Living conditions in Europe - housing quality

Statistics Explained

Data extracted in April 2020.
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This article is part of a set of statistical articles that form Eurostat’s online publication, *Living conditions in Europe*. Each article helps provide a comprehensive and up-to-date summary of living conditions in Europe, presenting some key results from the European Union’s (EU’s) statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC), which is conducted across EU Member States, as well as the United Kingdom and most of the EFTA and candidate countries.

**Key findings**

Overall, 17.1 % of people in the EU-27 lived in an overcrowded household in 2018. There were considerable differences between EU Member States, with overcrowding more prevalent in some of the eastern Member States, as well as in Greece, Italy, Latvia and Lithuania. In most Member States, the highest levels of overcrowding were usually concentrated in cities (where space is often at a premium).

In 2018, 18.2 % of the EU-27 population experienced too much noise from neighbours or from the street. This share was higher than the corresponding proportions of the EU-27 population who faced pollution, grime or other environmental problems (15.0 %), or crime, violence or vandalism (11.5 %). For all three of these issues, their prevalence across the EU-27 was lower in 2018 than it had been five years earlier.

For many households, the largest single expenditure item each month is in relation to housing costs. In those cases where housing costs represent a considerable share of total household expenditure, it is increasingly likely that the population may have to defer or cancel expenditure on other items. The housing cost overburden rate is defined by those households which allocate 40 % or more of their disposable income to housing. In 2018, this rate covered 9.6 % of the EU-27 population (and was much higher among tenants than owners), with shares rising above 10.0 % in Romania, Germany, Denmark and Bulgaria, while a peak of 39.5 % was recorded in Greece.

**Housing conditions**

Poor housing conditions are one of the main contributing factors that prevent people from enjoying an acceptable standard of living. The first part of this article analyses the distribution of housing stock before looking in more detail at overcrowding, living space and structural issues that impact on the quality of housing available to people living in the EU.

**People in the EU-27 were more likely to live in houses rather than in flats**

In 2018, 46.0 % of the EU-27 population lived in flats, while the majority of people lived in houses. Just over one third (34.7 %) of the population lived in detached houses and almost one fifth (18.6 %) lived in semi-detached or terraced houses (see Figure 1).
The share of persons living in flats ranged from 7.8 % in Ireland and 20.2 % in the Netherlands, to more than three out of every five people in Greece (60.6 %), Estonia (61.5 %), Spain (64.9 %), and Latvia (66.2 %).

By contrast, more than half of the population in Poland (50.1 %) and Denmark (53.2 %) lived in detached houses, while this share rose to more than three fifths in Hungary (64.6 %), Romania (65.2 %) and Slovenia (66.2 %), peaking at 69.7 % in Croatia. A high share of the populations in Norway (57.5 %), Serbia (63.6 %) and North Macedonia (74.6 %) also lived in detached houses.

Ireland (52.1 %) and the Netherlands (58.0 %) were the only EU Member States where more than half of the population lived in a semi-detached house in 2018; an even higher share was recorded in the United Kingdom (60.8 %).

In the EU-27, 7 out of 10 persons lived in an owner-occupied dwelling

In 2018, 7 out of 10 (70.0 %) persons in the EU-27 lived in an owner-occupied dwelling (see Table 1 ). Across each of the EU Member States, at least half of the population lived in a dwelling that was owner-occupied, with this share ranging from 51.4 % in Germany and 55.4 % in Austria — the only Member States having less than 60.0 % of their population owning their own dwelling — to 90.2 % in Croatia, 91.3 % in Slovakia and 96.4 % in Romania.
A closer analysis reveals that 45.1% of the EU-27 population lived in an owner-occupied dwelling without a housing loan or mortgage in 2018. The share of the population that lived in owner-occupied dwellings that did not have an outstanding mortgage or housing loan was generally quite high in eastern and Baltic Member States, above 60.0% in all cases except for Czechia (57.8%). In Romania, Croatia and Bulgaria this share was higher than 80.0%. By contrast, in many of the western and Nordic Member States the share was lower, ranging from 8.3% in the Netherlands to 37.9% in Ireland.

Turning to people living in owner-occupied dwellings with a mortgage or loan, the situation was generally reversed, with lower shares in eastern and Baltic Member States and higher ones in western and Nordic Member States.

It can be seen that more than half of the population that lived in owner-occupied housing in most EU Member States lived in a property without a mortgage or loan, the exceptions being Finland, Luxembourg, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands. Less than half of the population that lived in owner-occupied housing lived in a property without a mortgage or loan in the United Kingdom and the three EFTA countries for which data are available.

Three tenths (30.1%) of the EU-27 population lived in rented accommodation in 2018: some 20.8% of the population were tenants living in dwellings with a market rent, while 9.3% lived in rent-free or reduced-price dwellings. Among the EU Member States, the share of people living in a dwelling with a market price rent reached above 25.0% in Austria, the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark, and peaked in Germany at 40.8%; an even higher share was recorded in Switzerland (51.1%). A relatively high share of the population lived in rent-free or reduced-price dwellings in France (16.3%), Ireland (17.7%) and Slovenia (18.9%); this was also the case in Turkey (16.1%; 2017 data).

Despite a slowdown in population growth, many EU Member States are characterised by a shortage of (adequate) housing. This reflects, at least in part, a change in the composition of households, as an increasing share of the population live alone, while fewer extended families occupy the same dwelling.

The overcrowding rate is defined on the basis of the number of rooms available to a household, the household’s size, family situation and the ages of its members. In 2018, some 17.1% of the EU-27 population lived in an overcrowded household. This rate ranged from a low of less than 5.0% in Cyprus, Ireland, Malta, the Netherlands and Spain, to more than 35.0% in Slovakia, Poland, Croatia, Bulgaria, Latvia and Romania (where the highest share was recorded, at 46.3%).

As such, the overcrowding rate was higher in most of the eastern and Baltic Member States, Greece and

Table 1: Population distribution by tenure status, 2018(Share of total population)Source: Eurostat (ilc_lvho02)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tenure Status</th>
<th>Share of Total Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied without mortgage or loan</td>
<td>45.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner-occupied with mortgage or loan</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rented accommodation</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent-free or reduced-price dwellings</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Italy, while it was generally lower in western and Nordic Member States as well as the other southern Member States (see Map 1).

Map 1: Overcrowding rate, 2018(%) Source: Eurostat (ilc_lvho05a)

Figure 2 shows that people living in cities of the EU-27 were on the whole more likely to live in crowded conditions than were those living in rural areas, who in turn were slightly more likely to live in crowded conditions than people in towns and suburbs. In 2018, 18.7% of residents of cities in the EU-27 lived in an overcrowded household, while the corresponding shares for people living in rural areas and towns and suburbs were 16.7% and 15.4% respectively.
Based on this analysis by degree of urbanisation, there was some variation among the EU Member States in terms of the overcrowding rate in 2018, although this rate was highest for people living in cities in nearly all of the Member States. The overcrowding rate in cities in Belgium was 10.4 percentage points higher than the rates in towns and suburbs, while this gap was 12.9 points in Bulgaria and peaked at 13.4 points in Austria. Exceptions to this pattern of cities having the highest rates of overcrowding were Slovakia and Cyprus (where the highest overcrowding rates were recorded for people living in towns and suburbs), as well as Hungary and Poland (where the highest overcrowding rates were recorded for people living in rural areas).

Alongside the overcrowding rate, another measure which may be used to analyse living space is the average number of rooms per person. In 2018, EU-27 inhabitants had an average of 1.6 rooms each.

