

The
MONEY
Charity

The Money Statistics

**April
2021**

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The MONEY Charity

Welcome to the April 2021 edition of The Money Statistics, The Money Charity's complete monthly round-up of statistics about how we use money in the UK.

If you have any questions, comments, or want any information about the source of these statistics, please email us at hello@themoneycharity.org.uk. Throughout this report, statistics that are written in **colour** have been calculated by The Money Charity. All the other statistics come from external sources such as Bank of England, the ONS and UK Finance and are written in **black**. All statistics are taken from the latest available at the time of writing.

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1. Striking Numbers

This Month's Highlights

£60,935

Average total debt per UK household in February 2021

£1,962

Average credit card debt per household in February 2021

£3,724

Total unsecured debt per UK adult in February 2021

-23.9%

Change in outstanding credit card balances in year to February 2021

476,000

Number of 18-24 year-olds unemployed in the three months to February 2021

1.3%

Increase in private rental prices in the year to March 2021

8.6%

Increase in average first-time buyer house price in the year to February 2021

11 years

Time to save for a first-time buyer house deposit, saving at the average rate out of average UK income (at Oct to Dec 2020 rate of household saving)



1. Striking Numbers

Every Day in the UK

- The population of the UK grew by an estimated **990** people a day between 2018 and 2019.
- On average, a UK household spends **£4.20** a day on water, electricity and gas.
- **290** people a day were declared insolvent or bankrupt in England and Wales in January to March 2021. This was equivalent to one person **every 5 minutes**.
- In Northern Ireland in March 2021, there were **5.9** insolvencies per day and in Scotland **22.2** insolvencies per day.
- Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales dealt with **1,620** debt issues every day in the year to March 2021.
- **1.5** properties were repossessed every day in October to December 2020 in the UK, or one **every 15 hours and 46 minutes**.
- The number of UK mortgages with arrears of over 2.5% of the remaining balance rose by **18** a day in the year to December 2020.
- The number of people unemployed in the UK grew by **850** per day in the twelve months to February 2021.
- **2,267** people a day reported they had become redundant in December 2020 to February 2021.
- Net lending to individuals and housing associations in the UK grew by **£5.3 million** a day in February 2021.
- Government debt increased by **£818 million** a day in the year to March 2021.
- Borrowers paid **£122 million** a day in interest in January 2021.
- It costs an average of **£23.25** per day for a couple to raise a child from birth to the age of 18.
- For a lone parent family, the cost of raising a child comes to **£28.22** per day.
- **2.8** mortgage possession claims and **0.3** mortgage possession orders were made every day in England and Wales in October to December 2020.
- **91** landlord possession claims and **23.9** landlord possession orders were made every day.

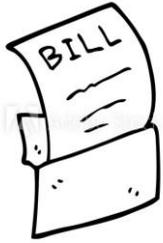


1. Striking Numbers

Arising from Coronavirus pandemic

Reports continue to be published showing the impact of Covid-19 on the financial health of the country and individual households. The following are some of the new findings that have been published during the last month:

- 21.7 million** Number of people forecast to be living in families with too little income to meet everyday needs by May 2021 (New Economics Foundation)
- 1 in 4** People not expected to recover financially from the pandemic for at least 12 months (Turn2us)
- 1 in 3** People reporting significant negative effects on their mental health from the pandemic, including **19%** reporting depression (Turn2us)
- Nearly 11 million** People who have borrowed to make ends meet since the beginning of the pandemic, including **2.8 million** who have used high-cost credit to make ends meet (StepChange)
- 4.3 million** People who are behind on household bills including council tax, rent and utilities (StepChange)
- 700,000** Number of renters who have been served with Section 21 'no fault' eviction notices since the start of the pandemic (Citizens Advice)
- 37%** Proportion of employees aged 18-24 who were furloughed in 2020, compared to **21%** of those aged 40-44 and **22%** of those aged 45-49. The over 65s also had a high furlough rate (**40%**) (British Academy based on Resolution Foundation data)
- 10%** Share of workers from minority ethnic backgrounds who lost their jobs in April-June 2020, compared to **6%** of workers from majority backgrounds (British Academy based on data from Leverhulme Centre and Understanding Society)
- 3.6 million** The number of self-employed either excluded from Government pandemic financial support or receiving a low level of support due to their employment status (Money Advice Trust)
- 55-64%** The proportion of callers to the Money Advice Trust Business Helpline between April 2020 and February 2021 citing Coronavirus as the main reason for their financial difficulty (Money Advice Trust)



2. Personal Debt in the UK

Total UK Personal Debt

People in the UK owed **£1,698.4 billion** at the end of February 2021. This is up by **£15.1 billion** from **£1,683.3 billion** at the end of February 2020, an extra **£286** per UK adult over the year.

