

Families

A REPORT ON THE 2016 AND 2017 FAMILIES WHO EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS IN THE DUBLIN REGION

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Foreword

This report follows on from a report published by the DRHE last year relating to the 2016 families, *Analysis of the Newly Homeless Families Accommodated by Dublin's Homeless Services during 2016*. A year on there is richer data on the 2016 families and the opportunity to review data for the 2017 families. The comparison of both years confirms trends in the profile of families and their progression through services.

Once again this report highlights that lone parent, non-Irish national and larger families are more susceptible to homelessness than other family types when compared with the general population. The report also demonstrates that the homeless Housing Assistance Payment has been instrumental in accommodating families who leave emergency accommodation in under six months. It also points out that up to 18% of all families leave emergency accommodation without the need for support from service providers or the local authority. It confirms that a small number of families remain in emergency accommodation for long periods.

The methodology used in the report of tracking families through services differs from our usual reporting on family duration which considers how many of the families who are currently in emergency accommodation have been there for durations of six months or more. As illustrated in Table 1 below, few remain in services for more than two years but this report gives us the rich data that illustrates the rate at which families leave and where they leave to.

Table 1: Duration accessing homeless services for families in emergency accommodation on a single night, 31st of December 2017

Length of time family in emergency accommodation	Number of families in emergency accommodation December 31st 2017	Percentage of families
24+ Months	82	8%
18-24 Months	101	9%
12-18 Months	147	14%
6-12 Months	277	25%
6 Months or Less	480	44%
Total Families	1,087	100%

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List of Abbreviations

AHB	Approved Housing Body
CSO	Central Statistics Office
DRHE	Dublin Region Homeless Executive
EA	Emergency Accommodation
EU	European Union
HHAP	Homeless Housing Assistance Payment
LA	Local Authority
NOT	Notice of Termination
PASS	Pathway Accommodation and Support System
PRS	Private Rented Sector

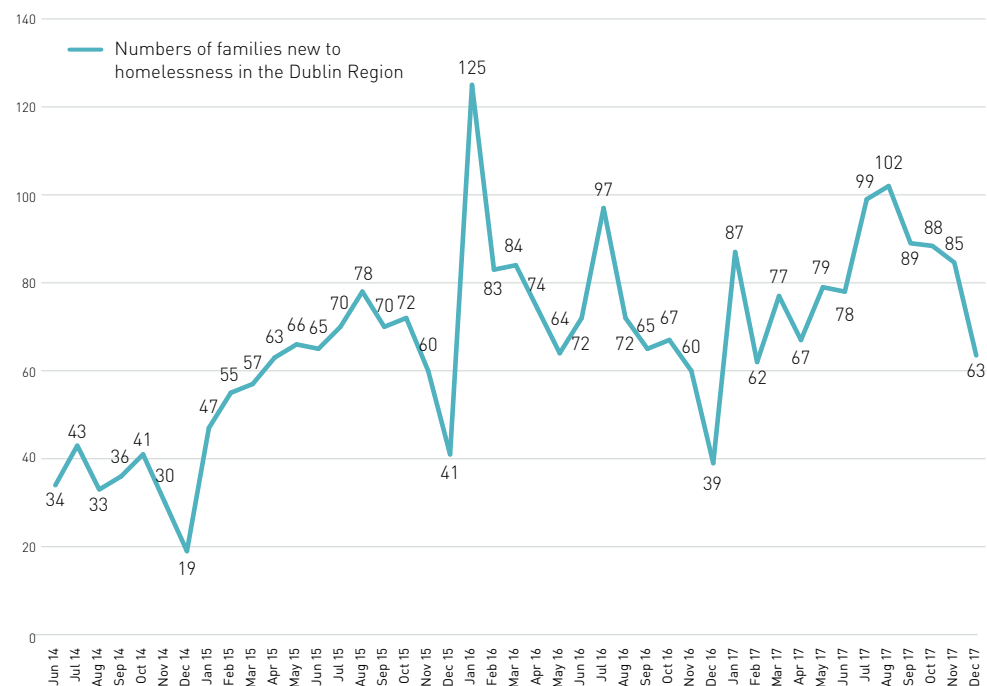
1. Executive Summary

From January 2016 to December 2017 a total of 1,878 families accessed emergency accommodation (EA) in the Dublin Region for the first time, 902 families in 2016 and 976 families in 2017. Families were categorised as new to homelessness when they had no previous Pathway Accommodation and Support System¹ (PASS) record or accommodation history as a family unit with accompanying dependent children. This report presents valuable information relating to the reasons for homelessness, demographic profiles and rates of progression through homeless services. It first documents the data relating to the families who presented in 2017 and goes on to compare the 2016 and 2017 families to present a more representative picture of family homelessness in the Dublin Region.

1.1 New family presentations 2014–2017

Over the past four years there has been a steady increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region with distinct seasonal patterns evident. As documented in Figure 1, there was a consistent decrease in the number of new family presentations in December followed by a peak in January after the Christmas period. A second peak in presentations is also visible in the summer months of July and/or August.

Figure 1: Number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region, 2014–2017



What is noticeable is the distinct upward trend in the average number of new presentations per month, increasing from 34 per month in 2014 to 81 in 2017. Despite this trend, there has been a slowdown in the rate of overall expansion of services as the number of families departing from services has also increased. Table 2 shows the annual increase in the number of families using EA dropped significantly in 2017 despite the increase in presentations. In the previous two years approximately 350 places for additional families had been provided in the Dublin Region. This dropped to 93 in 2017. The net annual increase over the past four years has slowed down reducing from 106% in 2015 to 9% in 2017.

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

Table 2: Number of families accessing emergency accommodation each December in the Dublin Region, 2014–2017

	Number of families in emergency accommodation	Annual Increase in number of families	Percentage Increase
Dec-14	331	-	-
Dec-15	683	352	106%
Dec-16	1,028	345	51%
Dec-17	1,121	93	9%

1.2 Reasons for homelessness

Two primary reasons for homelessness were reported by the families; leaving private rented accommodation on foot of a Notice of Termination² (NOT) and leaving family or friend's accommodation due to relationship breakdown or overcrowding. A small number of families reported 'other' reasons for their presentation to homeless services.

1.2.1 Private Rented Sector

For 48% of families (n=446) homelessness related to a loss of or inability to secure private rented accommodation.

Further analysis of these household's circumstances at presentation confirms that:

- Notices of Termination were issued to 413 families;
- Seven families left their accommodation as it was of poor quality or unsuitable to their needs;
- Three families were unable to source private rented accommodation after their previous lease expired;
- Nineteen families, who were either new or returning to Dublin, could not afford private rented accommodation in the Dublin region;
- Four families had to leave the parental home as it was sold and could not source private rented accommodation.

1.2.2 Family Circumstance

There were a total of 449 families (49%) in this category, of which 102 families stated the primary reason for their presentation as homeless was that they were departing an overcrowded living situation while 283

families stated that there was some element of relationship breakdown that triggered their rooflessness. General family circumstance (n=55) and family reunification (n=9) make up the remainder³.

1.2.3 Other

Causation among the remaining 30 families (or 3%) breaks down as follows:

- Two families were evicted from social housing;
- Twelve families cited no income source as their reason for homelessness;
- Thirteen families left properties due to being victims of anti-social behaviour;
- Three families left their properties voluntarily, i.e. without a valid NOT.

There was insufficient information available for the remaining 51 families.

1.2.4 Trends in reasons for family homelessness

The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) began recording the reasons for family homelessness in January 2016. As such, the data gathered to date covers a 24 month period. Upon initial examination, no distinct pattern as to the reasons for family homelessness emerges.

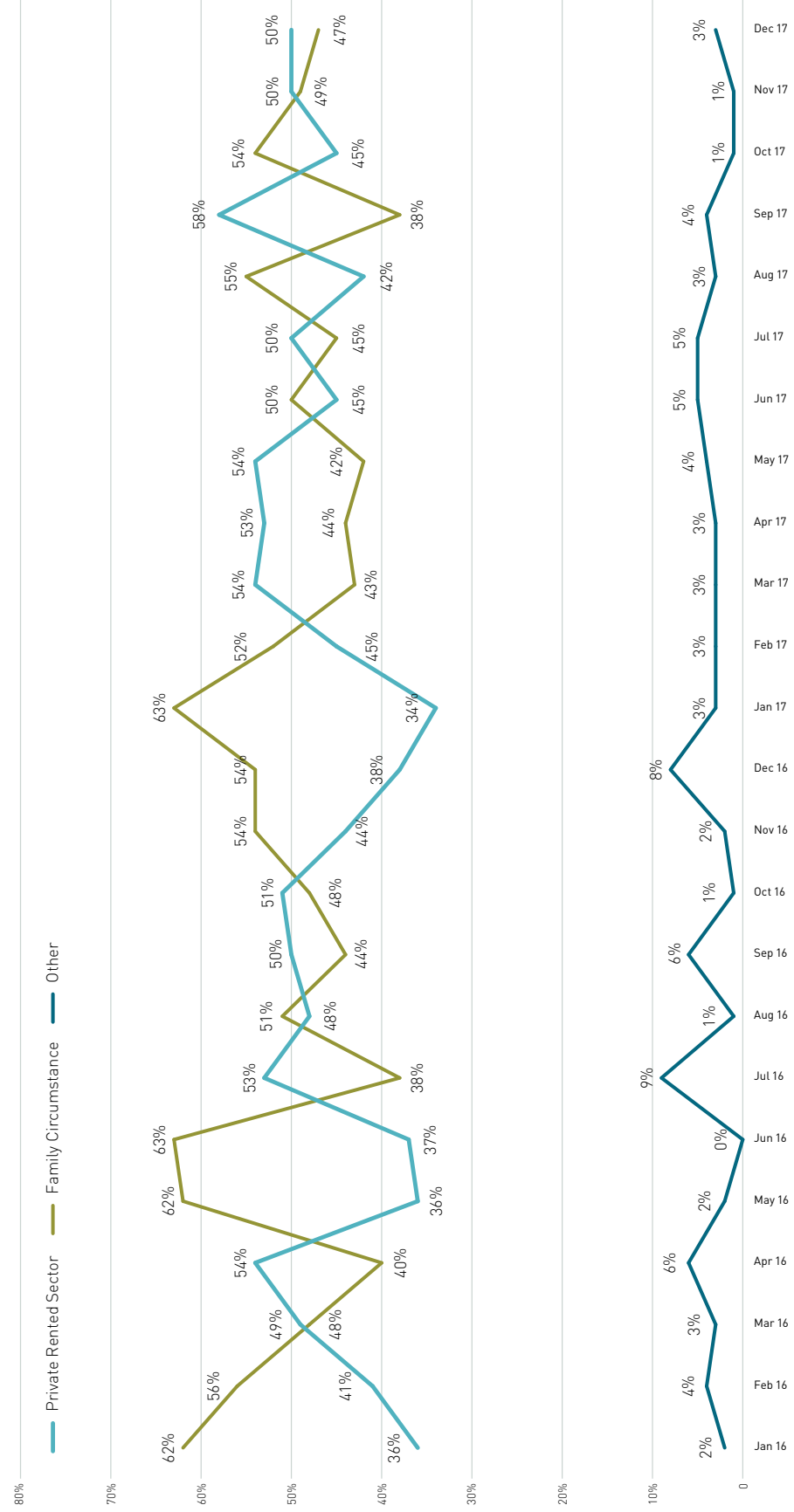
As illustrated in Figure 2, a lot of variation across the two year period is evident. However, a comparison of 2016 and 2017 data reveals a 3% increase in families presenting to homeless services as a result of issues stemming from the private rented sector. There was also a small decrease in the number of families presenting as a result of relationship breakdown, family conflict and/or some form of overcrowding, falling from 51% in 2016 to 49% in 2017.

2. Section 62 of the Residential Tenancies Act, 2004 sets out the requirements for a valid notice of termination <http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/eli/2004/act/27/enacted/en/print#sec62>.

3. The method used in this report captured a single reason for homelessness; however, previous qualitative research indicated that many families in the family circumstance category had previously departed from private rented accommodation. S, Stamp (2017), The Experiences of Newly Homeless Families Accommodated by Dublin's Homeless Services in August 2015. Dublin Region Homeless Executive.

1. Executive Summary (cont.)

Figure 2: Summary of primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region 2016 & 2017 – percentage of families



1.3 Demographic information

The demographic data has been reviewed for 971 of the 976 families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin Region during 2017⁴.

