

## HM1.4 LIVING ARRANGEMENTS BY AGE GROUPS

### Definitions and methodology

People's living arrangements change over the life cycle. In many countries, when young people move out of their parents' home, they frequently share dwellings with other young people before setting up their own home to move in with a partner and/or to start a family. At the same time, when children leave home, elderly parents often would like to downsize as household size has diminished.

This indicator shows how living arrangements vary across age groups, with a particular focus on youth (aged 15 to 29) and seniors (65 and older). The data presented here are based on household survey microdata and concern population-level data. The data analysis considers living arrangements in the latest year available for different age groups.

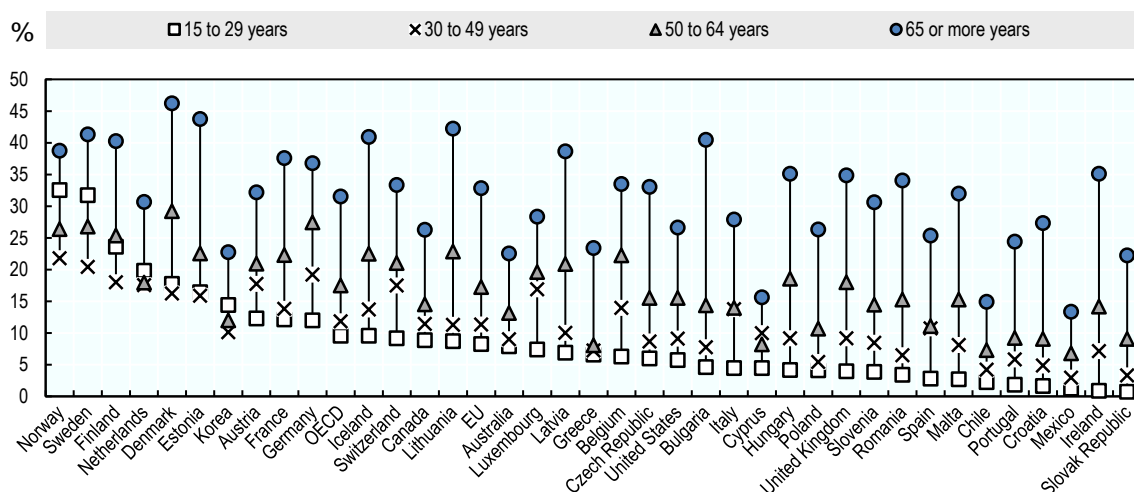
### Key findings

Less than half of the population, no matter the country or age group, live by themselves (see Figure HM1.4.1 and online worksheet HM1.4.A1 for earlier years). The share of one-person households ranges from 46% among seniors in Denmark to around 1% among youth in Ireland and the Slovak Republic.

In most countries, the share of one-person households among private households (which exclude group accommodation, such as nursing homes, hospitals and military quarters) rises with age. Seniors are the age group that is most likely to live alone (ranging from 13% of all seniors in Mexico to 46% in Denmark), followed by people aged 50 to 64 years (ranging from 6% in Mexico and 29% in Denmark). Meanwhile, the share of one-person households among 30- to 49-year olds ranges from 3% in Mexico to 22% in Norway. In most countries, youth are least likely to live on their own (ranging from 1% or less in the Slovak Republic and Ireland to 33% in Norway). This is not the case, however, in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, and to a slight extent in Estonia and Korea, which all register at least 16% of youth living alone.

## Figure HM1.4.1. Share of population living alone

Percentage of population living in single-person households,<sup>1</sup> by age groups, 2019 or latest year available



Note: 1 Only private households are considered. 2. The present publication presents time series which end before the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union on 1 February 2020. The EU aggregate presented here therefore refers to the EU including the UK. In future publications, as soon as the time series presented extend to periods beyond the UK withdrawal (February 2020 for monthly, Q1 2020 for quarterly, 2020 for annual data), the "European Union" aggregate will change to reflect the new EU country composition.

Source: OECD calculations based on European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) survey 2019 except for Iceland, Ireland, Italy, and the United Kingdom (2018; the German Socioeconomic Panel (GSOEP) for Germany till 2014, the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia (2019); the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) for Canada (2011); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2017); the Korean Housing Survey (2019); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2018); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2019).

