# COUNTED IN, 2008

A report on the extent of homelessness in Dublin

HOME
LESS
agency

**Homeless Agency Partnership**
The Homeless Agency Partnership is comprised of a range of statutory and voluntary organisations working together to implement the agreed action plan *A Key to the Door, the Homeless Agency Partnership Action Plan on Homelessness in Dublin 2007-2010* and to realise the Vision of 2010.

## Shared Vision

**The Homeless Agency Partnership Vision**
*'By 2010, long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated in Dublin. The risk of a person or family becoming homeless will be minimal due to effective preventative policies and services. Where it does occur, homelessness will be short-term and all people who are homeless will be assisted into appropriate housing and the realisation of their full potential and rights.'*

*A Key to the Door: The Homeless Agency Partnership Action Plan on Homelessness in Dublin 2007-2010*

**National Partnership Agreement**
*'The situation of homeless persons who are currently in long-term emergency accommodation is of particular concern. The revised strategies will have as an underlying objective the elimination of such homelessness by 2010 …'*

*Towards 2016: Ten-Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015*

**National Homelessness Strategy**
*'From 2010, long-term homelessness (i.e. the occupation of emergency accommodation for longer than six months) and the need for people to sleep rough will be eliminated throughout Ireland. The risk of a person becoming homeless will be minimised through effective preventative policies and services. When it does occur homelessness will be short-term and people who are homeless will be assisted into appropriate long-term housing.'*

*The Way Home: A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness in Ireland 2008-2013*

**SPSS**

Quality assurance of the data processing analysis and interpretation of the *Counted In* survey findings was provided by SPSS Ireland, Ltd.

# Preface

*Counted In, 2008* is published by the Homeless Agency Partnership as part of the evidence base produced in 2008 that helps us better understand how well we are working towards achieving and realising our 2010 vision to end long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough in Dublin, set out in our action plan *A Key to the Door*. Together with the *Review of Finance and Expenditure for Homeless Services in Dublin* and the *Evaluation of Homeless Services 2008 Series*, the Homeless Agency Partnership has used the evidence base from these three reports to generate a detailed number of recommendations for action.

The evidence and recommendations were accepted by the Board of the Partnership in December 2008 and have helped inform the basis of the Partnership's agreed submission to Government on implementing the new national strategy *The Way Home* (2008-2013). In our submission, the Board is taking this opportunity to put forward to all stakeholders in the Homeless Agency Partnership a proposed blueprint for change, which is about creating the conditions required to realise the vision of *A Key to the Door*. Our submission is about the change in policy and service provision required from January 2009 in order to make the Partnership's 2010 vision a reality for those experiencing homelessness in Dublin. This requires that innovation and change in areas of policy, service provision and practice are agreed and underway as a matter of priority under the implementation plan for the national homeless strategy *The Way Home*, which is currently being drawn up.

Change is required to ensure access to adequate and affordable housing and accommodation with supports (as required) is ramped up for people who are homeless in Dublin. In parallel a reconfiguration of homeless services is required to develop and deliver progression routes onto and along a pathway out of homelessness for those experiencing homelessness and to prevent pathways into homelessness for households at risk of episodic and repeat homelessness.

The Board acknowledges that the findings of these reports will enhance the capacity of the Partnership to meet its commitments as agreed in *A Key to the Door* and the vision of eliminating long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough in Dublin by 2010. This endorsement is also in keeping with obligations arising from meeting key National Policy objectives as set down in *The Way Home.* The Board also acknowledges the significance and challenge for all stakeholders entailed in the change required and will, therefore, allow for an appropriate level of time and due process to be established so as to fully detail and agree the necessary steps and decisions to be taken in order to realise the implementation of required change.

On behalf of the Homeless Agency Board, I would like to express my gratitude for the hard work and dedication of everyone involved in bringing this work to completion, particularly the staff of the Homeless Agency, everyone who participated in the working and steering groups, all homeless services staff involved in the work and most importantly, all current and ex-homeless service users who participated in the work.

**Kathleen Holohan,**
Chair, Board of the Homeless Agency Partnership
Director of Housing, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

# Executive Summary

*Counted In, 2008* breaks some new ground in comparison with previous reports in the series. The main research findings are still based on a survey carried out in all homeless services between 10 and 16 March 2008, but additional information is included from other sources in order to present a more thorough and nuanced overview of the current state of homelessness in Dublin.

The objective of *Counted In, 2008* is to provide a comprehensive analysis of homelessness in Dublin to assist the planning, co-ordination and configuration of services required to achieve the Vision of eliminating long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough by 2010.

In addition to the *Counted In, 2008* survey, this report includes the findings of three other pieces of research: street counts of people sleeping rough that were carried out in November 2007 and April 2008; a study of EU10 migrants using homeless services carried out in December 2006; and a verification process carried out with the four Dublin local authorities to establish whether or not the people in homeless services during the week of the *Counted In* survey were known to the local authorities, and whether they were homeless priority on the housing waiting lists.

## *Counted In, 2008* survey[1]

**2144 households were in homeless services during the week of the *Counted In* survey in March.** This represents a definite minimum number of households that were either resident in homeless accommodation, resident in long-term supported accommodation for people who were previously homeless, or else sleeping rough during the week of the survey. According to the census figures from the Central Statistics Office, the population of Dublin increased by 5% in the period 2005 to 2008.[2] There has been an increase of 4% recorded in the number of households resident in homeless accommodation, long-term supported accommodation or sleeping rough. This recorded increase is less than population growth over the same period.

While the overall number of people experiencing homelessness is similar to 2005, there has been significant change in the profile of people who were in homeless services in March 2008 compared to three years previously. Nearly half (47%) of adults first became homeless since the 2005 survey. This indicates that a similar number of adults have moved out of homelessness over the last three years.

**49.5 households are in homeless services for every 10,000 households in the population of Dublin.** In 2005, 50.1 households were in homeless services for every 10,000 households in Dublin. Putting this in another way, approximately 1 out of every 200 households in Dublin is in homeless services.

**Most adults in homeless services (84%) were Irish nationals, however nearly 1 in 6 (16%) were of foreign nationality.** The majority of people of foreign nationality were EU citizens (10%), especially people from the UK, Poland and Romania. However a large minority were non-EU citizens

## Figure 1. Percentage of adults by type of accommodation

*'Other' represents various other locations including domestic violence refuges, homeless detoxification and rehabilitation facilities and health service facilities.

**33%**
Private Emergency
Accomodation

**26%**
Emergency
Acommodation

**17%**
Transitional
Accommodation

**14%**
Long-Term
Supported Housing

**5%**
Rough Sleeping

**6%**
Other *

(6%). This represents a significant increase in the number of people of foreign nationality in homeless services. This is a cause for concern as foreign nationals do not have the same rights and entitlements to welfare or housing, and thus may face additional barriers to exiting homelessness.

**2366 adults were in homeless services during the week of the Counted In survey.** A majority (1439, 67%) of the households in homeless services were single person households. The remainder were either single persons who have children (not necessarily living with them) or couples (with or without children). An estimated 2280 adults were in homeless services in 2005.[3]

**95% of households in homeless services were in accommodation as illustrated in Figure 1.**

**The majority of adults (1388, 59%) were resident in either emergency accommodation or private emergency accommodation.** Most adults (989) in emergency/private emergency accommodation reported that they were there for more than six months. This equates to 942 households. In addition, 169 households did not disclose how long they had stayed there. As such, the figure of 942 households should be seen as a minimum number of households in long-term occupation of emergency/private emergency accommodation.

**Nearly a third of adults (732, 31%) were resident in either transitional accommodation or long-term supported housing.** This represents 708 households.

**110 people reported sleeping rough.** This is a decrease of 41% since 2005, when 185 people reported sleeping rough. However, there has been a large increase in the number and proportion of foreign nationals reporting sleeping rough (from 9% of rough sleepers in 2005, to 38% in 2008).

**5% of households in homeless services reported regularly sleeping rough.** In 2005, 9% of households in homeless services reported regularly sleeping rough. In all cases, it should be noted that rough sleeping is a dynamic situation and these figures represent the minimum number of people sleeping rough at any one time.

3   This estimate is based on the assumption that the average number of adults per household (1.1) remains the same between 2005 and 2008.

## Rough sleeper street count

The street count is an alternative to the survey method as a way of confirming a minimum number of people sleeping rough on the night in question. The street count method is in place to provide more regular information that is robust due to the confirmation of rough sleeping through direct observation. Its findings are not directly comparable with the survey, but independently confirm the minimum extent of rough sleeping.

**115 people were observed to be sleeping rough during a one-night street count conducted in April 2008.** The majority of people were observed in Dublin city centre locations, with very few people observed sleeping rough in suburban areas.

## Study of EU10 migrants using homeless services

In recent years, the Homeless Agency has been monitoring the extent to which migrants have been using homeless services. The EU10 study was a survey of the users of homeless services, including people who were only using day/food services.

**283 citizens of EU10 countries were using homeless services (including food/day services) in Dublin in the week of 4-10 December 2006.** Most (83%) of these service users were male and a majority (55%) were aged 26-39 years old. Most of these service users were using food or day services, but a number had used emergency accommodation. Two thirds of them (64%) reported having 'little or no' spoken English. At least a quarter (27%) of the individuals' living situations can be described as 'homeless' under the terms of the 1988 Housing Act, which represents 75 individuals, but many of them would not actually be entitled to local authority housing.

**Compared to the findings of the *Counted In* survey, there has been a significant increase in the proportion of EU citizens using homeless accommodation services.** The December 2006 survey found that a quarter (27%) of EU10 citizens were using accommodation services and three quarters (73%) were using only food/day services, however *Counted In, 2008* found that two thirds (69%) of EU migrants using homeless services were using accommodation and one third (31%) were using only food/day services.

## Verification process with the four Dublin local authorities

*Counted In, 2008* also presents the results of a verification process that was undertaken to align the findings of the survey with the administrative data held by each of the four Dublin local authorities. This represents the beginning of an ongoing process to make improvements in this area.

**Action 1:** **The four Dublin local authorities confirmed that 1340 households had homeless priority as part of the national Housing Needs Assessment review of their housing waiting lists in March 2008.** Apart from households that will become homeless in the next two years

as well as others in homeless services who may be eligible, the figure of 1340 households represents a minimum target number of households to be assisted into appropriate housing by 2010. *Subject to the necessary resources being made available,* the local authorities have agreed to use the full range of available housing options to assist as many households as possible into appropriate housing. Housing options include private rented housing, the Rental Accommodation Scheme and housing association social housing, in addition to local authority social housing.

**Action 2: A gap exists between the administrative data held by the local authorities and the data held by homeless services.** Although there was a large overlap between households with homeless priority and those in homeless services surveyed as part of *Counted In, 2008*, a significant number of potentially eligible households had not registered with the local authorities. There is a need for homeless services to do more to assist all households to register and to remain in contact with their relevant local authority. The local authorities have agreed to assess cases from *Counted In* as a matter of urgency in order to determine their eligibility for housing support.

**Action 3: The four Dublin local authorities have agreed to develop a common operational definition of homelessness under the Housing Act 1988.** The Centre for Housing Research is preparing a position paper on this on behalf of the Homeless Agency Partnership.

**Action 4: The Homeless Agency will carry out a smaller scale repeat study of the number of people using homeless services in 2009 and 2010.** This survey will include the verification of those using homeless services with those given homeless priority by the local authorities.



2366 adults were in homeless services during the week of the *Counted In* survey.

110 people reported sleeping rough

# 84%

84% of households were in homeless services for more than six months.

# 59%

59% of adults were resident in either emergency accommodation or private emergency accommodation.

# 16%

1 in 6 households in homeless services is not an Irish citizen

# 47%

47% of households currently in homeless services became homeless since 2005

2144 households were in homeless services during the week
of the *Counted In* survey in March 2008

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# Acknowledgements

First and foremost, the Homeless Agency Partnership Board wishes to thank all homeless service users who gave their time to participate in this important survey. We would also like to express our appreciation to the staff members across more than 150 homeless services in Dublin who assisted in the deployment of the survey.

Thanks are due to the staff from the four Dublin local authorities who assisted with verifying the *Counted In* survey data relative to their own housing waiting lists. We also want to thank the members of the *Counted In* Reference Group who provided advice on the conduct of the study. The Reference Group included representatives from the four Dublin local authorities, the Health Services Executive, the Homeless Network, the Irish Council for Social Housing, the Centre for Housing Research and the Private Rented Tenancies Board.

Quality assurance of the data processing, analysis and interpretation of the *Counted In* survey findings was provided by SPSS Ireland Ltd.

The Board also appreciates the work of Ms Karin O'Sullivan (Merchants Quay Ireland) who was principal researcher for the study of EU10 citizens using homeless services, commissioned by the Homeless Agency Partnership in 2006. We would like to give special appreciation to Mr Tadhg Kenehan of the Homeless Agency for his work in organising the ongoing rough sleeper street counts and the study of EU10 citizens. Lastly, the Board would like to express its gratitude to the all the Homeless Agency staff involved in the production of *Counted In*, particularly Mr Nathan O'Connor. Everyone's contribution is highly valued.

# Glossary and key terms

*Emergency Accommodation* includes hostels directly managed by local authorities, hostels managed by voluntary/ charitable bodies and 'private emergency accommodation' operated by private landlords. The role of emergency accommodation is to provide immediate accommodation as a response to presenting need.

*Homelessness* is defined in law in Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988:
'A person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless for the purposes of this Act if—
(a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or
(b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a), and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.'

*The Homeless List* is comprised of the households accepted by a local authority on their social housing waiting list with 'homeless priority'.

*The Housing List* is the full list of households accepted by a local authority on their social housing waiting list.

The *Housing Needs Assessment* is a national process where every three years housing authorities are required under Section 9 of the Housing Act 1988 to carry out 'an assessment of the need for the provision by the authority of adequate and suitable housing accommodation for persons (a) whom the authority have reason to believe require, or are likely to require, accommodation from the authority, and (b) who, in the opinion of the authority, are in need of such accommodation and are unable to provide it from their own resources.' Each local authority with responsibility for housing provides figures on the housing needs in their area to the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government who compile the national Housing Needs Assessment statistical report.

*Long-Term Homelessness is when a person has been homeless for over six months.*

A repeat experience of homelessness will be counted as long-term if a person has been homeless for over four weeks and his/her cumulative experience of homelessness exceeds six months in duration over the last five years. This includes people leaving prison or other institutions.

However, the six-month period does not include time spent in a transitional programme, as long as it has not exceeded its agreed duration (typically six months to two years). Where a person is unable to access long-term housing after the agreed duration of a transitional programme, he/she will be considered long term homeless even if he/she remains in transitional accommodation.[4]

*Long-Term Supported Housing* is self-contained housing in a building or block or collection of buildings that have been specifically built or converted for use as supported housing, where all or nearly all the residents have long-term support needs. The level of support provided can vary, for example day staff only, caretaker/staff sleepover or 24-hour waking cover.

*Private Emergency Accommodation* is where the local authority leases premises in order to provide temporary accommodation to people who are homeless.

*Rough Sleeping* is defined as people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); and people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats or stations).

*Transitional Accommodation* is the title given to certain longer-stay homeless accommodation.

4   Definition agreed by the Homeless Agency Partnership as part of the current Dublin action plan *A Key to the Door*, p. 26.

# Quality assurance role of SPSS Ireland

SPSS Ireland is a software and solutions provider company specializing in assisting organisations throughout all aspects of the data life cycle, from data collection through to analysis and reporting final results. SPSS Ireland have a services team with extensive industry experience in survey and data analysis, and interpreting the results to aid evidence-based research. The Homeless Agency contracted SPSS Ireland to provide both statistical and analytical best practice advice and to carry out a quality assurance audit on the final report.

The *Counted In, 2008* survey method utilised a paper-based questionnaire at each homeless services centre, to collect the data on individuals using these services. SPSS Ireland provided the Homeless Agency will industry best practice advice on survey design and question construction in order to maximise response rates and the quality of data collected.

In order to summarise and report on the collected information, analysis of questionnaire data follows a strict process of auditing and validation to enhance the quality of the data, its analysis and the reporting of the final results.

Following the data entry, SPSS Ireland advised the Homeless Agency on data audit and validation techniques, leading from the collected 'raw data' to a comprehensive data set, that allows for accurate reporting of the results. At any point where a decision was made to create new data fields, care was taken to ensure that these data fields accurately represented the underlying content of the 'raw data'.

SPSS Ireland are happy that the Homeless Agency followed best practice throughout all the phases of the *Counted In, 2008* project. SPSS Ireland conducted an extensive review of the *Counted In, 2008* report. The review focused on two aspects, ensuring that the reported results followed a strict process from the 'raw data' to the quoted results and to ensure that the commentary reflected the evidence. SPSS Ireland are happy to affirm that the analysis of the results conform to industry best practice and the results accurately reflect the content of the collected data.

# Section 1
# Measuring homelessness in Dublin

## 1.1 Measuring homelessness

It is important to be clear about why measuring homelessness is valuable and necessary. Once the number of people experiencing homelessness is estimated, it is possible to plan the delivery of services to eliminate long-term homelessness and the need for anyone to sleep rough. Clear evidence of the level of presenting need is required in order to demonstrate what emergency responses are needed, and what combination of housing types and personal supports are required to progress a household onto and along a pathway out of homelessness.

The *Counted In* survey is one of a number of different methods that are being used to monitor the extent of homelessness and to identify the needs of people who are currently using homeless services. Homelessness is a complex social phenomenon; so it is necessary to combine the strengths of multiple methods in order to robustly develop the evidence for what responses are needed both to provide for the needs of those who are currently homeless and to end long-term homelessness.

The evidence presented in this report comes from the following methods used by the Homeless Agency to measure homelessness:

— The *Counted In* survey of homeless service users carried out in March 2008
— Rough sleeper street counts carried out in November 2007 and April 2008
— The administrative records of local authorities ('homeless lists')
— A one-off survey of EU10 migrants using homeless services carried out in 2006

In addition, the Homeless Agency continues to develop the capacity of other information sources to deliver robust evidence, such as Homeless Persons Unit (HPU) statistics on the numbers of people presenting as homeless and reports from a shared database of homeless service users (LINK).

