Implementing Housing First in Finland

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Housing First Partner's Conference 2012

March 21-23 2012, Astor Crowne Plaza, New Orleans LA
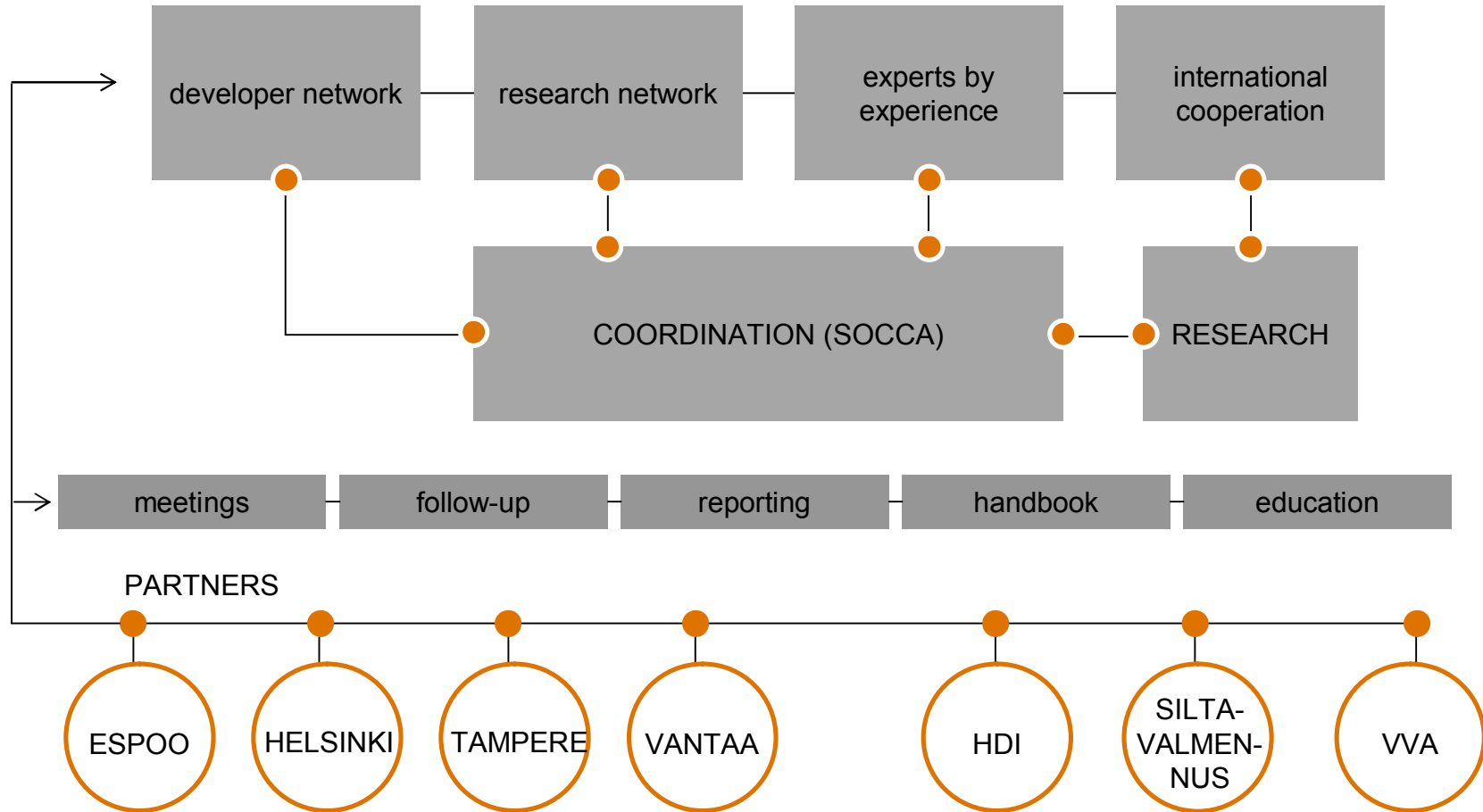
Finland

