

A stylized, dark purple house icon with a gabled roof, a large arched doorway, and a window with four panes. The house is positioned in the upper half of the page, overlapping the dark purple background.

Focus on Homelessness

South-West

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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. This series ‘Focus on Homelessness’ aims to build on the success of our research partnership by making the now substantial body of data published by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and other State Agencies working in the area of Housing and Homelessness, available in an accessible format.

Since 2020, Focus on Homelessness has provided an overview of key trends in the number of households experiencing homelessness in Ireland in recent years, the number of entries into and exits from emergency accommodation, length of stay in emergency accommodation and the expenditure on these services. Special editions of Focus on Homelessness have examined Adult-Only Homelessness, Gender and Homelessness, patterns of homelessness in each of the nine regions and ‘A Decade of Homelessness’ data. All previous editions of Focus on Homelessness can be found www.focusireland.ie/focus-on-homelessness.

This Focus on Homelessness edition will take a closer look at homelessness around the country by providing a detailed report for each of the nine Local Authority administrative regions that organise homelessness services, covering the period from mid-2014 to mid-2025. A combined report will also be published which will draw general observations on trends in homelessness in Ireland over this eleven-year period.

This is the second iteration of regional analysis of homelessness in the Focus on Homelessness series. The previous Focus on Homelessness edition on regional trends analysed the changes between 2014 and 2021. This iteration will compare figures in 2025 to both 2021 and 2014. Current figures are compared to two separate points in time as it shows how the introduction and subsequent ending of certain COVID-19 policies have impacted homelessness¹. This edition will also analyse a number of new data trends around aspects of homelessness that have become available since 2022.

This report looks at homelessness in the South-West region of Ireland, which covers Cork City Council, Cork County Council and Kerry County Council.

¹ The two most relevant temporary measures were a moratorium on evictions and a rent freeze. The moratorium on the termination of rental tenancies on all grounds was in place between March and August 2020. Evictions were permitted under limited circumstances during the 2nd and 3rd lockdowns, from October 2020 to November 2020 and from January 2021 to April 2021 respectively.

Prevention²

Figure 1 shows the number of adults who were assessed³ as homeless under Section 2 of the *Housing Act, 1988* by the South-West Local Authorities, but were provided with housing options and so were prevented from entering emergency accommodation between 2022 and 2025. The average number of such preventions per quarter in 2025 so far, was 49 – a 62.3% reduction from 2024’s quarterly average of 130 and marking the lowest average number of preventions since the start of data collection in 2022. While there is variance, the largest number of preventions have generally been through the Private Rented Sector (PRS) and LA Tenant-In-Situ (TIS) Schemes. In Q2 2025, 60.4% (n=32) of preventions came from the PRS, followed by LA TIS (17%, n=9), and LA Letting and AHB Lettings (11.3%, n=6⁴).

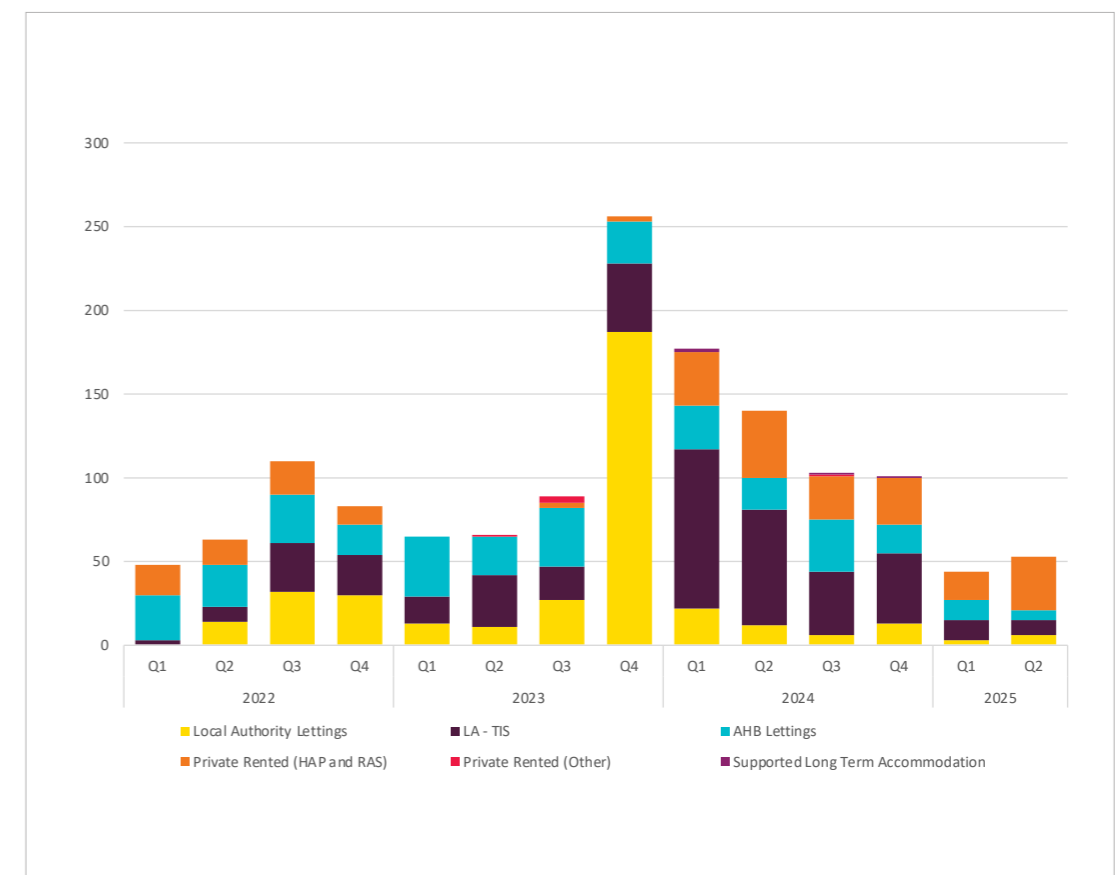


Figure 1: Adult Preventions from Entering Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, Q1 2022-Q2 2025

² Data on prevention is only available from Q1 2022 onwards.

³ Note that legislation uses the term ‘regarded ... as being homeless’ rather than ‘assessed’.

⁴ Both LA lettings and AHB lettings were responsible for 6 preventions each.

Presentations to Emergency Accommodation

Figure 2 shows the number of adult individuals who were assessed as homeless under Section 2 of the *Housing Act, 1988* by the Local Authorities in the South-West and provided with emergency or temporary accommodation. In 2024, an average of 154 adults were provided with emergency accommodation per quarter in the South-West, compared to 111 per quarter in 2021 and 175 per quarter in 2014. In the first half of 2025, 153 adults were provided with emergency accommodation on average per quarter.

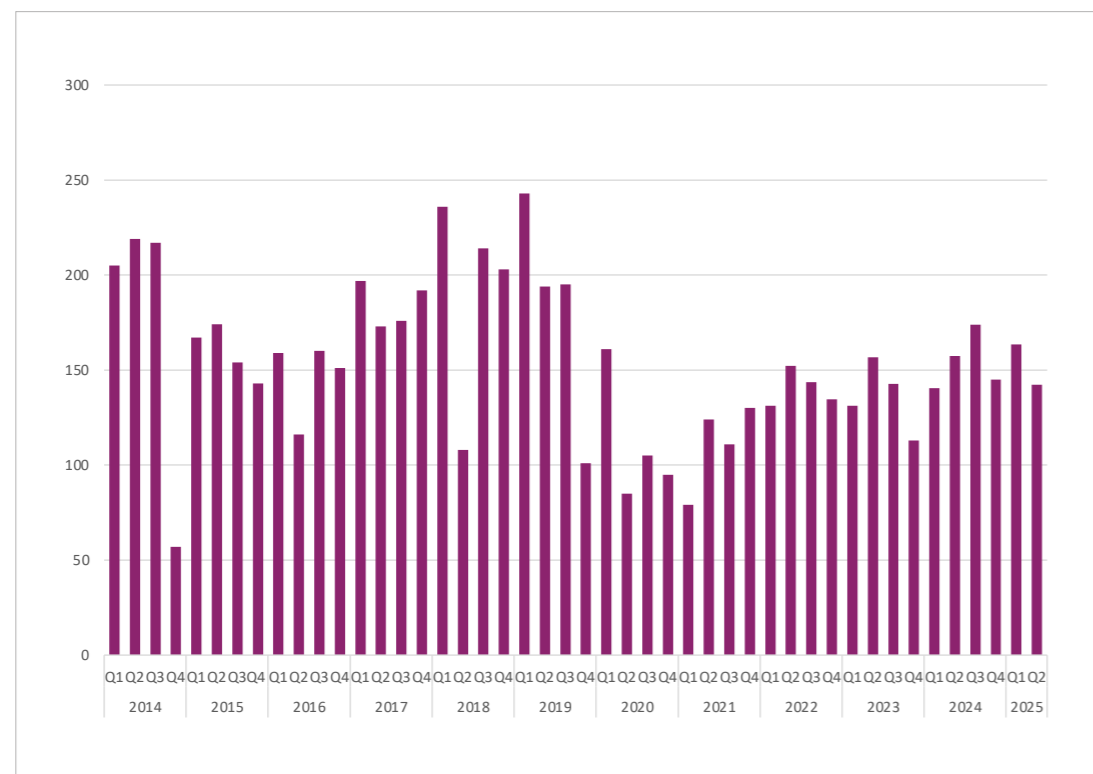


Figure 2: New Adult Presentation to Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, Q1 2014-Q2 2025

