1. Vagrants in European history: exclusion, imprisonment or relief

2. Knowledge and didactic objectives	3. Timing
The focus questions of this activity are: *How did the authorities deal with vagrants and what do you think of the measures taken?* A a variety of sources (images, texts and videos, see the separate document with sources) are used to engage students in historical inquiry to better understand change and continuity in crime and punishment and reflect on the values, beliefs and norms associated with laws and punishment and their own perspective. Students: - explore the experiences and perspectives of a marginalized group in early modern and modern Europe; 'vagrants' / homeless people - identify aspects of change and continuity in how vagrants were treated since the Middle ages - formulate historical arguments about vagrancy and changes in the treatment of vagrants / homeless using evidence from historical sources - formulate an ethical judgment about changes in the treatment of vagrants/homeless using historical arguments and moral values	About 150 minutes (three lessons of about 50 minutes) The closing essay assignment can be done as homework. The activity can be shortened by using only the sources about vagrancy in early modern time and the 19th century, or by doing only one of the three steps.

4. Grouping of students

Step 1: a) pairs; b individual; c and d) individual or in a whole-class discussion

Step 2: a) pairs; b) individual; c) individual or whole-class discussion

Step 3: a) individual; b) individual; c) pairs + whole-class construction of a world cloud; d) individual

5. Historical thinking skills

Identifying aspects of change and continuity

- in how vagrants were treated since the Middle ages;

- in the definition of crime;

- in punishments.

Identifying causes and consequences

- causes for the growth of vagrancy/homelessness (e.g. growth of cities / population, economic crisis, plagues, different attitudes towards the 'poor')

Formulating historical arguments

- about vagrancy and changes in the treatment of vagrants / homeless using evidence from historical sources

Formulating an ethical judgment

- about changes in the treatment of vagrants/homeless using historical arguments and moral values

Reflecting on enduring issues and values

- the enduring issue of how to deal with vagrants/homeless people or poverty;

- values related to the common good / what's fair/humaine towards individual people, e.g. care, health, humanity, liveability, safety, self-determination

6. Development or sequence of the activity

Introduction of the activity:

- The topic and activity can be introduced in different ways. The emphasis can be on a historical period or development (e.g. growth of population, cities or poverty in early modern time or the nineteenth century), a diachronic historical topic (crime and punishment through time), historical argumentation (how to write a historical argumentation), or the enduring issue of poverty / homelessness (a problem that society has faced and discussed across time).

- The topic and activity can be introduced using Rembrandt's Beggar with a Wooden Leg from ca. 1630 (https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/collection/RP-P-OB-419) or source 1 (cripple vagrant of Pieter Janszoon Quast). Questions that can be asked: What do you see? What were such people called in the past? What other terms are used for them. What would we call such a person

now? What could be reasons for this man to wander around with no fixed place to live or sleep? A closer look at this image reveals that the man has both legs and yet is provided with a wooden leg. Further research by medics Ten Kate et al. (2009) yielded almost thirty images of people with a wooden leg supporting a non-amputated leg coming from different artists from the period 1500-1700. They conclude that during this period, the artificial leg was also used on people suffering from a disease of the knee or lower leg. According to the researchers, the wooden leg was also used to evoke compassion.

- The topic can also be introduced by a present day example or news item about homeless people. In that case, focus the discussion on whether homelessness also occurred in the past. What might have been different in the past?

Step 1: Find out who was a vagrant and why

- 1a: Set up groups (pairs) and provide instruction about assignment 1a. The activity sheet is meant as a pre-writing organizer (explain the top row about showing that it is a diverse group and reasons for vagrancy/homelessness..

- 1b: Students individual write a historical argument. Extra support can be provided by giving an example (modelling): *There is no such thing as ' the' vagrant. First, vagrants could be either men or women. This can be seen, for example, in the pictures that were made of both male (source 1, 19), and female (source 2, 19) vagrants. Researchers found out that in early modern Germany about 35 to 40% of people convicted for vagrancy were female (source 5) and in present Italy about 14% (source 20).* This answer contains the claim (There is no…), an argument for this claim (First…) and evidence (facts, examples from the sources) that supports the argument. Students can be provided with feedback on the quality of their answer to promote students' competences in writing a historical argumentation. Students can also be asked to self-evaluate their answer or to evaluate the answer of a peer using criteria or a rubric (see below for assessment)

- 1c and 1d: These questions can be answered individually or in pairs first, and then discussed in class. A negative image of vagrants is evidenced, for example, in the way vagrants are pictured (poor, broken and dirty clothes,

e.g. source 1 to 3, 10, 11), or the words used to describe them (e.g. idle, suspicious, wicked (source 6). The photographer Lee Jeffries (source 20) wants to portray homeless people as persons, human beings, not as homeless persons.

