

**In the 2016 census, 116427 were reported to be homeless.**

**The causes of homelessness are numerous and complex.**

- poverty,
- unemployment
- shortage of affordable housing

**It can be triggered by:**

- family breakdown,
- mental illness,
- sexual assault,
- addiction,
- financial difficulty,
- gambling
- social isolation.

**Domestic violence is the single biggest cause of homelessness in Australia.**

**One third of homeless people in Australia are under 18 years.**

## Calling for an End to the Homelessness Crisis in Australia

Every night, roughly 1 in 200 Australians find themselves without a safe, secure or affordable place to sleep. In the 2016 census, 116427 were reported to be homeless. Many more do not have access to safe and secure long-term affordable housing even though this is one of the most basic of human rights. (See map below)

Homelessness causes are complex and numerous but stem from a shortage of affordable housing and human rights abuses including poverty and family violence. It can be triggered by unemployment, family breakdown, mental illness, sexual assault, addiction, financial difficulty, gambling or social isolation. Domestic violence which often involves children is the single biggest cause of homelessness in Australia. Young people are more likely to have difficulties securing suitable accommodation.

With the need to control infection rates in the pandemic, political leaders saw the need to find housing for rough-sleepers. Empty motel rooms and apartments were made available. In some states the participants were asked to contribute and in others it was free. But this will not last.

Is it no longer important to provide basic housing for vulnerable people? Some states have included funds in their 'stimulus packages' for social housing. The federal government has announced a stimulus package which hands taxpayers' dollars to people who are not in need of this support. Although it is important to stimulate the economy, giving a bonus of \$25,000 to be used for renovations on which the applicant is committed to spending \$150,000 does not appear to be best use of resources. The economy would receive the same stimulus if the funds were used to build or renovate much-needed social housing.

What can we do? Firstly, members could boycott the scheme and encourage friends and relations to do the same. Then we could write to the Prime Minister explaining our boycott, the need to end the homelessness crisis and request that funds set aside for the renovation scheme be redirected towards social housing projects.

We need to work towards eliminating the reasons why people become homeless in the first place, and support people experiencing homelessness to find more permanent living solutions.

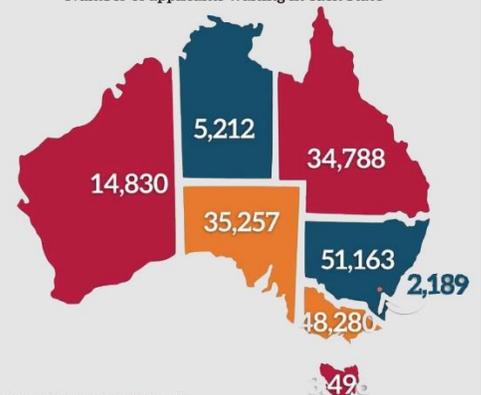
Money alone will not solve the underlying housing problems in our society but perhaps it will be enough to make a difference for some of the families in need of a safe secure and affordable home.

Susan Skowronski  
Social Issues and Action Coordinator  
June 2020

*May we always see the world through the eyes of Christ, speak to those we meet with the words of Christ, and take with us on our journey the peace of Christ*

### Our Social Housing Waiting Lists

Number of applicants waiting in each State



Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2019  
Most up-to-date figures are from 2018. Figure equals number of applicants for public housing, community housing or State-Owned and Managed Indigenous Housing in each state.