

## Case studies on international policy and implementation – Case 5

# France, intervention on homelessness

*“The Housing First program is still a promise to be kept”*

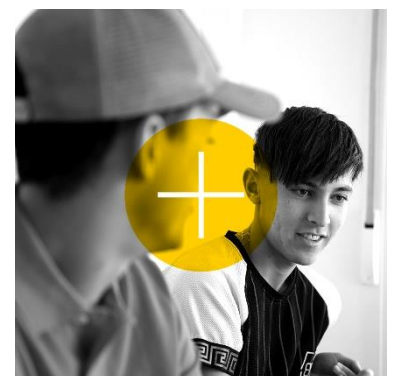
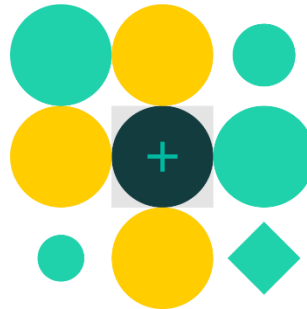
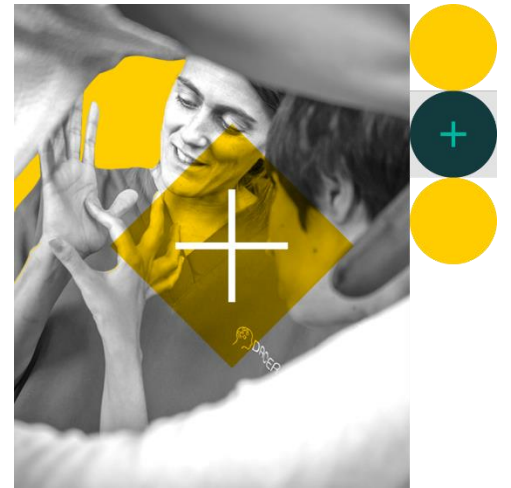


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Estrategia estatal  
de desinstitucionalización

Para una buena vida en la comunidad

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## Key messages

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For two decades France has identified homelessness as a priority and has formulated a policy that prioritizes the right to housing and promotes immediate access to housing solutions in line with the *Housing First* approach. However, despite the political commitment, data from the field demonstrates that while the housing first offer increases, albeit slowly, there is an increase in the number of homeless persons, some of them being attended to with traditional provisions such as shelters or informal precarious solutions, such as shanty towns.

- The Interministerial Delegation for Housing and Accommodation (DIAHL) has developed an innovative programme, in which tested intervention models of community-integrated housing are proven in pilot-territories and rolled out to other areas.
- Despite the rhetoric on housing first principles at central level, the offer of 'institutionalizing' services, such as shelter accommodation and emergency services, increase.
- State funding still spends heavily in institutionalized settings while an investment in housing first options has not increased over the years since the approval of the policy.
- Resistance to changing the model emerges from both structural interest of care providers as well as professional hesitance to shift from professional roles of care providers towards facilitators of community integration.
- Beyond the strong political will as articulated in the national policy, the French homelessness strategy need to be backed by coherent financial means capable of developing a sufficient supply of social housing at affordable rents and of reinforcing the mobilisation of the private stock for social purposes.
- In order to increase the rate of housing first placements, a strategic engagement with social housing agencies is needed to make them part of the strategy and lower the access barriers, both formal and informal, to transition towards safe housing.
- *Housing First* is still more a matter of local experiments. The interpretation of the national policy by on-the-ground implementation generates a wide variety of intervention models, not all of which respect the rights of the person to life a self-directed life in the community.
- Scaling up systematically with decisive investment and comprehensive policy learning is still a pending tasks.
- The policy remains immersed in a reactive mode and avoids to tackle prevention of housing breakdowns, for example via early interventions in case of risk of eviction, and more structural policies of rent control and access to affordable housing in general.
- People with no or incomplete residency rights represent a significant number of persons in precarious housing situations. They are denied access to social housing and are often forced out of private housing market. Despite appalling conditions, they are invisible to the national strategy.



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***For the 300 000 homeless  
people in France,  
the Housing First program  
is still a promise to be kept***

In 2017, the French government adopted a national strategy to fight against homelessness based on a principle that had already been present for several years in the French institutional and voluntary sector: *Housing First*. This strategy re-launches an ambition to reform the public policy on accommodation and support for homeless people that was initiated in 2007. The *Interministerial Delegation for Housing and Accommodation (DIAHL)* is responsible for developing and steering this policy at national level.<sup>1</sup> It has achieved a number of results: According to a report published in October 2021, Housing First has enabled 280.000 people to be housed in three years, including 82 000 in 2020 only.

