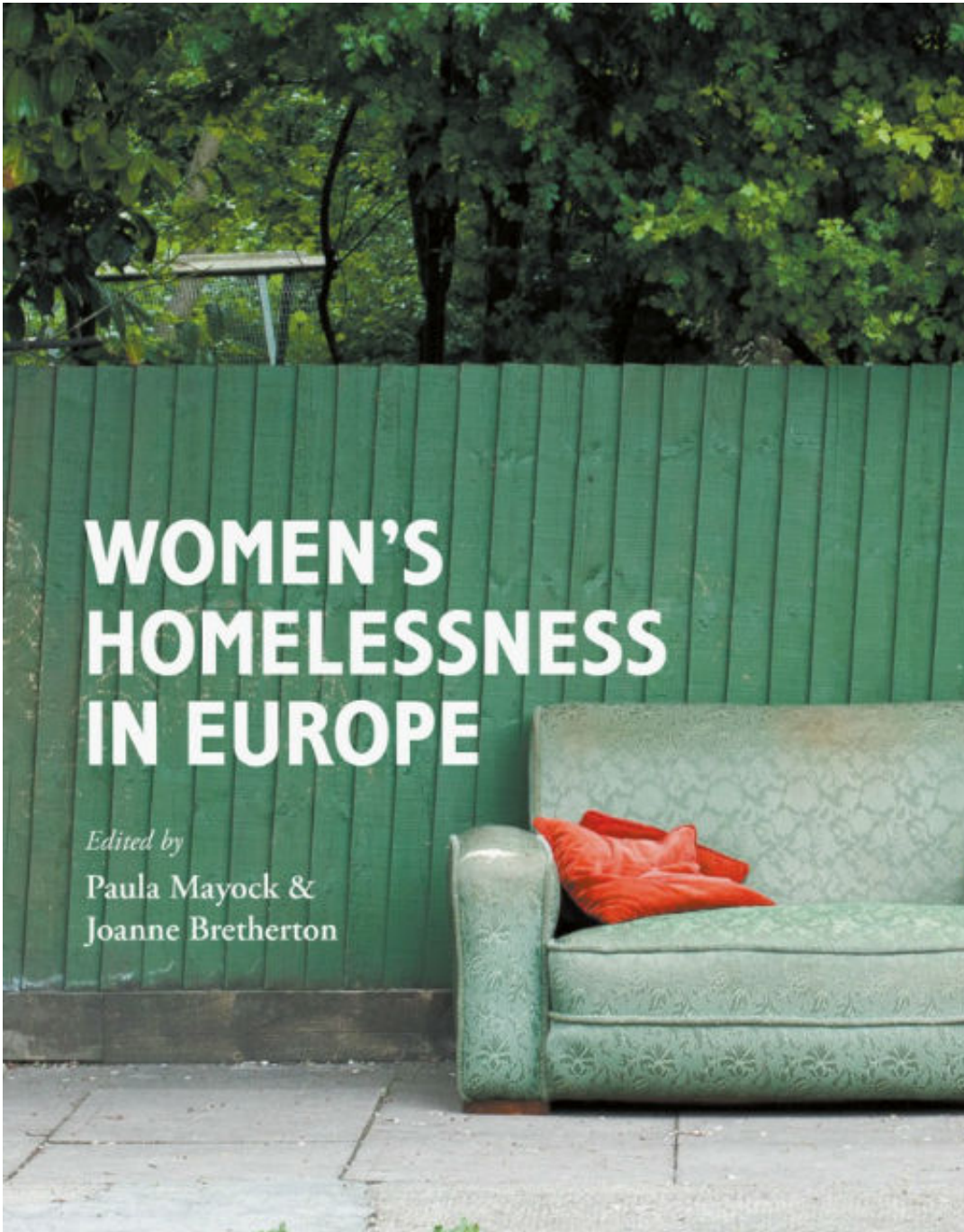


The UK's hidden homeless: lone women parents most likely to suffer

April 20 2017



Growing numbers of women in England are experiencing 'hidden homelessness' – living in precarious arrangements without privacy or

their own legal living space - according to new research.

Women's homelessness is a major social problem in the UK, with the latest figures revealing that from 1998 – 2015, 1,475,150 households were registered as homeless in England.

Approximately 995,360 of these households were homeless families (as opposed to single occupant households) and/or had a pregnant woman living in them.

Of these [homeless families](#), some 65 per cent are lone women parents, amounting to approximately 647,000 lone women parents and their children (source: University of York and the Department for Communities and Local Government - DCLG).

The research was conducted by the Women's Homelessness in Europe Network (WHEN), jointly coordinated by the University of York and Trinity College, Dublin.

Domestic violence

In the UK, as in other European countries, many women and women with children become homeless due to experiencing domestic and gender based violence. From 1998 – 2015, 66,660 lone women and lone women parents with dependent children were reported as being found homeless for this reason.

New European level analysis, highlighted in a new book *Women's Homelessness in Europe*, point to growing evidence that women often react to homelessness by seeking help through staying with friends, acquaintances and relatives, rather than using homelessness services.

Joanne Bretherton, Research Fellow at the University of York's Centre

for Housing Policy and Co-Editor of the book, said: "Women, throughout Europe, are far more likely to experience homelessness than men, often due to domestic male violence.

"Although lone women do live rough and in emergency accommodation, there is growing evidence that many women seek help by living in precarious arrangements with other people, without their own front door, privacy and their own living space, and without access to any housing of their own to which they have a legal right.

Different pathways

"Women and men tend to take quite different pathways through homelessness, with women's homelessness less easily observed. This is likely to have led to an underestimation of both the scale and consequences of this serious social problem.

"Women who become [homeless](#) can experience great harm to their health and wellbeing and face multiple obstacles to services. It is vital that we pay attention to this relatively neglected and profoundly serious problem both in the UK and in Europe, and build a socially scientific, robust evidence base on the role of gender as it relates to the experience of homelessness.

"Women's homelessness requires forms of preventative intervention and service models that recognise and respond to [women](#)'s specific needs."

More information: Women's Homelessness in Europe is published by Palgrave Macmillan. For further information, visit:

www.palgrave.com/de/book/9781137545152

Provided by University of York

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