



22 February 2021

Children's living conditions: modules on "Children's health and material deprivation " and " Separated and blended families"

INCOME AND LIVING CONDITIONS

2021

## 10.7% OF CHILDREN IN MATERIAL AND SOCIAL DEPRIVATION IN 2021

In 2021, 10.7% of children under 16 years of age lived in households in material and social deprivation, an outcome lower than that obtained for the general population (13.5%).

Data collected in 2021 leads to the conclusion that economic difficulties have prevented:

- 15.5% of children to spend holidays outside the home at least one week a year;
- 9.7% of children to participate in an extracurricular or leisure activity;
- 6.6% to participate in non-free school trips and activities;
- 4.3% of children to have the possibility of replacing worn-out clothes by some new ones;
- 1.6% of children to celebrate on special occasions;
- 1.5% of children to invite friends from time to time to play or eat together.

More than half of adults with children living in another household were aged 40 to 44 years old (29.1%) and 45 to 49 years old (23.1%). About 93.8% were men. Most of the children living in another household were aged 10 to 13 years old (29.0%) and 14 to 17 years old (31.2%).

Despite the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, 41.6% reported having shared their time with their children living outside the household every week, for example, in meals, games, homework, walks, conversations, home/school trips, and 15.9% reported having done so every day.

About 42.3% reported having contacted their children outside the household every day through telephone, video call or social networks; 32.1% did it every week.

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### 10.7% of children under 16 years of age in material and social deprivation

According to the Survey on Income and Living Conditions, there were almost 1.5 million children under the age of 16 at the beginning of 2021, most in households composed of two adults and one dependent child (20.3%) or two adults and two dependent children (32.4%).

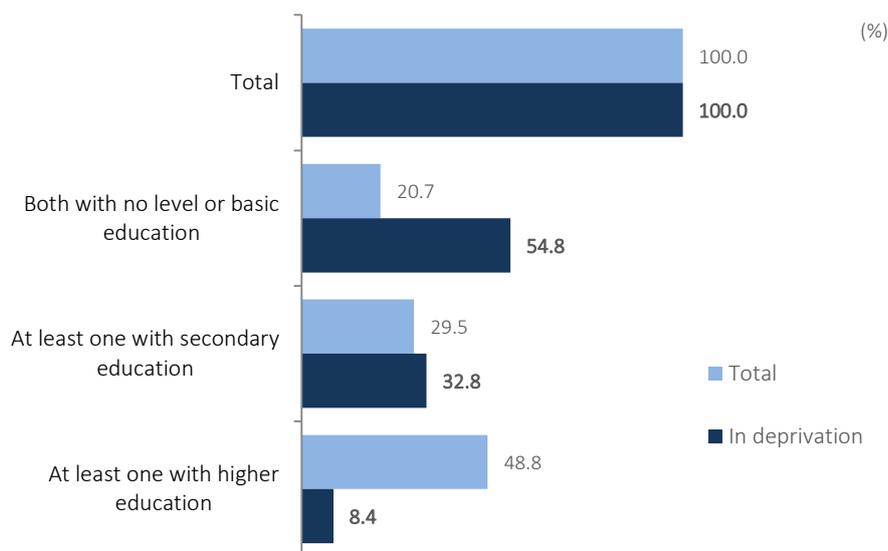
In 2021, 10.7% of children under 16 years of age lived in households in material and social deprivation, a result that is lower than that obtained for the general population (13.5%). Considering the indicator of severe material



and social deprivation, the result for children under 16 years of age (5.1%) is also lower than that obtained for the general population (6.0%).

The level of education of parents is one of the characteristics that most distinguish the population less than 16 years old in material and social deprivation, more evident when parents have a level of education up to primary education, a condition in which children under 16 years of age represented 20.7% overall, but 54.8% when in material and social deprivation. When at least one parent has completed a higher education degree, those proportions are 48.8% for children under 16 years of age in general, and 8.4% when in material deprivation.

