

# Intermediate report 2012–2013

The Finnish National Programme to reduce  
long-term homelessness (Paavo 2)  
2012–2015

**MINISTRY OF THE ENVIRONMENT IN FINLAND**

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## Abstract

The intermediate report describes the starting point of the long-term homelessness reduction programme 2012–2015 (Paavo 2) and its central implementation for the years 2012–2013. The programme is a continuation of the Paavo 1 programme implemented in 2008–2011. The goal of the programme is to eliminate long-term homelessness by 2015. The central actions include allocating 1,250 housing or supportive housing units or places in treatment for the long-term homeless, developing support models for scattered housing, making the prevention of homelessness more effective, and integrating work on homelessness as a part of the work in preventing social exclusion.

The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of the Environment. In addition the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH), the Criminal Sanctions Agency, the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA), Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY), 11 cities with the largest number of homeless people and several national and local organisations and service providers are participating in the implementation.

In 2012–2013, approximately €21 million in grants was awarded for construction and the procurement of dwellings and approximately €13.6 million for providing and developing services, or approximately €34.6 million in total. In addition, cities allocated funding, for example, for salaries at 50 % of the costs of support personnel in return of the MSAH grant.

In the cities participating in the programme, a total of 1,057 dwellings were completed for the use of the programme in 2012–2013. There were 763 dwellings for housing units and 294 for youth housing. The planning for the completed dwellings was already mainly started during Paavo 1. In addition, a total of 652 separate dwellings were allocated for scattered housing. 142 housing support personnel were hired with <sup>1</sup>Kaste funding and the cities' own funding and 13 employees with other funding. In addition, there were 30 housing advisers and 15 experts by experience working in the cities involved in the programme in 2013.

In the programme, the development work has been centralised to the Networking for Development project administered by Y-Foundation. In 2013, among other things, 11 training events were implemented and the pilot work for scattered housing was started, and together with an extensive network of actors, the programme's follow-up survey practice was created. The survey investigated the background for homelessness and the success of housing for people living with housing support in 2012–2013. According to the answers of the survey, most of the clients were homeless before entering the service. The average duration of homelessness was 3 years and 4 months. The average duration of support periods for those who moved out of the support was 1 year and 2 months. Over one half of the instances of moving out were planned, or the client continued to live independently in the same dwelling. The most important reasons for moving out unplanned were listed as the death of the inhabitant, use of intoxicants and the disappearance of the client or giving up housing.

In 2013, the number of the homeless and long-term homeless was less than during the previous year, but at the same time, the number of homeless people with an immigrant background increased significantly. The long-term homelessness of young people also increased slightly.

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<sup>1</sup> National Development Plan for Social Welfare and Health Care (Kaste Programme) is a strategic steering tool that is used to manage and reform social and health policy. [http://www.stm.fi/en/strategies\\_and\\_programmes/kaste](http://www.stm.fi/en/strategies_and_programmes/kaste)

In 2013, a discussion was also started on the next stages of the national homelessness policy. The goal is to link the work on homelessness and the Housing First approach even more closely in the future, as a part of preventing social exclusion and the policy of social empowerment. The objective of the new programme is to direct resources in particular to the prevention of homelessness and strengthening the prerequisites for housing, as well as preventing the recurrence of homelessness and breaking the spiral of becoming homeless repeatedly. The preparations for the new programme are carried out together with an extensive network.

## 1. Background

### 1.1. Government resolution and the goals of the programme

The programme to reduce long-term homelessness in 2012–2015 is based on the <sup>2</sup>Government resolution on 15 December 2011. The starting point for the resolution is that the eradication of long-term homelessness requires simultaneous actions at different levels, meaning the prevention of homelessness, general housing policy actions, and targeted actions to eradicate long-term homelessness. The programme's goals have been recorded in the resolution as follows:

- Elimination of long-term homelessness by 2015
- Reduction of the risk of long-term homelessness by making the use of social rental housing stock more efficient, in order to reduce homelessness
- Creation of more effective measures for preventing homelessness

In addition, the resolution defines the central measures taken to reach the goal:

- By 2015, allocating approximately 1,000 dwellings, supportive housing units, or places in treatment for the long-term homeless in the capital city area, of which 750 will be allocated to Helsinki and a total of 250 to Espoo and Vantaa. The goal is to implement at least 250 dwellings, supportive housing units or places in treatment in Tampere, Turku, Lahti, Kuopio, Joensuu, Oulu, and Jyväskylä by 2015. The city-specific goals are defined in detail in the letters of intent.
- Implementation plans for the eradication of long-term homelessness will be drawn up in the cities that participate in the implementation of the programme.

The implementation plan is an overall plan, which includes the use of social rental housing stock in providing housing for the homeless, the need for support and housing solutions focused on the long-term homeless, preventative measures, and the development of housing services for substance abuse and mental health rehabilitation clients and the structural changes implemented in them. The plans include an itemised schedule of the projects and other actions that will be started.

- The use of shelters, in accordance with the Act on Accommodation and Catering (2006/308), for the long-term housing of the homeless will be abandoned, and the shelters will be replaced by independent housing units, in accordance with the Act on Residential Leases, or supported housing units, in accordance with the Social Welfare Act.

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<sup>2</sup> <http://valtioneuvosto.fi/toiminta/periaatepaatokset/periaatepaatos/fi.jsp?oid=346219>

- In cooperation with the cities participating in the programme and organisations producing housing services, the Criminal Sanctions Agency will create local practices to ensure housing for people going on parole or serving a monitoring sentence, as well as the support needed.

#### Actions for preventing homelessness:

- In order to prevent the homelessness of young people, the youth homelessness prevention project will be implemented in the cities that have signed the letter of intent, as a nationally coordinated multidisciplinary joint project of the cities, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and various organisations. The Finnish Youth Housing Association (NAL) is responsible for coordinating the project. Preventing the homelessness of young people will be included in the letters of intent between the cities and the state. Housing advice and support for the management of everyday life that prevent homelessness and social exclusion will be increased for at least 500 young people, and a minimum of 600 dwellings will be built for youth housing stock supported by ARA and RAY.
- Housing advice will be made permanent by confirming the regulations on housing advice.

#### Other actions:

- The long-term homelessness eradication programme will be implemented as a partnership project of the state authorities and the cities that have signed the letter of intent, as well as various organisations. The Ministry of the Environment will be responsible for the management and coordination of the programme, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Ministry of Justice, as well as ARA and RAY.
- The Ministry of the Environment will appoint a steering and monitoring group for the programme; a representative of ARA will act as the Chair of the group.
- Research and development that support the implementation of the programme will be supported annually by ARA's development budget.

The funding activities are described in Chapter 3 Funding.

Based on the above items, the following have been specified as the focal points of the programme:

- The Housing First principle
- Work done in the cities that have signed the letter of intent, in accordance with the action plans
- Targeted actions, such as allocating 1,250 dwellings in order to reach the goals of the programme
- Flexible support and scattered housing
- Alternative housing solutions that enable permanent housing
- Inclusion of the inhabitants
- Replacing shelters with modern duty service housing and emergency housing facilities
- Developing housing services for substance abuse and mental health rehabilitation clients
- Having an impact on the homelessness of immigrants primarily via the measures of the general housing policy
- Integrating the work on homelessness as a part of the work to prevent social exclusion in cities
- Training and development
- Entrenching research and social innovations
- International cooperation

## 1.2. Central findings of Paavo 1

A set of targeted actions was implemented during the programme period 2008–2011, which helped to reduce long-term homelessness by 28 % from 2008 to 2011. By the end of 2011, a total of 1,519 dwellings and supportive housing units were taken into use in the cities that have signed the letter of intent. The programme's original goal of 1,250 was exceeded by 269 dwellings. During the programme, a new kind of multiprofessional, mobilised approach to work supporting the Housing First principle was created in Finland, the programme for converting shelters into housing units was started, and a set of preventative measures was implemented.

According to the <sup>3</sup>final report of Paavo 1, the focal point during the programme period 2012–2015 should be moved further towards lighter support and scattered housing. The central challenges of the new programme period are, on one hand, related to the development of substance abuse rehabilitation, and on the other hand, how to ensure that there is sufficient support available at the right time in scattered supportive housing. A particular challenge is the sufficient supply of reasonably priced housing stock, allowing the construction of successful individual housing paths. The goal of eradicating long-term homelessness is not realistic, unless the goals of the reduction programme are supported both by the more efficient use of the existing rental housing stock and methods of general housing policy that ensure the sufficient supply of reasonably priced rental housing.