It is important to be clear on the definition of homelessness that is being used. The work of the Homeless Agency is based on the legal definition provided in Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988. This definition describes the physical living conditions for someone to be recognised as 'homeless':

'A person shall be regarded by a housing authority as being homeless for the purposes of this Act if—
     (a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or
     (b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a),
     and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.'

Although this definition is quite broad, not everyone who fits under this definition will be entitled to social housing from a local authority, because each local council has the reserved function of making its own rules about eligibility, which may include length of time resident in the area, etc. However, whether or not a person is eligible for local authority housing, he/she can still be described as 'homeless' if his/her living situation fits the description provided in the legislation.

In a European context, a descriptive typology (ETHOS) has been developed as a research tool separate from the different legal definitions of homelessness across Europe. This typology does not challenge or replace how homelessness is defined in each country, but it provides a way of structuring research so that valid comparisons can be made across different European countries. International comparison is useful to highlight which European states have more successful policies and procedures to tackle homelessness.

ETHOS can be used in parallel with legal definitions of homelessness in order to better understand the dynamic of housing exclusion that can lead to homelessness (see Table 1).

Only the categories of 'rooflessness' and 'houselessness' are examined in this report. Although not everyone in these categories is defined as homeless under the Housing Act 1988, these categories describe a living situation of homelessness and are used to structure the data examined in this report.

The categories of 'insecure' and 'inadequate' housing represent housing exclusion rather than homelessness. They are beyond the scope of this report and are not examined. They form part of the typology because they represent people at risk of homelessness and information under these categories can be used plan prevention and early intervention initiatives to block these pathways into homelessness. The Homeless Agency will conduct further research into these categories in 2009.

**Table 1. European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS)**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roofless** | 1 | People living rough | 1.1 | Public space or external space |
| | 2 | People in emergency accommodation | 2.1 | Night shelter |
| **Houseless** | 3 | People in accommodation for the homeless | 3.1 | Homeless hostel |
| | | | 3.2 | Temporary accommodation |
| | | | 3.3 | Transitional supported accommodation |
| | 4 | People in Women's Shelter | 4.1 | Women's shelter accommodation |
| | 5 | People in accommodation for immigrants | 5.1 | Temporary accommodation/ reception centres |
| | | | 5.2 | Migrant workers accommodation |
| | 6 | People due to be released from institutions | 6.1 | Penal institutions |
| | | | 6.2 | Medical institutions |
| | | | 6.3 | Children's institutions/homes |
| | 7 | People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness) | 7.1 | Residential care for older homeless people |
| | | | 7.2 | Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people |
| **Insecure** | 8 | People living in insecure accommodation | 8.1 | Temporarily with family/friends |
| | | | 8.2 | No legal (sub)tenancy |
| | | | 8.3 | Illegal occupation of land |
| | 9 | People living under threat of eviction | 9.1 | Legal orders enforced (rented) |
| | | | 9.2 | Re-possession orders (owned) |
| | 10 | People living under threat of violence | 10.1 | Police recorded incidents |
| **Inadequate** | 11 | People living in temporary/ non-conventional structures | 11.1 | Mobile homes |
| | | | 11.2 | Non-conventional building |
| | | | 11.3 | Temporary structure |
| | 12 | People living in unfit housing | 12.1 | Occupied dwellings unfit for habitation |
| | 13 | People living in extreme overcrowding | 13.1 | Highest national norm of overcrowding |

## 1.2 *Counted In* survey method

*Counted In, 2008* is the fourth report about homeless service users carried out using a survey method.[5] This method has developed over the years and has been improved through feedback from stakeholders, including the National Homelessness Consultative Committee and its Data Sub-Group.

The basic method used was a census-style survey across all homeless services during one week (10-16 March 2008). Staff working in homeless services assisted people to fill in the survey form.

The survey is important because it includes every homeless service in Dublin, as well as a number of related services. Surveys were returned from over 150 different locations, and staff were very helpful in making sure as many people as possible were included. As such, *Counted In* represents a very robust and comprehensive 'point in time' picture of the extent of homelessness and profile of households using homeless services.

After the survey period, the forms were returned to the Homeless Agency. The data from these forms was entered into a database. Any duplicates or void forms were removed from the data. In addition, any household that did not indicate that they were either using homeless accommodation or sleeping rough was not included in the final analysis.

A detailed guide to the *Counted In* method is given in Appendix 1.

In 2008, the *Counted In* survey method was used for the first time in Cork, Galway and Limerick in addition to Dublin. These surveys also took place from Monday 10 to Sunday 16 March. The data for these surveys was returned to each local authority. The Homeless Agency will publish a comparative analysis of the four cities in 2009.

## 1.3 Non-response

Non-response is a central concept in survey-based research. Basically, it means that whenever a survey is conducted a certain number of people will decline to complete a form and 'non-response bias' may be generated on this basis.

5   Previous surveys were carried out by the Homeless Agency in 2005 and 2002, and by its predecessor the Homeless Initiative in 1999.

People experiencing homelessness are typically seen as a difficult group to survey. That is because mental health or addiction issues may make it difficult for people to complete a form. Moreover, there are often 'hard to reach' groups among those who are homeless that are more likely to refuse to complete a survey. It is generally accepted that some groups will always be systematically under-represented in survey research into homelessness. Young men in particular may not engage with services despite being homeless. Likewise migrants who are homeless may not be aware of existing services, may rely on alternative networks of services and/or associates, or may not have sufficient English to respond to the person carrying out the survey.

An innovation in 2008 was the more systematic use of 'non-response sheets'. This means that staff in homeless services were asked to record the name, date of birth, gender and nationality of everyone using their service who either could not or would not complete the survey form. In this way, *Counted In, 2008* can more accurately calculate the number of people who were using homeless services during the week, although detailed profile information from the rest of the survey questions is not available for the people recorded on the non-response sheets.

A total of 1961 completed survey forms were used in the *Counted In, 2008* analysis. In addition, 210 unique individuals were identified through the non-response sheets, making a total of 2171 valid responses. Individuals recorded on the non-response sheets represent nearly 10% of the total number of responses to the survey. It is likely that some of the 210 individuals recorded in this way were in the 'hard to reach' category who might not have been as well recorded in previous years. As such, *Counted In, 2008* represents a continuing improvement in the survey method for use in homeless services. It does not answer all of the questions about homelessness in Dublin today, but it provides a robust measurement of the number and profile of people in homeless services during the week of the survey.

# Section 2
# Key profile detail of people using homeless services

## 2.1 Key findings from *Counted In, 2008*

**Counted In survey**

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6   CSO *Population and Migration Estimates* 2005 and 2008

**Figure 2. Percentage of adults by type of accommodation**
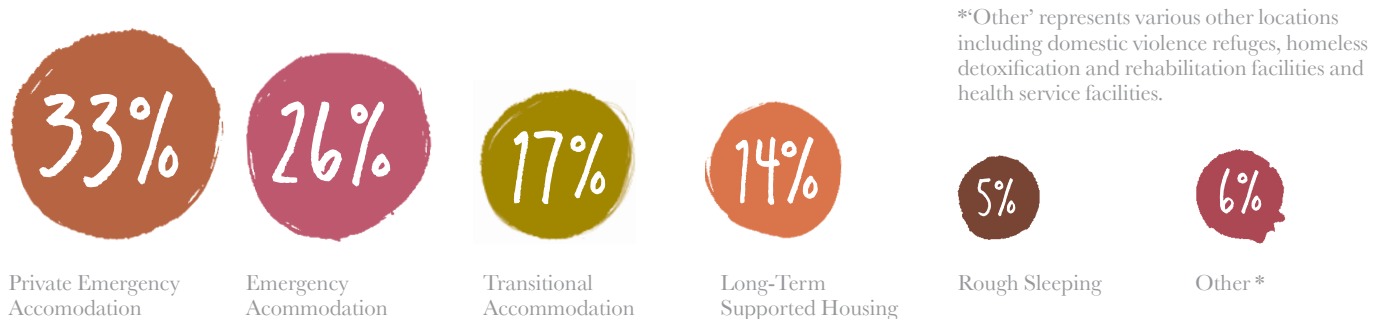


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7   This estimate is based on the assumption that the average number of people per household (1.1) remains the same between 2005 and 2008.

**Table 2. ETHOS categories included in the *Counted In* survey**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Roofless** | 1 | People living rough | 1.1 | Public space or external space |
| | 2 | People in emergency accommodation | 2.1 | Night shelter |
| **Houseless** | 3 | People in accommodation for the homeless | 3.1 | Homeless hostel |
| | | | 3.2 | Temporary accommodation |
| | | | 3.3 | Transitional supported accommodation |
| | 4 | People in Women's Shelter | 4.1 | Women's shelter accommodation |
| | 7 | People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness) | 7.1 | Residential care for older homeless people |
| | | | 7.2 | Supported accommodation for formerly homeless people |

## 2.2 Number of people in homeless services

The *Counted In* survey covers five of the categories in the European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS). ETHOS uses somewhat different definitions of accommodation types from the informal typology used in Dublin, but it is possible to align both of these (see Table 2). It is important to note that Category 7 – 'People receiving longer-term support (due to homelessness)' – refers to people who remain resident in services funded as 'homeless' services, and does not include people who move out of homelessness completely into any kind of mainstream housing (with or without supports).[8]

> Who is included in the survey findings?
> The survey provides a count of the number of people who are currently resident in accommodation provided through homeless services or else sleeping rough.
>
> This includes emergency accommodation, transitional accommodation and long-term supported housing for people who were previously homeless who have not moved into mainstream housing. In addition, it includes people who report that they are sleeping rough. It does not include people who use day services (e.g. food or information) but who are neither resident in homeless accommodation nor sleeping rough.
>
> 'Households' refers to single people or couples living with or without child dependents as part of their household, and 'Adults' refers to respondents or their partners, aged 18 or older.

**Table 3. Total number of adults in homeless services**

|  | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| Primary repondents | 2171 |
| Info given on partners | 195 |
| **Total number of adults** | **2366** |

In a small number of cases, a survey respondent completed the section to give the details of his/her partner and the partner also completed a survey form in his/her own right. However, information about any given individual was only counted once.[9] There are thus slightly fewer households than valid survey forms.

**Table 4. Total number of households in homeless services**

|  | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| Survey Forms | 2171 |
| Two forms per household | -27 |
| **Total number of households** | **2144** |

8   In terms of Irish law, people resident in homeless services do not generally have a tenancy and are living there 'under licence'; that is, they generally do not have the rights and security that a legal tenancy provides.

9   Preference was given to information on survey forms completed by individuals themselves, as opposed to information entered about them as partners on another person's form.

2144 households were in homeless services in 2008.

The equivalent figure for 2005 was 2066 households. That is, in 2005 there were a total of 2066 households in homeless accommodation, including transitional and long-term supported accommodation, or else sleeping rough.[10]

## 2.3 Accommodation types

The adults met during the survey were staying in the following locations.

**Table 5. Location of Adults in Homeless Services[11]**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Rough Sleeping | 110 | 4.6% |
| Emergency Accommodation | 617 | 26.1% |
| Private Emergency Accommodation | 771 | 32.6% |
| Transitional Accommodation | 392 | 16.6% |
| Domestic Violence Refuge | 53 | 2.2% |
| Long-Term Supported Accommodation | 340 | 14.4% |
| Homeless Detox/Rehab | 38 | 1.6% |
| Health Services Facility | 18 | 0.8% |
| Other[12] | 27 | 1.1% |
| **Total number of adults** | **2366** | **100%** |

For a description of each type of accommodation, see the Glossary and key terms.

The largest number of adults (1388, 58.7%) in homeless services were in some form of emergency accommodation. The next largest categories were adults in transitional accommodation (393, 16.6%) and adults in long-term supported housing (340, 14.4%).

It is important to note that not everyone in long-term supported accommodation would be accepted as homeless priority on a local authority housing waiting list, as they can be considered to have sufficiently secure accommodation. However, they could still be accepted on the regular housing waiting list. The long-term accommodation that was included in the survey only refers to those premises that are funded through the Homeless Agency as accommodation for people who were previously homeless.

10  The *Counted In, 2005* report concentrates on the profile of households in emergency accommodation only, but page 19 gives the numbers in transitional and long-term supported accommodation

11   These figures represent the current location of respondents over the week-long survey period as opposed to the maximum capacity in Dublin of these different accommodation types. Information on capacity is available in the Homelessness Directory 2007-2008

12  The category of 'other' includes 19 adults who did not give information on their current accommodation at the time of the survey. It also includes seven adults who gave an unknown address and one adult who gave prison as their current location. However these households were confirmed as having homeless priority with one of Dublin's local authorities.

## 2.4 Household type

Household type was inferred from whether or not a person identified living with a partner and/or children.[13] Note that many people who are homeless may identify that they have children, but they are not currently living with them. Also some couples are not currently living together, as they may not be able to access shared accommodation.

**Table 6. Type of Households Experiencing Homelessness**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Single Person | 1439 | 67.1% |
| Single with child(ren) living with him/her | 168 | 7.8% |
| Single with child(ren) not living with him/her | 315 | 14.7% |
| Couple (no children) | 62 | 2.9% |
| Couple with child(ren) living with them | 79 | 3.7% |
| Couple with child(ren) not living with them | 81 | 3.8% |
| **Total number of adults** | **2144** | **100%** |

The majority of respondent households (1439, 67.1%) were classified as single. The remaining households were made up of couples with no children (62, 2.9%) or households where there were child dependents (643, 30.0%).

13  Where respondents stated that they were currently living with one or more child dependents, this is noted above. In other cases, it was assumed that the respondent was not currently living with child dependents.

## 2.5 Gender

As in previous counts, there are significantly more men than women in homeless services. The majority (1601, 68%) of homeless adults were male. There were slightly more than twice as many males than females in homeless services. This is obviously significantly different from the approximately equal proportion of males to females in the general population.

**Table 7. Gender of Homeless Adults**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 1598 | 68% |
| Female | 746 | 32% |
| Not stated | 22 | - |
| **Total adults** | **2366** | **100%** |



68% of homeless adults are male

## Valid percentages

Note that all percentage figures in this report are derived from respondents who provided the information in question. Caution should be taken in generalising from percentages where there is significant non-response. The tables show the number of respondents who did not state a given piece of information in each case.



32% of homeless adults are female

## 2.6 Age

The largest age group of homeless adults was aged 30-34 (362, 16.2%). However, the average age for all homeless service users was 39 years old.

Over a fifth of adults in homeless services are aged 50 or over (475, 21%). Generally speaking, anyone over 50 who has had a prolonged experience of homelessness is vulnerable to many of the physical health problems associated with older age.

**Table 8. Age of Homeless Adults[14]**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 18-20 | 112 | 5.0% |
| 21-25 | 245 | 10.9% |
| 26-29 | 277 | 12.4% |
| 30-34 | 362 | 16.2% |
| 35-39 | 290 | 12.9% |
| 40-44 | 253 | 11.3% |
| 45-49 | 226 | 10.1% |
| 50-54 | 195 | 8.7% |
| 55-59 | 123 | 5.5% |
| 60-64 | 67 | 3.0% |
| 65+ | 90 | 4.0% |
| Not stated | 126 | - |
| **Total adults** | **2366** | **100%** |

21%

21% of homeless adults are aged 50+

14  As on Sunday 16 March 2008.

The age profile distribution of the respondents differs from what would be expected in the population. Approximately 42% of the respondents were between the ages of 26 to 39. This is more than would be expected in the general population and indicates that this age segment is over represented in the homeless population.

## 2.7 Duration of homelessness

A large majority of adults (1651, 84%) reported being in homeless services for more than six months.

A large number of these adults (989, 60%) were resident in emergency accommodation or private emergency accommodation. This equates to 942 households.

Nearly a third of all adults (617, 31%) have been in homeless services for over five years.

**Table 9. Length of Time Homeless**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 6 months | 316 | 16.1% |
| 6 months to 1 year | 281 | 14.3% |
| 1-2 years | 306 | 15.6% |
| 2-3 years | 152 | 7.7% |
| 3-5 years | 295 | 15.0% |
| 5-10 years | 281 | 14.3% |
| Over 10 years | 336 | 17.1% |
| Not stated[15] | 399 | - |
| **Total adults** | **2366** | **100%** |

15  Note that a significant number of people did not provide this information, including all households recorded on the non-response sheets. Some caution must be exercised in generalising the percentage figures, however the data does provide absolute minimum numbers of adults for each category of duration.

## Ending long-term homelessness

One of the three core objectives of the national homelessness strategy is 'eliminating long-term occupation of emergency homeless facilities'.[16] Long-term is defined as more than six months.[17]

The Homeless Agency Partnership has agreed that, for Dublin, 'a repeat experience of homelessness will be counted as long-term if a person has been homeless for over four weeks and his/her cumulative experience of homelessness exceeds six months in duration over the last five years. This includes people leaving prison or other institutions. However, the six-month period does not include time spent in a transitional programme, as long as it has not exceeded its agreed duration (typically six months to two years). Where a person is unable to access long-term housing after the agreed duration of a transitional programme, he/she will be considered long-term homeless even if he/she remains in transitional accommodation.'[18] In operational terms, what the definition of long-term homelessness means is that the priority must be to ensure that no-one is resident in emergency accommodation for more than six months, but housing options are also needed to ensure that no-one remains in transitional accommodation beyond the normal duration of transitional programmes or in any other homeless accommodation if he/she no longer requires that level of support.

16   *The Way Home*, p. 5

17   *The Way Home*, p. 13; this original
     commitment was made in the
     national partnership agreement,
     *Towards 2016*, p. 55

18   *A Key to the Door*, p. 26.

# Section 3
## Further analysis of the profile of homeless service users

## 3.1 Homelessness in the context of Dublin's population

The vision of ending long-term homelessness is much easier to understand when it is seen in the context of Dublin's population as a whole. Households in homeless services account for less than 0.5% of the total number of households living in Dublin; that is, 49.5 out of every 10,000 households.

