

Seminar 12: New Service Models in Homelessness Provision (Floor -1, Room 8)

Chair: Kjell Larsson, SE

Riikka Perälä, FI: Housing Social Work – What, To Whom and Why? The Context of Finnish Homelessness and Housing Work



Dr. Riikka Perälä received her PhD in sociology in 2012 from the University of Helsinki. Her research interests cover the position of vulnerable citizen groups in welfare and housing policies and services. In the homelessness field, she has investigated these issues in the context of housing first policies and participated also in the development of policies in various expert groups. Currently, she works as a post-doctoral researcher in Y-Foundation, in a large research

consortium, which investigates displacement processes related to estate demolition in different cities in Finland. The other members of the consortium are University of Tampere and Turku. The project is funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health.

Housing social work is a professional orientation, which has been developed in the field of housing first research in Finland since the beginning of 2000's. The work is targeted at people, who have difficulties in their housing or who lack housing. The purpose is to enhance their housing skills and options for housing to prevent homelessness. This presentation reviews the experiences of different professional groups, working in the field of homelessness and housing in Finland, of housing social work and of the abilities of this kind of work to help and support people in their housing. The data draws from semi-structured interviews, where professionals were asked to describe and share their views of the housing social work. In the background is a larger research project, which handles the role of housing social work in displacement processes resulting from estate demolition. The data collection started in February 2022 and the data will consist of 20-40 interviews.

The structure of the presentation is two-fold. First part defines housing social work and its special role in comparison with other forms of social work. The second part reviews the abilities of housing social work in preventing homelessness. The initial data suggests that housing social work has an integral role in securing housing, making houses feel like home and creating trust to society and its services. However, the work lacks possibilities and skills to affect in cities' housing and urban planning policies on a larger societal scale. In the end of the presentation it is discussed, how housing social work could be further developed in the context of housing rights. This could mean, for example, efforts to incorporate housing social work expertise in cities' urban planning work.

Maria Vargas-Moniz, Sofia Rodrigues, Maria Jose Domingos, Ana Oliveira and Henrique Joaquim, PT: The Role of Training for Professional Intervention Development: The Experience of the Portuguese National Homelessness Strategy



Maria João Vargas-Moniz, PhD in Psychology, Assistant Professor and Researcher at ISPA – Instituto Universitário Lisboa – Portugal. Member of the executive committee of the APPsyCI - Applied Psychology Research Center Capabilities. Represents the National Federation of Rehabilitation Mental Health Organizations at the ENIPSSA (member of the Executive Committee/ Coordinator of the Training WG). Board member of the European Community Psychology Association (President 2017-2019).

Sofia Rodrigues, Psychologist, PhD in Psychology, International Certification in collaborative and dialogical practices by TAOS Institute (Spain and USA); Specialization in Systemic and Family Intervention; Supervisor and consultant in the areas of social and community intervention with highly vulnerable families, collaborative and strengths-based approaches, solution-focused practices, case management and Photovoice methodology.



Maria José Domingos, Sociologist, Executive director from the CLLD Lisbon Network, member of the National Strategy for Social Integration of Homeless people since 2007.

Ana Costa Oliveira, PhD in Social Work. Currently, pedagogical coordinator of the master's in social work and assistant professor of the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Portuguese Catholic University. Researcher at the Católica Research Center for Psychological, Family, and Social Wellbeing. Areas of publication and research in the areas of social innovation and social intervention, strengths-based intervention, and narrative social intervention.



Henrique Joaquim, Ph.D. in Social Work and Social Worker, Executive Manager of National Strategy for Social Integration of Homeless People.

Portugal has been entailing effort toward a national strategy on homelessness since 2009 with the participation of civic society organizations and public entities representants. It was formally appointed by ministerial resolution in 2017 with a mandate until 2023.

Within the strategy, since 2019 there has been a series of training modules on the integration of homeless people that was transformed into an online baseline initiative in 2020 due to the pandemic contingency involving the national territory with over 250 professionals directly working with people with homelessness experiences.

The current proposal focuses on the qualitative descript analysis of a nationwide advanced training program on the strengths-based and capabilities approaches with 40 professionals of the initial group who are currently supporting people who are or have been in a homelessness situation.

The evaluation/reflection survey is focused on the: a) the potential for the adoption of the proposed frameworks (strengths-based and capabilities approaches); b) effective implementation of components or the overall frameworks and c) possibilities for the integration of the frameworks within their professional teams/service.

Preliminary results indicate the tensions between professional person-centered approaches and organizational aims and factors that hinder/foster the implementation of these approaches.