- A total of 1,315 adults with 1,949 accompanying children were newly accommodated by homeless services in Dublin during 2017;
- Two thirds of families were lone parenting (n=627 or 65%) and one third were headed up by couples (n=344 or 35%);
- The majority of families were accompanied by either one or two children (n=702 or 73%);
- Just over two thirds of the families were Irish (n=650 or 67%) while one third were non-Irish national families (n=321 or 33%);
- The average age for adults in this cohort of homeless families was 32 years with the majority over the age of 25 (n=1,016 or 77%);
- The average age for children in this cohort of homeless families was 7 years. The majority of children were between the ages of 4 and eleven (n=838 or 43%).

Demographic comparisons were made with the families who presented in 2016 to present a more comprehensive profile of the families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region. The DRHE previously published a report detailing the demographics relating to these families⁵. Lone parent families, families with three or more

children and non-Irish national families were previously identified as being more vulnerable to homelessness, a finding consistent with 2017 family data.

- Lone parents made up 66% and 65% of the families newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 2017 respectively. However, comparison with the 2016 Census reveals that 24% of families in the general population were lone parents⁶;
- There was a higher percentage of families with four or more children in 2016 (14%) and 2017 (11%) when compared with family units of this size in the general population (7%) as reported by the 2016 Census⁷;
- Of the families who presented in 2016 and 2017, 32% and 33% respectively were non-Irish national families. In comparison, the 2016 Census reported that 12%⁸ of individuals in the national general population were non-Irish⁹.

1.4 Progression through homeless services: 2017 families (n=976)

The accommodation status of the 976 families who newly accessed EA during 2017 was reviewed to explore their rate of progression through homeless services. Three distinct categories were identified: families no longer using EA with a reported departure to tenancy; families no longer using EA who had given no reason for their departure; and families still in homeless accommodation.

Table 3: 2017 families - accommodation status of February 28th 2018

2017 families		
Accommodation status as of February 28th 2018	Number of families	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	232	24%
No departure reason	126	13%
Returned to family/friends	5	0.5%
Still in emergency accommodation	605	62%
Insufficient information available	8	0.5%
Total	976	100%

As of the 28th of February 2018, 232 (24%) families had moved to tenancy. Notably, 126 (13%) families had departed EA but did not inform the local authority (LA) or the service provider of a reason for their departure while an additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.5%). A total of 605 families (62%) were still accessing EA on February 28th 2018, see Table 3 above.

4. Insufficient data was available for five families.

5. H. Morrin (2017), Analysis of the newly homeless families accommodated by Dublin's homeless services during 2016. Dublin: Dublin Region Homeless Executive

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

7. *ibid*

8. This percentage refers to all individuals (i.e adults with and without children and children) in the homeless population and national population as per the Census 2016.

9. *ibid*

1. Executive Summary (cont.)

1.5 Progression through homeless services: 2016 families (n=902)

From January to December 2016 a total of 902 families presented to homeless services within the four local authorities across the Dublin Region for the first time. The accommodation status of these families was first reviewed in May 2017 and again in February 2018 to determine what changes have taken place and to provide a more up to date exploration of the progression through homeless services.

Table 4: 2016 families - accommodation status as of May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018

2016 families				
Accommodation status	Reported status May 31st 2017	Percentage of families	Updated status February 28th 2018	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	288	32%	487	54%
No departure reason	149	17%	161	18%
Still in emergency accommodation	433	48%	210	23%
Returned to emergency accommodation	-	-	16	2%
Insufficient information available	32	3%	28	3%
Total	902	100%	902	100%

Table 4 documents changes in the accommodation status of the 2016 families in the nine month period between May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018.

- The percentage of those who **moved to tenancy** rose from 32% to 54%. Four hundred and eighty seven of the 902 families who newly presented in 2016 were in a tenancy by February 2018.

- In May 2017, 71% of 288 moves to tenancies were to the Homeless Housing Payment Assistance¹⁰ (HHAP) initiative.
- A different pattern emerges between May 2017 and February 2018, 91% (n=186) of the additional moves to tenancy were to LA or Approved Housing Body (AHB) tenancies¹¹.

- There was a one percent increase in families who departed homeless services and had provided **no departure reason** to the LA or service provider.

- The percentage of families **still accessing homeless services** dropped from 48% to 23% with 210 families in EA on the 28th of February 2018, down from 433 in May 2017.

- A total of 16 families **returned to EA** between May 2017 and February 2018 i.e. their previous departures from EA were unsustainable.

- For 6 of the 16 families their move to tenancy was unsustainable. Two of the families were issued with a NOT from their HHAP landlord while four families departed their tenancy due to relationship breakdown with their partner.
- The remaining 10 families returned to EA following a departure with no recorded reason, having left for periods ranging between 7 and 18 months.
- Insufficient information was available for 3% of families.

1.6 Progression through homeless services: 2016 & 2017 families (n=1,878)

A total of 1,878 families first presented to homeless services between 2016 and 2017. As of February 28th 2018 families first presented between 2 and 26 months prior. Table 5 shows that 38% of the 1,878 families had departed to tenancy while a further 15% had an unknown departure reason and 44% of families were still in EA. Less than one percent of families (0.8%) returned to EA after an unsustainable departure while an additional five families left homeless accommodation to live with family or friends (0.2%).

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

11. Approved Housing Bodies (including Housing Associations and Co-operatives) provide and manage social rented housing. They are not for profit organisations formed for the purpose of relieving housing need.

Table 5: 2016 & 2017 families - accommodation status as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families		
Accommodation status as of February 28th 2018	Number of families	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	719	38%
No departure reason	287	15%
Returned to family/friends	5	0.2%
Still in emergency accommodation	815	44%
Returned to emergency accommodation	16	0.8%
Insufficient information available	36	2%
Total	1,878	100%

Further analysis of the 2016 and 2017 data highlighted a number of trends in relation to the families use of EA and rates of progression through homeless services.

1.6.1 Departed to tenancy

- HHAP accounted for 51% of the total number of departures to tenancy;
- Over one third (37%) of departures to tenancy occurred within three months of first presentation to homeless services;
- The average number of months in EA before departure to tenancy was eight months;

- The rates of progression to tenancy also varied depending on the type of tenancy, see Table 6 below;
 - Departures to HHAP tenancies peak in the first three months with 60% departing EA within three months of their first presentation.
 - Peak periods for departures to LA or AHB tenancies were between 13 and 15 months; with 23% departing EA to LA housing and 21% to AHB tenancies.

Table 6: 2016 & 2017 families – duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families			
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed as of February 28th 2018 - %		
	Local Authority Housing	Approved Housing Body	Homeless Housing Assistance Payment
Less than 1 month	4%	1%	22%
1-3 months	8%	10%	38%
4-6 months	10%	10%	20%
7-9 months	11%	18%	11%
10-12 months	11%	11%	6%
13-15 months	23%	21%	2%
16-18 months	15%	16%	1%
19-21 months	10%	7%	0%
22-24 months	8%	6%	0%
Total	100% (n=216)	100% (n=135)	100% (n=368)

1. Executive Summary (cont.)

1.6.2 No departure reason

- Of the 1,878 families, one in seven left EA without active engagement with support services i.e. they left on their own and no departure reasons were recorded on PASS;
- Families who left with no recorded departure reason had relatively short stays in EA. In

2016 and 2017, 42% and 50%, respectively, left less than a month after their first presentation to homeless services;

- There were a higher percentage of families who left after 12 months in 2016 (11%) when compared with 2017 (1%) because the 2016 families were in EA for longer periods than the 2017 families, see Table 7 below.

Table 7: 2016 & 2017 families - duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families				
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018 -%			
	2016	2017	2016 & 2017	
Up to 6 nights	25%	30%	27%	
1-4 weeks	17%	20%	18%	
1-5 months	34%	42%	38%	
6-11 months	13%	7%	11%	
12+ months	11%	1%	6%	
Total	100% (n=161)	100% (n=126)	100% (n=287)	

1.6.3 Still in emergency accommodation

- A total of 832 families (45%) were accessing EA on the 28th of February 2018;
- These families first presented between 2 and 26 months prior to this date. However, the average duration in EA for these families was 11 months or 327 days.

- As would be expected there were higher numbers still accessing EA for the more recent months. Fourteen percent of families who first presented in January 2016 were in homeless accommodation as of February 2018 compared to 81% of families who first presented in December 2017.

1.7 Conclusion

From January 2016 to December 2017 a total of 1,878 families accessed EA in the Dublin Region for the first time, 902 families in 2016 and 976 families in 2017. Two primary reasons for homelessness were reported by the families; leaving private rented accommodation on foot of a NOT and leaving family or friend's accommodation due to relationship breakdown or overcrowding. A small number of families reported 'other' reasons for their presentation to homeless services. Analysis of demographic information identified lone parent, non-Irish national and larger families as more vulnerable to homelessness than other family types when compared with the general population.

The accommodations status of the 2016 and 2017 families were reviewed to explore the families rates of progression through homeless services. The 2016 families have been tracked into 2018 and as such more detail is available on how and when families move to tenancies. When looking at the 2016 families in February 2018, 54% had departed to tenancy, 18% had departed EA but provided no reason for their departure. However, 2% of families had returned to EA having either departed to tenancy (n=6) or having left and provided no reason for departure (n=10). Finally, 23% of families remained in EA. Insufficient information was available for 3% of families.

For the 2017 families a similar pattern is emerging. Although families had first presented to homeless services 12 months later than the 2016 families we can still see that 24% of families had departed to tenancy. Notably, 13% of families had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure while an additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.5%). A total of 605 families (62%) remained in EA on the 28th of February 2018. Insufficient information was available for 0.5% of families.

Together the two years of data revealed some notable findings, perhaps most significantly, the variation in rates of departure. Two distinctive patterns emerged. Eighty two percent of families departing to HHAP tenancies and 80% of those departing with no departure reason left EA within six months of their first presentation. A different trend emerges for families departing to LA and AHB tenancies with departure rates peaking after 6 months in homeless accommodation. Seventy nine percent of departures to LA happened between stays of 6 and 24 months in EA while 77% of departures to AHB tenancies occurred within the same time frame.

2. Introduction

Over the last four years the number of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region has been steadily increasing. In June 2014 the DRHE began to track the number of new families who were presenting to homeless services each month across the four local authorities. A review of this data gives some insight into patterns of presentations for families newly accommodated by Dublin's homeless services. From January 2016 administrative data has been used to further understand the issues contributing to the rise in the number of families experiencing homelessness. The analysis of such administrative data has allowed for a detailed breakdown of the reasons for family homelessness and highlights two of the major contributing factors; leaving private rented accommodation on foot of a NOT and leaving family or friend's accommodation due to relationship breakdown or overcrowding. This data together with demographic profiles and an exploration of families progression through homeless services provides an important contextual backdrop for a detailed analysis of the families newly experiencing homelessness during 2016 and 2017.

2.1 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 (HHAP)) is the optimal course of action. Failing that families are placed in EA.

2.2 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 demographic information on families presenting as homeless and track the rate of progression to tenancies. This information can then be used to inform operational and policy developments relating to

homeless families in the Dublin Region.

2.3 Methodology

This report was compiled using a combination of administrative data recorded by the four local authorities in the Dublin Region and PASS data. The process involved collecting the initial assessments for all new families who presented to homeless services over the course of 2016 and 2017. The initial assessment is a form filled out by LA staff and the family newly experiencing homelessness. A family was deemed new to homelessness when they had no previous PASS record or accommodation history as a family unit with dependent children. The data was analysed using SPSS.

2.4 Outline

Chapter 1 provides a summary of the findings detailed in this report. Chapter 2 further introduces the research and its objectives. Chapter 3 examines the trends in the number of families newly presenting as homeless on a month by month basis over the three and a half year period from June 2014 to December 2017. Chapter 4 presents the reported reasons for family homelessness in the Dublin Region and provides a month by month analysis for 2017 before going on to make comparisons with the 2016 families. Chapter 5 explores the demographic information for the families newly presenting to homeless services in 2017. It goes on to present a profile of the families who newly experienced homelessness over the past two years from January 2016 to December 2017. Chapter 6 through 8 explore the families rates of progression through homeless services. Chapter 6 identifies the accommodation status of the families new to homelessness in 2017 while Chapter 7 reviews the accommodation status of families who first experienced homelessness in 2016. Chapter 8 looks at the two year period together to further explore the families trajectories through homeless accommodation. Chapter 9 summarises the findings of the research identifying: patterns in new family presentations; the primary reasons for homelessness; families most vulnerable to homelessness; and rates of progression through homeless services.

3. New family presentations 2014–2017

This chapter looks at the trends in the number of families newly presenting as homeless in the Dublin Region. It first presents the number of new families accessing EA for the 12 month period between January and December 2017. It moves on to look comparatively at the entire period since June 2014 to examine emerging patterns. Thirdly, it looks at the net increase in families accessing EA in the Dublin Region.

