



Department for  
Communities and  
Local Government

# Rough Sleeping Statistics England - Autumn 2014 Official Statistics

- This is the fifth annual statistical release following the introduction of revised guidance on evaluating the extent of rough sleeping in September 2010.
- The Autumn 2014 total of rough sleeping counts and estimates in England was 2,744.
- This is up 330 (14%) from the Autumn 2013 total of 2,414.
- London had 742 rough sleepers, which accounted for 27% of the national figure.
- The number of rough sleepers in London has increased by 37%, compared to an increase of 7% in the rest of England.
- All 326 local housing authorities in England provided a figure. The total comprises counts provided by 49 local authorities and estimates provided by 277 local authorities.

## Homelessness *Statistical Release*

26 February 2015

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# Introduction

This is the fifth annual statistical release presenting [rough sleeping](#) counts and estimates following the introduction of revised guidance in September 2010 on evaluating the extent of rough sleeping.

Rough sleeping counts and estimates are single night snapshots of the number of people sleeping rough in local authority areas. Local authorities decide whether to carry out a count or an estimate based upon their assessment of whether the local rough sleeping problem justifies counting. They are encouraged to gain intelligence for street counts and estimates from local agencies such as outreach workers, the police, the voluntary sector and members of the public who have contact with rough sleepers on the street.

The release provides national summary information on rough sleeping counts and estimates carried out by local authorities between 1 October and 30 November 2014.

An accompanying table, showing figures at local authority level, is provided online alongside this release.

Although accurately counting or estimating the number of rough sleepers within the area of a local authority is inherently difficult, the series is now regarded as well-established, with a consistent run of figures over five years, and with their robustness enhanced by Homeless Link being involved in verifying local counts and validating local estimates. Partner agencies (including voluntary sector groups) are also actively involved in making estimates for those local authority areas where a direct count is not carried out.

This statistical release does not include any regional totals except for London following the consultation on the publication of regional statistics. Further details are given in the Written Ministerial Statement of 18 September 2012, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/statistics-for-local-enterprise-partnerships-and-upper-tier-local-authorities>.

Figures are given for London because they relate to the area covered by the Greater London Authority.

# Rough Sleeping in England

The Autumn 2014 total of street counts and estimates in England was 2,744. This is an increase of 14% from the 2013 figure of 2,414.

The Autumn 2014 total comprises a figure from every local housing authority in England, with 49 authorities conducting a count and 277 providing an estimate. This compares to 48 and 278 respectively in 2013, and 43 and 283 respectively in 2012.

# Rough Sleeping in London

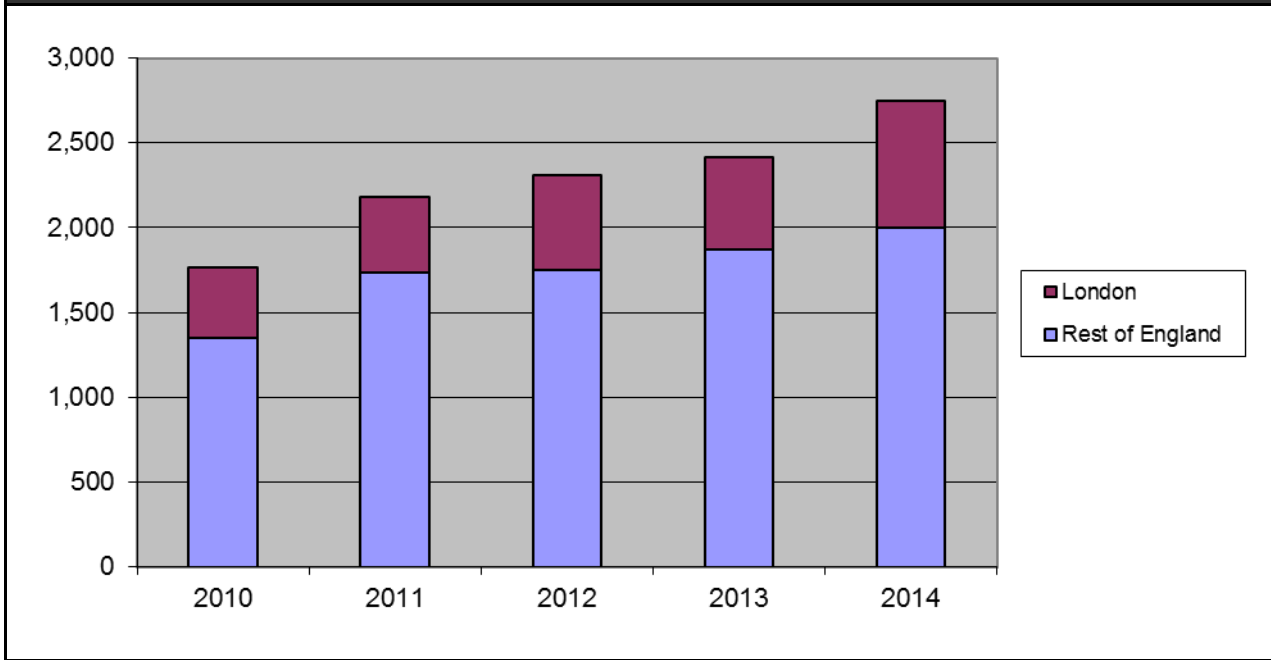
The Autumn 2014 total of street counts and estimates in London was 742. This is an increase of 37% from the 2013 figure of 543. London accounted for 27% of the total England figure, compared to 22% in 2013 and 24% in 2012.

