

# Mixed Housing:

Supporting the Individual and the Community: Connecting People with Experience in Homelessness and Their Neighbours in Mixed Housing Projects

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# What is Mixed Housing?

Mixed housing is about housing projects where – **within an organised context** – different groups of people intentionally live together, try to be **good neighbours** to each other, maintain contact and often undertake activities together.

These are people who (temporarily) need support or care and 'regular' tenants (or home-owners).







# Why we need Mixed Housing?

- It starts with a home.
- Pressure on 'deprived' neighbourhoods through (further) concentration of people in a vulnerable position.
- Concerns related to housing stability and integration in neighbourhoods of people leaving temporary accommodations: exclusion, (self-) stigmatisation, loneliness, reoccurring homelessness.
- Difficulties in organising & financing support for independently living specific needs tenants.
- Not-in-my-back-yard protests.



# Principles of Mixed Housing

- ‘Housing First with a focus on the benefits & challenges of **community-integration**.’
- Direct access to self-contained, independent, housing
- Fine-grained social mix (pepper-potting)
- Regardless of background and capability all residents are invited to contribute to a good living environment for all and be a ‘**good neighbour**’.





# How?

- Mixed Housing with people moving out of homelessness: currently appr. 75+ projects.
- Apartment buildings or small neighbourhoods with 15-250 residents.
- Individual support.
- Community support.
- Shared spaces: communal living room, meeting room, gardens...
- Variation in types of housing:
  - Temporary flex housing
  - Transformation (offices, former care homes, etc.)
  - Regular apartment buildings, adapted to Mixed Housing
  - Purpose-build housing projects