Helsinki

🇫🇮 Finland facts 2011

- Population: 5 401 267

- Area: 130 127 square miles

- GDP/c: $46 639

- Immigrants: 183 055 (3,4%)

- Temperature: from -43°F to 91°F
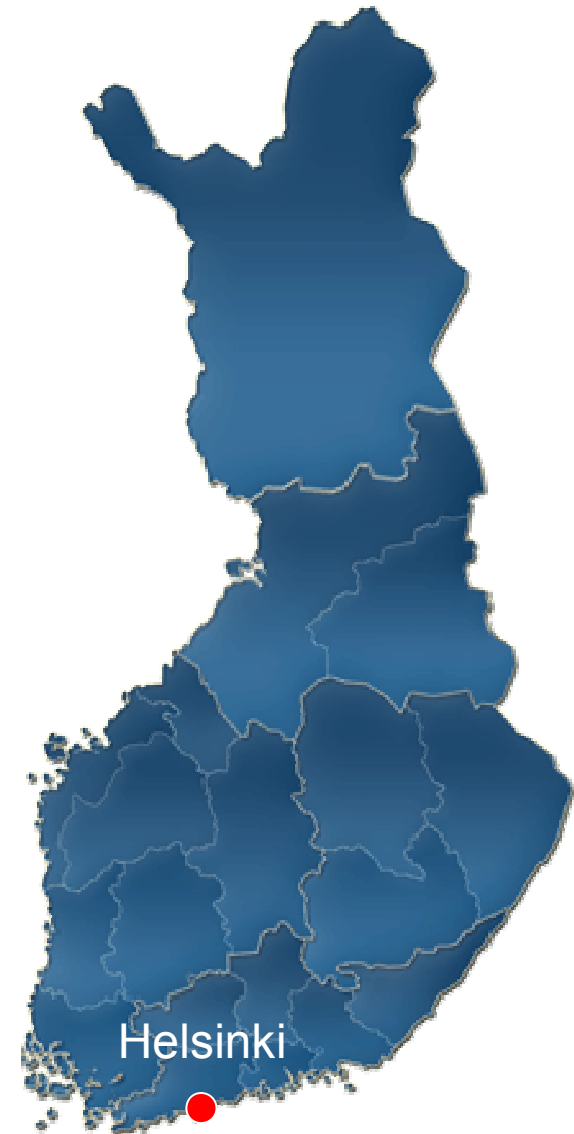
Helsinki

Nimi ovessa (Name in the Door) project 2010-12

- The aim of the project is to catalyse a paradigm shift towards housing first principle in a service system for a long-term homeless people

- Four Finnish cities are collaborated: Espoo, Helsinki, Tampere, Vantaa + several service providers from private and third sector

- Projects is funded by the four cities, HDI and TEKES (The Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation)

- The Internet handbook of implementations of HF

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Cooperation network of the project

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Housing market in Finland

Private owned flat or house
74%

Right of residence apartment

Rented flat
Social housing 16%

College hostel

Living with parents

age, income etc.

