

# The Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™

United Kingdom | September 2022

 **TELUS** Health

LifeWorks



# Table of contents

<b>1 What you need to know for September 2022</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3 Mental Health Index™ (regional)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6 Overview of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>2 The Mental Health Index™</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4 Mental Health Index™ (industry)</b>	<b>13</b>	Methodology	28
Mental health risk	5	<b>5 Spotlight</b>	<b>14</b>	Calculations	28
Mental Health Index™ sub-scores	6	Trust between employees and employers	14	Additional data and analyses	28
Anxiety	7	Work effort	18		
Isolation	8	Stress	20		
Financial risk	9	Isolation	21		
Demographics	10	Relationship quality	22		
Employment	10	Mental health issues	25		
Emergency savings	10				

# What you need to know for September 2022

## 1. Showing no improvement in three consecutive periods, working Britons continue to experience significant mental strain.

- At 64.1, the mental health of Britons is nearly unchanged from the prior period.
- 34% of Britons have a high mental health risk, 41% have a moderate mental health risk, and 25% have a low mental health risk.
- 26% feel alone more often and this group has a mental health score 23 points below the national average.
- Younger people (under 40) are more likely to feel alone more often.
- Financial risk declined by 0.6-points in September; 34% of UK citizens say inflation is the leading cause of stress.
- The mental health score declined most sharply in Northern Ireland, while mental health improved in England.

## 2. Nearly one in five working Britons report an erosion of trust with their employer since the pandemic.

- 41% indicate that a change in workplace culture is the reason for a decline in trust between employees and their employer.
- 25% indicate that a perceived change in how employee wellbeing is/was handled led to the decline in trust.
- 21% believe that changes in communication caused the decline in trust.

- Positive changes in communication, culture, and the employer's support for employee health and wellbeing are the top reasons for improved trust between employer and employees.

## 3. Mental health and wellbeing is the factor most likely to have a negative impact on the effort given to work.

- Mental health and wellbeing (14%), manager relationship (12%) and recognition (12%) are factors most likely to have a negative impact on the effort given to work.
- 27% identify co-worker relationships as having the most positive impact on their work effort.
- 12% identify their mental health/wellbeing as having the most positive impact on their work effort.

## 4. Adults under the age of 40 are nearly three times more likely to have a mental health condition or issue.

- 13% of working Britons self-report a mental health condition or issue; a further 15% are unsure.
- 30% say their mental health condition or issue worsened since the pandemic and the mental health of this group is more than 29 points below the national average.
- 46% attribute the decline in their mental health to having more personal stress.
- 22% attribute the decline in their mental health to having more work stress.
- 14% attribute the decline in their mental health to feeling isolated.

41%

say that a change in the handling of employee wellbeing led to a decline in trust

34%

say inflation is the leading cause of stress

30%

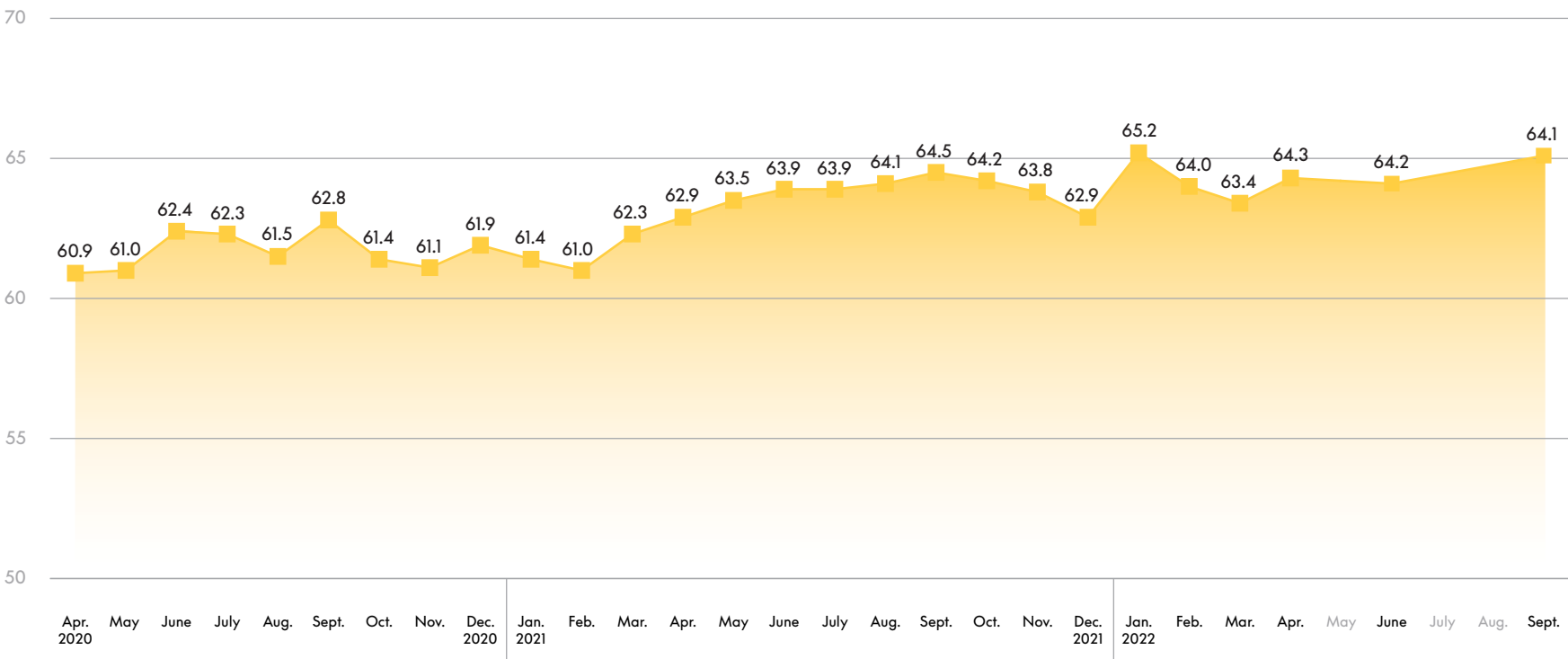
say their mental health worsened since the pandemic