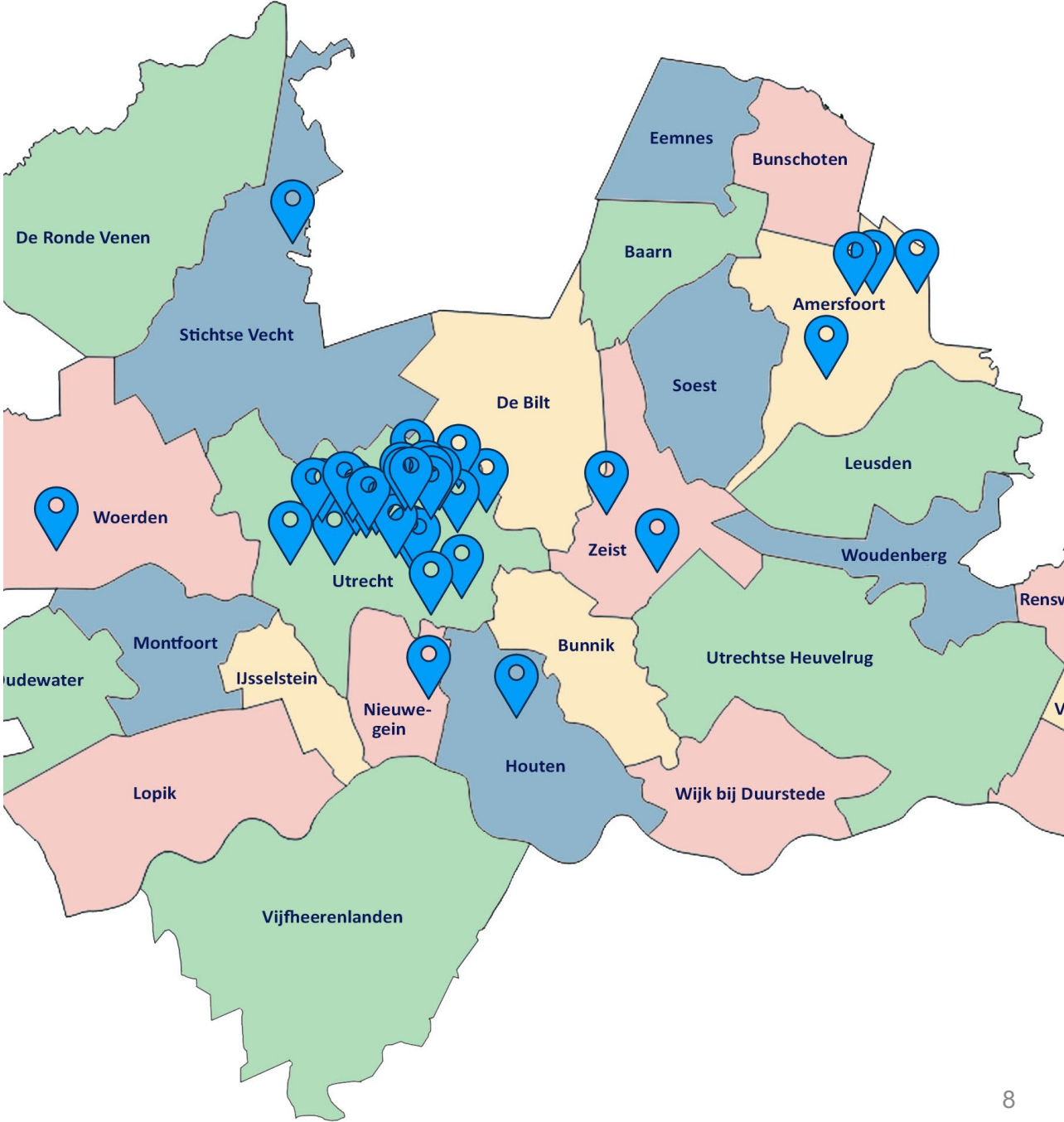


# Mixed Housing projects with people moving out of homelessness in the Netherlands (2025)





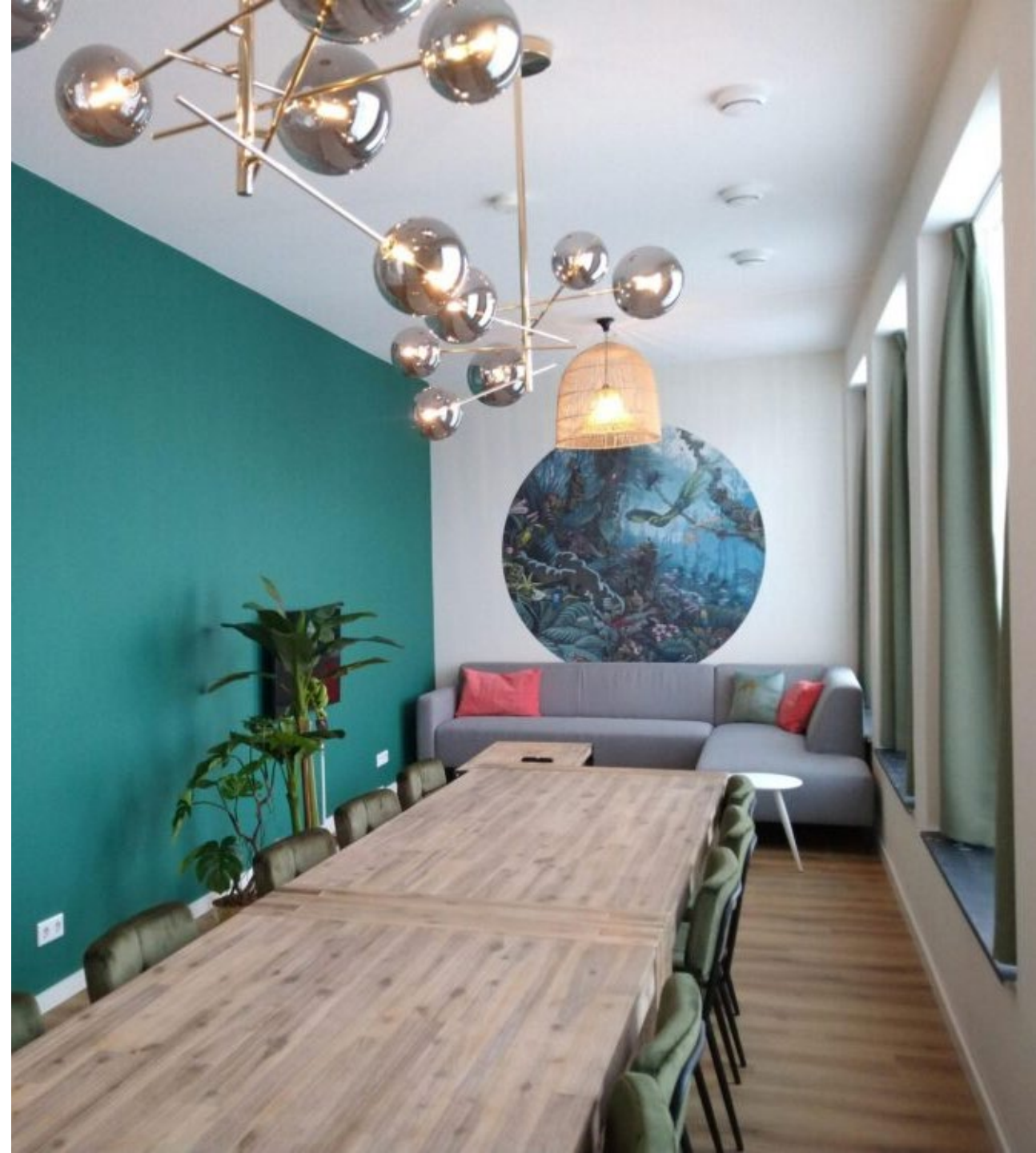
Mixed Housing projects with people moving out of homelessness in the province of Utrecht (2025)