Drivers of Entries to Emergency Accommodation

Figure 3 shows two explanations given by households for becoming homeless and entering emergency accommodation: Leaving Direct Provision and No-Fault Notices of Termination (NoTs)⁵. In Q2 2025, 24 households (18.6%) stated a No-Fault Notice of Termination (NoT) as their reason for presenting as homeless and entering emergency accommodation in the South-West, while 8 households (6.2%) stated that it was due to leaving Direct Provision.

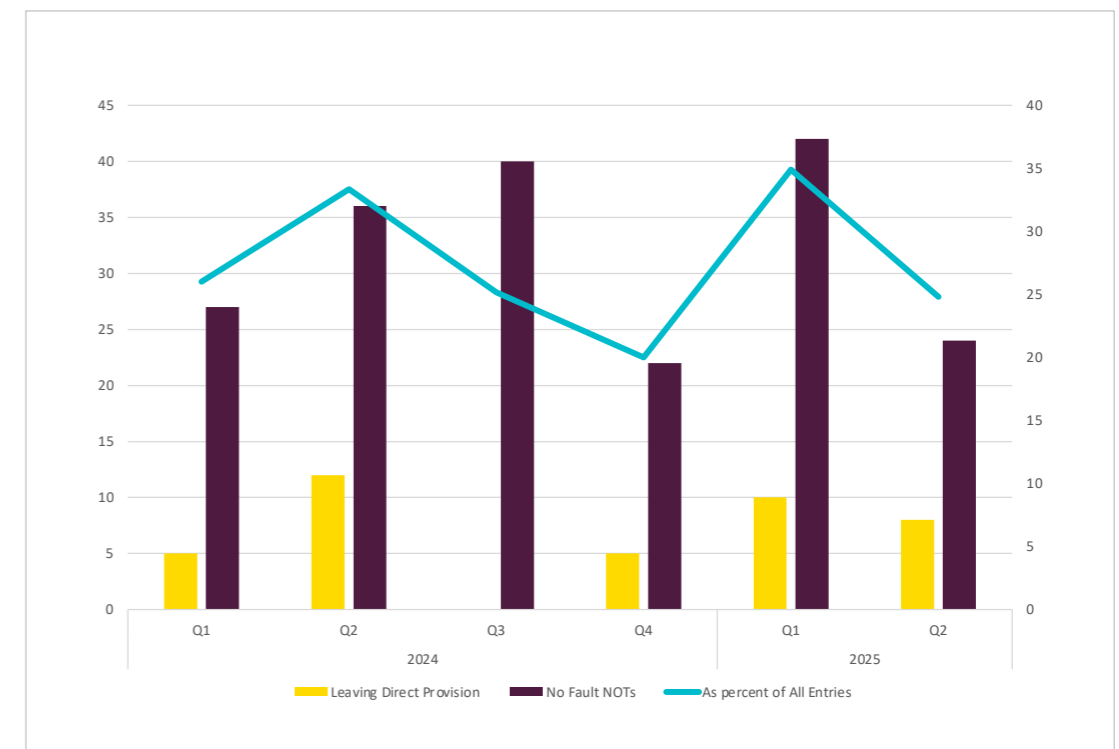


Figure 3: No Fault Terminations of Tenancy and Leaving Direct Provision as Reasons for Households Entering Emergency Accommodation, and as a Percentage of all Entries in the South-West Q1 2024-Q2 2025⁶

No-Fault NoTs and Leaving Direct Provision represent a quarter (24.8%) of all households entering emergency accommodation in Q2 2025 – with more of these coming from No Fault NoTs. Leaving Direct Provision and No-Fault NoTs consistently represent 20-35% of all households entering emergency accommodation in the South-West.

⁵ While there are a number of reasons given for entering emergency accommodation, we are highlighting Leaving Direct Provision and No-Fault NoTs as these are objective explanations and are not themselves the result of other longer-term issues – e.g. a household may cite family circumstances as a reason for entering emergency accommodation, but they may have been staying with family for some time before contacting homeless services as a result of a No Fault NoT.

⁶ Data is only available from Q1 2024 onwards.

Household Composition of those in Emergency Accommodation

Figure 4 shows the number of *adult-only households* in emergency accommodation in the South-West at a point-in-time (the third week of each month), and as a percentage of all homeless adult-only households in Ireland. Increases in adult-only homelessness are not entirely consistent but broadly have increased since 2014. Numbers experienced a decrease in late 2022-2023 but have increased consistently since then.

The number of adult-only households in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 27.9% since June 2021 (n=438) and 191.7% since June 2014 (n=192). There were 560 adult-only households in emergency accommodation in June 2025.

Adult-only households in the South-West make up 7.9% of all adult-only households in Ireland as of June 2025. This percentage has decreased slightly since June 2021 (9.7%) and June 2014 (9.8%).

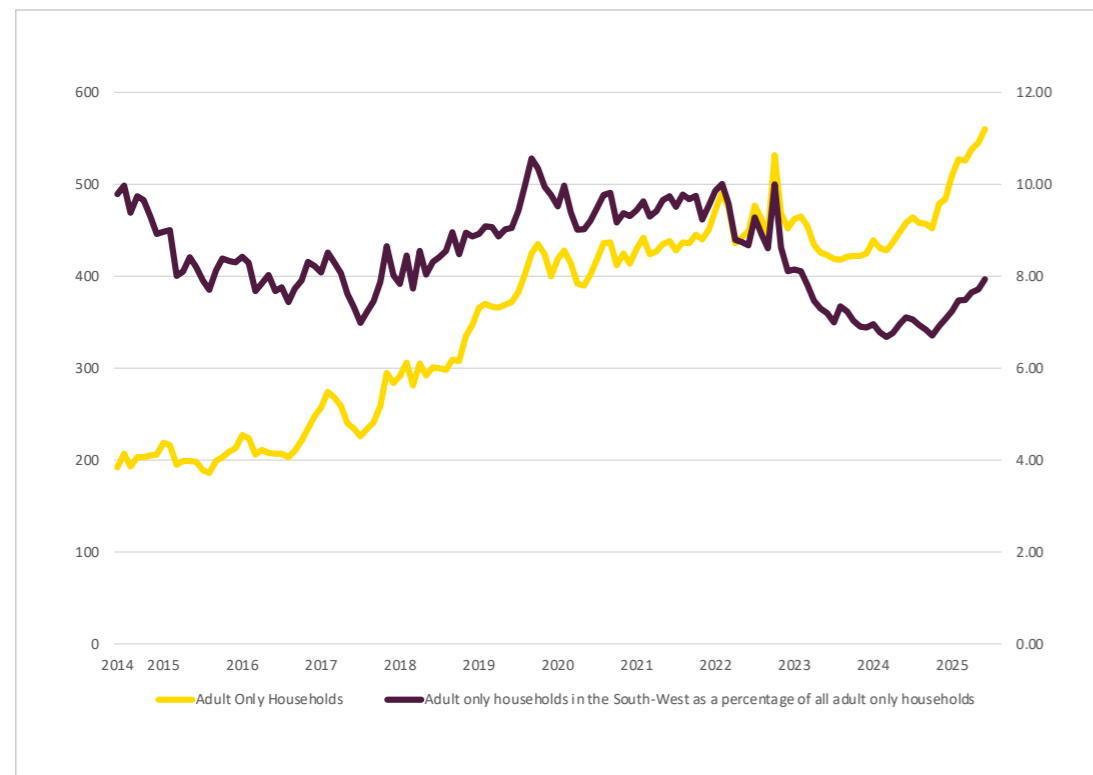


Figure 4: Adult-Only Households in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West and as a Percentage of all Adult-Only Households in Emergency Accommodation Nationally, 2014-2025

Figure 5 shows the number of *families* in emergency accommodation in the South-West, as well as homeless families in the South-West as a percentage of all families in emergency accommodation in Ireland.

Family homelessness in the South-West experienced a steady increase until its peak of 143 in July 2019, followed by a sharp decrease until 2021. While the number of families have increased since 2021, it has not surpassed the peak seen in 2019.

The number of families in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 119.6% since June 2021 (n=46) and 910% since June 2014 (n=10). In June 2025 there were 101 families in emergency accommodation in the South-West.

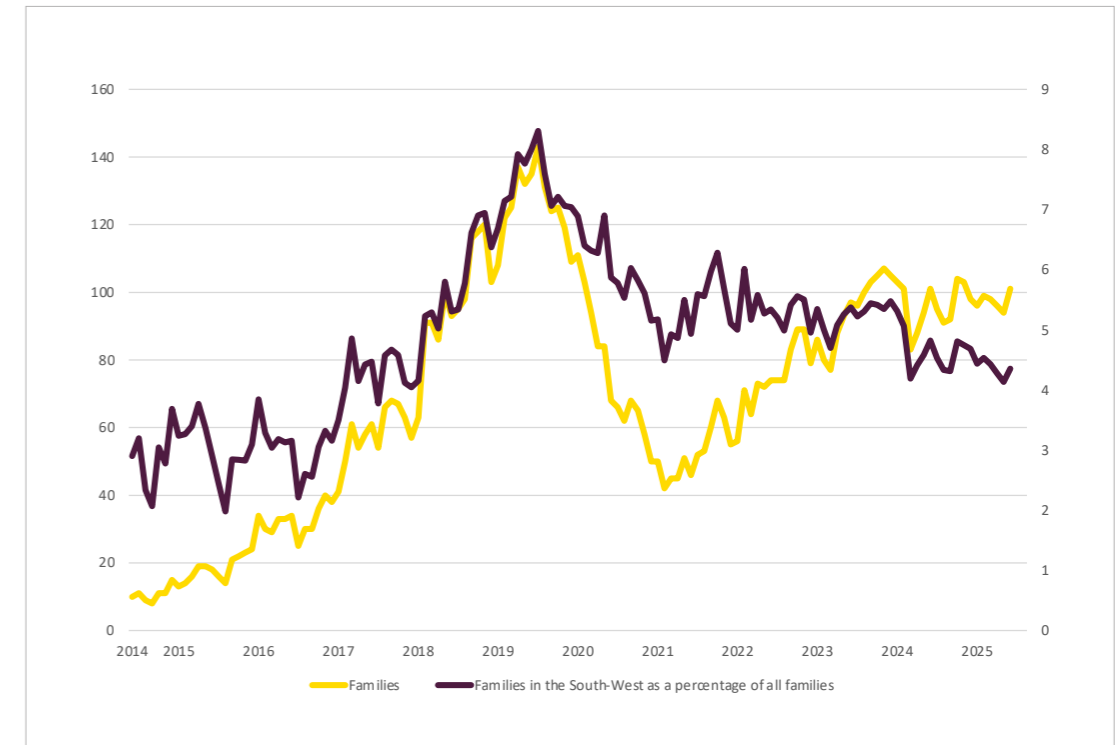


Figure 5: Families in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West and as a Percentage of all Families in Emergency Accommodation Nationally, 2014-2025

Families in emergency accommodation in the South-West make up 4.4% of all families in emergency accommodation nationally as of June 2025. This is lower than the percentage in June 2021 (4.9%) but higher than June 2014 (2.9%).

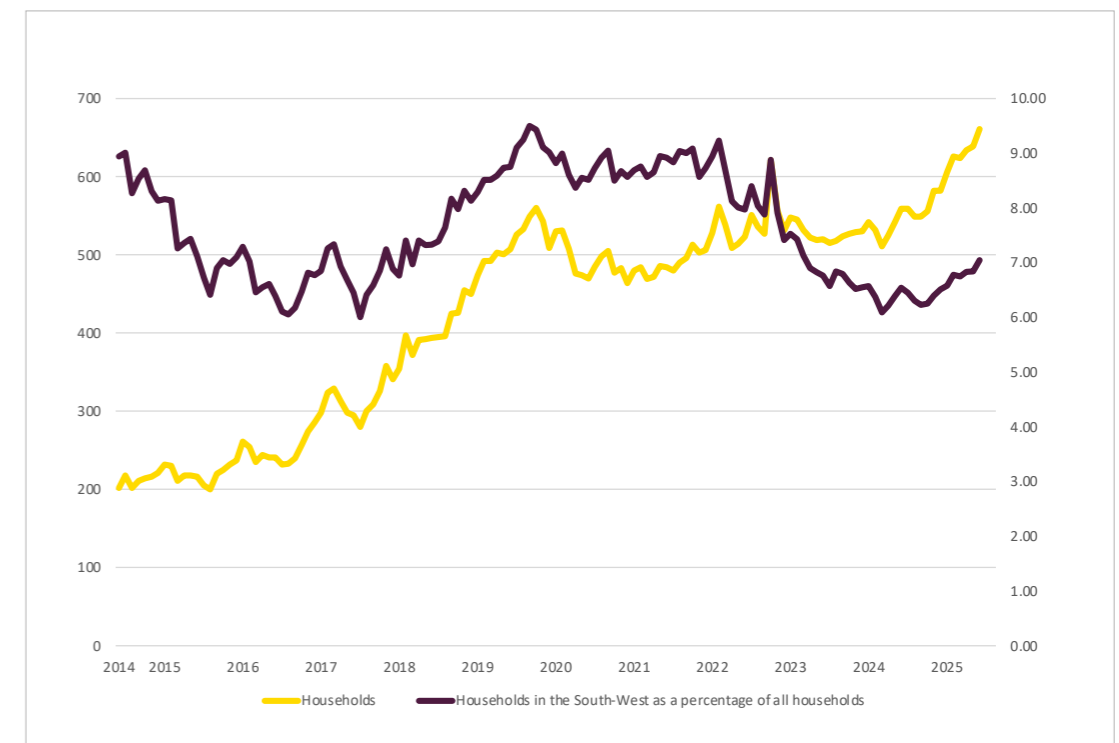


Figure 6: Households in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West and as a Percentage of all Households in Emergency Accommodation Nationally, 2014-2025

Figure 6 shows the total number of *all households* in emergency accommodation in the South-West, and the number of households in the South-West as a percentage of all households in emergency accommodation nationally. Household numbers

experienced a small reduction 2020-2021 but have increased since then – and have experienced a sharp increase 2024-2025 (largely due to the large increase in adult-only households).

The number of households in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 36.6% since June 2021 (n=484) and 227.2% since June 2014 (n=202). There were 661 households in emergency accommodation in the South-West in June 2025.

Households in the South-West represented 7.1% all households in emergency accommodation nationally. This is a slight decrease from June 2021 and June 2014 (8.9%)⁷.

Figure 7 shows the number of child dependents in emergency accommodation in the South-West, and the number of child dependents in the South-West as a percentage of all child dependents in emergency accommodation nationally. The trend of child dependents follows a similar pattern to families, with a large decrease occurring 2019-2021, and the current figures not as high as the peak in May 2019 (n=318).

