

51 million young EU adults lived with their parent(s) in 2008

In 2008, approximately 46% of young adults aged 18-34 in the European Union still lived with at least one of their parents (Figure 1). The disparities across the EU have been examined so as to shed new light on the situation of young people in our societies. This topic is of particular relevance due to increasing focus of EU policies on young people and their participation in the labour market.

An interesting and relatively consistent pattern emerges. In northern countries, a low share of young adults live with their parent(s), while in southern countries, as well as in some new Member States, the share is three to four times higher. Fewer women than men tend to live with their parent(s), a gap of 12 percentage points, partly because they are more likely to be in a consensual union with a partner (Figure 2).

The length of time spent in education is a key factor affecting young adults' decision to live longer with their parent(s). This is reflected particularly among the younger age group (18-24) a high share of whom, 55%, were still in education (Figure 6).

In the EU as a whole, 13% of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) were at risk of

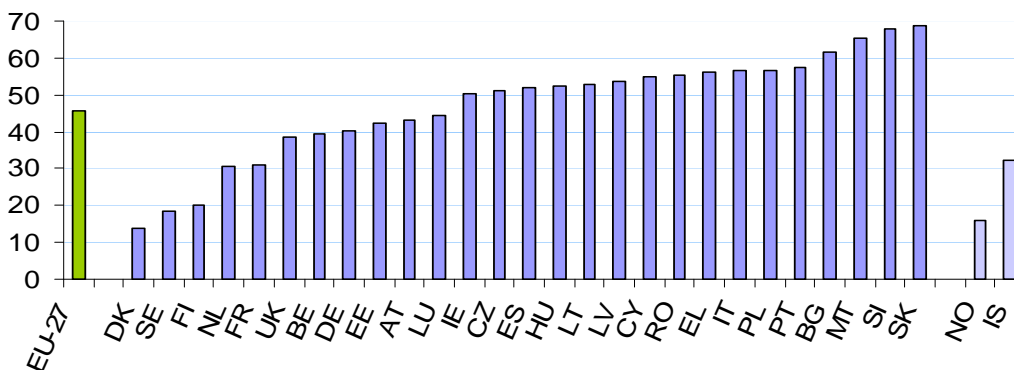
poverty. This figure ranged from 4% up to 20% across Europe (Figure 8).

Among the young adults in employment while living in their parental home, 36% of them held a temporary work contract (Figure 10). The unemployment rate for young adults living with their parent(s), was around 9% on average, though it was higher in Greece, Italy, Sweden and Ireland (Figure 11).

All figures are based on data from EU-SILC (Statistics on Income and Living Conditions).

In 2008, about 51 million young adults (45.6%), i.e. 33 million persons aged 18-24 and 17.5 million people aged 25-34, lived in the same dwelling as their parent(s) for some reason. Countries can be grouped into clusters, with, on the one hand, the northern Members States, where young adults tend to leave the parental home earlier, and on the other hand, a group of countries composed of most southern countries, as well as some new Member States, where young adults tend to stay longer with their parent(s). In practice, the share of young adults living with their parent(s) varies from 20% or less in Denmark, Sweden and Finland to 60% or more in Bulgaria, Malta, Slovenia and Slovakia. It exceeds 50% in 16 Member States.

Figure 1: Share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

In a Eurobarometer survey published in 2001¹, material difficulties were mentioned as the main obstacle facing young people in gaining their independence. These material difficulties reflect differences in the housing market, the labour market, or the conditions under which the young people study.

Going away to study or to work are obviously key factors in leaving home for this age group. Due to the limited number of cities with universities or vocational schools, young people from rural areas or mid-sized cities often need to move to urban areas not just to continue their education, but also to look for better job opportunities.

Another explanation as to why some leave and some not may be due to the fact that some countries offer better opportunities than others to young adults seeking affordable accommodation,

through subsidies to cover rent or education expenses.

Other factors explaining differences among countries may be found in cultural aspects such as the relative importance given to the nuclear family, or different lifestyle arrangements enabling children to be more independent. These are, however, by definition difficult to assess.

