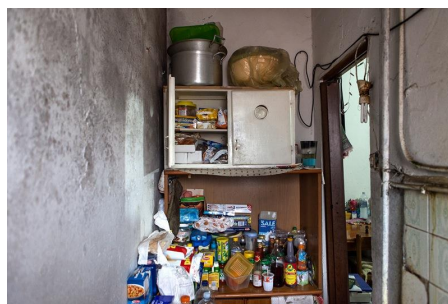


# Uncovering the impacts of housing policies on health equity with multiple methods

Davide Malmusi for the SOPHIE housing policies team

“How to tackle health inequalities?”

Preconference #EPH Glasgow 20 November 2014



# SOPHIE Housing policies team



**Agència de Salut Pública de Barcelona:** Ana Novoa, Lluís Camprubí, Davide Malmusi, Carme Borrell, Laia Palència, Jordi Amat, Roshanak Mehdipanah, Julia Ward, Andrés Peralta, Marc Marí-Dell'Olmo, Hugo Vázquez, Maica Rodríguez-Sanz

**Càritas Diocesana de Barcelona:** Fernando Díaz, Carme Trilla, Mercè Darnell, Tere Bermudez

**Universitat Pompeu Fabra:** Jordi Bosch



# Why housing? (1)

Secular trends in improvement of housing conditions have been regarded as a major factor behind advances in population health.

Housing as “wobbly pillar” of the welfare state (and social epi?).

Evidence of positive health impact of interventions improving physical housing conditions. Less evidence on:

- Health equity impacts
- Policies influencing access to housing and housing cost

# Why housing? (2)

Literature mainly from UK, New Zealand... much less in Spain where it has been an increasingly pressing social issue, both before and after the burst of the housing bubble



# What are we doing?

## European overview

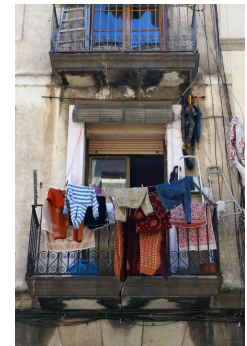
1. Literature reviews and conceptual framework on housing policies, housing conditions and health inequalities
2. European housing systems and health-related housing outcomes: ecological and multilevel analyses

## Focus on fuel poverty

1. Realist synthesis on energy retrofitting and health equity
2. Natural experiment on thermal insulation and winter mortality in social housing
3. Resistance to austerity on UK fuel poverty policies

