

A stylized, dark purple house icon with a large arched doorway and a four-pane window, set against a lighter purple background.

Focus on Homelessness

The Mid-East: Kildare, Meath and Wicklow

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Challenging homelessness. Changing lives.

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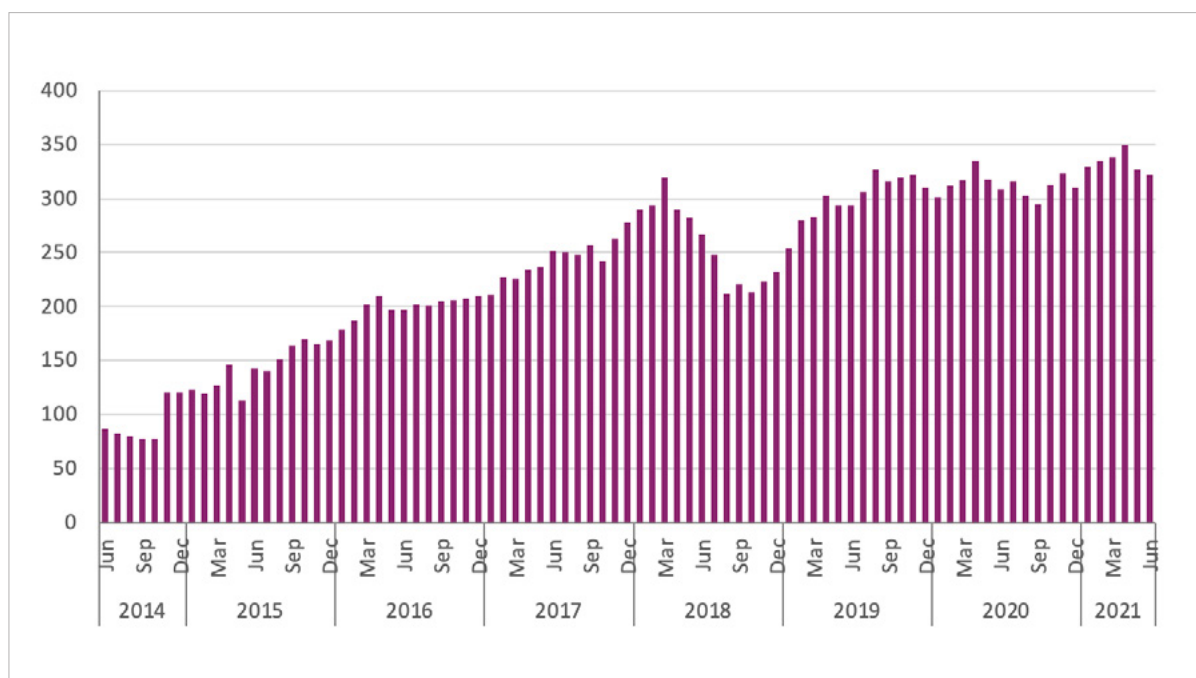
Introduction

Focus Ireland and the School of Social Work and Social Policy, Trinity College Dublin have collaborated for over a decade to bring high quality and up-to-date research on homelessness to a wider audience and into the core of public policy formation. Since 2014, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH) has published data on the number of adults and child dependents in Emergency Accommodation each month. In addition, over the same period, Quarterly Performance Reports and Financial Reports have contained data on the duration and cost of homelessness in Ireland. ‘Focus on Homelessness’ aims to make this substantial body of data available in an accessible and reliable format, and provides a detailed report on the extent, nature and duration of homelessness, in addition to the public expenditure on households experiencing homelessness in Ireland.

This new series in the Focus on Homelessness project will take a closer look at homelessness around the country by providing a detailed report for each region. There will be nine reports in total, following the nine regions under which the monthly data is published.

This report looks at homelessness in the Mid-East of Ireland. The Mid-East refers here to counties Kildare, Meath and Wicklow.

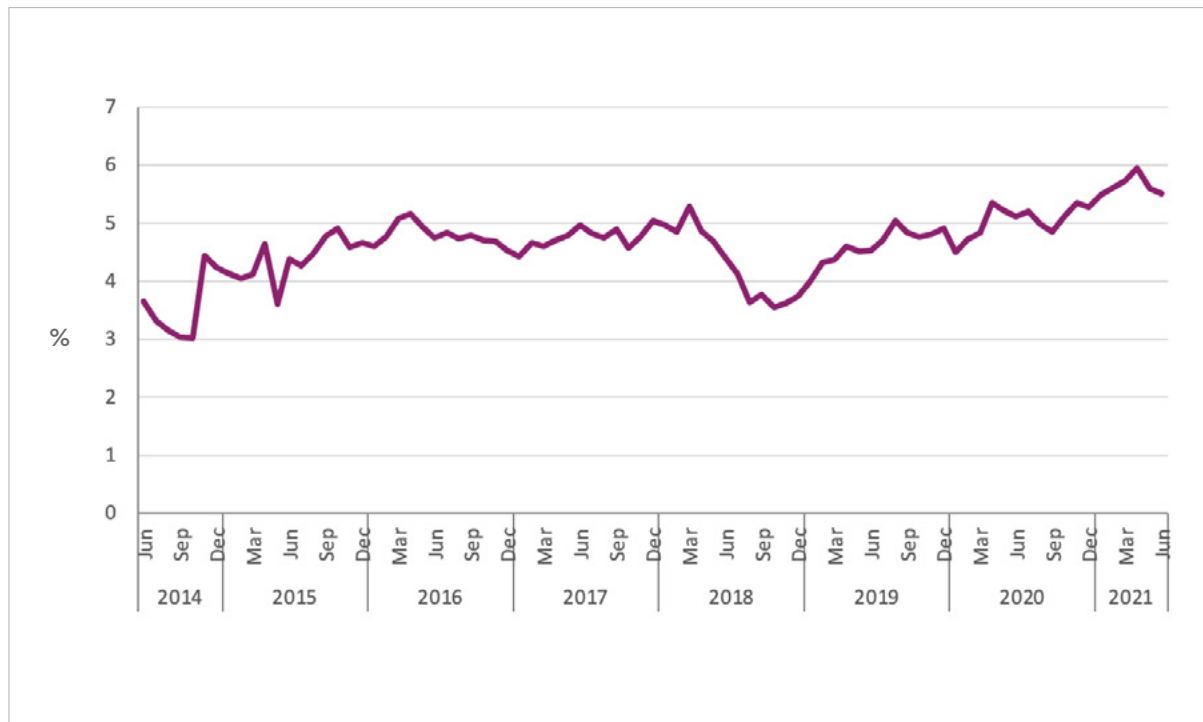
¹ For a more detailed description of these data sources, see Eoin O’Sullivan, Aisling Reidy and Mike Allen (2021) Focus on Homelessness: Significant Developments in Homelessness 2014-2021 (Dublin: Focus Ireland) and Eoin O’Sullivan and Thadee Mustafiri (2020) Public Expenditure on Services for Households Experiencing Homelessness (Dublin: Focus Ireland).

Figure 1: Adults in Emergency Accommodation

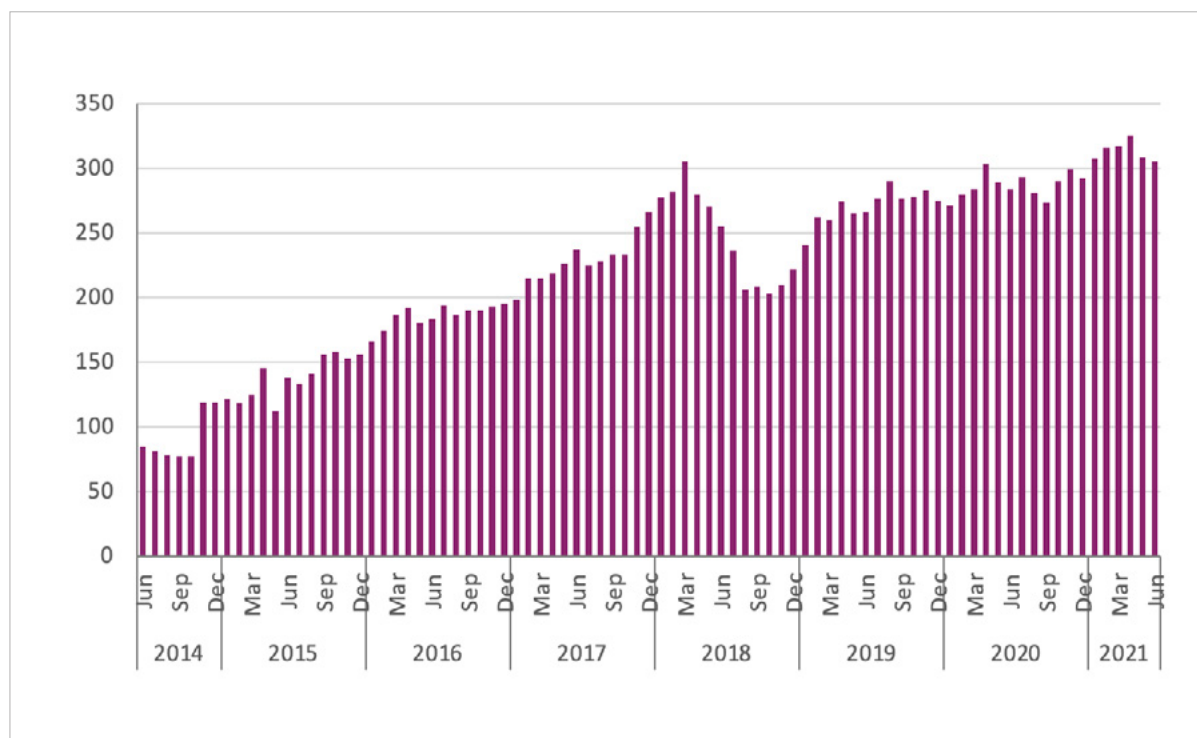
As of June 2021, there were 322 adults in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East. This number has risen steadily over the past seven years, and is now 270% higher than in June 2014. The peak was in April 2021 at 350 adults.

Breaking this down by county, Kildare and Meath each have around 40-50% of the adults in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East. Wicklow usually accounts for less than 10% of all adults in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East. Since 2014 Meath has seen the largest increase in the region, and as of June 2021 has almost seven times as many adults in emergency accommodation as it had in 2014.

This figure includes all adults, whether they are single or in a couple, and whether or not they are accompanied by children.

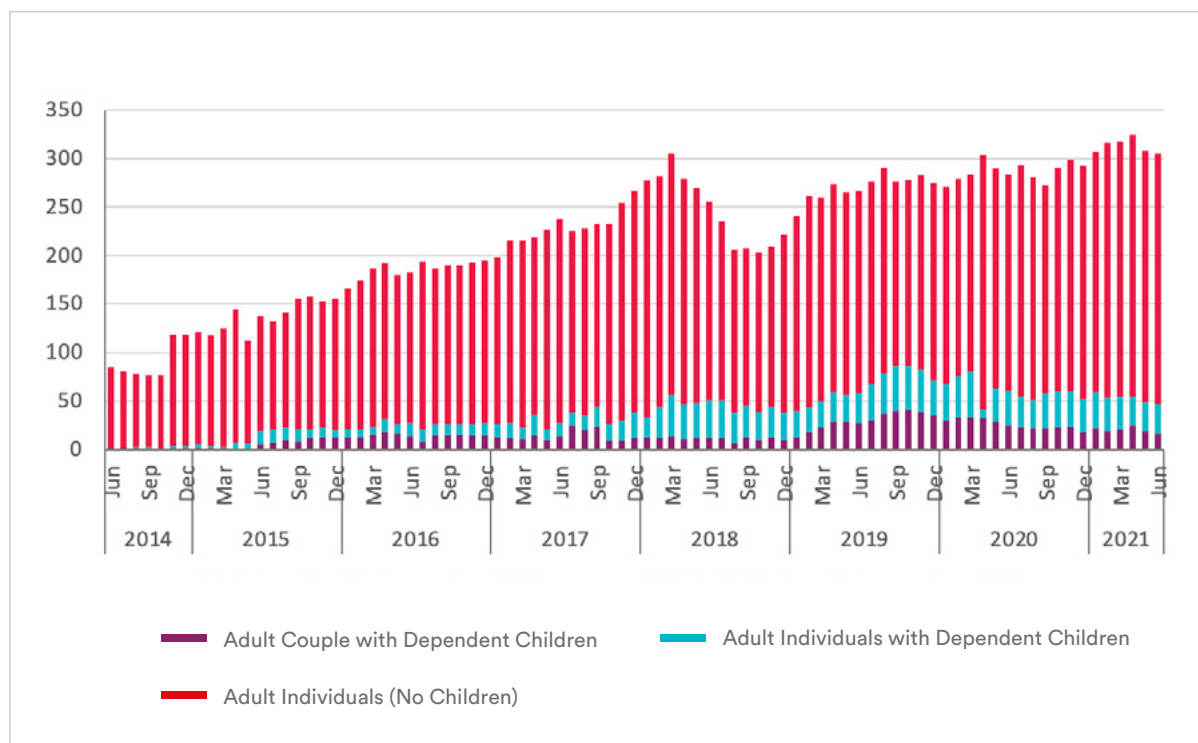
Figure 2: Adults in the Region as a Percent of all Adults in Emergency Accommodation

Comparing the Mid-East to the overall national figure, Figure 2 shows that the Mid East accounts for around 4-5% of all adults in emergency accommodation on average. This figure has been rising since late 2018 as the number of adults in emergency accommodation in the region has been increasing at a faster pace than the national figure. This reached a peak in April 2021, at 5.6%.

Figure 3: Households in Emergency Accommodation

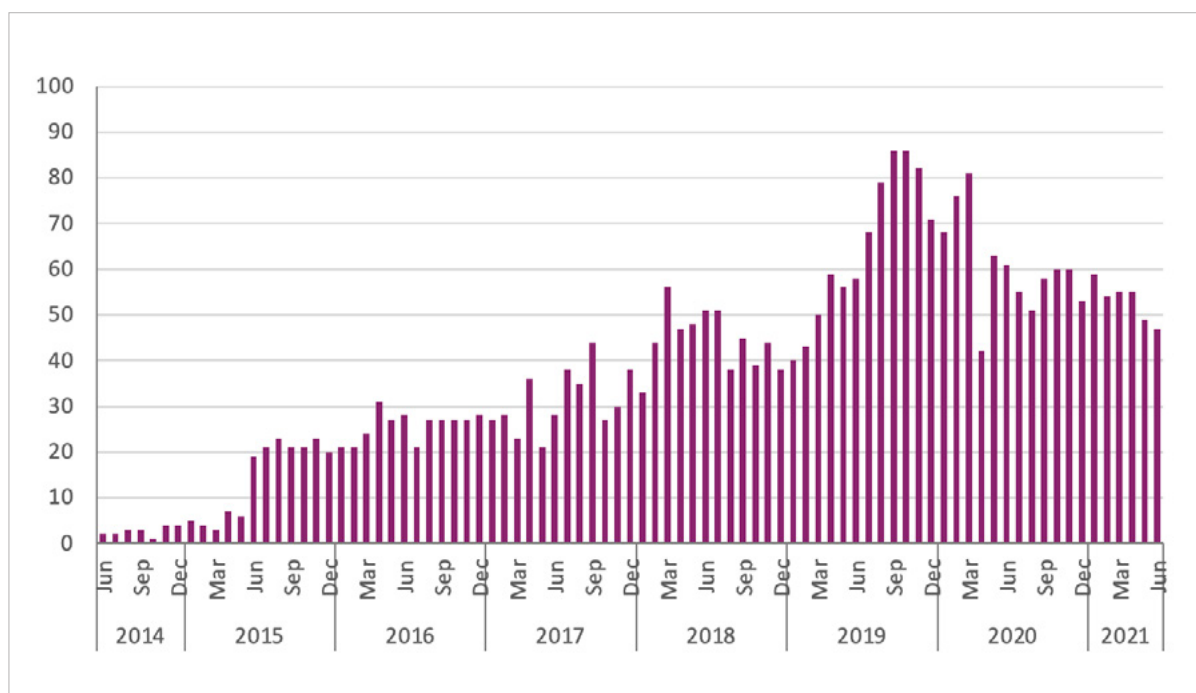
As with the number of adults shown in Figure 1, the number of households in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East has been increasing steadily for the past few years. Households in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East reached the highest figure in April 2021 with 325 households. In the past three years, this figure has risen by 50% and as of June 2021, there were 305 households in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East.

Presenting the scale of homelessness in terms of the number of households affected shifts the focus towards providing solutions to homelessness, which are homes. This gives the clearest indication of the number of dwellings required to meet the needs of households currently in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East.

Figure 4: Household Type

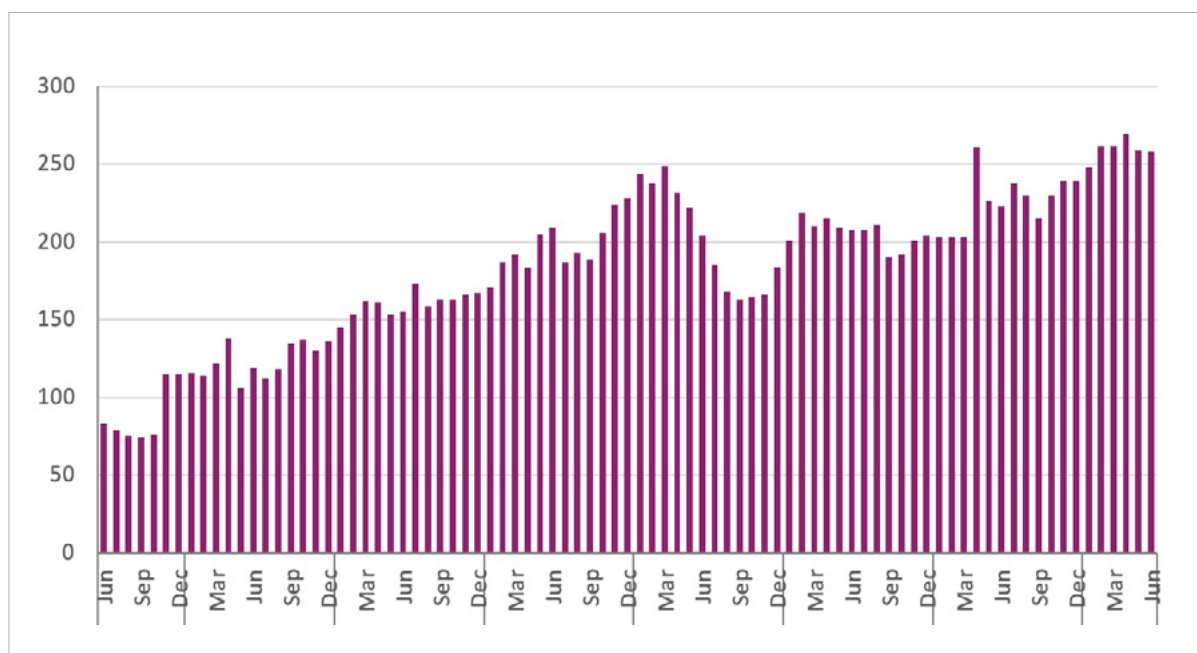
Adult individuals without accompanying children (often referred to as single homelessness) make up the majority of households experiencing homelessness in the Mid-East. Of the 305 households in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East in June 2021, 85% were adult individuals without accompanying children and 15% were households with children. Of the households with accompanying children, 64% are single-parent families.

As Figure 4 shows, family homelessness in the Mid-East has been declining since 2019, while single adult homelessness has continued to increase.

Figure 5: Families in Emergency Accommodation

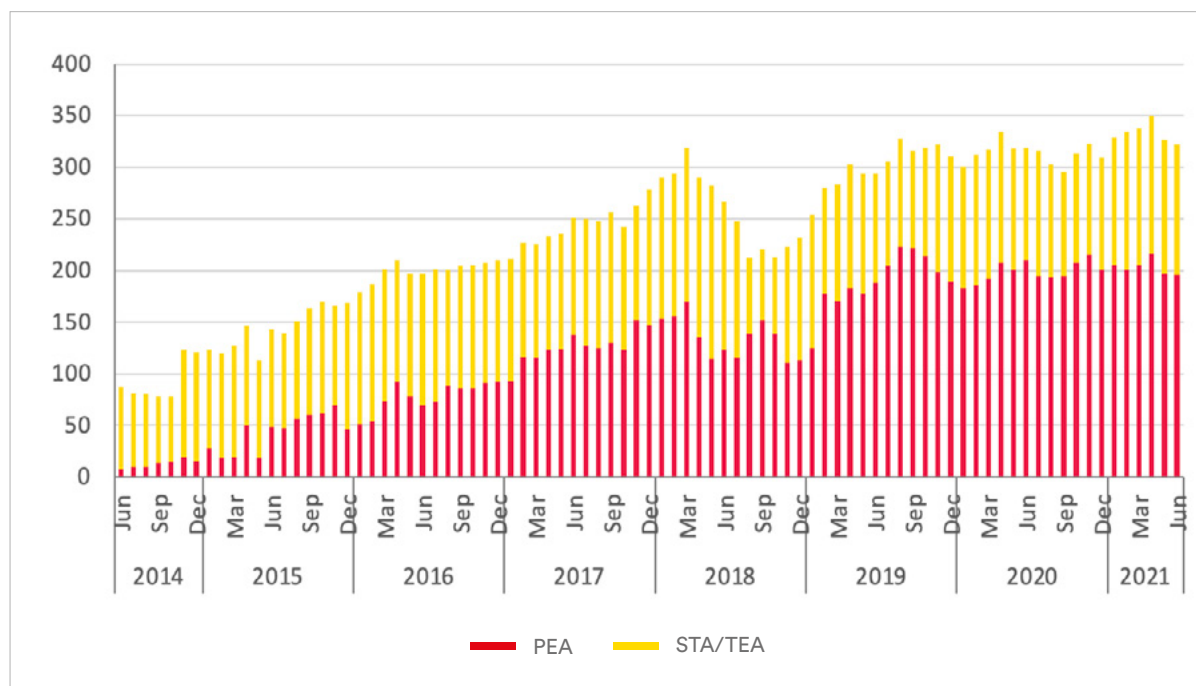
In June 2014, there were 2 families in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East region. After reaching a peak of 86 families in September and October 2019, the number of families in emergency accommodation has declined by 45%. As of June 2021, there were 47 families in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East.

