

Seminar 20: Housing Transitions (Room: TBD) - Chair: Eoin O'Sullivan, IE

Krista Kosonen, FI: Transition from Supported Housing Unit to Scattered Site Housing

In Finland, Housing First is applied both in supported housing units and in scattered site housing. The main aim of the Housing First approach is to secure housing and provide adequate support. The tenants in Housing First units typically have permanent tenancy agreements, and the right to housing and support as long as they want.

Even though the number of homeless people in Finland is relatively low, there are still people without permanent housing and queues to supported housing units. Thus, the discussion about “flow” to and moving on from the housing units has increased in recent years. The discussion ponders the capability of some tenants to move on, which would free space for people queuing.

According to the Finnish Housing First, the tenants should be supported towards independent living. This support should be provided in a way that respects the tenant’s self-determination. The question about flow and readiness to move on may be problematic, since each move holds potential risks, like relying on old survival modes, such as substance abuse. Many tenants in supported housing units have a fragile housing history and the unit may be their first secure living environment. On the other hand, if the support is no longer needed, moving to scattered housing may be beneficial to the tenant. The tenants are eligible for support for 6-12 months after their move.

The presentation introduces an ongoing study “Supported housing transition” and presents its preliminary findings. The data consists of tenant and case worker interviews that focus on the transition phase and the support given during the transition. The outcomes illustrate the provided support and different stages in the transition. The findings suggest which support is considered meaningful and which support could be strengthened.



Krista Kosonen works as a researcher in Y-Foundation in Finland. Her current research focuses on projects that aim to prevent homelessness by providing work for tenants and facilitating housing transition. Krista received her Doctor of Arts degree in Design in 2018 from Aalto University. Her main expertise is in narrative identity and visual methods.

Clíodhna Bairéad, IE: Irish Housing Dynamics: Insights from a 6-Year Time Series Analysis of Social Housing Assessment Records and Housing Assistance Payment Tenancies

The Irish housing market is currently under immense strain due to a combination of high costs, low supply and a growing population increasing demand. Homelessness and housing insecurity has become a pressing issue within the market due to a significant lack of affordable, accessible accommodation.

The Irish social housing system is reliant on local authorities who provide funding for accommodation in their region. This accommodation can be traditional social housing, provided by local authorities and approved housing bodies or through rent subsidisation in the private market. The largest subsidisation programme in Ireland is the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), which is a local authority subsidy paid on behalf of households who qualify for social housing. This presentation utilises local authority data from social housing assessments and HAP tenants over a six year period from 2016 – 2021. This is a quantitative study, examining 264,915 households who qualified for social housing.

This presentation will provide a new perspective on housing demand among potential social housing tenants. It shows the different household structures among some of the most vulnerable households in the Irish housing market. The age and gender of the head of household as well as household composition, household income and having experienced homelessness will be discussed in this presentation. It will examine what types of households in Irish society are waiting for social housing or relying on HAP for their rent. Through examining the fluctuations in demand for social housing and HAP and the households who apply for these supports, this research provides a unique insight into the Irish social housing sector.



Dr Clíodhna Bairéad is a postdoctoral researcher from University College Dublin. Her primary area of research is local authority funded accommodation from a policy perspective. Her research focuses on utilising local authority data for homelessness and social housing in Ireland. She holds a BA in Public and Social Policy from NUI Galway as well as a Masters of Public Policy and PhD in Social Policy from University College Dublin. Her doctoral thesis was funded by the IRC in partnership with Focus Ireland and her current postdoctoral research is funded by the IRC in partnership with the Housing Agency.