

Paper One



# SINGLE HOMELESSNESS IN THE SOUTHWEST

*June 2023*

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# INTRODUCTION

This paper, the first in Cork Simon's Home Truths series, looks at single adult homelessness and housing need in the South-west. It examines trends in single adult presentations to, and exits from, emergency accommodation. As further context, it looks at single adult social housing demand and single unit housing supply. The data is supported by case studies portraying the experiences of single adults staying in our emergency shelter and their enduring efforts to search for housing.

## DEFINITIONS

**Single adults** refers to adults presenting in homeless emergency accommodation without children in their care. They may be couples and they may have children but are not presenting to emergency accommodation with children in their care.

**Adults in families** refers to adults presenting in homeless emergency accommodation with dependent children in their care.

**Emergency accommodation**, according to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's Homeless Reports, refers to State-funded emergency accommodation overseen by local authorities and includes:

- Supported Temporary Accommodation: accommodation, including family hubs, hostels, with onsite professional support.
- Temporary Emergency Accommodation: emergency accommodation with no (or minimal) support.
- Private Emergency Accommodation: an emergency accommodation service that is directly provided by a statutory agency or by a private operator as opposed to a non-government organisation (NGO and usually a registered charitable organisation). Support services are available and promoted in all PEAs.

**Long-term homelessness** is defined as episodic or cumulative stays of six months or more in emergency accommodation over the previous 12 months.

**Departures from emergency accommodation** is the term used in the Department of Housing's Homelessness Performance Reports to describe exits from emergency accommodation other than exits to tenancies.

**Housing Assistance Payment (HAP)** is a form of social housing support provided by all local authorities.

**Rental Assistance Scheme (RAS)** is a form of long-term social housing support run by local authorities.

**Choice Based Lettings (CBL)** is Cork City Council's online system for people registered on the Social Housing Support waiting list to express an interest in renting a suitable council property.

*Names in case-studies have been changed to protect identities.*





## SUMMARY

- o The Southwest has one of the highest rates of single adult homelessness in the country. 81% of adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest present as single adults (March 2023).
- o The number of single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest has followed an upward trajectory, doubling in number since January 2015. There are now 455 single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest (March 2023).
- o An average of 25.5% of all adults (single adults and adults in families) left emergency accommodation in the Southwest each quarter in 2022.
- o An average of 5.4% of single adults exited emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies each quarter in 2022. Low as this rate is, it is slightly higher than the national average of 4.4% per quarter.
- o For every 18 single adults presenting in emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022, one single adult exited to a tenancy.
- o At the end of December 2022, 50% of single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest were long-term homeless. (One in three was homeless 12 months or more while one in eight was homeless 24 months or more).
- o Single adults who exited emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies did so mostly through Approved Housing Bodies and the Private Rental Sector (41% and 41% respectively).
- o The rate of single adults exiting to social housing in the Southwest and nationally in 2022 is comparable (57% and 55% respectively). However, single adults in the Southwest exited homelessness to social housing via Approved Housing Bodies at a higher rate than nationally (41% compared to 27%) and via Local Authority lettings at a lower rate than nationally (16% compared to 28%).
- o 56% of social housing applicants in the Southwest and nationally are single adults.
- o Single households represent the largest and fastest growing social housing category.
- o Less than 10% of Local Authority housing in Cork is one-bed.
- o Less than 20% of private rented housing in Cork is one-bed.

## SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The chance of exiting homelessness for a single adult in the Southwest, and even more so in other regions in Ireland, is grim. On average only 5.4% of single adults in the Southwest left emergency accommodation to a tenancy each quarter in 2022.

Given the low rates of exits to tenancies, increasing numbers of single adults are becoming long-term homeless in the Southwest, stuck in emergency accommodation with dwindling hope of securing housing, as the case-studies in this paper demonstrate.

Approved Housing Bodies and the private rental sector through housing supports are the more likely routes out of homelessness for single adults, with the latter carrying a high risk of poverty. Local Authority housing is a less likely route out of homelessness for single adults in the Southwest than nationally.

Given the number of single adults stuck in emergency accommodation in the Southwest, their limited opportunities of exiting to a secure tenancy, their risk of becoming long-term homeless, coupled with the fact that single households represent the majority on social housing waiting lists, the role of one-bed social and affordable housing is clear in addressing the current homelessness crisis. Significantly more single unit housing options are urgently needed.



# SECTION 1

## **PRESENTATIONS IN EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION**



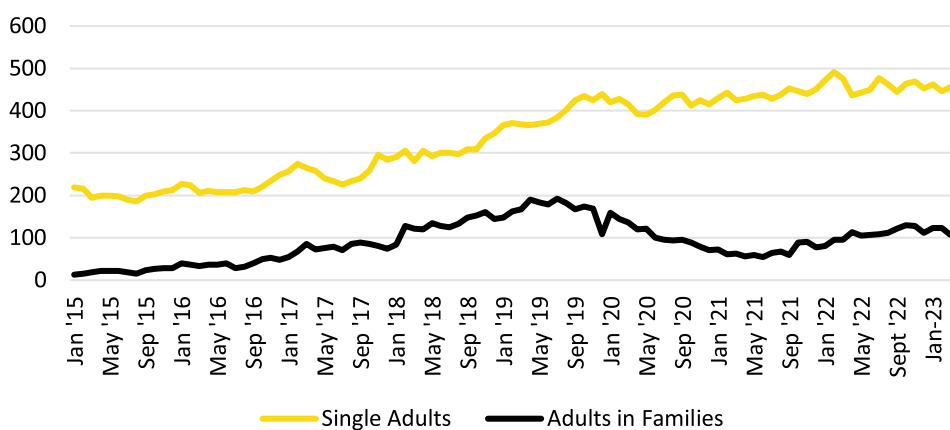
Data in the following section comes from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's monthly Homeless Reports from January 2015 to March 2023.

## 1.1 Adult presentations in emergency accommodation in the Southwest.

*81% of adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest present as single adults.*

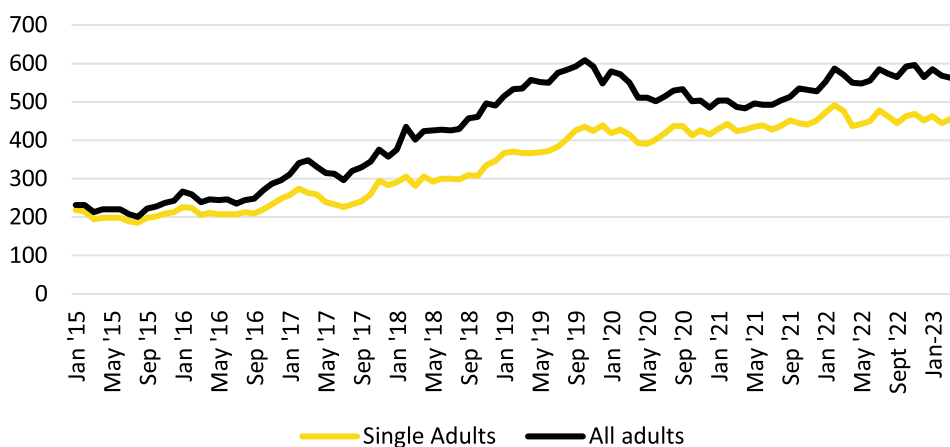
There are 455 single adults in homeless emergency accommodation in the Southwest, accounting for 81% of adults (Dept. of Housing, March 2023). The number of single adults has followed an upward trajectory, more than doubling, as Figure 1 shows, from 219 in January 2015 to 455 in March 2023.

As can also be seen in Figure 1, the number of adults in families also followed an upward trajectory up to July 2019. However, a two-year pattern of decrease followed until June 2021, after which their number started to increase again.



**Figure 1: Single adults and adults in families in emergency accommodation in the Southwest (Jan '15 – March '23).**

Single adults represented 94% of adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest in January 2015. Their proportion fell to 66% - its lowest point over the past seven years - in April 2019, when the proportion of adults in families in emergency accommodation peaked. The rate of single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest increased again to 81% in March 2023. The mean average of single adults in emergency accommodation between January 2015 and March 2023 is 79%. The median is 80%.



**Figure 2: Single adults as a percentage of all adults in homeless emergency accommodation in the Southwest (Jan '15 – March '23).**

