



COMHOM Living Labs: Building a digital solution to combat homelessness across Europe

GOVERNANCE MODEL



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Combating Homelessness: One paradox, Two figures

2

Homelessness Problematic: A Glimpse into 5 EU Countries

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What is the COMHOM Project?

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A Techno-Socio-Economic Initiative to Improve Homelessness Services

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The 5 Living Labs:
Finland, Greece,
Ireland, Portugal, and
Spain

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**We need YOU and
your expertise!**

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**Our Guiding
References**

1. Combating Homelessness: One paradox, Two figures

More
abandoned
houses

*than people experiencing
homelessness in Europe!*



38 Million

Vacant Houses
(FEANTSA, 2016)

VS.



1.29 Million

People experiencing Homelessness
(Albuquerque, 2024)



Despite the scale of homelessness, there is **no effective policy to address it**
– because **we lack accurate, real-time, and comparable data** (OECD, 2025)

Efforts misaligned with the real needs of people experiencing homelessness and those working to combat it

2. Homelessness Problematic: A Glimpse into 5 EU Countries

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Understanding the problem

1. WHAT WE FOUND IN PUBLIC AND OFFICIAL REPORTS

The availability of **homelessness data** varies significantly **both within countries and across the EU**, with differences in terminology, access, collection and analysis methods. These variations complicate cross-country comparisons and hinder effective policymaking (OECD, 2025).



2. HEARING FROM THOSE WORKING ON THE GROUND

To **characterize the homelessness context**, we held a **working session**:

- with representatives from **social care organizations, tech providers, academia**, and others
- from **5 EU countries** (Finland, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain)



2. Homelessness Problematic: A Glimpse into 5 EU Countries

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Main insights from the working session

The official **definition of homelessness** plus the related **data collection and analysis methods vary across countries** (OECD, 2025)

PROVIDED COUNTRY-LEVEL DATA

● Provided data ● Non-provided data

Gender distribution % men	●	●	●	●	●
Age breakdown	●	●	●	●	●
Nationality or origin	●	●	●	●	●
Education level	●	●	●	●	●
Family situation E.g., with children	●	●	●	●	●
Total people experiencing homelessness	●	●	●	●	●
	Greece *	Finland (Varke, 2024)	Ireland (DHLGH, 2025)	Portugal (ENIPSSA, 2023)	Spain (NIA, 2022)

*The information provided referred only to specific municipalities, not the entire country.

- **Data gaps make it hard to see the full picture**
In the five EU countries analyzed, the availability of homelessness-related data varies, making comparisons difficult.
- **Monitoring homelessness services is challenging**
Without real-time, accurate data – such as the total number of people experiencing homelessness – it's harder to assess needs and effectively plan support services.

There's a need for a **standardized EU-wide homelessness data monitoring & evaluation system**

3. What is the COMHOM Project?

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A 3-year European Social Fund (ESF) initiative launched in 2025 to help address homelessness in Europe

Goal

Transform homelessness response through data, digital tools, and a standardised Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework.

Approach

Implement co-creation through Living Labs, fostering collaboration to develop and test an AI-driven data platform with 25 EU social care organizations.

Outcomes

Strengthened social care service delivery, better resource allocation, and improved support for people experiencing homelessness.



CONSORTIUM PARTNERS



ASSOCIATED PARTNERS



4. A Techno-Socio-Economic Initiative to Improve Homelessness Services

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TECHNOLOGICAL

- **Design and develop a needs-driven digital solution**

Translate research and cross-sector expertise into actionable system requirements to create digital tools (platform, database and AI models) that fill data gaps, enhance monitoring, and support timely responses to homelessness.

SOCIOLOGICAL

- **Relevant stakeholder engagement**

Collaborate with stakeholders, such as former homeless people, social care workers and policymakers, through interviews or working sessions to capture lived experiences and real needs.



ECONOMICAL

- **Support sustainable investment and long-term impact**

Enable smarter, data-informed decisions that ensure efficient and equitable use of resources and long-term sustainability of homelessness services.