## Focus on people with severe problems of access to housing

1. Caritas BCN users: survey, rehousing quasi-experiment
2. “Mortgage affected platform”: online survey, cohort?





# What are we doing?



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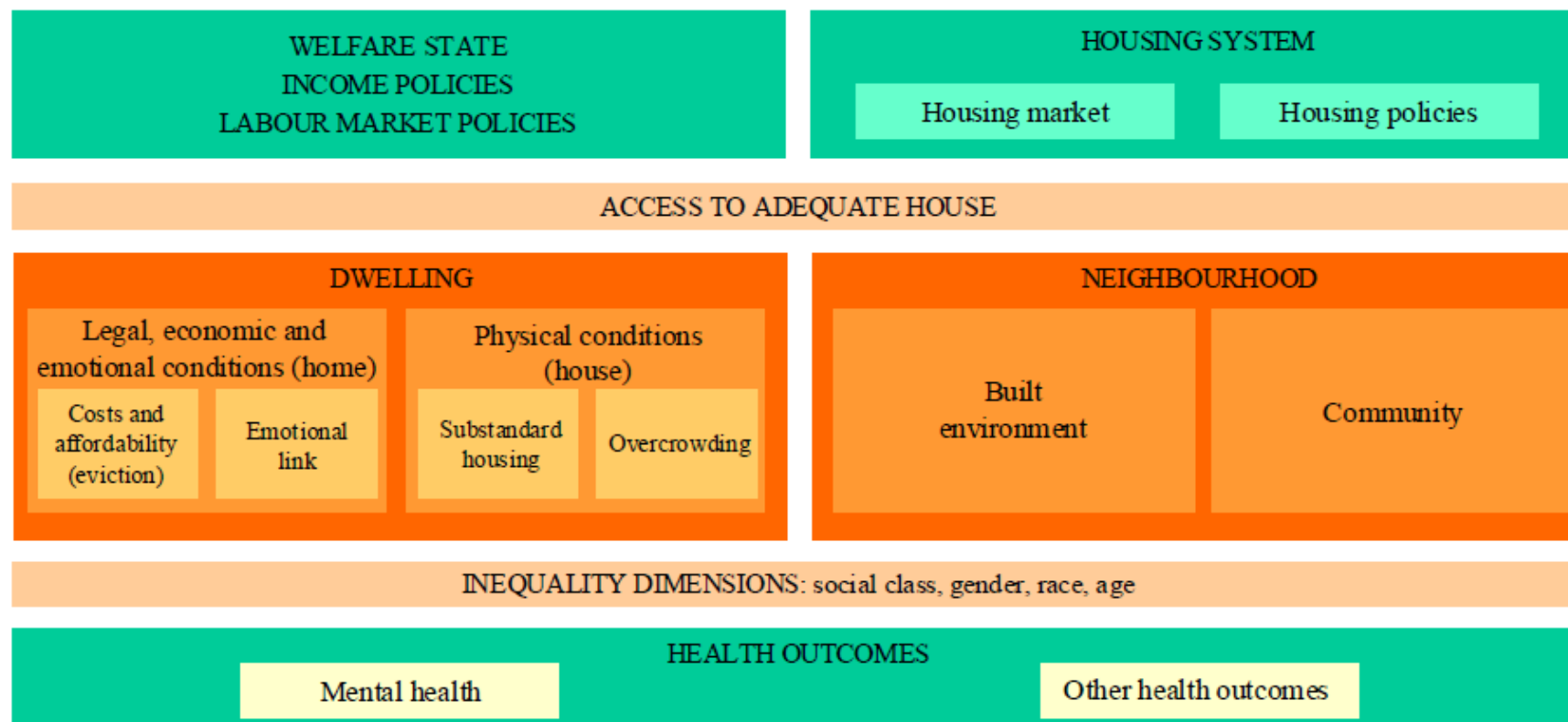
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# Conceptual framework



Adapted from Ana Novoa et al. Impact of the crisis on the relationship between housing and health. Policies for good practice to reduce inequalities in health related to housing conditions. Gac Sanit. 2014 Jun;28 Suppl 1:44-50.

# Literature review

Large body of literature showing the link between **inadequate material housing conditions** and poor physical and mental health and mortality. Health benefits of *thermal comfort improvement*.



Adverse impact on health of **insecure housing** and **lack of housing affordability**. Evidence of benefits of *social housing* and *rent subsidies* on health determinants.



**Homelessness** strongly associated with multiple physical and mental health problems and lower life expectancy. Positive impacts of both “*housing first*” and “*staircase*”.



Jordi Bosch. Literature review of the relationship between housing systems and health inequalities. Unpublished



# Housing systems and health inequalities



**Gap in knowledge** on the link between housing systems and health.

We have constructed **country indices** of health-related material and economic housing problems. They are ecologically linked to economic development, welfare regimes and “housing bubble”

Now starting a **multilevel analysis** of the association of country housing systems with the prevalence, social distribution and health impact of these housing problems in the European population



