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Tithíochta  
The Housing Agency

# Demographic and Socio-Economic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing and Recipients of Housing Assistance Payment

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## Acronyms and Definitions of Terms

Acronym	Definition or full term/title
AHB	Approved Housing Body
CBL	Choice based lettings
EEA	European Economic Area
HAP	Housing Assistance Payment
FHH	Female-headed household
MHH	Male-headed household
Principal applicant	The household member who applies for social housing and is generally registered as the tenant if the application is successful.
RAS	Rental Accommodation Scheme
RS	Rent Supplement
SHA	Social Housing Assessment
SILC	Survey of Income and Living Conditions
SSHA	Summary of Social Housing Assessments

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Recent decades have seen significant reforms to arrangements for providing housing supports to low-income households in Ireland and also to arrangements for accessing this support. Traditionally social rented housing provided by local authorities was the primary form of housing support available to this income group. From the late 1970s the sources of support diversified. Housing allowances were provided to low-income private renting tenants from the late 1970s via the Rent Supplement scheme part of the system supplementary social security benefits provided by the Department of Social Protection. Initially take up was low, but this began to expand from the end of the following decade. The sources of social housing supply also diversified, as dedicated government funding for the provision of social housing by non-governmental organisations called approved housing bodies (AHBs) was introduced in the mid-1980s and they came to make up an increasingly important source of social housing supply.

The period since the economic crisis in the mid-2000s has seen further significant shifts in these policies. In 2005 local authorities were enabled to long term lease private rented accommodation for letting to low-income households under a scheme called the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS). From 2014, responsibility for the administration of most housing allowances was moved from the Department of Social Protection to the local authorities when a new housing allowance called Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) was introduced. In addition, rules regarding access to social housing provided by local authorities and AHBs have changed on several occasions over this period. Applications for this form of housing are assessed by local authorities and those deemed qualified are placed on a waiting list until a suitable dwelling becomes available. Between 1989 and 2016 these applications were reassessed every three years by local authorities as part of the social housing assessment (SHA) process and summaries of the numbers and characteristics of these households (called SSHA - Summary of Social Housing Assessments) were published. Since 2016 these social housing assessments and the publication of the associated data have been conducted annually. In addition, the rules regarding who is eligible to be included on the waiting list have changed on several occasions. From 1996 households on the waiting list of more than one local authority were counted only once in the SHA. From 2011 Rental Accommodation Scheme claimants were not included in the SHA and from 2016 Housing



Assistance Payment claimant households were also excluded. This is because their housing need is deemed to have been met. However, RAS and HAP claimants who wish to apply for social housing can do so by applying to be included on a 'transfer list' maintained by the local authority to which they have applied. However, in contrast to SHA, details of the numbers of applicants on these transfer lists are not published.

No comprehensive analysis of the impact of these changes has been published to date. This report is intended to fill this information gap. It aims to use administrative data on applicants for social housing and claimants of Housing Assistance Payment to examine changes in the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of these cohorts between 2016 and 2021. It also aims to explore variations in reasons for termination of applications for social housing and HAP claims and in access to social housing over time and space.

## **1.2 Aims and Objectives**

To achieve the broad aim outlined above, the research presented in this report addressed the following specific objectives:

1. To examine changes in numbers of HAP recipients and households included in the social housing assessment over time and space.
2. To ascertain and compare the demographic characteristics of households on the social housing waiting list and HAP recipients, including their age, gender and household composition and examine variations in this regard over time and space.
3. To ascertain and compare the socio-economic characteristics of households on the social housing waiting list and HAP recipients, including their income level and source and the reason for their housing need (in the case of social housing applicants) and examine variations in this regard over time and space.
4. To ascertain and compare the reasons for termination of HAP claims and applications for social housing and examine variations in this regard over time and space.
5. To examine and compare the numbers and characteristics of social housing applicants and HAP claimants who<sup>1</sup> secured a social housing tenancy.

## 1.3 Methodology

### 1.3.1 Data Sources. Quality and Comparability

As mentioned above, this report presents the results of an analysis of administrative data on applicants for social housing and Housing Assistance Payment claimants. The analysis presented here drew on three sources of data:

- The annual social housing assessment (i.e. review of social housing waiting lists as published annually in the SSHA) conducted between 2016 and 2021. This data was provided by the Housing Agency but collated from data provided originally by all local authorities. This dataset covers all 166,789 households that were on the waiting list at some time between 2016 and 2021.
- A separate database on those whose application for social housing was terminated for any reason between 2016 and 2019. This dataset includes 69,559 households and was assembled by the Housing Agency from data provided by local authorities.
- Data on all HAP claimants of between 2016 and 2021. This dataset includes all 87,181 households who claimed HAP at some stage between these years and it was provided by the HAP Shared Service Centre based in Limerick City and County Council, which manages HAP payments on behalf of local authorities countrywide.

All three datasets are subject to ongoing accuracy checks by the organisations that manage them, therefore the data they contain is generally robust. However, because they were collected to support administrative decision making rather than for research purposes, there are some limitations to their quality and to the comparability of the three different datasets under examination. For instance:

- The social housing assessment is conducted at a single point in time each year, usually in the Autumn. It provides a useful 'snapshot' of all households on the waiting list at this point in time but does not include those who were on the waiting list at other points during this period or who applied for social housing but were deemed ineligible.
- HAP data includes all households who received this housing allowance at any time between 2016 and 2021. It also does not include those who applied but were deemed ineligible. Critically, this data is collected when households first apply for HAP and are not reviewed unless, among other reasons, they apply to have their claim reassessed. HAP payment rules suggest this would be likely to happen for two reasons: they move to a new

dwelling, or their household expands or contracts, due to the birth of a child for instance or a child leaving home. This means that data on the socio-economic and demographic profiles of long-term HAP claimants may be somewhat out of date.

- Administrative datasets are collated to support administration of benefits and services, therefore are unlikely to include all the information that a social scientist might include in a survey of the same population. The level of information provided varies between the datasets under examination here. However, the data on households on the social housing waiting list collected as part of the SSHA process does include more detailed information than that available for HAP claimants. The former includes information on applicants' nationality for instance and issues that local authorities are required by the 1988 Housing Act to consider when prioritising applications for social housing. This 'basis of need' information details whether they are homeless for instance or have a disability. No similar information is available for HAP claimants.
- Both the SSHA database and the data on HAP claimants were compiled from administrative databases that provided data entry staff with a limited number of pre-determined answers to client profiling questions. By contract the data set on those whose application for social housing was terminated between 2016 and 2019 was collated from information from spreadsheets which did not restrict the information recorded in any way. Thus, data entry staff were free to record any reason for termination of a social housing application they wish and collating this information requires interpretation of these reasons which may not be completely accurate.
- Only principal applicants have been included in the analysis conducted for this research. Where secondary applicants are present, they are included as part of households along with dependants but not as individual applicants.

### 1.3.2 Data Confidentiality

Every possible effort was made to protect the confidentiality of the data employed in this report. To this end:

- The vast majority of the information that could identify individual households on the social housing waiting list and HAP recipients, such as names and addresses, were removed by the data controllers before the datasets were shared with the authors.

- Any other information that could be linked to these individuals (such as dates of birth) were converted into summary form (in this case age groups) by the authors during the data analysis phase (see below).
- All analysis of the original datasets was carried out in the Housing Agency's office, and the results of the analysis of these data are presented in this report in summary form only and all summaries are sufficiently high level to ensure that no individuals can be identified. Thus, where individual data categories contained information on a small number of individuals these were amalgamated with other categories, as appropriate, to ensure anonymity.

### 1.3.3 Data Cleaning

All the data examined in this report was originally received in the form of excel spreadsheets and was transferred to SPSS to facilitate data analysis. As part of this process the data was cleaned to eliminate any data entry errors or multiple entries for the same households, some additional variables for analysis were also generated from the data.

The data on the social housing waiting list was received in September 2022 and following this households recorded in the social assessment in multiple years were identified and merged into single cases based on their unique identifier number and year in which they qualified for social housing. Where data on these households were available for multiple years their 'first response' was identified in the dataset, as were subsequent responses. The resulting dataset included 166,806 households, however two applicants with inconsistent ages were removed from the dataset during data cleaning, as were 13 applicants who were aged 17 when they applied for social housing and a further two applicants with disproportionately high (> €100,000 per annum) household income. Thus, 166,789 households were included in the final dataset examined in this report. The low number of households removed as part of the data cleaning means that the differences between the data examined in this report and the Summary of Social Housing Assessments published by the Housing Agency each year are very minor. The data examined here includes just six fewer households than the 2016 SSHA, three fewer than the 2017 SSHA, two fewer than the 2018 SSHA, four fewer than the 2019 SSHA, nine fewer than the 2020 SSHA and eight fewer than the 2021 SSHA.

The data on HAP claimants was received in February 2024 and the original dataset included 108,497 households. Only HAP claims that commenced between 01/01/2016 and 31/12/2021 were included in this analysis, and data on households that had multiple claims during this

period were merged. All claimants whose gender was not recorded were removed (n=1,663), as were claimants with an unrealistic age (n=96) and those who were aged under 18 years at the start of their first HAP tenancy, were also removed (n=2). Following this cleaning process 87,181 households were included in the final dataset examined in this research.

While the HAP dataset included information on the reason for cessation of the claim, no equivalent information was available in the SHA dataset. To address this issue, additional data were provided by the Housing Agency on the reason for termination of social housing applications. This dataset included the 69,559 households whose applications were closed between 2016 and 2021. It should be noted that it was not possible to link these data to the data on social housing applications, therefore they were treated as two separate datasets in the analysis.

### **1.3.4 Data Treatment and Analysis**

All three datasets examined in this research contained between three and sixteen variables (i.e. questions or categories of information) and associated values (i.e. answers to the questions or subcategories of information). These variables and values, which examined issues such as gender, household composition and income formed the basis for the analysis presented here. They are detailed in Tables A1.1, A1.3 and A1.5 in Appendix One to this report. In addition, the authors generated some new variables from the datasets on households on the social housing waiting list and HAP claimants (see Tables A1.2 and A1.4 in Appendix One for details). This was done to summarise information by, for instance, organising individuals' ages into age groups to ensure confidentiality, and to generate additional relevant information on for instance the number of bedrooms required by social housing applicants (which was calculated with reference to the household composition).

Due to the limits to the comparability of the different datasets, outlined above, only descriptive statistics were used in the analysis presented here. Two primary data analysis tools were employed: crosstabulation (two and three way) and analysis of central tendency (mean, median and income percentiles are also examined using Tukey's hinges to measure the inter-quartile ranges). Significance testing has not been conducted beyond the bivariate tests because the analysis presented here contains no predictability modelling. This was not considered appropriate because the datasets represent the vast majority of the populations in question and constitute complete enumeration surveys, not sample surveys (Field, 2009; Rea and Parker, 2014; Connelly et al., 2016).

### **1.3.5 Outline of Chapters**

The remainder of this report is organised into five chapters. Chapter Two is intended to contextualise the remainder of the analysis by outlining recent trends in policy on social housing and the provision of housing allowances for low-income private renting households and in social housing output and take up of HAP. Chapters Three and Four respectively present a demographic and a socio-economic profile of households on the social housing waiting list between 2016 and 2021. Chapter Four presents a demographic and socio-economic profile of HAP claimants over the same period. Chapter Five details trends in social housing applications, HAP claims and the reasons for their termination, including securing a social housing tenancy. The final chapter of the report sets out the key findings of the analysis of data on applicants for social housing and HAP claimants presented in preceding chapters and highlights the implications of these findings for housing policy and practice.

## **2. Relevant Trends in Social Housing Policy, Need and Output**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Policy on the accommodation of low-income households in Ireland has changed radically and repeatedly in recent decades as have the associated housing services and government funding programmes. Declining public capital funding for social rented housing in the years following the economic crisis that commenced in 2006-07, precipitated a marked decline in this form of housing, which had traditionally provided the main source of accommodation for low-income households unable to secure housing from the market. As a result, reliance on housing allowances such as Housing Assistance Payment, which subsidise low-income households to rent private housing, rose significantly. Recent years have seen some reversal of this trend, as public spending on new social house building has increased significantly.

These policy shifts have had a marked influence on the demographic and socio-economic profiles of applicants for social housing and HAP recipients which are the focus of the analyses presented in later chapters of this report. Therefore, to contextualise these analyses, this chapter outlines the key changes in social housing programmes, legislation and policy introduced in recent decades. In addition, the rules regarding access to Housing Assistance Payment and to social housing and procedures for compiling the regular Social Housing Assessment by local authorities are outlined. The final section of the chapter will examine change in social housing need in recent years and variations in these by household type, primary need reported and location.

### **2.2 Relevant Trends in Social Housing Law and Policy**

#### **2.2.1 Programme and Legislative Changes**

The provision of social housing in Ireland commenced in the late Nineteenth Century and was provided initially by charities and subsequently mainly by local authorities. During the decades that followed a complex series of legislation and public subsidies were put in place to support its provision (Norris, 2016). The Housing Act, 1966, consolidated all this previous housing legislation and set out the guiding principles of government intervention regarding housing. It still provides the legislative basis for social housing provision and is referred to in subsequent legislation as the 'the principal' housing act.

The 1966 Act defines local authorities as housing authorities and enables them to produce and manage housing on behalf of the State. It also assigns the responsibility of providing funding for state housing output (loans, subsidies, grants, etc) to the Minister for Local Government on behalf of the State. This Act also introduced some significant changes to the management of social housing which remain in place to this day. It enabled local authority tenants in towns and cities to buy their home at below market value – previously this option had only been available to tenants in rural areas. In addition, it specified that rents for social housing should be linked to incomes – they had previously been set at cost recovery rates.

Until the 1980s, social housing provided by local authorities was the primary form of housing support available to low-income households. This changed when housing allowances (called Rent Supplement) for low-income households living in private rented accommodation were introduced by Housing (Private Rented Dwellings) Act, 1982. Section 23 of this Act allowed for Rent Supplement to be paid to those in private rental accommodation (defined under Section 8 of this Act) “who would otherwise suffer hardship by reason of increases in the rents of their dwellings”. This payment was part of the social welfare system and was administered by the Department of Social Protection, which remains the case today. These payments are made directly to the individual as a welfare supplement. Rent supplement is a short-term support for those who have experienced a change of income, due to a period of unemployment for instance, which has left them unable to pay their rent. Consequently, Rent Supplement is withdrawn entirely when claimants enter paid employment for more than a specified number of hours each.

From the early 1980s, the sources of supply of social housing were diversified, as dedicated funding for non-profit social housing providers, called approved housing bodies, was introduced. This sector had received ad-hoc grants at various times during the twentieth century, but its output increased significantly when a long-term government funding programme called the Capital Assistance Scheme was established in 1984 (Norris and Winston, 2003). This has been used mainly to provide supported housing for households that require health or care support in addition to housing such as people with disabilities, homeless people, and older people. However, output of ‘general needs’ (i.e. standard housing without supports) by this sector began to expand from 1993 when a dedicated public funding scheme for this type of housing was established. Output by this sector increased steadily in subsequent years, and in recent years it has provided close to half of new social housing output (Housing Commission, 2024).



The 1988 Housing Act introduced further significant changes to arrangements for assessing and reporting on the need for social housing and allocating dwellings to applicants. This Act requires local authorities to adopt a 'scheme of letting priorities' which specifies how applications for social housing will be prioritised (these requirements have since been updated in the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2009). The 1988 Act also requires local authorities to regularly assess the level of need for social housing in their functional area and the 'basis of need' (i.e. the reasons why applicants need social housing) report on the results of this assessment. The first of these assessments was published as part of the Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 1989 (DHLGH, 1989). During the decade that followed, local authorities conducted social housing needs assessments every three years, however, since 2016 these assessments have been carried out annually. Section 9.1 of the 1988 Act, specifies ten 'basis of need' categories that should be used in social housing needs assessments, but these were subsequently amended by the Social Housing Assessments (Summary) Regulations 2013 and Social Housing Assessments (Summary) Regulations 2016. The basis of need categories currently used in the Social Housing Assessment process are summarised in Table 2.1 below and the schemes of letting priorities currently employed by local authorities are set out in Appendix Two.

*Table 2-1 'Basis of Need' Categories Currently Used in the Summary of Social Housing Need Assessments.*

1. Currently dependent on rent supplement
2. Unsustainable mortgage
3. Household member has a physical disability.
4. Household member has a sensory disability.
5. Household member has a mental health disability.
6. Household member has an intellectual disability.
7. Household member has a disability which has not been defined in 3-6 above.
8. Homeless, including living in an institution, emergency accommodation or hostel.
9. Reasonable requirement for separate accommodation (involuntary sharing)
10. Unfit accommodation
11. Overcrowded accommodation
12. Unsuitable accommodation due to particular household circumstances
13. Unsuitable accommodation due to exceptional medical or compassionate grounds

The last two decades have seen significant reforms made to housing allowances for low-income private renting households. A new scheme of this type, called the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) was established in 2004. It enables local authorities to source

and rent private accommodation on behalf of tenants. This scheme is aimed at people who have been in receipt of Rent Supplement for 18 months or longer (Citizens Information, 2022). Tenancies last for a minimum of four years, and the rent is paid directly to the landlord by the local authority. In return, tenants pay the local authority an income related contribution to their rent which is calculated in the same way as the income related rents paid by social housing tenants. Unlike Rent Supplement claimants, RAS recipients continue to receive a housing subsidy if they enter employment, although the income-related contribution they make to their rent increases. If a landlord terminates the RAS tenancy for reasons that are not the fault of the tenant (e.g. the landlord plans to sell the dwelling), the local authority must find new accommodation for the tenant. Notably, the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009, which gave legislative recognition to RAS agreements, specified that it is 'a form of social housing support' and thereby legally equivalent to social housing. Thus, RAS recipients' need for social housing need was deemed to have been satisfied and they were not included in the social housing waiting list and consequently in the regular Social Housing Assessment process. This is not the case for Rent Supplement claimants who remain on the social housing waiting list while in receipt of this housing allowance. However, RAS claimants can secure social housing by applying to join a 'transfer list' operated by each local authority. This is also open to local authority and AHB tenants who wish to transfer to alternative social housing, but unlike the Summary of Social Housing Assessments, the numbers of households on transfer lists are not generally made publicly available.

In 2012, the government announced the establishment of another new housing allowance for private renting tenants called the Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) (Savage et al., 2015). It was legally underpinned by the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2014 and the Housing Assistance Payment Regulations 2014 (S.I. No. 407/2014). Like RAS, HAP is paid directly to private landlords on behalf of tenants and, in return, tenants pay local authorities an income related contribution to rent (which is calculated in the same way as social housing rents). However, unlike RAS claimants, HAP recipients must find their own accommodation and if their tenancy ends, there is no contractual relationship between the local authority and the landlord (the contract is between the tenant and the landlord) the local authority is under no obligation to find alternative accommodation for them. HAP is intended to provide long term housing support for claimants and is intended to replace Rent Supplements for claimants who have a long-term housing need. Therefore, once claimants have been receiving Rent Supplement for eighteen months or more, they are generally transferred to HAP, if they have

not received an offer of social housing by then. Notably, unlike Rent Supplement claimants, recipients of HAP can enter full-time employment while continuing to receive their housing allowance, but the contribution they make to their rent will increase if their income rises. As is the case for RAS claimants, Section 37 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2014, defines the HAP as 'an appropriate form of social housing support' and consequently HAP claimants are removed from the social housing waiting list because their housing need is deemed to have been satisfied. However, HAP claimants are included on transfer lists managed by local authorities and therefore can access social housing in that way.

### 2.2.2 Key Policy Statements

From a policy perspective, prior to the 1990s, the focus of social housing policy in Ireland was on local authorities providing rental accommodation to people who fell below a specific income level or 'whose means were inadequate to provide them with access to suitable or adequate housing' (DHLGH, 1991b). *A Plan for Social Housing*, published in 1991, shifted the focus of social housing policy firmly to tenants purchasing their homes and on increasing home ownership through various supports and schemes (DHLGH, 1995). This shift reflected falling numbers of applicants for social housing and an increase in available tenancies from the mid-1980s (DHLGH, 1991b). *A Plan for Social Housing* also introduced the aforementioned public subsidies aimed at enabling approved housing bodies to increase their supply of general needs housing.

*Social Housing: the Way Ahead*, published in 1995, outlined the Government's strategy to produce 7,000 social rented homes annually, as well as to subsidise home improvements to existing stock (DHLGH, 1995). This focus reflected the economic landscape of the time, with new economic growth after years of instability and substantial market fluctuations. In the early 1990s, economic growth began to increase and stabilise (O'Connell, 1999). This strategy's social housing output objectives were achieved in the years between 1995 and 2005 (DHLGH, various years-c).

In 2005, the Government published the *Housing Policy Framework – Building Sustainable Communities*. This framework focuses on developing sustainable communities where both housing and the surrounding lived environment are developed with longevity in mind. The 2005 framework was closely followed by a government statement on the housing strategy *Delivering Homes, Sustaining Communities* in 2007, which developed and expanded upon the vision for sustainable communities outlined in the 2005 framework. The 2007 strategy statement set a goal of producing 60,000 new social rented houses between 2007 and 2013,

a goal that was reached (DHLGH, various years-c). However, the National Economic and Social Council advised at the time that 75,000 new social housing units were required between 2004 and 2012 to meet need. The 2007 strategy does acknowledge this advice, but it was decided to address the issue by providing housing through the combined approach of local authority housing, approved housing body housing and use of rent supplement (DHLGH, 2007a). This policy marked a further shift away from local authorities as the dominate providers of housing for low-income households. This shift came during a time of exponential growth in house prices and private housing output, which rose to a record high of 93,000 units in 2006 (DHLGH, 2007a).

By the time the next government housing policy statement - the *Social Housing Strategy 2020* - was published in 2014, the economic context had changed radically. Ireland had experienced a severe housing market bust and economic and fiscal crisis which commenced in 2006-07 but continued until the early 2010s. This strategy aimed to produce 35,000 new social rented homes by 2020 in addition to supporting up to 75,000 households through rent subsidisation. Thus, this strategy marked a continued shift away from direct provision of social housing by local authorities and AHBs and towards increased reliance on the subsidisation of private rents using housing allowances.

However, this strategy was rapidly replaced by a new strategy- *Rebuilding Ireland* (DHLGH, 2016). Published in 2016, it aimed to address the issue of housing provision through five pillars: homelessness prevention; increased social housing provision; increased house building; improvements to the rental sector; and use of current housing stock. It aimed to increase the social housing stock by 47,000 units by 2021 as well as rapidly increase housing allowance subsidised tenancies in the private market.

The most recent government housing strategy, *Housing for All*, published in 2021, aims to tackle the housing crisis through a multi-faceted approach. Its aims to produce 9,500 new social housing units per annum between 2022 and 2030 (Government of Ireland, 2021). The policy innovations announced in this statement include the introduction of the new cost rental housing tenure and additional supports for home buyers. Cost rental is targeted at those whose incomes are too high to access social housing but are unable to afford private rents in their area. Rents are set at cost recovery level but *Housing for All* states that they should be at least 25% less than local market rents and aims to provide 2,000 new cost rental dwellings each year during the implementation period of the policy statement. In terms of supports for home purchasers, *Housing for All* announced the establishment of a new the Affordable

Purchase Scheme, which aims to deliver homes built on publicly owned land for an average cost of €250,000, and the First Home Scheme, which offers first-time buyers a shared equity loan on the purchase of their first home, in addition to their mortgage. Both schemes can be used in conjunction with the Help to Buy Scheme, introduced in 2020. It provides qualified home buyers with a refund on tax paid during the four years prior to the property purchase.

## 2.3 Qualification for and Allocation of Social Housing

Assessments of whether applicants for social housing are qualified for entry to take account of four considerations:

- Residency: applicants are required to meet specific requirements regarding citizenship or right reside in Ireland.
- Housing need: applicants must demonstrate they have no suitable alternative accommodation available, and
- Income: applicants must demonstrate that their net household income is below a specified rate.
- Local connection: although local authorities have discretion to waive this requirement if they wish.

As explained in Table 2.2, this maximum allowable income varies by location. It also varies depending on household size. This Table details the maximum net income limits for single person households. These increase by 5% for every additional adult household member (up to a maximum of 10% or 2 additional adults) and by 2.5% of every child in the household.

*Table 2-2 Household Maximum Net Income Limits for Single Person Households on the Social Housing Waiting List*

Local Authority Functional Area	Income Limit €
Cork City, Dublin City, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal, Galway City, Co Meath, South Dublin, Co Kildare, Co Wicklow	40,000
Co Carlow, Co Clare, Co Cork, Co Galway, Co Kerry, Co Kilkenny, Co Laois, Limerick City and County, Co Louth, Waterford City and County, Co Westmeath, Co Wexford	35,000
Co Cavan, Co Donegal, Co Leitrim, Co Longford, Co Mayo, Co Monaghan, Co Offaly, Co Roscommon, Co Sligo, Co Tipperary	30,000

Once applicants are deemed qualified for social housing, they join a waiting list. The speed at which they secure an offer of a social housing tenancy reflects two factors:

- their place on the waiting list and
- the availability of accommodation suitable for their household, i.e.:
  - in the districts of the local authority functional area for which they have expressed a preference,
  - with any care supports they may require and,
  - of a size suitable for their household.

Historically, an applicant's place on the waiting list was determined by the 'scheme of letting priorities' that local authorities are required to adopt under the Housing Act, 1988. This determines the order of priority to be given in the allocation of social housing. The latest iterations of these schemes are included in Appendix Two to this report and summarised in Table 2.3. These reveal that those with exceptional medical issues and homeless households are most afforded priority status in these schemes. Of the 31 local authorities, 25 (81%) prioritise homelessness as a key factor in social housing. Among these, 13 (52%) explicitly prioritise applicants deemed homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988 (the statutory definition of homelessness in Ireland), while the remaining 50% assigned a general priority to homeless applicants.

*Table 2-3 Criteria Used by Local Authorities to Prioritise Applications for Social Housing*

Priority criteria:	Local authorities applying criteria (n=31) %
Exceptional medical or compassionate grounds: the needs of applicants due to medical conditions or compassionate circumstances.	84
Homelessness priority: Housing Act, 1988.	81
Overcrowding: applicants living in accommodation deemed unfit for human habitation under the Housing Act, 1966.	74
Unfit accommodation: Housing Act 1966	68
Dangerous dwellings: Applicants living in dangerous conditions, as defined under Section 3(9) of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964	45

However, in recent years, additional options for allocating social housing have been made available to local authorities. The Social Housing Allocation Regulations, 2011 enabled local authorities to use time on the waiting list as the primary criterion for allocating social housing rather than basing decisions solely on their scheme of letting priorities. These regulations also enabled local authorities to use the choice-based lettings (CBLs) allocation system for social housing. CBL allows those on a local authority waiting list (or transfer list) to apply for specific social housing units when they become available. These vacancies are generally advertised on a website, which enables qualified applicants to identify suitable dwellings and express an interest in living there. Generally, the applicant who is highest on the local authority waiting list and has a household size appropriate for the unit (e.g. a single person household is unlikely to be allocated a three bedroomed house, in preference to a five-person household) will be allocated the dwelling. Of the 31 city and county councils in Ireland, 18 operated a dedicated CBLs online platform at the time of writing, however at least three others sporadically advertised vacancies on social media, their website, or another online platform. Some local authorities use CBL as their primary method of allocating social housing to households that do not have specific housing requirements (e.g. wheelchair access). Other local authorities use CBL only to allocate specific categories of dwellings, such as dwellings that are in low demand among housing applicants. The primary advantage of CBL over the traditional arrangement, whereby the highest suitable applicant on the waiting list is offered the dwelling and, if they refuse, it is offered to the next placed suitable applicant and so on, is that CBL reduces the chance that an offer of a tenancy will be refused, speeds up housing allocations and thereby reduces vacancy periods.

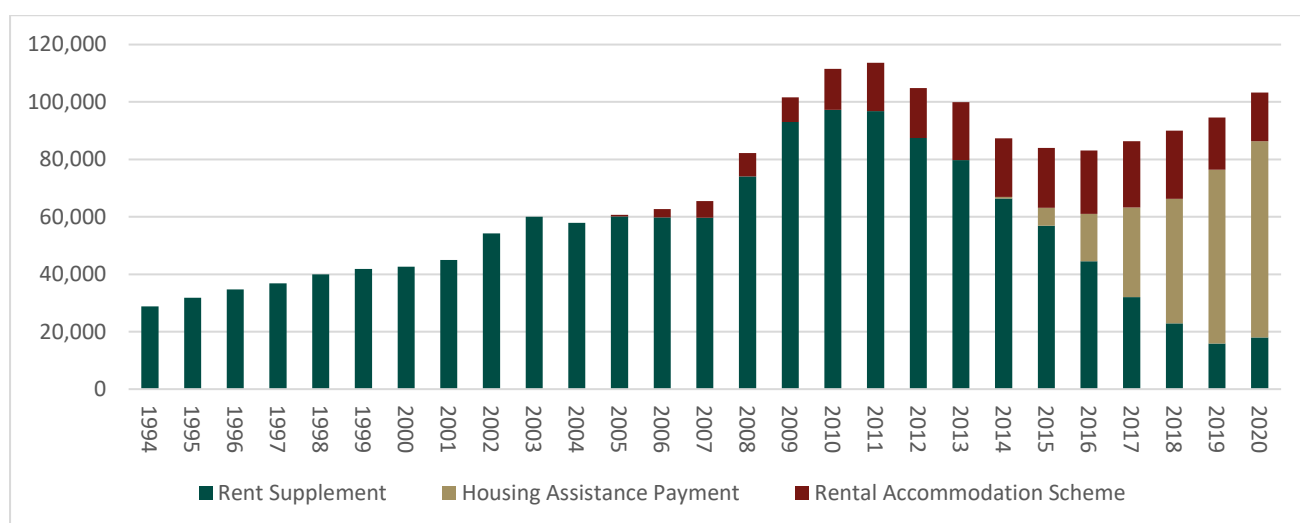
## **2.4 Housing Allowances for Private Renting Tenants**

### **2.4.1 Housing Allowance Take Up Compared to Social Housing Need**

As explained above, there are currently three forms of housing allowances provided by the State for private renting tenants: Housing Assistance Payment, the Rental Accommodation Scheme and Rent Supplement. Figure 2.1 below, outlines trends in the take up of these housing allowances since 1994 (the first year for which data are available). It reveals that between 1994 and 2020, the number of households in receipt of these three rents supports combined increased by 258% (from 28,800 to 103,235) (DHLGH, various years). In comparison, the general population of Ireland increased by 44% (from 3,563,300 to 5,123,536) between 1993 and 2022 (University College Galway et al., 1994; Central Statistics Office, 2022b). However total claimant numbers have declined somewhat since their peak in 2010.

