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EUROCITIES Report on Cities' Strategies Against Homelessness: The integrated chain approach

2012 update



EUROCITIES

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INTRODUCTION

The EUROCITIES working group on homelessness (WGH) was established in 2004. Members meet regularly to analyse policies and practices to prevent homelessness and support those who are homeless. The purpose of the WGH is to share best practices for preventing and reducing homelessness and the exclusion of vulnerable people from mainstream housing markets.

The WGH has developed a transferable strategic model for preventing homelessness, which we call the 'integrated chain'. This chain is an integrated systems approach to the housing market that refers to the city's role in developing a range of commissioned services. These services work together under a common strategy that seeks to support homeless single people, couples or families. Within the chain there should be a range of services to meet the diverse needs of homeless people.

The specifics of the integrated chain vary with local conditions, yet many of the measures are very similar. It is a flexible model that promotes the prevention of homelessness at the primary, secondary and crisis levels of intervention.

The integrated chain model (see the diagram below) shows how all services in the city contribute to promoting people's independence. This serves as a benchmarking, comparison and a diagnostic tool for mutual learning with the aim of improving policy integration and coordination. The diagram reflects the different levels in the housing market and is not meant to be viewed as a simple progression model that excludes housing first initiatives.

The fight against homelessness is an on-going challenge in all European cities as it is at this local level where the problems of homelessness and social exclusion are most acute and visible.



EUROCITIES working group homelessness continues to identify how best to prevent homelessness. We also work on developing the best methods of reintegrating homeless people into mainstream society. This includes establishing strategic frameworks and sharing the good practices adopted by other cities. We also measure the effectiveness of our strategies by their impact on service users. The integrated chain approach is reviewed periodically to monitor if and how the model makes a difference, through analysing comparative performance data.

Cities have a wealth of experience in terms of innovative policies and practices that can contribute to the EU social inclusion and social protection process. They are the level of government closest to other key actors, such as NGOs, and to those people who are homelessness or at risk of social exclusion. Local governments are responsible for providing public services and adapting these services to the needs of homeless people. Cities are an essential partner for national governments in the development of a more coordinated, integrated and strategic approach to combating homelessness and social exclusion.

The working groups' first report on the integrated chain approach was published in 2006. In 2008-09, a report in eight languages gave an overview of the results of this work. A 2009 report detailed the main components of the integrated chain approach by looking at the practical experience of nine cities (Barcelona, Bergen, Munich, Newcastle, Oslo, Rotterdam, Stockholm, Utrecht, and Vienna). It also outlined important issues that should be considered when developing a local strategy against homelessness. This 2012 report is an update of the 2009 report, to incorporate more recent information of these cities' strategies.

The Integrated Chain Model

This paper presents reports from nine European cities on their homelessness policies. You will find an overview of the current situation (2011-12) and the challenges cities are facing. The integrated approaches for the inclusion of homeless people are described with the help of a supporting diagram. The diagrams should be read from the bottom up. Each colour and line represents a type of support service with or without accommodation.

City services do not always fit neatly into the integrated chain model; there are many nuances and variations. However representing them as we have done here provides the basis for city representatives to compare and discuss their approaches and results. This also helps them identify gaps and improve services.

BARCELONA

Barcelona's 'Municipal Care for the Homeless' programme aims to improve the situation of homeless people in the city. This is done by ensuring comprehensive, quality care and customised support services that allow for the full reintegration of homeless people into society. The programme also simplifies access to resources and services so that homeless people can become independent. The programme establishes a network of public agencies and NGOs that work together to support homeless people through to independence.

Barcelona has a specific model for assisting homeless people. It is jointly funded by local agencies and the regional government. It encompasses street assistance services, accommodation resources, day centres and specific care. A wide range of social organisations are involved, through special agreements and pacts.

Structure

Barcelona's homeless programme applies to the whole geographical area of Barcelona. This means that the planning and management of the services and resources used by the programme are attached to a municipal body that is responsible for action throughout the whole city.

In order to provide assistance to people in the whole city, the programme is structured according to different types of services:

- initial reception and treatment assistance
- temporary residential protection
- day centre
- basic assistance such as food and hygiene facilities
- reintegration that provides dwellings with socio-educational support.

When a person becomes homeless the following approach is used:

- each homeless person's needs are identified and their motivation and likelihood to accept help are assessed
- links are established between the homeless person and the existing services based on the assessment
- individualised support plans are developed for each person so that tailored pathways to independence can be established
- intensive socio-educational support is given, which improves the chances that the person stays in accommodation and remains independent
- specific resources and services are developed according to the possible new needs of the person.

Challenges

The key challenges for Barcelona's homeless programme are:

- understanding the dynamics of extreme poverty and social exclusion in the city so as to improve the intervention processes
- generating specific social assistance resources and services which are adapted to the particular characteristics of the homeless population. This will help ensure a tailored response to the specific needs and situation of the homeless person, allowing them to benefit fully from their home, job and social relations
- working with other city social welfare departments to simplify access to health care, training, employment, housing services and resources
- creating an integrated network of social organisations, which can address the needs of the homeless person and the various aspects related to rehousing them.

Homelessness services

Homelessness prevention services

Barcelona's homelessness prevention services are delivered through 40 social services centres in ten city districts. They provide a variety of support to help people retain their home, including subsidies to maintain housing.

Intake to homelessness services

The primary gateway to the homelessness services is via the SIS (Servei Inserció Social/Social Insertion Service) walk-in centre. This has two teams: the SIS treatment team provides assistance at the centre, while the SIS detection team works on the streets with people who are sleeping rough. The objective is to get homeless people off the streets and include them through housing, social care and food provision.

Outside office hours, the CUESB centre for social emergencies (Centre d'urgències socials) deals with emergency situations. It is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

People can also access services directly via the city's six day centres and the three 'First Welcome' night shelters.

Non-accommodation services

The six day centres offer a number of free services including food provision, social engagement, workshops and employment advice. The centres also run socio-educational and recreational courses as well as classes on how to do laundry, sew and search for a home and a job. These centres also serve as an initial contact point for the other services. They can be accessed directly or through referrals from the SIS walk-in centre. The four hygiene centres are an additional service that is provided by four of the day centres (DC Meridiana, DC Horta, DC Nou Barris and DC Poble-sec). The hygiene centres are open to anyone in the city who needs a place to shower and change and wash their clothing.

All centres and programme services are supported by a team of psychiatrists who provide assistance to people with mental health problems.

Barcelona's local authority has 14 social canteens. Six of these are attached to the day centres and are specifically for homeless people, who can come and have lunch for free. The other eight are open to all people in the city who need it. They provide 1,106 meals a day.

Crisis and support services (specialist crisis support)

Crisis and support services are provided by the social health service. They help people with drug addiction and mental health problems. This service is separate from the homelessness services and social services.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

The stay at the city's First Welcome night shelters is initially limited to seven days. Here, people's immediate needs, such as housing, food and hygiene, are addressed. Professionals from the shelters carry out assessments and plan the services that the homeless person will need. The stay can be extended depending on the assessment and on the willingness of the client. In winter time the city uses a sports and community centre in order to accommodate 150 additional homeless people. This extra accommodation is provided in cooperation with the Nou Barris night shelter, through the 'Operation Cold' scheme (Operació fred).

If there is no space left in the night shelters, the city has an agreement with private hotels and guesthouses to take in people who are in urgent need of accommodation. Up to 120 additional beds can be made available in this way.

Accommodation with general residential support

Two residential centres provide accommodation for non-specific target groups. Many people living in the Pere Barnés centre are in a chronic situation while people living in the Can Planas centre have a higher potential for becoming independently housed relatively soon. However these centres are not limited to these groups.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

There are two centres specifically for chronically homeless people and, unlike most accommodation for homeless people, they have some tolerance for drug and alcohol use. There are also four centres that do not tolerate substance use. The St Joan de Déu centre is intended for men who recently became homeless, who retain some degree of structure and routine in their social and work situation, allowing them to be easily reintegrated into society. There is also a residence for mothers with infants. The Sta Lluïsa de Marillac centre is for people with chronic medical illnesses such as cancer or diabetes: this is a temporary arrangement for people waiting to move to more independent accommodation. Meanwhile, the Clinica Mercè takes in people with mental health problems.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

Different facilities for specific groups are provided outside the homelessness service network's remit.

Accommodation with floating support

In addition to the general accommodation with floating support that is provided under the Municipal Care for the Homeless programme, there is also a specific arrangement for people with drug addiction problems. Here, the floating support is provided by the social health system with the specific aim of increasing independence and enhancing life skills.

Independent housing

People wishing to live independently can be housed in social housing provided by municipal or regional authorities or in accommodation rented on the private market. For accommodation in the private sector, people can receive grants to support their rent payments. Also, the city arranges guarantees for rent payments and damage costs with the owners of the private housing. Both are paid for by the city administration in the event that a tenant fails to meet their obligations. This reassures the private owners, giving them the confidence to rent their homes to people who may otherwise find it difficult to rent privately.

Provision and funding

In general, private companies under the municipal authorities' guidelines manage the city's municipal services for homeless people. In addition, there are grant programmes for organisations that provide support to homeless people. The social health system provides specific support in addiction and mental health cases. The city council coordinates the network of many public and private service providers, in order to manage and standardise the quality of service.

Note that the diagram only includes services that are funded by the municipality; services that are either partially funded by the municipality or are independently funded are not shown.

