



MONITORUL OFICIAL

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ROMÂNIEI

Year 190 (XXXIV) - No. 1247 bis

PARTEA I
LAWS, DECREES, DECISIONS AND OTHER
ACTS

Friday 23 December 2022

SUMAR

	<u>Page</u>
Annex to Government Decision No 1.491/2022 approving the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027 and the Action Plan for the period 2022-2027	3-70

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DECISIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ROMANIA

ROMANIAN GOVERNMENT

DECISION

for the approval of the National Strategy on the social inclusion of homeless people for the period 2022-2027 and the Action Plan for the period 2022-2027*)

Pursuant to Article 108 of the Constitution of Romania, republished, Article 25 letter e) of Government Emergency Ordinance No 57/2019 on the Administrative Code, as amended and supplemented,

The Government of Romania adopts this Decision.

The National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027, as set out in the Annex, which forms an integral part of this Decision, is hereby approved.

Art.2 - The financing of the measures foreseen in the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027, as well as those in the Action Plan for the period 2022-2027, annexed to the Strategy, shall be carried out within the limits of the approved annual budgets.

PRIME MINISTER

NICOLAE-IONEL CIUCĂ

Mark:

p. Minister of Labour and Social Solidarity,

Mădălin-Cristian Vasilcoiu,

state secretary

Minister for

Investment and

European Projects,

Marcel-Ioan Bolos

Minister of Health,

Alexander Rafila

Minister for Home Affairs,

Lucian Nicolae Bode

Minister for Development, Public

Works and Administration,

Cseke Attila-Zoltán

p. Minister of Finance,

Mihai Diaconu,

State Secretary

Bucharest, 14 December 2022.

No. 1.491.

*) Government Decision No 1.491/2022 was published in the Official Gazette of Romania, Part I, No 1247 of 23 December 2022 and is reproduced in this issue.

ANNEX

**National strategy on social inclusion of homeless
people for the period 2022-2027**

List of abbreviations

Acronym	Description
AAPL	Local government authorities
ANES	National Agency for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men
ANL	National Housing Agency
ANPDCA	National Authority for the Protection of Children's Rights and Adoption
ANPDPD	National Authority for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ANL	National Housing Agency
ANPIS	National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection
CdS	Specifications
CNAS	National Health Insurance House
DAS	Directorate of Social Assistance
DGASPC	General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection
PSD	Directorate of Public Health
DPSS	Social Services Policy Directorate (within the MMSS)
ETHOS	European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion
ETHOS LIGHT	European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion LIGHT
FSS	Social service providers
FEDR	European Regional Development Fund
ESF	European Social Fund
INS	National Institute of Statistics
ÎL	Working meeting
MEC	Ministry of National Education
MS	Ministry of Health
MMSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
MMPS	Ministry of Labour and Social Protection
MMJS	Ministry of Labour and Social Justice
MDLPA	Ministry of Public Works Development and Administration
OT	Technical offer
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PHG	Draft government decision
PIN	Programme of national interest
PPP	Public Policy Proposal
RPL	Census of Population and Housing
SM	Member State
SPAS	Public Social Assistance Service
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service (European Commission)
IST	Technical Support Instrument (TSI) Programme
ATU	Administrative Territorial Unit
EU	European Union

1. Introduction

The objective of the policies developed by the Romanian Government is that all citizens have equal opportunities to participate in society, to be valued and appreciated, to live in dignity, and to have their basic needs met. The *Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People 2022-2027*, hereinafter referred to as the *Strategy*, and the *Action Plan for the period 2022-2027*, annexed to the *Strategy*, hereinafter referred to as the *Action Plan*, will enable Romania to make progress in combating the phenomenon of social exclusion affecting the vulnerable group of homeless people in line with the objectives of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the National Strategy for Sustainable Development of Romania 2030 and, implicitly, with the principles of the European Social Pillar.

The approval of the National Strategic Policy Framework for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction is a prerequisite for the implementation of EU funds under the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027. By Law no. 292/2011 - Law on Social Assistance (art. 6, lit. cc), as amended and supplemented, republished, the social inclusion process was defined as "the set of multidimensional measures and actions in the fields of social protection, employment, housing, education, health, information-communication, mobility, security, justice and culture, aimed at combating social exclusion and ensuring the active participation of people in all economic, social, cultural and political aspects of society". Measures to prevent and combat poverty and the risk of social exclusion are part of the general framework of multidimensional actions of the social inclusion process which ensure the opportunities and resources necessary for vulnerable people to participate fully in the economic, social and cultural life of society and in the decision-making process affecting their lives and access to fundamental rights. The harmonisation of policies aimed at understanding, preventing and combating the situations that lead to poverty and the risk of social exclusion is carried out within the framework of the *National Mechanism for the Promotion of Social Inclusion in Romania*, with the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity - MMSS having the task of analysing annually, at national level, data on poverty and social exclusion, identifying the factors that contribute to the social inclusion of vulnerable groups.

In 2018, the European Commission launched the legislative package for the implementation of EU funds related to the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, which provides for a number of enabling conditions, with the *implementation of the National Strategic Policy Framework for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction* under the responsibility of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity - MMSS being one such enabling condition. This precondition covers both ESF and ERDF investments contributing to the social inclusion of vulnerable individuals, groups and communities.

The *Strategy* and *Action Plan* were developed within the framework of the project "EVERY PERSON COUNTS! Assessing the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life" SIPOCA 575, in the period 2019-2021 on the basis of background studies carried out in the framework of the project. The studies are based on qualitative and quantitative research aimed at identifying the problems and needs of homeless people, assessing

the impact of social services on homeless people and the identification and location of homeless people.

The supporting document is the "*Report on the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the data collected with the tools developed, as well as the problems faced by this vulnerable group of homeless people*", also produced within the framework of the project and published on the website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity - MMSS.

Homelessness and the risk of homelessness are primarily addressed by the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020, approved by Government Decision No. 383/2015 and the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2022-2027, approved by Government Decision No. 440/2022. This strategy focuses on social housing and improving the accessibility and quality of the existing housing stock - as the main solution to both the risks of homelessness and housing exclusion .

Data collected through the qualitative and quantitative research of the project "EVERY MAN COUNTS! The needs assessment of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life" SIPOCA 575 demonstrated, however, the need to develop a national strategy for the target group of homeless people, defined by the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy as people living in squalid conditions, people in emergency shelters, people in homeless centres, people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends (due to homelessness).

2. Vision

Social exclusion of homeless people is a problem that requires a multi-sectoral approach in terms of public policies to address it.

Data collected through semi-structured interviews with social service providers in the framework of activity A 2.3, Project Sipoca 575 - EVERYONE COUNTS! The assessment of the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life indicates that the incidence of homelessness in Romania compared to other European countries is assessed as being quite high, but the lack of a constant identification and monitoring campaign of homeless people makes it difficult to compare homelessness in Romania with other European countries. Representatives of public social service providers for homeless people tend to consider that the incidence of homelessness is relatively lower compared to other European countries, while representatives of private social service providers consider that homelessness is higher in Romania. However, most of the participants in the semi-structured interviews lack an overview of homelessness, which is why they rather refer to their immediate experience of working with homeless people when asked to estimate the incidence of homelessness in Romania compared to other European countries. The perception of respondents is also influenced by the degree of visibility of the phenomenon.

social services for homeless people. In the absence of firm identification and monitoring actions, it is difficult to estimate the number of homeless people in the localities where the social service providers participating in the semi-structured interviews work. Respondents who estimate an overall number of homeless people generally refer to the size of the group of service users they represent and less to the total homeless population in the locality. It is worth noting, however, that social service providers in smaller localities estimate a smaller number of homeless people in their localities, with the estimated number of participants in the semi-structured interviews increasing in larger localities/county capitals. From the analysis of the responses it appears that migration also influences homeless people at locality level, with homeless people tending to migrate from small/rural localities to larger localities when they cannot find support in their locality of residence. In addition to the need for measures to identify and monitor homeless people, issues such as prevention measures or early detection of vulnerability are mentioned in the interviews as measures with the potential to reduce homelessness. The data collected through the semi-structured interviews with social service providers do not indicate the existence of initiatives to census/identify the number of homeless people. The analysis of the social service providers' responses does not show that there have been such initiatives either at local or county level, but rather that there have been campaigns to identify people on the streets and in makeshift shelters during cold periods of the year in order to provide first aid services (accommodation and meals). The situation of those living on the streets or in makeshift shelters is better known in smaller localities, where social service providers do not feel that there is a need for census/ numerical identification actions. In the case of larger localities, respondents are aware of the need for a census, but feel that a greater mobilisation of human resources and inter-agency collaboration is needed.

2.1. Causes and effects of the problem

Qualitative research (semi-structured interviews) developed within the project

- Activity A 3.2, Project Sipoca 575 - EVERYONE COUNTS! The assessment of the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life with a particular role in informing the problem definition stage, beneficiaries and public policy objectives identified a number of main causes that determine the risk of becoming homeless in Romania by 2020:

- a) Exogenous causes: issues related to the precarious economic situation and the current pandemic context leading to job losses, increasing poverty/material hardship, local housing situation leading to difficulties in covering the costs of renting a dwelling, lack of social housing stock available to local public authorities, rural-urban migration;
- b) Causes determined by the family context: the type and intensity of relations with the family, which depend on the family status - whether the person is single or not - the existence of violent behaviour in the family, the criminal history of one of the family members - if this has led to deprivation of liberty in the medium or long term, deception in the context of contracts - for example contracts for the sale-purchase of the adult's home to relatives, the sale of

marriage, abandonment of children by parents who have gone abroad to work, family history - the person comes from disorganised families with conflicts;

c) Specific personal causes, i.e. existence of disability/chronic illness/mental illness, low educational level, lack of professional qualifications, existence of addiction/depression, existence of violent behaviour, lack of motivation.

The problems faced by homeless people and their extent depend largely on the duration of homelessness, on the one hand, but also on the age at which homelessness occurs. Young people are considered to have fewer reintegration problems, while people over 50 face multiple problems and have fewer chances of socio-occupational reintegration. Lack of income, lack of personal hygiene, lack of proper nutrition are problems faced by anyone without stable housing. The longer the duration of homelessness, the greater the likelihood of other problems such as loss of identity documents, loss of health insurance, acquisition or aggravation of addictions - alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, gambling, acquisition or aggravation of physical and/or mental illness, loss of independent living skills and resignation, loss of self-esteem due to lack of social support. Lack of education due to early school leaving and lack of vocational training are also other difficulties faced by homeless people that make their socio-occupational reintegration difficult. There are multiple obstacles to their socio-occupational reintegration according to the participants in the semi-structured interviews. On the one hand, these barriers are generated by the characteristics of the homeless population: low level of education or lack of professional qualification, lack of work experience, age of homeless people (many people over 50), criminal record, addictions, low interest in work, serious health problems. On the other hand, social stigma has a strong impact on homeless people's chances of employment, with employers being reluctant to employ people with multiple vulnerabilities. Last but not least, insufficient inter-institutional collaboration is perceived as a hindrance to their socio-occupational reintegration.

Information collected through semi-structured interviews with social service providers - qualitative research based on semi-structured interviews with social service providers in the framework of activity A 2.3, Project Sipoca 575 - EVERYONE COUNTS! The assessment of the needs of homeless people and the impact of the existing social services on their quality of life, indicates that addressing homeless people is differentiated according to the type of public or private social service provider for homeless people. Thus, public social service providers generally focus their attention on people actually living on the street, while private social service providers take a broader view of this category of people, also referring to people living temporarily in shelters/specialised centres, with friends/relatives, or living in inadequate conditions in makeshift shelters. A possible explanation for this differentiation between the two types of social service providers for homeless people could be found precisely in the range of social services developed by each of them, the social services provided by the public system being better targeted to homeless people living on the street.

There are sub-categories of homeless people with a high degree of vulnerability, including:

- a) young people leaving the child protection system;
- b) people who become unemployed;
- c) older people who do not have a full contribution period;
- d) people with mental illnesses/different addictions.

In this context, measures are needed to prevent the occurrence of the causes that lead to the risk of homelessness, not only to treat the causes, which was admitted by most representatives of social service providers with whom semi-structured interviews were conducted. Qualitative results from the semi-structured interviews indicate that homeless people need constant emotional support, either from their family or from a psychologist. The main ways to prevent this from happening can be:

- a) Basic economic and legal advice and education measures;
- b) Information campaigns on the effects of early school leaving;
- c) Prevention campaigns for different types of addictions;
- d) Psychological and/or social counselling services for l o n g - t e r m addictions, but also in other cases by setting up support groups at local community level;
- e) The existence of at least one centre for homeless people in each city/municipality with homeless people;
- f) Programmes aimed at the social reintegration of these categories of people - education in various areas of life, support in finding a job, housing, prevention of forced evictions.

With regard to the impact of social services, most homeless social service providers specified that the only social services accepted by homeless people are services that cover their basic needs:

- a) hosting services;
- b) meal services;
- c) social and psychological counselling services.

For some types of social services that are available and that can be offered to them, some of the interview participants spoke of a high resistance from homeless people to avail of such services, which calls for an interest in developing measures/programmes to increase the confidence of homeless people in the social service system at local level, thus facilitating their social and occupational reintegration into their own or other communities.

The number of social services for homeless people is not very high in Romania compared to social services for other vulnerable groups. Lack of/insufficient funding, interruption and resumption of funding, of these services affects the predictability of the effectiveness of their intervention. Social services for homeless people are mostly concentrated in the cities of the counties. Small communities have neither the financial nor the administrative power to support and provide a framework for the development of social services for this vulnerable group. The impact of social services should also be looked at from an institutional perspective, the reasons for not providing them where they are needed, long enough to have

impact on the local community, are not offered in small communities where the problem of homelessness is different from that in large cities. Because we are talking about under-budgeted, under-staffed institutions/organisations, lack of specific social service 'mobile teams' offered on the street by specialist staff - very few staff reach the street to promote services there.

Data collected through semi-structured interviews with social service providers in the framework of activity A 2.3, Project Sipoca 575 - EVERYONE COUNTS! Assessing the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on quality of life

acestora highlights o series of vulnerabilities of homeless policies/measures/programmes. One of the vulnerabilities highlighted relates to the allocation of funds, with participants in the semi-structured interviews considering that insufficient financial resources are allocated to the social assistance sector, whether funding national measures/programmes or local programmes/projects. Vulnerabilities were also highlighted in terms of access to funds, in particular from representatives of private social service providers who consider that the NGO sector has reduced/restricted access to public funds for the development of social services compared to public social service providers. The lack of a uniform working methodology is also seen as a vulnerability, as there are diverging practices and different understandings of the conditions for exercising responsibilities and the extent of accountability of the different actors involved in homelessness issues. A number of vulnerabilities in the procedural sphere were also highlighted, such as the limited access of some categories of homeless people to accommodation centres or the lack of cost standards for accommodation centres.

