

ITV Website 21 September 2014 at 12:20pm

Struggling on £200,000 - the plight of the 'squeezed upper-middle'



Those on £200,000 a year are not living the champagne lifestyle they might have expected. Photo: PA

Forget the 'squeezed middle'.

There's another section of society struggling under difficult economic conditions.

This is the so-called "squeezed upper middle" - families who take home as much as £200,000 a year who are finding life tough.

The phenomenon is particularly pronounced in the capital, according to Danny Dorling, an Oxford academic who has written a book entitled 'Inequality and the 1%'.

Speaking to the [Sunday Times \(£\)](#), Prof Dorling said it would now be "very hard to find someone in London with a household income of between £200,000 and £350,000 who told you they felt comfortable".



Many people in well-paid jobs apparently wish they had plumped for an even better paid position in financial services. Credit: PA

While those on modest incomes might have to hunt for bargains at discount stores, the 'squeezed uppers' feel the pinch from high mortgage repayments, private school fees for the kids and pricey private medical care.

For instance, fees for private day schools have risen 429% in the last 25 years, while wages have gone up a measly 118% (still well above inflation).

Apparently the 'squeezed uppers' are also irritated at having to pay the top 45% rate of income tax while rarely using public services, aside from the weekly (or fortnightly) bin collection. Dorling also says they have a misplaced sense of their own

normality, believing themselves to be in the "squeezed middle" when plenty earn over ten times the average annual wage of £24,596.



The high cost of London mortgages is one reason the 'squeezed upper-middle' feel hard done by. Credit: PA

This arises partly because highly-paid lawyers, consultants, managers and the like often find themselves poorly compensated - at least in comparison to their peers who work in lucrative financial services jobs.

Peter York, who co-founded management consultancy firm SRU, has little sympathy for the whining well-to-do, but he does voice concern at what their "sense of grievance" says about society.

“It matters if you don’t realise that you’ve never had it so good, and it matters if people no longer want to go into more worthy types of work,” he told the Sunday Times.

Last updated Sun 21 Sep 2014