

Families

# A profile of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018 families

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August 2019



Feidhmeannacht um Dhaoiné ar Easpa  
Díidne Réigiún Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin Region Homeless Executive



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# Table of Contents

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List of Figures	03
List of Tables	04
List of Abbreviations	05
<hr/>	
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>07</b>
1.1 Presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region	07
1.2 Objective	08
1.3 Methodology	08
1.4 Outline	09
<hr/>	
<b>2. Families accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018</b>	<b>11</b>
2.1 New family presentations: January to December 2018	11
2.2 Trends in new family presentations	12
2.3 Tenancies and prevention	14
2.4 Summary	16
<hr/>	
<b>3. Reasons for homelessness</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1 Private rented sector	21
3.1.1 Notice of Termination (50%)	21
3.2 Family circumstance	21
3.2.1 Relationship breakdown (24%)	21
3.2.3 Overcrowding (8%)	22
3.2.4 Family circumstance – other (9%)	22
3.3 Other (9%)	22

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## Table of Contents (continued)

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<b>02</b>	3.4	Insufficient information	22
	3.5	Reasons for homelessness by month: 2018	23
	3.6	Reasons for homelessness: 2016–2018	24
	3.7	Summary	26
	<b>4.</b>	<b>Family demographics</b>	<b>29</b>
	4.1	Family composition	29
	4.2	Gender	30
	4.3	Citizenship	30
	4.4	Age	32
	4.5	Trends in family demographics: 2016–2018	33
	4.6	Summary	35
	<b>5.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>39</b>

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## List of Figures

---

<b>Figure 1</b>	Number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018	12
<b>Figure 2</b>	Trend in number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018	13
<b>Figure 3</b>	Family moves to tenancy by tenancy type: January 2017 to December 2018	15
<b>Figure 4</b>	Primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2018 – percentage values	23
<b>Figure 5</b>	Primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018 – percentage values	25
<b>Figure 6</b>	Family composition for 1,110 of the families who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018	29
<b>Figure 7</b>	Gender of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,557)	30
<b>Figure 8</b>	Citizenship of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,522)	30
<b>Figure 9</b>	Age groups of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,557)	31
<b>Figure 10</b>	Age groups of children in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=2,330)	31

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## List of Tables

---

<b>04</b>	<b>Table 1</b>	Number of new families accessing homeless accommodation: January to December 2018	11
	<b>Table 2</b>	Family moves to tenancy broken down by exits from emergency accommodation and preventative tenancies: 2017–2018	14
	<b>Table 3</b>	Reasons for homelessness reported at initial assessment for the families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin region: 2018	20
	<b>Table 4</b>	Reasons for family homelessness: 2016–2018	24
	<b>Table 5</b>	Number of children in family units newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018	30
	<b>Table 6</b>	Family composition of families newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018	32
	<b>Table 7</b>	Gender of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018	33
	<b>Table 8</b>	Number of children in family units newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018	33
	<b>Table 9</b>	Age groups of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018	34
	<b>Table 10</b>	Age groups of children newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018	34
	<b>Table 11</b>	Citizenship of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018	35

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## List of Abbreviations

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<b>AHB</b>	Approved Housing Body
<b>DRHE</b>	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
<b>EA</b>	Emergency Accommodation
<b>HAP</b>	Housing Assistance Payment
<b>LA</b>	Local Authority
<b>NOT</b>	Notice of Termination
<b>PASS</b>	Pathway Accommodation and Support System
<b>RTB</b>	Residential Tenancies Board

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# 01





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# Introduction

Over the last four years there has been a sharp increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness nationally, particularly in the Dublin Region. From June 2014 to December 2018 a total of 3,970 families accessed emergency accommodation (EA) across the Dublin Region for the first time. Families were categorised as new to homelessness when they had no previous Pathway Accommodation and Support System<sup>1</sup> (PASS) record or accommodation history as a family unit with accompanying dependent children.

From January 2016 to December 2018 administrative data has been used to further understand the issues contributing to the rise in the number of families experiencing homelessness (n=2,990). The analysis of such administrative data has allowed for a breakdown of the reasons for family homelessness and highlights two of the major contributing factors; leaving private rented accommodation on foot of a Notice of Termination (NOT) and leaving family or friend's accommodation due to relationship breakdown or overcrowding. This data together with demographic profiles of families provide an important contextual backdrop for a detailed analysis of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region.

## 1.1 Presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region

When families in the Dublin Region are at risk of homelessness or newly experiencing homelessness they present to the housing section of their local authority (LA). The LA housing section is responsible for completing an initial assessment with the family to determine their housing need and what supports may be available to them. Prevention (i.e., sustaining their existing tenancy or rapid re-housing through the homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)) is the optimal outcome. Failing that families are placed in emergency accommodation (EA).

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1. PASS provides real-time information for homeless presentation and bed occupancy across the Dublin Region.

#### 1.2 Objective

The specific objective of this research was to identify the reasons for homelessness for families newly experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region and to share the demographic profiles of families presenting as homeless. This information can be used to help inform operational and policy developments relating to homeless families in the Dublin Region.

#### 1.3 Methodology

This report was compiled using a combination of administrative data recorded by the four local authorities in the Dublin Region and PASS data. Each month representatives from the local authorities compile a list of the families who newly presented to homeless services. A family was deemed new to homelessness when they had no previous PASS record or accommodation history as a family unit with dependent children. Families were asked to detail the reason or reasons for their current experience of homelessness and provide details of their accommodation history. The data from their initial assessment forms were entered on to PASS and reviewed on a case by case basis. Data relating to key variables were extracted and entered into an anonymised dataset. The data were analysed using SPSS.

The initial assessment used by the four local authorities was updated in May 2018, particularly the reasons for homelessness section. The aim was to collect more robust data on why families were presenting to homeless services. The free text box was removed and replaced with a list of the most common reasons for homelessness with room to input 'other' if applicable. The different types of NOT's were listed as outlined by the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB).<sup>2</sup>

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2. <https://onestopshop.rtb.ie/ending-a-tenancy/sample-notices-of-termination/>

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## 1.4 Outline

Section 1 introduces the research and its objectives. Section 2 examines the trends in the number of families newly presenting as homeless over the four and a half year period from June 2014 to December 2018. Section 3 presents the reported reasons for family homelessness in the Dublin Region and provides a month by month analysis for 2018. It also reviews the data to date – January 2016 to December 2018 – to capture trends over time. Section 4 explores the demographic information for the families newly presenting to homeless services in 2018. It goes on to present a profile of the families who newly experienced homelessness over the past three years from January 2016 to December 2018. Section 5 summarises the findings of the research: patterns in new family presentations; the primary reasons for homelessness and profiles of families experiencing homelessness including those most vulnerable to homelessness.

# 02



# Families accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018

This section looks at the trends in the number of families newly presenting as homeless in the Dublin Region. Firstly, it presents the number of new families accessing EA for the 12 month period between January and December 2018. It then moves on to look comparatively at the entire period since June 2014. Thirdly, it looks at homeless prevention figures and the number of exits to tenancy for 2017 and 2018.

## 2.1 New family presentations: January to December 2018

From January to December 2018 a total of 1,112 families newly presented to homeless services within the four local authorities across the Dublin Region.<sup>3</sup> As can be seen in Table 1 below, the number of families presenting varies each month with July being the highest at 122 and December the lowest at 50.

Month of presentation	No. of presentations per month
January '18	109
February '18	102
March '18	82
April '18	90
May '18	79
June '18	92
July '18	122
August '18	113
September '18	88
October '18	89
November '18	96
December '18	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,112</b>

Table 1: Number of new families accessing homeless accommodation: January to December 2018

3. This figure represents the number of families who became homeless from January to December 2018 and had not been counted as homeless in the past.

## Families accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018 (continued)

### 12 2.2 Trends in new family presentations

Over the four and a half year period between June 2014 and December 2018, a total of 3,970 families have accessed emergency accommodation across the Dublin Region. Figure 1 demonstrates the upward trend in the number of new families presenting each month. In the last seven months of 2014, there was an average of 34 new families presenting each month. The monthly average increased to 62 new families per month in 2015 and 75 in 2016. In 2017 there was an average of 81 new presentations per month. 2018 saw the highest number of new family presentations to date with a total of 1,112 families newly experiencing homelessness over the 12 months, an average of 93 new families per month.

