

Statistical bulletin

# Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: 29 September to 9 October 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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# 1 . Main points

The following information is on the latest period between 29 September to 9 October 2022, based on adults in Great Britain.

- Around 9 in 10 (93%) adults reported their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago, while a lower percentage (79%) reported an increase in their cost of living over the last month.
- Around three-quarters (77%) of adults were worried (being very or somewhat worried) about the rising cost of living.
- Around 4 in 10 (43%) adults who pay energy bills said they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period.
- Around 3 in 10 (30%) of those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments reported finding it very or somewhat difficult to make these payments.
- Among those who had received any vaccine for coronavirus (COVID-19) and had not yet received the autumn booster, 8 in 10 (82%) reported that they would be very or fairly likely to have the booster vaccine if it were offered to them.
- Of adults who reported they had not had a 2022 winter flu vaccine, 59% reported being very or fairly likely to have one; all adults were asked this regardless of their eligibility for a free flu vaccine.

## 2 . Cost of living

Estimates in this release are based on data collected between 29 September and 9 October 2022 (the "latest period") and 14 to 25 September 2022 (the "previous period").

During the latest period, there was an increase to the energy price cap from 1 October 2022. On the same day, the government introduced the [Energy Price Guarantee](#), limiting the amount households pay for energy bills over the next two years.

### Cost of living increases

In this period, we asked adults about changes to their cost of living. Around 9 in 10 (93%) reported their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago. A lower percentage (79%) 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 (92%)
- their gas or electricity bills (75%)
- the price of fuel (46%)

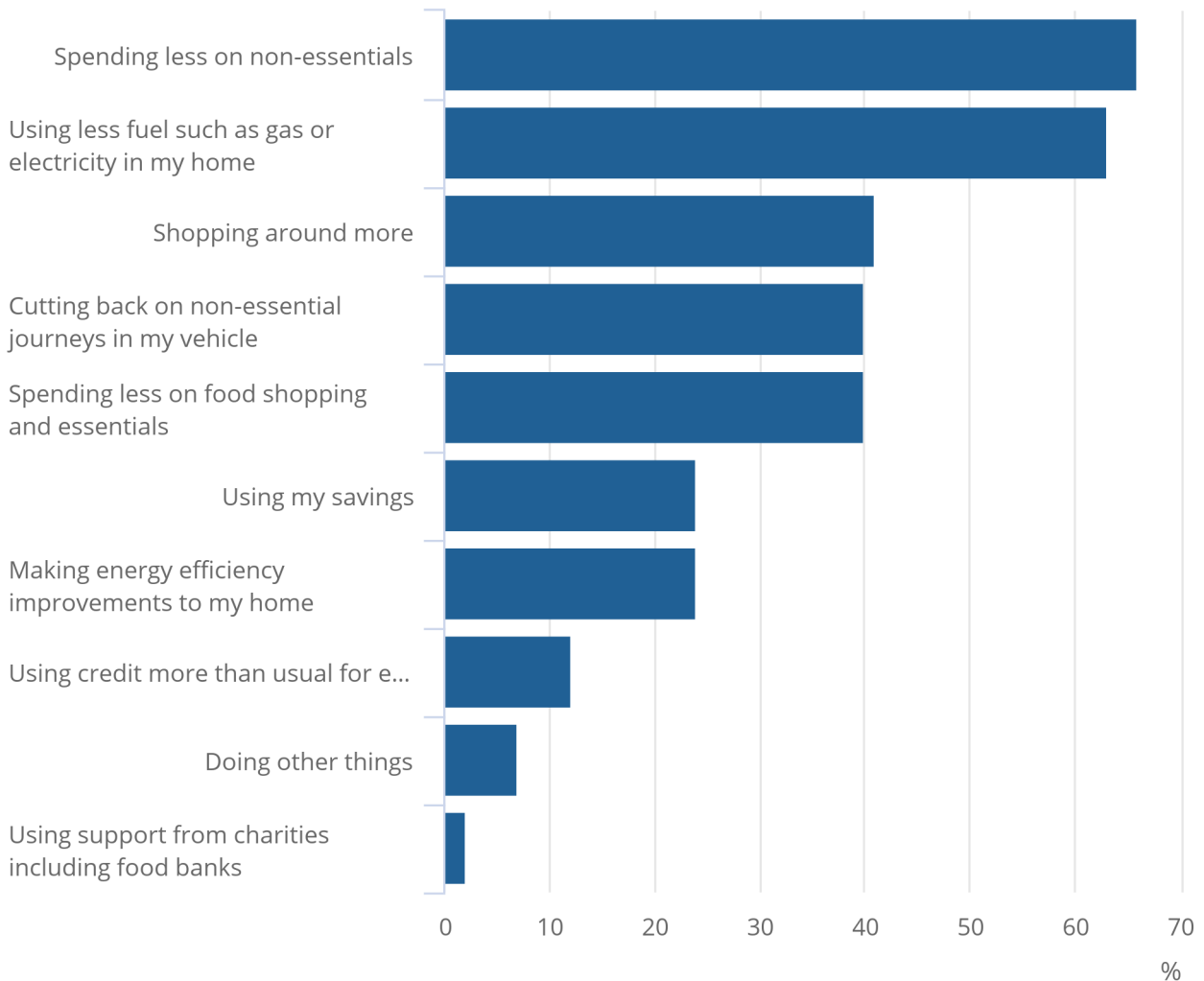
The most common actions reported by all adults because of the rising cost of living were spending less on non-essentials (66%) and using less fuel such as gas or electricity in their home (63%).

**Figure 1: Around two-thirds (66%) are spending less on non-essentials because of the increases in the cost of living**

Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, 29 September to 9 October 2022

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Proportion of all adults in Great Britain, 29 September to 9 October 2022



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

Notes:

1. Question: "Which of these, if any, are you doing because of the increases in the cost of living?"
2. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.
3. 8% 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.

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

## **Energy bills**

Around 4 in 10 (43%) adults who pay energy bills said they found it very or somewhat difficult to afford them in the latest period (44% in the previous 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**

In this period, we asked adults about changes to their rent or mortgage payments. Around a third (33%) of those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments reported that these payments have gone up in the last six months (31% in the previous period).

Among those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments, 3% reported that they are behind on their mortgage payments (3% in the previous period).

Around 3 in 10 (30%) of those who are currently paying rent or mortgage payments reported that they are finding it very or somewhat difficult to make these payments (27% in the previous period).

This period included volatility in the mortgage market, with lenders withdrawing products and higher interest rates for those on variable rate mortgages. We will continue to monitor the situation in the context of increasing interest rates 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 affecting 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.

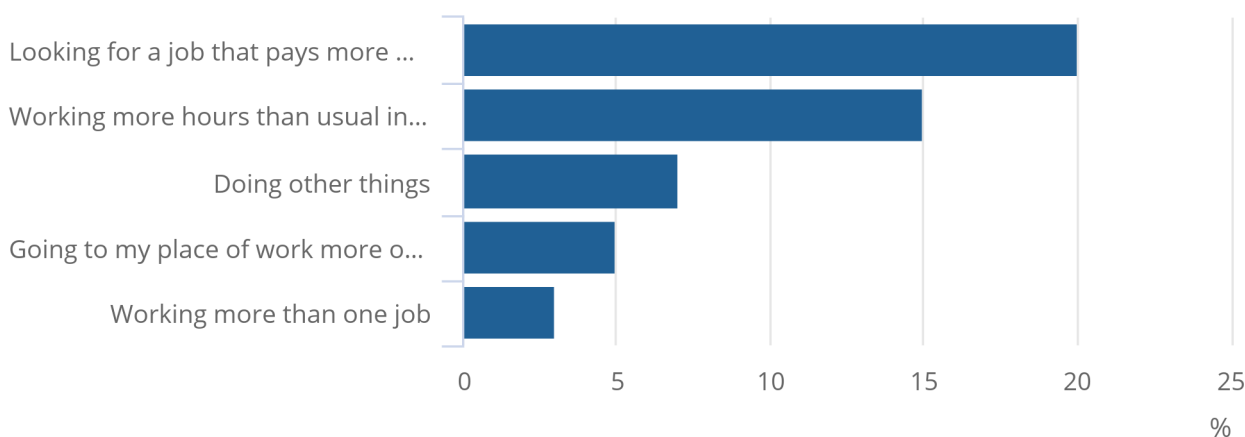
The most reported impacts on work reported by working adults because of increases in the cost of living were looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion (20%) and working more hours than usual in their main job (15%).

### Figure 2: Around 1 in 5 (20%) reported looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion

Proportion of working adults in Great Britain, 29 September to 9 October 2022

## Figure 2: Around 1 in 5 (20%) reported looking for a job that pays more money, including a promotion

Proportion of working adults in Great Britain, 29 September to 9 October 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.

## Location of work

Around 7 in 10 (70%) working adults travelled to work at some point in the past seven days (69% in the previous period). This includes:

- 48% who only travelled to work in the past seven days (47% in the previous period)
- 22% who reported both working from home and travelling to work (hybrid working) in the past seven days (22% in the previous period)

Around 11% of working adults said they worked from home exclusively in the past seven days (13% in the previous period). A further 19% neither travelled to work nor worked from home (18% in the previous period).

## **4 . Worries, personal well-being and loneliness**

### **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 reported worries (being very or somewhat worried) were:

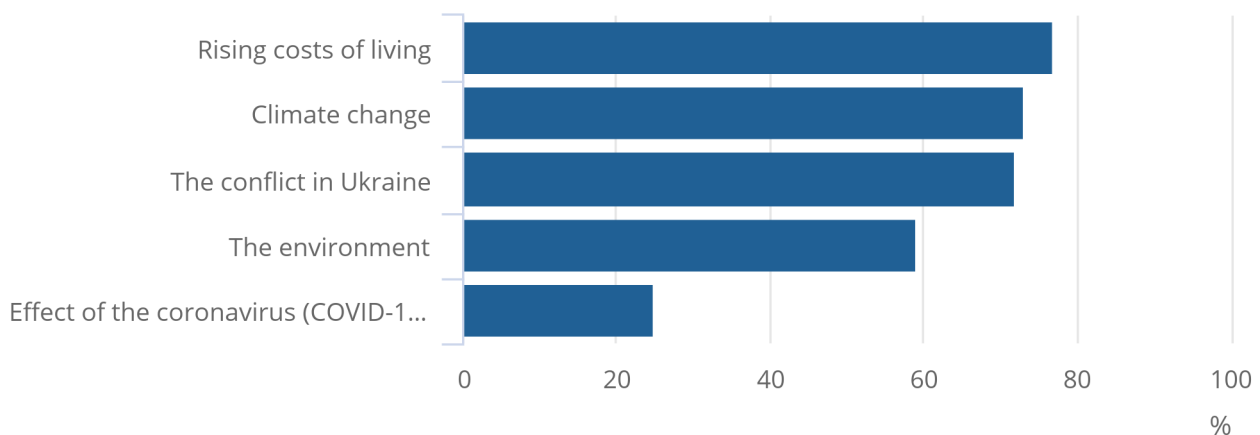
- the rising cost of living (77%)
- climate change (73%)
- the conflict in Ukraine (72%)

**Figure 3: 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, 29 September to 9 October 2022

### Figure 3: 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, 29 September to 9 October 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?” and “How worried or unworried are you about the effect that the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic is having on your life right now?”.
2. Respondents who select “don’t know” or “prefer not to say” for the climate change worries question have been excluded from the analysis of this question. However, for the other questions about worries, these are valid responses included in the analysis.
3. 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 (6.9 in the latest period and 7.0 in the previous period)
- feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile (7.3 in the latest period and 7.3 in the previous period)
- happiness (6.9 in the latest period and 7.0 previous period)
- anxiety (4.1 in both the latest period and the previous period)

#### Figure 4: Levels of personal well-being remained relatively stable in the latest period

Adults in Great Britain, March 2020 to October 2022

Download the data

[.xlsx](#)

### Loneliness

One-quarter (25%) of adults reported feeling lonely always, often, or some of the time in the latest period (25% in the 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 . COVID-19 booster and flu vaccines

In September 2022, the UK government announced that adults in England aged 50 years and over, those in care homes, and those aged 5 years and over in clinical risk groups will be [offered an autumn booster of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) vaccine by December 2022](#). A booster will also be offered to front-line health and social care staff, those who care for vulnerable individuals, and families of individuals with weakened immune systems. Similar announcements to roll out autumn boosters were also made in [Wales](#) and [Scotland](#).

All adults who had previously received a COVID-19 vaccine were asked about the COVID-19 booster regardless of their eligibility. Around 7 in 10 (72%) adults reported that they had received a vaccine for the coronavirus but had not yet received the autumn booster. Among those, 8 in 10 (82%) reported that they would be very or fairly likely to have the booster vaccine if it were offered to them. Around 9 in 10 adults aged 50 to 69 years (90%), and those aged 70 years and over (91%), reported that they would be very or fairly likely to have the booster if offered.

To help protect the public from seasonal illnesses, alongside the coronavirus booster, the [flu vaccine is also being offered to specific vulnerable groups this autumn](#).

Around 1 in 6 (15%) self-reported having received the 2022 winter flu vaccine. Of adults who reported that they had not had a 2022 winter flu vaccine, 59% reported being very or fairly likely to have one. All adults were asked questions about flu vaccines regardless of their eligibility for a free flu vaccine with the NHS.

## 6 . 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 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](#).
- [Explore the latest coronavirus data](#) from the ONS and other sources.
- View [all coronavirus data](#).

## 7 . Public opinions and social trends data

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

Dataset | Released 14 October 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 14 October 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 14 October 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 14 October 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: working arrangements](#)

Dataset | Released 14 October 2022

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

### [Public opinions and social trends, Great Britain: vaccines and testing](#)

Dataset | Released 14 October 2022

Indicators from the Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (OPN) related to coronavirus (COVID-19) boosters, flu vaccines and lateral flow tests for people in Great Britain.

## 8 . 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. For more information about these changes on our methods, please see our [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey Quality and Methodology Information \(QMI\) report](#).

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 (29 September to 9 October 2022), we sampled 4,979 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 2,112 individuals, representing a 42% 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 QMI](#).

## 9 . Related links

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

Web page | Updated as data become available

A live roundup of the latest data and trends about the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and other sources.

### [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 have in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

## 10 . Cite this statistical bulletin

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