



ASLIDO – Association of People for Homes, Czech Republic (*Asociace lidí pro domov, z.s.*)

**Evžen
Zuzka
Eliška**

ASLIDO - Association of People for Homes, Czech Republic

Asociace lidí pro domov (ASLIDO) is a group of people who have experienced homelessness and their allies in the Czech Republic.

Evžen, Chairman of association, member with experience of homelessness;

Zuzka, member with experience of homelessness; and **Eliška**, ally.

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Abstract

Asociace lidí pro domov (ASLIDO) is a group of people who have experienced homelessness and their allies in the Czech Republic. In our work, we have used the theatre of the oppressed method. We also work to make spaces that allow us, people with experiences of homelessness, to take part in the process of decision making regarding laws and documents that directly influence our lives.

Keywords

homelessness, theatre of the oppressed, Czech Republic

How we started

In 2012 ASLIDO organized an event called The Sleep Out for the first time in the Czech Republic. Housed people were invited to spend one night outside. The goal was to raise awareness about homelessness and open up a discussion in public space. The ticket to this event was a purchase of food for people living on the streets. This event was given a social innovation award by the Austrian foundation Unruhe in the Sozial Marie competition. We decided to use the received financial award for our new theatre group called Circle of Hope. The group was supposed to connect those who are affected by extreme housing precarity. The plays were made out of their stories and life experiences. In our work, we have used the theatre of the oppressed method. In 2014 our group formalised, mainly to be able to financially support the activities of its own members.

How we formed

In 2013, there was no mechanism that would allow us, people with experiences of homelessness, to take part in the process of decision making regarding laws and documents that directly influence our lives. In parallel, social workers were instructed to treat us as needy clients rather than as people with agency. By creating new opportunities and a friendly environment using the theatre of the oppressed method, we have created a space where people can show their talents and potential. We work to initiate change by giving those who have experienced homelessness the opportunity to join public discussions about their own destiny.

Our activities

In the past we dedicated most of our energy to theatre. We have created and performed three plays together. Our main topics were: life in the streets, women and violence and slumlords and social housing. We have collaborated with The Platform for Social Housing (Platforma pro sociální bydlení), which has been trying to open up the topic of social housing legislation. Until 2017, before the proposal for a social housing law in the Czech Republic was rejected, we frequently joined conferences and working groups organised by The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

In the same year, we decided to change the inner structure of our association. Today, membership is restricted only to those who have experienced homelessness. Those who have not can join as allies. As a part of this process we have changed our name from Homeless Action Group to The Association of People for Homes. At the moment, we have ten members from two cities and five allies. After this change we have focused mainly on events in public spaces. Our plan is to organise courses for homeless people under the title Lawyers for Homes. In these courses lawyers will teach homeless people about lobbying and advocacy. We would also like to initiate self-support groups that would help us gain new members. Recently we have become members of The European Action Coalition for the Right to Housing and the City and we hope to gain new ideas and perspectives from other groups' members that we can use in our local activities.

Figure 1

At the townhall after the happening, trying to talk with authorities.

Source: Author



Figure 2

Meeting with current members.
Source: Author



Figure 3

Sign reads 'city for the people not for profit'.
Source: Author



Figure 4

Happening for social housing. Sign reads: 'social housing instead of financial support restrictions'.
Source: Author



Figure 5

Happening in front of the town hall.

Source: Author



Figure 6

Demonstration for equal living for everyone. Sign reads: 'we all have the right to live full-fledged life!'

Source: Author



Figure 7

Strategic planning of the upcoming activities.

Source: Author



Figure 8

Rehearsal of Theatre of the oppressed.
Source: Author



Figure 9

Rehearsal of Theatre of the oppressed.
Source: Author