The Autumn 2014 total of street counts and estimates outside of London was 2,002, an increase of 7% from the 2013 figure of 1,871.

Figures for England, London and the rest of England are shown in Table 1 and Chart 1.

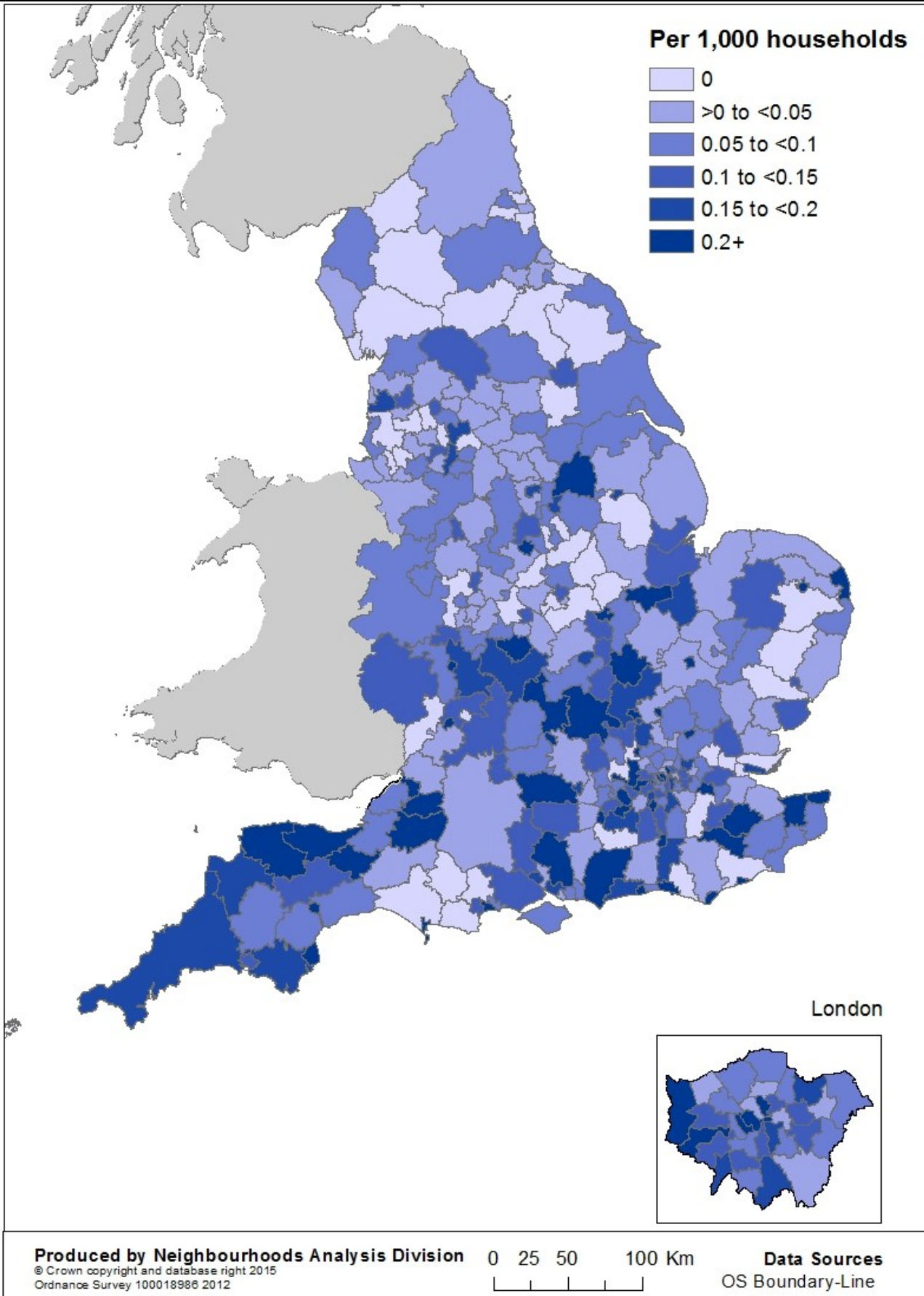
	England total		London		Rest of England	
	Number	% change	Number	% change	Number	% change
2010	1,768		415		1,353	
2011	2,181	23%	446	7%	1,735	28%
2012	2,309	6%	557	25%	1,752	1%
2013	2,414	5%	543	-3%	1,871	7%
2014	2,744	14%	742	37%	2,002	7%

