

Poverty in Data *Research, policy and next steps*

We'll start just after 11.00



Schedule for the session

Presentations

Helen Barnard – The Trussell Trust

Ed Davies – Centre for Social Justice

Lalitha Try – Resolution Foundation

Peter Matejic – Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Approx. 11:45 - Comfort break with videos from the UK Data Service

Approx. 11:55 - Q&A session

Close – 12:30



Poverty in data

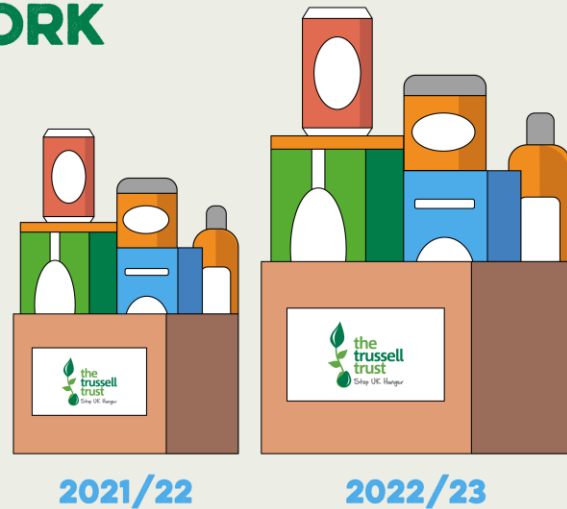
What challenges are we facing?

- Most striking trend in recent years = rising numbers in deep poverty and destitution
- Destitution in the UK (JRF)
 - 3.8 million people in 2022. Around one million children.
 - Almost two-and-a-half times the number of people in 2017, nearly triple the number of children.
- 5 in 6 of those on Universal Credit are going without essentials
- This year, 55% of people on Universal Credit ran out of food & couldn't afford more
- 2.4 million were pulled into debt trying to keep up with bills

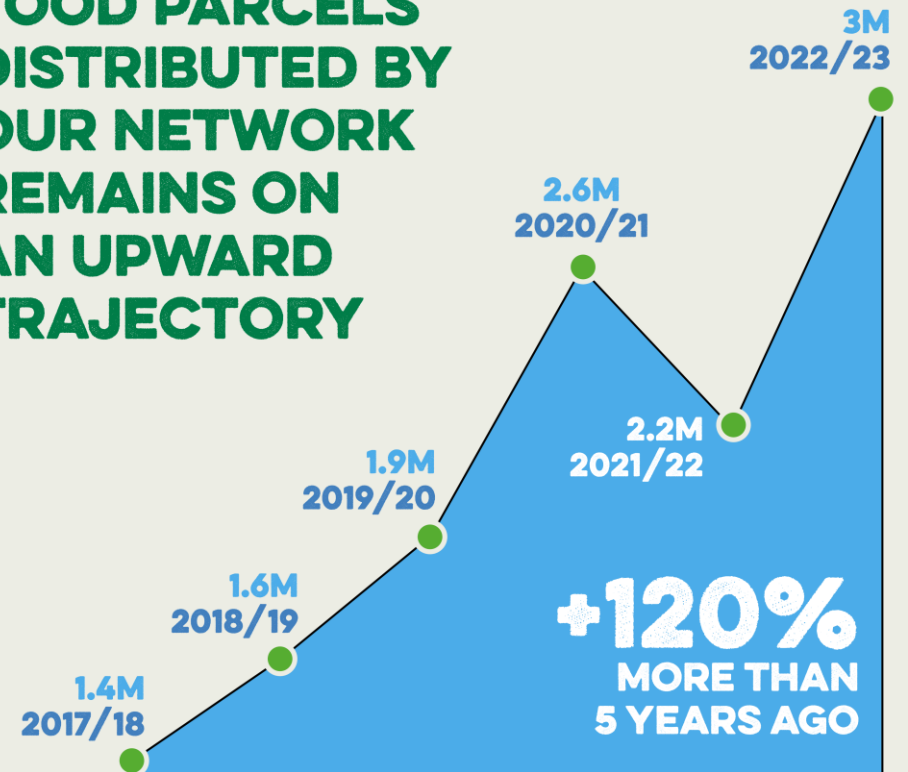
More and more people are forced to turn to food banks to survive

**ALMOST 3 MILLION
EMERGENCY FOOD
PARCELS WERE
DISTRIBUTED BY
FOOD BANKS IN
OUR NETWORK
LAST YEAR**

**+37%
FROM LAST
YEAR**



**THE NUMBER OF
FOOD PARCELS
DISTRIBUTED BY
OUR NETWORK
REMAINS ON
AN UPWARD
TRAJECTORY**



But this is
the tip of the
iceberg



14%
OF ALL UK ADULTS

(or their households) have
experienced food insecurity in the
12 months to mid-2022...

...this translates into an estimated

11.3M PEOPLE



What does this mean for people's lives?

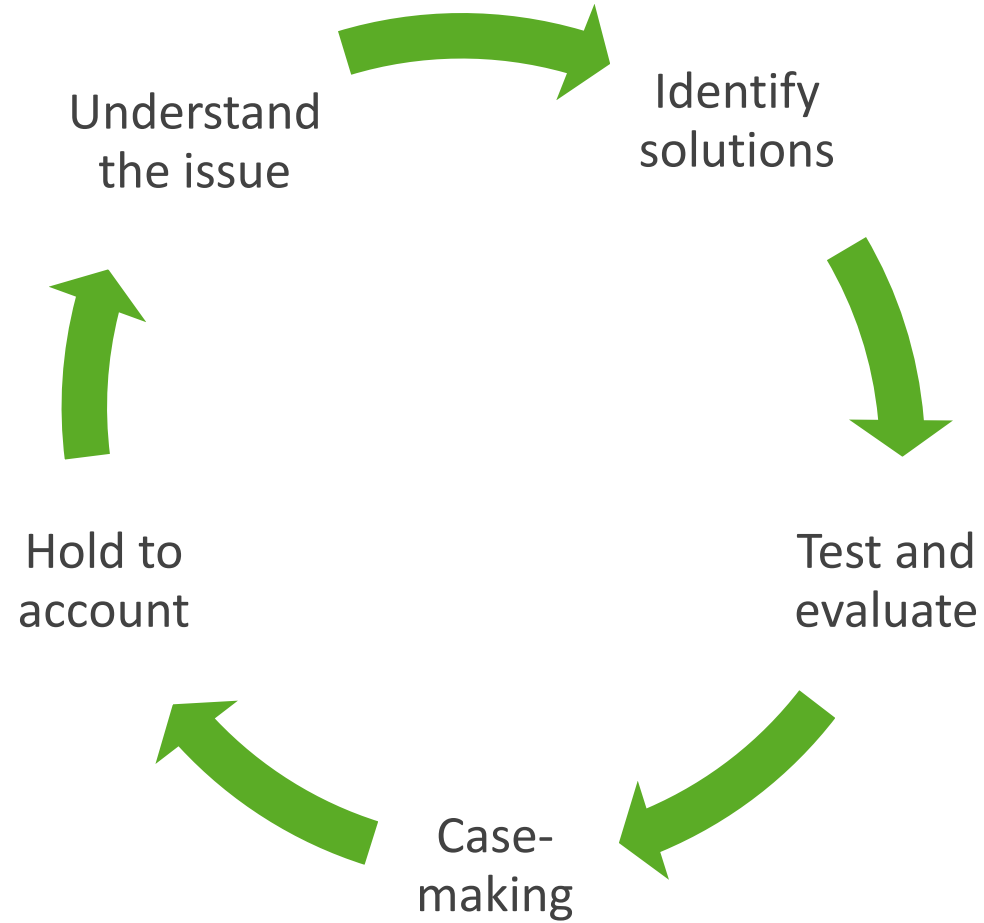
"I just get to the point where I can't be bothered. I'd rather just go without. As long as I've got enough for my daughter and the baby to eat, I kind of give up."

"It's hard as a parent to not allow children to turn on the heating, or some of the lights in the house, or have proper showers, this shouldn't be the case, I can't cope no more."

"I feel isolated from my family because I can't afford to travel to see them. Because of this I have no childcare support, family support and my mental health is suffering."

"Having to let my health conditions go without proper review, due to being unable to afford bus fare."

How do we use research and data



How do we use research and data

Scale, depth, distribution:

