

Pre Budget Submission 2024

Your Support Can Lead The Way Home

Make #Budget24 Count for Ireland's Homeless Population

Nearly 13,000 families and individuals are currently experiencing intense trauma and hardship living in temporary accommodation services around Ireland. In one year alone, there has been a 20% increase in the total number of people accessing emergency accommodation across Ireland. Budget 2024 is critically important to the lives of the people who are supported through the homelessness and housing sector.

While we welcomed last year's increased funding of €215m for emergency housing provision, much more resources are needed to get people into **own-door accommodation**. We are calling for the allocation and investment of this year's budget surplus to go towards public housing for individuals and families in temporary accommodation. The number one goal for this budget must be to get people out of temporary accommodation and into homes.

If there is a significant investment in these areas through Budget 2024, it would have a very real and tangible impact on ending chronic homelessness by 2030.

This submission will lay out the recommendations of Depaul for Budget 2024.

5 Key Priority Areas

1) Full Cost of Service Delivery

Provide adequate and sustainable multi-annual funding to the homeless sector that

- a) reflects the full cost of service delivery
- b) discretionary funding for charities to include prudent reserves, covering all costs associated with ongoing compliances to ensure the sustainability of homeless services
- c) urgently resolves funding disparities for Section 39/10 organisations' to attract and retain staff that are qualified for the incredibly challenging work we carry out
- d) recognises and provides for the necessary costs of back office support (e.g. HR, quality assurance) and compliance with governance/ regulatory requirements.
- e) Increases the social inclusion budget by 33 % on services
- f) Includes administrative costs in public service contacts

2) Housing

- Invest a proportion of the €10 billion budget surplus into building public homes and tackling vacancy and dereliction
- Increase HAP by 40%
- Allocate funding to pilot a Housing First for families programme
- Review of taxation for private landlords
- Increasing housing supply through robust budgets and increasing housing supply through the increased availability of social housing and cost rental units
- Resource approx. 60 additional Local Authority staff to be employed in housing sections across the 28 local authorities to support the Tenant in Situ scheme, at an estimated cost of €3.8 million per annum



3) Homeless Specific Health Budget

- Provide a ring-fenced homeless-specific health budget, ensuring adequate funding and resources for physical health, mental health and addiction supports
- Increase in available treatment to help people in particular who present with both mental health and addiction problems, and to humanely treat overdoses

4) International Protection

- We would like to see the introduction of a specific budget for this cohort, similar to the Traveller's Accommodation Budget

5) Trauma Supports

- Provide the resources necessary to ensure all services accommodating children are trauma informed
- Ensure every child in homelessness has access to a specific Child Support Worker
- Provide increased therapeutic interventions
- Multidisciplinary team approach involving child and youth development workers

Full Cost of Service Delivery

The homelessness crisis has dramatically worsened in 2023 . The number of people in emergency accommodation has increased by 20% in one year alone. Families and Individuals are suffering from a lack of movement from temporary accommodation and this must be addressed in **Budget 2024**.

Help Us To Help You Respond

In order to continue to play our role as partners in ending homelessness, we must be properly funded at full cost to deliver quality, safe services. Funding needs to meet the needs of the crisis we are in. Yearly budgets announced on budget day don't always reflect what is being spent and it is of great significance to the sector that true costs and requirements are published.

Recruitment Crisis

It is critical that we can recruit and retain workers that are needed to respond to this worsening crisis, all while adhering to the extensive regulatory requirements we are subject to. Section 39 and 10 organisations all receive contracts from the State to deliver public services, but staff do not receive pay or employment conditions equivalent to public-sector employees.

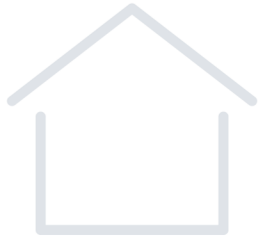
Many organisations across the sector have services at risk of closure due to a lack of staff.



Recommendations:

Provide and announce adequate and sustainable multi-annual funding to the homeless sector that:

- a) reflects the true cost of service delivery and is flexible to account for increasing need and inflation.
- b) is based on discretionary funding for charities to include prudent reserves, covering all costs associated with ongoing compliances to ensure the sustainability of homeless services.
- c) addresses the current pay deficit of up to 15% for our staff to deliver pay equivalence between Section 39/10 organisations and their counterparts in state agencies.
- d) Include state-funded charities in public-service pay talks and other relevant fora such as the Workplace Relations Commission to prevent future re-emergence of pay disparities
- e) Increase social inclusion budget by 33 % on services
- f) Include administrative costs in public service contacts



Housing

A lack of housing is the greatest barrier homeless people in Ireland are facing when trying to exit homelessness. Depaul is incredibly concerned that the lack of housing options will exacerbate homelessness even further into 2024. Efforts and initiatives must be made to ensure that housing can be accessed by those most in need. Depaul is advocating for increasing the social housing target to 12,000 units per annum, **with an equitable allocation to those in long term homelessness.**

As well as increasing housing stock, the taxation of landlords should be reformed to discourage them from leaving the market. If in three or four months we don't have it right, we will experience more street homelessness, much higher drug use and families in crisis.

While the private rental sector does not offer the best security of tenure, it is the most readily available option we have for moving people out of homelessness until more social housing is developed. HAP rates must reflect market rents. We are asking for an increase of 40% for HHAP and HAP rates in the immediate term to reflect market rents, to end the cycle of homelessness and to prevent more people from becoming homeless.

Recommendations

- **Increase in homeless HAP** and HHAP payments by 40%
- Create a dedicated funding line for homelessness prevention in each local authority, amounting to 20% of all homeless expenditure
- **Parity in taxation** of corporate and individual landlords - a flat rate of 25 percent on Case V income for small landlords who opt to become 'professional landlords' by foregoing grounds of termination under Section 34, giving additional security to their tenants.
- **Capital Gains Tax relief** at 4% per annum for rental properties acquired with tenants-in situ, conditional upon remaining in the rental market.
- **Increase national Tenant in Situ** guideline to approx. 5,000 to reflect demand
- **Increase social housing targets** by 3,000 to 12,000 per at a cost of 900 million for the additional units
- **Local Authorities and Approved Housing Bodies** must be resourced with appropriately trained staff to adequately to deliver the Tenant in Situ scheme and other safety-net measures

“To Ireland we would say, ‘Fix your dysfunctional housing market.’”

FEANTSA Report 2023

International Protection Supports

Recent figures show, almost two-thirds of adults in the direct provision system who have secured status to remain are currently working. These are individuals who want to contribute to society and as part of their security, must be able to access affordable and decent accommodation. They are no different in their aspirations and hopes than anybody else.

It is critical that there is a focus on this group in budget 2024 and we would like to see the introduction of a specific budget for this cohort, similar to the Traveller's Accommodation Budget for 2024.



Recommendations

- **Establish a specific accommodation budget** for individuals and families who have the right to remain but can't exit direct provision due to a housing shortage. **Similar to the Traveller Accommodation budget**
- **Establish a pilot shared tenancy** scheme funded by state sources for single people with Permission to Remain in Ireland.
- **Establish a tenancy sustainment service** for those who have moved on from the Direct Provision system to support the prevention of homelessness. This was previously piloted by Depaul
- **Identify and plan** for those who have permission to remain and who are assessed as vulnerable in the direct provision system. To seek specific funding through state sources to develop housing for this group. Local authority Housing Delivery Action Plans should play a key role in supporting this objective.
- Through the work of the Project Board, **clarify objectives and set targets for phase 2 of the New International Protection Accommodation Model**