27%

say co-workers have the most positive impact on their work effort

# The Mental Health Index™

The overall Mental Health Index for September 2022 is 64.1 points<sup>1</sup>. The mental health of Britons remains nearly unchanged from the prior period.



MHI Current Month  
September 2022

64.1

June 2022

64.2

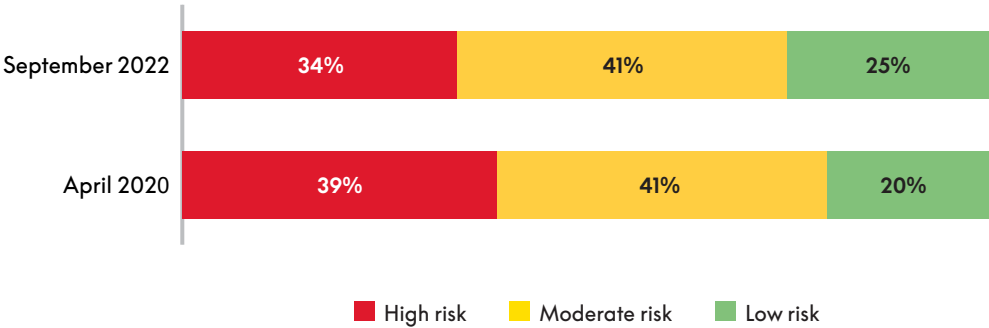
- Distressed 0-49
- Strained 50-79
- Optimal 80-100

<sup>1</sup> Beginning in May 2022, corresponding to year 3 of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™, scores are represented as absolute. The move to absolute scores has been taken given the degree of change that has occurred over the last two years. It is unlikely that a return to pre-pandemic levels will be realized hence the reference relative to that benchmark is no longer relevant.

## Mental health risk

In September 2022, 34 per cent of Britons have a high mental health risk, 41 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 25 per cent have a low mental health risk. Twenty-eight per cent of people in the high-risk group report a mental health condition or issue, eight per cent report a mental health condition or issue in the moderate-risk group, and two per cent of people in the low-risk group report a mental health condition or issue.

In contrast, in April 2020, at the launch of the Index and near the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, 39 per cent of Britons had a high mental health risk, 41 per cent had a moderate mental health risk, and 20 per cent had a low mental health risk.



## Mental Health Index™ sub-scores

The lowest Mental Health Index™ sub-score is for the risk measure of anxiety (56.4), followed by isolation (60.4), depression (62.7), optimism (63.0), work productivity (64.0), and financial risk (71.9). General psychological health (72.3) is the strongest mental health measure in September 2022.

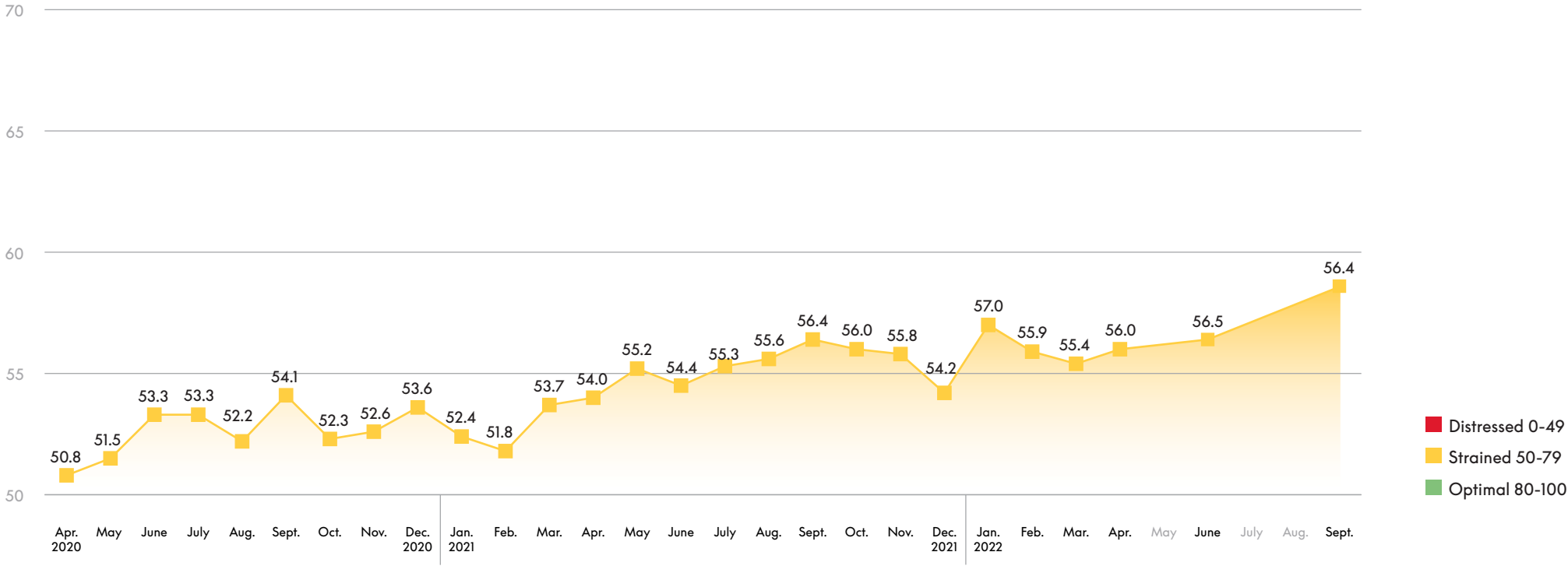
- Anxiety, isolation, and financial risk sub-scores have declined from the prior period.
- With a 1.1-point increase, work productivity and depression sub-scores have the greatest improvement from the prior period.