Step 2: Find out what has been changed in treatment and interventions
- 2a: Set up groups (pairs): the activity sheet is meant as a pre-writing organizer. In this case the emphasis is on aspects of change and continuity in how vagrants were treated / punished. It is important to note that prisons are a relatively recent phenomon. For a long time prisons were places where offenders awaited trial. The workhouses can be considered precursors of the 'modern' prison.
- 2b and c: Students individually write a historical argument about changes in how vagrants were treated (criminalization, decriminalization). Provide feedback on their answers or ask students to self-evaluate or peer-review (see for criteria, 7. Assessment). Discuss not only changes, but also aspects of continuity. Additional information can be provided about how punishment changed over time. In early modern time the notion that wrongdoers should be excluded from society, whereas it should simultaneously benefit society, gained ground. It was argued that harsh punishments did not prevent or decrease criminal behaviour and that an important reason why people committed criminal offences was their reluctance to work. Workhouses became popular in urban areas throughout Europe. Delinquents who were punished for begging, vagrancy, engagement in prostitution or petty theft, were, for example, made to rasp wood or spinning. Altough later they were often portrayed as places of hunger, humiliation, sexual and physical assault, the houses also provided relief for poor, old and sick persons, and security and education.

Step 3: Discuss what you think about the treatment of vagrants / homeless people
- Activities 3a, 3b and 3c are meant to prepare students for writing an essay in which they give their judgment about the question whether the treatment of vagrants improved over tiem.

- 3a: Before formulating their own judgment, students are asked to take the perspective of past authorities (why did they consider domestic and overseas penal colonies good measures to combat vagrancy?).
- 3b: Students are asked to give their own opinion using a variety of criteria. Make clear that they should use the criteria that are introduced in the introduction of step 3.
- 3c: Students are asked to identfy values they consider important. This assignment can be introduced by providing a definition of values and examples of values. When students have selected some values they consider important and discussed them in small groups, you can use Mentimeter (https://www.mentimeter.com/features/word-cloud) or another online tool to create a Word cloud. Let students use their smartphone or laptop and add the value(s) they consider most important for policy concerning homeless people. You can quickly see the most common values and values that only few students chose. Ask who is willing to explain their choice. Pay attention to both common and less common values. A distinction can be made between values related to the 'common good' (e.g. health, liveability, safety) and values related to what's considered fair, just or human for the homeless people (e.g. autonomy, humanity, respect, tolerance).
- 3d: This writing assignment can be used as an (formative or summarive) assessment activity. Make clear that all three options are possible (improvent, no improvement, partial improvement). What matters is the quality of the argument. Explain the guidelines. You can provide students with a rubric to inform them about the criteria used to evaluate the quality of the essay. You can also ask students to use the rubric to self-evaluate the quality of their essay or the essay written by a peer.

7. Asssessment techniques and instruments

The individual writing assignments in this activity can be used for formative assessment (assessment by the teacher, self-assessment or peer-assessment). The last assignment (3d) can also be used for summative assessment, particularly when the students were provided with feedback on the quality of their written arguments of 1d and 2b.

1d Explain that throughout history, there is no such thing as 'the' vagrant or homeless person. Give three arguments. Use at least six items (from both columns) from your activity sheet to support your arguments.

Criteria that can be used to assess students' written argument

- the use of arguments to adequately address the diversity within the group of vagrants/homeless? E.g. vagrants/homeless people can be
  - either men or women
  - old, middle age, young persons, families
  - healthy or having physical or mental disabilities
  - were people sleep (e.g. on the street, with relatives)
  - vagrant or homeless for different reasons: e.g. having disabilities, death of husband/wife/mother, having a convicted father, drunkenness, trauma, inability to work, social or behavioural issues, divorce and more structural societal causes (poverty, economic depression, war, crop failure, plaque, rebellion, shortage of affordable rental houses)
- the use of facts/examples/details from the sources used to support these arguments and the extent to which these are relevant and accurate

2b Use the information in your activity sheet and explain that in the early modern period and the nineteenth century there was criminalisation of vagrancy. Clarify what changed and use facts and examples from the sources to make it clear that vagrants were seen as criminals.

Criteria that can be used to assess students' argumentation

- the description of the process of criminalisation. What changed? How were vagrants treated in the middle ages and what changed in the early modern time
- the use of facts, examples or details from the sources that illustrate the process of criminalisation, e.g. punishments such as banishment, workhouses, branding, penal colony, the use of fingerprints and photographs in registration in penal colonies, the use of negative adjectives (e.g. idle, godless, suspicious)

3d Write a response (200 to 400 words) to the following statement using what you have found out so far.

The treatment of people who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence

(vagrants or homeless) improved over time.

Criteria that can be used to assess students' ethical judgment:

- the use of evidence from the sources to support the ethical judgment

- the accuracy of the details included

- inclusion of significant changes in how vagrants/homeless were treated

- the decription of values used to make the ethical judgment

8. Complementary resources

A set of a total of 26 resources accompanies this assignment. This set is provided in a separate document, including the links to the website were the images, videos or articles come from.

More sources can be found at the History Lab website.

9. Annexes

Background information about crime and punishment throughout history and the treatment of vagrants can be found at the HistoryLab website:

https://historylab.es/persecuted-by-justice/ (Persecuted by justice: rebels, renegades and outcasts in the history of Europe)

Information about teaching historical reasoning, historical argumentation (e.g. scaffolds, assessment rubrics) and teaching about enduring issues can be found in several research articles.

