

08 October 2025

Dear Applicant

Our Ref: FOI 895

Your request for information received on 19 August 2025 has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Request

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding homelessness among refugees in Northern Ireland.

Specifically, I would like to receive the following information:

Annual data, for the past six financial years, 2019 to 2025 (to date) on the number of individuals recognised as refugees who have been assessed or recorded by the Housing Executive as homeless. If it would exceed the section 12 limit to provide six years of data, please explain why that is.

For the relevant period, please provide the following information, broken down by financial year (or calendar year, if more appropriate):

- 1. The total number of individuals who have approached the Housing Executive (or NI local authorities) seeking assistance as homeless.*
- 2. Of those who approached your authority as homeless, how many were recognised as refugees — i.e., individuals granted refugee status or humanitarian protection with leave to remain (not asylum seekers with pending claims, accommodated by the Home Office).*
- 3. Of the homeless individuals recognised as refugees, how many were granted their refugee status and leave to remain while living in a different local authority.*
- 4. Total annual spending on homelessness for each of the past six financial years. This should cover:*

- a. *Support provided under statutory homelessness duties;*
 - b. *Support for individuals presenting informally or via referral who do not qualify for statutory assistance.*
5. *Of the total homelessness spend, how much was spent on homeless individuals with refugee status.*

Our response

1. The total number of individuals who have approached the Housing Executive (or NI local authorities) seeking assistance as homeless.

Homeless presentations are published as part of the DfC Homelessness Bulletin. The figures for the requested period are available on tab 1.1 of [this link](#).

2. Of those who approached your authority as homeless, how many were recognised as refugees — i.e., individuals granted refugee status or humanitarian protection with leave to remain (not asylum seekers with pending claims, accommodated by the Home Office).

The Housing Executive holds information within the scope of your request. However, it will not be possible to make this available to you without exceeding the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the FOI Act.

The Housing Executive records information relating to whether a person is subject to immigration control to establish a person's eligibility for homeless assistance. This information may include if an individual has been granted refugee status, however this information is not captured in a way that enables us to extract it other than by undertaking a significant manual exercise reviewing case notes on our Housing Management System (HMS), and this would go beyond the 'appropriate limit' as defined by the FOI Act.

Section 12 of the Act makes provision for public authorities to refuse requests for information where it is estimated that the cost of dealing with them would exceed the appropriate limit, which for the Housing Executive is set at £450. This represents the cost of one or more individuals spending 18 hours collectively in determining whether the Housing Executive holds the information, locating, retrieving, and extracting it.

The Housing Executive considers that it is not reasonably possible to reduce or narrow the scope of your request so that it might bring it under the cost limit.

3. Of the homeless individuals recognised as refugees, how many were granted their refugee status and leave to remain while living in a different local authority.

The Housing Executive does not hold this information.

4. Total annual spending on homelessness for each of the past six financial years. This should cover:

- a. *Support provided under statutory homelessness duties.*

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total Accommodation and Associated Costs	£9,247,584	£15,980,581	£21,016,891	£25,895,513	£36,686,512	£42,738,510

Please note that the figures above are the gross cost to the Homeless programme and therefore exclude any income received in relation to temporary accommodation placements. The costs are the full costs to the Housing Executive of provision of statutory duty related to homeless service provision.

It should also be noted that this does not include funding allocated via Voluntary Person Resettlement Schemes as such support is not directly funded under the Housing Executive's statutory homelessness functions until such time as assistance under such schemes concludes. For those refugees who have sought asylum and are entitled to statutory homelessness assistance having previously been supported via the Home Office (Section 95) or Voluntary Person Resettlement Schemes it is not possible to identify specific costs as they will be included in the overall homelessness funding information in the table above following either acceptance upon being accepted as statutorily homelessness having previously been supported via Home Office (Section 95), or upon conclusion of any support via Voluntary Person Resettlement Schemes.

b. Support for individuals presenting informally or via referral who do not qualify for statutory assistance.

The Housing Executive does not hold this information. Households who are ineligible for assistance can avail of advice and assistance from the Housing Executive, which can for example include information regarding any voluntary, community or statutory organisation who may be in a position to provide assistance.

5. Of the total homelessness spend, how much was spent on homeless individuals with refugee status.

The Housing Executive does not hold this information.

This concludes our response.