



# How is the Current Cost of Living Affecting You?



Survey Results  
December 2022





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# Introduction

In Autumn 2022, young people told us via our social media platforms and our volunteering programmes that they needed more information to support them during the cost-of-living crisis. Also, feedback we received from other survey projects showed that 91% of respondents had been impacted by the cost of living increases in some way.

## In response, we:

- / Launched a Cost Crisis Hub on **young.scot** which includes money-saving opportunities, financial information and tips on looking after mental health. Young people can use the free Young Scot National Entitlement Card (Young Scot NEC) to support them to manage increasing costs with free bus travel for U22s as well as saving money by accessing discounts at 1,110 in-store locations and 300 online discounts with 370 different retailers - such as money off exercise classes, cinema tickets and food shopping. The Hub also links to Young Scot's AyeFeel Hub mental health and emotional wellbeing resources, and information on government welfare support and how to make a claim.
- / Increased the levels of budgeting, financial literacy, and financial awareness content we deliver on our social media platforms for young people.

The results of this survey will support us, our partners and stakeholders to make informed decisions around the development and provision of responsive services for young people in Scotland as we continue to navigate the cost of living crisis.

Our **"How is the current cost of living affecting you"** survey was active from 6th October 2022 to 10th November 2022 and we received **1,045 complete responses**.

## Who responded to the survey?

We received responses from 11 – 25 year olds for all of Scotland's local authority areas. The demographic information given shows a broad spread of ages, including those:

- / at secondary school **(49.1%)**
- / at university **(21.2%)**
- / in employment **(19.5%** part time and **10.6%** full time)
- / at college **(9.9%)**
- / living with parents / carers / guardians **(63.9%)**
- / living independently **(24.5%)**
- / living with flatmates renting **(11.8%)**
- / living with a partner renting **(6.4%)**
- / living alone renting **(6.3%)**



### Purpose of the survey

The survey sought to establish how aware young people were of different costs and increasing costs. It asked if young people were aware of changes in how their household were using heating and electricity. The survey asked how concerned young people were about being able to afford common items such as food, heating, electricity, insurance and council tax. It asked questions about the impact which the cost of living crisis was having on young people, their physical and mental health, and on how good they felt about going to school, college or work in the context of the cost crisis. Finally, it asked about the kinds of support which young people wanted from Young Scot to help with the Cost Crisis.

### About the survey design

The survey included a range of different question styles including open-ended and closed as well as word scales to keep young people engaged throughout the process of completion.

We promoted the survey on our social media channels and incentivised young people to take part via Young Scot Rewards.

All responses were anonymous in order to eliminate response identification. Respondents were also asked if they would be happy for their responses to be anonymously quoted. Young people's wellbeing was considered due to the sensitive nature of some of the topics included. There were several open questions within the survey. Each of these questions was optional, meaning not every respondent will have contributed a response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes.



# Key findings

The cost of living crisis is having a negative impact on survey respondents, on their quality of life, their choices and opportunities, and their mental and physical wellbeing.

Many young people reported making a larger contribution to family finances, either by increasing the proportion of their income they contribute or by reducing the costs they incur. Survey respondents were also worried about the impact which the crisis is having on their parents or carers.

Young people reported that they had **changed how they were using the heating in their homes** (80.1%) and **were more aware of how much electricity they used** (82.7%). **Over half** (52.4%) **were concerned about affording heating** and **over half** (50.9%) **were concerned about being able to afford electricity**.

Young people have been **speaking to the people they live with** (77.5%) **and their friends** (62.9%) about the cost of living crisis.

**Over two thirds of respondents (70.4%) were concerned about their parents, carers or guardians** in relation to the cost crisis.

The level of responses is testament to how strongly young people felt about these issues, with some text comment questions receiving over 500 written replies. Quotes from these comments highlight the very real impact which the cost of living crisis is having on young people in Scotland.

## On paying for utilities:

**“As with the heating, I simply cannot afford to use more electricity than is necessary. Money is being stretched so thin at present that any non-essential electricity is kept to the bare minimum. I would rather sit in the dark than have the light on and spend money I don’t have”.**

(25, Midlothian)

**“My mum worries about the cost of food, rent, council tax and now Christmas”**

(22, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar)

**“My friends are saying how their parents are going through rules they have in their homes now. My friends are also stressed because we are going to university in 2 years, and they’re scared about how they’re going to be able to afford it”**

(15, Falkirk)

**“All my flatmates are terrified... I’m only grateful that they feel the same way and aren’t being careless with electricity and gas. We have started using apps like ‘Too Good to Go’ to save money on food”**

(20, Edinburgh)

**On the impact on families**

**“I can’t remember the last time [my mum] ate a full meal”**

(14, East Renfrewshire)

**“We stopped having school lunches to save money”**

(16, Dundee)

**On the impact on young people’s mental health and education**

**“I suffer with anxiety... I’m more worried about my family being able to cope and keep a roof over their heads. It is affecting university as I’m wanting to put in as many hours as possible working to help as much as I can”**

(21, Aberdeen)

**On the impact on young peoples ability to work and study**

**“I don’t have the energy to go to university, and when I’m there I would rather be working to have more money coming in”**

(22, Glasgow)

**“Constantly worrying about whether I will have enough money for heating and food over Winter is taking a toll on my mental health”**

(24, Perth & Kinross)

**On the impact on young people’s spending**

**“I feel now I am constantly trying to save money and feel guilty on doing anything fun or I would usually treat myself to”**

(16, Fife)

**“I worry because I am embarrassed if I don’t have enough money for lunch”**

(16, Renfrewshire)

**On their own use of spending money**

**“I’m going to start paying dig money to ensure I’m not costing my family excess amounts”**

(17, North Lanarkshire)

### Impact on your daily life

Young people report a significant impact of the cost of living on their daily lives.

- 80.1% of respondents had noticed a change in how they or their household had used the heating in their home.
- 82.7% had become more aware of how much electricity they had used.
- 52.4% were moderately or very concerned about affording heating.
- 50.9% were moderately or very concerned about being able to afford electricity.

Other cost items such as food, or petrol and diesel were selected by fewer respondents, 34.2% and 33.3% respectively stating that they were moderately or very concerned about being able to afford or access these items.

We asked if young people had spoken to the people they lived with and their friends about the cost crisis. This question was intended to find out how deeply the cost crisis was affecting people.

