

Life at Home Report 2023

A decade of discovery



60%
are positive about their
current life at home

47%
are positive about
the next two years

52%
say home is their
favourite place to be



3 positive perspectives for 2023

04 A decade of discovery

Past

- 06 The research in numbers
- 08 A decade of transformation
- 12 A decade of data
- 14 The big shifts over the last 10 years
- 18 Eight needs for a better life at home



Present

- 22 Three tensions for 2023
- 24 Doing more vs. doing less
- 42 Togetherness vs. privacy
- 58 Living well vs. living within our means

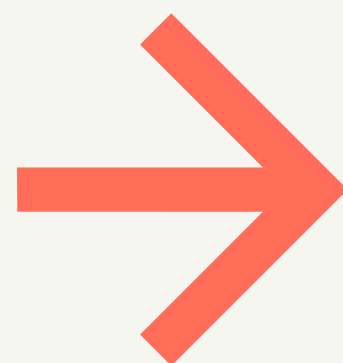
Future

- 74 Looking to 2030 ... and beyond

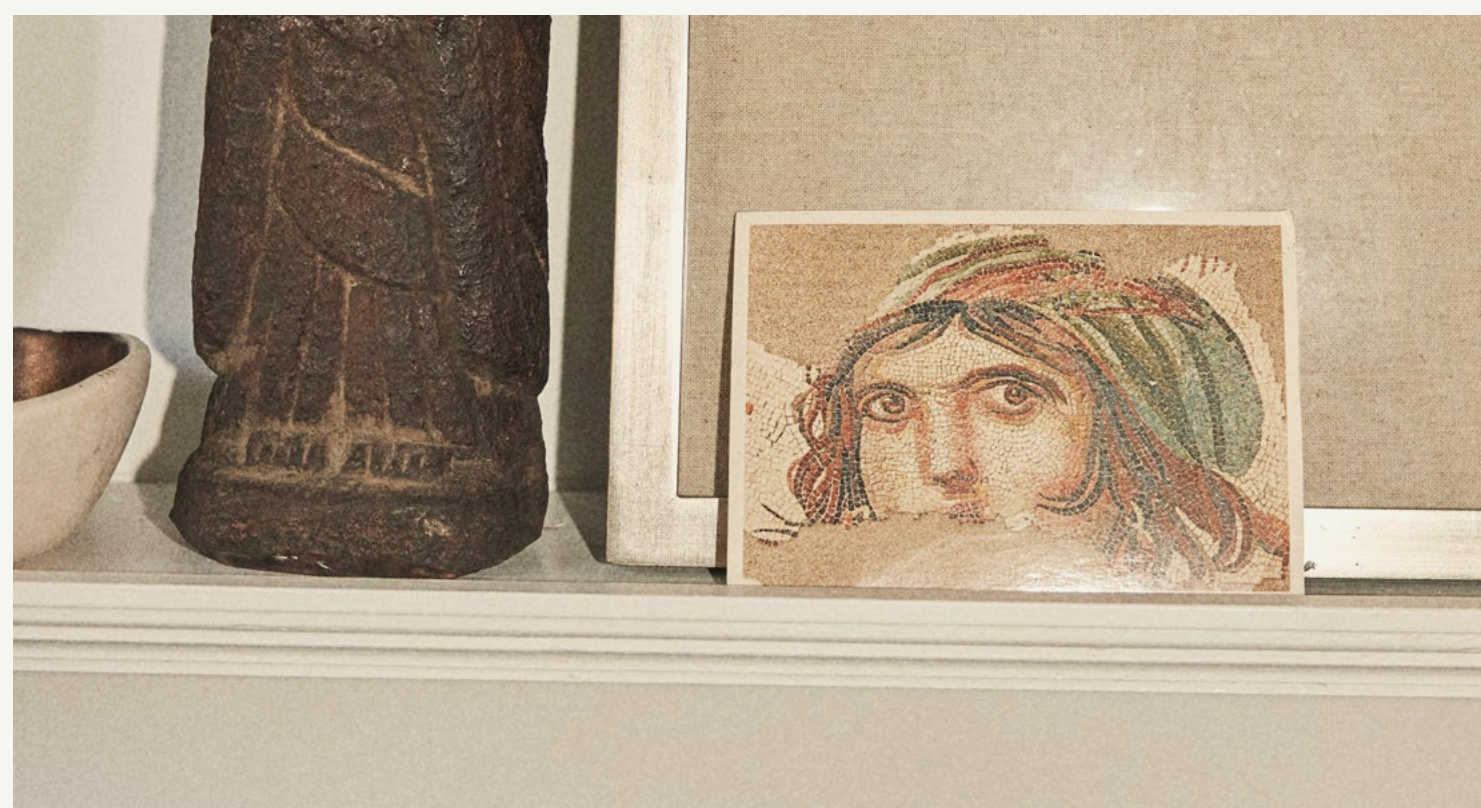
84 Conclusion

86 Methodology

A decade of discovery



At its best, home is more than just a physical space. It's where we find comfort, solace and a sense of belonging. It's where we're safe from the world and can be who we are, free from the opinions—and curious eyes—of others. It's where we dream, play and welcome our friends. Home is the feeling that calls us 'back' when we are away.



Over the last decade, we have spoken to a quarter of a million people in more than 40 countries. Seeking to understand life at home, we tapped into the deep emotions people feel about life inside their four walls.

The IKEA Life at Home Report 2023 is a culmination of findings from this year's research as well as insights from nine previous editions, 2014–2022*. Now, we share those findings.

Ten years of quantitative research, qualitative interviews, expert interviews and home visits represent the experiences of people around the world. They provide data and insights, but more than that, they help us to understand the emotions connected to a fulfilling homelife.

In a significant discovery, we identified the essential elements necessary for a satisfying life at home. We are calling them the **eight needs**.

These needs provide the framework for exploring **three big tensions** around life at home in 2023. We also look ahead using foresight research to imagine a variety of **possible futures** for life at home in 2030 and beyond. From a decade of research, this report explores the past, present and possible future of life at home. ■

*See Methodology

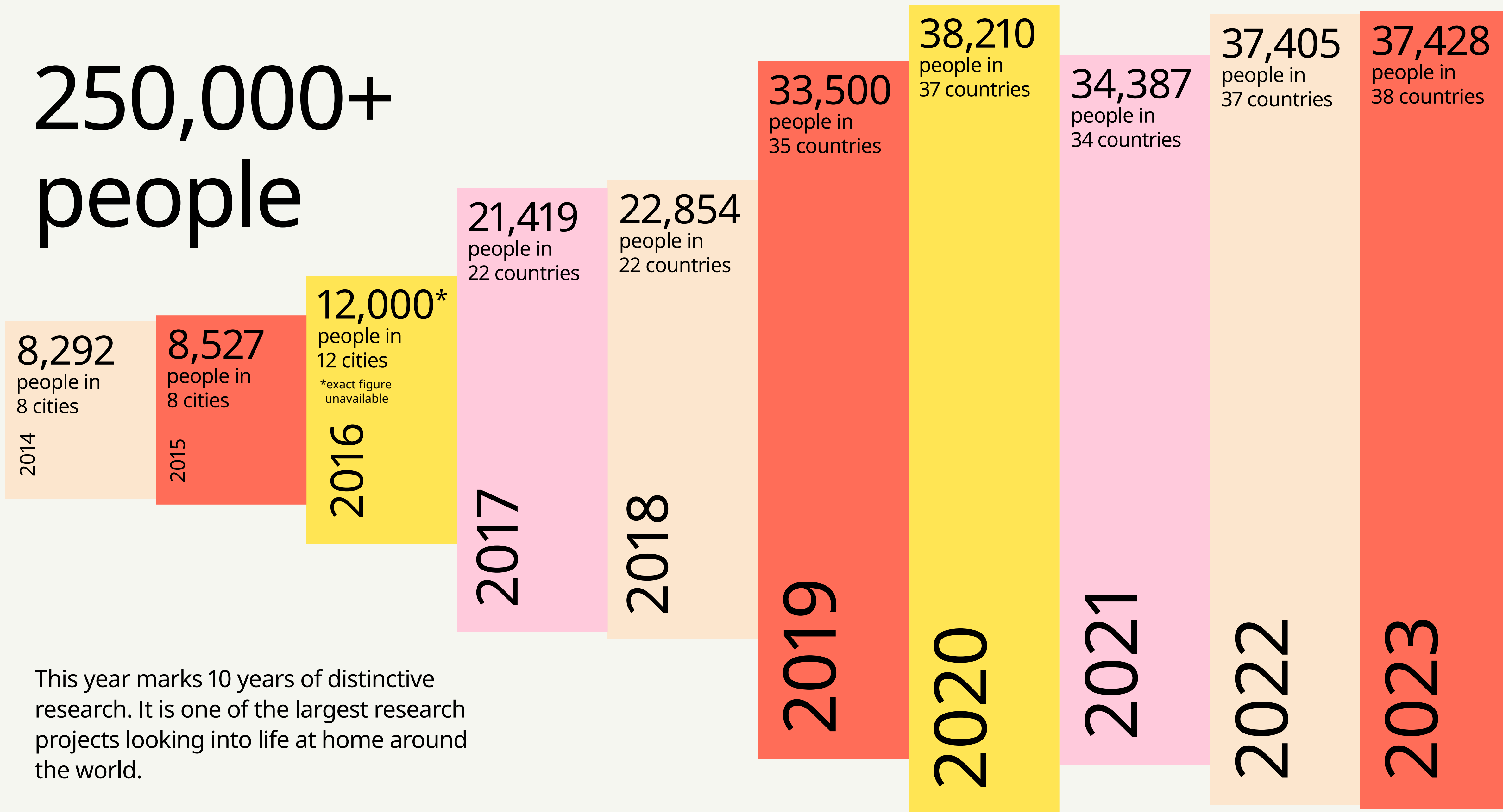
8 essential needs

3 big tensions

3 possible futures




250,000+ people



12,000*
people in
12 cities
*exact figure
unavailable

This year marks 10 years of distinctive research. It is one of the largest research projects looking into life at home around the world.

A decade of transformation



Global and cultural events had a significant impact on life at home over the last decade. These events altered the way people live—sometimes with a nudge, other times with a jolt. For some, it even shifted the definition of home.

Global changes

Home did not escape external events playing out on the global stage. Climate change, conflicts, rising cost of living, technology and the pandemic spilled over into life at home. They altered the choices about how or where to live.

→ **Climate change**

Visible impacts of ferocious weather were a result of rapid climate change. Households began to rethink food waste and looked at sustainable consumption of energy, clothing, furniture and food.

→ **Conflicts**

Turbulent war and conflicts were more widespread. The emotional wellbeing of families became fragile for affected people. There was an increased need for sanctuary and refuge for people fleeing war or seeking safe shelter.

→ **Cost of living**

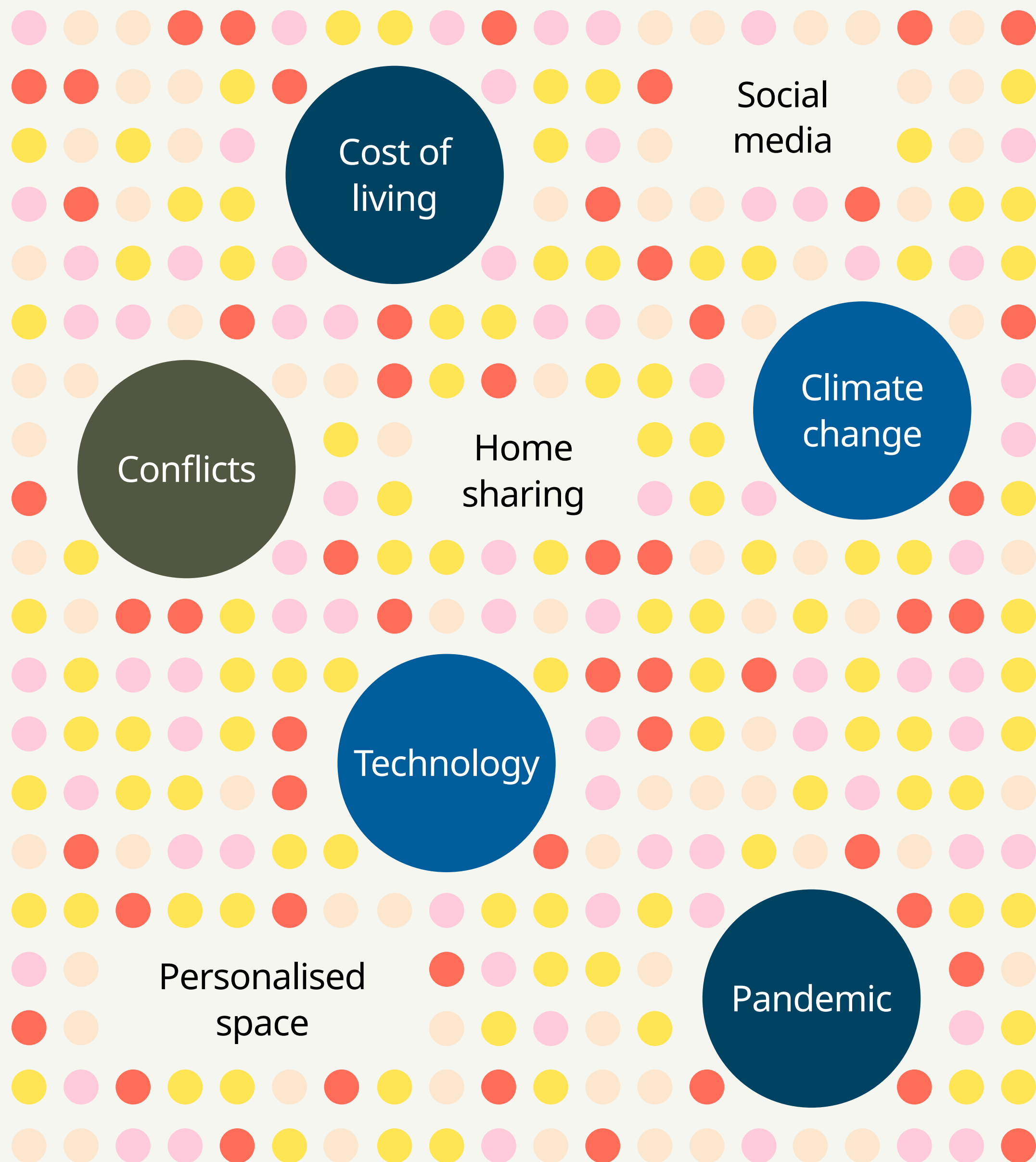
Cost of living concerns impacted disposable income. Housing, utilities and basic needs strained everyday household budgets. Affordable living became more imperative.