## 2. Actors

With the state, the Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the implementation of the programme and the coordination of the whole. In addition, other participants in the implementation affiliated with the state are the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Criminal Sanctions Agency and ARA, as well as the Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY). The 11 largest cities with homelessness, Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Tampere, Lahti, Jyväskylä, Oulu, Joensuu, Kuopio, Turku and Pori, are involved in the implementation of the programme. Letters of intent have been drawn up together with the cities, mainly during the start of 2012. Many of the cities have also drawn up an action plan, in which the city-specific goals and actions have been itemised. The city-specific central goals, actions and results are presented in more detail in Chapter 7.

In addition, several national and local organisations and service providers participate in the implementation, of which the following, among others, will implement separate projects as a part of the programme:

- Y-Foundation, the Networking for Development project
- No Fixed Abode NGO, Own Keys project
- Finnish Youth Housing Association (NAL), the youth homelessness prevention project
- A non-profit aftercare foundation (for released prisoners and their families ] (Krits), Building the bridge to freedom project
- Espoon järjestöjen yhteisö (EJY), Voimanpesä project
- Criminal Sanctions Agency (RISE), Own Home project

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<sup>3</sup>[http://www.housingfirst.fi/en/housing\\_first/development\\_work\\_2012\\_-\\_2015/international\\_evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_paavo\\_program](http://www.housingfirst.fi/en/housing_first/development_work_2012_-_2015/international_evaluation_of_the_paavo_program)

The central goals, measures and results of the aforementioned projects are presented in more detail in Chapter 4 Development work. In addition, the programme works in close cooperation with several partnership projects and programmes.

### 3. Funding

#### 3.1. Financiers and funding goals set

The most important financiers of the programme are the cities involved in the programme, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH) via Kaste funding, the Ministry of the Environment (ME), Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA), and the Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY). In the resolution, the roles and investments of the financiers are defined as follows:

ARA allocates investment subsidies for special groups to the projects approved into the programme. During 2012–2015, a maximum of 15 million euros/year in subsidies will be allocated. It is possible to receive ARA's investment subsidies for special groups for alterations of shelters. ARA also supports municipalities in making housing advice permanent and extending it by allocating state funding through ARA for housing advice or a similar preventative activity at 20 % of the costs. A requirement for granting the subsidy is that the municipalities have procedures in place in order to prevent evictions and regarding cooperation in eviction situations that the social administration and housing actors have agreed upon together, and that housing advice and housing support as a whole have been included as a part of the implementation plans.

MSAH funds the production of support services, in accordance with the programme. The funding is allocated for the personnel costs required to provide support services for projects, in accordance with the programme. A total of a minimum of €6.7 million in state funding can be allocated for the hiring costs of support personnel to new projects implemented as the cities' own or outsourced services in 2012–2015.

Taking into account its funding strategy and the more detailed policies, RAY will provide support in 2012–2015 with operating and development grants for organisations that develop and organise activities preventing long-term homelessness, as well as supported housing for the long-term homeless and people threatened by homelessness. In addition, RAY is estimated to support, when its profit development allows, the procurement of dwellings for the long-term homeless within the framework of an annual appropriation of approximately €10 million. Taking into account the funds for procuring dwellings for special groups already in the indicative funding plan, altogether €2.5 million of this appropriation can be allocated in 2012–2015 for the procurement of supportive housing for released prisoners and people serving a monitoring sentence as homeless. RAY is prepared to allocate operating and development grants to organisations for the prevention of homelessness of young people in 2012–2015, within the framework of its annual appropriation.

#### 3.2. Realisation of funding 2012–2013

By the end of 2013, ARA has made decisions on provisions for the implementation of a total of 171 dwellings, 122 of which are new constructions and 49 involve renovations. No decisions on provisions for the procurement of dwellings have been made. Altogether, a total of €9.2 million has been granted to the aforementioned targets in investment subsidies. By the end of 2013, a total of 33 dwellings have been completed. In addition, ARA has assisted housing advice activities with €890,000 by the end of 2013. The subsidies have been used to hire 51 housing advisers in 32 municipalities in different areas of Finland.

MSAH has awarded grants for the labour costs of support personnel in homelessness projects, with €2,454,117 in 2012 and €2,826,000 in 2013, resulting in a total of €5,280,117. The grants in 2012 have enabled the hiring of approximately 62 people (person years) and approximately 71 people in 2013, resulting in a total of 133 people hired for work on homelessness.

RAY has allocated €8.8 million in investment subsidies for procuring separate dwellings for the work on homelessness in 2012 and €7.14 million in 2013, which is €15.94 million in total. There were 160 dwellings procured in 2012 and 102 dwellings in 2013, or 262 dwellings in total. RAY granted €3.02 million of funding for building youth housing in 2012, and €2.96 in 2013, meaning a total of €5.98 million. Altogether 161 youth housing units have been completed, of which 138 were built in the cities participating in the programme in 2012–2013. In addition, RAY awarded €3.39 million in targeted operations funding (Ak and C grants) for work on homelessness in 2012 and €3.98 million in 2013, meaning a total of €7.37 million.

All in all, approximately €21 million in subsidies have been granted for construction and procuring dwellings in 2012–2013 and approximately €13.6 million have been granted for producing and developing services, meaning a total of €34.6 million in total. The cities that participate in implementing the programme have also invested significantly in the implementation. Among other things, the cities have allocated over 50 % of the personnel costs for hiring support personnel, in return for the MSAH subsidy. Some of the cities have also hired support personnel completely with their own funding. In addition, the cities' investment in issues, such as the local organisation of activities, development, and the implementation of construction projects, must be taken into account.

## 4. Development work

### 4.1. Networking for Development project as a platform for the programme's development work

The Networking for Development project 2012–2015 functions as a platform for the development work done in the programme. The goal of the project is to clarify the content of the Finnish Housing First principle and to strengthen the organisations in developing services for the homeless. The partnership project of five organisations is led by the Y-Foundation. The project is implemented according to the thematic aspects that arise in the programme. Each partner is responsible for its own area, as follows:

- Y-Foundation: scattered housing stock, housing rental, coordination responsibility for the project
- No Fixed Abode NGO: inhabitant inclusion in the planning and implementation of services
- Street Mission in the Rauma Region: support in scattered housing
- Helsinki Deaconess Institute: communality, environmental work and young people (Vamos work)
- The Finnish Blue Ribbon Foundation: rehabilitative housing for the homeless in the most difficult situations

Two teams of experts have been assembled to organise the work in practice. The role of the small team of experts, consisting of project partners, is to analyse, concretise and deepen their own role with regard to their themes of responsibility in the project's implementation, and to bring the expertise of the organisations they represent into the implementation of the project. In addition to the aforementioned people, the extended team of experts also includes representatives of organisations implementing the programme, the 11 cities involved in the programme, as well as state actors. The extended team supports the practical implementation of the project, working on and developing the concrete operating models in their workshop days that are organised 2–3 times per year.

The Networking for Development project plans and implements events in cooperation with the programme management, expert teams and partners. The events are free of charge for the participants. The participants represent a wide range of personnel and management of housing services, both from organisations and other service providers, as well as cities. Events organised have included, for example, the national homelessness day, seminars, study visits and peer visits, thematic training events and network events. The subjects have included: the Act on Residential Leases, environmental work and the renewal of professionalism. There were a total of 11 events in 2013, with 407 participants. The feedback from the events has been excellent (4.05 on average). The project has also played an important role in implementing the programme's follow-up survey and starting the pilot work for mobile support.

The project actively provides information about its activities, both in a newsletter and on the asuntoensin.fi and housingfirst.fi websites. The websites have information about the events of the project and their materials. The programme material will, for the most part, also be collected on the sites. At the end of the year, there were 740 people on the distribution list of the newsletter, and the use of the web pages increased by roughly 20 % from the previous year. The programme cooperates extensively with ongoing projects and programmes, such as Mielen Aske project coordinated by the Ministry of the Environment and the housing advice forum led by ARA. The Networking for Development project also participates in the programme's international cooperation together with the Y-Foundation.

The following separate projects have also played an important role in developing the work on homelessness.

#### **4.2. The Youth Homelessness Prevention project**

The goal of the youth homelessness prevention project (2012–2015) coordinated by the Finnish Youth Housing Association (NAL) is to prevent the homelessness of young people. The project is funded by RAY, and there are 6 employees working for it nationally. The project is implemented in the areas of the ten municipalities with the most homelessness.

The project is divided into four main goals:

- Structural goals, such as building 600 youth housing units and providing services to support housing for 500 young people
- Customer-oriented goals, such as reinforcing the young people's everyday life and housing skills, and developing operating models to prevent evictions
- Multidisciplinary cooperation goals, such as promoting youth housing by acting in cooperation networks essential to youth housing in the project municipalities
- Information goals, such as increasing housing information

In 2012–2013, there have been 294 youth housing units completed. In Helsinki, for example, 3 new plots have been reserved for building youth housing. In addition, municipalities have invested in the procurement and development of supported housing for young people and services that support independence. In the capital city area, for example, NAL Services Ltd. provided supported housing services in 2012–2013 for a total of 381 young people.

