

## habitact news

### Happy 70th...

#### ... POLICY BANK ENTRY!

In its online policy bank HABITACT compiles information on homelessness strategies in cities all over Europe. This information can help facilitate information exchange on local homelessness strategies.

During the last weeks, our policy bank grew rapidly – we already have 70 entries, the latest one about Hamburg's homelessness policy.

For more information, see our [policy bank](#) in the member's area of the HABITACT website.

### HABITACT website available in four languages!

The public part of the HABITACT website has been translated into German. Native speakers of German can thus read the website in their mother-tongue.

Now the website is available in four languages: English, French, Spanish and German.

Click [here](#) to read the website in German.

### HABITACT cities set up *Housing First Europe*

A number of HABITACT cities have taken part in the development of *Housing First Europe* (HFE), a project led by Servicestyrelsen (the Danish National Board of Social Services) and the German research institute GISS, with the cooperation of FEANTSA. HFE would test and evaluate Housing First projects in 5 cities from a European perspective, leading to greater clarity on the potential/limits of the approach, as well as the essential elements of the approach.

This would be a social experimentation project funded by the European PROGRESS programme. The application for funding was submitted on 31 August, and the funding decision will be made end 2010.

In Europe, there are a number of cities testing the Housing First approach to homelessness.

The Housing First model was developed in the USA and has demonstrated high degrees of success in both housing and supporting those who are homeless with multiple and complex needs. In contrast to "staircase" approaches, which predominate in many EU countries and which require homeless persons to show evidence of being "housing ready" before they are offered long-term stable accommodation. Housing First projects place homeless people directly into long-term self-contained housing with no requirement that they progress through transitional programmes.

If funded, HFE would be a 2-year project implemented through two strands:

1. A Research and Evaluation strand which would assess the Housing First projects and draw conclusions on the effectiveness of the approach.
2. A Mutual Learning strand which would bring together different stakeholders to discuss the results of the assessments, and would generally facilitate exchanges on different Housing First projects across the EU and beyond (USA, Canada). More information [info@habitact.eu](mailto:info@habitact.eu)

#### Partner cities:

Amsterdam (NL)	Esch-sur-Alzette (LU)
Aarhus (DK)	Ghent (BE)
Athens (GR)	Madrid (ES)
Bærum (NO)	Odense (DK)
Copenhagen (DK) <b>NEW!</b>	Venice (IT)
Dublin (IE)	Vitoria-Gasteiz (ES)

Go to the [website](#) for more info.

## local news

### Dublin: Reconfiguration of homeless services

Homeless services in Dublin (Ireland) are being reconfigured in order to ensure that Dublin has the optimum range of quality and effective supports to meet the 2010 vision of ending long-term homelessness and rough sleeping.

Very careful planning at organisational, service and sector level has taken place and will be further required so as to ensure that the objective of the homeless strategy is met, but more importantly that the person experiencing homelessness is central at this time of significant change.

See full report about the reconfiguration process and results [here](#).

### Prague sets up camp for roofless people

The city of Prague (Czech Republic) is planning to send roofless people to live in a camp in the outskirts. This camp will be located next to a garbage dump.

Jiri Janecek, Prague alderman for social matters, believes the camp is a good thing: "People, who do not want to integrate into society, should go and live their lives where they do not disturb anybody."

According to the 36-year-old politician the camp is supposed to become an "oasis" for about 10% of Prague's 3500 roofless. In the camp, there would be a doctor and social workers to assist the roofless. Moreover, the roofless would get hot soup three times a day. Janecek claims that some of the "Homlesaci" would move into the camp without hesitating, in the hope of getting help there.

However, some local NGOs have sent letters to the alderman disapproving the initiative, saying that it will not solve homelessness in the long term. Pavla Vopekalová of Prague's Salvation Army compares Janecek's project to a concentration camp aiming to rid the city of roofless people.

Read more [here](#).

### Oostende looking for a supra-municipal solution to homelessness

The city of Oostende (Belgium) would like to establish a new public shelter together with the neighbouring cities of Blankenberge and Brugge.

According to Oostende's social department these cities are sending "their" roofless people to Oostende. The number of people using the public night shelter in Oostende has increased.

While the employees working in the night shelter do not see a problem with this, Oostende's social department wants to put an end to this trend in the fastest possible way.

Oostende expects the province to play a bigger part in establishing the new shelter in the region – possibly not on Oostende's territory, since the night shelter's personnel costs already reached 45000€ this year.

