

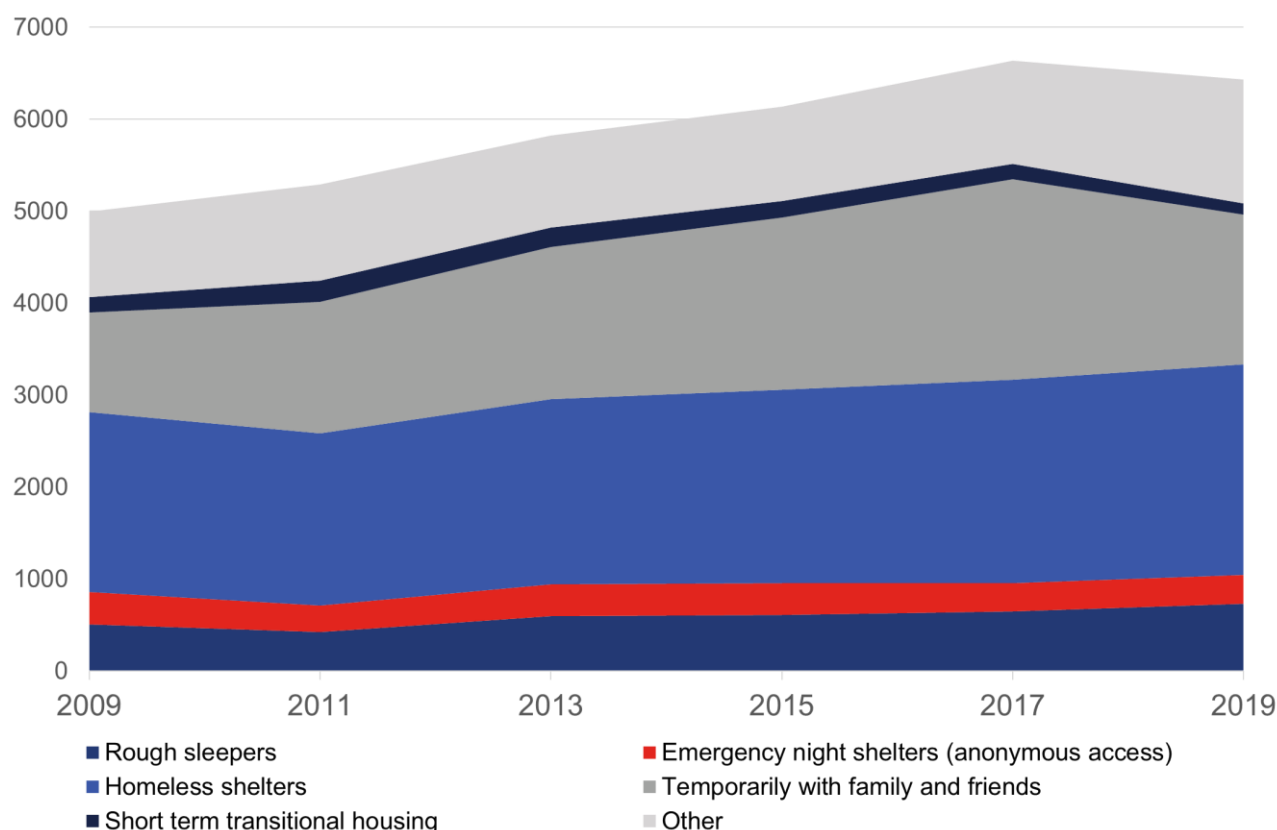


Mutual Learning Event – 23rd of June 2022

The Danish Strategy on Combatting Homelessness

Homelessness in Denmark

- In the week of counting 6.431 people out of population of 5,8 mio. live in homelessness. Number has increased since 2009.



Profil

- 36 pct. live in shelters.
- 66 pct. have a substance abuse and 59 pct. have a mental illness.
- Income base:
66% receive cash benefits from the government (1418 EUR gross monthly)

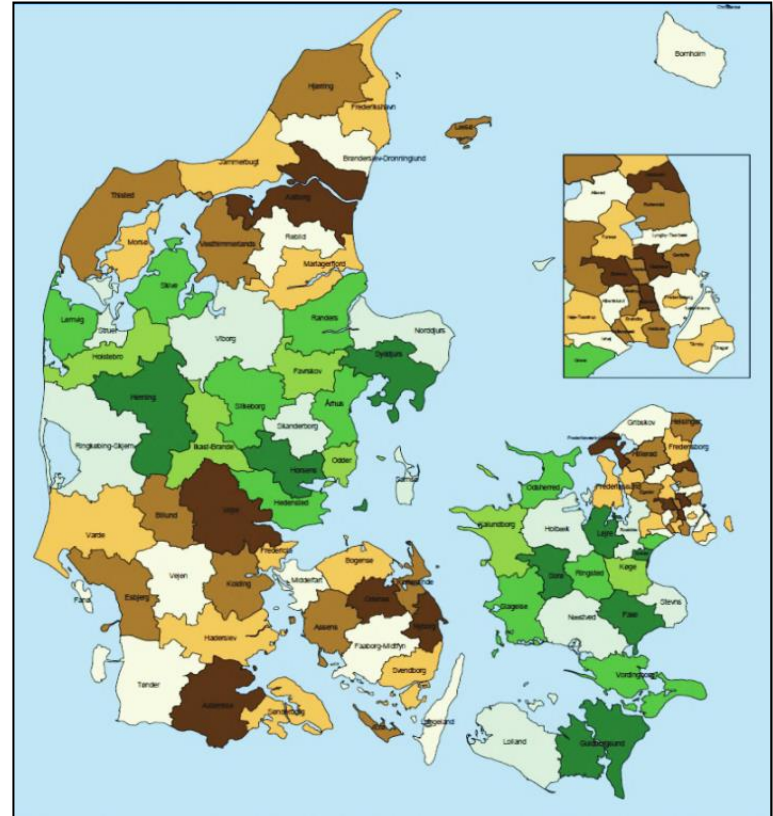
Non-profit housing sector in Denmark

- 20 pct. of the housing stock.
- *One in four* of the non-profit homes should be available for the municipal council to address urgent social housing tasks in the municipality.
- In 40.000 non-profit homes rent is 470 EUR monthly or below.
- The municipalities assigned around 11 pct. of the vacant non-profit homes with a rent below 470 EUR in 2019-2021.