Integrated approach to homelessness monitoring & evaluation

5. COMHOM Living Labs: What's a Living Lab?



A COMHOM
Living Lab
is a “center
without walls”

Where **people** with lived experience of homelessness, social care providers, psychosocial supporters, policymakers, and researchers **work together to co-create, test, and refine solutions for monitoring and evaluating homelessness** across Europe.

COMHOM Living Labs turn collaboration into action

6. COMHOM Living Labs: What's a Living Lab Session?

Co-creating a digital solution through Living Lab sessions

In a Living Lab session, participants contribute with diverse perspectives, often stepping into different roles, to share insights, explore ideas, and **co-design a solution that reflects their real needs**. These sessions can range from interviews to collaborative working sessions.



7. COMHOM Living Labs: How Do We Work?

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1. CO-DEFINING THE HOMELESSNESS PROBLEM

Identify and filter real challenges around homelessness through community engagement and lived experience.

2. CO-DESIGNING A DIGITAL SOLUTION

Work with those affected by the identified problems to define solution features (F) and create a practical solution.

3. DEPLOYING THE DIGITAL SOLUTION

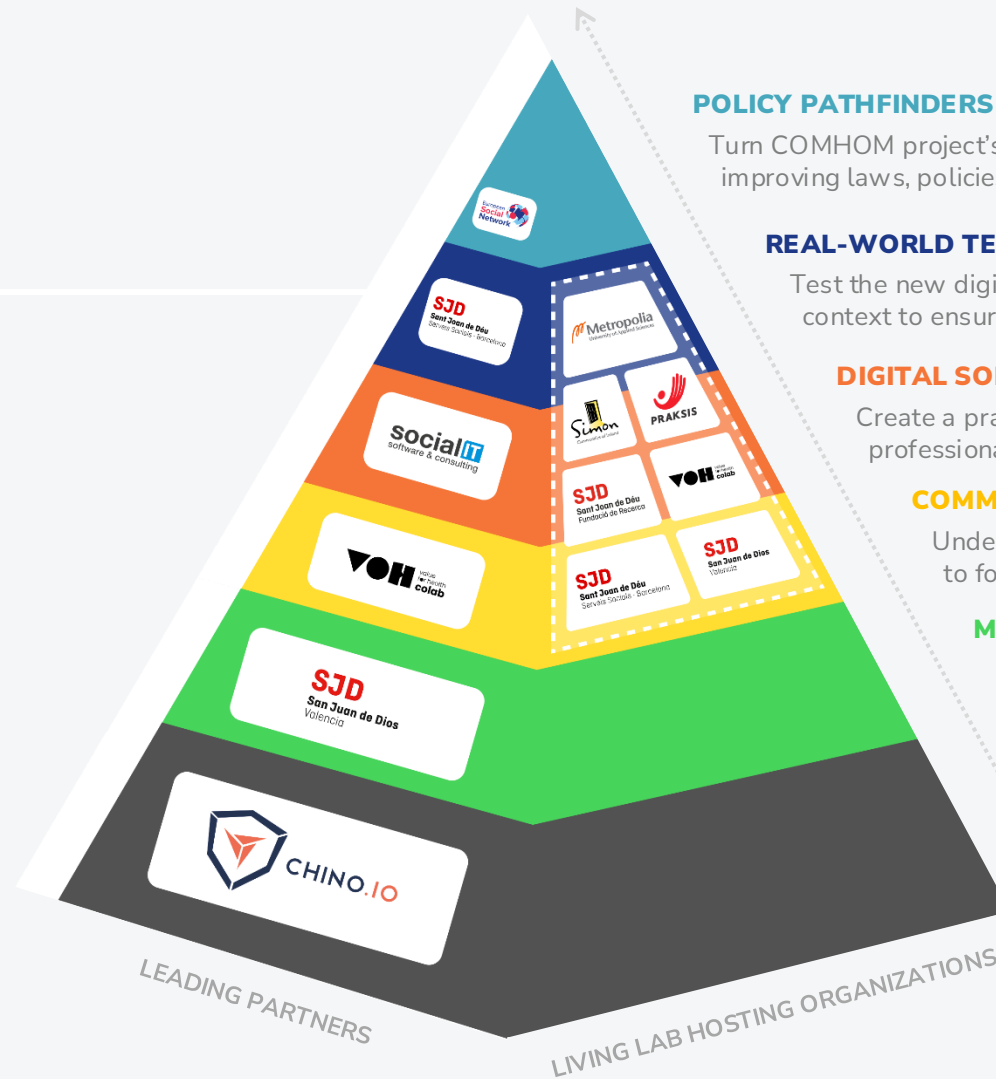
Test and refine the solution in real-world settings, including social care services.

