

HC2.2 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSHOLDS LIVING WITHOUT FLUSHING TOILET

Definitions and methodology

A lack of basic sanitary amenities such as a flushing toilet is a clear sign of poor quality housing and considered a health risk (Eurofund, 2016). To illustrate the extent of the issue, this indicator provides information on the share of households that do not have a flushing toilet at their exclusive disposal to measure low quality of housing. The information on access to basic sanitary amenities is derived from household survey microdata.

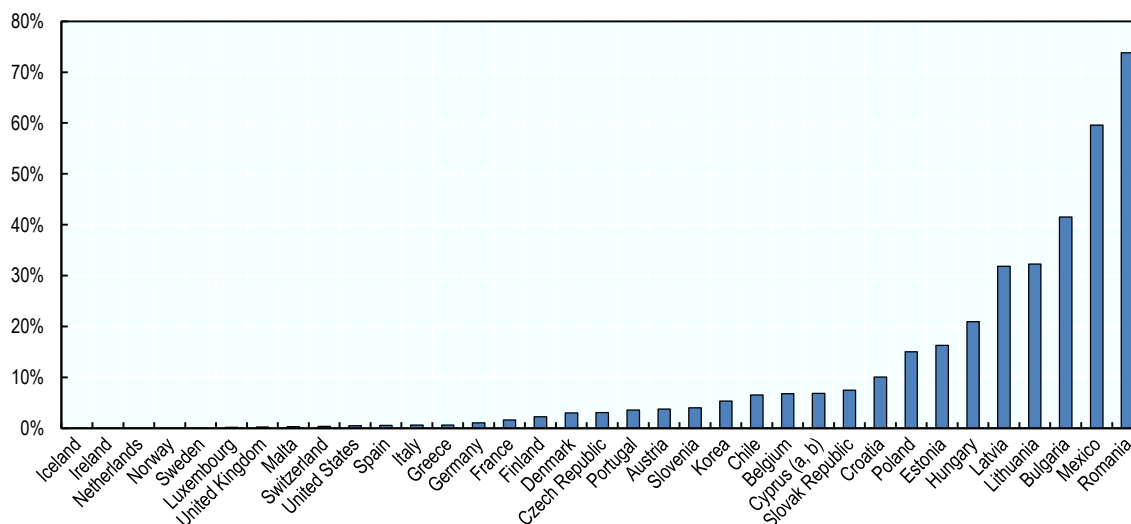
Key findings

While the vast majority of households in OECD countries has a flushing toilet at their disposal this does not always hold for poor households (Figure HC2.2.1, refer to online Annex HC2.2.A1 for earlier years and results for non-poor households).

In Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Ireland and Switzerland all poor households (below 50% of median equivalised disposable household income) had a flushing toilet in their dwelling, while in most Central and Southern European countries, the United States and Korea up to 7% of poor households have to do without. Many poor household in Central and Eastern European countries do not have a flushing toilet in their dwelling and this proportion is highest in Bulgaria and Romania while in Mexico too more than half of poor households are without an indoor flushing toilet.

Figure HC2.2.1: Share of poor households without exclusive flushing toilet, 2014 or latest year available^{1, 2, 3}

Share of poor households (below 50% of median equivalised disposable household income) without indoor flushing toilet, in percent



1. No estimates available for Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and Turkey due to data limitations.

2. Poor households are households with equivalised disposable income below 50% of the median country income. In Chile, Mexico, Korea, and the United States gross income is used due to data limitations.

3. Results only shown if category composed of at least 30 observations.

a) Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to “Cyprus” relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the “Cyprus issue”.

