

## HS021: ARREARS ON UTILITY BILLS

**Topic and detailed topic:** Income, consumption and elements of wealth, including debts/ Arrears

**Variable type:** Annual

**Unit:** Household

**Reference period:** Last 12 months

**Mode of collection:** Household respondent

**In use (period):** Yes, since 2008

**Series' differences:** Yes, 2008 (replaces HS020 from 2008 onwards)

### VALUES AND FORMAT

From 2008 onwards

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| 1 | Yes, once          |
| 2 | Yes, twice or more |
| 3 | No                 |

Before 2008

- |   |     |
|---|-----|
| 1 | yes |
| 2 | no  |

### FLAGS

- |    |                                   |
|----|-----------------------------------|
| 1  | Filled                            |
| -1 | Missing                           |
| -2 | Not applicable (no utility bills) |

### DESCRIPTION

This variable has replaced the variable HS020<sup>35</sup> from the 2008 operation onwards.

The variable records whether the household has been in arrears in the past 12 months, that is, unable to pay on time (as scheduled) utility bills (heating, electricity, gas, water, etc.) for the main dwelling. The question refers to financial difficulties, therefore, for example, if the household was unable to pay on time once/twice or more as result of lack of money, Only situations when household was unable to cover the costs due to financial difficulties should be recorded. If household was late with payment e.g. as forgot to pay the bill but had required amount of money, it should not be recorded..

Telephone bills should not be considered as utility bills in this item. However, sewage and rubbish bills are taken into account in this item.

If the household manages to pay through borrowing (from bank, relatives or friends), it is considered the same as if the household had managed to pay through its own resources.

If somebody from outside the household pays utility bill, flag -2 should be used<sup>36</sup>.

The amount paid by other household should be recorded as a cost in HH070 but also as Regular inter household cash transfer received in HY080.

Suggested question:

*In the past twelve months, has the household been in arrears, i.e. has been unable to pay the utility bills (e.g. heating, electricity, gas, water, waste disposal etc.) of the main dwelling on time due to financial difficulties?*

<sup>35</sup> The Living conditions Working Group agreed during its 2010 meeting to suppress HS020 and to keep only HS021 starting from the 2011 operation.

<sup>36</sup> The Living Condition Working Group meeting on 24-25 October 2017