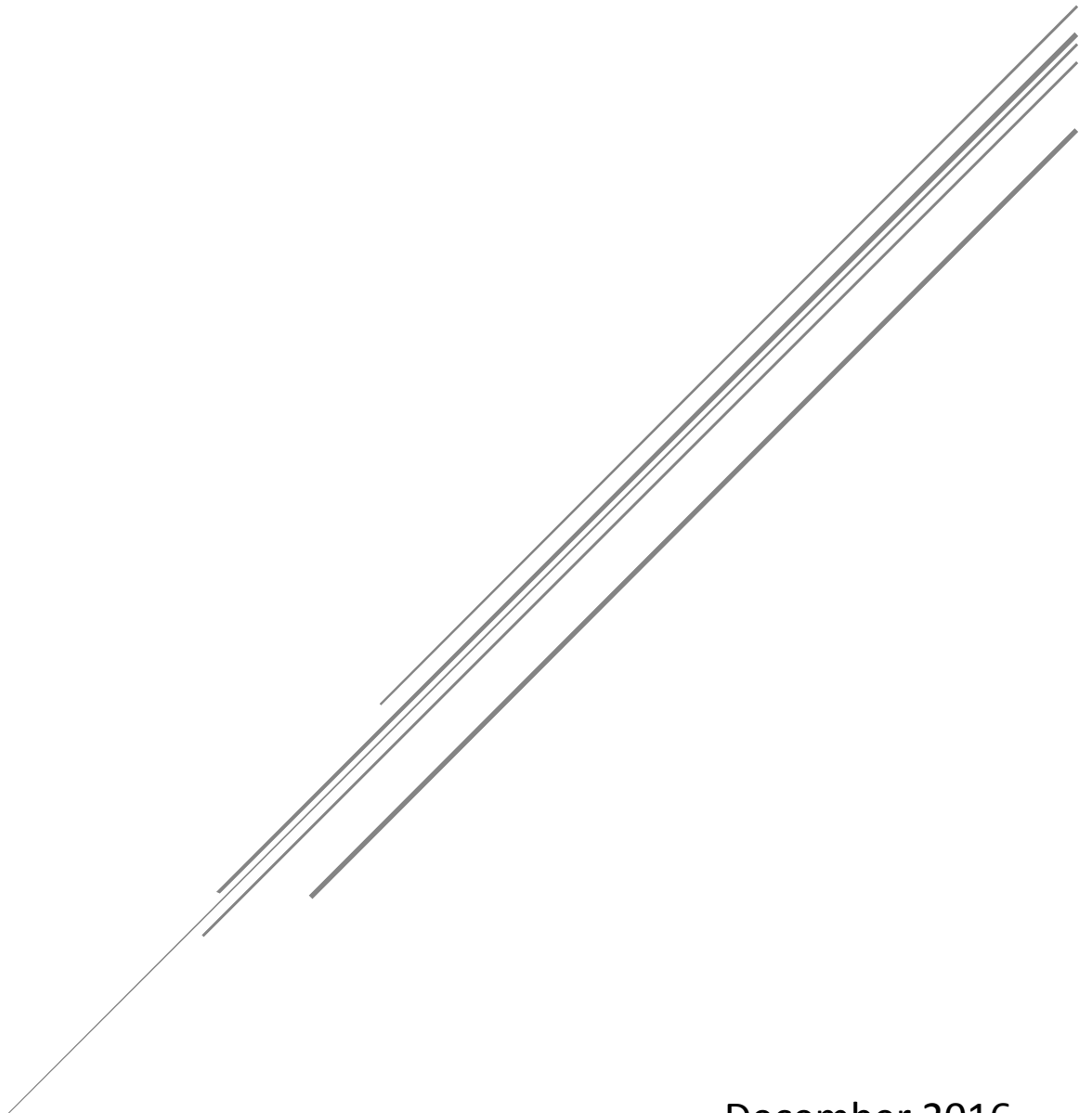


# TIME FOR CHANGE

A Research Study on Begging in Dublin City Centre



December 2016  
Alice O' Flynn

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# Time for change.

A research study on Begging in Dublin City Centre 2016

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Is begging on the increase in Dublin City Centre?

Who is involved in begging?

What is the impact of begging?

What could be done to reduce begging?

These are the questions reviewed, examined and analysed in this research study which was commissioned by Dublin City Council in May 2016. Undertaken between May and October 2016, the study included desktop research, observation, mapping, 45 semi structured 1:1 interviews with key informants and an online survey on begging which had 275 respondents. The study area of Dublin City Centre included the five districts of **Dublin Town**, running from Stephens Green to Parnell Square and from Capel Street to Amiens Street on the Northside of the city and Dawson Street to South Great Georges Street on the Southside of the city and the **Temple Bar Cultural** quarter. (Appendix 1)

A number of key issues were evident through the research, and these may be summarised as follows:

- Begging is an emotive issue. There is **concern and sympathy for those who are begging and, a sense of frustration and helplessness** that as a rich country so many people are begging on our streets.
- Begging is perceived to have **increased** in recent times and the areas where people are begging has **expanded**, although factual evidence of this is conflicting.
- The perceived **increase in begging** is mainly related but not exclusive to an **increase in homelessness; addiction issues were also associated with the increase** and any measures to reduce begging must take these into account.
- Begging is a **humiliating, shameful experience** for many and begging on the streets means having to “hide” and “mask” those feelings.
- Homelessness, addiction, to make a living, for food, being poor and social isolation are the main reasons people beg.
- Begging *per se* is not a policing matter, nor is it perceived as such – although certain manifestations of it such as aggressive begging are criminal acts and should be treated accordingly.
- There are notable perceived differences between **begging during the day and at night time** and these differences are important when considering **impact** and measures to **reduce**

begging - **begging at night** is more of a nuisance and hassle due to the frequency, persistence and physicality of the activity, there is a sense of desperation attached to begging at night time and occasionally it may be aggressive.

- People who chalk, paint, draw and/or write poetry on pavements are not viewed as “begging”.
- The reduction in the numbers of Gardaí was an overriding area of general concern not necessarily linked to begging. A **visible Garda presence** on the streets is viewed as crucial for public reassurance, confidence and prevention of crime.
- Active informal citizenship is visible and vibrant on the streets at night with a growing number of “pop-up” services providing food, clothes and shelter type support to people on the streets.
- Charities asking for donations on the streets are perceived as intrusive and as much if not more hassle for participants than people begging – moreover trust in the Charity sector has been shaken and this has changed the approach to donating for some participants.

As a general point, the research study was welcomed by respondents and a desire expressed to see the **causes of begging** tackled and not just the **symptoms**.

The study makes the following recommendations:

- Dublin City Council to engage with the Health Service Executive to organise a meeting with outreach services, both formal and informal, to pinpoint and map the outreach and services being provided including days and times, agree channels of contact and communication, identify gaps and saturation points and agree core information that all services provide
- Dublin City Council to engage with the Health Service Executive to ensure there are sufficient day services easily accessible to provide safe shelter, rapid assessment, food, laundry and support
- Dublin City Council to use all its communication channels to make the public aware of the day services and support that are available including opening times, facilities, access, costs and contact information – there is a significant lack of public information on services available
- Dublin City Council to further explore begging related issues that arise as part of a Night Time Economy
- Implement the recommendations of the recent independent evaluation of the Assertive Case Management pilot in Dublin City Centre (Appendix 14)
- As per Dublin City Councils Housing First policy - Street homeless people, who beg, with complex & multiple needs should be supported, as a matter of urgency, to access long term accommodation with appropriate support
- Implement the recommendations of the ‘Better City for All’ Report (Appendix 13)

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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In May 2016 Dublin City Council commissioned the Ana Liffey Drug Project to undertake this research study to focus on four key questions- Is begging is on the increase in Dublin City Centre? Who is involved in begging? What is the impact of begging? and What could be done to reduce begging? Alice O'Flynn, the lead researcher, completed the field work and write up between May and October 2016. The study included desktop research, semi structured interviews, an on-line survey, a review of begging legislation in Ireland and other jurisdictions and observation and mapping exercises of begging in Dublin City Centre.

## **Begging is legal in Ireland**

It is important to note at the outset that begging is legal in Ireland.

For over one hundred and fifty years the offence of begging in Ireland was prosecuted under section 3 of the Vagrancy (Ireland) Act 1847 subsequently amended by the Public Assistance Act 1939.

In December 2007, the constitutional validity of the Act was challenged and struck down and the government approved in 2008 the drafting of a Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011.

Section 1 (2) of the act defines begging as follows;

### **A person who;**

*Requests or solicits money or goods from another person or other persons or while in a private place without the consent of the owner or occupier of the private place requests or solicits money or goods from another person or persons*

### **Begging as such is not an offence but an offence is committed if**

*A person, while begging in any place –*

- (a) Harasses, intimidates, assaults or threaten any other person or persons, or*
- (b) Obstructs the passage of persons or vehicles*

*If such an offence is committed, the person or persons are liable, on summary conviction to a class E fine (an amount up to €500) or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or both. In January 2016, a new Fines Act came into force which allows payment of fines in instalments and imprisonment will be used as a last resort.*

Section 3 of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011 gives Gardaí powers to direct persons who are begging in certain places, such as near or at entrances to business premises, ATM machines, to stop and leave the area in a peaceful and orderly manner. Gardaí can ask people who are begging in a manner that they believe breaches the law to “move on”.

Begging, tapping or panhandling as it is called in some countries is a complex global phenomena and is an increasingly common sight in the major cities and urban areas of Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the USA as well as Asia and Africa. It is not a homogenous issue; indeed, cities in China, especially Shanghai, have been described as homes of different categories of beggars (including the poor, the disabled, the homeless and professional beggars), which are described as “liumin” (floating people) or “youmin” (wandering people) (Hanchao, Lu, 1999). Similarly, the situation in Nigerian cities as described by (Ojo, 2005) identifies different categories of beggars found at motor parks, religious centres, markets, road junctions among other public places where people are begging for alms. The situation is not so different in the cities of Cape Town and Johannesburg in South Africa where beggars are seen at junctions all over the city. In Mexico, as reported by Fabriga (1971), begging is widespread. Nor does begging disappear as economic conditions improve.

Many societies have grappled with how best to deal with the issue of begging, using a variety of methods including the use of prohibitive legislation, but it does not appear to be a phenomenon that is amenable to simple solutions. For example, Matej et al (2013) note that despite legislation to eradicate begging, it is still pervasive in Bucharest mainly due to local acceptance of begging as an indicator of social exclusion and economic deprivation and is not seen as anti-social. Although measures have been implemented to reduce or even prohibit begging, the authorities are overwhelmed by its prevalence and alternative approaches are needed to address it.

Research from the USA, “No Safe Place” 2014 National Law Centre on Homelessness & Poverty has demonstrated that even where cities limit begging to specific districts or places, the impact is significant. This is because commercial and tourist districts, the areas where begging is most likely to be prohibited, are often the only places where homeless people have regular access to passers-by and potential donors. In the absence of employment opportunities or when homeless people are unable to access needed public benefits, begging may be a person’s only option for obtaining money. Even in an area such as Dublin with a relatively robust homeless services network, homeless people may still need access to cash to pay for their stays in certain emergency shelters.

In short, begging is almost universal. Many countries at national, regional and local level are looking at how to address the growing prevalence of begging; there are impassioned discussions on best ways to respond which revolve around human rights, homelessness, addiction, migration and legislative levers of enforcement including fines and outright bans on begging.

In terms of the structure of this report, the following **Methodology section** outlines how the research was carried out. The **Findings Section** sets out the results of the research, both in the context of Dublin, and with reference to other jurisdictions. The **Discussion Section** delves deeper and draws out valuable and rich insights from both interviews and survey responses. It presents what may be viewed as challenging observations and reflections. It also questions assumptions.

It is clear that to tackle the causes of begging we must understand and distinguish the types of begging that are taking place in the City Centre and not make the mistake of thinking it is a homogenous activity. The **Recommendations Section** looks at options and approaches to move forward in a meaningful and practical way to address the underlying needs of people who beg in Dublin City Centre to reduce the need to beg and improve the situation for all.

## 2 METHODOLOGY

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### Descriptive and Explanatory Studies

This study was descriptive and explanatory in nature using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Given that descriptive research seeks to provide accurate information of a particular phenomenon and explanatory research looks for explanations on the nature of certain relationships we believed this combined approach would provide a solid and rich evidence base to address effectively the four research questions.

### Methods Used:

We used a mixed methodology including the use of semi structured interviews (N=45) and an online survey of 10 questions (N=275). We also carried out desktop research, mapping and observation exercises.

The semi structured interviews with 45 key informants were drawn from a range of sectors including the Private Business Sector (PBS), Non-Governmental Sector (NGS), Public Sector (PS), Residents (R), People with experience of begging (PWEB) and Tourists (T).

The interviews were based around the four research questions:

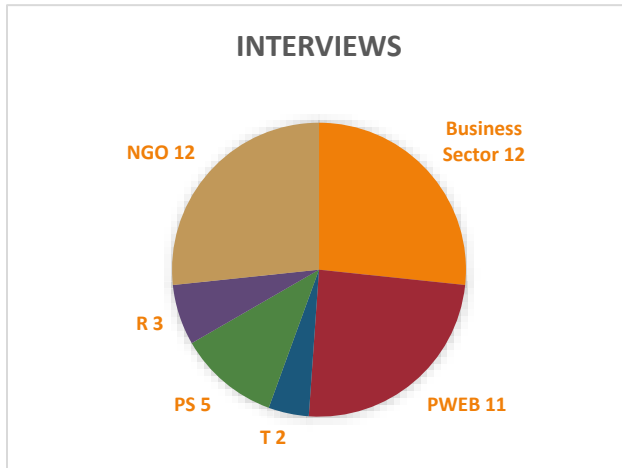
- is begging on the increase?
- who is involved in begging?
- what is the impact of begging?
- what could be done to reduce begging?

The format of the interviews provided an open confidential space to explore views and experiences and opened up incidental insights which added a valuable depth to the study e.g. lived comparisons with other cities, the path into begging, pop up night time services and views on the charity sector. It also emerged that for some interviewees across the different sectors being asked for their opinion was a unique experience and one they valued and enjoyed.

The interview sample included People with Experience of Begging PWEB (11); Business Sector BS (12); Non-Governmental Organisation Sector NGO (12) Tourists T (2); Public Sector PS (5); Residents R (3). 26 of the interviewees were men, 19 were women and the age group ranged between 20 – 67. (Appendix 2 Interview Cohort)



**Interviews N 45**



**Key Informants 26 Men 19 Women**

**People with experience of begging (PWEB)** included those who are presently begging and those who no longer beg; **Business Sector (BS)** interviews were conducted with a wide range of informants drawn from the **Legal Profession**, those working in the **Hotel, Pub, Restaurant & Security** industry, **Dublin Town & Temple Bar Management**; **International Education Student** specialists and the **Theatre** sector. Non-Governmental Sector (**NGO**) respondents comprised those working in the fields of **Homelessness, Traveller Services, Addiction, Migrant, Refugee & Asylum Services & Advocacy**; **Public Sector (PS)** informants were drawn from the **Probation Service, An Garda Síochána** & the **Health Services Executive**.