BARCELONA

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	SOCIAL AND PRIVATE HOUSING								
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	'HOUSING FOR INCLUSION' FLATS		FLATS FOR PEOPLE WITH DRUG ADDICTIONS: TRAINING ON INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS (not provided by homelessness services)						
	(44 homes; 197 places)								
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	RESIDENTIAL HOMES FOR OLDER PEOPLE, CARE HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AND CARE HOMES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES (none of these are provided by homelessness services)								
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	2 CENTRES WITH SOME TOLERANCE FOR DRUGS OR ALCOHOL USE				4 CENTRES WHICH DO NOT TOLERATE SUBSTANCE USE				
	Meridiana Centre (40 places)		Horta Centre (30 places)		Centre for mother and infants (10 places)	Sta Lluïsa de Marillac recovery centre (34 places)	Clínica Mercè (not provided by homelessness services) (4 places)	St Joan de Déu Centre (52 places)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	Centre Llar Pere Barnés (25 places)				Centre Can Planas (50 places)				
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	3 'FIRST WELCOME' NIGHT SHELTERS			PRIVATE HOTELS AND GUESTHOUSES: ADDITIONAL EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION IF NEEDED (up to 120 beds)					
	Zona Franca (120 places)	Nou Barrisc (75 places + 150 places in winter via Operació fred)	Sant Gervasi (60 places)						
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	SOCIAL HEALTH SERVICE								
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	SIS walk-in centre: main gateway to other services	6 DAY CENTRES, 4 OF WHICH HAVE HYGIENE CENTRES						14 community soup kitchens	Psychiatric team: on streets in in day centres
		DC Poblesec centre (30 places)	DC Horta centre (40 places)	DC Sta. Lluïsa Marillac centre (45 places)	DC Meridiana centre (60 places)	DC Nou Barris (30 places)	DC Zona Franca (70 places)		
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	SIS treatment team: intake to services	CUSB: CENTRE FOR SOCIAL EMERGENCIES (CENTRE D'URGÈNCIES SOCIALS)			'FIRST WELCOME' NIGHT SHELTERS AND ALL THE DAY CENTRES ACT AS INTAKE CENTRES				
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	SIS detection teams: street work								
	40 SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRES IN 10 CITY DISTRICTS								

BERGEN

Bergen's experience with homelessness shows that most people, when given accommodation, can cope with living by themselves as long as follow-up support is provided. However, for those homeless people with more complicated psychological and health problems, it is necessary to provide social support in addition to the accommodation. For some homeless people, protected housing is necessary, and the city of Bergen is in the process of developing this. Support services are personalised according to each individual's needs.

In Bergen, the local strategy against homelessness is to use a housing first approach. This means that homeless people have the same opportunities to access housing as non-homeless people, and, if necessary, to receive general support to live independently. They can also receive individually designed support to help them to live independently in suitable accommodation. The aim is to offer homeless people good quality permanent accommodation in residential housing, and to increase the availability of suitable accommodation. The city of Bergen is now in the process of establishing a housing first project in partnership with the Norwegian state housing bank, a government agency whose main role is to grant mortgages for newly constructed homes.

Another aim of Bergen's housing first approach is that no one should have to spend time in temporary accommodation when released from prison or when leaving an institution. Furthermore, when homeless people are offered overnight accommodation, a quality service agreement should be provided. The maximum stay in temporary accommodation should not exceed three months.

The main target group of the homelessness services in Bergen are people who experience mental health or substance abuse problems. Other vulnerable groups of people tend to successfully remain in housing with the assistance of social services.

Status

Although the overall number of homeless people is falling, the number of young homeless people is rising both in Bergen and elsewhere in Norway.

Challenges

In order to continue to reduce the number of homeless people, Bergen recognises the importance of developing its homelessness strategy further. The greatest challenges are:

- ensuring the availability of housing
- reducing youth homelessness
- developing floating support services for homeless people who have a history of drug and substance abuse: the quantity and flexibility of these floating services is crucial to helping them to live independently
- increasing the interaction between homeless people and the available services so that homeless people get the care that they need
- ensuring proper housing and coordinated support for people receiving medical treatment or coming out of prison and who are living in municipal accommodation.

Homelessness services

Homelessness prevention services

Bergen's eight social services centres assist people who are at risk of eviction (primary prevention) and ensure that people who were homeless can retain their flats (secondary prevention). In addition, all the relevant services play a part in preventing eviction through the local strategy against homelessness.

On top of these services, an outreach team of social workers is active on the streets, seeking out vulnerable young people who may be homeless or in danger of eviction. These young people are encouraged to get in touch with the appropriate services (for example, social services, mental health services, doctor, and addiction treatment), so that they can avoid losing their home. This service is not specific to young people at risk of homelessness but is a support service for young people in general.

The day centres, some of which are NGO-run, also undertake homeless prevention work, especially for formerly homeless people. They provide assistance in finding jobs, support for people with drug addiction, and help in contacting other relevant support services.

Additionally, a number of other wide-ranging services play a role in preventing homelessness, including floating psychiatry teams.

Intake to homelessness services

The eight social services centres act as the central intake into homelessness services and find places for homeless clients in all types of temporary accommodation and independent housing. The city's emergency accommodation can be accessed directly by homeless clients.

Non-accommodation services

Each of the eight social services centres provide a floating support team: they work across the services to support people in all types of accommodation arrangements.

The day centres also provide support, including social engagement, assistance in contacting the relevant services, job searching and substance abuse services. In addition, staff at Strax House, a municipal house for drug addicts, work towards reducing the physical, psychological and social problems of homeless people.

The low-threshold work centre is aimed at those who are unable to work more than a few hours a day and thus cannot enter the labour market. This centre helps people to find ad-hoc jobs for up to four hours a day. The client is paid immediately: these payments are tax-free and have lower deductions for social benefits contributions.

In the medical centres, the doctors, nurses, physiotherapists and social workers provide healthcare and illness prevention advice, as well as therapies and treatment for problems associated with stopping drug use. These medical centres are the same ones used by any other citizen.

Crisis and support services (specialist crisis support)

Strax House keeps one bed permanently available for people who experience a crisis such as drug overdose. There is also a 48-hour observation centre that provides acute medical and psychiatric care through cooperating specialist teams. Once a person has been assessed, they can either be given access to more specialised care or they can return to their accommodation.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

These low threshold emergency facilities and care provide people with direct walk-in access, a bed for the night, basic help, breakfast and someone to talk to. Bergen has 21 beds in walk-in care facilities for emergencies (rooflessness), including accommodation for people with substance abuse problems. Under Norwegian law, there is no guarantee of a bed in these facilities: people are offered beds on a daily basis.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

Most of the accommodation offering residential support to homeless people is provided with a 'roof guarantee' for a limited period, agreed on an individual basis, under the Norwegian legal framework. There are six such places in Bergen: three offer low intensity daytime support and three offer 24 hour support. Two of the 24 hour support facilities have a high tolerance for substance abuse: Bakkegaten and the Inner Mission House (Indremisjonsjernet).

The other 24 hour facility, Nubbeakken, has a low tolerance of substance abuse. The goal is for the stay not to exceed three months; however people can stay longer if social services are unable to find suitable accommodation with support in municipal apartments.

There is one specialist addiction treatment centre, Myrsaeter, and access to this is through diagnosis and interviews with the specialist team. In the Botrening centre, people with addiction problems learn the skills necessary to live independently. Stay here is limited and people have tenancy contracts.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

If people are not able to live independently, they can remain in municipal housing with floating support as far as is possible. Those who require more intensive support can agree with social services to extend their stay in temporary accommodation with 24 hour residential support and no tenancy contract. There are also homes for elderly people that offer specialist facilities for former substance abusers. In addition, there is floating and residential support for people with severe mental health problems and/or substance abuse.

Accommodation with floating support

Most people requiring accommodation with floating support are given long-term tenancy contracts in municipal housing. The exceptions are the 13 flats attached to the Botrening centre, where people receive a short-term tenancy contract while practising their independent living skills.

Bergen's floating support system is flexible: support is provided or withdrawn according to a client's needs. The city's social services team uses a 'floating office' system: in designated houses with five or six flats, one flat serves as a temporary office for the support team. The team provides intensive support to people living in the other flats as well as floating support to other vulnerable people in the area. As the clients in the building become more independent, the office reverts to accommodation and the team sets up its 'floating office' in another flat in another designated building.

This flexible system is able to support up to 250 people. The flats are for people with a double diagnosis (e.g. mental health problems and addiction problems), women only, newly released prisoners, people with alcohol dependency problems and people with mental health problems.

Independent housing

People can remain in the same flats when they become fully independent and no longer need support, or they can move to other accommodation in the private housing market.

Provision and funding

The city of Bergen provides most of the funding for its homelessness services, apart from the 48-hour observation centre, which is co-financed by the state. All the outreach and floating support services are provided by the city, in addition to most of the other services. However, some services are contracted out to NGOs or private companies.

BERGEN

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	PRIVATE ACCOMMODATION			PEOPLE CAN REMAIN IN MUNICIPAL HOUSING; SUPPORT WITHDRAWN			
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	MUNICIPAL HOUSING					BOTRENING CENTRE (13 flats)	
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	HOMES FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE			EXTENDED STAY IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION			
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION WITH LIMITED ROOF GUARANTEE AGREED WITH EACH CLIENT; NO TENANCY AGREEMENT			MYRSÆTER ADDICTION TREATMENT CENTRE		BOTRENING CENTRE	
	3 private low intensity centres (73 rooms)		3 residences with 24 hour support		(13 places)		
	Nubbebakken: Blue Cross (30 rooms)		Bakkegaten: Salvation Army (34 rooms)	Inner Mission Home Indremisjonshjemmet (30 rooms)		Independent living training for people with drug addiction problems (40 places)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICE PROVIDED						
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	LOW THRESHOLD CARE AND BED FACILITIES						
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	STRAX MUNICIPAL NIGHT HOUSE (7 beds)	Emergency accommodation for adults with substance abuse problems		Bakkegaten (Salvation Army): people with addiction problems (6 beds including 2 police beds)		City Mission: women only (8 beds including 2 police beds for those involved in prostitution or drugs)	
	includes 1 crisis bed	48 HOUR OBSERVATION CENTRE			CONTINUING CRISIS NEEDS ADDRESSED BY HEALTHCARE SERVICES		
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	access to medical and dental care	8 SOCIAL SERVICES CENTRES floating support team assists people in all types of accommodation			DAY CENTRES (NGO RUN)	LOW-THRESHOLD WORK CENTRE	MEDICAL CENTRES
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	OUTREACH STREET WORK		help with finding accommodation				
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	OUTREACH STREET WORK		support for people at risk of eviction and formerly homeless people			DAY CENTRES (NGO) Services for people already in housing	

MUNICH

All Munich's homelessness services are delivered under the city's principle of 'homes instead of shelters'. This is the focus of Munich's Overall Plan for Social Housing and Homeless Support which aims to:

- reduce the use of emergency accommodation
- create sufficient suitable rental accommodation to meet people's needs
- prevent homelessness by helping people maintain their tenancy contracts and avoid eviction.

