

# Amsterdam, a place to call home?

ECONOMIC HOMELESSNESS IN AMSTERDAM

## ACT Report, July 2020

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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In the Netherlands, homelessness is a growing problem. While the number of homeless people was 17,800 people between the age of 18 and 94 in 2009, this number increased to 39,300 by 2018 (CBS, 2019a). Around 40% of these people live in one of the four major cities of the country, namely Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam or Utrecht (CBS, 2019b). In Amsterdam alone, 24 people become homeless every week, of which 70% are the so-called 'economically' homeless (De Regenboog Groep, n.d.). Economically homeless people are those who have become homeless due to a combination of critical life events, such as job loss or a divorce. Typically, they are not struggling with psychological problems and/or addiction, and are therefore defined as 'self-sufficient' by the authorities. This causes them not to be eligible for social care offered by municipalities, although they often have to live in stressful situations (Baas et. al., 2020).

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the problem as it is in Amsterdam, by specifically looking into the the municipality. Several policies have been formulated by the Municipality of Amsterdam (MoA) and the Dutch National Government (DNG) to overcome homelessness. Domains like social care, (social) housing and prevention are included within these policies. This report reviews policies that directly and indirectly target homelessness within the MoA considering facilitating aspects and shortcomings of these policies. Additionally, this report looks into the homelessness approach of the City of Helsingborg (CoH) in Sweden, because this city has shown promising results for the prevention of homelessness (Adenberg & Dahlberg, 2018). A qualitative research approach is used in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the complexities that contribute to this problem. Policy review, literature review and interviews with relevant stakeholders form the core of this research. Based on the results of this analysis, this report aims to identify those factors that can contribute to long-term solutions for economic homelessness which are formulated as recommendations at the end of this report.

This report finds that the policies of the MoA and the DNG provide several facilitating factors to prevent and overcome homelessness. Improving the arrangements to obtain a postal address, introducing a new pointing system for the assignment of social houses and Early Prevention teams (Vroeg Eropaf teams) are some of the facilitative measures that have been taken. Yet, the same policies deal with persistent shortcomings. The use of a classification system based on 'self-sufficiency' highlights one of the biggest misconceptions about economically homeless people and actually prevents them from overcoming their problems. Additionally, the problem of economic homelessness and homelessness in general is mainly taken up by the Department of Care within the MoA, even though the lack of affordable housing is the key factor that leads to homelessness in Amsterdam. Furthermore, the decentralization strategy initiated by the DNG to address homelessness results in a lack of central coordination and leadership, which are needed to provide structural solutions.

Based on these findings, recommendations have been formulated. The main findings per stakeholder are: the DNG should take more responsibility and take a more central role in tackling the housing problem and they should expand stimulating measures, for example by lifting the landlord levy. Many of the problems are a result of an issue that falls between the lines of responsibility, wherefore the issue is not taken up. A centralized system would guarantee that someone is responsible and accountable for the entire scope of problems. The MoA should improve cooperation with other municipalities and stakeholders, create a specific policy for economic homeless people, critically re-assess the self-sufficiency matrix and be less restrictive in the policies that aim to help homeless people. Besides that, they should continue and intensify good initiatives and pilots. This accounts for De Regenboog Groep as well, they are working on good initiatives and are encouraged to intensify and expand these. Lastly, housing corporations should build more housing for one or two person households and should explore alternative ways of building and living, such as flexliving and tiny houses. If responsibility from higher up still lacks, these stakeholders should create a stronger collaboration in which they share responsibility and accountability jointly.

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## LIST OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

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- **BRP:** de Basisregistratie Personen (the Personal Records Database)
- **BZK:** Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations)
- **CBS:** The Netherlands Bureau of Statistics
- **CoH:** City of Helsingborg
- **COVID-19:** Coronavirus Disease 2019
- **DNG:** Dutch National Government
- **Flexwonen:** Flexwonen (*Flexliving*) refers to a design of single-family houses built in some places aimed for people who quickly need living space due to their mobility or some life events (e.g., switching job/workplace) (Expertisecentrum Flexwonen, n.d.).
- **GGD:** Municipal Health Services
- **GGZ:** Municipal Mental Health Care
- **Intramurale zorg:** Intramurale zorg (*Intramural care*) refers to the delivery of healthcare services provided by hospitals and nursing homes (Phillips, 1994).
- **Kostendelersnorm:** The Kostendelersnorm refers to the rule that your social benefits will be cut when you live together with another adult (21-years and older). This is based on the assumption that if you live together you will also share the costs of living.
- **MoA:** Municipality of Amsterdam
- **NOS:** Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (Dutch Broadcast Foundation)
- **Passantenpensions:** Passantenpensions (*passerby pensions*) refers to temporary housing facilities provided for the economic homeless people at which they can stay there for a maximum of six months.
- **RVS:** Raad Volksgezondheid en Samenleving (Council of Public Health and Society)
- **Self-sufficiency:** Self-sufficiency is defined as the ability of oneself to stand at an acceptable level of functioning without outside aid (Lauriks et al., 2014).
- **Self-sufficiency matrix:** Self-sufficiency matrix is a screening tool established by the Dutch Government in 2010 to provide a reliable assessment concerning the degree of self-sufficiency on eleven life domains (i.e., social network, physical health, mental health, housing, income and so on) (Lauriks et al., 2014).
- **Stakeholder matrix:** A stakeholder matrix refers to a management tool that is commonly utilized to analyze stakeholders and determine their goals or interest in a particular case or project (ProjectEngineers, n.d.).
- **VNG:** Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten (Association of Dutch Municipalities)
- **WOZ-value:** WOZ stands for the law that determines the value of real estate (Waardering Onroerende Zaken). The WOZ-value is determined by the municipality and forms a part of the calculations to determine the total rental price of a house. Among others, the location of the house and the surface in square meters of the house determine the WOZ-value.



## INTRODUCTION

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In the Netherlands, having a place to live is a human right. There should be 'sufficient accommodation' for everyone, meaning there should be enough homes and these homes should be of adequate quality. As described in the constitution (Art.22, lid 2): "Fostering sufficient accommodation is a task of the government" (De Nederlandse Grondwet, n.d.). Despite that the right for housing is a constitutional right, there are many people in the Netherlands that do not have a permanent place to stay and homelessness is an increasing problem. While the number of homeless people between the age of 18 and 94 was 17,800 people in 2009, this number increased to 39,300 by 2018 (CBS, 2019a).

In the *National Action Plan Human Rights 2020*, (Nationaal Actieplan Mensenrechten 2020) the government states they plan to reduce the amount of homeless people in the Netherlands. They aim to focus on prevention of homelessness by providing social care and by providing accommodations with social care (BZK, 2019). However, one group of homeless people seems to be overlooked by the government, the so called 'self-sufficient' or 'economically homeless'. In Amsterdam alone, 34 people become homeless every week, of which 70% are economically homeless (De Regenboog Groep, n.d.). Economically homeless people are those who have become homeless due to a combination of critical life events, such as job loss or a divorce. Typically, they are not defined by psychological problems and/or addiction, and are therefore not eligible for accommodations with social care, although they often have to live in stressful situations (Baas et. al., 2020). The term economic homelessness does not only refer to those who live on the street or in homeless shelters, but it also refers to those who stay over at family members, stay at holiday parks or live in spaces not intended for habitation (Van der Velden et al., 2019).

One of the key factors that lead to homelessness in Amsterdam, is the lack of affordable houses, mainly for people with a low or average income. The average price for a house in Amsterdam has doubled in the past seven years. At the same time, the waiting time for social housing is extremely long: 18 years on average for people aged 35-55 (Baas et. al., 2020). The idea that housing is the major cause of economic homelessness is confirmed by a letter of the national ombudsman, in which he states he has received an increasing number of alerts of people who have become economically homeless and cannot find a house on short notice due to strict regulations and long waiting lists for social housing (Zutphen, 2019). Additionally, due to tight

budgets and limited social housing capacity, many municipalities have created regulations with regard to who is and who is not able to request social care. Because economically homeless people are seen as not having many care needs in general, they are often not eligible for (housing with) social care (Baas et., al, 2020).

De Regenboog Group, an organization that works with homeless people, has sent a request to the Science Shop of Wageningen University to find out what the needs of economically homeless people are and what potential solutions for housing for these people might be. This report contributes to the project of the Science Shop by conducting a review on policies within the Municipality of Amsterdam (MoA) considering facilitating aspects and shortcomings within the policy for economically homeless people. Based on our analysis we try to identify those factors that can contribute to a long-term solution for economic homelessness. Furthermore, we will look outside of the MoA by studying the approach of the City of Helsingborg (CoH) in Sweden towards homelessness to acquire inspiration for possible recommendations. We have opted for this municipality because a survey made by the National Board of Health and Safety in Sweden regarding homelessness indicated that the municipality showed promising results concerning the prevention of homelessness (Adenberg & Dahlberg, 2018). In short, **the objective of this research is to provide a review on policies within the MoA that influence economic homelessness, and to come up with recommendations based on these results and best practices from the CoH.**

This report is structured as follows: the first chapter provides an analysis of the stakeholders involved in the problem of economic homelessness; the second chapter describes the research methods that were used to gather the data and information for this project; chapter three provides a review of policy documents of the MoA and the DNG; chapter four and five elaborate on facilitators and shortcomings within these policies based on the policy review and interviews with stakeholders; chapter six describes additional facilitators and barriers outside the influence of policy; chapter seven provides an overview of the policy of the CoH; chapter eight and nine provide the integrated results and a reflection on the research process; chapter ten gives the conclusion, and chapter eleven will present recommendations.

## 1| STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the main stakeholders that are involved in addressing economic homelessness within Amsterdam. It is important to be aware of the interests and influence over policy of stakeholders, because this can vary greatly between parties. The information gained from the analysis is important to consider during research in order to include and understand different perspectives on the problem. Besides, a stakeholder analysis helps to come up with recommendations that are relevant for all parties involved. To create an overview of the different stakeholders, a stakeholder matrix (figure 1) is created. The stakeholders are placed within the matrix based on their interest in and influence over policy-making regarding economic homelessness. On the y-axis a distinction is made between the degree of influence stakeholders have on policy design and implementation. The x-axis depicts the degree of expertise or interest on social care and/or housing. An explanation of the different stakeholders is provided below.

The **Dutch National Government (DNG)** has the most influence on the decision-making regarding policies on economic homelessness. Therefore, they are placed at the top of the y-axis of the figure. They, however, fall in the middle of the x-axis as the DNG both has an interest in policies regarding social care and housing.

The **MoA** is not one unified group. The entire municipality consists of politicians with different ideals and objectives, but also executors of policy with different interests in different activities. The MoA has a big influence over the policies targeting on homeless people and those that risk becoming homeless. The MoA is directed by the national policies, but because the social care and housing systems

are decentralized the MoA has the responsibility to design and implement adequate policies at the regional level.

For advice, **knowledge institutions** are involved. An example is Platform 31. This institution tries to connect policy, practice and science that concern societal issues in order to come up with advice for policymakers, directors and policy implementers (Platform 31, n.d.). As an advisory body, Platform 31 can provide directions for the policies made by the DNG or the MoA. It is, however, up to these parties to accept and include the advice.

**De Regenboog Groep**, being the stakeholder which employed our commissioner, has a high interest in our project. They work with homeless people on an individual level, but have a collaborative relationship with the MoA. The organisation provides mainly social assistance to people in need, yet their influence on policy is limited.

The **housing corporations** have a medium amount of power to influence the housing policies. They often work together with the municipality and have a significant lobby to address the DNG. However, their influence remains restricted as they are not formulating the final policy themselves.

At the bottom of the figure, the **target group** is placed, the economically homeless people. This group barely has any influence over policy, but has urgent need for housing and support in finding a house.

This stakeholder analysis is used to justify some of the decisions we made for the sake of the research. Firstly, it gives an adequate overview of the different power levels and interests that the different stakeholders have, which results into a scattered distribution over this stakeholder-analysis grid. This implies that they probably have diverging views on the broad problem, which makes it highly interesting to investigate these different aspects of the problem. Secondly, it justifies why we decided to approach the problem from the perspective of the MoA. Due to decentralization of the responsibility to provide housing and care for the population from the DNG to the municipalities, the MoA has significant power over these two aspects. And because our report will probably not be published at the highest level of the DNG but will somehow reach essential employees of the MoA, writing the report from the perspective of the MoA will give the most balanced perspective.

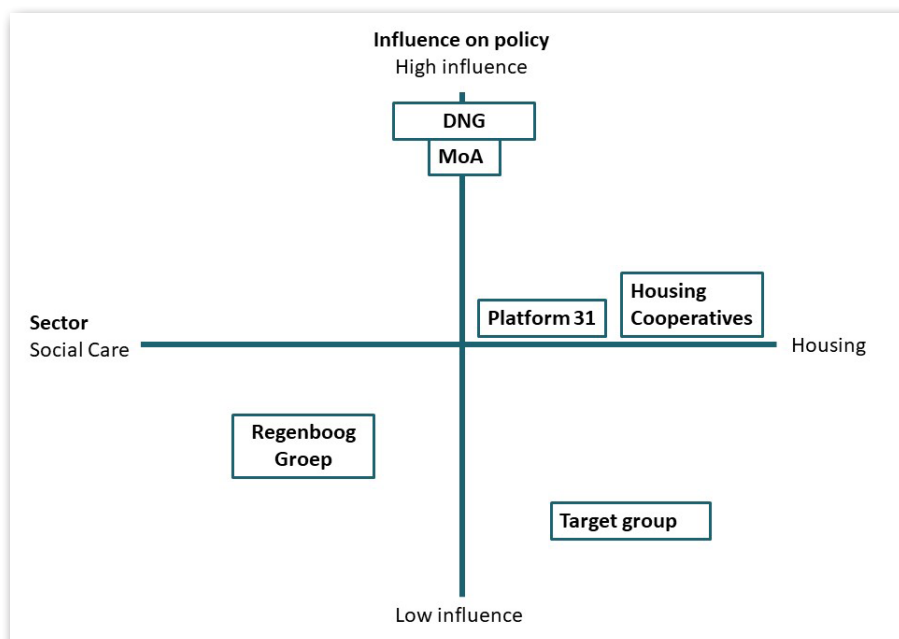


Figure 1: Stakeholder Matrix

## 2 | METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve our research objective, several research questions were created. To find answers to these questions, we chose to use a qualitative research approach. In addition to policy and literature reviews, interviews were carried out to gain a deeper understanding of the issue of economically homeless people in Amsterdam. For an elaboration on the definitions we use in our research questions, such as economic homelessness, social housing and policy, please refer to appendix 1.

### RESEARCH QUESTIONS

*“What are shortcomings and facilitators within the policies regarding providing support to (potential) economically homeless people in the Municipality of Amsterdam; and how does the City of Helsingborg address (economic) homelessness within its policies?”*

1. Which policies are in place in the Municipality of Amsterdam regarding (social) housing, applying for social care and regarding homelessness in general?
2. What aspects of the current policy within the MoA facilitate access for economic homeless people to housing and social care?
3. What are shortcomings of the current policy within the MoA that work as a barrier to access housing and social care for economic homeless people?
4. Which policies are in place in the City of Helsingborg regarding (social) housing, applying for social care and regarding homelessness in general?

### Justification

Within this research a qualitative approach will be used to gather the relevant data for the research questions. A qualitative approach provides the opportunity to capture the complex context of this research through interviews. This corresponds to our ambition to explore how stakeholders perceive the issue on a deeper level in our research. Also, since the topic is widely undiscovered, a qualitative research may lead to interesting leads for future quantitative research to dive into important sub-topics.

### Policy review

The policy review gains an overview of policies imposed by the DNG and by the MoA to obtain insights in what kind of policies are established and how these policies are implemented in Amsterdam (research question 1). Several policy documents have been studied such as policies of the MoA and the DNG regarding social care, social housing and the application procedure for the homeless to access social care. The policy documents of the MoA and the DNG

were mostly obtained from the *Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations* (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties) and the MoA official online site. The selection of relevant documents was based on their focus on (social) housing, social care, and (prevention of) homelessness. Furthermore, a second, policy review was conducted to answer sub-research question four regarding Swedish policy, and specifically the CoH. The documents used for this part were gained from the City of Helsingborg official online site and three of them are concerned only with the city’s homelessness strategy whereas in the last one from 2020 the issue of homelessness was incorporated as a part of the Land and Housing Program 2020-2023.

### Literature review

In addition to the policy review, a literature review was conducted in order to find facilitators and shortcomings in the policy of the MoA (research question 2 and 3). The literature consisted of scientific papers, reports, online news and media. The databases *Google*

*Nieuws*, Google Scholar, and Google search were used to search for respectively media and academic articles. Search terms included, amongst others, ‘social housing’, ‘economic homelessness’ and ‘housing provision Amsterdam’. Articles where sought for in Dutch and English. To be able to better judge the success of the CoH’s policies, evaluation reports were searched after in Swedish by using search terms such as ‘homelessness Helsingborg’, ‘Housing First Helsingborg’ and then subsequently used.

### Interviews

In order to gain insights in the perspectives of stakeholders regarding (economic) homelessness in Amsterdam and Helsingborg, several semi-structured interviews were conducted. Due to the social distancing regulation because of the COVID-19 outbreak, most of the interviews were conducted online via the online conference software Zoom or phone calls.

The interviewees were chosen based on their different positions and responsibilities regarding the problem. As starting point for selecting the interviewees, the stakeholder matrix was used. We wanted to obtain insights from or-

organisations working on the individual level (De Regenboog Groep) up to the national level (Platform 31), and from the two important and responsible parties regarding their influence on policy in Amsterdam; the municipality and the housing corporation. The interviews with the economically homeless persons - the target group - were conducted to obtain insights in their experiences with procedures of the MoA regarding social care and to understand their needs, wishes and ideas on how to address the problem. To learn from practices in Sweden, a representative from a walk-in house and a researcher in Sweden were interviewed. Before conducting the interview all participants were asked for their verbal consent and for their permission to have the interview recorded. Their consent and permission were recorded. All interviews took approximately one hour, were conducted in Dutch and Swedish. The Dutch interviews were fully transcribed and coded and the coded answers were translated. Because of limited time and only one group member who was able to speak Swedish, the Swedish interviews were not fully transcribed. Only important answers were translated and labeled.

Besides the interview, a stakeholder meeting (De Regenboeg Groep, the MoA, Platform 31, a homeless person, Science Shop WUR) was attended where a presentation of our project so far was given and a short discussion was held. This discussion was used to give input to our report that was used to further our discussion and recommendations.

### Interview guides

Based on the policy review and literature findings, interview guides were created. The interview guides can be found in appendix 3.