Studies developed over time that have analysed the causes and effects of the problems faced by homeless people (Baptista and Marlier, 2019; Kelly, 1985; Institute of Medicine - US, 1988 - identify two different mechanisms of homelessness. The first mechanism highlights homelessness as a result of the failures of the welfare and employment systems. Homeless people, from this point of view, are people with problems that these systems are supposed to help. The rise in homelessness can be seen as evidence that these systems are ineffective for a variety of reasons - perhaps due to inadequate funding, excessive demand or inherent difficulties in responding to particular groups with special needs. The second mechanism concerns economic factors. As the supply of affordable housing decreases, more people are at risk of homelessness. But each of these explanations is only partly accurate. Homelessness is a complicated phenomenon in which the characteristics of service systems and public policies play an important role. Demographic and personal factors are also important. Once a person becomes temporarily homeless, reintegration into the community is difficult and can be aggravated by secondary factors such as difficulties in finding a job, family breakdown, reactive depression or various addictions.

2.2. Target group affected by public policy: operationalisation of the homeless concept

Homeless people were recognised as a target group with major social problems quite recently, in the early 1980s - Jencks, 1994. The phenomenon was previously perceived as marginal, while the blame for life on the streets was placed on the shoulders of homeless people, who were thought to suffer from deficiencies

personal problems that hinder their normal path to social integration - Steiner, 1923; Cook, 1975. The concept of homelessness has gradually broadened its meaning in recent decades from its original meaning of homelessness to a broader concept, including the dimensions of unsafe and inadequate housing.

Currently, the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS), developed in empirical research by the European Observatory on Homelessness and adopted by the European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless - FEANTSA - is referred to in most European countries and beyond as the main conceptual tool in defining homelessness, although variations exist. Initially, the research team analysed homelessness within three major domains - Edgar, Doherty & Meert, 2004: physical, which refers to the actual type of housing/housing, legal and finally social, integrating into these domains seven categories of homelessness characterised by: rooflessness, homelessness, unsafe and inadequate housing, inadequate housing and social isolation in legally occupied housing. The ETHOS typology was further developed from this model for operational purposes, while an even smaller and simplified version, called ETHOS LIGHT, further refined the conceptual model to address measurement concerns at EU country level.

The ETHOS typology refers to the following conceptual categories: rooflessness, homelessness, unstable housing and inadequate housing.

Within these conceptual categories 13 operational categories are identified:

- a) people living in squalid conditions,
- b) people in emergency shelters,
- c) people in homeless shelters,
- d) people in women's shelters,
- e) people in immigration shelters,
- f) people released from various institutions,
- g) people receiving long-term support (due to homelessness),
- h) people living in unsafe centres,
- i) people living under threat of eviction,
- j) people living under the threat of violence,
- k) people living in temporary/non-conventional structures,
- l) people living in inadequate shelters,
- m) people living in overcrowded shelters.

The conceptual categories used in ETHOS LIGHT are:

- a) people living in squalid conditions,
- b) people in emergency shelters,
- c) people in homeless shelters,
- d) people in different institutions,
- e) people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness,
- f) homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to lack of their own accommodation.

In Romania, the definition of homeless people, provided in Law 292/2011, as amended, covers all ETHOS Light categories, except for people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, who are not explicitly defined as homeless, although they could be covered by the broad category of those unable to pay rent - Pop, 2019.

Social services addressing homelessness and exclusion from housing are defined in Law no.292/2011, as amended and supplemented, and in the normative acts regulating public housing, namely Housing Law no.114/1996, as amended and supplemented, republished and Law no.350/2001 on spatial planning and urbanism, as amended and supplemented.

According to Law no.292/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions, republished, homeless people are defined as "a social category made up of single persons or families who, for single or cumulative reasons of a social, medical, financial-economic, legal or force majeure nature, live on the street, live temporarily with friends or acquaintances, are unable to sustain rented accommodation or are at risk of eviction, are in institutions or prisons from which they are due to be discharged or released within two months and have no place of residence."

The definition used in the Romanian legislation explicitly includes: people living in squalid conditions - operational category 1 ETHOS Light, people in emergency shelters and people in homeless centres - categories 2 and 3 ETHOS Light, people in institutions/prisons - category 4 ETHOS Light, people temporarily living in conventional housing with family or friends - category 6 ETHOS Light. People in non-conventional housing - category 5 ETHOS Light, are not covered by the existing definition in Romanian legislation, but people who cannot afford the cost of rent or who are at risk of eviction are defined by law as homeless - Pop, 2019.

Government Emergency Ordinance No 97/2005 on the registration, domicile, residence and identity documents of Romanian citizens, as subsequently amended and supplemented, defines a person without residence as "a person who cannot provide proof of legal residence, has nowhere to live permanently or lives temporarily with someone".

The National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for 2015-2020, specifically refers to homeless people as a vulnerable group and identifies the interventions that are considered priorities for them.

Although there is a definition of the homeless person in national legislation, Law 292/2011, as amended and supplemented, republished, it is not entirely an operational definition - applied in the collection of statistical data to enable the collection of categorised data on homeless people or those at risk of exclusion, as official statistics on these people are difficult to identify. According to Romania's ESPN Country Report on National Strategies to Combat Homelessness and Homelessness - 2019, from a methodological point of view assessing inability to pay rent or risk of eviction can be challenging, as can assessing the size of the homeless population living across the country - Pop, 2019.

Although the definition derived from the ETHOS typology is the main academic perspective on homelessness and enjoys a broad consensus among policy makers as well, the methodological limitations of the measurement tools lead to limiting the research to much narrower populations - fewer categories - than the ETHOS definition would require.

Homelessness and the risk of homelessness are primarily addressed by the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2015-2020 and the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction 2022-2027. This strategy focuses on social housing and improving the accessibility and quality of the existing housing stock - as the main solution to both the risks of homelessness and housing exclusion.

Other intervention mechanisms mentioned in the Strategy refer to:

- a) improving emergency responses - by increasing the number of night shelters/temporary shelters/shelters for victims of domestic violence, and developing the number of health and food services provided directly on the street);
- b) strengthening general prevention and support services for different vulnerable groups, such as victims of domestic violence, drug addicts, ex-offenders and young people leaving public childcare institutions at the age of 18;
- c) the adoption of urban regeneration programmes to tackle unsafe buildings; and
- d) stopping discharges.

The objectives formulated in existing or draft national strategies focus either on providing adequate housing - developing public housing, upgrading marginalised communities and prioritising access to rehabilitation and social housing allocation programmes - or on increasing emergency street interventions targeting homeless people. The need to develop more focused social services for both homelessness prevention and social reintegration of homeless people is recognised - Pop, 2019. Few measures rely on social assistance benefits to increase housing affordability, as these are expected to be part of the minimum insertion income, which was approved in 2016 and its implementation has been delayed several times.

Most of the programmes targeting homeless people - from needs assessments to preventive or emergency social assistance services - have been funded by European funds. Some important systematic studies have been carried out using these funds: Housing Situation Diagnosis in Romania - World Bank, 2015; Informal Settlements Report (MDLPA 2022); Methodological Grounding and Analysis of Marginalised Urban and Rural Communities - World Bank, 2014 and 2016. EU funds made it possible to set up a programme of national interest on ending social exclusion of homeless people in 2007-2013, which allowed the opening and financing of 50 emergency centres in all major cities in Romania - benefiting around 10,000 people - Pop, 2019. During this period, social reintegration centres were developed, offering a wide range of services, from art therapy to employment services, training courses and health education. The private sector also benefited from EU funding, and many NGOs provided a range of services

diversified between 2007 and 2012, some of which stopped as soon as funding ended - Paraschiv, 2015.

The lack of an adequate, sustainable and predictable funding strategy for any policy intervention targeting homeless people - from investments in social housing to social services and social assistance benefits to facilitate access to housing, has forced institutional actors and social service providers to rely almost entirely on external funding, mainly funding sources made available by the European Union - Pop, 2019. In this context, the development of a national public policy targeting homeless people is a necessity for Romania.

Qualitative research, focus group type, semi-structured interviews, developed in the framework of the project - activity A 2.3, Project Sipoca 575 - EVERYONE COUNTS! The assessment of the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life, with a particular role in the foundation of the stage of defining the problem, the beneficiaries and the objectives of public policy, showed that the interest in defining homeless people is very high among specialists in social services for this category of people in Romania, but also among experts in the issue of homeless people, which was confirmed during the focus group organized on 9.12.2020 within the project, which was attended by 10 specialists in social services for homeless people and two sociological researchers specialized in the development of assessment/measurement methodologies on the issue of vulnerable groups. The aim of the focus group was to validate the concepts/dimensions and indicators used in the research tools developed to evaluate the impact of social services for homeless people in Romania, but also to identify inter-institutional connections and how they are made between institutions with responsibilities in the field of homelessness, as well as the vulnerabilities of policies/measures/programmes implemented so far for this target group.

The ETHOS definition of homelessness was also shared by all focus group participants. The vulnerable group of homeless people must include, beyond people who live permanently on the street and who are or are not beneficiaries of social services, also people who live temporarily even in their own dwellings, but who are permanently at risk of eviction and who have no housing stability, because they can very easily end up living on the street, even for a limited period of time. Also people living in makeshift shelters, informal housing, non-conventional housing need to be taken into account in a national housing policy.

Thus, the target group targeted in the National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027 includes, according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy: people living in squalid conditions, people in emergency shelters, people in homeless centres, people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to homelessness.

3. Existing priorities, policies and legal framework

In order to identify the problem of the developed public policy document, the first step was to *analyze the local strategies for the development of social services* identified at the level of the cities of county residence and at the level of the 6 sectors of Bucharest. The main objective of this type of analysis was to identify the *interest of the local public administration authorities with responsibilities in this field* towards the vulnerable group of homeless people as defined in the *Law no. 292/2011*, with subsequent amendments and ^{additions}¹, republished, and the extent to which this vulnerable group was targeted by the strategies. The analysis was subsequently extended to the level of *county strategies for the development of social services with reference to the homeless target group*.

In accordance with *Law no. 292/2011*, as amended and supplemented, republished, and *Government Decision no. 797/2017 for the approval of the framework regulations for the organization and functioning of public social assistance services and the indicative staff structure*, each territorial administrative unit is required to develop local strategies for the development of social services.

In order to identify the interest of the authorities with responsibilities in the field towards the issue of the vulnerable group of homeless people, during this stage the method of content analysis of public documents available online, such as local strategies for the development of social services and county strategies for the development of social services with reference to the target group of homeless people, was used, and **a quantitative analysis of the existence of references to the target group of homeless people in these strategies was** carried out.

The following content dimensions were considered for the quantitative analysis:

- a) References to the target group homeless people - section on the context of the *Strategies for the development of social services identified at the level of the city of residence of the county / sectors of the municipality of Bucharest*;
- b) References to the target group homeless people - section on the target group in the *Strategies for the development of social services identified at the level of the city/county residence/sectors of Bucharest*;
- c) References to the target group homeless people - section on the *Plan of measures*, annex to the *Strategies for the development of social services identified at the level of the city of residence of the county/sector of the municipality of Bucharest*, with the identification of the responsible institutions;
- d) References to deadlines, indicators, responsible, funding sources, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

Review period: September 2020 - October 2020

¹ Art. 6, lit. z). homeless persons are a social category made up of single persons or families who, for single or cumulative social, medical, financial, economic, legal or force majeure reasons, live on the street, live temporarily with friends or acquaintances, are unable to sustain rented accommodation or are at risk of eviction, are in institutions or prisons from which they are to be discharged or released within 2 months and have no place of residence.

Methodological limits:

- a) Inconsistent pattern of posting of these strategies on the public websites of institutions with responsibility for their development/implementation;
- b) Low visibility of these strategies on the public websites of the institutions with responsibility for their development/implementation.

The Strategy and *Action Plan* was complemented by an analysis of international good practice on the target group homeless people focusing on:

- a) identifying targets operationalised in national homeless strategies in European countries;
- b) identification by measures implemented through strategies for homeless people in European countries;
- c) operationalise the concept of homelessness in the identified strategies.

To this end, a structure has been proposed for analysing the national strategies identified in the Member States to cover the three objectives. The purpose of systematising the information on the proposed structure was to allow the definition of public policy objectives and beneficiaries based on desk research.

The Government Programme existing during the period of preparation of the public policy document, the sectoral and general strategies of the central public authorities initiating draft legislation, as well as the issues arising during the course of government and having a significant economic, social and environmental impact on the public policy defined were also analysed.

3.1 Analysis of social services development strategies at the level of the cities and districts of Bucharest

The desk research carried out in the 41 county towns and the 6 districts of Bucharest identified a total of ²²² social services development strategies.

The content analysis of the documents referring to the strategies for the development of social services at the level of the cities of county residence and the sectors of Bucharest municipality revealed the following:

- a) *Homeless people* are not clearly mentioned as a distinct target group in the *Context* section of the strategies, in only 8 of the 22 strategies identified. Otherwise, they **are** rather assimilated to other categories of vulnerable groups. References to homeless people as part of the target group identified in the strategies are found in 20 of the cases;

² The county towns and sectors of Bucharest municipality where strategies have been identified are: Alba Iulia, Bacău, Braşov, Călăraşi, Constanţa, Sfântu Gheorghe, Târgovişte, Craiova, Târgu Jiu, Piatra Neamţ, Ploieşti, Zalău, Sibiu, Alexandria, Timişoara, Focşani and sectors 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of Bucharest.

- b) For 21 of the 22 strategies identified, there is also a set of measures addressing the needs and difficulties faced by this vulnerable group. These include the development and funding of personalised social services, provision of accommodation for homeless people, development/expansion of night shelters and support centres, labour market reintegration strategies, reduction of homelessness;
- c) Other specific measures included in the strategies concern: counselling and information services, specialised interventions and integrated services at community level, the establishment and continuous updating of a database containing data on beneficiaries, financial and medical aid, medical, psychological and vocational assistance;
- d) Of the 21 local strategies that include references to homeless people in the Plan of Measures section, 19 have designated institutions responsible for implementing the measures and defined deadlines for the implementation of the specified measures;
- e) 7 of the 21 local strategies that include references to homelessness in the Plan of Measures section also contain indicators associated with the implementation of the measures;
- f) 19 of the 21 local strategies that include references to homelessness in the Plan of Measures section include funding sources to support the measures included in the plan;
- g) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been defined among 20 of the 21 local strategies that include references to homelessness in the Plan of Measures section.

