

# Almost half of all people released from the prison system become homeless

May 27 2015, by Laura Soderlind

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Homeless on bench: stencil in Melbourne. Credit: Fernando de Sousa

According to a longitudinal study following more than 1,000 homeless Australians and those at risk of homelessness, 42 percent of people released from prison, juvenile detention or remand in the past 6 months were found to be homeless.

The findings are presented in the Journeys Home Research Report No. 6, written by the Melbourne Institute and commissioned by the Department of Social Services.

Contributing [report](#) author Dr Julie Moschion from the University of Melbourne said that the study found that the longer the time spent in prison the longer the individual was likely to be [homeless](#).

"The connections between prison time and homelessness suggest that there is a further role for policy makers to prevent the cycle between crime and homelessness," said Dr Moschion.

"We also found that rates of homelessness were higher for those who experienced physical and sexual violence."

Risky drinkers and those using illegal drugs like marijuana are more likely to be homeless and stay homeless for longer periods of time.

"Over the 30 month survey period, of those experiencing homelessness, 44 percent are in this situation for less than 6 months," said Dr Moschion.

Multiple spells of homelessness are also relatively common with 40 percent of those experiencing homelessness cycling in and out of homelessness.

On average, males were homeless for a larger proportion of the survey period (23%) than females were (13%). Family contact was also found to be important factor in preventing homelessness as well as assisting individuals out of homelessness.

The report found that rates of homelessness are also higher in areas with higher housing costs. Those who moved to areas with cheaper housing are more likely to exit homelessness.

The report includes three types of homelessness: those without conventional accommodation; those moving frequently between

temporary accommodation and people staying in boarding houses on a medium to long-term basis.

**More information:** The report is available online:

[melbourneinstitute.com/journeys/pubs/2015/Scutella](https://melbourneinstitute.com/journeys/pubs/2015/Scutella)

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Provided by University of Melbourne

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