

ISTAT POVERTY STATISTICS | YEAR 2024

Absolute poverty stable



In 2024, over **2.2 million households** in condition of absolute poverty – (8.4% of total resident households) and **5.7 million individuals** (9.8% of total resident individuals) are **in absolute poverty**, both shares are stable compared to 2023, when they were equal to 8.4% and 9.7% respectively.

The incidence of absolute poverty among **households with at least one foreigner** is 30.4%, rising to 35.2% in **households** made up **exclusively of foreigners**, while falling to 6.2% for **households** made up **only of Italians**.

The **relative** household **poverty** incidence, at 10.9%, is stable compared to 2023 (it was 10.6%), as there are more than over 2.8 million households below the threshold. The incidence of individual relative poverty rose slightly to 14.9% (from 14.5% in 2023), involving over 8.7 million individuals.

10.5%

The percentage of households in absolute poverty in the South and Islands

7.9% in the North, 6.5% in the Centre.

1,28 mln

Children in absolute poverty (13.8% of the total number of children)

15.6%

Share of households with reference person worker or assimilated worker in absolute poverty

2.9% if reference person is Executive, Middle management or White collar

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Over 5.7 million individuals in absolute poverty in Italy in 2024

In 2024, just over 2.2 million households are estimated to be in absolute poverty; accounting for 8.4% of the total number of resident households, is substantially stable compared to 2023. Overall, over 5.7 million individuals or 9.8% of the total number of resident individuals are in absolute poverty as in the previous year (for statistically significant changes, see Statement 1 of the methodological note).

The incidence of households in absolute poverty remains highest in the South and Islands (where it involves over 886 thousand households, 10.5%), followed by the North-West (8.1%, 595 thousand households) and the North-East (7.6%, almost 395 thousand households), while the Centre confirms the lowest values (6.5%, 349 thousand households). On the other hand, among absolutely poor households, 39.8% reside in the South and Island (38.7% in 2023) and 44.5% in the North (45% in 2023); the remaining 15.7% reside in the Center (16.2% in 2023).

Absolute poverty is also stable at the individual level with the only exception of the Islands where there is a significant increase, reaching 13.4% from 11.9% in 2023.

The stability of the incidence of absolute poverty is observed for all age groups: among minors it is confirmed at 13.8% (almost 1.3 million children and young people) – the highest value of the historical series since 2014 – and among young people aged 18-34 at 11.7% (equal to approximately 1 million 153 thousand individuals); for 35-64 year olds it is confirmed at 9.5%, also the maximum value reached by the time series, and among the over-65s confirmed at 6.4% (over 918 thousand people).

The intensity of absolute poverty, which measures in percentage terms how much the average monthly expenditure of poor households is below the poverty line (i.e. "how poor are the poor"), remains stable at a national level (18.4%), in the North (18.5%, with values of 19.1 % in the North-West and 17.6 % in the North-East) and in the Centre (18.0%), while increasing in the South and Islands: incidence estimates rise to 18.5% from 17.8% in 2023.

In small municipalities (up to 50 thousand inhabitants), different from peripheral municipalities in metropolitan areas, the incidence of absolute poverty is higher (8.9%); followed by municipalities over 50 thousand inhabitants and peripheral municipalities in metropolitan areas (8.0%) and by the central municipalities of metropolitan areas (7.8%). However, in the South and Islands and the North are the central municipalities of the metropolitan area that record the highest values (12.5% and 8.2% respectively), while in the Centre the highest incidence is recorded in the smaller non-peripheral municipalities of the metropolitan areas (7.9%).

ABSOLUTE POVERTY: THE KEY FIGURES

Years 2023-2024 (a), estimates in thousands and percentage values

MAIN INDICATORS	Geographical breakdown										Italy	
	North-West		North-East		Centre		South		Islands		Italy	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024
Poor households (absolute values)	585	595	413	394	360	349	572	570	287	316	2,217	2,224
Poor people (absolute values)	1,423	1,458	990	930	918	884	1,609	1,621	754	851	5,694	5,744
Incidence of absolute household poverty (%)	8.0	8.1	7.9	7.6	6.7	6.5	10.2	10.2	10.2	11.2	8.4	8.4
Incidence of individual absolute poverty (%)	9.1	9.2	8.6	8.1	7.9	7.6	12.0	12.1	11.9	13.4	9.7	9.8
Household absolute poverty intensity (%)	19.0	19.1	18.0	17.6	18.0	18.0	18.6	19.3	16.2	17.0	18.2	18.4

(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note.

The situation of larger households still remains critical

The incidence of absolute poverty remains higher among households with more members: it reaches 21.2% among those with five and more members and 11.2% among those with four members. The incidence of households with three members is also unchanged (8.6%).

The most marked distress is observed for households with three or more minor children, where almost one in five household is in absolute poverty (19.4%) and even for households of *other types*, where several households and/or aggregate members often live together, the incidence is higher than average (15.7%); as well as for single-parent households (11.8%).