3.1 New family presentations, January to December 2017

From January to December 2017 a total of 976 families newly presented to homeless services within the four local authorities across the Dublin Region¹². As can be seen in Table 8, the number of families presenting varies each month with August being the highest at 102 and February the lowest at 62.

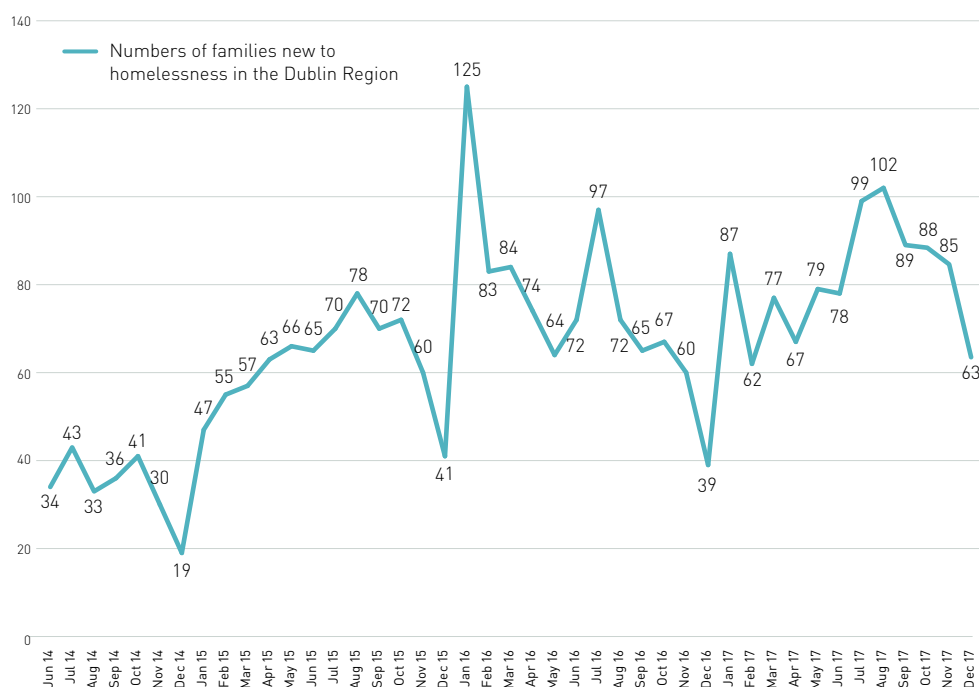
Table 8: Number of new families accessing homeless accommodation, January to December 2017

2017 families	
Month of presentation	Number of presentations per month
January '17	87
February '17	62
March '17	77
April '17	67
May '17	79
June '17	78
July '17	99
August '17	102
September '17	89
October '17	88
November '17	85
December '17	63
Total	976

3.2 Trends in new family presentations

In the seven months of 2014, there was an average of 34 new families presenting each month. In 2015 there were 744 new families who presented to homeless services which is an average of 62 families per month. The monthly average increased to 75 in 2016 and had increased again to 81 new family presentations per month in 2017. The upward trend is illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region, 2014–2017



¹² This figure represents the number of families who became homeless from January to December 2017 and had not been counted as homeless in the past.

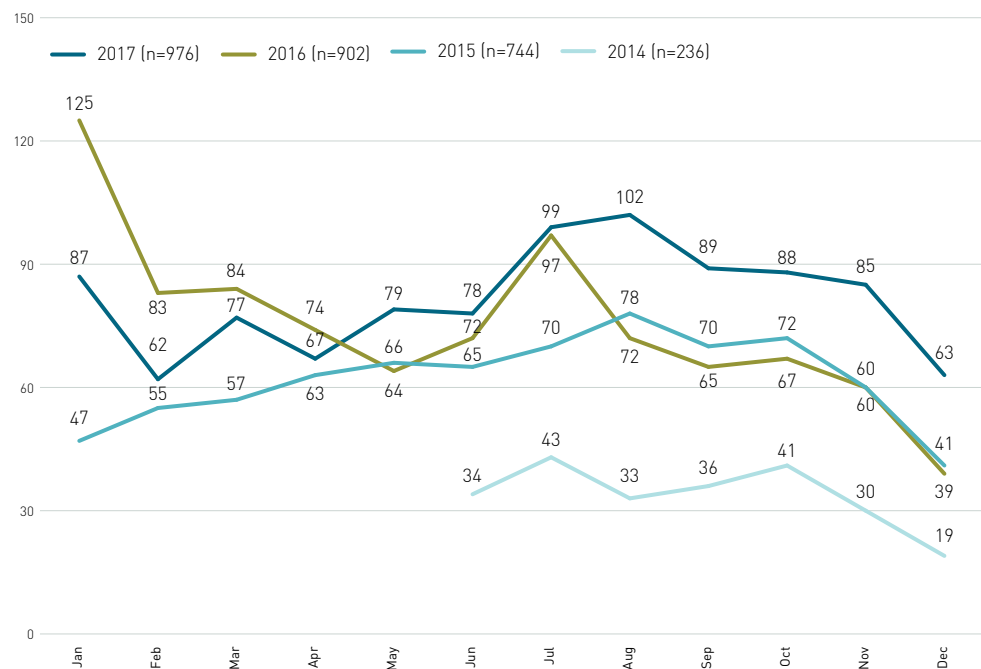
3. New family presentations 2014–2017 (cont.)

Also noticeable are some seasonal patterns of presentations that possibly coincide with school terms. There is a consistent pattern of families who may be deferring presentation to homeless services over the Christmas period as low numbers in December are followed by a peak in January. A second peak of activity appears to be evident during the summer months of July and/or August, during school holidays. It would appear that families may try to manage their entry to homelessness services to minimise disruption to the children with lower numbers of

new presentations during school term.

Figure 4 further illustrates the seasonal patterns in new family presentations between 2014 and 2017. New family presentations peaked in January in both 2016 and 2017. There are also increases in the number of new presentations in the summer months of July and/or August across all four years, 2014–2017. A downward trend in the number of new presentations from October to December is reflected across the four year period.

Figure 4: Trend in number of families new to homelessness each month in the Dublin Region, 2014–2017

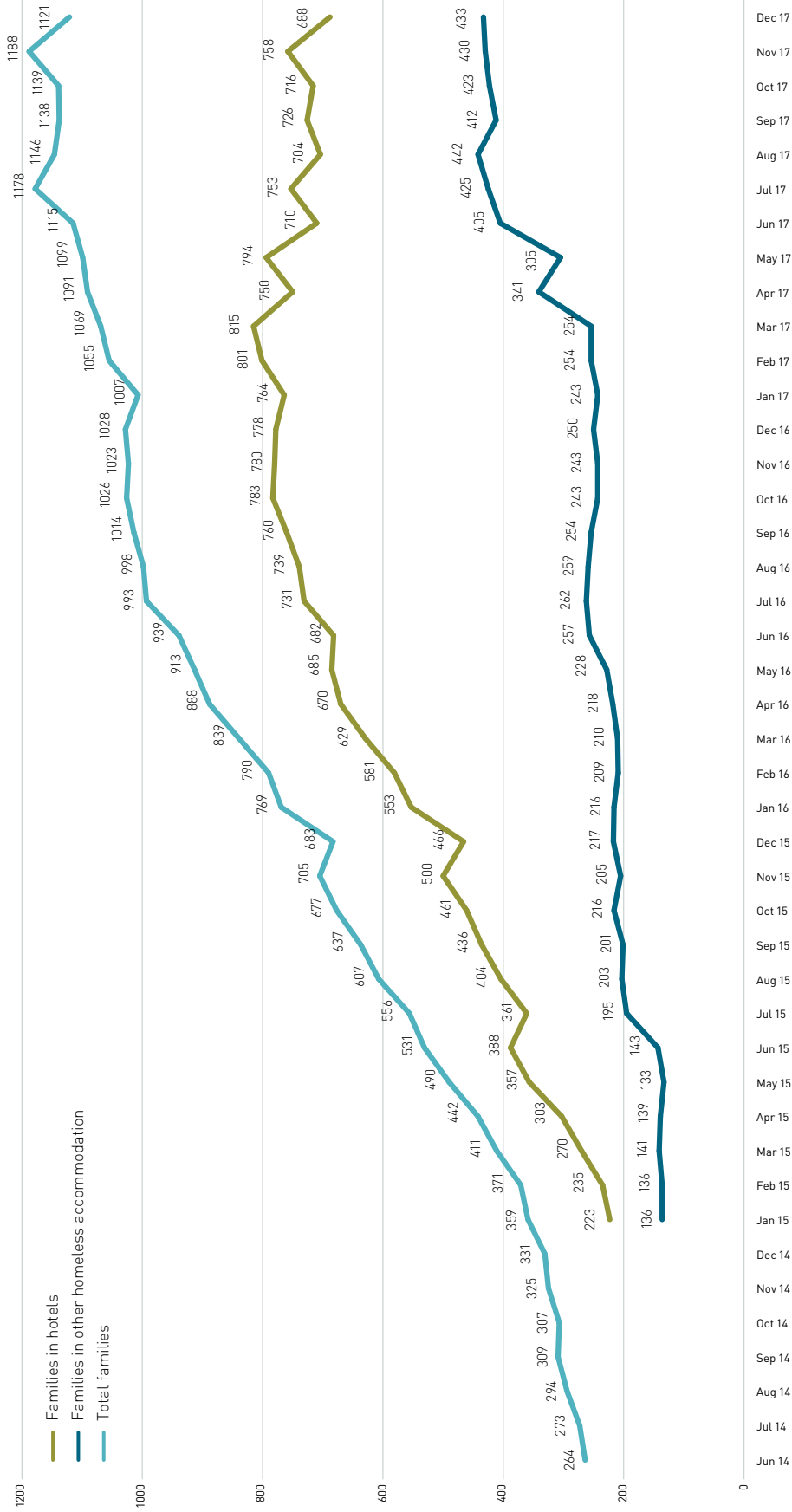


3.3 Net increase in families accessing emergency accommodation

As detailed in Figure 5, the number of families accessing EA increased from 264 in June 2014 to 1,121 in December 2017. However, comparisons of the net rate of increase across the three years shows a considerable slow down in the rate of growth. Table 9 shows that the total number of families increased from 331 in December 2014

to 683 in December 2015 representing a net increase of 106% or 352 families. The number of families accessing EA increased to 1,028 in December 2016, a net increase of 51% or 345 families when compared with December 2015. In comparison, the net increase in families accessing EA between December 2016 and December 2017 was 93 or 9%.

Figure 5: Number of families in emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region each month, June 2014 to December 2017



3. New family presentations 2014–2017 (cont.)

Table 9: Number of families in emergency accommodation each December in the Dublin Region, 2014–2017

	No. of families in Emergency Accommodation	Annual Increase in number of families	Percentage Increase
Dec-14	331	-	-
Dec-15	683	352	106%
Dec-16	1,028	345	51%
Dec-17	1,121	93	9%