Brush, T., & Saye, J. (2014). An instructional model to support problem-based historical inquiry: The persistent issues in history network. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Problem-Based Learning, 8*(1), 39–50. https://doi.org/10.7771/1541–5015.1409

Monte-Sano, C., & De La Paz, S. (2012). Using writing tasks to elicit adolescents' historical reasoning. *Journal of Literacy Research, 44*, 3, 273-299. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X12450445

Rombout, F., Schuitema, J.A., & Volman, M.L.L. (2021). Teachers' implementation and evaluation of design principles for value-loaded critical thinking.

International Journal of Educational Research, 106 (101731). https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101731

Seixas, P., & Morton, T. (2013). *The Big Six: Historical Thinking Concepts.* Toronto, ON:Nelson Education.

Van Boxtel, C., & Van Drie, J. (2018). Historical Reasoning: Conceptualizations and Educational Applications. In S. Metzger, & L. McArthur Harris (Eds), *International Handbook of History Teaching and Learning* (pp. 149-176). Wiley-Blackwell.

Van Boxtel, C. A. M., Voet, M., & Stoel, G. L. (2021). Inquiry learning in history. In C. A. Chinn, & R. Golan Duncan (Eds.), *International Handbook of Inquiry and Learning* (pp. 296-310). Routledge.

Van Drie, J., Braaksma, M., & van Boxtel, C. (2015). Writing in history: Effects of writing instruction on historical reasoning and text quality. *Journal of Writing Research, 7*(1), 123–156. https://doi.org/10.17239/jowr-2015.07.01.06

Van Straaten, D., Wilschut, A., & Oostdam, R. (2018). Exploring pedagogical approaches for connecting the past, the present and the future in history teaching. *Historical Encounters, 5*(1), 46–67.

Van Straaten, D., Wilschut, A., & Oostdam, R. (2016). Making history relevant to students by connecting past, present and future: a framework for research. *Journal of Curriculum Studies, 48*, 4, 479-502. DOI: 10.1080/00220272.2015.1089938

Wissinger, D.R., Ciullo, S.P., & Shiring, E.J. (2018) Historical literacy instruction for all Learners: Evidence from a design experiment. *Reading & Writing Quarterly, 34*, 6, 568-586. https://doi.org/10.1080/10573569.2018.1510795

Website

The Historical Thinking Project (Canada): explanation of and example materials related to the ethical dimension of historical thinking. https://historicalthinking.ca/ethical-dimensions

ANNEXES

SOURCES Vagrants in European history: exclusion, imprisonment or relief

EARLY MODERN TIME (1500-1800)
Source 1. Cripple vagrant. Pieter Jansz. Quast, 1634, Rijksmuseum.

http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.341429

Source 2. Old beggar woman. Pieter Jansz. Quast, 1634 – 1638, Rijksmuseum

Source 3. The young beggar. Bartolome Esteban Murillo, ca. 1650, Musee du Louvre Paris.

Source 4. Description of two women arrested for vagrancy in 18th century Frankfurt (1764).

> **Arrested as suspicious foreign vagrants**
>
> Magdalena Müllerin, aged 26, was born in Berlin and according to her statements she earned a living sewing and knitting. She did not have a fixed residence, and had previously stayed in the region around Cologne. Magdalena also had an illegitimate child of a year and a half, whose father was a French soldier.
>
> The second woman that was interrogated was Maria Kleeberin, aged 24 and born in Maastricht (Netherlands). She had been married to a Nassauischer soldier, who had passed away. Maria stated that she made a living knitting and washing and that she had come to the city to visit her sister.
>
> The women were ordered to leave the city. They were escorted out of the city gates by the city's militia, and warned not to return.
>
> From: Kamp, J. (2020). *Crime, Gender and Social Control in Early Modern Frankfurt am Main,* p. 211-274. Brill.

Source 5. Map of origin of (female and male) vagrants arrested in eighteenth century Frankfurt. Recent studies on early modern Germany have estimated a female share of 35 to 40 percent. Vagrancy was not a 'male' offence, as has long been assumed.
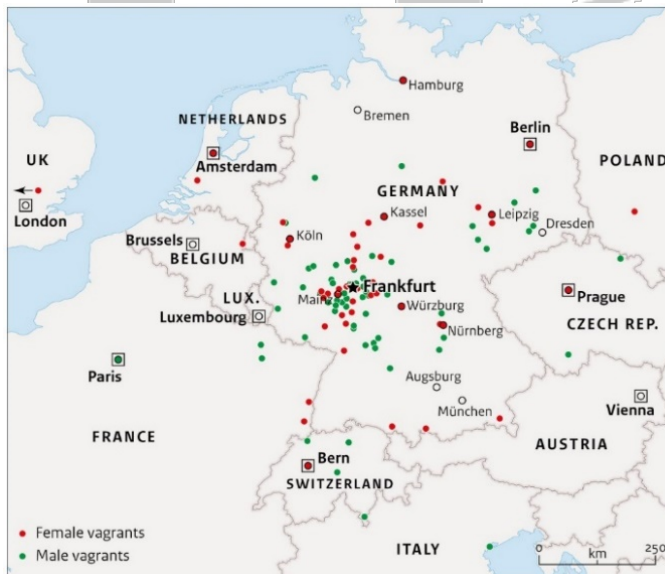
UvA Kaartenmakers, Castricum. From: Kamp, J. (2020). *Crime, Gender and Social Control in Early Modern Frankfurt am Main*. Chapter 6. Crime, Transgressing social order: mobile men and women (pp. 211-274). Brill.

https://brill.com/view/book/9789004388444/BP000006.xml

Source 6. How vagrants were perceived and treated in early modern Europe.