The incidence of absolute poverty among households with a reference person (r.p.) aged 65 or over takes on the lowest values (6.7%), compared with those with a younger r.p. (the incidence exceeds 10% among households with a r.p. aged no more than 54 years and stands at 7.3% among r.p. households aged 55-64 years). The values are particularly low among couples with elderly r.p. whose incidence (4.4%) is two percentage points lower than those of younger couples that showed a worsening between 2023 and 2024.

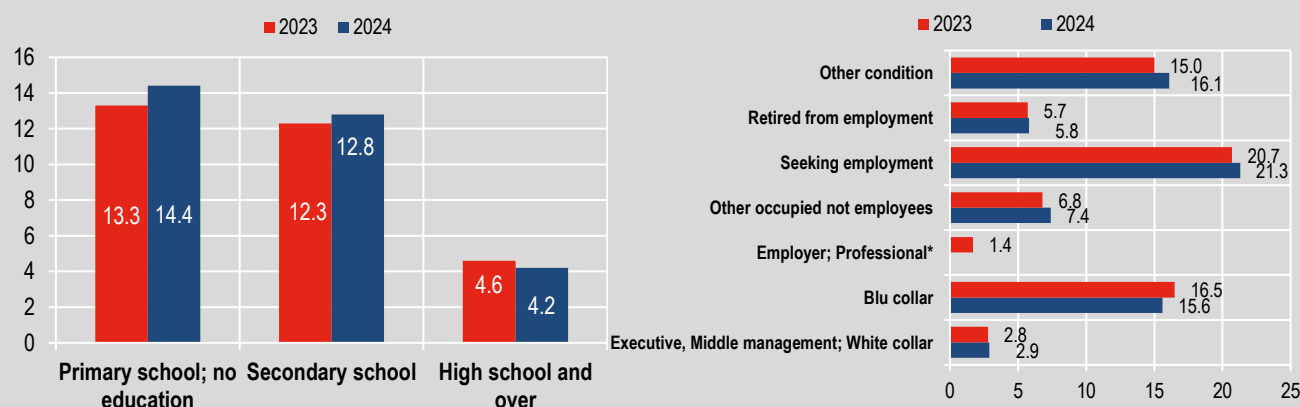
In general, an inverse relationship is confirmed between the value of the incidence and the age of the r.p., also due to the lower propensity to save of younger r.p. households.

Education and work: protective factors against poverty

The incidence of absolute poverty decreases the educational qualification of the household reference person increases: if the reference person has at least an upper secondary school diploma, the incidence is 4.2%, it is three times higher (12.8%) if the r.p. has at most a middle school diploma and reaches 14.4%, for households with the reference person has obtained at least a primary school diploma.

Among households with an employed reference person, the incidence of poverty in the case of an employed households r.p. is 8.7%, rising to 15.6% if households with blue-collar and assimilated r.p.; Among households with self-employed reference person, the highest values of the incidence are recorded for those who are self-employed other than entrepreneurs or freelancers ("*other independent*" 7.4%). Finally, among households with a reference person retired from work the incidence is confirmed at 5.8%, while the highest values are confirmed for households with a r.p. seeking employment (21.3%).

FIGURE 1. INCIDENCE OF ABSOLUTE HOUSEHOLD POVERTY BY STUDENT QUALIFICATION AND PROFESSIONAL CONDITION OF THE REFERENCE STAFF. Years 2023-2024 (a), percentage values



(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note.

*The data for 2024 is not statistically significant due to the reduced sample size

Absolute poverty continues to affect children

In 2024, absolute poverty in Italy affects over 1 million 283 thousand minors (13.8% of resident minors); the incidence varies from 12.1% in the Center to 16.4% in the South and Islands, and rising to 14.9% for children from 7 to 13 years old. The substantial stability compared to 2023 confirms the highest incidence value since 2014.

Households in absolute poverty in which there are minors number almost 734 thousand (12.3%); the highest incidence, is observed for *other types* of households with minors (23.9%) (i.e. those households where several households and/or aggregate members frequently live together); among couples, the spread of the phenomenon increases as the number of minor children increases (7.3% for couples with one minor child, 10.6% for those with two minor children and 20.7% if there are at least three minor children), reaching high values even among single-parent households with minors (14.4%).