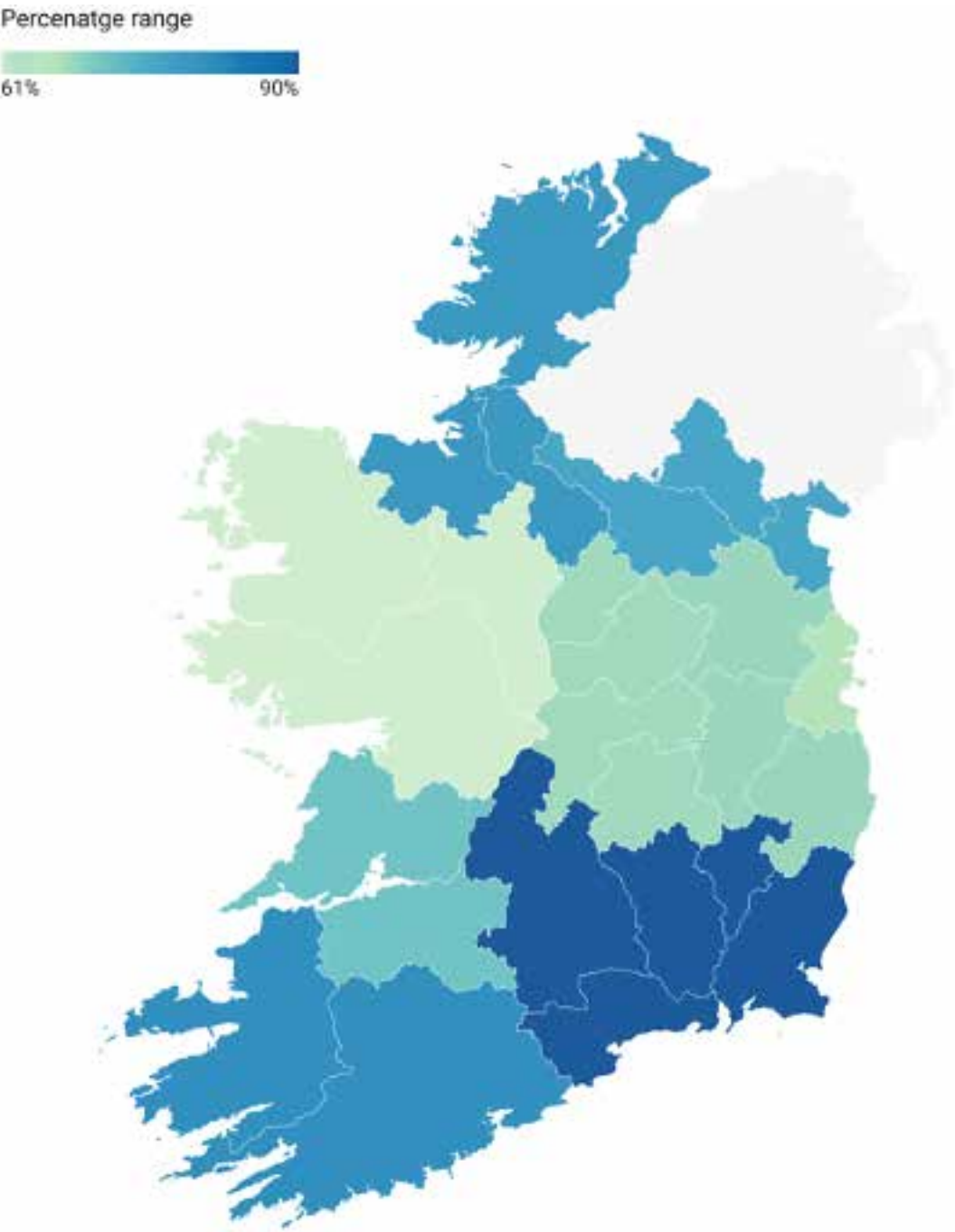
1.2 Adult presentations in emergency accommodation nationwide.



*The Southwest records one of the highest rates of single adult homelessness in the country.*

68% of adults in homeless emergency accommodation nationally are single adults (March 2023). There are however significant regional differences. The South-East records the highest rate at 90%, followed by the Southwest at 81% and the North-West at 79%. Rates of adults presenting as single are lowest in the West (61%), followed by the Midlands (64%) and Dublin (66%). Conversely rates of adults in families are highest in these areas.

Figure 3: Single adult homelessness by region (March 2023).



The percentage of single adults relative to all adults in emergency accommodation by region has remained consistently higher in the Southwest compared to the national figure and to Dublin, where close to three-quarters of adults in emergency accommodation are located.<sup>1</sup>

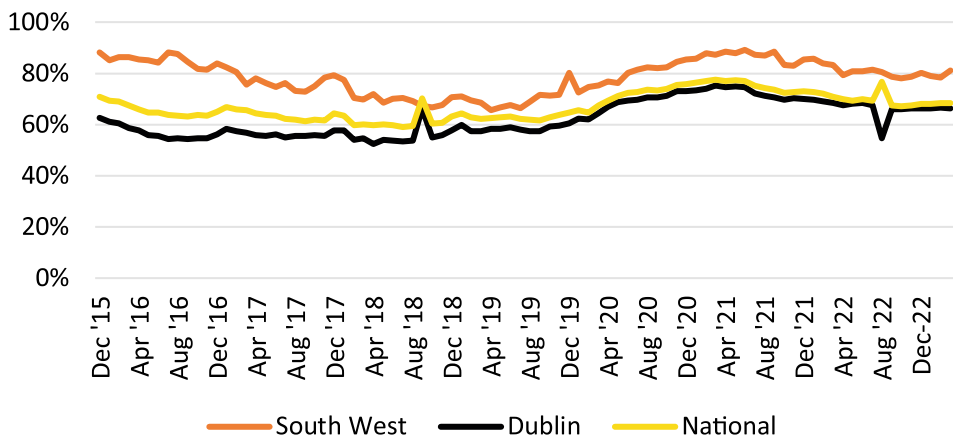


Figure 4: Single adults as a percentage of all adults by region (Jan '15 – March '23).

### 1.3 Adults and children in emergency accommodation in the Southwest.

When the number of children and adults in emergency accommodation are combined, single adults account for 64% of all people in emergency accommodation in the Southwest (March 2023). The proportion of single adults has varied between 85% (in January 2015) and 42% (in September 2018) of all people in emergency accommodation in the Southwest over the last seven years. The mean average of single adults as a proportion of all people in emergency accommodation in the Southwest between January 2015 and March 2023 is 60%. The median is 62%.

While the number of single adults has remained consistently higher than adults in families in emergency accommodation in the Southwest, the number of single adults fell below that of adults and children in families for most of 2018 and 2019 (February 2018 to November 2019), as can be seen from Figure 5 below. After this period family homelessness fell sharply for 19 months, before increasing again, while single adult homelessness continued to rise.

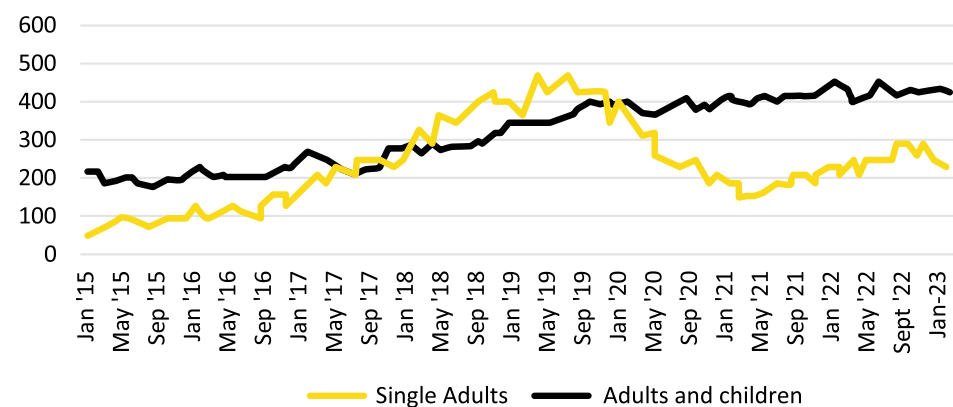


Figure 5: Single adults and adults and children in families in homeless emergency accommodation in the Southwest. (Jan '15 - March '23)

<sup>1</sup>According to Department of Housing data, in March 2023, 72% of adults in emergency accommodation were in the Dublin region.



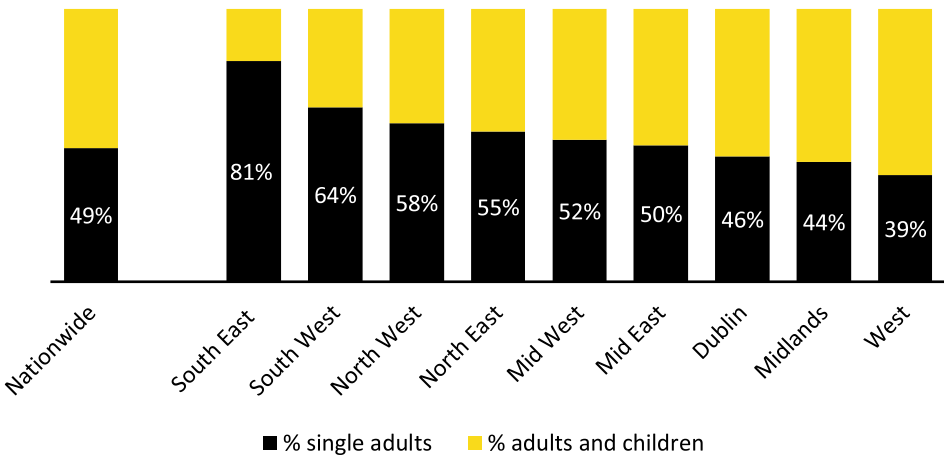
1.4 Adults and children in emergency accommodation nationwide.



*Higher rate of ‘single homelessness’ in the Southwest than in Dublin - higher rate of ‘family homelessness’ in Dublin than the Southwest.*

As Figure 6 shows, single adults represent the majority of people (adults and children) in homeless emergency accommodation in five of the nine regions, including the Southwest. In the Mid-East there is an equal ratio of single adults to adults and children in families. In the remaining three regions, including Dublin, single adults are in the minority.

Nationally, 49% of people in emergency accommodation present as single adults (March 2023). Although single adults are in the majority in most regions, as close to three-quarters of people who are homeless are located in Dublin<sup>2</sup>, where single adults are in the minority, figures for the Dublin region significantly influence the national average.



**Figure 6: Proportion of ‘single homelessness’ and ‘family homelessness’, nationwide, March 2023.**



<sup>2</sup>According to Department of Housing data, in March 2023, 73.2% of people (adults and children) in emergency accommodation were in the Dublin region.

# TADGH YOU'VE NO REAL HOPE

"There's nothing on Daft.ie. Everyone's pulling out of the market. Everyone's selling up. Very, very rarely you might get a day when there's two or three houses put up there, but they're pulled off just as fast as they're put up.

But you have to be checking four or five times a day for when the new properties come up. It's like the lottery when it comes to houses on Daft.ie. If you're not in you can't win, but the odds are you aren't going to f\*\*kin' win it anyway. You're more likely to get killed by a vending machine than find a house on Daft.

You could often click into some of the properties and there's properties viewed by over 30,000 people. I'd still send an email – most of them will say email only – send in the email, you get nothing back.

In the last two years I've had one response and one viewing. There was like 50 other people at that viewing. I was waiting about an hour to go in. Went in and viewed the property. It was tiny; a s\*\*t hole. And I would have taken it. Filled out all the applications. Never got an email back.

Oh there's no way you'd find a property within the HAP limits. HAP for a one-bed, it's not really possible. Even being on Homeless HAP, the higher threshold, it's still impossible to find places. They're looking for €1100, €1200, €1300 for one-bed properties – it's impossible. You'd be topping it up. And the Council don't always agree with that 'cause you can only use 15% of your income as a top up. So I could only put €150 a week towards my living situation, which is not a lot.

In the two years I've been on CBL (Choice Based Lettings)<sup>3</sup> I'd say I've seen one or two one-beds come up. That's about it. I check every Tuesday night into Wednesday morning without fail. I work every Tuesday night so come 12 o'clock when we're on lunch break anyway, I'd be logging in to CBL. Two two-beds and two three-beds went up this Tuesday. No single beds. They're not really putting people into two-beds when they're single. You've no real hope."



# SECTION 2

## EXITS FROM EMERGENCY ACCOMMODATION



Data source: Since Q1 2022, the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage have presented most data in their quarterly Homelessness Performance Reports according to the categories of single adults, families, and adults in families. Prior to this, with the exception of the Dublin region, data was presented on the basis of all people in emergency accommodation, without these category divisions. The following section examines data relating to exits from emergency accommodation from the four Homelessness Performance Report for 2022.

## 2.1 An overview of adult exits from emergency accommodation in the Southwest.

*An average of 25.5% of adults (single adults and adults in families) left emergency accommodation in the Southwest each quarter in 2022. A minority of these adults exited to tenancies; the majority departed to friends and family, to hospital and residential treatment, correctional facilities and 'other' places.*

*An average of 9.4% of adults (single adults and adults in families) exited emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies each quarter in 2022.*

The Department of Housing's quarterly Homelessness Performance Reports for 2022 detail exits from emergency accommodation according to exits to tenancies and according to what the reports describe as 'departures' from emergency accommodation, other than exits to tenancy. These 'departures' include staying with friends or family, departures to medical facilities (hospital / residential), departures to correctional facilities and 'other' (the largest category). While data on exits to tenancies is categorised according to single adults / adults in families, data relating to 'departures' is presented for all adults only. The analysis in this section (2.1) is therefore based on all adults (both single adults and adults in families) in emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022.

As Figure 7 shows, both the numbers of adults staying in and exiting emergency accommodation in the Southwest increased during 2022.

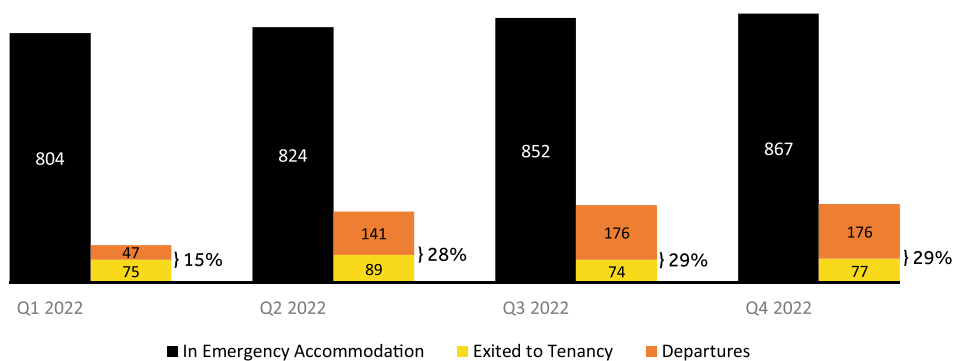
The number of adults staying in emergency accommodation in the Southwest increased by 8%, from 804 in Q1 to 867 in Q4. The number of adults leaving emergency accommodation, to a tenancy and elsewhere (i.e. 'departures'), more than doubled during 2022, from a total of 122 in Q1 to 253 in Q4. This represents 15% of adults in emergency accommodation leaving in Q1, increasing to 29% in Q4. The average rate of exit across the four quarters was 25.5%.

With the exception of Q1, 'departures' represented a larger proportion of exits than 'exits to tenancies' each quarter in 2022. The number of 'departures' increased from 47 in Q1 to 176 in Q4, or from 6% of adults in emergency accommodation in Q1 to 20% in Q4. The average percentage of 'departures' across the quarters was 16.1%.

The number of adults exiting emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies fluctuated between 74 and 89 across the quarters, or between 8.7% and 11% of adults in emergency accommodation. The average across the quarters was 9.4%.

<sup>3</sup>Choice Based Letting is Cork City Council's online system for people registered on the Social Housing Support waiting list to express an interest in renting a suitable council property. 'Suitable' refers to a property that an applicant has chosen to express interest in and that matches your housing needs.





**Figure 7: Adults staying in and exiting emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022.**

Rates of exit are higher in the Southwest than nationally.

An average of 12.4% of adults left emergency accommodation nationally each quarter in 2022 to tenancies and elsewhere (i.e. 'departures'), compared to 25.5% in the Southwest.

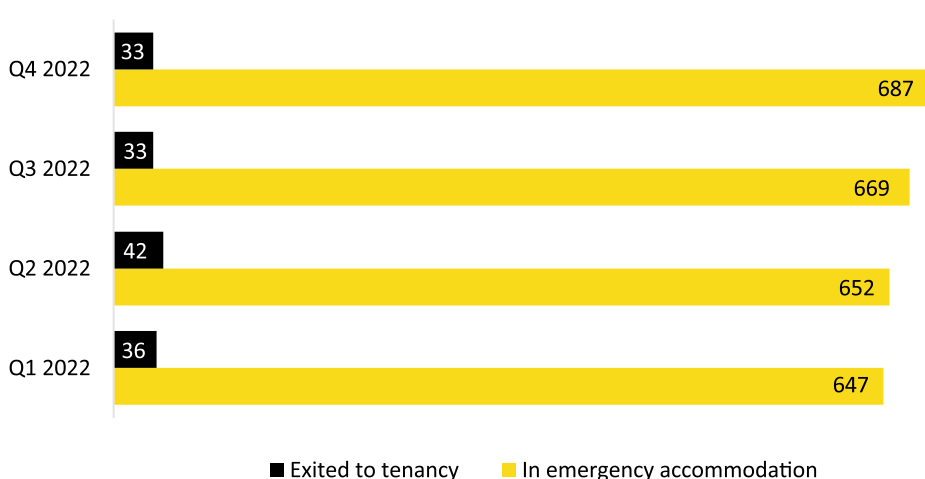
An average of 6.5% of adults exited emergency accommodation nationally each quarter in 2022 to tenancies, compared to 9.4% in the Southwest.

## 2.2 Rates of single adults exiting from emergency accommodation to tenancies in the Southwest.

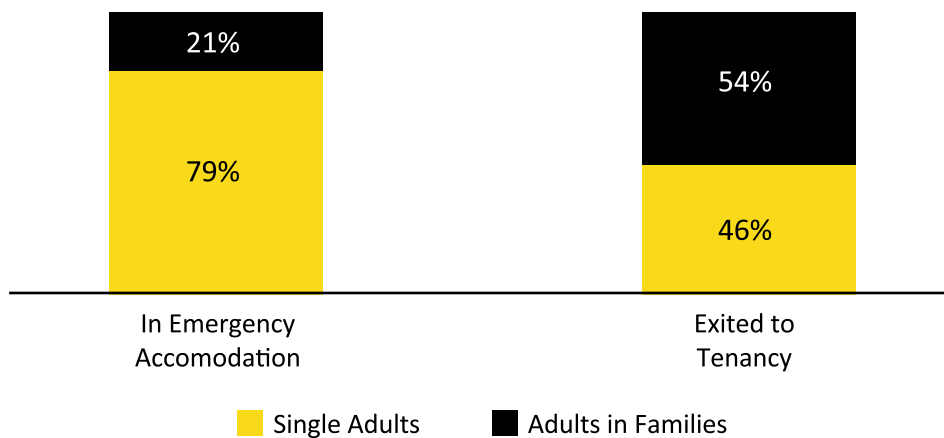
*An average of 5.4% of single adults exited homeless emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies each quarter in 2022.*

Exits from emergency accommodation to tenancies are categorised according to single adults and adults in families in the Department of Housing's quarterly Homeless Performance Reports for 2022.

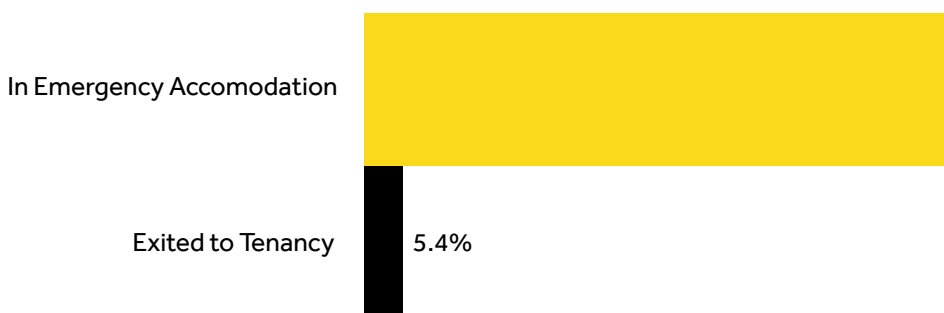
Figure 8 shows how the number of single adults in emergency accommodation increased each quarter in 2022 and how exits to tenancies fluctuated across the quarters. Exits to tenancies ranged between 33 and 42 per quarter, or between 4.8% and 6.4%. The average rate of exit to a tenancy each quarter among single adults was 5.4% or 36 adults. For every 18 single adults presenting in emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022, one single adult exited to a tenancy.



**Figure 8: Single Adults staying in emergency accommodation in the Southwest, and exiting to tenancies, per quarter in 2022.**



In 2022, single adults accounted for an average of 79% of adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest and an average of 46% of exits of tenancies, each quarter.



A quarterly average of 5.4% of single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest exited to tenancies in 2022.



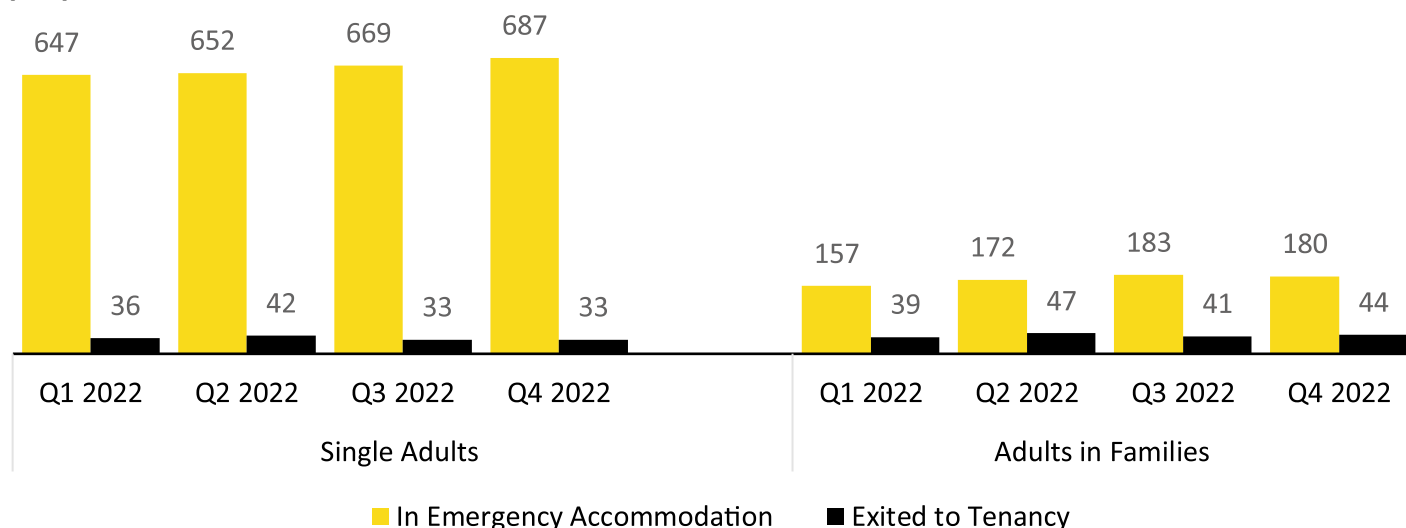
For every 18 single adults presenting to emergency accommodation in the Southwest each quarter in 2022, one single adult exited to a tenancy.

### 2.2.1 Rates of exits to tenancies among single adults and adults in families in the Southwest.

Single adults accounted for an average of 79% of presentations in emergency accommodation in the Southwest and 46% of exits to tenancies each quarter in 2022; adults in families accounted for the remaining 21% of presentations and 54% of exits to tenancies on average each quarter.

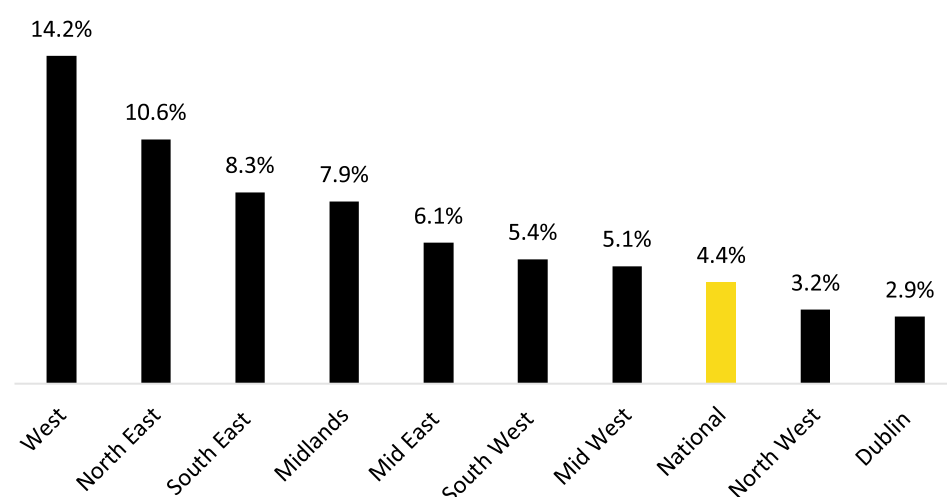
Lower numbers of adults in families staying in emergency accommodation and higher numbers exiting to tenancies compared to single adults, each quarter in 2022, resulted in a higher quarterly average rate of exits to tenancies of 24.7% among adults in families, compared to 5.4% among single adults, as Figure 9 illustrates.

**Figure 9: Single adults and adults in families staying in emergency accommodation in the Southwest and exiting to tenancies, per quarter in 2022.**



### 2.2.2 Rates of exits to tenancies among single adults in the Southwest and nationally.

The rate of exits from emergency accommodation to tenancies of 5.4% on average per quarter for single adults in 2022 is higher than the national average of 4.4% per quarter. There is, however, considerable variation across the country; average exit to tenancy rates per quarter in 2022 for single adults range from 2.9% in Dublin to 14.6% in the West. As almost three-quarters of homeless adults are in Dublin, figures for this region significantly influence the national average.



**Figure 10: Single adults, exits to tenancies 2022 – nationwide.**

2.3 Single adult exit to tenancy routes from emergency accommodation in the Southwest.

*Single adults in the Southwest are most reliant on Approved Housing Bodies and the Private Rental Sector to exit homelessness.*

As noted above, an average of 5.4% of single adults exited emergency accommodation in the Southwest per quarter in 2022. When exits for the four quarters are combined, 144 single adults were recorded as exiting emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies in 2022.

Among those who exited to tenancies, 97% did so with some form of social housing support. As figure 11 shows, the majority, 57%, exited to social housing; about two-thirds of whom secured tenancies through Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) and one-third through Local Authorities (LA). 41% found housing in the Private Rental Sector, mostly through HAP - Housing Assistance Payment or RAS - Rental Accommodation Scheme, while a small number of private rental exits are categorised in the Homelessness Performance Reports as 'other'. A very small minority, 2%, secured supported long-term accommodation.

There is ample evidence to be concerned with the security and affordability associated with private rental accommodation compared to other tenancy options via AHBs and LAs. Of particular concern are the recently published figures relating to eviction notices in the Private Rental Sector.<sup>4</sup> So too is CSO data which found that out of all tenure types, people in private rented accommodation with housing support are at the greatest risk of poverty once their rent is paid (CSO, 2022).<sup>5</sup>

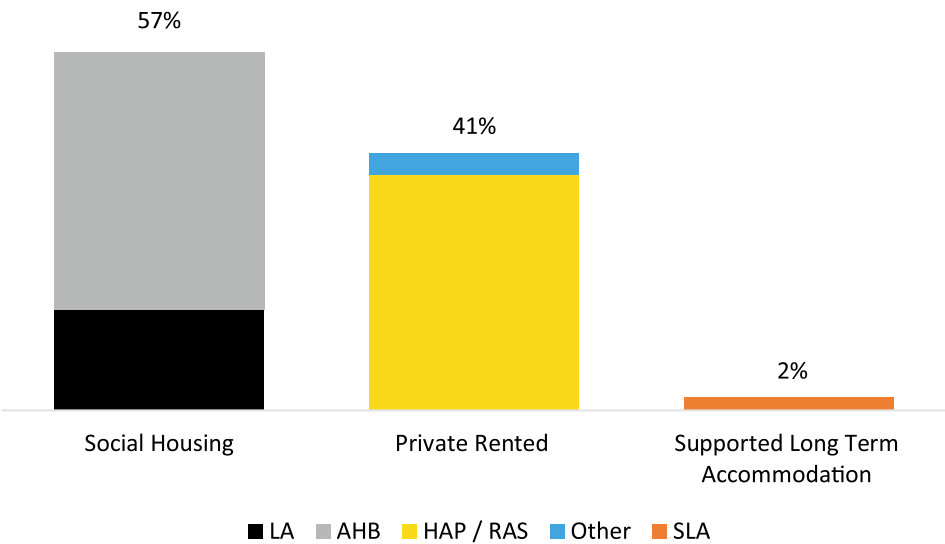


Figure 11: Single adult exit to tenancy routes from emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022 – overview.

As figure 12 shows, when exits to tenancies are further broken down, Approved Housing Bodies and the private rental sector through HAP and RAS were the most common routes to tenancies, accounting for 41% and 38% respectively of exits to tenancies.

