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An assessment of property level rental price growth in Ireland

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AN ASSESSMENT OF PROPERTY LEVEL RENTAL PRICE GROWTH IN IRELAND

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Jointly-published Report

Economic and Social Research Institute
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This report has been peer reviewed prior to publication. The authors are solely responsible for the content and the views expressed.

FOREWORD

As the regulator of Ireland's rental sector, the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) has played a vital role in Irish society for over 20 years. Over many years, our partnership with the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) has also supported us as we deliver the high-quality research and data on the rental sector required by government and the broader rental sector.

As the custodian of Ireland's national register of tenancies, the Residential Tenancies Board manages an unparalleled source of data on the rental market. The introduction of the requirement to register a tenancy annually in 2022 was a key opportunity for our research partnership, and this report has put that data at its core. It has also enabled us to significantly improve the accuracy of tenancy data, and to conduct more in-depth analysis on key questions affecting the sector.

Since 2012, we have collaborated with the ESRI to deliver the quarterly RTB/ESRI Rent Index. Drawing on RTB tenancy data that is independently analysed by the ESRI, this study has tracked price developments in the Irish rental market from 2007. Today, the Rent Index gives the best overall picture of how the standardised average rent paid by tenants in new and existing tenancies across Ireland is changing over time.

As the properties in the Rent Index sample are different in every quarter, however, it cannot tell us about the rent increases experienced at individual property level over time, or if landlords are complying with Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) rules. As we regulate tenancies at the individual property level, we commissioned the ESRI to conduct this additional 'Individual Property Level Analysis' to answer these questions.

The findings from this study have enhanced our understanding of how rent is changing at individual property level, and of landlord behaviours when it comes to increasing rent within and between tenancies. It also allows us to see changes inside and outside RPZ areas. Ensuring compliance with rental law is a key part of our remit. The data from this study is already driving targeted information campaigns to bring landlords who may have breached RPZ rules back into compliance with rental law.

I would like to thank Dr Rachel Slaymaker, Research Officer with the ESRI and her team for their outstanding work on this valuable study and my colleague Brian Gallwey, Senior Research Officer with the RTB, who has worked closely with Rachel on this project. I would also like to thank Dr Alan Barrett, Director of the ESRI for the organisation's strong commitment to our ongoing partnership. We hope this will allow us to continue to provide the highest quality research and insights that can help to deliver a rental sector that works for the people of Ireland.

Rosemary Steen,
Director, the Residential Tenancies Board

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ABBREVIATIONS

AHB	Approved Housing Body
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRO	Companies Registration Office (Number)
CSO	Central Statistics Office
ECB	European Central Bank
ESRI	Economic and Social Research Institute
GDA	Greater Dublin Area
PPS	Personal Public Service (Number)
PRS	Private Rental Sector
RPZ	Rent Pressure Zone
RTB	Residential Tenancies Board

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

An annual tenancy registration requirement came into effect in April 2022. This requires landlords to register any current tenancy each year with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB), in addition to the longstanding requirement to register new tenancies. This report uses the first two years of these data from the RTB administrative tenancy registers to construct a property level dataset that tracks individual rental properties over the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024. Using a large sample of 182,250 matched property pairs, for the first time, this report is able to examine how property level rents changed in Ireland over this period. The report addresses key research questions such as the magnitude of the average rental growth at the property level; the proportion of properties that saw no change in the rent; how rent changes differ between properties with ongoing tenancies (of at least one year in duration) compared to those that saw a change in tenants, i.e. where one lease ended and another began; and whether the patterns differ in areas designated as Rent Pressure Zones (RPZ) compared to non-RPZ areas.

For the period of our analysis, Q2 2022–Q1 2024, rental inflation was capped at 2 per cent per annum in RPZs. It is important to note while this report can identify how many properties saw rent increases above 2 per cent, it cannot identify non-compliance with RPZ regulations. Rent increases above 2 per cent from any particular one year to the next do not necessarily indicate any non-compliance. Notably, if the rent had not previously been changed for several years, a cumulative increase would be allowable. In addition, if substantial renovations had been implemented, the property would be exempt from RPZ regulations. Over time, the continued collection of such granular property level information on a consistent basis will enable a richer picture of the sector to be built up, with which to inform policymaking. It must also be noted this report does not provide an evaluation of the success or otherwise of Rent Pressure Zone measures. Over and above price effects, rent control measures can have impacts on the quality and quantity of housing supply, investment in the sector and mobility. All of these aspects are critically important to the overall long-term impact of the measures but are outside the scope of this report.

MAIN FINDINGS

Data and sample

- The share of total tenancy registrations that were annual registrations (as opposed to new) increased from 63.5 per cent in Q2 2022 to 76.6 per cent in Q1 2024. Each of the corresponding quarters in the second year of annual registration data collection saw both a higher number of annual registrations and a smaller number of new registrations.

- Tracking properties from one year to the next highlights the significant flows between the new and ongoing segments of the market. Around 30 per cent of annual registrations in the second year of data collection had been new tenancies one year before. Approximately 20 per cent of registrations seen in the first year of data collection were for properties not seen again within the subsequent year. Late or forgotten registrations are a likely cause.

Property level rental price growth

- Nationally, property level rent prices grew by an average of 2.6 per cent per annum. The year-on-year rate fell over the period, with the highest increases for properties observed between Q2 2022 and Q2 2023 (2.7 per cent) and the lowest for properties seen between Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (2.3 per cent).
- The median property level rent increase over this period was 0, and 60 per cent of properties saw no increase in rent year on year.
- Landlords were more likely to raise rents between one tenancy and the next than during a tenancy; 65 per cent of properties with ongoing tenancies saw no change in rent over this period compared to only 22 per cent of properties where the tenants changed.
- Property level rental growth rates were much lower in RPZs relative to non-RPZ areas in this period. For ongoing tenancies, property level rents increased year on year by an average of 1.3-1.5 per cent in Dublin, by 1.4–1.7 per cent in all other RPZs and by 3.5-4 per cent in non-RPZ areas.
- For properties that saw a change in tenants, average annual rent increases were notably more moderate in Dublin (2.8-3.2 per cent depending on the quarter), compared to other RPZ areas (5.1-6.2 per cent) and particularly non-RPZ areas (14-16.4 per cent).
- Properties in non-RPZs were more likely to see no change in rent from one year to the next. However, non-RPZ properties that did see an increase in rent were more likely to observe very large rises compared to properties in RPZ areas, particularly where there was a change in tenants. In contrast, those in RPZs were more likely to see more moderate changes year on year.
 - 16.5 per cent of ongoing tenancies in non-RPZs experienced rent increases of 8 per cent or more, compared with 2.8 per cent of ongoing tenancies in Dublin and 4.8 per cent in other RPZ areas. Note these RPZ figures do not necessarily indicate non-compliance.
 - In non-RPZs, 57 per cent of properties where the tenants changed saw a rent rise above 8 per cent, compared to 8.5 per cent in Dublin and 18.2 per cent in other RPZs. In Dublin, 78.7 per cent of properties where the tenants changed saw a rent increase of 4 per cent or below.

- Distributionally, there is evidence of clear peaks in the number of rent increases around 2 per cent in RPZ areas, both for ongoing tenancies and where the tenants changed. Many of these are fractionally above 2.0 per cent. This could occur where landlords round to the nearest whole or round number, or where the rent was increased after slightly more than a year.
- The largest property level average rent increases were generally for properties located in the West and Border counties over the Q2 2022–Q1 2024 period.
 - For ongoing tenancies, Clare, Roscommon, Mayo, Donegal, Cavan and Longford saw the biggest increases, with average property level rises ranging between 4.1–5.1 per cent year on year, compared to 1.3–1.4 per cent in Dublin and the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).
 - All counties saw higher rent increases for properties that saw a change in tenants. The highest rates seen in Donegal (18.7 per cent), Leitrim (18.3 per cent) and Longford (19.3 per cent) were more than six times that seen in Dublin (3.1 per cent).
- Galway, Limerick and Waterford cities saw higher rates of rent increases above 8 per cent relative to Dublin and Cork, particularly where properties saw a change in tenants.
- More established RPZs (2016/17 designations) saw a larger incidence of moderate price increases and a lower incidence of large rises compared to those designated in 2019/20. This suggests a possible higher degree of non-compliance in more recently designated RPZ areas.
- Company landlords¹ are more prevalent in Dublin, accounting for 34.6 per cent of all paired observations in Dublin compared to just 14.3 per cent in other RPZs and 11.1 per cent in non-RPZ areas. In Dublin, there is evidence those renting from individual landlords are more likely to see no change in rent, but, if their rent does change, they are also more likely to see large changes in rent year on year compared to those renting from company landlords.
- Rent Index estimates are designed to track how prices change at a market-wide level over time. They capture the impact of churn in the market and the sample of properties changes every quarter. They cannot be used to infer property level changes. Indeed, average annual rental growth for ongoing tenancies at the property level (around 2 per cent) was notably lower than the market-wide rental price growth indicated by the RTB/ESRI Existing Tenancies Rent Index over this period (5.5–5.9 per cent).

¹ Company landlords are landlords who register with a Companies Registration Office (CRO) number rather than individuals who register with a Personal Public Service (PPS) number. This will include, but is not limited to, the large institutional landlords.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The dynamics of rental price inflation are complex, particularly in a market with rent control measures. Housing expenditure makes up a substantial portion of Irish household budgets, particularly for those living in the private rental sector. The issue of measuring and understanding housing market inflation is therefore of critical importance.

Rent Index indicators such as the quarterly Residential Tenancies Board (RTB)/Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) Rent Index provide hugely informative and timely insights into average rent levels and broad price developments across the sector overall. However, a hedonic rent index does not track individual properties over time. It compares a basket of properties in one period to a basket of similar but not identical properties in another period to see how prices have changed at an aggregate or market-wide level. Indeed, these indicators are designed to capture churn and the impact on prices of new properties entering and other properties exiting the market. As the composition of the sample changes each period, they cannot tell us anything about the price rises seen by individual properties.

Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs) were first introduced in Ireland in December 2016 following a period of rapid rental price inflation. The measures aim to stabilise rental inflation in areas experiencing both high rent levels and rapid price growth. Initially covering Dublin, parts of the Dublin commuter belt and Cork and Galway cities, over time more areas met the designation criteria and by early 2024, 102 of Ireland's 166 local electoral areas (LEAs) were classified. Since late 2021, allowable annual rental inflation has been capped at the lower of either 2 per cent or the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) growth in RPZs. Cumulative rent increases are permitted where the rent has not been increased in previous years. These rent caps are applied at the property level in designated areas, i.e. they apply both during an ongoing tenancy and also between one tenancy and the next. It is therefore crucial to be able to conduct property level analysis to understand how many properties see different levels of rental inflation each year.

Annual tenancy registration, requiring landlords to register their tenancy every year, within one month of the anniversary of the tenancy commencement date, came into effect on 4 April 2022. Prior to this, landlords were only required to register new tenancies (and then complete a Further Part 4 renewal after 6 years if applicable), meaning that properties were typically only observed infrequently unless the tenants changed on a regular basis. This meant that rental price increases during a tenancy, as well as up-to-date rent levels, were not captured for properties with longer-term tenants. The introduction of this annual registration requirement allows us to track property level rental prices regularly and consistently over time. It therefore permits a comprehensive analysis of rental price growth at the individual property level for the first time in Ireland.

Within this context, the aim of this report is to provide insights into Irish rental price changes at the individual property level. Our main objective is to improve our understanding of rental market inflation and landlord pricing behaviour in Ireland. This involves unpacking how rental price growth differs during ongoing tenancies versus between one tenancy and the next and across different geographic areas. To do so, we use the first two years of these new data from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) administrative tenancy registers to construct a property level dataset that tracks individual rental properties over the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024. Using a large sample of 182,250 matched property pairs allows us to examine property level rental price changes both during tenancies, and between one tenancy and the next. This allows us to address key research questions such as the magnitude of average rental growth at the property level; the proportion of properties that saw no change in the rent; how rent changes differ between properties with ongoing tenancies (of at least one year in duration) compared to those that saw a change in tenants, i.e. where one lease ended and another began; and whether the patterns differ in RPZ compared to non-RPZ areas. This work aims to remove the influence of market churn and changing samples that are a feature of these market-wide Rent Index indicators, to instead provide complementary insights into how rental prices have changed at the individual property level. Note this work cannot identify if a property is compliant with RPZ regulations. Rent increases above 2 per cent from any particular one year to the next do not necessarily indicate any non-compliance due to allowable cumulative increases and potential exemptions.

The remainder of the report is structured as follows: Chapter 2 provides background as context for our analysis. Chapter 3 sets out the data used and Chapter 4 presents the analysis of property level rental price growth. Finally, Chapter 5 concludes.

CHAPTER 2

Background and context

2.1 INSTITUTIONAL BACKGROUND

Private residential landlords² are required by law, under Section 134 of the Residential Tenancies Act 2004, to register a new tenancy with the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) when they let a dwelling. The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act was enacted in May 2019 to provide for annual registration. Annual tenancy registration, requiring landlords to register their tenancy every year within one month of the anniversary of the tenancy commencement date, came into effect on 4 April 2022. Prior to this, landlords were only required to register new tenancies (and then complete a Further Part 4 renewal after six³ years if applicable), meaning that properties were typically only observed infrequently unless the tenants changed on a regular basis⁴. This meant that rental price increases during a tenancy, as well as up-to-date rent levels, were not captured for properties with longer-term tenants⁵. The lack of timely, comprehensive data on the rents faced by ongoing tenants had been a key data gap until the introduction of the annual registration requirement.

These tenancy registrations data are used to produce the two quarterly RTB/ESRI Rent Index measures. The New Tenancies Rent Index tracks developments in the prices faced by those taking up new tenancies in the private rental sector on a quarterly basis from Q3 2007 to present. This includes (i) new tenancies in existing rental properties; (ii) new rental properties never let before; and (iii) new tenancies in properties that have not been let in the immediate two years prior to this tenancy. Since the introduction of the annual registration requirement, the Existing Tenancies Rent Index captures the rent levels faced by those households in continuing tenancies (of at least one year in duration) from Q2 2022 to present.

The purpose of rental market monitoring tools such as the RTB/ESRI Rent Index is to track broad rental price trends over time. The recently introduced Existing Tenancies Rent Index, alongside the longstanding New Tenancies Rent Index, have been informative regarding the segmentation in the Irish private rental sector. There are large gaps in rent levels between what new and existing tenants pay

² Approved Housing Body (AHB) and student-specific accommodation landlords are also required to register with the RTB. These registrations are kept on a separate database and are outside the scope of this report. Informal family arrangements where no tenancy agreement has been signed do not fall under the remit of the RTB, but cases where a formal lease has been signed between family members are required to be registered. Those who rent out a room in their own home are also not required to register with the RTB as a landlord.

³ Four years if the tenancy commenced prior to 24 December 2016.

⁴ In Ireland, a Part 4 tenancy runs alongside any fixed term tenancy. This means once a tenant has occupied the property for a continuous period of six months, irrespective of the length of any fixed term lease, they are entitled to remain in the property for up to six years for tenancies that commenced between 24 December 2016 and 10 June 2022 and for an unlimited duration for tenancies that commenced from 11 June 2022 onwards. No new lease agreement is required in this period and landlords can only terminate a tenancy on limited grounds.

⁵ Landlords were supposed to update the RTB in relation to any changes to a tenancy, including a change in rent, but this was not commonly done prior to the formal introduction of the annual registration requirement.

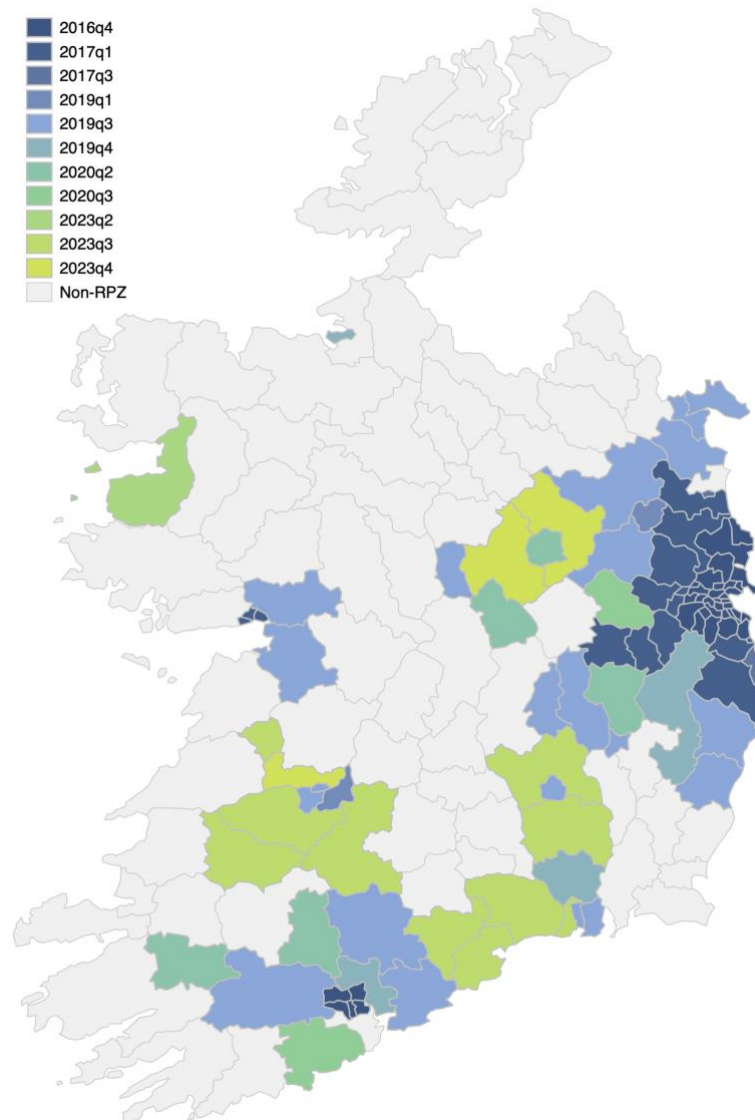
(Slaymaker and Shiel, 2023), as well as notable differences in the development of aggregate rental prices over time for new versus existing tenancies (RTB Quarterly Rent Index Reports, from Q2 2023 onwards).

