# Housing costs affecting teachers' job retention in the UK



Recent insights from a survey conducted by the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) indicate that housing costs significantly impact teachers' decisions to remain in the profession within the UK. The 2023 survey found that a staggering 57% of teachers aspiring to purchase homes believe they cannot do so on their salaries.

In light of this, Euronews has examined the landscape of housing affordability for teachers across 24 European countries, revealing a striking disparity in the number of months' salary required to purchase a 100-square metre property. The comparison is based on statutory salaries for lower secondary teachers and does not take into account mortgage interest rates.

Ireland has emerged as the most affordable country for teachers aspiring to home ownership, where the cost of a 100-square metre property amounts to 106 months' salary. Other countries also show promising affordability for teachers, with Spain, the Netherlands, and Belgium (Flemish Comm) requiring 112 months, 114 months, and 120 months of salary, respectively. Denmark follows closely, with home prices requiring 126 months of earnings.

In a moderate pricing bracket, Luxembourg and Germany require 145 and 157 months of salary, respectively, whilst teachers in Portugal and England face longer waits, needing 162 and 175 months of salary to purchase a home.

The research highlights a notable pattern: nine out of the 24 countries surveyed require teachers to spend between 15 and 20 years of salary on housing. In Italy, for instance, the figure soars to 191 months, while in Norway and Austria, it rises to 192 months and 203 months, respectively. France presents an even greater challenge, where buying a home would require a staggering 230 months of salary.

Conversely, Hungary represents the most challenging market for teachers seeking home ownership, with potential homebuyers needing an astounding 443 months of salary—over 35 years—to afford a 100-square metre home. Slovakia (398 months) and Czechia (383 months) also present substantial barriers, with their figures exceeding 30 years.

The data reveals stark regional divides regarding housing affordability for teachers. Generally, teachers in Northern and Northwestern Europe appear to find it easier to secure homes, while a divide between Eastern and Western Europe adds another layer of complexity. Notably, housing cost is not solely dependent on property prices; teacher salaries also play a crucial role. For example, despite the high cost of housing in the Netherlands, teacher salaries balance these expenses, making the purchasing process more feasible compared to other nations with lower salaries, such as Hungary.

Andrew Lifford, Casework and Subscriptions Manager at EDAPT, shared insights on the financial challenges facing young teachers, particularly in the South East of England and London. “For young teachers starting out… home ownership will be unrealistic unless supported with a large deposit by parents,” he stated, emphasising that typical take-home pay after taxes and pension contributions ranges from £1,800 to £2,800 per month, leaving many teachers struggling to save for a deposit.

As the EU's Education and Training Monitor 2023 report indicates, teacher shortages are becoming increasingly problematic, with low wages and heavy workloads frequently cited as contributing factors. The report further notes that between 2015 and 2023, real statutory salaries for lower secondary teachers fell in 10 of 22 countries within the EU when adjusted for inflation.

Moreover, NASUWT found that 42% of teachers reported that housing costs influenced their decisions on where to apply for teaching positions, with nearly three-quarters (72%) questioning the availability of adequate affordable housing for teachers in their local areas.

The Euronews analysis outlines the methodology behind their findings, which included using OECD data to provide comparable teacher salary figures and Numbeo data to calculate property prices. The data suggest a complex web of affordability that varies significantly across borders, influenced by local salaries and real estate markets.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

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