



**Austerity, the homicidal present,
and the probable Russian future**

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Outline*

- 1. The concept of structural violence**
- 2. Austerity and the homicidal present**
- 3. Long-term social and economic consequences:
The probable Russian future**

* All views expressed here apart from those of quoted authors are exclusively those of Prof. Schrecker

1. Structural violence

- A concept most closely identified with the work of physician/ anthropologist Paul Farmer, building on the work of Johan Galtung (Farmer et al., 2006; Sparke, 2007)
- My own preferred definition: the end-point of a process in which social and economic inequalities and limited access to political institutions, on various scales, operate at arm's length to generate forms of illness, suffering and death that would be understood as violent if they resulted from in-person interactions

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DAILY FIGHTING FOR YOU
Mirror Friday, June 16, 2017 70P



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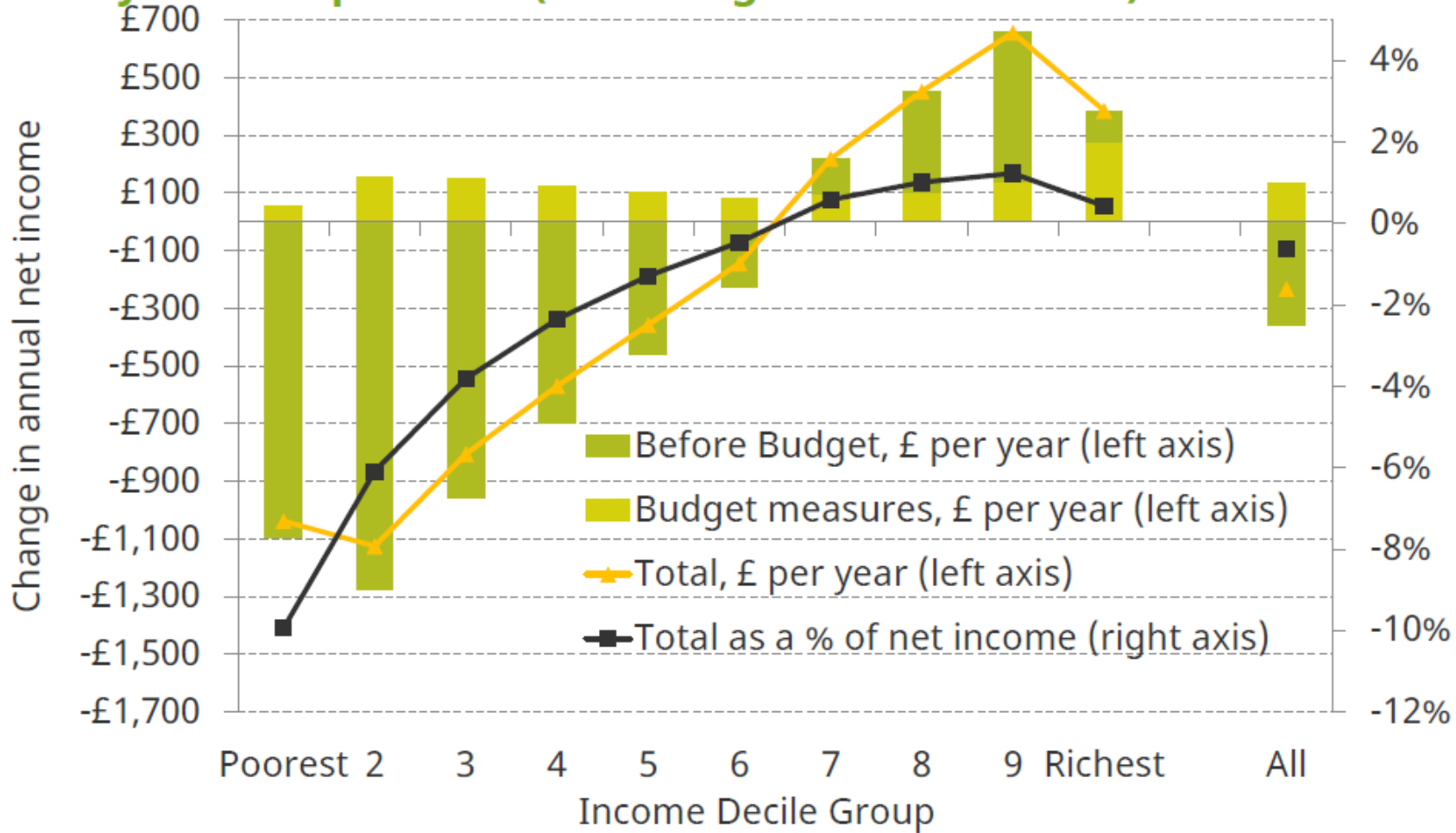
30 years ago Britain turned its back on social housing. Profit mattered more than putting a safe roof over the heads of our poorest. It is a diabolical failing which shames our nation... and may now have claimed more than 100 lives. We need answers. We need change.

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Background

- A decade of austerity combined with the rise of precarious employment in a deregulated labour market* to redistribute income and wealth *upward*

* 168k workers on zero-hours contracts in 2010; 974k in October-December 2019 (Office of National Statistics, 2020)

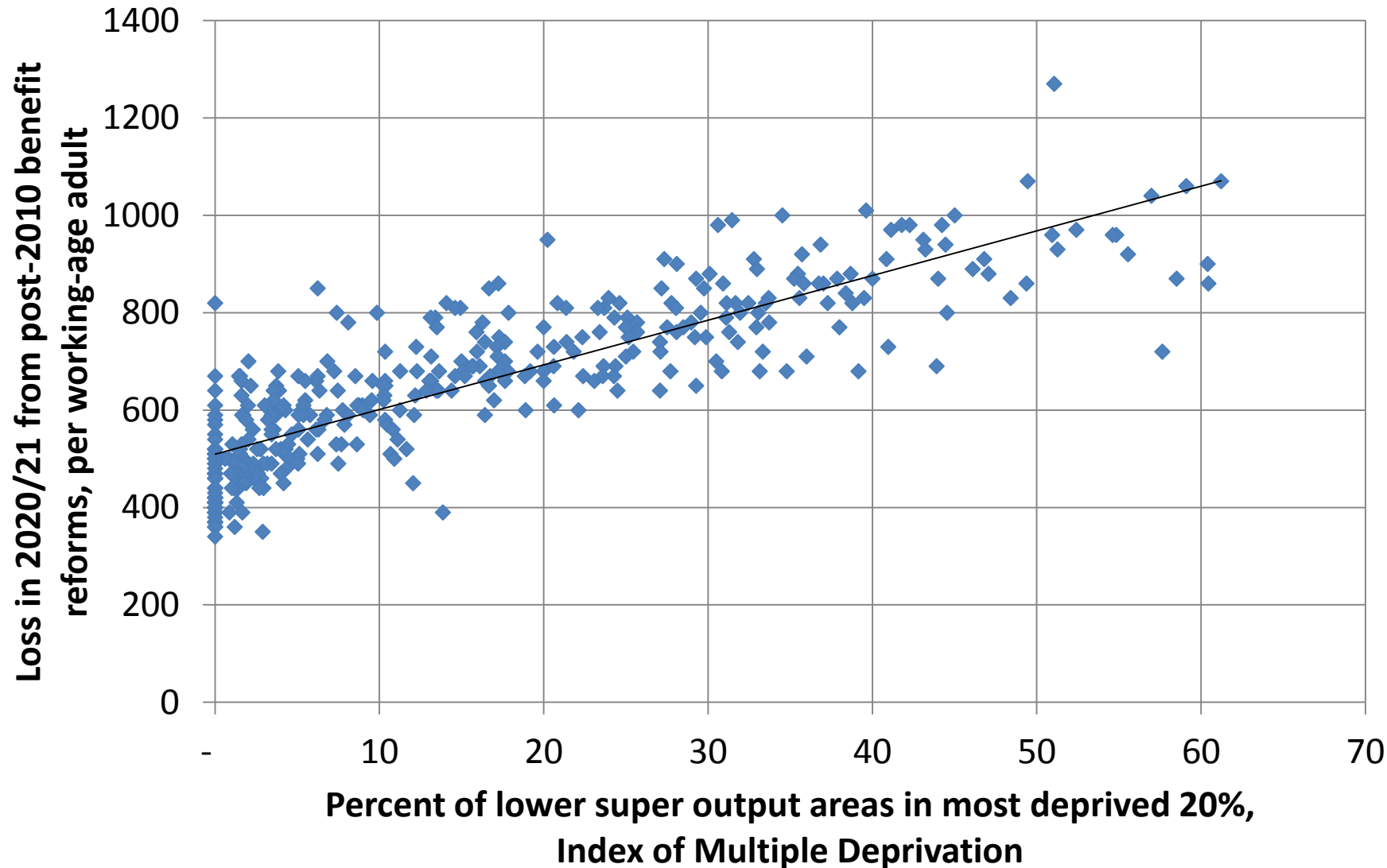
Impact of tax and benefit reforms May 2015 – April 2022 (including universal credit)



