

Press release from the 99% Organisation

99% reinforces Social Mobility Commission's latest findings on growing social inequality in the UK

London, Hereford, 11 March 2021

Responding to the Government's announcement on the [Social Mobility Commission's new poll](#) that dramatically underlines public concern about growing social inequality, Mark E Thomas, founder of The 99% Organisation, said:

"The coronavirus has torn off the veneer. Important trends in society which could previously be hidden are now undeniable. Countries like the US and UK can no longer pretend that their most deprived citizens are not only poorer financially and in terms of life opportunity, but also in health and even life expectancy.

"We welcome the Social Mobility Commission's snapshot of UK perceptions about the impact of the pandemic and urge the Government to address our worsening levels of deprivation urgently."

The 99% Organisation has shown that 'mass impoverishment' - where most working people get poorer even as the economy grows - has been growing in the UK over the last 10 years and in the US over the last 20 years.

It believes government policy, not, as is so often claimed 'economic necessity', is the root cause of the inequality the UK faces. The long and unnecessary period of austerity following the 2007 financial crisis led to underinvestment in public services and infrastructure. The Chancellor's recent emergency spending may now be used as an excuse for even further austerity, which would be a disaster.

From [300 years of Bank of England data](#), it is clear that our current levels of government debt are in fact far from unusual. In our two most successful economic periods, the Industrial Revolution and the Golden Age of Capitalism, levels of national indebtedness were much higher than the levels we have today. The IMF cautions that we must not reduce spending. 99% is deeply worried that the government's fundamentalist ideology may trump sound economic advice; in which case mass impoverishment will continue to damage UK society.

ENDs

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Notes

- 1. The 99% Organisation**, is an inclusive, entirely voluntary, movement of people who want to end mass impoverishment using peaceful means. The 99% Organisation aims to make mass impoverishment a key issue for Government, and to drive serious policy change. We want to build a world in 2050, where rather than being poorer than their parents, people are better-off. www.99-percent.org
- 2. Mark E Thomas**

Mark is the author of [99%](#), one of the FT's Best Books of 2019. He has spent most of his career in business; for many years he ran the Strategy Practice at PA Consulting Group. During this time, he began to explore whether the tools and techniques of business strategy could be applied to understanding the health and stability of countries.

This research led him to the uncomfortable conclusion that many developed countries – including the US and the UK –are unwittingly pursuing economic policies which will result in the unwinding of 20th century civilisation before we reach the year 2050. Hearteningly, he also concluded that this fate is entirely avoidable.

Mark is also the author of *The Complete CEO*, and *The Zombie Economy*. Mark has a degree in Mathematics from Cambridge University. He lives in Herefordshire <https://99-percent.org/about-mark-thomas/>
- 3. Link to the Social Mobility Barometer:** <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-mobility-barometer-2021>
- 4. 99% Campaigns**

Saving the NHS: The Government has recently published a White Paper on the Future of the NHS. Some elements of it are extremely worrying.

Externalisation: working with Imperial College and others on a project to [re-engineer the profit motive into a force for good](#). This project has completed phase 1, and we are hoping to broaden it over the next few months.

Herefordshire 2030: looking at how one county could -- without waiting for major shifts in government policy -- take steps to become [fairer, more prosperous and greener](#). This project is now engaged in detailed analysis and stakeholder engagement.

Local Action: mobilising members to write to their MPs about important issues such as the [rule of law](#) in the UK.

Contact with senior politicians: 99% is working with like-minded MPs from all parties, and with some All-Party Parliamentary Groups to begin the process of amending policy.
- 5. What is Mass Impoverishment**

[Mass Impoverishment](#) is the process by which even as the economy continues to grow richer, many people find themselves getting poorer year after year.

For example:

 - mass impoverishment means that we are looking at the first generation in living memory that expects to be poorer than its parents.
 - Many countries suffer from mass impoverishment: the US since 2000 and the UK since 2010.