Read more [here](#) (in Dutch).

### Basque Country approves psychiatric care programme for homeless people

The City Councils of Bilbao and Osakidetza (Basque Country) have approved a psychiatric care programme for homeless people. The primary objective of the programme is to offer homeless people care designed especially for their needs and to facilitate their resettlement into society.

The programme has been promoted by Ricardo Barkala (Councillor of Social Affairs), Adela Olaskoaga (Biskaia Regional Director of the Department of Health of the Basque Government) and Carlos Pereira (Manager of Mental Health of Bizkaia).

A lot of homeless people are affected by serious mental health problems. The programme will reach out to about 40 people annually and will be carried out by a multidisciplinary team including psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, social workers and street educators who work closely both in identifying cases and following them up.

Read more [here](#) (in Spanish).

### Funding cuts in Veneto region

The region of Veneto in Italy wants to cut the funding for homeless people and prisoners by the end of 2010. In 2008 532.000€ was spent on social issues in the region, compared to 350000€ in 2009. In 2010, however, so far 0€ has been spent on social issues – and this in the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion.



The organisations providing services for homeless people and prisoners are alarmed by this development. Michele Righetti, director of the Caritas shelter "Il Samaritano" says: "I am confused and disappointed by the Region's decision, which once again lowers the ax on the most vulnerable."

Caritas and other associations in the Veneto region hope to be able to negotiate a review of the budget, calling for at least minor adjustments to the rigorous austerity programme.

Read more [here](#) (in Italian).

### Glasgow launches Housing First project

A Housing First project had been launched by Turning Point Scotland in the city of Glasgow. This is a three-year pilot which will provide support at any one point in time for up to twelve homeless individuals who still choose to use drugs.

Following the principles of "Housing First", the individuals will be given their own tenancies without the requirement to move through transitional accommodation "steps" first, and the flats will not be in the same block.

The first staff are now in post and service users will start moving in by mid-September 2010.

### **Kuopio: Increase in youth homelessness**

According to an [article](#) in the Finnish newspaper *Savon Sanomat*, youth homelessness is on the rise in Finland. In 2009, in Finland 1500 homeless people under the age of 25 were registered – 100 more than in 2008. The two main causes of youth homelessness are eviction (young people are thrown out by their parents) or debts. This trend can be perceived in major Finnish cities with the city of Kuopio being most affected by it.

Kuopio however has responded to the problem by making an action plan against homelessness. The objectives of the action plan are:

- early intervention and prevention of evictions
- finding homes for prisoners about to be released;
- more help for households in order to prevent homelessness;
- making the transition from living in state care institutions to living in one's own home easier.

Furthermore, together with the towns of Iisalmi, Suonenjoki and Leppävirta, Kuopio is participating in the ATTE-project. This regional project is funded by the European Social Fund for 2009-2012 and aims to promote the employability of homeless people by providing them with housing.

### **Stockport homes strategy review**

Stockport (Greater Manchester, UK) reviewed its [homelessness strategy 2007-2010](#) in summer 2010. The key themes of the Stockport strategy are: domestic violence, youth homelessness, Black and Minority Ethnic homelessness, worklessness, “enhanced” housing options, voluntary and private sector engagement, ending rough sleeping, accredited landlords and allocations review.

So far, the reviews have confirmed the effectiveness of Stockport's homelessness policy – homelessness decreased from 561 in 2004/05 to 123 in 2009/10 – and the review results will feed into discussions on a new strategy for 2011.

Read more [here](#).

### **Budapest: mayor candidate István Tarlós promises to end street homelessness 2015**

István Tarlós, Budapest mayor candidate of the conservative party Fidesz, promises to reduce the number of rough sleepers. Referring to the European Parliament Written Declaration on ending homelessness, in his election programme he states that he wants to end street homelessness in Budapest by 2015.

Tarlós is not against taking repressive measures, as long as adequate accommodation is provided to rough sleepers. This means especially that security in shelters must be improved. Tarlós says: “If we provide support, we must also set up rules.” He also highlights public benefit work programmes for those homeless people who are able to work.

Miklós Vecsei, vice president of Hungarian Maltese Charity Service, and Péter Györi, head of the Budapest Centre of Social Methodology, basically agree with Tarlós, but they both emphasise the importance of housing policies as well as the development of supported housing and homelessness prevention methods.