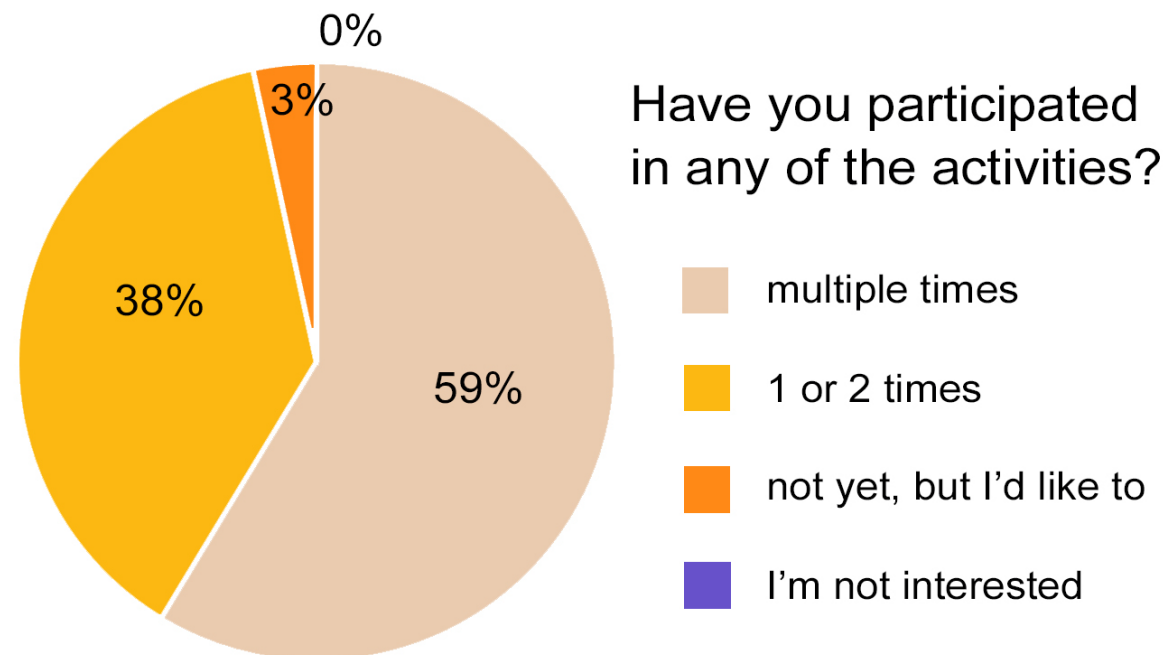
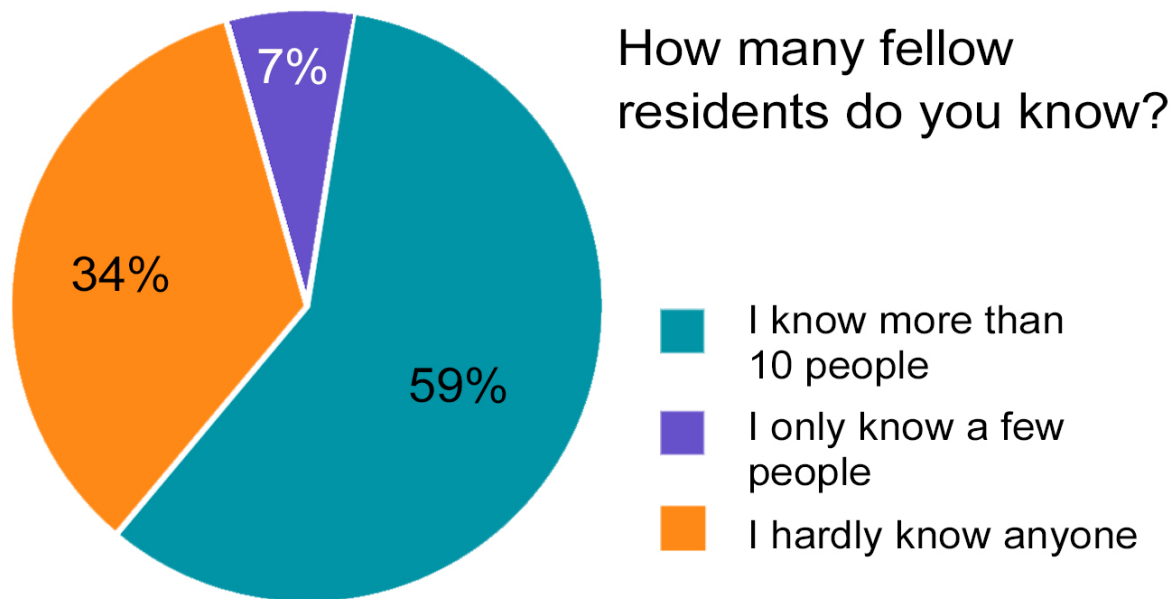