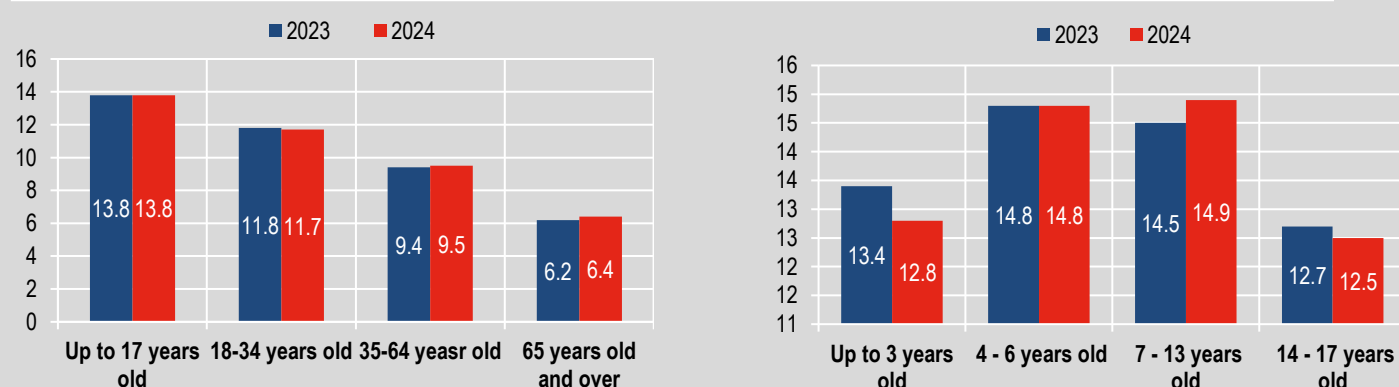
The intensity of poverty for households with minors, at 21.0%, is higher than that for poor households as a whole (18.4%), further evidence of a more marked condition of hardship.

Also evident for households with minors is the association between the spread of absolute poverty and the working status/position in the profession of the reference person: for employed persons, for employed persons (18.7%), followed by households with minors in which the r.p. is another self-employed person (9.4%). It reaches 23.2% for households with minors in which the r.p. is not an employed person, touching 20.0% for cases in which the r.p. is seeking employment.

Citizenship is strongly linked to the socio-economic condition of households with minors: for households with minors composed only of Italians, the incidence stands at 8.0% and becomes five times higher (40.5%) for households with minors composed only of foreigners (reaches 33.6% in the more general case where there is at least one foreigner in the household with minors).

The incidence of absolute poverty among households with minors in the central municipalities of the metropolitan area (16.1%) is almost six percentage points higher than that found in the peripheral municipalities of the metropolitan area and municipalities of more than 50 thousand inhabitants (10.8%); for the smallest municipalities, up to 50 thousand inhabitants, it stands at 12.2%.

FIGURE 2. INCIDENCE OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY AMONG INDIVIDUALS BY AGE GROUP AND AMONG CHILDREN ALONE BY AGE GROUP. Years 2023-2024 (a), percentage values



(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note.

High values for absolute poverty among foreigners are confirmed

In 2023, there will be more than 1.8 million foreigners in absolute poverty, more than one in three (the incidence is 35.6%), a share almost five times higher than that of Italians (7.4%). For the latter, two thirds of poor households (67%) are Italian-only households (over 1.490 thousand, 6.2% incidence) and only the remaining 33% are households with foreigners (733 thousand), which in 82% of cases (600 thousand) are households composed exclusively of foreigners.

The incidence of absolute poverty, at 30.4% among households with foreigners, rises to 35.2% for those composed exclusively of foreigners and falls to 6.2% for Italian-only households. In 2024, for households with foreigners, the 2023 values are confirmed, the highest recorded since 2014 (in 10 years the incidence among households composed exclusively of foreigners has increased by 10 percentage points, going from 25.2% in 2014 to 35.2% in 2024).

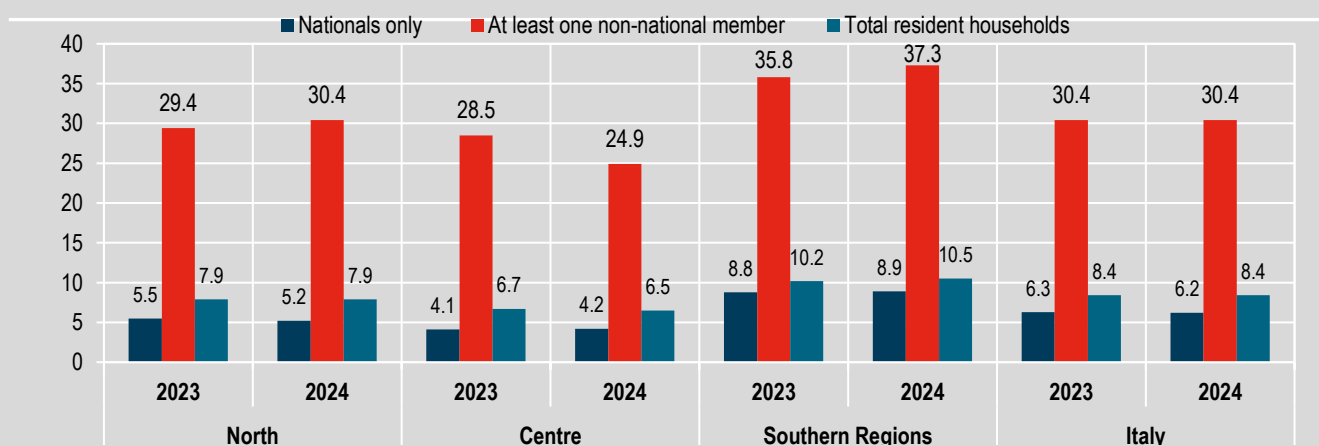
The difference between the incidences calculated for households composed exclusively of and for those Italian-only is higher in the South and Islands regions and this difference is equal to 33.6 percentage points (42.5% and 8.9% respectively), drops to 25.2 points in the North (30.4% and 5.2%) and reaches the lowest value in the Center (24.9% and 4.2%).