The project has developed courses in housing and everyday skills for young people, in cooperation with local actors. There have been a total of six courses arranged in Espoo, Jyväskylä and Tampere, and 36 young people have participated in them. Information about housing has been disseminated to young people at

lessons, fairs and events, which have reached an estimated 2,000 young people. Among other things, 34 training events have also been arranged, with roughly 1,200 professionals working with young people as participants.

The project's regional coordinators have mapped the challenges of housing for young people, and investigated the set of services that support the housing of young people. The project has gathered actors in the field together and supported the generation of new, multidisciplinary operating models that take the priority of housing into account. The homelessness of young people started to decrease in 2013, but the long-term homelessness increased slightly.

#### **4.3. Own Home project**

The purpose of the Own Home project by the Criminal Sanctions Agency is to create local practices to ensure housing for people going on parole or serving a monitoring sentence, as well as the support needed in cooperation with the cities in the PAAVO programme and organisations providing housing services. The goal of the project is to promote the implementation of the strategy of the Criminal Sanctions Agency, because it is a way to build a path to a crime-free life in cooperation with interest groups.

The project is coordinated by the Central Administration Unit of the Criminal Sanctions Agency, and participating in it is a performance target of the Criminal Sanctions Regions at least in 2013–2014. Contact persons with the Criminal Sanctions Agency have been appointed in all of the PAAVO municipalities. In cooperation with the Krits, the project arranges seminar days 3-4 times per year.

In 2013, it has been possible to create good practices in the Criminal Sanctions Region of Eastern and Northern Finland in particular. At the end of December 2013, a report by the researcher Kati Tuokkola will be completed; its purpose is to present the good practices created and the issues that need further development. Preliminary results indicate that there are still great challenges in finding suitable housing paths for criminal sanction clients. According to the data from the prisoner information system, too, the number of homeless released prisoners has remained the same in almost all cities.

#### **4.4. Building the bridge to freedom project**

The purpose of the Building the bridge to freedom project 2013–2015 (Sava) is to investigate and develop different forms of intensive support for the homeless criminal sanction clients in the capital city area placed in the housing training unit of a non-profit aftercare foundation for released prisoners and their families (Krits). The project's aim is to ensure the equal rights of the homeless to be in the scope of new forms of sanctions with the cooperation of the different units of the Criminal Sanctions Agency and the Department of Social Services and Health Care of the capital city area. The placements occur based on the decisions of the Criminal Sanctions Agency and the person's municipality of residence. The project cooperates closely with the network that supports the housing of released prisoners, which includes a total of 11 organisations providing housing services from the cities that have committed to the Paavo programme.

The first clients of the Building the bridge to freedom project started in June 2013, and there have been a total of seven clients. For them, intensive support has consisted of meetings and discussions held more frequently than usual. The support will continue, even if the parole is interrupted or if the housing does not follow Krits' planned housing path. The support is based on the client's needs, and in the end, it is voluntary. Particular focus is on the client's strengths that support detachment from crime.

The project is also currently testing the effect of evening employees in the support of parole, and the possibility to run the Criminal Sanctions Agency's accredited programmes for the clients on parole. In 2014,

the goal is to gain more clients on parole that would find coping with civilian life challenging in particular. This means that in prisons, parole should be arranged for those that truly need it.

#### **4.5. Own Keys project**

Own Keys is a development project by the No Fixed Abode NGO for 2012–2015. The project has been planned to be parallel to PAAVO 2 and to support it. The goal of the project is to reinforce the inclusion of people who have experienced homelessness in the planning and implementation of services, and to ensure that the user-oriented approach is already used in planning the services.

The project has resulted in a dialogue that is based on trust between cities, organisations, service providers and experts by experience. The experts by experience hired for the project of the No Fixed Abode NGO have grouped local experts by experiences, who have participated in e.g. the cities' project meetings. Through them, the opinions of homeless people who have been completely beyond reach before have now been heard. The project has also presented a new way of working. The experts by experience have been in direct contact with builders, architects and HVAC experts. Change proposals with an impact on the later use of the services at the location and the commitment to the services have been made at the construction stage.

In addition, the project work has generated completely new cooperation outside the project that will lead to a social network ensuring housing. The experts by experience have also become active in their own lives, and they say that they have been heard. In 2012, there were 5 experts by experience in homelessness in the cities involved in the programme and in 2013, there were already 15 experts. An expert by experience is also a member of the extended and small steering groups of the project.

#### **4.6. Voimanpesä project**

The Voimanpesä 1 (2009–2012) project of the EJY (Espoon Järjestöjen Yhteisö ry) started its operations as a part of the PAAVO 1 programme, emphasising the special position of families with children in homelessness and situations involving a threat of eviction. During the project, a client work model, based on dialogue pedagogy, was created with the help of intensive client work, assessment and research. In the model, the employee enables the emergence of a family that can cope. With this model, families can be supported very comprehensively in life changes. The model also creates significant cost savings. Active listening and being present are at the core of dialogue pedagogy. Based on the research done in the project, families that come under the threat of eviction can be divided into two groups with different reasons leading to the situation. Reasons arise from childhood and ways of acting learned then, as well as a poor financial situation during adulthood, problems internal to the family, and social structures.

The Voimanpesä 2 project (2013–2017) continues working for housing for families with children with the goal of creating a set of operating models that can ensure the housing of families with children. Target groups include homeless and multicultural families in particular, as well as the development of preventive work at even earlier stages. In order to implement the work, new kinds of structures for housing families with children and developing cooperation models with different actors are also needed. In addition, the project's goals include the assessment of the activities' impacts and their effectiveness in the long term.

### **5. Monitoring and assessment**

The Ministry of the Environment appointed a steering and monitoring group for the programme on 14 February 2012. Kari Salmi from ARA acts as the Chair of the group. The group includes representatives of

the state, the cities involved in the programme, and various organisations. The steering and monitoring group met twice in 2012. In 2013, the group did not meet. In 2014, the group met in January. The group also appointed a small steering group amongst themselves. The small steering group met six times in 2012 and nine times in 2013.

During 2013, a monitoring practice for the programme was built together with the actors participating in the programme, in accordance with the agreement of the letter of intent between the state and the cities. The monitoring makes it possible to make the work and the results visible, increases cooperation, and supports development, reporting and advocacy. The follow-up survey consists of a city-specific form and a client-specific entrance and ending form.

In 2013, the preparations for an international assessment of the programmes (Paavo 1 and 2) started. The assessment will be implemented in 2014 by a group of experts, including researchers from Sweden, United Kingdom, United States and Finland. The assessment will be completed by the end of 2014.

## 6. Central results

### 6.1. Changes in homelessness in 2012–2013

ARA collects information about homelessness from the municipalities annually. The homelessness figures are a cross section of the situation on 15 November each year. According to ARA's homelessness statistics<sup>4</sup> in 2013, long-term homelessness was reduced by approximately 80 people. In Helsinki, long-term homelessness remained at the same level after the increase in 2012. In Vantaa, long-term homelessness increased by 25 people, and it decreased in Espoo by 24 people. Long-term homelessness is focused in the capital city area, and in Helsinki in particular. 70 % of the long-term homeless are located in the capital city area. On a national level, the long-term homelessness has been reduced throughout the programme period.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://www.ara.fi/fi-FI/ARAtietopankki/ARAn\\_selvitykset/ARAn\\_selvitykset\(636\)](http://www.ara.fi/fi-FI/ARAtietopankki/ARAn_selvitykset/ARAn_selvitykset(636))

