



BritMates

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Think & Talk

시사토론

05 Economy & Consumer Culture

ISSUES NOW IN THE NEWS

Reading, Discussion and Critical Thinking

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How we spend, save, and make sense of money

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1. The Cost of Living

Why does everything feel more expensive now?

◆ Topic Overview

Across the world, people are feeling the impact of rising prices. From groceries and gas to rent and utilities, the cost of everyday life has increased while wages often stay the same.

Many households are making difficult decisions just to get by—cutting expenses, delaying purchases, or taking on extra jobs. Even basic needs like food and housing now feel out of reach for some. Governments are trying different solutions, such as price caps or subsidies.

But can these efforts really help people feel financially stable again?

◆ Key Vocabulary

Inflation

Definition: A general increase in prices over time, reducing the purchasing power of money.

Example Sentence: "Because of inflation, the same groceries now cost much more than they did a year ago."

Wage gap

Definition: The difference between how fast prices rise and how slowly salaries increase.

Example Sentence: "Even though I got a small raise, the wage gap makes it harder to cover all my monthly bills."



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◆ Discussion Questions

- ① What daily expenses have increased the most in your country recently?
- ② How does rising cost of living affect people's life decisions, like marriage, moving, or having children?
- ③ Should the government control prices on things like rent or food?
- ④ How can people adapt when income doesn't keep up with expenses?

◆ Idioms & Phrases

✓ “make ends meet” – to have just enough money to pay for the things you need.

Example: “With rising rent and food prices, many families are struggling to make ends meet each month.”

(집세와 식비가 계속 오르면서, 많은 가정들이 매달 생계를 유지하기 위해 힘들어하고 있다.)

✓ “tighten one's belt” – to spend less money than usual because you have less of it.

Example: “Since my salary hasn't changed, I've had to tighten my belt and cut down on extras.”

(급여는 그대로인데 물가는 오르니까, 허리띠를 졸라매고 불필요한 지출을 줄일 수 밖에 없었어.)

◆ Mini Debate

Statement: Governments should take stronger action to control the rising cost of living.

Do you agree or disagree? Prepare arguments and counterpoints.

