



Relate

Contents

Page No.

- 1. Right to housing**
At present, there is no explicit right to housing in the Irish Constitution or Irish law.
- 2. Defining homelessness**
The legal definition of homeless in Ireland is set out in the *Housing Act 1988*.
- 2. Why people become homeless**
- 2. Number of homeless people**
- 3. Homelessness policy**
In February 2013, the Government issued a *Homelessness Policy Statement*.
- 5. Youth homelessness**
- 6. Accommodation for homeless people**
The policy is to provide long-term housing for homeless people.
- 7. Social welfare**
- 8. Accessing services**
The majority of homeless people are in the cities.

The journal of developments in social services, policy and legislation in Ireland

Homelessness

Homelessness is difficult to both define and to measure. Finding long-term sustainable solutions for individuals and families who become homeless is also difficult. Here we describe the scale of the problem, the policies being pursued and how they are being implemented.

Right to housing

At present, there is no explicit right to housing in the Irish Constitution or Irish law. The local authorities have general responsibility under the *Housing Act 1988* for the provision of housing for adults who cannot afford to provide it for themselves. The local authorities do not have a statutory obligation to house people. They may help with accommodation by providing housing directly or through arrangements with voluntary housing organisations and other voluntary bodies. They may also provide funding to voluntary bodies for emergency accommodation and for long-term housing for homeless people.

The Child and Family Agency (Tusla) has responsibility under the *Child Care Act 1991* for providing accommodation for people under the age of 18 who are homeless or in need of care. It may also provide aftercare facilities for young people aged over 18 – see Aftercare page 6.

The Constitutional Convention has recently recommended that the Constitution be amended to include economic, social and cultural rights including a specific right to housing. The Government has not yet decided if this recommendation will be put to a referendum.

Defining homelessness

The legal definition of *homeless* in Ireland is set out in the *Housing Act 1988*. This states that you are considered homeless if:

- There is no accommodation available that, in the opinion of the local authority, you and any other person who normally lives with you or who might reasonably be expected to live with you, can reasonably occupy or remain in occupation of, or
- You are living in a hospital, county home, night shelter or other such institution, and you are living there because you have no suitable accommodation or
- You are, in the opinion of the local authority, unable to provide accommodation from your own resources

The *European Typology of Homelessness and Housing Exclusion* (ETHOS) is a wider definition of homelessness that has been recommended by the Jury of the Consensus Conference on Homelessness. It was developed under the auspices of FEANTSA, the European Federation of National Associations Working with the Homeless. It classifies the living conditions of homeless people as follows:

- Rooflessness – without a shelter of any kind, sleeping rough
- Houselessness – with a place to sleep but that place is temporary in institutions or shelter
- Living in insecure housing – threatened with severe exclusion due to insecure tenancies, eviction, domestic violence
- Living in inadequate housing – in caravans on illegal campsites, in unfit housing, in extreme overcrowding

A modified version of this – known as ETHOS light – excludes some forms of insecure and inadequate housing.

The Youth Homelessness Strategy (see page 5) regards young people as homeless if:

- They are sleeping on the streets or in other places that are not intended for night-time accommodation or not providing safe protection from the elements

Or

- They are sleeping in a public or private shelter, emergency lodging, bed and breakfast or such, providing protection from the elements but lacking the other characteristics of a home and/or intended only for a short stay

The Strategy's definition of homeless includes "young people who look for accommodation from the ...*Out of Hours Service*" and "those in insecure accommodation with relatives or friends regarded as inappropriate, this is to say where the young person is placed at risk or where he or she is not in a position to remain".

Why people become homeless

Ending Homelessness – A Housing-Led Approach is a report commissioned by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and published in 2012. It states that research conducted in Ireland and internationally shows that the following are the main factors that lead to homelessness:

- Housing and financial crises
- Discharge from institutions
- Family breakdown, including domestic violence
- Substance abuse
- Mental health issues
- The transition from youth to adulthood for young people in care or who were homeless as young people

Many people are homeless for relatively short periods, for reasons linked to issues such as loss of employment, eviction or relationship breakdown. Others who experience multiple forms of social exclusion may become long-term homeless, particularly those who become homeless before they become adults.

It seems that particular groups are more vulnerable to homelessness at particular times. The Dublin Region Homeless Executive said, in November 2013, that the reasons for people becoming homeless are both complex and wide-ranging but that there is "a particular risk for families with tenancies in the private rental sector, particularly those in rent arrears and in dispute with their landlords". The Minister for Housing has said recently that anecdotal evidence suggested that rent arrears in private rented accommodation was the most common reason for the increase in the number of homeless families in the Dublin region. She said that families were leaving accommodation and presenting to homeless services when they got notices to quit because of rent arrears.

