

Examining the socioeconomic characteristics of white homeless persons: A trend analysis

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Abstract

According to the UN Habitat (2021), globally, there were an estimated 150 million homeless people 1.6 billion people lacked suitable housing. In the US, homelessness varies according to racial groups. In the year 2022, homeless persons in the US were estimated to be 300, 000 and these were mostly African Americans, Asian, Native Americans and Pacific Islander or mixed race (Fowler, 2022). This paper intends to profile white homeless persons in South Africa. Trends and socio-economic characteristics of white homeless persons will be investigated using South African census 2001, 2011 and 2022. The results indicate that there was a decline in the number of white persons who were homeless from 1765 in 2001 to 1508 in 2022. Males and young people are at higher risk of homelessness.

Preliminary Findings

The results show that there was a decline in the number of whites homeless in South Africa from 2001 to 2022. Gauteng province had the largest number of white homeless compared to other provinces. Of interest, there were more white homeless female persons in 2001 compared to males while in 2022 there were more white males than females. This difference could be attributed to errors during data collection since it is contrary to other findings elsewhere. For age groups, there was a fluctuation in the age groups. In 2001, white elders (85+) had higher number of homeless persons compared to other age groups while in 2022 it was those between the ages of 35-39 years.

Figure 1: Number of white homeless persons, Census 2001 and Census 2022

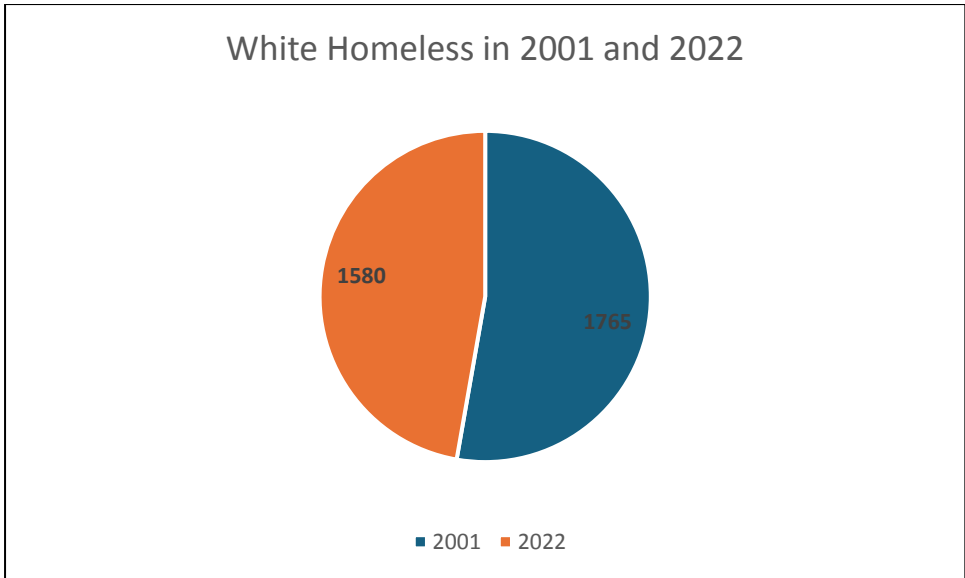


Figure 2: Distribution of white homeless persons by province, Census 2001 and Census 2022