This figure provides a consistent measurement over time that takes into account population change. In 2005, 50.1 out of every 10,000 households in Dublin were in homeless services.

The figure also illustrates the number of housing units that would be needed per 10,000 dwellings in every urban area, if everyone in homeless services was to be housed.

Put more simply, approximately 1 out of every 200 households in Dublin is in homeless services.

### Dublin's population

The Central Statistics Office (CSO) publishes an annual estimate of Ireland's population. In 2005, the estimated population of Dublin was 1,160,110 people and in 2008 it was 1,217,800 people; this represents an increase of 5%.

Census 2006 shows that the average number of people per household is 2.81. Using this figure as an estimate for 2005 and 2008, there were c. 413,000 households in Dublin in 2005 and c. 433,000 households in Dublin in 2008.

## 3.2 Children

The remit of the Homeless Agency does not extend to children/young people under the age of 18. Under child welfare legislation, under-18s who are out of home come under the responsibility of the Department of Health and Children; an 'out of hours' service operates through all Garda stations, so that a member of staff from social services is available to any young person out of home on a 24-hour basis.

As such, the *Counted In* survey does not include under-18s who are homeless and residing away from their families.

However, households in homeless services were asked to provide information about their children, whether or not they were currently living with them. 249 households reported that they had one or more children living with them in homeless accommodation. Overall these households account for 576 child dependents, although in some cases not all the children of a family are currently living with their parents.

In addition, 330 households indicated that they had children who were not currently living with them. This group included more men than women, but still has important implications for determining what is appropriate housing, for example as the people in question may have visits, part-time access or full custody of child dependents once they are housed. Finally, 70 households did not indicate

whether or not their children were living with them. These 400 households account for an additional 939 child dependents, however it is likely that most (if not all) of them are not living in homeless accommodation.[19]

## 3.3 Age and gender

**Table 10. Age by Gender of Homeless Adults**

|  | Male | Female | Male% | Female% |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 18-20 | 51 | 61 | 3.3% | 8.8% |
| 21-25 | 120 | 124 | 7.8% | 17.9% |
| 26-29 | 153 | 123 | 9.9% | 17.7% |
| 30-34 | 245 | 116 | 15.9% | 16.7% |
| 35-39 | 205 | 85 | 13.3% | 12.2% |
| 40-44 | 197 | 53 | 12.8% | 7.6% |
| 45-49 | 182 | 44 | 11.8% | 6.3% |
| 50-54 | 165 | 40 | 10.0% | 5.8% |
| 55-59 | 101 | 22 | 6.6% | 3.2% |
| 60-64 | 59 | 8 | 3.8% | 1.2% |
| 65+ | 72 | 18 | 4.7% | 2.6% |
| Not stated | 59 | 52 | - | - |
| **Total adults** | **1598** | **746** | **100%** | **100%** |

As noted in Section 2, men in homeless services outnumber women by a ratio of over 2:1. However, in the youngest age cohorts (18-25), women in homeless services outnumber men in absolute terms. In addition, the proportion of women aged 18-34 who are in homeless services is higher than the proportion of men.

As noted in Section 1, young men are a particularly 'hard to reach' group and they tend to be systematically under-represented in survey research into homelessness. This may partially explain the higher proportion of women in the youngest age groups, but nevertheless there are still significantly more younger women than older women in homeless services.

The average age for all homeless service users was 39 years old. However, the average age for men in homeless services was 41 years old, whereas the average age for women was 34 years old.

19 An error in the *Counted In* survey form meant that date of birth was not systematically gathered for children. As such, some of the reported 'children' may no longer be under-18 or part of the family unit.

## 3.4 Duration and repeat homelessness

One of the important considerations in relation to length of time homeless is where people are accommodated. As illustrated in Figures 3,4 and 5, people are occupying the full range of homeless accommodation types regardless of the duration of their experience of homelessness.

The main issue that is shown is that a large proportion of homeless service users continue to be resident in emergency and private emergency accommodation despite being homeless for six months or longer. Emergency accommodation continues to represent a significant proportion of those in homeless services for over three years.

**Table 11. Repeat Homelessness**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Repeat experience of using homeless services | 307 | 17.5% |
| First experience of using homeless services | 1447 | 82.5% |
| Not stated | 390 | - |
| **Total Households** | **2144** | **100%** |

17.5% of households currently in homeless services who gave this information had a previous experience of being homeless.

Households who are homeless for a second or subsequent time are resident across all homeless accommodation types in a similar way to those who were never homeless before.

## 3.5 Life cycle and disability

### Different stages in life
Social policy at national level is guided by the 'Life Cycle' approach. This means that any plan to meet someone's needs should take account of that person's age and position vis-à-vis the workforce. The three stages of the life cycle are: childhood, working age and older age.

In the *Counted In* survey, 1765 adults were aged between 18 and 49 (i.e. 'working age'). 475 adults were over the age of 50.

The adults over the age of 50 should be considered in terms of older age. It is generally accepted that any prolonged experience of homelessness (especially rough sleeping) causes people to experience the physical health effects of older age at a younger chronological age than people who were never homeless.

247 of the households live with child dependents and another 396 have children but are not currently living with them.

**Figure 3. Location of people in homeless services for less than six months**

41% Private Emergency Accomodation

29% Emergency Acommodation

6% Transitional Accommodation

3% Long-Term Supported Housing

12% Rough Sleeping

9% Other
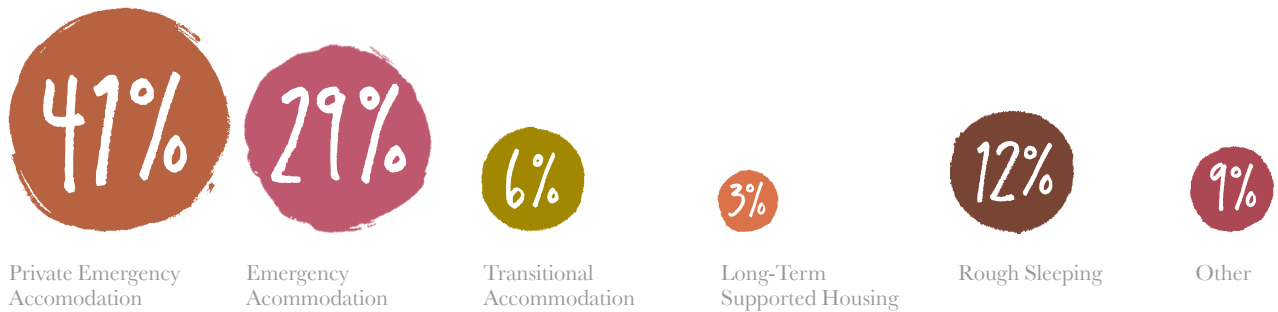
For a description of each type of accommodation, see the Glossary and key terms.

**Figure 4. Location of people in homeless services between six months and three years**

32% Private Emergency Accomodation

28% Emergency Acommodation

21% Transitional Accommodation

6% Long-Term Supported Housing

5% Rough Sleeping

8% Other

**Figure 5. Location of people in homeless services for over three years**

32% Private Emergency Accomodation

23% Emergency Acommodation

14% Transitional Accommodation

23% Long-Term Supported Housing

4% Rough Sleeping

4% Other

34% of households in homeless services
provided evidence of a disability

The *Counted In* survey does not provide definitive evidence about whether or not people have a disability. Nevertheless, it does provide two sources of information. Firstly, people are asked if they receive the Disability Allowance welfare payment. Secondly, people are asked to specify if they, or any member of their family, have a disability. Obviously, this information is limited in terms of the detail of what disability may be involved. However, it provides a reminder that disability has to be taken into account when identifying appropriate housing for a significant number of households in homeless services.

A total of 572 adults (24%) in homeless services reported that they receive Disability Allowance. This represents 548 different households (26% of all households in homeless services).

Separately, 598 households (28%) reported that a member of the household has a disability.

Responses to these two separate questions overlap. This is illustrated in Table 12. A total of 727 households (33.9%) reported some evidence of disability in the family.

**Table 12. Disability Allowance and family member with disability**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Both Disability Allowance and family member with disability | 358 | 16.7% |
| Disability Allowance only | 130 | 6.1% |
| Family member with disability only | 239 | 11.1% |
| No evidence of disability[20] | 1417 | 66.1% |
| **Total Households** | **2144** | **100%** |

The information about disability can be correlated with information about the age of adults in homeless services and whether or not they have children. The three variables are combined in Table 13.

20  Note, this information is not available for those enumerated on the non-response sheets and some respondents did not answer these questions.

**Table 13. Households in homeless services relative to life cycle and disability[21]**

|  | Working Age (18-49) | Older Age (50+) | Total households |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No disability and no children | 32% | 17% | 49% |
| Children living with them (no disability) | 9% | 1% | 10% |
| Disability (no children) | 23% | 15% | 38% |
| Children living with them and disability | 3% | 1% | 4% |
| **Total households** | **67%** | **34%** | **101%[22]** |

The table shows that around a third of those in homeless services are of working age, did not present evidence of having a disability and are not living with child dependents at this time.

A quarter of those in homeless services are of working age but presented evidence of a disability in the household.

Examining those of older age in isolation, nearly half of them (which is 16% of all households) showed evidence of a disability.

A total of 4% of households who gave this information had both child dependents and evidence of a disability in the household.[23]

## 3.6 Income

The *Counted In* survey provides only limited information about income, as it does not equate to a full income assessment. Also many respondents did not provide information about their income, which limits the extent to which the survey responses can be generalised.

1565 adults (66%) gave the amount of their income. The median average income was €197.80 per week.

1387 adults (59%) gave a source of income (including 40 who gave two sources of income). The types of income are specified in Table 14.

21 Note, these figures only represent the 1873 households who provided information on all three variables on the survey form. For example, data from the non-response sheets is not included. As such, the figures should be interpreted as a general guide to the life cycle and disability status of those in homeless services.

22 Values add to 101% due to rounding

23 This relates to 71 households out of the 1873 who provided sufficient information.

**Table 14. Source of Income (adults)**

|  | Frequency | Percent[24] |
|---|---|---|
| Jobseekers Allowance | 250 | 17.5% |
| Jobseekers Benefit | 32 | 2.2% |
| Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA) | 232 | 16.3% |
| Disability Allowance | 572 | 40.1% |
| Back to Education | 38 | 2.7% |
| FÁS | 41 | 2.9% |
| One Parent Family Allowance | 82 | 5.7% |
| Pension | 54 | 3.8% |
| Employment | 49 | 3.4% |
| Carers Allowance | 6 | 0.4% |
| Community Employment Scheme (CES) | 24 | 1.7% |
| Other | 47 | 3.3% |

24  Caution should be exercised in generalising from these percentages, given that a significant number of people did not provide this information. For example, whereas 40.1% of those who gave information on income were claiming Disability Allowance, this represents only 24% of all adults in homeless services.

## 3.7 Age when first in homeless services

One analysis that can be carried out is a comparison of a person's current age with the year he/she became homeless for the first time. Three quarters of adults surveyed (1732, 73%) gave both their age and the date when they first became homeless.

**Table 15. Age at first experience of homelessness**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0-8 | 3 | 0.2% |
| 9-11 | 13 | 0.8% |
| 12-14 | 44 | 2.5% |
| 15-17 | 79 | 4.6% |
| 18-20 | 168 | 9.7% |
| 21-25 | 260 | 15.0% |
| 26-29 | 211 | 12.2% |
| 30-34 | 245 | 14.1% |
| 35-39 | 213 | 12.3% |
| 40-44 | 158 | 9.1% |
| 45-49 | 134 | 7.7% |
| 50-54 | 109 | 6.3% |
| 55-59 | 54 | 3.1% |
| 60-64 | 23 | 1.3% |
| 65+ | 18 | 1.0% |
| **Sub-total adults** | **1732** | **100%** |
| Information not provided | 634 | - |
| **Total adults** | **2366** | **-** |

**25%**

Approximately 25% were first homeless between the age of 18 and 25.

**8%**

8% were homeless under the age of 18

Of those who provided this information, 8% were homeless under the age of 18. In addition, another 24.7% were first homeless between the age of 18 and 25.

## 3.8 Estimating annual homelessness

There is a lack of information to robustly say how many people become homeless on a yearly basis. It is crucial to remember that homelessness is dynamic. More people experience homelessness annually than can be counted in a survey at a single point in time. Counting only the people met through the March homeless survey under-represents the total number of people who experience homelessness in the year.

Every year, people will cycle in and out of homelessness. As shown in Section 3.4, 17.5% of households were homeless for the second or subsequent time.

Figure 6 illustrates the date that households first became homeless. Note that this gives the first date for those who are in a repeat experience of homelessness. 1758 households gave this information.

**Figure 6. Date of first experience of using homeless services**
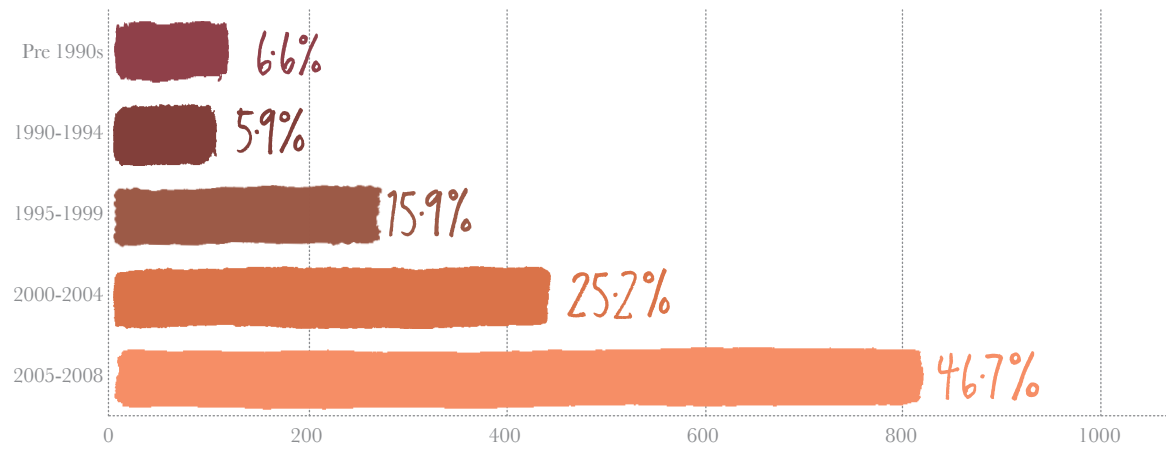


Just under half (46.7%, 822) of households in homeless services first became homeless between 2005 and 2008. Another 25.2% became homeless between 2000 and 2004. 21.6% became homeless in the 1990s. 6.6% of households in homeless services first became homeless before 1990.

Given that 822 households gave 2005-2008 as their first date of homelessness and that the total number of people in homelessness has not increased to this extent since 2005, it can be inferred that close to an equivalent number of people left homelessness in the same period of time. This does not represent the totality of people leaving homelessness, as some of those with a repeat experience may have left homelessness and returned in the same period of time. In addition, there is incomplete information on the outcomes for all of these households.

One of the actions identified in the new national homeless strategy is for local authorities to consider 'How many households are in need of housing currently and how many are likely to need housing in the next five years?'[24]

The Homeless Agency is committed to developing information systems and carrying out research to more robustly measure how many people use homeless accommodation on a yearly basis. Action H1 in the Homeless Agency Partnership action plan commits the Agency to 'conduct research into the number and type of housing units required in order to achieve the vision by 2010 and move all people experiencing long-term homeless into appropriate long-term housing with whatever supports they need to maintain their homes.'[25] This research will be carried out as a direct follow-up on the *Counted In* survey research and may assist the Dublin local authorities to develop a method to be used on an ongoing basis to estimate the number of housing units required to ensure households are not homeless for more than six months.

24   *The Way Home*, p. 47

25   *A Key to the Door*, p. 58



47% of households currently in homeless services first became homeless in the last four years

# Section 4
# Rough sleeping

## 4.1 Rough Sleeping in Dublin

The Homeless Agency has agreed a definition of 'rough sleeping' (or 'sleeping rough') as people sleeping, or bedded down, in the open air (such as on the streets, or in doorways, parks or bus shelters); and people in buildings or other places not designed for habitation (such as barns, sheds, car parks, cars, derelict boats or stations). 'Bedded down' is taken to mean lying down in a sleeping bag, or other bedding. The definition of rough sleeping does not include: people in hostels or shelters; people in campsites or other sites used for recreational purposes; squatters; Travellers or others who are living in trailers/halting sites; or people wandering around at night.[26]

Sleeping rough is a risky situation. Although most people who sleep on the street have access to sleeping bags and ground mattresses, there is still a serious risk of exposure, ill-health and injury as a result of sleeping rough, even over a short period of time. Long-term rough sleeping is associated with serious harm to people's health and long-term rough sleepers have a much lower life expectancy than the rest of the population. People sleeping rough are vulnerable to being attacked and losing their property.

The Homeless Agency Partnership Vision is that by 2010 nobody should need to sleep rough due to a lack of appropriate emergency accommodation that can cater for him or her, regardless of his or her level of support needs.

Rough sleeping is the most visible and most recognisable aspect of homelessness for many people. However, it is well established that most people experiencing homelessness are in some form of temporary shelter or accommodation. 5% of the people met in the *Counted In* survey were sleeping rough most of the time in the week prior to the survey. This is a reduction from 9% in 2005.

One of the reasons why many members of the public may perceive homelessness to equate to rough sleeping is because most emergency accommodation does not permit people to occupy the premises during the day. As such, there may be a higher concentration of people who are homeless on the streets during the day than at night. As the majority of emergency accommodation is in the city centre, this also means there may be a concentration of people who are homeless in the city centre during the day. In addition, members of the public may assume that everyone who is begging on the street is homeless, whereas this is not necessarily the case. Not all people who are homeless engage in begging and vice versa.

26  This definition was agreed for the purposes of the Homeless Agency's rough sleeper street counts and is based on guidelines developed by the UK Department of Communities and Local Government.