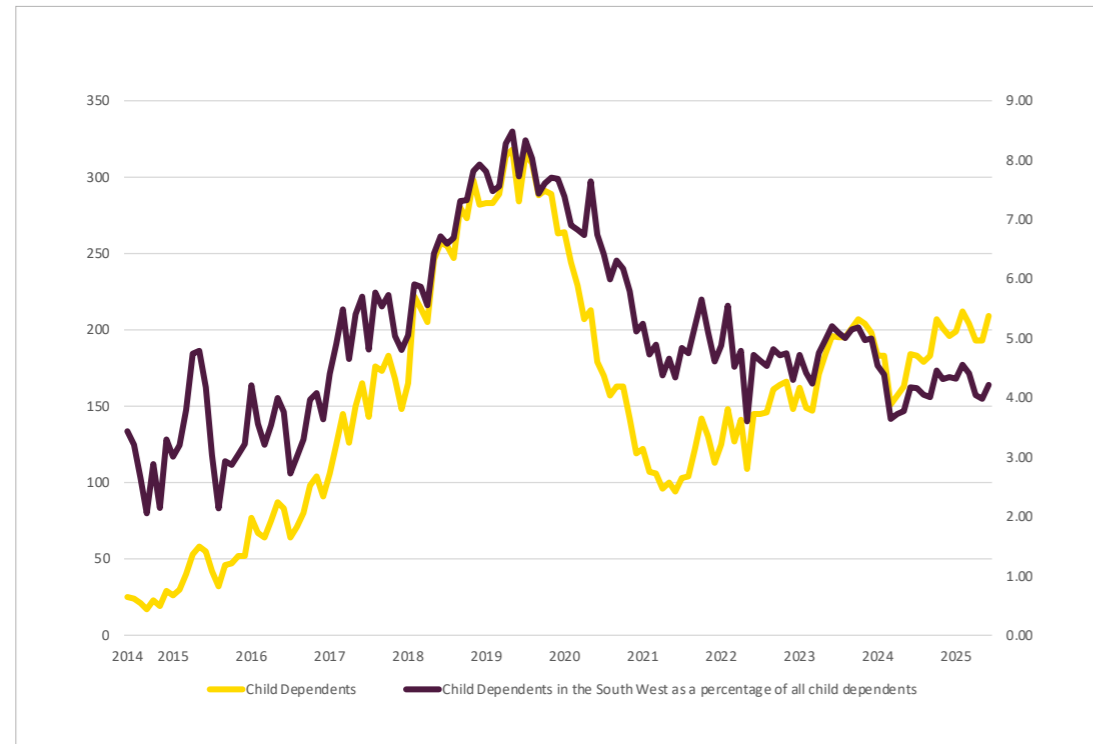


Figure 7: Child Dependents in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West and as a Percentage of all Child Dependents Nationally, 2014-2025

The number of child dependents in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 122.3% since June 2021 (n=94) and 736% since June 2014 (n=25). There were 209 child dependents in emergency accommodation in the South-West in June 2025.

Child dependents in the South-West represented 4.2% of all child dependents in emergency accommodation nationally – a slight decrease from June 2021 (4.3%) and slight increase from June 2014 (3.4%).

⁷ Households represented 8.9% of all households in emergency accommodation nationally in both June 2021 and June 2014.

Age profile of those in Emergency Accommodation

Figure 8 shows the age profile of *all adults* in emergency accommodation in the South-West. 25-44 year olds make up the majority of adults in emergency accommodation in the South-West at 58.2% in June 2025, a slight increase from June 2021 (55.3%). The 65+ category remains the smallest age category, with a slight decrease from 3.7% in June 2021 to 3.1% in June 2025.

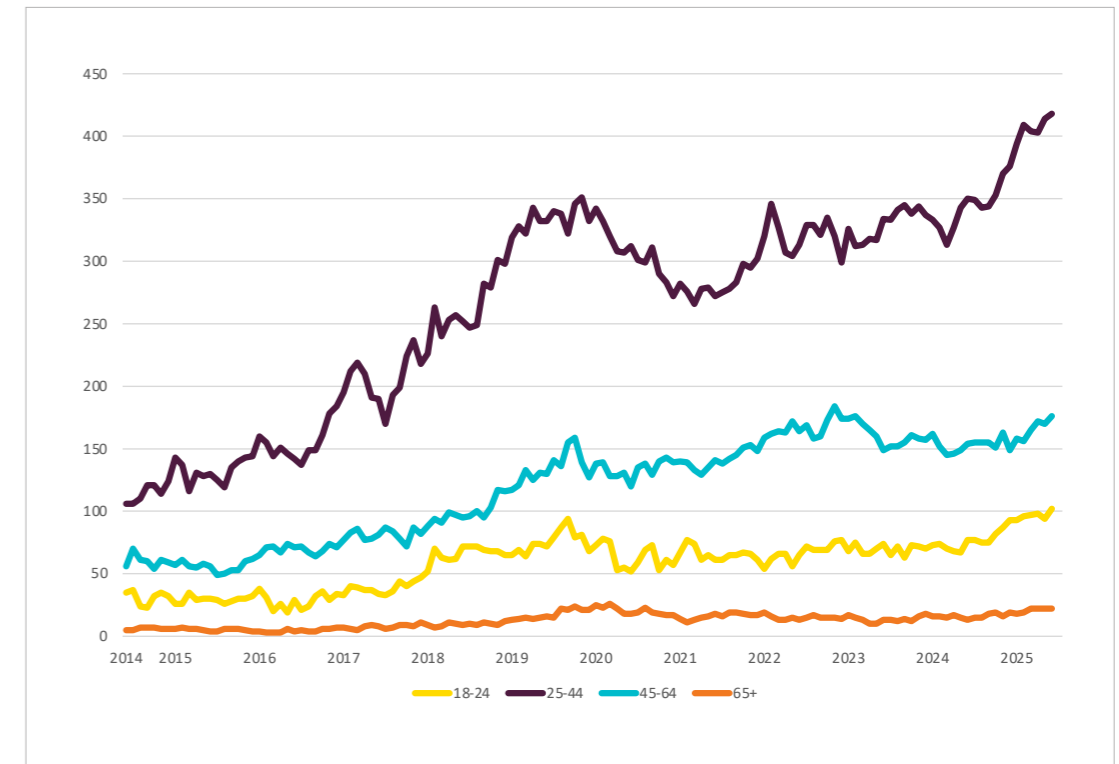


Figure 8: Age Profile of Adults in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, 2014-2025

The number of **18-24 year olds** in emergency accommodation was 102 in June 2025 – an increase of 67.2% since June 2021 (n=61) and 191.4% since June 2014 (n=35).

The number of **25-44 year olds** in emergency accommodation was 418 in June 2025 – an increase of 53.7% since June 2021 (n=272) and 294.3% since June 2014 (n=106).

The number of **45-64 year olds** in emergency accommodation was 176 in June 2025 – an increase of 24.8% since June 2021 (n=141) and 214.3% since June 2014 (n=56).

The number of **65+** in emergency accommodation was 22 in June 2025 – an increase of 22.2% since June 2021 (n=18) and 340% since June 2014 (n=5).

Gender and Emergency Accommodation

Figure 9 shows the gender breakdown of *all adults* in emergency accommodation in the South-West. As of June 2025, there were 468 men and 250 women in emergency accommodation, which is a ratio of 65:35. The proportion of women in emergency accommodation in the South-West was higher in June 2025 (34.8%) than in June 2021 (28.7%) and June 2014 (25.2%).

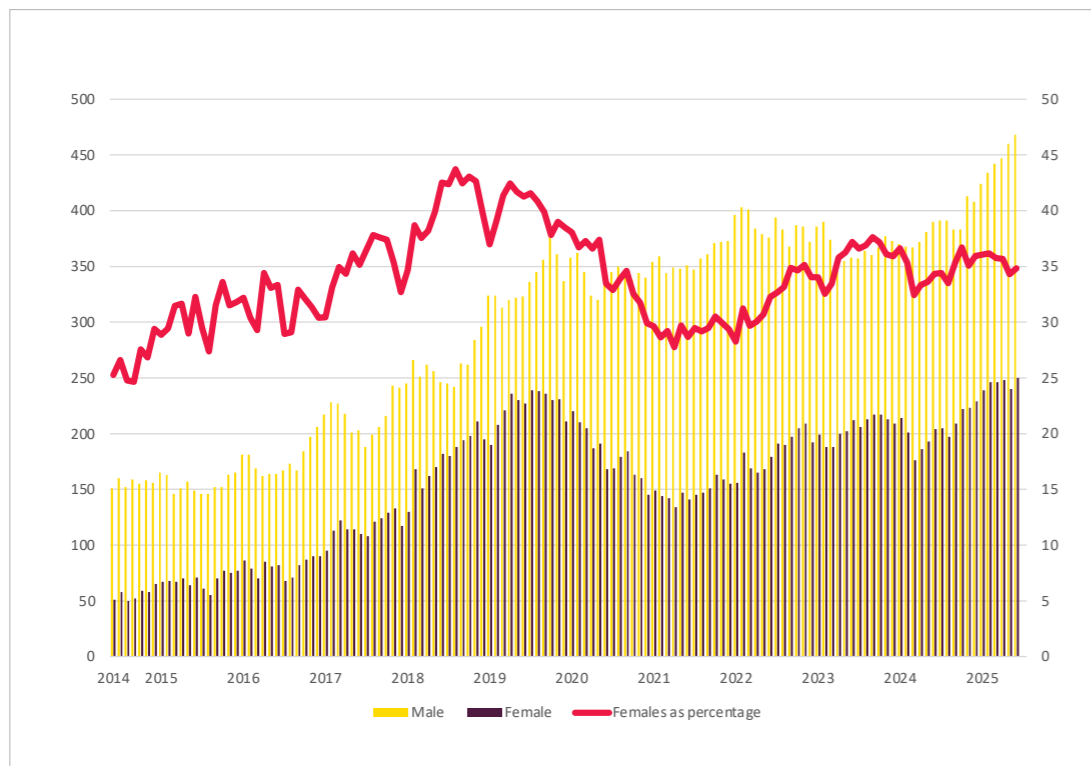


Figure 9: Adults in Temporary and Emergency Accommodation by Gender, and Females as a Percentage of all Adults in the South-West, 2014-2025

The number of men in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 33.3% since June 2021 (n=351) and 209.9% since June 2014 (n=151). In comparison the number of women in emergency accommodation in the South-West has increased by 70.2% since June 2021 (n=141) and 370.6% since June 2014 (n=51).