Mental Health Index™ Sub-scores <sup>2</sup>	September 2022	June 2022
Anxiety	56.4	56.5
Isolation	60.4	61.4
Depression	62.7	61.6
Optimism	63.0	63.0
Work productivity	64.0	62.9
Financial risk	71.9	72.5
Psychological health	72.3	72.1

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

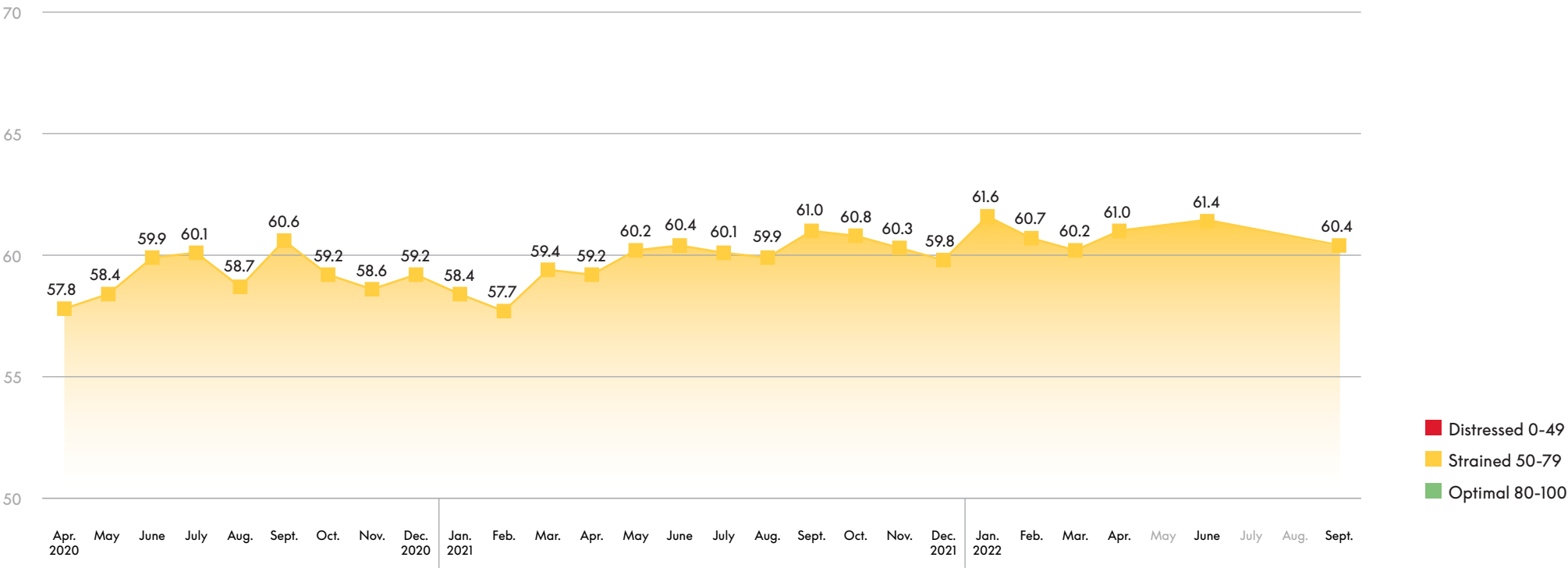
# Anxiety

The anxiety sub-score fluctuated through 2020, then showed general improvement to September 2021. Following from October through December 2021, the score rebounded in January 2022. Following a high in January 2022, the score have followed a declining trend. In September 2022, the anxiety score remains nearly unchanged from the prior period and is the lowest mental health sub-score for the second consecutive period.



Isolation

Since the launch of the Index in April 2020, the isolation sub-score has varied wildly. In September 2022, after two periods of improvement, the isolation score declined one point to 60.4, nearly equal to a low recorded in March 2022.

