Regional household income statistics

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in February 2026
Planned article update: February 2027

Highlights

The EU regions with the highest primary income per inhabitant in 2023 were all in Germany: Oberbayern, Hamburg, Stuttgart and Darmstadt.

The EU regions with the lowest primary income per inhabitant in 2023 were Mayotte (France), Severozapaden, Yugoiztochen, Yuzhen tsentralen, Severen tsentralen and Severoiztochen (all Bulgaria).

The EU regions that recorded the largest increases between 2013 and 2023 in the ratio of their net primary income per inhabitant to the EU average were Bucureşti-Ilfov, Nord-Vest, Centru (all Romania), Yugozapaden (Bulgaria) and Budapest (Hungary).

The EU regions that recorded the largest decreases between 2013 and 2023 in the ratio of their net primary income per inhabitant to the EU average were Åland (Finland), Guyane (France) and Luxembourg (a mono-regional country).

This article is focused on regional household accounts in the EU for NUTS level 2 regions. The data presented cover the household sector . The selected indicators focus on primary and disposable income as measures of living standards. Taken together these indicators provide more detailed information about societies and living conditions than, for example, looking only at gross domestic product (GDP) . Based on the 2024 version of NUTS, there are 244 level 2 regions that cover the EU countries: note that Estonia, Cyprus, Latvia, Luxembourg and Malta each have only one region at NUTS level 2. The analyses are based mainly on 2023 data but include a measure of dispersion across all EU regions from 2013 to 2023 (Figure 2) and comparison between 2013 and 2023 for individual regions (Figure 3).

Primary income is presented in relation to GDP and disposable income. It is also analysed in terms of its components (net operating surplus and mixed income, compensation of employees received by households, and net property income).

Primary income per inhabitant in PPS

Map 1 shows household net primary income per inhabitant across EU regions, expressed as a percentage of the EU average. These data have been compiled based on data in purchasing power standards (PPS) , in order to take account of price level differences between countries (see Box 1 for more information). There were 24 regions where net primary income per inhabitant in PPS in 2023 was at least 130% of the EU average of 24 500 PPS. The 4 regions with the highest primary income per inhabitant were all in Germany: Oberbayern (180.4% of the EU average), Hamburg (153.1%), Stuttgart (151.0%) and Darmstadt (150.2%). Among the remaining 20 regions, a further 10 were also in Germany, while the others included 3 regions in Belgium, 2 regions in the Netherlands (including the capital region), Luxembourg, Bucureşti-Ilfov (the Romanian capital region), Provincia Autonoma di

Bolzano/Bozen (Italy), Ile-de-France (the French capital region) and Vorarlberg in Austria.

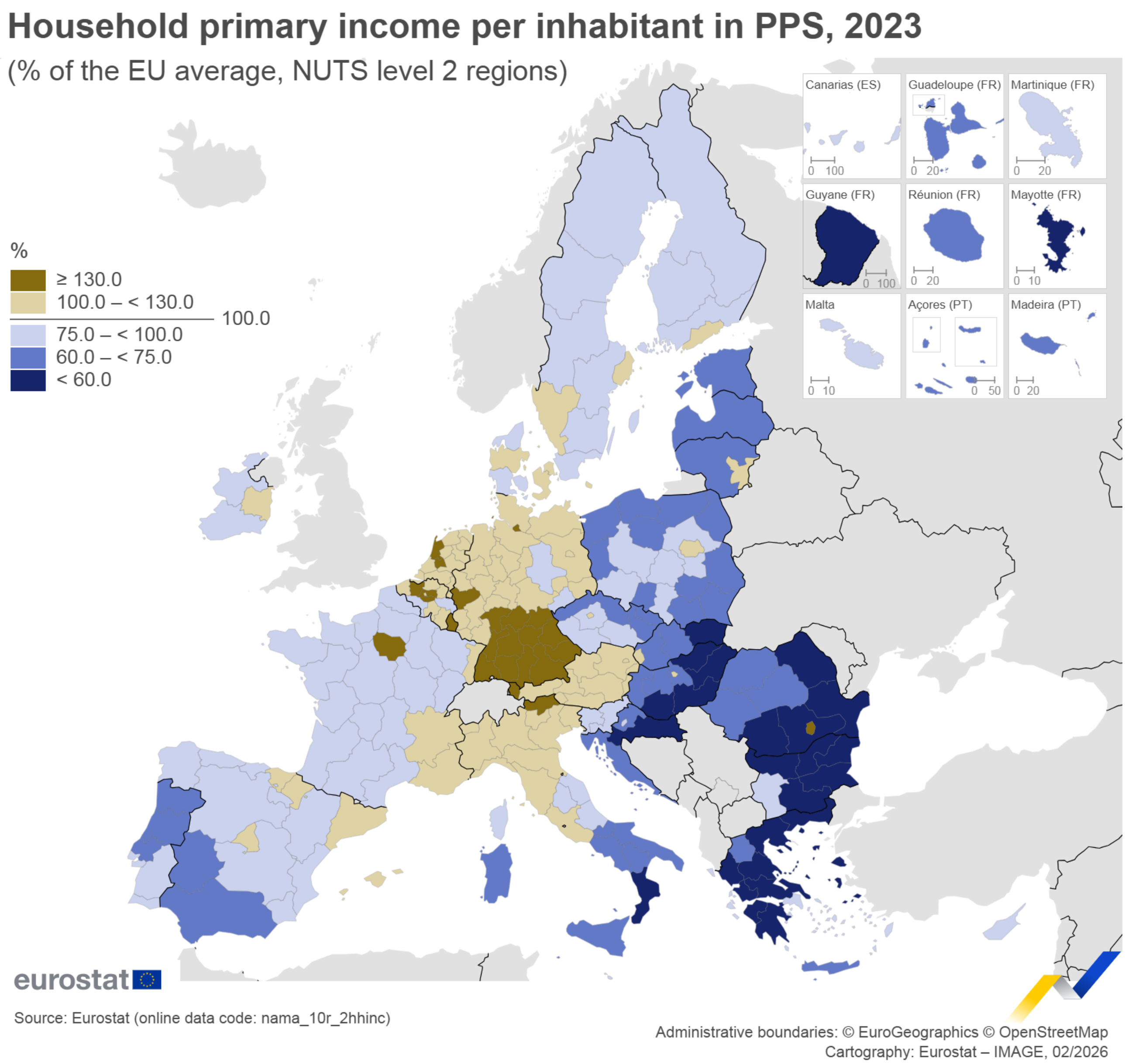
By contrast, there were 26 regions with net primary income less than 60.0% of the EU average. The 6 regions with the lowest primary income per inhabitant in 2023 were Mayotte in France (33.5%) and 5 Bulgarian regions: Severozapaden (33.9%), Yugoiztochen (38.8%), Yuzhen tsentralen (39.2%), Severen tsentralen (39.6%) and Severoiztochen (42.0%). The remaining 20 regions with ratios less than 60.0% of the EU average were located in Greece (8 regions), Hungary, Romania (4 regions each), France (1 more region), Croatia, Italy and Slovakia (1 region each)

