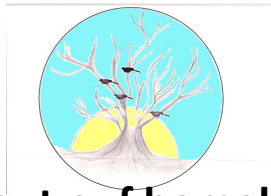


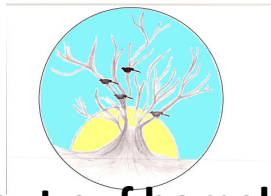
## Supported housing for rough sleepers

<b>Name of the project</b>	<b>2013-2014 Opening to the Streets– Independent Housing</b> <b>2014-2015 Housing project for rough sleepers and shelter users</b>
<b>Aims and Objectives</b>	<p>Primary objective was to find and keep independent accommodation for the period of the project and to help the beneficiaries reach goals set by themselves, e.g.: finding (better) employment, accessing health care services, reestablishing family connections, etc.</p> <p>Both projects target reintegration through solving housing problems, personal (social) support tailored to individual needs, improving physical and mental health conditions.</p> <p>Case-management targets building competences and resources to help the beneficiary become able to sustain private accommodation without monetary or other support and establish an independent lifestyle.</p>
<b>Description</b>	<p>The project lasts from Nov. 2014 – Jun. 2015, involving the 2 months recruiting/preparatory a phase. The projects covers monthly rental costs up to 35 000 HUF (approx. 110-115 EUR) for 6 months for 6 people.</p> <p>Possible options of accommodation include anything non-institutional, e.g.: rented rooms, apartments or workers hostels. Public transportation tickets were granted to the participants in the beginning of the project to help in the search for rents and accessing work. After moving to the new accommodation a corroborative pack worth 10 000 HUF (32 EUR) is assembled, composed of food, cleaning materials and household commodities. Each pack is assembled together with the participants to better suit individual needs.</p> <p>Furniture and clothing are not covered by the project, these are acquired from donations and other sources if necessary.</p> <p>After-care phase lasts 6 months with no further monetary support, but maintaining connection with the beneficiaries (at least bi-weekly).</p>
<b>Core elements</b>	Reaching and recruiting participants – finding housing – case management – preparation for the end of the project – aftercare.
<b>Funding</b>	<p>The 2013-2014 program was funded by the EU with support from the state of Hungary.</p> <p>The 2014-2015 program is funded by the NGO Hajléktalanokért Közalapítvány (“Public Foundation for Homeless People”, distributing national funds).</p>
<b>Impact/ results</b>	<p>2013-2014: 20 rough sleepers moved to apartments rented on the open market. Presently at least 12 participants have been able to maintain independent housing, not returning to homeless care.</p> <p>The 2014-2015 project is still running, 6 homeless people moved to private accommodation and they have all kept it so far.</p>



## Ways out of homelessness

<b>Participants</b>	<p>The target group of the 2013-2014 program were homeless people from Budapest who had been sleeping rough for at least 30 days (confirmed by a street worker) and had had no legal income from work at that time.</p> <p>The 2014-2015 involved homeless people verified as rough sleepers or shelter users for at least 30 days. Motivation and dedication for a change was a key aspect of choosing participants. Participants either had some kind of income already, were active job-seekers or had a realistic chance to find occupation within a reasonable time.</p>
<b>Staff</b>	<p>The 2013-2014 project involved 1 project manager, 1 supervisor and 4 part-time social workers (1 for every 5 beneficiaries, 20 hours a week in average).</p> <p>The 2014-2015 project involves 1 project manager and 1 social worker (10 hours a week dedicated to the project on average).</p>
<b>Innovative aspects</b>	<p>Both projects are innovative in Hungarian homeless care, as they help to move people from the streets or low-threshold shelters directly into independent housing, skipping the levels in between. The practice is based on the Housing First approach, as solving the problem of housing is the foundation for solving other social problems. This way the beneficiary does not need to go through the system of homeless care. Throughout the case management the social worker keeps regular, often daily contact with the beneficiary, providing active support and working together with the customer towards establishing an independent lifestyle.</p>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<p>Though the primary goal was to keep housing for the period of the project, beneficiaries are expected to be able to sustain independent accommodation without monetary support after the end of the projects, not returning to the homeless care system or to the streets.</p> <p>12 out of 20 beneficiaries of the 2013-2014 project were able to achieve this goal (but not necessarily in the same housing), the 2014-2015 project is not yet concluded. The project funding lasts for a limited duration, once over, only the VERY limited mainstream housing benefits are available (if available at all), together with the mainstream system of financial and non-financial social support.</p>
<b>Lessons learned</b>	<p>Several experiences of “Opening to the streets” have been adapted in the 2014-2015 project, mostly regarding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- importance and desirable duration of the recruiting/preparatory phase,</li><li>- adequate time for finding accommodation,</li><li>- profile of customers who can make best use of such projects,</li><li>- usefulness of specific support tools (food and travel),</li><li>- what is achievable by a project with limited duration</li></ul>



## Ways out of homelessness

### Obstacles

Inner obstacles:

Financial practice in the social care system is not harmonized with such projects, requesting and administrating payments are therefore very complicated and time-consuming.

The staff had to run the projects in line with their full-time jobs, making it a highly demanding activity.

Outer obstacles:

Scarcity of affordable housing on the market, aggravated by a further rise in rental costs in case of the 2014-2015 project.

Landlords often discriminate/turn away the target group as possible tenants.

Short-term duration poses a burden on those who cannot stabilize their lives in the given period. A small set-back (f. ex. the loss of a job or sickness) can be devastating due to lack of savings.

### Evaluation

Though beneficiaries often faced new difficulties and serious stress coping with the challenges brought by the changes, the projects can be considered successful in many aspects. Some of the most disadvantaged people were able to experience much better living conditions and (with or without adequate support) most of them seem to be able to maintain a higher standard afterwards. Positive changes include higher income, improved health conditions, and establishing new social connections.

The projects highlight the applicability of supported housing in Hungary. Such projects help to prepare a change in social policy, built on the principle of the right to housing.

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