

Living conditions in Europe - income distribution and income inequality

Statistics Explained

*Data extracted in November 2025.
Planned article update: November 2026.*

Highlights

In 2024, the median annual equivalised disposable income was 21 245 PPS per inhabitant in the EU; over one quarter of it (5 847 PPS) was received as social transfers from governments (e.g. pensions, social benefits, etc.).

The at-risk-of-poverty rate anchored to 2019 decreased to 14.1% in 2024, down from 16.5% in 2019.

In 2024, the Gini coefficient for the EU was 29.4, with the highest levels of inequality in terms of disposable income in the EU reported in Bulgaria (38.4), Lithuania (35.3) and Latvia (34.2), and lowest in Slovakia (21.7), Czechia (23.7) and Slovenia (23.8).

In the EU in 2024, the share of people at risk of poverty exceeded 45% only in one region in France's overseas departments, while 28 regions in the EU had rates below 10%.

This article focuses on income distribution and poverty risk in the [European Union \(EU\)](#) in 2024. It examines median disposable income, the role of social transfers, regional disparities in poverty risk, and income inequality as measured by the [Gini coefficient](#).

All figures are based on [EU statistics on income and living conditions \(EU-SILC\)](#) available from [Eurostat's online database](#). EU-SILC data are available for all EU Member States, as well as for most of the EFTA and [candidate countries](#).

Income distribution

Median annual disposable income in 2024 highest in Luxembourg and lowest in Hungary

In 2024, the [median annual disposable income](#) was 21,245 PPS ([purchasing power standard](#)) per inhabitant in the EU. Across the EU countries, it ranged from 37,781 PPS in Luxembourg and 29,758 PPS in Austria to 11,199 PPS in Hungary and 11,433 PPS in Slovakia.

Figure 1 shows the contribution of [social transfers](#) to disposable income. This information is split between transfers for pensions and other social transfers, for example, social security benefits and social assistance that aim to alleviate or reduce the risk of poverty.

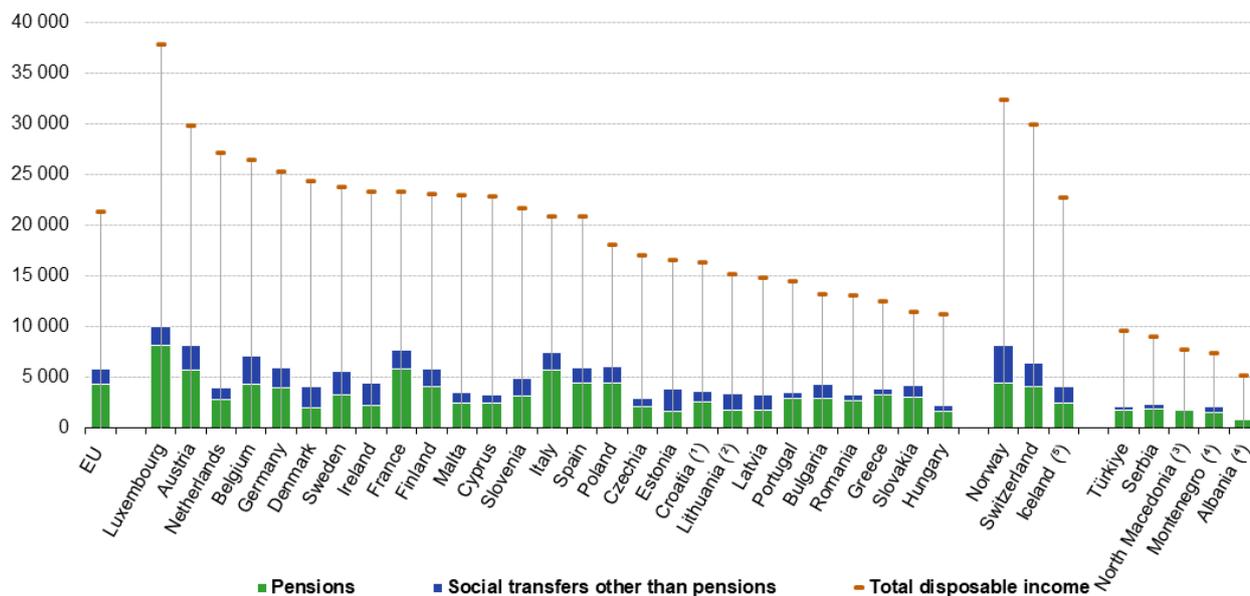
In 2024, in the EU, social transfers (including pensions) accounted for 5,847 PPS of the median disposable income, 1,613 PPS from transfers other than pensions.

