Leadership in practice: Ending Homelessness in Finland with Housing First

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4.10.2019
Homelessness in Finland

• In recent years Finland has been the only EU country where homelessness has decreased*

• Situation in 2018: 5,482, 4,882 single homeless persons, 600 in families
  • **Wide definition of homelessness:** 70–75% living temporarily with friends and relatives, low amount of rough sleeping (283)
  • From 2008 to 2018: long-term homelessness has decreased 21%, 2018: 1,162

* FEANTSA
Single homeless people

Y-Foundation's apartments
A non-profit social housing provider

• Founded in 1985 by:
  • The 5 largest cities in Finland, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, the Finnish Red Cross, the Finnish Association for Mental Health, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, the Confederation of Finnish Construction Industries RT, The Finnish Construction Trade Union

• Buys and constructs affordable rental housing
• 150+ employees
• Nationwide work is enabled by a wide network of partners: local authorities and housing companies, NGOs, social work of church
• 10,581 affordable social housing flats, 6,729 scattered housing flats for homeless people
17,012 apartments around Finland

Y-Foundation owns and rents

M2-Kodit, "M2 Homes"
10,581 apartments
Affordable state-subsidised rental housing.

Y-Kodit, "Y Homes"
6,729 apartments
For people with special needs, 80% sub-leased to partners (municipalities, NGO’s).
Housing First in Finland

• Housing as a **basic human and social right**
• Housing in normal surroundings/**permanent homes**
• Own **independent** rental apartment either in scattered housing or in a supported housing unit
• Own **rental contract** (normally for unlimited time)
• Adequate **support** if needed and wanted
• Autonomy/ **unconditionality**
• Normality
Housing First in Finland

• The **ethical** perspective: homelessness has to be eliminated because human dignity belongs to everyone

• A home is a human right
Making the change

Partnership
trust

clarity

simplicity

staff

commitment

leadership
M2-Homes
best responsible summer job employer 2019

Feedback from young summer employees:

• Meaningful work
• Fair and equal treatment
“Either we all live in a decent world or nobody does”

George Orwell