



The State We're In: Contexts

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Poverty and Social Justice in a Post-Covid World

Seventh Peter Townsend Memorial Conference

Wills Hall, Bristol

5th – 6th June 2024

65p

JOURNALISM YOU CAN TRUST • BRITAIN'S FASTEST GROWING READERSHIP

EXCLUSIVE
Prince Andrew's accuser agrees to meet his lawyers

LEADER
Mystery of Rebekah Vardy's missing messages
 'Wagatha Christie' court battle escalates

WEDNESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2022

Cost of living crisis: extra 1 million UK children set to go hungry

Free school meals rethink urged - to prevent many more children falling into food poverty
 1.6m currently eligible, but concerns for further 1m whose parents are hit by rising food prices
 Government reluctant to relax rules to offer school meals to all families on universal credit

OPINION
 Carrie Johnson makes me question my feminism
 by Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

HEALTH
 NHS backlog will grow for two more years

CONSUMER
 Blooming heck
 Valentine's Day flower massacre

HEALTH
 He-shuffle!
 Musical chairs after PM's three months from hell

POLITICS
 King of Puns
 Culture - Louise Bourgeois at the Hayward
 March on politics
 Money fall-out
 The fight for my boyfriend's sperm
 TV & Radio Guide
 Puzzles section - 37 games & crosswords inside

SUN HOLS
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 BOOKING FORM INSIDE

OUR NHS DYING
 HOSPITALS GO INTO MELTDOWN
 NHS hits breaking point
 10 hospitals in crisis
 Worst wait in 10yrs
 Car park care tent

THIRD WORLD A&E
 11-hour wait for 999 ambulance
 Helpline blunder led to melt

CRISIS WORST FOR TEN YEARS
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 ARE crisis is the worst in a decade

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Climate change is a global emergency that requires cooperation between all nations. That's why today the Guardian has joined with more than 30 newspapers and media organisations in more than 20 countries to present a common view about what needs to be done to stop the planet hurtling towards the point of no return - where climate chaos becomes irreversible.

It's time to act

The Guardian view on the climate crisis
 Journal, Page 2

The Guardian
 News, president of the year

Tory councils warn Sunak on stark risk of bankruptcy

Exclusive: Raab was warned over behaviour
 A leading civil servant spoke to Dominic Raab on several occasions about his behaviour towards Foreign Office officials, Guardian told.

Revealed
 The numbers that shame the World Cup

INSIDE TODAY
 Our great new-look magazine

INSIDE TODAY
 'I have a girl and she's got a boyfriend'

12 PAGES OF PUZZLES INCLUDING 8-PAGE PULLOUT FREE INSIDE

Sunday Mail
 £2.70
 January 7, 2022

FREE INSIDE
 Slimming World
 recipe magazine

GET YOUR
 Daily Mail
 70p A DAY FOR SIX MONTHS

EXCLUSIVE
Scandal of hungry kids forced into care

Ex-prime minister's anger as desperate families plead for help in poverty epidemic

Green ferry in diesel crisis
Salmond's chip of destiny

DAILY Mirror
 Newspaper of the Year
 Saturday September 2, 2023

INSIDE
 4 GREAT EXTRAS

Al-Fayed dies at 94
 PLUS... THE UNHEARD DIANA TAPES... INSIDE

GOVERNMENT OF FAILURE

Thousands of children now told they can't go back to school because buildings are falling down. Can't the Tories get ANYTHING right?

WHAT A MESS

HEROES
 Discover the power to lower prices on page 2.

ES
 £4

Mirror
 The Heart of Britain

SUNAK'S SICKENER
 NOTHING to help as energy bills set to soar by £1,300
 NOTHING to support struggling pensioners
 NOTHING to stop worst fall in living standards since 50s
 ...and NOTHING much to soften petrol pain

THANKS FOR NOTHING

The Daily Telegraph
 'The biggest fall in living standards on record'

THE TIMES
 Best for analysis
 Biggest fall in living standards since 1950s

THE Guardian
 Cost of living surges: and Sunak squeezes poorest

DAILY EXPRESS
 UNITED WITH THE PEOPLE OF BRITAIN

WILLIAM TAKES FIRM STANCE ON SLAVERY

68F! It's hotter than Spain

SPRING STATEMENT
 Chancellor's £15bn bid to ease cost of living crunch
 Fuel duty slashed by 5p a litre
 Zero VAT on green tech
 £6bn tax cut for 30 million
 National insurance boost for low-paid
 Penny off income tax by 2024

THE FORGOTTEN MILLIONS SAY:

WHAT ABOUT IT? Daily Mail

UNRIVALLED EXPERT ANALYSIS
What Rishi's Spring Statement means for your family finances
 Amid warnings of record squeeze on incomes, Tory MPs fear Chancellor's £15bn of tax cuts won't be enough...

THE TIMES
 SATURDAY
 August 3, 2023
 £2

Burns century sets Ashes alight

Britain's best gardens to visit this summer

No river safe for bathing
 Toxins at highest levels since testing began
 Watchdog leaves water companies free to pollute

My dating life after divorce
 By Candida Crewe 55

Eat!
 Easy recipes
 Donna Jay's summer favourites

Estimated Deprivation & Hunger in Bristol: September 2022

constituency	Missed a payment on a household bill	Cut back on the amount of hot water, heating or electricity that me or my household use	Cut back on food spending	Missed meals or gone without food
Bristol East	10	56	52	14
Bristol North West	9	57	45	13
Bristol South	9	54	48	16
Bristol West	11	50	43	13
Bristol Average	10	54	47	14

The Bristol Quality of Life Survey (2023/24) found that;

- 34% reduced spending on other essentials due to high energy prices
- 31% were worried about being able to keep their homes warm in winter
- 13% money problems stopped them getting involved with their community
- 9% financial circumstances prevents them from leaving their home
- 8% suffered from moderate/severe food insecurity in 2022/23 and in 2023/24

Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty & Human Rights 2019

Although the United Kingdom is the world's fifth largest economy, one fifth of its population (14 million people) live in poverty, and 1.5 million of them experienced destitution in 2017. Policies of austerity introduced in 2010 continue largely unabated, despite the tragic social consequences. Close to 40 per cent of children are predicted to be living in poverty by 2021. Food banks have proliferated; homelessness and rough sleeping have increased greatly; tens of thousands of poor families must live in accommodation far from their schools, jobs and community networks; life expectancy is falling for certain groups; and the legal aid system has been decimated.

The bottom line is that much of the glue that has held British society together since the Second World War has been deliberately removed and replaced with a harsh and uncaring ethos. A booming economy, high employment and a budget surplus have not reversed austerity, a policy pursued more as an ideological than an economic agenda.“

Source: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G19/112/13/PDF/G1911213.pdf?OpenElement>

Department of Work & Pensions Fact Check on the UN Special Rapporteur's Report

“We did a fact check of the special rapporteur’s report. He made a lot of good points, it was factually correct...in terms of the facts, in terms of austerity, and cuts to local government funding, in terms of the reliance that we have on the labour market and the risk that we have if there was a recession, all of those things were really good points that we have taken on board, we should take on board.”

Donna Ward, DWP’s Policy Director for Children, Families and Disadvantage
evidence to the Work and Pensions Select Committee 12/6/2019 – 10:13am
<https://www.parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/dc8af560-fd77-4196-922b-a80731799097>

In November 2023, Olivier De Schutter, the UN’s special rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights said;

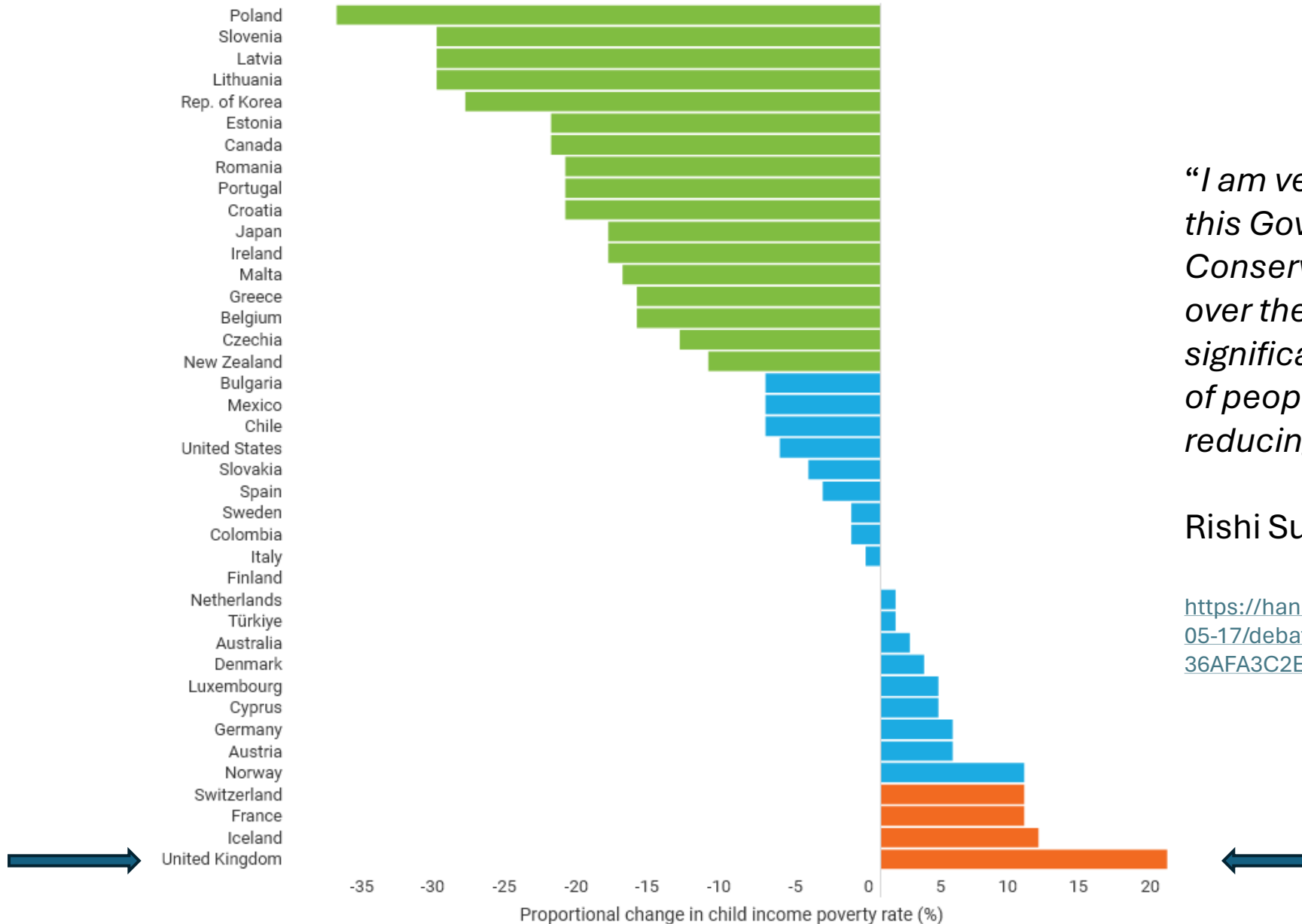
“Things have got worse.”

Source:

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/nov/05/uk-poverty-levels-simply-not-acceptable-says-un-envoy-olivier-de-schutter>

Change in child income poverty rates

Percentage of reductions and increases in child income poverty rates in 39 countries, 2014–2021.

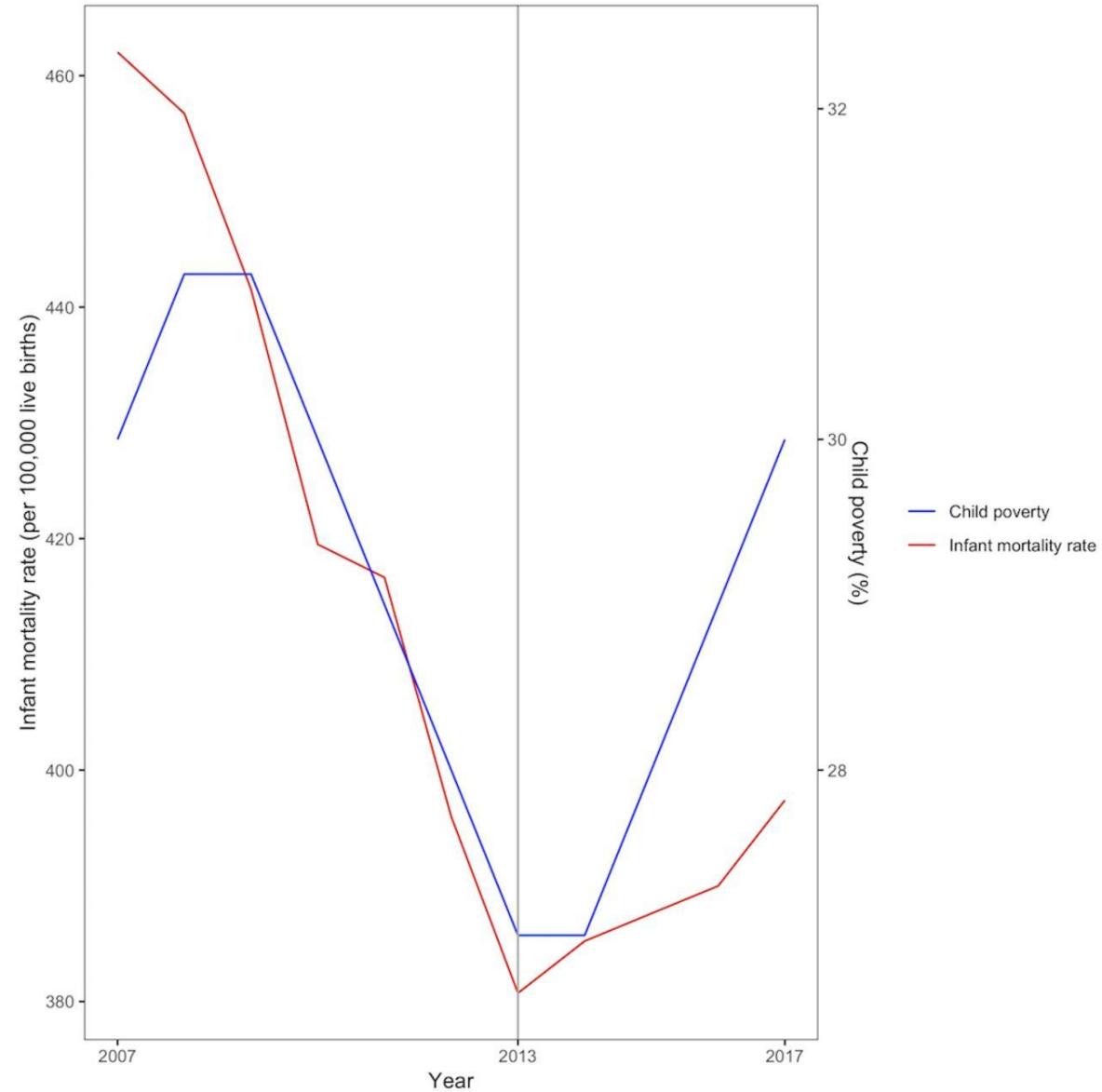


“I am very proud of the record of this Government and previous Conservative-led Governments over the past decade of significantly reducing the number of people living in poverty and reducing income inequality.”

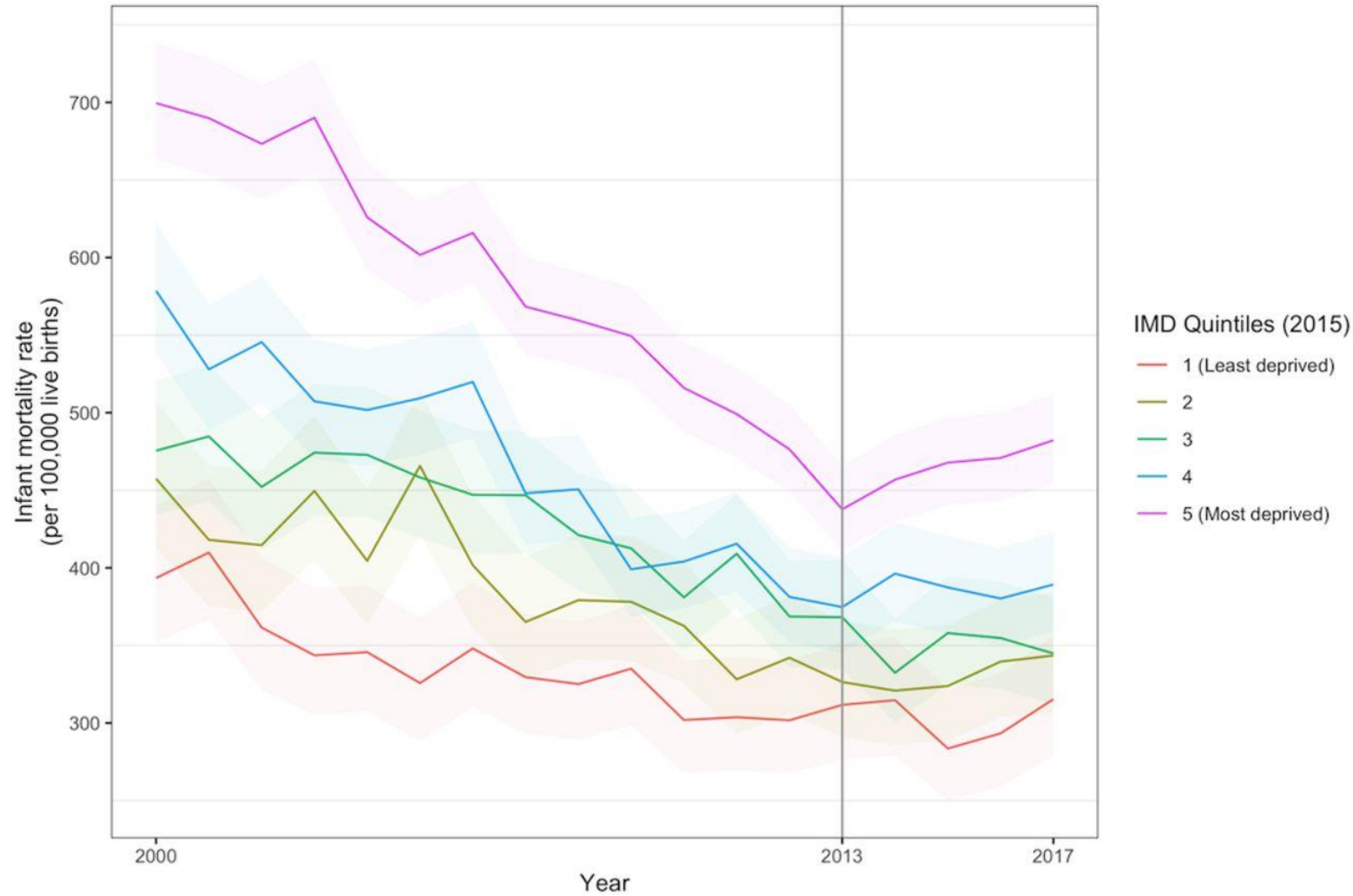
Rishi Sunak (17th May 2022)

<https://hansard.parliament.uk/Commons/2022-05-17/debates/208CFEE9-63DC-4B83-A0DD-36AFA3C2EDD9/ReducingEconomicInequality>

Change in Infant Mortality and Child Poverty in England, 2007 to 2017

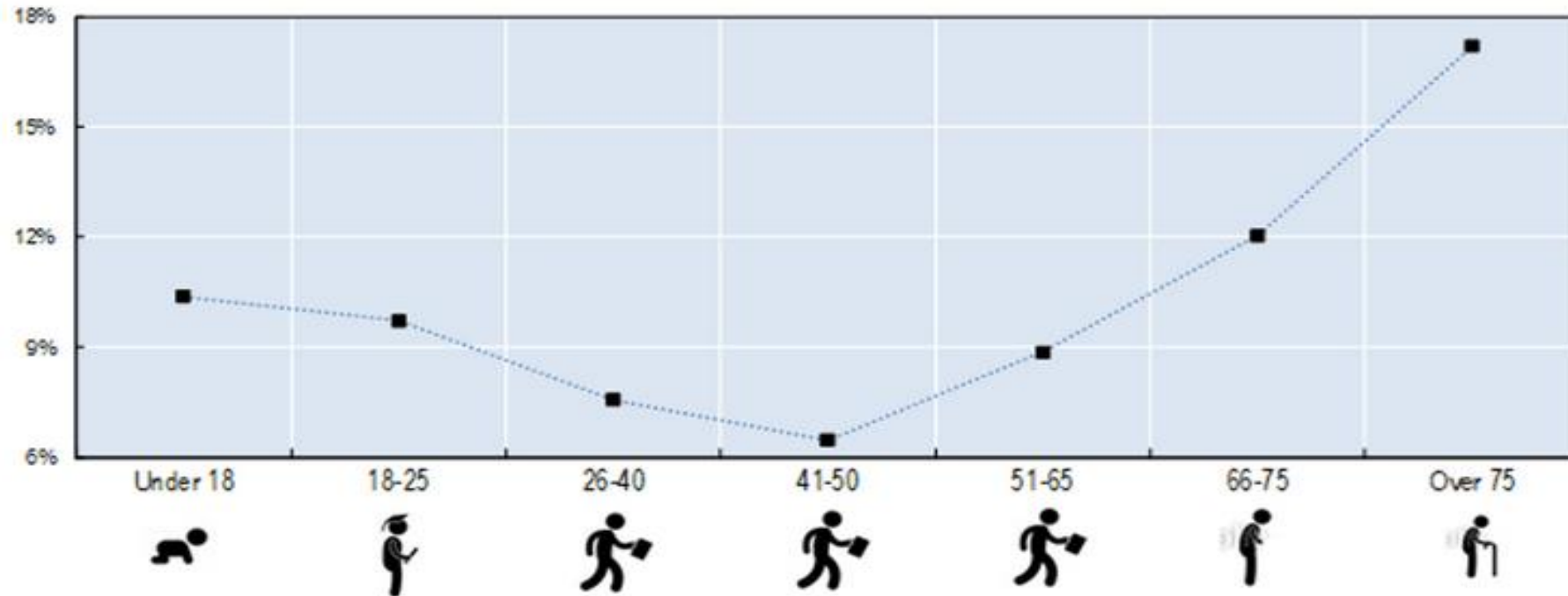


Infant mortality trend by deprivation quintile of local authority district, 2000–2017



“The unprecedented rise in infant mortality in England has disproportionately affected the poorest areas of the country, leaving the more affluent areas unaffected.”

Income Poverty Rates by Age Group in OECD Countries in the mid-1980s

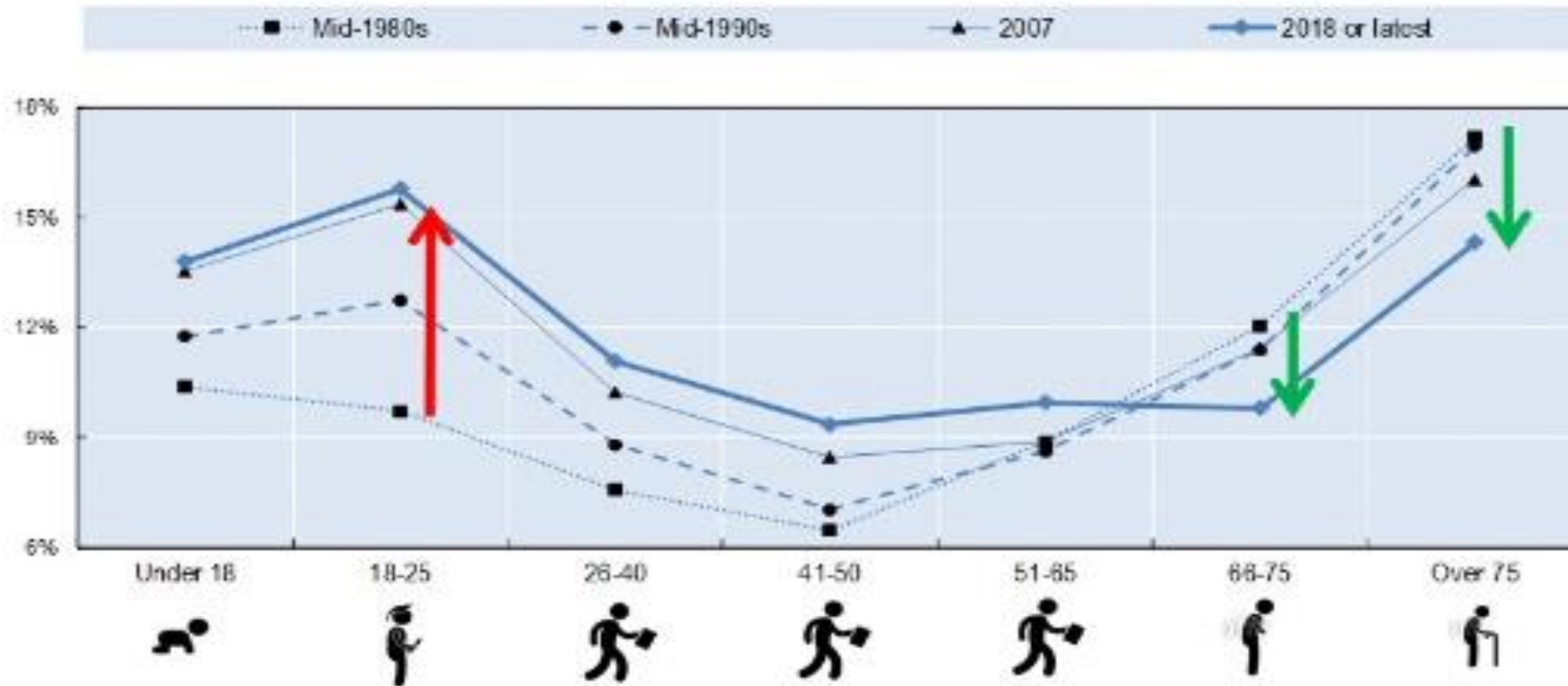


In the mid-1980s, older people were on average more likely to be poor than children or people of working age.

OECD poverty = less than half the median national household income.

<https://www.oecd-forum.org/posts/the-poverty-risk-has-shifted-from-the-elderly-to-young-people>

Changes in Income Poverty Rates by Age Group in OECD Countries 1980s to 2018



Source: OECD Income Distribution Database (<http://oe.cd/idd>).

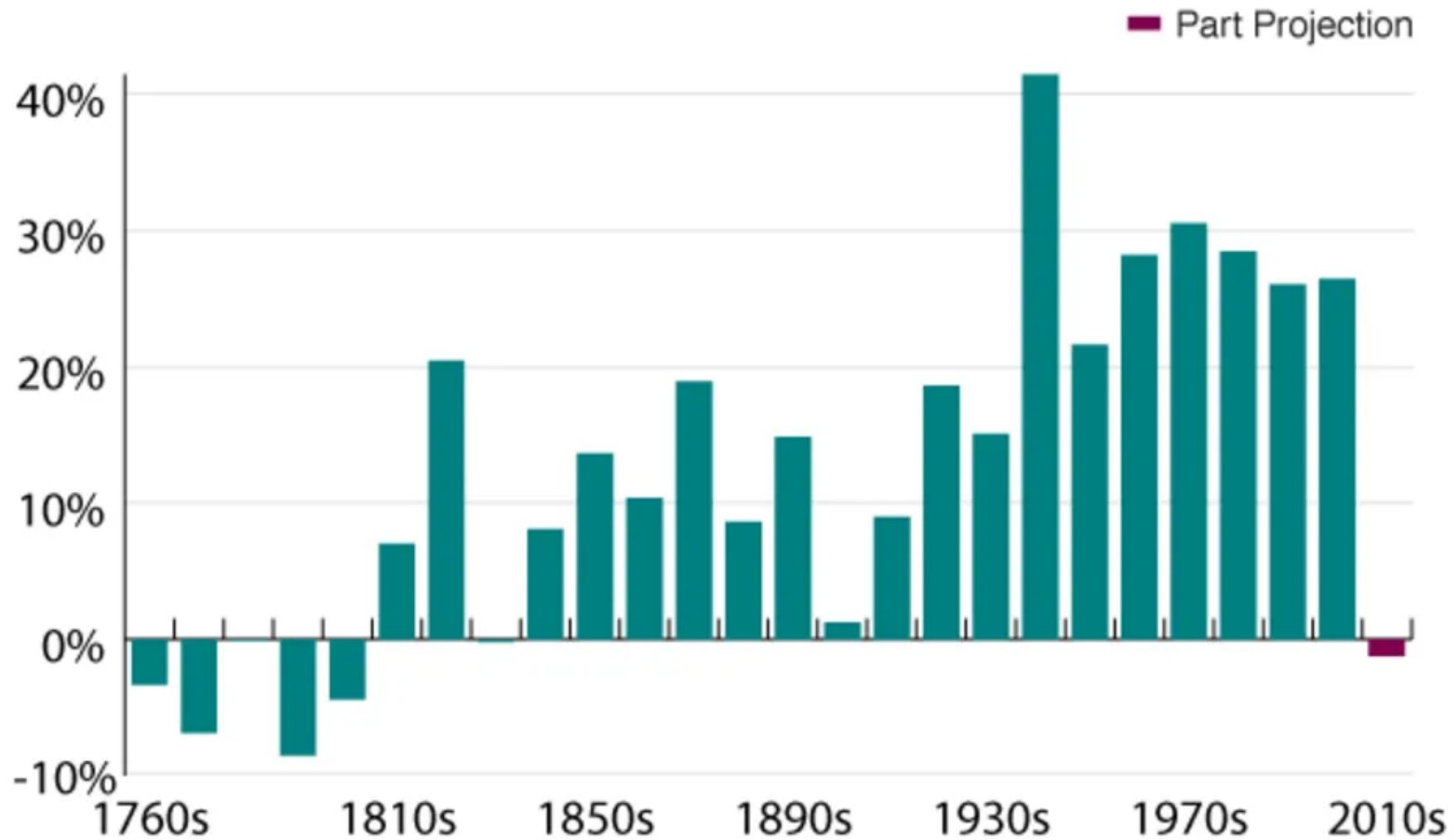
Poverty amongst older people has declined and child and working age poverty has increased over the past 40 years. This long term trend accelerated considerable after the 2008 financial crisis in OECD countries.

OECD poverty = less than half the median national household income.

<https://www.oecd-forum.org/posts/the-poverty-risk-has-shifted-from-the-elderly-to-young-people>

Earnings Growth in 2010s was the lowest since the Napoleonic Wars

Earnings growth between decades

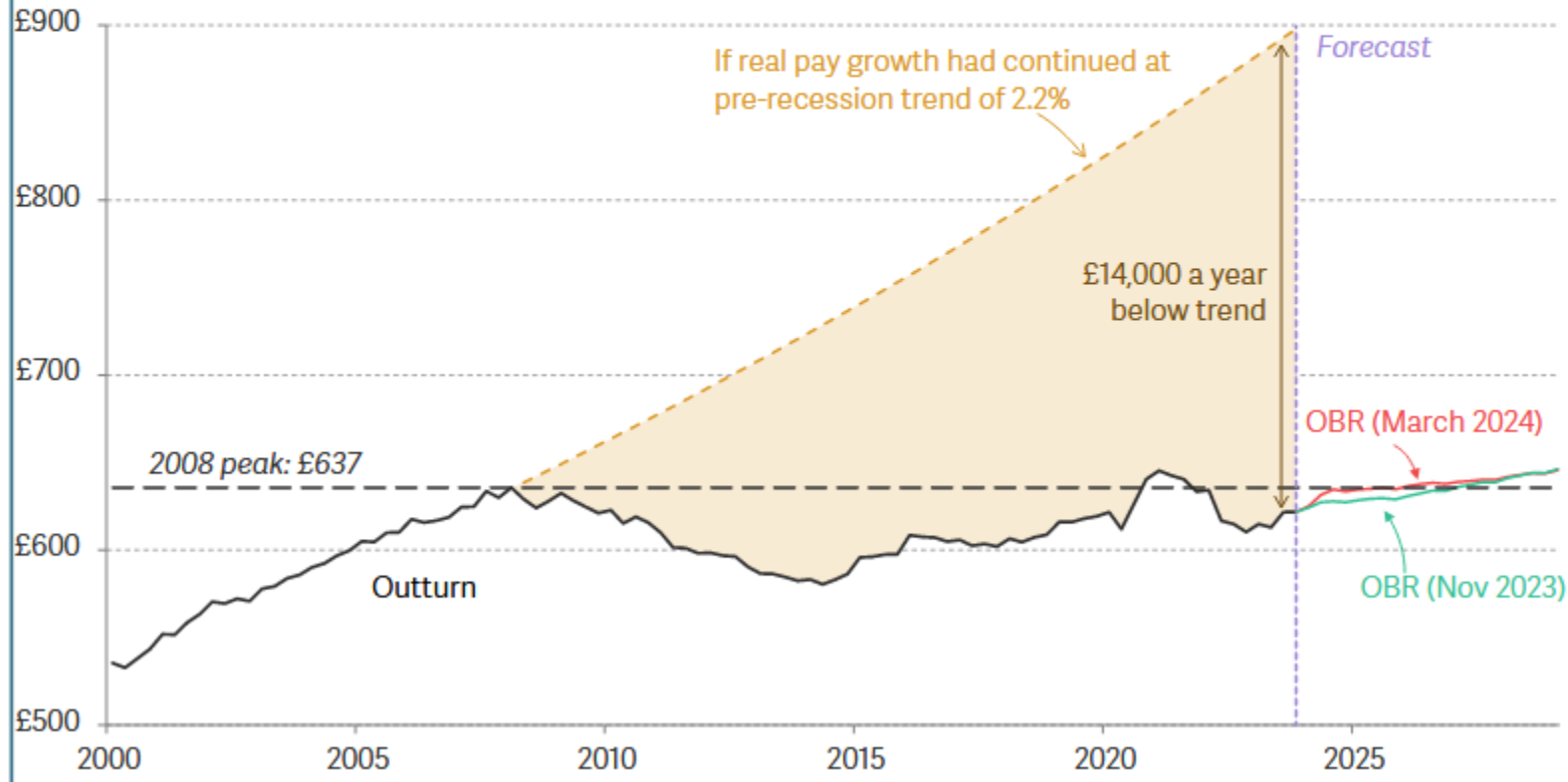


*Inflation adjusted

Source: Resolution Foundation analysis of ONS, OBR & Bank of England data

FIGURE 4: Lower inflation means the real wage outlook has improved, but it will still take until 2026 for real wages return to their 2008 level

Real average weekly earnings, outturn, successive OBR forecasts, and extrapolation of pre-recession trend: GB/UK



Aref-Adib et al (2024) Back for more? Putting the 2024 Spring Budget in context.

<https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/back-for-more/>

The £540 Billion Pound UK Austerity Spending Cuts: 2010-2019

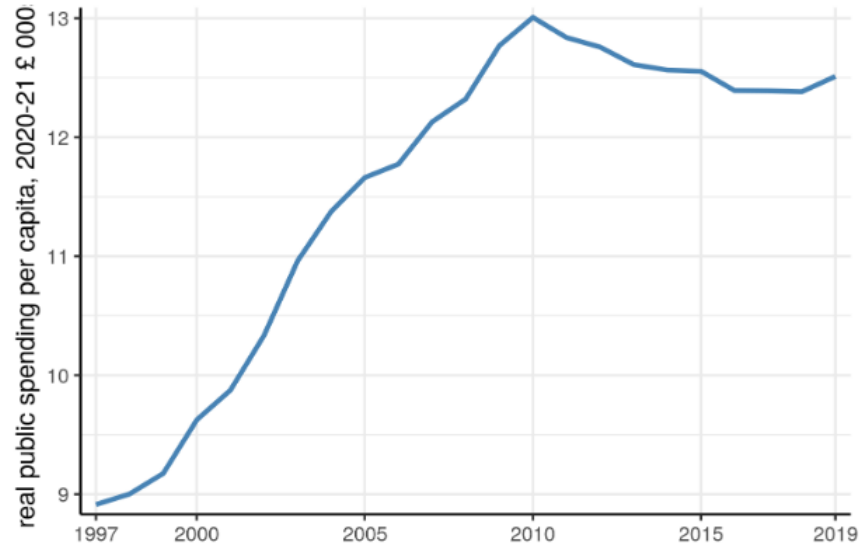


Figure 3. Government current spending per person, £000s in 2020-21 prices.

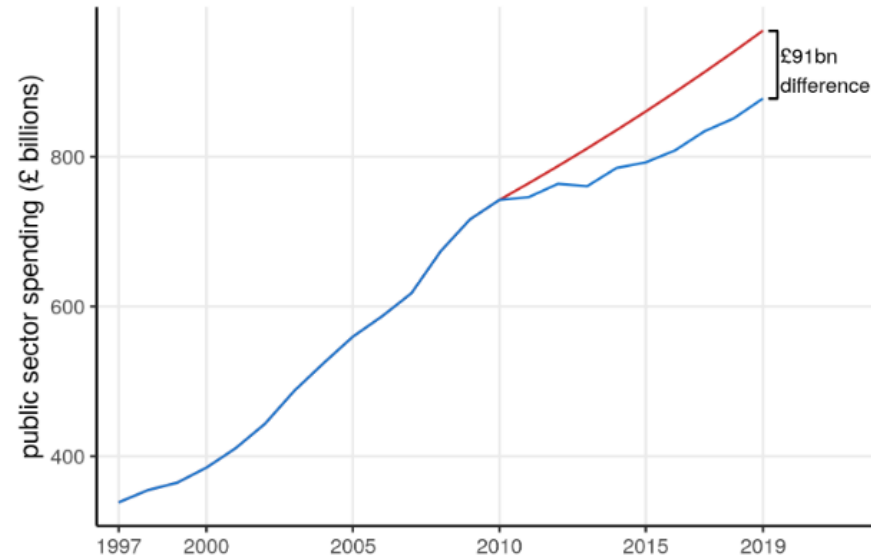
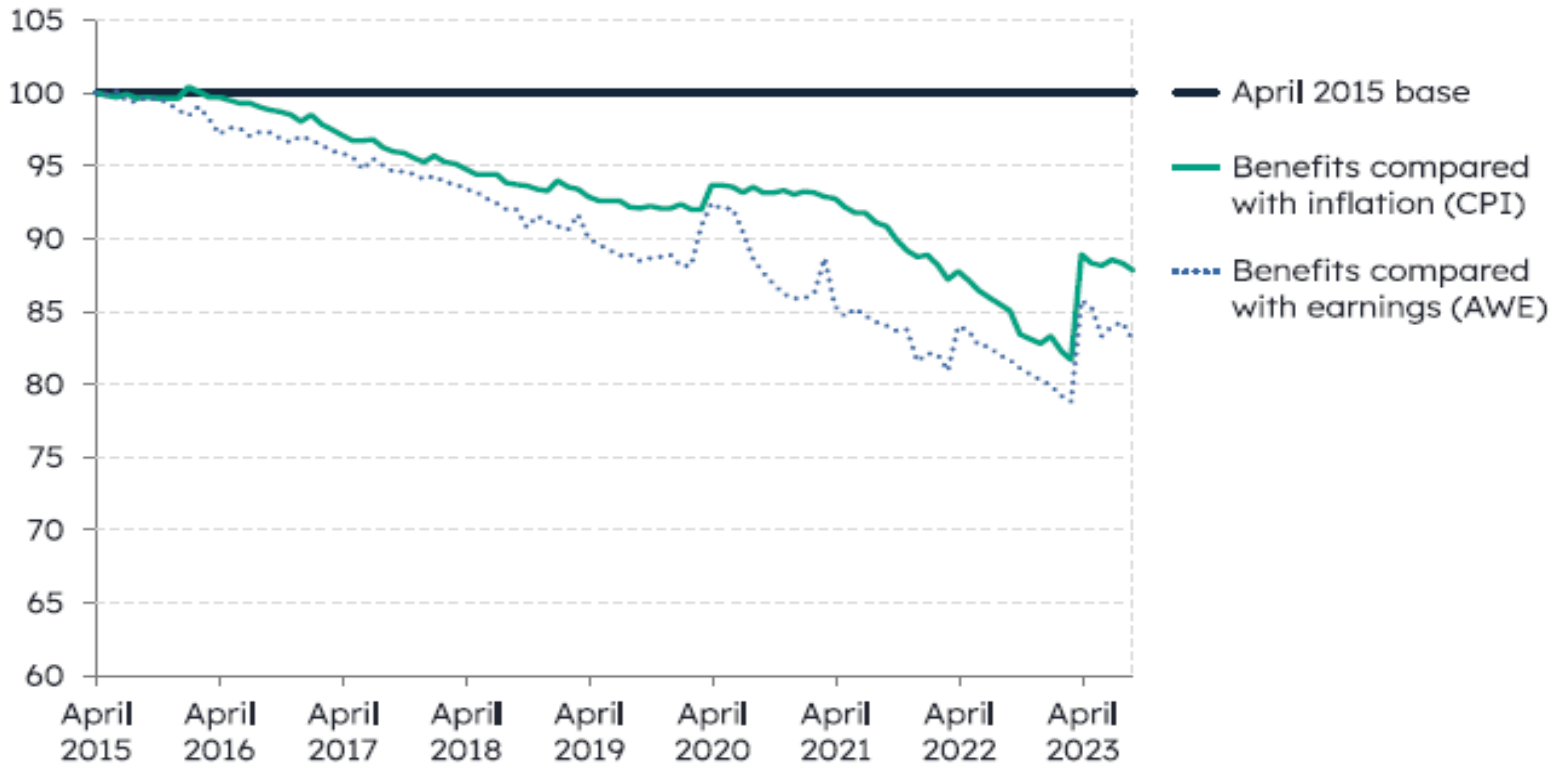


Figure 13: Public sector spending counterfactual (actual in blue; 3% growth balanced budget scenario in red).

The cost of austerity spending cuts in public spending growth, came to **£91bn** of lost public expenditure in the final year of the austerity programme, or **£540bn** over 2010-19.

Between April 2015 (the last year before the benefits freeze) and the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the value of benefits consistently declined. Although it increased when inflation and earnings fell at the start of the pandemic and the benefits freeze ended in 2020, it remains below pre-pandemic levels

Ratio of benefits to earnings or inflation



Source: DWP abstract of statistics and ONS inflation and wage data

United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Report on the UK, 2017

“the Committee considers that there is reliable evidence that the threshold of grave or systematic violations of the rights of persons with disabilities has been crossed”

This was due to austerity measures implemented by the UK Government

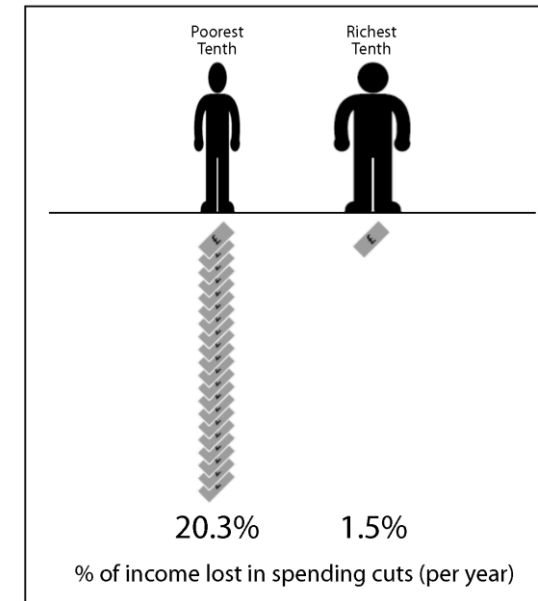
2% of the population - the people with the greatest needs - will bear the burden of 25% of all the cuts’

Source: Duffy, S. (2014) *A Fair Society? How the Cuts Target Disabled People*. Sheffield, Centre for Welfare Reform.

<http://www.centreforwelfarereform.org/uploads/attachment/354/a-fair-society.pdf>

<https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1311200?ln=en>

Figure 22. The effect of spending cuts on people in Britain, 2010-2016



Source: Oxfam (2012, p.24) *The Perfect Storm: Economic stagnation, the rising cost of living, public spending cuts, and the impact on UK poverty*, Oxford: Oxfam.

The UN asked the UK Government to report on the implementation of its 2017 recommendations in August 2023. The UK Government refused to attend the meeting and eventually reported in March 2024

Alexandra Gowlland (Deputy Director Disability Unit, Cabinet Office) said that the government is committed the “*transforming the benefits system*” by:

- *‘Focusing on what disabled people can do, not what they can’t’.*
- *“Stepping up employment support”.*
- *Ensuring disabled people can “access the right support [from the DWP] at the right time”.*

The UN committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities members stated:

“We find a pervasive framework and rhetoric that devalues disabled people and undermines their human dignity. Reforms within social welfare benefits are premised on a notion that disabled people are undeserving and skiving off and defrauding the system. This has resulted in hate speech and hostility towards disabled people.”

Rosemary Kayess, (Vice-chair, UN Committee on the Rights of Disabled People -18th March 2024; Source: 710th meeting, 30th Session CRPD - <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1s/k1svtljvtr> (47min 10 sec)

“we have heard numerous reports of persons with disabilities facing intolerable situations, even death, when trying to comply with the eligibility requirements of the UK government’s benefit regimes, work capability assessments and programmes administering support for independent living within the community.” Professor Laverne Jacobs (UN CRPD member) (710th meeting, 30th Session CRPD - <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1s/k1svtljvtr> (50min 15 sec)

Zero Covid is good for health and the economy

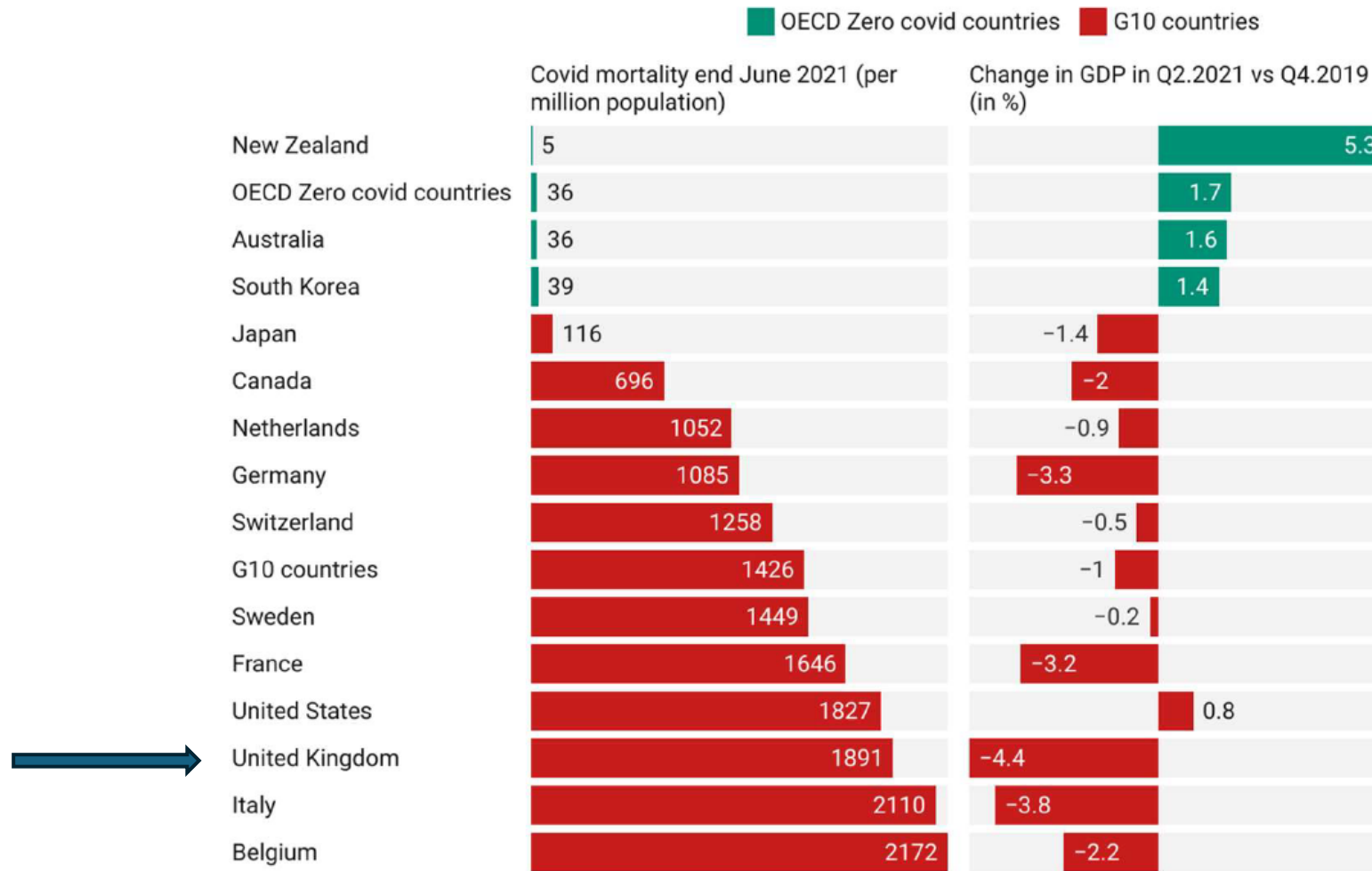


Chart: Institut économique Molinari with OurWorldInData & OECD • Created with Datawrapper

Source: Philippe, C. & Marques, N. (2021) *The Zero Covid strategy continues to protect people, economies and freedoms more effectively*. Institut Économique Molinari | World Health Network. <https://www.institutmolinari.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/zero-covid-whn-sept2021.pdf>

The Economic Effects of Austerity and the COVID Pandemic on the UK

The UK has a lower number of hospital beds and doctors per person than other European countries

Hospital beds per 1,000 people vs doctors per 1,000 people by Country for 2020

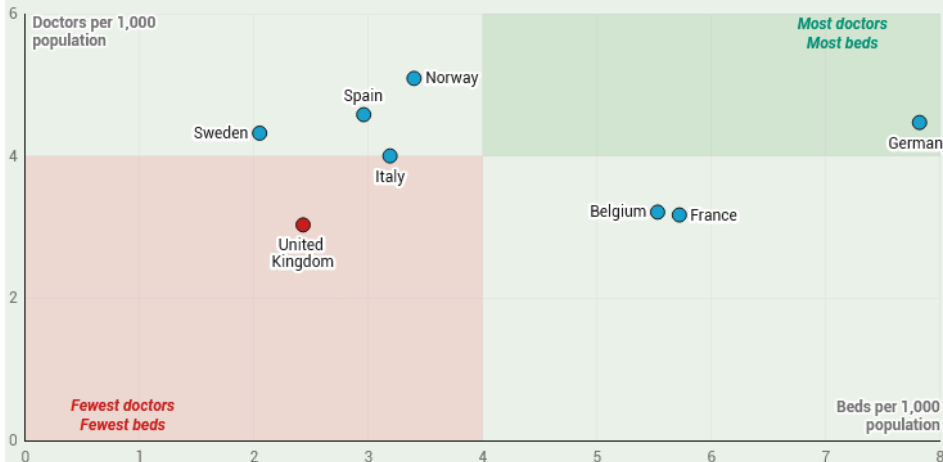


Chart: Bob Hawkins • Source: OECD • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

The costs of ill-health to the economy are estimated to amount to around £148 billion per year

Estimated economic cost of lost output among working -age people due to ill health: 2023



Chart: Bob Hawkins • Source: Analysis for TIMES Health Commission Report • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

The number of people economically inactive due to long-term sickness is at a record high of 2.8 million

ONS estimates of economic inactivity due to long-term sickness in the UK: Apr 1993 - Nov 2023



Chart: Bob Hawkins • Source: ONS Labour Force Survey (16-64 year old) • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

After a decade of falling, the number of people economically inactive started to rise with the advent of Covid

Number of people aged 16-64 years old economically inactive in the UK by quarter: 2000-2023

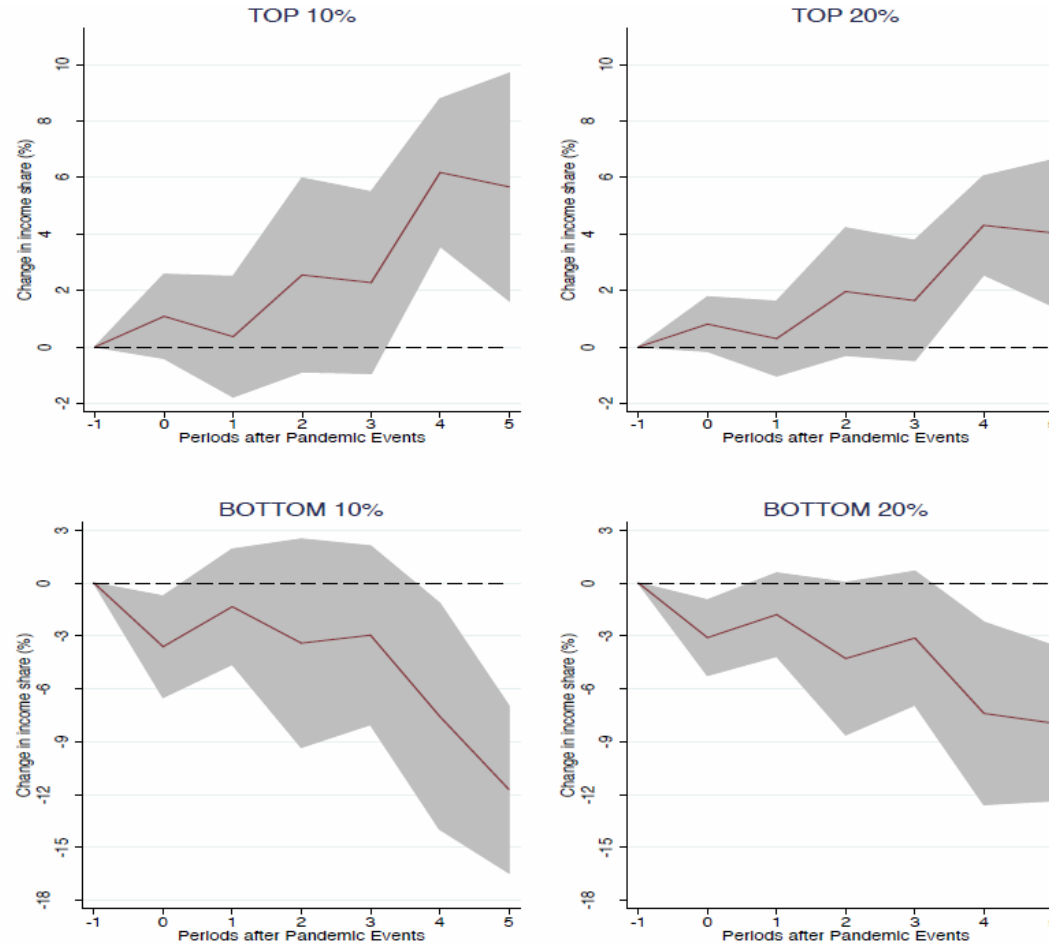


Chart: Bob Hawkins • Source: ONS Labour Force Survey • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

Pandemics have always done greater harm to poor and vulnerable people and resulted in increases in poverty and inequality

Average impact of the last five epidemics on Inequality: Income shares of the richest and poorest in 64 Countries

(SARS in 2003, H1N1 in 2009, MERS in 2012, Ebola in 2014 and Zika in 2016)

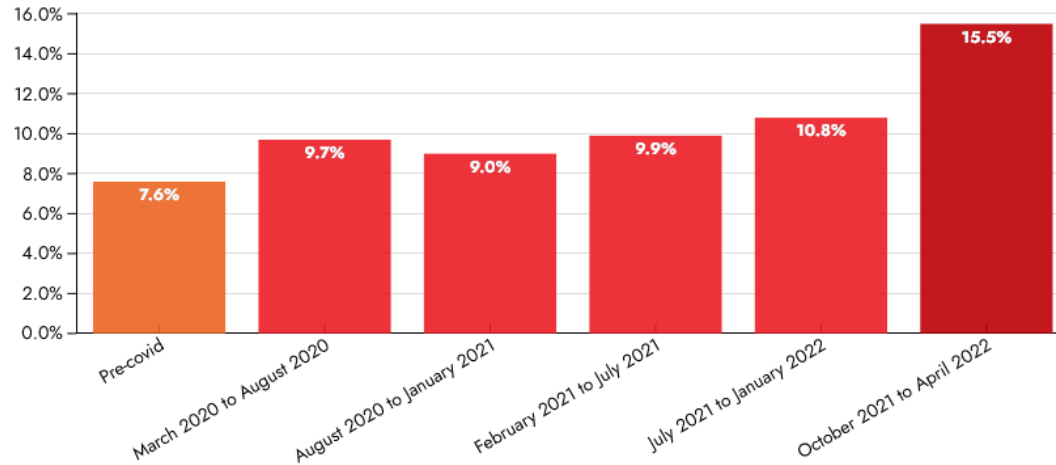


'Periods' are years before & after the epidemic

Source: Furceri et al, (2020) Will Covid-19 affect inequality? Evidence from past pandemics. *Covid Economics*, 12, 138-157

Food Insecurity in the UK has doubled since 2018

Percentage of households experiencing food insecurity*:



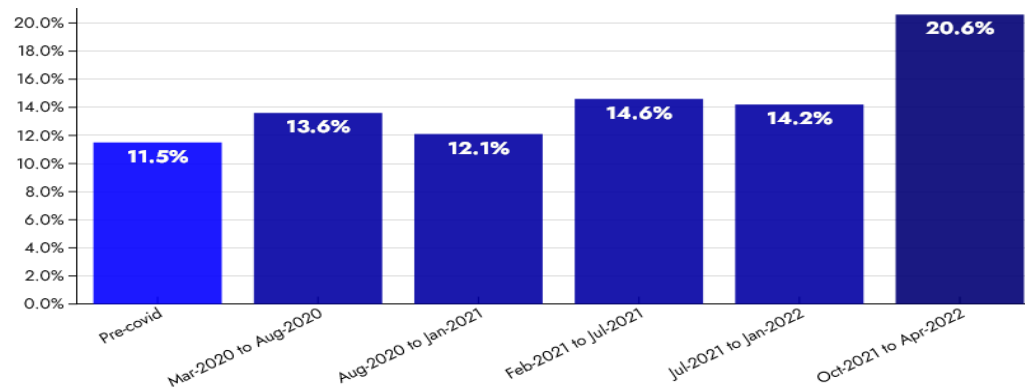
In January 2024, 15% of households experienced Food Insecurity

*Food insecurity during the pandemic (6-month recall period) compared with pre-Covid (12-month recall period).
Pre-covid source: Food Standards Agency, Food and You Survey 2018. Re-analysed to allow direct comparison.



1 in 5 households with children have experienced food insecurity in the past six months

Percentage of households with children experiencing food insecurity*:



In January 2024, 20% of households with children experienced Food Insecurity

* 6-month recall period
Pre-covid source: Food Standards Agency, Food and You Survey 2018. Re-analysed (to allow direct comparison).



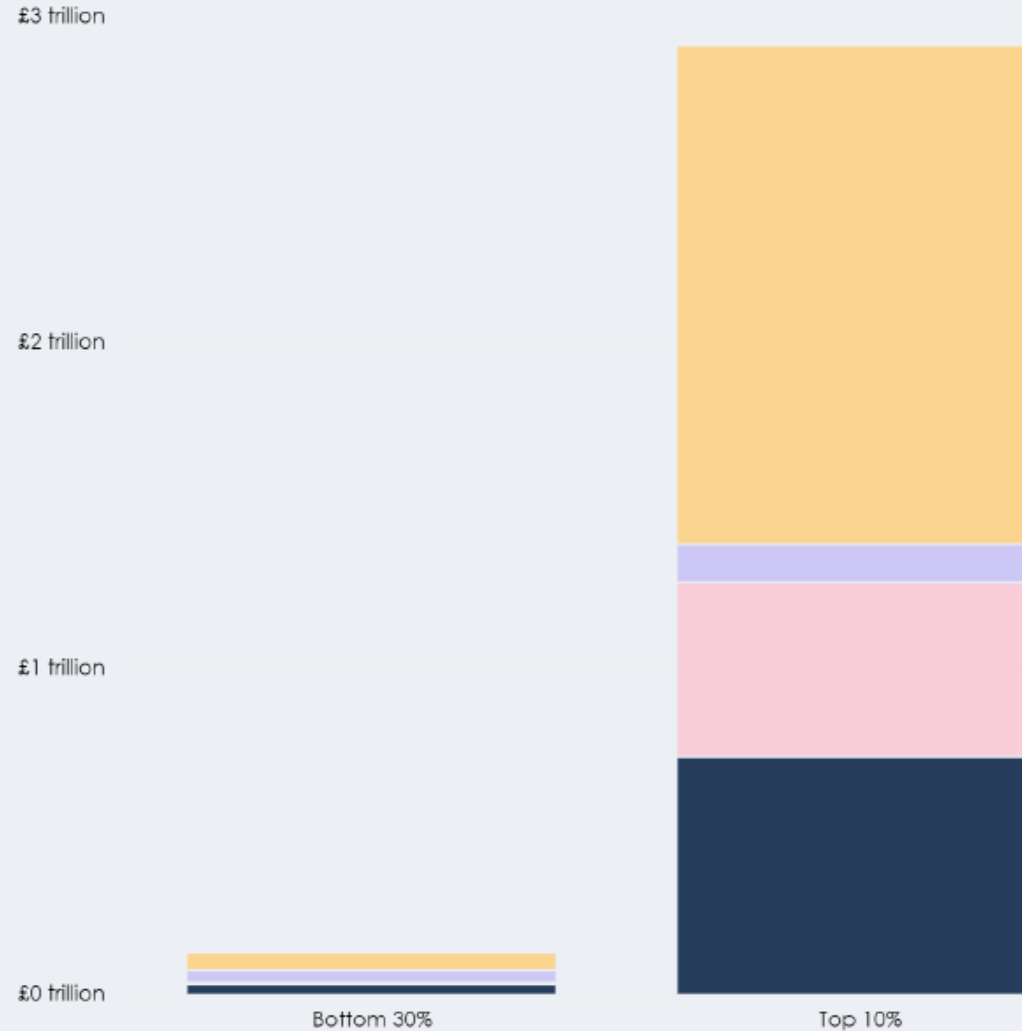
<https://foodfoundation.org.uk/initiatives/food-insecurity-tracking#tabs/Round-14>

The Growth of Wealth Inequality in the UK: 2006/08 to 2018/20

Total wealth for the wealthiest 10% grew by nearly £3 trillion between 2006-2008 and 2018-2020, nearly 25 times more than wealth grew for the bottom 30%

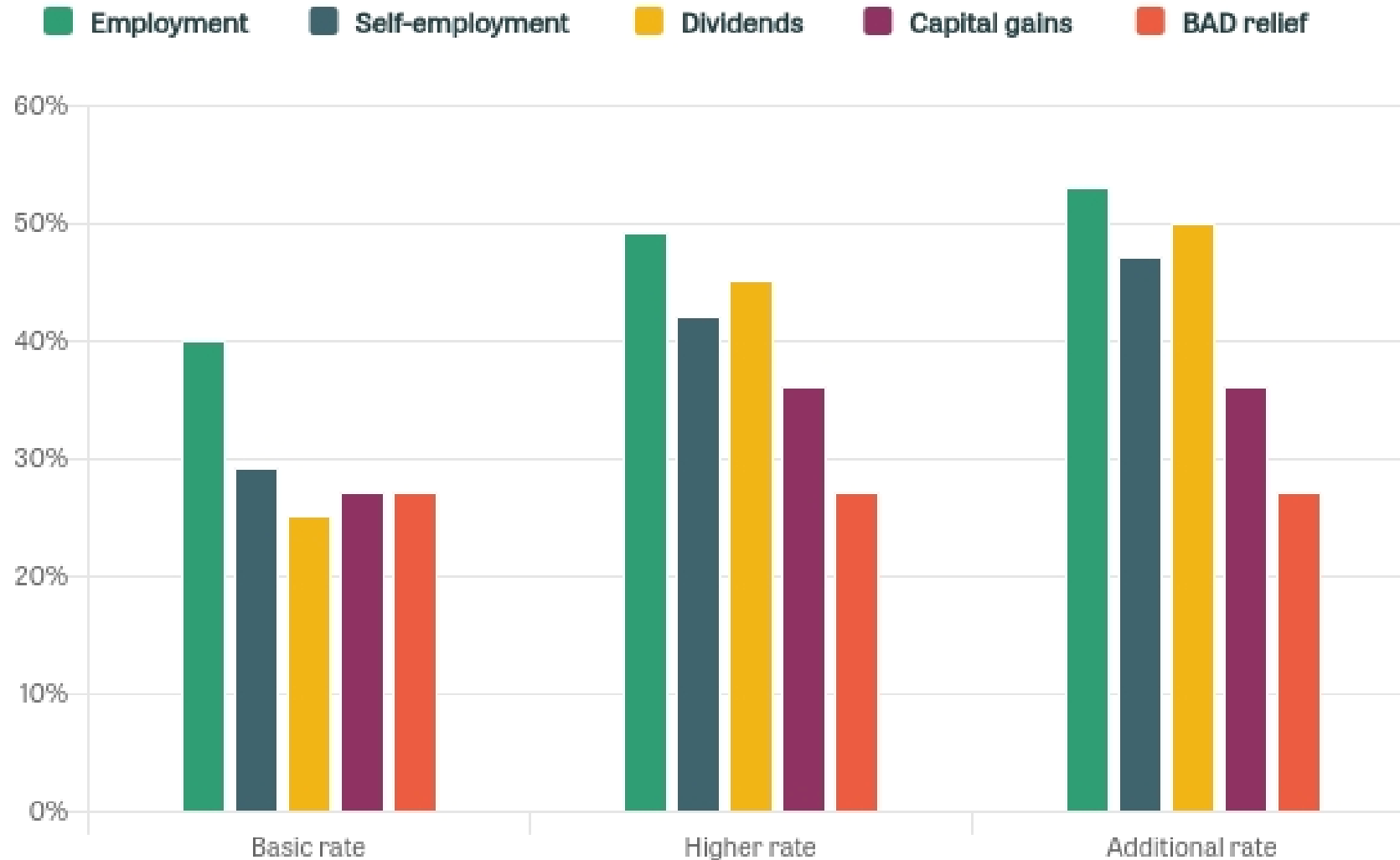
Growth in total wealth and the factors that make it up, 2006-2008 to 2018-2020. Highest wealth decile (top 10%) and lowest 30% wealth decile shown

- Growth in aggregate property wealth
- Growth in aggregate financial wealth
- Growth in aggregate physical wealth
- Growth in aggregate private pension wealth



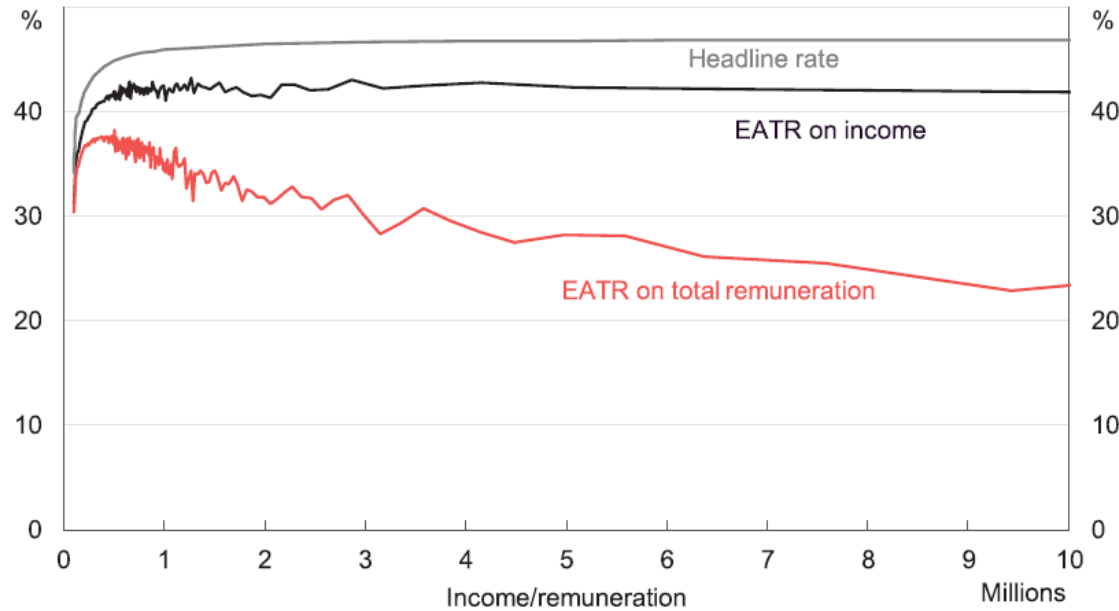
Source: ONS Data on Household total wealth in Great Britain • The growth in wealth for just Decile 1 is too small to be visible in comparison to the growth in wealth for Decile 10.

Overall marginal tax rates, by income type, 2021–22

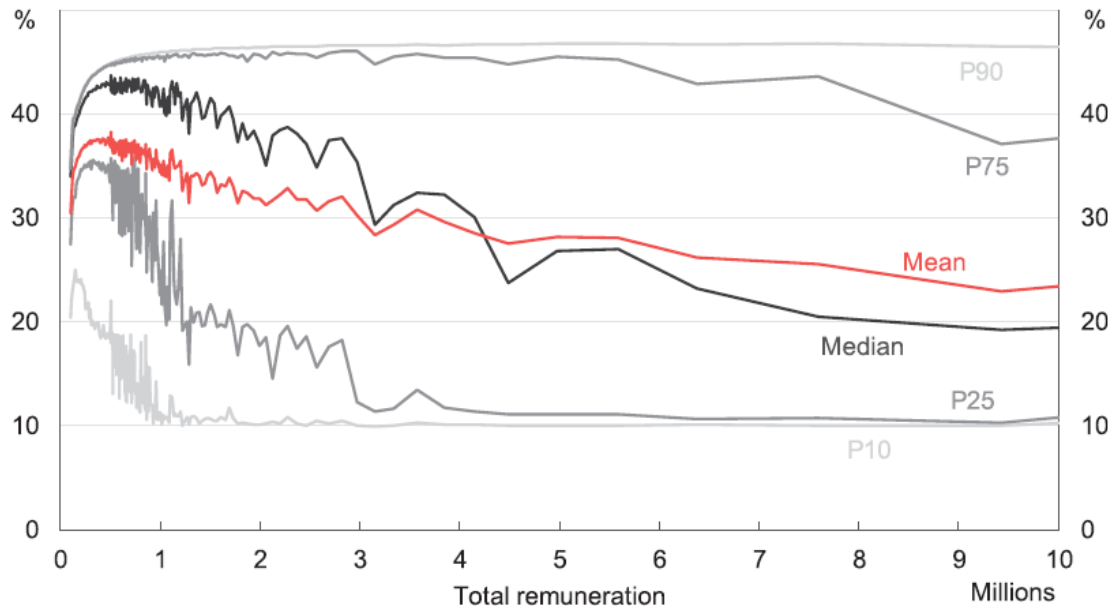


everviz.com

Average Effective Annual Tax Rate in 2018 of People in the UK with Income and Remuneration of over £100,000



In 2018, Individuals earning over £100,000 collectively earn over **£200 billion**. If they paid the headline tax rate that currently applies to earnings from employment (i.e. 47 per cent) across all forms of taxable income, this would raise up to **£23 billion**

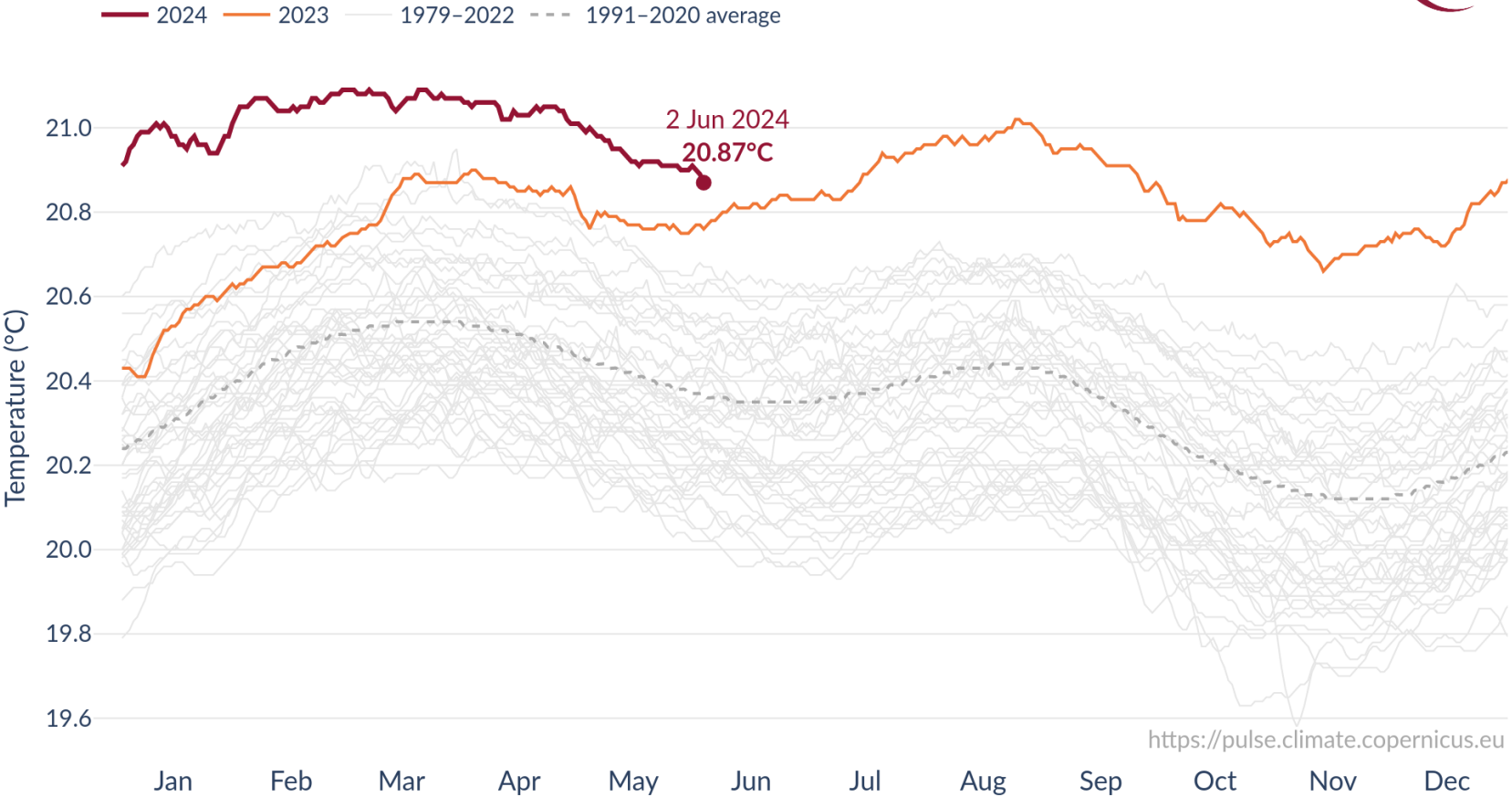


The last Chancellor to raise the tax rate on capital gains to the same level as earned income was Nigel Lawson in 1988

The Sea Surface Temperature in January 2024 was 1.52°C above the 1850-1900 pre-industrial average

Daily sea surface temperature for 60°S–60°N

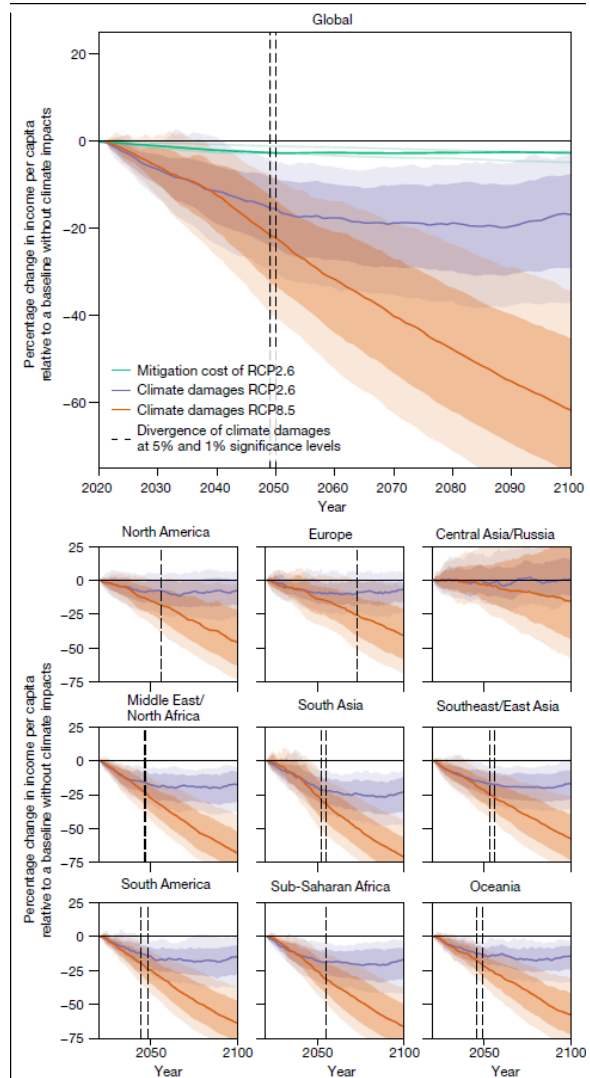
Data: ERA5 1979–2024 • Credit: C3S/ECMWF



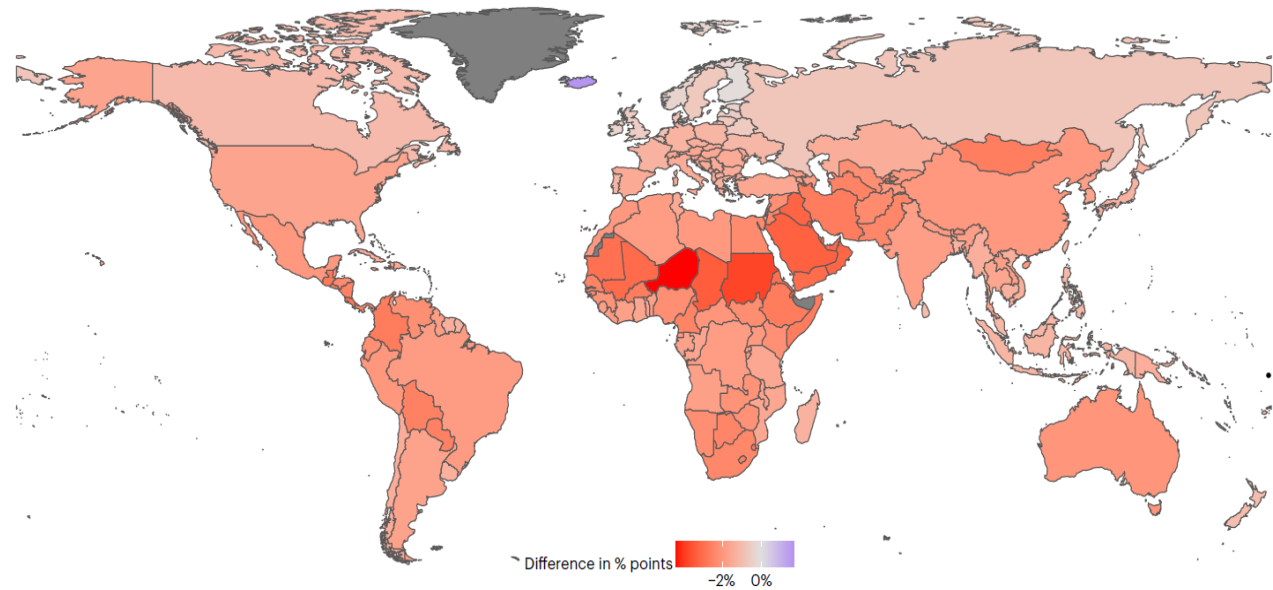
PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN UNION



Estimated reduction in income per capita due to Climate Change



Estimated reduction in GDP from + 3° C global warming



Sources:

Kotz et al (2024) The economic commitment of climate change. *Nature* 628, 551–557

Waidelich et al (2024) Climate damage projections beyond annual temperature. *Nature Climate Change*

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41558-024-01990-8>

Redistribution is the only Solution to Child Poverty

The economics are very simple and are entirely concerned with redistribution – where sufficient resources are redistributed from adults to children there is no child poverty; where insufficient resources are redistributed from adults to children child poverty is inevitable

Children cannot and should not do paid work to generate the resources they need to escape from poverty. This is the job of adults.

Children should be spending their time playing and learning not working at paid labour.