One of Munich's objectives is for no one to become homeless. But by 2008, 6 665 households were at risk of homelessness. So in 2009, the social services department launched a project called Measures to Maintain Tenancy Status (Maßnahmen zum Erhalt von Mietverhältnissen). This focused on:

- improving the way social services communicate with households to prevent homelessness
- improving procedures to prevent homelessness when a tenancy agreement is terminated
- achieving a better understanding of each household's problems
- stabilising rent payments and preventing cases from reoccurring through professional follow-up support.

It is vital for the city to ensure there is enough affordable housing for people on low incomes. In 2006, to help increase the stock of affordable housing, Munich began providing municipal assistance for developing reasonably priced accommodation through its Live in Munich (Wohnen in München) housing programme and its Purchase of Occupancy Rights housing subsidy programme: KomPro/B (which involves legal compromise agreements). This is designed for people who can move from homelessness into supported or independent housing. Each year, up to 125 affordable housing units are made available for disadvantaged people on the housing market. The social services department holds the underlying occupancy rights. By the end of 2011, 24 buildings with 473 units were available.

Because of new-build housing developments, Munich can no longer meet the medium to long-term demand for social housing. Thus, the city's 2012-2016 housing programme, Living in Munich V (Wohnen in München V), incorporates provisions for the city to acquire occupancy rights for vacant housing. This is vital if the city wants to meet the demand for affordable social housing.

Over the past five years, the number of homeless people in Munich has risen: the most rapid increase has been in cases of homelessness due to immigration. In 2011, 63% of families in emergency accommodation had a foreign background, compared to 40% in 2006-07. This rise is mainly due to family members migrating from outside Germany and the lack of sufficiently large flats. By 1 January 2012, 2 700 people were in city-managed accommodation (including 704 children and 278 single people).

Munich uses an individualised support system where each homelessness case is treated holistically. The homelessness services provide support to people aged 18+. Other teams provide for some vulnerable groups, such as victims of domestic violence. There are special provisions for people aged under 18.

Services for homeless people

Homelessness prevention services

Each of the city's 13 regions has a social services and benefits office (Sozialbürgerhäuser), with a homelessness prevention service (FaSt). The FaSt offices are drop-in centres, with social workers (ASA) who offer advice and assistance to people at imminent risk of homelessness, and can intervene on their behalf. In addition, under a cooperation agreement with landlords, FaSt services are notified of households who are in rent arrears. Under German law, FaSt services are informed of notices for repossession and eviction.

The ASA active outreach service carries out proactive social work. For example, they make contact with people who fail to comply with arrangements agreed with the FaSt services, and help them by assessing their ability to comply with their tenancy agreement: providing follow-up support; helping them manage the household budget through Fit-Finance training; and offering debt counselling and insolvency advice.

Intake to homelessness services

There are two main routes into the homelessness services: either through the city's Central Office of Homelessness Support, which registers people for the city-run emergency accommodation or directly, through the NGO temporary accommodation. People who arrive via the NGO accommodation still report to the Central Office of Homelessness Support to obtain money to pay for their emergency accommodation and to find a more permanent home.

Non-accommodation services

The city's Central Office of Homelessness Support provides assistance with housing, employment, finance, and child welfare. There is also an NGO day centre, NGO outreach work on the streets and helpdesks run by the NGOs responsible for temporary accommodation, advising clients on how to get out of homelessness. In addition, there are mobile medical facilities, as well as the static medical and psychiatric facilities available to everyone.

Crisis and support services (specialist crisis support)

These crisis services are for people with alcohol or drug problems. They are provided by NGOs and are funded and supervised either by the city's department of health and the environment, or the Upper Bavarian Communities.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

Munich does not have typical night shelters. Instead, various NGOs offer temporary direct access emergency accommodation. Other emergency response facilities offer longer-term arrangements that allow people to stay for up to two years until a suitable place can be found in a municipal flat or supported accommodation. There are six municipal buildings offering 623 beds in total: each unit has rooms for up to three people, or family rooms, with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities. There are also four emergency response 'Clearing Houses' (Clearinghäuser), where people can be housed in their own flat for up to six months, or longer if alternative accommodation cannot be found. This service is for those who require little support and will soon be able to live independently.

Accommodation with general residential support

The accommodation with residential support is designed to help integrate formerly homeless people into permanent housing. People with the same or similar experiences and outlook live in small housing units with general residential support. Munich aims to establish new housing projects to meet the urgent need for this type of accommodation.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

There are various options for different target groups of people needing accommodation with residential support; and further projects are planned.

In 2011, a new women's housing project called Living Space for Women (Lebensplätze für Frauen) was opened: this offers 25 flats, and is run by an independent NGO, financed by the city of Munich.

The social reintegration centres offer short-term accommodation and residential support to people with specific problems such as debt, or lack of social skills.

There are also flats with residential support specifically for single mothers, long-term accommodation that provides psychiatric support and residential rehabilitation centres that help people with mental health problems acquire skills for independent living.

The support services are provided either by the city's homelessness team, or by the psychiatry and addiction services. When starting a programme of long-term support, clients sign a contract with social services based on an agreed support plan.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

Permanent accommodation is available for older homeless people, people with mental health problems and those who require ongoing support. Most people live in small self-contained units in blocks of flats. A team of social workers is permanently based in an office in the building, together with geriatric nurses and care assistants.

Accommodation with floating support

Three types of accommodation with floating support are provided. Firstly, NGO-run facilities offer shared, single-gender flats. People have their own bedrooms and share a living room, kitchen and bathroom. Secondly, the municipality provides flats, some under the KomPro/B programme, for people to move into straight away. They receive floating support in the form of social and welfare counselling from the social services (not the homelessness team). This type of housing is reserved for the formerly homeless. They do not have their own tenancy contract but they have the right to use to the accommodation within the normal legal framework. Thirdly, there are hostels provided by private companies under a quality standards contract agreed with the city, where people receive floating support and can stay for up to two years.

Independent housing

Some people are able to take on their tenancy contract and continue to live in the same flat, but without support. Other people move out from their supported flat and into municipal housing as they become fully independent.

Provision and funding

Munich's homelessness services receive most of their funding from the municipal authorities. The city authorities and independent NGOs then implement the services and other measures.

The city funds the city shelters, private hostels, Clearing Houses and NGO accommodation for long-term homeless people. The remaining services are funded by the Upper Bavarian Communities: due to Munich's size, the city is the main contributor to these regional funds. There is no state funding for homelessness services in Germany.

The homelessness services in Munich are provided through the close cooperation between the Office of Housing and Migration, non-governmental welfare organisations (NGOs) and private providers operating under contractual quality agreements. Support for the homeless is carried out by the homelessness team and by the city's welfare counselling teams who work in private hostels and municipal shelters or flats.

MUNICH

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	MUNICIPAL FLATS				MUNICIPAL AFFORDABLE FLATS	
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	NGO -RUN SHARED FLATS (149 places)					36 private hostels: floating support (2 457 places; linked to "accommodation with residential support for specific target groups")
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	MUNICIPAL FLATS AND HOMES					
	Older homeless women (48 flats)	Older homeless men (232 places)		Men with mental health problems (86 places)		
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	VARIOUS OPTIONS DEPENDING ON THE TARGET GROUP					
	Living Space for Women (Lebensplätze für Frauen) (25 flats with tenancy agreements)	Long-term accommodation with psychiatric support (112 places)	Single mothers (73 flats)	Long and short term rehabilitation: people with mental health problems (282 places for men; 18 places for women)	Short-term social reintegration (331 places for men; 42 places for women)	36 private hostels: floating support (2 457 places; linked to "accommodation with floating support")
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NEW HOUSING PROJECTS WITH SMALL HOUSING UNITS, WITH THEIR OWN TENANCY AGREEMENTS					
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	NGO TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION WITH INTENSE SUPPORT			VARIOUS EMERGENCY RESPONSE FACILITIES, SOME LONGER-TERM		
	1 men only (177 places); 2 women only (102 places)			6 municipal facilities (623 beds); 4 'Clearing Houses' (125 flats)		
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	PROVISION FOR DRUG OR ALCOHOL CRISIS					
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	HEALTH ASSISTANCE SERVICES		Teestube komm NGO day centre	Outreach work on the streets (NGO team)	Central Office of Homeless Support: social counselling & welfare assistance; help to find work and accommodation	NGO-run help desks
	Mobile medical surgery	2 Medical surgeries and psychiatric facilities				
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES					accommodation allocation	NGO-run accommodation services
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	FaSt AND ASA ACTIVE OUTREACH SERVICE					
	12 drop-in centres					

NEWCASTLE

Preventing and responding to homelessness

Newcastle provides a range of housing support and advice and homelessness prevention activities. This is delivered directly, through the Housing and Welfare Rights Service, as well as through a range of housing-related support services commissioned from the independent, community and voluntary sector to support vulnerable people to access and/or maintain housing tenancies. The city also provides and commissions supported accommodation for people with care and support needs e.g. older people, and those with learning disabilities or mental health problems. The city provides advice and support to prevent needs from escalating. Having the right kind of housing is essential in helping to prevent homelessness, and the city wants to help its citizens to plan for the future, respond to change and choose appropriate accommodation from a range of options.

Newcastle's Housing and Welfare Rights Service underpins other support and care interventions by securing the basic foundations for life: somewhere to live, an income and freedom from unmanageable debt.

The Housing and Welfare Rights Service develops, coordinates and delivers citywide solutions for people who need help to:

- secure their statutory rights and their best available housing option
- access housing and support to sustain themselves in the community
- secure an income to meet their needs
- manage their debt and expenditure.