However, these hedonic rent indices are aggregate measures designed to track broad price developments in the market. That is, they compare a basket of properties in one period to a basket of properties in another period to see how prices have changed at an aggregate or market-wide level. A standardisation procedure controls for differences in observable characteristics (e.g. number of bedrooms, property type, location) to make samples as comparable as possible, but they do not track the same properties over time. Indeed, they are designed to capture churn and the impact on prices of new properties entering and other properties exiting the market. The sample of properties changes every quarter (both for the new and existing rent indices). They therefore cannot measure the level of rent increases seen by individual households over time, nor can they be used to infer compliance or otherwise with Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) legislation.

The introduction of the annual tenancy registration requirement allows us to track property level rental prices over time on a regular and consistent basis. It therefore permits, for the first time, a comprehensive analysis of rental inflation at the individual property level utilising the first two years' worth of data. While the aim of this work is to better understand property level pricing dynamics in the Irish private rental sector (PRS), and it is not an analysis or evaluation of RPZ policy, the presence of these measures will naturally affect rental inflation dynamics. Conducting property level analysis is crucial to improve our understanding of rental market inflation and landlord pricing behaviour in Ireland. In particular, how it differs during ongoing tenancies versus between one tenancy and the next and across different areas including RPZ versus non-RPZ areas.

RPZs were first introduced in Ireland in December 2016 following a period of rapid rental price inflation. The measures aim to stabilise rental inflation in areas experiencing both high rent levels and rapid price growth. Specifically, an area meets the classification criteria if (i) it has seen new tenancy rental growth above 7 per cent per annum in at least four of the previous six quarters and (ii) the rent level is above the relevant reference rent for that area⁶. Designations can be made at either the local electoral area (LEA) or broader local authority (LA) level.

⁶ Since mid-2019, there have been three reference rates depending on location. Prior to this, there was one reference rate: the national standardised average rent for new tenancies.

FIGURE 2.1 RENT PRESSURE ZONES BY DESIGNATION DATE

Sources: *Authors' analysis of RTB.ie.*

Figure 2.1 presents a map of all Irish LEAs, their RPZ status and, if applicable, the date of designation. Initially, all four Dublin local authorities and Cork City LA were classified, followed swiftly in January 2017 by Galway City LA and certain LEAs in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) counties of Kildare, Meath and Wicklow. In 2019 and into 2020, a second wave of designations occurred, covering smaller cities and towns, including Limerick and Waterford cities, the towns of Carlow, Portlaoise, Kilkenny and Killarney, as well as parts of Louth and more rural areas in both Galway and Cork counties. In 2023, a further wave of designations commenced, including the remaining areas of Limerick, Waterford and Kilkenny counties, as well as Westmeath LA, Ennis and Shannon LEAs in County Clare and Westport LEA in Mayo. As of the end of Q1 2024 (the end of our sample period), 102 of the 166 LEAs in Ireland, just over 60 per cent, were designated as RPZs. In terms of tenancies, Gillespie et al. (2024) estimate this accounts for around 80 per cent of Ireland's private rental sector. Ireland's rent stabilisation measures can be classified as

second generation rent controls, meaning they limit permitted annual rental price increases (as opposed to rent levels as per first generation controls) and they apply both during ongoing tenancies, but also between one tenancy and the next. In other words, they apply at the property level in designated areas. While tenants can search the publicly available register to check if their tenancy is registered, the register does not include the previous rent amount. In RPZs, landlords are supposed to provide the new tenant with (i) details of rent amount last set for the property, (ii) the date the rent was last set and (iii) a statement as to how any new rent has been calculated.

In designated RPZ areas, permitted annual rental inflation was initially capped at 4 per cent. In July 2021, this was changed to a maximum of the growth in the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) published by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). Since late 2021, in RPZs, annual rental inflation has been capped at the lower of either 2 per cent or the HICP growth. This was implemented in response to the rapid increase in inflation and resulting cost of living pressures seen from mid-2021 onwards (Figure 2.2). This condition marked a notable tightening of the regulations, as it prevents rents from increasing in real terms in RPZ areas. Properties in RPZs are exempt from the rent caps if (i) the property has not been rented out in the previous two years, (ii) the property is a protected structure and has not been rented out in the previous 12 months or (iii) the property has undergone a substantial change, i.e. a significant refurbishment⁷.

The RTB website provides a Rent Pressure Zone rent calculator tool⁸ which enables landlords of properties in RPZ areas to determine the maximum allowable rent increase on a given date based on when the rent was last changed⁹. Several points are important to note. First, rent reviews are not permitted more than once in any 12-month period. Second, cumulative rent increases are permitted where the rent has not been increased in previous years. If, for example, a tenancy's rent was last set on 1 February 2021 and the landlord planned to change the rent on 1 February 2024, the maximum allowable increase would have been 6 per cent. This means that the allowable rent increase at any particular point in time is property specific – i.e. it will not necessarily be 2 per cent for all properties in RPZs. As such, figures above 2 per cent do not necessarily represent non-compliance with the regulations. Third, the allowable rent increase depends on the specific date the rent was last set relative to the date the new rent is set. If, for example, a tenancy's rent was last set on 1 October 2022 and the landlord planned to change the rent on 20 October 2023, the allowable rent increase would have been 2.1 per cent because this period

⁷ This includes: (i) where the property floor area has increased by at least 25 per cent, (ii) a Building Energy Rating (BER) improvement of 7 or more ratings, (iii) where three or more of the following are met: internal layout permanently altered; dwelling adapted for disability use; permanent increase in number of rooms; BER improvement of at least 3 ratings if D1 or lower; BER improvement of at least 2 ratings if C3 or higher.

⁸ www.rtb.ie/calculator/rpz

⁹ The RTB's Investigations and Sanctions unit can investigate cases of suspected improper conduct by landlords. These include but are not limited to failure to comply with RPZ requirements, e.g. by increasing the rent by more than is allowed and failure to register a tenancy. Landlords can be cautioned and/or sanctions can be imposed up to a maximum value of €15,000.

is slightly over one year. These points should be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented in Chapter 4.

2.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

It is important to keep in mind the somewhat exceptional, broader economic environment over our period of analysis, Q2 2022–Q1 2024. This period was characterised by high levels of inflation throughout the economy. The left-hand panel of Figure 2.2 presents year-on-year Irish consumer price index (CPI) inflation, alongside trends in the European Central Bank (ECB) policy rate. Inflation had already been high in 2021 due to the post COVID-19 pandemic rebound in demand, alongside supply chain disruptions. The start of the war in Ukraine in February 2022 caused a further surge in inflation, driven primarily by rising energy prices and later food prices. Inflation hit a high of 9.3 per cent in October 2022, remaining high, before then declining rapidly in late 2023 and reaching 2.9 per cent in March 2024, the end of our sample period. Alongside high rates of inflation, this period also saw a substantial increase in interest rates, with the ECB policy rate rising from 0 in Q2 2022 to 4.5 per cent by Q1 2024 as a result of ten separate increases over this period. From a rental perspective, this may have resulted in a substantial rise in mortgage payments for any landlords with variable rate mortgages or whose fixed terms expired over this period.

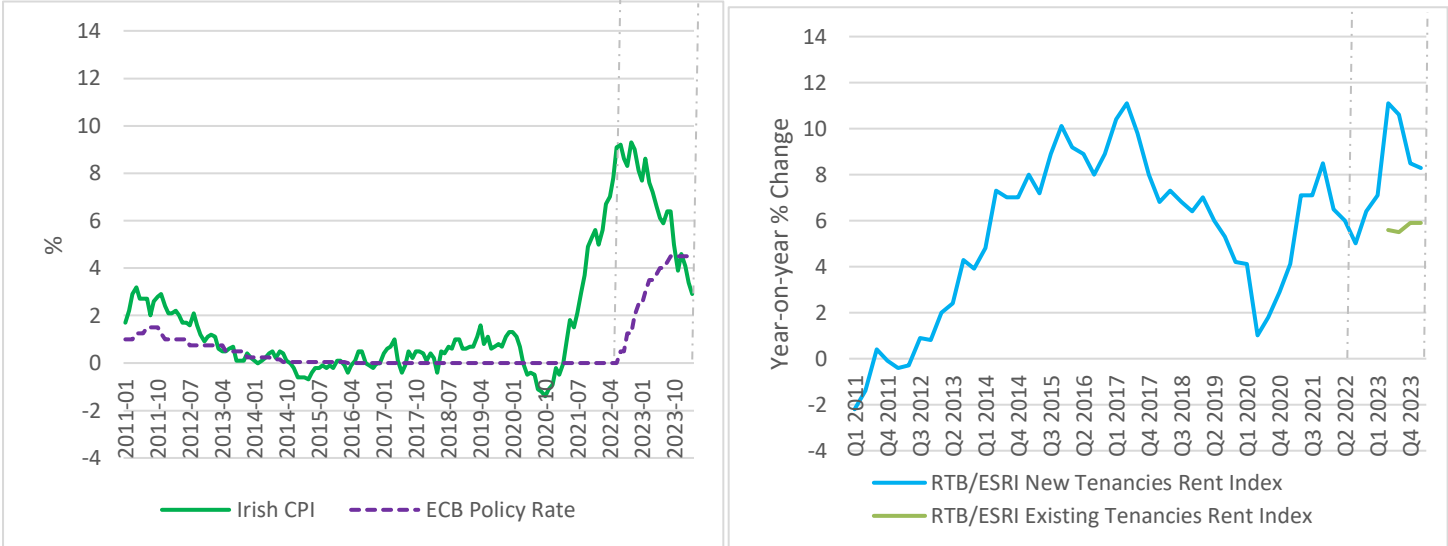
Rental price developments (like house prices) are typically influenced by key economic variables such as incomes/labour market conditions and interest rates, as well as levels of supply. The right-hand panel of Figure 2.1 presents developments in the year-on-year percentage change in the RTB/ESRI New and (from Q2 2023 onwards) Existing Rent Index measures. The period after the introduction of the RPZ rent cap measures was associated with a declining level of new tenancy inflation nationally. Previous work used a difference-in-difference approach and found RPZ areas experienced lower rental price growth relative to non-RPZs after the introduction of the price caps (O'Toole et al., 2021; Coffey et al., 2022). Establishing causality is challenging due to confounding factors. However, using additional macroeconomic modelling techniques, Coffey et al. (2022) showed the finding that RPZ areas were associated with lower rental inflation than non-RPZ areas held, even after controlling for differences in economic fundamentals across areas.

A more rapid decline in rental inflation occurred as the COVID-19 pandemic hit; new tenancy rental inflation fell to 1 per cent in Q2 2020. Rental inflation then increased rapidly throughout 2021, coinciding with the post-pandemic economic recovery. This dipped somewhat in the first three quarters of 2022 before rising rapidly again in 2023 and dipping down again at the end of 2023/start of 2024. As outlined in Section 2.1, the RTB/ESRI New Tenancies Rent Index is designed to capture rental price developments for the market as a whole. As it includes both new tenancies in existing properties (subject to rent caps in designated areas) and new properties to the market (not subject to rent caps in any area), we would therefore expect it

to be influenced by both rent stabilisation measures and economic conditions. Similarly, the RTB/ESRI Existing Tenancies Index can be thought of as a lagged indicator as it will contain tenancies that were newly commenced one year previous. This work aims to remove the influence of market churn and changing samples that are a feature of these market-wide indicators of rental inflation to instead provide insights into how rental prices have changed at the individual property level.

It is important to be cognisant of these broader circumstances in the economy when interpreting any findings in this report. The economic environment will influence rent change decisions in non-RPZ areas, although the relationship between rents and economic fundamentals should have decoupled in RPZ areas. If the analysis were to be repeated in future under a different set of economic circumstances, results may differ.

FIGURE 2.2 IRISH CPI INFLATION, ECB INTEREST RATES AND RTB RENT INDEX Q1 2011–Q1 2024



Sources: Authors' analysis of CSO, Eurostat and RTB Rent Index data.
Note: Left-hand panel reports monthly figures; right-hand panel reports quarterly figures. Vertical lines indicate period of analysis.

CHAPTER 3

Data and sample composition

3.1 DATA OVERVIEW AND ANALYTICAL SAMPLE CREATION

The data used in this report come from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) administrative tenancies register for the private rental sector (PRS). The data are based on registrations completed by landlords, which are a legal requirement. The data contain information on the rental price, tenancy commencement date, full address information and a series of property and tenancy level characteristics including the property type (detached, semi-detached, terrace houses, apartments/flats), number of bedrooms and number of tenants. These data have been collected since Q3 2007 for new tenancies and since Q2 2022 for annual registrations¹⁰. Student specific accommodation and properties owned and managed by Approved Housing Bodies (AHB) are not included in this dataset. Properties let by private landlords where the tenants may be in receipt of housing supports such as Housing Assistance Payment (HAP), Rental Accommodation Scheme (RAS) or Rent Supplement are included. In such cases, the prices reported are the full market prices.

For the purposes of this property level research, our dataset covers registrations received by the RTB between Q2 2022–Q1 2024, i.e. the first two full years of data collected since the introduction of the annual registration requirement. Having two full years of data is important because the registrations are submitted on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Without two full years, our findings could be influenced by seasonal patterns in the data. Our sample captures both new and annual registrations made in this period. With the introduction of annual registration, some landlords mistakenly registered ongoing tenancies as new tenancies instead of annual registrations. We utilise information on tenant names, addresses and Eircodes to establish property/tenant histories and correct these. See Appendix 2 of the Q1 2024 RTB Rent Index report for further information on the steps taken in this process (Residential Tenancies Board, 2024). We assign registrations to the quarter in which the tenancy commenced (or the anniversary of such for annual registrations¹¹), rather than when they may have been received by the RTB if these differ.

¹⁰ Since 4 April 2022, landlords have been required to register each tenancy every year, within one month of the anniversary of when that tenancy originally commenced, for as long as the tenancy continues.

¹¹ To determine which quarter to assign to ongoing tenancies, we combined information on the anniversary of when the tenancy began (Q1, Q2, Q3 or Q4) and the date the annual registration was received. Specifically, if a tenancy was registered in either the correct quarter (anniversary of tenancy start date) or two subsequent quarters, we allocated it to that year. For example, if a tenancy started in Q2 of a previous year and was received in Q1 2023 or Q3 or Q4 2023 it is counted as a Q2 2023 annual registration. Where an annual registration was received three quarters late, it was assumed to relate to the subsequent year and is allocated as such. For example, a tenancy started in Q2 of a previous year and received in Q1 2023 is assumed to be an early Q2 2023 registration and is allocated as such.

Our initial analytical sample consists of 454,170 registrations across the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024, shown separately by quarter in Figure 3.1b. A few points are evident. First, there were notably more registrations in Q2 2023 relative to Q2 2022, the first quarter in which annual registrations were collected (52,908 vs 45,363). Annual registrations are due to be completed within one month of the anniversary of the original tenancy start date. However, as this new requirement was only introduced in Q2 2022, it is likely that some landlords may not have been aware of these new requirements. In addition, difficulties accessing the new registration system were also reported and registration extensions were put in place as late registration fees were suspended¹². Comparing the other quarters, more similar numbers were recorded in Q3 2022 to Q3 2023, Q4 2022 to Q4 2023 and Q1 2023 to Q1 2024, although the Q1 2024 numbers were slightly down on those in Q1 2023. It is likely that this is due to late Q1 2024 registrations that had not yet been received by the RTB when the data cut was taken.

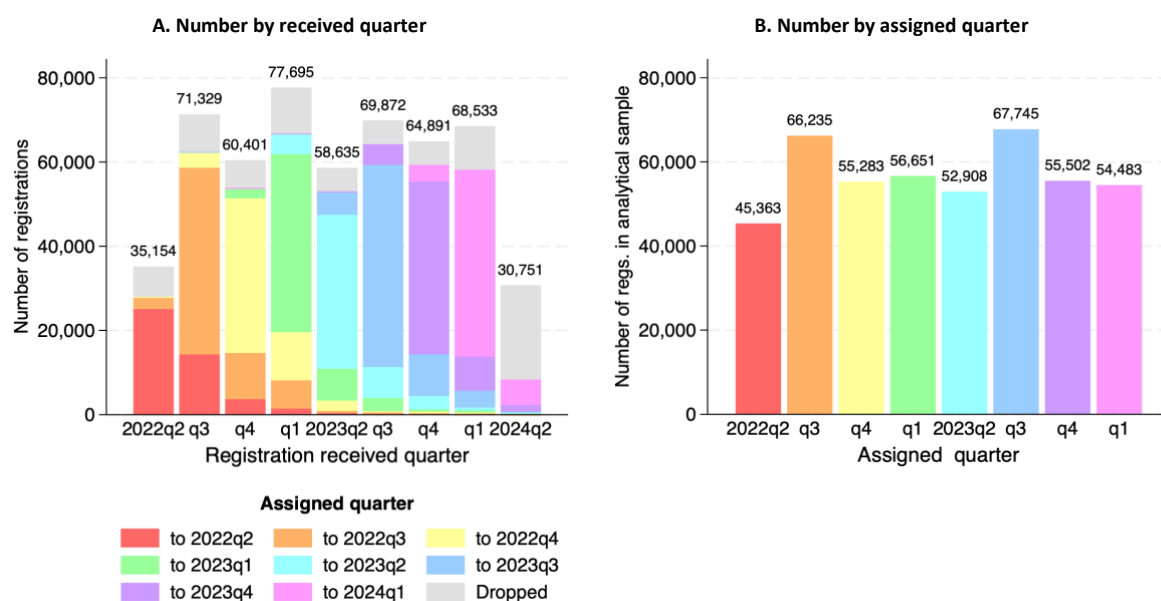
As noted above, in this analysis registrations are assigned to the quarter in which the tenancy commenced (or the anniversary of such for annual registrations). The left-hand side panel of Figure 3.1 shows the relationship between this quarter and when the registration was actually received by the RTB. Ideally, where all registrations are completed during the quarter in which they relate to, each bar would be a single colour, as in Figure 3.1b. Instead, we observe patterns of late registrations, as well as some registrations made in advance¹³. Note any observations marked in grey in Figure 3.1a have been dropped from this initial analytical sample. The dropped observations were primarily historical registrations relating to pre-Q2 2022 that were received late, as well as post-Q1 2024 registrations outside of our time frame¹⁴, duplicate observations, those with missing rent values, and overlapping observations (i.e. the same property registered multiple times within one quarter – some of these may relate to individual room lettings within the same property¹⁵, although this is difficult to determine with certainty).

