



24 June 2024

SURVEY ON LIVING CONDITIONS, ORIGINS AND TRAJECTORIES OF THE RESIDENT POPULATION

NATIONAL GYPSY DAY
2023

MORE THAN HALF OF PEOPLE OF GYPSY ETHNICITY HAVE ALREADY EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION

According to the results of the Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population in Portugal (ICOT), carried out in 2023, 47.5 thousand people living in Portugal aged between 18 and 74 self-identified with the gypsy ethnic group.

The population of the gypsy ethnic group was comparatively younger (35.0% were aged between 18 and 34) than the total population (25.0%), with a higher share of women (56.6% compared to 51.7% in the total population), but with a lower level of education (91.9 % had completed, at most, lower secondary education compared to 45.7% in the total population).

Almost all the people who self-identified as gypsy living in Portugal (88.1%) had no personal or family immigration trajectories.

People of gypsy ethnicity are more likely to favour spaces that are closer to them, such as the neighbourhood (57.7%), the town or city (63.2%), or the region where they live (66.3%), and in terms of social relationships they stand out with higher proportions of friends from the same social class (79.8%) and who live in the same neighbourhood or area (53.1%).

In the labour market, the gypsy population had a lower proportion of active people (61.3%, compared to 70.8% in the total population), and was mostly positioned in the first quintile of income distribution, i.e. in the 20% of the population with the lowest incomes (72.6%).

People of gypsy ethnicity generally rated their health as very good or good (62.0%), although with a higher proportion of chronic illnesses (38.1% to 31.9% in the total population).

This population group was well below the national average in terms of housing ownership (30.6% vs. 70.8% of the total population) and thermal comfort in the dwelling (46.8% vs. 72.3%), as well as access to the internet (74.2% vs. 91.8%) and to a car (55.1% vs. 75.6%).

More than half of gypsy people (51.3%) have experienced discrimination in Portugal, a much higher value than in the total population (16.1%). More than four fifths (82.8%) said there was discrimination in the country and around three quarters (74.3%) considered that discrimination based on ethnic origin is frequent or very frequent (48.8% in the total population). More than half of the population in this ethnic group (52.7%) has witnessed discrimination (35.9 % in the total population).



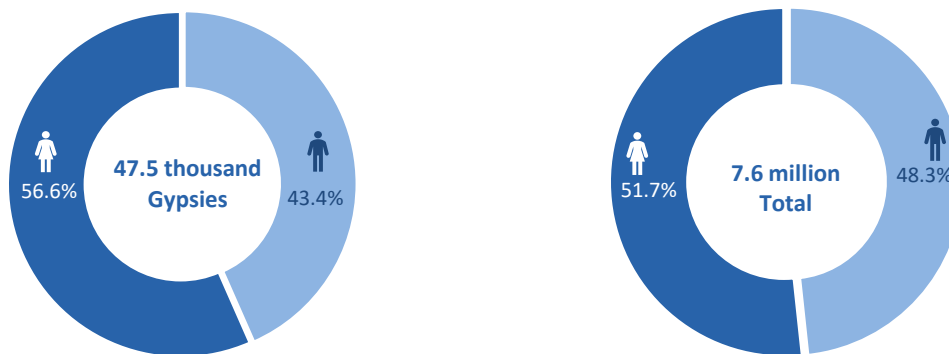
Based on information from the Survey on the Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population in Portugal (ICOT) 2023, and on the occasion of National Gypsy Day, which is celebrated in Portugal on 24 June¹, Statistics Portugal presents some indicators that allow for the characterisation of the gypsy community living in Portugal. This press release includes an analysis of this community, from a comparative perspective with the total resident population in Portugal, for several of the domains of information covered in this survey, such as education, religion, employment, health, housing, as well as the experience of discrimination.

The main results of the ICOT were disseminated in the [Press Release](#) published on 22 December 2023² and, alongside this publication, several statistical indicators were also made available in the [Database](#) of Statistics Portugal website (www.ine.pt), as well as the respective anonymised microdata for research purposes.

In Portugal, in 2023, 47.5 thousand people self-identified with the gypsy ethnic group.

In 2023, of the total number of residents in Portugal aged 18 to 74 (7.6 million), 47.5 thousand self-identified with the *gypsy* ethnic group.

Figure 1. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by sex, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

¹ On this [day](#), the celebration of St. John the Baptist takes place, a saint traditionally celebrated by Portuguese gypsies. The International Gypsy Day (or International Roma Day) is celebrated annually on 8 April. This date was created at the First World Romani Congress in London and aims to celebrate the centuries-old traditions of the Roma community, promote the inclusion of members of the Roma community in society and disseminate their culture and history.

According to the [European Commission](#), there are around 6 million European citizens or residents in the European Union from this ethnic group, making them the largest ethnic minority in Europe. In the European Union's strategic documents, the term 'Gypsy' is used to refer to different groups, such as Roma Sinti, Calós, Roma, Baiaxes, Ascalis, Egyptians, Yeniches, Domes, Lomes, Romani and Abdalis, as well as travelling communities (*gens du voyage, itinerantes, camminanti*, etc.).

² The main objective of this survey was to characterise the diversity of the resident population in Portugal, focusing on ethnic belonging/identification, generational trajectories and, whenever possible and the estimates associated with a sample survey allowed it, also on objective living conditions, in their multiple expressions, such as access to employment, education, health, housing, languages spoken and learned, as well as the experience of discrimination in various domains.



The ethnic identification, a central aspect of this survey, observed for the first time in official statistics, resulted from people's self-classification, corresponding to the way people see themselves, rather than the way others perceive them. The question about ethnic self-identification, to which respondents could pick more than one option of the group to which they considered to belong, included the following answer possibilities: *asian, white, gypsy, black, mixed origin or belonging*.

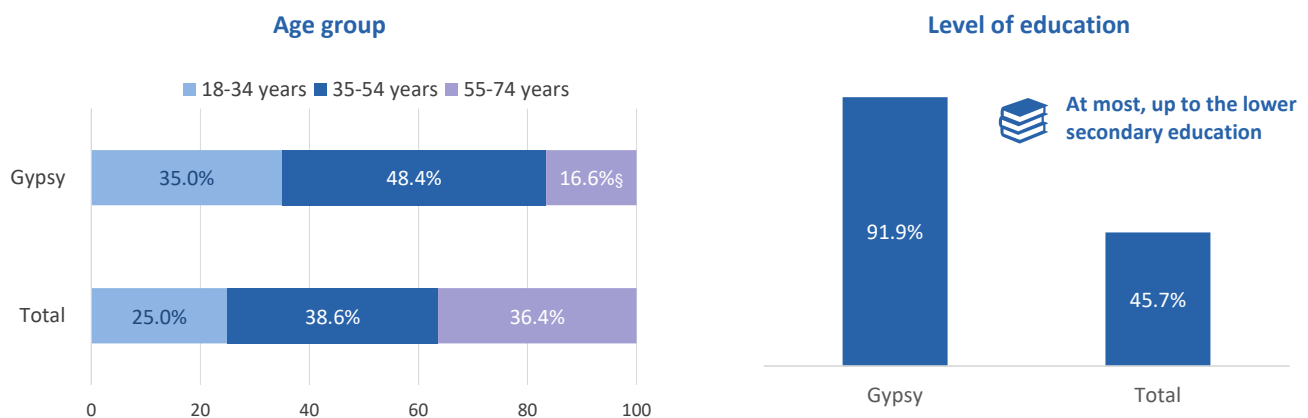
The gypsy ethnic group population has more women and a younger age structure than the total population, but with a lower level of education.

Compared to the total population, the population that self-identifies as *gypsy* had a higher proportion of women (56.6%), compared to 51.7% in the total population, a gender gap of 13.2 percentage points (p.p.) in this ethnic group.

Regarding age, the *gypsy* population aged 18 to 74 had a younger age structure, with more than four fifths (83.4%) aged up to 54: 35.0% belonged to the 18 to 34 age group (25% in the national total) and almost half (48.4%) to the 35 to 54 age group (38.6% in the total population). The weight of the older population, aged 55 to 74, in the *gypsy* ethnic group (16.6%) is less than half of that observed in the total population (36.4%).

Completion of a level of education corresponding, at most, with primary and lower secondary is dominant in the resident population (45.7%) but is more evident in the population that identifies with the *gypsy* ethnic group (91.9%).

Figure 2. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by age group and level of education, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.

Analysing the territory occupation, as is the case for the total resident population in Portugal (74.3%), the *gypsy* population also lives predominantly in urban areas (73.7%).



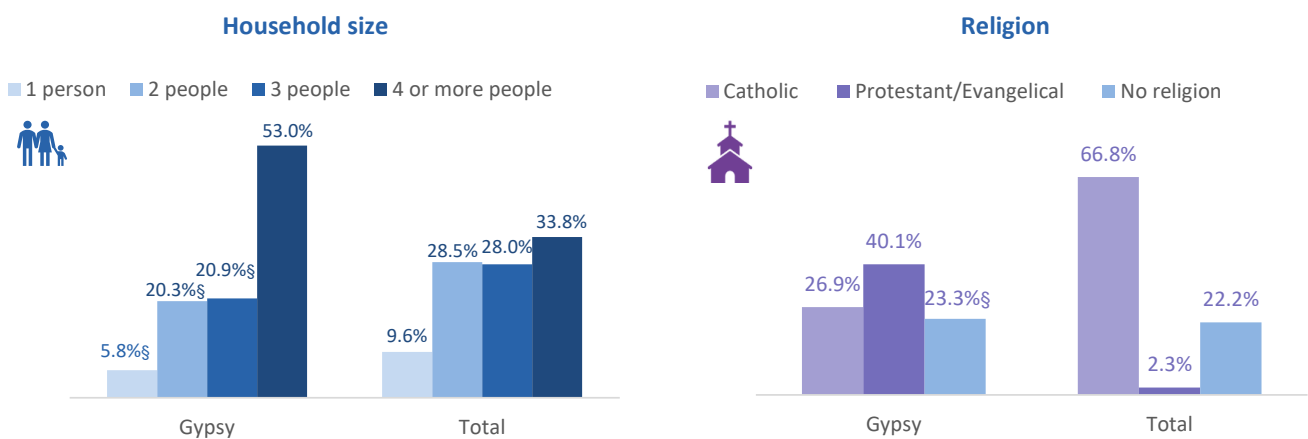
More than half of the *gypsy* population (53.0%) belonged to households of four or more people, a higher proportion than the average for the total resident population (33.8%).

About the type of household to which they belonged, 45.9% of the *gypsy* population was part of *other* type of household, made up of either only adults (three or more), or three or more adults with children, with this type of household comprising around two fifths of the total resident population (41.7%).

Protestant/Evangelical religion predominant in the gypsy ethnic group.

Around two fifths (40.1%) of the people who identified as gypsies said they were Protestant/Evangelical, and more than a quarter (26.9%) were Catholic, following a different pattern to the total population, where around two-thirds (66.8%) said they were Catholic and almost a quarter (22.2%) said they had no religion.

Figure 3. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by household size and religion, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.

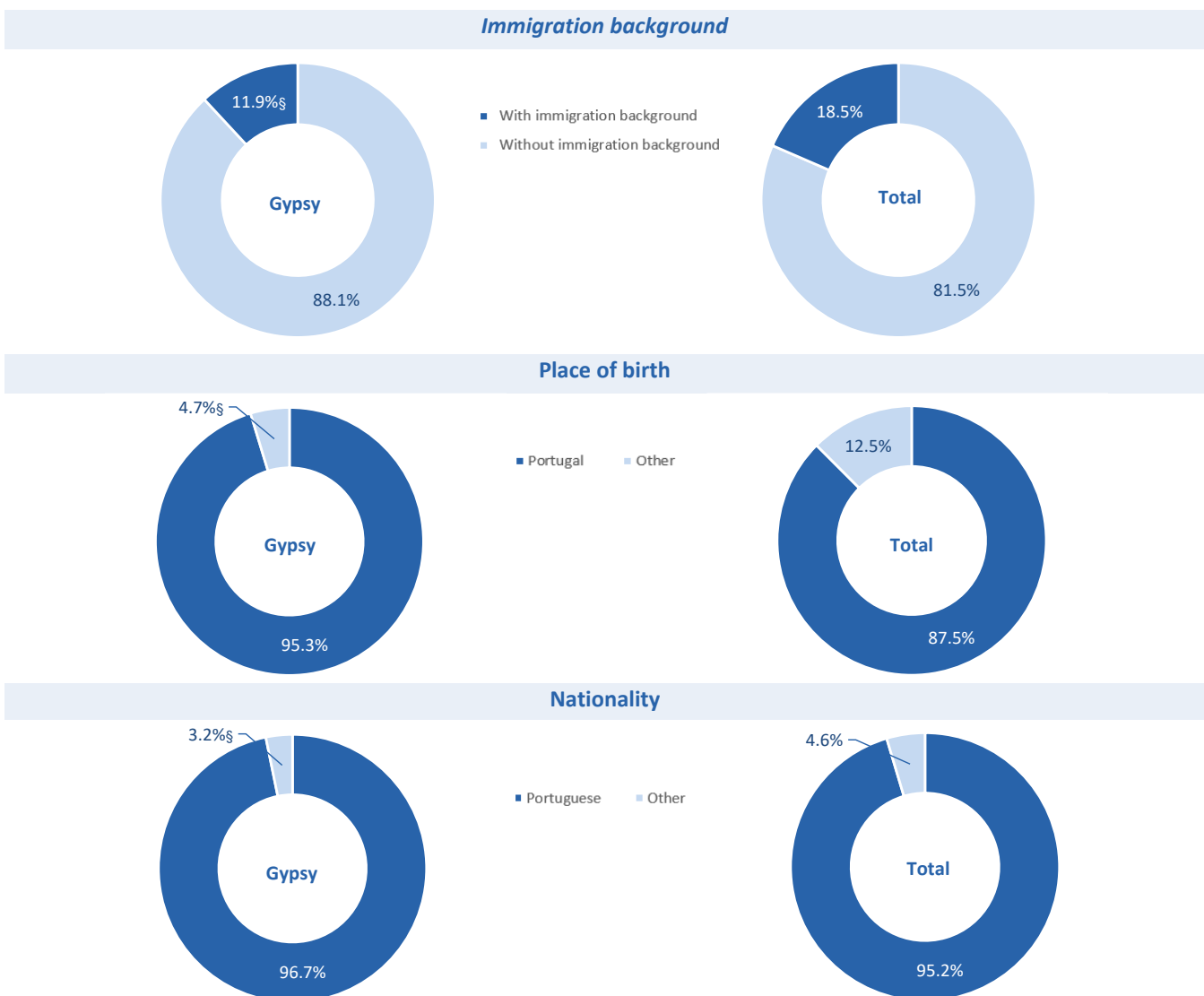


Nearly nine out of ten gypsy people had no personal or family immigration background.

Regarding immigration, personal and family trajectories, 88.1% of the people who identified as *gypsy* had no immigration background, i.e. they were born in Portugal and whose parents and grandparents were also born in Portugal, a higher proportion than the total population (81.5%).

Almost all of the *gypsy* population (95.3%) were born in Portugal, which compares with 87.5% of all residents in the country, and 96.7% also have Portuguese nationality (95.2% for the total population), which was acquired mostly by birth (95.1%, which compares with 89.9% for the total population).

Figure 4. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by immigration background, place of birth and nationality, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.

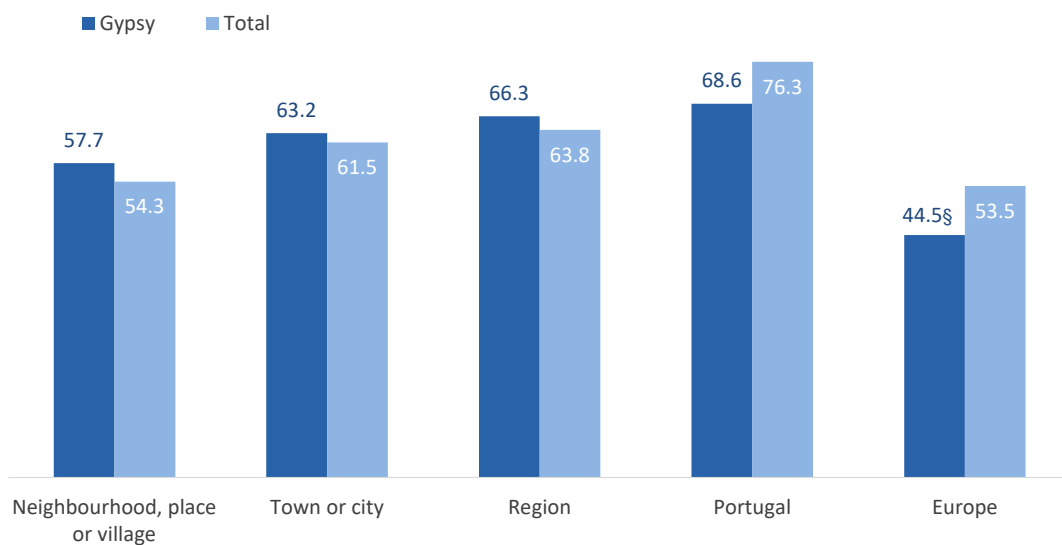


Compared to the total population, gypsy people are more likely to prefer places that are closer to them, such as their neighbourhood, town or city, or the region where they live.

The levels of belonging to different geographies and the degree of connection they felt to the place where they live, their city, region, country or Europe were observed in this survey. The results show that, considering the total population aged between 18 and 74, as the geographical area to which the sense of belonging being observed is extended, the proportion of those who say they feel a strong/very sense of belonging is higher: neighbourhood, place, or village (54.3%), town or city (61.5%), region where they live (63.8%) and Portugal (76.3%). This feeling is lower in relation to Europe, a geography with which only around half of the population (53.5%) say they feel that way.

A similar trend can generally be observed in the *gypsy* population, which, compared to the total population, favours spaces with greater proximity, with higher proportions than those observed for the total population in the feeling of strong/very strong belonging to the neighbourhood or village (57.7%), town or city (63.2%), region where they live (66.3%), and lower for Portugal (68.6%).

Figure 5. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by sense of belonging (strong / very strong) to the place where they live, their town, region, Portugal and Europe, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.



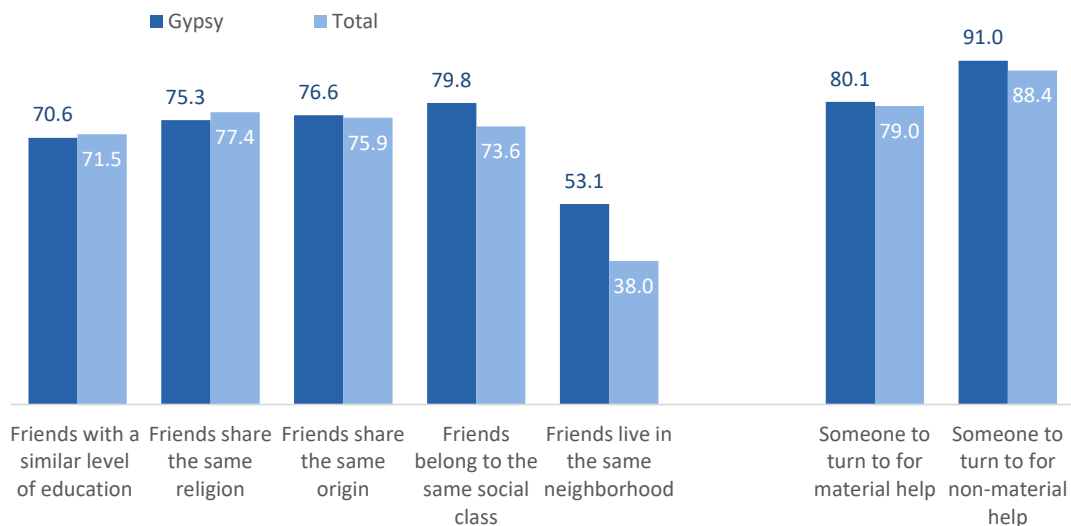
When it comes to social relationships, similar profiles regarding religion and ethnic group are favoured. The gypsy population stands out with higher proportions of friends from the same social class and who live in the same neighbourhood or area.

The sociability networks established and the support networks that people have and can turn to for specific needs was also a dimension observed in the survey. Overall, the population that self-identifies as *gypsy* has a profile close to the total population when it comes to the level of education, religion or ethnic group of their friends: 70.6% of *gypsy* people said that their friends had a similar level of education to them (71.5% in the total population); more than three quarters (75.3%) had friends with the same religion (77.4% in the total population); and who belonged to the same ethnic group (76.6%, compared to 75.9% in the total population).

The *gypsy* population stands out with higher proportions than the total population when it comes to friends from the same social class (79.8% and 73.6%, respectively) and living in the same neighbourhood or area (53.1% and 38.0%, respectively).

Approximately four fifths of *gypsy* people (80.1%) had someone to turn to if they needed material help, a proportion that increases to 91.0% when it comes to non-material help, slightly higher than the figures for the total population, 79.0% and 88.4% respectively.

Figure 6. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by sociability networks and support networks, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.



Gypsy population with a lower proportion of active population and lower income.

Regarding the labour market, the *gypsy* population has a lower proportion of active people (employed or unemployed) compared to the total population: 61.3% and 70.8%, respectively.

Around three quarters of people who self-identified as *gypsy* (72.6%) are in the first quintile of income distribution, which means they are in the 20% of the population with the lowest income.

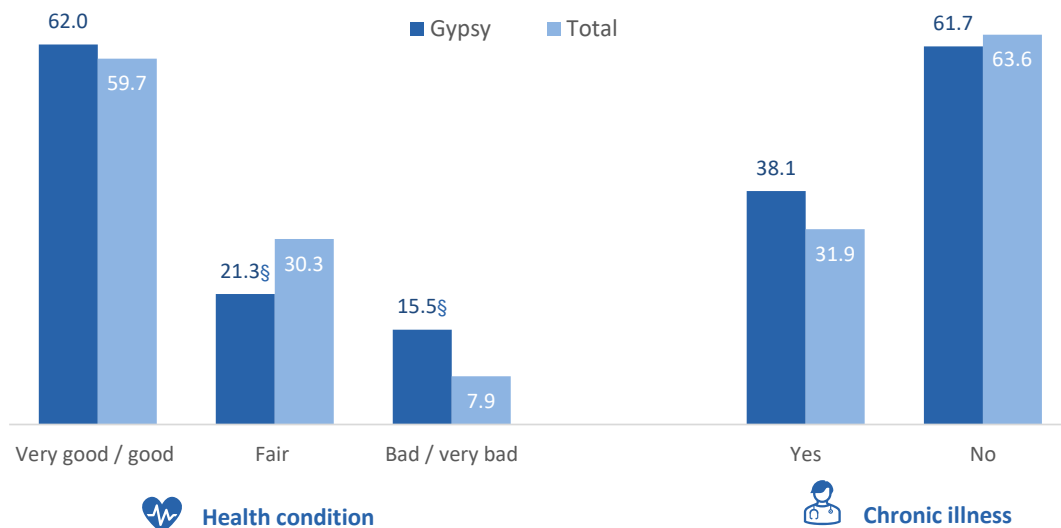
Nearly half of those who self-identified as *gypsy* (53.1%) considered that their household's financial situation is sufficient to make ends meet, although they have to control spending, a value significantly lower than that observed in the total population, where more than three quarters (76.3%) said they were in this situation.

Health condition generally rated as very good or good. The gypsy population had a higher proportion of chronic illnesses.

Regarding the health conditions of *gypsy* people, 62.0% consider their health to be *very good* or *good*, a similar evaluation to that of the general population (59.7%). In the same vein, regarding health limitations, the results show that 69.8% of *gypsies* did not feel limited at all (70.3% on the national average).

When we analyse the prevalence of chronic illness, people who self-identified as *gypsy* have a higher prevalence of chronic illness (38.1%), standing above the national average (31.9%).

Figure 7. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by health condition and chronic illness, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.

When asked about their ability to meet their health needs, regarding appointments, diagnostic examinations or treatments, the vast majority of the *gypsy* population (63.4%) were able to meet this need when they felt it.

Nevertheless, this proportion drops, and the difference with the national total widens, when it comes to the buying of prescription drugs: 59.9% of *gypsy* people needed and satisfied that need, 14.0 p.p. below the national total (73.9%).

The gypsy ethnic group with lowest values for housing ownership, thermal comfort, internet access and car ownership, compared with the national average.

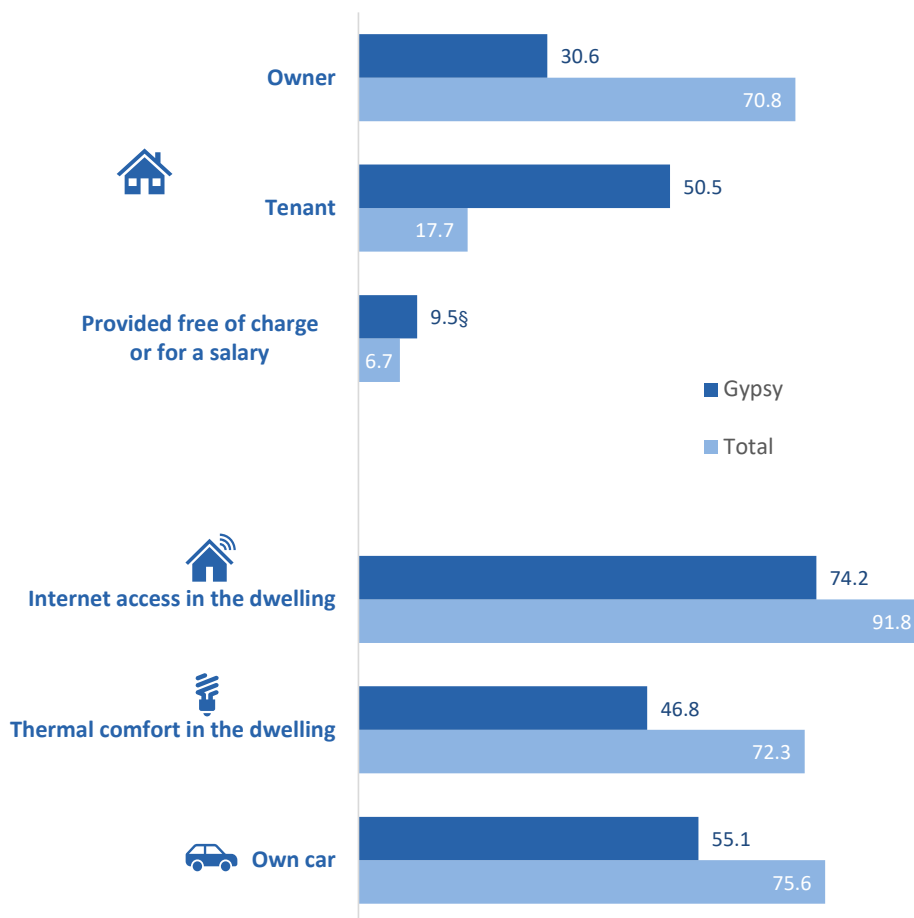
Regarding the occupancy status of the dwelling, results show that only 30.6% of those who self-identified as *gypsy* own their dwelling, compared to 70.8% of the total population. On the other hand, the *gypsy* ethnic group stand out as renters, with half (50.5%) in this condition (only 17.7% in the national average).

Internet access in the dwelling, which is practically extended to the general resident population (91.8% for the total population), only covers 74.2% of people who self-identified as *gypsy*.



Analysing other indicators of living conditions, such as thermal comfort in the dwelling and car ownership, the differences are also evident: less than half of the *gypsy* population (46.8%) reported being able to keep the house adequately heated in winter (72.3% of the total population); and just over half (55.1%) had access to their own car (75.6% of the national average).

Figure 8. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by occupancy status of the dwelling, internet access, thermal comfort and car ownership, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

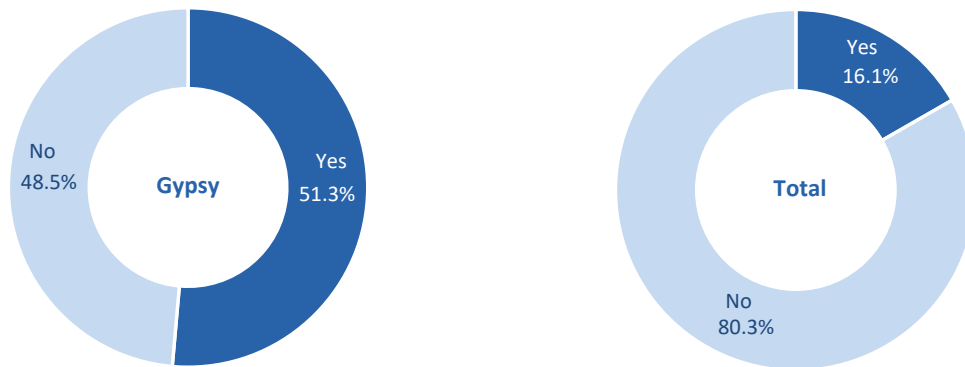
Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.



More than half of gypsy population have experienced discrimination.

More than half (51.3%) of the people who self-identified as *gypsy* had already experienced discrimination, a value much higher than that registered in the total population (16.1%). Among the reasons behind this discrimination, a set of factors that groups skin colour, territory of origin and ethnic group stands out, identified by 95.0% of people of that ethnicity who have been discriminated (a proportion that is more than double than the one observed in the total population that has been discriminated, 40.1%).

Figure 2. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by experience of discrimination, 2023



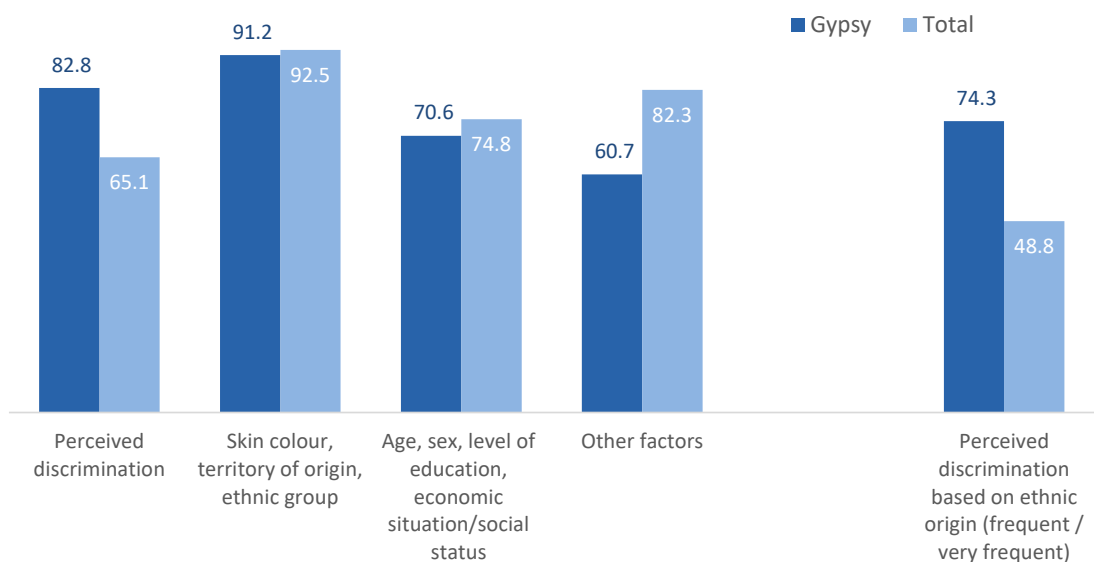
Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

More than four fifths of gypsies said there was discrimination in Portugal and around three quarters considered that the discrimination based on ethnic origin is frequent or very frequent.

Regarding the perceived discrimination in Portugal, 82.8% of the *gypsy* population considered there is discrimination in Portugal, compared to 65.1% of the total population. The origin of this discrimination was mainly attributed to the set of factors already identified in the experience of discrimination, i.e. skin colour, territory of origin and ethnic group (91.2%), as well as sociodemographic factors such as age, sex, education, and economic situation (70.6%).

When asked specifically about the existence of discrimination in Portugal based on ethnic origin, around three quarters of the *gypsy* population (74.3%) considered discrimination frequent or very frequent, an opinion shared by less than half of the total population (48.8%).

Figure 3. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by perceived discrimination, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

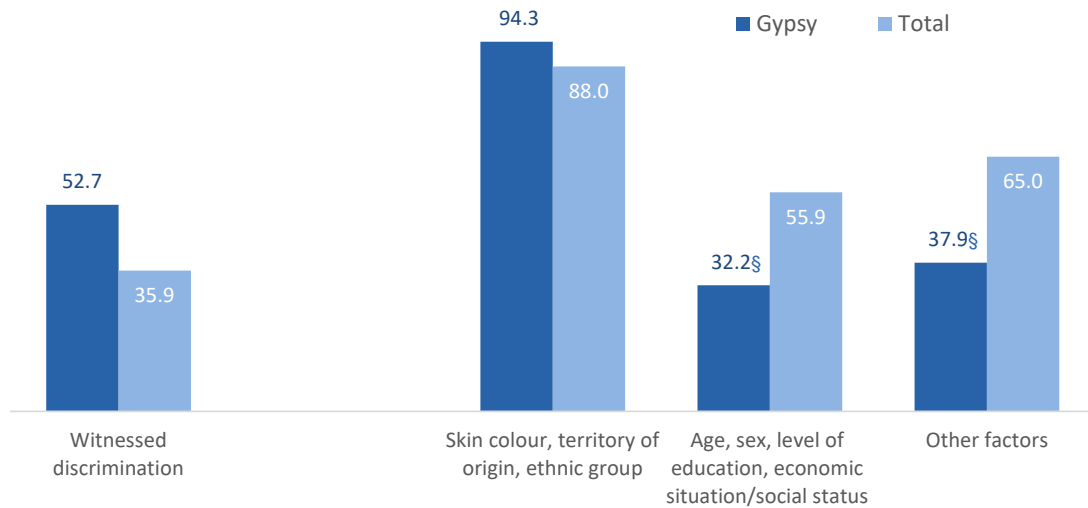
Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.

More than half of the gypsy population have witnessed situations of discrimination.

With regard to witnessed discrimination, more than half of the *gypsy* population (52.7%) have witnessed situations of discrimination, a value considerably higher than that registered in the total population (35.9%). Those who have witnessed such situations once again highlight the set of factors related to skin colour, territory of origin and ethnic origin as being behind the discrimination witnessed (94.3% for the *gypsy* population, and 88.0% for the total population).



Figure 4. Proportion of people (%) aged 18 to 74 (*gypsy* ethnic group and total) by witnessed discrimination, 2023



Source: Statistics Portugal, Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, 2023.

Note: § - Estimate with low reliability.



METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population in Portugal (ICOT), carried out in 2023, aims to measure and characterise each of the ethnic groups with which the resident population in Portugal identifies. The main objective is to understand how people self-identify and how they report and interpret their origins, to understand and combat discrimination and inequalities in various areas. The aim is to contribute to the Portuguese statistical system having official data on the origin and ethnicity of the population living in Portugal, and their characterisation.

The question of ethnic self-identification observed in the ICOT started with a first proposal, defined by the 2021 Census Working Group (WG) - Ethnic-Racial Issues (Statistics Portugal, 2019, "Summary of the Work of the 2021 Census Working Group (WG) - Ethnic-Racial Issues", Order no. 7363/2018), to include the question in the 2021 Census. Following the recommendation of the 2021 Census Standing Section of the Statistical Council not to include the question on ethnicity in the 2021 Census and the evaluation of an alternative solution that would allow the ethnic composition of the Portuguese population to be characterised, Statistics Portugal conducted an alternative survey with a more comprehensive analytical potential to learn about the origins, trajectories and objective living conditions of the resident population in Portugal: the ICOT.

Battling racism and ethnic discrimination, as well as obtaining data and knowledge about this issue to produce and support the definition of public policies, is a priority for the European Commission, expressed in the European Union Action Plan against Racism 2020-2025. At national level, the Working Group for Preventing and Combating Racism and Discrimination was set up in 2020 (Order no. 309-A/2021, of 8 January). In addition, Resolution of the Assembly of the Republic no. 11/2021 recommends "carrying out studies leading to the collection of statistical information, through the body responsible for national statistics, on ethnic-racial discrimination" and Assembly of the Republic Resolution no. 16/2021 recommends drawing up and implementing a national strategy to combat racism. This operation is provided for in the National Plan to Combat Racism and Discrimination 2021-2025 (Council of Ministers Resolution 101/2021).

With this in mind, the pilot Survey on Living Conditions, Origins and Trajectories of the Resident Population, previously presented and discussed with the Working Group for Preventing and Combating Racism and Discrimination (Order no. 309-A/2021), was carried out in 2021/2022. The main aim of this pilot survey was to test the sampling design and collection methods that were most appropriate, the content and the respondents' adherence to the topics being asked about. Based on the information obtained from the results of the pilot survey, Statistics Portugal developed a proposal for a final questionnaire on the themes of origin, belonging, trajectories and discrimination to be implemented on a national scale, submitted for consultation to experts in the field of study and also presented and subject to debate in the Statistical Council - Permanent Section for Social Statistics, as well as with the High Commissioner for Migration and the Migration Observatory.

This is a multidimensional survey, which aims to characterise this diversity as much as possible and, as a result, make it possible to explore the different characteristics of the population and their experiences of discrimination in various areas. The aim is to assess living conditions in their multiple expressions, such as access to and quality of employment, health, education, housing, mobility, and socialisation networks. Belonging from an ethnic point of view is the result of self-classification and origin is analysed by the place of birth of the respondent and their ancestors, up to the third generation.



The ICOT is a sample survey, whose information was collected directly from the observation units - individuals aged 18 to 74 who had been residing in Portugal for at least a year (or whose intention was to live there for at least a year) - using a mixed collection method, CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interview), CATI (Computer-Assisted Telephone Interview), and CAWI (Computer-Assisted Web Interview), giving respondents the opportunity to use the method that best suits them.

The survey was carried out throughout the country, between January and August 2023, on a sample of 35,035 housing units, making it the largest sample of household surveys carried out by Statistics Portugal. Only one person was interviewed per dwelling unit, selected using the last birthday method, and 21,608 complete interviews were obtained.

The results were calibrated with reference to the annual estimates of the resident population on 31 December 2022 (based on the Census 2021).

For a more detailed analysis of the methodology followed, we suggest reading the ICOT [methodological document](#) (only in Portuguese), available at Statistics Portugal website.

MAIN CONCEPTS

Discrimination: Any distinction, exclusion, restriction, preference, or unequal treatment directly or indirectly manifested on prohibited grounds, and which nullifies or impairs the recognition or exercise, on an equal basis, of fundamental freedoms and human rights in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.

Note: Prohibited grounds of discrimination are race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, social origin, property, state of birth, disability, age, nationality, marital and family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, state of health, place of residence, economic and social situation, pregnancy, African descent, and other statuses.

Ethnicity: A group of people with strong ties to each other, who historically share a common cultural and linguistic unit and whose characteristics distinguish them in the society in which they live.

Nationality: Special legal link between an individual and his or her country, acquired by birth or naturalisation, following declaration, choice, marriage, or other means, in accordance with the legislation in force.

Note: A person with two or more nationalities is assigned to a single country, to be determined in the following order of precedence: 1) declaring country; 2) if the person does not have the nationality of the declaring country: another Member State of the European Union; 3) if the person does not have the nationality of another Member State of the European Union: another country outside the European Union. In cases of dual nationality, where both countries belong to the European Union, but neither is the declaring country, the Member States determine the nationality to be attributed.

Place of birth: Place of birth or place of usual residence of the mother at the time of birth. For certain statistical purposes, the mother's place of usual residence at the time of birth should be considered preferential.