

St Mungo's

Hard Work for Homeless People

Contact:

Sara Hazzard or Lucy Whitford on: 020 8600 3003 or 07713 266 617 or 07979 018 734.

Email: shazzard@mungos.org
or: lwhitford@mungos.org

Contents

Introduction	2
Problems finding/retaining work	2
UK and European geographic breakdown of people surveyed	3
Employment history	4
Changes and looking forward	4
New solutions helping homeless people back to work	5
Work	5
Quotes	6
Notes to Editor	6

Introduction

St Mungo's surveyed 100 homeless people to identify the problems they face getting a job. Twenty years ago (1986) St Mungo's conducted a survey of homeless people, and revealed that 83% had some form of paid employment. St Mungo's reveals, 9 September 2005, that less than 5% have paid employment.

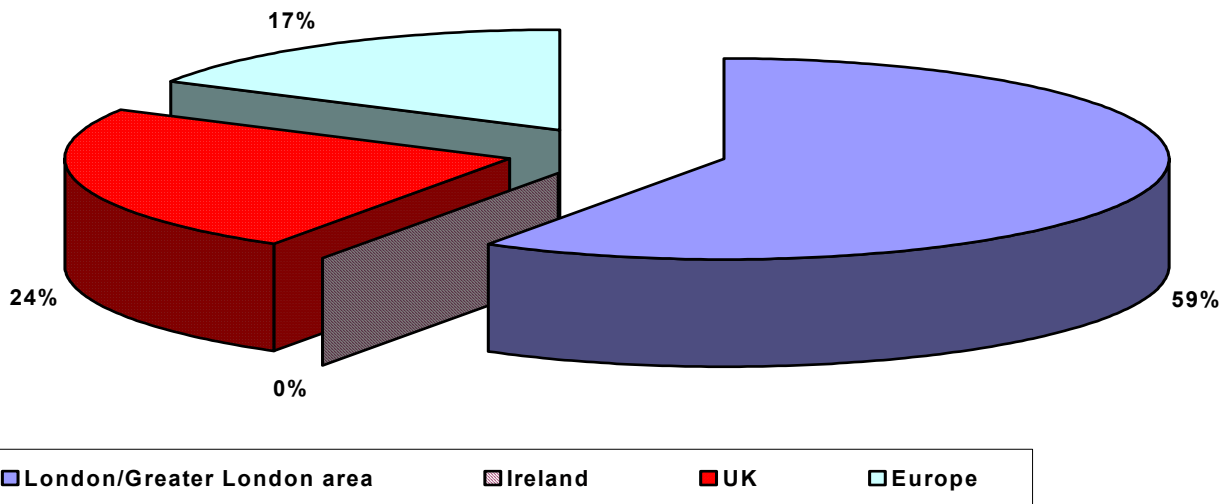
St Mungo's works with the most vulnerable people within the UK, and offers the best chance to leave a life of homelessness behind and gain employment.

Problems finding/retaining work

St Mungo's asked 100 homeless people what problems prevented them from finding work:

- 2 in 3 said that agencies and employers weren't willing to give them a chance while they were homeless
- 2 in 3 said that they didn't have enough money for appropriate work clothes or work related equipment
- 1 in 2 said they needed some help and advice but there just wasn't anyone who would help them
- 1 in 2 said they had problems getting a job without a current mailing address
- 1 in 4 stated that they had had problems due to substance use issues, mental or physical health problems
- 3 in 5 said they didn't have the right qualifications, the right work experience or any job references
- 4 in 5 said that they didn't have enough money to carry them until their first salary
- 3 in 5 said they couldn't find a job that would pay them enough for their rent and bills
- 1 in 5 said they had problems reading and writing.

UK and European geographic breakdown of people surveyed:



- **1 in 4 of those surveyed are from outside London.**

St Mungo's asked 50 homeless people who use its employment and training services about their experience.