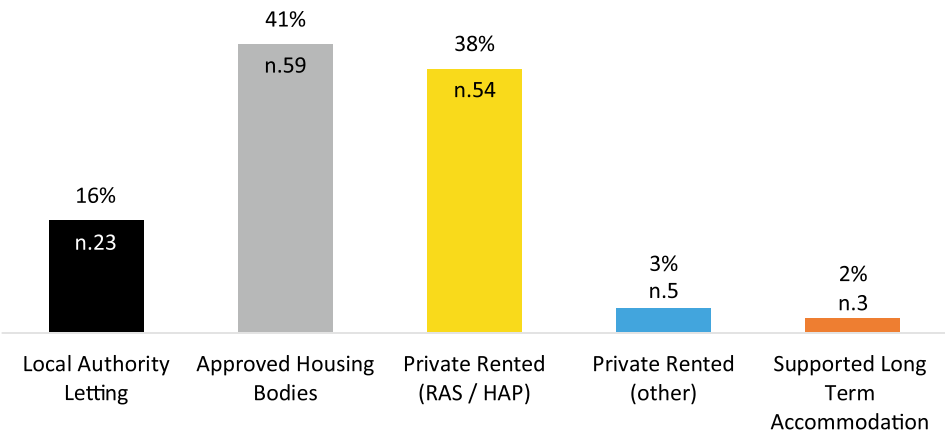


Figure 12: Single adult exit to tenancy routes from emergency accommodation in the Southwest in 2022 - further breakdown.

<sup>4</sup>Notices of Termination (NoT), recorded by the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), increased nationally from 131 in Q3 2019 to 1,666 in Q2 2022. During this time frame, NoT data related to tenancies that had lasted more than six months, as was the legislation then for reporting. In July 2022, new legislation came into effect that requires landlords to send a copy of all NoT to the RTB. In Q3 2022, 4,741 Notices of Termination nationally were recorded by the RTB and in Q4 2022, 4,329 were recorded.

<sup>5</sup>According to the latest Survey on Income and Living Conditions (2022), 21.9% of the population are at risk of poverty when housing costs are factored in. Households in receipt of rent subsidies such as HAP / RS / RAS are worst affected; their at-risk of poverty rate is 67.6% when housing costs are factored in.

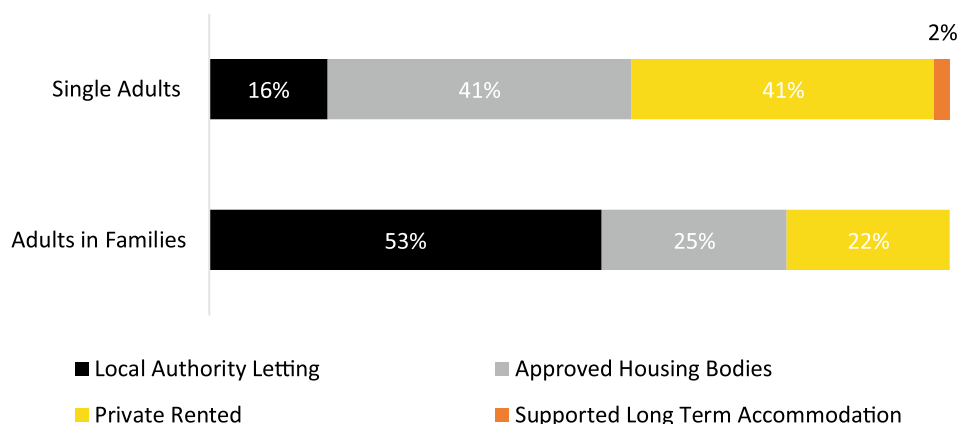


### 2.3.1 Exit to tenancy routes among single adults and adults in families in the Southwest.

161 adults in families were recorded as exiting emergency accommodation in the Southwest to tenancies in 2022 (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 combined), compared to 144 single adults.

As with single adults, the majority of adults in families who exited to tenancies did so through social housing. However, as Figure 13 shows, social housing exits via Local Authorities were more common among adults in families, while social housing exits via Approved Housing Bodies were more common among single adults.

Figure 13 also shows that single adults in the Southwest exited to the private rental market at almost double the rate of adults in families – 41% and 22% respectively. Exits to private rented accommodation among both groups were mainly through HAP and RAS with a small number of private rental exits categorised in the reports as 'other'.

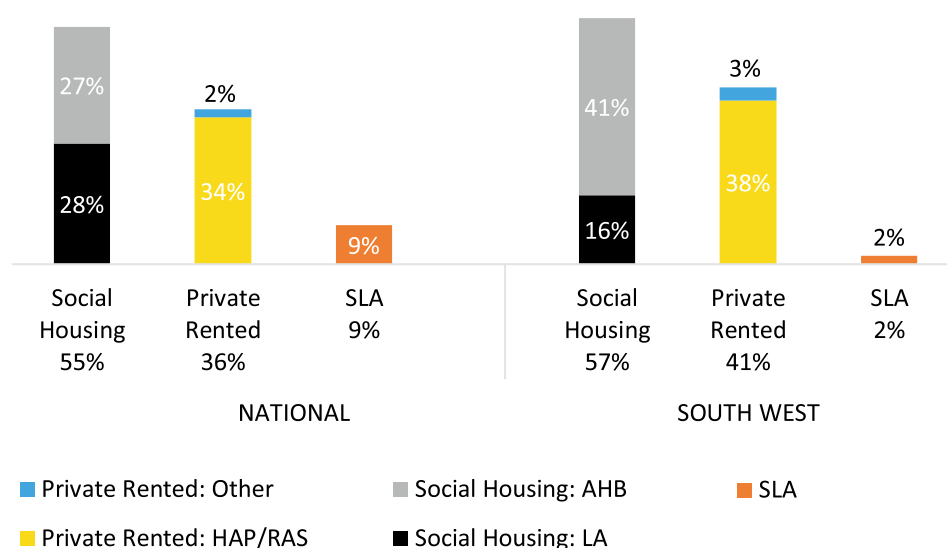


**Figure 13: Single adults and adults in families – exit to tenancy routes from emergency accommodation in the Southwest 2022 (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 combined).**

### 2.3.2 Exit to tenancy routes among single adults in the Southwest and nationally.

Nationally, 1,215 single adults were recorded as exiting emergency accommodation to tenancies in 2022 (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 combined). As the left-hand side of Figure 14 shows, the majority (55%) exited to social housing - almost equally to Local Authority and Approved Housing Body lettings. Over one-third (36%) exited to private rented accommodation and the remaining 9% secured supported long-term accommodation.

As Figure 14 also shows, a higher percentage of single adults in the Southwest exited via the Private Rental Sector compared to single adults nationally (41% and 36%). The rates of single adults exiting to social housing in the Southwest and nationally in 2022 are comparable (57% and 55%), however, single adults in the Southwest exited to social housing via Approved Housing Bodies at a higher rate than nationally (41% and 27%) and via Local Authority lettings at a lower rate than nationally (16% and 28%).



**Figure 14: Single adult exit to tenancy routes from emergency accommodation in 2022 (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4 combined) - nationwide and in the Southwest.**

# NATHAN: SINGLE FELLA IS THE WORST.



"Oh I've done private rented over the years. One-bedroom yeah. Single fella is the worst.

Years ago you could do a house share. But I wouldn't do that now 'cause you're in with strangers. It's bad enough in here (Cork Simon emergency shelter) sharing with people.

I don't know how to get my head around it (the cost of rent) – to pay for it and to pay for your food and all.

Most of the time you ring a place, it's gone. You get fed up of every day doing it and then you just give up for a while; depressed out of me head.

You can't get out of it. I don't seem to see a way anyway. And it's not for want of trying.

A bed, a bathroom and a kitchen. Basics. Oh, I'd love it. Come and go as you please."

# SECTION 3

## LONG-TERM HOMELESSNESS



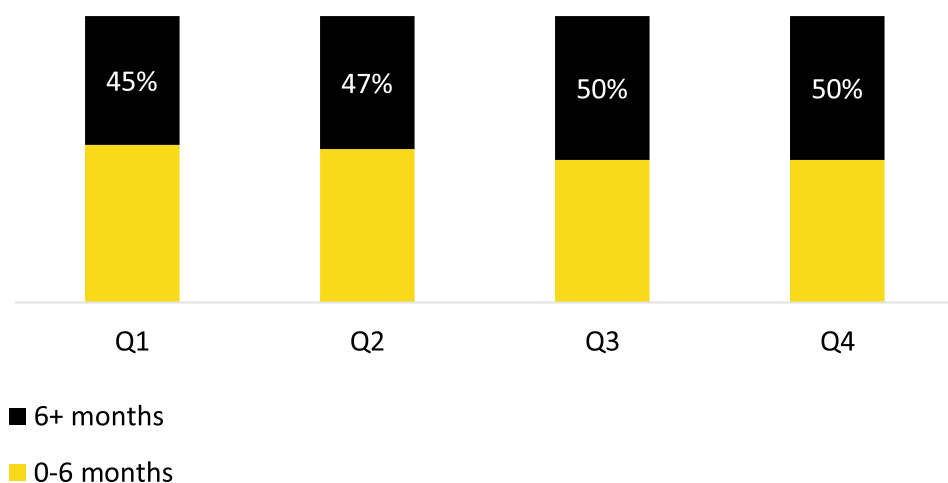
Data source: The following section analyses data from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's quarterly Homelessness Performance Reports for 2022. Data relating to long-term homelessness is recorded in these reports according to duration of stay in emergency accommodation on the last day of the quarter.

Long-term homelessness is defined by Government as episodic or cumulative stays of six months or more in emergency accommodation over the previous twelve months.

