

Reporting on homelessness 2026

The German Institute of Urban Affairs (difu) and Regio Kontext in Berlin are surveying people who are homeless or without housing on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Housing, Urban Development and Building. The results are intended to help improve the support system. Please support us by completing the questionnaire. Participation is voluntary. The survey takes about **15 - 20 minutes**. As a thank you, you will receive a Rossmann voucher worth 10 euros.

In the survey, we ask questions about your current living situation and your path to homelessness. Some questions may be distressing. If you feel uncomfortable, please seek support.

1. Have you stayed at the following places in one of the last seven nights?

Tick all that apply.

Outdoors, for example on the street, under a bridge, in a park or building entrance?

☐ Yes

☐ No

In substitute accommodation, for example in a garden shed, a barrack, a condemned building, a makeshift shelter, a cellar, an attic, a tent, a train, a motorhome or a (wrecked) car?

☐ Yes

☐ No

Are you staying with friends, colleagues, acquaintances or other family members, even though you don't have your own tenancy agreement there?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. Did you stay overnight here on the night of 31 January to 1 February (from Saturday to Sunday): in a hostel, homeless shelter, emergency shelter, overnight accommodation or any other public facility?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I don't know.

☐ I don't wish to answer.

3. Approximately how many times a week do you have contact (in person or by telephone) with organisations where you receive help?

e.g. day centres,
advice centres,
emergency
shelters, soup
kitchens, job
centres

Per week, I am in contact (in person / by phone) with the organisation that gave me the questionnaire approximately.....

times.

Per week, I am in contact (in person / by phone) with other organisations where I receive help approximately.....

times.

e.g. '07' or '01'

4. Personal details

First letter of your first name:

First letter of your surname:

On which day of the month were you born?

What year were you born?

We do not ask for your full name.
This way you remain anonymous
and nobody recognises you.

e.g. '01' or '31'

Year

5. What is your gender?

☐ Male

☐ Other/diverse

☐ Female

☐ I don't wish to answer.

6. Which nationality(ies) do you have?

Enter your nationality.

☐ German

☐ Other:

☐ I am stateless.

☐ I don't wish to answer.

7. Do you currently live with a partner or child/children?

Tick only
one option.

☐ No, I live alone.

☐ Yes, with a partner (no children).

☐ Yes, with a partner and
child/children.



Number of children under the age
of 18:

☐ Yes, single parent with
child/children.



Number of children under the age
of 18:

☐ Other:

☐ I don't wish to answer.

e.g. '01' or '03'

8. Do you also live with other people?

Tick only
one option.

☐ No, only with the people listed under Question 7

☐ Yes, with other relatives (e.g. grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts)

☐ Yes, with friends, colleagues, acquaintances

☐ Yes, with other homeless people (e.g. on the street, in a group)

☐ Other:

☐ I don't wish to answer.

9. What do you personally do for a living?

Tick all
that apply.

- ☐ Income from work:
 - ☐ Regular earned income (e.g. permanent job, mini-job, self-employment)
 - ☐ Irregular earned income (e.g. casual jobs, without a contract)
 - ☐ Other activities (e.g. collecting bottles for recycling, begging, street newspaper sales)
- ☐ Government benefits:
 - ☐ Unemployment benefit 1 (employment agency)
 - ☐ Citizen's allowance (job centre)
 - ☐ Social assistance / basic security (social welfare office)
 - ☐ Benefits for asylum seekers
 - ☐ Child benefit, parental benefit, maintenance advance
 - ☐ BAföG (study/school allowance)
- ☐ Pension (e.g. old-age pension, widow's pension, orphan's pension)
- ☐ Support (e.g. help from family/friends)
- ☐ Other income:
- ☐ I have no income.
- ☐ I don't wish to answer.

10. Approximately how much money do you personally have available each month?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No money | <input type="checkbox"/> 1.000–1,499 euros |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 300 euros | <input type="checkbox"/> 1,500–2,500 euros |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 300–599 euros | <input type="checkbox"/> Over 2,500 euros |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 600–999 euros | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

11. Do you have your own bank account?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, and I can use it. | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I don't have a bank account. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, but I can't use it. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

12. Do you have health insurance?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, and I can use all services. | <input type="checkbox"/> No, I don't have health insurance. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, but I can't use all services. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

13. Do you have a long-term illness, impairment or disability?

Tick all that apply.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chronic physical illness (e.g. diabetes, heart disease, rheumatism) | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental illness (e.g. depression, anxiety disorder) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical impairment (e.g. affecting walking, seeing, hearing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mental impairment (e.g. learning difficulties) | <input type="checkbox"/> I have no illness or impairment. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction (e.g. alcohol, drugs) | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

14. How long have you been homeless in Germany?

A person is homeless if they do not have their own flat/room (tenancy agreement or owned).

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> For less than 3 months | <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 10 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 3 months and one year | <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than 10 years |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than one year but less than 5 years | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

15. What was your living situation before you became homeless for the first time?

Tick only one option.

- ☐ In your own flat / own room / own house. Tenancy agreement / owned
- ☐ With my parents.
- ☐ In a facility. e.g. youth welfare, women's refuge, prison, hospital, psychiatric ward.
- ☐ I came to Germany and didn't have my own flat/room/house here (e.g. after fleeing or migrating).
- ☐ Other:
- ☐ I don't wish to answer.

