

Statistical bulletin

Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 20 September to 1 October 2023

Social insights on daily life and events, including estimates from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) relating to the biggest issues facing society today.

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Table of contents

1. [Main Points](#)
2. [Public opinions and social trends data](#)
3. [Measuring the data](#)
4. [Related links](#)
5. [Cite this statistical bulletin](#)

1 . Main Points

The following information is for the latest survey period 20 September to 1 October 2023, based on adults in Great Britain.

- When asked about the important issues facing the UK today, the most commonly reported issues continued to be the cost of living (90%), the NHS (86%), the economy (72%), climate change and the environment (62%) and housing (58%).
- More than half (54%) of adults reported that their cost of living had increased compared with a month ago, while 44% reported it had stayed the same and 2% said it had decreased.
- More than 9 in 10 (94%) adults who reported their cost of living had increased compared to one month ago reported the price of their food shop had increased, 65% reported the price of their fuel had increased and 58% reported their gas or electricity bills had increased.
- When asked about what people are doing because of the increases in the cost of living, 65% said they were spending less on non-essentials, around half of all adults (48%) were shopping around more, 47% of adults were using less fuel such as gas or electricity in their homes, and more than 4 in 10 (44%) were spending less on food shopping and essentials.
- Among those currently paying rent or a mortgage, almost a half (47%) of adults reported that their rent or mortgage payments had gone up in the past 6 months; this has increased from 33% during a similar period one year ago (29 September to 9 October 2022).
- Among those who are currently paying rent or a mortgage, 40% reported finding it very or somewhat difficult affording these payments; this is up from 30% during a similar period one year ago (29 September to 9 October 2022).
- Of those who pay energy bills, around 4 in 10 (43%) adults reported it being very or somewhat difficult to afford energy bills; this is the same as in a similar period last year (29 September to 9 October 2022).

2 . Public opinions and social trends data

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

Dataset | Released 6 October 2023

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 6 October 2023

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: personal experiences of shortages of goods](#)

Dataset | Released 6 October 2023

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: GP practice access](#)

Dataset | Released 6 October 2023

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to people's experiences of GP practice access in Great Britain.

3 . Measuring the data

This release contains data and indicators from the Office for National Statistics' (ONS's) Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN).

From the 16 June 2023 release onwards, we have made changes that reduce the scope of the release and accompanying datasets. This is based on a routine review of the relevance and usefulness of this release.

Breakdowns by age and sex are no longer provided for fortnightly estimates in the latest [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain datasets](#). All previous versions of the dataset remain available from this page. Estimates from the OPN by these and other personal characteristics will continue to be provided on a regular basis in other ONS releases. For example, OPN estimates relating to the impact of cost of living among different sub-groups of the population are provided within the regular [Impact of increased cost of living on adults across Great Britain](#) series.

[Confidence intervals](#) are provided for all estimates in the datasets. Where changes in results from previous weeks are presented in this release, 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 (20 September to 1 October 2023), we sampled 4,963 households. This sample was randomly selected from people who had previously completed the Labour Market Survey (LMS) or OPN. The responding sample for the latest period contained 2,364 individuals, representing a 47.6% 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 \(QMI\)](#).

4 . Related links

[Student voices: experiences of the rising cost of living](#)

Article | Released 6 September 2023

The rising cost of living has brought new challenges to higher education, with student budgets being squeezed. Interviews with students in England during the 2022 to 2023 academic year have helped shed light on the difficulties they are facing.

[Climate change insights, families and households, UK: August 2023](#)

Article | Released 11 August 2023

Latest climate change-related analysis using a range of UK official statistics.

[UK Measures of National Well-being: August 2023](#)

Article | Released 11 August 2023

An update on the UK's progress across ten domains of national well-being which include personal well-being, relationships, health, what we do, where we live, personal finance, economy, education and skills, governance, and the environment.

[Impact of increased cost of living on adults across Great Britain: February to May 2023](#)

Article | Released 14 July 2023

Analysis of the proportion of the population that are affected by an increase in their cost of living, and of the characteristics associated with financial vulnerability, using data from the Opinions and Lifestyle survey.

[Understanding AI uptake and sentiment among people and businesses in the UK](#)

Article | Released 16 June 2023

An exploration into the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how people feel about its uptake in today's society and business.

[Tracking the impact of winter pressures in Great Britain: November 2022 to February 2023](#)

Article | Released 24 April 2023

Insights from our Winter Survey as we tracked participants to examine how increases in the cost of living and difficulty accessing NHS services had impacted their lives during the winter months.

[Cost of living insights](#)

Web page | Updated frequently

The latest data and trends about the cost of living. Explore changes in the cost of everyday items and how this is affecting people.

5 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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