Figure 6: Adult-Only Households



Adult-only households are either single adult individuals or adults in couples without accompanying children. As shown in Figure 6, these households have followed a very different pattern to the households with children in Figure 5.

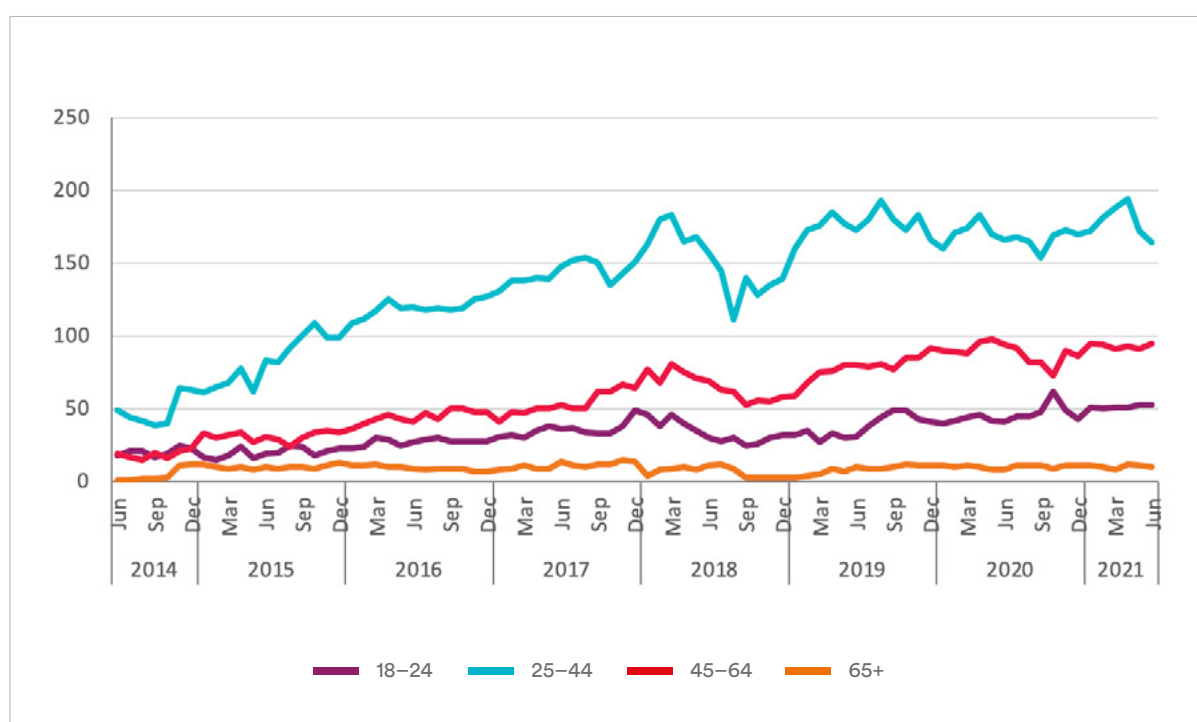
After increasing steadily over this period, the number of adult-only households in the Mid-East is now over three times higher than in June 2014. As of June 2021, there were 258 adult-only households in the Mid-East region.