Citizenship of those in Emergency Accommodation

Figure 10 shows the citizenship breakdown of *all adults* in emergency accommodation between April 2022 and June 2025⁸. In June 2025 there were 464 Irish citizens (64.6%), 87 UK/EEA citizens (12.1%) and 167 non-EEA citizens (23.3%) in emergency accommodation in the South-West.

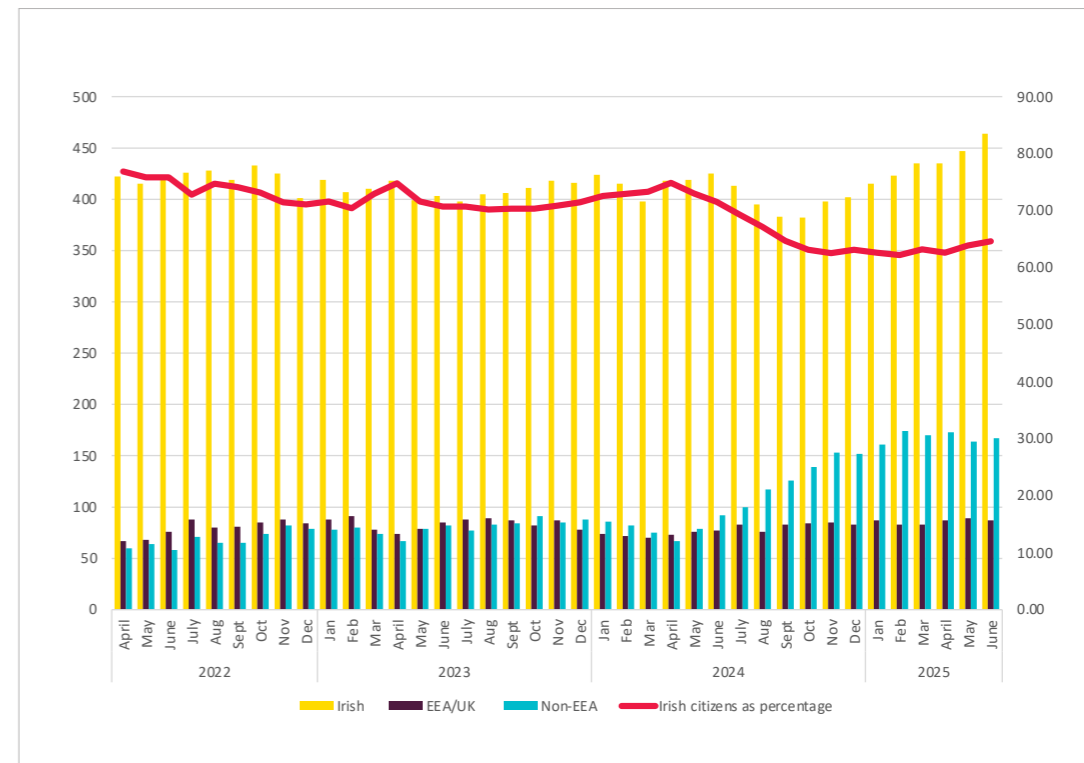


Figure 10: Citizenship of Adults in Local Authority Funded Emergency and Temporary Accommodation in the South-West, April 2022-June 2025

Non-EEA citizens have seen the largest increase, from 60 in April 2022 to 167 in June 2025 – a 178.3% increase in 3 years.

The number of Irish citizens in emergency accommodation represents a declining proportion of the total number of homeless adults, falling from 76.9% in April 2022 to 64.6% in June 2025.

⁸ Data only available from April 2022 onwards.

Emergency Accommodation Providers

Figure 11 shows the types of emergency accommodation in use in the South-West. There are three types⁹ of emergency accommodation reported. *Private Emergency Accommodation* (PEA) includes hostels, B&Bs and other residential facilities that are privately owned and have been contracted by local authorities on a temporary or long-term basis to be used as emergency accommodation. *Supported Temporary Accommodation* (STA) primarily comprises of congregate shelters and Family Hubs, which have onsite professional support and are operated by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), and are wholly or partially funded by Section 10 funding via the relevant local authority. *Temporary Emergency Accommodation* (TEA) includes emergency accommodation with minimal to no supports and are operated both by NGOs and private operators. The recorded use of TEA is low and so is included in the graph along with the STA figure.

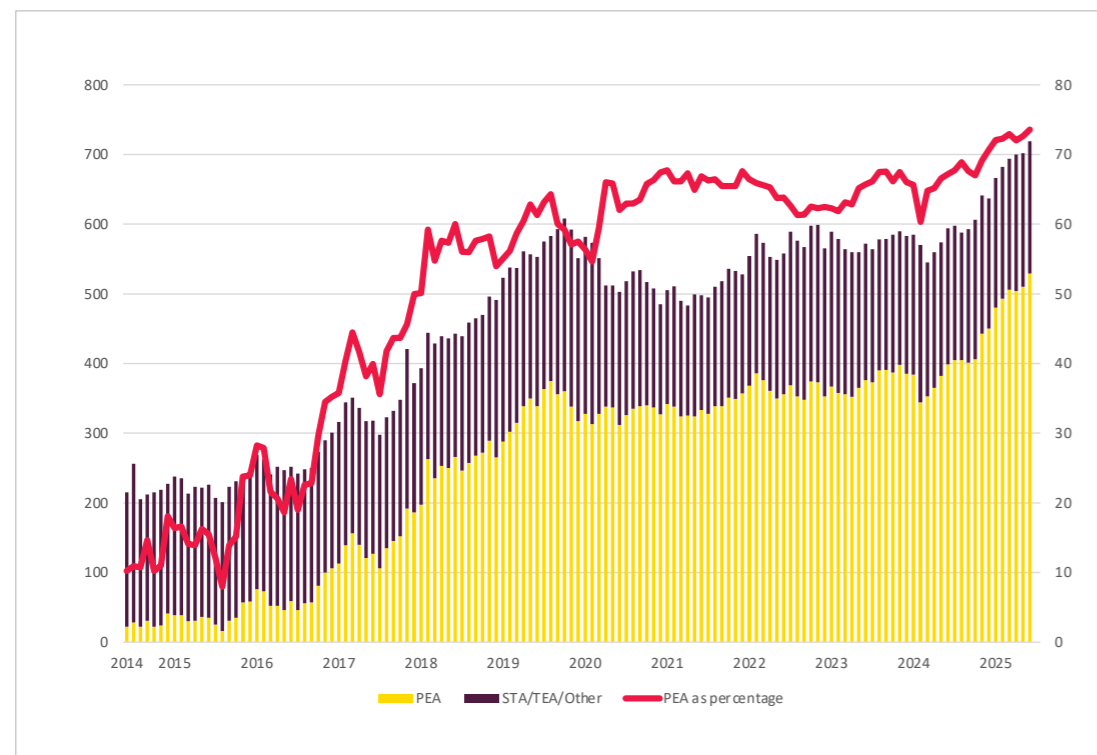


Figure 11: Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, and PEA as a Percentage of all Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, 2014-2025

Figure 11 shows that since 2018 PEA has made up the majority of emergency accommodation in the South-West and is consistently increasing its proportion. As of June 2025, PEA makes up 73.6% (n=529) of the total emergency accommodation beds in the South-West, compared to 66.9% in June 2021 (n=333) and 10.2% in June 2014 (n=22). PEA accommodation beds in the South-West have increased by 55.9% since June 2021 and by 2304.6% since June 2014. In comparison, STA/TEA/Other has increased by 15.2% since June 2021 (n=165) and decreased by 1.6% since June 2014 (n=193).