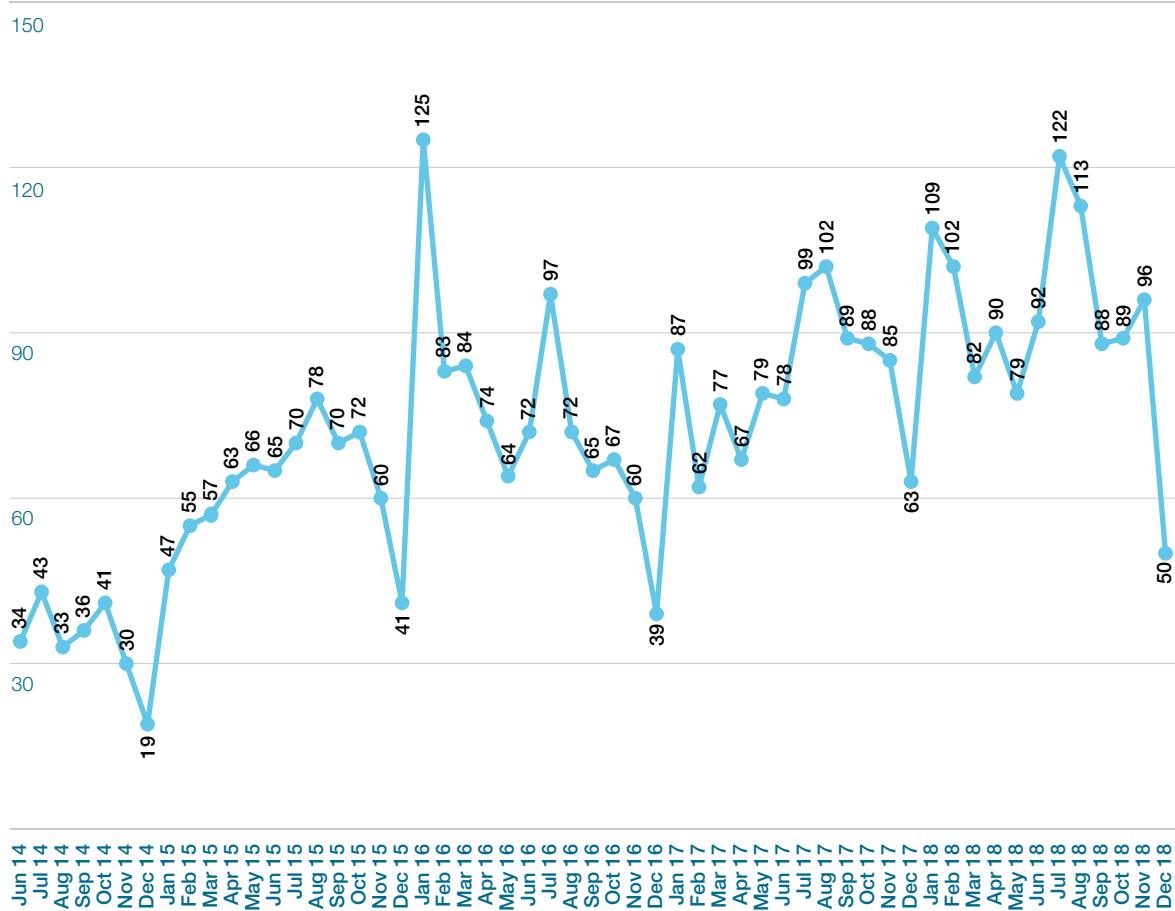


Figure 1: Number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018

Figure 2 illustrates the seasonal patterns in new family presentations, with a low number of new family presentations each December followed by a peak in presentations in January after the Christmas period. There are also increases in the number of new presentations in the summer months of July and/or August across all years. Also noticeable is a downward trend in the number of new presentations from October to December.

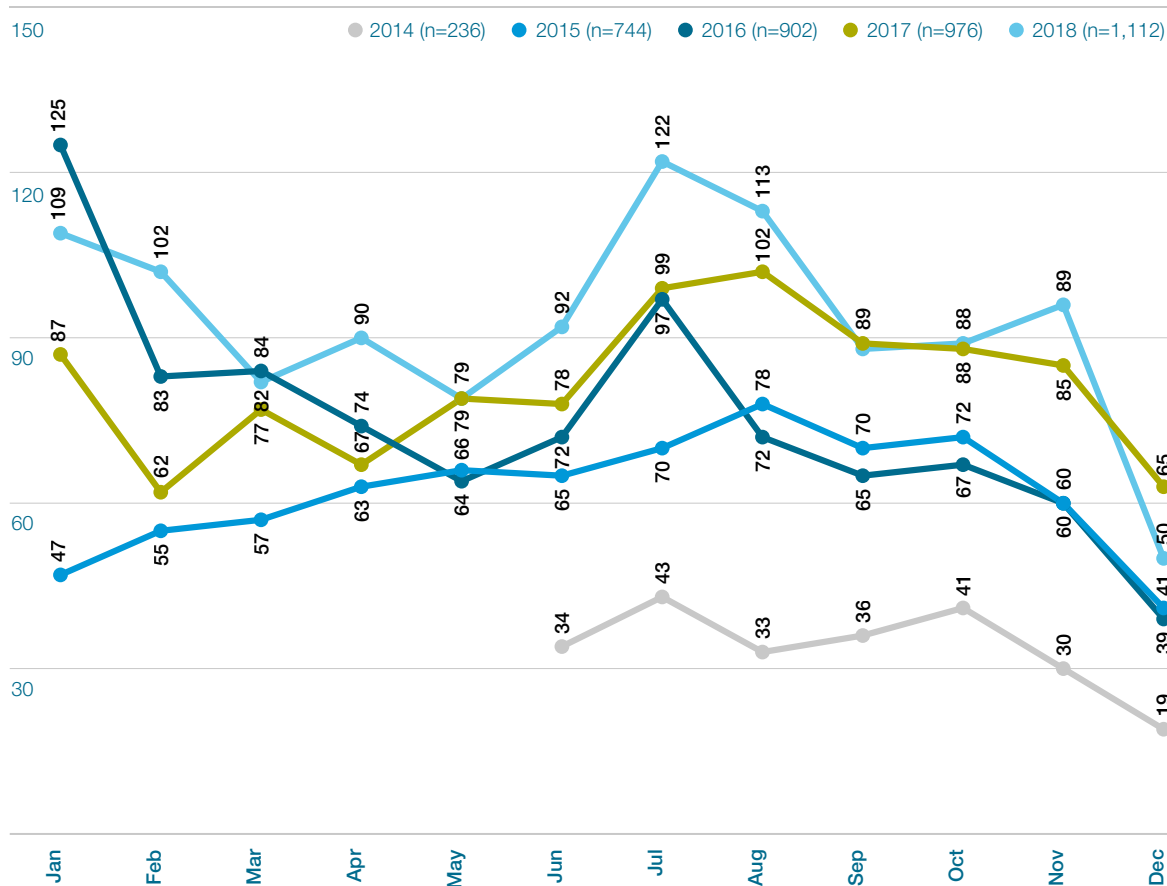


Figure 2: Trend in number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018

## Families accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018 (continued)

### 14 2.3 Tenancies and prevention

As previously discussed, the number of families presenting to homeless services has increased year on year. Despite this upward trend there has been a slowdown in the rate of overall growth. This can be attributed to the increase in prevention work being carried out and to the number of families departing homeless accommodation to tenancy.

In 2017, 1,675 tenancies were created for families.<sup>4</sup> Eight hundred and seventeen (49%) of these tenancies were preventative<sup>5</sup> while 858 families (51%) departed homeless accommodation to tenancies. This increased to 1,960 tenancies in 2018 of which 1,180 (60%) were preventative and 780 (40%) families departed EA to tenancies, see Table 2 below.

	2017		2018	
	Number of new tenancies for families	Percentage of new tenancies for families	Number of new tenancies for families	Percentage of new tenancies for families
Families departing emergency accommodation to tenancy	858	51%	780	40%
Families moving directly to prevention tenancies	817	49%	1,180	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,675</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,960</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: Family moves to tenancy broken down by exits from emergency accommodation and preventative tenancies: 2017–2018

4. The DRHE have been recording exits to tenancy since 2014, however, this data can only be broken down into singles and families from 2017 onwards.

5. Prevention tenancies are those when the family never enters homeless accommodation. They present to services at risk of homelessness but their existing tenancy is either sustained or they are directly rehoused, usually through the homeless Housing Assistance Payment scheme.



The homeless Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)<sup>6</sup> has played a key role in exits to tenancy. Two thousand six hundred and nineteen new HAP tenancies were created in 2017 and 2018, of which 1,885 were preventative and the families involved did not access EA. HAP has been utilized in combination with other schemes (local authority housing, approved housing bodies, rental accommodation scheme, rapid build housing and Housing Agency acquisitions) for both prevention and exits from emergency accommodation for families. Figure 3 outlines the moves to tenancy by month for 2017 and 2018. HAP reached a high during May and June of 2018 and continues to be the primary driver for family exits from homelessness.

