

# The Mental Health Index™ report

United Kingdom, February 2021



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## February highlights

**With reports of multiple highly contagious variants of the COVID-19 virus, restrictions across the country and the threat of a third wave, Britons are navigating uncharted territory as their mental health continues to suffer. February marks 11 consecutive months of diminished mental health when compared to the pre-pandemic benchmark.** The level of mental health in February indicates that **the working population is currently as distressed as the most distressed one per cent of working Britons, prior to 2020.**

The proportion of individuals reporting more stress than the prior month (26 per cent) is nearly equal to the prior month, while the proportion of individuals reporting less mental stress is only 6 per cent. The majority (69 per cent) indicate the same level of stress when compared to the prior month, however, given the escalation in stress each month since the pandemic; this reflects an elevated level of cumulative stress for this group as well. This strain will likely continue until a sufficient proportion of the British population is vaccinated.

While there have been occasional single month improvements, the psychological health of Britons has declined since the launch of the Index™. **The psychological health score in February continues its decline and is currently at the lowest point (-6.3),** down 4.2 points since April 2020. Moreover, the isolation score in February (-13.1) is the lowest recorded score since the inception of the Index.

The financial risk score of Britons remains the strongest sub-scale, and has remained above the pre-2020 benchmark since the inception of the Mental Health Index™ in April 2020. **In February, the financial risk score has climbed to its highest value (6.6),** up 5.2 points from April 2020, and 1.9 points from the prior month.

Regional mental health scores have been trending in line with the overall Mental Health Index™ for the United Kingdom marked by periods of increase and decrease without a consistent upward or downward trend lasting several months. Since peaking in September, scores have fluctuated. **Scotland continues to have the highest mental health scores since April, while Northern Ireland has the lowest.**

**Individuals reporting reduced salary or reduced hours continue to have lower mental health scores and a greater increase in mental stress** compared to unemployed people.

A positive score on the Mental Health Index™ indicates better mental health in the overall working population, compared to the benchmark period of 2017 to 2019. A higher positive score reflects greater improvement. A negative Mental Health Index™ score indicates a decline in mental health compared to the benchmark period. The more negative the score, the greater the decline. A score of zero indicates mental health that is the same as it was in the benchmark period.

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Despite the increasing incidence of mental health issues due to the prolonged impact of the pandemic among people of all ages, backgrounds and socio-economic status, stigma is an issue. **Forty-one per cent of respondents report that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue;** this group has the lowest mental health score (-22.2) as well as the lowest work productivity score (-24.3). More than half (57 per cent) of respondents aged 20-29 report that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue, suggesting that self-stigma is an issue.

**Nearly half (48 per cent) of respondents believe that their career options would be limited if their employer were aware that they had a mental health issue;** this group has both the lowest mental health score (-19.9) and the lowest work productivity score (-21.0).

**Thirty-eight per cent of respondents report that they would be concerned that friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue;** this cohort has both the lowest mental health score (-21.7) as well as the lowest work productivity score (-23.0).

**People leaders are struggling. Managers report a slightly greater increase in mental stress (60.5) than non-managers (59.7).** Forty-five per cent of managers would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue, compared to thirty-five per cent of non-managers. **Over half (54 per cent) of managers believe that their career options would be limited if their employer knew that they had a mental health issue** and 45 per cent believe that their friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue.

COVID-19's disruption to the mental, physical, social, and financial wellbeing of individuals has turned many to unhealthy coping mechanisms to deal with cumulative stress, and other effects of the prolonged pandemic. **Individuals under the age of 40 are nearly twice as likely to report an increase in their alcohol intake early in the pandemic (March to May 2020) compared to individuals over 60.**

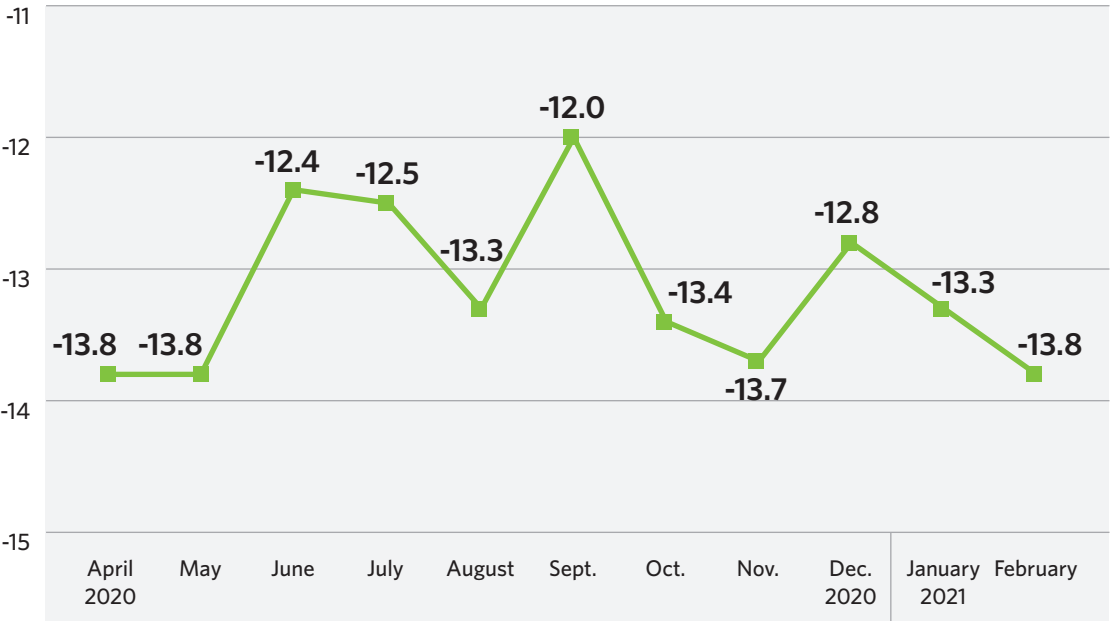
As Britons face one year of disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses across the country have had to react, change, and adapt to new processes, threats, and opportunities. A boon for some while other organizations struggle; a swing in either direction could land the business in either a fortuitous or grave scenario. Looking ahead in 2021, **over one-quarter (27 per cent) of respondents believe that their employer will struggle in 2021,** and this group has the lowest mental health score (-20.3) second only to the two per cent of respondents who believe that their employer will go out of business in 2021.



# The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index™ (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark<sup>1</sup> of mental health and risk. **The overall Mental Health Index™ for February 2021 is -14 points.** A fourteen-point decrease from the pre-COVID-19 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed one per cent of the benchmark population. February marks the second consecutive month of mental health decline, and a score that is equal to the lowest score since inception of the Mental Health Index™ in April 2020.

Current month February 2021:	-14	January 2021:	-13
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February marks the 11<sup>th</sup> consecutive month in which the Mental Health Index™ reflects strained mental health in the British population.