Among the EU countries, there were considerable variations in the contribution made by social transfers to median disposable income in 2024. The largest transfers were observed in Luxembourg, where social transfers (including pensions) increased the median disposable income by 10,015 PPS per inhabitant. Social transfers (including pensions) were also relatively high in Austria (8,141 PPS) and France (7,606 PPS).

In 2024, social transfers excluding pensions contributed more than 2,000 PPS per inhabitant to median disposable income in Belgium (2,686 PPS), Austria (2,442 PPS), Sweden (2,273 PPS), Estonia (2,254 PPS) and Ireland (2,233 PPS).

Median equivalised disposable income and magnitude of social transfers, 2024

(PPS per inhabitant)



Note: ranked on total disposable income.

(1) Break in time series.

(2) Provisional.

(3) 2023 data.

(4) 2022 data.

(5) 2020 data.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ilc_di03, ilc_di13 and ilc_di14)

eurostat

Figure 1: Median equivalised disposable income and magnitude of social transfers, 2024 (PPS per inhabitant) Source: Eurostat (ilc_di03), (ilc_di13) and (ilc_di14)

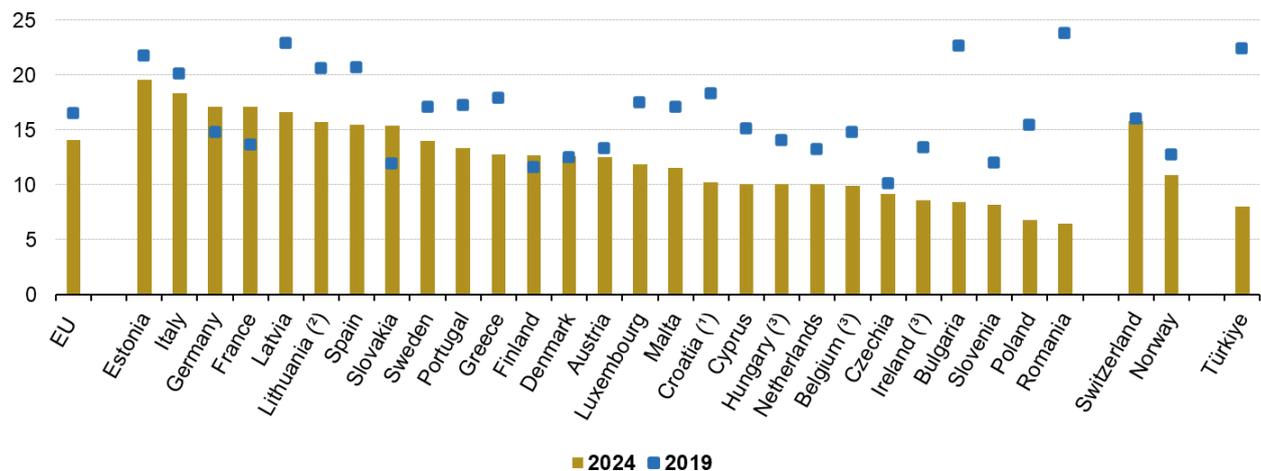
The at-risk-of-poverty rate in the EU decreased between 2019 and 2024

Figure 2 shows that the at-risk-of-poverty rate anchored to 2019 decreased across the EU, reaching 14.1% in 2024, compared to 16.5% in 2019. This decline reflects an overall improvement in living standards for low-income groups. It suggests that the real equivalised disposable incomes of these groups, adjusted for inflation, have increased compared to the 2019 baseline, lifting many out of poverty. The largest reductions were observed in Romania (down 17.3 percentage points (pp) to 6.5%) and Bulgaria (down 14.2 pp to 8.4%). The lowest decreases were recorded in Austria (down 0.8 pp to 12.5%) and Czechia (down 0.9 to 9.2%).

