



# Research on Housing in Poland

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SURVEY CONDUCTED ON A REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF POLISH WOMEN AND MEN

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Research conducted in the framework of the project “Społeczne Forum Polityki Mieszkaniowej” [eng. Social Forum on Housing Policy] co-financed from the EEA Funds as a part of the programme Obywatele dla Demokracji [eng. Citizens for Democracy]



Warsaw, 17<sup>th</sup> of June 2015

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## METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

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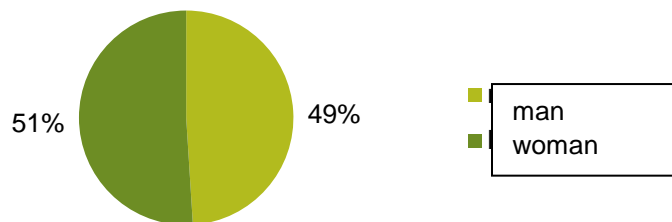
The research was conducted on a representative group of Polish men and women aged 16 or above for the Habitat for Humanity Foundation by the company Realizacja Sp. z o. o. Methodological consultation was provided by the company Millward Brown S.A.

The method applied in the survey consisted of direct, questionnaire-based interviews performed with the help of a computer (CAPI). The sample size totalled N=806 interviews.

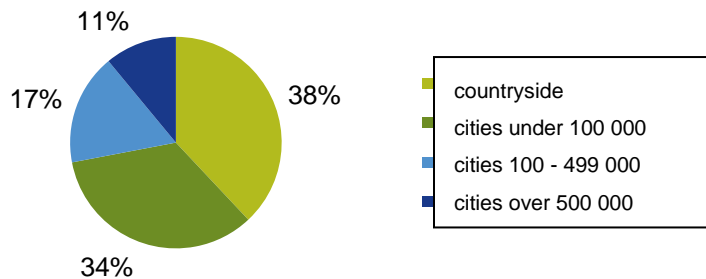
The survey was performed between 28.05.2015 and 4.06.2015.

The aim of the research was to analyse the housing situation of the Polish people.

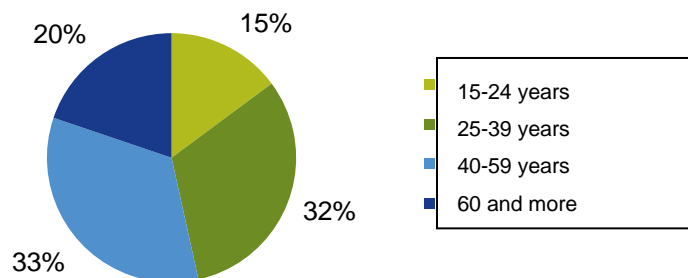
**Chart 1. Sample distribution according to sex**



**Chart 2. Sample distribution according to the place of residence**



**Chart 3. Sample distribution according to age**



### MAIN CONCLUSIONS FROM THE SURVEY

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Housing problems are, according to the respondents, one of the most important problems faced by Polish families. Nevertheless, in comparison to the assessment results of one's own housing situation, it may be observed that these results refer more to the perceived situation of other people than the housing situation of the respondents.

Place of residence constitutes a significant factor which influences how we assess the housing situation around us. Inhabitants of rural areas assess the housing situation most positively, while large city dwellers perceive it in the most negative manner.

According to the respondents, housing situation does affect people around them. The majority claims to know persons, who change their plans of having a baby or who emigrate as a consequence of their housing situation.

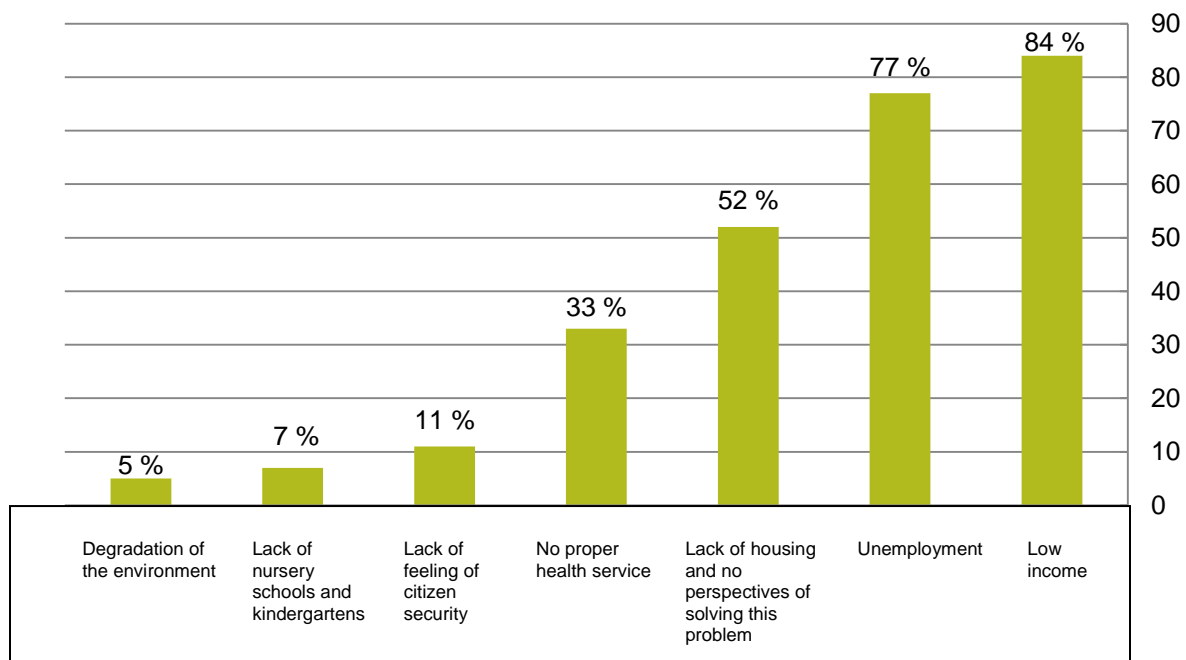
Such perception of one's environment results in a negative assessment of the actions undertaken in this field by the government. 2/3 of the respondents express negative opinions of the government in the context of housing.

65% of the respondents indicate having some kind of housing difficulties. Most often these concern redecoration or change for better living conditions (both 30%), yet still 15% of the respondents are unable to become independent and at least 15% experience problems with the regular payment of liabilities related to housing.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

Lack of housing and perspectives of acquiring one was considered by 52% of the respondents to be one of three most important problems of Polish families. For the Polish people, the only problems more troublesome than housing are low income (indicated by 84% of the respondents) and unemployment (77% referred to this problem). Lack of housing was indicated as more significant than the lack of proper health service (33%) and the feeling of citizen security (11%).

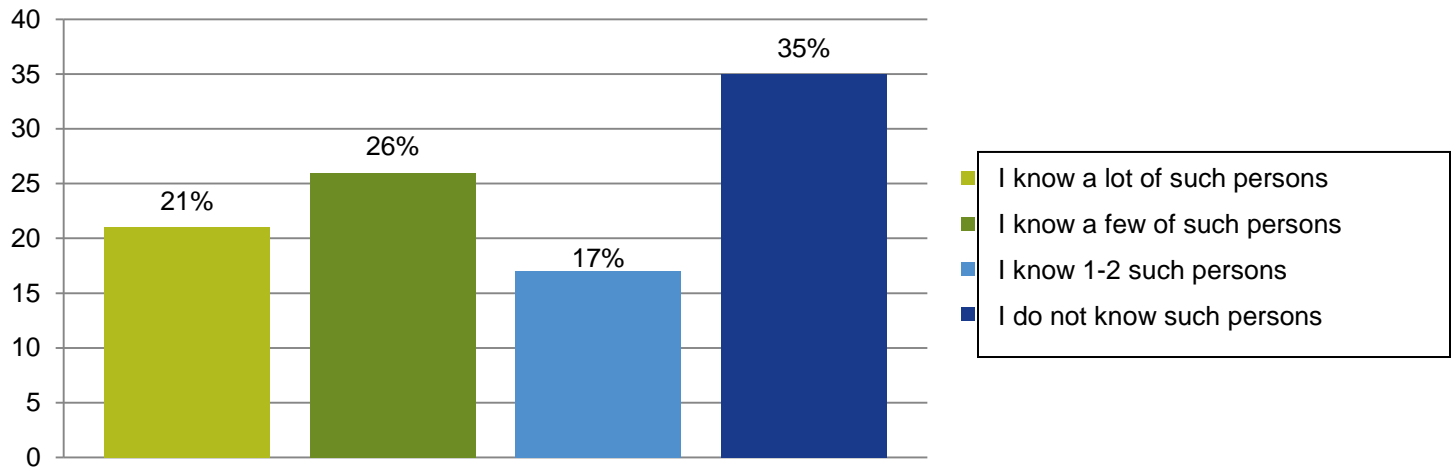
**Chart 4. From the given list, choose three problems, which are, in your opinion, most important for Polish families (data presented as %)**



Lack of housing and perspectives of acquiring one constitutes a problem typical of large cities (over 500 thousand inhabitants), where it is specified by 74% (as the second most important problem after low income (86%)). The percentage of answers indicating this problem decreases in parallel to the size of the city and reaches its lowest point in villages, where it is mentioned by 45% of respondents.

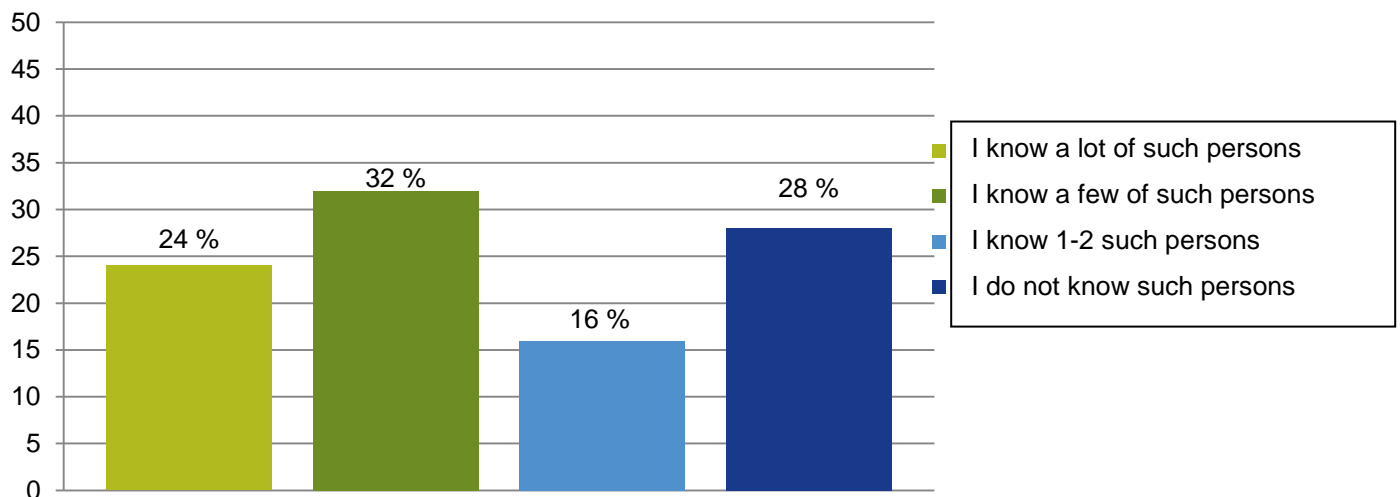
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**Chart 5. Are there any persons within your circle of relatives and acquaintances who postpone the decision to have a baby as a result of their housing situation?**



Almost 2/3 of the respondents (65%) know someone who postpones the decision to have a baby as a result of their housing situation. 21% know a lot of such persons, 26% a few of them and 17% know 1-2 persons in such a situation. Village dwellers less often know people who postpone such a decision (42%), while in case of inhabitants of large cities (over 500 000 inhabitants) only 18% declare not knowledge of any person who postpones such a decision.

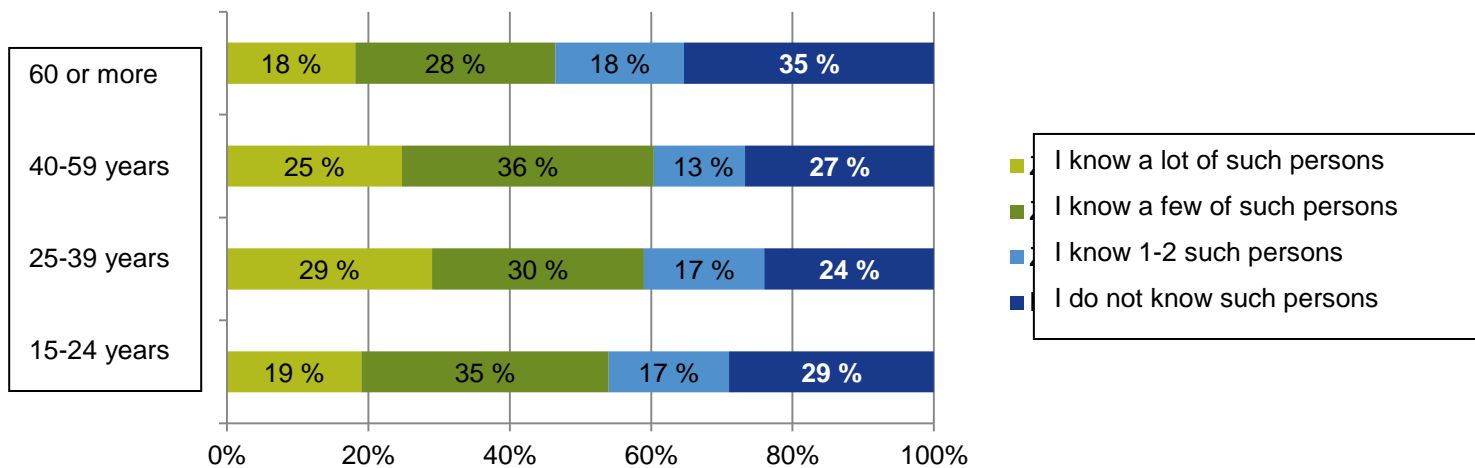
**Chart 6. Are there any persons within your circle of relatives and acquaintances for whom their housing situation was one of the reasons to move abroad?**



Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  (72%) of the respondents know people for whom their housing situation was one of the reasons to move abroad. Almost  $\frac{1}{4}$  of all the respondents know many of such persons (24%), 32% know a few of them and 16% know 1-2 of such persons. Inhabitants of the largest cities more often declare knowledge of at least one person who has emigrated, among other reasons, as a consequence of their housing situation.

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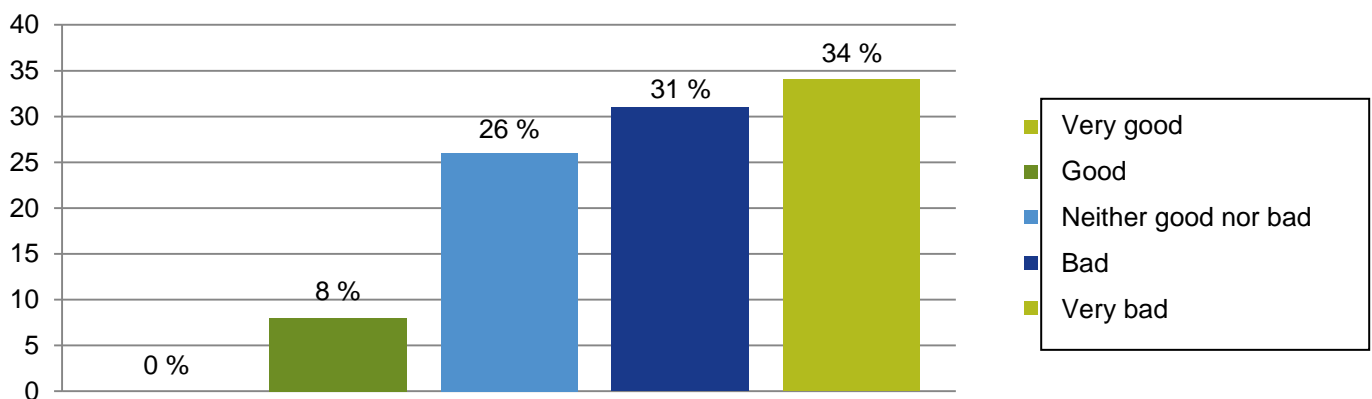
**Chart 7. Knowledge of people for whom their housing situation was one of the reasons to move abroad and age of the respondents**



In accordance with the expectations, knowledge of people who have decided to emigrate as a consequence of their housing situation is most often declared by respondents aged 25-29. Around 76% of respondents from this age group know persons who have decided to leave the country for this reason. A slightly lower level of acquaintance with such people is declared by persons aged 40-59 (73% of respondents) and those aged 15-24 (71% of respondents).

Among respondents who know persons postponing the decision to have a baby as a consequence of their housing situation, 94% also declare knowledge of people, for whom their housing situation was one of the reasons to emigrate.

**Chart 8. How would you assess actions undertaken by the government to solve the problem of insufficient housing for indigent people or those with low income?**

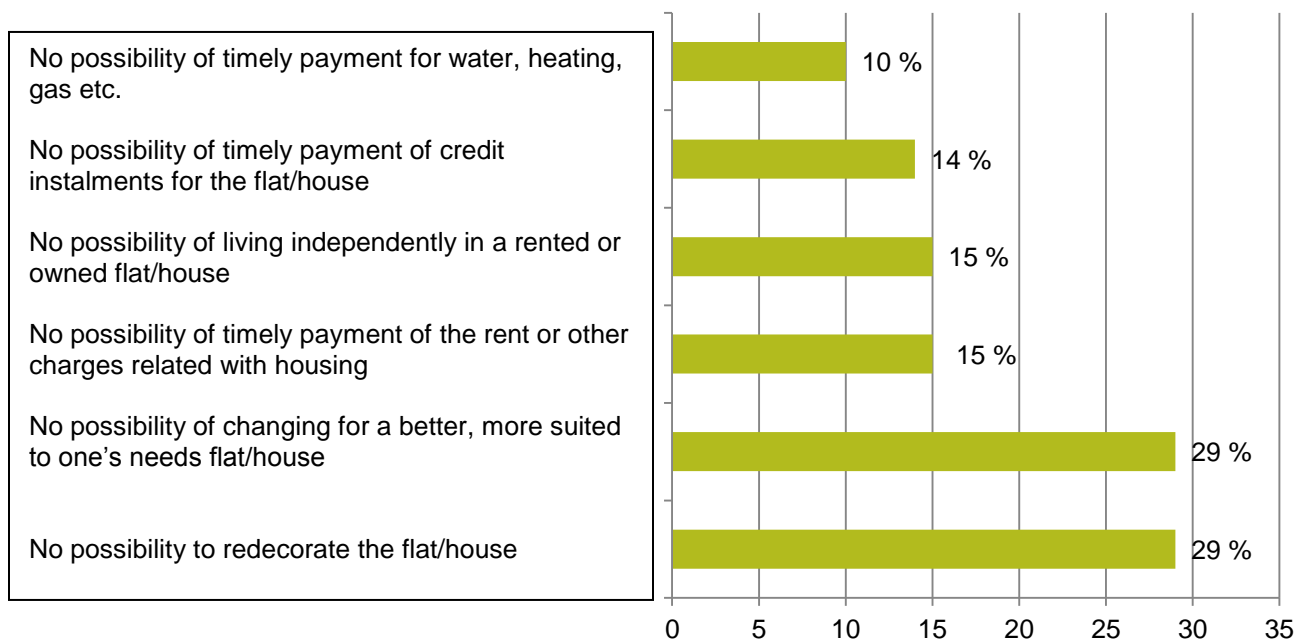


Respondents asked for their assessment of the governmental actions aimed at solving the problem of housing for the indigent and people with low income express strong criticism. 2/3 of the respondents consider them bad or very bad (65%), whereas only 9% assess them as good or very good. Inhabitants of rural areas are the least critical (60%), while most criticism is expressed by urban dwellers from cities up to 100 000 inhabitants (73%).

Those concerned, i.e. people who assess their own financial or housing situation as bad or very bad evaluate the actions undertaken by the government more critically than all the respondents on average (88% and 92%, respectively). Age and education do not provide for any difference in the opinions of this matter.

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Chart 9. Which of the problems listed below concern your household? Please, choose no more than 3 problems.



Respondents asked about the indicated housing-related difficulties concerning their own household (one could indicate no more than 3) referred to:

- No possibility to redecorate the flat/house – 29%. This answer correlates with education and income. The higher the income or education, such response is notably less often indicated .
- No possibility of changing for a better, more suited to one's needs flat/house - 29%.

At the same time, no less than 15% indicated at least one serious problem related to effecting payments:

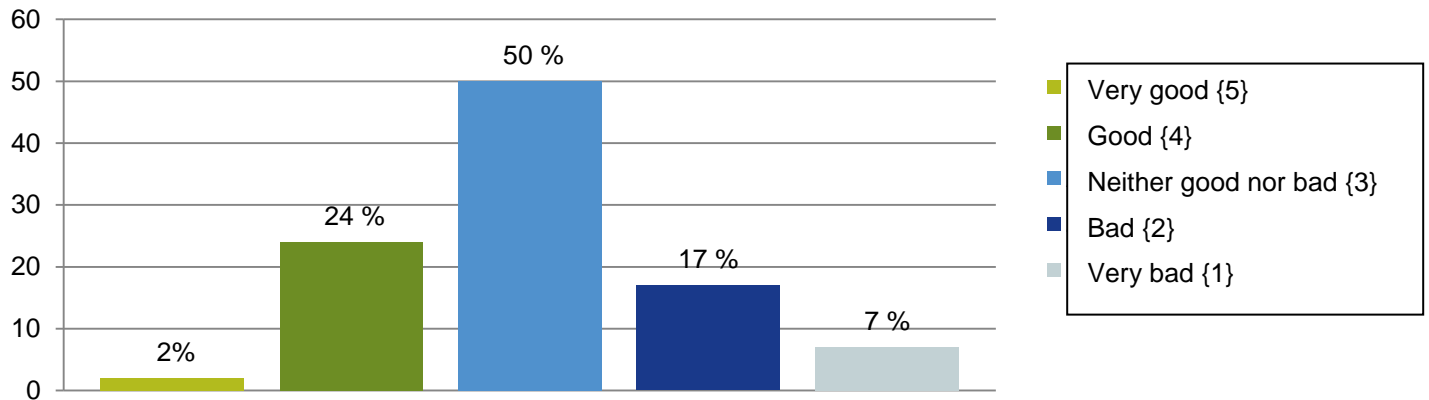
- No possibility of becoming independent is indicated by 15% of the respondents (no possibility of living independently in a rented or owned flat/house);
- No possibility of timely payment of the rent or other charges related with housing – 15%;
- No possibility of timely payment of credit instalments for the flat/house – 14%;
- No possibility of timely payment for water, heating, gas etc. – 10%.

It is worth noting that only 35% of the respondents have not indicated any of the problems from the list. Identification of each of these problems correlates with the financial situation of the respondents. Moreover, it is related with the size of their place of residence (village or city):

- Inhabitants of rural areas less often indicate no possibility of changing their flat/house for a better one, more suited to their needs (21%); no possibility of timely payment of the rent or other charges related with housing (11%) and no possibility of living independently in a rented or owned flat/house (11%);
- at the same time inhabitants of the largest cities (500 thousand and more) more often indicate such problems as: no possibility of changing their flat/house for a better one, more suited to their needs (44%) and no possibility of timely payment for water, heating, gas etc. (17%).

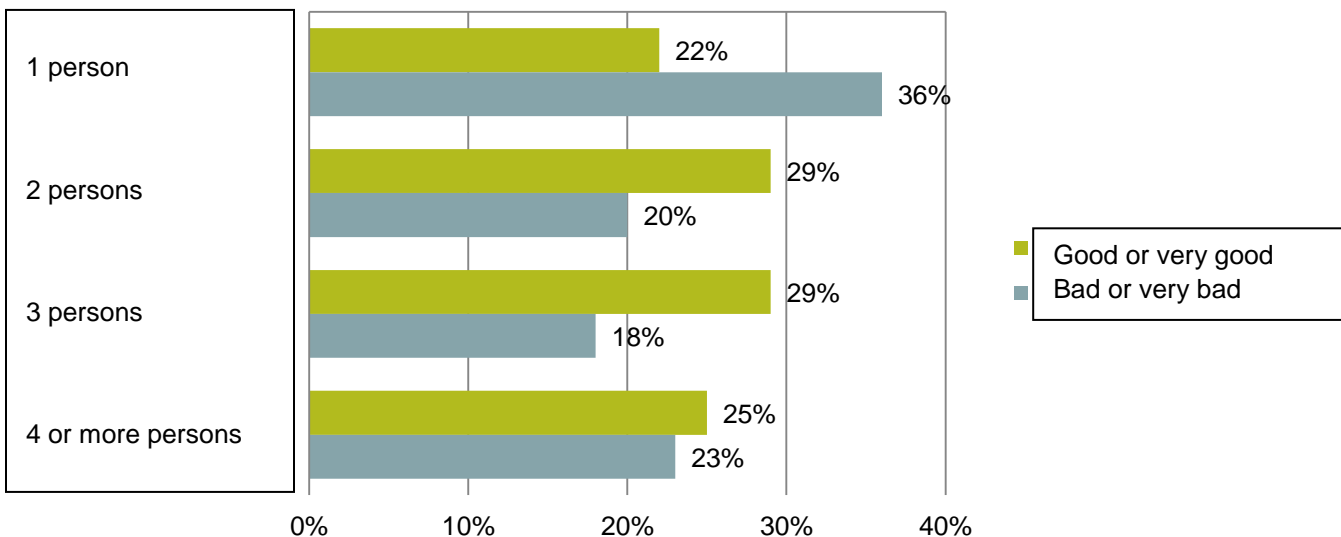
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**Chart 10. How would you assess your financial situation?**



Assessment of their own financial situation by the respondents presents a diverse picture: 26% of the surveyed persons consider it good or very good, while 24% assess their situation as bad or very bad. Self-assessment of the financial situation by the respondents correlates with education. The higher the education, the more positive the assessment. 22% of people with primary education consider their financial situation to be good, while among respondents with higher education it is 41%. 30% of the employed respondents and 22% of the unemployed evaluate their professional situation positively. At the same time, negative evaluation was declared by 20% of the employed respondents and by 28% of the unemployed.

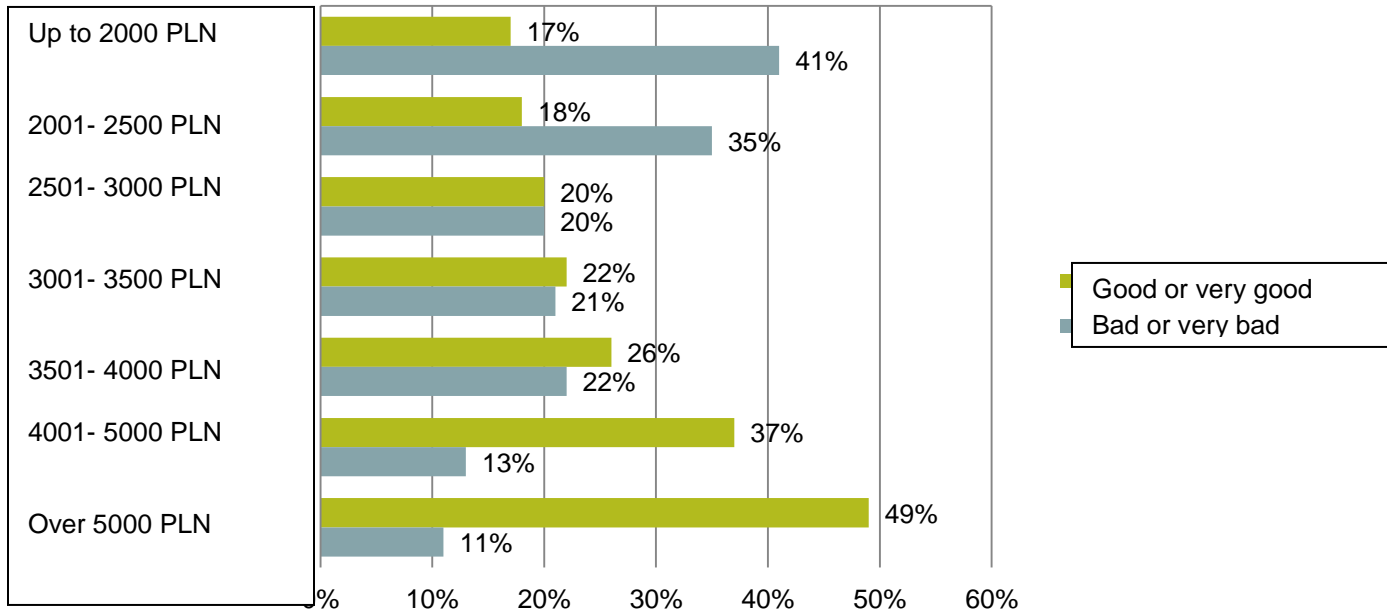
**Chart 11. Assessment of one's financial situation and household size**



People from households consisting of 1 person assess their financial situation most negatively. More than 20% of respondents from such households consider their situation to be good or very good, whereas as many as 36% assess it as negative. Financial situation is most positively evaluated by people from households consisting of 2 or 3 persons. Households with more than 3 persons tend to display a tendency that the more people in a household, the more negative the assessment of their housing conditions.

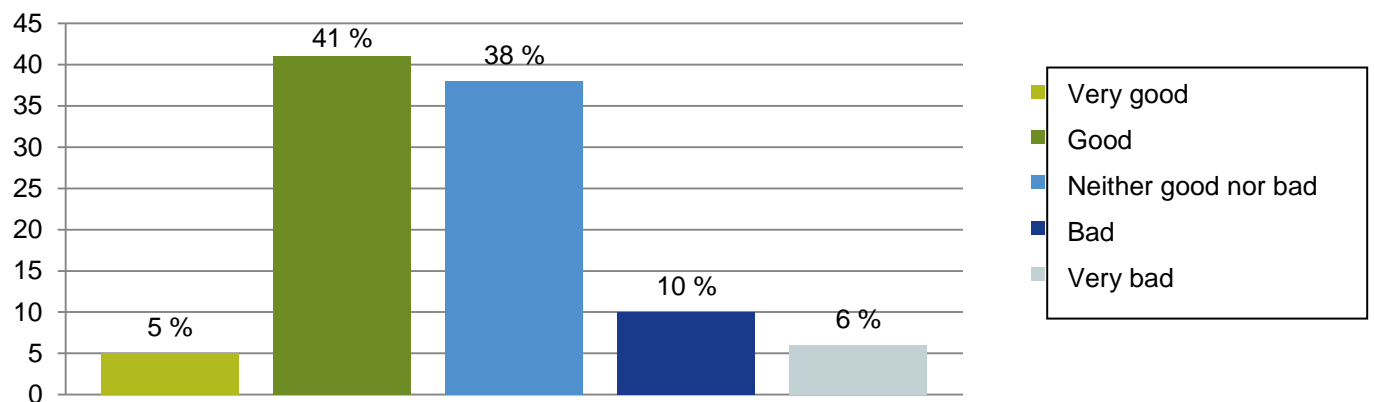


**Chart 12. Assessment of one's financial situation and monthly income of the household**



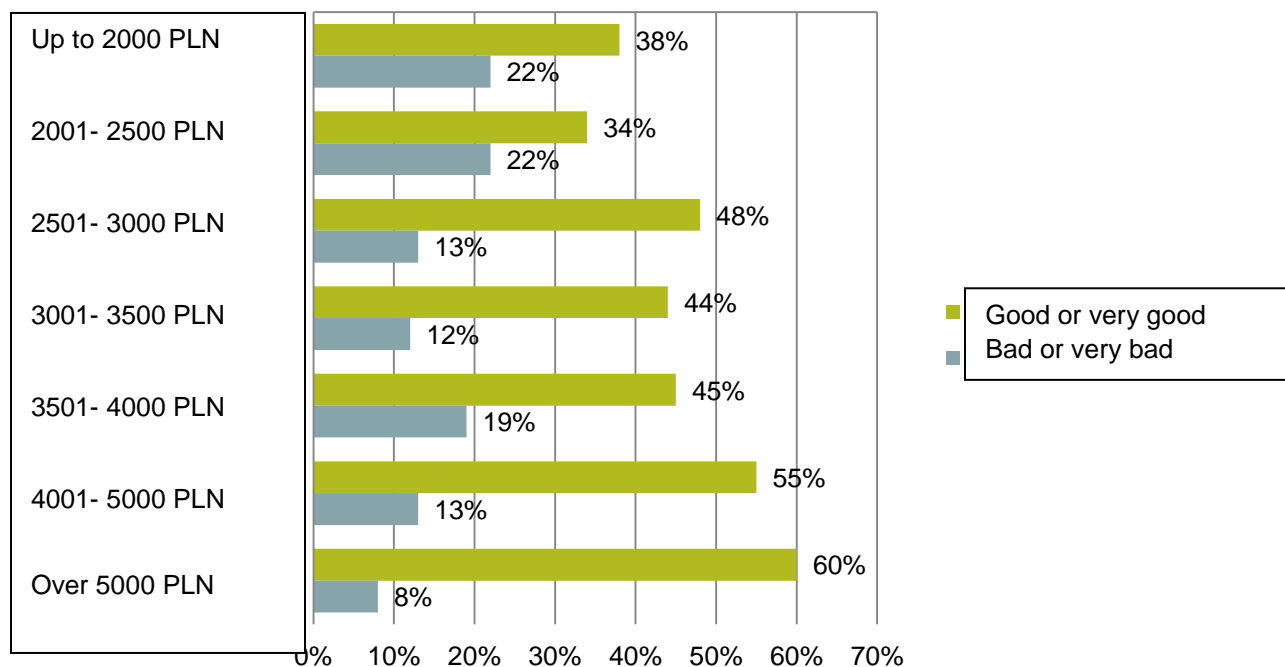
Analysing the relation between financial situation and the income of a household, one can clearly observe a tendency that with the decrease of monthly income of the household, the assessment of one's financial situation also visibly decreases. Only 17% of respondents whose household income is lower than 2000 PLN evaluate their financial situation positively, whereas as many as 41% consider it negative. However, approximately 50% of respondents with income higher than 5000 PLN assess their financial situation as good or very good.

**Chart 13. How would you assess your housing situation?**



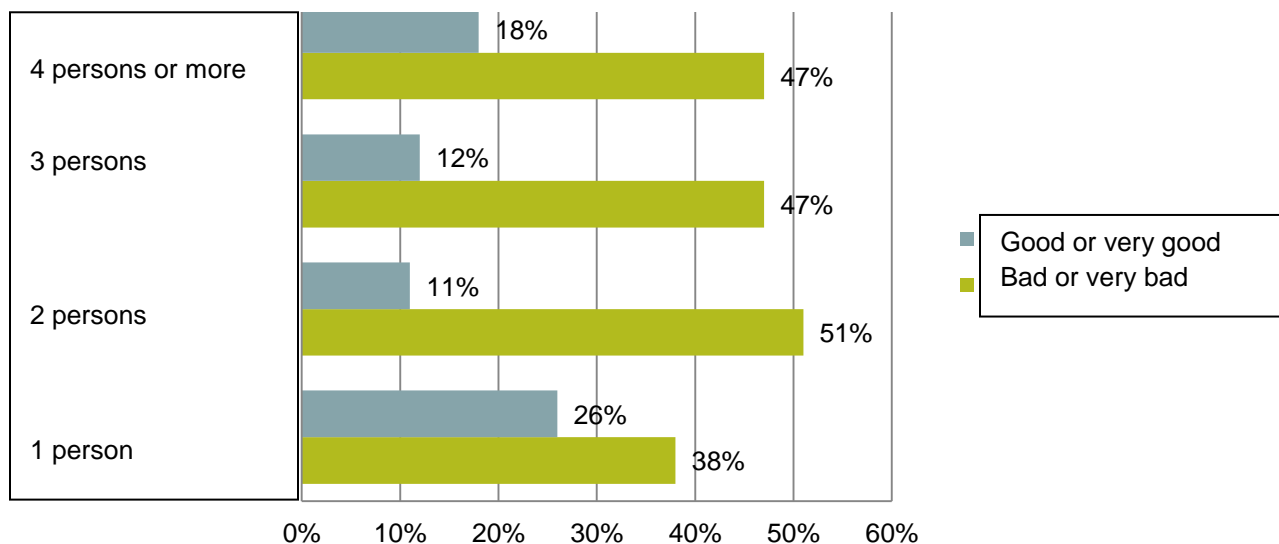
The self-assessment of their housing situation by each respondent is more positive than the assessment concerning their financial situation. 46% of the respondents consider it good or very good, while 16% bad or very bad. A slightly more positive evaluation of their housing situation is expressed by people aged 60 or more (57%) in comparison to people aged 25-39 (43% of the respondents). As in the case of financial situation, the evaluation correlates with education: 41% of respondents with primary education assess it as good or very good, whereas among people with higher education such percentage reaches 59%.

**Chart 14. Assessment of one's living conditions and monthly income of the household**



According to the results of the survey, the lower the household income, the lower the evaluation of one's living conditions. Among respondents whose income is lower than 2500 PLN, 22% assess their living conditions as bad or very bad compared with only 8% of respondents whose monthly income of the household exceeds 5000 PLN.

**Chart 15. Assessment of one's living conditions and household size**



People assessing their living conditions in the most negative manner are those from households consisting of one person. More than ¼ of them evaluate their living conditions negatively, whereas only 38% positively. Living conditions are considered to be the most positive by people from households of 2 or 3 persons (51% and 47% of Poles, respectively, assess their living conditions as good and very good). Analysing the situation of households with more than 4 persons, a significant decrease in the assessment of their living conditions may be noticed, correlated with the increase of people in the households.

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At the same time, the survey shows that sex is a variable which does not significantly affect the living situation of the Polish people. Taking into consideration the sex criterion, there are no statistically significant differences between women and men: both face the same challenges, perceive the analysed phenomena in a similar manner and coincide in their assessment of housing-related problem.