



# National Homelessness Data

**National Shelter Data 2005-2016**  
**Point-in-Time Count 2018**

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Homelessness Data Sharing Initiative

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# National data sources



# National Data Products

## Shelter Capacity Report

- Estimated capacity across emergency shelters, violence against women shelters, and transitional housing

## National Shelter Study

- Estimate of the number of emergency shelter users and their demographics.

## Community Progress Indicators

- Community-level reports including shelter data, PiT counts, and contextual information.

## Point-in-Time Counts

- Point-in-Time estimates of homelessness in 61+ communities, with survey data.



# National Shelter Study

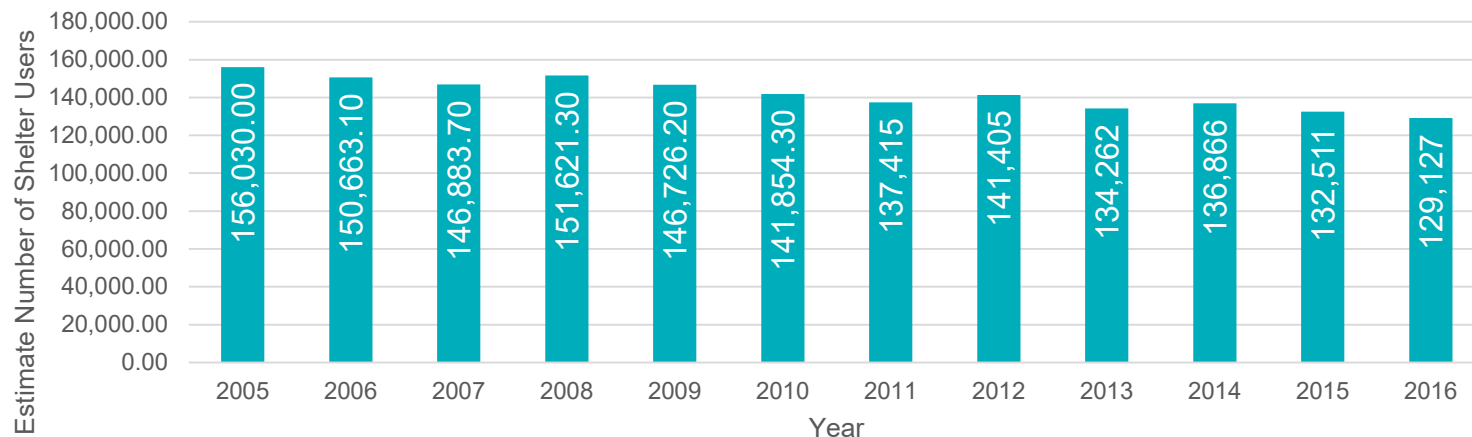
- The National Shelter Study is based on anonymous information from **3.1 million shelter stays** that occurred at over 215 of the 400 emergency shelters across Canada since 2005
- In 2016, the sample included most of the largest shelters in Canada, covering **70%** of the total emergency shelter beds in the country
- The study uses a stratified cluster sample of emergency shelters to ensure accurate estimates of the number and characteristics of shelter users
- The sample is based on emergency homeless shelters and does not include Violence Against Women shelters and transitional housing
- The study methodology takes into account people who use more than one shelter



# Emergency Shelter Use in Canada

- An estimated **129,000** people experienced homelessness at an emergency shelter in Canada in 2016
- This represents a decrease of about **17%** from 2005.
- On an average night in 2016, just over 14,000 Canadians slept in an emergency shelter.

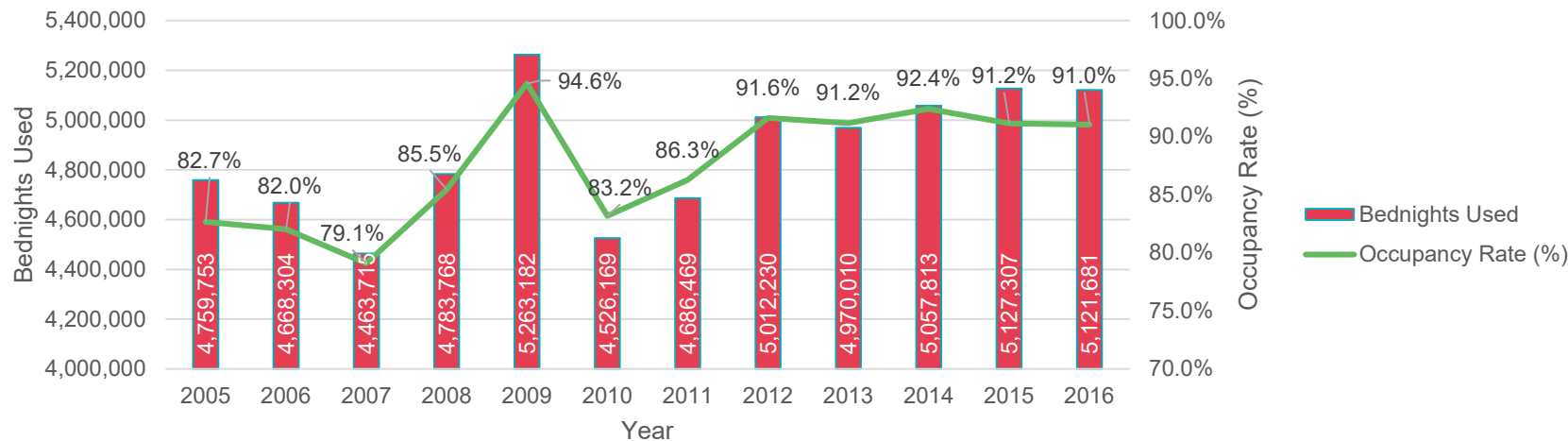
Figure 2: Estimated Number of Shelter Users per Year (2005-2016)



# Shelter System Use

- There are just over 15,400 emergency shelter beds distributed in 400 emergency shelters across Canada.
- Shelter use in Canada remains high with the occupancy rate hitting over 90%.
- While the overall number of emergency shelter beds in Canada is similar in 2005 and 2016 (15,774 beds in 2005, 15,413 beds in 2016), demand for shelter beds has increased overall during the same period.