**BS** Business Sector; **PWEB** Persons with experience of begging; **T** tourists; **PS** Public Sector; **R** residents; **NGO** Non-Government Sector

It was crucial to include people who are begging to hear their views and experiences; the business sector is concerned at the possible impact of begging on trade; the Public Sector and NGOs work with and provide services to people who are begging and residents and tourists are a vibrant part of Dublin City Centre. An initial population cohort was identified and we then used respondent driven sampling to snowball and expand the cohort. Information on the study (Appendix 10/11) was sent to potential participants and interviews were conducted in a range of different venues. The information included our contact details for queries/follow up. The recruitment of people with experience of begging was assisted by services who work in the field and by people begging. The information (Appendix 9) sent to services included our working principles based on international research ethics, data protection and confidentiality. We had arranged with a service provider that if a participant became upset and required support including counselling we could refer to them. Finally, our contact details were provided for any follow up.

We used a similar methodology with the **online survey**. The 10 questions (Appendix 8) were generated from the research themes and were piloted and refined before going live. Text boxes were included for additional comments and this facility was well utilised. We targeted an initial diverse sample reflecting those who worked, visited and/or lived in the City Centre who were emailed with an introduction and information brief on the study and the online link. We invited this sample to complete the survey and to consider sending the information brief and survey link to others in their network who fulfilled the criteria. We emphasised that if sharing the link it must be accompanied by the information brief. The online survey was open for three weeks.

## **Ethical Issues**

All participants took part voluntarily and were advised they could pause, stop and/or withdraw at any time. A risk analysis was carried out at the outset of the study and this was reviewed and updated throughout the study period. Particular emphasis was placed on issues of data protection, privacy, confidentiality, informed consent, accessibility, stigmatization, discrimination and follow up support.

## **Research Limitations**

The research is explanatory and descriptive and limited by the respondent driven snowballing sample. Nonetheless, the combination of qualitative and quantitative data and analysis informed by observation, interview and survey enhances the reliability and depth of the findings.

## **Data Analysis**

Data from the primary research material from interviews, survey and observations was analysed to identify themes and recurring experiences, perceptions and responses to begging. Secondary data sources supported the analysis of the primary data.

The mapping and observation exercises were conducted at random times morning, afternoon, evenings during the week and at weekends.

## 3 FINDINGS

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In this section, the findings are presented. An initial section sets the context of begging in Dublin. Following this, the responses to the survey and interview questions are reported. Comments, critical points and key messages are highlighted throughout this section. Direct comments from participants are noted in inverted commas.

### 3.1 BEGGING IN DUBLIN

For over one hundred and fifty years the offence of begging in Ireland was prosecuted under section 3 of the Vagrancy (Ireland) Act 1847, subsequently amended by the Public Assistance Act 1939. In December 2007, the constitutional validity of the Act was challenged and struck down and the government approved in 2008 the drafting of a Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011. Section 1 (2) of the act defines begging as follows;

2) For the purposes of this Act, a person begs if—

- (a) other than in accordance with a licence, permit or authorisation (howsoever described) granted by or under an enactment, he or she requests or solicits money or goods from another person or other persons, or
- (b) while in a private place without the consent of the owner or occupier of the private place, he or she requests or solicits money or goods from another person or other persons.

Begging **as such** is not an offence but an **offence is committed** if

*A person, while begging in any place –*

- (c) Harasses, intimidates, assaults or threaten any other person or persons, or*
- (d) Obstructs the passage of persons or vehicles*

*If such an offence is committed, the person or persons are liable, on summary conviction to a class E fine (an amount up to €500) or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month or both.*

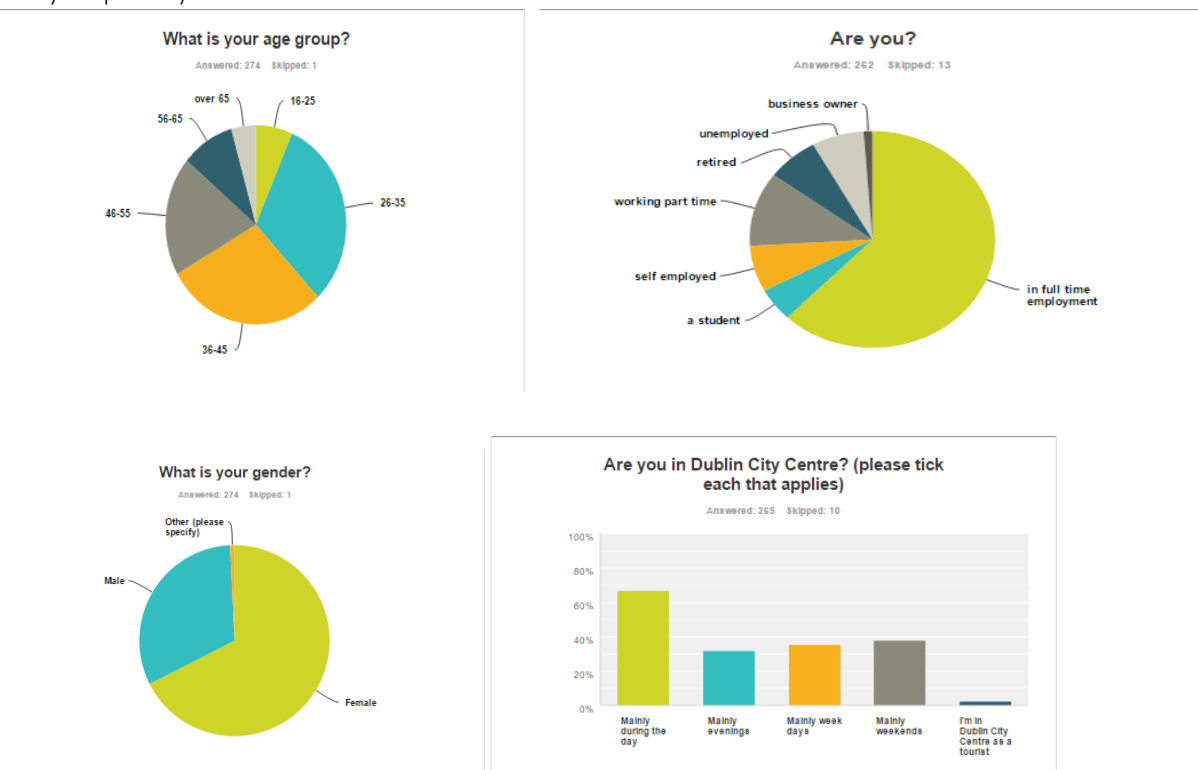
In January 2016, new regulations were introduced pursuant to the Fines (Payment and Recovery Act) 2014 which allow payment of fines in instalments and intend for imprisonment to be used as a last resort.

Section 3 of the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011 gives Gardaí powers to direct persons who are begging in certain places, such as near or at entrances to business premises, ATM machines, to stop and leave the area in a peaceful and orderly manner. Gardaí can ask people who are begging in a manner that they believe breaches the law to move on.

Interviewees in this study had a range of views with regard to legislation on begging, e.g. *“It’s not worth the paper it’s written on”* was a recurring observation from participants involved in business and policing. *“It calls for a high degree of subjectivity which makes it a nonsense”*; *“the power to ask people to move on is ludicrous, people move, wait for the Guard to walk on and come back again”*. Another view expressed was that *“some people are asked to move more than others”*, e.g. Roma Community (Appendix 3)

### 3.2 SURVEY RESULTS

Demographically, respondents to the online survey were mainly in the age group 26-45, just over 50% were in full time employment and 67% were women. Respondents were in the city centre during the day (67%), evenings (32%), weekends (38%) and weekdays (35%). (Appendix 7 Full Set of Survey Responses)

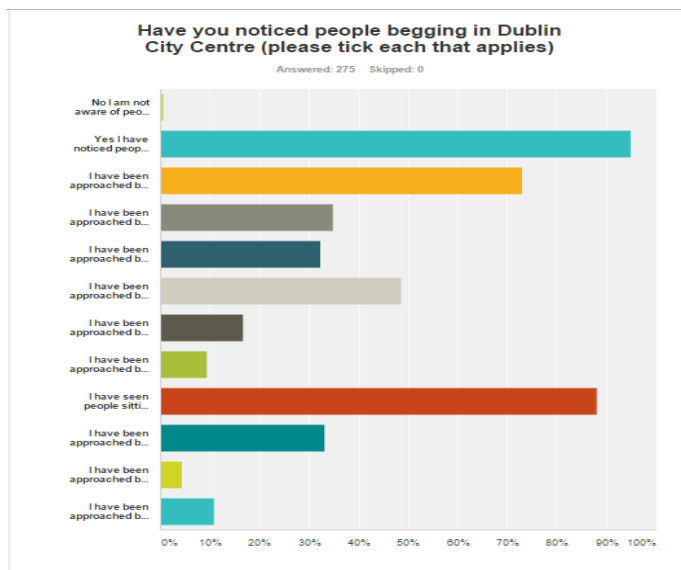


## Have you noticed people begging in Dublin City Centre?

There were **275** responses to this question with **32** additional comments recorded. Comments detailed where people are begging, e.g. church, going to Mass, at bus, train and Luas stops, they provided instances of when respondents felt intimidated by people begging, e.g. following them up the street, at bus, train and Luas stops and at ATM machines. Comments also referred to the number of charity collectors asking for money

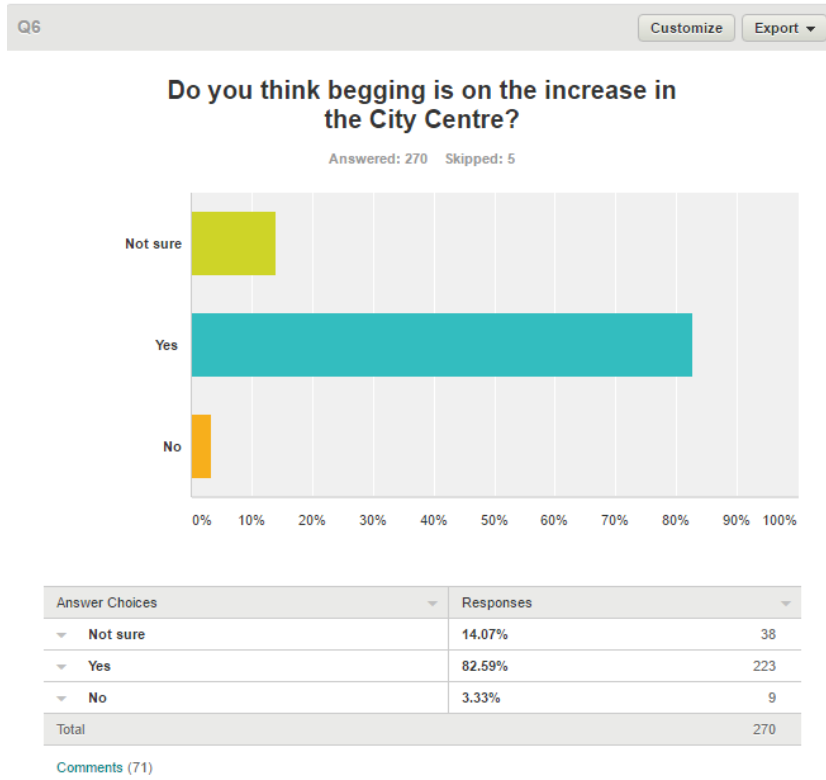
In total, **95%** of respondents have noticed people begging, and:

- 73% have been approached when walking
- 35% when eating in a café/restaurant
- 33% when having a drink in a pub
- 50% when entering a shop
- 17% going to the theatre
- 9% when going into a hotel
- 88% have noticed people sitting begging
- 34% have been approached at traffic lights
- 5% on their bike when stationary
- 11% when going to the cinema



## Do you think begging is on the increase in the City Centre?

270 people responded to this question with 71 additional comments



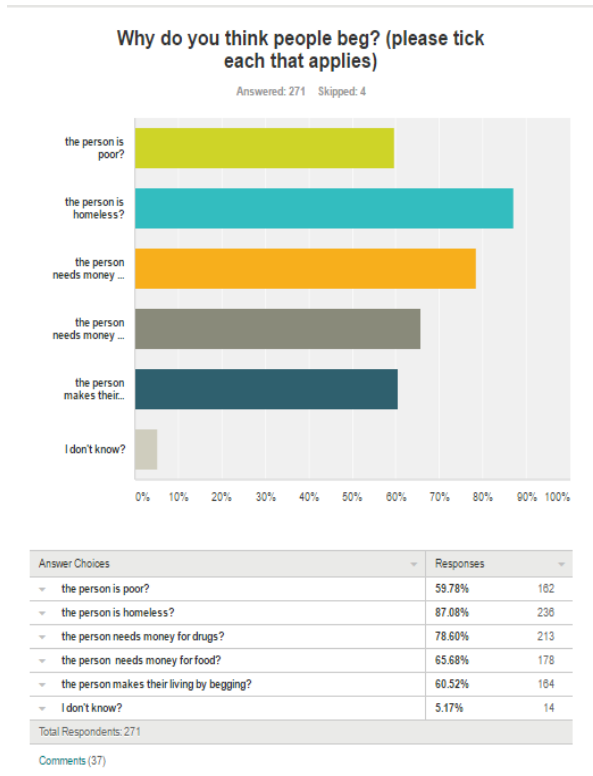
A majority of those surveyed (82%) believe that begging has increased. The 71 comments related to the increasing numbers of people begging, the many areas and places people are begging, the desperation of people begging, the link of begging to homelessness, to poverty, to a lack of affordable housing and to addiction. Some comments queried if there was organised begging whilst others mentioned feeling intimidated. A recurring theme was the extent of places where people are begging, including all over the City Centre and further out, not just on the main streets but laneways, side streets, outside many public buildings including churches, hospitals, shops, train stations, bus and Luas stops, car park paying machines, cinemas, theatres etc.

Comments included the following:

- *“every 50 metres people are begging”;*
- *“I can be asked up to 10 times a day walking in the City Centre”*
- *“Dublin is a magnet like other capital cities for beggars”*
- *“there is a huge increase linked to homelessness”*
- *“less children”*

## Why do you think people beg?

There were 271 responses to this question

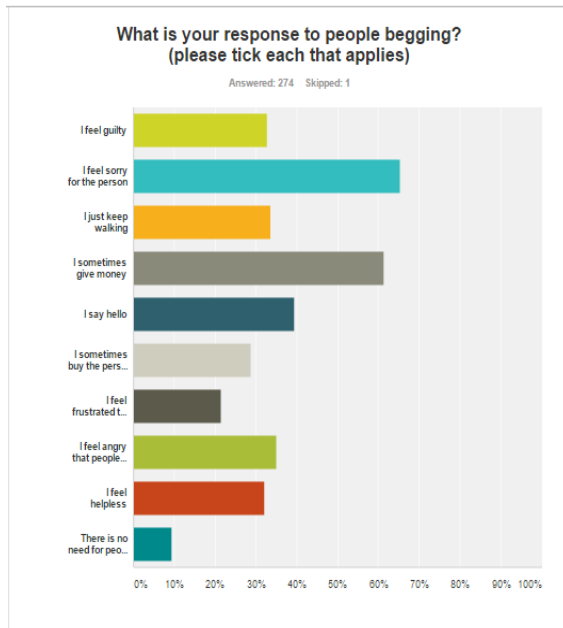


Homelessness and addiction are perceived as the main reasons people are begging, 87% responses cited homelessness, 78% addiction. Poverty, money for food and to make a living were the other reasons cited. Mental health and social isolation were mentioned in interviews. Organized begging was an observation in both survey and interviews.