It is important to remember that sleeping rough is something that people do; it is not a description of a 'certain type of person'. Different types of people sleep rough, including people who may be out of home temporarily as well as people who may have been sleeping on the streets for years.

Rough sleeping is dynamic and varies depending on the day of the week, the time of year and what the weather is like. Some people sleep rough most or all of the time, whereas others only spend a short period of time sleeping rough before moving into some form of accommodation. Given the dynamic nature of rough sleeping, it is important to bear in mind that more people will sleep rough in the year than will be counted on any one night or in any one survey.

The *Counted In* survey provides people using homeless services an opportunity to report if they are sleeping rough. This can be termed 'self-reporting' or 'disclosure'. In contrast, the street count method is based on 'discovery'; that is, direct observation of the number of people physically present on a given night. Both of these methods provide a minimum figure for the number of people sleeping rough. In the case of the survey, this is because not everyone sleeping rough engages with homeless services; so they will not all complete a survey form. Also, some people completing the form will not admit that they were sleeping rough. In the case of the street count, some people are sleeping in areas that are impossible for street count teams to enter. The above reasons are part of why people sleeping rough are considered to be a 'hard to reach' group in terms of any method of measurement. Nevertheless, the methods that are in place are robust as long as their limitations are understood. They provide a base figure that can be used to track change over time and to provide targets for concrete action to eliminate the need for anyone to sleep rough.

### 'Discovery' and 'Disclosure' in measuring rough sleeping

Different methods of enumerating the number of rough sleepers will give different estimates. The important thing is to be clear on why a given method is being used and what its limitations are.

The *Counted In* survey gives households the opportunity to self-report that they slept rough during the seven nights prior to the survey. Self-reporting or 'disclosure' means that people state their circumstances and this is taken at face value. Disclosure is vulnerable to people having different interpretations of what is meant by sleeping rough. At the same time, rough sleepers are a 'hard to reach' group. Survey research is limited in its ability to count the number of people sleeping rough precisely because rough sleepers are more likely to decline to complete a survey. Those rough sleepers that did complete a survey form were using a day service or a 'one night stay' in emergency accommodation at the time; whereas it is possible that some rough sleepers do not engage with homeless services.

The street count relies on direct observation or 'discovery' to estimate the number of people who are sleeping rough. A street count is only as robust as its thoroughness, which is why the Homeless Agency has recently developed a more comprehensive approach to conducting street counts. The entire length of every street in the target areas is investigated by teams of counters, to ensure that rough sleepers are enumerated as accurately as possible. As much as possible, the Dublin street counts cover every street in the city centre as well as a number of suburbs where there is evidence that people may be sleeping rough. A limitation of the street count method is that some people are too well concealed to be counted. Also, because the street count takes place on one particular night, the number of people counted will vary due to weather conditions. However, the street count provides an indisputable *minimum* number for the number of people sleeping rough on a given night.

## 4.2 Rough sleepers (survey method)

Information on people who are rough sleeping is gathered as part of the *Counted In* survey. All survey respondents are asked to specify where they spent the last seven nights prior to completing the survey. Anyone who indicates sleeping rough for four or more nights in the previous seven is counted as a rough sleeper for the purposes of the *Counted In* survey.

The assumption underlying the survey approach to counting rough sleepers is that the vast majority of people sleeping rough are known to at least one homeless service and almost all of them will visit one or more services during the week. Hence, they are likely to be counted as part of the survey.[27]

110 people were counted as sleeping rough in *Counted In, 2008*.

**Figure 7. Numbers sleeping rough since 1999**
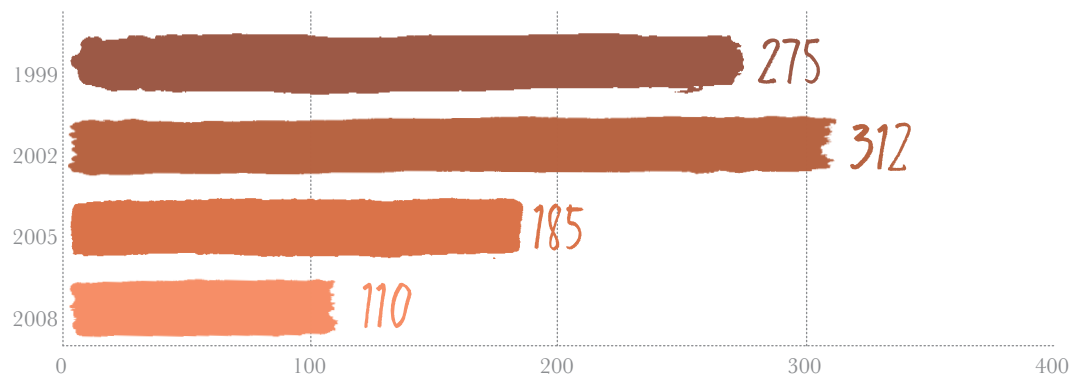


There has been a steady decline in the numbers of people self-reporting as sleeping rough since 1999, when 275 people reported sleeping rough. The level of rough sleeping in 2008 is 40% of the 1999 level.

The continued decrease in the numbers sleeping rough between 2005 and 2008 can be explained by improvements and increased investment in the operation of outreach and emergency services.

27  Although people who are only counted through the non-response sheet will not be recorded as rough sleepers.

**Sleeping Rough
male-to-female ratio**

2005
Male                              Female

70 : 30

2008
Male                              Female

85 : 15

## Profile of people who are rough sleeping

Table 16. Gender of homeless adults (rough sleepers)

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 92 | 85.2% |
| Female | 16 | 14.8% |
| Not stated | 2 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **110** | **100%** |

In 2005, the male-to-female ratio among people sleeping rough was 70:30, whereas in 2008 it has changed to 85:15. In other words, the number of women sleeping rough has decreased faster than the number of men. This change can possibly be explained by the fact that new services for women with complex needs have opened since 2005.

Table 17. age of homeless adults (rough sleepers)

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 18-20 | 0 | 0.0% |
| 21-25 | 15 | 14.6% |
| 26-39 | 48 | 46.6% |
| 40-49 | 27 | 26.2% |
| 50-64 | 13 | 12.6% |
| 65+ | 0 | 0.0% |
| Not stated | 7 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **110** | **100%** |

The age range of people sleeping rough is largely unchanged since 2005.

**Table 18. Length of time homeless (rough sleepers)**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 6 months | 36 | 34.6% |
| 6 months to 1 year | 22 | 21.2% |
| 1-2 years | 9 | 8.7% |
| 2-3 years | 5 | 4.8% |
| 3-5 years | 10 | 9.6% |
| 5-10 years | 12 | 11.5% |
| Over 10 year | 10 | 9.6% |
| Not stated | 6 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **110** | **100%** |

9%

In 2005, 9% of homeless people sleeping rough had a foreign nationality

38%

In 2008, approximately 38% of homeless people sleeping rough had a foreign nationality

The length of time people have been sleeping rough has decreased, with more people reporting shorter durations than in 2005. However 24 people had a repeat experience of homelessness, which is a higher proportion than among other homeless service users.

**Table 19. Nationality (rough sleepers)**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Irish | 63 | 62.4% |
| EU | 32 | 31.7% |
| Non-EU | 6 | 5.9% |
| Not stated | 9 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **110** | **100%** |

A significant change from 2005 is the increased proportion of people of non-Irish nationality who reported sleeping rough. One in ten people sleeping rough (17, 9%) reported a foreign nationality in 2005. This has increased to two out every five people (38, 37.6%) who reported sleeping rough in 2008. Not only has the absolute number of non-Irish people reporting sleeping rough doubled, but proportionately it represents a significant percentage of the total number of people who reported sleeping rough.

This is a serious concern for homeless services, as some of those who are sleeping rough may not have any formal entitlements to Irish welfare services. Language difficulties and general lack of awareness of available services are also barriers that can prevent non-Irish people from accessing appropriate accommodation.

The nationalities of non-Irish rough sleepers included: Romanian (15), Polish (6), other Central European (8), UK (2) and African (2).

24% of those who reported sleeping rough were verified as being registered with homeless priority with one of the Dublin local authorities. All but one of the people who were verified had Irish citizenship.

## 4.3 Rough sleepers (street count method)

The Homeless Agency developed a more comprehensive street count method in 2007, drawing on the experience in this area that has developed in the UK in recent years. The street count method provides a robust measure of the minimum number of people sleeping on the streets on the night of the count.

The following section reports on the two street counts that have been conducted using the new method, in November 2007 and April 2008. The November 2007 street count covered the Dublin City Council administrative area and the April 2008 count covered all four Dublin local authority areas.

A great deal of preparation work goes into every street count. Information was sought from various stakeholders and members of the public about where people are sleeping rough. Volunteers were recruited to work in teams alongside experienced homeless sector workers. Maps were prepared, dividing the administrative area into zones for teams to cover on the night. Count teams were provided with maps, high-visibility jackets, torches and clipboards. They were also given some information about homeless services and a resource pack to give to people they met who were awake. A team was also available to supply sleeping bags to anyone sleeping out without proper equipment.

An Garda Síochána are an important partner in the street counts, providing Gardaí to accompany count teams where required and being on alert to provide assistance to any team that encountered difficulty. The park rangers in the Phoenix Park along with the local authority Parks Services have also been very helpful in assisting count teams to access these areas and/or providing information.

The street count is conducted from midnight or 1am until approximately 5am the following morning. In the April 2008 street count, the parks were surveyed from 6am until 8am, as it was not possible to survey them in darkness.

In Dublin city centre, every street was walked. In more residential areas and many of the suburbs, count teams covered some of the ground in cars and only walked areas where necessary to determine whether someone was sleeping rough or not.

In Dublin City Council's administrative area, every street in the entire city centre was covered (between the Grand Canal in the south and the North Circular Road). In addition, between one third and half of the suburban areas were covered, chosen on the basis of information that some people may be sleeping rough in the area. Local community groups gave assistance in a number of neighbourhoods.

In the other local authority areas, every major urban centre was covered along with some suburban areas. These counts were co-ordinated by the local authority in each area.

More detail on the street count method is given in Appendix 3.

All information from the street counts was passed on to the homeless services dealing with outreach to people sleeping rough. These services use this information to try to make contact with as many people as possible to let them know what services are available and to provide them with assistance.

**Findings from the street counts**

**Table 20. Number of people observed sleeping rough (street count)**

|  | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| November 2007 (DCC) | 104 |
| April 2007 (DCC) | 111 |
| April 2007 (Other authorities) | 4 |

In November 2007, 104 people were observed sleeping rough in the Dublin City Council administrative area. In April 2008, a total of 115 people were observed sleeping rough across all four Dublin local authority areas, with the vast majority (111) seen in Dublin City Council's area.

When someone was awake it was possible to talk to them and ask their name, date of birth and nationality. People's gender was also noted. When people were asleep, counters tried not to disturb them and simply noted any visible details (e.g. gender and approximate age).

Approximately half of the people sleeping rough were awake during both counts and gave their names and other details.

In both November 2007 and April 2008, men substantially outnumbered women (the average ratio was 4:1, although more women were identified in the November count than in the April count).

Of those who gave details about their nationality, most were Irish.

Of those who gave details about their date of birth, the average age group was in the early 30s and most people were aged between 25 and 45.

The vast majority of people met were in Dublin city centre. In the April 2008 count, very few people were found to be sleeping rough in the other three Dublin local authority areas.

Rough sleeping in the city centre

The street count in April 2008 only found a total of four people sleeping rough across the administrative areas of all three of Dublin's suburban local authorities. In addition, very few people were found in the residential and suburban parts of Dublin City Council's area.

This indicates that rough sleeping seems to be concentrated as a city centre phenomenon. This may be due to a combination of factors. The city centre is close to many homeless services, including the major food centres. There are no equivalent services in the suburbs. Some rough sleepers in the city centre will be there because of a failed attempt to access emergency accommodation. The city centre also provides a non-residential space, where there are no local residents to seek to have someone sleeping rough moved on.

On the other hand, the lack of evidence for rough sleeping in the suburbs is not a reason for complacency. Visible rough sleeping may be replaced in residential areas by the more invisible occupation of squats or buildings not designed for human habitation. It is also likely that people who are from suburban areas sleep rough in the city centre, but would prefer to be housed and to access services in their home area.

## 4.4 Rooflessness

The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) includes rough sleeping as one of the two sub-categories of 'rooflessness'. The other sub-category includes people who have to seek emergency accommodation every night and who do not have a guarantee that they will have a place on any given night. See Table 21 below.

**Table 21. Roofless' category in ETHOS**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Roofless** | 1 | People living rough | 1.1 | Public space or external space |
| | 2 | People in emergency accommodation | 2.1 | Night shelter |

In Dublin, some of the emergency accommodation operates on the basis of allocating 'one night stays'. As such, some people who are homeless have to book a bed on a daily basis. This can mean phoning the Homeless Persons Unit freephone number late in the evening in an attempt to secure a bed or calling directly to a shelter. In addition, the Dublin City Council Night Bus service is also used as a means to access beds on a nightly basis.

**People living rough**

110 people self-reported sleeping rough as part of the *Counted In* survey in March 2008 and 115 people were observed to be sleeping rough on one night in April 2008.

In terms of 'people living rough', it is not appropriate to directly equate the findings from the *Counted In* survey with the findings from the street counts because the methods used in each case are completely different; that is, a person self-reporting that he or she sleeps rough is different from a person being observed sleeping rough. Typically, a week-long survey would be expected to elicit a larger number of rough sleepers than a one-night street count. As it happens, the numbers from both methods are similar. It is not possible to determine the extent of the overlap between the two counts, but it is likely that some people in one count are not included in the other, which implies a greater overall number of people sleeping rough in Dublin. Hence, as discussed above, both should be seen as minimum figures.

**People in emergency accommodation**

An estimated 50 beds in emergency accommodation and private emergency accommodation in Dublin are operated on the basis of 'one night stays'. These beds are generally all filled on a nightly basis. As such, the number of beds can be taken as a proxy for the number of people occupying these beds.

**Rooflessness**

Taking 110-115 as a minimum number of people sleeping rough on any given night, combined with 50 as the number of people in shelter on a 'one night stay' basis, an estimated 160-165 is the minimum number of people who are 'roofless' in Dublin. This figure refers to adults and not households.

There are an estimated 165 'roofless' people in Dublin

# Section 5
# The four Dublin local authority areas and homelessness

## 5.1 Analysis of last permanent address

Over three quarters of adults surveyed (1813, 77%) gave enough information on their last permanent address that it could be categorised by postcode, county or country.

Most respondents (1564) gave a last permanent address in Dublin. In a small number of cases, this address was a homeless service, especially in the city centre. 137 adults gave a last permanent address elsewhere in Ireland and an additional 112 adults gave a last permanent address outside of Ireland.

**Table 22. Last permanent address (Dublin postcodes)**

| | Local Authority | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| County Dublin (DLRCC) | DLRCC | 43 | 2.7% |
| County Dublin (FCC) | FCC | 43 | 2.7% |
| County Dublin (SDCC) | SDCC | 23 | 1.5% |
| D1 | DCC | 159 | 10.2% |
| D2 | DCC | 57 | 3.6% |
| D3 | DCC | 52 | 3.3% |
| D4 | DCC, DLRCC | 34 | 2.2% |
| D5 | DCC | 47 | 3.0% |
| D6 | DCC, DLRCC | 57 | 3.6% |
| D6W | DCC, SDCC | 9 | 0.6% |
| D7 | DCC | 195 | 12.5% |
| D8 | DCC | 186 | 11.9% |
| D9 | DCC, FCC | 81 | 5.2% |
| D10 | DCC | 48 | 3.1% |
| D11 | DCC, FCC | 108 | 6.9% |
| D12 | DCC | 70 | 4.5% |
| D13 | DCC, FCC | 20 | 1.3% |
| D14 | DCC, DLRCC, SDCC | 24 | 1.5% |
| D15 | FCC | 68 | 4.3% |
| D16 | DLRCC, SDCC | 8 | 0.5% |
| D17 | DCC, FCC | 41 | 2.6% |
| D18 | DLRCC | 8 | 0.5% |
| D20 | DCC, SDCC | 10 | 0.6% |
| D22 | SDCC | 79 | 5.1% |
| D24 | SDCC | 94 | 6.0% |
| **Total adults with Dublin last permanent address** | | **1564** | **100%** |

**86%**

Most people in homeless services had a last permanent address in Dublin

The information on last permanent address in Dublin illustrates that people move into homelessness more from some areas than others, although allowance has to be made that the population of each postcode area can vary greatly and hence more people would be expected to become homeless in more populated areas, all things being equal.

There was insufficient information in many cases to identify addresses by electoral district, however Table 22 (above) shows the breakdown of the postcodes by the local authority or authorities responsible for all or part of that area. The following table shows the overlap between last permanent address and the four Dublin local authority areas.

**Table 23. Last permanent address (local authority areas)**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Dublin City Council | 814 | 52.0% |
| Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council | 51 | 3.3% |
| Fingal County Council | 111 | 7.1% |
| South Dublin County Council | 196 | 12.5% |
| Postcodes divided between DCC and DLRCC | 91 | 5.8% |
| Postcode divided between DCC, DLRCC and SDCC | 24 | 1.5% |
| Postcodes divided between DCC and FCC | 250 | 16.0% |
| Postcodes divided between DCC and SDCC | 19 | 1.2% |
| Postcode divided between DLRCC and SDCC | 8 | 0.5% |
| **Total adults** | **1564** | **100%** |

On the basis of the above, a minimum and maximum number of adults with a last permanent address in each local authority area can be identified.[28]

28  DCC minimum 814, maximum 1198; DLRCC minimum 51, maximum 174; FCC minimum 111, maximum 361; SDCC minimum 196, maximum 247.