¹² Late fees applied for new tenancies commencing/annual registrations due between 4 April 2022–12 November 2022 were refunded. Late fees remained suspended from 12 November 2022 until they recommenced on 1 March 2024. www.rtb.ie/images/uploads/old/Comms%20and%20Research/RTB_Registration___Customer_Service_update_February_2024.pdf.

¹³ Registrations made in advance might occur where the landlord registers the tenancy when the lease is signed, but the tenancy commencement date is a matter of weeks or months later and may fall in a different quarter.

¹⁴ The data cut was taken towards the end of May 2024 so would include some of the earlier Q2 2024 registrations.

¹⁵ Landlords are required to submit one registration per property. Since these data were collected, updates to the registration system mean it is no longer possible to register multiple tenancies at the same property in the same time period.

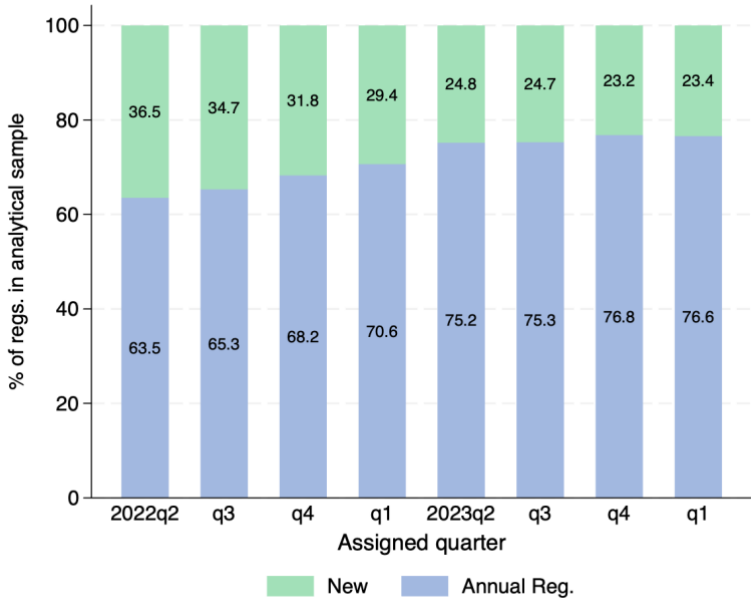
FIGURE 3.1 NUMBER OF RTB TENANCY REGISTRATIONS BY ASSIGNED VS RECEIVED QUARTER

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata.

Notes: Assigned quarter refers to the tenancy start quarter (new tenancies) or the anniversary of the tenancy start quarter (annual registrations), not when the registration may have been received (if they differ).

Looking across the eight quarters in our sample, we see that the share of total registrations that were annual registrations increased over that period, with a corresponding fall in the share that were for new tenancies (Figure 3.2). Across the first year of annual registration data collection, the share of annual registrations saw a notable increase with each quarter, rising from 63.5 per cent in Q2 2022 to 70.6 per cent by Q1 2023. In the second year (Q2 2023–Q1 2024), the shares were higher still, ranging from 75.2–76.8 per cent. This increase over time is likely driven by both a greater proportion of landlords filling out annual registrations, as familiarity with the newly introduced registration requirements increased, and a continuation of falling numbers of new tenancies. Indeed, each of the corresponding quarters in the second year of annual registration data collection saw both a higher number of annual registrations and a smaller number of new registrations.

FIGURE 3.2 SHARE OF TOTAL REGISTRATIONS IN ANALYTICAL SAMPLE THAT ARE NEW VS ANNUAL REGISTRATIONS – BY QUARTER



Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
Note: Assigned quarter refers to the tenancy start quarter (new tenancies) or the anniversary of the tenancy start quarter (annual registrations), not when the registration may have been received (if they differ). This figure refers to our initial analytical sample, i.e. before any property matching.

To examine rental price changes at the property level, we need to be able to match the same properties over time, both for ongoing tenancies, but also between tenancies, i.e. where one lease ends and another begins. This is not a trivial task. To do so, we utilise a property specific identifier contained in the dataset. In addition, we also conducted further checks based on full addresses, Eircodes and anonymised landlord identifiers to ensure that we can robustly track as many properties over time as is accurately possible. The structure of the resulting dataset is as follows. There is a maximum of one observation per property per quarter¹⁶. If an annual registration and a new tenancy are recorded in the same quarter, the new tenancy takes precedence (as we want the most up-to-date rent level), and the annual registration is dropped from the sample. In the case where there is more than one new tenancy per quarter, all but the most recent are dropped from the sample. Observations with a missing or zero rent amount were dropped from the sample¹⁷.

To calculate property level rental growth, each property must be observed in the sample at least twice. As shown in Table 3.1, 19.6 per cent of observations in our analytical sample are for properties only seen once and will therefore necessarily be excluded from the rental price growth analysis presented in Chapter 4. The final sample consisting of paired observations was obtained by linking different

¹⁶ Note properties are only observed in the quarter in which they are registered, i.e. this is a flow dataset, not a stock of all tenancies at each point in time.
¹⁷ These accounted for 0.2 per cent of observations.

instances of unique properties across time. The resulting final sample only contains pairs that fall within one year (based on assigned period) as we want to understand how prices changed from one year to the next. For example, if a property was first seen in Q3 2022, it must have been seen again by Q3 2023. We are interested in examining annual price changes for two reasons: (i) rent increases are only permitted once a year and (ii) we only observe a property's rent level once a year (unless a new tenancy begins, in which case it will be seen again). There are cases where a new registration commences five or more quarters after the preceding registration. For example, an annual registration completed in Q2 2022, but not in Q2 2023, with a new tenancy then commencing in Q3 2023. We allow for late receipt of registrations, but a five or more quarter gap in terms of *assigned* quarter is counted as 'not yet seen' and therefore excluded from our year-on-year analysis.

From Table 3.1 we see the number of uniquely identified properties is slightly lower than the total number of matched pairs. This occurs because, while the majority of our matched pairs are properties that were seen exactly twice during our sample period, some properties were seen more than twice. This can happen for example where an annual registration is made for a property in Q2 2022, again in Q2 2023 and then a new tenancy is registered in Q1 2024, meaning we observe the property three times¹⁸. Cases where a property had more than four registrations during our two-year sample period were excluded from our analysis. These were typically cases where we saw the same property registered multiple times within one quarter, so likely relate to individual room lettings within the same property, which cannot be tracked over time. After removing outliers, the top and bottom 1 per cent of rent changes, we are left with a final sample of 182,250 matched pairs.

TABLE 3.1 NUMBER OF OBSERVATIONS IN TOTAL ANALYTICAL SAMPLE AND IN FINAL PAIRED SAMPLE

Property category	Observation in the sample		Identified unique properties		Paired observations (inc. outliers)		Rent-change paired observations	
	Num.	%	Num.	%	Num.	%	Num.	%
Seen once	88,801	19.6	88,801	33.4	0	0.0	0	0.0
Seen at least twice	365,369	80.4	176,803	66.5	185,972	100	182,250	100
Total	454,170	100.0	265,604	100.0	185,972	100.0	182,250	100.0

Source: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Note: Paired observations are those that have been observed at least twice within a year based on assigned period, which allows for the calculation of a growth rate; e.g. if first seen in Q3 2022, it must have been seen again by Q3 2023. When looking at rent change, the top and bottom 1 per cent of changes were trimmed to remove outliers.

¹⁸ In this case, we observe both the annual change in price between Q2 2022 and Q2 2023, as well as the change in price between Q2 2023 and Q1 2024. While Q2 2023–Q1 2024 is not strictly a full year, we approximate this as an annual change because the rent cannot be changed within the first months (indeed the first year) of a tenancy, so the change Q2 2023–Q1 2024 would be the same as if we were to observe it in Q2 2024. AS RPZ rental caps apply at the property level, it is important we can calculate rental growth between tenancies, as well as those for ongoing tenancies, even though these will often occur at intervals that are not exactly one year.

In Table 3.1, we established that 19.6 per cent of observations in our analytical sample are for properties we only see once. There are numerous reasons why a property may only be observed once across our two-year sample period. One source of incomplete pairs may be late registrations that were due in Q1 2024 (or Q4 2023 in the case of very late registrations) but have not yet been received. Properties with inconsistent registration histories are another potential cause – for example, cases where landlords failed to complete an annual registration due in 2022 but did fill one in for the following year (or the other way around). Properties that were new to the rental market in 2023 and have neither reached the anniversary of their start quarter, nor undergone a tenancy change will only appear once. Cases where a new registration commences five or more quarters after the last registration and are therefore outside of the ‘seen within a year’ basis that we work on are marked as only seen once. Cases where the property has subsequently left the private rental sector would also only be seen once. Finally, inconsistently filled in address information could have created cases where it was not possible to match properties. For example, the same Eircode but different property numbers (or incomplete information such as a missing apartment number) in one of the years. Given the extensive matching efforts utilising property specific identifiers augmented with Eircodes, addresses and an anonymised landlord identifier, we would expect these to account for a minority of cases.

TABLE 3.2 COMPARISON OF CHARACTERISTICS: PROPERTIES ONLY SEEN ONCE VS AT LEAST TWICE

	Seen only once (Mean)	Seen at least twice (Mean)	Difference
Monthly rent	1,457	1,447	10.392**
Number of bedrooms	2.456	2.402	0.055***
Company landlord	0.211	0.222	-0.010***
Area: County Dublin (RPZ)	0.407	0.440	-0.033***
Area: Other RPZs	0.341	0.335	0.005**
Area: Non-RPZ areas	0.252	0.224	0.028***
Property type: Detached	0.131	0.100	0.031***
Property type: Semi-detached	0.229	0.219	0.010***
Property type: Terraced	0.147	0.147	0.000
Property type: Apartment	0.426	0.476	-0.050***
Property type: Other flats	0.066	0.057	0.009***

Source: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Note: Final column provides a t-test to gauge statistically significant differences in means between observations for properties only seen once versus those seen at least twice.

A natural question arises as to whether there are potential sample selection concerns, i.e. whether the properties only registered once would likely have different rental growth rates to those properties multiply registered. While we cannot know what rental growth rates would look like for properties we only observe once, large differences in sample characteristics between properties only seen once versus those seen twice or more would be a concern in terms of the representativeness of our sample. In Table 3.2, we therefore compare the characteristics of properties seen only once in the total analytical sample to properties that are observed multiple times. We provide a simple t-test to gauge statistically significant differences in means between the singly and multiply observed property samples. As is common when working with such large sample sizes, there are statistically significant differences between the samples. However, the magnitudes of these differences are small, which is reassuring for our analysis. For example, the raw monthly rent for those seen once is €1,457, only €10 higher than for properties seen at least twice. By area, Dublin makes up a higher share of properties observed multiple times (44.0 per cent vs 40.7 per cent of those seen once), while conversely non-RPZ areas make up a higher share of properties observed once (25.2 vs 22.4 per cent). Relatedly, by property type, apartments make up a higher proportion of properties seen at least twice (47.6 vs 42.6 per cent), whereas detached/semi-detached houses seen more commonly in non-RPZ areas make up a higher proportion of those only seen once. While the two samples are similar, these findings do suggest there may be a slight lack of familiarity with and/or adherence to the annual registration procedures in the smaller, non-RPZ rental markets relative to Dublin.

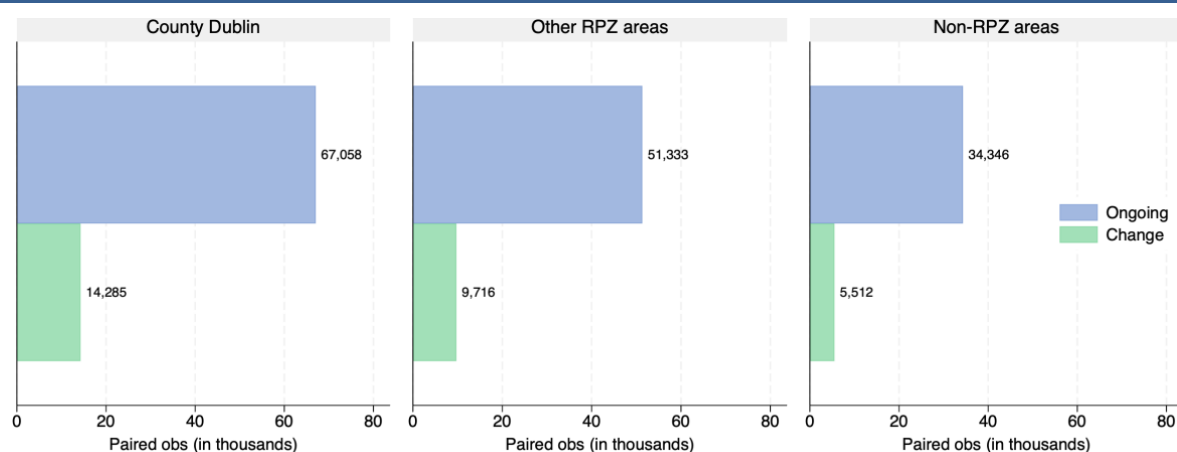
Recent analysis by the CSO matched RTB tenancy data with Census 2022 household data (CSO, 2024) to try and understand the degree of overlap between the two data sources. We would not expect the datasets to be identical. The Census is based on self-reported tenure status and as outlined in Chapter 2, not all those who declare themselves private renters will fall under the remit of the RTB, e.g. informal family arrangements. In addition, some discrepancies are always likely to occur when matching continuously collected or flow data (RTB tenancies) with stock data captured at a single point in time (Census). Nevertheless, their analysis found a 77 per cent match rate. The CSO estimated two-thirds of those unregistered to be 'potential informal tenancies' including lets to family members and friends. These properties' rent levels were 36 per cent lower than properties in both the Census and RTB registers. These findings indicate the RTB tenancies data have a high degree of coverage, particularly of the formal PRS sector. That said, as coverage is not universal, it is important to consider any potential impacts of this for our analysis.

The implications of these findings for rental price growth are unclear. On the one hand, we may expect landlords less likely to adhere to registration requirements to also be less likely to comply with RPZ legislation, meaning those unregistered may see higher rent increases than our sample. On the other hand, a high degree of letting to friends and family would probably make these properties less likely to see

large rental increases. The likely overall effect is therefore unclear. Given the high degree of RTB tenancies register coverage, the very large sample sizes and minimal observable differences between registrations seen once versus multiple times, these data permit robust and reliable analysis of property level rental price growth patterns.

Figure 3.3 presents the number of paired observations in our final sample by Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) status and by tenancy type. Throughout, we present County Dublin (entirely RPZ) separately from all other RPZ areas given the comparative size and importance of the Dublin rental market for Ireland as a whole. County Dublin contains the highest number of paired observations (81,343 in total), while a further 51,333 paired observations are located in other RPZ areas. Non-RPZ areas contain 34,346 paired observations in total. Ongoing tenancies comprise somewhere from 82.4 per cent (Dublin) to 86.2 per cent (non-RPZ areas) of total paired observations in each of the three areas. Unsurprisingly given the higher expected rate of turnover in urban centres, Dublin contains the highest proportion of changed tenancy pairs (17.6 per cent).

FIGURE 3.3 NUMBER OF MATCHED PAIRS BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

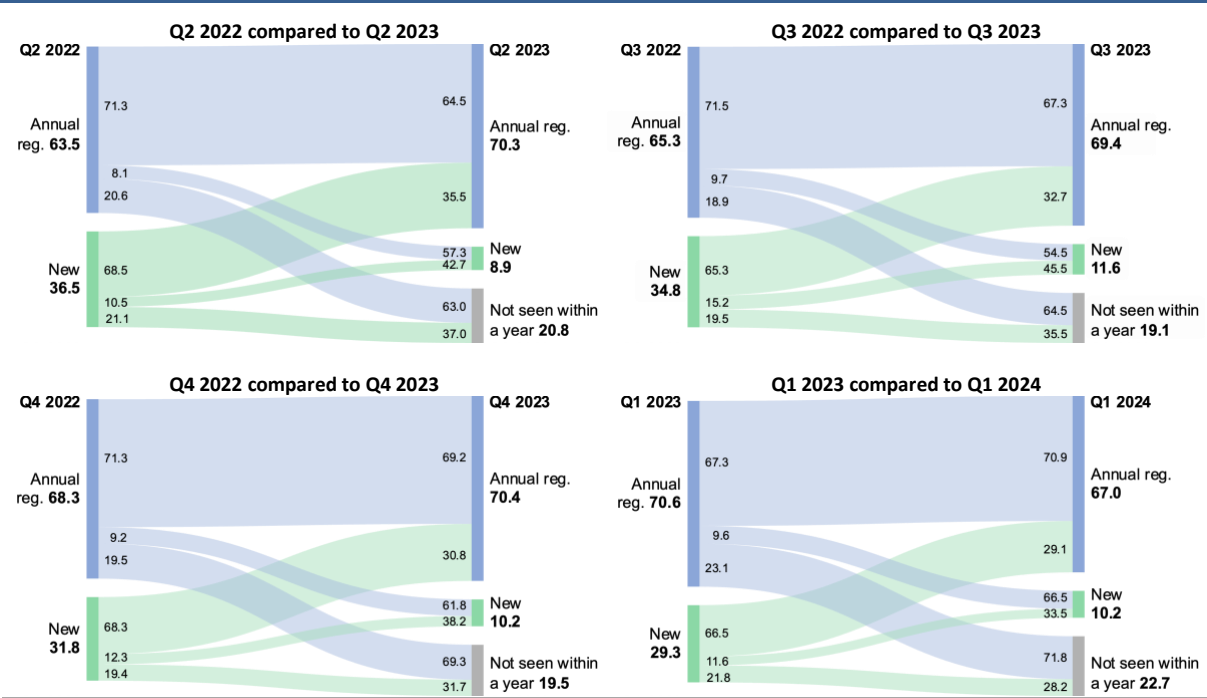
Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Percentage breakdown by tenancy type for each region: Dublin: 82.4 per cent ongoing tenancies, 17.6 per cent tenancy change; other RPZ areas: 84.1 per cent ongoing tenancies, 15.9 per cent tenancy change; non-RPZ areas: 86.2 per cent ongoing tenancies, 13.8 per cent tenancy change.

