



Key Trends

Cost of Living -
Consumer Trends

This content has been collated to provide information on **Cost of Living Consumer Trends** in Scotland. This report was produced in **September 2023**. As the cost-of-living issue is rapidly changing, you can access the latest data using the relevant links below.

Alternatively contact us on info@bgateway.com with your question and we'll answer with the latest information available for your business.

How are your customers affected by the cost of living?

The following summary statistics and links have been extracted from market research reports and reliable resources to give an overview of how the current cost of living changes are affecting consumer buying and spending behaviour.

- ◆ **The Opinion and Lifestyle Survey (OPN)** from **Office of National Statistics** (shorturl.at/bPZ59) asked adults about changes in their cost of living. In September 2023, around half (51%) adults reported their cost of living had increased compared with the previous month. The most common actions reported because of the increase in the cost of living were spending less on non-essentials (67%), shopping around more (50%), and spending less on food shopping and essentials (45%). Among those currently paying rent or a mortgage, more than 4 in 10 (45%) reported that their rent or mortgage payments had gone up in the past six months.
- ◆ **PWC Consumer Sentiment Survey – Summer 2023** (shorturl.at/dlmvR) reports that finances have remained broadly similar to the previous two surveys but continue to be an improvement on Autumn last year. There was a slight decrease from Spring in consumers that say they are either 'in trouble' or 'struggling and might miss bills' (from 10% to 8%), while nearly a third believe their finances are 'healthy' (up 2% from Spring). Compared with June 2022, there has been a reduction in spending cutbacks across nearly every category, further suggesting that finances have stabilised.
- ◆ **BBC Business** (shorturl.at/klM39) September 2023, reported that the rate at which prices are rising fell to 6.8% in the year to July, down from 7.9% in June. Food inflation on items like milk, bread and cereals has also come down, although remains high - at 14.9%. On average regular pay excluding bonuses grew by 7.8% between May and July, compared to the same period a year earlier. This matches the rate of inflation, which means real wages stayed flat for the first time in two years, rather than falling behind. However, unions point out that many workers have received smaller pay increases, and there have been widespread strikes over pay.
- ◆ **Office of National Statistics (ONS)** have produced **Family Spending Explorer** (shorturl.at/mAJQ8) which is an interactive family spending tree map to find out more about how families in the UK spend their money every week. Find out how much families spend on **recreation and culture, restaurants and hotels, clothing and footwear, food and non-alcoholic drinks, household goods and services, communication, alcoholic drinks, and health**.
- ◆ **Personal and Household Finances** section of **Office of National Statistics** (shorturl.at/szGKT) has up-to-date statistics on income and earnings, spending and saving, and wealth and debt of the UK population.
- ◆ **Nomis** (nomisweb.co.uk/) provides statistics on employment, earnings, occupations and economic inactivity statistics in Scotland and smaller regions. You can download a **Labour Market Profile** for an area of your choice. Select which type of area you would like more details on and then enter postcode or place name in the 'search' box on the next page. You can then select which type of profile from the results. This website also allows users to compare results with other UK regions, cities, or towns.

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Business Support

For information on **reducing the cost of running your business**, please visit our **Rising Costs Support** page (bgateway.com/rising-costs-support), additionally the following resources might also be useful;

- ◆ **Find Business Support** (findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/) is a comprehensive site where businesses can browse all of Scotland's public sector support options including advice, funding, training, webinars and more. An entire section has been dedicated to the [Cost of Doing Business](#) with resources to guide businesses on topics such as: reducing energy costs, managing your finances as well as sector- and region-specific funding and support links.
- ◆ **Highlands and Islands Enterprise (HIE) - Support for The Rising Cost of Doing Business** (shorturl.at/epCHZ) is a springboard for support and resources for those businesses based in the Highlands and Islands region. There are links to Digital Support, Scottish Manufacturing Advisory Service and Zero Waste Scotland, along with links on how to get in touch with a specialist.
- ◆ **Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC) - Business Support** (shorturl.at/zBSUV) This offering will link businesses to a range of services covering International Trade, Business Mentoring (including Finance Mentoring), the SCC Network in London and a Global Chamber Network.
- ◆ **The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) - Cost of living & the #RunningCostsCrisis** (SCVO.scot) highlights the challenges for voluntary organisations and the people they support. The SCVO talks about the need for both short- and long-term solutions for funding voluntary organisations. The page has links on how to save on costs; tax, legal and investment advice; policy and influencing articles and documents; as well as links to their information service among other resources.
- ◆ **Business Energy Scotland** (businessenergyscotland.org/) Free impartial support and access to funding to help businesses save energy, money and carbon.

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Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

We hope you find this Market Report useful and we'd love to hear your feedback [here](#).

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