It is estimated that there is a cohort of approximately 80 people begging in the City Centre, 75% of whom are men and 25% are couples. There are some people (about 10-15) at any one time who beg short term for a specific reason/amount of money, e. g for fares, pay a fine, fill a prescription for medicine. Those begging on a regular basis beg for money towards a hostel bed, towards a B&B, towards their rent, for drugs and/or for alcohol.

There was a view expressed in interviews and survey that some people beg as a means to a regular income. Anecdotally, there also appears to be a level of begging that is organised, some of which is carried out in groups moving from place to place and country to country.

## What is the impact of people begging?



Answer Choices	Responses
I feel guilty	32.85% 90
I feel sorry for the person	65.33% 179
I just keep walking	33.58% 92
I sometimes give money	61.31% 168
I say hello	39.42% 108
I sometimes buy the person a coffee or tea	28.83% 79
I feel frustrated that people are begging	21.53% 59
I feel angry that people have to beg	35.04% 96
I feel helpless	32.12% 88
There is no need for people to beg	9.49% 26
Total Respondents: 274	
Comments (36)	

There were **274** responses to this question, with **36** additional comments. 9% of respondents felt there was no need to beg; 32% feel helpless; 35% feel angry that people have to beg; 22% are frustrated that people have to beg; 28% sometimes buy the person coffee/tea; 38% greet the person; 62% sometimes give money; 33% just keep walking; 65% feel sorry for the person; 33% feel guilty that people have to beg.

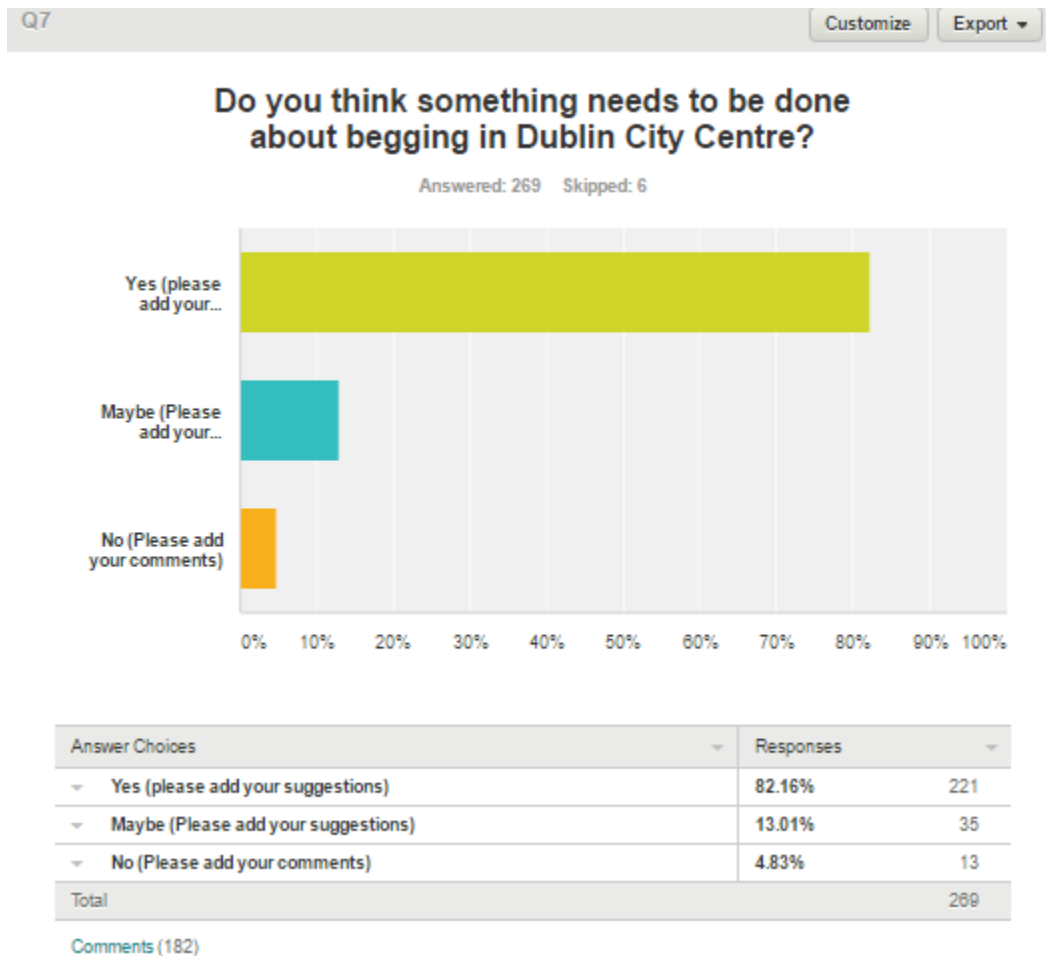
The **36 additional comments** detailed the impact of begging on respondents, e.g.

- *"confusion reigns as to why people are begging and how I should respond"*
- *"there should be no need, what alternatives are there?"*
- *"I help in other ways by donating clothes"*
- *"spend time with them, buy food, smokes, clothes etc."*
- *"hate when there is a beggar at a shop entrance"*
- *"I don't stop as sometimes feel afraid"*
- *"sometimes buy food, never give money"*
- *"I prefer to give money and goods to appropriate charities, I have occasionally bought coffee or sandwich for someone"*
- *"I keep seeing the same few faces over and over again"*
- *"I'm afraid to take my wallet out on the street even though I sometimes want to I no longer know who is genuinely in need"*



## What could be done to reduce begging?

It was clear from survey responses that people feel something does need to be done.



There were **269** responses to this question, with **182** additional comments. The vast majority (82%) felt that something needed to be done. Of the 182 comments, 119 focused on tackling the causes of begging and the provision of services, 20 were related to tackling organised begging and 12 were specifically about policing. Policing in the City Centre emerged as an issue of concern in interviews and in the survey, with the issues raised including the pressures on Garda resources in the City Centre and the reduction in Garda resources. It is important to note that respondents do not think begging is a policing matter. There are however important perceptions that a policing presence provides a sense of reassurance and can act as a preventative measure for criminal activity.

**Summary:** There is a definite perception that begging has increased in Dublin City Centre evident from both interviews and survey. Homelessness and addiction are the main reasons people are begging. Both interviewees and survey respondents are concerned that people have to beg and want something done which tackles the root causes and not just the symptoms. Direct action is being taken by people who go out on the streets with friends/neighbours to feed and bring shelter to those on the streets. There is also a view that some begging is organised and is an effective means to make an income. Regardless, begging is viewed a social issue, it is not a criminal matter and should be addressed accordingly.

In interviews, the research was welcomed and seen as a positive gesture on behalf of DCC.

There was a sense from participants that begging is something they encounter each day and at all times but it is seldom spoken about. There were concerns as to whether the research was a slick handed way of bringing in “draconian” actions which some participants had seen or experienced in other cities. That these concerns were raised is important because it enabled an acknowledgement of the different approaches taken in other cities, the conflicting views these have garnered and reassurance that there was no backhanded plan behind this study.

Participants were interested in and positive about the mixed methodology of the study, i.e. the range of participants in the interviews, that other jurisdictions were being studied and that there would be an online survey.

### 3.3 BEGGING IN OTHER JURISDICTIONS

Research on begging alone is unusual. More commonly studied and researched are subtopics like children begging, forced begging, trafficking, homelessness, addiction, migration, young people and/or “street culture”. COMPAS (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society) a research centre within the University of Oxford began a pilot project in 2015 to examine the intersection between begging, work and citizenship in the European Union. An aspect of the COMPAS study is a focus on four countries; the UK, Ireland, Spain and The Netherlands. The project is due to conclude in 2016.

European Federation of National Organisations working with the Homeless (FEANTSA) published a monitoring report in 2015 on changes to begging legislation in Europe. (Appendix 12). The report noted a number of different ways in which countries are bringing in or trying to bring in legislation to ban and/or proscribe begging. They found that four countries have introduced an explicit begging ban in their national legislation: Greece, Hungary, Italy and Romania; other countries have concluded that a ban on begging is unconstitutional, e.g. Germany and Italy. Other countries punish begging under their Penal Codes, or as actions that ‘breach the peace’ and are therefore disrupting public order. In Germany, Italy and France, there are specific conditions under which begging is generally forbidden, for example, begging with children, and in some cases, what is deemed ‘aggressive’ begging, or begging with a ‘dangerous’ animal (France). In Italy, the ‘enslavement of older people or minors’ for the use of begging is also forbidden, in order to protect potential victims of such schemes.

There are changes in approach towards public space in cities that are interesting to note. There is a trend emerging to remove and/or replace benches on main shopping streets, at bus shelters and other public spaces with seats that pivot forward which prevents people from resting. Alongside this trend is the introduction of what has been termed “defensive” furniture, i. e. the installation of sprinklers, spikes etc. outside some buildings. In London spikes and sprinklers have been installed not only outside several shops but also some apartment buildings. In Dublin, a large retailer erected gates to prevent people sleeping in a shop doorway and a soup kitchen setting up. This has been challenged by Dublin City Council under Planning Regulations.

In interviews with the business sector for this study, mention was made of the need to install screens and other furniture to cordon off space outside their establishments. The perception is that the frequency of people begging, their insistence and at times an aggressive manner has prevented patrons from relaxed dining alfresco. Furthermore, in some instances the screens have had to be raised to prevent those begging reaching over to attract the attention of customers. Erecting screens and placing street furniture also enables business to clearly mark out their premises. These measures are explored further in a report for Dublin City Council by Yvonne Scully on the Café and Restaurant Sector.

In some European countries, a degree of legislative power resides in local government, e.g. in Belgium, Italy, Hungary, Romania, Spain, Greece, U.K and The Netherlands and it is at local level that anti-begging measures have been passed as stand-alone instruments under Public Order regulations. These regulations are usually in the form of discretionary powers to move people on and fines. The ineffectiveness of imposing fines and the difficulties of paying fines for people struggling to survive day to day has been noted previously in this report.

Many jurisdictions restrict bans on begging to “aggressive” begging and limit the ban to certain areas, e.g. inner city, business, culture and/or tourist attractions. Public order regulations as well as banning begging may also ban sleeping in public places, removing items from rubbish bins, urinating in public places, and/or consuming alcohol in a public place. There are usually wide discretionary powers afforded to police when enforcing Public Orders. FEANTSA noted that discretionary powers can work well, for example when police, health and social services work closely together to support people who are homeless and sleeping rough. Many countries reported that police do not enforce anti-begging legislation. The FEANTSA report also makes the point that as public awareness increases about bans on begging, the issue of whether such bans are a breach of human rights comes into sharp focus. The rationale being that criminalizing human beings for carrying out life sustaining activities in public should not be further punished by fines and in some cases imprisonment.

There are many difficulties in enforcing Public Order measures. As already noted in relation to the Criminal Justice (Public Order) Act 2011, defining terms clearly is crucial and having sufficient resources on the ground to engage, monitor and enforce is equally critical. The London Borough of Westminster is one of many local authorities in England that have adopted a three-prong approach to begging, i.e. enforcement to ensure people begging are moved off the streets, assistance to help people begging change their lifestyle and a communication advertising campaign asking the public not to give to people begging. (Appendix 5/6). These communication advertising campaigns or “alternative giving campaigns” as they are also known are growing in favour as an important part of the approach in many jurisdictions. Dublin had such a campaign in 2013 launched by Dublin Town, a body that represents 2500 businesses in the City Centre. These types of campaigns draw mixed reactions. In Nottingham in 2016, an alternative giving campaign drew complaints to the Advertising Standards Authority which ruled that the campaign posters must be removed as they would cause offence and reinforce negative stereotypes of people who are homeless. In Belfast in June 2016 the DePaul Trust launched an alternative giving campaign, “Begging for Change” run by 2 Belfast-based charities - DePaul and the Welcome Organisation - supported by Belfast Policing and Community Safety Partnership, Belfast City Centre Management, Northern Ireland Housing Executive and the Police Service Northern Ireland. The charities stated that their primary concern in undertaking the campaign was the health and wellbeing of those involved in street activity.

It is difficult to determine the effectiveness of these type of campaigns, evaluations are not necessarily carried out and/or published but an evaluation study of an Oxford Anti Begging Campaign in 2012 shows mixed results and has a number of broad recommendations for future campaigns of this type.

Preparation before mounting such campaigns is crucial, e.g. clear information on the rationale for the campaign, consultation with people who are begging and with agencies working in the field, clear messages and a reliable contact point for queries. Moreover, assurance for the public that there is sufficient capacity and resources to provide safe accommodation, low threshold addiction services and targeted outreach services is equally critical.

Experience of begging in other countries emerged in the interviews e.g. *“yeh I have noticed begging in Dublin but it’s the same at home” “I live in Berlin, beggars come on to the U-Bahn, stand, tell a story to the carriage and then go round asking for money”*

*“beggars are all over our city at home, in the tunnels, at traffic lights, around shops, when you park your car”.*

*“You visit any city now, you see people begging, sometimes you also see posters saying don’t give money, or give instead to a charity”.*

The experience of other jurisdictions is also informative in looking at the types of interventions that are in place elsewhere.

**Denmark** has adopted quite a rigorous approach to reduce the influx of poor migrants, with a national ban that criminalises begging, harsh police tactics against homeless migrants sleeping outdoors, and very limited public funding of NGOs who provide basic services to homeless migrants.

**Norway** has taken an intermediate position. In Oslo, a municipal ban on sleeping outdoors was introduced with the explicit purpose of targeting homeless migrants. In 2014 a bill proposing a national ban on begging was launched, but this was later withdrawn. Instead, a provision allowing municipalities to enforce local bans on begging has been implemented in some smaller cities, but not in Oslo. Some public funding for emergency shelters and basic services has been allocated to NGOs.

**Sweden** is considering a ban on begging and has appointed a national begging coordinator following an increase of migrants coming into the country. Until recently, there was no begging in Sweden and the level of social solidarity was one of the highest in Europe. In 1964, the law of 1847 against begging for money was abolished -- the welfare state was considered all-encompassing and the law against begging obsolete. The people who could not work and support themselves were taken care of via various social welfare programs. However, begging is now seen

not only in Stockholm but other cities like Malmö and Gothenburg. It has been estimated that 4000 Roma mainly from Romania and Bulgaria but also Hungary and Slovakia are seeking assistance. Sweden was negotiating with Romanian Authorities so that Roma would get help to settle in Sweden but the negotiations broke down. Sweden has also tried to encourage its citizens to support local organisations working with poor people in Romania rather than give money to those begging on the streets. The coordinator on begging has said that a ban on begging would either have to criminalise those begging or those who give to beggars. A priority for the government is to defend and develop the Swedish Social Model but this is becoming more of a challenge. A recent survey found that over 50% of the population would support a ban on begging.

**Netherlands,** Amsterdam has brought in local regulations through their municipal bylaws. Rotterdam and Leiden have brought in similar by laws. The laws force people begging to sit at least 3 metres away from buildings and stay for only 30 minutes. Municipal agents will monitor and enforce.

**Canada,** Ontario is one of the only provinces in the country to expressly ban aggressive panhandling. The Safe Street Act has been in place since 1999. Although few other provinces or territories have an aggressive panhandling law, there is similar legislation in several municipalities throughout the nation, including Vancouver, Quebec City, and Calgary. A person who acts aggressively while soliciting money on the street can be fined a minimum of \$500 for a first offence. Subsequent fines go up to \$1,000 per offence. A panhandler convicted of violating the Act can also be sentenced to time in prison.