### 3.1 Long-term homelessness among single adults in the Southwest.

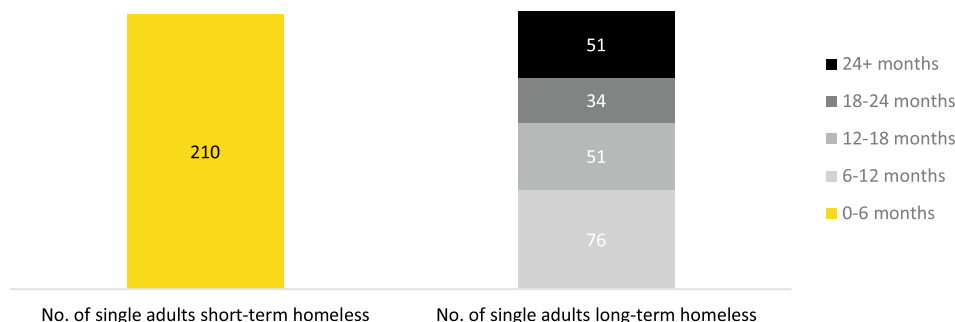
**50% of single adults in the Southwest are long-term homeless.**

As Figure 15 shows, the proportion of single adults long-term homeless in the Southwest increased as 2022 progressed. Long-term homelessness among single adults rose from 45% at the end of Q1 to 50.2% at the end of Q4. This is of concern as long stays in emergency accommodation have been found to have detrimental effects on people's well-being. (Finnerty, 2018).



**Figure 15: Single adults long-term homeless in emergency accommodation in the Southwest 2022.**

Figure 16 details length of stay at the end of Q4, 2022 for single adults in emergency accommodation in the Southwest: 210 single adults, or 49.8%, were short-term homeless and 212, or 50.2%, were long-term homeless - stuck in emergency accommodation for six months or more. 136 (32%) have been in emergency accommodation for 12 months or more and 51 (12%) for 24 months or more.



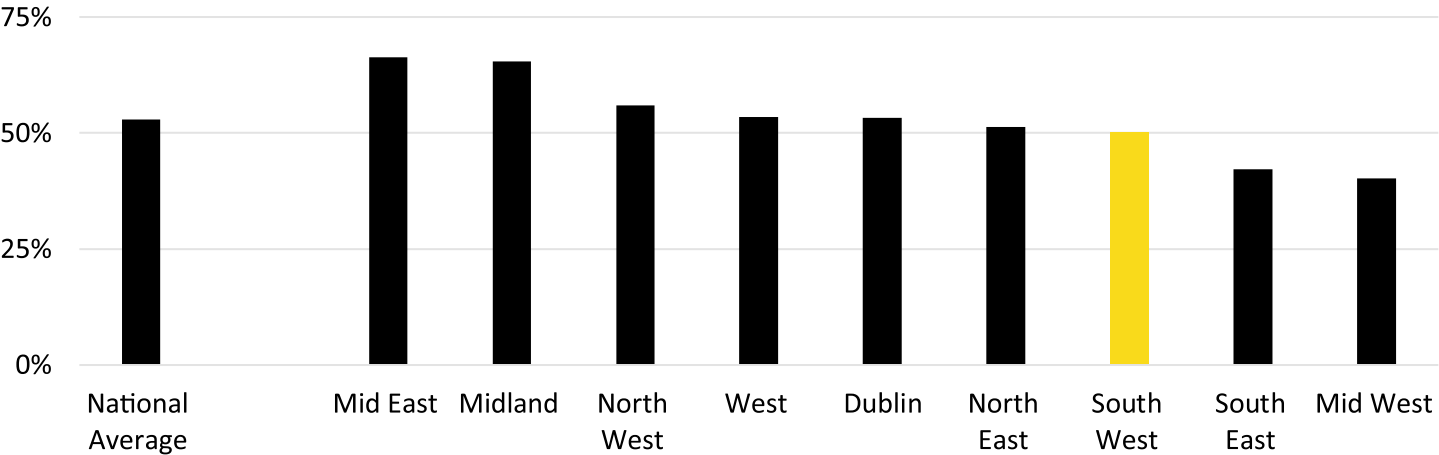
**Figure 16: Length of stay in emergency accommodation among single adults in the Southwest at the end of Q4, 2022.**



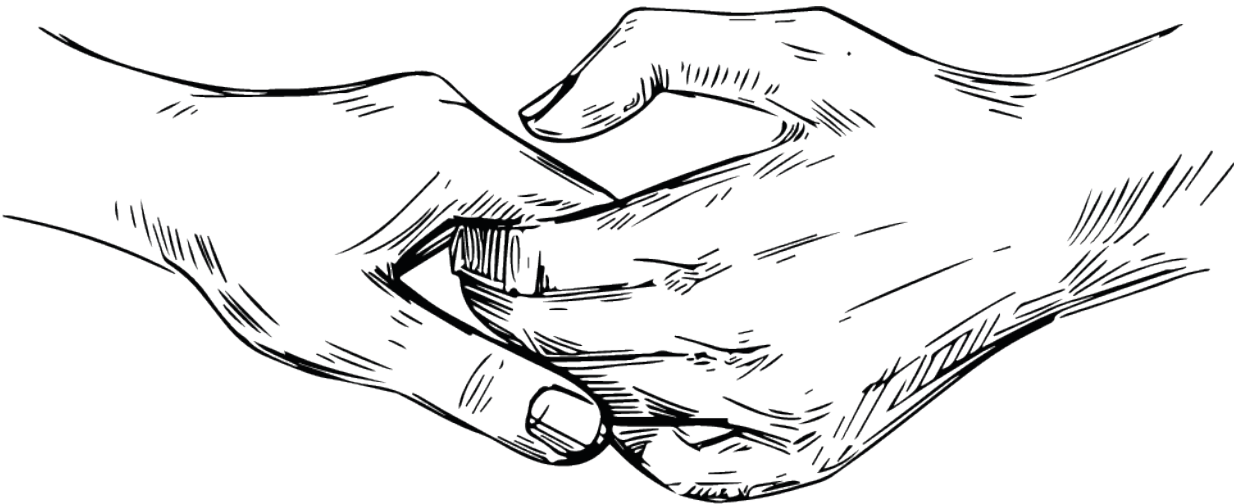
3.1.1 Long-term homelessness among single adults and families in the Southwest and nationally.

Long-term homelessness among single adults in the nine regions nationwide in Q4 2022 ranged between 40% and 66%, and average 53%, as Figure 17 shows. Even though 50.2% of single adults in the Southwest are long-term homeless, the Southwest has one of the lower rates of long-term homelessness among single adults across the country, as Figure 17 also shows.

Figure 17: Long-term homeless among single adults nationwide in Q4, 2022.



Data relating to long-term homelessness is included in Homelessness Performance Reports for 2022 according to single adults and families, rather than adults in families, as is the case in other sections of the reports. According to the report for Q4, 2022, the average rate of long-term homelessness among families nationally is 58%. The Southwest records the lowest rate of family long-term homelessness, at 23% - half the long-term homelessness rate for single adults in the Southwest.



# FIONA:

## THE WHOLE LOT OF MY LIFE IS ON HOLD.



"To be honest, I'm in homelessness since I'm 15 years of age. I'm 35 now, so it's a long time.

I'm on it (the social housing waiting list) nearly seven years now.

I'm on CBL (Choice Based Lettings)<sup>3</sup> every week – I'm bidding on houses every week. Every Wednesday. I was on it yesterday. I'm clicking on the houses all the time and I'm not getting nothing from it like.

I have (looked for private rented accommodation) and do you know what, never again. There's no point like. I don't look on them (property websites such as Daft.ie) anymore. I don't because I was doing it all the time. Very hard to find a place. Very, very hard. Even looking up online, like, there's not even a point emailing your details because there's no one gonna get back to you because the house is already gone.

I remember when I was viewing places years ago, I was viewing up to five, six houses a day like and now you wouldn't even get that in a year. That's years ago, I'm talking 10 years ago now.

I'm well able to manage places you know.

I just want my own home and just move on like you know. I just want to get out of here, you know.

The whole lot of my life is on hold. Sometimes I feel like giving up. I just want a home like, you know."

# SECTION 4

## SOCIAL HOUSING WAITING LISTS



Data source: The following section analyses data from the Summary of Social Housing Assessments reports, published by the Housing Agency.