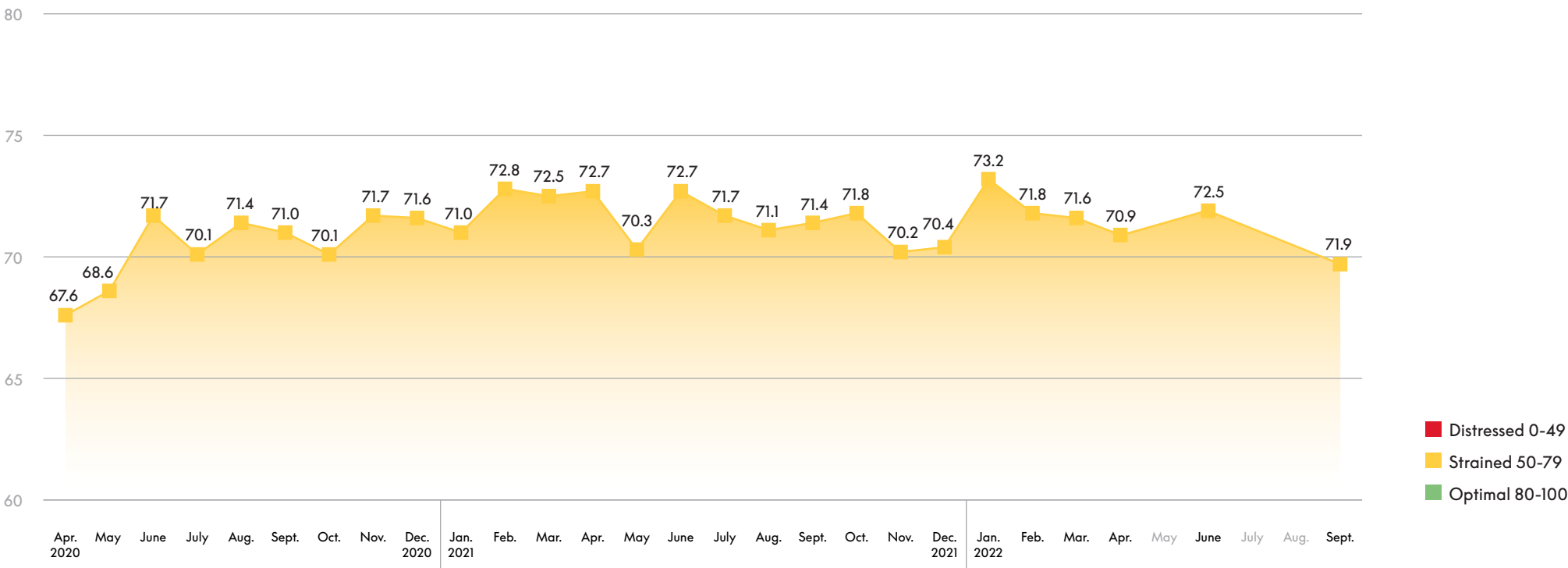




Financial risk

The financial risk sub-score measures the level of individuals' emergency savings.

Since the launch of the Index in April 2020, the financial risk sub-score has fluctuated modestly. In January 2022, the financial risk sub-score reached its peak but declined for three consecutive months thereafter. After rebounding 1.6 points in June 2022, the financial risk sub-score declined to 71.9 in September 2022.



## Demographics

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In September 2022, the mental health score of women is 61.8 compared to 66.2 for men.
- Since April 2020, mental health scores have improved 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. More than two years later, this pattern continues with a lower score for those with at least one child (58.8) than those without children (66.6).

## Employment

- Overall, three per cent of respondents are unemployed<sup>3</sup> and five per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary.
- Individuals reporting reduced salary compared to the prior month have the lowest mental health score (47.3), followed by those working fewer hours (54.0), those not currently employed (61.3), and those with no change to salary or hours (64.9).
- Managers have a near equal mental health score (64.6) to non-managers (64.0).
- Self-employed individuals have the highest mental health score (67.6)
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (59.5).

## Emergency savings

- Those without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (47.6) than the overall group (64.1). Individuals with emergency savings have a mental health score of 69.7.

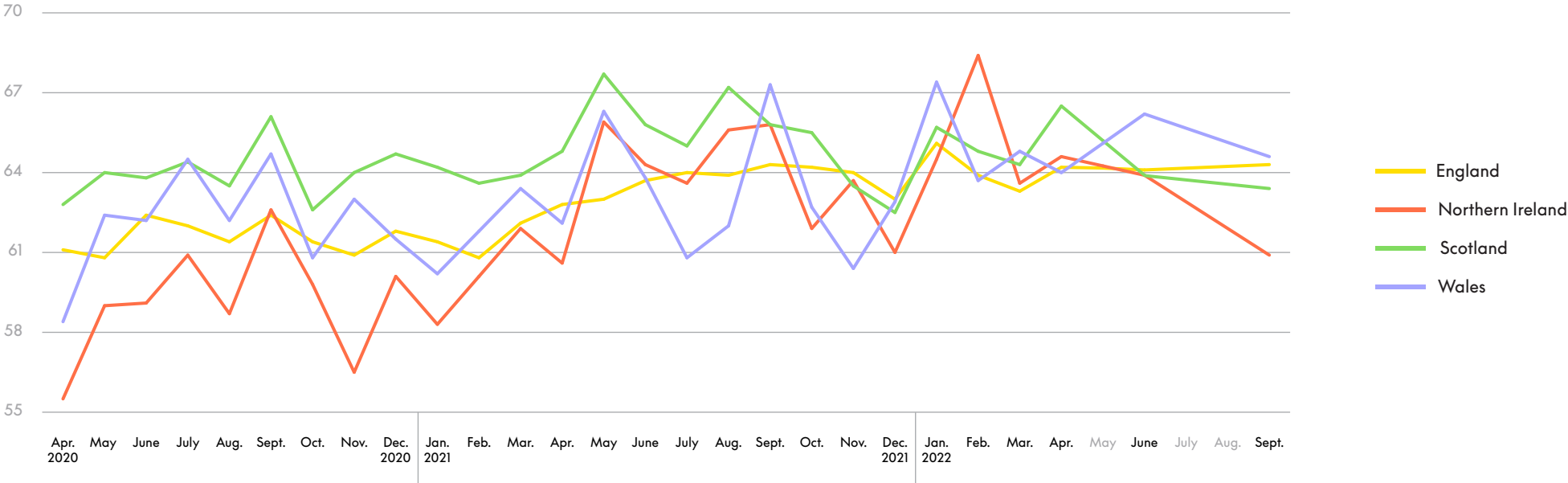
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3 MHI respondents who have been employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

# Mental Health Index™ (regional)

Since April 2020, regional mental health scores have fluctuated. In September 2022, the mental health scores in all regions apart from England declined from the prior period.

