**Logo, company name

Description automatically generated**

**EMBARGOED: 00:00 19th May, 2021**

**Interviews, further briefing and stats available. Images** **available** [**here**](https://we.tl/t-E8fOJUFnRm) **(please credit Save the Children). Local authority and constituency data available below.**

**RISE IN CHILD POVERTY IN NORTH WEST ENGLAND OVER THE LAST FIVE YEARS SHOWS SCALE OF ‘LEVELLING UP’ CHALLENGE**

* Even before the pandemic, 4.3 million children across the UK were living in poverty, up 200,000 from the previous year – and up 500,000 over the past five years.
* Almost a third of North West children are growing up in poverty, as child poverty rates rise over the last five years.
* Child poverty rates increased in most North West local authorities. Manchester and Oldham see sharpest rises in the region.
* Manchester Gorton and Oldham West and Royton constituencies report highest levels of child poverty.

New figures released today reveal that almost a third of children in the North West are growing up in poverty, once housing costs are taken into account.

The research carried out by Loughborough University for the End Child Poverty Coalition shows that the North West of England has seen child poverty rates increase over the past five years, fuelled by stagnating family incomes.

Overall child poverty rates in the North West have risen from 29% to 31% over the last five years. Several North West local authorities reported increases in child poverty rates, with Manchester and Oldham in particular seeing their levels of child poverty soar after housing costs are taken into account.

The new data also reveals the North West constituencies with greatest numbers of children living in poverty are Manchester Gorton (47%) and Oldham West and Royton (46%), closely followed by Blackburn (45%), Bolton South East (45%) and Manchester Central (44%).

**Imran Hussain, director of policy and campaigns at Action for Children, said:** “These deeply worrying figures reveal the true extent of the hardship facing families across the North West – even before the pandemic hit. With child poverty rates rising, children in the region are among those most exposed to the devastating economic consequences of the pandemic.

“Our frontline workers tell us that poverty levels are at the worst they ever seen, as they deliver vital support to families in the region desperately trying to keep their kids clothed and well-fed.

“We are desperately concerned this generation of children have had their childhoods and life chances damaged and disrupted by poverty and the pandemic. If the government truly wants to level up parts of the country hardest hit by poverty, they must scrap their plans to cut Universal Credit later this year and give families a fighting chance at recovery.”

The coalition is calling on the UK Government to recognise the scale of the problem and its impact on children’s lives and to create a credible plan to end child poverty which must include a commitment to increase child benefits. Given the extent to which families are already struggling, the planned £20 p/w cut to Universal Credit come October should also be revoked, with the support extended to those on the ‘legacy’ benefits system.

The full report ‘Local indicators of child poverty after housing costs, 2019/20’ as well as tables with Constituency and Local Authority data are available [here](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/).

**The 20 North West local authorities with highest increase in child poverty rates after housing costs, 2014/15 – 2019/20**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Local Authority** | **% of children below 60% median income AHC** | | |
| **2014/15** | **2019/20** | **%age point increase** |
| **North West** | **29%** | **31%** | **2%** |
| Manchester | 35.4% | 41.8% | 6.4% |
| Oldham | 32.4% | 37.5% | 5.1% |
| Blackburn with Darwen | 31.6% | 36.1% | 4.5% |
| Pendle | 31.4% | 35.6% | 4.2% |
| Bolton | 32.9% | 37.0% | 4.1% |
| Hyndburn | 32.1% | 35.9% | 3.8% |
| Burnley | 32.0% | 35.8% | 3.8% |
| Rochdale | 32.9% | 36.0% | 3.1% |
| Tameside | 31.0% | 33.4% | 2.4% |
| Liverpool | 31.9% | 34.1% | 2.3% |
| Blackpool | 32.1% | 34.1% | 2.0% |
| Salford | 32.3% | 34.1% | 1.8% |
| Knowsley | 30.4% | 32.1% | 1.7% |
| South Ribble | 22.8% | 24.4% | 1.7% |
| Bury | 30.5% | 32.1% | 1.6% |
| Wirral | 25.7% | 27.1% | 1.5% |
| Preston | 32.3% | 33.8% | 1.5% |
| Warrington | 24.1% | 25.4% | 1.3% |
| Fylde | 22.8% | 24.0% | 1.3% |
| Carlisle | 27.3% | 28.4% | 1.1% |

**The 20 North West parliamentary constituencies with highest child poverty rates, 2019/20**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Constituency** | **% of children below 60% median income after housing costs, 2019/20** |
| **North West** | **31%** |
| Manchester Gorton | 46.8% |
| Oldham West and Royton | 46.1% |
| Blackburn | 44.9% |
| Bolton South East | 44.8% |
| Manchester Central | 43.9% |
| Blackley and Broughton | 43.8% |
| Rochdale | 43.4% |
| Oldham East and Saddleworth | 43.0% |
| Pendle | 42.9% |
| Bolton North East | 41.7% |
| Hyndburn | 40.1% |
| Burnley | 39.9% |
| Liverpool Riverside | 38.3% |
| Preston | 38.2% |
| Ashton-under-Lyne | 37.5% |
| Liverpool Walton | 36.5% |
| Liverpool Wavertree | 36.2% |
| Bury North | 35.5% |
| Blackpool South | 34.9% |
| Leigh | 33.9% |

**ENDS**

**For further information, please contact Arron Williamson, Action for Children,** [**arron.williamson@actionforchildren.org.uk**](mailto:arron.williamson@actionforchildren.org.uk)**, 07718 244 125**

**NOTES TO EDITORS**

* The research was carried out by Dr Juliet Stone and Professor Donald Hirsch at the Centre for Research in Social Policy, at Loughborough University based on the latest Before Housing Cost child poverty data from DWP published in March 2021.
* Report and data all available here [Local child poverty data 2014/15 - 2019/20 | Improving the lives of children and families (endchildpoverty.org.uk)](http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/local-child-poverty-data-2014-15-2019-20/)
* For a family of one adult and one child, 60% of median income, after housing costs, in 2019/20 was £223 week
* For a family of one adult and two children, £280 week
* For a family of two adults and one child, £343 week
* For a family of two adults and two children, £400 week

**About End Child Poverty**

End Child Poverty is a coalition of organisations from civic society including children’s charities, child welfare organisations, social justice groups, faith groups, trade unions and others, united in our vision of a UK free of child poverty. For more details visit [www.endchildoverty.org.uk](http://www.endchildoverty.org.uk).

**About Action for Children**

Action for Children protects and supports vulnerable children and young people by providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives. With 476 services in communities across the UK, the charity helps more than 370,000 children, teenagers, parents and carers a year. [actionforchildren.org.uk](https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/P562CQ62ou6X3QyCP07nq?domain=track.vuelio.uk.com)