# IFS director warns Starmer’s reputation suffers as winter fuel payment cuts hit pensioners



A prominent economist has raised serious concerns about how Sir Keir Starmer's decision to cut the winter fuel payment for pensioners has tarnished his reputation. Paul Johnson, director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS) in London, highlighted that these crippling changes have left nearly 10 million pensioners facing financial strain due to new means-testing measures introduced by this Labour government.

In an interview with Times Radio, Johnson pointed out the staggering global awareness surrounding this issue, noting that many outside the UK recognize the government's retreat from supporting vulnerable citizens. “I was talking to the head of an international insurance company recently who said that the one thing everyone around the world knows about this government is that it's taking money away from helping the cost of fuel for pensioners,” Johnson remarked.

The government's reckless move to means-test the winter fuel payment—this lifeline supposed to ease heating costs—has unleashed grave concerns regarding the long-term repercussions for the public's perception of Starmer’s administration. Johnson argued that, while the immediate fiscal implications might appear minimal, the political fallout is destined to be far more damaging than the government anticipated.

As discussions around these devastating payment cuts continue, the widespread impact on the pensioner population and the crumbling reputation of this new government serve as stark reminders of the dangers of prioritizing budgetary constraints over the basic needs of citizens. It's clear that many will seek alternatives to a regime that turns its back on the most vulnerable in society—underscoring the growing urgency for a political vision that prioritizes the welfare of those in need.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.reuters.com/business/energy/uk-government-rethinking-winter-fuel-payment-cut-guardian-reports-2025-05-05/> - This article reports that the UK government is reconsidering its decision to cut winter fuel payments for pensioners, indicating a potential reversal of the policy.
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/8a045ba5-a3fd-42d5-80d7-d2f57347a86d> - This piece discusses the pressure on Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer to reverse welfare reforms, particularly cuts to the winter fuel allowance, following poor performance in local elections.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/labour-liz-kendall-conservatives-keir-starmer-b1194992.html> - This article highlights government estimates showing that limiting the winter fuel payment will push tens of thousands more pensioners into poverty each year.
4. <https://www.itv.com/news/2024-11-19/winter-fuel-payments-could-drive-100000-pensioners-into-poverty> - This report reveals that the government's policy to means-test winter fuel payments could drive between 50,000 and 100,000 additional pensioners into poverty annually.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2024/sep/12/no-winter-fuel-payments-impact-assessment-was-carried-out-no-10-admits> - This article reports that the UK government did not carry out an impact assessment on cutting winter fuel support for millions of pensioners, as confirmed by Prime Minister Keir Starmer.
6. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/starmer-confirms-no-impact-assessment-of-winter-fuel-payment-squeeze-carried-out> - This piece confirms that Prime Minister Keir Starmer has not received a report detailing the impact of the decision to means-test the winter fuel payment.
7. <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2051016/keir-starmer-winter-fuel-payment-shame> - Please view link - unable to able to access data