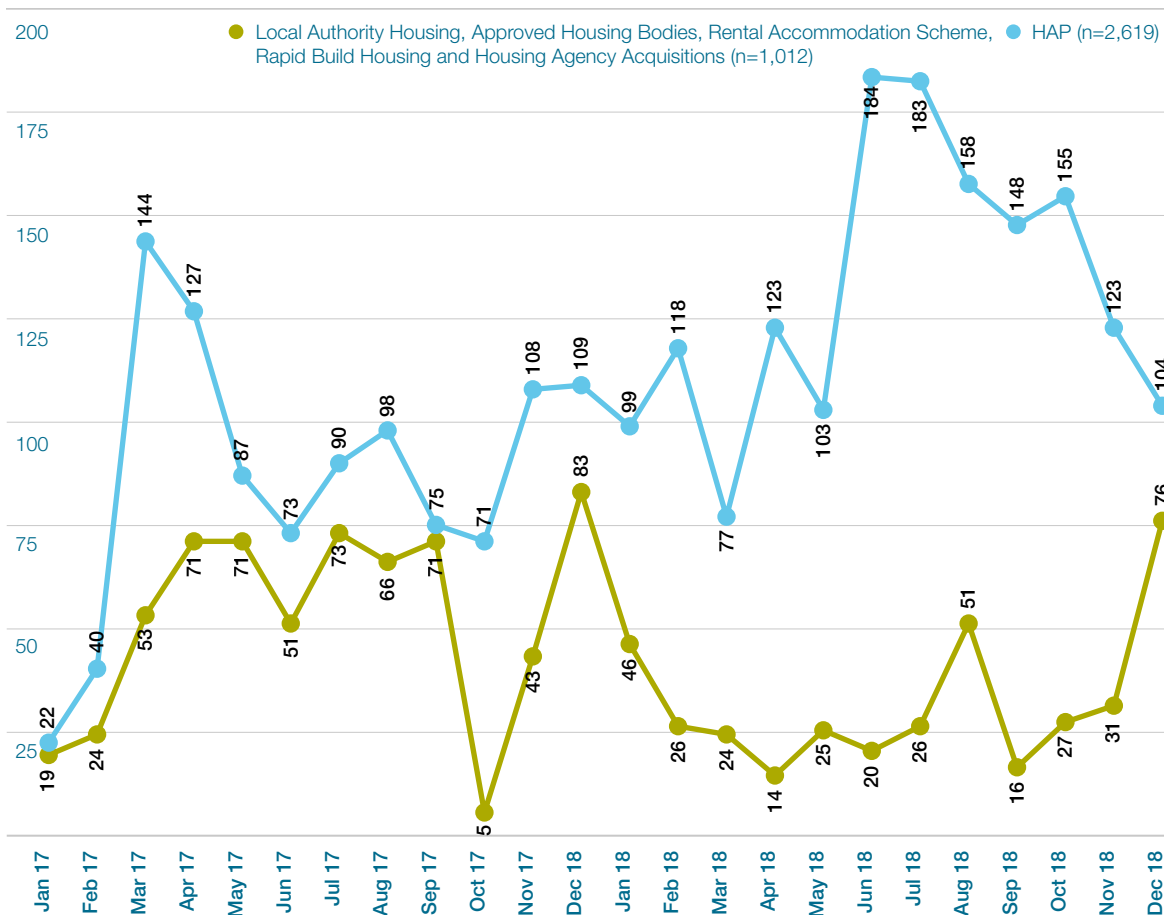


Figure 3: Family moves to tenancy by tenancy type: January 2017 to December 2018

6. HAP is a social housing support that allows tenants source private rental accommodation. Under HAP, local authorities will make a monthly payment to a landlord, subject to terms and conditions including rent limits, on a HAP tenant's behalf. In return, the HAP tenant pays a weekly contribution towards the rent to the local authority.

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## Families accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2014–2018 (continued)

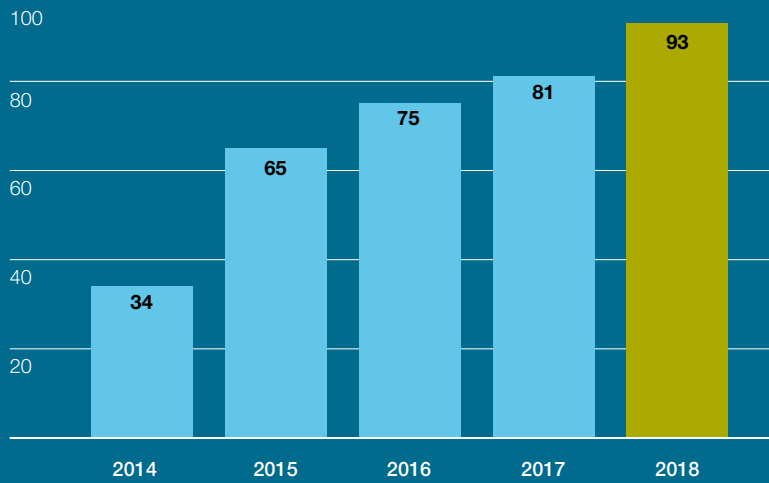
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16

### 2.4 Summary

Over the last four years there has been a steady increase in the numbers of families experiencing homelessness, with distinct seasonal patterns of presentations evident. A total of 1,112 families newly accessed emergency accommodation in 2018, an average of 93 new families per month compared to an average of 34 new families per month in 2014. Despite this upward trend in the average number of families newly presenting as homeless year on year there has been a slowdown in the rate of overall growth. The rate of increase in family homelessness began to accelerate in the summer of 2015 and did not even off until late 2016 and early 2017 when moves to tenancies began to increase. HAP has played a key role in exits to tenancy and preventions with 2,619 new HAP tenancies created for families in 2017 and 2018. While the number of families presenting month on month remains high, significant progress has been made in terms of preventions and exits from homeless accommodation.

# Family homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018



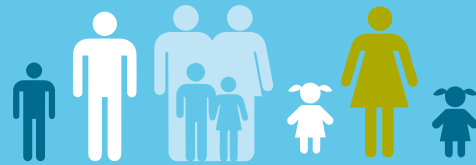
**93**

An average of 93 new families entered homeless accommodation per month in 2018

Average new family presentations per month: 2014–2018

**1,252**  
**FAMILIES**

**WITH 2,686**  
**CHILDREN**  
IN HOMELESS  
ACCOMMODATION  
DECEMBER 2018



Number of families accessing emergency accommodation at year end: 2018

**Families exiting  
homeless  
accommodation  
to tenancy**



2017



2018

Number of families exited emergency accommodation to tenancy: 2017–2018

**Families taking  
up preventative  
tenancies**



2017



2018

Number of families taking up preventative tenancies: 2017–2018

In 2017 and 2018 almost 2,000 families who presented to homeless services at risk of homelessness were re-housed directly and never entered emergency accommodation.

# 03



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## Reasons for homelessness

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This section details the reasons for homelessness as reported by the 1,112 families who newly presented to homeless services from January to December 2018. A review of administrative data reveals two primary reasons for homelessness, departure from a tenancy in private rented accommodation and family circumstances such as relationship breakdown and overcrowding.

19

It aims to highlight the key trends and common causes for family homelessness in the Dublin Region on a month by month basis. It will also review the data to date – January 2016 to December 2018 – to provide a comprehensive picture of the key drivers of family homelessness and capture trends over time.

## Reasons for homelessness (continued)

20

### 3.1 Private rented sector

#### Notice of Termination (NOT)

First six months of tenancy	1		
Rent arrears	54		
Breach of tenant responsibilities/anti-social behaviour	3		
Landlord requires property for own or family use	64		
Landlord intends to sell property	183	<b>535</b>	<b>50%</b>
Landlord intends to renovate	43		
Landlord in receivership	13		
Unsuitable to accommodation needs of tenant	16		
Invalid or illegal NOT	13		
Unknown/insufficient details on type of NOT	145		

### 3.2 Family circumstance

#### Relationship breakdown

Parent	152		
Partner	53		
Other	51	<b>450</b>	<b>42%</b>
Overcrowding	87		
Family reunification	12		
Other family circumstance	95		

### 3.3 Other

NOT/Surrendered social housing	5		
Property repossessed (former homeowner)	-		
No income source	40		
Property damage due to fire	9	<b>84</b>	<b>8%</b>
Experience of anti-social behaviour	16		
Leaving direct provision – permission to remain	6		
Leaving care	4		
Voluntarily left property without NOT	4		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,069</b>		<b>100%</b>
Insufficient information	43		
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,112</b>		

Table 3: Reasons for homelessness reported at initial assessment for the families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin region: 2018

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### 3.1 Private rented sector

Fifty percent (n=535) of the families presented to homeless services as a result of issues stemming from the private rented sector, with the various contributory factors briefly discussed below.