Box 1: use of purchasing power parities (PPPs) in household accounts

Purchasing power parities (PPPs) are used to remove price level differences across countries in order to facilitate inter-spatial comparisons. A PPP for GDP is commonly used in national accounts to adjust variables. The use of a single PPP has the benefit of maintaining the additivity of the variables in the system of national accounts. Indicators that have been adjusted using PPPs are expressed in purchasing power standards (PPS), rather than euro. When using a single PPP, GDP expressed in PPS is still equal to the sum of its expenditure components, as is the case for national accounts data in current or previous year's prices.

However, for specific analyses for parts of the national accounts system it is preferable to use PPPs that better reflect the coverage of the item being analysed. As households spend most of their income on the final consumption of goods and services, a PPP for that indicator provides a better adjustment for spatial differences in prices.

In many cases, the difference between using the PPP for GDP compared with the PPP for household final consumption will be small, but in a few cases the differences are quite substantial. In 2023, the PPP for GDP was substantially lower than the PPP for household final consumption for Ireland (118.6 compared with 138.2), Luxembourg (131.5 compared with 151.8), Denmark (132.3 compared with 144.0) and Belgium (112.9 compared with 121.4), while the opposite was observed in Bulgaria (60.4 compared with 55.0), Romania (57.3 compared with 53.9), Poland (67.6 compared with 64.2) and Hungary (70.1 compared with 66.6).



Map 1: Household primary income per inhabitant in PPS, 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc)

The relationship between primary income and GDP

The ratio of net primary household income to GDP is sometimes noticeably different between regions within a country. This ratio is generally lower in regions that concentrate economic activity, like capital regions, and higher in regions with many commuters (people who work and live in 2 different regions). While GDP is recorded where it is generated (the place of work), income is recorded in the place of residence of the employed person. Furthermore, the kind of economic activity that takes place in a region affects the relationship between net primary income and GDP. In regions specialised in capital-intensive (tangible or intangible) activities, the remuneration of workers will generally constitute a lower share of the value added than in regions specialised in more labour-intensive activities. As such, income per inhabitant is a better indicator of the income of residents for a region than GDP per inhabitant.

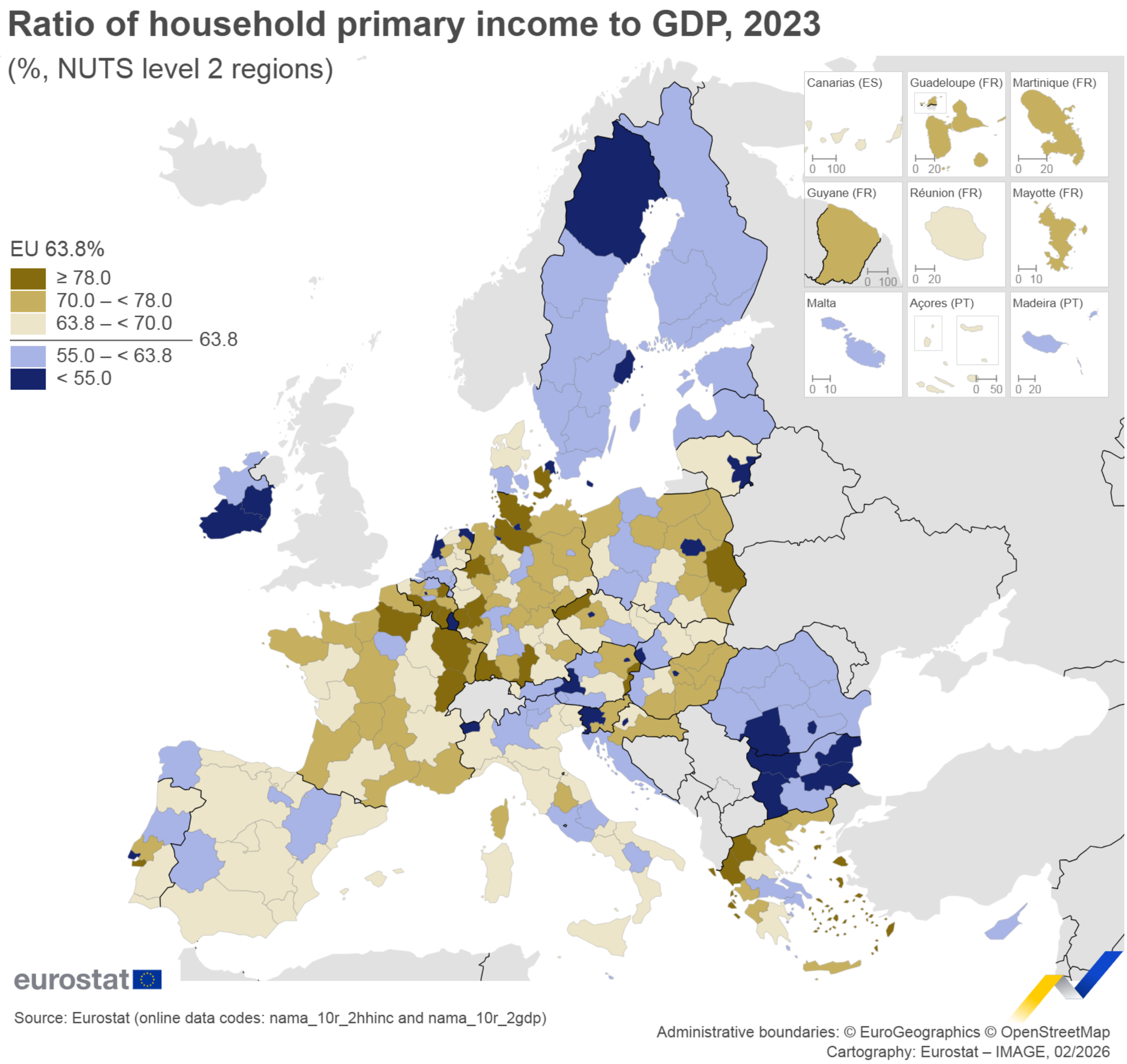
The ratio of primary income to GDP, both measured in euros, ranged in 2023 from a low of 30.8% in Southern (Ireland) to a high of 96.2% in Península de Setúbal (Portugal).