### Coding

For the coding, a bottom-up approach was used, and two types of labels were distinguished. Firstly, answers were labeled as a barrier or facilitator. Secondly, the answer was labeled to a certain topic. After the answers had their labels, they were compared to the outcomes of the literature review in order to analyse the findings.

Facilitators	Barriers
Housing scarcity	Housing scarcity and house prices
Procedures	Rules and procedures
Housing corporations	Housing corporations
Social care	Social care
Homeless stigma	Self-reliance
	Policy and perspectives (within MoA)
	Personal issues economic homeless that work as a barrier

Table 1: Label topics

Respondent	Role	Location	Date
Interviewee 1	Target group	Netherlands	09-06-2020
Interviewee 2	Target group	Netherlands	10-06-2020
Interviewee 3	Social researcher, representative of Platform 31	Netherlands	08-06-2020
Interviewee 4	Project manager, representative of De Regenboog Groep	Netherlands	08-06-2020
Interviewee 5	Representative of Housing Corporation Ons Doel	Netherlands	11-06-2020
Interviewee 6	Government employee at social care department of the MoA	Netherlands	11-06-2020
Interviewee 8	Manager, representative of a walk-in house in Helsingborg	Sweden	10-06-2020
Interviewee 9	Social researcher at Lund University in Sweden	Sweden	11-06-2020

Table 2: List of respondents

This chapter will discuss several policy documents of the MoA and the DNG that have an influence on homelessness in Amsterdam. The chapter is divided in three parts. The first section looks into the policies of the MoA and the DNG regarding social care. The documents *At Home in the Neighbourhood* (Thuis in de Wijk) and the *Program Plan Housing of Vulnerable Groups* (Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen) both mainly focus on early intervention and prevention regarding economic homelessness. The letter of parliament *A Home, a future* (Een (t)huis, een toekomst) discusses the strategy of the DNG on housing, social care, shelter and prevention regarding homelessness. The second section of this chapter reviews three policies regarding (social) housing: *The Housing Agenda 2025* (Woonagenda 2025), the *Housing Construction Impulse* (Woningbouwimpuls) and the *Stimulation Plan FlexLiving* (Stimuleringsaanpak Flexwonen). All three documents describe the strategies of the MoA and the DNG to increase the current housing stock. The last section of this chapter will discuss the short-term options for social care and housing that homeless people can make use of and the application procedures at the *Screening Desk for Special Target Groups* (Screeningsbalie Bijzondere doelgroepen). Some of the details of each document are elaborated upon in chapter four and five as a facilitator or shortcoming of the policy.

### 3.1. POLICY ON SOCIAL CARE

#### 3.1.1 *At Home in the Neighbourhood*

##### *Introduction*

*At Home in the Neighbourhood* (Thuis in de Wijk) is the policy document of the MoA that outlines the course the MoA will take with regards to social care and protected living (*maatschappelijke opvang/beschermd wonen*). Due to the new *Social Support Act* (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning), the responsibility to provide and organize social care and protected living has been decentralized from the national level to the municipal level. *At Home in the Neighbourhood* includes homeless people as a vulnerable group that is eligible to make use of the facilities that are discussed within the document. (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). In order to emphasize the aim of the policy, the MoA has formulated the following ambition in *At Home in the Neighbourhood*: “To provide suitable housing to people that will enable them to participate within society based on their own abilities.”

##### *Strategies for homeless people*

To achieve this ambition, the municipality has created a strategy that focuses on three aspects. Firstly, the municipality wants to achieve an early assessment of people who are at risk of becoming homeless and intervene where necessary. Secondly, the municipality wants to increase the participation in society of people dealing with complex personal problems. Thirdly, when people have their own home again, it is important to prevent them from a relapse. All these aspects focus on a transition from intramural care (in-

tramurale zorg) to an independent living situation and local care provision within a regular neighborhood. The support is mainly focussed on strengthening the living conditions that are essential to participate in society. These conditions include: self-management, physical and mental health, financial stability and establishing a functioning social network. Currently, there is a growing group of vulnerable people that have received intramural care and are in need of an independent living space. For those people, a ‘warm transition’ into the neighbourhood will be facilitated (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). How to achieve this ‘warm transition’ and create a transition towards independent living has been documented in the policy document *Ten agreements on At Home in the Neighborhood* (Tien werkafspraken Thuis in de Wijk)<sup>1</sup> (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017 a).

##### *Strategies for economically homeless people*

Homeless people that do not qualify for social care or protected living based on their ‘self-sufficiency’, will be referred to a social care worker by the *Central Access Point for Social Care* (Centrale Toegang Maatschappelijke Opvang). The social care worker will offer support to find a solution for the current situation the client is facing. This can be in the form of, for example, debt support or finding temporary shelter. Additionally, the municipality takes three additional measures to assist this group (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). Firstly, the possibilities to get a postal address will be expanded. Secondly, to assist economically homeless people in finding a permanent residence, temporary housing is provided in the form of so called ‘passerby pensions’

1. <https://www.amsterdam.nl/bestuur-organisatie/organisatie/ruimte-economie/wonen/huisvesting/10-werkafspraken/>

(*passantenpensions*), where people can stay for a maximum of half a year. Thirdly, the municipality aims to provide additional shelter by supporting various initiatives like *Onder de Pannen* and *Vriendschappelijke Opvang* (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016).

### 3.1.2 Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups

#### *Introduction*

Another policy document that elaborates upon the aim of the municipality to assist vulnerable groups within Amsterdam and translates it into more concrete actions is the Program Plan Housing for Vulnerable Group (Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen). The policy recognizes that several vulnerable groups in Amsterdam struggles with financial issues, housing, employment, physical or mental health, and domestic relations. Vulnerable people include, amongst others, people in social care facilities (Maatschappelijke Opvang), families in crisis shelter, victims of domestic violence and ex-convicts. The main ambition of this policy is to support these vulnerable groups and to provide suitable options for housing. In order to achieve this, four 'action tracks' have been developed (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019).

#### *Providing assistance*

The first track aims to prevent homelessness and provide assistance. The second track focuses on the building of homes by finishing construction projects and building new houses (2.700 homes by 2021), with the focus on family homes. The third track focuses on inclusion and livability of the neighbourhood, to make sure that people feel at home in their new living environment. The fourth track aims to closely monitor the progress that is being made on the aforementioned aspects. The information gathered can be used to train experts and partners (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019).

#### *The prevention of (economic) homelessness*

The program plan includes a separate section on the prevention of homelessness within Amsterdam. The section suggests that homelessness can be prevented for a large share of people if they are offered help early on while they are still living in their current place of residence. Therefore, early intervention forms the main strategy to prevent people from losing their current home and curbing the demand for new housing (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019).

### 3.1.3 Letter of Parliament: A Home, A Future

#### *Introduction*

In response to the Covid-19 outbreak various measures have been taken to protect more people from becoming homeless due to financial impact of the crisis measures. Various actors have, however, realized that these measures will not be sufficient to tackle the problem of homelessness. Therefore the Ministries of Public Health, Well-being and Sport (Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport); Internal Affairs and Kingdom Relations (Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties); Social Affairs and Employment (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid) have cooperated with the Association of Dutch Municipalities (Vereniging Nederlandse Gemeenten) and various other parties to establish a new plan of action: A Home, a Future (Een (t)huis, een toekomst). The central ambition of this plan is to prevent homelessness as much as possible and to ensure that nobody has to sleep on the streets (Blokhuys & Ollongren, 03-06-2020).

#### *Housing with social care, prevention and shelter*

The document discusses that people can stay in shelters when there is no other option for housing, yet preferably no longer than three months. In line with the advise of the *Council of Public Health and Society* (Raad voor Volksgezondheid en Samenleving) homeless people should be provided a living space suited to their ability to live independently, with customized social care if needed. Additionally, an effort will be made to organize shelter according to a more small-scale design, whereby dormitories will be renovated into one/two-person rooms. Furthermore, the plan formulates three strategies to realize 10.000 extra living spaces with customized social care for the target group. In order to stimulate that municipalities keep sufficient track of the local progress that will be carried out in cooperation with housing corporations, the DNG's aim is that municipalities will draft new performance agreements before the end of 2021. Besides this, the DNG will offer several forms of support for municipalities and other parties within three domains: prevention, renewing shelter and housing with professional support (Blokhuys & Ollongren, 03-06-2020).

## 3.2 HOUSING POLICY

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### 3.2.1 Housing Agenda 2025

#### *Introduction*

In order to alleviate the pressure on the current housing stock, the MoA has developed the *Housing Agenda 2025*

(Woonagenda 2025). The document describes the city's plans for housing construction for the coming five years. The main focus of the *Housing Agenda 2025* is to provide enough houses within an affordable price range and of good quality. The reason for this focus is the shortage for affordable houses in Amsterdam. In 2025, the estimated demand for houses with a regulated rent is 49%, but the estimated supply of regulated rent is only 39%. A similar problem occurs for the middle rent: the estimated demand is 11%, whereas the estimated supply is only 9%. This is in sharp contrast with the supply and demand ratio for expensive rent: an estimated supply of 14%, even though there is only an estimated demand of 4% (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017). Therefore, the central aim of the policy is to facilitate the build of 50.000 new houses within the City of Amsterdam.

### *Measures to overcome housing shortages*

In order to overcome the discrepancy mentioned above, the MoA has formulated several actions to create enough affordable houses. Because the MoA aims to build affordable homes, they have formulated actions that focus on a redivision of housing (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017). The MoA is already working on a new system to allocate social housing, which will be explained in chapter 4 (SHZ, 2020). Lastly, the MoA wants to ensure that there are not only enough and affordable houses, but also that the quality of those houses is sufficient. Quality, sustainability and supporting tenants are the focus points of this aspect in order to ensure safe, healthy and pleasant living. To achieve this goal, actions focus on creating new sustainability requirements, strict control of landlords and exploring the possibility for a housing quality system (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017).

## **3.2.2 Letter of Parliament: Housing Construction**

### *Impulse*

#### *Introduction*

Over the past couple of years the DNG has recognized the shortage of houses on the Dutch market. Even though the construction sector has achieved solid growth figures in the

past, the demand for especially affordable houses has risen. This has resulted in a shortage of 3,8% of houses in the Netherlands (Van Veldhoven - Van der Meer, 18-02-2020). One of the groups with a high demand for affordable houses are the economically homeless. In order to meet the demand for affordable houses, the DNG has issued a *Housing Construction Impulse* (Woningbouwimpuls) that consists of three main elements.

### *Increasing the housing stock*

First of all, 1 billion euros will be available to stimulate the building of affordable houses. Annually the government strives to add a minimum of 75.000 new houses to the existing housing stock. For 2018 and 2019

this goal was reached, but the expectation is that the coming years this goal will not be met (Ollongren, 17-09-2019). Therefore, the Minister of Environment and Housing has presented several tools (see chapter 4) to accelerate the build of new houses within areas that are selected in the so-called 'housing deals' (Woningdeals). Additionally, priority areas in which the shortage of houses exceeds the national average percentage will also be included. The funds

of the Housing Construction Impulse can also be employed to realize infrastructural elements that are needed to develop the area (Van Veldhoven - Van der Meer, 08-11-2019). The procedures to apply for the Housing Construction Impulse can be found in appendix 2.

Secondly, the build of new houses will be stimulated by reducing the landlord levy (Ollongren, 17-09-2019). Besides that, the build of flexible and temporary living spaces will be exempted from paying any landlord levy in order to stimulate the rapid build of houses. Temporary houses that will be built from 2020 to 2024 can be exempted for a max of 15 years from landlord levy. In order to finance this, another 1 billion euros will be available for the reduction of the landlord levy (Ollongren, 17-09-2019).

As a third element of the *Housing Construction Impulse*, the DNG has issued to enforce new policies to improve the functioning of the housing market. At the moment, young people, elderly, people with a low or middle

The **landlord levy** is in place for landlords who own more than 50 rental properties. These landlords pay a levy on the WOZ-value (WOZ-waarde) of the rental properties (Rijksoverheid, n.d.). The WOZ-value is determined by the Dutch law on the valuation of real estate (Wet waardering onroerende zaken). The WOZ-value is calculated according to the estimated market value of the property and co-determines the rental price of a rental property (vereniging Eigen Huis, n.d.). The landlord levy concerns rental properties that do not exceed a price point of € 720,42. In 2019, the landlord levy was set at 0,561%. (Rijksoverheid, n.d.)

range income and other vulnerable groups experience tremendous difficulty to find an affordable house. Therefore, the DNG will introduce several measures divided over four domains, which will be explained in chapter 4 (Ollongren, 17-09-2019).

### **3.2.3 Letter of Parliament: *Stimulation Plan FlexLiving***

Besides the above mentioned measures, the DNG formulated another Letter of Parliament which was published in May 2019 in order to stimulate the building of flexible living spaces (*flexwonen*) for urgent home seekers. The approach should lead to concrete arrangements at municipalities on a local level. The aim is to make more living spaces available in a short amount of time by using houses that are easily built, removable, and with temporary contracts for its residents (Ollongren, 29-05-2019).

## **3.3 PROCEDURES FOR HOUSING OR SOCIAL SUPPORT**

### **3.3.1 Short-term housing for economically homeless people**

Within the MoA several facilities are available for homeless people that offer a place to stay. Several organizations, like De Regenboog Groep and the Salvation Army, offer night-shelter locations. The night shelters are a short-term and short-stay option for accommodation where you can take a shower, have a meal and sleep a couple of nights each month. Night shelters are closed during the day and cost five euros to stay the night. If a person is between 18 and 22 and has no alternatives for accommodation, he or she can also approach the Street Corner Network of the Municipal Health Service (*GGD*). Homeless people that are able to live independently can go to the 'passerby pensions' of HVO-Querido. The 'passerby pensions' are hotel-like facilities where you can stay for a maximum of six months. The general idea is that these pensions offer a place for people to catch their breath and gain some time to actively search for a permanent place to live. At the pensions, social workers are available to offer guidance in this process. Important to note is that those who are interested need sufficient financial resources to pay in advance for your stay. Besides night shelters, several organizations also offer walk-in houses where people can stay during the day time. At these walk-in houses people can make use of the toilet, have a cup of coffee, socialize or get in contact with social workers (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d.).

### **3.3.2 Screening Desk for Special Target Groups**

Besides short term solutions, homeless people can also apply for long term social care, to do so there are two pathways. Firstly, if the applicant already receives support from a social service organization he or she can be referred to social care by their social worker. If this is not the case, the applicant can visit the *Screening Desk for Special Target Groups* (Screeningsbalie Bijzondere doelgroepen) at the Jan van Galenstraat. At the screening desk usually one of the employees discusses the situation the applicant is facing and the facilities that are available in Amsterdam to alleviate this situation. Additional information on housing, healthcare, debt relief, applying for social benefits and a postal address will be provided as well. People from 18-22 can also get in contact with social care via the department 'MGGZ Safety Net' (*Afdeling MGGZ Vangnet*) of the Municipal Health Services (*GGD*).

In order to be eligible for shelter or social care the applicant needs to meet several criteria. Firstly, every applicant above 18 years old has to be of Dutch nationality or has to be in possession of a valid residence status. Secondly, the applicant needs to be categorized as homeless, meaning that he or she does not have a permanent place of residence. Thirdly, applicants needs to show that they are connected to Amsterdam. Having a connection in this case means that you have lived in Amsterdam, you receive care within Amsterdam or your family and friends live in Amsterdam. Also, the applicant is not able to live independently due to a severe psychosocial impairment or a psychiatric impairment (this includes an addiction). Lastly, the applicant has no other options to alleviate his/her state of homelessness (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d.).

During the screening the service desk employee will make use of the self-sufficiency matrix (*GGD Amsterdam, n.d.; ZRM.nl, n.d.*) to judge the severity of the homelessness case. The self-sufficiency matrix measures the self-sufficiency of the applicant within 13 categories. The self-sufficiency matrix is an instrument for (health) practitioners, policy makers, researchers and social workers to determine the level of self-sufficiency of their clients. Self-sufficiency is tied to the ability to carry out tasks connected to various domains of living. For example, daily activities need to be performed to gain an income, to remain mentally and physically healthy or to sustain a good social network (*GGD Amsterdam, n.d.*).



## 4 | FACILITATORS IN POLICY

### SUMMARY

This chapter discusses the facilitating factors of the policies that have been discussed in chapter three, supported by information gained from the interviews. The chapter is divided in three sections. The first section looks into the facilitators regarding social care and finds the improved arrangements to obtain a postal address and the introduction of neighbourhood teams form facilitators for economically homeless people. The second section of this chapter examines the facilitators regarding (social) housing. A new pointing system for social housing, lowering the land price for social housing and the *Housing Construction Impulse* (Woningbouwimpuls) form facilitators on the municipal and national level to increase and redistribute the housing stock. The last section of this chapter reviews the facilitators regarding the prevention of (economic) homelessness.

### 4.1 SOCIAL CARE

#### 4.1.1 Postal address

Regarding social care a couple of facilitators can be identified within the policies of the MoA and the DNG. One of the most important facilitators is the improved arrangements to obtain a postal address. In order to apply for social benefits a postal address is needed. However, many economically homeless people often do not have an address. To overcome this the municipality offers arrangements for a temporary postal address, which makes it easier for economically homeless people to arrange support for social needs such as applying for a social benefit (Interviewee 6, 11-06-2020). Also, the national policy document *A Home, a Future* (Een (t)huis een toekomst), elaborates upon a new measure to ensure that homeless people are able to obtain a postal address. A legislative amendment in the law for the general registration of civilians (*Wet Basisregistratie Personen*) will require municipalities to officially register citizens on a postal address, when a person does not have a home address (Blokhuis & Ollongren, 03-06-2020).

By means of a new resolution of the municipality in November 2019, it is made easier for economically homeless people to get a postal address by the so called couch sleeping arrangement (*bankslapersregeling*).

*“Last weekend GroenLinks came with a proposal to create a ‘couch sleeping arrangement’ which should make it easier for people to arrange a postal address”*

(Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020)

Also, it aims to ease the system of living and social care, in order to make it easier for economically homeless people to get into the system (De Jong, 2019).

#### 4.1.2 Neighborhood teams

Another important development within the provision of social care is the transition from intramural care to the provi-

sion of local care within the neighbourhood as described in the document *At Home in the Neighbourhood* (Thuis in de Wijk) (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). Especially, so-called neighbourhood teams (*buurtteams*) will play an important role in providing accessible support services (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019). The neighbourhood teams aim to provide a customized approach for the problem or demand for care that is presented to them. Neighbourhood teams can provide, among others, support to establish a safe living environment, finding a place to live, obtaining an income and debt-relief. In this way the neighbourhood teams can facilitate an early intervention and prevent people from becoming homeless. The MoA is planning to establish 62 neighbourhood teams by 2021 (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020; Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020).