#### 3.1.1 Notice of Termination (50%)

As detailed in Table 3, landlords issued 535 families with a NOT. Based on the detail provided by the families at their initial assessment, 54 families stated they were issued with a NOT because of rent arrears, three families were issued an NOT due to anti-social behaviour or a breach of tenant responsibilities and 64 properties were being taken back by landlords for family use. In 183 cases the landlord issued a NOT with the intention to sell the property. In 43 cases families had to depart a property for repairs or renovations to take place while 13 landlords had gone into receivership. Sixteen families were issued with a NOT as the dwelling was no longer suitable to the accommodation needs of the tenant and 13 families were issued an invalid NOT. As long as the tenancy is not subject to a fixed term lease a landlord is entitled to terminate a tenancy during the first six months, one family received this type of NOT. There were insufficient details available on the type of NOT for the remaining 145 families.

### 3.2 Family circumstance

For most of the remainder (n=450 or 42%), homelessness had its origins in relationship breakdown, family conflict and/or overcrowding within the family home. In line with previous qualitative research commissioned by the DRHE on family homelessness, it is expected that some of these families will have moved in with family for friends following a loss of private rented accommodation and that this return to family or friends was unsustainable.<sup>7</sup> This, however, could not be determined from the information contained on the initial assessment form.

#### 3.2.1 Relationship breakdown (24%)

Of the 256 families that detailed relationship breakdowns, 152 were with parents, 53 with partners, while 51 families cited general relationship breakdown as the primary reason for presenting as homeless.

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7. S, Stamp (2017), The Experiences of Newly Homeless Families Accommodated by Dublin's Homeless Services in August 2015. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

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## Reasons for homelessness (continued)

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22

### 3.2.2 Overcrowding (8%)

A total of 87 families stated their cause for presenting as homelessness as being the result of living in overcrowded accommodation.

### 3.2.3 Family circumstance – Other (10%)

There are a total of 107 families in this category of which 12 families stated that family reunification was the cause of their homelessness. In these instances, changes in household types (e.g. new family members joining them in Ireland) resulted in a different housing need and subsequently a need to present to homeless services when suitable accommodation could not be sourced. For the remaining 95 families, homelessness came about as a result of a change in various family circumstances.

### 3.3 Other (8%)

Causation among the remaining 84 families breaks down as follows:

- Five families were issued with Notices of Termination from their LA or AHB, the reasons for such are unknown;
- Forty families cited no income source as their reason for homelessness;
- Nine families became homeless as a result of a fire in their previous accommodation;
- Sixteen families left properties after experiences of anti-social behaviour;
- Six families left direct provision centres and were granted Permission to Remain<sup>8</sup>;
- Four family units stated they became homeless upon leaving care;
- Four families left their tenancy in the private rented sector without a NOT.

### 3.4 Insufficient information

Insufficient information was available for 43 families. In some of these cases no initial assessment was completed as the family may have only accessed emergency accommodation for one night. For the purpose of analysis insufficient information was not included in the calculation of the percentages included in this report.

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8. A person who has been refused a refugee or subsidiary protection declaration may be granted permission to remain in the State <http://www.ipa.gov.ie/en/ipa/pages/permissiontoremain>



### 3.5 Reasons for homelessness by month: 2018

Figure 4 presents the reasons for homelessness as percentage values on a month by month basis for 2018. As previously discussed the number of families presenting varies each month. Similarly, the reasons for homelessness fluctuate across the 12 month period. On average 50% of families presented directly from private rented accommodation while 42% of the remaining families presented from staying with family or friends. However, as demonstrated, there is some variation across the months. From February to August there was a higher percentage of families presenting from the private rented sector. A higher percentage of families presented from living with family or friends in January, September and December.

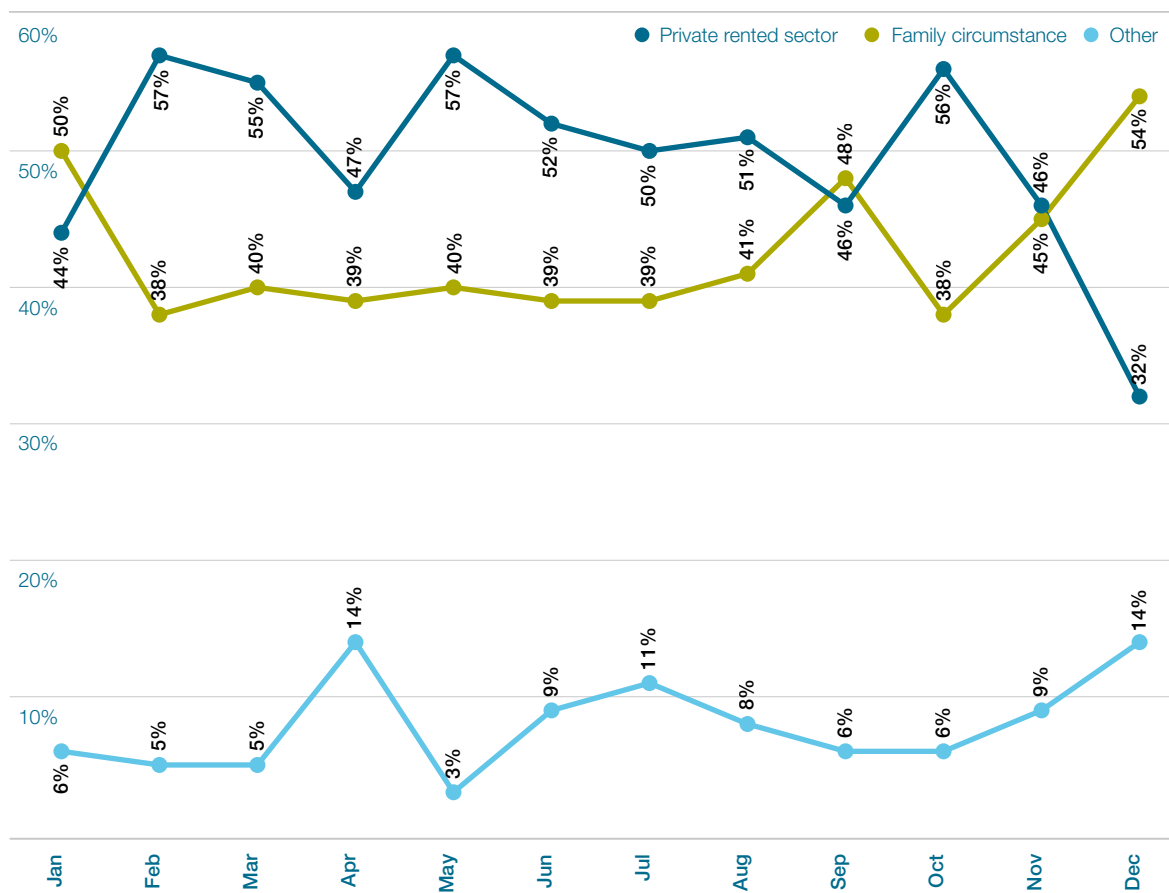


Figure 4: Primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2018 – percentage values

## Reasons for homelessness (continued)

24

### 3.6 Reasons for homelessness: 2016–2018

The DRHE began recording the reasons for family homelessness in January 2016. As such, the data gathered to date covers a 36 month period. A total of 2,990 families newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region from January 2016 to December 2018.

Table 4 presents a side by side comparison of the reasons for homelessness in 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2016, 45% of families stated the primary reasons for their homelessness related to a loss or inability to secure private rented accommodation. This percentage rose to 48% in 2017 and 50% in 2018 representing a 5% increase in families presenting to homeless services as a result of issues stemming from the private rented sector.

Table 4 also shows a small decrease in the percentage of families who presented to homeless services as a result of relationship breakdown, family conflict and/or some form of overcrowding. The percentage fell from 51% in 2016 to 49% in 2017 and 42% in 2018. In 2016 4% of families reported 'other' reasons for homelessness compared to 3% in 2017. This percentage rose to 8% in 2018 and further demonstrates the complexity of factors that contribute to experiences of homelessness for families.

	2016	2017	2018
Private rented sector	45%	48%	50%
Family circumstance	51%	49%	42%
Other	4%	3%	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: Reasons for homelessness: 2016–2018

Figure 5 presents the reasons for homelessness on a month by month basis for the three year period, 2016–2018. A lot of variation is evident in the month on month breakdown of reasons for homelessness. However, a greater gap began to emerge in 2018 between the reasons associated with the private rented sector and family circumstance. This illustrates the increase in the number of families presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region as a result of a loss or inability to secure private rented accommodation over the three year period.