Number of homeless people

Current estimates suggest that there are about 5,000 homeless people in the State but it is impossible to give an entirely accurate figure. Different methods of counting the number of homeless people have been used over the years.

Housing need assessment

The *Housing Act 1988* requires local authorities to carry out assessments of housing need. The homeless people who are included in this assessment are those who are registered with the local authority and have been assessed as being in need of housing.

The housing need assessment that was carried out in 2011 showed that there were 2,348 adult homeless households

with 428 child dependants. Single adults with no children accounted for nearly 90% of all homeless households.

The vast majority of the homeless people were unemployed and receiving a social welfare payment. Over two thirds were living in hostel or bed and breakfast type accommodation; 10% were living with friends or relatives and 13% were in private rented accommodation.

Homelessness is concentrated in urban areas and the majority of homeless people are in Dublin.

Other assessments

The assessments under the *Housing Act 1988* do not take account of homeless people who have not applied for social housing. There have been a number of other mechanisms for counting homeless people. For example, a *Counted In* survey has been conducted in Dublin since 1999 and in Cork, Limerick and Galway since 2008 to try to establish the actual number of homeless people. In 2011, a new system was introduced in Dublin – the Pathway and Accommodation Support System (PASS) – and this is being developed and is now extended to the rest of the State. PASS is operated and managed by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive (see page 7). It collects information from the bodies providing accommodation to homeless people. Initially, PASS did not measure long-term homelessness. It is expected that PASS will be able to produce national composite data on homelessness later in 2014.

Census 2011

The most recent census – Census 2011 – was the first time that comprehensive information was collected on the number of homeless people in the State. Homeless people were counted on the basis of where they were on Census night and the count was undertaken with the help of the homelessness services.

Homeless Persons in Ireland; A special Census report shows that on Census night, 10 April 2011, there were 3,808 people sleeping rough or staying in accommodation designated for homeless people:

- 2,375 were in the Dublin region
- 64 were sleeping rough; 58 of these were in Dublin
- Just over 43% were in emergency accommodation
- 2,539 were male and 1,269 were female
- There were 296 family units with a total of 905 people
- There were 457 children aged 14 and under

The Census showed that homeless people were

- More likely to be separated or divorced than the population generally
- Largely unemployed (although there were 274 homeless people in work)

- Less well educated than the population generally
- More likely to suffer ill-health and disability than the population generally

Website: cso.ie/en/census/census2011reports/homelesspersonsinirelandaspecialcensus2011report/

Trends in recent years

Having examined the information available from the different sources, the Homelessness Oversight Group (see page 4) concluded that there was little change in the incidence of homelessness in the Dublin region in the period 2008–2011.

The Census report did not measure long-term homelessness but the Group thought it unlikely that there had been any significant reduction in long-term homelessness in that period. In 2008, 84% of those counted as homeless in the Dublin region had been in homeless services for six months or more and nearly a third had been in homeless services for at least five years.

There is evidence that homelessness has been increasing since 2011. In November 2013, the Dublin Region Homeless Executive said that, on average, six new people were presenting on a daily basis to the homeless services while two people were leaving the services and going into housing.

Rough sleepers

A *rough sleeper* count is conducted in the Dublin region every six months by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive. Between 2008 and 2011, there was a reduction in the numbers sleeping rough but this had increased again by November 2013. The count in November 2013 showed that there were a minimum of 139 people sleeping rough. A similar count in April 2013 had shown that there was a minimum of 94 people sleeping rough then.

The November 2013 count showed that, of those about whom the information was available,

- 80% were male
- 53% were Irish
- 24% were aged between 18 and 30

Homelessness policy

Homelessness policy is, of course, part of overall housing policy. Clearly, social housing policies are all relevant to the problem of homelessness but here we concentrate mainly on the policies that are specifically aimed at addressing homelessness. Current housing policy is set out in the Government's *Housing Policy Statement* of June 2011 (See *Relate*, July 2011).

The Way Home: A Strategy to Address Adult Homelessness in Ireland 2008–2013, published in 2008, sets out the aim of ending homelessness by 2016. An implementation plan for the strategy was published in 2009. The Programme for Government (2011) included a commitment to ending homelessness and the need to sleep rough by implementing a housing-led approach.