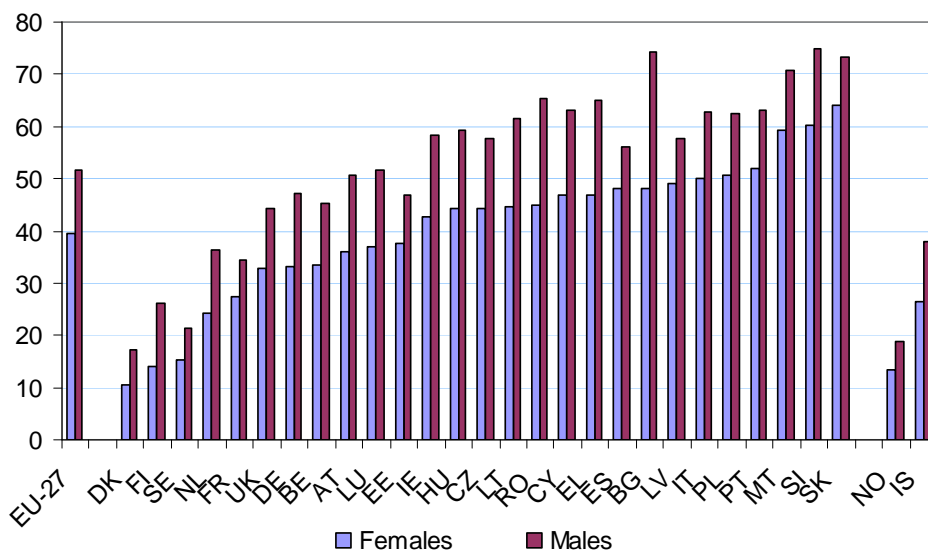
¹ Eurobarometer 151, 2001: 67% of young adults aged 15-24 quoted material difficulties as the main reason not to leave their family home. Such difficulties were the main reason in all countries except Luxembourg and the Netherlands.

More young men than young women live with their parent(s)

In all countries, fewer young women tend to live with their parent(s) than young men of the same age. At EU level, the gap was about 12 percentage points (pp) in 2008, with 39.4% for women and 51.6% for men. In relative terms, the gap is the

most pronounced in Finland, Denmark, Bulgaria and the Netherlands, where the proportion of young men living at home exceeds the proportion of young women by more than half of its value.

Figure 2: Share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) by gender (%), 2008

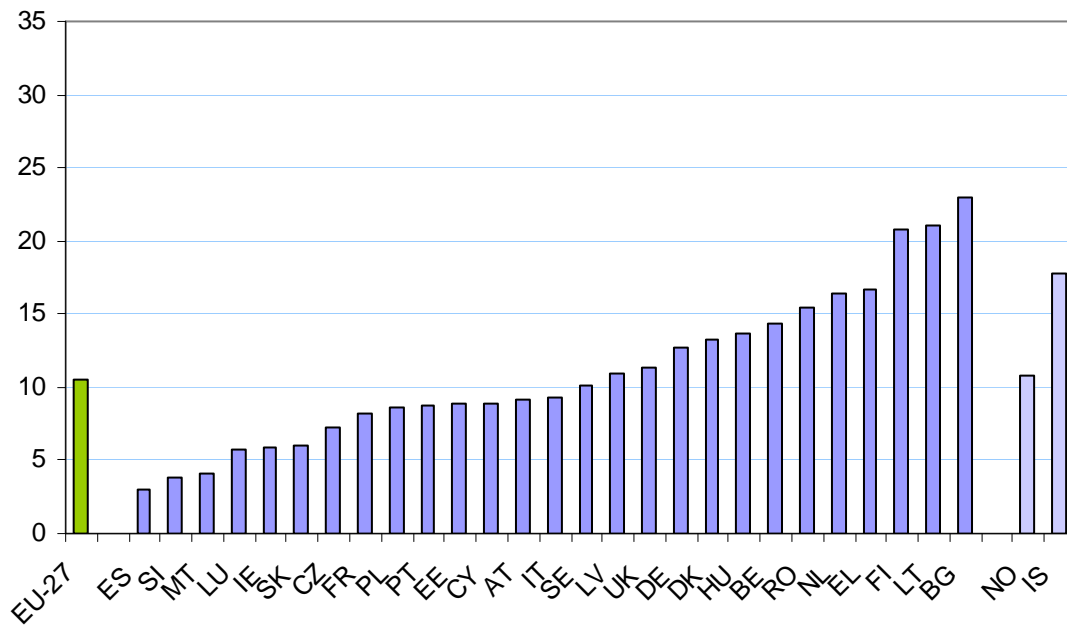


Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

Surprisingly, the difference between women and men in the share of young adults living with their parent(s) was broadly similar at the European level across the two age subgroups. In the age group 18-24, about 76% of young adults still lived with their parent(s) (71% of women, 81.5% of men). The gap

between men and women was widest in Bulgaria (23pp), Lithuania and Finland (both 21pp), followed by Greece (17pp) and the Netherlands (16pp). It was narrowest in Spain (3pp), Slovenia and Malta (both 4pp of difference).

Figure 3: Gender gap in the share of young adults aged 18-24 living with their parent(s) (pp), 2008

