



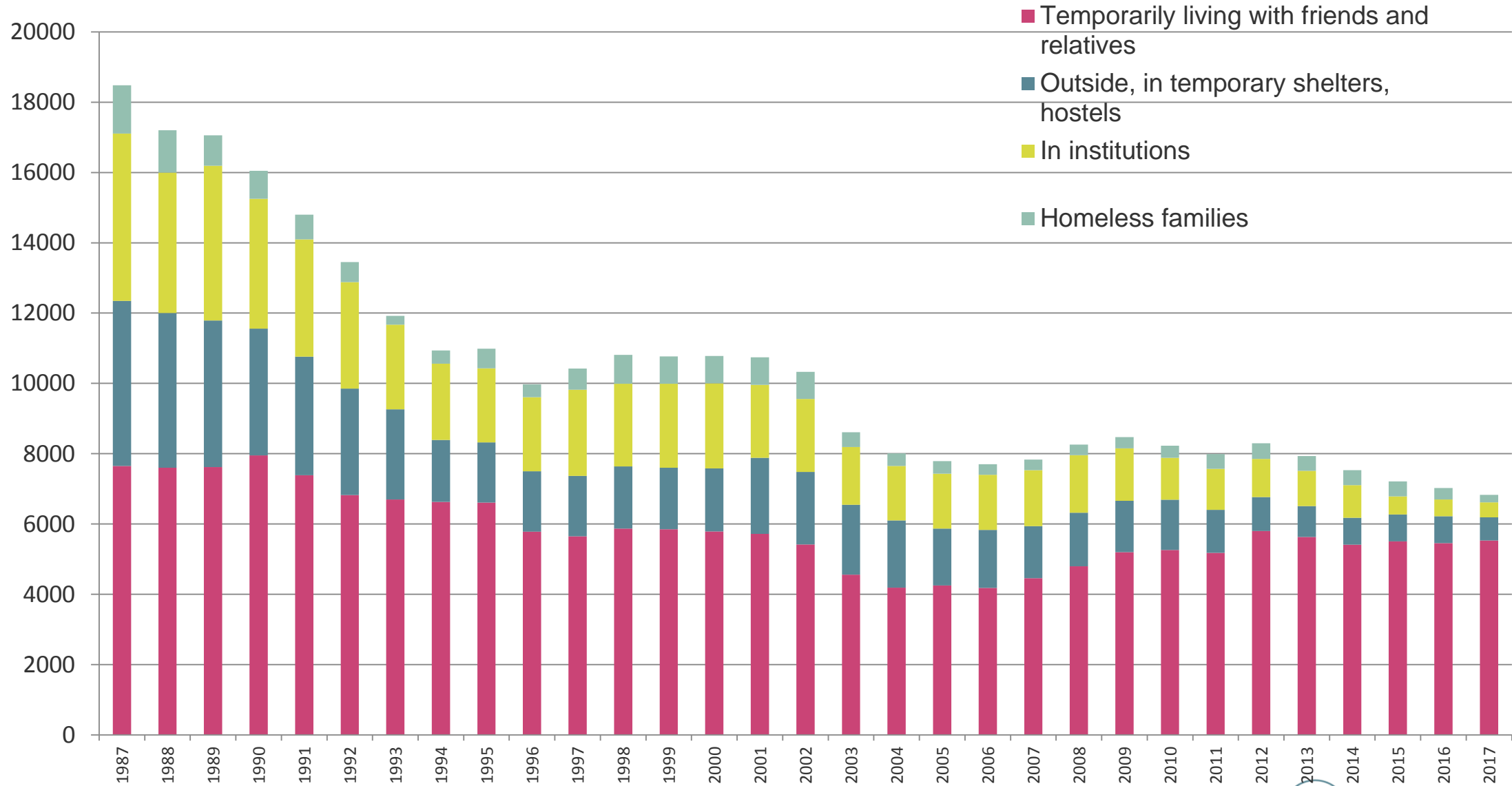
Y-FOUNDATION

**Ending Homelessness and Housing First in
Finland**

CAEH Conference, Hamilton 5.11.2018

Juha Kaakinen, CEO

Homelessness in Finland 1987-2017



What we wanted to do and achieve

- To halve long-term homelessness by 2011 and end it by 2015
- Conversion of all shelters and dormitory-type hostels into supported housing units
- Reinforcing Housing First approach as a mainstream organizing principle for housing and support services for homeless people

Quantitative targets*:

- 2.500 new apartments, supported housing units or care places in 10 (2008–2011) / 11 (2012–2015) major cities

*Targets of the National PAAVO Programme 2008–2015

What have we done

- **Housing:**
 - Over 3.500 new apartments built / purchased for homeless people
- **Services:**
 - 300 new professional support workers in housing social work
 - Housing advice services have been upscaled nationwide
- Housing First principle (as we understand it) has been established
- Shelters/hostels have been replaced by supported housing units

Housing options for Homeless persons in Helsinki

Year	Supported housing	Independent rental apartments	Hostels and shelters	Social housing apartments
1985	127	65	2.121	35.404
2008	552	2.033	558	68.881
2016	1.309	2.433	52	67.764

Shelter renovation: Why we wanted to get rid of shelters and hostels – and what made it possible?

