

At-risk-of-poverty rate

Definition

This indicator measures the share of the population whose equivalised disposable income after social transfers falls below 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income. It is one of the four energy poverty indicators defined under the Energy Efficiency Directive (Article 8 - EU/2023/1791).

Examples

A household with income below the poverty threshold may restrict energy use to limit costs, even at the expense of adequate indoor thermal comfort.

Limited financial capacity may also prevent the maintenance or replacement of inefficient equipment and contribute to arrears on utility bills, compounding existing vulnerability conditions.

Financial constraints may further prevent lower-income households from undertaking dwelling rehabilitation, potentially resulting in a higher share of the population residing in dwellings affected by leaks, damp, or rot.

Numbers

In 2024, 16.2% of the EU population had an equivalised disposable income below 60% of the national median after social transfers, corresponding to 72 million Europeans (EU population in 2024: 449.4M; Eurostat, 2026).

Limits

This indicator does not capture other potential drivers of general poverty. Households may fall below the income poverty threshold without experiencing energy poverty, for instance, if living in an energy-efficient dwelling, benefitting from subsidised energy tariffs, or using low-cost or no-cost energy sources.

Middle-income households living in a dwelling with poor energy performance or located in a region exposed to extreme climate conditions may face substantial energy expenditure and thus experience energy poverty despite not being classified as income-poor.

Additional insights in the EPAH report:

"Expanding energy poverty measurement in the EU: Integrating new climate, health, and mobility indicators"

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Total