Birth
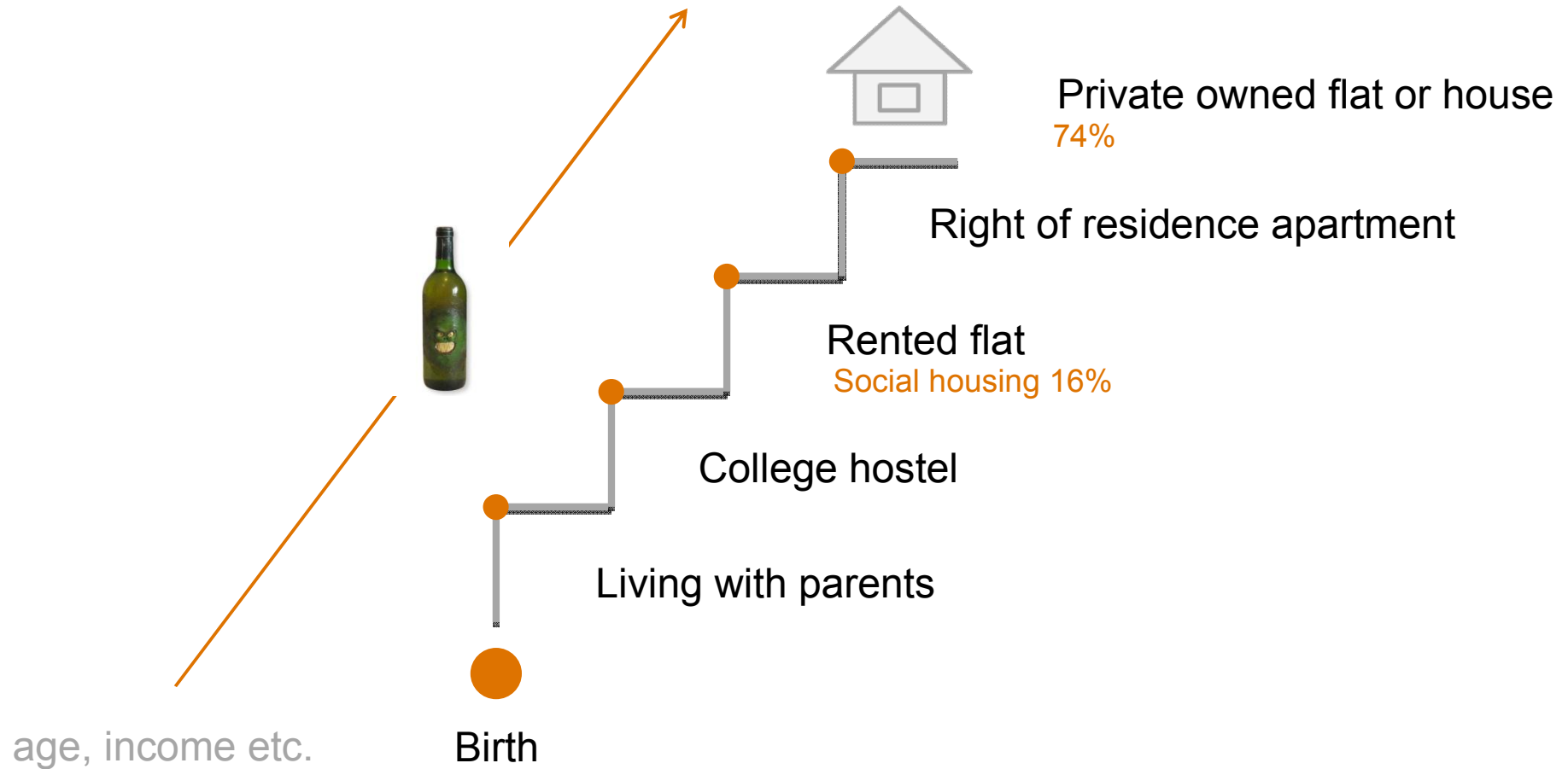
Homelessness in Finland 1987-2011