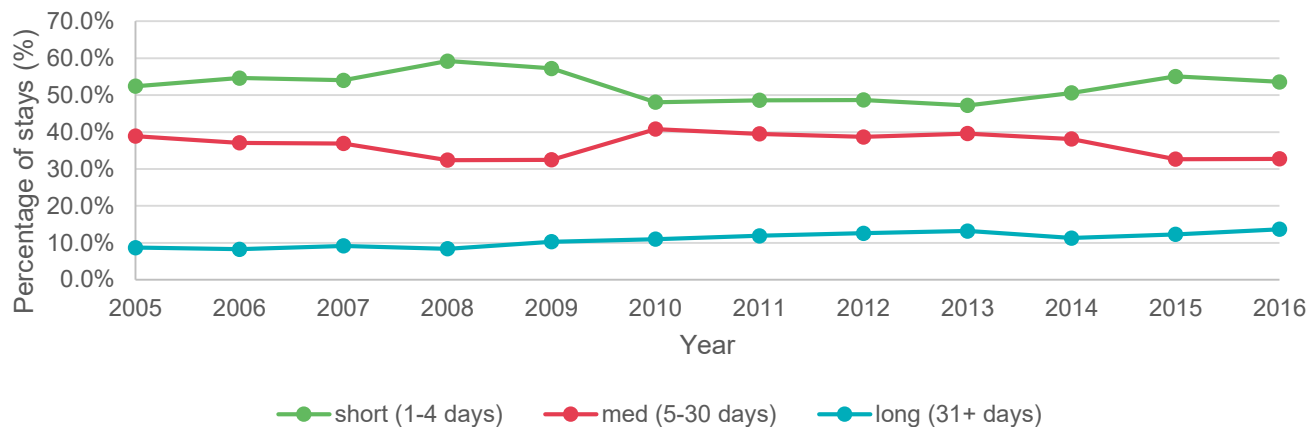
Figure 1: Bednights Used and National Shelter Occupancy Rate (2005-2016)



# Shelter stay duration

- The majority of shelter stays in a given year are short (1-4 days).
- Long stays (30+ days) have increased slowly and steadily over time starting at 9% of all stays in 2005 to 14% of stays in 2016. This increase in longer stays contributes to the increase in demand for bednights.

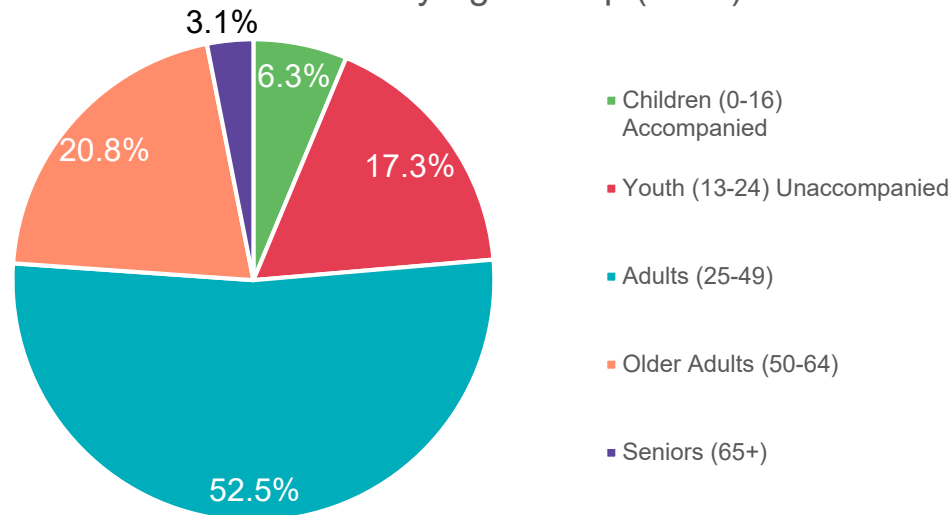
Figure 7: Percentage of short, medium and long stays by year  
(2005-2016)



# Shelter Use by Age Group

- The majority of shelter users are adults (aged 25-49), followed by older adults (aged 50-64) and youth
- Age distribution among shelter users have not changed much since the last National Shelter Study

Figure 5: Distribution of Shelter Users by Age Group (2016)

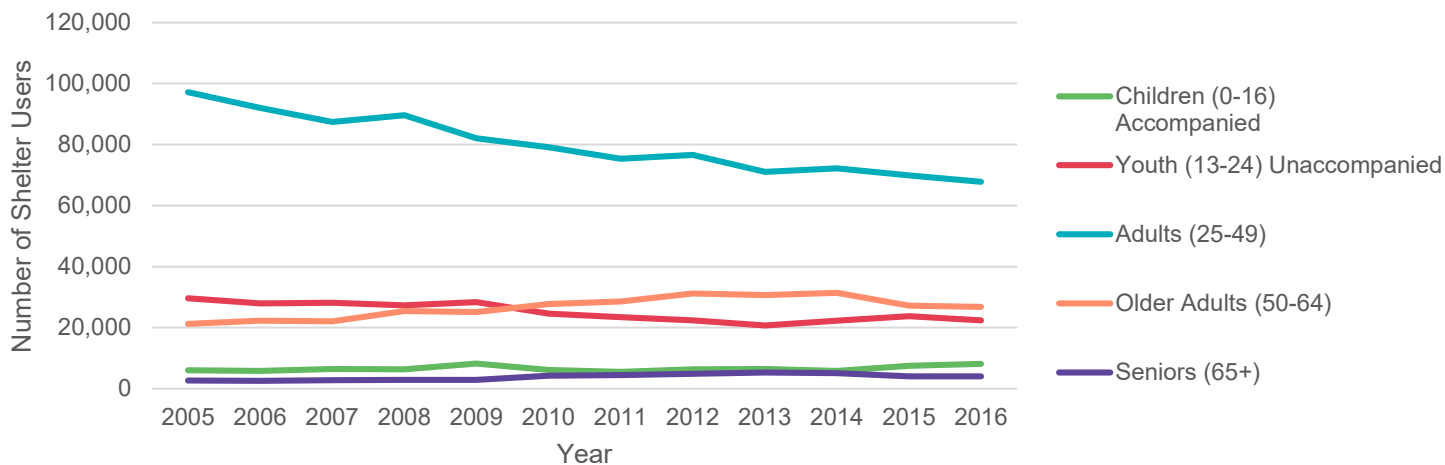




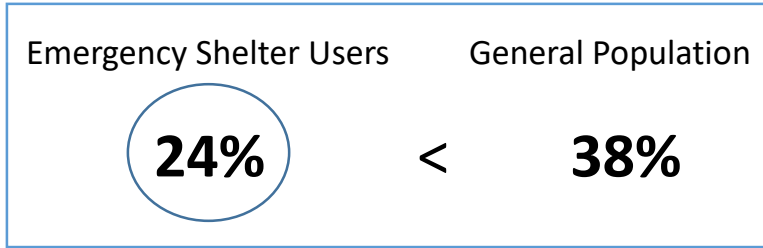
# Shelter Use by Age Group

- The number of shelter users in the adult age group dropped 30% between 2005 and 2016, which accounts for much of the overall decrease in shelter users over the study period.
- General trends in shelter use by older adults (aged 50-64) and seniors (aged 65+) continue to increase.
- The number of children using shelters increased 35% from 5,998 in 2005 to 8,124 in 2016.

Figure 4: Estimated Number of Shelters Users by Age Group (2005-2016)



# People aged 50+ (2016)



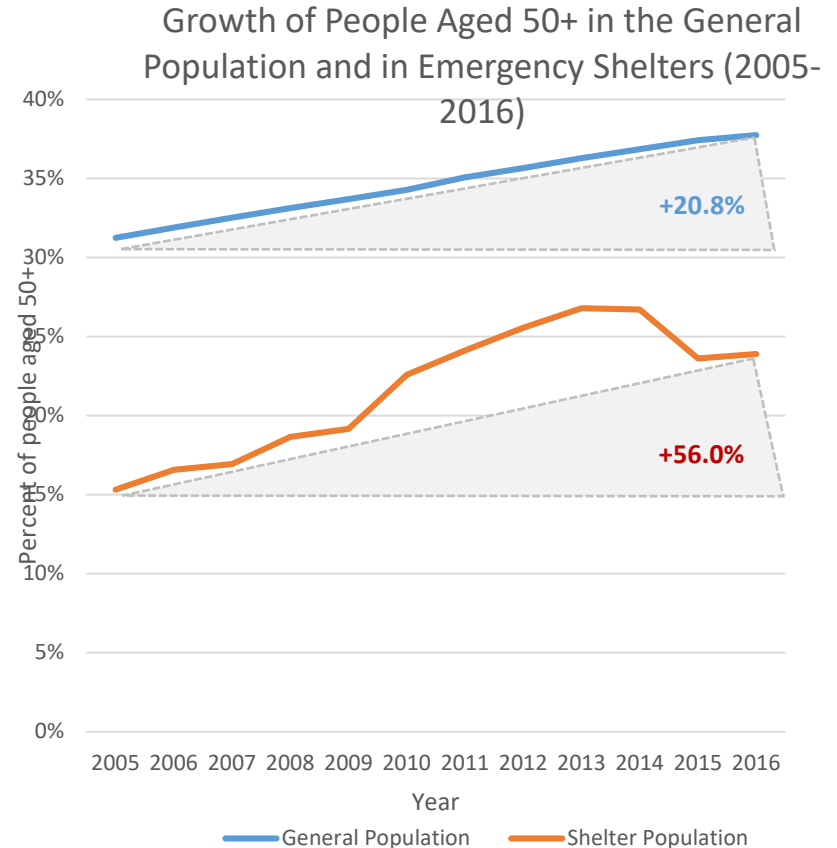
People aged 50 and over are **underrepresented** in shelters

**BUT**

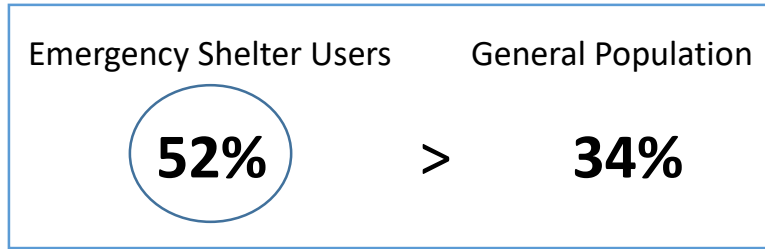
The **Canadian population is ageing** meaning that the percentage of people over 50 is growing

**AND**

The **% growth of people over the age of 50 is greater among shelter users** (56% growth) between 2005-2016 compared to the general Canadian population (21% growth).