8. COMHOM Living Labs: How Do We Govern Ourselves?



PROJECT COORDINATORS

Guide the project from start to finish, making sure everything stays on track



POLICY PATHFINDERS

Turn COMHOM project's findings into recommendations for improving laws, policies, and systems related to homelessness

REAL-WORLD TESTERS

Test the new digital tool with real users in a real-world context to ensure it's useful and easy to use

DIGITAL SOLUTION BUILDERS

Create a practical and useful digital tool to help social care professionals address homelessness effectively

COMMUNITY LISTENERS

Understand the real needs behind homelessness by talking to former homeless people and professionals

MONITORING AND EVALUATION ARCHITECTS

Develop a shared framework to understand, measure, and track progress in addressing homelessness

TRUST AND SAFETY GUARDIANS

Protect people's rights, privacy, and data by making sure the project follows ethical and legal rules

9. COMHOM Living Labs: Where Are We Across Europe?

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FINLAND	
GREECE	
IRELAND	
PORTUGAL	
SPAIN	  



10. COMHOM Living Labs: Finland

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Homelessness: Key Insights & Policy Response

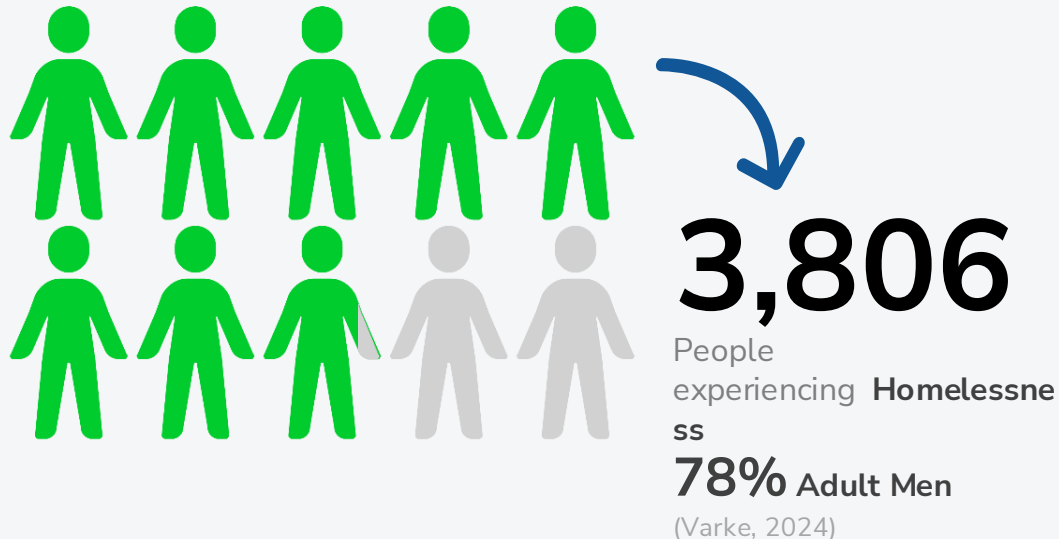


DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

Someone who do not have their own home (rental or owned residence) and that lives: outside, in stairways or temporary shelters; in dormitories or hostels; in welfare home-type housing units, rehabilitation units, hospitals or other institutions; or temporarily with friends or relatives due to lack of housing. Based on ETHOS Light classification (European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) (Varke, 2024)

Global
leader in
Housing First

IN THE YEAR OF 2024 THERE
WERE...



ROOT CAUSES

(Y-Foundation, 2024)

- Lack of small and affordable housing
- Poverty, Difficulty managing life, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Challenges
- Rising cost of living

POLITICAL AGENDA

- Program to Eliminate Long-Term Homelessness by 2027

10. COMHOM Living Labs: Finland

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Meet the Finnish COMHOM Living Lab

INSTITUTION: **Metropolia University of Applied Sciences (METRO)**

LOCATION: Helsinki, Finland

- METRO is a key player in Finland's **health and social care sector with extensive experience in capacity-building programs worldwide.**
- METRO plays a **crucial role in designing and implementing** the Living Lab's training and mentoring initiatives.