<sup>1</sup> The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.





## Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of optimism (-18.1), followed by depression (-16.4), anxiety (-16.4), work productivity (-13.4), isolation (-13.1), and general psychological health (-6.3). The risk measure with the best mental health score, and the only measure above the historical benchmark, is financial risk (6.6).

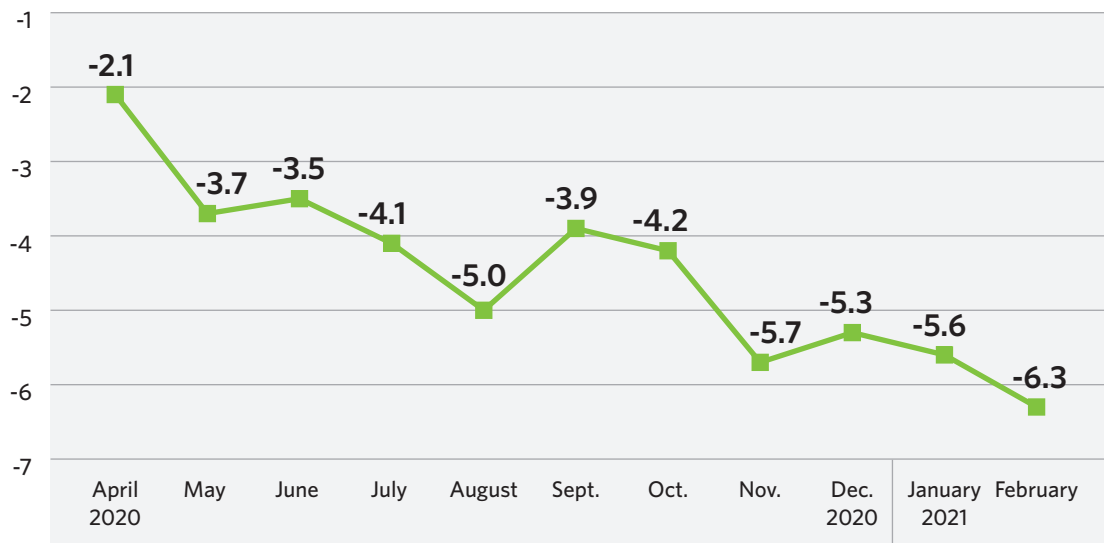
- All sub-scores, with the exception of work productivity and financial risk, declined from January results.
- The isolation score in February (-13.1) is the lowest recorded score since the inception of the Index.
- With a 1.9-point increase, the financial risk score has had the greatest improvement from the prior month.

MHI sub-scores <sup>2</sup>	February 2021	January 2021
Optimism	-18.1	-17.1
Depression	-16.4	-15.4
Anxiety	-16.4	-15.7
Work productivity	-13.4	-13.6
Isolation	-13.1	-12.4
Psychological health	-6.3	-5.6
Financial risk	6.6	4.7

<sup>2</sup> The demographic breakdown of sub-scores are available upon request.



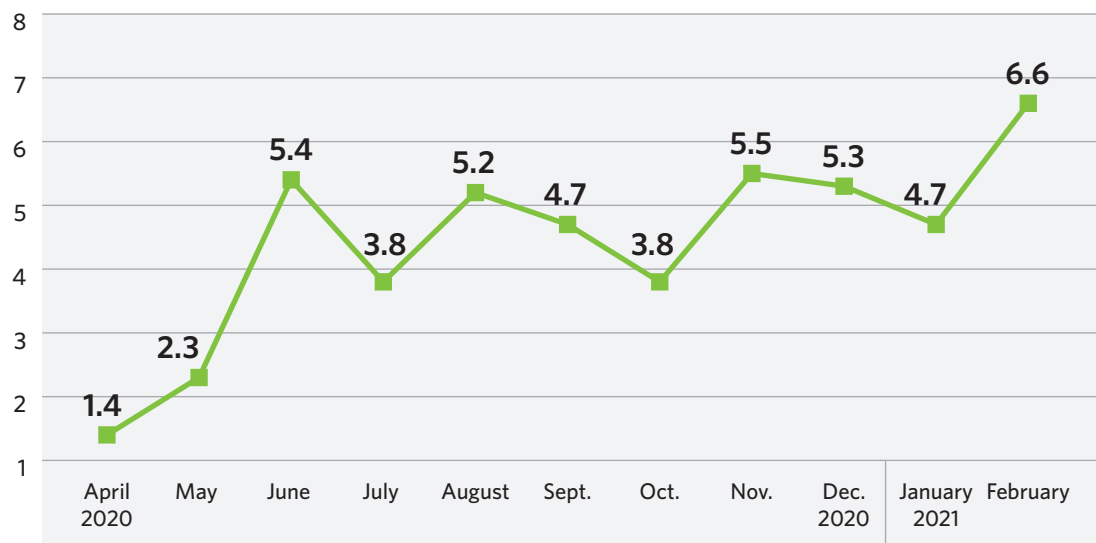
## General psychological health



## General psychological health

While there have been occasional single month improvements in the score, the psychological health of Britons has declined since the launch of the Index™ in April 2020. Despite a modest improvement in December, the score in February continues to decline, and is currently at the lowest point (-6.3), down 4.2 points since April 2020.

## Financial Risk



## Financial risk

The financial risk score of Britons remains the strongest sub-scale, and has remained above the pre-2020 benchmark since the inception of the Mental Health Index™ in April 2020. An early peak was observed in June (5.4), followed by a second in November (5.5). In February, the financial risk score has climbed to its highest value (6.6), up 5.2 points from April 2020, and 1.9 points from the prior month.