16. Have you been homeless more than once in your life?

Answer 'Yes' if you have been homeless several times and have had your own flat/room in between. Count any time without your own home separately, even if it was only for a short time.

- ☐ No, this is the first time.
- ☐ Yes, I have often been without my own flat/room, and I have already been homeless.....

times.

e.g. '02' or '10'

I was without my own flat/room for the first time in.....

(Year)

- ☐ I don't wish to answer.

17. If you ever had to give up a flat in Germany and became homeless as a result, what were the reasons?

Tick all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I've never had to give up a flat in Germany. | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I had to move to another city. | <input type="checkbox"/> I have experienced domestic violence. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> My flat was connected to my employment relationship. | <input type="checkbox"/> I had relationship or family problems (quarrels, separation). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I could no longer pay the rent. | <input type="checkbox"/> Someone in my family died. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The authorities did not pay the rent. | <input type="checkbox"/> I had health problems. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was given notice of termination for personal use. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> There was an eviction. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

18. Have you ever been homeless directly after a stay in an institution?

- | | |
|------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | |

If yes, continue with Question 26.

19. How often have you been homeless after a stay in an institution?

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Only once. | <input type="checkbox"/> Never before. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Several times, namely... <input type="text"/> times. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

If yes, continue with Question 26.

20. You became homeless when you were released from an institution. Which facility was that most recently?

Tick only one option.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Women's refuge / violence protection centre | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth welfare organisation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital | <input type="checkbox"/> Prison / correctional centre |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Psychiatric ward | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Addiction support organisation | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

21. Before your stay in the facility from Question 20,

Tick only one option.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I did not have my own flat / own room / own house | <input type="checkbox"/> I still had my own flat / own room / own house |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was living with my parents. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

tenancy agreement / owned

22. After the stay in the facility from Question 20,

Tick only one option.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was temporarily staying with family/friends/colleagues/acquaintances. | <input type="checkbox"/> I was living on the street. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was in another institution (e.g. youth welfare centre, women's refuge, prison, hospital, psychiatric ward). | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was in accommodation run by the probation service. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I was in accommodation for homeless people (e.g. hostel, sheltered housing). | |

23. Did you receive support or help with accommodation or a flat/room after your stay in this facility?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, in the facility itself. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't remember. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, at another local organisation/NGO. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No, there was no support. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

24. Did you have to stay longer in this facility because you could not find accommodation or a flat/room?

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No. | |

25. Why were you homeless after your stay at the centre?

Tick all that apply.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I didn't receive enough support. | <input type="checkbox"/> It was unclear which authority was responsible. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I couldn't apply for a flat/room from there. | <input type="checkbox"/> The applications / assumption of costs were processed too slowly. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I did not find an affordable flat/room. | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal reasons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I did not find suitable accommodation / temporary accommodation. | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="text"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> The assumption of rental or accommodation costs was rejected. | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't wish to answer. |

Thank you for your participation so far!

There is one final supplementary question on the next page.
We would be very pleased if you would take the time to answer it as well.

We want to understand how your living situation has changed over time.

26. Where did you live before you found yourself in your current situation?

Follow the instructions.

Line A: Think back to the last place before your current situation: Tick how long you were there (dark box) and where exactly you lived (light box).

Line B: Then think further back in time. Where were you before this last stop? Indicate again how long you were there (dark box) and where exactly you lived (light box).

Lines C and D: Repeat this step as far as you can remember or until all four lines have been filled in.

A: Before my current homelessness, I lived...

<input type="checkbox"/> under 6 months	In a flat/room (with rental agreement / ownership)	With my parents	With family/acquaintances/ friends (without rental agreement)	In an institution (prison / youth centre / psychiatric ward/ etc.)	In accommodation for homeless people (hostel, assisted living, etc.)	On the street / without accommodation	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> 6–24 months							
<input type="checkbox"/> over 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B: Before that, I lived...

<input type="checkbox"/> under 6 months	In a flat/room (with rental agreement / ownership)	With my parents	With family/acquaintances/ friends (without rental agreement)	In an institution (prison / youth centre / psychiatric ward/ etc.)	In accommodation for homeless people (hostel, assisted living, etc.)	On the street / without accommodation	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> 6–24 months							
<input type="checkbox"/> over 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C: Before that, I lived...

<input type="checkbox"/> under 6 months	In a flat/room (with rental agreement / ownership)	With my parents	With family/acquaintances/ friends (without rental agreement)	In an institution (prison / youth centre / psychiatric ward/ etc.)	In accommodation for homeless people (hostel, assisted living, etc.)	On the street / without accommodation	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> 6–24 months							
<input type="checkbox"/> over 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

D: Before that, I lived...

<input type="checkbox"/> under 6 months	In a flat/room (with rental agreement / ownership)	With my parents	With family/acquaintances/ friends (without rental agreement)	In an institution (prison / youth centre / psychiatric ward/ etc.)	In accommodation for homeless people (hostel, assisted living, etc.)	On the street / without accommodation	Other:
<input type="checkbox"/> 6–24 months							
<input type="checkbox"/> over 2 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>