



# Focus on Homelessness

The North-East: Louth, Monaghan  
and Cavan

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Challenging homelessness. Changing lives.

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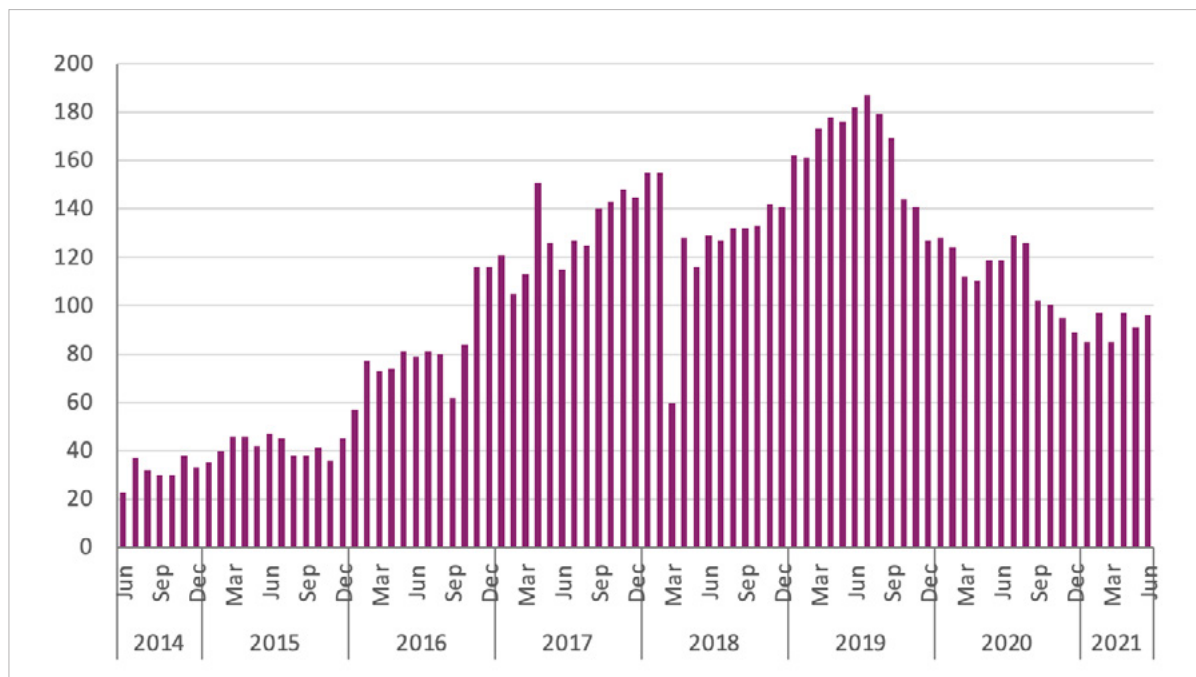
## Introduction

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 North-East of Ireland. The North-East refers here to counties Louth, Monaghan and Cavan.

<sup>1</sup> 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 96 adults in emergency accommodation in the North-East. This number has fallen by 25% since January 2020.

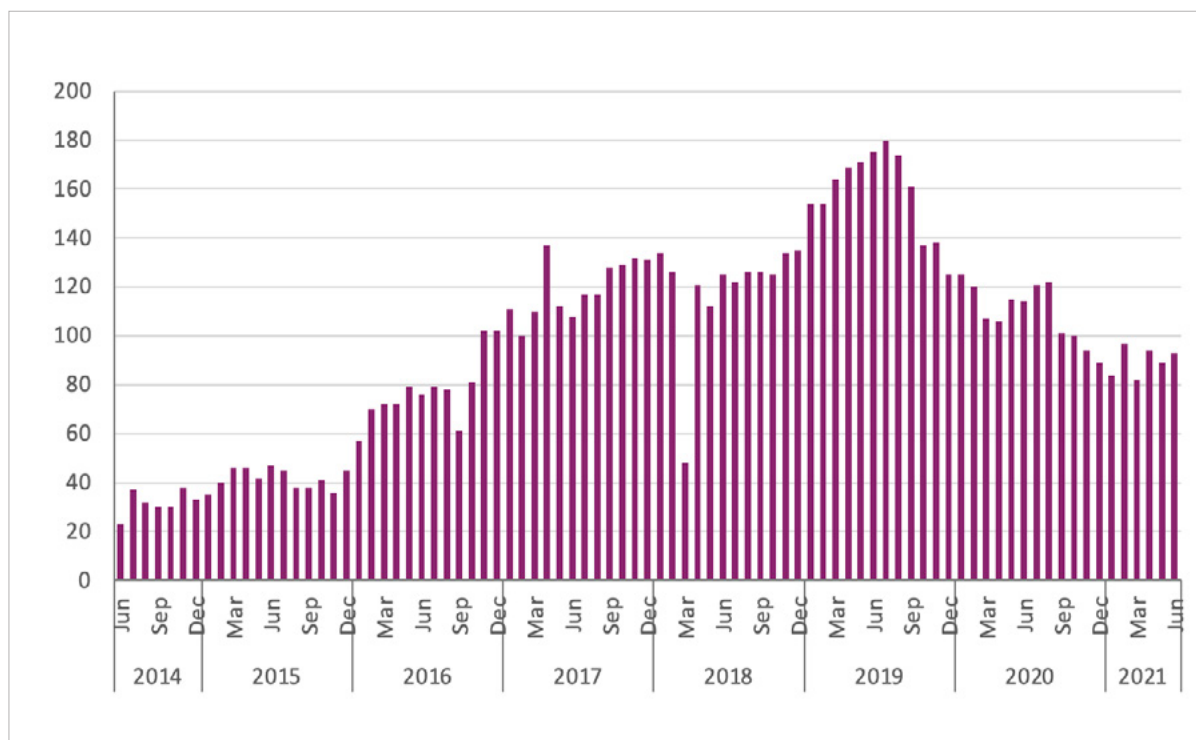
The peak was in July 2019, with 187 adults. Since these figures first became available in June 2014, the number of adults in the North-East has grown by 317%.

