

# Social security austerity

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# Benefit cuts

- 2010 - £18 billion p.a. cuts to 'social protection' by 2014/15
- 2012 – further £4.5 billion p.a. by 2015
- 2015 – further £12 billion p.a. by 2020
- Ideological concerns with reducing size and scope of the state:
  - 'the days of big government are over' (HM government, 2010, p. 7)
  - 'we want Britain to move from a low wage, high tax, high welfare economy to a higher wage, lower tax, lower welfare society' (Chancellor of the Exchequer, 2015)
- 'The benefit system has created a benefit culture. It doesn't just allow people to act irresponsibly, but often actively encourages them to do so' (David Cameron, 2011)
  - worklessness
  - family – 'benefit broods' and behaviour

# Benefit cuts

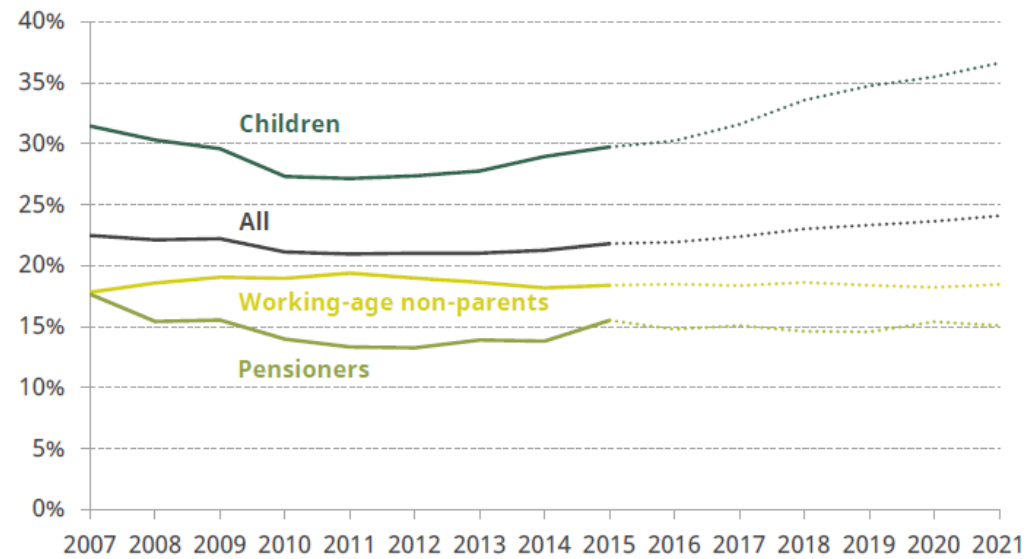
Benefit for lone mother with three children:

2016 – £247 pw

2019 – £180 pw (one child born after April 2017)

- Relative cuts
  - inflationary increases 2010-2012; 1% 2013-2015; 0% 2016-2019
- Absolute cuts – removals, restrictions and limits
  - e.g. removal of ‘family element’; limiting of Sure Start Maternity Grant to first child
  - ‘benefit cap’; ‘bedroom tax’; ‘two child limit’
- Increased conditionality – easier to lose benefits
  - extended – in addition to unemployed people includes:
    - part-time workers; lone mothers; sick and disabled people; carers
    - e.g. lone mothers – until 2002 no sanctioning possible until youngest child 16; from 2012 when youngest child is aged three
  - lengthened – lose benefits for longer periods (up to three years; indefinite sanctions for some)
- Greatest impact upon: households with children; the poorest households (e.g. non-working lone mothers); households with three or more children; households with children under age of five

Figure 2.3. Relative poverty rates, AHC incomes



Poverty  
(Hood and  
Waters, 2017)

# Benefit sanctions increasing poverty and pushing people into 'survival crime,' finds report

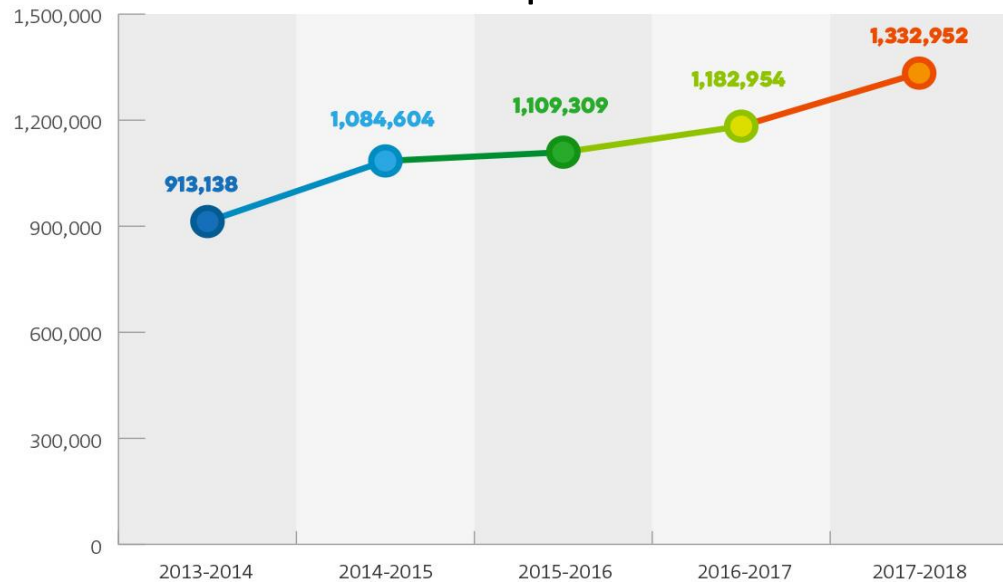
Research finds little evidence that benefit sanctions enhance people's motivation to enter paid work and can trigger profoundly negative personal, financial and health outcomes

May Bulman Social Affairs Correspondent | @maybulman |  
Tuesday 22 May 2018 17:00 | 92 shares |



## Hunger

### Trussell Trust – foodbank parcels



## Poverty

### MPs to launch inquiry into 'survival sex' by benefit claimants

Investigation in response to evidence that poverty forcing women into prostitution

Patrick Butler Social policy editor

Tue 19 Mar 2019 00:01 GMT



### Benefit sanctions scheme 'pointlessly cruel', say MPs

6 November 2018 |