Read Tarlós's election programme [here](#) (in Hungarian).

### **Täby: Roof-over-your-head-guarantee**

In accordance with the Swedish Government's strategy for tackling homelessness, the municipality of Täby has decided on a “roof-over-your-head”-guarantee. The guarantee is part of the Housing-First-programme “Bostad först – Täby”.

According to Patric Hamilton of the Täby Social Welfare Board, the guarantee means that no one – especially not socially disadvantaged people – should have to spend the night outdoors, if they do not want to. The municipality will assist persons registered in Täby with finding overnight accommodation.

The roof-over-your-head-guarantee is part of the Täby Development Plan for 2011-2014.

Read more [here](#) (page 18, in Swedish).

### **New stabilisation centre in Strasbourg**

Adoma, the municipality of Strasbourg, the Conseil Général of the Bas-Rhin-department and the French government opened a new “stabilisation centre” for homeless people in mid-July 2010. The organisation “Enfants de Don Quichotte” who helped plan the project, left the boat because of disagreements.

The stabilisation centre is located in the Southern part of Strasbourg and consists of 16 20m<sup>2</sup>-chalets. Each chalet has a little room with a kitchenette and a bathroom. Three chalets are reserved for couples and six can be shared by two persons. Living in the chalets presents the people with the possibility to get their life back on track, to search for a job etc. The tenants pay a symbolic rent of 45€ a month.

Read more [here](#) (in French).

### **Liverpool about to make homeless hostel an “eco-oasis”**

Liverpool Mutual Homes (LMH) wants to build an environmentally friendly extension to the Princess Park hostel, in the city of Liverpool (UK), which is an old convent converted into a homeless hostel 20 years ago.

At the moment, 16 new apartments that can host up to 80 people are being built. The hostel is energy-efficient with its external walls being lined up with “super dynamic slim line insulation” to keep warm in winter and cool in summer. Moreover, there will be solar energy panels and the water will be heated by the sun.

The project is expected to cost more than £1m.

Councillor Joe Anderson, Leader of Liverpool City Council, said: “I applaud the forward-thinking nature of this scheme with its emphasis on being eco-friendly.”

Read more [here](#).

## news from europe

### European Parliament launched Written declaration on homelessness

A group of European Parliament members have launched a declaration calling on the EU to adopt a homelessness strategy, aiming to end street homelessness by 2015 and to support national governments to develop effective homeless strategies to meet this target. The five members of European Parliament who launched the Declaration ([Britta Thomsen](#) (S&D, Denmark), [Liz Lynne](#) (ALDE/UK), [Ilda Figueiredo](#) (GUE/NGL, Portugal), [Karima Delli](#) (Greens/EFA, France) and [Jacek Protasiewicz](#) (EPP, Poland) now have until 6 December 2010 to collect signatures from at least 369 European Parliament members. If adopted, this Declaration would be a clear call for Europe to coordinate action on homelessness.

Read the Written Declaration 61 [here](#).

### European Consensus Conference on Homelessness

The European Consensus Conference on Homelessness taking place on 9-10 December 2010 in Brussels is an innovative policy process which seeks to establish common understandings on fundamental questions about homelessness, in order to provide a basis for future policy progress at EU level. It is an initiative of the Belgian Presidency of the EU, co-organised with the European Commission. FEANTSA (the European Federation of Organisations Working with the Homeless) is co-ordinating the process and the French Government is a key partner. Up to 400 stakeholders will be invited to take part in the hearings and share their opinion on [key questions](#) such as “what is homelessness” and “is ending homelessness a realistic goal”. See more [here](#).

### FEANTSA research conference 2010

FEANTSA is organising its annual research conference in Budapest on Friday 17 September 2010 on “Understanding Homelessness and Housing Exclusion in the New European Context”. Research into dimensions of homelessness and housing exclusion in Europe has been geographically uneven, with more published research emanating from Western and Northern Europe to date. This gap is gradually being addressed, and the aim of this conference is to both stimulate and consolidate research exploring home-

lessness and housing exclusion in Central and Eastern Europe. Although a particular focus of the conference is on understanding homelessness and housing exclusion in Central and Eastern Europe, the conference will also include open sessions on the broad theme of ‘homelessness and housing exclusion’ from across Europe. See more [here](#).

### EU training on social inclusion/social protection

On 3 August 2010, the European Commission published a call for tenders to provide the Commission with a framework contract offering assistance in identifying training needs and in developing and organising training both in the Member states and at the Commission's headquarters in Brussels.

