

# Young Generations, Housing, and Inequality in Southern Europe

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What is housing inequality and how this affects young generations in southern Europe? This paper explains the new concept of the emerging housing inequality and explains how it matters in southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Italy, and Greece). The paper analysis the case of Portugal with intergenerational perceptive and new findings of generation Z. Young generations have faced new challenges such as global warming and instability and they have recently witnessed three crises, namely the global financial crisis (GFC) in 2008, COVID-19, and now the Ukrainian and Israel-Hamas wars. Access to housing is now more difficult due to the economic crisis, the downward trend in homeownership, increasing house prices and limited access to credit; indeed, it has become a pivotal dimension in understanding contemporary inequalities and the future of welfare. Young adults are now more likely to live in their parents' home as they take longer to get their own home and start a family than the previous generations of baby boomers. Young people in much of European countries live in their parents' home, according to Eurostat (2022), countries in southern Europe tend to have higher rates of young adults aged 18-34 living in their parents' home: Greece (71,9%), Portugal (70,7%), Italy (69,4%), and Spain (65,9%), European Union (49,4%), 27 countries, from 2020. Housing is a source of wealth accumulation, intergenerational transfers and social mobility. It is vital not only to promoting prosperity and welfare, but also to reshaping inequality within and across generations. In southern Europe, housing has a high cultural value, and the family plays a key role in housing tenure. The increasing housing wealth affects future housing opportunities for families and generations and will also impact the welfare state.

## Design approach

This paper results from an exploratory project financed by the Portuguese Foundation for Science and Technology (FCT). The paper adopts a multimethod approach that integrates a systematic literature review, quantitative data from SILC microdata in order to develop a new qualitative framework of semi-structured interviews and focus group.

## Findings

The systematic literature review (SLR) criteria include articles, books and book chapters, published between January 1, 2008 and December 31, 2023. The 448 results were initially identified from the Scopus and Web of Science databases. After applying the eligibility criteria, 338 results were identified, which were reduced to 134 after eliminating duplicate results. After analyzing the titles, abstracts, and keywords, the 134 results were narrowed down to 46, of which 40 are articles, one is a book and five are book chapters. The preliminary exploratory findings shows that young adults are now more likely to live in their parents' home

as they take longer to get their own home and start a family than the previous generations of Baby Boomers, due to inequality, housing and welfare systems. Contribution

Our paper makes an original contribution to the field of social policy with new evidence on a sustainable welfare state that includes the needs of future generations. Firstly, by focusing on new forms of inequalities, and secondly, by discussing the contribution of intergenerational justice to new social contracts and recommendations that should be implemented to mitigate new intergenerational housing inequalities in southern Europe.