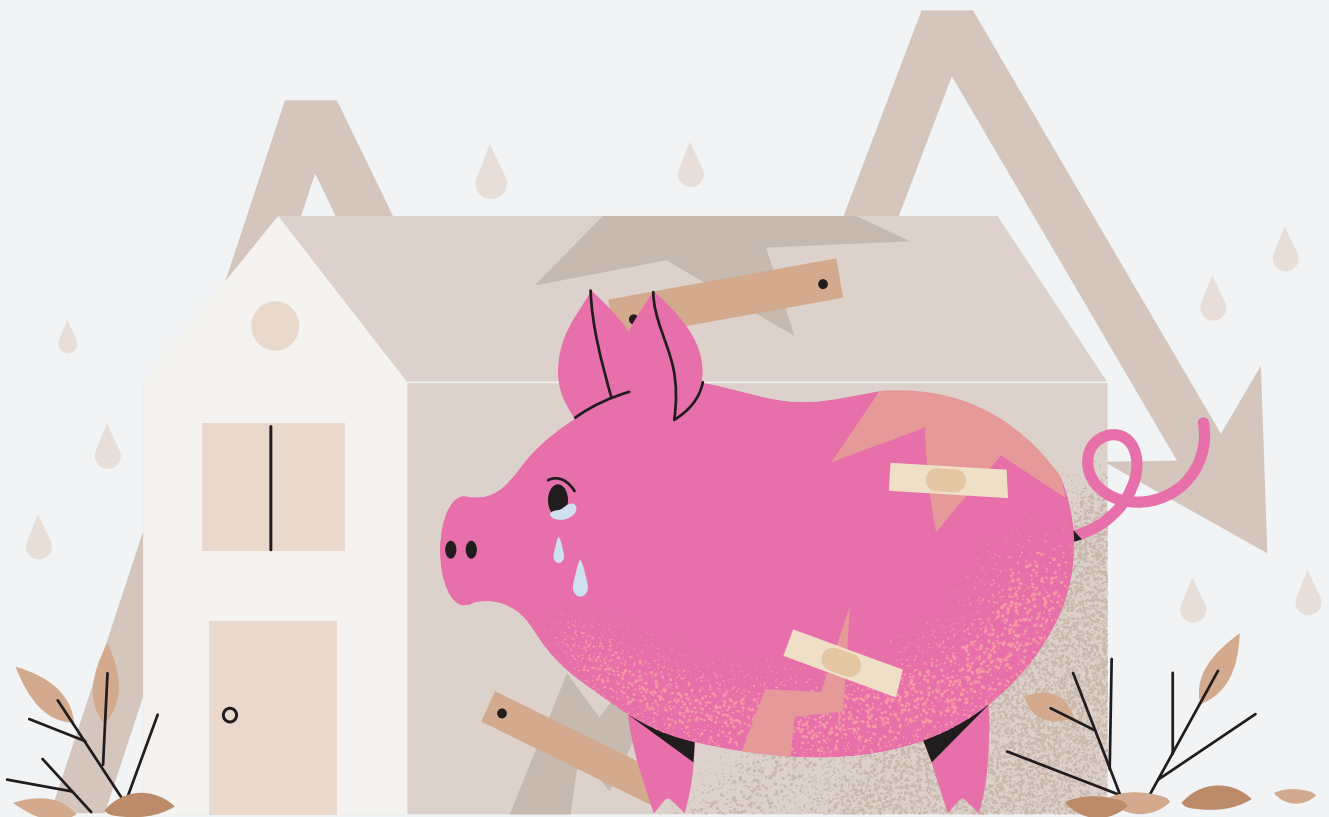
- 77.5% had spoken with the people they live with about the cost crisis.
- 62.9% had spoken to friends or peers.

We asked if young people were supporting the people they lived with in a different way than before. 35.4% said yes.

70.4% of respondents were concerned about their parents / carers / guardians.

We asked questions which were designed to find out about the impact of the cost crisis on peoples mental and physical health

- 50.2% of respondents did not feel good about their mental health and wellbeing when thinking about the cost crisis.
- 33.5% did not feel good about their physical health and wellbeing when thinking about the cost crisis.



### How can Young Scot help?

We asked young people to identify the services which would be of use to them from a list of services available through Young Scot Membership and the Young Scot Entitlement Card.

#### Services identified included:

- ✓ Under 22's free bus travel **(72.3%)**
- ✓ Instore Young Scot discounts **(57.3%)**
- ✓ Online Young Scot discounts **(55.6%)**
- ✓ Rewards **(43.4%)**
- ✓ Proof of age **(41.6%)**
- ✓ Leisure card **(32.3%)**

When asked which types of shops a discount would be useful for, young people selected

- ✓ Food **(82.1%)**
- ✓ Fashion **(62%)**
- ✓ Entertainment and leisure **(53.5%)**
- ✓ Health and beauty **(50.3%)**
- ✓ Education **(47.6%)**
- ✓ Technology **(46.1%)**
- ✓ Sports **(37.3%)**

When asked about which types of Young Scot Rewards would be most useful / beneficial young people selected:

- ✓ Vouchers for shops and retailers **(88.0%)**
- ✓ Treats such as days out, cinema tickets, pamper kits **(68.2%)**
- ✓ Physical items such as hygiene packs, warm items, stationery **(59.5%)**
- ✓ Unique experiences such as work shadowing, behind the scenes at events etc **(36.2%)**

#### Information needs

**276** young people completed a comment box giving details on the kind of information they would find helpful from Young Scot. The types of examples given include:

- ✓ Tips on how to save and budget money **(62)**
- ✓ Signposting where young people can go if needing help and support during the cost crisis **(43)**





# Survey results

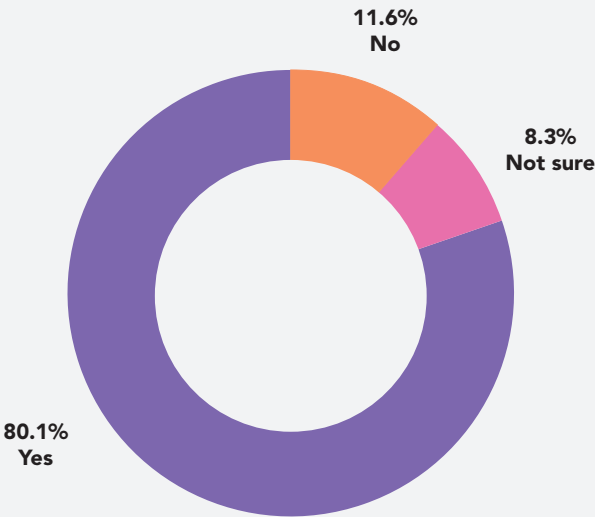
The survey received **1,045 complete responses**.

## Impact on your daily life

**Have you noticed any change in how you or your household use the heating in your home recently compared to previous years?**

We asked if respondents had noted any change in how they used the heating in their home recently. This question was designed to find out if the cost crisis was having an impact on how young people, and their families, were heating their homes.

Most respondents **(80.1%)** agreed that they had noticed a change in how they use heating.



**555** text responses were received for this question with eleven responses considered as non-applicable responses. *Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.*

Theme	Responses
The heating is on less/for shorter duration than previously	174
Too expensive to turn the heating on	145
Choosing to wear more clothes and use blankets instead of turning heating on	124
Much more hesitant to turn the heating on	93
Heating has not been turned on at all this year so far	78
Much more aware of what is being spent on heating home	76
Rising cost of using heating has led to cutting costs elsewhere (e.g., shorter showers, washing clothes less)	75
House is much colder than it previously was (directly stated)	44
Struggling to pay bills/rent because of rising costs	29
Chooses to light the fireplace or use portable heaters instead of turning heating on	15
Feels they are constantly having to choose between heating home or buying food/using electricals	13
Worried about their health due to being unable to turn heating on	10
Chooses to burn candles instead of turning heating on	6
Spends more time outside of house to keep warm instead of turning heating on (e.g., cafés, university)	6



**“When I’m cold my first thought isn’t to put the heating on. It’s to put on warmer clothes, then if I’m still cold get under the covers... putting the heating on is only for if the house is freezing”**

(21, West Lothian)

**“We’re more cautious about using the heating in recent months, it never used to be a problem, but the rising prices is making it more challenging to heat the home”**

(16, West Dunbartonshire)

**We have agreed to not turn the heating on, no matter how cold it gets, it’s just too expensive”**

(21, Fife)

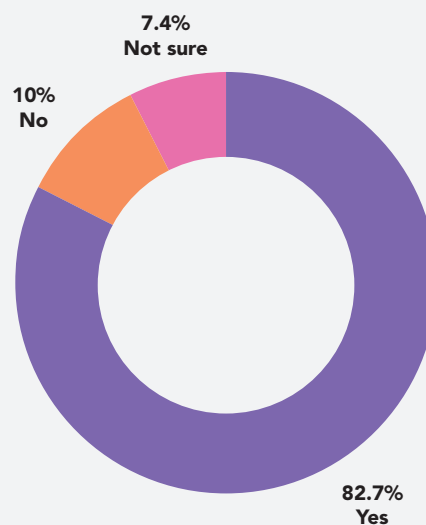
**“Due to the price increase I’m struggling to use the heating as and when I need it as I have to think about if I can afford it”**

(24, Fife)

#### **Have you become more aware of how much electricity you use in your home?**

We asked if respondents had become more aware of how much electricity was used in their homes. This was designed to let us know if young people had noticed that they were more aware of their electricity use.