**Table 24. Last permanent address (Irish counties)[29]**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Co Carlow | 2 | 1.5% |
| Co Cavan | 2 | 1.5% |
| Co Cork | 7 | 5.1% |
| Co Donegal | 3 | 2.2% |
| Co Galway | 6 | 4.4% |
| Co Kerry | 5 | 3.6% |
| Co Kildare | 29 | 21.2% |
| Co Kilkenny | 6 | 4.4% |
| Co Laois | 2 | 1.5% |
| Co Limerick | 8 | 5.8% |
| Co Longford | 4 | 2.9% |
| Co Louth | 7 | 5.1% |
| Co Mayo | 4 | 2.9% |
| Co Meath | 8 | 5.8% |
| Co Monaghan | 1 | 0.7% |
| Co Offaly | 3 | 2.2% |
| Co Roscommon | 4 | 2.9% |
| Co Sligo | 2 | 1.5% |
| Co Tipperary | 5 | 3.6% |
| Co Waterford | 6 | 4.4% |
| Co Westmeath | 6 | 4.4% |
| Co Wexford | 9 | 6.6% |
| Co Wicklow | 8 | 5.8% |
| **Total adults** | **137** | **100%** |

29  In the case of Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford and Tipperary, it was not always possible to distinguish which local authority area the address was in (e.g. city versus county).

The table illustrates that people from nearly every other county in Ireland are in homeless services in Dublin. In particular, 21.2% of service users from outside of Dublin are from Co Kildare.

**Table 25. Last permanent address (country outside Ireland)**

|  | Frequency |
| --- | --- |
| England | 58 |
| Northern Ireland | 10 |
| Scotland | 6 |
| Sub-total UK | 74 |
| Czech Republic | 2 |
| Italy | 3 |
| Poland | 6 |
| Romania | 8 |
| Spain | 2 |
| Other EU | 4 |
| Sub-total EU | 25 |
| South Africa | 4 |
| Switzerland | 2 |
| USA | 2 |
| Other Non-EU | 5 |
| Sub-total Non-EU | 13 |
| **Total adults** | **112** |

Two thirds of non-Irish last permanent addresses were in the UK.

## 5.2 Localising mainstream services

One of the Core Actions agreed by the Homeless Agency Partnership in its action plan is to provide local homeless services where there is a need for them.

Currently, existing homeless services are disproportionately concentrated in Dublin city centre (as illustrated below), although new services have opened in each of the other three local authority areas in recent years.

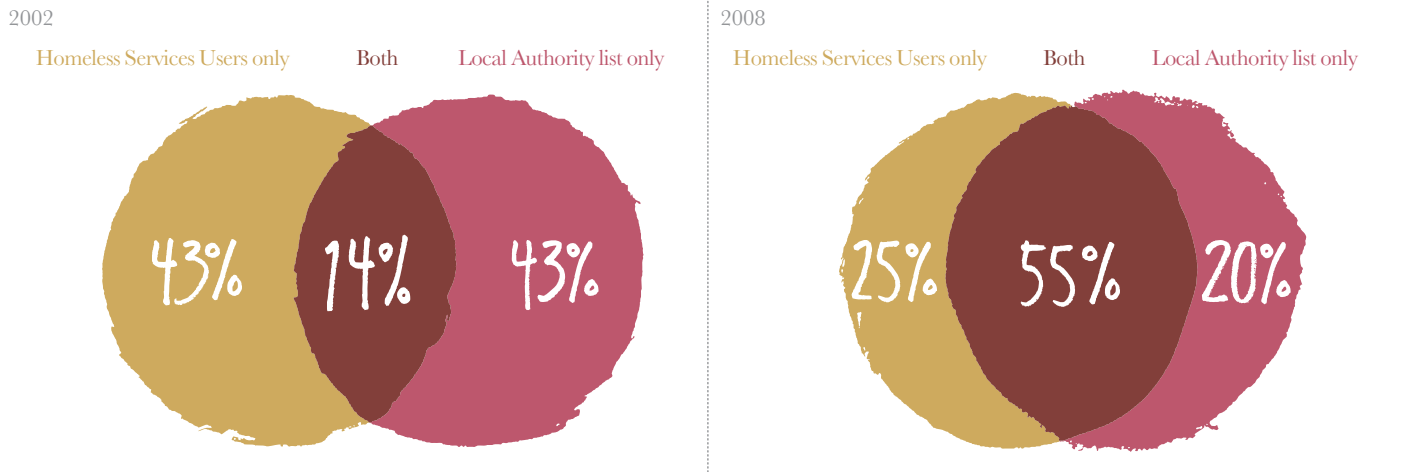**Figure 8. Centralisation of homeless accommodation in Dublin**

As a result of the centralisation of services, those who become homeless gravitate towards the city centre, which perpetuates a situation where homelessness is seen as a largely city centre phenomenon, whereas in reality people become homeless not just from all over Dublin, but from all over Ireland and elsewhere.

## Localisation strategy

People who are homeless in Dublin city centre come from all over Ireland and abroad, as well as from across the four Dublin local authority areas. The Homeless Agency's localisation strategy has agreed the development of homeless services in every major urban area across Dublin where there is evidence of need.

**Figure 9. Urban areas across the four Dublin local authority areas**



Fingal County Council

South Dublin County Council

Dún-Laoghaire Rathdown CC

**Figure 10. Comparison of verification process in 2002 and 2008**[30]

| 2002 | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Homeless Services Users only | Both | Local Authority list only |



43%   14%   43%

| 2008 | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Homeless Services Users only | Both | Local Authority list only |

25%   55%   20%

## 5.3 Verification of *Counted In* survey with local authorities[31]

One of the concerns of successive *Counted In* surveys has been to align the findings of the survey with the administrative records of the local authorities, in terms of the number of households registered with them as being 'homeless priority' on the housing waiting list. This process was conducted alongside every *Counted In* survey since 1999. However, the emphasis in 2008 was changed from previous years. In addition to seeking to align the numbers generated from the survey with the local authorities' administrative records, the verification process in 2008 examined some of the reasons why there were discrepancies between the *Counted In* survey findings and the local authorities' homeless priority lists. In effect, the 2008 verification process resulted in a qualitative inquiry into the administrative process that produces the national housing needs assessment (including the numbers given homeless priority). One of the results of this verification process was a series of agreed actions to be taken in order to improve the overlap between the survey findings and the local authorities' administrative data.

As Figure 10 shows, there has been significant improvement between 2002 and 2008 in relating the *Counted In* survey data to the local authority housing needs assessment.
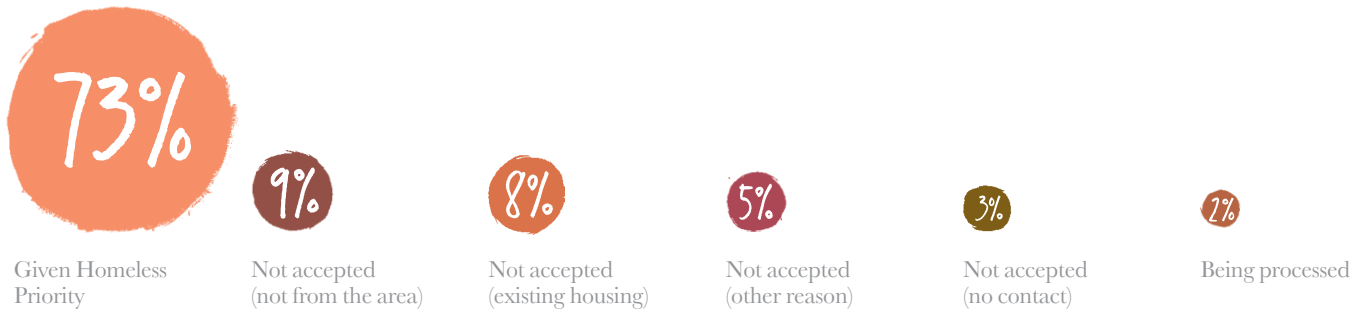
A minimum of 1507 households were both on the local authority homeless lists and reported through the *Counted In* survey.[32] Through the verification process, nearly three quarters (1119, 73%) of these households were confirmed as having homeless priority on one of the Dublin local authorities' housing lists.

A quarter of households (388, 25%) verified with the local authority were not given homeless priority. This was because they were not from the area (145, 9%), because they already had a tenancy or long-term housing (128, 8%), because they did not remain in contact with the local authority (47, 3%), or for various other reasons (68, 5%).

30 A different verification process was undertaken in 2005, which is not comparable with the processes undertaken in 2002 and 2008.

31 See Glossary and key terms for an explanation of some the terminology involved in this area.

32 This is a minimum because lack of details may have made it impossible to align a local authority record with the information gathered on a person through the *Counted In* survey, especially those whose details were only recorded on the non-response sheet.

**Figure 11. Breakdown of status of verified households**

| 73% | 9% | 8% | 5% | 3% | 2% |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Given Homeless Priority | Not accepted (not from the area) | Not accepted (existing housing) | Not accepted (other reason) | Not accepted (no contact) | Being processed |

A small number of applications (23, 2%) were being processed at the time of the verification process.

The homeless figures from the 2008 Housing Needs Assessment for the Dublin area are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dublin City Council | 1123 |
| Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council | 138 |
| Fingal County Council | 19 |
| South Dublin County Council | 60 |

A total of 1340 households on the housing waiting lists of these authorities are confirmed as homeless priority. Nearly all of these households are currently resident in some form of accommodation provided to people who are homeless – including around half who are resident in emergency or private emergency accommodation.

33  Typically, this was due to the lack of a valid PPS number or else an illegible survey form.

The limitation of the housing needs assessment process is that it does not include people who have not applied for inclusion on the housing waiting list and it also does not include people who are ineligible for local authority housing (e.g. those not from the local authority area). For this reason, the national housing needs assessment does not provide an overall picture of homelessness because it only includes people who are eligible for local authority housing and who have applied. At any one time, there may be a significant number of people in homeless services who are either not eligible or who have not applied to the local authorities.

Of the households that were not known to the local authorities prior to the *Counted In* survey, 414 had never made an application to be registered on a housing waiting list and 200 did not provide enough information on the *Counted In* form to enable the local authority to confirm whether they were on the list or not.[33]

**Figure 12. Location of households that were not known to the local authorities**



| 31% | 36% | 9% | 13% | 7% | 4% |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Private Emergency Accomodation | Emergency Acommodation | Transitional Accommodation | Long-Term Supported Housing | Rough Sleeping | Other |

The households that were not known to the local authorities were accommodated as shown in Figure 12.

This evidence suggests that significant numbers of potentially eligible households may not have registered with local authorities despite the fact that they are living in homeless services. (Although it is important to bear in mind the caveat that lack of information may simply have prevented the verification of a household from the survey with the local authority lists). This finding emphasises the role that homeless services must play in assisting all residents to register with the local authority and to stay in contact with them.

Another very important finding is that 388 households currently residing in homeless services were not given homeless priority because they were ineligible. This raises a serious issue regarding the ability of homeless services to deliver a pathway out of homelessness.

The verification process of the 2144 households surveyed in *Counted In* is summarised in Table 26.

**Table 26. Verification of households met through *Counted In* survey**

| Counted In survey | Local Authority response (orange = not verified) | Agreed Action |
|---|---|---|
| | 1119 of these households verified as homeless priority (part of 1340 households confirmed through Housing Needs Assessment) | These households are part of the 1340 households with homeless priority across Dublin; this is a concrete target for housing, including RAS and other alternative approaches |
| | 23 applications are being processed | Local authorities are following up on survey forms to make contact with households and make a full assessment of their housing need |
| | 200 households did not provide enough information on the survey form to be verified | |
| 2,144 households were in homeless services during the week of the survey | 145 not accepted (not from the area) | Local authorities will consider what assistance can be given to households in homelessness who are not eligible for social housing – e.g. housing advice, RAS, housing association housing, etc |
| | 128 not accepted (existing housing) | |
| | 68 not accepted (other reason) | |
| | 47 not accepted (no contact) | Homeless services must assist all service users to register and stay in contact with the local authorities |
| | 414 households have not applied | |

## 5.4 Actions following verification

As part of the verification process, the Homeless Agency met with the Directors of Housing/Assistant City Manager from the four Dublin local authorities to address the findings. A number of agreements were reached to respond to the information and to improve the co-ordination of information between the local authorities and homeless services.

**Action 1: The four Dublin local authorities confirmed that 1340 households had homeless priority as part of the national Housing Needs Assessment review of their housing waiting lists in March 2008.** Apart from households that will become homeless in the next two years as well as others in homeless services who may be eligible, the figure of 1340 households represents a minimum target number of households to be assisted into appropriate housing by 2010. *Subject to the necessary resources being made available*, the local authorities have agreed to use the full range of available housing options to assist as many households as possible into appropriate housing. Housing options include private rented housing, the Rental Accommodation Scheme and housing association social housing, in addition to local authority social housing.

**Action 2:** **A gap exists between the administrative data held by the local authorities and the data held by homeless services.** Although there was a large overlap between households with homeless priority and those in homeless services surveyed as part of *Counted In, 2008*, a significant number of potentially eligible households had not registered with the local authorities. There is a need for homeless services to do more to assist all households to register and to remain in contact with their relevant local authority. The local authorities have agreed to assess cases from *Counted In* as a matter of urgency in order to determine their eligibility for housing support.

**Action 3:** **The four Dublin local authorities have agreed to develop a common operational definition of homelessness under the Housing Act 1988.** The Centre for Housing Research is preparing a position paper on this on behalf of the Homeless Agency Partnership.

**Action 4:** **The Homeless Agency will carry out a smaller scale repeat study of the number of people using homeless services in 2009 and 2010.** This survey will include the verification of those using homeless services with those given homeless priority by the local authorities.



The four Dublin local authorities confirmed
1340 households as homeless priority

# Section 6
# Migration and homelessness

## 6.1 Homeless Agency research on migration

Internationally, a significant proportion of people experiencing homelessness are migrants, although this varies from county to country. Historically, Dublin has not had a large proportion of migrants experiencing homelessness, however there is evidence that this situation is changing.

The Homeless Agency has commissioned a number of research studies into the impact of migration and homelessness as part of its role in preventing homelessness. It is vital to monitor the situation and move to prevent a situation arising where migrants become a major proportion of homeless service users in Dublin.

The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) identifies people in accommodation for immigrants as one of the categories of 'houselessness'. This category was not covered by the *Counted In* survey, as responsibility for accommodation for asylum seekers lies with the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform and was not included in the survey.

**Table 27. Migrants' acommodation in ETHOS**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Houseless** | 5 | People in accommodation for immigrants | 5.1 | Temporary accommodation/ reception centres |
| | | | 5.2 | Migrant workers accommodation |

Accommodation for migrant workers (living situation 5.2) is rare in Ireland as a specific category of housing.

In 2005, the Homeless Agency investigated reports of increasing numbers of non-Irish nationals (particularly from the 'EU10' accession states)[34] accessing homeless services, including emergency accommodation and food services. An initial study was commissioned to clarify the situation. This study estimated that between 60 and 120 people from the EU10 states were seeking support from homeless services in Dublin in an average day in September 2005.[35] This report also raised the issue of the Habitual Residency Condition (HRC) and the increased risk that migrants who are not habitually resident in Ireland have less of a safety net to prevent them from becoming homeless if they suffer from a crisis event.

In 2006, a follow-up study was commissioned to develop a more accurate picture of the number of EU10 migrants using homeless services. The study involved a comprehensive method, with information sought from all accommodation services and a week-long interviewer-led survey carried out across homeless services from 4 to 10 December 2006. Survey forms were available in different languages and some of the interviewers were native-speakers from EU10 countries. As such, the findings provided a very robust estimate of the use of homeless services by migrants.

34   The 'EU10 states' refers to the 10 new members of the EU that joined in 2004: Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia.

35   *Away from Home and Homeless*, p. 7

A total of 283 people from the EU10 countries were using homeless services during the week of the count in December 2006, including food and day services. 170 of them agreed to complete a survey form, providing more information about their situation.

Of the survey respondents, the majority were Polish (65%), with significant numbers from Lithuania (10%) and the Czech Republic (9%). Men accounted for 83% of respondents. The majority (55%) were in the 26-39 years age group.

In addition, the 2006 study set out to examine issues arising in the context of their use of homeless services. The research focused on a broad range of areas including housing status, language abilities, work status, service use and service need. Barriers experienced by service providers in the provision of services to this group were also explored.

More details from the 2006 study are provided in Appendix 4.

It is possible to make some comparisons between the findings of the EU10 study in 2006 and the *Counted In, 2008* survey, but differences in the methods used require caution in interpreting the findings.[36]

*Counted In, 2008* surveyed 2366 adults in homeless services, of whom 193 were identified as EU citizens and 110 were identified as non-EU, for a total of 303 foreign nationals or 13% of all homeless services users. *Counted In* also surveyed an additional 104 foreign national households using homeless food and day services who were not considered to be homeless because they gave no evidence of using homeless accommodation or sleeping rough. In this group, 85 were identified as EU citizens and an additional 19 as non-EU citizens. In total, this represents a total of 407 foreign nationals adults who were using homeless services (75% of whom were in homeless accommodation). In the *Counted In* survey, 278 of the foreign nationals using homeless services were EU citizens.

The EU10 study found that 283 EU10 citizens were using homeless services, but in contrast with the *Counted In* findings, it was felt that most of them were only using food/day services. It should be noted that the EU10 study was only seeking to count EU10 citizens and not other nationalities among migrants, asylum seekers or refugees.

**Table 28. EU10 homeless service users**

|  | Using food/day services only | Using homelesss acommodation and/or rough sleeping | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| December 2006 | 208 (73%) | 75 (27%) | 283 |
| March 2008 | 85 (31%) | 193 (69%) | 278 |

In both cases, the surveys have confirmed that there are EU citizens (and people of other nationalities) using homeless accommodation and/or sleeping rough, as well as others only using food/day services. A comparison of the December 2006 survey with *Counted In, 2008* shows a growing proportion of EU10 citizens appear to be in homeless accommodation and/or sleeping rough. This represents a challenge to homeless services to avoid a situation of 'multiple disadvantage' where foreign nationals may become trapped in homeless services because of additional barriers to moving back into housing and employment, such as language and the Habitual Residency Condition.