> **Criminalization of vagrancy**
>
> In medieval Europe, many people saw poverty as a test of their charity. As a good christian, you had to give 'alms' to people who had insufficient food or no roof over their heads. Begging was an accepted way of survival for monks, pilgrims and all the 'honest' poor.
>
> From the 16th century onwards, a more negative attitude developed. People increasingly regarded vagrants and beggars as a problem. This was related to a

strong population growth and the expansion of cities such as Amsterdam, Milan, Antwerp, Naples and Paris. Paris with a population of less than 100,000 had no fewer than 30,000 beggars. Economic depressions, plague, wars (after a war soldiers were no longer needed in the army) and crop failures led to a rapid rise in the number of people without means and contributed to a growth of vagrancy. There was a fear of spreading diseases, theft, rebellions and riots. It became more difficult to distinguish who among the needy deserved support and who did not. In many cities, it was no longer allowed to beg without permission. Punishments used were mainly banishment and compulsory employment in workhouses. In some cases, people were branded (so they could be recognized when they returned to the city) or hanged (if they did return while that was not permitted). In sum, vagrants were increasingly seen as criminals, as harmful to the community. In the ordinances against vagrancy, the term vagrant was accompanied by adjectives like frivolous, loose, suspicious, bawdy, masterless, idle, godless, and wicked.

Based on: Kamp, J. (2020). *Crime, Gender and Social Control in Early Modern Frankfurt am Main* (pp. 211-274). Brill; Koenraadt, F.(2014). Vagebonden in woorden en daden, én in beelden. *Tijdschrift over Cultuur & Criminaliteit (4)* 2, 3-33; Kuijpers, E. (2005). *Migrantenstad. Immigratie en sociale verhoudingen in 17e-eeuws Amsterdam.* Hilversum: Verloren; Van de Mortel, J. (2005). *Criminaliteit, rechtspleging en straf in het Hollandse drostambt Heusden, 1615 – 1714.* Nijmegen.

Source 7. Medieval ways of punishing were increasingly considered brutal and barbaric. In the 16th century a new institution was becoming popular, the so-called prison workhouse (houses of correction, tuchthuizen, Zuchthäuser, Arbeitshäuser, hôpitaux généraux or dépôts de mendicité). These establishments are the precursors of the 19th century prison. Altough the workhouses were also places of hunger, humiliation, sexual and physical assault, they provided relief for poor, old and sick persons, and sometimes education. The Rasphuys (around 1700), was a workhouse in Amsterdam were delinquents had to shave wood from the brazilwood tree, rasping it into powder which was delivered to the paint industry.

Source 8. Spanish royal instruction of December 22, 1786 concerning the capture of vagabonds by the local justice. They had to serve in the army for a period of four years. There were entire battalions known as "Los Terceros" formed as a result. Library of Congress Law Library Washington.

https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.law/llhsp.2018751419
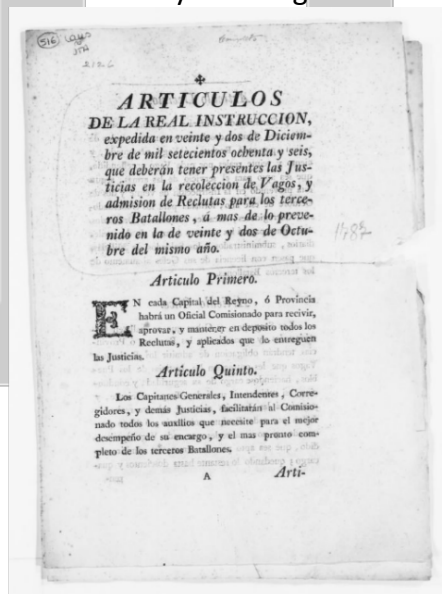
Source 9. Announcement of the French king Louis XV in 1764. All beggars who beg more than half a mile from their homes would be arrested. Beggars and vagrants were

interned and subjected to forced labor.
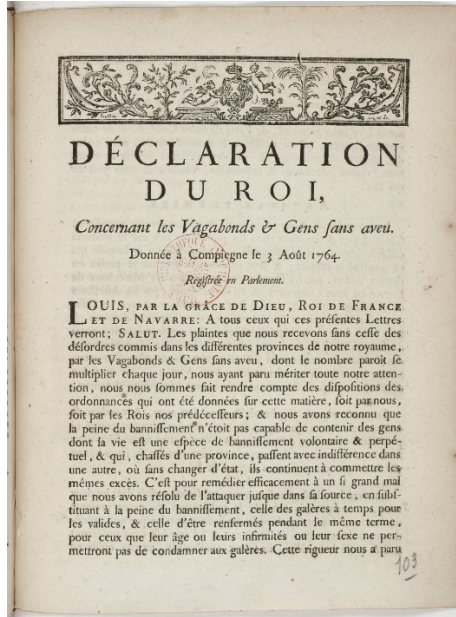
NINETEENTH CENTURY / EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Source 10. Drawing. Vagrant. Jan Toorop, 1909, Boymans.