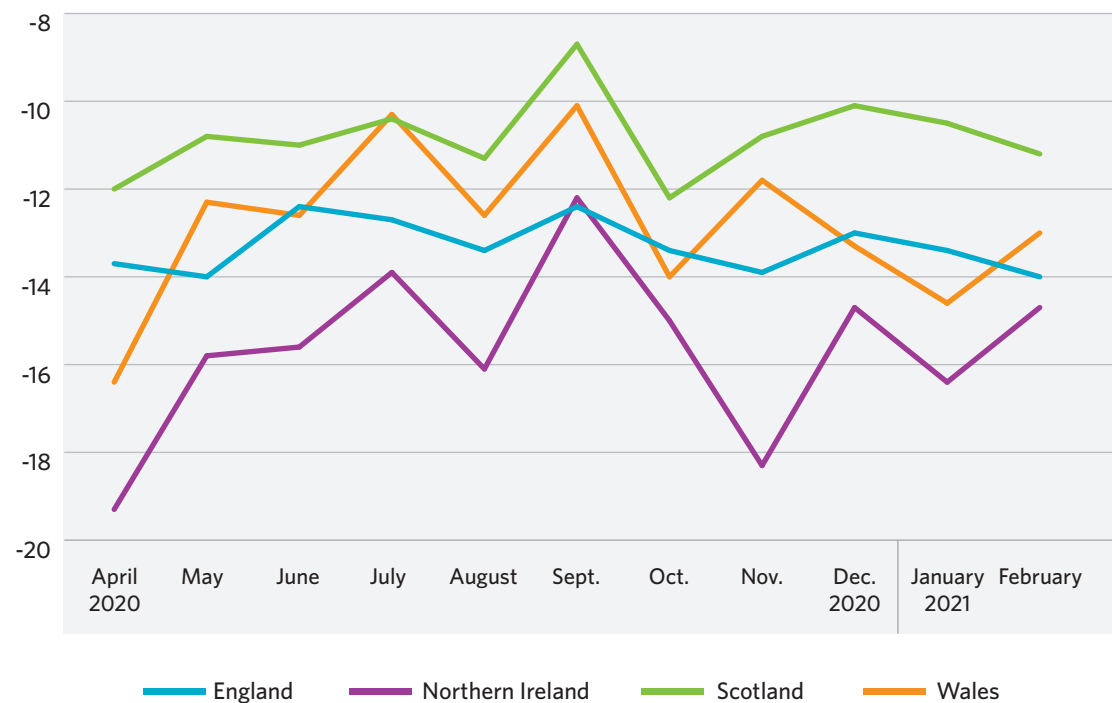


## The Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Regional mental health scores since April have been inconsistent from month-to-month.

- Despite a 1.7-point improvement since January, the lowest mental health score in February is observed in Northern Ireland (-14.7).
- Despite a 0.6-point decline from the prior month, the mental health score in Scotland remains strongest.
- Generally, Scotland has had the highest mental health scores while Northern Ireland has the lowest scores over the past 11 months.

### UK regional Mental Health Index™ scores







## Demographics

- For 11 consecutive months, women (-16.6) have a significantly lower mental health score than men (-11.4); mental health scores also improve with age.
- The variance in the mental health score between those with and without children has been observed since April, and results in February continue this trend with a lower score for those with at least one child (-16.5) when compared to those without children (-12.4).

## Employment

- Overall, 4 per cent of respondents are unemployed. While most individuals remain employed, 21 per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting fewer hours compared to the prior month (-20.6) have the lowest mental health score, followed by those reporting a reduced salary (-18.3), and those not currently employed (-16.8).
- Non-managers have slightly lower mental health scores (-13.8) when compared to managers (-13.5).
- Self-employed/sole proprietors have the highest mental health score (-10.9).
- Respondents who report working for companies with 501-1,000 employees have the lowest mental health score (-17.0).

## Emergency savings

- Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower score in mental health (-28.5) than the overall group. Individuals with an emergency fund have a mental health score of -9.3.



Employment status	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Employed</b> (no change in hours/salary)	<b>-11.9</b>	<b>-11.2</b>
<b>Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)</b>	<b>-20.6</b>	-20.9
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-18.3	<b>-23.3</b>
Not currently employed	-16.8	-18.1

Age group	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Age 20-29</b>	<b>-21.2</b>	<b>-22.4</b>
Age 30-39	-19.5	-18.4
Age 40-49	-15.0	-13.6
Age 50-59	-10.5	-11.4
<b>Age 60-69</b>	<b>-7.7</b>	<b>-6.2</b>

Number of children	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>No children in household</b>	<b>-12.4</b>	<b>-11.8</b>
1 child	-15.0	-15.6
2 children	-17.3	-16.5
<b>3 children or more</b>	<b>-19.9</b>	<b>-17.4</b>

Region	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
England	-14.0	-13.4
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>-14.7</b>	<b>-16.4</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>-11.2</b>	<b>-10.5</b>
Wales	-13.0	-14.6

Gender	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Men</b>	<b>-11.4</b>	<b>-11.4</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>-16.6</b>	<b>-15.7</b>

Income	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Household Income &lt;£15K/annum</b>	<b>-23.0</b>	<b>-19.8</b>
£15K to <£30K/annum	-18.3	-18.0
£30k to <£60K	-13.3	-13.5
£60k to <£100K	-10.1	-8.7
<b>£100K and over</b>	<b>-4.6</b>	<b>-3.7</b>

Employer size	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Self-employed/sole proprietor</b>	<b>-10.9</b>	-14.3
2-50 employees	-12.2	-11.6
51-100 employees	-16.4	-15.2
101-500 employees	-13.6	-13.6
<b>501-1,000 employees</b>	<b>-17.0</b>	<b>-16.2</b>
1,001-5,000 employees	-13.0	-12.9
5,001-10,000 employees	-15.6	<b>-10.8</b>
More than 10,000 employees	-13.7	-12.7

Manager	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Manager</b>	<b>-13.5</b>	<b>-12.1</b>
<b>Non-manager</b>	<b>-13.8</b>	<b>-14.0</b>

Numbers highlighted in **orange** are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in **green** are the least negative scores in the group.

**Available upon request:**

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses



## The Mental Health Index™ (industry)

Individuals employed in Administrative and Support services have the lowest mental health score (-20.7), followed by individuals employed in Utilities (-18.9), and Food Services (-18.3).

The highest mental health scores this month are observed among individuals employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (0.4), Other services (except Public Administration) (-7.8), and Manufacturing (-8.7).

Individuals employed in the Real Estate, Rental and Leasing, the Other services (except Public Administration), and respondents selecting "Other" have seen the greatest improvement in mental health since last month.

**Improvements from the prior month are shown in the table below:**

Industry	February 2021	January 2021	Improvement
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	0.4	-2.1	2.5
Other services (except Public Administration)	-7.8	-9.9	2.1
Other	-10.3	-12.3	2.0
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-11.1	-12.9	1.8
Manufacturing	-8.7	-10.1	1.5
Public Administration	-12.0	-12.8	0.8
Food Services	-18.3	-18.9	0.7
Management of Companies and Enterprises	-10.1	-10.6	0.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-17.7	-18.1	0.4
Health Care and Social Assistance	-15.6	-15.9	0.3
Transportation and Warehousing	-13.7	-13.5	-0.2
Educational Services	-14.3	-13.1	-1.1
Information and Cultural Industries	-18.1	-16.8	-1.3
Retail Trade	-17.1	-13.9	-3.2
Finance and Insurance	-12.2	-8.7	-3.4
Wholesale Trade	-17.5	-13.8	-3.7
Construction	-15.9	-12.0	-3.8
Administrative and Support services	-20.7	-16.4	-4.4

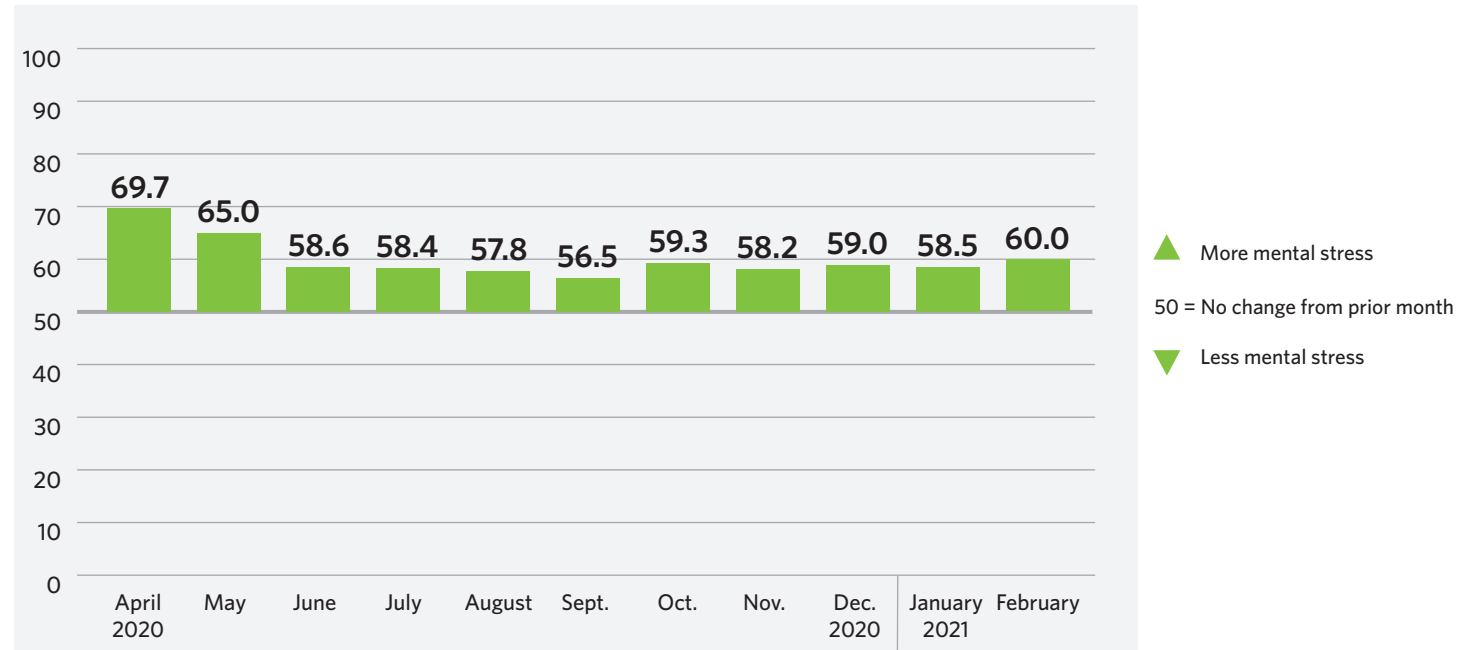


## The Mental Stress Change score

The Mental Stress Change Score (MStressChg) is a measure of the level of reported mental stress, compared to the prior month. **The Mental Stress Change score for February 2021 is 60.0.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month. The MStressChg score had been declining (meaning those surveyed reported less mental stress) month-over-month through September 2020, then increased in October. Since October, scores have oscillated between 58 and 60. The score in February 2021 **is up 1.5-points from the prior month.**

The current score indicates that 26 per cent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with 6 per cent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress over 11 months indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the population.

Current month February 2021:	60.0	January 2021:	58.5
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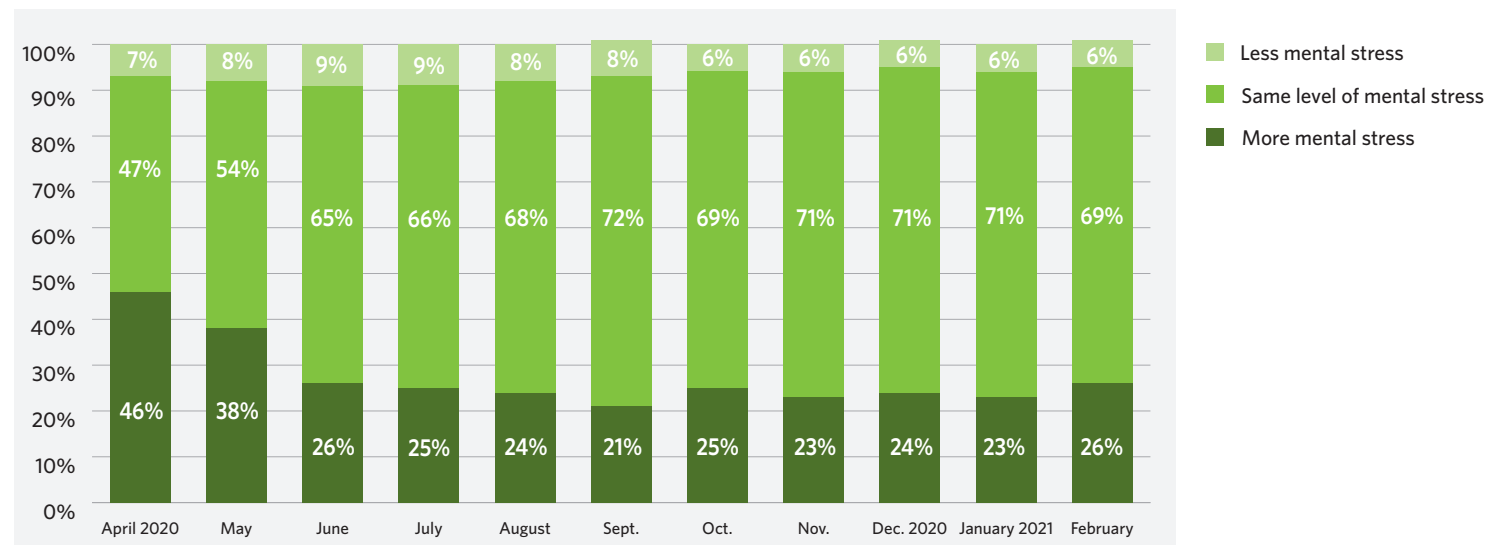
## Mental Stress Change (percentages)

Mental Stress Change tracks each individual's stress changes each month. The percentages of those experiencing more stress, the same level of stress, and less stress for each month of the survey are shown in the graph below.

Over the last 11 months, the percentage of those experiencing more mental stress than the previous month has steadily decreased; however, the data showing this decline is too insignificant to lower the overall Mental Stress Change score to below 50 (the level at which stress is lower than the previous month). As the proportion of individuals reporting the same level of stress or more stress than the previous month continues to significantly outweigh the proportion reporting less mental stress, the population will continue to feel the effects of significantly increased stress and will not be able to reach a more sustainable and healthy level of stress.

In April, 46 per cent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. While those reporting increased month-over-month mental stress decreased to 26 per cent in February 2021, 69 per cent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and only 6 report a decrease in mental stress.

**Mental Stress Change by Month**





## Demographics

- As reported in prior months, and as seen again in February 2021, younger respondents are experiencing a greater increase in mental stress when compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, women have had larger increases in mental stress when compared with men.

## Geography

- The greatest increase in stress month-over-month is for respondents living in Scotland (61.3), followed by England (59.9), Wales (59.8), and Northern Ireland (59.1).

## Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with fewer hours (67.5), followed by employed people with reduced salary (66.3), compared to unemployed people (59.3), and employed people with no change to salary or hours (58.1).
- The greatest increase in mental stress is observed among managers (60.5) while non-managers have a slightly more modest increase in mental stress (59.7).





Employment status	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Employed</b> (no change in hours/salary)	<b>58.1</b>	57.4
<b>Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)</b>	<b>67.5</b>	62.9
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	66.3	<b>66.4</b>
Not currently employed	59.3	<b>56.4</b>

Age group	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Age 20-29</b>	<b>63.4</b>	60.8
Age 30-39	61.5	<b>61.2</b>
Age 40-49	62.6	59.1
<b>Age 50-59</b>	<b>57.3</b>	57.3
Age 60-69	57.4	<b>56.2</b>

Number of children	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>No children in household</b>	<b>59.0</b>	<b>57.3</b>
1 child	60.9	61.2
2 children	62.9	60.2
<b>3 children or more</b>	<b>63.0</b>	<b>61.4</b>

Region	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
England	59.9	58.8
<b>Northern Ireland</b>	<b>59.1</b>	58.2
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>53.7</b>
Wales	59.8	<b>61.8</b>

Gender	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Men</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>57.1</b>
<b>Women</b>	<b>62.8</b>	<b>60.3</b>

Income	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Household Income &lt;£15K/annum</b>	<b>64.8</b>	<b>59.7</b>
£15K to <£30K/annum	61.7	58.4
£30k to <£60K	60.5	59.6
£60k to <£100K	58.7	57.6
<b>£100K and over</b>	<b>53.9</b>	<b>54.5</b>

Employer size	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Self-employed/sole proprietor</b>	<b>61.6</b>	58.2
2-50 employees	58.9	<b>56.6</b>
51-100 employees	61.2	<b>62.6</b>
<b>101-500 employees</b>	<b>58.5</b>	57.8
501-1,000 employees	59.9	59.1
1,001-5,000 employees	60.2	57.7
5,001-10,000 employees	60.3	57.6
More than 10,000 employees	61.6	59.7

Manager	Feb. 2021	Jan. 2021
<b>Manager</b>	<b>60.5</b>	<b>59.9</b>
<b>Non-manager</b>	<b>59.7</b>	<b>57.6</b>

Numbers highlighted in **orange** are the most negative scores in the group.

Numbers highlighted in **green** are the least negative scores in the group.

**Available upon request:**

Specific cross-correlational and custom analyses



## The Mental Stress Change (industry)

Mental Stress Change scores for individuals employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (48.5), Other (56), and Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (56.5) industries are less steep compared to the prior month.

Individuals working in Food Services (67.5) have the most significant increase in mental stress, compared to the prior month, followed by those working in Information and Cultural Industries (64.6), and those employed in Administrative and Support services (64.1).

**Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table below:**

Industry	February 2021	January 2021
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	48.5	50.0
Other	56.0	56.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	56.5	61.4
Manufacturing	57.0	55.9
Transportation and Warehousing	57.6	58.1
Wholesale Trade	57.9	59.5
Management of Companies and Enterprises	58.0	50.0
Finance and Insurance	59.0	55.9
Other services (except Public Administration)	59.3	55.1
Construction	59.6	57.1
Public Administration	60.4	60.8
Retail Trade	60.6	58.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	62.0	60.8
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	62.5	62.3
Educational Services	62.7	58.9
Administrative and Support services	64.1	59.7
Information and Cultural Industries	64.6	59.3
Food Services	67.5	60.9



## Spotlight

### Mental health stigma

In the United Kingdom, nearly 1 in 5 individuals have or have previously experienced some form of illness<sup>3</sup>. Despite the increasing incidence of mental health issues due to the prolonged impact of the pandemic among people of all ages, backgrounds and socio-economic status, stigma affects the way people perceive themselves as well as the way others perceive them. The resulting feelings can amplify an existing mental health issue and may become a barrier to seeking help.

Individuals were asked about mental health self-stigma, how a mental health issue might affect their career, and the perceived effect of mental health on personal relationships.

#### Self-stigma

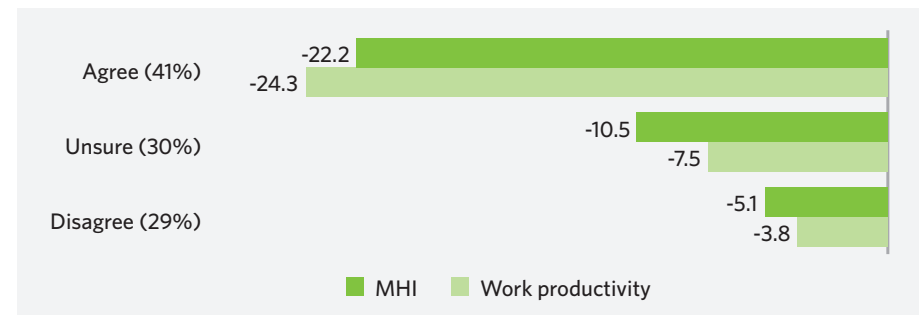
Individuals were asked whether they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue

- Forty-one per cent of respondents report that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue; this group has the lowest mental health score (-22.2).
- Work productivity scores follow the same trend as mental health scores, with those agreeing that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue reporting the lowest work

#### I would feel negatively about myself if I had a mental health issue



#### MHI and work productivity scores by agreement about feeling negatively about oneself if a mental health issue exists



<sup>3</sup> Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey, National Health Service (NHS) Digital,

productivity score (-24.3) and those who would not feel more negatively about themselves having the highest work productivity score (-3.8).

- Younger people are more likely to report that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue. Over half (57 per cent) of respondents aged 20-29 report that they would feel more negatively about themselves compared to thirty-five per cent of individuals aged 60 and above.
- Nearly half (45 per cent) of managers report that they would feel more negatively about themselves if they had a mental health issue compared with non-managers (38 per cent).