Among the county towns whose strategy implementation period ends in 2020, only one draft decision has been identified for the city of Zalău for the period 2021-2026.

Among the strategies for the development of social services at the level of the cities of county residence and the sectors of Bucharest, the strategy developed at the level of the city of Timisoara stands out as an example of good practice. This strategy can be considered an example of good practice as it contains almost all the elements of a rigorously ^{developed} strategy³. The elements included in the structure of the strategy, together with the interest in the target group of homeless people, manifested by the definition of specific measures addressed to this group, indicate the existence of a suitable basis for effective implementation leading to the expected results.

The application of the content analysis method in the case of documents referring to the social services development strategies at the level of the cities of residence of counties/sectors of Bucharest municipality indicates the following:

- a) There is an increased interest in including the vulnerable *homeless* category in the identified Social Service Strategies: 91% references to the target group homeless people in the *target group* section of the identified strategies, 95%

³ Except for the budget allocated to the measures defined in the strategy.

references to the homeless target group in the *action plan* of the identified strategies and 36% references to the homeless target group in the *context* section of the identified strategies. This means a recognition of the increasing size of this vulnerable group, and a methodology for the uniform national identification of these people is appropriate;

- b) The vast majority of local strategies that include measures defined for the vulnerable category of *homeless people* - 21 local strategies - also include elements that contribute to the feasibility of these measures such as: institutions designated responsible for the implementation of the measures - 90%, deadlines defined for the implementation of the measures - 90%, indicators associated with the implementation of the measures - 33%, funding sources identified to support the implementation of the measures - 90%, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the progress of the measures - 95%;
- c) It is identified the need to typologize the category of vulnerable group of homeless people into sub-categories in accordance with the provisions of national legislation and international typologies - ETHOS, in order to include distinct sub-categories of homeless people in the Local Social Services Development Strategies, according to the existing needs at local level;
- d) The measures identified in the social service development strategies that were consulted indicate the need to develop and fund tailor-made social services for homeless people, with a focus on an integrated approach to the problems faced by this vulnerable group. Also, as a medium and long-term measure, there is a need to monitor homeless people who have been successfully reintegrated into society in order to prevent them from relapsing into the situation of vulnerability specific to this group with the consent of the person concerned.

3.2. Analysis of county strategies for the development of social services with reference to the target group homeless people

The desk research carried out in the 41 counties identified 37 publicly available county social service development strategies. At the level of the other 4 counties, namely Calarasi, Ialomita, Teleorman, Valcea, the field of social services is addressed in a subsidiary way, within the county economic/sustainable development plans/strategies.

The content analysis of the documents referring to the county social services development strategies identified in October 2020 and available online, highlighted the following:

- a) Among the 37 county social service development strategies, reference to homelessness is found in the *Context* section for 19 strategies. In contrast, references to homeless people as part of the target group identified in the county strategies are found in only 15 of the 37 county strategies identified. In terms of the Action Plan, references to the target group were identified in 17 strategies and not identified in 18 strategies. For 2 strategies, the section / Action Plan was not publicly identified;

- b) Seventeen county strategies include measures targeting homeless people, including: institutions responsible for implementing these measures, defined deadlines for the implementation of the measures, indicators associated with the implementation of the measures, funding sources to support the implementation of the measures and the definition of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to monitor the degree of implementation of these measures. Thirteen of these 17 county strategies have designated institutions responsible for implementing these measures and 12 include defined deadlines for the implementation of these measures. When it comes to indicators associated with the implementation of the measures, 13 of these strategies include references to this topic;
- c) With regard to the sources of funding identified to support the implementation of the measures, the analysis concludes that 16 of the 17 strategies that include references to homeless people in the Plan of Measures section have specified such sources;
- d) Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms have been defined among 11 of the 17 county strategies that include references to homelessness in the Action Plan section.

With regard to the 4 economic/sustainable development strategies/plans that deal in a secondary way with the field of social services development, the following can be observed: only one strategy/plan includes references to homeless people in the Context section, none includes references to homeless people in the Target Group section and that 3 of the 4 strategies - Calarasi, Ialomita and Teleorman, include a series of measures/actions/objectives aimed at the development of general social services, and not necessarily those aimed specifically at homeless people.

From the analysis of the county strategies for the development of social services, the following conclusions emerge:

- a) There is an increased interest in including the vulnerable *homeless* category in the identified county social service strategies: 51% references to the homeless target group in the *context* section of the county strategies, 41% references to the homeless target group in the *target group* section of the county strategies and 46% references to the homeless target group in the *action plan* of the county strategies. This indicates a recognition at county level of the increased size of this vulnerable group;
- b) The vast majority of county strategies that include measures defined for the vulnerable category of *homeless people* - 17 county strategies - also include elements that contribute to the feasibility of these measures such as: institutions designated responsible for the implementation of measures - 76%, deadlines defined for the implementation of measures - 71%, indicators associated with the implementation of measures - 76%, funding sources identified to support the implementation of measures - 94%, as well as mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating progress in the implementation of measures - 65%.

3.3. Analysis of the Governance Programme from the perspective of social inclusion of homeless people

In order to define the public policy on homeless people in Romania, an analysis of the active government programmes in 2020 - the Government Programme presented in February 2020 and the Government Programme for 2020-2024 - was carried out. The analysis carried out revealed the following results:

- a) The target group of homeless people is not separately named in government programmes. Moreover, it is not part of a broader target group either, as government programmes only refer to vulnerable or disadvantaged groups without specifically naming them.

In the February 2020 Government Programme, measures for vulnerable groups and disadvantaged people aim to ensure *decent living conditions for families in need and reduce the risk of young people becoming victims*. One specific measure provides for a call for projects to provide hot meals to disadvantaged people, with an allocated budget of €28.7 million. This measure also targets homeless people.

In the Government Programme 2020-2024, the measures dedicated to vulnerable groups vary, aiming at: fighting poverty by increasing access to social, health and education services, as well as access to the labour market for vulnerable groups and providing benefits to economically vulnerable people. In terms of improving the quality of health services for disadvantaged people, measures are foreseen to make telemedicine services more widely available and accessible, to ensure access to primary and emergency medicine in hard-to-reach and remote areas, and to provide infrastructure and a sufficient number of health professionals for disadvantaged communities in Romania. The government programme also foresees the *reform of the social assistance system so that it provides competitive services that address the needs of families in need and vulnerable social groups in an integrated way*. The Government Programme 2020-2024 makes specific reference to homeless women and victims of domestic violence.

- b) *The issue of housing and social inclusion of people at risk of homelessness* is addressed in particular in the Programme for Government 2020-2024, but without specific reference to homeless people. In particular, the Programme for the construction of social housing under the provisions of Law no. 114/1996, as amended and supplemented, republished, which envisages the construction of 3,000 housing units nationwide, is envisaged. The category of vulnerable people that is particularly targeted by the social housing policy is young people with limited opportunities. For them, the Programme includes the development of programmes for the social integration of young people through measures to provide long-term housing and decent living space. It also includes measures such as investment funding for day centres for children, disabled people and adults and residential centres for the elderly. Both the Government Programme 2020-2024 in force at the time of drafting the public policy document and the February 2020 programme provide for the construction of housing for young people,

specialists in health, education and other socio-professional categories, through the National Housing Agency - ANL.

3.4. Analysis of sectoral and general strategies of central public authorities initiating draft legislation from the perspective of social inclusion of homeless people

In order to define public policy on homelessness, sectoral strategies aimed at the social inclusion of vulnerable target groups were analysed.

S-a based on the analysis of *the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategies for 2015-2020 and 2022-2027 and the related Action Plans*. Both Strategies and related Action Plans contain direct references to homeless people as a target group and address the housing and social inclusion of people at risk of homelessness as well as homeless people.

In the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for 2022-2027, the target group of homeless people is mentioned under other vulnerable groups. The strategy provides for the implementation of social service projects aimed at supporting the social service system and developing social services for the homeless and other vulnerable groups.

Homeless people are defined in Law 292/2011, as amended and supplemented, republished, which sets out concrete measures for them. Although in the two strategies analysed homeless people are directly named in all measures that provide for them as a target group, they are often named as part of the broad category of poor and vulnerable population, together with other vulnerable groups such as drug addicts, street children, people who have served custodial sentences, Roma and other groups. Street children are also a specific target group of homeless people in the strategies, to whom specific intervention measures are addressed.

No rigorous assessment of the number and situation of homeless people in Romania could be identified in the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2015-2020. Given that not addressing homelessness can generate costs for society as a whole, the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2015-2020 provided for specific measures in this regard:

- a) eradicating street children;
- b) assessing the size of the homeless population in all major cities;
- c) increasing the number and capacity of shelters;
- d) Improving emergency response capacity on the street;
- e) preventing and stopping discharges ;
- f) adopting prevention policies for people at risk of homelessness .

Some of these measures are also reflected in the Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2022-2027 which includes the implementation of a specific project aimed at developing tools and procedures to be used in

identifying homeless people and conducting qualitative and quantitative research to identify the problems faced by homeless people, solutions and recommendations - Project Sipoca 575 - EVERY PERSON COUNTS! Assessing the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life, a project under which this strategy is being carried out.

The Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Strategy 2022-2027 recognises three main categories of social services that can be provided by public and private social service providers, particularly to homeless people:

- 1) mobile street intervention teams or social ambulance services;
- 2) night shelters;
- 3) residential centres with fixed-term accommodation.

The Action Plan also provides for an increase in public housing for vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on the homeless.

The National Strategies for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction have Action Plans that have been analysed in terms of measures for homeless people.

In the Action Plan of the Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020 there are no indicators identified for monitoring programmes dedicated to vulnerable or homeless people, such indicators were subsequently developed by the MMPS and the World Bank in the framework of the Project "Increasing the effectiveness of interventions both at the level of the MMPS and the structures under the coordination of the MMPS", SIPOCA 390, implemented by the MMPS in partnership with ANPIS, completed in September 2020 with the following results:

- a) An operational system for monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the measures set out in the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for 2015-2020 developed, validated and ^{approved}⁴ - in particular those covering Chapter 2-Social benefits and Chapter 3-Social services;
- b) A system of social inclusion indicators developed and ^{validated}⁵;
- c) An analysis of the legislation governing the system of social inclusion indicators and the national mechanism for promoting ^{social} inclusion⁶;
- d) Legislative proposals to regulate the system of social inclusion indicators developed - 3 draft normative acts: PHG for the approval of the national system of social inclusion indicators - updating and revising the national set of indicators approved by Government Decision no. ^{488/2005}⁷, PHG for the modification and completion of Government Decision no.

⁴Available online: https://servicii-sociale.gov.ro/source/Studies%20and%20papers/P166070_ME%20RAS_Output%20Nr.%201_Report%20Principal_sent_RO_Methodology%20of%20ME%20to%20NISRS.pdf, and the Summary Report on NISRS Monitoring 2015-2020 can be accessed at https://servicii-sociale.gov.ro/source/Studii%20si%20rapoarte/P166070_Output%204_RO_Revised.pdf

⁵ Available online: https://servicii-sociale.gov.ro/source/Studies%20and%20Reports/P166070_Output%20No.%202_Report_RO_System%20of%20indicators%20of%20social%20inclusion.pdf

⁶Available online https://servicii-sociale.gov.ro/source/Studies%20and%20papers/P166070_Output%20No.3_Legislative%20analysis_EN.pdf

⁷ Available online: <http://mmuncii.ro/j33/index.php/ro/transparenta/proiecte-in-dezbatere/6107-proiect-de-decision-approving-social-inclusion-indicators>

1217/2006 on the establishment of the national mechanism for the promotion of social inclusion in ^{Romania}⁸, draft Law for the modification and completion of Law no.292/2011, with subsequent amendments and additions, republished (in internal endorsement MMSS);

- e) Staff of MMSS and subordinate structures, 50 people, trained on data analysis management (data collection, data processing, data interpretation and forecasting).

Thus, the system of inclusion indicators was approved by Government Decision no.731/2021 for the approval of social inclusion indicators.

On the other hand, MMSS, ANPDCA, ANPDPA and MS, MDLPA are all institutions listed as responsible for the implementation of programmes or measures. The measures dedicated to homeless people or vulnerable groups have no budget allocated, but it is specified that the sources of funding for projects come from the state budget and the European budget, in particular the European Social Fund - ESF.

As regards the National Strategy Plan on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2022-2027, it contains specific indicators associated with the implementation of measures. These are: the gap between life expectancy and healthy life expectancy for women and men, the number of public housing and public administrations or public services supported; the number of public administrations that have regulated informal settlements out of the total number of public administrations supported; the number of homeless people and its decrease; increasing social inclusion of homeless people. The institutions responsible for the implementation of measures for homeless people are: MS, CNAS, DSP, MMSS, ANES, MEC, UAT, NGOs, FS, MDLPA, ANPIS, DGASPC, SPAS, ANPDCA. As for the budget allocated for funding the programmes, it comes from the European Regional Development Fund - ERDF and ESF. Similar to the Action Plan of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2015-2020, the National Strategy on Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the period 2022-2027 does not allocate an estimated budget for each measure foreseen in the plan, as the measures are very diverse - from legislative changes to social intervention, multidisciplinary and involve several levels of administration and several stakeholders, which is why it is difficult to estimate a budget per measure and a precise budgetary source.

The National Programme for the Prevention, Surveillance and Control of Tuberculosis 2015-2020 includes direct references to homelessness among people living with TB. However, homeless people are not part of a wider target group. The programme estimates that the prevalence of TB among homeless people, particularly in Bucharest, is 50 times higher than the prevalence in the general population, which is why projects have been funded to identify TB in at-risk groups such as homeless adults. A project was also carried out to locate TB among homeless people and to accompany and support patients in accessing and receiving services. Among the measures that are planned to be implemented for active case detection among the homeless are

⁸ Available online: <http://mmuncii.ro/j33/index.php/ro/transparenta/proiecte-in-dezbatere/6106-proiect-de-decision-to-amend-and-complete-government-boards-nr-1217-2006>

includes: identifying community organisations/NGOs working with homeless people and mapping geographical areas of intervention, providing training sessions for community organisations/NGOs working with homeless people, contracting with community organisations/NGOs, identifying and securing funding for the provision of services to prevent and treat TB among homeless people, and the provision of services to prevent and treat TB by community organisations/NGOs through a mix of interventions. The programme includes indicators related to the number of training sessions for NGOs/community organisations as well as the number of reported TB cases among homeless people. The exact numbers of beneficiaries of the programmes implemented are also estimated. The issue of housing and social inclusion is not directly addressed, rather it is seen as a cause of TB prevalence among homeless people.