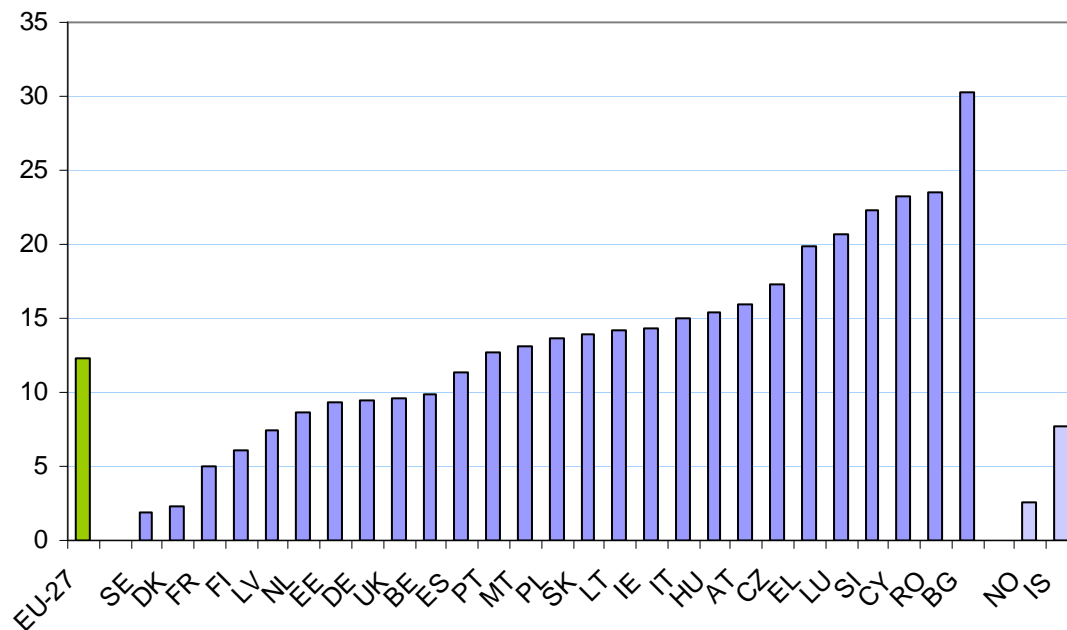


Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

Among young adults aged 25-34, about 26% still lived with their parent(s) (19.6% of women, 32% of men). The gender gap was below 10pp in 12 countries, i.e. indicating a relatively similar pattern

for men and women, but it exceeded 20pp in five countries: Luxembourg (21pp), Slovenia (22pp), Cyprus and Romania (both 23pp), and Bulgaria (30pp).

Figure 4: Gender gap in the share of young adults aged 25-34 living with their parent(s) (pp), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

Having a partner motivates young people to leave the parental home

A key factor driving the gender imbalance among young adults living with their parent(s) is being involved in a consensual union with a partner (with or without a legal basis). Women, on average, marry or move out with a partner earlier than men. Among the whole population of young adults (aged 18-34), in 2008, 48% of women but only 36% of men lived in a consensual union with a partner (see full results in Table 1).

Only a small share of the population of young adults living with their parent(s) was involved in a consensual union in the whole of the EU-27 (4.5%). This proportion ranged from less than 1% in Denmark, the Netherlands, Ireland and Luxembourg, to 8% and more in Lithuania, Latvia, and Poland. The highest percentages were recorded in Romania (17.8%) and Bulgaria (19.3%).

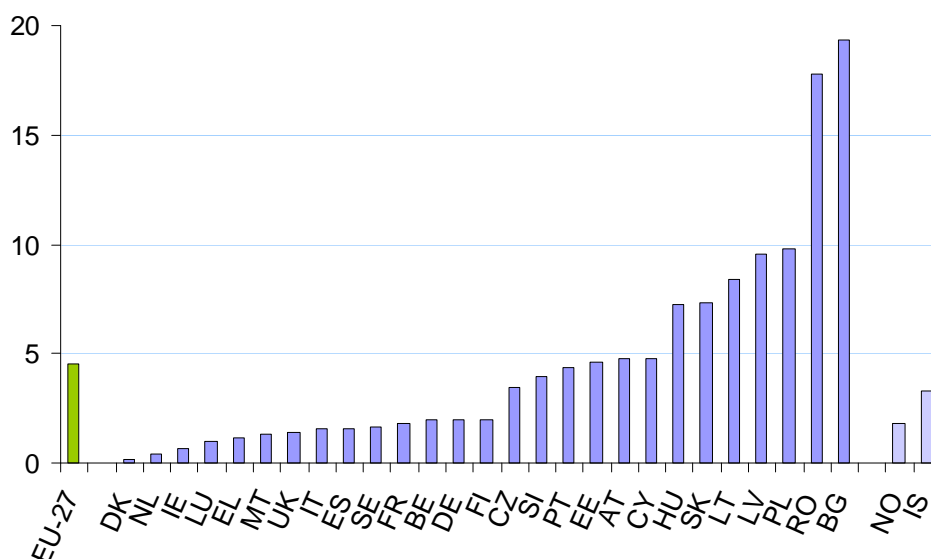
These disparities seem to largely result from cultural and/or economic differences, and they reveal that it is more common for young couples to stay at the parental home in some countries than in others.