Source 11. August Meissl, The vagrant, acquarel drawing, 1910. Collection Simonis & Buunk.

https://www.simonis-buunk.nl/kunstwerk/august-e-ritter-von-meissl-aquarel-tekening-de-landloper/5382/

Source 12. Description of a woman sent several times to a Dutch penal colony because of vagrancy (19ᵗʰ century).

> **Send to a penal colony**
>
> Aaltje Brouwer was born in 1821 in Leeuwarden, a city in the northern Netherlands. Her mother died when she was eleven, while her father served multiple sentences for vagrancy. Aaltje herself was convicted of vagrancy at least nine times between 1843 and 1890, and sent to beggar colonies. …. After each conviction, Aaltje Brouwer returned to Leeuwarden. Aaltje was convicted for a final time in 1890, and was resident in a penal colony when she died in 1893. She never married. Although the number of stays that Aaltje had in the penal colonies was high, her life was somewhat typical of other women convicted of vagrancy. Vagrant women tended to live in urban areas, where they were born or migrated to in adulthood. Many of them had weak social networks, and did not have the possibility of living with family members.
>
> Based on: Thompson, K, Tassenaar, V., Wiersma, S., & Portrait, F. (2022). *Early-life conditions, height and mortality of nineteenth-century Dutch vagrant women. The History of the Family*.

Source 13. Video of the Colonies of Benevolence. Central to the Colonies of Benevolence was the idea of raising beggars and vagrants into better people who contributed to society. This was in line with the 'progressive' Enlightenment ideals of malleability and eradicating poverty completely from society. In the agricultural colonies the people were put to work (they turned moorland into fertile farmland and did a variety of other work). The enterprise, however, became

a failure. The colonies ran into financial problems.

VIDEO Colonies of Benevolence -

Source 14. Registration card of convicted vagrant Jan Geel in Veenhuizen, one of the Colonies of Benevolence in the Netherlands.

Registration of convicted vagrants in a penal colony

In 1886 at the age of 47, Jan Geel was sent to one of the Colonies of Benevolence, Veenhuizen, by the judge in Alkmaar. Here you see how he was registered when he came in (with two pictures and finger prints). He was convicted for vagrancy. He had been married, but divorced in 1884. He beat his wife and was often drunk. His wife died in 1888. He had 8 children who were raised by others. In 1923 he was released.

https://www.gevangenismuseum.nl/bijzondere-verhalen/het-verhaal-van-een-verpleegde-6804-in-veenhuizen/

More pictures of people who were send to the colony Veenhuizen. https://allekolonisten.nl/nl/bewoners.html

More pictures of the Colonies of Benevolence. https://www.flickriver.com/photos/kolonienvanweldadigheid/popular-interesting/

Source 15. Print of the Ommerschans beggar asylum (1819). There were about thirty rooms where men and women slept (separately) with about 40 to 50 people. The residents had to sew, weave, spin, or make robes or carpent. Nearby, men accompanied by soldiers performed labor in the fields.

https://www.canonvannederland.nl/nl/overijssel/overijssel/ommerschans
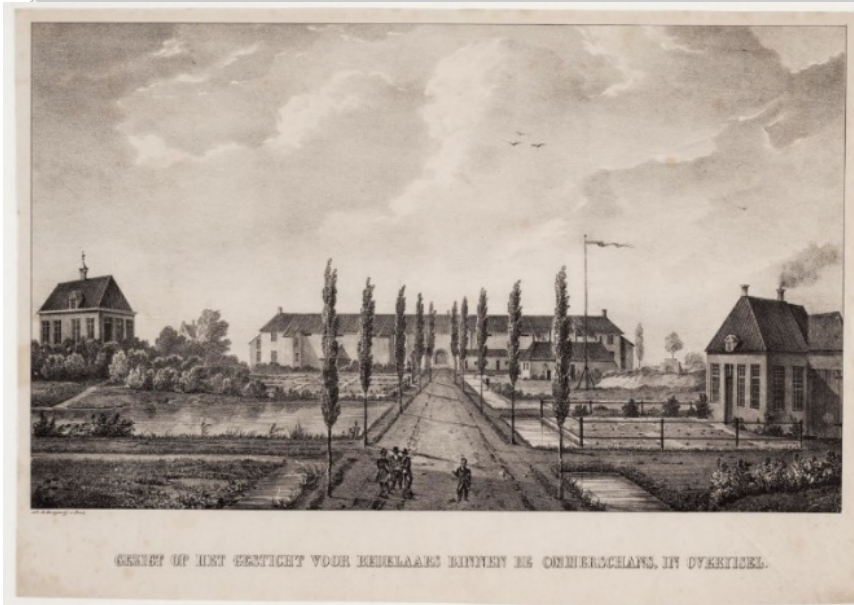
Source 16. Declaration of Napoleon II, 22 november 1850 about sending convicted to prisons in the French colonies.

Declaration of Napoleon III
"Six thousand condemned men in our prisons weigh heavily on our budget,

becoming increasingly depraved and constantly menacing our society. I think it is possible to make the sentence of forced labour more effective, more moralising, less expensive and more humane by using it to further the progress of French colonisation."

Barbançon, L. (2003). *L'Archipel des forçats : Histoire du bagne de Nouvelle-Calédonie* (1863-1931). Villeneuve d'Ascq, Presses universitaires du Septentrion.