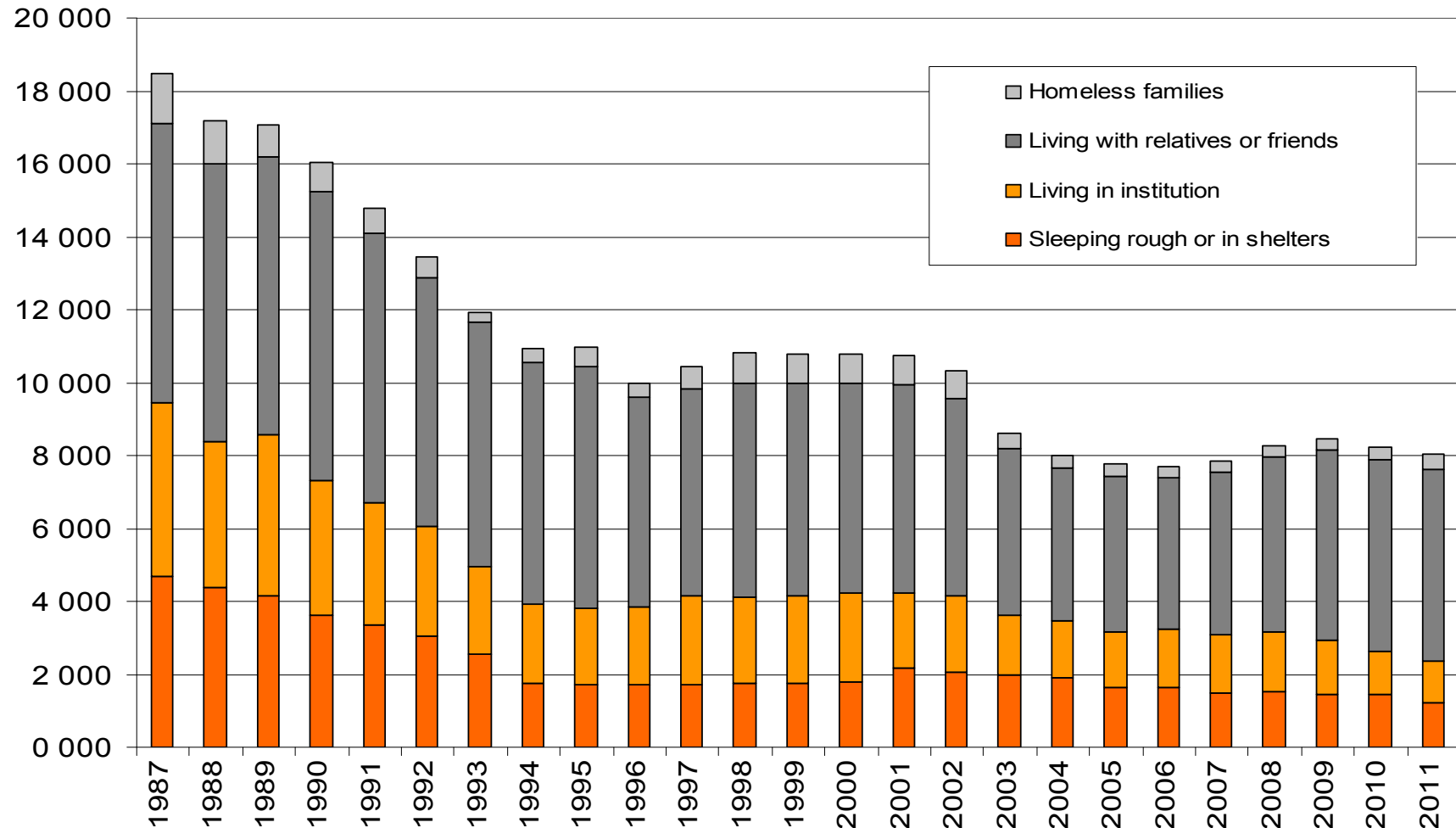
Counted yearly 15th of November