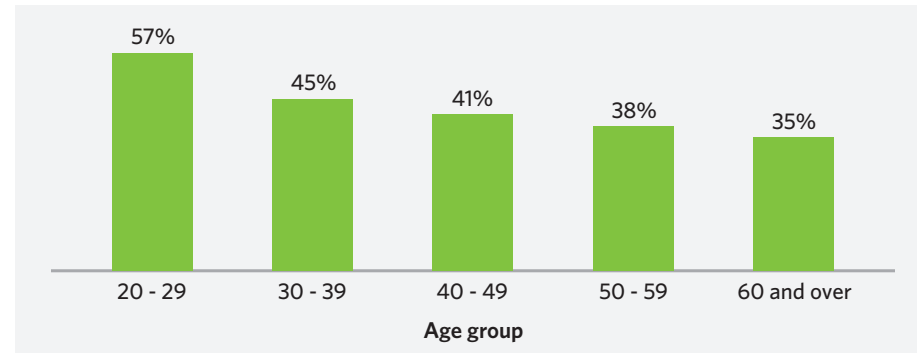
While it is widely assumed that younger individuals are more open about mental health issues, this openness does not preclude a high level of awareness of stigma, nor does it preclude self-judgment. As well, negative self-judgment may exist even though one's judgment of others with mental health issues might not be as negative.

### Perceived impact of mental health issue on friendships

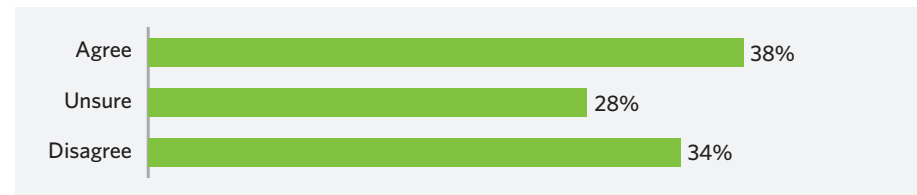
Individuals were asked whether they thought that their friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue.

- Thirty-eight per cent report that they would be concerned that friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue; this group has the lowest mental health score (-21.7).
- Work productivity scores follow the same trend as mental health, with those agreeing that they would be concerned about friends treating them differently

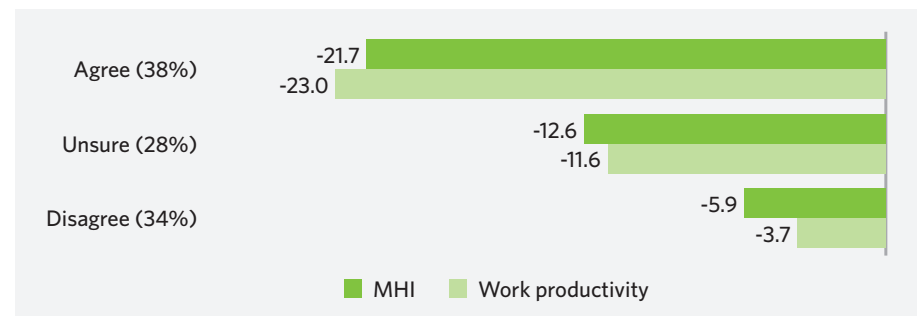
### I would feel negatively about myself if I had a mental health issue



### I would be concerned that my friends would treat me differently if I had a mental health issue



### MHI and work productivity scores by concern that friends would treat me differently if I had a mental health issue





if they had a mental health issue reporting the lowest work productivity score (-23.0) and those who disagree that their friends would treat them differently having the highest work productivity score (-3.7).

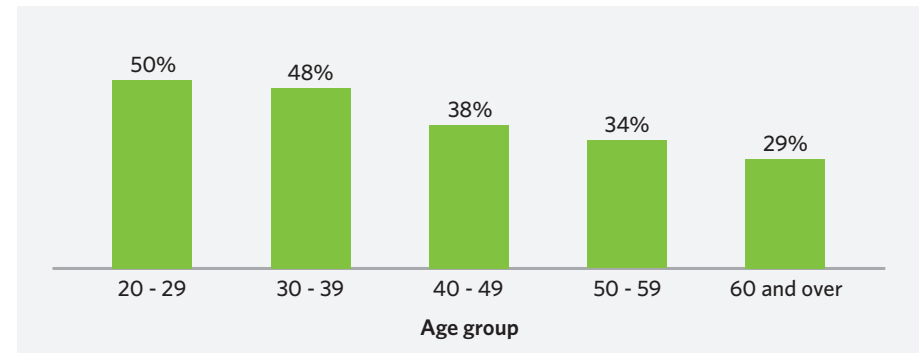
- Younger respondents are more likely to perceive that their friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue; fifty per cent of respondents aged 20-29 report compared to twenty-nine per cent of individuals aged 60 and above.
- Nearly half (45 per cent) of managers report that they would be concerned that their friends would treat them differently if they had a mental health issue when compared with over one-third (34 per cent) of non-managers.

### Perceived impact to career

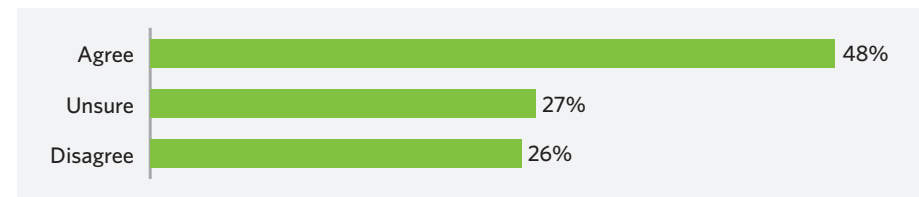
Individuals were asked whether they thought that their career options would be limited if they had a mental health issue of which their workplace were aware.

- Forty-eight per cent report that their career options would be limited if the workplace were aware of a mental health issue; this group has the lowest mental health score (-19.9).
- Work productivity scores follow the same trend as mental health scores, with those agreeing that their career options would be limited if their workplace were aware of a mental health issue reporting the lowest work productivity score (-21.0) and those who disagree that career options would be limited if they had a mental health issue report the highest productivity score (-1.4).

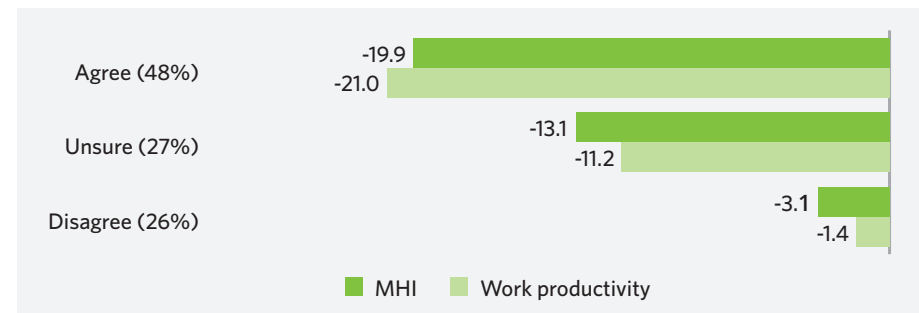
### I would be concerned that my friends would treat me differently if I had a mental health issue



### My career options would be limited if I had a mental health issue, and my workplace were aware



### MHI and work productivity scores by agreement that awareness of a mental health issue at work would limit career options