The average number of rooms per person was slightly higher, at 1.7, for people living in rural areas than it was for people living in cities or towns and suburbs (both 1.6 rooms). Differences in the average numbers of rooms per person were generally much greater between EU Member States rather than within individual Member States when analysed by degree of urbanisation. In 2018, the average number of rooms per person ranged from a high of 2.2 in Malta and values of at least 2.0 rooms per person in Belgium, Ireland, Cyprus, Luxembourg and the Netherlands, down to 1.1 rooms per person in Croatia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia.

Among the non-EU countries shown in Figure 3, the United Kingdom and Norway recorded the highest average number of rooms per person (2.0), while the average number of rooms per person in North Macedonia and Serbia (both 1.0 rooms) was slightly lower than in any of the Member States.

People living in rural areas tended to have the highest (or joint highest) average number of rooms per person. In 2018, this pattern held true in the vast majority of the EU Member States, although the highest average number of rooms in Cyprus and Hungary was recorded for people living in cities, in Croatia and Malta (no data available for rural areas) for people living in towns and suburbs, and in Slovenia jointly for people living in cities or in towns and suburbs (Figure 3).
The average number of rooms per person was generally quite similar within individual EU Member States when analysed by degree of urbanisation. The largest gaps were observed in the Nordic Member States, where the average number of rooms per person in rural areas was 0.4-0.5 rooms per person higher than in cities. By contrast, in Poland the average number of rooms was 1.1 per person in all three types of areas, while in Greece, Croatia, Italy, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, the average number of rooms was similar in all three types of areas.

In 2018, the average number of rooms per person was somewhat higher, at 1.7 rooms, for EU-27 homeowners than it was for tenants living in rented accommodation, 1.5 rooms per person (see Table 2). As may be expected, the space available to people living in houses was, on average, slightly greater than that available to people living in flats. This was somewhat more notable among owner-occupied dwellings, as people living in houses had, on average, 0.2 more rooms per person than homeowners living in flats. There was less difference in the average size of dwellings among tenants, whether they resided in houses (1.6 rooms per person) or flats (1.5 rooms per person).
The average number of rooms per person was higher for people in owner-occupied dwellings than for tenants in each of the EU Member States in 2018, with the exception of the Netherlands where tenants lived in dwellings with 2.1 rooms per person compared with 1.9 rooms per person in owner-occupied dwellings.

Space constraints on tenants were particularly apparent in Ireland and Luxembourg, where tenants had 0.8 and 0.7 fewer rooms per person than people in owner-occupied dwellings; in France, Austria, Slovenia and Sweden the corresponding gap was also high (0.5 rooms).

Structural problems for dwellings

Among the various structural problems that may be experienced in a dwelling, some 13.6 % of the EU-27 population reported that, in 2018, their home had a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundations, or rot in its window frames or floor. Between 2010 and 2012, the proportion of the EU population that lived in a dwelling that was affected by at least one of these issues, fell from 16.3 % to 14.8 %. There was a slight increase in 2013 and stability in 2014 (both 15.6 %), after which the share of population living in a dwelling with a leaking roof, damp walls, floors or foundation, or rot in its window frames or floor fell slightly in 2015 and 2016, and more strongly in 2017 to reach 13.1 %. As such, the increase between 2017 and 2018 (from 13.1 % to 13.6 %) was the first since 2013 (see Figure 4 ).
In 2018, 7.6% of the EU-27 population was unable to keep their home adequately warm.

Overall, some 7.6% of the EU-27 population in 2018 could not afford to keep their home adequately warm (see Table 3). Among the population at risk of poverty, this share was 2.5 times as high (19.0%).

Table 3: Share of population unable to keep home adequately warm by risk of poverty (%)

In 2018, close to one fifth of the population living in Portugal (19.4%) was unable to keep their home adequately warm.
warm, with this share between one fifth and one quarter in Cyprus (21.9 %) and Greece (22.7 %), more than one quarter in Lithuania (27.9 %) and peaking in Bulgaria above one third (33.7 %).

Among people at risk of poverty, the share that could not afford to adequately warm their home in 2018 was higher than 20.0 % in eight EU Member States, and was particularly high in Lithuania (35.5 %), Portugal (37.0 %), Greece (41.2 %), Cyprus (45.4 %), and Bulgaria (56.0 %).

The ability to keep a home adequately warm depends on a number of factors, including the general condition of the building, the outside temperature and the cost of energy. Energy prices tend to fluctuate far more than the inflation rate. During the period from 2013 to 2016, the price of energy fell at quite a rapid pace. In 2017 and 2018 energy prices increased again. By contrast, the share of the EU-27 population that was unable to keep their home adequately warm fell regularly during this period, from 10.8 % in 2013 to 7.6 % in 2018.

Environmental issues related to dwellings

Living conditions are also affected by the quality of the local environment around people’s dwellings. Some people encounter issues such as too much noise, pollution, crime, violence or vandalism, which may impact on their quality of life.

Reporting environmental issues in the EU-SILC survey

The data in Tables 4 and 5 and Figures 5 to 7 concern the proportion of the survey population having reported — in the EU-SILC survey — that they experienced the specified environmental issues.

Too much noise was the most widespread environmental issue for people living in the EU

In 2018, too much noise from neighbours or from the street was the most widespread environmental issue, as reported by 18.2 % of EU-27 inhabitants. The share of people who reported pollution, grime and other environmental problems was 15.0 % in the EU-27, while the share who reported Crime, violence or vandalism in the area was 11.5 %.

The issue of too much noise was particularly prevalent among people living in Portugal, the Netherlands, Germany and Malta, where between 23.0 % and 28.2 % of the population indicated that there was too much noise in the local area where they lived (see Table 4 ).
Table 4: Share of population encountering environmental problems in/around their dwelling(%)Source: Eurostat (ilc_mddw01), (ilc_mddw02) and (ilc_mddw03)

Compared with the other two issues presented in table 4, too much noise was the main one reported in the majority (16 out of 27) of the EU Member States in 2018. It was, however, more common to find that people in Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Malta, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Italy and Estonia reported pollution, grime or other environmental problems, while in Bulgaria and Ireland it was more common for people to report crime, violence or vandalism.

Between 2008 and 2018, the share of the EU-27 population perceiving too much noise around their dwelling dropped by 2.4 percentage points. There was a slightly smaller fall (down 1.6 points) observed for the share of people who reported crime, violence or vandalism in their area, while the share of people who reported pollution, grime and other environmental problems was almost unchanged (down 0.2 points).

Among the EU Member States, it was common to find a fall between 2008 and 2018 in the proportion of people who reported that they encountered these issues; this was particularly notable concerning the proportion of people who reported too much noise from their neighbours or from the street which fell in all Member States except for Malta, Sweden, Germany and France.

The proportion of people living in Italy, Romania, Cyprus and Estonia who reported too much noise from their neighbours or from the street fell at a rapid pace (down 13.4, 11.2, 10.1 and 9.4 percentage points respectively. The same was true in Latvia, Estonia, Cyprus and Slovakia for people encountering pollution, grime or other environmental problems (down 15.7, 13.5, 10.2 and 9.7 points). The proportion of people reporting that they encountered crime, violence and vandalism fell between 2008 and 2018 most strongly in Latvia (down 20.1 points).

In fact, between 2008 and 2018, at least one of these shares fell in all EU Member States except for France and Germany. All three shares fell in 15 Member States, including for example Estonia and Latvia.

The largest increase for too much noise from neighbours or from the street was recorded in Malta (up 3.7 points), Lithuania recorded the largest increase for pollution, grime or other environmental problems (up 4.2 points), and Cyprus recorded the largest increase for crime, violence or vandalism in the area (up 3.8 points).

From Table 5 it can be seen that, across the EU-27, these issues were more likely to be encountered by the part of the population at risk of poverty than by the total population. In 2018, the share of the population reporting that they encountered too much noise was 2.4 percentage points higher for the population at risk of poverty (20.6 %) than for the whole population (18.2 %), while the share of people at risk of poverty and...
reporting crime, violence or vandalism (14.1 %) was 2.6 points higher than the share for the whole population (11.5 %). The share of people at risk of poverty and encountering pollution, grime and other environmental problems (16.1 %) was 1.1 points higher than for the total population (15.0 %).

Table 5: Share of population encountering environmental problems in/around their dwelling by risk of poverty, 2018(%)Source: Eurostat (ilc_mddw01), (ilc_mddw02) and (ilc_mddw03)

In 2018, the share of the population at risk of poverty encountering too much noise from neighbours or from the street was at least 1.5 times as high as the share recorded for the whole population in Denmark, Hungary and Ireland. By contrast, Malta, Greece, Croatia, Poland, Romania and Lithuania reported that their subpopulations at risk of poverty were less likely (than the population as a whole) to report too much noise from such sources.

In a similar vein, the share of the population at risk of poverty and encountering pollution, grime or other environmental problems was 1.7 times as high as the share recorded for the whole population in Hungary and Denmark, while the population at risk of poverty was less likely to report encountering pollution, grime or other environmental problems in Slovenia, Cyprus, Croatia, Romania, Greece, Lithuania and Poland. In Hungary, the share of the population at risk of poverty and encountering crime, violence or vandalism in their area was 2.5 times as high as the share recorded for the total population, while it was also at least 1.7 times as high in Slovakia, Belgium and Denmark. By contrast, in Poland, Croatia, Latvia, Slovenia, Austria and Cyprus the share of the population at risk of poverty and encountering crime, violence or vandalism in their area was lower than the share recorded for the total population.

People in the EU-27 living in urban areas were generally more likely to encounter too much noise than those living in rural areas.

On average, 24.3 % of the EU-27’s population living in cities reported in 2018 that they had encountered too much noise from neighbours or from the street; this share was highest (ranging from 29.5 % to 35.5 %) in Malta, Portugal, Greece, the Netherlands and Germany. The equivalent shares — for the EU-27 — for people living in towns and suburbs (17.2 %) or in rural areas (10.9 %) were considerably lower (see Figure 5 ).
Figure 5: Share of population reporting noise from neighbours or from the street by degree of urbanisation, 2018(%)Source: Eurostat (ilc_mddw01) and (ilc_mddw04)

In 2018, pollution, grime and other environmental problems were encountered by 21.3 % of city-dwellers across the EU-27, with particularly high shares (over 30.0 %) in Malta, Greece and Germany — see Figure 6. Such problems were less commonly reported in the EU-27 by the subpopulations living in towns and suburbs (13.1 %) and especially rural areas (8.5 %).
In 2018, just over one in six (17.4 %) persons living in cities across the EU-27’s Member States reported crime, violence or vandalism in their area, with this share peaking at 28.0 % in Bulgaria. This share was notably lower in other areas: 9.2 % among the subpopulation that lived in towns and suburbs, and 5.8 % for people living in rural areas (see Figure 7).

Figure 6: Share of population reporting pollution, grime or other environmental problems by degree of urbanisation, 2018(%)Source: Eurostat (ilc_mddw02) and (ilc_mddw05)

As such, all three of the issues concerning the environment of a dwelling were more likely to be reported by...
people living in the EU-27’s cities.

Among the EU Member States, a similar pattern was observed in 2018, with the following exceptions:

- **too much noise from neighbours or from the street** was most commonly reported by the subpopulation living in towns and suburbs in Cyprus and Slovakia;
- **pollution, grime or other environmental problems** were most commonly reported by the subpopulation living in towns and suburbs in Luxembourg, Cyprus and Slovakia;
- **crime, violence or vandalism in the area** was most commonly reported by the subpopulation living in towns and suburbs in Slovakia.

As such, Slovakia did not share the general pattern observed for the EU-27, as it was in towns and suburbs where the highest proportion of the population reported experiencing each of the three surveyed issues related to the environment of their dwellings.