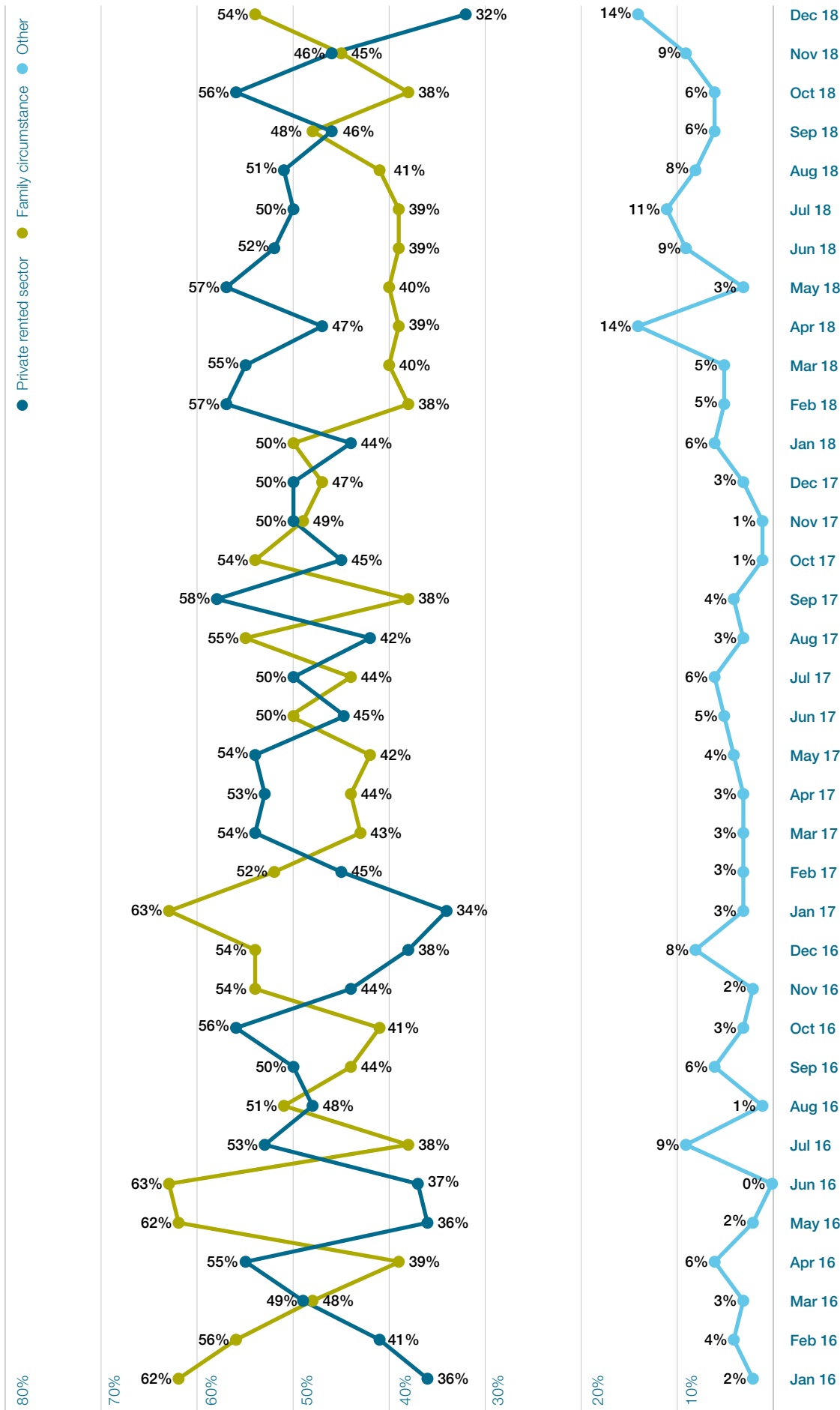


Figure 5: Primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018 –percentage values

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## Reasons for homelessness (continued)

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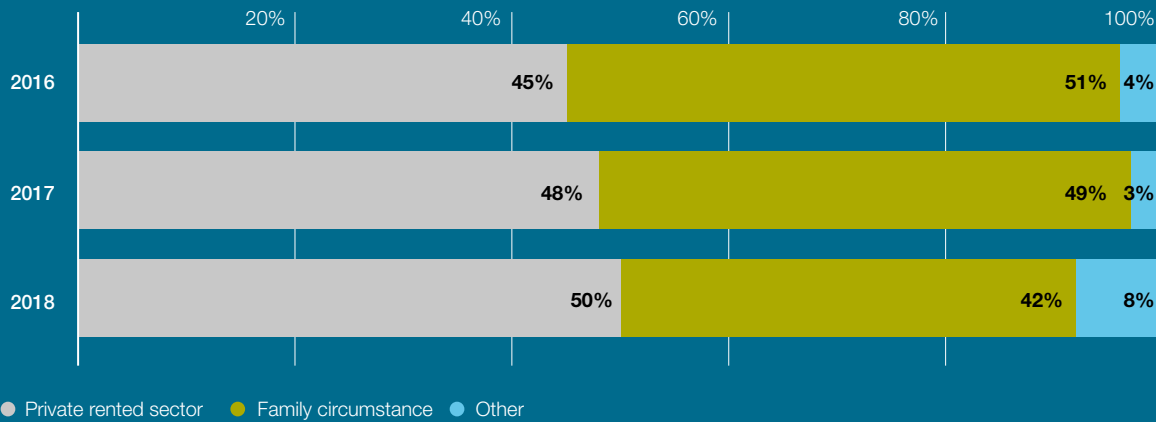
26

### 3.7 Summary

The method used captures a single reason for homelessness and demonstrates that in 2018 an average of 50% of families presented directly from private rented accommodation while 42% of the remaining families presented from staying with family or friends, although some may have moved out of private rented accommodation prior to moving in with family or friends. Indeed, it is important to note that reasons for homelessness are often more complex. The nature of administrative data makes it difficult to fully track the ancillary and compounding factors which may combine to bring about an experience of homelessness for each of the families newly accessing EA.

Overall, the data presented in this section provides valuable insight into the key trends and common causes for family homelessness over the three year period from January 2016 to December 2018. While the breakdown in reasons for homelessness vary month on month when taken together there is an increase in the number of families presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region as a result of a loss or inability to secure private rented accommodation.

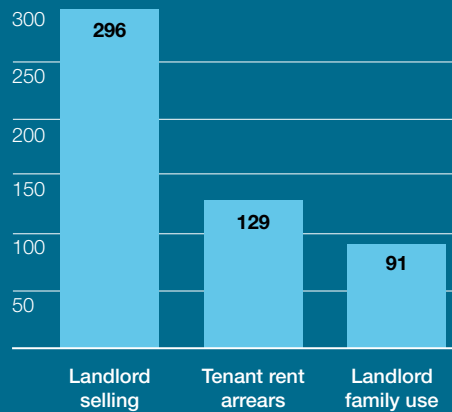
# Reasons for family homelessness: 2016–2018



Reasons for family homelessness: 2016–2018

**1,311** Notices of termination

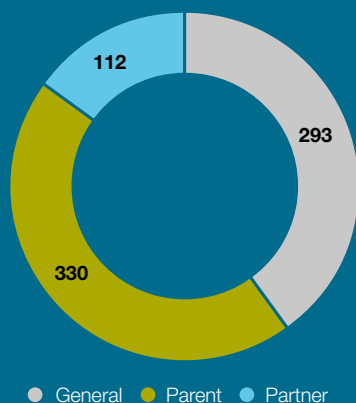
Of the available data, 1,311 NOT's were received by the families who presented to homeless services from the private rented sector between 2016 and 2018.<sup>7</sup>



The most common type of NOT issued was 'Landlord Selling'

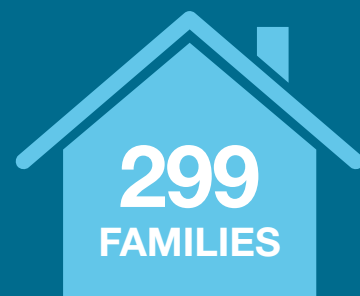
A minimum of 296 families (23% of 1,311) received this type of NOT.

Most common types of NOT received by families: 2016–2018



**735**

735 families reported relationship breakdown as their reason for homelessness



**299**  
FAMILIES  
WERE LEAVING  
OVERCROWDED  
ACCOMMODATION

Type of relationship break down: 2016–2018

Number of families leaving overcrowded accommodation: 2016–2018

9. More detail was available on the type of NOT for families who presented after May 2018 as the initial assessment form used to record the data and input it to PASS was updated. Due to the limitations of administrative data, particularly older data, there was insufficient information available on the type of NOT for 629 families. As such, the figures above represent the minimum of each NOT type issued to the families over this time period, 2016–2018.

# 04



# Family demographics

This section reviews demographic data for the families who newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region during 2018. Profile data was available for a total of 1,110 of the 1,112 families and includes information on family composition, nationality and age. Demographic data from 2016, 2017 and 2018 is compared to build a more representative profile of family homelessness in the Dublin Region and to identify families more vulnerable to homelessness.

