

The Changing Landscape of Youth Homelessness: An Analysis of Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) Data, 2023, in Ireland

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Presentation Content

- **What is the Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS)?**

- Youth homelessness Trends (2015 – 2023)
- Population of Homeless Young People – 2023
- Gender, Citizenship, Household Type
- Young People in Family Units
- Reasons for Homelessness

- **Comparative Analysis: Belgium and Denmark**

- Policy Implications

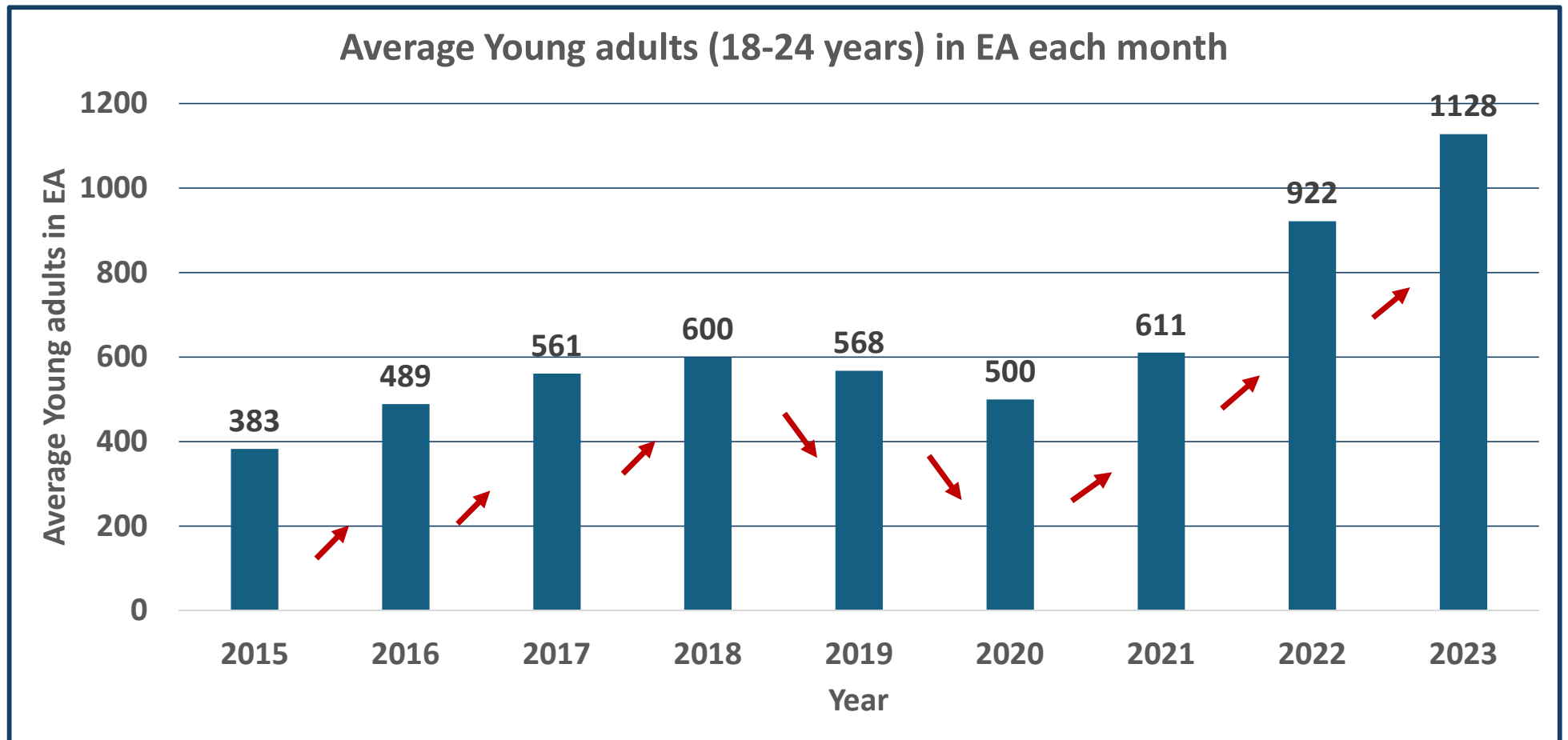


**Youth Homelessness
Trends & Profile:
Ireland**

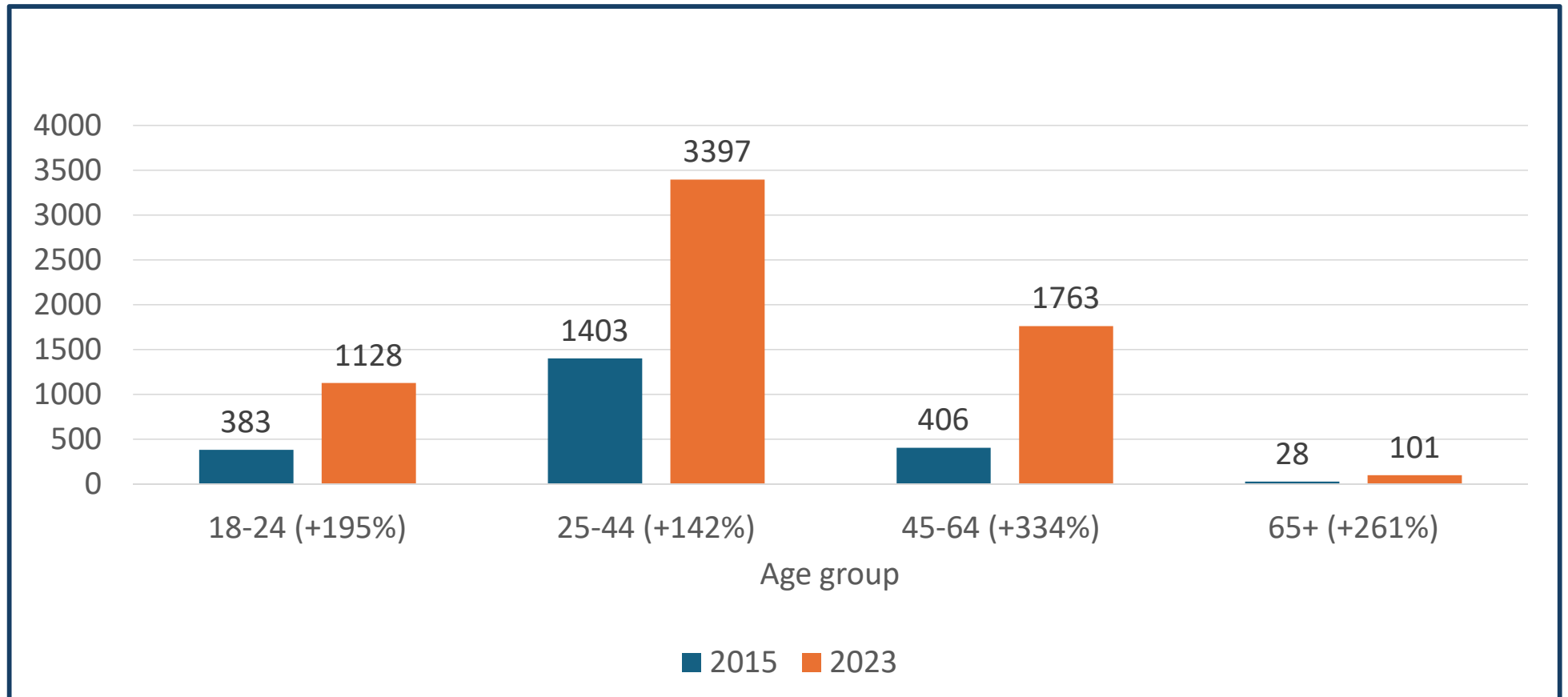
What is PASS?

- The Pathway Accommodation and Support System (PASS) is a shared **bed management** and **client support** system used by Government-funded homelessness services in Ireland.
- The system is live web-based and is divided into nine regions.
- All Local Authorities and funded homelessness service providers must use PASS.
- PASS is GDPR compliant - Access to the system requires two-factor authentication and data access is roles & permissions based.
- **The Primary Data Source for Official Homelessness Statistics in the State.**
- Although PASS has its limitations – ***non-government funded homeless services not included*** – the system provides robust data on homelessness in Ireland.