Figure 8: Accommodation Type

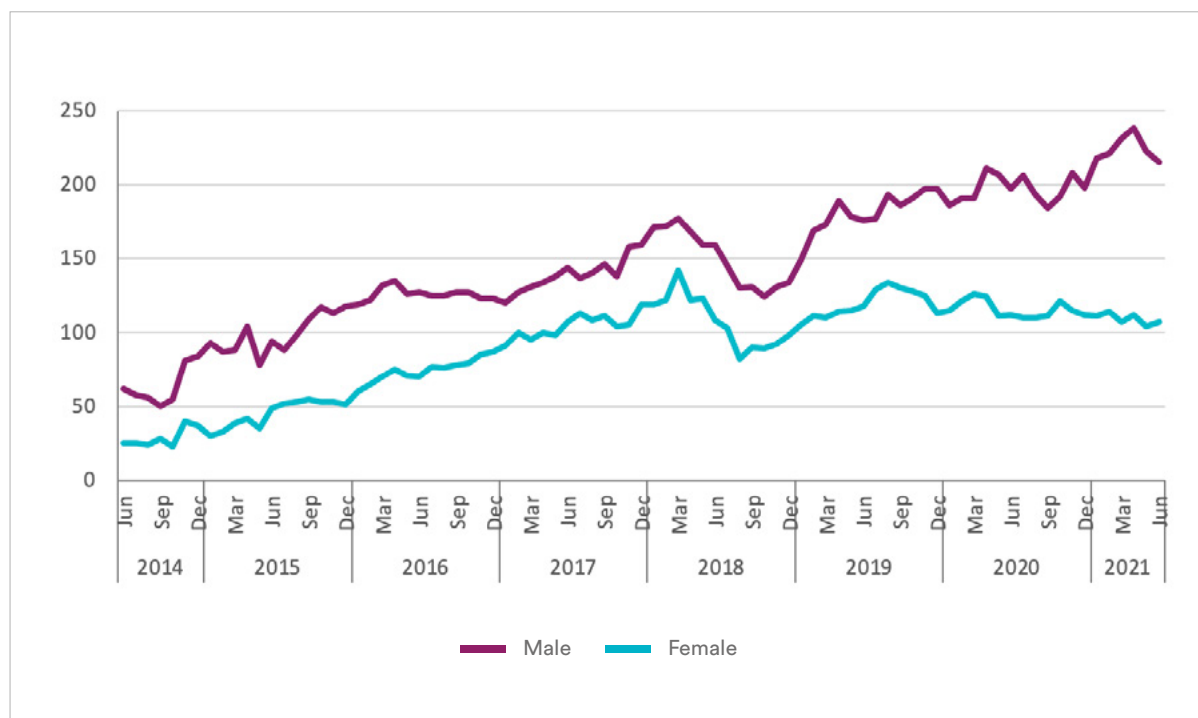
There are three types of emergency accommodation reported in the monthly reports. Private Emergency Accommodation (PEA) includes hotels, B&Bs and other residential facilities that are privately owned and are being used on an emergency basis. Supported Temporary Accommodation (STA) is emergency accommodation, primarily congregate shelters and Family Hubs, with onsite professional support, and operated by Non-Government Organisations fully or partially funded by Section 10 funding via the relevant local authority. Temporary Emergency Accommodation (TEA) is the smallest category and includes emergency accommodation with no (or minimal) supports, TEAs are operated both by NGOs and private operators. In the Mid-East, the number of TEA is very low and so has been combined with STA.

Up to early 2017, STA/TEA was the most common form of emergency accommodation in the Mid-East but has since been overtaken by PEA. In June 2021, the ratio is 61% in PEA compared to 39% in STA/TEA.

PEA tends to be predominantly allocated to families, hence the increase in the numbers here up to late 2019 as family homelessness increased, as shown in Figure 5. The number of adults in STA/TEA has increased by 59% over this period.

Figure 9: Age Profile

25–44-year-olds make up the majority of the number of adults in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East, at around 57%. The next largest group is 45–64-year olds (24%), followed by young adults aged 18–24 (15%). People aged over 65 years are just 4% of all adults in emergency accommodation.

Figure 10: Adults by Gender

As of June 2021, there were 215 adult men in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East and 107 adult women, a ratio of 67:33. In June 2014, there were 62 men and 25 women in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East.

As Figure 10 shows, the peak in April 2021 was predominantly driven by increases in the number of men in emergency accommodation in the Mid-East. The number of women has been slowly declining since mid-2019, the same point at which family homelessness in this region began to fall. The majority of single parents in homelessness tend to be women, meaning that the fall in family homelessness over this period causes the overall number of women in emergency accommodation to decline.

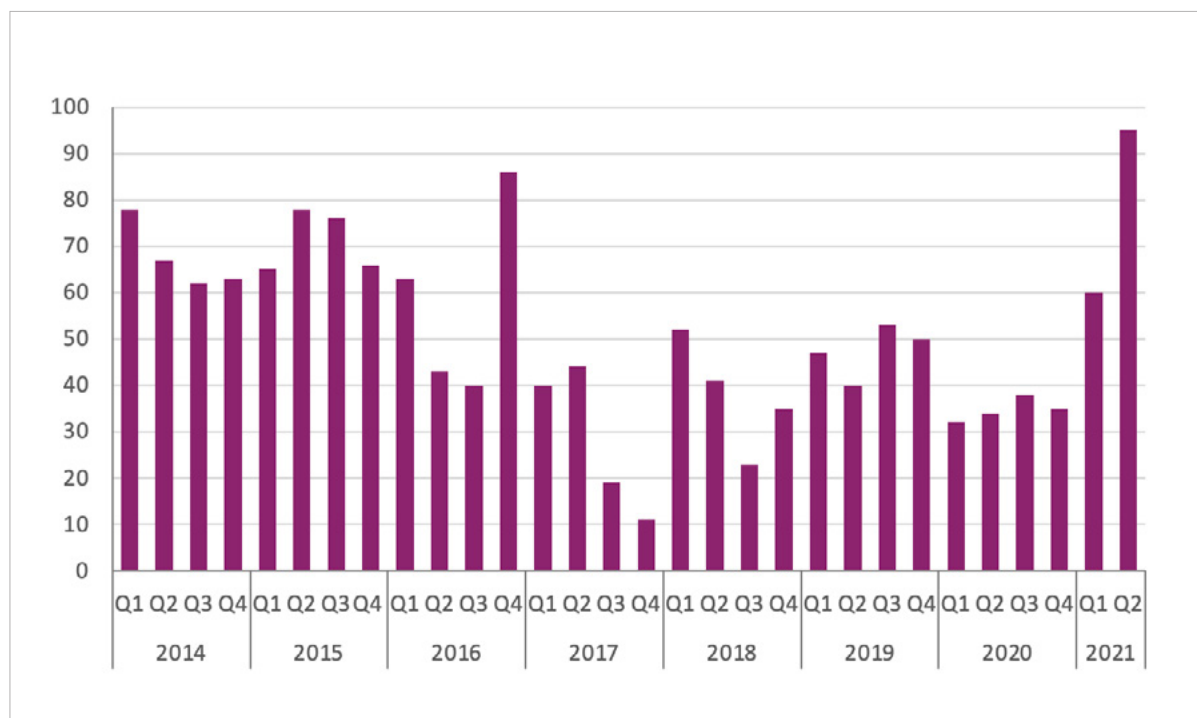
Figure 11: New Presentations

Figure 11 shows the number of adult individuals presenting as homeless to Local Authorities in the Mid-East and provided with emergency accommodation each quarter since Quarter 1 2014. The most recent quarter, Q2 2021, has had the highest number of presentations since this data became available, with 95 individuals presenting as homeless and provided with emergency accommodation.