**Housing affordability**

In 2010, a European Commission Communication *the European platform against poverty and social exclusion: a European framework for social and territorial cohesion* (COM(2010) 758 final) addressed the issue of affordable accommodation by declaring that ‘access to affordable accommodation is a fundamental need and right’.

Housing costs often make up the largest component of expenditure for many households. Increases in housing costs can potentially lead to other expenditure (possibly for other basic needs) being deferred or cancelled. **Some 9.6 % of the EU-27 population spent 40 % or more of their household disposable income on housing**.

Housing affordability may be analysed through the housing cost overburden rate, which shows the share of the population living in households that spend 40 % or more of their disposable income on housing.

The housing cost overburden rate for the EU-27 was 9.6 % in 2018. There were, however, large differences between the EU Member States (see Map 2). Rates below 6.0 % were recorded in 11 Member States, with lows of 2.0 % in Cyprus and 1.7 % in Malta. By contrast, the housing cost overburden rate was at least 10.0 % in Romania, Germany, Denmark and Bulgaria, reaching a peak of 39.5 % in Greece. Rates above 10.0 % were also observed in North Macedonia, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and Montenegro, as well as in Serbia where this rate reached 31.3 %. These differences may, at least partially, reflect differences in national policies for social housing or public subsidies and benefits that are provided by governments for housing.
Map 2: Housing cost overburden rate, 2018 (Share of total population) Source: Eurostat (ilc_lvho07a)

Having fallen steadily between 2013 and 2018, the EU-27’s housing cost overburden rate was 2.0 percentage points lower at the end of the period under consideration (see Table 6).
In 24 of the EU Member States, the housing cost overburden rate fell between 2013 and 2018, while there were three Member States where the rate increased. The largest decreases for the housing cost overburden rate were recorded in Romania (down 6.6 percentage points between 2013 and 2018), the Netherlands (down 6.3 points; note that there is a break in series), Hungary and Latvia (both down 4.7 points). There was an increase of 2.6 points in Greece as well as increases in Bulgaria and Luxembourg, both of which have a break in series.

In the EU-27, the share of the population living in households that spent 40 % or more of their disposable income on housing in 2018 was significantly greater among tenants than it was among homeowners, as shown in Table 7. This was especially the case for tenants living in dwellings with a market price rent, for whom the housing cost overburden rate was 25.1 %, while it was 4.0 % for homeowners with a mortgage or housing loan.

Table 6: Housing cost overburden rate by risk of poverty, 2013-2018(Share of total population)
Source: Eurostat (ilc_lvho07a)
When analysed by tenure status, the housing cost overburden rate varied considerably across the EU Member States in 2018. For tenants living in dwellings with a market price rent, it ranged from a low of 11.3 % in Cyprus up to 50.1 % in Bulgaria and 83.1 % in Greece.

For homeowners that had a mortgage, the housing cost overburden rate ranged from less than 1.0 % in Cyprus, France and Romania, to close to one tenth in Latvia (9.6 %) and 29.2 % in Greece.

**Figure 8** provides an alternative analysis, as it focuses on the share of the population that spent more than half of their disposable income on housing costs. Across the EU-27, more than one in seven (15.3 %) tenants living in dwellings with a market price rent spent more than half of their disposable income on housing costs in 2018.
Figure 8: Share of population with a housing cost burden over 50% of disposable income, 2018 (%)
Source: Eurostat (ilc_lvho28)

The share of tenants living in dwellings with a market price rent that spent more than half of their disposable income on housing costs was systematically higher than the share for the whole population across all 27 of the EU Member States. In Greece, nearly two thirds (65.5%) of tenants living in dwellings with a market price rent spent more than half of their disposable income on housing costs in 2018 and this share was also over one third in Bulgaria (37.8%) and Romania (37.0%).

Household consumption expenditure

National accounts provide information about household consumption expenditure on goods and services; this information may be analysed according to the classification of individual consumption by purpose, where Division 04 covers housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels.

