



From Abseiling



Home

News

Sport

Business

Travel

Jobs

Motoring

Property

SEARCH

Go

Our site | Web

- Comment home
- Your view
- Blogs
- Spy
- Letters
- Make us laugh
- Mandrake
- Earth log

Announcements

- Arts
- Blogs
- Comment
- Crossword
- Dating
- Digital Life
- Earth
- Expat
- Family
- Fantasy Games
- Fashion
- Features
- Food & Drink
- Football
- Gardening
- Health
- Horoscopes
- My Telegraph
- Obituaries
- Promotions
- Science
- Sudoku
- Telegraph e-paper
- Telegraph magazine
- Telegraph offers
- Telegraph PM
- Weather
- Your Money
- Your view

## Family misfortunes

Last Updated: 12:01am BST 14/06/2007

[Have your say](#) [Read comments](#)

To judge by its tax and benefits policies, one would have to conclude that this Government wished to discourage traditional, two-parent family life.

A report written by former welfare reform minister Frank Field, published today by the independent think-tank Reform, reveals, in genuinely shocking terms, the degree of official economic discrimination against two-parent families.

The figures are stark and astonishing: because of the huge bias in favour of single parenthood that prevails in the tax credit system, a single mother with two children under the age of 11 who works 16 hours a week on the minimum wage, receives, largely thanks to tax credits, an income of £487.

advertisement A two-parent family, on the other hand, also with two children under 11, in which either one or both partners works for the minimum wage, would have to put in a total of 116 hours a week to take home the same income.

As a result, Mr Field points out, the risk of poverty has scarcely changed for children in two-parent families, who have been systematically neglected in the Government's campaign to eliminate child poverty.

Bizarrely for a governing party that has advocated personal responsibility and the virtues of stable family life, Labour has chosen to victimise precisely those children who are being raised in what might be thought to be the most secure domestic environments.

In effect, unmarried women with children are being bribed to remain single, while existing two-parent families are penalised.

By a striking coincidence, the Home Office announcement yesterday of its new policy on paedophiles points up another dimension to the problem of the breakdown in traditional family patterns.

The Home Secretary, John Reid, proposed granting single mothers entering into a new relationship with a man the right to check his past record for sex offences.

This is, in effect, an acknowledgment of the fact that a single mother's new male partner is statistically the most likely perpetrator of child abuse. The Government, having encouraged single parenthood, is now having to deal with one of its consequences.

[Have your say](#)

[Print](#) [Email this story](#)

Post this story to: [del.icio.us](#) | [Digg](#) | [Newsvine](#) | [NowPublic](#) | [Reddit](#)

Related articles

[News: How tax credits 'cheat' working families](#)

Comments

Well, you can complain all you like, but Labour couldn't have done all this, if they hadn't been voted into power. The party is infested with hardcore feminists, what do you expect? They make no secret of the fact that they want to destroy marriage and the family.

Posted by bola on June 15, 2007 6:33 AM

[Report this comment](#)

"Supporting hard working families" - I don't think so Mr Brown. Mr Cameron show some teeth on this matter, it is an open goal.

Also - many of those claiming to be single are also co-habiting (official estimates put this figure at a conservative 200,000 claimants).

The tax credit system is rotten to the core.  
Posted by Jimmy McQuillan on June 14, 2007 10:34 PM

**UBS OPENINGS:  
at Tate  
Modern**



Telegraph.co.uk



MOST VIEWED

- ▶ Scientists a step closer to steering hurricanes
- ▶ Video referee right to disallow Mark Cueto try
- ▶ Alonso: Lewis Hamilton win would be unfair
- ▶ Scotland plans to axe prescription charges
- ▶ The Great Omani

FEATURE FOCUS

[Report this comment](#)

Absolutely astonishing figures!

I'm afraid that Britain is on the verge of collective lunacy. Plain common-sense has all but evaporated. You could not make it up.

I first learned of this madness some 15 years ago, when my step-daughter introduced me to an ex schoolfriend of hers. This young 'woman' was but 19 or 20 years old. She was unmarried and had two children by different fathers.

She also had a fully-furnished council house in a posh part of Surrey.

I reeled from the improbability of all this and assumed she was exaggerating out of bravado.

Now I see that it was all true.

The nation is truly barking mad.

The icing on this loony cake was covered in these columns very recently. Remember the issue of the 200,000 abortions and whether it was morally acceptable? It should be bloody compulsory!

Posted by Graham King on June 14, 2007 4:29 PM

[Report this comment](#)

Don't forget the architect of all this, does he have a selective memory?

Posted by Conkeyron on June 14, 2007 3:43 PM

[Report this comment](#)

Haven't you realised yet? Labour Governments always penalise those who work in favour of those who don't. Actually it is more complex than that. The desire of this Government in particular seems to be to create a nation in debt: people beholden to the state for their very survival. They don't really care if the new 'serfs' are Polish immigrants of the sons of gentry: just so long as they depend on Labour. There is a word for this. It is Communism.

Posted by Adrian Gilbert on June 14, 2007 2:42 PM

[Report this comment](#)

I should swap my 42hour job for the 16 option,i'd be £300 a month better off,how can this be.

Posted by mr lynch on June 14, 2007 2:09 PM

[Report this comment](#)

I have to pay my ex wife 20% of my Net salary (a massive 800 a month) but the government takes no account of this when calculating her "tax credits". I recommend any married couple with children to divorce, and cash in on Gordons Browns generosity.

Posted by Tom on June 14, 2007 1:47 PM

[Report this comment](#)

A lunchtime stroll through the town centre of Ipswich, any day of the week, will provide the unedifying sight of several dozen young women with either one or two offspring in buggies. As they aren't wearing rings, it's a fairly good guess that they are single women with illegitimate children.

I have no doubt that this is mirrored in every provincial town in the UK

Not only does society no longer frown on this behaviour, the tax system positively encourages it.

In my view, this is as unsustainable as it is irresponsible and immoral...

Posted by Laurie Brown on June 14, 2007 12:03 PM

[Report this comment](#)

To add to the comments already posted below, it now seems that both Labour and Conservative want to level the education playfield (in more ways than one) in order to accommodate the issue of these single parents. sorry, I mean children from a 'disadvantaged background'.

If society in the UK is cracking from centre towards the edges, it is this kind of mulchy thinking that is responsible.

Posted by Edwin Thornbe on June 14, 2007 11:30 AM

[Report this comment](#)

Labour, being infected with old, Marxist, collective dogma, hates the family. Ultimately people will always be more loyal to families than the State. The first thing any totalitarian state does is to nationalise children by conscripting them into the 'Pioneers', the 'Hitler Youth' etc. Mr Brown wants to make us all vassals of the state.

Some will argue that we are subjects of the Monarch and that we should be titled 'citizens'. This happened after the French Revolution and many, many citizens lost their heads. A similar process happened in the Soviet Union.

Posted by Chris Stephens on June 14, 2007 11:07 AM

[Report this comment](#)

My current partner was a single mother on benefits when we met receiving housing benefit free council tax and and income of £112 a week the moment we moved in all these benefits stopped and she now works 30 hours a week with me doing 50 we do not have a lifestyle anywhere near what we had separately where is the incentive to come off benefits when you are effectively worse off and have to pay taxes on top

Posted by Joe T on June 14, 2007 10:59 AM

[Report this comment](#)

As I type "There are currently no comments for this entry". Well it's just possible that there are no comments that are actually printable. We went "Through the Looking Glass" a long time ago and it's got to a point where most people of sound mind actually wonder if we will ever return to a commonsense and rational view of the "world in ferment" that has been created by meddling politicians.

Posted by Nick R on June 14, 2007 10:25 AM

[Report this comment](#)

A ludicrous situation - and one long overdue proper exposure in the quality media.

Our state systematically rewards socially undesirable behaviour.

There was never anything wrong with a system which gave the most modest of tax incentives to stable two parent families who supported themselves without benefits or 'tax credits'.

If you do not want to see further expansion of the demand on the raft of benefits we have to tackle the

practice of rewarding inappropriate behaviour, fecklessness and the like.

It is not clever to be pregnant without means of support and no partner prepared to share the burden.

It is not clever to go around getting women pregnant when you have neither the means nor the intention of contributing to the cost of bringing up your children or taking any part as a parent or positive role model.

Society currently enables both - in spades. This has to end - and that message needs to be communicated to all those in the areas where this is 'normal' behaviour.

Tell people quite plainly that the 'reward' is being phased out - that they will be on their own - no benefits, no free council house.

Point them to unmarried mother's homes and the adoption agencies. There is no "every woman's right to have a baby" - not on the taxpayer anyway. That will stop the rot.

Posted by simon coulter on June 14, 2007 9:57 AM  
[Report this comment](#)

A weekly income of £487 is equivalent to a monthly take home of over £2110. You'd have to be on a salary of over £40000 to get this. No wonder it's not worth anyone currently on benefits getting a job, they'd be doing their families a huge disservice. Meanwhile the rest of us have to flog our guts out for 40 - 60 hours a week, plus commuting time, have to pay through the nose for child care, and end up scrimping to make ends meet.

The tax and benefits system is a joke, and it is the workers who are the victim of it. It is hugely demoralising to realise that we are on the treadmill for life, and are no better off than if we'd never bother investing in our training and qualifications, and working our way up the career ladder. To rub salt in the wound, the Inland Revenue is a vindictive organisation, always ready to try to squeeze more out of the soft targets on PAYE.

Posted by Martin Brownall on June 14, 2007 8:24 AM  
[Report this comment](#)

The whole tax system needs an overhaul; families in which the parents are married to one another and remain in the home with the children should reap the benefits, instead, these are the ones who are penalised. No wonder the system is abused.

Posted by Sue on June 14, 2007 8:06 AM  
[Report this comment](#)

And the guy who is presiding over this discrimination against the old fashioned two parent family is none other than Tony Blair. A family man through and through and one who, we are told, is going to join the Catholic Church, the most traditional family apologist organisation in the world.

Posted by E Saunders on June 14, 2007 2:38 AM  
[Report this comment](#)

---

Post a comment

Please remember that the submission of any material to telegraph.co.uk is governed by our [Terms and Conditions](#) (clause 5 in particular) and by submitting material you confirm your agreement to these Terms and Conditions.

Your name: \*

Your email address: \* (We won't publish this.)

Your site's URL: (If you have one.)

Please click the post button only once - your comment will not be published immediately.

\* = Required information



**BUSINESS**  
Market Forces  
Keep track of what's driving global financial markets.



**TRAVEL**  
Lost world  
Away from the capital, Venezuela is ruled by nature.



**FEATURES**  
A real stag do  
What is the noisy tradition of 'bolving' among Exmoor deer?



**PROPERTY**  
Open house  
Want to beat the slow market? Open your doors.

You are here: [Telegraph](#) > [Opinion](#) > [Dt Leaders](#)

[About us](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Forgotten your password?](#) | [Advertising](#) | [Press office](#) | [Promotions](#) | [Archive](#) | [Today's news](#)

© Copyright of Telegraph Media Group Limited 2007. | [Terms & Conditions of reading.](#) | [Commercial information.](#) | [Privacy and Cookie Policy.](#)