

The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

United Kingdom | January 2022



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The top 5 things your need to know for January 2022

1. After three months of declining mental health, January marks the largest single month increase and the highest score since the launch of the Index.

- The current score is -9.6, and despite it being the highest mental health score recorded since launch of the Index, it remains nearly 10 points below the pre-2020 benchmark.
- All mental health sub-scores improved from December 2021 to January 2022.
- The strongest sub-score continues to be financial risk, reaching a high of seven points above the pre-2020 benchmark and representing an improvement in the level of emergency savings compared to 2019.
- Mental health scores in all regions improved compared to December 2021. Wales has the most significant increase and the highest mental health and, despite a 3.5-point increase, Northern Ireland has the lowest mental health score in the country.

2. Nearly three-in-five working Britons say that flexible work is more important than career progression.

- 31% say that flexibility is the most important action that their employer has taken to support mental health.
- 23% say that making them feel more valued is most important.
- 22% say that empathy is most important to supporting mental health.

3. Recognition, peer relationships, and salary are the top drivers of belonging at work.

- 17% say that recognition or appreciation is the most important aspect of feeling a sense of belonging at work.
- 15% say that co-worker relationships are the most important.
- Employees who report workplace relationships as the most important aspect of feeling a sense of belonging at work have higher mental health, work productivity, isolation, and financial risk scores than national averages.

4. Nearly half of Britons say that liking the work they do is the reason they stay with their employer.

- 31% say that relationships with their co-workers is the reason they stay.
- 27% say that being well-paid is the reason for staying.
- 21% say that they feel valued, and this group has among the highest mental health scores (-1.4).

5. Eleven per cent of Britons working at the jobsite say their biggest challenge is dealing with difficult people.

- 15% of Britons that work from home feel lonely compared to 5% that work at the jobsite.
- 12% that work from home feel forgotten most of the time compared to 6% that work at the jobsite.
- Fewer Britons believe that career opportunities would be limited (34%) than those who disagree (41%) about the career impact of working from home.

58%

say flexible work is more important than career progression

31%

stay because of relationships with their co-workers

14%

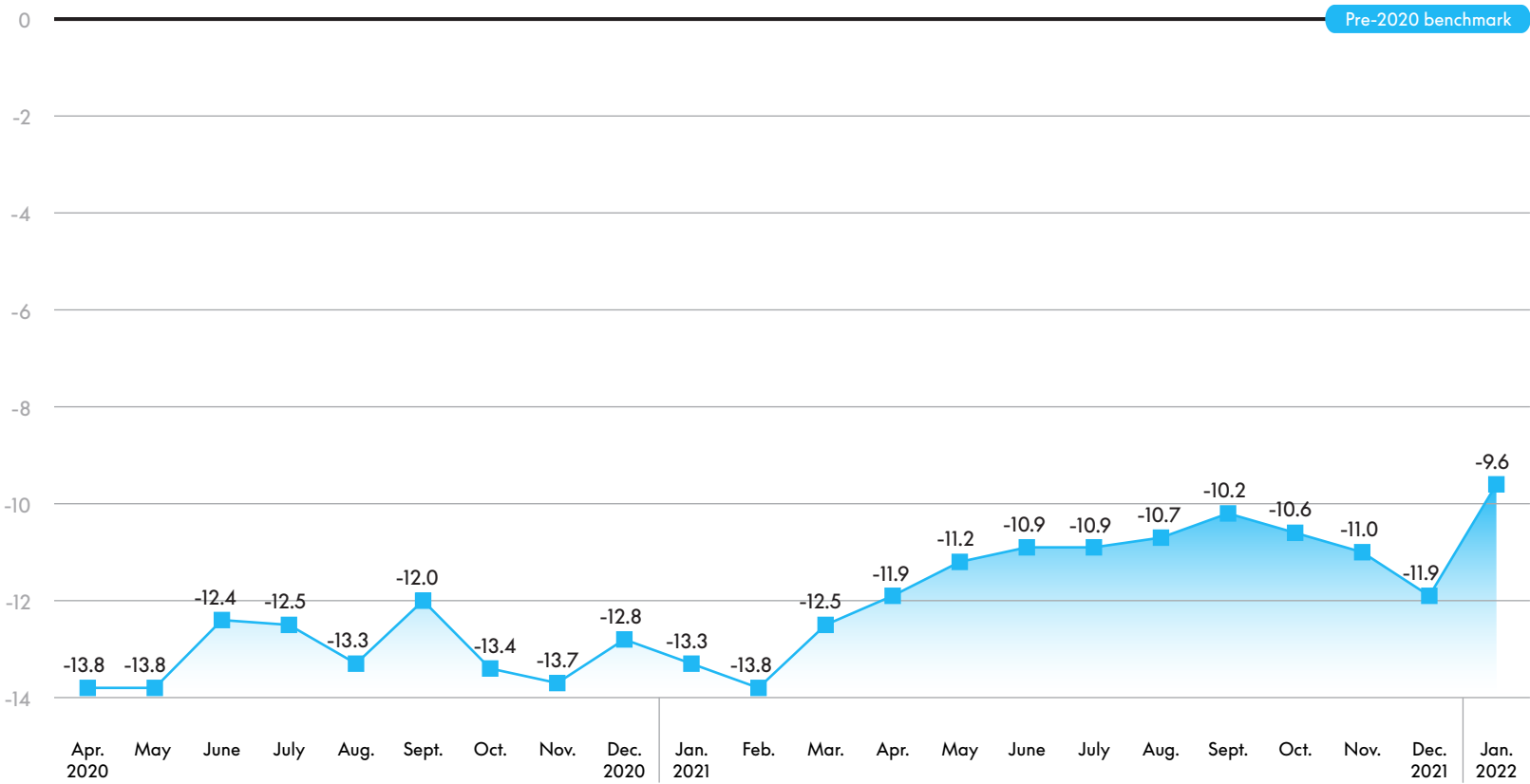
say little recognition is the biggest challenge at the worksite

The top driver

of belonging at work is recognition

The Mental Health Index™

The Mental Health Index™ (MHI) is a measure of deviation from the benchmark¹ of mental health and risk. **The overall Mental Health Index for January 2022 is -9.6 points.** A nearly 10-point decrease from the pre-2020 benchmark reflects a population whose mental health is similar to the most distressed four per cent of the benchmark population.



¹ The benchmark reflects data collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019.

MHI Current Month
January 2022

-9.6

December 2021

-11.9

Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of optimism (-12.3), followed by anxiety (-11.2), depression (-11.0), isolation (-9.2), work productivity (-8.7), and general psychological health (-2.4). The best sub-score, and the only measure above the historical benchmark continues to be financial risk (7.0).

