



EUROPEAN COMMISSION  
EUROSTAT

Directorate F: Social statistics and information society  
**Unit F-3: Living conditions and social protection statistics**



**DESCRIPTION OF SECONDARY TARGET VARIABLES:  
Module 2007  
"Housing conditions"**

**Version 2007.1 from 01-03-09**

**The following variables are enclosed in the "UDB\_c07H..." data file**



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**UNIT**

The target variables relate to two types of units:

- the household (all variables except for the ones related to the "change of dwelling"),
- the household respondent (variables related to the "change of dwelling").

**MODE OF DATA COLLECTION**

For all target variables the mode of data collection is one of the two following:

- personal interview with the household respondent,
- register.

**REFERENCE PERIOD**

The target variables relate to three types of reference periods:

- usual: an ordinary winter/summer, in the area where the dwelling is located (for the variables "dwelling comfortably warm during winter time" and "dwelling comfortably cool during summer time")
- last two years (for the variables related to the "change of dwelling")
- current (for all other variables).

**DEFINITIONS**

1. Shortage of space in dwelling

- (a) Shortage of space: the variable refers to the respondent's opinion/feeling about shortage of space in dwelling.

2. Dwelling installations and facilities

- (a) Electrical installations: wiring, contacts, sockets and other permanent electrical installations in the dwelling.
- (b) Plumbing/water installations: pipes, taps, drainage and outlets.
- (c) Central heating or similar: a housing unit is considered as centrally heated if heating is provided either from a community heating centre or from an installation built in the

building or in the housing unit, established for heating purposes, without regard to the source of energy. Fixed electrical radiators, fixed gas heaters and similar are included. The heating shall be available in most rooms.

- (d) Other fixed heating: a housing unit is considered heated by 'other fixed heating' when the heating is not considered as 'central heating/or similar'. It includes stoves, heaters, fireplaces and similar.
- (e) No fixed heating: no fixed heating system or heating device. Portable heating.
- (f) Air conditioning facilities: systems for controlling, especially lowering, the temperature and humidity of an enclosed space; systems that keep air cool and dry. Simple fans are not considered as air conditioning.
- (g) Adequate: sufficient to satisfy the general requirements/needs of the household. An installation which is permanently out of order is considered as no installation. Inadequate installations can be: installations in bad condition, dangerous installations, installations which are regularly out of order, where there is not enough electrical power/pressure for the water to be used, the water is not drinkable, or there is limited availability. Minor temporary problems such as a blockage in the outlet do not mean that the installation is inadequate.

### 3. Accessibility of basic needs

- (a) Accessibility: this shall relate to the services used by the household having regard to the financial, physical, technical and health conditions. The accessibility of the services is to be assessed in terms of physical and technical access, and opening hours, but not in terms of quality, price and similar aspects.
- (b) Grocery services: services which can provide most of the daily needs.
- (c) Banking services: withdraw cash, transfer money and pay bills.
- (d) Postal services: send and receive ordinary and parcel post.
- (e) Public transport: bus, metro, tram and similar.
- (f) Primary health care services: general practitioner, primary health centre or similar.
- (g) Compulsory schools: if more than one child in the household is in compulsory school the respondent should refer to the one with the most difficulty.

### 4. Overall satisfaction with dwelling

- (a) Overall satisfaction with dwelling: the variable refers to the respondent's opinion/feeling about the degree of satisfaction with the dwelling in terms of meeting the household needs/opinion on the price, space, neighbourhood, distance to work, quality and other aspects.

### 5. Change of dwelling

- (a) Family-related reasons: change in marital/partnership status. To establish own household. To follow partner/parents. To obtain better school or care facilities for children or other dependants.

- (b) Employment-related reasons: start new job or transfer of existing job. Looking for work or made redundant. To be closer to work/easier to commute. Retirement.
- (c) Housing-related reasons: desire to change accommodation or tenure status. Wanting new or better house/apartment. Seeking better neighbourhood/less crime.
- (d) Eviction/distrait: forced to move for legal reasons.
- (e) Landlord did not prolong the contract: non renewal of contract, short-term contract.
- (f) Financial reasons: problems paying rent/mortgage.
- (g) Other reasons: to attend or leave college/university, health and other reasons.
- (h) The reference period is 'the last two years'. If there have been several changes of dwelling, the main reason for the most recent change should be given.

## DATA TRANSMISSION

These secondary target variables will be sent to EUROSTAT with the Household Data file (H-file).

**MH010: Shortage of space in dwelling**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

This variable refers to the respondent's opinion/feeling about shortage of space in dwelling.

**MH020: Adequate electrical installations**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	not applicable (no electricity/installations)

The electrical installations refer to wiring, contacts, sockets and other permanent electrical installations in the dwelling.