As mentioned above, the current policy objective is to move people from RS to HAP and this has happened in practice. Between 1994 and 2020, the number of Rent Supplement claimant households declined from 28,800 to 17,983. While take up of both HAP and RAS has increased significantly in recent years (see Figure 2.1).

*Figure 2-1 Claimants of Rent Supplement, Housing Assistance Payment, and Rental Accommodation Scheme (N), 1994-2020.*



Note: data refer to households.

Source: Data compiled by the authors from DHLGH statistics, 2016-2021

Figure 2.2 outlines the number of households on the social housing waiting list in recent decades. As mentioned above, while this has always included Rent Supplement claimants, their counterparts who are reliant on RAS and HAP funded accommodation were not included in the waiting list for most of the period since the establishment of these programmes. However, both RAS and HAP recipients are entitled to access social housing via a separate transfer list. Figure 2.2 demonstrates that, while the number of people on social housing waiting lists has been declining since 2016, if RAS and HAP tenants were included, this number would be significantly increased in recent decades and particularly since 2007. While the total numbers of households qualified for social housing declined marginally in 2021, in the same year, the HAP recipients outnumbered those on social housing waiting lists for the first time ever (n=121,154).

More detailed analysis of the location of HAP claimants is presented in Figure 2.3. It compares the number of HAP claimants in cities (defined as the functional areas of Dublin, Cork, and Galway

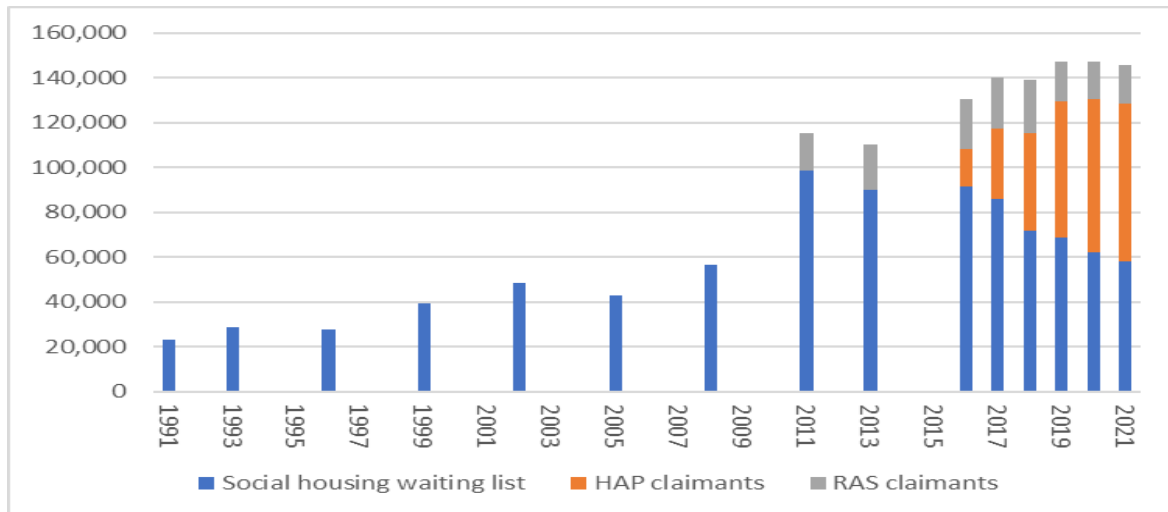


City Councils, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils and Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils) compared to the rest of the country. HAP initially had greater uptake in rural areas, but in 2019 the number of HAP claimants living in urban overtook rural areas.

#### **2.4.2. Affordability and Security of Housing Allowance Subsidised Accommodation**

While the RAS and HAP subsidised accommodation is defined as legally equivalent to social housing under recent legislation, there are some differences between the security of tenure of tenants in the social housing sector (particularly in local authority provided social housing, because, like private tenancies, AHB tenancies are regulated by the Residential Tenancies Board). Private tenancies may be legally terminated by the landlord on one of seven grounds: the tenant is in breach of their obligations; the tenant has failed to pay rent; the property no longer fits the tenant's needs; the landlord requires the property for personal or family use; the landlord wants to sell the property; significant refurbishment of the property; the use of the property is changing (Residential Tenancies Board, 2022b). A tenant may also terminate their tenancy if they wish by providing their landlord with a written notice of their intent to vacate the property. The required notice period varies depending on the length of the tenancy (Residential Tenancies Board, 2022a). Local authority social housing tenancies and also RAS and HAP claims can also be ended if: the tenant falls into rent arrears, engages in anti-social behaviour, or breaches their agreement with the local authority (e.g. does not give the local authority the information it requires to assess their rent) (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2014). Additionally, if a HAP claimant moves to a new home within two years of commencing a claim and seeks HAP support for the new home without the permission of the local authority, the payment may be terminated (hap.ie, 2021).

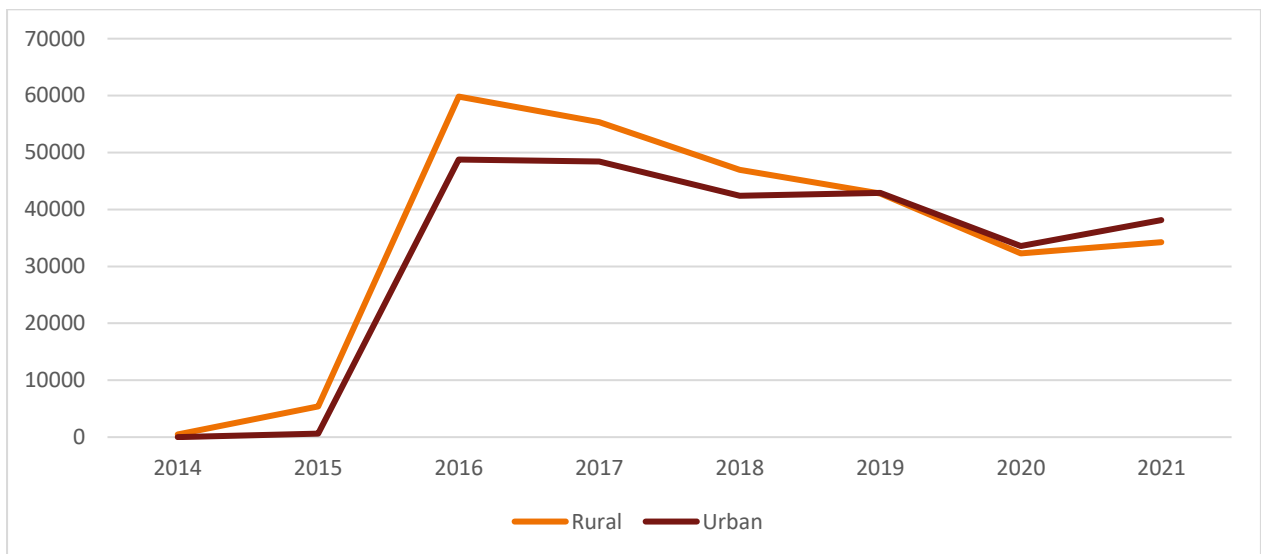
*Figure 2-2 Households on the Social Housing Waiting List and Claiming the Rental Accommodation Scheme and Housing Assistance Payment (N), 1991–2021*



Note: data refer to households.

Source: Data compiled by the authors from DHLGH statistics, 2016-2021.

*Figure 2-3 Housing Assistance Payment Claimants in Urban and Rural Areas 2014–2021*

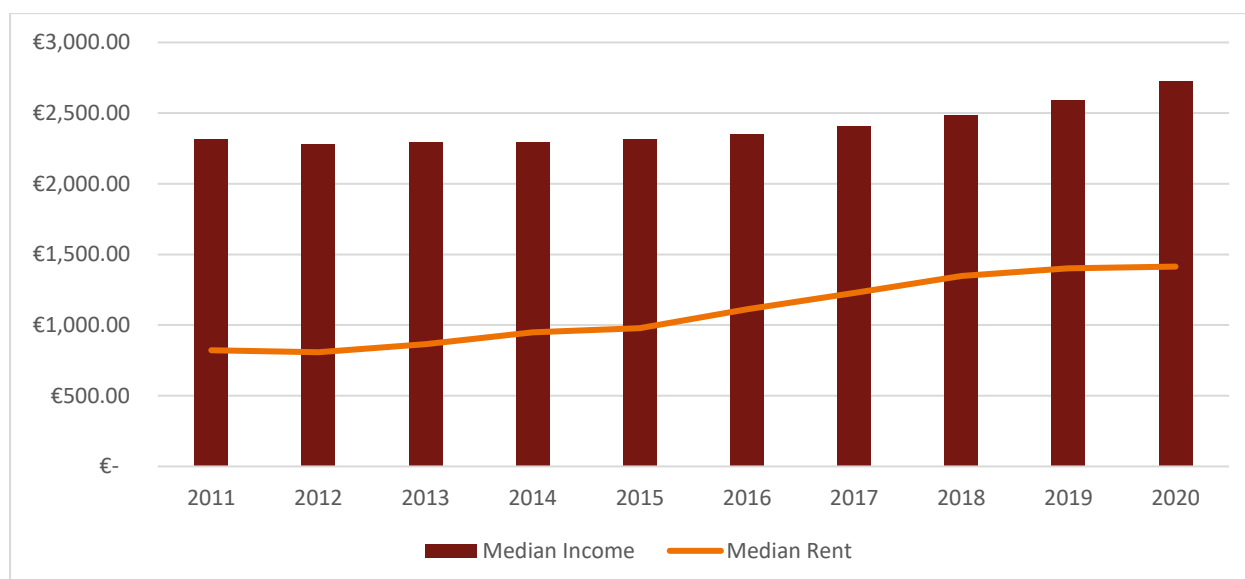


Source: Data combined by the author from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

Note: Data refer to households. Urban areas include the functional areas of as the functional areas of Dublin, Cork, and Galway City Councils, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils and Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils. Rural areas refers to the rest of the country.

Private rents have risen considerably over the last decade and affordability challenges have strengthened in tandem. In 2011, the median rent in Ireland was 35% of the median income, whereas in 2020 it was 52% of median (see Figure 2.4).

*Figure 2-4 Monthly Median Rents and Incomes 2011–2020*



Source: data compiled by the author from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

These challenges have inspired adjustments in the income limits for access to housing allowances (DHLGH, 1991b; DHLGH, 2022). In 1991, the maximum income allowed for the Rent Supplement recipients was £8,000 (€17,531.79 when converted into Euro and adjusted for inflation). In 2023, the maximum net income to qualify for HAP (and for social housing) was €42,000 for a family of three adults and four children (or more) (DHLGH, various years). The equivalent for single adult households was €40,000 in the Dublin region. By comparison, median earnings rose from €15,531.36 (adjusted for euro) or €25,811.24 (when adjusted for inflation) in 1991 to €44,944.64 in 2022 (CSO, various years). Thus, while median real earnings increased by 74% between 1991 and 2022, the maximum net income for access to housing allowances increased by 140% for the largest family and 100% for a single adult in Dublin. In 1991, the maximum income for access to housing allowances was 68% of the median wage; in 2022 it was 93% for the largest family and 78% for a single adult in Dublin.

It is important to note however, that these adjustment income limits for access to HAP were not evenly distributed over recent years. Notably, these income limits were not adjusted between 2011 and 2021. The Housing Commission (2024) raises concerns about the duration of reviews of these income limits and recommends that they should be reviewed on an annual basis in future.

## 2.5 Social Housing Need Output

As mentioned above, the Social Housing Assessment was first published in 1989. It was primarily concerned with counting households on the social housing waiting list and did not include the detailed information on their demographic and socio-economic characteristics contained in the more recent SSHA reports (Housing Agency, various years; DHLGH, various years). This more detailed profiling information is available from the 1990 report and therefore this year is the starting point for the analysis presented in this section. Between 1989 and 2016 Social Housing Assessments were published every three years, but since the latter date they have been published annually (DHLGH, various years-a; The Housing Agency, various years-b).

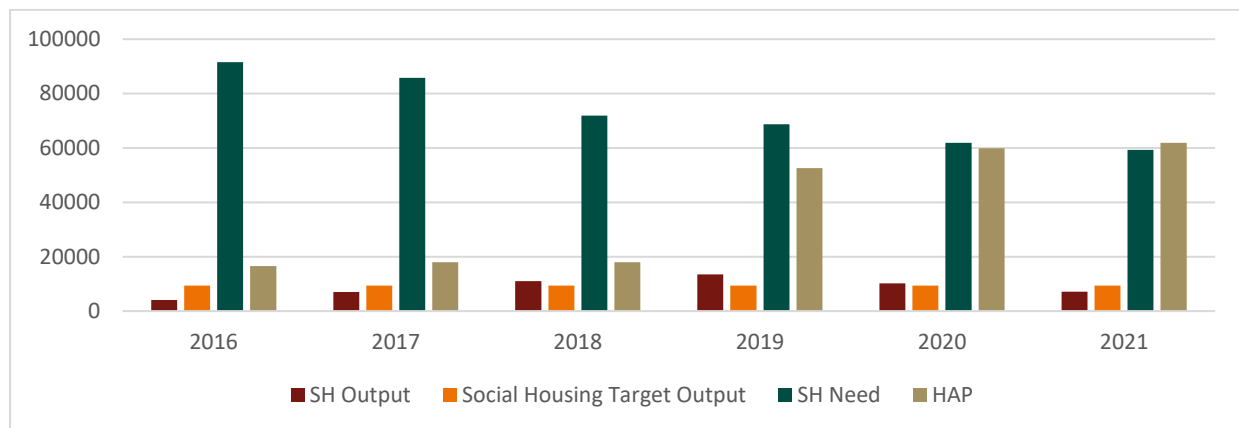
Summarising historical trends in social housing waiting lists is challenging for several reasons. This is firstly because the geographical boundaries of local authorities' functional areas have changed several times in recent decades. Dublin County Council was reorganised into three county councils (Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin) in 1994; town councils were amalgamated into county councils, and in 2012, Waterford and Limerick City Councils were amalgamated with the adjacent county council in 2014. This makes comparing long term spatial trends with housing need and supply challenging. Second, the basis-of-need categories were changed in 2013 and again in 2016, making it difficult to explore how the needs of potential social housing tenants have changed over time. Third, when RAS was underpinned by legislation in 2011 and the Housing Assistance Payment was introduced in 2014, those who received these housing allowances were removed from the social housing waiting list and therefore not included in SSHA reports. This has undermined the long-term comparability of these reports. In addition, the household size categorisations used in the SSHA has changed on several occasions since 1989, which further undermines their long-term comparability.

However, analysis of the SSHA reports clearly indicates that social housing need has outstripped supply since the early 1990s. This is evidenced by Figure 2.4 which compares all local authority and AHB social housing output (including new builds and acquisitions) between 2016 and 2021, to the social housing output targets specified in the government housing policy statements published during this period and HAP claimant households.

More detailed analysis indicates that since 2021 the growth in need has been stronger and the supply response weaker in the five cities in Ireland (see Figure 2.5). Furthermore, the growth in need has been particularly strong among single person households, compared to

multi person households (see Figure 2.6). Since 2019 the former have outnumbered the latter on the social housing waiting list. Based on these data, Figure 2.7 estimates the number of bedrooms required by households on the social housing waiting since 2008. It reveals that the households likely to require one or two bedroomed dwellings (one adult; two adults; single parent with one child; couple with one child) outnumber the households likely to require three or more bedrooms<sup>1</sup>.

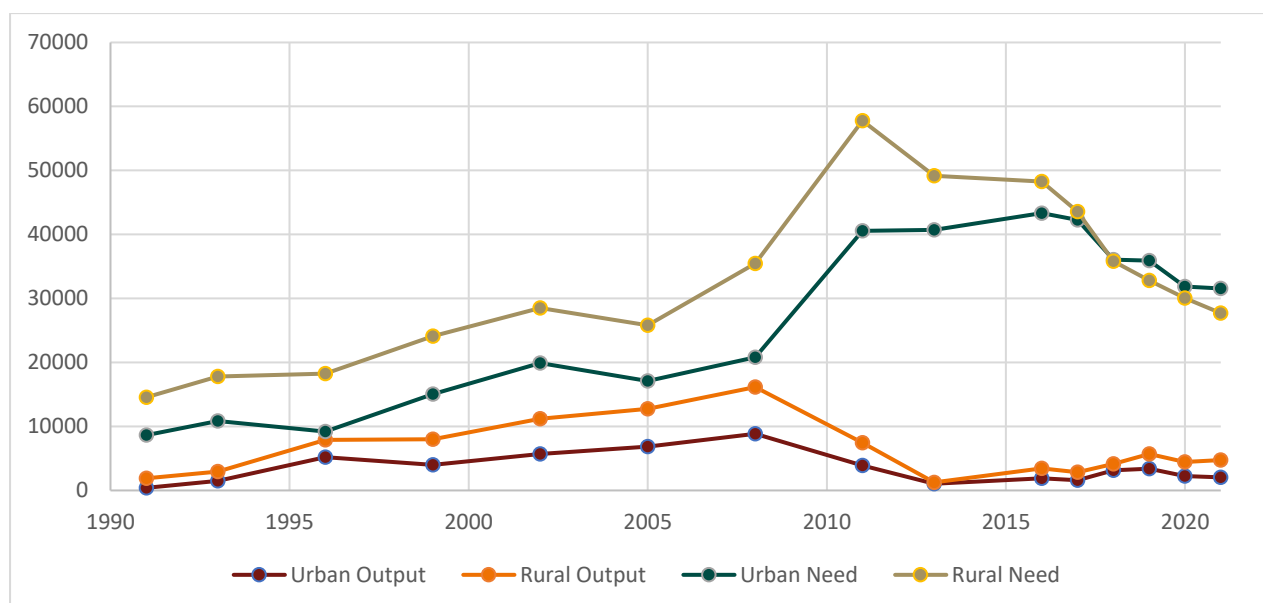
*Figure 2-5 Social Housing Need, Output, Targets and HAP Tenancies 2016–2021*



Note: SH means social housing. Source: data compiled by the authors from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

<sup>1</sup> Households with two children of the same gender may require a two-bedroom unit but are unable to be identified to this level in these data.

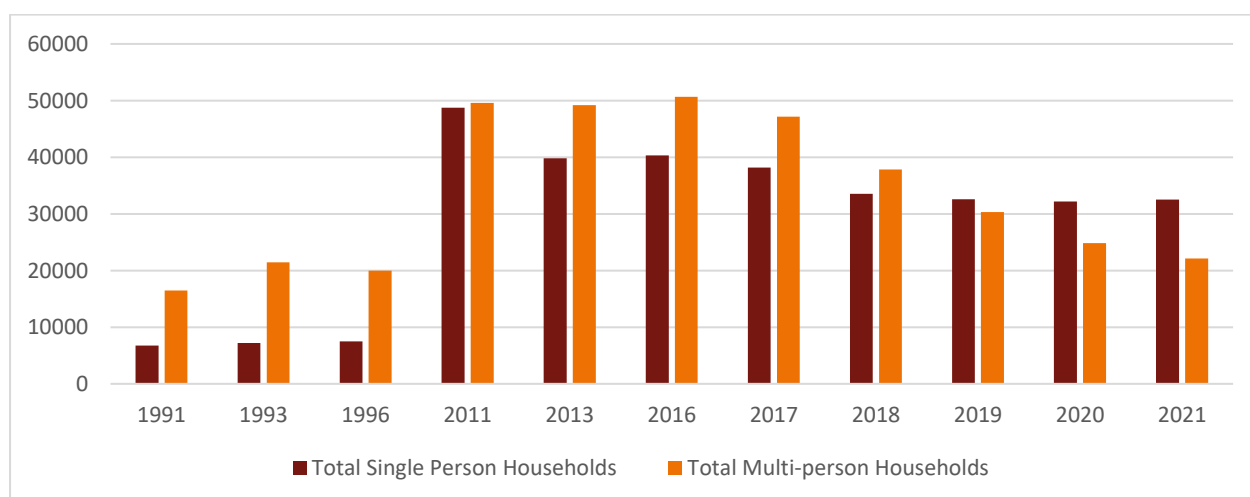
**Figure 2-6 Social Housing Need and Output in Urban and Rural Areas, 1991–2021**



Source: data compiled by the authors from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

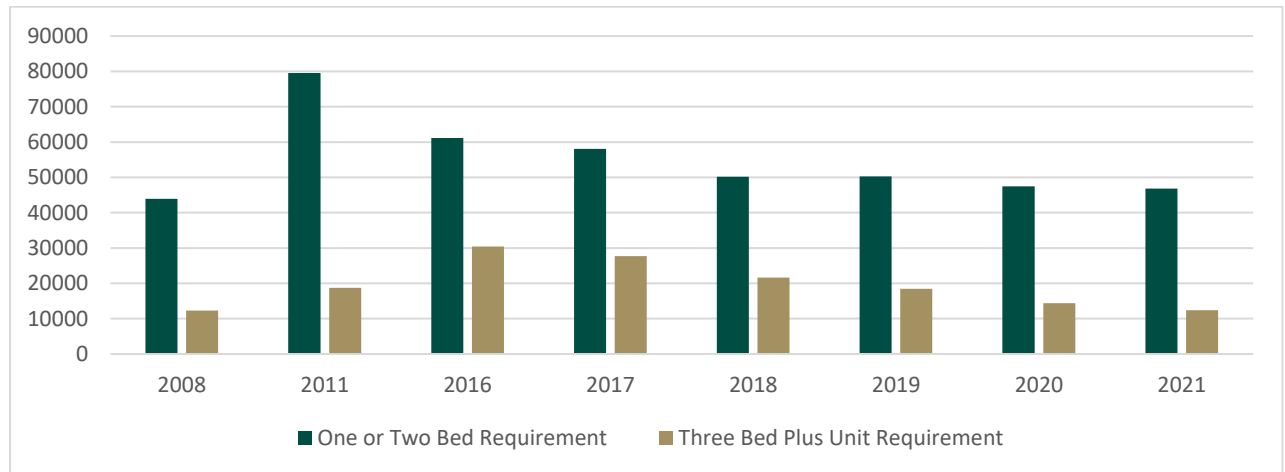
Note: Data refer to households. Urban areas include the functional areas of as the functional areas of Dublin, Cork, and Galway City Councils, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils and Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils. Rural areas refer to the rest of the country.

**Figure 2-7 Single and Multi-Person Households on the Social Housing Waiting List (N), 1991–2021**



Data combined by the author from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

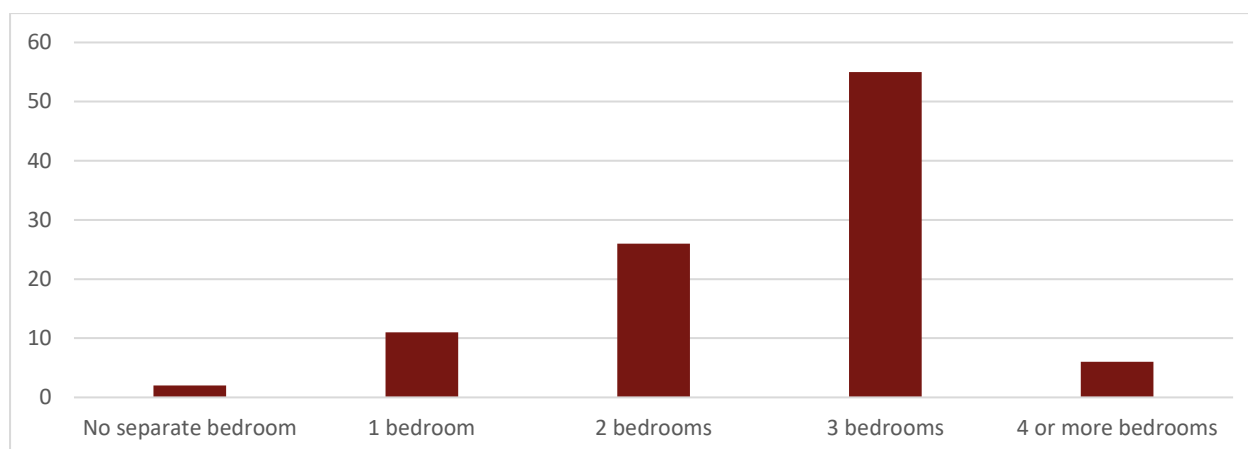
*Figure 2-8 Estimated Number of Bedrooms Required by Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2008–2021*



Data combined by the author from DHLGH publications, 2016-2021.

The latest data available on the number of bedrooms in the existing social housing are for 2015 and only include local authorities. It reveals that 61% of these dwellings contain three more bedrooms, and 13% consists of bedsits or one bedroomed dwelling (see Figure 2.9). Although these data are out of date, there is no evidence that this situation has changed significantly in recent years. The Housing Commission (2024) reported that 12.5% of the social housing units provided in 2021 contained one bedroom, 35% two bedrooms, 42% three bedrooms and the remainder four or more bedrooms. On this basis, the Housing Commission (2024) recommends that successfully reducing the social housing waiting lists will require significant increases to the stock of one- and two-bed units.

*Figure 2-9 Number of Bedrooms in Local Authority Social Housing, 2015.*



Source: National Oversight and Audit Commission, 2017.

## 2.6 Conclusions

This chapter has reviewed the key changes made to housing policy since 1990, particularly in relation to social housing and the provision of housing allowances to low-income private renting households. It has also identified the key trends in social housing need and the uptake of Housing Assistance Payment in recent years. These trends will be examined in more depth in the chapters that follow.

In addition, this chapter has presented a preliminary analysis of the factors which shaped these trends. This analysis focused on the changes in public capital spending on social housing, and consequently its output of social housing, both of which have a strong direct influence on social housing need and take up of housing allowances. However the latter is not the only factor influential in this regard, the undersupply of housing for sale and rent from the private housing market has a significant indirect influence (Kennedy and Myers, 2019). Despite unprecedented high housing output during the ‘Celtic tiger’ boom between 1996 and 2006, the construction sector has failed to keep up with demand in recent years (Norris and Redmond, 2007). Between 2012 and 2021, 126,526 new dwellings were constructed, of which 24,329 were social housing units (DHLGH, various years). However, this has failed to keep pace with population growth which has been particularly strong since 2016, due to a combination of natural increase (excess of births over deaths) and high levels of net inward migration (CSO, 2023). The Housing Commission (2024) has identified a significant ‘housing deficit’ of unmet housing need that has accumulated due to this sustained pattern of unmet need. It has recommended that in addition to building enough housing to meet needs



generated by future population growth, this 'deficit' of inadequate supply to meet existing need must also be met.

It is also striking that many of the demographic and spatial trends among applicants for social housing and HAP claimants identified in this chapter are mirrored in the wider Irish population. Unlike many neighbouring Western European countries, Ireland did not experience high internal migration to cities during the industrial revolution and the majority of the Irish population lived in rural areas until the mid-twentieth century (Norris, 2016). Although urbanisation came late to Ireland, this trend has been particularly pronounced in recent decades. Between 2000 and 2012, Ireland's urbanisation rate was almost double that of the European average (Ahrens and Lyons, 2019). Although the rural population has increased by 6.6% since 2006, the urban population has increased by 15.5% concurrently (CSO, various years). Population growth has been especially strong in Dublin. This region was home to 28% of the Irish population between 2011 and 2016, compared to 17% in 1926 (CSO, various years). The change in the location of social housing need is, therefore, not surprising given the shift in population distribution in recent years. Household size has also changed across the Irish population in recent decades, with more people remaining single, and couples having fewer children (CSO, various years). It is estimated that this changing household demographic is increasing demand for housing by 10,000 units per year (Lyons, 2020). Despite the clear need for smaller units, in 2022 apartments made up only 9.9% of the residential stock in Ireland (GeoDirectory, 2022). The current housing strategy, Housing for All, recognises the need for additional supply to be added to the market. It also recognises the need for different types of supply in the forms of social housing, cost-rental accommodation, and home purchasing schemes.

### **3. Demographic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Understanding the demographic characteristics of applicants for social housing, particularly their household size, composition, and location, is essential for efficient planning of the future delivery of this housing. Historically, social housing provision in Ireland was heavily focused on meeting the needs of large households – primarily two parents with children (Norris, 2016). Lone-parent and particularly single-person households were not prioritised for access to the tenure (O’Sullivan, 2020). This situation has changed in recent decades, but these historic norms are reflected in the composition of the social housing stock which, as explained in the preceding chapter, is heavily dominated by dwellings with three or more bedrooms that are suitable for larger households. Thus, if the needs of current applicants for social housing are to be met, it is critical that planning for new social house building be informed by up-to-date information on their household size, composition, and location.

This chapter presents an analysis of the demographic characteristics of the household on social housing waiting lists between 2016 and 2021. This analysis includes 166,789 households who completed a social housing assessment during this period. The demographic characteristics of these households examined here include age, gender, nationality and household size and composition, as well as the local authority to which they have applied for housing. Where possible, this chapter also compares the demographic characteristics of applicants for social housing to those of social housing tenants and the national population.

#### **3.2 Demographic Characteristics Compared to the Population-at-Large**

Table 3.1 summarises the key demographic characteristics of applicants for social housing and of their households. Analysis of the former focuses primarily on the principal applicant for social housing’ – i.e. the adult in whose name the application was submitted.

This table reveals that single-adult households were by far the most common type of household on the social housing waiting list for the applicants in the six years examined, followed by lone-parent households with one or two children. Larger, multi-adult, multi-child households were the least common household type. Notably, these trends intensified between 2016 and 2021. One-adult households made up 42% of households on the social housing waiting list in 2016 and 55% in 2021. Whereas between 2016 and 2021 lone-parent and children households declined from 24% to 20% of households on the social housing waiting

list, those of a couple with one or two children declined from 13% to 7%. It is important to note, however, that due to the decline in the total number of households on the social housing waiting list, in absolute terms, the number of single-people households on the waiting list in 2021 was lower than in 2016: 32,547 compared to 38,090 (see Table 3.1)

In contrast, the gender distribution of principal applicants for social housing remained relatively consistent between 2016 and 2021 and was largely evenly distributed between men and women: 50% of applicants were female and 50% were male in both 2020 and 2021, while 53% were female in 2016, 2017 and 2018. Similarly, the age profiles of principal applicants also remained fairly consistent across the years under examination. Between 2016 and 2021, 35–54-year-olds made up the largest cohort of principal applicants for social housing, followed by 18–34 years-olds, with over-55-year-olds consistently the smallest cohort.

The citizenship of the majority of applicants changed between 2016 and 2021. The proportion of applicant households headed by non-Irish nationals dropped slightly. The proportion of principal applicants who are citizens of the UK and countries in the European Economic Area (EEA) (other than Ireland) declined from 20% in 2016 to 15% in 2021. Concurrently, applicants from countries outside the EEA declined from 8% of the total in 2016 to 6% in 2021, while Irish citizens increased from 72% to 78% of principal applicants for social housing.

*Table 3-1 Demographic Characteristics of Applicants for Social Housing 2016–2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Household Composition</b>												
1 adult	38,090	42	35,883	42	31,696	44	32,606	47	32,200	52	32,547	55
1 adult, 1-2 children	22,161	24	20,568	24	17,643	25	15,570	23	13,329	22	12,114	20
1 adult, 3 or more children	3,200	3	2,952	3	2,650	4	2,181	3	1,737	3	1,542	3
2 adults	1,838	2	1,849	2	1,534	2	1,613	2	1,387	2	1,328	2
2 adults, with child/children	1,952	2	1,919	2	1,535	2	1,454	2	1,162	2	1,117	2
3 or more adults	525	1	529	1	442	1	428	1	384	1	355	1
3 or more adults, with child/children	467	1	450	1	361	1	311	0	277	0	264	0
Couple	3,942	4	3,683	4	2,885	4	2,984	4	2,701	4	2,537	4
Couple, 1 or more other adults	911	1	944	1	673	1	641	1	556	1	542	1
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children	1,433	2	1,419	2	1,050	1	960	1	753	1	684	1
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children	548	1	527	1	432	1	362	1	335	1	301	1
Couple, 1-2 children	11,761	13	10,654	12	7,540	10	6,741	10	4,958	8	4,191	7
Couple, 3 or more children	4,766	5	4,419	5	3,415	5	2,838	4	2,092	3	1,717	3
<b>Age of Principal Applicant</b>												
18–34-year-olds	38,734	42	34,268	40	27,600	38	25,733	37	23,556	38	22,172	37
35–54-year-olds	41,226	45	39,719	46	33,308	46	31,799	46	27,449	44	26,287	44
55 and over	10,643	12	10,815	13	10,022	14	10,242	15	9,951	16	9,944	17
<b>Sex of Principal Applicant</b>												
Female	48,534	53	45,502	53	37,972	53	35,429	52	31,042	50	29,350	50

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Male	43,060	47	40,294	47	33,884	47	33,260	48	30,829	50	29,889	50
<b>Nationality of Principal Applicant</b>												
Irish	65,832	72	62,062	72	53,611	75	52,123	76	48,084	78	46,299	78
EEA + UK	18,707	20	17,225	20	13,430	19	12,308	18	10,114	16	9,133	15
Non-EEA	7,055	8	6,509	8	4,815	7	4,258	6	3,673	6	3,807	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>91,594</b>		<b>85,796</b>		<b>71,856</b>		<b>68,689</b>		<b>61,871</b>		<b>59,239</b>	

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment.

Table 3.2 employs census data to detail the characteristics of all social housing tenant households in Ireland in 2011, 2016 and 2022, and compares these with the characteristics of the general Irish population. It reveals marked differences between the characteristics of these two categories of households and those of applicants for social housing (summarised in Table 3.1 above), and that these differences have persisted during the timeframe under examination. Notably, during the period examined in this table, social housing tenant households increased marginally as a proportion of total households, from 8.8% in 2011 to 10% in 2022 (Central Statistics Office, various years-a).

One-adult households are over-represented among social housing tenants compared to the general Irish population; they made up 30% of the former and 23% of the latter in 2022. However, this type of household made up 55% of applicants for social housing in 2021; thus, one-adult households account for a lower proportion of social housing tenant households than would be expected. Couples, both with and without children, were under-represented in social housing tenancies compared to the general population in each of the three years. However, considering the former accounted for only 4% and the latter for only 7% of applicants for social housing in 2021, both types of couple households constitute a higher proportion of social housing tenants than would be expected.

*Table 3-2 Composition of Social Housing Renting Households Compared to all Households, 2011, 2016 and 2022*

Census Year	2011		2016		2022	
Household Type	Social Housing %	General Population %	Social Housing %	General Population %	Social Housing %	General Population %
1 Adult	29	24	30	23	30	23
Couple	7	19	7	19	7	19
1 Adult with children	32	11	28	10	27	10
Couple with children	22	35	24	35	23	34
Other Household Types	10	12	11	12	13	14

Source: Central Statistics Office, various years-a.

Table 3.2 also reveals that one-parent households are strongly over-represented in social housing compared to the whole Irish population, accounting for 27% of the former and 10% of the latter in 2022. Notably in 2021, this type of household accounted for 23% of applicants for social housing, which suggests that allocation of tenancies to this household type is broadly in line with their rate of application.

Comparison of the data on the nationality of principal applicants for social housing set out in Table 3.1 with census data reveals that Irish citizens are under-represented among this population. In 2021 they made up 73% of principal applicants for social housing but, according to the 2022 Census, they accounted for 84% of the population of Ireland. Citizens of the UK and EEA countries made up 19% of households on the social housing waiting list in 2021 but only 8% of the population of Ireland, while the equivalent figures for non-EEA countries are 7% of households on the social housing waiting list and 5% of usual residents in Ireland (Central Statistics Office, 2022a).

### 3.3 Gender, Age and Household Composition

While the preceding analysis explained that male-headed households (MHHs) and female-headed households (FHHs) are reasonably evenly spread among applicants for social housing in recent years, a more detailed analysis presented in Table 3.3 reveals that the gender of principal applicants (i.e. the individual who applied for social housing) varies significantly by age group. The mean age of heads of households on the social housing waiting list households increased slightly during the period under examination in this report, from 39.31 years in 2016 to 41.42 years in 2021. The heads of MHHs tend to be older than their female counterparts.

*Table 3-3 Gender and Age of Households on Social Housing Waiting Lists, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Age Cohorts	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
18 – 34	52	28	50	27	49	26	47	26	46	27	45	27
35 – 54	39	55	40	56	41	55	41	54	41	51	41	51
55 and over	9	17	9	18	10	19	11	20	13	22	14	22

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment.

Households on the social housing waiting list households are smaller in size than the norm among the Irish population. The mean household size among households on the social housing waiting list in the SHA data was 1.96 in 2021 (down from 2.28 in 2016) compared to 2.74 among the Irish population as a whole according to Census 2022 (Central Statistics Office, 2022a).

Table 3.1 above detailed changes in the dominant composition of households on the waiting list for social housing. Table 3.4 disaggregates these data according to the gender of the principal applicant. It reveals that MHHs are more likely to be one-person households, while FHHs most commonly consist of an adult with children. Notably, between 2016 and 2021, lone-parent applicants for social housing predominantly included only one child (56-58%) or two children (27-30%).

**Table 3-4 Household Composition and Gender of households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021**

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Household Composition	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %	F %	M %
1 adult	25	60	26	60	28	62	31	65	35	69	39	71
1 adult, 1-2 children	40	6	40	6	40	7	38	6	36	7	35	7
1 adult, 3 or more children	6	1	6	1	6	1	5	1	5	1	4	1
2 adults	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
2 adults, with child/children	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1	3	1
3 or more adults	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
3 or more adults, with child/children	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Couple	3	6	3	6	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	5
Couple, 1 or more other adults	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	1
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Couple, 1-2 children	11	15	11	14	9	12	9	11	7	9	7	8
Couple, 3 or more children	5	6	5	6	4	5	4	5	3	4	2	3

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment.

### 3.4 Nationality, Gender, and Household Composition

Table 3.1, which detailed trends in the nationality of principal applicants for social housing, revealed that in 2021 Irish citizens made up the majority of principal applicants for social housing (73%), followed by EEA or UK citizen-headed households (19%) and non-EEA households (7%). More detailed analysis of these data reveals that the most common



citizenship among households on the social housing waiting list from this world region is Polish, followed by the UK and then by Romanian citizens. Among households on the social housing waiting list from outside the EEA, 66% had a residency status related to an application for asylum in Ireland: permission to remain in the State, refugee, or subsidiary protection status (McGinnity et al., 2021).

Table 3.5 disaggregates the nationality of principal applicants for social housing by their gender and year of application. It reveals that among Irish-citizen-headed households the distribution of male and female-headed households grew more even between 2016 and 2021, to the extent that these were split 50/50 by the latter year. There was no change in the gender distribution of UK and EEA citizens over this period; 52% of principal applicants in this category were female in each year between 2016 and 2021. Among principal applicants who were non-EEA citizens, the proportion who were female declined from 51% in 2016 to 43% in 2021.

*Table 3-5 Nationality and Gender of households on the Social Housing Waiting Lists, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016 %		2017 %		2018 %		2019 %		2020 %		2021 %	
Nationality	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Irish	53	47	53	47	53	47	52	48	50	50	50	50
EEA + UK	52	48	53	47	52	48	53	47	52	48	52	48
Non-EEA	51	49	50	50	49	51	47	53	43	57	43	57

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment.

Table 3.6 reveals that household composition is quite different across the citizenship groups under examination. One-adult households represented 76% of Irish, 49% of UK and EEA and 56% of Non-EEA citizen principal applicants in 2016, but by 2021 this had risen to 82% of Irish, 62% of UK and EEA and 70% of Non-EEA citizen principal applicants. Non-Irish citizen principal applicant households are also consistently more likely to have children and live in multi-adult households than their Irish peers.

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*Table 3-6 Nationality and Household Composition of households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
Household Composition	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA	Irish	EEA + UK	Non-EEA
1 adult	47	28	30	47	29	32	48	32	36	51	36	41	54	42	48	57	44	53
1 adult, 1-2 children	26	19	18	26	18	18	26	21	19	24	18	17	23	16	14	22	16	14
1 adult, 3 or more children	3	2	8	3	2	8	4	2	7	3	2	6	3	2	5	3	2	3
2 adults	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2
2 adults, with child/children	2	2	4	2	2	4	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	3
3 or more adults	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3 or more adults, with child/children	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
Couple	4	7	4	4	7	4	3	7	4	4	7	4	4	8	5	4	8	4
Couple, 1 or more other adults	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	1
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	3	3	1	3	3	1	2	3	1	2	3
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	2	0	1	2	0	1	1
Couple, 1-2 children	9	25	13	9	24	12	8	20	11	8	19	10	6	16	8	6	15	7
Couple, 3 or more children	4	6	13	4	7	12	4	6	10	3	6	9	3	5	8	2	4	6

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need

Table 3.7 reveals that non-Irish principal applicants for social housing are also generally older than their Irish peers. Between 2016 and 2021 the mean age of Irish heads of households on their first social housing application was 37.59. The equivalent figure for EEA and UK citizen principal applicants was 41.69 and for non-EEA citizen heads of household it was 40.

*Table 3-7 Age and Nationality of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020			2021		
Age Cohort	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A	Irish	EE A + UK	Non - EE A
18 - 34	45	31	29	43	28	28	42	26	28	40	25	29	40	23	30	39 %	30 %	36 %
35 - 54	42	56	64	43	57	64	44	57	63	44	57	61	43	56	58	43 %	56 %	46 %
55 and over	13	13	8	13	14	8	15	16	9	16	18	11	17	21	12	18 %	14 %	18 %
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100 %	100 %	100 %

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

### 3.5 Spatial Distribution

Table 3.8 details the distribution of households on the social housing waiting list households by local authority functional area between 2016 and 2021. Table 3.9 compares this distribution to the spatial distribution of the Irish population at large.

The former reveals that the spatial distribution of applicant households did not change significantly between 2016 and 2021. Among the 31 local authorities in the country, only Cork City Council experienced a rise in the number of households on the social housing waiting list during this period; it is thus one of the few local authorities where the proportion of all applicants on its social housing waiting list also increased (from 5% to 8% of total between 2016 and 2021).

Across the entire 2016-2021 period, households on the social housing waiting list remained heavily concentrated in cities and were also over-represented in these locations compared to the population-at-large. The Dublin region (which encompasses the functional areas of Dublin City Council and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils) included 28% of all households in the country in both the 2016 and 2022 censuses. However, this region received 39% of social housing applications in 2016 and 43% in 2021

*Table 3-8 Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Local Authority	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	n	%
Carlow County Council	719	1	651	1	499	1	518	1	504	1	457	1
Cavan County Council	761	1	705	1	737	1	608	1	584	1	414	1
Clare County Council	1,966	2	1,952	2	1,004	1	1,065	2	1,202	2	1,100	2
Cork City Council	4,440	5	4,373	5	3,118	4	4,639	7	3,953	6	4,501	8
Cork County Council	4,241	5	4,591	5	3,509	5	2,532	4	2,470	4	2,237	4
Donegal County Council	1,267	1	903	1	811	1	926	1	924	1	856	1
Dublin City Council	19,809	22	19,219	22	16,514	23	16,529	24	14,001	23	12,709	21
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	3,341	4	3,307	4	2,843	4	2,624	4	2,427	4	2,437	4
Fingal County Council	6,858	7	7,271	8	6,993	10	5,607	8	5,460	9	5,588	9
Galway City Council	3,322	4	2,219	3	1,728	2	1,551	2	1,233	2	1,263	2
Galway County Council	2,087	2	1,950	2	1,819	3	1,595	2	1,555	3	1,640	3
Kerry County Council	3,897	4	3,217	4	2,910	4	2,767	4	2,179	4	2,141	4
Kildare County Council	5,572	6	5,103	6	3,962	6	3,386	5	3,104	5	2,937	5
Kilkenny County Council	1,721	2	1,230	1	968	1	818	1	834	1	656	1
Laois County Council	1,198	1	1,342	2	1,024	1	806	1	664	1	588	1
Leitrim County Council	363	0	327	0	302	0	189	0	190	0	177	0
Limerick City and County Council	3,125	3	2,870	3	2,517	4	2,363	3	2,079	3	1,948	3
Longford County Council	644	1	655	1	542	1	496	1	502	1	301	1
Louth County Council	2,599	3	2,248	3	1,540	2	1,467	2	1,324	2	1,299	2
Mayo County Council	1,242	1	1,222	1	1,175	2	1,205	2	990	2	907	2
Meath County Council	3,310	4	2,453	3	1,966	3	1,715	2	1,703	3	1,589	3
Monaghan County Council	513	1	475	1	504	1	529	1	412	1	391	1
Offaly County Council	1,042	1	917	1	657	1	627	1	487	1	472	1
Roscommon County Council	560	1	538	1	369	1	323	0	291	0	241	0
Sligo County Council	800	1	611	1	442	1	501	1	522	1	517	1
South Dublin County Council	5,562	6	5,869	7	4,846	7	4,938	7	4,764	8	5,061	9
Tipperary County Council	1,858	2	1,277	1	1,201	2	1,266	2	1,259	2	1,121	2
Waterford City and County Council	1,596	2	1,444	2	1,117	2	1,094	2	1,266	2	1,228	2
Westmeath County Council	1,926	2	1,679	2	1,585	2	1,222	2	998	2	919	2
Wexford County Council	2,744	3	2,577	3	2,177	3	2,260	3	1,798	3	1,416	2
Wicklow County Council	2,511	3	2,601	3	2,477	3	2,523	4	2,192	4	2,128	4

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 3-9 Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List Compared to the National Population, 2016, 2021, 2022*

	SHA 2016		Census 2016		SHA 2021		Census 2022	
<i>Local Authority</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>
Carlow	719	1	20,537	1	457	1	22,238	1
Cavan	761	1	26,899	2	414	1	28,845	2
Clare	1,966	2	43,469	3	1,100	2	46,553	3
Cork City and Cork County	8,681	9	195,853	12	6,738	11	211,362	11
Donegal	1,267	1	58,505	3	856	1	61,780	3
Dublin City	19,809	22	211,747	12	12,709	21	225,685	12
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	3,341	4	78,601	5	2,437	4	85,128	5
Fingal	6,858	7	96,812	6	5,588	9	107,846	6
Galway City	3,322	4	28,859	2	1,263	2	30,901	2
Galway County	2,087	2	63,040	4	1,640	3	68,021	4
Kerry	3,897	4	54,493	3	2,141	4	58,317	3
Kildare	5,572	6	73,596	4	2,937	5	82,793	4
Kilkenny	1,721	2	34,855	2	656	1	36,787	2
Laois	1,198	1	29,107	2	588	1	31,232	2
Leitrim	363	0	12,452	1	177	0	13,630	1
Limerick City and County	3,125	3	71,224	4	1,948	3	76,472	4
Longford	644	1	15,122	1	301	1	16,229	1
Louth	2,599	3	45,448	3	1,299	2	49,424	3
Mayo	1,242	1	48,899	3	907	2	52,114	3
Meath	3,310	4	64,234	4	1,589	3	72,977	4
Monaghan	513	1	21,689	1	391	1	22,958	1
Offaly	1,042	1	27,343	2	472	1	28,923	2
Roscommon	560	1	24,013	1	241	0	26,021	1
Sligo	800	1	24,831	1	517	1	26,855	1
South Dublin	5,562	6	92,523	5	5,061	9	100,364	5
Tipperary	1,858	2	59,276	3	1,121	2	62,232	3
Waterford City and County	1,596	2	43,549	3	1,228	2	47,778	3
Westmeath	1,926	2	31,813	2	919	2	34,087	2
Wexford	2,744	3	54,289	3	1,416	2	59,389	3
Wicklow	2,511	3	49,211	3	2,128	4	54,211	3

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

Table 3.10 examines the gender, age group and nationality of households on the social housing waiting list in different local authority functional areas and reveals marked spatial variations in this regard. The data were collated from the initial applications for social housing submitted by all qualified households between 2016 and 2021 (bearing in mind that applicants may have applied repeatedly during this period). It reveals:

- Carlow County Council's waiting list included the highest proportion of female-headed households on its waiting list during this period (66%), while Waterford City and County Council had the lowest (48%).
- Carlow County Council (52%) and South Dublin County Council (52%) had the highest representation of younger applicants (18–35-year-olds), while Galway County Council (20%) had the highest representation of older applicants (aged 55+).
- Tipperary County Council (81%) and Donegal County Council (81%) had the highest representation of Irish citizen primary applicants.
- Monaghan County Council's waiting list included the highest proportion of applicants who were citizens of the UK or another EEA country (26%).
- The waiting lists for social housing in Cork and Galway City Councils and Fingal County Council all had the highest representation of non-EEA applicants (10%).

Table 3.11 also employs data collated from the initial applications for social housing submitted by all qualified households between 2016 and 2021 but uses these data to examine spatial variations in the composition of applicant households. It also reveals marked spatial variations in the distribution of one-adult households, particularly between large urban centres and local authorities with more rural functional areas. Dublin City Council and Sligo County Council's waiting lists both included the highest proportion of one-adult households (56%) in the country, but this household type is generally more common in urban local authorities' waiting lists. For instance, one-adult households made up 50%+ of qualified applicants for social housing in Dublin and Galway City Councils, Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Councils between 2016 and 2021. Social housing waiting lists in Dublin City Council and Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council also included relatively low numbers of couples with children during this period, but generally speaking there were no strong urban/rural differences in the spatial distribution of applicant households that included two or more people.

*Table 3-10 Gender, Age, Nationality and Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting Lists, 2016–2021*

Local Authority	Female %	Male %	18 – 34 %	35 – 54 %	55 and Over %	Irish Citizen %	EEA or UK Citizen %	Non EEA Citizen %
Carlow County Council	66	34	52	37	11	79	16	6
Cavan County Council	53	47	45	40	15	73	22	6
Clare County Council	52	48	41	42	17	76	18	5
Cork City Council	51	49	46	44	10	69	21	10
Cork County Council	55	45	38	46	16	70	24	6
Donegal County Council	54	46	46	39	15	81	16	4
Dublin City Council	50	50	46	43	11	72	19	9
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	54	46	43	44	13	79	13	7
Fingal County Council	59	41	42	48	10	69	21	10
Galway City Council	55	45	43	48	10	66	23	10
Galway County Council	53	47	37	43	20	76	19	4
Kerry County Council	50	50	40	45	15	72	22	6
Kildare County Council	53	47	41	46	14	72	21	7
Kilkenny County Council	52	48	42	45	13	78	17	5
Laois County Council	53	47	44	45	11	71	22	7
Leitrim County Council	50	50	38	45	17	71	22	7
Limerick City and County Council	51	49	48	41	11	80	13	7
Longford County Council	59	41	44	41	15	67	25	9
Louth County Council	56	44	45	42	12	71	21	8
Mayo County Council	53	47	38	43	19	77	19	4
Meath County Council	53	47	43	44	13	72	22	6
Monaghan County Council	54	46	41	45	15	69	26	5
Offaly County Council	53	47	43	40	17	79	17	4
Roscommon County Council	50	50	38	43	18	71	24	4
Sligo County Council	53	47	42	41	17	76	14	9
South Dublin County Council	55	45	52	40	8	73	19	9
Tipperary County Council	51	49	48	38	14	81	16	3
Waterford City and County Council	48	52	49	40	11	76	17	7
Westmeath County Council	52	48	43	41	15	71	21	7
Wexford County Council	59	41	46	38	15	80	16	3
Wicklow County Council	57	43	44	43	13	80	15	4
Total	53	47	44	43	13	73	19	7

Note: Data refer to the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 3-11 Spatial Distribution and Composition of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Local Authority	1 adult %	1 adult, 1-2 children %	1 adult, 3 or more children %	Couple %	Couple 1-2 children %	Couple 3 or more children %	Other household type %
Carlow County Council	38	29	4	5	12	5	6
Cavan County Council	41	20	4	6	14	6	8
Clare County Council	48	21	3	6	10	4	7
Cork City Council	48	23	2	5	12	4	5
Cork County Council	41	25	4	5	14	4	7
Donegal County Council	50	24	3	4	10	3	6
Dublin City Council	56	24	3	4	8	3	4
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	50	24	3	3	9	4	7
Fingal County Council	27	27	5	4	17	8	11
Galway City Council	54	18	2	4	12	4	4
Galway County Council	45	20	4	6	12	5	8
Kerry County Council	49	20	2	6	12	4	7
Kildare County Council	40	23	3	5	15	5	10
Kilkenny County Council	44	23	3	5	14	3	8
Laois County Council	37	23	4	7	16	5	8
Leitrim County Council	53	15	4	8	11	5	5
Limerick City and County Council	50	23	3	4	10	4	7
Longford County Council	39	20	4	8	13	6	9
Louth County Council	46	24	3	5	13	4	6
Mayo County Council	52	20	3	5	8	5	7
Meath County Council	35	27	3	5	14	6	11
Monaghan County Council	45	23	3	5	11	4	9
Offaly County Council	39	24	2	6	15	5	8
Roscommon County Council	45	19	2	6	13	7	8
Sligo County Council	56	24	2	4	7	3	5
South Dublin County Council	36	31	4	4	12	5	8



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Tipperary County Council	46	26	4	5	9	3	7
Waterford City and County Council	50	25	3	4	10	3	6
Westmeath County Council	46	20	3	6	13	4	8
Wexford County Council	40	27	4	5	13	4	7
Wicklow County Council	37	29	3	5	13	4	9
Total	45	24	3	4	12	4	7

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

### 3.6 Conclusions

This chapter has examined the demographic profile of qualified applicants for social housing and identified the most significant changes in this regard that occurred between 2016 and 2021 in the context of a marked concurrent decline in total applicants.

One of the most notable developments highlighted by this analysis is a marked rise in the proportion of applicant households that consist of a single adult only, and a related decline in the prevalence of multi-person households on waiting lists. This trend is particularly strong in cities and less evident in local authorities with largely rural functional areas. It is also much stronger among male-headed compared to female-headed households. Although one-adult households are more common in the existing social housing tenant population than among the Irish population at large, the high level of social housing applications from these households indicates that the proportion of one-person tenant households in the tenure will rise further in future. This is likely to be a particularly strong trend in Dublin City and County and other cities, because one-adult household applicants are concentrated in large urban areas.

Other key demographic characteristics of social housing applications including their age, gender and location changed very little during the period under examination in this chapter, although there were some changes in the citizenship of the majority of applicants between 2016 and 2021. The proportion of applicant households headed by non-Irish nationals dropped slightly. Although in 2021 Irish citizens made up 73% of principal applicants for social housing, they accounted for 84% of the population of Ireland according to the 2022 Census.

These findings indicate that household composition on the social housing waiting lists has changed in Ireland in recent years. To adapt to the needs of smaller households, social housing output, particularly in the Dublin region, will need to deliver smaller units.

## **4. Socio-Economic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing**

### **4.1 Introduction**

Social housing, by design, is aimed at improving the housing conditions of the most 'housing vulnerable' in society. In Ireland, to qualify for social housing, applicants must have a net (i.e. after-tax) household income that is below a prescribed limit. As explained in Chapter Two, this limit varies regionally and has been reviewed and increased in recent years but remains below average earnings. Local authorities can also take account of other indicators of housing need when making decisions regarding which households should be prioritised for access to social housing. These factors are specified in their scheme of letting priorities and commonly include homelessness and living in unfit or overcrowded accommodation. It is also important to acknowledge that many people who qualify for social housing do not apply for it (Lewis, 2019). Generally, however, social housing applicants generally have the most urgent or acute housing need and earn below-average incomes.

This chapter presents a socio-economic profile of applicants for social housing. It examines their source(s) and level of income and compares this to data on the Irish population at large, sourced from the Survey of Income and Living Conditions (SILC). In addition to ascertaining their incomes, local authorities collate information on applicants' current housing situation, their housing needs (including any specific requirements such as supported housing or Traveller-specific accommodation) and conduct a basis-of-need assessment for all households on the social housing waiting list (Lewis, 2019). These assessments are completed at the point of application and reviewed annually as part of the SHA process. The results of these assessments are also explored in this chapter, and any socio-economic variations in respect of applicants' gender, age, household composition and nationality are identified. One of the most vulnerable categories of households on the social housing waiting list are those who are currently homeless. Since reducing homelessness is a particular priority for government, the socio-economic characteristics and housing needs of this group are examined in depth in the analysis that follows.

### **4.2 Household Income**

Table 4.1 details the source and level of households on the social housing waiting list weekly net household income between 2016 and 2021. It reveals that during this period the

percentage of applicant households reliant on social welfare declined from 80% to 72%, and simultaneously, the proportion of those with at least some employment income increased from 23% to 31%. While this is a positive change in applicants' socio-economic profile, the level of benefit dependence among this cohort is extremely high compared to the general population. Between 2016 and 2021 the national unemployment rate ranged from 4.8% to 9.1% (Central Statistics Office, various years-c). Table 4.1 also reveals that the number of households on the social housing waiting list who received pension payments (from both public and private sources) increased from 1% to 2% of the total between 2016 and 2021, whereas the proportion of income from maintenance and other sources remained relatively stable proportionately to the number of households each year.

Table 4.1 also details changes in the median household incomes that households on the social housing waiting list received from various sources between 2016 and 2021. This reveals significant growth in the median incomes of employed households between these years, coupled with weaker growth in the median incomes of applicants dependent on social welfare, and very modest growth in the median incomes of pensioners.

*Table 4-1 Median Net Weekly Household Income and Income Source of Social Housing Applicants, 2016–2021*

Income Source	Employment		Pension		Social Welfare		Maintenance		Other	
	€	N	€	N	€	N	€	N	€	N
2016	277.4	21,034	222	832	188.4	73,538	40.00	4,610	125	807
2017	270.39	21,670	209.5	788	193	66,920	40.00	5,148	92.50	651
2018	300.13	20,518	220	956	198	56,032	40.00	4,896	92.31	615
2019	325	20850	219	948	203	52,367	45.00	4,616	100.38	641
2020	350	18,911	223.1	994	203	45,843	50.00	3,943	92.00	492
2021	357.79	18,174	227	1,030	203	42,878	50.00	3,583	97.07	469

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 assess households' on the social housing waiting list income adequacy from two other perspectives. Table 4.2 details the income percentiles of households on the social housing waiting list. These data are calculated from the information included in their first application submitted between 2016 and 2021. They reveal a strikingly flat income distribution among some categories of applicant households. For instance, among one-adult households and one-adult plus 1-2 children households, incomes at the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile are only marginally higher than incomes at the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile; among households that include

couples with children and/or other adults, a much larger variation between the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> income percentile is evident. This points to higher levels of benefit dependence among single-adult and lone-parent households, and their more uniformly acute need compared to couples with children and/or other adults in their household.

*Table 4-2 Monthly Net Household Income Percentiles of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List by Household Composition, 2016–2021*

Household Composition	25 Percentile €	50 Percentile €	75 Percentile €
1 adult	814.67	814.67	879.67
1 adult, 1-2 children	943.80	1,030.47	1,170.43
1 adult, 3 or more children	1,183.87	1,202.07	1,404.00
2 adults	814.67	884.00	981.46
2 adults, with child/children	943.80	1,072.93	1,332.07
3 or more adults	814.67	943.80	1,117.13
3 or more adults, with child/children	990.17	1,202.07	1,408.98
Couple	814.67	1,009.67	1,355.47
Couple, 1 or more other adults	825.50	1,346.80	1,484.60
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children	879.23	1,484.60	1,698.23
Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children	958.75	1,742.87	2,001.13
Couple, 1-2 children	814.67	1,392.50	1,613.73
Couple, 3 or more children	867.97	1,662.22	1,863.77

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Tukey's Hinges have been used in this analysis to measure the inter-quartile ranges because the 50 percentile is the median. This approach corresponds to other analyses presented in this report.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-3 Median Net Annual Equivalised Household Income of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List Compared to all Households, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Household Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>A. All households</b>						
1 adult aged <65	€17,383	€27,125	€26,476	€27,840	€23,628	€23,155
1 adult aged 65+	€14,034	€20,309	€20,539	€21,429	€17,312	€18,070
2 adults, both aged <65	€42,045	€53,509	€59,186	€56,232	€53,582	€52,701
2 adults, at least 1 aged 65+	€31,732	€37,329	€41,215	€43,180	€37,911	€39,051
3 or more adults	€58,147	€67,922	€77,521	€82,536	€75,285	€77,472
1 adult with children aged under 18	€22,845	€26,872	€31,057	€32,431	€29,506	€33,404
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	€53,828	€62,676	€62,930	€67,069	€58,008	€62,513
Other households with children aged under 18	€57,431	€68,027	€79,892	€78,671	€66,754	€72,420
<b>B. Households on the social housing waiting list</b>						
1 adult aged <65	€9,776	€9,776	€10,244	€10,296	€10,556	€10,556
1 adult aged 65+	€11,544	€11,752	€11,976	€12,064	€12,324	€12,324
2 adults principal applicant <65	€9,398	€9,398	€9,623	€9,692	€9,191	€8,995
2 adults principal applicant 65+	€7,299	€7,205	€7,424	€7,622	€7,737	€7,737
3 or more adults	€6,024	€6,086	€6,201	€14,955	€6,594	€6,733
1 adult with children aged under 18	€6,613	€6,613	€6,711	€7,410	€7,380	€7,647
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	€7,061	€7,047	€7,244	€7,485	€7,565	€7,748
Other households with children aged under 18	€5,899	€5,881	€5,551	€5,950	€6,051	€6,319
<b>B as a % A</b>						
1 adult aged <65	56	36	39	37	45	46
1 adult aged 65+	82	58	58	56	71	68
2 adults principal applicant <65	22	18	16	17	17	17
2 adults principal applicant 65+	23	19	18	18	20	20
3 or more adults	10	9	8	18	9	9
1 adult with children aged under 18	29	25	22	23	25	23
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	13	11	12	11	13	12
Other households with children aged under 18	10	9	7	8	9	9

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.

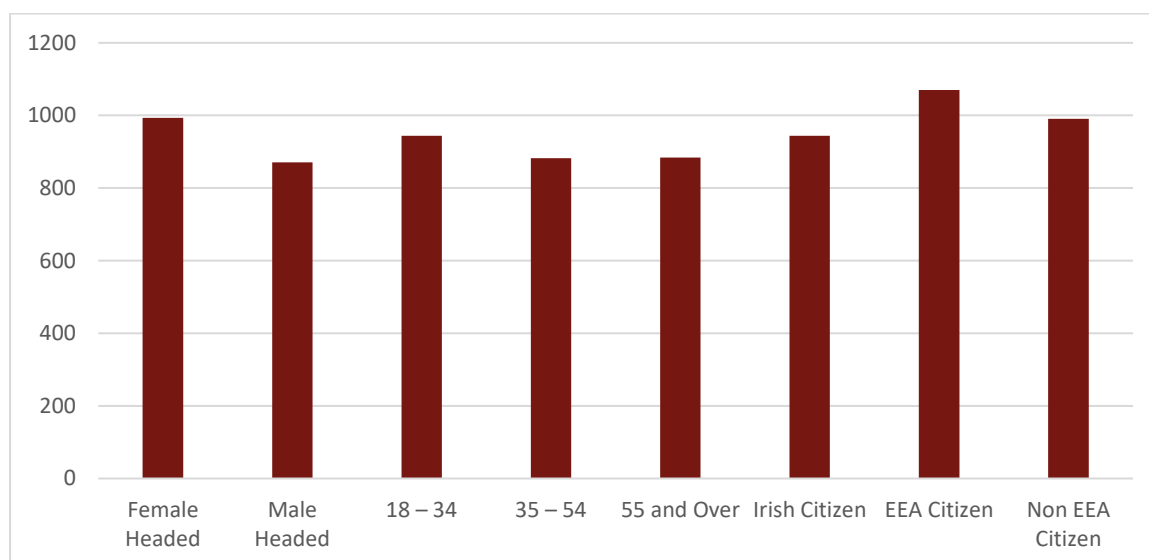
Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

To provide more meaningful information on the adequacy of the household incomes of those on the social housing waiting list, in Table 4.3 these data are ‘equivalised’; in other words, adjusted to take account of the number of adults and children in the household. In addition, households on the social housing waiting list equivalised incomes are compared to all households in the country. The latter was calculated from the annual SILC survey, which categorises households as being ‘at risk of poverty’ if their household income is below 60% of the national equivalised median for their household type (Central Statistics Office, various years-b). Table 4.3 reveals that single-person household applicants aged 65+ were the only cohort of the social housing waiting list whose incomes were above 60% of the national median for most years between 2016 and 2021. For all other categories of households on the social housing waiting list this was not the case; they were, therefore, at risk of poverty.

Figure 4.1 details demographic variations in applicants’ net household income and reveals that, in this respect, norms among the households on the social housing waiting list contrast with the general Irish population. For example, female-headed applicant households had higher incomes than their male equivalents, as did households headed by 18–35-year-olds compared to 35-54 year-olds and households headed by non-Irish citizens compared to Irish citizens. These variations are likely to be strongly influenced by household composition.

Female-headed households (FHHs) are more likely to be larger than male-headed households (MHHs), for example, the mean size of the latter between 2016 and 2021 was 1.93, for instance, while that of the latter was 2.37 on average – which means that FHHs generally received higher social security benefit payments. Single-person MHHs had the lowest median income of all the household types examined, at €10,036.00 per annum; they also accounted for 62% of all MHH and 29% of total households. However, single-adult MHHs and two-person MHHs were the only two groups where MHHs had a lower income than FHHs. Among households with three or more people, MHHs had a median income between 8% and 29% higher than FHHs. The implication of this is that single-person MHHs appear to be more financially vulnerable than their female-headed counterparts.

*Figure 4-1 Median Net Monthly Household Income of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List by Gender, Age and Nationality, 2016–2021*



Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

### 4.3 Current Accommodation

Local authorities also record information on the type of accommodation currently occupied by applicants for social housing; this is summarised in Table 4.4 below. Between 2016 and 2021, the vast majority of households on the social housing waiting list lived in apartments or houses.

Some of the detailed categories used in Table 4.4 are bundled together in Tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 for reasons of summary. Tables 4.5, 4.6 and 4.7 demonstrate that, among all households on the social housing waiting list between 2016 and 2021, female-headed households, couples with three or more children and ‘other household types’, and applicants to Roscommon County Council for housing were most likely to live in houses. Households headed by non-Irish households, couples without children and applicants to Dublin City Council were most likely to live in apartments or flats. Households headed by non-EEA citizens, one-person households and applicants to South Dublin County Council were most likely to live in emergency accommodation. Offaly County Council’s waiting list had the highest proportion of households living in Traveller accommodation.



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*Table 4-4 Current Accommodation of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Accommodation Type	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Apartment	18,460	20	16,727	19	14,656	20	12,763	19	9,721	16	9,251	16
Bed and breakfast accommodation	298	0	1407	2	1,406	2	1,693	2	2,362	4	894	2
Bungalow	950	1	871	1	749	1	804	1	851	1	787	1
Caravan	591	1	658	1	710	1	766	1	731	1	706	1
Cottage	1,100	1	1,069	1	851	1	813	1	734	1	665	1
Day house	14	0	14	0	11	0	14	0	28	0	26	0
Flat	5,520	6	4,074	5	3,165	4	3,053	4	2,513	4	2,319	4
Group housing scheme	283	0	306	0	278	0	284	0	281	0	359	1
Halting site bay	109	0	132	0	143	0	145	0	132	0	141	0
Hospital	202	0	182	0	232	0	264	0	222	0	221	0
Hostel accommodation	2,307	3	2,402	3	2,400	3	2,817	4	3,041	5	1,893	3
House	53,947	59	50,637	59	41,773	58	40,248	59	36,100	58	34,574	58
Institution	424	0	425	0	512	1	547	1	535	1	505	1
Maisonette	85	0	76	0	55	0	58	0	53	0	62	0
Mobile home	431	0	441	1	428	1	460	1	481	1	485	1
Other	5,736	6	4,590	5	3,506	5	2,852	4	2,833	5	2,965	5
Prison	87	0	79	0	85	0	92	0	121	0	196	0
Refuge	202	0	172	0	150	0	184	0	230	0	219	0
Sheltered accommodation	243	0	277	0	297	0	345	1	371	1	2,223	4
Tigin	6	0	8	0	5	0	6	0	12	0	11	0
Transitional accommodation	599	1	1,249	1	444	1	481	1	519	1	737	1
Total	91,594	100	85,796	100	71,856	100	68,689	100	61,871	100	59,239	100

Note: Tigin refers to a form of Traveller-specific accommodation; hostel accommodation is for homeless people; transitional accommodation is generally provided to people leaving hostel accommodation for the homeless. Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-5 Current Accommodation Type, Gender, Age and Nationality of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2020*

Current Accommodation	Female	Male	18 - 34	35 - 54	55 and over	Irish Citizen	EEA Citizen	Non EEA Citizen
Apartment/flat	20	26	19	25	28	19	33	33
Temporary accommodation	5	11	8	8	9	8	6	13
House	67	54	64	59	55	64	56	46
Traveller accommodation	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	1
Other	6	7	6	6	6	7	4	7

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. The demographic characteristics refer to principal applicants. Temporary accommodation includes: B&B; hospital; hostel; institution; refuge; shelter accommodation; transitional accommodation. Traveller accommodation includes group housing, tigrín, halting bay; caravan; mobile home.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-6 Current Accommodation Type and Household Composition of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2020*

Current Accommodation	1 Adult	1 Adult 1-2 Children	1 Adult 3 or more children	Couple	Couple 1-2 children	Couple 3 or more children	Other HH Type
Apartment/flat	27	18	11	24	12	12	8
Temporary accommodation	13	4	7	2	3	3	4
House	50	71	73	68	78	75	80
Traveller accommodation	2	1	2	2	1	2	1
Other	8	6	6	4	6	7	7
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. The demographic characteristics refer to principal applicants. Temporary accommodation includes: B&B; hospital; hostel; institution; refuge; shelter accommodation, and transitional accommodation. Traveller accommodation includes group housing, tigrín, halting bay; caravan; mobile home.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-7 Current Accommodation Type and spatial distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2020*

Local Authority	Apartment/ Flat %	Temporary Accommodation %	House %	Traveller Accommodation %	Other %
Carlow	14	6	75	3	2
Cavan	18	2	77	1	2
Clare	17	5	73	3	4
Cork City	30	9	59	2	1
Cork	19	4	74	2	2
Donegal	14	3	79	3	1
Dublin City	38	13	41	1	6
DLRD	10	2	20	0	68
Fingal	20	7	59	2	13
Galway City	31	8	57	2	3
Galway	16	5	73	3	2
Kerry	14	5	78	2	1
Kildare	21	6	67	3	3
Kilkenny	12	6	73	2	7
Laois	17	4	76	2	1
Leitrim	15	3	80	2	1
Limerick	24	10	60	3	4
Longford	19	3	74	2	2
Louth	14	12	72	1	1
Mayo	16	3	75	2	3
Meath	24	3	70	2	1
Monaghan	17	2	78	2	2
Offaly	18	4	70	6	2
Roscommon	12	4	81	2	1
Sligo	14	13	67	2	5
South Dublin	17	15	65	1	2
Tipperary	15	4	73	3	4
Waterford	20	10	65	2	2
Westmeath	24	5	66	2	3
Wexford	16	4	77	2	2
Wicklow	22	4	67	3	4

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Temporary accommodation includes: B&B; hospital; hostel; institution; refuge; shelter accommodation, and transitional accommodation.

Traveller accommodation includes group housing, tigin, halting bay; caravan; mobile home.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

Table 4.8 details the tenure in which households on the social housing currently live. Private rental accommodation had been the most common tenure type for households across all years considered, but its import in this regard has declined over time. This tenure accommodated 67% of applicants in 2016 but just 43% in 2021. The proportion of applicants living with parents or family increased from 21% to 36%, while the proportion living in emergency accommodation for homeless people doubled, from 5% to 10%.

Further analysis of these data is presented in Tables 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11. These tables demonstrate that households in which the principal applicant was an Irish citizen were most likely to be living with parents, and that among the different household compositions under consideration, one-adult plus 1 child households had the highest proportion of living with parents (25% and 34% respectively). Households whose principal applicant was aged 55+ were most likely to be living with relatives or friends (13%) or be an owner occupier (6%). Single-person households were also likely to be living in these tenure types; it is likely that there is overlap between these groups. It is possible that these older applicants had experienced changes to their financial and/or housing circumstances at the end of their careers or following relationship breakdown. Principal applicants who were citizens of non-EEA countries were most likely to be living in emergency accommodation for homeless people or to report having no accommodation (11%). Citizens of the UK or EEA countries and couples with three or more children were most likely to live in private rental accommodation (78% and 82% respectively). Thus, the extent of reliance on this tenure appears to depend on having alternatives available; where family or friends are an option (more likely for Irish citizens and smaller households) they are relied upon more.

*Table 4-8 Current Accommodation Tenure of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Tenure type	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	n	%
Emergency accommodation/ none	4,643	5	4,378	5	4,775	7	5,834	8	6,188	10	6,039	10
Living with parents	13,987	15	14,917	17	13,694	19	14,772	22	14,824	24	15,044	25
Living with relatives/friends	5,325	6	5,547	6	5,476	8	6,131	9	6,429	10	6,506	11
Other	4,813	5	4,412	5	4,230	6	4,232	6	4,559	7	4,602	8
Owner occupier	1,106	1	1,119	1	1,216	2	1,439	2	1,679	3	1,614	3
Private rented accommodation	61,720	67	55,423	65	42,465	59	36,281	53	28,192	46	25,434	43
Total	91,594	100	85,796	100	71,856	100	68,689	100	61,871	100	59,239	100

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.  
Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-9 Current Accommodation Tenure, Gender, Age and Nationality of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Tenure Type	Female %	Male %	18 – 34 %	35 – 54 %	55 and Over %	Irish Citizen %	EEA or UK Citizen %	Non EEA Citizen %
Emergency Accommodation/none	5	10	8	7	6	8	6	11
Living with parents	23	15	32	11	3	25	4	4
Living with relatives/ friends	8	9	8	7	13	9	6	7
Other	6	8	6	6	11	7	4	8
Owner occupier	2	2	0	3	6	3	1	1
Private rented accommodation	56	56	45	66	62	49	78	69

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. The demographic characteristics refer to principal applicants.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-10 Current Accommodation Tenure and Household Composition of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016-2021*

Tenure Type	1 Adult %	1 Adult 1-2 Children %	1 Adult 3 or more children %	Couple %	Couple 1-2 children %	Couple 3 or more children %	Other HH Type %
Emergency accommodation/ none	12	5	8	4	3	4	3
Living with parents	18	34	15	12	10	4	5
Living with relatives/ friends	12	7	6	6	3	2	5
Other	10	4	5	5	3	5	5
Owner occupier	2	1	3	5	2	2	7
Private rented accommodation	47	49	63	67	79	82	76

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. The demographic characteristics refer to principal applicants.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

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*Table 4-11 Current Accommodation Tenure and Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Local Authority	Emergency Accommodation/none %	Living with Parents %	Living with Relatives/ Friends %	Other %	Owner Occupier %	Private rented accommodation %
Carlow	4	24	10	6	5	50
Cavan	1	18	7	6	5	63
Clare	4	19	9	9	3	55
Cork City	5	21	8	7	1	59
Cork	3	16	6	5	3	67
Donegal	3	22	10	4	5	56
Dublin City	17	23	7	2	0	50
DLRD	5	15	9	35	0	35
Fingal	6	12	6	2	0	74
Galway City	9	9	6	4	1	71
Galway	4	15	7	6	5	63
Kerry	3	15	7	3	3	69
Kildare	4	19	11	9	2	54
Kilkenny	5	20	12	13	4	46
Laois	2	16	7	5	6	64
Leitrim	1	14	9	3	6	67
Limerick	7	22	10	11	2	47
Longford	2	18	10	6	5	60
Louth	8	20	10	5	3	54
Mayo	2	15	8	11	3	61
Meath	3	21	8	6	5	57
Monaghan	0	20	10	10	3	56
Offaly	4	19	8	6	6	57
Roscommon	1	14	6	5	5	69
Sligo	6	18	10	15	5	46
South Dublin	12	25	11	7	0	44
Tipperary	5	20	12	7	5	50

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Waterford	7	20	11	10	2	50
Westmeath	4	17	7	7	4	62
Wexford	3	17	7	7	3	63
Wicklow	3	22	9	6	3	56

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

Table 4.11 also highlights spatial variations in the current tenure of households on the social housing waiting list. The applicant population in Dublin City Council's functional area included the highest proportion of those living in emergency accommodation or having no accommodation recorded (17%). Those living in the South Dublin County Council area had the highest proportion of living with parents (25%). Tipperary County Council and Kilkenny County Council had the highest proportion of households living with relatives or friends (12%). Laois, Leitrim, and Offaly County Councils each had 6% of households who lived in owner-occupied accommodation. Fingal County Council had the highest proportion of households living in private rented accommodation (74%). As noted above, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council relied strongly on the 'other' category, using it for 35% of households.

Data on the Rent Supplement payments received by households on the social housing waiting list living in private rented accommodation are set out in Table 4.12. Levels of Rent Supplement payments vary depending on the size of the claimant's household and the location of their home, so the variations in median rent supplement payments received by different demographic groups, which are highlighted in this table, are influenced by these factors. (More detailed analysis of this issue is included in Appendix Three, Tables 1-6.) This table also compares these households' median income and median Rent Supplement payment with national median rents during the 2016-2021 period and reveals that the former were between 72% and 93% of the latter.

*Table 4-12 Rent Supplement Payments to Households on the Social Housing Waiting List and Estimated Rent Costs, by Gender, Age and Nationality, 2016–2021*

Demographic Variables	Median Monthly Rent Supplement Payment €	Median Monthly Nationwide Rent €	Median Rent as Percent of Median Income and Rent Supplement
Female	238.33	1,049.20	85
Male	251.33	1,049.20	93
18 – 34	229.67	1,049.20	89
35 – 54	260.00	1,049.20	92
55 and over	238.33	1,049.20	93
Irish citizen	368.33	1,049.20	80
EEA citizen	381.33	1,049.20	72
Non EEA citizen	450.67	1,049.20	73

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing. The demographic characteristics refer to principal applicants.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.



## 4.4 Homeless Households

As explained above, the numbers of homeless people on the waiting list for social housing have increased in recent years and applicant households headed by citizens of non-EEA countries are particularly likely to be homeless.

The statutory definition of homelessness is set out in Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988. It specifies that people will be regarded as homeless by a local authority if:

- (a) there is no accommodation available which, in the opinion of the authority, he, together with any other person who normally resides with him or who might reasonably be expected to reside with him, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or*
- b) he is living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and is so living because he has no accommodation of the kind referred to in paragraph (a), and he is, in the opinion of the authority, unable to provide accommodation from his own resources.*

Table 4.13 outlines information on the living circumstances of homeless applicants that is collated as part of the assessment of their social housing need. The categories are used reflect the statutory definition. This table reveals that the majority of homeless applicants in 2021 were 'living in night-time emergency hostel accommodation provided by LA and voluntary body' (42%) and 'have no accommodation they can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of' (38%). Furthermore, the proportion of homelessness applicants in both these categories has increased significantly since 2016. Concurrently, the proportion of homeless applicants 'living in bed and breakfast accommodation', declined from 32% in 2016 to 5% in 2021. This type of accommodation is generally provided to households with children; the decline in its use by applicants for social housing is likely due to the increase in the number of these households living in 'family hubs' – specialist facilities that accommodate homeless families and are concentrated in the Dublin region (DHLGH, various years).

*Table 4-13 Living Circumstances of Homeless Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
<i>Current Homeless Circumstances</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Currently serving custodial sentences and have applied for social housing	51	1	29	1	23	0	37	1	34	1	36	1
Living in night-time emergency hostel accommodation provided by LA and voluntary body because they have no other accommodation	1,389	24	1,549	30	288	5	3,303	51	3,396	52	2,649	42
Living in bed and breakfast accommodation	1,882	32	152	3	118	2	328	5	254	4	282	5
Living in other accommodation (e.g. county home, hospital, etc)	335	6	131	3	110	2	196	3	199	3	345	6
Living in refuge because of domestic violence	168	3	80	2	63	1	87	1	103	2	102	2
Living in sheltered long-term housing accommodation	208	4	204	4	418	8	55	1	42	1	58	1
Living in transitional housing accommodation	227	4	1,203	24	2,387	44	238	4	206	3	234	4
Sleeping rough	136	2	118	2	119	2	136	2	148	2	199	3
Have no accommodation they can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of	1,509	26	1,622	32	1,942	36	2,070	32	2,150	33	2,348	38
Total identified as homeless	5,905	100	5,088	100	5,468	100	6,450	100	6,532	100	6,253	100

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

## 4.5 Basis of Need

As explained in Chapter Two, in addition to meeting a financial qualification, applicants are deemed eligible for social housing if they are deemed to be 'in need of housing'. These 'basis of needs' categorisations are also used by some local authorities to prioritise eligible households on waiting lists (depending on their Scheme of Letting Priorities).

Table 4.14 details the basis-of-needs categorisations of households on the social housing waiting list between 2016 and 2021. The most common need categories reported during this period were: 'dependent on Rent Supplement', 'involuntary sharing' accommodation and 'particular household circumstances', while 'unspecified disabilities', 'sensory disabilities' and 'unsustainable mortgages' were the least commonly reported. However, the prevalence of these categorisations changed during the period under examination. Most notably, the proportion of applicants included in the 'homeless' and 'household circumstances' category

increased, while the numbers categorised as 'dependent on rent supplement' declined significantly. The latter development reflects the introduction of HAP, which has replaced Rent Supplement as the most commonly used housing support for low-income private renting households (see Chapter Two).

Tables 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17 present more detailed information on basis of need of households on the social housing waiting list, disaggregated according to the principal applicant's demographic characteristics, household composition and spatial distribution. This analysis reveals few significant gender differences in this regard, with the exception that MHHs are more likely to be homeless and FHHs are more likely to be 'involuntary sharing' or in 'overcrowded accommodation' (see Table 4.15). Households headed by younger people (aged between 18 and 34) are also more likely to be 'involuntary sharing' or in 'overcrowded accommodation' than their older counterparts. Principal applicants aged between 35 and 54 are most likely to be 'dependent on Rent Supplement' and applicants aged 55 years and over are most likely to have a disability.

*Table 4-14 Basis of Needs of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
<i>Basis of Needs</i>	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mortgage is unsustainable	657	1	746	1	873	1	999	1	1,267	2	1074	2
Dependent on Rent Supplement	39,293	43	35,203	41	25,023	35	19,617	29	14,021	23	11,753	20
Disability – unspecified	60	0	45	0	42	0	55	0	55	0	62	0
Disability requirement – intellectual	1,561	2	1,571	2	1,474	2	1,550	2	1,597	3	1,656	3
Disability requirement – mental health	1,687	2	1,691	2	1,522	2	1,603	2	1,550	3	1,477	2
Disability requirement – physical	2,098	2	2,084	2	1,696	2	1,730	3	1,492	2	1,418	2
Disability requirement – sensory	347	0	381	0	361	1	380	1	362	1	347	1
Exceptional medical or compassionate grounds	2,096	2	1,564	2	1,063	1	854	1	743	1	642	1
Homeless	5,401	6	4,977	6	5,663	8	6,277	9	6,498	11	6,331	11
Involuntary sharing	11,475	13	11,913	14	11,107	15	12,043	18	11,443	18	11,888	20
Overcrowded accommodation	3,516	4	3,544	4	3,465	5	3,649	5	3,551	6	3,451	6
Unfit accommodation	2,304	3	948	1	648	1	511	1	544	1	836	1
Particular household circumstances	21,099	23	21,129	25	18,919	26	19,421	28	18,748	30	18,304	31
Total	91,594	100	85,796	100	71,856	100	68,689	100	61,871	100	59,239	100

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-15 Basis of Needs, Gender, Age and Nationality of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Basis of Needs	Female	Male	18 - 34	35 – 54	55 and over	Irish Citizen	EEA or UK Citizen	Non EEA Citizen
Concluded that mortgage is unsustainable	1	2	0	2	3	2	1	1
Currently dependent on Rent Supplement	32	30	26	36	32	29	37	37
Disability	5	7	4	6	11	7	4	3
Exceptional medical or compassionate grounds	2	2	1	2	3	2	2	1
Homeless	6	11	9	8	6	9	6	11
Involuntary sharing	17	13	21	11	9	18	7	8
Overcrowded accommodation	7	4	8	3	2	6	3	4
Unfit accommodation	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Particular household circumstances	29	29	27	30	30	26	37	34

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing and refer to the principal applicant.  
Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-16 Basis of Needs and Household Composition of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Basis of Needs	1 Adult	1 Adult 1-2 Children	1 Adult 3 or more children	Couple	Couple 1-2 children	Couple 3 or more children	Other HH Type
Mortgage is unsustainable	1	1	2	4	1	2	5
Dependent on Rent Supplement	25	31	42	33	39	48	43
Disability	10	2	3	6	3	4	6
Exceptional medical or compassionate grounds	2	1	1	2	1	1	3
Homeless	13	5	9	4	3	4	3
Involuntary sharing	17	22	10	9	7	3	5
Overcrowded accommodation	3	10	6	3	4	5	3
Unfit accommodation	2	2	2	3	3	3	3
Particular household circumstances	27	27	24	36	38	30	30

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing and refer to the principal applicant.  
Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

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*Table 4-17 Basis of Needs and Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Local Authority	Mortgage %	Rent Supplement %	Disability %	Medical Grounds %	Homeless %	Involuntary Sharing %	Over- crowded %	Unfit Accommodation %	Particular Household Circumstances %
Carlow	4	23	13	1	5	17	7	1	30
Cavan	4	10	5	3	1	18	4	2	52
Clare	2	41	9	1	5	10	2	3	28
Cork City	1	23	5	1	6	24	2	0	37
Cork County	2	28	9	1	3	8	1	0	48
Donegal	2	15	4	1	2	15	2	2	57
Dublin City Council	0	26	0	1	18	21	10	1	23
Dún Laoghaire- Rathdown	1	13	5	8	11	44	3	2	13
Fingal	0	51	4	0	6	11	2	12	15
Galway City	0	27	9	0	9	18	2	0	33
Galway County	3	58	18	1	4	11	2	3	2
Kerry	1	56	15	1	4	9	2	0	13
Kildare	2	19	5	2	5	11	3	1	52
Kilkenny	2	36	7	3	4	4	6	3	36
Laois	4	64	5	0	4	10	2	1	11
Leitrim	4	29	19	10	0	11	0	2	26
Limerick City & County	2	36	6	2	12	10	5	1	27

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Longford	3	35	4	2	2	11	2	1	41
Louth	2	16	10	1	5	9	5	0	50
Mayo	3	55	9	3	2	9	3	2	15
Meath	3	39	7	4	2	10	5	2	28
Monaghan	3	16	2	22	0	3	3	7	44
Offaly	6	44	8	1	5	14	4	2	17
Roscommon	4	58	13	1	2	8	3	2	10
Sligo	3	4	15	2	8	17	1	1	50
South Dublin CC	0	24	5	0	12	20	13	3	23
Tipperary	3	29	10	5	4	9	2	1	37
Waterford City and County	2	20	6	1	11	9	5	1	44
Westmeath	3	34	5	1	6	7	4	1	38
Wexford	3	45	15	1	3	14	5	2	13
Wicklow	3	22	5	3	5	5	7	1	49

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

Table 4.15 also reveals some variations between the dominant basis of needs categories reported for different nationalities. Irish citizens were significantly more likely to be 'involuntarily sharing' accommodation than citizens of other countries, for instance, while citizens of Ireland and non-EEA countries were more likely to be homeless than their counterparts from the UK or EEA countries, UK and EEA and non-EEA country nationals were also more likely to be 'dependent on Rent Supplement' and included in the 'particular household circumstances' category compared to Irish citizen applicants.

Table 4.16 reveals some variations in the dominant basis of needs reported for different household compositions. One-adult households were significantly more likely to be 'homeless' than larger households, and households that included one adult plus 1-2 children were more likely to be 'involuntarily sharing' than other household types. Large households (specifically those containing one adult and three or more children, a couple and 1-2 children, and a couple and 3+ children) and 'other household types' were more likely to claim rent supplement than the other household categories examined in Table 4.16.

Table 4.17 highlights spatial variations in the categories of need reported. For instance, some rural local authorities' waiting lists – Carlow, Galway, Kerry, Leitrim, and Monaghan County Councils – include significantly above-average numbers of applicants in the 'disability' and 'medical grounds' categories. In contrast, the waiting lists of some local authorities with urban functional areas include a large number of homeless households. The local authorities in this category are Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, South Dublin County Council, and Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils. 'Involuntary sharing' was also more common among housing applicants in several of these urban local authorities.

## **4.6 Specific Accommodation Requirements**

Assessments of social housing need conducted by local authorities sometimes conclude that applicants require a specific type of housing, such as supported housing for an applicant with care needs. In addition, Travellers can request that they be allocated Traveller-specific accommodation, such as a halting site or group housing scheme accommodation. Tables 4.18, 4.19, 4.20 and 4.21 set out this information on the specific housing requirements of households on the social housing waiting list between 2016 and 2021.

Table 4.18 reveals that during all of these years the vast majority of applicants required general needs (i.e. unsupported) housing or did not specify any particular housing need., although the proportion of applicants assessed as requiring accommodation for homeless



people increased from 6% to 11% between 2016 and 2021, and the proportion of applicants who had specific housing needs due to a physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment also increased, from 4% to 6%.

*Table 4-18 Specific Accommodation Requirements of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List 2016, 2016, 2918, 2019, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Specific accommodation requirement	N	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	n	%
Elderly – aged 65 years or more	2,327	3	2,164	3	1,967	3	1,882	3	1,811	3	1,785	3
Enduring physical, sensory, mental health, or intellectual impairment	4,057	4	3,907	5	3,586	5	3,617	5	3,471	6	3,384	6
Exceptional medical grounds	399	0	419	0	451	1	508	1	528	1	497	1
General	77,867	85	73,051	85	59,153	82	55,098	80	48,492	78	46,152	78
Homeless	5,159	6	4,765	6	5,329	7	6,237	9	6,366	10	6,323	11
Traveller	1,778	2	1,472	2	1,295	2	1,173	2	1,045	2	965	2
Unspecified	7	0	18	0	75	0	174	0	158	0	133	0
Total	91,594	100	85,796	100	71,856	100	68,689	100	61,871	100	59,239	100

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-19 Specific Housing Requirements, Gender, Age and Nationality of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Specific Accommodation Requirement	Female	Male	18 - 34	35 - 54	55 and over	Irish Citizen	EEA Citizen	Non EEA Citizen
Elderly, disability or medical	6	8	3	5	27	8	6	4
General or unspecified	87	79	85	86	67	82	87	85
Homeless	6	11	9	8	6	9	6	10
Traveller	2	2	3	1	1	2	1	0

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-20 Specific Housing Requirements and Household Composition of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2021*

Classification of Need	1 Adult	1 Adult 1-2 Children	1 Adult 3 or more children	Couple	Couple 1-2 children	Couple 3 or more children	Other HH Type
Elderly, disability or medical	12%	2%	2%	10%	2%	3%	5%
General or unspecified	75%	93%	87%	81%	92%	87%	89%
Homeless	13%	5%	8%	4%	3%	4%	3%
Traveller	1%	1%	3%	5%	3%	6%	2%

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

*Table 4-21 Specific Accommodation Requirements and Spatial Distribution of Households on the Social Housing Waiting List, 2016–2020*

Local Authority	Elderly, disability or medical	General or unspecified	Homeless	Traveller
Carlow County Council	9	83	4	5
Cavan County Council	7	92	1	0
Clare County Council	7	88	3	1
Cork City Council	6	87	6	1
Cork County Council	5	93	2	1
Donegal County Council	4	95	1	0
Dublin City Council	7	74	18	1
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	2	90	8	0
Fingal County Council	2	88	8	2
Galway City Council	10	77	9	5
Galway County Council	9	83	2	6
Kerry County Council	16	78	3	3
Kildare County Council	6	88	5	1
Kilkenny County Council	6	88	5	1
Laois County Council	2	94	3	1
Leitrim County Council	28	66	2	4
Limerick County Council	7	76	13	3
Longford County Council	4	93	1	2
Louth County Council	8	83	5	3
Mayo County Council	10	84	1	5
Meath County Council	10	86	2	3
Monaghan County Council	2	97	0	0
Offaly County Council	7	88	3	2
Roscommon County Council	8	88	1	3
Sligo County Council	18	74	5	3
South Dublin County Council	5	84	11	1
Tipperary County Council	8	87	3	2
Waterford City and County Council	7	79	12	2
Westmeath County Council	6	87	6	1
Wexford County Council	15	80	2	3
Wicklow County Council	6	88	6	1

Note: Data are for the first year in which applicants applied for social housing.

Source: generated by the authors from the Assessment of Social Housing Need.

More detailed analysis presented in Tables 4.19 and 4.20 reveals that one-adult + 1-2 children households (93%), female-headed households (FHHS) (87%) and households headed by citizens of the UK or EEA countries (also 87%) were most likely to require general needs housing. MHHs (11%), principal applicants who were citizens of non-EEA countries (10%) and single-adult households (13%) were most likely to have specific housing needs linked to homelessness. Citizens of non-EEA countries were least likely to have accommodation needs linked to being elderly, having a disability or medical grounds (4%), and were also the only group without Traveller-specific requirements. Single-adult households were most likely to have an accommodation requirement linked to being elderly, having a disability or medical grounds (12%). Couples with three or more children were most likely to require Traveller-specific accommodation (6%).

Table 4.21 reveals significant spatial variation in applicants' specific accommodation requirements. The need for accommodation for homeless people is much higher in cities, for instance. The need for specific accommodation for Travellers is greater in more rural areas, specifically in the functional areas of Carlow, Galway, and Mayo County Councils (although Galway City Council is an exception in this regard because the need for Traveller accommodation is also high in its functional area.). In most parts of the country the prevalence of specific accommodation requirements linked to being elderly, having a disability or medical conditions are comparatively low among households on the social housing waiting list, there are some exceptions in this regard. The proportion of households on the social housing waiting list who have these categories of specific housing needs is particularly high in Leitrim Council (28%) for instance and to a lesser extent in Sligo County Council (18%).

## 4.7 Conclusions

The socio-economic profile of applicants for social housing presented in this chapter has revealed that the income, household composition and housing needs of this population differ in several important respects from that of the wider population of Ireland. However, this analysis also reveals significant internal diversity among households on the social housing waiting list. For example, differences exist based on region, nationality, household composition and changes in the dominant profile of applicants over time.

Analysis of the incomes of applicants for social housing reveals that, except for cases where the principal applicant is aged 65 and over, median equivalised incomes are significantly below the equivalent figure for the population-at-large. Thus, the vast majority of applicants for social

housing in recent years are 'at risk of poverty'. This is expected due to social housing being specifically targeted at low-income households. Furthermore, the maximum incomes required to qualify for social housing were increased between 2011 and 2021 and the adjustments made on the latter date may not have yet fed through to the population of social housing applicants examined in this chapter. Further analysis reveals very flat income distribution among some categories of applicants – particularly one-adult households and one adult plus 1-2 children households – meaning that the difference between the highest and lowest income households in these cohorts is very small. This is likely the result of particularly high benefit dependence rates among these categories of households compared to larger households. Thus, it does point to particularly acute need among single adult and lone parent applicants for social housing.

Most applicants for social housing live in private rented accommodation but the importance of this tenure as a source of accommodation for this cohort declined between 2016 and 2021. Concurrently the proportion of applicants living with parents or family and to a lesser extent, those living in emergency accommodation for homeless people, increased. This development is most likely related to rising take up of Housing Assistance Payment during this period because HAP claimants are not included on the social housing waiting list. The analysis also revealed some notable variations in the type of accommodation in which applicants lived. Households in which the principal applicant was an Irish citizen and one adult plus 1 child households were most likely to be living with parents. Households whose principal applicant was aged 55+ and single person households were most likely to be living with relatives or friends or be an owner occupier, but there was significant overlap between these groups. Thus, the extent of reliance on private rented accommodation appears to depend on having alternatives available; where parents, family or friends are an option (more likely for Irish citizens, older smaller households) they are relied upon more.

This chapter has also presented detailed information on homeless applicants for social housing. It has revealed that principal applicants who were citizens of non-EEA countries were most likely to be living in emergency accommodation for homeless people or to report having no accommodation. One-adult households were significantly more likely to be 'homeless' than larger households. The social housing waiting lists of local authorities responsible for some large urban centres included the largest proportion of homeless households. The local authorities in this category are Dublin City Council, Dún Laoghaire-

Rathdown, South Dublin County Council, and Limerick and Waterford City and County Councils.

The vast majority of applicants for social housing have no support requirements and therefore require unsupported, general needs housing. However, the proportion of applicants who require accommodation for homeless people and have specific housing needs due to a physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment has increased in recent years.

## **5. Demographic and Socio-economic Profile of HAP Claimants**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter profiles the households that claimed Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) to help them pay their rents to private landlords between 2016 and 2021. A total of 87,181 households are included in this analysis, which encompasses only those households that were still claiming this benefit in February 2024. Thus, this dataset does not include households that received HAP between 2016 and 2021 but ceased claiming entirely by February 2024. However, if a household terminated a HAP claim for one dwelling and claimed HAP again to support their tenancy in another property, they are included in this analysis. Of the 87,181 households examined here, 83,176 had one HAP claim between 2016 and 2021, 3,634 had two claims and 363 had three separate claims.

Like the profiles of households on the social housing waiting list presented in the two preceding chapters, the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of HAP claimants are examined and the most significant changes over time are highlighted. Where possible, they are also compared to data for the Irish population as a whole and to the data on applicants for social housing presented in preceding chapters. However, as explained in Chapter One of this report there are limits to the comparability of data on applicants for social housing and HAP claimants. Most notably the data available on applicants for social housing is far more detailed than that available for HAP claimants. The former group has contracted in recent years while the latter has expanded. Most significantly, unlike the social housing waiting list, which is updated annually as part of the social housing needs assessment, detailed information is only collected when applicants apply for HAP, or if there is a change in the claimant's circumstances. The claim is reassessed if the number of children in the household increases, for example, or there is a change in residence (consequently a new HAP tenancy is started). This means that data on HAP claimants are likely to be less up to date than data on households on the social housing waiting list.

### **5.2 Demographic Characteristics Compared to the Population-at-large**

Table 5.1 outlines the demographic characteristics of HAP claimants and how these changed between 2016 and 2021. In view of the growth in the numbers of HAP claimant households

during this period, it reveals marked stability in the age profile of principal claimants (i.e. the person in whose name the benefit is claimed), but changes in respect to other significant demographic characteristics are evident. For instance, the proportion of households in which the principal claimant is female increased from 57% in 2016 to 63% in 2021. The proportion of single-person claimant households declined (from 28% to 24% in the case of single adults renting one-person accommodation) while the proportion of multi-person households (i.e. including multiple adults and/or children) increased. It is important to emphasise however that, due to the marked increase in total HAP claimants between 2016 and 2021, in absolute terms the numbers of claimants in every demographic category increased significantly.

Comparison of the characteristics of HAP claimants and applicants for social housing reveals that the former include a higher proportion of lone-parent families. Households with one adult and one or more children were the most common household type among HAP claimants; they increased from 39% of all claimants in 2016 to 44% in 2021. As most lone-parent households in Ireland are female-headed, it is perhaps not surprising that HAP claimant households are significantly more likely to be female-headed households (FHHs). than are households on the social housing waiting list. The age distribution of HAP principal claimants and social housing principal applicants is broadly similar.



*Table 5-1 Household Composition, Age and Gender of Housing Assistance Payment Claimants 2016–2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Household Composition</b>												
Couple	346	4	886	4	1,543	4	1,928	4	2,243	4	2,522	4
Couple Sharing	13	0	32	0	63	0	104	0	127	0	138	0
Couple with 1 child	601	6	1,533	6	2,666	7	3,454	7	4,038	7	4,527	7
Couple with 2 children	932	9	2,494	10	4,155	10	5,323	10	6,000	10	6,204	9
Couple with 3 or more children	886	9	2,214	9	3,602	9	4,444	9	4,858	8	5,020	7
Single adult	2,792	28	6,287	26	9,823	24	12,084	23	14,119	23	16,293	24
Single adult sharing	413	4	1,016	4	1,904	5	2,477	5	3,074	5	3,434	5
Single adult with 1 child	1,895	19	4,904	20	8,337	21	11,111	21	13,811	23	16,507	24
Single adult with 2 children	1,289	13	3,371	14	5,647	14	7,394	14	8,695	14	9,605	14
Single adult with 3 or more children	687	7	1,717	7	2,856	7	3,623	7	4,075	7	4,342	6
<b>Age</b>												
18-34 year-olds	4,271	43	10,668	44	17,764	44	22,510	43	26,607	44	30,171	44
35-54 year-olds	4,511	46	11,118	45	18,358	45	23,617	45	27,734	45	30,944	45
55 and over	1,072	11	2,668	11	4,474	11	5,815	11	6,699	11	7,477	11
<b>Sex</b>												
Female	5,649	57	14,601	60	24,893	61	32,464	63	38,582	63	43,320	63
Male	4,205	43	9,853	40	15,703	39	19,478	37	22,458	37	25,272	37
Total	9,854		24,454		40,596		51,942		61,040		68,592	

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal claimant.  
Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

Comparison of the composition of HAP claimant households with all households and all private renting households in Ireland reveals that households in receipt of this benefit are atypical in several key respects (see Table 5.2). Single adults with children accounted for 44% of HAP claimants in 2021, for instance, but the 2022 Census indicates that they accounted for 10% of all households and the same proportion of private renting households. A total of 23% of HAP claimant households were couples with children; this household composition accounted for 25% of private renting households, but 34% of all households. Couples with no children accounted for only 4% of HAP claimant households but 18% of private renters and 19% of all households. In contrast, the presence of single-adult households was similar across the HAP claimant, private renting, and general Irish population.

*Table 5-2 Composition of Private Renting Households Compared to all Households, 2011, 2016 and 2022*

Census Year	2011		2016		2022	
Household Type	Private Rented Households %	All Households %	Private Rented Households %	All Households %	Private Rented Households %	All households %
1 Adult	25%	24%	21%	23%	21%	23%
Couple	17%	19%	18%	19%	18%	19%
1 Adult with children	12%	11%	11%	10%	10%	10%
Couple With children	21%	35%	28%	35%	25%	34%
Other household types	25%	12%	23%	12%	26%	14%

Source: Central Statistics Office (various years-a).

### 5.3 Age, Gender, and Household Composition

Tables 5.3 and 5.4 below compare the age and gender of the principal claimants of HAP and the composition of their households and identify changes in this regard between 2016 and 2021. These tables confirm that, in these respects, the demographic characteristics of claimant households changed only marginally. Among this population, in 2021 FHHs were predominantly one-adult with children (60%), while MHHs were mainly single people renting a single-person dwelling (39%).

*Table 5-3 Age and Gender of Housing Assistance Payment Claimants, 2016–2021*

Age Cohorts	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
18-34 years old	54	29	54	29	53	29	52	28	52	28	53	29
35-54 years old	39	55	39	55	39	55	40	54	40	55	40	54
55 years and over	7	16	7	17	7	17	8	17	7	17	7	17

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal claimant. Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP, but age profiles have been adjusted to take account of claimants' advancing age over time. Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

*Table 5-4 Composition of Housing Assistance Payment Claimant Households, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Household Composition												
Couple	2	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	5	3	5
Couple sharing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Couple with 1 child	5	8	5	8	6	8	6	9	6	8	6	8
Couple with 2 children	8	12	8	13	8	13	8	13	8	13	8	12
Couple with 3 or more children	7	11	7	12	7	12	7	11	6	11	6	10
Single	17	44	15	41	15	39	14	38	14	38	15	39
Single sharing	3	6	3	6	3	7	3	7	3	8	3	8
Single with 1 child	28	8	28	8	28	8	29	9	30	9	32	11
Single with 2 children	20	4	20	4	20	4	20	4	20	5	19	5
Single with 3 or more children	10	2	10	2	10	2	10	2	9	2	9	2

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP.

Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

Comparison of the age profile of HAP principal claimants with that of households on the social housing waiting list (which was examined in Chapter Three) reveals that the former group remained consistent between 2016 and 2021, while the average age of the principal applicants in the latter group increased significantly. Given that HAP claimants are removed from social housing waiting lists when they secure the benefit, this trend may reflect a 'substitution effect', i.e. younger social housing applicants are claiming HAP and moving off the social housing waiting lists, while older applicants remain on the lists and come to make up an increasing proportion of applicants.

MHHs in the HAP claimant population were more likely to include one adult with children (14% in 2016 and 18% in 2021) than those in the social housing applicant population (7% and 8%). Both MFF and FHH couples with children were more common among HAP claimants (20% in 2016 and 33% in 2021) than the social housing applicant population (13% and 20%).

## 5.4 Spatial Distribution

Table 5.5 below details changes in the spatial distribution of HAP claimant households between 2016 and 2021. HAP was still being rolled out in 2016, so the location of claimants in that year is heavily skewed in favour of those local authorities that participated in its pilot phase. Nonetheless, this table reveals some notable features of the spatial distribution of HAP claimants and of changes in this regard in more recent years.

This table indicates that claimants of this benefit are heavily concentrated in the Dublin region and this trend has strengthened over the period under examination. In 2021, 21% of HAP claimant households lived in Dublin City Council's functional area (compared to 13% in 2018) and a further 20% of claimants lived in the functional areas of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils (compared to 15% in 2018). Significantly more change in spatial distribution of HAP claimants has occurred in recent years than among applicants for social housing, probably because of the radical expansion in the former group.

*Table 5-5 Spatial Distribution of Housing Assistance Payment Claimant Households, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021*

Year	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Local Authority	N	%	n	%	N	%	n	%	N	%	N	%
Carlow County Council	332	3	208	1	210	1	171	1	221	1	133	1
Cavan County Council	0	0	117	1	174	1	143	1	150	1	130	1
Clare County Council	679	7	502	3	335	2	280	2	282	2	237	2
Cork City Council	744	8	681	5	533	3	1080	7	766	5	811	5
Cork County Council	914	9	982	7	929	6	813	5	801	5	757	5
Donegal County Council	832	8	520	3	497	3	443	3	365	2	320	2
Dublin City Council	443	4	1889	13	2325	14	2410	15	2859	18	3107	21
Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown CC	42	0	200	1	302	2	368	2	382	2	508	3
Fingal County Council	82	1	522	3	1068	7	880	6	838	5	1278	9
Galway City Council	231	2	510	3	526	3	528	3	485	3	378	3
Galway County Council	273	3	317	2	312	2	364	2	371	2	356	2
Kerry County Council	1	0	335	2	451	3	413	3	553	4	447	3
Kildare County Council	684	7	708	5	669	4	582	4	634	4	470	3
Kilkenny County Council	288	3	263	2	244	2	179	1	210	1	146	1
Laois County Council	0	0	281	2	398	2	336	2	229	1	191	1
Leitrim County Council	1	0	89	1	134	1	91	1	91	1	58	0
Limerick City & County Council	579	6	621	4	520	3	423	3	447	3	486	3
Longford County Council	1	0	118	1	182	1	120	1	112	1	70	0
Louth County Council	568	6	780	5	990	6	839	5	803	5	749	5
Mayo County Council	315	3	405	3	414	3	338	2	313	2	242	2
Meath County Council	365	4	677	4	690	4	623	4	671	4	486	3
Monaghan County Council	136	1	208	1	194	1	180	1	182	1	124	1
Offaly County Council	195	2	393	3	287	2	176	1	164	1	132	1
Roscommon County Council	0	0	144	1	197	1	155	1	147	1	113	1
Sligo County Council	158	2	268	2	251	2	220	1	208	1	179	1
South Dublin County Council	820	8	882	6	952	6	932	6	1138	7	1232	8
Tipperary County Council	744	8	773	5	486	3	381	2	393	3	413	3
Waterford City & County Council	427	4	622	4	521	3	642	4	552	4	425	3
Westmeath County Council	0	0	318	2	322	2	356	2	251	2	183	1
Wexford County Council	0	0	415	3	539	3	552	4	448	3	411	3
Wicklow County Council	0	0	343	2	490	3	578	4	469	3	391	3

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP and have not been reviewed since then. Data include HAP claims that were active in February 2024.

Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

However, comparison of the spatial distribution of HAP claimant households with census data on the Irish population at large and all private renting households, as is done in Table 5.7, paints a more complex picture. In the vast majority of local authority areas, the spatial distribution of the HAP claimant population is in line with that of the whole Irish population and of all private renting households, but there are some notable exceptions. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's functional area is one of these. In 2022 it included 5% of the national population and 5% of private renting households, but only 2% of HAP claimants in 2021, which suggests that the latter are under-represented in this area. Dublin City and South Dublin County Council's functional areas are also exceptions; 12% and 5% respectively of the Irish population lived in these areas in 2022, but 16% and 7% respectively of the HAP claimant population did so. Notably, Dublin City Council accommodated 21% of all private renting households in 2022, while South Dublin County Council accommodated 5%. Thus, when compared with this metric, the overconcentration of HAP households in these parts of Dublin appears less pronounced. In contrast, Louth County Council's functional area accommodated 5% of HAP claimants in 2021 but 3% of all households and 2% of all private renting households. This points to a high concentration of HAP claimant households in this area.

## **5.5 Homelessness**

Between 2016 and 2021, 17,583 HAP claimant households, encompassing 20% of total claimant households, were referred for assessment for this benefit from their local authority's homeless persons unit. This means in practice that these households were either homeless (within the terms of the statutory definition of homelessness set out the 1988 Housing Act) or were at high risk of becoming homeless.

*Table 5-6 Spatial Distribution of Housing Assistance Payment Households (2016, 2021) Compared to all Private Renting Households and all Households (2016, 2022)*

	HAP 2016		All Private Renting Households 2016		All Households 2016		HAP 2021		All Private Renting Households 2022		All Households 2022	
Local Authority	N	%	N	%	n	%	n	%	N	%	n	%
Carlow	332	3	3,130	1	20,537	1	882	1	3584	1	22,238	1
Cavan	0	0	4,171	1	26,899	2	544	1	4614	1	28,845	2
Clare	679	7	6,323	2	43,469	3	1,664	2	6457	2	46,553	3
Cork City and Cork County	1,658	17	36,031	12	195,853	12	7687	11	37618	11	211,362	11
Donegal	832	8	7,393	2	58,505	3	2,023	3	8377	3	61,780	3
Dublin City	443	4	62,865	20	211,747	12	11,220	16	70379	21	225,685	12
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown	42	0	15,906	5	78,601	5	1,562	2	17807	5	85,128	5
Fingal	82	1	20,558	7	96,812	6	4,078	6	21230	6	107,846	6
Galway City	231	2	10,241	3	28,859	2	2,196	3	10898	3	30,901	2
Galway County	273	3	8,629	3	63,040	4	1,646	2	9177	3	68,021	4
Kerry	1	0	7,865	3	54,493	3	1,782	3	8377	3	58,317	3
Kildare	684	7	12,629	4	73,596	4	2,803	4	12339	4	82,793	4
Kilkenny	288	3	4,767	2	34,855	2	912	1	4647	1	36,787	2
Laois	0	0	4,024	1	29,107	2	1,127	2	4003	1	31,232	2
Leitrim	1	0	1,773	1	12,452	1	338	0	2002	1	13,630	1
Limerick City and County	579	6	12,787	4	71,224	4	2,358	3	13497	4	76,472	4
Longford	1	0	2,621	1	15,122	1	456	1	2807	1	16,229	1
Louth	568	6	6,909	2	45,448	3	3,708	5	7443	2	49,424	3
Mayo	315	3	7,151	2	48,899	3	1,555	2	7885	2	52,114	3
Meath	365	4	9,332	3	64,234	4	2,598	4	9079	3	72,977	4
Monaghan	136	1	3,062	1	21,689	1	689	1	3420	1	22,958	1
Offaly	195	2	3,721	1	27,343	2	972	1	3758	1	28,923	2
Roscommon	0	0	3,210	1	24,013	1	553	1	3563	1	26,021	1
Sligo	158	2	3,959	1	24,831	1	972	1	4428	1	26,855	1
South Dublin	820	8	15,133	5	92,523	5	5,032	7	15730	5	100,364	5

# Demographic & Socio-Economic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing and Recipients of HAP

Tipperary	744	8	7,894	3	59,276	3	2,209	3	8336	3	62,232	3
Waterford City and County	427	4	6,592	2	43,549	3	2,184	3	7595	2	47,778	3
Westmeath	0	0	5,928	2	31,813	2	1,130	2	6122	2	34,087	2
Wexford	0	0	7,887	3	54,289	3	1,837	3	8269	3	59,389	3
Wicklow	0	0	7,237	2	49,211	3	1,875	3	7191	2	54,211	3
Total	9,854	100	309,728	100	1,702,289	100	68,592	100	330,632	100	1,841,152	100

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP and only include HAP claims that were active in February 2024.

Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants and Census 2016, 2022.



Table 5.7 outlines the demographic characteristics of these households. To ensure that they cannot be identified, these data cover the entire period under review in this report and are not disaggregated by year of application for HAP. This table demonstrates that the formerly homeless HAP claimants were primarily lone parents (51%) or to a lesser extent single-adult households (29%). Surprisingly, since the majority of adults who used emergency homeless accommodation were male, 64% of the homeless households referred for assessment for HAP had female principal applicants. (DHLGH, various years-b).

*Table 5-7 Gender and Household Composition of HAP Claimant Households Referred from Local Authority Homeless Units, 2016–2021*

	N	%
<b>Household Type</b>		
Couple	457	3
Couple sharing	11	0
Couple with 1 child	889	5
Couple with 2 children	1124	6
Couple with 3 or more children	1109	6
Single	4361	25
Single sharing	745	4
Single with 1 child	4887	28
Single with 2 children	2703	15
Single with 3 or more children	1297	7
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	11217	64
Male	6366	36

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP and have not been reviewed since then. Data include HAP claims that were active in February 2024.

Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

## 5.6 Household Income

Tables 5.8, 5.9 and 5.10 detail HAP claimants' household incomes and variations in this regard between different demographic groups and households with different compositions. Although, for the reasons outlined above, the data on HAP claimants' incomes presented in these tables are not all fully comparable with the data on the incomes of households on the social housing waiting list presented in the preceding chapter, these data suggest that the incomes of the former are higher than the latter. This does not necessary mean that housing affordability problems are less acute among the HAP claimants however. This is because unlike local authority tenants, HAP claimants can pay a make an additional contribution to rent (commonly termed a 'top' up) in order to rent a dwelling for a rent above the maximum HAP subsidy. A

2021 survey of HAP and Rent Supplement tenants of dwellings registered with the Residential Tenancies Board found that 66% were paying top-ups (Housing Commission, 2024).

Table 4.2 in Chapter Four reveals that the median monthly net income of single-person households on the social housing waiting list between 2016 and 2021 was €814.67 at the 50th percentile, while for couples it was €884.00. Table 5.8 below reveals that the equivalents for HAP claimants are €879.67 for single-person households and €1,772.77 for couples. This table also reveals that the income distribution among HAP claimant households is significantly less flat than among households on the social housing waiting list – in other words there is a greater difference between the 25th and 50th of household income among HAP claimants. These differences are not surprising since HAP was designed to address the ‘unemployment traps’ inherent in previous supports for private renting tenants, and to enable claimants’ to secure paid employment.

*Table 5-8 Monthly Income and Household Composition of Housing Assistance Payment Claimant Households, 2016–2021*

Household Composition <sup>1</sup>	25 Percentile	50 Percentile	75 Percentile
Couple	€1,463.37	€1,772.77	€2,275.09
Couple with 1 child	€1,636.68	€2,108.88	€2,626.76
Couple with 2 children	€1,792.70	€2,219.99	€2,679.95
Couple with 3 or more children	€1,931.37	€2,274.05	€2,808.91
Single	€860.17	€879.67	€1,204.06
Single sharing	€879.67	€879.67	€1,300.00
Single with 1 child	€1,027.00	€1,277.47	€1,926.97
Single with 2 children	€1,141.83	€1,391.00	€1,975.61
Single with 3 or more children	€1,271.40	€1,505.83	€2,006.33

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for each HAP tenancy. Data only include HAP claims that were active in February 2024. Valid results for the ‘couples sharing’ category could not be calculated.

Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

**Table 5-9 Demographic Characteristics, Monthly Median Income and Estimated Rent Costs of Housing Assistance Payment Claimant Households, 2016–2021**

Demographic Characteristics	Median Income	Median HAP Limit	Median Rent	Rent as % of Income and HAP
Female	€1,516.67	€712.50	€1,049.20	47
Male	€1,359.78	€712.50	€1,049.20	51
18 – 34	€1,516.67	€712.50	€1,049.20	47
35 – 54	€1,549.60	€712.50	€1,049.20	46
55 and over	€1,027.00	€712.50	€1,049.20	60

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP and only include HAP claims that were active in February 2024. Demographic characteristics refer to principal claimants. Data on median monthly nationwide rents are from the RTB. Median HAP limits were calculated using regional HAP household size HAP limits. Source: generated by the authors from the data on HAP claimants.

**Table 5-10 Median Net Equivalised Annual Household Income of Housing Assistance Payment Claimants Compared to all Households, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021**

HH Type	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>A. All Households</b>						
1 adult aged <65	€ 17,383	€ 27,125	€ 26,476	€ 27,840	€ 23,628	€ 23,155
1 adult aged 65+	€ 14,034	€ 20,309	€ 20,539	€ 21,429	€ 17,312	€ 18,070
2 adults, both aged <65	€ 42,045	€ 53,509	€ 59,186	€ 56,232	€ 53,582	€ 52,701
2 adults, at least 1 aged 65+	€ 31,732	€ 37,329	€ 41,215	€ 43,180	€ 37,911	€ 39,051
1 adult with children aged under 18	€ 22,845	€ 26,872	€ 31,057	€ 32,431	€ 29,506	€ 33,404
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	€53,828	€ 62,676	€ 62,930	€ 67,069	€ 58,008	€ 62,513
<b>B. HAP Claimant Households</b>						
1 adult aged <65	€9,776	€10,244	€10,322	€10,556	€10,556	€10,816
1 adult aged 65+	€12,012	€12,324	€12,662	€12,896	€13,078	€12,912
2 adults principal applicant <65	€10,701	€11,941	€12,577	€13,219	€12,718	€13,219
2 adults principal applicant 65+	€11,549	€13,846	€13,908	€14,237	€14,848	€15,161
1 adult with children aged under 18	€12,177	€13,013	€13,186	€13,345	€13,431	€13,713
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	€10,408	€10,803	€11,207	€11,413	€11,445	€11,483
<b>B as a % A</b>						
1 adult aged <65	56	38	39	38	45	47
1 adult aged 65+	86	61	62	60	76	71
2 adults principal applicant <65	25	22	21	24	24	25
2 adults principal applicant 65+	36	37	34	33	39	39
1 adult with children aged under 18	53	48	42	41	46	41
2 adults with 1-3 children aged under 18	19	17	18	17	20	18

Note: Data were reported at the time of initial application for HAP and only include HAP claims that were active in February 2024. Source: generated by the authors from data on HAP claimants.

No data are available on HAP claimants' sources of incomes but a report recently published by the Central Statistics Office (2022c) reveals that 58% of HAP claimants were in employment in 2021 compared to just 23% of principal applicants for social housing (see Table 4.1 in Chapter Four). The flatter income distribution among households on the social housing waiting list, therefore, is the result of higher benefit dependency.

Table 5.9 compares the median income of HAP claimant households with the median maximum rent subsidy they receive from this scheme and the median nationwide rent between 2016 and 2021. Although the presented calculations of rent costs as a percentage of income and HAP subsidy are broad estimates, they indicate a possibility that HAP claimants devote a significantly lower percentage of their incomes to rent than their counterparts on the social housing waiting list who are in receipt of Rent Supplement. In the case of MHHs, it is over 40 percentage points less (see Table 4.2 in Chapter Four).

In common with their counterparts on the social housing list, HAP claimants face a higher risk of poverty relative to the whole Irish population. This is demonstrated by Table 5.10 which compares the median net equivalised annual household income of HAP claimants with all households. Households are considered at risk of poverty if their household income is below 60% of the national equivalised median for their household type (Central Statistics Office, various years-b). Table 5.10 demonstrates that single-person households aged 65 + were the only cohort of HAP claimants whose incomes were above this level for any part of the 2016-2021 period. Comparison of 'at risk of poverty' rates among HAP claimants and households on the social housing waiting list reveals that they are similar among single adults in both cohorts (see Table 4.3 in Chapter Four). This is probably due to high rates of benefit dependency and therefore similarity of income sources among these households. For two-adult households (both with and without children) at risk of poverty, rates are lower among HAP claimants than among their counterparts on the social housing waiting lists.

## 5.7 Conclusions

This chapter has examined the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of households in receipt of Housing Assistance Payment between 2016 and 2021. It also compared them to their counterparts on social housing waiting lists, other private renting households and the national population.

Despite a very marked increase in the total number of HAP claimants during the period under review, this analysis has revealed remarkable stability in the age profile of principal claimants.

Some changes in other demographic characteristics exist, with household composition being the most common. For instance, the proportion of HAP claimant households that were female-headed and multi-person increased between 2016 and 2021. Households with one adult and one or more children were the most common household type among HAP claimants; they increased from 39% of all claimants in 2016 to 44% in 2021. Notably, the HAP claimant population contains a higher proportion of this household type than social housing waiting lists, private renting households and the general Irish population.

Analysis of the spatial distribution of HAP claimants indicates that they are heavily concentrated in the Dublin region and that this concentration has strengthened in recent years. In 2021, 21% of HAP claimant households lived in Dublin City Council's functional area (compared to 13% in 2018). A further 20% lived in the functional areas of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils (compared to 15% in 2018). However, comparison of the spatial distribution of HAP claimant households with the Irish population at large and all private renting households reveals a more complex picture. In most parts of the country, the spatial distribution of the HAP claimant population was in line with that of the whole Irish population and of all private renting households. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's functional area is an exception and includes fewer HAP claimant households than would be expected in view of its share of the national population. The opposite is the case in Louth County Council's functional area. The concentration of HAP claimants in Dublin City Council's functional area is higher than expected in view of its share of the national population but low compared to its share of the total private renting population.

The median monthly net income of HAP claimant households is higher than that of their counterparts on the social housing waiting lists. Furthermore, the distribution of incomes among the latter population is much flatter because there is less variation of income between the lowest and highest-income households. This divergence appears to be related to the higher level of employment among HAP claimants. This can also be seen in their risk of poverty rates as when income data are equivalised to take account of differences in house size, most categories of HAP claimant households have lower risk of poverty rates than households on the social housing waiting list.

## **6. Exits and Access to Social Housing**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines exits from the social housing waiting list and termination of Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) claims. Households exit from these systems for several reasons; they may be deemed no longer eligible for social housing or to claim HAP, they may decide to voluntarily exit, or they may be allocated social housing. Variations in the reasons for exit over time and between different demographic groups and household compositions are examined in the analysis that follows. This analysis devotes particular attention to households that exit due to the allocation of a social housing tenancy.

The analysis of data on HAP claimants presented here draws on the same data source used in preceding chapters. These data reveal that the HAP claims of 40,871 households ceased during the 2016-2021 period; these past tenancies are the focus of the analysis presented here. The data on households on the social housing waiting list examined in previous chapters does not include information on the reasons for applications being closed. To enable the authors to examine this issue, the Housing Agency assembled a separate dataset which includes 69,559 households whose applications for social housing were closed between 2016 and 2019.

### **6.2 Reasons for Social Housing Application or HAP Claim Termination**

Table 6.1 details the reasons that applications for social housing were closed between 2016 and 2019. In the database from which this information was generated, this is an 'open field' – meaning that local authority staff are free to describe the reason as they see fit. As a result, a large number of individual reasons are identified in the dataset. For reasons of transparency, these are set out in full in Table 6.1, whereas in analyses presented in later sections of this chapter, these reasons are grouped into summary categories.

*Table 6-1 Reasons for Termination of Social Housing Application, 2016–2019*

Reason for Application Close	N	%	Reason for Application Close	N	%
Adequate resources	5	0.008	Ineligible	110	0.168
Admitted to long-term care	1	0.002	Ineligible – rent arrears	105	0.160
Anti-social behaviour	3	0.005	IT error	1	0.002
Applicant deceased	1079	1.646	Medical priority awarded	68	0.104
Applicant has left administrative area	1884	2.875	Miscellaneous	125	0.191
Applicant no longer in need of re-housing	977	1.491	Mutual transfer within stock	2	0.003
Applicant providing accommodation from own resources	371	0.566	No basis for application	2349	3.584
Applicant rehoused by other local authority/AHB	2049	3.126	No clear rent account	2	0.003
Application manually closed (data fix)	4	0.006	No contact	14671	22.385
Bought own home	29	0.044	No long-term social housing need	2	0.003
Breach of conditions	2	0.003	No longer requires housing	113	0.172
By request	383	0.584	No reply – housing needs assessment	4036	6.158
Change of circumstances	758	1.157	Not eligible – 2011 regulations	222	0.339
Close government legislation re RAS	11	0.017	Not eligible – house owner	11	0.017
Closed by agency using Duplicate Removal Tool	99	0.151	Not eligible for RAS	1	0.002
Current ownership issue	30	0.046	Not qualified	6532	9.967
Does not have 2 years' tenancy	26	0.040	Not reclosed after reopened to add note	1	0.002
Failed to respond to correspondence	47	0.072	Not residing	3	0.005
Failure to attend Interview	9	0.014	Now on housing list	3	0.005
Failure to re-register	13	0.020	Now tenant purchase house owner	5	0.008
Failure to reply to further information request	6345	9.681	On other local authority's homeless list	4	0.006
Gone into long-term care	4	0.006	On other local authority's housing list	6	0.009
Granted overall priority	1	0.002	Other	3478	5.307
Handed back key	4	0.006	Over income limit	687	1.048
Hap	1010	1.541	Placed in band	272	0.415
High priority transfer	3	0.005	Previous ownership issue	12	0.018
Homeless priority	5	0.008	Re-opened in error	3	0.005
Housed	3083	4.704	Rehoused in our stock	2075	3.166
Housed – other local authority	110	0.168	Requirements met	1	0.002

Demographic & Socio-Economic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing and Recipients of HAP

Housed by Housing Association	996	1.520	Residing partner other application	34	0.052
Housed by RAS	1563	2.385	Site no longer available (SRC only)	1	0.002
Housed by voluntary body	15	0.023	Surrendered interest in tenancy	16	0.024
Housing need already met	653	0.996	Tenancy succession	9	0.014
Illegal occupier	1	0.002	Tenancy surrendered	5	0.008
Inadequate refugee/GNIB status	2	0.003	Tenant inter-transferred	1	0.002
Incomplete application	1511	2.305	Tenant request	37	0.056
Ineligible – alternative accommodation	1584	2.417	Title not in order (IWIL only)	2	0.003
Ineligible – income	3226	4.922	Transferring Housing Authority of application	1891	2.885
Ineligible – residency status	81	0.124	Unknown	666	1.016

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.



In contrast, in the database from which the data on HAP claimants were sourced, local authority staff are provided with a limited number of potential reasons for termination of a claim. The reasons recorded for claim terminations between 2016 and 2021 are set out in Table 6.2 below. Comparison of these two tables reveals significant divergence in the reasons for the termination of social housing applications compared to Housing Assistance Payment claims.

*Table 6-2 Reason for Termination of Housing Assistance Payment Claim, 2016–2021*

<b>Reason for Tenancy Cessation</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Anti-social behaviour	322	1
Change from landlord/agent for payments	106	0
Change in housing waiting list	50	0
Deceased tenant	781	2
Exceptional circumstances – change in family composition	373	1
Exceptional circumstances – differential rent increase	177	0
Exceptional circumstances – education	75	0
Exceptional circumstances – landlord monthly rent increase	46	0
Exceptional circumstances – medical	668	2
Exceptional circumstances – property standards	521	1
Exceptional circumstances – work in different area	240	1
Family composition HAP change cap	11	0
Family composition HAP new cap	10	0
Fire safety notice	14	0
Landlord gave notice to tenant	4,817	12
Landlord in receivership	120	0
Landlord selling the property	2,424	6
Landlord/agent change	182	0
Movement within HAP after 2 years	1,009	2
Non-compliance – rental accommodation standards	68	0
Non-compliance – tax clearance certificate	4	0
Non-payment of HAP Weekly Differential Rent	1,820	4
Non-payment of top-up landlord monthly	97	0
Social housing	15,043	37
Tenant change	7	0
Tenant gave notice	3,148	8
Voluntary exit from HAP	8,738	21

Source: generated by the authors from data on HAP claimants.

Table 6.2 reveals that in most cases, HAP claims were terminated for one of four reasons:

- the claimant accepted an offer of a social housing tenancy (37%);
- voluntary exit from HAP (21%);
- the private landlord gave notice [of termination of tenancy] to the claimant (12%), and
- the claimant gave the private landlord notice of their intention to end their tenancy (8%).

As these data cover a five-year period, this suggests that on average 7.4% of HAP claimants secured social housing in each year between 2016 and 2021.

In contrast, Table 6.1 reveals that 'no contact' was cited as the most common reason for an application for social housing being closed (22.3% of cases) between 2016 and 2019. This is likely to mean no contact from the applicant when they were asked to update their application for social housing as they are required to do annually as part of the housing needs assessment process. 'No reply – Housing Needs Assessment' was also cited as the reason for closing 6.1% of social housing applications and 'Failure to reply to further Information request' was cited as the reason for closing the application of 9.68 % of applicants. If these and other similar categories of non-responses to the annual social housing assessment are added together this indicates that 40.6% of applicants were removed from the social housing list for this reason. A further 34.6% of applicants were closed because applicants no longer qualified for social housing when reviewed as part of the social housing assessment process, for instance because their incomes were now too high, or they were ineligible for another reason. Thus, a total of 75.2% of applications were closed as part of the initial social housing needs assessment and annual reassessment process over this three-year period.

Notably, Table 6.1 also indicates that fewer social housing applications were terminated due to securing a social housing tenancy, than was the case for HAP claimants. A total of 3.16% of social housing applications were terminated because the applicant was 'rehoused in our stock' (i.e. the local authority's own housing), 4.18% were rehoused by other local authority or an AHB, and small numbers of applicants secured a social housing tenancy via 'high priority transfer' or 'inter transfer' (i.e. they were an existing social housing tenant who transferred to a more suitable social rented dwelling) or 'succession' (i.e. inheriting a social housing tenancy from their parents). If all these categories are combined it indicates that only 0.45% of social housing applications were terminated because applicants secured a social housing tenancy. However, Table 6.1 shows that a further 4.7% were terminated because applicants were

'housed', so this may have also been into social housing. This indicates that a maximum average of 5.05% and minimum average 3.48% of households on the social housing waiting list secured a social housing tenancy in each year between 2016 and 2019.

### 6.3 Accommodation Prior to Termination of Application for Social Housing

Table 6.3 reveals that most households were living in some form of private rented accommodation immediately prior to the termination of their social housing application. A total of 30% were reported to be living in 'Private Rented Accommodation', 19% in private rented dwellings subsidised by the Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS), 9% living in HAP subsidised accommodation, and 4% in Rent Supplement-funded accommodation. A further 16% of applicants were living with friends, family, parents, or relatives, 5% were in accommodation for the homeless, and a further 5% in 'temporary accommodation' – which probably means they were also homeless.

*Table 6-3 Accommodation Type Prior to Termination of Social Housing Application, 2016–2019*

Nature of Tenure	N	%
Co-operative	314	0
Differential Rents	452	1
HAP	5965	9
Homeless Accommodation	3346	5
Homeless HAP	6	0
Hotel – Self Accommodation	2	0
Institution	396	1
Involuntary Sharing	1	0
LA Rented Accommodation	2818	4
Licence Agreement	5	0
Living with family	89	0
Living with friends	1262	2
Living with parents	7235	10
Living with relatives	2635	4
Other	3546	5
Owner Occupier	1615	2
Private Emergency Accommodation	9	0
Private Rented (with Rent Supplement)	2537	4
Private Rented Accommodation	20859	30
Private Rented Accommodation (with court order for possession)	13	0
RAS	10902	16
Rough sleeper	205	0
Supported Temporary Accommodation	18	0
Temporary Accommodation	3756	5
Traveller Accommodation	8	0
Voluntary Housing	1564	2
Women's Refuge	1	0

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.

## 6.4 Basis of Need Prior to Termination of Application for Social Housing

Data on the basis of needs of households whose application for social housing was terminated between 2016 and 2019 are set out in Table 6.4. These data demonstrate that 'particular household circumstances' and 'dependent on Rent Supplement' were by far the most common bases of needs – 60% of terminated applicants were in this category. A further 10% were 'homeless' or 'at risk of homelessness', while 8% were 'involuntarily sharing accommodation' and a further 7% were 'sharing accommodation'.

*Table 6-4 Basis of Need Prior to Termination of Social Housing Application, 2016–2019*

<b>Basis of Need</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
At risk of Homelessness	2448	4
Currently Dependent on Rent Supplement	20687	30
Disability – Intellectual	1122	2
Disability – Mental Health	1352	2
Disability – Physical	1777	3
Disability – Sensory	282	0
Disability – Unspecified	91	0
Elderly	11	0
Exceptional Medical or Compass	2266	3
Financial	80	0
Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel	4013	6
Involuntary Sharing	5296	8
Leaving Institutional Care	13	0
Overcrowded	2156	3
Particular Household Circumstances	20819	30
Shared Accommodation	4591	7
Travellers	5	0
Unknown	1629	2
Unsustainable Mortgage	921	1

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.

*Table 6-5 Basis of Need and Reason for Termination of Application for Social Housing, 2016–2019*

Basis of Need/Reason for Application Close	Change of Circumstances	Other Accommodation	Tenant Choice/ Action	Deceased	Social Housing	Other	Not Eligible	Non Communication	On Housing List	HAP/ RAS	Total
At risk of homelessness	6	2	0	4	3	1	2	5	4	4	4
Currently dependent on Rent Supplement	31	31	19	17	23	24	23	36	25	41	30
Disability	8	5	6	24	12	8	5	5	9	6	7
Other	1	1	5	5	4	11	4	0	1	1	2
Exceptional Medical or Compass	5	1	4	11	4	3	3	3	2	5	3
Homeless	5	14	8	9	13	5	4	4	9	4	6
Involuntary Sharing	7	6	7	4	6	9	9	8	8	5	8
Overcrowded	3	4	2	1	4	3	3	3	4	2	3
Particular Household Circumstances	31	19	9	18	21	26	41	28	33	28	30
Shared Accommodation	2	14	39	7	9	9	4	7	5	3	7
Unsustainable Mortgage	3	3	0	0	1	2	2	1	0	1	1

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.

Table 6.5 compares households on the social housing waiting list basis of need and the reason for the termination of their application. It reveals that the most common bases of needs among households that secured social housing was 'Currently Dependent on Rent Supplement' (23%), followed by 'Particular Household Circumstances' (21%), 'Homeless' (13%) and 'Disability' (12%).

### **6.5 Waiting Time to Secure Social Housing**

The mean timeframe prior to the termination of applications for social housing for any reason was 213.06 weeks, but this increased to 286.81 weeks for applicants terminated on the grounds of securing social housing. In other words, applicants for social housing waited 286.81 weeks on average before they secured an offer of social housing that they accepted. They may have secured and refused an offer before then, but this was not recorded in the database examined in this chapter. Table 6.6 compares the reason for the termination of applications for social housing with waiting time on the housing list. As would be expected, it reveals that a majority (61%) of applications terminated soon after receipt were terminated because applications were deemed not to be eligible for social housing. In contrast, terminating applications on the grounds of 'no communication by tenants' was more commonly carried out for longer-standing applications – of one year or more in duration. This was the most common reason for terminating applications of between five and seven years' duration (53%). The rate of terminations because applicants had secured a social housing tenancy varied over time. They were most common among short-duration claims (10% of claims of less than six months in duration, and 17% of claims of 6-12 months were terminated for this reason) and very long duration claims (23% of claims of more than seven years in duration).

*Table 6-6 Reason and Timeframe for Termination of Applications for Social Housing, 2016–2019*

Reason for Application Close	< 6 months	6 - 12 months	1 - 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years	5 - 7 years	> 7 years	Total
Change of Circumstances	4	8	6	6	5	5	5	5	5
Other Accommodation	3	5	2	1	1	1	1	1	2
Tenant Choice/Action	1	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Deceased	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	3	2
Social Housing	10	17	9	9	7	9	11	23	12
Other	7	9	7	8	7	6	5	4	6
Not Eligible	61	23	17	15	15	17	17	18	24
No Communication by Tenant	6	20	48	53	57	56	53	39	42
On Housing List	3	7	4	4	3	2	3	3	3
HAP/RAS	5	7	4	3	3	3	3	4	4

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.

Tables 6.7 and 6.8 provide further details of the waiting time of those on the social housing waiting list who did secure a social housing tenancy. The first of these tables outlines variations in waiting times according to applicants' basis of needs. It reveals that applicants whose basis of needs was 'particular household circumstances' and 'shared accommodation' were more likely to secure a social housing tenancy quickly. The former category accounted for 21% of all social housing applications allocated a social housing tenancy between 2016 and 2019, but 27% of those allocated tenancies within three months of applying and 30% of those allocated tenancies within 3-6 months of applying. The 'shared accommodation' category accounted for 9% of applicants who secured social housing between 2016 and 2019, but 22% of applicants allocated a tenancy within three months of application. Notably, no similar pattern is evident among applicants whose basis of needs was 'involuntary sharing' or 'homeless'; allocations of social housing tenancies to the latter did not vary substantially according to waiting time.

Table 6.8 examines variations in waiting times for social housing according to applicants' accommodation type. Rather surprisingly it reveals that those in local authority rented accommodation and, to a lesser extent, owner occupiers were most likely to secure a tenancy within three months of applying. The former group accounted for 10% of all households on the social housing waiting list, but 23% of those who received a social housing tenancy within three months of applying; the latter accounted for 2% of all households on the social housing

waiting list but made up 5% of applicants who secured social housing within three months of applying.

*Table 6-7 Households on the Social Housing Waiting List Basis of Need and Waiting Time Prior to Securing a Social Housing Tenancy, 2016–2019*

Basis of Need	Up to 3 months %	3 - 6 months %	6 - 12 months %	1 - 2 years %	2 - 3 years %	3 - 4 years %	4 - 5 years %	5 - 7 years %	More than 7 years	Total
At risk of homelessness	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	5	4	3
Currently dependent on Rent Supplement	19	17	21	18	19	23	24	23	28	23
Disability	11	12	10	13	17	12	12	10	11	12
Other	2	2	1	3	4	3	4	5	6	4
Exceptional medical or Compass	2	3	5	7	4	6	4	4	4	4
Homeless	8	10	13	16	17	17	19	13	11	13
Involuntary sharing	3	6	6	6	5	5	6	6	6	6
Overcrowded	4	5	5	7	3	4	3	3	4	4
Particular household circumstances	27	30	23	19	20	19	17	22	19	21
Shared accommodation	22	13	16	7	7	6	7	8	8	9
Unsustainable mortgage	2	1	1	3	2	2	2	0	0	1

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.



*Table 6-8 Households on the Social Housing Waiting List Accommodation Type and Waiting Time Prior to Securing a Social Housing Tenancy, 2016–2019*

Nature of Tenure	Up to 3 months %	3 - 6 months %	6 - 12 months %	1 - 2 years %	2 - 3 years %	3 - 4 years %	4 - 5 years %	5 - 7 years %	More than 7 years %	Total %
Co-operative Housing	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0
Differential Rent	0	0	2	2	2	3	2	6	10	5
HAP	7	4	6	6	8	8	8	13	8	8
Homeless Accommodation	10	14	10	12	15	14	17	12	12	13
Institution	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1	1
Other	4	6	6	8	8	8	6	3	6	6
LA Rented Accommodation	23	12	15	12	9	9	8	8	7	10
Living with relatives/family	3	4	4	5	3	3	3	3	2	3
Living with friends	1	3	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1
Living with parents	9	11	7	9	10	8	8	10	8	9
Owner occupier	5	3	2	4	3	2	1	0	0	2
Private Rented (with Rent Supplement)	6	7	6	3	3	2	4	5	15	8
Private Rented	20	20	20	19	16	18	15	14	8	14
RAS	6	8	11	8	9	14	15	16	14	12
Rough sleeper	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Voluntary Housing	4	6	8	9	11	8	8	8	6	7

Source: generated by the authors from data provided by the Housing Agency.

This may reflect the impact of the Mortgage To Rent Scheme which enables home owners with an unsustainable mortgage to secure social housing or severe overcrowding or unfit accommodation among local authority tenants. However, it is notable that those in 'Homeless Accommodation' or 'Rough Sleeping' were not more likely to secure a social housing tenancy faster than other applicants. These households accounted for 13% of all households on the social housing waiting list but 10% of those allocated social housing tenancies within three months of application. Table 6.8 also indicates that private renting households receiving Rent Supplement subsidies or in Rental Accommodation Scheme Accommodation had the longest waits for a social housing tenancy.

The mean duration of a HAP claim was 175.54 weeks when the data for this study assembled in February 2024 are included, and 104.45 weeks for claims that had ended prior to this time. In total, 46,310 or 53% of the HAP claims included in these data were active in February 2024. Among claimants who ended their HAP claim because they had secured a social housing tenancy, the mean claim duration was 135.1 weeks .

Table 6.9 compares the reason for termination of HAP claims with the duration of the claim prior to termination. It reveals that 22% of HAP claimants who ceased claiming this benefit

within six months did so because they had secured a social housing tenancy. This compares to just 10% of their counterparts on the social housing waiting list.

*Table 6-9 Reason and Timeframe for Termination of Housing Assistant Payment Claims, 2016–2021*

Cessation Reason	< 6 months	6 - 12 months	1 - 2 years	2 - 3 years	3 - 4 years	4 - 5 years	5 - 7 years	Total
Notice to Quit	21	22	21	16	15	14	18	19
Non-compliance	8	7	7	9	7	6	6	7
Social Housing	22	26	33	41	48	51	50	37
Tenant Choice/ Behaviour	37	35	31	28	26	24	21	30
Tenant Deceased	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Exceptional Circumstances	9	8	6	4	3	2	3	5
Other	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0

Note: These data only include claims that were active in February 2021.

## 6.6 Conclusions

This chapter has compared the reasons for termination of applications for social housing and Housing Assistance Payment claims. Although there are some limits to the comparability of the datasets on these two populations, the analysis does highlight some notable differences between their experiences.

For instance, the analysis reveals that HAP claimants tend to secure a social housing tenancy faster and in greater numbers than their counterparts on the social housing waiting list. An average 7.4% of HAP claimants secured social housing in each year between 2016 and 2021. The reasons for termination of applications for social housing are more challenging to categorise, but they indicate that a maximum average of 5.05% and minimum average 3.48% of households on the social housing waiting list secured a social housing tenancy in each year between 2016 and 2019. Applicants for social housing waited an average of 286.81 weeks before they secured a social housing tenancy, whereas HAP recipients waited 135.1 weeks. Furthermore, 22% of HAP claimants who ceased claiming this benefit within six months did so because they had secured a social housing tenancy. This compares to just 10% of their counterparts on the social housing waiting list.

The most common reason why an application for social housing was terminated was due to reassessment as part of the annual Social Housing Assessment process. 40.6% of applicants

were removed from the social housing list because they failed to respond to a request for information as part of this process. A further 34.6% of applicants were closed because the reassessment of their application revealed they no longer qualified for social housing. As would be expected, it reveals that a majority (61%) of applications terminated soon after receipt were terminated because they were deemed ineligible for social housing. In contrast, terminating applications on the grounds of 'no communication by tenants' was more commonly carried out for longer-standing applications – of one year or more in duration. This was the most common reason for terminating applications of between five- and seven-years' duration (53%).

The data examined here also provides some important insights relevant to the key policy priority of homelessness. It indicates that these households do not have the success in securing social housing expected in view of their prioritisation in local authorities' scheme of letting priorities (see Chapter Two and Appendix Two). Analysis of applicants who successfully secured a social housing tenancy between 2016 and 2019 indicates that those whose basis of needs was 'particular household circumstances' and 'shared accommodation' were more likely to secure a social housing tenancy quickly. No similar pattern is evident among applicants whose basis of needs was 'homeless' – their rate of allocations of social housing tenancies didn't vary substantially according to waiting time. Analysis of data on households on the social housing waiting list previous accommodation type confirms this pattern. Rather surprisingly it reveals that those in local authority rented accommodation and owner occupiers were most likely to secure a tenancy within three months of applying. However, those in 'Homeless Accommodation' or 'Rough Sleeping' were not more likely to secure a social housing tenancy more quickly than other applicants; these households accounted for 13% of all households on the social housing waiting list but 10% of those allocated social housing tenancies within three months of application.