Research Aim – Moving Beyond the Basic Numbers

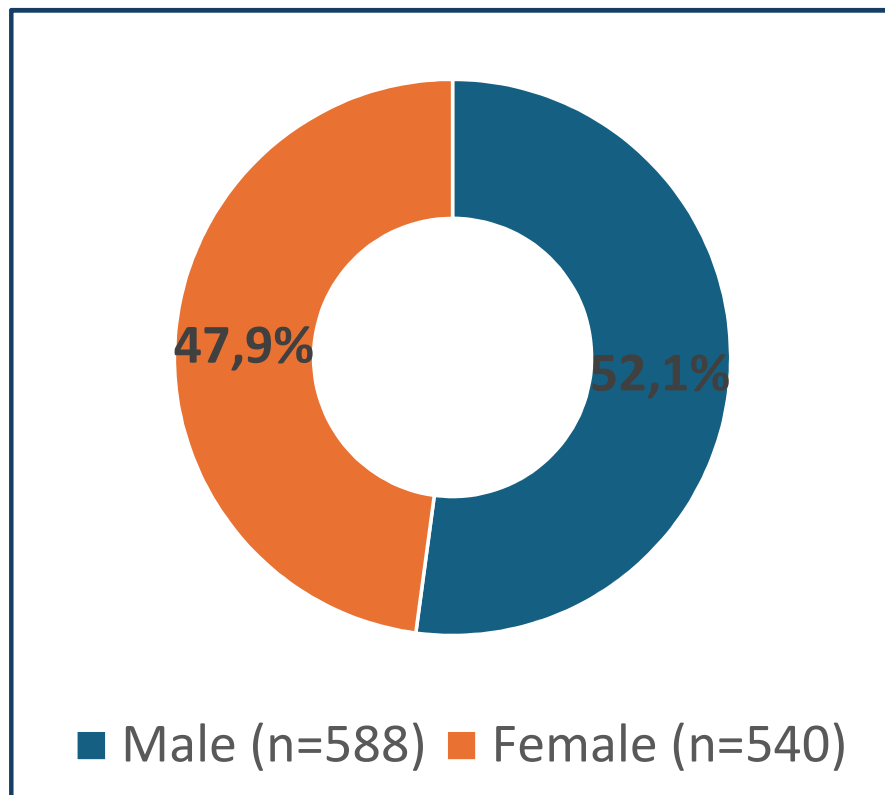


Homelessness in the Dublin Region, by Age Category

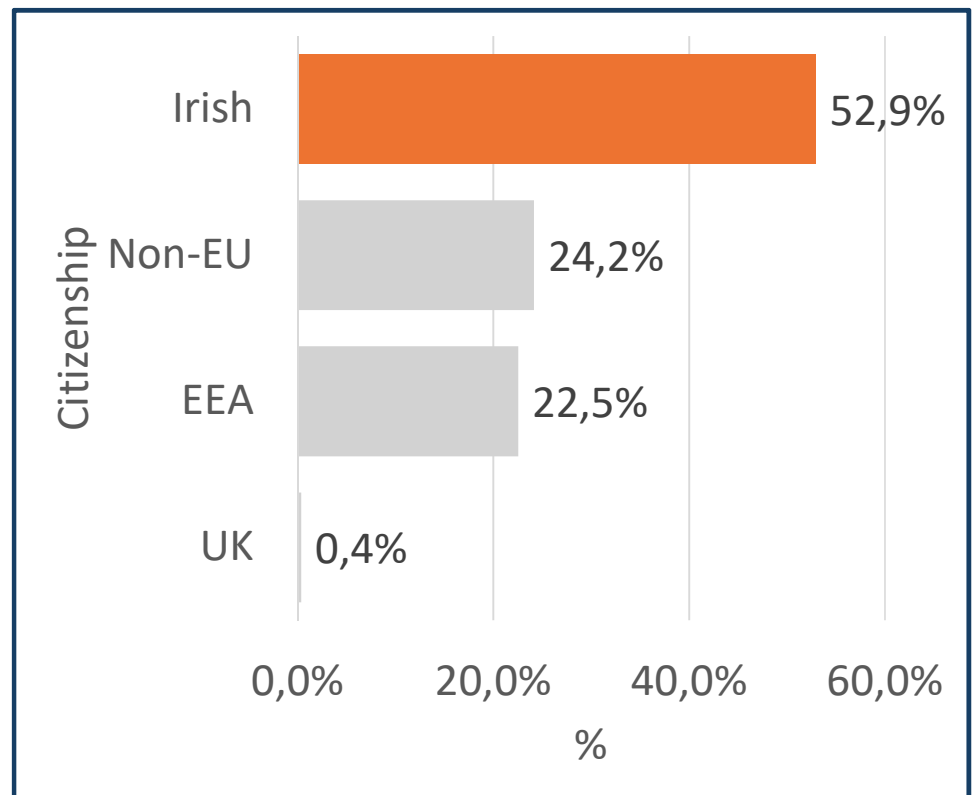


Profile of Youth Population, 2023 (n=1128)