Breaking this down by county, there were fewer than 10 adults in both Monaghan and Cavan. For counties with fewer than 10 adults, the exact number is not reported in the monthly homelessness reports. The majority of adults in emergency accommodation in the North-East are in Louth, which has the largest towns in the region.

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**

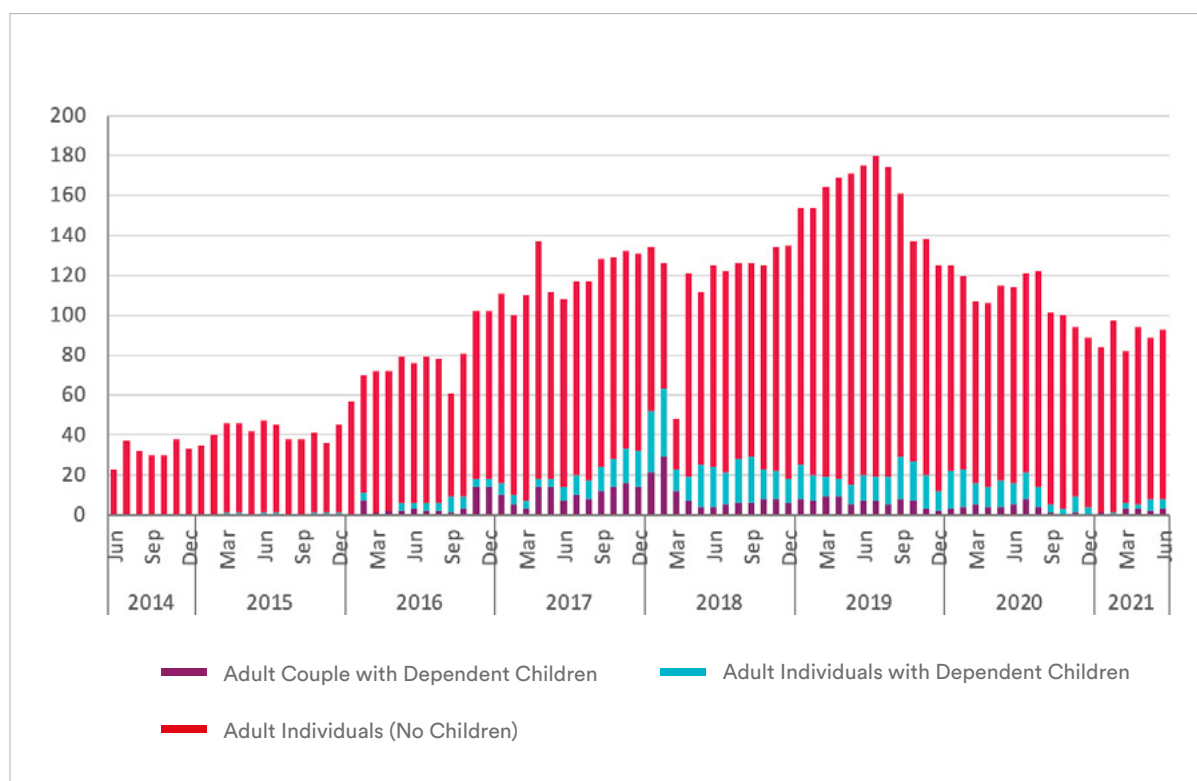
Comparing the North-East to the overall national figure, Figure 2 shows that the North-East accounts for around 1.5 - 2.5% of all adults in emergency accommodation on average. This figure peaked at just over 3% in April 2017, when the North-East saw a sudden spike in the number of adults in Emergency Accommodation. Since the beginning of 2020, this figure has decreased as the number of adults in the North-East fell.