## **7. Conclusions**

### **7.1 Introduction**

This final chapter sets out the key findings of the analysis of data on applicants for social housing and HAP claimants presented in preceding chapters. This discussion highlights the most significant changes in the socio-economic and demographic characteristics and locations of both populations identified this analysis and the extent to which the characteristics of these populations are similar or different. It also considers the relationships between the changes in these two populations and how they were shaped by the housing policy reforms implemented since in recent decades.

In addition, the chapter highlights the implications of these findings for housing policy and practice. These include their implications for the location and size of new social housing provision, for the compilation of the annual Social Housing Assessment, the use of SSHA and HAP data to inform policy making.

### **7.2 Key Findings**

#### **7.2.1 Trends in Social Housing Need and HAP Take Up and their Inter-Relationship**

The 2016-2021 period examined in this report saw repeated and far-reaching changes to policy on social housing and housing support for low-income households. Social housing output was low in historic terms at the start of this period but began to rise again towards the end. Reliance on housing allowances to subsidise the rents of low-income households (primarily Housing Assistance Payment) rose significantly at the start of the period. This was partially because of declining social housing output, but HAP take up began to decline marginally in 2020 and 2021. The social housing assessment was carried out annually, rather than every three years, from 2016, meaning that applications for this form of housing were reassessed each year. In addition, the legal status of HAP changed from 2014 when it was redefined as 'social housing support' and claimants were consequently removed from the social housing waiting list.

These last two policy developments, in particular, contributed to a contraction of 35% in the numbers of households on the social housing waiting list and between 2016 and 2021. Although because HAP claimants are also qualified to access social housing via a separate

'transfer list', the total number of people qualified for access to social housing rose by 26% concurrently.

These policy changes also contributed to increased divergence between some aspects of the socio-economic and demographic profile of households on the social housing waiting list and HAP claimants. This is largely because of a 'sorting effect' – households with certain characteristics are more likely to remain on the social housing waiting list and other categories of household are more likely to claim HAP. This pattern of divergence is not completely uniform however – some household types such as lone parents are strongly overrepresented in both the HAP claimant and social housing applicant populations and the spatial distribution of both populations is broadly similar.

### **7.2.2 Diverging Characteristics of Social Housing Applicants and HAP Claimants**

This pattern of divergence is evident in the social-economic characteristics of applicants for social housing compared to HAP claimants. Although both groups have lower incomes and consequently are much more likely to be at risk of poverty than the general Irish population, the analysis presented in this report reveals that the incomes of those on the social housing waiting list were more uniformly low. Whereas the HAP claimant population exhibits greater variation between the highest and lowest income households, even when their incomes are adjusted to take account of household size. This is likely to reflect the greater proportion of HAP claimant households with income from employment and the higher rates of benefit dependency among social housing applicants.

Growing divergence between the size and composition of HAP claimant and social housing applicant households is also evident over the 2016-2021 period. There are some links between this trend and the aforementioned variations in income and poverty profiles of both cohorts. For instance, since 2016 there has been a marked rise in the proportion of social housing applicant households that consist of a single adult only. The average incomes of these households suggest that they are likely to be reliant on social security benefits or a pension only and to have no income from paid work. Whereas multi-person households make up a larger proportion of HAP claimants, and their higher average incomes suggests that these often include earnings from employment.

These developments also reflect a sorting effect. Larger households may be more likely to avail of HAP because it is impractical for them to share with parents, friends and family as an increasing proportion of those on the social housing waiting lists do. The relatively low HAP

subsidies to single person households may impede their ability to move off the social housing waiting list into HAP subsidised private rented accommodation. As the total number of households on social housing waiting lists has declined in recent years, but homelessness has increased, homeless people have also come to make up an increasing proportion of those on the waiting list. Many homeless households consist of one person only and are reliant solely on social security benefits.

### **7.2.3 Converging Characteristics of Social Housing Applicant and HAP Claimant Households**

As explained above, social housing applicant and HAP claimant populations are not divergent in all respects. The two groups share some important characteristics. One of these is the prevalence of lone parent households, who are strongly overrepresented both among existing social housing tenants and applicants for social housing. These households made up 10% of all Irish households according to the 2022 census but accounted for 27% per cent of existing social housing tenants in the same years and 23% of applicants for social housing in 2021. Single adults with children were even more heavily overrepresented in the HAP claimant population and this has increased over time. They accounted for 30% of HAP claimants in 2016 and 44% in 2021 but only 10% of all private renting households according to the 2022 Census. If the social housing applicant and HAP claimant households are combined, to provide an indication of the total numbers of households qualified for social housing, this reveals that lone parent households made up 35% of this population in 2021 (see Table 7.1 below).

*Table 7-1 Combined Total of Social Housing Applicants and HAP Claimants by Household Type, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021*

Household Type	2016		2017		2018		2019		2020		2021		% Change 2016-2021
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1 Adult	41,295	41	43,186	39	43,423	39	47,167	39	49,393	40	52,274	41	27
1 Adult 1-2 Children	25,345	25	28,843	26	31,627	28	34,075	28	35,835	29	38,226	30	51
1 Adult 3 or more children	3,887	4	4,669	4	5,506	5	5,804	5	5,812	5	5,884	5	51
Couple	4,301	4	4,601	4	4,491	4	5,016	4	5,071	4	5,197	4	21
Couple 1-2 children	13,294	13	14,681	13	14,361	13	15,518	13	14,996	12	14,922	12	12
Couple 3 or more children	5,652	6	6,633	6	7,017	6	7,282	6	6,950	6	6,737	5	19
Other HH Type	7,674	8	7,637	7	6,027	5	5,769	5	4,854	4	4,591	4	-40
Total	101,448		110,250		112,452		120,631		122,911		127,831		26

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment and the HAP claimant database.

There are also similarities between the spatial distribution of social housing applicants and HAP claimant households, although these do not entirely mirror each other. The latter are heavily concentrated in the Dublin region and this concentration has strengthened in recent years. In 2021, 21% of HAP claimant households lived in Dublin City Council's functional area (compared to 13% in 2018) and a further 20% lived in county Dublin (the functional areas of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, Fingal and South Dublin County Councils) compared to 15% in 2018. In most parts of the country the distribution of HAP claimants reflects the distribution of the general population and of private renting tenants. However, HAP claimants are overrepresented in Dublin City Council's functional area compared to its share of the national population, but not in comparison with the share of private renting households. Social housing applicants are also heavily concentrated in the Dublin region and more overconcentrated than is the case for HAP claimants. 28% of all households in the country lived in Dublin City and County according to the 2022 census, but in 2021 43% of social housing applicant households lived in this region.

#### 7.2.4 Prevalence of Housing Support Needs

Information on support needs is not available for HAP claimants, but data on social housing applicants indicate that vast majority have no support requirements and therefore require unsupported, general needs social housing. However, the proportion of applicants who have

specific housing needs due to a physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment has increased in recent years but remains lower than would be expected in view of the prevalence of disabilities among the Irish population-at-large. The latter increased from 13.5% in 2016 to 22% in 2022 (Central Statistics Office, various years-a). By contrast, the proportion of social housing applicants whose basis of need was categorised as 'disability' increased from 6% to 8% over the 2016-2021 period.

### **7.2.5 Prevalence of Homelessness**

As would be expected in view of the increase in homelessness in recent years, the numbers of homeless households on the social housing waiting list have also increased – from 5,905 in 2016 to 6,253 in 2021. It is important to stress that these data are not directly comparable to the data on homelessness published by the Department of Housing every month, which reports on individuals in local authority funded emergency accommodation for homeless people. The data on homeless social housing applicants encompasses households and applicants whose accommodation is severely substandard rather than only those in emergency accommodation. However, this data does include three categories of applicants that are broadly comparable to the categories used in Department of Housing's data on homeless people. These are: living in night-time emergency hostel accommodation, bed and breakfast accommodation and a county home, hospital, etc (see Table 4.13 in Chapter Four). The social housing waiting list included 3,510 households in these categories in 2021 and in November of that year the Department of Housing reported that 8,009 individuals, including 1,108 families (i.e.. households), were using emergency accommodation. As the latter group includes some people who are homeless for short periods and may not need to apply to social housing, as well as others who do not qualify for social housing (mainly because they do not meet residency requirements), the numbers of homeless people on the social housing waiting list broadly reflects the total numbers of homeless people in the population at large.

As explained in Chapter Five, between 2016 and 2021, 17,583 HAP claimant households, encompassing 20% of this population, were referred for assessment for this benefit from their local authority's homeless persons unit. This means in practice that these households were either homeless (within the terms of the statutory definition of homelessness set out the 1988 Housing Act) or were at high risk of becoming homelessness. Therefore, HAP plays a significant role in combating and preventing homelessness.



### 7.2.6 Variations in Access to Social Housing

The analysis presented in Chapter Six revealed significant differences between the proportion of social housing applicants and HAP claims that were terminated. This is because the households in question had received and accepted an offer of social housing. Between 10.45% and 15.15% of applications for social housing that were terminated between 2016 and 2019, ended because the applicant secured a social housing tenancy. This indicates that a maximum average of 5.05% and minimum average 3.48% per annum of those who left the waiting list did so on these grounds. These households waited 286.81 weeks on average for a social housing tenancy. In contrast 37% of HAP claimants whose claim was terminated between 2016 and 2021 secured a social housing tenancy – an annual average of 7.4% of claimants who left the HAP system. These households waited 135.1 weeks on average for a tenancy. 22% of HAP claimants who ceased claiming this benefit within six months did so because they had secured a social housing tenancy. This compares to just 10% of their counterparts on the social housing waiting list.

These trends are surprising considering that, under the terms of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2014, receipt of HAP is deemed to have satisfied claimants' need for 'social housing support' (see Chapter Two). They therefore merit further exploration.

Table 7.2 suggests that the greater stability of HAP tenancies – claimants of which are marginally less likely to change housing tenure (and therefore address) and significantly less likely to change local authority compared to those on the social housing waiting list – may be a contributory factor. Changing local authority may also prolong wait times, particularly if the new local authority has a longer social housing waiting list and/or the supply of dwellings available for letting is lower.

Differences between the locations of HAP claimants and social housing applicants may also have contributed to variations in access to social housing between these two populations. As mentioned above, both groups are concentrated in the Dublin region and other cities. This is particularly the case for social housing applicants. The Housing Commission (2024) raised concerns about undersupply of new social housing in these locations compared to social housing need.

*Table 7-2 Spatial Stability of Social Housing Applicant and HAP Claimant Households, 2016-2021.*

Category	Years	N	%
<b>Social Housing Applicants</b>			
Change in housing tenure	2016-2017	3110	4
	2017-2018	3726	6
	2018-2019	2287	5
	2019-2020	2228	5
	2020-2021	2558	6
Change in local authority	2016-2017	465	1
	2017-2018	469	1
	2018-2019	1176	2
	2019-2020	533	1
	2020-2021	185	0
<b>Housing assistance Payment Claimants</b>			
Multiple HAP subsidised tenancies	2016-2021	4,005	5
Change in local authority	2016-2021	311	0

Note: Demographic categorisations refer to the principal applicant.

Source: generated by the authors from the Social Housing Assessment and HAP claimant database.

The most significant influence on HAP claimants' faster and greater access to social housing is likely due to their household size matching the size of social rented dwellings available. The HAP claimant population contains a higher proportion of larger households (which include three or more people) compared to households on the social housing waiting list (a majority of which are one person households) (see Chapters Three and Five). Whereas, as explained in Chapter Two, most of the existing social housing stock is suitable for larger households (one bedroomed dwellings made up only 11% of the local authority social housing stock in 2015) and the same is the case for most of the new dwellings being delivered (12.5% of the social housing units provided in 2021 contained one bedroom). At least some of these smaller dwellings are reserved for specific categories of applicants (e.g. dwellings in sheltered housing schemes for older people). Thus, the size of the social rented dwellings available for letting does not match the needs of the majority of social housing applicants.

The data examined in this report also provides some important insights relevant to the key policy priority of homelessness. It indicates that these households do not have success in securing social housing that is expected in the vast majority local authorities' scheme of letting priorities (see Chapter Two and Appendix Two). Analysis of applicants who successfully

secured a social housing tenancy between 2016 and 2019 indicates that those whose basis of needs was 'particular household circumstances' and 'shared accommodation' were most likely to secure a social housing tenancy quickly. Whereas the rate of allocations of tenancies to applicants whose basis of needs was 'homeless' did not vary substantially according to waiting time. Analysis of data on social housing applicants' previous accommodation type confirms this pattern. Those in 'Homeless Accommodation or 'Rough Sleeping' were not more likely to secure a social housing tenancy more quickly than other applicants.

It is likely that this phenomenon also primarily reflects a mismatch between the size of homeless households on the social housing waiting list – the majority of which consists of one person- and the size of the social housing units available for letting. The strong concentration of homeless people in Dublin, particularly in Dublin City Council's functional area, and the relatively low supply of new social housing in this area may be a contributory factor. It is also notable that the Dublin City Council's scheme of letting priorities is one of the few that does not explicitly prioritise homeless people. It does prioritise applicants on 'exceptional social grounds', those who have been displaced from their homes and other groups who are likely to be homeless.

Chapter Five revealed that HAP subsidised accommodation plays a significant role in accommodating formerly homeless people and in preventing homelessness. Indeed, HAP's contribution in this regard appears to be more significant than the mainstream social housing sector. Between 2016 and 2021, 17,583 HAP claimant households, encompassing 20% of total HAP claimant households, were referred for assessment for this benefit from their local authority's homeless persons unit. This suggests that they were either homeless or at risk of homelessness. Notably, significant numbers of smaller homeless households managed to secure accommodation with the help of HAP. 51% of the homeless households in this category were lone parents between 2016 and 2021 and 29% were single-adult households.

### **7.2.7 Acute and Unmet Housing Need**

The analysis presented in this report suggests that many applicants for social housing have their need met relatively quickly, either by securing private rented accommodation with the support of HAP or by securing a social housing tenancy. Thus, for many, the social housing support system operates reasonably well.

However, for a significant minority of applicants this is not the case. There is a cohort, which comprises working age, mainly male headed, single person applicant households primarily,

who have acute housing needs that remain unmet for far longer than the norm. Chapter Four revealed that applicants in this category tend to have uniformly low incomes, indicating that they are primarily reliant on social security benefits and rarely have income from employment. Chapter Three revealed that the numbers of people in this category on the social housing waiting list has increased significantly in recent years. As highlighted above, this is likely because they wait longer to secure a social housing tenancy due to the lack of suitable housing available.

### **7.3 Implications for Housing Policy and Practice**

The analysis presented in this report has implications for a variety of housing policy and practice issues. It is clearly relevant to the management of new social housing delivery and highlights the need to ensure that the size of the dwellings provided better matches the size of households on the social housing waiting list, particularly homeless applicants. This same point was raised by the Housing Commission (2024) which highlighted the need to build more units suitable for one person households.

This analysis has also revealed that a majority of those who were removed from the social housing waiting list did not reply to a request for information as part of the annual reassessment of their social housing need (40.6% of cases), or they no longer qualified for social housing (34.6%). The Housing Commission (2024) raised concerns about both of these issues. It suggested that the latter may be related to the fact that the income limits for access to social housing are not regularly updated to take account of increases in average incomes or benefit payments and recommend that, in future, they should be updated annually. The number of households removed from the social housing waiting list due to failure to answer requests for information merits further research to ascertain whether these households were no longer in need of housing, or did not respond for another reason. Furthermore, procedures for applying for social housing and reassessment of applicants should be subject to an equality proofing assessment. The Housing Commission (2024) highlighted the need to streamline procedures for applying for all forms of housing support for government and to replace the multiple, paper-based application arrangements with a single, user friendly online application portal.

The use of an online portal for applications for HAP is currently being rolled out. Future expansion of the use of this portal for all social housing and other forms of government housing support would also facilitate easier collation of data on applicants and standardisation of the

data provided so it can be analysed more easily to better inform housing policy and practice. This report demonstrates the value these data have as a source of evidence for policy. The author's experience of analysing the social housing assessment and HAP claimant data, suggests that following reforms to these datasets would maximise their value as evidence for policy:

- *Strengthening recording consistency:* Establishing an online portal where the basic profiling information (name, date of birth, gender, nationality, basis of need, date of application and date of approval) all remain the same unless the applicant chooses to alter them would produce a more consistent dataset. This would eliminate the tendency for social housing applicants' and HAP claimants' demographic characteristics to change more frequently than would be expected, which was identified during the analysis for this report.
- *Standardising basic profiling data:* the publication of data on HAP claimants was expanded to include the detailed demographic and socio-economic profiling data currently collected for social housing applicants. This would require the collection on HAP claimants': household composition, current accommodation type/tenure, annual income and income source.
- *Improving Household Composition Data:* improving data on the composition of social housing applicant and HAP claimant households would enable more robust planning of social housing output. While information on the number of children in a household is currently collected, information on the age and sex of these children is not and this information is vital to properly assess housing need.

## Appendix One: Description of Datasets

*Table A1 1: Variables on Social Housing Applicants Present in the Original Dataset*

Variables	Values
Gender	Male and female.
Nationality	Irish, EEA including the UK and Non-EEA.
Household Composition	1 adult; 1 adult, 1-2 children; 1 adult, 3 or more children; 2 adults; 2 adults, with child/children; 3 or more adults; 3 or more adults, with child/children; Couple; Couple, 1 or more other adults; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children; Couple, 1-2 children; Couple, 3 or more children.
Adults in Household	Number.
Children in Household	Number.
Local authority	Any one of 31.
Yearly Net Income	In Euro.
Income Source	Combination of Employment and Social Welfare; Employment Only; Other; Social Welfare Only.
Rent Supplement	Claiming or not and amount of payment in Euro.
Basis of Need	Concluded that mortgage is unsustainable; Currently Dependent on Rent Supplement; Disability – Unspecified; Disability requirement – intellectual; Disability requirement – mental health; Disability requirement – physical; Disability requirement – sensory; Exceptional Medical or Compassionate Grounds; Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel; Involuntary sharing; Overcrowded accommodation; Unfit accommodation; Unsuitable – Particular Household Circumstances.
Specific Accommodation Requirements	Household member(s) aged 65 years or more; Household member(s) is a Traveller; Household member(s) is homeless; No specific accommodation requirements; Physical, sensory, mental or intellectual impairment
Current Accommodation Type	Apartment; Bed and breakfast accommodation; Bungalow; Caravan; Cottage; Day house; Flat; Group housing; Halting site bay; Hospital; Hostel accommodation; House; Institution; Maisonette; Mobile home; Other; Prison; Refuge; Sheltered accommodation; Tíghín.
Current Accommodation Tenure	Emergency Accommodation/none; Institution; Living with friends; Living with parents; Living with relatives; Other; Owner occupier; Private rented accommodation with court order for possession; Private rented accommodation with rent supplement; Private rented accommodation without rent supplement; Rough sleeper with no accommodation.
Homeless Current Circumstances	The categories set out in Section 2 of the 1988 Housing Act. These are: currently serving custodial sentences and have applied for local authority housing; Are living because they have no other accommodation in night time emergency hostel accommodation provided by local authorities and voluntary bodies; Are living in bed and breakfast accommodation; Are living in other accommodation (e.g. county home - hospital - etc.); Are living in refugees because of domestic violence; Are living in sheltered long term housing accommodation; Are living in transitional housing accommodation; Are sleeping rough; Have no accommodation they can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of.
Waiting Time	The length of time (in weeks) between the approval of application for social housing and their most recent review as part of the social housing assessment.

**Table A1 2: Variables on Social Housing Applicants Created from the Original Dataset**

<b>New Variables Created</b>	<b>Values</b>
Age at first social housing application date	Calculated using date of birth and application date.
Urban/rural	All local authorities with responsibility for a city (or part of a city in the case of the Dublin region) is considered 'urban', all other local authorities are considered 'rural'.
Year first applied	Year extracted from date of application.
Number of bedrooms required	Calculated based on the number of people within a household.
Age cohorts	These cohorts are 18-34; 35-54; 55 and over.
Region	Local authority regions are Dublin; North West; North East; Midlands; West; South West; South East; Mid East; Mid-West.
Simplified Basis of Need	All disability categories were combined into one.
Identified as Homeless	If a household reported being homeless in any SHA return.
Household composition	Combines small groups. Single parents with 3+ children combined, couples with 3+ children combined, all multi-adult households combined.
Current Accommodation Type New	Temporary Accommodation (B&B; hospital; hostel; institution; refuge; shelter accommodation; transitional accommodation); Apartment/Flat; House (House; bungalow; cottage; maisonette); Traveller accommodation (halting bay; caravan; mobile home; group housing; Tigin); Other.
Reason for Application Close	From application close data to combine small and similar categories including Change of Circumstances (Adequate Resources; Applicant has left administrative area; Applicant no longer in need of re-housing; Change of circumstances; No Long Term Social Housing Need; No Longer Requires Housing); Other Accommodation (Admitted to Long Term Care; Gone Into Long Term Care; Now Tenant Purchase House Owner; Bought Own Home; Applicant providing accommodation from own resources; Housing Need already Met); Tenant Choice/Action (Breach of Conditions; Anti-Social Behaviour; Handed Back Key; Tenancy surrendered; Surrendered Interest in Tenancy; Tenant Request; By request; Withdrawn); Deceased; Social Housing (Requirements Met; Tenant Inter-transferred; Mutual Transfer Within Stock; Tenancy Succession; Housed by Voluntary Body; Housed - Other Local Authority; Housed by Housing Association; Applicant rehoused by other Local Auth./Housing Association ;Rehoused in our Stock; Housed); Other (IT Error; Not reclosed after reopened to add note; Site no longer available (SRC only); Re-opened in Error; Application Manually Closed (Data fix); Closed by already using the Duplicate Removal Tool; Miscellaneous; Unknown; Other); HAP/RAS (HAP; Housed by RAS; CLOSE GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION re RAS); Not Eligible Illegal Occupier; Not Eligible for RAS; Inadequate Refugee/GNIB Status; No clear rent account; Title not in order (IWIL only); Not Residing; Not Eligible - House Owner; Previous Ownership Issue; Does not have 2 years tenancy; Current Ownership Issue; Residing partner other Application; Ineligible - Residency Status; Ineligible – Rent Arrears; Ineligible; Not Eligible - 2011 Regulations; Over Income Limit; Incomplete Application; Ineligible - Alternative Accommodation; No Basis for Application; Ineligible – Income; Not Qualified); Communication; Failure to attend Interview; Failure to Re-register; Failed to respond to Correspondence; Whereabouts unknown; NO REPLY – HNA; Failure to reply to Further Information request; No Contact); On Housing List (Granted Overall Priority; High Priority



# Demographic & Socio-Economic Profile of Applicants for Social Housing and Recipients of HAP

	Transfer; Now on Housing List; On Other LA Homeless list; Homeless Priority; On other LA Housing List; Medical Priority Awarded; Placed in Band; Transferring Housing Authority of application).
Lone parent	Binary variable.
Over the age of 65	Binary variable.
Year Number	Number of years SHA was returned during time period considered.
Gap in Applications	If there was one or more years without an SHA return between SHA returns.
Bivariate correlations test (two-tailed)	Completed for - waiting time; age; gender; marital status; region; HH comp; nationality; disability; homeless; traveller. Enough significance (>0.05) established to continue.

*Table A1 3: Variables on Housing Assistance Payment Claimants Present in the Original Dataset*

Variables	Values
Gender	Male and female.
Household Type	The household categories in HAP are based on the HAP limits set by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, these are, Couple; Couple Sharing; Couple with 1 child; Couple with 2 children; Couple with 3 or more children; Single; Single Sharing; Single with 1 child; Single with 2 children; Single with 3 or more children.
Local authority	Any one of 31.
Household Income	This information is only available for active HAP tenancies, the weekly amount is recorded for these households.
Referred from Homeless Unit	Binary variable.
Tenancy Cessation Reason	The reasons given for why a tenancy ended are, Anti-Social Behaviour; Change from Landlord/Agent for payments; Change in Housing Waiting List; Deceased Tenant; Exceptional circumstances - change in family composition; Exceptional circumstances - Differential Rent increase; Exceptional circumstances – Education; Exceptional circumstances - Landlord Monthly Rent increase; Exceptional circumstances – Medical; Exceptional circumstances - Property Standards; Exceptional circumstances - work in different area; Family Composition HAP Change CAP; Family Composition HAP New CAP; Fire Safety Notice; Incorrect Property ID Chosen; Landlord gave notice to Tenant; Landlord In Receivership; Landlord Selling the Property; Landlord/Agent Change; Movement within HAP after 2 years; Non Compliance - Rental Accommodation Standards; Non Compliance - Tax Clearance Certificate; Non Payment of HAP Weekly Differential Rent; Non Payment of Top Up Landlord Monthly; Social Housing; Tenant Change; Tenant gave notice; Voluntary exit from HAP.



**Table A1 4: Variables on Housing Assistance Payment Claimants Created from the Original Dataset**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Values</b>
Gender	Male and female.
Nationality	Irish, EEA including the UK and Non-EEA.
Household Composition	1 adult; 1 adult, 1-2 children; 1 adult, 3 or more children; 2 adults; 2 adults, with child/children; 3 or more adults; 3 or more adults, with child/children; Couple; Couple, 1 or more other adults; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children; Couple, 1-2 children; Couple, 3 or more children.
Age at Start of Tenancy	Calculated based on date of birth and tenancy start date.
Age cohorts	These cohorts are 18-34; 35-54; 55 and over.
Length of Tenancy	Calculate using tenancy start and end dates.
Year variables	Binary variables recording if a tenancy was active during each individual year of the time period considered.
Year of Tenancy Start	Start year extracted for each tenancy in data.
Year of Tenancy End	End year extracted for each tenancy in data.
Time in HAP	Calculated using first start date and either end date or the 15/02/2024 for active tenancies.
Lone parent	Binary variable.
Over 65	Binary variable.
Cessation Reason Simple	Recategorisation of cessation reason for simplification purposes, new categories are, Notice to Quit (Landlord gave notice to Tenant; Landlord In Receivership; Landlord Selling the Property; Landlord/Agent Change); Non Compliance (Movement within HAP after 2 years; Non Compliance - Rental Accommodation Standards; Non Compliance - Tax Clearance Certificate; Non Payment of HAP Weekly Differential Rent; Non Payment of Top Up Landlord Monthly); Social Housing; Tenant Choice/Behaviour (Anti-Social Behaviour; Tenant gave notice; Voluntary exit from HAP); Tenant Deceased; Exceptional Circumstances (Exceptional circumstances - change in family composition; Exceptional circumstances - Differential Rent increase; Exceptional circumstances – Education; Exceptional circumstances - Landlord Monthly Rent increase; Exceptional circumstances – Medical; Exceptional circumstances - Property Standards; Exceptional circumstances - work in different area); Other (Change from Landlord/Agent for payments; Change in Housing Waiting List; Family Composition HAP Change CAP; Family Composition HAP New CAP; Fire Safety Notice).
HAP Tenancy Duration	This variable was created to allow for comparison with social housing waiting times. Categories for this variable are: < 6 months; 6 - 12 months; 1 - 2 years; 2 - 3 years; 3 - 4 years; 4 - 5 years; 5 - 7 years; > 7 years.

**Table A1 5: Variables on Reasons for Termination of Applications for Social Housing Present in the Original Dataset**

Variables	Values
Gender	Male and female.
Nationality	Irish, EEA including the UK and Non-EEA.
Household Composition	1 adult; 1 adult, 1-2 children; 1 adult, 3 or more children; 2 adults; 2 adults, with child/children; 3 or more adults; 3 or more adults, with child/children; Couple; Couple, 1 or more other adults; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 1-2 children; Couple, 1 or more other adults, 3 or more children; Couple, 1-2 children; Couple, 3 or more children.
Reason for Application Close	Categories for this variable are: Adequate Resources; Admitted to Long Term Care; Anti-Social Behaviour; Applicant deceased; Applicant has left administrative area; Applicant no longer in need of re-housing; Applicant providing accommodation from own resources; Applicant rehoused by other Local Auth./Housing Association; Application Manually Closed (Data fix); Bought Own Home; Breach of Conditions; By request; Change of circumstances; Close Government Legislation re RAS; Closed by Agency using the Duplicate Removal Tool; Current Ownership Issue; Does not have 2 years tenancy; Failed to respond to Correspondence; Failure to attend Interview; Failure to Re-register; Failure to reply to Further Information request; Gone Into Long Term Care; Granted Overall Priority; Handed Back Key; HAP; High Priority Transfer; Homeless Priority; Housed; Housed - Other Local Authority; Housed by Housing Association; Housed by RAS; Housed by Voluntary Body; Housing Need already Met; Illegal Occupier; Inadequate Refugee/GNIB Status; Incomplete Application; Ineligible - Alternative Accommodation; Ineligible – Income; Ineligible - Residency Status; Ineligible; Ineligible – Rent Arrears; IT Error; Medical Priority Awarded; Miscellaneous; Mutual Transfer Within Stock; No Basis for Application; No clear rent account; No Contact; No Long Term Social Housing Need; No Longer Requires Housing; NO REPLY – HNA; Not Eligible - 2011 Regulations; Not Eligible - House Owner; Not Eligible for RAS; Not Qualified; Not reclosed after reopened to add note; Not Residing; Now on Housing List; Now Tenant Purchase House Owner; On Other LA Homeless list; On other LA Housing List; Other; Over Income Limit; Placed in Band; Previous Ownership Issue; Re-opened in Error; Rehoused in our Stock; Requirements Met; Residing partner other Application; Site no longer available (SRC only); Surrendered Interest in Tenancy; Tenancy Succession; Tenancy surrendered; Tenant Inter-transferred; Tenant Request; Title not in order (IWIL only); Transferring Housing Authority of application; Unknown; Whereabouts unknown; Withdrawn.
Nature of Tenure Prior to Application Close	Co-operative; Differential Rents; HAP; Homeless Accommodation; Homeless HAP; Hotel - Self Accommodation; Institution; Involuntary Sharing; LA Rented Accommodation; Licence Agreement; Living with Family; Living with friends; Living with parents; Living with relatives; Other; Owner Occupier; Private Emergency Accommodation; Private Rented (with Rent Supplement); Private Rented Accommodation; Private Rented Accommodation (with court order for possession); RAS; Rough sleeper; Supported Temporary Accommodation; Temporary Accommodation; Traveller Accommodation; Voluntary Housing; Women's Refuge.
Basis of Need	Categories for this variable are: At risk of Homelessness; Currently Dependent on Rent Supplement; Disability – Intellectual; Disability - Mental Health; Disability – Physical; Disability – Sensory; Disability – Unspecified; Elderly; Exceptional Medical or Compass; Financial; Homeless, Institution, Emergency Accommodation or Hostel; Involuntary Sharing; Leaving Institutional Care; Overcrowded; Particular Household Circumstances; Shared Accommodation; Travellers; Unknown; Unsustainable Mortgage.
Waiting Time Length	Categories for this variable are: < 6 months; 6 - 12 months; 1 - 2 years; 2 - 3 years; 3 - 4 years; 4 - 5 years; 5 - 7 years; > 7 years.