In February 2013, the Government issued a *Homelessness Policy Statement*. The overall strategy and aims of *The Way Home* continue to be Government policy but with the explicit recognition of the housing-led approach. This approach means that long-term secure housing, with social supports if necessary, is seen as the best outcome for homeless people. The policy of providing temporary shelter as a stepping stone to permanent housing is not regarded as effective. Temporary or emergency accommodation is generally also more expensive than providing Rent Supplement for private rented accommodation.

The 2013 policy statement reiterates the aim of ending homelessness by 2016 and sets the following objectives (known as the 2016 objectives):

- Preventing homelessness
- Eliminating the need to sleep rough
- Eliminating long-term occupation of emergency accommodation
- Providing long-term housing solutions
- Ensuring effective services
- Better co-ordinated funding arrangements

The policy statement outlines how the resources available for homelessness are to be channelled into more permanent responses while also providing a supply of emergency accommodation. Among other things, this involves providing secure long-term tenancies for homeless people. The policy statement also provided for the establishment of a three-person oversight group to review the approach being advocated in the statement, to identify obstacles and to propose solutions.

Homelessness Oversight Group

The first *Report of the Homelessness Oversight Group* was published in December 2013.

The report states that the goal of ending homelessness and ending the need to sleep rough can be achieved by 2016, as set out in the Homelessness Policy Statement. However, the group considered that progress towards achieving that goal has been limited.

The report states that a major reason for the lack of progress in providing permanent housing for homeless people is that “agencies that deliver services to the homeless have had little role in providing long-term housing while providers of

long-term housing have accorded low priority to housing the mainly single adults who comprise the majority of the homeless”. The report goes on to say that “the resulting limited access to permanent housing for the homeless forces the homeless services to shelter many of the homeless in various types of temporary and emergency accommodation, sometimes for long periods, usually at high cost and often with results that either achieve little lasting improvement in the circumstances of the homeless or sometimes may cause them to worsen”.

The report notes that the health and social services needed by many homeless people have developed greatly since the early 2000s but that their effectiveness is hampered by absence of secure accommodation.

The group considered that the goal of ending long-term homelessness and the need to sleep rough by 2016 can be achieved if:

- Policy on social housing in a broad sense (including provision of rent supports for tenants in the private rented sector) fully accepts the 2016 objectives and goes further to meet them than it does at present
- Support services for the homeless succeed in re-orienting their work towards settling, supporting and sustaining the homeless in permanent housing in place of the current focus on shelter-based services
- Housing providers and social support services do more to prevent homelessness among vulnerable people who are exiting institutional settings (especially prisons and care institutions) or who are at risk of eviction from current housing

The group recommended the establishment of a high-level team and implementation unit to ensure this happens – this has now been announced. They also recommended that funding be maintained at 2013 levels for the years 2014–2016. Website: environ.ie/en/Publications/Developmentandhousing/Housing/FileDownload,34865,en.pdf

Homelessness Policy Implementation Team

In February 2014, the Government announced a number of measures to support homelessness policy. These measures are largely as recommended by the Homelessness Oversight Group. A Homelessness Policy Implementation Team is being established. This consists of Assistant Secretaries from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and the Department of Social Protection; the HSE’s Director of Primary Care; the Dublin City Manager and the Monaghan County Manager. Its main aim is to achieve the objective of ending long-term homelessness by 2016.

The implementation team will initially prepare and publish a plan to “make the transition from shelter-led to a sustainable housing-led approach”. This plan will:

- Set targets for the supply of suitable properties for people who are homeless
- Focus on services to successfully support homeless households in permanent housing
- Provide for adequate short-term accommodation to eliminate the need to sleep rough while arranging the closure of expensive private emergency accommodation over the medium term

Homelessness Action Plans

The *Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009* provides that local authorities must have Homelessness Action Plans. The relevant sections of the Act came into effect in February 2010 (SI 540/2009) and the plans were drawn up in 2010.

These plans are required to specify the actions to be taken by the local authorities and other relevant bodies, for example, the HSE, the Prison Service, the Probation Service, Education and Training Boards (ETBs), to achieve the following objectives:

- The prevention of homelessness
- Reduction of homelessness or its extent or duration
- The provision of services, including accommodation, to address the needs of homeless households
- The provision of housing support services, for example, social housing, housing grants or loans, to formerly homeless people
- The promotion of co-ordination between the various service providers

Homelessness consultative forums

The *Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009* also provides for the establishment of homelessness consultative forums by the local authorities. The aim of the forums is to provide information, views and advice to the local authority management in relation to homelessness and the implementation of the Homelessness Action Plan. There may be a joint forum between two or more local authorities. In practice, regional forums have been established. The membership of the forum includes local authority and HSE employees and people nominated by providers of services to homeless people.