### 4.2 HOUSING

#### 4.2.1 Housing Amsterdam

##### *Pointing system social housing*

Within the domain of housing, several facilitators can be identified regarding the provision and distribution of social housing. On the municipal level, the system to apply for social housing has recently been renewed in order to make the distribution of the available houses more fair. The distribution of social houses is based upon a system with points, in which the amount of points determines the allocation of social houses. A high number of points will place a person higher upon the waiting lists and increases his or her probability of obtaining social housing. Previously, only the registration history determined the ranking position of a person within the application procedure for a social housing. In the new system, three factors will be taken into account to determine the total score of a person within the ranking: registration history (you get extra points for being longer on the waiting list), active searching (active responding is rewarded with extra points) and three priority situations (break-up with children, families that reside at someone el-

se's place, or problematic youth living at home (SHZ, 2020). Also, there is a pilot implemented that gives teachers and caregivers priority to apply for social housing (NOS, 2019).

#### *Measures to increase the affordable housing stock*

In addition to the new distribution system for social housing, the MoA aims to increase the existing stock of affordable social houses by charging a lower land price per square meter for social houses than before. Up until now, the land price for a social houses of 50 square meters varied from 15.000 to 35.000 euros in different areas of the city - between 300 and 700 euros per square meter respectively. From now on, the municipality will charge housing corporations only 215 euros per square meter in every area of the city. This makes it more affordable for corporations to build social houses and will make it equally attractive to build social houses in popular neighbourhoods as well as more unpopular areas of Amsterdam (Damen, 2016). Alongside this, the *Housing Agenda 2025* (Woonagenda 2025) describes the aim to build 1500 middle-range priced rental houses and 1200 regulated rent - or social houses - annually. This is in line with the policy to develop all new housing construction projects according the 40-40-20%-rule. This means that each housing construction project is required to provide 40% of social housing; 40% of middle-range housing; and maximum 20% of expensive housing (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017). Both measures form a significant facilitator to increase the stock of affordable houses within Amsterdam.

#### *Temporary housing*

Another facilitator concerning housing is the provision of additional shelter for economically homeless people by the MoA. As mentioned in chapter 3, the municipality has undertaken initiatives together with parties such as De Regenboog Groep to create temporary housing for economically homeless people. An example of such an initiative is *Onder de Pannen*, which allows economically homeless people to stay at someone who has a room available for up to a year in order to get their life back on track (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). This initiative seems to be effective, since "50% of the people in this initiative find a permanent house within that year" (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

#### *Stakeholder cooperation*

In addition to *Onder de pannen*, a new pilot project will be set up in 2020 to house economically homeless people. Approximately 200 houses that have been filed for demolition or reconstruction will be rented out according to the

procedures of *Onder de pannen* to economically homeless people. Participants within the pilot will sign a temporary rental contract for 12 months. Each house will accommodate 2-3 homeless people that have been declined social care or housing within social care/protected living (Maatschappelijke Opvang/Beschermd Wonen). Besides housing, participants within the project will also receive support and guidance to find a permanent housing solution after the rental contract is expired (Interviewee 2, personal communication, 10-06-2020; interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

For this project a collaboration is established between the Municipal Department of Housing, the Municipal Department of Care and various non-governmental stakeholders. Together they form a steering group on economic homelessness. Currently, a program specifically targeted at economically homeless people does not exist, however a working group is formed which works on several pilots (Interviewee 6, personal communication, 11-06-2020). The integrative nature of the steering group and working group is promising, because it takes into account the different aspects of economic homelessness rather than solely looking at the care aspects of the problem.

### **4.2.2 National measures on housing**

#### *Housing Construction Impulse - financial stimulus*

Also on the national level several measures have been taken to increase the existing stock of social houses. In order to accelerate the built of new houses, the Minister of Environment and Housing has presented several tools in the *Housing Construction Impulse* (Woningbouwimpuls). These include: shorter procedures for realizing new projects; expert-teams that support designing new projects; facilitating the sharing of knowledge; and financial stimulus provided by the DNG to speed up the building process in several urban regions. Besides the 1 billion euro that is available for projects that apply and are selected according to several criteria (see appendix 2), another main financial stimulus will be realized by reducing the landlord levy for the construction of social housing (Ollongren, 17-09-2019). Currently, the landlord levy collects a tax total of 1.7 billion euros which is mainly paid by housing cooperatives that build social housing with a low rental price (Teije, 2020). By reducing the landlord levy, housing corporations will be stimulated to build more houses that fall within the social housing price range and more money will be available to build more social houses. Additionally, temporary houses that will be built from 2020 to 2024 can be exempted for a max of 15 years from landlord levy. This can provide hou-

sing corporations in Amsterdam with the incentive to build temporary and flexible living spaces that might form a creative solution for housing economically homeless people (Ollongren, 17-09-2019).

#### *Housing Construction Impulse - other measures*

Besides providing a financial stimulus, the *Housing Construction Impulse* also offers several measures divided over four domains. The first domain addresses the sustenance of affordable houses within the existing rental stock. This will primarily be done by limiting the share of the WOZ-value to 33% within the calculation of the final rent price. The second domain focuses on the redistribution of the available stock of affordable houses. This will, for example, be done by increasing the income limit for multi-person households to € 42,000 and slightly lowering the income limit for single-person households to € 35,000. This will make households with a low middle-income also eligible to apply for social housing. In order to stimulate the flow from social housing to middle rent housing for a tenant with a high income, the DNG also makes it possible for housing corporations to increase the rent based on the income of the tenant and the quality of the house. This will prevent skewed living (*scheefwonen*) by providing tenants with a high income the incentive to move out of their social rental house. Apart from increasing the rent, corporations will also be allowed to temporarily lower the rent for tenants with a low income. That way, tenants who could previously not apply for a rent subsidy because their rent did not fall within the margins, now have the possibility to do so. The third domain encompasses measures to give local housing corporations more space to respond to the specific needs and wishes of tenants at the local level. The final domain aims to rebalance the stakes of starters and private investors on the housing markets. For example, the collaboration with various parties to approach the problem of dodgy landlords will be continued (Ollongren, 17-09-2019).

#### *Flexible living*

In order to make more living spaces available for the growing group of urgent house seekers, the letter of Parliament *Stimulation Plan FlexLiving* (Stimuleringsaanpak Flexwonen) tries to offer a start of a solution. The government aims to increase possibilities of flexible living by several measures. These measures include changing regulations for destination plans and dispense the landlord levy for short-term housing in order to make flexible housing more attractive. To make the plans of the DNG more concrete, there are measures proposed to ease rapid implementation of

flexible housing projects by stimulating municipalities, corporations and other parties to hand in project proposals for new flexible living spaces. Secondly, there is a digital platform created to map the needs of urgent house seekers and the possibilities for housing supply. Furthermore, because there was unclarity on regulation considering flexible living, these will be clarified. Lastly, there will be more flexible dealing with temporary living contracts, to make the implementation of flexible living easier (Ollongren, 29-05-2019).

### **4.3 PREVENTION**

Besides social care and social housing, prevention is a crucial aspect of the facilitating factors within the policies. As described in the *Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups* (Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen), homelessness can be prevented for a large share of people if they are offered early help while they still live in their current place of residence. Therefore, the MoA tries to prevent eviction where possible. As mentioned within the program plan, Early-intervention teams (*Vroeg eropaf teams*) of the housing corporations will visit people with a rent arrear in order to agree on an arrangement to prevent eviction. Early intervention, thus, can result in a lower number of people that end up on the streets due to an eviction (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020; Woonbond.nl, 2019).

Another document that incorporated prevention as the central ambition is the national policy *A Home, a Future* (Een (t)huis, een toekomst). Besides aiming to deliver 10.000 new living spaces with customized social care, the policy describes several measures in the domain of homelessness prevention. First of all, the DNG will set up an online platform ([www.iedereenondereendak.nl](http://www.iedereenondereendak.nl)) where professionals that work within the field of homelessness can connect. On this platform professionals can share innovative ideas for projects regarding housing with professional support and renew the social care. Furthermore the DNG will facilitate a specialized Prevention Alliance (Preventie Alliantie) that will offer municipalities an analysis of their current prevention strategy and advise on how this can be improved. Municipalities will also be offered extra financial means for three years to continue the development of poverty and debt strategies. Before January 1st 2021, the DNG will also set up another platform (*Platform Woonplek*) that specifically addresses offering homeless people or people that are at risk of becoming homeless a place to live with professional support (Blokhuis & Ollongren, 03-06-2020).

	Facilitators	Status	Evaluation
Social Care	Postal address	Already implemented	The temporary postal address facilitated by the MoA makes it easier for economically homeless people in Amsterdam to get a postal address, which is compulsory for access to social care. Additionally, the couch sleeping arrangement ( <i>bankslapersregeling</i> ) policy has been helping the economically homeless people to obtain an address.
	Neighborhood teams	Will be implemented	These teams will work based on the principle of bringing the support closer to (economically) homeless people. Assistance to find a house will be provided to reduce the number of homeless people, while help related to debt-relief and finding jobs is intended to prevent people from becoming economically homeless.
Housing	Pointing system social housing	Will be implemented	This new system is intended to create a more equitable housing allocation mechanism. There are three factors that are taken into consideration to determine the total points of a person within the ranking, which are living with another family, breakup with children or children with problems living at home.
	Measures to increase the affordable housing stock	Already implemented	The MoA has reduced land prices to 215 euros per square meter in all areas of the city. This approach therefore gives a discretion for housing corporations to build more affordable social housing within the city.
	Temporary housing	Already implemented	In this program, the (economically) homeless people are able to stay at someone who has a room available for up to a year, whilst trying to improve their life and economy. It has been found that 50% of the people in this initiative successfully find a permanent house within 12 months.
	Stakeholder cooperation	Already implemented	A collaboration between the Municipal Department of Housing, the Municipal Department of Care and other actors was established. Together they will form a steering group and working group on economic homelessness. This collaboration is intended to execute a new pilot project that will be set up this year. This project will provide approximately 200 houses for economically homeless people.
	<i>Housing Construction Impulse (Woningbouwimpuls)</i>	Already implemented	The DNG's policy to provide a 1 billion euro and reduce the landlord levy for the construction of social housing will expedite the building process in several urban regions including Amsterdam.
	Flexible living	Will be implemented	Flexible living gives people, including the homeless, an opportunity to find a house quickly. To make the flexible living program works, there are several actions that will be taken by the DNG such as clarifying the regulation considering flexible living and and, creating a digital platform to map the urgent house seekers.
Prevention	Eviction prevention	Already implemented	Early-intervention teams ( <i>Vroeg eropaf teams</i> ) of housing corporations are established to deal with eviction prevention. In their work, the team will approach people with rent arrears and find a solution to solve their problems.
	<i>A Home, a Future (Een (t) huis, een toekomst)</i>	Will be implemented	One of the objectives of this policy is to build an interconnection between the DNG, Municipalities and professionals to prevent homelessness. Online platforms will be formed as a way for professionals to share innovative ideas. In addition, the DNG will also facilitate a Specialized Prevention Alliance ( <i>Preventie Alliantie</i> ) to provide input to Municipalities related to their homelessness prevention strategy.

Table 3: Facilitators on Policies Within the MoA

## 5 | SHORTCOMINGS IN POLICY

### SUMMARY

This chapter outlines the shortcomings of the policy that is formulated by the MoA and the DNG. The chapter focuses on social care and housing. Shortcomings that have been identified for social care include the fact that homelessness is often still considered as a social care problem, rather than an integrative problem that includes housing; current initiatives are too small scaled; economically homeless people are often excluded from policy; and lastly, the use of the classification 'self-sufficiency' hinders economically homeless people in overcoming their problems. For housing, problems are the decentralization of the housing construction; a lack of finance for housing corporations to focus on social housing and middle rent simultaneously; and solutions are not structural.

### 5.1 SOCIAL CARE

#### 5.1.1 Focus on social care

A major concern that stood out during early orientation, the interviews and the stakeholder meeting we attended is that the problem of (economic) homelessness is put on the plate of the municipality's Department of Care. Due to decentralization initiated by the DNG, homelessness has become the responsibility of the municipality (De Ridder et al, 2018). Around fifteen years ago, the four largest municipalities of the Netherlands came up with a large-scale programme for addressing homelessness called *Action Plan Social Care* (Plan van Aanpak Maatschappelijke Opvang; Panije, et al., 2014). As a result, a large share of the municipality's budget has been used to provide tailor-made care for homeless people dealing with problematic circumstances, such as drug addictions and psychiatric problems.

The overall conception that the homelessness problem should be addressed from the perspective of the Department of Care - even though not every homeless person requires intensive social care - is also portrayed in the policy reports *At Home in the Neighbourhood* (Thuis in de Wijk), the *Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups* (Programma-plan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen) and the principles of *Housing First*. Firstly, in the *At Home in the Neighbourhood* document, there seems to be a strong responsibility for the healthcare provider of the involved resident to provide him or her housing. The report proposes that the healthcare provider cooperates closely with the housing corporations to design the best possible option for the resident with a need for care. This can be considered a positive development, as the healthcare providers and the housing corporations now share the responsibility to provide suitable housing for those with a need for care (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). Nevertheless, economically homeless people mainly fall outside this program as they cannot apply for care and are generally not supported by a healthcare provider. Therefore they will not directly benefit from cooperations between the healthcare provider and housing corporations.

#### 5.1.2 Initiatives are too small scale

As mentioned in chapter four, there are some actions taken for the target group, such as agreements on increased access to postal addresses and increased support in temporal stays ('passerby pensions', *Onder de Pannen* and *Vriendschappelijke Opvang*). Even though it became clear that these activities have some positive effects for people who are able to apply, these activities fail to achieve the required large scale effect: *"There is no alternative for homeless groups. An initiative such as Onder de Pannen is nice, but if you regard the mass then this does not really get us anywhere. Something big must happen on the housing market, something unorthodox"* (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020). Moreover, De Regenboog Groep indicates: *"There is a lack of supply and a surplus of requests [referring to Onder de Pannen]"* (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

#### 5.1.3 Exclusion of economically homeless people

Besides initiatives being too small, they are often excluding economically homeless people. For example, the Housing First principle is a promising initiative to improve the flow of vulnerable people from the Societal Care to the general housing market. Staying too long in Social Care will impede people's independent development which is needed to build up a solid independent livelihood in the city. However, the target group of Housing First are the vulnerable people linked to the GGZ (Mental Healthcare) and Societal Care (Van Veen, 2009; Housing First Nederland, 2016). Even though the Housing First principle is meant for everyone with housing problems - also those without (mental) health issues - the executor of Housing First in Amsterdam (HVO Querido's Discus) mentions that the programme intends to provide housing for the homeless with a history of drug addiction.

#### 5.1.4 Lack of specific policy

It has become evident that the MoA spends a lot of effort on providing care for the homeless, but that the homeless of the target group - the economically homeless without a need for (health)care - fall just outside the care programs. This can lead to problems, as Platform 31 indicated: "When you don't make policy for this group, then they will have to choose for options that are not ideal. Then you create exploitation and nuisance" (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020). Thereby, the measures that are in place for the target group are executed on a too small scale and only effective for the small amount of people who are able to apply for, for example, a place via Onder de Pannen. Therefore, the economically homeless in Amsterdam often feel lost in the jungle of rules and procedures in which they are often sent 'from pillar to post' (De Ridder et al., 2018; Zutphen, 2019). As stated by Interviewee 2 (personal communication, 10-06-2020): "Before you are helped by the Regenboog Groep (named as example by the interviewee), you've had twelve different organisations." The question here is: who exactly determines who will be immediately supported by the city's social care and why is our target group left behind?

#### 5.1.5 Self-sufficiency

Since the costs of (health) care for the homeless are substantial, the MoA was forced to come up with a system to determine who will receive housing and care (De Ridder et al., 2018). For this, the 'self-sufficiency matrix' (zelfredzaamheidsmatrix)<sup>2</sup> is used (see section 3.1.3). Not passing the self-sufficiency matrix means no immediate social care from the MoA. The question is, however, to what extent a person without a roof over her/his head could be labelled as 'self-sufficient'. As an interviewee from the target group mentioned:

*"I got denied access to social care because I was too self-sufficient. The only problem you have is that you don't have a house, but that ignores the fact you are struggling to survive twenty-four seven"*

(Interviewee 2, personal communication, 10-06-2020)

This could lead to questionable actions as indicated by another interviewee from the target group who mentioned that drinking heavily would help him to obtain housing and support (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020). Thereby, he said: "You have to be sick or mad, only then doors will open" (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020). The problem of a lack of support for

the "self-sufficient" is also emphasized by the representative of the MoA and De Regenboog Groep in our interviews (Interviewee 6, personal communication, 11-06-2020, (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020). Moreover, interviewees mentioned that being economically homeless is generally not a permanent state of being, as not having a home does often lead to psychological or drug related problems (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020, Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020). Therefore, the problem seems to enforce itself, which also puts an increasing pressure on social care services which already experience difficulties in coping with the increasing demand (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020, Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020).

## 5.2 HOUSING

In the Netherlands, housing scarcity is an increasing problem. It is mostly triggered by the fast population growth and the stagnant production of new houses (Capital Value, 2018). With less than 1% of the total housing stock added as new buildings every year, Amsterdam is one of the leading cities in terms of high housing prices and the lack of affordable houses on an international level (Bouwinvest, 2019). As one of our interviewees mentioned:

*"Amsterdam has one big problem: they are one of the most successful cities of the Netherlands"*

(Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020)

Unfortunately, the policy on homelessness shows several shortcomings to take this housing shortage into account. These shortcomings correspond to the policy overview and some were mentioned in the interviews as well as. The three main shortcomings will be presented below.

### 5.2.1 Decentralization

Firstly, as described in the stakeholder analysis, social care and housing systems have been decentralized by the DNG to the regional level. The DNG sets the guidelines, but municipalities have the responsibility to provide adequate housing and social care (De Ridder et al., 2018). During the interviews, this decentralization has been named as a problem for economic homelessness. Platform 31 addressed the necessity for the central government to take control back over the market because of the housing scarcity. However, the DNG constantly pushes away that responsibility and refuses to take control over the market:

2. <https://www.zelfredzaamheidmatrix.nl/wp-content/uploads/200303-Zelfredzaamheid-Matrix-2017-v2.0.pdf>

*“I think the national government has an important role there. But they refuse to take it, as their last letter shows (see: Blokhuis & Ollongren, 03-06-2020). It’s all stimulating, giving some money, but that’s it”*  
(Interviewee 3, focus group, 16-06-2020)

De Regenboog Groep also mentioned the urgency for the national government to take control and took it even further by saying that there is *‘a reservoir of problems that is about to burst’* (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020). The fact that the national government fails to take control of the housing market causes high cost of buying and renting houses, which is also considered to significantly increase the number of economically homeless people (NBC, 2018). The decentralization of responsibilities of the housing market also means more responsibilities for housing corporations (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020), which can lead to discussion between the housing corporations and the municipality, as is discussed below.