⁹ There is a very small number of housing under the 'Other' category, which is included in the STA/TEA group for the purposes of this analysis.

Exits from Emergency Accommodation to Housing

Figure 12 shows the number of adults exiting emergency accommodation to housing in the South-West in each quarter since 2014. LA refers to *Local Authority housing*, AHB/LTSA is for housing provided by *Approved Housing Bodies* and PRS refers to exits to the *Private Rented Sector*, largely supported by HAP payments.

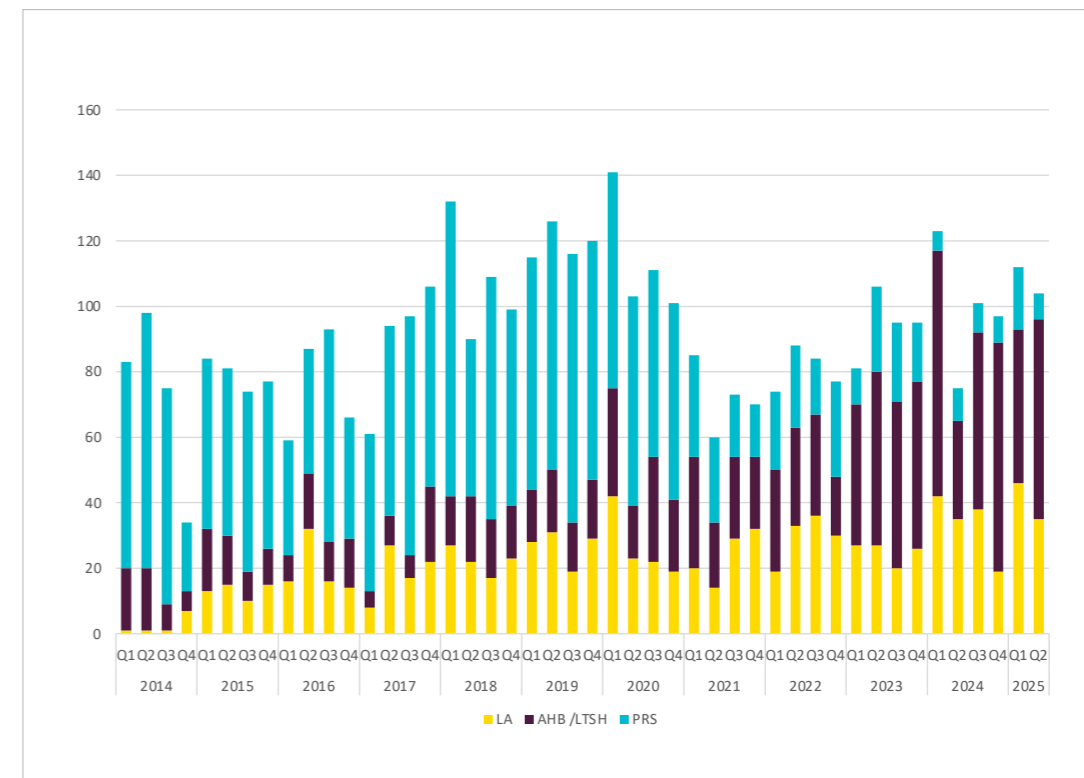


Figure 12: Adult Exits to Housing from Emergency Accommodation by Type in the South-West, Q1 2014-Q2 2025

In Q2 2025 35 households (33.7%) exited into LA housing, 61 (58.7%) into AHB/LTSA and 8 (7.7%) into the PRS. The number of exits into the PRS has reduced significantly since 2014, and that pattern has continued between 2021 and 2025. In Q2 2021 43.3% (n=26) of exits were into the PRS, which fell to 7.7% in 2025.

Between Q3 2021 and Q2 2025 there were 1,455 adult exits from emergency accommodation to housing in the South-West: 34% to LAs (n=494), 47.6% to AHB/LTSA (n=692) and 18.5% to the PRS (n=269). Between Q1 2014 and Q2 2025 there were 4,232 adult exits from emergency accommodation to housing in the South-West: 24.7% to LAs (n=1,045), 28.1% to AHB/LTSA (n=1188) and 47.2% to the PRS (n=1,999). Compared to the last iteration of this paper, AHB/LTSA housing represents a much greater proportion of the exits from emergency accommodation, representing just under half of all exits in the South-West since 2021.

Figure 13 shows the breakdown of exits to Social Housing Tenancies (Local Authority and Approved Housing Bodies) *versus* Social Housing Support (Private Rental Tenancies supported by rent subsidies such as HAP and RAS).

In Q2 2025 there was a 92:8 ratio of Social Housing Tenancy to Social Housing Support. This is a large decrease in the proportion of Social Housing support exits compared to Q2 2021, which had a 57:43 ratio of tenancies to support.

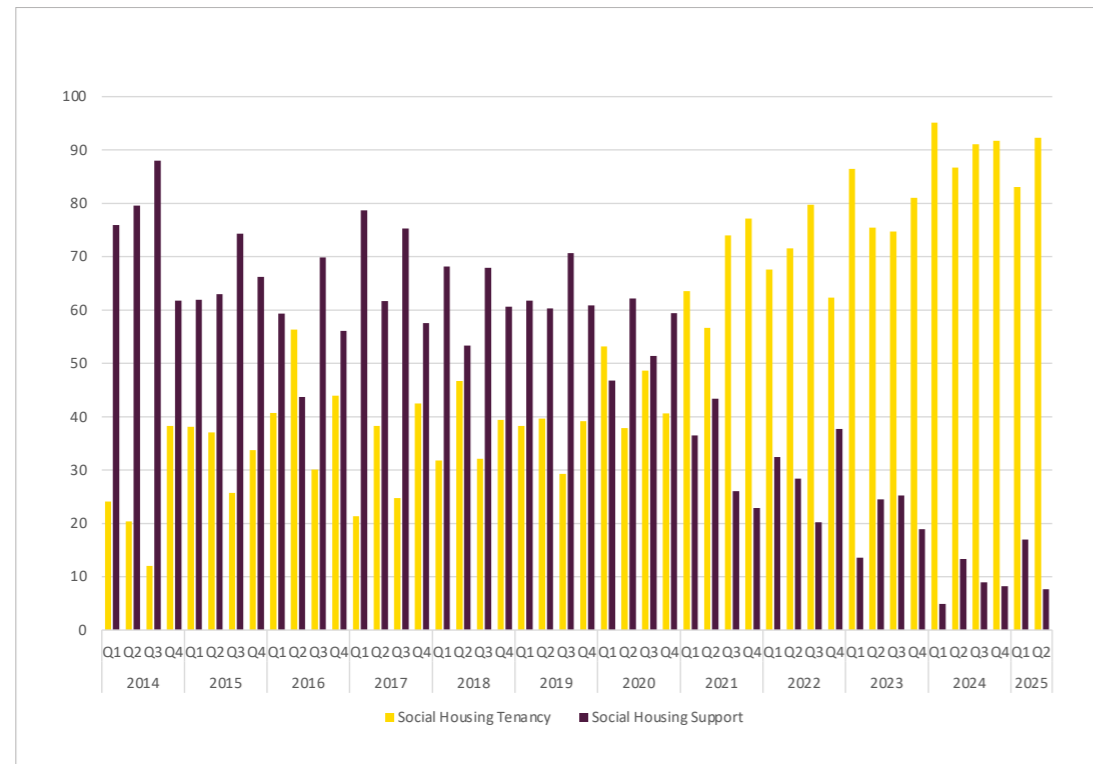


Figure 13: Adult Exits from Emergency Accommodation by Tenancy/Support in the South-West, Q1 2014-Q2 2025

Duration in Emergency Accommodation

Figure 14 shows the average duration of stay in emergency accommodation for *adult-only households* between Q1 2022 and Q2 2025¹⁰. In Q2 2025 46.6% of adult-only households stayed in emergency accommodation for 0-6 months (n=256); 24% for 6-12 months (n=132); 12.2% for 12-18 months (n=67); 7.1% for 18-24 months (n=39) and 10% for 24+ months (n=55). The number of adult-only households staying in emergency accommodation for 0-6 months represents a smaller proportion of the population than in Q1 2022, where 55.1% (n=250) were in emergency accommodation for 0-6 months.