→ **Technology**

Technology impacted every aspect of home life. Smart home devices began constantly listening. Homes became a digital fortress. There is a delicate balance between convenience, digital security and privacy of living spaces.

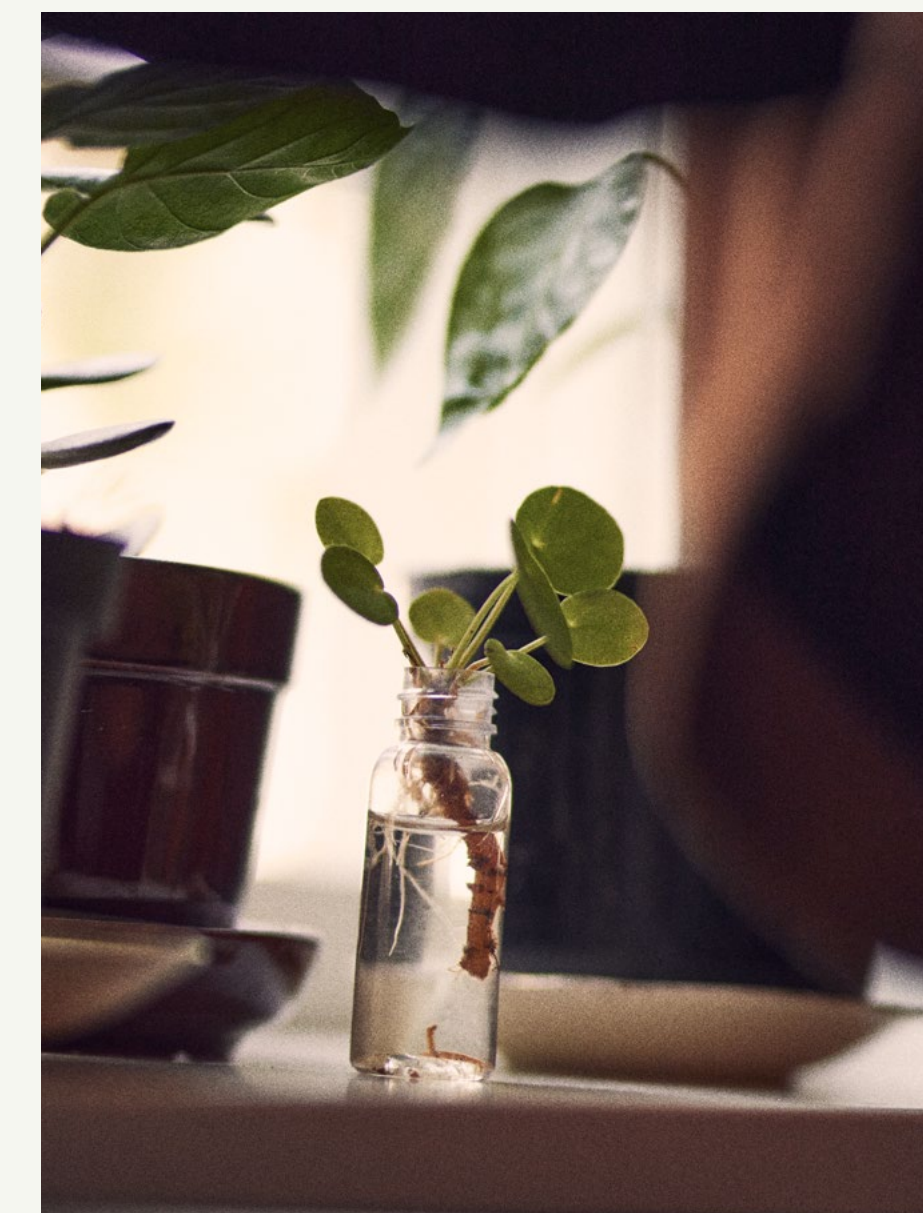
→ **Pandemic**

Homes also became chameleons. Boundaries between work, school and leisure shifted—and still are. Lockdowns forced living spaces to be re-imagined. Life turned into adaptability. Rules on living and working were rewritten. Some work can now be done from anywhere.



Cultural changes

The rise of social media, home-sharing platforms like Airbnb and self-curated spaces have had an enormous influence on home life. Opening up the home either by giving out the key or inviting others in digitally, became more and more common. People felt pressure to meet ideal standards. At the same time, a sense of community from commonalities, humour and similar struggles arose.



- **Social media**
The intensity of social media influence dialled up the pressure to conform to Instagram-worthy standards; changes in how we perceive and share our homes; and the sharing of daily rituals, life hacks or sustainable living tips.
- **Home sharing**
Homes increasingly opened to the eyes and footsteps of strangers. Short-term home renting saw people sharing the keys to their kingdoms. Nothing was off limits. Lines between public and private spaces became blurred.

- **Personalised space**
Instead of design magazines or designers defining the trends, people curated their own styles more and more. Pinterest, along with influencers, opened the door to mixing and matching designs. Personal taste and identities won out over a homogeneous mainstream.

The 10-year reflection of cultural and global changes adds a deeper perspective to the current state of life at home in 2023. These changes helped to shape, reprioritise and redefine how people lives. Their impact did not stop at the front door.

A decade of data



2014 **A world wakes up**
2 in 10 people make time for self-reflective moments early in the day

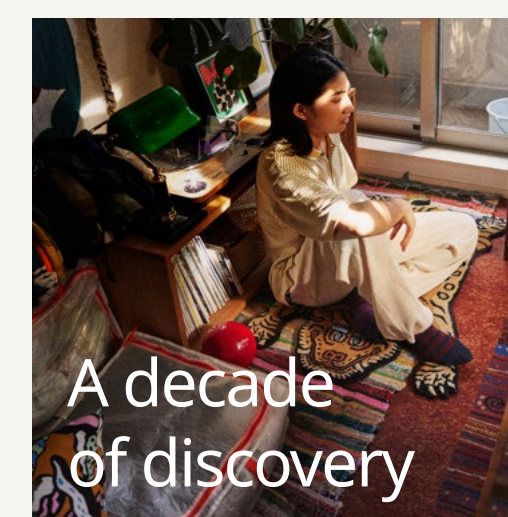
2016 **What makes a home**
38% consider the neighbourhood in which they live a part of their home

2015 **Tasting the moments**
52% think it's annoying that people use their phones when eating together



2018 **Beyond four walls**
1 in 3 people say they feel more at home in other places than where they live

2022 **Make yourself at home**
54% say the most important aspect in an ideal home is the ability to unwind and relax



2023 **A decade of discovery**
72% say dreaming about the future is a way to create a better life at home

2017 **Beating the battles**
49% of arguments stem from people's different perspectives on what a "mess" actually is



2020 **The big home reboot**
46% feel their homes better met their emotional needs during the lockdown



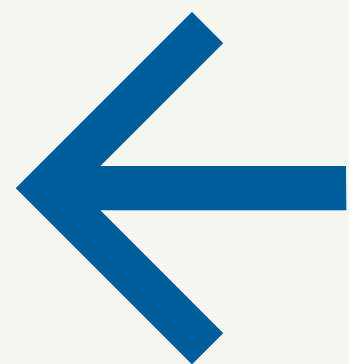
2019 **The power of privacy**
69% agree the size of home doesn't impact the privacy they can achieve



2021 **Balance starts at home**
4 in 10 people who felt more positive towards their home also saw a positive impact on their mental health during the previous year

The big shifts over the last 10 years

A decade of global and cultural changes created shifts around technology, wellbeing, sustainability and the multiple functionalities of home.



Technology

From intruding on personal relationships to making home more efficient

Technology has worn many hats. It connects people and entertains. As early as 2017, people told us it negatively impacted their relationships and killed conversation. 27% were spending less time with a partner as a result of being online. From 2014–2019 technology ranked pretty high as being intrusive in relationships.

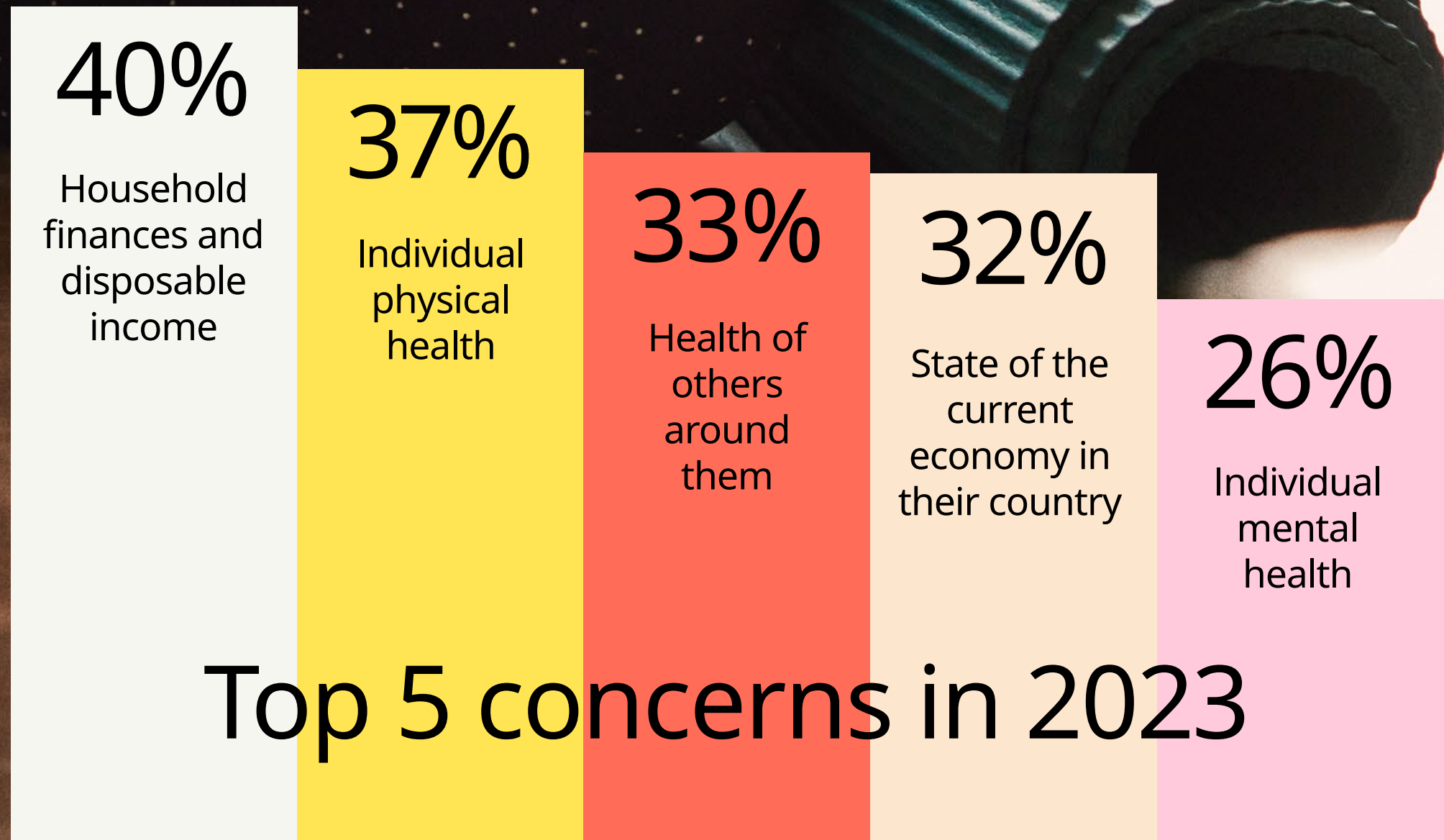
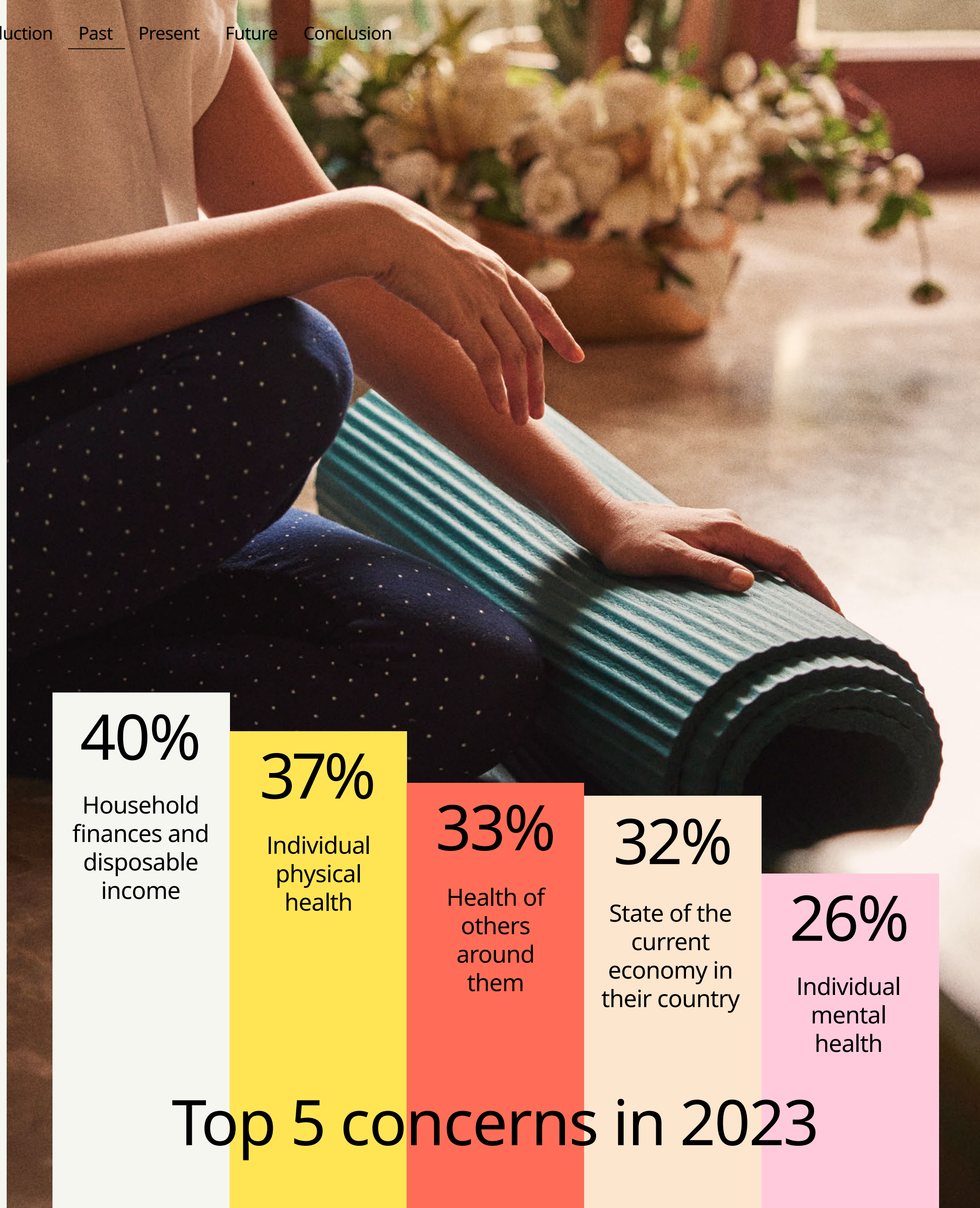
During the pandemic, it became a life-line connecting work, study and distant family. People learned to live with screen time and sought ways to set boundaries. In 2023, only 21% of us feel we use too much screen time. Technology still entertains and plays a larger part in the every day, but it has also made home more efficient.

