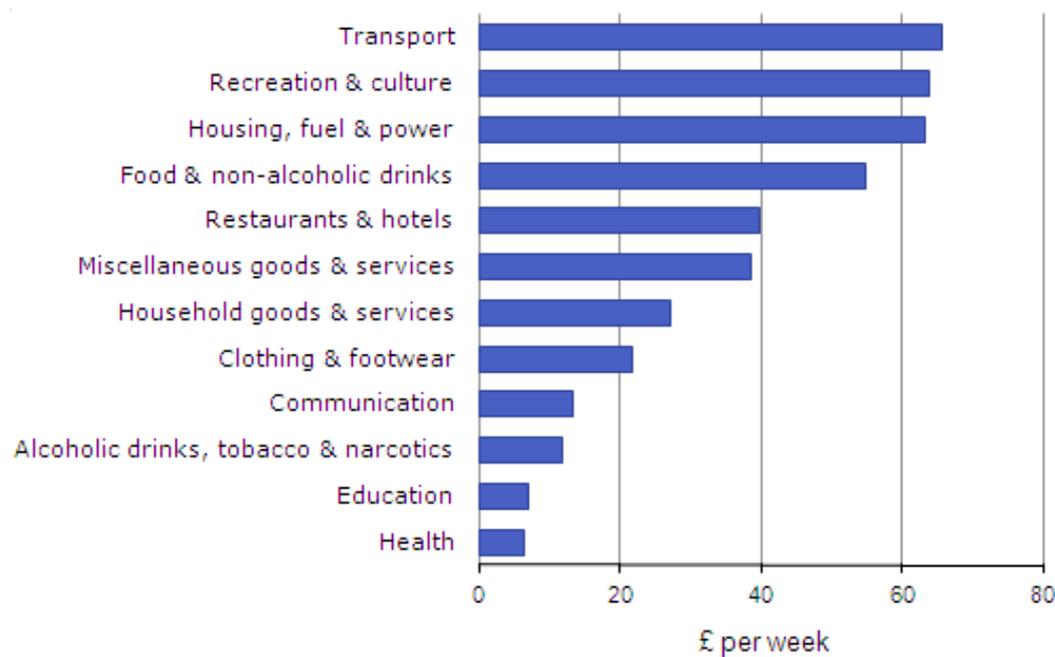


The Headlines: Household Expenditure at a Glance

Average weekly household expenditure on main commodities and services, 2011

United Kingdom



Source: Living Costs and Food Survey - Office for National Statistics

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UK households spent an average of £483.60 a week in 2011 compared with £473.60 a week in 2010. Expenditure, unadjusted for inflation, increased for a second consecutive year after a fall in 2009, when expenditure was £455.00.

Household spending is analysed according to an internationally agreed classification system: the Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose (COICOP). Using this classification in 2011, household spending was highest in the transport category, at £65.70 a week. This included £19.10 on the purchase of vehicles, £36.40 on the operation of personal transport (such as petrol, diesel, repairs and servicing) and £10.20 on transport services (such as rail, tube and bus fares).

The second highest category of spending was recreation and culture, at £63.90 a week. This includes TVs, computers, newspapers, books, leisure activities and package holidays. Averaged out over the year, £17.10 a week was spent on package holidays abroad, compared with £1.70 a week on package holidays in the UK.

The third highest category of spending was housing (excluding mortgage costs), fuel and power, at £63.30 a week. This includes rentals for housing, and electricity, gas and other fuels.

Food and non-alcoholic drink purchases contributed £54.80 to weekly household expenditure, £14.40 of which was spent on meat and fish, £4.00 on fresh vegetables, and £3.10 on fresh fruit. Non-alcoholic drinks accounted for £4.50 of weekly expenditure, and £2.30 per week was spent on chocolate and confectionery.

Average weekly household expenditure varied according to the age of the household reference person (as defined in the notes below). Those households where the reference person was aged 30 to 49 spent the most on average at £580.20 a week. Those where the reference person was aged 75 or over had the lowest average household expenditure, at £272.60 a week.

Background notes

1. The 'other expenditure items' category is not included here but is shown in 'Family Spending' (for example, Table A1). It includes mortgage interest payments, council tax, licences, fines and transfers, and holiday spending.
2. A 'household reference person' (HRP) is the person who own or rents or is otherwise responsible for the accommodation. In the case of joint householders, the person with the highest income takes precedence and becomes the HRP. Where incomes are equal, the older is taken as the HRP.
3. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

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