The Housing and Welfare Rights Service provides strategic coordination and direct delivery on three levels:

- **Primary prevention activities:** these target the whole community and include providing benefits and housing advice and support to help people at life changing moments such as starting and losing work, childbirth, ill health and disability, retirement, old age, divorce and separation; developing housing options that support people in finding accommodation that best meets their needs by aligning housing advice, housing allocation and welfare advice.
- **Secondary prevention activities:** these target people at risk of homelessness and include predictive preventative support and advice to those at risk of housing loss, income loss or debt e.g. the Prevention from Eviction Protocol that has reduced eviction by over 300 cases over the last 3 years (see below under 'Good practice'); providing debt advice to people in mortgage arrears.
- **Crisis prevention activities:** these are for people who are at imminent risk of losing their home or income, including the provision of the Council's emergency accommodation, the Court Duty Representation Scheme, outreach services, and the development of a range housing options to accommodate people leaving institutions and asylum schemes so that they avoid becoming homeless.

Accommodation placements are based on a client's individual needs, so although progression through the integrated chain model is not necessarily incremental, this is often found to be the most effective route into independent housing.

Good practice

Newcastle's 'Prevention from Eviction' protocol requires social landlords to liaise with support agencies if there is a risk of a person being evicted. There were 174 evictions in 2011/12.

Challenges

At present the most common address given by a homeless person in Newcastle is a homeless hostel, which indicates an over-reliance on temporary hostels. A key challenge for the city is to overcome this reliance, and the city has therefore launched a joint project, led by the Adult and Culture Services and the Commissioning Unit, known as the Newcastle Gateway. Run by the Housing Advice Centre, the Gateway provides a single access point for emergency and short-term supported accommodation to which agencies can refer clients. The Gateway plays a significant role in changing the culture of relying on hostels, by reconciling the housing and support needs of people who face multiple issues and who are among the most socially excluded members of society, and securing appropriate accommodation for them.

The Gateway creates a single register of people requiring supported housing and prioritises referrals to help target resources at those most in need. In the project's initial phase, clients access the Gateway through statutory agencies within the city, such as social services, the probation and youth offending team, mental health services and the Housing Advice Centre.

Newcastle's local authority believes that breaking the cycle of homelessness is more likely if support service providers work together to more closely meet each client's individual support and accommodation needs.

The Gateway project helps the support services work together to meet each client's needs by:

- providing a single register of people who require short-term supported accommodation
- managing referrals into short-term accommodation (both emergency and non-emergency access) and floating support
- better matching clients' accommodation and support needs
- reducing the number of inappropriate or unsuccessful referrals

- encouraging continued engagement from the commissioning team
- monitoring the match achieved between vacancies and individual needs
- helping city authorities to understand the needs of people requiring short-term supported accommodation
- providing evidence of met and unmet needs and contributing to the strategic commissioning process.

Services for homeless people

Homeless prevention services

The city's Housing Advice Centre (HAC) has two main functions: the city checks that it can meet its statutory duties to help people at risk of homelessness, and it provides a range of housing options to prevent homelessness. The Centre helps people to remain in their accommodation and helps people in crisis to access stable accommodation, through a network of over 60 agencies that work to a range of prevention protocols and procedures.

The Centre's housing management team monitors people who were homeless or were at risk of homelessness but are now living independently in public housing to check that they do not relapse into homelessness and re-establish support services if necessary.

Intake to homelessness services

Intake to homelessness services can be via several routes: through the Housing Advice Centre, the day centres and the direct access emergency accommodation. The Housing Advice Centre advises and supports those who have nowhere suitable to live, and, through the Newcastle Gateway, coordinates and prioritises access to supported housing.

Non-accommodation services

Newcastle's four NGO-run day centres are direct access services, which provide food, social engagement, healthcare and education. They are also open to formerly homeless people.

Crisis and support centres (specialist crisis support)

Two teams deliver specialist crisis support. The mental health and alcohol addiction team carries out assessments and promotes access to the mainstream health care services according to needs; this helps overcome some homeless peoples' reluctance to use mainstream services. The hospital discharge team helps patients who are leaving hospital to access accommodation, so they can prevent the recurrence of health problems caused by homelessness. Other specialist crisis care is provided by mainstream services.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

Newcastle does not have traditional night shelters (i.e. centres that do not necessarily offer a bed but give some kind of shelter for the night). Instead, there is walk-in emergency access accommodation, both statutory and voluntary, which also serve as an entry point to the homelessness services. Within the UK legal framework, certain vulnerable groups have a statutory right to housing, which gives them priority access to housing services. This statutory housing provision is for families with children, young people aged 16 and 17, young adults leaving care, people fleeing violence and people who are vulnerable because of an 'institutionalised' background or significant ill health. Newcastle therefore ensures fast-track procedures into housing for these groups of people.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

Clients often progress from emergency accommodation into communal accommodation with ongoing residential support. These are shared or hostel type facilities and are available for up to two years on average.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support is outside the remit of the homelessness team. Instead, if a person cannot move into independent housing, for example, due to mental health problems, drug and alcohol problems or disability, then the respective social work team arranges appropriate services and support.

Accommodation with floating support

When people in supported housing no longer need residential support, they usually move into social housing with floating support (council flats or flats managed by homelessness organisations).

Specialist services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender clients (LGBT) are available within the residential and floating support teams. This is because LGBT groups are potentially more vulnerable to housing problems due to discrimination and issues with social support.

Independent housing

Moving into fully independent housing in many cases does not require a physical move. The support is withdrawn and the person's support status changes but they remain in the same accommodation.

Provision and funding

The majority of Newcastle's non-statutory homelessness services are provided by NGOs commissioned by the city. Rent subsidies are provided by central government. The relatively small amount of core statutory homelessness services are organised directly by the city.

NEWCASTLE

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	FLATS: MAINLY IN COUNCIL HOUSING BUT SOME IN PRIVATE RENTED HOUSING					
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	COUNCIL FLATS AND SELF-CONTAINED UNITS IN 5 CENTRES (1,067 PLACES IN TOTAL)					
	Council flats: people with a history of offending, substance abuse or general homelessness (639 places)	Centre for young people (2 LGBT specialists available) (44 places)	Victims of domestic violence (34 places)	Refugees (92 places)	People with mental health problems (132 places)	People with learning disabilities (26 places)
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	PROVIDED BY THE SOCIAL WORK TEAM (61 TRANSITIONAL TENANCY PLACES) (Not provided by the homelessness team)					
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	SHARED AND HOSTEL TYPE ACCOMMODATION: MAXIMUM STAY 2 YEARS (457 BEDS IN TOTAL)					
	People with a history of offending, substance abuse or general homelessness (306 beds in total: 222 with generic support; 49 for single men aged 16+; 35 for single women aged 16+)	Young people aged under 25 years (105 beds, including 8 LGBT)	Women and children (11 beds)	Refugees (20 beds)	People with mental health problems (10 beds)	British Army veterans (5 beds)
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICE PROVIDED					
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	STATUTORY PROVISION	DIRECT ACCESS ACCOMMODATION (166 BEDS IN TOTAL)				
	Self-contained units for men and women (47 beds)	For people with a history of offending, substance abuse or general homelessness (143 beds in total: 69 with generic support; 56 for men aged 18+; and 18 for women aged 16+)	For people aged 16 to 21 years (10 beds)	For victims of domestic violence and women aged 16+ (10 beds)		
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	Specialist mental health and alcohol addiction service	Hospital discharge team		Other crisis and support services		
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	4 NGO-RUN DAY AND EVENING CENTRES					
	Ron Eager	Joseph Cowen Health	Crisis Skylight		People's Kitchen	
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	HOUSING ADVICE CENTRE					
	Gateway project coordinates access to supported and emergency housing			Day centres and direct access accommodation also provide intake to homelessness services		
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION						

OSLO

The city of Oslo supports every individual in managing their own life, by helping them to acquire the skills needed for independent living. As a part of this strategy, the use of private hostels is limited, and if they are used, it must be a temporary arrangement with a quality agreement contract. In line with Norway's national strategy against homelessness, a further aim is to reduce the number of eviction notices, as well as the number of actual evictions. The city is working to reduce the amount of time people spend in temporary housing to no more than three months and to have permanent housing available for people leaving institutions.

Until a few years ago, support for disadvantaged groups in Oslo was characterised by an over abundance of competing agencies and a lack of strategic direction. Today, the city's social services department is responsible for disadvantaged people in the city. Clients now present themselves at a single place to get the support they need to solve their housing problems. The city can then provide the necessary services and support directly, or can commission these from specialist agencies.

Municipal accommodation is available for people whose needs are not met by the private housing market or who cannot find a house or flat. Home ownership is promoted and support is given to find private sector accommodation. For those people who cannot manage or maintain independent housing, individual support plans are developed to meet their specific needs.

Young people under 18 years of age, including those who are at risk of homelessness, are cared for through the child welfare system, so the city's homelessness services do not work with this age group.

Challenges

Since 2007, Oslo has taken steps to actively identify those people who use the emergency accommodation facilities, by improving the coordination between the various emergency housing services and clarifying the procedure for accessing emergency housing.

All applicants for emergency housing must now visit and apply via the social services district offices, or via the 24 hour Emergency Medical Centre. This ensures the city understands how emergency housing is being used. It has become clear that a small group of clients are using emergency housing regularly, even if they are frequently offered more permanent accommodation. Many of them are heavy drug abusers or have psychiatric and other problems.

Every two years, Oslo conducts a survey of the number of rough sleepers: people sleeping outside for more than 14 days. This survey indicates that a small number of clients are unable to make use of the long-term housing that is offered to them.

The city is now designing and building accommodation that more closely matches clients' needs, and has acquired useful experience through projects that follow the Danish model of 'unusual houses for unusual people', a facet of the housing first approach. Special arrangements are made for people who have mental health or addiction problems but are unable or unwilling to live in rehabilitation centres: they are given their own housing, and are visited regularly by various social services support staff. The housing is monitored, and the social workers receive mobile phone text messages if there are problems such as a fire alarm, power cut or heating failure, so they can notify the appropriate services.