Source: Keiller & Walters, 2018

Notes: Assumes full take-up of means-tested benefits and tax credits and all changes fully in place. All bar includes adjustment to Scottish block grant that is not included in decile impacts.

Relation between deprivation and anticipated financial loss in 2021 from post-2010 welfare reforms, by local authority



Source: Data from
Beatty & Fothergill,
2016

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Background

- A decade of austerity combined with the rise of precarious employment in a deregulated labour market to redistribute income and wealth *upward*
- At the *start* of decade, Great British Class Survey found that a third of the population, whom authors described as the precariat and emergent service workers, had an average of just £1,000 in household savings (Savage et al., 2013)

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2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Background

- Impacts on households compounded by an average 49 percent cut in central government grants to local authorities (National Audit Office, 2018), with cuts concentrated in cities and in relatively deprived areas of the country

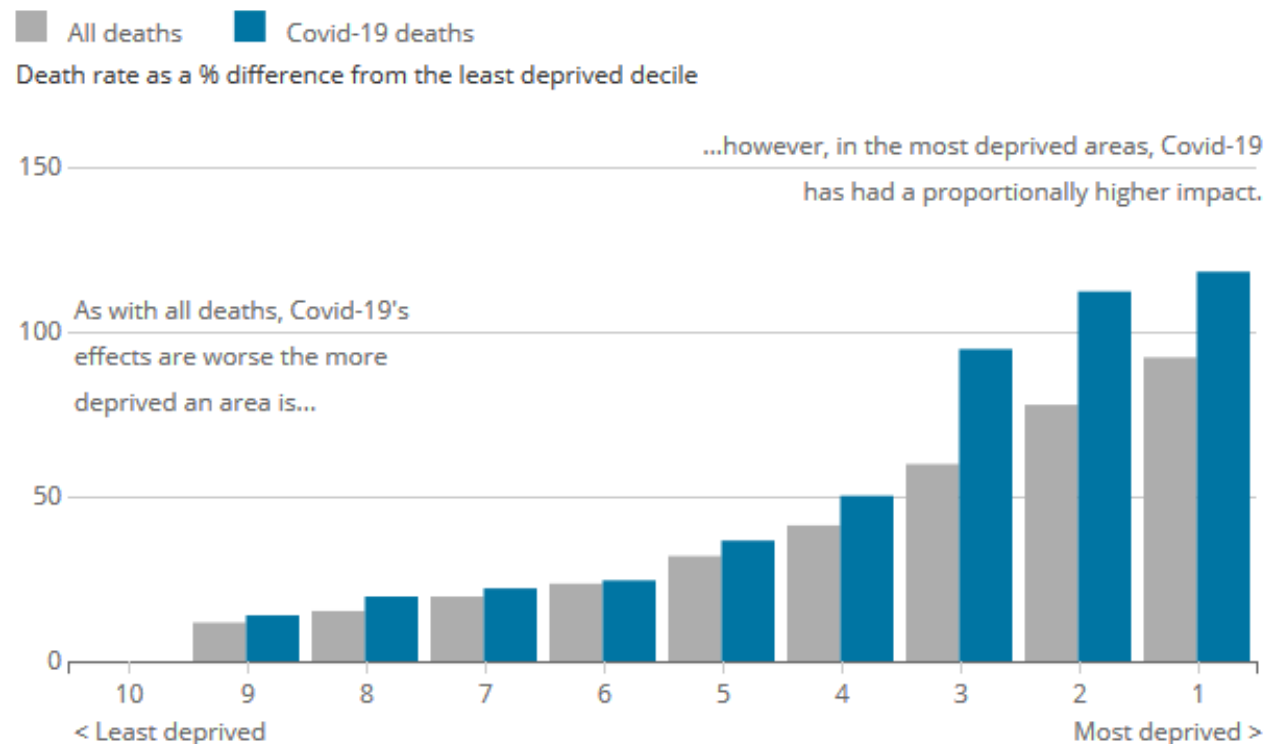
‘Joe Anderson, the mayor of Liverpool, says that, even if he closed all 19 libraries in the city and its nine sports centres, stopped maintaining its 140 parks, halted all highway repairs and street cleaning and switched off 50,000 streetlights, he would save only £68m – which is £22m short of what he must cut by 2020. So there will have to be a further 10% reduction in the social care budget, he says’ (‘Running on empty’, 2017)

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Background

- Impacts on households compounded by an average 49 percent cut in central government grants to local authorities (National Audit Office, 2018), with cuts concentrated in cities and in relatively deprived areas of the country
- The unequal impacts of the pandemic must be understood against this background

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: The dangers of deprivation and inequality

Age-standardised mortality rates, all deaths and deaths involving the coronavirus (COVID-19), Index of Multiple Deprivation, England, deaths occurring between 1 March and 31 May 2020



Source: Office of National Statistics, 12 June 2020;
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsinvolvingcovid19bylocalareasanddeprivation/deathsoccurringbetween1marchand31may2020>

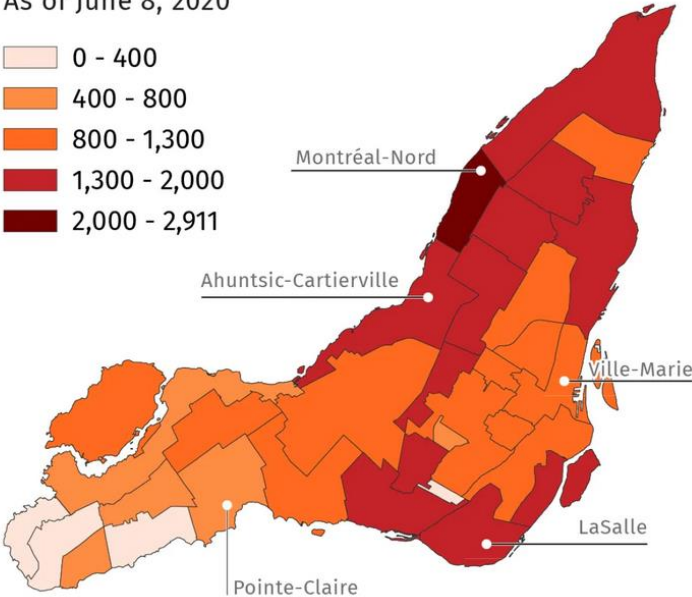
The dangers of deprivation and inequality are not distinctive to UK