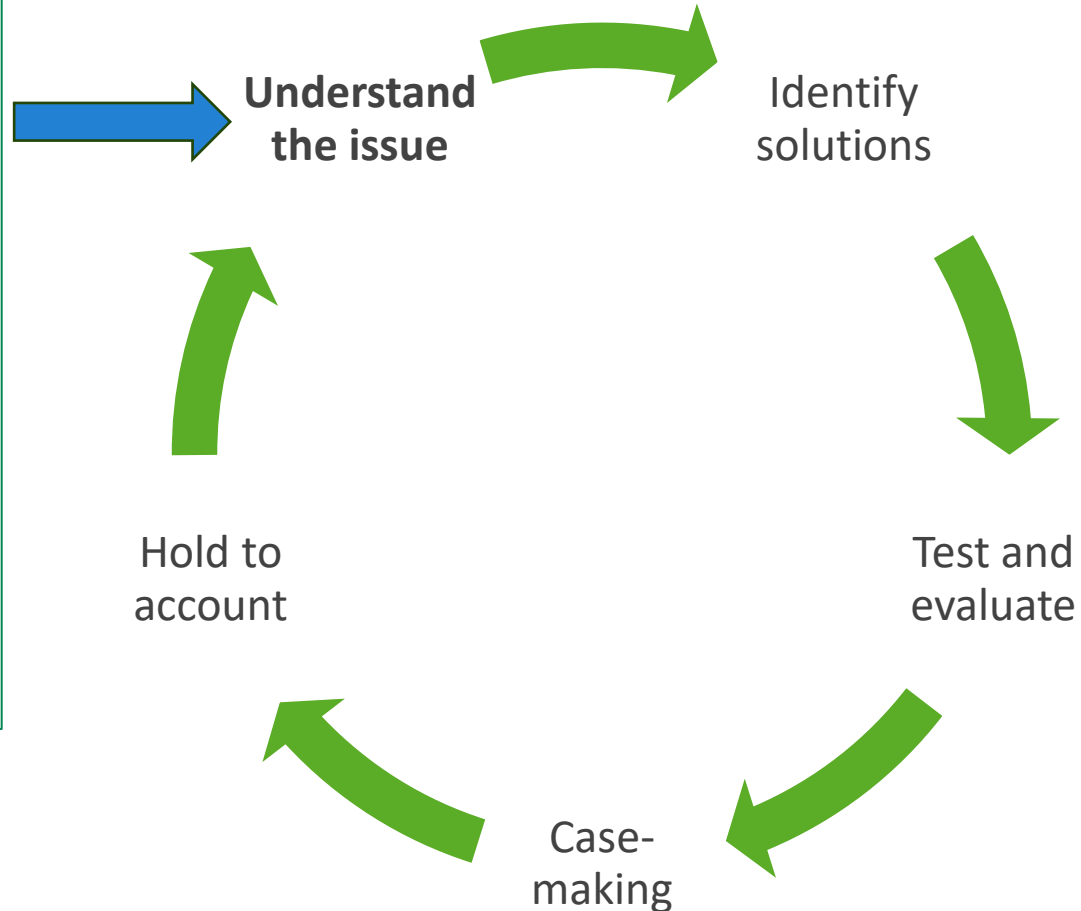
What, who, where, why

Family Resources
Survey, Understanding
Society

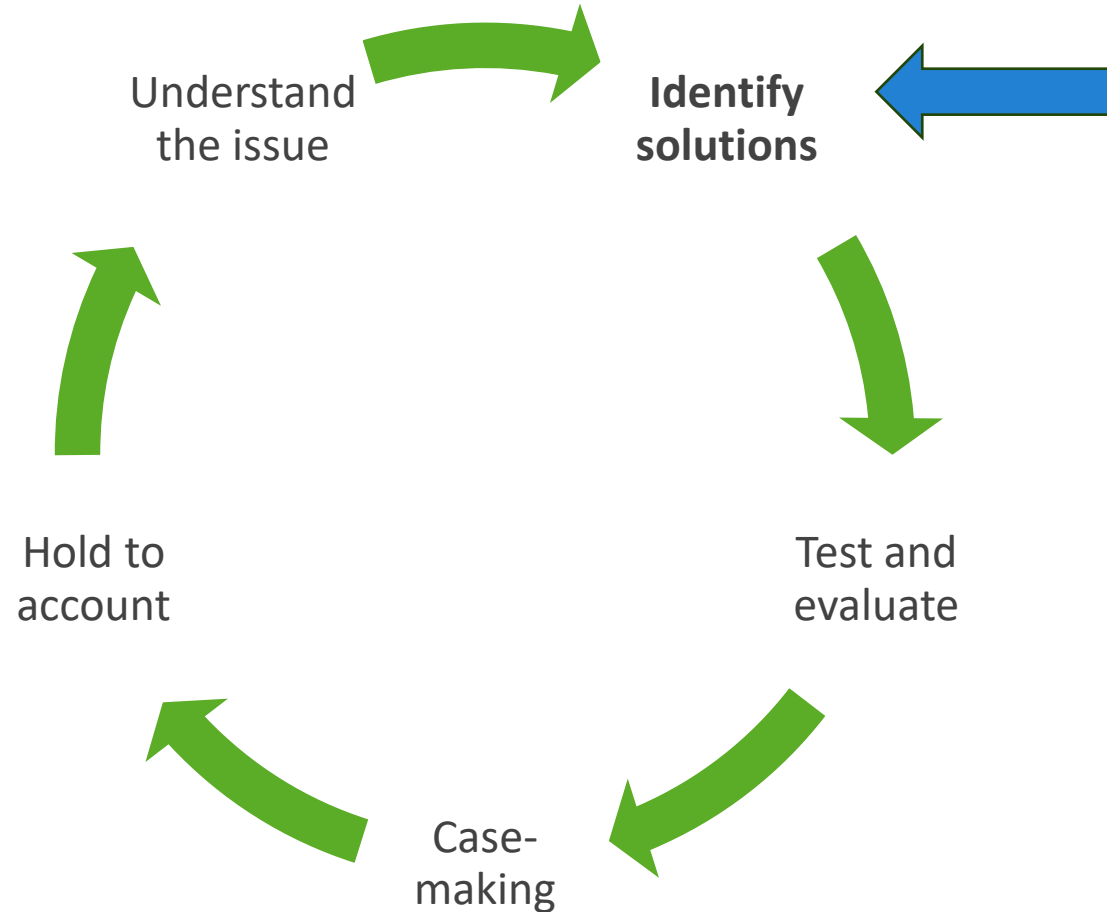
Hunger in the UK

Bespoke surveys & qual

Operational data



How do we use research and data



Drivers & interventions:

Operational insights

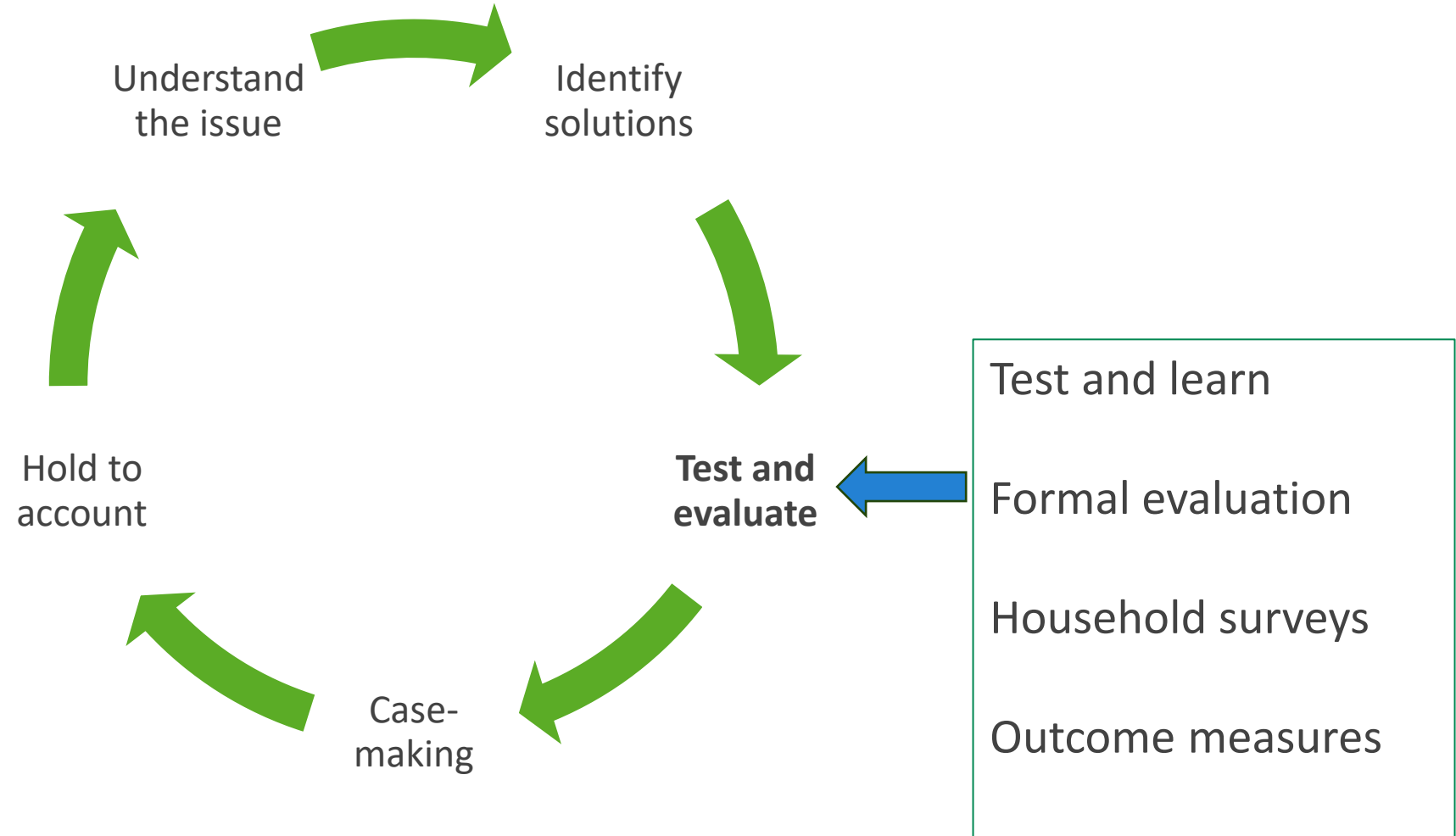
Lit reviews, national/international

Participatory policy development

Evaluations

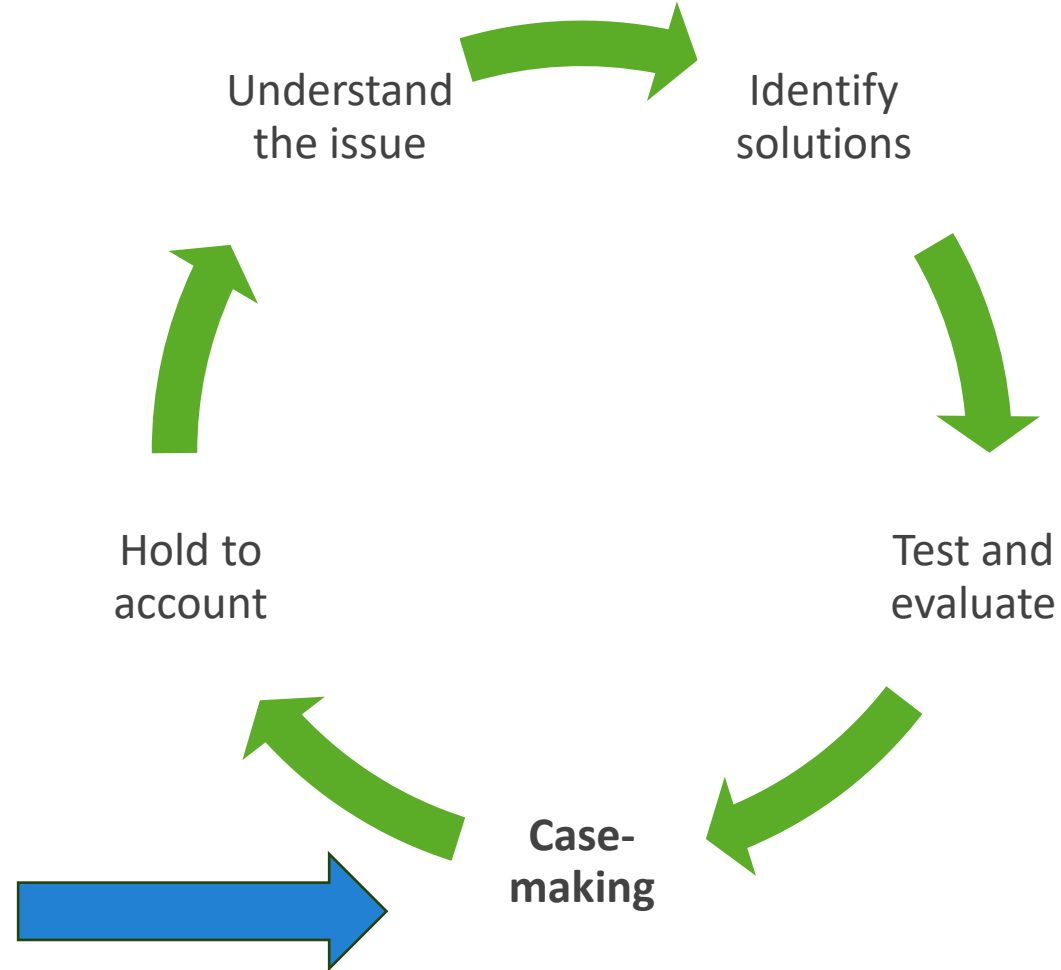
Modelling – TaxBen

How do we use research and data



How do we use research and data

- Policy costings
- Cost/benefit modelling
- Public polling
- Evaluation evidence
- Data driven comms