The Social System in Denmark

- Equal access to services.
- Social System that is tax financed.
- 98 municipalities that play a key role in delivering the social service.



Act on Social Services

The purposes of this Act are:

- 1) To offer counselling and support so as to prevent social problems
- 2) To offer a range of general services, which may also serve a preventive purpose;
- 3) To cater to needs resulting from a physical or mental impairment or special social problems.

Shelters

- According to § 110 in Act on Social Services:

“The municipal council shall offer temporary accommodation in facilities to persons with special social problems who either have no home or are unable to stay in their own home and who need accommodation facilities and offers of activating support, care and subsequent assistance”

- The principal of the shelter shall decide on admissions.
- Shelters shall notify the municipal council with a duty to provide assistance.

State reimbursement

- According to § 177 in Act on Social Services:

“The state shall reimburse 50 per cent of the expenses incurred by municipal authorities in respect of (...) Accommodation facilities under sections 109 and 110 above, including expenses for assistance, support, employment and activity programmes, etc., offered in connection with the accommodation facility.”



National strategies in Denmark



Level: 1 2009-2013

- The national homelessness strategy
- 17 municipalities
- Method testing and development in a Danish context

Level 2: 2014-2016

- 25 municipalities
- Implementation of Housing First and supported housing
- A youth project

Level 3: 2016-2019

- ≥ 25 municipalities
- Dissemination and implementation of Housing First in even more municipalities
- Testing of transitional housing for young people

Level 4: 2018-2021

- ≥ 25 municipalities
- A national plan to combat homelessness
- Social Investment Initiatives
- Housing First for youth

Level 5: 2021-



Q&As



Designing the new strategy



The challenges in Denmark

- Average length of stay in shelters has increased.
- Only 8 pct. of the target group is met by an Housing First-method.
- 70 pct. of people living in shelters are ready to move into own apartment.
- 28% of people living in homelessness have an action plan.



Learning points and barriers

In 2020 the National Board of Social Service carried out a research about the barriers of full implementation of Housing First.

- Some of the barriers for full implementation of Housing First are:
 - Relevant housing available to homeless citizens.
 - Cooperation across relevant subject areas internally in the municipalities and across sectors.
 - Knowledge of the Housing First approach as an effective approach.
 - The political and managerial prioritization of the Housing First approach in the municipalities and at national level.
 - Financial incentive for the use of the Housing First approach.

Development of a new strategy

2019:

Establishment of task force to identify barriers and come up with new solutions. Cross-ministerial.

2020:

The task force starts its work. Involvement of municipalities and third sector actors.

October 2021:

Presentation of the initiative: *“A home for everybody – a new way to combat homelessness”* – consisting of concrete recommendations.

November 2021:

Agreement between a majority of the political parties in The Danish Parliament on: *“The fund for mixed cities – more affordable housing and a way out of homelessness”*.

June 2022

First partnership meeting with central stakeholders.

July 2023

New legislation comes into force.

The new political agreement 2021

New political agreement on combatting homelessness with increased focus on the Housing First-method and the ambition:

- 1) To reduce the number of homeless citizens significantly.
- 2) To end long-term homelessness.



In addition to this the goal is to canalize the funds spent on shelters into a Housing First-oriented approach.

More affordable housing

- The government will provide more affordable housing in two ways:
 - 1. Utilize existing housing stock:**
A grant to support a temporary reduction in rent in 1.800 already existing non-profit apartments.
 - 2. Build more housing:**
A one-time grant that permanently reduces the rent 2.250 new non-profit apartments.
- Intensified municipal referral to housing.
- Extension of the opportunity for municipalities to subsidy rent for 5 years (formerly 2 years) if you are moving from shelters and temporary accommodation to own apartment.

Housing First I

- Rearrangement of the existing reimbursement agreement that will strengthen the incentives for the municipalities to accommodate homeless people in permanent housing.
 - 50 pct. state reimbursement in up to 90 days of the stay in shelters. 0 pct. reimbursement after 90 days.
 - Phasing-in period from 2023-2025 with 50 pct. reimbursement in 120 days. From 2026 it's 90 days.
- A new paragraph in the Act on Social Services that should support increased use of evidence based supporting methods in line with the Housing First-approach.
 - 50% reimbursement from the state for support-in-housing for 2 years following a stay in temporary and emergency accommodation.

Housing First II

- Requirement to work out an action plan for citizens using shelters.
- Discharge from shelters on the condition that:
 1. Citizen has an action plan.
 2. Referral to housing is possible.
 3. Referral to support in own apartment.
- Introduction of capacity management and focus on downscaling shelter use.

Implementation of Housing First

Another political agreement is targeted to make the implantation of the Housing First-method possible. Funding for implementation runs from 2022-2025 and includes the following initiatives:



Establishment of a national partnership of stakeholders.



A new Task Force should strengthen the case work and the performance of the municipalities within the field and strengthen implementation of Housing First.



A fund for civil society work will be established.



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