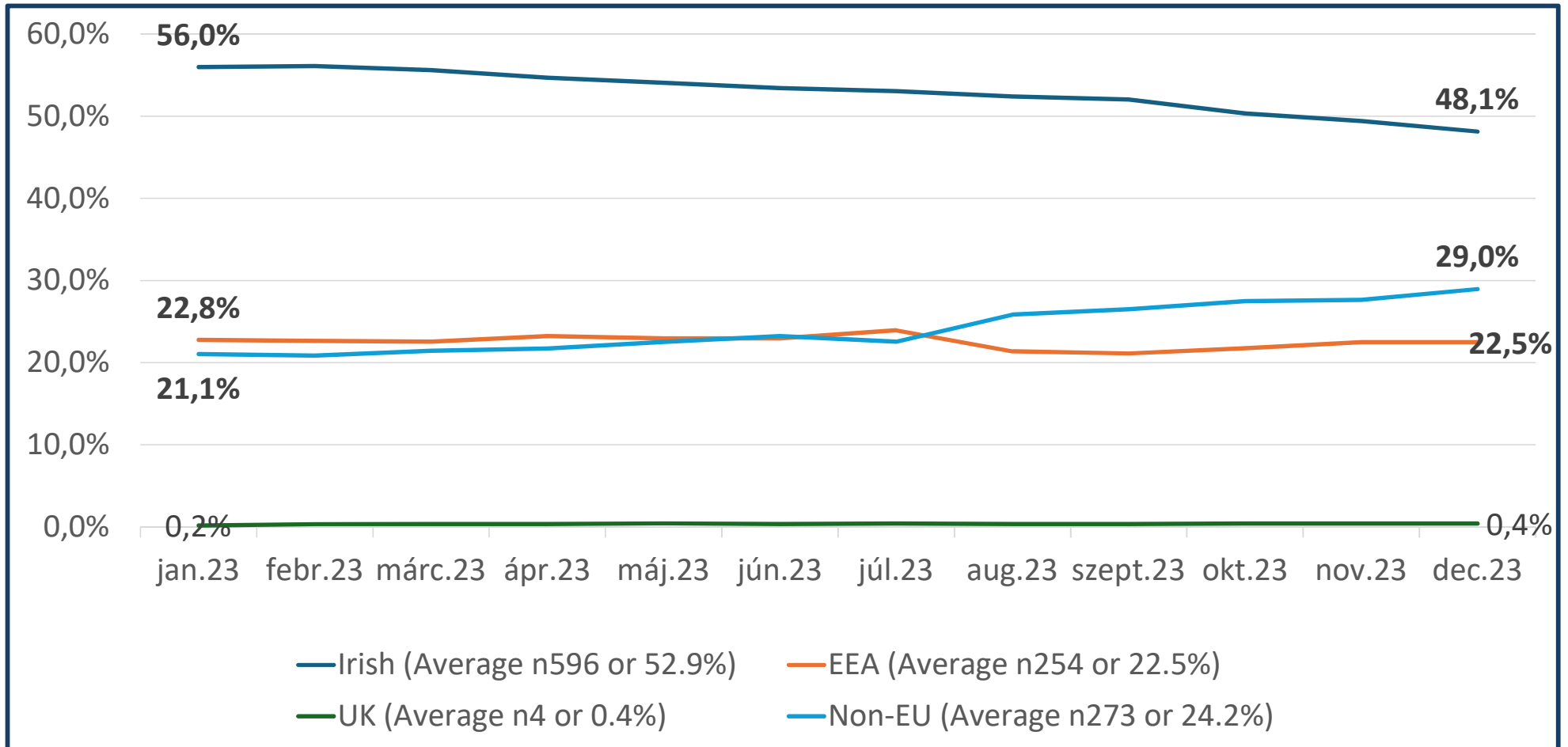
Gender



Citizenship

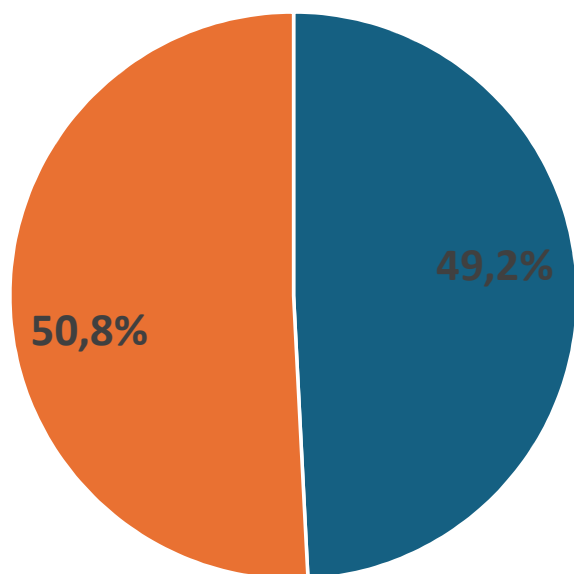


Noticeable Shift in Non-EU Citizenship Percentages



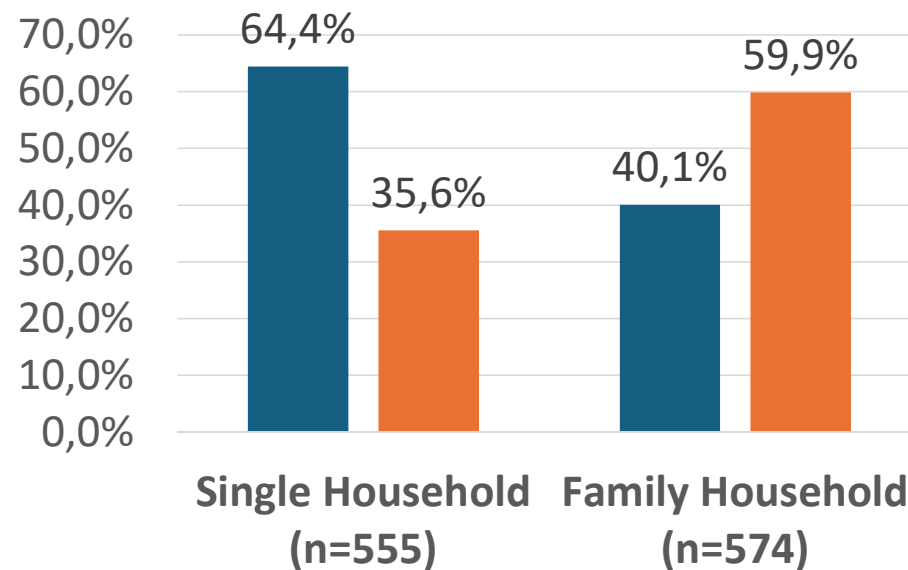
Household Types & Gender of Youth Population - 2023

Household Type



■ Single Household (n=555)
■ Family Household (n=574)