There were 5 regions for which this ratio was less than 40.0%. Alongside Southern, these regions were Eastern and Midland (32.9%) also in Ireland, Praha (37.0%) in Czechia, the Région de Bruxelles-Capitale/Brussels

Hoofdstedelijk Gewest (38.2%) in Belgium and Luxembourg (38.9%).

At the other end of the scale, apart from Península de Setúbal, there were 2 other regions in which the ratio was above 90.0%: Prov. Luxembourg (95.7%) in Belgium and Lüneburg (94.7%) in Germany.

The commuting effect can be seen in Belgium between Prov. Namur (87.7%) and the capital city region (38.2%), in Germany between Lüneburg (94.7%) and Schleswig-Holstein (83.5%) on one hand and Hamburg (48.6%) and Bremen (52.1%) on the other, in France between Picardie (79.1%) and Ile-de-France (57.7%), in Austria between Niederösterreich (77.6%) and Burgenland (83.3%) on one hand and Wien (51.5%) on the other. It can also be seen between regions in different EU countries as in the case of Prov. Luxembourg (95.7%), Trier (89.8%) and Lorraine (82.3%) (in Belgium, Germany and France, respectively) and Luxembourg (38.9%). Map 2 offers a general overview for all EU regions.



Map 2: Ratio of household primary income to GDP, 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc and nama_10r_2gdp)

Components of primary income

In this section, the components of household primary income are analysed. The components of primary income are the compensation of employees (national accounts code D.1), net operating surplus and mixed income (national accounts codes B.2n and B.3n) and net property income (national accounts code D.4).

Compensation of employees is defined as the total remuneration, in cash or in kind, including employer's social contribution, payable by an employer to an employee in return for work done.

Net operating surplus includes the activities of unincorporated enterprises (which are not included in other institutional sectors), housing services to others or own accommodation services (normally called owner-occupied dwelling services) and own-account production of goods by households.

Net mixed income includes the joint remuneration of capital and labour in unincorporated enterprises. For example, for an independent taxi driver who owns a license it is difficult to estimate from their earnings which part comes from the time spent driving the taxi and which part from owning the license. As the concept is net, the consumption of fixed capital should be deducted from the gross flows.

Property income includes, among other elements, interest received by households from their financial investments (less interest paid on loans), dividends, withdrawals from income of 'quasi-corporations', investment income from insurance or pension entitlements, and rents on land.

The share of each of these components in primary income depends on several factors. In a region in which there are few self-employed people, compensation of employees will represent a high share of primary income, whereas its share will be low if the proportion of self-employed people is high. For employees, remuneration for labour is recorded as compensation of employees while for the self-employed it is included in mixed income. A region in which households reside mainly in dwellings that they own will (generally) have a higher share of net operating surplus and mixed income because it includes owner occupied imputed rents (an amount comparable with the rent paid to live in a similar dwelling); a region in which households mainly rent the dwellings in which they live will (generally) have a lower share of net operating surplus and mixed income. Net property income will depend on the size of the net assets that households own and on the return on those assets. Households in regions with higher income may (depending on whether they also have higher costs) accumulate net financial assets more easily. Households in regions of countries with less generous public pension systems may accumulate more assets to increase their future pensions compared with those in countries with more generous public pension systems.

In 2023, the share of the compensation of employees was highest (more than 80% of net primary income) in all Danish and Slovenian regions as well as in Estonia, Latvia and Luxembourg; this was also the case in all Swedish regions except for 2. The share of net operating surplus and mixed income in net primary income was highest (above 35%) in all Greek regions except the capital region (whose share was marginally lower), several Polish regions and Nord-Est in Romania. Finally, net property income was relatively substantial (above 15%) in most German regions, many Italian regions, 2 Swedish regions and 1 region each from Belgium, Lithuania, Hungary and Finland.

The shares of each component in net primary income varied among regions within each EU country, with this diversity greater in some EU countries than in others.

- Notio Aigaio (57.5%) and Ionia Nisia (56.2%) recorded notably higher shares for net operating surplus and mixed income compared with other Greek regions (34.9% to 44.2%).
- Ciudad de Ceuta (82.2%) and Ciudad de Melilla (79.9%) recorded notably higher shares for the compensation of employees compared with other Spanish regions (62.5% to 73.2%).
- Budapest recorded a notably higher share for net property income (27.5%) than in other Hungarian regions (5.2% to 10.0%); it also recorded a notably lower share for compensation of employees (55.9%) than elsewhere in Hungary (68.2% to 74.4%).
- Península de Setúbal recorded a notably higher share for compensation of employees (82.2%) than was observed for Algarve (63.0%).

