

# An exploration of migrant women's experiences of homelessness within the UK.

Jennifer Galbraith

PhD Candidate – University of Stirling

Email: [jennifer.galbraith@stir.ac.uk](mailto:jennifer.galbraith@stir.ac.uk)

European Economic Area, EEA  
(EU, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and  
Switzerland)



A8  
(Czech Republic, Estonia,  
Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania,  
Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia)

A2  
(Bulgaria and  
Romania)

# EEA Qualified Persons:

Jobseeker

Worker

Self-sufficient

Self-employed

Student

Family members of someone with right to reside

Worker



Paid less than £155 a week  
and/or cash in hand



Viewed as not doing genuine  
and effective work



Homelessness

Family breakdown

Proves  
extenuating  
circumstances

Keeps right to reside  
and welfare

Cannot prove/does not have  
extenuating circumstances

Lose right to reside  
and welfare

Homelessness

Loses status as  
qualified person



Becomes Jobseeker



Needs to pass Habitual Residency Test



Fail: Cannot access welfare



Pass: Cannot claim both Jobseekers  
Allowance and Housing Benefit



Homelessness



Homelessness

EEA female migrants once homeless....

RIGHT TO RESIDE

ENTITLED TO ASSISTANCE  
FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY

UNINTENTIONALITY  
HOMELESS, ENTITLED TO  
SETTLED  
ACCOMMODATION

INTENTIONALLY  
