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<p>Key Statistics</p>	<p>There are several sources of data on homelessness in Ireland.</p> <p>At national level, the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government carries out a Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) every three years. This national summary of social housing assessments provides an important insight into the level of need for social housing support across Ireland. The Housing Needs Assessment was collated by the Housing Agency in 2013. 89,872 households were assessed as qualifying for social housing supports (as of 7th May 2013). This included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homeless households (ETHOS 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6): 2,808 (3.1%) ○ Households living in unfit accommodation (ETHOS 12.1): 647 (0.7%) ○ Households living in overcrowded accommodation (ETHOS 13.1): 2,896 (3.2%) ○ People who are dependent on Rent Supplement: 46,584 (51.8%) <p>The total 2013 figure represents a reduction of 9.4% on the 2011 total of 98,318, but is still significantly above the 2008 figure of 56,249. It is important to note that these figures are not strictly comparable as different methods were used in the assessments. The 2011 HNA was a snapshot of those registered with housing authorities as in housing need at that time, but the 2013 figures use a stricter criteria as local authorities were required to re-confirm that households were still in need of social housing support.</p> <p>The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (then the Homeless Agency) conducted a triennial survey of rough sleepers and people using homeless accommodation and day services in 1999, 2002, 2005 and 2008 called 'Counted In'. In 2008, the survey identified 2,144 households staying in homeless accommodation during one week in March. Approximately 115 people were observed to be sleeping rough.</p> <p>Census 2011, for the first time, attempted to enumerate the number of people who were homeless in Ireland on Census night. These figures were released in September 2012 and reported 3,808 people sleeping rough or in homeless accommodation on Census night. This is a point-in-time count and does not include everyone who comes under the ETHOS definition. The Central Statistics Office (CSO) has confirmed that they will prepare a Special Census Report on Homelessness again as part of Census 2016.</p> <p>Data from PASS (the Pathway Accommodation and Support System) shows that in Dublin in 2013, on average six individuals who were new to homeless services were presenting every day.</p>
<p>Increase/Decrease in Number of Homeless People</p>	<p>The HNA shows a consistent increase in the number of households registered with Local Authorities as in need of social housing – rising from 1,394 in 2008, to 2,348 in 2011 and 2,808 in 2013.</p> <p>The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (DRHE) reports a rise in rough sleeping in Dublin. 139</p>

¹ Last updated January 2014.

	<p>persons were confirmed to be sleeping rough in November 2013, compared to 94 in April 2013. Of the 139 persons confirmed sleeping rough:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 111 (80%) were male, 20 (14%) were female, and 8 (6%) were unknown. • 73 (53%) persons were Irish, 39 (28%) persons were not from Ireland, and 27 (19%) were unknown. • 34 (24%) were aged 18-30 years, 37 (27%) were aged 31-40 years, 31 (22%) were aged 41-50, 12 (9%) were aged 51-60, 3 (2%) were aged 61+, and 22 (16%) persons were unknown. • 87 persons had previously accessed homeless accommodation and received support, 17 persons were new to homeless services, and no information was available for the remaining 35 persons.
<p>Change in Profile of Homeless People</p>	<p>Homeless services in Dublin have reported an increase in the number of women accessing services. According to the 2008 'Counted In' survey, the proportion of women users of homeless services aged 18-34 was higher than the proportion of men.</p> <p>Homeless service providers have also reported increased demand for services from foreign nationals. The 2008 'Counted In' survey reported that most adults in homeless services were Irish nationals (84%). However, nearly 1 in 6 (16%) were of foreign nationality. The majority of these were EU citizens (10%), especially people from the UK, Poland and Romania. A large minority were non-EU citizens (6%). There have also been substantive changes in the composition of those sleeping rough in Dublin, with an established foreign national population observed rough sleeping since November 2008. The proportion of (known) foreign nationals counted sleeping rough in Dublin increased from 6.7% in November 2007 to 28.1% in November 2013.</p> <p>Youth homelessness is a growing concern in Ireland. A total of 245 children aged 12-17 years were accommodated in emergency residential accommodation in 2011 (primarily as a result of family relationship breakdown or a placement breakdown, either from foster care or residential placement breakdowns). Of the 179 referrals to Crisis Intervention Service emergency accommodation, 14 were admitted as either seeking accommodation or being homeless. The number of children accessing aftercare services increased by 34% between 2005 and 2010 (from 783 to 1,046).</p> <p>There has been an increase in the number of families becoming homeless in Dublin, many for the first time, particularly those that were previously living in private rented accommodation. The number of families presenting as homeless doubled between August 2012 and June 2013 (from an average of 8 families per month to 16 per month).</p> <p>There has been an increase in the overall proportion of the population at risk of homelessness in the context of increased austerity, growing levels of poverty and pressure on those with low incomes and mortgage foreclosures due to the crisis. The numbers of households falling into mortgage arrears and risk of repossession has continued to increase every quarter since the beginning of the financial crisis.</p>
<p>National Strategy</p>	<p>National Strategy <i>The Way Home: A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness in Ireland, 2008-2013</i></p> <p>Scope An overall national policy framework accompanied by an implementation plan. Guides development of local homeless strategies.</p>