Gender

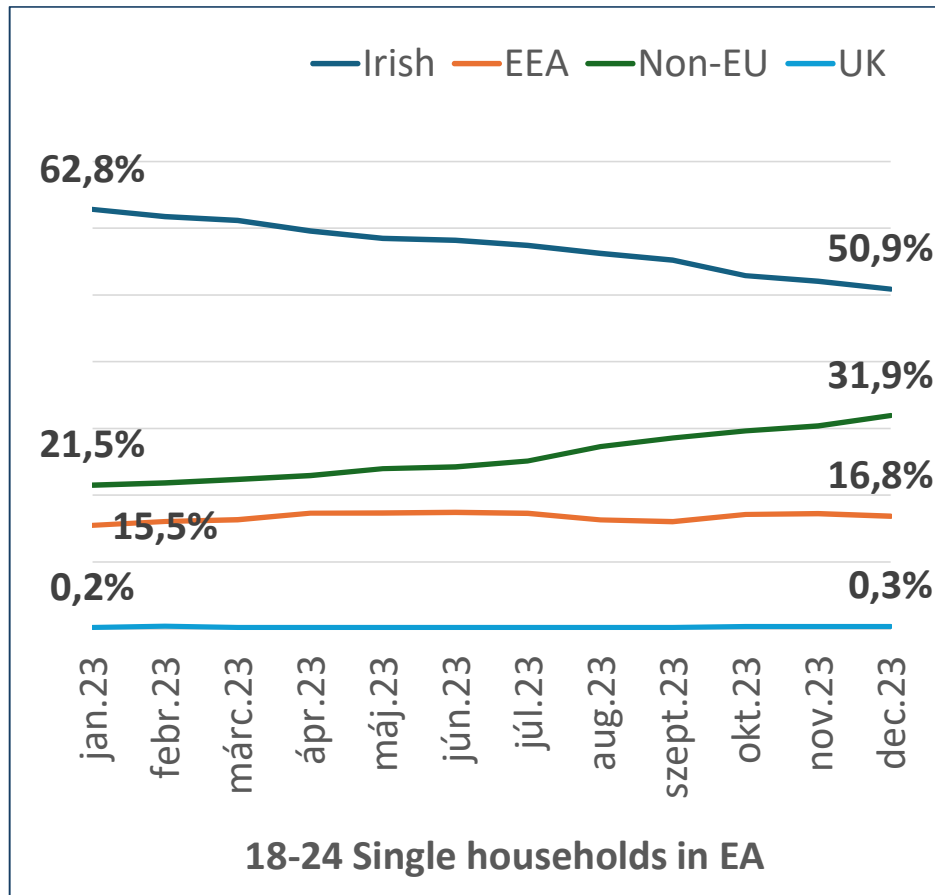


Gender

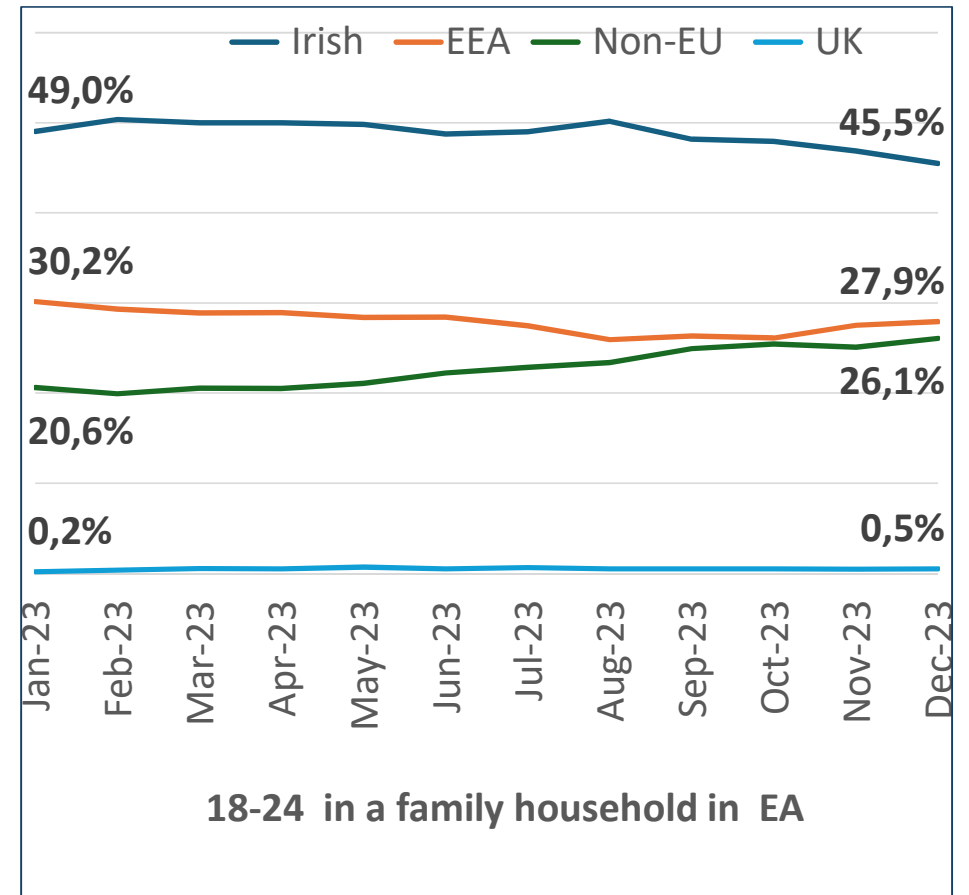
■ Male ■ Female

