A Study of the Number, Profile and Progression Routes of
Homeless Persons before the Court and in Custody,

By Dr Mairéad Seymour, *Dublin Institute of Technology*
and Liza Costello (2005).

Introduction

Bringing readers information on recent research that is relevant to work with offenders is part of the Irish Probation Journal (IPJ) editorial strategy. This part of the present edition provides summaries of two such reports, both published over the past couple of months. Aspects of the research on homelessness among offenders (Seymour and Costello) were reported on in the first edition of IPJ. It is very relevant to work with offenders, and the PWS is actively following up on its findings and recommendations. The summary of the report on domestic violence (Watson and Parsons), commissioned and published by the National Crime Council, is particularly apposite for inclusion in the present edition of IPJ given the articles by Mark Shevlin, David Morran and Christine Hunter also included in this edition. Those articles, allied to the NCC research report, are a timely reminder of the importance of developing effective responses to domestic violence offenders and victims with whom probation services come in contact. This research report brings new clarity to this field of research and practice. It underlines the previous dearth of relevant research in the area, and highlights the need for professionals in a variety of agencies to improve their understanding of and responses to domestic violence. In particular, findings refer to prevalence in the general population, risk factors, impact and reporting issues. Recommendations are made with specific reference to the criminal justice system. Some of these, such as the recommendations on data collection, staff training, treatment and rehabilitation of offenders and measures to ensure the safety of complainants, have relevance for probation services and their partner agencies. Both reports, published over this summer, have received significant media attention and are available in hardcopy and electronic versions: