

# How Toronto's Shelter System Flow Data is Driving Change

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# Background

# ➤ Background

- The foundation of an effective Coordinated Access system
  - Requirement of federal Reaching Home funding
  - Consistent with approaches in many other North American jurisdictions
  - Part of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness Built for Zero campaign
- Collaboration between the City, the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness (TAEH), and the Toronto Indigenous Community Advisory Board (TICAB)

# ➤ Who

- People experiencing homelessness in the shelter system in the last three months
- Work is underway to include people who are exclusively sleeping outdoors
- Enhancements underway to add racial identity and veteran status
- With time, this data will become a comprehensive snapshot of all people experiencing homelessness and Toronto will be one of the largest cities in North America with a quality By Name List

## ➤ How

- Data is collected in intake into, or discharge from, a shelter, 24-hour respite, warming centre, or hotel/motel shelter program
- Using the Shelter Management Information System (SMIS)
- Front-line staff enter information based on responses from people accessing services

# ➤ Why

- Measure progress towards achieving the vision of homelessness being rare, brief and non-recurring
- Provide a more comprehensive picture of the shelter system, rather than focusing exclusively on nightly occupancy and capacity
- Provide a better understanding of who is experiencing homelessness and how people are entering and exiting the system
- Best practice among North American cities who have seen reductions in chronic and veteran homelessness

# Data overview

# ➤ Dashboard details

- Two dashboards:
  1. The Monthly Snapshot shows current reporting month
  2. The Historical Trends highlights changes over time
- Users are able to filter data by sub-populations and specific time periods using the built-in filtering tools
- Dashboards is updated monthly on City's website
- Data is also available on the City's open data portal



# Shelter System Flow: Monthly Snapshot

## April, 2022

Shelter System Flow: Monthly Snapshot dashboard has 7 visualizations and 4 key performance indicators to comprehend monthly trends of shelter system flow across the city of Toronto.

1.

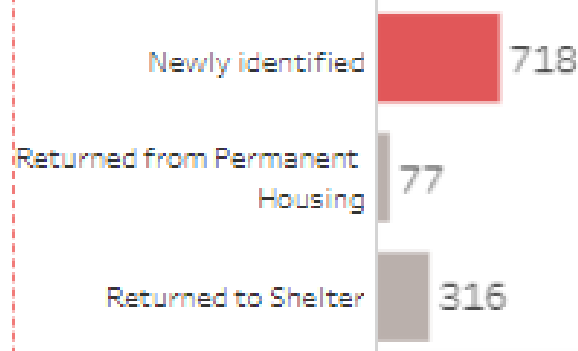
People actively homeless in the last three months\*: **9,913**

Shelter System Inflow in April, 2022:  
**1,111**

Change (inflow-outflow) in April, 2022:  
**+25**

Shelter System Outflow in April, 2022:  
**1,086**

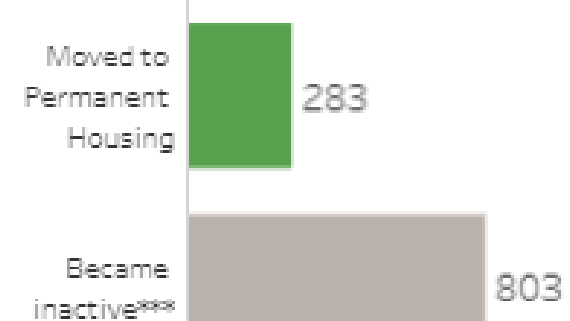
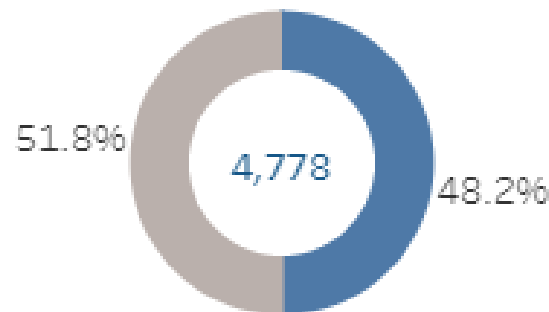
2.



3.

4.

People experiencing chronic homelessness\*\*\*



5.

6.

## Shelter System Flow: Historical Trends

Shelter System Flow: Historical Trends dashboard has 6 visualization to depict historical trends of shelter system flow across the city of Toronto. Further, Select a Population Group, Select a Year, and Select a Month filters provide additional interactivity in the dashboard.

