

What do we mean by Supported Housing?

BMSZKI

In Hungary, there is no central housing benefit, local authorities can provide financial aid, but it is a very low amount (a maximum of 10-15 euros/month) and it generally not accessible for homeless people leaving services (due to administrative barriers). Some homeless service providers (BMSZKI one of them) try to secure funding from other sources (national and ESF projects or its own budget) to help their clients move onto rented accommodation. As social housing is scarce and very difficult to access for single people or couples without small children, most homeless people try to rent a room or share an apartment on the private market.

Some BMSZKI initiatives to help homeless people into housing:

- [Single Room Occupancy Building](#), offering a bedroom with shared kitchen and bathroom facilities, at a low rental. Single and double rooms are available. There is no obligation to cooperate with a support worker, but support workers are available in the building should someone need advice.
- [Supported housing scheme](#): as a top of the staircase model, people sleeping in hostels (and in theory in shelters or even rough) can receive financial support (max. 800 euros) for the duration of 12 months to help cover their housing costs when moving out. Tenants receive floating support, usually by their former support worker (from the hostel/shelter), which usually consist of monthly meetings, talk about budgeting, mental health, etc. However, there is no protocol about the content of floating support.
- There had been [some initiatives](#) of housing first light projects, using ESF funding, with the serious limitation of only supporting people for a definite period. Here support workers could offer more complex support, visiting people in their homes as often as needed, offering help all the way from furnishing their apartment, budgeting, general and mental health, employment, etc. Tenants had access to a psychiatrist, a mental health nurse as well as psychologists. Support workers were recruited from BMSZKI services. Although they received a limited training on housing first, most of them kept working with the same mind-set as before, so a truly client-centred approach was not achieved in all cases.

Platforma

We do comply with principles of HF https://housingfirstguide.eu/website/the_guide/

We use a Fuzzy logic instead of SMART when planning with clients.

Before moving in:

Starting cooperation with the clients prior they moving-in helps to be better informed about the clients' needs, preferences (location, social worker) and start promising collaboration of the client and the supportive team. Special activities are:

- Inviting the client (family) to the program – celebrating the provision of the new flat
- Basic survey of the clients’ needs: income/benefits, preferred location of the flat/locations which should not be provided due to practical reasons, special needs, experiences from previous housing,
- Group gathering: let the clients know each other (if they want), build self-supportive community and celebrate new live in standard living conditions
- Planning of moving in, support in the shelter/hostel before moving in, direct support while moving when needed.
- Income/benefits planning, providing basic information about the contract, direct support in communication with authorities when needed

Direct support of re-housed clients in the program:

Basic setting of the program requires the worker and client to meet at least once a week in the flat provided by the program; the support is intended basically to keep the provided housing (avoid any problems which may affect the contract and its prolongation) – this part of the program is compulsory – the supportive team is increasing the intensity of support when needed and the assertivity of approaching the clients when they refuse to stick with the program rules; basic activities are:

- Assistance with rent and services (electricity, gas) payment
- Assistance with housing/other benefits claiming
- Assistance with Financial management
- Neighborhood relationships support
- Property maintenance – when needed help with cleaning and practical things
- Domestic violence prevention and helping the victims of domestic violence
- Neighborhood conflicts prevention and conflict management
- Communication with landlord
- Communication with authorities

The support may also be much wider (when the client expresses the need) helping with other practical issues:

- Employment/income increasing counseling
- Children rising
- Schools/education support
- Leisure time planning
- Relationships counseling
- Basic medical care
- Substance abuse counseling – harm reduction
- Legal advocacy
- Child care protection assistance

In the case the client (family) has to leave the property (because of violation the contract terms) we support with:

- Finding emergency shelter (asylum house should be provided to all clients prior to eviction)
- Moving out
- Store personal belongings
- Help with new home finding