Both the *National Strategy for the Promotion of Active Ageing and Protection of the Elderly for the period 2015-2020* and the *Action Plan* of this strategy omit the issue of elderly homeless people and do not name them either as a target group or as part of a broader category of vulnerable people. The only reference to this issue is identified by reference to Law No 17/2000 *on social assistance for the elderly*, which stipulates that *access to homes for the elderly is provided for persons who [...] have no accommodation and are unable to provide for themselves from their own resources*. However, there are no strategic measures or objectives to improve the conditions of the homeless elderly. Similar to the *Strategy*, its *Action Plan* does not include direct references to homeless people and their housing issues. However, reference is made to promoting participation and social inclusion for older people. For the specific objective of promoting participation and social inclusion, the Plan sets out action lines and measures, deadlines, result indicators, funding sources and institutions responsible for implementing the measures.

The *National Strategy on the promotion of equal opportunities and treatment between women and men and the prevention and combating of domestic violence* for the period 2018-2021 includes the target group of homeless women in a broader target group of vulnerable persons. The strategy takes into account the issue of housing, specifically shelters. The issue of housing and shelters, however, is not envisaged as a measure to help homeless women, but rather as a measure to help women who are victims of gender-based violence. There is no explicit reference to homeless women/people in the Implementation Plan of the *National Strategy on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities and Treatment between Women and Men and Prevention and Combating of Domestic Violence for 2018-2021*. Also, the issue of housing and shelters for vulnerable women is not addressed. However, the plan contains allocated amounts and resources, as well as monitoring indicators and institutions responsible for implementing the measures.

The Romanian government's strategy for the inclusion of Romanian citizens belonging to the Roma minority for the period 2022-2027 devotes particular attention to the issue of Roma housing. However, housing is not addressed as a support measure for the homeless. Rather, it refers to decent housing conditions and access to infrastructure. The Strategy also makes reference to the problems of

related to evictions from social housing, demolitions of houses built on public or private land and the lack of housing for young people, which are seen as a manifestation of social exclusion of the vulnerable Roma population. However, there is no reference in the Strategy to homeless people, but only to vulnerable groups, including women, children and young people from socially disadvantaged families.

In the *Strategy for Social Reintegration of Deprived Persons, 2020-2024* homelessness of prisoners is one of the problems mentioned in the post-release period. Housing and shelter are also identified as areas of service deficit requiring joint intervention measures. Homeless prisoners are considered to be few, but they are a very vulnerable group, especially when it comes to recidivism. The Strategy therefore addresses the problem of homeless prisoners but gives it marginal importance.

The National Employment Strategy 2014 - 2020 does not name homeless people as a separate target group, nor does it include them in a broader category. The strategy only refers to vulnerable groups including young people, long-term unemployed, older unemployed people, inactive people who want to enter the labour market. Homelessness is therefore not dealt with separately in the Strategy.

The situation does not change in the Strategy Plan either: it provides for measures to improve the occupational structure and labour market participation of women and vulnerable groups and to increase the labour market participation of vulnerable groups. However, it does not specify who is included in the category of vulnerable groups. However, the plan contains sources of funding, monitoring indicators and institutions responsible for implementing the measures.

In the Government Decision no. 558/2021 for the approval of the *National Strategy for Employment 2021-2027*, the target group of homeless people is not separately named, but neither is it identifiable in a broader target group. The Strategy refers to the group of vulnerable people as people with disabilities from the social assistance system, those sentenced or on probation and those who are serving or have served part or all of a custodial sentence. In addition, young people, women and workers aged between 55 and 65 are considered as part of the vulnerable group. As regards the Action Plan for the National Strategy for Employment 2021-2027, it refers to subsidising the process of socio-occupational integration of disadvantaged workers, without specifying who they are, and lists the institutions responsible for implementing the measures, as well as establishing monitoring indicators. In addition, the sources of funding for the programmes are made explicit, although the exact amounts for the measures are not given. The Action Plan for the National Employment Strategy 2021-2027 does not mention the target group of homeless people separately.

The National Housing Strategy for 2022-2050 nominates the target group of homeless people separately and treats housing for this vulnerable group as a priority. The government aims to develop programmes to

development of social housing, focusing on homeless people out of a desire to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion, such as homeless people. Improving living conditions for this vulnerable group is also a priority. The strategy defines homeless people as *a social category made up of single people or families who, for single or cumulative social, medical, financial-economic, legal or force majeure reasons, live on the street, live temporarily with friends or acquaintances, are unable to sustain rented accommodation or are at risk of eviction, are in prison from which they are to be released and have no home or residence*. The strategy mentions the objective of increasing the public housing stock, which will be achieved by analysing and assessing the needs of vulnerable groups such as the homeless in order to determine the housing needs of these groups and the budget for them.

The National Housing Strategy for the period 2022-2050, approved by Government Decision no.842/2022 sets as a target the construction by 2027 of 8000 housing units through the Social Housing Construction Programme under Law no. 114/1996, as amended, republished. The Strategy also aims to improve, facilitate and simplify access to housing for people from marginalised communities and vulnerable groups. The National Housing Strategy for the period 2022-2050 aims at measures for homeless people, such as building social housing for people from vulnerable groups, categories at risk of social exclusion and marginalisation, ensuring access to housing services for homeless people through housing first interventions, increasing the supply of social housing for homeless people in connection with social inclusion plans.

Neither does the *National Strategy for the Sustainable Development of Romania 2030* mention homeless people separately nor include them in a broader target group. The strategy refers to people from vulnerable groups, with poor or Roma families or women with disabilities identified in these categories. In addition, the Strategy refers to categories of disadvantaged people without specifying them. On housing issues, the Strategy mentions the problem of inadequate housing for poor and vulnerable groups, with a particular focus on young people. However, there is no reference to homeless people or people at risk of homelessness.

The following is a SWOT analysis of the policy framework addressing homelessness in Romania, see Table 1.

Table 1. SWOT analysis of the framework of central and local policies/measures addressing homelessness in Romania

TARI DOTS	SLAVE POINTS
Increased local interest in including vulnerable category <i>h o m e l e s s</i> person in service development strategies local and county social services that starts from the recognition of the size in	Non-existence/non-use a definition operational for the effective quantification of homelessness, based on sub-categories according to the provisions of national legislation and international typologies,

TARI DOTS	SLAVE POINTS
<p>increase in this phenomenon;</p> <p>Large number of strategies developed by central government institutions that include homeless people in the broader category of vulnerable groups or address homelessness separately - MMSS, ANDPDCA, ANES;</p> <p>The Government Programme 2020-2024 makes specific reference to homeless women and victims of domestic violence;</p> <p>The issue of housing and social inclusion of people at risk of homelessness is particularly addressed in the Government Programme 2020-2024;</p> <p>Social services system to cover the primary needs of homeless people articulated, but insufficiently developed; Implementation including of a programme of national interest Combating social exclusion of homeless people through the creation of emergency social centres - Annex no. 7 to Government Decision no. 197/2006 on the approval of programmes of national interest in the field of protection of the rights of persons with disabilities, as well as in the field of social assistance to elderly people, homeless people and victims of domestic violence and the financing of these programmes.</p> <p>The current drive to develop a national public policy for homeless people and people at risk of homelessness;</p>	<p>ETHOS;</p> <p>Weaknesses in inter-institutional cooperation, starting from poorly defined responsibilities authorities responsibilities;</p> <p>Low share of social services with an integrated approach to the problems faced by this vulnerable group;</p> <p>Absence/failure to budget adequately for homelessness measures;</p> <p>Lack of data needed to assess homelessness;</p> <p>Lack of a procedure to identify and locate homeless people. The focus on determining the number of homeless people results largely from the increased interest in projecting service needs and distributing resources to homeless people. Quantifying homelessness is extremely difficult due to the lack of a clear definition of homelessness, the mobility of the population and the cyclical nature of homelessness. In addition, homeless people are often reluctant to be interviewed and many remain invisible to even the most diligent researchers.</p> <p>Lack of a national strategy/programme for homeless people in Romania; Many European countries have developed national strategies/programmes/action plans specifically targeted at homeless people.</p> <p>Lack of social assistance benefit programmes that provide integrated housing support and employment support;</p> <p>Weaknesses in the implementation of integrated case management for the homeless person;</p> <p>Reduced financial resources - deficit in state and local budgets; COVID-19 pandemic that has burdened these budgets and affected more</p>

TARI DOTS	SLAVE POINTS
	already vulnerable people.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<p>The Government's programme also takes into account this vulnerable group, which demonstrates the Government's commitment to this issue;</p> <p>Interest in the issue of homelessness in the European institutions;</p> <p>Basing public policy and local/county strategies on empirical evidence;</p> <p>Exploitation of best practice in tackling homelessness;</p> <p>Raising awareness through actors involved in managing homelessness;</p> <p>High potential to use European funds for the development of social and socio-medical services targeting homeless people and people at risk of homelessness.</p>	<p>Bottlenecks in inter-institutional collaboration;</p> <p>Locks in implementation monitoring of social service development strategies;</p> <p>Low implementation potential of the <i>Housing First</i> programme in Romania;</p> <p>Bottlenecks in the implementation of inter-institutional collaboration protocols.</p>

3.5. Analysis of international good practices on the target group homeless people

In order to define the objectives and beneficiaries of the public policy on homeless people in Romania, an analysis of international good practices on the target group homeless people was carried out:

- O1. Identification of objectives operationalised in strategies strategies for homeless people in European countries;
- O2. Identify measures implemented through national homeless strategies in European countries;
- O3. Operationalise the concept of homelessness in the identified strategies.

The analysis of international good practices was based on the conclusions of the Report of the public policy expert appointed at the level of the MMSS on strategies, policies and measures implemented by the Member States of the European Union in relation to homeless people. Specifically, this Good Practice Review focused on examining in detail the homeless strategies and action plans developed or under development in the following Member States: France, Finland, Denmark, Spain, Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg and Portugal. The criteria for selecting the countries from which good practice models were selected were

separate treatment of homelessness in dedicated national strategies or plans, compared to other Member States that address homelessness in a subsidiary way, in strategies or plans addressing social inclusion, poverty reduction or only in national social legislation or in declarations of intent or protocols.

In order to meet the objectives of the analysis of international good practice, the following data sources were investigated:

- a) ESPN (2019)⁹ National strategies to fight homelessness and housing exclusion reports on the Member States under review;
- b) the report of the public policy expert appointed at the level of MMSS within the project;
- c) information source available online with reference to strategies/plans other than those mentioned in the first two points.

The results of the analysis indicate the following main issues:

At the level of the Member States analysed, a total of 12 strategies/action plans were identified which directly address the issue of homelessness, as follows:

- a) France: *5-year plan to implement "housing first" and combat homelessness 2018-2022*. This Member State has not developed a specific strategy for the vulnerable group targeting homeless people;
- b) Finland: *Action plan for the prevention of homelessness in Finland 2016-2019 - AUNE*. This Member State has not developed a specific strategy for the vulnerable group targeting homeless people;
- c) Denmark: *Action plan to reduce homelessness 2019-2021*. This Member State has not developed a specific strategy for the vulnerable group targeting homeless people;
- d) Spain: *Comprehensive National Strategy for Homeless People 2015-2020*;
- e) Czech Republic: *Concept for preventing and combating shelter problems in the Czech Republic until 2020 - 2014-2020*;
- f) Greece: *National Homelessness Strategy under development and Short Term Action Plan 2019-2021*;
- g) Ireland: *Social Housing Strategy 2020 - Support, Construction and Reform -2015-2020- and Rebuilding Ireland: Housing and Homelessness Action Plan - 2016-2021*;
- h) Luxembourg: *National homelessness strategy 2013-2020*;
- i) Portugal: *Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People 2017- 2023 (ENIPSSA) and Strategy "New Generation of Housing Policies" 2018-2020*.

⁹(https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?pager.offset=25&advSearchKey=ESPN_hhe2019&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&doc_submit=&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0)

Of the 9 Member States mentioned above, 3 have developed action plans directly addressing homeless people (France, Finland, Denmark), 3 have developed strategies (Spain, Czech Republic, Luxembourg), 2 have developed both strategies and action plans (Greece and Ireland), while 1 Member State (Portugal¹⁰) has defined two strategies targeting the homeless group;

In terms of the objectives operationalised in these national strategies/action plans for homeless people, it was observed that in general, an average of 4-5 general objectives are defined in the strategies/action plans in 9 out of the 12 strategies/action plans;

With regard to the measures included in the identified strategies/action plans, their analysis concludes that on average the strategies/action plans set out a number of measures ranging from 9 to 34 in order to achieve the overall objectives;

In relation to the operationalisation of the concept of homelessness in the identified strategies/plans, the analysis shows that in 3 cases the definitions used are based on the ETHOS Light categories, in 5 cases no definitions of homelessness are included in the documents, in 3 cases the publicly available data and documents did not provide information regarding the definitions used, while in one case a nationally customised definition of the concept was used, namely in the case of Portugal. It should be noted that in cases where the operationalisation of the concept of homelessness was not possible on the basis of the information included in the strategies/action plans consulted, the analysis was complemented with information from other national sources referring to this issue at the level of each Member State analysed.

3.6. Analysis of issues arising during the course of governance that have a significant economic, social and environmental impact

Research in the field, Perri et al, 2020, Leung et al, 2008, indicates that epidemics and pandemics caused by infectious diseases have an increased impact on people who face risk of poverty, marginalisation, stigma and discrimination. Against the background of the current SARS-CoV-2 pandemic these risks are deepening, with homeless people being the majority affected, they are at increased risk of SARSCoV- 2 infection due to lack of safe housing and conditions in various accommodation facilities, crowded communal living spaces, difficulties in maintaining physical distance, high turnover of people. In the case of homeless people the same studies, Perri et al., 2020, Leung et al, 2008, indicate that the spread of SARS-CoV-2 can be rapid and detection of the disease delayed due to limited access to health care and social services. The risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection is increased for people experiencing homelessness due to the high prevalence of medical comorbidities, heart disease, respiratory disease, liver disease among these individuals.

