

At risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU28

## **In 2012, a quarter of the population was at risk of poverty or social exclusion**

Corresponding to around 125 million persons

In 2012, 124.5 million people, or 24.8% of the population, in the **EU**<sup>1</sup> were at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared with 24.3% in 2011 and 23.7% in 2008. This means that they were in at least one of the following three conditions: at-risk-of-poverty<sup>2</sup>, severely materially deprived<sup>2</sup> or living in households with very low work intensity<sup>2</sup>. The reduction of the number of persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in the EU is one of the key targets of the Europe 2020 strategy<sup>3</sup>.

In 2012, the highest shares of persons being at risk of poverty or social exclusion were recorded in **Bulgaria** (49%), **Romania** (42%), **Latvia** (37%) and **Greece** (35%), and the lowest in the **Netherlands** and the **Czech Republic** (both 15%), **Finland** (17%), **Sweden** and **Luxembourg** (both 18%).

These figures<sup>4</sup> are published by **Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union** and are based on data from the EU-SILC survey<sup>5</sup>.

### **17% of the population in the EU28 at risk of income poverty...**

Looking at each of the three elements contributing to being at risk of poverty or social exclusion, 17% of the **EU28** population in 2012 were at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers, meaning that their disposable income was below their national at-risk-of-poverty threshold<sup>2</sup>. The highest at-risk-of-poverty rates were observed in **Greece** and **Romania** (both 23%), **Spain** (22%), **Bulgaria** and **Croatia** (both 21%), and the lowest in the **Czech Republic** and the **Netherlands** (both 10%), **Denmark, Slovakia** and **Finland** (all 13%). It is important to note that the at-risk-of-poverty rate is a relative measure of poverty and that the poverty threshold varies greatly between Member States. The threshold varies also over time and in a number of Member States it has fallen in recent years due to the economic crisis.

### **...10% severely materially deprived...**

In the **EU28**, 10% of the population were severely materially deprived, meaning that they had living conditions constrained by a lack of resources such as not being able to afford to pay their bills, keep their home adequately warm, or take a one week holiday away from home<sup>2</sup>. The share of those severely materially deprived varied significantly among Member States, ranging from less than 5% in **Luxembourg** and **Sweden** (both 1%), the **Netherlands** (2%), **Denmark** and **Finland** (both 3%) and **Austria** (4%) to 44% in **Bulgaria**, 30% in **Romania** and 26% in **Latvia** and **Hungary**.

### **...and 10% living in households with very low work intensity**

For low work intensity, 10% of the population aged 0-59 in the **EU28** lived in households where the adults worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year<sup>2</sup>. **Croatia** (16%), **Spain, Greece** and **Belgium** (all 14%) had the highest proportion of those living in very low work intensity households, and **Luxembourg** and **Cyprus** (both 6%) the lowest.