# Adults 25-49 (2016)



Adults are **overrepresented** in emergency shelters

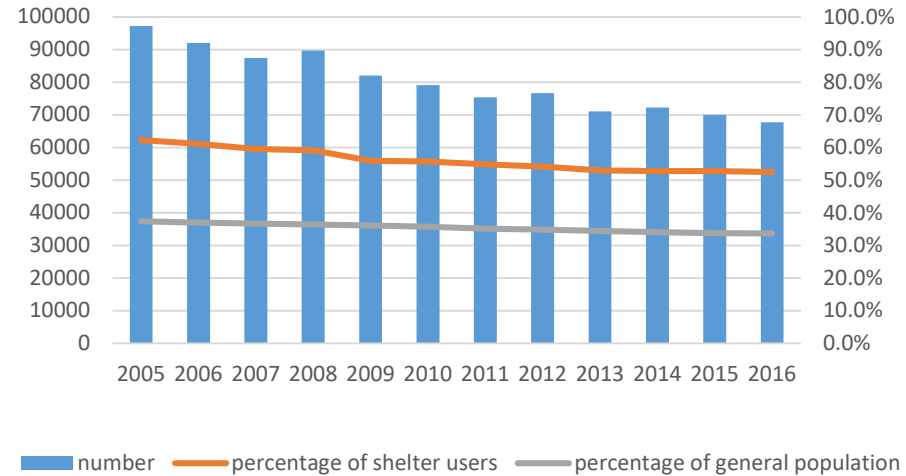
**BUT**

There has been a **steady decrease** in the overall number and the proportion of adults using shelters in 2005-2016

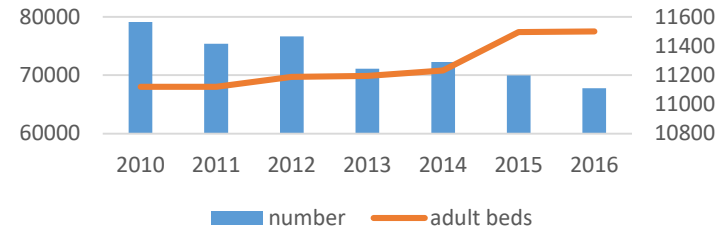
This trend looks to be **unrelated to the supply of beds**, which has increased for adults over time.

Despite the decrease in number of unique shelter users and the increase in available beds, **the occupancy rate in adult shelters is very high** (93% in 2016).

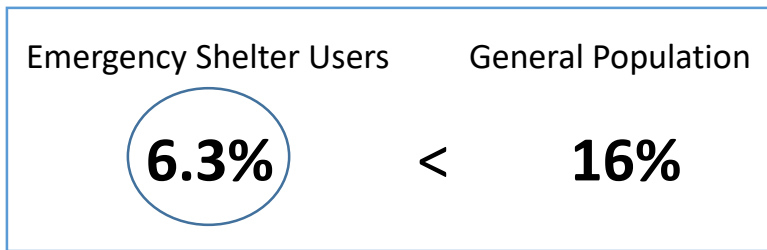
Number of adults (25-49) using emergency shelters annually (and percentage of total shelter users)



Number of adults and number of adult beds



# Children (2016)



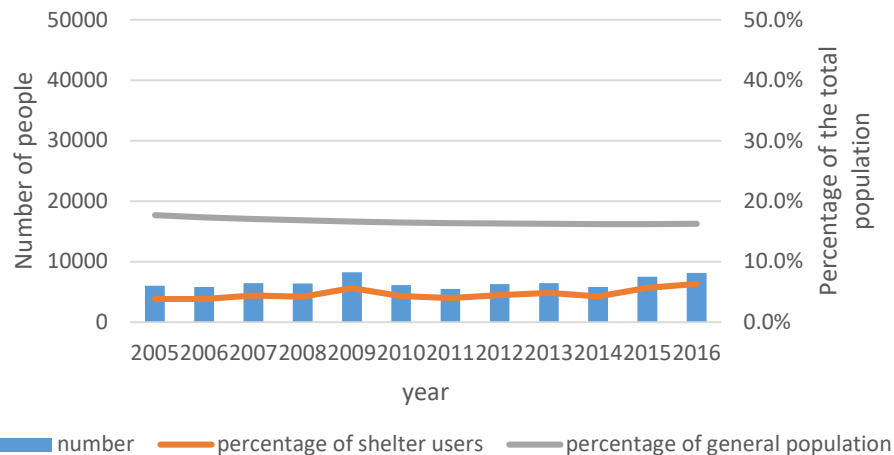
Children under 16 and accompanied by an adult are **underrepresented** in shelters

## BUT

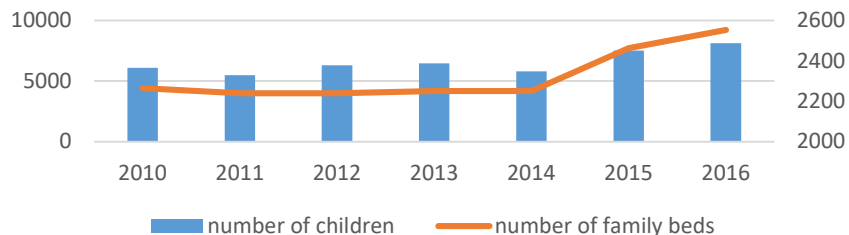
There has been a **slight increase in the proportion of children using shelters** in 2015-2016 compared to previous years

This is likely because there has been an **increase in the number of family beds** offered in Canada at the tail end of the study.