## 6.2 Nationality in the *Counted In* survey

The *Counted In* survey found that most homeless service users were Irish (84%), however at least 1 in 6 of all adults using homeless services are not Irish citizens (16%). A significant number of people (193, 19%) did not state their nationality and some of these people may also be foreign nationals.

**Table 29. Nationality of Adults Using Homeless Services[37]**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Irish | 1619 | 84.2% |
| EU | 193 | 10.0% |
| Non-EU | 110 | 5.7% |
| Not stated | 444 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **2366** | **100%** |

37 Note, this does not include the additional 104 foreign nationals who were only using food/day services and who had not provided evidence of using homeless accommodation/ sleeping rough.
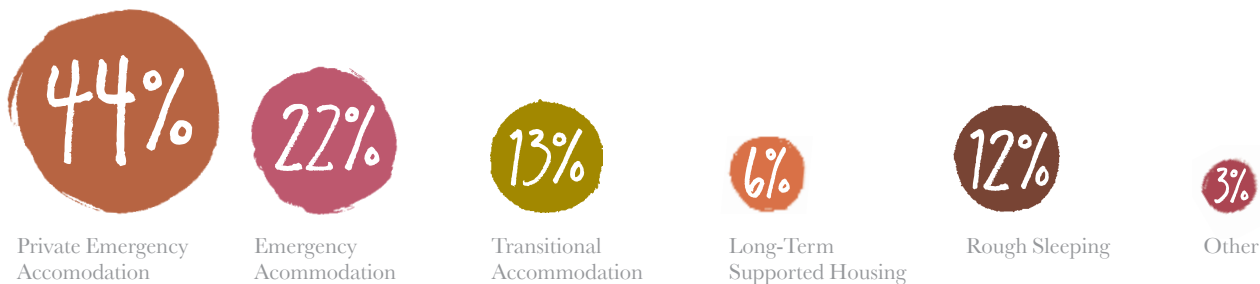
Nationality of foreign national homeless service users
47 of the EU citizens were from parts of the UK, 35 were from Poland and 22 were from Romania. In addition, the following EU nationalities were met in the *Counted In* survey: Belgian, Cypriot, Czech, French, German, Dutch, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Portuguese, Slovak, Slovene, Spanish and Swedish.

The following non-EU nationalities were met in the *Counted In* survey: Afghan, American, Angolan, Bangladeshi, Bosnian, Brazilian, Cameroon, Chinese, Congolese, Eritrean, Indian, Iraqi, Ivorian, Kenyan, Kosovan, Liberian, Libyan, Loesotho, Mauritian, Moroccan, Nigerian, Pakistani, Palestinian, Russian, Rwandan, South African, Serbian, Sierra Leone, Somali, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Swiss, Tanzanian, Turkish, Ugandan and Zimbabwean.

Not every respondent gave details of their nationality beyond EU or non-EU.

**Figure 13. Location of foreign national homeless service users**



| 44% | 22% | 13% | 6% | 12% | 3% |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Private Emergency Accomodation | Emergency Acommodation | Transitional Accommodation | Long-Term Supported Housing | Rough Sleeping | Other |

For a description of each type of accommodation, see the Glossary and key terms.

One of the more serious concerns is that 12% of foreign national adults in homeless services reported sleeping rough. In contrast, only 4% of Irish adults in homeless services reported sleeping rough. (See Section 4 for more details on rough sleeping).

12% of foreign national adults in homeless
services reported sleeping rough.



4% of Irish adults in homeless
services reported sleeping rough.

# Section 7
# Domestic violence and homelessness

## 7.1 Domestic violence refuges

In Ireland, domestic violence refuges were not traditionally funded as homeless services. However, The Way Home, the new national homeless strategy, notes that the 1988 definition of homelessness is 'generally interpreted as including' victims of family/domestic violence.[38]

The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) identifies people in women's shelters as one of the categories of 'houselessness'. (In addition, people living under threat of violence are considered 'insecurely housed'.)

**Table 30. Domestic violence refuges in ETHOS**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Houseless** | 4 | People in Women's Shelter | 4.1 | Women's shelter accommodation |

From the perspective of the Homeless Agency, domestic violence represents one possible pathway into homelessness. Due to the often hidden nature of domestic violence, it is very difficult to prevent a situation where someone leaves home due to violence (or the threat of violence). Hence the emphasis needs to be on ensuring that there are enough domestic violence refuge places so that no-one is forced to use homeless accommodation instead, which may lack the more appropriate personal supports that are needed by women (and their children) fleeing domestic violence.[39]

It should also be noted that men fleeing domestic violence do not have the option of domestic violence refuges and are likely to be placed in homeless accommodation.

Domestic violence refuges are planned and funded through the Department of Health and Children, with capital funding provided through the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The National Office for the Prevention of Domestic, Sexual and Gender-based Violence (Cosc) was established in June 2007 and operates within the Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.[40]

There are currently four domestic violence refuges serving the Dublin area. Refuges provide accommodation, personal advice and support to women and help to access whatever other mainstream and specialised services their households need.

A new refuge building has been constructed in Blanchardstown, but it is not yet operational. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Council Council is currently investigating the need for a refuge in that area.

In addition to refuges, a specialist housing association provides supported transitional housing to women and their children who are homeless due to domestic violence.

38  *The Way Home*, p. 17

39  For example, the 1997 *Report of the Taskforce on Violence Against Women* notes that 'accommodation-only services like hostels and B&Bs are an inadequate response to complex family needs, and women and children fleeing a violent situation need more than just a roof and a bed.' p. 69

40  www.cosc.ie

It is generally accepted that Dublin has fewer domestic violence refuge places than are likely to be needed by its population of nearly 1.2 million people.[41] A comparison can be made with the UK, where a target has been set for all local authority areas to have a minimum of 1 refuge place per 10,000 in the population.[42] (A 'refuge place' means space to accommodate a woman and her children.) If the UK performance target was applied to Dublin, a minimum of 122 refuge places would be needed.[43] The four refuges currently in operation provide a total of 30 places.

Domestic violence also introduces some additional barriers to moving a household out of homelessness. For example, people fleeing violence are generally not eligible to be accepted on local authorities' housing lists if they already have a joint tenancy or shared ownership of a family home. However, local authorities are generally very flexible about accepting households from other local authority areas if they are fleeing violence.

The *Counted In, 2008* survey included the four domestic violence refuges in Dublin for the first time. A total of 16 households returned survey forms from three of the four refuges and an additional 32 households returned forms from transitional accommodation for women made homeless due to domestic violence.[44]

40 of the 48 households reported having children. This accounted for a total of 96 children. 29 of the children belonged to women in refuges and the rest to women in specialist transitional accommodation.

30 households reported that they were living with one or more of their children, 9 were not living with their children and 8 did not have any children.

**Table 31. Age of women in domestic violence refuges**

|  | Frequency | Percent |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 18-25 | 8 | 17.4% |
| 26-39 | 27 | 58.7% |
| 40-49 | 7 | 15.2% |
| 50-64 | 4 | 8.7% |
| 65+ | 0 | 0% |
| Not stated | 2 | - |
| **Total Adults** | **48** | **100%** |

The majority (59%) of the women in domestic violence refuges were aged 26-39 years old.

In terms of the duration of homeless, almost all the women in the domestic violence refuges were there for less than six months. However, the majority of residents of specialist transitional accommodation were homeless for one to two years.

41  1997 *Report of the Task Force on Violence Against Women* notes that 'There is a need to increase the present level of refuge accommodation' p. 14 and 'All refuges in Ireland have, at times, more women seeking space than they can accommodate. There has been no systematic data collection on the demand for refuge space and this lack of reliable data on levels of demand make it extremely difficult to quantify precisely refuge space requirements. Available statistics on the incidence of violence in Ireland… would testify however to the need for additional refuge places.' p. 66

42  The provision of 1 place per 10,000 in the population is a current local authority performance target. The original estimate of that this number of refuge places is needed comes from a 1997 report of a Commons Select Committee. Source: www.audit-commission.gov.uk

43  Dublin's estimated population was 1,217,800 people in April 2008 (Central Statistics Office).

44  This survey only accounts for half of the available refuge places. This is partially because one refuge did not participate in the survey. It is also possible that some women did not regard themselves as homeless and therefore declined to complete a form.

Domestic violence represents one
possible pathway into homelessness

# Section 8
# State institutions and homelessness

## 8.1 State institutions

The European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion (ETHOS) includes people due to be discharged from state institutions who do not have access to adequate and secure accommodation upon release as one of the categories of 'houselessness'. Specifically, the living situations included are prison, various medical institutions and young people coming out of state care.

**Table 32. People due to be released from state institutions in ETHOS**

| Conceptual Category | Operational Category | | Living Situation | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Houseless** | 6 | People due to be released from institutions | 6.1 | Penal institutions |
| | | | 6.2 | Medical institutions |
| | | | 6.3 | Children's institutions/homes |

The *Counted In* survey does not encompass the wide range of state institutions where people may be at imminent risk of homelessness. Furthermore, there are fundamental difficulties in identifying people at risk of homelessness. They may not even be aware of it themselves; for example, people leaving a state institution may have somewhere to stay upon release, but it may not be a secure long-term option and they may become homeless within a short period after discharge.

This section provides a reflection upon what is known about people at risk of homelessness in state institutions in Dublin. It is important to take account of these pathways into homelessness as part of prevention strategies and rapid responses to people who do move from state institutions into homelessness. However, neither the *Counted In* survey nor current information systems can provide comprehensive information on the numbers of people who are at risk of homelessness in each of these categories.

There are seven prisons in the Dublin area, which account for about half of Ireland's prison population (that is, an average of 1797 prisoners at any one time). Many sentences or remand periods in prison are for less than one year. In 2006, a total of 3542 prisoners gave a Dublin address and 897 gave no address details.[45]

45   Figures from Irish Prison Service (www.irishprisons.ie/statistics-home.htm)
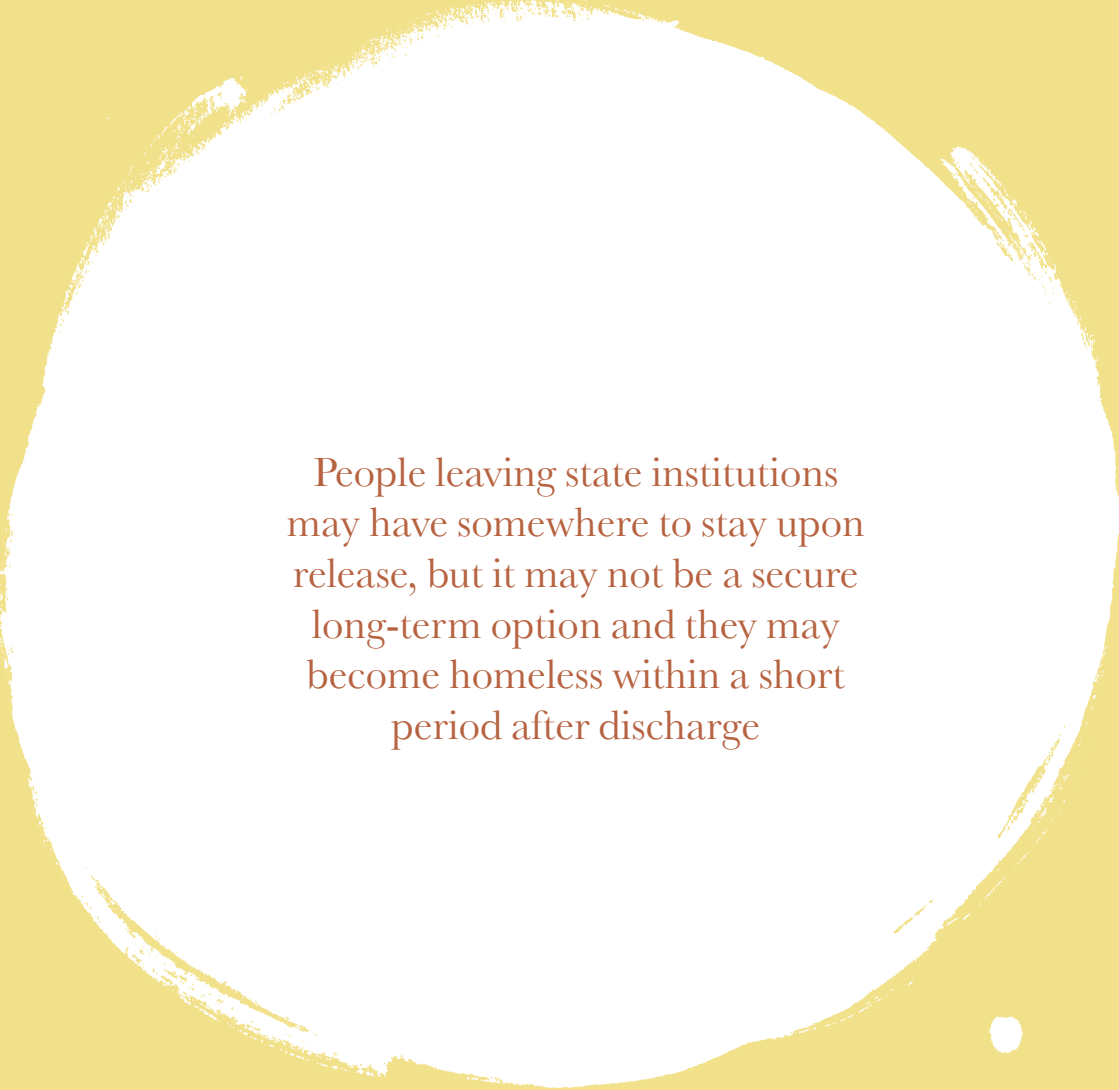
46   Seymour and Costello (2005)

Various studies have looked into the question of how many prisoners may be at risk of homelessness on release. A 2005 report (based on 2002 data) surveyed 241 prisoners and found that 54% of them had at least one experience of homelessness prior to imprisonment and that 25% of them were homeless on committal into prison. Many of the prisoners had a long history of homelessness and were at risk of becoming homeless again on release.[46] However, it is not possible to make a strong statistical inference from these percentages to the prison population as a whole. Nevertheless, it is likely that a significant number of people will have accommodation difficulties upon release from prison.

Health service facilities include hospitals, mental health hospitals and other residential facilities. A total of 18 people were surveyed in the *Counted In* survey through various health service facilities, however this is considered to under-sample the numbers of people who may be currently homeless in this accommodation. The risk of people becoming homeless upon discharge from mental health facilities is particularly of concern.

The Office of the Minister for Children, under the Department of Health and Children, has responsibility for the Youth Homeless Strategy. The current strategy was published in 2001.[47] Recent qualitative research into youth homelessness in Dublin and Cork has been carried out by the Children's Research Centre in Trinity College Dublin.[48] This research includes a longitudinal study of young people's pathways through homelessness, part-funded through the Homeless Agency. Phase 2 of this research is due for publication in late 2008 and the fieldwork for phase 3 is ongoing.

47  For more information,
    see www.omc.gov.ie

48  For more information, see
    www.tcd.ie/childrensresearchcentre

People leaving state institutions may have somewhere to stay upon release, but it may not be a secure long-term option and they may become homeless within a short period after discharge

# Section 9
# Performance indicators

## 9.1 Performance indicators

'Performance indicators' provide the Homeless Agency with a way of measuring the outcomes in terms of progress towards achieving the vision and agreed core actions of its action plan, *A Key to the Door*. Although many of the factors affecting homelessness (such as economic change, migration and personal crisis events) are outside of the influence of homeless services, the overall outcome measurements provide a benchmark as to whether or not the situation is improving. By monitoring the overall situation, the Homeless Agency can focus resources and address homelessness as strategically as possible. *A Key to the Door* lists 22 key performance indicators (KPIs).[49] The new national strategy to address adult homelessness also has a number of key performance indicators.[50] The *Counted In* survey provides information for nine of the Homeless Agency KPIs (which overlap with four of the national KPIs).

The ideal with performance indicators is to put in place an 'information system' that makes the information available on a regular, ongoing basis. An information system is not the same thing as a computer/IT system. Rather, an information system is an agreement and set of guidelines about gathering, sharing, analysing and reporting on certain information among a group of organisations. If information technology can be used to support this goal, then it can be part of the process, but the key to any information system is simply identifying what data is needed to inform decision-making.

The Homeless Agency is continuing to develop its information systems, including quarterly returns from funded services and the use of a shared client database.

In the absence of a fully comprehensive information system, one-off surveys like *Counted In* provide valuable information as a baseline for monitoring performance indicators. Although it cannot provide answers to all of the key questions, the *Counted In* survey provides a good basis for the further development of an information system to regularly monitor the performance indicators.

* = Measure is also a key performance indicator for national strategy

**Vision**
— How many people are experiencing homelessness? *
 2366 adults were in Dublin homeless services in March 2008. In terms of households proportional to the population as a whole, c. 0.5% (1 in 200) of all Dublin households are in homeless services.

— How many people are experiencing long-term homelessness? *
 1651 adults were in homeless services for more than six months and an additional 399 did not state how long they were in homeless services. At least 989 of these adults (942 households) were in emergency or private emergency accommodation for more than six months. Not everyone in stated how long they were in homeless services.

— What is the duration of people's experience of homelessness? *
 The median average date that people first became homeless is five years ago; that is, half of those currently homeless became homeless within the last five years and half first became homeless over five years ago. This includes people who may have exited homelessness and then become homeless again.

49  *A Key to the Door*, p. 81

50  *The Way Home*, p. 30

— How many people are sleeping rough? *
110 adults reported sleeping rough in the *Counted In* survey (representing 4.6% of all adults in homeless services). 115 adults were observed sleeping rough on one night in April 2008. Both of these figures represent minimum figures.

— How many repeat cases of homelessness occur every year?
17.5% of those met in *Counted In* were experiencing their second or subsequent experience of homelessness.

— What are the demographic profile and support needs of people experiencing homelessness in each local area?
Sections 2 and 3 of this report provide a lot of this information (in terms of gender, age, household type, etc). Further information on households' support needs will be gathered through the Holistic Needs Assessment process currently being rolled out across homeless services.

