommodation. The rate reflects the number of units that are available for rental. For example, a vacancy rate of 3 percent indicates that 3 out of every 100 rental units are vacant and available for rental. Rather than provide a single average for all types of units, the indicator will distinguish between vacancies at the high-end and low-end of the rental market.	**No change**
Significance/Uses: • Decreasing vacancy rates may signal future increases in rents, along with more investment, particularly in "high end" accommodation. • There is consensus that a vacancy rate below 3% indicates that renters do not have an adequate choice of rental units. • When vacancy rates are low, landlords can discriminate against certain types of tenants, including populations considered to be at-risk of homelessness.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • Vacancy rates are normally measured for multi-unit buildings (typically with six units or more). This method misses a range of other rental units such as houses, second units within houses and duplexes. • The average rent derived from surveys of rental prices is unlikely to accurately reflect the average rent of vacant units. Rent surveys usually include the cost of units that are then rented. Vacant units will almost always cost more than occupied units, since renters are likely to occupy lower cost rental units first, and since vacancies provide landlords with an opportunity to increase rents.	**No change**
Source: Canada Mortgage & Housing Corporation (CMHC) Housing Market Survey.	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis** Revised source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Rental Market Survey, 1991, 1996-2001. Additional data were acquired from CMHC allowing for analysis by rent range quintile.

Recommended Actions for Future Work:
• Additional analysis is possible using the customized statistics acquired from CMHC.

The FCM Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS)
Measuring Homelessness

Estimated Vacancy Rates, Privately Initiated Row and Apt Structures 3+ Units, 1991, 1996, 2001

Year	Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	N/A	3.0	3.7	2.2	4.7	1.0	1.9	1.6	3.7	2.8	0.7	3.1	5.6	5.5	6.1	0.7	1.6	1.8	4.3	3.4	6.5	1.4
1996	4.5	2.8	1.5	7.5	8.6	1.0	2.7	4.2	6	5.4	4.9	1.7	6.5	1.9	0.7	6.8	1.2	0.7	2.3	2.8	6.0	1.0
2001	1.7	1.3	1.2	0.9	2.8	0.6	1.5	1.4	1.6	2.0	0.8	1.0	0.8	2.0	2.9	6.0	0.9	0.7	0.9	2.9	1.4	0.7

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing, Rental Market Survey, 1991, 1996-2001

The FCM Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS)
Measuring Homelessness

Lone-Parent Families

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: Defined as the percentage of families with a single parent living with at least one never-married son or daughter in the same dwelling. Provides a percentage figure for 1996 and 1998.	New Definition: Change in percentage of families led by a single parent living with at least one never-married son or daughter, as a proportion of all families, by sex, for 1991, 1996 and 2001.
Significance/Uses: • A measure of social and economic vulnerability, since the children of single-led households are left to the care and responsibility of only one parent. • Persons in lone-parent families are more likely to be in low-income situations, and tend to face greater health and well-being risks (eg. poor housing conditions, fewer employment prospects due to a lack of childcare, etc.). • Persons in lone-parent situations may be dependent on a range of social supports that are not always available in the community. This increases their vulnerability.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • The Second Report shows 1996 (Table 5.1a) and 1998 (Table 5.1b) on the same page. It should be noted however, that the source and methodology for each year's data are different, thus eliminating the ability to make direct comparisons between these two years.	**No change**
Source: Statistics Canada, 1996 Census and 1998 Small Area Data (Special Tabulations).	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis** Revised source: Statistics Canada, Census Division, 1991, 1996, 2001 FCM acquired additional customized data for this variable, allowing for analysis with a wide range of demographic types.

Recommended Actions for Future Work:
• Additional analysis is possible using the customized statistics acquired from Statistics Canada.

