

# Focus Ireland

## Review of 2018

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2018 will see Focus Ireland work with over 15,000 people. Across Ireland 2018 has proven to be an even more difficult year for those experiencing homelessness. This year is seeing the largest ever increase in family homelessness. While a significant number of individuals and families have been supported to move on from homelessness, there have been a number of challenges that has seen homelessness increase again this year to new record highs these have included:

- A reduction in allocations by some Local Authorities
- The continuing housing crisis has led to increasing tightening of the private rental market. This has made securing move-on more and more difficult as the year has progressed.
- The number of families entering homelessness increased. In the Dublin Region where we have the most comprehensive data the number of families entering homelessness shown to have increased for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row.
- While the majority of those in emergency accommodation are in the Dublin Region (67%) 2018 has seen homelessness and in particular family homelessness in the rest of Ireland grows to unprecedented levels.

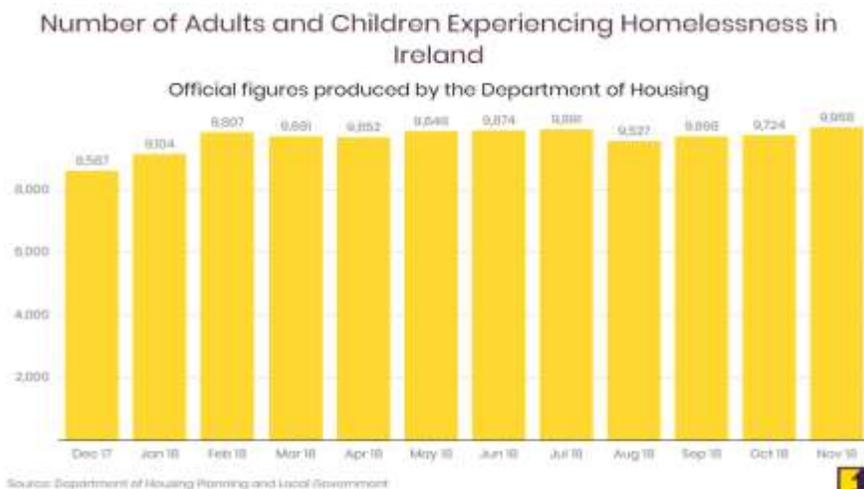
The reclassification of a significant percentage of families experiencing homelessness in 2018 has hidden the true scale of the increase in homelessness. That process needs to be considered in reviewing the year.

When we take account of the reclassification family homelessness in Ireland rose by 52% in 2018.

### Unprecedented increase in Homelessness in 2018

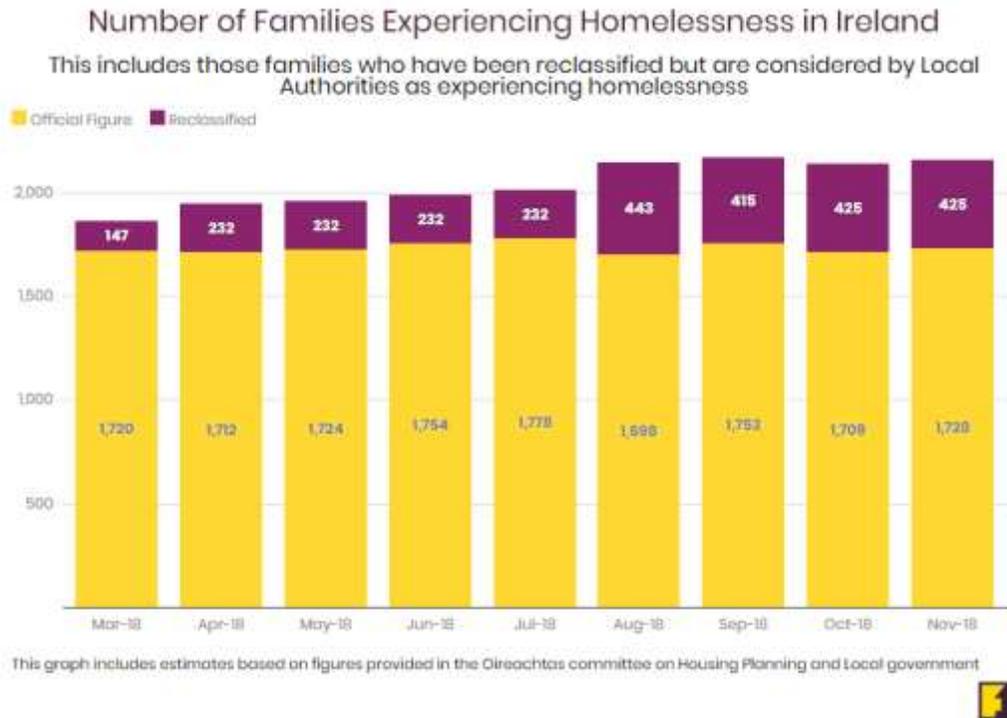
Official figures for Homelessness in Ireland are set out in the figure 1 shows a 16% increase in homelessness over the first 11 months of 2018.