	<p>Objectives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To reduce the number of households who become homeless through the further development and enhancement of preventative measures; 2. To eliminate the need for people to sleep rough; 3. To eliminate long-term homelessness (specifically people spending more than 6 months in temporary accommodation); 4. To meet long-term housing needs; 5. To ensure that all services for people who are homeless are effective in addressing needs; 6. To re-orientate spending on homeless services away from emergency responses to the provision of long-term housing and support services. <p>Resources</p> <p>The strategy has been supported by significant financial resources. For example, €45 million has been allocated by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government for homeless services in 2014. The Homeless Oversight Group noted that since 2010 the two principal funding sources (for homeless services) - known as Section 10 and Section 39 funding – have been reduced. Section 10 funding has reduced by approximately 15% during that period, with Section 39 funding reducing by approximately 17%. Implementation has been poor and a major challenge in the current financial and economic context is a lack of funding to promote access to affordable and secure housing for people moving on from homelessness. The 2014 estimate for housing programme expenditure is €575.8 million, which includes €302.7 million for current, and €273 million for capital, expenditure.</p> <p>Governance</p> <p>The strategy is underpinned by a legal framework. The Housing Act 1988 provides a legal definition of homelessness and lays out the duty for periodic assessments of homelessness and housing need in each local authority area. It also empowers Local Authorities to respond to homelessness. The Health Act 1953 imposes a duty on health boards (now the Health Service Executive) to provide assistance and shelter to people who are homeless.</p> <p>The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government (the Department) has overall responsibility for the national strategy. A Cross Departmental Team on Homelessness was set up in 2000, chaired by the Department. A National Homelessness Consultative Committee was established in 2007 to provide ongoing input into the development and monitoring of homelessness policy from stakeholders.</p> <p>A Homeless Policy Statement was published by the Department of Environment in March 2013, updating the objectives of the Strategy, setting a new target for ending Long-term Homelessness of 2016 and establishing a Homeless Oversight Group.</p> <p>The Homelessness Oversight Group issued its first report in December 2013, stating that the 2016 target could only be met if certain policies were put in place. These included greater access to housing and a new Homeless Policy Implementation Team be established to drive the Strategy. This report is due to be considered by Cabinet in early 2014.</p>
<p>Targeted Prevention</p>	<p>There are preventative measures outlined in the national strategy. These include the provision of housing advice and advocacy to address the causes of eviction and to support movement to alternative accommodation. There are a number of agencies that assist tenants threatened with eviction. Nonetheless, the full implementation of early intervention is hampered by a lack of information on tenancies which are under a notice of termination or a notice to quit.</p> <p>Discharge policies and practices to support transition from institutions (e.g. hospitals, prisons, and State child care) are one of the focuses of the national strategy. Despite strong policy guidance, there is currently an implementation gap between policy and practice which means</p>

