

# Co-production for improving social housing programmes

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13<sup>th</sup> European Research Conference on Homelessness  
21 September 2018, Budapest, Hungary



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# Introduction

The city of Helsingborg in Sweden has since 2010 been conducting a development work of its social housing programme. The city has built up a Housing First service, which today comprises 60 tenants, and has good results.

Through two pilot projects, the city has also tried to develop the other parts of the social housing programme that previously was built on the staircase model. The ambition was to enhance co-production and service user involvement within the programme.

Our aim with this paper is to describe and analyse the development work and discuss drivers and barriers that either facilitates or hinders the development of social housing programmes.

# Method & Theory

The method of the research project was practice research (Uggerhøj 2011; Marthinsen & Julkunen 2012)

Theoretically, the project was inspired by theories that highlight the importance of co-production (Ostrom, 1990) and trust (Misztal, 1996; Ostrom, 1990).

# The Social Housing Programme in Helsingborg

## **Housing First**

60 persons

4 social workers

**6 housing units ("staircase"), emergency shelter, training flats**

330 persons

46 social workers

# The Project: Service User Involvement in Social Housing Services

Service User Involvement in Social Housing Services

1 year

VINNOVA (Swedish Governmental Agency For Innovation Systems)

The methods used in the development work to stimulate involvement, participation and co-creation include dialogue meetings and future workshops.

3-4 dialogue meetings on every social housing service

1 Future Work shop

# Results

Our study shows that this kind of methods, where professionals' knowledge and homeless people's own experience can meet on equal terms leads to co-operative processes.

Our studies also show that by working for co-production, change processes are initiated that live beyond the initial project's ambitions.

Our study shows the importance of discovering and supporting service users who are interested and want to be involved in the development work (Finding the missing hero!)

Although the development work has sometimes encountered resistance, many social workers have been positive and committed to the development work and expressed appreciation of being able to work strength based and relationship-oriented.

The study also shows the importance of anchoring the objectives of the project not only in the direction of the organisation and at the service users, but equally important is that the staff working in the front line in the housing units are engaged and are participating in the project.