

For more information:

Hannu Ahola (Statistics)
Tel. +358 400 996 067
Saara Nyssölä
Tel. +358 40 172 4917

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Homelessness in 2013

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The data on homelessness is based on the housing market survey conducted by the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) in 2013. A total of 281 municipalities in mainland Finland responded to the survey, with a response rate of 92.4%. The report examines developments in homelessness by comparing the figures for a chosen cross-section date of 15 November 2013 to those of the previous year. A more detailed discussion is presented of the ten municipalities participating in the National Programme to Reduce Long-term Homelessness (PAAVO II). The annex to the report on homelessness outlines data on each municipality, by region and in order of magnitude.

Homelessness in Finland in 2013

According to the housing market survey conducted by the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA), at the end of 2013 there were 420 homeless families and 7,500 single homeless people in Finland¹. The number of single homeless people decreased by 350 and long-term homeless by 80 compared to the previous year.

In 2013, homelessness was reported in 116 mainland Finland municipalities, while the same figure for the previous year was 157. In proportion to the population, the most homeless people live in Helsinki: 6.7 homeless for every 1,000 inhabitants. In Riihimäki (2.6), Vantaa (2.5) and Espoo (2.2) relative homelessness was also high. Municipal and regional homelessness statistics can also be found in Annexes 1 and 2.

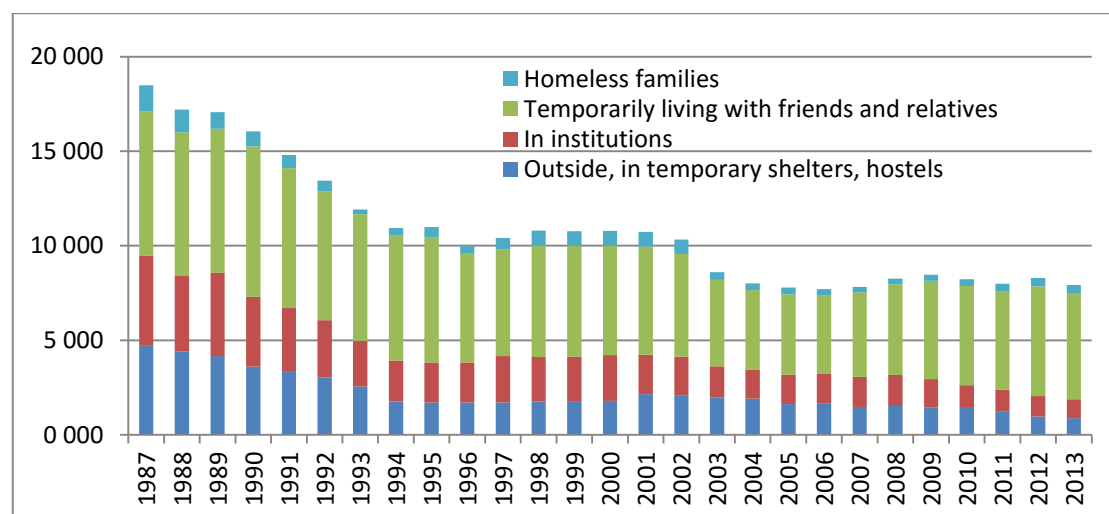


Figure 1. Number of homeless people 1987-2013

Development of homelessness in large cities

In 2013, homelessness in Helsinki remained unchanged, while it had increased in the previous year. In Vantaa, homelessness increased by 80 persons in 2013. Homelessness also increased in Espoo. Homelessness figures for Turku, Jyväskylä and Oulu remained nearly on a par with the figures for 2012. Homelessness in Lahti, Joensuu and Pori increased slightly. The biggest decreases in homelessness were reported in Tampere and Kuopio.

¹ These figures should be treated with caution, since municipalities compile statistics in various ways and not all are able to provide precise figures on homelessness. For more information on homelessness statistics, see the ARA Report 2|2010 **Selvitys pitkäaikaisasunnottomuuden määrittelystä ja raportoinnista** (Report on the definition and reporting of long-term homelessness) (available at www.ara.fi>Julkaisut>Raportteja-sarja).

Table 1 Municipalities with the highest homelessness rates in 2013

Municipality	Homeless people 15.11.2013				Change 2013-2012, people			
	Single			Homeless families	Single			Homeless families
	total no. of homeless	long-term homeless	under 25-years-old		total no. of homeless	long-term homeless	under 25-years-old	
Helsinki	4 100	1 415	1 100	300	0	0	0	0
Espoo	563	223	150	41	9	-24	25	8
Vantaa	522	150	115	33	80	25	-14	-23
Turku	221	149	23	0	-3	0	-12	0
Tampere	175	72	22	7	-147	8	-49	-10
Jyväskylä	141	33	40	5	-2	-7	-10	-5
Lahti	117	57	34	0	-12	-8	1	0
Kuopio	102	13	15	1	-83	-31	-29	0
Joensuu	88	21	20	2	-13	-1	-13	0
Pori**	85	32	13	1	-8	-10	5	-1
Oulu	43	27	6	0	5	-5	6	0
Total	6 157	2 192	1 538	390	-174	-53	-90	-31
Other municipalities with high homelessness rates								
Järvenpää								
Kotka	93	44	22	1	33	9	3	1
Riihimäki	76	28	20	5	-11	-10	-12	1
Vaasa	75	13	19	0	27	8	12	-2
Whole country	7 500	2 545	1 860	417	-352	-83	-189	-29

