POVERTY IN ITALY | YEAR 2021

Higher consumption does not compensate for inflation. Absolute poverty keeps stable

In 2021, a little more than 1.9 million households (7.5% of the total from 7.7% in 2020) and about 5.6 million individuals (9.4% as last year) were in absolute poverty. Therefore, absolute poverty substantially confirms the historical picks reached in 2020, the year when the Covid-19 pandemic began.

For relative poverty, the incidence raised to 11.1%, (from 10.1% in 2020) and households below the threshold were about 2.9 million (2.6 in 2020).

10.0%

The percentage of households in absolute poverty in the Southern regions

6.7% in the North, 5.6% in the Center

1.4 million

Children in absolute poverty (14.2%)

32.4%

The incidence of absolute poverty for non-national citizens (29.3% in 2020)

7.2% for the Italians (7.5% nel 2020)
POVERTY IN ITALY

ABSOLUTE POVERTY

Absolute poverty was stable, improvement in the North for households and individuals

In 2021, according to final estimates, there were just over 1.9 million households in absolute poverty (with an incidence of 7.5%), for a total of about 5.6 million individuals (9.4%), stable values compared to 2020, when the incidence reached its historical maximum and was equal, respectively, to 7.7% and 9.4%. The reason for this substantial stability was due to a number of factors; in particular, to a more moderate increase in consumer spending by the poorest households (+1.7% for 20% of households with the lowest spending capacity, that is to say almost all households in absolute poverty) which was not enough to compensate for the rising inflation (+1.9% in 2021) in the absence of which the share of households in absolute poverty would have fallen to 7.0% and that of individuals to 8.8%.

The intensity of absolute poverty - which measures in percentage terms the monthly spending of poor households was on average below the poverty line (i.e., "how poor are the poor") - remained broadly stable compared to last year (18.7%) with the only exceptions of the Centre where it reached 17.3% from 16.1% in 2020 and the North West (where it reached 19.3% from 18.6%).

In 2021, the incidence of households in absolute poverty was higher in the Southern regions (10.0%, from 9.4% in 2020) while it significantly fell in the North (6.7% from 7.6%), and in particular in the North-West (6.7% from 7.9%). 42.2% of households in absolute poverty resided in the Southern regions (it was 38.6% in 2020), while in the North they were 42.6% (47.0% in 2020). The proportion recorded in 2019, when the poor households of our Country were distributed almost equally between North and Southern regions, was thus restored.

Also in terms of individuals, the North recorded a marked improvement in the incidence of absolute poverty, which decreased from 9.3% to 8.2% (as a result of the decrease in the North-West from 10.1% to 8.0% and the substantial stability in the North-East from 8.2% to 8.6%) with values still distant, however, from those of 2019. Thus, there were over 2.2 million absolute poor individuals living in the regions of the North against 2.455 million in the Southern regions. In this last distribution the incidence of individual poverty increased from 11.1% to 12.1% (13.2% in the South, 9.9% in the Islands); in the Centre it rose to 7.3% (from 6.6% in 2020).

Referring to the age group, the incidence of absolute poverty stood at 14.2% (just under 1.4 million) among minors; 11.1% among young people (18-34 years) (equal to over 1.86 million individuals) and remained at a high level (9.1%) even for the 35-64 age group (2.361 million individuals), while it remained below the national average for the over 65 (5.3%, affecting about 743 thousand people).

Compared to the type of municipality of residence, the share of poor households was distributed in a similar way to the previous year; with the only exception for municipalities up to 50,000 inhabitants (other than suburban municipalities of metropolitan area) of the North where the incidence decreased from 7.8% to 6.6%, mostly due to the dynamics affecting the North-West (at 6.3% from 8.2%).

ABSOLUTE POVERTY: KEY FIGURES

Years 2020-2021, absolute values and percentage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MAIN INDICATORS</th>
<th>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA</th>
<th>Italy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>North-West</td>
<td>North-East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>577</td>
<td>488</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor individuals (absolute values)</td>
<td>1,607</td>
<td>1,271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor household incidence (%)</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor individuals incidence (%)</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Absolute poverty intensity (%)</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>19.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The condition of households with more members worsened

In 2021, the incidence of absolute poverty was higher among households with a higher number of members: it reached 22.6% among those with five and more members and 11.6% among those with four; signs of improvement came from households of three (from 8.5% to 7.1%) and two components (from 5.7% to 5.0%). The hardship has been more marked for households with minor children, for whom the incidence passed from 8.1% for households with only one minor child to 22.8% for those with three or more. High values were also recorded for couples with three or more children (20.0%) and for households of other types, where more than one household lived together (16.3%).

On the other hand, the incidence of poverty was lower, at 5.5%, in households with at least one elderly person and was confirmed at 3.6% among couples where the age of the reference person in the household was over 64 (in the case of single persons over 64 the incidence was 5.1%). In general, household poverty showed a decreasing trend as the age of the reference person increased; generally, young households were more frequently less likely to spend because they had lower average incomes and lower life savings or inherited assets accumulated over life.

Absolute poverty affected 9.4% of households with reference person aged between 18 and 34 and 5.2% of those with reference person over 64. The highest rates of incidence were found among households with reference person aged 35-44 (9.9%) and those where the reference person was aged 45 - 54 (9.7%), were stable compared to 2020.

Higher education and employment levels protect households from poverty

The spread of poverty decreased with the increase of qualifications. The incidence was 3.9%, if the reference person of households had at least the high school certificate, an improvement compared to 2020, and 11.0% with a secondary school certificate.

Labor and professional status as well as the position in the profession of the reference person was very important. Absolute poverty was stable among households with an employed reference person (7.0%), who suffered more from the effects of the crisis. High levels of the incidence were confirmed for households with a worker reference person or assimilated (13.3%) and among households with self-employed reference person (7.8%), in comparison with 2020, only households with entrepreneurs and freelancers showed signs of improvement, and reaching 1.8% from 3.2% in 2020. The uneasiness for households with a reference person seeking employment was confirmed, the incidence reached 22.6%.

FIGURE 1. ABSOLUTE POVERTY INCIDENCE BY EDUCATION, LABOR AND PROFESSIONAL STATUS OF THE REFERENCE PERSON. Years 2020-2021, percentage
Still very difficult the condition of childhood

In 2021, absolute poverty in Italy affected 1.382 million children (14.2%, compared to 9.4% of individuals nationwide). The incidence ranged from 11.4% of the Centre to 16.1% of the Southern regions. Compared to 2020, the condition of children was stable at a national level, with the exception of the worsening observed for 4-to-6-year-old children (15.4% from 12.8%), in particular in the Centre, where, in the same age group, the incidence increased to 13.2% from 8.3% (in general for the children of the Centre the incidence rose to 11.4% from 9.5%). Although substantially stable, the other values remained distant from those recorded in 2019.

The households in absolute poverty with minors were almost 762 thousand, with an incidence of 12.1% (stable compared to 2020). Studying the behavior of households, we noted how the households of other typologies with minors (those households where often more households live together), reached the highest incidence values (26.6%, against 16.3% of “other type” of households as a whole). Moreover, the incidence of absolute poverty increased as the number of minor children in the households increased (6.0% for couples with one minor child, 11.1% for those with two minor children and 20.4% for couples with three or more minor children) and was high among single-parent households with minors (11.5%). All types of this subset had stable values compared to 2020. The intensity of poverty, equal to 18.8%, was in line with the general figure for all poor households (18.7%), but showed a slight decrease in 2021.

The incidence of poverty among households with children greatly varied depending on the reference person’s employment status and position in the profession 9.5% in the households with an employed reference person (16.1% in the case of a worker) and 23.3% when not employed (27.2% if seeking employment).

The citizenship plays an important role in determining the socio-economic condition 8.3% of households with minors composed by national members only, and 36.2% (28.6% in 2020) for households with minors entirely composed by non-nationals, 30.7% for households with minors with at least one non-national.

The incidence of absolute poverty for households with minors was higher in metropolitan areas, both in the municipalities in the center of a metropolitan area and in the suburbs of a metropolitan area and in municipalities with over 50 thousand inhabitants, where it stood at 13.2%; finally in the smallest municipalities up to 50 thousand inhabitants it was 11.1%.

**FIGURE 2. INDIVIDUAL ABSOLUTE POVERTY INCIDENCE BY AGE CLASS, AND FOR MINORS BY AGE-CLASS.**

*Years 2020-2021 percentage*
Absolute poverty among foreigners was still high

Non-national individuals in absolute poverty were over 1.6 million, with an incidence of 32.4%, more than four times higher than that of national citizens, equal to 7.2%. Compared to 2020, there was an increase in absolute poverty for non-nationals both in the Centre and in the Southern regions (respectively 27.5% and 40.3%), while in the North there was a reduction in the incidence of absolute individual poverty, driven by the decrease observed for national citizens. The households in absolute poverty were in 68.7% of the cases households of Italian members only (almost 1.3 million) and the remaining 31.3% households with at least one foreigner (over 614 thousand), although the latter represents only 9.0% of the total.

For households with at least one foreigner, the incidence of absolute poverty was 26.3% (25.3% in 2020); it was 30.6% for households composed by non-national members only (up from 26.7% in 2020) and 5.7% for households of Italian members only (value not significantly different from that of 2020).

At the territorial level, the highest incidence was recorded in the Southern regions, with the share of households composed by non-national members only, more than four times higher than those of households of Italian members only (respectively 37.6% and 8.8%). In the North, the incidence for households of non-national members only was 30.2% while in the Centre values were lower (25.9%). Compared to 2020, signs of worsening were recorded for households of foreigners only at the national level (up to 30.6% from 26.7), while signals of improvement were recorded for mixed families in Italy where the incidence dropped from 22.2% to 17.0% in 2021 and for Northern households of Italian members only (from 5.4% to 4.3%). In households with at least one foreigner in which the reference person was seeking for employment, the incidence of absolute poverty was growing strongly and amounted to 43.5% (from 29.1% in 2020, for a total of more than 74 thousand households); while with an employed reference person poverty affected almost one in four households (24.7%).

Households with at least one foreigner and with minors showed a poverty rate of 30.7% (325 thousand households), but the subset of households composed by non-national members only with minors signed the highest growth of incidence, with values of 36.2% (from 28.6% in 2020), which was more than four times higher than that of households with Italian members only and with minors (8.3%). In the Southern regions and the North, the incidence exceeded 30% in households with foreigners and with minors, (respectively 37.1% and 30.5%, against 12.9% and 5.7% of households with Italian members only with minors).

![Figure 3. Absolute poverty incidence by member citizenship and geographical area. Years 2020-2021, percentage](image-url)
A more widespread absolute poverty was confirmed among households on rent

More than 889,000 poor households on rent in 2021 amounted for 45.3% of all poor households, with an absolute poverty rate of 18.5%, compared to 4.3% of those living in owned houses.

The households on rent living in the Southern regions showed absolute poverty incidence values by 22.4%, compared to 17.6% in the North, with substantially stable values in 2020, and 15.4% in the Centre (+3.1 percentage points). Households with a young reference person (frequently with minors) and those with foreigners, live on rent more often.

The incidence of absolute poverty is higher for households on rent with reference persons aged between 45 and 54 (23%). Considering citizenship, 76.5% of poor households with foreigners live on rent; only 10.6% have an owned house against, respectively, 31.1% and 54.9% of households in poverty with Italian members only. The average rent for households in absolute poverty is about 337.0 Euros per month, compared to 434.0 Euros paid by households who are not in poverty. 15.0% of households in absolute poverty who live in their own houses pay a mortgage (against 19.3% of non-poor households). From an economic point of view, this budget item was an investment and therefore did not form part of the consumption expenditure. However, for the households that met it, it represented a particularly heavy output, especially for those below the poverty line, to whom this item subtracted resources from consumption expenditure.

RELATIVE POVERTY
General growth in the incidence of relative poverty especially in the Southern regions

In 2021, the relatively low increase in the expenditure of the poorest households and the higher growth for households with high levels of consumption (which, by contrast, had fallen more sharply in 2020) encouraged a general increase in the incidence of relative poverty, widening the gap between households spending more and those spending less.

The households in condition of relative poverty were about 2.9 million (11.1%, against 10.1% in 2020) for a total of almost 8.8 million individuals (14.8%, against 13.5%). Compared to 2020, the incidence of households in relative poverty increased especially in the Southern regions, where it rose to 20.8% from 18.3% in 2020. At the individual level there was also a significant increase in the incidence of relative poverty both in national average (which returned to the 2019 levels when it was 14.7%) and, in particular, in the Southern regions (from 22.6% in 2020 to 25.3% in 2021) and in the Centre (from 8.9% in 2020 to 10.0% in 2021).

Relative poverty intensity stood at 21.7% in 2021, in line with the 2020 figure (21.4%), reaching the highest percentage in the South (23.2%) and the lowest in the North-East (18.6%).

FIGURE 4. RELATIVE POVERTY INCIDENCE OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY GEOGRAPHICAL AREA. Years 2017-2021, percentage
At the territorial level, in the North the incidence of relative poverty was 6.5%, with similar values in the North-West compared to the North-East (respectively, 6.4% and 6.6%), in the Centre it was 6.9% while in the Southern regions, where the worsening is more decided, it is 20.8% from 18.3% (closest to 2019 value, 21.1%).

In 2021, the incidence of relative poverty increased for households living in municipalities up to 50 thousand inhabitants (from 10.8% to 12%), a dynamic driven by the Southern regions that signaled the growth of both the municipalities in the center of metropolitan areas (from 18.1% to 22.6%) and of the municipalities up to 50 thousand inhabitants (from 18.3% to 21.2%). The incidence of relative poverty increased for single-component households (from 4.5% in 2020 to 5.7% in 2021), especially in the Southern regions (from 9.1% to 12.2%); they were mostly over-65 individuals for whom the incidence increased from 4.4% to 6.6% at national level, with a more significant increase in the Southern regions, from 7.9% to 13.7%. This trend also affected couples with over-65 reference persons (from 6.8% to 8.4%), for whom in the Southern regions the incidence reached 18.1% (13.2% in 2020). Households of other typology, that often see the presence of more households within them, also recorded an increase of 4.1 percentage points (from 21.3% to 25.4%) largely affected by the increment recorded in the Southern regions (40.3% from 31.6%).

Still suffering the households with three or more minor children who showed a relative poverty rate almost three times higher than the national average (31.9% against 11.1%) higher than that recorded for couples with three or more children, not necessarily minors (28.4%).

The dynamics of relative poverty incidence for households with reference persons seeking for employment showed increasing values (30.1% from 24.4%) and in line with 2019 levels (30.7%); similarly, it worsened among households in which the reference person is retired from work (an incidence that increased from 6.7% in 2020 to 8.0% in 2021). These dynamics were more marked in the Southern regions where the incidence for households with reference persons seeking employment reached 40.1%.

As for the citizenship of the household members, the incidence of relative poverty increased to 9.2% for households of Italian members only (from 8.6%), but was three times higher and significantly grew for households with at least one non-national member (30.4% from 26.5%; 32.2% for those of non-national only showing a value of 25.7% in 2020). The lowest figures refer to households of nationals only in the North (4.0%), the highest for those households with at least one non-national in the Southern regions (45.8%, households with non-national only 47.6%).

**FIGURE 5. RELATIVE POVERTY INCIDENCE OF HOUSEHOLDS, BY PRESENCE OF NON-NATIONAL MEMBERS.**

*Years 2017-2021, percentage*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Households with all national members</th>
<th>Households with national and non national members</th>
<th>Households with all non national members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>34.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>32.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Glossary

Absolute poverty basket: Set of goods and services considered essential to assure a minimum life-standard to an Italian household with certain characteristics.

Relative poverty thresholds: They represent the minimum expenditure necessary to acquire the goods and services included in the basket of absolute poverty. Absolute poverty thresholds vary, by construction, according to the size of the family, its composition by age, geographical distribution and the size of the municipality of residence.

Relative poverty threshold: For a two-member household it is equal to the average expenditure per person in the country (i.e. per capita expenditure and is obtained by dividing the total expenditure per household consumption by the total number of members).

Absolute poverty: Households with a monthly expenditure equal to or less than the value of the absolute poverty threshold (which differs in size and composition by age of the household, by geographical distribution and by type of municipality of residence) are classified as absolutely poor.

Relative poverty: Relative poverty is defined as households that have consumption expenditure below a conventional relative poverty line (poverty line). Households of two persons having a monthly expenditure equal to or less than this value are classified as poor. For households of different sizes, the line value is obtained by applying an appropriate equivalence scale, which takes into account the economies of scale that can be achieved as member number increases.

Incidence of poverty: It is obtained by the ratio between the number of households with average monthly consumption expenditure equal to or below the poverty line and the total number of resident households. For persons, it is obtained as the ratio of the number of persons in poor households to the total number of resident persons.

Poverty intensity: A measure of how much as a percentage the average expenditure of households defined as poor is below the poverty line.