### Select a Population Group

Chronic

### Select a Year(s)

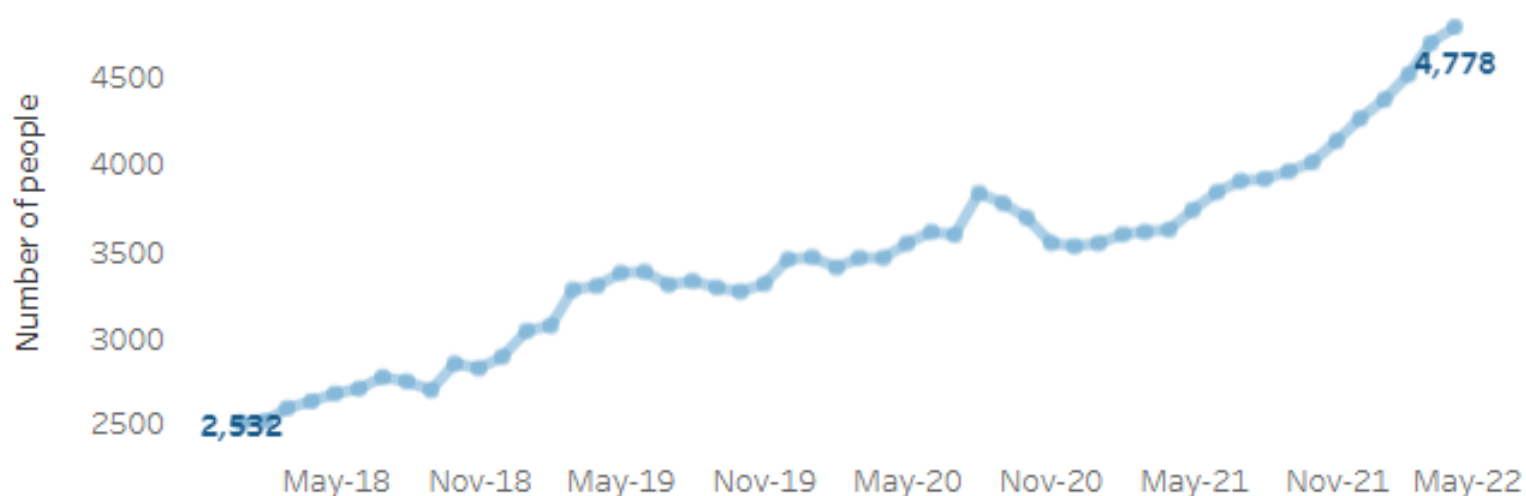


(All)

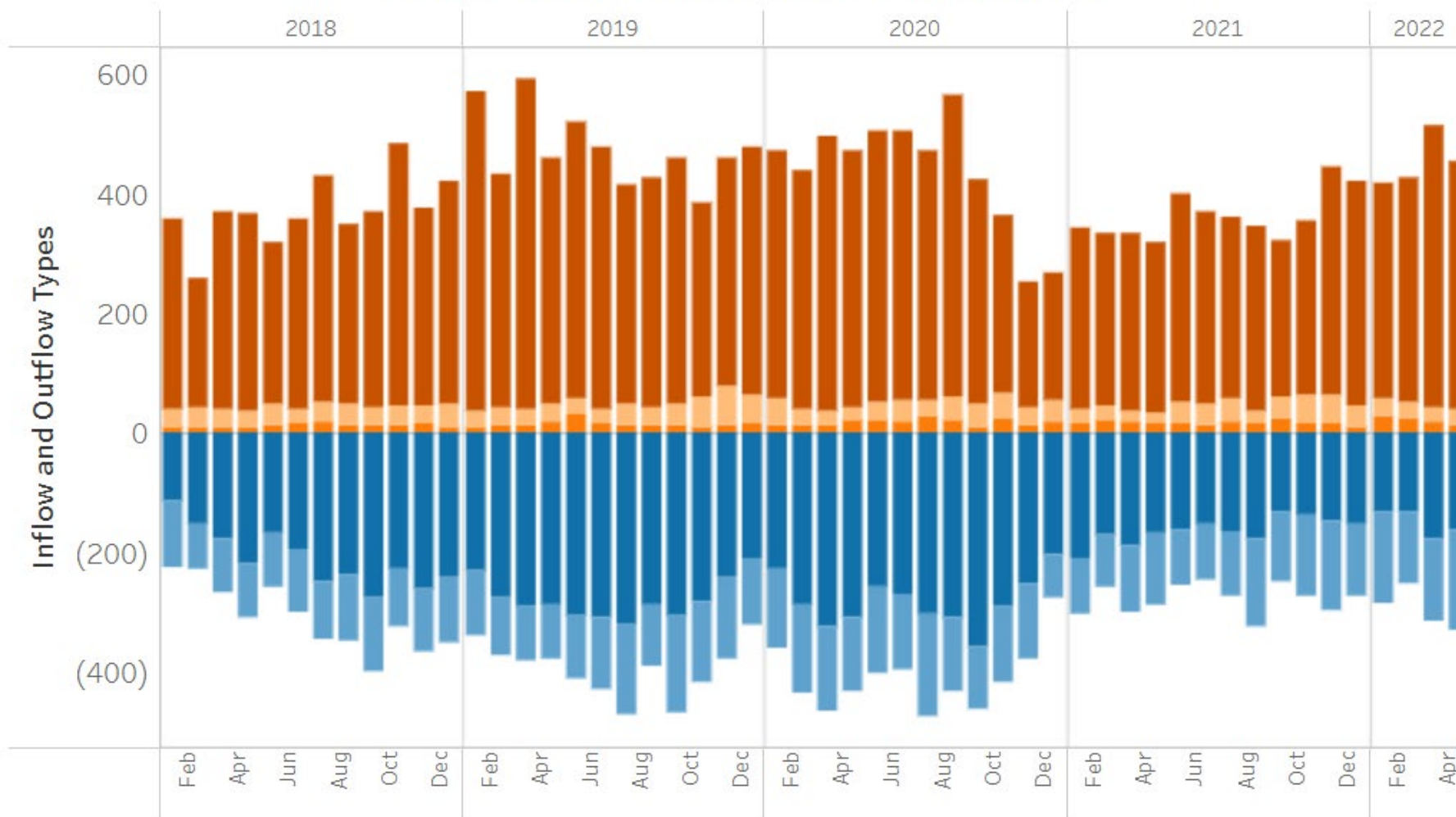
### Select a Month(s)

(All)

### People actively homeless in the last 3 months



## Detailed Inflow and Outflow each month



### Color Legend for Detailed Inflow and Outflow each month

- Inflow - Newly Identified
- Inflow - Returned to shelter
- Inflow - Returned from Permanent Housing
- Outflow - Moved to permanent housing
- Outflow - Became inactive

# What impact has this data made?

Public discourse and service planning