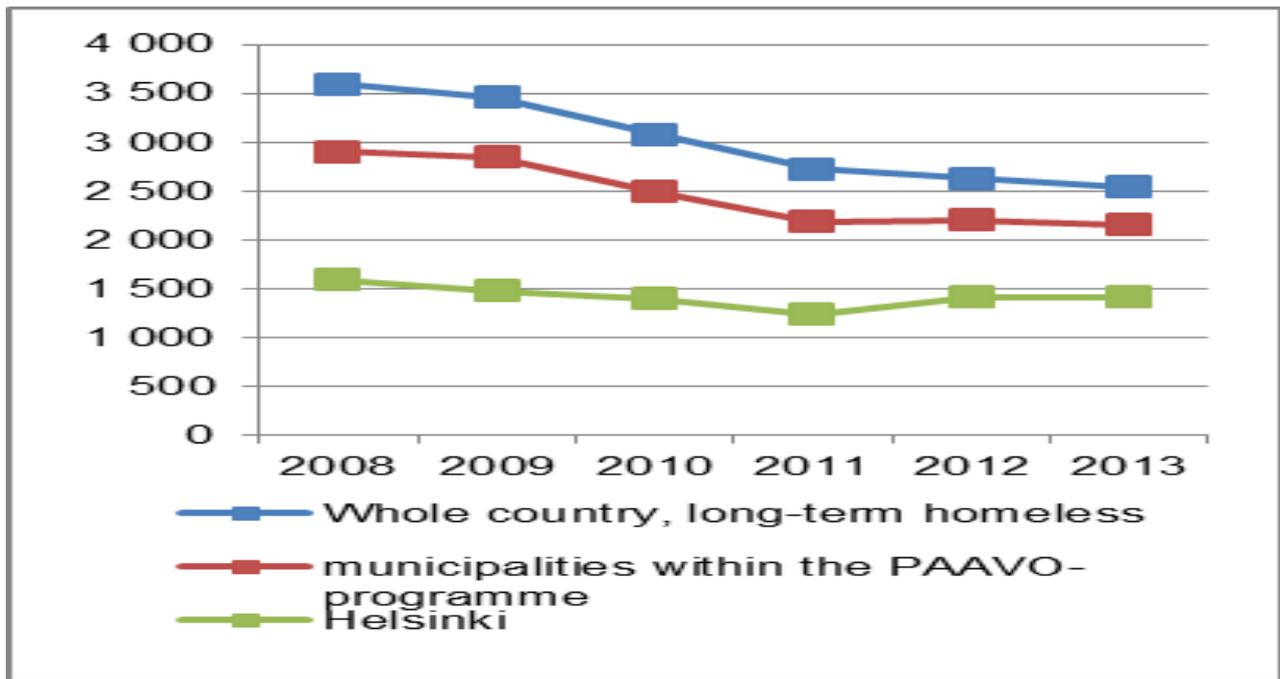


Figure 1. Long-term homeless in 2008–2013 (ARA).

From 2012 to 2013, homelessness decreased in the whole country by approximately 350 people. Both homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased clearly in Kuopio. In Lahti, Joensuu, Pori and Jyväskylä, both homelessness and long-term homelessness also decreased. In Tampere, homelessness decreased clearly, but long-term homelessness increased slightly. In Helsinki, Turku and Oulu, homelessness remained almost unchanged. In Vantaa, both temporary and long-term homelessness increased slightly. The significance of the capital city area is emphasised in the homelessness figures: over two thirds of the homeless in Finland live in Helsinki, Espoo or Vantaa.

The homelessness of young people under 25 years old began to decrease, but the long-term homelessness of young people increased slightly. The homelessness and long-term homelessness of women decreased, as did that of released prisoners. On the other hand, the homelessness of immigrants increased by more than 25 % and the number of long-term homeless increased by 130 people. Even though the total number of homeless families decreased, the number of families with an immigrant background increased significantly. The increase in the homelessness of immigrants occurred specifically in Helsinki.

The largest group of the homeless are those who live temporarily with friends or family. In 2013, three out of four single homelessness persons and over 60 % of the long-term homeless belonged to this group. The number of long-term homeless living outdoors in stairwells and in temporary housing decreased by over 20 % from last year.

Whole country	2013		Change year-on-year (people)		Change year-on-year (%)	
	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless
Outside, in staircases, shelters etc	332	146	-29	-38	-8,0 %	-20,7 %
In hostels, boarding houses	547	228	-57	-39	-9,4 %	-14,6 %
In housing service units, hospitals or other institutions	819	531	-34	52	-4,0 %	10,9 %
Released prisoners (no dwell.)	177	68	-57	-16	-24,4 %	-19,0 %
Temporarily with friends or relatives	5 626	1 572	-174	-42	-3,0 %	-2,6 %
<b>Whole country</b>	<b>7 500</b>	<b>2 545</b>	<b>-352</b>	<b>-83</b>	<b>-4,5 %</b>	<b>-3,2 %</b>
Homeless women	1 804	534	-89	-101	-4,7 %	-15,9 %
young people under 25-year	1 862	520	-187	44	-9,1 %	9,2 %
immigrants	1 986	648	436	131	28,1 %	25,3 %
<b>Homeless families</b>	417		-29		-6,5 %	
families with children	475		111		30,5 %	
immigrant families	254		43		20,4 %	
with children	346		70		25,4 %	
<b>Housed by the municipality</b>						
single homeless	3 066	1070	-237	-48	-7,2 %	
families	429		-61		-12,4 %	
families with children	570		-22		-3,7 %	

Figure 2. Homeless by group in 2013 (ARA).

## 6.2. Housing and the housing support personnel

At the end of 2013, a follow-up survey was carried out in cities with the programme for the years 2012–2013. The follow-up information was collected with city-specific and client-specific forms. The city-specific form collected information on the dwellings allocated for the programme, the personnel participating in the implementation of the programme, and estimates on the future needs for support. Most of the information was received from all 11 cities participating in the programme.

	Helsinki	Espoo	Vantaa	Lahti	Joensuu	Jyväskylä	Kuopio	Pori	Tampere	Turku	Total
Housing units	424	148	85	16	18	27	45	0	0	0	<b>763</b>
Youth housing	212	70	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	<b>294</b>
Scattered separate housing, for support use in the cities' rental housing companies	0	0	0	0	0	42	0	0	30	23	<b>95</b>
Scattered separate housing, for support use from e.g. organisations	134	25	0	5	7	0	0	0	10	0	<b>181</b>
Scattered separate housing, for independent living in the cities' rental housing companies	80	296	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	<b>376</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>539</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1709</b>

Figure 3. Completed housing allocated for the use of the programme in 2012–2013.

Based on the responses to the survey, during 2012–2013 a total of 1,709 dwellings were completed in the Paavo cities, of which 850 were in Helsinki, 539 in Espoo, 85 in Vantaa, and altogether 226 in the other cities involved in the programme. There were 763 dwellings completed in housing units and 294 in youth housing. The planning for a large number of the completed dwellings was already started during the first programme period. For the use of scattered housing in support, 95 separate dwellings were allocated with the cities' rental housing companies and 181 with organisations. In addition, 376 separate dwellings with the cities' rental housing companies were allocated for independent housing. The total number of separate dwellings for scattered housing was 652.

A total of 142 housing support personnel were hired in 2012–2013 for the cities involved in the programme with Kaste funding and the cities' own funding. An additional 13 employees were hired with other funding. According to the follow-up survey, there were also more than 30 housing advisers working in the Paavo cities and the rental housing companies owned by the city. The work of the housing advisers focused on preventive housing social work, for example in ensuring the continued housing in situations involving the arrears of rent and disturbances. In 2013, there were 15 people altogether acting as experts by experience.

### 6.3. Successful housing

A central tool in monitoring the success of housing has been the follow-up survey of the programme implemented at the end of 2013. The follow-up survey's issue-specific forms (entrance and moving out forms) were used to collect information on the background of the clients' homelessness and the success of housing. The service providers filled in the client-specific forms, partially together with the clients. There were 1,022 client-specific entrance forms and 400 moving out forms filled in by the end of 2013.

Of the respondents of the entrance forms, approximately 81 % lived in a housing unit, and approximately 19 % lived in scattered housing. Roughly 23 % were under the age of 29 and 78 % of them were men. Approximately one quarter had children (not necessarily dependants). Before entering the service, most of them were homeless. Approximately 7 % spent their nights outdoors or in a temporary shelter, and approximately 65 % lived with friends or relatives or were staying temporarily in an institution, for example. The average duration of homelessness was 3 years and 4 months. On average, the clients had been homeless 1.8 times.