3.2 TENANCY TYPE TRANSITIONS

The paired dataset allows us to investigate how many properties observed in each period (i) remained as an existing tenancy, (ii) re-entered as a new tenancy or (iii) were unaccounted for in the subsequent year. This exploration aims to shed light on these market dynamics (as well as dataset dynamics, the propensity to re-register, etc.). Figure 3.4 illustrates these tenancy transitions for the four quarter pairs that fall within the two years covered by the sample. The transitions

are split by quarter pairs to reveal any seasonal patterns¹⁹. Throughout this report we work on a ‘seen within a year’ basis, essentially aiming to track annual changes for each property. Any properties not seen within the year are necessarily excluded from the rental price growth analysis presented in Chapter 4.

FIGURE 3.4 TENANCY TYPE TRANSITIONS FROM ONE YEAR TO THE NEXT



Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
Note: These transition flows take all registrations made in the first period (left-hand side) and track how many of those properties have been re-registered within the subsequent year and if so, what tenancy type they are. These charts aim to highlight the significant flows between the new and ongoing segments of the market, as well as the degree of missed/late re-registration. Annual registrations are for ongoing tenancies of at least one year in duration. New tenancies in the first period include newly commenced tenancies in existing rental properties and in new rental properties to the market. Note, by definition, any new tenancies observed in the second period must be newly commenced tenancies in existing rental properties as we observed these properties one year earlier.

Taking Q2 2022–Q2 2023 as an example, in Q2 2022, 63.5 per cent of the registrations were for existing tenancies (those of at least one year in duration) and 36.5 per cent were new tenancies. Of these 45,363 properties we saw in Q2 2022, one year later in Q2 2023, 70.3 per cent of the tenancies were still ongoing, 8.9 per cent of properties had seen a new tenancy start in that time and 20.8 per cent of properties had not been seen again within the year (by Q1 2024, i.e. allowing for late registrations).

¹⁹ See Appendix Figure A.2 for these transitions pooled across all four quarter pairs during our period of analysis Q2 2022–Q1 2024. See Appendix Table A.1 for the shares in each of the six potential transition groups, i.e. ongoing-ongoing; ongoing-new; ongoing-not seen within a year; new-ongoing; new-new; and new-not seen within a year.

Several patterns emerge across the four pairs of quarters. First, as shown in Figure 3.2, the share of total registrations that were annual registrations (vs new tenancies) increased with every quarter, i.e. was lowest in Q2 2022 (63.5 per cent) and highest in Q1 2023 (70.6 per cent). Second, a higher proportion of the properties seen in Q3 2022 had had a new tenancy start by Q3 2023. Conversely, a slightly lower proportion of the Q3 properties (69.4 per cent) than the Q2/Q4 properties (70.3–70.4 per cent) were host to ongoing tenancies when they appeared again. This is unsurprising given the higher turnover of tenancies generally seen in Q3 periods. Consistent with the academic calendar, a greater number of one-year tenancies tend to be observed starting in Q3 than at other points in the year. Third, the share of properties not seen again within the year is highest for the most recent period, i.e. Q1 2023–Q1 2024. This is to be expected given that the data drop dates from Q1 2024 and hence any late registrations for Q1 will not yet be included.

The transitions presented in Figure 3.4 highlight the significant movements of properties between the new tenancies and the ongoing tenancies segments of the market. These findings have important implications for our understanding of the RTB/ESRI Rent Index estimates. We discuss this further in Section 4.2.

CHAPTER 4

Rental price growth – property level analysis

The creation of a sample containing matched observations allows us to track properties over time and thus examine rental price changes at the individual property level. This allows for a detailed exploration into rental price dynamics, and specifically enables us to improve our understanding of how many properties see no change in rents from one year to the next (nominal rigidity) versus how many see more moderate and large changes. How this varies across different areas and tenancy types is of particular interest.

It is however important to note several caveats to our analysis. Our sample is limited to the first two years of annual registration data collection covering the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024. We are measuring how rents changed across a specific two-year period only; we cannot see how they may have changed throughout the tenancy as a whole (if longer than one year in duration). While we can identify the share of rents that grew above 2 per cent in that time, we cannot use the observed changes in rent to measure non-compliance with Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) regulations. As outlined in Chapter 2, there are legitimate reasons why the allowable rent increase for a property in an RPZ area can be above 2 per cent between any two particular years. Notably, if the rent had not previously been changed for several years, a cumulative increase would be allowable. In addition, if substantial renovations²⁰ had been implemented, the property would be exempt from RPZ regulations. As outlined in Chapter 3, only properties seen at least twice can be included in this analysis.

The broader economic context of this period should also be kept in mind when interpreting the findings presented in this chapter. As discussed in Chapter 2, the period covered by our analysis was characterised by high inflation and steep interest rate rises. Results may therefore differ if the analysis were to be repeated over a different time period. The continued collection of these annual registrations data will facilitate a deeper understanding of rental growth dynamics moving forwards.

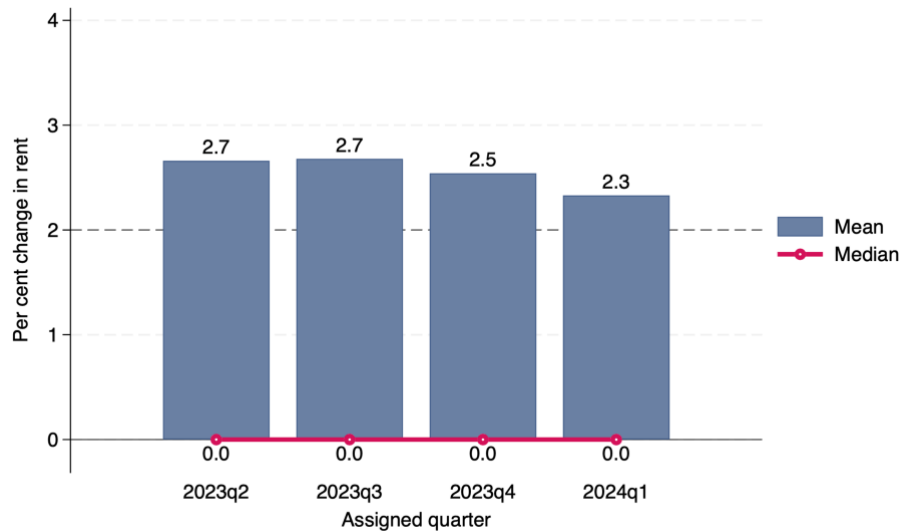
4.1 NATIONAL

The aim of this subsection is to examine property level rental growth findings at the national level. On average, over the sample period, rent prices at the property level grew by 2.6 per cent per annum. The mean rate of property level rental inflation fell over the period, with the highest increases for the properties observed earliest in our sample, i.e. between Q2 2022 and Q2 2023 (2.7 per cent) and the lowest for properties seen between Q1 2023 and Q1 2024 (2.3 per cent). As shown in Figure 4.1, the median increase in each case was 0. In other words, sorting every

²⁰ While there is a flag for substantial renovations in our dataset, it is not well filled in and we are therefore unable to examine this.

property from lowest to highest rental increase, the middle property saw no change – this indicates that at least half of all properties experienced no increase in rent during this period.

FIGURE 4.1 MEAN AND MEDIAN PROPERTY LEVEL ANNUAL PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN RENT – NATIONAL



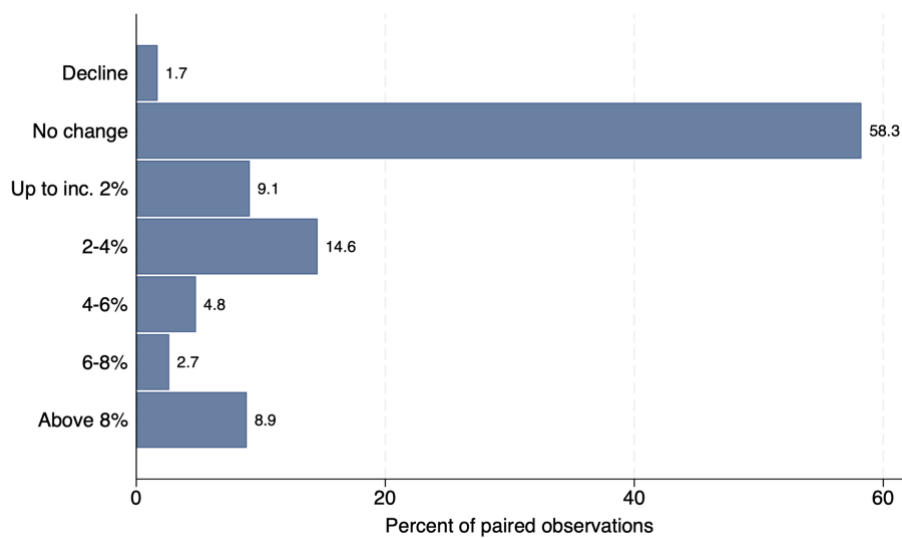
Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
Notes: 2023q2 measures the change in rent between Q2 2022 and Q2 2023 for properties whose tenancies commenced or were due an annual registration in Q2.

To examine this further, Figure 4.2 categorises properties according to observed percentage change in rent, if any. Here we pool across all quarters. The first thing to note is the majority of properties, 60 per cent nationally, saw no increase in the rent from one year to the next. Most properties (58.3 per cent) saw no change, while a small fraction saw a decline in the price (1.7 per cent). It is interesting to observe this degree of price stickiness in the Irish rental market. This phenomenon has been observed internationally, to varying degrees. For example, examining US apartment rents between 1974–1981, Genesove (2003) found around 30 per cent saw no change in the rent. Aysoy et al. (2014) found a similar 31.5 per cent of rents that remained unchanged from one year to the next using a nationally representative sample of Turkish data. Shimizu et al. (2010) instead found that 90 per cent of Japanese rental units saw no change in rents from one year to the next during the 1990s credit boom. Note rent control measures were not in place in any of these previous studies and the specifics of each market and economic conditions will play a key role in the magnitude of any such effect.

Turning to the 40 per cent of properties in our sample that did see an increase in rent, it is interesting to note that nationally, a larger proportion of rents increased by above 2 but up to 4 per cent (14.6 per cent) than did by 2 per cent or less

(9.1 per cent)²¹. A similar 8.9 per cent of properties saw a large increase of above 8 per cent. Note these are national level results. We will examine differences between RPZ and non-RPZ areas in Section 4.2. We use a strict cut-off at 2.0 in Figure 4.2 so this >2–4 per cent band could include cases where the rent increased marginally above 2 per cent. This could happen for example where the rent was rounded to the nearest whole or round number, or in cases where the rent was increased slightly more than one year after the previous rent was set. We will explore this further in Section 4.3.

FIGURE 4.2 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS – NATIONAL

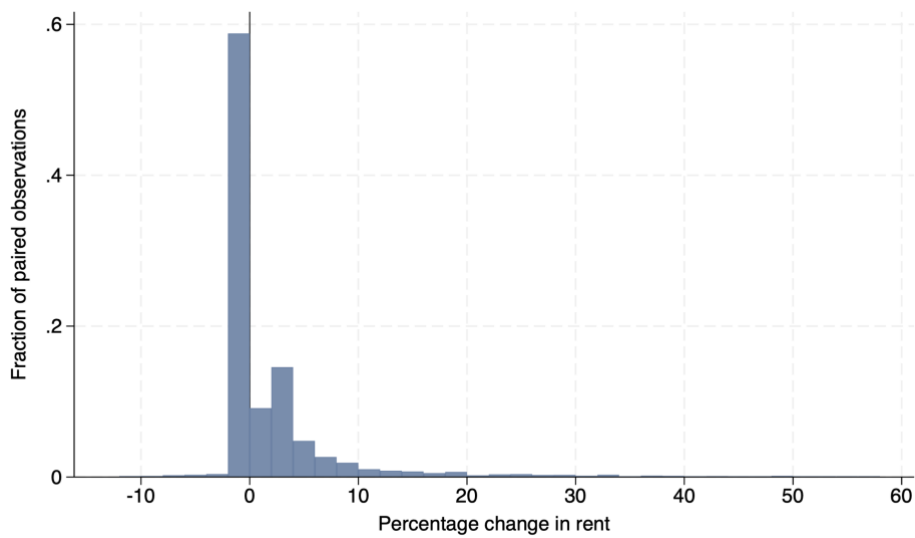


Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Results are aggregated across all quarter pairs in our sample over the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Figure 4.3 illustrates the distribution of property level annual percentage changes in rent. As already demonstrated in Figure 4.2, most properties saw zero change in rents, with those year-on-year rent increases that did occur primarily falling between zero and four per cent. While relatively substantial increases up to approximately 10 per cent are clearly evident in a minority of cases, increases beyond 10 per cent were rare and hikes beyond 20 per cent even more so. Declines beyond 2 per cent were similarly uncommon.

²¹ For the period of our analysis, Q2 2022–Q1 2024, HICP growth was above 2 per cent and therefore rental inflation was capped at 2 per cent per annum.

FIGURE 4.3 DISTRIBUTION OF YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGES IN RENT – NATIONAL

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Note: Bands with width of 2 percentage points and inclusive upper bound, e.g. (-2,0], (0,2].

4.2 RENT PRESSURE ZONE STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE

The aim of this section is to investigate the differences in rent changes between (a) properties with ongoing tenancies versus properties that have had a change in tenants and (b) properties that are in RPZs versus those that are in non-RPZ areas. Finally, we explore (a) and (b) in tandem. We define ongoing tenancies as properties where the same tenancy was observed in both periods. The terms tenancy change/change in tenants are used to define cases of property turnover, i.e. where a new tenancy has been registered since the property was observed in the first period²².

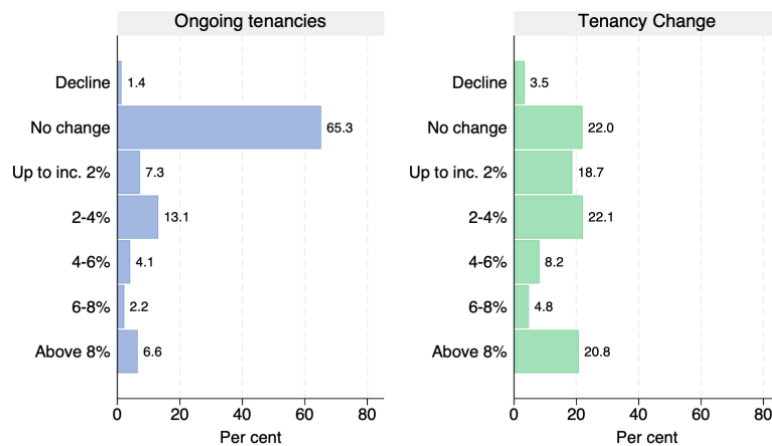
As shown in Figure 4.4, nationally 65.3 per cent of ongoing tenancies saw no change in the rental price from one year to the next during our sample period Q2 2022–Q1 2024. In contrast, a much smaller 22.0 per cent of properties that underwent a tenancy change saw no change in rent. This highlights that landlords are much more likely to increase rents between tenancies rather than during an ongoing tenancy. Indeed, Fitzenberger and Fuchs (2017) refer to the well-known concept of the residency discount for sitting tenants, and turnover provides an opportunity for landlords to increase the rent. The information gap may play a role here too, as new tenants are likely to be unaware of the rent paid by previous tenants. The finding that two-thirds of ongoing tenancies saw no change in the rent from one year to the next is broadly consistent with findings from the RTB tenant surveys conducted in 2022/23 showing high levels of price rigidity (Residential Tenancies Board, 2023).

²² Note we use the term 'tenancy change' rather than 'new tenancy'. In the RTB/ESRI New Tenancy Rent Index, new tenancies include (i) new tenancies in existing rental properties; (ii) new tenancies in rental properties never let before; and (iii) new tenancies in properties that have not been let in the previous two years. Properties that saw a 'tenancy change' are only a subset of all new tenancies, i.e. those where a new tenancy has commenced in an existing rental property.

They found that 69 per cent of tenants had seen no increase in the rent since they moved in, with a lower – but still large – figure of 50 per cent among longer-term tenants (five or more years). While the estimates are not directly comparable due to different sample groups and questions asked, they do both reveal the large degree of price stickiness in the Irish PRS. It is also reassuring that measures reported by tenants appear to be in line with the RTB tenancy registration data based on registrations made by landlords.

