

# 'Indefensible!': Pensioners join forces to stop 500,000 people receiving 'poverty pension'

Pensioner campaign groups have joined forces to condemn a policy which sees hundreds of thousands of older people miss out on state pension increases.

By [Rebekah Evans](#) 13:14, Thu, Feb 9, 2023 | UPDATED: 19:15, Thu, Feb 9, 2023

## Pensioners on state pensions being frozen after moving overseas

[State pension](#) payments only increase each year if a person lives in an eligible country, as a rise is not a foregone conclusion. Each year, those who do not live in the UK, the European Economic Area (EEA), Gibraltar, Switzerland or a country with a specific social security agreement with the UK, end up missing out on triple lock rises.

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Those affected are known as frozen pensioners, and many state they are facing financial hardship.

Now, two groups, Silver Voices and the End Frozen Pensions campaign, have united in a new call for action to end the policy which sees many expats missing out.

The pair have launched a new petition asking all political parties to commit to ending frozen pensions.

Frozen pensions are a result of historical reciprocal agreements negotiated between the UK and a select list of countries and territories - meaning those living in places without this agreements see their sum frozen.

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State pension: Pensioners join forces to stop 500,000 people receiving 'poverty pension' (Image: Getty)

The End Frozen Pensions Campaign has previously described this as an “arbitrary postcode lottery”.

One such person impacted by this policy is Anne Puckridge, a 98-year-old World War Two veteran.

Ms Puckridge currently receives a weekly pension of £72.50, which is far below the current basic state pension - a sum which is set to reach £156.20 per week in its full payment by April.

The reason as to this discrepancy is because Ms Puckridge moved to Canada at the age of 76 in order to be closer to her family.

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# WHAT IS STATE PENSION?

## You can claim the basic state pension if you're:

- A man born before April 6, 1951
- A woman born before April 6, 1953
- If you were born later you'll need to claim the new state pension.
- The most you can get on the basic state pension is **£141.85** per week.
- The full new state pension is **£185.15** per week.

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State pension: What is state pension (Image: EXPRESS)

However, it meant she inadvertently became one of an **READ MORE** estimated 500,000 pensioners, and one of 60,000 military veterans who are no longer eligible for the annual uprating of their state pension.

Instead, these individuals see their sum frozen at the level it was when they left an eligible country - meaning the purchasing power of their money reduces every year.



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Dennis Reed, director of Silver Voices, said: “All UK pensioners quite rightly expect to receive the pension that they were promised, paid for and deserve and it is wholly wrong that nearly half a million pensioners are denied this right because of where they live.

“There is a very clear solution to ending this injustice through the UK Government signing new reciprocal agreements with all countries impacted and we urge them to do so as soon as possible.

“It is morally indefensible the UK Government is leaving pensioners like Anne living on a poverty pension and denying them the retirement that they paid for and deserve.”

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The petition states the policy can have a “devastating impact” on the lives of those affected.



However, the campaign groups also take issue with the UK Government rejecting a series of requests from the Government of Canada to enter into a reciprocal deal.

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The sentiments were shared by Sheila Telford, chair of the ICBP, who added: “We know that countries like Canada have made numerous requests to end this injustice and that the UK Government has refused to even discuss this out of hand.

“It is frankly absurd and a national embarrassment that Anne’s service and the contributions made by nearly 500,000 British pensioners are valued more by countries like Canada than by their own nation.

“British pensioners are British pensioners irrelevant of where they live, and it is high time that the Government stopped hiding behind tired excuses and got around the table with all countries and ended this injustice once and for all.”

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In an exclusive interview with Ms Telford in 2022, she explained how she worked for British Airways and British Petroleum (BP) for many years.

She told Express.co.uk: “I was very British. I feel I have made a huge contribution to this county. I’ve done my bit for Britain, there’s no doubt about it.”

The [change.org](#) petition has already begun to garner signatures, and both campaign groups are keen to enact change as soon as possible.

It concluded: “They paid in. Now it is time to end the callous, immoral, and unjustifiable policy once and for all.”

A Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) spokesperson

told [Express.co.uk](http://Express.co.uk): “We will forever be indebted to our brave personnel who fought and gave their lives for this country and our priority is ensuring every pensioner, including veterans, receives all the financial support to which they are entitled.

“We understand that people move abroad for many reasons and we provide clear information about how this can impact on their finances.

“The Government’s policy on the uprating of the UK state pension for recipients living overseas is a longstanding one of more than 70 years and we continue to uprate state pensions overseas where there is a legal requirement to do so.”