

HC 3.3 EVICTIONS

Definitions and methodology

This indicator presents available data at national level on the number of evictions. Data are taken from the European Commission report on the project ‘Promoting protection of the right to housing - Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions’.

For the scope of this indicator, we refer to evictions as the involuntary removal of people from their homes involving a judicial process. Evictions can be both from owner-occupied and rented housing (private and social rental housing). EC (2016) distinguishes three phases in this process: 1) the pre-court phase (starting from the moment of issuance of the formal instruction to leave, such as a notice to quit or a letter seeking repossession), 2) the court phase (the court process itself, up to the decision to evict/possession order), and 3) the phase encompassing the period between the court order for possession and the actual physical eviction (if it indeed takes place) (EC, 2016). Not all households who receive a notice to quit or repossession letter are eventually evicted. For example, they may eventually pay arrears on rents/mortgage payments, follow a payment scheme and remain in the dwelling, or leave without going through a court process.

Evictions are legally justified on the basis of enforcing property, mortgage, contract or tenancy law as well as building or property condition regulations. All EU countries have established a set of regulations regarding evictions (see also indicator PH6.1 on rental regulation) and many of them have legal, social and procedural measures to avoid evictions and support those who are evicted (EC, 2016). From this perspective, they should be distinguished from so-called ‘forced evictions’, which according to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are defined as “the permanent or temporary removal against their will of individuals, families and/or communities from the homes and/or land which they occupy, without the provision of, and access to, appropriate forms of legal or other protection” (UN HABITAT and OHCHR, 2014).

Evictions imply negative personal and social consequences, and can lead to homelessness. The link with homelessness is not confined to the actual physical eviction, as people may just leave their home on receiving a notice to quit and they might not be able to find alternative accommodation.

Key findings

As Table HC3.3.1 shows, data on legal evictions is available for only a limited number of countries. Furthermore, countries often do not record all different phases of the eviction process.

Despite limitations, it is possible to draw some observations from the available EU evidence:

1. In Austria, Belgium, Estonia and Finland there was little change in the number of evictions between 2010 and 2013 (+/- 10%)

2. In Croatia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Portugal and Sweden the number of evictions decreased by more than 10%

3. In Bulgaria, Ireland, Latvia and the Netherlands the number of evictions has increased by more than 10%

4. Data from Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom do not allow for identifying consistent trends.

Table HC 3.3.1: Eviction processes, 2010-2013

National data on eviction processes, according to available indicators¹

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Change 2010- 2013	Indicator
Austria	5,466	5,253	4,936	4,955	-9	Households evicted (all tenures)
Austria	13,788	14,071	13,625	13,320	-3	Households receiving eviction order in rented housing (private and social)
Austria	36,597	36,985	36,731	36,032	-2	Households receiving notice to quit in rented housing (private and social)
Belgium	12,566	12,740	13,561	12,958	3	Eviction procedures started in Flanders in rented housing (private and social)
Bulgaria	904	970	1,131	1,324	47	Dispossession of all types of properties (incl. commercial property)
Croatia	487	345	286	319	-35	Applications filed to Zagreb Civil Court for the vacation and surrender of dwellings (owner-occupied and rented)
Croatia	214	152	174	178	-17	Eviction orders in public housing in Zagreb
Croatia	54	13	11	6	-89	Executed evictions in public housing in Zagreb
Cyprus (a,b)	290	328	303	358	23	Court decisions on eviction cases in rented housing
Czech Republic	6,376	6,832	6,012	5,029	-21	Court proceedings on evictions (all types of tenures)
Czech Republic	1,740	1,697	1,442	1,019	-41	Motions to execute court decisions for evictions (all tenures and including commercial property)
Denmark	4382	4405	3790	3507	-20	Executed evictions from rented housing (private and social)
Denmark	20,756	21,388	19,736	17,479	-16	Court cases for evictions from rented housing (private and social)
Denmark	3,726	3,554	3,685	3,279	-12	Repossessions from owner-occupied residences
Estonia	..	28	34	26	-7	Evictions in Tallinn public housing
Finland	8,310	8,042	8,076	8,148	-2	Eviction summons to district court from housing (all tenures)
Finland	6,641	6,959	6,643	6,585	-1	Eviction cases receiving an eviction order from bailiff (all tenures)
Finland	3347	3772	3686	3407	2	Execution of eviction by bailiff (all tenures)
France	58,739	55,957	49,685	51,096	-13	Notice to quit (private and social rented)
France	11,670	12,759	11,487	10,132	-13	Forced intervention by authorities in evictions from private and social rented housing
Germany	49,295	44,377	38,131	34,491	-30	Compulsory auctions or owner-occupied housing (including commercial properties)
Germany	34,885	36,082	35,355	Prevention cases (all tenures) at municipal prevention centres (in North Rhine-Westphalia)
Greece	16,000	17,500	20,000	16,500	3	Estimate of applications to courts for eviction from private

