Beyond Four Walls
A new era of life at home

LIFE AT HOME REPORT 2018
IN SHORT
Today, around 1 in 3 people all over the world say there are places where they feel more at home than the space they live in.
Every year, we set out to understand more about what makes a better life at home by connecting with thousands of people where they live. And this year is no exception.

Ever since our 2016 report, we have been harbouring a deep curiosity about where the feeling of home really comes from. Back then, we found that 20% of the people we surveyed said there were places where they felt more at home than the space they lived in. Two years on, we have found that 25% of people say they feel this way, rising to 35% of those who live in cities. We wanted to know why lots of people feel this way. So we went off to explore what gives people the feeling of home, and where they go to find it.
We are living in a new era of life at home

When we talk about what makes a home, we talk about the four dimensions that are shared by everyone, no matter where or how we live – space, place, relationships and things.

For some people, ‘my home begins at my front door.’ For other people ‘my sense of home begins when I am within this area, around the estate within which I live.’ It’s that sense of a wider, more expansive notion of home.”

Dr Alison Blunt
Co-director of the Centre for Studies of Home, and expert contributor to the Life at Home Report 2018

These dimensions help us explain how our homes are organized and what kinds of activities we do there.

In the past couple of years, we have been digging deeper into the emotions of home and how they interact with these dimensions. How can we describe the feeling of home? Why does home feel different to me than it does to you?

During our research we learned that life at home is changing, profoundly, all over the world. Our physical homes are getting smaller, smarter, busier and noisier… All of this impacts on how successfully a single space can deliver what we need from it – functionally and emotionally.

When we can’t get what we need at home, we head outside. In short, life is on the move, and home needs to catch up.

Life at home is becoming a network of places and spaces, and the feeling of home can be found in more than one location.

For lots of people, this bigger understanding of life at home presents new opportunities.

This is a new era of life at home, and it’s taking place within and beyond four walls.

60% of people are ready to create a life at home that’s different from the one they were brought up in.
"HOME IS ARRIVING TO A PLACE WHERE PEOPLE TAKE ME AS I AM, WHERE I CAN BE MYSELF AND HAVE FREEDOM."

Anna, Berlin
Defining that elusive feeling

Through our research, we have identified five core emotional needs connected to the home. This is what people mean when they talk about the feeling of home.

These needs are universal but they play different roles at different stages of our lives, depending on how old we are, who we live with, and where we are in the world.

We believe that knowing more about these needs can help us find a feeling of home more easily, more quickly, and more successfully.

Privacy
Security
Comfort
Ownership
Belonging

THE NEEDS OF THE HOME
Home doesn’t always feel like home

Most of us believe that it’s important for our residential homes to provide these five emotional needs, and in many cases they do that well.

However, we have seen a gap between expectation and reality, particularly amongst those living with friends or strangers. For too many people, home doesn’t give them the feeling of home. Today, lots of us are looking to spaces and places beyond four walls to provide us with these emotional needs.

Pushed out:
Some people are restricted by what their residential home can give them. “Home doesn’t give me mental privacy, so I like to escape onto my balcony to be alone or go and sit in my car on ‘my street’ in winter.”
Alessandra, Rome

Pulled in:
Some people are excited by opportunities beyond four walls to enhance their feeling of home. “The extended home adds the seasoning and spice you can’t get at home. Using the extended home imaginatively helps you get the home you want and need, no matter what your home is.”
Sarah, London

Lack of comfort
When we have less space to play with, life at home can feel restrictive.

“I WOULD MAYBE HAVE FAMILY OVER, BUT DEFINITELY NOT FRIENDS. IT’S WAY TOO SMALL.”
Tan Jiaqin, Shanghai

Lack of privacy
As new homes compete for space, we are living closer together than ever before.

23% of people globally feel they have to leave the house to find alone time, and this goes up to 33% for people living with friends or strangers.

Lack of belonging
Living with people who don’t share our interests or values can make us feel disconnected.

53% of young families don’t get belonging from their residential home.

Lack of security
It’s harder to put down roots when we’re moving between homes, cities and countries more than ever.

1 IN 3 PEOPLE don’t feel their residential home provides a sense of security.

Lack of ownership
If we don’t own the space we live in or the things within it, life at home can sometimes feel harder.

24% of people who live with strangers don’t feel ownership over where they live and feel MORE COMFORTABLE OUTSIDE OF THEIR HOME.

These feelings are exacerbated by major shifts in how people live today, which is rapidly adapting to our changing demographics and climate, the increased use of technology, and the exponential rise in urban living.

OUR KEY FINDINGS

THE PUSH FACTORS

Pushing beyond four walls

Expectations

Reality

Expectations amongst those living with family or alone

90%

45%

Privacy

Security

Comfort

Ownership

Belonging

90%

77%

76%

74%

62%

66%

71%

76%

57%

76%

76%

87%

66%

71%

74%

57%

45%

34%

34%
We found that for those who feel happy at home, the richness of life beyond four walls enhances our five emotional needs. In particular, many of us find an extended sense of belonging in the communities that surround where we live.

Building a greater sense of belonging

Diverse social networks, enriching experiences and connecting to people in our communities all help us feel like we belong.

44% OF PEOPLE WHO FEEL RELAXED, CONTENT AND JOYFUL IN THEIR HOMES ALSO BELIEVE THAT COMMUNITY IS AN EXTENSION OF HOME.

No matter what role our residential home plays in our lives, the feeling of home can exist in multiple places and spaces, at any given time.

The four walls are important but you need to have other opportunities outside the four walls to feel at home.”

Erik, Berlin

MEET GRETA

Greta lives by herself in a senior community of 12 women, in Copenhagen, Denmark. She says it’s important to stay independent and she has a lot of energy which helps her get out and about.

“...I go across the street here, there is a place for lunch, it’s very social and there are many people so I go there almost every day.”

Greta runs social activities for the community she lives in, including a film club and a space for gymnastics. She says:

"IT’S VERY IMPORTANT FOR ME TO DO SOMETHING TO GET CLOSER TO EACH OTHER.”
The feeling of home is no longer limited to our residential homes. Understanding the five emotional needs in this bigger context makes it easier for us to find the feeling of home, no matter where or how we live.

**THE FIVE EMOTIONAL NEEDS**

- **BELONGING** is about feeling part of a group of people who accept you for who you are, and in places that reflect you. It’s not just about others acknowledging you.
- **SECURITY** is about feeling safe and grounded wherever you are. It’s not just about financial stability and locks on the doors.
- **OWNERSHIP** is about having a sense of control over the space and place you live in. It’s not just about mortgages and stuff.
- **PRIVACY** is about feeling in control of where and how you can disconnect and reflect. It’s not just about curtains and closed doors.
- **COMFORT** is about feeling content and at ease in your surroundings. It’s not just about having a comfortable sofa or bed.

**PLACES AND SPACES**

Life at home is a network of places and spaces

The boundaries are blurring between what we do at home and what we do beyond four walls. Our daily routines are changing as we take traditional home activities into other spaces and places, and bring more of the outside in.

For me, it’s all about the area. I love living in Astoria and it’s so multicultural and I feel alive when I walk around. I’d rather live here in my not-so-perfect flat than in a luxury flat in a shabby area.

Stephanie, New York

With home activities shifting between locations, it’s clear that our neighbourhoods and communities play an increasingly important role in our homemaking experiences. In some instances, they can provide us with more opportunities to create a better life at home than the space we live in.

In fact, 64% of us say we would rather live in a small home in a great location compared to a big home in a less ideal location.

**1 IN 4 WORK MORE FROM HOME than ever before**

**OVER A 1/3 OF US SHOWER OR BATH THE HOME multiple times a week**

**NEARLY 1/4 of people living with strangers use AirBnB to MAKE MONEY FROM THEIR HOME**

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Stephanie, New York

Life at home is a network of places and spaces
Everyone deserves that home feeling

Your network of spaces and places might be big or small, and maybe you have your own home at the heart of it, and maybe you don’t. There’s no one-size fits all. The important thing is that everyone deserves to experience that feeling of home.

The things we have learned through this year’s research will help us develop products, show furnishing solutions, and design home experiences that take us closer to our vision. Like always, we’re committed to doing our part.

But, just like our flatpack furniture, you can do your part too.

Ask yourself, does my home feel like home? How could it feel better?

To help you answer those questions, we’ve designed a simple online tool that will help you get to the heart of how your home really feels.

We have also asked a number of experts, from interior designers, to UN ambassadors and trend-spotters, to give us their tips on how to create a better life at home.

You can find all this, and much more, on our Life at Home website: lifeathome.ikea.com

I think where I feel most like home is where my wife and child are. I think no matter if its in a house or in a flat, or if its a place I bought or a place I rented, as long as the person I love is there, that is my home.”

Tang, Shanghai

WHAT NOW?

Everyone deserves that home feeling
The research for the Life at Home Report 2018 was commissioned by IKEA Group (INGKA Holding B.V. and its controlled entities), and undertaken by London-based customer agency C Space. It was conducted between March and August 2018.

Qualitative research was conducted in USA, Germany, Denmark, China, Italy and UK. Quantitative research was undertaken in 22 countries across four territories - USA, Middle East, Europe, and Asia. The survey was conducted amongst more than 22,854 people and is nationally representative.

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We know that home is the most important place in the world. That’s why we’re obsessed with making it better.