In Q2 2025 29.3% of adult-only households were in emergency accommodation for 12+ months (n=161). In Q1 2022 this was 23.8% (n=108).

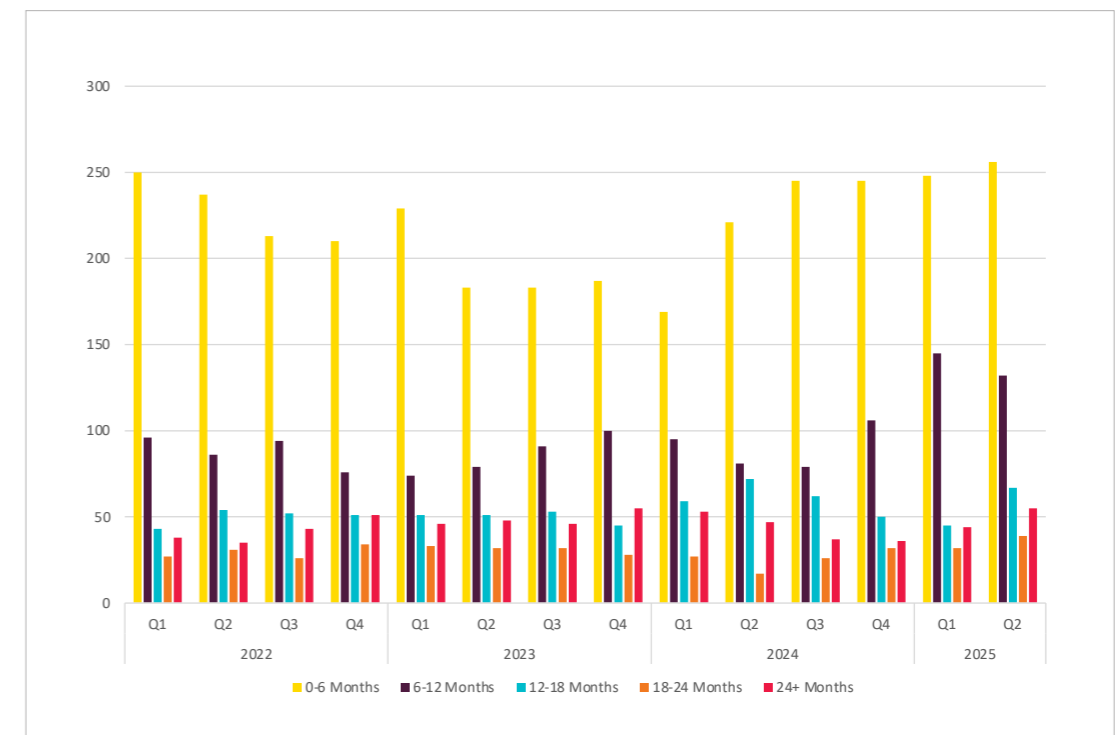


Figure 14: Duration of Stay by Adult-Only Households in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, Q1 2022-Q2 2025

Figure 15 shows the duration of stay for *families* in emergency accommodation in the South-West. In Q2 2025 55% of families stayed in emergency accommodation for 0-6 months (n=55); 20% for 6-12 months (n=20); 15% for 12-18 months (n=15); 4% for 18-24 months (n=4) and 6% for 24+ months (n=6). There is much lower proportion of families are staying in emergency accommodation for 0-6 months now than in Q2 2022 (75.4%, n=46). In Q1 2022 there were no families staying in emergency accommodation for both 12-18 months and 18-24 months, compared to now where these durations make up 19% of the families.

In Q2 2025, 25% (n=25) of families were staying in emergency accommodation for over 12 months. In Q1 2022 this was 3.3% (n=2).

¹⁰ Figures are shown from 2022 onward, as the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage changed the presentation of the length of stay options from <6 months or >6 months to 0-6 months, 6-12 months, 12-18 months, 18-24 months, and 24+ months.

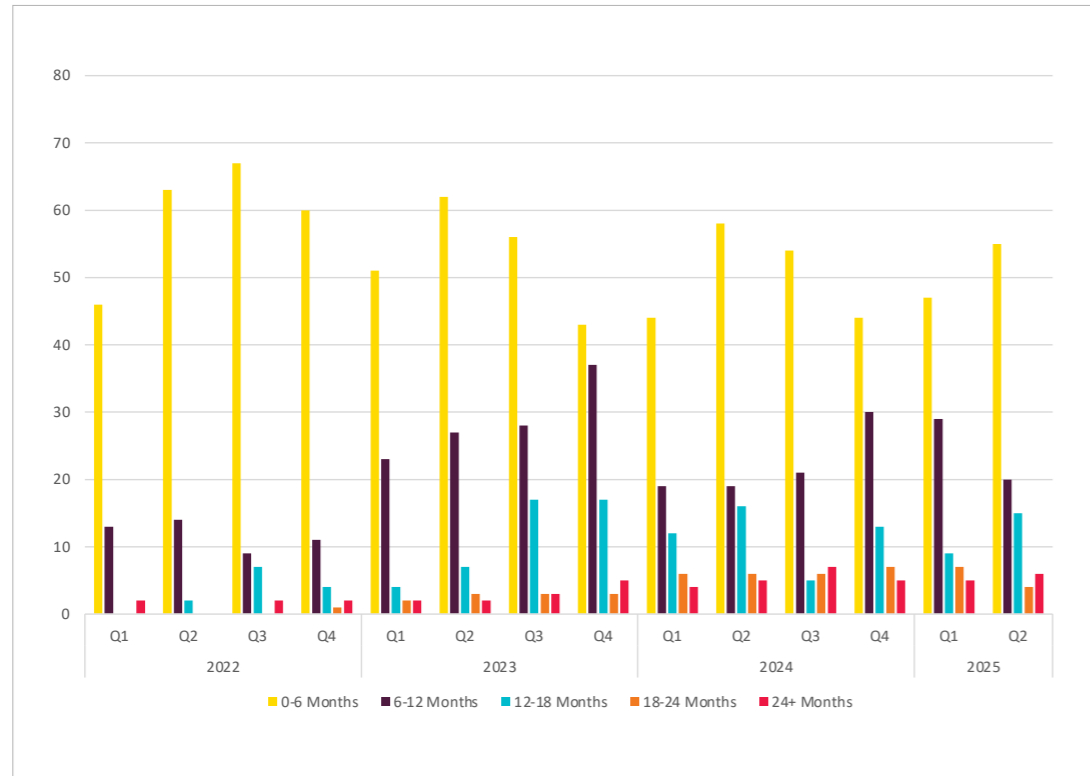


Figure 15: Duration of Stay by Families in Emergency Accommodation in the South-West, Q1 2022-Q2 2025

Housing First

Figure 16 shows the number of Housing First tenancies created in the South-West since 2020. Eight tenancies were created in Q2 2025. This is a 42.9% decrease from its highest point of 14 new tenancies in Q4 2021. There was an average of 5 new tenancies created per quarter in 2024, compared to 4 per quarter so far in 2025. Since 2020 a total of 128 Housing First tenancies have been created in the South-West.