Programmes and policies to address SARS-CoV-2 infection among homeless people should be developed to ensure that *the marginalisation and stigmatisation of homeless people is not exacerbated by public health policies adopted during the pandemic and that the specific needs of homeless people are addressed in an integrated manner*. Institutional actors involved in managing the issue of these people

¹⁰ The implementation of one of the two strategies defined in Portugal, namely the *Strategy for the Integration of Homeless People 2017-2023 (ENIPSSA)*, is carried out by means of two-year action plans, which include actions, activities, objectives, indicators, allocated budget, timetable and responsible institutions, defined for each of the strategic objectives related to the 3 axes of the strategy. Annex 5 of this report includes a number of details contained in the 2019-2020 Action Plan developed for ENIPSSA.

need to work together in a coordinated approach when developing and implementing services for these people. Funding is needed to ensure adequate provision of resources such as personal protective equipment, to increase accommodation and for people experiencing homelessness.

There are a number of challenges generated by the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic ranging from difficulties in locating homeless people who have been exposed to infection and require isolation or quarantine but have returned to shelters or the streets to concerns that epidemic planning/management is failing to address the underlying issues of homelessness and marginalization of these individuals, Perri et al, 2020. As the pandemic declines in intensity and is eventually brought under control, government and service providers should review the way homelessness issues are managed, *moving towards approaches that focus on the long-term socio-occupational reintegration of homeless people by addressing housing and access to public services that facilitate this reintegration.*

3.7. Priorities in addressing homelessness

On 21 June 2021, the European institutions, the governments of the Member States of the European Union and civil society committed themselves for the first time to work together to combat homelessness in the European Union. Homelessness affects all Member States and has increased substantially over the last decade. The complex causes of homelessness, which include the rising cost of housing, insufficient supply of social housing or housing assistance funds, low income and precarious employment, job loss, family breakdown, ageing, discrimination, long-term health problems are insufficiently addressed at the level of implemented public policies. The SARS-COV 2 pandemic has increased the urgency for effective action to address homelessness affecting large groups of people.

The European Commission is committed to supporting the monitoring of homelessness through the European Semester process and the Social Protection Committee to ensure quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress. It will also promote the use of EU funding to support inclusive policy measures to tackle homelessness. The European Commission is also committed to supporting the strengthening of analytical work and data collection to promote evidence-based policies and initiatives that address homelessness in line with Regulation 019/1700 of 10 October 2019 establishing a common framework for European statistics on individuals and households, based on data collected at individual sample level.

This strategy thus responds to calls for Member States to design and implement measures recognising the problems of homeless people and addressing these problems by facilitating the social inclusion process for this vulnerable group and promoting access to housing.

The analyses carried out indicate that the *social exclusion of homeless people is a problem that requires a multi-sectoral approach in terms of public policies that play a role in solving it, but that should be implemented through a public policy document for homeless people.* The number of social services for homeless people is not very high in Romania,

compared to social services for other vulnerable groups. Lack of/insufficient funding, interruption and resumption of funding, of these services affects the predictability of the effectiveness of their intervention. Social services for homeless people are mostly concentrated in the county towns. Small communities have neither the financial nor the administrative power to support and provide a framework for the development of social services for this vulnerable group. The impact of social services should also be looked at from an institutional perspective, as the reasons why social services are not provided where they are needed, long enough to have an impact on the local community, are not provided in small communities where the problem of homelessness is different from that in large cities.

Data collected through qualitative and quantitative research in the project "EVERY PERSON COUNTS! Assessing the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life" SIPOCA 575, demonstrated the need to develop a national strategy for the homeless target group.

In this *Strategy* the target group of homeless people is defined based on the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy of homeless people as follows: people living in squalid conditions, people in emergency shelters, people in homeless centres, people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to homelessness. The ultimate goal of the Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027 and the *Action Plan* is to reduce homelessness by 2027 and ensure social inclusion of the homeless.

4. Context analysis and problem definition

The phenomenon of homelessness and severe housing deprivation exists in all European countries. The lack of reliable data on the quantification of homelessness poses serious problems in understanding the *nature, causes and effective actions needed to address this group with increased vulnerability to social exclusion*.

In the literature, Briciu, C., 2014; European Commission, 2007, 3 main categories of data sources can be identified for collecting information on homeless people:

- a) *Surveys of social service providers* to quantify the number of homeless people living rough, in night shelters or accessing other social services developed for this target group or *surveys of local public authorities* to estimate the number of homeless people accessing social services;
- b) *Administrative records* used by several countries to collect statistics on the number and profile of homeless people. These include official national registers and official registers of social service providers;
- c) *General population or census data* used to collect information on specific categories of homeless people.

The literature developed on the phenomenon of homelessness in Romania, Save the Children, 2009, 2014; Teşliuc et al, 2015, Lancione, 2019, indicates a poor documentation through empirical information of this phenomenon. The little research undertaken has been carried out in a small number of localities, with low frequency and of

They usually targeted only a part of the street population, mostly children and young people. Some older studies are based on estimates by local authorities, with no possibility for researchers to check the validity of the data. Therefore, it can be said that there is neither an adequate estimate of the dimensions of the phenomenon at national level nor of the causes and profile of the social problem, Briciu, 2014. **The 2011 census, among other things, aimed to estimate the number of homeless people, but the result showed a number of 1524 homeless people¹¹, a figure much lower¹² than the estimates of local public authorities and non-governmental organisations**, Briciu, 2014. This was also determined by the methodology used in the census to quantify these people, taking into account the *homeless* categories and *part of the homeless of the ETHOS typology*, ignoring all other categories.

An analysis of census data shows that the majority of homeless people live in urban areas, with one third of the declared homeless population located in the capital. The same census data indicate that this vulnerable group is concentrated **mainly in the cities of the county capitals, over 85%**, the phenomenon being more pronounced among *men* and affecting mainly *adults of working age*, between 25 and 64 years.

The same data from the 2011 census indicated that 1 in 10 people were children. The process of quantification through the national census of homeless people will continue in the next Population and Housing Census scheduled to be implemented through its territorial structures and by the NSI in ²⁰²²¹³.

Homelessness and the risks of homelessness have grown and diversified at a much faster pace than public systems' responses to this social reality. **People living in squalid conditions were estimated in 2009 at around 15,000 at national level, with a high concentration, 88%, in large cities and municipalities, especially in Bucharest with around 5,000 people, at least a quarter of whom were young people under 35 years old**, Pop, 2019. The analysis in the report, ESPN 2019, of Romania's country report on *National strategies to fight homelessness and housing exclusion* indicates that the available data do not allow an accurate assessment of the dynamics of the phenomenon, with social service providers agreeing that the profile of homeless people on the street has changed in recent decades. The proportion of young adults living rough has increased and two new categories of homeless people have emerged: *older people* due to housing scams and *whole families* due to evictions. Many of these are ethnic Roma.

The new dynamics recorded indicate a shift in the causes of homelessness from *individual reasons*, e.g. drug addiction, violence and family breakdown, divorce and/or death of a family member, to *structural reasons*, mass evictions due to repossession of properties, lack of supportive housing policies and insufficient social housing stock. A new form of exclusion from housing has emerged, turning homelessness into a collective and segregated reality -

¹¹ Eurostat, Romania, census data, 2011 (People in households (Detailed household status) (HC48) by hst, geo - Primary homeless persons.

¹² Separately, the number of people living in non-conventional dwellings was quantified in the 2011 LPR, with 165,000.

¹³ Government Emergency Ordinance No 19/2020 on the organisation and conduct of the population and housing census in Romania in 2021, supplemented by Law No 178/2020.

Marginalized communities and informal settlements, rooted in post-communist economic realities, but consolidating and growing due to the lack of a housing strategy, World Bank, 2014. The number of people living in these communities far exceeds the number of people on the street - some 165,000 people lived in informal housing according to the 2011 census. The European Parliament has repeatedly called on the European Commission to address the rising levels of homelessness, in line with **Principle 19 of the European Pillar of Social Rights, which states that access to social housing or good quality housing assistance should be ensured for people in difficult circumstances.**

The literature, Briciu, 2014; Paraschiv, 2015, points to the need to assess homelessness at national level and especially in large cities in order to start developing appropriate policies. Although homelessness is elusive to measure, comprehensive information systems can be built on several datasets, extracted from registers and surveys. **Creating a system for registering and monitoring homelessness requires collaboration between public institutions and NGOs.** In Romania, for the moment, there is a lack of solid data sources for all these areas. Thematic surveys should provide estimates of the number of homeless people and types of homeless people, the causes and effects of homelessness, and the needs and opportunities for social reintegration. Research also needs to provide a more rigorous answer to the causes of homelessness in Romania, in order to understand which social groups are at risk.

Estimation of the extent of homelessness through the survey carried out in the framework of the project "EVERY PERSON COUNTS! Assessment of the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life" SIPOCA 575, SMIS 126131 showed mainly a deficient process of quantification of the phenomenon at the level of factors involved in the management of homelessness. Less than half of the representatives of the institutions participating in the field survey, 43.9%, stated that they were aware of the existence of initiatives/campaigns to identify the number of homeless people in their localities. Estimating the number of homeless people at local level is perceived by the responding institutions as rather difficult but necessary, as the number of homeless people is increasing in the context of the SARS-COV 2 pandemic crisis. The difficulty in estimating is due to the lack of firm actions to identify and monitor homeless people, as also results from the analysis of the semi-structured interviews with social service providers. The development of a specific homeless strategy is thus an important step in the integrated approach to homelessness in Romania with the aim of reducing homelessness.

5. General and Specific Objectives

The literature, Briciu, 2014, Pop, 2019, identifies two main perspectives on the most appropriate intervention models for homeless people:

- a) **the perspective of gradual integration assistance, starting with emergency health care and shelter, continuing with transitional housing and various services and culminating in housing provision and labour market/social integration and**
- b) **perspective that promotes the model of sudden change and immediate access for homeless people to a permanent residential solution.**

The first perspective represents a traditional paradigm of thinking or linear model of intervention and has been criticised as too prescriptive in terms of imposing a model of social integration.

The second perspective has benefited from the experience of pilot projects and programmes, the best known of which is Housing First, the US programme that provides permanent, affordable housing as quickly as possible for individuals and families. A theoretical flaw of all intervention models is that they insufficiently address invisible/hidden homeless people, Briciu, 2014.

At the moment, there is a growing interest at European Commission level in ensuring access to the "Housing First" programme, which is intended to be integrated into the regional, national and local strategies of EU Member States.

An analysis of the strategies/action plans/programmes developed by traditional European countries, France, Finland, Denmark, Spain, Czech Republic, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal, in dealing with homeless people through public policies, has led to the conclusion that the use of:

- a) *tools developed as part of a strategy specifically addressing housing issues including reference to the target group of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness,*
- b) *(2) strategies/programmes/measures to reduce homelessness and prevent situations that lead to homelessness and homelessness according to the ETHOS and/or ETHOS LIGHT typology.*

All the analyses carried out point to the establishment of the following general objective of the National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027:

General Objective - to increase the social inclusion of homeless people by providing social protection appropriate to their needs.

On the basis of the analyses carried out, four specific objectives of the **National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027** have been defined, each with action lines for which measures/actions have been developed.

The general objective and specific objectives cover 3 levels of problem solving, prevention, intervention and post-intervention, complemented by a cross-cutting objective aimed at improving policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people on all 3 levels of intervention. These specific objectives are:

Specific objective 1: Prevent the increase in homelessness at national level based on the principle "No one left behind";

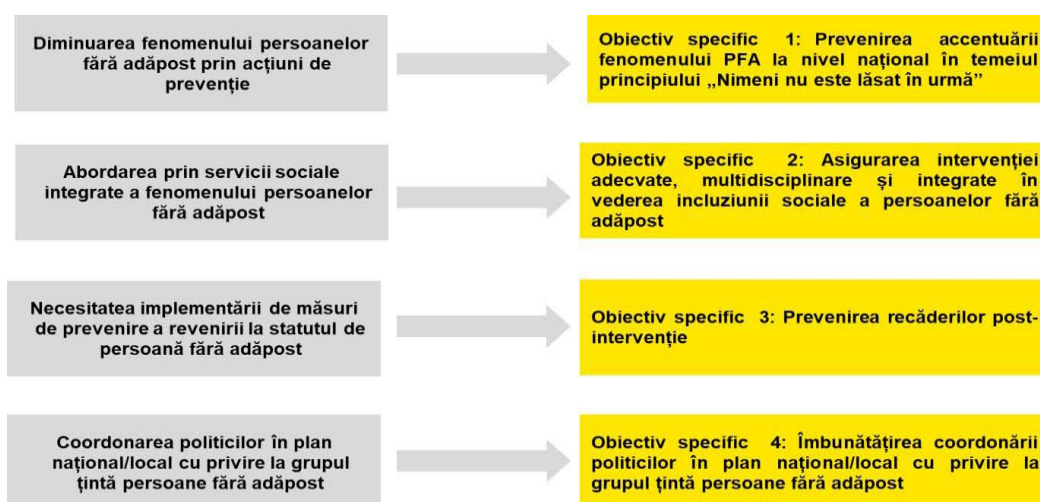
Specific objective 2: Ensure appropriate, multidisciplinary and integrated intervention for the social inclusion of homeless people;

Specific objective 3: Prevent post-intervention relapses;

Specific objective 4: Improve policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people.

Specific actions/measures for each strand are developed for all six categories of homeless people (according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy), with a focus on specific vulnerable sub-groups where appropriate.

Figure 1. Correlation of identified needs/specific objectives



6. Directions for action

The results of the research carried out in the framework of the SIPOCA 575 project and of the debates in 8 regional workshops attended by stakeholders involved in the management of homelessness were used to define the objectives, action lines and measures of the Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People.

Specific objective 1: Prevent the increase of homelessness at national level based on the principle "No one left behind".

A three-level social-ecological model was used in defining preventive measures, suggesting that homelessness and all the consequences it generates is the result of a complex interaction between structural factors, failures of welfare systems and individual circumstances, Gaetz & Dej, 2017; Gaetz & Scot, 2013. These factors were taken into account in identifying directions for action.

The main causes of homelessness identified by the research are:

Structural/systemic causes: poor monitoring of homelessness, inefficiencies in the effectiveness of social assistance systems;

Individual causes: lack of income to afford housing, loss of home due to divorce/separation, leaving foster care on turning 18, death of parents, eviction from home by landlords claiming the home, domestic violence, fraud/fraud in property.

Institutions involved in achieving the objective: MMSS, SPAS, social service providers (other than SPAS), AJPISSs/API SMB, AJOFMs/AMOFMs, prisons, hospitals (through UPU, but not only), Social Inclusion Commission organized at the level of the Prefect's Institution.

Categories of homeless people on whom the achievement of the target would have an impact, according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy: people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to homelessness.