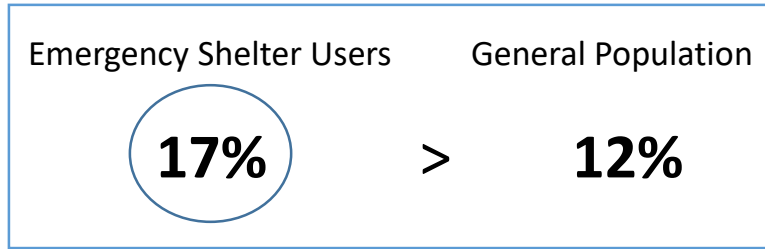
## Number of children using emergency shelters annually (and percentage of total shelter users)



## Number of children and number of family beds



# Youth\* (2016)



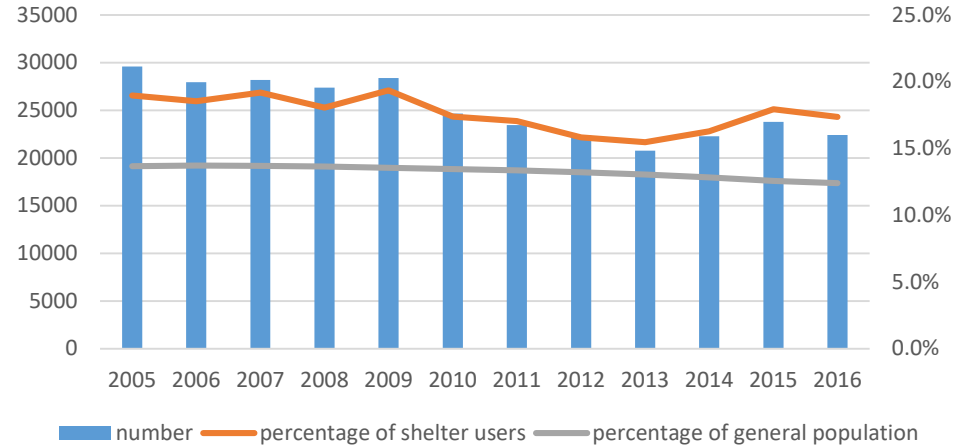
Youth are slightly **overrepresented** in shelters

**AND**

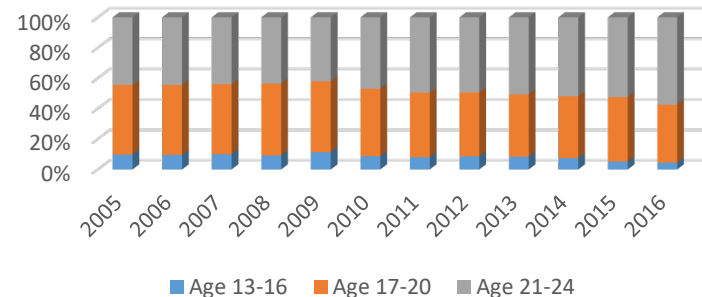
The youth group has been getting steadily older. The proportion of people under the age of 16 is decreasing and the number of people over the age of 21 is increasing.

*\* Person between the ages of 13 and 16 who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian during their episode of homelessness. People between the ages of 17 and 24 are considered to be youth regardless of accompaniment status.*

Number of youth using emergency shelters annually (and percentage of total shelter users)



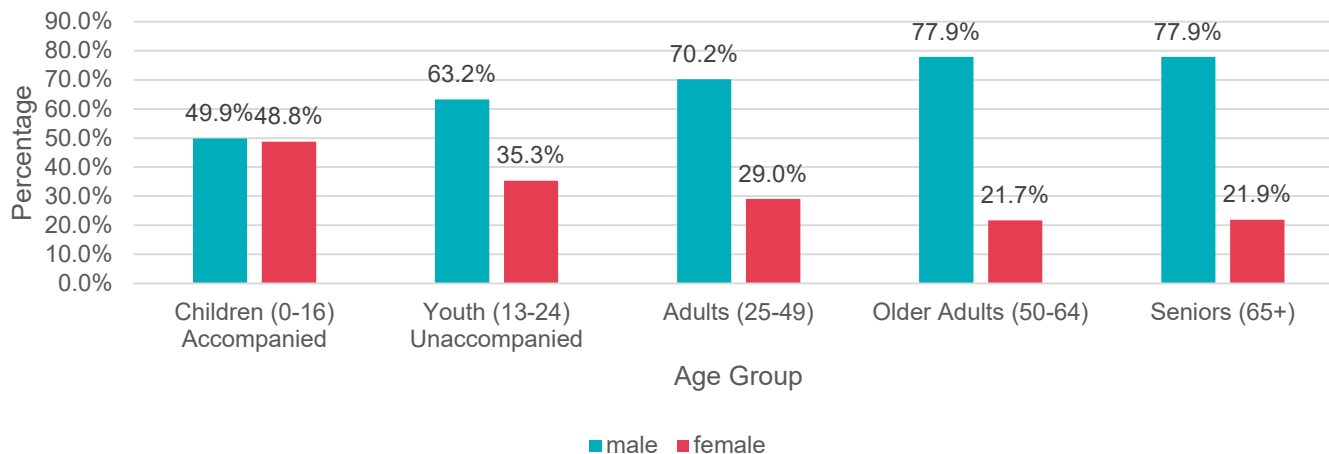
Youth Age Group Breakdown (2005-2016)



# Shelter Use by Gender

- In 2016, **69.5%** of shelter users were male and **29.7%** were female. This has not changed considerably between 2005-2016
- The proportion of male shelter users increases with age

Figure 8: Shelter Use by Gender by Age Group (2016\*)



# Shelter Use: Indigenous Peoples

- Indigenous Peoples continue to be overrepresented in Canada's emergency shelters
- While Indigenous Peoples represent about **5%** of the Canadian population, the percentage of shelter users reporting Indigenous ancestry is approximately **31%**
- Indigenous shelter use varies widely by region, from less than 5% in some suburban communities to over 90% in many northern communities. In each of the communities where data are available, Indigenous Peoples are over-represented in homeless shelters compared to the overall population



# Shelter Use: Veterans

- Shelter use by Veterans was first collected in 2014
- In 2016, **1.8%** of shelter users—an estimated 2,400 people—reported having served in the military
- This is down from nearly 3,000 (**2.2%**) in 2014





# Shelter Use: Immigrants, Refugees and Temporary Residents

- In 2016, over 7,600, or **5.9%**, of shelter users reported that they were not Canadian citizens. This includes:
  - 5,067 permanent residents or immigrants
  - 1,991 refugees
  - 558 temporary residents (student, work or visitor visa)
- Compared to 2014 , the number of permanent residents or immigrants using shelters remained stable while the number of refugees increased by almost 900.
- Among non-citizens, 35% accessed shelters as part of a family compared to just 12% of Canadian citizens.