The training courses will focus on the following issues:

- EU social inclusion and social protection policies and the use of indicators;
- elaboration of National Action Plans and country profiles as appropriate;
- key priorities (such as homelessness, child poverty, active inclusion, social aspects of migration, pensions' sustainability, health inequalities, etc);
- PROGRESS programme as a tool to support the social inclusion and social protection process.

The target audience for training events includes:

- 1) staff of national, regional and local administrations in countries participating in Progress;
- 2) staff employed with social partner organisations or NGO's who are working in the areas of social inclusion/social protection;
- 3) staff of the Commission.

We will follow this closely, as it could provide opportunities for local administrations involved in HABITACT.

Click [here](#) for more information.

### Urbact annual conference – 30 November & 1 December 2010

The URBACT Annual Conference will take place in Liège in Belgium. URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme sharing new, integrated solutions for a sustainable urban development. The programme funds projects between EU cities on various urban issues, including social inclusion and social housing projects.

The Annual Conference aims to disseminate the results, experiences, and local policies developed in these projects, and is an opportunity to meet local policy-makers from across Europe. More information will be available shortly on the URBACT [website](#).



# local trends

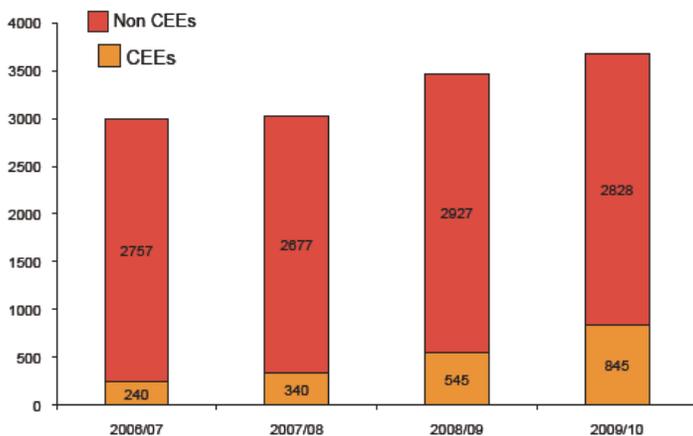
## Annual London borough reports on homelessness

Whereas the London Delivery Board has planned to put an end to rough sleeping by the end of 2012, the number of rough sleepers in Greater London has increased over the last few years. There has been an increase in the number of rough sleepers from 3017 in 2007/08 to 3673 in 2009/10. Profile data shows that one in ten of the rough sleepers were women, and only 8% of the rough sleepers were under 25. Furthermore, only three people were underage.

See more in the [“Street to Home” annual report 2009-2010 \(bulletin\)](#) published by the London-based organisation Broadway.

If you want to learn more about the situation in specific London boroughs, a number of [annual London borough reports](#) (such as City of London, Camden, Westminster and Islington) are also available.

Number of people seen rough sleeping 2006/07-2009/10:



## Homelessness in Reykjavik

The number of homeless people in Iceland is about 60 to 70. Iceland has 315.000 habitants.

Icelandic authorities and especially the Reykjavik City Council are piloting projects together with NGOs like the Red Cross.

In Reykjavik, there are six day drop-in centres run by social workers and four accommodations centres, with space for 8 to 20 people each. However, in Iceland there are no resettlement programmes.

The economic crisis hit Iceland very hard and thus Icelandic authorities do intend to take measures in order to prevent eviction of families who cannot pay the rent or mortgage.

This information was collected by the French government through a general consultation of all embassies on national homeless policies.

Read more [here](#) (in French).

## The rural district of Munich exemplary in the fight against homelessness

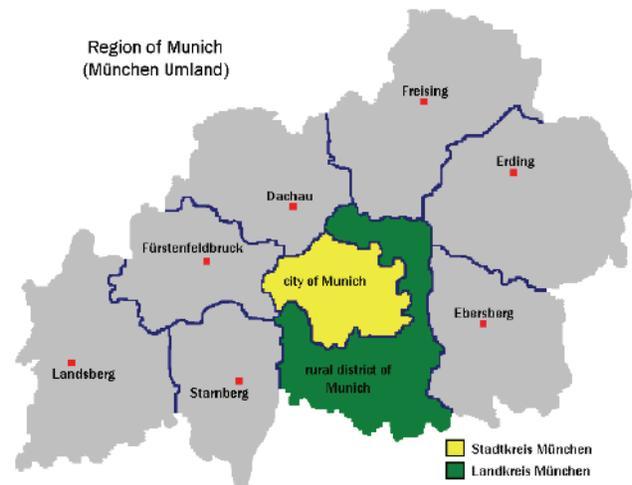
Die Fachstelle zur Verhinderung von Obdachlosigkeit (FOL – special unit for the prevention of rooflessness) of the rural district of Munich, existing since 2007, successfully manages to help people threatened with eviction.