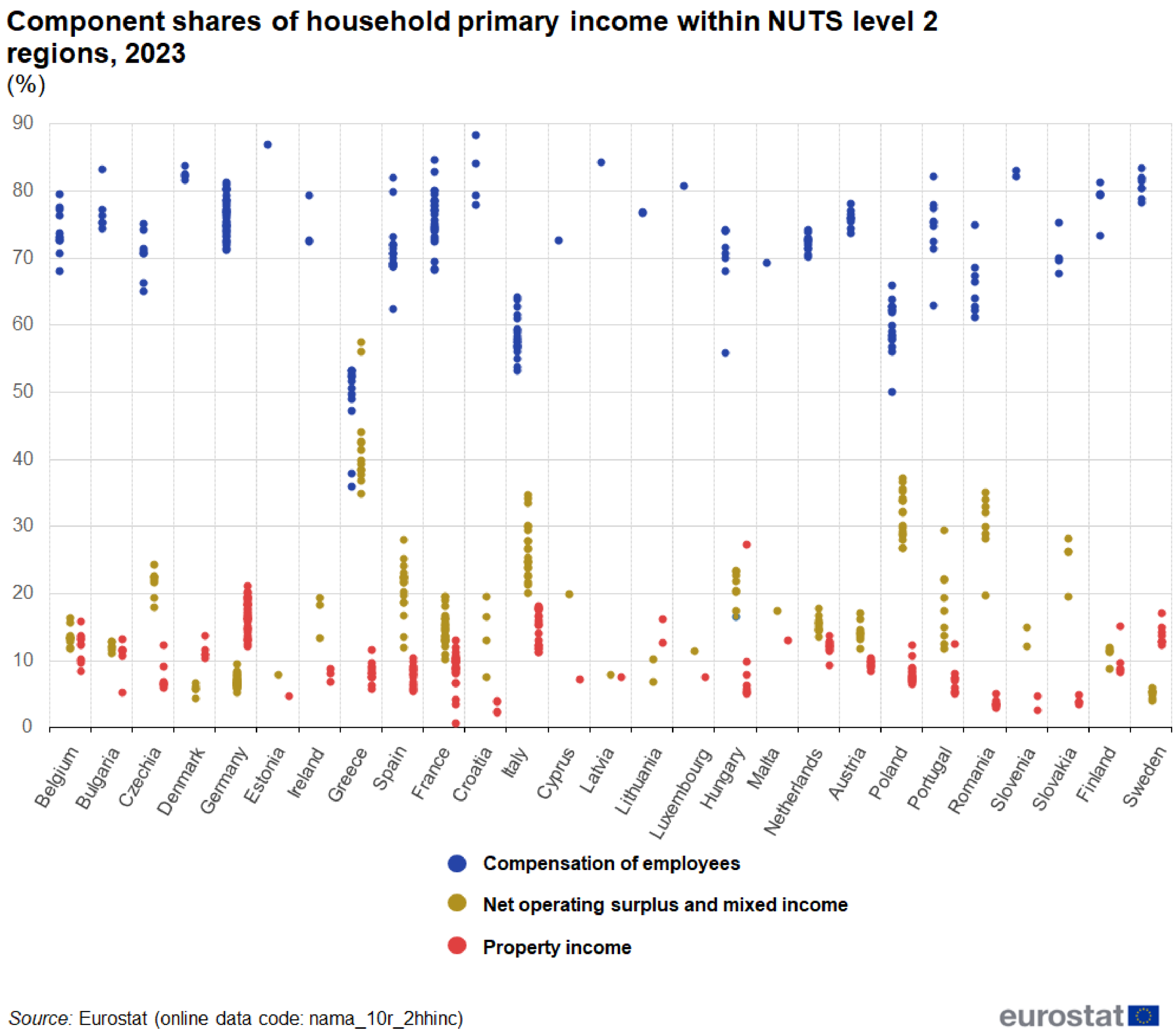


Figure 1: Component shares of household primary income within NUTS level 2 regions, 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc)

Change between 2013 and 2023 in primary household income relative to the EU average

The main observation from the first section of this article was that there are substantial differences in net primary income per inhabitant between EU regions[1]. An analysis of the changes in this indicator over time gives information on convergence or divergence among regions. Computing the unweighted standard deviation of net primary income per inhabitant in PPS as a percentage of the EU average reveals that there was a decrease in this measure of dispersion (reflecting a convergence in regional income per inhabitant) between 2013 and 2023, interrupted by a year of near stability (2018) and a single increase (2020).

[1] For an analysis of GDP per inhabitant differences please refer to *Convergence of EU regions redux* .

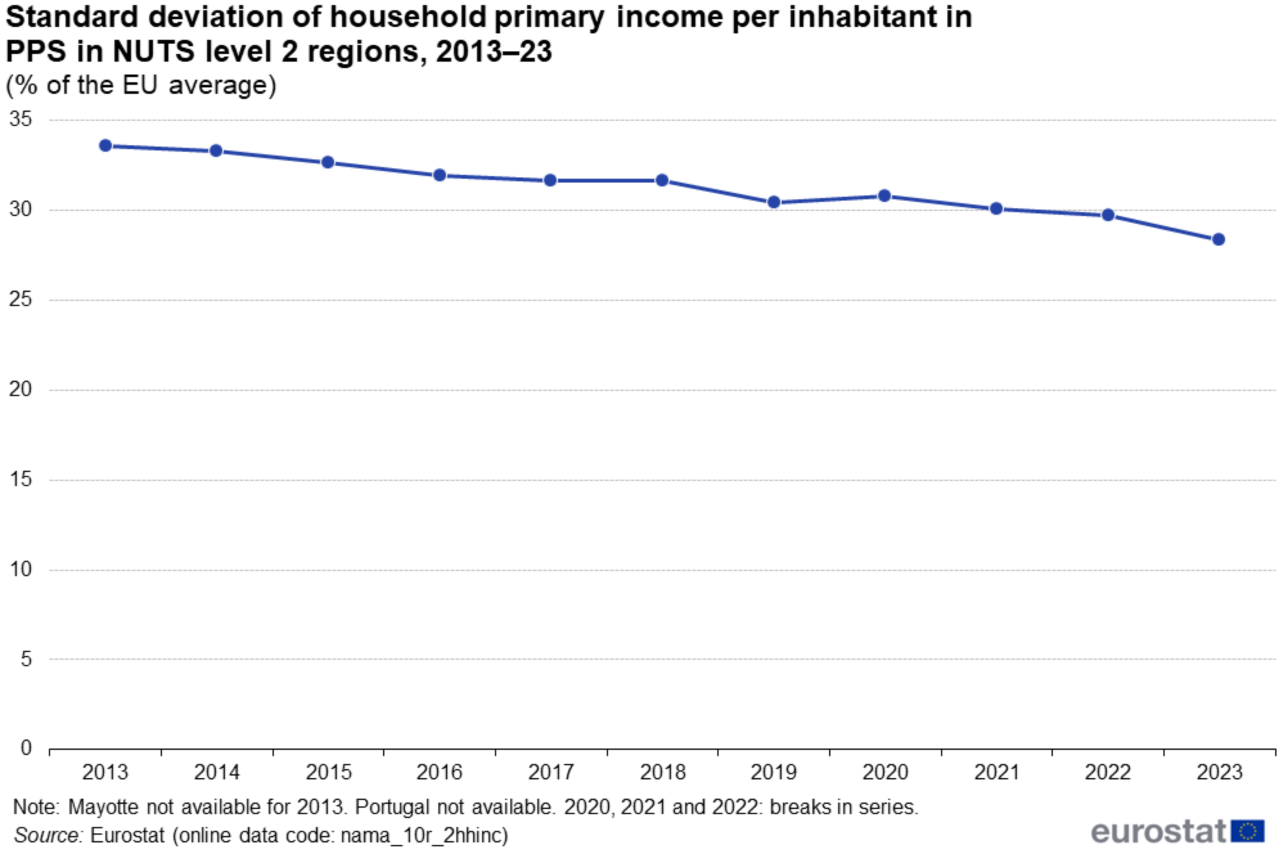


Figure 2: Standard deviation of household primary income per inhabitant in PPS in NUTS level 2 regions, 2013–23 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc)

However, this overall development masks some important changes that have taken place in individual regions. Figure 3 plots household primary income per inhabitant in PPS as a percentage of the EU average for NUTS level 2 regions in 2013 and 2023. The x-axis (horizontal) shows the ratio in 2013 and the y-axis (vertical) the ratio in 2023. Regions that appear above/left of the diagonal in the figure are regions for which an increase in their ratio compared with the EU was observed between 2013 and 2023, while those that appear below/right of the diagonal in the figure are those for which a decrease was observed.

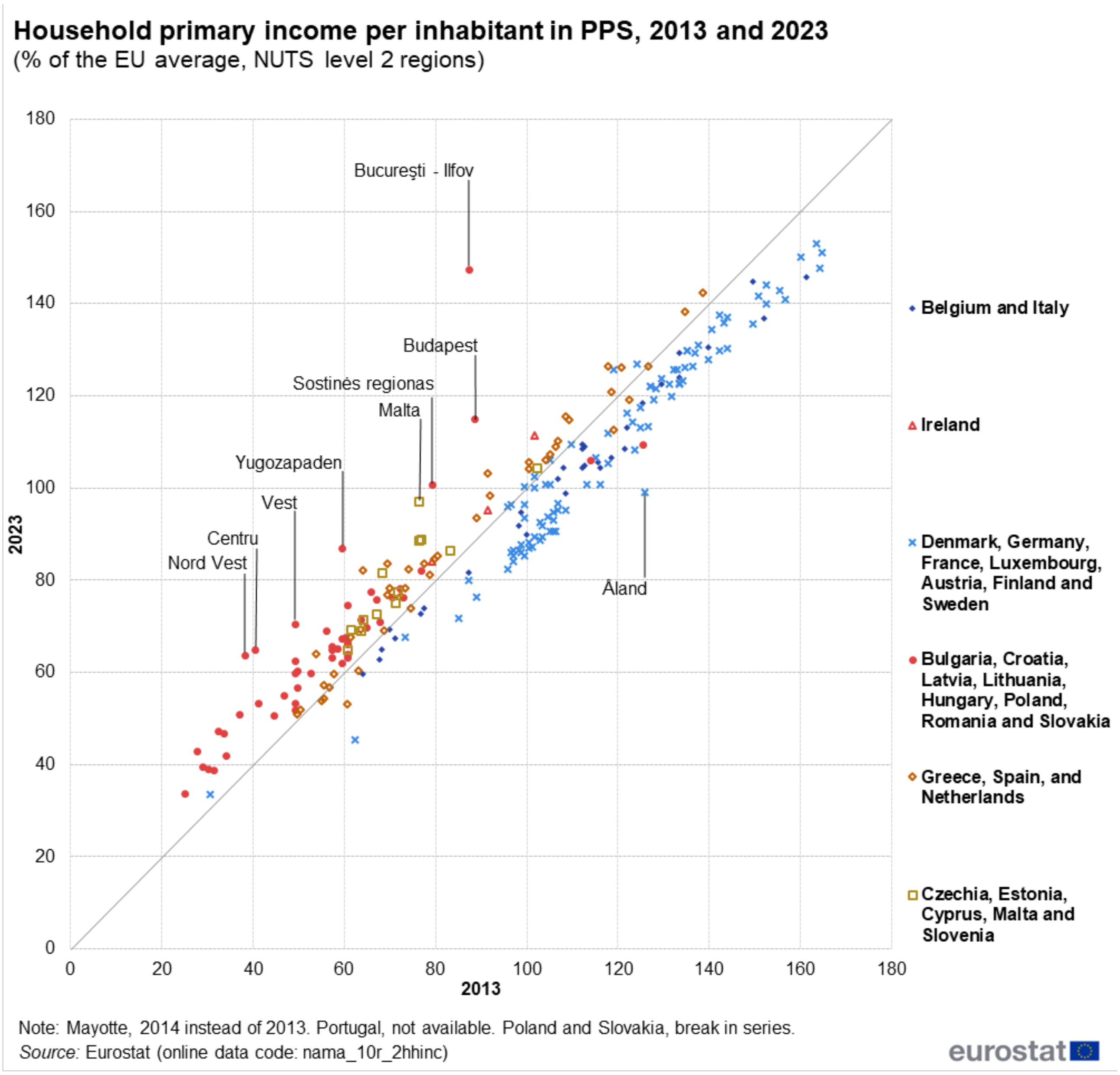


Figure 3: Household primary income per inhabitant in PPS, 2013 and 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc)

In general, the ratio of the income per inhabitant of regions of countries which joined the EU in 2004 or more recently moved towards the EU average between 2013 and 2023.