**Figure 3: Households in Emergency Accommodation**

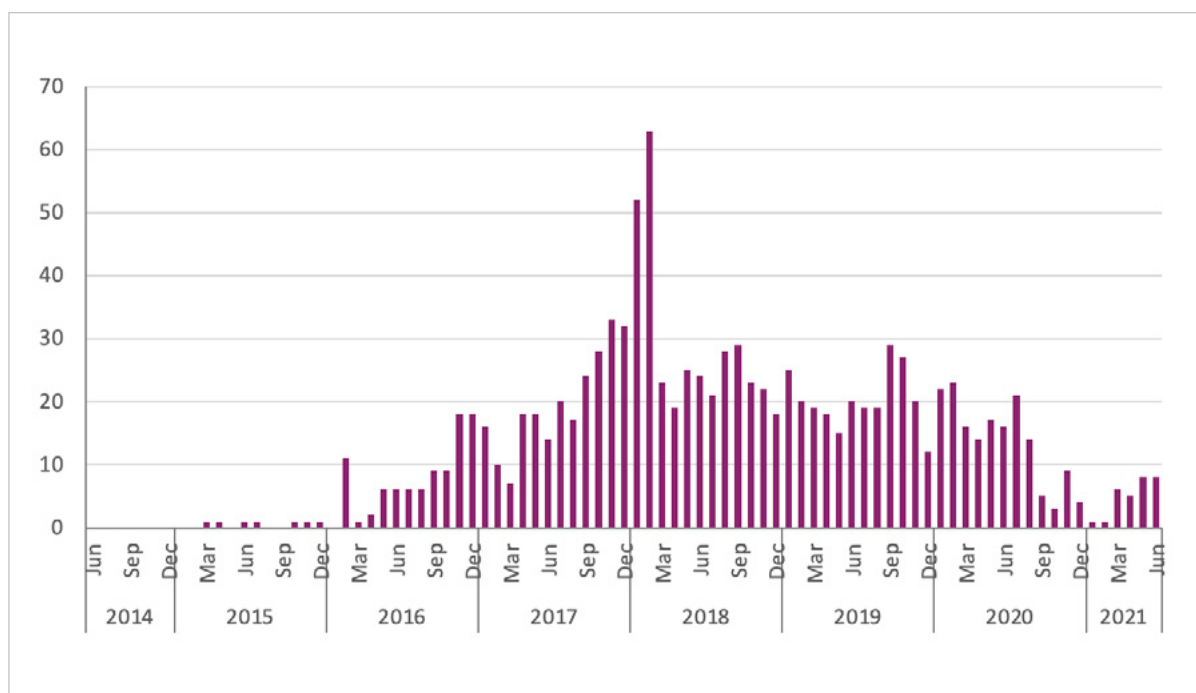
After increasing steadily since 2014, the number of households in emergency accommodation in the North-East reached a peak of 174 in July 2019, after which it began to decline. This figure has since decreased by 48%. As of June 2021, there are 93 households in Emergency Accommodation in the North-East.

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.

Despite the decline observed since 2019, the number of households accessing Emergency Accommodation in the North-East in June 2021 is 304% higher than the number of households in June 2014.

**Figure 4: Household Type**

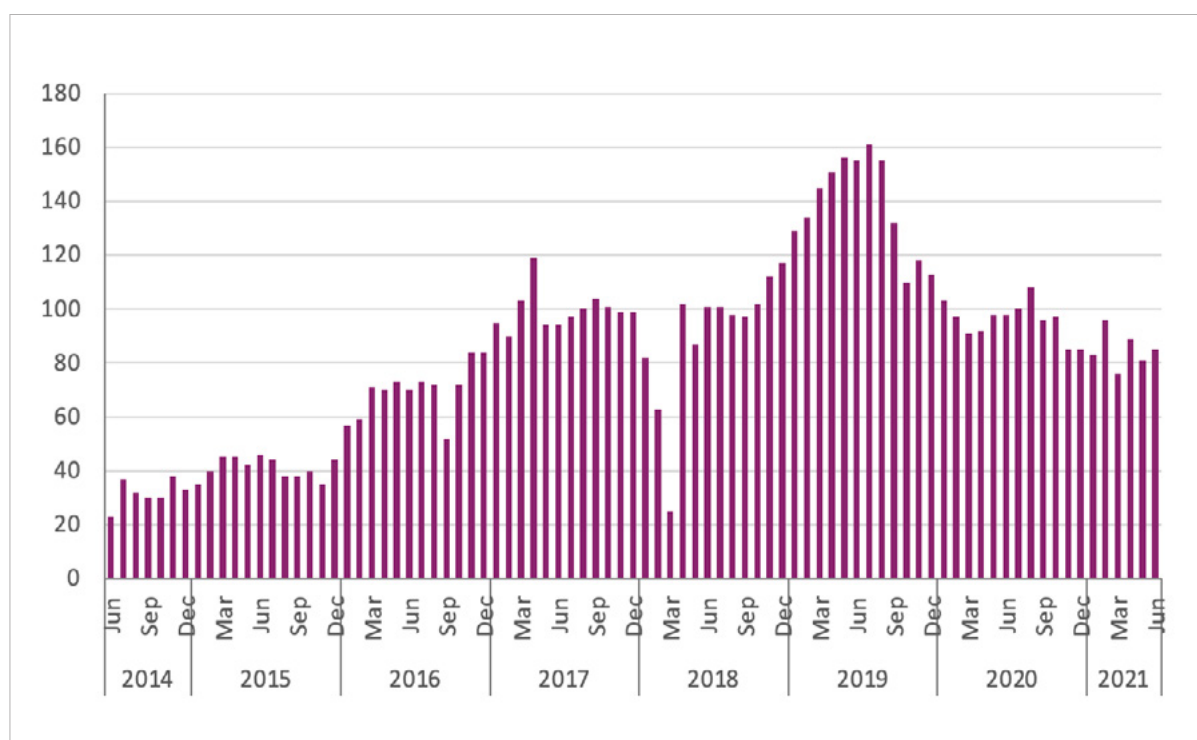
Adult individuals without accompanying children (often referred to as single homelessness) make up the majority of homeless households in the North-East. Of the 93 households in emergency accommodation in the North-East in June 2021, 91% were adult individuals without accompanying children and 9% were households with children. Of the households with accompanying children, two-thirds are single-parent families.

**Figure 5: Families in Emergency Accommodation**

There were no families recorded in emergency accommodation in the North-East until March 2015, and from mid-2016 this began to grow quickly. The highest number of families was reached in February 2018, with 63 families. It then fell and remained around 20-30 families throughout 2018 and 2019.

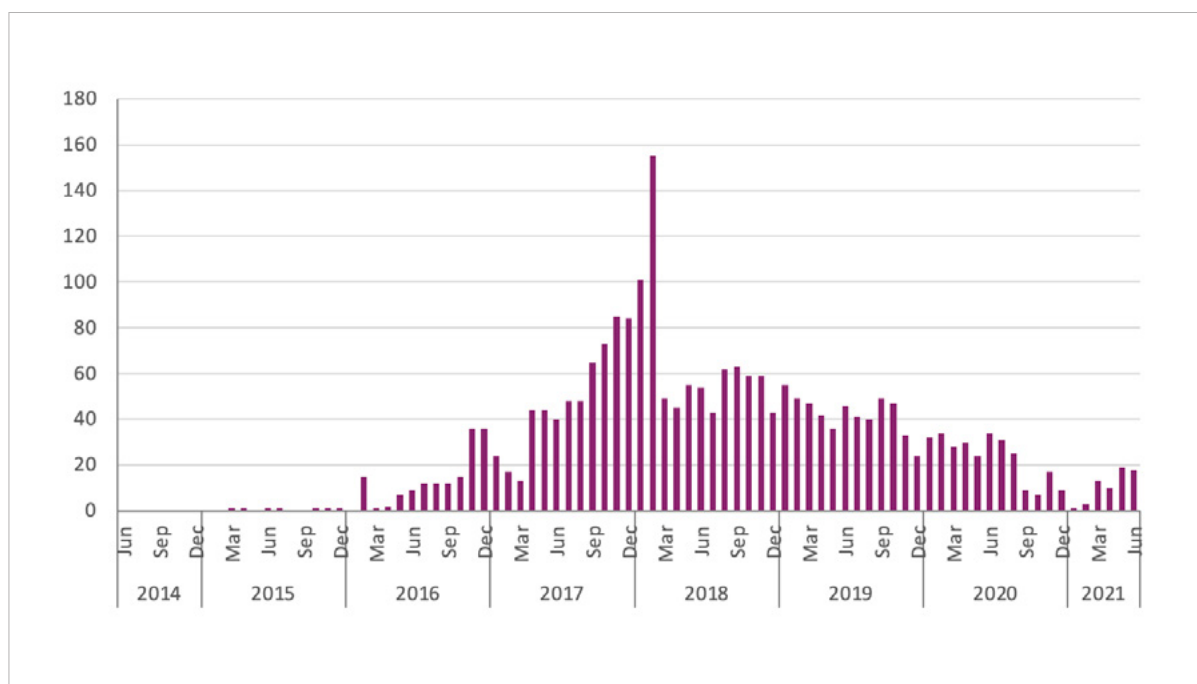
Since the beginning of 2020, there has been a sharp drop in family homelessness nationally, and the number of families in the North-East fell by 64% in this period. As of June 2021, there were 8 families in emergency accommodation in the North-East.



**Figure 6: Adult-Only Households**

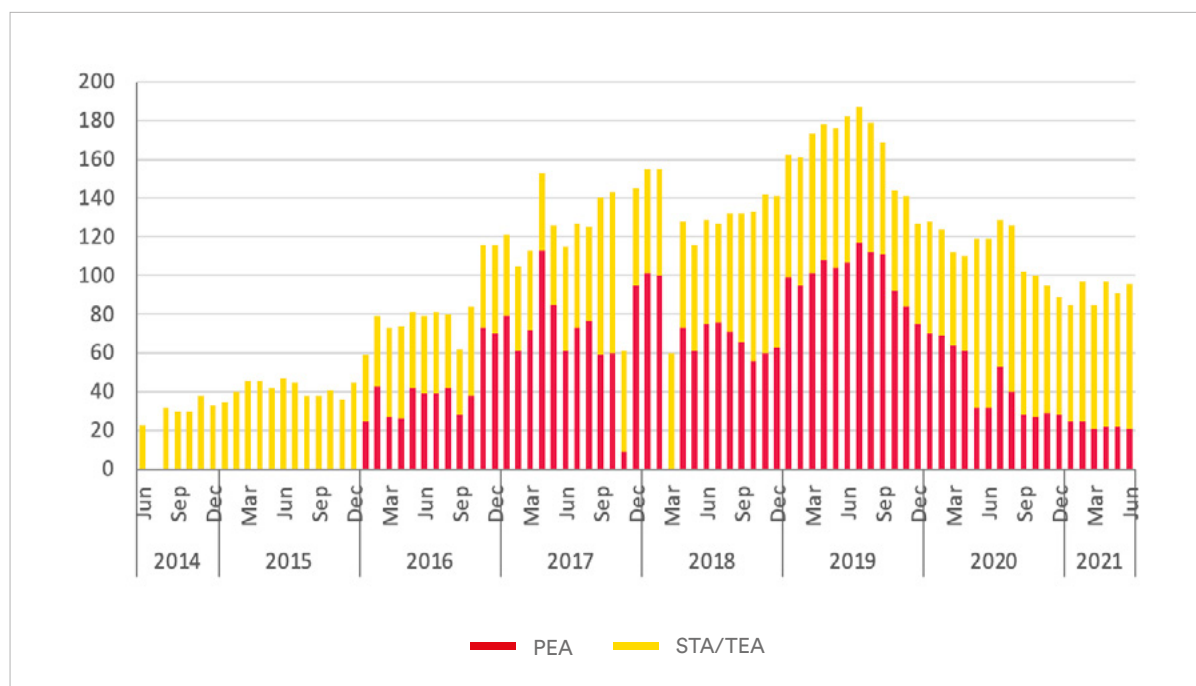
Adult-only households are either single adult individuals or adults in couples without accompanying children. In most regions, there is a stark difference between the trends among single adults and families in emergency accommodation, particularly since the beginning of 2020. In the North-East however, both have followed a similar overall pattern.

After increasing steadily since June 2014, the number of adult-only households in the North-East saw a sudden dip in March 2018 before increasing again to a peak of 161 in July 2019. It has since declined to around 80 households during 2021. As of June 2021, there were 85 adult-only households in emergency accommodation in the North-East.

**Figure 7: Child Dependants**

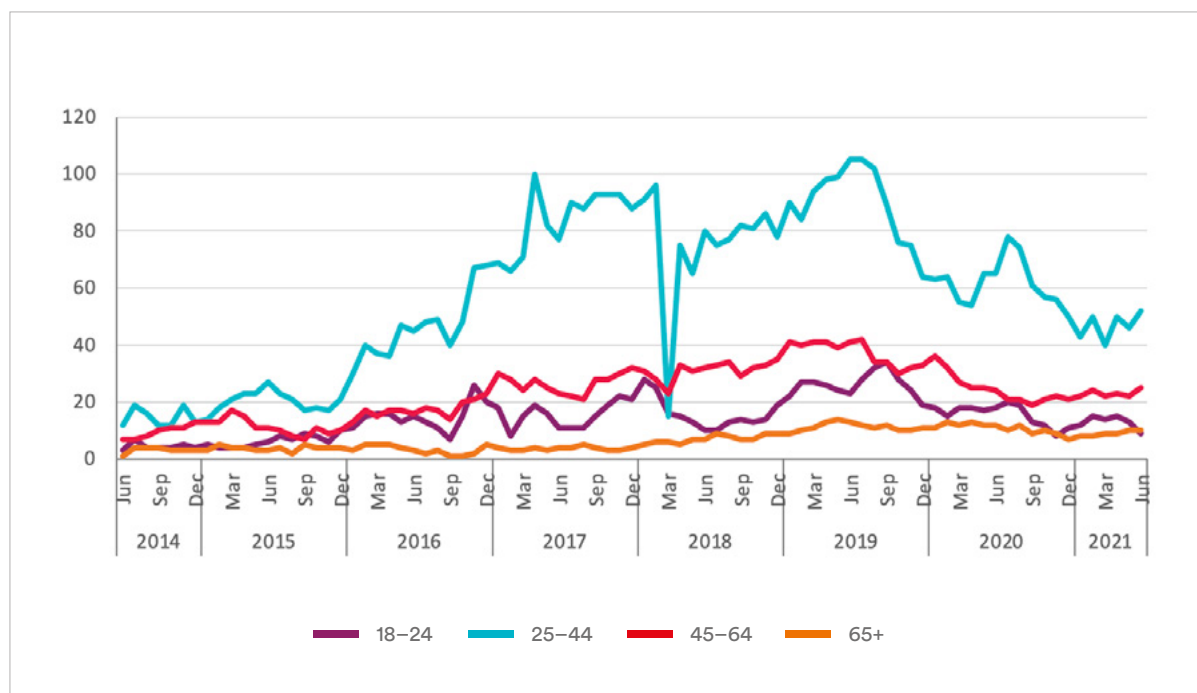
The number of children in emergency accommodation follows the trend of families in emergency accommodation as shown in Figure 5. In June 2021 there were 18 children in Emergency Accommodation.

The highest number was reached in February 2018, with 155 children in emergency accommodation in the North-East. Since then, the number has fallen rapidly. Since mid-2020, there has been a sharp drop in the number of children in emergency accommodation in the North-East, falling by 47% during the past 12 months.

**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 North-East, the number of TEA is very low and so has been combined with STA.

Before 2016, there was no PEA used in the North-East. It then quickly became the dominant type of accommodation in the region, accounting for over half throughout 2016-2019. It was then overtaken by STA, which now makes up 70-80% of the emergency accommodation in the region.

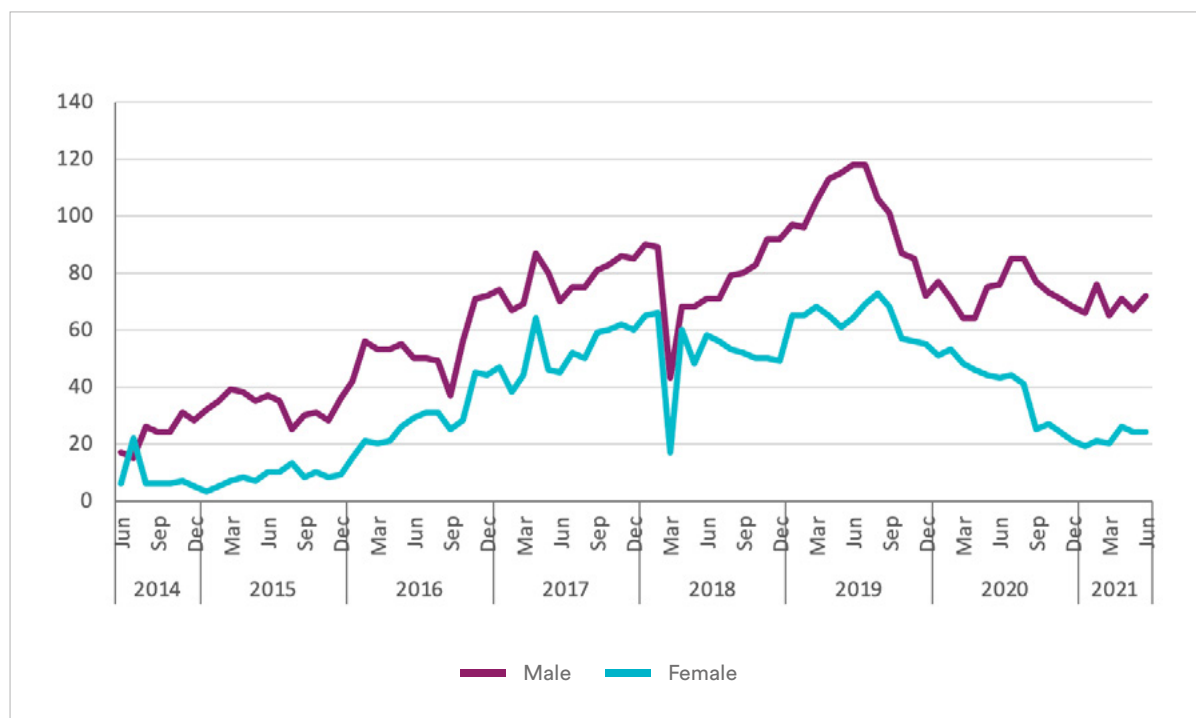
**Figure 9: Age Profile**

25–44-year-olds make up the majority of the number of adults in Emergency Accommodation in the North-East, at around 57%. The next largest group is 45–64-year-olds (23%), followed by young adults aged 18–24 (14%). People aged over 65 years are just 6% of all adults in Emergency Accommodation.

As can be seen from Figure 9, the sudden dip in the numbers around March 2018 seen in Figures 1 and 6 seems to have been driven by a sharp decrease in the number of 25–44-year-old.<sup>2</sup>

All age groups have seen a rise in homelessness over the past seven years. Since the total number of adults in emergency accommodation in the North-East began to fall in July 2019, the biggest decrease has been among the 18–24 age group, falling by 68% in two years.

<sup>2</sup> This is likely to be a reporting error, but as this is the published figure, we have include it.

**Figure 10: Adults by Gender**

As of June 2021, there were 72 adult men in emergency accommodation in the North-East and 24 adult women, a ratio of 75:25. In June 2014, this figure was 17 adult men and 6 adult women.

At the peak in July 2019, there were 118 men and 69 women in emergency accommodation in the North-East. Since then, the number of women has fallen more sharply than the number of men, by 65% compared to 39%. 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.

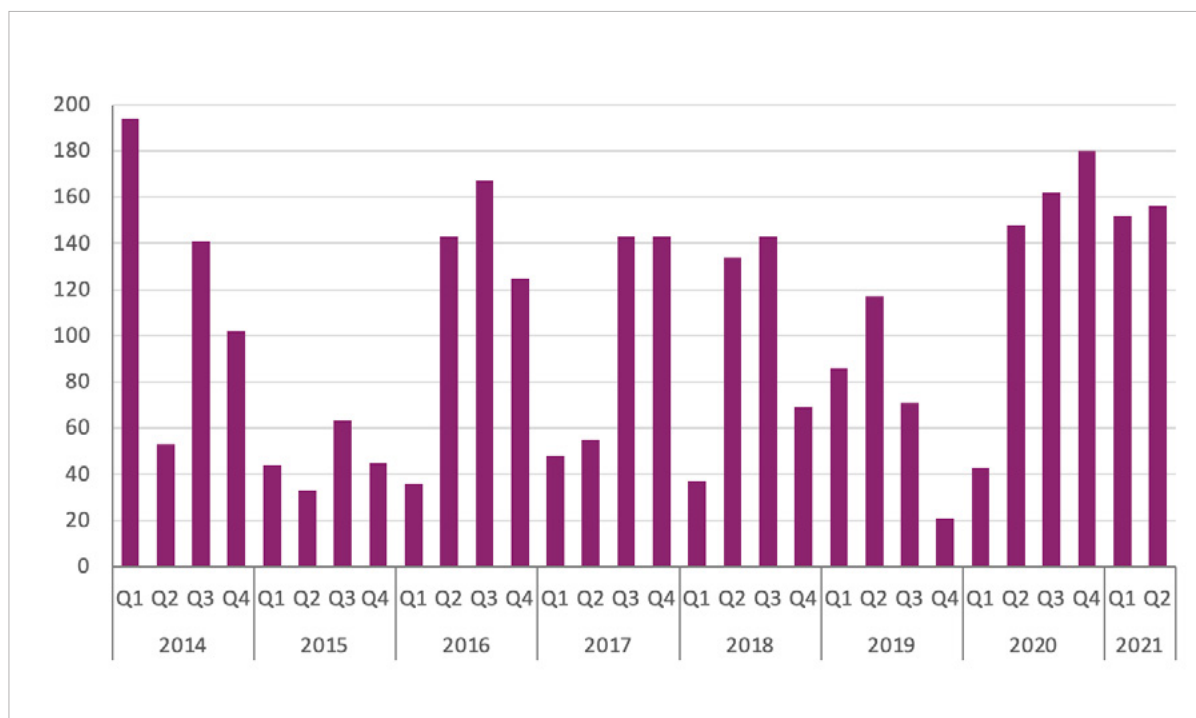
**Figure 11: New Presentations**

Figure 11 shows the number of adult individuals presenting as homeless to Local Authorities in the North-East and provided with Emergency Accommodation each quarter since Quarter 1 2014. At its highest, 194 individuals presented as homeless in Q1 2014.

