

The
Economist

预期寿命

life expectancy

The Economist

听读系列



请多多点赞！谢谢大家 译文在评论区
公众号：狂奔的外刊 分享PDF链接

社论

无法解释的25万人

英国经历了十年的预期寿命增长停滞，而疫情并不是唯一的原因

Leaders

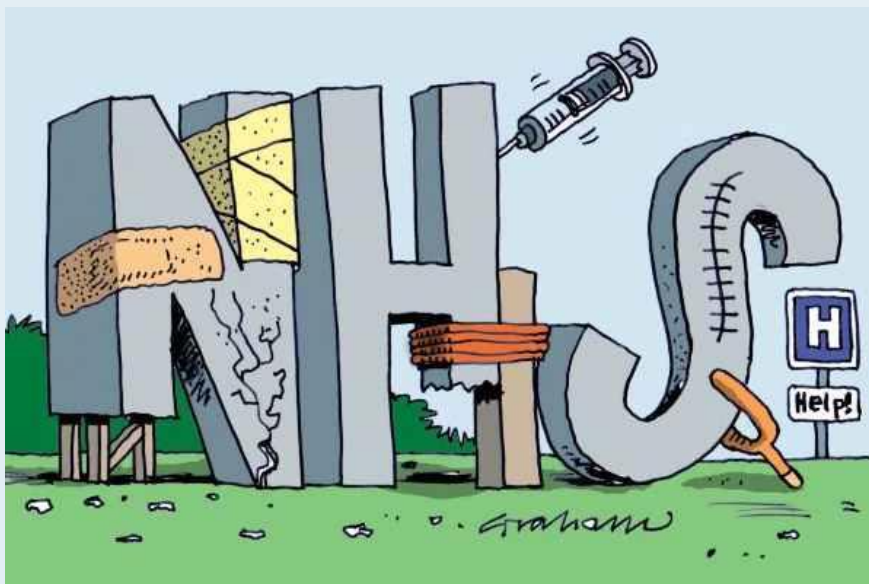
The missing quarter of a million

Britain has endured a decade of early deaths, and the pandemic is not the only reason

Rain

bilibili 狂奔的外刊

1. IN RECENT YEARS Britain has been hit by one health crisis after another. First came the covid-19 pandemic—then **backlogs** in health and social care that the **coronavirus** **exacerbated**, and a long winter of **strikes** and **overwhelmed** emergency departments.



backlog /'bæklog/ **noun** a quantity of work that should have been done already, but has not yet been done 积压的工作

coronavirus /kə'reʊ.nə.vaɪə.rəs/ **noun** 冠状病毒；
日冕形病毒

exacerbate /ɪg'zæsəbeɪt/ **verb** ~ sth (*formal*) to make sth worse, especially a disease or problem 使恶化；
使加剧；使加重

strike /straɪk/ **noun** a period of time when an organized group of employees of a company stops working because of a disagreement over pay or conditions 罢工；罢课；罢市

overwhelm /əʊvə'welɪm/ **verb** ~ sb to be so bad or so great that a person cannot deal with it; to give too much of a thing to a person 压垮；使应接不暇

emergency department **noun** 急诊科；急诊室

But in the background, long before the pandemic hit, an even more **disturbing** story has been **unfolding**. Britain has endured a **grim** decade during which perhaps a **quarter** of a **million** people died younger than expected.



disturbing /dɪ'stɜːbɪŋ/ **adjective** making you feel anxious and upset or shocked 引起烦恼的；令人不安的；引起恐慌的

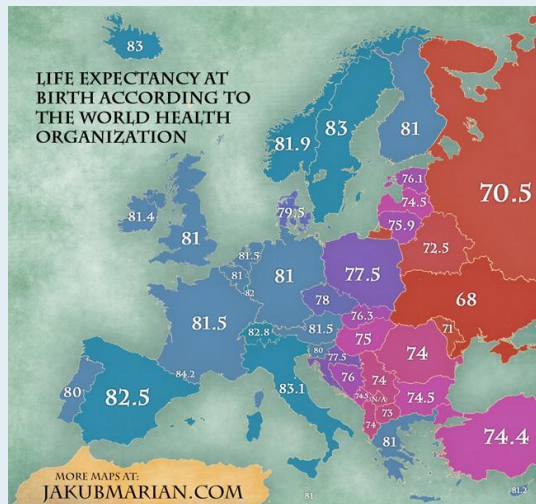
unfold /ʌn'fəʊld/ **verb** [I, T] to be gradually made known; to gradually make sth known to other people (使) 逐渐展现；展示；透露

grim /grɪm/ **adjective** unpleasant and depressing 令人不快的；令人沮丧的

quarter /'kwɔːtə/ **noun** (also **fourth** *especially in NAmE*) [C] one of four equal parts of sth 四等份之一

million /'mɪljən/ **noun** (*plural verb* 复数动词) (*abbr. m*) 1 000 000 一百万

2. By our **calculations**, that is the number of extra deaths Britain has **suffered**, compared with similar countries such as France and **Denmark**. The reason is that, in the early 2010s, **life expectancy** **stalled** in Britain compared with **long-run** trends and other countries. This slowdown in life expectancy struck all **age groups**, not just the elderly.



calculation /kælkjuˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ **noun** [C, U] the process of using your judgement to decide what the results would be of doing sth 估计; 预测; 推测

suffer /ˈsʌfə/ **verb** [I] to be badly affected by a disease, pain, sadness, a lack of sth, etc. (因疾病、痛苦、悲伤等) 受苦, 受难, 受折磨

Denmark /ˈdenmɑ:k/ **noun** [sing.] a country in northern Europe 丹麦 (北欧国家)

life expectancy **noun** [U, C] the number of years that a person is likely to live; the length of time that sth is likely to exist or continue for 预期寿命; 预计存在 (或持续) 的期限

stall /sto:l/ **verb** [T, I] ~ (sth) to stop sth from happening until a later date; to stop making progress 暂缓; 搁置; 停顿

in the long run at a time that is far away in the future 从长远看; 终究

age group **noun** people of a similar age or within a particular range of ages 年龄组; 年龄段 bilibili 狂奔的外刊

