

**Catch template for good practice description**  
**Homeless women**

**Turvanen**

<b>Theme:</b>	Short-time sheltered housing in Turvanen -homes for homeless people and people in crisis situations (especially in mental health problems)
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<b>Project History &amp; Aims:</b>	<p>The Finnish Central Association for Mental Health is an association for people suffering and recovering from psychiatric problems. The association started the Turvanen-project to develop new means to solve crisis situations in outpatient care and to develop an individual approach to service counselling. The main target was to find supportive ways to solve crisis situations in advance and to prevent unnecessary hospitalization.</p> <p>During the project it has been necessary to develop services and the network to help homeless people, since majority of the clients in Vantaa have been homeless.</p>
<b>Target Group(s):</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∞ People recovering from mental health problems</li> <li>∞ People in personal crisis situations (e.g. young homeless people after conflicts at home, divorce situations)</li> <li>∞ People in need of service counselling (prolonged homelessness)</li> </ul>
<b>Main approaches to work:</b>	Short-time supported housing connected with help in every day life and intensive service counselling. A very comprehensive approach: the clients are attached to the general social and health care system but also supported in developing meaningful activities and social networks. Turvanen –homes are normal dwellings in normal blocks of flats.
<b>Funds, staffing &amp; other resources (inputs)</b>	The work was started in 1999 with the project funding from RAY (the Finnish Slot Machine Association). Since 2002 the city of Vantaa has taken part in financing the work and from the beginning of 2006 all funding comes from the city. There are two counsellors working with the clients and the city has offered 4 dwellings for the project. The counsellors are experts in mental health questions and they have created a large local network to cooperate with.
<b>Main activities (outputs)</b>	The work is based on Turvanen -homes and service counselling. A person can come to a Turvanen -home for a limited period of time (varies from some days to over one year) during which she gets intensive support to improve her health, living conditions and social networks. After this she can usually get a normal rental home from the city, from the Youth Housing Association or from the Y-Foundation. The counsellors continue the support work as long as necessary to secure a good start in independent living.
<b>Impact on people who are homeless:</b>	Support services are carried out according to individual plans. The clients set their own targets, which are evaluated at regular intervals. In a bad crisis situation it is possible to get very intensive support. The possibility to settle down the situation in the Turvanen-home does, however, very often encourage the homeless to set further goals and thanks to the service counselling they also start to benefit from other social and health services. Restoring confidence is the crucial thing in promoting inclusion.

<p><b>What is innovative about this project?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∞ Low threshold</li> <li>∞ The services are truly client-oriented, the specific needs and demands of the homeless people are taken into account (including time). The clients are not selected to a special service. Instead the services are selected to help the client.</li> <li>∞ Support continues also after the client gets a home of her own</li> <li>∞ Prevention of ending up homeless again (possibility to return to the services)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Why is it considered a good practice?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∞ In crisis situations people do not always find help. There are no services available or they do not find the right services and it is difficult to improve the situation in a chaos. Turvanen offers a sheltered home and intensive individual support.</li> <li>∞ It combines the expertise of an NGO and the services of the city and other service providers.</li> <li>∞ The clients move to normal rental housing after Turvanen (costs), the homeless people can get a good quality rental home</li> <li>∞ Support work is continued as long as it is necessary (prevention)</li> <li>∞ The work can be carried out flexibly without any major investments</li> <li>∞ The Turvanen –method recognizes the meaning of a comprehensive approach: every person must be met as an individual.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Replicability of the experience in other countries</b></p>	<p>This way of action can be applied to various situations and many groups of homeless people. Turvanen has helped not only women but also men; young and old, people suffering from serious mental health problems etc. Supported housing has been carried out in normal dwellings, expensive investments are not necessary.</p>
<p><b>Input to NAPs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>∞ The Finnish NAP states, that homelessness is a state to which a large portion of the population may become liable. The number of homeless people has been decreasing during the past years, but the proportion of women has been about the same (20 %).</li> <li>∞ The NAP refers to the government programme to reduce homelessness and mentions the provision of small homes and the allocation of social housing as practical measures. They are important also in the future, but the possibility to arrange <b>support services</b> is of vital importance, too. It has been estimated that only one third of the homeless in the capital region (where most of the homeless live in Finland) can be helped by a dwelling. The majority need some kind of support services if we want to find lasting solutions to their situation. Turvanen -work has been one innovative way to catch homeless people, arrange necessary services and to help them to get a proper home. There are numerous experiences of good practices of support work in Finland, but the funding of the services is a very critical question.</li> <li>∞ Turvanen is also an example of <b>cooperation and partnership</b> between actors on the local level in prevention of poverty and social exclusion. The NAP recognizes the importance of NGOs as service developers and providers. On the other hand the work of the NGO relies to a great deal on the general welfare services available to all citizens.</li> <li>∞ But will the NGOs have this role also in the future as the Finnish NAP predicts? Will there be space for developing new approaches as the EU-regulations on <b>public procurement</b> are followed also in the welfare services?</li> </ul>