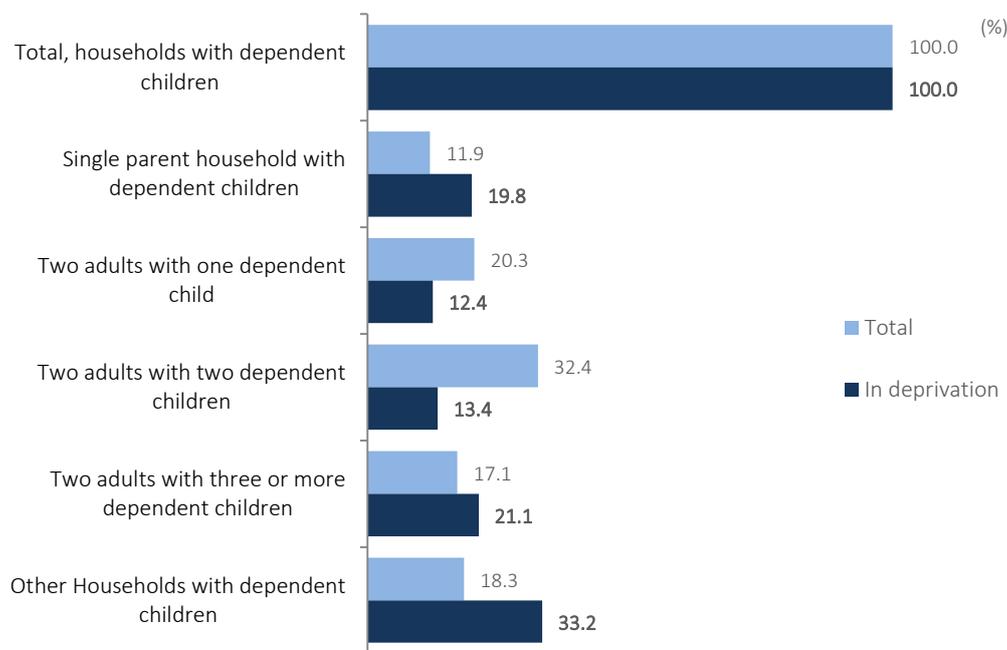
Figure 1. Distribution of people aged less than 16 years old by level of education of their parents and material and social deprivation, Portugal, 2021



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021.

Household composition is also a relevant factor for material and social deprivation, with significant changes in proportions by household type, between the total population and the population in deprivation. This change is more relevant in the case of children under the age of 16 living in households with two adults and two children (representing 32.4% of the total, but only 13.4% of those in material and social deprivation), and children belonging to households consisting of children and at least three adults (18.3% of the total and 33.2% of children in deprivation).

Figure 2. Distribution of people aged less than 16 years old by household type and material and social deprivation, Portugal, 2021

