

HS021: Arrears on utility bills [*Whether the household has been in arrears on utility bills in past 12 months*]

Domain/Area	Social exclusion/Housing and non-housing related arrears	
Transmission type	Early and regular	
Reference period	Last 12 months	
Unit	Household	
Mode of collection	Household respondent	
Values	1	Yes, once
	2	Yes, twice or more
	3	No
Flags	1	Filled
	-1	Missing
	-2	Not applicable (no utility bills)

Description

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

This variable has replaced the variable HS020 as defined in the EU-SILC Regulation¹ 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, HS021 = 1/2, otherwise (illness,...) HS021 = 3.

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.

¹ The Living conditions Working Group agreed during its 2010 meeting to suppress HS020 and to keep only HS021 starting from the 2011 operation.