- The only exceptions among these countries were:
  - the Czech capital region (Praha), which already had an income above the EU average in 2013 and for which the ratio was higher by 2023
  - the Polish and Slovak capital regions (Warszawski stołeczny and Bratislavský kraj), which also already had income above the EU average in 2013, but their ratios moved back towards the EU average, although remaining above it.

- Among countries which joined the EU in 2004 or more recently, all the regions with the lowest income per inhabitant in 2013 (below 60% of the EU average) are above/left of the diagonal, meaning that their income increased between 2013 and 2023 relative to the EU average and therefore moved towards (converged on) that average. Countries with at least some regions having income per inhabitant below 60% in 2013 included Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia; these are shown in the figure as a red circle.

- The remaining countries which joined the EU in 2004 or more recently – Czechia, Estonia, Cyprus, Malta and Slovenia – did not have any regions with income per inhabitant below 60% of the EU average in 2013; their regions are shown in the figure as a hollow gold square. Within these countries, all regions had income per inhabitant between 60% and 100% of the EU average in 2013 (except for Praha, where the ratio was already above 100%) and all recorded increases relative to the EU average between 2013 and 2023.

Like most regions in the countries which joined the EU in 2004 or more recently, all regions in Ireland recorded an increase in income per inhabitant relative to the EU average between 2013 and 2023. For 2 regions, the ratio remained below the EU average but moved closer to it; the third Irish region was already above the EU average in 2013 and moved further ahead. Irish regions are shown in the figure as a hollow red triangle.

Generally positive developments were also observed for Greece, Spain and the Netherlands. These are shown in the figure as hollow brown diamonds.

- All of the Greek regions had income per inhabitant below the EU average in both 2013 and 2023. Nevertheless, 6 of the 8 regions which had income per inhabitant below 60% of the EU average in 2013 moved closer to the EU average by 2023, most notably Kriti, and 3 of the 5 regions which had income per inhabitant above 60% of the EU average in 2013 also moved closer to the EU average by 2023, most notably Ionia Nisia and Notio Aigaio.
- In Spain, 14 of the 15 regions which had income per inhabitant below the EU average in 2013 moved closer to the EU average by 2023, with Illes Balears passing the EU average; the only Spanish region to record a lower income per inhabitant in 2023 (than in 2013) was Ciudad de Ceuta. The 4 regions which had income per inhabitant above the EU average in 2013 moved further ahead by 2023.
- In the Netherlands, all regions had income per inhabitant above the EU average in both years. Most moved further ahead of the EU average, but this was not the case for Flevoland, Zeeland and Zuid-Holland.

All of the regions of Belgium and Italy recorded a lower income per inhabitant relative to the EU average in 2023 than they had done in 2013, with the Belgian regions of Prov. Hainaut and Prov. Liège falling below the EU average by 2023. Belgian and Italian regions are shown in the figure as a cobalt blue diamond.

A majority of the regions of Germany, France, Luxembourg, Austria and the Nordic EU countries (Denmark, Finland and Sweden) – all regions of these countries are shown with a cornflower blue cross in the figure – also recorded a lower income per inhabitant relative to the EU average in 2023 than they had done in 2013 (regardless of whether or not their income was above or below the EU average in 2013). Exceptions were the French overseas region of Mayotte (2014 to 2023), the German regions of Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Dresden and Leipzig, and the Danish and German capital regions (Hovedstaden and Berlin). Apart from these few exceptions, the regions of these countries are positioned below/right of the diagonal in Figure 3. Twelve French regions, 5 Swedish regions and 1 Finnish region had income per inhabitant that was below 100% of the EU average in 2023 having had income per inhabitant above the EU average in 2013.

The regions for which this ratio increased by more than 20.0 percentage points between 2013 and 2023 were: Yugozapaden in Bulgaria; Budapest in Hungary; Sostinės regionas in Lithuania; Malta; Nord-Vest, Centru, Bucureşti-Ilfov and Vest in Romania. All had income per inhabitant below the EU average in 2013, while the Lithuanian (Sostinės regionas), Hungarian (Budapest) and Romanian (Bucureşti-Ilfov) capital regions had income per inhabitant above the EU average in 2023. Åland in Finland was the only region which recorded a decrease of more than 20.0 percentage points, its income per inhabitant falling to just below the EU average in 2023.

Regional income differences within EU countries

In the previous sections, the regional differences of household primary income across EU regions have been described, along with the components and changes over time of this income. In this section, the focus is on regional differences within EU countries. Rather than net primary income, a more appropriate measure of regional differences in household income within EU countries is net disposable income – see Box 2. To calculate net disposable income, income taxes (national accounts code D.5) and net social contributions (national accounts code D.61) are deducted from primary income while net social benefits (other than social transfers in kind; national accounts code D.62) and net current transfers (national accounts code D.7) are added.

The deduction of income taxes tends to reduce differences between regions, as they are generally progressive. As such, households in regions with higher incomes are normally taxed at higher rates. The same can be expected for net social contributions, as regions with higher primary income generally tend to have higher employment rates. The opposite can be expected from net social benefits (other than social transfers in kind) and net current transfers. Regions with higher unemployment, a greater share of older people or a generally more vulnerable population are likely to receive proportionally more unemployment benefits, pensions and other kinds of monetary benefits. Consequently, it can be inferred that regional inequalities for disposable income depend on the inequalities in primary income as well as inequalities in other factors (such as income tax and social benefits and transfer systems, differences in age structure and unemployment rates between regions).

