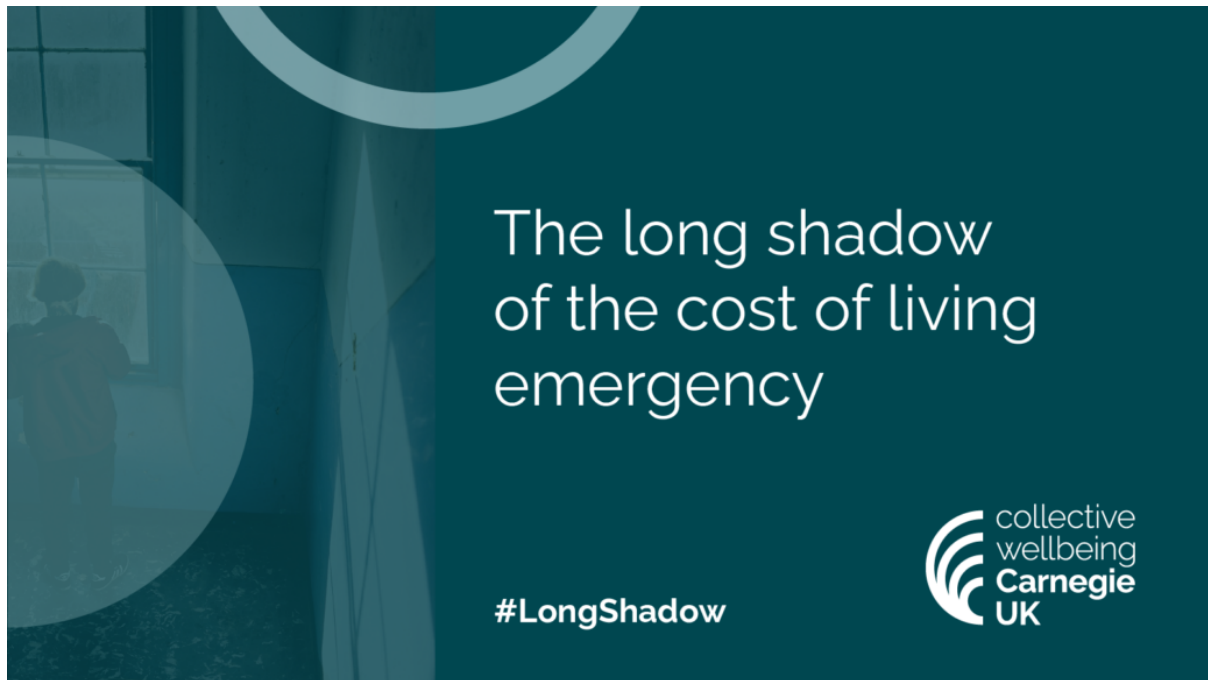


Dorling, D. (2023) The long shadow of the cost of living emergency, Carnegie UK Trust, May 23rd, <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/blog-posts/prof-danny-dorling-looks-at-our-cost-of-living-research/>



Danny Dorling is Professor of Geography at the University of Oxford. In this guest blog, Professor Dorling looks in more detail at the statistics which inform Carnegie UK's recent research into the wider impact of the cost of living.

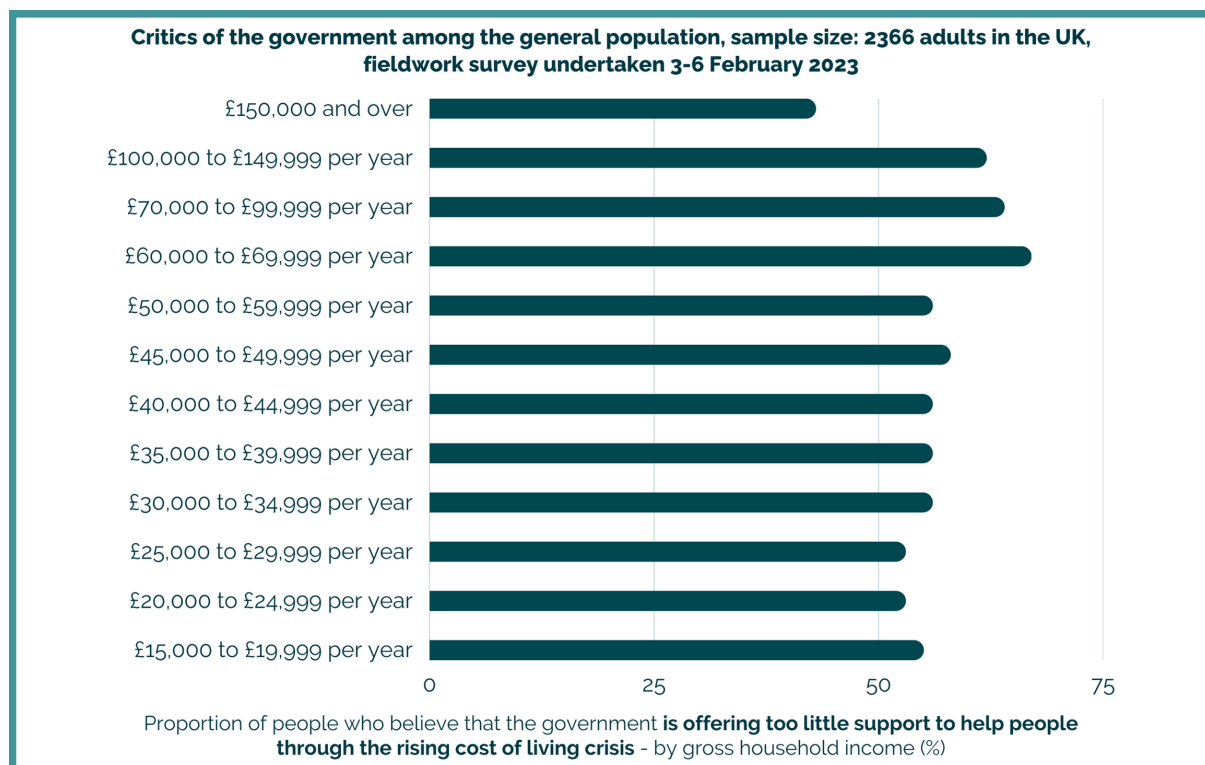
In *'The long shadow of the cost-of-living emergency'*,¹ Amy Baker and Hannah Paylor revealed that: one in six people by early 2023 were less able to exercise, two in six less able to afford a healthy diet, and three in every six much less able to partake in the norms of society than they were just a year ago.^[1] Eating out with friends or family is no longer a sensible option for most. The cinema has become unaffordable to half of society.

At the extremes, a growing number in the most recent winter talked of being *'freezing cold to the point of feeling ill... [too] scared to turn on the heating.'* Corroborating the findings of the Carnegie work, the *2023 UK Living Standards Report* from the Resolution Foundation showed that most children with a brother and a sister (two siblings) in the UK now go hungry at least once a week.²

Even the well-off are now affected. More than a fifth of people in families with a household income of £70,000 or more say they are now finding it hard to maintain a healthy diet as the cost of food, rent or mortgage, fuel and many other essentials soar.

In mid-2023 there is no sign of prices falling, just a vague hope that soon they will not rise much higher. More people are becoming physical ill. Anxiety rises. Increasing numbers of adults are saying: 'I can barely afford to exist.' Families with children are especially badly impacted.

Two thirds of parents say they are less able to participate in leisure activities in 2023 as compared to 2022, which will include taking their children on an annual holiday. Even before the cost-of-living crisis began, more than a third of all British families no longer had an annual holiday because they could not afford one. This has been the case for at least twenty years, as the government's annual '[Household Below Average Incomes](#)'³ report regularly reveals in a story that is now such old news that it is hardly ever [reported](#).⁴



Almost no one believes that is acceptable and a majority of all adults in all families earning less than the top 1% believe that 'the government is offering too little support to help people through the rising in cost of living'. Only people in the very richest of families, with household incomes of over £150,000, are home to a minority of adults not dissatisfied by government. However, even two in every five of them are now [sympathetic](#) to the need for action.⁵

The consensus is now so strong that it is likely that government will act further than it has done to date.

At Carnegie UK we are advocates for collective wellbeing. This is achieved when everyone has what they need to live a good life, individually and together. As a social change organisation, we are concerned by the implications of rising living costs for tackling poverty and reducing inequalities; the quality of our relationships; and the extent to which we are able to exercise individual and collective power over our own lives.

Read the report [here](#).⁶

Data used in the graph above is taken from the full YouGov dataset, commissioned by Carnegie UK. If you'd like to learn more or see the full dataset, please don't hesitate to get in touch with [Hannah Paylor](#).⁷

[\[1\] https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/the-long-shadow-of-the-cost-of-living-emergency/](https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/the-long-shadow-of-the-cost-of-living-emergency/)

¹ <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/the-long-shadow-of-the-cost-of-living-emergency/>

² <https://www.resolutionfoundation.org/publications/the-living-standards-outlook-2023/>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/households-below-average-income-hbai--2>

⁴ <https://www.dannydorling.org/?p=6732> 'Which children in Britain will have no holiday this summer?'

⁵ https://docs.cdn.yougov.com/3i7w1ajgm8/CarnegieUK_UK_Results_230203_W.pdf

⁶ <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/the-long-shadow-of-the-cost-of-living-emergency/>

⁷ Hannah.Paylor@CarnegieUK.org