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Tom Tom English (Kinshicho)
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TOM TOM ENGLISH



VOCABULARY

Reveal =

To make known
something that was
unknown

The Continent =

When British people
say this, they mean
Europe (but not
Britain)

Flat =

English word for
apartment

Rural =

Countryside

Read the article overleaf and discuss these questions:

1. What do you think “An Englishman’s home is his castle” means? Is there a similar Japanese expression?
2. How do the figures in the article compare to Japan? Are they similar? Different? Which European country is Japan most similar to?
3. Do you live in a house or a flat? Why?
4. How do you think Japanese housing compares with other countries? What are the good points and bad points?
5. Would you rather live in a Japanese house or a British house? Why?

VOCABULARY

Social Housing =

Houses and apartments
owned by the
government or cities

Surge =

Sudden movement
forwards or upwards

Buy-to-let =

Buying a house so that
you can rent it out, not
live in it yourself

Mortgage =

Loan to buy a house or
flat

“An Englishman's home is his castle” but

these days it's not so much a castle as a shed. The British have the smallest homes in Europe!

The average British home has an average usable floor space of 76m sq. The Italians lead the rest of Europe with the most space - an average of 92m sq.

A recent report **revealed** that British living space per home is 12 percent smaller than the average Spanish home, 14 percent smaller than in Germany and 16 percent smaller than in France.

The gap between the UK and **the continent** is getting bigger. New homes in France, Germany and Spain are getting bigger. On average, newly built homes in France and Germany have over 100m² of usable floor space, while in Spain modern homes have 95m². In Britain, new homes remain the same size as existing properties at 76m².

The report reveals that 82 percent of British families live in a house and only 15 percent live in a **flat**. This is in contrast to families on **continental** Europe where flats are more popular. In Spain, Italy and Germany more than 50 percent of families live in a

flat. In France it's about 41 percent. So it's strange that the average British family home has the least usable living space.

Owning your own home is popular, but Britons aren't the biggest homeowners. The Spanish (80%) own more of their homes than the Brits and Italians (69%). The French (54%) and Germans (43%) own less.

Britain still has the highest number of '**social housing**', (22%). France has the second highest with 18% living in socially owned homes. Spain has almost no social sector with only 1%.

The UK has the least developed rental sector with only 9% of British homes being rented privately. This contrasts sharply with 46% in Germany - over five times the UK level. This news is surprising given the recent **surge** in popularity of **buy-to-let mortgages** in the UK.

There are big differences between the residential property prices in the five countries and the types of homes people can purchase. For £60,000 a homeowner could buy a semi-detached home in the north of England, a **rural** home in Italy, a villa in Spain or an apartment in a French ski resort.