THE TEAM



WANT TO KNOW MORE? TALK TO



Eija Raatikainen, PhD
Project Manager



10. COMHOM Living Labs: Ireland

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Homelessness: Key Insights & Policy Response



DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

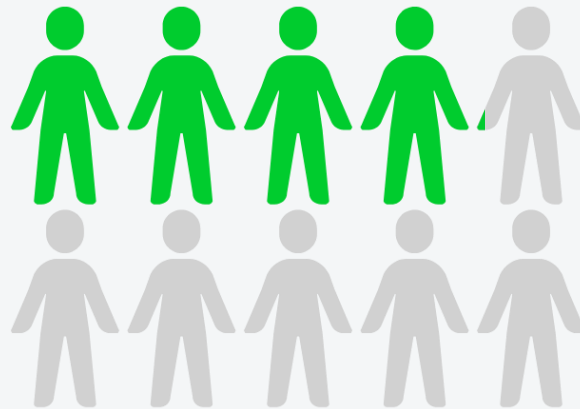
Someone who is sleeping rough, staying in emergency hostels or refuge, temporarily in a bed and breakfast or hotels, or squatting illegally, or temporarily living with friends/family due to lack of housing (Housing Act, 1988)

IN THE YEAR OF 2024 THERE WERE...

15,199

People in Emergency
Homeless Accommodation

(Department of Housing, Local
Government and Heritage, 2025)



42%

Adult men

ROOT CAUSES

- Lack of Social Housing
- Over-reliance on private rental market
- Discrimination
- Inadequate supports for persons leaving institutions (e.g., foster care, mental health facilities, prisons, direct provision, etc.)

(Simon Communities of Ireland, 2025)

POLITICAL AGENDA

- Housing for All
- Housing First
- Rent Regulation

10. COMHOM Living Labs: Ireland

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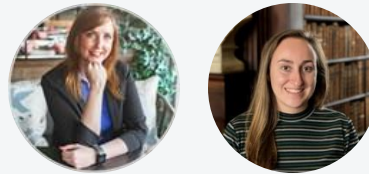
Meet the Irish COMHOM Living Lab

INSTITUTION: **Simon Communities of Ireland (SCI)**

LOCATION: Dublin, Ireland

- Ireland is moving towards a **Housing First approach**, focusing on permanent housing before other interventions.
- SCI are a network of independent communities across the country that respond to local needs and provide services to people experiencing, or at risk of experiencing, homelessness.
- With its **expertise in service provision and policy advocacy**, SCI offers valuable insights for developing the COMHOM's M&E framework and actionable recommendations.

THE TEAM



WANT TO KNOW MORE? TALK TO



Kenny Ogunjemilusi
Research Lead



10. COMHOM Living Labs: Greece

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Homelessness: Key Insights & Policy Response



DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

Classified into four categories: Rooflessness, Houselessness, Insecure Housing, and Inadequate Housing, according to ETHOS (European Typology on Homelessness and Housing Exclusion) (FEANTSA, 2017)

IN THE YEAR OF 2018 THERE WERE...

1,645

People experiencing
Homelessness
in 7 municipalities



87%
Adult men
living on the
streets

(Ministry of Labour, Social Insurance and Social Solidarity, 2018)

ROOT CAUSES

- Crises (refugee, economic, health, energy)
- Rising rent prices and financial difficulties
- Substance-abuse related health issues (mental health, chronic illnesses)

(Dimoulas et al., 2018)

POLITICAL AGENDA

- Hellenic Network for the Right to Housing
- Hellenic Anti-Poverty Network Research Projects
- **Housing Policy Office Programs**
Social housing, employment for the homeless, winter protection

Meet the Greek COMHOM Living Lab

INSTITUTION: PRAKSIS

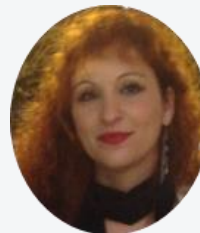
LOCATION: Athens, Greece

- Greece's homelessness strategies focus on **emergency shelters and social supporting services**, with limited Housing First initiatives.
- **PRAKSIS**, an independent civil society organization, **works to address the social and economic exclusion of vulnerable groups and defend their rights.**
- In COMHOM, PRAKSIS plays an essential role in **designing social experiments and adapting digital solutions** for the social care sector.