*Note that data from immigrant/refugee shelters are not included in this analysis*



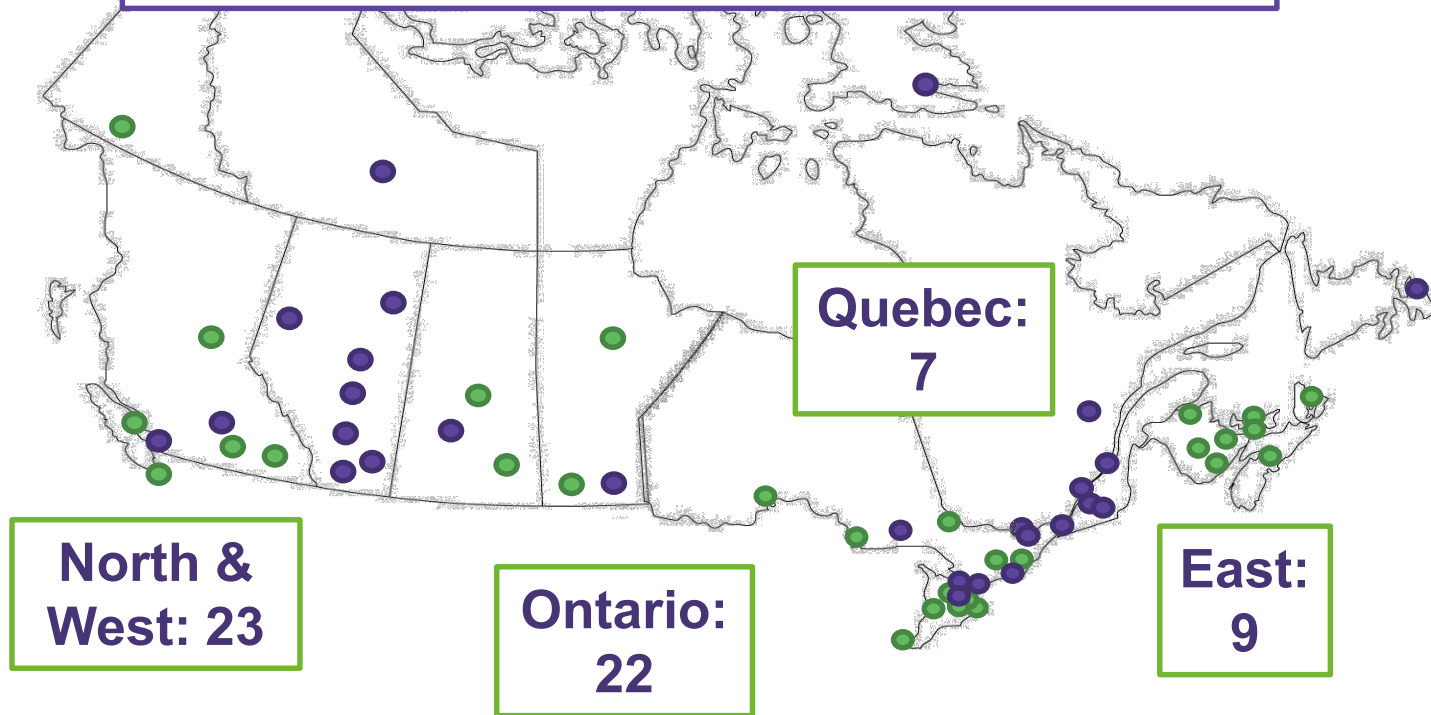
# PIT COUNT 2016

## 32 Participating Communities



# PIT COUNT 2018

## 61+ Participating Communities

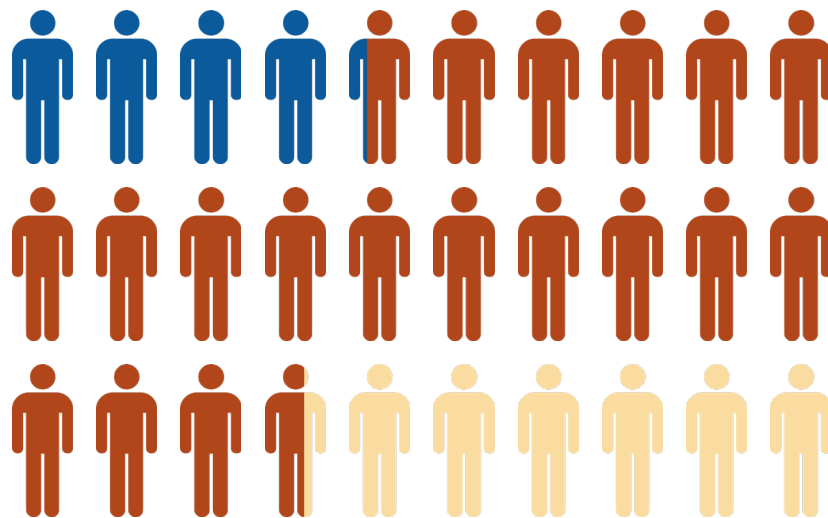


# Enumeration

On a given night **25,222** people across 61 communities were experiencing absolute homelessness in shelters or unsheltered locations.

An additional **6,789** people were in a transitional program.

Over the communities that also conducted a count in 2016, there was a 14% increase.