**Chart 1 Rough sleeping counts and estimates by London and Rest of England**



The rate of rough sleeping per 1,000 households stands at 0.12 for England, 0.22 for London and 0.10 for the rest of England. This compares to 0.11 for England, 0.16 for London and 0.10 for the rest of England in 2013. The rates per 1,000 households by local authority are shown in Map 1.

**Map 1: Rough Sleeping rate by local authority 2014**



# Accompanying table

Table 1 – Total of rough sleeping counts and estimates, by local authority, Autumn 2014

This can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2014>

Related DCLG statistical releases are available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/homelessness-statistics>

# Related information for London: Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN)

The Combined Homelessness and Information Network (CHAIN) database contains information about rough sleepers in London who have been contacted by outreach teams or who have accessed accommodation for rough sleepers in London. CHAIN is used by people working with rough sleepers in London and it is maintained by Broadway, a London-based homeless charity. The latest financial year report shows that a total of 6,508 people were seen rough sleeping by outreach workers or building based teams in London during 2013-14. The nationality breakdown of this total is as follows:

Nationality (or continent)	Number	%
<b>United Kingdom</b>	<b>2,945</b>	<b>46</b>
<u>Rest of Europe</u>		
Poland	627	10
Romania	730	11
Lithuania	223	3
Republic of Ireland	134	2
Latvia	82	1
Portugal	107	2
Hungary	99	2
Czech Republic	79	1
Slovakia	44	1
Bulgaria	62	1
Estonia	20	0
Slovenia	1	0
Other Europe	412	6
<i>Of which:</i>		
<i>CEE countries that joined the EU in 2004 or 2007<sup>(a)</sup></i>	<i>1,967</i>	<i>31</i>
<u>Rest of the world</u>		
Africa	413	6
Asia	330	5
Americas	73	1
Australasia	6	0
<b>Total non-UK</b>	<b>3,442</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Total for which information exists</b>	<b>6,387</b>	<b>100</b>
<i>Not known</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>-</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,508</b>	

(a) Central and Eastern European Countries joining the EU in 2004 or 2007 are also known as the A10 countries. They are all the individual countries listed under 'Rest of Europe' except the Republic of Ireland, Portugal and those included in the 'Other Europe' row.

These figures show that 2,945 rough sleepers in London were recorded as having United Kingdom as their nationality. This group represents just under half (46%) of all rough sleepers recorded on the CHAIN database in 2013-14 for whom nationality information was available. 31% were from Central and Eastern European countries that joined the EU in 2004 or 2007.

Figures for other parts of the country (i.e. outside London) are not collected on a comparable basis. Latest figures from CHAIN are published at:

<http://www.broadwaylondon.org/CHAIN/Reports/StreettoHomeReports.html>.