Source 17. Old postcard (about 1900) of the bedroom of the prison in the penal colony Cayenne, French Guyane.

GUYANE - CAYENNE - Intérieur du pénitencier - Le dortoir

Source 18. Transportation of people who were convicted for a crime to oversees French colonies.

Prison camps in French Guyana
The French were inspired by the British who send convicted to Australia. There were various motives for sending people to overseas prison camps. First, the French authorities could get rid of convicts who might commit crimes again after their release. Second, it provided the colonies with abundant and cheap workforce and helped founding overseas settlements to furhter build the French colonial empire. At their release, convicted were required to remain in the colony a time equivalent to the duration of their sentence. This allowed the prevention of the return of convicts to France and forced them to settle in the colony of French Guyana.
Typically, people sent to the overseas prison camps were mostly those

convicted of serious crimes. However, a new category of convicts appeared in French Guyana in 1887. From then on, people who had been arrested several times were also transported. And those convicts were mostly offenders guilty of simple theft or vagrancy. They were interned in the penitentiary of Saint-Jean-du-Maroni and its subcamps, where they were subjected to forced labor. 17,372 of those 'relégués' were sent to French Guyana. The prison closed in 1946, the same year the whole colonial penal system was abolished.

Sanchez, J. (2016). *French Guiana. The Penal Colonization of French Guyana* 1852-1953.
Entrance of the French colonial overseas prison camp in Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni in French Guiana (1858-1946).
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Entr%C3%A9e_du_camp_de_la_transportation_%C3%A0_Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni.jpg

Source 19. Detail of a poster (1837) against the New Poor Law in the United Kingdom. This law ensured that the poor were housed in workhouses, clothed and fed. In return, the poor had to work for several hours each day. The poor called the workhouses 'Prisons for the Poor'. There were several riots because of the new law. In the poster you can read: "Beating this here hemp is worser than breaking stones. Lord ha' mercy on us poor. Our heads shaved and no shirt allowed us to wear; talk of Vest Ingy slaverys, indeed vy they're expectable mechanics to us."

See for a larger version and the complete poster:
https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/1834-poor-law/z

Source 20. Lee Jeffries, photographer, made portraits of homeless people in the United Kingdom.

Portraits of the homeless
Lee Jeffries is a British street photographer. He photographed homeless people in England and all around the world. The first photo he made was an 18th year old girl in a sleeping bag on the street in London who shouted at him when he took a picture. He sat next to her and started a conversation. When asked about his work Lee Jeffries said: "I want people to look at my photographs and see the person, not the homeless person." "I want them to see the humanity."

See for some of his work
https://www.instagram.com/lee_jeffries/

See for Lee Jeffries' motivation a **video** (CNN, 2016) https://lee-jeffries.co.uk/films

Source 21. How many homeless people are there? What is being done to solve homelessness? Annual reports about homeless people for several European countries can be found on the FEANTSA website. https://www.feantsa.org/en/resources/resources-database?theme=trends+%26+statistics

Homeless people and interventions in Italy
The lack of a secure relationship (with family and parents), trauma, inability to work, long term unemployment, social and behavioural issues, divorce/separation are some of the triggers, events or factors influencing the homeless condition. Women totalled 6,239 (14.3%). They have similar characteristics as men, but a majority are victims of divorce/separation, personal trauma and forced separation from children.
…
Homelessness is recognised as urgent issue within the National Anti-Poverty Plan (ESF) in order to address two priorities: reducing homelessness; making Housing First the first way to tackle homelessness…. From 2015 to 2018, more than 160 million meals has been distributed to more than 550.000 homeless people reached, due to FEAD funds.
From: Country Profile Italy. https://www.feantsa.org/en/country-profile/2021/01/04/country-profile-italy?bcParent=27

Source 22. Extract from an interview of Jon May with David, 22 years old and homeless in the United Kingdom (1997).

David, 22 years old and homeless

Interviewer. What do you want?

David. *I want a flat, but I can't get one. I want my own, my own independence.*

Interviewer. And what would make it a home?

David. *Um, decent people for starters. Somewhere where you haven't got all your drunks, people starting fights all the time ... a decent place [not one where] there are holes in the wall, where the carpet smells, that's full of drunks and druggies ... a decent job... and a bird.*

Interviewer. And does it matter where it is?

David. *No. Anywhere really. It doesn't matter to me.*

David left `home' at the age of 16 years to move within the same town into a flat provided by the local social services.... *I was born in [place name], one of the worst areas of [place name]. And what it was, was like gangs. All the youngsters round there from age anything, from about 14 up to about 18, 19, hung around in gangs. If you didn't join a gang [very quietly] you got picked on, basically.*

Never part of a gang and frequently bullied (partly because of his size), having left home David also quickly left the town, moving no fewer than six times over the next six years. A number of these moves were, ostensibly at least, made in search of work, others as he took up the kind of training schemes offering only low-paid, temporary employment that are a common feature in the lives of the young homeless and unemployed. Each time he moved David also found himself homeless, sleeping rough for a few nights as he reached a new town before finding a bed in a night shelter or hostel and moving from there to a bedsit or room in a shared house.