The homelessness figures show an emphasis on the Capital Region, because over two-thirds of the homeless in Finland live in Helsinki, Espoo or Vantaa. Table 1 shows the **municipalities** involved in the **programme to reduce long-term homelessness**² (PAAVO I and II) and three other municipalities hard-hit by homelessness. PAAVO municipalities accounted for 82% of the total number of homeless in Finland in 2013. More detailed information on the homelessness rates of PAAVO municipalities and the measures being taken by them can be found in Annex 3.

Many forms of homelessness

The largest group of homeless people is comprised of those *temporarily living with friends or relatives*. In 2013, three-fourths of single homeless people and 61% of long-term homeless people belonged to this group (Table 2, page 4).

In 2013, one out of every four homeless people in Finland was under 25 years of age. Women also account for nearly a quarter of all homeless people. Compared to 2012, homelessness decreased 9% among youths and 5% among women.

In 2011, the number of homeless immigrants exceeded the 1,000-person mark for the time. In 2013, there were nearly 2,000 homeless immigrants, exceeding 25% of the total number of homeless people. Immigrants accounted for over 60% of homeless families. In Helsinki, the number of homeless immigrants rose by 450 persons during the year, while smaller changes were reported elsewhere.

² Long-term homeless persons are those who have been homeless or will be homeless for more than a year due to social or health reasons, or those who have been homeless repeatedly over the past three years

Table 2. Number of homeless by group in 2013

Whole country	2013		Change year-on-year (people)		Change year-on-year (%)	
	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless	Single homeless	of which long-term homeless
Outside, in staircases, shelters etc	332	146	-29	-38	-8,0 %	-20,7 %
In hostels, boarding houses	547	228	-57	-39	-9,4 %	-14,6 %
In housing service units, hospitals or other institutions	819	531	-34	52	-4,0 %	10,9 %
Released prisoners (no dwell.)	177	68	-57	-16	-24,4 %	-19,0 %
Temporarily with friends or relatives	5 626	1 572	-174	-42	-3,0 %	-2,6 %
Whole country	7 500	2 545	-352	-83	-4,5 %	-3,2 %
Homeless women	1 804	534	-89	-101	-4,7 %	-15,9 %
young people under 25-year	1 862	520	-187	44	-9,1 %	9,2 %
immigrants	1 986	648	436	131	28,1 %	25,3 %
Homeless families	417		-29		-6,5 %	
families with children	475		111		30,5 %	
immigrant families	254		43		20,4 %	
with children	346		70		25,4 %	
Housed by the municipality						
single homeless	3 066	1070	-237	-48	-7,2 %	
families	429		-61		-12,4 %	
families with children	570		-22		-3,7 %	

Long-term homelessness in 2013

In November 2013, there were 2,550 long-term homeless persons in all of Finland. Long-term homelessness decreased by approximately 80 persons (3%). In the Capital Region, long-term homelessness remained at 2012 levels, with figures for Helsinki remaining unchanged, an increase of 25 persons in Vantaa and a decrease of 24 persons in Espoo. In November of 2013, the Capital Region had a total of nearly 1,800 long-term homeless persons, which is 70% of the total number of long-term homeless for all of Finland. In PAAVO municipalities, long-term homelessness decreased by 43 persons. The biggest decrease was reported in Kuopio, with 31 fewer persons. In addition to Vantaa, Tampere also reported an increase in long-term homelessness (8 persons), while levels remained the same or decreased slightly in other PAAVO municipalities (Table 1, page 3).

The long-term homelessness of youths under 25 years of age increased 9% to 520 persons. Of the long-term homeless, 534 were women, which is 16% less than in 2012. The number of immigrants who were long-term homeless increased 25% to 648 persons (Table 2).

Reducing long-term homelessness

The aim of the PAAVO I (2008–2011) programme to reduce long-term homelessness was to halve long-term homelessness, using the number of dwellings as an indicator. The programme objective was to provide 1,250 new service or supported housing units for the long-term homeless. **Helsinki, Espoo, Vantaa, Tampere, Turku, Lahti, Jyväskylä, Kuopio, Joensuu** and **Oulu** participated in the programme.

The aim of the PAAVO II (2012–2015) programme to reduce long-term homelessness was to eliminate long-term homelessness, using the number of dwellings as an indicator. Letters-of-intent were signed by the same cities as above, with the addition of **Pori** in 2013. Financing for investments and support services required for the programme's implementation is secured in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Slot Machine Association RAY and ARA.