# ➤ Impact

- Use of data in staff reports to demonstrate need for different programs and funding, including provincial dollars for supportive housing
- Use of data in media with a more nuanced understanding of homelessness than nightly occupancy data alone
- Monthly housing and homelessness forums with partners at the Toronto Alliance to End Homelessness
- Data-informed Homelessness Response Service Plan
- Increased awareness of how many people move through our system each month

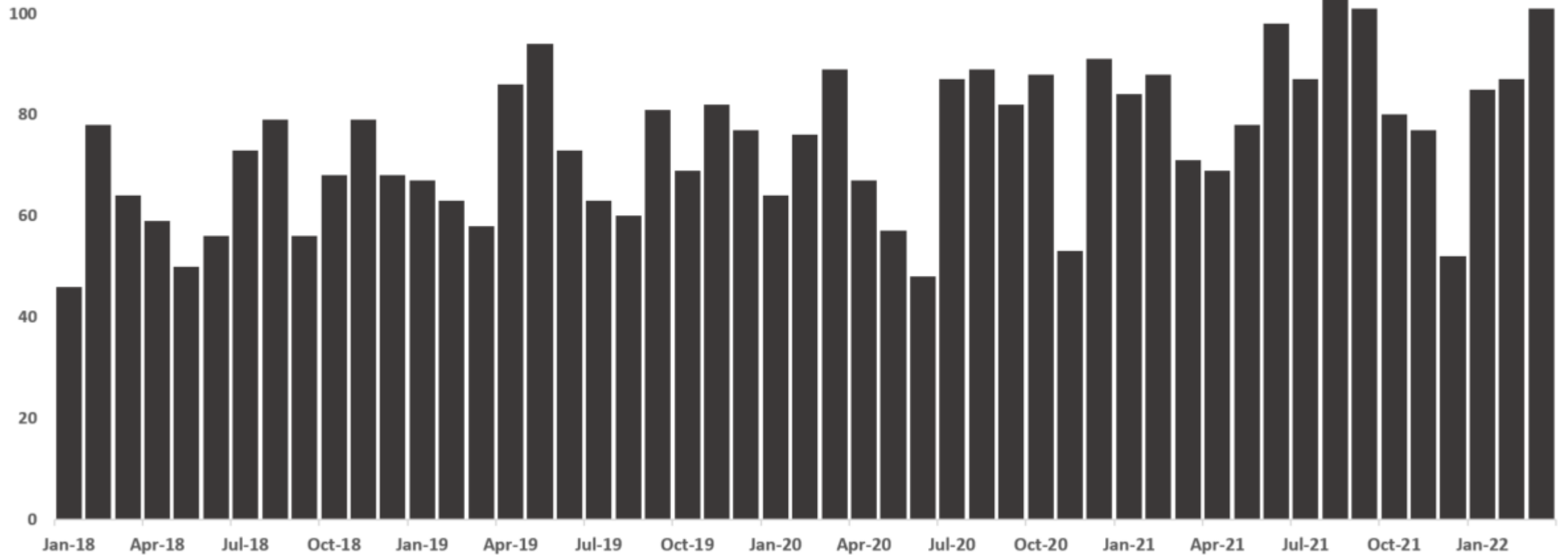
# What impact has this data made?