	<p>that people continue to become homeless when leaving institutions. In a historic move, in November 2013 the Cabinet approved the amendment of the Child Care Act, 1991 to provide for a statutory right to the preparation of an aftercare plan for young people leaving care.</p>
<p>Housing-Led Approaches</p>	<p>In 2013, a Homelessness Policy Statement was published by the Minister for Housing and Planning, endorsing housing-led approaches and containing commitments to end long-term homelessness by 2016. Despite this commitment to a housing-led approach, the development of housing options for people moving on from homelessness remains a major challenge.</p> <p>The capital funding programme for social housing in Ireland has been seriously reduced over the last number of years. A switch to a leasing system has not produced sufficient units to meet demand, and the Private Rented Sector is under huge pressure.</p> <p>A Housing First Demonstration Project is being carried out in Dublin using scattered accommodation with floating support to house 24 long-term rough sleepers who have significant support needs. A fidelity evaluation of this project is being conducted, which will make recommendations regarding the potential application of this model in the Dublin region and nationally.</p>
<p>Quality of Homeless Services</p>	<p>A good-practice guide for homeless services, named 'Putting People First' and published by the Homeless Agency (now the Dublin Region Homeless Executive) some years ago, contains quality standards and performance measures for homeless services. These are not yet mandatory but provide targets and a framework for the continuous improvement of services for people who are homeless.</p> <p>The DRHE are preparing a <i>National Quality Standards Framework</i> for homeless services in 2014, which will be developed in consultation with all voluntary and statutory homeless services on a national basis.</p> <p>The area of staff training is considered a vital tool in improving services/responses for people who are homeless. The Care and Case Management Guidebook published by DHRE is used as a tool for staff training. There is also an accredited partnership with DRHE and Dublin City University in Professional Training Development for key workers/case managers and management.</p>
<p>Remarks on Research</p>	<p>A substantial amount of research on homelessness has been conducted by the voluntary sector, academics and the DRHE. For example, research has been conducted on measuring homelessness, reasons for people becoming homeless, migrants experiencing homelessness, youth homelessness, women and homelessness, and the exploration of the health needs of homeless people.</p> <p>Information and research gaps still remain, and there continues to be disagreement about the total number of people who are homeless. The Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government held a Data Workshop in late-2013 to discuss the key homeless performance indicators and reporting systems. Another workshop will be held in 2014.</p>
<p>Remarks on Budget Evolution</p>	<p>In order to ensure continued progress towards the achievement of the 2016 target of ending long-term homelessness, funding for homeless services through the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government has been maintained at €45 million in 2014.</p> <p>However, the capital funding programme for social housing has been seriously reduced in recent years. The impact of cuts on the special needs capital budget has resulted in projects</p>

	<p>being halted and delayed. The budget of the governmental scheme for housing for people progressing out of homelessness (CAS scheme) was reduced from €145m in 2010 to €75m in 2011. It has remained around this level since.</p> <p>In addition to cutbacks on social housing, cuts in health services, probation and welfare services, education and training services etc. also have knock-on effects that contribute to homelessness and prevent people from moving out of homelessness.</p>	
<p>Remarks on Key Policy Developments</p>	<p>Positive</p>	<p>Negative</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good National Homeless Strategy • A range of targeted services to improve access to health care for the homeless have been introduced. A national mental health policy, which aims at the maximisation of recovery and meaningful integration of patients, is also an important development. • Homelessness Policy Statement was published in 2013 (the first ever homelessness policy statement). • Endorsing a housing-led approach • New commitment to end long-term homelessness by 2016. • Review conducted on the implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy. • Homeless Oversight Group's first report published in December 2013. • The Cabinet has approved the amendment of the Child Care Act, 1991 to provide for a statutory right to the preparation of an aftercare plan for young people leaving care as required before they have to leave at 18. • A new Social Impact Investment was announced in Budget 2014 to support 130 homeless families to move out of private emergency accommodation and into sustainable long-term tenancies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor implementation • The target to eliminate long-term homelessness and the need for people to sleep rough by 2010 was not achieved. The monitoring of and the reporting against the Key Performance Indicators identified in this Strategy has been poor for a number of reasons, including the delayed roll-out of an agreed, national data-collection system (PASS). • No clarity on where the accommodation/housing will come from. • No clear road map to get to the 2016 target. • Nationwide rents increased by 4.8% between Q3-2012 and Q3-2013. Many households are having to contribute to their rent on top of the Rent Supplement that they receive. This has stretched household incomes and increased vulnerability to homelessness. In addition, it has prevented people from moving out of homelessness as they cannot find accommodation within the rent limits. • A new Criminal Justice Public Order introduces specific provisions on begging. Non-compliance with a police officer's instructions leads to a fine of up to €500.