# Recent research

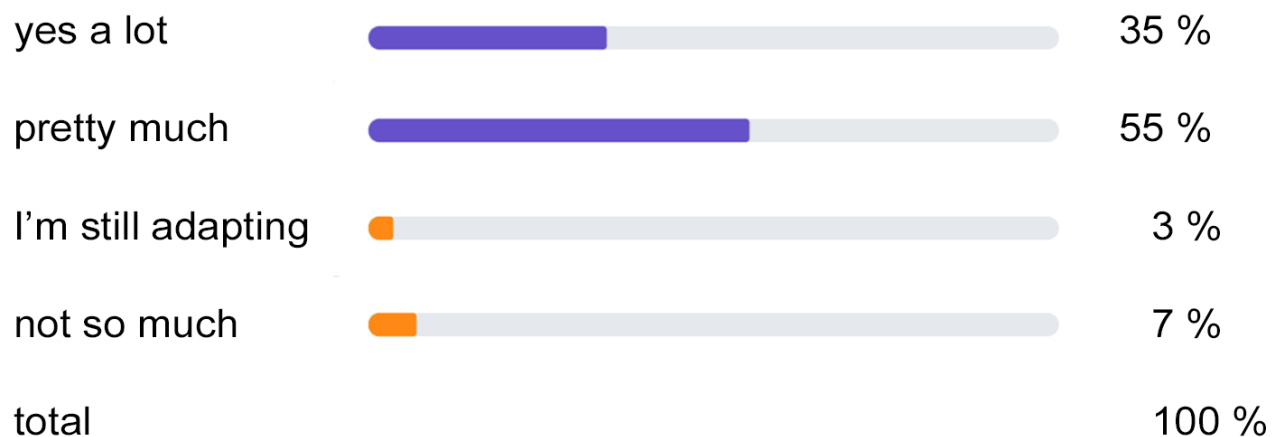
- Action and evaluative research on 8 housing projects in the Utrecht agglomeration (2021-2024) with on average 30% of all tenants previously experiencing homelessness.
- Mixed methods.
- Involving tenants, social workers, frontline professionals, managers and policy makers.





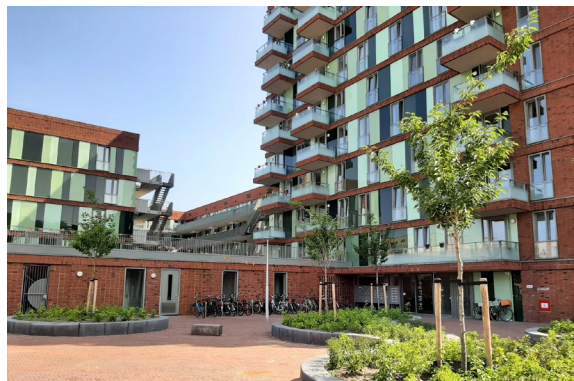


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# Recently researched housing projects