However, some countries recorded increases in their anchored at-risk-of-poverty rates. Denmark saw its rate rise by 0.1 pp to 12.6%, while Finland experienced an increase of 1.1 pp, reaching 12.7% in 2024. Germany reported a more significant rise of 2.3 pp to 17.1%, and Slovakia recorded the largest increase together with France, up 3.5 pp to 15.4% and 17.1%, respectively.

At-risk-of-poverty rate anchored to 2019, 2019 and 2024

(%)



Note: the indicator represents the percentage of the total population at risk of poverty, anchored to 2019. The poverty threshold is based on the income distribution of 2019 and is updated for 2024 by adjusting for inflation. Ranked on 2024 data.

(¹) 2024: break in time series.

(²) 2024: provisional.

(³) 2019: break in time series.

Source: Eurostat (online data codes: ilc_li22)

eurostat

Figure 2: At-risk-of-poverty rate anchored to 2019, 2019 and 2024 (%), ranked by year 2024 Source: Eurostat (ilc_li22)

Income inequality

Median disposable income provides a measure of average living standards, but it does not capture the distribution of income within the population. The **Gini coefficient** gives the extent to which the distribution of income within a country deviates from a perfectly equal distribution. A Gini value of 100 means that only one person receives all the income in the country, while a Gini value of 0 means that income is distributed equally across the population.

Income inequality as measured by Gini coefficient above the EU average in 14 EU countries

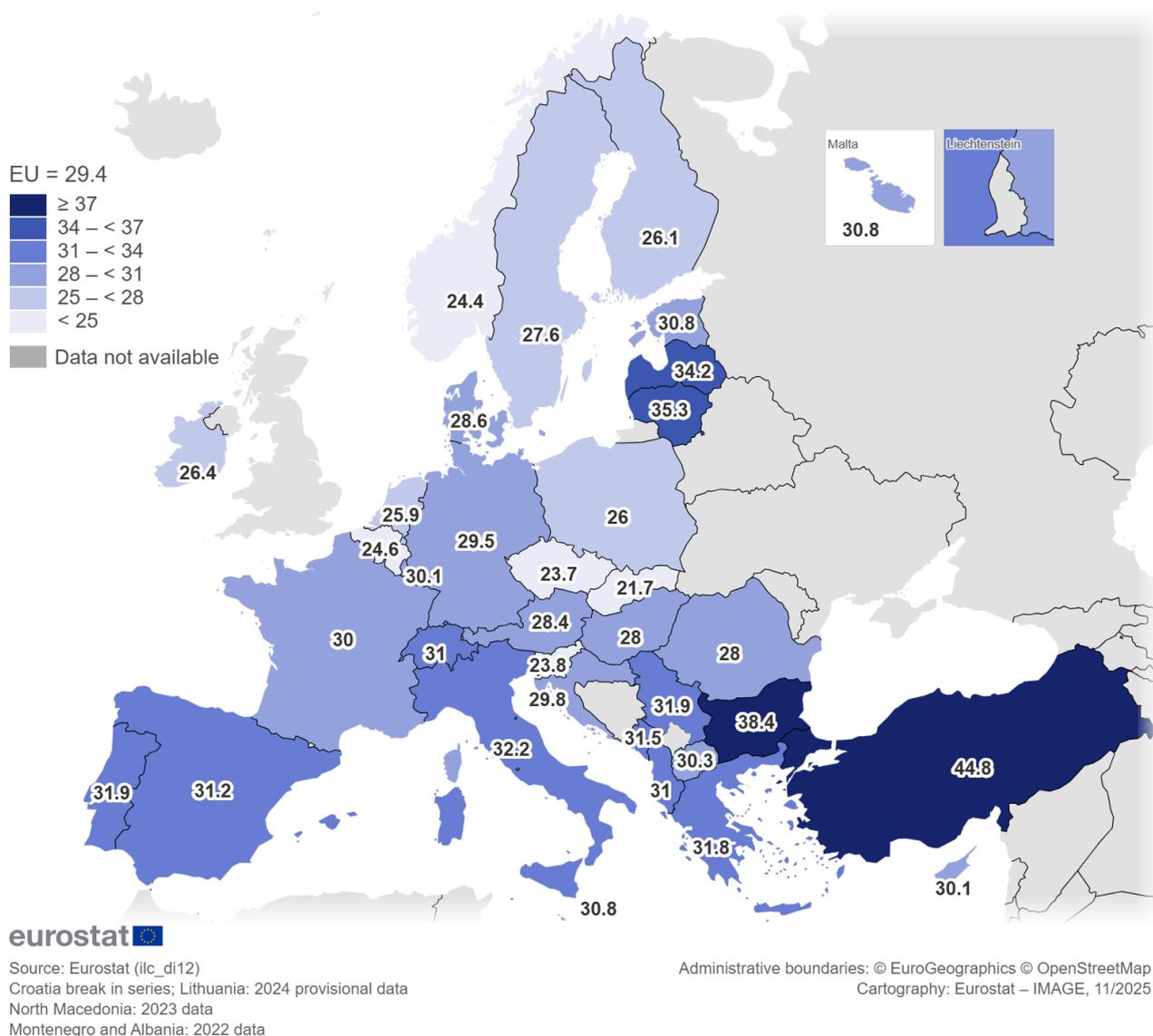
In 2024, the Gini coefficient for the EU was 29.4, as shown in Map 1. The highest income disparities among the EU countries were recorded in Bulgaria (38.4), Lithuania (35.3) and Latvia (34.2). In Germany, Denmark and Croatia, the Gini coefficients were close to the EU average. Income was more evenly distributed in Slovakia, Czechia, Slovenia and Belgium, where the Gini coefficient was less than 25.0.