Directions for action:

Obiectiv Specific 1	Prevenirea accentuării fenomenului PFA la nivel național în temeiul principiului „Nimeni nu este lăsat în urmă”			
Direcții de acțiune	1. Eficientizarea sistemului de asistență socială destinat persoanelor fără adăpost	2. Identificarea și monitorizarea fenomenului persoanelor fără adăpost în scopul prevenirii accentuării fenomenului	3. Stabilirea unor mecanisme pentru gestionarea pe termen lung a problemelor persoanelor aflate în risc de adevini persoane fără adăpost	4. Abordarea integrată a circumstanțelor individuale în asigurarea prevenirii accentuării fenomenului PFA

Action Line 1: Making the social assistance system for homeless people more efficient

The actions/measures under this strand aim at linking the components of the social assistance system, social assistance benefits, social services, in order to allocate resources more efficiently to address the problems of homeless people. People at risk of becoming homeless are targeted.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Create pilot programmes for people at risk of homelessness including financial/legal/psychological support services at reduced or no cost;
- b) Making expenditure on social assistance benefits more efficient and providing a social investment fund to ensure functionality

- social services for people at risk of homelessness;
- c) Measures to identify people at risk of becoming homeless by involving owners' associations in their identification in collaboration with local public administrations, community police and people in this situation on the basis of collaboration protocols.

Action Line 2: Identify and monitor homelessness in order to prevent further increase in homelessness

The actions/measures under this strand aim to prevent the spread of homelessness by identifying and monitoring it. The measures target PESAS, AJPIS/API SMB, FSS (other than PESAS) staff.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Identification/location persons without Homeless on based on the methodology/procedure for the identification and location of homeless people, a tool with national applicability to be approved by the MMSS ministerial order and by using the computer module for the collection of data on homeless people that supports the social diagnosis at the level of the local authority in order to elaborate the strategy for the development of social services;
- b) Training measures for SPAS staff to implement their duties under the methodology/procedure for identifying and locating homeless people;
- c) Introduction of mandatory and legally sanctioned activities for the diagnosis¹⁴ of homelessness as part of county/local strategies for the development of social services and monitoring of the implementation of the related action plans.

Action Line 3: Establish mechanisms for the long-term management of the problems of people at risk of homelessness

Actions/measures under this strand will target long-term social investment type mechanisms that mainly target people at risk of becoming homeless.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Establishment of a nationally managed social investment fund to support people at risk of homelessness, accessed by local authorities for people at risk of homelessness when there are no local sources of funding;

¹⁴ In accordance with the provisions of Article 47 of Law no. 292/2011, as amended and supplemented, republished, the initial assessment and the intervention plan are carried out by the social worker or, in his absence, by the staff with competences in the field of social assistance within the public social assistance service under the local public administration authorities. The purpose of the initial assessment is to identify individual and family needs, on the basis of which the intervention plan is drawn up. As part of the initial assessment process, the person receives, free of charge, information on the social risks and social protection entitlements available to him/her and, where appropriate, the necessary counselling to help him/her overcome his/her difficulties. The initial assessment may include social diagnosis at group and community level and the development of a community service plan.

- b) Provision of basic financial and legal advice for the prevention of homelessness carried out at SPAS level by specialised staff.

Action Line 4: Integrated approach to individual circumstances in ensuring prevention of increased homelessness

The actions/measures under this strand aim to address individual circumstances in an integrated way, by carrying out a socio-economic assessment, in order to prevent this phenomenon from increasing. The measures under this strand mainly target social service providers.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Implementation of case management for homeless people by providing specialised human resources at the level of social service providers;
- b) Development of training tools for staff involved in homelessness issues in order to implement case management as a basis for interventions aimed at social and professional integration of people at risk of becoming homeless;
- c) Conduct a rigorous socio-economic assessment to identify the immediate needs of people at risk of homelessness and identify solutions to address them.

Specific objective 2: Ensuring appropriate, multidisciplinary and integrated intervention for the social inclusion of homeless people

The main causes of homelessness identified by the research carried out in the Sipoca 575 project and in the regional workshops are:

Structural/systemic causes: insufficient development of the social services system, shortage of human resources in the social services system, insufficient development of the social housing stock, poor development of incentives to employ them, low resilience of the social services system;

Individual causes: lack of income to access housing, poor access to socio-professional counselling services, low self-esteem which acts as a brake on the socio-professional reintegration of homeless people, poor health, various addictions.

Institutions involved in achieving the objective: MMSS, SPAS, social service providers other than SPAS, AJPISs/APISMB, AJOFMs/ AMOFM, prisons, hospitals, through UPU, but not only, the Social Inclusion Commission organized at the level of the Prefect's Institution.

Categories of homeless people on whom the achievement of the target would have an impact according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy: people living in squalid conditions, people in emergency shelters, people in homeless centres, people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to homelessness.

Directions for action:

Obiectiv Specific 2	Asigurarea intervenției adecvate, multidisciplinare și integrate în vederea incluziunii sociale a persoanelor fără adăpost			
Direcții de acțiune	<p>1. Creșterea accesului la servicii sociale pentru a răspunde nevoilor PFA prin dezvoltarea serviciilor sociale destinate acestui grup țintă</p>	<p>2. Dezvoltarea de instrumente financiare și linii directe tehnice pentru sprijinirea intervenției integrate</p>	<p>3. Introducerea unor programe specializate pentru stimularea integrării în muncă a persoanelor fără adăpost</p>	<p>4. Creșterea capacității de reziliență în sistemul de servicii sociale destinat PFA în contextul manifestării unor fenomene exogene care generează situații speciale de gestionare</p>

Action Line 1: Increase access to social services to meet the needs of homeless people by developing social services for this target group

The actions/measures under this strand will aim at increasing the coverage of social services for homeless people at national level, with a focus on areas of greatest need and social services that are most underrepresented, and at increasing the quality of these services according to the identified needs of the beneficiaries. The measures developed under this strand target both homeless people and staff in social services for homeless people.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Implementation of funding/co-funding programmes to set up and/or expand the capacity of social services for homeless people with the aim of increasing their access to social services, including by encouraging public/private partnerships/exchanges of experience;
- b) Develop solutions/initiatives to combat discrimination, marginalisation, social stigma, stereotypes of homeless people and improve the public image/perception of homeless people at community level by considering homeless people as people temporarily in a situation of vulnerability requiring integrated support at community level;
- c) Mentoring programmes for homeless people who have accessed the social services system in order to build on and promote successful examples of their socio-professional reintegration;

- d) Improving access to homeless people by setting up area/county homeless shelters/centres coordinated by DGASPCs in partnership with AAPLs;
- e) Social inclusion of immigrants and refugees at risk of homelessness through access to national integration programmes.

Action Line 2: Developing financial instruments and technical guidelines to support integrated intervention

The actions/measures under this strand will aim to support integrated homelessness intervention. The measures developed under this strand mainly target homeless people, but also institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Increase the supply of social housing for homeless people or those at risk of homelessness at the level of territorial administrative units, in line with local plans for social inclusion and measures to develop the independent living capacity of these people, and allocate social housing for at least 10% of homeless people annually;
- b) Development and implementation of "housing first" pilot programmes by LPAs or NGOs;
- c) Establishment of the network of practitioners in the field of social services for homeless people and the tools necessary to operationalise this network;
- d) Provide basic material assistance to the homeless through specific programmes to finance the needs of vulnerable groups, - food, hygiene products, childcare items, school support package, hot meals, sanitary materials, medicines;
- e) Organise information campaigns on access to social services, educational services, employment services for homeless people;
- f) Legislative changes to exempt homeless people from paying for temporary ID cards;
- g) Testing the possibility of introducing medical-social services for homeless people.

Action Line 3: Introduce specialised programmes to stimulate the integration of homeless people into employment

The actions/measures under this strand will aim at developing specific programmes for homeless people that contribute to the integration/reintegration of homeless people into the labour market. The measures developed under this strand target institutions with a role in managing homelessness/employers.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Financing of integrated pilot housing-labour market integration programmes for homeless people;
- b) Developing and supporting social economy enterprises and social integration enterprises that facilitate the integration of homeless people into the labour market;
- c) Initiation of protocols MMSS - ME - ANOFM - FSS to identify the vocational training needs of homeless people for integration/reintegration into the labour market (facilitating the implementation of training/qualification/vocational retraining/training programmes, counselling of employable homeless people to inform and identify personal barriers to accessing income from work, support homeless people in developing a CV, preparation for a job interview, identifying successful examples of people who have integrated socially and into the labour market and publicising them among homeless people, employers and the general public in order to reduce stigma, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice against homeless people, promoting mentoring activities, identifying collaborative mechanisms whereby service providers such as hairdressers, barbers and barbers provide such services occasionally free of charge;
- d) Support programmes for employers to stimulate the integration of homeless people into employment.

Action Line 4: Increasing resilience in the social service system for homeless people in the context of exogenous phenomena generating special management situations

The actions/measures under this strand will aim at developing flexible mechanisms at the level of social service providers in the context of the manifestation of exogenous phenomena generating special management situations.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Establishment of working protocols between the main institutional actors involved, Prefect's Institution, DAS, ISU, FSS and sets of instructions/procedures addressed to frontline social care professionals to counter identified risks and to provide the necessary resources to counter the risks of additional employment, working hours, accommodation, meals, child/dependent family care options, ensuring the continuity of social service provision by public and private providers affected by exogenous phenomena/special situations through the provision of temporary financial support, identifying innovative temporary solutions to protect homeless people in residential services as well as those in the community and developing intervention models, consulting social service providers and beneficiaries in the development of intervention models in health crises and other special situations;

- b) Financial support mechanism for risk management expenditure in emergency situations, ensuring the continuity of social service provision, additional staff costs;
- c) Identification and provision of accommodation and temporary services for emergency situations.

Specific objective 3: Prevention of post-intervention relapses

The main causes of homelessness identified by the Sipoca 575 research and the regional workshops are:

Structural/systemic causes: poor implementation of case management in the post-intervention period, shortage of human resources in the social services system for homeless people, poor development of programmes to stimulate medium- and long-term employment of formerly homeless people who have left a vulnerable situation;

Individual causes: insufficient income to access housing, poor access to socio-professional/motivational counselling services, low self-esteem acting as a brake on the socio-professional reintegration of homeless people, maintaining employment and social relationships, difficulties in adapting to work, insufficient development of post-intervention case management.

Institutions involved in achieving the objective: MMSS, SPAS, social service providers other than SPAS, AJPISs/APISMB, AJOFMs/AMOFMs, prisons, hospitals, through UPU, but not only, the Social Inclusion Commission organized at the level of the Prefect's Institution.

Categories of homeless people on whom the achievement of the target would have an impact, according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy: former people who have been living in squalid conditions, people who have been in emergency shelters, people who have been in homeless centres, people who have been in different institutions, people who have been living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people who have been temporarily living in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to homelessness.

These people have benefited from measures/interventions to overcome vulnerability, have acquired housing or employment.

Directions for action:

Obiectiv Specific 3	Prevenirea recăderilor post-intervenție		
Direcții de acțiune	<p>1. Monitorizarea, cu scopul prevenirii redobândirii situației de vulnerabilitate, a persoanelor care au beneficiat de măsuri de sprijin în vederea depășirii situației de vulnerabilitate</p>	<p>2. Creșterea gradului de angajare pe termen mediu și lung a fostelor persoane fără adăpost care au ieșit din situația de vulnerabilitate</p>	<p>3. Promovarea dreptului persoanelor fără adăpost la o imagine autentică și respectuoasă</p>

Action Line 1: Monitoring, with the aim of preventing the re-emergence of vulnerability, of people who have benefited from support measures to overcome vulnerability

The actions/measures under this strand aim at monitoring to ensure intervention to counteract post-intervention relapses of people who have benefited from measures to overcome vulnerability. The measures developed under this strand directly target homeless people by involving institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Implementation of a monitoring system for people who have benefited from measures to overcome vulnerability, formerly homeless people;
- b) Access to psychotherapy programmes carried out during the post-intervention monitoring period offered by the SPAS psychologist;
- c) Multidisciplinary support at the person's place of residence provided through social services for a minimum period of 1 year from the end of the vulnerability situation, by the social worker/social workers of the SPAS.

Action Line 2: Increase the medium and long-term employment of formerly homeless people who have left vulnerability

The actions/measures under this strand are aimed at keeping formerly homeless people in the labour market in the medium to long term.

The measures developed under this strand directly target homeless people by involving institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Post-employment accompaniment offered to a homeless person who has left a vulnerable situation, psychological counselling services, legal counselling services;
- b) Support programmes for employers to maintain in medium and long term employment, 3-5 years, former homeless people who have overcome vulnerability conditioned by counselling measures from the employer on motivation to stay in employment;
- c) Stimulating the development of social economy structures that employ and keep formerly homeless people in medium and long-term employment.

Action line 3: Promoting the right of homeless people to an authentic and respectful image

The actions/measures under this strand aim to promote the right of homeless people to an authentic and respectful image. The measures developed under this strand directly target homeless people by involving institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Information/promotion campaigns aimed at homeless people to disseminate among them the benefits of applying for and using social assistance services, including by using successful examples of homeless people who have integrated socially and in the labour market and popularising them among homeless people, employers and the general public in order to remove stigma, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice against this category of people;
- b) Strengthening the role of local and central social welfare institutions in identifying and correcting barriers to accessing social services and welfare benefits for formerly homeless people in general.

Specific objective 4: Improved policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people

Institutions involved in achieving the objective: MMSS, SPAS, social service providers other than SPAS, AJPISs/APISMB, AJOFMs/AMOFMs, prisons, hospitals through UPU, but not only, Social Inclusion Commission organized at the level of the Prefect's Institution.

Categories of homeless people on whom the achievement of the objective would have an impact, according to the ETHOS LIGHT taxonomy: people living in squalid conditions, people in emergency shelters, people in homeless centres, people in various institutions, people living in non-conventional housing due to homelessness, homeless people living

temporarily in conventional housing belonging to family members or friends due to lack of their own accommodation.