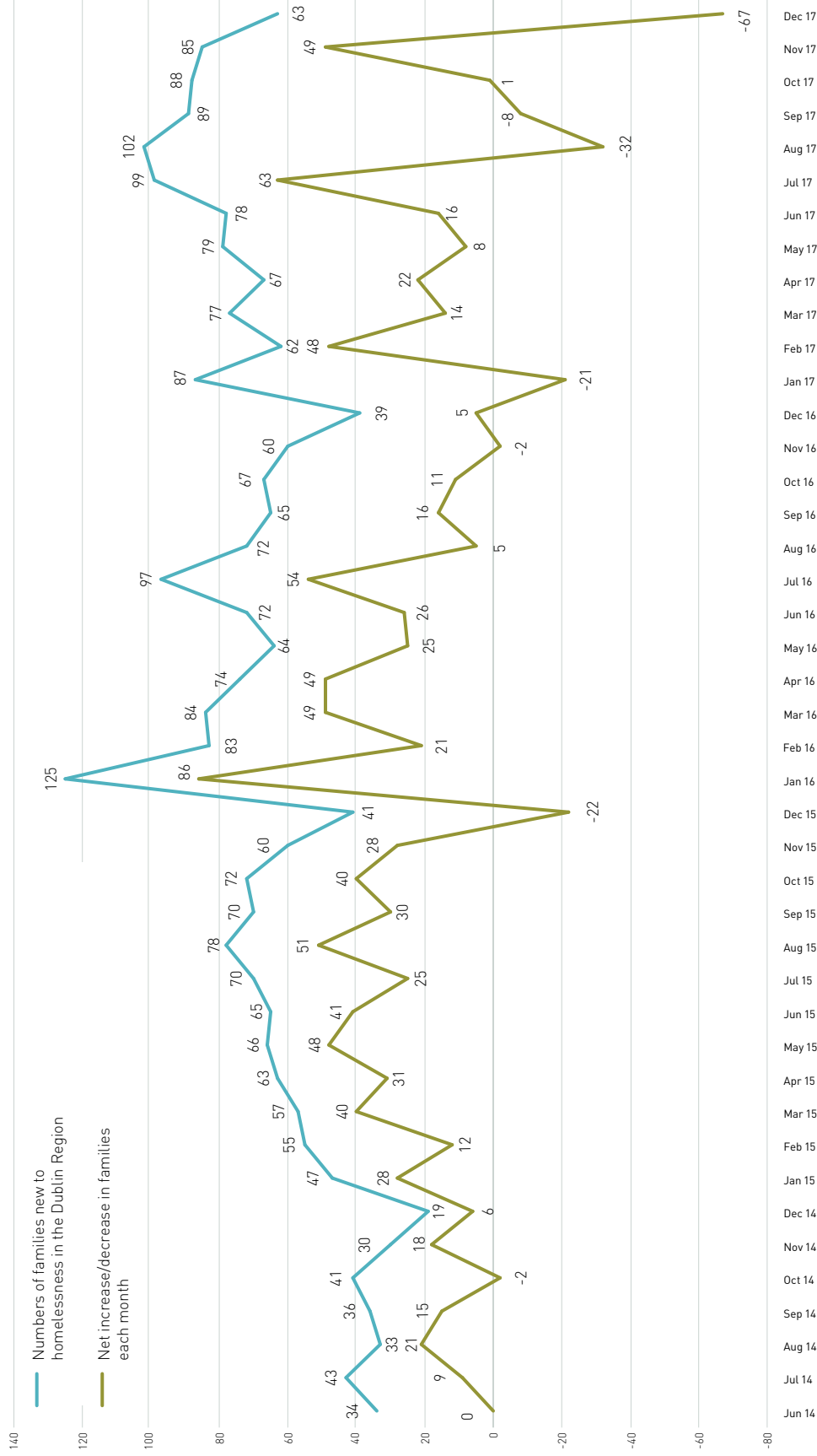
Figure 6 on the following page further illustrates the net increases and decreases in families newly accessing EA over the three and a half year period.

What is noticeable is that the difference between the figures is widening as time progresses. This reflects an increase in the number of families departing relative to new families entering EA. There have been six occasions in which departures exceeded entries (October 2014, December 2015, November 2016, January 2017, August 2017 and September 2017) but three of these have been during the first nine month of 2017. This indicates that some progress is being made in reducing the number of families in EA in the Dublin region.

3.4 Summary

Over the last four years there has been a steady increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness. Despite the 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 when moves to tenancies began to increase. While families continued to present on a daily basis there were also a large number of families departing to tenancies resulting in a net increase of 9% in families accessing EA between December 2016 and December 2017 compared 106% between December 2014 and December 2015.

Figure 6: Families entering and exiting homelessness each month in the Dublin Region, June 2014 to December 2017



4. Reasons for homelessness

This chapter first details the reasons for homelessness as reported by the 976 families who newly presented to homeless services from January to December 2017. It goes on to make comparisons with the 902 families who first experienced homelessness in 2016 to highlight the key trends and common causes for family homelessness in the Dublin Region over the two year period. Two primary reasons for homelessness were reported by the families; leaving private rented accommodation on foot of a NOT and leaving family or friend's accommodation due to relationship breakdown or overcrowding. A small number of families reported 'other' reasons for their presentation to homeless services. As documented in Table 10, in 2017 an average of 48% of families presented from private rented accommodation while 49% of families presented from living with family or friends.

Table 10: Reasons for homelessness reported by families in the Dublin region, 2017

2017 families		Total number of families	Total percentage of families
4.1 Private Rented Sector			
Notice of Termination		446	48%
- NOT – specific type unknown	265		
- Landlords family use	12		
- Property to be sold	64		
- Landlords bankrupt/receivership	9		
- Tenant Rent Arrears/rent increase	42		
- Tenant anti-social behaviour	3		
- Building work to be carried out on property	13		
- Invalid notice/illegal eviction	5		
Unsuitable accommodation	7		
Expiry of lease	3		
Parental family home sold	4		
New/Return to Dublin – unable to afford rent	19		
4.2 Family Circumstance			
Relationship breakdown		449	49%
- General	117		
- Parent	115		
- Partner	51		
Overcrowding	102		
Family reunification	9		
Family circumstance – other	55		
4.3 Other			
Evicted from social housing	2	30	3%
Property repossessed	-		
No income source	12		
Voluntarily left property without NOT	3		
Victim of anti-social behaviour	13		
Subtotal		925	100%
Insufficient information		51	-
Total		976	-

4.1 Private Rented Sector (48%)

Almost half of the 2017 families (n=446 or 48%) presented as result of issues stemming from the private rented sector, with the various contributory factors briefly discussed below.

4.1.1 Notice of Termination (45%)

As detailed in Table 11, landlords issued 413 families with a NOT. There was no detailed reason available on the type of NOT for 265 of these families. Based on the detail provided by the remaining families at their initial assessment, 12 properties were being taken

back by landlords for family use and 64 were to be sold, while nine landlords had gone into receivership. A total of 42 families stated they were issued with a NOT because of rent arrears or difficulties paying rent and five were subject to illegal evictions. In thirteen cases, families had to depart a property for repairs or renovations to take place and three families were issued with a NOT due to anti social behaviour.

Table 11: Notice of Termination type reported by families new to homelessness in the Dublin Region, 2017

2017 families	
Notice of Termination	No. of families
NOT specific type unknown	265
Invalid/illegal	5
Landlord/family use	12
Property to be sold	64
Landlord bankrupt/ receivership	9
Tenant rent arrears	42
Anti-social behaviour	3
Building work/repairs	13
Total	413

4.1.2 Other reasons for leaving the private rented sector (3%)

There were a total of 33 families in this category. Three families were unable to source private rented accommodation after their previous lease expired. Unfitness or unsuitability of the property for habitation (n=7) was also cited as a reason for having to vacate a rented property. An additional nineteen families were either new or returning to Dublin and could not afford rent in the region. Four families had to leave the parental home as it was sold. Difficulties finding a suitable private rented property resulted in the families presenting to homeless services.

4.2 Family Circumstance (49%)

For most of the remainder (n=449 or 49%), homelessness resulted from relationship breakdown, family conflict and/or some form of overcrowding.

4.2.1 Overcrowding (11%)

One hundred and two families stated the cause of their homelessness was a result of living in overcrowded accommodation. 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 unsustainable¹³. This, however, could not be determined from the information contained on the initial assessment form.

4.2.2 Relationship breakdown (31%)

Of the 283 families that detailed relationship breakdowns, 115 were with parents, 51 with partners, while 117 families cited general relationship breakdown as the primary cause for presenting to homeless services.

4.2.3 Family Circumstance - Other (7%)

There are a total of 64 families in this category of which nine families stated that family reunification was the cause of their homelessness. In these instances, changes in household types (i.e. 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. Fifty five families experienced homelessness as a result of a change in family circumstance. No further information could be obtained from the administrative data.

4.3 Other (3%)

4.3.1 Other (3%)

Causation among the remaining 30 families breaks down as follows:

- Two families stated that they were evicted from social housing; the reasons for such are unknown;
- Thirteen families left properties due to being victims of anti-social behaviour;
- Twelve families cited no income source as the main reason for homelessness. All of these families were non-Irish nationals and many of them were new to Ireland;
- Three families departed the private rented sector voluntarily i.e. without a valid NOT upon presentation to homeless services.

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

4. Reasons for homelessness (cont.)

4.3.2 Insufficient information

Insufficient or partial information was available for 51 families. In some of these cases, no initial assessment was completed as the family may have been placed into EA after business hours and subsequently did not present to their LA to have an assessment form completed. For the purpose of this analysis, insufficient information was not included in the calculation of the percentages included in this chapter.

4.4 Reasons for homelessness by month: 2017

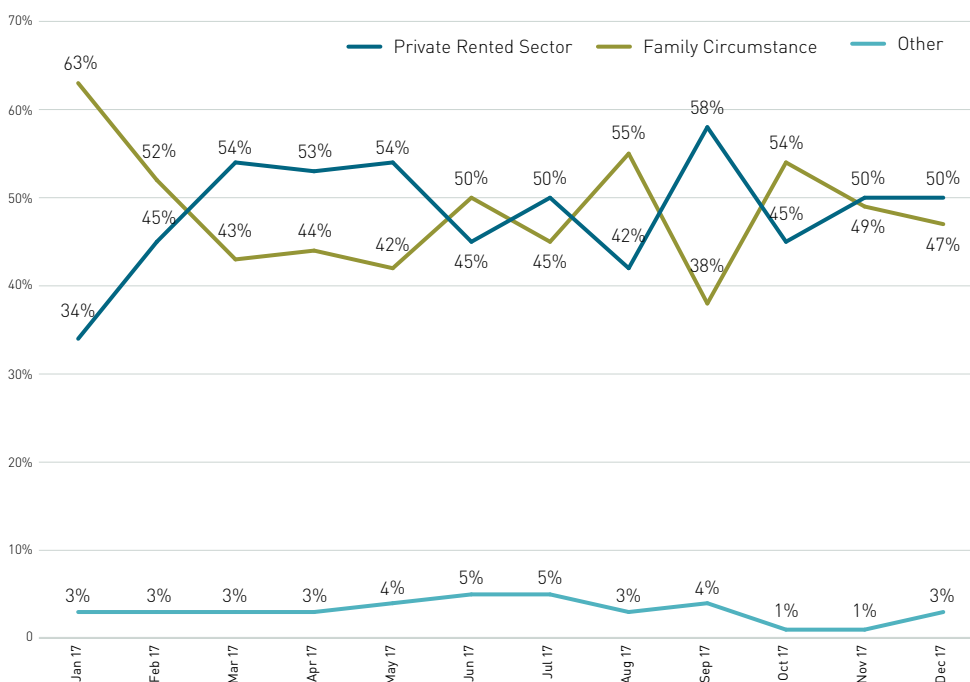
Table 12 presents the reasons for homelessness on a month by month basis for 2017. As previously discussed the number of families presenting varies each month. Similarly, the reasons for homelessness fluctuate across the 12 month period.

Table 12: Summary of primary reasons for family homelessness in Dublin Region – number of families, 2017

	2017 families												Total
	Jan '17	Feb '17	Mar '17	Apr '17	May '17	Jun '17	Jul '17	Aug '17	Sept '17	Oct '17	Nov '17	Dec '17	
Private Rented Sector													
Notice of Termination	26	21	33	31	38	31	41	40	46	36	40	30	413
Other reasons for leaving PRS	2	6	5	1	2	3	6	2	3	2	1	-	33
Family Circumstance													
Overcrowding	16	7	5	3	4	5	11	12	10	12	14	3	102
Relationship breakdown	29	18	19	21	22	23	25	35	18	28	25	20	283
Family circumstance - other	7	6	6	2	5	9	6	7	4	6	1	5	64
Other													
Other	2	2	2	2	3	4	5	3	3	1	1	2	30
Insufficient information	5	2	7	7	5	3	5	3	5	3	3	3	51
Total	87	62	77	67	79	78	99	102	89	88	85	63	976

Figure 7 illustrates the reasons for homelessness as percentage values. On average 48% of families presented directly from private rented accommodation while 49% of the remaining families presented from living with family or friends. However, as demonstrated, there is some variation across the months. March, May and September 2017 saw the highest percentage of families presenting from the private rented sector while a high percentage of families presented from living with family or friends in January, August and October 2017.

Figure 7: Summary of primary reasons for homelessness in the Dublin Region 2017 – percentage of families



4.5 Reasons for homelessness: 2016-2017

The DRHE began recording the reasons for family homelessness in January 2016. As such, the data gathered to date covers a 24 month period. A total of 1,878 families newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region from January 2016 to December 2017.

Table 13 presents a side by side comparison of the reasons for homelessness in 2016 and 2017. 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, representing a 3% increase in families presenting to homeless services as a result of issues stemming from the private rented sector.

Table 13 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. In 2016 4% of families reported 'other' reasons for homelessness compared to 3% in 2017.