On average in 2020, 10.25 individuals presented as homeless each week in the North-East, compared to 3.6 per day in 2015. To date in 2021, 11.8 people have presented as homeless each week in the North-East.

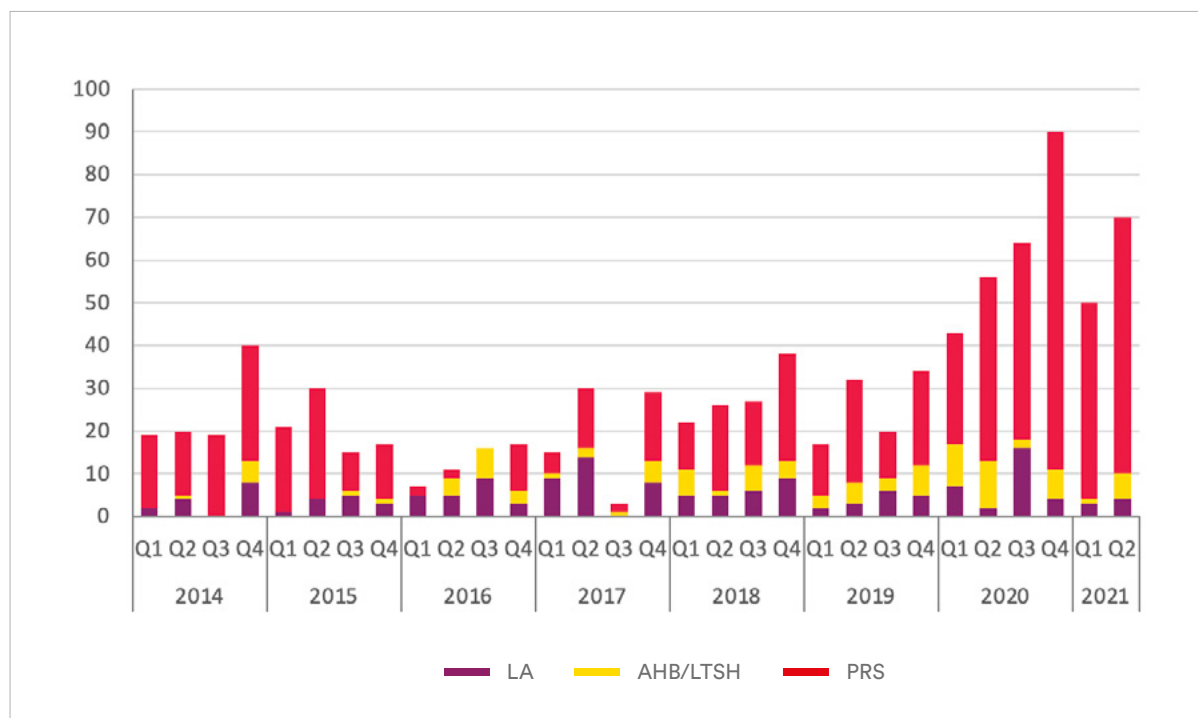
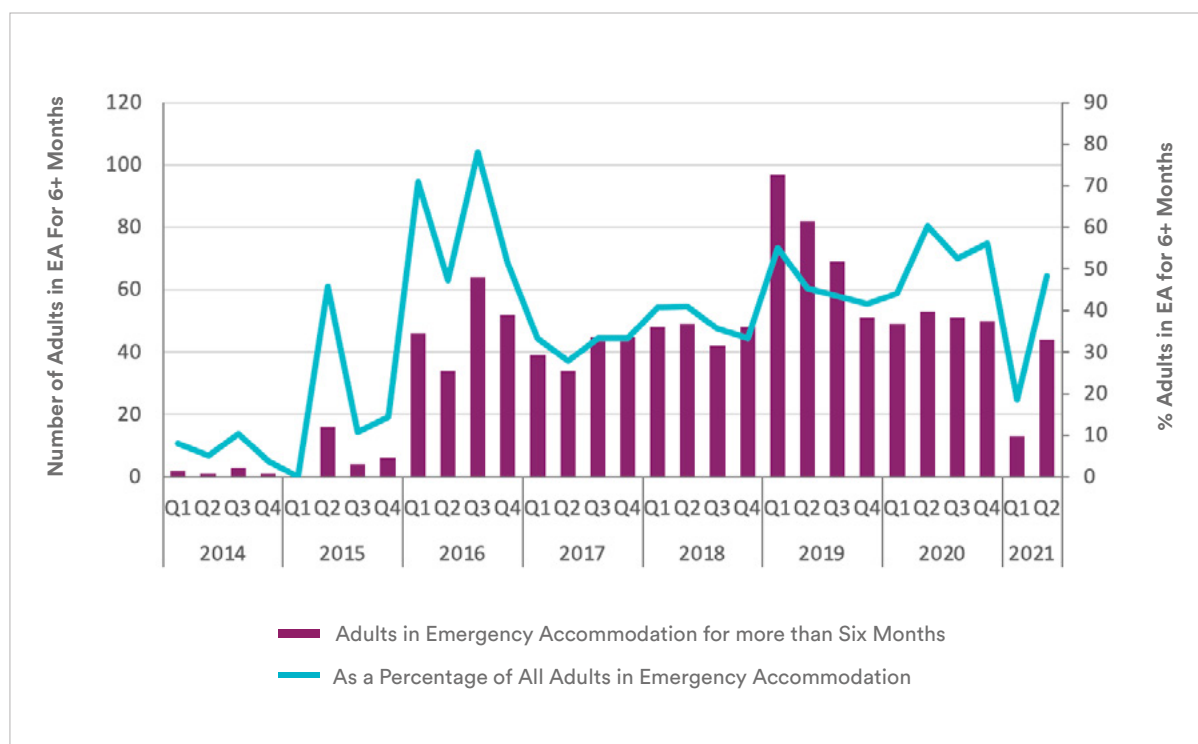
**Figure 12: Adult Exits to Housing**

