



Homelessness in Finland and Denmark

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The aim of this Bachelor's thesis was to examine homelessness in Finland and Denmark. The thesis was carried out as comparative secondary research focusing mainly on three chosen perspectives: definitions, statistics and strategies.

The preliminary data was collected from online platforms, using Google's advanced research and through that Feantsa's research homepage. Voluntary work observations were conducted in a homeless dormitory in Finland and two interview forms were sent to Danish organisations to support the data and to give insight on real-life homelessness. The collected secondary data not only covered homelessness in Finland and Denmark, but also the reasons behind extreme social exclusion, Housing First-methodology and human rights as well.

The results of this thesis show that homelessness is a similar problematic issue affecting thousands of people in both Finland and Denmark. Finland has achieved the desired direction in the work against homelessness whereas Denmark continues to struggle with rising homeless statistics despite the national programmes.

As a conclusion, it is safe to say that homelessness is a multiform phenomenon that demands concrete measures to diminish. The Housing First-method has shown its functionality, and for the Danes to achieve the same results as the Finns, an individual's own apartment as the ground base of all well-being should be developed from idea to action.

Keywords: homelessness, housing, comparative research, Europe

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1 INTRODUCTION

Homelessness is a worldwide phenomenon which affects approximately 100 million people all over the world (United Nations 2005, 2). European Commission (2009, 6) states, that there could be over 3 million people affected by the issue of homelessness in Europe, and of them, 410.000 in the most vulnerable state of homelessness, houseless or roofless. Compared to other countries in Europe, Finland remains to be the only country in EU that has been able to battle homelessness and decrease the homeless statistics successfully (Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa 2018, 10-11).

Homelessness has more than one official definitions (National health care for the homeless council 2018) and no universally accepted specification (Feantsa n.d). European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion (2017) divides homelessness in to four categories to cover most shapes of the phenomena. These categories are rooflessness, houselessness, living in insecure housing and living in inadequate housing (2017) [see figure 1]. This typology has been found useful in many European countries (European Commission 2009, 4).

	OPERATIONAL CATEGORY	LIVING SITUATION	GENERIC DEFINITION
Conceptual Category	ROOFLESS	1 People Living Rough	1.1 Public space or external space Living in the streets or public spaces, without a shelter that can be defined as living quarters
		2 People in emergency accommodation	2.1 Night shelter People with no usual place of residence who make use of overnight shelter, low threshold shelter
	HOUSELESS	3 People in accommodation for the homeless	3.1 Homeless hostel 3.2 Temporary accommodation 3.3 Transitional supported accommodation Where the period of stay is intended to be short term
		4 People in Women's Shelter	4.1 Women's shelter accommodation Women accommodated to experience of domestic violence and where the period of stay is intended to be short term
		5 People in accommodation for immigrants	5.1 Temporary accommodation/reception centres 5.2 Migrant workers accommodation Immigrants in reception or short term accommodation due to their immigrant status
		6 People due to be released from institutions	6.1 Penal institutions 6.2 Medical institutions (*) 6.3 Children's institutions/homes No housing available prior to release Stay longer than needed due to lack of housing No housing identified (e.g. by 18th birthday)
		7 People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)	7.1 Residential care for older homeless people 7.2 Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people Long stay accommodation with care for formerly homeless people (normally more than one year)
	INSECURE	8 People living in insecure accommodation	8.1 Temporarily with family/friends 8.2 No legal (sub)tenancy 8.3 Illegal occupation of land Living in conventional housing but not the usual place of residence due to lack of housing Occupation of dwelling with no legal tenancy illegal occupation of a dwelling Occupation of land with no legal rights
		9 People living under threat of eviction	9.1 Legal orders enforced (rented) 9.2 Re-possession orders (owned) Where orders for eviction are operative Where mortgagee has legal order to re-possess
		10 People living under threat of violence	10.1 Police recorded incidents Where police action is taken to ensure place of safety for victims of domestic violence
		11 People living in temporary/non-conventional structures	11.1 Mobile homes 11.2 Non-conventional building 11.3 Temporary structure Not intended as place of usual residence Makeshift shelter, shack or shanty Semi-permanent structure hut or cabin
	INADEQUATE	12 People living in unfit housing	12.1 Occupied dwellings unfit for habitation Defined as unfit for habitation by national legislation or building regulations
		13 People living in extreme over-crowding	13.1 Highest national norm of overcrowding Defined as exceeding national density standard for floor-space or useable rooms

Note: Short stay is defined as normally less than one year; Long stay is defined as more than one year.

Figure 1: European Typology of Homelessness and housing exclusion (ETHOS) - Comprehensive framework 2017.

Although the definition of homelessness varies from the contemplated country, it is safe to say that the feelings and emotions homelessness brings to an individual are universally the same.

According to Busch-Geertsema, Edgar, O'Sullivan and Pleace (2010,7) being homeless affects individuals and household's well-being extensively (e.g. medical, economic and mental aspects) and puts individuals in a vulnerable position exposed to various risks. Although all homeless people have a serious need for an apartment, the need for additional support is usually just as important.

Throughout the years, homelessness has been researched from multiple different angles. For example, Kotti & Saarhelo (2012) contemplate the importance of individual's own input as a homeless person whereas Olukoju (2017) discusses the causes of homelessness with ways to inhibit and end homelessness. In addition to the thesis', there are multiple different researches and measurements done by different global, national and local organisations in various countries on homelessness and the state of housing and social exclusion.

The purpose of this thesis is to compare homelessness in Finland to homelessness in Denmark to find out and make visible the similarities and differences these two countries have when it comes to homelessness. This meaning, that the thesis covers the definitions, statistics and strategies of homelessness in both Finland and Denmark with some other findings made along the research process. The thesis is implemented as a secondary comparative research, similar with qualitative research, combining data with email-interviews with organisations as well as observations from voluntary work done in a homeless dormitory.

The countries were chosen based on personal interest in both Finnish and Danish society and the ways they take care of the ones in weaker positions. Because the thesis contains comprehensive data on homelessness, the thesis can be used extensively among professionals working with the researched topic. The thesis is also suitable reading for someone who pays greater interest to homelessness and wants to find out factual up-to-date information on the phenomena.

2 HOUSING AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Since the declaration of human rights in 1948, all human beings are stated to be equally eligible to human rights despite their nationality, residency, colour, sex, origin, language or

any other status. International human rights law gives certain frames and obligations to countries to promote and secure human rights to everyone. (United Nations 2019a).

The international human right to adequate housing underlines that every women, man, youth and child have the right for a safe home in a community in which they can live in tranquillity (United Nations 2019b). There are different elements that form the International Human Right to Adequate Housing and those three elements are covered in the first three sections under this chapter.

Legal security of tenure means that everyone living in a home which is owned by tenure should have promised legal security against illegal evictions, harassment or threats. Housing should be affordable in a way, that it isn't harmful in relation to your basic needs (e.g. food, healthcare, school). Habitability of the housing means that a home should protect its residents from outcoming elements as in wind, cold, rain, and it should have adequate amount of space. Availability of materials and services is a part of the right to adequate housing, meaning lighting, sanitation, energy for cooking etc. (United Nations 2019b).

For housing to be adequate the needs of marginalized groups should also be taken in to account. Accessibility of the housing is an important element. Marginalized groups here mean people with special needs and disabilities as well as the poor. More concretely this means that social housing and housing prices should be made to meet the customers' needs. Like the accessibility, the location should be taken under consideration. The location should allow access to school, health care services and other necessities of life. (United Nations 2019b).

The last element of the *international right to adequate housing* is the cultural adequacy. Cultural adequacy in terms of housing means that everyone should be allowed to express their culture in respectful manners despite where they live in. (United Nations 2019b).

Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa (2018, 40) state, that homelessness is '*a clear violation of human rights*'. This proposition can be seen correct when looking the stated upper elements that should apply to every human being and the homeless measurements and statistics.

3 REASONS BEHIND HOMELESSNESS - EUROPE

There are many reasons behind homelessness and this part of the research looks at the reasons from two perspectives: *society* and *individual*. As mentioned, the definition of homelessness varies depending on the contemplated country, but despite this, it is possible to notice specific trends that recur globally (Housing Europe 2017, 21). New research show how homelessness can be deeply understood if thought about as '*the outcome of a dynamic*

interaction between individual characteristics and actions and structural change'' (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 5).

It is acknowledged that in addition to the chosen contemplated factors in this chapter there can be other reasons behind homelessness as well that are not covered. It is also acknowledged that it varies from the situation whether the reasons listed in the chapter are the causes or the effects of homelessness. In most cases, several different factors summed up together lead to the point where an individual ends up without a home, rather than only one single setback (Homeless Hub 2018a).

3.1 Society

According to Housing Europe (2017, 10) there are multiple factors in the society and its structure that contribute to the state of housing which is strongly linked with homelessness. Below are some of the key issues European countries face when it comes to the state of housing, considering especially Finland and Denmark.

The European Union alone doesn't have specific competence in matters related with housing, but on the other hand, it is clearly visible how EU-led policies such as those related to e.g. social inclusion and health and human rights affect more or less the issue of homelessness. (Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa 2018, 36).

Since 2016, housing prices have been rising, although the average income level has remained the same in most European countries. This brings us to a situation where multiple households' economical situations, especially in poor households, are in a worsening condition as housing costs remain as the largest progressive expense households have. (Housing Europe 2017, 11 & Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa 2018, 51).

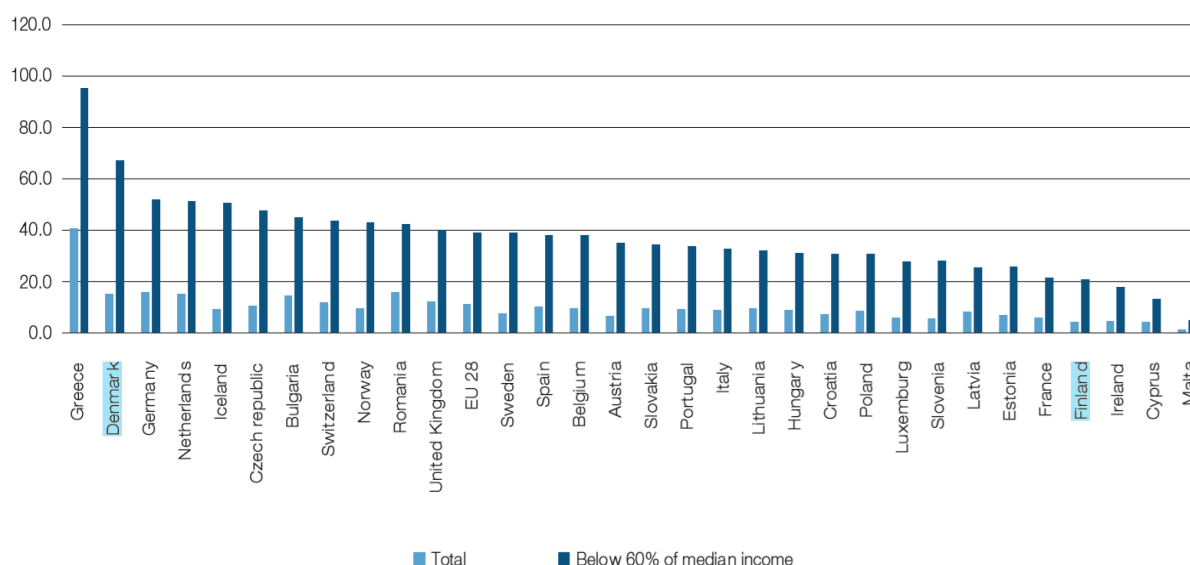


Figure 2: Housing cost overburden by income group, Eurostat SILC, cited in Housing Europe Review 2017.