And it **disproportionately** affected the poor. If you travel just 10km (six **miles**) from the **poshest** part of **Kensington** in London to **New Cross Gate**, life expectancy for men falls by a **staggering** 18 years, from 92 to 74.



disproportionate /_disprə'pɔ:ʃ(ə)nət/ **adjective** ~ (to sth) too large or too small when compared with sth else 不成比例的; 不相称的; 太大 (或太小) 的

mile /mail/ **noun** [C] a unit for measuring distance equal to 1 609 metres or 1 760 yards 英里 (= 1 609 米或 1 760 码)

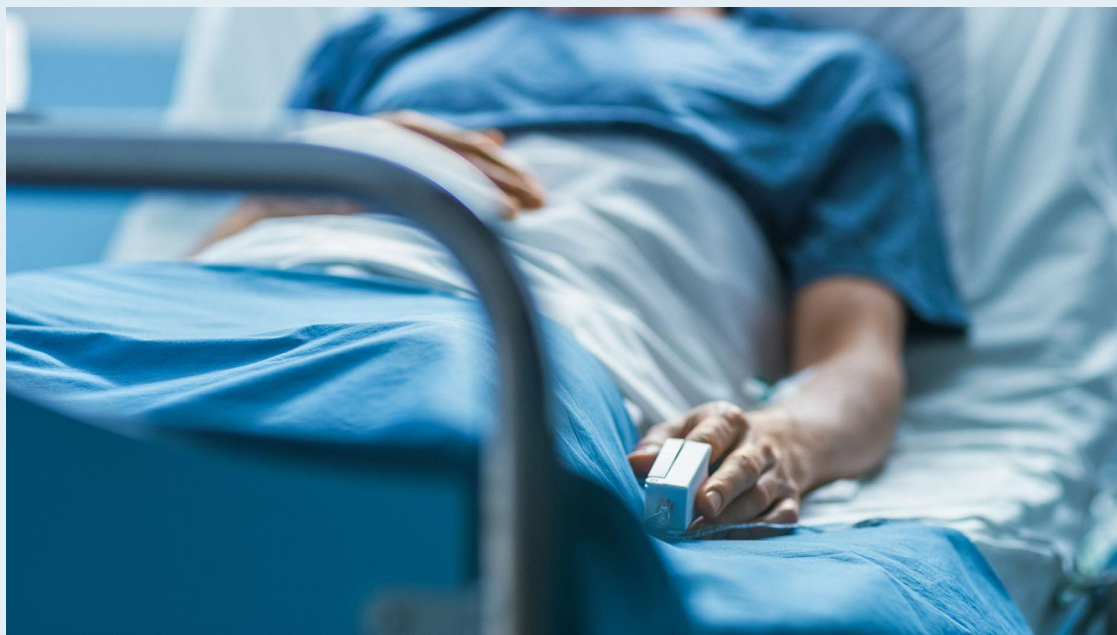
posh /pɒʃ/ **adjective** (BrE) (sometimes *disapproving*) typical of or used by people who belong to a high social class 上流社会的; 上等人的

Kensington **noun** 指肯辛顿-切尔西区, 属内伦敦的一部份, 英国皇家自治市, 英国皇家所居住的肯辛顿宫就位于此自治市内

New Cross Gate **noun** 伦敦新十字地处伦敦东南路厄斯罕区(London Borough of Lewisham), 在19世纪曾是许多火车路线的工作坊和交界处, 也有当时生产蒸汽机车的重要工厂

staggering /'stægərɪŋ/ **adjective** (rather informal) so great, shocking or surprising that it is difficult to believe 令人难以相信的

The burden these deaths **place** on the living is not just **weighed** in **grief**. When more people are dying and life expectancy is **stagnating**, a greater number of people are also living in **ill health**.



place /pleɪs/ **verb** [T] ~ sb/yourself + adv./prep. (more formal than *put* 比 *put* 正式) to put sb/yourself in a particular situation 使（人）处于某位置；安置；安顿

weigh /weɪ/ **verb** [I] ~ (with sb) (against sb/sth) to have an influence on sb's opinion or the result of sth （对看法或结果）有影响；有分量