Menhely Alapítvány / Shelter Foundation

- housing is not a fundamental right in Hungary
 - unrealistically high renting rates (rising since 2014) - consequence: what up to now was affordable housing scheme, recently it got worse, therefore other non-positioned, marginalized groups are also forced to live with lower living conditions, for example, living permanently in workers' lodges, while other workers' lodges become student hostels, and homeless people with low income are forced out from these places, etc.)
 - there is a small number of social housing options (there are no statutory regulations over regular, vacant housing, local governments have no individual responsibilities, lack of new construction, etc.)
 - there is no direct housing support under the subordinate right
 - local governments with no central financial coverage are responsible to eliminate homelessness (local governments are obliged to support homelessness and prevention but without the details of certain tasks and specific regulations)
- 3 municipalities out of the 23 in Budapest (8th, 9th, 10th district) run an experimental program ("LÉLEK" Program –i.e. Housing, Lifestyle, Mental Assistance and Building of Existence Community Program), which provides complex resocialization assistance to homeless people locally linked to the district (temporary housing - work at the local municipalities - social rental housing options)
- the support of donations is not enough to finance long-term programs (either at corporate or individual level) in the area of homelessness (not just because it is not an attractive topic)
 - Housing First method is very narrowly implemented

The activities of Menhely Alapítvány in the area of housing support:

1. operation of accommodation

- night shelter – 52 beds for males – one night free of charge
- residential care home - 24 men (60+) settled for the rest of their lives here, 3-4 beds/room, pension and standard state normative allowance for institutional services cover expenses for the care including medical assistance
- the home "Oikos" for addict inhabitants with religious cooperation, some of whom have a cumulative problem of homelessness
- affordable housing support: additional support for blue collar workers' hostel with a capital from the Municipality of Budapest
- "Consortium" support: to accommodate rough sleepers directly from public space – financial support for low level night shelters – with a capital from the Municipality of Budapest rental scheme
- tenancy support for individuals with income: duration can be 6-12 months on grant basis, both adult members of a family can benefit from it, but not at the same time funded by short-term grants and donations
- support with maintaining tenancy: to maintain the housing of 3-5 families, in their own or rented real estate funded by donations and social rents

Projects 2 - "Úton" (On the Road)

- housing support without directly given financial benefits
- for individuals / families with decent income
- primarily consultancy and ad-hoc funding, available by application
- an approach supporting independent decisions and lifestyle
- project funding (grants)
- involving volunteer and professional personnel

Projects 3 – "Sarokház" (CornerHouse)

- intensive social work project with a Housing First approach
- is not a real HF because the inhabitants did not move to their own home (in the second year they had jointly supported housing for some of the participants of the first year)
- group work and individual case management for 12 + 5 people (2014-2017)
- own real estate
- funding from grants
- involving volunteer and professional staff (2 + 5 persons), peer support involved

Arrels

National Context:

Housing is considered a fundamental right in Spain and is protected by law. Despite this, there are over 30,000 homeless people in Spain.

Sharp increases in the rental market mean that more and more people are experiencing severe residential exclusion.

Night shelters are still very common throughout Spain, though it must be pointed out that Housing First programmes are being implemented in many of the major cities.

Local context:

Since 2015 Housing First is becoming more and more prevalent in Barcelona, with both the City Council and various Organisations offering HF programmes. The council has launched a plan to combat homelessness in Barcelona and within this plan guarantees the provision of 150 HF units between 2016-18.

Programme requirements for the participants are the same as those proposed in the original model Pathways Housing First: an individual's economic contribution to the rent mustn't exceed 30% of income; a weekly visit with the case management team and no conflicts with the neighbours.

Barcelona is one of the European cities currently using the staircase model and the Housing First model, managing a model of attention for the homeless people that integrates and coordinates an array of services targeted to the autonomy of these people.

On the 17th May 2017, the fifth PIT count of homeless people was carried out, registering 3.395 homeless people of which 1.026 (30%) people were sleeping rough, 1.954 (57.7%) were in municipal and social entities' facilities and 415 (15.5%) were in irregular settlements.

There are many types of supported housing resources in Barcelona: 3 direct-access night shelters, convalescent homes (both for men and women), a specialized care home for homeless people with mental health issues, emergency night shelters in winter, HF programmes...

At Arrels we offer various types of supported housing - self-contained flats, shared flats, sub-tenancy rooms, pensions and a care home.

Each person that we offer housing to is assigned a team made up by professionals and volunteers from the Individual Support programme and, regardless of the type of housing, they receive social monitoring based on the HF program intervention model. These principles stress the individuals' rights and provide a person-centered attention.

In January 2017 we opened a new accommodation facility called "Flat Zero". It's a flexible and low-threshold resource addressed to people who live on the street, fail to adapt to the HF model (20%) and have no place in any other resource. It has 10 places and only opens at night.