- With a significant 3.0-point decline, Northern Ireland has the lowest mental health score in September (60.9).
- Despite a 1.6-point decline, the mental health score in Wales remains the highest (64.6).



Employment status	Sept. 2022	June 2022
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	64.9	64.8
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	54.0	55.4
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	47.3	50.3
Not currently employed	61.3	62.6
Age group	Sept. 2022	June 2022
Age 20-29	55.9	55.0
Age 30-39	56.6	56.9
Age 40-49	61.0	60.9
Age 50-59	66.0	66.7
Age 60-69	71.3	71.1
Number of children	Sept. 2022	June 2022
No children in household	66.6	66.0
1 child	59.0	59.6
2 children	59.1	62.1
3 children or more	56.7	58.3

Region	Sept. 2022	June 2022
England	64.3	64.1
Northern Ireland	60.9	63.9
Scotland	63.4	63.9
Wales	64.6	66.2
Gender	Sept. 2022	June 2022
Men	66.2	66.3
Women	61.8	61.6
Household income	Sept. 2022	June 2022
<£15K/annum	55.3	58.1
£15K to <£30K/annum	58.2	57.9
£30k to <£60K	65.2	65.6
£60k to <£100K	68.3	68.2
£100K and over	73.9	73.7

Employer size	Sept. 2022	June 2022
Self-employed/sole proprietor	67.6	65.2
2-50 employees	66.1	66.0
51-100 employees	59.5	59.5
101-500 employees	63.8	65.2
501-1,000 employees	62.6	59.6
1,001-5,000 employees	64.3	63.2
5,001-10,000 employees	63.7	64.9
More than 10,000 employees	64.5	65.3
Manager	Sept. 2022	June 2022
Manager	64.6	65.3
Non-manager	64.0	63.3

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

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

# Mental Health Index™ (industry)

The lowest mental health score in September 2022 is among individuals employed in Wholesale Trade (57.5), followed by those working in Administrative and Support services (57.6), and Retail Trade (60.8).

Those employed in Real Estate, Rental and Leasing (73.4), Management of Companies and Enterprises (69.8), and Construction (69.1) have the highest mental health scores this month.

Changes from the prior month are shown in the table.

Industry	September 2022	June 2022	Change
Information and Cultural Industries	64.1	55.5	8.7
Construction	69.1	64.6	4.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	64.8	61.5	3.3
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	73.4	70.9	2.5
Other	64.4	62.5	1.8
Transportation and Warehousing	63.6	62.9	0.7
Health Care and Social Assistance	61.1	60.8	0.4
Administrative and Support services	57.6	57.6	0.0
Finance and Insurance	67.9	68.2	-0.3
Educational Services	66.3	66.8	-0.4
Public Administration	63.2	63.6	-0.5
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	65.9	66.7	-0.8
Manufacturing	65.9	67.4	-1.5
Food Services	61.7	63.3	-1.6
Retail Trade	60.8	63.6	-2.9
Other services (except Public Administration)	63.3	66.5	-3.1
Wholesale Trade	57.5	62.9	-5.4

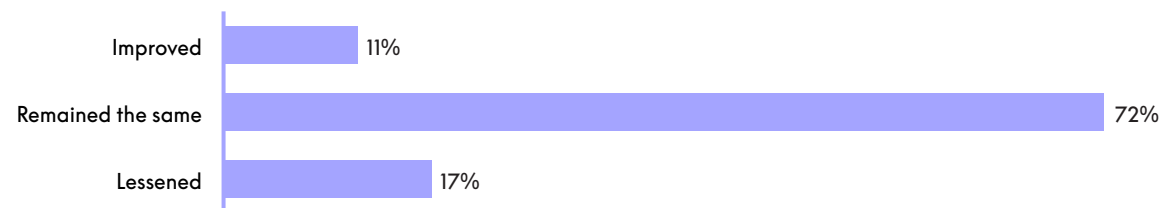
# Spotlight

## Trust between employees and employers

Britons were asked how trust between employees and their employer has changed compared to before the pandemic.

- Nearly three-quarters (72 per cent) indicate there has been no change in trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic, and this group has the most favourable mental health score (66.5).
- Nearly one in five (17 per cent) report a decline in trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic. This group has the lowest mental health score (53.6), more than ten points below the national average (64.1).
- More than one in ten (11 per cent) report improved trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic.
- Managers are 80 per cent more likely than non-managers to report improved trust between employees and their employer.
- Parents are 80 per cent more likely than non-parents to report improved trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic.