Staircase (continuum of care) model in Finland

Independent apartment
Social housing, Y-foundation

Transitional housing unit
Municipalities, NGOs and private companies

Hostel
NGOs and private companies

Shelter (dry department)
Municipalities

Shelter (wet department)
Municipalities

Street

Rehab

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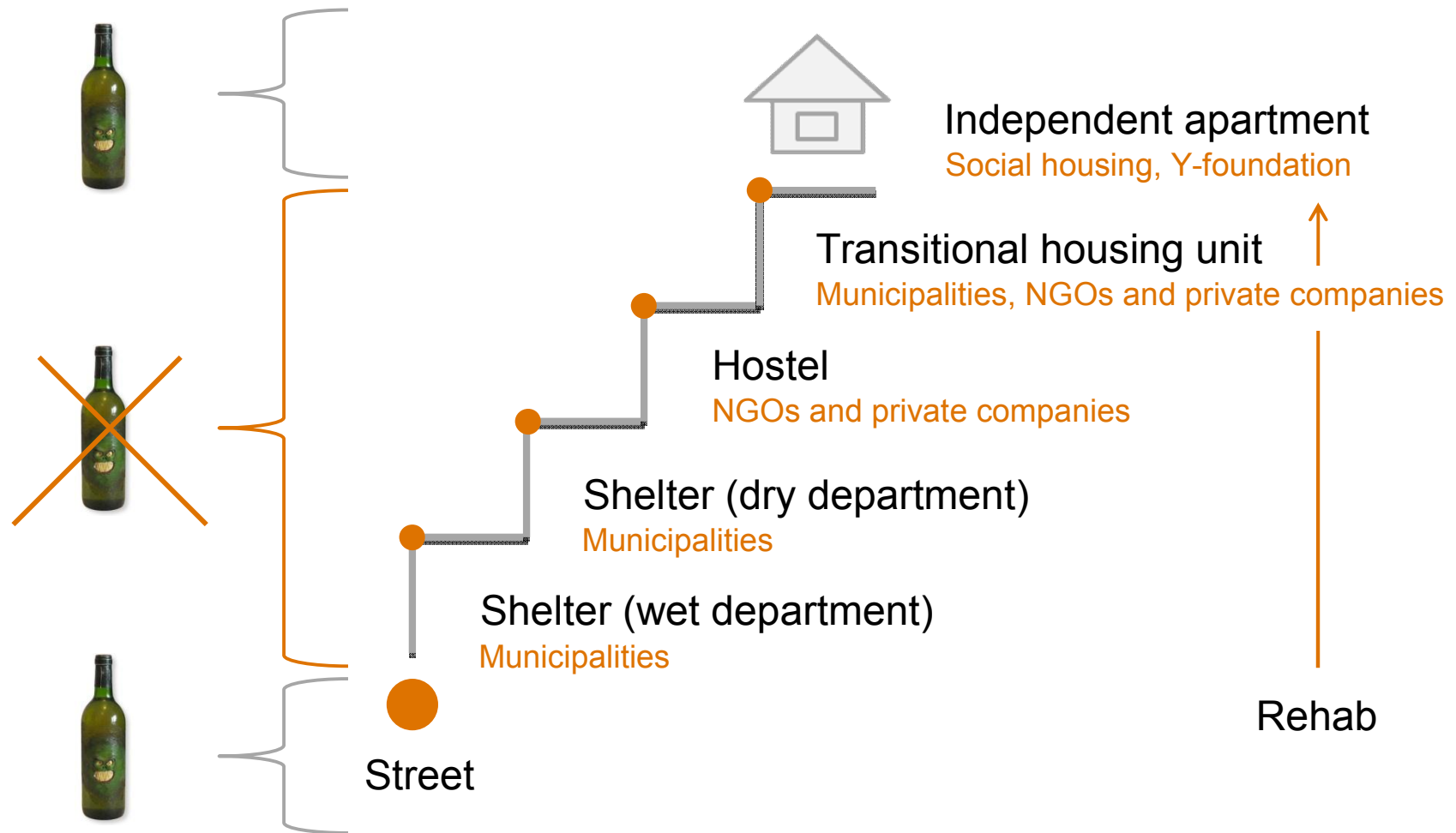
Housing history 1/6: Hostels 1880-

👫 200   👫 240

Build for short time residents and for travelling working force

Shared rooms, low tolerance for substance abuse, revolving doors

The hostels are now renovated to small studios with rental agreements

Housing history 2/6: Woods & streets -1967

44 homeless persons died in Helsinki during extremely cold winter 1967

The November movement was established

Service system for homeless people started to develop

Housing history 3/6: Night shelters 1967-

First night shelter opened 1967 in the Helsinki city center

Wet departments for the people with ongoing substance abuse problems

Dry departments for the people aiming for rehabilitation programs

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Housing history 4/6: Group homes 1985-
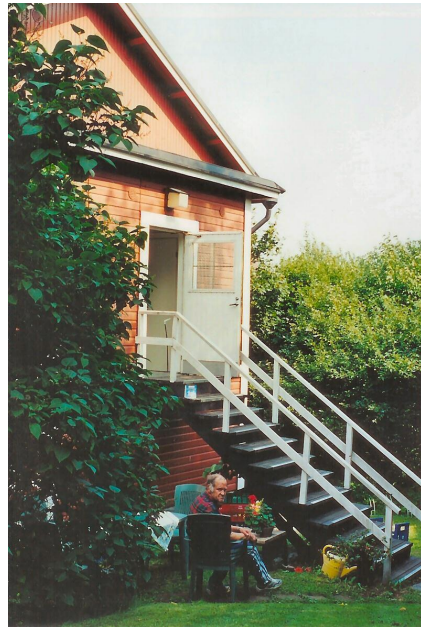
†† 28 **†† 5-10** **†† 25**