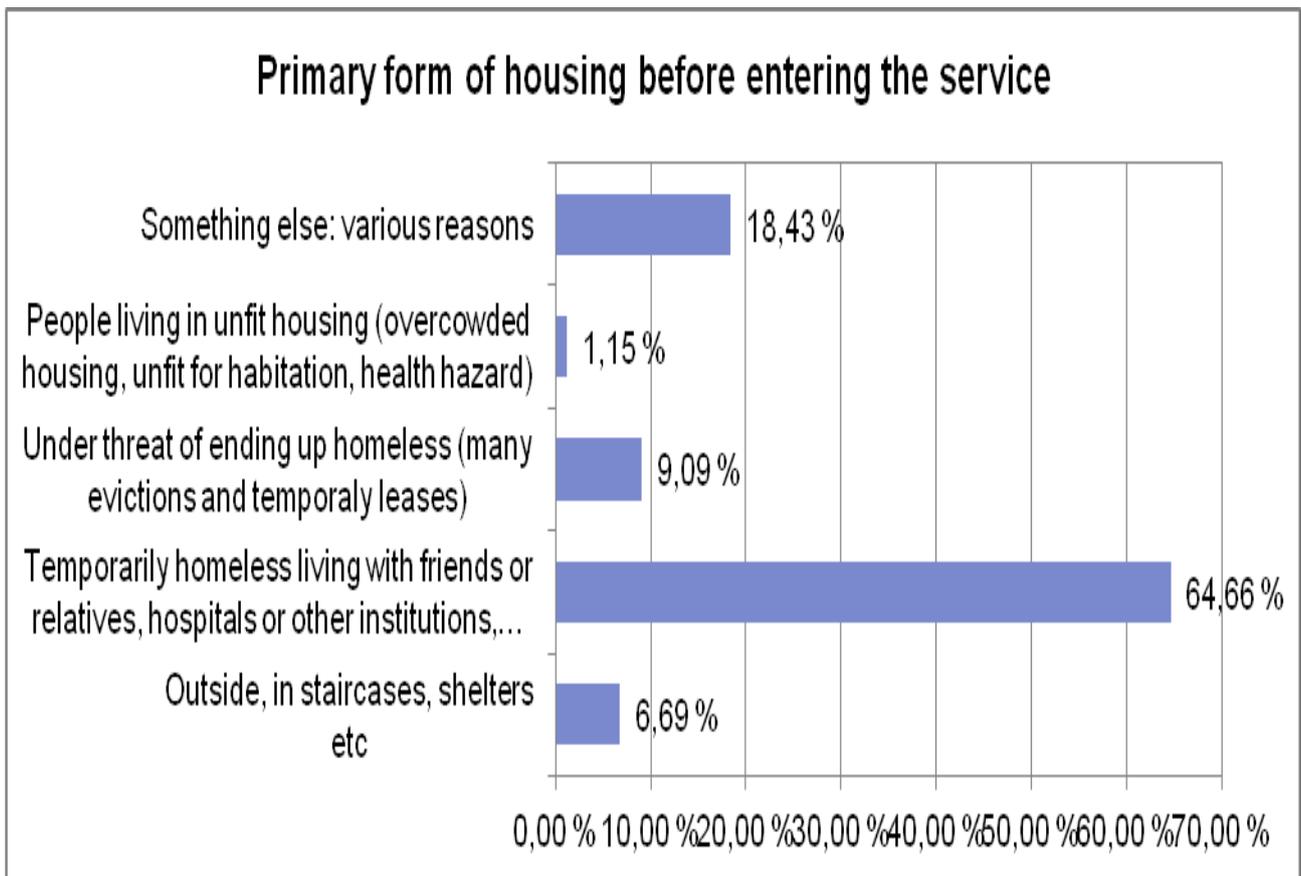


Figure 4. Primary form of housing before entering the service.

The average duration of support periods for the respondents of the moving out forms (N=400) was 1 year and 2 months. Over one half, or 53 %, of instances of moving out were planned or the client continued to live independently in the same dwelling. The share of people who moved out unplanned was approximately 40 %.

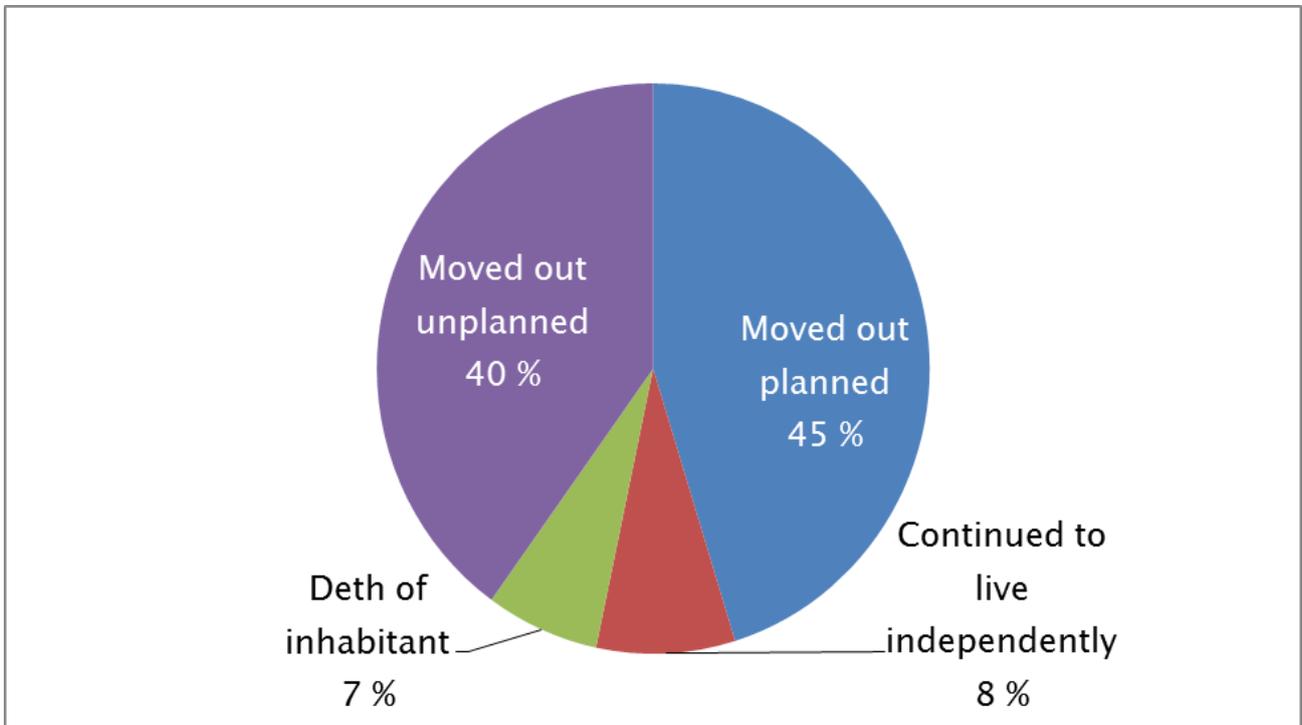


Figure 5. Reasons for moving out/terminating the service.

The most important reasons for moving out unplanned were listed on the moving out forms as the death of the inhabitant, use of intoxicants, and the disappearance of the client or giving up housing. For as many as 70 inhabitants, the reasons included several of the following issues: arrears of rent, disturbances, violence, lack of commitment and the use of intoxicants. Even though the results are merely indicative, in the future it is important to find more effective ways to prevent the recurrence of homelessness and break the spiral of repeatedly becoming homeless.