Confidence interval and absolute and relative sampling error: Knowing the estimate $Y$ of a $Y$ parameter of the population and the estimate of the absolute sampling error associated with it, it is possible to construct a confidence interval which, with confidence level $\alpha$, includes within it the value of the $Y$ parameter being estimated. The magnitude of this interval is a function of the absolute sampling error of a $k$ value that depends on the shape of the sample distribution of the estimator and the value chosen for the confidence level $\alpha$. For large samples, reference is commonly made to the normal distribution and there is, for example, for $\alpha = 0.05$, that $k = 1.96$. The magnitude of the confidence interval, and therefore the degree of uncertainty on the parameter $Y$ in the population, is equal to 2$k$ times the absolute sampling error. The estimation of the absolute sampling error is a statistic to evaluate the sample error and is equal to the mean squared deviation of the parameter’s estimator $Y$. The coefficient of variation of the estimator is instead the relative sampling error, generally expressed as a percentage. For the methodological details of the survey, see the Report statistics on household consumption expenditure of 9 June 2022).

Equivalence scale: is a set of correction coefficients used to determine the poverty line if households have a different number of members from two. For example, the poverty line for a four-person household is 1.63 times that for two members (€ 1,709.56), the line for a six-person household is 2.16 times that for two members (€ 2,265.43).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Equivalence scale: (coefficient)</th>
<th>Poverty threshold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>629.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1,048.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1,394.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1,709.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.90</td>
<td>1,992.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.16</td>
<td>2,265.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 and over</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2,517.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Equivalent expenditure: is calculated by dividing the value of the household consumption expenditure by an appropriate correction coefficient (equivalence scale), which enables to take into account the effect of economies of scale and to make the expenditure levels of different-size households directly comparable.

Household consumption expenditure: all expenditures incurred by resident households to purchase goods and services exclusively devoted to meet their needs (including presents purchased). It also includes the monetary value of the imputed rentals and that of self-consumption, i.e. goods produced and consumed by households, as well as goods and services received by the employer as a salary.
Reference person (r.p.): is the person referred to, in the Municipality Population Register, as the head of the household.

Other self-employed: includes the own-account worker, the member of producers' co-operative, the family worker, the employer-coordinated freelance work contract (on specific project or not), the occasional work contract.

Worker and related: includes the chief worker, the subordinate worker and related workers, the apprentice, the home worker on behalf of companies.

Methodological note

Knowledge targets and framework
The poverty estimates disseminated in this Report are based on data from the household consumption expenditure survey, which aims to measure the structure and level of consumption expenditure according to the main social, economic and territorial characteristics of resident households (See Statistics report "Household consumption expenditure" of 09 June 2022).

Survey regulatory framework
The HBS is included in the National statistical programme, the document that regulates the production of official statistical information.

Survey frequency and interval
The HBS is a sample and monthly survey, continuously conducted throughout the year.

Reference population
The reference population is represented by private households residing in Italy and by the individuals they are composed by (persons living in collective households are not included). Household is intended as the de facto household, defined as a group of people living together in the same dwelling, who are related by legal relationship (blood, marriage, adoption or guardianship) or affective ties and who share (in part or entirely) incomes and expenditures. The sample size is about 28 thousand households. The population used for the 2021 survey is estimated prior to the issuance of the 2018 and 2019 census and intercensory reconstruction data.

Process and methodologies
The methodology for estimating absolute poverty, developed in 2005 by a study committee of experts in the field (see Volume Istat Metodi e Norme, "La misura della povertà assoluta" of 22 April 2009), is a measure based on the monetary evaluation of a basket of goods and services considered essential to avoid serious forms of social exclusion. Starting from the hypothesis that primary needs and the goods and services that meet them are homogeneous throughout the country, account has been taken of the fact that costs vary in different parts of the country.

The reference unit of the basket is the family, considered in relation to the characteristics of the individual components, their specific needs (for example, for nutritional needs) and any economies of scale or forms of savings that can be achieved when the family composition varies. The essential needs have been identified in adequate nutrition, in the availability of a dwelling - of a size appropriate to the size of the family, heated, equipped with the main services, durable goods and accessories - and in the minimum necessary to dress, communicate, get informed, move around the territory, educate and maintain good health.

Consequently, the basket is composed of three macro components - food, housing, residual - whose monetary valuation was not carried out at the absolute minimum price, but at the minimum price accessible to all families (taking into account the characteristics of the offer in the different territorial realities).

The monetary value of the overall basket was obtained by direct summing of those of the various components and corresponds to the absolute poverty threshold.
Therefore, it is not a single threshold, but as many absolute poverty thresholds as there are combinations between family type (obtained as a combination of number and age of members), geographical distribution and type of municipality of residence (distinguishing between municipalities in the centre of the metropolitan area, metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inhabitants and above and other municipalities up to 50,000 inhabitants (different from metropolitan area suburb municipalities)).