Box 2: comparing regional income in different EU countries

Even though Eurostat collects and publishes regional data on net disposable income, it is not recommended to use these data to compare the income in regions of different EU countries. The reason for this is that net disposable income removes from household income the payments made to government but does not include some goods and services provided by government for free or at prices that are not economically significant (in other words, social transfers in kind; national accounts code D.63). Most official statistical offices do not compile regional data for social transfers in kind.

If, for example, net primary income (national accounts code B.5n), net disposable income (B.6n) and net adjusted disposable income (B.7n = B.6n + D.63) are compared for Cyprus and Malta in 2023, it can be seen that net primary income per inhabitant was € 1 200 higher in Malta (€ 21 200) than in Cyprus (€ 20 000), while net disposable income was the same (€ 18 800) in both and net adjusted disposable income was € 500 higher in Malta (€ 23 100) than in Cyprus (€ 22 600).

To compare the extent of regional differences within each EU country (with more than 2 NUTS level 2 regions), the standard deviations of net primary income and net disposable income per inhabitant as a percentage of the national average have been compiled; population weights have been used for each region in each country.

- The highest levels of regional dispersion (in other words, the highest standard deviations) for net primary income in 2023 were recorded for Romania (48.5), Bulgaria (41.6) and Hungary (31.5). The lowest levels of regional dispersion were recorded for Austria (4.3), the Netherlands (8.7), Ireland (10.6) and Denmark (12.5).
- For disposable income, the highest and lowest levels of regional dispersion were recorded for the same EU countries, although the regional dispersion for Bulgaria (28.1) was lower than for Hungary (29.4) while for Ireland (3.1) the regional dispersion was lower than for the Netherlands (4.2) and Austria (3.9).
- In all EU countries, the standard deviation was lower for disposable income than for primary income. In relative terms, the difference between the levels of regional dispersion for these 2 indicators was narrowest in Hungary and Austria, while it was widest in Ireland.

Even though the use of net disposable income rather than net primary income leads to less dispersion of regional values for all EU countries, the high regional dispersion observed for net primary income in some countries (such as Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary) still translates into relatively pronounced regional dispersions (compared with other EU countries) for net disposable income.

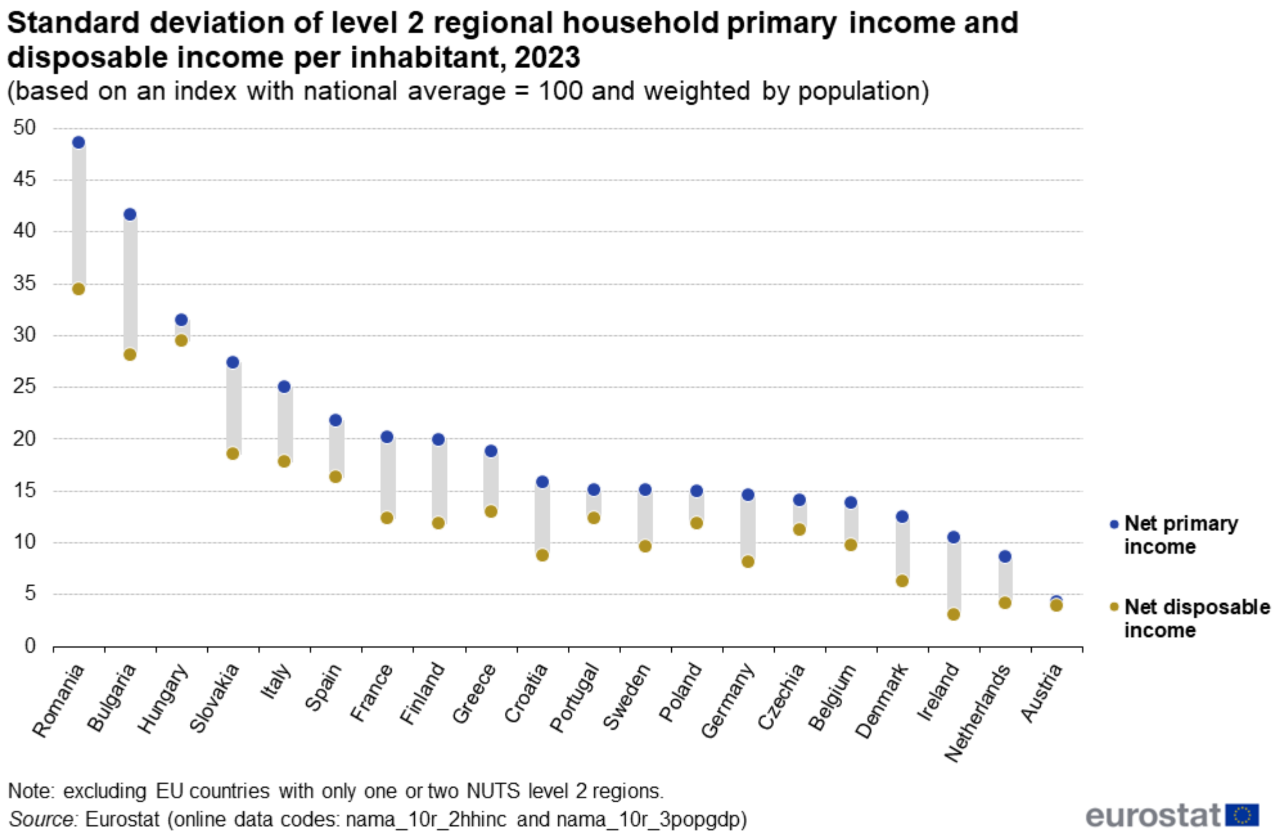
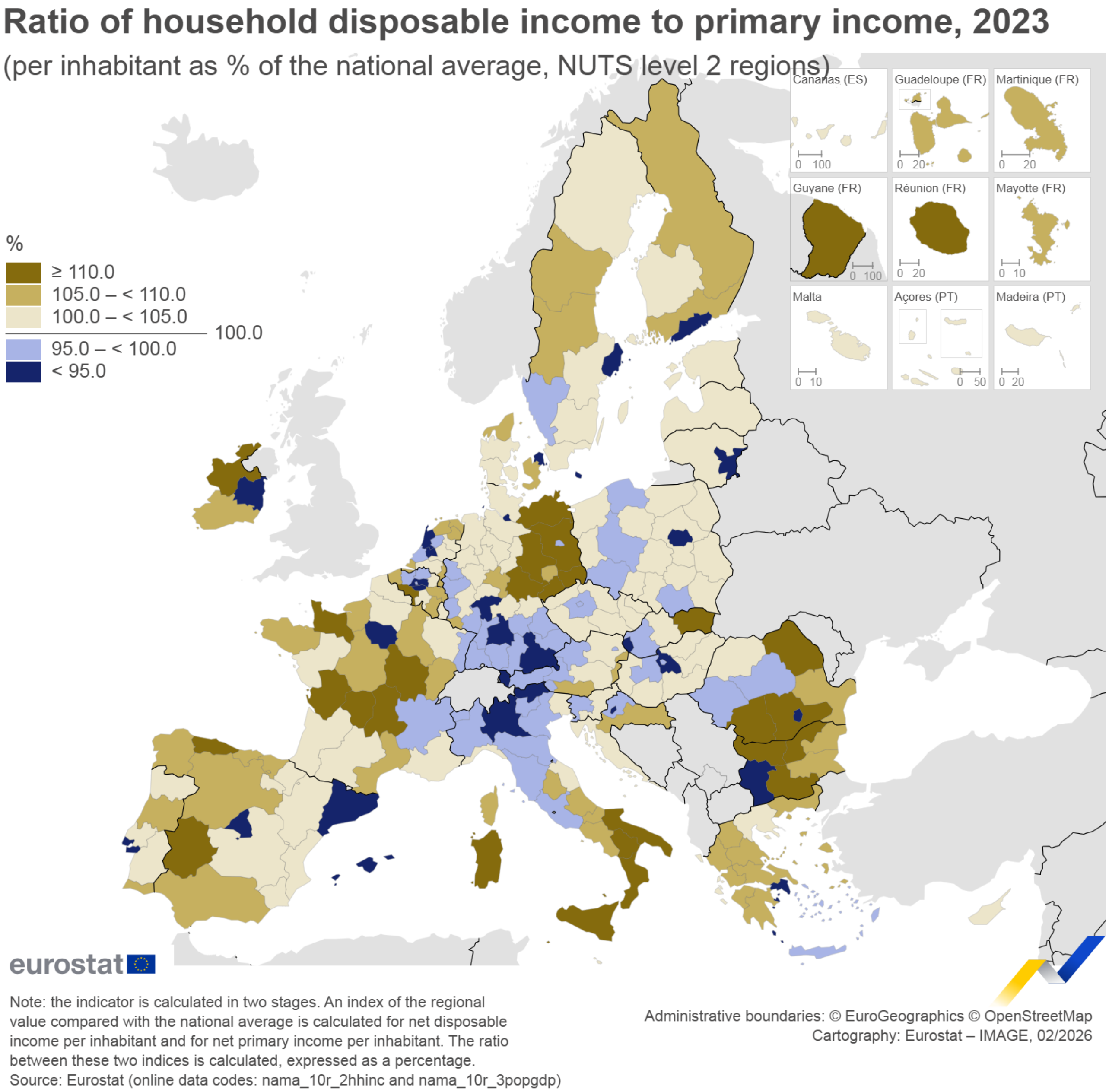