The term "adequate" means sufficient to satisfy the general requirements/needs of the household. An installation which is permanently out of order is considered as no installation.

Inadequate installations can be: installations in bad condition, dangerous installations, installations which are regularly out of order, where there is not enough electrical power or there is limited availability.

Minor temporary problems such as a blockage in the outlet do not mean that the installation is inadequate.

**MH030: Adequate plumbing/water installations**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	not applicable (no plumbing/water installations)

The plumbing/water installations refer to pipes, taps, drainage and outlets.

The term "adequate" means sufficient to satisfy the general requirements/needs of the household. An installation which is permanently out of order is considered as no installation.

Inadequate installations can be: installations in bad condition, dangerous installations, installations which are regularly out of order, where there is not enough pressure for the water to be used, the water is not drinkable, or there is limited availability.

Minor temporary problems such as a blockage in the outlet do not mean that the installation is inadequate.



**MH040: Dwelling equipped with heating facilities**

Values	
1	yes - central heating or similar
2	yes - other fixed heating
3	no - no fixed heating
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

The three categories are defined as follows:

**Central heating or similar**

The heating is provided either from a community heating centre or from an installation built in the building or in the housing unit, established for heating purposes, without regard to the source of energy. Fixed electrical radiators, fixed gas heaters and similar are included. The heating shall be available in most rooms.

This category contains fixed electrical radiators. So, if a dwelling is equipped with electrical panel heaters and if the heating is available in most rooms, then it will belong to this first category.

**Other fixed heating**

The heating is not considered as 'central heating/or similar'. The dwelling is equipped with stoves, heaters, fireplaces or similar heating device.

**No fixed heating**

There are no fixed heating system or heating device. The dwelling could however be equipped with portable heating.

This variable MH040 should refer to the degree of comfort of the dwelling, the first category corresponding to the most comfortable and the third category to the less comfortable. When deciding if a dwelling belongs to the first category, a key element should be the availability of heating in most rooms.

If different modes of heating are combined, the aspect of "degree of comfort" must be kept in mind. If the combination allows a high level of comfort and if heating is available in most rooms, the first category should be chosen. An example of this situation is a fireplace (in the living room) combined with panel heaters (in the other rooms).

**MH050: Dwelling comfortably warm during winter time**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

This variable refers to the equipment of the dwelling in terms of heating system and insulation.

The concern of this variable covers the two following concepts: "Is the heating system efficient enough to keep the dwelling warm?" and "Is the dwelling sufficiently insulated against the cold?". These two concepts should be kept in mind by the interviewers but the two questions have not be explicitly recorded in the questionnaire. The central point concerns the general state of the dwelling, i.e. is the condition of the dwelling good enough to allow that it is comfortably warm during winter time.

It should not be confused with the variable HH050 "Ability to keep home adequately warm" which refers to the financial resources of the household and for which the concern could be expressed as: "Does the household have sufficient financial resources to keep its dwelling sufficiently warm during winter time?".

**MH060: Dwelling equipped with air conditioning facilities**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

The air conditioning facilities are systems for controlling, especially lowering, the temperature and humidity of an enclosed space. These are systems that keep air cool and dry. Simple fans are not considered as air conditioning.

**MH070: Dwelling comfortably cool during summer time**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

This variable refers to the equipment of the dwelling in terms of insulation and cooling system.

The concern of this variable is the following: "Is the cooling system efficient enough to keep the dwelling cool?" and/or "Is the dwelling sufficiently insulated against the warm?".

**MH080: Overall satisfaction with dwelling**

Values	
1	very dissatisfied
2	somewhat dissatisfied
3	satisfied
4	very satisfied
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

The variable refers to the respondent's opinion/feeling about the degree of satisfaction with the dwelling in terms of meeting the household needs/opinion on the price, space, neighbourhood, distance to work, quality and other aspects.

**MH090: Accessibility of grocery services**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

**Accessibility**

The concept of "accessibility" relates to the services used by the household having regard to the financial, physical, technical and health conditions.

The accessibility of the services is to be assessed in terms of physical and technical access, and opening hours, but not in terms of quality, price and similar aspects.

Consequently, the access should refer to an objective and physical reality. It should not be based on a subjective feeling.

The access should be determined in relation to the services actually used by the household.

The physical access has to be assessed in terms of distance but also of infrastructure and equipment for example for respondents with a physical disability.

The services provided at home should also be taken into account, if they are actually used by the household. The accessibility has thus to be evaluated regardless the way(s) the household access to the service.

The respondent should give an answer for the household as a whole. If the respondent doesn't use a service but other household member(s) do, the respondent should assess the accessibility according to this(these) other household member(s).

The accessibility should be considered at the level of the household, the difficulty to access has to be evaluated for the household as a whole.