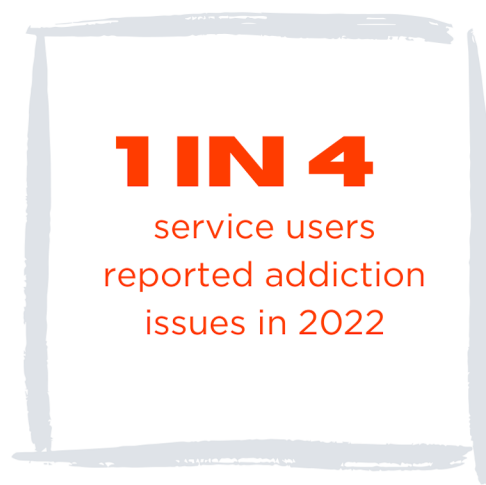


Homeless Health Budget

The homelessness crisis has dramatically worsened in 2023. As figures in emergency accommodation continue to increase, we are now facing unique challenges of 2023; the war in Ukraine, a chronic housing shortage, the collapse of the private rented sector, the eviction ban ending, an excessive cost of living and a spiralling inflation rate. People are suffering from a lack of movement from temporary accommodation and this must be addressed in Budget 2024.

In order to continue to play our role as partners in ending homelessness, we must be properly funded at full cost to deliver quality, safe services. Funding needs to meet the needs of the crisis we are in. Yearly budgets announced on budget day don't always reflect what is being spent and it is of great significance to the sector that true costs and requirements are published.

It is critical that we can recruit and retain workers that are needed to support society's most vulnerable, all while adhering to the extensive regulatory requirements we are subject to. Section 39 and 10 organisations all receive contracts from the State to deliver public services, but staff do not receive pay or employment conditions equivalent to public-sector employees. Many organisations across the sector have services at risk of closure due to a lack of staff.



Recommendation:

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Trauma Supports

Depaul supports a housing led approach and based on the principles of Housing First and believes housing should come first. For people who are in homelessness, it is critical that the trauma that comes with it is minimised. Every effort must be made to limit the adverse impact that this experience may have on the overall trajectory of their lives. We believe this can be achieved through the provision of therapeutic, age-specific supports for families and individuals while in homelessness and the necessary resources to avoid or minimise the time spent in emergency accommodation. **It is essential that services can implement multidisciplinary teams to enhance the support care provided** to children and youth, ultimately improving the effectiveness of the services.

Recommendations:

- Ensure every child in homelessness has access to a specific Child Support Worker.
- Provide the resources necessary to ensure all services accommodating children are trauma informed.
- Allocate funding to pilot a Housing First for Families programme.
- Increased therapeutic interventions

Fiona's story (48)

Fiona has been homeless for 19 years and became addicted to drugs at the age of 28. After enduring numerous traumas in her life, unsupported and alone, she became addicted to prescription tablets. Then heroin. Then crack cocaine. Like many people who are in addiction, Fiona resorted to selling drugs to feed her habit. She never got arrested but was always terrified of prison. One of the things that scared her the most was becoming very sick because of the immediate withdrawal from drugs without any therapeutic support. At one of our city centre services, Fiona is sharing a bedroom with four other women and admits this makes it harder for her to avoid drugs, especially if other women in the room are using which has been the case. She has been on the housing list since 2004 but still hasn't her own place. Fiona, who is a grandmother, would settle for her own bedroom in homeless accommodation at this stage, just to be able to create her own safe space and environment free from drugs.



Fiona has gone into rehab twice and is off heroin for 12 years but it's hard for her to stay clean in an environment where temptation stares her in the face every morning and night. It takes courage, resilience and every ounce of personal strength. Everyday, on repeat.

She worries she might end up back on drugs but if she had her own house she said life would be much easier for her.

Fiona has gone to many dark places during her time in addiction and recovery and has endured more than you or I can ever imagine. She says addiction is a sickness that people need help with just like any other disease. Fiona urges the Government to provide accessible and adequate medical interventions for people who are in addiction.

Fiona is keeping her mindset positive. Her focus now is on securing long term housing, somewhere that she can grow old with dignity and pride.

How can Budget 2024 help Fiona?