Services for homeless people

Homelessness prevention services

Oslo's homelessness prevention services are provided by 15 district social services offices. They follow up on notices of eviction, give practical support to help people keep their homes, advise on different support schemes, and can give financial support to help pay the rent.

Intake to homelessness services

The 15 social services district offices provide access to the homelessness services, but these only operate during office hours. Intake is also via the 24/7 Emergency Medical Centre where social services workers are also available (see 'Crisis and support centres'). Clients who access the homelessness services via the Emergency Medical Centre are later directed back to a social services district office. This ensures that the most suitable accommodation can be found and a long-term plan can be agreed.

During the winter, the capacity of Oslo's homelessness intake services is increased due to additional demand.

Non-accommodation services

Oslo offers a number of non-accommodation homelessness services. The 15 social services districts are the key service providers for homeless people and for those at risk of homelessness; and the 15 social services day centres provide food, social engagement and a variety of support and advice services. Five low-threshold job centres assist people who are unable to take up employment in the ordinary job market to find short-term work and remain active.

Outreach work on streets is carried out by the Agency for Social and Welfare Services, and outreach activities are also provided by some of the social services districts. There are nine medical assistance centres for drug users, providing direct medical assistance for infection control and addiction problems. In addition, the city's rehabilitation centres provide a team of specialist 'motivation and change' agents

who work specifically to encourage active substance users to enter into treatment and help them contact the relevant services, not just for addiction problems but also for housing and financial help.

Crisis and support centres (specialist crisis support)

The city's Emergency Medical Centre provides acute medical and psychiatric care outside office hours. Other crisis and support care is provided under the national health care system.

There are also crisis centres for victims of domestic violence: these are run by NGOs rather than by the municipal homelessness services.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

Oslo does not have typical night shelters. The first option for housing people who have become homeless due to a natural disaster or fire is to immediately secure suitable accommodation in a municipal flat with floating support or, if needed, in a rehabilitation centre.

The second option is to use one of the four private emergency hostels. This private emergency accommodation is only used where suitable accommodation in municipal housing or a rehabilitation centre is not available: the stay is limited to a maximum of three months. 99 private emergency response places are available in four separate hostels. Two of these hostels offer places for substance users, while two have no tolerance for substance abuse, one being for individual non-users and the other for families with children. In addition, emergency access accommodation is offered by some of the rehabilitation centres.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

There are 32 rehabilitation centres in Oslo which prepare clients for independent living: 22 are run by the municipal social and welfare services agency and 10 are run by NGOs and other private service providers. The accommodation is mainly in rooms within flats. There is no time limit, but on average, people stay for around two years. Most of these rehabilitation centres tolerate drug use and alcohol use.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

Permanent accommodation with residential support is provided in care centres run by Oslo's social and welfare services agency. These are mainly for older people with addiction problems, and combine housing needs with medical needs. Accommodation is mainly in apartments and a team of nursing staff is permanently available to provide support.

People can move between care centres and rehabilitation centres, depending on their individual needs.

Accommodation with floating support

The floating support service is provided both in municipal flats and in private sector flats. Municipal flats are allocated to people who are otherwise unable to rent or buy a home on their own: clients have ordinary tenancy contracts and can stay for up to five years. 11,000 of these flats have been ring-fenced for allocation to vulnerable people. Most of this municipal housing is in ordinary apartment blocks, and is for young people, people with developmental disabilities, people with mental health problems and refugees. Older people are allocated flats of a particularly high standard and which are fully accessible, for example by people using wheelchairs.

A separate scheme provides housing with floating support for people with mental health and addiction problems who are unable or unwilling to live in the rehabilitation centres. This housing is located in quite remote areas of Oslo.

In addition to these arrangements, flats are available that are adapted to the needs of clients with a disability who require low levels of support.

Independent housing

Independent housing is available in the private sector. Clients can either use their housing allowance for rent payments, or they can take advantage of the loan schemes that help people buy their own property.

There is also short-term housing for up to three months for people who are waiting to receive a place in suitable accommodation. The support provided depends on clients' individual needs.

Provision and Funding

All the homelessness services described here are funded by the city of Oslo, and are provided by a mix of municipal agencies, NGOs and other commissioned organisations.

OSLO

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	PRIVATE SECTOR FLATS OR HOUSES						Flats adapted to disability needs
	Short-term housing for people waiting for a flat						
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	MUNICIPAL AND PRIVATE SECTOR ACCOMMODATION: MOSTLY FLATS						
	Municipal housing	Municipal flats ring-fenced for vulnerable people (11 000 flats)				Housing for people with both mental health and addiction problems	
		People needing wheelchair facilities; older people	Young people	people with a developmental disability	People with mental health problems		
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	CARE CENTRES (approx. 80 places)						
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	32 REHABILITATION CENTRES (approx. 660 places)						
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICES PROVIDED						
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	4 PRIVATE HOSTELS: EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION ON DAY-BY-DAY BASIS, MAINLY IN ROOMS, MAXIMUM 3 MONTHS (99 PLACES)						
	Some of the 32 rehabilitation centres offer emergency accommodation	Municipal flats: used for emergency accommodation when available	2 hostels for substance users and non-users (depending on needs)		1 hostel for single non- substance abusers		1 hostel for families with children
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	'Motivation and change' agents		CENTRES FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE (NGO-RUN); OTHER CRISIS SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM				EMERGENCY MEDICAL CENTRE
			Outreach work on streets		5 low-threshold work centres	9 medical assistance centres	15 day centres: run by social services districts
NON- ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	15 SOCIAL SERVICES DISTRICTS comprehensive support for people in all types of accommodation						
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	access to homelessness services (office hours)						
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	assistance to prevent homelessness		HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAMMES Funded by the municipality or the state				

ROTTERDAM

The Dutch Strategy Plan for Social Relief aims to combat homelessness, using a personalised integrated approach. It involves the Dutch government and the country's four largest cities: Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht. The first phase of this strategic plan was implemented during 2006 -2010. It focused on improving the living conditions of homeless people. By the end of 2009, a total of 2 989 homeless people had received an individualised integrated plan. This has helped to reduce the level of anti-social behaviour and criminal offences committed by homeless people: the number of cases in 2009 was some 25% lower than in 2006.

The second phase of the Strategy Plan for Social Relief (2010-2014) focuses on homelessness prevention and empowering vulnerable citizens to make a long-term commitment to avoid homelessness. This includes increasing their participation in society, enjoying meaningful activities in the municipality, learning skills such as computer skills, or recreational activities like painting or woodwork, and building a social network. The personalised and integrated approach is continued during this second phase.

Status

The first phase of the Strategic Plan for Social Relief resulted in a substantial increase in special accommodation and housing projects in Rotterdam, specifically for vulnerable and homeless people. This is in line with the aim of reducing the use of shelters and providing more care.

The second phase of the strategic plan takes the provision of accommodation for vulnerable and formerly homeless people to the next stage. Rather than developing additional special accommodation, Rotterdam is now focusing on integrating suitable forms of housing into the local community to deliver a win-win situation for both homeless people and the communities involved. This new approach

is called 'home port' (Thuishavens). It acts as a safety net and provides care for people who live in supported accommodation. It also supports vulnerable and formerly homeless citizens who are living independently. This helps vulnerable people to integrate into the local community, so that they feel more welcome, and less likely to use anti-social behaviour. It also raises awareness and understanding among other people living in the community. However, this approach is not always easy to achieve, due to the negative not in my back yard (NIMBY) reactions of some citizens. To overcome this resistance, the city needs to increase awareness of the benefits of this integrated approach and of the need to provide accommodation for homeless people.

Although there is a certain degree of progression through the integrated chain model, it is not necessary for people to move through all the stages incrementally. The type of support received depends on the individuals' needs and the reasons why the person became homeless.

Vulnerable groups

The homelessness services described here and in the diagram are for people aged 23+ years. There are separate services for people under 23 years, organised through other funding channels, and are outside the homelessness team's remit. By providing separate accommodation and services for young people, the goal is to help minimise the risk of young people mixing with other homeless people and developing further social problems.

There are also separate services for victims of domestic violence: under Dutch law it is the alleged perpetrator who must seek alternative housing. So it is usually the alleged perpetrator who becomes a client of the homelessness services, and the services therefore need to provide not just housing, but support to address their issues and needs on many other levels. Where a victim needs accommodation in a refuge the address remains confidential.

Challenges

With the financial crisis, experts predict that there will be new groups of homeless people sleeping on the streets, although none yet have appeared. People most at risk continue to be young people with multiple problems and homeless families. Like many other cities in Europe, Rotterdam is experiencing severe cuts in state funding, especially care funding. This has a cumulative effect on vulnerable people: they rely heavily on the health care system, but they tend to avoid social service care and are often unable to deal with bureaucracy. Rotterdam has therefore increased the number of places in supported accommodation for vulnerable people.

Rotterdam tries to minimise the use of basic short-term day centres and night shelters and instead focuses on providing long-term housing. However, due to the economic crisis, it is clear that it is still essential to offer a certain number of these day centres and night shelters, even when there is a successful system for central intake and personalised plans.

In addition, people who are homeless or formerly homeless need to take part in meaningful activities: these are an essential part of a client's integrated plan as they boost self-confidence and create social networks. This means that more emphasis is being put on creating a variety of meaningful activities, such as learning and enhancing skills or craftwork.

Homelessness Services

Homelessness prevention services

Rotterdam provides primary and secondary homelessness prevention services. Primary homeless prevention is carried out via 36 local care networks made up of local professionals such as housing corporation managers, doctors, teachers, and social workers. These professionals meet to identify people at risk of becoming homeless so that they can intervene before people lose their home. The city's department of health chairs these networks.

Secondary homeless prevention services are provided through three projects that offer continuous floating support to formerly homeless people who are living independently, but are still at risk of homelessness, to prevent them from becoming homeless again.

Intake to homelessness services

Intake to most of the homelessness services offered by the city is through a single central reception office: the Centraal Onthaal. Here, for example, homeless people can obtain a card that is needed to access the night shelters.