Table 1: Share of young adults aged 18-34 living in a consensual union by gender (%), 2008

	Women	Men
EU-27	47.6	35.8
BE	49.5	38.2
BG	52.9	38.8
CZ	48.8	34.7
DK	53.0	41.8
DE	43.4	35.8
EE	48.1	39.5
IE	34.4	25.5
EL	40.2	20.8
ES	45.4	32.0
FR	55.3	44.6
IT	39.8	24.7
CY	46.5	32.5
LV	45.6	37.3
LT	45.3	36.2
LU	50.3	34.6
HU	49.3	36.1
MT	37.3	26.0
NL	45.1	34.5
AT	46.9	32.7
PL	48.7	37.2
PT	44.0	32.2
RO	57.3	42.1
SI	37.0	22.3
SK	37.4	27.1
FI	62.9	50.5
SE	61.4	48.2
UK	49.2	38.9
IS	54.0	41.6
NO	57.1	41.9

Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

Figure 5: Share of young adults aged 18-34 who live with their parent(s) while involved in a consensual union (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

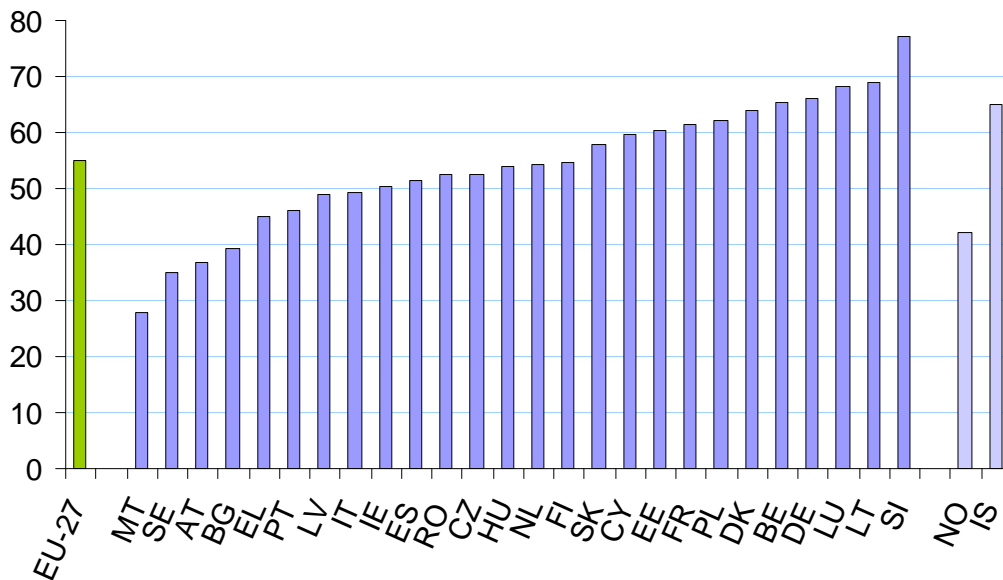
For younger adults, staying in education is the main reason to stay at home

Staying in education is an obvious reason for staying at the parental home, and it is the main reason for most young adults aged 18-24. Not surprisingly, there are substantial differences between the age groups 18-24 and 25-34. On average in the EU27, a majority (54.8%) of young adults aged 18-24 living with their parent(s) declared they were still in education, while this dropped to only 13.4% for those aged 25-34.

The share of young adults aged 18-24 living with their parent(s) and involved in education ranged from less than 40% in Malta (27.7%), Sweden (35%), Austria (36.8%), and Bulgaria (39.2%) to more than two-thirds in Luxembourg (68.1%), Lithuania (68.8%) and Slovenia (77%)¹.

¹ See methodological notes for some restrictions regarding in particular the household and household membership definitions.

Figure 6: Share of young adults aged 18-24 living with their parent(s) and still in education (%), 2008



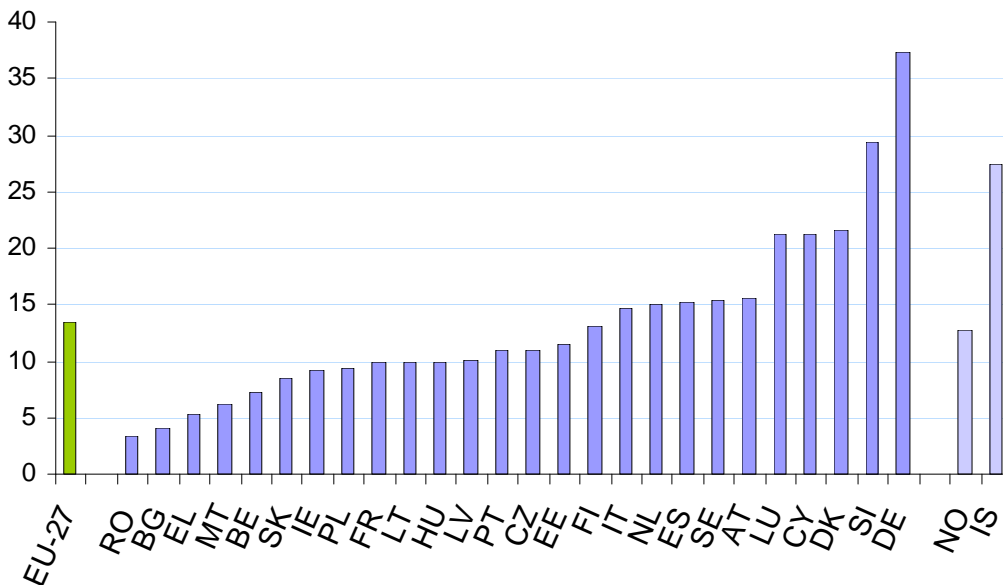
Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database.

NB: UK data are considered as unreliable due to item non-response higher than 20%.

The proportion of young adults aged 25-34 who declared they were still in education was much lower, and in most countries, it stood below the level of the country with the lowest value for the

population aged 18-24 (Malta). Exceptionally high values were recorded in Iceland (27.5%), Slovenia (29.3%) and Germany (37.4%).

Figure 7: Share of young adults aged 25-34 living with their parent(s) and still in education (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database.
NB: UK data are considered as unreliable due to item non-response higher than 20%.

Living with parent(s) can decrease the risk of poverty

Overall in the EU-27, 13.2% of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) were at risk of poverty, compared to 15.7% for the whole population in this age group, with some considerable variations across Europe.

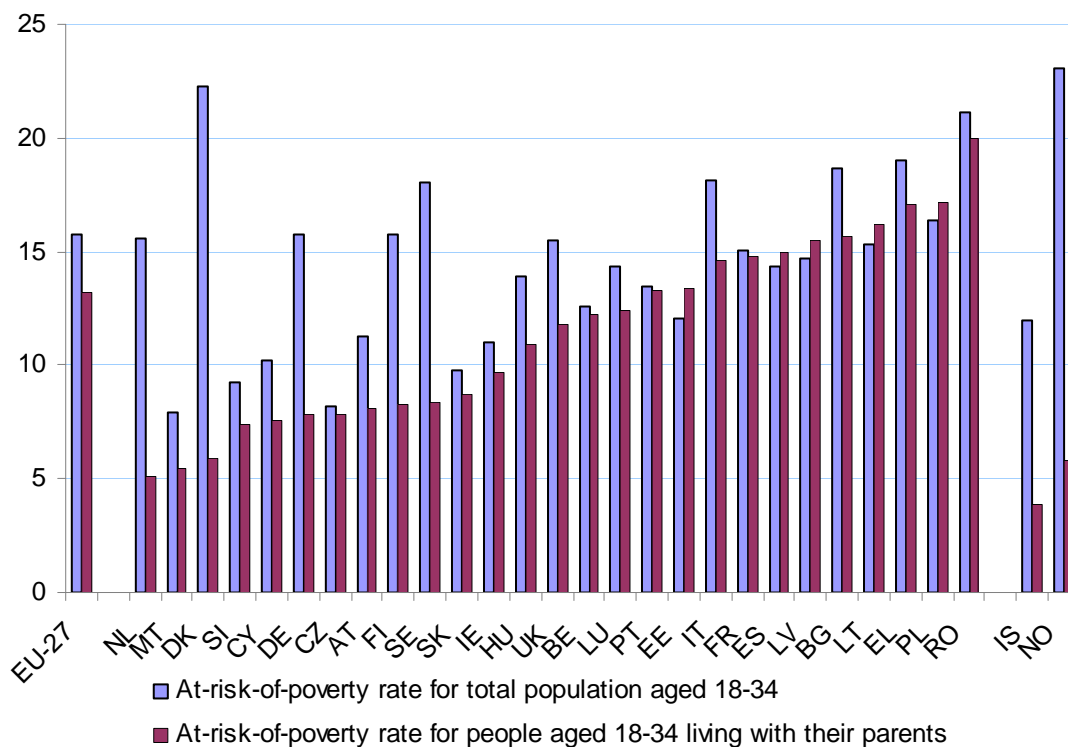
The risk of poverty for young adults living with their parent(s) ranged from about 4% in Iceland and 5% in both the Netherlands and Malta, to about 16% in Bulgaria and Lithuania, 17% in both Greece and Poland, reaching 20% in Romania.

These numbers, however, should be interpreted with caution, due to the disparities among countries in the proportion of young people who have left the parental home (as highlighted in Figure 1). Those who stay with their parent(s) are less likely to be at risk of poverty due to the fact that their

individualised income takes into account the income of their parent(s). This also explains the relatively high percentage of young adults at risk of poverty in some northern countries, such as Sweden (18%), Denmark (22%), or Norway (23%), which simultaneously have a high percentage of young people who have left the parental home.

In five Member States (Estonia, Spain, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland), the risk of poverty was on average equal or higher for young adults living with their parent(s) compared to those living on their own. This reflects situations where the fact of living with parent(s) does not protect young adults from being at risk of poverty.

Figure 8: At-risk-of-poverty rate for the whole population of young adults aged 18-34 and those living with their parent(s) (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database

Having a job does not always allow a young person to leave home

Access to employment with a stable situation is a key condition for developing an independent life and, in the case of young adults, to setting up their own household. However, not every job automatically leads to financial self-sufficiency.

In 2008, in EU-27, 51.1% of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) were working full- or part-time, 33.2% were identified as students and 9.5% as unemployed¹. The remaining 6.2% were classified as 'others' (e.g. permanently disabled and/or unfit to work, in compulsory military or community service, occupied with domestic tasks and care responsibilities).

This shows that most young adults living with their parent(s) had a job, particularly in Malta (75%), Austria and Bulgaria (both 60%). Nevertheless, they still lived with their parent(s). Reasons to postpone the decision to leave the parental home could be due to the fact that their current job could not provide them with enough financial resources

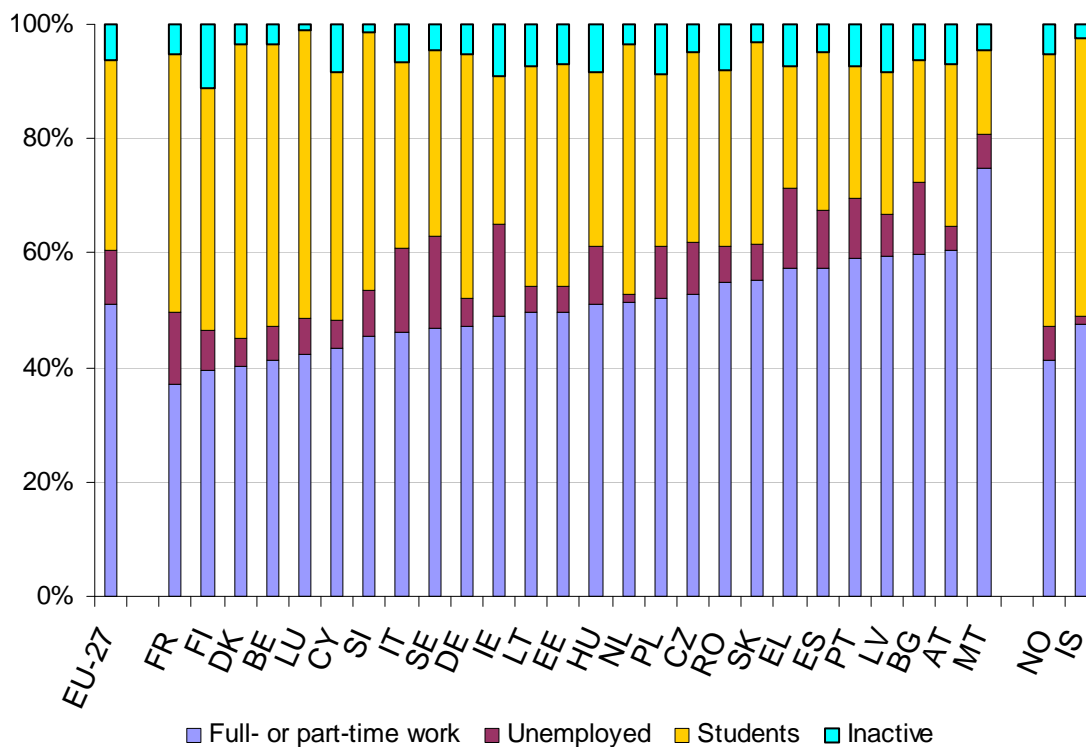
to be self-sufficient or for other, often more personal, reasons.

Other possible factors that could have an influence on young adults' decision to live with their parent(s) and which would require further analysis to determine their actual impact may be the limited availability of affordable housing and the lack of mobility of young adults.

This may be particularly relevant for those aged 18-34 who live in urban areas and do not need to move out of the parental home in order to find a job.

¹ See the description of the Self-defined economic status variable in the Methodological Notes.

Figure 9: Share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) by self-defined current economic status (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database.

NB: UK data are considered as unreliable due to item non-response higher than 20%.

Temporary contracts or unemployment contribute to later departure from the parental home