HOMELESS, ENTITLED TO  
TEMPORARY  
ACCOMMODATION

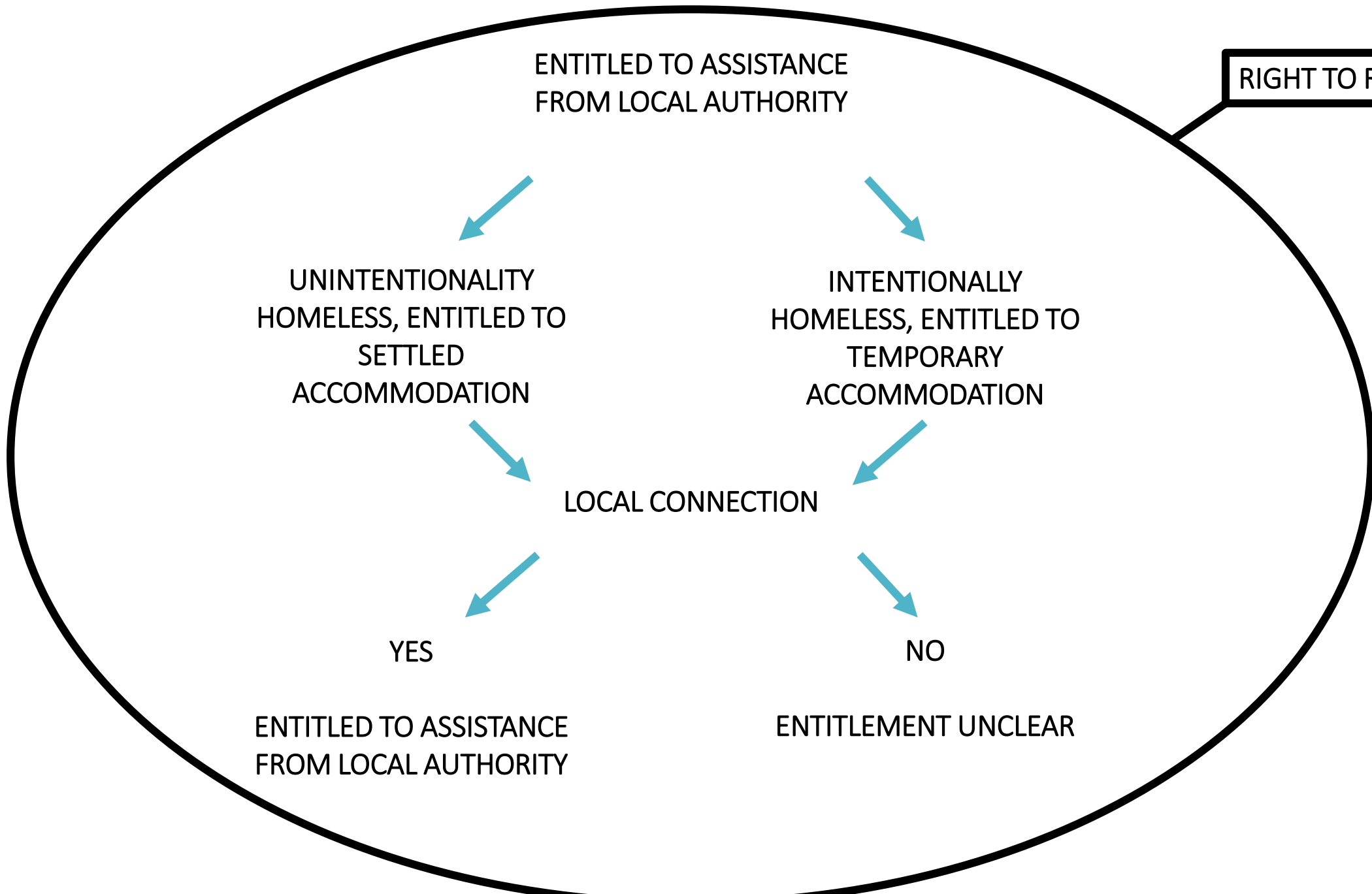
LOCAL CONNECTION

YES

NO

ENTITLED TO ASSISTANCE  
FROM LOCAL AUTHORITY

ENTITLEMENT UNCLEAR





# Issues arising from this:

- Many layers of policy and legislation to understand and navigate.
- Could be difficult for all EEA migrants to meet local connection criteria.
- Gendered barriers to assistance from local authority as EEA women may find it harder to prove local connection than males due to limited labour market participation or casual employment.

# EEA female migrants once homeless (contd):

Services not always equipped to deal with specific needs of women and migrants:

- Complex entitlement
- Male-centred
- Language barriers

Cultural factors:

E.g. the gender roles that are dominant in their country of origin can also result in lack of engagement in services of the host country.

# EEA female migrants once homeless (contd):

Migrant women may have fewer social networks to draw on for support both in country of immigration and in country of origin because:

They often come through employed partner and have limited labour market participation and so have less chances to build up social networks in host country.

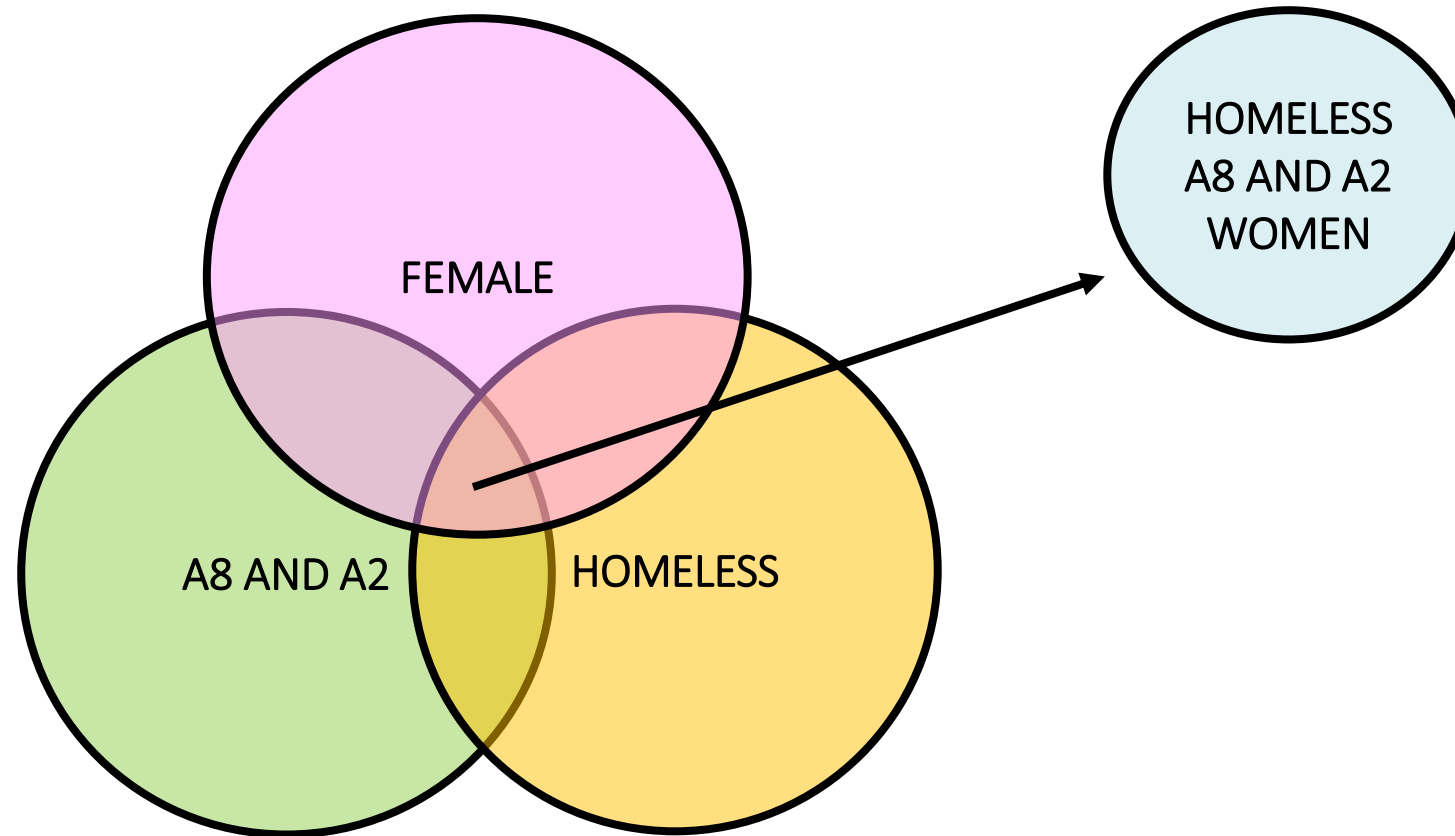
They do not want to 'acknowledge a failure' and might hide their circumstances from their family and friends in the host country and back home.

