

# HPS 2016 Coordinated Point-in-Time Count

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## Dataset Description

### Context

**The Point-in-Time Count Methodology:** A PiT count is a method used to measure sheltered and unsheltered homelessness. It aims to enumerate individuals in a community who are, at a given time, staying in shelters or "sleeping rough" (e.g., on the street, in parks), providing a "snapshot" of homelessness in a community. PiT Counts include a survey that can provide communities with information on the characteristics of their homeless population (e.g., age, gender, Aboriginal identity). This information can be used by communities to direct resources to areas of greatest need, and to connect individuals with specific backgrounds to targeted supports to help them achieve stable housing. When completed on subsequent years, it can also be used to track changes in the homeless population over time and measure progress in reducing it.

**The 2016 HPS Coordinated PiT Count:** The Homelessness Partnering Strategy (HPS) coordinated the first PiT count in communities across provinces and territories in Canada. It provided funding, training and implementation tools to the 31 communities that participated. For many, this was the first count in the community. Each community used the same "Core" screening and survey questions and followed the same general methodology. These communities have agreed to provide their enumeration and their survey data to contribute to a broader picture of homelessness in Canada.

**Key Online Resources:** The following resources were developed or supported by the HPS.

**Guide to Point-in-Time Counts in Canada of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy:** Detailed the methodological standards and common Core Screening and Survey questions.

[www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/pit\\_countguide.shtml](http://www.esdc.gc.ca/eng/communities/homelessness/pit_countguide.shtml)

**Point-in-Time Count Implementation Toolkit:** A resource developed by the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (COH) offering further guidance, and tools that can be downloaded and adapted by participating communities. The COH included standard optional questions that communities could choose from to enhance their survey.

[www.homelesshub.ca/pitcounttoolkit](http://www.homelesshub.ca/pitcounttoolkit)

**Community Workspace on Homelessness:** An online workspace hosted by the COH for service providers, policy makers and researchers to share information and resources, seek input and guidance from others, as well as to have discussions around homelessness. It includes a PiT Count page with resources from the HPS and others.

[www.homelesshub.ca/workspace](http://www.homelesshub.ca/workspace)

## Data

The data from the coordinated count will include enumerations and survey data from each community.

**Enumeration:** Each community is contributing their enumeration based on the table below.

Population	Data Source
Unsheltered – Surveyed	Number of unsheltered responses*
Unsheltered – Observed	Number observed homeless from tally
Emergency Shelter and VAW	Systems data/Occupancy
Transitional Housing	Systems data/Occupancy
Systems (Health and/or Corrections)	Systems data (No fixed address)
Unsure (likely homeless)	Number of “Respondent doesn’t know” responses**

\*Refers to the number of people who responded with an **unsheltered location** to the question, “Where are you staying tonight?”

\*\*Refers to the number of responses of “Respondent doesn’t know (likely homeless)” to “Where are you staying tonight?”

**Surveys:** Each community is contributing the responses to each of the common “Core” questions from each participant (see below). The full list of questions and response options can be found in the [HPS Guide to Point-in-Time Counts](#). The size of the dataset will be determined after the last community has submitted its data.

Core Screening Questions	
C	Do you have a permanent residence that you can return to tonight?
D	Where are you staying tonight?
Core Survey Questions	
1	What family members are with you?
2	How old are you? [OR] What year were you born?
3	What gender do you identify with?
4	Do you identify as Aboriginal or do you have Aboriginal ancestry? This includes First Nations, Métis, Inuit, with or without Status. (Communities could use “Indigenous” or locally-used terminology)
5	Have you ever had any service in the Canadian military or the RCMP? [Military includes the Canadian Army, Navy and Air Force]
6	Did you move to [Community name] in the past year?
7	Did you come to Canada as an immigrant or refugee within the past 5 years?
8	Over the past year, how much of the time have you been homeless?
9	Over the past year, how many different times have you experienced homelessness?
10	Have you stayed in an emergency shelter in the past year?
11	What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently?
12	Where do you get your money from?