Calculating rates of return to shelter from permanent housing



# Returns to Shelter from Permanent Housing

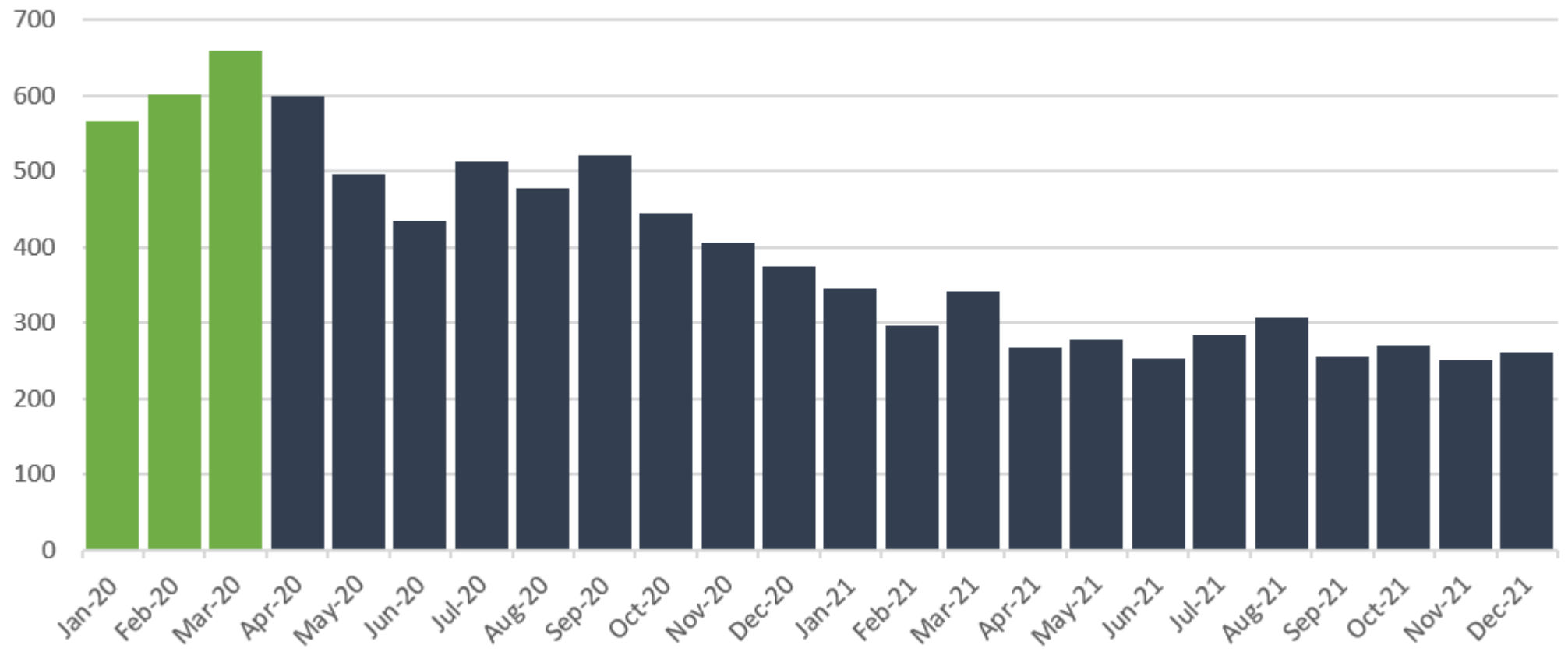
Monthly return from permanent housing, Jan 2018 to Mar 2022