## 4.1 Family composition

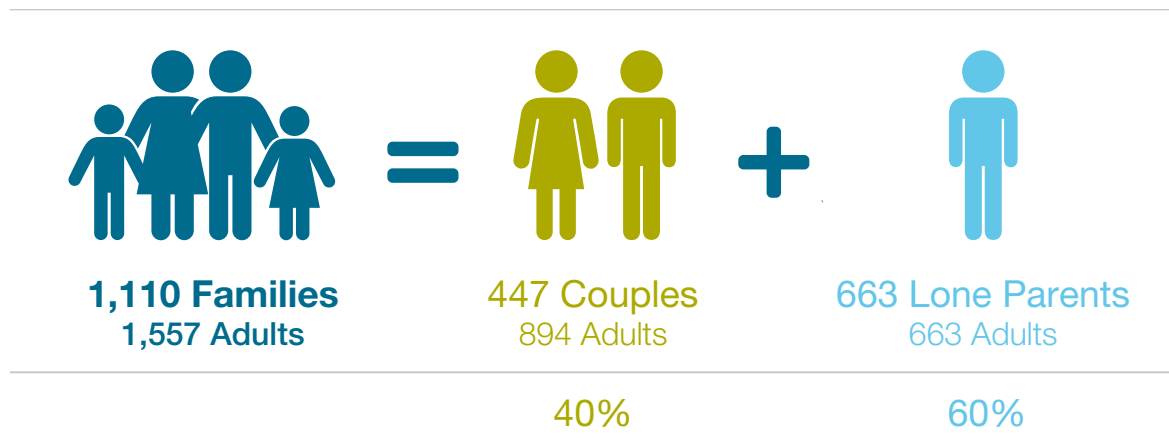


Figure 6: Family composition for 1,110 of the families who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018

Figure 6 illustrates the family composition for the 1,110 in this cohort of families newly experiencing homelessness in 2018. Couples made up 40% (n=447) of the total families while 60% (n=663) of families were lone parenting. As such, 1,557 new adults in family units were accommodated by homeless services in the Dublin region during 2018.

A total of 2,330 children accompanied the 1,110 families accommodated by homeless services in the Dublin region during 2018. As demonstrated in Table 5, the majority of families had one child (n=478 or 43%), while 14% (n=116) of families had four or more children.

## Family demographics (continued)

30

No. of children	Couples	Lone Parents	Total families 2018	Percentage of families	Total children
1 Child	142	336	478	43%	478
2 Children	116	176	292	26%	584
3 Children	90	98	188	17%	564
4+ Children	99	53	152	14%	704
<b>Total</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>2,330</b>

Table 5: Number of children in family units newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018

### 4.2 Gender

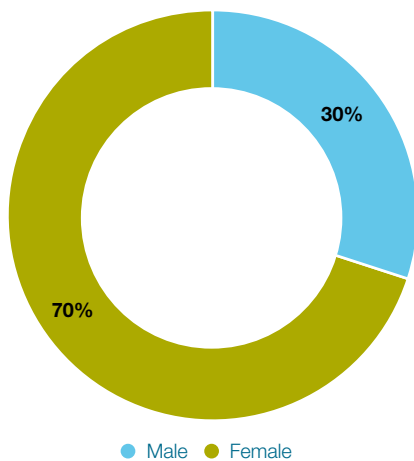


Figure 7: Gender of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,557)

Of the adults in the families who experienced homelessness in 2018, a higher proportion were female (n=1,091 or 70%) than male (n=466 or 30%), see Figure 7 above. This can be attributed to the high representation of lone parents among this cohort of families, the majority of these lone parents were female.

### 4.3 Citizenship

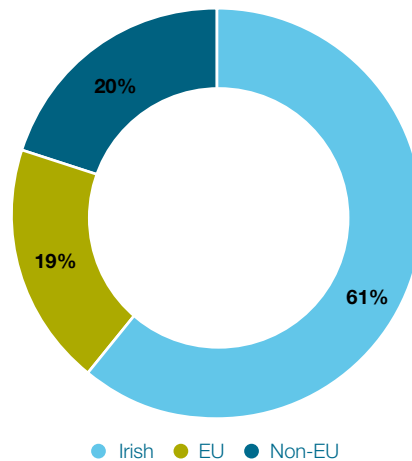


Figure 8: Citizenship of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,522)

Figure 8 shows that 61% (n=926) of the adults were Irish citizens, 19% (n=297) had EU citizenship and 20% (n=299) were non-EU citizens.<sup>10</sup> Please note that citizenship does not necessarily determine eligibility for social housing supports, however, it does show a higher representation of migrant families among those experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region. Insufficient information was available for 35 individuals.

10. Please note that citizenship data on PASS is self reported.



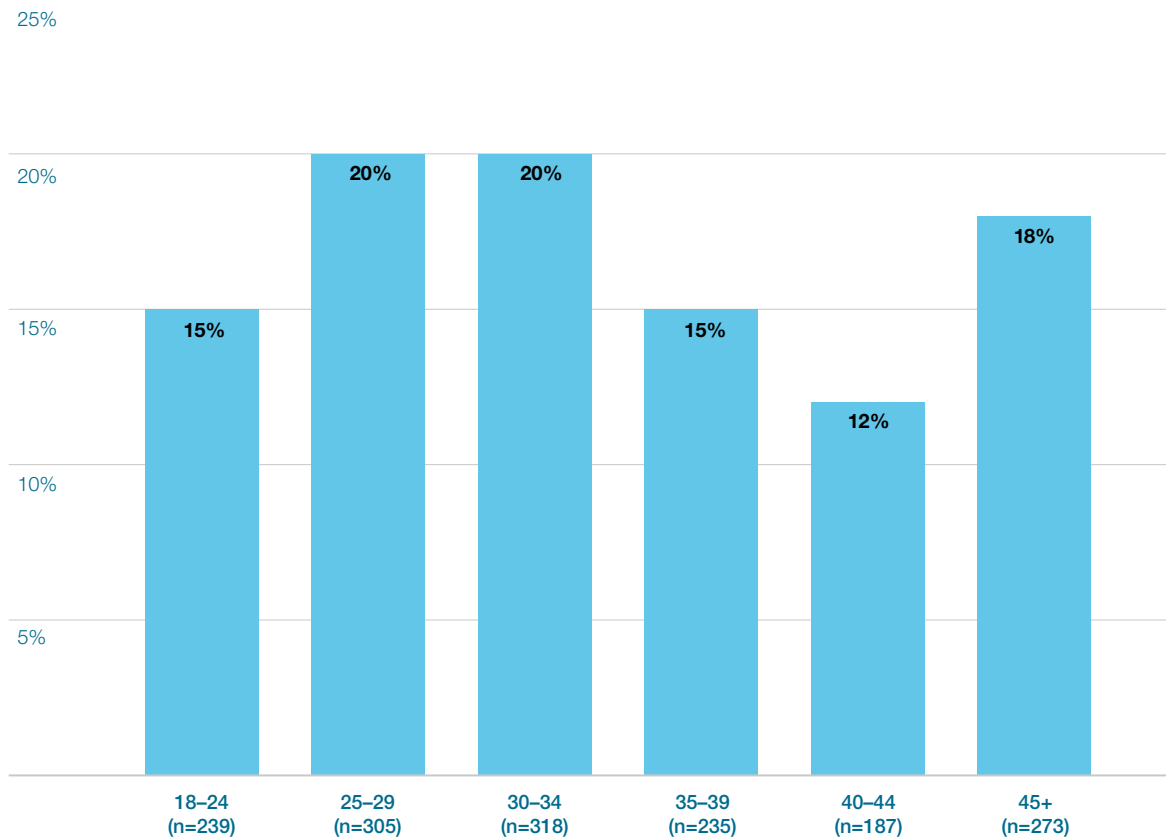


Figure 9: Age groups of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=1,557)

