



Specialist homelessness services 2016–17: Victoria

Homelessness can profoundly affect a person’s mental and physical health, their education and employment opportunities, and their ability to fully participate in society. Governments across Australia fund a range of specialist services to support people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Specialist Homelessness Services (SHS) deliver services for specific groups (such as people experiencing domestic and family violence, and young people) as well as more generic services for people in housing crisis.

How many people were assisted?

One in 56 people in Victoria (Vic) received homelessness assistance, higher than the national rate (1 in 84). The top 3 reasons for clients seeking assistance were:

- domestic and family violence (44%, compared with 37% nationally)
- housing crisis (40%, compared with 44%)
- financial difficulties (39%, compared with 38%).

On average, 99 requests for assistance went unmet each day.

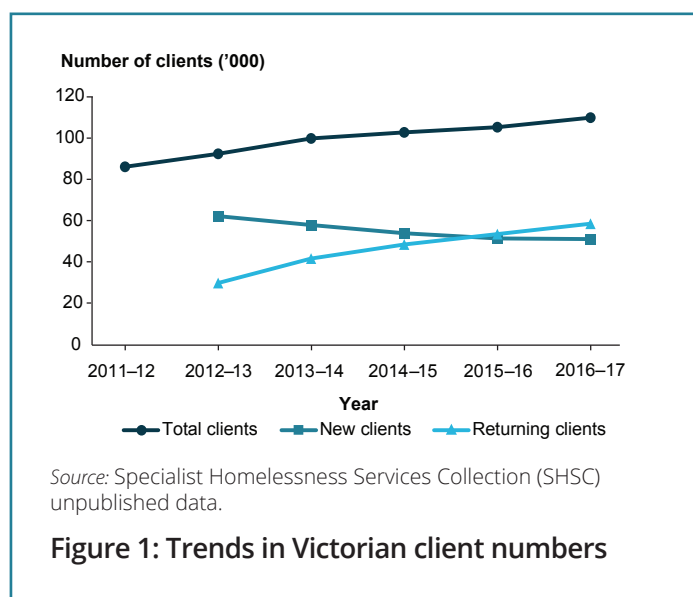


Figure 1: Trends in Victorian client numbers

Quick facts

- 109,901 clients were assisted, representing 38% of the national Specialist Homelessness Services population (288,273 total clients).
- 38% were homeless, lower than the national rate (44%).
- 9 in 10 clients (91%) at risk of homelessness were assisted to maintain housing.
- 3 in 10 clients (30%) who were homeless were assisted into housing.



Table 1: Victorian client characteristics, 2016–17

	Vic	Australia
Sex (%)	Male	40
	Female	60
Indigenous (%)	9	25
Remoteness (%)	Major cities	62
	Inner regional	23
	Outer regional	11
	Remote and very remote	5
Living arrangements (%)	Living alone	29
	One parent with child/ren	35
	Couple with child/ren	13
	Couple without child/ren	5
Labour force (%)	Other family group	18
	Employed	11
	Unemployed	48
Education status (%)	Not in labour force	41
	Education/training	22
	Not in education/training	78
Median length of support (days)	22	37
Median length of accommodation (nights)	26	33
Proportion receiving accommodation (%)	23	30

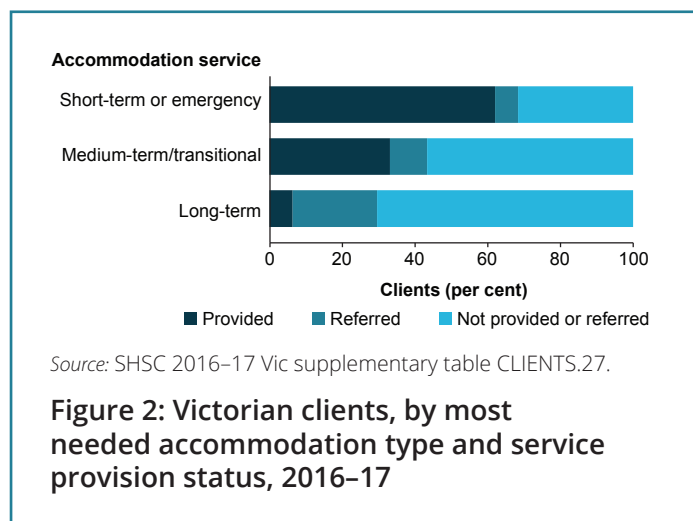
— nil or rounded to zero

Note: Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

Sources: SHSC National and Vic supplementary tables 2016–17.