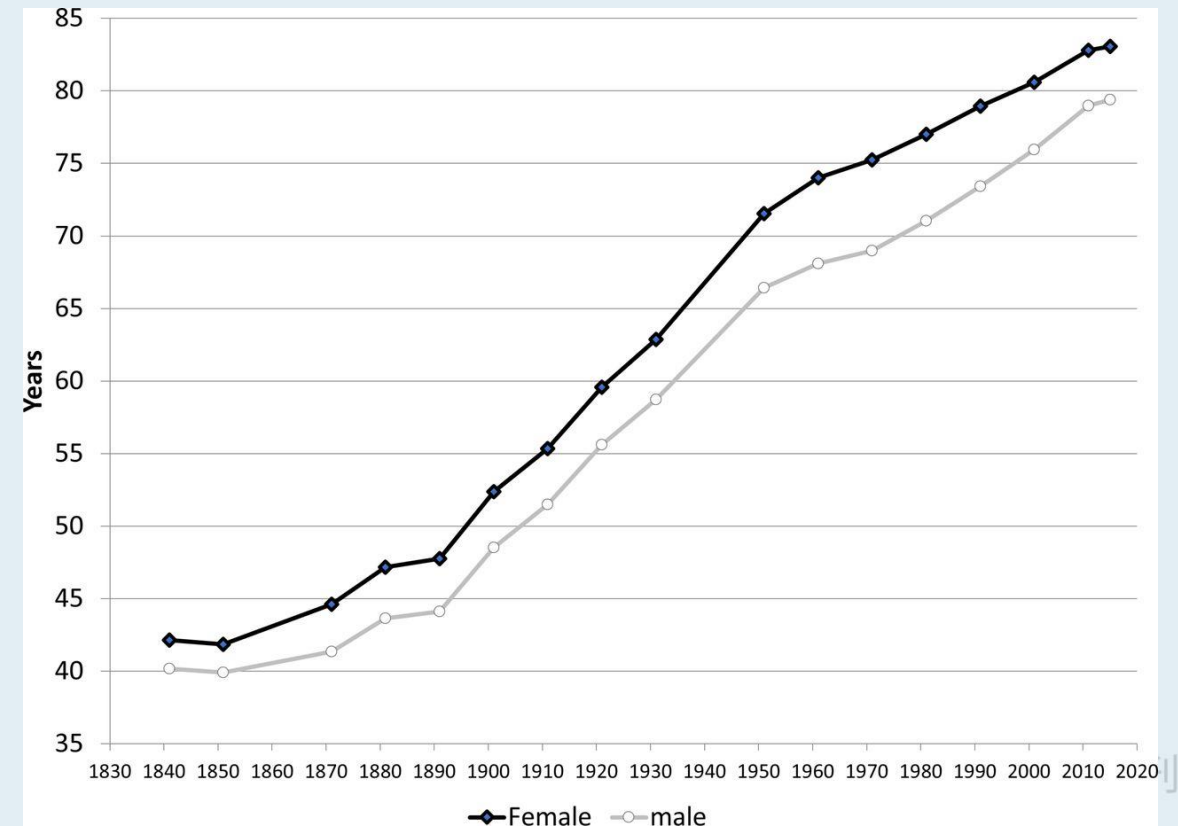
grief /ɡriːf/ **noun** [U, C] ~ (over/at sth) a feeling of great sadness, especially when sb dies （尤指因某人去世引起的）悲伤，悲痛，伤心

stagnate /stæɡˈneɪt/ **verb** [I] to stop developing or making progress 停滞；不发展；不进步

ill health **noun** [U] the poor condition of a person's body or mind （身心）健康状况差；生病

3. Life expectancy in Britain, as in almost all other rich countries, had been rising for nearly two centuries. But something went wrong in the early 2010s. Life expectancy at birth today, at 81, is just eight weeks longer than it was in 2011.

century /ˈsentʃʊri/ *noun* a period of 100 years 100 年;
百年



In a **best-case scenario**, in which the **pace** of improvement between 1980 and 2011 had been **sustained**, life expectancy today would have been over 83. By The Economist's calculations, that is no minor difference: it implies that between 2012 and 2022 **approximately** 700,000 Britons died sooner than they might have.



best-case *noun* 最佳案例

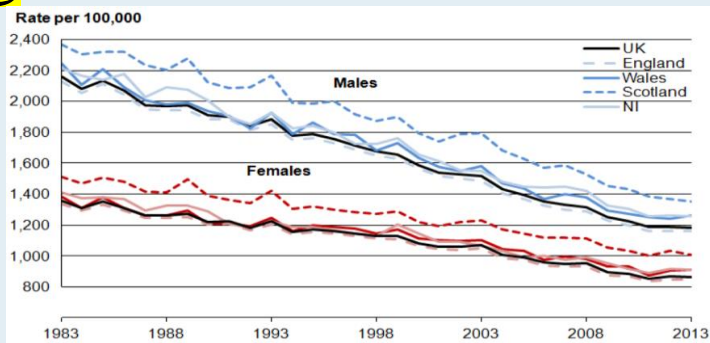
scenario /sɪˈnɑːrɪəʊ/ *noun* *pl. scen-arios* a description of how things might happen in the future 设想; 方案; 预测

pace /peɪs/ *noun* [*sing., U*] ~ (of sth) the speed at which sth happens 发生的速度; 步伐; 节奏

sustain /səˈsteɪn/ *verb* ~ sth to make sth continue for some time without becoming less 使保持; 使稳定持续

approximately /əˈprɒksɪmətli/ *adverb* used to show that sth is almost, but not completely, accurate or correct 大概; 大约; 约莫

4. Two **features** make this figure even more worrying. Death comes mostly when people are old. But the slowdown in life expectancy has occurred across all age groups. **Mortality** rates have stalled for **infants**, and risen among young adults and the middle-aged. Death rates for 30-to-49-year-olds have **steadily** increased in Britain since around 2012, in **sharp contrast** with **neighbouring** countries.



feature /'fi:tʃə/ **noun** [C] something important, interesting or typical of a place or thing 特色; 特征; 特点

mortality /mɔ:'tælɪti/ **noun** [U] the number of deaths in a particular situation or period of time 死亡数量; 死亡率

infant /'ɪnf(ə)nt/ **noun** (formal or technical 术语) a baby or very young child 婴儿; 幼儿

steady /'stedɪ/ **adjective** developing, growing, etc. gradually and in an even and regular way (发展、增长等) 稳步的, 持续的, 匀速的

sharp contrast **noun** 鲜明对比; 猝然的对照; 强对比; 鲜明的对比;