Citizenship by Household Type

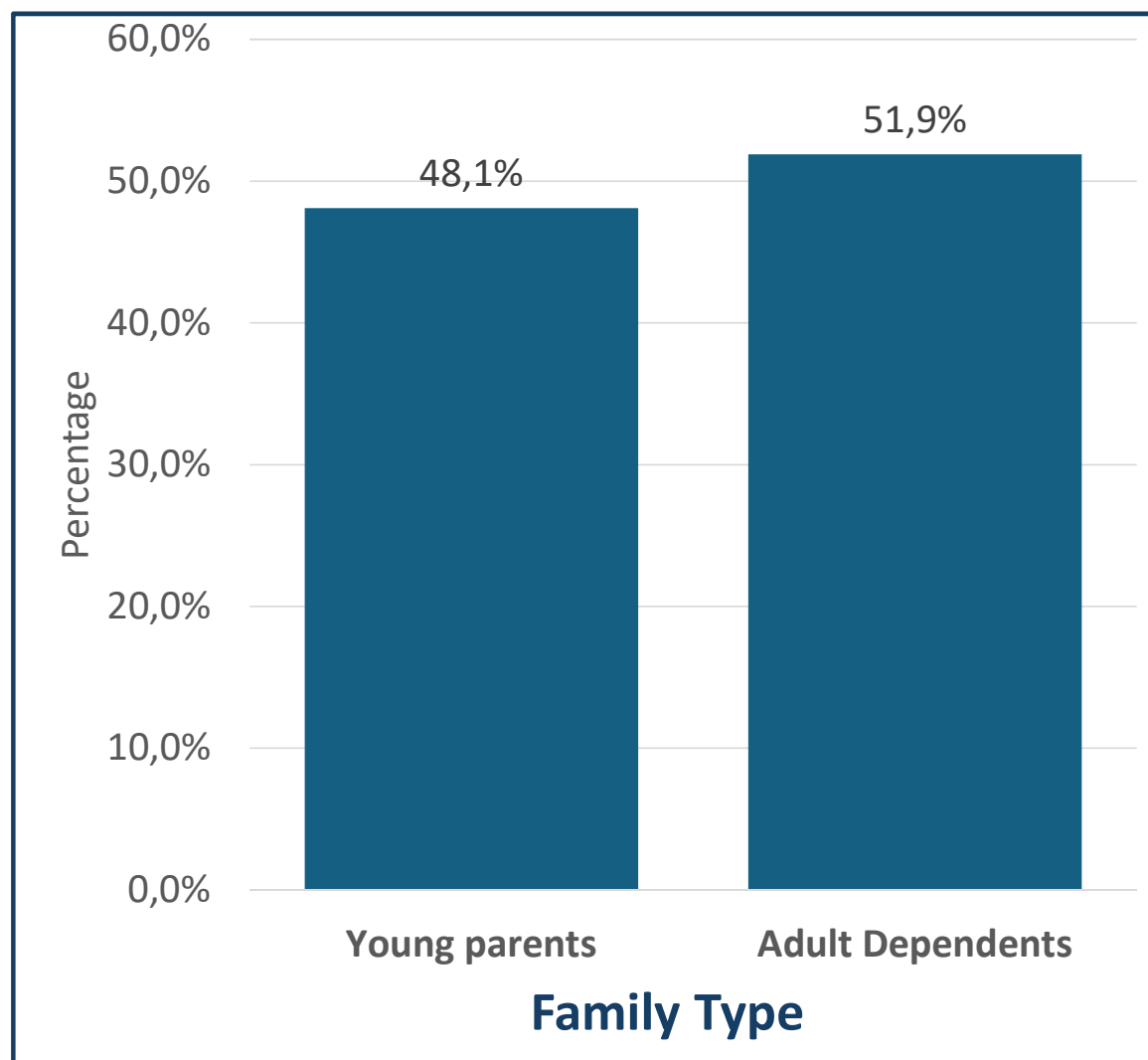
Single Households



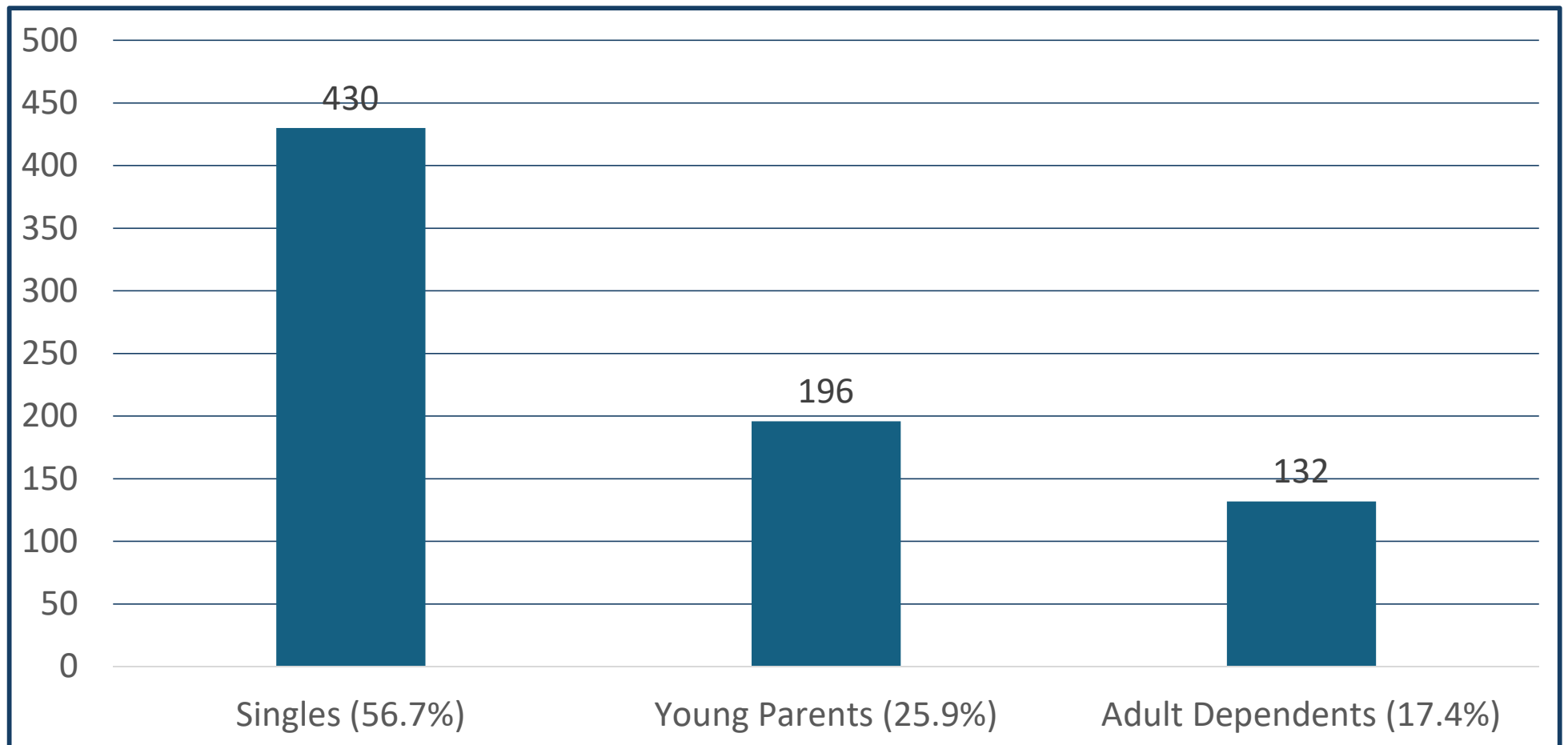