In 2018, people in the EU-27 spent an average of EUR 4 020 on housing-related purposes. There were considerable variations between the EU Member States, reflecting differences in both rental/house prices and utility prices.

In 2018, average expenditure per inhabitant on housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels ranged from EUR 1 000 in Bulgaria and EUR 1 230 in Hungary, up to EUR 6 120 in Finland and EUR 6 720 in Denmark, reaching a peak of EUR 7 960 in Luxembourg. Among the non-EU countries shown in Map 3, an even higher value was recorded in Switzerland, EUR 9 160.

In 11 of the 27 EU Member States for which data are available, expenditure per inhabitant on housing-related items was above the EU-27 average (as denoted by the two darker shaded areas in Map 3). Except for Italy, all of these were western and Nordic Member States. By contrast, expenditure was lower than the EU-27 average in southern (except for Italy), eastern and Baltic Member States.
The share of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels in EU-27 final household consumption expenditure was 23.5 % in 2018 (which was slightly higher than 10 years earlier (22.6 % in 2008) but lower than five years earlier (24.6 % in 2013) — see Table 8). The highest proportion was attributed to imputed rentals for housing (12.1 % of final household consumption expenditure), followed by actual rentals (4.5 %), electricity, gas and other fuels (4.2 %), water supply and related services (1.8 %) and maintenance and repair for dwellings (1.0 %).
Table 8: Share of housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels in final household consumption expenditure, EU-28(%)Source: Eurostat (nama_10_co3_p3)

Source data for tables and graphs

- Housing quality: maps, tables and figures

Data sources

The data used in this article are primarily derived from data from EU statistics on income and living conditions (EU-SILC). EU-SILC is carried out annually and is the main survey that measures income and living conditions in Europe, and is the main source of information used to link different aspects relating to the quality of life at the household and individual level.

The reference population is all private households and their current members residing in the territory of an EU Member State 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.

Tables in this article use the following notation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value in italics</th>
<th>data value is forecasted, provisional or estimated and is therefore likely to change:</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>not available, confidential or unreliable value.</td>
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Context

In the context of material living standards and well-being, housing is a fundamental characteristic. Indeed, many people would agree that being able to afford adequate housing of decent quality in a safe environment is a basic need, as a dwelling should provide shelter, adequate space for its occupants to live, eat and sleep, as well as a degree of privacy for the household as a whole and for its individual members.

Housing quality is a broad term that covers a wide range of issues, which are related not only to the dwelling itself, but also to the broader residential area surrounding where people live. Housing quality may be assessed, for example, in relation to: structural issues such as damp walls or a leaking roof; overcrowding or a shortage of space; the ability to keep the home adequately warm; or a lack of basic amenities (for example, hot and cold running water, or bathing and sanitary facilities). It may also be assessed through a wider residential context, for example, whether (or not) people live in a noisy area, are exposed to pollution, or feel unsafe in their neighbourhood. The information presented in this article generally analyses these aspects in terms of the subjective responses of individuals to questions about their local environment.
See also

Online publication

- All articles from *Living conditions in Europe*

Other articles

- Ageing Europe — statistics on housing and living conditions
- Being young in Europe today — living conditions for children
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- Housing statistics
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- Young people — housing conditions

Main tables

- Income and living conditions (t_i1c)

Database

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- Income and living conditions

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- Analytic report on subjective well-being
- Living conditions in Europe — 2018 edition

Methodology

- Income and living conditions (ESMS metadata file — ilc_esms)
- Main concepts and definitions

Legislation

- Detailed list of legislative information on EU-SILC provisions for survey design, survey characteristics, data transmission and ad-hoc modules
- Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003 — the central piece of legislation for EU-SILC
- Summaries of EU Legislation: EU statistics on income and living conditions

External links

- European Commission — Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion — Employment and Social Developments in Europe 2019
- United Nations — Demographic and Social Statistics — Housing
- WHO — Housing