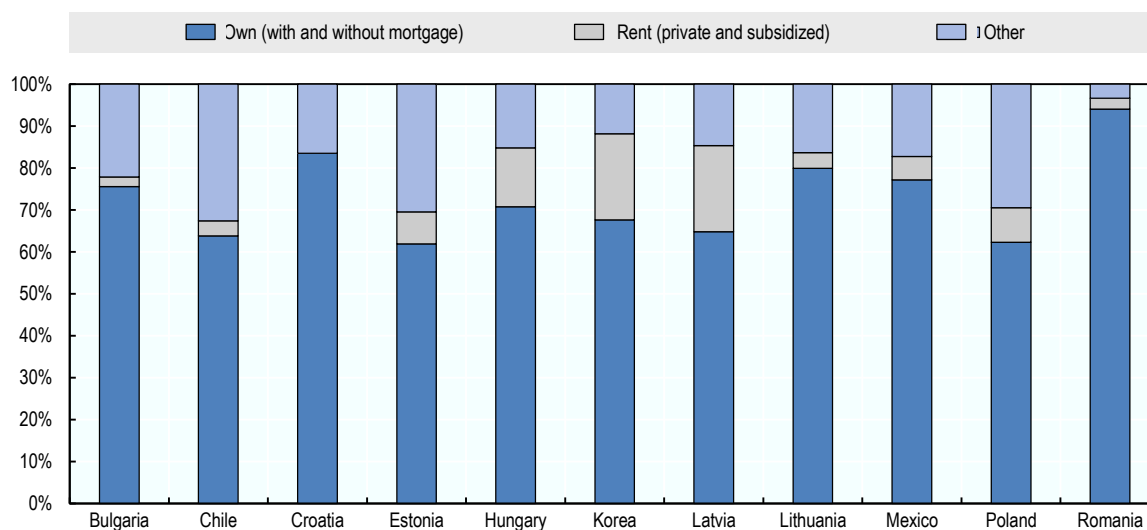
b) Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Sources: OECD calculations based on European Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) 2014 except Germany; Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2013); the German Socioeconomic Panel (GSOEP) for Germany (2014); the Korean Housing Survey (2014); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2014); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2014).

The lack of indoor flushing toilets mainly concerns low-income owners rather than low-income tenants (Figure HC2.2.2, only shows results for countries with more than 5% of low-income households without an indoor flushing toilet). Poor households without flushing toilets are mostly located outside urban areas. The category "Other, unknown tenure" is composed of free accommodation and/or unknown or unclear types of tenure.

Figure HC2.2.2: Tenure structure of poor households without indoor flushing toilet, 2014 or latest year available, selected countries^{1,2}

Tenure shares of low-income households without indoor flushing toilet, 2014 or latest year available, in percent of population



1. Disaggregation by tenure type only shown for countries where more than 5% poor households do not have a flushing indoor toilet and 40 or more of the sampled poor households reported lack of an indoor flushing toilet.
2. Poor households are households with equivalised disposable income below 50% of the median country income. In Chile, Mexico and Korea (2014) gross income is used due to data limitations.

Source: OECD calculations based on European Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) for European countries (2014); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2013); the Korean Housing Survey (2014); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2014).

In the vast majority of countries the share of poor households without indoor flushing toilets has been stable at very low levels since 2010. By contrast in countries such as Bulgaria, Estonia and Romania the situation is improving, particularly for the poor (data not shown here, refer to online annex, HC2.2.A1); e.g. in Romania the share of poor households without exclusive flushing toilet has decreased from 82.3% in 2010 to 73.2% in 2014 and in Bulgaria from 55.1% (2010) to 41.5% (2014).

Data and comparability issues

This indicator is calculated based on household surveys. For European countries the European Survey on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) is used except for Germany where the German Socioeconomic Panel (GSOEP) is used; for Chile the Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN); for Korea the Korean Housing Survey; for Mexico the Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH); and for the United States the American Community Survey (ACS). No information on flushing toilets is available in the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey, the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) in Canada and the Japanese Household Panel Study (JHPS) and the indicator therefore not included for those countries.

The surveys ask whether the household has exclusive access or shared access to a flushing toilet. The toilet does not have to be in a separate room to qualify as exclusive but can also be in the same room as a shower or bath. Data for Korea refer to a flushing toilet regardless of the type of toilet (Asian or European style).

Sources and further reading:

Eurofound (2016), *Inadequate housing in Europe: Costs and consequences*, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg;

Solari, C. and R. Mare (2012), "Housing crowding effects on children's wellbeing", *Social Science Research*, Vol. 41(2), pp. 464-476.