Young Adults in Family Households



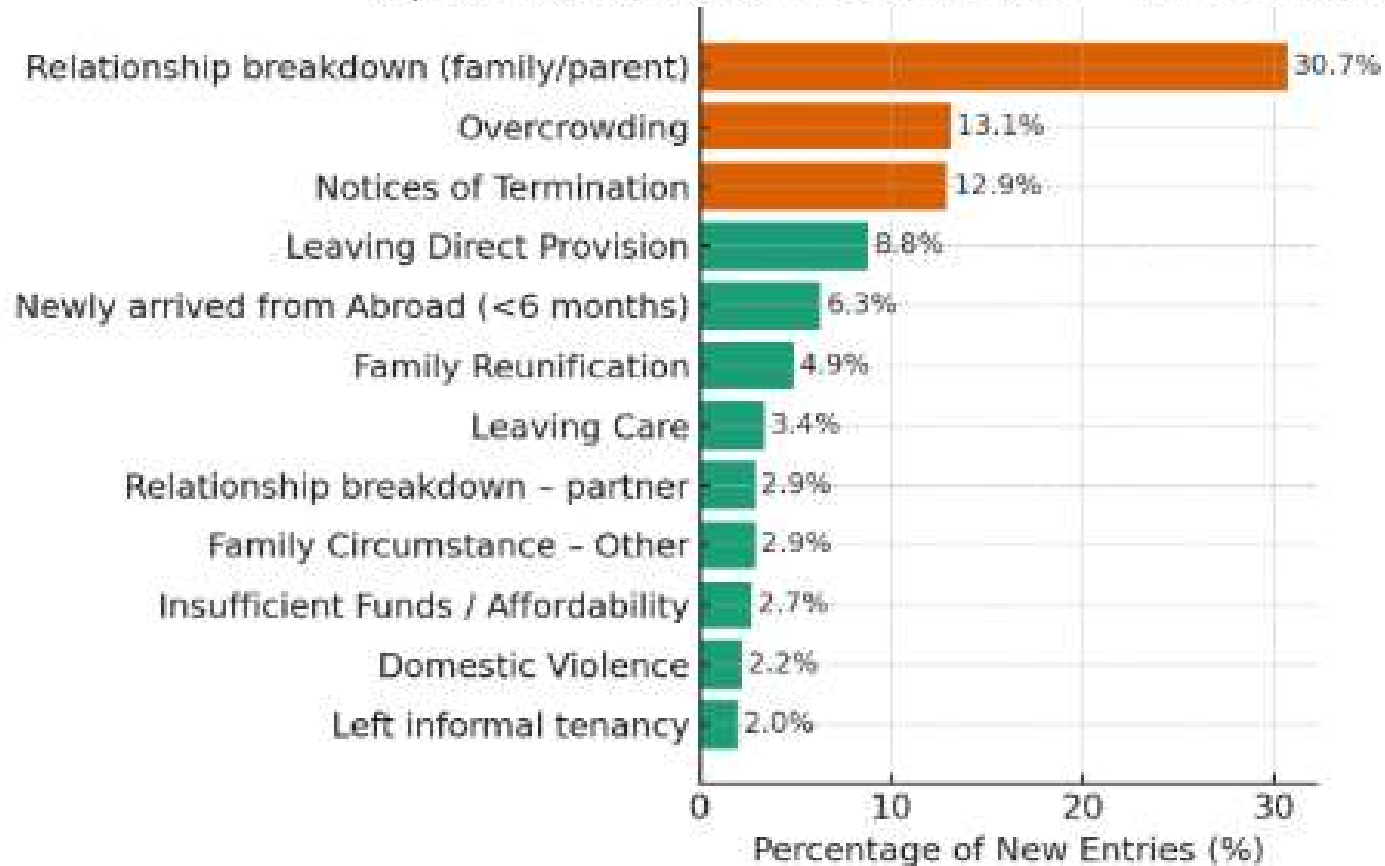
Sub-groups of 18–24-year-olds in Family Units