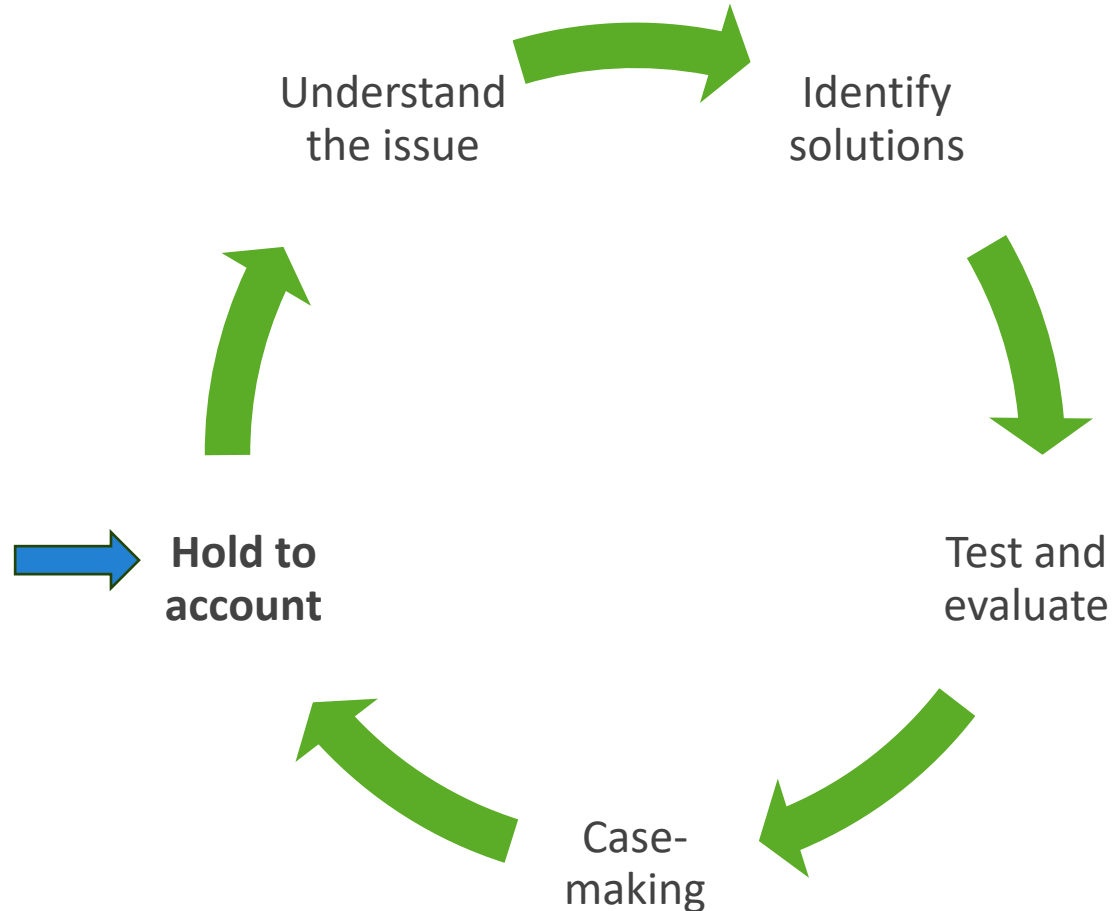
How do we use research and data

Ourselves:

Organisational impact, theory of change, key results, programme outcomes, evaluation & learning

Others:

Tracking change, public data, bespoke research



Data gaps and concerns

Contested measures
& concepts

Data lags
Falling response rates
Attrition

People missed out of
household surveys

Capturing reality as
well as scale

Using operational
data & insights
Real time trends

Working in
partnership
Avoiding 'extraction'

Thank you!





The Centre for
Social Justice

Poverty in data

About the CSJ

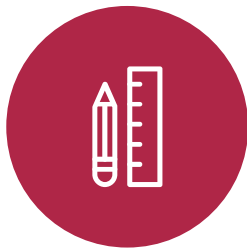
We have dedicated teams of **policy experts** focused on the root causes of poverty, developing solutions that change lives and transform communities, we focus on:



Family Breakdown



Work and Opportunity



Educational failure



Addiction



Problem Debt



Criminal Justice



Modern Slavery



Housing and Communities

The CSJ Foundation oversees our Alliance of over 650 small, grassroots charities that enable our policy experts to find and promote evidence-based, experience-led solutions:



Pinpointing the best local poverty-fighting charities; charities input into policy, get support from an expert team, and are exposed to funding opportunities



Championing regions; our regional offices (NW, NE, EM, Yorkshire and Edinburgh) act as 'hubs' connecting business, philanthropy, local charities, and policymakers



Connecting philanthropists with the very best; high-quality due diligence provides a ready-made group of fundable projects and will administer foundations funds



Lobbying for the best policy solutions taken from the frontline; we gather the true nature of poverty and consider scalable solutions to feed directly into Government

How we work

Understanding the frontline

We regularly visit, consult with and invite views from our Alliance of over 700 poverty fighting charities. This ensures our work is experience led.



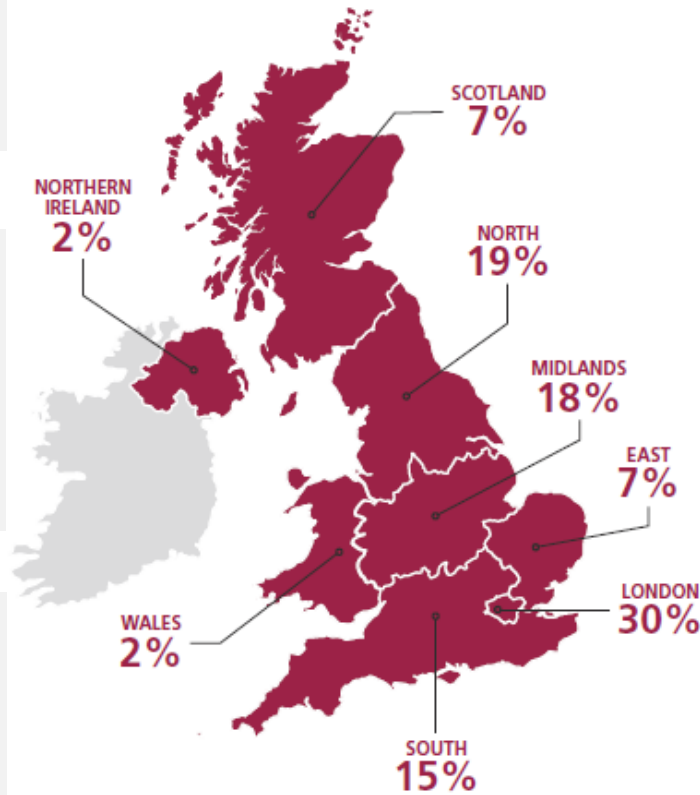
Policy Work

Our Policy teams conduct extensive research into issues we want to tackle to gain an in-depth understanding of them. They are supported by our data analytics team, expert working groups, and advisory boards. This ensures our work is evidence based.



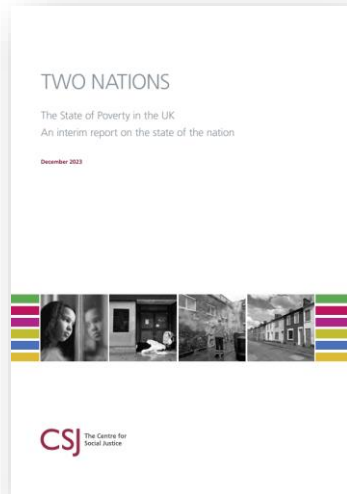
Impact

We speak into government policy for the most disadvantaged. We advocate in the media and through campaigns. Over the last year we have seen half of our recommendations adopted by Government or Opposition.



For example.... The CSJ's Social Justice Commission

Our cross-party Commission conducted an unflinching inquiry into what life at the bottom of society is really like. '[Two Nations](#)' reveals a widening gap between those who can get by and those stuck at the bottom.



Millions of people lead lives marred by family fragility, stagnant wages, poor housing, chronic ill-health, and crime. Lockdown measures had severe consequences on various aspects of life for the most disadvantaged:

- Calls to a domestic abuse helpline rose **700%**
- Severe school absence jumped **134%**, and now stands at **140,000 children**
- **1.2 million** more people on working-age benefits
- **86%** more people sought help for addictions
- Prisoners locked up **22+** hours per day

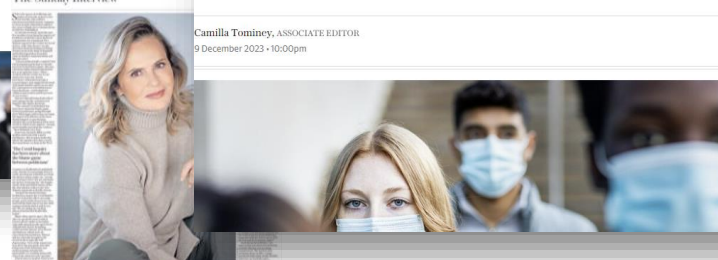
Covid has left Britain divided like in Victorian era, says think tank

Centre for Social Justice cites 700% rise in calls to domestic abuse helpline and increase in mental health problems among the disadvantaged



Lockdown had 'catastrophic effect' on Britain's poverty gap

Landmark report warns that UK is at risk of sliding back into the Victorian era



'We should never be locked down again – it was disastrous'

The Centre for Social Justice has published its landmark report 'Two Nations' which reveals the state of poverty in the UK. The report shows that the poverty gap has widened significantly since the start of the pandemic, with millions of people living in poverty and struggling to meet their basic needs. The report also highlights the impact of lockdown measures on the most disadvantaged, including a 700% increase in calls to the domestic abuse helpline and a 134% increase in severe school absence.