Source: Rocha et al., 2020

Total confirmed COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people

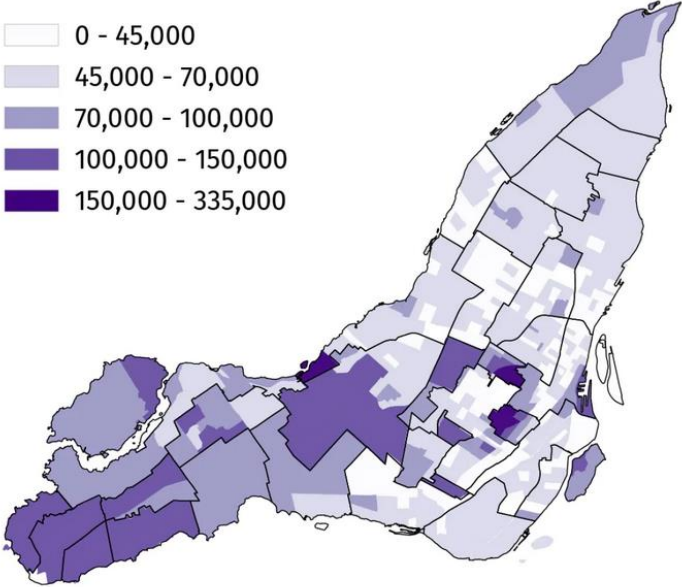
As of June 8, 2020

- 0 - 400
- 400 - 800
- 800 - 1,300
- 1,300 - 2,000
- 2,000 - 2,911



Median total income of households in 2015 (\$)

- 0 - 45,000
- 45,000 - 70,000
- 70,000 - 100,000
- 100,000 - 150,000
- 150,000 - 335,000



SOURCE: Santé Montréal, City of Montreal



SOURCE: 2016 census (Statistics Canada), censusmapper.ca, City of Montreal



2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Near-collapse of public health

- NHS stretched thin by a decade of limited funding increases (e.g. Edwards, Crump & Dayan, 2015)
- ‘[D]evastating cuts to community-based communicable disease control’ and legislated reorganisations of the remaining services ‘created a perfect storm. National and local expertise has been lost and many of my colleagues in communicable disease control were made redundant’ (Pollock, 2020)

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Inequality magnified

In the first half of April, around 20 percent of the UK working-age population had been furloughed.

Employment status of UK population aged 16 to 64,¹ % share (Apr 6–19, 2020)

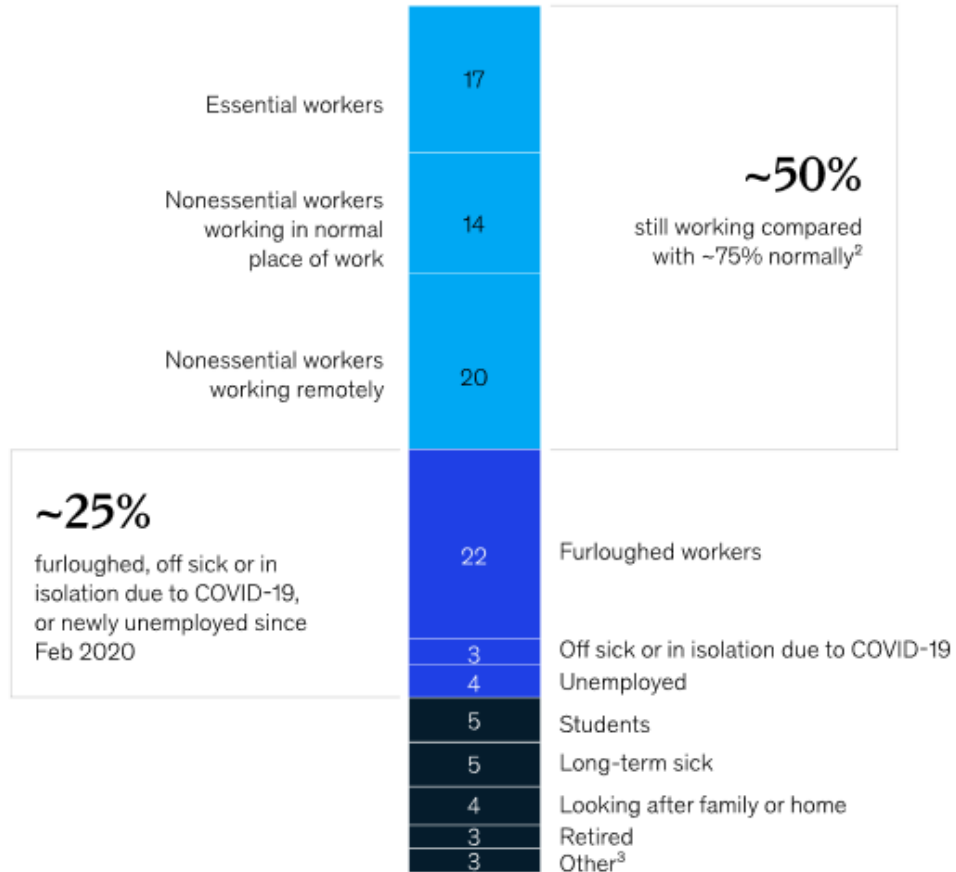


Exhibit from *Covid-19 in the United Kingdom: Assessing jobs at risk and the impact on people and places*, by T. Allas, M. Canal & V. Hunt (May 2020), McKinsey & Company, www.mckinsey.com. Copyright © 2020 McKinsey & Company. All rights reserved.

¹Estimates based on data from the Business Impact of COVID-19 Survey, Office for National Statistics, Apr 6–19, 2020.

²Dec 2019 to Feb 2020.

³Discouraged workers and temporarily sick (non-COVID-19-related).

Source: Office for National Statistics; McKinsey analysis

The impact across sectors is highly uneven, as shown by both furloughed employees and jobs at risk.