THE TEAM



WANT TO KNOW MORE? TALK TO



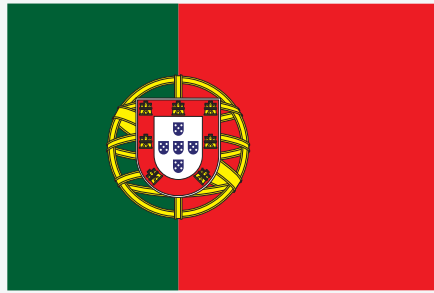
Maria Moudatsou
Project Manager



10. COMHOM Living Labs: Portugal

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Homelessness: Key Insights & Policy Response



DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

A person who is: i) roofless, living in a public space, accommodated in an emergency shelter or with whereabouts in a precarious location, or ii) without a house and living in temporary accommodation designated for this purpose (Resolução do Conselho de Ministros n.º 208/2024, 2024-12-30)

IN THE YEAR OF 2023 THERE WERE...

13,128

People experiencing
Homelessness
in the mainland



72%
Adult men

(ENIPSSA, 2023)

ROOT CAUSES

- Unemployment & job insecurity
- Addiction to alcohol & psychoactive substances
- Lack of family support

(ENIPSSA, 2023)

POLITICAL AGENDA

- **2025-2030 Strategy:** Focus on prevention and inclusion measures, and their impact evaluation.
- **Housing Plan 2024:** €2.22B to build 33,000 homes by 2030, plus low-rent housing subsidies.
- **Lisbon Project "É UMA CASA"**
Housing First initiative for homeless individuals with a drug addiction issue.

10. COMHOM Living Labs: Portugal

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Meet the Portuguese COMHOM Living Lab

INSTITUTION: Value for Health CoLAB (VOH)

LOCATION: Lisbon, Portugal

- VOH empowers patients, clinical teams, and organizations by **measuring health value to support better decision-making.**
- VOH also bridges research and practice, **ensuring knowledge transfer to society** through innovative, data-driven solutions
- With **expertise in innovation strategy, participatory frameworks, and co-creation methods**, VOH is the coordinator of the COMHOM Living Labs.

THE TEAM



WANT TO KNOW MORE? TALK TO



Francisco von Hafe, MSc
Researcher



10. COMHOM Living Labs: Spain

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Homelessness: Key Insights & Policy Response



DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

It refers to anyone who cannot access or maintain adequate housing, whether due to economic reasons or personal or social challenges that prevent them from leading an autonomous life (Ministry of Social Rights and Agenda 2030, 2023)

IN THE YEAR OF 2022 THERE WERE...

28,500

People experiencing
Homelessness



80%

Adult men

(National Institute of Statistics, 2022)

ROOT CAUSES

- Lack of affordable housing
- Unemployment
- Mental health / addiction issues
- Ethnicity-related barriers

(National Institute of Statistics, 2022)

POLITICAL AGENDA

- Approval of the Second National Strategy to Address Homelessness (2023-2030)
- **7 regions with Homelessness Strategies:** Cantabria, Catalonia, Galicia, Basque Country, Madrid, Castilla-La Mancha, and Andalusia
- The '**Housing First**' program in the Basque Country and Catalonia **prioritizes stable housing** as a foundation for social inclusion.

Meet the Spanish COMHOM Living Lab

INSTITUTION: **Sant Joan de Déu**

LOCATION: Spain

The Spanish Living Lab is hosted by three branches of the same institution:

- **Sant Joan de Déu Serveis Socials (Barcelona)** has supported homeless individuals for 45+ years, ensuring housing rights and social inclusion
- **Fundació de Recerca Sant Joan de Déu** advances healthcare through research, focusing on vulnerable groups.
- **Sant Joan de Déu València** helps prevent homelessness, supporting 100+ people daily through innovation and collaboration.