Directions for action:

Obiectiv Specific 4	Îmbunătățirea coordonării politicilor în plan național/local cu privire la grupul țintă persoane fără adăpost	
Direcții de acțiune	<p>1.</p> <p>Măsurile legislative/de reglementare pentru întărirea rolurilor și a sistemului de coordonare/cooperare</p>	<p>2.</p> <p>Aplicarea politicii bazate pe dovezi și cooperarea dintre ministere/departamente/diferite niveluri ale administrației publice în crearea de politici favorabile prevenirii și combaterii fenomenului excluziunii sociale a persoanelor fără adăpost</p>

Action Line 1: Legislative/regulatory measures to strengthen roles and coordination/cooperation system

The actions/measures under this strand aim at strengthening the capacity for regulating institutional roles and collaboration between entities with a role in managing homelessness. The measures developed under this strand are aimed at institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Strengthen the coordination and planning role of LPAs with extended competences in relation to homeless people, as defined by ETHOS, through the development of specific coordination and planning tools, inter-agency working groups, implementation/monitoring of collaboration protocols;
- b) Inclusion in the county social inclusion plan of measures to implement collaboration between local authorities to facilitate the social inclusion of homeless people;
- c) Strengthening the role of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion;

- d) Complete quality standards for social services for homeless people to facilitate post intervention monitoring of homeless people at least in the short term, 1 year;
- e) Adjustment of quality standards of social services for homeless people based on evidence generated in pilot impact evaluation exercises of social services for homeless people;
- f) Develop cost standards for social services for homeless people and update them regularly;
- g) Implementation of Social Audit legislation in the field of social services;
- h) Development of quality classes related to social services based on the audit process of social services for homeless people.

Action Line 2: Implementation of evidence-based policy and cooperation between ministries/departments/different levels of public administration in creating policies conducive to preventing and combating social exclusion of homeless people

The actions/measures under this strand aim at using specific funding instruments to underpin policies in the field in order to create policies conducive to preventing and combating social exclusion of homeless people. The measures developed under this strand are aimed at institutions with a role in managing homelessness.

Action Plan measures:

- a) Use of funding sources for evidence-based policy, MMSS Sectoral Research and Development Plan, instruments offered through the Directorate General for Structural Reforms Support - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS, to support policies to prevent and combat social exclusion of homeless people;
- b) Auditing social services for homeless people through the Social Audit;
- c) Implementation of pilot exercises to evaluate the impact of social services for homeless people.

7. Expected results and indicators

The main results to be achieved through the implementation of the *Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027* concern 3 intervention components: prevention, intervention provision, post-intervention relapse prevention. It adds results related to improved policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people.

Specific results of **the prevention component:**

- a) Making the social assistance system for homeless people more efficient;
- b) Improved/implemented mechanisms for the long-term management of the problems of people at risk of homelessness;
- c) System of public policy development in the field of social inclusion of homeless people improved by implementing a mechanism for systematic collection of information on homeless people based on the procedure/methodology of identification and location of homeless people;

Specific **intervention component** results:

- a) Increased access to social services to meet the needs of homeless people by developing social services for this target group;
- b) Financial instruments and technical guidelines developed to support integrated homelessness intervention;
- c) Specific programmes for the integration/reintegration of homeless people into the labour market implemented;
- d) Increased resilience in the social services/social assistance system;

Results specific to **the post-intervention relapse prevention component**:

- a) Monitoring activities implemented with the aim of preventing relapse for people who have benefited from support measures to overcome vulnerability;
- b) The degree of medium- and long-term employment of formerly homeless people who have moved out of vulnerability increased;
- c) Increased number of information/promotion campaigns targeting homeless people to disseminate among them the benefits of seeking and using social assistance services, including by using successful examples of homeless people who have integrated socially and in the labour market and popularising them among homeless people, employers and the general public in order to remove stigma, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice against homeless people;

Results related to improved policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people:

- a) Legislative/regulatory measures to strengthen roles and coordination/cooperation system developed and implemented;
- b) Evidence-based policies to prevent and combat social exclusion of homeless people developed and implemented.

In monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People in the period 2022-2027 in order to achieve the expected results at national level, as well as to measure the impact of the Strategy, effects derived directly from the planned actions and measures, the performance indicators related to the measures undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Strategy will be used, developed on the basis of existing statistical data and data from administrative sources from

the level of public institutions responsible/involved in the implementation of the *Action Plan*.

In monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the Strategy for the social inclusion of homeless people for the period 2022-2027 and the achievement of the expected results at national level, the national social inclusion indicators approved by Government Decision no.731/2021 for the approval of social inclusion indicators, as well as the performance indicators related to the measures undertaken to achieve the objectives of the Strategy, developed on the basis of existing statistical data and data from administrative sources at the level of public institutions responsible / involved in the implementation of the measures in the *Action Plan*, will be considered as quantitative reference indicators.

Performance indicators are nominated for each measure in the *Action Plan* and cover: the prevention component, the intervention component, the post-intervention falls prevention component and the component of improved policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the target group homeless people.

8. Budgetary implications and sources of funding

In terms of budgetary implications, the *Strategy* includes:

- a) Measures that do not require additional funding: regulation of normative acts, development of methodologies and working tools to ensure methodological coordination of public social assistance services, implementation of existing legislation;
- b) Measures involving the allocation of financial resources from various sources.
 - With regard to the financing of the measures in the second category, in accordance with the legal provisions in force concerning the financing of activities in the field of combating poverty and promoting social inclusion, the sources of financing considered are: the state budget; reimbursable external funds, contracted under the conditions of the legislation in force on public debt; the budgets of non-reimbursable external funds; the local budgets of the counties, respectively of the sectors of Bucharest municipality, as well as of the municipalities, towns and communes; donations, sponsorships and other sources, under the conditions of the law.

Budgetary projections to support the measures set out in the Action Plan are drawn up each year for the following year, based on the 1+3 year rule, and are a conditionality for the implementation of the strategy.

Financing of the measures set out in Strategy n and those in the *Action Plan* shall be carried out within the limits of the approved annual budgets.

At the same time, the opportunity of funding social investments through the InvestEU Programme in the period 2022-2027 can be considered.

This programme has a component dedicated to stimulating these investments, through the European Commission's implementing partners such as the European Investment Bank or the Council of Europe Development Bank, directly or through financial intermediaries for small value projects, constituting reimbursable external financing.

Financial conditionalities in implementation:

- a. the balanced allocation of budgetary sources, through the State Budget Law and the State Social Insurance Budget Law, of the single national health insurance fund to all national and local public institutions/authorities involved;
- b. attracting and making optimal use of non-reimbursable/reimbursable external funds from the European Union and other international bodies.

Legal implications:

In order to achieve the objectives set out in the *Strategy* and the *Plan*, it is necessary to develop new regulations in the field, as well as to amend existing ones, in relation to the need and opportunity to adapt and modernise the legal framework and in accordance with the annual legislative programmes.

The strategy is part of the National Mechanism for the Promotion of Social Inclusion in Romania established under Government Decision no.1217/2006.

9. Mechanism by elaboration, implementation, monitoring and evaluation

Since the beginning of 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity through the project "**EVERY MAN COUNTS! Assessing the needs of homeless people and the impact of existing social services on their quality of life**" **SIPOCA 575, SMIS 126131**, ensured the participation of all institutions/entities with competences in the process of substantiating and developing the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People 2022-2027*. The results of the following studies developed by Ernst&Young Romania, the National Institute for Scientific Research in Labour and Social Protection - INCSMPS and CURS S.A. were used to substantiate the Strategy:

- a) *Report evaluating the impact of social services on the quality of life of homeless people,*
- b) *Report on the analysis of street homelessness nationally,*
- c) *Report on the problems faced by the vulnerable group of homeless people,*
- d) *Qualitative and quantitative analysis report.*

Also, the organisation of 8 regional workshops with representatives of institutions involved in the implementation of the Strategy within the framework of the project allowed the consultation of stakeholders in the development of the Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027 and the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy.

The implementation mechanism of the four specific objectives and related action lines included in the *Strategy* involves a multi-year framework plan with measures to be implemented in the period 2022-2027. In order to streamline implementation, the planned measures will be operationalised through annual action plans. These action plans will be drawn up by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity, based on the contributions of the institutions/entities involved, and will be approved by order of the Minister of Labour and Social Solidarity.

Monitoring of the implementation of the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027* will be coordinated at the level of the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity through the following mechanisms:

- a) *Mechanism for annual evaluation* of the implementation of the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027*, the Action Plan for the implementation of the Strategy, 7 annual monitoring reports being generated and publicly available as a result of the evaluations carried out on the basis of the Annual Action Plans.
- b) The evaluation and updating of the strategy shall be carried out in accordance with Article 13 of the Methodology for the elaboration, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and updating of government strategies, approved by Government Decision No 379/2022 and in accordance with the provisions of Articles 17-23 of the Regulation on procedures for the elaboration, monitoring and evaluation of public policies at central level approved by Government Decision No 775/2005;
- c) *Ex-post evaluation mechanism of the implementation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027 and the Action Plan* for the implementation of the Strategy, with two implementation periods: at the mid-term of the implementation period of the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022- 2027*, with the formulation of recommendations for the next implementation period, and at the end of the implementation period of the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027* with the formulation of recommendations for the next strategic exercise.

As regards the institutions responsible for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the *National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022 - 2027*, they are represented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity; the National Agency for Social Payments and Inspection; the National Agency for Employment; local public social assistance services; general directorates for social assistance and child protection; private social service providers; the Ministry of Interior; the General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations; the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Education; local public administration authorities; the Ministry of Investments and The public authorities and institutions responsible for implementing the actions/measures established will report on the progress made in implementing the actions and achieving the results, by referring to the evolution of the performance indicators defined in the *Action Plan* for the implementation of the *National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022-2027*. An important role in this process will be played by *the National Mechanism for Promoting Social Inclusion in Romania*.

Annex to the Strategy

Action plan for the period 2022-2027

List of abbreviations

	Description
AAP	Local government authorities
ANOFM	National Employment Agency
ANPIS	National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection
DGASPC	General Directorate of Social Assistance and Child Protection
FSS	Social service providers (other than SPAS)
IGSU	General Inspectorate for Emergency Situations
IP	Prefect Institution
MAY	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MIPE	Ministry of Investment and European Projects
MMSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Solidarity
MS	Ministry of Health
SPAS	Public Social Assistance Service
SRSS	Structural Reform Support Service (European Commission)
IST	Technical Support Instrument (TSI) Programme

Introduction

The Action Plan covers the implementation period of the strategy, i.e. 2022-2027, and its role is to allocate results, performance indicators, responsibilities, implementation periods and funding sources to the measures identified for the action lines allocated to the specific objectives identified in the previous steps.

Social exclusion of homeless people is a problem that requires a multi-sectoral approach in terms of public policies to address it.

All the analyses carried out point to the establishment of the following general objective of the National Strategy for the Social Inclusion of Homeless People: to increase the degree of social inclusion of homeless people by ensuring adequate social protection for them.

On the basis of the analyses carried out, **four specific objectives** of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People for the period 2022- 2027 have been defined, each with action lines for which measures/actions have been/will be developed. The general objective and the specific objectives cover 3 levels of tackling the problem, prevention, intervention and post-intervention, complemented by a cross-cutting objective aimed at improving policy coordination at national/local level with regard to the homeless target group on all 3 levels of intervention.

Specific objective 1: Prevent the increase of homelessness at national level based on the principle "No one left behind".

Directions for action:

Action Line 1: Making the social assistance system for homeless people more efficient;

Action Line 2: Identify and monitor homelessness in order to prevent further increase in homelessness;

Action Line 3: Establish mechanisms for the long-term management of the problems of people at risk of homelessness;

Action Line 4: Integrated approach to individual circumstances in ensuring prevention of increased homelessness.

Specific objective 2: Ensuring appropriate, multidisciplinary and integrated intervention for the social inclusion of homeless people

Action Line 1: Increase access to social services to meet the needs of homeless people by developing social services for this target group;

Action Line 2: Develop financial instruments and technical guidelines to support integrated intervention;

Action Line 3: Introduce specialised programmes to stimulate the integration of homeless people into employment;

Action Line 4: Increasing resilience in the social services system for homeless people in the context of exogenous phenomena generating special management situations.

Specific objective 3: Prevention of post-intervention relapses

Action Line 1: Monitoring, with the aim of preventing the re-emergence of vulnerability, of people who have benefited from support measures to overcome vulnerability;

Action Line 2: Increase the medium and long-term employability of formerly homeless people who have left vulnerable situations;

Action Line 3: Promote the right of homeless people to an authentic and respectful image.

Specific objective 4: Improved policy coordination at national/local level on the target group homeless people

Action Line 1: Legislative/regulatory measures to strengthen roles and coordination/cooperation system;

Action Line 2: Implementation of evidence-based policy and cooperation between ministries/departments/different levels of public administration in creating policies conducive to preventing and combating social exclusion of homeless people.

The specific measures for each directorate are linked to results, performance indicators, responsible institutions, implementation period and funding sources in Table 1.

Table 1. Action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy on Social Inclusion of Homeless People 2022-2027

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
Specific objective 1: Prevent the increase of homelessness at national level based on the principle of "No one is homeless". left behind"						
Action Line 1: Making the social assistance system for homeless people more efficient						
1.1.1	Creating pilot programmes for people at risk of homelessness including services by financial/legal/psychological assistance at reduced or no cost;	Pilot programmes for people at risk of becoming homeless which include services financial/legal/psychological assistance at reduced or no cost	No. of pilot programmes created No. of beneficiaries	2025	SPAS, FSS	European funds within the limits of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each programme operational (2022-2027)
1.1.2	Measures to identify persons at risk of homelessness by involving owners' associations in identifying them in collaboration with local public administrations, community police and people at risk of homelessness on the basis of collaboration protocols.	Development by protocol for collaboration at local level to implement these measures	No. of protocols concluded No. of persons at risk of homelessness identified	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL	This is not the case
Action Line 2: Identify and monitor homelessness in order to prevent further increase in homelessness						

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
1.2.1	Identification/location of homeless people on the basis of the methodology/procedure for identification and location of homeless people (tool with national applicability to be approved by ministerial order MMSS) and through the use of the computer module for data collection on homeless people that supports the realization of social diagnosis at the level of the TAU in order to develop the strategy for the development of social services;	Methodology for the identification and location of homeless people approved by Ministerial Order	Number of homeless persons identified and entered in the module IT on homeless people in Romania	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS/SPAS	It is not the case
1.2.2	Staff training measures SPAS at in order to implement their tasks under methodology/procedure for the identification and location of homeless people;	Programs by training of SPAS staff at for implementation tasks that them revin in based on the methodology/procedure for the identification and tracing of homeless persons	Number of trained SPAS staff	2023	AAPL/SPAS	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each operational programme /State budget (2022-2027)
1.2.3	The introduction of mandatory activities subject to legal sanctions for the diagnosis of homelessness in the framework of local/county strategies for the development of social services and the monitoring of the implementation of related action plans.	Edit Law No 292/2011	Number strategies for the development of social services at local/county level with direct reference to homeless people (actions and budgets allocated for these categories of people)	2027	AAPL	It is not the case

Action line 3: Establish mechanisms for the long-term management of the problems of people at risk of homelessness