4. Reasons for homelessness (cont.)

Table 13: Reasons for homelessness comparison, 2016–2017

2016 & 2017 families				
	2016		2017	
Private Rented Sector				
Notice of Termination				
- NOT specific type unknown	219	45%	265	48%
- Invalid notice/illegal eviction	5		5	
- Landlords family use	15		12	
- Property to be sold	49		64	
- Landlords bankrupt/receivership	11		9	
- Tenant Rent Arrears/rent increase	33		42	
- Tenant anti-social behaviour	2		3	
- Repairs or renovations	8		13	
Unsuitable accommodation	13		7	
Expiry of lease	3		3	
Parental family home sold	3		4	
Rented property secured but fell through	1		-	
New/Return to Dublin – unable to afford rent	9		19	
Family Circumstance				
Relationship breakdown				
- General	127	51%	117	49%
- Parent	127		115	
- Partner	50		51	
Overcrowding	95		102	
Family reunification	5		9	
Family circumstance - other	23		55	
Other				
Evicted from social housing	5	4%	2	3%
Property repossessed	3		-	
No income source	10		12	
Voluntarily left property without NOT	5		3	
Victim of anti-social behaviour	14		13	
Subtotal	835	100%	925	100%
Insufficient information	67	-	51	-
Total	902	-	976	-

Every six months the DRHE produce a summary report on the reasons for family homelessness. Reasons for family homelessness were first documented in January 2016 as such there are four bi-annual reports to date. A summary of the results is presented Table 14 below.

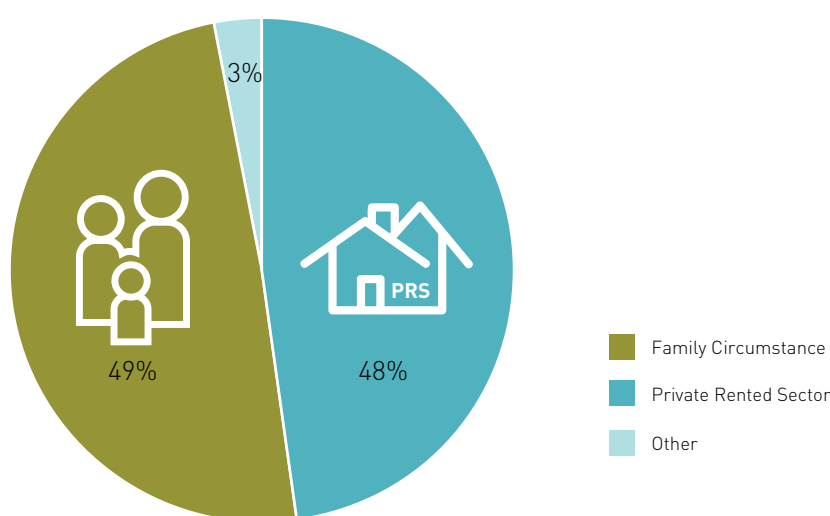
Table 14: Reasons for family homelessness bi-annual summary, 2016 -2017

2016 & 2017 families				
	Jan-Jun 2016	July-Dec 2016	Jan-Jun 2017	July-Dec 2017
Private Rented Sector				
Notice of Termination	39.5%	43%	43%	46%
Other reasons for leaving PRS	2%	5%	4%	3%
Family Circumstance				
Overcrowding	12%	11%	10%	12%
Relationship breakdown	39.5%	33%	31%	30%
Family circumstance - other	4%	2%	8%	6%
Other				
Other	3%	6%	4%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

An upward trend in the percentage of families presenting with a NOT is evident in Table 14, with an increase of 6.5% from between January to June 2016 and July to December 2017. A downward trend is emerging in the reasons for families presenting to homeless services as a result of relationship breakdown with percentages decreasing from 39.5% to 30%. The percentages of those presenting as homeless as a result of living in overcrowded accommodation were more consistent over the four six month periods. Similarly, no stable trends emerged in relation to the general family circumstance and other categories.

4.6 Summary

Figure 8: Primary reasons for family homelessness 2017



The method used here captured a single reason for homelessness and demonstrates that in 2017 an average of 48% of families presented directly from private rented accommodation while 49% of the remaining families presented from living 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 chapter reveals valuable insight into the key trends and common causes for family homelessness over the two year period from January 2016 to December 2017. There has been a lot of variation in the monthly breakdowns of reasons for homelessness across the two year period. However, a comparison of 2016 and 2017 data reveals a 3% increase in families presenting to homeless services as a result of issues stemming from the private rented sector.

5. Demographic Information

This chapter reviews demographic data for the families who newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region during 2017. Profile data was available for a total of 971 of the 976 families and includes information on family composition, nationality and age. Demographic data from 2016 and 2017 is compared to build a more representative profile of family homelessness in the Dublin Region and to identify families more vulnerable to homelessness.

5.1 Family Composition

Figure 9: Family composition for 971 of the families who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region, 2017

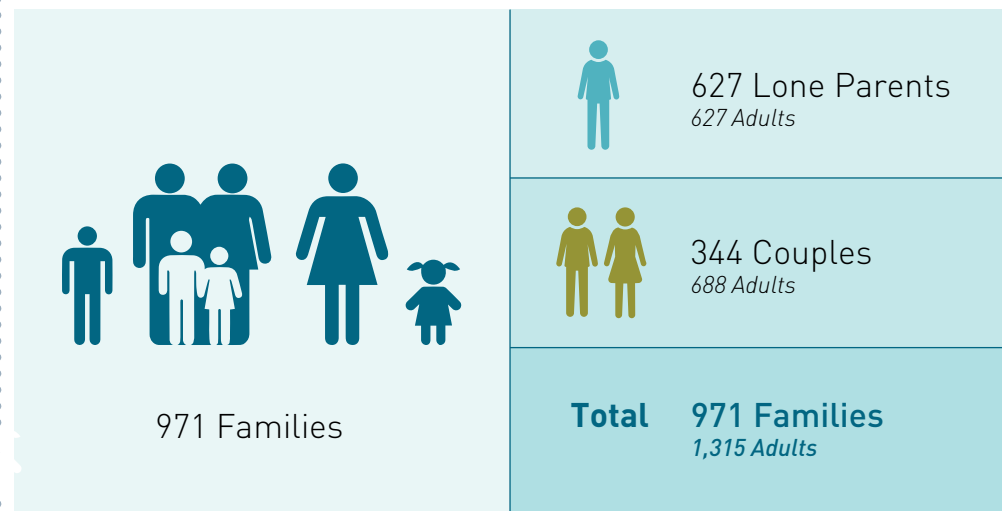


Figure 9 illustrates the family composition for the 971 in this cohort of families newly experiencing homelessness in 2017. Just under two thirds of families (n=627 or 65%) were lone parenting while 35% (n=344) were headed up by couples. As such, 1,315 new adults in family units were accommodated by homeless services in the Dublin region during 2017.

A total of 1,949 children accompanied the 971 families accommodated by homeless services in the Dublin region during 2017. As demonstrated in Table 15, just under half of the families had one child (n=436 or 45%), while 11% (n=116) of families were accompanied by four or more children.

Table 15: Number of children in family units newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region, 2017

Number of children	Couples	Lone Parents	Total families	Percentage of families	Total children
1 Child	122	314	436	45%	436
2 Children	96	170	266	28%	532
3 Children	65	88	153	16%	459
4+ Children	61	55	116	11%	522
Total	344	627	971	100%	1,949

5.2 Nationality

Figure 10: Nationality of families newly accessing emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region, 2017 (n=971)

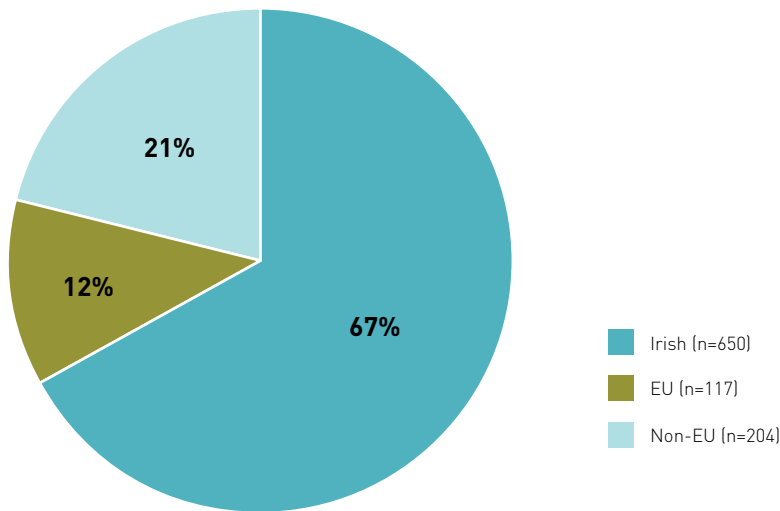
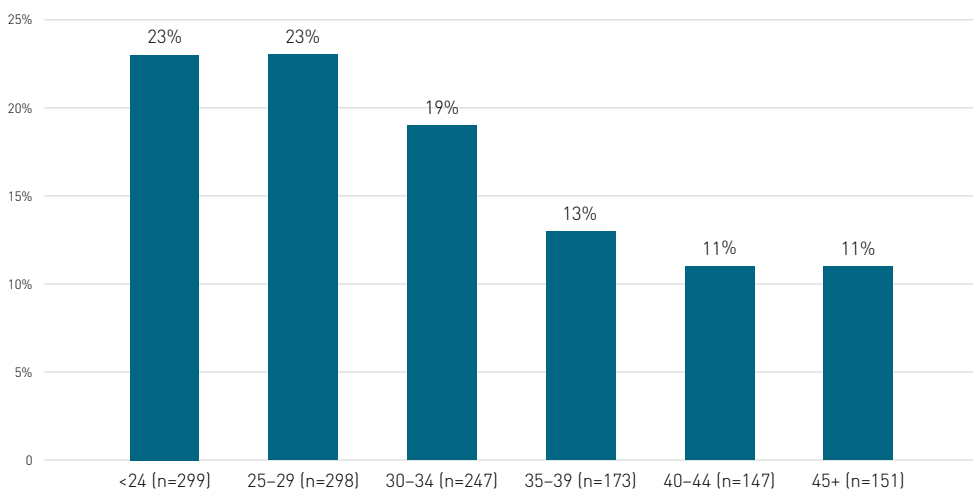


Figure 10 shows that just over two thirds of the families were Irish nationals (n=650 or 67%) while 12% were from the European Union (EU) (n=117) and 21% were non-EU nationals (n=204).

5.3 Age

Figure 11: Age groups of adults in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region, 2017 (n=1,315)

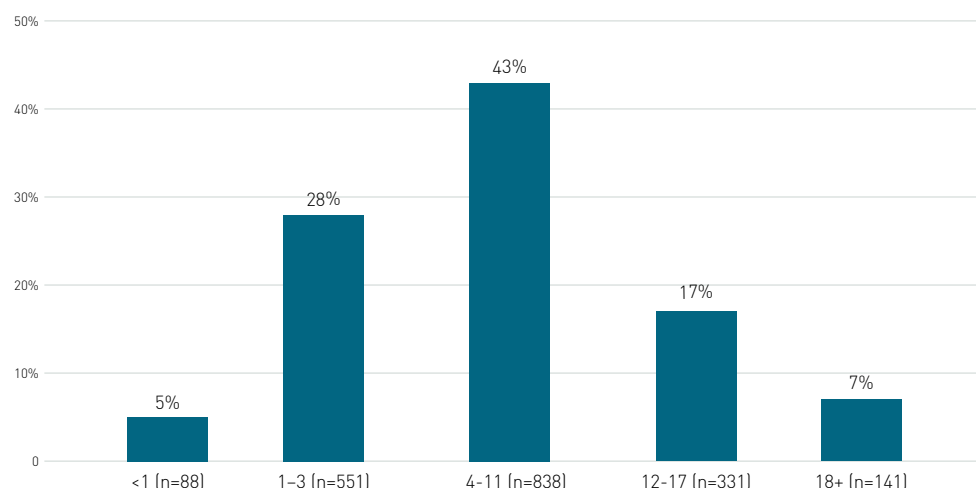


The average age of the adults in this cohort of homeless families was 32 with ages ranging from 18 to 69 years. As documented in Figure 11, almost one quarter of the adults were aged 24 or under (n=299 or 23%) while 77% (n=1,016) of adults were aged 25 or over ¹⁴.

14. The ages displayed in Figure 11 and 12 were calculated at a specific point in time and reflect the ages of the adults and children as of February 2018.

5. Demographic Information (cont.)

Figure 12: Age groups of children in family units who newly accessed emergency accommodation in the Dublin Region, 2017 (n=1,949)



As previously stated 1,949 children were recorded across the 971 families. Of these, one third of children were aged three or under (n=639 or 33%). The majority of children were aged between four and 11, i.e. primary school going age (n=838 or 43%). Seventeen percent of children were aged between 12 and 17 (n=331) while a minority were aged 18 or over (n=141 or 7%).

5.4 Demographics 2016-2017 Comparison

From January 2016 to December 2017 a total of 1,878 families newly accessed EA in the Dublin Region. Demographic data was available for 1,849 of these families. A comparison of 2016 and 2017 data shows a consistent pattern in the profile of families newly experiencing homelessness over the two year period.