St. Mungo's

St. Mungo's understands the meaning of 'Supported Housing' as defined by Homeless Link:

'Supported housing is any housing scheme where housing, support and sometimes care services are provided as an integrated package. Some schemes are long-term, designed for people who need ongoing support to live independently, others are short-term, designed to help people develop the emotional and practical skills needed to move into more mainstream housing. This can include support with health needs, including mental health, drug and alcohol use, managing benefits and debt, developing daily living skills and accessing education, training and employment.'

St Mungo's authored a report around [why the government should save supported housing](#).

The definition of supported housing that our clients came up with as part of this report was:

"Supported housing is a non-judgemental, stable environment where we are given consistent support to rebuild our lives. Keyworkers provide support around mental and physical health, as well as financial and employment advice, with a view to building confidence, fulfilling potential and moving into independence."

A '[Supported Accomodation' review](#) for the government in 2016 defined Supported Housing in the following way:

"Supported housing' can be described as any housing scheme where housing, support and sometimes care services are provided to help people to live as independently as possible in the community."

Supported housing users include those who would otherwise be homeless (including those at risk of domestic abuse); older people and people with disabilities (many of whom would otherwise be living in long-term care or hospital settings).'

Vva ry – No Fixed Abode NGO

Housing support in No Fixed Abode

No fixed abode has a contract for 13-15 apartments through Y-foundation¹. The support is based on residents needs and it is based on knowing the people. So the service is not available for anyone who gets the apartment. The support is floating and it is available almost 24/7. The support is given by staff members and peer workers. No fixed abode has no extra budget or staff to do the support for scattered housing. Many of the residents are also members and active participants in the organization, and the staff is familiar with their life situation and can therefore support people directly and as soon as the need arises. People who live in scattered housing are welcome to visit the organization's low threshold places whenever they wish, also during night time. An outreach team, too, visits some of the residents in the evenings, even at night time.

One peer worker who works in 'Own Keys 2' project has a special group to support, people who have been released from prison. He has approximately 5-8 ex-prisoners to whom he offers his support (his phone is open 24 /7).

Vartiosaari Island is also a form of peer housing support. Some ex-prisoners can work the rest of the prison time in the island if they have an apartment. Some people also live the whole summer on the island, where they stay without alcohol and drugs use and get apartment in the end of summer. The staff and the peers help to get the apartment.

No Fixed Abode has also two Housing first units – Sällikoti and Junailijankuja – where the support is based on the general principles of the Housing first model in Finland. There are special quality recommendations designed for organization's Housing first units.

Housing First Finland

- Housing as a basic social right
- Housing in normal surroundings
- Own independent rental apartment either in scattered housing or in a supported housing unit
- Own rental contract(unlimited time)
- Separation of housing and services
- Adequate support:

¹ The Finnish Y-Foundation offers rental accommodation for people who are having difficulties in finding a home for themselves. The Y-Foundation has over 16 000 apartments and operate in over 50 cities and municipalities.

- Intensive support: 5 support workers/10 inhabitants in service housing
- Vs. Support in scattered housing: 1/10

Forms of housing support:

- Supported housing units /Supported scattered housing in NGO's / Supported scattered housing in city rental housing

•In scattered housing:

- Floating support, no ACT –team
- Use of normal basic health and social services
- The role of support worker (social worker) both personal support and case management
- Special services, expertise if needed

•In supported housing:

- Special services, expertise if needed
- on site personnel, social and health professional according to needs, different levels of support and service within the same house

Housing for special groups (according to the Finnish Ministry of Environment)

Groups with special housing needs include the homeless, refugees, students, people with substance abuse and mental health problems, the disabled, and the elderly who suffer from memory loss or weakened condition.

Sheltered and supportive housing

Sheltered housing is intended for people who need help in their everyday lives but who do not require institutional care. Sheltered housing covers both the apartment and the related services.

In so-called extra care sheltered housing, there are service personnel at the accommodation unit around the clock. Communal homes for people with memory loss are an example of sheltered housing.

Supportive housing, on the other hand, refers to living either in a separate apartment or as part of an apartment group where various amounts and types of support are included.

Residents in sheltered and supportive housing have leasing relationships in accordance with the Tenancy Act.

