



**DEPAUL INTERNATIONAL  
IMPACT REPORT 2020-21**



A student supported by Depaul USA's Dax Programme in Chicago

## OUR MISSION

We aim to end homelessness and change the lives of those affected by it.

## OUR VISION

Our vision is of a society in which everyone, across the world, has a place to call home and a stake in their community.

## OUR VALUES

Our key values underpin all of the work we do:

- We celebrate the potential of people
- We put our words into action
- We aim to take a wider role in civil society
- We believe in rights and responsibilities

## OUR ROOTS

Depaul International takes its roots from the 17th century French social reformer St Vincent de Paul who started a movement that responded to the needs of the 'poorest of the poor' in a practical and non-judgemental way. All of the Depaul charities continue to work in the spirit of St Vincent de Paul, responding to need through action and innovation.

## CHAIR AND GROUP CEO'S STATEMENT

In March of 2020, the world changed for us all. What quickly became apparent, however, was that the incoming crisis of Covid-19 would disproportionately impact the most vulnerable among us. In the last year, the subsidiaries and partners of Depaul International have responded with speed and innovation to not only ensure the homeless communities across the world were safe and cared for but that the pandemic did not halt their journey away from the streets and that they could continue to build bright futures.

From the establishment of feeding stations in Ukraine, medical outreach in Croatia, the management of converted hotels for street homeless people in the UK and Ireland, quarantine facilities for those infected by Covid-19 in Slovakia and outdoor day centres in France and the USA. Every single subsidiary in the Depaul family has adapted to local needs and, especially, to support those who have fallen through existing safety nets.

Our partnerships with the Institute of Global Homelessness (IGH) and Famvin Homeless Alliance (FHA) also allowed the Depaul Group to demonstrate a truly global reach in relation to systemic change and practical solutions for some of the world's most vulnerable homeless people.

The IGH led a debate at the UN in February 2020 that saw the first-ever formal resolution on street homelessness and a call for a clear global definition and measurement of the problem, as well as an appeal for ambitious strategies to tackle the issue.

In the last two years, the FHA has managed to house 6,000 people in over 40 countries as part of its "13 Houses Campaign" - including Covid-19 responses - and is well on its way to reaching its target of 10,000 housed across every continent.

Thank you to all of our supporters for making this work possible - your generosity and support at this time has been greatly appreciated. However, our special thanks go to all our staff and volunteers. This has been a year to remember, both because of the pain and loss so many have endured but also for the heroic work of those who operate on the front line of our services. People have given selflessly, and for that, we all owe a deep debt of gratitude.

As the beginning of the end of the pandemic comes into sight, we are faced with task of making sure everyone benefits from the recovery and we leave nobody behind. At Depaul we have a new strategic plan to build back stronger and better. If society can bring Covid-19 under control, surely it is also possible for us to think about how we might end homelessness and the systems that contribute to it.



*Mark McGreevy*  
**Mark McGreevy OBE**  
Group Chief Executive



*John Darley*  
**John Darley**  
Chair of Trustees

# SPOTLIGHT ON THE DIFFERENCE WE HAVE MADE



**1 THE RUFF INSTITUTE OF GLOBAL HOMELESSNESS**  
(IGH) signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UN Habitat to plan for global homeless data collection and provide member states and UN offices with technical assistance on strategies to reduce homelessness.

**2 THE FAMVIN HOMELESS ALLIANCE**  
welcomed 18 new projects to the 13 Houses Campaign, including one in Guatemala, which saw the construction of 35 new houses for families who lost their homes following the Fuego Volcano eruption.

**3 DEPAUL USA**  
helped a total of 765 women and men attain employment and benefits, providing some much needed security and advancing clients' journey towards a life independent of homelessness.

**4 DEPAUL IRELAND**  
provided over 20,500 social support sessions, during which clients work closely with their caseworker to develop individualised support plans covering topics from managing a budget to rebuilding relationships.

**5 DEPAUL UK**  
established emergency Covid-19 hotels as part of the Government's 'Everyone In' campaign and provided over 31,700 bed nights to people at risk of sleeping on the streets.

**6 DEPAUL FRANCE**  
assisted 45 clients to restore their official documents, which are necessary to secure accommodation and employment, as well as a variety of state benefits.

**7 DEPAUL SLOVAKIA**  
welcomed 838 new clients in 2020, an increase of 96 from 2019, as they expanded their outreach and emergency response services following the onset of Covid-19.

