

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 14 to 25 September 2022

Social insights on daily life and events, including the cost of living, working arrangements and well-being from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

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## Correction

**20 October 2022 16:00**

We have corrected an issue affecting some of the estimates originally published on 30 September in this bulletin. This is because of a change in the methodology used for weighting estimates to make them representative to the population. The issue had a minor impact on the estimates reported in the bulletin and accompanying datasets. This issue was first announced on Friday 14 October. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

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# 1 . Main points

The following information is on the latest period between 14 and 25 September 2022, based on adults in Great Britain.

- Around 9 in 10 (92%) adults reported their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago, while a lower percentage (74%) reported an increase in their cost of living over the last month.
- In response to increases in the cost of living, around 1 in 5 (19%) working adults reported looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion.
- Among working adults, 16% reported working more hours than usual in their main job because of increases in their cost of living, and 5% reported working more than one job.
- Around 4 in 10 (41%) adults reported feeling very or fairly unsure about the future, while around a quarter (26%) stated feeling very or fairly sure.
- The most frequently reported worries (being very or somewhat worried) were about the rising cost of living (77%) and climate change (76%).
- Around 4 in 10 (44%) of adults who pay energy bills said they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period.
- Around 3 in 10 (27%) of those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments reported finding it very or somewhat difficult to make these payments.

## 2 . Cost of living

Estimates in this release are based on data collected between 14 and 25 September 2022 (the "latest period") and 31 August to 11 September 2022 (the "previous period").

During this period, the Chancellor of the Exchequer delivered the [Growth Plan 2022](#) to Parliament on 23 September 2022.

In this period, we introduced some changes to the cost of living questions to allow us to better measure the short- and long-term impacts. For this reason, we recommend not directly comparing with data from earlier periods. For further information please see the notes in our [Household finances dataset](#).

### Cost of living increases

In this period, we asked adults about changes to their cost of living. Around 9 in 10 (92%) reported their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago. A lower percentage (74%) reported an increase in their cost of living over the last month.

The main reasons reported by adults for the rise in their cost of living over the past month were an increase in:

- the price of food shopping (95%)
- their gas or electricity bills (73%)
- the price of fuel (50%)

The most common actions reported by all adults because of the rising costs of living were:

- spending less on non-essentials (66%)
- using less fuel such as gas or electricity in their home (61%)
- shopping around more (45%)

Around three-quarters (77%) of adults reported being very or somewhat worried about rising costs of living in the past two weeks.

## **Energy bills**

Around 4 in 10 (44%) of adults who pay energy bills said they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period.

There are strong seasonal spending patterns relating to gas and electricity that may affect the results in this section. For more information on this and recent price rises for gas and electricity, please see our [latest Consumer price inflation bulletin for August 2022](#).

## **Rent or mortgage payments**

Around 3 in 10 (27%) of those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments reported they are finding it very or somewhat difficult to make these payments. Data collection from the latest period covered the announcement of the [Growth Plan 2022](#) to Parliament on 23 September 2022 from the Chancellor of the Exchequer. We will continue to monitor this to provide insights over the coming months.

# **3 . Working arrangements**

## **Cost of living impacts on work**

This period we asked working adults how the increasing cost of living was impacting their work. Most working adults (61%) reported they were not doing anything differently in terms of their work situation because of increases in the cost of living.

The most reported impacts on work reported by working adults because of increases in the cost of living were:

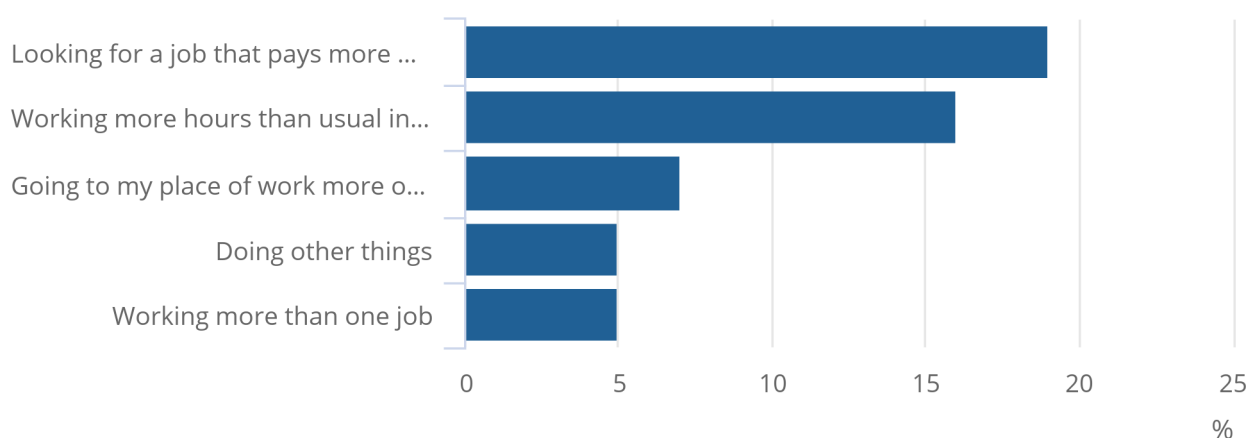
- looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion (19%)
- working more hours than usual in their main job (16%)
- going to their place of work more often to reduce home energy costs (7%)

**Figure 1: Around 1 in 5 (19%) reported looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion**

Proportion of working adults in Great Britain, 14 to 25 September 2022

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Proportion of working adults in Great Britain, 14 to 25 September 2022



**Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)**

### Notes:

1. Question: "Thinking of your work situation, which of these, if any, are you doing because of the increases in the cost of living?".
2. Base: Working adults.
3. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.
4. 61% of adults reported "None of these". This has not been included in the chart because respondents who selected this response option were unable to select any other response option.

Among working adults, 5% reported working more than one job because of increases in the cost of living. This is in line with data from the [Labour Force Survey, on second jobs](#), that show approximately 1.2 million workers have second jobs between May and July 2022, remaining relatively stable since recent cost of living increases began.

## Location of work

Around 7 in 10 (69%) working adults travelled to work at some point in the past seven days (66% in the previous period):

- nearly half (47%) only travelled to work in the past seven days (45% in the previous period)
- around 1 in 5 (22%) reported both working from home and travelling to work (hybrid working) in the past seven days (22% in the previous period)

Around 1 in 7 (13%) working adults said they worked from home exclusively in the past seven days (13% in the previous period). A further 18% neither travelled to work nor worked from home (20% in the previous period).

## 4 . Personal well-being and perceptions about the future

During this collection period, the UK was reflecting on the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II through a period of National Mourning, which ended on Monday 19 September.

### Perceptions about the future

In this period, we asked adults how they are feeling about the future in response to the times that we are living in now:

- around 4 in 10 (41%) reported feeling very or fairly unsure about the future
- around 26% reported feeling very or fairly sure about the future
- around 33% reported feeling neither sure nor unsure about the future

## Worries

This week, we continued to ask respondents how worried they were about a range of issues, including: the conflict in Ukraine, increases in the cost of living, the environment, and the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

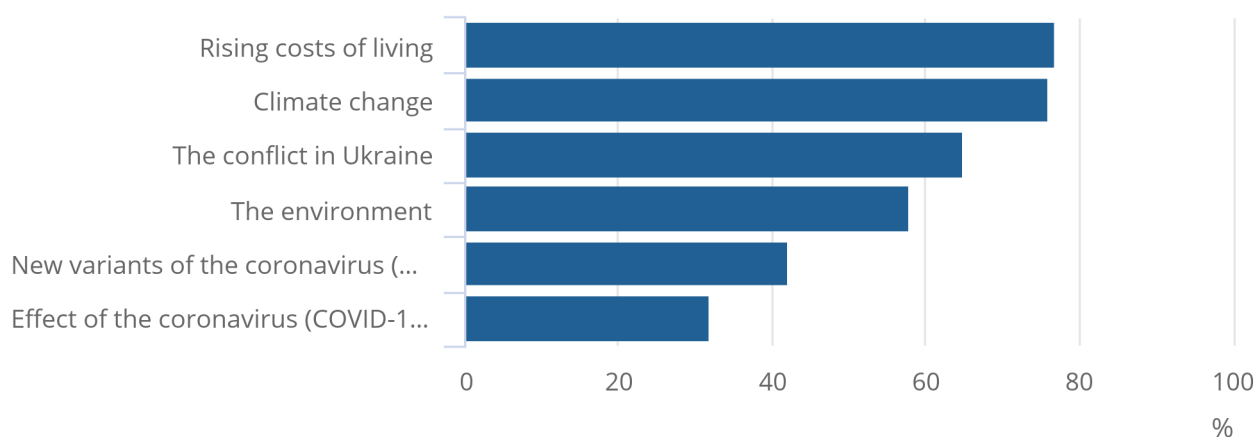
The most frequently reported worries (being very or somewhat worried) were about the rising cost of living (77%) and climate change (76%).

### Figure 2: Around three-quarters (77%) of adults were very or somewhat worried about the rising cost of living

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain who are very or somewhat worried, 14 to 25 September 2022

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Proportion of all adults in Great Britain who are very or somewhat worried, 14 to 25 September 2022



Source: Office for National Statistics (ONS) – Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)

#### Notes:

1. Questions: "How worried or unworried are you about the impact of climate change?", "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about rising costs of living?", "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about the environment?", "In the past two weeks, how worried or unworried have you been about the conflict in Ukraine?", "How worried or unworried are you about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having on your life right now?" and "How worried or unworried are you about new variants of the coronavirus (COVID-19)?".
2. Base: all adults.

## Personal well-being

This period, we continued to ask respondents about their personal well-being. Average levels of personal well-being were:

- life satisfaction (7.0 in the latest period and 6.9 in the previous period)
- feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (7.3 in the latest period and 7.2 in the previous period)
- happiness (7.0 in both the latest period and previous period)
- anxiety (4.1 in both the latest period and previous period)

These estimates of personal well-being may differ from those in our [Personal well-being in the UK, quarterly: April 2011 to September 2021 bulletin](#), which is based on the Annual Population Survey (APS). To find out more about the difference between these two data sources, you can view our [Data collection changes due to the pandemic and their impact on estimating personal well-being methodology](#).

### Figure 3: Levels of personal well-being remained relatively stable in the latest period

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to September 2022

#### Notes:

1. Questions included: "Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays?", "Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile?", "Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?", and "Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?"
2. These questions are answered on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 is "not at all" and 10 is "completely".
3. Base: all adults.

#### Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

## Loneliness

One-quarter (25%) of adults reported feeling lonely always, often, or some of the time in the latest period (26% in previous period).

For further estimates on people's personal well-being and loneliness, including breakdowns by age, sex and trends over time, please see our [Personal well-being and loneliness dataset](#).

## 5 . Actions taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses

Our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights tool](#) provides a roundup of the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) and other sources.

Further estimates regarding the actions taken to reduce the spread and the social impacts of COVID-19 and other illnesses, with trends over time and breakdowns by age and sex, can be found in our [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses dataset](#).

#### More about coronavirus

- Find the latest on [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) in the UK](#).
- View [all coronavirus data](#).



## 6 . Public opinions and social trends data

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: coronavirus \(COVID-19\) and other illnesses](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and other illnesses on people, households and communities in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal experiences of shortages of goods](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of whether people experienced shortages of goods such as food, medicine, or fuel when shopping in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: household finances](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of people's experiences of changes in their cost of living and household finances in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: personal well-being and loneliness](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) of worries, personal well-being and loneliness in Great Britain.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: travel abroad](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) on people in Great Britain's experiences travelling abroad and any disruption faced.

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: working arrangements](#)

Dataset | Released 30 September 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to the working arrangements of people in Great Britain.

## 7 . Measuring the data

This release contains data and indicators from a module being undertaken through the Office for National Statistics' (ONS) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

From the period 30 March to 10 April 2022, changes were made to the OPN to enable us to provide ongoing indicators on a wide range of public opinions and societal issues.

Changes were made to the OPN survey design, for example: sample size, the questionnaire and financial incentives to participate. These changes may result in small changes to the responding sample. We therefore advise caution with comparing estimates from this period onwards with those published prior to this period.

Breakdowns by age and sex, including [confidence intervals](#) for the estimates, are contained in our [Public opinion and social trends, Great Britain datasets](#).

Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this bulletin or comparisons between estimates are made, associated confidence intervals should be used to assess the [statistical significance](#) of the differences.

## Sampling and weighting

In the latest period (14 to 25 September 2022), we sampled 4,970 households. This sample was randomly selected from those who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample for the latest period contained 2,142 individuals, representing a 43% response rate.

Survey weights were applied to make estimates representative of the population (based on ONS population estimates). Further information on the survey design and quality can be found in our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey quality and methodology information \(QMI\)](#).

## 8 . Related links

### [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) latest insights](#)

Web page | Updated as data become available

An interactive tool to explore the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other sources.

### [Economic activity and social change in the UK, real-time indicators](#)

Bulletin | Released weekly

Early experimental data and analysis on economic activity and social change in the UK. These real-time indicators are created using rapid response surveys, novel data sources and experimental methods.

### [Climate change insights, UK: August 2022](#)

Article | Released 12 August 2022

Quarterly publication bringing together the latest climate change-related statistics and analysis from a range of sources.

### [What actions are people taking because of the rising cost of living?](#)

Article | Released 5 August 2022

Estimates from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey regarding increases in cost of living and the actions adults in Great Britain are taking as a result, by breakdowns including disability status, personal income, area deprivation and region, for the period 30 March to 19 June 2022.

### [Inflation and the cost of living for UK households, overview: June 2022](#)

Article | Released 22 June 2022

Inflation and cost of living article collating and updating analysis of different price measures.

### [The cost of living, current and upcoming work: September 2022](#)

Article | Released 28 September 2022

A summary of ONS's current and future analytical work related to the cost of living.

### [Worries about the rising costs of living, Great Britain: April to May 2022](#)

Article | Released 10 June 2022

An article covering people's worries about the rising costs of living, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey collected between 27 April and 22 May 2022 and based on adults in Great Britain aged 16 years and over.

### [Is hybrid working here to stay?](#)

Article | Released 23 May 2022

Almost half of working adults were working from home at times during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, but what will business as usual look like with restrictions lifted?

### [The rising cost of living and its impact on individuals in Great Britain: November 2021 to March 2022](#)

Article | Released 25 April 2022

Analysis of how different groups in the population have been affected by an increase in their cost of living, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey.

### [COVID-19 question bank](#)

Web page | Updated frequently

Government Statistical Service page that provides a bank of questions from multiple Office for National Statistics (ONS) surveys related to COVID-19 to be used in other surveys to further support harmonisation and questionnaire development. This bank also provides users with an understanding of what data the ONS has in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

## 9 . Cite this statistical bulletin

Office for National Statistics (ONS), released 30 September 2022, ONS website, statistical bulletin, [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 14 to 25 September 2022](#)