An individual tailor-made support plan is developed for each client, based on a comprehensive assessment of his or her situation and needs. This is agreed by the client and the support team.

Non-accommodation services

There are seven day centres offering food, social engagement and hygiene services. The day centres and emergency centres operate on a walk-in basis and do not require a card for access.

Crisis and support services (specialist crisis support)

Ten beds in 'Time-out' care are available for people with addiction or mental health problems, and are experiencing a mental health, addiction or behavioural crisis. Here they can spend time away from their regular supported housing or residential health clinic. Care is provided to help clients stabilise and to prevent their condition from deteriorating. Stay is usually for up to two weeks.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

Six night shelters are available. In addition, there is a separate provision of 12 emergency beds for people who are suddenly made homeless due to fire, flood or other disaster. Stay is usually for a few nights. People can move from the night shelters into accommodation with specialist residential support, floating support or independent housing.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

Rotterdam provides seven residential facilities that support specific groups of people. One centre is for people with alcohol addiction; five centres are for people with a double diagnosis of both mental health and substance abuse problems; and one centre offers semi-permanent accommodation for retired people.

Accommodation with general residential support

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support is outside the remit of Rotterdam's homelessness services. Instead, people who do not need specialist treatment but are unable to be independently housed, for example, due to disability, are referred to other services that can address their needs.

Accommodation with floating support

There are two main types of accommodation with floating support: accommodation shared between four to six people with a common kitchen or living room; and self-contained accommodation in flats for one or two people where floating support is provided under the 'With(out) a Roof' housing programme. People can stay for up to four years.

There is also a short-stay hotel that accepts people without severe drugs problems or psychiatric problems. Clients can stay here for up to 6 months or so, and can receive low-intensity floating support to help them organise their life and long-term housing.

Independent housing

People who no longer require support mainly move into housing association accommodation, but also occasionally into municipal flats or private sector housing.

Provision and funding

Rotterdam's homelessness services are financed through a mix of national and municipal funds. The services are mainly run by NGOs. The exception is the Central Reception office (Centraal Onthaal), which is both funded and run by the municipality.

ROTTERDAM

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	ACCOMMODATION MAINLY WITH HOUSING CORPORATIONS, OCCASIONALLY IN MUNICIPAL FLATS OR PRIVATE HOUSING			
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	'With(out) a Roof' housing programme: approx 400 flats (600 places)	10 buildings with shared flats that are for 4 to 6 people (265 places)	Short stay hotel (110 rooms)	
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	THIS SERVICE IS OUTSIDE THE HOMELESSNESS TEAM'S REMIT			
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	1 centre for people with alcohol addiction (43 beds)	5 centres for people with a double diagnosis of both mental health and substance abuse problems (120 beds)	1 centre offering semi-permanent retirement accommodation (65 beds)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICES PROVIDED			
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	4 Salvation Army night shelters, one of which is for women only; and 2 Centrum voor Dienstverlening night shelters		Accommodation for people made homeless due to fire/flood/other disaster (12 beds)	
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	'TIME-OUT' CARE (10 beds)			
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	7 NGO-RUN DAY CENTRES (250 PLACES)			
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	3 Salvation Army day centres			
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	36 LOCAL CARE NETWORKS		3 PREVENTION PROJECTS (166 places)	

STOCKHOLM

Stockholm's homelessness strategy is based on a system of housing and support that uses an integrated and coordinated chain approach. One of the city's key objectives is to prevent evictions: responsibility for this lies with the 14 city districts.

In particular, Stockholm recognises the need for better coordination of the city's support for people with mental health problems: this support is provided by the municipal social welfare service and the county council health care service.

Stockholm is now developing a new homelessness strategy that will be implemented in 2013. As well as eviction prevention, this will focus on the role of NGOs, and on how best to address the specific needs of various groups of homeless people: families; young people; older people aged 65+; homeless people with complex problems such as substance abuse and/or physical/mental health problems; and EU migrants and other migrants who are homeless.

To succeed in living independently the city recognises that people need individually tailored support.

Vulnerable groups

Most homelessness services in Stockholm are used by people with substance abuse problems. Other vulnerable groups of homeless and near-homeless people receive assistance from other services. They include young people who are homeless or risk homelessness, single mothers, other vulnerable women and homeless families with children. Most homeless families are from other countries and have not previously had their own accommodation in Sweden. They are given temporary accommodation before moving into their own flat.

Challenges

Stockholm aims to halve the number of people either sleeping rough or using shelters by 2013. As part of this, a key challenge is to reduce the number of young people who become homeless. Since 2006 the city has implemented several projects to give extra support to young people aged 18-25 years who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The city works with each young person individually and offers them support in obtaining accommodation and other services. Many homeless young people are young migrant men who left school early, have ongoing substance abuse problems, and have almost no social network. Although the situation has improved considerably, there is more to do.

One initiative is the Crossroads homelessness centre which provides a drop-in point for EU migrants who are unemployed and destitute. It provides essentials such as food and daytime shelter, as well as advice and training opportunities. The centre receives around 100 people every day.

Another key challenge for Stockholm is to help more homeless people to eventually live independently. Over 60% of homeless people in Stockholm remain in supported accommodation of some kind. Although many of them are ready to live in a flat of their own with floating support, for a number of reasons not all homeless people are able to do this. The main reasons are:

- debts: it is difficult to get a flat if you are in debt. The city offers debt counselling
- lack of training flats and trial flats: more of these flats are available now but there are still not enough
- lack of focus within supported accommodation on the next step for clients: many homeless people need to learn and practise independent living skills. This can take months or even years.

Homelessness services

Homelessness prevention services

Each of Stockholm's 14 social service districts decides how best to prevent and avoid evictions in their district, while working within the national and city recommendations and guidelines.

The 14 districts are supported by the social welfare service administration, which, for example, suggests effective ways of organising and delivering services, based on research and evidence.

Intake to homelessness services

Each of the 14 social services districts serves as the local intake and referral point into homelessness services. An additional small central intake service can arrange short-term accommodation (1-2 nights) for people who do not wish to contact the social services at that particular time. People using this service to access a night shelter are still referred back to their social service district for further assistance. People can also access a night shelter directly, in which case the central intake service is informed and becomes very involved in supporting the client.

There is also a special unit for homeless people that acts as a route into homelessness services.

Non-accommodation services

The 14 social services districts provide homeless people with all types of accommodation and non-accommodation services. In addition, there is a special unit (run by the social welfare services administration) offering support services to all homeless people who have not been in contact with any of the social services districts for two years. This special unit helps around a quarter of the homeless people in the city. The Homelessness Centre is a new approach to providing non-accommodation support to homeless people. It offers a one-stop-shop where people can obtain help, ranging from assistance with the Internet to health services. This is a collaboration between the

municipal services (the outreach team and the social services special unit for homeless), and the county council services (health services, psychiatry services, substance abuse services).

In addition, five day centres provide food and social engagement for about 400 to 500 people daily.

Crisis and support centres (specialist crisis support)

Emergency social services respond to urgent social problems outside office hours and run a 24 hour helpline operated by highly experienced staff. In addition, they also work on specific initiatives for vulnerable children and adolescents, abused women, substance users and homeless people. They can also help foreign-born people on emergency relief to arrange voluntary repatriation.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

The six emergency night shelters have a high tolerance for substance abuse. These shelters are meant to be used for a maximum of two weeks. However, in about 40% of cases, the clients do not want to move out into longer-term supported accommodation, and this significantly reduces their chances of overcoming homelessness.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

The city's accommodation with residential support offers two types of service: high tolerance for drugs and alcohol abuse; and low/no tolerance (i.e. 'dry').

In the 'dry' accommodation, clients have their own rooms and bathrooms but share a kitchen. This includes the 103 trial flats provided by the SHIS city foundation (which is separate from the municipal services). These are mainly for people with addiction problems and they receive support while they try out their independent living skills. SHIS (Stiftelsen hotellhem i Stockholm) is the city's social housing resource and offers temporary accommodation.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

People who are unable to live completely independently can move into permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support. These facilities provide services, including intense support if required, for older people and for people with mental health or substance abuse problems. There is no tolerance for drug or alcohol use on the premises. With no limit on stay, some people remain in this type of accommodation, while other people prefer to move out and live independently.

Accommodation with floating support

The accommodation with floating support includes the SHIS's Hostel Home for people with a variety of problems such as debts or mental health. People from the SHIS trial flats often move here, provided their residentially supported trial goes well. They have a small room with a kitchenette. There is minimal support and clients have their own contract for the flat. This accommodation is available for up to four years.

There are also other training flats and trial flats offering floating support, including a few in the same building as the 'dry' accommodation centres. These are for people who wish to try living on their own but prefer to have support from staff who already know them.

Another training and trial system works in parallel: the training stage is for those who require a lot of assistance to live independently, whilst the trial stage allows people to test their living skills with floating support, including people who do not require training. If a trial is successful after one to two years, an individual can take over the housing tenancy agreement and assume the status of independently housed, without needing to physically move accommodation.

During the last few years Stockholm has been increasing the number of training and trial flats, and currently acquires some 300 new flats every year. About half are assigned for training and half for trial, depending on needs. These flats often provide the last steps for formerly homeless people before they become fully independent.

Independent housing

The majority of Stockholm's formerly homeless people become independently housed through the municipal housing system. This operates a general non-means-tested waiting list, open to all citizens.

Provision and funding

Stockholm's homelessness services are fully or partially funded by the city of Stockholm, and are provided by a mix of NGOs, private companies and the city.