**8 DEPAUL CROATIA**  
had over 19,000 visits to their day centre in 2020, where they provide homeless and destitute individuals with food, healthcare, hygiene and social support services.

**9 DEPAUL UKRAINE**  
increased the capacity of their Odesa day centre to provide over 1,400 healthcare sessions as, at one point, due to the pandemic, they were the only operational service provider in the whole city.



# OUR WORK

## Humanitarian and emergency response

People affected by homelessness are at the heart of everything Depaul does and our subsidiaries across currently seven countries continuously strive to meet their most basic needs. Our teams step in when urgent action is required, often on short notice, to ensure access to life-saving provisions including shelter, food, sanitation and medical care.

**DEPAUL CROATIA** continued to develop its outreach project in Rijeka and have focused on providing healthcare and hygiene services to clients in need. As a result, their outreach project had 828 visits this year, up from 230 in 2019. Importantly, they have continued to prioritise helping clients to move-on from homelessness and build a life away from the streets.

**DEPAUL USA** adapted its day centres in Macon (Georgia) and Little Rock (Arkansas) to ensure vulnerable individuals could still access support, despite pandemic restrictions. By moving operations outside, the team were able to continue meeting clients' basic needs and provided over 56,000 meals and 18,000 hygiene episodes.

**DEPAUL FRANCE** took into management the innovative Mobil'douche, a mobile shower that travels the streets of Paris offering the homeless community a

hot shower, fresh clothes, a cup of coffee and a listening ear. The Mobil'douche was indispensable in the maintenance of support to service users throughout periods of lockdown.

**DEPAUL IRELAND** were instrumental in the establishment and delivery of vital Covid-19 shielding units for their most medically vulnerable clients. In total, Depaul Ireland managed over 230 shielding beds and provided a safe haven to the especially vulnerable homeless community, many of whom were already tackling a variety of health complexities.

**DEPAUL UKRAINE'S** outreach work sees the team drive through Odesa and Kharkiv, establishing contact and building relationships with over 7,000 homeless and destitute people. As a result, in 2020, they distributed over 96,000 meals, provided over 2,000 clients with healthcare services and issued more than 11,000 hygiene episodes.