— Where are people experiencing homelessness temporarily housed? (i.e. in what type of accommodation and in what local area)
617 adults in homeless services were in emergency accommodation and 771 were in private emergency accommodation.

— How many people experiencing homelessness are currently accommodated through a transitional programme or another fixed duration support/treatment programme?
392 adults were in transitional accommodation and 340 adults were in long-term supported housing.

— How many people experiencing homelessness are entitled to register on a local authority social housing list? How many have done so? And how many have homeless priority? For those people not entitled to register, why is this the case?
2144 households were surveyed in *Counted In*. 1507 (70%) were verified with the local authorities and 614 (29%) could not be verified because of incomplete information or because they had never registered with a local authority. In addition, 23 (1%) applications were being processed.

Of the 1507 households verified with the local authority, 1119 (73%) had homeless priority and 388 (25%) were not eligible for homeless priority (although some were on the housing waiting list without this priority). Reasons for ineligibility included not being from the area, not staying in contact with the local authority and having an existing tenancy/long-term housing, among other reasons.

17·5%

17.5% of those met in *Counted In* were experiencing their second or subsequent experience of homelessness.

# Appendices

# Appendix 1- Details of *Counted In* survey method

The following method is written to provide a concise guide to how to conduct a weeklong survey of people using homeless services in the manner of the *Counted In* survey.

## Aim

— The aim of the survey is to provide as accurate an enumeration as possible of every person using any homeless service in the area during the week of the survey. The survey also provides detail about a person's household type and experience of homelessness, which is important for planning homeless services.

## Survey organisers

— The survey organisers in Dublin were based in the Homeless Agency. In Cork, Galway and Limerick, they were based in the local authority. One member of staff will need to take charge of the preparation and management of the project on a full-time basis for several weeks before and after the survey. Several members of staff may be needed to assist around the week of the survey.

— It is a good idea to form a reference group, with participation from the local authorities in the area and the voluntary sector. A reference group can provide advice in advance of the survey and review the final report. The reference group can further act as a steering committee if required, to help plan and organise the survey in more detail. The reference group/steering committee could be a sub-group of the local homeless forum.

## Preparation

— The survey organisers will need a list of all homeless services in the area, including managers' names and contact details, as well as those of any other service which might be used by people who are homeless; e.g. various community/day centres, youth services, addiction services, etc.

— A formal letter should be sent out to each service well in advance, requesting their participation in the survey. Follow up email and/or telephone calls should be made to ensure the widest possible participation.

— A named contact person should be established for each participating service.

— The survey forms will need to be printed in advance, in sufficient quantity to provide each participating service with a surplus. If possible, a situation where services photocopy forms should be avoided. In Dublin, the forms were printed on blue paper to avoid confusion with the white forms being used for the Housing Needs Assessment being carried out at the same time. This proved to be very useful, as it was easy to ask people if they had completed the blue form during the week; bearing in mind that people who are homeless are frequently asked to complete forms.

— Posters and fliers giving the dates of the survey and explaining its purpose were prepared.

— A survey pack was sent to the named individual in each participating service, containing:
  – A letter reminding them of the purpose and importance of the survey;
  – Instructions for conducting the survey;
  – The survey forms;
  – One or more posters, plus a number of fliers;
  – An envelope for the storage of the forms for collection.

— Where possible, survey packs were delivered by Homeless Agency staff. This gave an opportunity to have a brief meeting with the contact person from each service when handing over the material and to answer any last minute queries about the process.

— In most cases, the envelope of completed survey forms was also collected by Homeless Agency staff. This gave an opportunity to gain any additional feedback from services and to thank them for their participation.

## The survey form

— The survey form used is shown in Appendix 2.

— The questions on the form are based on instructions issued from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in relation to the information required as part of the national housing needs assessment. Additional questions around homelessness were added by the Homeless Agency.

— Note, there is an error on the form that was used. Children's dates of birth should have been asked rather than their maiden names.

— Feedback from the survey is used to improve the forms and the specific questions asked. Guidance on the latest survey form can be obtained from the Homeless Agency.

## The non-response sheet

— In addition to the survey form, each participating service was provided with a non-response sheet. This was a simple table, with columns for Name, Date of Birth, Gender and Nationality.

— Services were asked to record these details for any service user who declined to complete a full survey form.

— The purpose of the non-response sheet is for the overall survey to have the most accurate possible total count of all service users.

## Conducting the survey

— Workers in each participating service are asked to ensure that every service user is asked to complete a form during the week of the survey.

— Generally, workers should complete the form on behalf of service users, by asking them the questions as in an interview. It is important to remind workers to use block capitals and complete the form as clearly as possible. Service users may complete the form on their own if they prefer.

— Service users must sign the completed form.

— If a service user declines to complete the survey, the worker should still note their name, date of birth, gender and nationality on the non-response sheet (see above).

## Collecting and sorting the survey forms

— It is important to remember that the forms hold personal information and should be stored securely, according to the guidelines of data protection.

— The first task is to ensure that every set of survey forms is returned as soon as possible after the end of the week of the survey. Where possible, these should be collected. If not, a courier service should be used to ensure that they are not lost. Survey forms should not be returned by regular post.

— As the forms are returned, they should be kept in batches according to the service they came from.

— Each batch of forms should be examined. Spoilt forms should be removed, along with any remaining blanks.

— Every valid form should be checked to make sure that the name of the service is written in. If not, this information should be written in, using a red pen to distinguish this from the original completion of the form.

— The office use only sections of the form should also be completed in red pen.

— All survey forms should be numbered on the front with a heavy marker. This survey number will be important to manage the data later.

## Data entry

— The information on each form should be entered into a spreadsheet (e.g. MS Excel).

— It is important to avoid the errors that can occur when large volumes of data are being entered. These can be minimised by double data-entry, where the same data is entered twice and the results compared. Any inconsistencies between the two datasets can be queried against the original paper form.

— The information on the non-response sheets should also be entered.

## Data preparation

— It is important to preserve the original dataset. As every stage of preparation is undertaken, the dataset should be saved as a separate file with a new name. This allows an audit trail in the files, from the original data to the final dataset that is used for analysis.

— The first step in making the data ready for analysis is to remove any duplicates, as some people may have completed a survey form more than once during the week, especially if they used multiple services.

— When removing duplicates, it is important to keep the data from the form with the most information. For example, if someone completed a form and was also recorded on a non-response sheet, the latter entry should be removed as it only includes basic details.

— The next stage is to remove any data concerning people who completed a survey form in day/food services and who did not indicate on the form that they were using homeless accommodation or sleeping rough. Likewise, anyone who indicated on the form that they were not homeless should be removed from the dataset.

— The next stage is to deal with any remaining anomalous data. For example, dates may be entered using the incorrect format or using words instead of numbers. These should all be standardised.

— Next, a series of new columns of data should be created, as required, to recode or combine data from the original forms. For example, it is necessary to calculate people's ages from their dates of birth. It is also useful to classify these according to age group. A new variable of age group can be generated to record this.

— It is useful to create a separate dataset for all adults, separate from the main dataset of households. This allows for the combination of respondents and their partners in the same columns.

## Data analysis

— The final dataset can be analysed using Excel and/or a statistics software package such as SPSS.

— Basic descriptive statistics can be generated from the data, as shown in Section 2.

— As shown in the rest of this report, a number of other analyses can also be carried out, based on the data provided in the survey forms.

## Appendix 2- *Counted In* survey questionnaire

# Homeless Persons – Household Details Form

The Homeless Agency is conducting a survey on homelessness over the course of this week on behalf of the four Dublin local authorities. This information will be used for the national housing needs assessment, so it is important that we get information on everyone who is currently homeless.

It is also necessary to complete this form if you want to register for homeless priority for local authority housing.

Can you please answer the following questions? It will only take a few minutes.

**Please complete the form using BLOCK CAPITALS.**

Please begin the interview by asking if the person has completed the (blue) form already this week. If the person does not remember, please ask him/her to complete it again.

**A. What is your current address?** _____

_____

Postcode/County: _____
If the person is moving between locations or sleeping rough, please write "no fixed abode".

**Is this your own home (or the home of friends/family)?**   Yes[a] ☐   No ☐

**Do you stay there every night?**   Yes[a] ☐   No ☐

**Are you in receipt of Rent Allowance?**   Yes ☐   No ☐

[a] If the answer to the first two questions above is "Yes" in both cases (unless the person's home is actually homeless accommodation) then please end the interview and thank the person for his/her time.  If the answer to either question is "No", please continue and complete the form in full.

For Office Use Only (Please indicate the designation of the above address)

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Emergency Accommodation | ☐ | Transitional Accommodation | ☐ |
| Private Emergency Accommodation | ☐ | Long-Term Supported Housing | ☐ |
| Private Tenancy/Housing | ☐ | No fixed abode/sleeping rough | ☐ |
| Other | ☐ | | |

**B. Over the last seven nights, how many of those nights have you spent:**
Please enter a number from 0 to 7 for accommodation that the person stayed in.

In your current accommodation (as above)   _____ nights
In a hostel?   _____ nights
In a domestic violence refuge?   _____ nights
In a B&B (private emergency)?   _____ nights
In a friend's house?   _____ nights
Sleeping rough (on the streets)?   _____ nights  [Specify postcode area/county:              ]
Sleeping somewhere else (e.g. in a squat)?   _____ nights  [Please specify:              ]
Can't remember   _____ nights

## C. Your Details:

| First Name | Surname | Maiden Name | Other Names |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |

Please note the person's gender:        Male ☐              Female ☐

Date of Birth: ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐   dd/mm/yyyy

PPS Number: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐   7 numbers + 1 or 2 letters

Your Citizenship:        Irish Citizen ☐        EU Citizen ☐           Non-EU Citizen ☐

If not Irish, please specify country of origin: _____

If non-EU please indicate the basis for residence in Ireland:
Permission to Remain ☐        Refugee Status ☐       Other ☐ please specify other: _____

If you have permission to remain, please note your Green Card Expiry Date ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐ dd/mm/yyyy

What is your weekly income?   € _____

What is the source of your income:
☐ Jobseekers Allowance (JA)            ☐ Jobseekers Benefit (JB)
☐ Disability Allowance                 ☐ One Parent Family Payment
☐ Back to Education                    ☐ HSE/CWO/HPU – Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA)
☐ In Employment                       ☐ Carers Allowance
☐ Pension                             ☐ Community Employment Scheme
☐ FÁS                                ☐ Other

## D. Do you have a partner?   Yes ☐ No ☐        If Yes, please supply your Partner's Details:

| Partner's First Name | Surname | Maiden Name | Other Names |
|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |

Please note the partner's gender:        Male ☐      Female ☐

Date of Birth: ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐   dd/mm/yyyy

PPS Number: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐ ☐☐   7 numbers + 1 or 2 letters

Your partner's citizenship:        Irish Citizen ☐        EU Citizen ☐           Non-EU Citizen ☐

If partner is not Irish, please specify country of origin: _____

If partner is non-EU please indicate the basis for residence in Ireland:
Permission to Remain ☐        Refugee Status ☐       Other ☐ please specify other: _____

If partner has permission to remain, note his/her Green Card Expiry Date ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐ dd/mm/yyyy

**D. Partner's Details (continued)**

What is your partner's weekly income?

What is the source of your partner's income:

☐ Jobseekers Allowance (JA)
☐ Disability Allowance
☐ Back to Education
☐ In Employment
☐ Pension
☐ FÁS

☐ Jobseekers Benefit (JB)
☐ One Parent Family Payment
☐ HSE/CWO/HPU – Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA)
☐ Carers Allowance
☐ Community Employment Scheme
☐ Other

**E. Do you have any Dependents (that is, children or others who you look after)?**

How many children do you have? ☐

| First Name | Surname | Gender | Maiden Name | PPS Number | Relationship to you? | Living with you? Y/N |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

**F. Do you, or any member of your family have a disability?**

Yes ☐    No ☐

**G. Are you on a local authority housing waiting list?**

Yes ☐         No ☐

If Yes, please indicate which authority:
Dublin City Council ☐      Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown CC ☐      Fingal CC ☐      South Dublin CC ☐

Other ☐    please specify: _____

**H. What was your last permanent address?** _____

_____

Postcode/County: _____

During what years did you live there?    From: ☐☐☐☐    Until: ☐☐☐☐

**I. Have you previously been a local authority tenant?**

Yes ☐            No ☐

Which local authority:
Dublin City Council ☐        Dún Laoghaire/Rathdown CC ☐        Fingal CC ☐        South Dublin CC ☐

Other ☐        please specify: _____

What was your address?        _____

_____

Postcode/County: _____

**J. In what year did you <u>first</u> become homeless?** ☐☐☐☐

How long have you <u>currently</u> been homeless? _____ Please specify months or years

If the person is not sure of the length of time that he/she has currently been homeless, please tick one of the following options:

☐ Under 6 months                    ☐ Up to 5 years
☐ Between 6 and 12 months           ☐ Up to 10 years
☐ Up to 2 years                     ☐ Over 10 years
☐ Up to 3 years

---

## DECLARATION

I confirm that the information I have provided on this form is correct and that,

(a)   I require permanent local authority housing          ☐

(b)   I do not require permanent local authority housing    ☐

Signed: _____        Date: ☐☐ / ☐☐ / ☐☐☐☐ dd/mm/yyyy

| For Office Use Only |
| --- |
| LINK ID Number |
| Survey conducted in the following location: |
| Survey conducted by the following person: |

# Appendix 3 – Details of rough sleeper street count method

The following method is written to provide a concise guide to how to conduct a street count of people rough sleeping in urban areas.

## Golden rule

— People who are sleeping rough must be treated with respect and dignity.

## Count organisers

— The count organisers in Dublin are based in either the Homeless Agency or one of the local authorities. One member of staff will need to take charge of the preparation and management of the street count on at least a half-time basis for several weeks leading up to the count.

— If required, a steering committee can be formed to help plan and organise the count. The same committee can also meet to agree the count findings afterwards. This committee could be a sub-group of the local homeless forum.

— The count organisers will need to provide a building (Count Centre) to accommodate count teams on the night of the count (from 11pm to 6am). Typically, a local authority building can be used. This will require agreement to provide a member of staff to open the building, provide security, etc.

## Preparation

— It is important to begin preparations for the count well in advance. A six to eight week lead in period may be needed, depending on the size of the area to be covered.

— The count organisers will have to meet with those who have information about rough sleepers and collate this information. Local homeless outreach teams and other services should have good intelligence about where people are sleeping rough. It is useful to have one or more meetings in advance and to collate all available information. The Gardaí, parks services, local parish priests/ministers, port authorities and others may have information.

— Individual maps need to be prepared for count teams, with the area that team is to cover clearly marked. Maps should be laminated. The maps should represent an area that can be comfortably covered in 2 hours. Remember that teams will have to cover every street and alleyway, which requires considerable back-tracking. Smaller areas should be given to teams in the city/town centre, as they will spend quite a lot of time interacting with people they meet there. Larger areas can be given to teams in quiet residential areas, especially if they are covering them by car.

— Teams will require the following equipment: maps; high visibility jackets (most local authorities have a stock of these or have a contract for their purchase); torches (at least one per team); resource packs that can be given to people who are sleeping rough (several per team depending on how many people they are likely to meet in their count area); a clipboard; A-forms and B-forms (see below); two pens; and a letter of identification explaining the purpose of the count. Resource packs include information on homeless services in the area as well as one or two snack items.

— Teams must also bring mobile telephones with them.

— It will also be necessary to have a few sleeping bags available on the night in case someone is met sleeping rough without bedding.

— Confirm with the local authority well in advance whether they can provide insurance cover for the night.

— The core set of people involved in the count should be people working in homeless services, especially outreach services and other services that work directly with people who sleep rough. Count teams should be led by these experienced workers.

— Volunteers can be recruited from other homeless services, from local community/addiction/youth groups or from other areas. In Dublin, many local authority staff volunteered. Count teams should have one or more volunteers, accompanied by an experienced worker.

— The Dublin count covered every street in the city centre between the North Circular Road and the Grand Canal, as well as at least a third of the residential areas in the rest of the local authority area (which roughly covers all the area inside the M50). A minimum of 30-40 count teams were required to cover this area.

— A spreadsheet of volunteers should be maintained by the count organisers. This will include the volunteer's name and contact details – including the number of a mobile phone number that the person will carry with them on the night – and the name and contact details of someone who can be contacted in case of emergency.

— The count organisers should also ask who will bring a car with them on the night, as suburban/ residential areas may be more appropriately covered by car than on foot.

— An email contact list of all volunteers should be compiled and maintained by the count organisers. Reminders prior to the count as well as details of briefings, guidelines, etc should be circulated by email.

— Prior to the night, the count organisers should seek confirmation from volunteers that they will be there. Every experienced worker should be allocated an area to cover in advance and other volunteers can be added to teams on the night. This allows volunteers to be quickly supplied with their equipment when they arise. (NB It takes time to supply even a small number of people with equipment, especially if they need to discuss any details about their count area).

— Plan in advance to have enough staff available so that a number can remain in the Count Centre. They will have several tasks to perform (see below).

## Where to count

— The goal of the street count method is to cover every street in the central urban area, as well as all streets in residential/suburban areas where there is a possibility that people sleep rough.

— The count teams do not enter private property, including squats.

— The count teams are also instructed not to go anywhere where they feel threatened or at risk. Teams can ask local Gardaí to accompany them in such cases (see below).

— In Dublin, the parks services and the Gardaí have assisted count teams to cover parks and other open areas in the morning after the count. This allows an estimation of the number of people sleeping in these areas, which otherwise cannot be covered for safety reasons.

## When to count

— The count should take place on a typical mid-week night (typically Tuesday or Wednesday evening) and should not occur when there is any major event, such as concert or festival, taking place. The choice of a typical mid-week night minimises the level of night-time street activity that is not related to rough sleeping.

— The count should not begin until licensed premises have closed and most people have left the city/town centre. In Dublin, the counting begins at 1.30am and ends at 4am.