Map 1: Gini coefficient for equivalised disposable income per inhabitant, 2024 (Scale from 0 to 100)

Source: Eurostat (ilc_di12)

GINI coefficient for equivalised disposable income per inhabitant, 2024

Scale from 0 to 100



Map 1: Gini coefficient for equivalised disposable income per inhabitant, 2024 (Scale from 0 to 100)
Source: Eurostat (https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/ilc_li41__custom_18893793/default/table/ilc_di12)

Regional disparities observed in shares of people at risk of poverty across the EU

Map 2 shows the share of people **at risk of poverty** at regional **NUTS** level 2 in 2024. Among all EU regions, one region in France’s overseas departments (Guyane) recorded the highest percentage of people at risk of poverty, with a percentage of 53.3%.

Across the EU, 10 regions had a share of people at risk of poverty ranging from 30.0% to 41.4%. These regions specifically include two of France’s overseas departments (La Réunion and Guadelupe), two of Spain’s autonomous cities (Ciudad de Ceuta and Ciudad de Melilla), four regions in Italy (Campania, Calabria, Puglia and Sicilia), and two regions in Greece (Dytiki Elláda and Voreio Aigaiο).

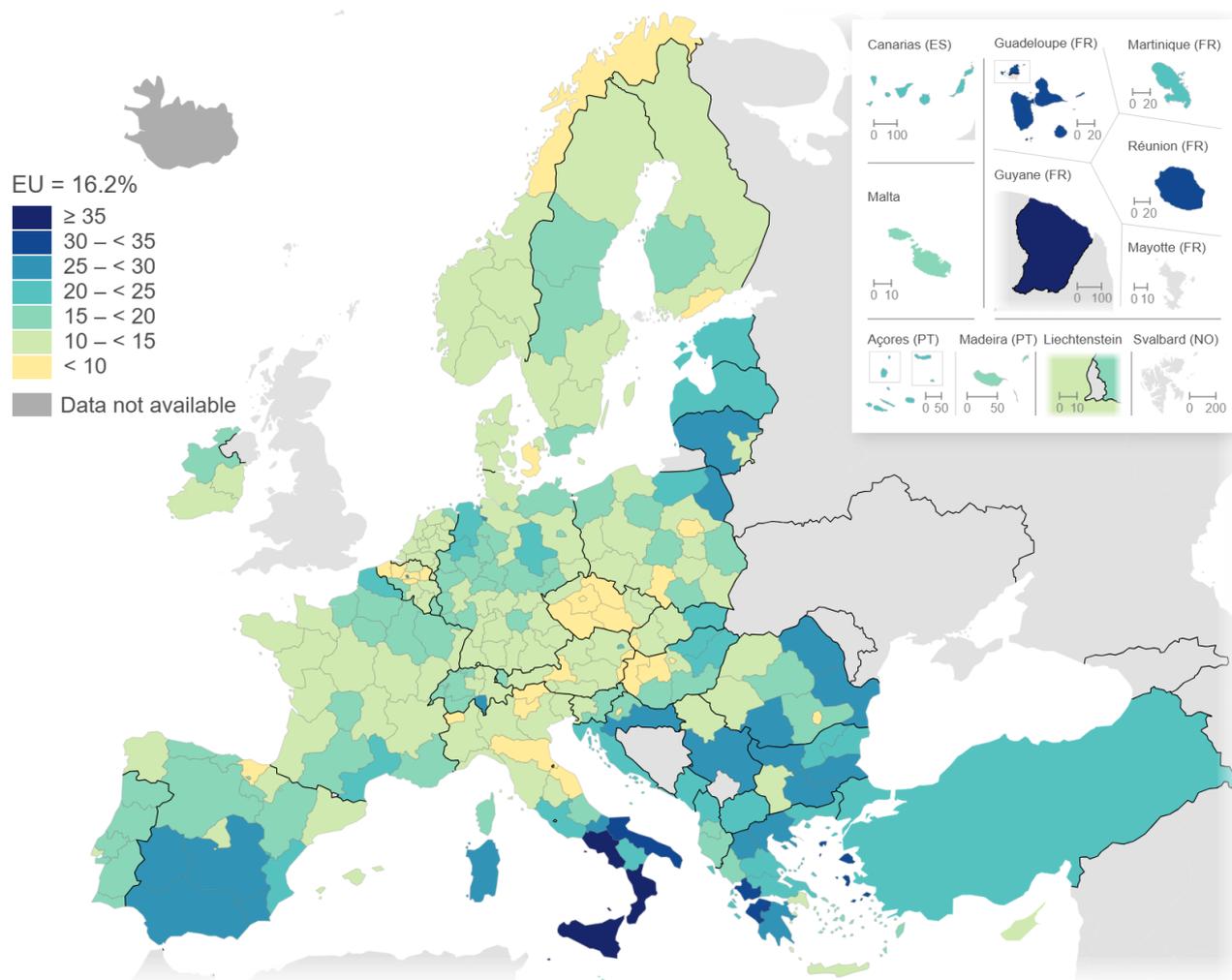