# Calculating the Rate of Returns to Shelter from permanent housing – Cohort approach

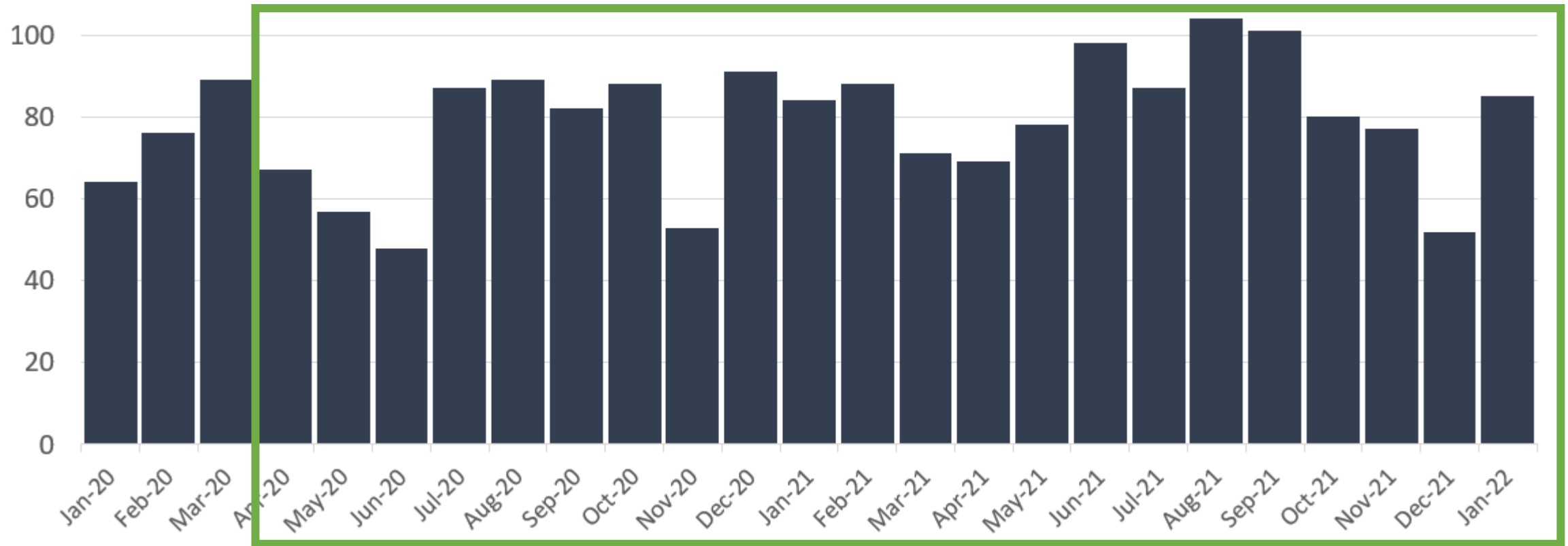
Number of people moved to permanent housing, January 2020 to December 2021