Most respondents **(82.7%)** are more aware of electricity use in their home:



**405** text responses were received for this question with nineteen responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Much more aware of turning off switches and unplugging things when not using them	129
Choosing to leave lights turned off or switching them off as soon as possible	115
Much more aware of what is being spent on electricity	113
Reducing use of electrical appliances	76
Much more aware of how expensive using electrical appliances is	72
Rising cost of using electrical appliances has led to cutting costs elsewhere (e.g. turning heating on less, spending less on food)	65
Has a smart meter to help keep track of how much is being spent	47
Worries a lot more about being able to afford electricity bills	22
Much more hesitant to use electrical appliances	21
Spends more time outside of house to use other electricity supplies (e.g. cafés, university)	12
Struggling to pay bills/rent because of rising costs	8
Chooses to burn candles instead of turning lights on	7
Feels they are constantly having to choose between using electrical appliances or buying food/heating home	3
Researched the costs of using certain appliances to be more informed	3
Worried about their health in relation to cost of electricity	2



**“I do notice about electricity usage. You don’t realise how much electricity you use, until it comes to a crisis like this. Simple things like turning off switches, lights and things that don’t need to be on if not being used. Be aware.”**

(13, Angus)

**“As with the heating, I simply cannot afford to use more electricity than is necessary. Money is being stretched so thin at present that any non-essential electricity is kept to the bare minimum. I would rather sit in the dark than have the light on and spend money I don’t have”.**

(25, Midlothian)

**“I always ask my parents about the bills as I worry more”**

(16, Glasgow)

**“I am consistently checking and re-checking our smart meter, use kitchen appliances as little as possible, and have begun using more candles for lighting”**

(20, Highland)



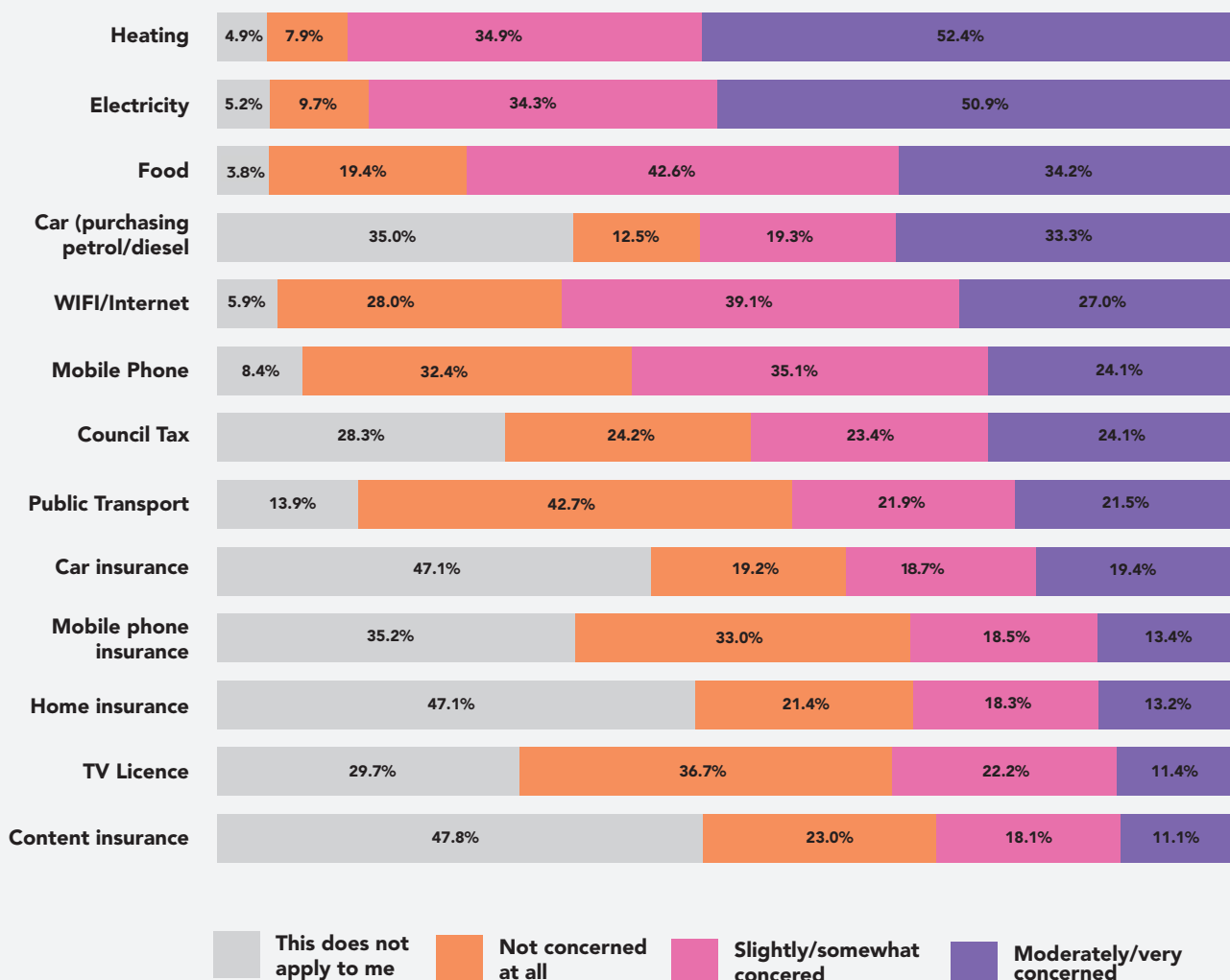
### Common expenses

We asked young people to rate how concerned they felt about being able to access or afford some common expense items this Autumn/Winter. The responses to this question varied by age, with over and under 18's identifying different areas of concern.