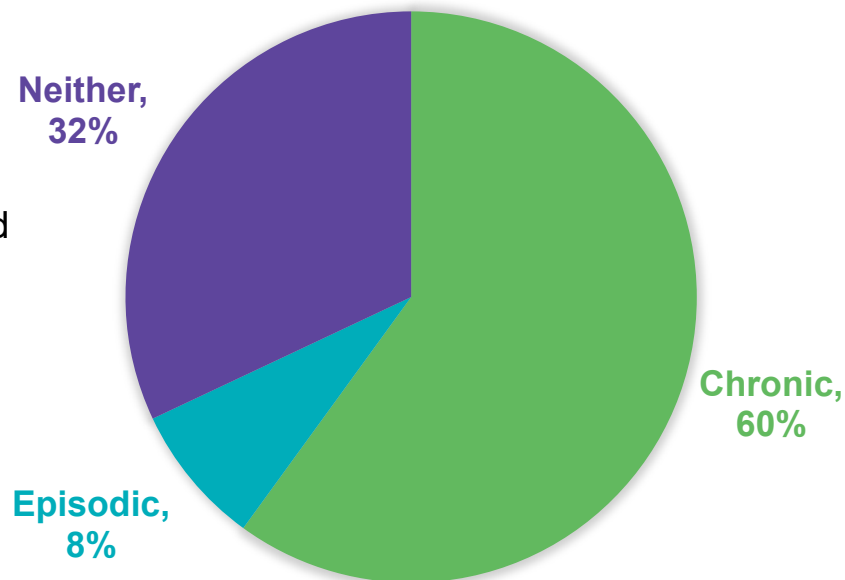
# Chronic and Episodic Homelessness

To measure chronic and episodic homelessness\*, respondents were asked how long they were homeless over the past year and how many times.

**Chronic:** 60% of those surveyed reported experiencing 6 or more months of homelessness. Chronicity was higher in communities in the West and North (67%) and lower in the East (46%).

**Episodic:** 8% had been homeless for less than 6 months, but had experienced 3 or more episodes distinct episodes of homelessness.

**Neither:** 32% did not meet either criterion, although some may become chronic or episodic over time.

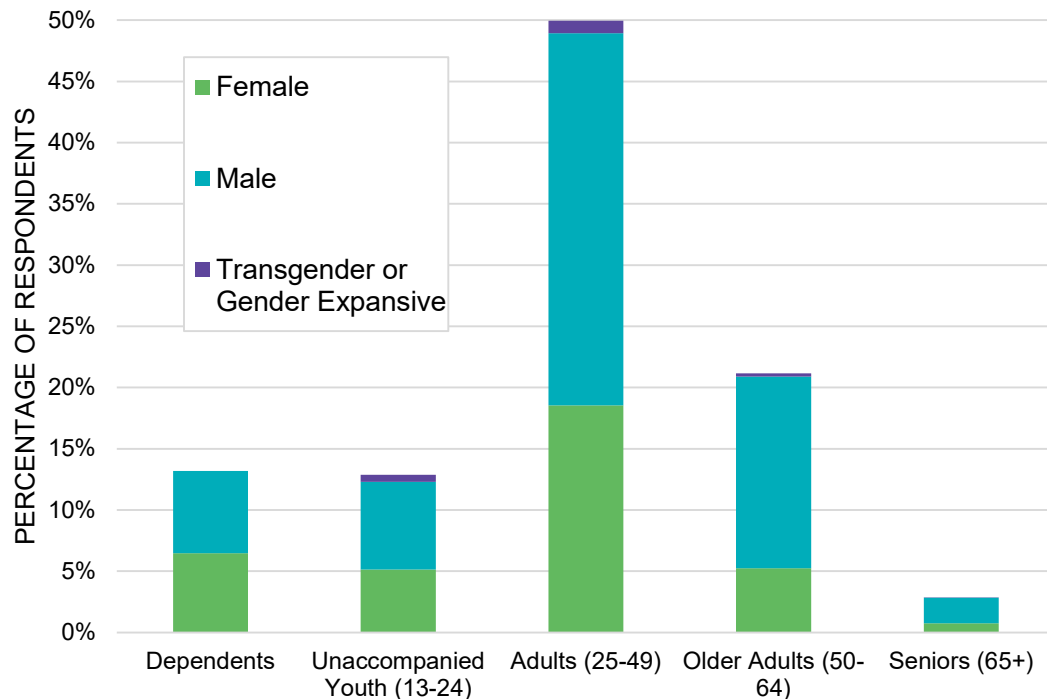


\*The definitions of chronic and episodic homelessness have since been revised and will be measured in future counts.

# Age & Gender Identity

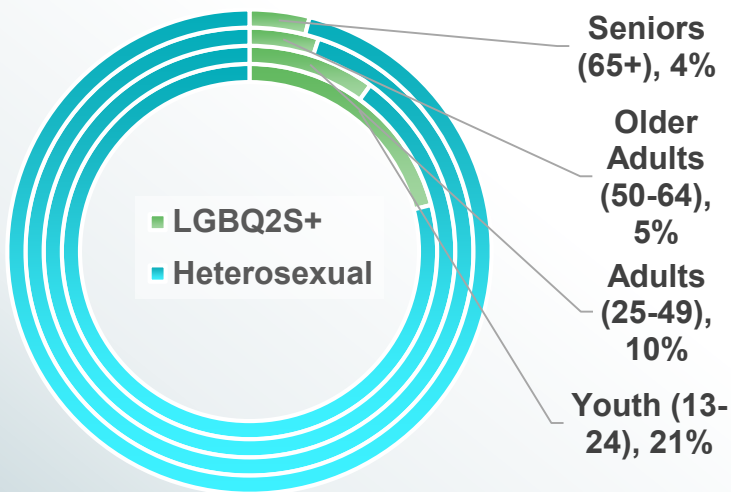
Males become increasingly overrepresented with age, accounting for 56% of youth, 61% of adults, and over 70% of older adults and seniors.