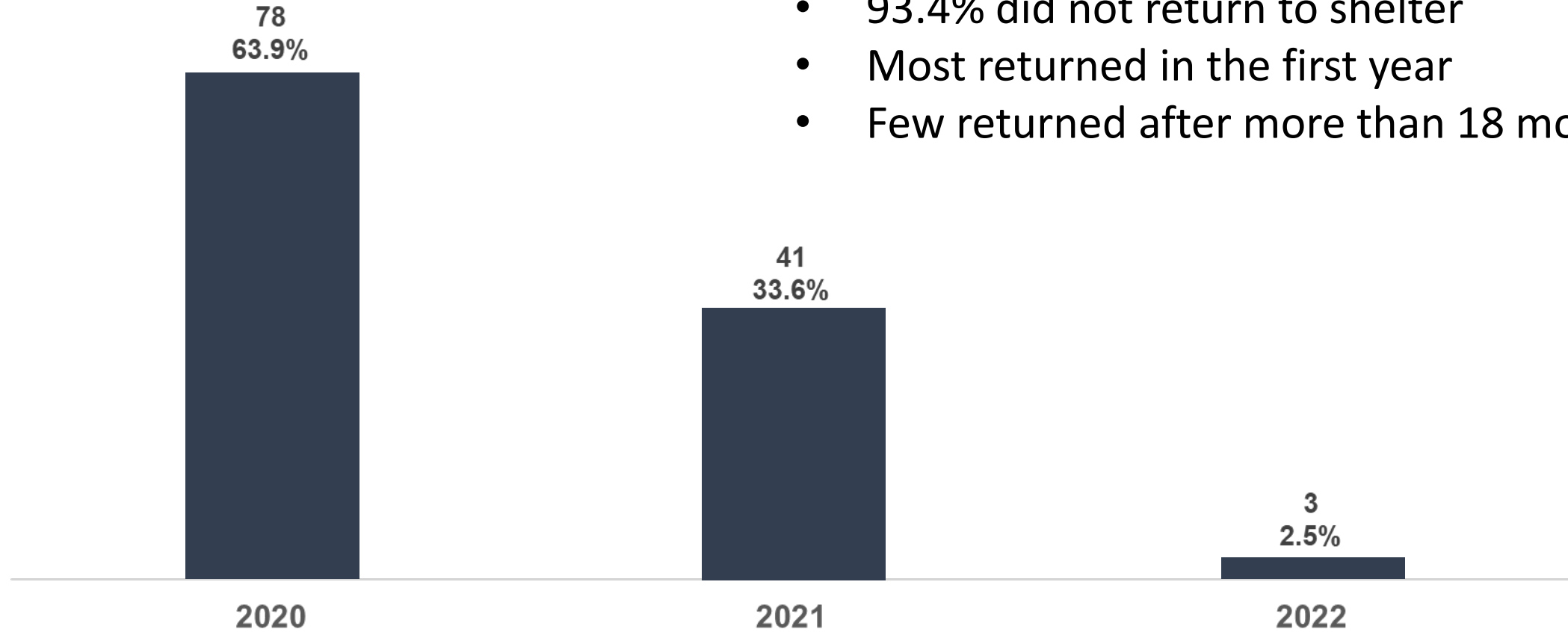


# ➤ Calculating the Rate of Returns to Shelter from permanent housing – Cohort approach

Monthly Returns from Permanent Housing, 2020 – January 2022



# ➤ Findings: 6.6% have returned to shelter



- 93.4% did not return to shelter
- Most returned in the first year
- Few returned after more than 18 months

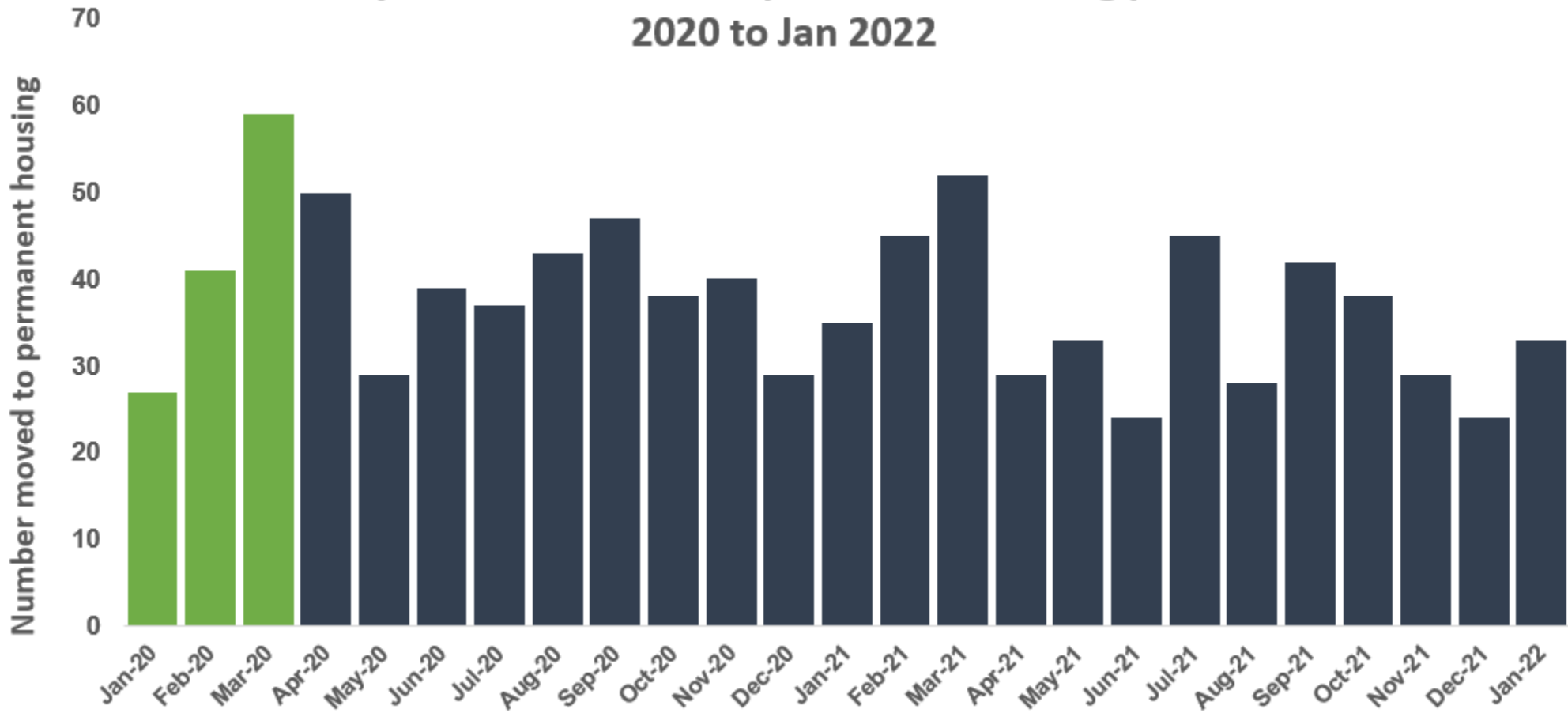
# What impact has this data made?