On average in 2020, 2.7 individuals presented as homeless each week in the Mid-East, compared to 5.2 per week in 2015. In the first half of 2021, 6 people have presented as homeless each week in the Mid-East.

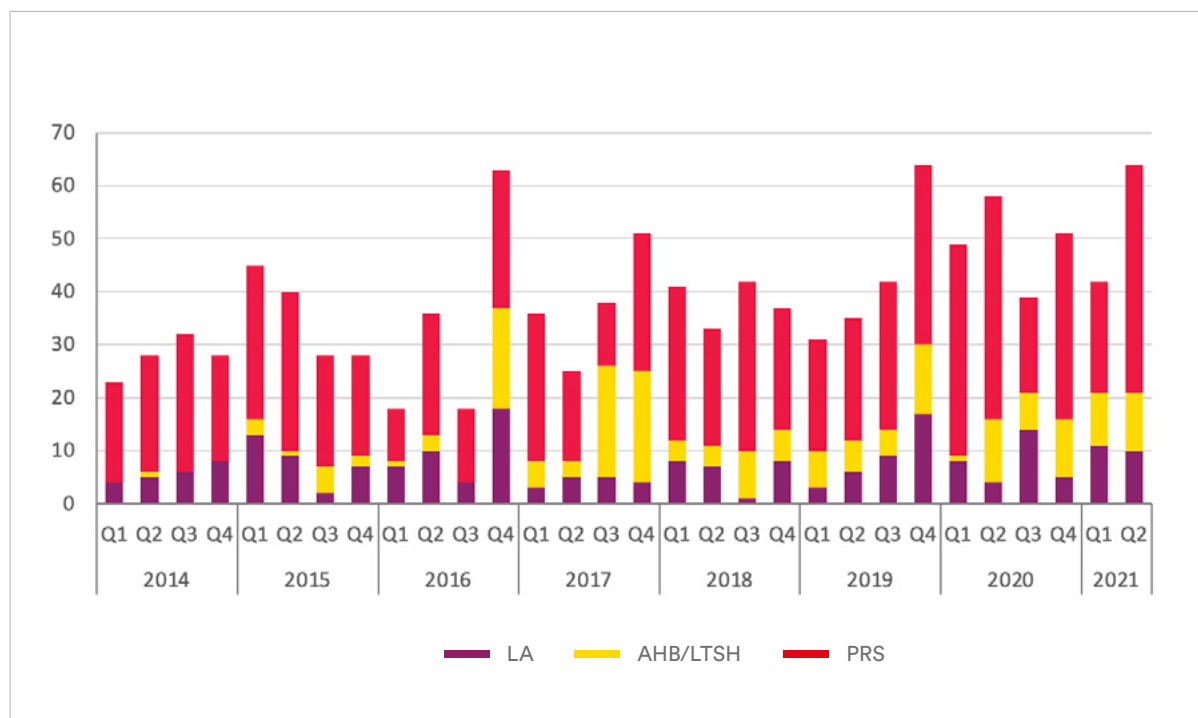
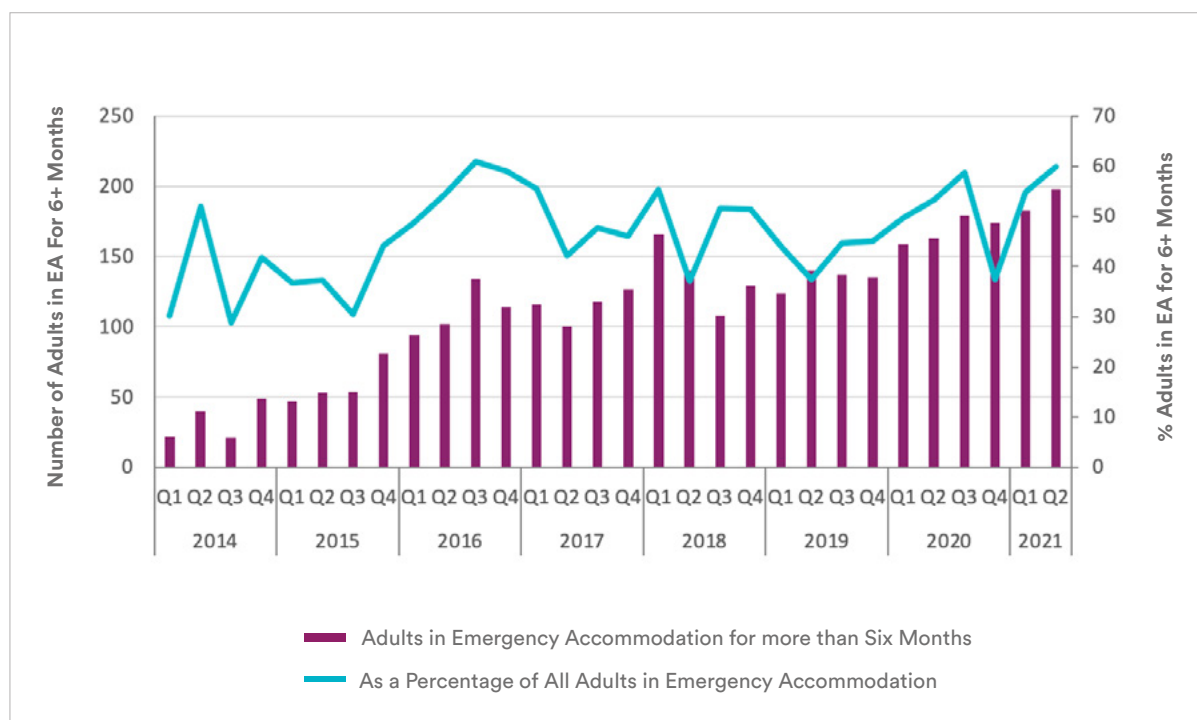
Figure 12: Adult Exits to Housing