Because of this ongoing increase of the housing costs, the income gap and inequality are increasing as well (Abbe Pierre Foundation 2018, 53). In 2017, in Denmark nearly 70% of the people with low income spend over 40% of their earnings in housing expenses whereas in Finland the number is a bit over 20% (Figure 2). It is detected that *“although the average housing overburden rate for the overall population has remained stable in recent years, the share of poor people overburdened by housing costs has increased significantly over the past decade, from 35% in 2005 to over 39% in 2015”* (Housing Europe 2017, 20) and the percentage can be interpreted to continue growing.

The costliest countries for construction investment after Switzerland are Scandinavian countries according to Eurostat’s data on construction price levels in Europe (Eurostat, cited in Housing Europe 2017, 14). These high costs bring challenge to housing providers as they try to provide affordable housing and match the supply with the demand. Therefore, housing shortage is alarmingly increasing especially in the capitals and big cities with the growing population. (Housing Europe 2017, 14).

Also, an important structural factor is the social protection and social security regulated by the laws. In situations, where an individual ends up unemployed or falls sick, it is vital to receive benefits for housing costs and necessary living expenses. If individual can’t receive these benefits or the benefits are not covering the costs, the risk of ending up homeless and being socially excluded rises. (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 51).

The most alarming issue related with the state of housing is the unsuccessful political response to homelessness (Housing Europe 2017, 11) because decreasing the amount of homeless and putting an end to homelessness completely, is a *“public policy issue”* (Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa 2018, 17). This is explained since Finland remains to be the only EU-member that has been able to reduce the amount of homelessness successfully. In more details, Finland has used effective policies, as in the housing first model, in the battle against homelessness, whereas multiple European countries including Denmark remain to struggle with the continuous increase in the homelessness rate. (Housing Europe 2017, 11). A successful political response will require money, determination, resources and action to change the course of housing politics.

3.2 Individual

Factors that lead to homelessness can be examined from individuals’ point of view by looking at the personal feature and actions as well as the relationships of an individual. Individuals

characteristics have influence on whether an individual is in a vulnerable position which can lead to actions causing homelessness. Escalating disputes in interpersonal relationships relate to homelessness because crisis e.g. domestic violence can lead to the situation where individual needs to leave the residence immediately without warning, this causing the individual to end up homeless. (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 52).

Busch-Gertseema et al. (2010, 52) state that mental health problems and addictions are the most common and generally discussed factors linked with homelessness. Mental illnesses cause the individual to lack resilience and motivation which again can be directly linked with working life and capabilities to maintain housing, not to mention personal well-being and social relationships (Homeless Hub 2018b). Topic related mental health issues can be anything from depression to severe psychiatric disorders (Homeless Hub 2018b). Fabian (2013) states that according to research "the more severe the level of homelessness, the poorer the level of mental health". Addictions to substances, as in drugs and alcohol, and gambling can lead to the break of life management which again relates with homelessness the same way as mental health issues (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 52).

Just like the majority of homeless people suffer from mental health issues, the majority is also either unemployed or in unstable work positions (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 51), which brings us to the overburdening of poor individuals and households (Housing Europe 2017, 20). Poor individuals are in a vulnerable position, as their income is inconsistent and unsure. As mentioned before, although the housing prices are rising, the income levels have remained the same. This explains poverty being one of the key issues from society's as well as the individual's point of view. (Busch-Gertseema et al. 2010, 51).

It can be inferred, that if individual suffers from e.g. mental health problems and is unemployed, it can lead to the lack of capabilities to pay the bills and the rent which that can lead to homelessness and debt. Debt in turn affects individuals access to housing as credit information is often required, and this hamper getting an apartment and through that may lead to homelessness.

Busch-Gertseema et al. (2010, 51-51) remark that although media often proposes homelessness as a '*chosen lifestyle*', there is no research display for this kind of notion. This is a common mindset that people have towards the homeless, thinking that due to working well-fare systems no one would have to be homeless (Danish homeless institution 2019, personal communication). The stigma of homelessness remains so strong that it is said to even be one of the core reasons why homeless people don't seek help (Fabian 2013).

4 HOUSING FIRST

Before Housing First-model was invented, many countries around the world, including Finland and Denmark, pursued the so-called *treatment first* methodology, Staircase Services. Staircase Services include steps that the homeless person should follow in order to receive proper housing. Staircase Services started to be seen as a negative approach as it underlines the importance of different commands being filled before receiving housing which that can be nearly impossible for a homeless individual with complex problems. This note became visible as homelessness remained to increase and the research on homelessness went further. (Pleace 2016, 15).

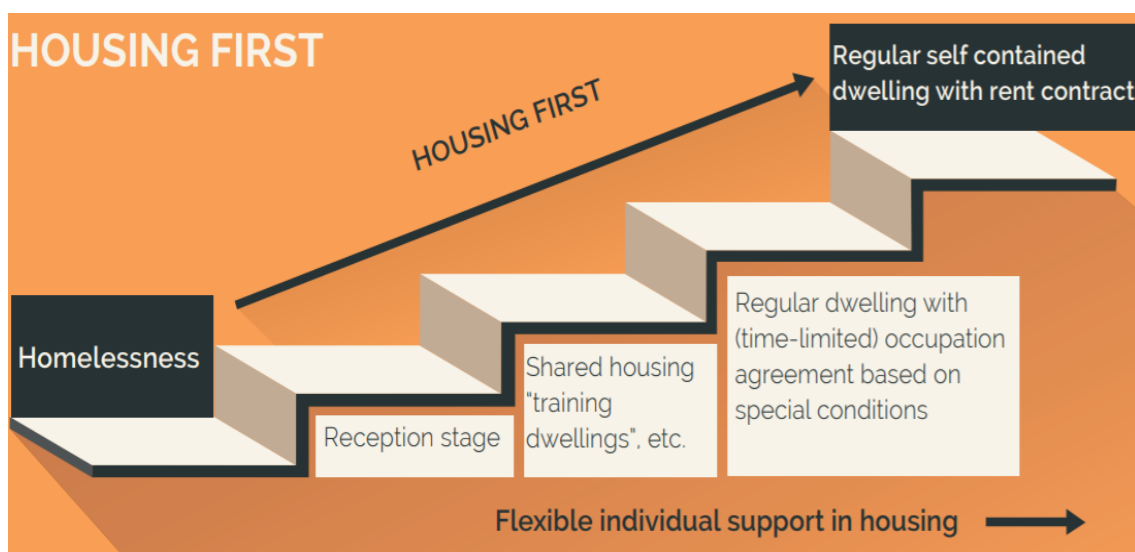


Figure 3: Staircase model vs. Housing First. 2016. Housing first guide Europe.

The Housing first-model was designed by Dr. Sam Tsemberis in the United States, and it's now used in various European countries, including Finland and Denmark (Pleace 2016, 13). Pleace (2016, 12) simply defines Housing first as an innovation that aims to decrease homelessness especially among people that are in great need for high-support. Promoting social integration, as in *social support*, *community integration* and *economic integration*, is the primary intention of the housing-model (Pleace 2016, 22). More simplified, the basic idea of the model is that housing is the number one priority and after that is provided and stabilized for the individual, other problems can be fixed as well.

Promoting *social support* targets on giving the service users the feeling of being valuable and respected as a human being and providing them practical support and companionship. Harder defined term *community integration* simply defined aims to build positive two-way relationship between the service users of Housing first and their neighbours. This gives an opportunity for the service users to alter to new roles in the joint community. Lastly,

economic integration means not only paid work but also rewarding activities and participation in variety of different activities. (Pleace 2016, 22).

First principle of the model is that housing is a human right to everybody. As stated already in the chapter 2, everyone has the right to adequate housing. This right is something that one should not have to earn, and the right is not linked with personal behaviour in any way. (Pleace 2016, 29).

Second principle is the choice and control for service users. This underlines the importance of being respected and listened to as the service user. It is important to meet the homeless individuals and listen to their personal needs. This guarantees that the help provided meets the needs of the service user as efficiently as possible. Self-determination is the “starting point of recovery”. (Pleace 2016, 30).

Third principle emphasizes the separation of housing and treatment. Separation ensures that not applying for treatment in case of e.g. substance abuse doesn’t affect whether the service user should still receive help with housing issues. (Pleace 2016, 31).

Fourth principle is recovery orientation which means focusing on the overall well-being of the individual, and supporting the physical, mental and social aspects of individuals life. (Pleace 2016, 32).

Harm reduction as the fifth principle aims to clarify how ending substance abuse completely in detoxification service is a “*complex process*” as individuals suffer also from other problems. To be more specific, the view of harm reduction points out substance abuse being the possible consequence of other problems and therefore the aim is in providing help, treatment and support without forcing the service user for complete abstinence. (Pleace 2016, 34).

Sixth principle is the active engagement without coercion which underlines the importance of positive and motivational approach to work when dealing with the Housing First service users. The key is to stay recovery orientated and create faith in the recovery process. (Pleace 2016, 34).

Person-centred planning as the seventh principle means adapting to the needs of individuals rather than trying to adapt the individuals to fit the Housing First service. Service users are in a position in which they choose themselves about their own life while contributory support is provided from the Housing First services. (Pleace 2016, 35).

Last principle is flexible support for as long as is required. For an example, if a person who uses the Housing First service is evicted, Housing First supports and helps the individual again

with housing related issues. Social integration takes time, and this is why in order to succeed in the integration process flexible support is vital. (Pleace 2016, 36).

Pleace (2016, 12) describes the Housing First model as ‘‘probably the single most important innovation in homelessness service design in the last 30 years’’. All eight core principles can be seen below in figure 4.



