HOUSING FIRST

A model developed in New York in the early 90's. Transposed to different countries in Europe. HF shows its EFFICIENCY and EFFECTIVENESS wherever it gets implemented.

It has a better cost-benefit ratio. HOUSING FIRST IS EVIDENCE-BASED.

FOR THE HOMELESS

• In a long-term homelessness situation.
• Very vulnerable i.e. who have physical and/or mental health problems and/or addiction.
• For whom traditional solutions have shown their limits i.e. these people have been using services for homeless people for years but are still not able to start an integration process.

THE GOAL IS RECOVERY

DIRECTLY FROM THE STREET INTO HOUSING

Without any other condition than compliance with the tenancy agreement and payment of rent. There is no obligation to enter treatment and no obligation to develop a personal project.

Housing is the starting point of the integration process, not the end result.

HOUSING + SUPPORT

This support is intensive and multiple and lasts as long as necessary.

Moving away from a copy-paste of the American model, the State Secretary for Combating Poverty launched a 3-YEAR TEST PHASE in 8 implementation cities:

GHENT, ANTWERP, BRUSSELS 2, MOLENBEEK-SAINT-JEAN, HASSELT, LIÈGE, NAMUR AND CHARLEROI using a grant from the National Lottery.

Housing First teams facilitated access to housing for over 150 VERY VULNERABLE HOMELESS PEOPLE. They then provided them with intensive support in all areas of life in order to make them retain their home and start a recovery process.

An evaluation team FOLLOWED the evolution of part of the tenants for TWO YEARS and compared the results with people who use (or that have used) traditional services usually offered to the homeless in Belgium.

Results bring to light the best implementation conditions of the Housing First model taking into account the Belgian realities.

HOUSING FIRST BELGIUM

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1. **Homeless People with High Vulnerabilities**
   - 50% of homeless adults stay in their home.
   - 20% of homeless people stay in reception facilities.

2. **Housing First, It Also Works in Belgium!**
   - 27% of the HFB tenants receive an allowance due to disability.
   - Minimum 50% have severe vulnerabilities.

3. **Traditional Support**
   - Does not address homeless people in a direct and rapid manner.
   - The difference is noticeable in the first year.
   - A. More than 50% of homeless people are sentenced to prison for non-payment of fines.
   - B. 86% of homeless people who are in treatment for mental health have no access to proper treatment.
   - C. 48% of homeless people who are in treatment for addiction have no access to proper treatment.

4. **Efficiency of Housing First**
   - The positive impact of Housing First lasts for 5 or more years.
   - It also works for homeless people with high addiction.
   - They work hard drugs and show better compliance to lease agreements.

5. **Social Integration**
   - The HF support manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.
   - The data collected during the first year of the HF practices manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.
   - The positive impact of HF practices manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.

6. **Improvement but it Takes Time**
   - The HF support manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.
   - The data collected during the first year of the HF practices manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.
   - The positive impact of HF practices manifests itself slowly then asserts itself after the 1st year.

7. **Housing Tenants Are in the First State of Health**
   - After 5 years, 86% of tenants are in their home.
   - 25% pay their rent.
   - More than 60% have increased income.
   - At least 67% have increased social participation.
   - The main source of income is the public housing.

8. **Some Lessons Learned from the Housing First Belgium Experiment**
   - Describe and record the number of homeless people in the municipality.
   - Compare the needs and the offer of services through an efficient orientation scheme.
   - Aim for short circuit solutions for durable exit from homelessness.
   - Prevent homelessness by anticipating evictions and other types of situations.
   - Longitudinally evaluate the efficiency and the durability of the interventions.

**Public Housing**
- 65% of tenants are in their home.
- 57% pay their rent.
- 63% have increased income.
- Longitudinally evaluate the efficiency and the durability of the interventions.