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
1.3.1.	Provision of basic financial and legal advice for the prevention of homelessness carried out at SPAS level by specialised staff.	Basic financial and legal advice programmes for loss prevention by SPAS staff at the level of the SPAS specialized	Number of people given financial and legal advice to prevent homelessness	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	This is not the case

Action Line 4: Integrated approach to individual circumstances in ensuring prevention of increased homelessness

1.4.1	Implementation of case management for homeless people by providing specialised human resources at the level of social service providers;	Case management implemented for homeless people	Number of case managers for homeless people Number of people who have benefited from management case	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	This is not the case
		Training tools developed for staff involved in homeless issues	Number of staff specialised in management implementation of for homeless people			
1.4.2	Development of training tools for staff involved in homelessness issues in order to implement case management as a basis for interventions aimed at the socio-professional integration of people at risk of homelessness;			2027	MMSS/AAPL/SPAS	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each operational programme /State budget (2022-2027)
1.4.3	Conduct a rigorous socio-economic assessment to identify the immediate needs of people at risk of homelessness and identify solutions.	Socio-economic assessments for identifying the immediate needs of people at risk of homelessness and identifying solve .	Number of persons at risk to become homeless for whom socio-economic assessments of their situation have been carried out	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	This is not the case

Specific objective 2: Ensure appropriate, multidisciplinary and integrated intervention for the social inclusion of homeless people

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
Action Line 1: Increase access to social services to meet the needs of homeless people by developing social services for this target group						
2.1.1.	Implementation of funding/co-funding programmes in to set up and/or expand the capacity of social services for homeless people in order to increase their access to social services, including by encouraging public/private partnerships/exchanges of experience;	Financing/co-financing programmes to establish and/or expand capacity services social for homeless people with purpose increase access to social services for people homeless people, including by encouraging partnerships/swaps by experience public/private	Number of services funded Number of beneficiaries	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS	State budget (NIPs)/ Non-reimbursable funds (2022-2027)
2.1.2	Develop solutions/initiatives to combat discrimination, marginalisation, social stigma, stereotypes of homeless people and improve their public image/perception at community level by considering homeless people as people temporarily in a vulnerable situation requiring integrated support at community level;	Information campaigns	Number campaigns developed	Annual (2022-2027)	SPAS/AAPL	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)/Local budget
2.1.3	Mentoring programmes for homeless people who have accessed the social services system in order to valorise and promote successful examples of their socio-professional reintegration;	Mentoring programmes for homeless people who have accessed the social services system	Number programs by type mentoring developed No. of people involved in mentoring programmes	Annual (2022-2027)	APL/SPAS	DG REFORM: IST Local budgets

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.1.4	Establishment by zonal/county shelters/centres for homeless people coordinated by DGASPCs in partnership with AAPLs.	Area/county shelters/centres for homeless people in at coordination of DGASPCs at partnership with AAPLs	Number of shelters/area/county centres for homeless people coordinated by DGASPCs in partnership with AAPLs	2027	SPAS	State budget
2.1.5	Social inclusion of immigrants and refugees at risk of homelessness through access to national integration programmes.	National integration programmes for immigrants and refugees	Number of immigrants and refugees at risk of homelessness who have accessed national homelessness programmes integration	Annual (2022-2027)	MAI/MMSS	State budget

Action Line 2: Developing financial instruments and technical guidelines to support integrated intervention

2.2.1	► Increasing the supply of social housing for homeless people or those at risk of homelessness at the level of territorial administrative units, in conjunction with local plans for social inclusion and measures to develop the independent living capacity of these people and the allocation of housing social housing for a minimum of 10% of homeless people annually;	Housing fund developed at local authority level for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness by establishing a minimum of 10% of the social housing fund for these people	Number of beneficiaries	2027	AAPL/SPAS	Local budgets
2.2.2	Development and implementation of "Housing First" pilot programmes by LPAs or NGOs;	Programs pilot by type "housing first"	Number of programs developed	2027	AAPL/SPAS	Funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each operational programme /Local budget (2022-2027)

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.2.3	Establishment of the network of practitioners in the field of social services for homeless people and the tools necessary to operationalise this network;	Network of practitioners in the field of social services for homeless people and the tools needed to operationalise this network	Number practitioners affiliated to the network	2027	MMSS	Funds provided through Structural Reform Support - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS)
2.2.4	Provide basic material assistance to the homeless through specific programmes to finance the needs of vulnerable groups - food, hygiene products, childcare items, school support package, hot meals, sanitary materials, medicines;	Programmes providing basic material assistance to homeless people	Number of beneficiaries	Annual (2022-2027)	MIPE	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each operational programme /Local budget (2022-2027)
2.2.5	Organisation of information campaigns on access to social services, educational services, employment services for homeless people;	Information campaigns on access to social services, educational services, employment services for the homeless	Number campaigns developed	2027	SPAS/ANOFM	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down in each operational programme /Local budget (2022-2027)
2.2.6	Legislative amendments to exempt persons from the payment for provisional identity cards homeless;	Amendment of Article 41(2) of Government Emergency Ordinance No 97/2005	Number of beneficiaries	2024	MAI/SPAS	State budget

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.2.7	Testing possibility introduction of services for homeless people.	Pilot programmes to test the possibility of introducing medico-social services for homeless people	Number programs pilot developed Number of beneficiaries	2024	MMSS/MS	Funds provided through Structural Reform Support - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS)
Action Line 3: Introduce specialised programmes to stimulate the integration of homeless people into employment						
2.3.1	Financing of integrated pilot housing-labour market integration programmes for homeless people;	Integrated housing pilot programmes - Accompaniment la bour market integration for homeless people	Number programs pilot developed Number of beneficiaries	2027	SPAS/ANOFM/AAP L	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)/Local budget

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.3.2	Developing and supporting social economy enterprises and social integration enterprises that facilitate the integration of homeless people into the labour market;	Social economy structures facilitating the labour market integration of homeless people	Number of social economy structures developed Number of beneficiaries	2027	AAPL/SPAS/ANOF M/MIPE	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)/Local budget

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.3.3	<p>Initiate MMSS-ME- ANOFM-FSS protocols to identify the vocational training needs of homeless people for integration/reintegration into the labour market (facilitating the implementation of programmes of training/training/vocational retraining/education, counselling of employable homeless people to inform and identify barriers at accessing income from work, supporting homeless people in preparing a CV, preparing for a job interview, identifying successful examples of homeless people who have integrated socially and in the labour market and popularising them among them, employers and the general public at in general to reduce stigma, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice against homeless people, setting up a job exchange for homeless people, promoting mentoring activities, identifying collaborative mechanisms whereby providers of various services (hairdressing, barbering, shaving, etc.) offer such services on an occasional basis free of charge.</p>	<p>Protocols MMSS-ME- ANOFM-FSS to identify training needs of homeless people for integration/reintegration into the labour market</p>	<p>Number of protocols developed</p>	<p>Annual (2022-2027)</p>	<p>AAPL/SPAS/ANOFM</p>	<p>This is not the case</p>

Action Line 4: Increasing resilience in the social services system for homeless people in the context of exogenous phenomena generating special management situations

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
2.4.1	Establishment of working protocols between the main institutional actors involved Prefect's Institution, SPAS, IGSU, FSS and of sets of instructions/procedures addressed to frontline social care professionals to counter identified risks and ensure resources needed to counteract risks, additional employment, working hours, accommodation, meals, child/dependent family care options, ensuring continuity of social service provision by public and private providers affected by the intervention of exogenous phenomena/special situations by providing temporary financial support, identifying innovative temporary solutions to protect homeless people in residential services as well as in the community and developing intervention models, consulting social service providers and beneficiaries in developing intervention models in health crisis situations and other special situations;	Working protocols between the main institutional actors involved (Institution Prefect, SPAS, IGSU, FSS) Set from instructions procedures for frontline social work professionals	Number of protocols established	Annual (2022-2027)	IP/SPAS/	This is not the case
2.4.2	Financial support mechanism for risk management expenditure in emergency situations, ensuring the continuity of social service provision, additional staff costs;	Financial support mechanism for risk management expenditure in emergency situations	Allocated amounts thousand lei	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS	State budget
2.4.3	Identification and provision of temporary accommodation and services for emergency situations.	Identification and provision of accommodation for temporary emergency services	Number of shares Amounts allocated in thousands of lei for endowments	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	Local budgets

Specific objective 3: Prevention of post-intervention relapses

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
Action Line 1: Monitoring, with the aim of preventing the re-emergence of vulnerability, of people who have benefited from support measures to overcome vulnerability						
3.1.1	Implementation of a monitoring system for people who have benefited from measures to overcome vulnerability, formerly homeless people;	Monitoring system of persons who have benefited from measures to overcome the situation of vulnerability implemented	Number persons monitored	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	This is not the case
3.1.2	Access to psychotherapy programs conducted during the post-intervention follow-up period provided by the SPAS psychologist;	Psychotherapy programmes carried out during the monitoring period post-intervention offered by the SPAS psychologist	Number of beneficiaries	Annual (2022-2027)	SPAS	Not the case
3.1.3	Multidisciplinary support at the person's place of residence provided through social services for a minimum period of 1 year from the end of the vulnerability situation, by the social worker/persons with social assistance attributions at SPAS level.	Actions by multidisciplinary support at the person's place of residence provided through social services for a minimum period of 1 year from the end of the vulnerable situation	Number assistants social workers involved Number of beneficiaries	2027	AAPL/SPAS	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)/Local budget
Action Line 2: Increase the medium and long-term employability of formerly homeless people who have left homelessness. vulnerability						

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
3.2.1	<p>Post-employment accompaniment offered to a homeless person who has left a vulnerable situation, psychological counselling services, legal counselling services;</p>	<p>Programs by accompaniment post -employment support offered to a homeless person who has left a vulnerable situation</p>	<p>Number of beneficiaries</p>	<p>2027</p>	<p>SPAS/MIPE</p>	<p>European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the eligibility rules and provisions laid down in each operational programme (2022-2027)/Local budget</p>
3.2.2	<p>Stimulating the development of social economy structures that employ and keep formerly homeless people in medium and long-term employment.</p>	<p>Social economy structures employing and maintaining in medium and long-term employment formerly homeless people</p>	<p>Number of social economy structures developed Number of beneficiaries</p>	<p>2027</p>	<p>MMSS/ MIPE</p>	<p>European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)</p>

Action line 3: Promoting the right of homeless people to an authentic and respectful image

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
3.3.1	Information/promotion campaigns aimed at homeless people to disseminate among them the benefits of using social assistance services, including by using successful examples of homeless people who have integrated socially and in the labour market and popularising them among them, employers and the general public in order to remove stigma, marginalisation, discrimination and prejudice against homeless people;	Information / promotion campaigns targeted at homeless people to disseminate among them the benefits of using social assistance services	Number of campaigns developed	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS/AAPL/SPAS	European funds within the limit of the amounts allocated and in compliance with the provisions and eligibility rules laid down at the level of each operational programme (2022-2027)/. Local budgets
3.3.2	Strengthening the role of local and central social welfare institutions in identifying and correcting barriers to accessing welfare services and benefits in general social services for formerly homeless people.	Change no.292/2011 Law	Amended law	2022	MMSS/SPAS	This is not the case

Specific objective 4: Improved policy coordination at national/local level on the target group homeless people

Action Line 1: Legislative/regulatory measures to strengthen roles and coordination/cooperation system

4.1.1	Strengthening the coordination and planning role of LPAs with extended competences in relation to homeless people, as defined by ETHOS, by developing specific coordination and planning tools, working groups working groups, implementation/monitoring of collaboration protocols;	Specific coordination and planning tools	Number groups by interinstitutional working groups Number of monitoring cooperation protocols	Annual (2022-2027)	AAPL/SPAS	Not the case
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Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
4.1.2	Inclusion in the county plan for social inclusion of measures for the implementation of collaboration between the local authorities in order to facilitate the social inclusion of homeless people;	Approval of the framework model for the development of the County Social Inclusion Plan Collaboration component between TAUs to facilitate social inclusion of homeless people included in the County Social Inclusion Plan	Number of county social inclusion plans that included the component of facilitating social inclusion of homeless people	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS/IP/AAPL	This is not the case
4.1.3	Strengthening the role of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion;	Strengthened role of the County Commissions for Social Inclusion	Number of County Social Inclusion Commissions with strengthened role	2022	IP	This is not the case
4.1.4	Complete quality standards for social services for homeless people to facilitate post intervention monitoring of homeless people at least in the short term (1 year);	Developing quality standards for social services for homeless people	Amended/implemented legislation	2024	MMSS	This is not the case
4.1.5	Adjustment of quality standards of social services for homeless people based on evidence generated in pilot impact evaluation exercises of social services for homeless people;	Developing quality standards for social services for homeless people	Amended/implemented legislation	2024	MMSS	This is not the case
4.1.6	Develop cost standards for social services for homeless people and update them regularly;	Specific legislation	Legislation developed/implemented	2024	MMSS	This is not the case
4.1.7	Implementation of Social Audit legislation in the field of social services;	Social Audit Act	Legislation developed /implemented	2024	MMSS	This is not the case

Crt. no.	Direction of action/measures	Results	Performance indicators	Deadlines	Responsible authorities	Financial resources
4.1.8	Development of social service quality grades based on the audit process of social services for homeless people.	Drafting of a draft order of the Minister of Labour and Solidarity social solidarity for the approval of of social services for homeless people and the indicators for assessing the levels of their quality	Legislation drafted/amended	2024	MMSS	This is not the case
Action Line 2: Implementation of evidence-based policy and cooperation between ministries/departments/different levels of public administration in creating policies conducive to preventing and combating social exclusion of homeless people						
4.2.1	Use of funding sources for evidence-based policy (MMSS Sectoral Research and Development Plan, instruments offered through the Directorate General for Structural Reform Support - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS) for informing policies to prevent and combat social exclusion of homeless people;	Applications by funded projects	Number of funded projects	Annual (2022-2027)	MMSS	State budget (PSCD MMPS) Funds provided through Structural Reform Support - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS)
4.2.2	Auditing social services for homeless people through the Social Audit;	Social services for homeless people audited	Number of services audited	2027	MMSS/ANPIS	State budget
4.2.3	Implementation of pilot exercises to evaluate the impact of social services for homeless people.	Pilot impact assessment exercises on social services for homeless people	Number exercises pilot exercises implemented	2027	MMSS/ANPIS	Funds provided through Support for Structural Reforms - DG REFORM: IST, SRSS)

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and IBAN: RO12TREZ7005069XXX000531 DTCPMB (allocated to budget legal entities only) Tel.
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