Staircase model becomes a standard

Small size supported group homes for the homeless people

A nice solution for the ones who have rehabilitated

Housing history 5/6: Independent flats 1985-

👫 1-2

Y-foundation was established

Secondary leasing cooperation with the municipalities (City of Helsinki)

Operating mainly as a last step of the staircase model

Y-Foundation

Y-Foundation

-Buying and renovating flats
- owner responsbilities

City social services

-Selecting tenants
- arranging support services
- house calls & interventions
- rehabilitation

The City Real Estate Department

-Landlord responsibilities
- help in the maintenance of the housing stock

http://www.ysaatio.fi/index.php/in_english/

Y-foundation owns some 6300 flats all over the country
Over 4500 in privately financed housing stock
1500 in the buildings owned by the Y-Foundation

Housing history 6/6: New constructions 2008-

The National program to reduce long-term homelessness 2008-2015

Supported housing with long term rental agreement

Mediocre HF fidelity

Housing history in numbers: Helsinki 1970–2011

Year	Places in supported flats	Places in supported group homes	Places in independent flats (incl. new constructions)	Shelter places (incl. hostels)
1970				3665
1975				3036
1980				2351
1985	99	28	65	2121
1990	423	194	382	1403
1995	409	199	1223	884
2000	374	203	1667	906
2005	335	178	2130	659
2008	374	178	2033	558
2009	223	180	2210	518
2010	245	180	2274	511
2011	483	180	2300	171

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National programme to reduce LTH

- Objective is to settle over 3000 LTH persons in 8 years

- Reinforcing Housing First

- Because of the quantity/time: large units are needed
  Hostels are renovated to small studios

- Permanent rental agreements as a goal

- Harm reduction approach - 24/7 on site support / ctrl

- Focus on scattered housing in 2012-2015

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National programmes to reduce LTH

- **First phase 2008-2011**

  Conversion of shelters and hostels into supported housing
  1250 new dwellings, supported housing or care places in ten major cities
  2010: 494 new dwellings in use
  2011: 581 under construction, will be in use
  2012: 622 under planning and construction will be in use
  Total: 1697 new dwellings