## At risk of poverty or social exclusion<sup>2</sup>, 2012

	Persons at-risk-of-poverty after social transfers	Persons severely materially deprived	Persons aged 0-59 living in households with very low work intensity	Persons falling under at least one of the three criteria (at risk of poverty or social exclusion)			
				% of total population			In millions, 2012
				2008	2011	2012	
<b>EU28*</b>	<b>17.0</b>	<b>9.9</b>	<b>10.4</b>	<b>23.7</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>24.8</b>	<b>124.5</b>
<b>Belgium**</b>	14.8	6.5	14.0	20.8	21.0	21.6	2.4
<b>Bulgaria</b>	21.2	44.1	12.4	44.8	49.1	49.3	3.6
<b>Czech Republic</b>	9.6	6.6	6.8	15.3	15.3	15.4	1.6
<b>Denmark</b>	13.1	2.8	10.9	16.3	18.9	19.0	1.1
<b>Germany</b>	16.1	4.9	9.8	20.1	19.9	19.6	15.9
<b>Estonia</b>	17.5	9.4	9.0	21.8	23.1	23.4	0.3
<b>Ireland</b>	:	:	:	23.7	29.4	:	:
<b>Greece</b>	23.1	19.5	14.1	28.1	31.0	34.6	3.8
<b>Spain</b>	22.2	5.8	14.2	24.5	27.7	28.2	13.1
<b>France</b>	14.1	5.3	8.4	18.6	19.3	19.1	11.8
<b>Croatia</b>	20.5	15.4	16.1	:	32.3	32.3	1.4
<b>Italy</b>	19.4	14.5	10.3	25.3	28.2	29.9	18.2
<b>Cyprus</b>	14.7	15.0	6.4	23.3	24.6	27.1	0.2
<b>Latvia</b>	19.4	26.0	11.5	33.8	40.4	36.6	0.7
<b>Lithuania</b>	18.6	19.8	11.3	27.6	33.1	32.5	1.0
<b>Luxembourg</b>	15.1	1.3	6.1	15.5	16.8	18.4	0.1
<b>Hungary</b>	14.0	25.7	12.7	28.2	31.0	32.4	3.2
<b>Malta</b>	15.0	8.0	7.9	19.6	21.4	22.2	0.1
<b>Netherlands</b>	10.1	2.3	8.7	14.9	15.7	15.0	2.5
<b>Austria**</b>	:	4.0	7.6	18.6	16.9	:	:
<b>Poland</b>	17.1	13.5	6.8	30.5	27.2	26.7	10.1
<b>Portugal</b>	17.9	8.6	10.1	26.0	24.4	25.3	2.7
<b>Romania</b>	22.6	29.9	7.4	44.2	40.3	41.7	8.9
<b>Slovenia</b>	13.5	6.6	7.5	18.5	19.3	19.6	0.4
<b>Slovakia</b>	13.2	10.5	7.2	20.6	20.6	20.5	1.1
<b>Finland</b>	13.2	2.9	9.1	17.4	17.9	17.2	0.9
<b>Sweden**</b>	14.2	1.3	10.0	14.9	16.1	18.2	1.8
<b>United Kingdom***</b>	16.2	7.8	13.0	23.2	22.7	24.1	15.1
<b>Iceland</b>	7.9	2.4	6.0	11.8	13.7	12.7	0.0
<b>Norway</b>	10.1	1.7	7.0	15.0	14.5	13.8	0.7
<b>Switzerland</b>	15.9	0.8	3.4	18.6	17.2	17.5	1.3

\* EU27 data for persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2008; EU28 estimates for 2012.

\*\* Belgium and Austria: 2012 data provisional; Sweden: 2012 data provisional for households with low work intensity and persons at risk of poverty or social exclusion

\*\*\* Change of provider of cross-sectional EU-SILC data: until 2012 data were collected by the ONS, from 2012 onwards they are collected by the Department for Work and Pensions.

: Data not available

0.0 Less than 0.05 million

1. EU27 data for 2008, EU28 data for 2011 and 2012.
2. **Persons at-risk-of-poverty** are those living in a household with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income (after social transfers). The equivalised income is calculated by dividing the total household income by its size determined after applying the following weights: 1.0 to the first adult, 0.5 to each other household members aged 14 or over and 0.3 to each household member aged less than 14 years old.  
**Severely materially deprived persons** have living conditions constrained by a lack of resources and experience at least 4 out of the 9 following deprivation items: cannot afford 1) to pay rent/mortgage or utility bills on time, 2) to keep home adequately warm, 3) to face unexpected expenses, 4) to eat meat, fish or a protein equivalent every second day, 5) a one week holiday away from home, 6) a car, 7) a washing machine, 8) a colour TV, or 9) a telephone (including mobile phone).  
**People living in households with very low work intensity** are those aged 0-59 who live in households where on average the adults (aged 18-59) worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year. Students are excluded.  
The total number of **people at risk of poverty or social exclusion** is lower than the sum of the numbers of people in each of the three forms of poverty or social exclusion as some persons are affected simultaneously by more than one of these situations.
3. For more information on the Europe 2020 strategy: [http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm).
4. For more information, see Statistics explained article on the Eurostat web site:  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics\\_explained/index.php/People\\_at\\_risk\\_of\\_poverty\\_or\\_social\\_exclusion](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/statistics_explained/index.php/People_at_risk_of_poverty_or_social_exclusion)
5. The **EU-SILC survey** is the EU reference source for comparative statistics on income distribution, poverty and living conditions. More information can be found on the Eurostat website:  
[http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income\\_social\\_inclusion\\_living\\_conditions/introduction](http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/introduction).  
The reference population is all private households and their current members residing in the territory of a given Member State at the time of data collection. Persons living in collective households and in institutions are generally excluded from the target population as well as small and remote parts of the national territory amounting to no more than 2% of the national population.

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