Of those ongoing tenancies that did see an increase in the rent, nationally the most common rise was above 2 per cent up to and including 4 per cent (13.1 per cent), followed by up to and including 2 per cent (7.3 per cent). For properties that saw a change of tenants, the rental increases were more evenly spread across the bands. A similar percentage of properties saw increases up to and including 2 per cent (18.7 per cent), above 2 but up to 4 per cent (22.1 per cent) and above 8 per cent (20.8 per cent). Nationally, far fewer ongoing tenancies saw these larger rises, with just under 13 per cent seeing a price rise above 4 per cent. Indeed, more than three times as many turnover properties (20.8 per cent) saw rent increases above 8 per cent as did ongoing tenancies (6.6 per cent).

FIGURE 4.4 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

Turning to differences across areas, Figure 4.5 illustrates how rent increases varied by RPZ status. Note we separate RPZs into two groups: (i) Dublin (city and county) and (ii) other RPZs²³. For non-RPZs, a larger share of properties saw no change at all in the rent compared to properties in RPZs (71.0 vs 51.6 per cent in Dublin and 58.9 per cent in other RPZs). However, where price increases did occur in non-RPZs, the vast majority were large increases above 8 per cent (22.1 per cent). In contrast, while fewer properties in RPZs saw no change in the rent, these properties were more likely to see more moderate increases. In Dublin, around 35 per cent of

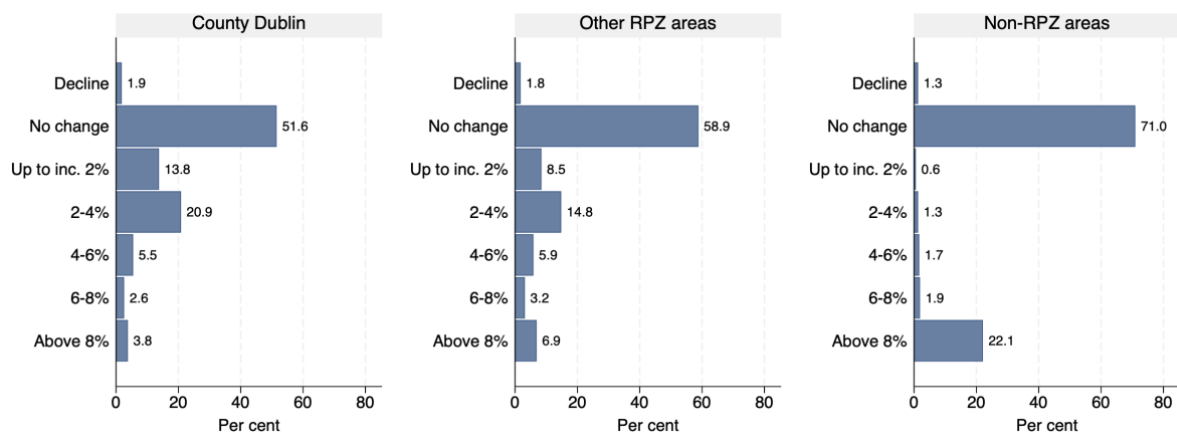
²³ For consistency, we only include areas as RPZs if they were designated as such for the entire period of our analysis, i.e. we define by RPZ status as at 2022, the start of our sample period. Areas that became RPZs part way through the sample period (in the second half of 2023) are therefore marked as non-RPZ here. We examine this group separately in Section 4.4.

properties saw increases up to and including 4 per cent, with just under 12 per cent seeing a rise above 4 per cent. In other RPZs, the fraction of rent increases above 4 per cent was higher at 16 per cent, with around 23 per cent seeing a rise up to and including 4 per cent.

RPZ areas are associated with fewer properties seeing no change in the rent across this two-year period, but also fewer seeing severe increases compared to non-RPZ areas. Nevertheless, the ‘above 8 per cent’ bands in Figure 4.5 clearly show that a minority of properties did see large rental increases in RPZs, particularly outside of Dublin, albeit they were much less commonplace than in non-RPZ areas. It is important to reiterate that from our analysis we cannot determine whether these properties are non-compliant with RPZ regulations as we only observe the change in rent from one year to the next. Given such a high share of properties see no change in the rent from one year to the next, it is likely that some of these larger rental increases reflect accumulated increases applied in one go. As we outlined in Chapter 2, cumulative rent increases are permitted where the rent has not been increased in previous years. It also seems probable that some of these larger rises may reflect a degree of non-compliance with the regulations²⁴.

Given that permitted rent increases in this period were limited to 2 per cent per year in RPZs, it is unsurprising that the proportion of rent increases falling within the up to and including 2 per cent band for both County Dublin (13.8 per cent) and the other RPZ areas (8.5 per cent) was much larger than the corresponding proportion for the non-RPZ areas (0.6 per cent). The relatively large proportions falling within the above 2–4 per cent increase band for these rent-controlled areas (20.9 per cent for County Dublin and 14.8 per cent for other RPZs) is perhaps more unexpected. We examine this further in Section 4.3.

FIGURE 4.5 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BY RPZ STATUS

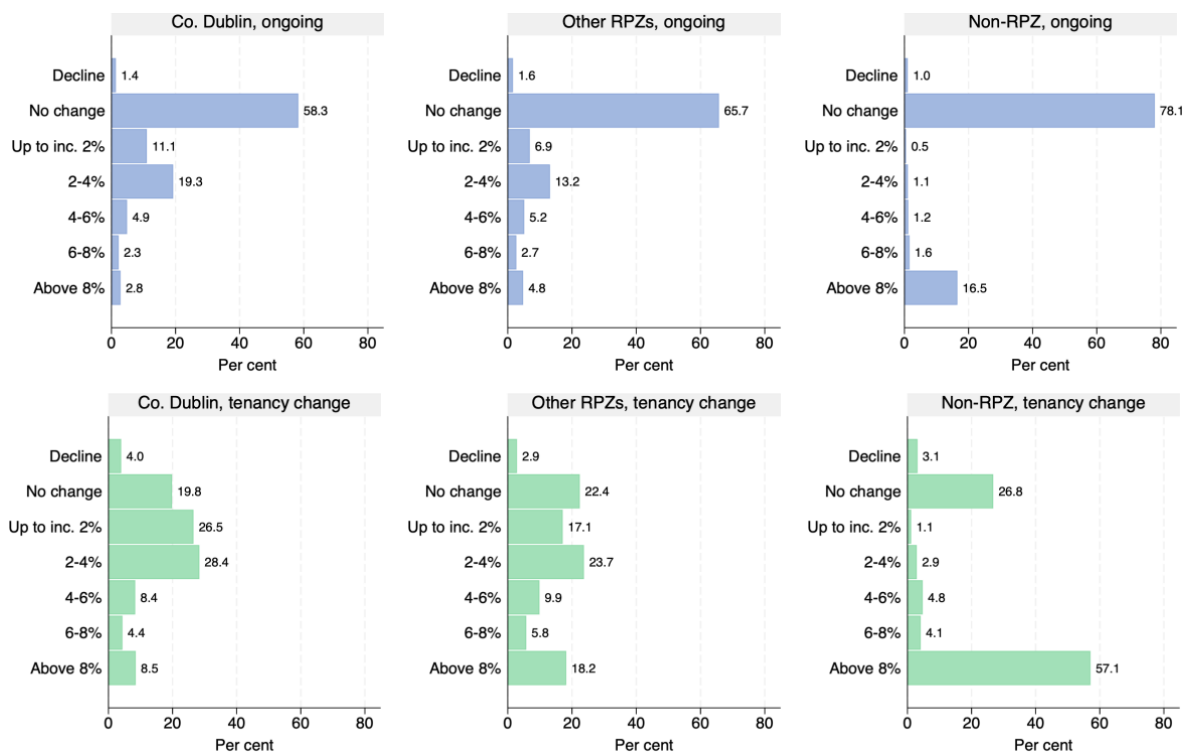


Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
 Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Includes both ongoing tenancies and where there was a change in tenants all together.

²⁴ There may also be cases where a substantial renovation has occurred and the property may therefore be exempt from RPZ regulations.

Further insight is provided by Figure 4.6, which breaks down rental growth by both RPZ status and tenancy type. It is clear that landlords are much more likely to apply rent increases between tenancies than during an ongoing tenancy, even in RPZ areas where the rent cap limits apply both during, but also between tenancies, i.e. at the property level. While sitting tenants in non-RPZs were 1.3 times more likely to see no change in their rent from one year to the next compared to those in Dublin, they were also 5.9 times more likely to see a rise above 8 per cent. Indeed, the top right-hand panel of Figure 4.6 really illustrates the all or nothing nature of rental inflation in non-RPZ areas, even for sitting tenants. Almost 4 in 5 saw no change, but a further 16.5 per cent saw a rise above 8 per cent relative to one year previous. The fact that the corresponding proportions of rent increases in the highest band for RPZ areas are much lower would suggest that RPZs do have a moderating effect on the severity of rental price increases. It is important to note that this is descriptive rather than causal analysis, though. Even if the rent caps were not in place, rental price growth trends could still differ between RPZ and non-RPZ areas if their economic trends differed.

FIGURE 4.6 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
 Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). Note the bands presented have strict cut-offs, i.e. an increase of 2.05 per cent would be included in the >2–4 per cent band. We explore this issue further in Section 4.3. See Appendix Table A.2 for a further breakdown of mean, median, p(25), p(75) rental changes by RPZ status and tenancy type.

Regarding properties that saw a change in tenants, in Dublin far fewer of these properties saw price rises above 4 per cent relative to other RPZ and particularly non-RPZ areas. Indeed, just over one-fifth of turnover properties in Dublin saw

rents rise by more than 4 per cent, compared to one-third in other RPZs and just under three in five in non-RPZs. It is important to reiterate at this point that observing a rent increase above 2 per cent across a single two-year period does not necessarily indicate any non-compliance with RPZ regulations. A couple of points are important to note here. Given the high shares of properties that see no change in the rent from one year to the next, it is likely that some of these larger rental increases reflect allowable accumulated increases applied in one go. This is particularly likely to occur when there is a change in the tenant. That said, non-compliance with regulations is also more likely to occur between tenancies, as new tenants are unlikely to know the level of rent paid by the previous tenant(s).

While we are not able to directly examine the degree of non-compliance in this work, it is interesting to note the different rent increase patterns observed in Dublin relative to the other RPZ group. For ongoing tenants who saw the most extreme rent rises (above 8 per cent), the rate was 4.8 per cent in other RPZs vs 2.8 per cent in Dublin. The differences are more notable however when there was a change in tenants. In other RPZs, a sizeable 18.2 per cent of turnover properties saw rents rise by 8 per cent relative to the previous year, more than double the rate in Dublin (8.5 per cent). In part, this may be due to the higher rates of no change during tenancies resulting in larger accumulated rent increases applied in other RPZ areas compared to Dublin. However, the substantial variation in patterns also suggests there may be greater non-compliance issues elsewhere relative to Dublin.

Our dataset does not allow us to distinguish between cases of non-compliance versus cumulative rent increases applied in one go (allowable under RPZ regulations). However, for ongoing tenancies we can distinguish between those that were new tenancies in the first period (new-ongoing) versus those that were ongoing tenancies in both periods (ongoing-ongoing), i.e. longer-term tenancies of more than one year in duration. Cumulative rent increases would only be expected for the longer-term tenancies and not for those that only started one year before. Figure A.2 in the Appendix shows most rent increases above 4 per cent in RPZs (especially Dublin) were for longer-term tenancies so could plausibly, but not necessarily, be allowable increases. In contrast, nearly 7 per cent of tenants in non-RPZs whose tenancy started one year previous faced a rent increase above 8 per cent.

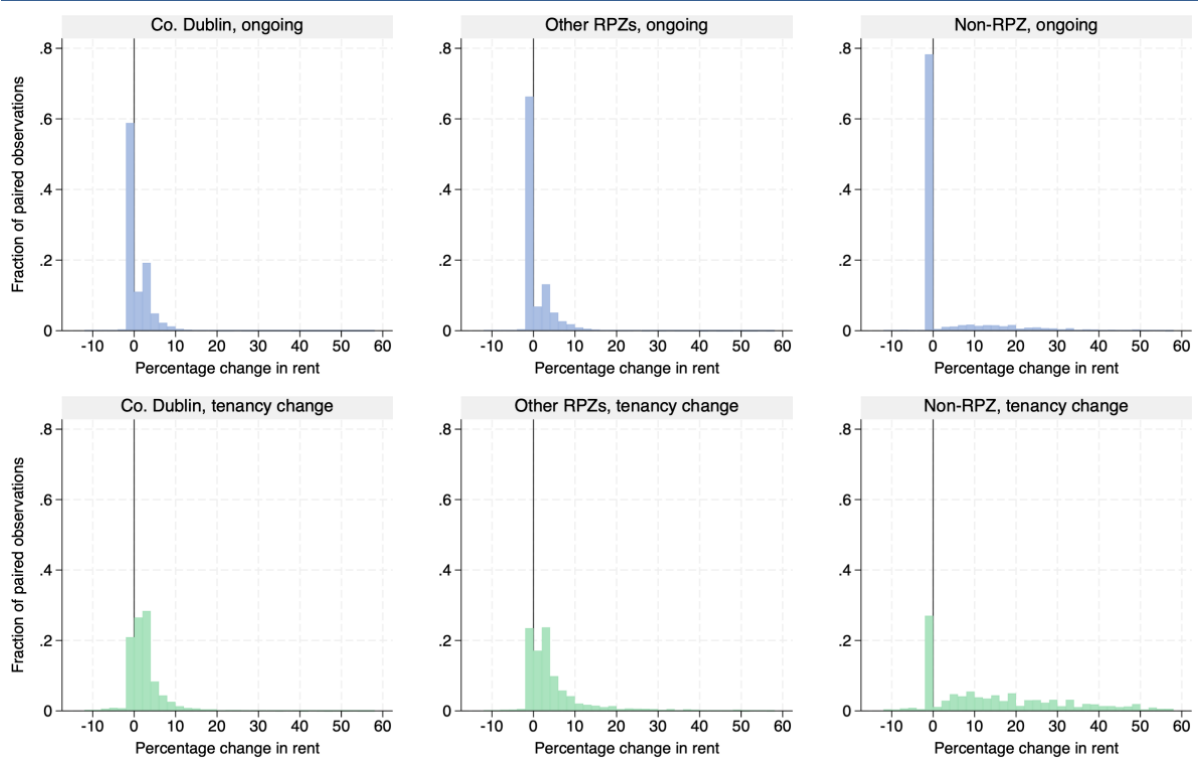
O'Toole et al. (2021) examined the issue of nominal rigidities (rents that do not change from one year to the next) in the Irish PRS pre and post the introduction of the Rent Pressure Zone measures in late 2016/2017. At that time, it was only possible to track properties each time a new tenancy registration was made (or in the case of a Further Part 4 renewal after six²⁵ years). The vast majority (92.5 per cent) of their sample were therefore between tenancy price changes, i.e. turnover properties. They found the share of properties that saw no change in the rent from one year to the next increased from around 15 to 20 per cent in the then RPZ areas after the introduction of the RPZ measures, while it stood at around 30 per cent in

²⁵ Four years if the tenancy commenced prior to 24 December 2016.

non-RPZ areas. Interestingly, these figures are similar to those observed in our current sample in Figure 4.6 for properties where the tenants changed (19.8 and 22.4 per cent for Dublin and other RPZs respectively and 26.8 per cent for non-RPZs). This suggests the degree of price stickiness has remained fairly stable since the introduction of the rent cap measures. In addition, for the first time, in this report we are also able to show the considerably larger degree of price stickiness for ongoing tenants.

Further to the rent change bands presented in Figure 4.6, Figure 4.7 presents the full distribution of all rental changes (including those that see no change), by RPZ status and tenancy type. While Figure 4.6 highlighted the significant share of non-RPZ properties (both ongoing tenancies and turnover properties) that saw a rent increase above 8 per cent relative to one year previous, Figure 4.7 illustrates just how widely dispersed these larger rental increases were in non-RPZ areas, stretching in the most extreme cases to almost 60 per cent. In contrast, the distributions of rent increases are much more tightly clustered at lower levels for properties located in County Dublin, with a slightly more dispersed distribution in other RPZ areas compared to Dublin. It is important to note here that each chart represents a different number of properties, with relatively few properties in non-RPZ areas, particularly turnover properties (see Figure 3.3). This may also play a part in the relatively dispersed distribution in these areas.

