



The impact of rising costs on women in Scotland

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What the statistics say

- Up to 70% of unpaid care work is undertaken by women;
- 12% pay gap between women and men's full time hourly rates in Scotland;
- 85% of those deemed 'inactive' in the labour market due to caring responsibilities are women;
- 92% of single parents are women with single parent households experiencing higher levels of poverty;
- Women more likely to experience poverty

Working harder, worrying more: Why the cost of living is worse for women

A mounting body of research suggests women are cutting back on spending, working harder and taking on the mental load for home and family, leading to worse mental health, family and society

Cost of Living: Women making tough choices in work and motherhood

🕒 27 November 2022

The women on a 'war footing' as the cost of living crisis deepens - video

YOUNG WOMEN ARE AT THE SHARP END OF THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS



LOW PAID WORK AND COST-OF-LIVING CRISIS DISPROPORTIONATELY AFFECTING WOMEN

Women are disproportionately affected by low pay and spiralling living costs according to research by the Living Wage Foundation.

“It’s hard work being poor”:
Women’s experiences of the
cost-of-living crisis

Prices rises having significant effects

- Energy costs, particularly an issue for households with pre-payment meters and using oil
- Rising food costs
- Costs of essential items (e.g. school uniforms, clothes, nappies and formula for babies)
- Fuel costs



"I was shocked to see how the prices of things have gone up compared to the previous time I went to the shop, it has gone even higher, vegetable oil the last time I bought was 1.98 But today it 2:49, I had to leave it and bought vegetable spread instead which was lesser, and I was going round the shop looking for yellow stickers (reduction) just so I can buy more food to last the more days" (Journal entry)

Responses

- Cutting back on food (missing meals, using foodbanks/food pantries, changing diet)
- Disconnecting/cutting back on energy use (examples included washing less, not putting lights on etc.)
- Employment – taking on additional hours or second job
- Reducing/stopping leisure/social activities
- Walking instead of using public transport
- Self-motivation, strength, resilience

"I and many are thinking we will not use our heating this year, not cook as much, and fill flasks with hot water for the day to save boiling the kettle. Buy sleeping bags, hot water bottles, extra socks, candles, heavy jackets, scarfs and gloves just to sit in the house! Where will it lead us and where shall it end." (Journal entry)

Impacts on women

- Destitution and deepening poverty
- Rising debt
- Guilt, shame and stigma
- Negative impacts on physical and mental health



*“At the weekend, I just lie in bed, it isn’t worth getting up.”
(Single woman, aged 55-64)*

“I spoke to my friend who told me she has been starving and only eats at night. I have started doing that though it didn’t go well with me the first day but I will get used to it.” (Journal entry)

Measures to support women

- Getting more money into people's pockets and ensuring adequate incomes
- Investing in public services that support people through crisis, including long-term investment in childcare and social care
- Investing in support and advice services to help manage debt
- Providing stigma free support locally

Hopes for the future

- ▶ Invest in care;
- ▶ Create a caring social security system;
- ▶ Develop a tax system to promote fairness and equality;
- ▶ Build a feminist just transition;
- ▶ Deliver gender mainstreaming within policy development