Total jobs in 2019 and jobs at risk, million¹

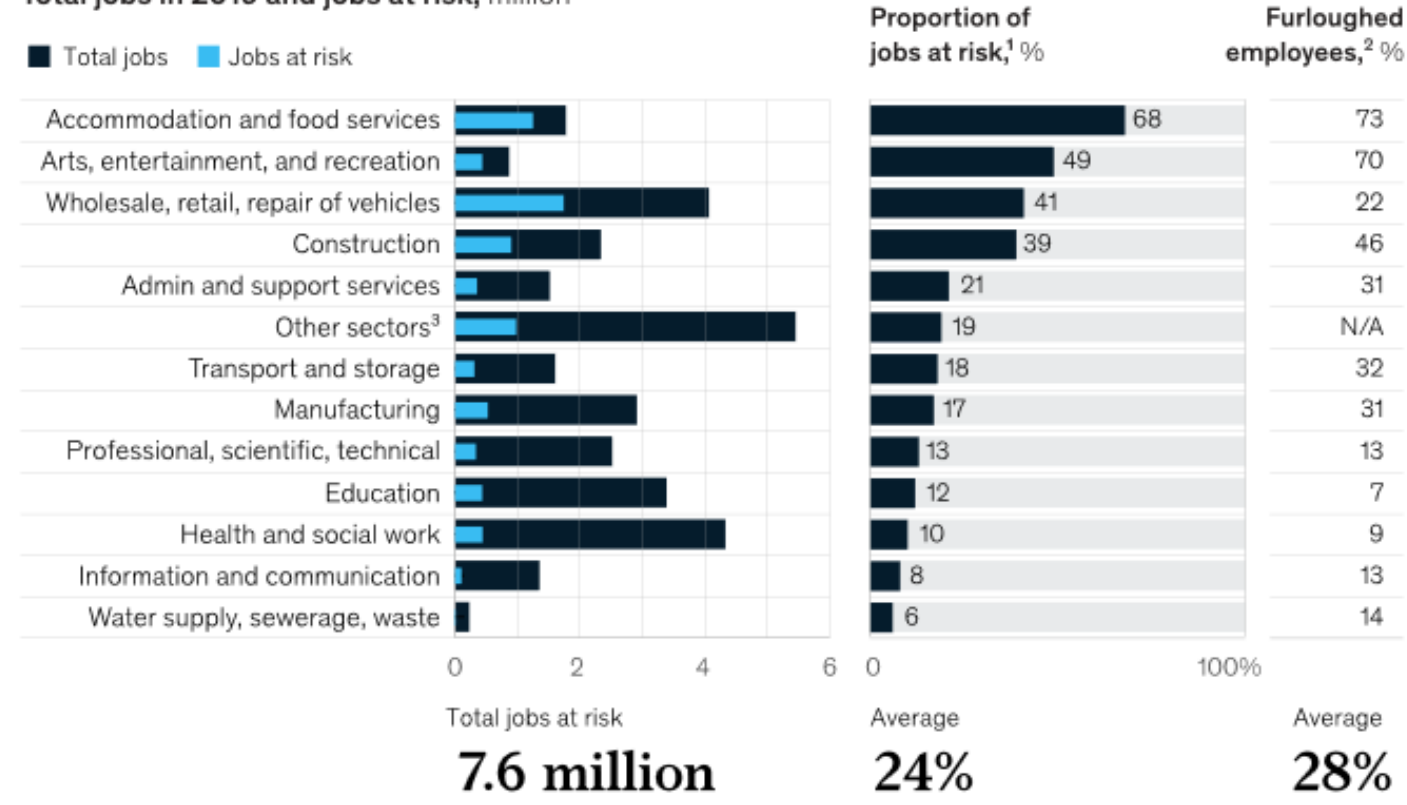


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¹Jobs that are at a high risk of furloughs, layoffs, or reductions in hours or pay during periods of high physical distancing.

²From Apr 6–19, 2020, published on May 7.

³Data for furloughed employees does not exist for some sectors, so they have been combined into this category. The sectors include agriculture, forestry and fishing, mining and quarrying, electricity, gas, steam, financial and insurance activities, real-estate activities, other service activities, public administration and defense, households as employers, and extraterritorial organizations.

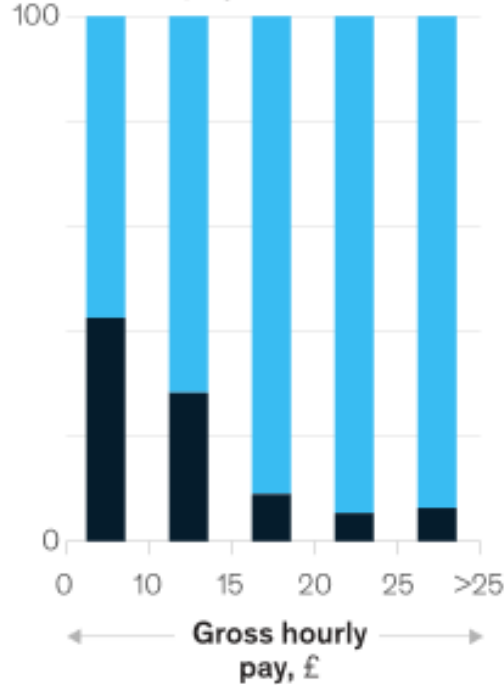
Source: Office for National Statistics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; McKinsey Global Institute analysis; McKinsey analysis

Half of the jobs classified as at risk pay less than £10 per hour.

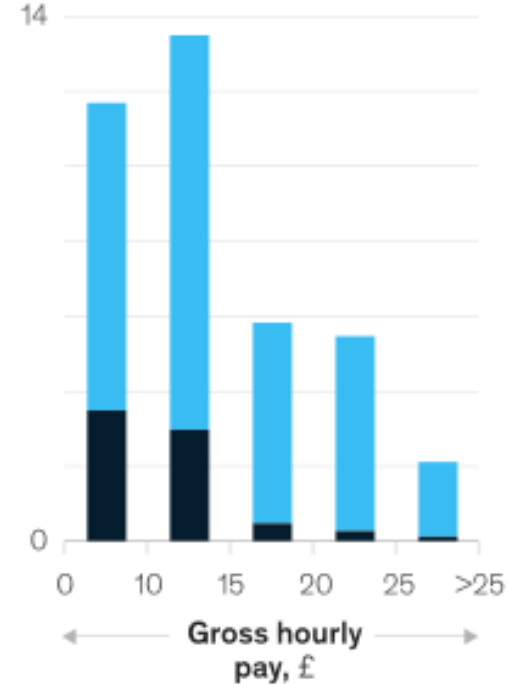
Jobs at risk,¹ by hourly pay band

■ High risk ■ Lower risk

Jobs by pay band, and risk level,
% of total employment



Jobs by pay band, and risk level,
million



Distribution of jobs at risk
by hourly pay band,¹
% of all jobs at risk

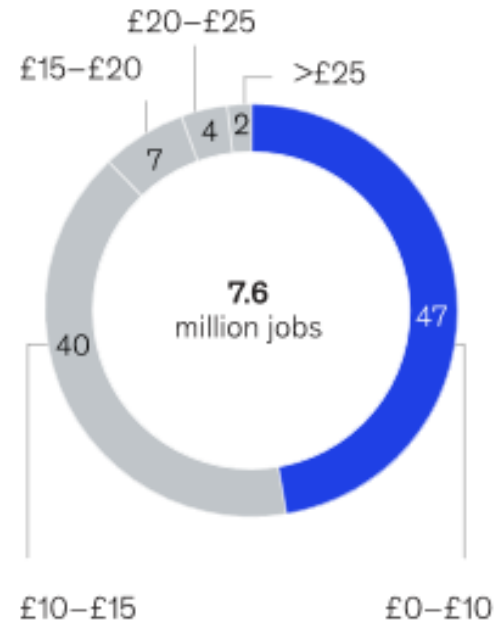


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¹Jobs that are at a high risk of furloughs, layoffs, or reductions in hours or pay during periods of high physical distancing. Excludes occupations where no pay data were available.

Source: Office for National Statistics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; McKinsey Global Institute analysis; McKinsey analysis

The most affected sectors tend to have a significantly lower share of employees with tertiary education.