Figure 12 presents the number of adults exiting emergency accommodation in the Mid-East each quarter and their destination. LA is exits to Local Authority housing, AHB/LTSA is for housing provided by Approved Housing Bodies and PRS is exits to the Private Rented Sector, which are largely supported by HAP payments.

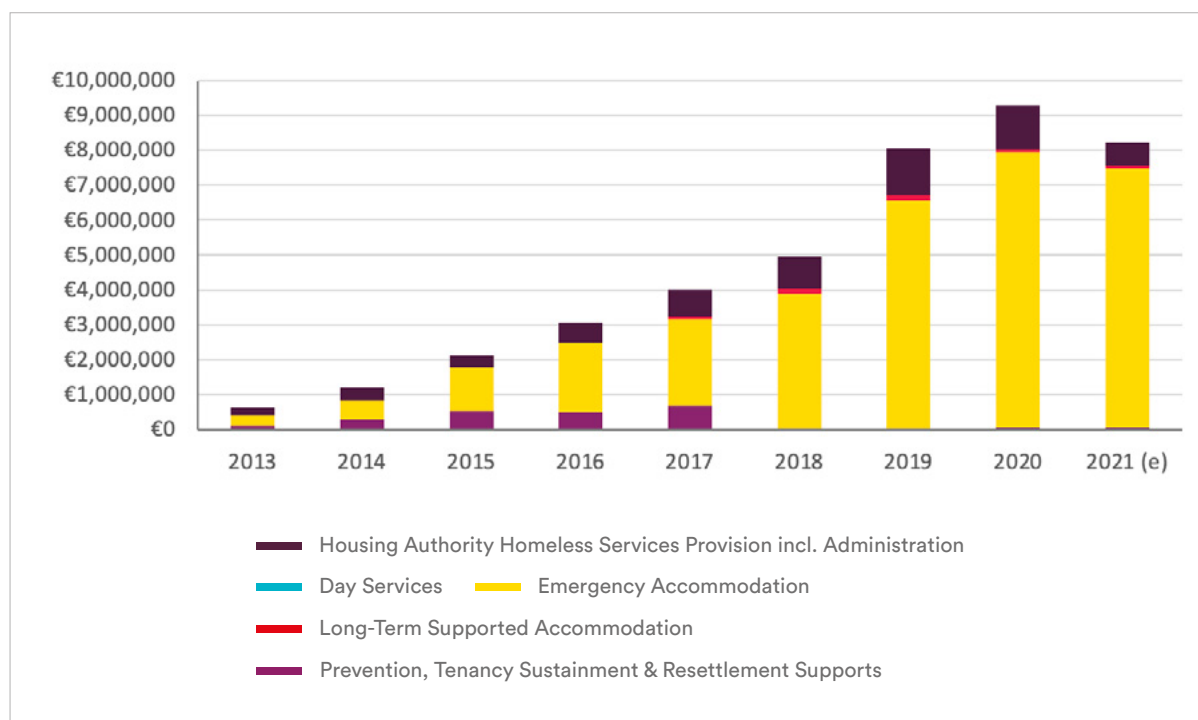
The highest number of exits to housing was reached in Q4 2019 and Q2 2021, at 64. When compared with the data on presentations in Figure 11, there have been 9 quarters since 2014 where more people exited emergency accommodation than presented as homeless.

Overall during the period Q1 2014 – Q2 2021, there were 1,165 adult exits from emergency accommodation to housing in the Mid-East: 65% to the PRS, 16% to AHB housing and 19% to Local Authority housing.

Figure 13: Adults in Emergency Accommodation for Over 6 Months

The number of adults experiencing long-term homelessness, defined as over 6 months, is shown in Figure 13. As of June 2021, 59.8% of all homeless adults in the Mid-East have been in Emergency accommodation for over 6 months. This is the highest point since Q3 2016, when it reached 61% but there were much fewer adults in Emergency accommodation in the region.

The number of adults experiencing long-term homelessness in the Mid-East is nine times higher than it was in June 2014 and stands at 198 as of June 2021.

Figure 14: Section 10 Expenditure

Actual expenditure by central (DHLGH) and local government on services for households experiencing homelessness in the Mid-East increased from €637,008 in 2013 to €9.27 million in 2020. The Mid East estimates it will spend €8.24 million in 2021.

In 2020, expenditure on emergency accommodation in the Mid-East was €7.91 million, or 85% of total expenditure in the region. Housing Authority services accounted for 13%, LTSA for 1% and Prevention for 0.5%.

Between 2013 and 2020, 75% of total expenditure in the Mid-East was on emergency accommodation. This is also the category which has seen the biggest increase in expenditure since 2013, while Prevention is the only category to have decreased, having fallen by 57%. There was no expenditure on Day Services in the Mid-East during this period.

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