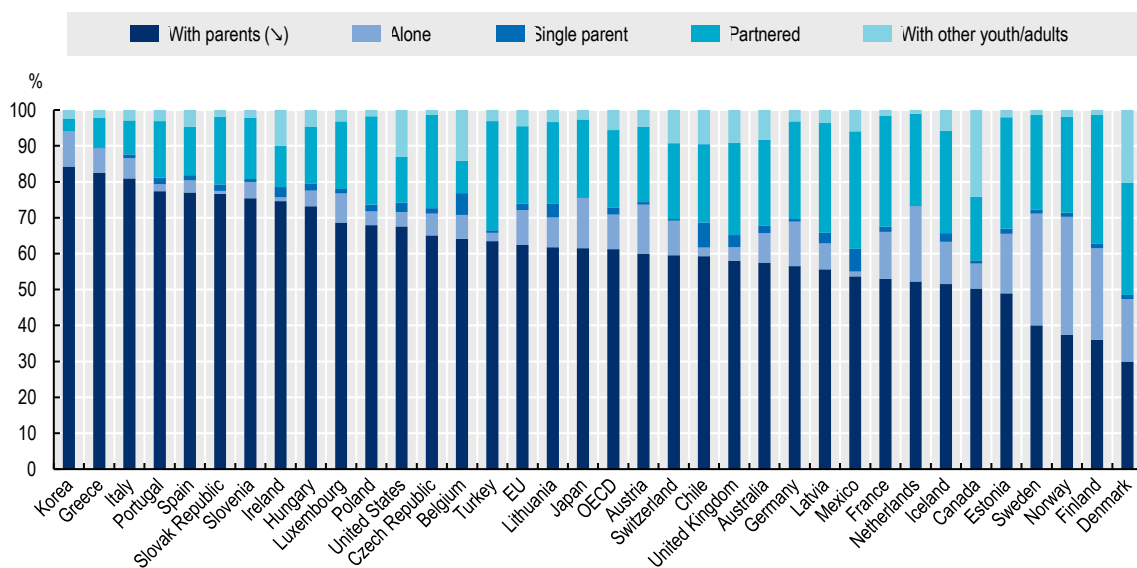
Living arrangements of youth (aged 15-29 years old) vary widely across OECD (Figure HM1.4.2). In countries such as Greece, Italy and Korea, about 80% or more of youth live with their parents. Meanwhile, in the Nordic countries, a smaller proportion live with their parents, and youth are much more likely to live independently. On average, around a fifth of young people live with a partner, ranging from 3% in Korea to 36% in Finland.

*Footnote by Turkey:* The information in this document with reference to "Cyprus" relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognizes the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue";

*Footnote by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Commission:* The Republic of Cyprus is recognized by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

## Figure HM1.4.2: Living arrangements of youth

Distribution of young people (15- to 29-year-olds), by household type<sup>1</sup>, 2019 or latest year available



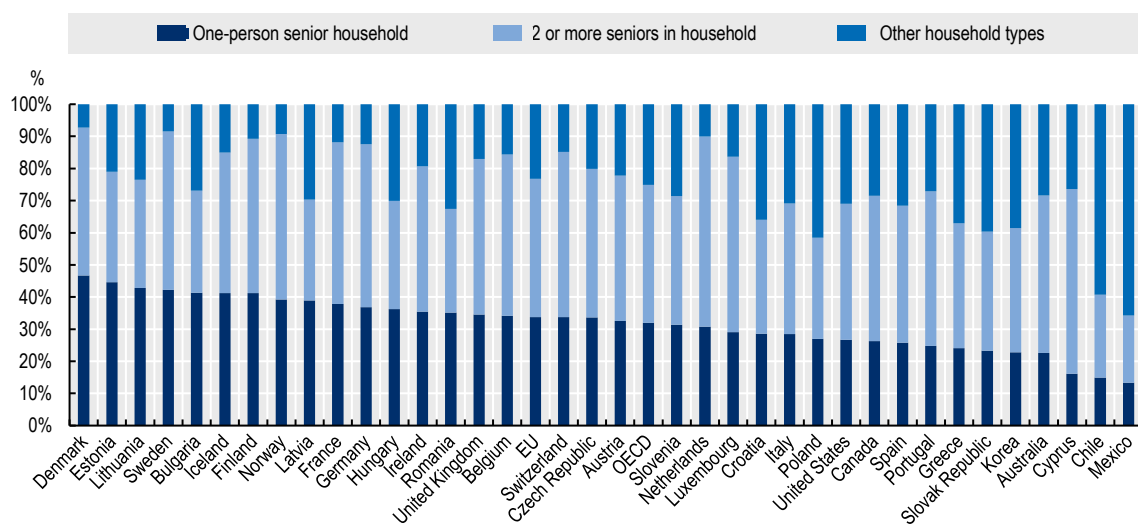
Note: 1. Data refer to 2018 for Italy, Mexico and the United States, to 2017 for Australia, Canada, Chile and Ireland, to 2016 for Korea and Iceland, 2015 for Turkey and 2012 for Japan.

Source: OECD calculations based on EU-SILC, HILDA (Australia), CASEN (Chile), JHPS (Japan), KLIPS (Korea), ENIGH (Mexico) and CPS (United States)

Compared to other age groups, seniors living in private households (see the data and comparability section for more information on the limitations of this approach) are the most likely age group to live on their own (Figure HM1.4.3, see online annex for earlier years). Nevertheless, the share of seniors living in one-person households varies considerably across countries. One-person households are the most common arrangements for seniors in several Eastern and Central European countries, such as Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania and as well as Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden. In most other countries, however, living with one or more other senior(s) is the most common household type among the senior population, ranging from 21% of all seniors in Mexico to 59% in the Netherlands. In Chile, Greece, Korea, Mexico, Poland and the Slovak Republic, the most common living arrangement of seniors is a household that includes at least one person below the age of 65. In these countries, multi-generational households thus seem more common than in the rest of OECD countries.

**Figure HM1.4.3: Share of senior population living in private households by household type**

Distribution of senior people (65+ year-olds), by household, 2019 or latest year available



Note: No data available for Japan, New Zealand and Turkey due to data limitations. The present publication presents time series which end before the United Kingdom’s withdrawal from the European Union on 1 February 2020. The EU aggregate presented here therefore refers to the EU including the UK. In future publications, as soon as the time series presented extend to periods beyond the UK withdrawal (February 2020 for monthly, Q1 2020 for quarterly, 2020 for annual data), the “European Union” aggregate will change to reflect the new EU country composition.”

Source: OECD calculations based on European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU SILC) survey 2019 except for Iceland, Ireland, Italy, and the United Kingdom (2018; the German Socioeconomic Panel (GSOEP) for Germany till 2014, the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics Survey (HILDA) for Australia (2019); the Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID) for Canada (2011); Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN) for Chile (2017); the Korean Housing Survey (2019); Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH) for Mexico (2018); American Community Survey (ACS) for the United States (2019).

## Data and comparability issues

This indicator is calculated based on household surveys. For European countries, the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC); for Chile, the Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional (CASEN); for Korea, the Korean Housing Survey; for Mexico, the Encuesta Nacional de Ingresos y Gastos de los Hogares (ENIGH); and, for the United States, the American Community Survey (ACS).

The analysis considers only private households and excludes individuals living in institutions, such as nursing homes, hospitals and military quarters. The analysis of living arrangements of elderly people on the basis of household survey data has its limits. Population and census data that also consider people living in institutions suggest that the probability to live in an institution increases with age. Despite the avowed political shift away from institutional settings, the increasing number of elderly people have led to an increase in the institutionalised population in some countries. Seniors aged 65 and over make up around 86% of the total institutionalised population, representing around 4% of all seniors aged 65 and over. Moreover, the majority (57%) of seniors living in institutions are over age 80, representing around 11% of all seniors aged 80 and over. Meanwhile, working-age adults (aged 18 to 64) make up around 12% of the total institutionalised population, on average. In 18 countries for which data are available, around 21 000 children under age 18 live in institutions, representing less than 0.5% of the total institutionalised population.

There are important limitations to data on long-term care services, however. They are difficult to collect in many countries, and the definition of “institution” varies from one country to another. In addition, data

for some countries refers only to people receiving publicly funded care, while other countries include people who are paying for their own care (OECD, 2019a).

### Sources and further reading

Eurostat (2020), *Ageing Europe - looking at the lives of older people in the EU*, [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing\\_Europe\\_-\\_looking\\_at\\_the\\_lives\\_of\\_older\\_people\\_in\\_the\\_EU](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Ageing_Europe_-_looking_at_the_lives_of_older_people_in_the_EU).

OECD (2019), *Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris. [https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/soc\\_glance-2019-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/soc\\_glance-2019-en](https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/soc_glance-2019-en/index.html?itemId=/content/publication/soc_glance-2019-en)

OECD (2019a), *Health at a Glance 2019: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, <https://doi.org/10.1787/4dd50c09-en> .

OECD (forthcoming - 2021), Policy Brief on housing for people with disabilities, *Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Policy Briefs*, OECD, Paris.