

SMPE - People living alone in France by gender and age in 2017

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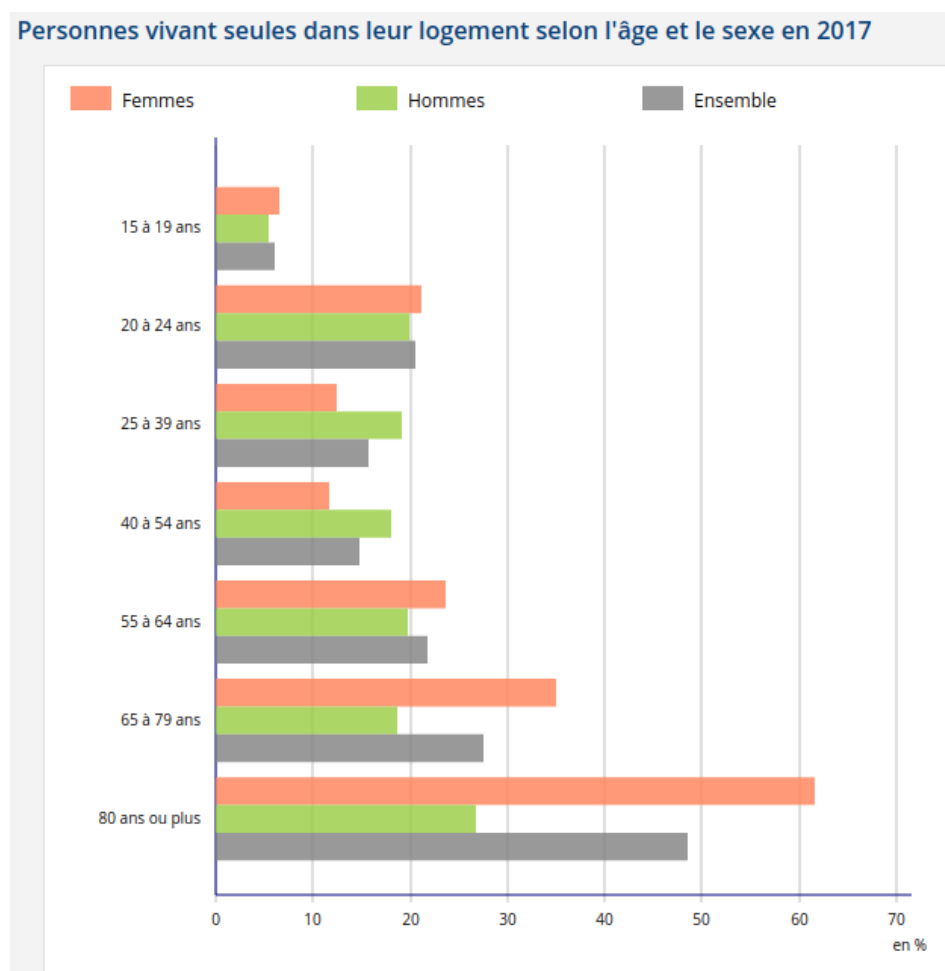


Figure 1: Bar chart of people living alone in their home in France by gender and age in 2017.

About the layout

The Figure is a bar chart representing the percentage of people living alone in their home by age and gender. Here are our observations about the chart layout:

- **Color choice.** We can note that the cliché blue/pink association for men/woman has not been made here. This is more and more common to avoid this color association for gender and use it for other things instead. This is meant to break the cliché even if blue/pink is easier to understand as it's anchored in our culture ([an interesting blogpost on the matter](#)). Grey is chosen when genders are combined, this is a great decision as grey is neutral.
- **Age grouping.** We can see that ages are grouped in a meaningful way that make sense to us and are easy to interpret contrary to a, for example, simpler approach where each group is 10-20, 20-30, etc. For example 15-19 is an age at which most people still live with their parents and 20-24 is people starting to work or students going into higher-education.

Questioning the chart

Here are our observations about the chart data:

- We can see a spike of people living alone for the 20-24 years old. This make sense as it's usually a transition period between living with parents and living with a partner.
- From 25 to 54, more woman are living alone than men. And the opposite from 55 to 80+. This can be explained **partially** by the fact that
 - most people that are not living alone are living with their partner
 - most people living with their partner are heterosexual
 - woman tends to live longer than man

A woman would loose the men she is living with and finish her life alone. This explanation is quite good for the 80+ group but not really for 55 to 79 years old.

The grey bars actually explains us that woman tends to live longer than man. Indeed, if there was an equal proportion of men and woman at 80+ then the grey bar would be around 42: equidistant from men and woman. This is not the case, there are more woman than men at that age so the overhaul proportion of people living alone at that age is more influenced by the number of woman living alone.

- From 25 to 54, more men live alone than woman. This can be explained by many factors that would require another study. Here are some potential explanations (note that this is probably a combination of factors and not only one).
 - Assuming that most people that are not living alone at that age are living with their partner. Then, maybe, at that age there is more homosexual woman than men.
 - Assuming that most people that are not living alone at that age are living with their partner. Then, maybe, woman have more partners outside this age group (less than 25 or more than 54) than men.
 - Maybe, at that age, woman that are not living with their partner prefer to share a flat rather than men that prefer to live alone (we say "prefer" but this might actually not be a choice but another factor explaining it. For example, it is know that [woman are paid less than men](#), it might be harder for them to pay for an apartment alone, and sharing one might be the only solution).

Improving the chart

The chart was quite good already. Here are some improvements we added:

- 0 to 100% horizontal axis so we don't think almost every woman is living alone at 80+
- English translation
- Vertical legend to follow the chart reading orientation
- Legend inside chart taking advantage of blank space
- Dashed horizontal lines that highlight the four main groups of the chart: mostly living with parents, transition, more men alone, more woman alone
- Minor break every 5% to help read values
- Data source in the title so user can see where the data come from
- Pretty colours



Figure 2: Improved bar chart of people living alone in their home in France by gender and age in 2017.