Supported housing

A person living in supported housing copes with everyday tasks almost independently. The amount of support depends on the needs of the resident. It may vary from everyday to weekly visits. Supported housing may refer to a dwelling owned by the resident, a rental dwelling or some other housing type.

The duration of supported housing depends on the resident's own needs and situation in life. The purpose is for the residents to organize their lives during supported housing well enough to be able to transfer to independent living.

In "Municipal Strategies to Prevent Homelessness" (ARA) Clients meaningful daily life is developed with multisectoral network. Subletting is developed and piloted in municipalities for homeless people and people who are in thread for loosing apartment. (*Housing programs, Infopankki*)

Investment grants for special groups

ARA (The Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland) finances sheltered and supportive housing with investment grants for special groups. Grants can be awarded to projects that would also be entitled to partake in the interest subsidy loan scheme. Grants are awarded for construction, renovation or acquisition, and they vary from 10 to 50 per cent of the approved construction or renovation costs. The bigger grants are reserved for apartments with more special housing solution needs.

Municipalities are the principal organizers of sheltered and supportive housing, but they can also be provided by various associations and companies. Sheltered and supportive housing application procedures vary between municipalities and service providers. More information is available from the municipalities.

Supported housing unit

A supported housing unit is a form of housing where each resident has their own lease for their own permanent apartment. Living in supported housing units is communal and staff is present around the clock. Typically, a supported housing unit resembles an apartment building with common living areas.

Living in a supported housing unit is regulated by the Act on Residential Leases, among other things, which guarantees the rights of the tenant. The Social Welfare Act in turn regulates the support given in connection with housing. Compared to a shelter, a supported housing unit provides privacy: a resident's home in a supported housing unit is a private space, which is not the case in shelters.

In supported housing...

- a housing unit can be a home for life, or a pit stop for people who are moving from homelessness towards ordinary living

- Residents are free to do what they like in their own homes – within the Act on Residential Leases regulating rental housing in Finland. Only the care homes have rules you have to obey.

-the staff receive training in the care profession

(Home of Your Own, Y-Foundation)

Scattered housing

Scattered housing is rental housing that is based on the Act on Residential Leases. A former homeless person lives in a normal rental apartment, which is located in the middle of so-called ordinary housing. Scattered housing apartments are acquired from the city's rental housing stock, for example. It is essential that the apartment can be rented out to a resident for an affordable price and support can be provided for them at home.

Forms of support work

Neighbourhood work and low-threshold work activity are just one form of support work offered to supported housing unit residents. Providing the resident with tailored support after housing has been arranged is an essential part of the Housing First principle.

In supported housing units, the support provided for a resident is determined by what has been written down with them in their service plan. The support needs are reviewed at regular intervals.

If the residents who need support live in scattered housing, the support will be provided to them at home if necessary. For example, it can be agreed that a support worker or registered nurse will visit them regularly. In some cases, scattered homes have been placed close to or connected to supported housing units, in which case the unit's support is nearby and available.

The ultimate goal of all support is to help residents get the kind of grip on life that enables them to survive by using the same services that society provides to everyone. Strengthening the residents' agency and involvement in their own lives is central to support work in the Housing First model. That is why the resident and the staff plan the forms of support together. When providing support, the aim is to not do things for the residents but to help them do things themselves, with the exception of medical and health care, of course.

Peer support is a good way to strengthen the residents' involvement in their own lives in such a way that they do not experience feelings of inferiority. Support can be provided, for example, in peer support groups or a designated person can act as a peer support person. A peer understands and knows how to offer support in a different way than a professional. A peer can also speak the same language as the resident. Sometimes workers may resort to using professional jargon, in which case a peer support person can act as an interpreter between the authority and the resident.

Housing advice has been proven to be an effective way of helping residents hold on to their apartments or to get one. A housing advisor can help with problems such as paying the rent and applying for support. Housing advice can be organized by the municipality or an organization, for example. (*Home of Your Own, Y-Foundation*)

List of sources

http://www.ara.fi/en-US/Housing_programs

http://www.ymparisto.fi/en-US/Housing/Housing_for_special_groups

<http://www.infopankki.fi/en/living-in-finland/housing/supported-and-service-housing>

https://ysaatio.fi/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/A_Home_of_Your_Own_lowres_spreads.pdf?utm_source=web&utm_campaign=thebook, pp. 25