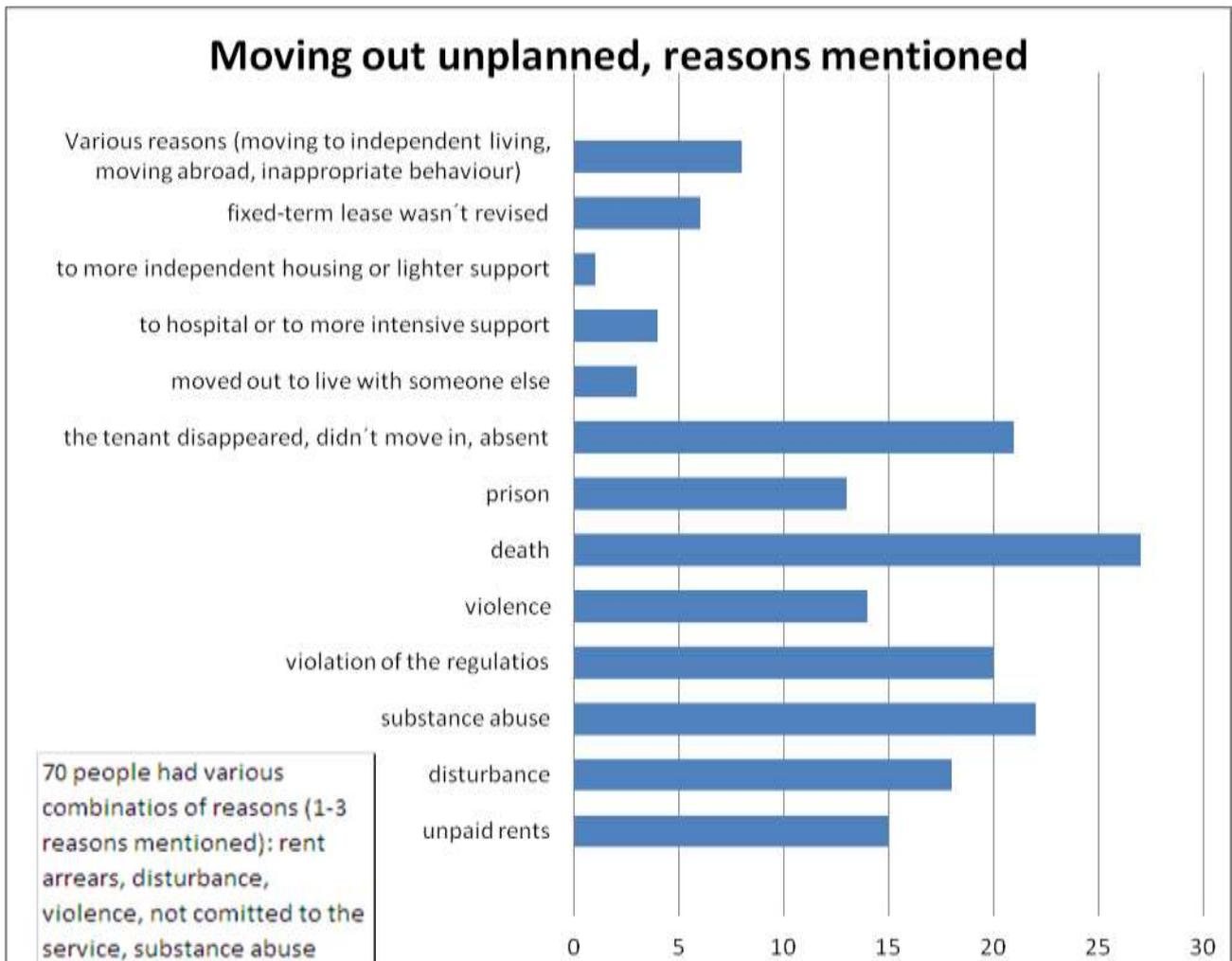


Figure 6. Reasons for moving out unplanned (a compilation of the respondents' free-form answers).

#### 6.4. Housing advice as an example of preventive work

Housing advice work is the most central form of work in preventing homelessness in Finland. According to the follow-up survey, in 2013 there were over 30 housing advisers working in the Paavo cities and the rental housing companies owned by the cities. In 2012–2013, there were over 16,000 housing advice clients, and 280 evictions could be cancelled thanks to housing advice work. With ARA's subsidies, 51 housing advisers have been hired in 32 different municipalities.

According to Anne Kinni<sup>5</sup>, in 2013 there were 18 employees working for the City of Helsinki in the Housing Advice team, 14 of which were housing advisers. The housing advisers implemented a total of 1,858 interventions to prevent homelessness, of which 415 involved payment agreements on arrears of rent and 47 were evictions cancelled from court, found in statistics. The central working methods of housing advice in Helsinki included:

- Individual- and family-specific direction to services related to housing
- Mapping problems in housing and carrying out the necessary measures together with the client and the network actors

<sup>5</sup> Kinni, Anne (2013). Housing advice, report 2012–2013. Department of Social Services and Health Care of the City of Helsinki

- Providing crisis assistance to the client and directing clients to the services they need
- House calls, monitoring the arrears of rent, a supportive approach to work
- Preventing risks related to the comfort in housing, mediating conflicts with neighbours and cultural conflicts
- Assisting people who have been evicted (controlled eviction process)
- Coordination of further housing, transfer, and if necessary, the monitoring of housing

The City of Helsinki is expanding the housing advice activities to the operating area of rental housing companies in all cities.

Other forms of preventive work on homelessness implemented in the cities involved in the programme are e.g. the ASO working group for released prisoners and the prison's cooperation group with homeless released prisoners, the Housing in order courses and supported housing as a preventive service for young people becoming independent, for example.

### **6.5. Cost impacts**

The study by Sillanpää (2013)<sup>6</sup> investigated the use of social and health care, as well as the police services of people living in Housing First units before moving into the unit and while living in the unit. The study reinforced the earlier research results, according to which the Housing First model has positive effects on both the use of services, the costs incurred by them, and the inhabitants' quality of life. For the mental health rehabilitation clients, the total costs decreased. For the substance abuse rehabilitation clients, the total costs increased, but housing had significant positive effects on the lives of the inhabitants. The increased costs for substance abuse rehabilitation clients are explained on one hand by the low housing costs during homelessness. On the other hand, this also involved investments in housing management and directing homeless people to the services they need. For the substance abuse rehabilitation clients, too, the amount and costs of inpatient care decreased significantly. According to a qualitative assessment, the inhabitants were satisfied with the units operating on the Housing First approach, and the inhabitants' quality of life improved in several different aspects while they lived there.

Housing advice work has also led to significant financial savings. According to Kinni, the savings from the housing advice work of the City of Helsinki during 2012, based on the work of one housing adviser, were €223,000 for the national economy and €152,000 in public finances. The personnel costs of a housing adviser (approx. €55,000/year) were only a fraction compared to the savings gained from advice work.

## **7. City-specific review of the results**

### **7.1. Helsinki**

According to the action plan, the goal of Helsinki during 2012–2015 is to create a total of 750 dwellings/supportive housing placements for the long-term homeless. The plan includes the construction of 422 dwellings and allocating 328 dwellings from the rental housing stock to the long-term homeless (50 dwellings/year of the city's rental housing units, and 32 dwellings/year of new housing of other non-profit rental housing lessors).

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.ym.fi/download/noname/%7B13F1333B-9C45-438D-B9BD-59D0BEE62339%7D/77950>

In Helsinki, the group of homeless people in the most difficult situations stands out. In accordance with the plan, the use of shelters for housing in Helsinki ends completely during 2013.

In addition, the city participates in the youth homelessness prevention project by allocating plots to building youth housing, purchasing supported housing services for young people, among other things; it also participates in the Building the bridge to freedom project of a non-profit aftercare foundation for released prisoners and their families (Krits), which ensures the supported housing path for homeless inhabitants of Helsinki on parole or serving a monitoring sentence.

The city is also implementing an evaluation project on the need of housing for families, reinforces the coordination of the social administration and housing, and expands the housing advice activities by two housing advisers/year. The goal is to reduce the use of substance abuse care housing services and to profile new supported housing units, so that abstinent housing is a possibility for those who want it. In order to improve the situation of clients with double or triple diagnoses, the focus will be on the activities of the Healthy rehabilitation at home group.

*Implementation:*

During 2012–2013 in Helsinki, there were 424 dwellings completed in housing units and 212 in youth housing. There were 134 separate dwellings allocated by organisations for supported use in scattered housing. In addition, there were 80 separate dwellings allocated in the city's rental housing companies for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there were 69 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Helsinki. There were 16 housing advisers doing preventive work, and 35 evictions were cancelled. 9 people acted as experts by experience. The use of shelters for housing in Helsinki ended. In addition, the City started the activities of the working groups investigating homelessness, emergency housing, and housing for special groups. The reports of the working groups were completed by the end of 2013.

*Homelessness:*

In 2013, the number of homeless and long-term homeless in Helsinki remained almost the same, but the homelessness of immigrants increased significantly.

## **7.2. Vantaa**

The action plan for Vantaa includes three sections: 1) Implementation of the 88 housing units transferred from the previous programme period 2) A total of 100 housing units in new construction 3) Selling the 100 scattered dwellings owned by the city to parties operating in long-term homelessness projects to be allocated to the client groups of the programme. The actions aim to reach over €4 million in savings during the programme period.

*Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Vantaa, a total of 85 dwellings in housing units were completed. Selling scattered dwellings owned by the city to parties operating in long-term homelessness projects to be allocated to the client groups of the programme will began in 2014. There were 8 support employees hired with Kaste funds in Vantaa carrying out support work. There were 2 housing advisers carrying out preventive work.

*Homelessness:*

In Vantaa, homelessness and long-term homelessness increased slightly. In Vantaa they want to pay attention especially to preventing and decreasing homelessness of young people and families.

### **7.3. Espoo**

The action plan for Espoo includes four sections: 1) Providing housing for 225 homeless people in social rental housing stock annually 2) Building 150 dwellings and organising support allocated to the long-term homeless 3) Making actions to prevent homelessness more efficient by developing housing advice and the further housing of young people and by allocating 3 plots for the rental housing of young people, and 4) Implementing structural renewal of housing services for the substance abuse and mental health rehabilitation clients.

#### *Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Espoo, there were 148 dwellings completed in housing units and 70 in youth housing. There were 25 separate dwellings allocated by organisations for supported use in scattered housing. In addition, there were 296 separate dwellings allocated in the city's rental housing companies for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there were 46 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Espoo. There were 5 housing advisers carrying out preventive work.

#### Homelessness:

Homelessness increased slightly in Espoo, but long-term homelessness decreased by 24 people.