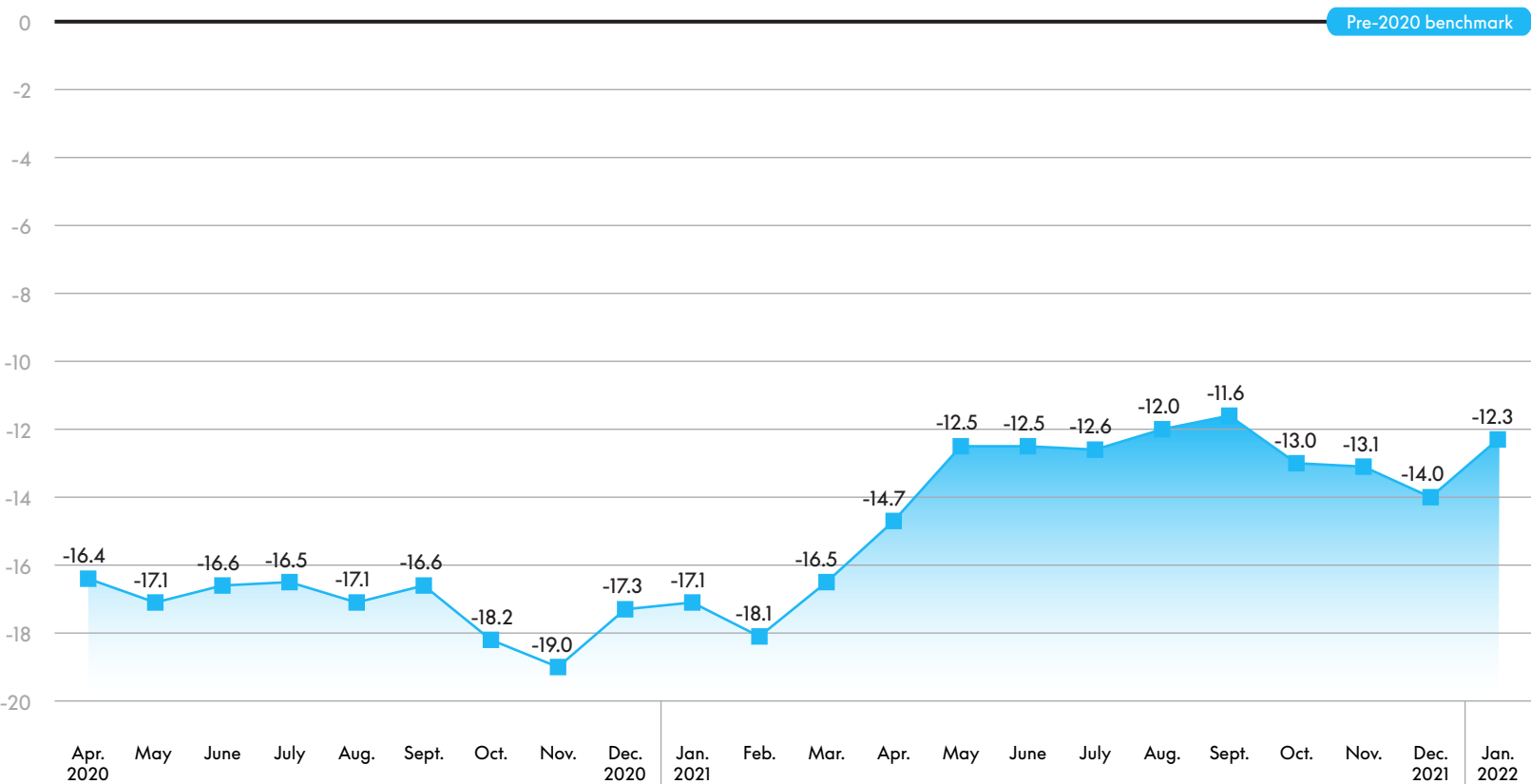
- All mental health sub-scores have improved from December 2021.
- With a 3.2-point increase, the depression score has had the most significant improvement in January.
- The financial risk sub-score improved by nearly three points to a high of 7.0 points above the pre-2020 benchmark.

Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores ²	January 2022	December 2021
Optimism	-12.3	-14.0
Anxiety	-11.2	-14.0
Depression	-11.0	-14.2
Isolation	-9.2	-11.1
Work productivity	-8.7	-11.6
Psychological health	-2.4	-4.4
Financial risk	7.0	4.1

² The demographic breakdown of sub-scores is available upon request.

Optimism

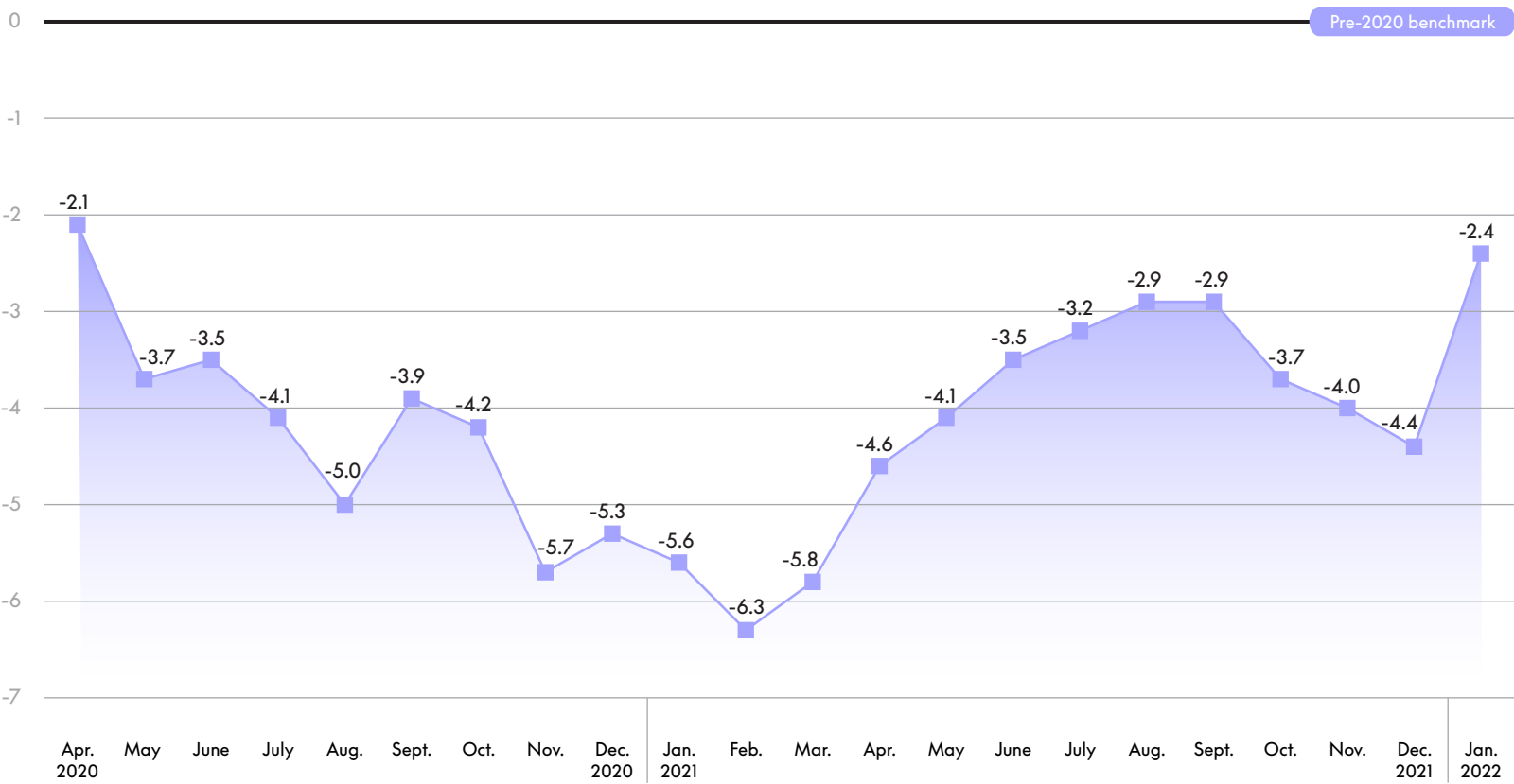
Since April 2020, optimism sub-scores have remained significantly below the benchmark however, beginning in March 2021, scores improved to a high of -11.6 in September. After seven months of improvement, the optimism sub-score in the United Kingdom fell 1.4-points to -13.0 in October 2021. In December, the optimism score declined but with a nearly two-point improvement in January 2022, the optimism sub-score is -12.3.



General psychological health

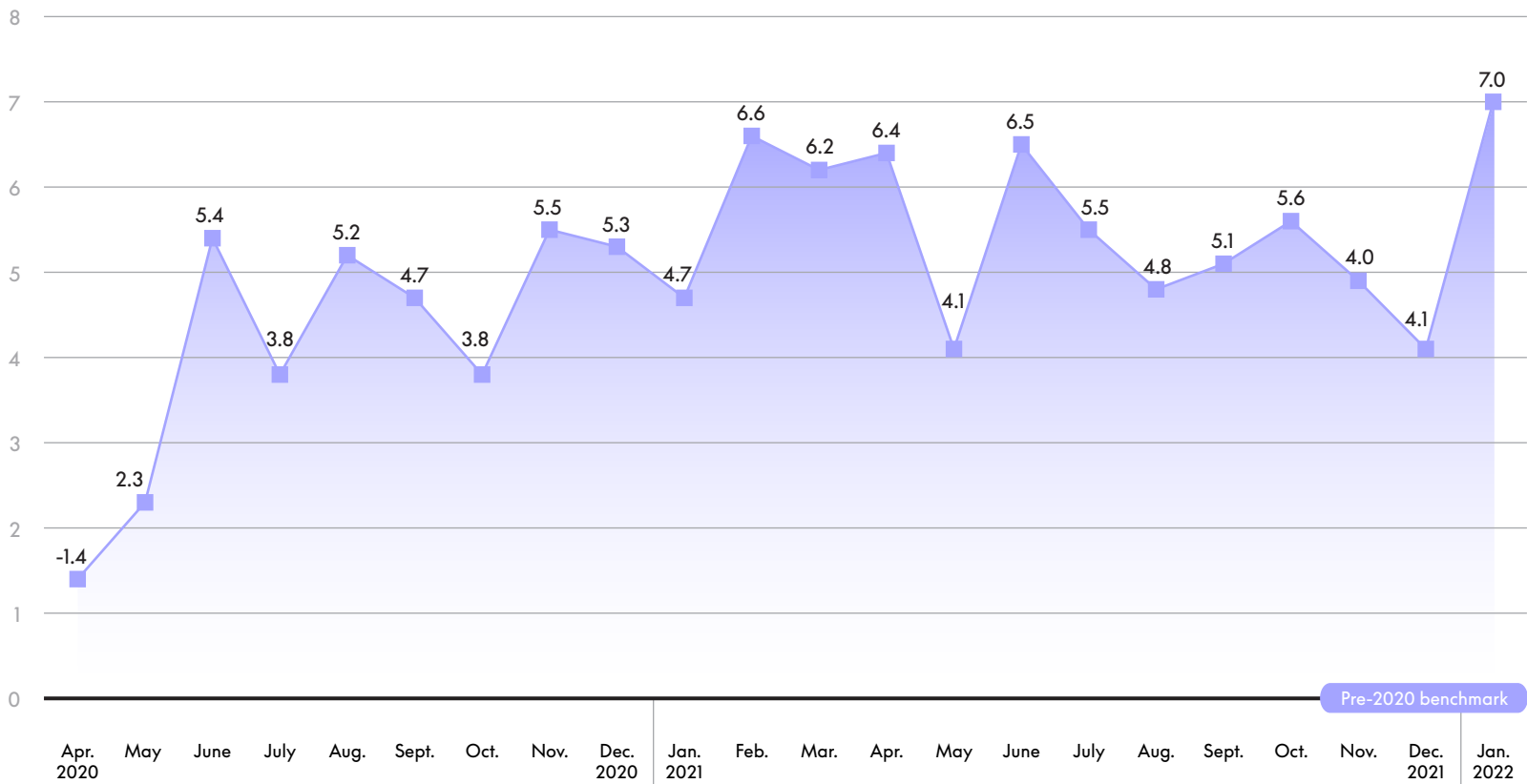
The psychological health sub-score assesses individuals' self-perception of their overall level of psychological health.

From the launch of the MHI in April 2020 to February 2021, the general psychological health of Britons declined to a low of 6.3 points below the pre-2020 benchmark. Since March 2021, scores have increased, reaching -2.9 in August. After six months of improvement, the psychological health of Britons fell nearly one point to -3.7 in October. The decline continued in November and December but has improved two points in January 2022 to -2.4, the highest score since April 2020.



Financial risk

The financial risk sub-score measures the level of individuals’ emergency savings. The financial risk score of Britons remains the strongest of all sub-scores. Since the launch of the Index in April 2020, the financial risk sub-score has been above the pre-2020 benchmark. Following two consecutive months of declines in July and August, the financial risk score recovered in October to 5.6 points however, a significant 1.6-point decline was seen in November and remained nearly unchanged in December. In January 2022, the financial risk sub-score improved nearly three points to its highest score since the launch of the Index, seven points above the pre-2020 benchmark.



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In January 2022, the mental health score of women is -11.9 compared to -7.6 for men.
- In each of the past 22 months, mental health scores improve with age.
- Differences in mental health scores between those with and without children have been reported since the launch of the Index in April 2020. Nearly two years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (-13.6) compared to those without children (-7.5).

Employment

- Overall, three per cent of respondents are unemployed³ and seven per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (-24.3), followed by those reporting fewer hours (-18.4), and those not currently employed (-14.8).
- Managers (-9.4) and non-managers (-9.3) have nearly equal mental health scores.
- Individuals who are self-employed have the highest mental health score (-6.5).
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (-16.5).

Emergency savings

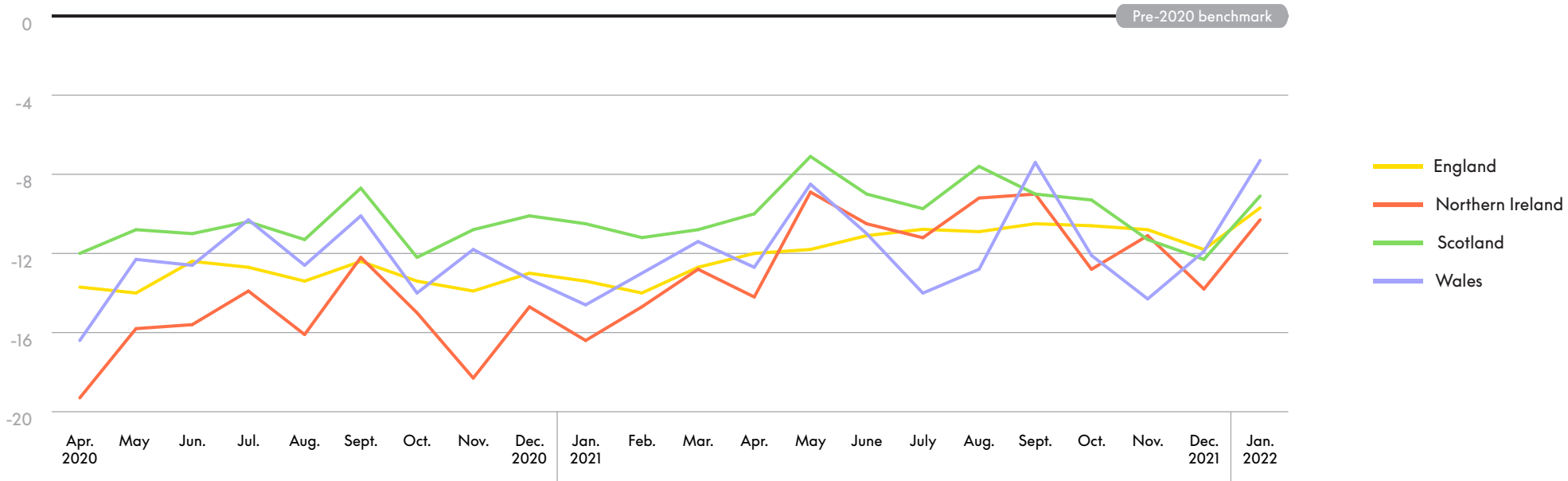
- Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (-25.4) than the overall group (-9.6). Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of -4.4.

3 MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Since April 2020, regional mental health scores have fluctuated. In January 2022, the mental health scores in all regions improved over December 2021.

- With a significant 4.6-point increase, Wales has the greatest improvement in mental health in January (-7.3) and has the highest mental health score in the country.
- Despite a 3.5-point increase in January, Northern Ireland continues to have the lowest mental health score (-10.3).



Employment status	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	-8.7	-11.3
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	-18.4	-18.4
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	-24.3	-22.1
Not currently employed	-14.8	-17.7
Age group	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Age 20-29	-17.8	-20.5
Age 30-39	-15.2	-19.0
Age 40-49	-13.1	-14.6
Age 50-59	-7.1	-9.4
Age 60-69	-3.1	-4.5
Number of children	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
No children in household	-7.5	-9.7
1 child	-13.0	-16.1
2 children	-14.2	-16.7
3 children or more	-14.4	-16.3

Region	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
England	-9.7	-11.8
Northern Ireland	-10.3	-13.8
Scotland	-9.1	-12.3
Wales	-7.3	-11.9
Gender	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Men	-7.6	-9.9
Women	-11.9	-14.4
Household income	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Household Income <£15K/annum	-18.1	-18.6
£15K to <£30K/annum	-14.6	-17.0
£30k to <£60K	-8.7	-10.8
£60k to <£100K	-4.8	-7.8
£100K and over	-0.9	-3.8

Employer size	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	-6.5	-8.9
2-50 employees	-6.8	-8.6
51-100 employees	-16.5	-17.1
101-500 employees	-10.5	-12.4
501-1,000 employees	-11.0	-14.9
1,001-5,000 employees	-8.7	-11.5
5,001-10,000 employees	-7.2	-10.3
More than 10,000 employees	-9.2	-12.2
Manager	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Manager	-9.4	-12.2
Non-manager	-9.3	-11.5

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

Mental Health Index™ (industry)

Individuals working in Information and Cultural Industries have the lowest mental health score (-19.9) in January 2022, followed by those working in Wholesale Trade (-14.9), and Food Services (-14.8).

Those employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (0.1), Construction (-5.3), and Other services (except Public Administration) (-5.6) have the highest mental health scores this month.

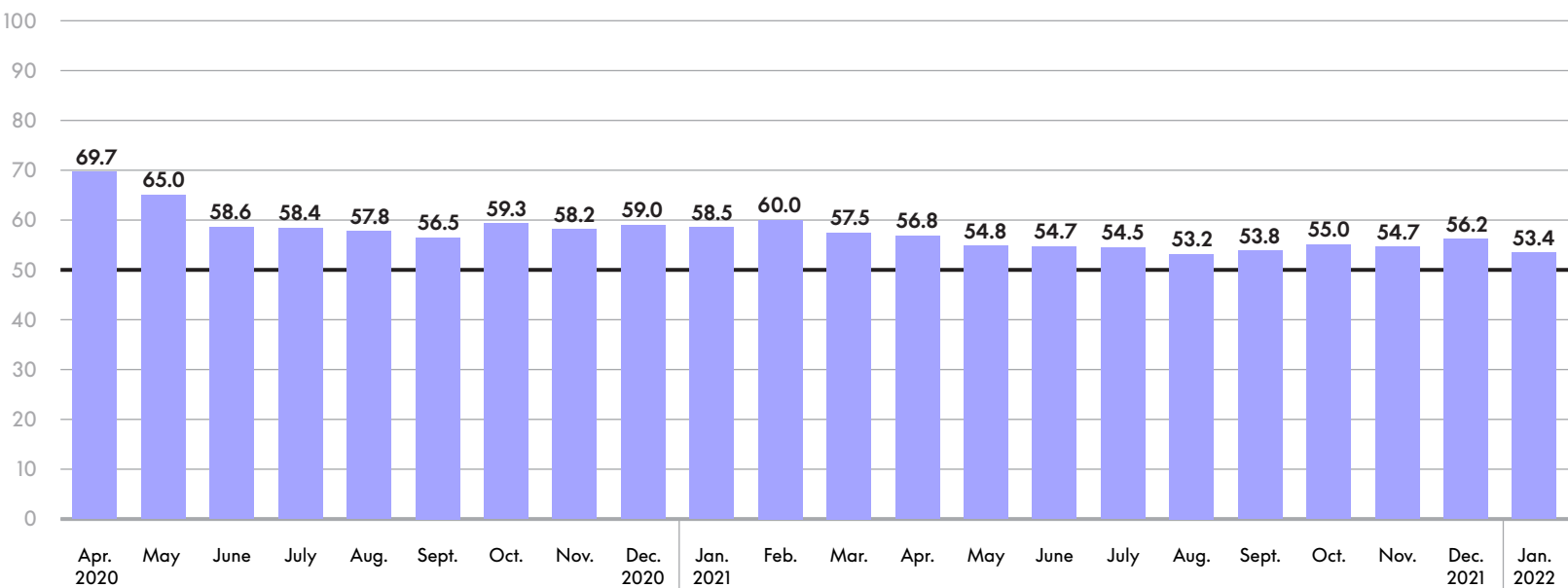
Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	January 2022	December 2021	Change
Utilities	-14.1	-22.3	8.2
Construction	-5.3	-12.3	7.0
Transportation and Warehousing	-7.3	-11.4	4.2
Other services (except Public Administration)	-5.6	-9.8	4.1
Finance and Insurance	-7.5	-11.5	4.0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	-13.3	-17.1	3.7
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	-6.8	-10.3	3.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	-10.4	-13.5	3.1
Retail Trade	-13.3	-16.0	2.7
Public Administration	-9.0	-11.7	2.7
Manufacturing	-7.2	-8.3	1.1
Food Services	-14.8	-15.7	0.9
Other	-8.9	-9.8	0.9
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	0.1	-0.6	0.6
Administrative and Support services	-12.8	-13.3	0.5
Educational Services	-9.9	-10.1	0.2
Wholesale Trade	-14.9	-14.4	-0.6
Information and Cultural Industries	-19.9	-18.1	-1.8

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 January 2022 53.4.** This reflects a net increase in mental stress compared to the prior month.

The current score indicates that 15 per cent of the population is experiencing more mental stress compared to the prior month, with eight per cent experiencing less. A continued increase in mental stress since April 2020 indicates a significant accumulation of strain in the British population.



