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Headline: Debts and house costs send adults back to nest

Subject: European research

Adults are being forced to move back in with their parents due to rising house prices and soaring levels of debt, research showed today.

An estimated 4.3 million single people aged between 25 and 50 have moved back to the family home after being unable to afford to live alone, according to dating firm Parship.com.

Four out of 10 single people said high house prices meant they were unable to buy their own place, while 'unrealistic' rents on one-bedroom apartments meant they could not even afford to rent.

Others cited the amount of unsecured debt they had taken on as being the main obstacle to their independence.

More than half of all singletons who live with their parents owe between £10,000 and £20,000 in unsecured debt, and 21% owe between £20,000 and £50,000 through credit cards, overdrafts and loans.

The research found that just 42% of single people in the UK lived by themselves, compared with an average of 56% across Europe, rising to 81% in Switzerland.

A further 3% of single Britons admitted that financial constraints were forcing them to continue living with former partners.

Men are more likely to live at home than women, with 26% of single men living with their parents, compared with just 15% of women.

Tony Blin-Stoyle, UK director of Parship.co.uk, said, 'For many singles, particularly between the ages of 25 and 50, renting never mind buying a property is just a pipe dream.

'With no real assets, just a growing burden of debt, their only chance of a parent-free existence is to plunge themselves into more debt, or form a relationship with someone who is willing to share the rent or has the assets to buy a property.'

Single people in London, the South East and the North of England are most likely to have moved back in with their parents, with 22% living in the family home.

Those in Scotland, where property prices remain cheapest, are most likely to live alone at 62%, compared with only 43% of people in the South East.

YouGov questioned 5,800 single people in the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, Austria and Switzerland. The research on single people's levels of debt was carried was based on 1,366 people.