# What are we doing?



## European overview

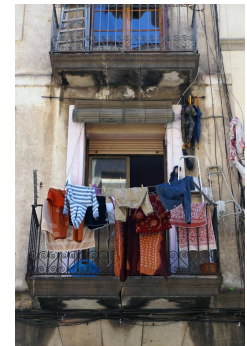
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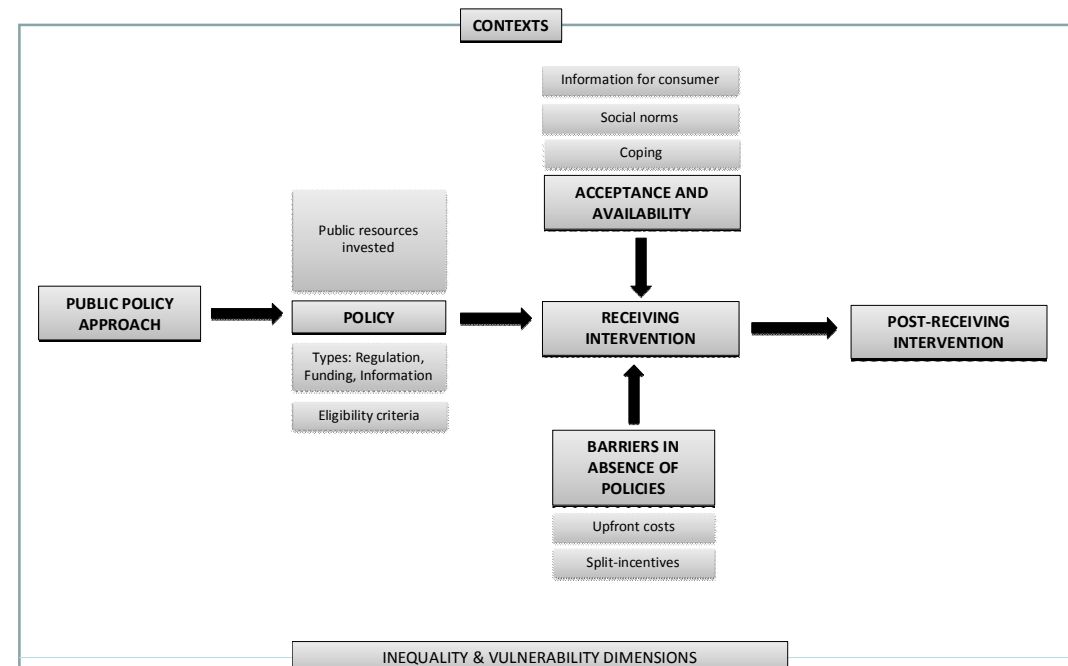


# Focus on fuel poverty

## Realist synthesis: energy retrofitting and health equity

To explain how and why public policies influence social inequalities in receiving housing energy retrofitting and in its health impacts

Key reviews/reports, stakeholders interviews, systematic search of articles (124 read, 70 used)



# Focus on fuel poverty



## Realist synthesis: energy retrofitting and health equity

### *Main conclusions:*

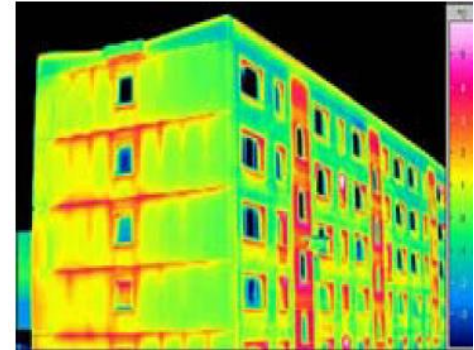
Social categories suffering most from fuel poverty (low-income, renters, elderly) can attain more health benefits from housing retrofitting but experience more barriers (upfront costs and presentism, split incentives, disruption and lack of control)

Public policies on housing energy efficiency usually exacerbate these inequalities, unless they are specifically aimed at tackling fuel poverty or social inequities, totally free to users, targeted at most affected groups and adapted to their needs



# Focus on fuel poverty

## Natural experiment: Social housing insulation and winter mortality



**Objective:** Evaluate the impact of energy efficiency facade retrofitting interventions on the association between cold outdoor temperatures and mortality in public housing buildings in the city of Barcelona from 1985 to 2013

**Methods:** Case-crossover design. Buildings geocoded with Regional Housing Agency intervention dates and linked to census and mortality data