**Figure 1**



According to official figures, family homelessness (illustrated in figure 2) has increased by 23% from the end of December 2017 to the end of November this year. However, when those families who have been 'reclassified' out of official numbers are included, family homelessness has risen by 53%. These families are still receiving homeless services and classified by local authorities as homeless. In hard numbers, that means that there are 745 more families and 1,600 more children in homelessness this year than last. This is the largest ever increase in family homelessness. These real numbers more closely reflect the experience of Focus Ireland services on the ground.

**Figure 2**

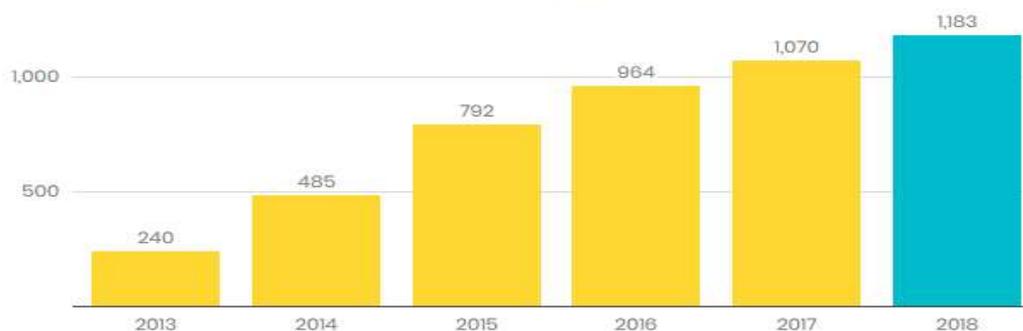


### Why has homelessness increased?

The Dublin Region Homeless Executive in partnership with Focus Ireland monitors the number of families entering homelessness each month in the Dublin Region. 2018 saw this number reach record levels for the 6<sup>th</sup> year in a row (Figure 3). Focus Ireland research has shown that the majority of families entering homelessness had their last stable home in the private rental market. A review of the Local Authority Regional Performance Reports by Professor Eoin O’Sullivan revealed that for the first two quarters of 2018 the number of households exiting emergency accommodation in Dublin in 2018 will be down significantly in 2017.

Figure 3

### Number of Families Entering Homelessness in the Dublin Region



2018 January to November

Source: Focus Ireland



The number of homes being built in the state is not yet at a level required to meet the need generated by the natural growth in population. The residential tenancy board latest figures have shown a decrease in the number of private rental tenancies<sup>1</sup>. The rate of increase in public housing is not at a scale to bridge this gap<sup>2</sup>. This shortage of supply combined with the poor distribution of the housing stock that is available is exerting pressure on all levels of the housing system. This is leading to homelessness for the most vulnerable.

In short, the reasons for the unprecedented increase in homelessness this year are no different to the years before. The cumulative impact of the housing crisis is increasing the numbers coming into homelessness and reducing opportunities to move-on from homelessness.

<sup>1</sup> [https://onestopshop.rtb.ie/images/uploads/Comms%20and%20Research/RTB\\_RI\\_2018\\_Q3\\_Final.pdf](https://onestopshop.rtb.ie/images/uploads/Comms%20and%20Research/RTB_RI_2018_Q3_Final.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/csr\\_q3\\_2018\\_final\\_report.pdf](https://www.housing.gov.ie/sites/default/files/publications/files/csr_q3_2018_final_report.pdf)