Youth homelessness

The Youth Homelessness Strategy was published in 2001. A report on its implementation *Every Child a Home: A Review of the Implementation of the Youth Homelessness Strategy* was published in July 2013. The aim of the strategy was to reduce and if possible eliminate youth homelessness through

preventative strategies. Where a child becomes homeless, the aim was to ensure that he or she benefits from a comprehensive range of services aimed at re-integrating him or her into the community as quickly as possible.

The 2013 review found that the strategy made a significant contribution to addressing the problem of youth homelessness and helped to ensure that very few children were sleeping rough. The *rough sleeper* count conducted by the Dublin Region Homeless Executive in 2011 and 2012 showed that there were no children aged under 18 sleeping rough in Dublin.

The review noted that investment and improvements in family support; child protection and welfare services; residential and foster care for children in care; and youth services have made a positive impact on the experience of children who were homeless or at risk of homelessness. The review also identified a number of problems, for example:

- Problems remain in access to mental health and intellectual disability services for children in crisis or out of home
- Support for children continuing education while in emergency settings needed to be improved
- There were still problems with the types of emergency accommodation available
- Accessing services through Garda stations is inappropriate and intimidating

The review made a number of recommendations for improvements, in particular, in relation to aftercare and the transition from youth to adult services as well as recommendations on the provision of health, education and other social services. Website: dcya.gov.ie/documents/Child_Welfare_Protection/Homelessness_Strategy/YthHomelessStratReview.pdf

Young People's Homeless and Housing Pathways was also published in 2013. It outlines the findings from a six-year (2004–2010) qualitative longitudinal study of homeless young people in Dublin city. Website: dcya.gov.ie/documents/Child_Welfare_protection/Homelessness_Strategy/YP_HomelessHousingPath.pdf

Crisis intervention service

Services for homeless children (under the age of 18) are provided as part of the child care services. In Dublin, there is a crisis intervention service, usually known as the Out-of-Hours Service. It is the initial point of contact for young people who experience homelessness. It is a social work service that also deals with accommodation. In order to access the service, a young person must go to a Garda station. The station then contacts the service.

Aftercare

The Child and Family Agency has responsibility for promoting the welfare of children up to the age of 18 (under the *Child Care Act 1991*). It may also help a young person leaving care if such help is required but it is not obliged to provide this help at present. In practice, the agency does provide aftercare up to the age of 21, or to 23 if the young person is in full-time education. *Leaving and Aftercare Services: National Policy and Procedure* was published by the HSE in 2012 and sets out how aftercare is to be delivered (this is now the responsibility of the Child and Family Agency). There were 1,093 recipients of aftercare services in December 2013.

The Minister for Children and Youth Affairs has recently published the *General Scheme and Heads of the Aftercare Bill 2014*. This proposes that the Child and Family Agency will have a statutory duty to prepare an aftercare plan for children who have spent some time in the care system and who are soon to leave the system. That plan would include arrangements for accommodation among other things. Website: dcya.gov.ie.

Social welfare payments

Young people who were in the care of the Child and Family Agency before the age of 18 and who qualify for Jobseeker's Allowance when they reach 18 may get the full rate of the payment rather than the reduced rates that apply to those aged between 18 and 26. Young people who were not in care and who become homeless may qualify only for the reduced rates.

Accommodation for homeless people

The accommodation available for homeless people includes emergency hostels, refuges for women and children experiencing domestic violence, temporary hotel or bed and breakfast accommodation and long-term supported housing. In Dublin in 2010 there were 4 outreach services, 24 day centres, support and advice services, 14 emergency facilities, 20 transitional housing services, 14 long-term supported housing services and 4 settlement services provided by statutory and voluntary homelessness services as well as emergency accommodation facilities.

As already stated, the policy is to provide long-term housing for homeless people. This is part of the general provision of social housing. It is expected that about 5,000 new social housing units will be provided in 2014. These will be provided through regeneration, direct construction and leasing and also through the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA).

Local authority home building

In March 2014, a two-year €68 million local authority home building initiative was launched. There has been no local authority house building since the start of the current financial

crisis. This will allow for the building of 449 new homes throughout the State.

€15 million is being provided in 2014 to bring about 500 vacant local authority houses back into use and €10 million to deal with unfinished housing developments. Funding of up to €30,000 for each dwelling is being provided for the refurbishment of vacant properties.