Table 16: 2016-2017 comparison – family composition

Family composition	New families who accessed emergency accommodation in Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed emergency accommodation in Dublin Region, 2017
Lone Parents	66%	65%
Couples	34%	35%
Total	100% (n=878)	100% (n=971)

Table 16 shows that the average of families lone parenting was consistent across 2016 and 2017. However, the proportion of lone parents is considerably higher when compared with the national general population. The 2016 Census revealed that 24% of families were lone parent families¹⁵ compared with 66% and 65% in the cohort of families newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 2017.

Table 17: 2016-2017 comparison – number of children in family units

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

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

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 in 2016 and 2017. As documented in Table 17, 46% and 45% respectively had one child, while 28% of families in both 2016 and 2017 had two children. There was also a higher percentage of families with four or more children in 2016 (14%) and 2017 (11%) when compared with family units in the general population (7%)¹⁶. As such, there is a high percentage of large families i.e. families with three or more children.

Table 18: 2016-2017 comparison – age groups of adults

Age groups	Age groups of adults who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2016	Age groups of adults who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2017
<24	24%	23%
25-29	24%	23%
30-34	20%	19%
35-39	12%	13%
40-44	10%	11%
45+	10%	11%
Total	100% (n=1,170)	100% (n=1,315)

Table 18 documents the similar breakdown in the age groups of the adults within the family units newly accessing EA in 2016 and 2017. Over 75% of adults were over the age of 25, with just under a quarter aged 24 or younger.

Table 19: 2016-2017 comparison – age groups of children

Age groups	Age groups of children who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2016	Age groups of children who newly accessed emergency accommodation, 2017
<1	4%	5%
1-3	30%	28%
4-11	42%	43%
12-17	17%	17%
18+	7%	7%
Total	100% (n=1,787)	100% (n=1,949)

Data from families presenting as homeless across the two year period provides, yet again, a pattern of consistency with the majority of children aged between 4 and 11 (42% in 2016 and 43% in 2017) see Table 19. However, perhaps more significantly is the third of children under the age of four. The 2016 Census revealed that 33% of children in the general population were between the ages of 0-4 compared to 47% of children newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 39% in 2017¹⁷. This would indicate that there is a high prevalence of families with young children among the cohorts new to homelessness in 2016 and 2017.

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

17. CSO (2017), Census of Population 2016 – Profile 3 An Age Profile of Ireland <http://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cp3oy/cp3/agr/>.

5. Demographic Information (cont.)

Table 20: 2016–2017 comparison – nationalities of families

Nationality	New families who accessed emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2016	New families who accessed emergency accommodation Dublin Region, 2017
Irish	68%	67%
EU	9%	12%
Non-EU	23%	21%
Total	100% (n=878)	100% (n=971)

There was a continued presence of non-Irish national families, both EU and non-EU, presenting to homeless services in 2016 and 2017. The proportion of EU national families is slightly higher in 2017, a three percent increase compared to 2016. However, what is noteworthy is the disproportionate representation of non-Irish national families when compared with individuals in the general population. The 2016 Census reported that just under 12%¹⁸ of the general population were non-Irish nationals¹⁹.

5.5 Summary

This chapter reviewed the demographic data available for 971 of the 976 families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin Region in 2017, composed of a total of 1,315 adults with 1,949 accompanying children. Comparisons were also made with 2016 family demographics to present a more comprehensive profile of the families experiencing homelessness. Lone parent families, families with three or more children and non-Irish national families were previously identified as being more vulnerable to homelessness, a finding consistent with the 2017 demographic data.



Lone parent families were disproportionately represented among families experiencing homelessness. The 2016 Census revealed that 24% of families were lone parent families compared with 66% and 65% in the cohort of families newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 2017 respectively.



In the families who newly accessed homeless services in 2016 and 2017, the average number of children per family was 2.03, 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.

There was also a higher percentage of families with four or more children in 2016 (14%) and 2017 (11%) when compared with family units in the general population (7%).



The 2016 Census also revealed that 33% of children in the general population were between the ages of 0-4 compared to 47% of children newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 39% in 2017. This would indicate that there is a high prevalence of families with young children among the cohorts new to homelessness in 2016 and 2017.

Over 75% of adults among the 2016 and 2017 families are over the age of 25, with just under a quarter aged 24 or younger.



The 2016 Census revealed that just under 12% of the general population were non-Irish nationals compared to 32% and 33% of families in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

18. This percentage refers to all individuals (i.e. adults with and without children and children) in the homeless population and national population as per the Census 2016.

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

6. Progression through homeless services: 2017 families (n=976)

Previous chapters have looked at trends in family homelessness in relation to the number of new family presentations, the reasons for homelessness and the demographic profiles of families newly experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region. This chapter goes on to explore the rate of progression through homeless services for the 976 families who newly presented to homeless services in 2017. This was done by determining the accommodation status of the families as of the end of February 2018.

To this end three distinct categories were identified: families no longer using EA with a reported departure to tenancy, families no longer using EA who had given no reason for their departure and families still in EA. When this review was carried out, families had first presented to homeless services between 2 and 14 months prior. A summary of the results is presented in Table 21 below.

Table 21: 2017 families - accommodation status of February 28th 2018

2017 families		
Accommodation status as of February 28th 2018	Number of families	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	232	24%
No departure reason	126	13%
Returned to family/friends	5	0.5%
Still in emergency accommodation	605	62%
Insufficient information available	8	0.5%
Total	976	100%

As of February 28th 2018, a total of 232 (24%) families had departed from EA to a tenancy. An additional 126 (13%) families were no longer accessing EA and had provided no departure reason to the LA or service provider. Five families (0.5%) returned to live with family or friends. As detailed in Table 21, just under two thirds of the families (n=605 or 62%) were still accessing EA and no information was available on the status of the final eight (0.5%) families.

6.1 2017 families - Departed to tenancy (n=232)

Table 22 presents the type of tenancy secured by the 232 families who departed from homeless services as of the February 28th 2018. As demonstrated, HHAP accounted for 64% of the total moves to tenancy for this cohort of families. Twenty two percent of families moved to LA housing and 14% of families were housed by AHB's.

Table 22: 2017 families - number and type of tenancies secured as of February 28th 2018

2017 families		
Tenancies secured as of February 28th 2018		
Tenancy type	Number of tenancies	Percentage
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	149	64%
Local Authority Housing	50	22%
Approved Housing Body	33	14%
Total	232	100%

On average families were accessing EA 4 months or 112 days before departing to tenancy. As documented in Table 23, the average number of months in EA is shorter for families who moved to HHAP tenancies with an average of three months compared to five and six months for those who moved to LA and AHB tenancies respectively.

6. Progression through homeless services: 2017 families (n=976) (cont.)

Table 23: 2017 families – type of tenancy and average duration in EA prior to departure as of February 28th 2018

2017 families			
Tenancies secured as of February 28th 2018		Average duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure	
Tenancy type	Number of tenancies	Months	Days
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	149	3	84
Local Authority Housing	50	5	158
Approved Housing Body	33	6	162
All tenancy types	232 tenancies	4 months	112 days

6.2 2017 families – No departure reason (n=126)

A total of 126 families departed EA without active engagement with support services. In other words, families did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure; as such no departure reason was recorded on PASS.

Table 24: 2017 families - duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018

2017 families		
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018	
	Number	Percentage
Up to 6 nights	38	30%
1-4 weeks	25	20%
1-5 months	53	42%
6-11 months	9	7%
12+ months	1	1%
Total	126	100%

As demonstrated in Table 24, a majority of these families (n=63 or 50%) were in EA for less than a month before departing services. A minority of the families (n=10 or 8%) with no reported reason for their departure were accessing EA in excess of six months prior to departing.

6.3 2017 families – Returned to live with family or friends (n=5)

Five families departed EA to live with family or friends.

6.4 2017 families - In emergency accommodation (n=605)

A total of 605 families (or 62%) were still accessing EA as of February 28th 2018. While durations accessing EA ranged between 2 and 14 months, Table 25 breaks these down into three categories. As can be seen, one third of families were in accommodation less than six months, while 53% had been accessing homeless accommodation between 6 and 11 months as of the end of February 2018.

Table 25: 2017 families – duration in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018

2017 families			
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018		
	Number	Percentage in EA	Percentage of total families
Less than six months	201	33%	21%
6–11 months	322	53%	33%
12–14 months	82	14%	8%
Total	605	100% (n=605)	62% (n=976)

Table 26 provides a more detailed breakdown of the number and percentages of families in EA by looking at family presentations month by month.

Table 26: 2017 families - in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018 and month of first presentation

2017 families			
Month of presentation	Number of presentations per month	Families in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018	
		Number	Percentage
January '17	87	36	41%
February '17	62	28	45%
March '17	77	44	57%
April '17	67	45	67%
May '17	79	49	62%
June '17	78	48	62%
July '17	99	53	54%
August '17	102	65	64%
September '17	89	66	74%
October '17	88	59	67%
November '17	85	61	72%
December '17	63	51	81%
Total	976	605	62%

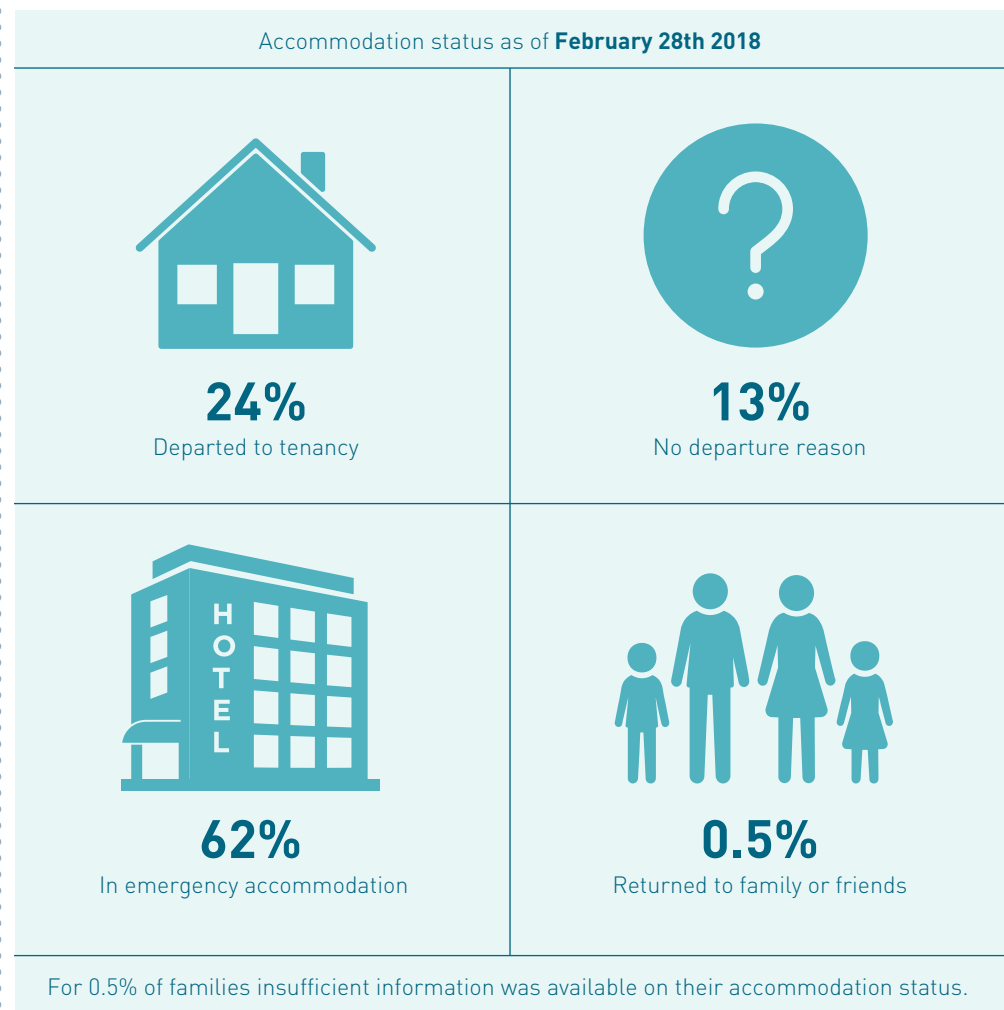
As previously mentioned, 62% of families who first experienced homelessness in 2017 were still in homeless accommodation as of February 28th 2018 and, as would be expected the more recent months had a higher percentage of families still accessing EA while the earlier months had less families remaining in EA. For example, 81% of the 63 families who first presented in December 2017 were still in EA compared to 41% of the 87 families who first presented in January 2017.

6. Progression through homeless services: 2017 families (n=976) (cont.)

6.5 Summary

Of the 976 families who newly accessed EA during 2017, 232 (24%) moved on to tenancy by the 28th of February 2018. Notably, 126 (13%) families had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure while an additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.5%). A total of 605 families (62%) were still accessing EA as of this date.