### **CHAIN data coverage**

The CHAIN figure of 6,508 rough sleepers in London compares with a figure of 543 which was compiled and published last year by the Department in its *Rough Sleeping England - Autumn 2013* statistical release (available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-in-england-autumn-2013>) using figures supplied by London boroughs and the City of London. These two numbers are different because the CHAIN figure is a count of all individuals who were seen sleeping rough on the streets of London on at least one night during the entire year between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014, whereas the DCLG figure is a snapshot of the number of rough sleepers in London as counted or estimated by each London borough and the City of London on a single night in between 1 October and 30 November 2013.

### **CHAIN data collection**

People who work with rough sleepers record information on CHAIN about people who have been seen 'bedded down' on the streets by outreach workers. This group is known as 'Verified Rough Sleepers'. It is important to note that CHAIN does not cover 'hidden homeless' groups, such as those who are squatting or staying in places which are inaccessible to outreach workers.

Information is recorded onto the CHAIN database by people who work directly with rough sleepers in London (e.g. workers in outreach teams, day centres, hostels, resettlement teams).



# Rough Sleeping Statistics

## Definitions

**Rough Sleepers** are defined as follows for the purposes of rough sleeping counts and estimates:

*People sleeping, about to bed down (sitting on/in or standing next to their bedding) or actually bedded down in the open air (such as on the streets, in tents, doorways, parks, bus shelters or encampments). People in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as stairwells, barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats, stations, or “bashes” which are makeshift shelters, often comprised of cardboard boxes).*

The definition does not include people in hostels or shelters, people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes or organised protest, squatters or travellers.

**Bedded down** is taken to mean either lying down or sleeping. **About to bed down** includes those who are sitting in/on or near a sleeping bag or other bedding.

## Technical notes

### Data collection

Since 1998, rough sleeping has been measured by street counts in areas with a known or suspected rough sleeping problem. Local authorities had been asked to conduct an annual count if they estimated there were more than ten rough sleepers in the area. In June 2010, to supplement the counts, local authorities that had not conducted a street count were asked to provide an estimate of the number of rough sleepers on a given night. Results of the June 2010 estimates and a time series of rough sleeping counts since 1998 are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rough-sleeping-in-england-total-street-count-and-estimates-2010>

Following the publication of these figures, a public consultation on evaluating the extent of rough sleeping was run over the Summer 2010, and new guidance for local authorities was published in September 2010 explaining how to carry out rough sleeping counts and estimates:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6009/1713784.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6009/1713784.pdf)

The changes that were made to the methodology and the definition of rough sleepers mean that figures produced in line with the September 2010 guidance are not directly comparable with previous statistics because we cannot separate the impact of these methodological changes from changes in the level of rough sleeping between Autumn 2010 and earlier time periods. A technical note setting out and explaining the differences between the Autumn 2010 rough sleeping statistics and previously published figures was published alongside the Autumn 2010 release on the DCLG website:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7379/1846366.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7379/1846366.pdf).

Local housing authorities report their annual rough sleeping count or estimated figures by completing the rough sleeping statistical return:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/244149/Rough Sleepers Local Authority Form Autumn 2013.xls](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244149/Rough_Sleepers_Local_Authority_Form_Autumn_2013.xls)

or

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/evaluating-the-extent-of-rough-sleeping--2>

These figures have been published just over two months after the 15 December deadline for local authorities to submit their forms, on a pre-announced date in accordance with the Official Statistics Code of Practice.

**Rates per 1,000 households** have been calculated using the 2011-based household projections for 2014 produced by the Department for Communities and Local Government. These are consistent with the projections published on 9 April 2013 at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-household-projections>

## Data quality

All rough sleeping returns submitted by local authorities undergo thorough validation and checking, and late returns are pursued to ensure overall response is as complete and accurate as possible. Anomalous data are highlighted by the Department and verified by contacting the local authority.

Homeless Link (the voluntary sector umbrella body) independently verifies all rough sleeping counts and validates all estimates submitted to ensure they are robust. Local authorities providing estimates are asked to provide details of agencies that have been consulted in deriving the

estimate. 99% of authorities that provided estimates reported that they had consulted with at least one type of local agency. Of the 277 authorities that consulted in this way, the numbers consulting with particular types of agency were, in descending order:

Voluntary sector	259
Police	252
Outreach workers	248
Faith groups	187
Substance misuse	172
Mental health agencies	165
Drugs and alcohol treatment teams	143
Local residents/businesses	99

Please note that these counts exclude authorities who conducted a street count but also consulted an agency. The Autumn 2014 figures are based on returns for all 326 local authorities (100 per cent response).