Social Housing Leasing Initiative

The Social Housing Leasing Initiative was introduced in 2009. It involves local authorities and approved housing bodies leasing properties from private owners in order to provide housing for people on the social housing waiting list. To the end of February 2014, over 4,700 properties were leased. About 400 of these were sourced from NAMA. The current average cost of properties leased under this scheme is just under €505 per month. Website: housing.ie.

Not-for-profit housing sector

The not-for-profit housing sector has an important role in providing housing for homeless people.

Under the Capital Assistance Scheme (CAS) funding is provided to approved housing bodies, (through the local authorities), for the provision of accommodation for people with specific needs, including homeless people. Local authorities have been asked to submit a list of prioritised projects for such funding by the end of March 2014.

The Capital Advance Leasing Facility (CALF) was launched in 2011. This allows for an approved housing body to buy or build properties. The housing bodies get direct Government funding of up to a maximum of 30% of the cost and the rest is borrowed from the private sector or the Housing Finance Agency. Over 350 housing units have been provided under this scheme and a further 22 are coming on-stream.

The Minister for Housing intends to announce details of a €35 million voluntary housing construction programme in the second quarter of 2014. This is expected to fund 250 special needs housing units over the next two years.

Private rented accommodation

Private rented accommodation is seen as the main long-term solution for homeless people. About one in five households in the State live in private rented accommodation. The proportion of households in the sector almost doubled in the period 2006 to 2011.

However, there are particular problems in this sector at present, especially in Dublin. There is reduced availability of properties to rent and some landlords are unwilling to accept tenants who

are recipients of Rent Supplement. It is intended to introduce amendments to the *Residential Tenancies (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2012*, for the improved management of rent arrears.

Particular schemes for homeless people

Support to Live Independently (SLI)

This is a scheme whereby long-term accommodation in mainstream housing is provided for homeless people, together with appropriate time-limited supports to make the transition from homelessness to independent living. It is mainly designed for people who need low to moderate support. The scheme is provided through voluntary organisations. Accommodation can be sourced either from unsold affordable housing or through the Social Housing Leasing Initiative.

Cold Weather Initiative

The Cold Weather Initiative in Dublin operates during the period November to March. Additional emergency beds are provided during this period for people who are sleeping rough.

Housing First

The Housing First Demonstration Project is currently accommodating 24 people in tenancies in the Dublin region. These are people who have been sleeping rough and have significant support needs. Website: homelessdublin.ie.

Social welfare

Your entitlement to social welfare payments is not affected by the fact of being homeless but you may have difficulty getting your payments mainly because of not having a permanent address. You may make any claims for payments such as Jobseeker's Allowance or illness and disability payments in the normal way.

The Department of Social Protection has a Homeless Persons Unit (HPU) in Dublin to deal with claims for Supplementary Welfare Allowance (see below) and to help with claims for other payments. The unit can also help with applications for medical cards and can provide information on other services that may be relevant to your circumstances.

The HPU for men is at Oisín House, 212-213 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 and is open from Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon. Tel: 1800 724 724.

The HPU for women and families is at 41 Castle Street, Dublin 2; Monday to Friday 10am–12 noon. Tel: 1800 724 724.

If you are a person from one of the countries that have recently joined the EU, or a refugee or an asylum seeker, you have the option of going to the HPU for new communities at 77 Upper Gardiner Street, Dublin 1; 10am–11.30am, 2pm–3.30pm. Tel: 01 858 5100.

Supplementary welfare payments

The Supplementary Welfare Allowance (SWA) scheme includes a basic weekly payment and a number of discretionary payments.

You may qualify for the weekly payment if you are not entitled to any other social welfare payment or if you are waiting for your claim for any other payment to be processed.

You may qualify for a discretionary payment if you are in need. The most immediately relevant such payment for homeless people is an Exceptional Needs Payment.

Exceptional Needs Payments

Exceptional Needs Payments are one-off payments that may be made if you have unforeseen expenses such as clothing, travel, rent deposit or costs relating to setting up a home that you could not reasonably be expected to meet from your weekly income. You may apply to your local Department of Social Protection officer dealing with SWA (formerly called the Community Welfare Officer) or to the HPU if you are in Dublin.

You do not have to meet the *habitual residence condition* in order to get an Exceptional Needs Payment (the habitual residence concept is rather complex but it means that you are living in Ireland, your 'centre of interest' is here and you intend to stay here into the future).