Accommodation services

A smaller proportion of Victorian clients needed accommodation compared with the national SHS population (44% and 56%, respectively).



Client groups of interest

While the overall service use rate in Victoria was similar in 2016-17 and the previous year, higher rates were reported for a number of priority groups, including domestic and family violence and mental health groups.

Table 2: Client rate per 10,000, by priority group

	Vic		Australia	
	2015-16	2016-17	2015-16	2016-17
All clients	177.3	177.9	117.4	119.1
Indigenous	1,541.4	1,664.0	787.0	813.9
Young people presenting alone (15-24)	24.3	22.7	18.1	17.4
Older people (55 and over)	17.2	18.2	9.1	9.7
Domestic and family violence	76.9	81.0	44.4	47.4
Disability	6.1	6.4	4.1	4.5
Mental health	45.7	47.7	30.4	32.0
Exiting custodial arrangements	5.6	5.5	3.3	3.4
Leaving care	3.5	3.5	2.9	2.9
Children on protection orders	6.2	5.5	3.7	3.6
Drug/alcohol use	14.3	14.0	11.1	11.3

Notes

- Crude rates are used except for Indigenous rates which are directly age-standardised (see online technical information).
- Minor adjustments in rates may occur between publications reflecting revision of the estimated resident population by the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Sources: SHSC National and Vic supplementary tables 2015-16 and 2016-17.

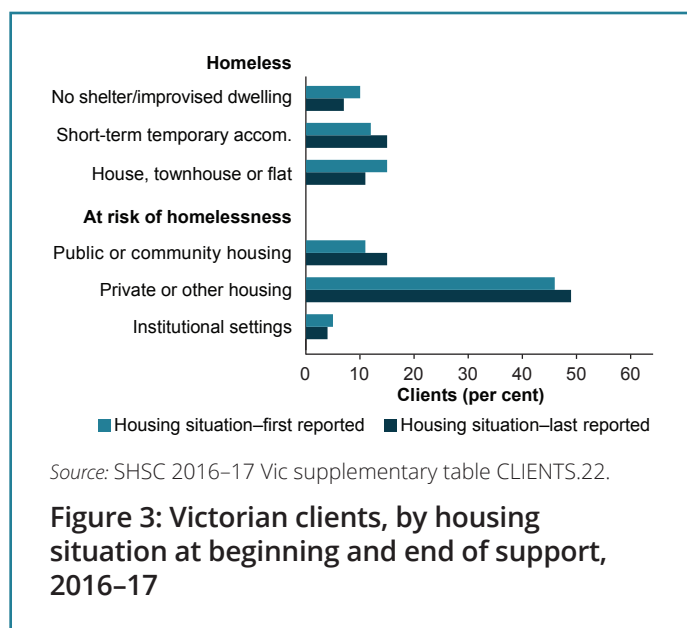
Housing outcomes

Housing outcomes are described for clients whose support had ended and housing situation was known.

Nearly 22,000 clients began support homeless; 30% (nearly 6,500 clients) were assisted into housing. Of these, 59% (3,800 clients) were housed in private/other housing while 36% (2,300 clients) were housed in public/community housing.

Of the nearly 37,000 clients who began support housed, but at risk of homelessness; 9 in 10 (91%) were assisted to maintain housing. Of these clients at risk:

- About 5,500 (86%) of those in public/community housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 6% (around 400) were assisted into private/other housing.
- About 24,000 (88%) of those in private/other housing were assisted to remain in their tenancy and a further 3% (over 900) were assisted into public/community housing.



More information

More information is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2016-17/contents/contents>.

Specific information on Victoria is available from <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/specialist-homelessness-services-2016-17/data>.

© Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2018

Any enquiries about copyright and/or this fact sheet should be directed to: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, GPO Box 570, Canberra ACT 2601, Tel: (02) 6244 1000, Email: info@aihw.gov.au.