THE TEAM



WANT TO KNOW MORE? TALK TO



Carlota Saumell
Scientific Manager



Irene Oliva
Project Manager



Maite Arrondo
International Project Manager

SJD
Sant Joan de Déu
Serveis Socials - Barcelona

SJD
Sant Joan de Déu
Fundació de Recerca

SJD
Sant Joan de Déu
València

11. COMHOM Living Labs: We need YOU and your expertise!

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Your expertise can help drive change

WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR

Voices from **NGOs, advocacy groups, business, government, academia,** and any initiative focused on homelessness to share insights with us.

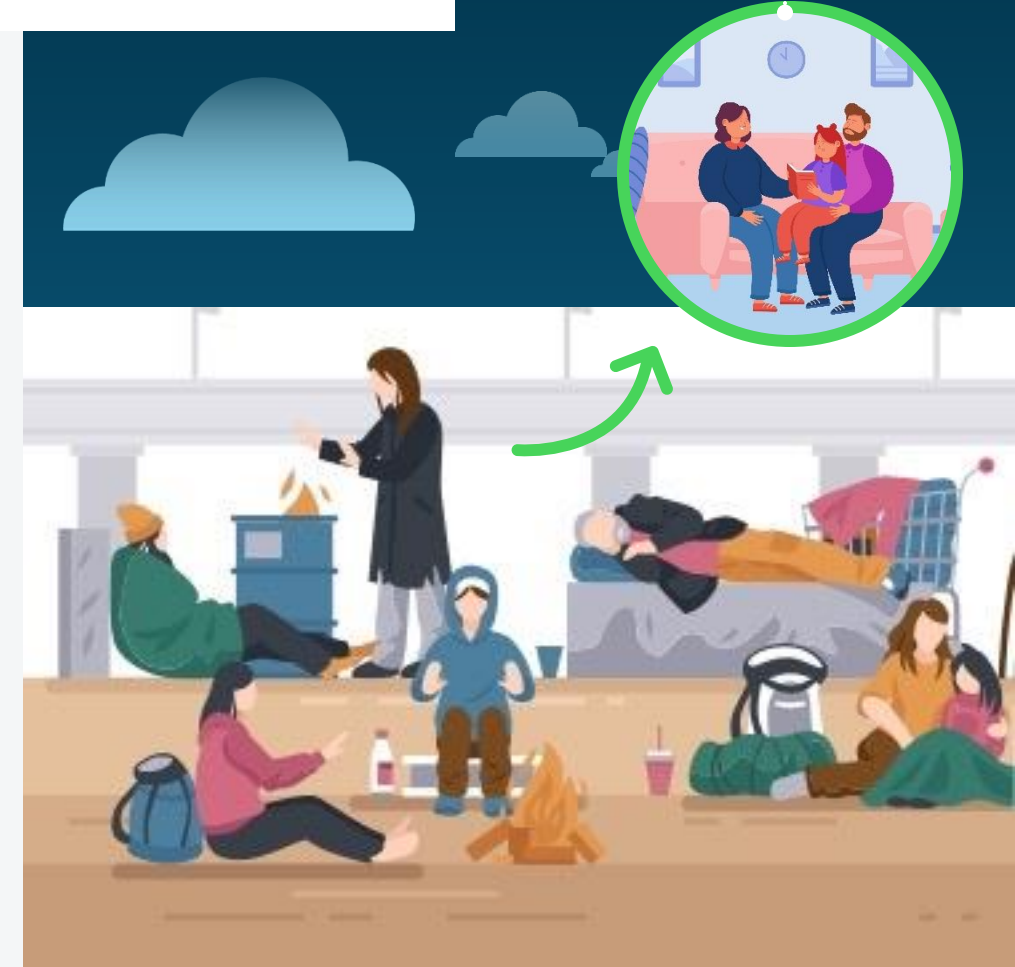
HOW YOU CAN HELP

Join a European Commission initiative

Collaborate in Living Labs to create innovative solutions for monitoring and addressing homelessness.

Expand our impact

Connect us with key stakeholders and help spread the word.



CONTACT TODAY!

HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Email us
info@vohcolab.org

→ We schedule a session with you

→ Contribute to real solutions

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