Of 1001 cases worked with in 2009/10 (counted until 30 July 2010), 846 have been solved, i. e. eviction has been prevented. Only 16 cases ended with an eviction.

Nobody knows what has happened with the rest of the cases since these people have not been in touch with FOL after establishing the first contact.

FOL is funded by the rural district of Munich. Even though funding the programme is not inexpensive (230.000€/year), the district managed to save more than 2 million euro of consequential costs, that would otherwise have been caused by possible evictions.

Read more [here](#) (Süddeutsche Zeitung 21/08/2010) [here](#) (FOL) (both links in German).



## City of Munich: Number of homeless people on the rise due to higher rents

Whilst the rural district of Munich is successful in its fight against rooflessness, the city of Munich itself struggles a lot more.

Since the rents in the city of Munich are exploding (12,80€/m<sup>2</sup> in 2008, 13,77€/m<sup>2</sup> in 2009), the number of homeless people is soaring, too. The emergency shelters in the city are used by 2095 homeless people (compared to 1650 in May 2008).

In 2003, there was a similar situation (2600 homeless persons) – at that time the housing department refused to resettle people who had not been living in Munich for at least six month prior to the eviction.

Read more [here](#) (Süddeutsche Zeitung 04/08/2010) or [here](#) (social department of Munich) (both links in German).

## Figures on homelessness in 16 Polish provinces

The Department of Social Assistance and Integration of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy published a Review of Homelessness (more specifically **ETHOS 2** and **3**) in Poland.

For each of the 16 Polish “voivodships” (or provinces), there is data on the number of shelters, the number of places in these shelters, the number of homeless people using these shelters, the number of men/women/children using the shelters. The table below shows the number of shelters in each province and the number of places in each shelter.

This data is based on two surveys conducted on 15-16 December 2009 and 26-27 January 2010. The review shows that homeless people tend to concentrate in large cities like Warsaw (province of Mazowieckie), Poznan (province of Wielkopolskie), and Katowice (province of Slaskie).

See more [here](#) (in Polish).

Nazwa województwa	liczba placówek noclegowych	liczba miejsc w placówkach noclegowych dla osób bezdomnych na terenie województwa
Dolnośląskie	41	1 757
Kujawsko-Pomorskie	21	945
Lubelskie	34	1 127
Lubuskie	30	557
Łódzkie	38	1 272
Małopolskie	41	1 570
Mazowieckie	68	3 561
Opolskie	15	663
Podkarpackie	19	710
Podlaskie	20	660
Pomorskie	49	1 750
Śląskie	99	3 149
Świętokrzyskie	26	735
Warmińsko-Mazurskie	32	808
Wielkopolskie	49	1 730
Zachodniopomorskie	43	1 535
<b>Razem:</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>22 529</b>

## Salzburg: homelessness survey 2009

A recently published homelessness survey (October 2009) by Forum Wohnungslosenhilfe Salzburg gives very detailed information on the number of homeless people in Salzburg (Austria).

In 2009, 812 persons were registered as homeless by Salzburg’s social services. Of these 812 persons:

- 557 were Austrian;
- 41 were EU-citizens;
- 132 were migrants from other countries;
- 29 were persons seeking asylum;
- 53 were unaccompanied minors.

The number of homeless Austrians in Salzburg has slightly increased. In 2008, 545 homeless Austrians were registered compared to 557 in 2009.

Of the homeless Austrians 25,3% are female. In Salzburg, as in many other cities, the number of young people (ages 18-29) becoming homeless is rising.

The majority of the homeless Austrians are experiencing hidden forms of homeless (such as living with friends/family, living in overcrowded flats, etc.). See the table below:

NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE	LOCATION
3 (0,5%)	sublet flats
20 (3,2%)	overcrowded flats
22 (3,6%)	unappropriate conditions
23 (3,7%)	prisons
31 (5%)	hospitals
39 (6,3%)	roofless
64 (10,4%)	emergency shelters
68 (11,95%)	b'n'bs, hostels
77 (12,5%)	supported housing
267 (43,4%)	friends/family

For more information, click [here](#) (in German).