### Change in trust between employees and employer compared to before the pandemic



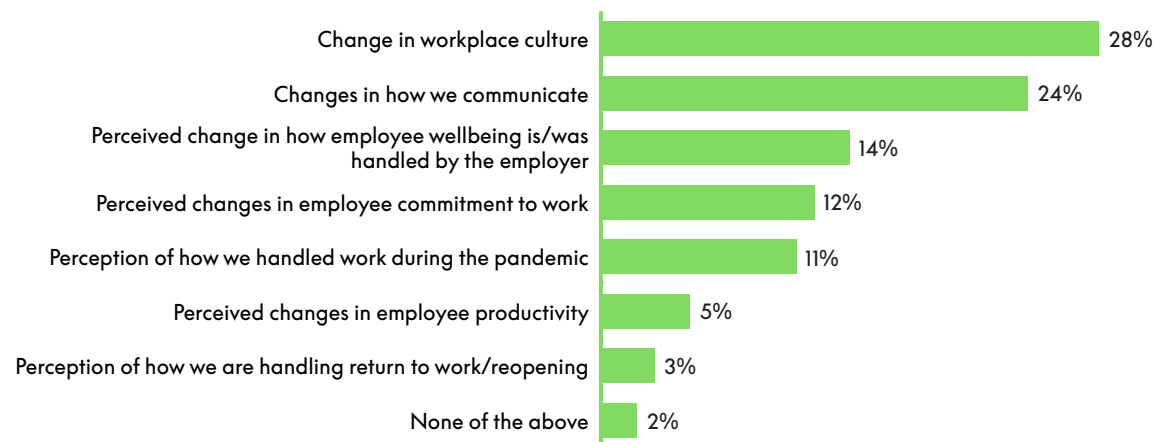
### MHI score by change in trust between employees and employer compared to before the pandemic



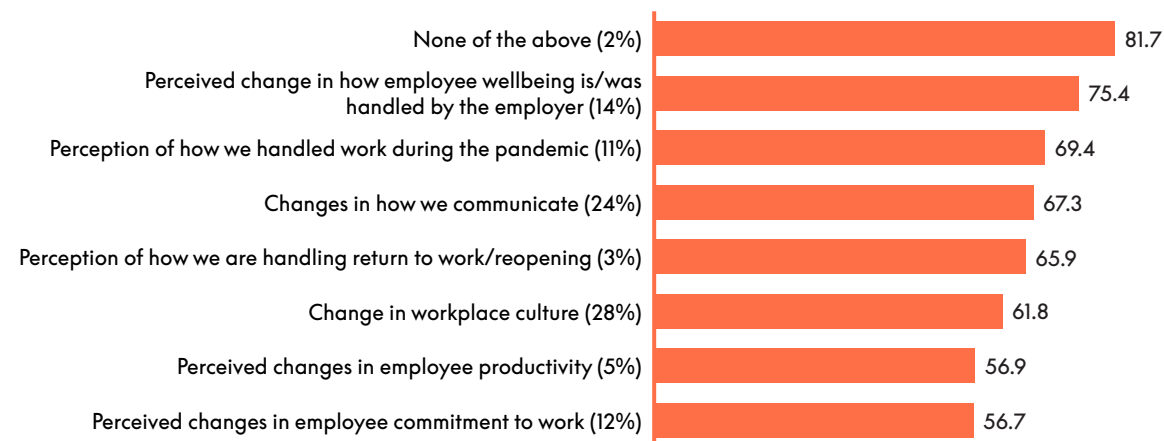
Britons reporting **improved** trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic were asked why the level of trust changed.

- More than one-quarter (28 per cent) indicate that changes in workplace culture is the reason for improved trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic, 24 per cent report a change in communication, and 14 per cent report a change in how employee wellbeing is/was handled by the employer.
- Respondents reporting increased trust because of the change in how employee wellbeing is/was being handled have the second highest mental health score (75.4), followed by those reporting increased trust due to the perception of how work was handled during the pandemic (69.4), and those who report increased trust because of changes in communication (67.3).

## Causes of improved trust between employees and employers



## MHI score by causes of improved trust between employees and employers



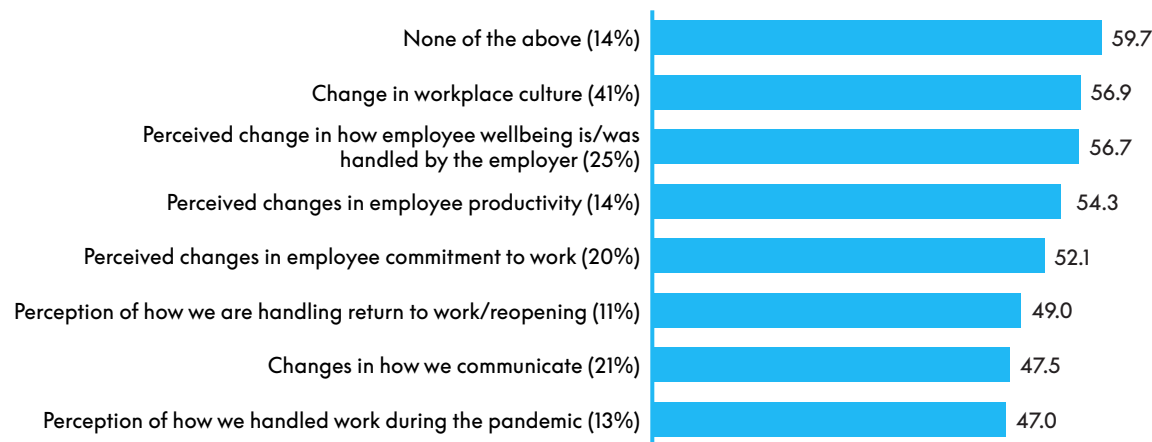
Britons reporting a **decline** in trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic were asked why the level of trust changed.

- More than two in five (41 per cent) indicate that a change in workplace culture is the reason for a decline in trust between employees and their employer compared to before the pandemic, 25 per cent report a perceived change in how employee wellbeing is/was handled contributed to the decline, and 21 per cent report a change in communication as the reason for the decline in trust.
- Respondents reporting decreased trust because of perception of how work was handled during the pandemic have the lowest mental health score (47.0), followed by those reporting decreased trust due to changes in communication (47.5), and those reporting decreased trust because of perception of how return to work/ re-opening is being handled (49.0).