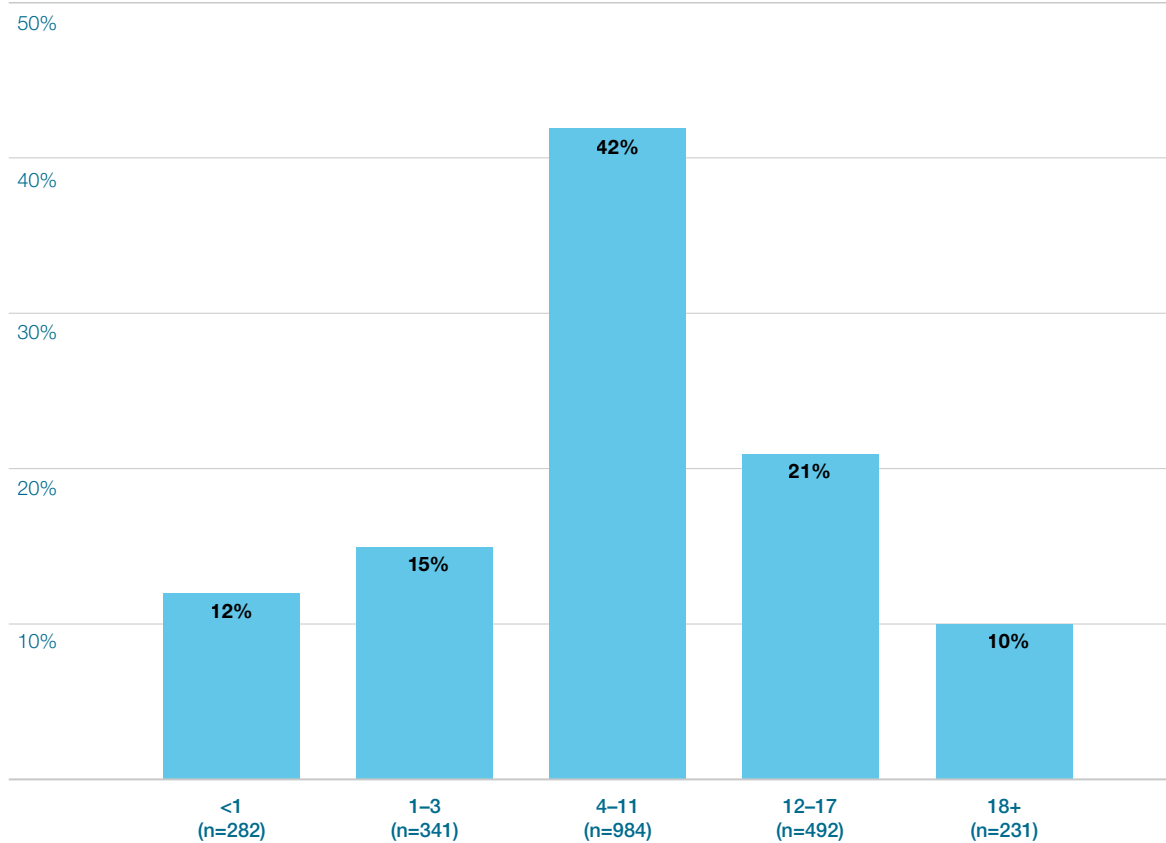


Figure 10: Age groups of children in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2018 (n=2,330)

## Family demographics (continued)

32

### 4.4 Age

The average age of the adults in this cohort of homeless families was 34.5 years. As documented in Figure 9, 15% of the adults were aged 24 or under (n=239). The majority were between the ages of 25 and 34 (n=623 or 40%) while 27% were aged between 35 and 44 years (n=422). A notable percentage of the adults were over the age of 45 (n=273 or 18%).<sup>11</sup>

As previously stated 2,330 children were recorded across the 1,110 families. Of these, 27% of children were aged three or under (n=623), see Figure 10. The majority of children were aged between four and 11, i.e. primary school going age (n=984 or 42%). Twenty one percent of children were aged between 12 and 17 (n=492) while a minority were aged 18 or over (n=231 or 10%).

### 4.5 Trends in family demographics: 2016–2018

From January 2016 to December 2018 a total of 2,990 families newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region. Demographic data was available for 2,959 of these families. A comparison of 2016 and 2017 data shows a similar profile of families newly experiencing homelessness while the data from 2018 highlights a shift in the emerging patterns of family homelessness.

Family composition	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2017	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2018
Couples	34%	35%	40%
Lone Parents	66%	65%	60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (n=878)</b>	<b>100% (n=971)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,110)</b>

Table 6: Family composition of families newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

Table 6 shows that the average percentage of families lone parenting is consistent across 2016 and 2017 with 66% and 65% respectively. In 2018 the average percentage of lone parents decreased to 60%, demonstrating an increase in the number of couples among the cohort of families newly experiencing homelessness.

11. The ages displayed in Figure 9 and 10 were calculated at a specific point in time and reflect the ages of the adults and children as of May 2019.

Gender	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2017	New families who accessed EA in Dublin Region, 2018
Female	76%	73%	70%
Male	24%	27%	30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (n=1,170)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,315)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,110)</b>

Table 7: Gender of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

The gender profile of the adult's also changed over the three years. Table 7 shows that 70% of the adults were female in 2018 compared to 76% in 2016. This can be attributed to the higher representation of couples among the 2018 families.

Number of children per family	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2017	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2018
1 Child	46%	45%	43%
2 Children	28%	28%	26%
3 Children	12%	16%	17%
4+ Children	14%	11%	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (878)</b>	<b>100% (n=971)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,110)</b>

Table 8: Number of children in family units newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region: 2016–2018

In terms of the number of children in family units, the available data shows a similar percentage breakdown between the families who newly presented to homeless services in Dublin from 2016 to 2018. Across the three years the majority of families had one child. See Table 8 for a further breakdown.

## Family demographics (continued)

34

Age groups	Age groups of adults who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2016	Age groups of adults who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2016	Age groups of adults who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2018
<24	24%	23%	15%
25–29	24%	23%	20%
30–34	20%	19%	20%
35–39	12%	13%	15%
40–44	10%	11%	12%
45+	10%	11%	18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (n=1,170)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,315)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,157)</b>

Table 9: Age groups of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

Table 9 documents a similar breakdown in the age groups of the adults within the family units newly accessing EA in 2016 and 2017. Notably, there was a shift in the age profiles of adults who presented in 2018 with 15% under the age of 24 compared to 24% and 23% in 2016 and 2017 respectively. A difference can also be seen in the percentage of adults over the age of 45. In 2018, 18% of the adults new to homelessness were over the age of 45, 8% higher than 2016 and 7% higher than 2017.

Age groups	Age groups of children who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2016	Age groups of children who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2017	Age groups of children who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2018
<4	34%	33%	27%
4–11	42%	43%	42%
12–17	17%	17%	21%
18+	7%	7%	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% (n=1,787)</b>	<b>100% (n=1,949)</b>	<b>100% (n=2,330)</b>

Table 10: Age groups of children newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

Data from families presenting as homeless across the three year period reveals a pattern of consistency with regards to the number of children of primary school age

i.e. between the ages of 4 and 11 (42% in 2016, 43% in 2017 and 42% in 2018). Table 10 shows that in 2018 a slightly lower percentage of children were under the age of four, 27% in 2018 compared to 34% and 33% in 2016 and 2017 respectively. There was also 3% more children/dependents in the over 18 category for 2018.

Citizenship	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2017	New families who accessed in emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2018
Irish	75%	72%	61%
EU	10%	13%	20%
Non-EU	15%	15%	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 11: Citizenship of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

The percentage of families with Irish citizenship has decreased from 75% in 2016 to 61% in 2018.<sup>12</sup> This represents a decrease of 14%. Table 11 highlights the high representation of migrant families among those who accessed homeless services over the three years.

#### 4.6 Summary

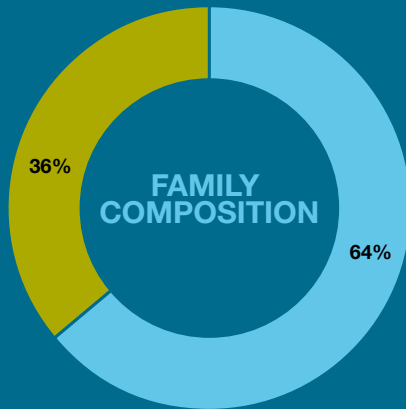
This section reviewed the demographic data available for 1,110 of the 1,112 families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin Region in 2018, composed of a total of 1,557 adults with 2,330 accompanying children. Comparisons were also made with 2016 and 2017 family demographics to present a comprehensive profile of the families experiencing homelessness over the three year period. Lone parent families, families with three or more children and migrant headed families were previously identified as being more vulnerable to homelessness<sup>13</sup>, a finding consistent with the 2018 demographic data. However, a shift in the profile of families also emerged in 2018 with a higher percentage of couples and non-Irish citizens first presenting in 2018 as well as a higher average age of both adults and children.

12. Please note that citizenship data is self reported and does not correlate to eligibility for social housing supports.