Population specific analysis



# Returns to shelter from permanent housing for Youth

Number of youth who moved to permanent housing per month, Jan 2020 to Jan 2022

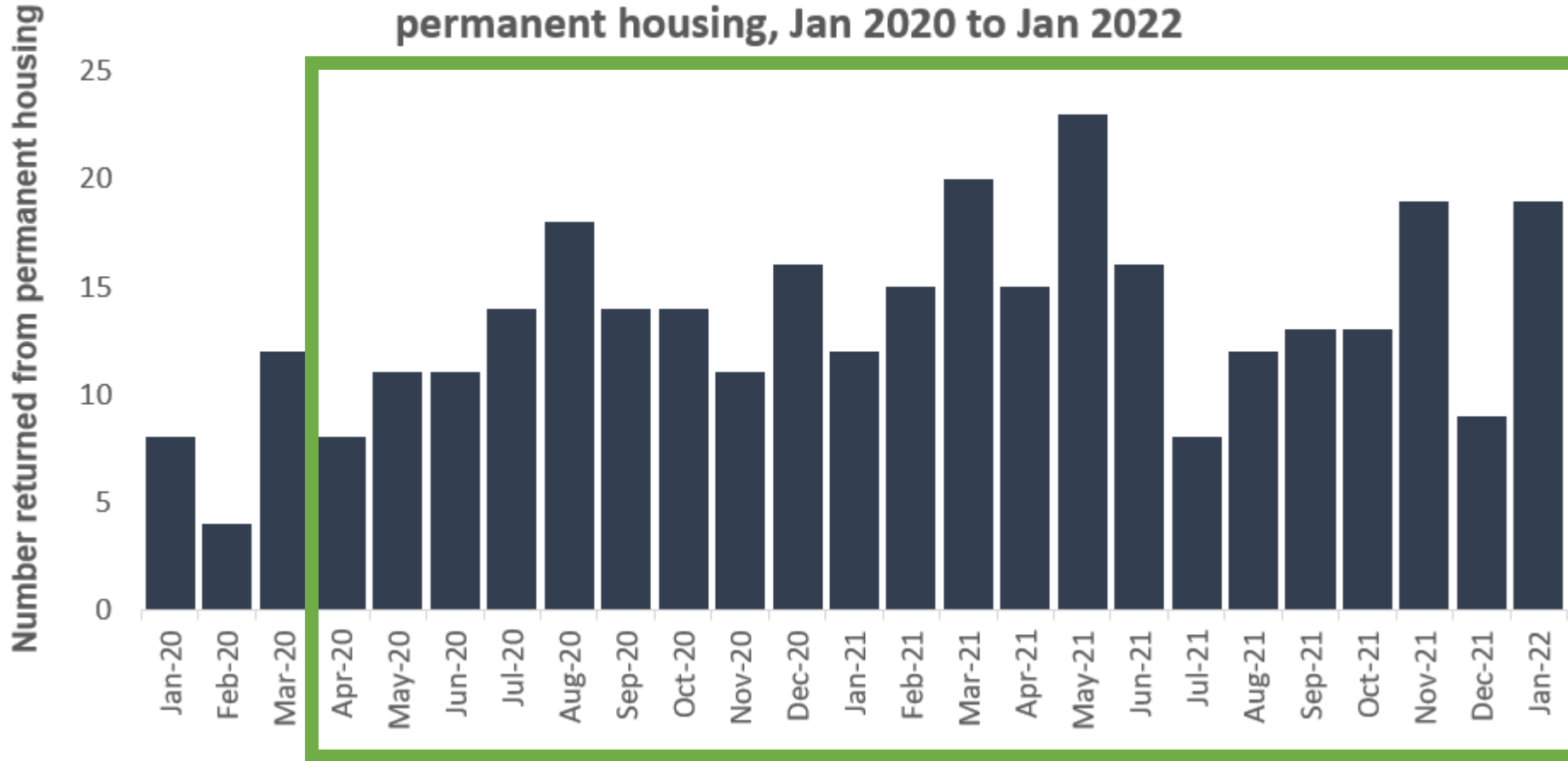


**127 youth** moved to permanent housing between Jan and Mar 2020



# Returns to shelter from permanent housing for Youth

Monthly number of Youth who returned to shelter from permanent housing, Jan 2020 to Jan 2022



**23 youth** returned to shelter between April 2020 and December 2021. Return rate of **18.1%**

The median time to return to shelter was **188 days**

# What impact has this data made?

Preventing returns to homelessness

# Meet Jesse

Preventing returns to homelessness



# ➤ Jesse

- Jesse **Moved to Permanent Housing** in July 2021
- He was referred to a support worker, Calvin, who visited him once a week for the first couple of months
- Calvin lost touch with Jesse. He wouldn't answer the phone and didn't answer the door when he visited
- In December 2021, Jesse **Returned from Permanent Housing**

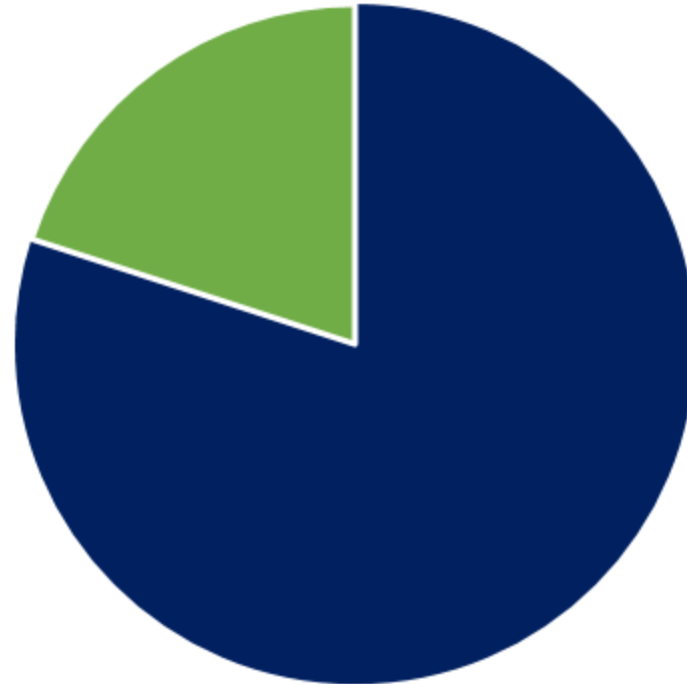


# ➤ Jesse

- Because we know Jesse had a home and a support worker, we were able to connect with Jesse and ask what happened
- Jesse let us know that his home had been taken over and he could no longer stay there, so he had returned to shelter
- With Jesse's permission, we reached out to Calvin who connected with the landlord to report the unit takeover
- The landlord removed the unwanted guests, changed the locks, and Calvin helped Jesse to move back into his home

# ➤ Outcomes

July - December 2021



■ Resolved ■ Unresolved

# ➤ Reasons

- The main reasons someone Returned from permanent housing have been
  - Unit takeover
  - Issues with neighbour
  - Delayed transition into housing
  - Data quality issues
- The individual impact is big, but it's also allowed us to think about some system-level changes

# What next?

## ➤ Next Steps

- Add people who are sleeping outdoors
- Add racial identity data
- Add veteran identity data
- Enhance our capacity to do complex analysis of this large data set

# Questions?

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