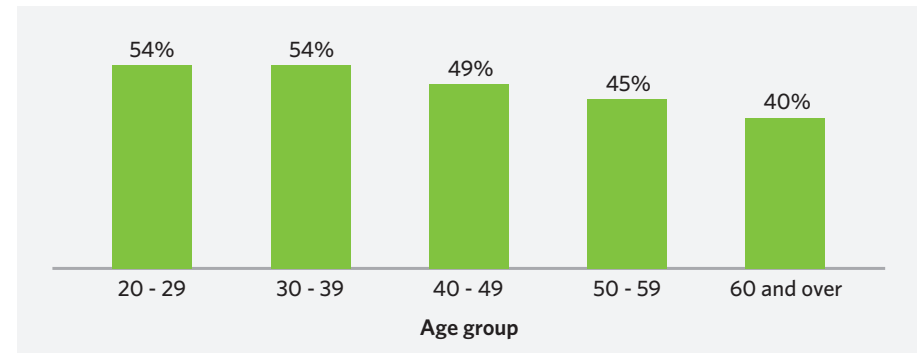


- Younger respondents are more likely to agree that their career options would be limited if their workplace were aware of a mental health issue; over fifty per cent (54 per cent) of respondents aged 20-29 would be concerned compared to forty-five per cent of individuals aged 50-59.
- More than half (54 per cent) of managers perceive that there would be an impact to career if their employer knew of a mental health issue compared with non-managers (42 per cent).

Of the three types of stigma studied (self-stigma, workplace stigma, and social stigma) workplace stigma is perceived more prevalently.

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**My career options would be limited if I had a mental health issue, and my workplace were aware**





## Alcohol use during the pandemic

Since the inception of the Mental Health Index™ in April 2020, the mental health of Britons has been strained when compared to the pre-2020 benchmark. Further, the proportion of individuals reporting more stress than the prior month has persisted over 11 months. The disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the physical, mental, social, and financial wellbeing of Britons to the extent that many have turned to unhealthy coping mechanisms to deal with cumulative stress, feelings of isolation, loss, etc. Individuals were asked to consider their use of alcohol at two stages during the COVID-19 pandemic.

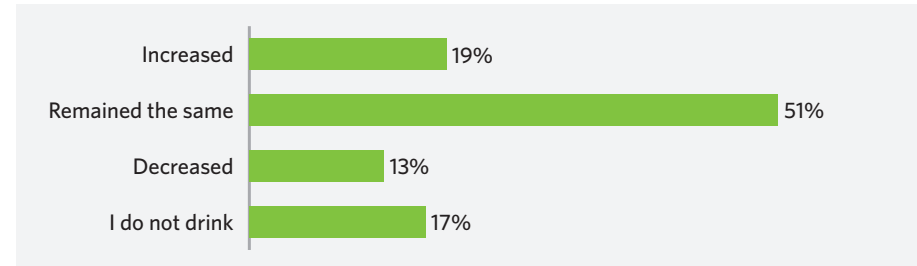
### Alcohol use early in the pandemic (March to May 2020)

- Nineteen per cent of respondents increased their alcohol use from March to May 2020; this group has the lowest mental health score (-24.1).
- Individuals under the age of 40 are nearly twice as likely to report an increase in their alcohol use from March to May 2020, compared with those over the age of 40.

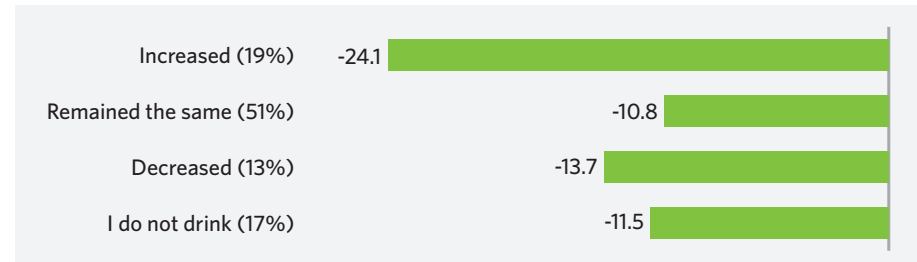
### Alcohol use later in the pandemic (October 2020 to January 2021)

- Eleven per cent of respondents increased their alcohol use from October 2020 to January 2021 compared to earlier in the pandemic; this group has the lowest mental health score (-28.1).
- Eighteen per cent of individuals are drinking less from October 2020 to January 2021 compared to their alcohol intake earlier in the pandemic.

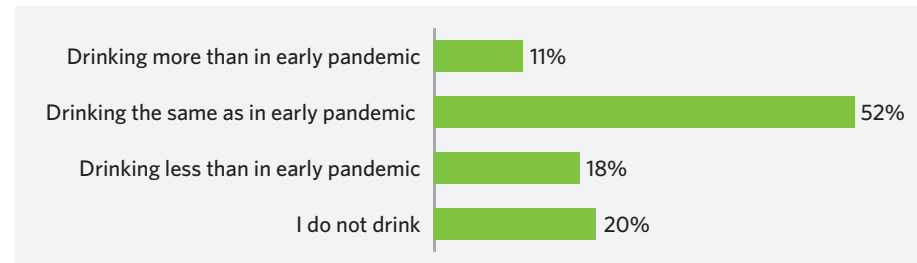
### Changes to alcohol consumption early in the pandemic (March to May 2020)



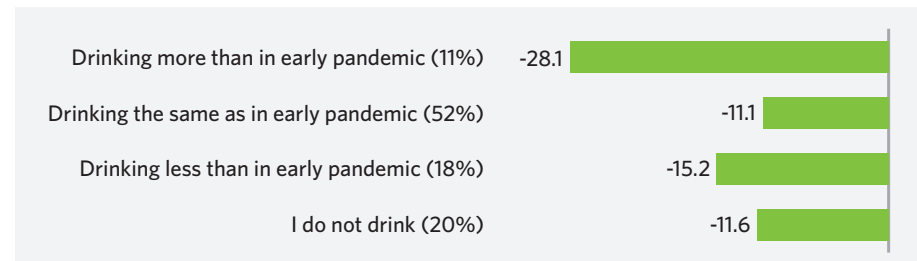
### MHI score by changes to alcohol consumption early in the pandemic



### Changes to alcohol consumption more recently (October to present)



### MHI score by changes to alcohol consumption more recently (October to present)



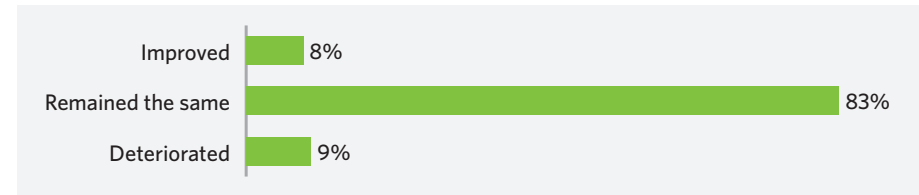


## Employee – manager relationship

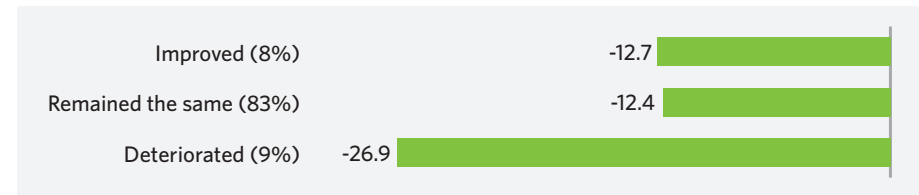
With many employees working from home and others working under modified conditions, workplaces have changed remarkably since before the COVID-19 pandemic. Employees were asked how the relationship with their supervisor has changed since the pandemic began.