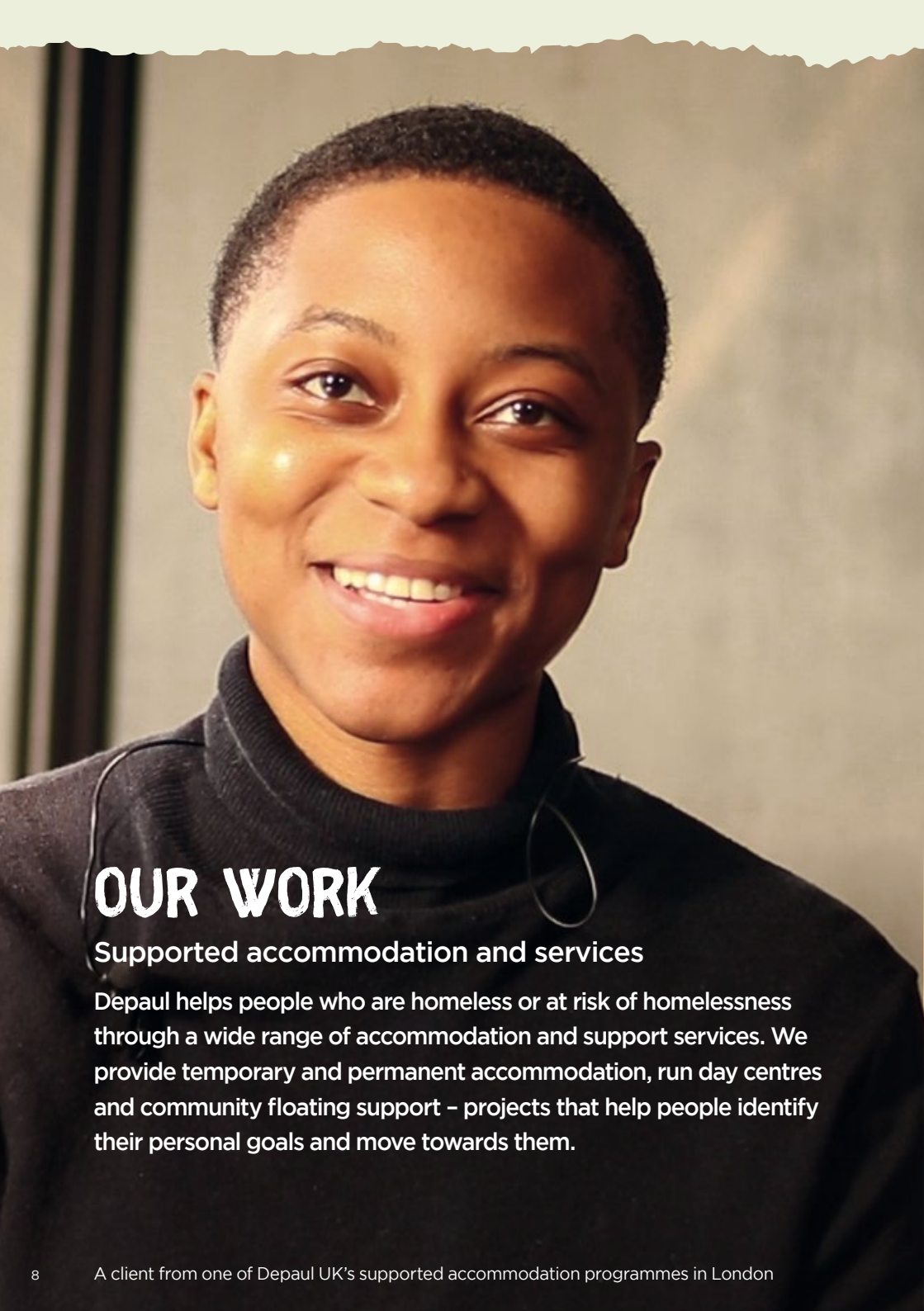
## OUR IMPACT: SLOVAKIA – DIANA'S STORY

Previously, Diana owned a travel agency, had her own apartment and a long-term partner. Her life seemed secure and stable. After discovering her partner's debts, however, she lost it all: her business, her apartment and her relationship. Diana went to Depaul Slovakia's Night Shelter for help where she was immediately offered a bed for the night.

shone through. The team soon helped Diana to secure a new job, which she was thrilled about as it meant she could move on to Depaul Slovakia's more long-term housing options. After more than two years of hard work and saving every euro, Diana paid off all of her debt. Since then, with Depaul's support, Diana has continued to progress in her job and has secured private rental housing.

Once she was off the streets, Diana could begin to focus on transforming other aspects of her life. She joined their Integration Programme and her diligence and determination immediately

It is bittersweet for Depaul Slovakia; they are delighted that her life is once again secure and stable but they will miss her contagious optimism and positive presence in their projects.



## OUR WORK

### Supported accommodation and services

Depaul helps people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness through a wide range of accommodation and support services. We provide temporary and permanent accommodation, run day centres and community floating support – projects that help people identify their personal goals and move towards them.

**DEPAUL IRELAND** opened a new abstinence-based accommodation service 'Birch Haven' for families and parents leaving residential drug treatment programmes. The project, based in Firhouse, provides a variety of individualised support options for clients, with the aim of resettling families back into the wider community, when the time is right.

**DEPAUL SLOVAKIA**, acknowledging the lack of affordable housing as a major barrier to ending clients' homelessness, established a pilot Housing First project. They now have three apartments where clients can take their next steps towards independent living, whilst still receiving the individualized support they require.

**DEPAUL FRANCE'S** day centre, which provides essential services such as hygiene and healthcare support, as well as social support such as document restoration, remained open throughout

the pandemic. When restrictions prohibited the indoor space being used, Depaul France quickly and creatively transformed the outside space into a Café Terrasse, enabling them to have over 5,000 visits over the year..

**DEPAUL USA** developed new affordable housing units in Little Rock (Arkansas) and opened a transitional housing programme in Philadelphia. The provision of longer-term housing options is essential to ending a client's homelessness. In 2020, Depaul USA added 46 beds to their roster and provided over 82,000 bed nights.

**DEPAUL UK'S** progression coaches continued to work intensively with young people to support their mental health. Through an especially challenging year, 87% of clients with an identified need relating to mental wellbeing experienced an improvement.

## OUR IMPACT: USA – MONISE'S STORY

Monise became homeless at the age of 16 when her mother asked her to leave home. Depaul USA quickly arranged for her to move into one of their supported housing programmes. Undoubtedly, this was a nerve-wracking experience for Monise, who was very young, tackling depression and had only the clothes on her back.

The team worked hard to reassure Monise and helped her to apply for food stamps, health insurance and disability income, which allowed her to shop on her own and pay her own rent. By laying this groundwork, Monise was then better

able to address her physical and mental health care needs and, with Depaul's support, she enrolled in counselling.