Education level by industry, % of total jobs in sector

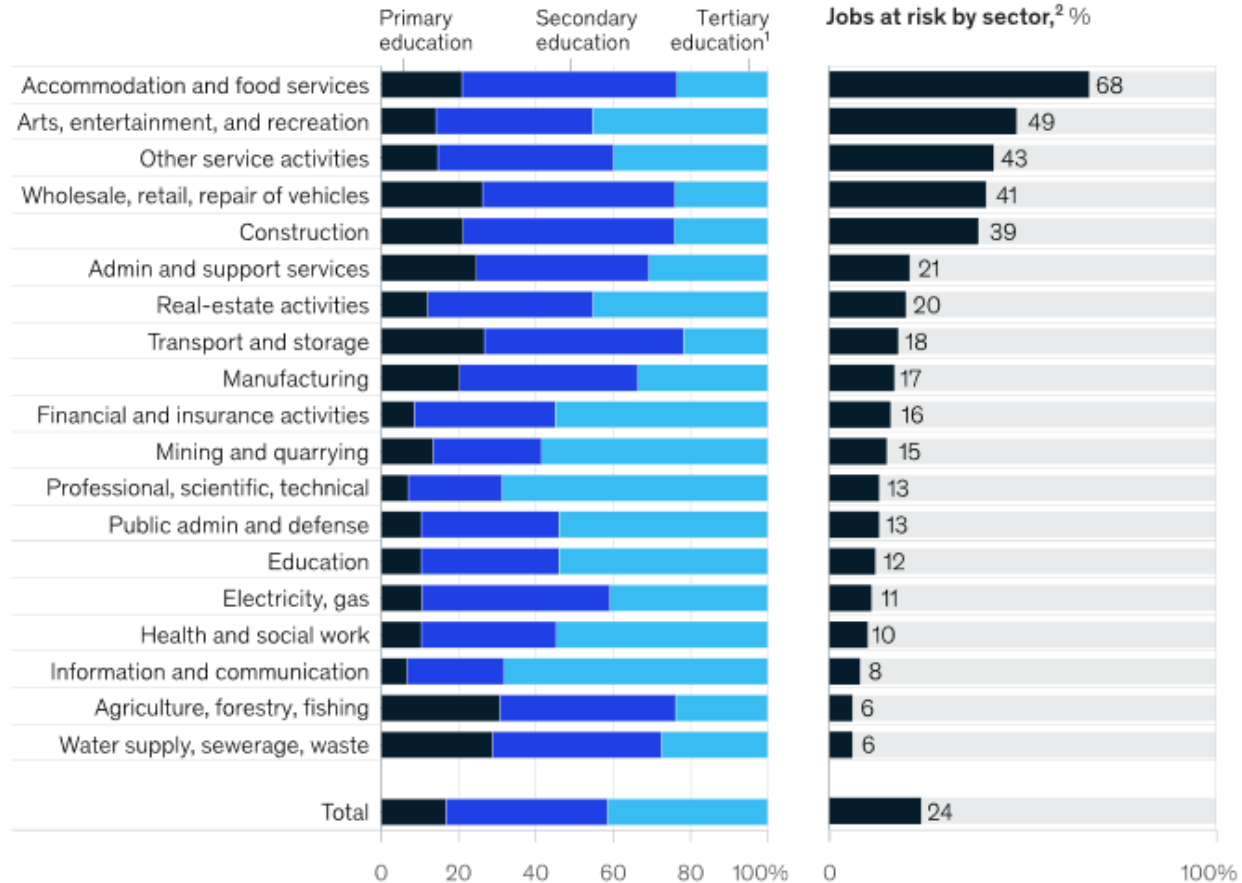
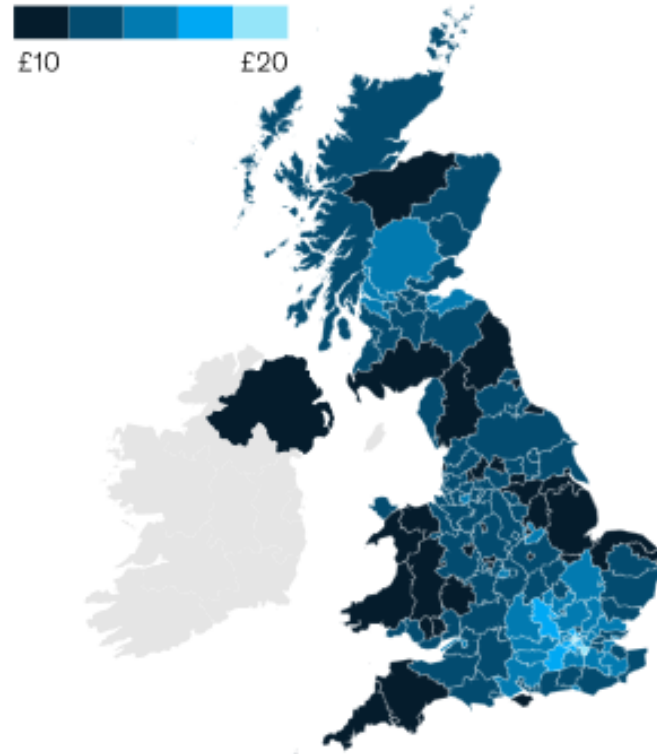


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¹For purposes of this article, "tertiary education" is defined as International Standard Classification of Education 2011 education levels 5 through 8.
²Jobs that are at a high risk of furloughs, layoffs, or reductions in hours or pay during periods of high physical distancing.
 Source: Office for National Statistics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; McKinsey Global Institute analysis; McKinsey analysis

Regions of the United Kingdom with lower incomes have a larger proportion of jobs at risk.

Median gross hourly pay by region, 2019, £



Jobs at risk¹ by region, 2020, % share of total employment in 2019

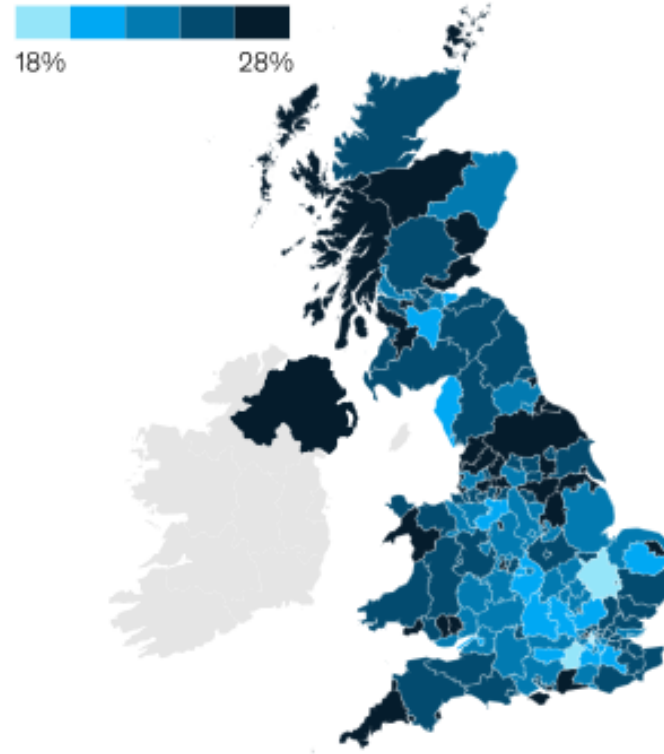
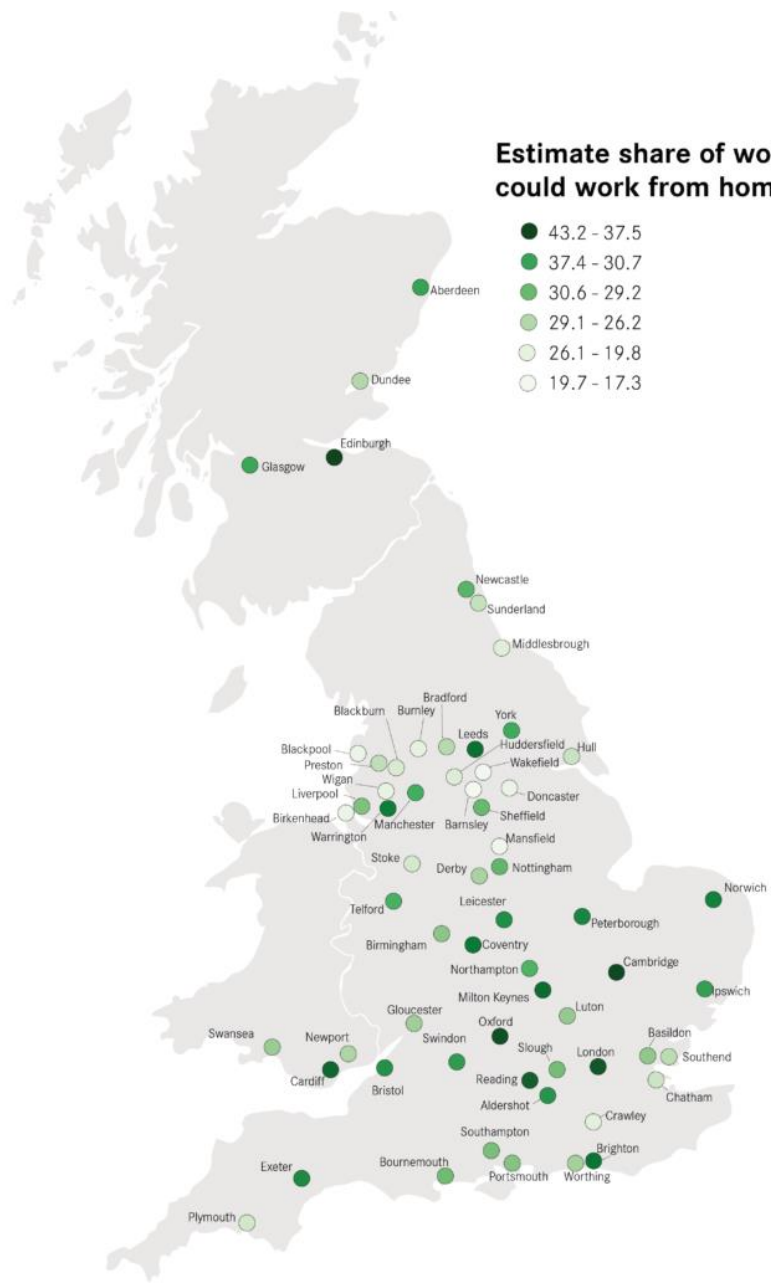


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¹Jobs that are at a high risk of furloughs, layoffs, or reductions in hours or pay during periods of high physical distancing.
Source: Office for National Statistics; US Bureau of Labor Statistics; McKinsey Global Institute analysis; McKinsey analysis

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Inequality magnified

- Ability to work from home is likewise unequally distributed



Source: Magrini, Centre for Cities, 2020

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Inequality magnified

- Ability to work from home is likewise unequally distributed, as is the ability to compensate for the effects of prolonged school closures

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2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Inequality magnified

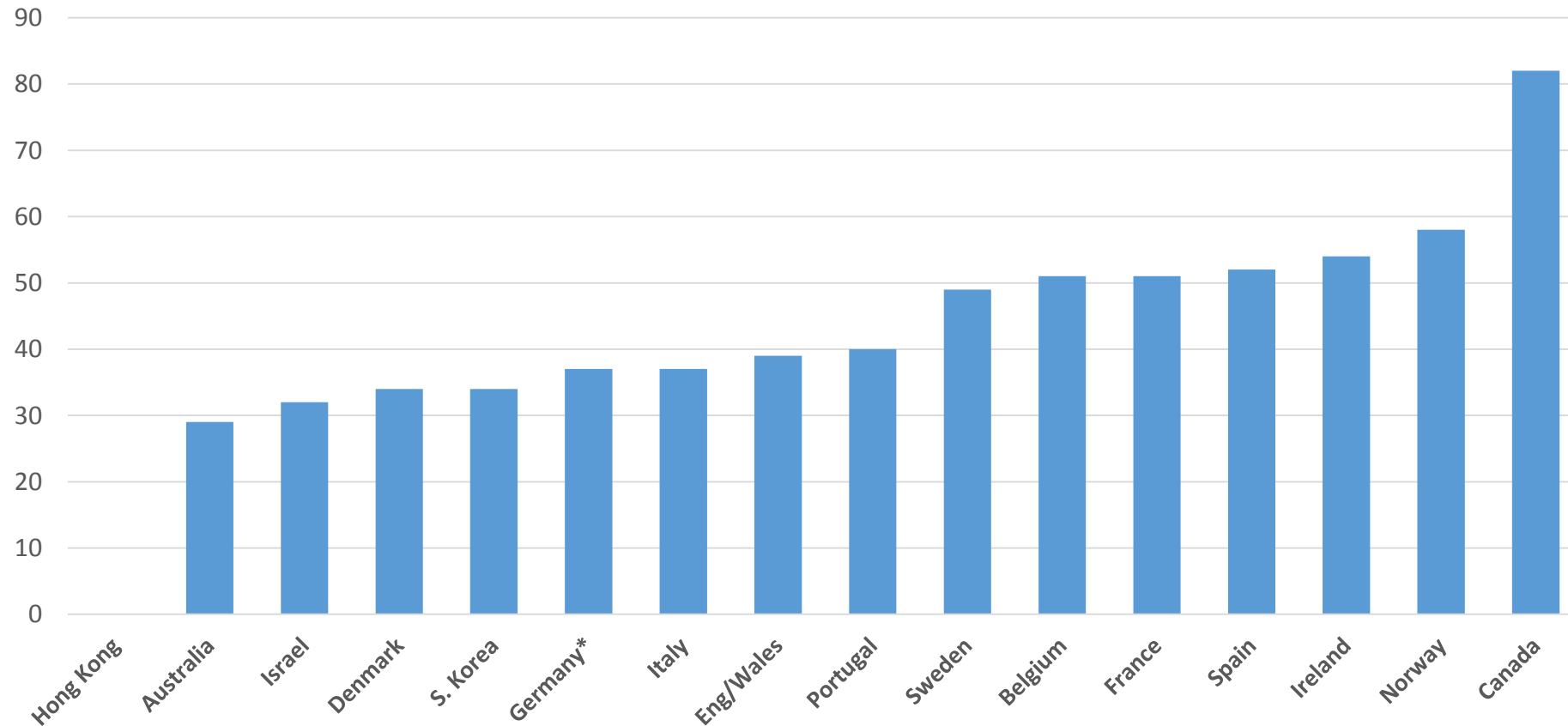
- Everything we know about health inequalities and social determinants of health tells us that *economic shutdowns are a public health menace*
- Temporary measures have eased the threat;
- ‘Public health measures are expected to last 12–18 months, but the economic measures were only initially in place for 3 months and extended to 7 months’ (Rochford & Sridhar, 2020)

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Front-line health workers endangered

‘Based on modelled PPE [personal protective equipment] requirements for the period 20 March to 9 May ... the amount of PPE distributed from central stocks only matched health providers’ requirements for face masks and clinical waste bags. The lowest level of distribution to health settings was for gowns (where central stocks distributed were 20% of the modelled requirement), eye protectors (33%) and aprons (50%). Central stocks distributed to social care accounted for 15% or less of the modelled requirement for any item of PPE, apart from face masks. Local NHS bodies and social care providers could also source PPE from other routes throughout March and April’ (National Audit Office, 2020)

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: The care home cull of the elderly

Care home resident deaths as % of all COVID-19 deaths



* An overstatement; includes all deaths in communal settings

Source: Data from Comas-Herrera et al., 2020. Note that because countries differ in reporting practices and the progress of the pandemic, direct comparisons should be made with extreme caution

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Less access to treatment for other conditions

- During April, NHS cancelled 53 percent of treatments for cancer, 70 percent for diabetes and 78 percent for severe overweight in UK (Benzeval et al., 2020)
- ‘We are a country with high-income standards and high-income expectations, but we’ll be confronted with a capacity of something considerably less than we’ve been used to. That will create some very significant tensions’ - Nigel Edwards, author of a recent Nuffield Trust study (Edwards, 2020), quoted by Lintern (2020)

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: A connecting thread

- Long-standing indifference to the socioeconomic substrates of health inequality, combined with what George Monbiot (2020) has called ‘de-preparations, conscious decisions not to act’ based on ‘refusal to frontload the costs’ of preparing for public health catastrophes

2. Austerity and the homicidal present: Assessing the damage

- *Assessing the ‘success’ of any European jurisdiction’s response to the pandemic in a scientifically responsible way will not be possible for years, if not longer, because short-term measures cannot capture the impact of deferred treatments, effects of economic insecurity, ‘deaths of despair’, etc.*

3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- Despite much breathless media coverage, in some respects current situation *is not unprecedented*
- After collapse of Soviet Union, Russia's economy contracted by close to 50 percent; social provision and much of the health care system crumbled; average wages plunged and poverty increased dramatically (Field & Twigg, eds., 2000; Kotz, Field & Buchman, 2000; Mikhalev, 2001)
- 'Population lost nearly 5 years of life expectancy between 1991 and 1994' (Stuckler, King & McKee, 2009)

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Line

Bar

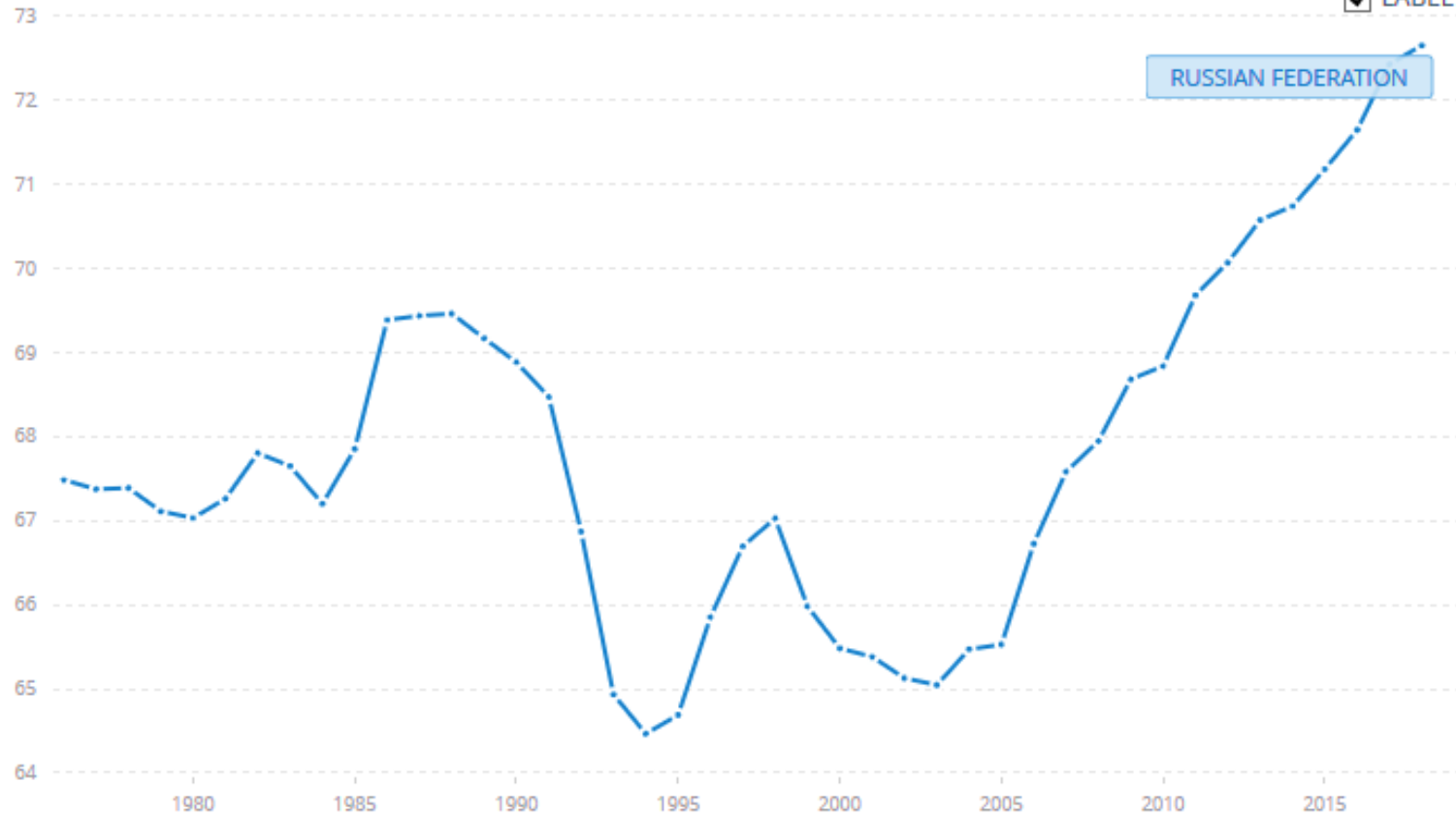
Map

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Life expectancy at birth, 1976-2018

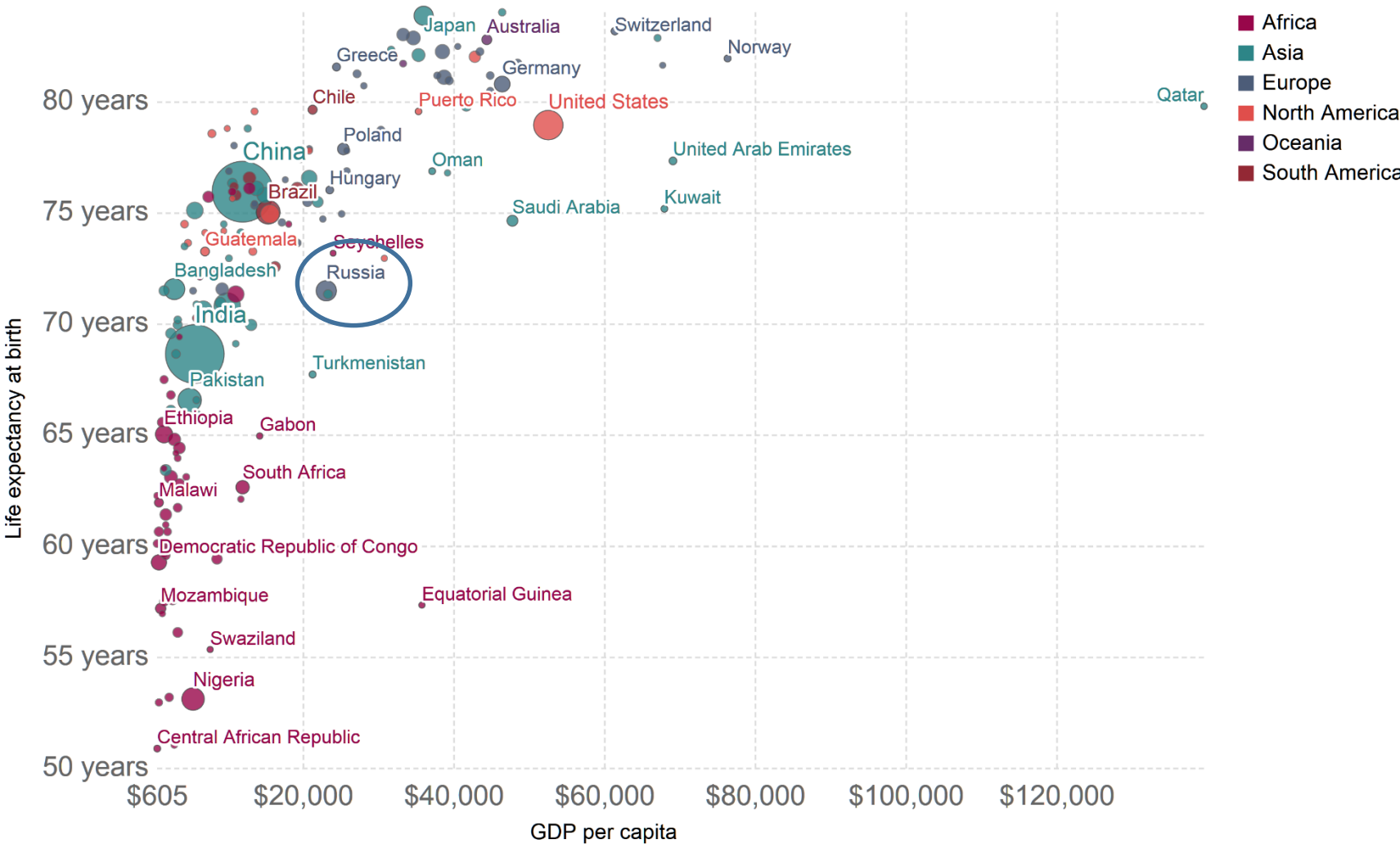
Source: World Bank;
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?end=2018&locations=RU&start=1976>

3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- Unavoidable crisis worsened by ‘shock therapy’ economic policy
- Despite economic recovery, *in 2015* life expectancy still 6.5 years lower than would be expected based on GDP/capita (the Preston curve) (Shkolnikov et al., 2019)

Life expectancy vs. GDP per capita, 2015

Our World in Data



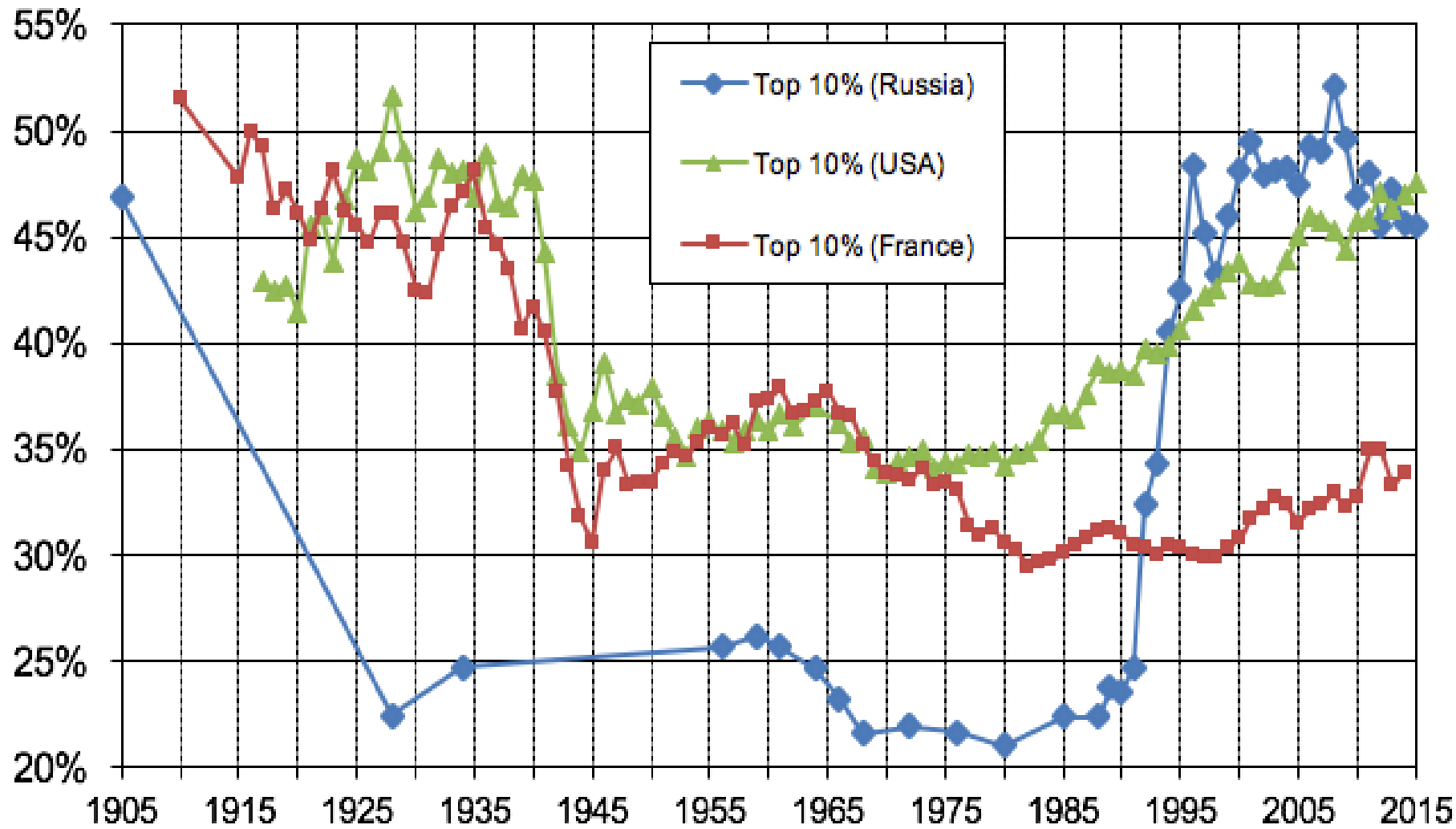
Source: Clio-Infra & UN Population Division ; Maddison Project Database (2018)

OurWorldInData.org/life-expectancy • CC BY



3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- Unavoidable crisis worsened by ‘shock therapy’ economic policy
- Despite economic recovery, *in 2015* life expectancy still 6.5 years lower than would be expected based on GDP/capita (the Preston curve) (Shkolnikov et al., 2019)
- Perhaps because recovery associated with drastic increases in inequality



Source: Novokmet, Piketty & Zucman, 2017

Distribution of pretax national income (before taxes and transfers, except pensions and unempl. insurance)

3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- Perhaps because recovery associated with drastic increases in inequality, creation of a new class of oligarchs (Russian *Forbes* billionaires' wealth > 28 percent of national income since c. 2007, as against < 15 percent in US), capital flight (half of all Russians' financial assets held outside the country; Novokmet, Piketty & Zucman, 2018)

3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- The legacies of a decade of austerity that increased inequality and insecurity and starved the NHS and local government of resources, compounded by short-term planning and implementation failures, may stretch across a generation to create a poorer, meaner, less healthy and far more unequal UK

3. The probable (but not inevitable) Russian future

- This outcome *is not inevitable* but serious discussion about how to avoid it – the ‘what do we do now’ questions, rather than the ‘how did we get here’ questions - is urgently required, and so far not happening in UK at requisite level of detail, despite promising international efforts



**TACKLING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19):
CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL EFFORT**

oecd.org/coronavirus



Building Back Better: A Sustainable, Resilient Recovery after COVID-19

5 June 2020

For the economic recovery from the COVID-19 crisis to be durable and resilient, a return to 'business as usual' and environmentally destructive investment patterns and activities must be avoided. Unchecked, global environmental emergencies such as climate change and biodiversity loss could cause social and economic damages far larger than those caused by COVID-19. To avoid this, economic recovery packages should be designed to "build back better". This means doing more than getting economies and livelihoods quickly back on their feet. Recovery policies also need to trigger investment and behavioural changes that will reduce the likelihood of future shocks and increase society's resilience to them when they do occur.

Central to this approach is a focus on well-being and inclusiveness. Other key dimensions for assessing whether recovery packages can "build back better" include alignment with long-term emission reduction goals, factoring in resilience to climate impacts, slowing biodiversity loss and increasing circularity of supply chains. In practice, well-designed recovery policies can cover several of these dimensions at once, such as catalysing the shift



About



The Great Reset: A Unique Twin Summit to Begin 2021

- "The Great Reset" will be the theme of a unique twin summit in January 2021, convened by the World Economic Forum.
- "The Great Reset" is a commitment to jointly and urgently build the foundations of our economic and social system for a more fair, sustainable and resilient future.
- It requires a new social contract centred on human dignity, social justice and where societal progress does not fall behind economic development.
- The global health crisis has laid bare longstanding ruptures in our economies and societies, and created a social crisis that urgently requires decent, meaningful jobs.
- The twin summit will be both in-person and virtual, connecting key global governmental and business leaders in Davos with a global multistakeholder network in 400 cities around the world for a forward-oriented dialogue driven by the younger generation.

Speakers for 1430 livestream:

- *Victoria Alonsoperez, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Chipsafer, Uruguay, and a Young Global Leader*
- *Caroline Anstey, President and Chief Executive Officer, Pact, USA*
- *Ajay S. Banga, Chief Executive Officer, Mastercard, USA*
- *Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Brussels*
- *Ma Jun, Chairman, Green Finance Committee, China Society for Finance and Banking,*



Question Authority

‘All observations of life are harsh, because life is. I lament that fact, but I cannot change it’

- Margaret Atwood,
The Tent (2006)

Follow my observations on such matters on my blog [here](#)

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