Figure 4: Standard deviation of level 2 regional household primary income and disposable income per inhabitant, 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc and nama_10r_3popgdp)

How the change from net primary income to net disposable income affects a region's relative position compared with the national average can be seen by calculating the ratio between these 2 indicators. Values below 100.0% indicate regions in which the relative position of households worsens due to the secondary distribution of income; values above 100.0% indicate regions in which the relative position of households improves.

- In 2023, net primary income per inhabitant of Bucureşti-Ilfov was 225.3% of the average for Romania, while net disposable income per inhabitant was 189.2% of the national average. The ratio of the second of these ratios to the first of them was 84.0%, the lowest among all regions in the EU. Other regions for which the ratio between the 2 indicators was below 90.0% included the capital regions of Bulgaria, France, Slovakia, Spain and Croatia, as well as Oberbayern in Germany.
- By contrast, Chemnitz in Germany had a net primary income per inhabitant equal to 73.4% of the German average, while net disposable income was 90.4% of the national average, resulting in a ratio of the latter to the former that was equal to 123.3%. Other regions for which this ratio was above 120.0% included Severozapaden in Bulgaria and Calabria in Italy.



Map 3: Ratio of household disposable income to primary income, 2023 Source: Eurostat (nama_10r_2hhinc and nama_10r_3popgdp)

Source data for tables and graphs

- Regional household income: figures

Data sources

Regional accounts data are compiled annually based on the ESA 2010 requirements and in accordance with the transmission programme . For this article, the latest household data available for NUTS level 2 regions refer to the year 2023.

2024 benchmark revision

Benchmark revisions are coordinated major revisions carried out at least once every five years to incorporate new data sources and major changes in international statistical methodology. In national accounts, they aim to ensure a maximum degree of consistency within national accounts. In other words, they should be implemented to obtain a long time series and ensure consistency across countries. For further information, please refer to the associated metadata .

Context

In her political guidelines for the European Commission for 2024 to 2029, President van der Leyen highlighted the need to support people and to strengthen our societies and our social model .

View this article online at https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Regional_household_income_statistics

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- Annual national accounts (nama10) , see

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Branch and Household accounts (nama_10r_brch)

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- Maps can be explored interactively using *Eurostat's statistical atlas* (see also the dedicated section)
- Regional statistics illustrated
- *Regions in Europe*

Methodology

Manuals and further methodological information

- ESA 2010 – manuals and guidelines
- Manual on regional accounts methods – 2013 edition
- Methodological manual on territorial typologies – Eurostat – 2024 edition

Metadata

- Regional economic accounts (ESMS metadata file – reg_eco10_esms)

External links

- European Commission – Economic and financial affairs
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