

"Spaniards on the squatting of homes in Spain. Opinion, concerns and proposals" report

ONE IN FOUR SPANIARDS BELIEVE THAT THERE IS A MEDIUM OR STRONG POSSIBILITY OF THEIR HOME BEING SQUATTED

- **Social alarm is spreading: 24% of Spaniards believe that there is a "medium or strong" possibility of their home being "squatted" and 77% consider this phenomenon to already be a social problem in Spain.**
- **Almost a third of the Spanish population (31%) claims to directly or indirectly know someone who has suffered the squatting of a property they own, with the inhabitants of the Balearic Islands (39%) expressing this view the most.**
- **Between 2018 and 2022 cases of squatting in Spain increased by almost 40%, exceeding 75,000 cases in the period. In addition, the length of procedures has become another issue: In 2022, the average resolution time for eviction processes and their appeals was 20.5 months.**
- **According to the general public, the causes of squatting are the slowness of the justice system (28%), social permissiveness (25%) and difficulty in accessing housing due to high prices (23%). In addition, almost three in four citizens think that the penalties for this type of practice "are very lax" and that "there is no legal certainty".**
- **The solutions proposed by Spaniards are: harsher penalties and swifter evictions (60%), making access to housing easier for the most disadvantaged groups (45%) and police action against mafias (31%).**
- **Over half of Spaniards (53%) favour evictions being resolved directly by the police and another 35% the intervention of a judge, but with much shorter resolution deadlines than at present.**
- **By autonomous community, the residents of Catalonia (83%), Andalusia (81%) and Cantabria (81%) are the most concerned about the proliferation of squatting, while those of Navarra, Galicia and Valencia are the least bothered.**

Madrid, 19 September 2023. We have all seen images of squatted houses dominating the news: broken doors, demonstrations in favour and against, violent evictions and the despair of those affected. It is a complex phenomenon that for months has been dominating the headlines in our country and which, according to the **CIS (Centre of Sociological Research)**, has become one of the **main concerns of Spaniards**.

In fact, **one in four Spaniards (24%)** believe that there is a **"medium to strong" possibility that their home will be squatted** and **77%** believe that this phenomenon has already become a **social problem** in our country. Unsurprisingly,

just 8% of society thinks that the squatting of homes is a **residual phenomenon** of little significance that tends to be exaggerated for political reasons.

For Spaniards, homes are squatted for **various reasons: the slowness of justice** (28%), **the laxness of politicians** (25%) and **the difficulty in accessing housing** due to high price prices (23%). In addition, almost **three in four** citizens (73%) think that the **penalties** for this type of practice **"are very lax"** and that there is "no legal security".

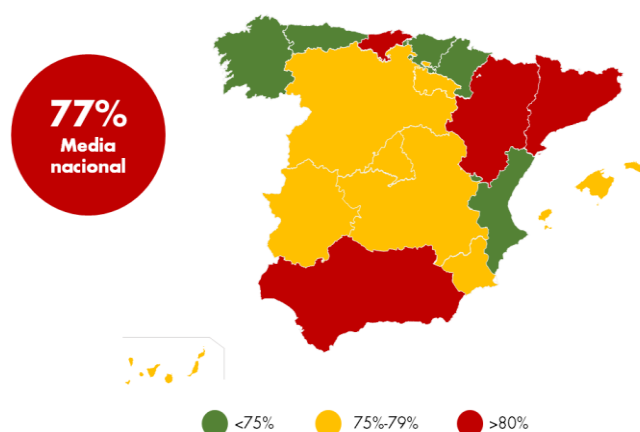
These are some of the main **conclusions** of the study **"Spaniards on the squatting' of housing in Spain. Opinion, concerns and proposals"**, compiled by [Línea Directa Aseguradora](#) based on the results of **1,700 surveys** conducted throughout Spain.

According to **Mar Garre, Head of People, Communication and Sustainability at Línea Directa Aseguradora**, "our direct model has enabled us to detect the significant concern that exists in society about the squatting of homes. As an insurance company, we believe that we must provide a solution that helps alleviate the effects of a phenomenon that can undoubtedly seriously affect those concerned."

A phenomenon on the rise

Although squatting does not exist as a specific criminal offence in our legal system, it can be prosecuted using the **crime of usurpation or breaking and entering**, depending on the circumstances of each process. At any rate, it is a growing phenomenon: according to figures from the Interior Ministry and the General Council of the Judiciary, cases of **squatting rose by 37%** between 2018 and 2022, surpassing **75,000 complaints** and **15,000 civil procedures in this** period. In addition, **31%** of respondents **are directly or indirectly aware of a case of squatting**, with an especially high percentage (39%) in the Balearic Isles.

Porcentaje de españoles que piensan que la "okupación" es ya un problema social:



By territory, **Catalonia**, with 650 squats reported in 2022, **Andalusia** (535) and **Valencia** (390) are the regions with the largest number of registered cases. With regard to the autonomous communities **most concerned about the** phenomenon, **Catalonia** (83%), **Andalusia** (81%) and **Cantabria** (81%) are the regions where residents are most alarmed by the proliferation of cases of squatting, while **Navarra, Galicia and Valencia** are the least bothered.

At any rate, and despite the social alarm, just **22% of Spaniards** say that they are **well acquainted with the current** squatting regulations, while half say that they have a general idea and 28% admit that they have no knowledge whatsoever.

What do Spaniards propose?

The **toughening of penalties and speeding-up of evictions** are the preferred solutions to mitigate squatting, according to **60% Spaniards**, far ahead of other measures such as **facilitating access to housing** (45%) or **focusing police action on organised mafias** (31%).

The **eviction** process, which, according to official information from the General Council of the Judiciary, can take more than **20 months**, is another of the topics for debate. Here, **53% of Spaniards favour eviction by the police without the intervention of a judge** in the event that ownership or the existence of binding contract is not proven 'in situ'. **35%** are in favour of a **judge** always intervening in the procedure, but with much shorter deadlines. In addition, **76% of respondents** would be prepared to take out **anti-squatting insurance**, with payment of the **mortgage** (35%) and **procedure expenses** (30%) the most valued cover.

Methodology

Survey carried out by Línea Directa in collaboration with the consultancy firm MDK on 1,700 drivers proportionally distributed along quotas by sex, age and region. Margin of error of +/- 2.37% ~ 3.1% with a confidence interval of 95%. Fieldwork carried out between 14 and 19 June 2023.

About Línea Directa

Línea Directa Aseguradora is the 5th largest insurer of cars in Spain, specialising in direct sales of insurance for cars, motorbikes, companies, the self-employed, and homes. Línea Directa is among the 100 Spanish companies with the best reputations, according to the MERCO Companies ranking. It also offers health insurance, through a new brand built on digitisation and rewards for policyholders.

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