Source 23. Extract from NOS news article about the increased number of homeless people in the Netherlands (August 23, 2019). The full article also mentions possible causes of the increase in homelessness, such as the growing shortage of affordable rental housing. Or that youth assistance ends after the age of 18, when many young people are not yet able to stand on their own two feet.

Number of homeless people more than doubled in ten years

The number of homeless people in the Netherlands has more than doubled in ten years. Figures from the Central Bureau of Statistics show that the number of people between the ages of 18 and 65 who have no fixed place to live or stay has increased from 17,800 in 2009 to 39,300 in 2018. The number of homeless people between the ages of 18 and 30 actually tripled over the same period.

CBS defines homeless as people who sleep in the open, in covered public spaces, such as porches, bicycle sheds, stations, shopping malls or in a car. People who are taken in by social organizations or have found temporary shelter with friends, acquaintances or family are also included in the figures. People who are in the Netherlands illegally and are homeless have not been included in the figures by CBS.

https://nos.nl/artikel/2298592-aantal-daklozen-in-tien-jaar-meer-dan-verdubbeld (in Dutch)

Source 24. Data about homelessness in the European Union. FEANTSA and the Fondation Abbe's, *6th Overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe*, May 6, 2021

https://www.feantsa.org/en/news/2021/05/05/6th-overview-of-housing-exclusion-in-europe-2021-youth-in-danger

Source 25. Video of Karl's story about the Vagrancy Act being repealed in England and Wales.

VIDEO

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1uZF_kedl8o

Source 26. Changing perceptions and interventions regarding homelessness.

Decriminalization?

In the 20th and 21th century, there is still criminalization of what are now called "homeless people". This is reflected in removing them from particular areas, restricting the areas in which sleeping is allowed, an the prohibiting of begging.

Since 1824, in England and Wales, the Vagrancy Act has made it a crime just to sleep rough or beg. In 2022 the act was repealed. Also in other countries acts against vagrants were abolished (e.g. in Finland in 1987, or in Belgium in 1993). However, there are also countries where these acts are under discussion. In those countries, it is, for example, a criminal act to sleep in the open air or in deserted or unoccupied buildings, not having any visible means of subsistence. The persecution of homeless is contrary to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the European Convention on Human Rights and the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

It has become more common to consider poverty the root of vagrancy rather than a predisposition to laziness. Many European countries prioritize housing-led approaches and programs combining medical and social support for long-term homeless people.

ACTIVITY: Vagrants in European history: *exclusion, imprisonment or relief*

Cripple vagrant, Pieter Jansz. Quast, 1634, Rijksmuseum

Throughout history, there have been people in society who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, such as those living on the street, in emergency shelters, transitional housing, or places not meant for habitation. For a long time, these people were referred to as vagrants or beggars. Nowadays, we usually speak of the homeless.

The focus questions of this activity are:

How did the authorities deal with vagrants and what do you think of the measures taken?

STEP 1: FIND OUT WHO WAS A VAGRANT AND WHY

a) First you are going to investigate who was considered a vagrant / homeless and why.

Work together in a dyad. Distribute the sources mentioned below *within* each time period.

Work together to complete the anwer sheet. In the second column, you gather evidence for the proposition that vagrants were a diverse group. In the third column, you gather (possible) reasons for why people became vagrant or homeless. Always indicate the source (write down the number) from which you got the information.
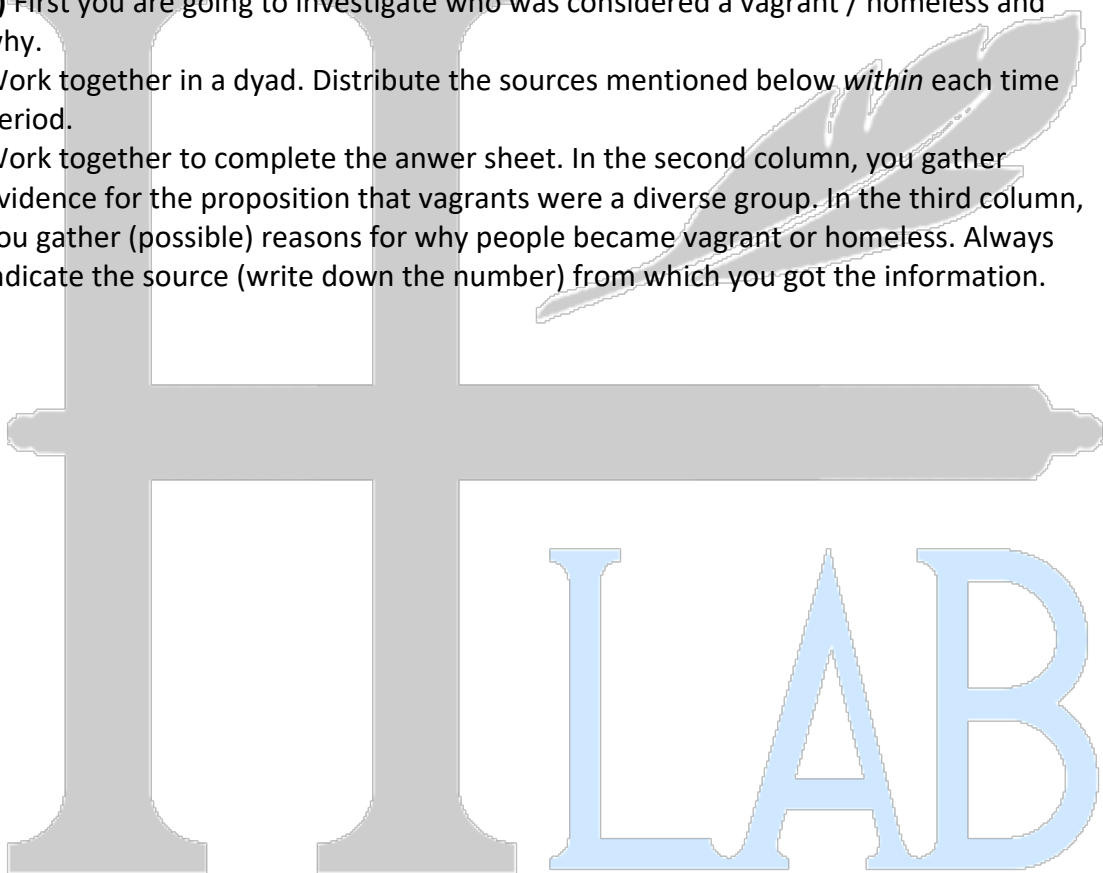
Answer sheet: Who were vagrant/homeless and why?

