

OFCOM

SURVEY NAME: BROADBAND IN CONTRACT PRICE RISES OCT'23

SURVEY FIELDWORK: 20TH – 22ND OCTOBER 2023

METHODOLOGY: ONLINE OMNIBUS

SAMPLE: 2,000 UK 16+

Background

Introduction

This survey is being conducted on behalf of Ofcom, the UK regulator for providers of mobile phone, broadband, landline and pay-tv services. Ofcom would like to understand your views and experiences of using communications services.

Section 1 - Current contracts

ASK ALL

JAN Q1

Q1. Which, if any, of the following services are you solely or jointly responsible for paying the bill?

Please select all that apply. **MULTI CODE**.

1. Mobile phone service
2. Landline phone (i.e. home phone) or line rental
3. Fixed broadband internet
4. Pay TV service (via a cable, satellite or a broadband connection)
5. None of these (SINGLE CODE)
6. Don't know (SINGLE CODE)

CLOSE IF NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYING FIXED BROADBAND BILL

SHOW AS HOVER OVER TEXT FOR 'BUNDLED' A bundle is when you purchase two or more of your telephone, internet or other communications services from the same provider, either on the same contract or on contracts that are linked. For example, the contracts may be linked because the provider requires you to purchase one service to receive the other, or because you receive a discount for purchasing them together. If the bundle includes a mobile service, you may also be required to pay the remaining balance of any mobile phone handset costs in full if you decide to end the mobile service contract.

ASK THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FIXED BROADBAND INTERNET [Q1=3]

JAN Q1A

Q1A. Which other service(s), if any, are bundled together in your package from the same provider as your fixed broadband service?

Please select all that apply. **MULTICODE.**

1. Mobile phone service
2. Landline phone (i.e. home phone) or line rental
3. Pay-TV service (via a cable, satellite or a broadband connection)
4. Don't know/can't remember **EXCLUSIVE**
5. N/A - No other services are bundled together with my fixed broadband service **EXCLUSIVE**

ASK THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FIXED BROADBAND INTERNET [Q1=3]

JAN Q2

Q2. Broadband contracts tend to run for a set period of time such as 12 months, 18 months or 24 months and this minimum contract period is agreed when you take out your contract for the service.

Thinking about your fixed broadband service and the contract you have, which of these statements best describes your situation?

SINGLE CODE

1. I am currently within a fixed minimum contract period (e.g. 12-month, 18-month, 24 month)
2. My fixed minimum contract period has ended - I am now out of the minimum contract and am still paying monthly
3. My current contract has always been on a rolling monthly / 30-day contract
4. I don't know whether I am within my minimum contract period or not
5. I'm not sure/don't know if I ever had a contract

ASK THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FIXED BROADBAND INTERNET [Q1=3]

JAN Q3

Q3. Which provider do you use for your broadband service?

SINGLE CODE

If you use more than one provider, please answer about your MAIN provider.

1. BT
2. EE
4. Plusnet
5. Sky
6. TalkTalk
7. Virgin Media
8. Vodafone
10. Other provider – SPECIFY **OPEN END**
11. Don't know/Can't remember
12. Other provider – SPECIFY **OPEN END**
13. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN-CONTRACT AND KNOW THEIR PROVIDER [Q2=1 OR 3 AND Q3 = 1-10]

Q4. How long ago did you take out your current contract with [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3]?

JAN Q4

SINGLE CODE

1. In the last 6 months
2. 7-12 months ago
3. 13-18 months ago
4. 19-24 months ago
5. Over 2 years ago
6. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY NOT IN-CONTRACT AND KNOW THEIR PROVIDER (Q2=2, 4 OR 5 AND Q3 = 1-10)

JAN Q9

Q5. How long have you been with [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Up to 6 months
2. 7-12 months
3. 13-18 months
4. 19-24 months
5. Over 2 years
6. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY IN A FIXED TERM CONTRACT AND KNOW THEIR PROVIDER [Q2 = 1 AND Q3 = 1-10]

JAN Q10

Q6. Do you know whether [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase your monthly payment during your minimum contract period?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes, [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase my monthly payment during my minimum contract period.
2. No, [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] cannot increase my monthly payment during my minimum contract period.
3. I'm not sure whether [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase my monthly payment during my minimum contract period.

ASK THOSE WHO ARE CURRENTLY NOT ON A FIXED TERM CONTRACT AND KNOW THEIR PROVIDER [Q2 = 2, 3, 4 OR 5 AND Q3 = 1-10]

JAN Q11

Q7. Do you know whether [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase your monthly payment [now you are out of your minimum contract period (Q3 = 3)]

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes, [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase my monthly payment
2. No, [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] cannot increase my monthly payment
3. I'm not sure whether [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] can increase my monthly payment

ASK THOSE WHO ARE AWARE THEIR PROVIDER CAN INCREASE THEIR PAYMENT (Q6 = 1 OR Q7 = 1)

JAN Q12

Q8. When did you **first** become aware that your monthly payments to [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] could increase [during your minimum contract period (Q2 = 2)]?

SINGLE CODE

1. Before signing up to the contract
2. During the sign-up process
3. After signing up to the contract
4. Can't remember

ASK ALL WHO RECALL WHEN THEY BECAME AWARE (Q8 = CODE 1, 2 OR 3)

JAN Q13

Q9. How did you become aware that [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] could increase your monthly payments?

MULTICODE

1. Press advertisement
2. TV advertisement
3. Billboard/poster advertisement
4. On the provider's website
5. On a price-comparison website (e.g. USwitch, Compare the Market)
6. During a webchat with the provider
7. While on the phone with the provider
8. From a salesperson in a store
9. In the provider's Terms and Conditions
10. In the provider's Contract Summary
11. In a letter sent to me by the provider
12. In an email sent to me by the provider
13. In a text sent to me by the provider
14. When I noticed on my bank statement that the payment had increased
15. Read / heard about it in a newspaper / on the radio / on the tv / in a social media feed
16. A friend / family member / someone else told me about it
17. Other (**WRITE IN**)
18. Can't remember **EXCLUSIVE**

ASK ALL

JAN Q17

Q10. Do you know what the CPI and the RPI measure?

SINGLE CODE, RANDOMISE CODES 1-3

Interest rate	1
Data speeds	2
Inflation rate	3
Don't know	4

ASK ALL

JAN Q18, WITH REVISED RESPONSE WORDINGS

Q11. CPI stands for the Consumer Prices Index and RPI stands for the Retail Prices Index. Both measure rates of inflation (the amount by which prices have risen over the last 12 months) and are produced monthly.

Before today, had you heard of the CPI and the RPI?

SINGLE CODE FOR EACH COLUMN

	Consumer Prices Index (CPI)	Retail Prices Index (RPI)
Yes, had heard of it and understand how to find information about it	1	1
Yes, had heard of it but don't understand how to find information about it	2	2
No, had not heard of it	3	3
Not sure	4	4

**ASK THOSE WHO ARE AWARE THEIR PROVIDER CAN INCREASE THEIR PAYMENT (Q6 = 1 OR Q7 = 1)
JAN Q21**

Q12. Do you know how [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] will calculate the increase to your monthly payments?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes, by the rate of inflation
2. Yes, by a set percentage decided by the provider
3. Yes, by a set amount decided by the provider
4. Yes, by the rate of inflation plus a set percentage decided by the provider
5. In another way (WRITE IN)
6. No

ASK THOSE WHO ARE NOT AWARE THAT THEIR PROVIDER CAN INCREASE THEIR PAYMENT [Q6 = 3 OR Q7 = 3]

JAN Q24

Q13. Where would you look to find out whether [PIPE PROVIDER NAME FROM Q3] will be increasing your monthly payments?

MULTI CODE

1. In my contract documents
2. On my provider's website
3. By calling my provider
4. By speaking to someone in my provider's shop
5. By speaking to friends or family who are with the same provider
6. On Ofcom's website
7. Other (**WRITE IN**)
8. Don't know

ASK ALL

JAN Q25

Q14. Thinking back to around March/April this year, did the broadband provider you were with at the time increase your monthly payment?

SINGLE CODE

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know/Can't remember
4. Not applicable, as I did not have fixed broadband internet at that time

ASK IF BROADBAND PRICE INCREASED IN MARCH/APRIL 2023 [Q14=1]

JAN Q26, WITH NEW CODE 7 AND CODES 8 & 9 MOVED DOWN ONE

PLACE Q15. How did you respond to the price increase in March/April 2023?

MULTI CODE, RANDOMISE

1. I just accepted the price rise and did nothing else
4. I checked my terms and conditions/contract
2. I looked online to find out more about the price rise
3. I complained to my provider
5. I negotiated a better deal with my provider
6. I decided to take up the option to leave my existing provider without penalty
7. I thought about looking for another provider as soon as my contract expired
8. Other (**WRITE IN**)
9. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK IF BROADBAND PRICE INCREASED IN MARCH/APRIL 2023 [Q14=1]

NEW Q

Q16. And what effect, if any, did the price increase in March/April 2023 have on you?

MULTI CODE, RANDOMISE

1. I was surprised by the price rise
2. I was annoyed by the price rise
3. I had to adjust my spending on other things
4. I had difficulty paying the increased amount
5. I understood why my provider had increased the price
6. I didn't really notice it, as it was quite small
7. I didn't really notice it, as I could afford to pay it
8. None, I was already expecting a price rise
9. Other **(WRITE IN)**
10. Don't know/Can't remember

ASK ALL

NEW Q

Q17. We'd now like you to imagine that it is 1st October 2023 and you are looking for a new broadband contract to run for 18 months (from 1st October 2023 to 31st March 2025). We are going to show you some different pricing options and ask you some questions about them.

**NOTE TO SCRIPTER, PLEASE ASK ABOUT EACH DESCRIPTION IN TURN, ON SEPARATE SCREENS.
RANDOMISE ORDER BETWEEN INTERVIEWS**

- A. £32 a month, to increase by £3 a month from April 2024
- B. £32 a month until March 2024, then £35 a month until March 2025
- C. £32 a month for the first six months, then £35 a month for the remaining 12 months
- D. £34 a month for 18 months

To what extent do you agree or disagree that this description of the price:

	Agree strongly	Agree slightly	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree slightly	Disagree strongly
Makes it easy to understand how much you will be paying each month	1	2	3	4	5
Makes it easy to understand how much you would pay in total over the 18 months of the contract	1	2	3	4	5

ASK ALL

NEW Q

Q18. Which of the four pricing options do you think provides the best value for money over the 18 months of the contract period?

- A. £32 a month, to increase by £3 a month from April 2024
- B. £32 a month until March 2024, then £35 a month until March 2025
- C. £32 a month for the first six months, then £35 a month for the remaining 12 months
- D. £34 a month for 18 months

- 1. A
- 2. B
- 3. C
- 4. D
- 5. They are all the same
- 6. Not sure

ASK ALL

NEW Q

Q19. How useful would you find each of the following pieces of information when you are comparing different broadband contracts? When answering, please assume that all broadband contracts you are considering would tell you this information and that you are looking at an 18-month contract period.

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful
The total amount you would pay over the whole life of the contract For example: Provider A: £32 a month, to increase by £3 a month from April 2024 (total contract cost £612) Provider B: £33 a month, to increase by £2 a month from April 2024 (total contract cost £618)	1	2	3	4	5
The average monthly price over the whole life of the contract For example: Provider A £32 a month, to increase by £3 month from April 2024 (average monthly cost £34.00) Provider B £33 a month, to increase by £2 a month from April 2024 (average monthly cost £34.33)	1	2	3	4	5

ASK ALL

JAN Q27

Q20. Which one of these – if any – is the highest educational or professional qualification that you currently have?

Please choose the highest option on the list that applies to you.

SINGLE CODE

1. I have no formal qualifications (and I am not still studying)
2. Entry level qualification such as ESOL, ELC or Skills for Life
3. GCSE/ O' Level/ CSE/ National Qualifications/ Standard Grades – but not Maths and not English
4. GCSE/ O' Level/ CSE/ National Qualifications/ Standard Grades – including Maths or English
5. Level 1-2 vocational qualification or intermediate apprenticeship
6. A' level, Scottish Higher, Welsh Baccalaureate, International Baccalaureate or equivalent)
7. Level 3 vocational qualification or advanced apprenticeship
8. Diplomas in higher education (HNC/ HND/ BTEC Higher or equivalent)
9. Level 4-5 vocational qualification or higher apprenticeship
10. University first degree (BA/ BSc/ BEd/ PGCE or equivalent)
11. Level 6 vocational qualification or degree apprenticeship
12. University higher degree (e.g. Masters, PhD or equivalent)
13. Still studying/ still at school
14. Prefer not to say
15. Don't know

ASK ALL
JAN Q30

Q21. Which one of these bands describes your total household income before tax or any other deductions are made? Please include any benefits or credits that you or anyone else in your household receives, including housing benefit, as well as any income from employment.

SINGLE CODE

	Per week	Per Year
1	Up to £199	Up to £10,399
2	From £200 to £299	From £10,400 to £15,599
3	From £300 to £499	From £15,600 to £25,999
4	From £500 to £699	From £26,000 to £36,399
5	From £700 to £999	From £36,400 to £51,999
6	From £1,000 to £1,499	From £52,000 to £77,999
7	£1,500 and above	£78,000 and above
8	Don't know	
9	Refused	