**Edinburgh** Begging came to the surface in 2013 when a local group, Essential Edinburgh, launched a radical petition to prohibit begging on the city's streets through the creation of a by-law. Edinburgh Council voted against the proposal saying that public complaints about begging in Edinburgh were "low", so introducing a by-law would be unnecessary. The Scottish Government said there is already existing legislation which could be used to convict anyone on the street that breached the peace legislation; if they were offensive, aggressive, threatening, abusive or sitting by an ATM machine, for example.

**London** People begging can be arrested and prosecuted under a number of powers, e.g. Vagrancy Act 1824 (section 3). Enables the arrest of anybody who is begging. It is a recordable offence and carries a level 3 fine (currently £1,000); Highways Act 1980 (section 137). If a person willfully obstructs the free passage along a highway they are guilty of an offence. This carries a level 2 fine (currently £500); Public Order Act 1986 (section 5). Causing harassment, alarm or distress. This carries a level 3 fine (£1000) or a penalty notice of £80. Community sentences can currently be imposed when the court considers that the offence is serious enough to warrant that penalty.

**Summary:** Legislation in most countries does not ban begging *per se* but, similar to the situation in Ireland, proscribes begging that is aggressive and/or is near or at particular places, e.g. ATM machines. The enforcement measures are usually to move on, fine and/or the use of some type of public exclusion/anti-social behaviour orders.

The approach taken is a combination of political, social and legal measures to address begging.

Concern at organised groups begging for short periods of time and then moving on is a common feature.

The Roma community are cited as a group that experience particular exclusion and prejudice and are highlighted in reports as an increasing population of beggars in most European cities. (Appendix 3)

**Public Information/Alternative Giving Campaigns:** Many cities in Europe have mounted information and/or alternative giving campaigns as part of an approach to reduce begging. The campaigns may be part of a more integrated plan or may be stand-alone measures. The campaign messages are two-fold, on the one hand to inform the public that there are social protective benefits for people and/or that there are shelters and other services that people can avail of, and, on the other hand that that giving money directly to people begging can be harmful to their health, e.g. the money will be used for alcohol and/or drugs. Both message and posters in these types of campaigns have drawn mixed reactions and views, e.g. that they are stereotyping, that it is up to the person begging how they spend their money, that living on the streets is tough so use of alcohol and/or drugs is a way of coping. (Appendix 5/6)

## 4 DISCUSSION

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As can be seen, the findings from this work reveal that:

- a) There is a perception that begging is on the increase
- b) Those who beg are perceived as having a range of social and health problems, such as homelessness, addiction, poverty and social isolation
- c) There is an overwhelming sense that something needs to be done to tackle the root causes and
- d) The legislative approach currently in place in Ireland is not dissimilar to the approaches taken by other jurisdictions

In this section, these findings are further discussed.

### 1 Is begging on the increase?

The majority of participants believe that begging has increased and that the crisis in homelessness is a key factor. Other key factors mentioned were the number of people begging with addiction issues, begging for monies for specific items and a perceived increase of people begging from the Roma population. Mention was made not only of an increase in the numbers of people begging but that people are begging in more places; on main and side streets, on bridges, at junctions, at stations, at bus and Luas stops, outside most public buildings, theatres, cafés, restaurants, shops, etc. Furthermore, begging is not perceived to being confined to the City Centre but people are begging in most suburbs as well.

At the September Dublin City Joint Policing Committee a report from the Garda Metropolitan Region stated that *“activity led incident types, such as Public Order (-27%) and Begging offences (-47%) have shown a marked decrease on 2015 levels in the DCC area. This type of activity has decreased across the whole Region (-11% / -38%) and can be largely attributed to An Garda Síochána increased hi-visibility patrols in place to target key hotspot areas. Special Public Order patrols are put in place in key areas particularly at the weekends to address matters of a public order nature.”*

This apparent disconnect between the perceived increase in begging and the reduction in the number of begging offences may be explained by the following;

Firstly, the activity of begging is legal and only becomes an offence when

*A person, while begging in any place –*

- (e) Harasses, intimidates, assaults or threaten any other person or persons, or*



*(f) Obstructs the passage of persons or vehicles*

Secondly, the law as has been articulated throughout this study is ill defined and subjective, thirdly, the perceived low visibility of a policing presence in the City Centre is a recurring issue of mention in this study, and lastly, An Garda Síochána face ongoing challenges to juggle priorities and resources. There may also have been an impact of the dispersal effect i.e. in recent years the assertive policing of begging during the day time in the city centre may have led to a dispersal of people begging across the city and outlying areas.

## 2 Who is begging?

Dublin Town estimate that between 50 – 80 people are begging in Dublin City Centre on a regular basis and this can be augmented by 20 or more on a sporadic and/or opportunistic basis. Men on their own make up 75% of the cohort and 25% approximately are couples.

Comments drawn from survey and interview include;

*“Women do not beg on their own, it’s not safe”*

*“Some people begging have mental health problems”*

*“No children begging now that is good”*

*“See the odd woman with a baby begging wonder about the baby they never seem to cry or make much noise”*

*“Some groups of people are begging, I’ve seen them come in together, split up, go to their pitches and then meet up later”*

*“Begging is not part of our culture, people say it is but it’s not, just because some people begging are Roma why do you think it is part of our culture, lots of people begging are Irish, is it part of your culture?”*

*“Issue of access to Social Protection support, No PPS number, don’t know the system, don’t trust authority,*

*“Came here for a better life, job and place to live for a while but then let go, nowhere to live, no money, never thought I’d be doing this”*

*“whether begging is accepted in some cultures is a red herring, the issue is why people beg, tackle that and any criminal activity that is involved, pigeonholing people does not help, it alienates and isolates people”*

*“I’m worried about young people on the streets, there seems to be more now than ever before and they are younger and so vulnerable”*

*“few addiction services for young people”*

**Dublin Town** is a business improvement district in Dublin City Centre representing 2,500 businesses and works to enhance the City Centre as a place for shopping, recreation and business development by increasing footfall and overall trading performance

*What is begging? - not all "begging" is viewed as begging!*



Is chalking poetry, drawing, pavement painting begging? This came up in both interview and survey. It is not viewed as begging. It was described *"as an activity that makes me stop, maybe smile, have a quick chat"*. *"My son loves seeing what the guys chalking have done", "It's good that they are doing something creative"*.

*"The kids love coming up and seeing what I am doing, they chat and ask me about it"*

*"Some kids came and gave me coloured chinks"*

*"I like to see the guys painting or drawing or whatever, they are performing a service and should be left alone"*

Other views on what is begging highlighted people who have a pitch where they sit on a regular basis, they do not "beg", they are not asking for money. They may have a sign about an issue that is important to them and/or they may not have anything except themselves. They have some regular members of the public who stop and chat, they may be given money. This was a daily activity of one key informant and weekly activity of the other. Both had accommodation.

*"I don't see people who are just sitting down without hassling anyone as begging"*

*"Begging and hassle go together but I am more inclined to give to those who are not hassling"*

The issue of begging as performance was also raised by participants. In particular, some people who beg "put on" a different persona to their usual self when they were begging.

*"You sort yourself out before you go on the street, you put your jacket on, this is your jacket for begging, you get yourself ready, you have a story to tell if someone comes up and you act it out, you have to do it like that otherwise how could you live with yourself"*

As can be seen, there is not always a clear division between begging and other types of street activity. We spoke to and observed a small number of people sitting on a pavement with notices

relating to an issue that was personal to them and/or to highlight a perceived injustice. They were not part of a group but were sharing their thoughts on an issue that was important to them. They were accepted by others on the street, e.g. licensed traders, those who were performing and had a license to do so. These individuals were not “begging” but members of the public did stop, chat and sometimes gave money.

Two other issues relevant to who is begging were also highlighted, First, it is rare to see a woman begging on her own. A woman may be seen alone on a pavement begging but usually a companion (male) is standing/sitting along the pavement or on the opposite side of the street. We were told that it is unsafe for a woman to be on her own and within a very short period of time many women experience physical and/or sexual assault when alone on the streets. Second, there was some concern voiced in interviews regarding young people on the streets. There were two issues highlighted; firstly, a perception that there were more young people on the streets and their vulnerability when they were “new”. The pace at which risk can escalate and the fear that “life” on the streets would then transition to becoming institutionalised. Secondly, there is a shortfall in services specifically for young people that could intervene early particularly addiction services. Overall, there was a view that addiction services have not kept pace with changing and increased demands and needs.

### **3. What is the impact of begging?**

Overall, study participants feel sorry for people who are begging, along with a sense of helplessness, anger and frustration.

*“People are homeless, sure you see them all over the place, sleeping everywhere, every other shop doorway, it’s a disgrace”*

There was concern in the business sector at the impact of begging, e.g.

*“the number of times beggars are up and down outside here asking punters for money, you ask them to walk on, they walk on but along comes another one, then the original guys are back again”*

*“begging is a problem at night time, when people are congregating coming to the performance, they are confronted by people begging, most are ok but some are very persistent and can be nasty, then at the interval they are back again, sometimes it’s all good natured but you know there is the odd time that it’s not, but, don’t get me wrong, there but for you know it could be any of us, I have a huge amount of sympathy and do what I can, Temple Bar are great they keep the area clean and that, but to do something about the begging, you need to get to the cause*

These concerns were mirrored to a certain degree by survey respondents, particularly in relation to the night time economy.

*“it is a hassle when you are out at night for a drink or whatever, people asking for money, but again it depends how they ask, if they move on when you say sorry, that’s not too bad but it is tiring and you can’t give to everyone”*

*“It is difficult at night time, I don’t take out my purse if I can help it, people begging are more in your face”*

There was also a realistic approach to the impact begging had on business

*“in terms of factors that impact on our business, yes, begging is an issue but there are other issues which are higher up the list...”*

It was also clear how begging affected those who have or are begging.

*“It’s terrible, who would do it, of course I’m ashamed but what can I do, I need money, I’m behind with the hostel.”*

*“We chalk mostly, but sometimes we beg, can’t get in anywhere, you don’t know from one night to the next where you might be”*

*“I’m begging yeh, I’ve got a 6-month bed but I’m a bit short on the rent, if I don’t make up the difference I’ll be out again”*

*“Some people are nice and don’t bother you, others are nasty especially at night time even if you are not begging, just sitting there”*

## Dublin at night

The concept of a night time economy is one that Dublin City Council and the business sector are keen to promote. The concept essentially relates to how local authorities expand their cultural, leisure, eating and shopping offerings for the public so that cities are a safe, vibrant, interesting place to visit late into the evenings. It is a concept that many European cities have taken on, e.g. Amsterdam recently hosted the first Night Mayor Summit and the idea has been taken up by other cities including Milan, Zurich, Paris, and London. Dublin City Council has recently launched a five-year cultural strategy for Dublin based on work carried out for the unsuccessful bid to become European Capital of Culture. This new strategy aspires to a broader, more ambitious and all-encompassing vision of culture in the capital. The council's main infrastructure project is the planned relocation of the central library from the Iliac Centre to Parnell Square. "We're very keen on the Parnell Square project," CEO of DCC Owen Keegan said. "The failure of O'Connell Street reflects the failure to develop any sort of a magnet to draw people to the northern end of the street. The library will be an enormous magnet" (Appendix 4) These plans are important to note when considering what could be done to support people who are begging and reduce the need for people to beg.

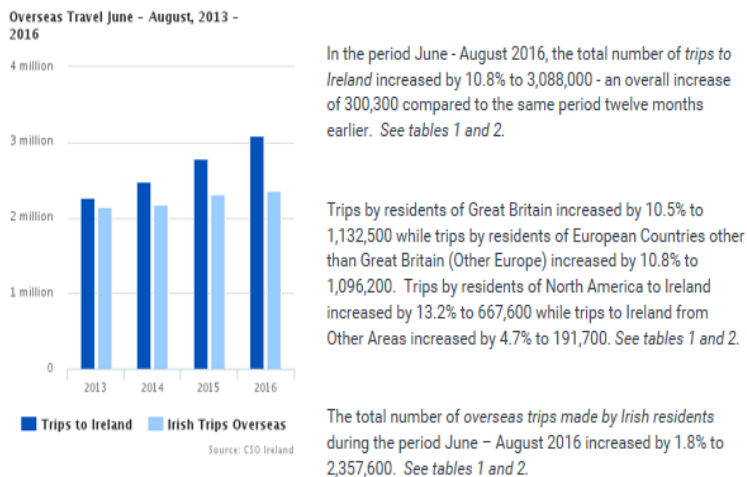
There is a difference in the activity of begging between day time and night time. These differences are not only in relation to how people beg, e.g. during the day more people are sitting down, they may have a notice, they may ask for money and overall it seems that day time begging is more passive. At night time begging is more active with those begging more frequently walking up to people, stopping people at junctions, tapping at pubs, restaurants, theatres etc.

The response of the public during the day and at night time is also different – during the day residents, workers, students, visitors and tourists are on the move, they are busy, going from A to B, going to work, to appointments, visiting, shopping, getting the bus, train, Luas, and though they are busy they are perhaps more in control of how they wish to respond to people begging. The situation changes at night; people want to relax after their day but it is at night time that begging can take on a different dimension, it can be more assertive, more persistent and at times aggressive. At night time, perhaps the person begging is also becoming more desperate. Whatever, these differences between day and night time begging have emerged clearly in the study and they are, we believe important to note. Study participants spoke about having to say sorry and/or give money 5, 10, 15 times when out for a drink or having to cross the road, or move out of the way at bus stops to avoid persistent and aggressive begging. Begging at theatres and cinemas is also a particular night time issue before performances, at intervals and at the end of performances.

The hassle that people experience of night time begging was mentioned across interviews and survey, this is when people are out relaxing for the evening and it seems that the frequency and persistence are the factors that create the hassle. Participants who mentioned this issue are dining or drinking al fresco. We were told that part of the reason for installing screens and partition like furniture by some establishments is to reduce the impact of begging on their business.

In terms of trade and tourism, the Central Statistics Office and Fáilte Ireland recently reported an upward trend in visitor numbers, c 3.5m visitors between Jan and May 2016 an increase of 14% on the same period in 2015. The hotel sector has also seen an increase in guest numbers and restaurants report increased footfall and dining.

#### Trips to Ireland increased by 10.8% for the period June - August 2016



#### Fáilte Ireland Tourism Brochure 2016

#### Hotels go from strength to strength

3.3 The hotel sector continues to thrive in 2016. Following an exceptional few years, a large proportion (84%) report that overall business is up compared to the same period in 2015

We were interested to learn from the business sector what feedback they elicit from their customers and whether safety, access, location or journey are included.

**Hotels;** Hotels elicit feedback from guests through a number of channels; follow up emails requesting completion of feedback form, completion of comment card in hotel room and/or through informal conversation with hotel staff. The feedback focus is on the hotel experience, i.e. check in, room facilities, comfort, staff attitude, value for money etc. We were interested if there was any focus on location, journey experience, ease of access etc. There is no focus on these aspects. We were told of an incident some time ago when a guest arriving at a hotel was accosted by someone begging as they stepped out of a taxi, which could have escalated but was diffused by staff.

**Restaurants;** Restaurants vary on prompting feedback from diners but when they do it is related to the dining experience and meal.