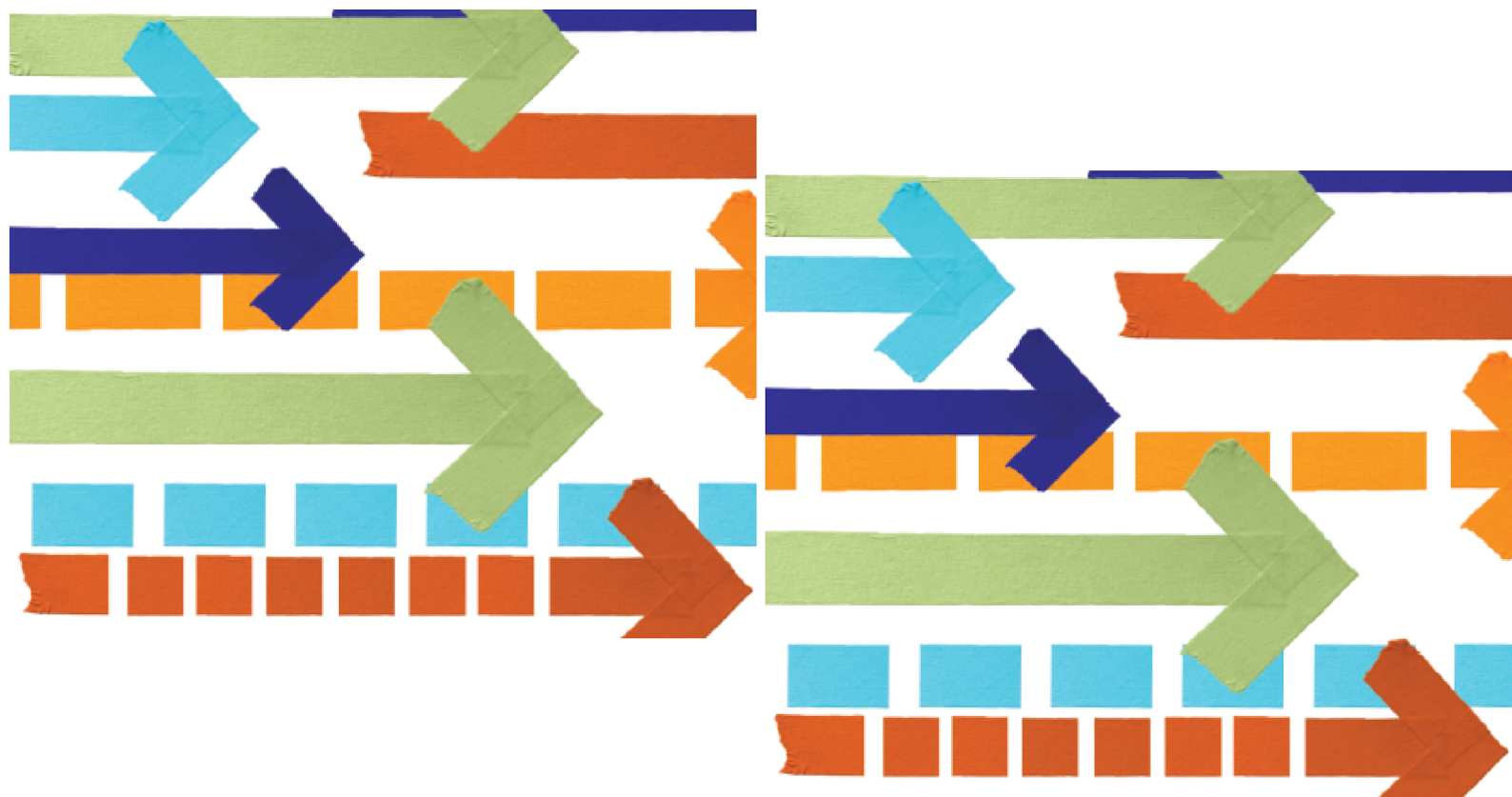
All she wants is a safe place she can call home, where she can have her grandkids over, learn to cook again and start to live.

Lead the Way Home

Working with vulnerable and complex individuals means taking action can transform lives.

We must continue to acknowledge that addressing homelessness requires more than temporary solutions. We know the State can do more to reach those most in need and as an organisation we are advocating for more funding to be allocated in key areas such as Housing, Health, International Protection and our Staff.

Hostels are not the future, communities where people can thrive are.



Make Budget 2024 Count For The Women, Men and Children of Ireland Who Are Homeless.

DEPAUL

Homelessness has no place

We put our words into action.

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