**Results:** Spring 2015





# What are we doing?



## European overview

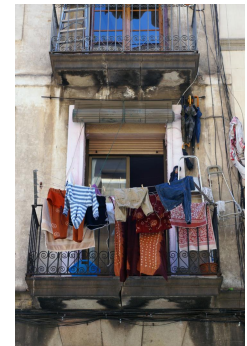
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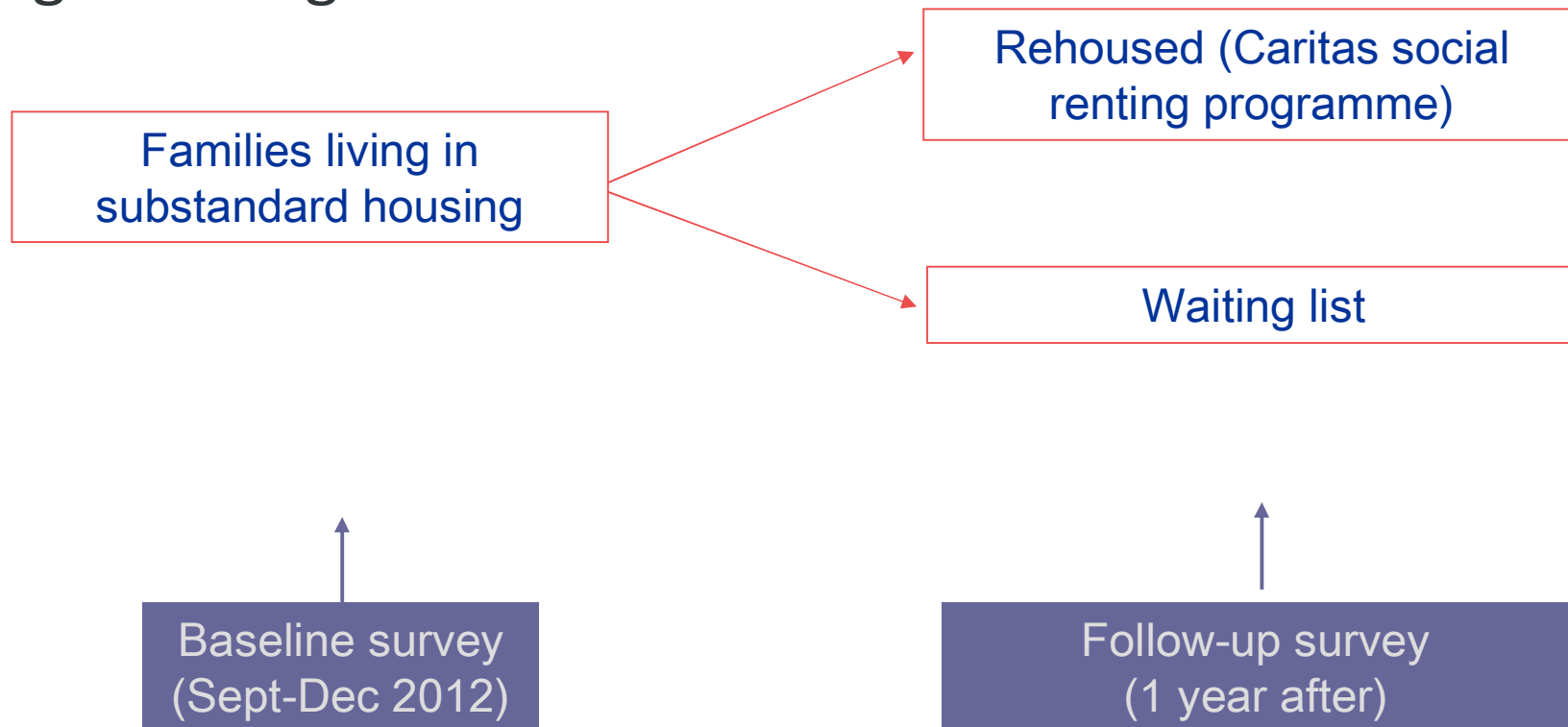
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# Focus on Caritas Barcelona users *sophie*★

## Rehousing quasi-experiment

### Original design



Survey interview on socioeconomic and housing conditions, health of the respondent and of one of her/his children

# Focus on Caritas users



## Health status of people with severe problems of access to housing

n=175

Families living in  
substandard housing

... or with difficulties paying  
rent or mortgage (Housing  
Mediation Service)