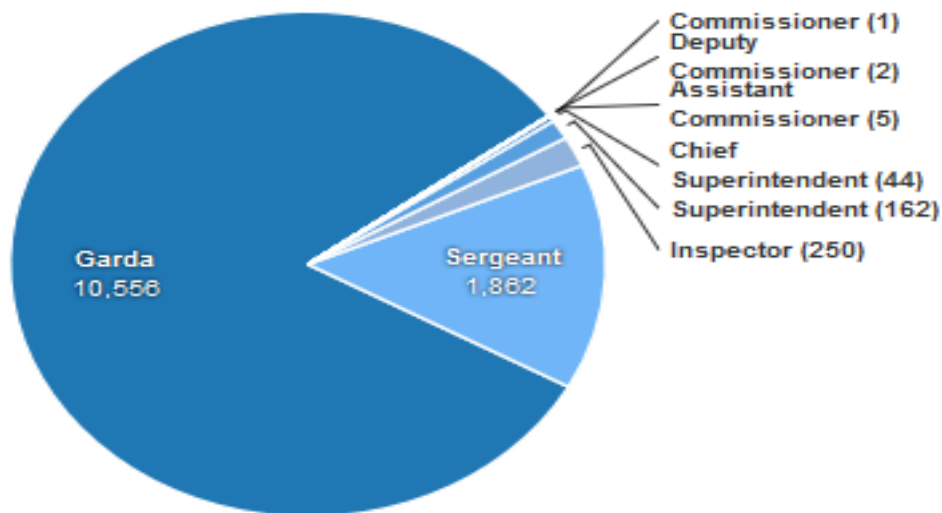
#### 4. What could be done to reduce begging?

In both survey and interview, there was a clear view that something needed to be done to reduce begging in the city centre that tackled the causes of begging. The issue of a police presence has also emerged as an important discussion point, the low visibility of Gardaí in the City Centre drew comparisons with other cities in Europe where there is a high police visibility. The cities were known to participants because they either lived there or had visited them.

The reduction in the numbers of Gardaí was a recurring topic in the interviews. On a factual basis, numbers in the force have reduced from a high of over 14,500 to just over 12,800. This has led to a reduced presence of Gardaí on the street which impacts on public reassurance, prevention of crime and capacity by the Gardaí to respond rapidly when required. The need to increase Garda numbers has been recognized by the Government and a second phase of Garda recruitment is underway. The most recent statistics on Garda numbers provided by the Department of Justice state that there are 12,882 members of the force.

### **Garda Numbers**

Breakdown of 12,882 members of An Garda Síochána  
Figures valid as on 31st October 2015.



Source: [An Garda Síochána](#)

The positive impact of a visible police presence on the streets is well researched and is mentioned in the other jurisdictions we studied. The recent publication of An Garda Síochána - Modernisation & Renewal Programme 2016-2021 highlights the need to strengthen and resource Community Engagement and Public Safety and is underlined with plans for Community Policing Units.

A review of Police per capita in other jurisdictions illustrates how Ireland compares to other countries. It is important to note that police officer includes criminal police, traffic police, border

police, gendarmerie, uniformed police, city guard and municipal police, while excluding civilian staff, tax police, military police, secret service police, special duty police reserves, cadets and court police. Variations in these definitions exist between various jurisdictions and the table below illustrates the wide differences between countries.

### Police per capita (1000) Police officers, 2002–12 - Source: Eurostat

	Number (1 000)											Index (2007 = 100)				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Belgium (*)	37.2	36.3	37.0	38.9	39.0	38.7	38.6	39.9	39.7	46.9	46.8	100	103	103	121	121
Bulgaria	.	.	.	.	.	.	33.8	30.8	29.4	29.4	28.2	.	.	.	.	.
Czech Republic	45.5	46.6	47.2	45.5	46.0	44.1	42.1	43.5	43.1	38.9	38.3	96	99	98	88	87
Denmark	10.2	10.4	10.5	10.7	10.8	10.8	10.7	10.9	11.1	10.9	10.8	99	100	102	100	99
Germany	247.2	245.4	246.8	248.2	250.3	250.4	247.6	245.8	243.6	243.2	244.0	99	98	97	97	97
Estonia (*)	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	4.5	4.5	4.4	99	98	140	138	136
Ireland	11.9	12.0	12.2	12.3	13.0	13.8	14.4	14.5	14.4	13.9	13.4	105	106	105	101	98
Greece	51.6	52.1	50.2	49.7	48.5	51.2	50.8	56.3	59.5	55.2	54.7	99	110	116	108	107
Spain	190.1	195.0	198.1	202.5	209.2	214.9	224.1	231.8	241.3	247.5	249.9	104	108	112	115	116
France	235.1	233.3	235.8	235.0	242.0	238.5	228.4	243.9	211.3	203.1	204.0	96	102	89	85	86
Croatia	19.5	19.6	19.6	19.9	19.8	20.4	19.8	20.2	20.8	21.1	21.3	97	99	102	103	104
Italy	272.3	249.7	250.2	249.3	246.8	247.5	245.2	293.6	276.3	278.5	276.8	99	119	112	113	112
Cyprus	4.5	4.8	4.9	5.0	5.1	5.1	5.3	5.4	5.3	5.3	5.3	103	104	104	103	102
Latvia	10.3	9.8	9.9	9.9	9.6	8.2	8.4	7.1	7.6	6.6	6.5	102	87	93	80	79
Lithuania	11.7	11.9	11.5	11.2	11.3	11.2	11.0	11.0	10.7	9.9	9.5	99	98	96	89	85
Luxembourg	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.7	102	106	109	112	114
Hungary (*)	29.0	29.5	29.5	28.6	28.6	26.3	9.0	9.2	8.7	34.5	36.5	34	35	33	131	139
Malta	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.9	1.9	97	96	99	99	98
Netherlands	36.8	36.9	36.0	35.3	35.3	35.4	35.5	36.5	37.3	38.3	39.7	100	103	105	108	112
Austria	27.8	26.6	27.1	27.1	26.6	26.6	26.6	26.6	27.5	27.6	27.8	100	100	103	104	104
Poland	99.5	99.9	100.8	100.7	99.1	98.3	100.6	99.0	97.5	97.5	96.3	102	101	99	99	98
Portugal	47.9	47.3	47.6	46.9	47.6	47.3	47.5	49.2	46.6	47.1	46.1	101	104	99	100	97
Romania	45.2	45.7	45.8	46.9	50.3	50.3	50.3	51.1	52.1	49.6	53.1	100	101	103	98	105
Slovenia	7.4	7.5	7.6	7.9	7.9	8.0	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.4	98	98	98	96	92
Slovakia (*)	14.0	13.7	14.1	22.5	22.7	22.5	22.5	24.3	24.1	23.6	24.2	100	108	107	105	108
Finland	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.0	100	102	100	100	99
Sweden	16.1	16.3	16.9	17.1	17.4	17.9	18.3	19.1	20.3	20.4	19.9	103	107	114	114	111
United Kingdom:																
England and Wales	129.6	133.4	139.2	141.2	141.4	140.5	140.2	142.2	142.1	137.5	132.2	100	101	101	98	94
Scotland (*)	15.3	15.5	16.0	16.2	16.2	16.2	17.0	17.4	17.3	17.4	17.5	105	107	106	107	108
Northern Ireland	9.1	9.0	8.9	8.6	8.4	7.4	7.4	7.3	7.2	.	.	100	98	97	.	.
Iceland	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	95	98	97	95	96
Liechtenstein	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	89	95	95	95	94
Norway (*)	8.2	8.1	8.2	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.6	7.7	7.8	7.9	101	102	103	104	106
Switzerland	15.1	15.2	15.5	16.4	16.6	16.2	16.3	17.1	17.2	17.3	17.6	101	105	106	107	109
Montenegro	.	.	.	.	.	.	5.5	5.0	4.9	4.2	.	.	.	.	.	.
FYR of Macedonia	7.7	8.4	9.2	9.8	9.8	9.6	9.9	12.2	11.3	11.1	11.4	103	128	118	116	119
Serbia	.	.	.	.	.	.	32.6	33.5	34.0	34.4	.	.	.	.	.	.
Turkey	370.1	318.2	327.4	330.3	325.7	329.5	341.8	351.3	362.7	407.4	412.6	104	107	110	124	125
Bosnia and Herzegovina	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	16.8	16.7	.	.	.	.	.
Kosovo	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	8.3	8.4	.	.	.	.	.

(\*) 2005: break in series.  
 (\*) 2010: break in series.  
 (\*) 2008 and 2011: break in series.  
 (\*) 2004: break in series.

The study has found a consistent view that begging is not really an issue which can be solved by policing. The approach Ireland has taken is reflected in other jurisdictions insofar as begging itself is not outlawed, but instead there is a focus on sanctioning begging in a particular manner or in particular locations. Speaking to people who have experienced begging, it is clear that it is symptomatic of broader issues in their lives, rather than being a simple wilful choice as to how to make money:

*“it may sound counterintuitive but being homeless costs money, it’s exhausting”*

*“begging and being outside most of the day, it’s soul destroying”*



*“we have no choice about anything, where we stay, what we eat, if you can make a few bob then you can maybe have a B&B for a night and something hot that you choose rather than being given stuff all the time, don’t get me wrong, it’s kind of people but I’m tired”*

*“I was turfed out of home at 15 and have been on the streets off and on since, I need money for somewhere to stay that is safe, those hostels are terrible, they are worse than being on the streets”*

*“I was desperate, I had no money and no way of getting any money, it was terrible but I got used to it, I had to do it”*

Problems like this do not lend themselves to simple solutions. Rather, they need sustained, intensive interventions that address the root causes, begging is not the problem, but rather it is a symptom.

In Dublin members of An Garda Síochána, the Health Service Executive, Dublin City Council and the Ana Liffey Drug Project work together to provide an Assertive Case Management Team (ACMT) - to help tackle issues among Dublin city centre’s homeless drug using population. The ACMT provide intensive case management support to a group of people identified as having addiction, mental illness, physical illness, homelessness and behavioural issues; typically polydrug users with a history of low level criminal behaviour and many are also known to beg. This group have been targeted for support because they are not engaging with, or they are excluded from, other services.

#### **4.1 CONCLUSION**

There was tremendous interest in this study and a sense that though begging is now very prevalent it is not an issue discussed or spoken about.

Begging is a complex issue, it is a global phenomenon and due to a range of factors outlined in this report the number of people begging in Dublin City Centre is perceived to be increasing. Begging *per se* is not illegal, it is not seen as a policing matter and should be tackled as a social issue. As begging has increased, the range of places where people beg has expanded and its visibility has intensified. While begging as an activity may have become “normalised” it is by no means perceived as being acceptable by respondents: *“no one should have to beg, we are a rich country, Dublin is our capital City, no one should have to beg”*. This was an unambiguous finding.

The impact on the person begging is physical, emotional and social, it is distressing and humiliating. Attention has also been drawn to the growing number of night time outreach services both formal and informal. There is a myriad of active citizens and neighbours who have established “pop up” services driven by a concern for those on the streets. The potential of these services as a critical front line is perhaps not being fully utilised and though there is, we understand, contact between these services it is sporadic and informal. The differences between begging during the day and

begging activities at night time have been drawn out and are important to note. The impact of begging on the public going about their daily business is concern, sadness, anger and frustration and, depending on the nature of the begging activity, it may also be fear and intimidation. It is understandable that some in the business sector raised their concern at how begging affects customers and trade, this did not however, detract from the high level of concern expressed at the struggles of those begging.

## 5 RECOMMENDATIONS

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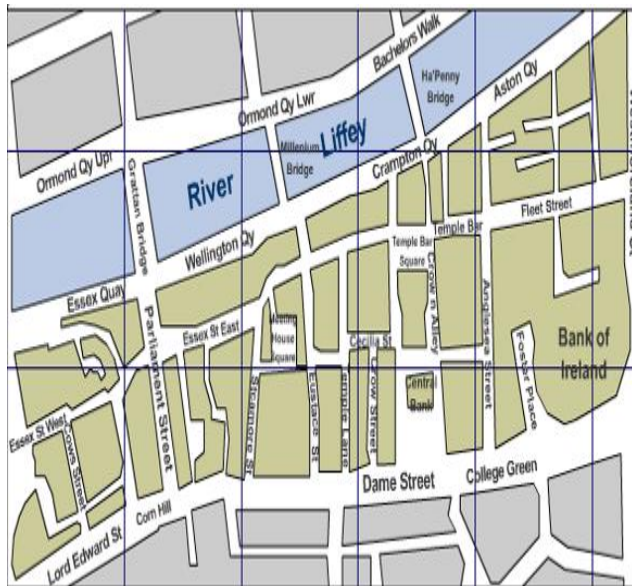
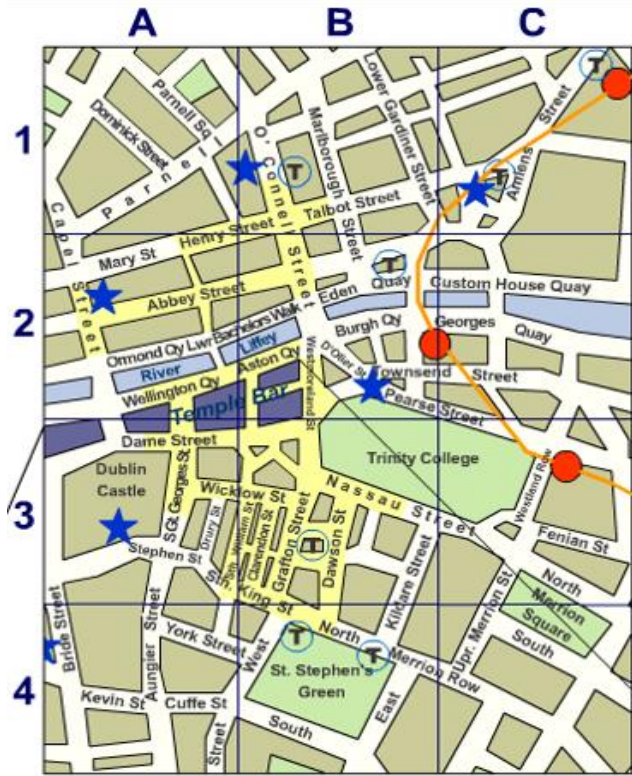
Begging cannot be solved entirely, it can however be reduced and the current situation in Dublin can be improved for the betterment of all. The following recommendations are aimed at reducing the need for people to beg in Dublin City Centre:

The following **recommendations** arise from the findings of this research study:

- Dublin City Council to engage with the Health Service Executive to organise a meeting with outreach services, both formal and informal, to pinpoint and map the outreach and services being provided including days and times, agree channels of contact and communication, identify gaps and saturation points and agree core information that all services provide
- Dublin City Council to engage with the Health Service Executive to ensure there are sufficient day services easily accessible to provide safe shelter, rapid assessment, food, laundry and support
- Dublin City Council to use all its communication channels to make the public aware of the day services and support that are available including opening times, facilities, access, costs and contact information – there is a significant lack of public information on services available
- Dublin City Council to further explore begging related issues that arise as part of a Night Time Economy
- Implement the recommendations of the recent independent evaluation of the Assertive Case Management pilot in Dublin City Centre (Appendix 14)
- As per Dublin City Councils Housing First policy - Street homeless people, who beg, with complex & multiple needs should be supported, as a matter of urgency, to access long term accommodation with appropriate support
- Implement the recommendations of the 'Better City for All' Report (Appendix 13)

## 6 APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 Dublin City Begging Study



**Dublin Town:** Dublin Town works to ensure that visitors and shoppers are provided with a positive impression of the city. A clean and pleasant environment has a subliminally positive effect on shoppers, while dirty, grimy streets are an active turn off for consumers and decrease footfall.