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Change 2010- 2013	Indicator
						rented housing
Greece	11000	13000	16000	14500	32	Estimate of orders issued for evictions in private rented housing, based on sample of Greek courts
Hungary	2,377	2,769	2,739	2,548	7	Sold immovable properties in repossession process
Hungary	33,150	39,499	34,784	49,533	49	Immovable (incl. commercial) properties defined for execution of forced sales
Hungary (moratorium)		199	234	517	160	Executed evictions from sold properties (2011-13)
Ireland	1,564	1,549	1,738	1,840	18	Evictions initiated by local authorities in district courts
Ireland	2,230	2,366	4,224	5,291	137	Eviction-related cases at Private Rented Tenancy Board
Ireland	363	608	604	766	111	Properties taken into possession by regulated mortgage lenders
Italy	65,664	63,846	70,315	73,385	12	Households receiving an eviction order (private rented housing)
Italy	29,889	28,641	29,154	31,399	5	Households actually evicted (private rented housing)
Latvia	803	732	857	988	23	Eviction cases from rented housing (private and social) in court
Latvia	4,071	5,101	5,603	5,666	39	Effectively sold properties in forced auctions
Latvia	525	717	748	787	50	Completed enforcement of evictions from private and social rented housing
Latvia	138	309	375	279	102	Completed enforcement of evictions from repossessed owner-occupied housing
Netherlands	19,650	18,800	21,700	23,100	18	Judgments for evictions from social rental housing
Netherlands	5,900	6,000	6,480	6,980	18	Actual evictions from social rental sector
Netherlands	1,331	2,004	3,548	4,521	240	Forced sales of dwellings with mortgage guarantee
Poland	32,863	34,792	34,052	30,411	-8	Resolved court cases for eviction (all tenures)
Poland	7,014	7,260	7,812	8,557	22	Resolved bailiff cases (all tenures)
Portugal	1687	1824	1640	1176	-30	Urban eviction cases solved (all tenures)
Slovenia	352	321	313	283	-20	Court decisions for eviction / vacating the premises (all tenures)
Slovenia	9,274	9,311	10,424	10,608	14	Solved cases in enforcement procedures on immovable properties
Spain	39,894	33,133	39,051	38,961	-2	Voluntary or forced eviction after mortgage enforcements
Spain	23,052	19,036	55,523	38,141	66	Court cases regarding rental accommodation (private and social, including garages etc.)
Sweden	8,624	8,452	7,674	7,549	-13	Eviction applications to bailiff (all tenures including commercial property)
Sweden	2727	2567	2338	2293	-16	Executed evictions (all tenures including commercial property)
Sweden	1,168	1,039	849	1,050	-10	Executed forced auction sales of owner-occupied housing
United Kingdom	23,147	22,740	23,079	..	0	Claims for eviction in private rented sector by standard procedure in England and Wales (2010-2012)
United Kingdom	61,100	63,101	65,054	..	7	Eviction orders in social rented sector in England and Wales (2010-2012)
United Kingdom	90,217	93,631	96,742	..	7	Claims for repossession orders in social rental sector in England and Wales (2010-2012)
United Kingdom	3,390	3,588	3,732	3,694	9	Claims for repossession from owner-occupied housing in Northern Ireland (2013 provisional data)
United Kingdom	14906	13972	12358	..	-17	Eviction cases initiated in Scotland (all tenures, 2010-2012)
United Kingdom	75,431	73,181	59,876	..	-21	Claims for repossession of owner-occupied housing in England and Wales (2010-2012)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	Change 2010- 2013	Indicator
United Kingdom	21,597	25,712	31,178	..	44	Claims for eviction in private rented sector by assured short hold tenancy – accelerated procedure in England and Wales (2010-2012)
United Kingdom	609	590	717	1,070	76	Ejectment decrees from private and social rented sectors in Northern Ireland

Notes:

1. Information is based on reports by national experts from EU countries only. Only countries for which information is available are included.

a) Footnote 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 recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the “Cyprus issue”;

b) Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission: The Republic of Cyprus is recognized 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.

Source: EC (2016) Pilot project - Promoting protection of the right to housing - Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2016.

Data and comparability issues

As mentioned above, data show some significant limitations. The extent to which data are available on each of the different stages of an eviction process varies significantly across countries. Overall, while the number of court cases is relatively well documented, there is less information available on notice to quit/repossession orders and the actual physical eviction. Furthermore, in some cases data is only available for some municipalities and not at national level. Finally, data do not often distinguish between different tenures and/or between residential and commercial properties.

Box 1. Evictions as a reason for changing dwelling in EU SILC

In its 2012 ad-hoc module on housing conditions, the EU Survey on income, social inclusion and living conditions (EU-SILC) asked respondents whether they had changed dwelling over the previous five years and what was the main reason for this change. The survey result show that an estimated 17.7% of the EU 28 population changed dwelling between 2007 and 2012, and out of this share only 0.8% moved homes following an eviction.

A number of arguments point to the fact that results of the SILC module do not capture the real extent of evictions. First of all the survey only addressed people living in 'regular' housing and therefore is not representative of homeless persons. Furthermore, despite experiencing an eviction respondents might have chosen other explanations as the main reason for changing homes such as 'financial reasons' or others (EC, 2016).

Sources and further reading:

EC (2016), Pilot project - Promoting protection of the right to housing - Homelessness prevention in the context of evictions. Full report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2016;

EU-SILC 2012 MODULE ON HOUSING CONDITIONS, available at <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-living-conditions/data/ad-hoc-modules> ;

Stenberg, Sten-Åke and van Laere, Igor (2009) Evictions - a Hidden Social Problem. Comparative evidence from

OECD Affordable Housing Database – <http://oe.cd/ahd>

OECD - Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs

Modern Welfare States. Paper presented at the ISA RC43 Housing conference in 2009

UN HABITAT and OHCHR (2014), Forced Evictions, Fact Sheet No. 25/Rev.1. United Nations, New York and Geneva.