Although, devastatingly, Monise lost both her mother and grandmother to Covid-19, the team helped her to see a path forward. They assisted her in finding affordable accommodation and she is even a proud mum to a new rescue dog. While Monise keeps in touch, with the team's encouragement she has grown in confidence and independence; she is proud of her achievements and is on her way to realising her potential.



# OUR WORK

## Programmes and activities

Depaul encourages and helps people to discover their potential, seize opportunities, and develop their skills through a wide range of activities and programmes. Our teams across all of our projects support professional development and activities to build confidence and social networks – not only for people facing homelessness, but also for the wider community through volunteer opportunities.

**DEPAUL SLOVAKIA'S** night shelter clients organised an exhibition to display their art. Service users themselves moderated the whole event, presented some of their original poetry and provided a commentary on individual art pieces. The event was well attended and saw politicians, local media, and representatives from NGOs across Bratislava participate.

**DEPAUL IRELAND'S** innovative volunteer-led Community Befriending programme facilitated over 300 one-to-one sessions in 2020. The programme connects service users to volunteers in the local community, ensuring vulnerable people are not left isolated and thus increasing the likelihood of them sustaining their tenancies and moving on from homelessness for good.

**DEPAUL UK** initiated their new Steps to Success programme, which works

closely with young people to build the skills, knowledge and confidence to achieve their employment goals. The programme takes a personalised approach whereby every client's journey will be bespoke and tailored to their specific individual needs, ensuring young people are set up with the best possible chance for success.

**DEPAUL UKRAINE** launched the 'Motivation Centre' to support clients involved in the criminal justice system. The Centre supports those who have stumbled in life by providing skills training to improve their employability, with the hope of offering viable alternatives to crime and reducing their chances of reoffending. In addition, the Centre hosts lectures from mental health professionals, industry experts and impressive individuals to motivate people and give them the chance to transform their lives and realise their potential.

## OUR IMPACT: CROATIA – TOMA'S STORY

At just 21 years old, Toma had already experienced a lot of hardship in his life. Following a series of unfortunate events and the breakdown of family relationships, Toma became homeless and was unable to finish school.

After finding Toma sleeping rough in a staircase, a Depaul Croatia volunteer brought him to their day centre. Sensitive to his fear of abandonment, the team slowly and patiently worked with him. Then, an opportunity arose for a client to participate in the H-Garden, a project that integrates marginalised individuals into society in a horticultural setting. Toma was the perfect candidate;

devoted, enthusiastic and always happy to help. Here, Toma uncovered a natural talent for building work.

With the support of Depaul Croatia, his new friends and his girlfriend, Toma secured his dream job and he has since passed his probation. The team also helped Toma find suitable accommodation and he now rents a flat with his girlfriend. Through early intervention, Depaul Croatia prevented Toma from slipping into entrenched homelessness and helped him to build a bright future of endless possibilities instead.

# A GLOBAL VISION



The **FHA** reached the halfway milestone in their goal to transform the lives of 10,000 people affected by homelessness; at the end of 2020, 58 projects were at some phase of development in 41 countries. The team also organised two fundraising appeals in response to emergency situations that developed throughout 2020. Firstly, the Covid-19 appeal, which raised \$74,033, supported 18 relief initiatives in 16 countries and helped over 36,920 people. The second appeal followed the devastating explosions in Lebanon and saw the distribution of nearly \$205,000 to recover dignified living conditions. Here, the Vincentian Family on the ground used the funds to help 176 families, comprising 492 people, to pay for anything from emergency accommodation or the replacement of lost appliances.



**Depaul International** remained on-hand to support subsidiaries throughout the pandemic whether through the coordination of emergency appeals or the enablement of knowledge exchange across the Group. We also supported corporate fundraising efforts in the USA and facilitated the Group's website development. We launched the Group's updated Strategic Framework 2021-2023, which includes a renewed commitment to sharing learning between subsidiaries; one example being the launch of a 'housing forum'. Due to global travel restrictions, we hosted our first ever virtual Depaul Assembly, welcoming staff, trustees, the FHA, the IGH and key Depaul funders to celebrate our achievements and discuss how we can continue serving the most vulnerable.