▲ More mental stress
50 = No change from prior month
▼ Less mental stress

MStressChg
Current Month—
January 2022

53.4

MStressChg
December 2021

56.2

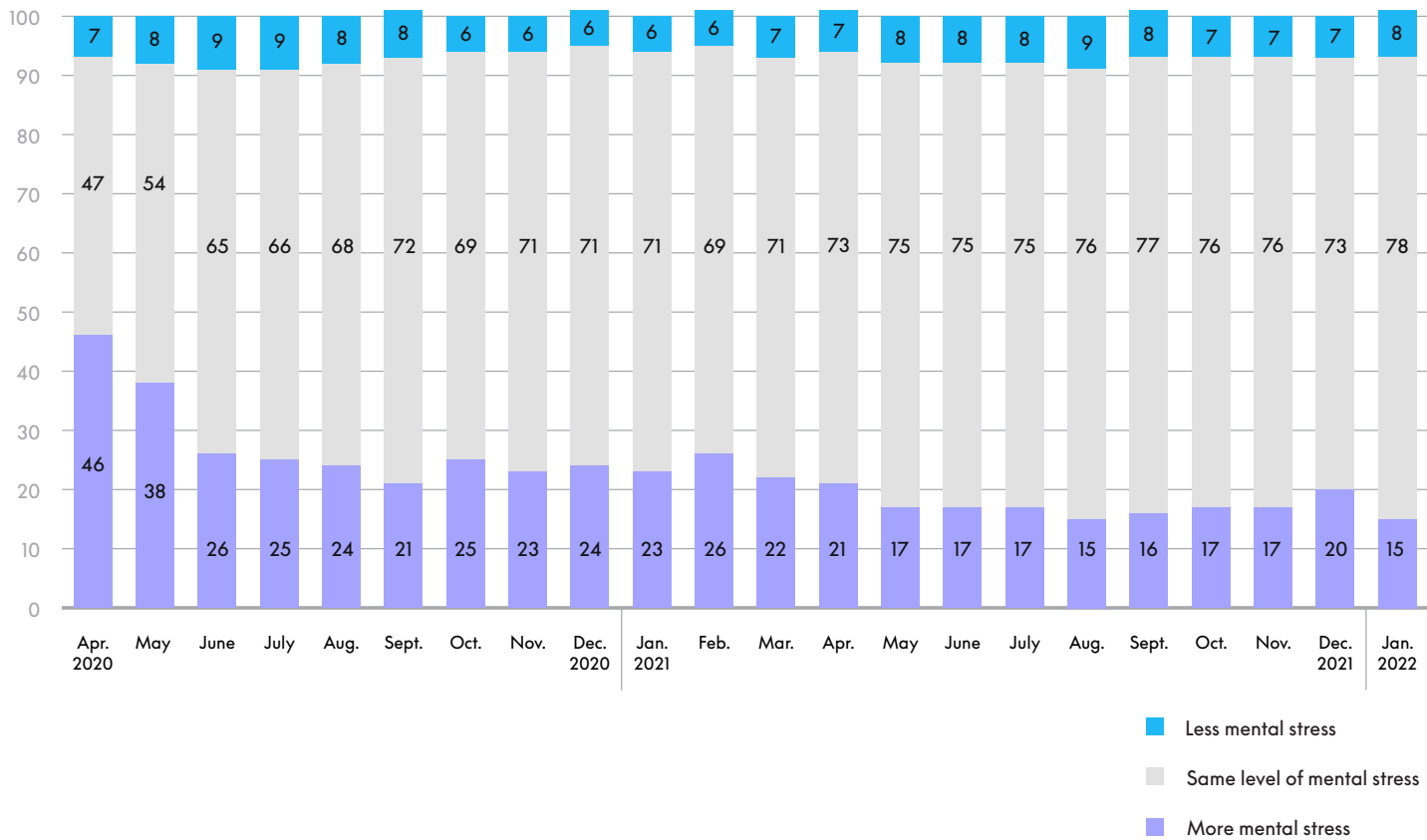
Mental Stress Change (percentages)

Mental Stress Change tracks 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.

For nearly two years, 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 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 2020, 46 per cent of individuals reported an increase in mental stress. The number of respondents reporting increased month-over-month mental stress is 15 per cent in January 2022, while 78 per cent of respondents report the same level of mental stress and eight per cent report a decrease in mental stress.

Mental Stress Change by month



Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI in April 2020, younger people have experienced a greater increase in mental stress month over month compared to older respondents.
- Since April 2020, women have had larger increases in mental stress compared to men. In January 2022, the mental stress change score for women is 54.1 compared to 52.9 for men.

Geography

- The greatest increase in month-over-month stress is for respondents living in Northern Ireland (55.3), followed by Scotland (53.7), England (53.5), and Wales (50.6).

Employment

- The greatest increase in mental stress is seen in employed people with reduced salary (66.7), followed by employed people with reduced hours (58.1), unemployed people (53.9), and employed people with no change to salary or hours (53.0).
- Managers have a greater increase in mental stress (54.4) than non-managers (52.7).

Employment status	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	53.0	56.1
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	58.1	58.5
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	66.7	50.0
Not currently employed	53.9	58.8
Age group	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Age 20-29	55.7	62.9
Age 30-39	56.2	59.9
Age 40-49	54.7	56.2
Age 50-59	52.0	54.8
Age 60-69	51.7	52.7
Number of children	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
No children in household	52.2	55.2
1 child	54.9	56.5
2 children	55.6	58.9
3 children or more	62.7	63.4

Region	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
England	53.5	56.3
Northern Ireland	55.3	57.8
Scotland	53.7	56.0
Wales	50.6	53.2
Gender	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Men	52.9	55.2
Women	54.1	57.4
Household income	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Household Income <£15K/annum	57.8	58.6
£15K to <£30K/annum	54.2	57.9
£30k to <£60K	52.9	54.9
£60k to <£100K	53.2	58.2
£100K and over	52.5	51.7

Employer size	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Self-employed/sole proprietor	54.3	54.7
2-50 employees	50.5	56.1
51-100 employees	59.5	57.0
101-500 employees	53.6	54.7
501-1,000 employees	54.2	55.7
1,001-5,000 employees	51.5	56.2
5,001-10,000 employees	55.5	57.8
More than 10,000 employees	53.1	57.0
Manager	Jan. 2022	Dec. 2021
Manager	54.4	57.7
Non-manager	52.7	55.0

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)

In January 2022, individuals employed in Utilities (44.6), Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (46.3), and Construction (49.5) report less mental stress than the prior month.

Individuals working in Information and Cultural Industries have the most significant increase in mental stress (61.8), followed by individuals employed in Arts, Entertainment and Recreation (57.6), and Administrative and Support services (57.3).

Mental Stress changes from the last two months are shown in the table.

