

Nearly half of Brits (44%) would struggle to pay for basic necessities within a month of losing income unexpectedly

3 months ago



44% of Brits report they would find it difficult to pay for basic necessities such as housing, food and utilities within just a single month of unexpectedly losing their income, a new [Big Issue](#) YouGov poll^[1] has found. That figure rises to 48% for adults under 50.

The research reveals sweeping regional differences in the precariousness of people's personal financial situation across the UK, with more than half (54%) of people in Wales and 49% of Londoners saying they'd find it difficult to pay for these necessities within the month of suddenly having their income taken away, compared to 42% in the rest of the South of England and 41% in Scotland.

A census of Big Issue's UK vendor network^[2] published concurrently reveals that more than two-thirds (68%) of its magazine sellers are worried about affording their basic necessities.

The organisation is highlighting the continued financial insecurity of both people engaging with its services and the wider UK public as it publishes its latest impact report, which shows demand for its support remains unabated.

Its 2024 Impact Report, published today (Thursday 8 May), shows that Big Issue Group has now met its ambitious five-year goal of engaging 11 million people by the end of 2026, two years ahead of schedule – engaging 11.6 million in 2024. This has been achieved via its social issue journalism, which grows awareness of issues facing people in poverty, an uptick in campaigning activity, and by supporting more of these people directly through the Group's social businesses.

The social enterprise aims to use business solutions to dismantle poverty, offering various opportunities to people living in poverty to work, earn, learn and thrive. The most famous of its services is the Big Issue magazine, which has been sold by vendors on the streets of the UK for over 34 years.

As revealed in the report, Big Issue vendors collectively earned more than £3.9 million through sales of the iconic weekly street magazine in 2024. Vendors can also access support with their health and wellbeing, housing needs and access to financial and digital services through the Big Issue Changing Lives CIC.

The Group's social investment arm, Big Issue Invest, has invested £2.7 million in 13 social purpose organisations in the past 12 months, expanding their portfolio to 145 businesses. These businesses in turn have provided life-changing services and support for a combined total of 1.8 million Brits – a 20% growth from 2023.

Big Issue Recruit, its person-centred recruitment service, has continued to see growth two years on from its launch, supporting 13% more candidates than in year one. Dedicated to finding sustainable employment for people who face barriers to finding work, such as people struggling with their mental health, over half (58%) of its candidates have completed a full 12-week programme of training and been certified 'work ready' by their job coaches, who have delivered more than 1,677 hours of training in total.

Ex-Big Issue vendor Leventica 'Levy' Paun is one candidate supported by the service. She had to drop out of school before completing her GCSEs to become a carer for her mother. With the support of a Job Coach, Paun successfully secured a role as a Vendor Outreach Assistant, providing guidance and training to Big Issue's Roma-speaking vendors. She has since been promoted to London Outreach Worker with Big Issue Changing Live CIC.

Paun said: "It has been a very big thing for me, it has changed my life. The best part is I know I'm working with people who really care about me, who want to get the best out of me every single day. I have had some tough periods of my life, but when I'm at work, I stop overthinking everything and concentrate on the things I have to do. I'm building a timetable and a life for myself."

Paul Cheal, CEO of Big Issue Group, said: "Poverty is a problem that touches everybody. The issues it throws up are already destabilising our wider society, from the growing welfare bill to our overburdened public services. And as our new poll shows, more people than ever are close to the brink.

"Across all areas of the Big Issue Group, we're working to end poverty. Whether it's with our vendors out earning on the streets, with the candidates engaging with us to find work, with people being supported by the innovative organisations we're investing in, or with the readers of our groundbreaking social justice journalism – Big Issue is using all the resources at our disposal to do our bit in the fight against poverty and inequality."

Read the full report to find out more about the Big Issue Group's work and find out how you can support their work: bigissue.com/big-issue-group-impact.

^[1] 2,123 GB adults were surveyed by YouGov between 30th April and 1st May 2025.

^[2] 281 UK Big Issue vendors were surveyed by the Big Issue between 24th March and 18th April 2025.