On the other hand, 28 NUTS level 2 regions in the EU recorded shares of people at risk of poverty below 10% in 2024. These included five NUTS Level 2 regions each in Italy (Marche, Valle d’Aosta, Emilia Romagna, Provincia autonoma di Trento and Provincia autonoma di Bolzano/Bozen), Belgium (Prov. Limburg, Prov. Oost-Vlaanderen, Prov. Vlaams-Brabant, Prov. West-Vlaanderen and Prov. Brabant wallon) and in Czechia (Praha, Jihovýchod,

Střední Čechy, Jihozápad and Severovýchod), three regions in Hungary (Budapest, Közép-Dunántúl and Nyugat-Dunántúl), two regions in Poland (Śląskie and Warszawski stołeczny) and Austria (Burgenland and Salzburg), and one region each in Finland (Helsinki-Uusimaa), Slovakia (Bratislavský kraj), Spain (Pais Vasco), Denmark (Sjælland) and Romania (București-Ilfov).

Map 2: People at risk of poverty by NUTS 2 regions, 2024
 (% of people)
 Source: Eurostat ([ilc_li02](#)) and ([ilc_li41](#))

People at risk of poverty by NUTS 2 regions, 2024

(% of people)



Source: Eurostat ([ilc_li02](#)) and ([ilc_li41](#))
 Croatia break in series; Lithuania: 2024 provisional data
 North Macedonia: 2023 data
 Montenegro and Albania: 2022 data
 Serbia (NUTS 1) and Türkiye (country level).