**The Temple Bar Company** is unique within Dublin as it provides the democratic voice for all business, cultural and voluntary sectors within Temple Bar. It is not just a business association.

Our mission is to protect, enhance and develop the area known as Temple Bar; to ensure that Temple Bar is kept clean, safe, attractive and accessible for all who live, work and visit the area; to promote the arts, tourism, trade and commerce and to maintain and promote Temple Bar as Ireland's leading entertainment, business and cultural quarter.

## Appendix 2 Interview Cohort N 45

Interview No	Sector
1	B
2	B
3	B
4	B
5	B
6	B
7	NGO
8	B
9	PS
10	PS
11	PS
12	NGO
13	PS
14	NGO
15	NGO
16	PS
17	B
18	NGO
19	NGO
20	PWEB
21	NGO
22	NGO
23	PWEB
24	B
25	PWEB
26	PWEB
27	PWEB
28	PWEB
29	NGO
30	NGO
31	PWEB
32	PWEB
33	PWEB
34	PWEB
35	B
36	NGO
37	B
38	R
39	R
40	R
41	NGO
42	PWEB
43	B
44	T
45	T

**T** – Tourist (2)  
**B**- Business (12)  
**NGO**-Non-Governmental Organisation (12)  
**PS**-Public Sector (5)  
**PWEB**-Person with Experience of Begging (11)  
**R**- Resident (3)  
 Total 45

## Appendix 3 Roma Community in Ireland

### Roma Community Ireland

The term “Roma” used at the Council of Europe refers to Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom), and covers the wide diversity of the groups concerned, including persons who identify themselves as “Gypsies”. It is estimated that about 5000 Roma are living in Ireland about 90% of whom have travelled from Romania whilst others have come from Bulgaria, Slovakia and Czech Republic. Collecting data on Roma populations is challenging, Roma ethnicity is not collected in immigration, employment or other Government statistics. Roma have a number of range of different statuses, depending on when they came and what was their country of origin. As EU citizens, they have the same rights as any other citizen from their country of origin legally resident in Ireland. Prior to 2012 however, Romanian and Bulgarian nationals required a work permit to gain employment but these conditions were removed ahead of the 2014 EU wide deadline.

NASC (The Irish Immigrant Support Centre) published in 2013 research” In from the Margins” ROMA IN IRELAND addressing the structural discrimination of the Roma Community in Ireland found structural discrimination faced by the Roma in accessing their basic rights to employment, education, social protection, housing, healthcare, as well as ethnic profiling and their treatment by the Gardaí. The report identified the often subtle and complex barriers to integration that Roma experience.

#### Appendix 4 Irish Times 27/9/2016

A five-year cultural strategy for Dublin is to be launched by the city council today. Based on work carried out for the unsuccessful bid to become European Capital of Culture, the new strategy aspires to a broader, more ambitious and all-encompassing vision of culture in the capital.

Dublin was knocked out before the final round of the competition, ultimately won by Galway, to be European Capital of Culture 2020. However, according to council chief executive Owen Keegan, the process ended up being valuable in its own right.

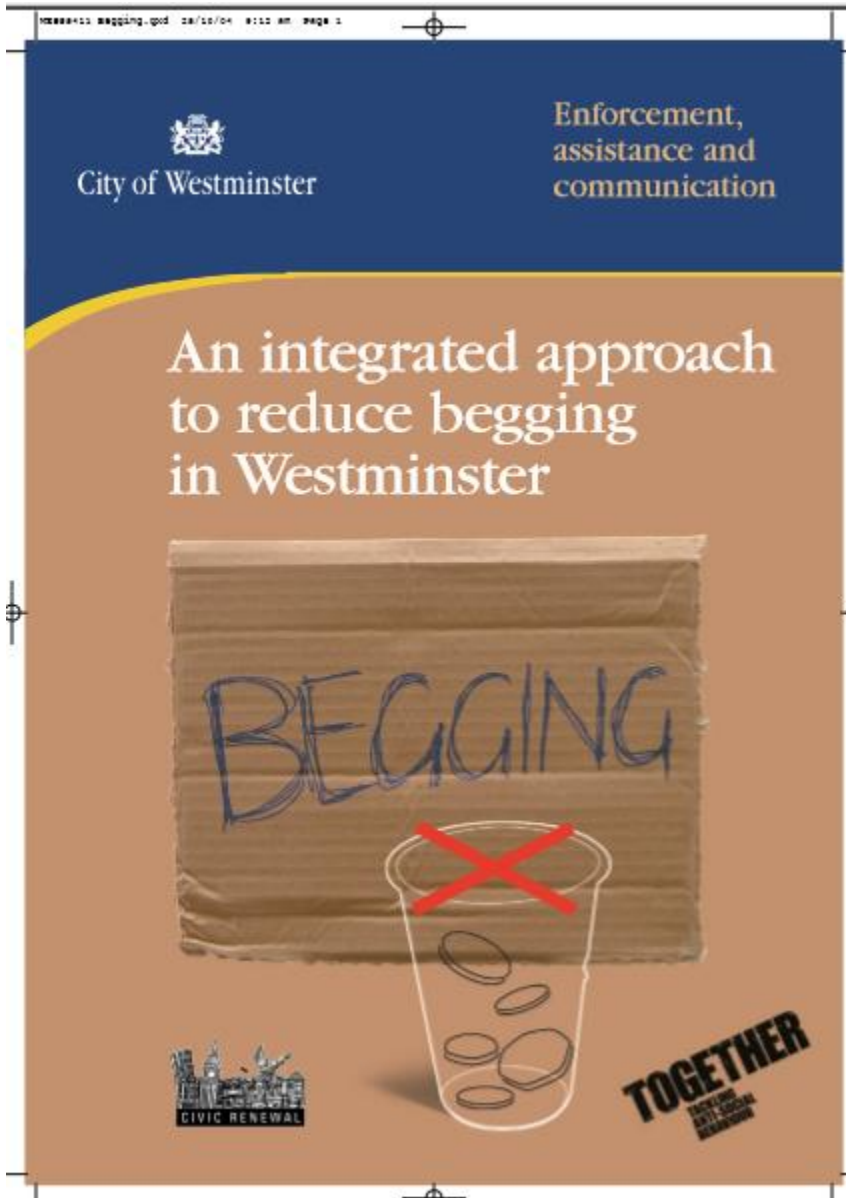
“We put a lot of work into that bid. I’d have to say I was a little bit skeptical at first that it was just another opportunity to blow a lot of money, but in fairness to the arts people, they made a very good case as to why it was worth doing,” he said.

“A lot of our public engagement is very sterile – that whole model of engagement needs to be refreshed – but this was an extraordinary, vibrant process and it certainly convinced me. We got a great response across all areas of the city, and businesses got involved. It demonstrated that there’s great energy around the idea of culture. We didn’t win the designation but we did feel we shouldn’t just go back to what we were doing.”

Up to now the council’s definition of culture has been very narrow. “It was a series of very worthy projects but the total effect was just the sum of those projects,” Mr. Keegan added. “We want to get beyond just doing worthy projects towards broader goals.”

What this means in practice is a number of concrete initiatives. The National Neighbourhood Project brings together public libraries and council agencies, in partnership with the national cultural institutions in the city, to work with artists in areas from Finglas and Artane to Ballyfermot and Drimnagh.

Appendix 5 Westminster Campaign Poster/Information



## Appendix 6 Thames Reach Begging Info

Killing with kindness Thames Reach October 2016 Newsletter



One of the killing with kindness begging posters that featured in a campaign in the City of London and Tower Hamlets.

**You could be killing with kindness if you give to people begging on the capital's streets.**

Thames Reach is urging well-meaning people that giving spare change to people who beg could help to buy the drugs that kill them.

Thames Reach's Killing with Kindness campaign aims to educate the public on the links between begging and heroin, crack cocaine and super-strength drinks in the UK – contrary to popular perception, most people who beg are not homeless, and are using the money they receive to fuel a drug or alcohol addiction.

Thames Reach first issued this message back in 2003 when it developed the '[moneyman' begging image](#), a photograph of a human body made up of the coins thrown to him by the unwitting public.

Since then the image has been used by local authorities across London and England including Westminster, Camden, Newcastle, Croydon, Maidstone and Oxford.

In 2013, Thames Reach joined forces with the City of London, Tower Hamlets and the charity Broadway to launch an advertising campaign in the two boroughs.

In 2014, the image was used in Ipswich in a campaign that launched in early August, in the City of London and Tower Hamlets in the autumn and most recently in a campaign running at Bethnal Green station in December 2014/January 2015.

### **The link between begging and drugs**

Overwhelming evidence shows that people who beg on the streets of London do so to buy hard drugs, particularly crack cocaine and heroin, and super-strength alcoholic beers and ciders. These highly addictive drugs cause an extreme deterioration in people's health and even death.

This evidence comes from a number of sources. Firstly, Thames Reach's outreach teams including its London Street Rescue service who are out and about on the streets of the capital working with London's homeless 365 days of the year. They estimate that 80 per cent of people begging do so to support a drug habit.

In the experience of frontline workers, people are more likely to accept help and to address their addictions when they are not receiving money from begging.

Secondly, when the Metropolitan Police did some drug testing of people arrested for begging, the figures indicated that between 70 and 80 per cent tested positive for Class A drugs.

Most recently, in a police crackdown in Birmingham on begging in autumn 2013, every single one of the 40 people arrested failed a drug test.



Thames Reach Chief Executive Jeremy Swain said: "The frontline homelessness charities are in no doubt that money contributed by caring members of the public to people begging is, invariably, spent on heroin and crack cocaine, causing ill health, misery and sometimes death.

"Please give us the opportunity of transforming lives by putting money into services instead of into the pockets of the dealers."

## **Homelessness and hostels**

The hostel accommodation set aside for London's homeless men and women does not require payment in order to 'book in'. Hostel rent is covered through Housing Benefit; which hostel workers can help the new resident to claim once they have moved into the hostel.

There are around 3,000 bed-spaces of hostel accommodation in London, which can be accessed via the street outreach teams that work in the central London boroughs. London Street Rescue, run by Thames Reach, is one of the main providers of outreach services across London. Our teams not only help people to find accommodation but also get them into drug and alcohol treatment and mental health programmes.

Outreach teams are active at night, and during the day, seven days a week. In the last decade, 20,000 people have been helped off the streets.

However, only 40 per cent of people arrested for begging in a Metropolitan Police operation claimed to be homeless. Most people begging have accommodation of sorts, either a hostel place or a flat or bed-sit.

[Read frequently asked questions about begging](#)

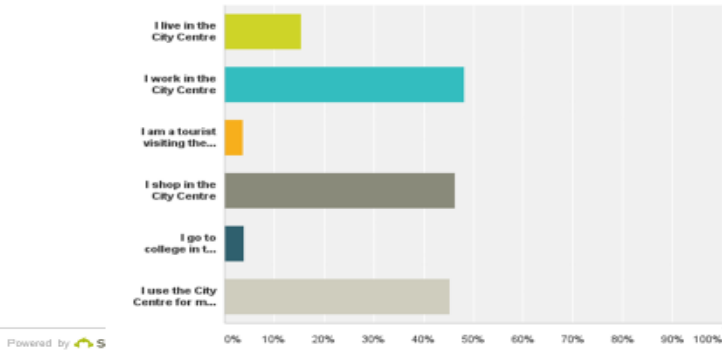
### **You can still help**

Rather than giving money to people on the streets, the Killing with Kindness campaign urges people to give their spare change to homelessness charities. All money donated to Thames Reach goes directly towards helping homeless and vulnerable people.

## Appendix 7 Survey Results 275 Responses

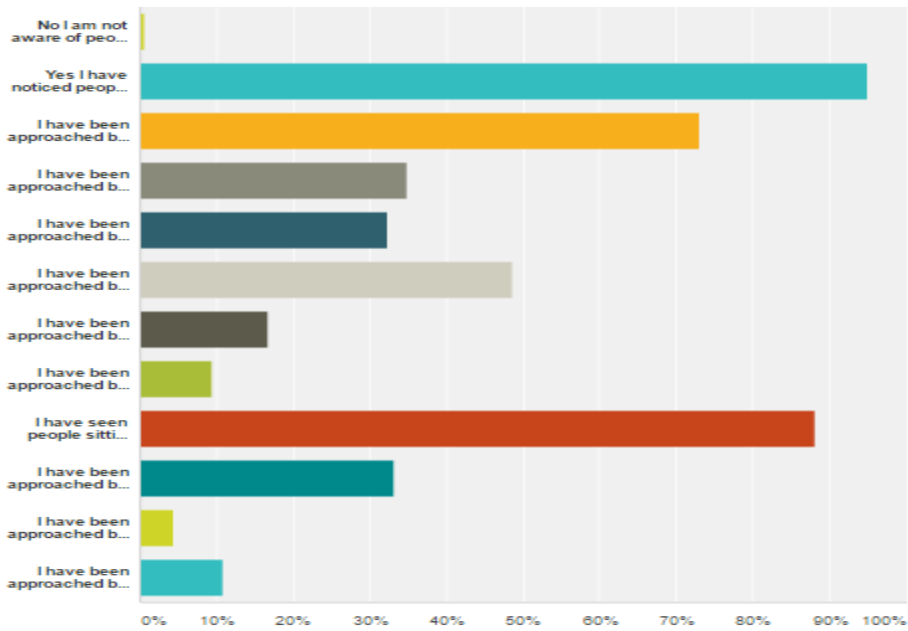
### Q1: How do you know Dublin City Centre? (please tick all that applies)