Figure 4: Eight core principles of Housing first in Europe. 2016. Housing first guide Europe.

5 HOMELESSNESS IN FINLAND

Finnish constitution law says that ‘‘anyone, who is incompetent to obtain the security required for a decent life, is justified to receive livelihood and care’’ which is the precept Finland has been trying to pursue (VVA ry n.d.). Behind the lowering statistics and successfully provided care and support are government, voluntary work, municipalities and organisations that have worked determinedly towards a better welfare state (Y-Säätiö 2019). Finland has been able to battle homelessness, although there is still a long way for the ultimately perfect situation, where homelessness doesn’t appear at all. (VVA ry n.d.).

5.1 Definition of homelessness

In Finland, homelessness definition includes the ones living outside, in different temporary shelters or housing units and institutions due to the lack of proper housing. Also, soon to be released prisoners without upcoming apartments, people staying at their friends or close ones’ houses and people roaming around are counted as homeless. (Tilastokeskus n.d.). Homelessness definition seals in also the people living in different institutes not only due to

the lack of housing but other issues (VVA ry n.d.). This is the Finnish definition used in measuring homelessness and building statistics on the phenomena.

Long-term homelessness applies to a homeless person, who has a severe problem that undermines housing (e.g. debt, substance abuse or mental health problem) and whose homelessness is prolonged by the lack of suitable support services. Homelessness is considered long-termed when it has lasted at least for one year or a person has been time after time homeless for the past three years. Long-term homelessness underlines the need for high-support and help- the duration is secondary. (ARA 2018).

5.2 Statistics

In Finland, the measurement on homelessness is executed once a year during one day (Benjaminsen & Knutagård 2016, 50). Statistics show a drastic drop from year 1980, when Finland had almost 20 000 homeless people, to this decade (VVA ry n.d). According to ARA (2018), Finland had 7112 homeless people in year 2017. Figure 5 below indicates the previous years from 1987 to 2016 and demonstrates the different categories of homelessness.

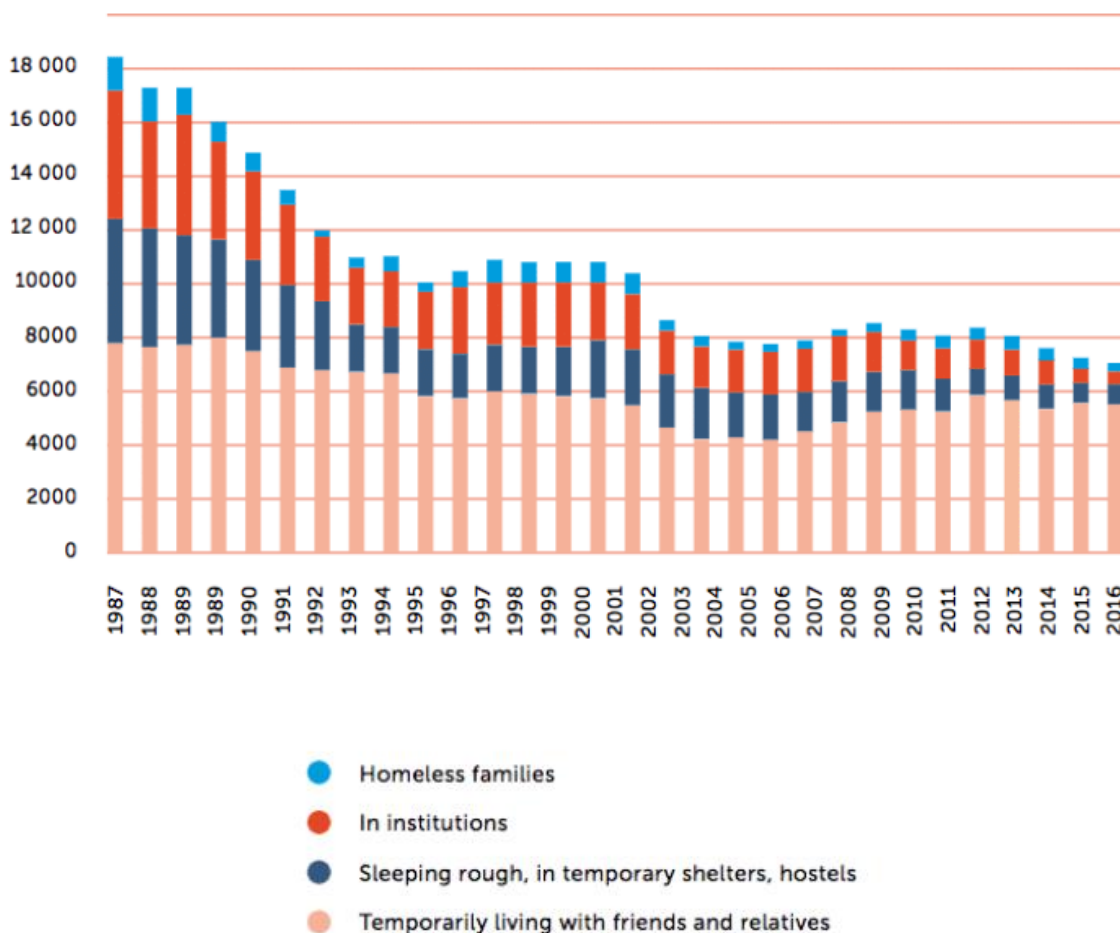


Figure 5: Statistics on homelessness in Finland 1987-2016. The housing finance and development of Finland, cited in Y-säätiö 2019.

In figure 5, homelessness is divided into four categories that cover the most prevalent shapes of homelessness in Finland. These categories are homeless families, homeless people in institutions, homeless people sleeping rough/in temporary shelters/hostels and homeless people temporarily living with friends and relatives. As mentioned, the overall number of homeless persons in Finland has gone down. When looking at the different homeless categories, there has been large dispersion, but coming to this day, one category has clearly stood major.

Figure 5 shows, that homeless families have been and remain to be the smallest group of all four. Research from 2017 shows, that from the total amount of 7112 homeless persons, 6615 were single individuals and 497 people had family. From the 497 people, 214 were counted to be a homeless family. (ARA 2018). Over half of the homeless families are immigrant families and the amount of them is increasing (The Finnish homeless strategy 2017).

Figure 5 also indicates, that the amount of homeless people in institutions has significantly decreased with well over half. Same has happened with homeless people sleeping rough, in temporary shelters and hostels, which is from the four categories the most extreme shape of homelessness.

The fourth category which covers temporary living with friends and family remains to be the largest form of homelessness, from 1987 to still this day. Over 80% of all homeless people are staying with their friends or family, either way, in unstable housing situations without permanent residence. Around 400 people are living outside or in different homeless shelters. (VVA ry n.d.)

Although *homeless family* is not a concrete location as the other categories, figure 4 aims to cover most prevalence shapes of homelessness in a way that is easy to perceive which happens to include homeless family as one, on top of the locations.

Among the single homeless the number of immigrants and paperless immigrants has increased, now being 27% of all homeless in Finland. (Ministry of Environment 2016). This is important to note, as the percentage is high in relation to the total number of homeless people and immigrant homelessness requires special features on the homelessness work. Statistics show a slight increase also in youth homelessness in Finland compared with previous years, the percent of homeless person under 25 years old being around 25% (The Finnish homelessness strategy 2017).

Other noted feature on the statistics is that the amount of long-term homeless has always been big among all homeless, although steadily decreasing. In 2015 Finland had 2252 long-term homeless which meant an 8% drop from the previous year. (ARA 2015).

Figure 6 is a close-up from year 2009 to 2015 on the homeless statistics. The figure makes it visible how the direction is positive on the battle against homelessness in Finland.

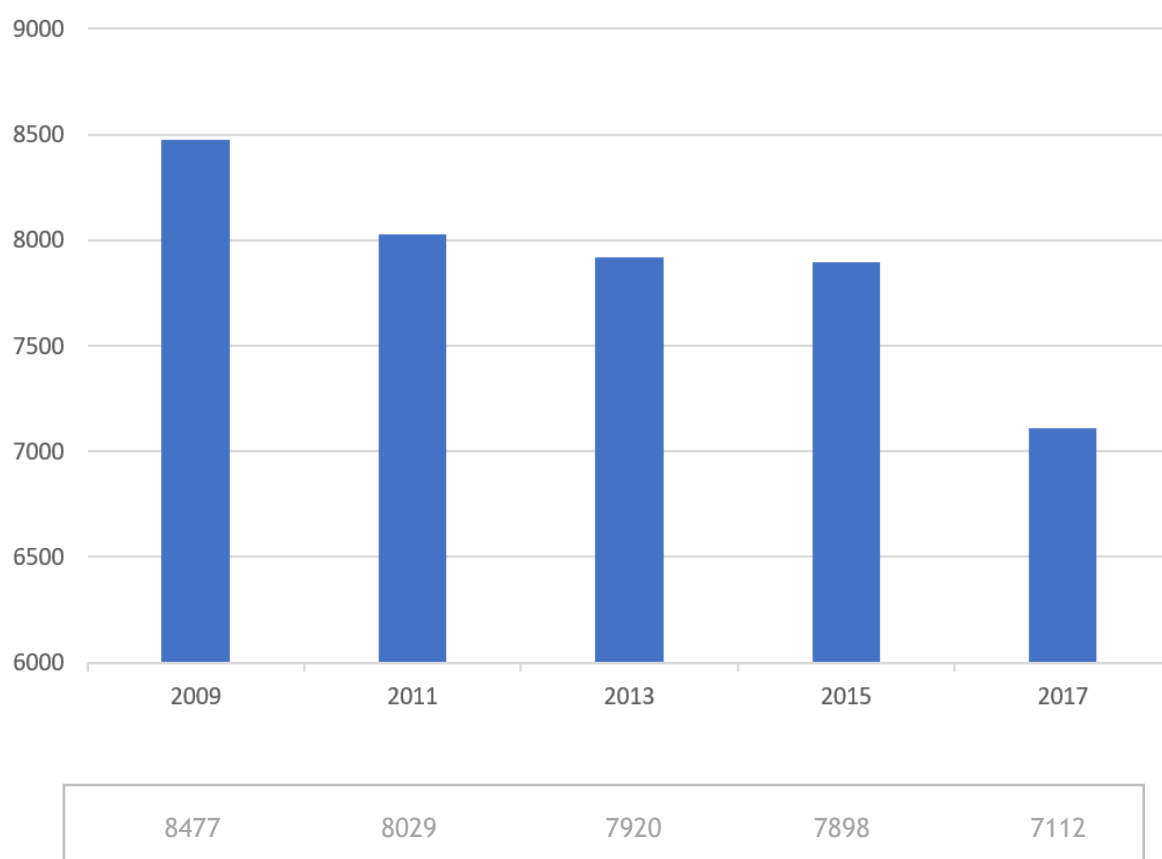


Figure 6: Homelessness in Finland 2009-2017.

According to ARA's (2019) latest measurement on homelessness in Finland, in 2018 Finland had **5482** homeless, which means again a significant drop from previous years. Special feature of the newest research data is that for the first time the share of single-parented families among all homeless families was studied, with the result of 77,4% being single-parents. One important result was also the decrease on long-term homelessness for tenth year in a row, now showing that in 2018 Finland had 1162 long-term homeless (ARA 2019).

5.3 Strategies and methods

Leading model and base of the national homelessness strategy in Finland is the Housing First methodology, that was taken in use 2008 first adapting two tailored programmes: Paavo I

(2008-2011) and Paavo II (2012-2015). The central goal of the national strategy and the programmes Paavo I and II was to specifically end long-term homelessness and adapt the Housing First model in Finland. (Pleace, Culhane, Granfelt & Knutagård 2015, 20-21).

Paavo I model started in 2008 and lasted until 2011, with the main goal of ending long-term homelessness and preventing homelessness in Finland. Ministry of Environment operated the programme and it was implemented and funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs, Criminal Sanctions Agency, The Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) and Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY), costing a total of €78 million. Ten cities with the highest percentage on homelessness were covered by the programme, including Tampere, Turku and the capital Helsinki. Concrete improvement targets were halving the amount of long-term homeless by coming up with permanent housing solutions and creating at least 1.250 supported housing units and dwellings with a permanent tenancy rather than shared shelter rooms.

Homeless shelters turning in to Housing First Units was one of the greatest achievements of the strategy. This is because that abled the most vulnerable people to receive and maintain their own housing with tailored care and high-support. (Pleace et al. 2015, 17). By receiving the permanent tenancy and housing, other needs of the homeless can be met and treated better as the Housing First model states.

According to Pleace et al. (2015, 18) Paavo I *"...reduced long-term homelessness by 28% between 2008 and 2011. By the end of 2011, a total of 1,519 dwellings and supportive housing units had been completed in the 10 cities..."*. This can be interpreted as the programme being very successful and over the expectations on the number of new dwellings.

The aims of Paavo II programme (2012-2015) was 1) eliminating long-term homelessness by 2015, 2) reducing the risk of ending up as long-term homeless by using social housing more effectively and 3) creating more effective actions end homelessness. Creating scattered housing with preventative services and floating support has been the key focus of the housing issues. Paavo II underlines especially the preventative methods as in housing advice services as well as floating support.

Other key tasks of Paavo II was focusing especially on youth when providing services, decreasing the stigma and negative attitudes towards homeless by bettering the communal practises and using the expertise of former homeless people (Pleace et al. 2015, 20). Although the ambitious goal of eliminating long-term homelessness wholly was not reached, results were visible when long-term homelessness decreased by 35% (1.345 persons) throughout the programme period of Paavo I and Paavo II (Ministry of the Environment 2016, 2).

The latest strategy for 2016-2019, funded with €78 million, concentrates on the prevention of homelessness in Finland. This in action means securing housing following the Housing First principle whenever a client is in contact with any social services. The specific client group of the strategy are the people who have recently ended up homeless and the people who have been homeless for longer periods, *long-term homeless*. Two very important goals of this strategy are the 1) reinforcement of prevention work and the 2) inhibition of homelessness recurrence. Providing around 2.500 dwellings to homeless or people at the risk of ending homeless and bettering the service system towards more client-oriented and cost-efficient ways are other underlined goals of the strategy. (Ministry of Environment 2016, 3-4)

To achieve these goals, concrete measures have been defined and taken in to use. There are eight measures that concentrate on the prevention of homelessness and six measures that concentrate on the prevention of homelessness recurrence, these two being the main goals. Tables 1 and 2 indicate these measures in a nutshell.

1. Increasing the production of reasonably priced housing and diversifying the housing available to the homeless	2. Strategies preventing homelessness in cities	3. The integration of asylum seekers who have received a residence permit and quota refugees is promoted and homelessness is combated.	4. The threat of losing housing is prevented for households experiencing financial difficulties and access to housing is made easier for those who have lost their credit rating
5. Housing guidance is established and strengthened	6. Housing guidance to service points with a low threshold	7. The housing social approach to work is strengthened	8. The transition of risk groups from institutions/housing services to independent housing is secured

Table 1: Eight measures - The prevention of homelessness. Ministry of Environment 2016, 5-9.

1. The role of tenants and experts by experience in the work on homelessness is strengthened	2. Comprehensive availability of housing services that allow the use of intoxicants, as well as abstinent housing services is ensured	3. The employment of formerly homeless people is supported
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4. Multidisciplinary support that is brought into the home is developed	5. The ' <i>pienet tuvat</i> ' (small homes) model is tested as a solution for the group with the most difficult case of homelessness	6. A 'night shelter' offering emergency housing and direction to services for young people is modelled for the Helsinki metropolitan area
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Table 2: Six key measures - The prevention of homelessness recurrence. Ministry of Environment 2016, 10-11.

Adaption of these measures wishes to effect the number of homeless people in Finland, reform the social service system in to a more customer-centred way and reduce overall costs in a long-term run against homelessness. In the future, researchers suggest that focus on the homelessness reduction should centralize especially in the capital of Finland, Helsinki, because the metropolitan area of Helsinki is where the housing prices are the highest as well as the number of homeless persons (Ministry of Environment 2016, 2).

The Finnish homelessness strategy underlines the importance of multidisciplinary work between different parties as in health care, social services, employment services and housing services. The strategy also pays attention to the special needs of men and women when it comes to housing and service needs. (Ministry of Environment 2016, 2-3).

6 HOMELESSNESS IN DENMARK

According to Christensen & Kirkwood (2001), ever since 1930's Denmark has strongly committed to be a welfare state that aims to reduce socio-economic inequality. Danes have invested relatively large amounts of their income in programmes supporting equality and social inclusion but despite that, the homeless are not "caught by the Danish social security net" (Christensen & Kirkwood 2001).

6.1 Definition of homelessness

Homelessness and homeless person in Denmark are defined as "people that do not have their own (owned or rented) dwelling or room but have to stay in temporary accommodation or stay temporarily and without a contract [tenancy] with family or friends. People who report they do not have a place to stay the next night are also counted as homeless." (Busch-Gertseema, Benjaminsen, Hraet & Pleace 2014, 16).

When measuring homelessness in Denmark, the ETHOS-light methodology has been seen useful. Ethos-light categorizes homelessness as in total of six categories, which are 1) people living rough, 2) people in emergency accommodation, 3) people living in accommodation for

the homeless, 4) people living in institutions, 5) people living in non-conventional dwellings due to lack of housing and 6) homeless people living temporarily in conventional housing with family and friends (due to lack of housing). (Busch-Gertseema 2015, 6-7).

6.2 Statistics

In Denmark, homelessness statistics are measured every second year from a seven-day period of time since 2007 (Benjaminsen & Knutagård 2016, 50). Statistics show, that in 2017 Denmark had 6635 homeless persons. This means an 8% rise from the previous homeless count of 2015 when Denmark had 6138 homeless people. (Abbe Pierre Foundation & Feantsa 2018).

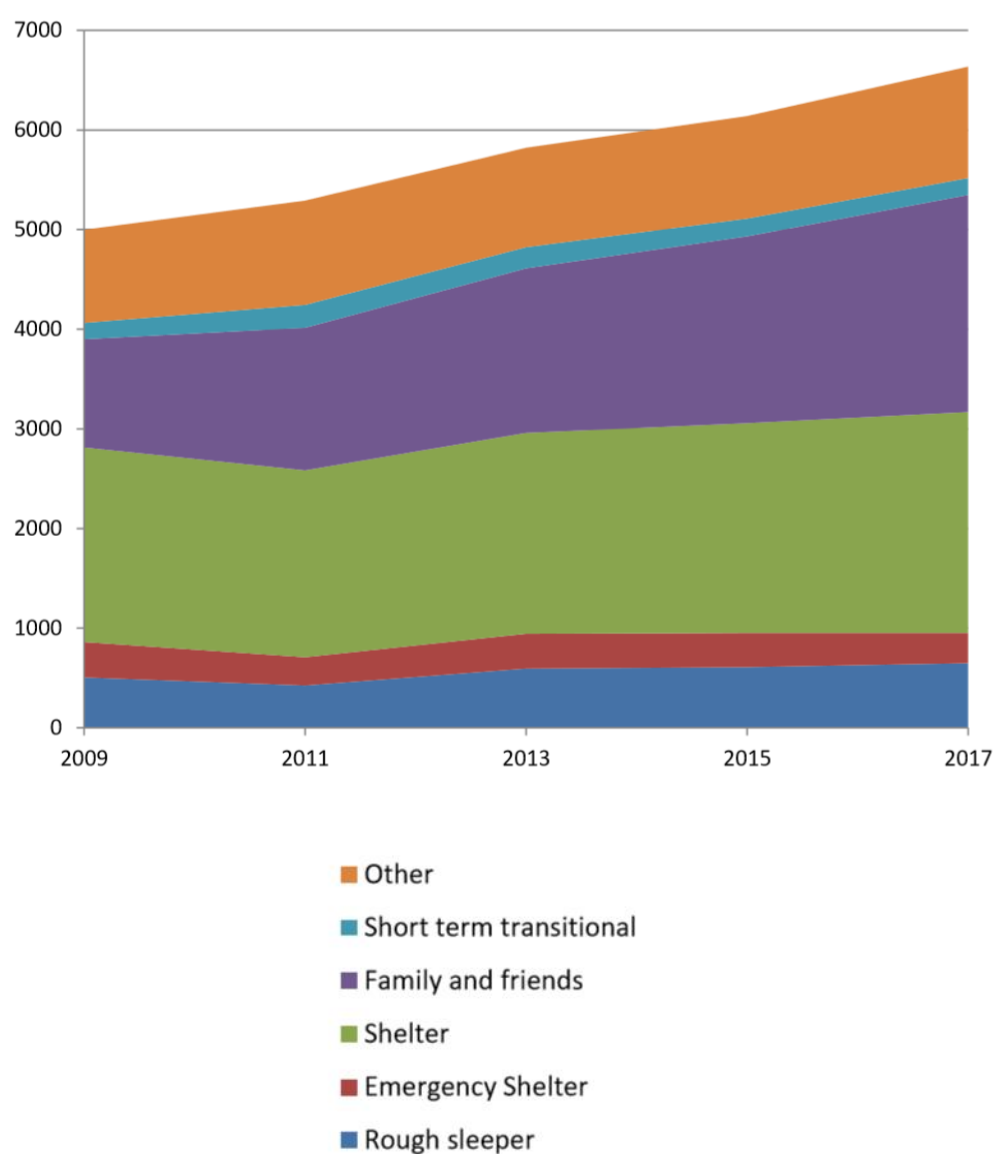


Figure 7: Homelessness categories in Denmark 2009-2017. Lars Benjaminsen VIVE - The Danish Centre of Applied Social Science.