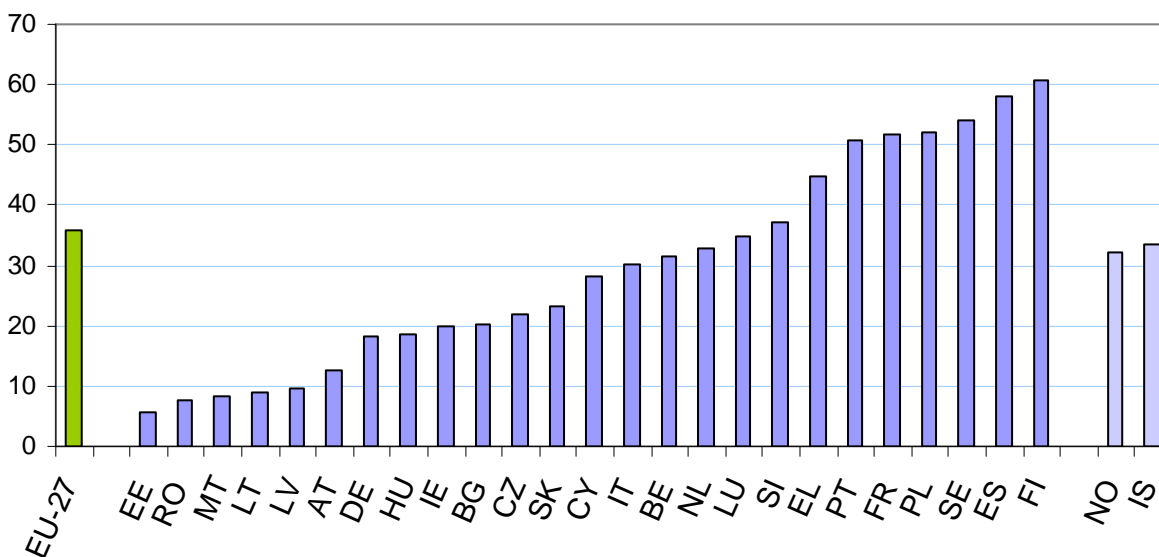
Among young adults aged 18-34 in employment and living with their parent(s), in 2008, 35.8% of them reported holding a work contract with a limited duration. More of these young people held temporary contracts than permanent contracts in six Member States, namely: Portugal, France, Poland, Sweden, Spain and Finland.

This high percentage may be a result of increasing flexibility in the labour markets in countries concerned. It may also be due to the prevalence of probationary contracts offered to young adults aged

18-34 at the beginning of their career. The lack of long-term job security may contribute to their later departure from the parental home.

The lowest share of young adults living with their parent(s) and having a temporary contract were found in Estonia, Romania, Malta, Lithuania and Latvia.

Figure 10: Share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) and having a temporary contract (%), 2008



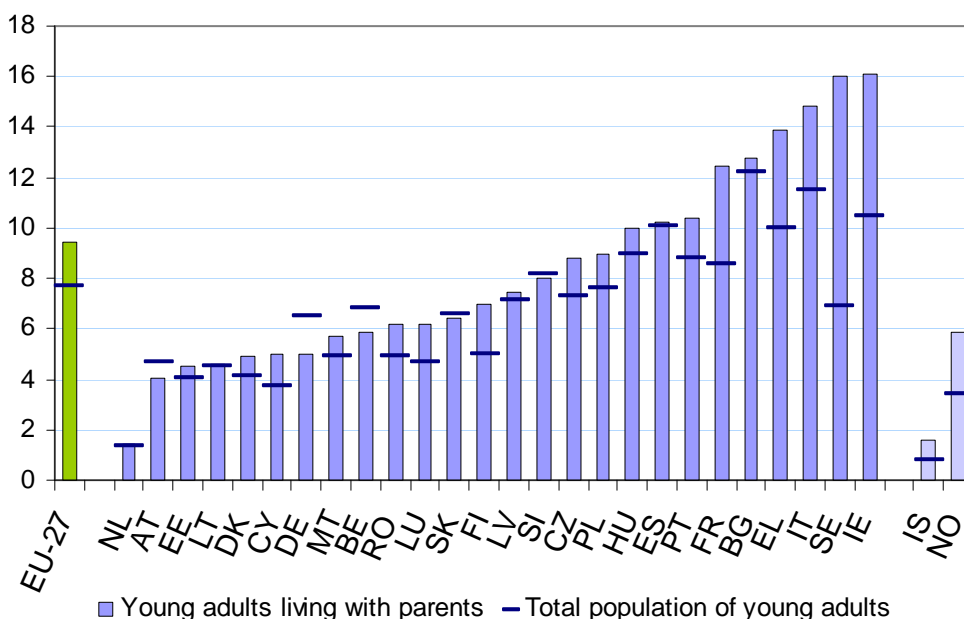
Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database.
NB: Data missing for DK and UK.

The share of young adults aged 18-34 living with their parent(s) and unemployed² remained below 10% in the EU-27 (9.5%) as well as in a majority of countries. The share of unemployed was highest

in Ireland and Sweden (both about 16%), Italy (15%), Greece (14%), Bulgaria (13%) and France (12%) and this is likely to be a factor contributing to the decision of young adults to stay longer in the parental home. In most countries, the share of those unemployed was higher among those living with their parent(s) than for the whole population, which illustrates the difficulty of leaving the parental home when unemployed.

² See the description of the Self-defined economic status variable in the Methodological Notes and in particular the restrictions vis-à-vis the ILO definitions.

Figure 11: Unemployment rate for the whole population of young adults aged 18-34 and those living with their parent(s) (%), 2008



Source: Eurostat calculations based on EU-SILC database.
NB: UK data are considered as unreliable due to item non-response higher than 20%.