### **7.4. Tampere**

The action plan for Tampere includes: 1) Offering 120 dwellings from the social rental housing stock of companies owned by the city for work on homelessness 2) 106 dwellings/supportive housing placements for the long-term homeless 3) Housing advice and actions preventing homelessness, such as making social property management more efficient 4) Developing the housing services for the substance abuse and mental health rehabilitation clients increasingly towards a model of scattered housing based on lease agreements 5) Preventing the homelessness of young people 6) Developing housing for people going on parole or serving a monitoring sentence and 6) Strengthening the inhabitants' point of view in the development of services for the homeless.

#### *Implementation:*

In Tampere, there were 30 separate dwellings allocated in the city's rental housing companies and 10 dwellings by organisations for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there were 4 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Tampere. There were 3 housing advisers carrying out preventive work. In Tampere, the process of social rental housing and its areas of responsibility have been developed and described.

#### *Homelessness:*

Homelessness decreased significantly in Tampere, but long-term homelessness increased slightly.

### **7.5. Lahti**

The action plan for Lahti includes: 1) Implementing 58 dwellings/supportive housing placements for the long-term homeless and abandoning the use of shelters 2) Making the use of social rental housing stock in

providing housing for the homeless more efficient and modelling the housing support process 3) Assessing the housing services for mental health and substance abuse rehabilitation clients 4) Cooperation in order to ensure housing for people going on parole or serving a monitoring sentence and 5) Investing in the prevention of homelessness by e.g. hiring one housing adviser and making the prevention of homelessness of young people more efficient.

*Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Lahti, a total of 16 dwellings in the housing unit were completed. There were 5 separate dwellings allocated by organisations for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there were 2 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Lahti and 8 support workers employees hired with other funding. There are 4 people in Lahti acting as experts by experience.

*Homelessness:*

In Lahti, both homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased.

### **7.6. Turku**

The main focus of the action plan for Turku is preventing the homelessness of young people and improving life management. Among other things, the plan includes the implementation of the TALK project, and the creation of 20–30 dwellings/supportive housing placements for the long-term homeless or people living under the threat of long-term homelessness.

*Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Turku, there were 23 separate dwellings allocated in the city's rental housing company for supported use in scattered housing. There were 4 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in the TALK project. In addition, there were 3 housing advisers carrying out preventive work.

*Homelessness:*

In Turku, homelessness remained almost unchanged.

### **7.7. Jyväskylä**

The action plan for Jyväskylä consists of: 1) Producing 12 dwellings for long-term homeless young adults 2) Strengthening support services in normal scattered rental housing, two advisers and support for 30 inhabitants starting from 2014 3) Operations of the housing units organised by Jyväskylä Street Mission and 4) Preventive measures, such as the ASU ITE activity.

*Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Jyväskylä, there were 27 dwellings completed in housing units and 70 in youth housing. There were 42 separate dwellings allocated in the city's rental housing company for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there was one support employee hired with Kaste funds working in Jyväskylä, and one inhabitant adviser working on city funding in social property management. There was one housing adviser carrying out preventive work, and, approximately, 15 evictions were cancelled. The service centre for young adults (J-Nappi) that started its operations in 2013 also serves clients classified as long-term homeless.

*Homelessness:*

In Jyväskylä, homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased slightly.

### **7.8. Joensuu**

The action plan for Joensuu consists of 1) Starting the operation of a housing support point, 10 emergency housing periods and 3 supportive housing placements 2) Preventing the homelessness of young people, 27 housing units and services 3) Requirement review for the housing services of mental health rehabilitation clients and the measures required by it 4) Housing for released prisoners and 5) Increasing housing advice, 2 new advisers.

#### *Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Joensuu, a total of 18 dwellings in the housing unit were completed. There were 7 separate dwellings allocated by organisations for supported use in scattered housing. In 2013, there were 4 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Joensuu and 3 support workers employees hired with other funding. There was one housing adviser carrying out preventive work, and, approximately, 10 evictions were cancelled.

#### *Homelessness:*

In Joensuu, both homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased.

### **7.9. Kuopio**

The action plan for Kuopio consists of 1) Implementing 55 dwellings/supportive housing placements for the long-term homeless 2) Implementing the ATTE project for young homeless people using intoxicants and 3) Producing youth housing, 2 plots.

#### *Implementation:*

In 2012–2013 in Kuopio, a total of 45 dwellings in the housing unit were completed. In 2013, there were 4 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Kuopio. There is one person acting as an expert by experience.

#### *Homelessness:*

In Kuopio, homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased clearly.

### **7.10. Oulu**

In the action plan for Oulu, the emphasis is on: 1) Creating an operating model for housing direction and advice and putting it into practical use 2) Developing preventive measures, procedures for preventing evictions, preventing the homelessness of young people, comprehensive support for scattered housing, ensuring the housing for released prisoners, and 3) New kinds of housing solutions allocated for the long-term homeless and ensuring that the need for human emergency housing is fulfilled, while minimising the use of shelter in Kenttätie.

#### *Implementation:*

In Oulu, the focus of housing has been moved to as housing that is as independent and individual as possible. In 2012 and 2013, there were 2 support employees hired with Kaste funds working in Oulu in scattered housing project. For young people becoming independent and leaving home, the supply of housing has been increased by arranging housing services for young people.

*Homelessness:*

In Oulu, homelessness increased slightly, but correspondingly, long-term homelessness decreased slightly.

**7.11. Pori**

The emphasis in the action plan for Pori is on: 1) Converting the men's shelter into a housing unit 2) Allocating 60–80 dwellings from the rental housing stock to the long-term homeless 3) Implementation of the Housing support in promoting employment project 4) Starting youth housing activities and 5) Increasing housing advice, 1 new adviser.

*Implementation:*

In 2013, there was one support employee hired with Kaste funds working in Pori. There were 2 housing advisers carrying out preventive work, and 24 evictions were cancelled.

*Homelessness:*

In Pori, both homelessness and long-term homelessness decreased.

**8. Further work****8.1. Mobile support for scattered housing**

In the goal setting of the programme, the development of mobile support for scattered housing and investment in the prevention of homelessness are emphasised. In order to lay a foundation for the development of models of mobile support for scattered housing, a survey was carried out with the actors in the cities involved in the programme in the autumn of 2013, regarding the support models in use. A particular point of interest was finding out what kinds of multidisciplinary working teams were used in the work on homelessness in order to provide scattered housing. In addition, the housing stock used for scattered housing and cooperation networks were also investigated. Responses on a total of around 28 support models for scattered housing were received. Most typically, the support was provided by a social adviser with training in the field of social services. Often the adviser was partnered with a social worker, licensed practical nurse, youth worker, property management representative, or benefit assessor. For some actors, the working team (or staff) also included a health care professional or a person with therapeutic training. The working partnerships/teams were built based on local needs and resources. None of the actors used a multidisciplinary mobile working team similar to the ACT model<sup>7</sup> used in Denmark. Experts by experience were mainly utilised in group activities. The role of the Y-Foundation as a housing supplier had a strong presence in the responses. The cities' rental housing companies and youth housing actors also played an important role.

Based on the feedback from the survey, a work plan was finalised for developing mobile support models for scattered housing and preparations for the work were started. 15 actors involved in the work on homelessness committed to the work; they will implement the mobile support in practice. In accordance with the idea of Learning by Developing, the goal of the work is to model and analyse the mobile support implemented for scattered housing. The work will mainly be implemented as a part of the current service production, and it will be coordinated through the Networking for Development project. The goal is to form

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.housingfirst.fi/files/3318/L.Benjaminson\\_Experiences\\_from\\_the\\_danish\\_homelessness\\_strategy\\_\(2\).pdf](http://www.housingfirst.fi/files/3318/L.Benjaminson_Experiences_from_the_danish_homelessness_strategy_(2).pdf)

a so-called assessment team of the actors in the pilot group to carry out quick analyses of promising models. The aim is to also include a research section in the development work. The development work started on 7 February 2014 with a joint workshop day.

## **8.2. Social empowerment strategy**

During 2013, a discussion has also started on the next stages of the national homelessness policy, under the working name a strategy for social empowerment – The Housing First approach. During 2008–2013, housing social work and its resources have strengthened considerably and the long-term homelessness has decreased. A foundation has been built, which can be used to direct actions in the future increasingly towards actions preventing homelessness.

In the future, the goal is to include the work on homelessness even closer than at present as a part of preventing social exclusion and the policy of social empowerment. It is important to identify and minimise risk factors that cause homelessness, and to reinforce factors protecting people from homelessness on different levels, emphasising multidisciplinary work starting from the priority of housing and a preventive approach to work. In addition, it is important to find more effective ways to prevent the recurrence of homelessness, especially in order to break the spiral of repeatedly becoming homeless and to ensure permanent results.