STOCKHOLM

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	MUNICIPAL HOUSING AVAILABLE TO EVERYBODY									
	Trial flats can become independent housing: People take on the tenancy contract; support withdrawn									
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	Trial flats: no contract; stay up to c. 2 years		Training flats	Training flats: connected to the 'dry' supported accommodation described below (57 apartments)			SHIS Hostel Home: (1 154 small rooms) Max. 4 years			
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	Gamlebo: older people (29 places)						Ljungbacken/City mission: men, women and couples (23 places)	Hamnvikshemmet: men only (34 places)	Edshemmet: men, women and couples (31 places)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	HIGH TOLERANCE FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE (150 PLACES)			LOW OR NO TOLERANCE FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE ('DRY' ACCOMMODATION) (387 PLACES INCLUDING LJUNGBACKEN, HAMNVIKSHEMMET AND EDSHEMMET)						
	Västberga boende: men only (69 places)	Norrtull/City mission: men only (26 places)	Råcksta/City mission: men and women (55 places)	SHIS trial apartments (103 apartments)	Syrenen: women only: 2 facilities (13 + 12 places)	Bandhagshemmen: men and women: 2 facilities (62 + 26 places)	Råcksta: men and women (28 places)	Lönnen: men and women (55 places)		
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICES PROVIDED									
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	6 CENTRES (207 BEDS)									
	Grimman: men, women and couples (28 places)	Salvation Army: men only (24 places)	Hvilan: women only (21 places)	City Mission: men and women (30 places)	Hammarbybacken: men and women (34 places)	Skarpnäckgården: men only (70 places)				
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	EMERGENCY SOCIAL SERVICES FOR OUTSIDE OFFICE HOURS									
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	14 social services districts: provide support in all types of accommodation	5 DAY CENTRES					Homelessness Centre: one stop shop	Crossroads, service for EU-migrants	Special unit for homeless people: support services	
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES		City Mission: women only	City Mission: men and women	NyGemenskap: men and women	Situation Stockholm: men and women	Salvation Army: men and women	SMALL CENTRAL INTAKE CENTRE			
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	a range of services	CENTRAL SOCIAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION								
		intake to services								

UTRECHT

Utrecht is one of the four cities covered by the Dutch Strategy Plan for Social Relief, launched in 2006 in partnership with the Dutch government. The other three cities are Amsterdam, Rotterdam and The Hague. The first phase of this strategic plan, which covered 2006 to 2010, aimed to improve the living conditions of homeless people or those at risk of homelessness. The plan uses an individualised solution-orientated approach based on cooperation and mutual trust.

Independent monitoring showed that by the end of 2010, across the four cities, a total of 10 150 formerly homeless people were on an agreed individualised programme that provides them with a pathway to independence. These personalised programmes address issues such as housing, income (mostly social benefits) and care. During the first phase of the strategic plan, evictions from rent arrears decreased by over 20% and public nuisance convictions were down by over 25%. The second phase of the Strategy Plan (2010-2014) focuses on preventing homelessness and on optimising social participation, self-sufficiency and rehabilitation. It includes action plans for each city.

Status

In 2010, at the end of the first phase of the Strategy Plan, 1 725 formerly homeless people in Utrecht were on an individualised pathway to independence: 1 005 of these were assessed as stable - meaning they have good contact with the social services, they have regular income and they are socially active - by staff from the homelessness and social services teams. The staff believed that the homeless person would complete their agreed programme and be able to live with some degree of independence. These results were in line with results for the other participating cities.

A comparison of the number of arrests for public nuisance offences showed that people on an individualised programme had on average 0.13 public nuisance violations per person per year, compared to 0.79 for those not on a programme. This indicates that a significant decrease in public nuisance can be achieved by providing homeless people with stable housing, income and care.

Progression through the integrated chain model is usually incremental but this is not essential.

Challenges

Many people become homeless due to debt and the Dutch government and local NGOs have devised various special initiatives to help tackle debt problems. The city is also looking for ways of providing meaningful daytime activities for homeless and formerly homeless people; developing innovative ways to achieve small-scale community support; and social rehabilitation schemes. All these activities must be client-focused.

More far-reaching challenges for Utrecht's homelessness services include budget cuts, reforms to health financing and capacity problems in the housing market. It is not yet clear how these threats will affect Utrecht's action plan; however, there are signs that it may be difficult to meet the goal of reducing the number of new homeless people by 10% compared with 2008.

A further challenge is how to cope with the large number of migrant people who are homeless, including those with no entitlement to social services or support. Based on a successful project in London, Utrecht is working with a Polish organisation, which runs a programme to reconnect east European homeless people with their families.

Homelessness services

Homelessness prevention services

Utrecht's Prevent Eviction project helps prevent the eviction of people who are at the start of court eviction proceedings. In 2011, more than 80% of the 123 eviction cases reported to the Municipal Health Centre were subsequently prevented through debt guidance and mobile support (ambulatory outreach social work where social workers visit the clients and give them advice and support with their debt management).

The social hygiene project targets people whose living conditions may be hazardous to their own health or the health of others. People who are unable to take care of their living and housing conditions are at a higher risk of eviction. In 2011, 80 households were reported and intervention was needed in 50 of these.

The six 'signalling networks' consist of representatives from care providers, social workers, the police and housing corporations. They signal any problems by alerting the homelessness services of households causing nuisance or people who are independently housed but who may be isolated. For maximum efficiency the same team deals with both groups. It is often people who are the quietest and keep themselves to themselves who are most at risk of homelessness. They may face social isolation, psychiatric problems, addiction, problems such as compulsive hoarding or depression or dementia. By alerting the homelessness services, early intervention can be provided and eviction prevented.

Utrecht is developing a community support network consisting of secondary prevention workers, client organisations and welfare organisations. A pilot group of 250 formerly homeless people will receive the support they need to live as independently as possible. The strength of this type of project is that it will be demand led: clients, their peers and client organisations will lead the project rather than care providers or local government.

Intake to Services

The central intake service refers clients to longer-term accommodation. Short-term low-threshold services such as advice services, night shelters and crisis support can be accessed directly by clients. In 2011, 408 homeless people were assisted by the homelessness services (including 132 young people aged under 23 and 134 women).

Non-accommodation services

All five day centres in Utrecht offer food and social engagement. One provides rooms for people addicted to hard drugs, but this requires a permit for each client, issued by the municipal health service, addiction care, police or client representatives. The number of permits being issued has steadily decreased: by 1 January 2012, fewer than 20 permits were in circulation. The services are now being reorganised to provide a day centre for all homeless people addicted to either hard drugs or alcohol.

Utrecht's Assertive Community Treatment is an innovative outreach service, adapted from experience in the USA. Provided by the psychiatric services, it actively seeks vulnerable people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and also offers primary and secondary prevention.

There is also a new outreach service for young people. This addresses every facet of their situation and is in addition to the specialist care via the homelessness services.

Crisis and Support Centres

The five crisis and support centres provide short term specialised care. They cater for homeless people and people who are housed but who cannot attend a regular hospital, psychiatric or addiction centre, for example, because they are unwilling, too aggressive, or uninsured. These crisis centres include 'time-out' beds that allow people in mental health, addiction or behavioural crises to spend time away from their regular accommodation. After a short stay clients return to their regular housing or are referred to homelessness housing services. One centre is specifically for people with medical problems, where patients receive treatment and have time to recover.

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

Night shelters in Utrecht increase their capacity for the winter. The NOIZ shelter (Nachtopvang in Zelfbeheer) is unique in being run by homeless or formerly homeless people: they carry out all the day-to-day work, such as cooking, cleaning and working with The Foundation De Tussenvoorziening which looks after finances, overheads, and additional support.

Clients of the NOIZ shelter can apply to become wardens. In total, the NOIZ can accommodate 30 clients each night, plus 17 formerly homeless wardens.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

Most accommodation with residential support for specific groups is available for a limited but variable period, because the people using these services have clear potential to move into independent accommodation. The time limits are particularly short for young people and the recently homeless: they should be able to return to independent housing quite quickly. This accommodation includes 13 sheltered facilities with individual rooms and a support office.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

Those with more severe problems and less potential for living independently are offered accommodation without a time limit and with ongoing residential support. Although these are permanent places, efforts are still made to maximise independence, and in some cases, people move into their own flat.

Accommodation with floating support

People requiring floating support have their own tenancy contract for a room or flat.

Independent housing

For people who no longer need floating support there is no actual physical move into the independent housing level: the support is withdrawn, their status changes to independently housed, and they remain in the same accommodation.

It is also possible to live independently directly. This depends on a client's independent living skills and on the extent to which a housing corporation trust their ability and willingness to pay the rent. Support services are still offered via the Assertive Community Treatment outreach service or social services, but not directly by the homelessness team.

Utrecht is also experimenting with the housing first approach, for people with a strong desire and motivation to live independently in their own home. By the beginning of 2012, 25 places in a housing first dwelling were available.

Provision and funding

Central government provides about two-thirds of funding for Utrecht's homelessness services, with the city providing the rest. NGOs run two-thirds of the services and the rest are run by private companies.

UTRECHT

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	Housing corporation flats: own tenancy contract						
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	Housing corporation accommodation: own room/ flat; own tenancy contract (317 places)						
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	People with alcohol dependency (46 places)	People who are hard drug users; drug use allowed in own room (89 places)	People with mental health problems (52 places)	People with no addiction problems (77 places)			
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	Young people (96 places)	Recently homeless people (26 rooms)	13 FACILITIES (239 BEDS)				General homeless people: low drug tolerance (112 places)
			Young people (60 places)	People newly-released from prison (10 places)	Family centre (22 places)	Homeless people including hard drug users: drug-use allowed in own room (35 places)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	NO SERVICES PROVIDED						
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	3 NIGHT SHELTERS (97 BEDS, INCREASED TO 139 IN WINTER)						
	Sleep Inn (55 places)	Huis Vaartserijn (12 places)			NOIZ (Nachtopvang in Zelfbeheer) (30 places + 17 places for wardens)		
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	SPECIALIST PSYCHIATRY, ADDICTION AND MEDICAL CARE						
	3 centres (101 places in total)		1 centre for young people (12 places)			1 Salvation Army: medical centre (15 places)	
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	5 DAY CENTRES				OUTREACH SERVICES ACTIVELY SEEK OUT PEOPLE WHO ARE HOMELESS, IN TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION, OR AT RISK OF HOMELESSNESS		
	1 day centre with drug-use rooms (20 permits in 2012)	4 day centres (approx. 45 clients per day)			Assertive Community Treatment: outreach service (approx. 560 people annually)		Outreach service for young people (max. capacity: 45 clients annually)
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	CENTRAL INTAKE SPECIFICALLY FOR ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT, FLOATING SUPPORT, AND INDEPENDENT HOUSING						
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	Prevent Eviction project	Social hygiene project	6 'signalling networks'	Social support system for formerly homeless people			

VIENNA

The Viennese Assistance Programme for the Homeless provides a comprehensive and varied range of possibilities regardless of how they became homeless.