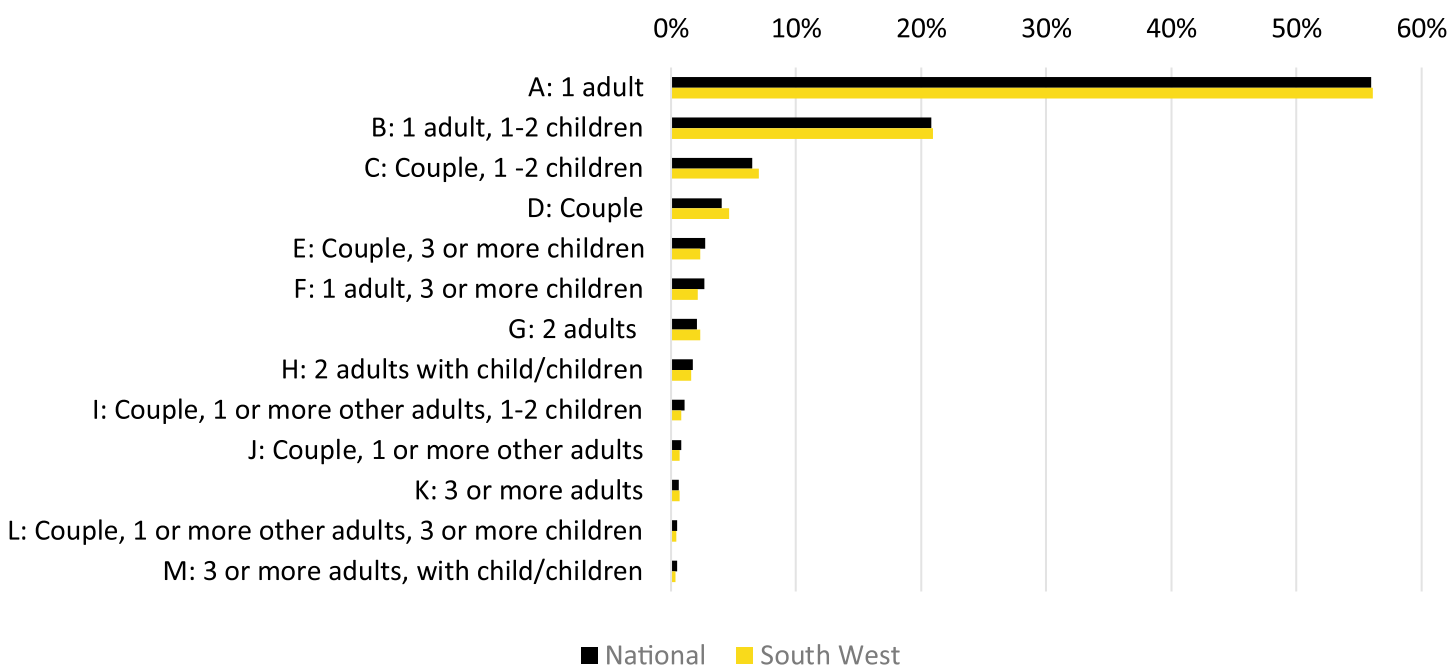
#### 4.1 Social housing applicant categories.

***56% of social housing applicants in the Southwest and nationally are single adults.***

The Summary of Social Housing Assessment (SSHA) draws together social housing waiting list data from Local Authorities across the country. Social housing applicants are divided into 13 household categories, labelled A- M in Figure 18 below. The largest category by far, both in the Southwest and nationally, according to the latest SSHA (2022) is the single adult category: "A: 1 adult". Nationally and in the Southwest, single adults account for 56% of people on social housing waiting lists – that's 4,773 people in the Southwest and 32,383 people nationally.

Couples account for an additional 4.7% of applicants in the Southwest and 4% nationally. With single person and couple applicants combined, approximately 60% of applicants in the Southwest and nationally may require one-bed homes.

**Figure 18: Social housing applicants by household type, 2022.**





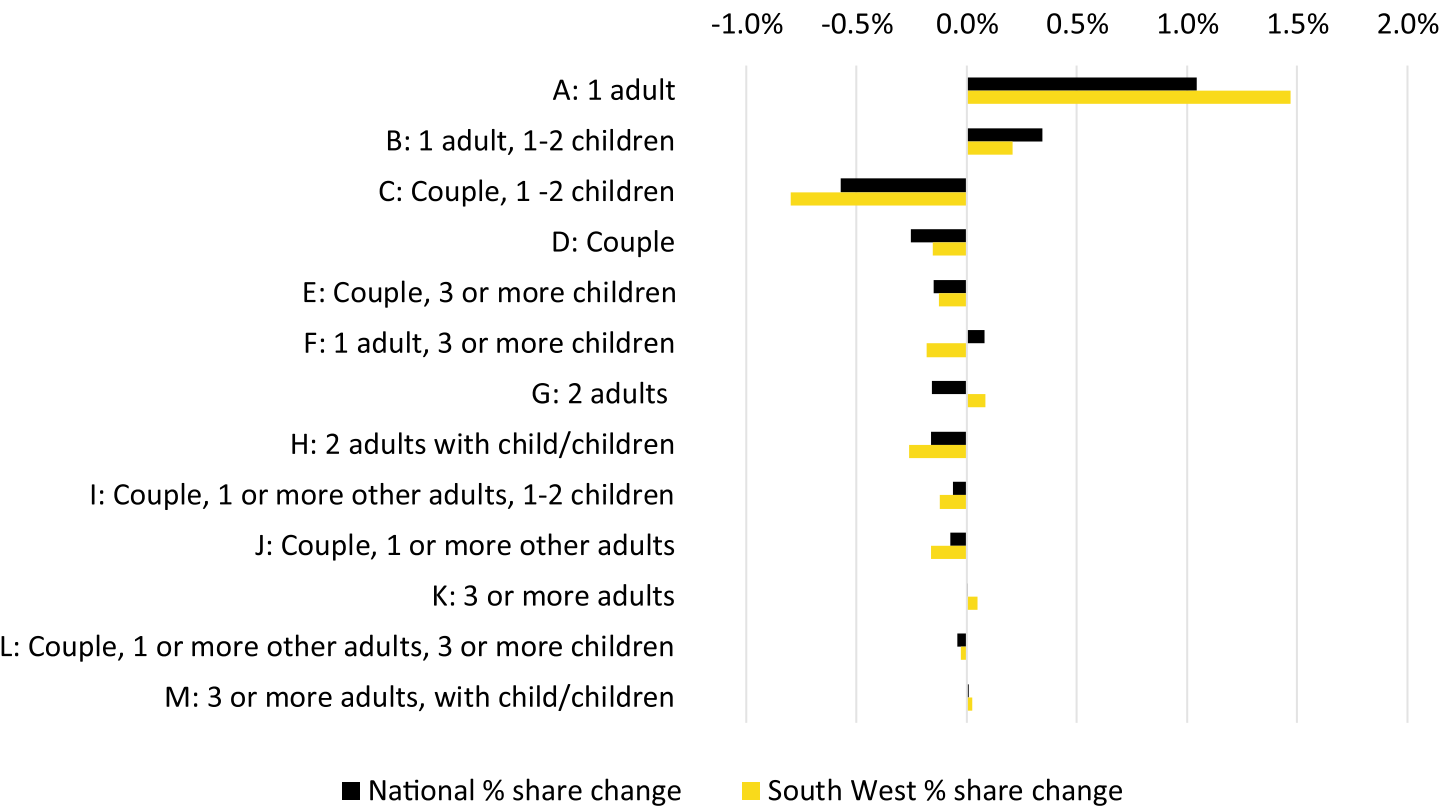
4.2 Changes in social housing applicant categories between 2021 and 2022.

Single adult is the fastest growing social housing category.

In 2022, both in the Southwest and nationally, the number of applicants on social housing waiting lists reduced compared to the previous year, as has been the pattern since 2016. In the Southwest, the number of applicants fell by 2.4% and nationally applicants fell by 4.2%.

While the number of single adult applicants also fell both in the Southwest and nationally, the percentage share of single adults increased more than any other household category, as Figure 19 shows. In the Southwest the percentage share of single adults increased by 1.5% from 54.6% in 2021 to 56.1% in 2022. Nationally it increased by 1.1%, from 54.9% to 56%.

Figure 19: Social housing categories - percentage share change between 2021 and 2022.



# LIAM: EVERYONE NEEDS THEIR OWN PLACE.

"I've been homeless four years. I thought, yeah, I'll have a place in a year or so, tops. Four and a half years and I'm still here.

I was here (Cork Simon emergency shelter) about a month before starting college. The stresses of college, coming back here, trying to study, can't study, can't get no sleep, can't get no peace and quiet.

I try to keep my head down. Trying to get my life back on track. Actually, if I stay here any longer my life isn't going to get back on track. It's going to get worse. Like I know there's a housing crisis. At the end of the day, it's getting worse. Trying to get somewhere these days is bloody impossible.

I'm sick of looking on Daft now. I've been to so many viewings now I'm sick of it. I went to viewings all over Cork. I even went so far as going up to Macroom looking for places. I've often went to a viewing, and I'd have to stand in line to get in to the building. Landlord bring you up, have a quick look around, tell you to go. I'll contact you, and that's it. Hear nothing.

Since I became homeless, it's just getting very hard because of my situation. Landlords are thinking, why is he homeless? I don't want to be going up to someone and them saying, oh where do you live? This is not a good location (an emergency shelter) d'you know. Looks bad on you. Like why are you in there? I'm here for my problems.

It's not only the problem of getting a place; it's the problem of actually keeping to afford to pay the place. I'm on disability, so how would someone like me be able to afford a place for a thousand euro on disability? Now I know I'd have HAP, but HAP only covers you a certain amount. It's budgeting everything. You have to pay ESB, heating, the whole lot. No wonder why people are becoming homeless like.

I'm up in college and I know about four people in that college are homeless. Four people. And that's not including me. Homeless because they can't afford anything.

It's messed up. It's, in my personal experience, not good. I wake up in the morning and instead of sitting here thinking what am I going to do? Drinking, whatever, I wake up and go this is what needs to be done. And I do it. I don't have hardly nothing to do. I just make stuff up to do.

I can't even get a job because I can't concentrate. I can't focus. I can't focus in college. So my own place would be my own independence, d'you you know what I mean? Come and go, do what I want, buy my own shopping, cook when I want. I know the food is lovely here (in Cork Simon's emergency shelter) and the staff are lovely. But I don't have my own independence. It's not good like. Everyone needs their own place like. D'you know what I mean? It's the independence."



# SECTION 5

## HOUSING STOCK



Almost one in four households in Ireland are single person households (Census, 2016) and such households represent the largest and fastest growing household category in the EU (EU-LFS in Eurostat, 2022). It has been noted that the supply of one-bed homes lags behind the growth of single person households in Ireland. The Department of Housing notes that there are approximately two and half times as many one-two person households as there are one-two person homes. (Department of Housing, 2018).

An in-depth analysis of housing supply and demand is beyond the scope of this paper. However, as an insight into the supply of one-bed homes, private rented and Local Authority housing in Cork has been documented according to unit type. Plans for future social and affordable housing in the Southwest have also been noted.

