

Glossary: Under-occupied dwelling

Statistics Explained

An **under-occupied dwelling** is a [dwelling](#) deemed to be too large for the needs of the [household](#) living in it, in terms of excess [rooms](#) and more specifically bedrooms. **Under-occupation** is opposed to a situation of [overcrowding](#) . The classic cause of under-occupation is older individuals or couples remaining in their home after their children have grown up and left; family breakdown can also result in under-occupation.

For statistical purposes, a dwelling is defined as under-occupied if the household living in it has at its disposal *more* than the minimum number of rooms considered adequate, and equal to:

- one room for the household;
- one room per couple in the household;
- one room for each single person aged 18 or more;
- one room per pair of single people of the same gender between 12 and 17 years of age;
- one room for each single person between 12 and 17 years of age and not included in the previous category;
- one room per pair of children under 12 years of age.

Related concepts

- [Dwelling](#)
- [Household](#)
- [Room](#)

Statistical data

- [Living conditions in Europe - housing](#)
- Database table:

[Share of people living in under-occupied dwellings by age, sex and poverty status - Total population \(ilc_lvho50a\)](#)

Source

- [The importance of housing systems in safeguarding social cohesion in Europe](#) , August 2004, footnote 35 on p. 67
- [Under-occupation of social housing: Housing Benefit entitlement](#) House of Commons Library, UK, 3 June 2014, p. 1