Homeless migrants

Your entitlement to a social welfare payment depends on a number of factors. Most weekly means-tested payments require that you meet the habitual residence condition. People from EU/EEA countries who are working in Ireland are entitled to payments such as Child Benefit without meeting this condition. As already stated, you do not need to satisfy this condition in order to get an Exceptional Needs Payment.

Accessing services

The majority of homeless people are in the cities. Dublin and Cork local authorities have dedicated services for homeless people.

Dublin Region Homeless Executive

The four local authorities in the Dublin area have formed the Dublin Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum under the *Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2009* (see page 5). The Dublin Region Homeless Executive (which replaced the Homeless Agency in 2011) provides support and services to the Dublin Joint Homelessness Consultative Forum and the Statutory Management Group. The main aim of the Forum is to implement the action plan on homelessness. Website: homelessdublin.ie.

The Citizens Information Board provides independent information, advice and advocacy on public and social services through citizensinformation.ie, the Citizens Information Phone Service and the network of Citizens Information Services. It is responsible for the Money Advice and Budgeting Service and provides advocacy services for people with disabilities.

Head office

Ground Floor

t 0761 07 9000

George's Quay House

f 01 605 9099

43 Townsend Street

e info@ciboard.ie

Dublin 2

w citizensinformationboard.ie

Dublin City

Dublin City Council has a Central Placement Service for homeless people. It is open from 10 am to 12 noon and from 2pm to 4pm Monday to Friday at Parkgate Hall, 6-9 Conyngham Road, Dublin 8. 24-hour helpline: 1800 707 707

Fingal County Council

Fingal County Council's Assessment and Placement Service is available 10am to 12.30pm and 2.30pm to 3.30pm, Monday to Friday at: Housing Department, Fingal County Council, Grove Road, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15. Telephone: 01 890 5090

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council's Assessment and Placement service is available from 10am to 6pm Monday to Friday at: Housing Department, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council, County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Telephone: 01 205 4700

South Dublin County Council

The South Dublin County Council Assessment and Placement service is available from 10am to 12 noon and 2.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday at The Housing Department, South Dublin County Council, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24. Telephone: 01 414 9000

Cork

The Cork City Homeless Forum has produced a guide to homeless emergency services for adults in Cork.

The Homeless Persons Unit

Drinan Street, Cork. 10am to 12 noon and 2.30pm to 4pm, Monday to Friday (Except Tuesday afternoons. A City Council Outreach Worker is available)

Telephone: 021 496 3052

Website: corkcity.ie/services/housing-community/guidetohomelessemergencyservicesincork

Voluntary organisations

The following are some of the voluntary organisations providing temporary and permanent accommodation (and advice and assistance) to homeless people:

Simon Communities in Ireland: simon.ie

Focus Ireland: focusireland.ie

Crosscare: crosscare.ie

St Vincent de Paul: svp.ie

De Paul Trust: depaulireland.org

Salvation Army: salvationarmy.ie

Peter McVerry Trust: pmvtrust.ie

Novas: novas.ie

Sophia: sophia.ie

Cope: copegalway.ie

Sonas: sonashousing.ie

Cuan-Teach Mhuire: cuanmhuire.ie

Sisters of Charity: religioussistersofcharity.ie

Threshold: threshold.ie provides advice and assistance but not accommodation.

Voluntary housing organisations

There are about 270 housing organisations which are members of the Irish Council for Social Housing. Website: icsh.ie.

Homeless migrants

In general, you may be eligible for housing services if you are legally resident in Ireland and you have been living in the relevant local authority area for a specific length of time. If you are not eligible for long-term housing assistance you may get temporary help from the various homelessness emergency service providers. The following two organisations provide specific advice and information:

Crosscare Refugee Service

Crosscare provides information, advocacy, support and referral services to refugees and asylum seekers who need help with, among other things, social welfare payments, housing – particularly for those who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Telephone: 01 873 2844 Website: crosscare.ie

Migrant Rights Centre Ireland (MRCI)

MRCI provides information, advocacy and assistance on social welfare entitlements. The resource centre offers a frontline drop in service, and a phone and email service to assist with queries nationally. Telephone: 01 889 7570 Website: mrci.ie

Relate email subscription

If you would like to receive *Relate* by email you can subscribe by sending an email with the subject line SUBSCRIBE to relate@ciboard.ie and including your name and your organisation if applicable.



Citizens Information 

LOG ON citizensinformation.ie

CALL 0761 07 4000 Mon–Fri, 9am–8pm

DROP IN 260 locations nationwide