5.1 Private rented stock.

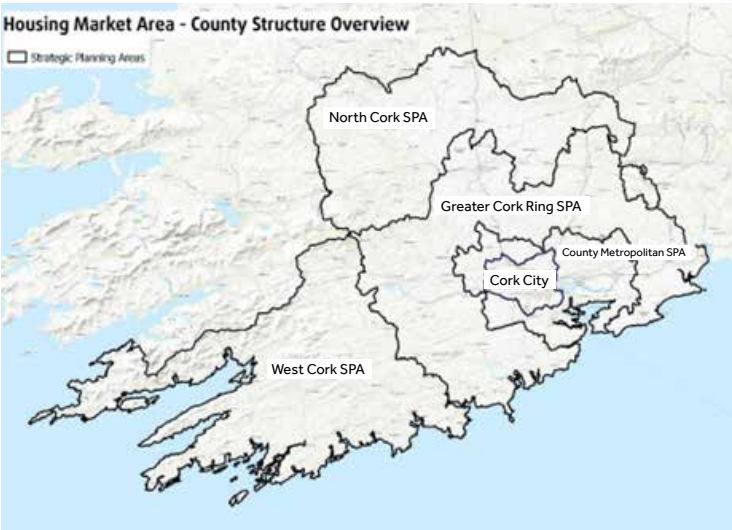
*One-bed homes account for 19.5% of the private rental market in Cork city and an average of 12.2% outside the city.*

Cork Joint Housing Strategy 2022 provides an analysis of private rental properties by unit type according to what the strategy terms ‘strategic planning areas’ in Cork. The analysis is based on data published by the Residential Tenancies Board from Q1, 2020. Figures 20 and 21 below, taken from the strategy, show the ‘strategic planning areas’ (SPA) used in the analysis. In all but one of the strategic planning areas in Cork, one-bed homes account for the fewest number of housing units.

As Figure 20 shows, among the properties in the analysis, three-bed homes are in greatest supply, accounting for 42.5%. The next most common house size is two-bed homes (28%), followed by four-bed (15.9%) and finally by one-bed homes (13.6%). In the city, the order is two-bed closely followed by three-bed, then one-bed, followed by four-bed. Figure 20 also shows that one bed properties account for between 10.82% and 19.47% of registered tenancies across Cork. Cork City SPA has the highest proportion of one-beds at 19.47%. Outside the city, in the four remaining SPAs, one-bed properties account for 12.2% on average of private rented tenancies.

**Figure 20: Percentage of registered private rental properties by unit type and ‘strategic planning areas’ (SPA) in Cork (KPMG Future Analytics & Lisney, 2022).**

SPA	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
County Metro SPA	10.85%	28.38%	46.25%	14.30%
Greater Ring SPA	10.82%	26.94%	47.19%	15.05%
North Cork SPA	10.82%	21.21%	50.11%	17.86%
West Cork SPA	16.20%	27.58%	37.96%	18.15%
Cork City	19.47%	35.63%	30.71%	14.19%
Percentage share (Cork Simon addition)	13.6%	28%	42.5%	15.9%



**Figure 21: Cork Strategic Planning Areas (SPA) (KPMG Future Analytics & Lisney, 2022).**



5.2 Local Authority housing stock.

One-bed homes comprise less than 10% of Cork City Council and Cork County Council’s housing stock.

A 2017 NOAC (National Oversight and Audit Commission) report on Local Authority housing showed one bedroom housing, including bedsits, to account for less than 10% of social housing stock in Cork City and Cork County Councils, as Figure 22, which is taken from the report, shows.

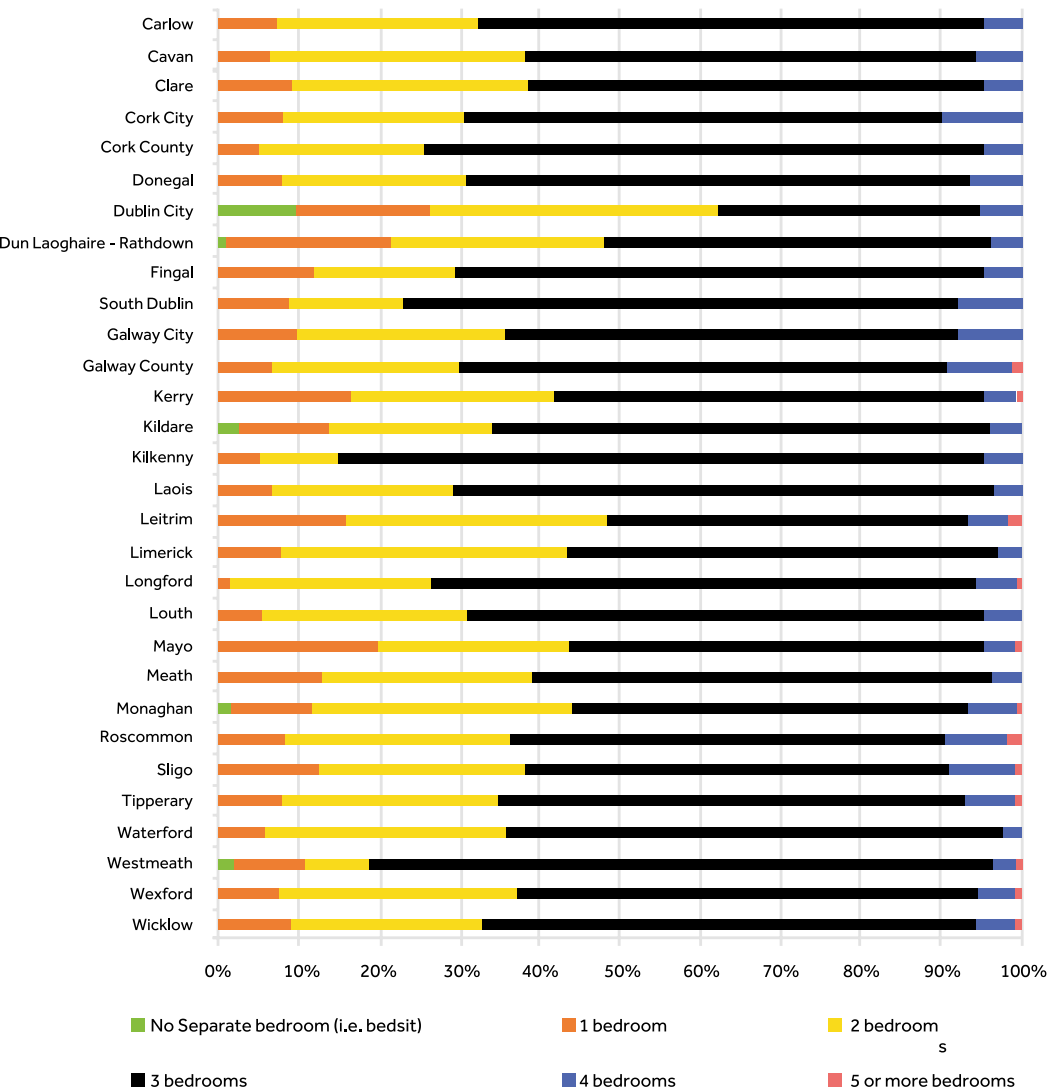


Figure 22: Percentage of housing units by number of bedrooms in each Local Authority. Data from 2015. (NOAC, 2017).

The report found that three-bedroom homes make up the majority of Local Authority housing stock nationwide (55%), followed by two-bedroom homes (26%), with one bed units (including bedsits) accounting for 13%.

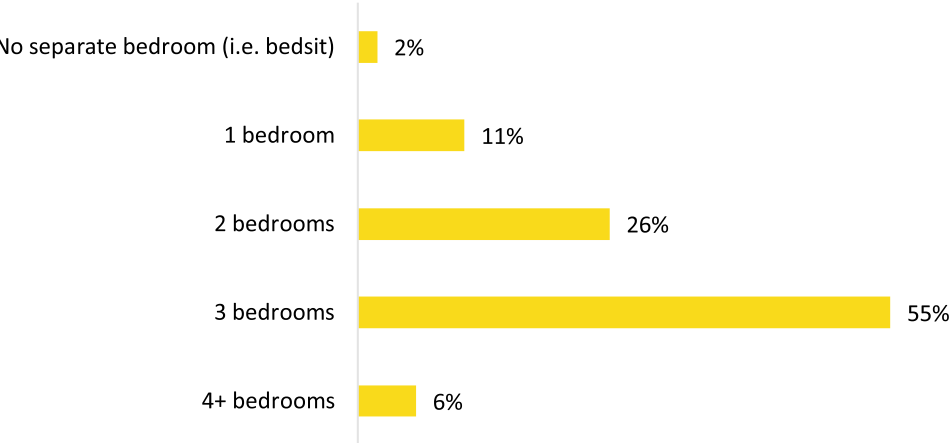


Figure 23: Percentage of bedrooms in Local Authority housing stock nationwide. Data from 2015. (NOAC, 2017).




### 5.3 Planned social housing in the Southwest.

Under Housing for All<sup>5</sup>, councils are required to produce Housing Delivery Action Plans (HDAP) to include details of social and affordable housing delivery for the period 2022 – 2026. HDAPs for councils in the Southwest – Cork City Council, Cork County Council and Kerry County Council – all identify the prominent need for one-bed homes. Only Cork County Council quantify one-bed homes needed and currently planned for the period 2022 to 2026 and show that supply as planned will only meet 20% of need. Cork County Council acknowledge the need to rebalance development towards a greater supply of one-bed units.



<sup>5</sup>Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland' is the Government's housing plan to 2030.



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