Youth New entries into EA in 2023: 18–24 year olds, n758

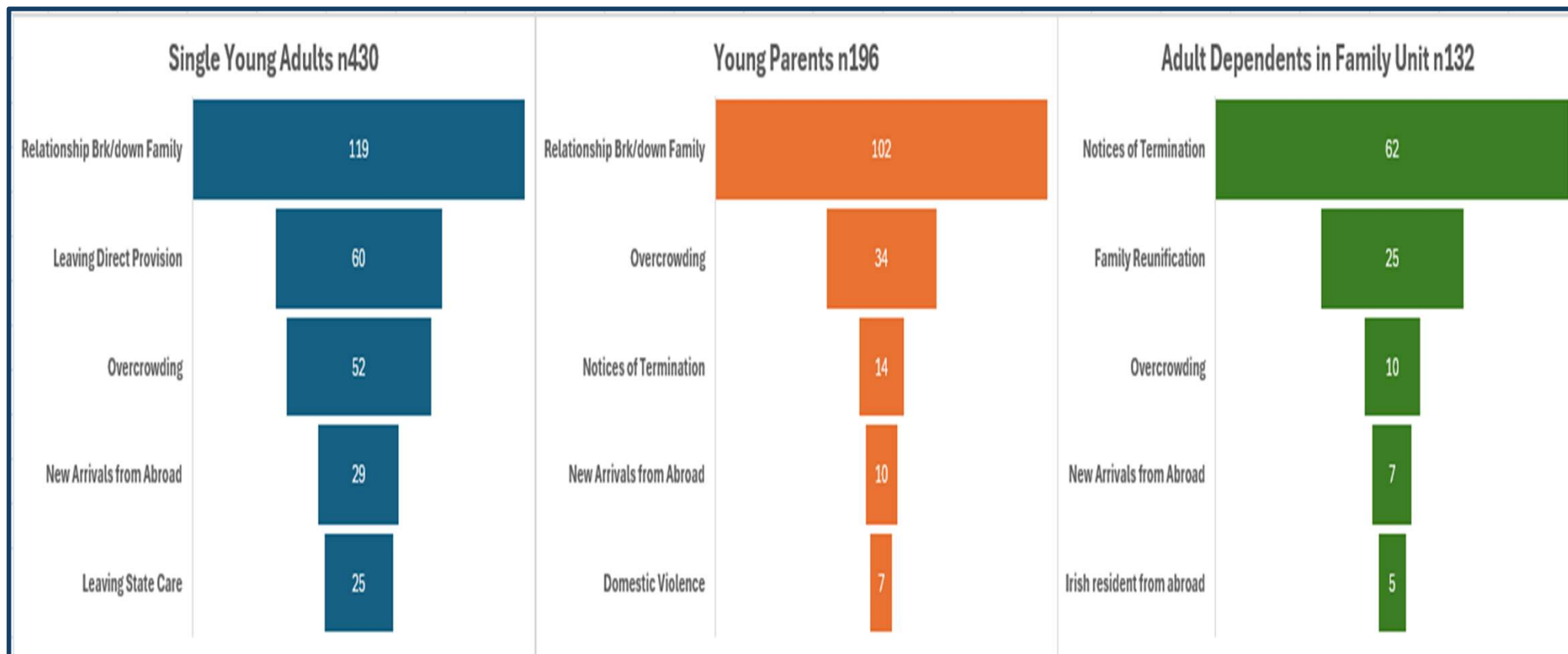


Top 12 Reasons for Presentation - 18-24 Year Olds (2023)



Among 18–19-year-olds, leaving care was the reason for homelessness cited by 20%

Top Five Reasons for each Sub-group of Young People



Comparing data in Ireland with available data in Belgium and Denmark

To what extent is the youth homelessness landscape changing?