## focus: prevention

A distinction can be made between primary (or systemic) prevention of homelessness through general policies aiming to improve institutions/systems/communities which could potentially trigger homelessness, and secondary (more targeted) prevention policies specifically targeting homeless people and people at risk (over-indebted households, people leaving prisons or health institutions, people threatened with eviction, etc).

Primary prevention is generally a competence of national authorities (social welfare, education) so that cities tend to focus more on targeted prevention strategies where they can have a direct impact.

The initiatives referred to in this section aim to give examples of toolkits as well as methods used in policy and research to prevent homelessness at local level.

### Prevention of homelessness in Dutch cities

Over five years, homeless people in the G4 cities (Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht, Rotterdam) will be followed closely to examine the long-term impact of the personalised approach to homelessness adopted by the G4 in 2006.

The study will aim to contribute to a better understanding of the causes of homelessness/pathways into homelessness, and to support the development of more targeted prevention strategies.

The Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre and the IVO in Rotterdam launched this longitudinal study on homelessness in August 2010 which will run until 2014, and will aim to answer the general question “What works for whom?”.

Cities like Amsterdam are already working closely with the Dutch network “Eropaf” which offers training to social work organisations and local social departments on dealing with evictions. The “Eropaf”-methodology pursues the following goal: preventing evictions by intervening at the earliest stage possible and by following-up the cases.

Read more in Rosalie Metze’s [paper](#) on “Eropaf”.

### FAWOS in Vienna

In 1995, People’s Aid Vienna, Vienna’s Youth and Family Department and Vienna’s Public Health and Social Welfare Department (MA15) established the Centre for Secure Tenancy (FAWOS – Fachstelle für Wohnungssicherung). The centre’s main focus lies on preventing evictions. FAWOS works according to a six-step-programme:

1. **Registration of cases:** Each district court informs the municipality when an eviction procedure is opened, and the municipality then decides to pass on the information to FAWOS.
2. **Establishing contact:** Persons threatened with eviction are sent an invitation to meet one of FAWOS’s social workers.
3. **Clarifying the situation:** During the first meeting the causes of a possible eviction, the personal circumstances, the legal situation and the financial situation will be clarified. Moreover, possible solutions will be discussed.
4. **Counselling:** If a tenant is not able to solve the problem alone, further support is offered from a social worker according to their individual needs (drawing up a personal finance plan, support to find work, alcohol or drug treatment, etc).
5. **Crisis intervention:** In the critical situation of an impending eviction, FAWOS will act as mediator and try to prevent the eviction.
6. **Financial support:** The MA15 department can grant financial help for paying rent arrears or other housing-related costs, if necessary.

In 2009, 629 people benefited from intensive support (steps 4, 5 and 6) from FAWOS. For another 1713 people short-time counselling was sufficient.

Out of the 629 cases:

- 375 apartments could be secured;
- 26 stable accommodation could be secured;
- 146 evictions were carried out;
- 82 outcomes are unknown, no information is available.

According to FAWOS eviction prevention reduces the costs for social security authorities and facilitates the work of public shelters. In the long term, the aim is to reduce homelessness and the use of public shelters. For more information, click [here](#) (in German).

### West Midlands report on the cost-effectiveness of homelessness prevention

In July 2010, the West Midlands Regional Homelessness Strategy Action Plan Implementation Group published a Guide to Cost Effectiveness of Preventing Homelessness. The guide is aimed at local authorities, housing associations, and voluntary organisations which provide services that prevent homelessness. The report contains some information that local authorities might find useful when compiling reports to explain the cost-effectiveness of preventing homelessness, including advice on how to calculate the costs of homelessness in a local area, and recommended actions for local authorities to assemble an evidence base that shows the value of cost efficiencies that have been achieved in their local area as a result of preventing homelessness.

The report refers to three principle arguments that local authorities can use when explaining the cost-effectiveness of homelessness prevention:

#### *Preventing homelessness is value for money*

Research done by Edinburgh’s Heriot-Watt University in 2007 shows that homelessness prevention can save money compared to the cost of helping someone who is already homeless. The cost of providing temporary accommodation and re-housing, for example, amounts to about £5,300 per household per year. Compared to this, successful mediation between households and landlords or Law Enforcement Agency, is estimated at £600, thus being nine times less expensive than providing alternate settled accommodation. Other such figures are available in the Guide.