Figure 12 presents the number of adults exiting Emergency Accommodation in the North-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 in one quarter was 90 in Q4 2020. When compared with the data on presentations in Figure 11, there has been just 1 quarter since 2014 where more people exited Emergency Accommodation than presented as homeless, Q4 2019.

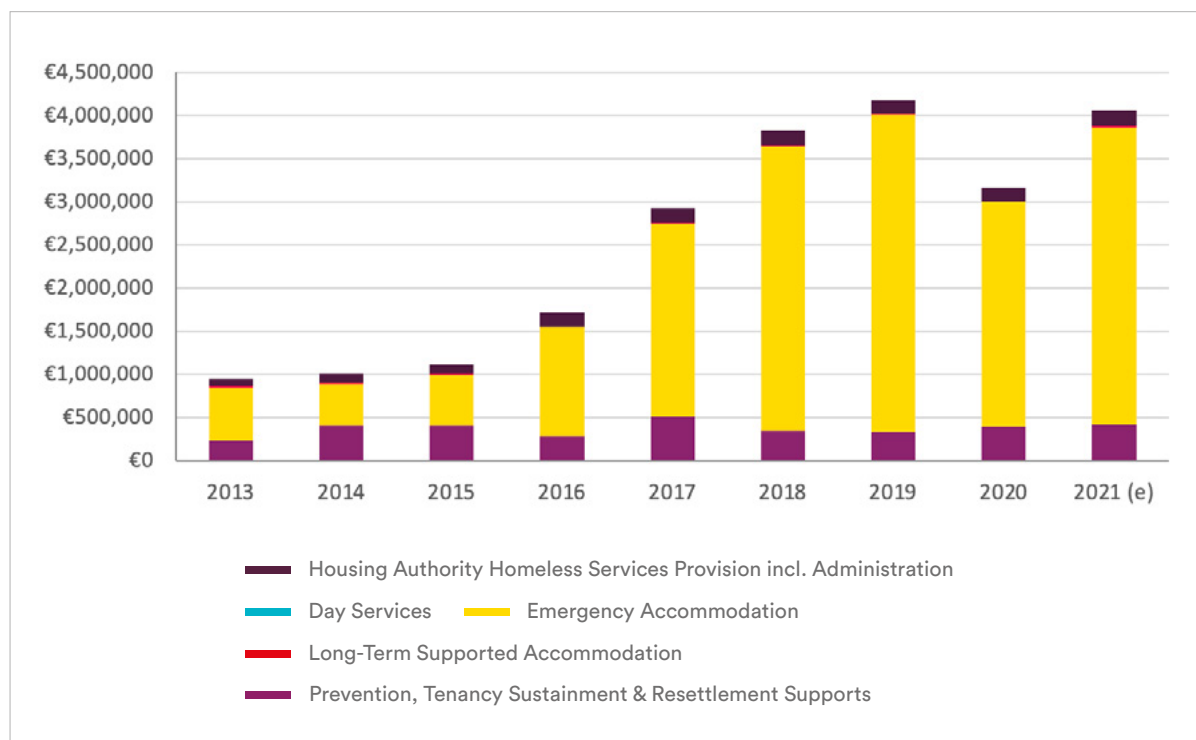
Overall during the period Q1 2014 – Q2 2021, there were 898 adult exits from emergency accommodation to housing in the North-East: 71% to the PRS, 11% to AHB housing and 17% to Local Authority housing.

**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 Q2 2021, 48% of all homeless adults in the North-East have now been in emergency accommodation for over 6 months. This reached its highest point in Q3 2016, at 78%.

The number of adults experiencing long-term homelessness in the North-East has increased from 2 in Q1 2014 to 44 in Q2 2021.



**Figure 14: Section 10 Expenditure**

Actual expenditure by central (DHLGH) and local government on services for households experiencing homelessness in the North-East increased from €950,963 in 2013 to €3.16 million in 2020. The North-East estimates it will spend €4.06 million in 2021.

In 2020, expenditure on emergency accommodation in the North-East was €2.6 million, or 82% of total expenditure. Prevention accounted for 13% and Housing Authority services for 5%. There was no expenditure on LTSA in 2020.

Between 2013 and 2019, 79% of total expenditure in the North-East was on emergency accommodation. There was no expenditure on Day Services in the North-East during this period.

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