These factors also contribute to lack of engagement of homeless female migrants with outreach or other homeless people and so have limited knowledge of services and support.

# Summary of potential challenges to EEA homeless women:

- Difficulties satisfying statutory homelessness criteria.
- Male-orientated services.
- Language barriers
- Confusion over entitlement to welfare.
- Limited social networks and lack of support.

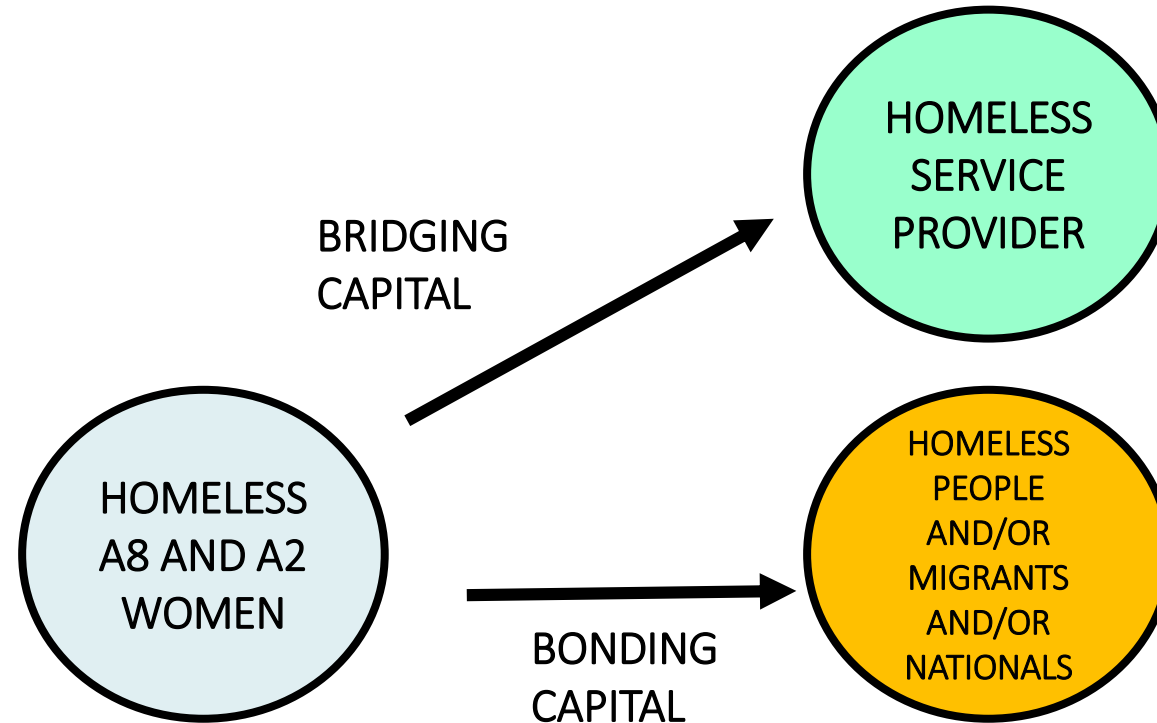
Intracategorical approach to capturing complexity of intersectionality:



A8: Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

A2: Bulgaria and Romania

# Bonding and Bridging Social Capital:



“Bonding social capital constitutes a kind of sociological superglue, whereas bridging social capital provides a sociological WD-40” (Putnam, 2000: 22)

- **Bonding social capital** - where there are strong bonds between people in a group.
- **Bridging social capital** - weaker bonds, but they are more cross-cutting across groups.

## **Main Question:**

What are A8 and A2 female migrants experiences of homelessness?

## ***Sub-Questions:***

What are the main pathways into homelessness for female migrants from A8 and A2 member states?

How much awareness do homeless A8 and A2 female migrants have of housing, support services and social care provision in the Scotland?

Does the social capital of homeless A8 and A2 female migrants impact their experiences of homelessness?

How well do homelessness services in Glasgow and Edinburgh respond to the care and support needs of women from new member states? Can services be improved to aid good practice in supporting pathways out of homelessness?

# Methodology

Locations – Edinburgh and Glasgow

Participant observation in homeless services.

Will aim to recruit female A8 and A2 homeless migrants through observation and available services, e.g. hostels and day centres.

Biographical semi-structured interviews to capture A8 and A2 women's lives pre-migration to present day.

Semi-structured interviews with those employed in frontline homelessness services at the end of the fieldwork (e.g. hostels, day centres) to capture experiences working with A8 and A2 women and to raise issues raised in biographical interviews.



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