The Department's statistical quality guidelines are published here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-quality-guidelines>

## Revisions policy

This policy has been developed in accordance with the UK Statistics Authority Code of Practice for Official statistics and the Department for Communities and Local Government Revisions Policy (found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statistical-notice-dclg-revisions-policy>).

There are two types of revisions that the policy covers:

### **Non-Scheduled Revisions**

Where a substantial error has occurred as a result of the compilation, imputation or dissemination process, the statistical release, live tables and other accompanying releases will be updated with a correction notice as soon as is practical.

Where a local authority notifies DCLG of an error in the information they have submitted after publication of the release a decision on whether to revise will be made based upon the impact of any change and the effect it has on the interpretation of the data.

## Scheduled Revisions

We do not currently have scheduled revisions for this release.

## Uses of the data

The data in this statistical release form the basis of evidence on rough sleeping in England. They will be used by ministers and officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government in the formulation and monitoring of policy, the allocation of resources, performance monitoring and to support bids for funding from the Treasury. The data will be used to ensure democratic accountability in answers to Parliamentary Questions, ministerial correspondence, Freedom of Information Act cases and queries from the public.

Local housing authorities are both providers and users of the statistics and will use the data to track progress, benchmark against other authorities and plan and commission services to prevent and tackle rough sleeping. The voluntary sector will also use the statistics to monitor and evaluate housing policy and for campaigning and fundraising purposes.

## User engagement

Users are encouraged to provide feedback on how these statistics are used and how well they meet user needs. Comments on any issues relating to this statistical release are welcomed and encouraged. Responses should be addressed to the "Public enquiries" contact given in the "Enquiries" section below.

The Department's engagement strategy to meet the needs of statistics users is published here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/engagement-strategy-to-meet-the-needs-of-statistics-users>

## Notes

The scope of this data collection and release is limited to a single night snapshot of rough sleeping in England. This release does not contain data on other forms of homelessness, for example local authorities' actions under homelessness legislation. The Department publishes quarterly statistics on Statutory Homelessness and these can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/homelessness-statistics#this-series>

The Department also published statistics on homelessness prevention and relief. The most recent [publication relating to local authority actions in 2013-14](#) can be found at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/series/homelessness-statistics>

Details of officials who receive pre-release access to the Department's rough sleeping statistical release up to 24 hours before release can be found at:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/73181/Rough\\_Sleeping\\_Statistics\\_pre-release\\_access.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/73181/Rough_Sleeping_Statistics_pre-release_access.pdf)

The publication of the Autumn 2015 Rough Sleeping Statistics will be in February or March 2016. The date will be pre-announced on the UK Statistics Authority publication release calendar.

## Devolved administration statistics

The devolved administrations publish their own statistics on homelessness and details of their releases which contain information on rough sleeping are provided below.

The Scottish Government publishes figures on the number of households applying for assistance under homelessness legislation who say they have slept rough the previous night or have reported their housing situation as 'long term roofless'. The latest annual figures are published here:

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2014/06/3967>

In 2007 and 2008, local authorities in Wales undertook rough sleeping street counts to gauge the extent of rough sleeping in Wales. Results of these counts can be found at the following link:

<http://wales.gov.uk/statistics-and-research/national-rough-sleeping-count/?lang=en>

The Combined Homelessness and information Network (CHAIN) contains information about people seen contacted by outreach teams and those who have accessed accommodation for rough sleepers in London. Information on the nationality of rough sleepers in London in 2013-14 is summarised in this release, and other figures are published here:

[http://www.mungosbroadway.org.uk/chain/street\\_home\\_annual\\_reports](http://www.mungosbroadway.org.uk/chain/street_home_annual_reports)

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Information on Official Statistics is available via the UK Statistics Authority website:

[www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/browse-by-theme/index.html](http://www.statistics.gov.uk/hub/browse-by-theme/index.html)

Information about statistics at DCLG is available via the Department's website:

[www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-communities-and-local-government/about/statistics)

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