### Causes of a decline in trust between employees and employers



### MHI score by causes of a decline in trust between employees and employers





- Managers were asked how trust of their employees has changed compared to before the pandemic.
- Three-quarters (75 per cent) indicate there has been no change in their trust of employees compared to before the pandemic, and this group has the most favourable mental health score (67.1).
  - More than one in ten (11 per cent) report a decline in trust compared to before the pandemic, and these managers have the lowest mental health score (50.9), 13 points below the national average (64.1).
  - More than one in ten (14 per cent) report an improvement in trust compared to before the pandemic, yet the mental health of this group (62.1) is below the national average (64.1).

Managers: change in trust of employees compared to before the pandemic



MHI score by change in trust of employees compared to before the pandemic



## Work effort

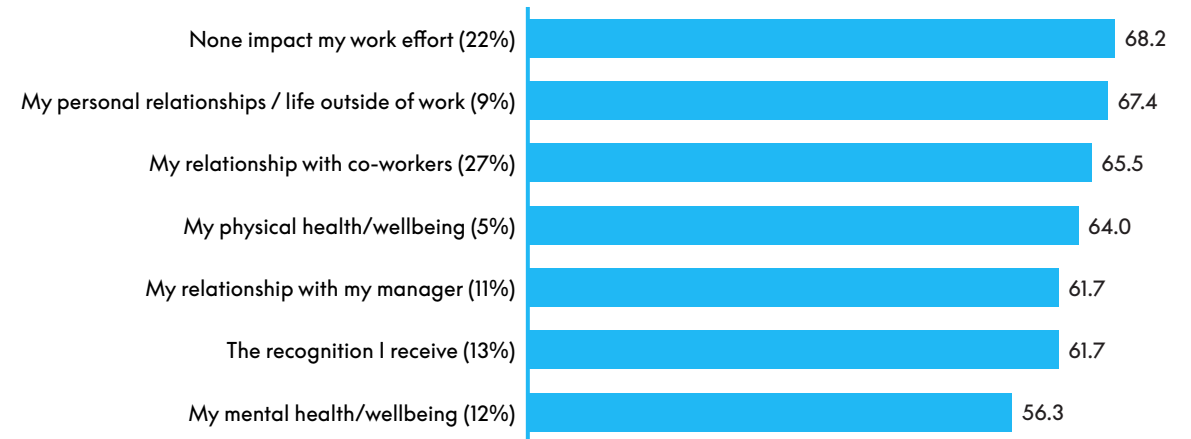
Britons were asked which factors most **positively** impact the effort given to their work.

- More than one in four (27 per cent) indicate that relationships with co-workers most positively impacts the effort given to their work.
- Thirteen per cent report that the recognition they receive most positively impacts the effort given to their work, and 12 per cent indicate that their mental health/wellbeing has the most positive impact on their work effort.
- Individuals under 40 are 80 per cent more likely than those over 50 to report that the recognition they receive most positively impacts their work effort.

### Factors that positively impact the effort given to work



### MHI score by factors that positively impact the effort given to work



Britons were asked which factors most **negatively** impact the effort given to their work.

- More than one in ten (14 per cent) report that their mental health/wellbeing most negatively impacts the effort given to their work, followed by 12 per cent indicating that the recognition they receive has the most negative impact on their work effort.
- Respondents over 50 are twice as likely as those under 40 to indicate that none of the factors impact the effort given to their work.