- **Second phase 2012-2015**

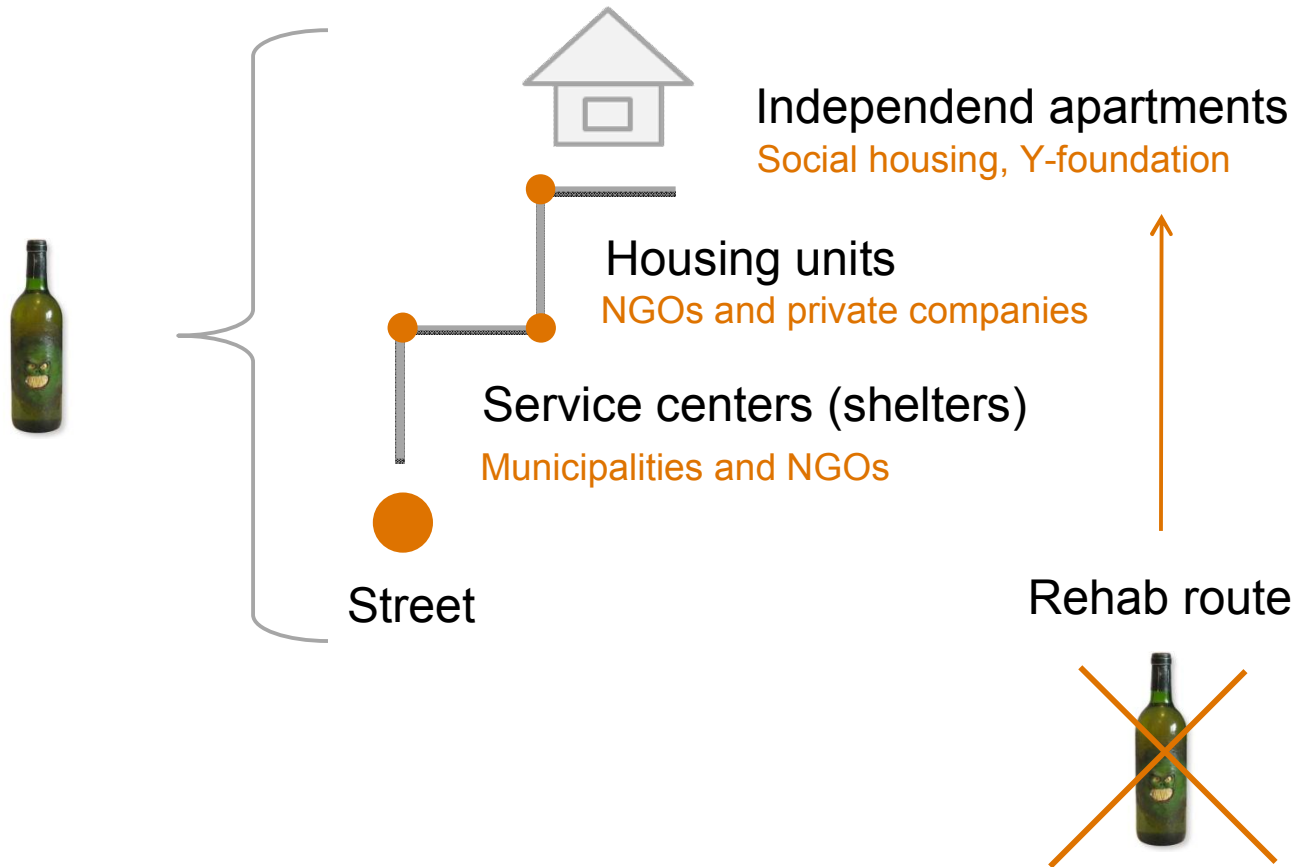 1000 new dwellings of which at least 500 in scattered housing
  Abolishing shelters nationwide
  Structural changes in institutional care for substance abusers
  More systematic prevention: Legal status for housing advisors

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HF model in Finland (2008-)

Independend apartments
Social housing, Y-foundation

Housing units
NGOs and private companies

Service centers (shelters)
Municipalities and NGOs

Street

Rehab route

Example of Finnish HF single site unit

Single site HF-unit for 29 LTH men, long term rental agreements, single or double rooms with kitchen, 24/7 housing support, harm reduction, maintained by NGOs, funded by the City of Helsinki

👫 29

Consumer Choice	High: LTH tenants was picked up from the shelters and from the streets by the staff, no evaluation of housing readiness
Separation of Housing and Services	Medium: long term rental agreements, 24/7 on site housing support, no obligations for a change of a life style (harm reduction), on site medical care
Recovery Oriented Services	Yes: support and opportunities are provided as needed and wished by the tenants
Community Integration	Medium: homogenius community, mostly off site services, independent living

Example continues: facts 2007-2011

- 45 residents (44 men + 1 woman) in five years in 28 flats
  Housing retention rate 64.4%

- Most of the residents had extremely severe alcohol abuse problem
  when they moved in, slightly decreased consumption over years

- 7% moved to more independent housing (Y-foundation)
  7% moved to unit with more intensive support
  1 person was evicted because of constant violence
  14% past away

- Average age 56 (end of 2011)

- Rent $45/m^2 (average in Helsinki was $18/m^2)

Selected criticism of the HF in Finland

- HF (harm reduction) will eradicate the great efforts put into the development of intoxication treatments

- HF = "bottle first model"

- HF = a form of abandonment

- The Finnish model is not cost effective

Challenges of the implementation of HF in Finland

- Intertwining of services and housing

- Institutionalized services and service providers
  - lack of service providers that are able and willing to work with the most challenging long-term homeless clients

- Self interests of professions and professionals
  - lack of workforce with appropriate values and skills

- Housing resources
  - lack of both, scattered site and single site housing units

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THANK YOU !

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