Supporting 18-25 Year-Olds Through Long-Term Mentoring Plus Financial Assistance in France (Pass' Accompagnement)

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Sector(s): Labor Markets, Social Protection

Location: The Bas Rhin region in France, Strasbourg

Sample: 1,400 young adults

Target group: Job seekers Youth People experiencing housing instability

Outcome of interest: Earnings and income Employment Cognitive development Housing stability

Intervention type: Cash transfers Coaching and mentoring Housing and neighborhoods Job counseling Social protection Subsidies Conditional cash transfers

AEA RCT registration number: AEARCTR-0001892

Partner organization(s): Conseil Général du Bas Rhin, Fonds d'expérimentation pour la jeunesse (FEJ)

High unemployment, low wages, and expensive rents prevent many young adults from acquiring long-term housing. In France, researchers evaluated the effect of a financial independence and social integration program for young adults living in government-subsidized housing. They analyzed its impact on the young adults' professional lives, housing situations, financial independence, and general welfare.

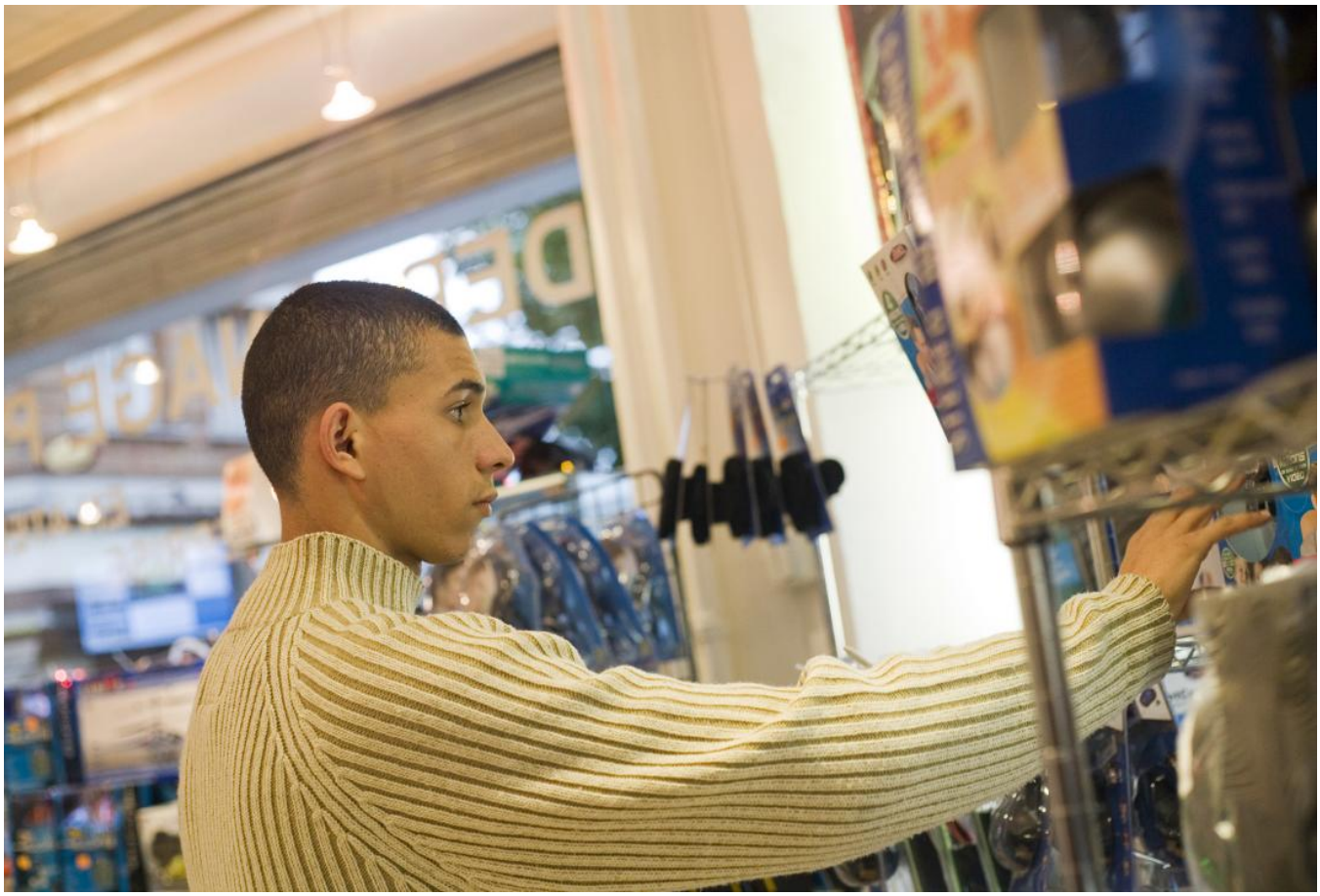
Policy issue

High unemployment, low wages, and expensive rents prevent many young adults from acquiring long-term housing in parts of Europe. Additionally, insufficient work experience, familial and social difficulties, and a lack of formal training often further compound the problems faced by such individuals. Some argue that these conditions trap many young adults in a situation that they are incapable of changing without outside help. In response to these concerns, many European states facilitate social sector housing that lowers the cost of rent to a more affordable level. The goal of these social accommodations is to support struggling young adults in their efforts to obtain sustainable employment and housing.

Context of the evaluation

In 2004 the French social sector offered 4.2 million units (17 percent of the country's housing stock) at 30 to 40 percent below private market rates.[1] Despite these provisions, demand for housing (both public and private) in the Bas-Rhin department of Alsace is still greater than the supply. Currently, the main existing measure in France that allows young people to rent an apartment is a housing benefit that subsidizes part of the rent. These grants are assigned for students and applicants with a demonstrated need for financial resources. In 2010, the General Council of Bas-Rhin began offering 18-25 year olds residing in the Bas-Rhin department access to Pass' Accompagnment, a program which aims to improve the financial independence and social

integration of 1,000 young adults in the Bas-Rhin.



French man considers making a purchase

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Details of the intervention

In collaboration with the Haut Commissariat aux Solidarits Actives Contre la Pauvret (the French Ministry for Active Solidarity against Poverty), researchers will measure the impact of the new Pass' Accompagnement program. The evaluation will consist of two waves, each of which consists of a randomly selected program group of 300 and comparison group of 400 young adults from a total pool of 700 youth identified as being in "a precarious situation." Members of the comparison group will not participate in the program.

Those that are randomly selected to participate in the program will be assigned a unique social worker with the task of advising them in matters of employment, education, and housing over the course of two years. If program participants rent their apartments, the General Council makes a commitment to their landlord that they will pay the rent if the participant fails to do so over the next two years. Additionally, participants are given an EUR 1800 grant which can be spent on a variety of things, including interview clothing, drivers licenses, etc depending on the social worker's assessment. This flexible design is intended to allow the program to address the specific needs of each participant.

Members of both the intervention and comparison group will be evaluated for a period of three years to determine the impacts of the program on professional integration, housing, independence, and general welfare.

Results and policy lessons

Results forthcoming.

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1. http://www.lse.ac.uk/geographyAndEnvironment/research/london/ (Chapter 6: France)