Type of Personal Debt	Total Personal Debt £ billion	Per Household £	Per Adult £
Secured (Mortgages)	£1,501.1 billion	£53,855	£28,329
Unsecured Consumer Debt	£197.3 billion	£7,080	£3,724
Of which, Credit Card Debt	£54.7 billion	£1,962	£1,032
Grand Total (Feb 2021)	£1,698.4 billion	£60,935	£32,053

The average total debt per household, including mortgages, was **£60,935** and per adult was **£32,053**, around **108.2%** of average earnings. This is up from a revised **£32,051** a month earlier.

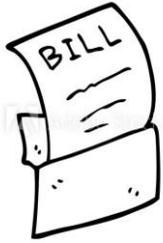
Based on February 2021 numbers, the UK's total interest payments on personal debt over a 12-month period would have been **£44,550 million**, an average of **£122 million** per day. The average annual interest per household would have been **£1,598** and per person **£841**, **2.84%** of average earnings.

According to the Office for Budget Responsibility's March 2021 forecast, household debt of all types is forecast to rise from **£2,006 billion** in 2020 to **£2,354 billion** in 2025. This would make the average total household debt **£82,641** (assuming household numbers track ONS population projections).

Consumer Credit Debt

At the end of February 2021, outstanding consumer credit lending was **£197.3 billion**, falling by **£1.7 billion** on the revised total for the previous month, and **£27.5 billion less** than in February 2020. Within the total, outstanding credit card debt came to **£54.7 billion**, a decrease of **23.9%** (**£17.2 billion**) in the year to February 2021. Credit card debt averaged **£1,962** per household and **£1,032** per adult.

A credit card on the average interest rate would take **24 years and 5 months** to repay, making only the legal minimum repayments (interest plus 1% of the outstanding balance) each month. The minimum repayment in the first month would be **£51** but would reduce each month. If **£51** were paid *every* month, the debt would be cleared in **5 years and 2 months**.

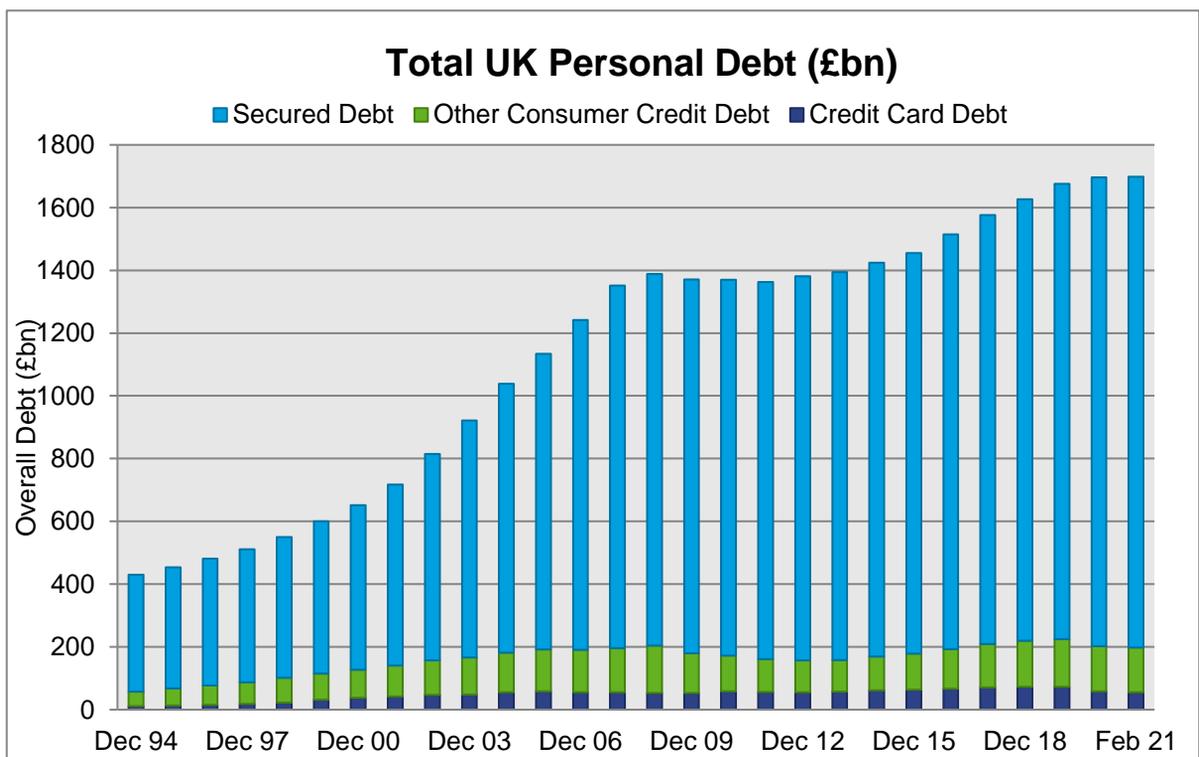


2. Personal Debt in the UK

Net Lending and Write-Offs

Total net lending to individuals and housing associations by UK banks and building societies **rose by £148 million** in February 2021 or **£5.3 million a day** over revised figures for January 2021.