The **IGH's** advocacy efforts led to the first ever UN resolution defining global homelessness, which, amongst other things, encourages governments to measure homelessness and implement solutions to address it. The resolution represents a watershed moment in the fight to end homelessness, elevating the issue within the UN ecosystem and connecting homelessness to the current set of Sustainable Development Goals. The team also launched the Better Data Project, which maps all of the data publicly available on global homelessness. The project aspires to improve understanding of the data and spotlight issues in data quality and definition. They also began their Community of Impact webinar series, which facilitates knowledge sharing on homelessness strategies from panellists around the world.

Our **vision for the future** became more concrete over the past year with the development of the Depaul Group's 2021-2023 Strategic Framework. The new strategy is built on the achievements of the past, encourages learning and innovation, and focuses on our unique position as a global voice on homelessness. It is anchored across five pillars: 1. Responses to homelessness; 2. Advocacy for change; 3. Striving for excellence and continuous learning; 4. Impact and reach; and 5. Global engagement. As ever, our clients are at the heart of everything that we do and our commitment to them, and to our Vincentian values, will guide our actions as we move into this new and exciting strategic cycle.

## UKRAINE – IVAN'S STORY

Growing up in poverty, Ivan turned to crime in order to survive and was first jailed at the young age of 25 or stealing essential groceries.

In Ukraine, there is a severe lack of social support available to those who become involved in the criminal justice system. As a result, a life of crime tragically becomes the only option for many and the reoffending rate currently sits at 80%. This was sadly the beginning of many years of imprisonment for Ivan.

When he was 28, Ivan married, but when he was again sentenced to prison shortly after, his wife filed for divorce. She was worried about the stigma of being 'married to a criminal'. When Ivan was released this time, he had none of the crucial social networks needed for a fresh start and he found himself alone on the streets with absolutely no one to turn to.

In and out of prison, Ivan remained homeless for the next 20 years and during this time, he turned to alcohol to help him cope.

During his latest stint in prison, Ivan sustained a serious thigh injury that saw him lose all ability to move independently without crutches and became physically disabled. In February of this year, at the age of 65, Ivan was released again. He could barely walk to make it out of the gates.

It had been arranged for Ivan to work at a rehabilitation centre but on learning of his condition, the centre flatly refused to take him. Depaul Ukraine were very distressed to learn of Ivan's situation and, of course, would never stand by and do nothing. Without their support, Ivan, a vulnerable individual, would have been abandoned, in minus 15 degrees, with almost no ability to move unaided.

The team, therefore, made sure they were there waiting for him on release. They greeted him with a warm smile and did whatever they could to make him feel as comfortable as possible. They then drove him back to the Depaul shelter, where they have been caring for him ever since.

During this time, Depaul Ukraine's social work team discovered that Ivan did not even have a passport, without which it is impossible to receive hospital care or any sort of state support. As such, the team embarked on the long process of restoring Ivan's documents so that one day in the future, he will be eligible for state benefits and permanent residence in a care home.

Although Ivan remains physically very weak, he has not lost his sense of humour and has a renewed sense of optimism. Thanks to Depaul Ukraine, Ivan's future has transformed from one of desperation and destitution to one of care and kindness.

A client currently supported by Depaul Slovakia in their nightshelter



## THANK YOU

The past year has been like no other and has truly brought to the fore the importance of our work. Whilst governments asked for people to stay home and stay safe, we knew that this was not an option for the individuals we help every day. We were worried about their wellbeing, we knew that many already had pre-existing health conditions that would make them more vulnerable to Covid-19, and we knew that any response had to be rapid.

It only took a week for our staff, volunteers, clients and supporters to show us that there was no challenge they could not overcome. In what was a stressful time for themselves

and their families, our subsidiaries responded with innovation to ensure our clients were not only cared for, but that the pandemic did not halt their journey away from homelessness and that they could continue to build bright futures. All of this was only possible with your support.

And so we want to take this opportunity to thank all of our staff, volunteers and supporters for their outstanding, admirable and inspiring commitment to our mission during this difficult time. We could not have done it without every single one of you. You saved and changed lives. **Thank you.**



Depaul International is the parent organisation of a group of charities that works to support homeless and marginalised people around the world. The Depaul Group currently works in Croatia, France, Ireland, Slovakia, the UK, Ukraine and the USA.

Depaul International is committed to transparency in its activities. We welcome requests for information and feedback on our work.

To find out more, visit: [int.depaulcharity.org](http://int.depaulcharity.org) or email [info@depaulinternational.org](mailto:info@depaulinternational.org)

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For financial information, including our Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements, please visit [int.depaulcharity.org/governance](http://int.depaulcharity.org/governance)

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