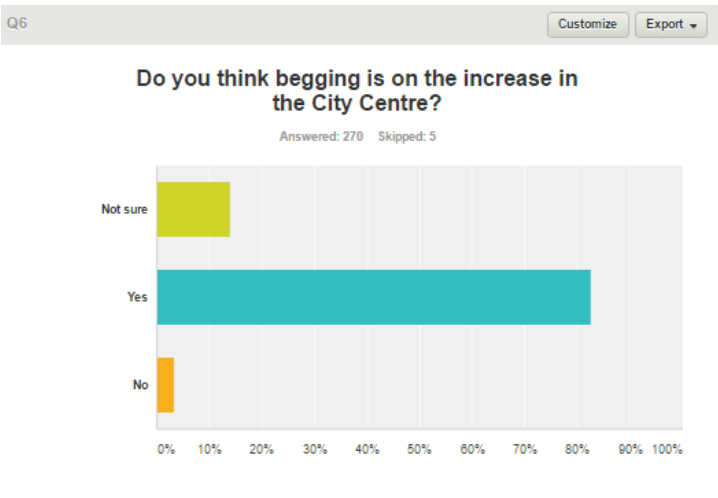
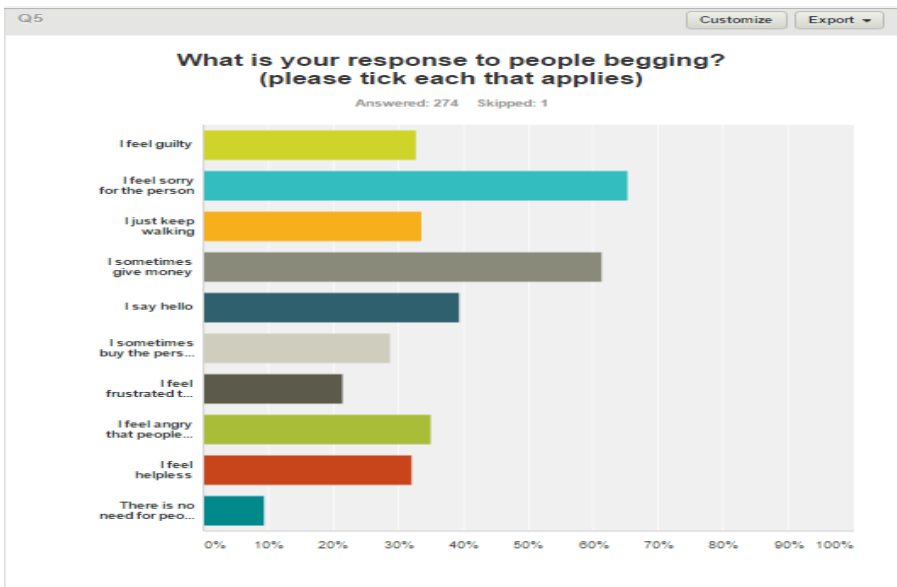
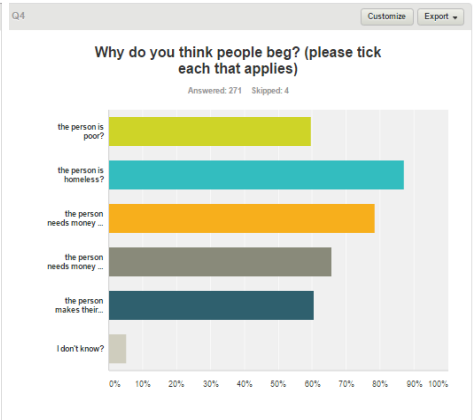
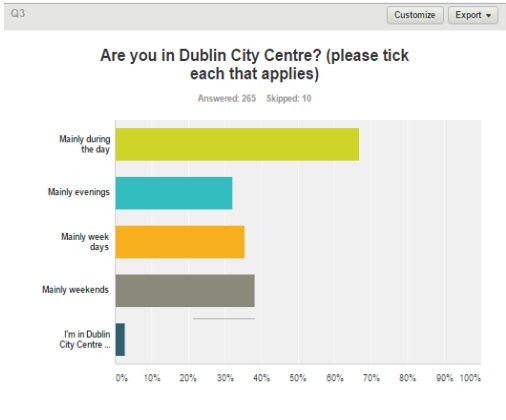
Answered: 272 Skipped: 3

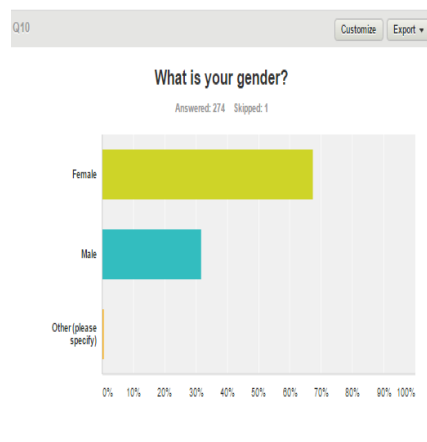
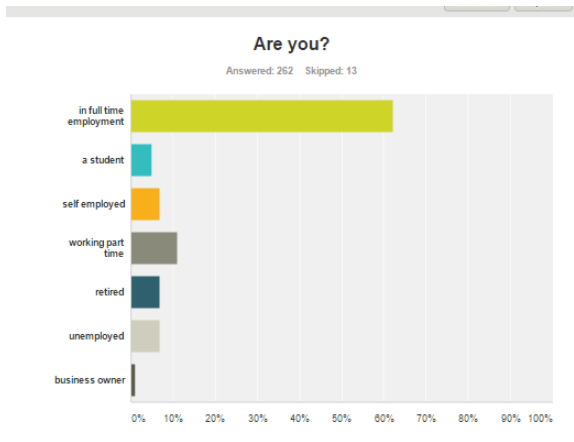
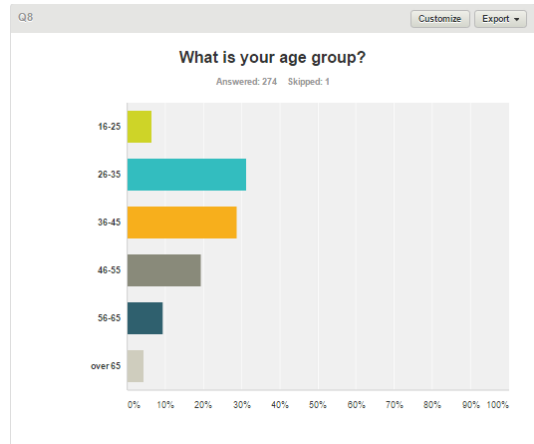
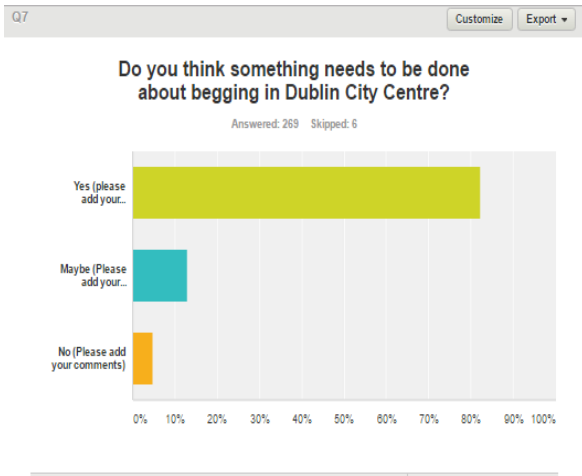


### Have you noticed people begging in Dublin City Centre (please tick each that applies)

Answered: 275 Skipped: 0







# Appendix 8 Survey Questions

**Snapshot survey on Dublin City Centre**

Thank you for taking this survey

1. Are you?

- a student?
- unemployed?
- running a business?
- working part time?
- self employed
- looking for work?
- retired?

Comment (please add)

2. How do you know Dublin City Centre?

- I live in the City Centre
- I work in the City Centre
- I am a tourist visiting the City Centre
- I am studying in Ireland
- I use the City Centre for my leisure activities

3. Have you noticed people begging in Dublin City Centre

- No I am not aware of people begging
- Yes I have noticed people begging
- I have been approached by someone begging as I walked round the City Centre
- I have been approached by someone begging when I was eating in a café/restaurant
- I have been approached by someone begging when I was having a drink in a pub
- I have been approached by someone begging when I was entering a shop/hotel
- I have seen people sitting on the pavements begging
- I have been approached in my car when I have been stationary
- I have been approached on my bike when I have been stationary

Other (please specify)

4. Are you in Dublin City Centre?

- Mainly during the day
- Mainly evenings
- Mainly week days
- Mainly weekends
- I'm in Dublin City Centre as a tourist

Other (please specify)

5. Why do you think people beg?

- the person is poor?
- the person is homeless?
- the person needs money for drugs?
- the person needs money for food?
- the person makes their living by begging?
- I don't know?

Other (please specify)

6. What is your response to people begging?

- I feel guilty
- I feel sorry for the person
- I just keep walking
- I sometimes give money
- I say hello
- I sometimes buy the person a coffee or tea
- I feel frustrated that people are begging
- I feel angry that people have to beg
- I feel helpless
- There is no need for people to beg

Other (please specify)

7. Do you think begging is on the increase in the City Centre?

Comment (please specify)

8. Do you think something needs to be done about begging in Dublin City Centre?

Other (please specify)

9. What is your age group?

10. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other (please specify)

## **Appendix 9 Information for Services**

Study of Begging in Dublin City Centre 2016 - Information for Services

This study is a snapshot of Begging in Dublin City Centre. It has been commissioned by Dublin City Council and is being conducted by Súil Eile Consultancy. The Ana Liffey Drug Project are providing oversight.

In conducting the study, The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity is drawn upon to inform the methodology.

### **Working Principles**

The following are the principles that underline the study.

- Participants are treated equally and with respect
- Participants safety and well- being is safeguarded at all times
- Duty of Care
- Informed consent
- Privacy
- Confidentiality
- Honesty at all stages
- Reliability in carrying out the study
- Open and accessible approach to the study

### **Compliance with Data Protection Legislation, Data Collection, Storage, Retention and Disposal Súil Eile will:**

Obtain and process personal data fairly

Keep it only for the purposes of the study

Process it only in ways compatible with the purposes for which it was initially volunteered

Keep it safe and secure

Keep it accurate and up to date

Ensure it is adequate, relevant and not excessive

Retain it no longer than is necessary for the study

### **Security of Data**

Manual data is kept locked and secure

Computer data is kept secure and password protected, it is backed up and is restricted to one computer and no mobile devices

## **Appendix 9 (Information for services continued)**

### **Confidentiality**

All information provided will be treated confidentially and will not be attributed individually. The only limit to confidentiality is where there is a strong belief that the participant or a third party is in immediate danger of serious harm.

### **Conduct of interviews with Participants**

At the outset of meetings/interviews with participants, information on the study is provided in written format and verbally, the participant is asked if they understand the purpose of the study and interview, information on confidentiality is provided and anonymity of participants is explained and assured. The participant is asked if they have any questions. Notes are taken during the interview and this is explained to the participant at the outset. Tape recorders are not used in the interviews. At the end of the interview, the participant is asked if they have anything else to add, any comments to make, how they found the process and if they have any questions. Participants are thanked and contact details for Súil Eile are provided for any follow up.

### **Participants from vulnerable groups and/or those who are involved or have been involved in begging**

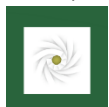
In the case of interviews with participants from vulnerable groups and/or those who are or have been involved in begging, information on the study is provided in written format and verbally, the participant is asked if they understand the purpose of the study, confirmation is elicited that the participant is involved on a voluntary basis, information on confidentiality is provided and anonymity of participants is explained and assured. A consent form is provided to participants, the consent information is read over and the participant is asked to sign the form.

It is explained to the participant that the interviewer will be making notes during the interview and that these are confidential. Tape recorders are not used in these interviews. At the end of the interview, the participant is asked if they have any other comments to make that were not covered in the interview, they are asked how they found the process and if they have any questions. Participants are thanked and contact details for Súil Eile are provided for any follow up.

If English is not the first language of participant's arrangements can be made for an interpreter and/or cultural mediator to be present.

### **Duty of Care**

Súil Eile is aware of and attuned to the duty of care for participants, particularly those participants who may be connected to vulnerable groups and sensitivity to age, gender, culture, religion, ethnic origin, social class, sexual orientation and disability issues is afforded. Follow up with participants is offered by Súil Eile.



[www.suileileconsultancy.ie](http://www.suileileconsultancy.ie) ☎ 0861025335

## Appendix 10 Information for participants

### A Study of Begging in Dublin City Centre 2016

This study is to explore and carry out a snapshot of Begging in Dublin City Centre.

It has been commissioned by Dublin City Council and being carried out by Súil Eile Consultancy with oversight being provided by the Ana Liffey Project

It will assess, investigate, review, compare and analyse Begging in the City Centre through desktop research, interviews and consultations concluding with a report and recommendations to address the following:

*Why do people beg and who is involved in begging?*

*What is the impact of begging?*

*Is begging on the increase in Dublin?*

*What could be done to reduce the incidence of begging?*

We will be contacting and seeking the views of those who live, work and/or visit Dublin City Centre including individuals, organisations, services, agencies, businesses', as well as those who are or have been involved in begging in Dublin City Centre to listen and learn.

If you would like to give us your views, insights and experiences and/or want further information, please contact Alice on 0861025335 or [info.suileileconsultancy@gmail.com](mailto:info.suileileconsultancy@gmail.com)

All information provided will be treated confidentially and will not be attributed individually.

Interviews are relaxed and informal and are held in safe and private spaces. Notes are taken by the interviewer during the interview, tape recorders are not used.

Begging can be an emotive and sensitive issue. It can raise a range of feelings for those who are asking for goods and/or money and those who are being asked.

If you are being interviewed it may touch on things that are upsetting. At any time, the interview can be stopped and/or a break taken. Also, if you want to speak to someone about how you are feeling this can be arranged.

Thank you for your participation.



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## **Appendix 11 Information for People with Experience of Begging**

This study is to explore and carry out a snapshot of Begging in Dublin City Centre.

It has been commissioned by Dublin City Council and is being done by Súil Eile

It will assess, investigate, review and analyse Begging in the City Centre through desktop research, interviews and consultations concluding with a report and recommendations to address the following:

*Why do people beg and who is involved in begging?*

*What is the impact of begging?*

*Is begging on the increase in Dublin?*

*What could be done to reduce the incidence of begging?*

In order to listen and learn, Súil Eile is seeking the views of those who live, work and/or visit Dublin City Centre including those who are or have been involved in begging.

All information provided will be treated confidentially unless there is a strong belief that you or a third party are in imminent danger of serious harm.

No information provided will be used in a way that identifies a person.

Interviews are relaxed and informal and are held in safe and private spaces. The interviewer will be making notes as the interview progresses and this information is solely for Súil Eile.

Tape recorders are not used during interviews.

Súil Eile will ensure that information provided by participants is kept in a safe place and will be disposed of securely when the study has been completed.

Begging is an emotive and sensitive issue. It can raise a range of feelings for those who are asking for goods and/or money and those who are being asked.

During the interview there may be issues touched upon which you may find upsetting. You can stop the interview at any time or take a break. Also, if you want to speak to someone about how you are feeling this can be arranged.

Súil Eile Consultancy is responsible for all the main work of the study. Súil Eile is working in partnership with the Ana Liffey Project who are providing oversight.



Súil Eile Consultancy [www.suileileconsultancy.ie](http://www.suileileconsultancy.ie) ☎ 0861025335

## Appendix 12 Banning Begging in the EU – FEANTSA February 2015

Country	Is begging banned at national level?	Is forced begging banned?	Is begging with children banned?	Is aggressive begging banned?	Are there measures at local level banning begging?	Have begging bans been successfully challenged?
Austria	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Belgium	No				Yes	
Czech Republic	No				Yes	
Denmark	No				At discretion of the police	
France	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Finland	No					
Germany	No		Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Greece	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes	
Hungary	Yes				Yes	
Ireland	No				Yes	
Italy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
The Netherlands	No				Yes	
Poland	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	
Portugal	No	Yes			No	
Romania	Yes					
Spain	Yes		Yes		Yes	
Sweden	No					Successful policies – homeless coordinator
UK	No	Yes				Yes

## **Appendix 13**

**A Better City for All – A Partnership Approach to Address Public Substance Misuse & Perceived Anti-Social behaviour in Dublin City Centre** Report prepared by Johnny Connolly, Research officer, Health Research Board 2012

### **Treatment Services**

#### **Key Findings**

It is acknowledged that for a range of historical reasons there is a clustering of treatment services in the inner city. It is also acknowledged by all stakeholders that treatment services are a major part of the solution to the issues being addressed and that the problems would be worse in their absence. Drug-related antisocial behaviour can also undermine the provision of effective treatment. The following recommendations are aimed at minimising any negative impact of such clustering on the city centre while at the same time enhancing the quality of those services and ensuring that vital treatment and drug-related services continue to be made available to those who need them.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **Short term actions**

- All treatment and drug-related services should ensure the roll-out of 'good neighbour' protocol and involve service users in the development of best practice approaches in responding to anti-social behaviour.
- the fact that all main treatment centres close for lunch from 1pm-2pm contributes to the problems being addressed. Treatment and other service providers should review their opening and closing times to address this issue. This could be done through a review of service provision.
- Design and roll out a peer led campaign on safe disposal of drug paraphernalia to be delivered in each organisation simultaneously.
- Design and roll out a peer led campaign on overdose to be delivered in each organisation simultaneously.
- there should be improved coordination of the available outreach services to optimise service provision.