- Eighty-three per cent of individuals report that the relationship with their supervisor has remained the same since the pandemic began; this group has the highest mental health score (-12.4).

### Changes to relationship with supervisor since the pandemic began



### MHI score by changes to relationship with supervisor since the pandemic began



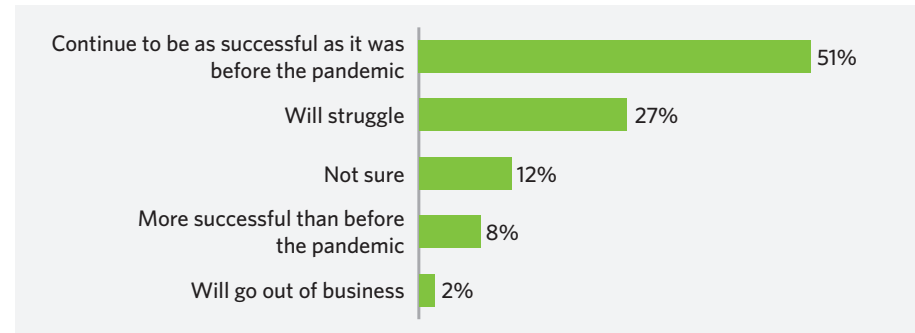


## Organizational stability

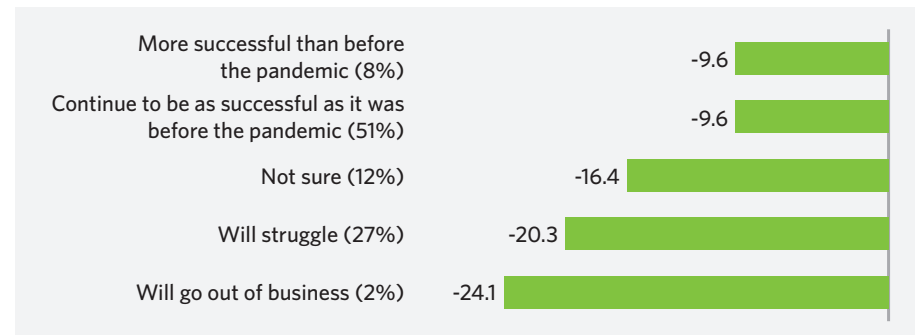
As Britons face one year of disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses across the country have had to react, change, and adapt to new processes, threats, and opportunities. A boon for some while other organizations struggle; a swing in either direction could land the business in either a fortuitous or grave situation. Looking ahead in 2021, employees were asked about the stability of their employer.

- Over half (51 per cent) of individuals believe that their employer will continue to be as successful in 2021 as before the pandemic; this group has the most favourable mental health score (-9.6).
- Over one-quarter (27 per cent) of respondents believe that their employer will struggle in 2021, and this group has the lowest mental health score (-20.3) second only to two per cent of respondents who believe that their employer will go out of business in 2021.
- Individuals under the age of 40 are nearly three times more likely to report that their organization will be more successful in 2021 compared with those over the age of 40.

## Employee expected trends of organizations through 2021



## MHI score by expected trends of their employer through 2021





## Overview of the Mental Health Index™

The mental health and wellbeing of a population is essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index™ provides a measure of the current mental health status of employed adults in a given geography, compared to the benchmarks collected in the years of 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the Index are intended to predict cost and productivity risks, and inform the need for investment in mental health supports by business and government.

### **The Mental Health Index™ report has three main parts:**

1. The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI), which is a measure of change compared to the benchmark of mental health and risk.
2. A Mental Stress Change (MStressChg) score, which measures the level of reported mental stress, compared to the prior month.
3. A spotlight section that reflects the specific impact of current issues in the community.

### Methodology

The data for this report was collected through an on-line survey of 2,000 British citizens who are living in the United Kingdom and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants were selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry and geographic distribution in the United Kingdom. The same respondents participate each month to remove sampling bias. The respondents were asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ is published monthly, starting in April 2020. The benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The data for the current report was collected between January 15 to January 25, 2021.

### Calculations

To create the Mental Health Index™, the first step leverages a response scoring system turning individual responses to each question into a point value. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. Each individual's scores are added and then divided by the total number of possible points to get a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores.



To demonstrate change, the current month's scores are then compared to the benchmark and the prior month. The benchmark is comprised of data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The change relative to the benchmark is the Mental Health Index™. A score of zero in the Mental Health Index™ reflects no change, positive scores reflect improvement, and negative scores reflect decline.**

A Mental Stress Change score is also reported given that increasing and prolonged mental stress is a potential contributor to changes in mental health. It is reported separately and is not part of the calculation of the Mental Health Index™. The Mental Stress Change score is (percentage reporting less mental stress + percentage reporting the same level of mental stress \* 0.5) \* -1 + 100. The data compares the current to the prior month. **A Mental Stress Change score of 50 reflects no change in mental stress from the prior month. Scores above 50 reflect an increase in mental stress, scores below 50 reflect a decrease in mental stress.** The range is from zero to 100. A succession of scores over 50, month over month, reflects high risk.

### Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdown of sub-scores, and specific cross-correlational and custom analyses are available upon request. Benchmarking against the national results or any sub-group, is available upon request. Contact [MHI@morneaushepell.com](mailto:MHI@morneaushepell.com)

Morneau Shepell is a leading provider of technology-enabled HR services that deliver an integrated approach to employee wellbeing through our cloud-based platform. Our focus is providing world-class solutions to our clients to support the mental, physical, social and financial wellbeing of their people. By improving lives, we improve business. Our approach spans services in employee and family assistance, health and wellness, recognition, pension and benefits administration, retirement consulting, actuarial and investment services. Morneau Shepell employs approximately 6,000 employees who work with some 24,000 client organizations that use our services in 162 countries. Morneau Shepell inc. is a publicly traded company on the Toronto Stock Exchange (TSX: MSI). For more information, visit [morneaushepell.com](https://morneaushepell.com).



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