Status

Statistics for Vienna show that in 2011, a total of 3 280 people stayed at overnight shelters. In all, 5 200 people, including special target groups and mothers with children, used the short-term transitional housing facilities for homeless people; 2 030 people lived in flats with floating support and 1 230 people lived in permanent long-term socially supported housing for homeless people.

Socially supported houses are residential homes for homeless people in self-contained studio flats containing a kitchenette and sanitary facilities. The 'socially supported housing scheme' will be completed in 2012 with the opening of the final planned facility. In total the city will have socially supported housing places for 1,103 people.

Results of a 2011 evaluation of the Viennese Assistance Programme for the Homeless were presented in June 2012. The conclusions are currently being discussed, but it is hoped that they will help shape future plans and actions to optimise the homelessness support structure.

The homelessness services in Vienna are intended for adults aged 18+. Other vulnerable groups are supported by other services. Young people under 18 years who are homeless or at risk are provided for by the department for children and youth. There is also a 24 hour immediate intake service for victims of domestic violence, called Women's Houses. These are separate from the homelessness services and not represented in the diagram. Under the Austrian legal framework, the police or courts can prevent an abusive partner from re-entering the

family home, so it is these alleged perpetrators who are more likely to become homeless.

Challenges

Because of the low temperatures experienced in Vienna in February 2012, the city, together with service providers (NGOs), acted fast and rapidly expanded the number of night shelter places, opening the shelters for people with a legal status but without papers, and ensuring that nobody has to sleep on the streets.

The central focus now is to implement a housing first approach. Currently, representatives of service providers and the city administration are developing proposals for a Viennese Housing First model. The goal is to reduce the time spent in transitional accommodation and instead to move homeless people quickly into their own apartment with ongoing floating support. Some projects are already working towards this goal, providing direct access to an affordable flat and offering services to stabilise the housing and the personal situation of each homeless person, according to their individual needs.

Last year a quality framework was developed and currently audits are being conducted across the Viennese Assistance Programme for the Homeless, to ensure high quality services for the users.

Future challenges for the Viennese Assistance Programme for the Homeless will be:

- implementing the results of the evaluation to optimise the support structure
- implementing a Viennese model of the housing first approach
- reducing the number of places in night shelters in favour of creating emergency places in transitional accommodation facilities, which are a more adequate form of support for homeless people.

Homelessness services

Homelessness prevention services

Prevention constitutes one of the main homelessness services in Vienna. It centres on assistance with people's financial situation and preventing personal suffering. By law, Vienna's office for the prevention of eviction (FAWOS) is kept informed of all eviction notices by the courts and offers support to the people facing possible eviction.

Intake to homelessness services

Two units provide a centralised intake service: bzWO and P7. The bzWO Counselling Centre for the Homeless allocates subsidised residential places according to needs. It uses a personalised case management approach where the assessment of needs and goal setting is carried out together with each homeless person.

The P7 Service for the Homeless in Vienna acts as central intake to the night shelters and also acts as an entry point to a variety of other services. The P7 staff motivate clients who use night shelters to accept longer-term accommodation and more advanced types of support.

Non-accommodation services

There are several types of non-accommodation services in Vienna. The P7 service offers counselling and support service on all issues concerning homelessness for people living on the streets and in night shelters. There are also three day centres that provide food, social engagement, laundry services, support and advice, as well as counselling by social workers. One of these is for women only and is adjacent to one of the transitional accommodation centres for women. Two services work directly with people on the streets: an outreach team, organised by the day centres, works both during the day and at night; and the Louise Bus provides mobile medical care for people living on the streets.

There are also various services which are open both to people living on the streets and to clients of the accommodation facilities. Homeless people can use the floating psychiatric support services, floating health care services (where men and women are treated separately), a static medical and dental surgery, and food service.

There is also a special unit to support migrants, which provides advice and contact information for further support services.

Crisis and support centres

Crisis services are outside the homelessness team remit and are provided by specialist services including mental health services, hospitals, and Women's Houses (for victims of domestic violence).

Night shelters and emergency response accommodation

In an emergency (i.e. rooflessness) people can be accommodated in one of Vienna's night shelters or in an emergency bed in one of the transitional accommodation units.

Accommodation with general residential support

Accommodation with general residential support is for people who do not require additional specialist support. It is mostly in hostel type housing, where sanitary facilities and kitchen are shared. Places are awarded based on each person's assessed needs. The limits on stay vary for each unit: from eight months to two years.

Accommodation with residential support for specific target groups

This accommodation for specific target groups is mainly in self-contained units, but sometimes facilities are shared. Here too the limits on stay vary, up to a maximum limit of two years.

Permanent accommodation with ongoing residential support

People who are not able to become independently housed can receive a permanent place in a small self-contained unit. This socially supported housing is mainly targeted at older people who, due to long-term homelessness or other difficulties such as alcoholism, are not able to live on their own without care. Socially supported housing aims to safeguard their dignity and provide safe, good quality accommodation, whilst maintaining the highest possible level of independence. People are housed in studio apartments with their own kitchenette and sanitary facilities.

Accommodation with floating support

Vienna's accommodation with floating support is mainly in designated apartments, with a two year limit on the stay. After this period most people move into general municipal flats. However, families are able to take over the tenancy agreement and remain in the same flat. Clients may also live in permanent accommodation, mostly in municipal flats, and receive floating support for a limited period.

Independent housing

Independent housing for formerly homeless people is mainly in general municipal flats. However, families can opt to stay on in the same flat even though they no longer need support. Some people are allocated their own permanent municipal flat while they receive floating support, and continue to live there independently once support is withdrawn.

Provision and funding

Vienna's homelessness services are provided by various NGOs and by a non-profit city-owned organisation called Wieder Wohnen, which provides around 40% of the services. All the services presented in the diagram are funded by the city, through the city-owned organisation Fonds Soziales Wien; some NGOs also obtain additional funding.

VIENNA

INDEPENDENT HOUSING	MAINLY IN MUNICIPAL FLATS								
							Floating support in own permanent flat (2 services, 194 places)	Families can take over rental agreement and remain in same accommodation (58 flats: 175 people)	
ACCOMMODATION WITH FLOATING SUPPORT	14 SERVICES: 18-120 PEOPLE IN EACH (978 places in total)								
PERMANENT ACCOMMODATION WITH ONGOING RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	RESIDENTIAL HOMES: MEN, WOMEN AND COUPLES: MOSTLY OLDER PEOPLE (18 facilities: 30 to 122 people in each; 1 018 places in total)								
ACCOMMODATION WITH RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT FOR SPECIFIC TARGET GROUPS	TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION (781 PLACES IN TOTAL)								
	Mother and child (8 facilities: 10-60 places in each, 341 places in total)	Young adults (2 facilities with 30 + 66 places)			People with mental health or addiction problems (4 facilities: 5-60 people in each, 143 places in total)		Elderly people (2 facilities: 87 places)	Women only; (2 facilities: 32 + 38 places)	Short term support; max. 6 months stay (44 places)
ACCOMMODATION WITH GENERAL RESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	TRANSITIONAL ACCOMMODATION (1 237 PLACES IN TOTAL)								
	Men only (232 places)	Women, men and couples (168 places)	Women and men (26 places)	Women, men and couples (270 places)		Families (141 places)	Families (132 places)	Men only (268 places)	
NIGHT SHELTERS AND/OR EMERGENCY RESPONSE ACCOMMODATION	NIGHT SHELTERS (397 BEDS IN TOTAL)								
	Women only (16 beds)	Women and couples (18 beds)	Women only (20 beds)	Men and couples (112 beds)	Men only (70 beds)	Men only (126 beds)		Emergency beds within some transitional accommodation units (above); men and women (35 beds)	
CRISIS AND SUPPORT CENTRES (SPECIALIST CRISIS SUPPORT)	SERVICES PROVIDED BY SPECIALIST SERVICES OUTSIDE THE HOMELESS TEAM								
NON-ACCOMMODATION SERVICES	SERVICES TO PEOPLE ON THE STREETS		SERVICES PROVIDED BY SPECIALIST SERVICES OUTSIDE THE HOMELESSNESS TEAM					Counselling centre for migrants	P7
	3 day centres (1 women only facility)	Street work	Louise Bus: mobile medical surgery	NeunerHaus: stationary medical and dental surgery	Floating health care	Floating psychiatric care	Food bank		
INTAKE TO HOMELESSNESS SERVICES	CENTRAL INTAKE (bzWO AND P7)								
SUPPORT TO AVOID HOMELESSNESS / PREVENTION	FAWOS – OFFICE FOR THE PREVENTION OF EVICTION								

CONCLUSIONS

The most successful tool in preventing homelessness is a well-developed system of integrated services. These services should work together to intervene at an early stage to prevent homelessness or to help homeless people find somewhere to live as soon as possible. While the causes of homelessness are manifold and local conditions will always have to be considered, there are common aspects of homelessness that can best be tackled by a strategic coordinated approach which includes:

- professional support and advice for people who are at risk of becoming homeless
- temporary accommodation for homeless people that is geared towards supporting them into independent living and their (re) integration into the mainstream housing market
- transitory accommodation with support that helps prepare people for independence
- specialised long-term accommodation for people who cannot live independently
- professional social support to prevent and end homelessness is crucial to help people back into independent living, and
- identifying the powers and resources available to the city to support change.

Two common developments throughout the cities' strategies are the integration and emphasis on housing first and a housing-led approach. Many cities are moving towards offering a permanent solution to homelessness directly and quickly.

A challenge for each of the participating cities is the situation of homeless people from other EU countries. Cities are confronted with the situation that many EU citizens become homeless but are not entitled to social services or support. This is an issue that hopefully will be discussed and addressed at a higher level in Europe.



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