Figure 13: 2017 families, where were they in 2018?



7. Progression through homeless services: 2016 families (n=902)

From January to December 2016 a total of 902 families presented to homeless services within the four local authorities across the Dublin Region for the first time. The DRHE published a report detailing the reasons for homelessness and the demographics relating to these families²⁰. This report included a review of the accommodation status of the families as of May 31st 2017. This chapter goes on to review the accommodation status of these families in February 2018 to determine what changes have taken place since the last investigation. This exercise expands on the point in time analysis and provides a more up to date exploration of the progression through homeless services for the cohort of families who newly experienced homelessness in 2016.

Table 27: 2016 families - accommodation status as of May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018

2016 families				
Accommodation status	Reported status		Updated status	
	May 31st 2017	Percentage of families	February 28th 2018	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	288	32%	487	54%
No departure reason	149	17%	161	18%
Still in emergency accommodation	433	48%	210	23%
Returned to emergency accommodation	-	-	16	2%
Insufficient information available	32	3%	28	3%
Total	902	100%	902	100%

Table 27 documents changes in the accommodation status of the 902 families in the nine month period between May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018. The percentage of those who moved to tenancy rose from 32% to 54%. Four hundred and eighty seven of the 902 families who newly presented in 2016 were in a tenancy by February 2018. There was a one percent increase in families who departed homeless services and had provided no departure reason to the LA or service provider. The percentage of families still accessing homeless services dropped from 48% to 23% with 210 families in EA on the 28th of February 2018. A total of 16 families returned to EA between May 2017 and February 2018 i.e. their previous departures from EA were unsustainable. Insufficient information was available on the accommodation status of 3% of families.

7.1 2016 families - Departed to tenancy (n=487)

Table 28 details the type of tenancies secured but also tracks the difference between May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018. The total number of families departed to tenancy increased from 288 to 487 an increase of 69%. Of note is the small number of tenancies which were unsustainable. A total of six families who had been in tenancies in May 2017 had returned to access EA by February 2018. Two of the families were issued with a NOT from their HHAP landlord while four families left their accommodation due to relationship breakdown with their partner.

20. H. Morrin (2017), Analysis of the newly homeless families accommodated by Dublin's homeless services during 2016. Dublin: Dublin Region Homeless Executive

7. Progression through homeless services: 2016 families (n=902) (cont.)

Table 28: 2016 families – number and type of tenancies secured as of May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018

2016 families				
Tenancy type	Number of tenancies May 31st 2017	Unsustained tenancies	Additional moves to tenancy	Total no. of tenancies February 28th 2018
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	204	(-4)	19	219
Local Authority Housing	51	-	115	166
Approved Housing Body	33	(-2)	71	102
Total	288	(-6)	205	487

In May 2017 the majority of moves to tenancies had been driven largely by the HHAP initiative with 204 of the 288 families (71%) accommodated through the scheme. However, the majority of the additional recorded moves to tenancy in the nine months between May 2017 and February 2018 were either LA or AHB tenancies (186 of the 205 additional moves to tenancy or 91%), as illustrated in Table 28.

Table 29: 2016 families - type of tenancy and average duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure as of February 28th 2018

2016 families			
Tenancy type	Number of tenancies	Average duration in emergency accommodation	
Tenancy type	Number of tenancies	Average no. of months	Average no. of days
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	219	5	151
Local Authority Housing	166	15	454
Approved Housing Body	102	14	436
All tenancy types	487 tenancies	10 months	314 days

Table 29 shows that on average families were accessing EA 10 months or 314 days before departing to tenancy. However, the average number of months in EA is notably shorter for families who moved to HHAP tenancies with an average of five months compared to 15 and 14 months for those who moved to LA and AHB tenancies respectively²¹.

Table 30: 2016 families – duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy as of February 28th 2018

2016 families			
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed to tenancy as of February 28th 2018 - %		
	Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	Local Authority Housing	Approved Housing Body
Less than 6 months	67%	8%	5%
6-11 months	26%	16%	24%
12-17 months	6.5%	45%	46%
18-24 months	0.5%	31%	25%
Total	100% (n=219)	100% (n=166)	100% (n=102)

21. The length of time it takes to secure a local authority tenancy can vary across the four local authorities in the Dublin Region.

Table 30 provides a further breakdown of duration in EA according to the type of tenancy for the 487 families in a tenancy as of the 28th of February 2018. Sixty seven percent of total moves to HHAP tenancies occurred within less than 6 months of families first accessing EA. Of the families who moved to LA tenancies, the majority (45%) had been accessing EA for periods ranging from 12 to 17 months. A further 31% were in EA in excess of 18 months. Similarly, 71% of families who departed to AHB tenancies were in EA between one and two years.

7.2 2016 families – No departure reason (n=161)

Between May 2017 and February 2018 an additional 22 families left EA with no recorded departure reason, while 10 families returned to access homeless accommodation in this period. As such, as of the 28th of February 2018, a total of 161 families were no longer using EA but had no departure reason recorded on PASS. This represents a net increase of 1%. These families left EA without active engagement with support services i.e. their departure from EA was not administered through the LA or service provider.

7.3 2016 families – Returned to emergency accommodation (n=16)

Sixteen families who had departed EA as of May 31st 2017 returned to access homeless services in the eight month period between May 2017 and February 2018. As previously mentioned, for six families previously reported tenancies were unsustainable. Two of the families were issued with a NOT from their HHAP landlord while four families departed their tenancy due to relationship breakdown with their partner. The remaining 10 families returned to EA following a departure with no recorded reason, having left for periods ranging between 7 and 18 months. There is insufficient information as to why these departures were unsustainable.

7.4 2016 families – In emergency accommodation (n=210)

A total of 210 families were still accessing EA as of February 28th 2018. Table 31 provides a breakdown of the number and percentages of families in EA by month of presentation.

Table 31: 2016 families – in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018 and month of first presentation

2016 families			
Month of presentation	Number of presentations per month	Families in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018	
		Number	Percentage
January '16	125	17	14%
February '16	83	13	16%
March '16	84	25	30%
April '16	72	16	22%
May '16	62	16	26%
June '16	66	13	20%
July '16	97	22	23%
August '16	72	18	25%
September '16	65	25	38%
October '16	67	24	36%
November '16	60	21	35%
December '16	39	16	41%
Total	902	226*	23%

*including the 16 families who returned to EA after a previously unsustainable departure




7. Progression through homeless services: 2016 families (n=902) (cont.)

7.5 Summary

The accommodation status of the 902 families new to homelessness in 2016 was examined at two points in time - May 2017 and February 2018 - to explore their progression through homeless services. The percentage of families who moved to tenancy rose from 32% to 54% while the percentage of those still accessing homeless services dropped from 48% in May 2017 to 23% in February 2018.

There was only a one percent increase in families who departed homeless services and provided no departure reason to the LA or service provider. There were also a small number of families (2%) who returned to access EA after a previously unsustainable departure (six families from failed tenancies while 10 families returned after having previously left with no recorded departure reason).

Figure 14: 2016 families, where were they in 2017 & 2018?

	31st May 2017	28th February 2018
	32% Departed to tenancy	54% Departed to tenancy
	17% No departure reason	18% No departure reason
	48% In emergency accommodation	25% In emergency accommodation
Insufficient information was available for 3% of families in 2016 and 2017.		

8. Progression through homeless services: 2016 & 2017 families (n=1,878)

The previous two chapters looked at the new families who presented to homeless services in 2016 and 2017 in isolation. This chapter moves on to examine the entire 24 month period together to further explore how families are progressing through homeless services in the Dublin Region.

A total of 1,878 families first presented to homeless services between 2016 and 2017. As of the 28th of February 2018, families had first presented between 2 and 26 months prior. Of the 2016 and 2017 families, 38% of 1,878 families had departed to tenancy while a further 15% had an unknown departure reason and 44% of families were still in EA. Less than one percent of families (0.8%) returned to emergency accommodation after an unsustainable departure while an additional five families left EA to live with family or friends (0.2%). For a further breakdown see Table 32 below.

Table 32: 2016 & 2017 families - accommodation status as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families		
Accommodation status as of February 28th 2018	Number of families	Percentage of families
Departed to tenancy	719	38%
Departed with no departure reason	287	15%
Returned to family/friends	5	0.2%
Still in emergency accommodation	815	44%
Returned to emergency accommodation	16	0.8%
Insufficient information available	36	2%
Total	1,878	100%

8.1 2016 & 2017 families –Departed to tenancy (n=719)

Of the 1,878 families who first presented to homeless services in 2016 and 2017, 719 had departed to tenancy as of the 28th of February 2018. Families had been accessing EA for an average of 8 months or 249 days before departing to tenancy. However, as demonstrated in Table 33 the average duration in accommodation varied largely depending on the type of departure.

Table 33: 2016 & 2017 families – type of tenancy and average duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure as of February 28th 2018

Tenancies secured as of February 28th 2018 & average no. of months in emergency accommodation prior to departure						
Tenancy type	2016 families		2017 families		2016 & 2017 families	
	Number of tenancies	Average no. of months	Number of tenancies	Average no. of months	Number of tenancies	Average no. of months
Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	219	5	149	3	368	4
Local Authority Housing	166	15	50	5	216	13
Approved Housing Body	102	14	33	6	135	12
All tenancy types	487	10 months	112	4 months	719	8 months

8. Progression through homeless services: 2016 & 2017 families (n=1,878) (cont.)

As would be expected, the average number of months in EA before departure to tenancy was 10 months for the families who newly experienced homelessness in 2016 compared to 4 months for the 2017 families.

Table 34 progresses to look at shorter time frames and shows that 13% of families departed EA less than a month after presentation to homeless services. In other words, one in eight families departed to tenancy after less than a month in EA. An additional 24% of total departures were within one and three months of first presentation. The remaining 63% were in EA in excess of three months prior to departure to tenancy.

Table 34: 2016 & 2017 families – duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure to tenancy as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families		
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed to tenancy as of February 28th 2018	
	Number	Percentage
Less than 1 month	93	13%
1-3 months	169	24%
4-6 months	110	15%
7-9 months	89	12%
10-12 months	59	8%
13-15 months	83	12%
16-18 months	59	8%
19-21 months	31	4%
22-24 months	26	4%
Total	719	100%

Table 35 includes the families who left EA with no recorded departure reason and demonstrates the difference in the rates of progression through homeless services. The pattern for those leaving with no departure reason more closely mirrors the departure rates for those moving to HHAP tenancies when compared with departures to LA or AHB tenancies.

Table 35: 2016 & 2017 families – duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure and type of departure as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families				
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed as of February 28th 2018 - %			
	No departure reason	Homeless Housing Assistance Payment	Approved Housing Body	Local Authority Housing
Less than 1 month	45%	22%	1%	4%
1-3 months	28%	38%	10%	8%
4-6 months	12%	20%	10%	10%
7-9 months	7%	11%	18%	11%
10-12 months	4%	6%	11%	11%
13-15 months	2%	2%	21%	23%
16-18 months	1%	1%	16%	15%
19-21 months	0%	0%	7%	10%
22-24 months	1%	0%	6%	8%
Total	100% (n=287)	100% (n=368)	100% (n=216)	100% (n=135)

For the families who left with no recorded departure reason 85% were in EA less than six months, with the majority in EA for less than one month. Similarly, departures to HHAP tenancies peak in the first three months with 22% departing after less than a month and 38% departing after durations in EA ranging between one and three months. In comparison, peak periods for departing to LA or AHB tenancies were between 13 and 15 months, with 23% and 21% respectively. Only 4% and 1% of those departing to LA and AHB tenancies did so less than one month after their initial presentation.

8.2 2016 & 2017 families - No departure reason (n=287)

Of the 1,878 families who first presented to homeless services in 2016 and 2017, 287 (15%) families departed EA without active engagement with support services as of February 28th 2018. In other words, families did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure; as such no departure reason was recorded on PASS. Table 36 compares the duration in EA for the 2016 and 2017 families.

Table 36: 2016 & 2017 families - duration in emergency accommodation prior to departure (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018

2016 & 2017 families			
Duration in emergency accommodation	Families departed (no departure reason) as of February 28th 2018 -%		
	2016	2017	2016 & 2017
Up to 6 nights	25%	30%	27%
1-4 weeks	17%	20%	18%
1-5 months	34%	42%	38%
6-11 months	13%	7%	11%
12+ months	11%	1%	6%
Total	100% (n=161)	100% (n=126)	100% (n=287)

A total of 161 and 126 families left EA of their own accord in 2016 and 2017 respectively. As documented in Table 36, 42% of these did so less than a month after their first presentation in 2016 compared to 50% of the 2017 families. There is also a difference of 10% in the percentage of families leaving after 12 months. This would suggest that the 2017 families left EA at a faster rate. However, further investigation will be required as time elapses.

