

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



TORY VOTERS CALL FOR RENATIONALISATION AND ENERGY PRICE RISE BAN, AS 2 IN 3 BRITS BACK BROWN COST OF LIVING PLAN

- **2 in 3 (67%)** people back an ambitious package of measures laid out by former PM Gordon Brown to tackle the cost of living crisis.
- The [wholesale plan](#) even wins the backing of **Tory voters**, with 64% in full support and more backing calls for temporary **re-nationalisation of energy companies**, a **price cap freeze**, **tougher windfall tax and levy on bankers bonuses**.
- Polling published as **over 100,000 members of the public add their names to Gordon Brown's call for an emergency budget** to fix the cost of living crisis.

Polling conducted by Opinium for campaigns group 38 Degrees shows:

- A huge 72% of 2019 **Tory voters** backed **bringing energy companies into temporary public ownership** if they can't offer lower bills (compared to 73% of the general public).
- The British public **overwhelmingly support suspending the October price cap rise**: 86% of the public and **85% of current Conservative voters** back keeping the price cap at its current rate of £1,971.
- **68% of Brits**, including 67% of current Conservative supporters, **support direct payments to nearly 8 million low-income families of just under £2,000** each to help meet rising energy costs.
- **71% of Conservative voters** said a windfall tax on energy companies and on bankers' bonuses should be used to fund the extra support measures.
- 9 in 10 people say **the Government should be offering more support** to people during this crisis: 50% say more support should be offered to those on lower incomes, 40% say everyone should get extra help. Among Conservative voters, 45% back more support for those on lower incomes, and the same proportion (45%) back more support for everyone.

Against the backdrop of a brewing cost of living catastrophe, 9 in 10 Britons say the Government and Conservative leadership candidates should be offering people more

support. Just over 2 in 3 back an ambitious set of interventions - from renationalising the energy companies and banning the price rise, to direct grants to low income families.

Over 8 in 10 (86%) of Brits support the policy announced this week by Labour leader Keir Starmer to *ban* energy price rises in October, including 85% of Conservative supporters.

But the appetite for more government action doesn't end there.

Last week, former Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced a wholesale package of measures to tackle the crisis, including temporarily re-nationalising energy companies if they can't keep bills down, and supporting low income families with grants of up to £2,000 this winter. Now, new polling for campaign group 38 Degrees shows 2 in 3 Brits (67%) want to see *all* the measures he proposed implemented over the coming months. Over 7 in 10 people (73%) back the prospect of re-nationalisation.

Support for Mr Brown's plans was also high among Conservative voters: 72% backed temporary re-nationalisation, while 63% agreed with his entire proposal.

PM frontrunner Liz Truss has cautioned against a windfall tax, yet her pledge seems at odds with the vast majority of voters she will be hoping to represent. 71% of her own party's 2019 voters backed the plan to implement a *tougher* windfall tax on energy companies, and to tax bankers' bonuses, to fund the support package.

The results show the vast majority of the public, including Conservative voters, back more wide-ranging measures than those put forward by either Liz Truss or Rishi Sunak.

The polling, conducted 10-15 August, sends a stark message from the public:

- **More than half (51%)** of people see suspending the October price cap rise as the single best response to the crisis, when asked to choose.
- **8 in 10 Brits (79%)**, including 68% of Conservative Party voters, say **energy companies should not be allowed to make higher profits** this year than they did the year before.
- **Three quarters (75%)** believe **workers should get a year-on-year pay rise** to keep pace with the cost of living.
- **71% of Conservative voters** said a windfall tax on energy companies and on bankers' bonuses should be used to fund the extra support measures.
- **74%, including 71% of Conservative Party voters**, agree with former Prime Minister Gordon Brown that "a warm home is a human right", with well over half of those questioned (62%) saying the Government should quickly **increase funding to insulate homes**.

Chris Curtis, head of political polling at Opinium, said: “Polling has consistently shown that the increase in cost of living is the biggest issue on voter’s minds as we head into a tough winter. The vast majority don’t think the current government are doing enough and are looking for bold action.

“Ultimately, the biggest threat to the Conservative’s parliamentary majority is inaction in the face of this crisis.”

Ellie Gellard, strategic director at 38 Degrees, said: “This government, and the contenders to lead it, have been warned that they must act in the face of a brewing cost of living catastrophe. Experts like Martin Lewis and former PM Gordon Brown have raised the flag and, now, the British public are weighing in.

“Faced with skyrocketing energy bills, homes to heat this winter and the prospect of empty fridges, the overwhelming majority of Brits want a *ban* on rising energy prices in October; low income families given money they need to make it through and - if needed - energy companies brought into public ownership.

“You don’t often see polling results send a message as stark as this - sent as loudly from the Conservatives’ own voters as the rest of the country. As the leading candidate for PM, Liz Truss is making headlines for her “do-nothing” plan, and the nation she wants to lead faces catastrophe. It’s time she listened to the people she hopes to represent in three weeks’ time.”

For more information, obtain the full data set or to arrange an interview, please contact Hannah Graham, hannah.g@38degrees.org.uk, 07583 705914

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NOTES TO EDITORS

1. 38 Degrees carried out this polling in partnership with Opinium. Fieldwork dates: 10-15 August 2022. Survey was carried out with 2,273 GB adults, weighted to be politically and nationally representative.

2. Former PM Brown's full plan was originally outlined in full [in the Guardian last week](#).
3. The 38 Degrees petition, calling for the Government to announce an emergency budget that increases Universal Credit immediately has now been signed by over 107,000 members of the public and [can be viewed here](#).

About 38 Degrees

38 Degrees is an online campaigning organisation, involving 2 million people from every corner of the UK. We help people make their voices heard on issues they care about, so that they can make a difference in the country and in their local areas. From 300,000 of us who came together to help make sure digital giants like Amazon paid their fair share in tax - to Terry, in Hertfordshire, who used a 38 Degrees petition to stop his local hospice from closing down.