## Appendix Two: Local Authorities' Social Housing Prioritisation Criteria

*Table B1 1: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in **Carlow County Council***

Applicants who are: (a) being displaced from dwellings deemed to be dangerous in accordance with Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act, 1964 (b) being displaced by operation of Carlow County Council
Applicants who are homeless as defined in the Housing Act, 1988
Applicants living in unfit and overcrowded conditions as defined in Sections 66 and 63 respectively of the Housing Act 1966
Applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, compassionate, or similar grounds
Applicants who share accommodation with another person or persons and who, in the opinion of the housing authority, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation
Approved applicants not included in any of the categories above who have been assessed and approved for social housing support

*Table B1 2: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in **Cavan County Council***

Conditions of Applicants' Dwelling
Overcrowding
Homelessness/Displaced Persons (No home)
Lack of Household Facilities
Need on Medical, Disability, Compassionate or other similar Grounds
Length of Time in Housing Need
Family circumstances or other factors of housing need not specifically mentioned under the other headings of this points systems
Location/Distance from Work, Services etc.
Efforts by applicant to improve living condition

*Table B1 3: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in **Clare County Council***

Homeless persons as defined by Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988 and referred via the Homeless Action Team of the council.
Persons living in accommodation that is unfit for human habitation as defined in Section 66(2) of the Housing Act, 1966, and the Second Schedule of that Act, or is materially unsuitable for their adequate housing, where there is no evidence of the tenant having contributed to the condition of the dwelling.
Persons in accommodation, the extent to which it does not meet their requirements, arising from the enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of a household member.

Persons who require accommodation on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds.
Persons living in overcrowded accommodation within the meaning of Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Households identified by the Housing Welfare Officer or Housing Professional Social Worker(s) who have a requirement for accommodation for exceptional reasons.
Involuntarily sharing accommodation with another person and having a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation.
Persons who are not, in the opinion of the council, reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation.
Persons not included in any other specific category above, who have been assessed and approved for social housing supports.

**Table B1 4: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Cork City Council***

Current accommodation is an institution, emergency accommodation or a hostel
Current accommodation is fit for human habitation having regard to the matters set out in the Second Schedule to the Housing Act 1966
Current accommodation is overcrowded
The extent to which the current accommodation meets any accommodation requirement arising from the enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of a household member
Persons who are sharing accommodation with another person or persons, in the opinion of Cork City Council, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation
Current accommodation is unsuitable for the household's adequate housing – (iii) in any other material respect, having regard to particular household circumstances, including rent affordability, or (iv) on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds.

**Table B1 5: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Cork County Council***

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous as defined in Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act 1964 or being displaced by operation of the Local Authority.
Applicants deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988.
Applicants living in unfit and overcrowded conditions as defined in Sections 66 and 63 respectively of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants living in unfit conditions as defined in Section 66 of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants living in overcrowded conditions as defined in Section of 63 of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, or compassionate or other similar grounds.
Applicants not included in any other category above who have been assessed and approved for Social Housing Support.

**Table B1 6: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Dublin City Council***

Persons Displaced by Fire, Flood, Dangerous Building etc.
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Persons Displaced by Dublin City Council Redevelopment
Persons Living in Unfit Accommodation
Exceptional Medical Grounds
Exceptional Social Grounds
Older Persons
Tenants Surrendering Larger Accommodation in High Demand Areas
Tenants of Dwellings to be Demolished/Refurbished
Traveller Accommodation
Return of Adapted Property
Young People Leaving Care

**Table B1 7: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council***

Dangerous Buildings
Displacement due to an act of the Council
Medical / Disability Priority
Downsizing Priority
Domestic / Racial/ Other Violence
Homeless Priority
Member of the Travelling Community
Emergency / Estate Management Priority

**Table B1 8: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Donegal County Council***

Homeless
Unfitness
Overcrowded
Medical/Disability
Compassionate
Time on List
Number Requiring Rehousing

**Table B1 9: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Fingal County Council***

Families or persons living in dangerous premises on whom a requisition under Section 3(9) of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964 has been served.
Families or persons displaced as a result of acts of the Local Authority.
Families or Persons on exceptional medical or exceptional compassionate grounds. Where priority is claimed on exceptional medical or exceptional compassionate grounds, regard shall be had to the report of the Chief Medical Officer and/or the Council's Welfare Committee whichever is appropriate.
RAS tenants where the landlord has indicated that the contract will not be renewed, or the property is no longer available to the Council. Category 2
Transfer applicants due to overcrowding .
Transfer applicants who wish to down-size.

Transfer applicants who wish to vacate 2 dwellings for 1
Transfer applicants wishing to transfer to a “Vacancy Rich” area from a “Vacancy deficient” area.
Transfer applicants wishing to transfer to an area in order to assist in care of a close relative or avail of the care of a close relative. Category 3 (to include other transfer applicants) (to include other transfer applicants).
Families or persons rendered homeless through no fault of their own and who are not in a financial position to provide their own accommodation. (Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988 defines homelessness.)
Families or persons evicted through no fault of their own on foot of a Court Order and who are not in a financial position to provide their own accommodation.
Persons fleeing Domestic Violence.
Families living in overcrowded conditions.

**Table B1 10: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Galway County Council**

Homeless persons as defined by Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988.
Persons living in accommodation that is unfit for human habitation as defined in Section 66(2) of the Housing Act, 1966, and the Second Schedule of that Act, or is materially unsuitable for their adequate housing.
Persons in accommodation, the extent to which it does not meet their requirements, arising from the enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of a household member.
Persons who require accommodation on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds.
Persons living in overcrowded accommodation within the meaning of Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Involuntarily sharing accommodation with another person and having a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation.
Persons who are not, in the opinion of the council, reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation.
Persons not included in any other specific category above, who have been assessed and approved for social housing supports.

**Table B1 11: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Galway City Council**

<b>Order of priority for dwelling allocations:</b> Galway City Council will give reasonable preference to certain household groups when allocating dwellings. The household groups and the order of priority that will be given to the household groups are as follows:
homeless persons as defined by section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988
persons living in accommodation that is unfit for human habitation as defined in Section 66(2) of the Housing Act, 1966, and the second schedule of that Act, or, is materially unsuitable for their adequate housing.
persons living in overcrowded accommodation within the meaning of section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
persons in accommodation, the extent to which it does not meet their requirements, arising from the enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of a household member;
persons who require accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds

persons who are not, in the opinion of Galway City Council, reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation
persons not included in any other specific category above, who have
<p>Note:</p> <p>The priority that an application will receive will depend mainly on the priority afforded to each household group. Households are placed in one group only. As a general rule, priority as between households within the same group will be determined by reference to the date of entry of the household on Galway City Council's record of qualified households. In the allocation of dwellings where priority is claimed on grounds consisting of, or including, medical grounds, Galway City Council will require a report from a medical practitioner accredited by the Health Service Executive.</p> <p>Accordingly; Where priority is claimed on disability grounds the applicant shall submit a report from an Occupational Therapist on their disability condition and how this impacts on their housing requirements. Where priority is claimed on Medical Grounds, the applicant shall submit a report from a Consultant on their medical condition and how this impacts on their housing requirements.</p>

**Table B1 12: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Kerry County Council**

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous or who are being displaced by the Local Authority.
Applicants living in overcrowded conditions.
Applicants living in unfit conditions.
Applicants in need of housing because of disability or exceptional medical or compassionate circumstances.
Elderly applicants.
Members of the Traveller Community.
Applicants who have been assessed and approved for Social Housing Support.

**Table B1 13: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Kildare County Council**

Age Friendly
Dangerous Buildings
Displacement resulting from an act of the council where financial compensation has not been paid or is not payable.
Exceptional Medical Grounds
Homeless Priority
Members of the Travelling Community: where the accommodation being provided is Traveller specific

**Table B1 14: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Kilkenny County Council**

Emergencies
Persons being displaced from dangerous buildings under the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964, or potentially dangerous buildings under the Fire Services Act 1981, as



amended, or persons rendered homeless by fire, flood, storm damage etc. or by operations of the Kilkenny County Council from dwellings urgently required for redevelopment.
Households that are homeless as defined by Section 2 Housing Act 1988. Accommodation made available in this category may include Tenancy sustainment supports.
Applicants living in unfit Conditions as defined in Section 66 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Applicants living in overcrowded conditions as defined in Section of 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Older persons (aged 55 yrs or more). Accommodation under this category will be those provided specifically for older persons or that is specifically suited to the older person's need.
Applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, compassionate or other similar grounds.
Traveller Households: Including households who wish to be housed in standard social Housing supports and in Traveller specific accommodation under this category will be provided in accordance with the Kilkenny County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme.
Applicants not included in any other category above, who have been assessed and approved for Social Housing Support.

**Table B1 15: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Laois County Council**

Unfit
Overcrowding
Payment for existing accommodation
Medical/Disabled
Length of Time on Waiting List
Number of Dependents
Compassionate Grounds

**Table B1 16: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Leitrim County Council**

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous as defined in Section 3 of the Local Government Sanitary Services Act, 1964 or being displaced by the operation of a local authority.
Applicants deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988.
Applicants living in unfit conditions as defined in Section of the Housing Act, 1966
Applicants living in overcrowded conditions as defined in Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, compassionate or other similar grounds.
Elderly applicants in need of housing where elderly is defined as 60 years of age or older and where such applicants are assessed and approved for social housing supports.
Applicants not included in any other specific category above, who have been assessed and approved for social housing supports.

**Table B1 17: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Limerick City and County Council**

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous as defined in Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act, 1964 or being displaced by operations of the Local Authority.
Applicants deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988.
Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be unfit as defined in Section 66 of the Housing Act, 1966.



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Applicants in need of housing on disability, medical, compassionate or similar grounds.
Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be overcrowded as defined in Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Persons who are sharing accommodation with another person or persons and who, in the opinion of the Housing Authority, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation.
Applicants in need of housing who are living in unsuitable accommodation having regard to the particular household circumstances in accordance with 23 (f) Social Housing Assessment Regulations 2011.
Applicants not included in any other category above who have been assessed and approved for social housing support.
Persons who are, in the opinion of the Housing Authority, not reasonably able to meet the cost of their mortgage and are unable to obtain suitable affordable alternative accommodation.

**Table B1 18: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Longford County Council**

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous as defined in Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act, 1964 or being displaced by operation of the Local Authority.
Applicants deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988.
Applicants living in unfit and overcrowded conditions as defined in Sections 66 and 63 respectively of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants living in unfit conditions as defined in Section 66 of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants living in overcrowded conditions as defined in Section of 63 of the Housing Act 1966.
Applicants in need of housing on disability medical compassionate or other similar grounds.
Applicants not included in any other category above compassionate or other similar grounds.

**Table B1 19: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Louth County Council**

Homeless
Unfit Accommodation
Overcrowding
Medical/Disability
Compassionate

**Table B1 20: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Mayo County Council**

Whether the current accommodation is an institution, emergency accommodation or a hostel
Whether the current accommodation is fit for human habitation having regard to the matters set out in the Second Schedule to the Housing Act 1966
Whether the current accommodation is overcrowded
The extent to which the current accommodation meets any accommodation requirement arising from an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment of a household member

Whether persons who are sharing accommodation with another person or persons, in the opinion of Mayo County Council, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation

Whether the current accommodation is unsuitable for the household's adequate housing – (i) in any other material respect, having regard to particular household circumstances, including rent affordability, or (ii) on exceptional medical or compassionate grounds.

**Table B1 21: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Meath County Council**

Homeless
Age 65 & over
Traveller
General
Enduring Health Impairment

**Table B1 22: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Monaghan County Council**

Condition of Housing Accommodation
Overcrowding
Overcrowded Conditions
Lack of Facilities
Homeless
Medical Grounds
Compassionate Grounds
Length of Time on Waiting List

**Table B1 23: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Offaly County Council**

Persons who are homeless
Persons living in unfit accommodation. Persons living in overcrowded accommodation
Persons sharing involuntarily with family, relatives or other persons
Persons in need of accommodation on medical/compassionate grounds
Persons with a clearly defined and documented disability or special need
Persons unable to meet the cost of accommodation from own resources and are dependent on state support
Persons who are homeowners but where it has been determined that their mortgage is unsustainable
Persons whose need for housing has been established and their inclusion in the most recent assessment of housing need or their acceptance thereafter for the next assessment

**Table B1 24: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Roscommon County Council**

First preference shall be given to persons who are homeless as defined in Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988. (a) Roscommon County Council will determine the appropriate Housing support to be offered to Applicants assessed for, as having an accommodation need based on homelessness.
Second preference shall be given to persons who are living in accommodation that is unfit for human habitation as referred to in Section 66 of the Housing Act 1966, and the Second Schedule thereto or in accommodation that is materially unsuitable for their adequate housing.
Third preference shall be given to persons who are living in overcrowded accommodation as defined in Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966.
Fourth preference shall be given to persons in need of accommodation for medical or compassionate reasons.
Fifth preference shall be given to persons who are sharing accommodation with another person or persons and who in the opinion of the Council have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation.
Sixth preference shall be given to persons who in the opinion of the Council are not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable alternative accommodation.

**Table B1 25: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Sligo County Council**

Unfit
Overcrowded
Income and Rent
Time on Housing List
Medical, Compassionate and Other Special Circumstances

**Table B1 26: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in South Dublin County Council**

Families or persons living in dangerous premises on whom a requisition under Section 3 (9) of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act, 1964 has been served.
Displacement (resulting from acts of the Local Authority).
Families or persons rendered homeless through no fault of their own.
Families or persons evicted through no fault of their own on foot of a Court Order who are not in a financial position to provide their own housing.
Exceptional medical/compassionate grounds.
Persons aged 65 or over for older persons accommodation.

**Table B1 27: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Tipperary County Council**

Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be dangerous as defined in Section 3 of the Sanitary Services Act, 1964 or being displaced by operations of the Local Authority
Applicants deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act, 1988
Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be unfit as defined in Section 66 of the Housing Act, 1966

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Applicants with exceptional medical/compassionate grounds
Applicants living in dwellings deemed to be overcrowded as defined in Section 63 of the Housing Act, 1966 or in the case of down-sizing
Applicants in need of housing who are deemed to have a need based on disability – physical/mental health/sensory/intellectual
Applicants in need of housing where the accommodation is unsuitable for the household in any other material respect, having regard to particular household circumstances
Applicants in need of housing who are dependent on Rent Supplement
Persons who are sharing accommodation with another person or persons and who, in the opinion of the Council, have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation
Persons who are, in the opinion of the Council, not reasonably able to meet the cost of their mortgage and are unable to obtain suitable affordable alternative accommodation

**Table B1 28: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Waterford City and County Council***

Emergencies
Homeless
Older Persons
People with Disabilities
Traveller Households

**Table B1 29: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Westmeath County Council***

Homeless
Travellers
Elderly
People with a Disability
Rural Houses
Succession of Tenancy

**Table B1 30: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in *Wexford County Council***

First priority shall be given to applicants who are living in accommodation that is dangerous or materially unsuitable to such a degree that there is, in the opinion of the Local Authority, a serious and immediate risk to their health and safety by their continued occupation thereof.
Second priority shall be given to applicants who need alternative accommodation on very serious or exceptional medical grounds including severe physical or mental disability where the allocation of social housing will improve the quality of living of that applicant.
Third priority shall be given to applicants who are deemed to be homeless under Section 2 of the Housing Act 1988. Normally applicants in this category will be offered accommodation in the homeless facilities in the County while their application for housing is being assessed and will then be accommodated in the private rented sector when approved for re-housing.
Fourth priority shall be given to applicants who are living in conditions of severe overcrowding.
Fifth priority shall be given to persons who are young person's leaving institutional care and without family accommodation.

Sixth priority shall be given to persons who are in the opinion of the local authority not reasonably able to meet the cost of the accommodation which they are occupying or to obtain suitable affordable alternative accommodation.
Seventh priority shall be given to persons who are elderly i.e., persons aged 65 and over and who are capable of independent living and who are not eligible under any of the categories listed above.
Eighth priority shall be given to persons with a disability and who are capable of independent living and are not eligible under any of the categories listed above.
Ninth priority shall be given to members of the Traveller community who are ineligible under any of the categories listed above.
Tenth priority shall be given to persons who are sharing accommodation with another person and who in the opinion of the Local Authority have a reasonable requirement for separate accommodation.
Eleventh priority shall be given to applicants on grounds of insecurity of tenure "Insecurity of Tenure" is defined as an applicant who is residing in private accommodation and who is receiving rent supplement and has been issued with a Notice to Quit by their landlord.

**Table B1 31: Schemes of letting priorities local authorities use to prioritise applicants for social housing in Wicklow County Council**

Families or persons living in dangerous premises on which a requisition under Section 3(9) of the Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act 1964 has been served
Displacement (resulting from acts of the Local Authority).
Families of persons rendered homeless through no fault of their own
Exceptional medical grounds
Compassionate grounds
Persons aged 60 or over for Older Persons Accommodation

## Appendix Three: Median Income and Household Type for Social Housing Applicants and HAP Claimants

Table A3.1: Couple Median Income and Rent Cost

Couple	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 866.67	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	56%
Male	€ 1,083.33	€ 251.33	€ 617.98	46%
18 – 34	€ 866.67	€ 229.67	€ 617.98	56%
35 – 54	€ 1,142.27	€ 260.00	€ 617.98	44%
55 and over	€ 1,054.73	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	48%
Irish Citizen	€ 890.07	€ 247.00	€ 617.98	54%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,164.80	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	44%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,300.00	€ 294.67	€ 617.98	39%
Urban				
Female	€ 879.67	€ 533.00	€ 1,212.81	86%
Male	€ 1,225.03	€ 552.50	€ 1,212.81	68%
18 – 34	€ 879.67	€ 568.10	€ 1,212.81	84%
35 – 54	€ 1,248.00	€ 519.01	€ 1,212.81	69%
55 and over	€ 1,075.88	€ 567.67	€ 1,212.81	74%
Irish Citizen	€ 937.43	€ 541.67	€ 1,212.81	82%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,203.02	€ 547.09	€ 1,212.81	69%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,330.98	€ 517.84	€ 1,212.81	66%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

*Table A3.2: Couple 1-2 Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Couple 1-2 children*	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 1,009.67	€ 359.67	€ 802.26	59%
Male	€ 1,556.32	€ 346.67	€ 802.26	42%
18 – 34	€ 1,270.75	€ 342.33	€ 802.26	50%
35 – 54	€ 1,484.60	€ 361.84	€ 802.26	43%
55 and over	€ 1,484.60	€ 359.67	€ 802.26	43%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,319.76	€ 355.33	€ 802.26	48%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,484.60	€ 342.33	€ 802.26	44%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,484.60	€ 364.00	€ 802.26	43%
Urban				
Female	€ 1,038.68	€ 770.60	€ 1,656.80	92%
Male	€ 1,556.53	€ 767.87	€ 1,656.80	71%
18 – 34	€ 1,161.33	€ 775.67	€ 1,656.80	86%
35 – 54	€ 1,484.60	€ 760.91	€ 1,656.80	74%
55 and over	€ 1,484.60	€ 758.34	€ 1,656.80	74%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,243.30	€ 777.83	€ 1,656.80	82%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,484.60	€ 759.46	€ 1,656.80	74%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,484.60	€ 720.11	€ 1,656.80	75%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

*Table A3.3: Couple Three or More Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Couple 3 or more children	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 1,313.00	€ 407.33	€ 903.61	53%
Male	€ 1,773.20	€ 385.67	€ 903.61	42%
18 – 34	€ 1,726.96	€ 381.33	€ 903.61	43%
35 – 54	€ 1,742.87	€ 416.00	€ 903.61	42%
55 and over	€ 1,778.83	€ 357.50	€ 903.61	42%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,742.00	€ 390.00	€ 903.61	42%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,742.87	€ 403.00	€ 903.61	42%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,742.87	€ 420.33	€ 903.61	42%
Urban				
Female	€ 1,285.27	€ 823.33	€ 1,988.87	94%
Male	€ 1,742.87	€ 891.58	€ 1,988.87	75%
18 – 34	€ 1,503.67	€ 845.00	€ 1,988.87	85%
35 – 54	€ 1,742.87	€ 866.67	€ 1,988.87	76%
55 and over	€ 1,863.33	€ 1,056.25	€ 1,988.87	68%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,612.00	€ 853.67	€ 1,988.87	81%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,742.87	€ 859.78	€ 1,988.87	76%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,742.87	€ 851.41	€ 1,988.87	77%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.



*Table A3.4: Single Adults Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 858.00	€ 242.67	€ 617.98	56%
Male	€ 836.33	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	58%
18 – 34	€ 836.33	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	58%
35 – 54	€ 836.33	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	58%
55 and over	€ 879.67	€ 247.00	€ 617.98	55%
Irish Citizen	€ 849.33	€ 242.67	€ 617.98	57%
EEA Citizen	€ 853.67	€ 238.33	€ 617.98	57%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 848.03	€ 251.33	€ 617.98	56%
Urban				
Female	€ 879.67	€ 346.67	€ 1,212.81	99%
Male	€ 836.33	€ 336.27	€ 1,212.81	103%
18 – 34	€ 853.67	€ 338.00	€ 1,212.81	102%
35 – 54	€ 836.33	€ 337.35	€ 1,212.81	103%
55 and over	€ 879.67	€ 338.00	€ 1,212.81	100%
Irish Citizen	€ 849.33	€ 338.00	€ 1,212.81	102%
EEA Citizen	€ 866.67	€ 336.27	€ 1,212.81	101%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 836.33	€ 344.93	€ 1,212.81	103%

*Table A3.5: Single Adults 1-2 Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single 1-2 children	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 1,072.93	€ 368.33	€ 802.26	56%
Male	€ 910.00	€ 338.00	€ 802.26	64%
18 – 34	€ 1,064.27	€ 359.67	€ 802.26	56%
35 – 54	€ 1,072.93	€ 368.33	€ 802.26	56%
55 and over	€ 943.80	€ 346.67	€ 802.26	62%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,070.33	€ 359.67	€ 802.26	56%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,085.93	€ 359.67	€ 802.26	55%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,052.13	€ 381.33	€ 802.26	56%
Urban				
Female	€ 1,072.93	€ 743.17	€ 1,656.80	91%
Male	€ 943.80	€ 627.96	€ 1,656.80	105%
18 – 34	€ 1,053.00	€ 749.67	€ 1,656.80	92%
35 – 54	€ 1,072.93	€ 728.00	€ 1,656.80	92%
55 and over	€ 952.90	€ 676.65	€ 1,656.80	102%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,061.67	€ 749.67	€ 1,656.80	91%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,122.33	€ 715.00	€ 1,656.80	90%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,044.33	€ 719.40	€ 1,656.80	94%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

*Table A3.6: Single Adult 3 or More Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single 3 or more children	SHA Median Income	Median Rent Supplement	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as Percent of Income and Rent Supplement
Rural				
Female	€ 1,331.20	€ 433.33	€ 903.61	51%
Male	€ 960.87	€ 364.00	€ 903.61	68%
18 – 34	€ 1,282.75	€ 424.67	€ 903.61	53%
35 – 54	€ 1,322.53	€ 420.33	€ 903.61	52%
55 and over	€ 814.67	€ 396.50	€ 903.61	75%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,300.00	€ 411.67	€ 903.61	53%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,322.53	€ 420.33	€ 903.61	52%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,299.57	€ 468.00	€ 903.61	51%
Urban				
Female	€ 1,203.80	€ 834.17	€ 1,988.87	98%
Male	€ 1,202.07	€ 849.98	€ 1,988.87	97%
18 – 34	€ 1,202.07	€ 824.42	€ 1,988.87	98%
35 – 54	€ 1,288.73	€ 854.97	€ 1,988.87	93%
55 and over	€ 903.50	€ 1,060.97	€ 1,988.87	101%
Irish Citizen	€ 1,202.07	€ 812.50	€ 1,988.87	99%
EEA Citizen	€ 1,316.60	€ 850.74	€ 1,988.87	92%
Non EEA Citizen	€ 1,202.07	€ 932.66	€ 1,988.87	93%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

## Appendix Four: HAP Median Income and Household Type

*Table A4.1: Couple Median Income and Rent Cost*

Couple	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 1,759.33	€ 433.00	€ 617.98	28%
Male	€ 1,672.67	€ 433.00	€ 617.98	29%
18-34 Year Olds	1,716.00	€ 433.00	€ 617.98	29%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,712.79	€ 433.00	€ 617.98	29%
55 and over	€ 1,759.33	€ 433.00	€ 617.98	28%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 2,040.57	€ 650.00	€ 1,212.81	45%
Male	€ 1,986.83	€ 650.00	€ 1,212.81	46%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 2,144.74	€ 650.00	€ 1,212.81	43%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,987.70	€ 650.00	€ 1,212.81	46%
55 and over	€ 1,956.72	€ 650.00	€ 1,212.81	47%

*Table A4.2: Couple 1-2 Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Couple 1-2 children*	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 2,119.00	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	30%
Male	€ 2,000.01	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	31%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 2,054.00	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	31%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 2,085.07	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	30%
55 and over	€ 2,082.60	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	30%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 2,300.65	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	52%
Male	€ 2,243.24	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	53%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 2,194.27	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	54%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 2,332.29	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	52%
55 and over	€ 2,101.93	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	56%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 1-2 children estimated to need 2-3 bedrooms.

*Table A4.3: Couple Three or More Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Couple 3 or more children	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 2,251.17	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	32%
Male	€ 2,139.19	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	33%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 2,140.67	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	33%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 2,227.33	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	32%
55 and over	€ 2,276.52	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	31%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 2,369.19	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	61%
Male	€ 2,377.70	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	61%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 2,247.05	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	63%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 2,428.23	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	60%
55 and over	€ 2,223.93	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	64%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

*Table A4.4: Single Adults Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 901.33	€ 420.00	€ 617.98	47%
Male	€ 879.67	€ 420.00	€ 617.98	48%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 879.67	€ 420.00	€ 617.98	48%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 879.67	€ 420.00	€ 617.98	48%
55 and over	€ 903.50	€ 420.00	€ 617.98	47%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 1,248.00	€ 550.00	€ 1,212.81	67%
Male	€ 1,027.00	€ 550.00	€ 1,212.81	77%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 903.50	€ 550.00	€ 1,212.81	83%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 897.00	€ 550.00	€ 1,212.81	84%
55 and over	€ 996.67	€ 550.00	€ 1,212.81	78%

*Table A4.5: Single Adults 1-2 Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single 1-2 children	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 1,248.00	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	44%
Male	€ 1,027.00	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	50%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 1,203.80	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	45%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,284.83	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	43%
55 and over	€ 1,074.67	€ 562.50	€ 802.26	49%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 1,471.17	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	71%
Male	€ 1,358.41	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	75%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 1,347.67	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	75%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,577.33	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	68%
55 and over	€ 1,625.00	€ 862.50	€ 1,656.80	67%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 1-2 children estimated to need 2-3 bedrooms.

*Table A4.6: Single Adult 3 or More Children Median Income and Rent Cost*

Single 3 or more children	HAP Median Income	Mode HAP Limit	Median Rent for HH Size*	Rent as a Percent of HAP and Income
<b>Rural</b>				
Female	€ 1,495.00	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	43%
Male	€ 1,209.00	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	50%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 1,421.33	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	45%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,495.00	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	43%
55 and over	€ 1,027.00	€ 600.00	€ 903.61	56%
<b>Urban</b>				
Female	€ 1,568.67	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	81%
Male	€ 1,489.80	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	83%
18-34 Year Olds	€ 1,453.83	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	84%
35 - 54 Year Olds	€ 1,694.33	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	77%
55 and over	€ 2,109.99	€ 900.00	€ 1,988.87	66%

Notes: HAP data combined to reflect SHA data in relation to number of children in household. Median rent for household size is the median between the estimated number of bedrooms needed for 3 or more children estimated to need 3 or more bedrooms.

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