8.3 2016 & 2017 families – Returned to live with family or friends (n=5)

In 2017, five families informed the LA that they were departing homeless accommodation to live with family or friends.

8.4 2016 & 2017 families – In emergency accommodation (n=831)

Of the 1,878 who first presented in 2016 and 2017, 831 (44.8%) were accessing EA on the 28th of February 2018 (including the 16 families who returned to access emergency accommodation). On this date, families had been accessing accommodation between 2 and 26 months. However, the average duration in EA for these families was 11 months or 327 days.

8. Progression through homeless services: 2016 & 2017 families (n=1,878) (cont.)

Figure 15: 2016 & 2017 families – number in emergency accommodation as of February 28th 2018 and month of first presentation

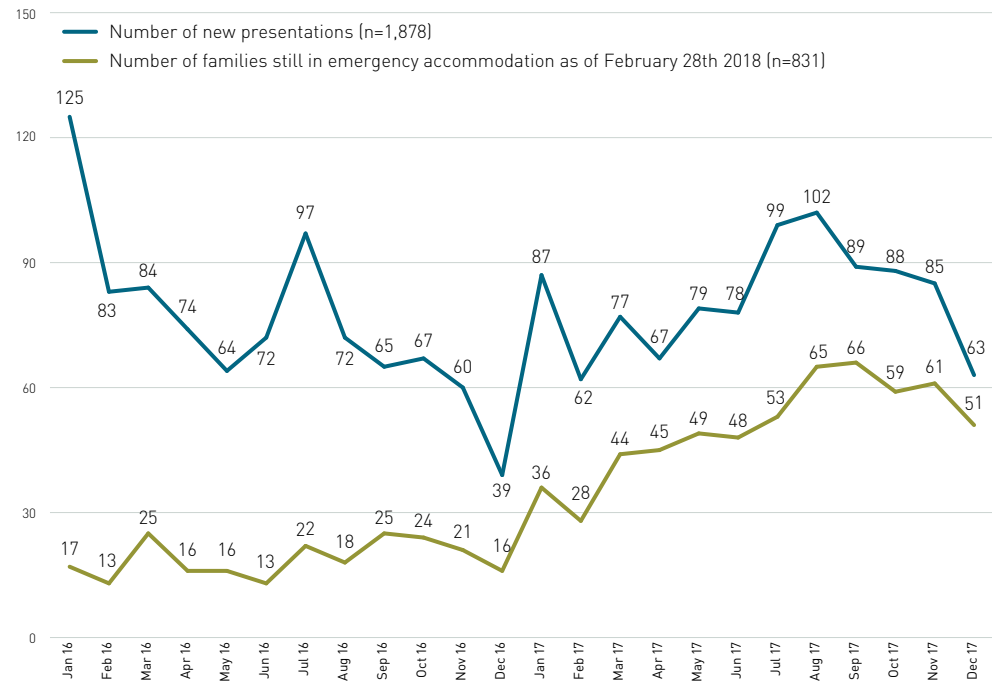
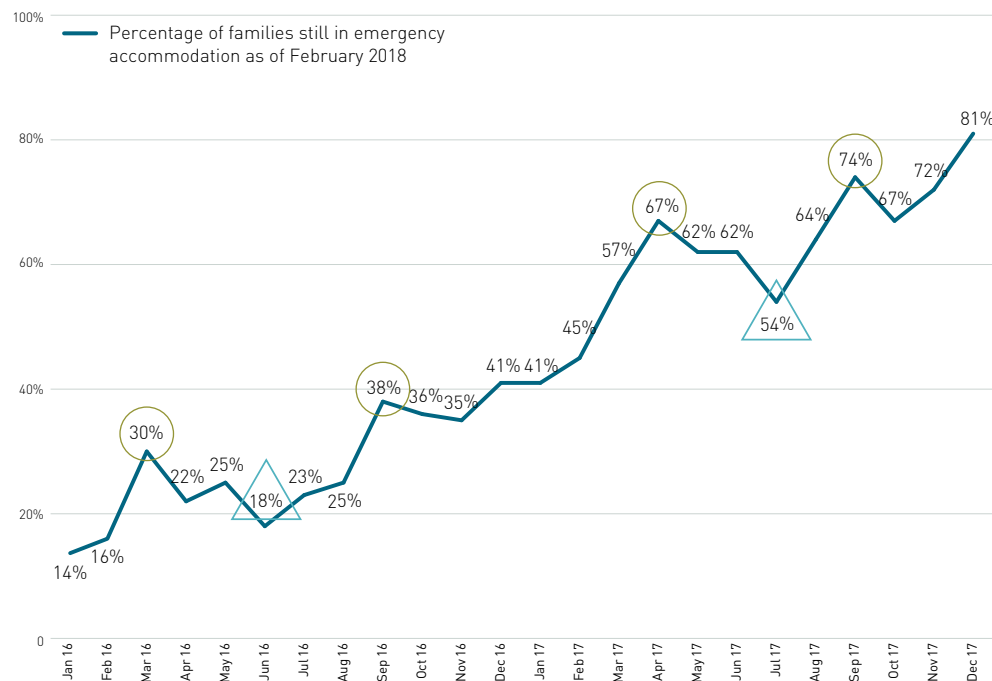


Figure 15 compares the number of families still accessing EA by the month of their first presentation. As would be expected there were higher numbers still accessing for the more recent months, as reflected by the difference in the figures narrowing over time. Similarly, Figure 16 highlights the trend in the percentage of families still accessing EA. Fourteen percent of families who presented in January 2016 were still in homeless accommodation compared to 81% of families who first presented in December 2017.

Figure 16: 2016 & 2017 families - percentage in emergency accommodation by month of presentation as of February 28th 2018



The trend in Figure 16 shows that generally more families have departed from earlier months. However, for June 2016 and July 2017 a lower percentage of families remained in EA when compared with the trend. The reverse can be said for March 2016, September 2016, April 2017 and September 2017, with a slightly higher peaks in families who first presented during these months still accessing EA as of February 28th 2018.

8.5 2016 7 2017 families - Returned to emergency accommodation (n=16)

Sixteen families who had departed EA as of May 31st 2017 returned to access homeless services in the eight month period between May 2017 and February 2018.

8.6 Summary

This chapter examined the accommodation status of the families who presented in 2016 and 2017. Of the 1,878 families who newly accessed EA during 2016 and 2017, 719 (38%) had moved on to tenancy by the 28th of February 2018. Two hundred and eighty seven families (15%) had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure while an additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.2%). A total of 831 families (44.8%) were accessing EA as of this date. Insufficient information was available for 2% of families. Most significantly, this chapter revealed the variation in rates of departure depending on the reason i.e. no departure reason, HHAP, AHB or LA housing. Two distinctive patterns emerged. Eighty two percent of families departing to HHAP tenancies and 80% of those departing with no departure reason left EA within six months of their first presentation. A different trend emerges for those departing to LA and AHB tenancies with departure rates peaking after 13-15 months in homeless accommodation.

9. Conclusion

From January 2016 to December 2017 a total of 1,878 families newly accessed homeless accommodation in the Dublin Region with a total of 902 families presenting to homeless services in 2016 and 976 families in 2017. The purpose of this report was to increase knowledge about family homelessness in the Dublin region. Firstly, it set the scene by looking at trends in the number of families newly presenting to homeless services over the three and a half year period from June 2014 to December 2017. It began the analysis of homeless families by looking at the reasons for homelessness for the 2017 families before going on to make comparisons with the 2016 families. It then provided detailed demographic profiles of the families. Finally, this report explored the rates of progression through homeless services by documenting the accommodation status of the 1,878 families at specific points in time, May 31st 2017 and February 28th 2018.

Over the past four years we have seen a steady overall increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness in the Dublin Region alongside distinct seasonal patterns in **new presentations**. There is a consistent pattern of families who may be deferring presentation to homeless services over the Christmas period as low numbers in December are followed by a peak in January. A second peak of activity appears to be evident during 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 family presentations per month, increasing from 34 in 2014 to 81 in 2017. Despite this upward trend we have seen a considerable slowdown in the rate of overall expansion of services as the number of families departing from services has also increased. There has been a considerable reduction in the net annual increase in families accessing EA over the past four years, reducing from 106% in 2015 to 9% in 2017.

The method used in this report captured a single **reason for homelessness** and demonstrates that in 2017, an average of 48% of families presented from private rented accommodation while 49% of the remaining families presented from staying with family or friends. When compared with 2016

data we can see an increase of 3% of families presenting to homeless services in the Dublin Region as a result of a loss or inability to secure private rented accommodation. A decrease of 2% in families presenting with issues relating to relationship breakdown and/or overcrowding can also be observed. 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. However, previous research reported that many families defer presenting to homeless services by moving in with family or friends following the loss of private rented accommodation²². As such, factors relating to the private rented sector may be understated. Notwithstanding this limitation, the data raises key insights into the primary reasons why families continue to present as homeless across the two year period.

With regards to **demographic information** there is a notable consistency across the two year period from 2016 to 2017. As previously outlined, the available demographic data shows that lone parent families are disproportionately represented among families experiencing homelessness. In line with previous research two thirds of families were lone parenting compared to 24% of families in the national general population as revealed in the 2016 Census. Not only were the families overwhelmingly headed by lone parents, but they were also disproportionately large families and families with young children. There was a higher percentage of families with four or more children in 2016 (14%) and 2017 (11%) when compared with family units in the general population (7%). The 2016 Census also revealed that 33% of children in the general population were between the ages of 0-4 compared to 47% of children newly experiencing homelessness in 2016 and 39% in 2017. The majority of parents, however, were over the age of 25 with just under a quarter aged 24 or younger. Also of note was the high prevalence of non-Irish national families amongst the families who newly presented to homeless services in the Dublin Region in 2016 and 2017, with 33% of non-Irish nationals in this cohort of homeless families

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

compared to 12% of individuals in the general population. As such, lone parents, families with three or more children and non-Irish national families would appear to be more vulnerable to homelessness than other family types.

The accommodation status of the families who newly accessed EA during 2016 (n=902) and 2017 (n=976) was reviewed to explore their rate of **progression through homeless services**. Three distinct categories were identified:

1. Families no longer using EA with a reported departure to tenancy;
2. Families no longer using EA who had given no reason for their departure;
3. Families still in homeless accommodation.

2017 families

As of the 28th of February 2018, 232 (24%) families moved to tenancy. Notably, 126 (13%) families had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure while an additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.5%). A total of 605 families (62%) were still accessing EA on this date. Insufficient information was available for 0.5% of families.

2016 families

The 2016 families have been tracked into 2018 and as such more detail is available on how and when families move to tenancies. The accommodation status of the 2016 families was first reviewed in May 2017 and again in February 2018 to determine what changes have taken place. The percentage of families who moved to tenancy rose from 32% to 54% while the percentage of those still accessing homeless services dropped from 48% in May 2017 to 23% in February 2018. There was a one percent increase in families who departed homeless services and provided no departure reason to the LA or service provider. There were also a small number of families (2%) who returned to access EA after a previously unsustainable departure (six families from failed tenancies while 10 families returned after having previously left with no departure reason). Insufficient information was available for 3% of families.

2016 & 2017 families

Of the 1,878 families who newly accessed EA during 2016 and 2017, 719 (38%) had moved on to tenancy by the 28th of February 2018. A notable finding, however, was the 287 families (15%) who had departed EA but did not inform the LA or the service provider of a reason for their departure. However, more investigation is needed to determine the sustainability of departures where families leave without engagement (i.e. giving no reason for departure) compared with those who depart with the knowledge and/or assistance of support staff. An additional five families returned to live with family or friends (0.2%). A total of 831 families (44.8%) were accessing EA as of this date. Insufficient information was available for 2% of families.

The exploration of the families progression through homeless services revealed some notable findings. Most significantly, this report highlighted the variation in rates of departure depending on the reason i.e. no departure reason, HHAP, AHB or LA housing. Two distinctive patterns emerged. Eighty two percent of families departing to HHAP tenancies and 80% of those departing with no departure reason left EA within six months of their first presentation. A different trend emerges for families departing to local authority and AHB tenancies with departure rates peaking after 6 months in homeless accommodation. Seventy nine percent of departures to LA happened between stays of 6 and 24 months in EA while 77% of departures to AHB tenancies occurred within the same time frame.

Overall, this report provides valuable insight into the most common causes of family homelessness in the Dublin Region, a profile of the families most likely to experience homelessness and comprehensive details on the rate of family progression through services. So 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 housing supply.