FIGURE 4.7 DISTRIBUTION OF CHANGE IN RENT BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

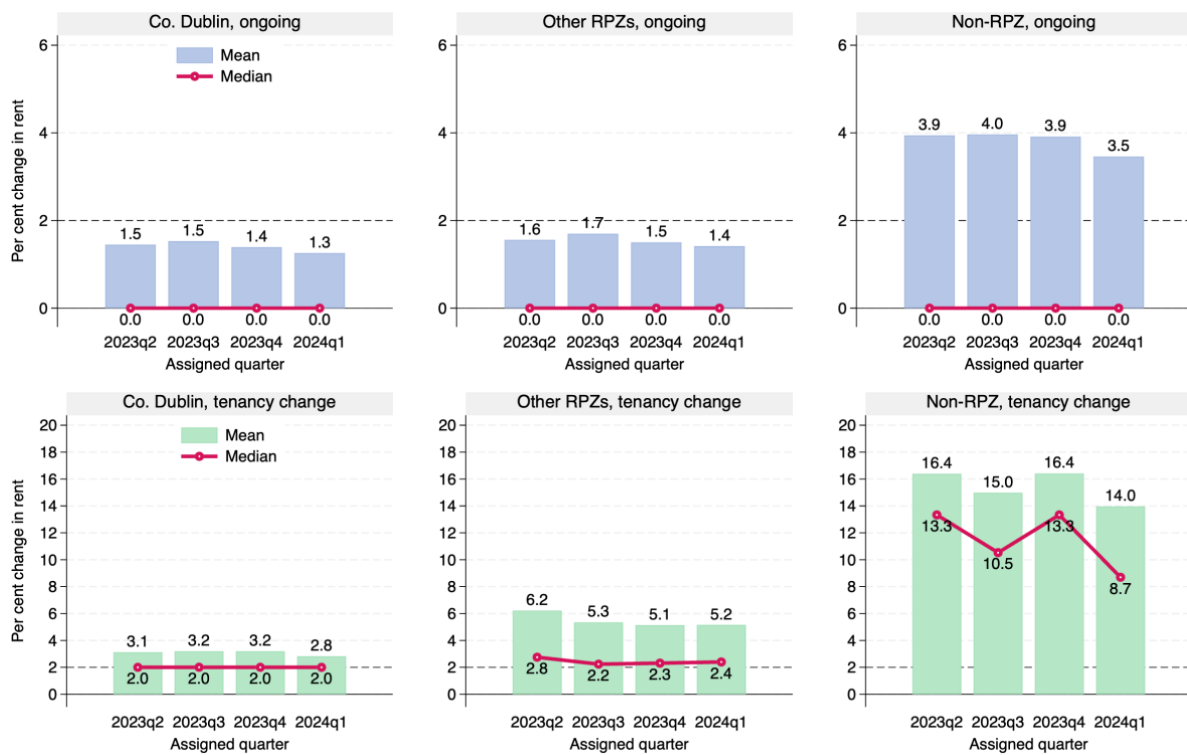
Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). Categories defined with inclusive upper bound and 2 per cent width, e.g. $(-2,0]$, $(0,2]$.

Having observed the rental price distributions by RPZ status and tenancy type in Figures 4.6 and 4.7, Figure 4.8 summarises by presenting mean and median growth rates across each of these six splits. Over the Q2 2022–Q1 2024 period, ongoing tenancy rents in Dublin grew at an average of 1.3–1.5 per cent year on year depending on the quarter. The figure in other RPZs was marginally higher at 1.4–1.7 per cent. In contrast, in non-RPZ areas ongoing tenancies saw annual rental inflation of 3.5–4 per cent depending on the quarter.

In all cases, the average rental inflation was higher for properties that saw a change in tenants. In Dublin, turnover properties' rents increased 2.8–3.2 per cent year on year, approximately double the rate seen for ongoing tenancies. This figure was higher in the other RPZ areas, ranging from 5.2–6.2 per cent on average depending on the quarter. In non-RPZs, for properties that saw a change in tenants, rental prices increased substantially by 14–16.4 per cent relative to the year before. Note both the average and median rental price changes for properties with a change in tenants in non-RPZs were subject to greater fluctuation over the sample period than the other groups shown. This is likely due to the comparatively small number of properties comprising this group (see Figure 3.3).

Over this period, property level rental inflation rates were clearly lower in RPZ versus non-RPZ areas. Note as this is descriptive analysis, we cannot make definitive causal statements. However, these findings are consistent with previous work that found lower rental inflation in RPZ versus non-RPZ areas in the periods immediately after the introduction of the measures (O'Toole et al., 2021; Coffey et al., 2022). Despite the higher shares of properties in non-RPZ areas that saw no change in rent from the previous year, the impact of those properties that saw large increases on the averages is clear. Given the scale of rental prices not changing year on year within tenancies, it is not surprising the averages are somewhat higher for turnover properties. In part, this likely captures accumulated rental increases being applied between tenancies. In RPZs, it may also capture a degree of non-compliance whereby it is easier to increase rents above permitted levels between tenancies as the new tenants are unlikely to know what the previous rent was. It is interesting to note the higher levels of average rental inflation between tenancies in other RPZs relative to Dublin. As noted above, this may suggest possible differences in compliance levels across RPZ areas; for example, due to differing levels of familiarity with the regulations and differences in landlord types.

FIGURE 4.8 MEAN AND MEDIAN ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RENT CHANGE BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
 Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). 2023q2 measures the change in rent between Q2 2022 and Q2 2023 for properties whose tenancies commenced or were due an annual registration in Q2.

The property level rental growth rates presented above are lower than rental inflation rates from the RTB/ESRI Rent Index measures. It is useful at this juncture to consider the different methodologies and understand why this is the case.

The first thing to note is that property level rental inflation rates where there has been a change in tenants are not comparable with estimates from the RTB/ESRI New Tenancies Rent Index; they measure different things. The property level sample only includes longer-term rental properties that have turned over, whereas the New Tenancies Rent Index covers (i) new tenancies in existing rental properties; (ii) new tenancies in rental properties never let before; and (iii) new tenancies in properties that have not been let in the previous two years. The latter two categories would not be subject to RPZ rent caps as they do not apply the first time the rent is set.

Substantial falls in the numbers of new tenancy registrations have occurred in recent years, so where there are new properties entering the sector, they can make up a sizeable share in particular areas. For example, a series of new rental developments in South Dublin were contributing to the higher new tenancy growth rates in Q2 and Q3 2023 Rent Index reports. These properties would not be in our tenancy change property level sample for the same period because as new properties to the market, they would only be seen once in our sample period. While the relationship between rents and economic fundamentals should have decoupled in RPZ areas for properties subject to the rent caps, the rents for these new to

market properties not subject to the caps are likely to be affected by economic conditions. Given the high interest rates and strong labour market in this period, it is unsurprising that the RTB/ESRI New Tenancies Index measure of rental inflation, that accounts for entry and exits into the market, is higher than our property level measure that tracks price changes when tenants change for existing rental properties.

The RTB/ESRI Existing Tenancies Rent Index compares the standardised average rent for the group of ongoing tenancy properties (annual registrations) in one period with the standardised average rent for the group of ongoing tenancy properties in another period. The difference between the two group averages is the rental inflation rate. The rent index is therefore an aggregate measure designed to track broad price developments in the market. In the hedonic model, a standardisation procedure controls for differences in observable characteristics, e.g. number of bedrooms, property type and location to make the samples as comparable as possible from one period to the next. However, a hedonic rent index does not track the same properties over time. Indeed, in Chapter 3 we saw that approximately 30 per cent of annual registrations seen in one year were not annual registrations in the subsequent year (either because they had not been re-registered or because a new tenancy had commenced). While the hedonics control for observable property characteristics and the model has a high degree of explanatory power, it cannot control for unobserved differences in quality. Property level analysis, on the other hand, controls for everything by design and is therefore the purest form of comparison between identical units. It does not however account for market churn.

Moreover, group averages are likely to be affected by those properties seeing rapid growth, even though they may only be a relatively small share of properties. In addition, as we saw in Chapter 3, a sizeable share of new tenancies in one year will have become ongoing tenancies (of at least one year in duration), and will therefore have entered the existing tenancies sample by the subsequent year. We have seen in our analysis in this section that larger price rises are more common as properties turn over, while others may have been new to market and therefore had free rent setting as new tenancies. Prices for those properties entering the existing tenancies sample in a quarter are therefore likely to be higher than the properties no longer in that sample from the year before. This change in composition likely explains why the aggregate rent index measures of inflation (5.5–5.9 per cent shown in Figure 2.2) are higher than the property level estimates in this report (around 2 per cent for ongoing tenancies) for the same period.

In addition, it is also important to note that they are not based on identical samples. The property level analysis is necessarily limited to the sample of properties observed more than once within the two-year sample period (Q2 2022–Q1 2024). The hedonic existing tenancies Rent Index would also include properties only registered once throughout our sample period. It is possible that those only registered once may be those less likely to be compliant, although we showed in

Chapter 3 that the sample of properties only seen once was similar to the properties seen more than once and included in the property level rental growth analysis.

In summary, the RTB/ESRI Existing Tenancies Rent Index provides the best and most comprehensive picture of (standardised) average rent levels for ongoing tenancies in each quarter as it uses the full sample of annual registrations made each quarter. It provides a useful and timely overview of aggregate, market-wide price levels and broad trends over time and from one area to another. However, the sample of properties changes each period, which will affect year-on-year changes, even after the standardisation process. To understand how individual property rents have changed over time and distributional analysis of how many properties see different levels of rental inflation instead requires property level analysis. This is a much more intensive use of the data, requires longer timeframes and can only include properties registered more than once in the sample period.

4.3 A CLOSER LOOK AROUND 2%

Since late 2021, allowable annual rental inflation has been capped at the minimum of either 2 per cent or the Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP) growth in Rent Pressure Zones (RPZs). For the period of our analysis, Q2 2022–Q1 2024, HICP growth was above 2 per cent and therefore rental inflation was capped at 2 per cent²⁶. One somewhat surprising finding outlined above is that for those properties that did see an increase in the rent, the most common increase was above 2 per cent up to and including 4 per cent, rather than the up to and including 2 per cent band. There are several potential explanations for why this might be the case. First, given the high shares of properties that see no change in rent from one year to the next, it is likely that when properties do see an increase, they may see a cumulative rise, i.e. several years' worth at once. As outlined in Chapter 2, this is permitted under RPZ regulations. Second, up until July 2021, rents were permitted to increase by 4 per cent annually so it is possible there may be some legacy effects of this, with some landlords still applying the previous threshold. Third, landlords may set rent increases at a round euro amount (e.g. a 2 per cent raise applied to a €900 rent comes out at an additional €18 – a landlord might charge an extra €20 in practice). Fourth, the landlord may have increased the rent after slightly more than a year which would mean that a higher increase would be allowed. The presence of many increases in the >2–4 per cent band that are close to but just over 2 per cent would support either or both of these final two hypotheses.

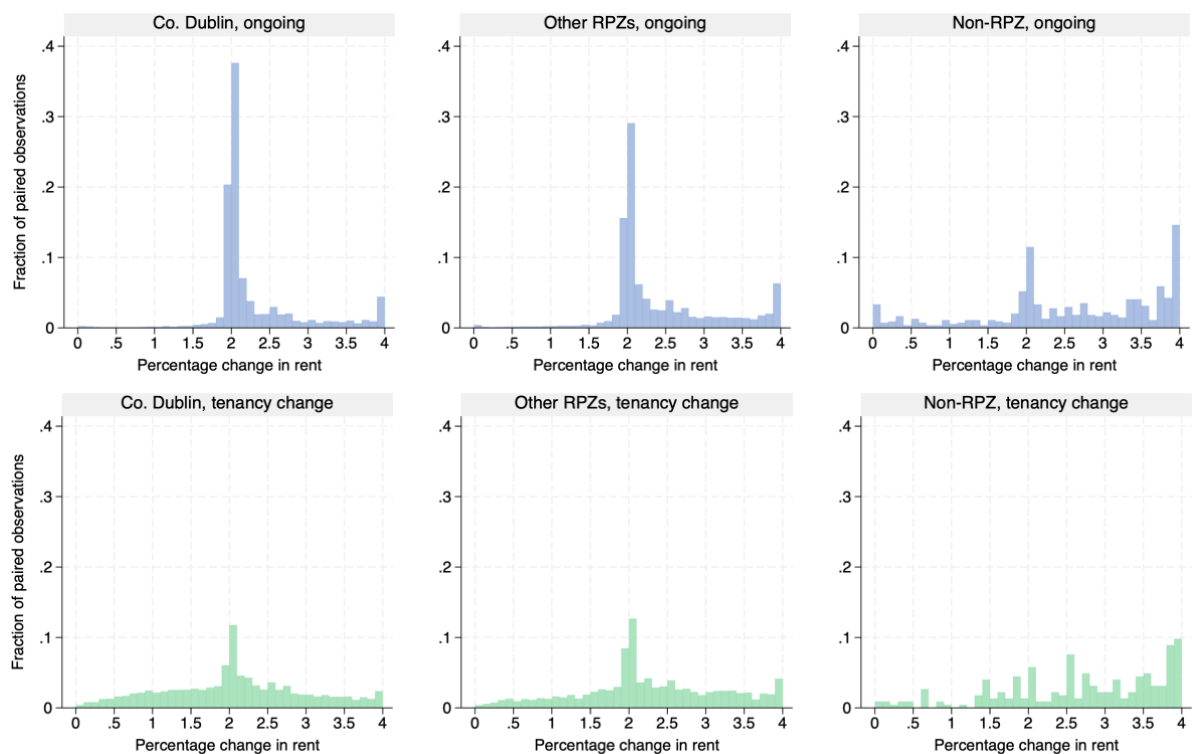
Indeed, the evidence presented in Figure 4.9 confirms that a substantial proportion of rent increases between 2 and 4 per cent in RPZs were in fact only slightly over 2 per cent, particularly in the case of ongoing tenancies. Of ongoing tenancies that saw an increase in rent up to and including 4 per cent, in Dublin 37 per cent of these saw a rise of 2–2.1 per cent, i.e. marginally above 2 per cent. For other RPZ areas, the figure was lower but still substantial at just under 30 per cent. This spike at

²⁶ With the exception of the final month of Q1 2024, March, where HICP growth stood at 1.7 per cent.

2–2.1 per cent also occurs in RPZs when there is a change in tenants, but to a lesser degree.

We would not expect to see any clustering around 2 per cent in non-RPZs. For ongoing tenancies, there is a slight peak around 2 per cent. It may be the case that some landlords in these areas are using the 2 per cent as a rule of thumb even though the regulations do not apply to them. That said, the peak is fairly small, indeed a larger proportion saw a rise of 4 per cent. For turnover properties in non-RPZ areas, there was no peak around 2 per cent, as expected. The spikes around 4 per cent evident in all three areas, particularly in the case of ongoing tenancies, are also worth noting. In the RPZ areas, this could perhaps be due to landlords combining two years’ worth (up to 2 per cent) of rent increases into one. The apparent spike approaching as increases approach 4 per cent in non-RPZ areas is somewhat deceptive: as can be seen in Figure 4.7, this is not so much a spike as part of a tendency towards higher rents in these areas where landlords face no percentage restrictions on rent increases.

FIGURE 4.9 YEAR-ON-YEAR PERCENTAGE CHANGES IN RENT UP TO 4% BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE

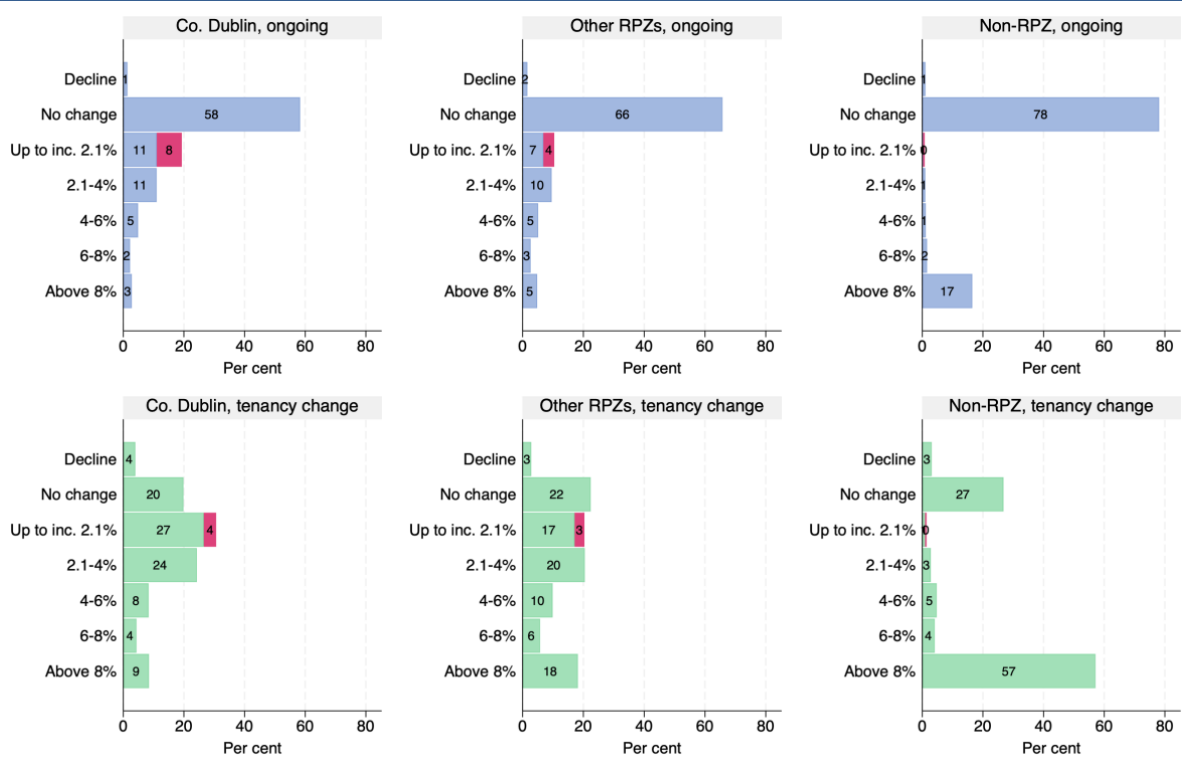


Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
 Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). Inclusive upper bound, width 0.1. (2,2,1)

Figure 4.10 presents percentage rent changes by RPZ status and tenancy type, adjusted so that the previously 0–2 per cent band now stretches from 0 to 2.1 per cent, i.e. an adjusted version of Figure 4.6. Adjusting the bands to take the clustering of rents marginally above 2 per cent into account makes a difference to the observed rental increase dynamics. The difference is especially pronounced for

County Dublin. For ongoing tenancies in Dublin, for example, only 11 per cent saw an increase up to and including 2 per cent. The percentage that saw an increase up to 2.1 per cent expands by over two-thirds, up to 19 per cent. The percentage of ongoing tenancies that experienced an increase of 2 per cent or less in non-RPZ areas (7 per cent), meanwhile, expanded by more than half (to 11 per cent) when the band was expanded to include increases of 2.1 per cent. Although the equivalent differences were less pronounced for changed tenancies, they were not insubstantial at 4 percentage points (from 27 per cent to 31 per cent) and 3 percentage points (17 per cent to 20 per cent) for Dublin and other RPZs respectively.

FIGURE 4.10 YEAR-ON-YEAR ADJUSTED CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Note: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

4.4 ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS

In this section, we present a series of additional data splits examining how rental price changes differed across counties, cities, by the length of time an area has been an RPZ and by landlord type.

The left-hand panel of Figure 4.11 presents average annual property level rental price changes by county for ongoing tenancies; the right-hand panel presents the corresponding figures for properties that saw a tenancy change. In all counties, rental growth for sitting tenants was lower, in many cases substantially so, than

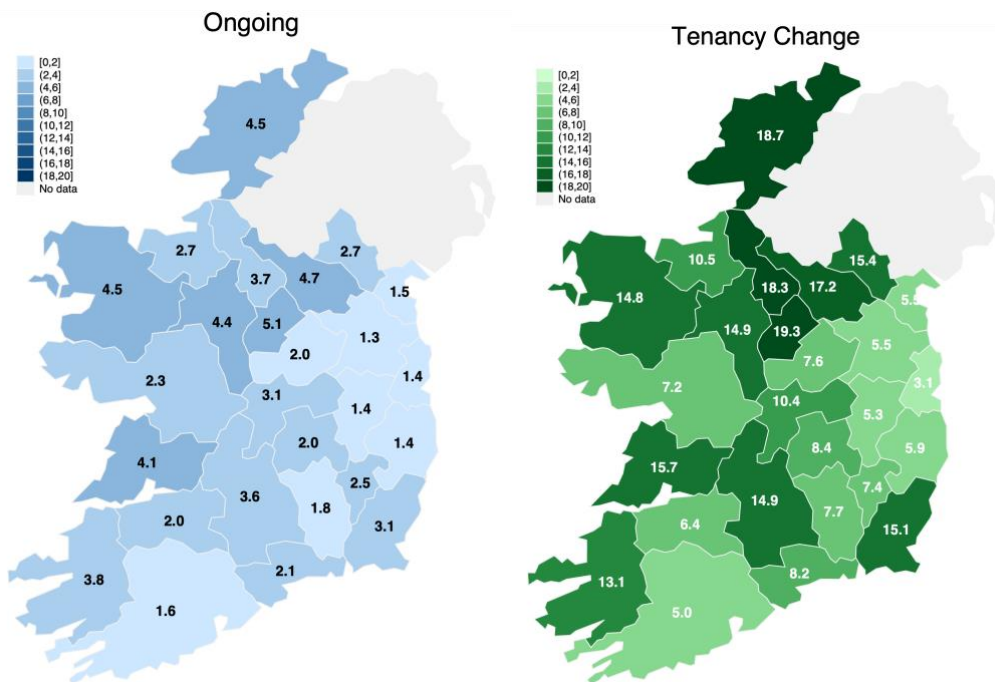
the corresponding growth rate for changed tenancies. A similar geographic pattern emerges for both properties with ongoing tenancies and those that saw tenancy changes, though. The highest average rental growth was generally seen outside of Dublin and the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), for both ongoing and changed tenancies. The counties that are home to Ireland’s other cities – Cork, Galway, Limerick, Waterford – also saw relatively lower rental price growth on average compared to other areas of the country. Instead, the largest average rental price increases for each tenancy type were seen primarily in the West and in the Border areas. This is unsurprising given the extent of RPZ coverage in the East of the country and other parts of the country containing major urban areas.

Over the Q2 2022–Q1 2024 period, sitting tenants saw fairly moderate rent increases on average across much of the country. In Dublin and the GDA counties of Kildare, Meath and Wicklow, this ranged from 1.3–1.4 per cent year on year and was marginally higher in Cork (1.6 per cent) and 2.3 per cent in Galway. Note both Cork and Galway counties contain a mixture of RPZ and non-RPZ areas. At the higher end of the scale, sitting tenants in Clare, Roscommon, Mayo, Donegal, Cavan and Longford saw the biggest increases, with average property level rises ranging between 4.1–5.1 per cent year on year.

The differences in average rental price increases by county are most stark when focusing on properties that saw tenancy changes: average property level rental growth rates over the period for changed tenancies in Donegal (18.7 per cent), Leitrim (18.3 per cent) and Longford (19.3 per cent), for example, were more than six times that seen for changed tenancies in Dublin (3.1 per cent). Mayo, Roscommon, Tipperary, Wexford, Monaghan, Clare and Cavan all saw average increases in the range 14.8–17.2 per cent too. These areas typically have fairly small rental markets. From the distributional analysis presented in Section 4.2, we know the majority of sitting tenants in non-RPZ areas saw no change in rent from one year to the next. These much larger rent increases between tenants therefore likely reflect a degree of deferred increases applied in one go. The counties seeing the highest property level rent increases in Figure 4.11 are broadly consistent with the areas highlighted as having had the highest rental inflation in the RTB/ESRI Rent Index reports over this period²⁷.

²⁷ Note ‘tenancy change’ rental inflation would not be directly comparable with the RTB/ESRI New Tenancies Rent Index. ‘Tenancy change’ only includes longer-term rental properties that have turned over (so subject to RPZ rules in those areas), whereas the New Tenancies Index would also include new builds and other properties not let in the previous two years, i.e. ones that have free rent setting (regardless of whether in an RPZ or not), so we would typically expect New Tenancies Index rental inflation to be higher. Substantial falls in the numbers of new tenancy registrations have occurred in recent years, so where there are new properties entering the sector, they can make up a sizeable share. For example, a series of new developments in South Dublin were contributing to the higher new tenancy growth rates in Q2 and Q3 2023 Rent Index reports. These properties would not be in the tenancy change sample for the same period.

FIGURE 4.11 AVERAGE PROPERTY LEVEL ANNUAL RENTAL GROWTH BY COUNTY



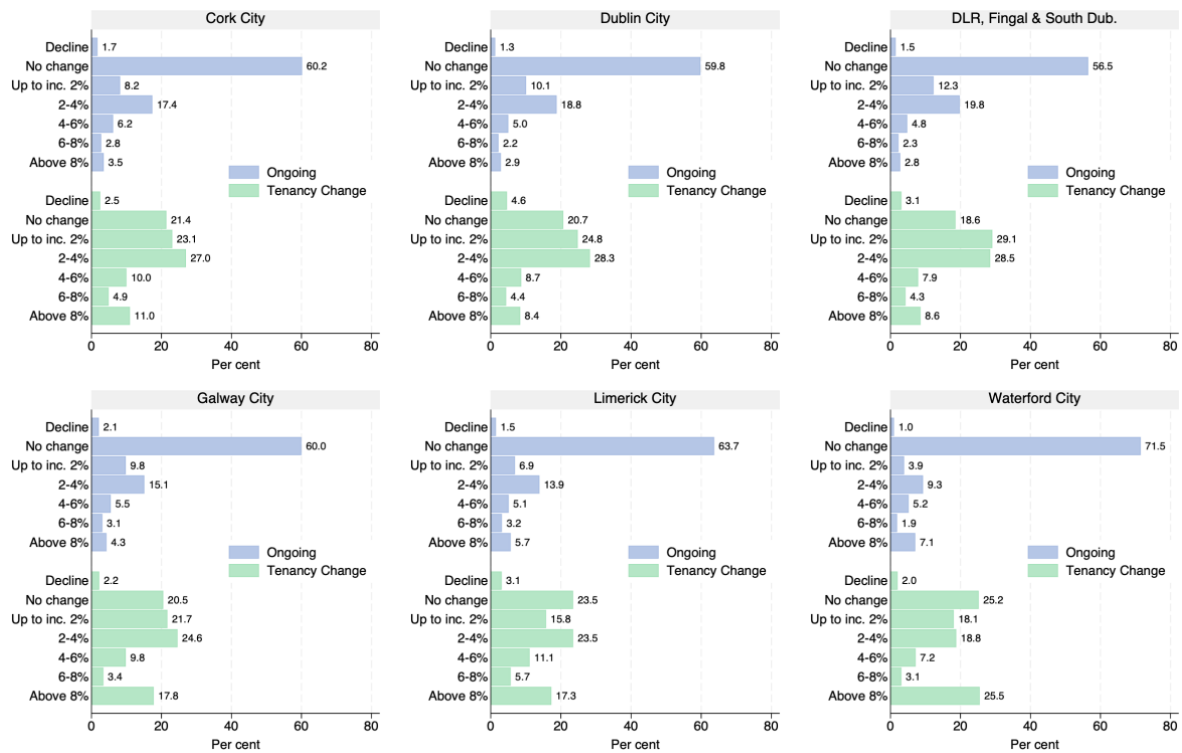
Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.
 Notes: Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

Focusing on Ireland’s urban areas, Figure 4.12 illustrates rental change distributions by city (plus Dublin’s other three local authorities) and tenancy type. Dublin, Cork and Galway cities have reasonably similar distributional patterns. In those three cities, 87–90 per cent of sitting tenants saw rental increases up to and including 4 per cent, with corresponding figures ranging from 69 (Galway) to 78.4 per cent (Dublin) for properties with a change in tenant. Galway City did see more large increases, though. This was particularly evident for properties that saw a change in tenants; 17.8 per cent saw a rise above 8 per cent, more than double the rate in Dublin City (8.4 per cent), for instance. For an area that has been an RPZ for a similar length of time²⁸ and saw a similar rate of properties seeing no change, this does suggest there may possibly be more of a non-compliance issue in Galway City relative to Dublin and Cork cities. This would require further examination to confirm whether or not this is the case. Both Limerick and Waterford²⁹ cities had a higher degree of properties that saw no change in the rent year on year, but also more that saw large changes. Indeed, 17.3 and 25.5 per cent of turnover properties in Limerick City and Waterford City respectively saw rents increase by more than 8 per cent. These findings appear to suggest there may be greater non-compliance issues in areas more recently designated as RPZs.

²⁸ The three local electoral areas that make up Galway city were designated RPZ areas in January 2017, shortly after the designation of all four Dublin local authorities and Cork City LA in December 2016.

²⁹ The three local electoral areas that make up Limerick City were designated RPZ areas in 2019, as were Waterford City East and Waterford City South. Tramore-Waterford City West was however only designated in August 2023.

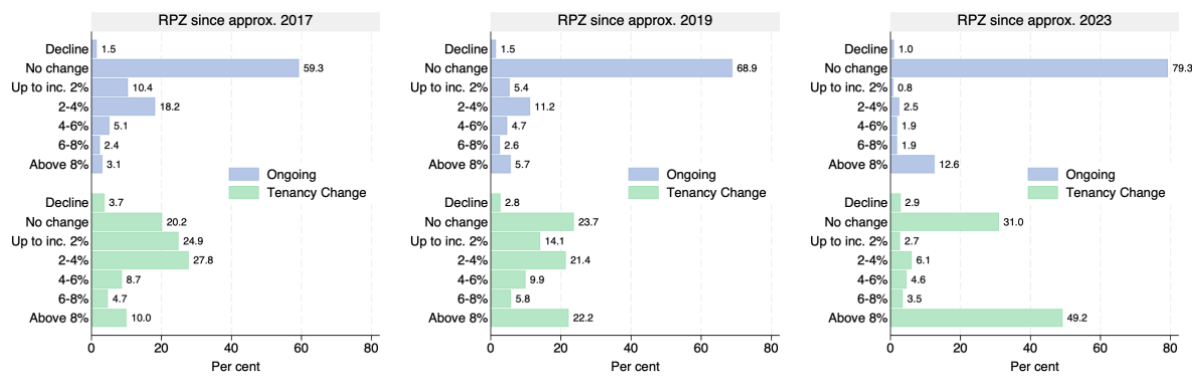
FIGURE 4.12 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY CITY AND TENANCY TYPE



Sources: Authors’ analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

To investigate this further, Figure 4.13 examines how rental price change patterns vary with the length of time an RPZ has been in place. Unsurprisingly, the longer an RPZ has been in place, the less commonplace large rent increases above 8 per cent become. This was the case for both ongoing tenancies and properties with tenancy changes. On the other hand, it appears that the proportion of tenancies with unchanged rent is decreasing with length of time RPZ restrictions have been in place. The patterns in Figure 4.13 are consistent with the evidence presented in section 4.2 showing that RPZ areas had a higher proportion of large rent increases – but also a lower proportion of properties seeing no change in rents – than did non-RPZ areas. It is unsurprising that RPZs only designated as such since the second half of 2023 see such high rates of large increases (above 8 per cent), because designation occurs in areas where rents are high and rising rapidly. These are areas we exclude elsewhere from our RPZ groupings as they were only RPZs towards the end of our period of analysis Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

FIGURE 4.13 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY HOW LONG AN RPZ AND TENANCY TYPE

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: RPZ since approx. 2017 includes any areas designated as RPZs from the outset in December 2016 or throughout 2017. RPZ since approx. 2019 includes areas designated in 2019 or 2020. RPZ since approx. 2023 includes all areas designated in the second half of 2023³⁰. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

Finally, we examine whether different types of landlords differ in their pricing behaviour. We can distinguish between individual versus company landlords. Note in this dataset the distinction is based on whether the landlord registers with a PPS number (individual) or a CRO number (company). The term company landlord will therefore include, but is not limited to, large institutional landlords whose aims are typically to maximise investment returns. Company landlords may also include smaller outfits with multiple properties.

First, it is important to establish how common company landlords are in different areas (Table 4.1). Company landlords are clearly much more prevalent in County Dublin than in other areas – 34.6 per cent of all paired observations in County Dublin were rented out by company landlords, compared to just 14.3 per cent in other RPZs and 11.1 in non-RPZ areas³¹. Company landlords were also more common amongst properties that saw a tenancy change (27.6 per cent nationally) than those with ongoing tenancies (21.7 per cent nationally), suggesting a higher turnover rate amongst properties rented out by corporate landlords. It could also be the case that company landlords are more likely to complete their annual registrations each year, making them more likely to appear in our sample. However, in Chapter 3, we showed that the shares of company landlords were similar in both our sample and the sample of registrations only seen once (see Table 3.2).

County Dublin offers arguably the most reliable insight of the three areas into the differences in rental price increases by landlord type given the substantial sample sizes for each combination of tenancy and landlord type. For both ongoing and tenancy changes, properties rented out by individual landlords were around

³⁰ See www.rtb.ie/registration-and-compliance/setting-and-reviewing-rent/guide-to-rent-pressure-zones#:~:text=Guide%20to%20Rent%20Pressure%20Zones.%20This%20page%20will%20provide%20information for the full list of RPZ designations by date.

³¹ This is consistent with the picture of institutional investment in Irish housing outlined by Daly (2023), namely that it is Dublin-centric. However, it is important to keep in mind that the definition of company landlord in the RTB dataset will capture more than just large institutional investors.

1.2 times as likely to see no change in price from one year to the next than the corresponding tenancy type in properties operated by company landlords (Figure 4.14). Those renting from individual landlords were also relatively more likely (approximately 1.7 times and 2.4 times as likely for ongoing and changed tenancies respectively) than those renting from company landlords to see larger changes above 4 per cent. In contrast, company landlords were more likely (around 1.6 times and 1.5 as likely for ongoing tenancies and changed tenancies respectively) to apply more moderate price increases of 0–4 per cent from one year to the next than were individual landlords. In all areas, for both ongoing and changed tenancies, a smaller proportion of rent increases fall into the ‘above 8 per cent’ category where there is a company landlord compared to where the landlord is an individual. It is not clear whether company landlords are generally more compliant with RPZ rules – this pattern emerges even in non-RPZ areas plus, as mentioned previously, we cannot ascertain non-compliance from the data in our sample. As the numbers of company landlords are fairly small outside of Dublin (see Table 4.1), the charts for other RPZs and non-RPZ areas in Figure 4.14 should be interpreted with caution.

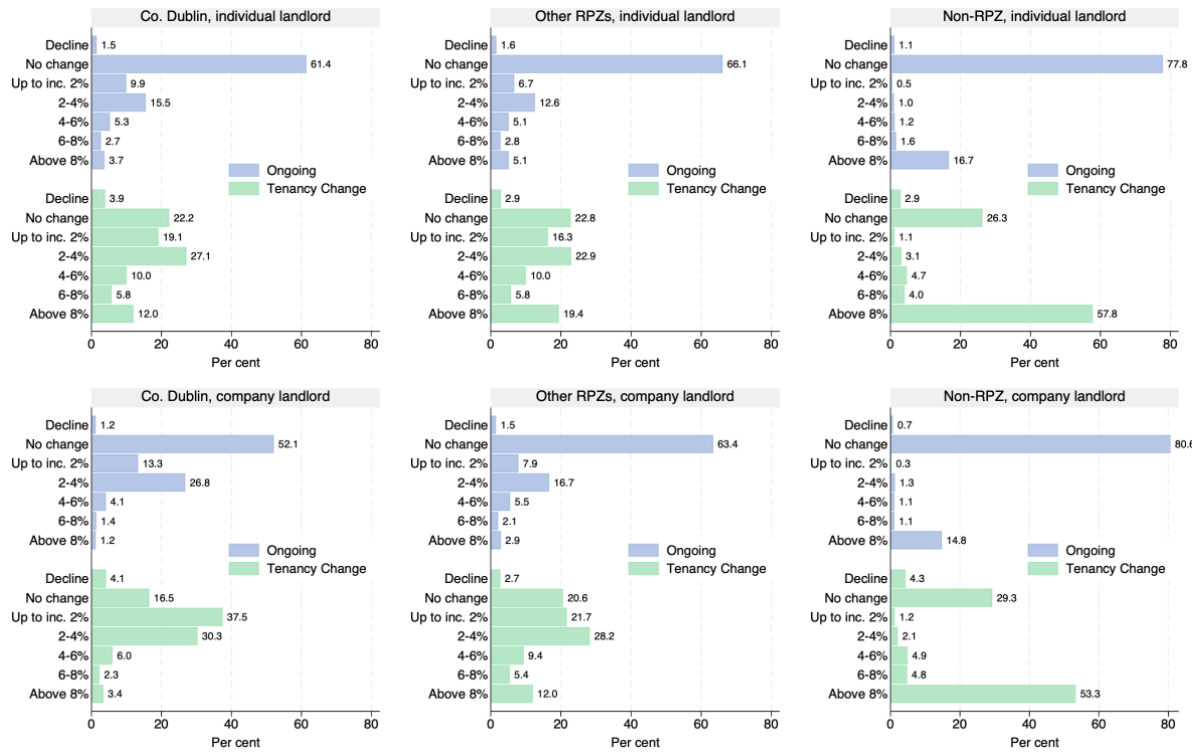
TABLE 4.1 SHARE OF PAIRED OBSERVATIONS BY LANDLORD TYPE, RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE

RPZ group	Tenancy type	% Company landlord
Co. Dublin	Ongoing tenancies	33.3
	Tenancy change	40.6
	Total	34.6
Other RPZs	Ongoing tenancies	14.1
	Tenancy change	15.7
	Total	14.3
Non-RPZ	Ongoing tenancies	10.5
	Tenancy change	14.7
	Total	11.1
Total	Ongoing tenancies	21.7
	Tenancy change	27.6
	Total	22.6

Source: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Note: Table split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).