#### *Preventing homelessness achieves outcomes for the local communities*

A community plan that seeks to create employment for all, have sustainable environment, well-being for everyone and cohesive communities inevitably will tackle the causes of homelessness. Here it can be argued that through the direct results that can be achieved from preventing homelessness, there is a positive contribution towards achieving the goals of the community plan. Success from preventing homelessness re-enforces the successful delivery of the community plan and vice versa.

#### *There are risks if funding for preventing homelessness is reduced*

Reducing spend on preventing homelessness has a number of corporate, environmental, economic, social and legal risks associated with it. Negative publicity that funding cuts could generate could portray a local authority as an organisation that does not care about marginalised, vulnerable people (corporate risks). Cutting funding for preventing homelessness could lead to short-term savings but could cost the public purse a considerable greater amount in the medium/long-term (economic risks). Furthermore, other public services could see increased pressures on their services and budgets (such as health services or police services). See more [here](#).

## Norrköping early warning system

The Municipality of Norrköping in Sweden has developed an early warning system in order to prevent evictions.

The supra-municipal prevention work is carried out in close cooperation with the Swedish Enforcement Administration (*Kronofogde*), real estate owners/landlords, and the Collection Agency (*Inkassoblag*). Furthermore, the Municipality of Norrköping employs two full-time outreach housing counsellors.

If a household first encounters social or financial problems, the landlord or authorities report this to Norrköping's social department. These households are then monitored more closely, in order to detect the most problematic cases that cannot solve their problems without support.

Throughout this monitoring and follow-up work there are several possible intervention points where the municipality can step in:

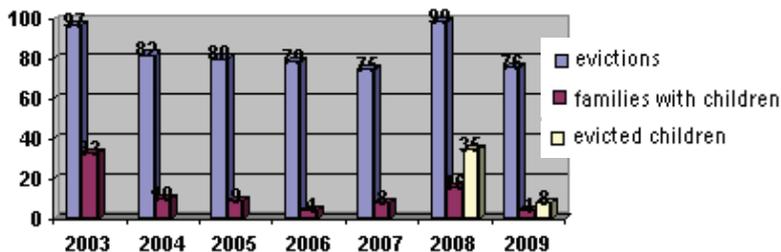
1. After a landlord reports rent arrears, the landlord and the legal representative consult with the social department. About 700 rent arrears are reported per month. 90% of the households want to solve their problems by themselves, 10% however are unable to cope without support.

2. In order for the prevention work to be successful there need to be several consultations about the rent arrears. If this does not help and an eviction request is sent to the Enforcement Administration, the municipality will step-in again. This way the municipality detects about "70 households" or "cases" threatened with eviction. Only when eviction is prevented successfully will the cases be closed.

3. After some more time the housing cooperation (*Bostadsföretag*) reports the cases they still want to evict, even after consultations. This way the municipality knows which cases still need more support and intensifies the prevention work. At some point there is a hearing about the notice of eviction. At this stage the municipality has already worked with the households in question before.

One of the biggest challenges is to detect the households which can solve their problems without support (about 630) and the ones that cannot (about 70).

So far Norrköping's prevention work seems to be very successful. Compared to 2008, in 2009 the number of evictions had been reduced by 23%. The number of evicted children has reduced by 77%. The table below shows the eviction rates for Norrköping between 2003 and 2009:



## Additional links on prevention

- 2008 article in the European Journal of Homelessness, "Effective Homelessness Prevention? Explaining Reductions in Homelessness in Germany and England" by Volker Busch-Geertsema & Suzanne Fitzpatrick >> [Details](#)
- "Prevention on Homelessness Guidance" about measuring the impact of homelessness prevention and a typology of prevention activities, published in June 2009 by the Scottish Government and the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities >> [Details](#)
- National Youth Homelessness Scheme resources page on preventing and tackling youth homelessness >> [Details](#)
- Homeless LINK conference "Staying In – Preventing Evictions and Abandonment" >> [Details](#)
- Experimental official homelessness prevention statistics 2009-2010 in England >> [Details](#)



For any reactions/comments/contributions to the e-bulletin, please contact us at [info@habitact.eu](mailto:info@habitact.eu)