The criticality for foreign-only households is more pronounced for the smallest municipalities, up to 50 thousand inhabitants (which are not municipalities on the outskirts of metropolitan areas), where the incidence reaches 37.9%, followed by the central municipalities of the metropolitan area (35.3%); similarly, for Italian-only households, even if at much lower values, the incidence of poverty is equal to 7.0% in the smaller municipalities and 4.7% in the central municipalities of the metropolitan area.

In households with foreigners in which the reference person is looking for work, the incidence of absolute poverty is 44.3% (15.3% for Italian-only households); if the r.p. is employed, the poverty condition affects more than one in four households with foreigners (29.1%, almost seven times higher than that of Italian-only households of 4.5%). For households with r.p. classified as blue collar or similar, the highest values are recorded for households composed exclusively of foreigners (35.3%), more than four times compared to those made up of Italians only (8.7%).

A decidedly marked economic hardship characterizes households with at least one foreigner in which there are minors, among whom the incidence of poverty is 33.6% (338 thousand households), if they are households composed exclusively of foreigners the incidence (40.5%) is approximately five times higher than that of Italian-only households (8.0%). The incidence of absolute poverty of households where there are foreigners and minors exceeds 30% in all the divisions, recording the highest values in the South and Islands, where it reaches 46.2% (31.3% in the North and 30.6% in the Centre); the incidence is also particularly high in comparison with that of Italian-only households with minors (which varies from 4.9 in the Center to 12.6% in the South).

FIGURE 3. INCIDENCE OF ABSOLUTE HOUSEHOLD POVERTY BY CITIZENSHIP OF MEMBERS AND GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN. Years 2023-2024 (a), percentage values



(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note.

Absolute poverty more widespread for households living in rented dwellings

In 2024, 18.0% of households residing in Italy pay a rent for the dwelling they live in; 73.5%, however, own a dwelling (the remaining 8.5% are in usufruct or free use).

There are over one million poor households living in rented housing, the incidence stands at 22.1% against the 4.7% recorded among those living in owned housing (almost 916 thousand households); among households in usufruct and free use, the incidence of absolute poverty is 11.5% (260 thousand households).

For households living in rented housing, the highest incidence is in the South and Islands (24.8%, involving 346 thousand households), followed by the North and the Centre (21.9% and 18.7% respectively). Same evidence for households owning the property in which they live, with maximum values in the South and Islands (7.0%) and minimum values in the Centre (3.3%). Even if such households pay a mortgage, the incidence stops at 3.9%.

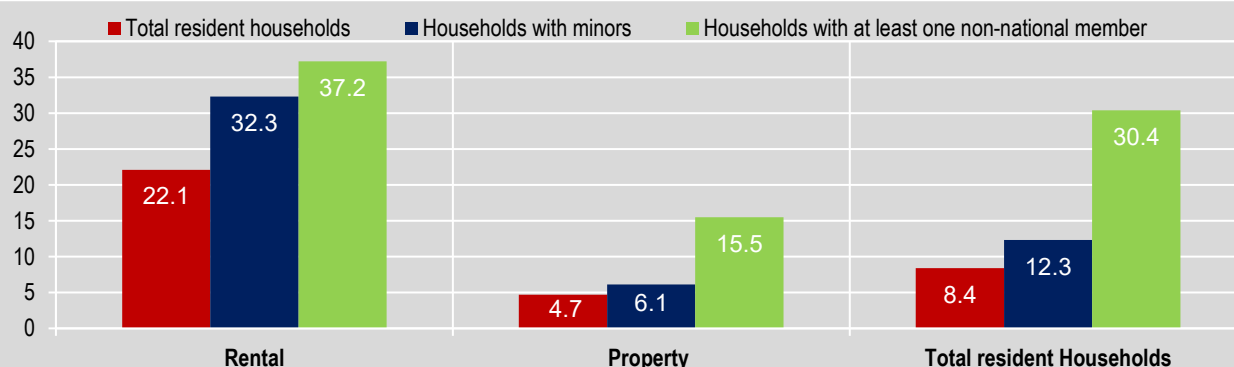
Among households living in rented dwellings, the incidence of absolute poverty is highest for households with a reference person aged between 45 and 54 years (27.3%) and it shows lower values for those with an elderly reference person, aged 65 and over (17.7%). The households living in rented dwellings entirely composed of Italians show values of absolute poverty more than halved compared to those of households with at least one foreigner (15.2% and 37.2% respectively); it should be noted that among poor households with foreigners 75.9% live in rented accommodation and only 14.1% have a house of their own; the remaining 10% live in a dwelling in usufruct or free of charge (the values are, respectively, 33.0%, 54.5% and 12.5% among poor families of Italians only).