— Count teams can finish once they have covered their designated area. It is important that all teams are instructed to stop counting at 4am, even if they have not covered all of their area.

— Count teams are asked to assemble in the Count Centre for around 11.30pm. A brief presentation is made and refreshments are made available. Count teams are also supplied with their equipment and asked to present at the local Garda station for 1am, before beginning the count.

— All volunteers should be asked to keep the planned date of the count confidential, to avoid media intrusion on the night (see below).

## The role of An Garda Síochána

— The Gardaí have been important partners in the Dublin street counts. They have provided information about where people are known to sleep rough, provided local stations as contact points for count teams, provided Gardaí to accompany teams in certain areas and they have been on standby to provide assistance for any count team that got into difficulty.

— It is important to contact the headquarters of the Garda Síochána in your area several weeks in advance of the count and ask if local Garda stations can assist on the night. The headquarters should be able to confirm that no other major events are planned on the night in question and can send a letter or fax to Garda stations in the area asking them to support count teams.

— On the night, count teams go from the Count Centre to the Garda station that covers their area. From there, they proceed to carry out the count. Every team has the name of that night's desk sergeant and the telephone number of the local station. If the team wishes to be accompanied in any area or should they have any difficulty, the local station can send out support. At the end of the count, each team returns to the Garda station to let them know that they have finished.

## Recording information (A forms and B forms)

— Two different forms are used to record information about people who are sleeping rough. These should be different colours and clearly marked with a letter A or B.

— Forms should be printed with the name of the area that the count team will cover. There should be space on the form for the count team to write their names.

— The main part of both forms is a table with the following columns: Time, Location, Name, Date of Birth (approx. age), Gender, Nationality and Any Other Details. The Time column is for the exact time when someone was counted. The Location column should allow room to give as much detail as possible – e.g. street name, neighbouring building or shop front, etc.

— The purpose of having both A-forms and B-forms is to make the job of count teams as straightforward as possible on the night and to remove any need to debate whether or not someone should be counted.

— The A-form is used to record the details of someone who is bedded down (as defined above).

— The B-form is used to record the details of someone who may be sleeping rough, but who is not bedded down. For example, someone who is walking around. The B-form can also be used to record other information, such as if the count team discover bedding without anyone being there.

— If someone is asleep, he/she should not be woken up. If someone is awake, the count team can explain what they are doing and ask the person his/her name, date of birth and nationality. If the person is asleep, the team should note his/her gender and approximate age, if this can be estimated.

## The role of the count centre

— The Count Centre should be a central location where all count teams will assemble in advance of the count. It should be warm and provide toilet facilities and refreshments, especially hot drinks and some food. The Count Centre will also be used to brief teams in advance and to supply them with their equipment. It is useful to have several tables, each labelled by area, to speed up the process of issuing equipment and instructions to the count teams.

— All counters should sign in at the beginning of the count.

— Throughout the night, one or more staff members in the Count Centre should telephone one person from each count team. This is simply to check in with them to make sure they are not in any difficulty and to answer any questions they might have.

— The Count Centre should also have a telephone number that any team can ring during the night if they have questions or are in difficulty. Ensure this number is not engaged due to outgoing calls.

— An experienced member of staff should be ready to drive out to any team in difficulty, for example if they meet someone who is in need of medical attention. A team should also be available to drive out to provide a sleeping bag to anyone who is found sleeping rough without bedding.

— At the end of the night, all count teams must return to the Count Centre and each individual must sign out.

— All equipment, especially the A-forms and B-forms should be handed over to the count organisers. Make sure that all details on these forms have been completed, especially the name of the counters in case there is any question later about the information they recorded.

— At the very end of the count, it is important to check that every volunteer is accounted for. Anyone who did not sign out should be telephoned to make sure they are alright.

— The A-forms and B-forms should be kept securely for the night. The calculation of the total should be done later in the week.

## Briefing for count teams

— It is important that all count teams should receive a briefing before participating in the count. Ideally, this briefing should occur in advance of the night. A short briefing should also be given on the night to include anyone who could not make it to the earlier briefing.

— The briefing should inform counters of:
  – the definition of rough sleeping that is being used;
  – when to use the A forms and when to use the B forms;
  – the role of the Count Centre and An Garda Síochána on the night;
  – the need to wear sensible clothing on the night;
  – the precaution of not bringing any valuables (e.g. jewellery, iPods);
  – not to wake people who are asleep;
  – how to interact with people who are awake;

— An experienced worker from homeless services can be asked to say a few words about how to interact with people who are sleeping rough. In particular, he/she should give some tips for de-escalating situations where someone sleeping rough may feel alarmed or threatened by count teams.

— It is very important that count teams are clear about what their role is. The purpose of the count is to provide robust information that will be used by homeless service to react to the needs of people sleeping rough. It is not the role of count teams to seek accommodation for people on the night. Therefore, count teams should not unfairly raise people's expectations.

— In interacting with people who are sleeping rough, the count team should simply explain that they are conducting a count of people sleeping rough on behalf of the local authority/Homeless Agency. They can then ask the person if they wouldn't mind providing their basic details.

## Child welfare

— If any team encounters someone sleeping rough who is, or appears to be, under the age of 18, they must contact the local Garda station as this is a child welfare issue. An 'out of hours' services operates nationally out of every Garda station and a social worker will be called on the night to meet the young person and to bring them to accommodation.

— One or more members of homeless services are likely to have experience of working with children who are out of home. It is a good idea to nominate one person to act as a contact for all count teams if under-18s are met on the night. He or she can be asked to drive to the location and talk to the young person until the 'out of hours' social worker arrives.

## Medical assistance

— If any team encounters a person sleeping rough who appears to require medical assistance, they should telephone the Count Centre. If the person is very ill the team can telephone 999 directly to ask for an ambulance to come, but they should also inform the Count Centre.

— The Count Centre should send someone with experience to wait with the ill person and to allow the count team to complete counting in their area.

## Serious incidents

— If a serious incident occurs; for example, someone is seriously injured; the entire count should be abandoned and all teams instructed to return to the Count Centre.

## Media intrusion

— The Homeless Agency has agreed that media involvement in rough sleeper street counts is inappropriate and runs counter to the human rights and dignity of people who are sleeping rough.

— If there is any media intrusion on the night, in particular photography or filming, count teams are instructed to abandon the count in their area and return to the count centre. If there is widespread media intrusion the entire count is to be abandoned.

## Agreeing the total number of people who were sleeping rough on the night

— It is important to recall that this method provides a definitive minimum count of people who were sleeping rough on the night. It is accepted that there may be additional people hidden in inaccessible locations, such as on private property, who could not be counted on the night.

— All of the information from the A-forms and B-forms should be typed into a spreadsheet (e.g. MS Excel). Whether the information is from the A-forms and B-forms should be clearly marked and the data kept separately.

— A formal meeting should be called to agree the count findings, with at least one representative from the local authority and one from the voluntary sector. (If there is a steering committee, they can take on this role). The purpose of the meeting is to review the lists generated from the A-forms and B-forms.

— The meeting should firstly agree the removal of any duplicates in the data. Duplication can occur if someone sleeping rough moves during the count or if a count team accidentally covers part of another team's area.

— The meeting should then review the A-form list and agree that there are no irregularities.

— The meeting should then review the B-form list and agree whether or not to include the people on that list. To assist this process, it is important that count teams should record as much information as possible on the B-forms to explain why they believe that a person may be sleeping rough.

— Decisions about including someone in the count total should be unanimous. That is, if either side has an objection to the inclusion of a given record then it should be excluded. As noted above, the method only provides a minimum count. As such, there should be no grounds for anyone to claim that they did not agree the minimum count total.

## Following the count

— The number of people sleeping rough is an important indication of whether or not there is sufficient emergency accommodation, appropriate to the profile of those who were sleeping rough. All emergency accommodation providers should be asked if they had any vacancies on the night of the count. This information should be conveyed to the persons in charge of managing emergency accommodation in the area.

— The location of people sleeping rough is important information for outreach teams. These teams should be given information about where people were sleeping rough so that they can make contact with them and assist them into accommodation and/or to access other services.

— It is not appropriate to make any details public about where people sleep rough.

— Regular street counts should be carried out to continue to monitor the situation. A minimum of one count per year should be carried out. Where there are significant numbers of people sleeping rough (which will depend on the population of the local area) a count should be carried out every six months or even more frequently.

## Debriefing

— Many volunteers who have never worked in homeless services may find the experience of seeing numbers of people sleeping rough to be disturbing, particularly if they encounter someone who is particularly vulnerable, in need of medical assistance or in distress.

— It is advisable to agree the assistance of a professional with experience in critical incident debriefing. In Dublin, a professional is available on the night of the count and is also available to meet counters on a one-to-one basis subsequent to the count if they wish to discuss their experiences or to voice any particular concern or question.

— Many volunteers are also interested in the result of the count. It is a good idea to circulate the count finding to the email contact list and to invite counters to a short debriefing session to present the findings and to give people an opportunity to discuss their experiences.

# Appendix 4 – Detail of EU10 Research

The EU10 Study was carried out by Karin O'Sullivan of Merchants Quay Ireland, with assistance from the Homeless Agency research team.

## Method

The method used five strands.

1.  All homeless services were asked to fill in a questionnaire and identify whether people from the EU10 countries were accessing their services. Those who were meeting the target group were included in the week-long count.
2.  A survey of people from the EU10 countries who accessed homeless services during the week of 4-10 December 2006 was carried out. Surveys were distributed in Polish, Lithuanian, Latvian and Russian as well as English.
3.  A non-response sheet was used to record identifier details of those who did not have surveys available to them in their own language, and those who chose not to fill in a survey.
4.  Two discussion groups were carried out with clients from Poland who were accessing homeless services.
5.  Interviews with embassy representatives were held.

## Key findings from the count/profile

— A total of 283 people from the EU10 countries were using homeless services, including food/day services, during the week of the count in December 2006.

— 65% (n=165) were Polish; 10% (n=29) were Lithuanian; and 9% (n=27) were from the Czech Republic.

— Men accounted for 83% of respondents

— The majority (55%, n=108) were in the 26-39 years age group. This was followed by those in the 40-49 years age group (25%, n=48).

## Key findings from the survey (n=170)

**Profile/housing status**
— 47% (n=76) of respondents were in Ireland for less than six months. 12% (n=20) were in Ireland for longer than 24 months.

— Well over half of respondents reported having basic or 'little or no' written (59%, n=98) or spoken (64%, n=91) English language skills.

— Family links were in the main maintained by those who were in the country for a year or more (n=56) where 87% (n=49) of those respondents reported having family links.

— The housing status of respondents included: 20% (n=35) living in private rented accommodation, 18% (n=30) living with friends/relatives, 14% (n=24) living in tourist accommodation, 12% (n=20) living in a squat, 11% (n=19) sleeping rough, and 13% (n=21) staying in homeless accommodation.

— Based on the definition of homelessness in the Housing Act 1988, 44% (n=75) of the study population were identified as being homeless. Using broader definitions of homelessness and housing exclusion 76% (n=129) would be considered to fall within these categories.

— Asked if they consider themselves homeless, 37% (n=57) reported that they did, and 63% (n=95) reported that they did not.

— 16 respondents (9%) reported sleeping rough and/or living in a squat for longer than three months. A total of 18% (n=31) of respondents reported sleeping rough and/or living in a squat for longer than one month.

**Work Status**
— 62% (n=99) of the sample reported being unemployed. Just over half of those (55%, n=55) came to Ireland in 2006, and 37% were in Ireland for less than six months at the time of the study.

— 14% (n=14) of unemployed respondents reported sleeping rough while 15% (n=15) reported living in a squat. An additional 10 (10%) were residing in homeless accommodation, while 10 others (10%) were moving between various housing categories. 13% (n=13) of unemployed participants reported staying with friends or family.

— 17% (n=27) reported working full-time, and 17% (n=27) reported working part-time. 10 (19%) respondents who reported working, also reported sleeping rough and/or living in a squat. Others who were working reported staying in homeless accommodation (7%, n=4), tourist accommodation (24%, n=13), with family/friends (26%, n=14) and living in private rented accommodation (22%, n=12).

**Income**
— 24% (n=36) of respondents reported having income from regular employment. The majority of those in receipt of an income from regular employment were in Ireland for less than one year (69%, n=25.) Others who were in receipt of most income from work or welfare were, odd jobs 21% (n=32), state benefits 13% (n=20), and informal labour 11% (n=17).

— Of those in receipt of most income from odd jobs (n=32) 18% were in Ireland for less than six months.

— Other sources of most income included relatives/friends 11% (n=17), begging 4% (n=6) and charity 3% (n=4).

— Food services were accessed the most by those in receipt of an income from regular employment (33%, n=12), state benefits (50%, n=10), informal labour (24%, n=4), and odd jobs (53%, n=17).

— Odd jobs (29%, n=49) was identified the most often as one of 'all sources of income' that respondents had. 18% (n=30) reported state benefits as one of their sources of income.

— 11% (n=18) of respondents reported being in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance. 6% (n=10) reported that they were in receipt of Job Seekers Benefit. 36% (n=62) of the total study population reported that they had applied for state benefits and were rejected.

**Use of homeless services**

— Food services (54%, n=92) were identified as the homeless service used by most people in the study population. This was followed by the use of emergency accommodation (29%, n=50).

— 64% (n=60) of those who reported using food services stated that they used them on a weekly basis.

— 32% (n=16) of those who accessed emergency accommodation did so 'once a day', while a further 30% (n=15) reported accessing emergency accommodation 'in the past week'.

— 'Word of mouth' was identified as the primary source of information on homeless services (79%, n=135) among the total population.

**Health status**

— 58% (n=98) of the total study population reported experiencing at least one of a list of symptoms of psychological strain.

— 12% (n=22) reported experiencing three or more of the list of symptoms. Of those 22, well over half (63%, n=14) were also experiencing extreme housing exclusion, which was inclusive of those sleeping rough, living in a squat, and moving between housing category types.

— 7% (n=11) of the study population reported that they had been diagnosed with a psychiatric health illness.

— 12% (n=18) of respondents reported that their health status was 'bad' or 'very bad'. 44% (n=8) of those were in Ireland for a year or longer.

— Dental problems (25%, n=43) were the physical health complaints identified the most often. This was followed by those reporting headaches (20%, n=34). Chronic health complaints were experienced by very few participants. Peptic ulcer disease (6%, n=10) was identified the most often in this category.

**Alcohol and drug use**

— Of the 85 respondents (50%) who supplied details concerning the frequency of alcohol intake, 28% (n=24) were found to drink in excess of the weekly recommended units of alcohol.

— The drug used by the highest number of participants was cannabis (9%, n=16).

**Assessment of service needs**
— 59% of respondents identified housing as their main service need. The service being used the most frequently (food services, 54%) and the service identified as being the main service need (housing, 59%) are not the same.

— Language skills (42%, n=71), employment (36%, n=61), and financial support (35%, n=59) were ranked second, third and fourth main service needs.

— Service providers also identified housing as the main service need of people from the EU10 countries (94%).

# Appendix 5 – Organisations that participated in the *Counted In* survey

**Emergency accommodation**
Crosscare, Bentley House
Crosscare, Charlemont
Crosscare, Longford Lane
Depaul Trust, Aungier Street
Depaul Trust, Back Lane
Depaul Trust, Clancy
Dublin City Council, Beech House
Dublin City Council, Maple House
Dublin Simon, Eblana
Dublin Simon, Harcourt Street
Focus Ireland, Alyward Green
Focus Ireland, Caretakers
Focus Ireland, NCR
HSE, Haven House
Iveagh Trust
Legion of Mary, Morning Star
Legion of Mary, Regina Coeli
Missionaries of Charity, SCR
Novas, Mount Brown
Salvation Army, Cedar House

Dublin City Council also conducted
the survey across all Private Emergency
Accommodation premises

**Transitional accommodation**
Belvedere Social Services
BOND
Crosscare, Bentley House
Daisyhouse
Don Bosco, Blessington Street
Don Bosco, Cabra
Don Bosco, Fairview
Don Bosco, Phibsborough
Dublin Simon, Dorset Street
Ecclesville
PACE
Peter McVerry Trust, Avoca Lodge
Peter McVerry Trust, Cabra

Peter McVerry Trust, Whitworth Road
Respond!
Salvation Army, Granby
Salvation Army, Lefroy House
Salvation Army, York House
Sophia Housing Association, Ballymun
Sophia Housing Association, Camberley
Sophia Housing Association, Churchtown
St Catherine's Foyer
Tus Nua
Vincentian Housing Partnership, Rendu
Apartments
YMCA

**Long-term supported housing**
Clonmore Villas
Dublin City Council, Oak House
Dublin Simon, Hazelwood House
Dublin Simon, NCR
Dublin Simon, Sean McDermott Street
Focus Ireland, George's Hill
Focus Ireland, Stanhope Green
Iveagh Trust
Sophia Housing Association, Cork St

**Drug and Alcohol Services**
Ana Liffey
Dublin Simon, Ushers Island
Peter McVerry Trust, The Lantern
Teach Mhuire

**Domestic Violence**
Aoibhnas
Bray Women's Refuge
Rathmines Women's Refuge
Saoirse
Sonas Housing Association (Transitional,
various locations)

**Day Services/Other**
Access Housing Unit
Aislinn Aftercare Service
Capuchin Day Centre
Chrysalis
Crosscare Housing and Welfare Information
Service
Focus Ireland, Coffee Shop
Focus Ireland, Extension
Focus Ireland, Spokes Programme
Guild of the Little Flower
Homeless Persons Unit
HSE, Asylum Seekers Unit
LINX Project
Mendicity Institution Trust
Merchants Quay Ireland
Northside Healthlink Team
Refugee Information Service
Resettlement Service
Ronanstown Youth Service
St Agatha's Food Centre
St Brigid's Food Centre
St Josephs Penny Dinners
Tallaght Homeless Advice Unit
The Light House
Tower Project
Trust
Vincentian Refugee Centre

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Comhairle Contae
Átha Cliath Theas
**South Dublin County Council**