### **5.2.2 Housing corporations lack finance**

Secondly, the DNG has requested for more middle-rent housing (*middelhuurwoningen*) recently, especially because it is expected that the demand for middle rent housing will increase due to the corona crisis. The housing corporations are willing to fulfill that request, but are unable to focus on building middle rent, social housing, increasing sustainability and keeping prices low at the same time. Right now, 60% of housing corporations give preference to focus on social housing, sustainability and keeping rent prices low. That is why they want an official law from The Hague that provides financial stimulation so they can to adjust their planning and build middle rent in addition to their current activities (NUL20, 2020) So far, municipalities and housing corporations have not been able to find common ground on the issue of resources available to the housing corporations, as becomes clear from this quote:

*“The governments conclude that housing corporations have enough resources and capacity to build more. Housing corporations do not agree because they think that the government does not provide them enough facilities, or that they do not have enough capital to make the investments for all these different groups that you want us to take care for.”*  
(Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020)

### **5.2.3 Solutions are not structural**

As of now, the MoA undertakes several actions to assist economically homeless people who do not qualify for Social Care and Protected Living. Actions include expanding the postal address possibilities, assisting people in finding permanent residence with ‘passer-by pensions’ and creating additional shelter such as Onder de Pannen (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2016). Although these initiatives are facilitative in some aspects, more structural solutions are required to help economically homeless people according to the interviews. For example, someone from the target group (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020) pointed out that these initiatives are short term and the municipality has strict requirements to get in. Therefore *“it does not give perspective, no perspective towards the future”* (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020). Besides that, De Regenboog Groep indicated that these initiatives lack resources and suffer from a surplus of requests (Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

	Shortcomings	Evaluation
Social Care	Focus on social care	Most of the policies such as <i>At Home in the Neighbourhood</i> (Thuis in de Wijk), the <i>Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups</i> (Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen) and Housing First are prioritizing people with health issues. Therefore, people who do not have a health-related problem will find it difficult to get access to social care
	Initiatives are too small scale	Some actions and policies such as access to postal addresses and increased support in temporal stays (i.e., ‘passerby pensions’ and <i>Onder de Pannen</i> ) fail to provide a structural solution to solve homelessness.
	Lack of specific policy for economically homeless people	There is no policy specifically targeting economically homeless people. They seem to be excluded of most of the current policies within the MoA. Therefore, it is difficult for them to get access to social care.
	Self-sufficiency	The term ‘self-sufficiency’ and the use of ‘self-sufficiency matrix’ is debatable. The use of the self-sufficiency matrix seems to be unfavorable for economically homeless people, since economically homeless people have less chance to get access to social care because they are considered too self-sufficient.
Housing	Decentralization	The decentralization of social care and housing markets caused a lack of control over the housing market by the DNG. This has resulted in increasing housing prices and increasing numbers of people who cannot afford to buy a house.
	Housing corporations lack finance	Currently, there is a lack of financial stimulation provided for housing corporations to build more social and middle rent housing.

Table 4 Shortcomings on Policies Within the MoA



## 6 | ADDITIONAL BARRIERS AND FACILITATORS

### SUMMARY

This chapter outlines facilitators and barriers that have been identified that influence economically homeless people, but are not directly related to policy of the MoA. Barriers that have been identified are the high housing prices in Amsterdam, the fact that Amsterdam attracts many people from outside Amsterdam, the unsuitable distribution of housing and the fact that there are some misconceptions about homelessness. Facilitators have also been identified, such as a social assistance program by the MoA and the fact that the stigma surrounding homeless people is slowly changing.

### 6.1 ADDITIONAL BARRIERS

#### 6.1.1 Amsterdam as attractive place for job seekers

Amsterdam is an attractive city for Dutch inhabitants including homeless people for seeking jobs and finding a better quality of life. It is predicted that there will be a significant population surge in Amsterdam reaching about 1 million people by 2023 (Desai, 2019). This inevitably makes the housing scarcity even bigger and puts more pressure on social care (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020). Besides that, homeless people in Amsterdam generally do not want to leave the city (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020). As a result of these two factors, social housing and social care suffer from long waiting lists (Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020; Interviewee 2, personal communication, 10-06-2020).

#### 6.1.2 High housing prices

The high housing prices in Amsterdam function as a barrier for homeless people. As mentioned in the introduction, high housing prices is one of the key factors that lead to homelessness in Amsterdam (Baas et al., 2020). According to a research of Capital Value en ABF Research, a big trigger in the rising house prices is the lack of building permits in 2019 (Amsterdam Nieuws, 2020). The price of houses is expected to increase even further, because the municipality decided that the rent prices are allowed to increase with 1 percent each year, in order to get investors on board (Roelle, 2020). De Regenboog Groep addresses the use of the WOZ-value for calculating the value of houses as a problem for the housing prices:

*“Housing prices have exploded [...] In the social housing sector, there is a point system which is equal to the WOZ-value, but it used to be about the value of the stone, of the actual house”*

(Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020)

Ons Doel addressed that it is hard for housing corporations to build more social housing, partially because of the landlord levy: *“Just the other day, I was looking through my administration. I noticed that we pay between 30 to 40 percent of our rent incomes on landlord levies”* (Interviewee 5, personal communication, 11-06-2020). The lack of new social housing further increases housing prices.

#### 6.1.3 Unsuitable housing distribution

Another barrier for homeless people is that housing is not correctly distributed. For example, the income of many people who started in social housing years ago has surpassed the threshold for social housing in the meantime. However, they keep living in social housing, since they cannot find alternative living. This group of people are the so called skewed renters (*scheef huurders*): although their rents are allowed to increase, they cannot be kicked out (Akkerman, n.d.). This leaves a problem for people with lower incomes, since social housing that used to be destined for them, is occupied by people with a higher income. De Regenboog Groep recognizes this problem and states that the MoA should show better effort to equally distribute housing: ‘

*“It is also about redistributing housing, because building extra houses is not enough; it takes too much time and we have a problem now. We really have a problem.”*

(Interviewee 4, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

This is also an argument why Minister Ollongren proposed that housing corporations should focus more on middle rent housing, as this will enforce a more fluent flow from social to middle rent houses (Ollongren, 17-09-2019).

#### 6.1.4 Misconceptions about homelessness

There are some misconceptions surrounding homelessness that function as a barrier for homeless people. For example, counselors at the MoA have a wrong image of the housing market. According to Platform 31, *“the imagination of a*

*well-functioning housing market is still present.”* (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020). This problem is exacerbated by the fact that housing corporations are afraid to build housing focused on economically homeless people, as they are afraid that this is not profitable (Interviewee 5, personal communication, 11-06-2020). Besides that, according to one interviewee, the MoA could learn from other municipalities but has difficulty in doing so (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020).

## **6.2 ADDITIONAL FACILITATORS**

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### **6.2.1 Stigma on homelessness has gradually changed**

As described above, there are still some misconceptions surrounding homelessness. Fortunately, the stigma surrounding homeless people is slowly changing to a less negative image:

*“You notice that homelessness can happen to anyone and that has been put on the agenda much more. There is much more understanding for that”*

(Interviewee 6, personal communication, 11-06-2020)

### **6.2.2 City social assistance program**

The MoA has launched a program about applying for social assistance benefits. Everyone including homeless people who have a little income as well as few savings could apply for social assistance benefit. According to the MoA’s official online site, as of 1 January 2020, a single person and the single parent will receive €999,70, per month and for a family it is around €1,428,14 (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d. b). This is also justified by one of our interviewees:

*“The municipality provides social benefits for homeless people, such as an allowance for homeless people (daklozenuitkering)”*

(Interviewee 1, personal communication, 09-06-2020)

This chapter details the practices that can serve as inspiration for the MoA. It starts off by discussing the benefits of the CoH's organisation before moving on to discuss the merits of their housing strategies. The CoH has been successful in their work regarding homelessness not only because the city owns its own housing corporation, but it has also managed to mobilise private housing corporations in their Social Housing program. The chapter then mentions self-sufficiency and alternative ways of viewing homelessness. Seeing homelessness as a set of situations rather than classifying it into economically, self-sufficient or social homeless people, has provided the city with more flexibility in dealing with the issue. In the CoH the housing first model has proved to be more efficient than the housing staircase model. Lastly, a big factor enabling the CoH's success has been its improved coordination and cooperation between departments. It has also been successful in halting the segregation in the city by taking into account where people within its Social Housing program are placed.

### 7.1 BACKGROUND TO PROBLEM OF HOMELESSNESS

In the report *“Det bostadssociala programmet i Helsingborg: Hur samarbetar Helsingborgs stad, AB Helsingborgshem och stadens privata fastighetsägare för att lösa bostadsbehovet för människor som står utanför den ordinarie bostadsmarknaden?”* (2019)<sup>3</sup> two researchers were tasked by Helsingborgshem to carry out an evaluation of the social housing program in CoH<sup>4</sup>. Their main focus was to identify a new group of people that had been excluded from the regular housing market. In 2008 the Swedish government made the health insurance regulations much stricter, causing a lot of people to no longer be qualified for health benefits or to receive them for as long as before. Consequently, people that were previously dependent on their sick pay (paid by the state) now become dependent on receiving economic support from the municipality instead. The municipality was therefore required to take over much of the responsibility previously held by the state. Moreover, the problem with people's income changing from sick pay to economic support is that in many landlords' income re-

gulations, sick pay is often approved whereas economic aid is not. Before 2014, more than 100.000 people had been excluded from social insurance and many of them ended up at the Swedish Public Employment Service which complained that they received a lot of people that are too sick to work. It is believed that this change in national policy has caused an increase in the number of people that can be classified as economically homeless (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). The CoH's Social Housing Program is aimed at homeless people or people at risk of becoming homeless.

### 7.2 ORGANISATION

The Social Housing Program involves the Social Services Department, Labour Market Department, the Property Management Department, and Community Care and Services Department. The executive directors from the departments form a management team that has the overall responsibility and they make the decisions for the direction of the work regarding homelessness. They also employ a project group

on activity level that is responsible for strategic questions and the management team can give it strategic missions. An intergroup on the level of an executive director is responsible for operative questions on an individual level. The management team meets at least

3. English translation: “The Social Housing program in Helsingborg: How do the City of Helsingborg, AB Helsingborgshem and the city's private property owners work together to solve the housing need for people who are outside the ordinary housing market?”

4. A summary of the policies that are discussed in this chapter can be found in appendix 4

#### The City of Helsingborg

The City of Helsingborg is a municipality in the south of Sweden from which you can reach Helsingör (Denmark) with a ferry. In 2019 it had 147.734 inhabitants and from 2013 to 2019, the only years where there was a housing shortage were 2016 and 2019. In 2017 the housing supply consisted of 68.844 residences of which 46 percent were rental, 27 percent co-operative apartments, and 27 percent home-crofts (SCB, 2016). The municipal housing corporation Helsingborgshem owned 11.600 apartments. Every sixth year the National Board of Health and Welfare carries out a survey of the amount of homeless people in Sweden. It reported that there were 33.250 homeless people during week 14 in 2017- of a population of around 10 million- and of those more than a fifth had no other need that required support, intervention or treatment besides housing. CoH had in 2017 29.4 persons per 10.000 inhabitants that were homeless, which was a decrease from 68 persons per 10.000 inhabitants in 2011 (Socialstyrelsen, 2012; Socialstyrelsen 2017).

once every half a year. The project group also participates in those meetings as well as seeing each other as often as their projects requires. The intergroup meets 4-5 times a year (Helsingborgs stad, 2018).

This organisation had decided on to make sure homelessness became an integrated part throughout most of the city's departments and to make sure no group of people was excluded from the care of the city. During their evaluation of the CoH's Social Housing program, Annadotter and Knutagård (2019) found that the coordination between the departments had been clarified and that the understanding for each others roles and responsibilities had been deepened. However, there was room for improvement such as the departments having a meeting where they discussed their respective housing prognosis. In order to continuously improve the coordination and cooperation of the departments it was recommended that they continued to organise workshops. To increase the function of the Social Housing program it was recommended that they included the City Management Administration's department of strategic social development in the organisation as it had valuable knowledge regarding planning and development. By incorporating the CoH's social housing interventions in the Land and Housing Program 2020-2023 (decided on every fourth year) the department for strategic social development received a much bigger role in the program, since it has the overarching responsibility for the plan.

## **7.3 HOUSING**

### **7.3.1 The housing first model or the staircase model**

There are two different modes of viewing the Social Housing program within the departments of the CoH, which are the housing staircase model and the housing first model. In the housing first approach the housing is seen as a condition for an independent life to be possible and a means for social integration. The housing staircase approach involves the homeless person advancing step by step to eventually achieving the goal of having an own apartment. Furthermore, it includes a moral evaluation of the faults of homeless people that make them inadequate in handling their own housing. Research has shown the housing first approach receives better results, whereas many homeless people risk getting stuck in one of the steps along the way to receiving an apartment in the housing staircase model. The housing staircase model is also much more expensive due to the temporary housings that the homeless people must pass through (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019).

### **7.3.2 The CoH's Housing First project**

The CoH started its Housing First project in 2009 and it has proven to be effective. As of 2017, 85,2 percent of all people that has been housed since the beginning of the project, still remain (Knutagård & Kristiansen, 2018). The target group for the project are those with the biggest need for social care and those who are currently homeless. The participants of the project first receive permanent housing and then social care, since the underlying idea is that everything starts with having your own home (Interviewee 8, personal communication, 11-06-2020). The philosophy behind their approach, is that it is much harder to achieve any positive change when you still have the doubts and insecurities of finding a permanent home hanging over you. By starting with first having a home, it becomes easier for the participants to receive and take in social care, since having a home provides them with a sense of security. During CoH's Housing First project the Social Services Department tried to come up with alternative modes of housing in cooperation with homeless people. Their experiences were seen just as important as the researchers. The experiences from the project can be applied throughout the social housing program (Interviewee 8, personal communication, 11-06-2020). The project is likely to be very effective if applied to economically homeless people as well, since most often all they need is a home. By providing them with a home early on, it is possible to prevent people developing drug abuse problems and mental health issues as a result of lacking a home.

### **7.3.3 Social housing**

The CoH owns its own housing corporation called Helsingborgshem, which eases the process of finding apartments for its Social Housing program and exerting its influence over what type of housing is needed. However, the aim of the CoH is that all housing corporations should provide their market share of housing to the program. As the current situation stands, Helsingborgshem provides more than their market share of apartments. Nonetheless, their housing share of the program has decreased from 86 percent in 2012 to 64 percent in 2018 (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). Within the Social Housing program there are 25 on call apartments (an apartment that the municipality rent from a housing corporation and then rent out furnished) provided by the Labour Market Department that are targeted to people that receive economic aid and have become urgently homeless (Helsingborgs stad, 2013). However, during the interview with the social researcher from Lund

University (Interviewee 8, personal communication, 11-06-2020) it became clear that it can be hard to escape the second-hand market that social housing is, since there is a negative stigma surrounding living in social housing. Moreover, the interviewee (11-06-2020) said: *“The problem with social housing is that it risks becoming an acceptance that we have people that will never gain entrance to the housing market. It is made into a regular part of the housing market”*. The CoH recognises this problem and one way it tries to remedy it, is by providing rental apartments in the regular housing market. To do so and help economically homeless people back into the regular market the CoH acts as a guarantor over maximum 2+2 years but thereafter the secondhand contract is turned into a firsthand contract with the involved private property owners. As the situation stands, many of the property owners have agreed to turning the contracts into firsthand contracts and discussions are ongoing with those that have yet to agree to doing so (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019).

### 7.3.4 Projects to facilitate staying and reentering the regular housing market

In the policy document *Action plan the Social Housing Program* (Handlingsplan: Bostadssocialprogrammet) from 2018 a further proposed solution to help people to remain or gain entry to the regular housing market was to reformulate the land transfer agreement so that building operators leave 10 percent of the volume of housing in the land allocation received in the current stock during year X (Helsingborgs stad, 2018). This ensures that at least 10 percent of the housing volume remains open when areas are redeveloped. Considering that most new housing is of too high of a rental level for economically vulnerable people or/and economically homeless people, it is important that housing in the lower rent category remains available if they are to be able to receive housing of their own. As the interviewee from Hemlösas Hus (Interviewee 7, personal communication, 10-06-2020) said: *“The municipal housing corporation should be open for everyone. Limit or slope regulations regarding demands to be met in order to be allowed to rent one of their apartments”*. The five tenants project is a step towards that, since it does not discriminate against people with debts or previous late rental payments. This project supplies five tenants that do not satisfy Helsingborgshems economic demands with an apartment provided that the tenant meets the requirements of having kept up with current rental payments, having caused no disturbances and is provided with a recommendation from the Property Ma-

nagement Department (Helsingborgs stad, 2018).

### 7.3.5 Segregation

All the previously mentioned strategies deal with what is the most important step in solving homelessness, namely to have an adequate housing supply. However, as previously discussed what housing strategy is deployed and in what type of housing homeless people are placed can also have a major impact. Likewise where people are placed can have a huge effect on the rest of their lives and if homeless people are placed in already poor areas it risks causing a worsening segregation. In the Social Housing program, the CoH and Helsingborgshem have actively worked to try to prevent segregation by spreading out the apartments within the program throughout the city. Helsingborgshem has even stopped placing homeless people in some areas with a high poverty level. According to Annadotter and Knutsson (2019) this has probably caused the segregation to slow down in the city. The importance of this cannot be understated and is clearly evident in Galster’s (2012) research that show that if the neighbourhood has more than 20 percent poverty the negative effects such as criminality, dropouts and lasting poverty increase. Up to 40 percent poverty the increase is escalated before planning out. Moreover, research at Harvard University that studied the long term effects on children that got the opportunity to move to a neighbourhood with low levels of poverty through the experiment “Moving to Opportunity”, found that especially children between four to twelve years old when they moved had a vastly increased income and a higher degree of them were studying at college compared to those children that remained (Chetty, et al., 2016). It is therefore not only important that children receive a roof over their head, it is also of utmost importance where they are placed.

## 7.4 AN ALTERNATIVE TO SELF-SUFFICIENCY

### 7.4.1 Four situations of homelessness

The CoH has decided to follow the The National Board of Health and Welfare’s definition of homelessness in utilizing their classification system of homelessness, namely that homelessness is a situation that a person may be in and not a trait. Meaning that at no point in their policies do they classify homeless people in categories of social homelessness, economic homelessness, and self-sufficient people. Rather their goals and actions are based on the situation the homeless person currently faces.

