



MEN AND BOYS
COALITION

www.menandboyscoalition.org.uk

c/o The ManKind Initiative (charity), Belvedere Road, Flook House, Taunton, TA1 1BT

Mr Ed Humpherson,
Director General for Regulation
Office for Statistics Regulation
UK Statistics Authority
1 Drummond Gate
London
SW1V 2QQ

4th March 2018

Dear Mr Humpherson

Formal Complaint: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Rough Sleeping Statistics Autumn 2017 (revised), England

I am writing on behalf of the Men and Boys Coalition, a network of over 70 charities, academics and professionals committed to highlighting and taking action on gender-specific issues that affect the wellbeing of men and boys.

This is a formal complaint with regard to the above statistical report which we believe is in breach of the UK Statistical Authority's Code of Practice, especially Section 2 (Integrity), and, Section 8 (Frankness and Accessibility).

This complaint is made far firmer by the fact that we made a similar complaint on 2nd February 2017 on exactly the same issue – with regard to the 2016 figures.

In 2017, we made the complaint that the Department for Communities, Housing and Local Government (now the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) had excluded the number and percentage of male rough sleepers (at a national level) and the number of male rough sleepers (at a local authority level), when the corresponding data for female rough sleepers had rightly been published. This was for the 2016 statistics. We are pleased that the Ministry has changed their practice and included the statistics for each gender for 2017.

Our complaint is on the continuing lack of presentation of the number and percentage of male rough sleepers in the accompanying narrative report even though they make up 86% of rough sleepers. The narrative includes on the front cover and on page six where only the female figure is mentioned.

Page 1: "14% of rough sleepers were women, 20% were non-UK nationals and 8% were under 25 years old."

Page 6: "653 (14%) were women."

The male figure can only be found by deducing 100%-14% equals 86%. There is a graph which includes gender but nowhere does the report actually give the precise figure of male rough sleepers :

It is inexplicable why such a report would (again) fail to mention in the narrative the number of male rough sleepers when they are so far in the majority, unless there was a deliberate decision to exclude the figure for men (we want both male and female figures to be presented because we are as concerned about female rough sleepers as we are about male rough sleepers).

This is most concerning as unless an explanation is given by the Ministry then it is difficult not to conclude that there is a strong element of discrimination in the way the figures are presented. There is no statistical or public information reason why such a decision would be taken for this exclusion. There is certainly no reason in the UK Statistical Authority's Code of Practice this should not be included. Can the Ministry therefore please explain why it has chosen to act in this way?

This was officially raised by the Coalition last year and the UK Statistical Authority also stated last year that "[I] recognise your concerns that the exclusion of males from these statistics is likely to limit the factual representation of male rough sleepers in the media and in societal awareness in general and that this could inadvertently lead to a lack of service provision and funding for this group." The fact that it has happened again is of great concern.

The reasons for the importance of the presentation of these figures were set out in our previous complaint dated 2nd February 2017 especially regarding societal awareness, public policy and service provision.

A clear example of how this translates can be seen by the [BBC report](#) which does not mention the male figure in its list of statistics as they take the headline figures from the Ministry's report.

Thank you for your time and consideration, I look forward to receiving a positive outcome to this complaint. It is a pity that we have to make it again.

Yours sincerely

Mark Brooks

Co-founder

The Men and Boys Coalition

info@menandboyscoalition.org.uk

www.menandboyscoalition.org.uk