13. H, Morrin & B, O'Donoghue Hynes (2018), A report on the 2016 and 2017 families who experienced homelessness in the Dublin Region. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

# Family Demographics: 2016–2018

36



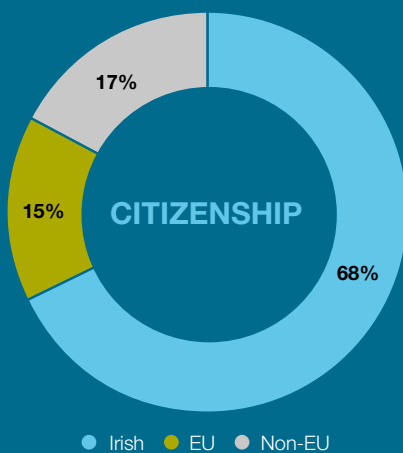
Family Composition ● Couples ● Lone Parents

Lone parent families are disproportionately represented among families experiencing homelessness. The 2016 Census revealed that nationally 24% of families were lone parent families. This compares to 64% among the cohort of families experiencing homelessness in Dublin from 2016–2018.<sup>12</sup>

	New families accessing EA in Dublin Region, 2016–2018	Homeless families nationally, Census 2016	National general population, Census 2016	General population in Dublin Region, Census 2016
Average number of children per family	2.02	2.07	1.38	1.17

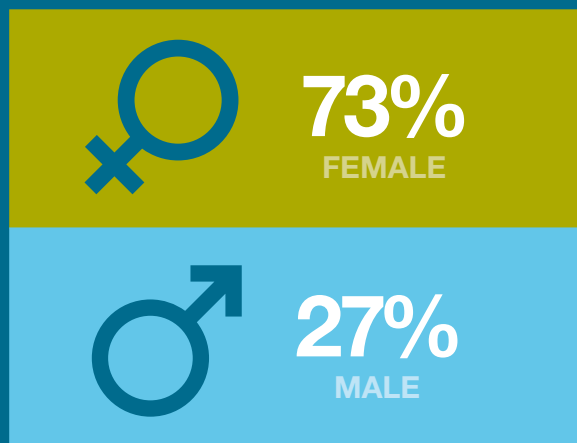
Average number of children per family among families newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018<sup>14</sup>

In the families who newly accessed homeless services from 2016 to 2018, the average number of children per family was 2.02, notably higher than 2016 Census data for the general population which shows an average of 1.17 children per family in the Dublin Region and an average of 1.38 nationally.<sup>15</sup>



● Irish ● EU ● Non-EU

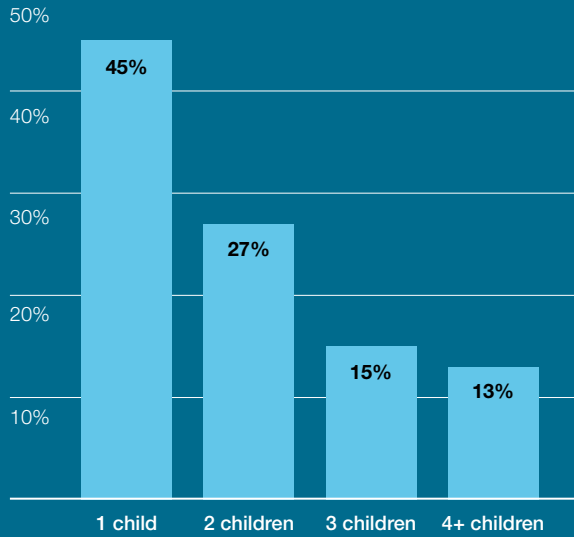
Citizenship of adults in family units newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018



Gender of adults newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

14. CSO (2017), Census 2016 Summary Results Part 1 <http://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/newsevents/documents/census2016summaryresultspart1/Census2016SummaryPart1.pdf>

15. Ibid

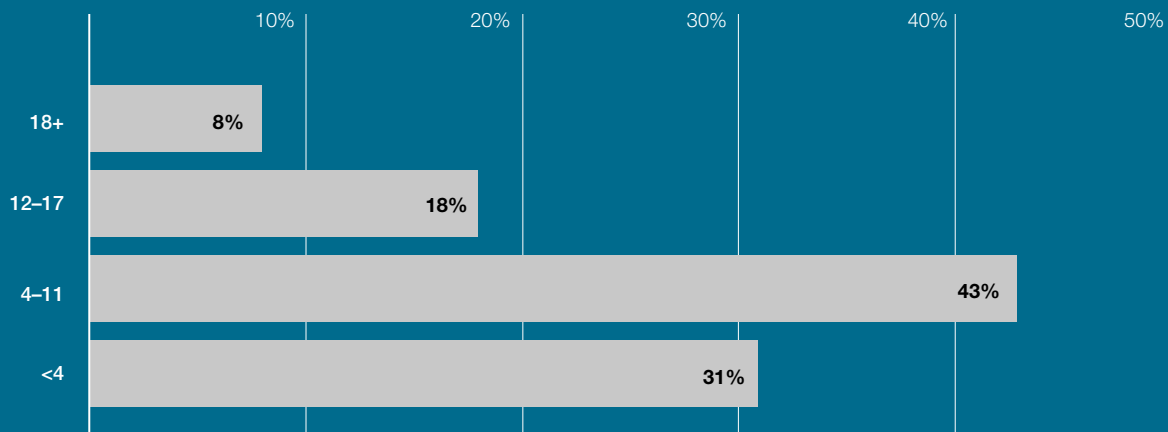


There was a higher percentage of families with four or more children (13%) when compared with family units in the general population (7%).<sup>14</sup>

Number of children per family among families newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018



Age groups of adults in family units newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018



Age groups of children newly accessing homeless services: 2016–2018

16. Ibid

# 05





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## Conclusion

This report follows on from previous DRHE family homelessness reports<sup>17</sup> and adds to the research into family homelessness in the Dublin Region. The objective of the research was to increase knowledge about family homelessness in the Dublin Region by highlighting the primary reasons for homelessness among the cohort of families who first presented and accessed EA between January 2016 and December 2018 (n=2,990). Demographic profiles were reviewed to provide a clearer picture of the dynamics of family homelessness. The findings aim to inform both operational and policy developments relating to homeless families in the Dublin Region.

Over the past five years there has been an increase in the number of families accessing EA in the Dublin Region, with a high of 1,112 new families in 2018. Distinct seasonal patterns in new family presentations can be observed, with a low number of new family presentations each December followed by a peak in presentations in January after the Christmas period. There are also increases in the number of new presentations in the summer months of July and/or August, during school holidays. What is also noticeable is the distinct upward trend in the average number of new presentations per month, increasing from 34 in 2014 to an average of 93 new families in 2018. Despite this upward trend there has been a considerable slowdown in the rate of growth as the number of families departing from services has also increased. The number of exits to tenancy began to accelerate in late 2016 with the take-off of the HAP scheme. In 2017 and 2018, 2,619 new HAP tenancies created for families exiting EA and for those at risk of homelessness. HAP continues to play a key role in exits from homeless accommodation to tenancy and preventions.

The method used in this report captured a single reason for homelessness and demonstrates that in 2018, an average of 50% of families presented directly from private rented accommodation while 42% of the remaining families presented from staying with family or friends. When compared with 2016 and 2017 data there is a noticeable increase in the number of families presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region as a result of a loss or inability to secure private

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17. H, Morrin & B, O'Donoghue Hynes (2018), A report on the 2016 and 2017 families who experienced homelessness in the Dublin Region. Dublin Region Homeless Executive

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## Conclusion (continued)

40 rented accommodation (45% in 2016, 48% in 2017 and 50% in 2018). However, it is important to note that reasons for homelessness are often more complex. The nature of administrative data makes it difficult to fully track the ancillary and compounding factors which may combine to bring about an experience of homelessness for each of the families newly accessing EA. Some families defer presenting to homeless services by moving in with family or friends following the loss of private rented accommodation. As such, factors relating to the private rented sector may be understated. Notwithstanding this limitation, the data presents key insights into the primary reasons why families presented to homeless services across the three year period. Overall the report highlights that difficulties finding and sustaining tenancies in the private rented sector is a key driver for homelessness among families in the Dublin Region.

This report reviews the demographic information for the families new to homelessness in 2018. Comparisons were also made with the families who presented in 2016 and 2017 to present a more comprehensive profile of the families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region. A shift in the profile of families emerged in 2018 with a higher percentage of couples and non-Irish citizens first presenting in 2018 as well as a higher average age of both adults and children when compared with the previous years. However, what is consistent is the profile of families identified as being more vulnerable to homelessness: lone parent families, families with three or more children and migrant families. The 2016 Census revealed that 24% of families were lone parent families compared with 64% in the cohort of new families experiencing homelessness, 2016–2018. There was also a higher percentage of families with four or more children (13%) when compared with family units in the general population (7%). While citizenship could not be directly compared with the Census, the average of non-Irish citizens (32%) across the three years highlights the high representation of migrant families among those experiencing homelessness.

Overall, this report provides valuable insight into the most common causes of family homelessness in the Dublin Region and an interesting profile of the families most likely to access homeless services. Notwithstanding the limitations of a focus on administrative data, the report can assist in focusing policy on the effective management of services in the Dublin Region and the development of a regional and national response to the issue of family homelessness and housing supply.