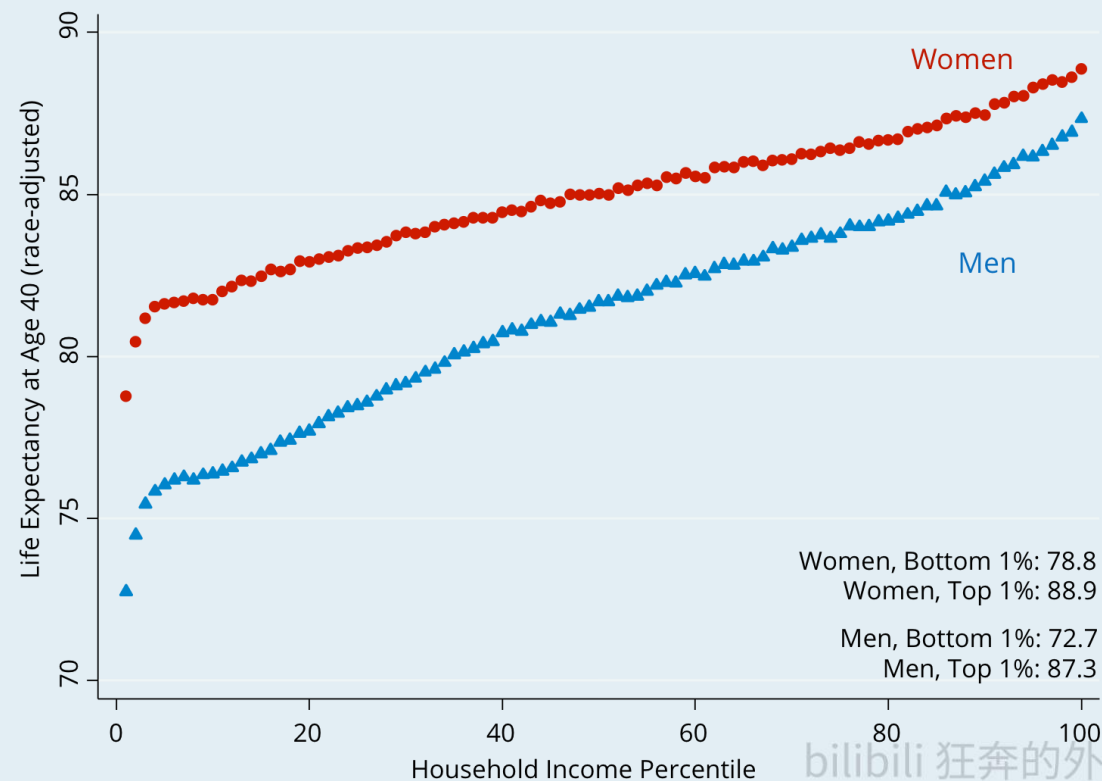
neighbouring /'neɪbərɪŋ/ **adjective** [only before noun] located or living near or next to a place or person 邻近的; 附近的; 毗邻的

5. Although the deaths have been spread across **generations**, they have not been spread across the income **spectrum**. Life expectancy has fallen among the poorest in society but risen for the richest. A poor English girl could on average expect to live 6.8 years less than a rich girl in 2011, but 7.7 less in 2017. For boys, the **gap** increased from 9.1 to 9.5 years over the same period.

generation /ˌdʒenə'reɪʃn/ **noun** [C + sing./pl. v.] all the people who were born at about the same time (统称) 一代人, 同代人, 同辈人

spectrum /'spektrəm/ **noun** [usually sing.] a complete or wide range of related qualities, ideas, etc. 范围; 各层次; 系列; 幅度

gap /gæp/ **noun** a difference that separates people, or their opinions, situation, etc. 分歧; 隔阂; 差距



6. The **combined** effect of the pandemic and global **demographic** trends can explain only some of Britain's missing **multitude**. Though other rich countries have also experienced **slowdowns**,



combine /kəm'beɪn/ **verb** [T] to have two or more different features or characteristics; to put two or more different things, features or qualities together 兼有；兼备；使融合（或并存）

demographic /_demə'græfɪk/ **noun** relating to the population and different groups within it 人口的；人口学的

multitude /'mʌltɪtjuːd/ **noun** **the multitude** [sing. + sing./pl. v.] (also **the multi-tudes** [pl.]) (*sometimes disapproving*) the mass of ordinary people 群众；大批百姓；民众

slowdown /'sləʊdaʊn / **noun** a reduction in speed or activity 减速；减缓
a slowdown in economic growth 经济增长的减缓

Britain has done the worst out of a **cohort** of its European peers. After **stripping out** the effects **attributable** to covid and the broad European slowdown from the **toll** of 700,000, you are still left with those 250,000 **unexplained** deaths.



cohort /'kəʊhɔ:t/ **noun** [C + sing./pl. v.](*technical 术语*) a group of people who share a common feature or aspect of behaviour (有共同特点或举止类同的) 一群人, 一批人

strip sth out to ignore particular numbers or facts in a situation in order to understand what is really important 刨除 (某个具体数字或细节, 以了解真正重要之处)

attributable /ə'trɪbjətəbl/ **adjective** [not before noun] ~ to sb/sth probably caused by the thing mentioned 可归因于; 可能由于

toll /təʊl/ **noun** [C, usually sing.] the amount of damage or the number of deaths and injuries that are caused in a particular war, disaster, etc. (战争、灾难等造成的) 毁坏; 伤亡人数

unexplained /ʌnɪk'spleɪnd/ **adjective** for which the reason or cause is not known; that has not been explained 原因不详的; 未解释的; 未说明的

7. Working out what has gone wrong is not easy. In America, where life expectancy has fallen even more sharply in recent years, “deaths of despair” from drugs, alcohol and suicide have done the most harm.



work sth↔ out (*especially BrE*) to find the answer to sth 找 ... 的答案; 解决

go wrong to experience problems or difficulties 出现问题; 遇到困难

despair /dɪ'speə/ **noun** [U] the feeling of having lost all hope 绝望

alcohol /'ælkəhɒl/ **noun** [U] drinks such as beer, wine, etc. that can make people drunk 含酒精饮料; 酒

suicide /'s(j)uːsaɪd/ **noun** [U, C] the act of killing yourself deliberately 自杀

The same is true for **Scotland**, where **drug** deaths have more than doubled in a decade; **Dundee** is now the drug-death **capital** of Europe. Yet although a similar problem may be **brewing** in England and **Wales**, the rate of drug deaths is nearly four times higher in Scotland.



