



March 6, 2025

INCOME AND LIVING CONDITIONS – Children’s health and material deprivation
2024

THE PROPORTION OF CHILDREN WHO WERE UNABLE TO TAKE A WEEK'S HOLIDAY AWAY FROM HOME, PAID FOR BY THE HOUSEHOLD, HAS INCREASED

In 2024, 11.3% of children lived in households in material and social deprivation, which corresponds to an increase compared to the proportion observed in 2021 (10.7%) and a slightly higher proportion than that obtained for the general population (11.0%).

The rate of severe material and social deprivation was also higher for children (5.0%) than for the general population (4.3%). A higher level of parental education is associated with less material and social deprivation, decreasing from 55.5% when considering children in deprivation with both parents with schooling up to basic education, to 18.5% when at least one of the parents has higher education.

The proportion of children living in households unable to afford at least one week's holiday a year away from home for all their members up to the age of 15 increased from 15.5% in 2021 to 20.6% in 2024.

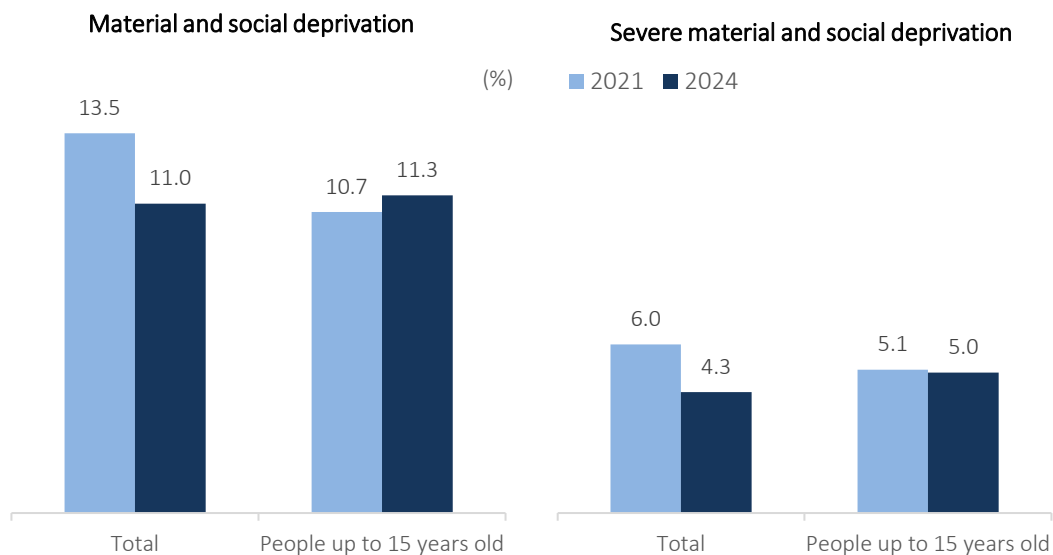
In 2024, the need for medical consultations or treatment was not met for 1.8% of children, in the case of non-dental care, and for 3.6%, in the case of dental care.

The proportion of children in material and social deprivation increased to 11.3%

In 2024, of the approximately 1.5 million children up to 15 years old, 11.3% lived in households in material and social deprivation, 0.6 percentage points (pp) more than in 2021, an evolution in the opposite direction to that seen for the general population, whose material and social deprivation rate decreased from 13.5% in 2021 to 11.0% in 2024.

Considering severe material and social deprivation, the result for children (5.0%) is also higher than that obtained for the general population (4.3%) in 2024.

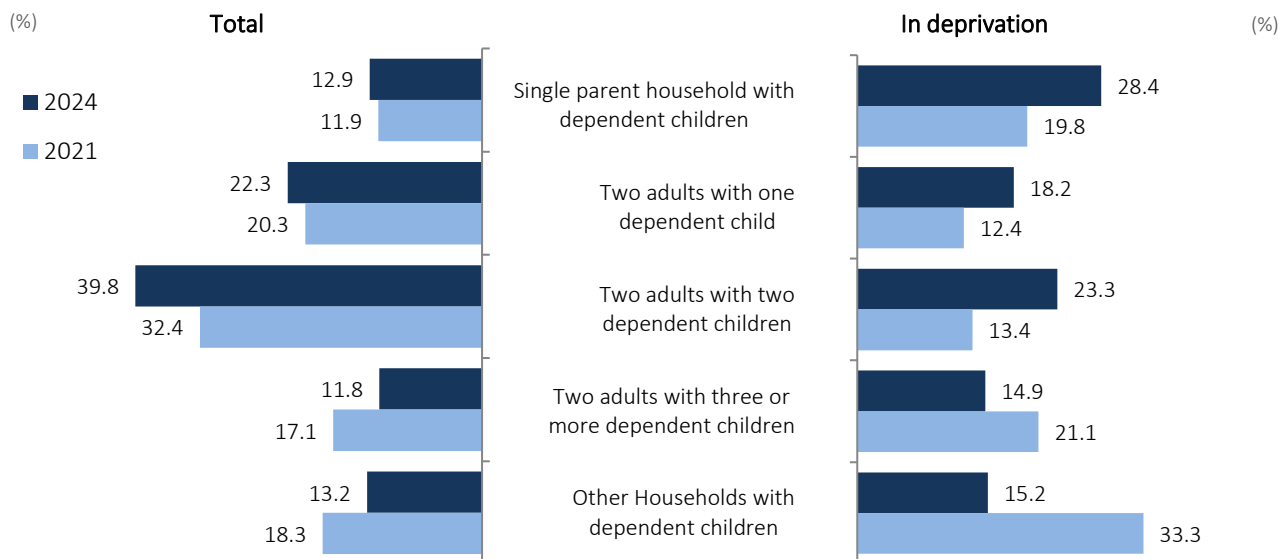
Figure 1. Material and social deprivation indicators for the total population and the for the population up to 15 years old, Portugal, 2021 and 2024



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.

Household composition is a relevant factor for the condition of material and social deprivation. If, in 2024, according to the results of the Survey on Living Conditions and Income, children up to 15 years of age living in families composed of one adult and one or more dependent children represented 12.9% of the total, the proportion increased to 28.4% when in condition of material and social deprivation; children under 16 years of age living in households with 2 adults and 3 or more dependent children represented 11.8% of the total and 14.9% of those in material and social deprivation.

Figure 2. Distribution of population up to 15 years old by household type and material and social deprivation, Portugal, 2021



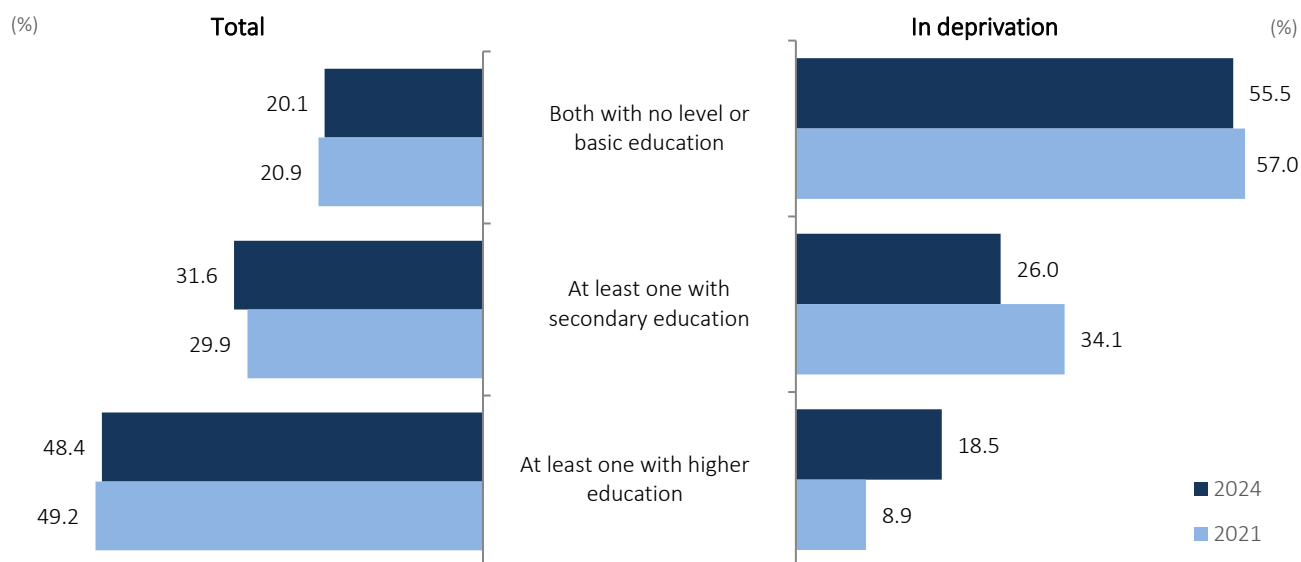
Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.

55.5% of children in material and social deprivation had parents with low levels of education

The level of education of the parents is one of the characteristics that most distinguishes children in material and social deprivation, which is mainly evidenced when both parents completed schooling up to basic education, a condition in which, in 2024, 20.1% of children in general and 55.5% of those who were in material and social deprivation were.

On the other hand, for 48.4% of all children up to 15 years old, at least one of the parents had completed higher education, a proportion that decreases to 18.5% in the case of children in material and social deprivation.

Figure 3. Distribution of population up to 15 years old by level of education of their parents and material and social deprivation, Portugal, 2021 and 2024



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.

Almost 30% of children lived in households with difficulties in ensuring the payment of an unexpected expense close to the monthly poverty line

The analysis of each of the seven items of material deprivation collected at household level (for more details, see the Methodological Note at the end of this Press Release) reveals that, for four of these items, in 2024 the proportion of the population up to 15 years old living in households without the financial capacity to ensure their access was lower than the proportion recorded for the general population in the same condition:

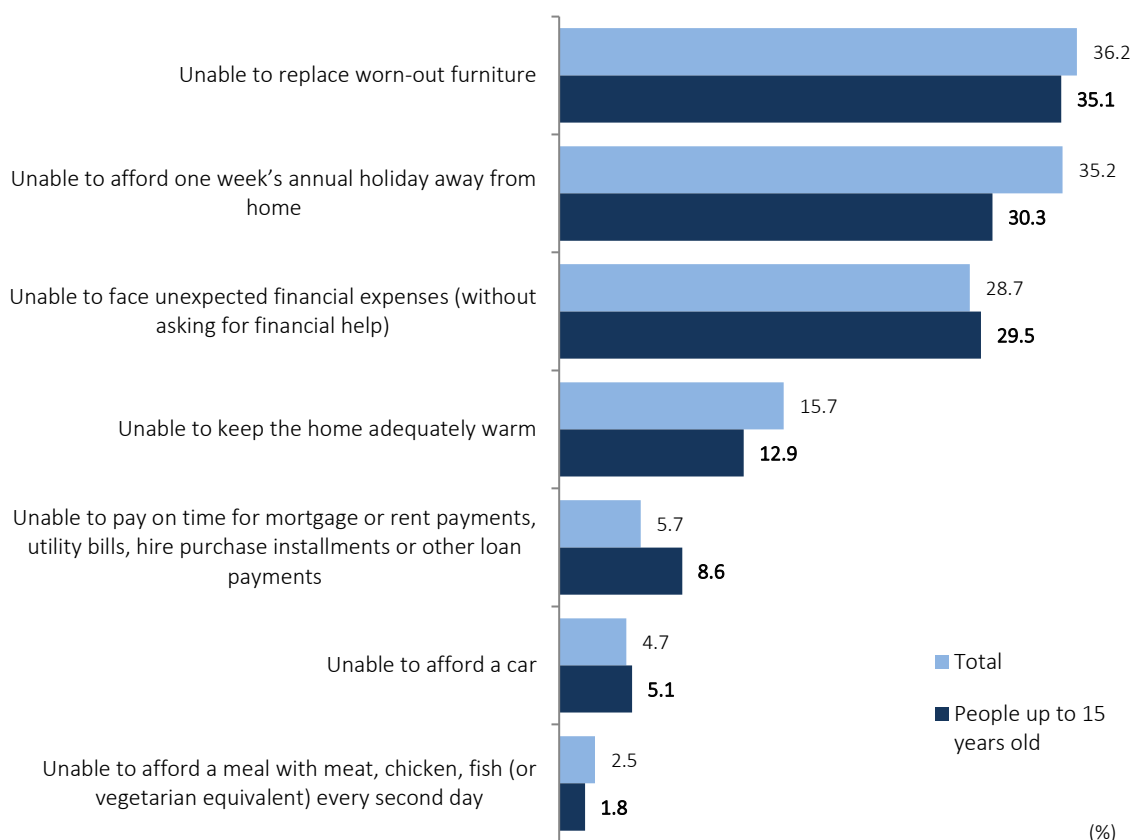
- inability to pay for one week of vacation per year away from home, supporting the cost of accommodation and travel for all members of the household (30.3% in the case of children, 4.9 pp less than for the general population);
- financial inability to keep the house adequately warm (12.9% in the case of children, 2.8 pp less than for the general population);
- without the financial capacity to replace used furniture (35.1% in the case of children, 1.1 pp less than for the general population); and
- financial inability to have a meat or fish meal (or vegetarian equivalent) at least every 2 days (1.8% in the case of the child population, 0.7 pp less than for the general population).



The opposite situation is verified for the following three items:

- late payments for mortgage or rent payments, utility bills, hire purchase installments or other loan payments, for economic reasons (8.6% in the case of children belonging to households in these conditions, 2.9 pp more than for the general population in the same conditions);
- inability to ensure the immediate payment, without resorting to a loan, of an unexpected expense of 590 Euros, which corresponds approximately to the monthly value of the poverty line in the previous year (without resorting to a loan) (29.5% in the case of children, 0.8 pp more than for the general population); and
- unavailability of a car (5.1% in the case of the child population, 0.4 pp more than for the general population).

Figure 4. Items of material and social deprivation for the total population and the for the population up to 15 years old, Portugal, 2024



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.



20.6% of children could not spend a week of holidays away from home due to economic difficulties

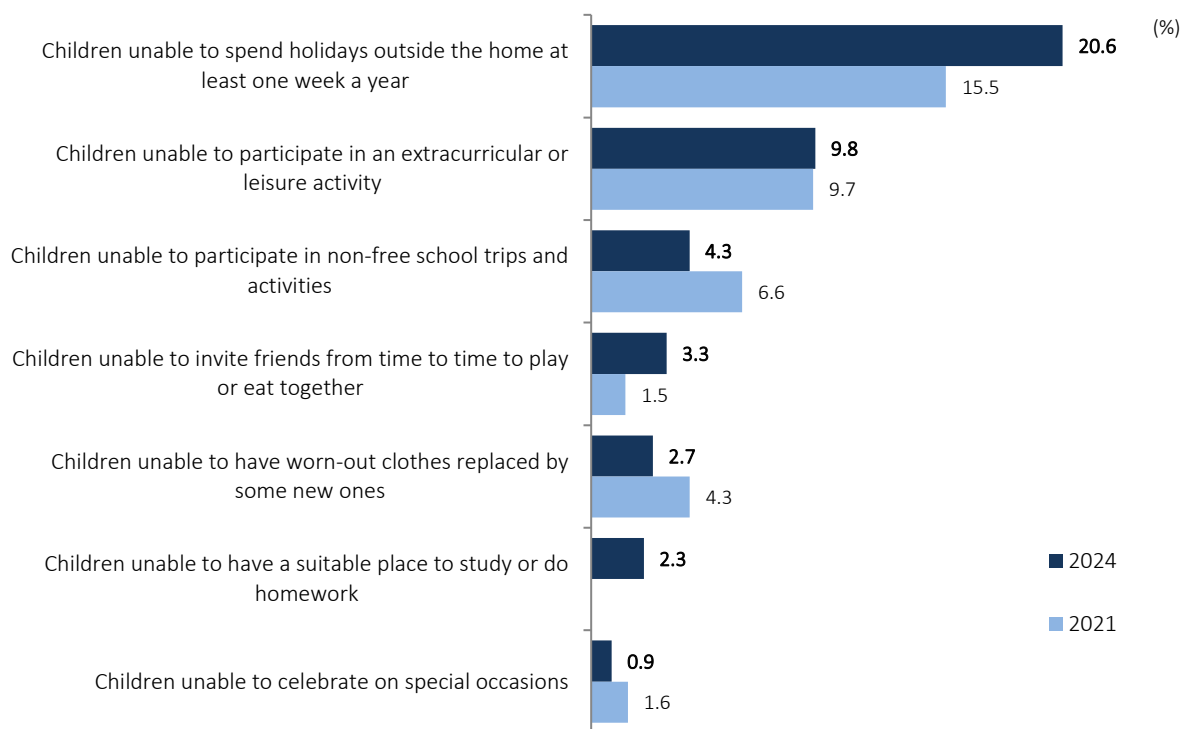
In addition to the annual collection of data on material deprivation items in general, the Survey on Living Conditions and Income carried out in 2024 collected, as in 2021, data on the material deprivation of children up to the age of 15. This additional data collection makes it possible to obtain results on specific items in children's lives (e.g. extracurricular activities, school trips, or celebrations on special occasions), but also to specifically target children on items that normally are only collected at household level or from members aged 16 and over (such as, for example, the possibility of going on holiday, away from home, for at least one week a year, and replacing used clothes or shoes). In this context, a deprivation item is considered to be lacking when at least one of the children in the household does not have access to the item due to economic difficulties, regardless of the situation of the older members.

The collection of this specific data indicates that, in 2024, 20.6% of children lived in households unable to afford at least one week's holiday a year away from home for all children up to the age of 15, a result that remains well below that recorded for the general population, despite the 5.1 p.p. increase compared to 2021.

In 2024, 9.8% of children were unable to participate regularly in an extracurricular or leisure activity, 4.3% could not participate in non-free school trips and activities, and 3.3% could not invite friends from time to time to play and eat together. Compared to 2021, the proportions of children who could not invite friends to play and eat increased mainly (1.8 pp more).

Also in this context, 2.7% of the children had no possibility of replacing used clothes with new clothes (excluding second-hand clothes) and 2.3% did not have an appropriate space to study and do homework.

Figure 5. Items of material deprivation for the population up to 15 years old, Portugal, 2021 and 2024



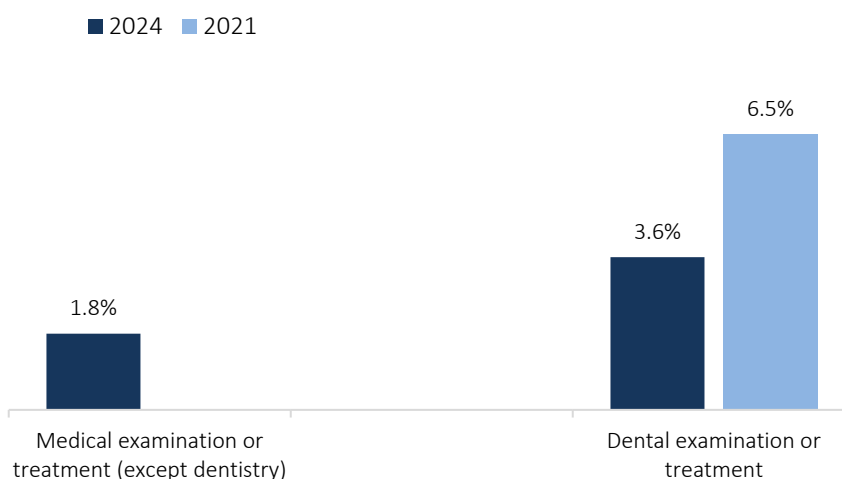
Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.

3.6% of children without access to dental consultation or treatment mainly for financial reasons

In 2024, 3.6% of children (population up to 15 years old) needed a dental consultation or treatment and could not meet this need¹, with the lack of financial availability being the main reason for non-satisfaction. With regard to the need for non-dental medical consultations or treatments, the proportion of children who could not have them in 2024 was 1.8%.

¹ It is considered the occurrence of at least one occasion in which at least one of the children in the household needed consultation, examination or treatment and this need was not met.

Figure 6. Unmet need for health care for the population up to 15 years old, Portugal, 2021 and 2024



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.

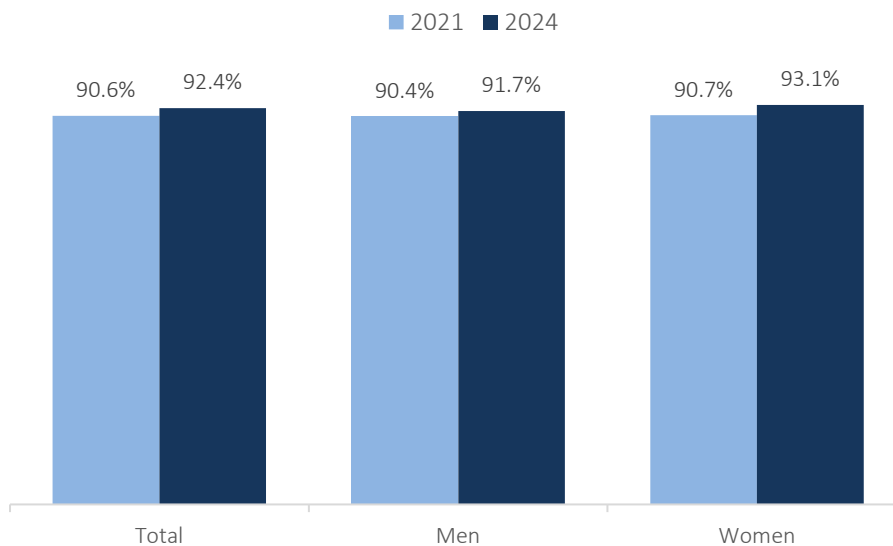
92.4% of the children had a good or very good health status

Being female or male was still not a distinguishing factor in the assessment of children's health status in 2024, despite a slight increase in the difference between the proportion of girls in good or very good health (90.7% in 2021 and 93.1% in 2024) compared to boys (90.4% in 2021 and 91.7% in 2024).

In 2024, 4.5% of the population up to 15 years old had some limitation in carrying out activities considered usual for their age due to long-term health problems (4.8% in 2021).



Figure 7. Proportion of the population up to 15 years old and health status “Good or very good”, by sex, Portugal, 2021 and 2024



Source: INE, Survey on Living Conditions and Income 2021 and 2024.



METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The Survey on Living Conditions and Income (EU-SILC) has been carried out in Portugal since 2004. Until 2020, the survey was carried out within the framework of specific European legislation (Regulation 1177/2003), establishing a harmonised European system of production of statistics on poverty, deprivation and social exclusion. From 2021, the survey is being carried out in the context of new specific European regulations, in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1700 of the European Parliament and of the Council, of 10 October 2019.

The survey aims to obtain results for the set of all individuals residing in the national territory in the reference period, with a breakdown by NUTS 2 level from 2018. For income, the reference period corresponds to the year before that in which the interviews are carried out.

In 2024, data was collected through computer-assisted face-to-face interviews (CAPI, or Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) and telephone interviews (CATI, or Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) between April and July. 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 2024, the survey addressed 19,815 families, of which 15,777 provided a complete response (collecting data on 37,524 people, of which 4,396 up to 15 years old).

For more detailed information on the methodological options and concepts used, see the [Press Release - information to the media of December 3, 2024](#), which released the first results for Portugal of SILC 2024. In the area under analysis (Children's health and material deprivation), another release were also published on [February 22, 2022](#).

CONCEPTS

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

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

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

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

Medical appointment: Appointment made by a medical doctor.

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

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 up to 15 years of age are considered to be deprived if at least half of the household members aged 16 or over reported being in deprivation.

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.