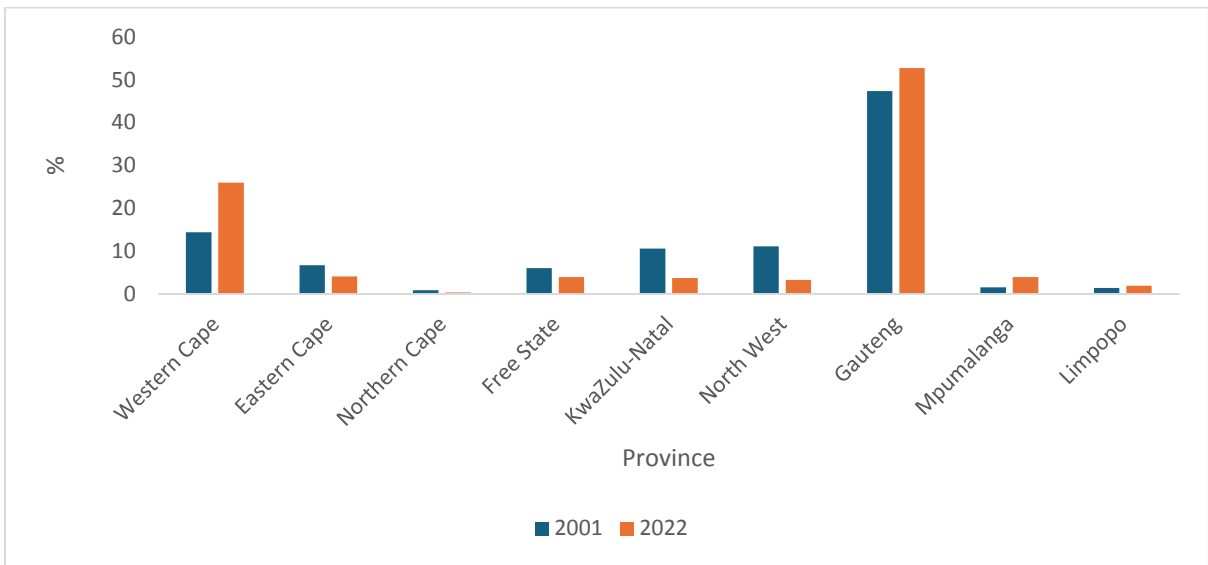


Figure 3: Distribution of white homeless persons by sec, Census 2001-Census 2022

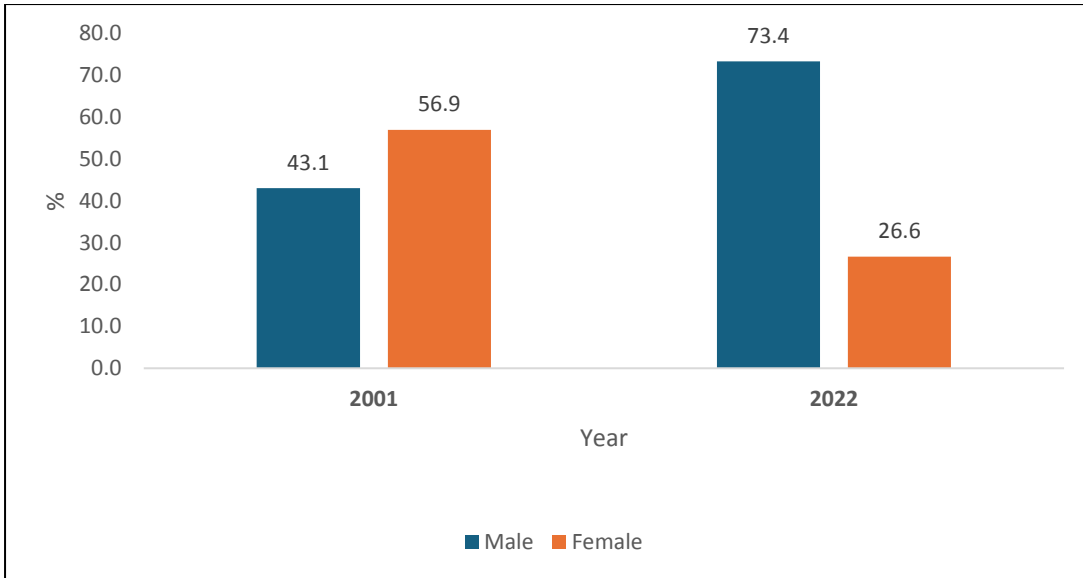


Figure 4: Percentage of white homeless persons by 5-year age group, Census 2001-Census 2022