If one member of the household has a disability, but if another member can access easily to the service for him/her, the access to the service causes any problem for the household in the sense that it doesn't represent any burden for the household, then the service would be considered as easily accessible by the household.

On the other hand, if one member of the household has a disability and can hardly access a service (which he needs as an individual) and the household has no resource available to provide him support (e.g. if no other member can access easily to the service for him/her), or really represents a burden for the household, in this case the access to the service would be considered as difficult for the household.

**Grocery services**

The grocery services refer to the services which can provide most of the daily needs (food, etc.).

The aspects linked to the prices, like the affordability, should not be considered. Only the physical access and the adequacy of the opening hours should be taken into account.

The accessibility could also be assessed in a technical point of view if the technology allows an access to these services, for example order of daily needs via Internet or by phone.

Consequently, the access to order of daily needs via Internet or by phone should be evaluated by the household, if the household uses it.

The accessibility has to be evaluated according to the facility/difficulty to buy the daily products (to fill the fridge) no matter if it is done by internet, phone or "ordinary shopping".

**MH100: Accessibility of banking services**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

About the concept of "accessibility", see explanations of variable MH090.

The banking services refer to the following actions: withdraw cash, transfer money and pay bills.

When assessing the accessibility, the physical access and the opening hours should be taken into account.

For the banking services, the technical access could also intervene. The accessibility in terms of phone-banking and PC-banking should also be part of the assessment, if these ways are actually used by the household.

The accessibility has to be evaluated according to the facility/difficulty to transfer, withdraw money, ... no matter if it is done by phone-banking and PC-banking or in a bank.

**MH110: Accessibility of postal services**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

About the concept of "accessibility", see explanations of variable MH090.

The postal services refer to the sending and receiving ordinary and parcel post.

**MH120: Accessibility of public transport**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

About the concept of "accessibility", see explanations of variable MH090.

The public transport refer to the bus, metro, tram and similar.

As the accessibility should be assessed in terms of physical and technical access, if the respondent or another household member has a physical disability and if the available public transport are not adapted to his disability, a difficulty in the accessibility should be recorded.

If the public transport are too far away or have inappropriate timetable, the access would also be considered as difficult.

**MH130: Accessibility of primary health care services**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

About the concept of "accessibility", see explanations of variable MH090.

The primary health care services refer to the general practitioner, a primary health centre, a casualty department or similar, where first-aid treatment could be received.

**MH140: Accessibility of compulsory school**

Values	
1	with great difficulty
2	with some difficulty
3	easily
4	very easily
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (services not used by household)

About the concept of "accessibility", see explanations of variable MH090.

The accessibility is assessed in relation to the school actually attended by the children of the household.

If more than one child in the household is in compulsory school, the respondent should refer to the one with the most difficulty.

This variable only concerns children whose age corresponds to the compulsory school attendance in the country, and not the other children even if the majority of them go to school.

For example in Luxembourg, where the compulsory school attendance is fixed from 4 years until 15 years, the household has to evaluate the school accessibility only for the children (member of the household) aged from 4 until 15. Children aged from 16 to 18 must not be taken into account even if nearly all of them in the country attend the school.

**MH150: Change of dwelling**

Values	
1	yes
2	no
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing

The reference period is 'the last two years'.

This variable records if there has been at least one change of dwelling during the last two years.



**MH160: Main reason for change of dwelling**

Values	
1	family related reasons
2	employment related reasons
3	housing related reasons
4	eviction/distrait
5	landlord did not prolong the contract
6	financial reasons
7	other
Flags	
1	filled
-1	missing
-2	n/a (MH150 not = 1)

The reference period is 'the last two years'.

If there have been several changes of dwelling during the reference period, the main reason for the most recent change should be given.

The seven categories are defined as follows:

**Family-related reasons**

This category relates to a change in the marital or partnership status.

The change of dwelling could occur in order to establish own household, to follow partner/parents or to obtain better school or care facilities for children or other dependants.

**Employment-related reasons**

This category includes the following reasons:

- to start a new job,
- the transfer of existing job,
- looking for work,
- to be closer to work/easier to commute,
- to be made redundant,
- retirement.

**Housing-related reasons**

This category should correspond to:

- the desire to change of tenure status,
- to want a new or a better house/apartment,
- to seek a better neighbourhood (with less crime or more shops, more facilities, etc.).

**Eviction/distrait**

The household was forced to move for legal reasons.

**Landlord did not prolong the contract**

This category could correspond to a non renewal of the contract or to the initial establishment of a short-term contract.

**Financial reasons**

The change of dwelling was due to problems for paying the rent or mortgage.

**Other reasons**

This category includes for example a change of dwelling in order to attend or to leave the college/university. It could also concern health and other reasons.