Administrative boundaries: © EuroGeographics © OpenStreetMap
 Cartography: Eurostat – IMAGE, 11/2025

Map 2: People at risk of poverty by NUTS 2 regions, 2024 (% of people) Source: Eurostat ([ilc_li02](#)) and ([ilc_li41](#))

Source data for tables and graphs

- [Income distribution and inequality: maps and figures](#)

Data sources

The data used in this article are derived from [EU statistics on income and living conditions \(EU-SILC\)](#) . EU-SILC data are compiled annually and are the main source of statistics that measure income and living conditions in Europe. It is also the main source of information used to link different aspects relating to the living conditions of households and individuals.

The reference population for the information presented in this article is all private [households](#) and their current members residing in the territory of an EU Member State (or non-EU member country) at the time of data collection. Persons living in collective households and in institutions are generally excluded from the target population. The data for the EU are population-weighted averages of national data. The reference time for information on income is 2023, while the other households' characteristics are referenced to 2024.

Context

To consider differences in household size and composition, and thus enable comparisons of income levels across countries and population groups, the concept of [equivalised disposable income](#) is used. This measure is based on the total net (also referred to as disposable) household income divided by the number of "equivalent adults" in the household, using a standard (equivalence) scale. Eurostat employs the "modified OECD scale", which assigns a weight of 1.0 to the household head, 0.5 to each additional adult (aged 14 and over), and 0.3 to each child (aged under 14). The weights are summed to calculate an equivalised household size, which is then used to divide the total household income and determine the equivalised disposable income attributed to each household member.

For the anchored [at-risk-of-poverty](#) rate, the equivalised disposable income is compared to a fixed poverty threshold, which is calculated using the income distribution of the base year (2019). This anchored poverty line remains constant over time but is adjusted for inflation to maintain its real value. The anchored poverty threshold enables comparisons across years, providing a consistent baseline to assess changes in living standards for low-income groups.

The median of the equivalised disposable income distribution is typically used in the EU as a key measure for analysing standards of living within each economy. It is simply the income level that divides the population into two groups of equal size: one group encompasses half the population with a level of disposable income above the median and the other group encompasses the half of the population with a level of disposable income below the median. The use of the median (rather than the arithmetic mean) avoids any potential distortion that may be caused by the existence of extreme values, such as a few extremely rich households that may raise the arithmetic mean.

The at-risk-of-poverty rate is part of the [at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate \(AROPE\)](#) . The AROPE ratio is the share of the total population which is at risk of poverty or social exclusion. The headline target ([EU2030 target](#)) on poverty and social inclusion of [the European Pillar of Social Rights Action Plan](#) is to reduce the number of people at risk of poverty or social exclusion by at least 15 million by 2030. Progress towards this target is monitored through the AROPE rate, published by Eurostat.

Explore further

Other articles

Online publication

- All articles from [Living conditions in Europe](#)
- [EU statistics on income and living conditions \(EU-SILC\) methodology - people at risk of poverty or social exclusion](#)
- [Living conditions in Europe - poverty and social exclusion](#)

Other statistical articles

- [Migrant integration statistics - poverty and social exclusion](#)
- [SDG 10 — Reduced inequalities](#)

Background articles

- [EU statistics on income and living conditions \(EU-SILC\) methodology — distribution of income](#)

Database

- [Income and living conditions - database](#)

Thematic section

- [Income, social inclusion and living conditions](#)

Publications

- [Key figures on European living conditions – 2025 edition \(europa.eu\)](#)

Selected datasets

- [Database - Eurostat \(europa.eu\)](#)

Methodology

- [Income and living conditions - SIMS metadata file](#)
- [Income and living conditions - information on data](#)
- [Income and living conditions - methodology](#)

External links

- [European Commission — Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion: Indicators' Sub-Group of the Social Protection Committee](#)
- [European Commission — Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion: Employment and social analysis](#)

Legislation

- [Income and living conditions - legislation](#)