Table 3. Dwellings financed by ARA in municipalities signatory to the letter-of-intent 2008–2013*

Municipality	New construction	Renov./acquisition	Total
Espoo	166	125	291
Helsinki	307	433	740
Joensuu	48		48
Jyväskylä		38	38
Kuopio	73	10	83
Lahti	98		98
Oulu	24		24
Tampere	169	49	218
Turku	60		60
Vantaa	76		76
Combined total	1021	655	1676

*) This includes projects which received investment support; some of the projects are still under construction. In addition to ARA, Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) has granted financing for housing projects for the long-term homeless, for 19 dwellings in Helsinki and 10 dwellings in Espoo.

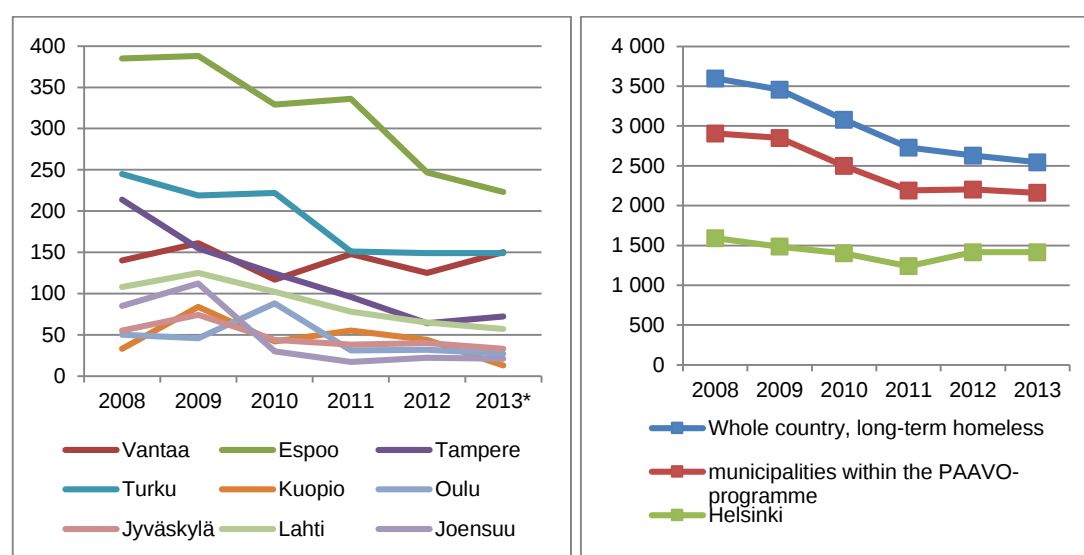
Table 3 shows the share of housing production financed by ARA in 2008–2013 for the elimination of long-term homelessness in the cities that have signed the letter of intent to achieve this goal. During this period, the signatory cities received around 66 million euros³ in investment grants from ARA for the construction, renovation or acquisition of over 1,676 dwellings. Although the quantitative targets set for dwellings were exceeded during PAAVO I, long-term homelessness was not yet halved or eliminated. Interest in the construction of dwellings intended for the reduction of long-term homelessness has waned in recent years.

Long-term homelessness decreasing slowly

Since 2008, long-term homelessness has been surveyed using the ARA housing market survey. Figures 3 and 4 show the trends for long-term homelessness in all of Finland and in PAAVO municipalities. Long-term homelessness for all of Finland has decreased by over one thousand persons (29%) during this time. PAAVO municipalities reported a decrease of 26%. In Helsinki, there was a decrease of 176 persons

³ This figure includes the subsidy allocated for dwellings after the grant decision for the project has been made. Subsidies for other facilities in the properties are not included. For projects at the reservation and partial decision stage, an estimate has been drawn up of the amount of grant applied for.

and in Espoo, 164 persons. The goal of halving long-term homelessness was achieved in Joensuu (75%), Tampere (66%) and Kuopio (61%). Only Vantaa reported an increase in long-term homelessness (7%) during the PAAVO programme.



Figures 3 and 4. Long-term homelessness in PAAVO municipalities 2008-2013

Housing advisory services prevent homelessness

According to the Government's housing policy action plan for 2012–2015, housing advisory services will be given permanent status and government subsidies of 0.6 million euros per year, to be granted by ARA, will be allocated for such services. Housing advisory services serve to prevent segregation and other housing-related problems. Municipalities, communities and organisations can apply for subsidies, which can be granted to cover 20% of housing advisory service expenses.

In 2012, approximately 400,000 euros of financing from ARA was used to support housing advisory services. In 2013, approximately EUR 510,000 was granted. These subsidies were used to employ 51 housing advisers for 32 municipalities throughout Finland.

Annexes (in Finnish)

- Annex 1 Municipalities with homeless persons in 2013 (in order of size)
- Annex 2 Municipalities with homeless persons in 2013 (by region)
- Annex 3 Homelessness in PAAVO municipalities in 2013 – measures and the causes of trends