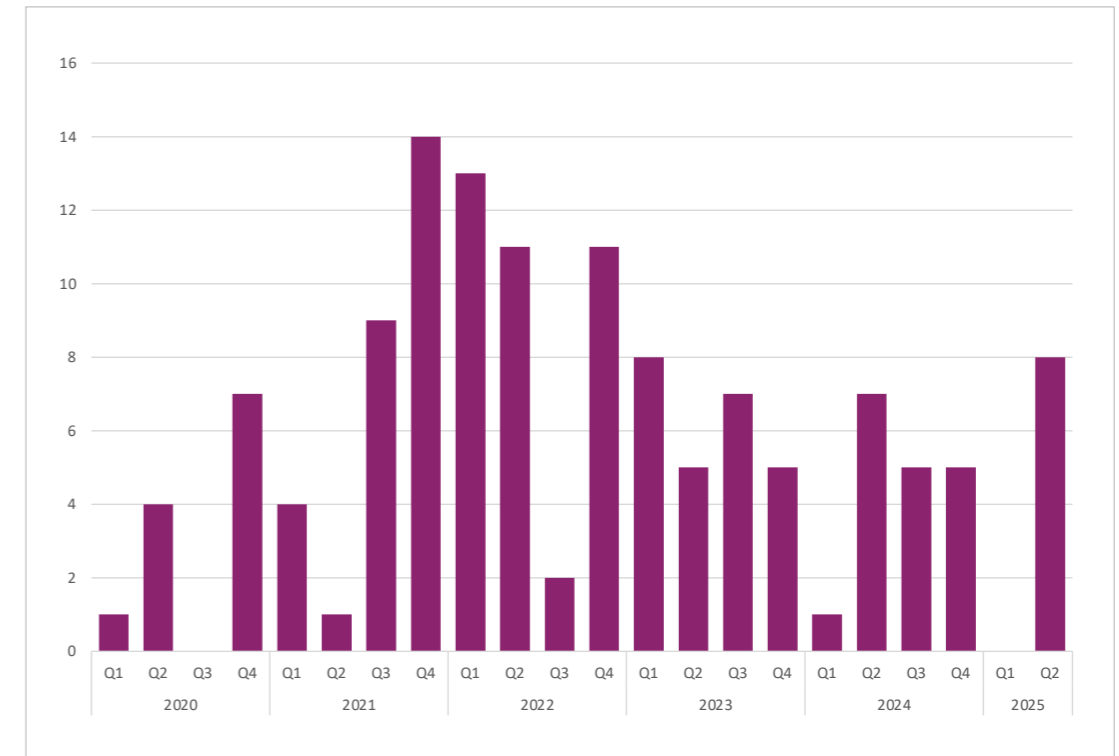


Figure 16: Number of Housing First Tenancies Created in the South-West, Q1 2020-Q2 2025

Expenditure on Homeless Services in the South-West

Figure 17 shows the expenditure by local authorities on services for households experiencing homelessness in the South-West was €43.1m¹¹ in 2024 – the majority of this (71.7%) being in Cork City Council. South-West local authorities’ annual expenditure on homelessness has seen a 104.4% increase since 2020 (€21.1m) and a 570.6% increase since 2009 (€6.4m). In the past ten years (2015-2024) €193.6m has been spent on homelessness by local authorities in the South-West.

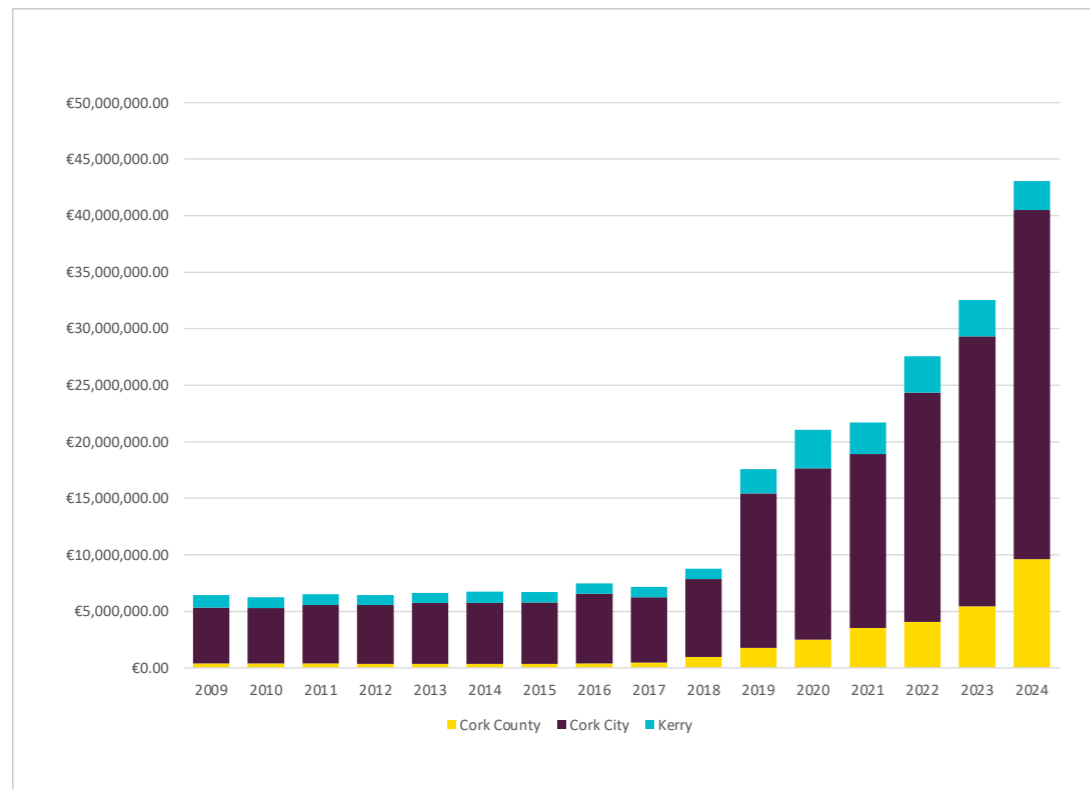


Figure 17: Expenditure on Services for Households Experiencing Homelessness by Local Authorities in the South-West, 2009-2024

Figure 18 shows Section 10 expenditure on homelessness services in the South-West – that is for services funded by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage under Section 10 of the Housing Act, 1988. In 2024 €33.1m was spent on homeless services, the vast majority of this (79.1%) on emergency accommodation. €26.2m was spent on emergency accommodation in 2024, an increase of 163.7% since 2020 (€9.9m) and 1624.4% since 2013 (€1.5m). In comparison, expenditure on all other services combined has increased by 61.6% since 2020 (€4.3m) and by 125.2% since 2013 (€3.1m).

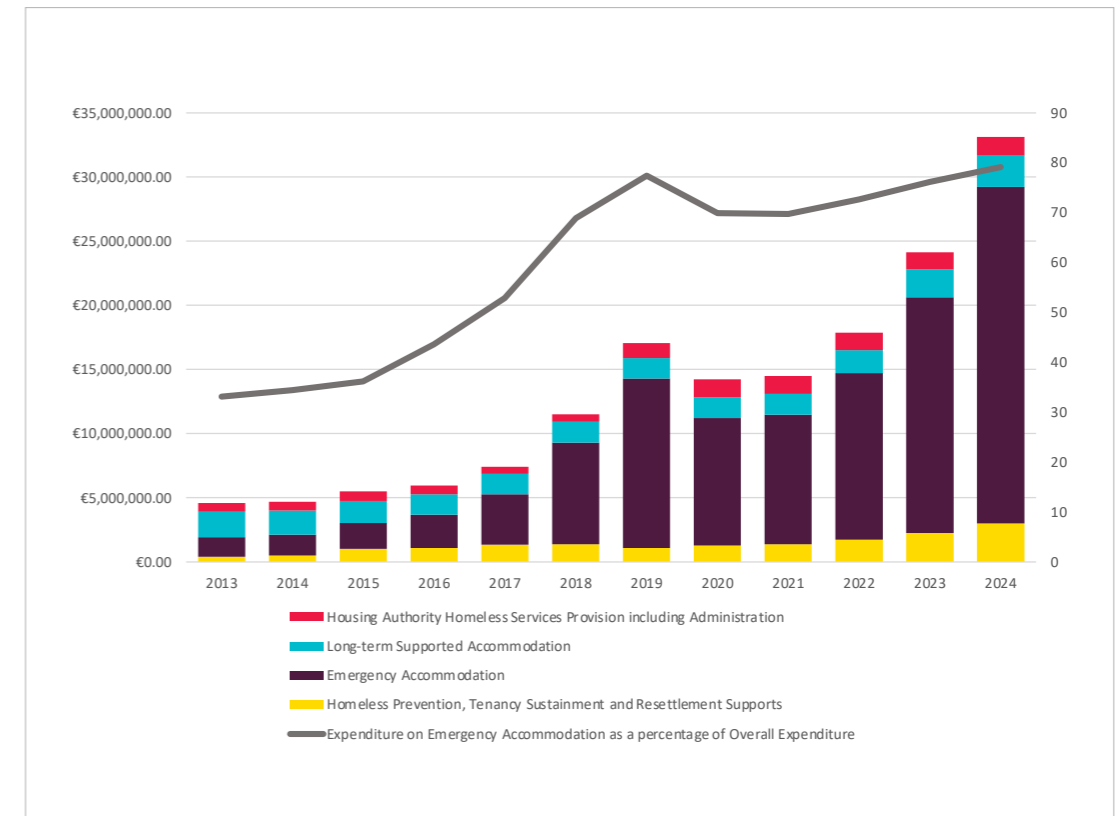


Figure 18: Section 10 Expenditure on Homeless Services in the South-West, 2013-2024

¹¹ See Focus on Homelessness Report on Public Expenditure on Services for Households Experiencing Homelessness (2025).

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Publication date December 2025

ISBN: 978-1-9996896-4-3

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