n=145

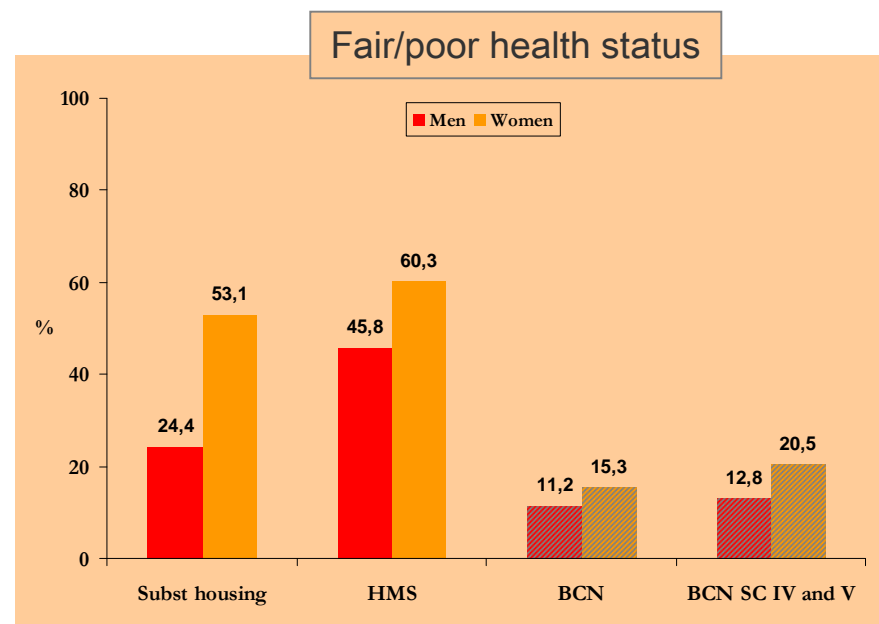
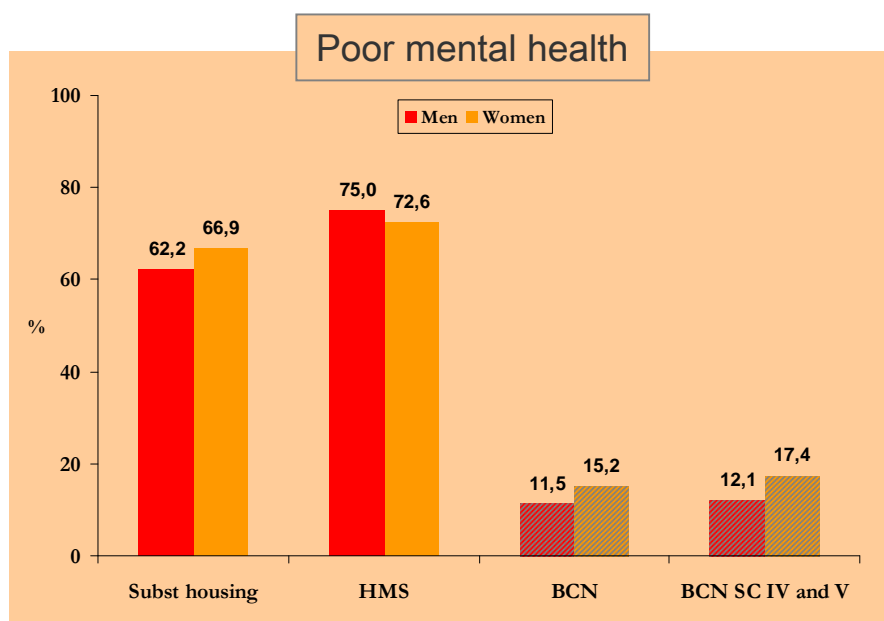
Baseline survey  
(Sept-Dec 2012)