In households in absolute poverty where there are minors, the incidence of poverty for those living in rented dwellings stands at 32.3%, while for those living in owned housing it stops at 6.1%.

The average rent for households in absolute poverty is approximately EUR 373.18 per month, compared to approximately EUR 437 paid by households who are not classified as absolute poor.

Furthermore, 16.0% of households in absolute poverty living in owned housing pay a mortgage (compared to 19.6% of non-poor families). Although the mortgage does not fall within the definition of consumption expenditure since it is aimed at increasing the housing stock, for the households burdened by this expenditure, the outlay significantly limits the economic resources to be allocated to consumption expenditure.

FIGURE 4. INCIDENCE OF ABSOLUTE POVERTY AMONG HOUSEHOLDS. AMONG HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN AND AMONG HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE FOREIGNER BY HOUSING TENURE. Year 2024 (a), percentage values



(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note.

The incidence of relative poverty also shows substantially stable values

In 2024 the relative household poverty line is EUR 1,218.07 for a two-member household, which is higher than the EUR 1,210.89 in 2023 (see Glossary and Methodological Note).

In 2024, there are more than 2.8 million households in relative poverty (10.9%, stable compared to 2023), totalling more than 8.7 million individuals (14.9%, slightly increased from 14.5% of the previous year). Compared to 2023, the incidence of relative household poverty is stable in all territorial breakdowns, while at individual level there are signs of worsening in the Islands (24.9% to 22.5% in 2023) (for statistically significant changes between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note).

Relative poverty intensity stands at 20.8%, in line with the 2023 value (20.5%). However, the dynamics to be reported concern the decrease in intensity throughout the North (in both the North-East and the North-West, where it is 19.4% and 18.6%, respectively), and in the Centre (20.4%), while the South and Islands reports an increase to 21.7% (compared to 20.9% in 2023).

In the North, the incidence of relative household poverty is 6.6%, with higher values in the North-West (7.3%) than in the North-East (5.6%); in the Centre it stands at 6.5%, while in the South and Islands, the incidence value stops at 20.0%, clearly higher than in the other divisions. On a regional scale Apulia (24.3%), Calabria (23.5%), and Campania (20.8%) are the regions with the highest values of the household incidence, while Aosta Valley/Vallée d'Aoste (4.1%), Trentino-Alto Adige (4.7%), Veneto (5.2%) and Tuscany (5.3%) present the lowest values. The regional incidences are not significantly different to last year.

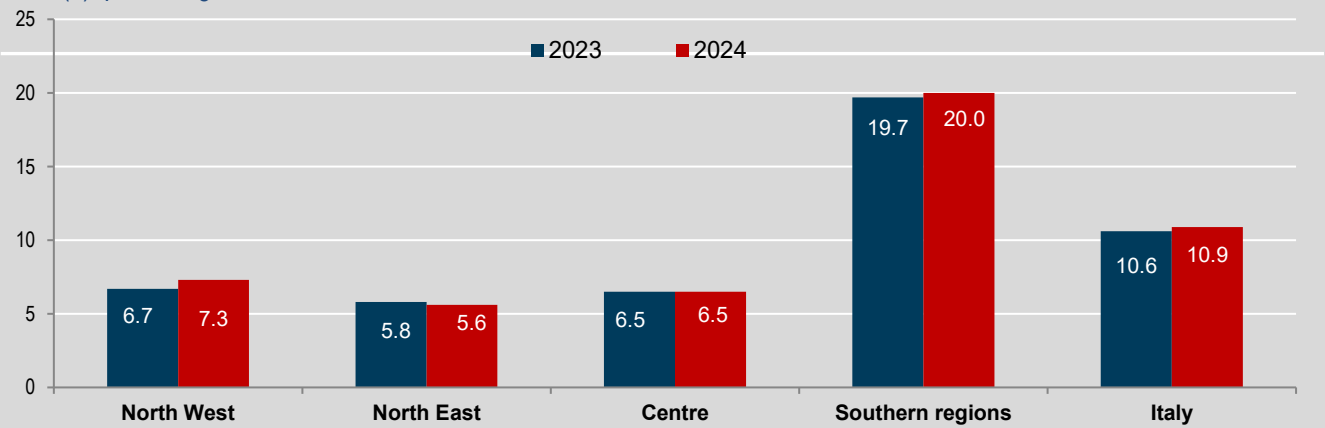
The incidence of relative poverty at national level is stable for the different municipal typologies too; the peripheral municipalities of the metropolitan area show the highest value (12.2%), with the exception of the South and Islands, where also the central municipalities of the metropolitan area show the highest incidence values (20.8% for smallest municipalities – up to 50 thousand inhabitants – and 20.9% for metropolitan areas).

For households with children, the incidence of relative poverty is also high

The incidence of relative poverty grows in relation to the increase in the number of household members; in 2024, it stands at 4.3% for one-person households and increases to 33.7% for larger households (of five members or more). In particular, households with three or more minor children show the highest values, for which the incidence of relative poverty is more than three times higher than the national average (39.2% against 10.9%); couples with three or more children also show high incidence values (31.8%), with the highest value in the South and Islands (39.6%). There are also signs of hardship for households of *other types* (23.5%; in the South and Islands the incidence for this type reaches 35.0%).



FIGURE 5. INCIDENCE OF RELATIVE HOUSEHOLD POVERTY BY GEOGRAPHICAL BREAKDOWN. Years 2023-2024 (a), percentage values



(a) For statistically significant changes (i.e. other than 0) between 2023 and 2024, see Table 1 of the methodological note

Compared to 2023, the incidence of relative poverty increases for childless couples aged less than 65 (7.0% to 5.6% in 2023). More generally, a lower values of the incidence are observed for single persons under 65 in the North (2.3%), followed by the Centre and the South and Islands (3.2% and 8.0%, respectively). As the number of household components increases, also the incidence rises, reaching the highest value for 5 or more components households (33.7%), 43.5% in the South and Islands and 27.4% in the North.

Analysing employment status and occupational position, higher values are observed for households with a reference person seeking employment (25.5%), rising to 31.6% in the South and Islands. Signs of growing economic hardship concern households with an employee reference person (10.8%) and, above all, households with a worker or assimilated reference person (18.5%, 28.9% in the South and Islands). The condition of households with a retired r.p. also worsened, both at a national level (8.0%) and in the different breakdowns: 4.1% in the Centre, 4.5% in the North and 16.7% in the South and Islands.

High incidence values are also confirmed among households with a self-employed r.p., especially those with r.p. classified as other self-employed other than entrepreneurs and freelancers (10.3% at national level and 18.4% in the South and Islands). The incidence of relative poverty is 9.0% for Italian-only households, but is more than three times higher for households with at least one foreigner (30.0%; it reaches 31.9% for foreign-only households).

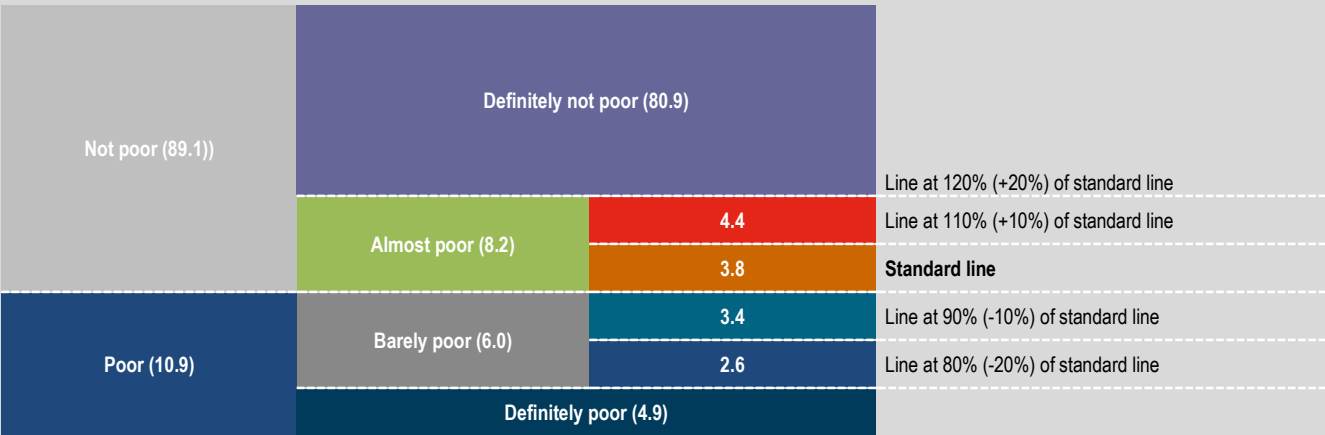
Households 'definitely poor' especially in the South and Islands division

The classification of households into poor and non-poor, obtained through the conventional relative poverty line, can be further articulated with the use of additional thresholds, corresponding to 80%, 90%, 110% and 120% of the standard one.

In 2024, those households that are 'definitely' poor (with levels of equivalent monthly expenditure below the standard line of more than 20%) are 4.9% (stable with respect to 2023), with higher values in the South and Islands (9.7%). The 'barely' poor (expenditure below the line of no more than 20%) are 6.0% and reach 10.3% in the South and Islands. Among the "barely" poor, 3.4% have consumption expenditure levels very close to the poverty line (below the line by no more than 10%); in the South and Islands they are 5.8%.



FIGURE 6. POOR AND NON-POOR HOUSEHOLDS BY DIFFERENT POVERTY LINES. Year 2024, percentage values



Glossary

Other self-employed: means the self-employed person, the cooperative member, the helper in a household member's business, the coordinated and continuous collaborator (with or without a project), the occasional worker.

Incidence of poverty: obtained as the ratio of the number of households with average monthly consumption expenditure at or below the poverty line to the total number of resident households.

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

Worker and assimilated worker: includes the head worker, the subordinate worker, the assimilated worker, the apprentice, the home worker for companies.

Absolute poverty basket: represents the set of goods and services which, in the Italian context and for a family with certain characteristics, are considered essential to achieve a minimally acceptable standard of living and avoid forms of social exclusion.

Household reference person: is the holder of the household record in the registry office.

Absolute poverty: households with monthly expenditure at or below the absolute poverty line (which differs by household size and age composition, by region and by type of municipality of residence) are classified as absolutely poor.

Relative poverty: Households with consumption expenditure at or below a conventional relative poverty line (poverty line) are considered relative poor. Two-person households with a monthly expenditure at or below this value are classified as poor. For households of different sizes, the value of the line is obtained by applying an appropriate equivalence scale, which takes into account the economies of scale that can be achieved as the number of members increases.

Absolute poverty threshold: represents the minimum expenditure required to acquire the goods and services included in the absolute poverty basket. It varies, by construction, according to household size, age composition, region and size of municipality of residence.

Relative poverty line: for a household of two members it is equal to the average expenditure per person in the country (i.e. per capita expenditure and is obtained by dividing the total consumption expenditure of household by the total number of members); for household with a number of members other than two, the threshold is calculated by applying the Carbonaro equivalence scale whose coefficients make it possible to take account of the effect of economies of scale. For example, the poverty line for a household of 4 members is 1.63 times that for 2 members (1,985.45 euros), the threshold for a household of just one person is 0.6 times that for 2 members (730.84 euros), while the threshold for a family of six people is 2.16 times (2,631.03 euros).

Household size	Equivalence scale (coefficients)	Poverty Line
1	0.60	730.84
2	1.00	1,218.07
3	1.33	1,620.03
4	1.63	1,985.45
5	1.90	2,314.33
6	2.16	2,631.03
7 and more	2.40	2,923.37

Equivalent expenditure: it is calculated by dividing the household value of the expenditure by the coefficient of the equivalence scale and allows the spending levels of households of different sizes to be made directly comparable (see the relative poverty line item).

Household expenditure: expenditure on goods and services purchased by households to satisfy their needs (including expenditure on gifts). It also includes the monetary value of imputed rent and that of self-consumption, i.e. goods produced and consumed by the household, as well as goods and services received from the employer as wages.

Methodological note

Knowledge objectives and framework

The poverty estimates disseminated in this Report are based on data from the Household Consumption Expenditure Survey which finds the structure and level of consumption expenditure according to the main social, economic and territorial characteristics of resident households. As already explained in the methodological note of the Statistics report "[Household consumption expenditure](#)" of 7 October 2025, in the second half of 2024 the survey was not conducted and therefore the full-year estimates were produced using data collected between January and June 2024 and those collected between July and December 2023, the latter updated on the basis of information from other

Survey references

The collection of information on household consumption expenditure is provided for in the [National Statistical Programme](#), which brings together all the statistical data collections needed by the country.

Target population

The population of interest consists of households resident in Italy and the individuals that make them up (persons residing in cohabiting institutions are excluded). The household is understood as a de facto household, i.e. the set of cohabiting persons bound by marriage, kinship, affinity, adoption, guardianship or affective ties. The survey is conducted on a theoretical sample of over 32,500 households.

Processes and methodologies

The methodology for estimating absolute poverty was modified in 2022 on the basis of the indications of a commission of experts in the field who devoted themselves to updating the methodology developed in 2005 (see Istat Volume Metodi e Norme, '[La misura della povertà assoluta](#)' of 22 April 2009). The main changes are illustrated in a specific appendix in the Report 'Poverty in Italy. Year 2022' (<https://www.istat.it/it/archivio/289383>). The measure is based on the monetary valuation of a basket of goods and services considered essential to avoid serious forms of social exclusion in the reference context. Starting from the assumption that primary needs and the goods and services that satisfy them are homogeneous throughout the national territory, account was taken of the fact that costs are variable in the different regions of the country.

The reference unit of the basket is the household, considered with respect to the characteristics of the individual members, their specific needs (e.g. nutritional requirements) and the possible forms of savings that can be made as the household composition changes. The essential needs have been identified as an adequate diet, the availability of a dwelling - of a size commensurate with the size of the household, heated, equipped with the main services, durable goods and accessories - and the minimum necessary for clothing, communication, information, getting around, education and keeping healthy.

Consequently, the basket is made up 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 households taking into account the different distribution channels (in the case of foodstuffs, reference was made to a mapping, which links each to one or more products in the consumer price basket, for which traditional techniques or, alternatively, scanner data are used). The monetary value of the overall basket was obtained by direct addition of those of the different components and corresponds to the absolute poverty line.

There is therefore no single threshold, but as many absolute poverty thresholds as there are combinations of household type (obtained as a combination of the number and age of the members), region and type of municipality of residence (distinguishing between municipalities in the centre of the metropolitan area, the periphery of the metropolitan area and municipalities with 50,001 inhabitants and more and other municipalities with up to 50 thousand inhabitants other than the periphery of the metropolitan area).

If absolute poverty classifies households on the basis of their ability to acquire certain goods and services, the relative poverty measure, defined in relation to the average standard of the population, is linked to inequality in the distribution of consumption expenditure and identifies poor households among those that are at a disadvantage compared to others. In fact, a household of two members is defined as poor if its consumption expenditure is less than or equal to the average per capita consumption expenditure.

An equivalence scale is used for households of different size, 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 in relative poverty estimation, known as the Carbonaro equivalence scale, is based on a double logarithmic function between consumption expenditure and household size.

The values of the equivalence scale (see Glossary relative poverty line item) 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-person household (the size corresponds to a coefficient of 1).

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

To summarise information on the various aspects of poverty, two indices are calculated: the first is the proportion of the poor (incidence), i.e. the ratio of the number of households (individuals) in poverty to the number of resident households (individuals). The second is the average poverty gap (intensity), which measures "how poor are the poor", 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 different conditions of deprivation, four additional thresholds are added to the standard relative poverty line, 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 more exposed to this eventuality, and on the other hand the share, among poor households, of those with consumption expenditure levels well below the poverty line.

The absolute poverty thresholds

The absolute poverty thresholds represent the values against which a household's consumption expenditure is compared in order to classify it as absolutely poor or not poor. For example, for an adult (30-59 years old) living in a central municipality of the metropolitan area in Piedmont, the poverty threshold is 916.98 euro per month; in Sicily, it is 760.22 euro per month; if he/she lives in a central municipality of the metropolitan area of Lombardy, it is 1,224.64 euro; while if he/she lives in a small municipality of Apulia, the threshold is 716.36 euro.

The values of the absolute poverty thresholds for the most common household types in Italy for 2024 and for the historical series reconstructed from 2014 according to the new methodology are available in the Institute's *datawarehouse* in the [poverty threshold](#) section. For a customised consultation of the poverty thresholds relating to any household composition, please refer to the special [poverty calculator](#), which has been revamped in terms of graphics and functionalities.

The accuracy of the estimates

In order to assess the accuracy of the estimates produced by a sample survey - and therefore also the statistically significant variations between the estimates it produces (see Table 1 below) - it is necessary to take account of the sample error, which results from having observed the variable of interest on only a part (sample) of the population. This error can be expressed in terms of absolute error (standard error) or relative error (i.e. the absolute error divided by the estimate, which is called coefficient of variation, CV).

Starting from these, it is possible to construct the confidence interval which, with a predetermined level of confidence, contains within it the true but unknown value of the parameter being estimated. The confidence interval is calculated by adding and subtracting from the point estimate its absolute sample error, multiplied by a coefficient that depends on the level of confidence; considering the traditional 95% confidence level, the corresponding coefficient is equal to 1.96 (for further details see the methodological note Statistica Report "[Household consumption expenditure](#)" of 7 October 2025).

Table 1 - Statistically significant changes in incidence between 2023 and 2024 (percentages)

	2023	2024
Absolute poverty		
Individuals in absolute poverty in the Islands	11.9	13.4
Couple with r.p. (a) under 65 years old in Italy	4.7	6.4
Relative Poverty		
Individuals in relative poverty in Italy	14.5	14.9
Individuals in relative poverty in the Islands	22.5	24.9
Couple without children with r.p. (a) under 65 years old in Italy	5.6	7.0
Households residing in other municipalities with up to 50 thousand inhabitants (other than municipalities on the outskirts of the metropolitan area) of the Islands	17.3	20.2

(a) r.p. reference person.

Dissemination

Every year, the Statistics report 'Poverty in Italy' will release estimates for the previous year.

The main results of the survey are also available on the Institute's I.Stat data warehouse at <https://esploradati.istat.it/> (topic: 'Household economic conditions and inequalities').

Every year, the data collected are analysed and disseminated in Istat publications of a cross-sectional nature (such as the Annual Report, the Italian Statistical Yearbook, Noi Italia, Italia in cifre) and, occasionally, in Istat's in-depth or analytical series, which can be consulted in the area of the website dedicated to editorial production (<http://www.istat.it/it/prodotti/produzione-editoriale>).

Finally, the elementary data collected during the survey will be available both as a public use file mlcro.STAT, which can be downloaded directly from the ISTAT website, and as files for MFR research, which are usually released to scholars from universities or research institutions upon submission of a project.

For technical and methodological clarifications

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