COVID'S BROKE' UK KIDS in 5 mental toll

700% rise in calls to domestic abuse helpline during lockdown

LOCKDOWN has left one in five kids with mental health issues – almost double the number 20 years ago, a report warns as many as 2.5 million children have a mental disorder by 2030, the Centre for Social Justice study shows 20 years after its landmark Broken Britain survey reported reforms that led to Universal Credit. Back then, just one in nine children were assessed as having a clinically recognisable mental health problem. The new report found 13 million people had lives being poorer because of the pandemic. It also found that the calls to domestic abuse lines increased 700 per cent in lockdown and school absences rose by 134 per cent. "There is a growing gap between those who can get by and those stuck at the bottom", The Sun Says – Page Ten



Poverty in data: How the Resolution Foundation use data

Lalitha Try

Economist, Resolution Foundation

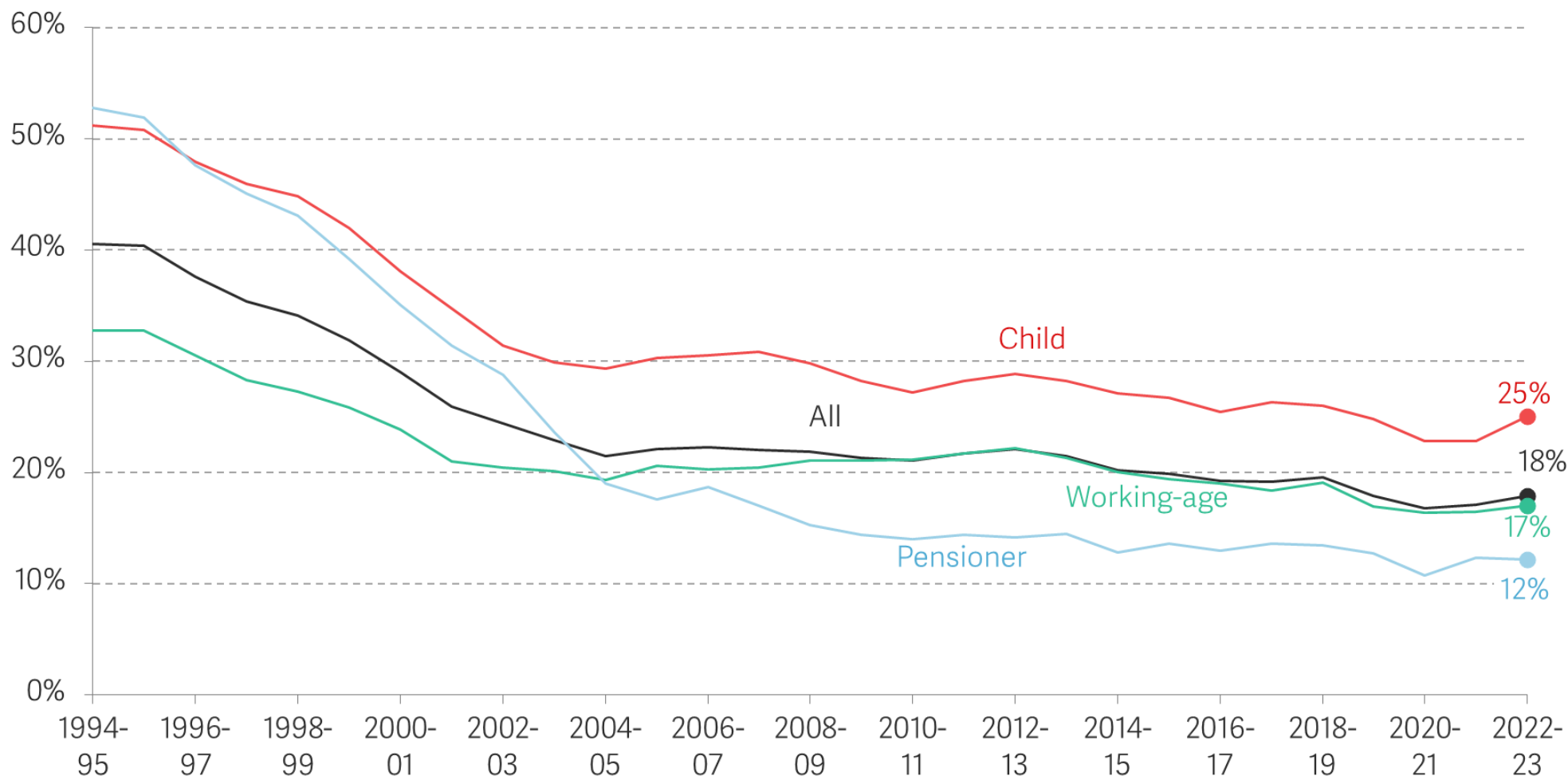
The Resolution Foundation

- An independent think-tank focused on improving the living standards of those on low-to-middle incomes
- We frequently use household surveys including FRS/HBAI, LFS, WAS and LCFS
- High quality, representative and timely data is key to analysing living standards

Why it's important to focus on poverty

Absolute poverty rose in the latest data...

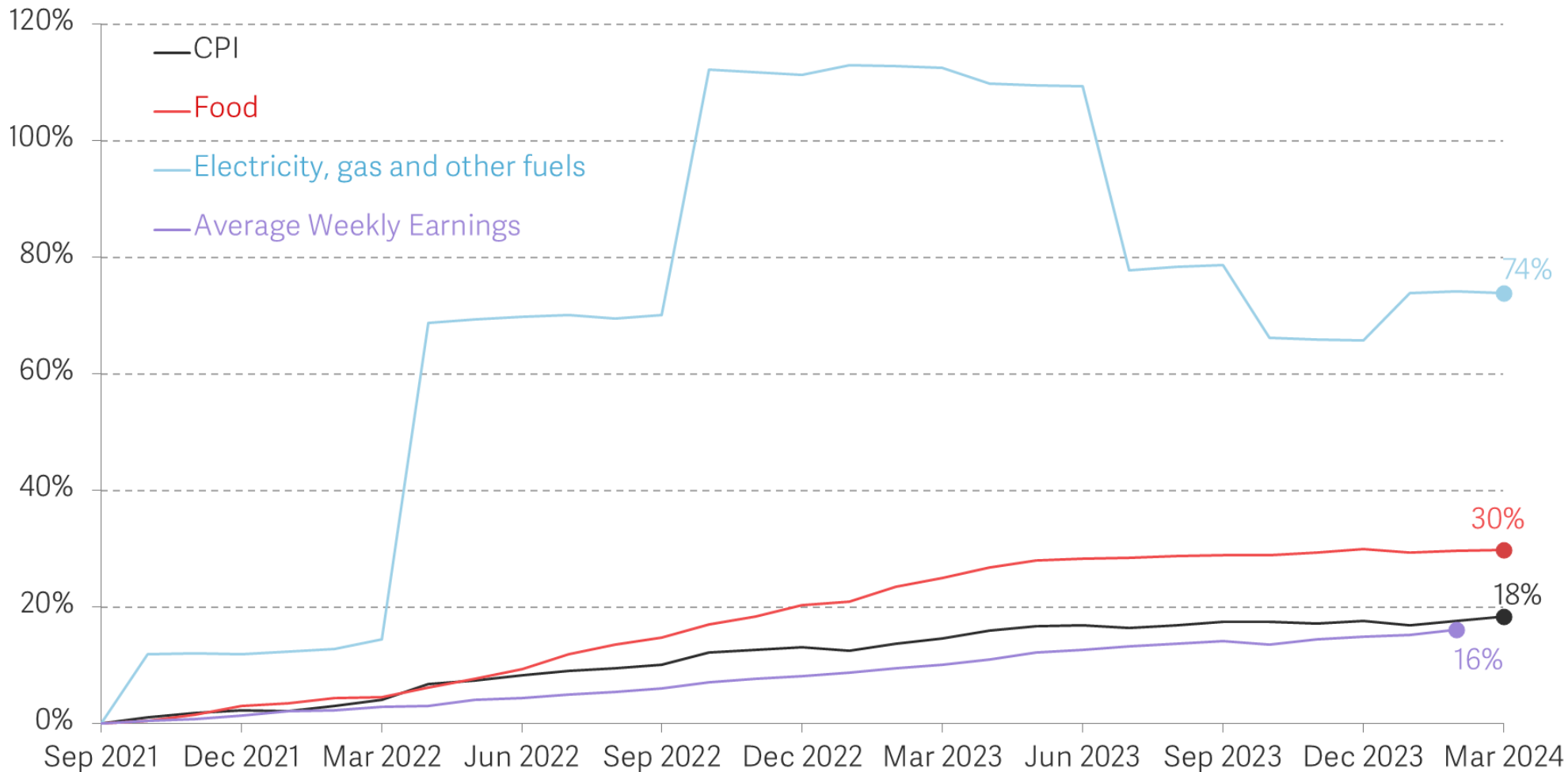
Proportion of people living in absolute poverty, after housing costs: GB/UK



Notes: GB before 2002-03.
Source: DWP, Households Below Average Income.

...and pressures on household incomes are far from over

Change in CPI price level by spending category: UK, September 2021 to March 2024

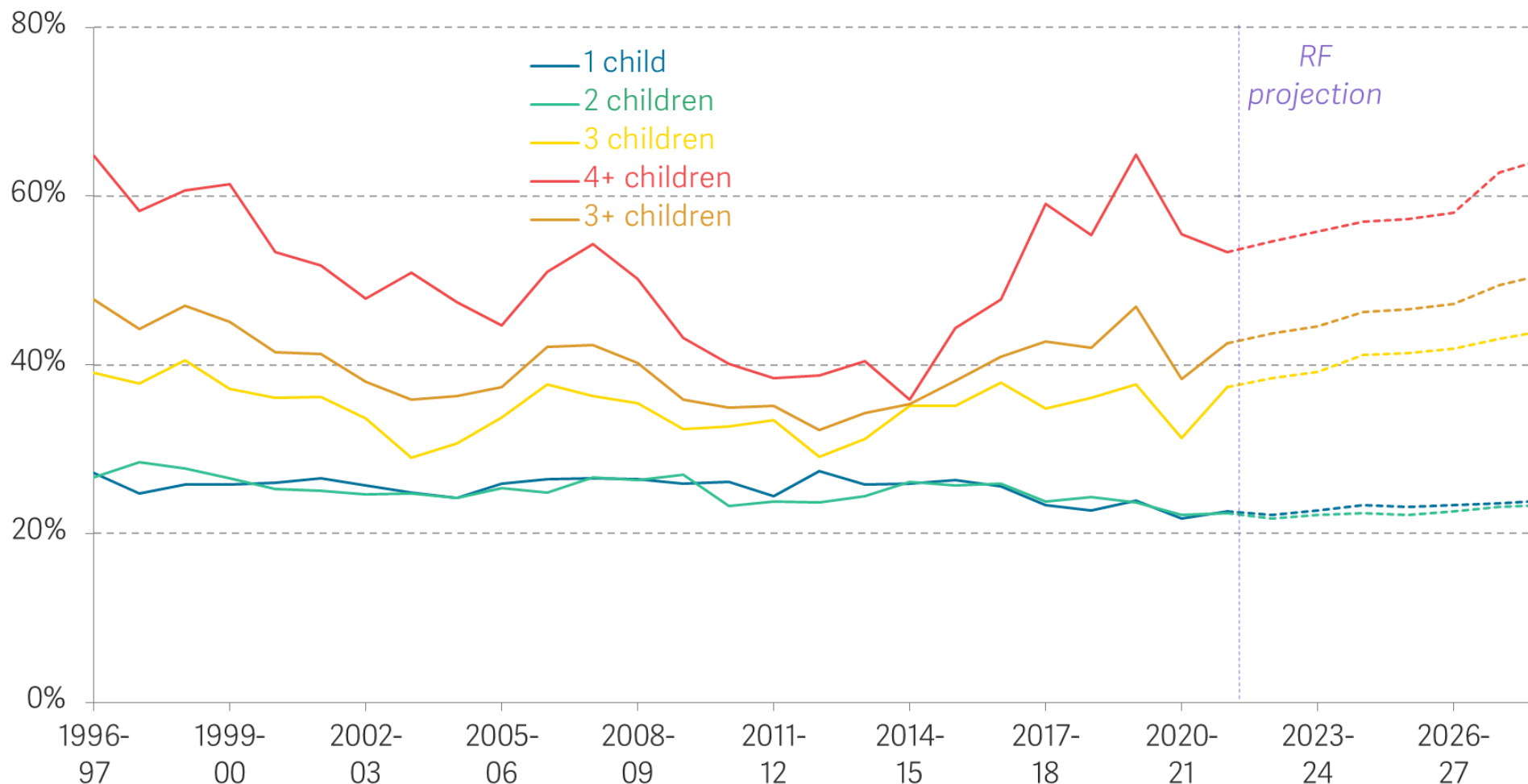


Source: ONS, Consumer Prices; ONS, Labour Market Statistics.

Interesting ways to use data

Microsimulation modelling allows us to forecast poverty rates

Proportion of children living in relative poverty, after housing costs, by number of children in the household: UK

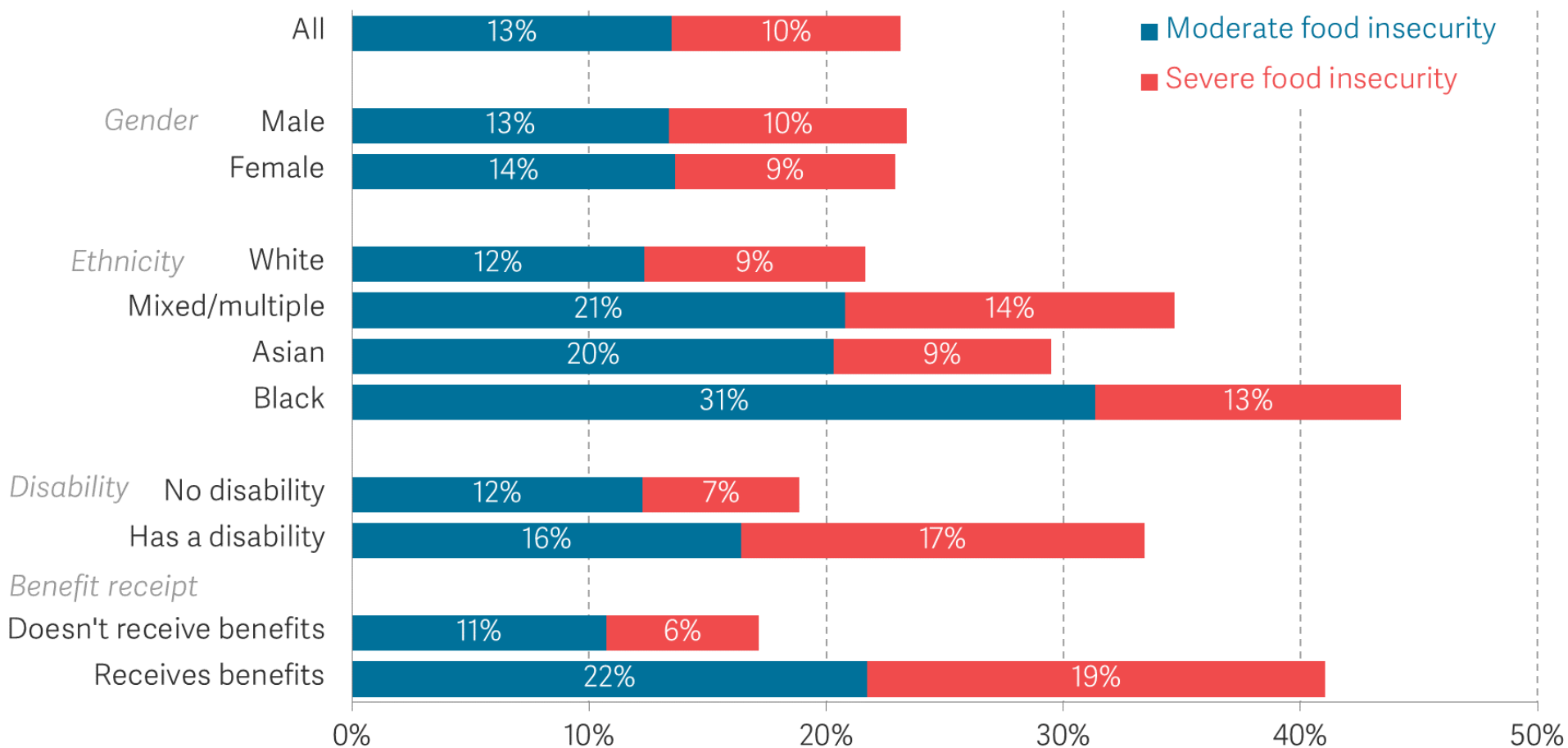


Notes: GB before 2002-03.

Source: RF analysis of DWP & IFS, Households Below Average Income; and RF projection including use of the IPPR Tax Benefit Model, ONS data, and OBR forecasts.

Commissioned surveys provide up to date insights on measures included in household surveys...

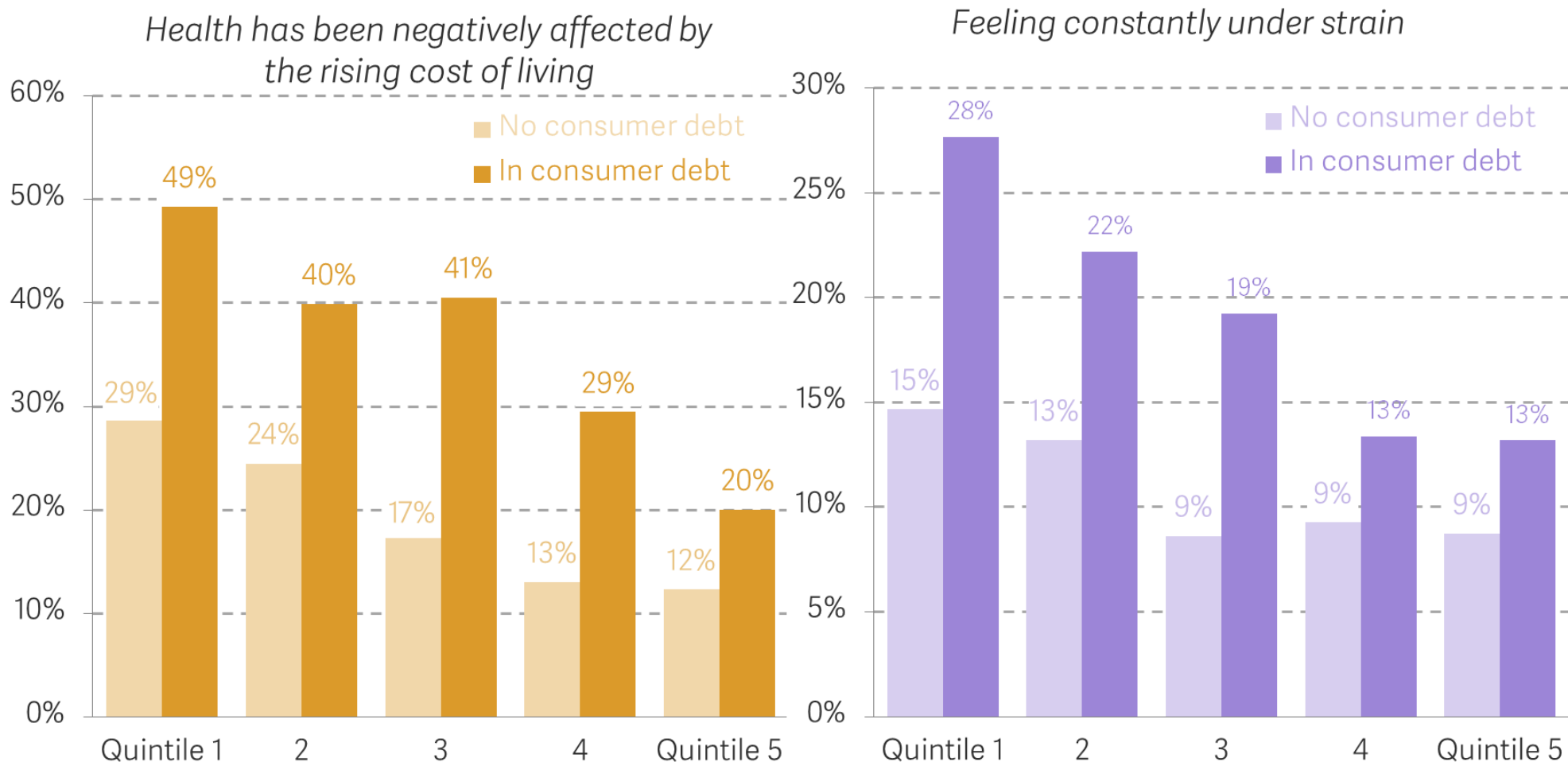
Proportion of respondents experiencing moderate and severe food insecurity, by various characteristics: UK, 13-17 October 2023



Notes: Base = all adults aged 18+ (n=8,378), male (n=4,060), female (n=4,318), no disability (n=5,877), disability (n=2,501), White (n=7,413), Mixed or multiple (n=158), Asian (n=292), Black (n=149), doesn't receive benefits (n=6,295), receives benefits (n=2,083). 'Receipt of benefits' includes those receiving Tax Credits but excludes those receiving only Basic State Pension or Child Benefit. Other ethnic groups excluded due to small sample sizes. See footnote 4 for details on how we define moderate and severe food insecurity. Source: RF analysis of YouGov, Cost of Living Crisis October 2023 wave.

...and give us new insights

Proportion of respondents reporting various wellbeing measures, by equivalised net household income quintile and whether they had formal credit debt: UK, October 2023

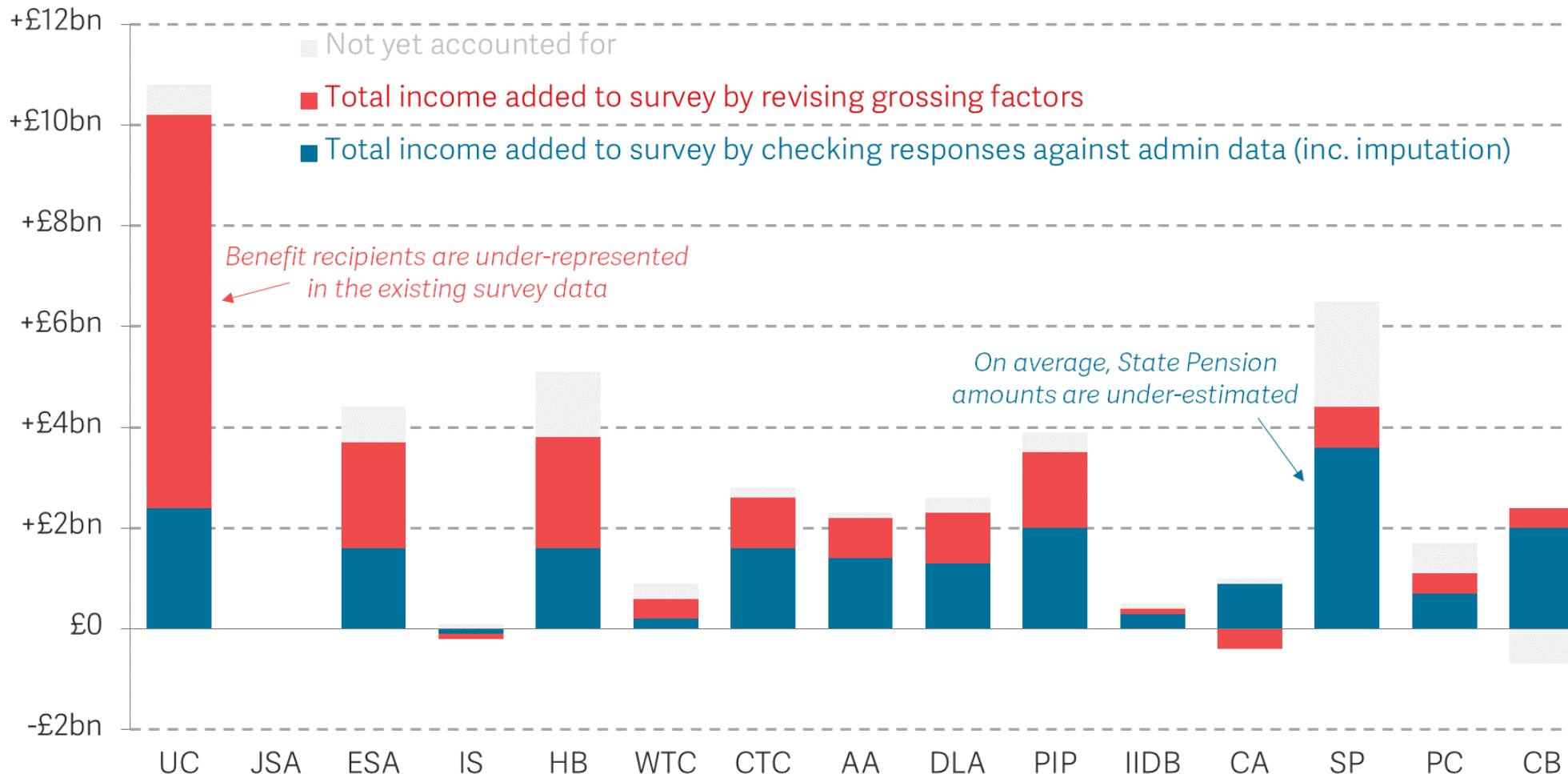


Notes: Base for those not in credit debt: (n=3,120). Base for those in credit debt (n=4,596). Income quintiles for those not in credit debt: Quintile 1 (n=465), Quintile 2 (n=462), Quintile 3 (n=406), Quintile 4 (n=512), Quintile 5 (n=494). Income quintiles for those in credit debt: Quintile 1 (n=512), Quintile 2 (n=646), Quintile 3 (n=694), Quintile 4 (n=934), Quintile 5 (n=1,075). Source: RF analysis of YouGov, Cost of Living Crisis October 2023 wave.

Making data better

Improvements to the FRS need to continue at pace

Impact of experimental data improvements on total benefit income in the Family Resources Survey in 2022-23:
GB



Notes: UC = Universal Credit; JSA = Job Seeker's Allowance; ESA = Employment and Support Allowance; IS = Income Support; HB = Housing Benefit; WTC = Working Tax Credit; CTC = Child Tax Credit; AA = Attendance Allowance; DLA = Disability Living Allowance; PIP = Personal Independence Payment; IIDB = Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit; CA = Carer's Allowance; SP = State Pension; PC = Pension Credit; CB = Child Benefit.
Source: RF analysis based on DWP, Family Resources Survey, Integrating administrative data for benefits, March 2024.

Some final notes

- Good quality data is essential to analysing incomes and poverty
- Too many poverty measures can get confusing
- It's good to see the DWP work on missing benefit income but worrying to see how unrepresentative HBAI still seems to be

Poverty in data: How the Resolution Foundation use data

Lalitha Try

Economist, Resolution Foundation





Using data to understand and alleviate poverty

Poverty in Data: Research, policy and next steps

Peter Matejic, April 25th 2024

Contents

- About the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)
- External data we use
- Growing destitution and hardship
- Reaching the Minimum Income Standard
- Taking an infrastructure mindset
- Data improvement asks



About the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)

About the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF)

We are an independent social change organisation, working to support and speed up the transition to a more equitable and just future, free from poverty, where people and planet can flourish.

Types of work we undertake:

- Research and insight
- Policy and ideas
- Campaigns and advocacy
- Movement building
- Funding and supporting pioneers

For us, ending poverty in the UK is a moral cause: to ensure dignity and respect for everyone, and to address exclusion and powerlessness.

Our work is supported by about 150 permanent staff across York, London and Glasgow

Also oversee the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust (JRHT) providing housing and care services in York and the region.



External data we use

Data from family finance surveys are fundamental to our work

- They are the backbone to our flagship UK Poverty report
- Includes FRS, HBAI, WAS, Understanding Society, LCF, as well as a wide range of other data sources to look across all dimensions of poverty to give an up-to-date picture of the state of the nation



The importance of administrative and forecast data

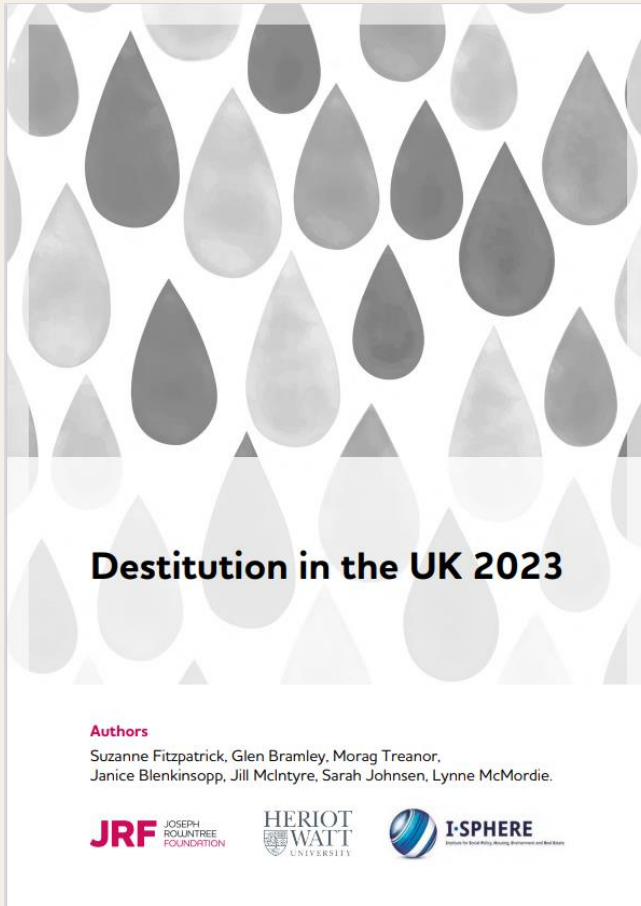
Increasingly using:

- Stat-Xplore admin data (especially on Universal Credit and benefit combinations)
- Abstract of benefit rate statistics
- Benefit Expenditure and Caseload Tables

Why?

- Long time series, back to the start of the modern welfare state in some cases, as well as looking forward in the expenditure tables
- Exhaustive
- Timely (with a bit of work with the Abstract)
- Easy to use (once you get hang of Stat-Xplore!)

But we also fund primary infrastructure projects to plug gaps



Destitution in the UK 2023

Authors
Suzanne Fitzpatrick, Glen Bramley, Morag Treanor,
Janice Blenkinsopp, Jill McIntyre, Sarah Johnsen, Lynne McMordie.

JRF JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION
HERIOT WATT UNIVERSITY
I-SPHERE Institute for Social Policy, Health, Education and Wellbeing



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NEWS

21 Jul 23

New Research: Economic Security 2023-2025


The Nuffield Politics Research Centre (NPRC) will be partnering with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) to conduct innovative research to explore economic security, its causes and consequences, how greater security could benefit wider society and the relationship of economic security to electoral support.

Professors [Jane Green](#), [Geoffrey Evans](#) and Dr [Zack Grant](#) will design a landmark new survey, initially as a three-wave panel run over two years. It will provide an unparalleled dataset to study the drivers, features and outcomes of economic security, as well as their implications for political choices.

“
Professor Jane Green, lead researcher, NPRC, said:
“

‘Economic security adds important insights to our understanding of economic outcomes, expectations, political attitudes and electoral choice. Our new research will dive much deeper than has been possible before, giving new insights into the broad benefits of economic security, as well as developing novel ways to analyse and make sense of the upcoming political period in Britain.’

The project will start this autumn with early findings expected in 2024. It builds on the Joseph Rowntree Foundation’s ongoing analysis and thinking about economic security and previous work from NPRC.



A Minimum Income Standard for the United Kingdom in 2023

by Matt Padley and Juliet Stone.

This latest update sets out what households need to reach the MIS benchmark in 2023 as costs continue to rise, and our social security system fails to provide adequate, appropriate support. As millions of people in the UK risk falling well short of a minimum living standard, we urgently need a social security system fit for today and tomorrow.

JRF JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

INSPIRING SOCIAL CHANGE

...as well as less regular analyses

- Deepening poverty – where we look at trends in poverty using a lower poverty line
- Anxiety nation – where we look at mental health and other impacts of economic insecurity
- Cost of living tracker – uses FRS and HBAI data in grossing up results
- Ill health and labour market participation – uses WAS and HBAI data
- On a low income, but not claiming means-tested benefits – uses WAS and HBAI data

...and lots of use of Understanding Society

- The caring penalty – looking at the financial impact of unpaid care, and how policies can help
- The dynamics of very deep poverty in the UK – extending DWP income dynamics to look in depth at deep poverty



Growing destitution and hardship

Definition of destitution

a) People are destitute if they have lacked two or more of following in past month because they cannot afford them:

- Shelter
- Food
- Heating
- Lighting
- Clothing and footwear
- Basic toiletries

b) People are also destitute if their income is so low, and they have no savings, such that they are unable to purchase these essentials for themselves

- £95 for a single adult living alone
- £125 for a lone parent with one child
- £145 for a couple with no children
- £205 for a couple with two children

Destitution in the UK

3.8 million people

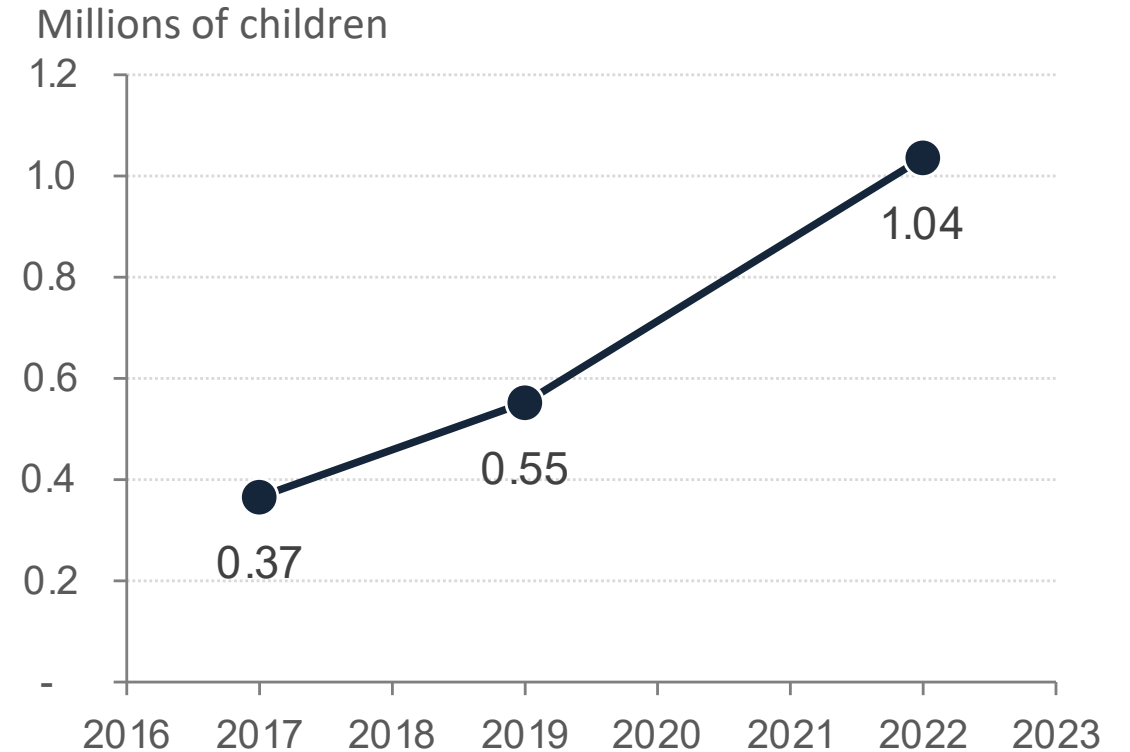
1.0 million of them children

were unable to meet their most basic physical need to be warm, dry, clean and fed in 2022.



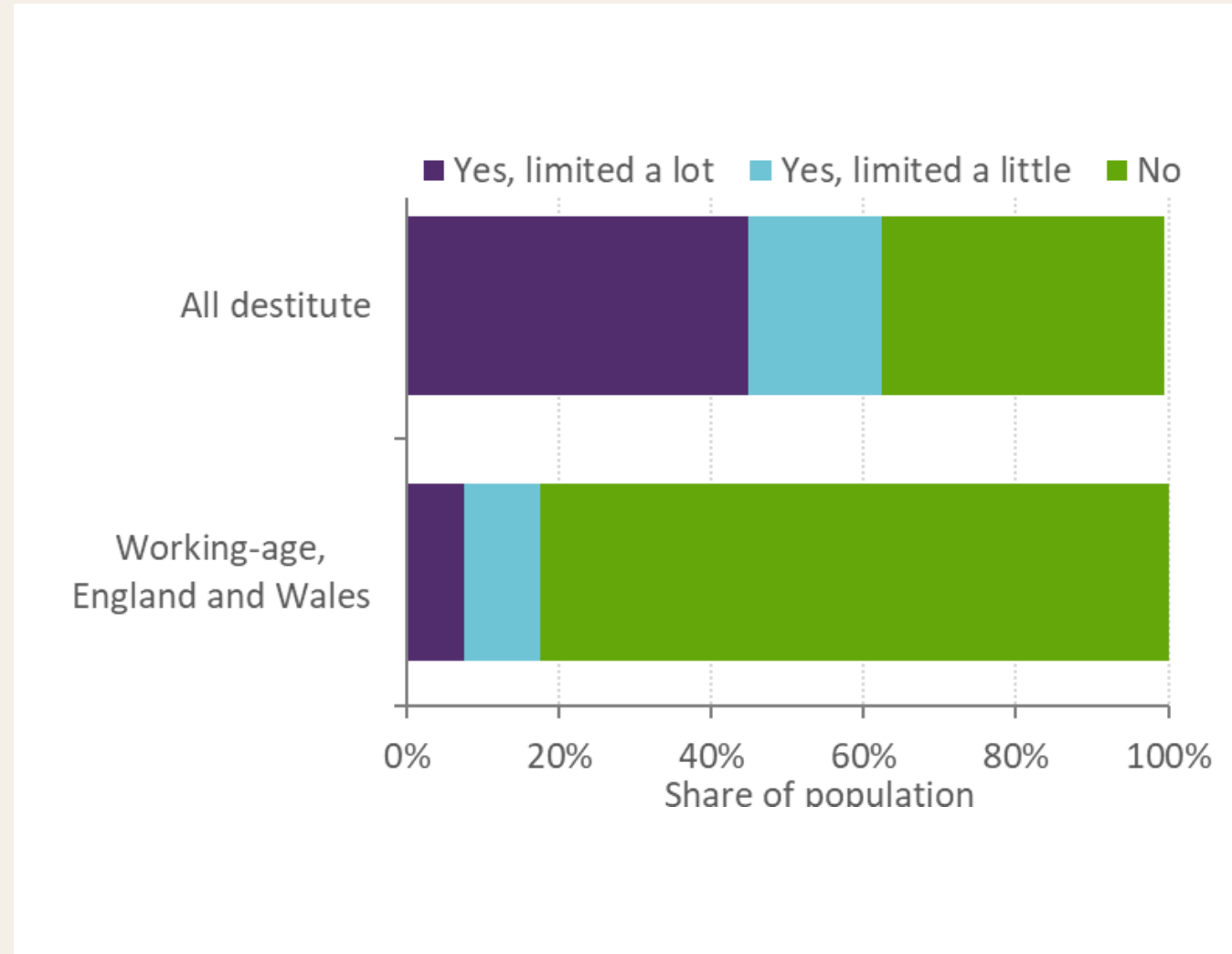
The Scale of Destitution

- The number of people experiencing destitution has increased sharply (**by 61%**) since the last Destitution in the UK survey was conducted in 2019, and has **more than doubled** between 2017 and 2022
- The number of children experiencing destitution has **almost trebled** since 2017

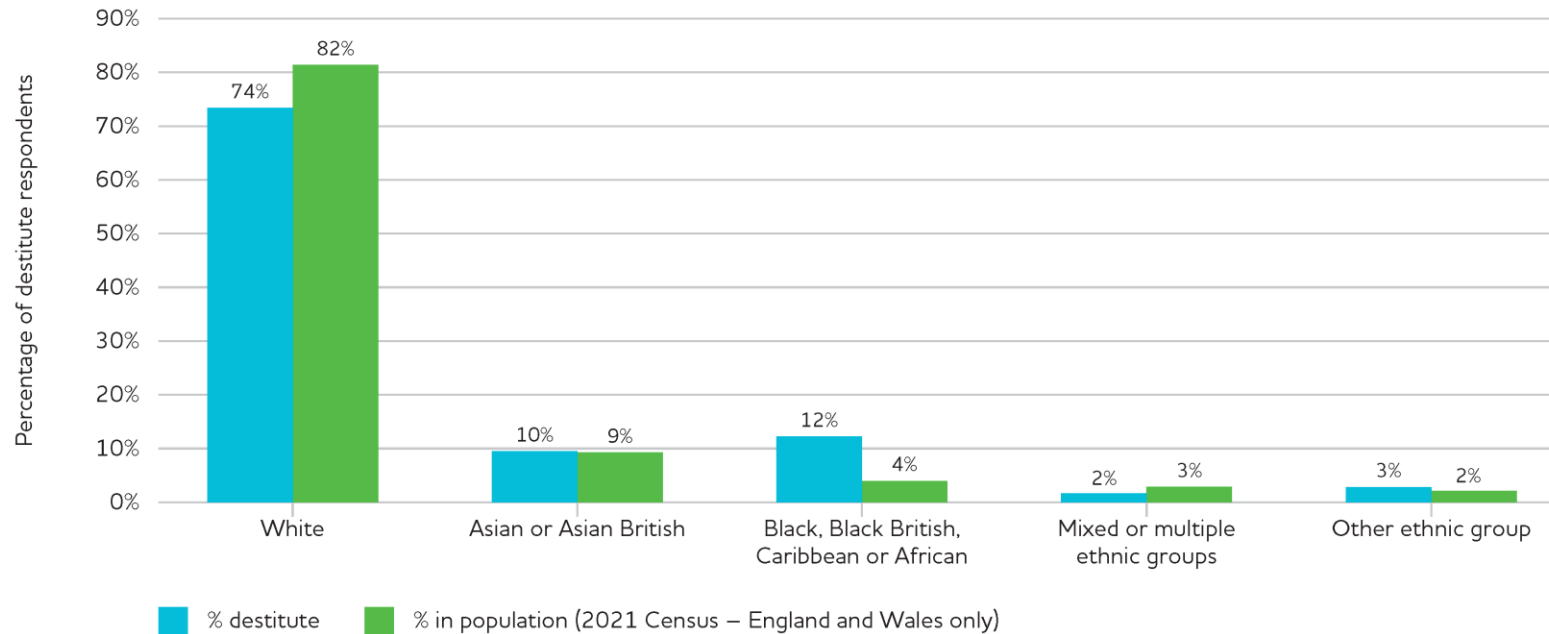


Strong links between destitution and disability

- Almost two-thirds (62%) had chronic health problem or disability (up from 54% in 2019).
- Men more affected than women
- Claiming disability benefits a long and arduous process; resolution can be a key factor pulling people out of destitution



Black people at disproportionate risk of destitution



- Black people three times more likely to be destitute than their population share
- Migrants also at disproportionate risk, and there is a strong link between ethnicity and migration status



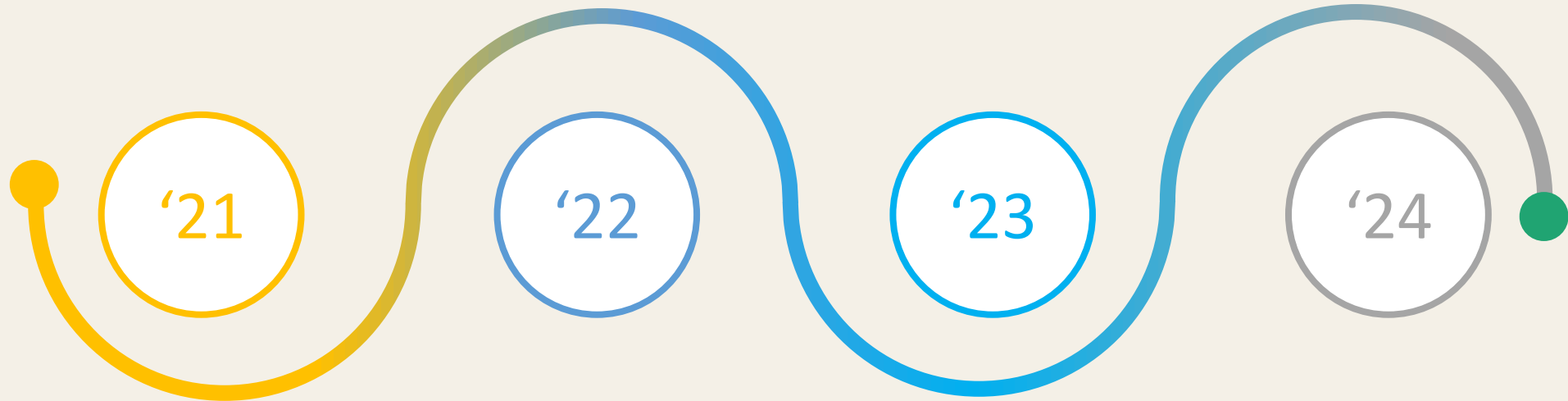
Reaching the Minimum Income Standard

What is MIS?

A minimum standard of living in the UK today includes, but is more than just, food, clothes and shelter. It is about having what you need in order to have the opportunities and choices necessary to participate in society.

MIS research enables us to track changes in what people think is necessary to live at that level, and what income is required to provide it.

MIS timeline 2021-24



- Inflation uprating

Apply inflation-based uprating method to adjust budget costs from previous year

- Review/Rebase

> HHs with children reviewed
> HHs without children rebased

- Inflation uprating

Apply inflation-based uprating method to adjust budget costs from previous year

- Rebase

> All HHs rebased

The portfolio of MIS products

The annual MIS reports:

- Details of any new research (every other year) and budgets based corresponding to April

Households Below MIS:

- Looks at adequacy of incomes compared to MIS and is based on latest HBAI available (so in Jan 2024 we published based on 2021/22 data)

Parents of non-resident children with shared care arrangements:

- c1/3 of kids stay regularly with a non-resident parent overnight. New research covers how costs differ from a single adult living on their own.

User support:

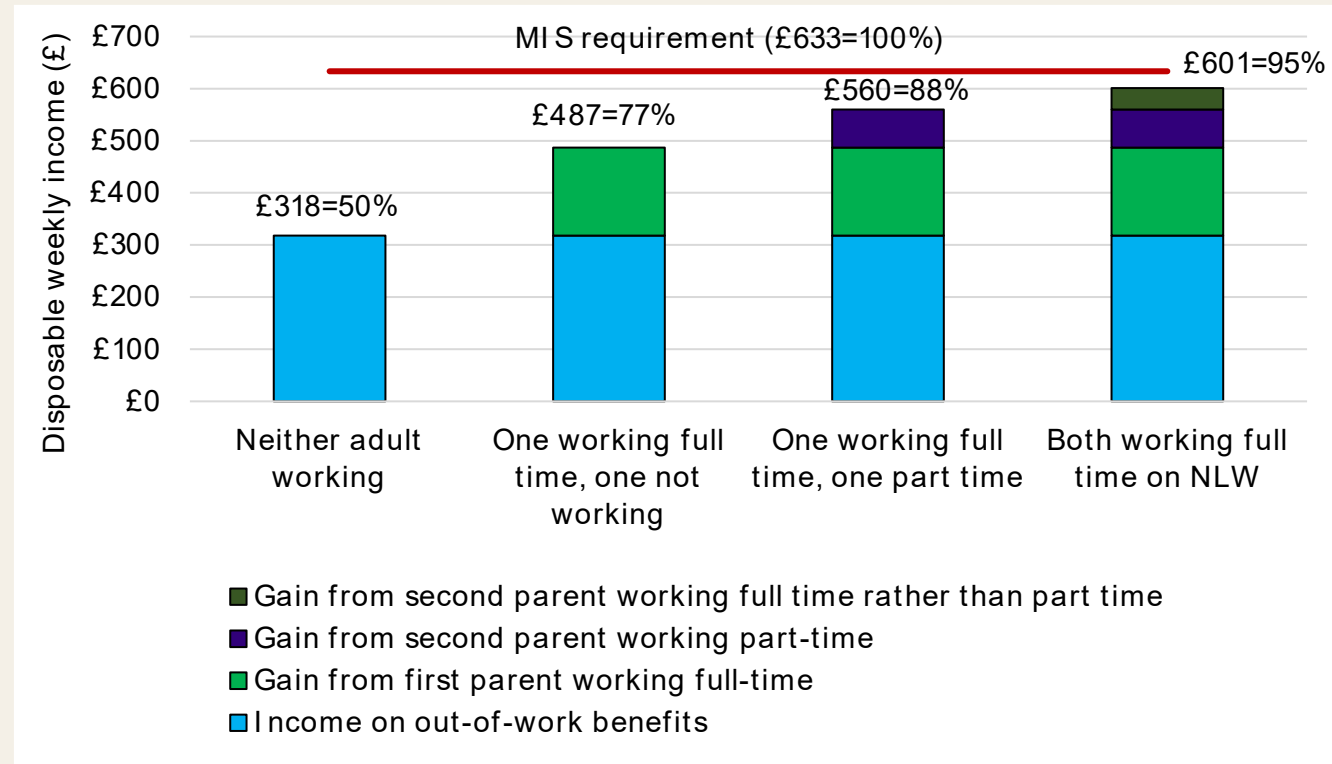
- Data helpdesk, publishing more underlying MIS data, online discussion groups with users, user events, stakeholder mapping

Minimum Income Calculator

- Provides an easy to access platform for general public use

Even working full-time doesn't enable households to meet the MIS

A couple with two children on out-of-work benefits are falling short with benefits covering just half of what is needed. Even where both parents are working full time, their combined income still falls short of what they need to reach MIS





Taking an infrastructure mindset

The Insight Infrastructure we are developing

- We are currently developing an **insight infrastructure** powered by quantitative and qualitative data.
- Insights will be generated through **triangulation** of data from different sources – **established datasets** (admin data); **new sources** (charity data); **experimental data products** (place-based insight hubs, banking data, consumer data); and **lived experience of people** (experiential insight, social listening).
- Data and insights products, which we will generate and disseminate in open collaboration with others, are going to support and sustain a **shared movement** promoting innovation, better use of evidence, and data-driven decisions to solve social and economic inequality in the UK.

Guiding principles

- To make decisions informed by trusted sources, reliable evidence, and actionable insights.
- To ensure that data and insights are useful and accessible to technical and non-technical audiences.
- To adopt open-source and public good principles, wherever possible, to guide everything we do.
- To always use data and insights in a manner that is proportionate, purposeful, and respectful.
- To make sure innovation and experimentation embrace the possibility of failure, strive to learn from mistakes and widen our collective appetite for risk.

Projects to date (1)

Ecosystem mapping & External Engagement (in partnership with Connected by Data)

- Gain a better understanding and to map the ecosystem of users of the insight infrastructure and what they needs as well as identifying effective communication strategies with so we create tools which there is demand for and so build a meaningful shared movement.

Developing tools and models to share insights on poverty (in partnership with Social Finance)

- Testing models and approaches to insight generation and dissemination that are accessible to both technical and non-technical audiences, creating a series of prototypes for user-testing, by harnessing and integrating a range of data sources, to learn from target users about what it will take for the infrastructure to effectively disseminate insight into poverty.

Social Media Listening (in partnership with Demos)

- Generating and disseminating insights drawn from contributions on social media platforms of those experiencing social and economic inequality, poverty and related issues, to embed lived experience into research, programming, policy debate and recommendations.

Grounded Voices

- Generation and dissemination of insights on social and economic inequality, poverty and other issues, drawn from the contribution of people with direct experience, to ensure the research, policy and campaigning work of JRF, the sector and beyond is informed by what matters to people struggling to afford what they need.

Projects to date (2)

The Role of Charity Data (in partnership with Data For Action)

- Create, test and implement models which allow for better designing and targeting of interventions by social sector organisations, whilst increasing research and analysis of social sector data, to explore the role data collected by charities can play in informing decision-making and service delivery

Making sense of data gaps (in partnership with Insightano)

- To generate an comprehensive checklist of major statistical releases assessing gaps and limitations, to create a strong and compelling case to lobby government departments to collect and release better and more inclusive data.

The Untapped Potential of Benefits Data (in partnership with Policy in Practice)

- Prototype a series of new insights informed by data on Universal Credit and other benefits in triangulation with other administrative datasets to explore the untapped potential of underused admin data and increase its accessibility.

Northern England Insight Finder (in partnership with Open Innovations)

- Interactive portal triangulating a large variety of open-source data that users can navigate by geography, from regional to local level, and by themes (or 'spotlights') to create a series of 'spotlights' on issues relating to economic insecurity, health and housing.

Projects to date (3)

Unlocking Banking Data for Social Good (in partnership with Smart Data Foundry)

- Deploy an interactive dashboard powered by banking data exploring income volatility and economic security in the UK; plus, award a series of free licenses for researchers to access the data through a secure haven to fill the gap in evidence on within-year earnings and income volatility.

Grassroots Poverty Action Group

- Sounding board made of people with direct experience of poverty and related issues to ensure we test approaches and deploy programmes that are truly representative and respectful of those with direct experience of the issues we care about



Data improvement asks

We need action from Government (especially DWP and ONS) to improve poverty data

Five actions to include:

- 1. Take forward the development of the Below Average Resources measure** based on the Social Metrics Commission's work
- 2. Integrate linked data into poverty statistics and a new grossing regime to tackle undercounts.**
- 3. Produce income distribution statistics based on administrative data**, allowing (secure) access to external researchers
- 4. Open up information about Universal Credit**, including calculating take up statistics and allowing more splits to be derived, e.g. to look at work and family status simultaneously.
- 5. Have more of a focus on deep poverty**, including on destitution.