Transgender or Gender Expansive responses were most common among youth, accounting for 4% of responses.



# Sexual Identity

**LGBQ2S+ responses were most common among youth**



Respondents were asked about their sexual identity, or orientation. 10% of respondents identified as gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual, pansexual, two-spirit, queer, questioning, or provided another response not listed on the survey.

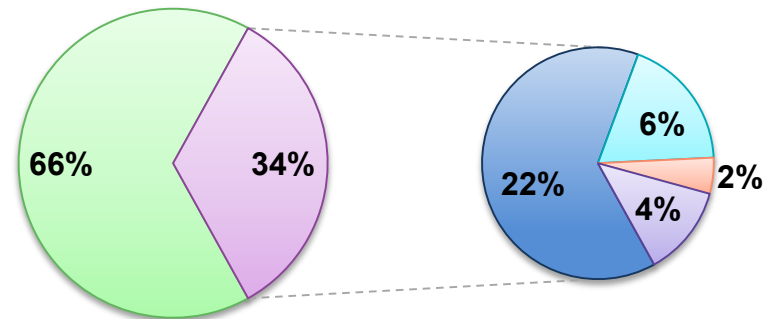
These responses were given by 21% of youth and became less frequent with age, accounting for 10% of responses from adults, 5% of older adults, and 4% of seniors.

# Indigenous Identity

One in three respondents identified as Indigenous, with the majority identifying as First Nations. The percentage of Indigenous respondents was higher in unsheltered locations (42%) and among those who were staying with others (47%).

A higher proportion of First Nations, Métis and Inuit respondents were adults, with a smaller proportion identifying as older adults and seniors. No differences were seen in the proportion of youth.

All Indigenous respondents were more likely to identify as female, particularly for First Nations (40%) and Inuit (42%) compared to 32% among non-Indigenous respondents.



- Non-Indigenous
- First Nations
- Métis
- Inuit
- Indigenous Ancestry



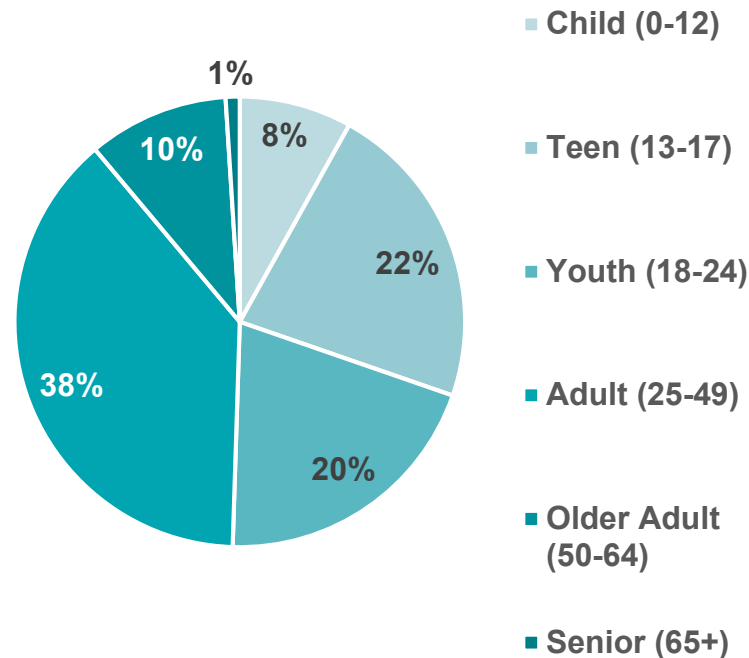


# Age of First Homelessness

Half of all respondents first experienced homelessness under the age of 25. This percentage was still high among older adults and seniors, with 25% first experiencing homelessness before 25.

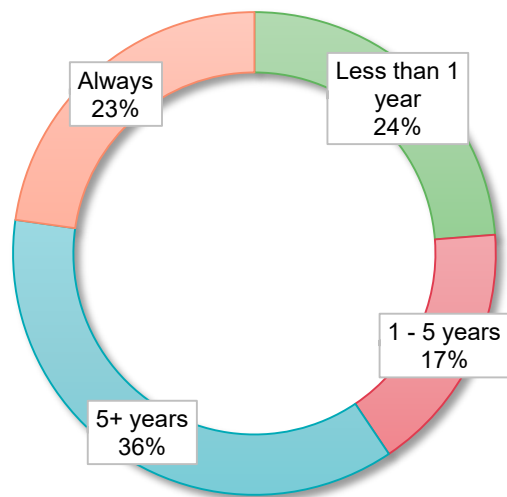
This highlights the need to intervene early to address homelessness among families and youth.

Nevertheless, 38% of seniors first experienced homelessness as a senior.



# Migration

24% of respondents came to the community in the past year



The majority (59%) of respondents have either always been in the community or came to the community more than five years ago. Nearly a quarter (24%) came less than a year ago.

Respondents were asked where they were previously. Most indicated that they had come from elsewhere within the province or territory (63%) or from elsewhere within Canada (27%). Fewer came internationally (11%).



# National PiT Results

## Findings to come

- A Highlights Report from Everyone Counts 2018 is expected in June, with further reporting following later in the year.
- In addition to the analyses discussed during this presentation, it is expected to include findings related to:
  - Changes between 2016 and 2018
  - Findings by community type and region
  - Patterns of homelessness experienced by different populations (e.g. Indigenous peoples, youth, families, veterans)
  - Migration between communities and across provinces and territories
  - Homelessness experienced by refugees and refugee claimants
  - Reasons for housing loss and sources of income
  - And more!



# Thank you

## Questions?

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