# Focus on Caritas users

## Health status of people with severe problems of access to housing

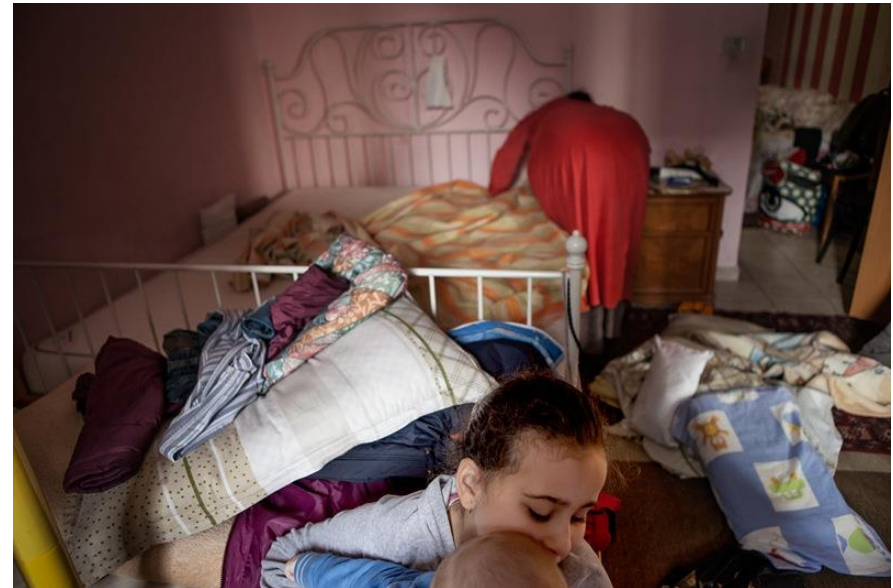
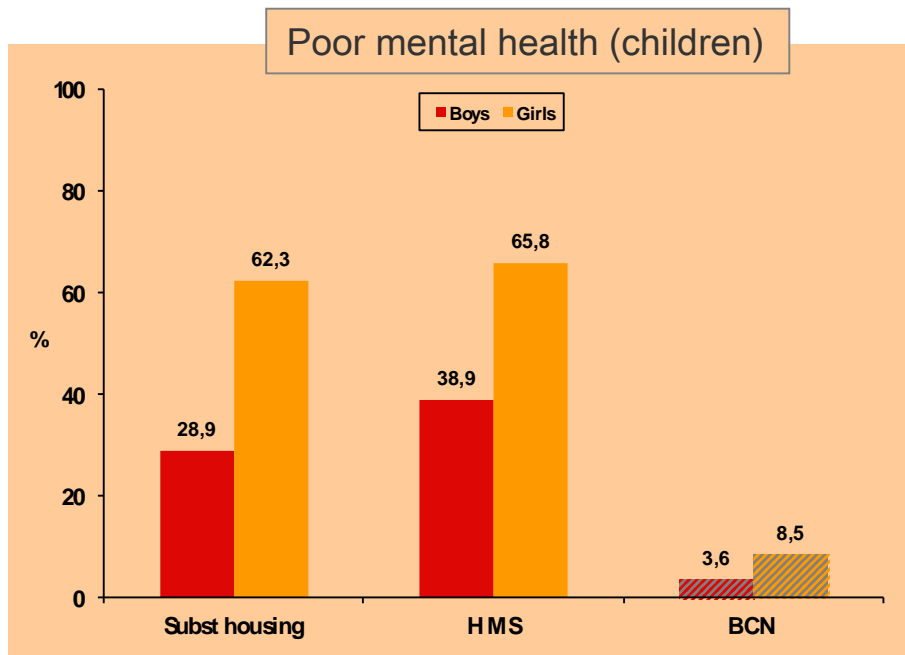
Much worse health status than Barcelona population (overall and manual social classes)



