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**2.7% of the Austrian population were severely materially deprived in 2020;  
COVID-19 pandemic caused a rise in financial worries**

**Vienna**, 2021-04-29 – In 2020, 233 000 persons or 2.7% of the total population were severely materially deprived, meaning their living conditions were severely constrained by a lack of resources in comparison with a European minimum living standard. As Statistics Austria further reports, the proportion of people affected has declined since the start of the time-series in 2008 by more than half from 5.9% to 2.7% in 2020 (a minus of 252 000 persons in total numbers). European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions, EU-SILC, surveyed during the first half of 2020 don't yet show the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the results for the main poverty indicators, however, they capture a rise in financial worries.

"In 2020, 233 000 people or 2.7% of the population could not afford various expenses to secure the EU minimum standard of living. This means that the number of significantly materially deprived people in Austria has decreased by 252 000 over the last twelve years. With the COVID-19 pandemic, however, financial worries have increased significantly," explains Statistics Austria Director General Tobias Thomas.

Additional to the absolute measure of material deprivation a relative risk-of-poverty can be reported: 1 222 000 persons corresponding to 13.9% of the population had low household income (equivalised household income below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold of 60% of the national median). 465 000 persons below the age of 60, or 7.1%, lived in households with a low work intensity (below 20% of potential work intensity of all persons of working age of that household).

A combination of those three indicators – absolute living standard below a European minimum living standard, relative risk-of-poverty due to low household income and low household work intensity – defines the measure known in European social statistics as "risk of poverty or social exclusion". 1 529 000 persons or 17.5% of the population in Austria were at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2020, as Statistics Austria reports. Since these categories can overlap, the total number of persons at-risk-of-poverty or social exclusion is lower than the sum of the three individual indicators.

When comparing with the European Union a much lower poverty risk has been reported throughout the time-series for Austria. The latest figures of the EU-28 average for the year 2019 show that 21.4% were affected by poverty or social exclusion, while in Austria it was 16.9% in 2019 and 17.5% in 2020 (an update of EU-numbers can be expected for autumn 2021).

Even if the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions of 2020 don't yet show the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in the main poverty indicators first results for living conditions at the beginning of the crisis can be shown: Worse conditions for persons affected by risk of poverty or social exclusion in fields like housing (e.g. over-crowding), possession of computers and availability of internet and general health status become more noticeable in a critical situation as caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the negative perception of income development has increased in general. In the years before the crisis, 2018 and 2019, respectively 9% and 8% estimated to have less income at their disposal in the months to come, whereas in 2020 this number rose to 15%. For 13% of the poverty risk group an income decline is expected, about as often as for those not at risk (15%). For the past income development 30% of those at risk of poverty or social exclusion reported a loss, compared to 19% of those with no poverty risk. In 21% of those cases loss of job or bankruptcy of one's business were named to be the main reason.

For more detailed information please refer to the [German version](#).