Overall Trends

Ireland:

- Young people aged 18-24 years experiencing homelessness: *an **increase** of 195% between 2015 and 2023.*
- In 2023, youth aged 18-24 years constituted **18% of the total homeless population.**

Belgium: Figures published by the Flemish Department of Care for 2020 and 2021 indicate an **increase** *in number of youth experiencing homelessness* compared to 2014 (Mayock & Hermans, 2025): Figures for 2020/21 indicate that youth constituted **19.2% of the total homeless population.**

Denmark: Data indicate a *small decline* *in the number of young people aged 18-24 years in 2024* compared to 2022. In 2024, youth constituted **16% of the total homeless population** (Benjaminsen, 2024).

Gender

Ireland: 52% male; 48% female

Singles - 64% male; Family Units: 60% female

Belgium:

61% male; 39% female

12% of young people were single parents; 8% couples with one or more children (Mayock & Hermans, 2025).

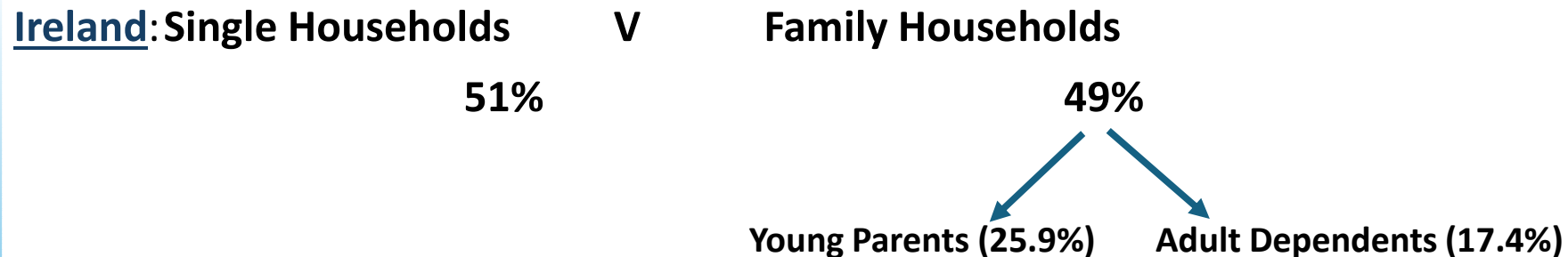
Denmark:

68% male; 32% female

Proportion of women in 18-24 year cohort higher than overall homeless population

More young women appearing in the mapping – perhaps associated with young women making use of services to a greater extent (Benjaminsen, 2024).

Household Composition



In Belgium, as noted earlier, 12% of young people were single parents; 8% couples with one or more children (Mayock & Hermans, 2025).

Young parents aged 18-24 years who are accessing emergency homelessness accommodation might be expected to **have particular age-related vulnerabilities** associated with the demands of parenting in the absence of a stable home and the potential negative impacts of social isolation and limited or poor social supports.

Citizenship/Ethnicity

Ireland: 53% Irish / 22.5% EU / 24% non-EU

	Irish Citizenship	EU(EEA) Citizenship	Non-EU Citizenship	UK Citizenship
All Young People who accessed EA	52.9%	22.5%	24.2%	0.4%
Single Young People who accessed EA	57.1%	16.7%	25.8%	0.2%
Young People who Accessed EA as a Family Unit	48.8%	28.0%	22.7%	0.5%

Belgium: 67% Belgian / 33% non-Belgian

Denmark: 69% Danish / 21% a non-Western background / 10% Western
Percentage non-Western background higher among homeless youth than in the total homeless population

Reasons for Homelessness

Ireland: Relationship breakdown (family/parent) dominates for both single households and young parents. Leaving the system of Direct Provision a significant reason for single households. Leaving care featured strongly for 18–19-year-olds.

Belgium: Youth aged 18– 25 years experiencing homelessness: former care leavers (24%); Belgian youth without a care history (29%); ‘newcomers’ (30%) (Dewanckel et al., 2022).

Denmark: For Danish youth, the causes are often related to mental illness, substance use or family conflict. For young people with a non-Western background, lack of access to stable housing and limited social networks play a role. For both groups, lack of financial resource and high rental costs are important drivers of youth homelessness (Benjaminsen, 2024).

Broadly consistent with the international literature on the drivers of homelessness in youth populations (Mayock & Parker, 2023)

Is the Youth Homelessness Landscape Changing?

Youth homelessness has increased dramatically in Ireland and rising numbers of youth in Belgium are experiencing homelessness or housing stability.

Denmark has seen a slight decrease in the number of young people experiencing homelessness, which has been attributed in part to an increased focus on prevention (Benjaminsen, 2024).

Profile of youth experiencing homelessness is more diverse and complex.

GENDER: Although, percentages differ significantly between Ireland, Belgium and Denmark, an increasing proportion of young women (aged 18-24 years) is evident in all three countries.

MIGRANT YOUTH: Corresponding with Europe-wide trends (Hermans et al., 2020), migration has become a prominent structural driver of youth homelessness in Ireland, Belgium and Denmark.

Policy Implications

- Policy responses to youth homelessness continue to be dominated by crisis-oriented service provision.
- While prevention is prominent within youth homelessness policy in Ireland and Belgium, the link between care experience and homelessness ensures in both countries (Mayock & Hermans, 2025). Lessons from the Danish context?
- Lack of affordable housing is a major barrier to youth exiting homelessness (Benjaminsen, 2016, 2024; Mayock & Parker, 2020, 2023).
- Amid growing recognition of gendered homelessness and its implications for policy and practice (Bretherton & Mayock, 2021), there is a strong case for embedding a gendered approach within youth homelessness policy.
- Understanding and the development of appropriate responses to migrant youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness requires urgent attention.

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN THE DUBLIN REGION, 2023



Feidhmeannacht um Dhaoine ar Easpa
Dídeine Réigiún Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin Region Homeless Executive

BLOCK 1, FLOOR 2, DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL CIVIC OFFICES, DUBLIN 8

PATHIE MAPHOSA
PAULA MAYOCK

Available at:

<https://www.homelessdublin.ie/content/files/Youth-Homelessness-in-the-Dublin-Region-2023.pdf?v=1740669531>

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Questions and Discussion Welcome!

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