



PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA
Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee – Legislative Council

MEDIA RELEASE

Homelessness inquiry to hear Finland’s success story

Solutions to homelessness that have worked in Finland will be shared with the Victorian Legislative Council Legal and Social Issues Committee at the next public hearing on its inquiry into homelessness in Victoria.

To be held on Monday 27 July 2020, the online hearing will be broadcast live on the Victorian Parliament’s [website](#) starting at 4:00 pm.

Since 2008 the number of homeless people in Finland has decreased by around 40% and the number of long-term homeless people has fallen by more than 65%.

The CEO of Y-Foundation, Juha Kaakinen, and the Director of the Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland, Jarmo Linden, will be presenting live from Finland.

“During our inquiry, many people have suggested that we should learn from Finland’s experience in dealing with homelessness,” Committee Chair Fiona Patten said.

“That’s exactly what we are doing with this online hearing. It will allow us to discuss solutions with two expert witnesses from Finland who have the lived experience of addressing the complex issues associated with homelessness,” Ms Patten said.

Y-Foundation was established in December 1985 as a response to a serious housing shortage in Finland. It set about acquiring apartments and offered them as rental housing for homeless people living alone. It also provided specialised housing solutions for people recovering from mental health issues and substance abuse. Today, Y-Foundation has over 17,300 apartments in over 50 cities and municipalities.

The Housing Finance and Development Centre of Finland (ARA) is a governmental agency operating under the supervision of the Ministry of the Environment and implements social housing policy. It is an expert partner, developer and moderniser of housing and promotes ecologically sustainable, high-quality and reasonably priced housing. ARA’s operating principle is “everyone is entitled to comfortable housing”.

“This is an important opportunity for us to hear about some of the ways in which progress has been made in reducing homelessness,” Ms Patten said.

“We are grateful that these two experts from Finland are available to join us online so that we can hear about and better understand the factors behind Finland’s success story in responding to homelessness and see whether some of their solutions can work here in Victoria.”

More information about the inquiry, including submissions received and transcripts from earlier hearings, is available from the Committee's [website](#).

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