Industry	January 2022	December 2021
Utilities	44.6	60.0
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	46.3	50.0
Construction	49.5	48.9
Transportation and Warehousing	50.0	57.2
Other	51.1	52.2
Retail Trade	52.4	59.4
Finance and Insurance	52.6	59.4
Public Administration	52.6	56.8
Wholesale Trade	52.9	57.8
Educational Services	53.3	54.6
Food Services	53.7	61.8
Manufacturing	53.8	54.4
Other services (except Public Administration)	55.3	55.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	55.6	54.7
Health Care and Social Assistance	56.2	58.1
Administrative and Support services	57.3	56.6
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	57.6	59.4
Information and Cultural Industries	61.8	60.3

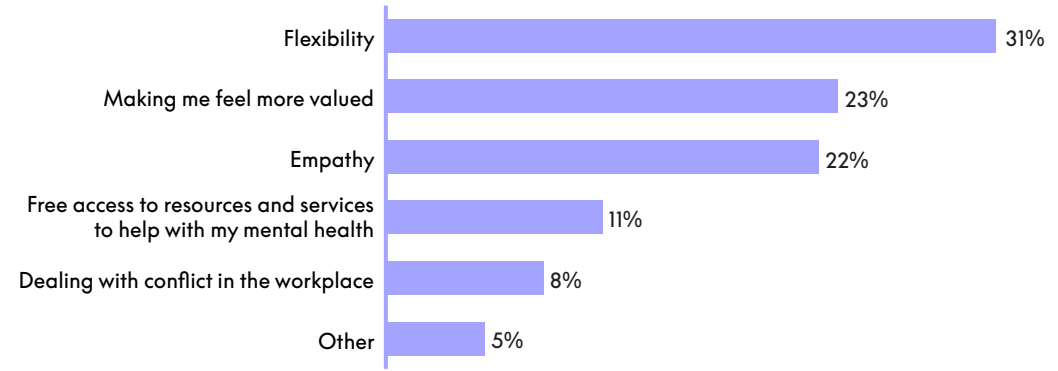
Spotlight

Mental health support

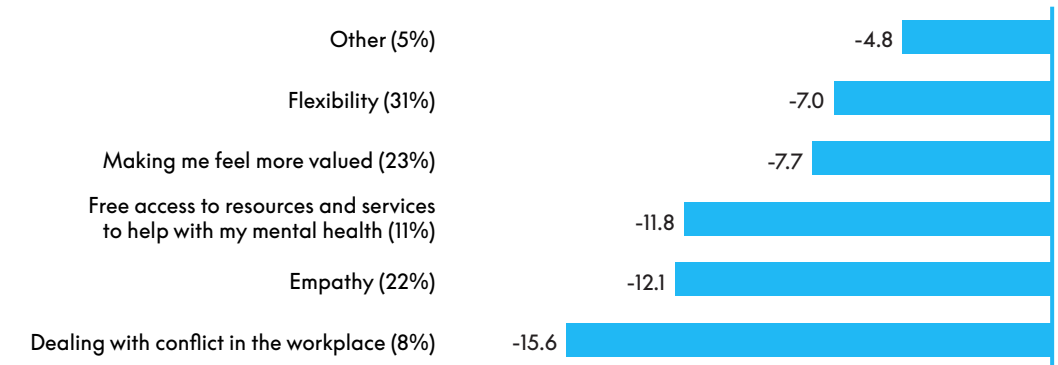
Britons were asked which action taken by their employer is most important in supporting their mental health.

- Nearly one-third (31 per cent) of Britons report that flexibility is the most important action taken by their employer in supporting their mental health. This group has a mental health score (-7.0) more than two points higher than the national average (-9.6).
- Nearly one-quarter (23 per cent) indicate that making them feel more valued is the most important action taken by their employer, followed by 22 per cent reporting empathy.
- The lowest mental health score (-15.6) is observed in eight per cent of Britons who report dealing with conflict in the workplace is the most important action taken by their employer in supporting mental health.

Most important action taken by my employer in supporting mental health



MHI score by the most important action taken by my employer in supporting mental health

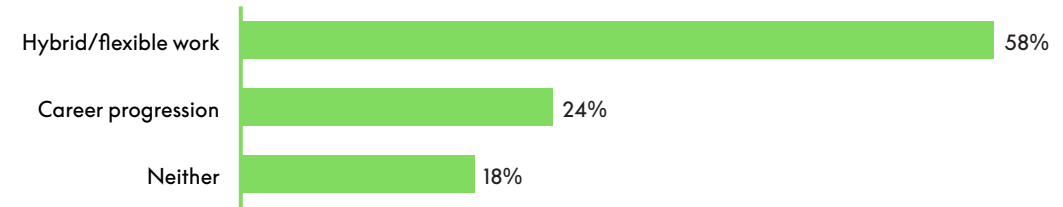


Importance of flexible/hybrid work or career progression

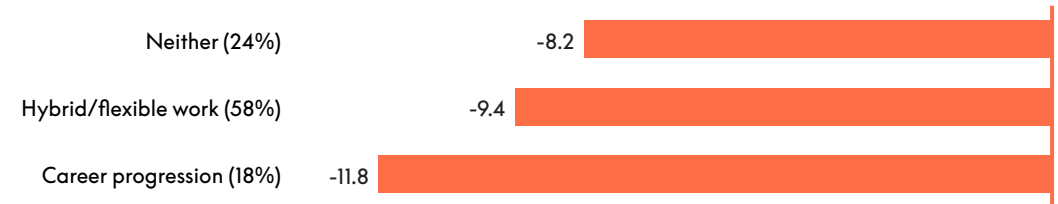
Britons were asked which is more important, flexible/hybrid work or career progression.

- Nearly three-in-five (58 per cent) report that flexible/hybrid work is more important than career progression.
- Managers are more than twice as likely as non-managers to indicate that career progression is more important than flexible/hybrid work.
- Parents are 60 per cent more likely than non-parents to indicate that career progression is more important than flexible/hybrid work.

Which is most important to you?



MHI score by which is most important to you

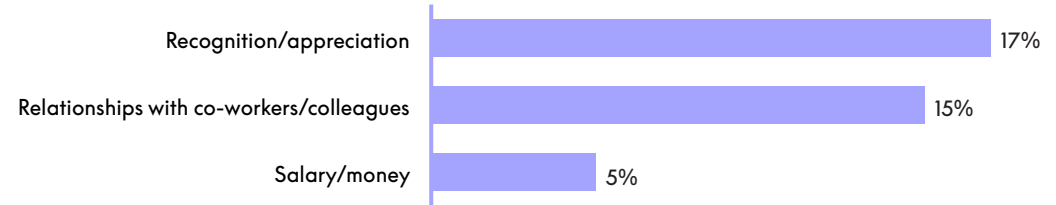


Belonging

Britons were asked what is most important for them to feel a sense of belonging at work.

- Britons most commonly reported recognition or appreciation, relationships with co-workers or colleagues, and money as most important to feel a sense of belonging at work.
- Respondents reporting relationships with co-workers or colleagues as most important have higher mental health, work productivity, isolation, and financial risk scores than national averages.
- Those reporting recognition or appreciation as most important have lower mental health and isolation scores than national averages.
- Those reporting money as most important have work productivity and financial risk scores than national averages.

What is most important to feel a sense of belonging at work?

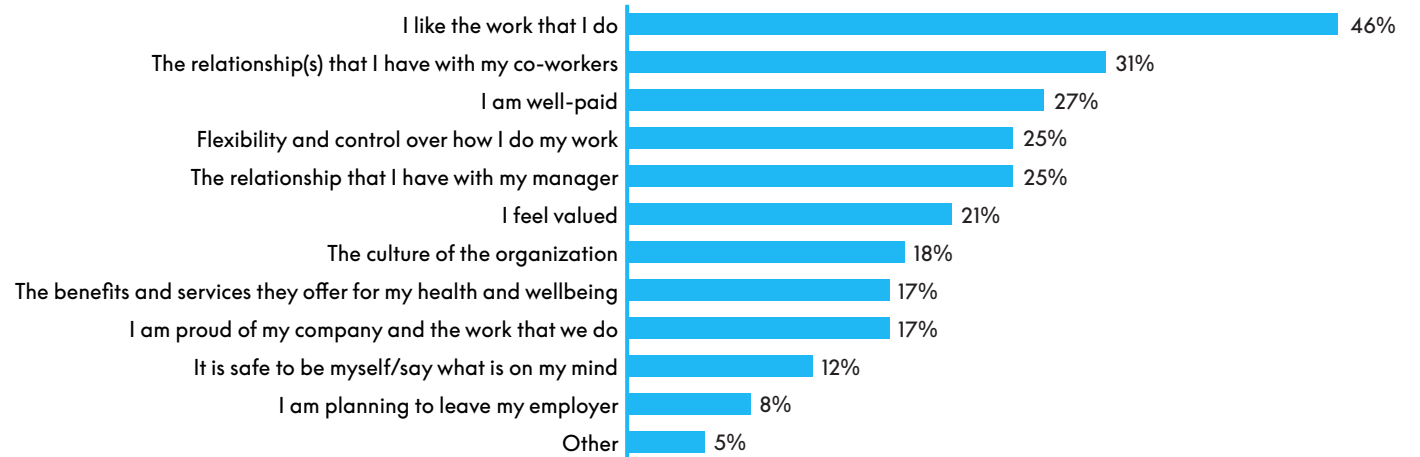


Reasons for remaining with an employer

Britons were asked for the reasons they stay with their employer.

- Nearly half (46 per cent) of Britons report that liking the work they do is the reason they stay with their employer.
- Nearly one-third (31 per cent) indicate that relationships with their co-workers is the reason they stay, and more than one-quarter (27 per cent) report that being well-paid is the reason for staying with their employer.
- More than one-in-five (21 per cent) report that they feel valued, and this group has the second highest mental health score (-1.4).
- Eight per cent are planning to leave their employer and this group has a mental health score (-17.6), more eight points below the national average.
- Managers are 50 per cent more likely than non-managers to report that feeling valued is the primary reason for staying with their employer.

Reasons for staying with my employer



MHI score by reasons for staying with my employer

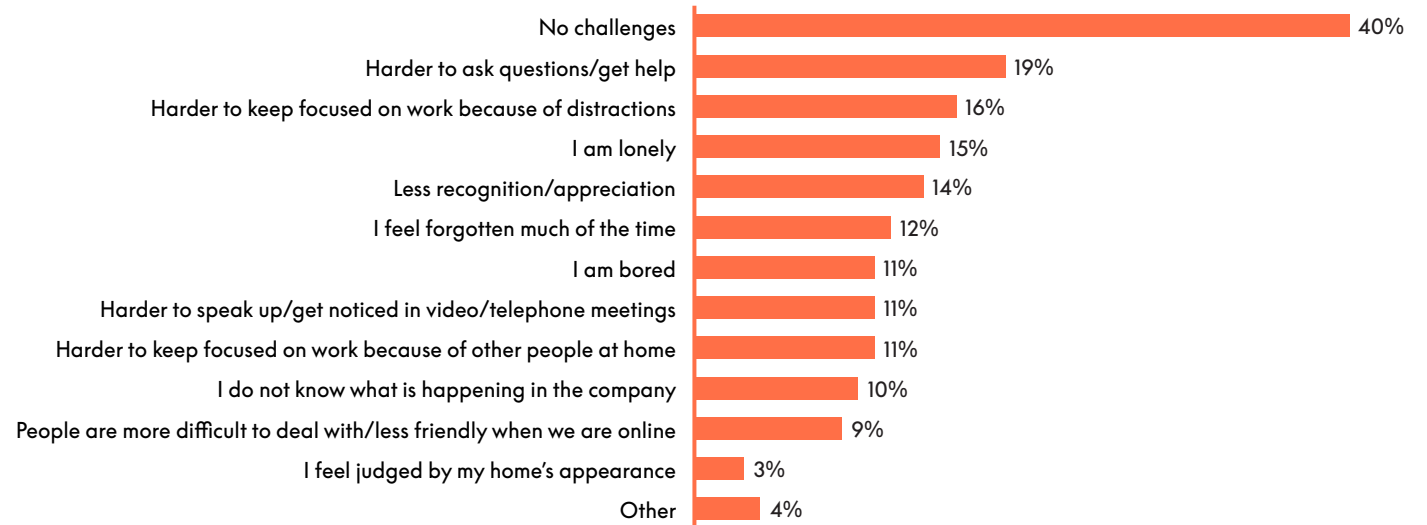


Work from home

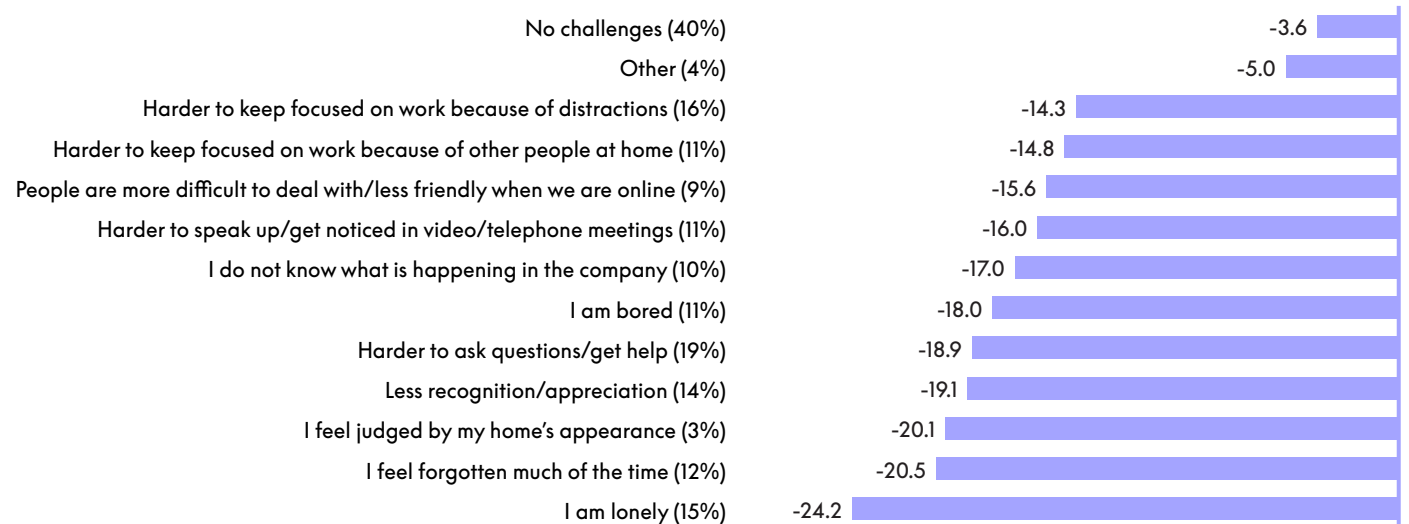
More than half (56 per cent) of Britons who report working from home were asked about the greatest challenge in this environment.

- Two-in-five (40 per cent) do not have challenges working from home. This group has the most favourable mental health score (-3.6), six points higher than the national average (-9.6).
- Fifteen per cent of Britons working from home feel lonely and 12 per cent feel forgotten most of the time. Both groups have mental health scores more than 10 points below the national average.

Greatest challenge working from home



MHI score by greatest challenge working from home

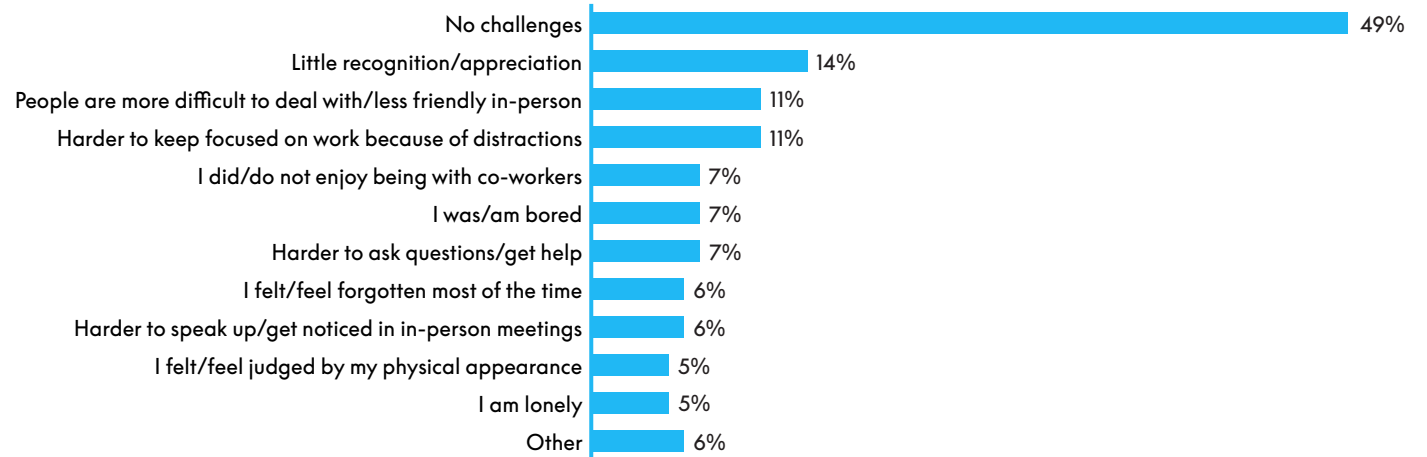


Work at jobsite

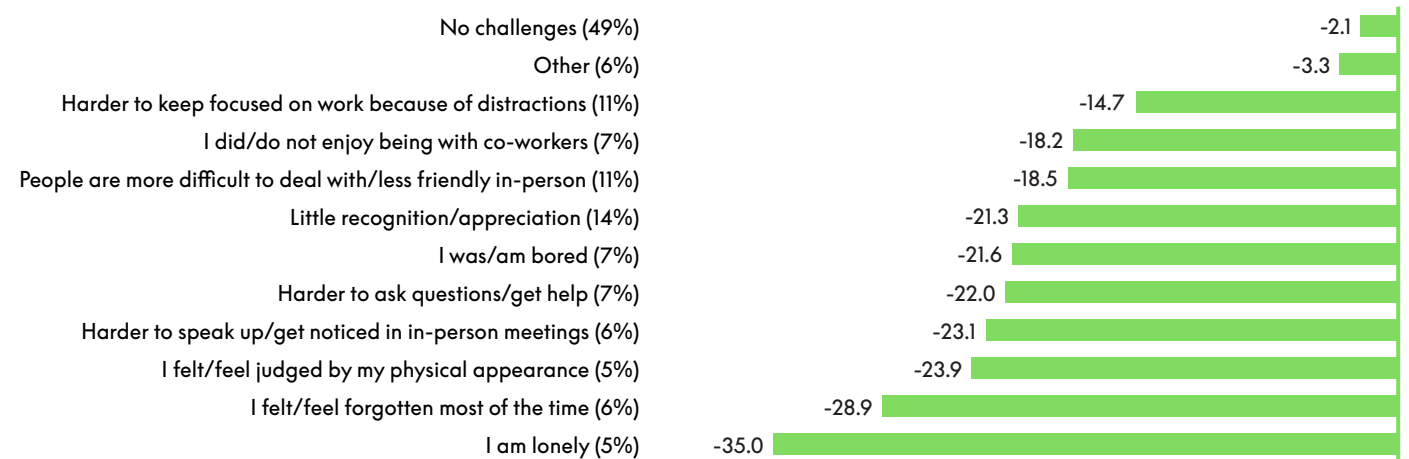
Britons working at the jobsite were asked about the greatest challenge in this environment.

- Nearly half (49 per cent) of Britons do not have challenges working at the jobsite. This group has the most favourable mental health score (-2.1), more than seven points higher than the national average (-9.6).
- Eleven per cent indicate that the greatest challenge is that people are more difficult to deal with or less friendly in-person. This group has a mental health score more than 19 points below the national average.
- Despite being at the jobsite, 11 per cent of Britons say that they are lonely or feel forgotten much of the time. This group has a mental health score more than 19 points below the national average.

Greatest challenge working at jobsite



MHI score by greatest challenge working at jobsite



Career impact of work from home

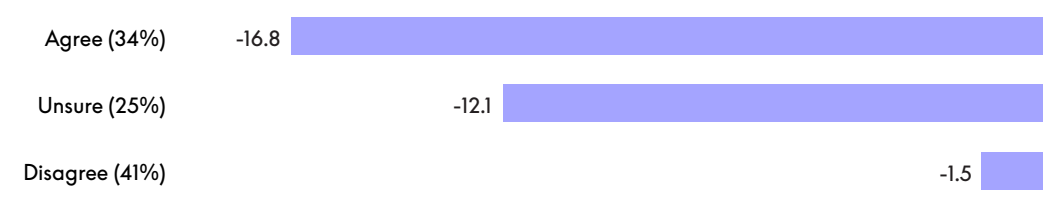
Britons were asked whether they would be concerned that career opportunities would be limited if they were to work from home full or part-time.

- More than one-third (34 per cent) of Britons believe their career opportunities would be limited if they were to work from home. The mental health score of this group (-16.8), is seven points lower than the national average (-9.6).
- More than two-in-five (41 per cent) do not believe that their career opportunities would be limited, and this group has the most favourable mental health score (-1.5).
- Britons under the age of 40 are twice as likely than those 50 and older to believe their career opportunities would be limited if they were to work from home.

Are you concerned about career opportunities if working from home?



MHI score by concern about career opportunities if working from home



Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

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 each geography compared to benchmarks collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. The increases and decreases in the MHI are intended to predict cost and productivity risks and inform the need for investment in mental health support by business and government.

The Mental Health Index™ report has three 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

Data for this report is collected through an online survey of 2,000 people who live in the United Kingdom and are currently employed or who were employed within the prior six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in the United Kingdom.

The same respondents take part each month to remove a sampling bias. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. The Mental Health Index™ has been published monthly since April 2020. Benchmark data was collected in 2017, 2018 and 2019. Data for the current report was collected between January 13 and 26, 2022..

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. Everyone's scores are added and then divided by a 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 comprises data from 2017, 2018 and 2019. This was a period of relative social stability and steady economic growth. **The change compared 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 score reflects a comparison of 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 and 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@lifeworks.com



About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a world leader in providing digital and in-person solutions that support the total wellbeing of individuals. We deliver a personalized continuum of care that helps our clients improve the lives of their people and by doing so, improve their business.

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