FIGURE 4.14 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS BY RPZ STATUS, TENANCY TYPE AND LANDLORD TYPE



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Graph split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). As the numbers of company landlords are fairly small outside of Dublin (see Table 4.1), these charts for other RPZs and non-RPZ areas should be interpreted with caution.

CHAPTER 5

Conclusion

To improve our understanding of rental market inflation and landlord pricing behaviour in Ireland, for the first time, this report has provided a detailed examination of Irish rental price changes at the property level. To do so, we have utilised a new, large data sample from the Residential Tenancies Board (RTB) administrative tenancy registers to construct a property level dataset that tracks individual rental properties over time, both during ongoing tenancies and between one tenancy and the next. This has been possible following the introduction of the annual tenancy registration requirement in April 2022. Using a large sample of 182,250 matched pairs of properties over the period Q2 2022–Q1 2024, we have analysed how rental price growth varies across geographic areas, by Rent Pressure Zone (RPZ) status and within versus between tenancies. It is important to reiterate that while this report can identify properties which saw rent increases above 2 per cent in this period, our research cannot identify whether these are non-compliant with RPZ regulations.

A number of key findings emerge from our analysis. Property level rent increases over this period were moderate overall, with rents increasing annually by 2.3–2.7 per cent on average nationally depending on the quarter. This finding is driven in large part by a high degree of price stickiness; around three in five properties nationally saw no change in rent from one year to the next.

Average property level rental growth rates were clearly lower in RPZs versus non-RPZ areas over this period. Note as this is descriptive analysis, we cannot make definitive causal statements. However, these findings are consistent with previous work that found lower rental inflation in RPZ versus non-RPZ areas in the periods immediately after the introduction of the measures (O’Toole et al., 2021; Coffey et al., 2022). For ongoing tenancies, average annual rental inflation ranged from 1.3–1.5 per cent in Dublin, 1.5–1.7 per cent in other RPZs, up to 3.5–4 per cent in non-RPZs depending on the quarter. Landlords are more likely to raise the rent between tenancies. For properties that saw a change in tenants, average annual rental inflation ranged from 2.8–3.2 per cent in Dublin, 5.1–6.2 per cent in other RPZs, up to 14–16.4 per cent in non-RPZs depending on the quarter.

Looking at the distribution of rental price changes, properties in non-RPZs were more likely than those in RPZ areas to see no change in rent from one year to the next. However, those properties that did see an increase in rent were much more likely to observe large rises in the rent compared to properties in RPZ areas, particularly where there was a change in tenants. In contrast, those in RPZs were more likely to see more moderate changes year on year. There is evidence of sizeable numbers of rent increases in and around 2 per cent in RPZs. Many of these increases are fractionally above 2 per cent, particularly in Dublin. This may occur where landlords approximate a 2 per cent rise and round to the nearest number or round figure, or where the rent was increased after slightly more than a year

meaning the allowable increase was fractionally above 2 per cent. It must be noted this report does not provide an evaluation of the success or otherwise of Rent Pressure Zone measures. Over and above price effects, rent control measures can have impacts on the quality and quantity of housing supply, investment in the sector and mobility. All of these aspects are critically important to the overall long-term impact of the measures but are outside the scope of this report.

While average property level rental inflation rates were clearly lower in RPZs relative to non-RPZ areas, there is evidence that some properties in RPZs did see a large price rise over our sample period. This was more the case for properties that saw a change in tenants and particularly in more recently designated RPZ areas, i.e. outside of Dublin and the longer established RPZs (Cork and Galway cities and much of the Greater Dublin Area). Observing a rent increase above 2 per cent across a single two-year period does not necessarily indicate any non-compliance with RPZ regulations. Given the high shares of properties that saw no change in the rent from one year to the next, it is likely that some of these larger rental increases reflect price rises being applied cumulatively on a less frequent basis rather than every year. Further investigation is required to distinguish between allowable accumulated rent rises versus non-compliance issues. Differences in rental inflation rates are evident across RPZ areas, with lower rates in Dublin and other longer established RPZs and a higher incidence of large price rises in other RPZ areas. These findings suggest compliance with RPZ regulations may be lower in more recently designated areas. Further investigation is required to determine whether this is indeed the case or not.

Our findings in this report show rental growth for ongoing tenancies at the property level was lower than the market-wide rental price growth indicated by the Existing Tenancies Rent Index over this period. This finding highlights the importance of using the appropriate measure for the question in hand. The RTB/ESRI Existing Tenancies Rent Index provides the best and most comprehensive picture of (standardised) average rent levels for ongoing tenancies in each quarter as it uses the full sample of annual registrations made each quarter. It provides a useful and timely overview of aggregate, market-wide price levels and broad trends over time and from one area to another. However, it is designed to capture churn in the market and the sample of properties changes each period which will affect year-on-year changes, even after the standardisation process. To understand how individual property rents have changed over time and distributional analysis of how many properties see different levels of rental inflation instead requires property level analysis. This can remove the influence of market churn and changing samples that are a feature of these market-wide Rent Index indicators, to instead provide complementary insights for policymakers into how rental prices have changed at the individual property level.

This study has a number of limitations and caveats that must be kept in mind. The annual registrations data used in this report are from the first two full years of data collection. Only properties that were registered at least twice in the sample period could be included in the rental inflation analysis. Our sample period includes the

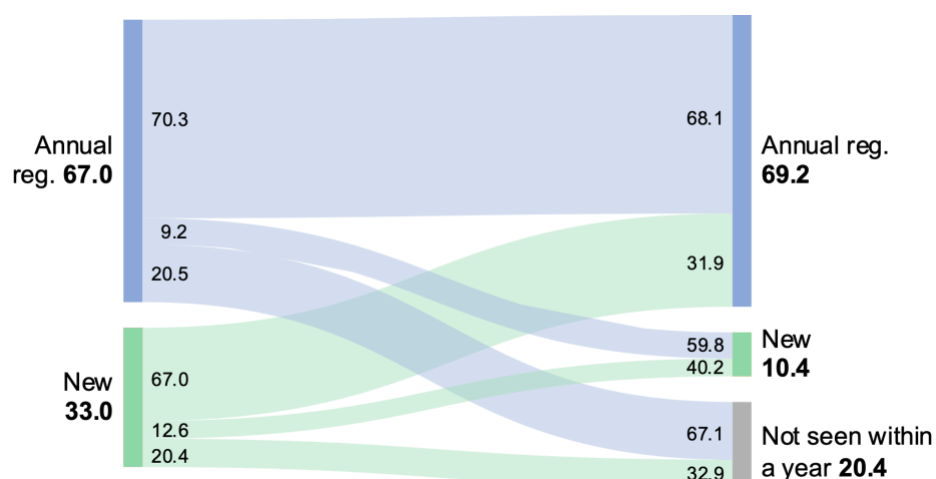
initial months of data collection during which familiarity with the newly introduced annual registration requirement was lower. Second, we are only able to measure how rents changed across a specific two-year period. As there may be legitimate reasons for any growth greater than 2 per cent seen for properties in RPZ areas between any two particular years – notably if the rent had not previously been changed for several years – we are not able to identify whether a property is compliant with RPZ regulations. Over time, the continued collection of such granular property level information on a consistent basis will enable a richer picture of the sector to be built up, with which to inform policymaking. It is also important to be cognisant of the broader economic circumstances when interpreting the findings in this report. The period Q2 2022–Q1 2024 was characterised by high levels of inflation and persistent increases in interest rates. Findings may therefore differ if the analysis were to be repeated in future under a different set of economic circumstances.

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APPENDIX

FIGURE A.1 TENANCY TYPE TRANSITIONS FROM ONE YEAR TO THE NEXT – ALL QUARTERS POOLED



Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: These transition flows take all registrations made in the first period (left hand side) and track how many of those properties have been re-registered within the subsequent year and if so, what tenancy type they are. This chart tracks properties from one year to the next and includes all registrations in our sample pooled together, i.e. those that started in Q2 2022, Q3 2022, Q4 2022 and Q1 2024 pooled together as opposed to presented separately as in Figure 3.4. The chart aims to highlight the significant flows between the new and ongoing segments of the market, as well as the degree of missed/late re-registration. Annual registrations are for ongoing tenancies of at least one year in duration. New tenancies in the first period include newly commenced tenancies in existing rental properties and in new rental properties to the market. Note, by definition, any new tenancies observed in the second period must be newly commenced tenancies in existing rental properties as we observed these properties one year earlier.

TABLE A.1 TENANCY TYPE TRANSITIONS FROM ONE YEAR TO THE NEXT – BY QUARTER

Tenancy type change	2022Q2– 2023Q2 (%)	2022Q3– 2023Q3 (%)	2022Q4– 2023Q4 (%)	2023Q1– 2024Q1 (%)	Entire sample (%)
Ongoing – Ongoing	45.3	46.7	48.7	47.5	47.1
Ongoing – New	5.1	6.3	6.3	6.8	6.2
Ongoing – Not seen	13.1	12.3	13.3	16.3	13.7
New – Ongoing	25	22.7	21.7	19.5	22.1
New – New	3.8	5.3	3.9	3.4	4.2
New – Not seen	7.7	6.8	6.2	6.4	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

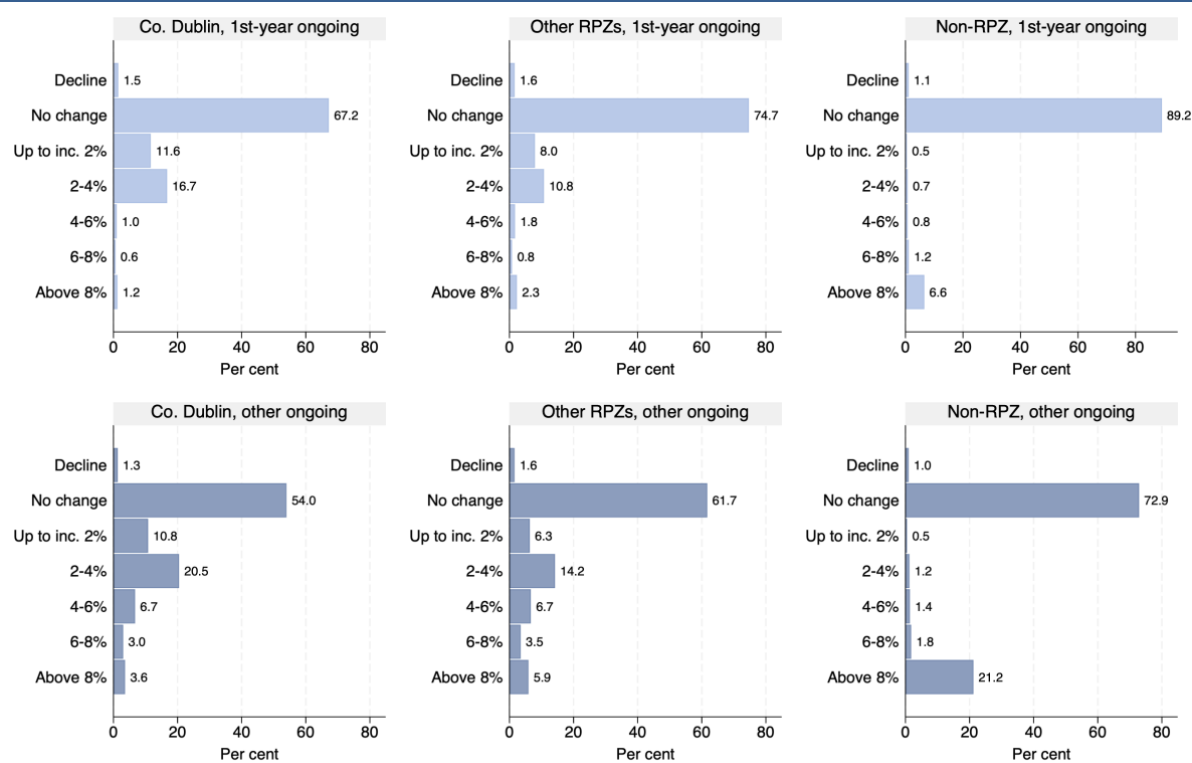
Note: Annual registrations are for ongoing tenancies of at least one year in duration. New tenancies include newly commenced tenancies in existing rental properties and in new rental properties to the market. Not seen means not seen within one year subsequently. These transition flows take all registrations made in the first period and track how many of those tenancies have been re-registered within the subsequent year and if so, what tenancy type they are.

TABLE A.2 SUMMARY OF RENT CHANGES BY RPZ STATUS AND TENANCY TYPE

RPZ Group	Tenancy type	Share zero	Mean change	P25	P50 (Median)	P75
Co. Dublin	Ongoing	58.3	1.4	0	0	2.0
	Tenancy Change	19.9	3.1	0.3	2.0	3.6
	Total	51.6	1.7	0	0	2.1
Other RPZs	Ongoing	65.8	1.6	0	0	2.0
	Tenancy Change	22.4	5.3	0	2.4	5.8
	Total	58.9	2.2	0	0	2.3
Non-RPZ	Ongoing	78.1	3.8	0	0	0
	Tenancy Change	26.8	15.2	0	11.1	25.0
	Total	71.0	5.4	0	0	5.2

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Split by RPZ status in 2022. Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy Change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new). P(25) is the 25th percentile and p(75) is the 75th percentile.

FIGURE A.2 YEAR-ON-YEAR CHANGE IN RENT BANDS – FIRST YEAR VERSUS LONGER TERM TENANCIES

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: First year ongoing refers to tenancies that were new tenancies in the first period (new-ongoing) i.e. only one year in duration versus 'other ongoing' that were ongoing tenancies in both periods (ongoing-ongoing) i.e. longer-term tenancies of more than one year in duration.

TABLE A.3 SUMMARY OF RENT CHANGES BY COUNTY/CITY AND TENANCY TYPE

	Ongoing				Tenancy Change		
County/city	Share zero	Mean change	Median		Share zero	Mean change	Median
Carlow	60.3	2.5	0		20.0	7.4	2.1
Cavan	77.8	4.7	0		23.6	17.2	12.0
Clare	74.1	4.1	0		26.7	15.7	13.3
Cork	66.6	1.6	0		22.8	5.0	2.3
Donegal	77.2	4.5	0		18.5	18.7	15.8
Dublin	58.3	1.4	0		19.8	3.1	2.0
Galway	67.1	2.3	0		24.0	7.2	2.5
Kerry	71.3	3.8	0		33.6	13.1	8.3
Kildare	68.4	1.4	0		20.2	5.3	2.7
Kilkenny	74.5	1.8	0		24.6	7.7	3.6
Laois	72.1	2.0	0		20.9	8.4	3.8
Leitrim	79.4	3.7	0		17.5	18.3	20.0
Limerick	67.2	2.0	0		24.7	6.4	2.5
Longford	76.1	5.1	0		23.5	19.3	16.0
Louth	67.7	1.5	0		24.6	5.5	2.6
Mayo	76.4	4.5	0		27.7	14.8	10.0
Meath	69.7	1.3	0		23.9	5.5	3.0
Monaghan	83.5	2.7	0		21.5	15.4	11.8
Offaly	74.5	3.1	0		23.9	10.4	4.4
Roscommon	77.7	4.4	0		29.4	14.9	10.0
Sligo	73.3	2.7	0		29.2	10.5	4.0
Tipperary	77.9	3.6	0		23.4	14.9	11.5
Waterford	74.0	2.1	0		26.4	8.2	2.4
Westmeath	67.8	2.0	0		28.3	7.6	2.8
Wexford	77.0	3.1	0		23.8	15.1	10.0
Wicklow	69.8	1.4	0		21.7	5.9	3.0
Cork City	60.2	1.5	0		21.4	3.9	2.1
DLR, Fingal and South Dublin	56.5	1.4	0		18.6	3.2	2.0
Dublin City	59.8	1.4	0		20.7	3.1	2.0
Galway City	60.0	1.7	0		20.5	5.1	2.1
Limerick City	63.7	1.8	0		23.5	5.3	2.4
Waterford City	71.5	2.0	0		25.2	7.6	2.1
Ireland Total	65.3	2.0	0		22.0	6.1	2.3

Sources: Authors' analysis of RTB tenancy level microdata Q2 2022–Q1 2024.

Notes: Ongoing refers to properties with the same tenant(s) in both years (i.e. ongoing: ongoing or new: ongoing). Tenancy Change refers to properties that saw a change in tenants (i.e. ongoing: new or new: new).