METHODOLOGICAL NOTES

Background

The Europe Union Member States co-ordinate their policies for combating poverty and social exclusion on the basis of a process of policy exchanges and mutual learning known as the 'Open Method of Coordination'. Since 2006, three policy areas provide the framework for this process:

- Eradicating poverty and social exclusion
- Ensuring adequate and sustainable pensions
- Providing accessible, high quality and sustainable health and long-term care

The set of politically agreed outcome indicators plays a central role in monitoring the performance of Member States in promoting social inclusion. The purpose of these indicators is to allow the Member States and the European Commission to monitor national and EU progress towards key EU objectives in the area of social inclusion and of social protection, and to support mutual learning and identification of good (and bad) practices in terms of policies and institutional processes.

In order to provide underlying data for indicators, the EU-SILC (Community Statistics on Income and Living Conditions) instrument was implemented. The EU-SILC, organised under a Framework Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council ([N°1177/2003](#)), is now the reference source for statistics on income and living conditions and for common indicators for social inclusion in particular.

Data source

The EU-SILC instrument was launched in 2003 on the basis of a 'gentleman's agreement' in six Member States (Belgium, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Austria) as well as in Norway. From 2005 onwards, EU-SILC covered the then EU 25 Member States plus Norway and Iceland. Later on, Bulgaria and Turkey (2006), and then Romania and Switzerland (2007) launched EU-SILC.

Household and household membership definitions

In EU-SILC a private household is defined as a person living alone or a group of people who live together in the same private dwelling, pool income to a greater or lesser extent and share resources. The following persons must, if they share household expenses, be regarded as household members.

- persons usually resident, related to other members;
- persons usually resident, not related to other members;
- resident boarders, lodgers, tenants;
- visitors;
- live-in domestic servants, au-pairs;
- persons usually resident, but temporarily absent from the dwelling (for reasons of holiday travel, work, education or similar);
- children of the household being educated away from home;
- persons absent for long periods, but having household ties, such as persons working away from home;
- persons temporarily absent, but having household ties such as persons in hospital, in a nursing home, at boarding school or in another institution.

However, there are some conceptual and operational differences between countries in the definition of household and household membership. In particular, the treatment of children being educated away from home is not fully harmonised, and could have an impact on discrepancies between Member States in the percentage of young adults living with their parent(s).

Young adults

For the purposes of this study, the term 'young adults' is used to cover persons aged 18-34 who are in transition from a dependent childhood to independent adulthood. However, there is no clear-cut definition of youth or young adult, mainly because it is impossible to select a definitive factor to characterise the transition to adulthood. Due to the increase in the length of studies and trend towards later departure from parental home, either or both of which may take a young person over the age of 30, an arbitrary choice was made to set the upper age limit to 34.

The population of young adults living with their parent(s) comprises persons who replied 'yes' to the question: 'Do you live with your parent(s)?' and is assessed on the basis of the filled variables Father ID (RB220) and/or Mother ID (RB230). These variables enable analysis of the household composition. RB220 and RB230 also include step/adoptive/foster father or mother.

Consequently, this study excludes young people who live with other relatives (e.g. grandparent(s), uncle or aunt).

Risk of poverty

The at-risk-of-poverty rate relies on a relative income definition and counts as poor individuals those living in households where equivalised disposable income is below the threshold of 60% of the national equivalised median income. Given the nature of the retained threshold, and the fact that having an income below this threshold is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of having a low standard of living, this indicator is referred to as a measure of *poverty risk*.

Variables

A consensual union (PB200) means that both partners live in the same household, which for a young couple living with parent(s) means that they live with the parent(s) of one of the pair. Following EU-SILC definition, a consensual union with a legal basis means that the partners are spouse/husband or registered partners. A consensual union without a legal basis reflects the situation of people who are considered as "de facto" partners.

Current educational activity (PE010) indicates whether the person is currently following an educational programme on a full- or part-time attendance basis or by correspondence course. This

variable only covers the regular education system (formal education, including schools, colleges and universities).

Self-defined current economic status (PL030) captures the person's own perception of his/her main activity at present. It therefore differs from the ILO concept to the extent that people's own perception of their status differs from the strict ILO definitions. In principle, it is determined on the basis of the activity on which they spend most time, but no criteria have been specified explicitly.

EU-average

EU poverty rates are computed on the basis of micro data using national poverty thresholds. EU aggregates appear as the population-weighted averages of national indicators.

Abbreviations

EU-27 Member States: Belgium (BE), Bulgaria (BG), the Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Germany (DE), Estonia (EE), Ireland (IE), Greece (EL), Spain (ES), France (FR), Italy (IT), Cyprus (CY), Latvia (LV), Lithuania (LT), Luxembourg (LU), Hungary (HU), Malta (MT), the Netherlands (NL), Austria (AT), Poland (PL), Portugal (PT), Romania (RO), Slovenia (SI), Slovakia (SK), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE) and the United Kingdom (UK). Iceland (IS) and Norway (NO) are also referred to in this publication.

Further information

Eurostat Website: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Data on "Income, Social Inclusion and Living conditions:"

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/data/database

More information about "Income, Social Inclusion and Living conditions:"

http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/introduction

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Manuscript completed on: 28.09.2010

Data extracted on: 15.01.2010

ISSN 1977-0316

Catalogue number: KS-SF-10-050-EN-N

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