Wellbeing

From an outside-of-home action to wellness embedded in home life

Home has always been a place to rest and recover, but 10 years ago we were more likely to rely on activities outside of home to boost wellness. In the 2018 research, 23% of us left the house to find alone time. This figure went up to 33% for people living with friends or strangers. The pandemic marked a turning point. In 2021, 35% of us wanted our own green

space within easy reach. Wellness-focused spaces at home are still on the rise. 26% believe hobbies and personal projects contribute to wellbeing. Physical health is the second highest concern for life at home (37%) after household finances (40%) in 2023. And 7% of us even keep crystals, perhaps to promote spiritual, emotional and physical healing.



Top 5 concerns in 2023

Climate change

From affecting distant corners of the world to sustainability as a personal responsibility

Climate change had been discussed for many decades, but environmental issues were seen as a concern for people with higher incomes. In 2016, only 15% of people felt guilty about owning too many things.

In 2020, the year of widespread lockdowns, a focus on nature came to the forefront. 43% of us were open to moving further away from work for a better home. Part of what defined “a better home” was being closer to nature. As an aspiration for sustainable living, 20% of us now feel our ideal home would allow us to be self-sufficient with energy and food.

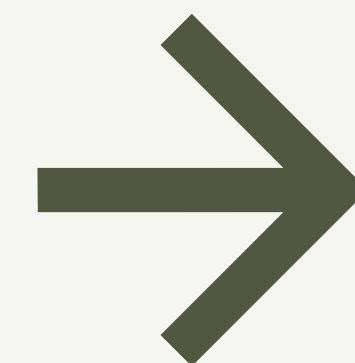
Multifunctional homes

From work being separate from home to spaces with many purposes and activities

In the first part of the last decade, people often left home to eat out, exercise, work or find entertainment. The Life at Home Report 2020 showed that 29% began exercising at home, 49% enjoyed cooking more and 32% enjoyed working from home more than going to the office.

Changes people made to their homes during COVID-19 restrictions are lasting to some extent. A quest to accommodate more activities in a better way gave rise to multifunctional living.

Eight needs for a better life at home



Throughout a decade of research, conversations and home visits, repeated themes cropped up. After reviewing more than 200 research studies from across IKEA, interviewing over 20 experts and gathering insights from nine previous editions of the Life at Home Report, we identified **eight needs**. Together, these eight needs give everyone the chance to speed up their journey towards a better life at home.

Control

Having agency over our environment, what goes into it and how it is used

Comfort

Making sure our environment allows us to feel content and at ease

Security

Protecting what we care about so that we feel secure and resilient to the changes of the world around us

Nurturing

Connecting with ourselves and taking care of our mental and physical wellbeing

Belonging

Feeling we are accepted for who we are by the people that we live amongst and in places that reflect us

Enjoyment

Uplifting moments of joy that give us warmth and happiness

Accomplishment

Feeling a sense of pride and progress by achieving our goals and improving our abilities

Aspirations

Feeling positive and prepared for our futures

Our everyday essentials

Our regular connections

Our meaningful moments

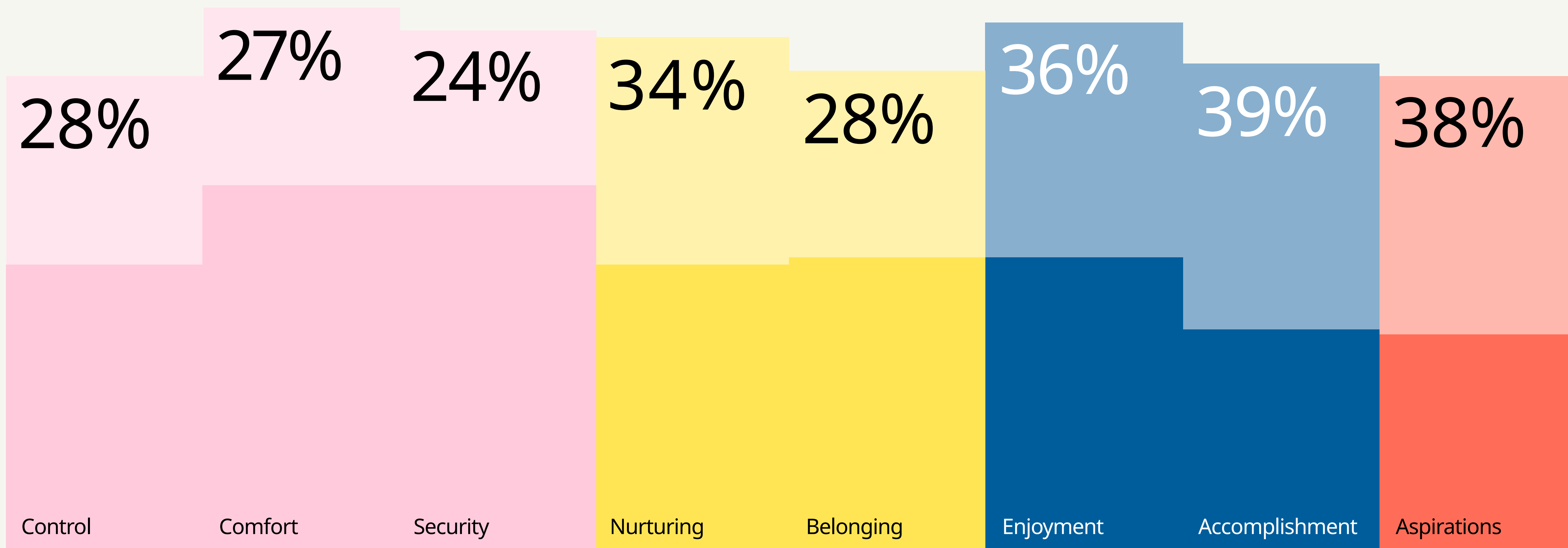
Our future plans

This graph indicates percentage of people who find the need important but only sometimes, rarely or never have it fulfilled at home

What happens when the needs go unmet?

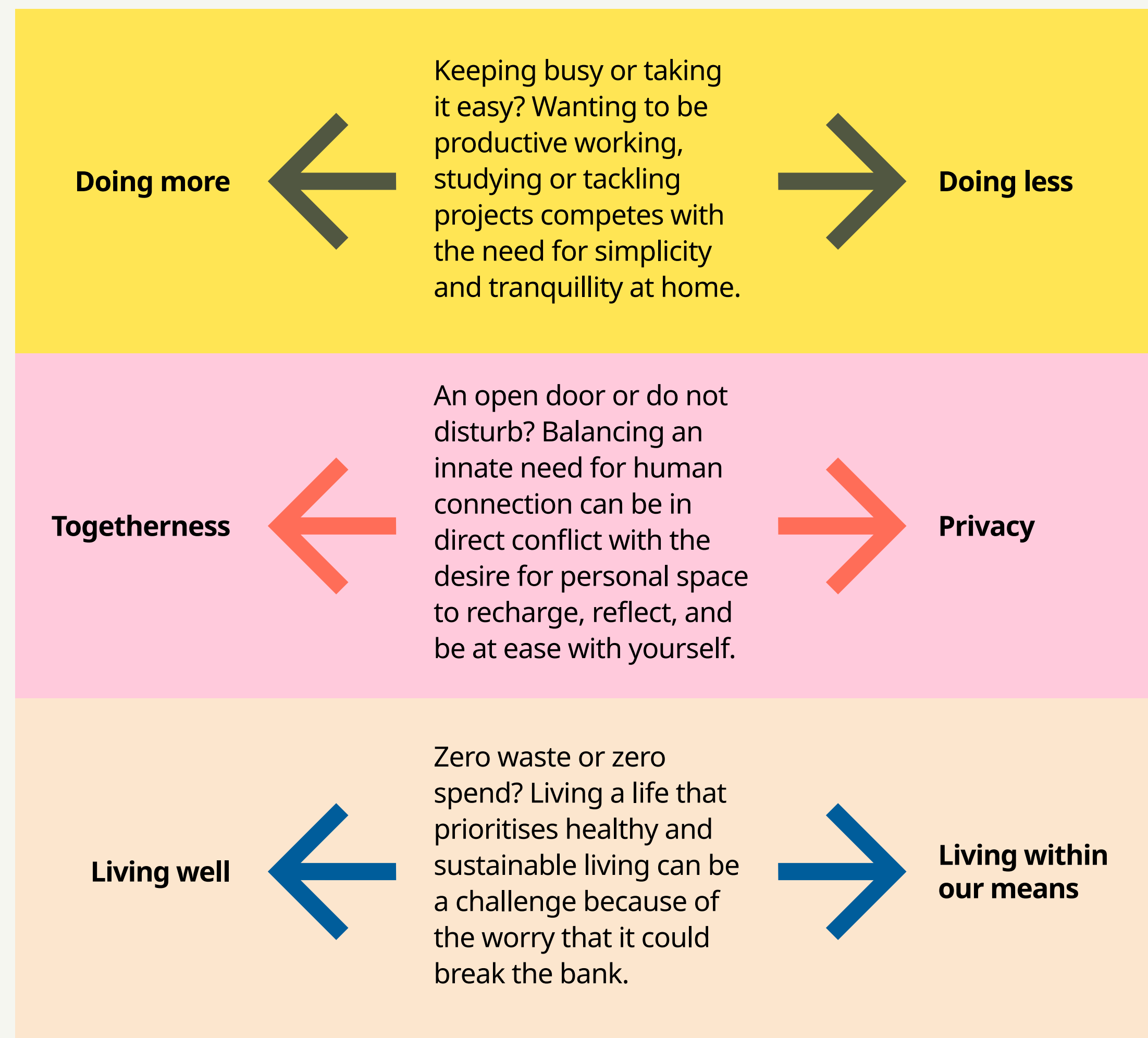
There is a persistent gap between the importance people place on their home to meet these needs and the reality of whether they get them. Unmet needs can hinder the path to an improved home life. They foster a sense of safety and

security, affecting basic necessities. When accomplishment and enjoyment are absent, meaningful moments are lost. Lastly, aspirations are vital for a positive view of the future. Without them, dreams fade away.



Three tensions for 2023

Home is, has been, and will always be an evolving landscape. However, that journey isn't always smooth. The Life at Home research uncovered three key tensions in 2023 that are getting in the way of the eight needs for a better life at home. These tensions represent the push and pull of pressures that millions face daily.



Over the coming chapters, we'll explore these tensions in more detail. You'll hear from some of the individuals we've visited in our home stories. And you'll explore IKEA solutions that can help to create the balance needed for a better life at home.



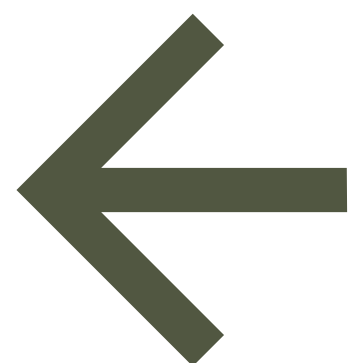
01 Tension

Doing more vs.

doing less



We often experience a tension between doing more versus doing less when at home. The struggle between productivity and relaxation plays out in how we use our homes as well as what we choose to do (or not do) within them. Being active and doing things can be a counterweight to relaxing, cocooning and de-stressing.



Keep busy or take it easy?

Homes are doing more than ever before. Nowhere was this more evident than during the pandemic when they were required to perform a vast number of functions from offices to daycare to gyms. And for many, those new roles have become permanent. 24% of people in 2023 say they sometimes work from home.

The shift of maximising what we do in our lives at home creates an increasing need for multifunctional spaces with a clear purpose. We're looking to home life as a place to pursue passions, feel

productive and create a sense of control and accomplishment.

On the other hand, there is also a yearning for calm. People want a home life that is peaceful and fosters relaxation. Searches for 'slow living' have doubled since 2015¹. Many are prioritising meaningful objects over quantity, and are looking to create a place of nurturing, accomplishment and enjoyment.

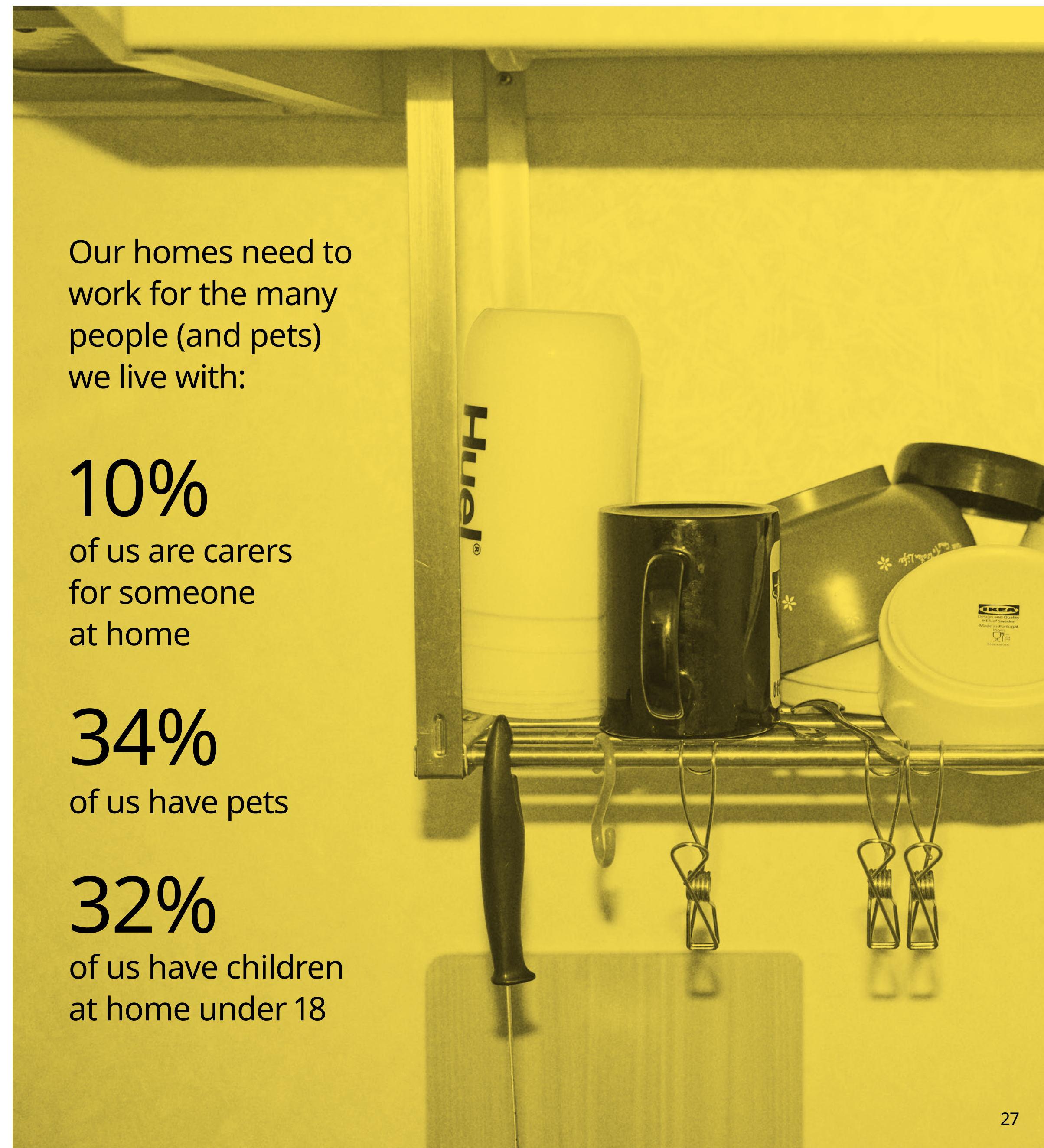
Should home be a playground or an oasis? This tension is a universal struggle for individuals, families and households.

Our homes need to work for the many people (and pets) we live with:

10%
of us are carers for someone at home

34%
of us have pets

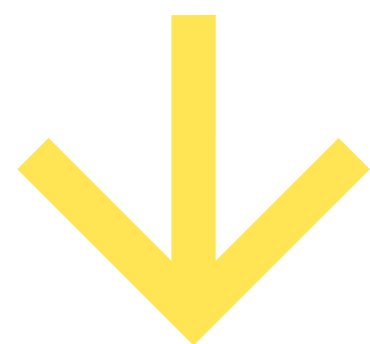
32%
of us have children at home under 18



1. Google Trends, 2023

Doing

more



Needs being met
Control
Accomplishment

Top 5 countries that say staying on top of chores is one of the things that gives them the biggest sense of pride and progress at home



Whether it's working from home, tidying up clutter or achieving goals, there's a lot we fit into home life.

Balancing remote work

The work-from-home trend exploded during the height of the pandemic, but it's still a way of life today with 24% of us sometimes working from home. What was a new normal is now just normal. Setting up home offices and searching

for ways to stay organised and focused are everyday realities.

Tidiness plays a key role

Whilst keeping the home tidy is often seen as a chore, it does have its upsides. As many as 40% of people agree that having a tidy, organised home helps them feel content and at ease. It creates a sense of accomplishment and calm that makes the hard work worth it.

Feeling productive

Being productive at home in 2023 isn't just about keeping organised. It's about achieving meaningful goals and having a sense of accomplishment. It's engaging in hobbies, taking on renovation projects, working, studying and caring for loved ones. The ability to feel progress at home is essential for personal and professional growth.

→ 56% of us of people are either looking to move or renovate their home in the next two years

→ 22% of us feel a sense of pride and progress teaching our children/grandchildren

→ 20% of us feel a sense of pride and progress spending time on hobbies or interests

Top 5 countries that say an ideal home is one where they can unwind and relax

Finland
59%

South Korea
58%

Serbia
57%

Singapore
53%

Japan
52%

From finding a way to relax to enjoying a nap to putting off pesky chores, we want home life to help us unwind and recharge.

Taking a breather

In a chaotic world, having a place to unwind is the number one home priority in 2023. 43% of us agree on this issue. Home should be the sanctuary where we can easily enjoy ourselves. Doing less helps to fulfil the need for nurturing. It allows us to step back from the hustle and bustle of the outside world. The desire to relax at home increases with age. Just 34% of Generation Z mentioned it compared to 48-49% of Generation X and Baby Boomers.

Tidying isn't always fulfilling

While a tidy home creates a sense of accomplishment and control, the act of tidying—or guilt of not tidying—can be stressful. 21% of us feel that never-ending tasks or chores prevent us from feeling in control of life at home. Not tackling our to-do lists leaves a nagging feeling of guilt and can often lead to disagreements within the household.

When it comes to chores, there's a gender split. 34% of women say they do more household chores than the people they live with. Only 14% of men state that they do more.

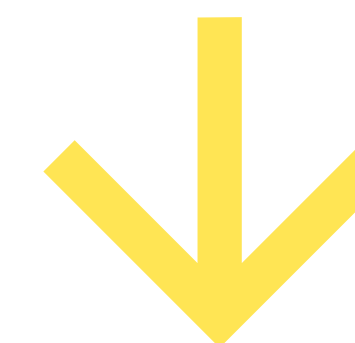
A good night's sleep

For most, getting a good night's sleep or napping is a vital ingredient for a better life. More than 20% report that napping is one of the things that brings the most joy in life at home. That figure rises to 29% for people in Asia.

Getting a good night's sleep is all about having the basics in place. These basics include paying attention to temperature, light and comfort.

Doing less helps to fulfil the need for nurturing. It allows us to step back from the hustle and bustle of the outside world.

Doing



less

Needs being met
Nurturing
Enjoyment
Control



Appeal to the senses

An important part of doing less and feeling relaxed is looking at homelife sensorially. Creating a cosy space means appealing to the senses. Consider how your space interacts with your senses.

→ Touch

14% of us find comfort in controlling the temperature at home. It's all about feeling just right.

→ Smell

A pleasant smell is essential for 18%. We want our homes to smell good—a fresh breeze, the scent of firewood, or maybe a signature scent from a candle or potpourri. Pleasing smells can be turned up or down to control the intensity of the stimulation.

→ Sound

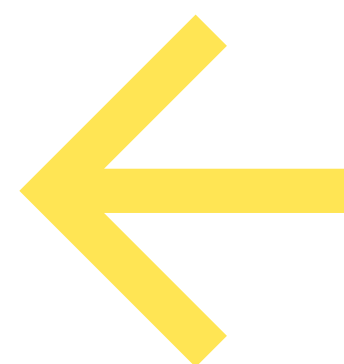
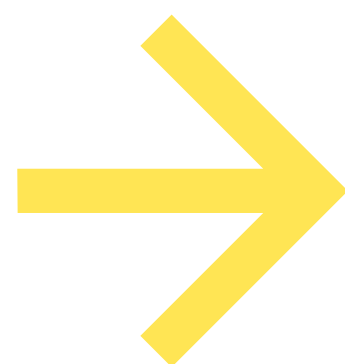
Peace and quiet are crucial for 25% of us. We want minimal noise from neighbours and the outside world. 19% of us love music to set the right mood at home.

→ Taste

Finally, as many as 34% of us say one of the things that makes us feel most content is cooking or eating homemade meals. Comfort food can be a self-indulgent treat for a challenging day. It can also connect to childhood memories.

Conclusion

We hold high expectations for our living spaces. We expect them to provide us with comfort, security, and a nurturing environment. Yet, we still have a need to pursue our dreams and goals there. Finding the right balance between doing more and doing less is more about discovering your own recipe for comfort.



The key elements for a good night's sleep

31%
of us need the
right temperature

28%
of us need
complete darkness

28%
of us need our
favourite
pillow

Some of us can't
seem to get out
of bed!

20%
hit the snooze
button more
than once



Doing more

Keeping busy
or taking
it easy?

Doing less

At IKEA, how might we help you revel in your passions or simplify your chores?

Work smart, live well

We believe in working hard—but being comfortable and supported. A relaxing atmosphere that's tactile with a soft rug to dig your feet into or a cosy throw to wrap in keeps home feeling like home and not like an office. We encourage work zones separate from living that can be closed off or rolled away at day's end.

Tidy space, happy places

Doing small things each day and having fun with it, makes the list of chores seem less daunting. Like integrating short tasks into everyday routines. Brushing teeth with one hand and wiping the bathroom counter with another? We say, doable. Turning cleaning day into a game for the whole family? We say, absolutely, gets everyone to contribute. Happy cleaning!



At IKEA, how might we make it easy to take it easy?

Reboot your sleep routine

Many of us need conditions just right when catching a good night's sleep. The air feels clean, the sheets feel cool to your skin, the head rests perfectly on your favourite pillow. The heavy-weight duvet gives you a feeling of safety and warmth. It's pitch-dark and silent. Resting is a form of art for some.

Sensorial serenity

The softness of a high-pile rug, the fresh scent of a jasmine candle, the tunes of a favourite playlist, the slow-cooked meal that reminds us of childhood. A nurturing and relaxing home takes care of all senses.

Daisuke



24-year-old Daisuke Hayashi lives alone in his cosy studio apartment in Tokyo. He moved here from Nagano Prefecture to work at an advertising agency. A collector of vintage clothing and plants, he uses his free time to cultivate a vibrant social media identity using his home as the context.



For Daisuke Hayashi, his studio apartment is an extension of his imagination and an embodiment of his personal style. Rather than simply furnishing the small space, he transformed every square metre into a representation of himself. From the makeshift sofa he literally built out of IKEA PÄRKLA bags stuffed with his clothing to his gallery of jerseys hung like paintings on the wall or his extensive hat collection, it is all displayed like decoration.

“To me, home is a place where I can express myself. It’s a place that shows my personality and my interests,” he says. “I can make my home into anything I want.”

Measuring 29 sq metres, the physical constraints of his home have taught him to create more space in less. A self-con-



Vases and bowls from Daisuke's collection

fessed collector of all things fashion, the abundant stash of vintage clothing, shoes and magazines he brought when he moved in were obviously too much for the space. So, he had to get creative.

Daisuke's home isn't just a place to relax and be creative: it's also where he



Daisuke's corn-cob-shaped stool

brainstorms ideas and creates content for his social media platforms. His studio set-up plays a significant role in the identity he's built online. Beyond using the space for his gallery of collected items, he's also made a conscious decision to bring in nature. He created a community of plants to come home to each day.

"When I'm creating content here, what I feel is helpful is how I have completely divided up the workspace and the relaxation space in the living room," he explains. "By being conscious of the division of areas, I can manipulate the photos or videos when I'm shooting so that they focus on a certain area or present the display in a certain way."

"In order to relax, a clean and tidy home is best for me. To some extent, the state of my home reflects my mental state. It mirrors the state of my mind."



Daisuke's collection reflects his quirky aesthetic



Daisuke's kitchen is efficiently designed to suit his small space living



Daisuke has even grown a plant on a wooden plank

Other than being creative with his space, he says that three needs are essential to him at home: comfort, a sense of belonging, and enjoyment. He finds comfort in the functionality of his living area and in making it all work despite the tight quarters. His sense of belonging is increased by having a home where he is truly able to be himself. He feels enjoyment when he is invigorated and inspired at the start and end of every day. That feeling is tied closely to his ability to keep things organised and tidy.

"In order to relax, a clean and tidy home is best for me," he says. "To some extent, the state of my home reflects my mental state. It mirrors the state of my mind."

Daisuke is at a crossroads concerning his collection. Although he would love to keep the passion alive and continue acquiring, he knows that the space he has now is essentially full. He aspires to have a bigger home one day, where he will have to take extra thought before bringing in more objects, clothing or things he loves. ■

02 Togetherness vs. privacy

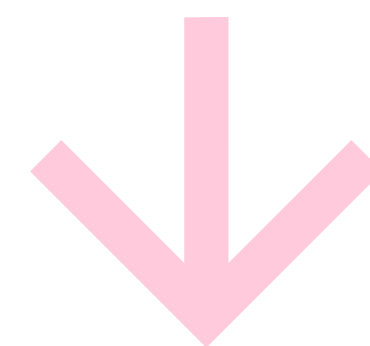
Tension



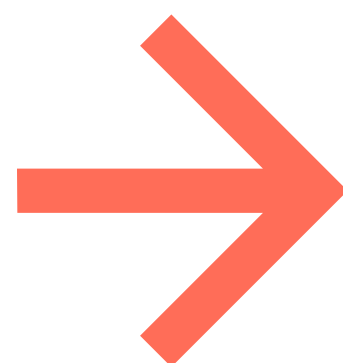
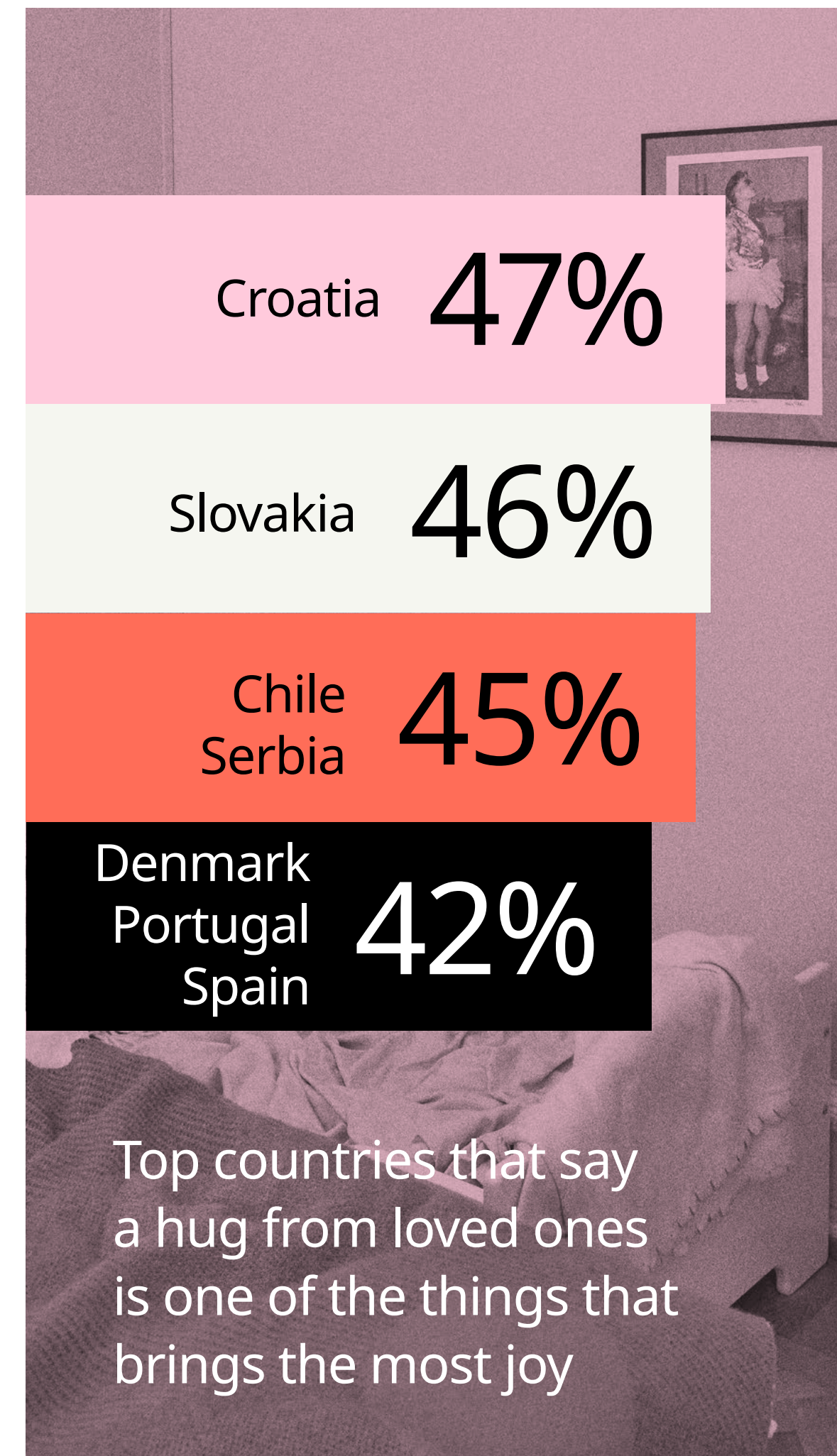


together

Being



Needs being met
Belonging
Enjoyment
Security



Home is where we welcome people in, but also where we escape. It's a sanctuary that sits in the heart of our community. However, the joy and warmth of togetherness can put a strain on privacy and personal space.

An open door or do not disturb?

In a world rapidly growing in population, our ability to balance togetherness and privacy is put to the test. The boundaries of home are changing. Until 2009 the majority of people lived in rural areas. Today, around 55% of the world's population lives in towns and cities¹. More people are dealing with reduced space and finding innovative solutions to get the most out of where they live.

There is also a changing portrait of who is living inside homes. For example, the

number of people living in multigenerational households in the US has quadrupled since 1971, reaching 59.7 million in March 2021. This figure is equivalent to 18% of the US population².

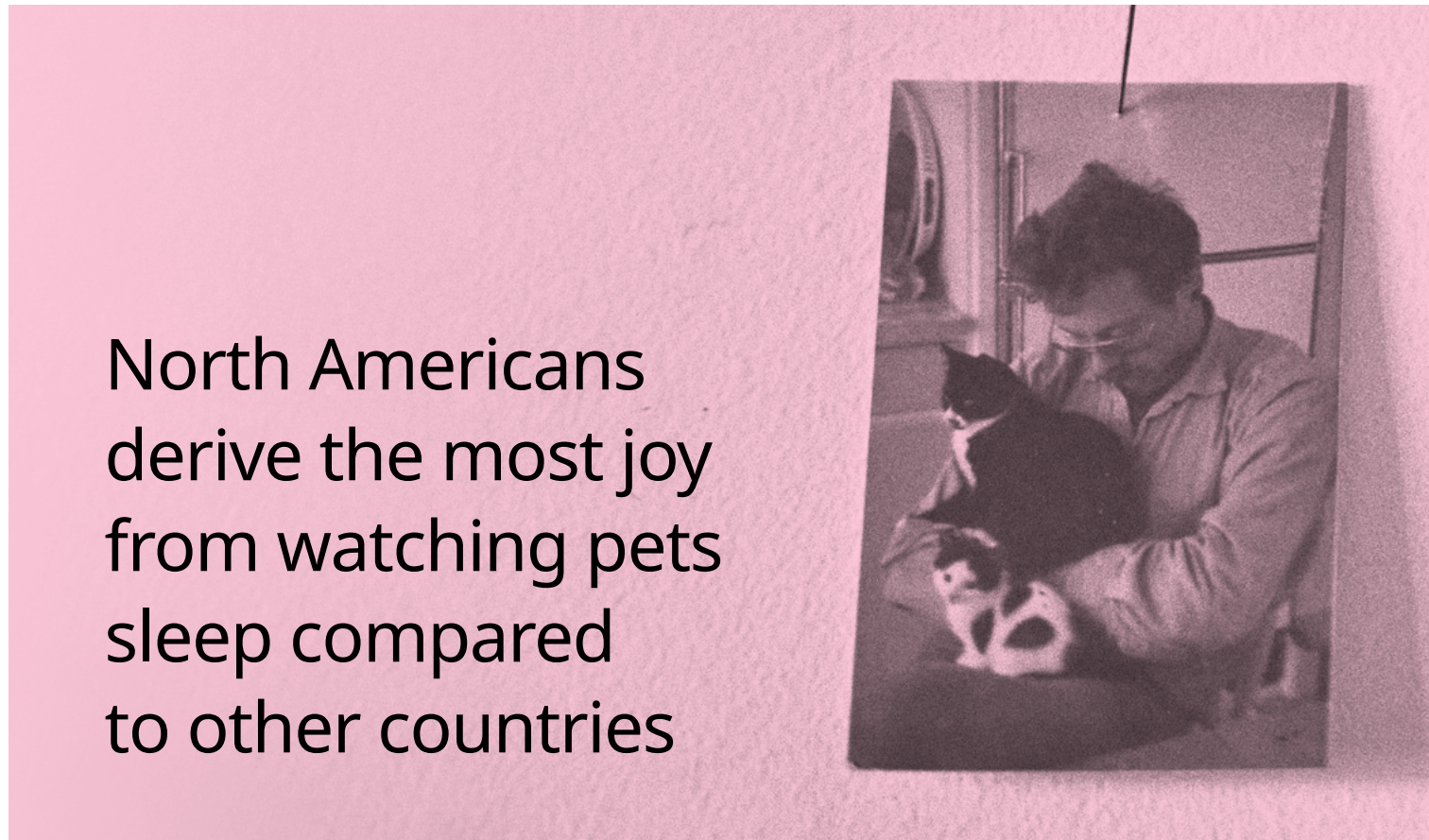
Even when we find privacy, the ever-present nature of technology means that it can be hard to switch off and disconnect. As people increasingly move to cities and live in smaller spaces with more people, addressing the tension of togetherness and privacy becomes more central to enjoying a better life at home.

Whether it's about spending time with people inside the home or out in the community, togetherness is fundamental to creating a sense of belonging, enjoyment and security.

The importance of togetherness

Togetherness is important for wellbeing. It's good for us because it supports security and belonging by being surrounded by people we care about and are connected to. 35% of us feel that hugs from a loved one are an enjoyable and fulfilling aspect of home. 33% of us feel that laughing with friends is one of the best things about being together.

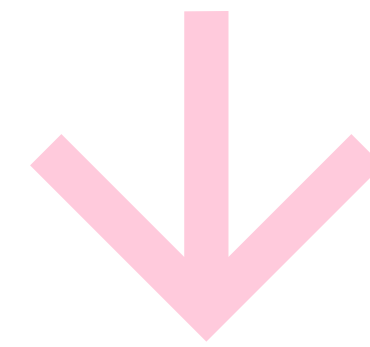
1. United Nations: un.org/en/un75/shifting-demographics
2. Pew Research, 2022



North Americans derive the most joy from watching pets sleep compared to other countries

Having

privacy



Needs being met
Comfort
Control
Enjoyment



While togetherness is important, it's equally essential to have your own space. Privacy is the launchpad for self-expression and freedom. It plays a role in not only comfort and control but life enjoyment as well.

Safe from the world

The concept of home security has been evolving. Rather than solely relying on physical security like locks, bars and gates, it is increasingly tied to interpersonal relationships. Emotional wellbeing creates a sense of security in a similar way as a locked door.

- 31% of us feel that the people we live with make us feel secure
- 22% of us say that having someone next to us makes us sleep especially well
- 17% of us feel that physical security like strong locks and bars on windows makes us most secure

Community belonging

Belonging is not limited to the people within our households. It extends beyond the walls to neighbours and the community at large. In fact, 21% of us find a sense of belonging from shared values with others in our community. Only 11% of us feel that belonging results from being similar in age.

In 2023, 25% of people living alone get a sense of belonging from chatting with a neighbour. That figure drops for people in larger households. Being able to ask a neighbour for help is important for:

- 30% of people living in rural areas
- 22% of people living in cities



Haunted house?

4% of us believe our homes might be haunted (due to creaky floorboards or strange happenings)!



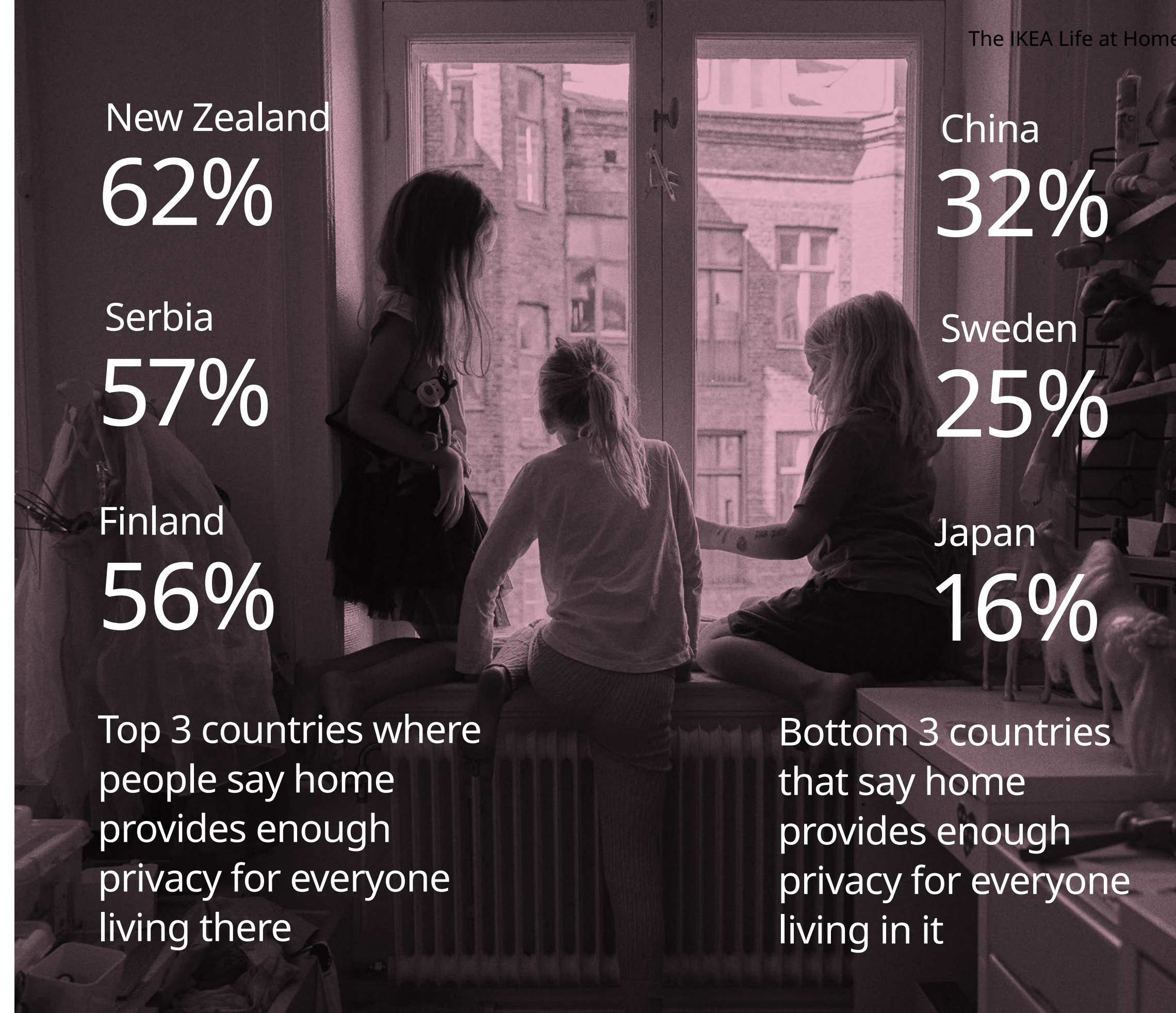
25%
of us spend time alone to nurture wellbeing

26%
of us get a wellbeing boost from quality time with partners and kids

Some things are better left private
From walking around naked to just sitting quietly with our thoughts, privacy is a crucial part of life many of us struggle to have. In 2023, the disparity between the amount of privacy we want to have and the amount we have is growing. Only 45% of us feel home provides enough privacy for everyone in the house.

- 30% of us sing or dance when no one is around
- 23% of us walk around naked at home
- 33% of us say the right amount of privacy is one of the most important things for feeling content and at ease at home

Access to privacy
Privacy helps to create a sense of control. The more people we live with—or the less we know those we live with—the harder it is to find this sense of privacy.



New Zealand
62%

Serbia
57%

Finland
56%

China
32%

Sweden
25%

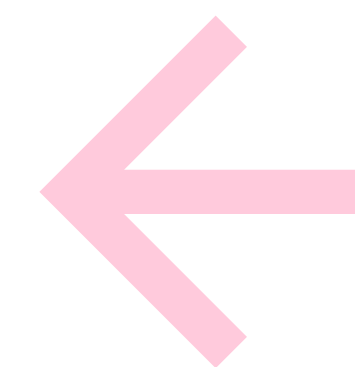
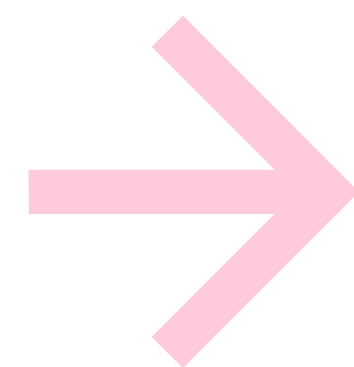
Japan
16%

Top 3 countries where people say home provides enough privacy for everyone living there

Bottom 3 countries that say home provides enough privacy for everyone living in it

Conclusion

Finding a balance between togetherness and privacy is rarely easy. Because home is where we feel emotionally secure and protected from the world, one side of the coin should not be sacrificed for the other. In an increasingly crowded world, togetherness strengthens the vital bonds of belonging. Creating the right mix requires understanding the needs while setting boundaries.





At IKEA, how might we nurture the need for community?

Togetherness recipe

Set time aside every day for celebrations to enjoy moments with friends and family. Fold up the drop-leaves of your dining table, spread out the stools that you stack in the corner, iron the tablecloth and set the mood with music and lights. Having people over every once in a while is a good balance to the precious solo moments.

From strangers to friends

Knowing who lives behind the walls we share has a tremendous effect on feeling safe in our shared communities. So, let's get to know our neighbours! Encourage everyone to bring food in their on-the-go containers. Set up blankets in the garden and get ready to mingle. Nothing is more nurturing to the sense of belonging than sounds of soft music and friendly chatter or the smell of home-cooked food in the twinkle of garden lights.



At IKEA, how might we create shortcuts for privacy?

Boundaries are a good thing

The key to privacy is to feel safe and cocooned in our own space when you need it. Simply closing blackout curtains on your windows excludes the outside realm from home and gives much-needed moments away from the rest of the world.

Shared spaces, personal retreats

To be able to physically exclude ourselves from our surroundings is an effective way to take some me-time when living with others. Use dividers or curtains on ceiling rails to set your favourite armchair apart from the rest of the home. Make space for individual hobbies. This way, you can do things alone in the same space. Living together, yet apart.

Erika and Lena



Erika and Lena connect with nature at their country cottage



Erika and her family live between two homes: a collective apartment in Malmö, and a country cottage 20 minutes away. In the city, they share their daily lives with another family. Here, they create moments of community and connection while the country escape offers them relaxation and privacy.



The twins invite a friend over

Visitors to Erika and Lena’s home in the centre of Malmö might believe they’ve accidentally stepped into the foyer of a kindergarten. The wide hallway overflows with vibrant clothing organised into seasonally appropriate individual units. Each is carefully labelled with colourful, handwritten name tags. The winter shelves host a complete collection of scarves, gloves and hats, while the summer section features sunglasses and baseball caps. In some ways, the structure

built into their lives in a collective apartment echoes the peace-keeping rhythms of school. Sharing a home with their seven-year-old twins and another family means separating public spaces from private. It means keeping things straight and ensuring all members of what they describe as their “extended family” feel there’s room specifically for them. This system explains why their home is full of lists and colour-coded schedules. All of this helps them maintain order in a

“What we’ve learned as the most essential rule in collective living is that you must always communicate. Everybody has to be honest about their needs; then you make a plan considering all the different needs. It’s essential that you stick to that plan. That’s the way you create trust, and trust is the key.”



The dining table is a hub for colouring, studying and eating together

network of spaces that must accommodate an abundance of needs and personalities.

During the summer months, the couple and their kids head outside the city to a small country allotment with a summer cottage and abundant garden. There, the pace of their life changes. The daily commute to work and school is longer. However, the peaceful, natural environment that awaits them at the end of the day offers a creative outlet and space for relaxation. This mix is hard



The children love being outdoors at their country cottage

to achieve in the city. It affords them privacy, too: the cottage belongs only to them—although the family they share their apartment with owns the house just next door!

The logistics of living in a collective may seem overwhelming for some, but for Erika and Lena, it’s always been their preference. Not only does an increased number of residents mean more help with chores, and a friendly companion always nearby, but it offers them a diverse take on life that can be refreshing.



The walls provide ample storage for the family's various interests

“For me, the best and worst things about living in a collective have a flip side,” Lena adds. “I love having other people around and getting new perspectives from them. I think it keeps me open-minded. But the other side of that means you always have to negotiate around your own needs. That can be difficult and tiring, but I think

ultimately, it's a good thing to do. It makes you tune in to yourself more than you would otherwise.” There is always the issue of privacy when sharing a home with people other than your family members. Keeping open lines of communication, even about difficult subjects, is a fundamental part of life in a collective. Whether you've just emerged from a fight with your partner or are simply having a bad day, creating a space where every emotion is allowed enables everybody to feel like they can truly be themselves. ■



The living room has space for the children's interests

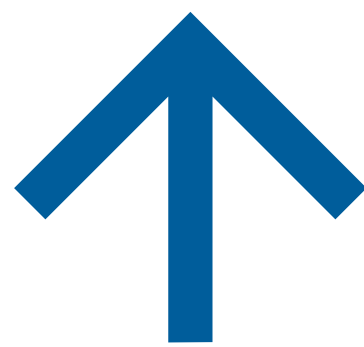


Tension 03

Living well vs. living within our means



Healthy and sustainable living is crucial to the planet but also to individuals in their everyday lives. We all have a desire to live well while not breaking the bank. Over the past 10 years the definition of 'living well' has broadened to include health, wellbeing, and sustainability. At the same time, many people face increasing pressure on the wallet.



Zero waste or zero spend?

A life that makes room for healthy eating, personal wellbeing and sustainability is part of living well. However, many households equate living well with higher incomes.

Living within our means places an expected focus on affordability. The rising cost of living can feel like a hindrance to the aspirations of living a healthy and sustainable life. 75% of us feel that environmentally friendly products have become more expensive in the past

12 months¹. The need for security, control, and comfort are at play here.

The tension between living well or living within our means can lead to a feeling that a choice must be made. 48% of us find it too expensive to do more to help reduce climate change².

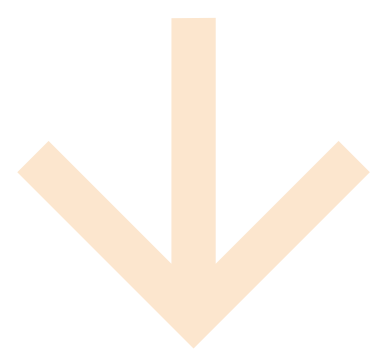
However, a balanced life at home doesn't always require hefty expenses. A 'back to basics' approach to health, sustainability and saving the planet's resources might be the key to finding harmony.



Living within our means places an expected focus on affordability. The rising cost of living can feel like a hindrance to the aspirations of living a healthy and sustainable life.

Living

well



Needs being met
Nurturing
Aspirations

Living well and living sustainably are inextricably linked, and our homes can help us do both.

Looking after the planet - good for home

Living well balances individual wellbeing with planetary health. Our research shows that the two are mutually reinforcing. 72% of us who think our homes help us live sustainably, feel positive about our current life at home.

Nature plays a powerful role as well. More than 20% of us connect with nature as a way to feel content and at ease.



Different approaches to building better mental health

33%
of us feel sleep is important

20%
of us feel that access to green space is important

28%
of us feel good relationships with the people around us are important

18%
of Gen Z think gaming is important

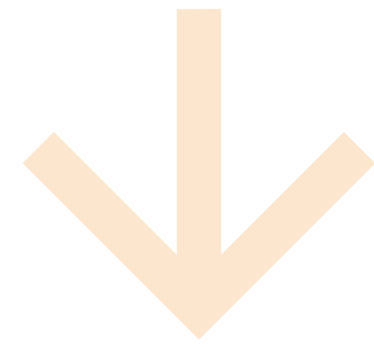
11%
of women feel self-care time is important, compared with 6% of men

Looking after the planet - good for health

Living sustainably is good for mental and physical health. One of the benefits of living through a global pandemic may be that it reminds us of the importance of our bodies and staying active. Almost 18% of us think exercising helps to maintain wellbeing at home. 30% of us say that an ideal home must help us to be physically or mentally stronger. Home plays a pivotal role in fostering wellbeing.

Living within

our means



Needs being met

- Security
- Control
- Comfort

sustainable solutions are seen as having a price premium. Those who can live sustainably are often homeowners. Likewise, there is an increasing health divide between those with high and low incomes.

Back to basics

Living well doesn't have to break the bank. Going back to basics allows people to embrace uncomplicated, cost-effective methods to enhance their life quality. At the same time, it cares for our health and the planet and is an ideal many are already searching for. 19% of us say our ideal home would help us to be more self-sufficient with food and energy. Even the simple act of enjoying nature at home can bring powerful benefits with 20% saying that accessing green space is important to mental wellbeing.

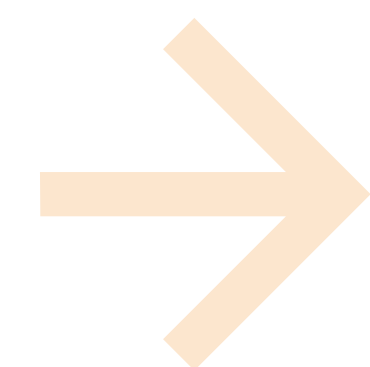
When wallets are already stretched thin, healthy and sustainable living must be affordable for the many.

Can I afford it?

For some, living well at home is challenged by household budgets and affordable living. 26% of us feel a loss of control when we do not have enough money to take care of our home. For people with lower incomes, the figure rises to 30%. Affordable living is a priority, and for many,

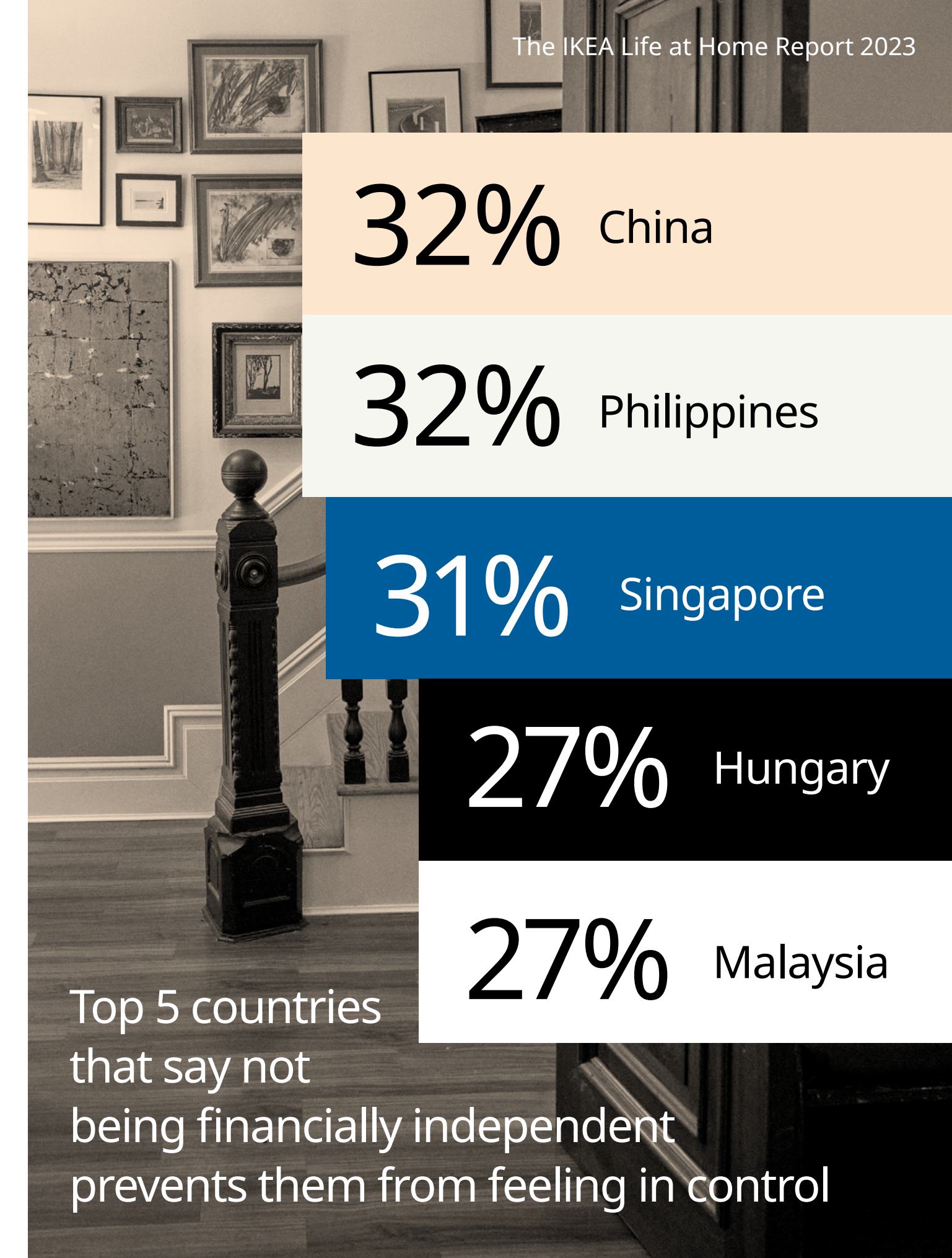
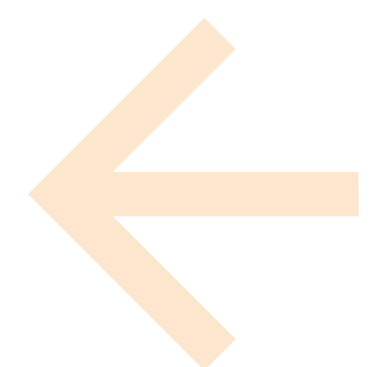
Back-to-basics lifestyle changes for healthier, affordable and more sustainable living

- Accessing outdoor space
- Cooking at home with seasonal, local, affordable food
- Reducing food waste
- Eating vegan or vegetarian for some or all meals
- Buying second-hand
- Avoiding plastic
- Socialising at home instead of going out



Conclusion

Living well is about living a healthy life and living sustainably. The two are intrinsically linked. Going back to basics can make it easier to achieve at home, without breaking the bank.



32% China

32% Philippines

31% Singapore

27% Hungary

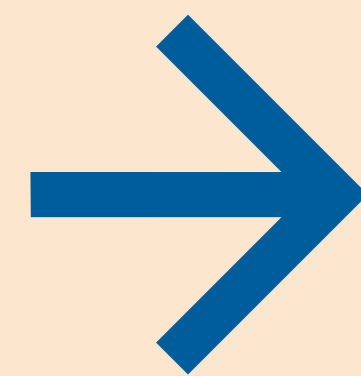
27% Malaysia

Top 5 countries that say not being financially independent prevents them from feeling in control

Living well



Zero spend or zero waste?



Living within our means

At IKEA, how might we build healthier, more sustainable solutions?

Living with nature

We love to lead with sustainable solutions and practices. No garden? No problem. Our homes are not always geared for green living. But with small adjustments, we can take first steps towards it. Surrounding the indoor space with greenery can have a huge impact on how we feel inside, both in our homes and in our minds. They support wellbeing by connecting us to nature while purifying the air we breathe.

Small shifts

Changing simple habits can benefit both you and the planet. Introduce more vegan or vegetarian dishes into the everyday. Turn off the lights when you're not in the room. Set up a waste-sorting station. Switch to reusable products, such as bamboo straws, rechargeable batteries, reusable shopping bags and glass food containers. Believe us, small shifts make a difference.



At IKEA, how might we show you you're not alone?

Back to basics

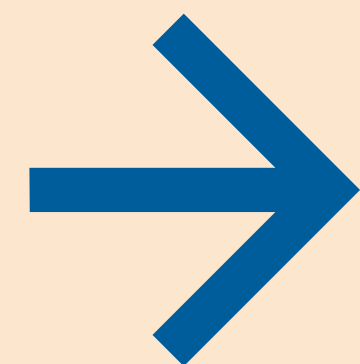
At IKEA we're working hard to run our business in more sustainable ways, and at the same time, developing products and services that enable people to reduce their impact on the planet. We want to make healthy and sustainable living the norm by inspiring and enabling more sustainable behaviours. We develop products that enable people to live more sustainably and share tips for being more energy and water-efficient, for minimising waste, and for eating more plant-based meals. We focus on affordable resources and energy-efficient products—from veggie hot dogs and plant balls to reusable water bottles and rechargeable batteries. We're paving the way for more sustainable homes for the many.

Jarret and Dan

Brooklyn, NYC



Jarret recounts the story of building their beautiful home



In 2005, Jarret and Dan bought a decrepit 4-story building in a rough Brooklyn neighbourhood. But the serious illness Dan developed in the years since required them to transform the brownstone, originally intended as their dream home, into a multifunctional space that provides financial stability and environmental health.

An abandoned house with no windows or door, Dan and Jarret got an exceptionally affordable deal. Jarret is an interior designer born and raised in Hawaii. "We planned to slowly renovate it to be our own home, using both of our incomes. But Dan's illness made that impossible. So, we've had to dramatically pivot."

Dan is a former firefighter who developed a brain tumour and complex nerve damage from toxic chemical exposure after volunteering at the World Trade Centre on 9/11. Since then, he has suffered



Jarret's home office houses a lot of his art collection

from debilitating cluster headaches and acute sensitivity to a range of environmental factors, such as changes in atmospheric pressure. Six months of the year, his health forces him to leave New York and



Their brownstone came without windows or doors when they bought it

move to Hawaii. There, a community of Jarret's old school friends become his makeshift family.

The cost of his healthcare, and the horror of his illness, have changed the course of Dan and Jarret's life together. After grappling with their difficult circumstances, they found a solution that puts their home at the heart. Rather than renovate the whole building for themselves, as they had originally planned, they decided to transform two of the four floors into income-earners that keep them afloat.

Dan has recently taken up ceramics, dried-flower arranging, and other creative outlets that have helped him heal. Combining Jarret's keen eye for unique finds and priceless artworks that others overlook, and Dan's recent hobbies, they've turned their first floor into a popular design property on Airbnb. It's special enough to have earned a place in the pages of Architectural Digest.

The second floor is a long-term rental where Dan and Jarret live between the basement, which is currently under re-

novation, and the top floor where Jarret runs an international interior design firm and manages their joint properties.

From the beginning, a healthy home was a priority. Jarret struggles with seasonal affective disorder and needs sunlight to avoid lethargy and depression. Dan's survival requires a litany of environmental modifications. They selected paints with low volatile organic compounds (low VOC) for the walls and vinyl for all the floors. Both materials have limited to zero off-gassing. They also avoided



Rolls of sample textiles peek from a corner in Jarret's office

“Ultimately, health is not a negotiable factor for my clients, or for me and Dan in our home. There’s nothing you can do to replace your health. And once it’s gone, you will spend all your money trying to get it back.”



Art and other collectibles stay put in Jarret’s under-construction bedroom

carpets or rugs throughout since the fibres can make it difficult for him to breathe. Rather than keeping their lighting decorative, they strategically installed lights with a certain temperature and colour to mimic the sun.

“Throughout our design of this house, we’ve found that we need to harmonise competing interests of health and money,” says Jarret. “But ultimately, health is not a negotiable factor for my clients, or for me and Dan in our home. There’s nothing you can do to replace your health. And once it’s gone, you will spend all your money trying to get it back.” ■



Their Living room with its wooden floor, boxes and Asian tapestry has a unique blend of styles

Looking to 2030

What does the future hold? At IKEA, we know that there are many possible futures, and we all have the chance to influence how closely they meet the needs and dreams of life at home. In fact, given that 72% of people say having a home that helps them feel positive and prepared for the future is important, dreaming about what comes next is one of the ways we can create a better life at home today.

Thinking beyond the here and now taps into a human desire to make plans that help us grow and prepare us for the uncertainties we all face ahead.

So whilst we can't predict the future, we can prepare for different future possibilities. We believe that by anticipating what lies ahead of us, which we continually do, we can react so that the path ahead points to a more optimistic outcome.

What do we know about the future?

Based on the paths our lives are taking now, it's possible to point to a number of certainties for our shared

future. The difficult reality is that the road ahead is sure to be bumpy. We know that the climate crisis will continue to grow in scale and intensity, and it will impact all aspects of life—including where and how we live at home.

We will continue to see the effects of systemic shocks, such as pandemics, conflicts, and financial crises. We also know that social fragmentation might deepen and that the fabric that holds societies together will continue to weaken in the wake of continued division around inequality and ethnicity. In this context, the distance between the haves and have-nots will most likely widen.

Despite these probabilities, the future is not fixed. The uncertainties ahead often fluctuate between extremes. Where we find ourselves in the years to come will have a lot to do with how intentional we are about the future we want to walk towards. The possibilities that await us become opportunities for inspiration and spaces where we can create our own stories.

The uncertainties:

- **Communal Belonging**
or **Individual Privacy?**
- **Autonomous Technologies**
or **Individual Control?**
- **New Experiences**
or **Permanent Stability?**
- **Controlling Nature**
or **Harmonious Nature?**

Here, we share three possible futures for life at home that reflect on these uncertainties. We believe the stories inspired within them depict a desirable role for the home in a volatile world. These possible futures also tap into one of the three tensions currently faced by people in their lives at home, which we explore in this report.

Fast forward to life at home in 2030 and beyond!

AI-generated image

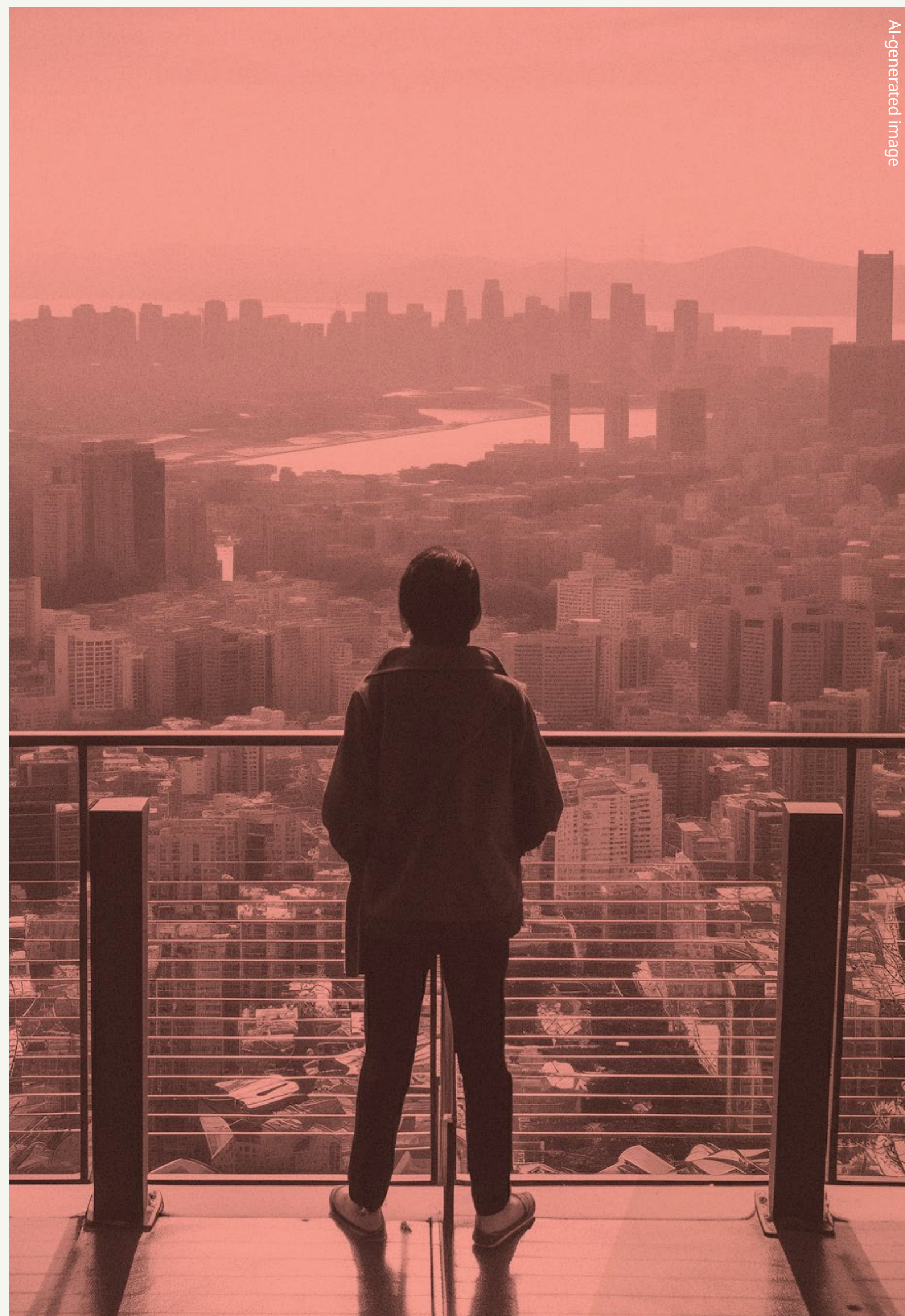
... and beyond

Possible Future 01

The future of this world is marked by movement. Lifestyles are transient, through choice or circumstance, but the emphasis is on the enthusiastic search for a better life that might be just around the corner—or even further away, perhaps in a different dimension. In any instance, people use their homes to allow them to be their best selves, with a deeply individualised approach to how they curate and act in their home space. Independence is essential, as is the ability to feel resilient amidst constant change. Different homes become different places for us to get our hit of accomplishment and enjoyment and to find time to retreat inwards when it all feels a bit too much. The good news is that we can access all of our homes at any time and from anywhere, thanks to personalised technology.

Life at home in this future is embedded with technology that focuses on individual progress, privacy, and the pursuit of new experiences.

WE ASK: What if there wasn't just one home, but multiple homes to help people foster resilience in their every day and nurture themselves?



Meet Jin

Jin is currently living in a pod in a high-rise apartment in central Seoul this week after climate reports proposed a temporary evacuation from the lowlands. He'll head back to the coast in a few days as he's keen to get his home ready for his graduation party. He's invited new friends from the local area to join physically, and several thousand of his cohorts from the remote University he attends to join online. Jin is planning to host karaoke in one of the breakout rooms, so he needs to rent the lights and sound equipment before the prices go up again.

This summer, Jin plans to travel. It's so easy to organise now that all his living administrative requirements get monitored through his personalised AI advisor. Without his trusted advisor, travelling would be almost impossible as the transport is harder to arrange with fluctuating prices. If the borders close again, then Jin will just travel digitally so he doesn't miss out. The new headset he rents really helps with immersion, and he can access virtual environments that help him get into the feeling of travelling, such as exotic backdrops like the London skyline!

Jin likes living alone because it gives him space to rest after hours of meeting people online. He's excited to start his new job in experience design in the autumn and is thinking about joining the co-living programme connected to the company. They have pods all over the world so he can do his job from anywhere. Just so long as he has a place to sleep at night, Jin is happy to explore as much as he can. ■

Home on the go



AI-generated image

Possible Future 02

The future of this world sees the planet's population broken into various separate communities that live unconnected lives of their own. People tend to stick to those they most closely identify with, whether that's through politics, parenting styles or music taste. Interactions between different communities are transactional at best. With so much social fragmentation, self-sufficiency is in demand and communities place a high premium on people who can

share a wide range of skills. Learning is a constant, and therefore stability inside the community is a priority.

Life at home in this future is focused on communal belonging and permanent stability, whilst people are shunning technology and leaning into support from people within their own groups. In this world, nature is interwoven into everyday life, but it doesn't take centre stage.

WE ASK: How can our homes foster our sense of identity and togetherness without further alienating distinct communities from one another?

Meet Angela

Angela has just bought into a women-only housing collective in Massachusetts, USA. This collective is working to become completely self-sufficient. She's one of the older residents, but her recent divorce after 30 years of marriage triggered a deeper exploration of her identity and the kinds of people she relates most closely to.

To be actively involved in her new community, she borrowed some money from the neighbourhood co-operative bank so she could complete a basic welding course. They never want to break the community code and ask others outside their community to help out, even in a crisis. The group has designed a central workspace, which they call their She Shed, where they can repair almost anything in the collective. It's where Angela will teach others to weld once she's received her training at the technical college across the other side of the township.

Resilient

Angela has recently started dating Patricia, one of the other women in the collective. Patricia is spending her Saturdays learning how to deliver emergency medical treatment. She's also helping fortify all the collective housing units against climate change. Patricia and Angela connected over their mutual love of sustainable interior design. The two of them are installing bio-solar wallpaper with a lovely retro feel using patterns from the early 2000s. The wallpaper uses algae to generate electricity from sunlight.

A few weeks ago, some of the women in the collective decided to carve out some space in the She Shed for an anaerobic digester that processes all their biowaste. They built it themselves using a 3D flat plan they found on an open-source site. They made quite a few customisations which means they've been getting several enquiries from other groups nearby who want to barter for access to their IP. It's a real point of pride for the women in the collective that their community is thriving so well. ■

Communities

Possible
Future **03**

AI-generated image

The future of this world has significantly adapted to the realities of the climate crisis. Bilateral policies have created international and interconnected eco-initiatives and prompted the widespread adoption of smart home systems to support the efficient use of resources. People are forced into transparent behaviours when it comes to consumption. Everyone recognises the consequences of and connectedness between the way they live, their homes, communities and the natural environment. Homes in this future are more responsive to external forces and integrate both technology and nature into their design.

Life at home in this future is directed towards individual control. By living more in tune with nature through technology, people are free to explore new experiences.

WE ASK: How might our relationship with both technology and nature allow us to live with a more regenerative mindset?

A nurtured home

Meet Jamie

Jamie is a non-binary primary school teacher, living with their two partners and children in a small township north of Uppsala in Sweden. The three adults are parents to a two-year-old and a five-year-old, so life at home is often chaotic and messy. It helps that the surfaces of the kitchen and all the floors are self-cleaning, and they can outsource meal planning and grocery shopping to the cloud. But some things still require human hands. Jamie likes to be able to take over from technology when it comes to working with their adjacent land because of the well-being benefits.

Most days, Jamie downloads a report from Gaia, the in-house AI that monitors their energy use and overall wellbeing. It suggests improvements in their living situation based on accurate climate and health forecasts for the next six months. Gaia proposes they switch on their wind readiness turbines given that it's going to get blustery on the back of Hurricane Lex which made landfall further south a few

days ago. Gaia also plays a new ambient soundscape to help manage Jamie's spike in anxiety around their workload.

Next week, Jamie's parents are coming to visit 'for real' after a year or more of digital visits. Jamie's XXL remote teaching screens have been a real boost for the virtual Sunday lunch and smaller online get-togethers they like to have. But nothing beats a real hug. Jamie and their family live in a modest regenerated farmhouse, so they will 3D print some furniture from a mushroom compound for one of the outhouses and turn it into a cosy guest space. Over dinner that evening, Jamie talks to the kids about the upcoming visit from Gram and Gramps. They get so excited they struggle to go to bed after their mist baths. Jamie's partner, Joakim, decides to read them a story from a physical collection he's saved from his own childhood rather than outsource to the bot that's programmed with his voice. With the kids finally in dreamland, the adults enjoy some of their home-distilled whiskey while they listen to new music. It's good to connect whilst also taking time to be private with their thoughts. As far as life goes, theirs is a pretty good one. ■


“Imagining myself living in these possible futures, it’s significant to see the impact of climate change on life at home as we know it. But there is careful optimism, with technology helping us live more sustainably. We will need a shift towards new ways of powering our world, such as intuitive home monitoring and energy alternatives, as well as emerging techniques for distributed manufacturing. These scenarios also emphasise the role of relationships between people. The shift towards co-operatives, community-centric lifestyles, and collective self-reliance can be a way to improve overall quality of life for everyone.

There are lots of opportunities for action within these future scenarios. I’m curious to see how IKEA can support when ‘home’ becomes a relative term in the wake of increased mobility. Being able to quickly establish a home environment and social connections will be vital in these uncertain circumstances. I’m also excited to see more developments in alternative energy sources and climate mitigation.

Coming back to the importance of relationships, I still believe that nothing can replace authentic intimacy, like the kind you see between families. We don’t need technology to take over the role of parenting, but to give us more time to spend with our kids.”

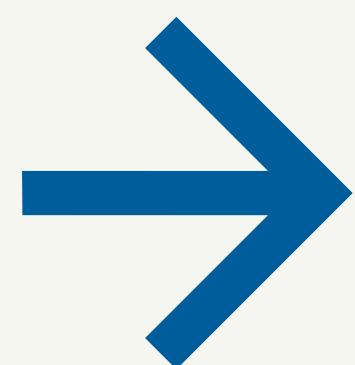
Mat Lincez

Partner, Foresight Director
Human Futures Studio



The residents of our three possible future scenarios all interact with home in a variety of relatable ways, from emotional to functional, no matter the reality of their life outside. Whilst many of their experiences feel different from our life at home today, their desires and expectations continue to span the eight needs of the home. The future may not be a fixed destination, but we believe that we can all dream about the future possibilities ahead.

Conclusion



The IKEA Life at Home Report 2023 marks a significant milestone in our journey to understand what makes a better life at home. We've engaged with over a quarter of a million people across more than 40 countries to identify the eight needs that contribute to a fulfilling life at home.

Our decade-long journey has not only been one of research but also an adaptation to global and cultural shifts. Technological advances, well-being, sustainability and the evolving multifunctionality of home have all played significant roles.

From the comprehensive research, we discovered that there are eight needs fundamental to finding happiness at home. These needs became the framework for the 2023 research.

The eight needs are foundational elements that also bring colour and vibrancy to life at home:

- **Control, Comfort** and **Security** are everyday essentials
- **Nurturing** and **Belonging** fulfill the need for connections
- **Enjoyment** and **Accomplishment** provide meaningful moments
- **Aspirations** give us hope for our future dreams

Many people experience a gap between the importance of these needs and the reality of meeting them.

This year's research also highlights three tensions for life at home in 2023: the struggle between doing more vs. doing less, the balance between togetherness and privacy, and the challenge of living well whilst living within our means. These tensions are part of the daily pressures millions of people face. And they represent the ever-evolving nature of home.

Knowing where these tensions arise, we can do even more to meet people's needs and dreams. We even went a step further. Reflecting on our 2030 foresight research, we created possible future scenarios to explore what may come.

With this report, we celebrate a decade of research, home visits, qualitative research and quantitative research. Their findings help us to gain a better understanding of what people need for happiness at home. Through this, we fulfil the IKEA purpose of making life at home better for all.

Doing more vs. less

- Hybrid working is here to stay, so finding balance is key
- Tidying is important, but not everything
- Take a breather sometimes
- Nurture the senses

Privacy vs. togetherness

- Spend time with people at the heart of your community
- Safety is tied to interpersonal relationships much like physical locks
- Carve out a space of your own
- Feel liberated in your privacy

Living well vs. within your means

- Living sustainably makes us feel positive about home
- Living sustainably fosters good health and wellbeing
- Living sustainably doesn't have to have a price premium
- Back-to-basic changes can bridge the gap

Methodology

10 years of making the Life at Home Report

The IKEA Life at Home Report gives us the opportunity to dig deeper into life at home around the world, and how we can make it better. Over the last 10 years, it's become one of the largest and most distinctive research projects of its kind, involving a mix of approaches and partners to explore the needs and dreams of people all over the world.

Home visits are at the heart of everything we do at IKEA, including the Life at Home Report. Meeting people where they live gives us a greater and more empathetic understanding of the challenges they face at home. In addition to home visits, our research methodology always includes a nationally representative survey across a wide range of countries, and we work with world class research agencies to ensure that our data collection is robust and representative.

The Life at Home Report began in 2014 exploring the practical aspects of home, and over the years has expanded into the emotional landscape of where we live. One of the most distinct qualities of the Life at Home Report is exploring how people feel about where there live, and not just what they do there.

This blend of functional and emotional insights helped to develop a framework which presents eight emotional needs for a better life at home. This year, the research survey was based on these eight emotional needs of home.

Methodology for the Life at Home Report 2023

A nationally representative sample of 37,428 people aged 18+ were surveyed across 38 countries. We surveyed over 1,000 people from 36 of the countries and over 500 from two of them. Quantitative surveys were conducted by YouGov

using the online CAWI (computer-assisted web interviewing) method. Data was collected from May to June of 2023.

Data for each country was weighted according to the dimensions of gender, age and geography so that the results were representative of the population in the target group. Each country has the same weight in global results. Chile and New Zealand were given added weight to make sure their results were equal to those from other countries despite their lower numbers of respondents.

For story gathering, eight home visits were conducted by the IKEA team: One in Stockholm and one in Malmö, Sweden, two in New Delhi, India, two in New York, USA, one in Tokyo, Japan and one in Matsumoto, Japan. The 2023 report used data collected from surveys and home visits. It also used data from IKEA Life at Home Reports 2014-2022.

The futures section is based on an internal foresight exploration done with Human Futures Studio focusing on emerging shifts of the home.

Decade overview methodology

Between 2014 and 2023, more than 250,000 people were surveyed. In most years, we conducted qualitative in-depth interviews in addition to the surveys. Qualitative methods included home interviews, online communities, mobile ethnography, and online in-depth interviews. As qualitative insights were critical in all reports, during the 2020 pandemic, home visits were conducted online so that the research could continue.

We thank United Minds, C Space, IPSOS, CrowdDNA, Mindspark, YouGov, Human Futures Studio and Given Agency who have partnered with us at different stages of the Life at Home Report from 2014 to today.



Tack!

Explore Life at Home at lifeathome.ikea.com