Employment history

Homeless people were asked, prior to being involved with St Mungo's, when they were last employed, why they left that job and the longest period they had held the job:

- 2 in 5 respondents said they hadn't had a job for at least 2 years
- 1 in 10 said they hadn't had a job for over 5 years
- 3 in 5 said they had previously held steady jobs for over 2 years
- 4 in 5 had previously held steady jobs for over a year.

Changes and looking forward

Homeless people were then asked what their ideal job was. The jobs homeless people stated they most wanted were all in areas where there are currently labour shortages in the UK:

- Maintenance, building, plumbing and related jobs
- Factory and warehouse jobs
- Care and support work
- Computers and IT
- Horticulture
- Leisure industry jobs.

Homeless people were asked what they had gained from taking part in employment and employment training programmes at St Mungo's:

- 4 in 5 felt they were learning new skills by being linked into the service
- 4 in 5 felt their confidence and self-esteem had increased since linking into the service
- 4 in 5 said their job finding skills had improved
- 4 in 5 had been applying for more jobs since linking into the service
- 2 in 3 were positive that their involvement would lead to them getting work
- 1 in 2 said their housing situation had improved since coming to the service
- 1 in 2 had been offered work already
- 1 in 2 felt their health had improved.

New solutions helping homeless people back to work

St Mungo's offers pioneering solutions to help homeless people back on their feet. These include:

- **Employment Link:**
The only project in the country that helps homeless people once they actually start work in their new job.
- **The Clothes Store:**
This scheme ensures that homeless people have the clothes they need for interviews and also provides clothes for clients who have started their job but are waiting for their first pay cheque.
- **Placement Link:**
This project recruits employers who provide work placements and, in some cases, permanent jobs for homeless men and women.
- **The Workshop:**
This scheme offers paid employment with staff support to aid homeless people's transition back into the world of work by teaching woodworking skills to build furniture, making sales worth over £25,000 a year.
- **Volunteering:**
Putting Down Roots is St Mungo's gardening training scheme; homeless men and women work alongside community volunteers to improve public spaces while gaining horticultural skills.
- **Voicemail4all:**
Voicemail for all offers homeless people a phone number and voicemail so that they can pick up messages from potential employers when they are looking for work. Voicemail for all is managed by St Mungo's on behalf of Tech4all and with the support of the LDA, Bridge House Trust, Evoxus, Teamphone, Full Employment UK and Credit-Suisse First Boston.
- St Mungo's operates an employment centre and two training centres where clients can take courses, use computers, gain NVQs and other qualifications, look for jobs, improve their CV and practice for interviews.

Work

St Mungo's offers pioneering services to men and women who have complex and overlapping needs that often exclude them from mainstream services. Our work prepares people with mental health, substance use, alcohol and housing problems to move on.

Last year, our Work and Learning programme, Europe's largest directly delivered service for homeless people, helped more than 1,700 vulnerable men and women prepare for maintaining their tenancy, holding down a job, get back in touch with their family, learn to read and write and so much more.

Quotes:

“I was sceptical when I first heard about the resource centre but they were very welcoming; they helped me get a CV together, learn new work skills and apply for jobs. And now I have a job”.

“The employment team helped me realise what I want in life. I’m now totally focused on getting a job, saving money and moving on, and I’ve learnt not to be disappointed if things don’t go my way first time”.

“The employment centre has helped me structure my job hunting. I come in for three hours a day and the atmosphere is really positive -I’ve met lots of new people and got my confidence back”.

“A few years ago I’d never even touched a computer - now I’ve got a computer qualification which means I’ve got a better chance of finding a job”.

Notes to Editor:

- **Interviews are available** from; Director of Work and Learning, frontline employment workers, and possible interview available from a corporate employer
- **Case stories** are available
- **Events**; film, photo and soundbite opportunities; mock interviews, prepare for interviews, sign up for courses and receive free clothes
- The Jobs Fair is part funded by the European Social Fund
- **In studio and pre-records available.**