# Focus on Caritas users

Health status of people with severe problems of access to housing

Much worse health status than Barcelona population also for children

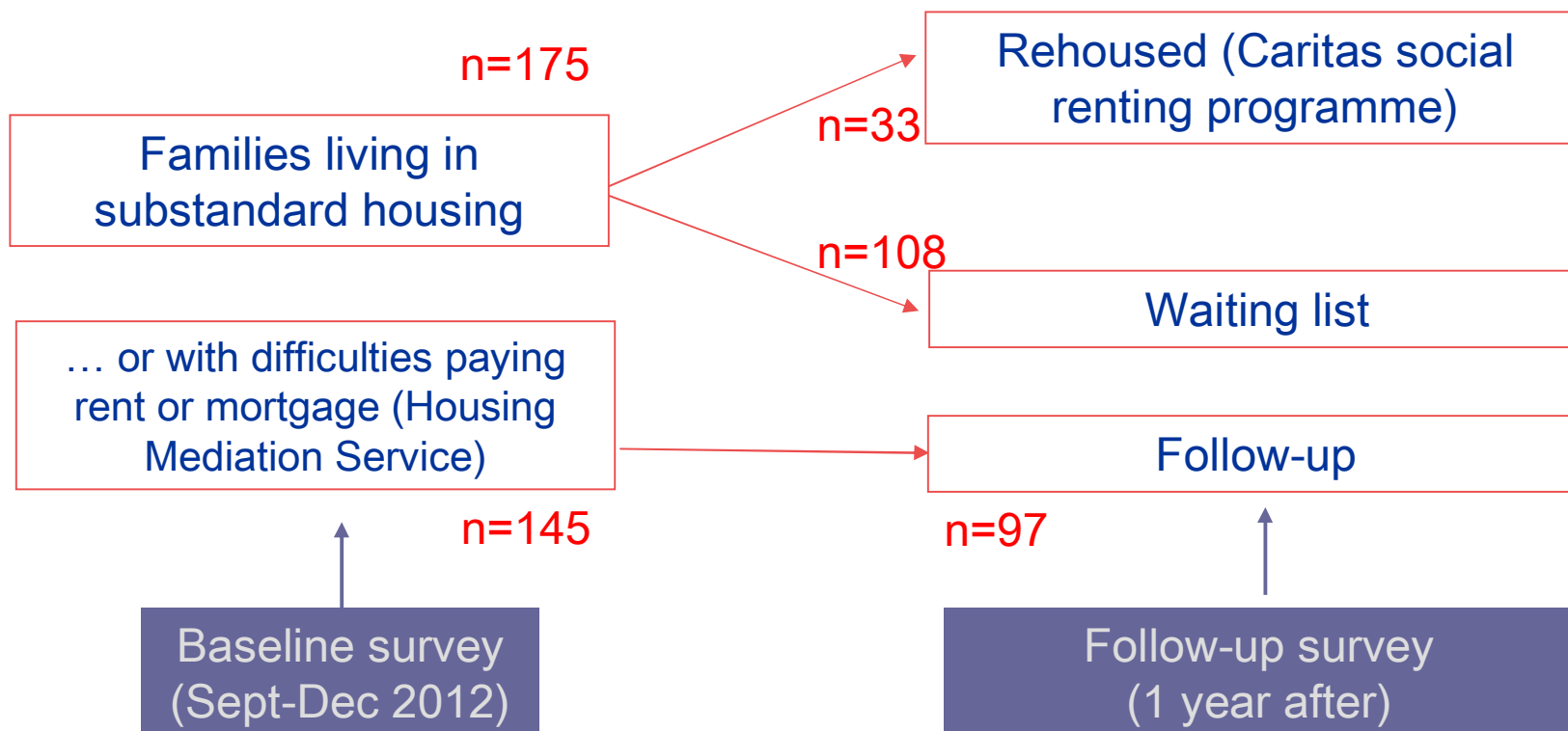




# Focus on Caritas users

## Rehousing quasi-experiment

### The fieldwork

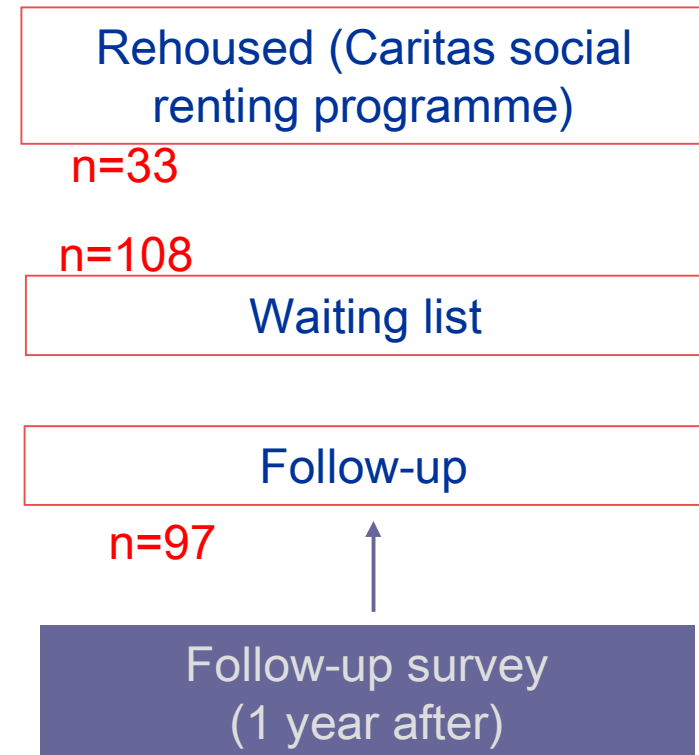


# Focus on Caritas users

## Rehousing quasi-experiment: preliminary results

Rehoused adults report more improvements in housing conditions, and similar improvements in health as “controls” (some of whom also move, find job, increase income)

Improvements in habitability, tenure security and income significantly associated with improvements in health (especially mental health)



# Dissemination and stakeholders contact



**Plataforma de Afectados por la Hipoteca**  
De la burbuja inmobiliaria al derecho a la vivienda  
**(PAH)**

INICIO	CAMPAÑAS PAH »	ASESORÍA Y RECURSOS »	MEDIA »	CONTÁCTANOS
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El PAH es una plataforma de afectados por la hipoteca, que defiende el derecho a la vivienda y la lucha contra la especulación.

**Nueva encuesta de la PAH: las dificultades relacionadas con la vivienda en la infancia y la salud**

**LA PAH HA PARALIZADO 1135 DESAHUCIOS**

This project is funded by:



Thank you!  
Gràcies!  
Grazie!



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Photos: Fredi Roig, Alice Sassu, Roberto Malaguti