Six homeless categories visible in Denmark are broken down in figure 7. These categories are some what the same as the ETHOS-light models' six paragraphs. It can be seen from the figure that the most prevalence two groups are the ones staying with family and friends and the ones staying at shelters.

More precisely, the number of those living with family and friends was 2177 when 2217 homeless people were staying in hostels and shelters (Benjaminsen 2017). According to Benjaminsen (2017), in 2017 the share of people living roughly on the street or in stairwells was 648. Statistics show, that the rest of the number of homeless people are in hospitals, probations or unknown places. Approximately half of the homeless citizens, 3242 are living in the metropolitan areas of Denmark, 1518 persons in the capital Copenhagen. (Benjaminsen 2017).

The highest increase of homelessness in Denmark is among young people. Young people, youth, here means people from age 18 to 25. Statistics show a substantial 105% growth in youth homelessness from 2009 to 2017.

Figure 8 is a close-up on the numbers of homelessness in Denmark from 2009 to 2017. As the latest measurement of homelessness in Denmark has been done from 2017 data and homelessness is measured every second year, no data on the statistics of 2019 was yet found anywhere for the research.

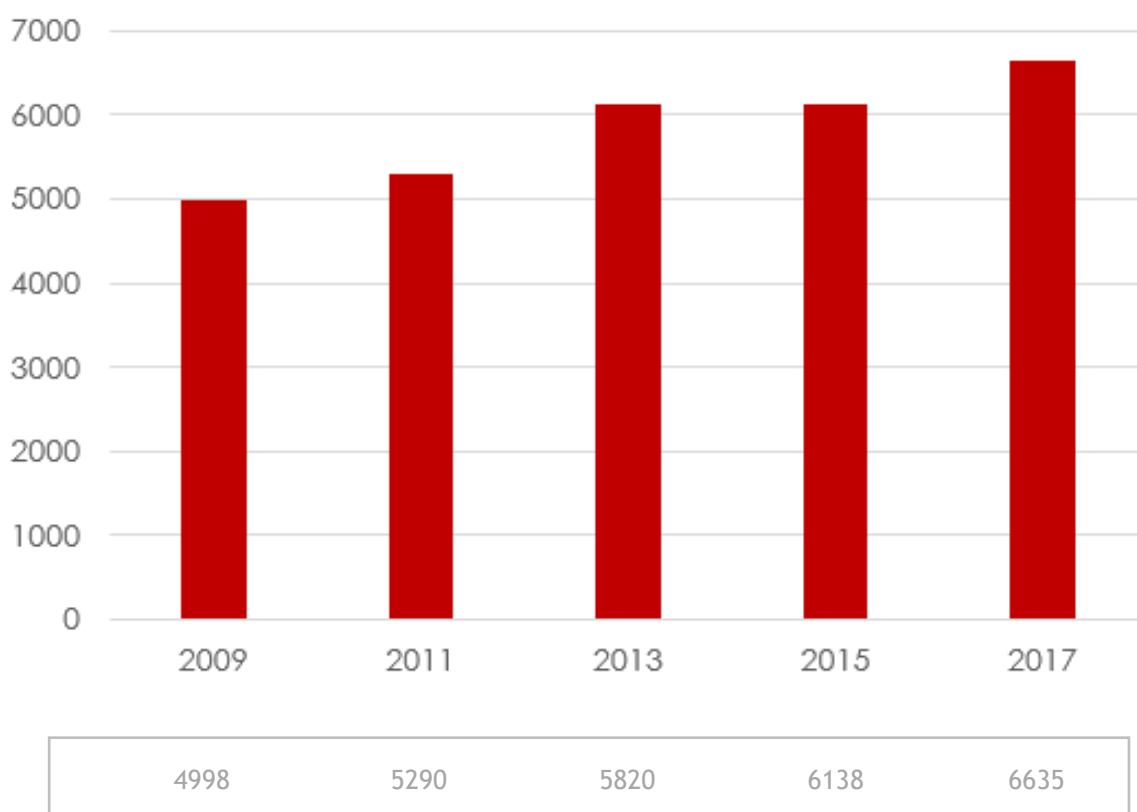


Figure 8: Homelessness in Denmark 2009-2017.

6.3 Strategies and methods

Denmark had one of the largest Housing First based programmes in Europe from years 2009 to 2012, funded with 500M DKK (€65million) and later extended to last until 2013. The Danish National Strategy aimed to help homeless people especially in high-support need following the eight core principles of the Housing First model. The key objectives were to decrease the number of people living rough, to reduce youth homelessness more efficiently, to cut the time spent in emergency accommodation by the homeless and to lower the amount of homelessness linked with leaving prison or hospitals. The model was used in 17 municipalities with the highest numbers of homelessness, including the three largest cities in Denmark: Copenhagen, Aarhus and Odense. Eight municipalities with the highest homelessness rate were participating the programme and then later nine municipalities shared the surplus budget. (Benjaminsen 2013).

Housing First methodology was chosen as the core of the strategy to see if the model works in practise in Denmark. (The Danish Homelessness Strategy 2013). Denmark explored three floating support models within the National Homelessness Strategy: Intensive Case Management, Assertive Community Treatment and Critical time intervention.

Intensive Case Management (ICM) is a recovery-oriented case management approach which aims to provide individualistic one-on-one support for the homeless to help them maintain housing and support their well-being (Homeless Hub 2018c). The approach underlines the importance of regular meetings and hearing client's individual needs when it comes to services and care.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) is a longer process approach with multi-professional team aiming to help people who are at the risk of losing their home (Homeless Hub 2018d) and have high-support needs (Benjaminsen 2016). The multi-professional team can be used 24/7 and the methodology aims to strengthen client's own capabilities to a stable base and in order to achieve so, it provides regular mobile meetings and intensive care on the client (Homeless Hub 2018d).

The last floating support model, critical time intervention (CTI) underlines the importance of community integration and strong ties between the individual and the society during times when there is a high-support need (Critical time intervention n.d.).

On top of the floating support methods, the strategy also aimed to improve the street outreach work and bring in to use the methodology of service need assessment in homeless shelters (Benjaminsen 2013).

As a result, all the models have been seen as an important part of the Danish National Strategy, especially the ACT-model, due to the fact that two out of three homeless in Denmark have dual diagnosis and the model is especially suitable for supporting the high-support need (Benjaminsen 2016). Despite this, Benjaminsen (2016) states, that using the ACT-model has appeared challenging in other municipalities than the capital Copenhagen. Results show, that through-out the strategy (2009-2013), 700 people received ICM-support, 300 individuals received CTI-support and 90 persons were reached by ACT-support model (Benjaminsen 2018) which indicates the models having a positive effect on the lives of homeless as the help provided has been tailored to observe the needs of the client.

Housing First model fits the Danish society, because as said, in Denmark most of the homeless are measured to have the need for high-support due to dual diagnosis, which is precisely whom the model is designed for. (The Danish Homelessness Strategy n.d.). Evaluation of the strategy showed, that 9 homeless persons out of 10 were able to maintain their dwelling after receiving it through the Housing First based programme. Evaluation also implements that scattered housing has more benefits compared with homeless community units. (Benjaminsen 2016).

Despite the evidence-based models, the over-all homelessness statistics went up from 2009 to 2012 (Benjaminsen 2013). According to Benjaminsen (2013), homelessness increased by 4% in the 8 municipalities which had the full strategy programme. 9 municipalities with a floating support programme experienced an 11% growth in homelessness, whereas the rest 81 municipalities with no participation to the programme experienced a prominent 43% rise in the number of homeless. In the capital Copenhagen, homelessness was increased with 6% (Benjaminsen 2013). Statistics show that although the strategy didn't work in a wanted decreasing way, it had effect on whether the statistics grew drastically or marginally, which still though contradictory, a positive result.

It is stated in The Danish Homelessness Strategy (2016) that profitable housing is the primary objective of homelessness reduction and prevention. This is because growing statistics are specifically centralized in the metropolitan area where housing is overall more expensive. (The Danish Homelessness Strategy 2016).

After 2013, Danes carried out a follow-up programme from 2014 to 2016 which aimed to anchor the Housing First principle and model in to the first programme participant municipalities and new municipalities using same methods as the previous strategy, but now with more municipality-based funding (Benjaminsen n.d.). As in total, 24 municipalities took

a part in the follow-up programme, while three municipalities from the original programme discontinued to the follow-up. (Benjaminsen 2018) At the same time started a youth programme that particularly aimed to reduce youth homelessness with preventative multidisciplinary methods (Benjaminsen n.d.).

Again, the programme showed high percentages of housing retention among homeless people and the results were somewhat successful in the municipalities taking part in the programme. Even so, despite the successful retention outcomes, homelessness kept rising reaching the number of 6635 homeless persons at the end of the follow-up programme. (Benjaminsen 2018).

Benjaminsen (2018) discusses one of the issues behind rising statistics being the ‘*general challenge of implementing a mind-shift from Treatment First to Housing First*’. A successful turn from Treatment First to Housing First would require the change of organisational structures and practises as well as special effort from e.g. social services and cooperation between different actors. These processes involve municipal social offices, homeless shelters, housing allocation offices etc. (Benjaminsen 2018) as multidisciplinary work is in a big role when it comes to working with clients who have needs in many areas of life.

Other difficult issues concerning the phenomena are the cuts made from social benefits, especially from the assistance benefits that youth under 25 years receive. With these cuts made from the social benefits, the lack of capabilities to pay rent in the metropolitan areas and even smaller cities has increased. Summing up the lack of affordable housing and the lack of adequate income, the outcome is extreme social exclusion and homelessness. (Benjaminsen 2018).

As social services are not free, Benjaminsen (2016) discusses money as one matter related with the state of homelessness. Municipalities have seemed unwilling to spend money on floating support models when the budget of government has let up, this affecting the access and quality of services. Hansen (2010, 122) raises one reason behind the results being the heavy concentration on floating support methods rather than concretely building new dwellings and housing solutions for the homeless. Here we see a contradiction between the approach of Denmark and the Housing First method as it is impossible to pursue Housing First methodology without adequate dwellings and tailored housing systems aimed to people with high-support needs (Hansen 2010, 122).