Scotland /'skɒtlənd/ **noun** 苏格兰 (大不列颠和联合王国最北部地区)

drug /drʌg/ **noun** an illegal substance that some people smoke, **INJECT**, etc. for the physical and mental effects it has 毒品

Dundee **noun** a large city in Scotland on the Firth of Tay. It is an important port. Dundee is known for its marmalade and as a centre for making cloth. 邓迪 (苏格兰泰湾沿岸的大城市, 重要港口, 出产的橘子酱很有名, 也是知名的布料中心)

capital /'kæpɪt(ə)l/ **noun** (also **capital 'city**) [**C**] the most important town or city of a country, usually where the central government operates from 首都; 国都

brew /bru:/ **verb** [**I**] ~ (up) (usually used in the progressive tenses 通常用于进行时) if sth unpleasant **is brewing** or **brewing up**, it seems likely to happen soon (不愉快的事) 即将来临, 酝酿

Wales /weɪlz/ **noun** 威尔士 (大不列颠和联合王国的构成公国, 位于英格兰中部以西)

8. The recent struggles of the National Health Service (NHS) have played their part. Hospital waits of record lengths and a crisis in primary care jeopardise timely treatment. But delays in medical care cannot explain all the extra deaths, especially before the pandemic.



the National Health Service *noun*

[sing.] (*abbr. NHS*) the public health service in Britain that provides medical care and is paid for by taxes (英国) 国民保健服务计划

length /lenθ/ *noun* [U, C] the size or measurement of sth from one end to the other 长; 长度

primary care *noun* [U] the medical treatment that you receive first when you are ill/sick, for example from your family doctor 最初保健护理; 基础医疗; 初始的治疗

jeopardise /'dʒepədaɪz/ *verb* ~ sth/sb (*formal*) to risk harming or destroying sth/sb 冒 ... 的危险; 危及; 危害; 损害

timely /'taɪmlɪ/ *adjective* happening at exactly the right time 及时的; 适时的

Besides, the greatest improvements in life expectancy come not from treatment but from better **diagnosis** and **prevention**, and wider **prosperity**. This is where Britain appears to have **fallen short**. It could do much better in all three.



diagnosis /ˌdaɪəɡˈnəʊsɪs/ **noun** [C, U] *pl.* **diag·noses**
~ (of sth) the act of discovering or identifying the exact cause of an illness or a problem 诊断; (问题原因的) 判断

prevention /prɪˈvenʃn/ **noun** [U] the act of stopping sth bad from happening 预防; 防止; 防范

prosperity /prɒˈsperɪti/ **noun** [U] the state of being successful, especially in making money 兴旺; 繁荣; 成功; 昌盛

fall short of sth to fail to reach the standard that you expected or need 未达到; 不符合

9. First, diagnosis. Poorer Britons are 20% more likely to be diagnosed with **cancer** at a later **stage**, when the disease is more complex and expensive to treat. Having more NHS **diagnostic** centres would help, as well as cutting the pandemic-related backlog.



cancer /'kænsə/ **noun** [U, C] a serious disease in which **GROWTHS** of cells, also called cancers, form in the body and kill normal body cells. The disease often causes death. 癌; 癌症

stage /steɪdʒ/ **noun** [C] a period or state that sth/sb passes through while developing or making progress (发展或进展的) 时期, 阶段, 状态

diagnostic /daɪəg'nɒstɪk/ **adjective** [usually before noun] (*technical* 术语) connected with identifying sth, especially an illness 诊断的; 判断的

Prescribing more **statins** for those at risk of heart attack or **stroke** would be good, too.



prescribe /prɪ'skraɪb/ **verb** (of a doctor 医生) to tell sb to take a particular medicine or have a particular treatment; to write a **PRESCRIPTION** for a particular medicine, etc. 给 ... 开 (药) ; 让 ... 采用 (疗法) ; 开 (处方)

statin /'stætɪn/ **noun** a drug that people take to lower the level of **CHOLESTEROL** (= a substance in the body that can cause heart disease) in their blood. There are several types of statin. 胆固醇合成酶抑制剂; (台) 他汀

stroke /strʊk/ **noun** a sudden serious illness when a blood **VESSEL** (= tube) in the brain bursts or is blocked, which can cause death or the loss of the ability to move or to speak clearly 中风

Both treatments are cheap and **cost-effective**, and are recommended. But with around one in 11 NHS posts **vacant**, it will be **tricky** to find enough **radiologists** and **general practitioners** to make a difference.



cost-effective *adjective* giving the best possible profit or benefits in comparison with the money that is spent 有最佳利润的；有成本效益的；划算的

vacant */ˈveɪk(ə)nt/ adjective (formal)* if a job in a company is **vacant**, nobody is doing it and it is available for sb to take (职位) 空缺的

tricky */ˈtriːki/ adjective (rather informal)* difficult to do or deal with 难办的；难对付的

radiologist */ˌreɪˈdɪələdʒɪst/ noun* a doctor who is trained in **RADIOLOGY** 放射科医生；X光科的医生

general practitioner *noun* (also **family prac'titioner**)(*abbr. GP*) (also *informal* **family 'doctor**) (*especially BrE*) a doctor who is trained in general medicine and who treats patients in a local community rather than at a hospital (医院以外的) 全科医生，普通医师

10. Next, prevention. Individuals bear responsibility for their own decisions but public-health **interventions**, from **vaccines** to **anti-smoking** and weight-loss programmes, can improve things. They also provide good value for money. One study found that it cost nearly four times as much to gain an extra year of good health **via clinical** interventions than through public-health programmes.

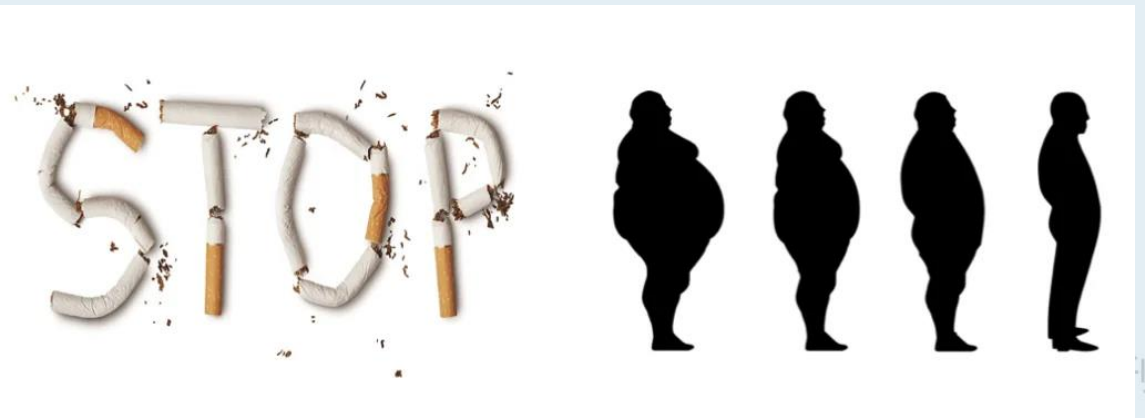
intervene /ɪntə'vi:n/ **verb** [I] to happen in a way that delays sth or prevents it from happening 阻碍; 阻挠; 干扰

vaccine /'væksi:n/ **noun** [C, U] a substance that is put into the blood and that protects the body from a disease 疫苗; 菌苗

anti- /'æntɪ/ **prep.** (*informal*) if sb is **anti** sb/sth, they do not like or agree with that person or thing 反对

via /'vaɪə/ **prep.** by means of a particular person, system, etc. 通过, 凭借 (某人、系统等)

clinical /'klɪnɪk(ə)l/ **adjective** [**only before noun**] relating to the examination and treatment of patients and their illnesses 临床的; 临床诊断的



Yet funding for the public-health **grant**, which is **allocated** to local **authorities** by central government and **amounts to** a **mere** 2% of the NHS budget, has been cut in real terms in recent years.



grant /grɑːnt/ **noun** ~ (to do sth) a sum of money that is given by the government or by another organization to be used for a particular purpose (政府、机构的) 拨款

allocate /ˈæləkeɪt/ **verb** to give sth officially to sb/sth for a particular purpose 拨 ... (给) ; 划 ... (归) ; 分配 ... (给)

authority /ɔːˈθɒrɪti/ **noun** [C, usually pl.] the people or an organization who have the power to make decisions or who have a particular area of responsibility in a country or region 当局; 官方; 当权者

amount to sth to add up to sth; to make sth as a total 总计; 共计

mere /mɪə/ **adjective** [only before **noun**] *superlative mer·est* no comparative used when you want to emphasize how small, unimportant, etc. sb/sth is 仅仅的; 只不过

11. Ultimately the greatest improvements will come from raising the living standards of the poor. Their lower life expectancy has many causes, from less money to spend on home insulation or nutritious food, to the stress of financial insecurity.



ultimately /'ʌltɪmətli/ **adverb** in the end; finally 最终; 最后; 终归

insulation /ɪnsjuˈleɪʃ(ə)n/ **noun** [U] the act of protecting sth with a material that prevents heat, sound, electricity, etc. from passing through; the materials used for this 隔热; 隔音; 绝缘; 隔热 (或隔音、绝缘) 材料

nutritious /njuˈtriʃəs/ **adjective** (approving) (of food 食物) very good for you; containing many of the substances which help the body to grow 有营养的; 营养丰富的

insecure /ˌɪnsɪˈkjʊə/ **adjective** not safe or protected 不安全的; 无保障的; 不牢靠的

One useful long-term thing the government can do is help improve the country's **dreadful** record on **productivity** by **liberalising** planning and **devolving** fiscal **powers to** local authorities.



dreadful /'dredfʊl/ **adjective** (especially BrE) very bad or unpleasant 糟糕透顶的；讨厌的；令人不快的

productivity /ˌprɒdʌk'tɪvɪti/ **noun** [U] the rate at which a worker, a company or a country produces goods, and the amount produced, compared with how much time, work and money is needed to produce them 生产率；生产效率

liberalise /'lɪbrəlaɪz/ **verb** ~ sth to make sth such as a law or a political or religious system less strict 使自由化；放宽对 ... 的限制

devolve sth to/on/upon sb to give a duty, responsibility, power, etc. to sb who has less authority than you (将职责、责任、权力等) 移交，转交，委任

fiscal /'fɪsk(ə)l/ **adjective** connected with government or public money, especially taxes 财政的；国库的；国家岁入的

Life after life

12. The government should also recognise the role that **deprivation** plays in health. **Reweighting funding formulas** to benefit general practitioners in the poorest areas would be a good idea. They care for 10% more patients than practices in the richest areas, but receive 7% less cash.



Life after life 生命不息

deprivation /deprɪ'veɪʃ(ə)n/ **noun** [U] the fact of not having sth that you need, like enough food, money or a home; the process that causes this 贫困; 丧失; 剥夺

weight /weɪt/ **verb** [usually passive] ~ sth to give different values to things to show how important you think each of them is compared with the others 使加权

funding /'fʌndɪŋ/ **noun** [U] money for a particular purpose; the act of providing money for such a purpose 基金; 资金; 提供基金; 提供资金

formula **noun** [C] a particular method of doing or achieving sth 方案; 方法

And as **Jeremy Hunt**, the **chancellor of the exchequer**, prepares his budget for March 15th, he should recognise how spending cuts show up in other areas. The data show that life expectancy was worst affected in the places with the largest **relative** declines in **housing** services and adult social-care spending between 2009 and 2019.

Jeremy Hunt *noun* 杰里米·亨特, 英国财政大臣

Chancellor of the Exchequer *noun* (in Britain) the government minister who is responsible for financial affairs (英国) 财政大臣

relative */ˈrelətɪv/ adjective* considered and judged by being compared with sth else 相比较而言的; 比较的

housing */ˈhaʊzɪŋ/ noun [U]* houses, flats/apartments, etc. that people live in, especially when referring to their type, price or condition (统称, 尤指住房类型、价格、条件) 住房, 住宅



13. In its covid response, Britain went to extraordinary lengths to prevent its citizens from suffering an early death. The pandemic may be over, but that job is nowhere near complete.



extraordinary /ɪk'strɔːdənəri/ **adjective** not normal or ordinary; greater or better than usual 不平常的; 不一般的; 非凡的; 卓越的

go to any, some, great, etc. lengths (to do sth) to put a lot of effort into doing sth, especially when this seems extreme 竭尽全力; 不遗余力

nowhere /'nəʊhweə/ **adverb** not in or to any place 无处; 哪里都不

The
Economist

预期寿命

life expectancy

The Economist

听读系列



请多多点赞！谢谢大家 译文在评论区
公众号：狂奔的外刊 分享PDF链接

社论

无法解释的25万人

英国经历了十年的预期寿命增长停滞，而疫情并不是唯一的原因

Leaders

The missing quarter of a million

Britain has endured a decade of early deaths, and the pandemic is not the only reason

Rain

bilibili 狂奔的外刊

1. IN RECENT YEARS Britain has been hit by one health crisis after another. First came the covid-19 pandemic—then backlogs in health and social care that the coronavirus exacerbated, and a long winter of strikes and overwhelmed emergency departments.

近几年来，英国遭受了一次又一次健康危机。首先是covid-19大流行，随后是冠状病毒使卫生和社会保健积压加剧，漫长的冬季罢工和不堪重负的急诊科。

But in the background, long before the pandemic hit, an even more disturbing story has been unfolding. Britain has endured a grim decade during which perhaps a quarter of a million people died younger than expected.

但早在疫情发生之前，一个更加令人不安的事实就已经开始显现。英国经历了一个十年的严峻时期，在这十年中，可能有25万人死亡早于预期寿命。

2. By our calculations, that is the number of extra deaths Britain has suffered, compared with similar countries such as France and Denmark. The reason is that, in the early 2010s, life expectancy stalled in Britain compared with long-run trends and other countries. This slowdown in life expectancy struck all age groups, not just the elderly.

根据我们的预测，与法国和丹麦等类似国家相比，这就是事实上的英国额外死亡人数。原因是，在2010年代初，英国长期趋势和其他国家相比，预期寿命增长停滞。预期寿命的放缓打击了所有年龄组，而不仅仅是老年人。

And it disproportionately affected the poor. If you travel just 10km (six miles) from the poshest part of Kensington in London to New Cross Gate, life expectancy for men falls by a staggering 18 years, from 92 to 74. The burden these deaths place on the living is not just weighed in grief. When more people are dying and life expectancy is stagnating, a greater number of people are also living in ill health.

而且，它对穷人的影响也不成比例。如果你从伦敦肯辛顿最豪华的地方到新十字门，只需10公里（6英里），男性的预期寿命就会惊人地下降18年，从92岁降至74岁。这些死亡给生者带来的负担不仅仅是情绪上的悲痛。当更多的死亡和预期寿命停滞不前时，更多的人会处在不健康的身体状态中。

3. Life expectancy in Britain, as in almost all other rich countries, had been rising for nearly two centuries. But something went wrong in the early 2010s. Life expectancy at birth today, at 81, is just eight weeks longer than it was in 2011.

与几乎所有其他富裕国家一样，英国的预期寿命在近两个世纪以来一直在上升。但在2010年代初发生了问题。如今，出生时的预期寿命为81岁，仅比2011年长8周。

In a best-case scenario, in which the pace of improvement between 1980 and 2011 had been sustained, life expectancy today would have been over 83. By The Economist's calculations, that is no minor difference: it implies that between 2012 and 2022 approximately 700,000 Britons died sooner than they might have.

在最好的情况下，如果1980年至2011年期间的上升速度得以保持，今天的预期寿命将超过83岁。根据《经济学人》的计算，这不是一个小差异：这意味着在2012年和2022年之间，大约有70万英国人死于预期寿命之前。

4. Two features make this figure even more worrying. Death comes mostly when people are old. But the slowdown in life expectancy has occurred across all age groups. Mortality rates have stalled for infants, and risen among young adults and the middle-aged. Death rates for 30- to 49-year-olds have steadily increased in Britain since around 2012, in sharp contrast with neighbouring countries.

有两个特点使这个数字更加令人担忧。死亡主要发生在人们年老的时候。但是预期寿命的放缓发生在所有年龄组。婴儿的死亡率并没有变高，但年轻的成年人和中年人的死亡率则上升了。自2012年左右，英国30至49岁的人的死亡率稳步上升，与邻国形成鲜明对比。

5. Although the deaths have been spread across generations, they have not been spread across the income spectrum. Life expectancy has fallen among the poorest in society but risen for the richest. A poor English girl could on average expect to live 6.8 years less than a rich girl in 2011, but 7.7 less in 2017. For boys, the gap increased from 9.1 to 9.5 years over the same period.

虽然死亡人数在几代人中都有分布，但它并没有体现在收入层面。社会中最贫穷的人的预期寿命下降了，但最富有的人的预期寿命却上升了。2011年，一个贫穷的英国女孩的平均预期寿命比一个富有的女孩少6.8年，但在2017年少7.7年。同一时期，男孩的差距从9.1年增加到9.5年。

6. The combined effect of the pandemic and global demographic trends can explain only some of Britain's missing multitude. Though other rich countries have also experienced slowdowns, Britain has done the worst out of a cohort of its European peers. After stripping out the effects attributable to covid and the broad European slowdown from the toll of 700,000, you are still left with those 250,000 unexplained deaths.

疫情和全球人口趋势的综合影响只能解释英国部分人群。尽管其他富裕国家也经历了经济放缓，但英国在欧洲国家中表现最差。从70万的死亡人数中剔除了可归因于疫情和欧洲广泛放缓的影响后，仍然留下了25万例无法解释的死亡。

7. Working out what has gone wrong is not easy. In America, where life expectancy has fallen even more sharply in recent years, “deaths of despair” from drugs, alcohol and suicide have done the most harm. The same is true for Scotland, where drug deaths have more than doubled in a decade; Dundee is now the drug-death capital of Europe. Yet although a similar problem may be brewing in England and Wales, the rate of drug deaths is nearly four times higher in Scotland.

弄清究竟出了什么问题并不容易。在美国，近年来预期寿命下降得更厉害，毒品、酒精和自杀造成的“绝望之死”伤害最大。苏格兰的情况也是如此，那里的毒品死亡人数在十年内增加了一倍以上；邓迪现在是欧洲毒品死亡之都。然而，尽管类似的问题也可能在英格兰和威尔士酝酿，但苏格兰的毒品死亡率几乎是它们的四倍。

8. The recent struggles of the National Health Service (NHS) have played their part. Hospital waits of record lengths and a crisis in primary care jeopardise timely treatment. But delays in medical care cannot explain all the extra deaths, especially before the pandemic. Besides, the greatest improvements in life expectancy come not from treatment but from better diagnosis and prevention, and wider prosperity. This is where Britain appears to have fallen short. It could do much better in all three.

英国国民医疗服务体系（NHS）最近的努力发挥了作用。医院创纪录的医疗等候者名单和基础医疗危机损害了及时的治疗。但医疗服务的延误不能解释所有额外的死亡，尤其是在疫情之前。此外，预期寿命的最大改善不是来自治疗，而是来自更好的诊断和预防，以及更广泛的社会繁荣。这正是英国似乎没有做到的地方。它在这三方面都可以做得更好。

9. First, diagnosis. Poorer Britons are 20% more likely to be diagnosed with cancer at a later stage, when the disease is more complex and expensive to treat. Having more NHS diagnostic centres would help, as well as cutting the pandemic-related backlog.

首先是诊断层面。较贫穷的英国人在较晚阶段被诊断出癌症的可能性要大20%，此时疾病的治疗更加复杂和昂贵。拥有更多的NHS诊断中心将有所帮助，并削减与疫情有关的医疗积压。

Prescribing more statins for those at risk of heart attack or stroke would be good, too. Both treatments are cheap and cost-effective, and are recommended. But with around one in 11 NHS posts vacant, it will be tricky to find enough radiologists and general practitioners to make a difference.

为那些有心脏病发作或中风风险的人开出更多的他汀类药物，也会有好处。这两种治疗方法都很便宜，具有成本效益，推荐使用。但是，由于NHS每11个职位中就有一个空缺，要找到足够的放射科医生和全科医生来发挥作用将是很困难的。

10. Next, prevention. Individuals bear responsibility for their own decisions but public-health interventions, from vaccines to anti-smoking and weight-loss programmes, can improve things. They also provide good value for money. One study found that it cost nearly four times as much to gain an extra year of good health via clinical interventions than through public-health programmes.

其次是预防层面。个人对自己的决定负有责任，但公共卫生干预措施，从疫苗到反吸烟和减肥计划，可以改善情况。它们也提供了良好的资金价值。一项研究发现，通过临床干预换来一年健康时间所需的费用约四倍于公共卫生计划。

Yet funding for the public-health grant, which is allocated to local authorities by central government and amounts to a mere 2% of the NHS budget, has been cut in real terms in recent years.

然而，由中央政府分配给地方议会的公共卫生补助金，仅占国家卫生系统预算的2%，近年来已被实际削减。

11. Ultimately the greatest improvements will come from raising the living standards of the poor. Their lower life expectancy has many causes, from less money to spend on home insulation or nutritious food, to the stress of financial insecurity. One useful long-term thing the government can do is help improve the country's dreadful record on productivity by liberalising planning and devolving fiscal powers to local authorities.

最终，最大的改善将来自于提高穷人的生活水平。他们较低的预期寿命有很多原因，从较少用于房屋保温或营养食品的金钱，到来自财务风险的压力。政府可以做的一件长期有用的事情：通过放宽财政规划并将财政权力下放给地方当局，帮助改善国家在生产力方面的可怕记录。

Life after life

12. The government should also recognise the role that deprivation plays in health. Reweighting funding formulas to benefit general practitioners in the poorest areas would be a good idea. They care for 10% more patients than practices in the richest areas, but receive 7% less cash.

生命不息

政府也应该认识到贫困在健康层面的危害。重新调整资金分配方案，使最贫困地区的全科医生受益，这将是一个好主意。他们照顾的病人比最富裕地区的诊所多10%，但得到的现金却少7%。

And as Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor of the exchequer, prepares his budget for March 15th, he should recognise how spending cuts show up in other areas. The data show that life expectancy was worst affected in the places with the largest relative declines in housing services and adult social-care spending between 2009 and 2019.

在财政大臣杰里米-亨特准备3月15日的预算时，他应该认识到开支削减在其他领域的表现。数据显示，在2009年至2019年期间，在住房服务和成人社会护理支出相对减少最多的地方，预期寿命受到的影响最大。

13. In its covid response, Britain went to extraordinary lengths to prevent its citizens from suffering an early death. The pandemic may be over, but that job is nowhere near complete.

在应对疫情的过程中，英国不遗余力防止其公民过早死亡。这场疫情可能已经结束，但这项工作还远远没有完成。