The following issues, among others, have been emphasised in the discussion:

- Reinforcing the preventive approach to work and the priority of preventive measures
  - Services with a low threshold and taking the services home, if necessary
  - Allocating resources more intensively towards prevention
  - Seeking cost savings in the long term
- Identification of the risk factors of homelessness as early as possible, quick intervention and reinforcing protective mechanisms
- Understanding the priority of housing and strengthening the point of view of housing
  - Multidisciplinary, goal-oriented and appropriately organised cooperation
- Increasing integration and increasing the communality, inclusion and joint responsibility of inhabitants, actors, residential areas and suburbs
- Special regional points of emphasis
  - Unreasonable difficulty in solving the rental housing situation in the metropolitan area
- Analysing the planned activities by stages, so that they form a realistic implementation plan that is appropriate for the purpose
- Real-time monitoring of the effects and quick allocation
  - Ways of measuring the functionality and success of cross-administrative structures and prevention structures

In a world with limited resources, the correct allocation of preventive measures is important. From the point of view of the cost benefits and general acceptability of preventive work, it is very important on which situations and whom the measures are focused. Therefore, identifying the risk factors causing homelessness and protective factors against it is a key factor. Regular monitoring and assessment of preventive activities, bringing the effects of the work to the forefront, and demonstrating the cost savings achieved with prevention are ways of increasing resources towards preventive work.

In the programme's follow-up survey, the contact persons of the cities were also asked about their views on what direction the needs of work on homelessness will be focused in the future, and what are the issues that should be prepared for? The same issue was also discussed with the team of experts of the Networking for Development project. The answers emphasised the following issues:

- Multidisciplinary services that take the client's needs and situation in life flexibly into account
- The services' lack of threshold and investigative work, ensuring support at turning points
- Improving the availability of reasonably priced rental housing, especially in the capital city area
- Mobile, multidisciplinary and diverse support
- Meeting genuinely on the client's terms, accepting different ways of life
- A supportive approach to work, sensitivity for noticing needs to change, and readiness to intervene quickly in a crisis
- Abstinent services and housing options, as well as ones that allow the use of intoxicants
- Further development of housing advice
- Correct timing of preventive measures and sensitivity in the basic services to identify the risk factors of homelessness
- The homelessness and service needs of immigrants
- Further development of services for homeless young people
- Losses of housing due to becoming overburdened by debt
- Finding different kinds of solutions for crisis and emergency housing
- Describing the basic services and the roles and processes that complement them
- Cooperation networks to plan and assess activities, experts by experience included
- Further development of the Housing First principle
- Discovering the factors that enable success and improve the effectiveness

## 9. International cooperation

The work on homelessness carried out in Finland has received quite a lot of international attention, and the international cooperation has been active. Groups of experts from e.g. Scotland and Japan have learned about the Finnish work on homelessness. Finnish experts have also been heard in several international seminars on homelessness, and similarly, international experts have brought outside points of view to seminars organised in Finland. Representatives of Finland participated in the international peer review of Danish work on homelessness arranged in the autumn of 2013. An expert from the Ministry of the Environment consulted in the preparations of the Irish homelessness strategy.

Finns have also participated actively in the activities of the European Federation of National Organisations Working with the Homeless (FEANTSA). For example, the No Fixed Abode NGO has a representative in FEANTSA's Participation Working Group, as well as the HoPe network for people who have experienced homelessness, and the Y-Foundation has a representative in FEANTSA's Executive Committee.

In 2013, the planning for an international assessment by researchers of the Finnish programme began. The assessment will be implemented in 2014 by a group of four experts, including representatives from the USA, United Kingdom, Sweden and Finland.

## 10. Communications

Like in the first period, the communications during the second period of the programme has been carried out in cooperation between different actors. The network of PAAVO communicators, led by the Ministry of the Environment, has met a few times per year, and the goal has been to make one or more joint communication efforts to raise awareness of the homelessness themes in the public discussion. The results of the communication cooperation from the first two years include a background event directed towards journalists at the end of 2012, in which close to twenty journalists participated. In addition, the communication cooperation has assisted in organising a morning coffee hour for journalists on homelessness by the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister of Housing and Communications, as well as a two-page brochure on homelessness. In addition, the group has drawn up instructions on how to make cooperation more effective in difficult communication situations.

## 11. Conclusion

The reduction of homelessness and long-term homelessness from 2012 to 2013 is an excellent thing. However, worrying aspects of the change of homelessness are the continuing growth of the homelessness of immigrants and the increase in the long-term homeless of young people. During last year, the homelessness of immigrants increased by over 25 %, and the number of the long-term homeless increased by approximately 130 people. The number of homeless families with an immigrant background also increased significantly.

According to Katisko<sup>8</sup>, there is a growing group of people with an immigrant background in the capital city area, who are either unable to find any housing or who are not official tenants in the dwelling. Those with the greatest risk of becoming homeless are people with an ethnic Somali background and young people. Risk factors for the immigrants' homelessness include problems in personal life on one hand, and a poor

Financial situation due to unemployment on the other hand a lack of information and language skills also become a barrier to finding and acquiring housing. According to Katisko, the homelessness of immigrants must, therefore, be viewed not just at the individual level, but also an issue of the Finnish integration and housing policy and the development of the service system.

The long-term homelessness of young people also increased slightly from last year. Among other things, the lack of sufficient services in the current system to rehabilitate young adults for independent life after the child welfare after-care services is in the background of the long-term homelessness of young people. Neither do the current services seem to reach or meet sufficiently well the needs of the young adults living in the most difficult situations. Ensuring housing is a prerequisite for the start of the comprehensive rehabilitation process of young people. Adding the point of view of housing to the youth guarantee is a good way of reinforcing the overall work.

The availability of reasonably priced housing in the capital city area is the most important factor for the treatment of homelessness. The ability of young people, as well as people such as homeless released prisoners and immigrants, to pay rent is often lower than average, and the aforementioned groups are not very successful on the free rental housing market. Without a marked increase in the production of

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.diak.fi/tyoelama/Julkaisut/Sivut/A-tutkimuksia.aspx>

reasonably priced rental housing, it will not be possible significantly to reduce or eradicate homelessness in the capital city area.

Discussion on the need of housing solutions that allow the use of intoxicants and the abstinent housing options is still ongoing. In the housing units at the capital city area, the use of intoxicants in the inhabitant's own dwelling is mainly allowed, in accordance with the Act on Residential Leases. Instead, several cities involved in the programme outside the capital city area still have almost no housing solutions for the homeless operating under the Housing First principle that allow the use of intoxicants. On the other hand, a need for sufficient abstinent housing services has arisen in the capital city area. The important thing is to ensure that the client has the freedom of choice, in accordance with the Housing First principle. This means that different options are needed.

During the second programme period, the focus of development work has been moved further towards developing mobile support models for scattered housing. For example, in Denmark, there have been good experiences with multidisciplinary mobile support implemented for scattered housing, organised according to the ACT model, with especially challenging client groups. Testing the model in Finland is justified, but it requires the arranging of separate funding. Investment in scattered housing also continuously raises new issues to be solved. For example, solutions to the experiences of loneliness in scattered housing must be sought, for example, through peer support and new kinds of environmental work. It must also be possible to utilise different kinds of housing options as appropriately as possible from the clients' point of view. For example, how can we utilise the resources in communities and

The possibilities in developing scattered housing? Would it be possible to arrange night duty for scattered housing, in cooperation with the housing units? How can we enable the client's smooth and seamless movement between different housing solutions, if necessary, when the need for support changes rapidly? Are we still missing some options for housing solutions?

The discussion on the direction of work on homelessness in the future was opened officially on 4 March 2014 in a round table meeting with the Minister of Housing and Communications at the House of the Estates. The goal for the future is to link work on homelessness even closer than at the moment, as a part of preventing social exclusion and the policy of social empowerment. Investing into prevention means, for example, identifying the risk factors causing homelessness and addressing them early, and reinforcing factors that protect people from homelessness. It also means expanding the housing advice activities and developing new preventive ways of working. In addition, ways to prevent the recurrence of homelessness must be found. According to the programme's follow-up survey, in 2012–2013 approximately 1,020 inhabitants began a support period and 400 inhabitants ended one. Of those who ended a support period, 40 % ended the period unplanned. For 70 inhabitants, the reasons included several of the following issues: arrears of rent, disturbances, violence, lack of commitment and the use of intoxicants. Even though the result is only indicative, it serves as a reminder that preventing the recurrence of homelessness is an important part of preventing homelessness. Now is the time for a shared discussion on the direction of work on homelessness in the future.

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