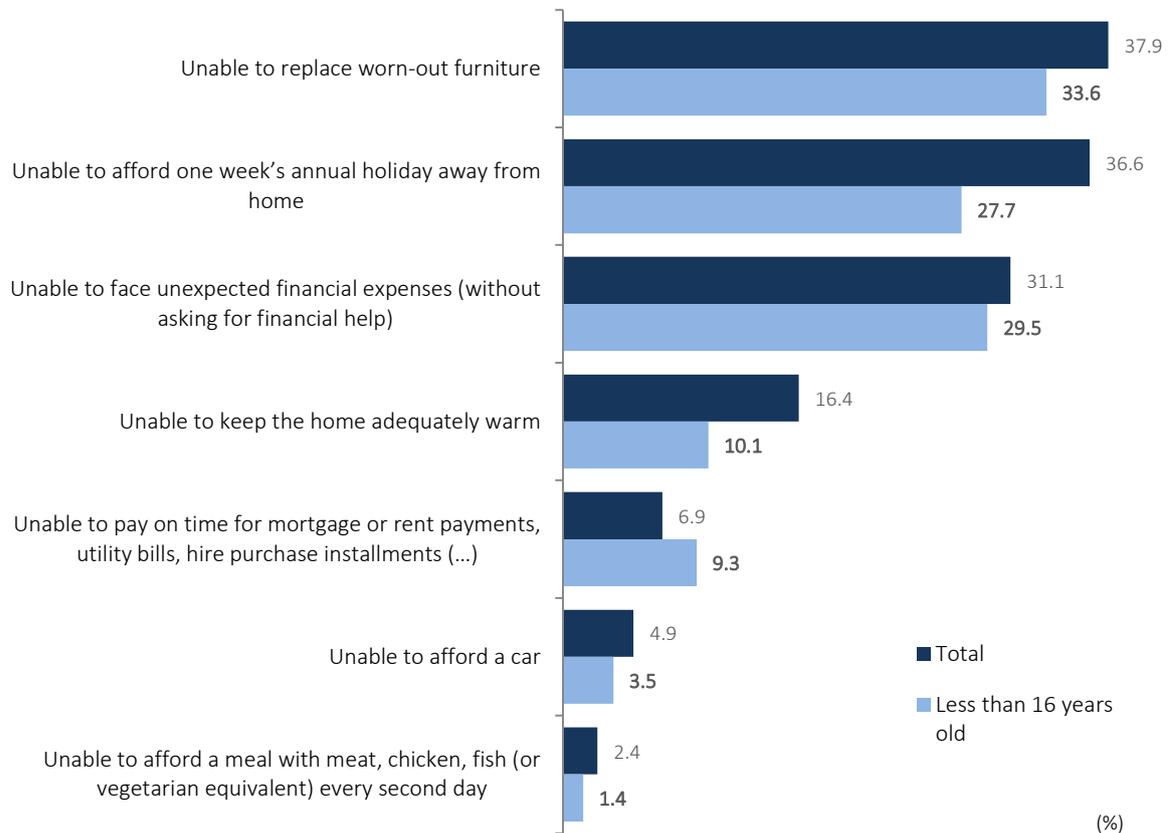


Source: INE, Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2021.

### The difficulty in paying regular payments for economic reasons mainly affects households with children

The analysis of the seven items of material and social deprivation obtained at the household level (for more detail, see Methodological note), confirms that the proportions of people living in households in deprivation tend to be lower than the proportions of children under 16 who live in households in deprivation, except for the item "Unable to pay on time for mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase instalments or other loan payments". It should be noted that items relating to the payment of a week's holiday and a meal of meat, fish or vegetarian equivalent, consider that there is deprivation when at least one of the members of the household does not have access to the item due to economic difficulties, regardless of age.

Figure 3. Items of material and social deprivation for the total population and the for the population aged less than 16 years old, Portugal, 2021



Source: INE, Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2021.

### 15.5% of children cannot spend a week on holiday away from home for economic difficulties

In addition to the regular collection of data on items of material and social deprivation in general, the 2021 Survey on Income and Living Conditions collected specific data on the material deprivation of children. This data collection allows for results on items that are usually only measured for the population aged 16 years or older (such as in the case of the possibility of holidays, outside the home, at least one week a year, and the replacement of worn-out clothing or footwear), and on items specific to children (e.g. extracurricular activities, school trips, or celebrations on special occasions). In this context, deprivation is considered to exist when at least one of the children in the household under the age of 16 does not have access to the item due to economic difficulties, regardless of the situation of the older members.



The results collected show that economic difficulties prevented:

- 15.5% of children to spend holidays outside the home at least one week a year, a result much lower than that obtained for the general population (36.6%), and even that obtained for the population under 16 years (27.7%) when the deprivation of the household as a whole is considered;
- 4.3% of children to have the possibility of replacing worn-out clothes by some new ones (excluding second-hand clothing), just over half the estimated proportion for the general population (8.3%);
- 9.7% of children to participate regularly in an extracurricular or leisure activity;
- 6.6% of children to participate in non-free school trips and activities;
- 1.6% of children to celebrate on special occasions;
- 1.5% of children to invite friends from time to time to play or eat together.

## More than 90 % of children under the age of 16 with a health status rated “good or very good”

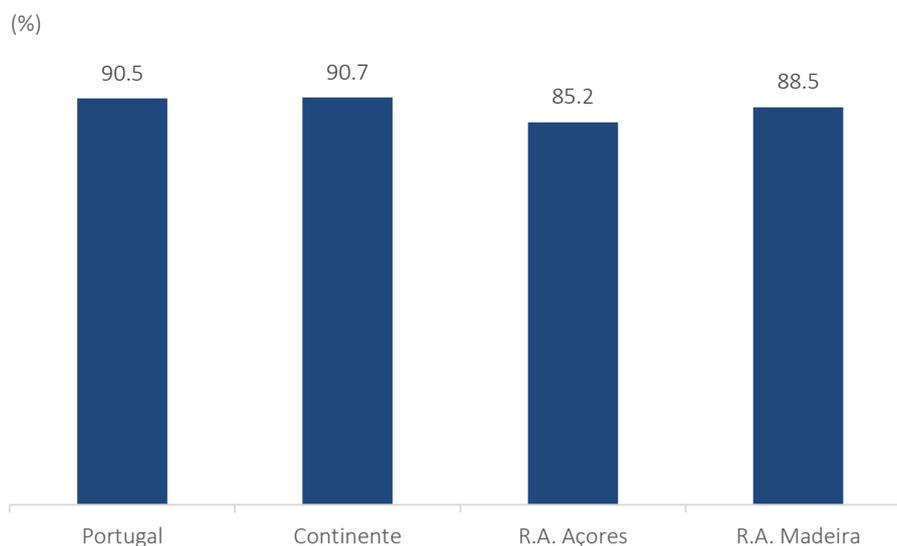
In 2021, 90.5% of children under 16 years of age showed a very good or good health status, a result substantially higher than the average in the previous 5 years for the population aged 16 to 64 years (61.3%); 8.1% were rated a fair health status.

For ages under 16 years, being a man or a woman was not a factor influencing health status, with proportions of 90.4% and 90.6%, respectively.

The NUTS 1 region of residence was in 2021 the characteristic that most distinguished the population under 16 years in relation to the way their health status was assessed: 90.7% of those living in Mainland, 1.8 percentage points (p.p) above the rate recorded in the Região Autónoma da Madeira and 6.3 p.p. above the rate recorded in the Região Autónoma dos Açores.



Figure 4. Proportion of the population aged less than 16 years old and health status “Good or very good”, by NUTS 1, 2021



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2020-2021.

In 2021, 95.2% of the population under 16 years of age showed no limitation due to longstanding health problems in performing activities considered usual for their age, while 4.8% had some type of limitation, more often in the case of male children (5.3%) than in female children (4.3%).

The survey conducted in 2021 also indicates that 98.5% of children under 16 who needed medical consultations and/or treatments (except dental treatments) in the 12 months prior to the interview saw their needs met.

The proportion of satisfaction was lower in the case of the need for dental consultations/treatments (93.5%), mainly because it could not be afforded.

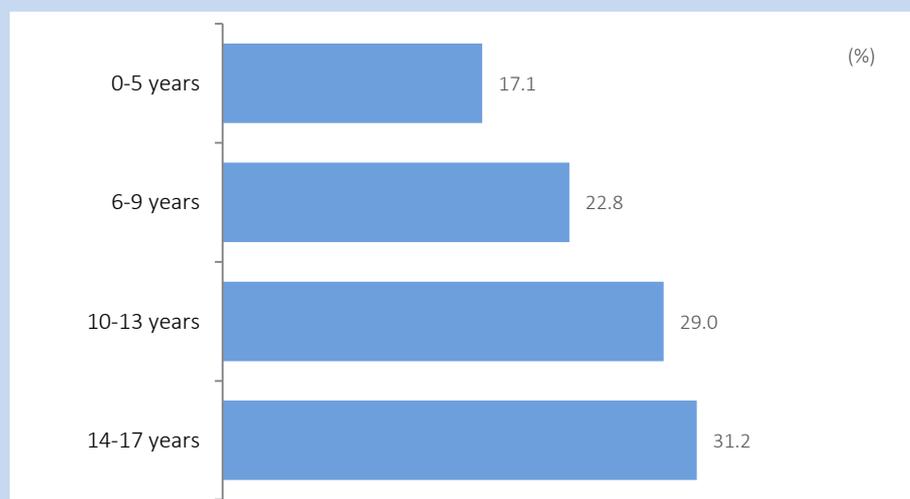


## The majority of adults with children outside the household were in their 40s

Data collected in the Survey on Income and Living Conditions 2021 indicate that about 1.8% of the working-age adult population had minor children living outside their household (in 81.5% of cases one child living outside the household). Custody of children living outside the household was mainly attributed to the parent with whom they lived outside (74.1%), and in 18.7% of the situations it was shared.

More than half of adults with children living outside the household were aged 40 to 44 years (29.1%) and 45 to 49 years (23.1%). About 93.8% were men. Most of the children outside the household were aged 10 to 13 years old (29.0%) and 14 to 17 years old (31.2%).

Figure 5. Distribution of adult population with minor children outside the household by the children's average age, Portugal, 2021



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2019-2021.

More than 70% of the parents lived relatively close to the place of residence of their children outside the household: the travel delay was 10 minutes or less for 30.1% of the parents, and from 11 to 30 minutes to 40.3%.

There were also more than 70% (74.5%) parents who reported having at home a single or shared room for children outside the household, where, on average, they spent at least 4 nights per month (20.9%), 4 to 7 nights (19.3%) and 8 to 15 nights (25.1%).

Despite the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, 41.6% reported having shared their time with their children outside the household every week in the 12 months prior to the interview, for example, in meals, games, homework, walks, conversations, home/school trips, and 15.9% reported having done so every day.

About 42.3% reported having contacted their children outside the household every day over the phone, video call or social networks in the previous 12 months; 32.1% did it every week.



## METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Inquérito às Condições de Vida e Rendimento das Famílias (in English, Survey on Income and Living Conditions) has been held in Portugal from 2004 to 2020 within the framework of specific EU legislation (Regulation (EC) No 1177/2003), establishing a common EU program for the systematic production of statistics on poverty, deprivation, and social exclusion. From 2021, the survey is carried out in accordance with specific European regulations and in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and the Council of 10 October 2019.

In addition to a set of data to be obtained annually, the new Regulation establishes a set of detailed topics to be obtained regularly and also the development of ad hoc modules to be applied every two years, consisting of matters of particular interest to users at a given time, but which are not included in the regular data sets. In 2021, the regular triennial module on "Children's health and material deprivation" and the ad hoc module on "Separated and blended families" were implemented for the first time, the results of which are presented in this press release.

In Portugal, the information was regularly collected on an annual basis through computer-assisted face-to-face interviews (CAPI) in the second quarter of each year. Yet, as a result of public health measures following the COVID-19 pandemic, in particular social lockdown and distancing, the survey was conducted exclusively through telephone interviews (CATI) in 2020 and 2021.

The sample size usually considers a compensation factor of the effect of the total non-responses. Being impossible to carry out face-to-face interviews due to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, this factor has been substantially reinforced by taking into account that telephone data collection usually have lower response rates than face-to-face interviews, as well as the effect of outdated telephone numbers in the database.

The questionnaire includes questions about the household and also about the personal characteristics of each member, in particular about the income of all members aged 16 years or older. In 2021, the survey addressed 16,478 households, of which 10,973 with full response (with data collection on 26,822 people; 23,730 with 16 and over). The data from the module "Children's health and material deprivation" concern people under the age of 16 at the end of 2020, living in 3,092 households, and were obtained through proxy interviews with representatives of private households. The data from the module "Separated and blended families" presented in this press release concern people aged 16 years or older at the end of 2020.

The estimated results were obtained using household and individual weights, calibrated by region, household size, age, and sex. In the calculation of weights, a correction factor of total non-responses was incorporated, as well as a calibration procedure based on the results of the 2021 Census for the variables at the level of the household, and the Resident population estimates as at December 31, 2020 for the variables at the level of the individuals. The auxiliary variables (margins) were the number of households by NUTS 2 and the number of households according to their size (1, 2, 3 and 4 or more individuals), and, at the level of individuals, the estimates of resident population by sex and five-year age groups (except the first and last age-groups comprising, respectively, individuals under 16 years of age and individuals 75 years of age or older).



## CONCEPTS

**Appointment:** Health act in which a health professional evaluates the clinical situation of a person and plans the provision of health care.

**Medical appointment:** Appointment made by a medical doctor.

**Shared custody:** Shared custody refers to the continuation of the exercise of parental responsibilities by both parents after their separation or divorce.

**Medical doctor:** Health professional with a degree in medicine and authorization by the respective professional order for the exercise of medicine.

**Dentist medical doctor:** Health professional that has a degree in dental medicine and the respective professional order's authorization to practice dental medicine.

**Private household representative:** Household member considered as such by the other members, living in the dwelling, legally of age (18 years old or over) and, preferably, being the owner of the dwelling, i.e., having the ownership title or the rental contract in his/her name.

**Health problem:** Health-related issue that raises the need for health care.

**Longstanding health problem:** Health problem that lasts or is expected to last for six months or more

**Proxy:** Person who responds in place of the effective respondent.

**Health:** State of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not just the absence of disease.

**Material and social deprivation rate:** percentage of population with an enforced lack of at least five out of the following thirteen items, due to economic difficulties:

- Collected at household level
  - a) capacity to face unexpected financial expenses (without asking for financial help); b) capacity to afford paying for one week's annual holiday away from home, paying travel and accommodation costs for all household members; c) capacity to pay on time for mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase installments or other loan payments; d) capacity to afford a meal with meat, chicken, fish (or vegetarian equivalent) every second day; e) capacity to pay for keeping its home adequately warm; f) capacity to afford a car; g) capacity to replace worn-out furniture;
- Collected at individual level
  - h) Capacity to replace worn-out clothes by some new ones; i) Capacity to have two pairs of properly fitting shoes (including a pair of all-weather shoes); j) capacity to spend a small amount of money each week on him/herself; k) capacity to have regular leisure activities; capacity of getting together with friends/family for a drink/meal at least once a month; capacity to have internet connection.

In the case of items of material and social deprivation, and not child-specific indicators of deprivation, the household situation is replicated for all its members, regardless of age; in the case of deprivation items collected at the individual level, children under 16 years of age are considered to be deprived if at least half of the household members aged 16 or over reported being in deprivation.



INSTITUTO NACIONAL DE ESTATÍSTICA  
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press release

# DIÍSTAQUE

**Severe material and social deprivation rate (13-items):** proportion of the population in which there are at least seven of the thirteen difficulties described in Material and social deprivation rate.

**Treatment:** Curative care provided to a patient by a healthcare professional.

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