The thresholds for the years after 2005 are estimated by applying the change in the specific consumer price indices to the monetary value of the individual expenditure items; since the dynamics of these indices may differ across the territory, the revaluation of all items is carried out separately by geographical breakdown (the threshold value can be calculated for any household at: https://www.istat.it/it/dati-analisi-e-prodotti/contenuti-interattivi/soglia-di-poverta)

If absolute poverty classifies poor/non-poor households according to their inability to acquire certain goods and services, the measure of relative poverty, defined by the average standard of the population, provides an assessment of the inequality in the distribution of consumer spending and identifies poor households among those that are at a disadvantage compared to others. In fact, a poor family is defined as a family of two members with consumption expenditure lower than or equal to the average per capita consumption expenditure.

For households of different sizes, an equivalence scale is used, which takes into account the different needs and economies/diseconomies of scale that can be achieved in larger or smaller households. The equivalence scale used to estimate relative poverty, known as the Charcoal equivalence scale, is based on a double logarithmic function between consumption expenditure and household size.

The values of the equivalence scale (see Glossary) represent the coefficients by which the expenditure of a household of a given size is divided in order to be made equivalent to that of a two-member household (this size corresponds to the coefficient of 1).

For both measures of poverty (absolute and relative), it is assumed that family resources are shared equally between all members; consequently, individuals belonging to a poor household are all equally poor.

To summarize the information on the various aspects of poverty, two indices are calculated: the first is the proportion of the poor (incidence), i.e. the ratio between the number of households (individuals) in a condition of poverty and the number of resident households (individuals). The second is the average poverty gap (intensity), which measures "how poor the poor are", i.e. by how much, in percentage terms, the average monthly expenditure of poor households is below the poverty line.

In addition to the intensity, and in order to distinguish the different conditions of hardship, the standard relative poverty line is accompanied by four additional thresholds, respectively 80%, 90%, 110% and 120% of the standard value. These thresholds make it possible to identify, on the one hand, the share of households that, although not relatively poor, are most at risk of becoming so, and, on the other hand, the share, among poor households, of those with levels of consumer spending well below the poverty line.

**Absolute poverty thresholds**

Absolute poverty thresholds represent the values against which the consumption expenditure of a family is compared in order to classify it as absolutely poor or non-poor. For example, for an adult (aged 18-59) living alone, the poverty line is 839.78 euros per month if he lives in a northern metropolitan area, 766.70 euros if he lives in a small northern municipality, 576.63 euros if he lives in a small southern municipality.

The table on the next page shows the values of the absolute poverty thresholds for 2021, relating to the most common family types in Italy. The values of the thresholds for the different types of families can be calculated in the dedicated https://www.istat.it/it/dati-analisi-e-prodotti/contenuti-interattivi/soglia-di-poverta, on the institutional website of Istat.
## TABLE A. MONTHLY ABSOLUTE POVERTY THRESHOLDS FOR SELECTED HOUSEHOLD TYPOLOGIES, GEOGRAPHICAL AREA AND MUNICIPALITY TYPE. Year 2021 (euros)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household typology</th>
<th>North</th>
<th>Centre</th>
<th>South and Islands</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities</td>
<td>Metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
<td>Metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
</tr>
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<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities</td>
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<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities</td>
<td>Metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities</td>
<td>Metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
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<td>Metropolitan area centre municipalities</td>
<td>Metropolitan area suburb municipalities, and municipalities with 50,001 inh. and above</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 The values of the thresholds published here may differ from those that can be calculated in the web area due to rounding.
Dissemination

Every year in June, the Report "Poverty in Italy" disseminates the estimates referred to the previous year. The main results of the survey are also available on the I.Stat data warehouse, at: http://dati.istat.it (theme: "Households Economic Conditions and Disparities").

Every year, the collected data are analyzed and disseminated by means of Istat general publications (Annual Report, Italian Statistical Yearbook, Noi Italia, SDGs) and, occasionally, by Istat specific series of in-depth analysis, available at: http://www.istat.it/it/produzione-editoriale.

Finally, the elementary data collected during the survey are available either in file format for public use (micro.STAT), downloading it directly from the Istat website, or as a file for researchers (MFR), usually released to university scholars or research institutions on a project submission.

For technical and methodological information

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