### For example:

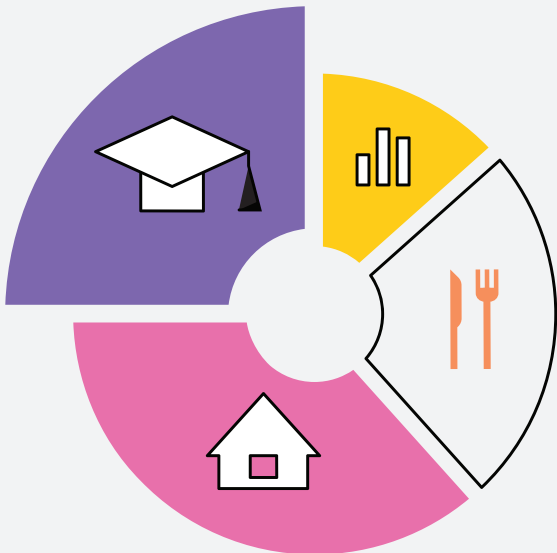
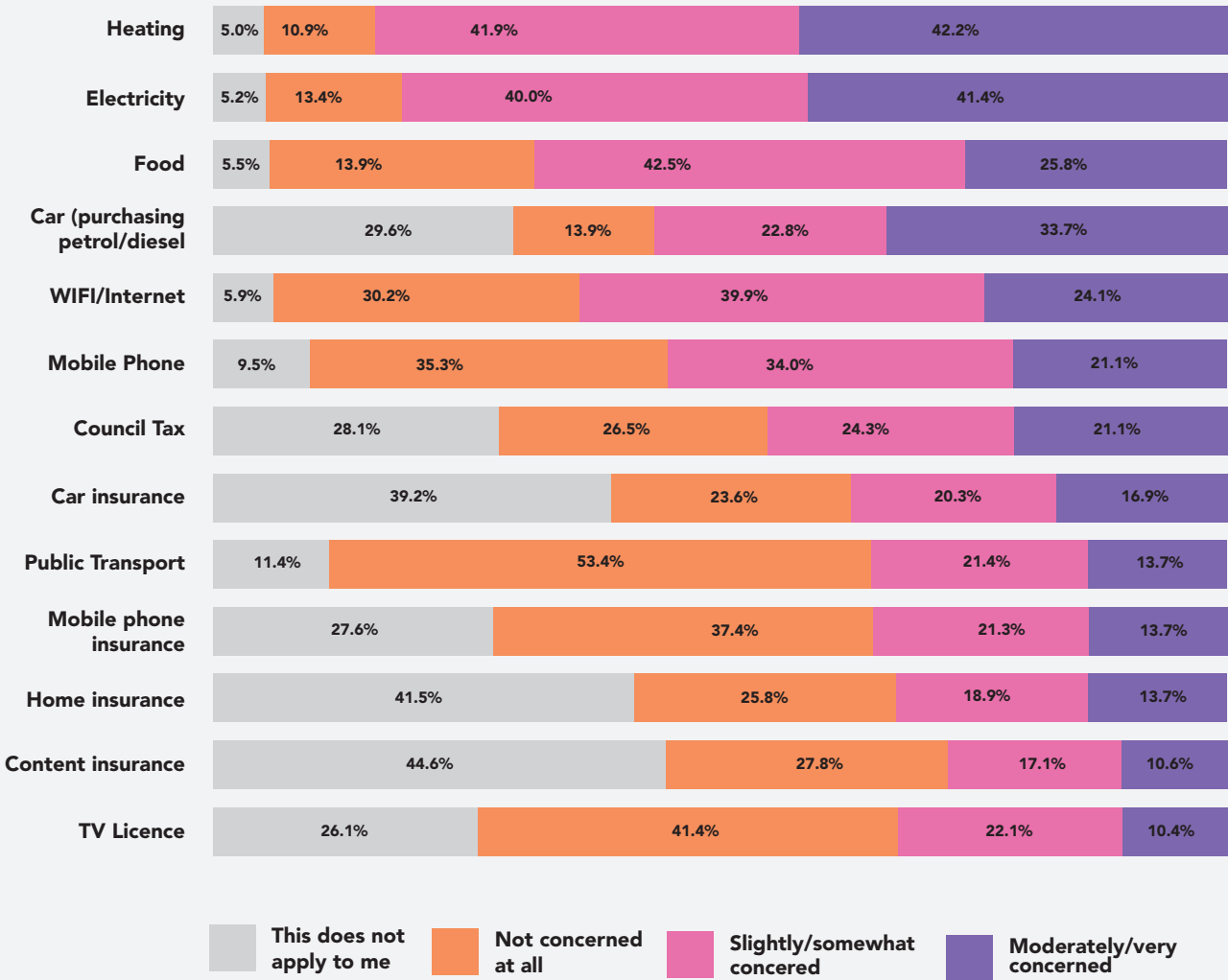
- 66.0% of over 18's were concerned about accessing heating this autumn and winter, compared to 42.2% of under 18's
- 63.5% of over 18's were concerned about affording electricity this autumn and winter, compared to 41.4% of under 18's
- 31.8% of over 18's were concerned about affording public transport, compared to 13.7% of under 18's.

**All ages: Below is a list of common expenses that you may be thinking more about at the moment. Please use the scale to rate whether you feel concerned about being able to access/afford these products this upcoming Autumn/Winter.**



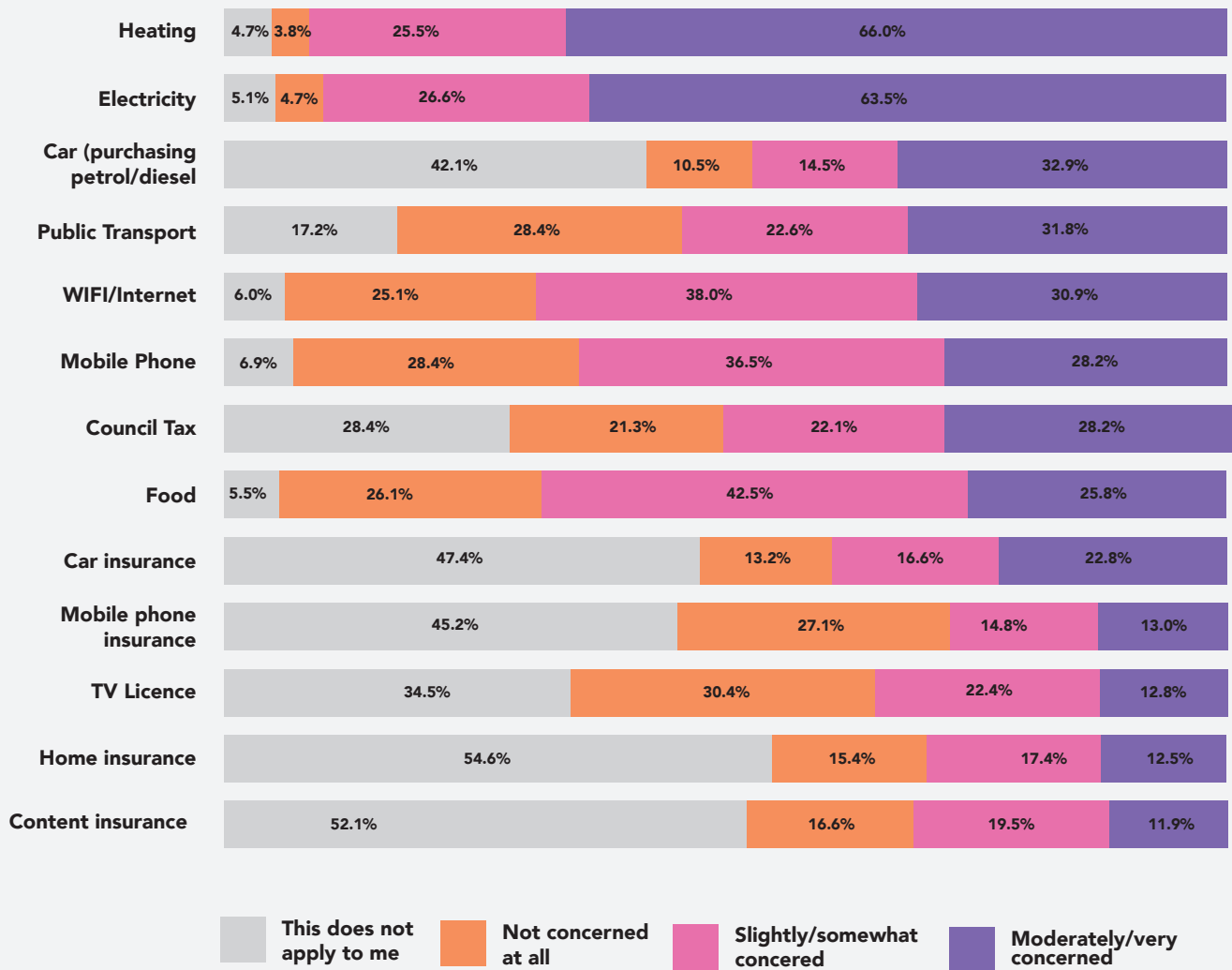
**Under 18s responses:** Below is a list of common expenses that you may be thinking more about at the moment. Please use the scale to rate whether you feel concerned about being able to access/afford these products this upcoming Autumn/Winter.

(597 responses under 18)



Over 18 responses: Below is a list of common expenses that you may be thinking more about at the moment. Please use the scale to rate whether you feel concerned about being able to access/afford these products this upcoming Autumn/Winter.

(447 responses)

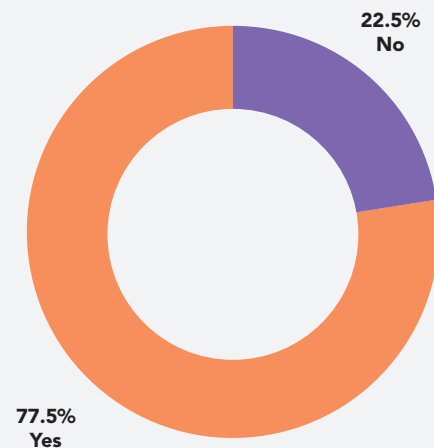




### Have you spoken with the people you live with about the cost crisis?

We asked whether survey respondents had spoken to the people they lived with about the cost crisis. This question was intended to find out how deeply the cost crisis was affecting people.

Most respondents (**77.5%**) have spoken with others about the cost crisis:



**303** text responses were received for this question with seventeen responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Discussed how we can reduce our use of electrical goods and the heating	80
Discussed the best ways we can save money	68
Considered how much we currently spend and how we can be more cautious with spending	60
Discussed the rising cost of using electricity and heating	47
Discussed the rising cost of food and wastage	41
General collective concern in household around cost-of-living crisis	37
Reminders to switch things off when not using them	23
Discussed potential lifestyle changes that may impact household	18
Discussed the rising cost of fuel/driving	17
Criticism of Government handling of cost crisis	10
Discussed the rising cost of necessities (e.g. hygiene products and clothing)	6
Received reassurance from parents to alleviate worrying	6
Worried about being able to afford Christmas expenses	5
Discussed getting a job to support household finances	4
Discussed how we can be more environmentally friendly	3
Discussed potentiality of power cuts in coming months	3
Paying (more) dig money	3
Taking on more responsibilities around the house	3
Discussed the rising cost of travel	2
Keeping ourselves informed through watching the news	2

**“To reduce the usage of electricity and heating. Do more exercise and go out to avoid sitting at home wasting electricity on gaming and other irrelevant usage”**

(11, Dumfries & Galloway)

**“We have spoken about how we save money and are trying to plan how we can afford everything. We have had to take cuts in terms of social life etc.”**

(25, Aberdeen)

**“All my flatmates are terrified... I’m only grateful that they feel the same way and aren’t being careless with electricity and gas. We have started using apps like ‘Too Good to Go’ to save money on food”**

(20, Edinburgh)

**“I have spoken to my parents, regarding if there is anything more I can do, if they are concerned etc. I feel they don’t want to worry me and want me to think everything is okay, but I know it’s not”**

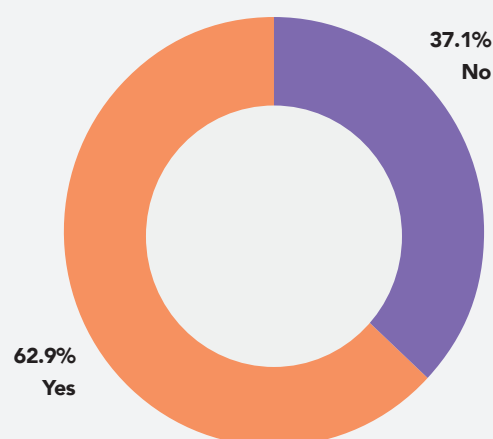
(16, Fife)



### Have you spoken with friends or peers about the cost crisis?

We asked if respondents had spoken to friends or peers about the cost crisis. This question was intended to find out how deeply the cost crisis was affecting young people.

Many respondents (**62.9%**) have spoken with friends/peers about the cost of living crisis:



**203** text responses were received for this question with nine responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
General collective concern amongst friends and peers	38
Discussed how expensive everything has gotten	34
General discussion around the impact of the cost crisis	26
Discussed worries of being unable to afford things	25
Shared their own experiences of the cost crisis so far	25
Discussed the rising cost of food specifically	24
Discussed ways we can save money	17
Discussed concerns about living on student loans and income	15
Political discussions regarding cost crisis	15
Discussed how to reduce heating and electrical use	14
Discussed the rising cost of fuel specifically	12
Discussed at school/college/university	11
Provided emotional support	10
Discussed socialising in places that cost less or don't cost at all	7
Discussed the rising cost of heating and electricity specifically	6
Speaking with friends and peers has made them feel worse about their own situation	6
Discussed getting jobs or working more to financially support their families	4
Discussed the rising cost of travel specifically	4
Discussed fears of becoming homeless	3
Provided financial support	3
Supported each other to be more informed about the cost crisis	3

**“We talk about when we will put the heating on and doing low-cost activities together to cut down on the cost of socialising. There are some friends who I am reluctant to spend time with because they will want to spend money whilst we are together”**

(23, Edinburgh)

**“I have been there to support my friends with their worries and always helping them wherever is possible through food or extra clothing”**

(14, East Ayrshire)

**“No one my age that I know is prepared for this... my parents at my age had a child, a car, and permanent jobs that paid at a lower wage than my current job, yet I can't afford any of these things that I want in life”**

(25, Glasgow)

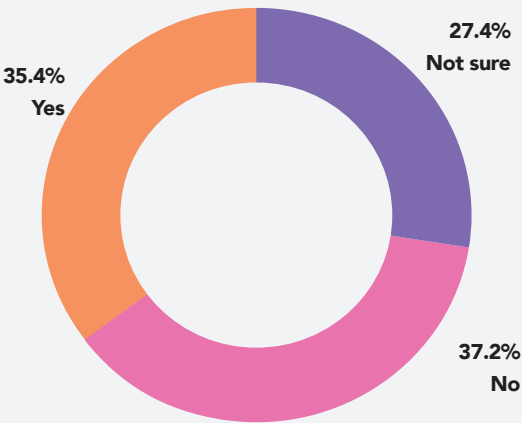
**“My friends are saying how their parents are going through rules they have in their homes now. My friends are also stressed because we are going to university in 2 years, and they're scared about how they're going to be able to afford it”**

(15, Falkirk)



Have you recently supported the people that you live with in a different way than you have had to before?

We wanted to find out if survey respondents had been supporting the people that they lived with in a different way to before the cost crisis. This question was designed to find out how deeply the cost crisis is impacting people’s lives.



**Ninety-two** text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable answer. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Pays more towards household expenses (bills, food etc)	39
Small changes to lifestyle (switching off lights, using heating less etc)	15
Supports people they live with more (helping around the house, emotional support etc)	15
Looking for or got a job to help financially support household	12
Paying (more) dig money	7
Paying for their own things independently	5
Adopted proactive ways to help cut costs (creating budgets, looking for discounts etc)	4
Wearing more clothes to stay warm	4
Works more hours to help financially support household	4
Uses their student loans to help financially support household	2
Sold items to earn money	1

Putting off lights, wearing more clothes and asking before I buy things”

(13, Glasgow)

“I pay for a lot of my own things and am mindful about electricity and heating”

(20, Scottish Borders)

“I’m going to start paying dig money to ensure I’m not costing my family excess amounts”

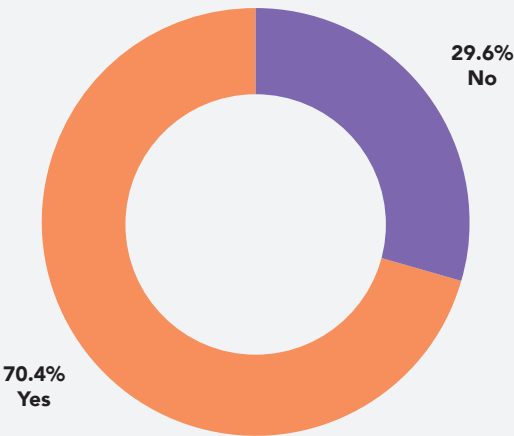
(17, North Lanarkshire)

“I contribute more of my own money I earn to the house voluntarily”

(24, Orkney Islands)

**Are you currently concerned about your parents/carers/guardians in terms of the cost crisis?**

We wanted to find out whether young people were concerned about their families when thinking about the cost crisis. Most of our respondents (**70.4%**) are concerned about their parents/carers/guardians:



**162** text responses were received for this question with eleven responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Worried about the financial constraints placed on their parents/carers/guardians	78
Concerned about the added stress and pressure placed on their parents/carers/guardians	53
Worried about how their family will manage with the cost crisis	19
Worried their parents/carers/guardians are overworking themselves	14
Worried specifically about the mental/physical health of their parents/carers/guardians	13
Parents/carers/guardians are unable to find sufficient work to support family	12
Concern as they live with a single parent	10
Their parents/carers/guardians have underlying health issues that worry them	10
Their parents argue more often	4



**“I can’t remember the last time  
[my mum] are a full meal”**

(14, East Renfrewshire)

**My parents collectively work 5 jobs and  
have my little siblings to worry about”**

(18, Aberdeenshire)

**“I would hate my mum and dad to be  
under pressure or stress and worry  
that they are letting us down as I  
am entirely aware this crisis is out  
of their hands”**

(17, North Lanarkshire)

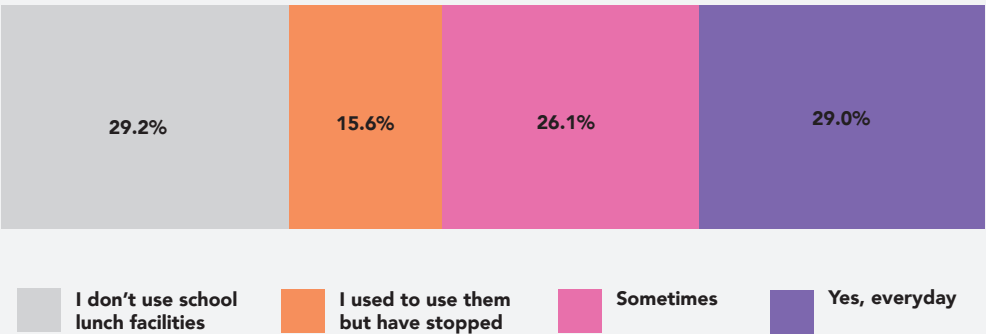
**“My mum worries about the cost  
of food, rent, council tax and  
now Christmas”**

(22, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar)



**Do you buy/receive your lunch from school facilities? (e.g., school cafeteria, tuck shops etc)**

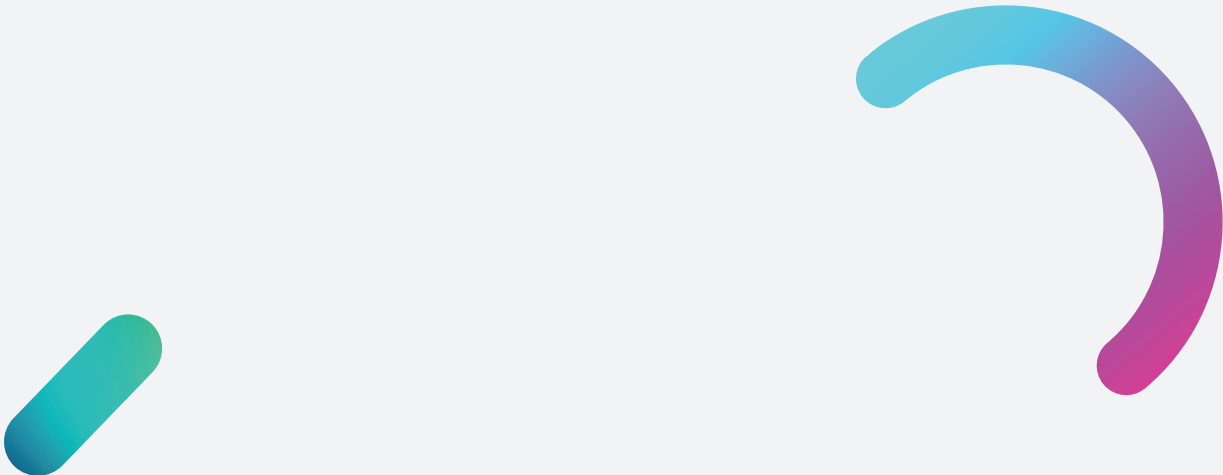
Understanding access to adequate food provision for young people is important during times of challenge. The following questions seek to gain more insight into the food consumption behaviours of young people during the school day:



**Where are you most likely to get your lunch from?**

320 text responses were received for this question with seven responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Packed lunch/food from home	163
Goes to local stores and supermarkets	115
Uses school facilities	54
Doesn't eat lunch	23
Food vans that come to the school	4





**Forty-nine** text responses were received for this question with three responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
School facilities are too expensive	22
The food served at school is of poor quality	11
It is easier and quicker to bring own lunch	11
It is much more affordable to bring own lunch	7
Options at school facilities are too limited	4
Brings own lunch for health reasons	1
None of my friends use the school facilities	1
Prefers to use facilities outside of school (e.g. local shops)	1

**“To save money but also the food isn’t very good, and I prefer to bring my own”**

(13, Orkney Islands)

**Very limited options and it was so much more expensive that bringing food”**

(15, Falkirk)

**“We stopped having school lunches to save money”**

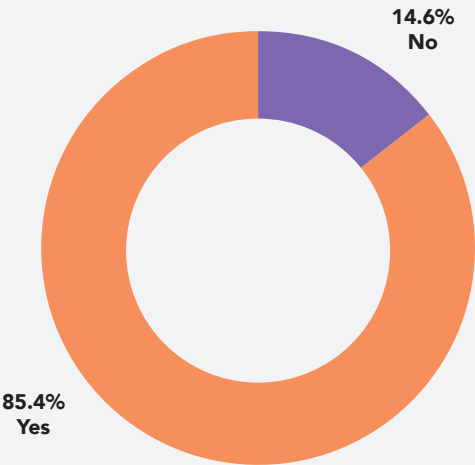
(16, Dundee)

**“The cost of food at the school facilities was very overpriced and incredibly expensive for the quality and quantity of food provided. It ended up being far cheaper to buy bread at the supermarket and make a packed lunch instead”**

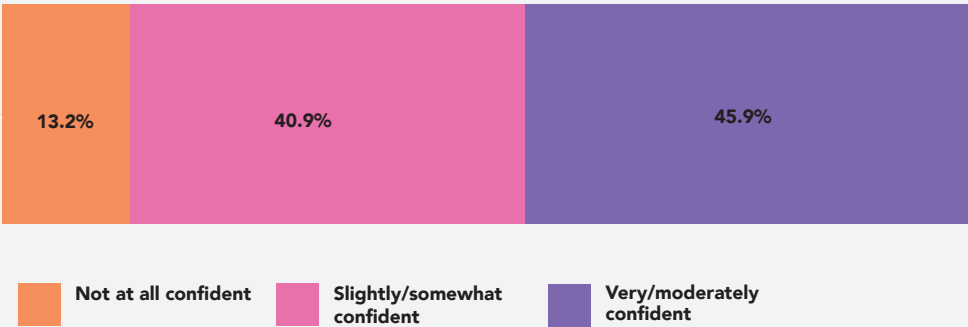
(16, East Lothian)

**Do you have access to your own spending money (such as pocket money or money that you earn)?**

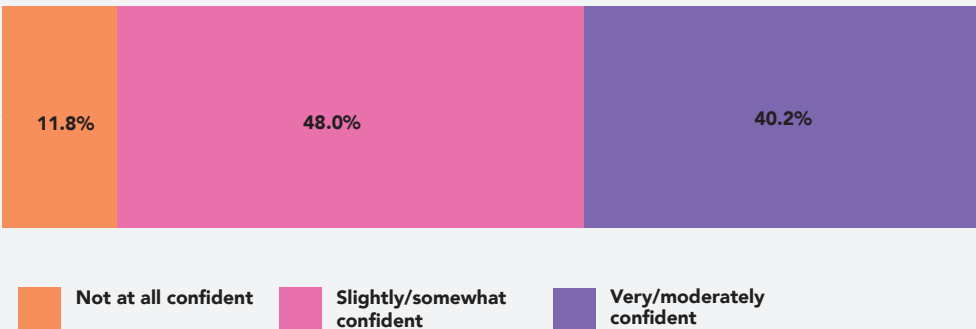
We wanted to understand if the respondents to our survey had access to their own money, and were able to save, budget and spend that money effectively. Most respondents **(85.4%)** have access to their own spending money: Almost half **(45.9%)** were confident in their ability to save money and slightly fewer **(40.2%)** were confident in their ability to budget.



**How confident are you in your ability to save money?**

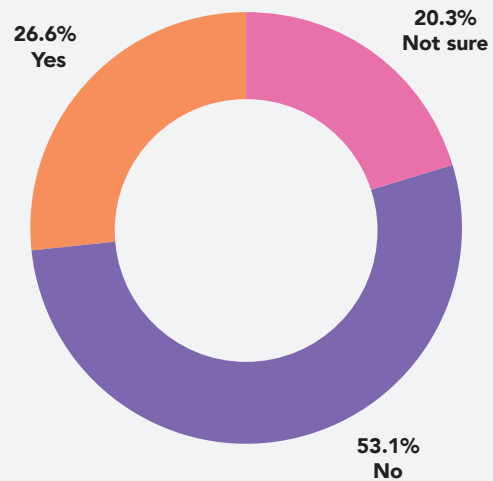


**How confident are you when it comes to budgeting?**



### Have you been targeted or seen any cost of living scams in the past few months?

As part of our work in supporting young people to avoid online financial scams we asked if respondents had seen or were aware of any online cost of living scams.



**119** text responses were received for this question with four responses considered as non-applicable responses. *Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.*

Theme	Responses
Scam text messages	65
Scams that offer fake grants, discounts, or rebates	39
Scam messages that claim to be from the Government	24
Scam emails	17
Scam phone calls	12
Aware of family members being targeted	7
Scams claiming recipient has 'unpaid bills'	7
Scams claiming recipient has 'missed deliveries'	5
Text messages from non-professional numbers	5
Scams posted on social media	4
Received confusing messages	3
Aware of scams through seeing things on the news	2
Been victims of fraud and lost money	2
Scams claiming recipient has been 'hacked'	2
Scam messages through search engines	2

**“I keep getting texts from different numbers claiming to be gov.uk & asking that I apply via a link to get a cost of living payment or that I am eligible for money towards my energy bills and to apply via a link. My mother accidentally opened one and it asked her for her bank card details so we knew it was definitely a scam”**

(19, Highland)

**“I have received multiple scam texts, emails and phone calls regarding the cost of living crisis”**

(14, Glasgow)

**“I’ve received several messages from normal phone numbers claiming that their link will take me to a website where I can apply for £400 to put towards my gas/energy bill”**

(18, Aberdeenshire)

**I’ve been sent fake emails claiming to be the Government or energy companies about fake support schemes”**

(25, North Lanarkshire)



# Other impacts

In the following questions, respondents were asked to decide whether they agreed with the statement or not. They had five options to choose from:

- / Strongly agree
- / Agree
- / Neither agree nor disagree
- / Disagree
- / Strongly disagree

High numbers of ‘neither agree nor disagree’ responses were received for each question. The results below consider the proportion of respondents within each statement who chose ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’.

### Mental and physical health and wellbeing

We wanted to find out whether the cost crisis was having an impact on young people’s mental and physical health and wellbeing. Some young people **(50.2%)** did report that the cost crisis was having an effect on their mental health or physical health **(33.5%)**.

When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about my mental health and wellbeing.

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
1,044	50.2%



**202** text responses were received for this question with seven responses considered as non-applicable responses. *Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.*

Theme	Responses
Constantly worrying about money and being able to afford things	54
Constantly worrying about the future	51
Feels stressed a lot more	49
Increased levels of anxiety	33
Worried about the mental health of others around them (e.g. friends, family)	32
Cannot afford to go out and socialise/do something fun	19
Struggling to survive in current situation	18
Has underlying mental health and medical issues that are worsened by cost crisis	17
Fear they may have to move out of their home or be made homeless	13
Studies have been impacted through poorer mental health	12
Feels unmotivated which impacts their mental health	8
Worrying about their ability to save/budget money	8
Looking for a job/having to work more	6
Worried about affording their education	6
Politically driven comment	5
Mental health is impacting their ability to work	2
Struggles to sleep	2
Worries about strains placed on relationships	2



**“I’m worrying about my family and affording to eat and heat the house”**

(15, West Lothian)

**“Constantly worrying about whether I will have enough money for heating and food over Winter is taking a toll on my mental health”**

(24, Perth & Kinross)

**“Healthy food is considerably more expensive than other foods. I would love to eat healthy and go out to exercise but it’s too expensive and I work too much to have any time to exercise”**

(18, Aberdeenshire)

**“When it’s colder in the flat (to save money on heating costs) it is much more difficult to motivate myself to go out and exercise. Food is more expensive, so I have to sacrifice healthy food in favour of cheaper options”**

(24, Perth & Kinross)

**“It’s not healthy to have to regulate when you receive heat or not nor having to buy less/ worst quality food.”**

(16, Dundee)

**Keeping on top of your physical wellbeing during a cost of living crisis is very difficult... Especially when you are struggling mentally, your physical health declines too”**

(21, Dundee)

**“I suffer with anxiety... I’m more worried about my family being able to cope and keep a roof over their heads. It is affecting university as I’m wanting to put in as many hours as possible working to help as much as I can”**

(21, Aberdeen)

**When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about my physical health and wellbeing.**

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
1,044	33.5%

**100** text responses were received for this question with three responses considered as non-applicable responses. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
It is harder to eat healthily due to the rising cost of food	35
Feels cold often	22
Feels stressed and worried all the time about affording things	22
Had to cancel gym membership or cut back on other activities that benefits physical health	15
Has a health condition that is being impacted by the cost crisis (e.g. chronic illnesses worsened by feeling cold)	12
Eating less due to the cost of food	10
Feels unmotivated and sluggish a lot more than usual	10
Physical health is directly impacted by poor mental health also	10
Feels they are stuck at home and unable to things	5
Feels overworked	4
Hygiene has been impacted due to the cost of water and having to shower/bathe less	3



**“It’s not healthy to have to regulate when you receive heat or not nor having to buy less/ worst quality food.”**

(16, Dundee)

**“Keeping on top of your physical wellbeing during a cost of living crisis is very difficult... Especially when you are struggling mentally, your physical health declines too”**

(21, Dundee)

**“When it’s colder in the flat (to save money on heating costs) it is much more difficult to motivate myself to go out and exercise. Food is more expensive, so I have to sacrifice healthy food in favour of cheaper options”**

(19, Glasgow)

**“Healthy food is considerably more expensive than other foods. I would love to eat healthy and go out to exercise but it’s too expensive and I work too much to have any time to exercise”**

(18, Aberdeenshire)



Impact of the cost crisis on going to school, education and employment

We wanted to find out if the cost crisis was having an impact on how young people felt about going to school, college, university and work. The impact here was less than some of the other questions. **22.3%** of respondents who had said they attended school disagreed with the statement ‘when thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to school most days’.

A slightly higher percentage (**32.7%**) of young people who attended college or university disagreed with the statement ‘when thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to college or university most days’. **27%** of those who worked disagreed with the statement ‘When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to work most days’.

When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to school most days.

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
513	22.3%

**Twenty-nine** text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Worried about being unable to afford lunches or school clothes	8
Fears they will be bullied for not having enough money	4
Feels the school is unable to support them	3
Worried about the cost of fuel to get them to school	3
The school is very cold	2
Feels they should be helping at home instead of going to school	1
Scared of catching COVID	1

“I spend money on food at school everyday at break and lunch and I feel bad using my parent’s money”

(16, North Ayrshire)

“I can’t afford to eat at school sometimes”

(13, East Lothian)

“Costs my family a lot in petrol costs as there is no bus that goes to my school”

(17, Dundee)

“I worry because I am embarrassed if I don’t have enough money for lunch”

(16, Renfrewshire)

**When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to college or university most days.**

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
321	32.7%

**Forty-two** text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Worried about the cost of transport to get there	15
Financial burdens of being a student worry them	13
Feels they should be working instead of studying	7
Mental health has impacted their studies	7
The cost of food is too expensive	6
Finding it hard to stay motivated and focused on their studies	4
Their studies require materials which are expensive	4
Fear they may have to drop out of college/university	3
Spends more time at college/university to use electricity and stay warm	2
Their studies have been impacted by the need to work more	2

**“I could be working more to help pay for things”**

(20, South Lanarkshire)

**“I don’t have the energy to go to university, and when I’m there I would rather be working to have more money coming in”**

(22, Glasgow)

**“I worry about travel expenses often (under 22s helps though!)”**

(18, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar)

**“Some days I am having to miss my educational studies to take on extra shifts so I can afford rent and food which has been impacting my studies... as well as since I am overwhelmed/worked it is difficult to do all of my classes on top of coursework which is leaving me feeling behind”**

(21, Edinburgh)

**When thinking about the cost crisis, I feel good about going to work most days.**

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
312	27.0%

**Thirty-seven** text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Feels they don't earn enough to live comfortably	20
Getting to work is becoming increasingly more expensive (cost of fuel, transport)	7
Finding it hard to stay motivated and focused on their work	5
Doesn't enjoy their job	4
The stress of their job is impacting their mental health	4
Feeling overworked	3
Fear they may lose their job	2
Working in health sector where resources are stretched	2

**“I don't feel good about going to work most days as I feel the money I'm earning is being swallowed up by the rising costs”**

(18, North Lanarkshire)

**“No matter how much I work I still don't feel like I have enough to support myself and my family when they need help”**

(20, North Lanarkshire)

**“I'm working full time to not be able to live comfortably”**

(22, Glasgow)

**“I feel really tired at work as my body lacks nourishment and is exhausted from walking to and from work”**

(22, West Lothian)

Taking part in activities

We wanted to find out if young people were finding an impact from the cost crisis on them being able to take part in activities. Some survey respondents (25.9% of those who lived with parents and did not have access to their own income) noted that their parents/ carers/ guardians did not pay for them to take part in activities. 31.9% of those who had access to their own money disagreed with the statement that they were able to pay to take part in activities that they enjoyed.

My parent(s), carer(s) or guardian(s) pay for me to take part in activities that I enjoy.

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
108	25.9%

Eleven text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Unable to spend money on going out	5
Had to stop going to activities I used to attend	4
The cost of fuel is impacting ability to go places	2

“[They] can’t afford to support anything like that”

(16, Falkirk)

“Car trips to places. Only essential car journeys”

(19, West Lothian)

“Because of the rising costs and having 3 other siblings money is tight so we get if mum has extra, sometimes one at a time each week”

(14, Glasgow)

**I am able to spend money on activities that I enjoy.**

Responses	% of Respondents who Disagreed
892	31.4%

**113** text responses were received for this question with one response considered a non-applicable response. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
Feels they are unable to have any fun as they can't afford to	39
Chooses to save money as doesn't want to spend money unnecessarily	33
Feels they are unable to socialise with friends and family	22
All available money is used to pay bills and essentials (e.g. food shopping)	20
Unable to eat out as much/at all	18
Have stopped gym memberships and/or attending sports clubs	15
Feels they are unable to spend money above non-essentials (e.g. new clothes, luxury items)	11
The cost of travel is becoming too expensive	10
Unable to go to the cinema	10
Doesn't have any spare time to do fun activities	3
Unable to spend money on holidays	3
Unable to use electricity/heating the same way as previously	2
Unable to go on school trips	1

**"I feel now I am constantly trying to save money and feel guilty on doing anything fun or I would usually treat myself to"**

(16, Fife)

**"I can't go out with my friends because I either don't have money at all or I don't have enough money to justify spending it on fun things. I can't go on school trips either because it's too expensive"**

(16, North Ayrshire)

**"I don't go out much because I am worried about spending money"**

(23, Dundee)

**"I feel more careful than ever with spending money"**

(24, North Lanarkshire)

# Respondent demographics

## How old are you?

Age	% Respondents	Age	% Respondents
11	1.1%	18	6.4%
12	5.1%	19	6.9%
13	6.8%	20	6.9%
14	8.9%	21	4.7%
15	11.6%	22	5.7%
16	11.9%	23	4.6%
17	11.8%	24	3.9%
		25	3.6%

## Which Local Authority do you live in?

Local Authority	% Respondents	Local Authority	% Respondents
Aberdeen	3.4%	Highland	6.1%
Aberdeenshire	4.6%	Inverclyde	1.1%
Angus	1.4%	Midlothian	1.6%
Argyll & Bute	1.1%	Moray	1.5%
Clackmannanshire	1.3%	North Ayrshire	1.6%
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	0.9%	North Lanarkshire	6.3%
Dumfries & Galloway	2.1%	Orkney Islands	0.6%
Dundee	3.4%	Perth & Kinross	5.4%
East Ayrshire	1.7%	Renfrewshire	3.2%
East Dunbartonshire	1.5%	Scottish Borders	1.9%
East Lothian	5.3%	Shetland Islands	0.6%
East Renfrewshire	2.3%	South Ayrshire	1.0%
Edinburgh	12.3%	South Lanarkshire	2.7%
Falkirk	1.9%	Stirling	2.0%
Fife	4.0%	West Dunbartonshire	0.9%
Glasgow	13.4%	West Lothian	3.0%

**Are you currently in any of the following...?**

Response	% Respondents
Secondary School	49.1%
University	21.2%
Part-time employment	19.5%
Full-time employment	10.6%
College	9.9%
None of the above	5.6%
Other – please specify	2.6%
Prefer not to say	1.7%

This question was multiple choice, therefore the results will not total 100%

**Twenty-two** text responses were received from responses who were asked to specify when selecting 'other'. Qualitative responses often discuss multiple themes and so were coded under multiple themes. This means that the table will not total to the exact number of responses stated.

Theme	Responses
In a work/training programme	5
Part-time employment	3
Apprenticeship	2
Primary School	2
Self-employed	2
Stay-at-home parent	2
Unemployed	2
Full-time carer	1
Maternity leave	1
Part-time study	1
Secondary school	1



**What is your current living situation?**

Response	% Respondents
Living with parents/carers/guardians	69.3%
Living with flatmates (renting)	11.8%
Living with a partner (renting)	6.4%
Living alone (renting)	6.3%
Other – please specify	2.3%
Living with a partner (homeowners)	1.8%
Living with flatmates (homeowners)	1.1%
Living alone (homeowner)	1.1%

**Twenty-three** text responses were received from responses who were asked to specify when selecting 'other'.

Theme	Responses
Living with other family members (e.g. siblings, grandparents)	6
Student accommodation	6
Supported accommodation	4
Living with parents	2
Single parent	2
Living alone	1
Living with a friend	1
Returned to family home after being made homeless	1

# Get in touch

We would be delighted to hear what you think about **#CostCrisisSurvey @youngscot**

You can also let us know your thoughts on the issues raised in this report by emailing **insights@young.scot**

Any enquiries **email [info@young.scot](mailto:info@young.scot)**

Please visit Cost Crisis hub **[www.young.scot/CostCrisis](http://www.young.scot/CostCrisis)**

# About us

We are Young Scot – the national youth information and citizenship charity. We provide young people with the information and opportunities that help them to thrive and make the most of their lives as they grow up.

## There are lots of ways for young people to benefit from Young Scot:

young.scot is our **information website** for young people that's packed full of quality-assured information tailored specifically for young people. We share this information with young people inside the digital spaces they spend their time in – including **TikTok, Instagram, Snapchat and YouTube**. We also produce information in Gaelic too.

Hundreds of thousands of young people are already using their **Young Scot National Entitlement Cards for free bus travel**, and others are using it for **discounted trains and ferries** too. They can also use their card to save money with **discounts at 1000s of in-person and online outlets across Scotland and Europe!** Their card is also free **legal proof of age** too.

Young carers get help to make the most of their free time and support in their caring role with access to our **#YSCarers Young Carers Package** special bundle of treats. We also run programmes for young people facing barriers to their attainment too.

Young people can build their skills, experiences and make a change to the things that matter **by taking part in surveys or volunteering** with us! They can also connect to exciting opportunities, rewards and money-can't-buy experiences with our **Young Scot Rewards** programme.

Find out more at **young.scot**





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