- Net mortgage lending rose by **£1.86 billion** in the month, while net consumer credit lending fell by **£1.71 billion**.
- In Q4 2020 lenders wrote off **£960 million** (of which **£292 million** was credit card debt, amounting to a daily write-off of **£3.2 million**).



Bank of England Data to February 2021

(The last three columns in the chart are Dec 19, Dec 20 and Feb 21)



2. Personal Debt in the UK

Advice on Problem Debts

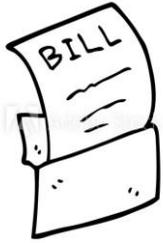
Citizens Advice Bureaux across England and Wales answered **420,565** enquiries in March 2021, **6.0% up** from March 2020.

Debt was the second largest advice category in March 2021 with **67,740** issues, behind Benefits and Tax Credits (**82,942**). Debt calls were **1.1% down** compared with March 2020, while calls about Benefits and Tax credits were down by **1.2%**. Debt represented **14.3%** of all issues dealt with in the year to March 2021. The top three debt categories in March 2021 were fuel debts, Council Tax arrears and credit, store and charge cards. In the year to March 2021, Citizens Advice Bureaux in England and Wales dealt with **1,620** debt issues every *day*.

In Scotland in January 2021 (latest available data), Citizens Advice Scotland answered **82,835** enquiries, with debt enquiries being **13% of the total**, the second largest group after benefits.

In Northern Ireland, in March 2021, Advice NI's Debt Action service dealt with **598** cases involving debt issues, covering **£1.9 million** of debt. The top three debts were credit cards, mortgage shortfalls (negative equity) and personal loans.

In its annual report for 2020, StepChange Debt Charity reports that 60% of its new clients in 2020 were female, with 45% of new clients being in the 25-39 age bracket. 50% of new clients were in a vulnerable situation in addition to their debt problem (up from 44% in 2019) with the most common vulnerability being a mental health issue. The most common type of debt affecting new clients was credit card debt (67%) followed by personal loans (52%) and overdrafts (39%). Around one third of new clients had council tax and water arrears, while around one quarter had rent, electricity and gas arrears.



2. Personal Debt in the UK

Individual Insolvencies

There were **26,091** individual insolvencies in England and Wales in January to March 2021, **down 2.9%** from 26,871 for the same period in 2020. This was equivalent to **290** people a day or one person **every 5 minutes**.

Every day on average in England and Wales, **31** people were made bankrupt, **46** Debt Relief Orders were granted, and **213** Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) were entered into.

In the 12 months to March 2021, **110,638** individuals, **1 in 424 (0.24%)** of the adult population of England and Wales became insolvent.

In Northern Ireland there were **184** individual insolvencies in March 2021, a rate of **5.9** per day. This comprised **140** Individual Voluntary Arrangements, **36** Debt Relief Orders and **8** bankruptcies. Individual insolvencies for the three months to March 2021 were down by **31.6%** on the same three months the previous year.

In Scotland there were **688** personal insolvencies in March 2021, a rate of **22.2** per day, comprising **238** bankruptcies and **450** protected trust deeds. Personal insolvencies for the three months to March 2021 were **47.0% lower** than the same period the previous year.

County Court Judgements

2,110 Consumer County Court Judgements (CCJs) were issued every day in England and Wales in October to December 2020, a **28% fall** on the same period in 2019. The average value was **£1,761**.

In Northern Ireland, there were **8** consumer judgements every day in October to December 2020, with an average value of **£3,076**.

In Scotland, **40** consumer debt decrees were registered every day in October to December 2020, with an average value of **£2,961**.



3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Mortgage Debt

According to the Bank of England, outstanding mortgage lending stood at **£1,501 billion** at the end of February 2021.

- This is up from £1,458 billion a year earlier, an increase of **£42.7 billion**.

That means that the estimated average outstanding mortgage for the **10.99 million** households with mortgage debt was **£136,589** in February 2021.

The average mortgage interest rate was **2.09%** at the end of February 2021. Based on this, households with mortgages would pay an average of **£2,855** in mortgage interest over the year.

For new loans, the average mortgage interest rate was **1.92%**. Based on this, First-Time Buyers with mortgages would pay an average of **£3,113** in mortgage interest over the year.

According to the FCA and Bank of England, gross mortgage lending in October to December 2020 was **£76.6 billion**, **4.2% higher** than the same quarter the previous year and the highest quarterly total since before the 2008 crash.

The Financial Conduct Authority reports that **60.0%** of mortgage lending in Q4 2020 was for 75% or less of a property's value.

- **1.2%** of lending was for mortgages for over 90% of a property's value.

58.9% of mortgage lending was for three or more times the borrowers' incomes.

According to UK Finance, in December 2019 (latest publicly available data), the mortgage as percentage of house value was on average **77.0%** for first-time buyers, **67.6%** for home movers and **58.8%** for re-mortgagors, slightly higher than the previous year.



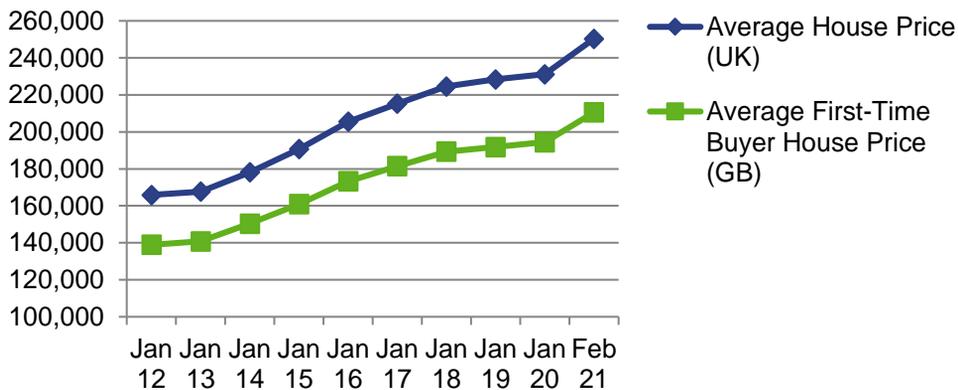
3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

House Prices

Nationwide estimates that house prices **fell by 0.2%** in March 2021 but were **5.7%** higher than 12 months before. Halifax reports that the average UK house price in March 2021 reached a record high of **£254,606**, rising by **0.3%** in the three months to March 2021 and by **6.5%** in the year to March 2021.

Nationwide, Halifax and HM Land Registry all show sharply higher house prices over the last year, particularly over the summer and autumn of 2020. HM Land Registry has the largest dataset and includes cash sales, but records transactions later, after registration of the sale, not at the mortgage approval stage. The Halifax and HM Land Registry averages are similar, with Nationwide being slightly lower.

House Prices (HM Land Registry)



Source: ONS and HM Land Registry

First-Time Buyers

HM Land Registry reports that the average house price for first-time buyers in Great Britain was **£210,560** in February 2021, an annual increase of **8.6%** and a monthly increase of **0.4%**.

According to UK Finance, the typical first-time buyer deposit in December 2019 was **23%** of the purchase cost, which would average **£48,429** in February 2021 based on the above Land Registry first-time buyer price. This is **163.5%** of the average UK salary.



3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

House Prices in Government Office Regions, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

According to HM Land Registry, average house prices in the UK increased by **8.6%** in the year to February 2021 to **£250,341**. The highest rate of increase (**11.9%**) was in the North West. The lowest price increases were in London (**4.6%**) and Northern Ireland (**5.3%**).

The average house price was highest in London (**£496,269**) and lowest in the North East (**£138,370**).

Average House Prices: Nations and Regions – February 2021

Country and Government Office Region	Price	Monthly Change	Annual Change
North West	£184,351	1.3%	11.9%
Yorkshire and The Humber	£182,220	0.6%	10.9%
East Midlands	£213,967	0.8%	10.6%
North East	£138,370	-1.6%	9.0%
South West	£279,242	0.0%	9.0%
England	£268,291	0.2%	8.7%
South East	£345,075	0.9%	8.5%
Wales	£179,861	-0.7%	8.4%
West Midlands Region	£215,451	0.8%	8.3%
Scotland	£161,529	-1.7%	8.0%
East of England	£306,346	-0.9%	6.0%
Northern Ireland (Quarter 4 - 2020)	£147,593	3.0%	5.3%
London	£496,269	-1.4%	4.6%

Source: ONS and HM Land Registry. Ranked by Annual Change.



3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Renting

According to the Office for National Statistics, private rental prices in the UK rose by **1.3%** in the 12 months to March 2021, **0.1% less** than for the 12 months to February 2020.

Over the year to March 2021, private rental prices increased in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and all the English regions. Northern Ireland (**3.3%**), South West (**2.4%**) and East Midlands (**2.1%**) saw the highest rates of increase. The lowest increases were in London (**0.5%**), Scotland (**1.0%**) and South East (**1.2%**).

The median rent in England across all private rental property types for the 12 months to 30 September 2020 was **£725**, according to the Valuation Office Agency and ONS. In London it was **£1,435**.

For a single room with shared facilities, the median monthly private rent was **£403**. In London it was **£650 (61% higher)**.

For two bedrooms, the median monthly private rent was **£695**. In London it was **£1,450 (109% higher)**.

Figures from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government show that in 2018-19, private renter households in England spent an average of **£867** a month on rental payments. Inclusive of benefits, private renters spent an average of **33%** of their income on rental payments.

Monthly rents in the social housing sector in England were **£459** for housing association renters and **£416** for local authority renters.

In 2018-19, **34%** of households owned their home outright, while **29%** were mortgagors, **19%** rented privately and **17%** paid a social rent.

- Since 2013-14 outright owners have been the largest tenure group.
- Since the mid-1990s, the number of renters and outright owners has risen, while the number of people owning a house with a mortgage has fallen.
- In 2018-2019, only **35.6%** of 16-34 year-olds were owner occupiers. **46.3%** of this age group were private renters.



3. Mortgages, Rent and Housing

Arrears and Repossessions

According to the Financial Conduct Authority, at the end of Q4 2020 there were **170,755** mortgage loan accounts with arrears of more than 1.5% of the current loan balance.

- This is **1.3%** up on revised numbers for the previous quarter and **0.2%** up on Q4 2019.

45.5% of payments due for loans in arrears were received in Q4 2020.

UK Finance reports that **77,410 (0.86%)** of homeowner mortgages had arrears equivalent to at least 2.5% of the outstanding mortgage balance in Q4 2020, **3.4%** up on the previous quarter. Over the last year, mortgages in arrears have increased by **18** a day.

UK Finance estimates that there were **140** homeowner properties taken into possession in the UK in Q4 2020, down from 1,330 in Q4 2019.

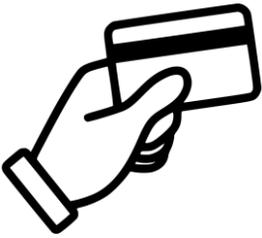
This equates to **1.5** properties being possessed every day, or one property being possessed **every fifteen hours and forty-six minutes**. This low number is due to the pandemic-related moratorium on forced possessions.

In England and Wales, in October to December 2020, according to the Ministry of Justice, every day **2.8** mortgage possession claims were issued and **0.3** mortgage possession orders were made.

91 landlord possession claims were issued and **23.9** landlord possession orders were made every day.

Compared to October to December 2019, mortgage possession claims fell by **96%** and orders by **99%**, while landlord possession claims fell by **67%** and landlord possession orders fell by **89%**. This was due to action by Government in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

However, possession claims and orders increased in Q4 from the very low levels of Q3 2020.



4. Spending and Loans

How We Spend

In the year to February 2021, outstanding consumer credit fell by **12.2%** according to the Bank of England, while outstanding levels of credit card borrowing fell by **23.9%**. The largest reduction occurred during the spring 2020 period of lockdown and furlough due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but after slight growth in mid-2020 there were further significant falls from August 2020 to February 2021.

LINK transaction volumes have fallen steeply since the beginning of the pandemic. On average, **42.8** cash machine transactions (including balance enquiries and rejected transactions) were made **every second** in March 2021, a fall of **26.1%** on March 2020. The total value of transactions fell by **19.5%** over the same period.

- In total, cash machine transactions were worth an average of **£52.40** per transaction.
- These LINK transaction figures do not include transactions or withdrawals made by customers at their own banks or building societies.
- The number of ATMs (in-branch and remote) fell from **60,662** at the end of 2019 to **54,574** at the end of 2020 (a fall of **10.0%**). Free-to-use ATMs fell from **45,355** to **41,727** while pay-to-use ATMs fell from **15,307** to **12,847**.

What We Buy

In Q4 2020, households in the UK spent **£117.1 million** a day on water, electricity and gas, or **£4.20** per household per day. On a seasonally adjusted basis, this was **1.9% more than** the revised figure for Q3 2020.

In March 2021 the average price of unleaded petrol **increased by 3.8ppl** to **125.3 ppl**.

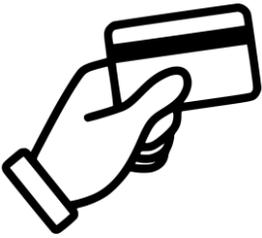
- This meant it cost **£62.65** to fill a 50 litre unleaded tank, **£1.90 more than** last month.

The average price of diesel **increased by 3.5ppl** to **128.2ppl**.

- This meant it cost **£64.10** to fill a 50 litre diesel tank, **£1.75 more** than last month.
- The price difference between the two fell to **2.9ppl**, a difference of **£1.45** per 50 litre tank.

Child Poverty Action Group's "The Cost of a Child in 2020" report estimates that couple families now spend **£152,747** on raising a child to their 18th birthday, **£23.25 a day**. This is an increase of **1.4%** over the last year and **7.1%** since the study began in 2012.

- The cost for a lone parent is **£185,413**, an increase of **19.6%** since 2012.
- This comes to **£28.22 a day**.
- For couples in 2020, **23%** of basic costs are covered by child benefit. For lone-parent families in 2020, **17%** of basic costs are covered by child benefit.



4. Spending and Loans

The Cost of Credit

The average interest rate on credit card lending bearing interest was **21.17%** in March 2021. This was **20.07%** above the Bank of England Base Rate of **0.1%**.

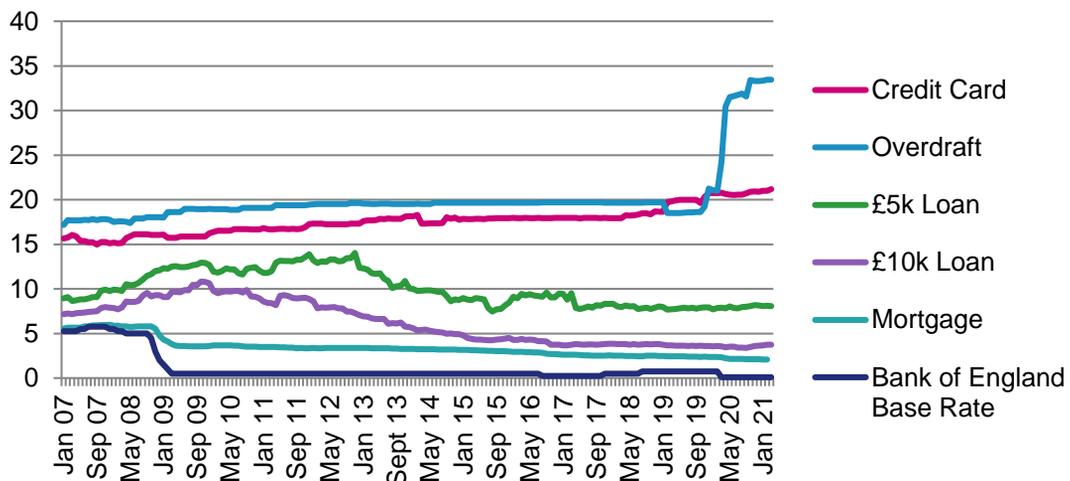
UK Finance figures show that **56.3%** of credit card balances were bearing interest in January 2021.

In March 2021, the average APR for a £5,000 personal loan was **8.09%**, according to the Bank of England. For a £10,000 loan it was **3.73%**, while the average rate for an overdraft was **33.46%**.

As shown in the chart, the gap between credit card, overdraft and other interest rates has widened substantially since 2008. The dramatic recent increase in overdraft rates is due to new FCA overdraft rules, which banned high fixed charges penalising accidental and short-duration overdrafts, but at the cost of a rise in the average overdraft rate.

Why overdraft and credit card rates are so high when the bank base rate is only 0.1% is an open question.

Interest Rates (% pa to March 2021)



Source: Bank of England



5. Savings and Pensions

Savings

The average interest rate for an instant access savings account was **0.06%** in March 2021. For a cash ISA, this was **0.29%**, down from 0.53% a year ago.

In Q4 2020, households saved an average of **15.6%** of their post-tax income, including benefits, down from the record 25.1% (revised) in Q2 2020, which was more than double the previous peaks in the late 1970s and early 1990s. From 2000 to 2015, the savings rate fluctuated mostly in the 7-10% range, with the most recent pre-Covid peak being 12.7% (revised) in Q1 2010. If someone on the average salary saved 15.6% of their income in an average instant access savings account for a year, they would receive **£2.22** in interest after tax. If they saved it in an average cash ISA, they would receive **£13.40**.

It would take **11 years** for someone on the average salary, saving the average amount per household every year in an average instant access savings account, to afford the average first-time buyer deposit. If they saved into a cash ISA at the same rate it would also take **11 years**.

In 2020, according to the FCA, **27-34%** of UK adults (**14-18 million people**) had either no savings or less than £1,000 in savings. This was skewed toward younger age groups with **at least 47%** of 18-24 year-olds having less than £1,000 in savings.

Pensions

According to The Pensions Regulator's Compliance Report, at least **10.46 million** workers had joined a pension scheme under auto-enrolment by the end of March 2021, making a total of **22.72 million** members of pensions schemes, but leaving **9.98 million** workers unenrolled, out of the total declared workforce of **32.70 million**.

According to the Family Resources Survey, **52%** of working age adults actively participated in a pension in 2019-20, up **1%** on the previous year. Participation was **75%** for employees and **18%** for the self-employed.

The Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings reports that in 2019, **20.2%** of private sector employee scheme members received an employer contribution to their workplace pension of 8% or more, whereas **94.7%** of public sector employee scheme members received a contribution of 12% or more. According to ONS, in 2020, **34.8%** of employees with a pension were in an occupational Defined Benefit scheme, **36.5%** were in an occupational Defined Contribution scheme and **26.6%** were in group personal or stakeholder schemes.

In August 2020, there were **12.4** million recipients of the State Pension, a fall of **1.6%** on the year before. Of these, **1.6 million** were receiving the new State Pension (nSP) introduced in April 2016.



6. Financial Inclusion

According to the FCA, in the UK in 2020 there were **1.2 million** UK adults who did not have a bank account (either a current account or an alternative e-money account). This was **2.3%** of the UK adult population. The highest unbanked rates were for the unemployed, those in a marginal or vulnerable situation and those aged 18-21.

There were **7.2 million** basic bank accounts (BBAs) on 30 June 2020, according to HM Treasury. BBAs are the no-frills bank accounts that the nine largest personal current account providers are required to offer under the Payment Accounts Regulations 2015.

According to ONS, in 2019 there were **10,405** bank and building society branches in the UK. This was a reduction of **2,940** branches (**-22%**) since 2012. The biggest proportional reduction in bank branches was in the South West, which lost **27%** of its branches over the period. Northern Ireland bucked the trend with an increase of **3%** (**10** branches) since 2012.

According to the 2019 Access to Cash Review, **2.2 million** people use only cash in their daily transactions.

In 2020, **44.4 million** UK adults (**85%** of the total) used some form of credit, according to the FCA. This includes unregulated credit (**4%** of adults) and running credit such as credit cards that are paid off each month (**30%** of adults). Around **7.8 million** people (**15%** of total UK adults) either chose not to access credit or did not have access to credit.

According to the Bank of England, **1.90 million** adults were members of credit unions in July to September 2020, an increase of **0.8%** over the same period in 2019. There were **412** credit unions, with loans to members to a value of **£1.59 billion**, **37.5%** of which was in Northern Ireland.

According to the FCA, **17.8 million** UK adults (**34%** of the total) did not have home contents insurance in 2020. According to ONS, **1.11 million** households did not have access to the Internet in Jan-Feb 2020. This included **20%** of households with one adult aged 65+.

Recent research by Turn2us and Fair By Design found that low-income households pay a 'poverty premium' in buying their goods and services of **£478** per year. The poverty premium is the extra amount people on low incomes pay from not being able to access the best deals.

According to Turn2us, **4.8 million** people are living without at least one essential household appliance (fridge, freezer, cooker or washing machine).

According to the FCA, in October 2020, **14.6 million** UK adults (**28%** of the total) said they had low confidence in managing their money, while **17.7 million** UK adults (**34%**) had poor or low levels of numeracy involving financial concepts.



7. Young People

Young People in Education and Employment

According to ONS, in December 2020 to February 2021 there were **5.39 million** people aged 18 to 24. Of these, **1.83 million** were in full-time education while **3.25 million** were in employment (including those in full-time education who were also in employment). From February 2020 to February 2021, the number of 18-24 year-olds in employment fell by **241,000**.

Unemployment

476,000 18-24 year olds (**12.8%**) were unemployed in December 2020 to February 2021. This was **68,000** more than the same period the previous year.

- Of these, **192,000 (40.3%)** had been unemployed for over 6 months.
- **91,000** had been unemployed for over 12 months, the same as for September to November 2020 but an increase of **31,000 (+52%)** on a year earlier.

797,000 (11.6%) of 16 to 24-year-olds in the UK were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in October to December 2020, an increase of **34,000** over the last year.

Minimum Wage

Minimum wage rates increased in April 2021. For under 18s the new rate will be **£4.62**. The apprentice rate (for those under 19 or in the first year of their apprenticeship) will be **£4.30**. For those aged 18-20, the minimum wage goes up to **£6.56**. For those aged 21-22, **£8.36** and for those aged 23+, **£8.91**. The age for receiving the National Living Wage has dropped from 25+ to 23+.

Wages Paid by Age and Gender

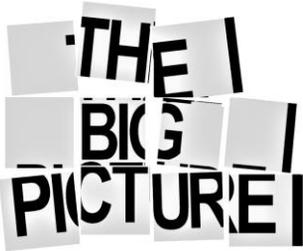
According to ONS, in April 2020 the median weekly pay for all full-time employees was **£586**. For employees aged 16-17 it was **£207**. For those aged 18-21 it was **£350** and for those aged 22-29 it was **£499**. For those aged 16-21, male and female pay was about the same (within the margin of error). For those 22-29, the female median was around **£26** per week less than the male median.

Student Loans

In 2019-20, the provisional average maintenance loan awarded to full-time students in England was **£6,588 (up 5.0%** on the revised figure for the previous year). In Wales it was **£4,651** and in Northern Ireland **£3,117**. The provisional average tuition fee loan in England was **£8,413 (down 0.3%)**. In Wales it was **£6,976 (up 24.2%)** and in Northern Ireland **£5,287**.

Student Debt

In England, the average debt per borrower at the end of 2019-20 was **£25,130**. In Wales it was **£16,704**, in Northern Ireland **£15,099** and in Scotland **£13,589**. The average debt for the latest cohorts to enter repayment was **£40,280** in England (2020), **£24,960** in Wales (2020), **£23,520** in Northern Ireland (2020) and **£13,890** in Scotland (2020).



8. The Bigger Picture

Economy and Inflation

The UK economy grew by **0.4%** in February 2021, recovering slightly from the Covid-19 lockdown. GDP in February 2021 was **7.8%** below the level of February 2020, according to the latest estimates from the ONS, as a result of the hit to economic activity from pandemic restrictions.

The CPI (Consumer Prices Index) increased by **0.7%** in the year to March 2021, **0.3%** more than the year to February 2021. The highest rates of inflation over the 12 months to March 2021 were for transport (**3.7%**), alcoholic beverages and tobacco (**2.3%**) and recreation and culture (**2.3%**). The lowest rate was for clothing and footwear (**-3.9%**).

Pay Rates

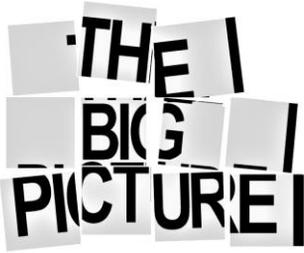
In the three months to February 2021, regular pay increased by **4.4%** on the year before. Pay including bonuses rose by **4.5%**. According to ONS, the increased averages are in part due to a reduction in the number of lower paid jobs due to the pandemic. Average weekly pay was **£534**, or **£568** including bonuses; an annual salary of **£27,844**, or **£29,617** with bonuses. In real terms, for the year to February 2021, regular pay grew by **3.6%** while total pay grew by **3.7%**. Due to pay growth being lower than inflation for most of the last twelve years, total real pay (**-0.4%**) was slightly below the pre-financial crash peak in February 2008 while regular real pay increased by only **3.4%** over the same period.

Public Sector Borrowing

Public Sector Net Borrowing (excluding NatWest Group and Bank of England) in the three months to March 2021 was **£46.2 billion**, an average borrowing of **£514 million** per day. Spending included **£21.2 billion** net investment, meaning there was a current budget deficit of **£25.1 billion** over the same three months. Total net borrowing for the year to March 2021 was **£298.4 billion**, compared with **£57.1 billion** for the year to March 2020.

Public sector net debt in March 2021 (excluding NatWest and Bank of England) was **£1,920 billion** (**87.5% of GDP**). This was **£298.4 billion** more than in March 2020, an increase of **£817.5 million** per day, mainly due to the economic impact of Covid-19.

According to the March 2021 Forecast from the Office for Budget Responsibility, public sector net debt will be **106%** of GDP in 2024-25. However, interest on public debt is forecast to be **lower** in relation to revenue in 2024-25 than in 2019-20 due to lower interest rates and the Bank of England's Asset Purchase Facility.



8. The Bigger Picture

Population, Taxpayers and Benefit Recipients

According to the latest ONS estimate, the population of the UK grew by **990** people per day between mid 2018 and mid 2019.

Out of a total working-age population of **54.4 million**, there are projected to be **32.3 million** income taxpayers in 2020-21. Of these, **27.6 million** will be basic rate taxpayers, **4.2 million** people will fall into the 40% income tax band and **481,000** will pay the 45% rate, which replaced the 50% rate in 2013-14. People who do not pay income tax still pay indirect taxes such as VAT, non-EU import duties, insurance premium tax and excise duties on tobacco, alcohol and fuel.

There were **9.5 million** working-age people claiming benefits in the year to August 2020, according to DWP. Housing benefit was received by **3.0 million** people (of all ages) in the year to November 2020 while **5.9 million** were receiving Universal Credit in December 2020, an increase of **3.0** million since February 2020.

Unemployment

The number of people classed as unemployed in December 2020 to February 2021 was **1.68 million** (4.9% of the workforce), **50,000** less than the previous quarter, **556** per day, but up **311,000** from the previous year, **850 a day**. The unemployment rate in the UK was highest in London (7.2%) and the North East (5.7%) and lowest in South East (outside London) (3.4%) and Northern Ireland (3.7%). **363,000** people had been unemployed for over 12 months in December 2020 to February 2021, up by **56,000** (**153 a day**) from a year earlier.

Employment and Unemployment – Older Workers

426,000 people aged 50 and over were unemployed in December 2020 to February 2021, an increase of **14,000** on September to November 2020 and **107,000** on a year earlier. **29.9%** of unemployed workers aged 50 and over, a total of **127,000** people, had been out of work for over a year. **81,000** had been unemployed for more than two years.

1,274,000 (10.4%) people aged 65 and over were *in work* in December 2020 to February 2021, **58,000** fewer than in Sept to November 2020, and a decrease of **112,000** from the previous year.

Redundancies

204,000 people (**2,267 per day**) reported they had become redundant in December 2020 to February 2021, **191,000** fewer than in September to November 2020 but **98,000** more than the year before.

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