- Living in a hostel or shelter is always a temporary solution
- A person living in a hostel is still homeless
- No privacy and very limited professional help in your problems
- Hostels sustain a culture of irresponsibility, a “prison-like” subculture
- Renovation of hostels has increased public safety
- **Carrot:** State grants for renovation 50%
- **Stick:** Obligation to work according to Housing First principles in the future
- Systematic training for personnel (also new personnel hired)

Väinölä


- Supported housing
- 33 apartments (35 tenants)
- Opened 2014
- Built by Y-Foundation
- Leased to City of Espoo
- Support provided by Salvation Army (11 co-workers)



Alppikatu 25

- Opened in 1936:
 - As a shelter 250 bed places
- Since 2012:
 - Supported housing
 - 81 independent rental apartments
 - 88 residents
 - Apartment size 19–36 m²
 - On site personnel by Salvation Army
 - 22 employees



A photograph of a wooden door with a silver handle, a lock, and a mail slot. The text is overlaid on the door.

You can't have Housing First
without having housing...
first.

New apartments for the target group 2016–2017

	Espoo	Helsinki	Jyväskylä	Kuopio	Lahti	Oulu	Pori	Tampere	Vantaa	Kuuma Municipalities	Total
Non-profit rental apartments	90		2	12							104
Youth apartments	223	177		31	346			58	61	65	961
Housing Units					1	2	1	2			6
Apartments in Housing Units					29	40	17	57			143
Build apartments total	313	95	2	43	293	40	17	85	61	65	1014
Intermediary letting from the private market	27		11			117		20	24		199
Other apartments, apartment purchases	32	63	23	3		20		14	37		192
All new apartments total	372	158	36	46	293	177	17	119	122	65	1405

Housing First in Finland

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

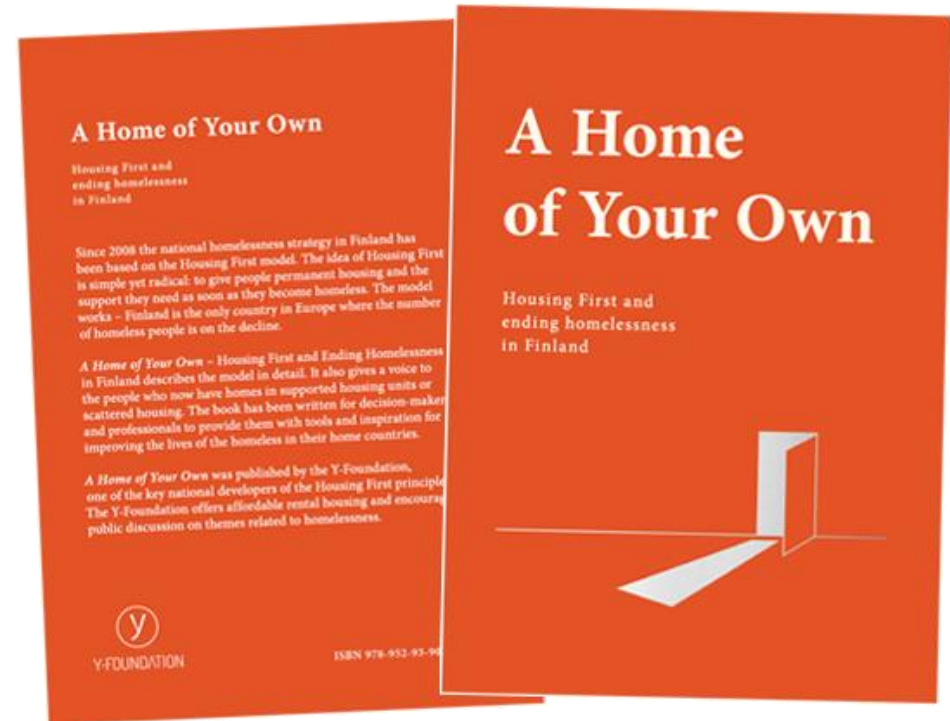
Housing First Pathways / Housing First Finland

- Customer choice
- Special services (ACT-team)
- Scattered housing
- Hostels and shelters still part of the system
- Using existing housing stock
- Tenants pay 30% of their income for the rent
- Project-based