Despite this claim and reinforcement of this policy, it is important to inquire what these figures represent in relation to the scale of the problems that professionals and associations are identifying in the field: There is an increase in the number of homeless people (300.000 persons on the streets, in emergency accommodation or in shanty towns according to the estimates of the *Fondation Abbé Pierre*). The data hint to a paradox: The Housing First policy is spreading, and more and more people are accessing housing each year. Yet, the government has never spent as much on emergency accommodation and the number of unfilled requests to the homeless emergency call number continues to rise by the thousands each night due to a lack of places (3 800 at the beginning of December 2022).

The response remains far below what is needed. The accommodation sector continues to grow at a rapid rate. This trend that has increased since the COVID crisis, so that emergency accommodation is still the default response to homelessness. Indeed, between 2012 and 2017, the State opened and funded 55 000 additional places in generalist accommodation, an increase of 66% compared to the number of places opened in 2012. Housing First has proved its worth in getting homeless people off the streets in the long term, but certain contradictions in public policy are holding back its implementation. The challenge is therefore to strengthen the emerging policies for direct access to housing by building on the progress made in recent years and removing the obstacles. Various assessments make it possible to identify their successes and the obstacles that prevent the housing first policy from going further.<sup>2</sup>

It seems that resistance to the introduction of the housing first model could be found at two levels. On the one hand, the State's funding is still concentrated on shelters, whereas the credits allocated to housing first are limited to five years. While operators naturally look to secure their funding, this lack of sustainability of housing first funding pushes their focus on providing shelters. On the other hand, resistance also comes from social workers because housing first challenges the top-down approach of social work by relying on other methods (risk reduction, peer work, etc.). Changing practices remains a process that takes time.

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<sup>1</sup> Délégation interministérielle à l'hébergement et au logement. Translated by the author.

<sup>2</sup> Fondation Abbé Pierre, 27th report on housing exclusion in France, 2022; La Cour des Comptes, "Housing First policy in France", 2020; New Agency for Active Solidarity, "Housing First put to the test in the field. Feedback on Housing First projects supported by ANSA (2018-2020)", February 2021.

With this in mind, this article aims to answer several questions. Since its implementation, has Housing First been successful in terms of sustainable access to housing in France? Which territories have gone furthest in changing the model? On which aspects has progress been made or regressed? Can we identify new good practices to promote? What are the obstacles to the implementation of *Housing First*? Are the pitfalls linked to local or national political decisions?

## **1. Trajectory and milestones of *Housing First* in France**

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Since nearly a decade, France has a national plan that affirms an ambition to end homelessness, proposes a vision, and guides the action of local public authorities. Initiated in 2017, *Housing First* is an approach that has been translated in France into a five-year plan (2018-2022). It was a roadmap for the State over the five years of the presidential term and an accelerated implementation in 23 territories in 2018 and 23 more in 2021. This means that 45 local authorities are involved in the accelerated implementation of the national plan.

The aim of the plan is to rapidly guide homeless people towards sustainable housing, which is a prerequisite for their integration, thanks to appropriate, flexible and multidisciplinary support. This roadmap is a technical document for professionals in the sector (state services, associations, social landlords, etc.) which sets the course, objectives, and stages for the national and local levels. The implementation of a national plan is an essential first step that has allowed to characterize the problems, to propose a common reading grid and to share the proposed solutions.

In 2017, the President of the Republic, Emmanuel Macron, presented the Five-Year Plan for Housing First and the Fight against Homelessness 2018-2022. Priority is given to housing as a first condition for inclusion. There are five main **priorities**: (1) to produce and mobilise more affordable housing, (2) to promote and accelerate access to housing, (3) to provide better support, (4) to prevent breakdowns and refocus accommodation on an immediate and unconditional response, and (5) to mobilise actors and territories. The plan lists three quantified **commitments**: 40 000 very low rent social housing units per year from 2018, 10 000 places in boarding houses, 40 000 additional places through social renting agencies (SRA).

After one year of implementation, the results were encouraging but showed weaknesses: few territories committed to quantified objectives; weak observation and evaluation tools; unequal political support; clearly insufficient funding; and a lack of participation by the people concerned. In 2019, the Minister in charge of Housing announced an "Act II of Housing First", reiterated its ambition and strengthened the means at its disposal: an additional €60 million, 12 new "Home First" sites, a second call for expressions of interest to accelerate its implementation, and a doubling of the funds dedicated to slum clearance. In 2021, the government decided to reorganise its administration by creating a public service "*de la Rue au logement*" [From the street to housing]: the Interministerial Delegation for Housing and Accommodation (DIAHL) was given responsibility for managing the emergency accommodation budget programme.

The role of a central State administration at the head of this public policy makes it special compared to its European partners: it is a matter of cooperation between the State and local authorities, formalised by an agreement and a roadmap. Created in 2010, the Interministerial Delegation (DIAHL) that developed and leads the implementation of this public policy provides the 45 implementing territories with technical support and a national vision. By adopting a

cross-cutting approach within the central administrations, it facilitates interministerial mobilisation and partnerships to resolve problems arising in the field. It accompanies and supports the dissemination of ideas and actions that work. It is therefore a decentralised policy in its implementation but based on shared principles.

## 2. Implementation of Housing First

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**Welcomed in principle by all actors, the implementation of the housing first policy is far from being effective today. In particular, what is needed is a strong political will backed by coherent financial means capable of developing a sufficient supply of social housing at affordable rents and of reinforcing the mobilisation of the private stock for social purposes.**

### 2.1. Key data and approach

Housing First in figures:

- 280 000 rough sleepers or housed people were able to access social housing, boarding houses or intermediary rental accommodation between 2018 and the end of June 2021; 64 % of these were in social housing.
- 38 000 new state-funded homes through social rental agencies in five years.
- 5 600 places have been opened in boarding houses for homeless people since the launch of the plan.
- 45 000 housing units mobilised for refugee households between 2017 and the end of 2021.

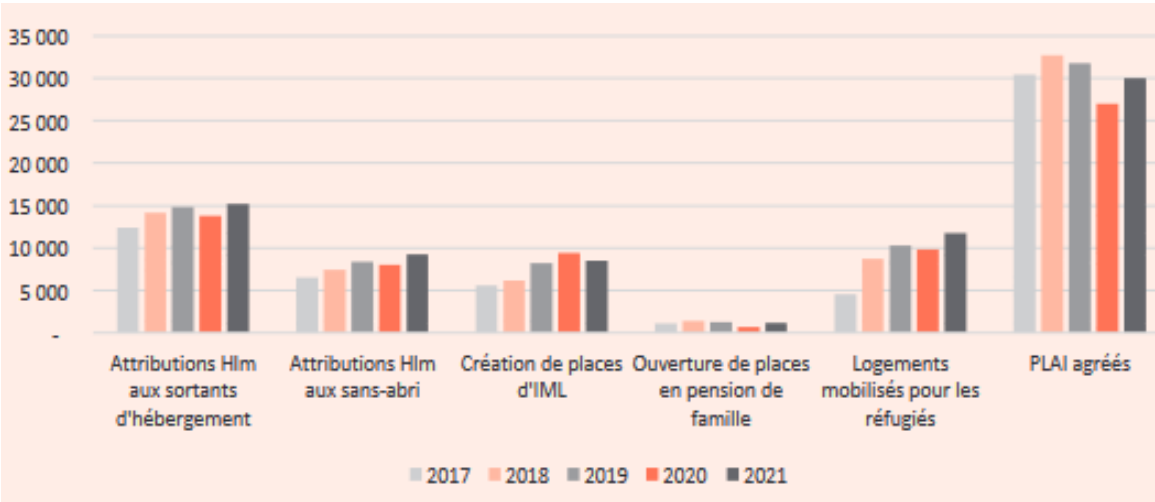
However, the results provided by the Ministry show that there are gaps between the objectives and the initial results observed. In 2019, only 79 % of the target for very social housing was met (with 31.777 very social housing units approved at the end of the year, against a target of 40 000), 400 places in boarding houses were short of the initial target of 1 600 places, and around 1.700 additional social housing allocations would have been needed to meet the target. The initial target of 1 600 places was missed by 400 places in boarding houses, and approximately 1 700 additional social housing allocations would have been required to meet the target for access to social housing for rough sleepers (approximately 16 600 allocations initially planned).

While the rate of allocation of housing to rough sleepers has increased over the period, thousands of people are still waiting for social housing and the average length of stay in shelters is increasing. However, since the beginning of the five-year period, the target for the creation of homes through social rental agencies has been met (55.751 rentals managed by the end of 2020). The Finance Act for 2021 provides for an increase in the daily rate for boarding houses on 1 January 2021, from 16 to 18 euros per day and per place, and a strengthening of social support for housing, thanks to the recruitment of 150 jobs within the integrated reception and orientation services (SIAO<sup>3</sup>).

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<sup>3</sup> “ Service Intégré de l’Accueil et de l’Orientation” is the flagship service of the social watch system for the reception and orientation of people in difficulty who need emergency accommodation or adapted housing. Translated by the author

Figure 1: A slow start - Housing First response 2017-2021



Source: Fondation Abbé Pierre, 27th report on housing exclusion in France, 2022; Key: 1 - Social housing allocations to people leaving accommodation; 2 - Allocation of social housing to homeless people; 3 - Creation of intermediary rental spaces; 4 - Opening of boarding house places; 5 - Housing mobilised for refugees; 6 - Approved subsidised integration loans

The “A home first” programme (*“Un chez soi d’abord”*) had been tested since 2011 in Paris, Lille, Marseille, and Toulouse under the aegis of DIHAL. It aims to test the provision of care and support for homeless people with severe psychiatric disorders, together with intensive social and health support provided by a multidisciplinary team composed of social workers, nurses, psychologists, and peer workers. The conclusions presented in April 2017 show that the programme is effective over time.<sup>5</sup> 89 % of the 353 persons are still housed and monitored four years after the start of the experiment. In 2016, the average length of hospitalisation for housed people had fallen by 50%. In 2020, 348 persons will be housed in the four initial sites.

On the basis of these findings, the scheme was made permanent in the four experimental areas and deployed in 16 additional sites, at a rate of four sites per year over the period 2018-2022, in the form of therapeutic coordination flats (ACT), bringing the total number of places opened for the scheme to 800, at a total cost of 18 million euros. The aim was to house and support a further 400 homeless people, bringing the total number of places to 2.000 by 2020. By 2021, 22 sites were open, providing 1 875 places.

At the end of 2019, the State launched a four-year experiment “A home first - Youth” in two metropolitan areas (Lyon and Toulouse), aiming to provide housing and intensive, multidisciplinary support to a total of 100 young people by 2021. Up to date, 50 young people have been supported and housed, aged 20 on average, most of them men. In addition, the government is starting to roll out the programme to other cities.

<sup>4</sup> Fondation Abbé Pierre, 27<sup>th</sup> annual report on housing exclusion in France, 2022.

<sup>5</sup> Interministerial delegation for Housing and accommodation, “Experimental programme “A home first”, activity results”, April 2017.



## 2.2. Turning *Housing First* into a structural public policy in France

### The under use of social housing

The success or failure of *Housing First* depends on the availability of accessible housing for homeless households. However, some social landlords are under pressure from various sides to meet multiple demands. Therefore, sometimes, they appear to be absent from the housing first implementation. However, everywhere, the challenge of housing first comes up against the shortage of available low-rent housing. Thus, construction must be made a priority.

In 2018, the State set a target of 4.000 very low rent social housing units per year. In 2020, only 2.176 units were financed. This increase is not likely to meet the target or compensate for the general decline in the construction of very low-cost social housing since 2017 (28.000 very low rent social housing in 2020, around 30.000 in 2021, compared to 34.000 in 2016), especially as the new social housing often still has rents that are too high for homeless households.

Social housing allocations increased by 50% between 2017 and early 2021 but homeless households are still the minority of recipients: only 3,8% of allocations to people housed in accommodation and 2,3 % to homeless people: being homeless is still the least likely situation to obtain social housing.<sup>6</sup> The framework is evolving but practices are changing slowly, for economic or political reasons or because of the weight of habits and prejudices about the "*capacité à habiter*"<sup>7</sup> of people who have lived on the street and the "risk" they represent. Allocations outside 'sensitive' neighbourhoods are rarely made to the poorest households. Although the law has required, since 2017, that a quarter of all allocations go to the poorest 25% of applicants, they are still poorly served (17 % in 2017, 16% in 2019, 17 % expected in 2020). Most social housing agencies have not relaxed the conditions for accessing their stock and are reluctant to have the lease signed directly by the tenant.

### Training to change the professional paradigm

The lack of training of actors to change the paradigm from "ability to live" to "right of housing" and the social support still very dependent on too rigid and insufficient funding.

Today, those involved in tackling homelessness are more likely to think in terms of 'housing' than 'accommodation'. However, some are wary of an approach that aims to reduce resources for accommodation while the number of homeless people continues to grow. In addition, in the Housing First philosophy, support to and in housing is seen as something that should be flexible according to the needs and wishes of the household i.e not a systematic approach. However, both local authorities and some social landlords sometimes see social support as a form of 'guarantee' rather than as a way of adapting housing conditions to the needs of the household.

Thanks to the financial support of the state, the territories have developed structuring actions that reconfigure the systems for combating homelessness over the long term. Amongst these

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<sup>6</sup> Union sociale pour l'habitat, *Les HLM en chiffres*, édition 2020.

<sup>7</sup> Roughly translated to : the ability to live independent and productive lives. However, this concept used by social workers covers other aspects like the ability to pay the rent on time, to maintain peaceful social relations with neighbours, to keep a clean home, etc.

are (a) the optimisation and reconfiguration of the available support offer with the creation of territorial support platforms which aim to move from a "culture of measurement" to a logic centred on the needs of the household; (b) the development of the integrated reception and orientation service (SIAO), which serves to bring together the demand and supply of accommodation or housing and to articulate the various initiatives promoting support and access to housing and, in the long term, the prevention of breakdowns; (c) the development of local observatories on homelessness and operations to take a census of homeless people; (d) the implementation of actions promoting access to housing from the street, in particular by multidisciplinary support teams or mobile teams. Professionals at all levels have had to deconstruct their way of working. In many areas, support projects have been revised to include new, more multi-disciplinary team compositions and peer helpers.

The training of actors (elected officials and professionals) is one of the strategic axes of the Housing First plan to ensure that the paradigm shift is accepted. In Montpellier, about a hundred people a year are trained to implement this policy. The University of Lyon has developed a "Housing First" university diploma, which focuses on the "user experience" and mobilises "peer workers" as trainers. However, alongside these examples, not all social worker training has yet integrated the paradigm shift.

Beyond training, the difficulty for frontline workers to apply the principles of housing first (personalized support 24 hours a day, direct proposal of housing without waiting list, etc.) is due to the fact that this transition takes place in a context where the teams lack staff (too many social follow-ups compared to the number of social workers), budget to employ multidisciplinary teams (psychologist, nurse...) and housing offer to propose to the homeless people they meet.

### **2.3. The prevention of breakdowns: a dimension rarely favoured**

The coordination between different public stakeholders, public administration, municipality, health-social services etc. is key to an integrated response to homelessness.

While the number of people leaving the street for housing is increasing, others are losing their home due to family breakdowns, unemployment, a disruption in administrative procedures or to failing public policies. Evictions with the assistance of law enforcement continue to rise, despite successive prevention plans since 2016 (the record of 16.700 was reached in 2019). It took the urgency of the health crisis for the government to take more protective measures (extension of the winter truce, instructions to prefects not to evict without accommodation, replenishment of the Housing Solidarity Fund and the Landlord Compensation Fund, 26 mobile eviction prevention teams).

It remains to be seen whether all these emergency measures will continue. This eviction prevention policy has sometimes been implemented in housing first areas, but on a modest scale. In most areas, there are still many people leaving child welfare care, which contributes to homelessness. Mobilisation around this issue has led to various measures in 2019 (an Undersecretary for Children, 10 million euros per year to help the departments to continue care after the age of 18).

### **2.4. Diversity of approaches depending on the territory of intervention**

The policy recommendation made by the DIHAL to prevent rental evictions is far from being applied in the territories: the local authority continues to evict shantytowns and camps instead

of making social diagnoses and proposing accommodation places, so that shantytowns and camps are recreated elsewhere, further away, less visible, making these inhabitants more precarious. The same is true for evictions, which continue to be carried out with the intervention of the police without offering accommodation.

While these figures and the list of measures do reflect the involvement of the State and local authorities, they do not give a clear picture of what is actually being produced in terms of additional solutions and also in terms of reducing homelessness in the territories. What is the real gain compared to the initial situation, what are the structuring effects of Housing First policy?

### **A wide variety of implementation of Housing First in the territories: from a simple scheme to a paradigm shift**

Fondation Abbé Pierre has conducted field surveys and interviewing project leaders in the context of the *Report on the state of poor housing in 2022*.<sup>8</sup> It appears that there is still a lot of confusion and vagueness surrounding the approach. The perception of what the "philosophy" of housing first covers is still undecided. Some professionals emphasise the promise of the approach, while others fear that it is a sham without any real follow-up in terms of resources and coordination. In the minds of some of the actors interviewed, *Housing First* is perceived as an additional housing policy measure, a new channel dedicated to people "leaving the streets and shelters". On the other hand, some actors indicate that, in their territory, Housing First "serves as a reference", around which initiatives are organised, and "cross-subsidies" converge. Some spoke of a "new" impetus given to the policy in favour of disadvantaged groups, while others spoke of the way in which the calls for proposals had made it possible to fill gaps or to strengthen local engineering and coordination through the funding of ad hoc projects.

The surveys carried out make it possible to identify five postures, or forms of support for housing first, depending on the territory:

- A "formal" adherence to the philosophy, without any real mobilisation of the actors.
- A partial reading of Housing First, which adopts only one or two axes in a particular field (mental health, young people on the move, etc.).
- A global adoption intended to reinforce projects and actions under consideration or delayed due to lack of means or mobilisation.
- An "opportunistic" aim to renew the image of the existing action system in the territory.
- The claim that these issues are already being dealt with, rejecting the framework of the National Plan and defying official discourse.

There are two main reasons for these different territorial postures that deviate from the national discourse. On the one hand, there is a double national discourse that officially encourages the housing first dynamic but has not succeeded in creating funding that is as sustainable and secure as that allocated to accommodation, which does not encourage operators to switch from accommodation to housing first. **Operators need sustainable funding to change their philosophy of action.**

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<sup>8</sup> Fondation Abbé Pierre, *27<sup>th</sup> annual report on housing exclusion in France*, 2022.

On the other hand, the territories where the housing first approach is rolled out in an accelerated manner do not have all the administrative competences to implement housing first. Indeed, administrative competences are divided between the State (responsible for the prevention of rental evictions, housing, part of the social housing allocations), the departments (responsible for social support and child protection), the municipalities (responsible for part of the social housing allocations, for the construction of social housing, for domiciliation, etc.) and the metropolises (which have different responsibilities depending on the territory). Some willing territories have not succeeded in federating all administrative entities around housing first. Counterproductive actions can therefore be carried out at the level of a territory because the administrative entity that has applied to housing first does not have all the administrative competences to carry out a coherent housing first policy.

These positions may have changed during this five-year period, punctuated by unforeseen events that have caused disruption or instability, such as - the reform of the housing benefits, with the introduction in 2018 the RLS<sup>9</sup>, which weakened the ability of the social housing agencies to build and manage their stock:

- a health crisis which had a very strong impact on local agencies and the solutions mobilised, particularly in terms of accommodation.
- an increase in migratory flows, which put pressure on the already underfunded accommodation structures (only 1 in 2 asylum seekers are housed by the state) as well as on the measures aimed at facilitating the transition from accommodation to housing.
- a decline in the supply of available housing in areas where demand is high, due to a level of new housing construction (both social and private) that has been steadily decreasing for the past five years; a slowing down of turnover in the existing housing stock; the "Programme National de Rénovation Urbaine" (PNRU), which has led to a reduction in the supply of low-rent housing and increased recourse to new or recent housing for rehousing.<sup>10</sup>
- changes in governance following the local elections of May 2020, which have had a significant impact.

### **The history and strength of the system of actors**

Behind the great diversity in the implementation of this housing first approach, the history of local policies to help the homeless is a factor that explains whether or not this approach has been adopted. Are social housing agencies attentive to their allocations? How strong is the cooperation between different local associations, authorities, and social landlords?

In some places, housing first is based on a long-standing structuring of partnerships and solid systems, on a "political support/technical support" articulation, and on enlarged operational teams. Some local authorities have therefore been able to experiment in the grey areas of public policy (e.g. the city of Strasbourg is experimenting with an allowance to promote housing for young people who are homeless).

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<sup>9</sup> "Réduction de loyer de solidarité" is a measure introduced in the 2018 Budget Act to compensate for the reduction of housing benefits by imposing lower rents on social landlords, thus passing the financial burden from the state to them in a cost-cutting effort by the government.

<sup>10</sup> National Urban Renewal Programme

### **3. Lessons and outlook of twelve years of housing first in France**

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#### **The forgotten in the housing first strategy**

People with no or incomplete residency rights (600.000-700.000 people) are denied access to social housing and are often forced out of private housing because of the cost of rent and the guarantees expected, and are forced to live with third parties, in hotels or in emergency accommodation, or even on the streets or in squats.

This impasse is not solved by the Housing First roadmaps. The actions presented by the territories make access to housing conditional on legal residence, such as the instruction of 4 June 2018 aimed at relaunching housing through social renting agencies SRA (except for single-parent families awaiting renewal of a residence permit and those where one member of the couple is legally resident). Only a few initiatives are being carried out by certain local authorities or associations.

Evacuations of squats and shanty towns continue without any rehousing solution: 1.330 informal settlements were evicted between November 2020 and October 2021 (+23 %), occupied by over 172.000 people. Preliminary social diagnoses are very rare (4 % of cases). In 91 % of evictions, evicted people are not offered any solution. When they do exist, they are usually very precarious (gymnasiums, hotels). The national strategy to reduce shantytowns, led by the DIHAL since 2018, had nevertheless favoured coordination prior to evacuation and promoted comprehensive support for people (social, professional, access to rights).

Finally, the 2019-2022 Overseas Housing Plan makes no mention of Housing First, despite the fact that some overseas territories, particularly Mayotte and French Guiana, have large numbers of homeless people.

#### **Sustainability of the model and outlook for future reform agenda**

When assessing the situation at the territorial level, housing first is still more a matter of local experiments involving at most a hundred people here or there than of real structural change. Taking these innovations out of the laboratory is rarely thought of, as is their dissemination. It is high time to move beyond the experimental stage and aim for generalisation. While some people see this as an announcement and a scattering of resources, others see it as a way of giving intermunicipal authorities the opportunity to take on the problem of homeless people. The actors agree that the transformation has begun but is far from complete. *Housing first* is not very visible on the ground. Decision-makers and managers still need to take ownership of the approach and pass on the main principles to their teams (staff, social services, other elected representatives, etc.), but also to the public.

Despite its limitations, the housing first philosophy is no longer openly questioned and the indicators for rehousing homeless people or people leaving accommodation are increasing. Five key issues can now be identified to ensure the sustainability of action in favour of the poorly housed:

- Real-time measurement of the achievement of homelessness reduction targets.
- Correctly sized, well-funded and technically sound social support.
- Awareness-raising among all actors.
- Continuity and resources guaranteed over time with the signing of a multi-year funding plan.

- A sufficient supply of social, very social or simply affordable housing.

## 4. Conclusion

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After a year of implementation, the results were encouraging but revealed some weaknesses, which the Fondation Abbé Pierre pointed out in its 2019 annual report.

- Firstly, **limited ambition**: few territories have committed themselves to quantified targets for the results to be achieved;
- Secondly, **insufficient observation and evaluation tools**: the last census of homeless people by Insee<sup>11</sup> dates back to 2012, and censuses in several cities are based on local initiatives;
- Thirdly, unequal political support **depending on the territory**;
- Fourthly, **insufficient funding**: the mobilisation of common law and existing resources is still the rule, with, in addition, "support" credits (engineering, social observation, monitoring, evaluation, communication, etc.) and "measure" credits for intermediaries. 15 million over two years for the 23 territories, in addition to easier access to ordinary law credits and an additional 8 million from the National Agency for Housing Improvement, with no guarantee that these credits will be sustainable over time.

From the point of view of the municipalities, the distribution of administrative competencies renders them powerless to implement a coherent housing first policy and there is great frustration when the state's financial investment in housing production comes to a standstill. There is a need to extend and generalise the shift towards Housing First. It is still possible to draw inspiration from Finland, a leading country in housing first, whose recipes (increased housing subsidies, intensive support, development of supply and transformation of shelters into permanent housing) are not so far removed from a French social housing model that must stop being undermined, as this five-year period has done by attacking housing benefits and the financial means of social landlords.

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<sup>11</sup> Institut national de la statistique et des études économiques : National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies