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Epreuve du 1^{er} Groupe**ANGLAIS****Dropping shopping**

Henry Ford said that it was customers, not employers, who really pay workers' wages; employees merely look after the cash. Ford also thought economies did best when workers could afford to buy the goods that they make. These old American ideas do a good job of explaining Britain's consumer slump. Digging into a typical household's accounts suggests when it might end.

Spending by private households is the biggest slice of GDP, accounting for **63%** in 2012. It has been remarkably weak, even by comparison with previous recessions. To see why, start with the accounts of a typical household in 2012. On the top line are median pre-tax wages of £ 37,000 (\$ 56,000). Tax and national insurance take £ 9,400 leaving disposable income of £ 27,600. Next a host of unavoidable bills have to be paid. Borrowing, mainly mortgage payments, drains £ 7,700. With council tax, utilities and petrol costs running to £ 5,000 a year, the average Briton was left with close to £ 15,000.

During the boom years, income and outgoings moved in ways that made household finances glow. Average weekly earnings grew at 4% a year between 2001 and 2007, while prices went up by just 2% a year. Workers' buying power increased steadily and strong private consumption underpinned rising GDP. But in 2008 the numbers flipped. Since then pay increases have been 2% a year, price increases above 3%. Workers' cash buys less and less.

A glance at Britain's strong employment figures might suggest that wages should recover some of their old vigour soon: surely firms hiring more must pay more? But strong job numbers do not always translate into better pay. Over the long run wages tend to move in line with productivity. In Britain, growth in output per worker is low relative to other countries and to other recessions. Whereas the productivity slump is puzzling, the puny* wage increases are not.

That makes the prospect of rising prices all the more painful. Energy bills are an on-going worry. In 2011 and 2012, gas charges rose by close to **10%**, electricity by more than **6%**. Another price hike of up to 10% could be coming in the autumn, according to Amit Kara, an economist at UBS, a bank. Overall, the impact of these prices and "other" administered prices like tuition fees* imply that even if all others are flat, inflation would still be 1% in 2013.

That is worrying, since other prices are highly unlikely to stand still. Firms facing higher energy bills tend to pass on cost increases. Another worry is the continued fall in sterling, says Mr. Kara. The pound has depreciated by close to **6%** in 2013 against the currencies of Britain's main trading partners. When the pound loses value, imports become more expensive, cutting buying power.

The Economist, March 9th 2013, page 56

Glossary :

- Puny : dérisoire
- Tuition fees : frais de scolarité

A – READING COMPREHENSION. (09 marks)

I./ Are the statements below true (T) or false (F)? Choose T or F and justify your answer, quoting the text.

(01.5 marks)

1. Between 2001 and 2007, Britons could buy more and more with their wages. T / F

.....

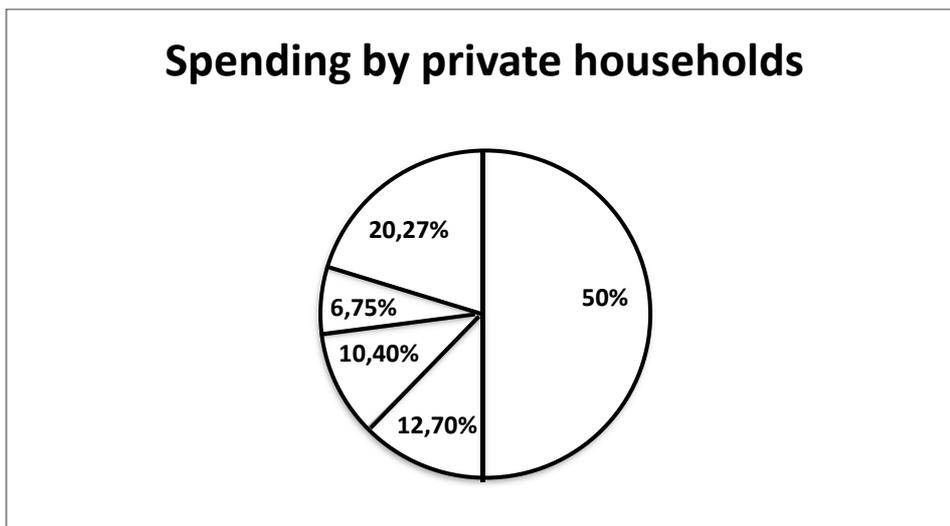
2. No price rising has been recorded in energy bills, in Britain. T / F

.....

3. Unlike energy costs, other prices will remain at the same level. T / F

.....

II./ Information transfer. Refer to the text, and the pie chart below, and complete the blanks with the right percentages. N°4 has already been done. (03 marks)



- 4. Medium pre-tax wages:⇒ 50%
- 5. National insurance ⇒ _____
- 6. Remainder of salary:⇒ _____
- 7. Borrowing ⇒ _____
- 8. Council, utilities and petrol costs:⇒ _____

III./ Answer the questions below. (1. mark)

9. What proves that workers' cash buys less and less?

.....

10. How different is Britain from other countries, in terms of productivity?

.....

IV./ Figures. What do the percentages in bold in the text below refer to? (02 marks)

- 63% (in line 5) :
.....
.....
- 10% (in line 23):
.....
.....
- 6% (in line 23):
.....
.....
- 6% (in line 29):
.....
.....

V./ Read the text and list the consequences of the loss in value of the pound. (01 mark)

- 15.
- 16.

VI./ Find in the text words meaning the same as: (02 marks)

- 17. simply (in paragraph 1):
.....
- 18. crisis (in paragraph 1):
.....
- 19. portion (in paragraph 2):
.....
- 20. development (in paragraph 3):
.....

B – LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE [07 marks]

VII. Reformulate the sentences below using the prompts given. (02 marks)

- 21. Because average weekly earnings grew regularly, workers' buying power increased.
⇒ If.....
.....
- 22. A host of unavoidable bills have to be paid by Britons.
⇒ Britons
- 23. Ford thought economies did best when workers could afford to buy the goods that they make.
⇒ Ford said: "
- 24. Since 2007, pay increases have been growing 2% a year.
⇒ For

VIII. Find the other forms of the words below. (02 marks)

| VERB | PERSON | NOUN | ADJECTIVE |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 25. | 26. | economy | 27. |
| 28. | consumer | 29. | |
| 30. | 31. | productivity | 32. |

IX. Now use the right forms of the words in the table above to complete the following (1.5 marks)

- 33. Things are getting more and more expensive: we'll have to on our expenses.
- 34. The of tobacco is still growing despite the constant warnings.
- 35. Samsung is the Korean of the "Galaxy" smartphones.
- 36. These kinds of lamps are not really : Better use energy-saving ones.
- 37. Senegalese people usually a lot of rice.
- 38. This cow doesn't really enough milk: I'll have to sell it.

C – WRITING (04 marks)

Write about 200 words on the topic you choose.

Topic 1 - Essay: Do you think that the buying power of the Senegalese has increased or decreased in the last ten years? Write an article of about 200 words to be published in one of your local newspapers.

Topic 2 – Letter: In his New Year's address, the President of the Republic promised to cut down on taxes in order to improve workers' living conditions. However, Mr. Mayoro Fall, a civil servant living in Keur Massar, Dakar, has noticed no decrease in taxes on his pay slip. Imagine and write down the letter he has sent to the Finance Minister to get explanations about, and reparation for this inconvenience.