

ROOF

Ending homelessness



ROOF, 9 cities, 1 objective ending homelessness

For the past 3 years, in the framework of URBACT, 9 European cities have been putting the objective of ending homelessness into practice. ROOF's aim is to end homelessness through innovative housing solutions at city level. It is about making the shift from managing homelessness to actually ending it through Housing First/Led and about gathering accurate data. In the last 3 years the ROOF cities engaged in exchange and learning activities on a transnational and local level, while testing and planning new ways of working and changing mindsets. All cities developed integrated local Action Plans to promote and achieve the strategic goal of Functional Zero (no structural homelessness). Key in the network process were the design led approach to create social change and the focus on advocacy and storytelling to change the minds of the different stakeholders.

You can read all about this exciting journey in this summary. Each page contains a code for you to scan if you want to discover and learn more.



Ending homelessness from different starting points: adopting and adapting known solutions

Each ROOF city is located in a specific geographical place with its own history, present and future implications. They are of different cultures and habits and most of all, their local and national policies as well as their experience on Housing First are at very different stages. Being a part of the URBACT programme created an opportunity to bring different points of view and experiences together, to advance from different starting points while adopting and adapting proven solutions to specific contexts.

Some cities needed to start from zero and understand how to change the local mindset and put the first milestones to introduce Housing First as the most sustainable solution. Other cities explored scaling-up without losing quality. And a couple of advanced cities took the opportunity to work on prevention or long-term sustainability. All cities agreed that the exchange between the cities has been the most insightful part of the ROOF network.



Read about each of the ROOF cities to learn more



Braga

Using housing and professional re-integration as a means to social integration

Ghent

Designing multiple housing solutions with tailored support and assistance

Glasgow

Driving change and embedding prevention through collaboration and storytelling

Liège

Mobilizing local community by awareness-raising campaigns to develop Housing Led approach

Odense

Engaging different stakeholders, maintaining a high-quality Housing First system

Poznań

Bringing housing policies and homelessness data together

Thessaloniki

Challenging lack of housing and building a housing stock to effectively implement Housing First

Timișoara

Starting up Housing First through training and awareness-raising

Toulouse Métropole

Creating unique housing solutions and homelessness services on a metropolitan level

Learning from a crisis...

COVID-19 took everybody by surprise leading to dramatic changes affecting our social systems. Including the 9 ROOF cities, who suddenly found themselves in an unwanted situation. The crisis forced them to respond quickly and to change strategies in a more agile way. Over time it has become clear that the pandemic also has brought some valuable lessons and unexpectedly positive and surprising effects: homeless people being housed for the first time in small temporary houses, rough sleepers finally being housed after many years, use of nontraditional infrastructure to house homeless people, cross-stakeholder collaboration and a changing public opinion.



Read more about “From street lockdown to a roof over your head” in our knowledge hub



...to adopt agile policy making strategies

As the pandemic generated more agile policy making strategies, so did the URBACT Small Scale Action (SSA) plan. URBACT encouraged the cities to try-out Small Scale Actions; the aim of these actions is to learn from tests, measure the results and either adapt, upscale or reject actions to be included in the Integrated Action Plan. Beyond that, the testing itself gives each municipality the rare opportunity to become more agile in their way of working and to activate all relevant local stakeholders with a vision in mind and a concrete first step to take.

Through their specific SSAs the ROOF cities tested new tools and methods for providing better services, new communication and advocacy tools, and different ways to collect and use data.



**Read more about
“How to succeed by
daring to fail” in our
knowledge hub**



Moving towards actually ending homelessness by implementing Integrated Action Plans ...

Each city now has a detailed action plan and a strong local group to support the activities. The collaboration with local stakeholders developed through the project is recognised by the cities to be one of the success factors for their actions.

An Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is a policy instrument that can be used to respond in a concrete way to a policy challenge. Each IAP is unique, in terms of local context, theme and coverage. It is integrated because it is addressing the different dimensions of the problem, i.e. social, economic, health and environmental dimensions, and considers the various territorial levels relevant to the solutions to be implemented.



**Read the plans of
each of the ROOF
cities in our ROOF
cities page**



...using the Design Led approach to create social change...

The Design Led approach pushed all ROOF activities. This meant adopting a problem solving approach, seeing opportunities in challenges, and using data as means towards solutions. The methodology followed was divided in non-linear steps:

- Inspire:** creating a shared vision and forming ambassadors for the change that is about to happen.
- Sustain:** collecting and growing data in order to support change and orient the advocacy trajectory.
- Learn:** building capacity and growing expertise for the local networks.
- Activate:** putting ideas into actions useful to demonstrate that the direction taken is correct or interesting.
- Evaluate:** evaluating and using the actions taken to address the next steps in the cycle.



Read more about how the ROOF network used a Design Led approach in our knowledge hub



... and by calling on Europe through advocacy and storytelling

The ROOF process made it very clear: it takes a city, a country and Europe to finally end homelessness. We believe that change is key, change the mindset and get all levels on the same page. We have been aiming to make progress in the local, national and European homelessness and housing policies. Through advocacy and storytelling we have been changing more minds towards data collection and starting or upscaling Housing First/Led. Now we need Europe to help us cities end homelessness. Therefore, the ROOF network created 4 specific messages outlining what Europe can do in the next decade to help cities towards functional zero. Now we need you to call on Europe with us.



Read the 4 ROOF key messages to the EU

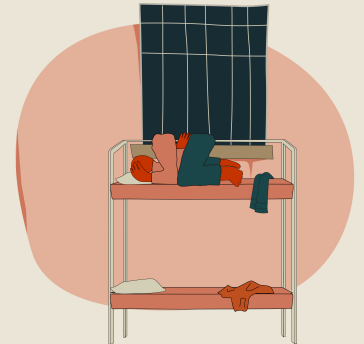
Join the ROOF call to the EU

Send a postcard to the EU

Check out the ROOF advocacy trajectory



in our advocacy page





ROOF was an URBACT Action Planning Network running from 2019 to 2022, co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund.

ROOF network cities: Ghent (Belgium - Lead Partner), Thessaloniki (Greece), Toulouse Métropole (France), Braga (Portugal), Timișoara (Romania), Glasgow (United Kingdom), Liège (Belgium), Poznań (Poland), Odense (Denmark).

Lead Partner City of Ghent (BE) would genuinely like to thank the whole ROOF network. You were a great group that kept working with total commitment, even despite the difficult COVID and Ukraine circumstances, even online. Also a big thank you to the ROOF coordination team (Patricia, Ariana, Sana, An, Hannelore, Steven, Eric, Linda) and the Glasgow-Milan-Ghent communication team (Stevie, Euan, Mafalda, Arezoo, Claudia, Renae, Fabienne, Asena). Special thanks also goes to the very supportive URBACT Secretariat, our always inspiring Programme Expert Laura Colini and our fantastic Lead Expert Liat Rogel, as well as the great ad hoc experts Prof. Philip Brown and Luiza Braga Campos. Last but not least we would like to thank the friends of our ROOF network FEANTSA, Eurocities, World Habitat, Housing First Europe,... all the expert speakers and everyone that inspired us to do more and better. Together we put new tiles on the ROOF that will end homelessness for all.



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