“The number of homeless people continues to rise in Denmark. It takes political will and action to change the situation. Homelessness in Denmark is about much more than the lack of a place to live. Often there are serious complex social problems - such as mental illness, economic issues, abuse and poor social networks - behind homelessness. Efforts to combat homelessness must, to a greater extent, be based on the individual's situation and needs

rather than on law paragraphs, demands and sanctions, which mostly contribute to create additional deroute (=loss).’’ -Danish homeless institution 2019, personal communication.

7 METHOD SECTION

The seventh chapter is the method section. It contains the chosen research questions and research methods that have defined how the research has been made. Figure 9 indicates the implementation of the thesis process.



Figure 9: Implementation of the thesis.

7.1 Research questions

The purpose of the thesis is to carry out a research that clarifies and finds out what are the similarities and differences of homelessness in Finland and Denmark and what could Finland and Denmark possibly learn from each other. To be able to answer these research questions,

it is important to first look at the countries separately. The most vital question for the research in the beginning is *what is homelessness in Finland and Denmark*. After there is knowledge on both countries' situations, comparing and answering the core research question can begin. There are three chosen areas of homelessness, *themes*, in which the research focuses on from both countries point of views. These themes are 1) definitions 2) statistics and 3) strategies. Although these key themes were chosen in the beginning for the comparison, through-out the thesis process knowledge on other aspects has been found and compared in the result chapter as well.

7.2 Research methods

The thesis is implemented as a comparative and qualitative secondary research, also known as desk study. The base of the research is on the theory gathered from different reliable sources and databases, and it is supported with two semi-structured email interviews and voluntary work observations. The first subcategory below is the most comprehensive as it is the core method of the thesis, and it is followed by two subcategories discussing shortly the stated supportive methods, semi-structured email interviews and observations.

7.2.1 Comparative qualitative secondary research & data collection

Varto (1992) states that qualitative research as a research method is the most valid method especially when doing a study about human beings, in this case, homeless people. Like qualitative research, secondary research combines different data together to find new point of views and realizations on the chosen topic; taking the preliminary data and combining it to a secondary data and material. According to Eco (1989,43-46, cited in Vilkkä 2015) there are four steps that should be taken under consideration when making a qualitative research.

The first step is defining the researched phenomena or topic in a way that the reader can identify it as well, which happens already in the introduction part and in both chapter Homelessness in Finland and Homelessness in Denmark. The second step is producing new knowledge that hasn't been find out and said before: as the study is a secondary research, the combined preliminary data collection constructs an ensemble of new realizations and conclusions. The third step is producing something that people can make use out of, something relevant. This is covered by firstly the thesis being a public issue and secondly by building a data that is universal and useful when looking for knowledge on homelessness, whether in Finland, Denmark or Europe, as the thesis covers many different aspects of the phenomena. As the final step, it is stated that the research should give enough justification to build a public conversation and this is covered by providing information and new conclusions as previously mentioned in a public issue. (Vilkkä 2015). All these aspects are covered in the thesis.

Collecting the preliminary data started in September 2018 and continued until late February 2019, except for one research found in April. During these months documents that provide relevant knowledge for the thesis and its research questions were gathered.

The online data was searched with multiple different key words that are linked with the researched topic. Main keywords in the research process were *homelessness*, *homeless*, *Finland*, *Denmark*, *Europe*, *exclusion* and *housing* and different combinations of the words, also in Finnish as well as in English. When words *Finland* or *Denmark* were used in the search, they were always linked with the core keyword, *homelessness*.

The main research platforms used were Feantsa's homepage and Google's advanced search. After relevant articles, overviews and collections were found, they were saved for later use. Homelessness related books were gathered from library as well, but most of the books ended up without use because of the wide range of already found e-formed documents and comprehensive overviews that were found more suitable for the thesis than the books.

All the materials used were from the 21st century, and as recent and timely as possible. This has been done to make sure that the data is as up-to-date as possible and that the gathered secondary data covers the latest trends and issues Finland and Denmark tackle with within the topic of homelessness.

Before the actual writing process of the thesis started, the collected data was sifted through. The research question and the preliminary table of content as the base of the content analysis, data was looked as for what it could be used and what kind of answers would it give to the thesis and secondary data. The table of analysis was divided in to three different sections, covering 1) the data, 2) purpose of the original text and key content and 3) key issues and outline of the data for the secondary research Homelessness in Finland and Denmark. These three sections were chosen to simplify and distribute the broad topic. The *data* part covers and answers the questions who, when, what and where. *The purpose of the original text and key content* clarifies what has been the purpose of the original text and what are the key issues and themes the original content keeps in. The last section, *key issues for the secondary research Homelessness in Finland and Denmark*, aims to bring forth the key issues and findings concerning the thesis Homelessness in Finland and Denmark and clarifies how and where the findings from the preliminary data have been used in the secondary research.

Table 3 on the following pages indicates how the preliminary data was sifted and used. Content analysis helped to see whether the data found was linked with the chosen aspects of homelessness and if the found data was useful for the object of the thesis. Table 3 consists of not all sources but gives the idea on how the analysis was produced. All sources are found in alphabetical order in the end of the thesis.

Data:	Purpose of the original text and key findings:	Key issues for the secondary research <i>Homelessness in Finland and Denmark:</i>
Benjaminsen, L. 2017. Hjemloshed I Danmark - Summary. SFI - The Danish National Centre for Social Research, Copenhagen, Denmark.	Hjemloshed I Danmark covers and describes the issues and statistics of homelessness in Denmark.	Homelessness in Denmark - Statistics: Data and numbers on the situation of homelessness in Denmark.
Benjaminsen, L. 2013. Policy Review Up-date: Results from the Housing First based Danish Homelessness Strategy. SFI - The Danish National Centre for Social Research, Copenhagen, Denmark.	Policy Review Up-date aims to show and make visible the results of the Housing First based Strategy tried out in Denmark in years 2009-2013. It is shown that evidence-based methodology has helped homeless in various Danish municipalities but still, surprisingly, the over-all number keeps on growing.	Homelessness in Denmark - Strategies and methods: Results of the Housing First strategy method in Denmark.
Busch-Gertseema, V., Edgar, W., O'Sullivan, E. & Pleace, N. 2010. Homelessness and homeless policies in Europe: Lessons from research. A report prepared for the consensus conference.	Overview of previous research and data on homelessness in Europe. The report looks at homelessness widely and explains the entries, effects and exits of homelessness as well as the welfare provision and definition of homelessness.	Introduction: Homelessness affects individuals and households profoundly and homeless people need high-support.
European Commission. 2009. Confronting Homelessness in the European Union. Commission Staff Working Document - Brussels 2013.	The Commission Staff Working Document (CSDW) is a part of a Social Investment Package that debates for instant common action on homelessness. The document consists of two parts that deal with homelessness: <i>Late trends and data</i> and <i>policy standards and approaches</i>	Introduction: Statistics on the number of homeless persons in the European Union are going up due to the growing issue of homelessness.
Feantsa & Abbe Pierre Foundation. 2018. Third overview of housing exclusion in Europe. Web publication.	Third overview of Housing Exclusion in Europe is a gathered package on housing	Introduction: The clarification of Finland being the only country in Europe that has been

	<p>exclusion by Feantsa and Abbe Pierre Foundation.</p> <p>The overview is built from five different chapters that cover different aspects of homelessness as in the statistics and strategies used in European countries.</p>	able to reduce the amount of homelessness.
<p>Kotti, H. & Saarhelo, M. 2012. Asunnottoman oman osallisuuden merkitys asunnottomuuden poistamisessa ja terveydenhoidossa. Degree programme in Nursing. Laurea University of Applied Sciences. Theseus.</p>	<p>Bachelor's thesis aims to find out and clarify what are the opportunities for a homeless person to influence his or her well-being, situation in order to get an apartment and health care.</p>	<p>Introduction:</p> <p>Clarification that the researcher has knowledge on the previously done researches on the topic of homelessness.</p>
<p>Pittini, A., Koessler, G., Dijol, J., Lakatos, E. & Ghekiere, L. 2017. A Housing Europe Review - The State of Housing in the EU. Housing Europe, the European Federation of Public, Cooperative and Social Housing Brussels</p>	<p>Housing Europe is a network of the European Federation of Public,</p> <p>Cooperative and Social Housing which aims to increase the amount of housing and dwellings in Europe to end homelessness.</p> <p>The State of Housing in the EU 2017 is an overview data collection on the state of dwelling and housing exclusion in Europe.</p>	<p>Reasons behind homelessness - Society:</p> <p>Society is in a big role in order to reduce the amount of homelessness.</p> <p>Pittini et. al. state the important key issues related to the housing policies and society's role in the battle against homelessness.</p>
<p>Pleace, N. 2016. Housing First Guide Europe.</p>	<p>A guide on what is Housing First and how it can be used in various European countries. The guide also states the benefits of the model.</p>	<p>Housing First:</p> <p>Explanation of what is Housing First.</p>

Table 3: Content analysis.

7.2.2 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interview platforms with open questions (see appendices) were sent out in Autumn 2018 to three organisations that work with homelessness in Denmark. Semi-structured interview as a method combines questions but those questions can be left open, unlike in structured-interview (Hirsjärvi & Hurme 2001, 47, cited in KvaliMOTV n.d) meaning, that the interviewee can answer themselves with no strict and specific guidelines. The organisations

were found by searching different Danish organisation online from Google's advanced search. I contacted the organisations first via Facebook and then later with email including the interview forms. Two of the forms came back and were saved to the data collection for later usage.

The interview form was made to get an overall view of the organisations and the organisational point of view on homelessness. Interview form with open questions as a method allowed me to get a tiny bit of insight on the issue in Denmark; insight that supported the data found in the theory. The purpose was not to collect a wide data collection of interviews but to get some idea on how organisations in Denmark work with homelessness and what is their perspective on the phenomena due to the cancellation of the field visit planned to Danish organisation. As the focus of the thesis is on the theory, the answers from the organisations were used to support the already found knowledge.

7.2.3 Observations

As a part of the research, it was important from my personal opinion to see in real life what kind of organisations promote the well-being and inclusion of homeless. As already mentioned, although the focus in the thesis stays in the theory, observations from real-life homelessness are discussed shortly in this chapter and more deeply in the conclusion part.

Voluntary work was provided to a homeless dormitory that offers accommodation and help for the homeless in Finland. The organisation stays anonymous in the thesis. 27 hours of voluntary work consisted of e.g. party planning, home visits to those whom have received housing and the most important, regular daily interaction with the homeless in the dormitory. Voluntary work allowed observations, which were seen useful in the thesis process.

Observation as a method allows researcher to see if the theory matches the reality. The key benefit of observation is that you get immediate information on how the individual, group or organisation works and acts in different situations. Involved observation which was used as a method when volunteering means, that the researcher has an active role in the observation. Before volunteering it is important to know about the studied phenomena so that the previous knowledge and new information created by observing can be connected truthfully. (KvaliMOTV n.d.).

To be able to understand the real aspects of the phenomena, it was fruitful to deepen the perspective by seeing how the issue is in Finland not only in the data but in real life action. Observations were used in the conclusion part and the effect of the voluntary work in connection with me seeing homelessness can be seen through-out the thesis by looking at the chosen aspects of homelessness and the way I am discussing homelessness in the thesis.

8 ETHICS

This chapter discusses and explains the ethical aspects of the thesis. Ethics are always present when an individual must consider what kind of attitudes, thoughts and feelings the actions of others brings to oneself; what are your opinions in this case concerning homelessness. Ethics cover the positive and negative aspects and features that occur in different matters. (Kuula 2016, 21). Homelessness as a sensitive topic requires consideration on the ethical aspects of the phenomena when researched, due to the already existing stigma and negative attitudes that homeless people face.

The research respects and follows the good scientific practises and ethics honestly. This is proven by providing and openly showing accurate sources with clear marks on the original writers and researchers (Kuula 2016, 34-35) and respecting overall the topic of homelessness by focusing on the role of society and making sure the negative stereotypes homeless face wouldn't be strengthened by the secondary data but rather diminished (VVA ry n.d.). Also acknowledging that neutrality between the countries is important was one ethical aspect that was taken under consideration.

Discussing human rights and housing rights already in the second chapter underlines the importance of equality and rights all humans have, despite where they come from and what kind of issues they are dealing with. This attaches weight to justice as one important ethical aspect. Also, the names of the organisations stay anonymous in the thesis and the interviews and observations were made respecting confidentiality, as it is seen as a suitable solution for the research as the topic is sensitive. It is not seen necessary to point out the names when the knowledge gathered can be generalized from my point of view as it is so strongly linked with the theory. These kinds of choices make visible that the ethical aspects of the sensitive phenomena have been respected and taken under consideration through-out the thesis process. Figure 10 compasses the ethical framework of the thesis in a nutshell.

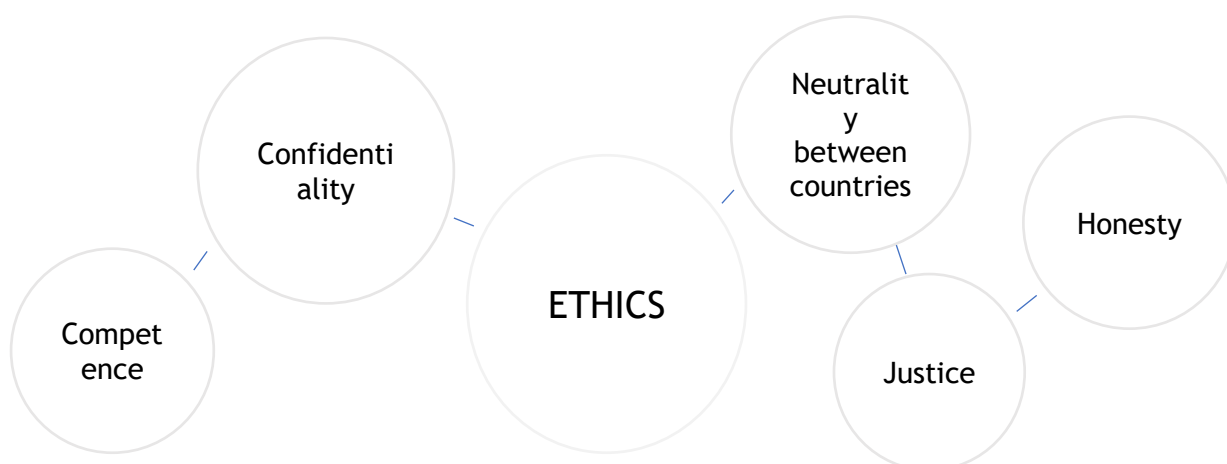


Figure 10: Ethical framework of the thesis.

9 RESULTS

Firstly, it is important to know that although both Finland and Denmark have similarities in homelessness, the differences in measuring homelessness make “*direct comparison*” impossible (Benjaminsen & Knutagård 2016, 50-51) and therefore comparison is made by applying the different aspects of both countries together. Differences in the measurement here refer to Finland measuring homelessness once a year on one day and Denmark doing the count in one week every second year (Benjaminsen & Knutagård 2016, 51).

The amount of homeless people visible in the statistics give us the idea on how homelessness is dealt with: when the stats are decreasing, we can interpret that the strategies are working well. Nevertheless, the statistical categories are in an on-going change as some homeless may experience homelessness differently every day by sometimes sleeping outside and sometimes staying with their friends, and this said, we should acknowledge the statistics being only indicative when it comes to both and all countries (VVA ry n.d.).

The first differences that Finland and Denmark have regarding homelessness can already be seen in chapter 3, reasons behind homelessness. The ongoing crisis of housing cost overburden is something that 70% of the Danes with low income experience. As mentioned in chapter 3, it means that 40% of individuals' low income goes straight to housing expenses. The housing cost overburden percent is only 20% in Finland (see Figure 2) which means an 50% difference when compared to Denmark. As the housing cost overburden piles up on the poorest individuals of the society, the risk of homelessness increases and the inequality between the rich and poor strengthens. It can be deduced that the gap between the rich and the poor is wider in Denmark than Finland based on these readings and that tells that inequality is increasing.

The housing cost overburden numbers are also strongly linked with the lack of affordable housing and housing shortage which is seen as an issue in both countries. Especially in the metropolitan areas of Helsinki and Copenhagen where the prevalence of homelessness is significant and constantly increasing due to migration, the lack of affordable housing and housing shortage is a difficult matter. Also, Finland and Denmark as two Scandinavian countries possess the highest construction investment costs which that again brings challenge to providers on matching the supply with demand, as discussed in chapter 3.

The definition of homelessness appears to be similar in Finland and Denmark although there are some slight differences in wording and expressions of the definitions. Definitions in both countries keep in the ones living outside in the rough, people living in emergency accommodation or housing institutions, the ones living with friends or family without a contract and the people soon to be released from the prison or hospital. Finnish definition uses expression “*people roaming around*” whereas Danes say “*the people who report they do not have a place to stay the following night*”. Despite these little differences, the purpose and the outcome of homeless definitions are tolerably same in both countries. The most significant difference in the definitions is that Danes do not have a specific definition for long-term homelessness as its own category as Finns. This can be seen significant because Danes have high shares of homeless individuals with multi-diagnosis and that said, having many complex problems can be seen to be linked with being homeless for a long time.

Differences in the profiles of the homeless are to some extent seen. Figures 5 and 7 make visible the big difference in the share of homeless people living in shelters as in Denmark the number is much bigger than in Finland. This says something about the different kind of adaption to Housing first methodology as Finland has provided more scattered housing compared to Denmark leaving most of the shared shelters in the past, which that can be seen from the measurements.

Also, youth homelessness is in the high rise in Denmark (The Danish Homeless Strategy 2016) when immigrants and especially immigrant families are a rising group in Finland (The Finnish Homeless Strategy 2017). This doesn’t exclude the prevalence of both profiles in both countries but shows the special features of homelessness and underlines the slight differences on what is seen as current trend of homelessness. Youth homelessness in Denmark is in connection with the cuts made from the social benefit assistances youth receive as now more and more people are struggling with the inadequate incomes. Behind the large share of immigrant homelessness is the migration wave of asylum seekers coming to Finland especially after 2015 and as they have also centred in the metropolitan area, it has strongly affected homelessness (ARA 2015).

As this important note has come to light previously, Finland is the only country in European Union that has been able to reduce homelessness in a continuous way. The homeless statistics of 2017 appear to be almost at the same level in both countries, although the divergence and direction of homelessness is entirely different when looking at the previous years of statistics. In proportion with both countries’ whole population, homelessness takes around the same

percentual number as Finland has around 5.5 million people and Denmark around 5.7 million when looking at the statistics of 2017.

Figure 11 below demonstrates the dispersion of the statistics in Finland and Denmark. It can be noted, that as the Finnish statistics are going down the Danish statistics are coming up, not to mention now the newest research showing that in Finland in 2018 there were 5482 homeless which is far below the Danish counts of 2017 (ARA 2019).

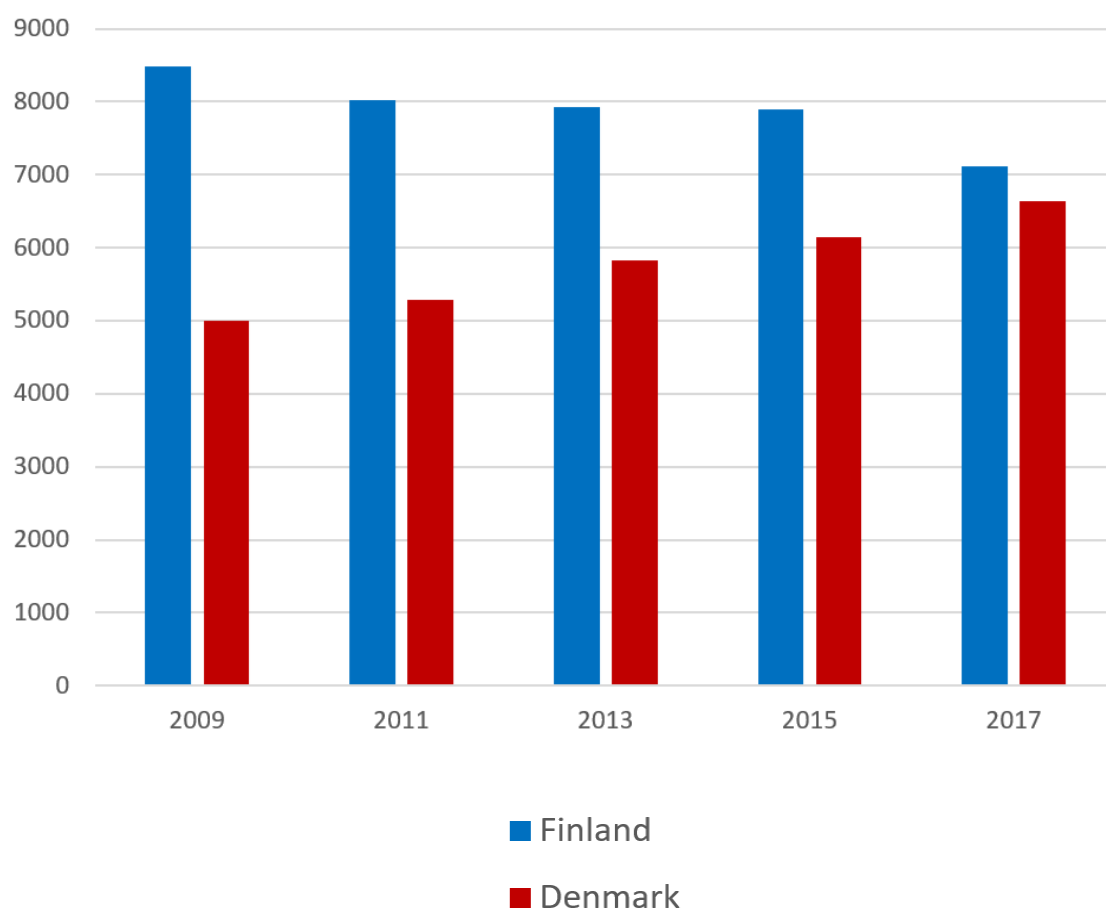


Figure 11: Homelessness in Finland and Denmark 2009-2017.

There are reasons behind this statistical divergence and the biggest reason lies behind the differing strategies used in Finland and Denmark, which these were opened in chapters 5 and 6. It needs to be underlined, that the dissenting adaption to Housing first-model and its

methodology between Finland and Denmark is the key finding in relation with the results. Finnish government and national actors took the turn from “*treatment first*” state of mind to Housing first procedure successfully and effectively by using €78 million. It can be seen from the statistics, that Paavo I especially (2008-2011) and Paavo II (2013-2015), are in connection with the lowering statistics of homelessness those years; in long-term homelessness particularly. By building new dwellings and supported housing systems which followed the Housing First approach, many homeless received a permanent home supported with floating services of multidisciplinary work.

The Danish National Strategy funded with €65million, started from 2009 and lasted until 2013, had positive effects on the municipalities attending as 9 out 10 homeless were able to maintain housing after receiving it through the programme, but the problem lies on it not reaching as many homeless as wished. The strategy had positive aspects, but the effort made was not enough to turn the direction of homelessness to be decreased as new dwellings and supported housing units were not constructed even though the need for them was relatively high.

The amount of money used in connection with the results of homelessness measurements show that Finland has had more investments and a bigger budget on the kick-off of Housing first and that affects also the differences in the results. As contemplated before, Danish municipalities had hard time on funding new dwellings by themselves after the money run out from the governments desk and sadly, when it comes to homelessness prevention and effective social work in relation with it, money is in prior position in order to achieve successful outcomes.

As the positive and last result, it is safe to say that Finland and Denmark both battle against homelessness within the framework and resources they have at the moment, although there are many on-going issues to tackle with in both countries. Housing first methodology has shown its strengths in effective multidisciplinary work against homelessness and positive results have been seen to a wide extent, but as Benjaminsen (2016) says, it “*cannot solve the housing affordability crisis or counteract consequences of welfare benefit reforms*”.

Figure 12 below lists and iterates the previously discussed key finding of similarities and differences in housing exclusion and homelessness in Finland and Denmark. The first and foremost important finding is the dissenting adaption to Housing first and the differing political response in order to end homelessness.

SIMILARITIES	DIFFERENCES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing first methodology • Similar homelessness definitions • Helsinki and Copenhagen as the capitals of the countries struggle with the largest homeless shares • Lack of affordable housing • Individual's income levels remain the same as housing costs rise • High construction investment costs • Both countries working within the framework they can 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissenting adaption to Housing first methodology - > dissenting political response to homelessness • Danes have no definition for long-term homelessness • Finns measure homelessness every year, Danes every second year • Homelessness is decreasing in Finland and rising in Denmark • Gap between rich and poor is greater in Denmark • Differing shares in homeless profiles (immigrants, youth, shelter-living etc.) • Danes have more negatively affecting structural issues that are straightly linked with homelessness

Figure 12: Results of the thesis.

10 CONCLUSION & DISCUSSION

Although homelessness is something that can be measured and looked throughout from many angles as in different stats and indicators, the core and most important factor should be recognizing the phenomena's severity for even one individual. Homelessness is the extreme form of exclusion and it affects individual's life to a great extent. As already discussed, housing is a human right for everyone and still, there are millions and millions of people suffering from the lack of this basic requirement for decent life. It is impossible to cope work, relationships and personal well-being if you don't have a safe roof on top of your head.

Finland and Denmark are globally well-known welfare states and despite this the extent of the homelessness issue reaches and affects thousands and thousands of individuals and their families every day. As stated in the results, poor political response is directly linked with the direction of homelessness. Democracy is the base of politics in both Finland and Denmark and this said, it should be acknowledged that vice versa the direction of politics is outright linked with the state of housing and homelessness and that is something we can have an impact on by voting.

From the answers received from the Danish organisations, it came clear how lack of affordable housing is a major issue among homeless: how can you apply for rental housing from homeless shelters if your income isn't enough for the expenses and living despite your personal choices? A principal observation I did in the Finnish homeless dormitory was that it is vital to always stay kind and understanding towards others as you never may know what life bring to you next and by giving people a chance, the end results can be truly amazing. As Benjaminsen (2016) states "*we cannot predict in advance who will fail*" when pursuing the Housing first methodology. It was also noted that the organisational work in Finland and Denmark is very similar. The interview platforms gave a wide view on the work provided in Denmark and that compared with the observations made in the Finnish dormitory lead to the conclusion of it having a lot of similarities. On top of these thoughts an important realization was that there is clear resemblance on the theory, interview answers and observations as no contradictory findings were made.

Looking at the built secondary data, it is visible how Finland and Denmark have different kind of needs in the homelessness politics. Youth homelessness as one of the largest rising group in Denmark requires strong preventative measures that underline multidisciplinary work between different services as in education and school, social services and health care and social assistance, which this was already started as the youth-programme was launched as a part of the follow-up programme in Denmark 2014. Immigrants as one of the largest rising groups of homeless in Finland require improvement in reception and integration programmes as from the stats it can be interpreted that they do not receive enough support when ending homeless. These are just few examples on the homeless profiles; it is acknowledged that both Finland and Denmark need to continue working with all homelessness and the preventative methods are in a key position in doing so. Also setting even more concrete goals could be beneficial for the Danes in the strategy making, so that the positive methods would go from idea to action.

In the future, the topic of homelessness could be looked more deeply from the newest statistics of 2018 and further, and homeless individuals' voices could be heard and involved in the research process. Also looking at the special features of homelessness and gender would be interesting from my personal point of view. Overall the phenomenon assign endless

possibilities in the field of research as it can be looked at from so many levels and aspects, locally, nationally and globally.

Preventing and ending homelessness requires concrete measures, ambitious goals and adequate funding. I have a strong belief that Finland as the leading country of decreasing homelessness in EU and Denmark as the country progressing slowly but surely with positive actions can achieve great results in a decade.

11 PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH

The idea of the topic started already in fall 2017, when I was doing my exchange in Denmark, Roskilde. We discussed homelessness in class and it came clear to me that homelessness is still very much a taboo in our society's and many people have the idea of it not existing because it is not clearly seen out in the streets. The conversation in class brought up many feelings in me and ever since I have been fascinated to find out more and more about homelessness: the waterproof statistics, real-life stories and the great role of society in the homelessness battle.

Delimiting the topic was a necessity because of the large scope of the subject. I knew I wanted to compare Finns and Danes, and at first delimiting the topic felt hard because every aspect of the phenomena felt interesting. I ended up distributing the headlines under both countries in to three sections covering the definition, statistics and strategies related with homelessness. Although this delimitation, throughout the thesis process important knowledge on the countries situations was found already when writing the first chapters of the thesis making the comparison even more interesting.

Looking at the phenomenon from many different aspects (theory, statistics, interviews, observations) was challenging but at the same time rewarding as so much of information was found and collected. It brought some extra challenge that through-out the thesis process new researches were published, and it was hard to decide where to draw the line in the data collection, as for an example the statistics of Finnish homelessness of 2018 was published in March 2019.

Choosing the theoretical point of view and using comparative secondary qualitative research method thought me a lot about research making, as this was the first long research I have ever made in my entire life this far. When choosing to do an international study in English I wished to challenge myself, and that I surely did. I think doing the thesis in English was a perfect final touch for the international Bachelor's Degree of Social Services I have studied for the past three years. Throughout the thesis journey I have improved my English vocabulary extensively and my English skills have overall developed a lot.

I am grateful for have been able to meet the homeless individuals in Finland and to have been able to have had contact with the Danish organisations preventing homelessness and helping homeless. In the future, I wish to apply the knowledge I now hold from homelessness and I can see myself working in the homelessness field in Finland, or even abroad, as I now think I have the professional competence to do so.

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Figures

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Figure 3: Staircase model vs. Housing first. 2016. Housing first guide Europe.

Figure 4: Eight core principles of Housing first in Europe. 2016. Housing first guide Europe.

Figure 5: Statistics on homelessness in Finland 1987-2016. The housing finance and development of Finland, cited in Y-säätiö 2019.

Figure 6: Homelessness in Finland 2009-2017.

Figure 7: Homelessness categories in Denmark 2009-2017. Lars Benjaminsen VIVE - The Danish Centre of Applied Social Science.

Figure 8: Homelessness in Denmark 2009-2017.

Figure 9: Implementation of the thesis.

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Table 1: Eight measures - The prevention of homelessness. Ministry of Environment 2016, 5-9.

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Table 3: Content analysis.

Appendices

Homelessness in Finland and Denmark - Katariina Koivisto

Here are the questions. The answers will be used in the thesis possibly under your / your organisations name (tell me what you prefer) and if you wish, I would be more than happy to send you the final thesis when it is done (spring 2019).

Thank you for your co-operation!

- 1) Name of the organisation:
- 2) How many people work in the organisation?
- 3) What is the educational background of the workers?
- 4) What is the main goal of the organisation?
- 5) Do you work together with other institutions?
- 6) What kind of services does the organisation provide to its users?
- 7) How many people use the service?
- 8) What kind of people use the service and how they find the organisation? (man, woman, old, young, unemployed..)
- 9) What kind of meaning does the service have to its users?
- 10) What kind of attitudes does people have towards homeless people in Denmark?
- 11) How many people are affected by being homeless in Denmark?
- 12) Does Denmark have any organised events regarding homelessness? (For an example, in Finland every year 17.10. is the Night of the homeless.)
- 13) What are the main issues in working with homelessness?
- 14) To prevent homelessness what should/could be done?
- 15) Anything else you would like to add: