

# UK cost-of-living crisis set to increase early deaths: study

September 26 2023

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

The UK's inflation-fueled cost-of-living crisis is set to "cut lives short" and "significantly widen the wealth-health gap", according to a study published by open access journal *BMJ Public Health* on Monday.

Modeling conducted for the study predicted that the proportion of

people "dying before their time" (under the age of 75) will rise by nearly 6.5 percent due to the sustained period of high prices.

The most deprived households will experience four times the number of extra deaths than the wealthiest households, it forecast, with the poorest having to spend a larger proportion of their income on energy, the cost of which has soared.

The researchers studied the impact of inflation on [death rates](#) in Scotland in 2022-3, with and without mitigating measures such as [government support](#) to help cut household bills.

The collected data was then used to model various potential future outcomes on life expectancy and inequalities for the UK as a whole if different mitigating policies were implemented.

Without any mitigation, the [model](#) found that inflation could increase deaths by five percent in the least deprived areas and by 23 percent in the most deprived—coming down to two percent and eight percent with mitigation, with an overall rate of around 6.5 percent.

Overall [life expectancy](#) would also fall in each case, it added.

"Our analysis contributes to evidence that the economy matters for [population health](#)," said the researchers.

"The mortality impacts of inflation and real-terms income reduction are likely to be large and negative, with marked inequalities in how these are experienced.

"Implemented public policy responses are not sufficient to protect health and prevent widening inequalities," they added.

UK inflation unexpectedly slowed in August to 6.7 percent from a high of 11.1 percent, but remains the highest in the G7, fueled by coronavirus lockdowns, Brexit and the war in Ukraine.

**More information:** Population mortality impacts of the rising cost of living in Scotland: scenario modelling study, *BMJ Public Health* (2023).  
[DOI: 10.1136/bmjph-2023-000097](https://doi.org/10.1136/bmjph-2023-000097)

© 2023 AFP

Citation: UK cost-of-living crisis set to increase early deaths: study (2023, September 26)  
retrieved 27 April 2024 from  
<https://phys.org/news/2023-09-uk-cost-of-living-crisis-early-deaths.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.