The four situations of homelessness according to the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen, 2017):

1. Urgent homelessness: sleeps outside, in cars, shelters and so on.
2. Institutional stay and assisted living: Persons who do not have housing after institutional stay or after living at an assisted living facility.
3. Long-term housing solutions: Accommodation in one of the social services' housing forms such as training apartments where the living is combined with supervision and certain rules and regulations.
4. Self-organized short-term accommodation: Short-term housing with family, friends or having a temporary second-hand contract with a private person.

The benefit of this system is that it allows for greater flexibility, since it sees homelessness as a situation rather than a trait, it recognizes that people are not static and may move between categories. The interviewee from Lund University (Interviewee 8, personal communication, 11-06-2020) stated that homelessness should only be addressed from the situation of homeless people. By seeing homelessness in different situations instead it becomes evident that homelessness is first and foremost about a lack of housing no matter how one became homeless. Being homeless is likely to cause insecurity as well as stress and could potentially lead to drug abuse problems or/and mental health issues for those that previously had none. A classification in social and economic homelessness risk leading to only those that are classified as social homeless receiving adequate help, since they are seen as the ones in much need. Moreover,

seeing homelessness as a set of situations instead of traits makes it apparent that it is something that can happen to everyone, rather than something that only happens to an abstract them.

#### **7.4.2 General or specific difficulties**

Although the four situations of homelessness pervades the CoH's work regarding homelessness, it still makes some categorizations. The Social Services Department distinguishes between general and specific difficulties. It is required to have specific difficulties in combination with social issues to be qualified for support from the department. However, rental debts and lack of permanent income counts as general difficulties, thereby excluding those that can be said to be economically homeless from receiving support from the Social Services Department (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). Considering that having for example rental debts most often effectively excludes oneself from the regular housing market, it can be argued that it should count as a specific difficulty as well.

## 8 | DISCUSSION

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The discussion is divided into four different topics. First, the facilitators and shortcomings that are apparent in the homelessness policies are analyzed and provided with context by linking them to different concepts. Second, a comparison is made between relevant concepts in the CoH with the case in Amsterdam, which is later used for the recommendations section. Lastly, a reflection on the research process is included.

### 8.1 INTERGRATIVE ANALYSIS

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#### 8.1.1 Amsterdam

In the chapters above, we have provided the results obtained from policy reports, literature, media and interviews with stakeholders regarding the different sub-research questions. In this chapter, we merge the results into a discussion regarding the policies and regulations within the MoA that are related to the problem of economic homelessness: social care and (social) housing. By doing so, we gain an integral perspective on the problem, which, together with a comparison between Helsingborg and the Amsterdam, can provide a starting position from which recommendations for future policy or research can be drawn. Some leads for future recommendations are already mentioned carefully throughout this section.

#### *Amsterdam: A large focus on Social Care leaves the economically homeless out of focus*

As mentioned earlier, the MoA makes a considerable effort in addressing the problem of homelessness, and specifically in providing social care for those in need. Addressing homelessness is still a large priority for the MoA, which can be seen in reports such as *At Home in the Neighbourhood* and the *Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups* (Thuis in de Wijk and Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen). Thereby, the MoA stimulates cooperation with independent non-profit organisations such as De Regenboog Groep and HVO-Querido, which are more closely in contact with the target group. Out of these collaborations, initiatives such as Housing First, *Onder de Pannen*, *Vriendschappelijke Opvang*, ‘passerby pensions’ and increased access to postal addresses are facilitated, which are targeted slightly more to the economically homeless (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017a). Based on publications in the media and the interviews that have been studied, it has become clear that the effects for the homeless who are able to make use of these initiatives are generally positive (e.g. Interviewee 4, personal contact, 08-06-2020; Van Veen, 2009). The way that the

MoA implements concerns from social organisations and the target group in its policies - such as the problem with a requirement for postal addresses for social benefits or the restrictions on the *kostendelersnorm* - is a highly important development and promising for the implementation of future policy implications.

Nevertheless, the cost-intensive social care for the most vulnerable groups in the city forces the MoA to only provide care for those whose situation is so serious that they are in need of urgent care. To determine this, the ‘self-sufficiency matrix’ is used. But, as made clear throughout this report, this matrix is controversial as it only passes through people with (diagnosed) mental illnesses, drug addiction, alcoholism or violence records or other types of run-ins with the law. People who are solely coping with the problem of not having a home (the increasing group of economically homeless) will be labelled as self-sufficient, and it has been made clear throughout this report that the label ‘self-sufficiency’ is in many cases inadequate (ZRM.nl, n.d.).

The striking difference in the level of support for vulnerable citizens with a need for (health) care versus the lack of support for the economically homeless people without current physical or mental issues sketches the skewed distribution of focus on the broad homelessness problem within the MoA. Policies and measures to combat homelessness are mostly taken up by the Department of Care. Policy programs such as *At Home in the Neighbourhood* and *Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups* are primarily focused on people with a need for healthcare (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017a; Gemeente Amsterdam, 2019). Social Care and Protected Living are only targeted at those who pass the self-sufficiency matrix. Therefore, collaborations between healthcare providers and housing cooperatives are only beneficial for clients of these healthcare providers. By closing the door at the *Screening Desk for Special Target Groups* (Screeningsbalie Bijzondere doelgroepen), the MoA excludes the growing group of economically homeless people. This is understandable, since the interviews showed that the MoA’s Social Care has difficulty to cope with the increasing group of people with a need for (health) care. However, one could ask oneself if rejecting social care to those without current (mental) health issues but with severe stress and confidence problems can eventually result in psychological problems that need more (cost) intensive care. Plausibly, one does not carry the label “economically homeless” forever, as sliding into mental disorders is likely. This problem is widely addressed by multiple interviewees, but future research regarding this relation is recommended. Nevertheless, municipalities in Sweden have another approach that might be interesting to consider, which will

be explained later.

Moreover, alternative measures focused on economic homelessness appear to be insufficient. As mentioned earlier, the MoA does not have any specific policy that is meant to solely support the (potential) economically homeless. *At Home in the Neighbourhood* and *Program Plan Housing Vulnerable Groups* clearly focus on early signaling (*Vroegsignalering*) of vulnerable people who are likely to face financial or social problems in the near future. Consequently, the number of evictions in the city decreased over the previous years. Also, *Onder de Pannen* and *Housing First* show, according to interviewees and media, promising effects for people who are able to apply. However, early signaling does not help the current economically homeless. And according to interviewees, initiatives such as *Onder de Pannen* work, but are carried out on a too small scale as there is a lack of available empty homes or rooms. This is why many interviewees mentioned that simply constructing new houses for the target group is probably the only structural solution for the problem.

#### *Amsterdam: Insufficient housing remains a large problem*

The MoA and the DNG acknowledge the shortage of social housing but the actions that both parties undertake are not convincing. What stands out is the substantial estimated shortage of social housing in Amsterdam for 2025 in the *Housing Agenda 2025* (Woonagenda 2025). Whereas the demand for social housing will increase to 49 percent, the city's supply is estimated to be only 39 percent. In *Housing Agenda 2025*, the MoA resolves to make new agreements with housing corporations and residents to come up with a new 'dynamic equilibrium' after 2019. However, any adequate actions have not been seen yet. How the city will cope with the demand surplus of social housing is unclear, especially taking into account the increasing number of homeless people due to the corona-crisis (NOS.nl, 2020a). The 18 year long waiting list for social housing is not likely to decrease substantially in the near future considering this development (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2017). Given the predictions of the MoA, much more houses need to be constructed than is agreed upon in the *Housing Agenda 2025*. Initiatives such as *Onder de Pannen* and the new point-system that should allocate social houses more fairly will not close the gap between supply and demand anytime soon.

#### *Considerations for the future housing market*

Apart from constructing houses, the city should consider alternative options to execute simultaneously, as the problem is urgent and immediate housing is essential. First, the MoA should come up with fair instruments that are

designed to assign houses to those who need them the most. As mentioned, the MoA came up with a point system for their social housing waiting list, and intend to let go of the first-come first-serve principle (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2020b). However this might not have any severe impact considering the 18 year long waiting list. In order to provide housing to people who are on that long waiting list, concepts such as flexliving or temporary housing have to be explored. This will be elaborated upon in chapter 10.

*“Is it fair to give houses to the people who wait the longest, or do we need other instruments than a waiting list? Because of this consideration, we now also make use of a raffling system. But this instrument is already spoiled, because others who do not need a house urgently now also have an incentive to join the raffle. We need an instrument that serves the people who urgently need new houses, without the rest of the population thinking that the system is unfair”*

(Interviewee 3, personal correspondence, 08-06-2020)

Second, the available square meters that are currently livable but empty have to be considered as well. According to the CBS, between 2015 and 2019, 2 percent of the houses in Amsterdam are vacant and 1 percent of the houses are dealing with long-term vacancy (longer than one-and-a-half year no or very little energy usage; CBS.nl, 2020). This translates to 4,000 to 8,000 houses. Besides that, more than 40 percent of the long-term vacant houses are property of private landlords, whereas less than 15 percent of the long-term vacant houses are property of housing corporations. Besides that, it might be worthwhile investigating the possibility to create housing from empty non-residential buildings.

*“But also alternative ways of housing, such as tiny houses or creating a park/area for people who need temporary housing. If the ground is available, why not?”*

Interviewee 1, personal correspondence, 06-06-2020

*“The other day I had a nice thought. You see in offices, for example, that they share each other's desks instead of owning one. This means that you need less office space. What if we would use this sharing method with houses in the Netherlands? Then you would see that we even have too much space! You could even demolish some houses, if you are able to distribute it more smartly.”*

(Interviewee 5, personal correspondence, 11-06-2020)



### *Amsterdam: Considering leaving the city*

If affordable housing remains scarce, moving to another municipality might function as a last resort for the economically homeless person. This does sound as a valid option when you take the problematic situation of the Amsterdam housing market as given. There are, nevertheless, a few drawbacks to consider when aiming to move the vulnerable group of the *Amsterdammers* to other municipalities.

Firstly, as is clear by now, economically homeless people are not self-sufficient and require some support to build up a decent livelihood. This support could vary between a decent social network to social benefits (*bijstandsuitkering*). However, as the municipality is responsible for providing social benefits, it is unlikely that municipalities in the Dutch countryside are very willing to welcome 'care-needing homeless people from Amsterdam' (e.g. Interviewee 1, personal correspondence, 06-06-2020). As mentioned in the recent Report of the Council of Public Health & Society: 'Recovery starts with a Home' (*Rapport Raad van Volksgezondheid & Samenleving - from now on RVS -: 'Herstel begint met een huis'*), many 'centre-municipalities' (Dutch municipalities who are jointly responsible for the national care for the homeless) stick to the principles of the need for affection with the region (*regiobinding*), and already spend much effort on caring for its own vulnerable citizens (Raad van Volksgezondheid & Samenleving, 2020). Additionally, as was mentioned by a representative of De Regenboog Groep, social workers of societal organisations have a strong network within the city, but do not have strong connections to societal organisations in other municipalities. Altogether, if there is no other option than to transfer the economically homeless people to other municipalities, a stronger network between different municipalities and societal organisations should be established to ensure a smooth transition. The person concerned should feel comfortable with moving to another place and the risk of developing other social problems in the new municipality should be minimized by providing a safe environment.

Secondly, one might ask oneself if 'transferring' vulnerable groups from the big city to the countryside is actually desirable. The MoA should ask itself how it sees the future demographics of the city. Does it want to maintain the current trend which shows that the city is more and more the city of the successful and wealthy instead of the city of the hardworking average laborer (Milikowski, 2020)? In her essay, Floor Milikowski (2020) argues that Amsterdam and its *Amsterdammers* feel much more related to Paris and its Parisians and New York and its New Yorkers than to other Dutch places such as Zwolle and Emmen. In this report, we are not arguing which direction for the future of the capital

of the Netherlands is 'best' or 'most desired' - even though this development leads to increased economic inequalities (Milikowski, 2020). We do argue, however, that if Amsterdam actually wants to take care of its vulnerable citizens, it might not want to take individualistic and liberalised metropolises as an example to strive for. On the contrary, it might actually want to be more engaged with other Dutch cities that face similar situations, instead of holding on to the thought that Amsterdam is a 'special' Dutch city that cannot learn from the initiatives and experiences of other Dutch 'centre-municipalities' (Interviewee 3, personal correspondence, 08-06-2020) - with whom the MoA has a joint responsibility regarding homelessness. Pushing the (potential) economically homeless people out of the city in order to join the group world-leading metropolises might not be the way a national capital should cope with its responsibility to care for all of its citizens.

### *Responsibility of the problem*

Nevertheless, then the question remains: who is actually responsible for this problem? For this, we can start at the recent RVS-report regarding housing for vulnerable groups. It says that the 43 'centre-municipalities' have the leading role in distributing funds from the national government with a purpose of providing care and protected living to the citizens of the municipalities (Raad van Volksgezondheid & Samenleving, 2020). The report acknowledges that the 'stratification of governance' (read: decentralization to municipalities) leads to problems that remain 'stuck in the middle' between the different responsibilities of municipalities and other organisations. Problems such as homelessness become tragedies of the commons as no (governmental) organisation has an incentive to proactively take more responsibility as others remain reactive. To the question 'who is responsible' the report answers: we all are a little bit responsible. The report calls for a higher degree of cooperation between the different responsible stakeholders, such as the (centre-)municipalities as well as housing corporations and societal organisations. Ironically, the report refers to a study from Platform 31 when stating this, whereas the representative of Platform 31 whom we interviewed is highly critical towards the state's attitude regarding its own responsibility. He mentioned that only handing out some funds to address the problems locally is taking way too little responsibility for a problem that is nation-wide. Even though formally, the responsibility of the problem lays with the municipalities - as a result of decentralization and integrative governance that is highly popular in the Netherlands - a central approach lacks, which is exactly what the

RVS report mentions as well. Nevertheless, the proposed solution in this report is even more integrative governance of different local stakeholders.

*“We could make Amsterdam responsible for this, but you should coordinate this from regional or upper-regional agreements. I think the national government has a large role in this. But, they refuse to take this, which you could see in their latest letter [refers to RVS report (2020)]. They stimulate, they ask nicely, they give a little money, they tickle them a bit, but that’s it. And that is really not enough. Because the shortage is large, and they just push the problem away.”*

(Interviewee 3, 16-06-2020)

We can draw this even further. The United Nations included ‘The Right to Adequate Housing’ in the universal human rights, of which the states who have ratified these rights are responsible for ensuring that its population has access to those rights. Adequate housing is not only providing four walls and a roof: *“Housing is not adequate if the specific needs of disadvantaged and marginalized groups are not taken into account”* (UN-HABITAT, 2009, p.3). Based on the interviews and media that are discussed in this report, we could argue that the needs for the growing marginalized group of economically homeless, are not taken into account. One could argue that this is formally the responsibility of the municipality, but if the municipality cannot meet this requirement for whatever reason, it is the state who should step in. Not an even more integrated network of local stakeholders. It is, however, unfortunate that the one ministry that could be held fully accountable for this - the Ministry of Housing - has been terminated in 2010, as the then minister Stef Blok concluded that the housing market was ‘finished’. Fortunately, the House of Representatives intends to re-found this ministry, as the national housing shortage is widely acknowledged (NOS.nl, 2020b). A more centralized and adequate approach is, for this future ministry, highly recommended.

### **8.1.2 Differences with the City of Helsingborg**

Similarly to the case of the MoA and The Netherlands, the increasing amount of homeless people in Sweden can be traced back to a decentralization of the housing market in the 1990s. A major cause for the increase of the economically homeless people is believed to be the decentralization of responsibility from the government to the municipality

by making the sick pay regulations stricter. Consequently, in Sweden, many of those that were previously depending on sick pay (paid by the state) now became dependent on economic aid (paid by the municipality) instead. Economic aid however is to a lesser degree seen as viable income by prospective landlords and many thereby became excluded from the regular housing market. In the CoH, social housing is only for homeless people and can therefore be understood as constituting a second housing market separate from the regular one (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). In this part of the discussion we will discuss the differences between the MoA and the CoH. Due to the nature of our research the focus is on the positive parts of the CoH’s policies, however that is not to say that they do a perfect job.

### *View of homelessness and how this affect the organisation*

To understand the differences between the municipalities it is best to start with how they view homelessness, because that will inform how they approach the problem. As mentioned before, in the policy of the MoA homelessness has traditionally been seen as a social care problem, although there are some tendencies to adopting an integrated approach. Still a self-sufficiency matrix is used, and homelessness is usually classified in social homelessness or economic homelessness (GGD Amsterdam, n.d.). Contrary in the CoH, homelessness is seen as a set of situations a homeless person can be in, spanning from living in the streets to moving from couch to couch (Socialstyrelsen, 2017). Such an approach makes it clear that there is one thing that is in common for all homeless people no matter the cause, which is a lack of housing. Furthermore, it provides the municipality with more flexibility because homeless people are not stuck within one category. It is recognized that they move around between situations. Although, the situations clarify that the need for housing is central, they also make it obvious that depending on the situation one is in, one’s needs besides housing might be different. Consequently, the CoH has understood that multiple of its departments (Social Services Department, Labour Market Department, the Property Management Department, and Community Care and Services Department) need to be included, since they have different competencies that can be matched to the different needs of the homeless people (Helsingborgs stad, 2018). Although, the MoA has started to cooperate between some departments and with some other stakeholders as well, it is needed to make such cooperation a permanent and integrative part of the organisation to be able to achieve any constructive changes.

### *How to provide a better structure in dealing with homelessness*

The CoH's current homelessness strategy is detailed in four policy documents starting from 2012 that all solely revolve around homelessness. Furthermore, within those policies they have specific actions that would benefit the economically homeless the most (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). As of 2020 homelessness issues are included as a part in the Land and Housing Program (Helsingborgs stad, 2020). This is in contrast to the MoA which has no specific policy on economically homeless people (see Chapter 3: Policy overview). There seems to be a lack of structure how the MoA approaches the issue of homelessness. This again goes back to how they view homelessness, by dividing them into social or economically homeless through the self-sufficiency matrix and seeing homelessness as mainly a social care problem. Then it follows naturally that those that are deemed as self-sufficient are considered to be outside of the municipality's responsibility. By changing how homelessness is viewed it would also be easier to understand what structure is needed and the CoH provides a good example of a structure that the MoA can try to follow.

### *Housing*

An obvious advantage that the CoH has is that it owns its own housing corporation, thereby making it easier to satisfy its housing needs (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). Whether, it is feasible for the MoA to start its own housing corporation is hard for us to say but it would provide a much bigger control over the municipality's housing supply. Although the MoA already cooperates with housing corporations, it can be improved further by taking inspiration from the CoH which has been successful in involving private housing corporations within its social housing projects by inviting them in to discuss them. In some projects the CoH also acts as a guarantor for the homeless tenant and it thereby provides the private housing corporation with a security which makes the housing corporation more willing to participate (Annadotter & Knutagård, 2019). The first and foremost issue of homelessness is a lack of housing. However, as is detailed in chapter 7 of this report where children are placed can play a huge role for their future. It is, therefore, needed to have a long-term approach when housing homeless families to understand the detriment or benefits of where they are placed. The CoH takes this into account by not housing homeless people in some of their areas with a high poverty rate, instead trying to spread them out in more well-off areas. Since 2009 the CoH has had a Housing First project ongoing with a success rate of 85 percent, similarly to the

MoA, however, it is still only targeted towards homeless people with a mental health issue or drug abuse problem (Knutagård & Kristiansen, 2018). The MoA can learn from the success of housing first projects throughout the world, and be a paragon by making the housing first model its guiding principle throughout its work regarding homelessness. In doing so, it should not make any distinctions in classifications of homeless people who can or cannot apply for the Housing First program.

## **8.2 REFLECTION ON THE RESEARCH PROCESS**

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### **Limitations**

As with the majority of research, the results in this report are subject to limitations. There are several limitations that could be improved in the future research. Firstly, the time frame given for completing this report is effectively only 6 weeks, disregarding the time spent on personal reflection. This time constraint led the scope of our research to be limited only on policies within the MoA and CoH concerning housing and social care for homeless people. If more time is available, we could have widened our observations and analysis on other policies. Secondly, due to the COVID-19 outbreak, a travel restriction policy has been enforced since March 2020. Therefore, most of the data collections in our research - especially the interviews - were conducted online. The travel restriction and social distancing policies impeded us from making direct observations. Considering that observation can be useful in qualitative research to see the current condition of the target group firsthand, that could be seen as a limitation.

Another limitation encountered during the process of our research is related to the policy review and interviews. Almost all of the policies related to homelessness, housing and social care in Amsterdam and Helsingborg are written in their respective languages namely Dutch and Swedish. Furthermore, interviews were carried out conforming to the interviewee's respective languages. This aimed to establish effective communication between interviewers and interviewees. As a consequence, not all team members could participate in interviews, because of which there were less team members available to work on the specific parts, especially in analyzing the contents of policies of the two cities.

Lastly, it is undeniable that the term 'economically homeless people' is a new term in the world of homelessness. This is also recognized by several stakeholders in Amsterdam, where the economically homeless people are a new group of homeless people whose numbers tend to increase every year. This indicates that our topic is a most contemporary issue nowadays, and therefore few studies

that focused on the specific topic of 'economic homelessness' were found. The lack of prior research related to the topic of economic homelessness made it difficult for us to find theoretical underpinning for the research questions we investigated.

### **Suggestions for further research**

The problem of homelessness can be seen from various perspectives. Based on our analysis, the problem of homelessness in Amsterdam is very much related to housing problems specifically. The housing scarcity combined with skyrocketing housing prices add to the burden of the homeless in their struggle to find a home. As socio-political studies about homelessness have been vastly publicized, the other important thing to be researched in the future is related to the design of residential buildings. Analyzing or recommending alternative ways to provide sustainable and affordable permanent housing are considered critical to deal with the problem of homelessness. The result of such a research could be valuable for the MoA and the housing corporations to determine what sustainable and affordable housing in Amsterdam can look like in the future.

Furthermore, there is a possibility to address the problem of homelessness more central. In this case, the DNG could provide (financial) help to municipalities without housing scarcity. By this measure, it should become easier to find adequate housing for all (economically) homeless people. To achieve this, the DNG could determine the carrying capacity of every municipality. Therefore, a research

that intends to analyze the concrete amount of people that every municipality can or should accommodate is considered necessary. Moreover, it would be desirable to investigate the possibilities of increased flexliving spaces. If economically homeless people have a (temporary) house, the chance of developing (mental) health issues is lower, this will save a lot of money on social care later. It is very interesting to investigate mental health effects of being homeless for an X number of years before one obtains a (permanent) house, for example. These mental health effects could be expressed in monetary costs for the city. This might provide an incentive for the MoA or other municipalities to proactively tackle homelessness. Therefore, to support this desire, a research and analysis concerning the cost-benefit within the MoA to see how much money they could save by investing in flexliving is highly recommended.

## 9 | CONCLUSION

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This research aimed to provide a review on policies within the MoA that influence economic homelessness as well as discover best practices from the CoH in dealing with the issue of economic homelessness. By using a qualitative research approach, shortcomings and facilitators of the homelessness policy of the MoA and the DNG have been indicated. Various stakeholders have been interviewed and a stakeholder meeting has been organized. This was supported by a policy review and a literature study. To guide this research, the following research question has been formulated:

*What are shortcomings and facilitators within the policies regarding providing support to (potential) economically homeless people in the Municipality of Amsterdam; and how does the City of Helsingborg address (economic) homelessness within its policies?*

Based on a review of policies within the MoA, the DNG and the CoH, combined with stakeholders' perspectives concerning the issue of economic homelessness, it can be concluded that there are several shortcomings and facilitating factors within the policies.

Several policies have been formulated by the Municipality of Amsterdam (MoA) and the Dutch National Government (DNG) to overcome homelessness. Domains like social care, (social) housing and prevention are included within these policies. This report has reviewed policies that directly and indirectly target homelessness within the MoA considering facilitating aspects and shortcomings of these policies. Additionally, this report has looked into the homelessness approach of the City of Helsingborg (CoH) in Sweden, since this city has shown promising results for the prevention of homelessness (the National Board of Health and Safety, 2018).

In line with the second subquestion, this report finds that the policies of the MoA and the DNG provide several facilitating factors to prevent and overcome homelessness. Improving the arrangements to obtain a postal address, introducing a new pointing system for the assignment of social houses and Early-Intervention teams (*Vroeg Eropaf teams*) are some of the facilitative measures that have been taken. Also, the DNG tends to take a bit more responsibility by distributing funds to municipalities for a more thorough approach of addressing homelessness. Thereby, the willing-

ness of the MoA to cooperate with housing corporations and societal organisations is promising.

Yet, following our third subquestion, the same policies deal with persistent shortcomings. The use of a classification system based on 'self-sufficiency' highlights one of the biggest misconceptions about economically homeless people and actually prevents them from overcoming their problems. Nevertheless, we understand that the MoA requires some instrument to determine who urgently requires social care and who does not, but there seems to be no alternative support for this latter group. The problem of economic homelessness and homelessness in general is mainly taken up by the Department of Care within the MoA, even though the lack of affordable housing is the key factor that leads to homelessness in Amsterdam. Furthermore, the decentralization strategy initiated by the DNG to address homelessness results in a lack of central coordination and leadership, which are needed to provide structural solutions.

Besides shortcomings in the social care policies, shortcomings in housing policies have also been found. Firstly, it is clear that the DNG avoids taking responsibility to overcome the housing shortage and has decentralized their responsibilities to the municipal level. Rather, they rely on stimulating measures such as reducing the landlord levy, but these measures seem not to be enough. Reason for this is that municipalities come up with solutions on the short term rather than structural solutions. Besides that, there seems to be a lack of finance for housing corporations to focus on social housing and middle rent simultaneously.

Further improvement is needed. Considering our fourth subquestion, possible improvements can be found in the policies of the CoH. For example, the CoH classifies homelessness as a set of situations rather than classifying it in economic or social homelessness. This allows for a greater flexibility and recognizes that all homeless people face the problem of a lack of housing. Moreover, one of the biggest success factors behind the CoH's reduction in the amount of homeless people is how it has integrated the issue of homelessness within several of its departments that cooperate closely together. It has also been successful in including other stakeholders (housing corporations, homeless people, researchers) in their work, which has led to improved practices. This example of the CoH highlights that it is important for the MoA to continue increasing the cooperation between its departments as well as with other

stakeholders.

This research has attempted to contribute to overcoming the issue of homelessness by (I) studying the policies on homelessness, housing and social support from the policy of the MoA and the DNG to evaluate barriers and facilitators and (II) looking into the policies of the Municipality of Helsingborg to identify possible best practices. This research has resulted in an analysis of the facilitators and shortcomings of the homelessness policy of the MoA and DNG. Furthermore, it has also resulted in several recommendations that can be implemented by the MoA, the DNG, De Regenboog Groep and housing corporations to formulate better policies and practices that address economically homeless people.

## 10 | RECOMMENDATIONS

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After reviewing social care and housing policies from the MoA and DNG, it is possible to formulate several recommendations on how to overcome these shortcomings and use the facilitators. This chapter will provide these recommendations for the DNG, the MoA, De Regenboog Groep and housing corporations. Recommendations for future research can be found in chapter 8.4.

### 10.1 DUTCH NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

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#### Action 1: Reinforce central steering in addressing homelessness nationwide

The first recommendation for the DNG is that they should take more responsibility to take a central leadership role in addressing this problem. The fact that the DNG fails to take control of the housing market leads to a shortage of housing. As a result, housing prices have increased and selling and renting houses comes with a high cost. Consequently, the number of economically homeless people has risen (NBC, 2018). The housing shortage is so big, that merely stimulating and providing some money will not solve the housing problems. Issues that remain between the different boxes of responsibility and accountability are not taken up in a decentralized system. It is time for the DNG to take their responsibility and take responsibility for the housing problem. Re-founding the Ministry of Housing might be an essential first step.

#### Action 2: Maintain stimulating measures

The fact that the DNG should take a central role in addressing the housing problem does not mean that they should abandon stimulating measures altogether. In fact, expanding stimulating measures is desired. A possible measure is to skip the WOZ-value when determining housing prices and rather look at the actual value of a house. This should lead to more affordable housing. Besides that, lifting the landlord levy permanently should enable housing corporations to build more affordable housing (Teije, 2020), but research is needed to determine how the landlord levy could be used as an instrument that generates the largest stimulation for the construction of new (social) houses while maintaining the buildings in place currently.

#### Action 3: Determine carrying capacity per municipality

Lastly, due to decentralizing the problem of homelessness, municipalities are now trying to solve this problem on their

own. This is problematic, since it is much harder for municipalities with housing scarcity to find housing for homeless people than for municipalities without housing scarcity. However, municipalities without housing scarcity are still not eager to receive homeless people from other municipalities. If the problem of homelessness would be addressed more central and the DNG could provide (financial) help to municipalities without housing scarcity, it should become easier to find adequate housing for all (economically) homeless people. To achieve this, the DNG could determine the carrying capacity of every municipality. How much homeless people can or should every municipality accommodate? When those figures are clear, it should be easier to address the problem of homelessness on a national scale (Interviewee 3, focus group, 16-06-2020; Raad van Volksgezondheid & Samenleving, 2020). Thereby, the DNG should take a leading role in a more centralized network of municipalities with one overarching goal: reducing nationwide homelessness. Municipalities should be stimulated to cooperate instead of competing over issues such as who is going to guarantee for a person's social benefits.

### 10.2 MUNICIPALITY OF AMSTERDAM

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#### Action 1: Understand the target group

The MoA should keep track of the number of applicants for social care at the *Screening Desk for Special Target Groups* (Screeningsbalie Bijzondere doelgroepen). It is highly important to understand the size of the problem and the underlying wishes and demands of these people. Thereby, we understand that new economically homeless people do not apply for social care immediately, but wander around for a bit longer hoping to find alternative solutions. The MoA should ensure that they have accurate data regarding the number of economically homeless people, their characteristics and, most importantly, what they say they need to get their life back on track. This is, in our opinion, a first step in solving the problem. Important in this step is that the people who knock on the door of the *Screening Desk for Special Target Groups* have the idea that their problem is taken seriously. Also important is to make sure that the MoA keeps track on these people to see if and how their situation changes. This could provide some very relevant data for future researchers who will work towards a solution of the problem. As was mentioned in chapter 7, Swedish researchers emphasize the importance of input from the target group itself as well.

## Action 2: Increase cooperation

Building upon the last point of the previous section, the municipality should also look for more cooperation with other municipalities themselves. As stated by interviewee 3, the MoA sees itself as different than other municipalities. Even though that might be true, that does not mean they cannot learn anything from other municipalities. Besides that, the MoA should not wait for the DNG to come up with a national plan for tackling homelessness before taking action to actively cooperate with other municipalities, to prevent problems like this: *“You don’t want the economically homeless people to be rejected by one municipality and go to another municipality that says: ‘if they do nothing for you, we also do nothing for you. But this is what actually happens...”* (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 08-06-2020)

If the central approach from the DNG still lacks behind, the MoA should have some leverage to offer other municipalities to create a win-win situation for both. It could for example be that municipalities in the countryside of the Netherlands have season-bounded labour demand, which they have difficulties with to fulfill. A network between the MoA and these municipalities might generate a situation in which unemployed economically homeless people rejoin the labour market *and* a roof over their head. This could be the same for other sectors and regions in which the labour supply lacks behind, such as construction workers and nurses. The MoA could, for example, stimulate the initiation of an employment agency for the city’s economic homelessness with labour opportunities across the country. Nevertheless, future research is needed to verify these assumptions.

## Action 3: Invest in flexliving

The MoA could not only learn from other municipalities, but also from other stakeholders. For example, flexible living has, according to representatives of the NDG, the potential to provide opportunities for economically homeless people, so cooperating with stakeholders such as Expertisecentrum Flexwonen might be fruitful. This report recommends to carry out a cost-benefit analysis within the MoA to see how much money they could save by investing in flexliving. If economically homeless people have a (temporary) house, the chance of developing (mental) health issues is lower, which saves a lot of money for social care later. It would be desirable to investigate the possibilities of increased flexliving spaces.

The initiatives of Flexwonen should be well considered by the municipality, as multiple stakeholders and

interviewees mentioned its potential for the Amsterdam housing market. According to a representative of Expertisecentrum Flexwonen, multiple steps should be taken by different parties to increase the share of Flexwonen spaces in a city. These first steps that the Expertisecentrum Flexwonen representative came up with are, namely, to give a face to the economically homeless person by using storytelling and to calculate the costs and benefits for the municipality to invest in Flexwonen. Nevertheless, the first steps are already difficult to implement as the decentralized system does not attain these steps to one responsible party. Hereafter, a team of different stakeholders should proactively search for locations of Flexwonen across the city. In this consideration, the MoA should prioritize Flexwonen housing, to ensure that there will always be suitable living spaces. This could be in the form of tiny houses, empty industrial buildings or creative ways to redistribute vacant existing houses. We recommend the city also to look into initiatives in other cities, such as Dakdorpen Rotterdam or Basisschool Het Epos in Rotterdam.

## Action 4: Make the problem a widely known problem by engaging other parties in storytelling

The representative of Expertisecentrum Flewonen emphasized the importance of storytelling as the Amsterdam economically homeless person should get a face and a story to start a movement within more departments of the MoA and in the city as a whole. One can imagine that if the story of the economically homeless person of Amsterdam gets more widely known, the societal support to address this problem would increase. If the problem is widely acknowledged, it will also be easier for people to apply for help, instead of waiting until their situation become very serious. We understand that, for example, De Regenboog Groep is already engaged in storytelling via their own social media channels, but we would like to emphasize the importance of making the problem wider known. For this, a more outgoing campaign is needed in which not only De Regenboog Groep participates, but also departments of the MoA and other stakeholders

## Action 5: Develop specific policy on economic homelessness

The lack of policy on economic homelessness causes various problems that have been described in this report. Therefore, it is necessary to develop specific policy on economically homeless people, to address the problem of lacking policy. Within economic homelessness policy, it is important not



to focus on social care predominantly, but to integrate the need for housing as well. An integrative coalition, such as the cooperation of departments in the CoH, is highly recommended.

### **Action 6: Replace the term ‘self-sufficiency’**

Interviewees addressed that the self-sufficiency matrix prevents many economically homeless people from receiving support. Therefore, this report recommends to remove the use of the classification ‘self-sufficiency’ and replace it. An example could be the classifications that are used in the CoH and have been elaborated in chapter 7. If that turns out to be not feasible, another option could be to define different categories of economic homelessness. This should prevent that economically homeless people do not get help because they are not self-sufficient. In general it is advised to spend more time on assessing the needs and situation of economically homeless people. This might cost more time and money initially, but might prevent many economically homeless people from needing social care and could thus potentially save money.

### **Action 7: Be less restrictive**

This report suggests to be less restrictive on the assessment of (economically) homeless people and the measures that are initiated to help them. For example, *the couch sleeping arrangement* (bankslapersregeling) seems like a good initiative to help economically homeless people without affecting the *kostendelersnorm*. However, there is a restriction of 8 months on this measure. This is still a relatively short time for economically homeless people to solve their problems, so it is advised to create more measures that create more sustainable, long term solutions.

### **Action 8: Keep up the good work**

There are also several initiatives that work facilitative for economically homeless people. This report strongly suggests that the MoA to continue their work on these initiatives. For example, the MoA has started a pilot to allocate 200 houses for economically homeless people, in which they cooperate with stakeholders from within and outside the MoA that focus on both social care and housing. This report has shown that economic homelessness is an integrative problem and should be tackled as such. This pilot is a step in the right direction and is greatly encouraged.

## **10.3 DE REGENBOOG GROEP**

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Currently, a couple of good initiatives are set-up by De Regenboog Groep. This report strongly suggests De Regenboog Groep to continue their work on these initiatives.

### **Action 1: Expand Onder de Pannen**

The *Onder de Pannen* initiative proves to be a very successful program to house economically homeless people. Even though the demand exceeds the supply, this report suggests that De Regenboog Groep looks into the possibilities to expand this program. If possible, this program could be expanded further throughout the metropolitan region of Amsterdam (which includes Almere and Lelystad).

### **Action 2: Strengthen ties with housing parties**

This report shows that De Regenboog Groep cooperates on several fronts with the MoA. Yet, as the results of this report suggest, De Regenboog Groep could profit from strengthening its ties with the Department of Housing and other housing parties for future collaborations.

## **10.4 HOUSING CORPORATIONS**

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Lastly, this report also provides recommendations for housing corporations.

### **Action 1: Explore unconventional building**

It is recommended to explore more unconventional building methods. Flexible living, temporary housing and tiny houses are all relatively new concepts that have potential to help solving the housing problem. These concepts can provide housing not only for economically homeless people, but also for students, migrants and homeless people in general. Therefore, these concepts are worth exploring. As mentioned before, initiatives such as Dakdorpen Rotterdam or Basisschool Het Epos have proven to be successful and profitable.

### **Action 2: Build according to future demand**

Housing corporations are encouraged to focus on building small houses. For example, they should build more houses for 1 or 2 person households. This aligns better with actual need of the people that are looking for housing and it also enables housing corporations to build more houses on smaller areas. These smaller houses can be combined with shared facilities to not only achieve a higher quantity of housing, but still live up to the expected quality.

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## APPENDICES

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### APPENDIX 1: IMPORTANT CONCEPTS

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#### Economically Homeless People

The problem of economical homelessness has been discussed in Dutch media more frequently over the past years. The term economical homelessness has been popularized in the US in the 1990s. The Department of Veteran Affairs and Housing in the US has already indicated people who have a low income as 'economically homeless people' in 1996. Typically, economically homeless people could not afford to buy or maintain a permanent house. This definition is in line with what Westhues (2006, p. 273) explained in her book *Canadian Social Policy: Issues and Perspectives*. Westhues describes that economically homeless people are "a group of homeless that needs housing only". Furthermore, Westhues explains that those who become economically homeless particularly fail to compete for affordable housing in the housing market. In addition, scholars identify several factors that lead people to become economically homeless. Francis (2005) states that economic homelessness is caused by economic-related problems such as unemployment. Furthermore, Garnham (2019) explains that the unpreparedness of some people for any unanticipated life-issues (e.g., losing a job, having an accident, and even an unexpected health problem) rises the potential of these people to become economically homeless.

#### Policy

The term 'policy' is often mixed and misinterpreted with the term 'regulation'. The avoid misunderstanding of these terms this section will provide the definition of both. Policy is defined as rules that are made by individuals, companies, groups, and governments intended to achieve certain goals and objectives (Energy Policy, n.d.). Meanwhile, regulations are established rules with a legal effect and imposed by authorities to make people comply and behave in a particular manner (Bevir, 2007). Thus, policy is intended and utilized to achieve certain goals, while regulation is established to regulate behavior in order to reach those policy goals.

Many scholars have interpreted the term policy. James Anderson as quoted by Sapru in his book *Public Policy* states that policy can be regarded as "a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern" (Sapru, 2004, p.4). This definition emphasizes the goals and the presence of authorized actors who strive to solve the problem concerned. Furthermore, Carl J. Friedrich (1941) has a semblable policy definition to James Anderson. He argues that policy is "a proposed course of action of a person, group, or government within a given environment providing obstacles and opportunities which the policy was proposed to utilize and overcome in an effort to reach a goal or realize an objective or a purpose" (Miyakawa, 1999, p. 171). Carl Friedrich's notion concerning policy emphasizes that policy is intended to be utilized as a means to achieve the expected goal.

Related to our case, policy is developed by various parties, including the Municipality of Amsterdam, not necessarily to regulate the homeless people but rather to achieve certain aspirational goals regarding homelessness. These goals include to prevent people from becoming homeless, to rehabilitate them and to provide a housing for everyone (Boesveldt, 2015, p.23). In this report, several kinds of policies will be reviewed such as: policies regarding homelessness, policies concerning social housing, and policies concerning social care for the economically homeless people in Amsterdam. A further explanation of the policy overview can be found in chapter 3 of this report.

#### Social Housing

In the Netherlands, social housing is defined as: accessible and affordable housing that can be accessed and afforded by people with a low income. This established in the 1902 Dutch Housing Act, which emphasized that accessible as well as affordable housing in the Netherlands is a national shared responsibility (Brown, 2020). The number of social housing in Amsterdam is more than 50% of the total housing stock within the city. Social housing is usually led by housing associations in the Netherlands and rents determined according to the housing valuation system (*woningwaarderingstelsel*) (Gemeente Amsterdam, n.d. a).

#### Social Care

Social care is a generic term for non-medical services and actions taken or provided by the government and independent parties (Social care, 2011). Components of social care are emotional support, financial support, and instrumental support. Instrumental support homeless people includes physical and material assistance such as housing, temporary shelters and so on (Hwang, et al., 2009).

## **APPENDIX 2: SELECTION CRITERIA FOR THE WONINGBOUWIMPULS FUNDING**

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In order to apply for funding, a selection procedure of five phases is in place. In the first phase an inventory will be made in cooperation with the housing deal regions of the projects that are suitable for the Housing Impulse funds. Projects that can supply a larger amount of affordable houses with less governmental funding compared to other projects, will be given extra attention. In the second phase the ministry and specialized booster teams (aanjaagteams) will support those municipalities that want to apply for a governmental funding. The booster teams are an extension of the expert teams and will help to design a project proposal that can be handed in to the review committee. In the third phase the review committee will examine the project proposals and judge them based on several criteria (Van Veldhoven - Van der Meer, 08-11-2019).

The following criteria need to be met by housing projects that seek to receive funding (Van Veldhoven - Van der Meer, 11-02-2020):

1. The application for a grant can only be submitted by a municipality
2. The application is backed up by support from the region and the province. This is shown by a provincial statement of support.
3. The project will provide at least 500 new houses
4. 50% of the houses will fall in the category of affordable houses with a rent of less than €1000
5. Projects that apply need to be in the final development stage prior to the construction phase. The Housing Construction Impulse is meant for projects that need a final push. Construction of the houses must start no later than 2023.
6. Despite plan-optimization and substantial co-financing of other parties, the project is faced with a financial shortfall. All other options to optimize the plan or to reduce the financial deficit need to be explored first. Project that can also be realized without the governmental grant cannot apply.
7. The investment is necessary and imputable: the Housing Construction Impulse will not contribute to projects that are not directly related to the goal of housing construction
8. In the fourth phase the projects that are accepted by the review committee will be send to the minister for final approval. If the project received the final approvement of the minister, the project will receive the funding in phase 5 (Van Veldhoven - Van der Meer, 08-11-2019).



## APPENDIX 3: INTERVIEW GUIDES

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### Interview Guide Target group

- Bedanken voor tijd en moeite
- Uitleggen wie we zijn en het doel van ons onderzoek
- Reden noemen waarom we hem/haar graag willen interviewen
- Verwerking gegevens
- “U zult anoniem blijven in ons verslag”
- “De gegevens van dit interview zullen alleen voor het doel van ons onderzoek gebruikt worden. U bent vrij om geen antwoord te geven als u dat onprettig vindt, en mag het op elk moment aangeven als u wil stoppen met het interview.”
- Verwachtingen
- Vragen of we het interview mogen opnemen
- Samenvatting geven
- Vragen of hij/zij nog vragen heeft
- Opbouw van het interview vertellen
- Heeft u nog vragen?

### Vragen

#### Vragen

1. Waar woont u op dit moment?
2. Heeft u een baan? Heeft u een baan gehad?
3. Waar heeft u gewoond voordat u in [huidige woonplaats] ging wonen?
4. Wat is er precies gebeurd dat u in deze situatie terecht bent gekomen?
5. In hoeverre bent u betrokken bij de begeleidingscommissie?
6. Kent u mensen die ongeveer in dezelfde situatie zitten?
  - Zijn er gelijkenissen tussen hun verhaal en uw verhaal?
7. Kunt u ons wat vertellen over uw zoektocht naar een geschikte woonplaats?
  - Bent u op het moment actief op zoek naar een woonplaats?
    - Waar zou u het liefst willen wonen?
  - Wat waren de procedures die u moest/moet volgen?
    - Waren/zijn de stappen duidelijk?
  - Hoe lang heeft u moeten wachten/bent u aan het wachten op een (vaste) woonplaats?
  - Krijgt u begeleiding bij het zoeken van een huis?
  - Wat vindt u van de procedures van de gemeente Amsterdam en de woningbouwcorporaties om in aanmerking te komen voor een sociale huurwoning? Zoals het lotensysteem, het wachtrijsysteem of het nieuwe systeem met punten?
  - Heeft u overwogen de stad te verlaten?
  - Staat u op wachtrijen van maatschappelijke organisaties?
8. Heeft u ervaring met het aanvragen van maatschappelijke steun?
  - Wat waren de procedures die u moest/moet volgen om maatschappelijke steun te krijgen?
  - Wordt er vanuit de gemeente steun aangeboden, ook zonder dat u daar om hoeft te vragen?

- Heeft u ervaring met wijkteams?
  - Wat vindt u van de informatievoorziening van de gemeente over uw opties toen u uw woning verliet?
  - Hoe makkelijk vond u de procedures om te begrijpen?
  - Hebben bepaalde procedures u geholpen?
    - Zo ja, hoe en welke?
  - Welke steun heeft u tot nu toe ontvangen? Van wie ontving u deze steun?
  - Stond er iets in de weg voor het ontvangen van steun?
9. Waar denkt u dat het grootste probleem zit binnen de gemeente als het gaat om het voorkomen van dakloosheid zoals in uw geval?
10. Wat in de procedures/het beleid, werkt volgens u goed in de gemeente van Amsterdam?
11. Als u zelf in het stadsbestuur zou zitten, wat zou u dan als eerste aanpakken als het gaat om
- dakloosheid
  - en de woningmarkt
  - en het aanvragen/ontvangen van maatschappelijke steun?

### *Afsluiting*

- Bedankt voor uw antwoorden, dit waren alle vragen die wij hadden
- Korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten die zijn besproken
- 'Zou u hier nog wat aan willen toevoegen?'
- Herhalen waar de antwoorden voor gebruikt gaan worden, anonimiteit etc.
- Heel veel dank

Social talk

## Interview Guide MoA

- Bedanken voor tijd en moeite
- Uitleggen wie we zijn en het doel van ons onderzoek
- Reden noemen waarom we hem/haar graag willen interviewen
- Verwerking gegevens
- “U zult anoniem blijven in ons verslag”
- “De gegevens van dit interview zullen alleen voor het doel van ons onderzoek gebruikt worden. U bent vrij om geen antwoord te geven als u dat onprettig vindt, en mag het op elk moment aangeven als u wil stoppen met het interview.”
- Verwachtingen
- Vragen of we het interview mogen opnemen
- Samenvatting geven
- Vragen of hij/zij nog vragen heeft
- Opbouw van het interview vertellen
- Heeft u nog vragen?

### Vragen

#### Rol bij de gemeente

1. Kunt u iets vertellen over uw rol bij de gemeente Amsterdam?
  - Binnen het cluster sociaal
  - Als projectleider huisvesting kwetsbare groepen

#### Beleid van Gemeente Amsterdam

2. Kunt u ons iets vertellen over het beleid met betrekking tot dakloosheid in het algemeen binnen de gemeente Amsterdam?
  - M.b.t. maatschappelijke hulp aanvragen
  - M.b.t. maatschappelijke opvang/huisvesting
  - Rol/verantwoordelijkheid van de staat?
3. Kunt u ons iets vertellen over het beleidsstuk ‘Thuis in de wijk’?
  - Binnen het beleidsstuk wordt er een transitie van intramurale zorg naar een woonplek in de wijk beschreven. Kunt u ons vertellen hoe dat er in de praktijk uit gaat zien?
  - Via Michael (de regenboog groep) hebben we gehoord dat er 62 wijkteams op worden gezet, wat is precies de rol van deze wijkteams? En hoe ondersteunen zij daklozen die bij hen aankloppen?
  - In het document wordt erg de nadruk gelegd op het belang van participatie. Waarom is dat zo belangrijk?
4. Kunt u ons iets vertellen Programmaplan Huisvesting Kwetsbare Groepen? (Sven)
  - Wie worden er precies verstaan onder de term kwetsbare groepen?
  - Hoe vallen economisch daklozen daarbinnen?
  - Voorbeelden van een preventieve woonvraag: Dakloze mensen die worden afgewezen MO/BW, omdat zij (nog) te zelfredzaam zijn. Hebben jullie al concrete ideeën hoe deze groep geholpen kan worden (binnen het vervolgprogramma 2019-2022)?
5. Woningwaaier
  - Kunt u ons kort vertellen wat de woning waaier is en wat het doel is van de woning waaier?

- Hoe spreekt dit beleidsstuk dakloze mensen aan? Bijvoorbeeld ivm het verruimen van de maatregelen om een postadres aan te vragen?
- Binnen de woon waaier wordt er ingegaan op de tijdelijke huisvesting van dakloze mensen, op welke manier wordt dit gekoppeld aan permanente huisvesting voor daklozen?

### **Economisch daklozen binnen het beleid**

6. Hoe spelen de documenten thuis in de wijk en het programmaplan in op de problematiek van economische daklozen?
  - Wat gaat hier goed?
  - Wat kan hier beter?
7. Heeft u het idee dat de gemeente het probleem van economische dakloosheid goed in kaart heeft? Zo niet, wat is hier nog voor nodig?
8. In hoeverre wordt er binnen de gemeente prioriteit aan het probleem gegeven?
9. Binnen veel beleidsstukken zien we dat er onderscheid wordt gemaakt tussen kwetsbare groepen op basis van zelfredzaamheid, op basis waarvan wordt dit beoordeeld (zelfredzaamheidsmatrix)?
  - Wij begrijpen dat economisch daklozen vaak als zelfredzaam worden bestempeld, in hoeverre ziet u dat als een probleem?
  - In hoeverre ben je zelfredzaam als je dakloos bent? (je bent toch niet zelfredzaam als je dakloos bent?)
  - Wat is de meerwaarde van de zelfredzaamheidsmatrix bij het helpen van daklozen?

### **Positieve en negatieve aspecten van het beleid**

10. Waar lopen jullie tegenaan bij het aanpakken van zo'n complex probleem?
11. Welke rol is er voor de gemeente weggelegd om de krapte op de woningmarkt te verhelpen?
12. Nemen woningcorporaties volgens u genoeg initiatief/verantwoordelijkheid in het oplossen van het probleem?
13. Leegstand? Is er wat u betreft genoeg fysieke ruimte binnen Amsterdam en omliggende gemeenten om de doelgroep te huisvesten?

### **Overige onderwerpen**

14. Flexibele plaatsing van woningen voor 1-10 jaar
15. Samenwerking met andere gemeenten
16. Aanvragen postadres
17. Bankslaapregeling
18. Staat de gemeente ervoor open meer samenwerking te hebben met partijen zoals woningcorporaties en maatschappelijke organisaties om het ec. daklozen probleem aan te pakken?

## Interview Guide Housing Corporations

- Bedanken voor tijd en moeite
- Uitleggen wie we zijn en het doel van ons onderzoek
- Reden noemen waarom we hem/haar graag willen interviewen
- Verwerking gegevens
- “U zult anoniem blijven in ons verslag”
- “De gegevens van dit interview zullen alleen voor het doel van ons onderzoek gebruikt worden. U bent vrij om geen antwoord te geven als u dat onprettig vindt, en mag het op elk moment aangeven als u wil stoppen met het interview.”
- Verwachtingen
- Vragen of we het interview mogen opnemen
- Samenvatting geven
- Vragen of hij/zij nog vragen heeft
- Opbouw van het interview vertellen
- Heeft u nog vragen?

### Vragen

1. Kunt u iets vertellen over uw rol bij Ons Doel?
2. Kunt u iets vertellen over uw rol bij de Leden Begeleidingscommissie?
3. Wat weet u van het probleem economische dakloosheid?
  - Wat verstaat u onder economische dakloosheid?
  - Hoe groot is dit probleem in Leiden en hoe wordt dit aangepakt?
  - Weet u of het probleem rondom economische dakloosheid in Amsterdam verschilt ten opzichte van de situatie in Leiden?
  - Hoe lang speelt het probleem van economische dakloosheid al?
4. Uit uw ervaring: Welke problemen ervaren economische daklozen bij het vinden van een nieuwe woonplek?
5. Kunt u ons iets vertellen over het beleid met betrekking tot dakloosheid in het algemeen binnen de gemeente Amsterdam?
  - wat is de rol van huisvesting binnen dat beleid?
  - rol/verantwoordelijkheid van de staat/gemeente/woningbouw?
  - waar wringt het in het beleid?
6. Hoe denkt u dat het probleem van economische dakloosheid wordt aangekaart binnen de Gemeente Amsterdam en haar beleid/procedures?
  - Wat gaat er goed?
  - Wat kan hier beter/wat gaat er dus fout?
  - Welke aspecten missen er binnen het beleid specifiek met betrekking tot economische daklozen?
7. Welke rol spelen woningcorporaties in het probleem rondom economische dakloosheid?
  - Wat gaat er goed?
  - Wat kan hier beter/wat gaat er dus fout?
8. Welke rol speelt Ons Doel bij de huisvesting van economische daklozen?
9. Welke rol speelt de nationale overheid/het Rijk bij het huisvesten van daklozen?

10. Eind 2019 heeft de Tweede Kamer de Woningbouw Impuls ingevoerd die 2 miljard euro vrij moet maken voor de bouw van betaalbare woningen. Bent u bekend met deze regeling?
  - Kunt u iets meer vertellen over deze regeling?
  - Wat vindt u van deze regeling?
  - Heeft de gemeente Leiden/gemeente Amsterdam aanspraak gemaakt op deze regeling?
  - Kunt u een korte schets geven hoe deze aanspraak in z'n werk gaat?
11. Vanuit uw perspectief: wat gaat er fout binnen het beleid van de gemeente Amsterdam wat economisch daklozen betreft?
12. Wat gaat er goed binnen het beleid van Amsterdam bij het aanpakken van economische dakloosheid?
13. Wat zijn mogelijke oplossingen voor het probleem van economische dakloosheid in Amsterdam?
  - Welke rol spelen woningbouwcorporaties daarin?
  - Wat zijn belangrijke aspecten van deze oplossingen?
14. Welke positieve/creatieve initiatieven ziet u binnen/buiten Amsterdam?
15. In eerdere interviews werd er door iemand aangegeven dat onze economie steeds meer gaat naar de flexibele deeleconomie, maar dat de huizenmarkt daar nog niet echt in mee gaat. Wat is uw mening hierover? Technisch/juridisch haalbaar?
16. In een eerder interview werd als mogelijke oplossing het verhogen van de huurliberalisatiegrens aangedragen. Hoe kijkt u hier tegen aan?

### *Afsluiting*

- Bedankt voor uw antwoorden, dit waren alle vragen die wij hadden
- Korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten die zijn besproken
- 'Zou u hier nog wat aan willen toevoegen?'
- Herhalen waar de antwoorden voor gebruikt gaan worden, anonimiteit etc.
- Heel veel dank
- Social talk

## Interview Guide Regenboog Groep

- Bedanken voor tijd en moeite
- Uitleggen wie we zijn en het doel van ons onderzoek
- Reden noemen waarom we hem/haar graag willen interviewen
- Verwerking gegevens
- “U zult anoniem blijven in ons verslag”
- “De gegevens van dit interview zullen alleen voor het doel van ons onderzoek gebruikt worden. U bent vrij om geen antwoord te geven als u dat onprettig vindt, en mag het op elk moment aangeven als u wil stoppen met het interview.”
- Verwachtingen
- Vragen of we het interview mogen opnemen
- Samenvatting geven
- Vragen of hij/zij nog vragen heeft
- Opbouw van het interview vertellen
- Heeft u nog vragen?

### Vragen

1. Wat verstaan jullie onder economische dakloosheid?
  - Wie vallen binnen deze groep?
2. Hoe lang speelt het probleem van economische dakloosheid al?
  - Sinds wanneer is deze groep opgekomen/groter geworden?
3. Uit uw ervaring: wat zijn de redenen dat economische daklozen zich in een positie bevinden dat ze dakloos raken?
4. Uit uw ervaring: Waar lopen economische daklozen tegenaan bij het vinden van een nieuwe woonplek?
  - Postadres
  - Buiten de stad
  - Urgentie

### Beleid: Stakeholders & Procedures

5. Welke rol speelt de Regenboog Groep bij de opvang van economische daklozen?

Kunt u ons iets vertellen over het beleid met betrekking tot dakloosheid in het algemeen binnen de gemeente Amsterdam?

  - M.b.t. maatschappelijke hulp aanvragen
  - M.b.t. maatschappelijke opvang/huisvesting
  - Rol/verantwoordelijkheid van de staat?
  - Waar wringt het in het beleid?
6. Hoe denkt u dat het probleem van economische dakloosheid wordt aangekaart binnen de Gemeente Amsterdam en haar beleid/procedures?
  - Wat gaat er goed?
  - Wat kan hier beter/wat gaat er dus fout?
  - Welke aspecten missen er binnen het beleid specifiek met betrekking tot economische daklozen?
7. Welke rol spelen woningcorporaties in het probleem rondom economische dakloosheid?

- Wat gaat er goed?
- Wat kan hier beter/wat gaat er dus fout?

**Beleid: wat gaat er goed en wat niet?**

8. Vanuit uw perspectief: wat gaat er fout binnen het beleid van de gemeente Amsterdam wat economisch daklozen betreft?
9. Wat gaat er goed binnen het beleid van Amsterdam bij het aanpakken van economische dakloosheid?
10. Wat zijn mogelijke oplossingen voor het probleem van economische dakloosheid in Amsterdam?
11. Welke positieve initiatieven ziet u binnen/buiten Amsterdam?

*Afsluiting*

- Bedankt voor uw antwoorden, dit waren alle vragen die wij hadden
- Korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten die zijn besproken
- 'Zou u hier nog wat aan willen toevoegen?'
- Herhalen waar de antwoorden voor gebruikt gaan worden, anonimiteit etc.
- Heel veel dank
- Social talk



## Interview Guide Platform 31

- Bedanken voor tijd en moeite
- Uitleggen wie we zijn en het doel van ons onderzoek
- Reden noemen waarom we hem/haar graag willen interviewen
- Verwerking gegevens
- “U zult anoniem blijven in ons verslag”
- “De gegevens van dit interview zullen alleen voor het doel van ons onderzoek gebruikt worden. U bent vrij om geen antwoord te geven als u dat onprettig vindt, en mag het op elk moment aangeven als u wil stoppen met het interview.”
- Verwachtingen
- Vragen of we het interview mogen opnemen
- Samenvatting geven
- Vragen of hij/zij nog vragen heeft
- Opbouw van het interview vertellen
- Heeft u nog vragen?

### Vragen

1. Souterrain van het wonen
  - Waarom deed Amsterdam niet mee? We zagen in het document dat Amsterdam niet betrokken was binnen het project, weet u misschien de reden daarvoor?
  - Is er al iets geïmplementeerd?
  - Wat zijn de subgroepen binnen economische dakloosheid?
2. Kunt u ons wat vertellen over uw perspectief over het probleem van economisch daklozen in Amsterdam?
  - Rol van de gemeente
  - Rol van de woningbouw
  - Rol van de staat
  - Rol van Platform 31
3. Wat weet u over het beleid met betrekking tot dakloosheid in de Gemeente Amsterdam?
  - dakloosheid in het algemeen
  - Maatschappelijke hulp
  - Huisvesting / voorziening
4. Op wat voor manier wordt het probleem van economische dakloosheid aangepakt in dat beleid?

*In het volgende deel van het interview willen we het hebben over sterke en minder sterke punten van het beleid omtrent dakloosheid bij de gemeente Amsterdam.*

5. Wat gaat er goed in het beleid van de gemeente van Amsterdam als het economisch daklozen betreft in de afgelopen paar jaar?
  - Beleid: procedures om aanspraak te kunnen maken op woning
  - Woningbouw
    - Wat dan precies?
    - Wat zijn de verschillende belangen die een rol spelen?
    - Woningcorporaties

- Wat zijn middelen die de gemeente van Amsterdam inzet om economisch daklozen ondersteunen, en wat vindt u van de werking van deze middelen?
  - Hoe werkt vroegsignalering in de wijk?
- 6. Waar zitten volgens u valkuilen in het beleid van de gemeente van Amsterdam als het economisch daklozen betreft in de afgelopen paar jaar?
  - Beleid: procedures om aanspraak te kunnen maken op woning
  - Woningbouw
    - Wat dan precies?
    - Wat zijn de verschillende belangen die een rol spelen?
    - Woningcorporaties
- 7. Welke problemen met betrekking tot economische dakloosheid worden volgens u niet adequate aangekaart binnen de Gemeente Amsterdam?
- 8. Waar zitten volgens u oplossingen voor het probleem voor Amsterdam ?
  - Flexwonen (hoe kijkt Amsterdam hier tegenaan?)
  - Magic mix
  - Vakantieparken
  - Hebben gemeenten die meededen met souterrain van het wonen jullie voorstellen meegenomen en wat is het effect hiervan geweest?

### *Afsluiting*

- Bedankt voor uw antwoorden, dit waren alle vragen die wij hadden
- Korte samenvatting geven van de belangrijkste punten die zijn besproken
- 'Zou u hier nog wat aan willen toevoegen?'
- Herhalen waar de antwoorden voor gebruikt gaan worden
- Heel veel dank
- Social talk

## Interview Guide Researcher in Social Work at Lund University, Sweden

- Thank you for your time, we really appreciate it.
- We are six students who conduct research for the Science Shop WUR as a part of a larger research project about economic homelessness for De Regenboeg Groep (a non-governmental organisation who work with homeless people) in Amsterdam.
- The problem that is brought forth in our project is the knowledge gap of the role the Municipality of Amsterdam's policies play in causing people to become economically homeless and research what Amsterdam can learn from other places abroad which can help them overcome the problem. To understand this can provide a starting point for future solutions that will prevent this increasing problem from occurring.
- You will remain anonymous in our research.
- The information from the interview will only be used for our own research. You have the right to leave questions unanswered and can end the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue.
- Mention the reason we chose the interviewee
- Do we have permission to record the interview?
- Explain expectations

### Questions

1. How long have you been researching homelessness?
  - What kind of research?
  - Do you have any perception of how homelessness has changed over time?
  - Do you have any perception of if the situation for economically homeless has changed over time?
2. Can you tell us about your perspective on economic homelessness?
  - The role of researchers
  - The role of the municipality
  - Housing corporations
  - The national government
  - Other actors (other organizations, private actors etc.)
3. What is your relationship with other actors in your research on homelessness?
  - Which actors do you collaborate with?
  - How does the collaboration work?
  - What works well or less well?
  - Someone who should take more responsibility?
  - Any actor you wanted to get in better contact with?
4. What is your relationship with the municipality?
  - Are you consulted by the municipality in their work on designing plan documents regarding homelessness?
5. What is your opinion of the municipality's work on economically homeless people?
  - How do you think their policies (plan and regulatory documents) and regulations work?
  - Good or bad aspects?
  - What is your opinion of the Social Housing program?
  - Does it work in practice?
  - Homeless families?
6. How do you think the Housing First program works?
  - Negative and positive aspects?
  - Selection criteria?
  - Do you think the program has the potential to be developed to involve economically homeless people as well?
7. What do you think is needed to improve the situation of economically homeless people?

### Final

- Thanks for your answers, these were all my questions
- Short summary (or pick up single points that were most interesting)
- Ask if he/she has any questions or anything or wants to add
- Repeat confidentiality
- Thank you for your participation

## Interview Guide Social Worker Hemlösas Hus, Helsingborg, Sweden

- Thank you for your time, we really appreciate it.
- We are six students who conduct research for the Science Shop WUR as a part of a larger research project about economic homelessness for De Regenboeg Groep (a non-governmental organisation who work with homeless people) in Amsterdam.
- The problem that is brought forth in our project is the knowledge gap of the role the Municipality of Amsterdam's policies play in causing people to become economically homeless and research what Amsterdam can learn from other places abroad which can help them overcome the problem. To understand this can provide a starting point for future solutions that will prevent this increasing problem from occurring.
- You will remain anonymous in our research.
- The information from the interview will only be used for our own research. You have the right to leave questions unanswered and can end the interview at any time if you do not wish to continue.
- Mention the reason we chose the interviewee
- Do we have permission to record the interview?
- Explain expectations

### Questions

1. How long have you been working at Hemlösas Hus?
  - What does Hemlösas Hus do?
  - Who comes to Hemlösas Hus?
  - What are the requirements for receiving help from you?
  - Do you have any specific measures for economically homeless people? (Explain what economically homelessness means if needed)
  - Is it common for economically homeless people to visit your organization?
  - Do you have any idea how the situation for them has changed over time?
2. Can you tell us about your perspective on economic homelessness?
  - Your roll
  - The role of the municipality
  - Housing corporations
  - The national government
  - Other actors (other organizations, private actors etc.)
3. What is your relationship with other actors in your work on homelessness?
  - Which actors do you collaborate with?
  - How does the collaboration work?
  - What works well or less well?
  - Someone who should take more responsibility?
4. What is your relationship with the municipality?
  - Do you have regular contact?
  - Which department or person do you have most contact with?
  - Is there anyone you would like to get in better contact with?
  - Are you consulted by the municipality in their work on designing plan documents regarding homelessness?
5. What is your opinion of the municipality's work on economically homeless people?
  - How do you think their policies (plan and regulatory documents) and regulations work?
  - Good or/and bad aspects?
  - What is your opinion of the Social Housing program?
  - Does it work in practice?
6. What do you think is needed to improve the situation of economically homeless people?

### Final

- Thanks for your answers, these were all my questions
- Short summary (or pick up major points that I found most interesting)
- Ask if she has any questions or anything she wants to add
- Repeat confidentiality
- Thank you for your participation

## APPENDIX 4: SUMMARY OF THE COH'S POLICIES REGARDING HOMELESSNESS

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### *The City of Helsingborg's Goals and Strategies in the work against homelessness, completed 2012, approved 2013 (Helsingborgs Stads Mål och strategier i arbetet mot bostadslöshet)*

The start of the policy document details what responsibilities municipalities have according to law. In chapter 4, first paragraph of the Social Services Act (*Socialtjänstlagen*) says that “the one who cannot satisfy her/his needs or is able to get them satisfied in another way has the right to receive aid from the Social Services Department for his/her livelihood and life in general. The individual must be assured of a reasonable standard of living. Assistance should be designed to strengthen his or her ability to live an independent life”.

The responsibility of the municipality is further detailed in a law regarding housing supply from January 2001 (SFS 200: 1383 and 2002: 104). It states that the municipalities must draw and approve guidelines for the housing supply at least once every election period: “Each municipality must plan housing supply in order to create conditions for everyone in the municipality to live in good housing and to promote the preparation and implementation of appropriate housing supply measures”. The national goals for Swedish housing policy are long-term well-functioning housing markets where consumer demand meets a supply of housing that meets the needs.

As an attempt to keep in line with the legislatures and work towards the national goals Helsingborgshems (the CoH's own real estate company) owner directive (from 2011) is to actively take responsibility for acquiring of housing to the city's social housing program as well as to provide effective counselling together with the CoH for tenants with the aim of minimizing the amount of evictions. In their work with homelessness CoH has decided to follow the The National Board of Health and Welfare's definition of homelessness in utilizing their classification system of homelessness, namely that homelessness is a situation that a person may be in and not a trait. Meaning that at no point in their policies do they classify homeless people in categories of social homelessness, economic homelessness, and self-reliant people. Rather their goals and actions are based on the situation the homeless person currently faces.

4 situations of homelessness according to the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen, 2017):

1. Urgent homelessness: sleeps outside, in cars, shelters and so on.
2. Institutional stay and assisted living: Persons who do not have housing after institutional stay or after living at an assisted living facility.
3. Long-term housing solutions: Accommodation in one of the social services' housing forms such as training apartments where the living is combined with supervision and certain rules and regulations.
4. Self-organized short-term accommodation: Short-term housing with family, friends or having a temporary second-hand contract with a private person.

#### *Overriding aim*

The aim of the city is as follows “The city's resources must be coordinated in a long-term commitment. The City of Helsingborg shall strive for long-term and commercially good relations with the City's landlords. The goal is to facilitate for weak groups to obtain stable, long-term and safe housing, adapted to the individual's needs and conditions. We must pay special attention to the situation of children in our work against homelessness”.

To achieve their aim the CoH came up with four sub-goals, of which three (sub-goal 1,3 and 4) are related to the issue of economic homelessness.

- **Sub-goal 1:** The inhabitants of the city shall be offered temporary housing with continuous interventions based on individual needs if needed.

In order to achieve the goal, the CoH came up with a variety of strategies involving providing support to increase the number of people that can stay or gain a sufficient housing. It was deemed that unconditioned shelters should be disbanded, since it was believed that they resulted in lock-in effects. Meaning that there was an insufficient flow out of the shelters. For the same reason the amount of people with lengthy stays at emergency housings should be limited. A primary target

was to work towards people having a stable living all hours of the day and principally in own apartments. To achieve this it was recognized that an increase in the cooperation with non-profit actors was needed and that those non-profits that shared the city's vision of how to tackle homelessness and achieve the most optimal long-term result should be supported.

- **Sub-goal 3:** Entrance into the ordinary housing market shall be eased for persons in housing such as training apartments.

To achieve the goal it was judged that all new signings of social housing deals with landlords should clearly state the agreements in place. The city also placed an expectation that landlords should aid the social housing program. Furthermore it was concluded that the housing support as well as the eviction prevention work for persons with social contract, and training- or on-call apartments needed to be increased, thereby increasing their possibilities for gaining a first hand contract. A need to provide budget and debt counselling in conjunction with support efforts in the home was also recognized. To facilitate for homeless people to take a first step towards entering the regular housing market it was identified that the supply of rental apartments in the social housing program must increase and that an equal spread of these apartment throughout the city is desired. However, since the aim is to limit the time spent in the program's apartments, what is also wanted is to faster incorporate homeless people into the regular housing market.

- **Sub-goal 4:** The number of homeless families with children shall be reduced.

This was to be achieved by working in close cooperation with property owners, debt advisors and the Enforcement Authority. Together they were to work on eviction prevention and property owners would be able to quickly gain support from the city when disturbances in the housing was noticed. The eviction prevention work was to be boosted with an increased amount of competent personnel that were tasked with working on early measures to prevent people losing their accommodation. It also involved working preventative to decrease the amount of families with children that lost their second-hand contract.

### *Cooperation*

The CoH administrations together with its housing corporation and private landlords were tasked with establishing a forum where housing issues within and outside the social housing program can be discussed with the aim of finding mutual solutions.

### ***The City of Helsingborg's social housing program: report published 2013-12-19, approved 2014-02-26 (Helsingborgs stads bostadssociala program)***

The report details the available housing at that time in the CoH's Social Housing Program and what the housing needs for the future were. The Social Housing Program (4742 apartments) entail apartments to individuals and families which due to economic and/or psychosocial reasons are outside the regular housing market and are considered to be able to manage their own accommodation. They are monitored and supported under at least one year by the administration (the Development Board or the Social Serviced Department) which conducted the referral. The Development Board's administration had 25 on-call apartments available to offer for individuals/families who were homeless due to primarily economic reasons and were not considered to have any grave social problems. Moreover, the Social Services Department had 11 training apartments available for young people in urgent need of housing and who were not deemed to suffer from any serious social problems.

Every year around 40 people were placed in other municipalities due to a lack of housing solutions in the CoH. In total 1300 persons were estimated to be covered by the CoH social housing efforts each year and the estimated cost was around 54 million SEK/year.

A needs assessment over the last four years before the report was released concluded that the social housing program was in need of 140 new apartments/year, preferably rental apartments. However, the influx was 80 rental apartments/year of which 65 were provided by Helsingborgshem. In order to solve the issue of the lack of housing and be able to provide new long-term housing solutions it was concluded that an increased cooperation between the city's administrations was needed, and they all needed to have a shared responsibility in the issue.

### ***Action plan for the Social Housing Program, 2018-02-12 (Handlingsplan Bostadssociala programmet)***

Two of the CoH's strategic goals in the action plan were that everyone in Helsingborg will have the opportunity to affect their lives; and that Helsingborg will be an open and inclusive city. To accomplish those goals it was deemed that all the citizens needed to have the opportunity to have safe and long-term housing. The purpose of the action plan was to concretise and act out the content from the goal and strategy policy document from 2012. It was targeted towards all the city's departments and corporations. The sub-goals remained the same as in the policy from 2012.

According to the law "Bosättningslagen" (2016:38) the municipalities are required to take in and house newcomers that have acquired a residence permit. The normalization principle governs that newcomers are included in the same rules as all else that lack housing.

In the action plan a detailed list of measures was provided of how to accomplish set goals as well as which department/s was responsible for the implementation. Information was also given of when set action was to be completed, and who was responsible for monitoring its result. One of the actions was to reformulate the land transfer agreement so that building operators leave 10 percent of the volume of housing in the land allocation received in the current stock during year X. Moreover, a guideline was to be created to clarify the process for the renting out of apartments within the Social Housing Program. Another benefit of the guideline was that it defined the responsibilities between the departments. Another measure was to grant the Property Management Department the possibility to supply five tenants that do not satisfy Helsingborgshems economic demands with an apartment provided that the tenant has kept up with the current rental payments, has caused no disturbances, and that the department gives a recommendation. The Property Management Department was also tasked with increasing the allocation of apartments for ex-clients of the Social Housing Program, thereby increasing the flow in the housing market. The problem being that clients of the Social Housing Program rent their apartments from the municipality and need to move on to having their own first-hand contracts. Finally it was decided that an eviction prevention team needed to be established to facilitate finding people at risk of becoming homeless due to disturbing behaviour, at an earlier stage in order to increase the possibility of them being able to stay.

### ***Land and Housing Program 2020-2023: with guidelines for land allocation and development agreements (Mark- och boendeprogram 2020-2023: med riktlinjer för markanvisning och exploateringsavtal)***

As of this year homelessness issues no longer had a separate policy program, instead from this year on it is incorporated in the Land and Housing Program which is decided on every fourth year. There is not much new information compared to the previous policies. They do however clarify that the city will counteract segregation by using apartments in all parts of the city and avoid new placements in the least well-off areas.

Social Housing goals are: The citizens will according to needs and appropriate legislation be offered temporary housing with coordinated efforts based on individual needs. Entry into the regular housing market will be facilitated for persons in temporary housing provided by the city. The amount of homeless families shall decrease. How the goals are to be accomplished is not detailed in the document and to receive that information it is needed to look into the aforementioned policies in this chapter.