Lone Parent Families by sex of parent - 1991, 1996, 2001

Year	Canada	Rest of Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	13.0%	12.3%	14.1%	13.2%	16.2%	13.8%	8.9%	13.4%	20.3%	14.6%	12.5%	13.9%	11.2%	14.9%	14.9%	15.5%	13.8%	16.3%	15.4%	12.0%	17.6%	15.4%	8.2%
1996	14.5%	13.8%	15.7%	13.7%	17.2%	15.8%	10.6%	15.4%	22.3%	16.7%	14.3%	15.6%	13.0%	16.1%	17.3%	17.1%	15.2%	18.9%	16.4%	13.4%	18.9%	16.6%	9.6%
2001	15.7%	15.1%	16.6%	15.1%	18.4%	16.6%	11.3%	16.6%	16.8%	17.5%	15.2%	15.9%	14.5%	16.5%	19.7%	18.9%	16.5%	19.7%	17.0%	14.0%	19.8%	18.6%	10.9%

Source : Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 Census

Measuring Homelessness

Unemployment Rates

Original	Modifications Based on Data Collection and Analysis
Definition: Defined as the annual average unemployment rate for 1998. Provided for three demographic groups – 15-24 years, 15-39 years and 40+ years.	Defined as Average Annual Rates of Unemployment, Employment, and Participation, by sex, by ages 15+. Analysis of other age groups is not possible due to data availability limitations.
Significance/Uses: • Measures overall economic conditions. • Reflects the distribution of economic opportunities (employment) and problems (unemployment) among the available work force by different age ranges.	**No change**
Limitations & Notes: • Figures are for the overall QOL communities. Rates for areas or neighbourhoods within individual QOL communities will vary greatly • The link between unemployment, precarious, low wage work and homelessness is not well understood. • The <u>Unemployment Rate</u> is defined as the percentage of people in the labour force who are currently looking for work. The unemployment rate underestimates true unemployment, as it does not take into account people who have stopped looking for work. • These measures do not reflect under-employment (part-time or low-paying jobs, working conditions, or employment in an area other than what the person holds a qualified degree in etc.). • Annual numbers only. Rates will vary seasonally. • Based on the monthly labour force survey of 50,000 households. Includes only those that are employed or actively seeking work, and excludes those that are <u>not</u> in the labour force (neither employed nor unemployed or unwilling/unable to offer labour services). Excludes persons on Indian reserves. • Unpaid housework and volunteer work are not counted. • May be under-counting in some instances (eg. younger males due to higher mobility rates). • As with any surveys of this magnitude, there are instances of sampling and non-sampling errors (see Statistics Canada *Guide to the Labour Force Survey*).	**Limitations Revealed as a Result of Data Collection and Analysis** • No 1991 data are available from the Labour Force Survey; • 1991 Census only provides participation rate, and does not include age breakdown.
Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force Survey (A20093).	**Additional Data Sources Identified During Data Collection and Analysis** Revised sources are Statistics Canada, 1996, 2001, Labour Force Survey; and Statistics Canada, Census Division, 1991. FCM acquired additional customized data for this variable, allowing for analysis with a wide range of demographic types.

Recommended Actions for Future Work:

• Additional analysis is possible using customized statistics acquired from Statistics Canada.

The FCM Quality of Life Reporting System (QOLRS)
Measuring Homelessness

Unemployment Rate, ages 15+, 1991, 1996, 2001

Year	Canada	All QOLRS	Calgary	Edmonton	HRM	Halton	Hamilton	Kingston	London	Niagara	Ottawa	Peel	CMQ	Regina	Saskatoon	Sudbury	Toronto	Vancouver	Waterloo	Windsor	Winnipeg	York
1991	10.2	8.9	8.1	9.2	9.4	6	9.8	9.7	8.8	9.3	7	7.8	9.2	7.6	9	8.6	9.6	10.9	8.7	13	8.8	6.4
1996	10.1	8.9	6.7	9	8.7	5.6	9.1	13	9.6	9.6	8.7	8.1	10.5	7.5	7.8	12.1	10.7	9.8	7.9	9	8.2	6.8
2001	7.4	6.4	5	6	7.2	4	6.4	7.5	7	5.8	5.8	5.1	6.9	6.3	7.2	9.1	7	8.3	5.3	7.5	5.7	4.5

Source : Statistics Canada, 1991, 1996, 2001 Census