

Depression hits poorest hardest: UK study

December 6 2022



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Britons hardest hit by the cost-of-living crisis are also the worst affected by depression, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) said on Tuesday.

Households are facing inflation at 40-year highs of 11 percent, forcing up the cost of food at the same time as energy prices soar on the back of

the war in Ukraine.

Nearly a quarter (24 percent) of people who had trouble paying their [energy bills](#) over four weeks to October 23 experienced "moderate to severe depressive symptoms".

That was almost three times higher than those who found it easy to pay (nine percent), the ONS said in a new report based on answers from nearly 4,300 people aged 16 and over.

About one in four (27 percent) adults who reported difficulty in affording the rent or mortgage payments had moderate to severe depressive symptoms.

For those who had no trouble paying, the figure was 15 percent, it added.

In all, one in 16 (16 percent) of British adults surveyed had moderate to severe depressive symptoms—similar to 2021 but higher than pre-pandemic levels (10 percent).

The study found levels of depression highest among adults who were unable to work because of long-term sickness (59 percent).

Unpaid carers were the next worst affected (37 percent), followed by disabled adults (35 percent) and [adults](#) in the most deprived parts of England (25 percent).

The figures for [young adults](#) aged 16 to 29 were 28 percent.

The UK saw the economy shrink in the third quarter of this year and is already in recession, according to several assessments.

The Bank of England has estimated the contraction will last for most of

next year.

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Citation: Depression hits poorest hardest: UK study (2022, December 6) retrieved 25 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-12-depression-poorest-hardest-uk.html>

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