	Who were vagrant/homeless? Include examples that show that it is a <u>diverse</u> <u>group</u> (think, for example, of gender, age, profession, having disabilities, were they sleep). Always mention the number of the source with your example.	What were <u>reasons</u> for vagrancy / homelessness? Always mention the number of the source(s) with each reason.
Early modern time (1500-1800) Sources: 1 to 6		
19th century / early 20th century Sources: 10 to 14		
Present (late 20th / early 21st century		

b) Explain that *throughout history, there is no such thing as 'the' vagrant or homeless person*. Give three arguments. Use at least six items (from both columns) from your answer sheet to support your arguments.

c) When it comes to groups that are excluded, prejudice and stereotyping are readily apparent. Our image of vagrants and homeless people is also shaped by the way the group is portrayed and the words used to describe them. Give three examples of a negative portrayal/description that you found in the sources.

d) Explain how photographer Lee Jefferson (source 20) tries to take another approach.

STEP 2: FIND OUT WHAT HAS BEEN CHANGED IN TREATMENT AND INTERVENTIONS
How the authorities deal with people without a roof over their heads or a permanent place of residence has changed over time. But some things have also remained the same.

a) Work together in a dyad. Distribute the sources mentioned in the answer sheet below. Work together to list the ways vagrants/homeless people were treated or punished (which punishment?) in the Middle ages, Early modern time, the 19th century and the present. Always indicate the source (write down the number) from which you got the information.

Answer sheet: Tr *criminalisation* **of vagrancy / homelessnes** *decriminalisatio*

Middle Ages Source 6	Early modern time Sources: 4, 5, 7 to 9	19th / early 20th century Sources: 12 to 19	20th century/present Sources: 21, 25, 26

b) Use the information in your answer sheet and explain that in the early modern period and the nineteenth century, there was criminalisation of vagrancy. Clarify what changed and use facts and examples from the sources to make it clear that vagrants were seen as criminals.

c) Is there decriminalization of homelessness in our time? Are homeless people no longer treated as criminals? Give an argument for and against using facts or examples from the sources.

STEP 3: DISCUSS WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT THE TREATMENT OF VAGRANTS / HOMELESS PEOPLE

When is a punishment or intervention from authorities justified or good or bad? On the one hand you can look at what is best for the common good, for the society as a whole. On the other hand you can look at what is humane or fair towards the person that is punished. Is the severity of the punishment proportional to the offense. Is there a criminal offense at all? Finally, you can look at the effectiveness; does it result in less vagrancy or homelessness?

a) Ideas about what is justified or good or bad change over time. The founders of the penal colonies in the Netherlands and Belgium called them 'colonies of benevolence' (source 13). And Napoleon III (source 16) was positive about the sentence of forced labour in the colonies.
Look at sources 12 to 19 again. Why did people at that time think these domestic / overseas penal colonies were good measures to combat vagrancy? Give three reasons.

b) What do *you* think about the domestic and oversees penal colonies? Use at least two criteria mentioned in the introduction of step 3 above and information from the sources (12 to 19).

c) What values do you consider important when dealing with homeless people? Chose two or three values you consider important. Work in pairs. Explain to each other your choice.

O Autonomy	O Justice
O Care	O Liveability
O Charity	O Order
O Discipline	O Protection

O Generosity   O Respect
O Freedom   O Safety/security
O Health   O Self-determination
O Helpfulness   O Tolerance
O Humanity   O ……………………….

d) Write an essay (200 to 400 words) in which you respond to the following statement using what you have found out so far.
The treatment of people who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (vagrants or homeless) improved over time

Guidelines:

- present your stance: has it improved over time? Yes, no or partially?
- provide two or three arguments for your stance, supported with facts / examples from the sources (include the number of the sources)
- include information about how vagrants / homeless people were/are treated (think about punishments or other interventions) in different periods (middle ages to present)
- evaluate the punishments/interventions you mention, and make clear what criteria and values you use in your judgment

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