- Self-determination, autonomy
- ICM + basic social and health services
- Scattered housing and supported single site
- No hostels, only emergency shelter
- Also new construction
- Tenants pay the rent (can get normal housing benefits)
- Program/strategic level

Support in Housing First

- Intensive case management
- Use of basic social and health care services
- Personnel ratio: 1/10 in scattered housing
- Max 5/10 in supported housing units



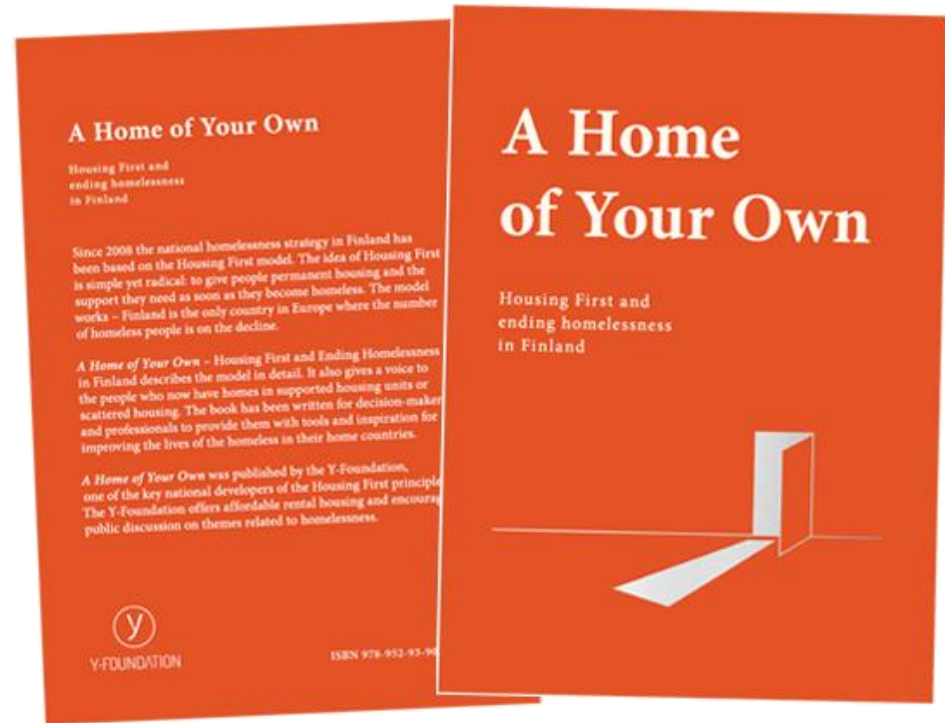
Forms of Support

In supported housing:

- Community work
- Low threshold work/daily activities

In scattered housing:

- Detoxification at home
- Tailored harm reduction support for people with drug addiction
- Floating support team for people with recurrent psychoses



Deconstructing some concepts

Housing in “normal surroundings”:

- Scattered housing in owner occupied environment
- Scattered housing in social housing
- Supported housing unit (single site), small unit max. 30 flats
- Supported housing unit (single site), bigger ones max 125 flats

Which one of these is “normal surroundings”?

Challenges of social inclusion

- Is our understanding of social inclusion of ex-homeless people in “normal environment”, in local community, a bit idealistic?
- Retention rate is a limited concept for success in HF:
- Paying the rent/level of tolerance can explain most of it
- Social inclusion as a process: providing “handles” to grip
- Meaningful life and growth of resilience
- Family ties
- Work or other meaningful daily activities

Paths of Ending Homelessness with Housing First

1000 homeless people
after 2 years

- 100 scattered housing with HF HF
- 500 in shelters
- 400 rough sleeping

- 400 scattered housing with HFF
- 500 in supported housing units (single site) with HFF
- 100 in temporary accomodation (friends, relatives, occasional rough sleeping)

Ending Homelessness with Housing First

- Fidelity to the ultimate goal: To end Homelessness
- If the shelter system is still prevalent is it possible to end homelessness with HF?
- The importance of time: How long can the homeless people wait?
- Is there a risk of HF turning into a curiosity or just one more model among others?
- Inequality among homeless people: those “elected ones” in HF and the rest getting normal, traditional service
- Housing First as an evolving concept and practice

What next?

- 2016–2019: National Programme for Homelessness Prevention
- Prevention strategies for cities
- Upscaling housing advisory services:
 - 80 housing advisors prevented in 2017 2.871 evictions
- NGOs and cities working together to develop women specific services and housing solutions
- From functional zero to absolute zero:
 - Government has made a decision of principle to halve the existing homelessness before 2022:
 - Target group: people living temporarily with friends and relatives
 - Proposed measures: 5.000 new apartments, social housing in new housing areas from 20% to 30%



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