## Findings/ Recommendations (continued)

### Medium to long term actions

- there should be greater access to and prompt provision of treatment options nationally.
- People should be treated and provided with support services as close to their home as possible. the treatment provided should be of the level of complexity required to meet their needs. this should ensure that people are only using services that are essential and appropriate to meet their needs and that are local to their place of residence. this should involve a relocation of service provision for some people from the focus area where possible.
  
- While acknowledging the need for specialised treatment clinics, there needs to be an increase in the proportion of treatment taking place in a primary care setting, and a related reduction in the use of specialised treatment centres. treatment in primary care involves being prescribed substitution treatment, for example methadone, by a trained GP, and having medication dispensed at a community pharmacy. A greater emphasis on GP prescriptions should ease the pressure on centrally located (i.e. in the focus area) specialised centres. the implementation of the relevant recommendations of the report: the introduction of the opioid treatment protocol by Professor Michael Farrell and Professor Joe Barry will assist in this respect.
- The continued promotion of a model of individual supported care planning in treatment centres, seeking to increase stabilisation and promote recovery & progression on to GPs and community pharmacies.
- There is a need to engage more GPs, moving from different levels (1 to 2) of service. The implementation of the relevant recommendations of the report on the opioid treatment Protocol by Professor Michael Farrell and Professor Joe Barry will assist in this respect.
- There is a need to make community-based residential crisis stabilisation/detoxification unit(s) available. these should target people with problematic poly-substance use (including alcohol) and multiple needs i.e. public injectors, people with mental health issues and people who are homeless.
- There should be an extension of the current pilot of regional Pharmacy needle exchange across Dublin city and county.
- The provision of psycho-social support should be expanded for those attending level 1 and level 2 GP's.
- Evidence has shown that many attending drug-related services require mental health interventions & assessments to receive appropriate treatment. there needs to be better integration of drug treatment services and mental health services.
- There needs to be continuing development and implementation of inter-agency protocols towards more effective and responsive care and case management.

**A Better City for All – A Partnership Approach to Address Public Substance Misuse & Perceived Anti-Social behaviour in Dublin City Centre** Report prepared by Johnny Connolly, Research officer, Health Research Board 2012

**Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

- Alcohol and drug services tailored to the needs of people who are homeless across the spectrum of service provision should be expanded to include harm reduction, access to substitution treatment, detoxification, rehabilitation and aftercare. People who are homeless have been identified as specific ‘at risk group’ in the national Drugs strategy.
- There is a group of problematic intravenous drug users who may continue to engage in unsafe injecting practices, possibly in public places, which can contribute to anti-social behaviour, such as the unsafe disposal of needles and drug paraphernalia. international approaches to such problems include:
  - the establishment of medically supervised injecting centres
  - the prescribing of injectables including pharmaceutical opioids.Such approaches have proven controversial. research, informed debate and further public consideration is needed to establish how best to engage with this group of people in an Irish context. future approaches may or may not require legislative change.

**Rehabilitation**

**Key findings**

There needs to be a greater level of partnership between treatment and rehabilitation services to ensure a seamless package of required supports are made available to the individual.

**Recommendations**

**Short term**

- Rehabilitation-integration service or key workers should be linked in with all treatment centres in the area for developing an integrated, inter-agency care plan based on the needs of the service user on assessment.
- Rehabilitation work should begin immediately once a person presents for treatment. there should be a focus on integrated rehabilitation, not only for those who are detoxing, but also for those who are stabilising and receiving methadone substitution treatment. the redeployment and up-skilling of existing workers is required in state agencies to fulfil this role.

## **Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

### **Medium to long term**

- There is a need to develop links between treatment agencies and projects in the voluntary sector with a view to maximising the capacity of existing services. this should be included as part of a partnership approach.
- Links should be developed between the business community and treatment centres to encourage employment schemes for stabilised drug users and to encourage further links with existing services. business community support in the development of community employment schemes should be provided.

### **Homelessness**

#### **Key findings**

It is clear from the research findings and discussions of the SRG that homelessness is a factor that impacts on perceptions of anti-social behaviour. there is a concentration of hostels for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, and a clustering of homelessness services in or adjacent to the focus area. hostels are, at best, a short- term measure. hostels are not designed nor are they appropriate for people to live in the long-term. some hostels have problems with drug use and intimidation which can undermine treatment and rehabilitation efforts. the research findings indicate that some people in hostels must leave hostels (and B&B's) in the morning and are not permitted to return until the evening. treatment centres and other SRG stakeholders also report evidence of this from their clients. consequently, such people have little option but to spend their days on the streets. it is acknowledged at a national policy level that access to appropriate long term accommodation/housing is a major block in delaying the implementation of the national homeless strategy the Way home and Delivering the Pathway to home – the framework homeless Action Plan for Dublin. some of the issues which arose in the research would be addressed by the full implementation of these strategies.

### **Recommendations**

#### **Short term**

##### **Emergency provision and Day Time Services**

- Emergency accommodation should only ever be used in an 'emergency'. this is often not the case, due to a lack of suitable long-term housing options people often spend long periods in emergency accommodation. Private B&B's are a form of emergency provision which are often not fit for purpose and are without regulatory provision.

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**Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

- Street drinking is an issue which arose in this research. to discourage street-drinking, to reduce harm and to offer safer alternatives accommodation models should be provided where people who wish to consume alcohol can do so in their accommodation under regulated conditions. existing services should be reconfigured to ensure that more ‘Wet services’ are made available where required, i.e. hostel/ temporary accommodation or supported housing that allows the consumption of alcohol on the premises.
- Models of emergency provision should be further developed where residents have 24/7 access. this is working effectively in some services.
- In addition, effective day time services should be provided to offer support and options for people during the day.
- The SRG has been invited to make a formal submission to the Dublin Joint homeless consultative forum to discuss actions required to mitigate and effectively respond to issues associated with problematic drug and alcohol use and abuse.

**Medium term**

**Health and Social Care Supports**

- Given the high levels of health care needs amongst people who are homeless, on site specialist services are required to work in conjunction with, and complement, mainstream services. examples of such interventions are the SafetyNet Primary care network for homeless health services (SafetyNet) and the mobile health bus; run in partnership with Dublin Simon community, Chrysalis, SafetyNet and the Order of Malta which aims to bring primary health care and harm reduction services to people who are homeless and to female street-workers.
- Once people are in secure long-term accommodation they should be supported to access mainstream Primary care teams and social care networks. critical to the efficiency of such an approach is the roll-out of the community mental health teams.

## **Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

### **Long term**

#### **Access to Appropriate Long Term Accommodation/Housing**

- There is a need to end the clustering of homelessness services in the city centre. People should be accommodated in the most appropriate setting for their circumstances.
- It is critical that a range of appropriate accommodation types are sourced for people who are homeless and that the following provision options are pursued:
  - housing provision
  - privately rented options
  - properties under the influence of NAMA
- In addition, there is potential for appropriate accommodation to be sourced in partnership with homeless services and the business community.
- Support is needed to help people to move into independent accommodation, appropriate housing support and health and social care support based on need must be provided. In addition, high support housing for those who need more intensive, on-going support must also be an option.
- Homeless policy in Ireland is working towards a 'housing led' approach which aims to provide housing, with support as required, as the initial step in addressing all forms of homelessness. This must be pursued as a matter of urgency.

#### **Alcohol Supply In the Focus Area**

##### **Key findings**

Alcohol was identified in the research as a key contributor to public order & property crime within the focus area. There are two dimensions to the alcohol problem. Firstly, the contribution of alcohol misuse in the night-time economy to public disorder. Secondly, problems associated with the impact on public perception of visible street-drinking by a small number of individuals during day-time hours. There is a clustering of off-licenses and mixed products retail outlets in the area. The Dublin Development Plan 2011-2017 has identified the city centre area as being sufficiently supplied with off-licence units. All that is necessary in the case of the District court ruling is for the superintendent from the relevant Garda station to give evidence in objection or for a resident in the local area to give evidence in objection. Objections can also be made to the planning authority for a change of use of a premise to an off-licence.



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**Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

**Short to medium term**

- The SRG endorses the recommendations of the steering group on the national substance misuse strategy in relation to the supply of alcohol and the findings of the Oireachtas committee on the health report on Alcohol published in Jan 2012.
- In accordance with the Dublin Development Plan, no new planning permissions should be given for off-sales in the focus area.
- The relevant Garda Siochána superintendent should consider the Dublin Development Plan 2011-2017 when considering applications for any further off-licence units in their respective area of responsibility.
- To ensure that District court objections to the provision of off licences in a certain area can also be made by local businesses, not just by residents. Local community and city wide Policing forums should also have a role in this area.
- Given the concentration of alcohol outlets in the area, the provisions of the intoxicating liquor act 2003 relating to the responsible sale of alcohol should be strictly enforced, as should all other relevant regulations including advertising & the promotion of alcohol sales.
- Reporting on licensing should become a part of the regular agenda of relevant Joint Policing committee, local & community policing forums.

**Policing Responses**

**Key findings**

It is acknowledged that this is primarily a public health issue, not a policing or criminal justice one. covert and overt policing operations were deemed effective but resulted in displacement within and outside of the research area. Qualitative narratives described satisfaction with policing efforts but highlighted the need for increased vigilance, along with service level policing in deterring congregating, loitering and drug activity.

## **Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

### **Short to medium term**

- there is a need to build on the positive links that already exist between An Garda Síochána and treatment services through integrated structures. However, there needs to be a further structured engagement at strategic and operational level between local Gardaí and the main treatment and rehabilitation centres. this should happen with a view to providing appropriate behavioural management and enhanced public safety in the vicinity of treatment centres.
- Policing responses such as operation stilts (involving surveillance, stop-and-search and regular street patrols) have had a positive and lasting effect in certain locations in the research area, by reducing congregations of large groups of people who can be perceived as engaging in anti-social behaviour. these initiatives should be continued, and extended as a short and medium-term strategy. their overall impact should be monitored and regularly reviewed.
- Gardaí should continue to maintain a visible presence in the areas prone to anti-social behaviour as this serves to deter disorder and reassure members of the public who reside in, visit or frequent the areas to work.
- Integrated policing approaches incorporating business, community and other statutory agencies involving ‘Problem orientated Policing’ solutions should be maintained and enhanced further to build on current and previous positive outcomes.
- Police Partnerships with individual stakeholders or stakeholder groups should be maintained and further enhanced to improve positive intervention initiatives such as the recent ‘Arrest referral Pilot’ between the Gardaí and the Ana Liffey Drug Project and the weekly reports and joint planning between Dublin city BID and the Gardaí in the target area.
- As part of the roll-out of the ‘crime stoppers Dial to stop Drug Dealing’ free phone, a high visibility promotion campaign including retail outlets as well as pubs/clubs & hotels should be undertaken in the city centre area.

### **Planning and Urban Design**

#### **Key findings**

The built environment including transport infrastructure can have a negative impact on people’s enjoyment of public space.

## **Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

### **Short term**

- Explore the potential use of audio technology, complimenting CCTV with a Public-Address function.
- Enhanced public lighting is required to increase public perceptions of safety locations & in general street planning to predict potential use of public spaces.
- Laneways prone to anti-social behaviour should have double yellow lines and have bins removed. this can also reduce unsafe drug-related behaviour.

### medium term

- there is a need for integrated urban, shop and transport planning including the expansion of the use of CCTV monitoring and policing systems to enhance public safety.
- further development, planning and design of future Luas line stops should take place in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders so as to minimise the development of hot-spots for anti-social behaviour
- in design planning, there is a need to avoid the development of concealed areas conducive to antisocial behaviour.
- there is a need to provide incentives to develop areas and locations prone to anti-social behaviour

### long term

- there is a clustering of Pre 1963 Declaration buildings that are capable of being used for hostel emergency accommodation in the city centre, and are being used due to existing demand<sup>3</sup>. this demand needs to be addressed appropriately as identified in the section under the heading “homelessness”. In the meantime it must be ensured that, Pre 63 buildings, that are being used for emergency accommodation or other multi occupied purposes are subject to all appropriate regulations, including health and safety and fire regulations.

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## **Findings/Recommendations (continued)**

### **Legislation and Regulation**

#### **Key findings**

Sometimes there is a perception that people are dealing illegal drugs when often they are selling legal, albeit possibly non-prescribed drugs, such as benzodiazepines. the street-sale of benzodiazepines and Z-hypnotics (Zimmovane) has been identified as a major issue.

#### **Recommendations**

##### **Medium to Long term**

- Gardaí need to be given powers to deal with street dealing of non-prescribed drugs so as to initiate prosecutions. the SRG supports the current proposals by Roisin Shorthall TD, Minister of State with special responsibility for the National Drugs strategy, to update the misuse of Drugs legislation in relation to benzodiazepines.
- Provisions should also be made for the scheduling of Z-hypnotics (Zimmovane)
- Seek Irish Medicines Board support to include Gardaí as authorising officers, which would enable them to enforce IMB regulations. this would allow action within existing legislation on tablet prosecutions.
- the impact of any proposed legislative change needs to be monitored. specific treatment issues for some individuals and the need for specific treatment supports might arise as a result of this legislation.

## **Appendix 14**

Ana Liffey Drug EVALUATION REPORT Emer Dolphin, April 2016

Evaluation Report. Assertive Case Management Team Pilot. Dublin: Health Service Executive.  
Dublin City Centre 2016 Assertive Case Management Team Pilot

### **Recommendations**

#### **Funding and management**

The ACMT pilot should continue to be funded for the next three years. There should be a mid-point review and a final evaluation towards the end of the three years, with recommendations for the future of the service on a permanent basis.

#### **Staffing**

An additional project worker, with the required skills and mindset, should be added to the outreach team within the next few months to increase the case load.

Funding should be sought from a variety of sources in addition to HSE, including local businesses, for additional project workers to be added to the ACMT team over the next three years to increase the case load up to at least 100 clients, provided this is paced and managed in a way that ensures the integrity of the project model and ethos.

#### **Operational changes**

Review the regularity and format of case management team meetings to maximise the time of the Garda and change as required.

Discuss with the Garda at the HLG level their increased involvement, particularly as the case load gets bigger.

Create an induction procedure for any new Garda involved in the project, including some training on addiction issues.

#### **Systemic issues**

The HLG to work together to discuss current and emerging systemic issues and work with government and senior statutory representatives to lobby for change.

Data tracking and analysis Allocate a small budget for specialised technical support to significantly improve data gathering, data analysis, data visualisation and to explore the potential of Salesforce. Data analysis should focus on mapping the impact of the project, particularly the progress - or reversal of progress - of clients in relation to key indicators, so that evidence based trends and learning can be extracted.

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