**Livin**



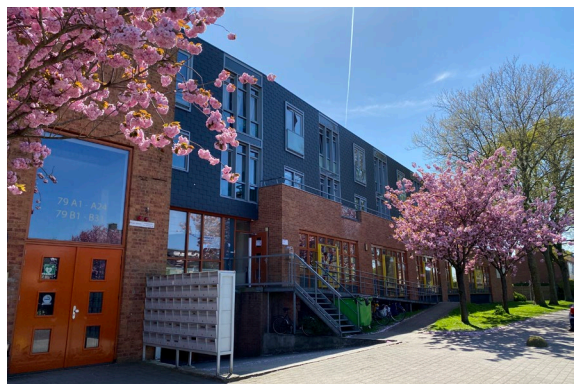
**Mixit**



**Meanderpark**



**Nijeveld**



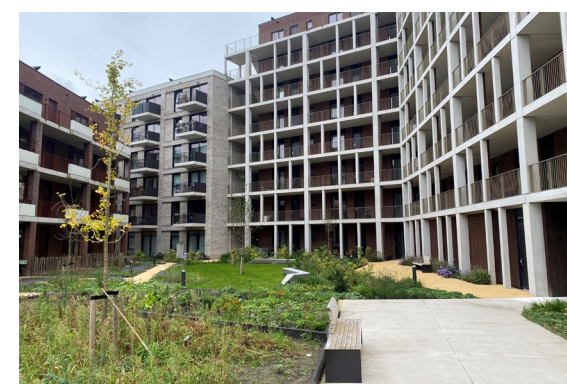
**WijCk Wonen**



**De Molen**



**De Schipper**



**De Generaal**



# What works?

- Close collaboration between housing association, support services and local government: shared responsibility on all levels.
- Fine-tuned selection and allocation of all tenant-groups.
- Support workers able and capable to support the individual and the community.
- Housing association staff able to invest time in community matters, working closer to the tenants.
- Community building 'as long as it takes'.
- Self-organisation of tenants (with ex-homeless tenants as fully eligible members of resident committees).
- Building design that stimulates social interaction.







# Challenges



- Discussions on conditionality: sometimes only after 2-3 years permanent rental contracts.
- Support workers struggle with new tasks, roles and skills that come with the shift from individual guidance to supporting the individual in the community (including tackling tensions, differences in expectations and (self)stigma.
- Organising new ways of funding, accountability and cooperation between all partners.
- Selection and allocation of new residents:
  - ‘Cherry-picking’ or ‘asking too much from neighbours’?
  - Just informing new ‘regular’ tenants or asking them to help building an inclusive living environment?
  - Trial and error.....



# Benefits (conclusion)

- Increases wellbeing: 'feeling at home', friendly interactions, being accepted by neighbours.
- Functions as a 'social early warning system':
  - proximity of professionals
  - neighbours looking after each other
  - limited anonymity helps solving conflicts and reduces forms of anti-social behaviour.



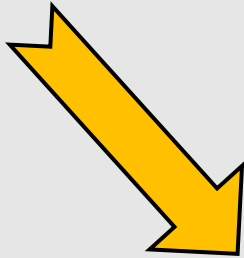
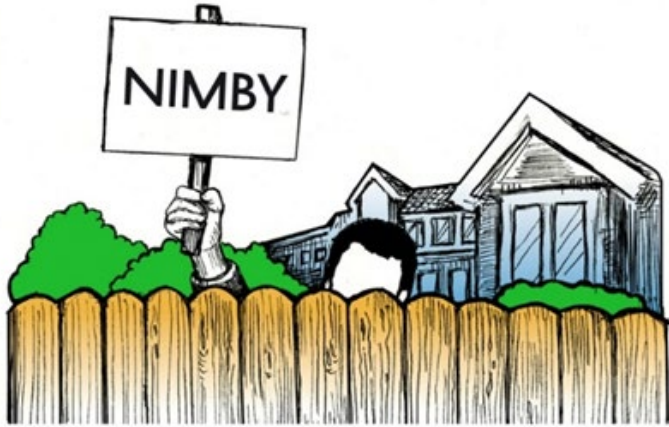


# Benefits (conclusion)

- Contributes to scaling up affordable housing solutions, also through a better spatial distribution across towns and regions.
- Provides direct access to permanent housing: security and stability as foundation for recovery: **drop-out rates are low.**
- Helps housing bodies, support services & local authorities to secure a good living environment for all.







## Main conclusion:

most projects succeed in creating a supportive living environment, thus contributing to the social inclusion of former homeless persons





Dublin

## Questions and discussion

Do you see possibilities in your town/country?

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