### Factors that negatively impact the effort given to work



### MHI score by factors that negatively impact the effort given to work

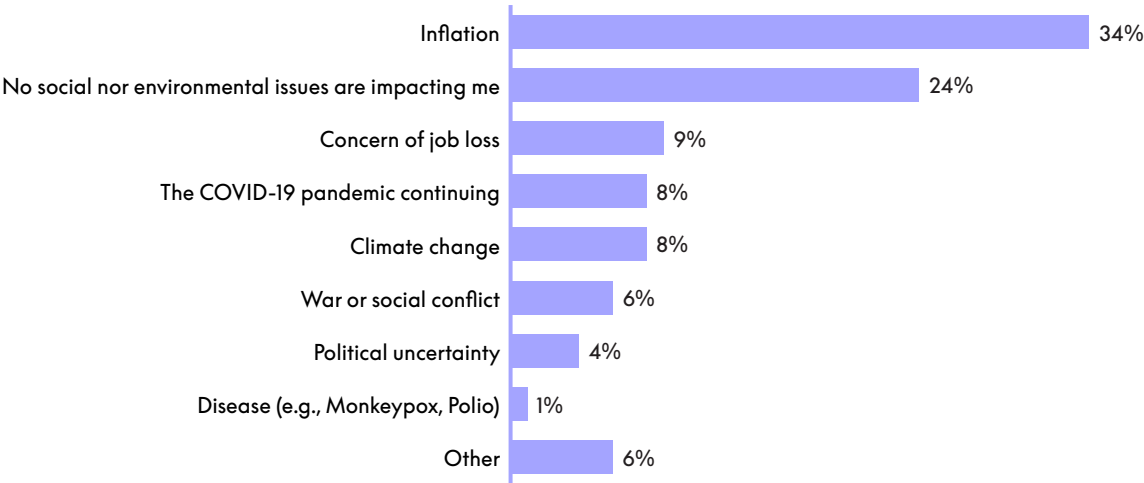


# Stress

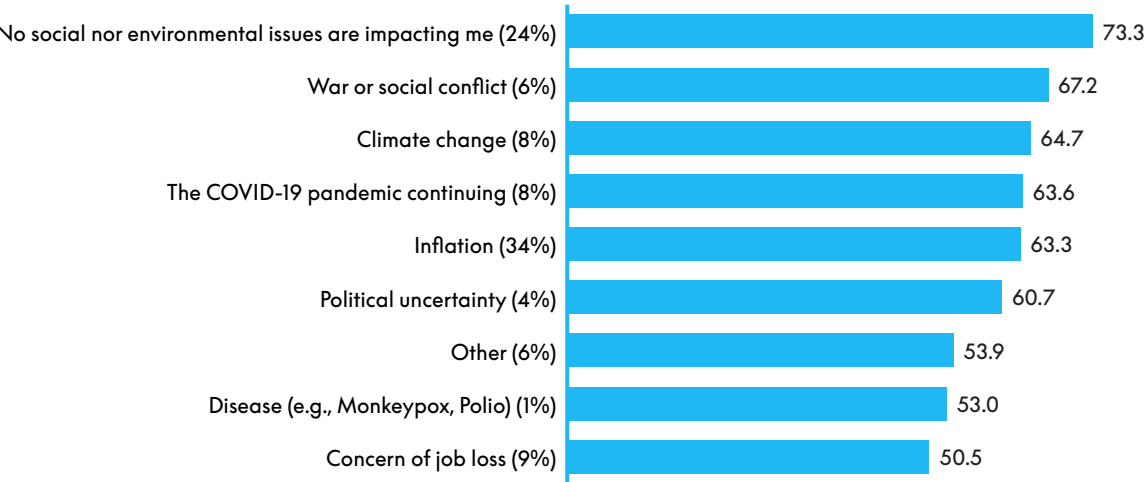
Britons were asked about issues causing the most stress.

- More than one-third (34 per cent) identify inflation as the biggest stressor.
- Nine per cent are concerned about job loss, eight per cent are stressed about continuation of the COVID-19 pandemic, and 8 per cent are most stressed about climate change. Those who are most stressed over the prospect of job loss have the lowest mental health score (50.5), nearly 14 points below the national average (64.1).

## Issues that cause the most stress



## MHI score by issues that cause the most stress

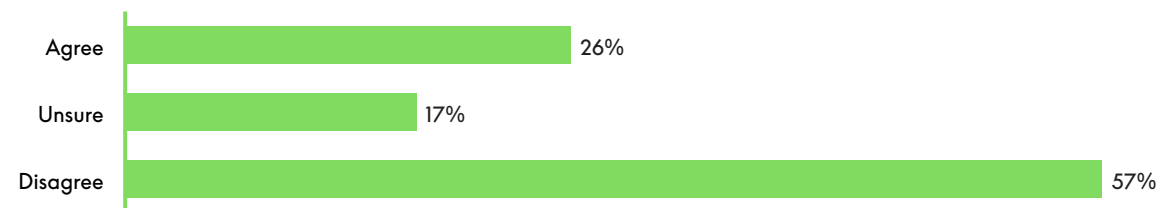


# Isolation

Britons were asked whether they feel alone more often.

- More than one-quarter (26 per cent) feel alone more often. This group has the lowest mental health score (41.2), 36 points below those who do not feel alone more often and 23 points below the national average (64.1). This group also has the lowest isolation score (21.8), more than 61 points below those who do not feel alone more often.
- Nearly three in five (57 per cent) do not feel alone more often. This group has the most favourable mental health score (77.7) and the most favourable isolation score (83.1).
- Respondents under 40 are twice as likely as those over 50 to feel alone more often.

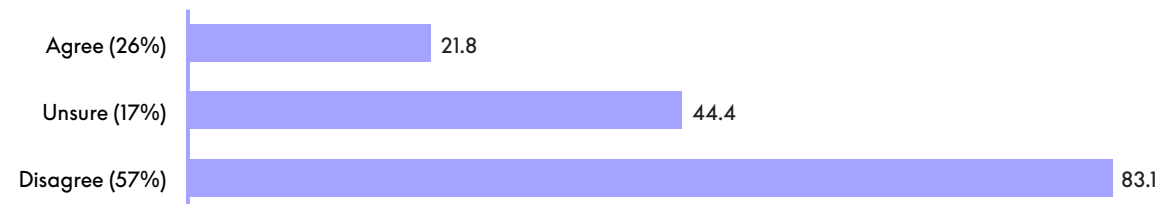
## I feel alone more often



## MHI score by I feel alone more often



## Isolation score by I feel alone more often

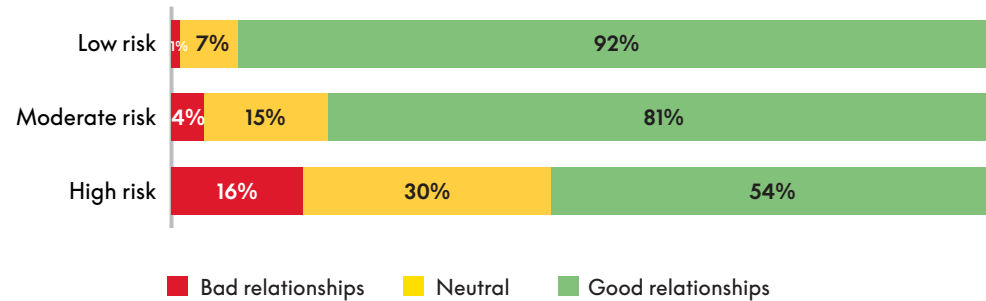


## Relationship quality

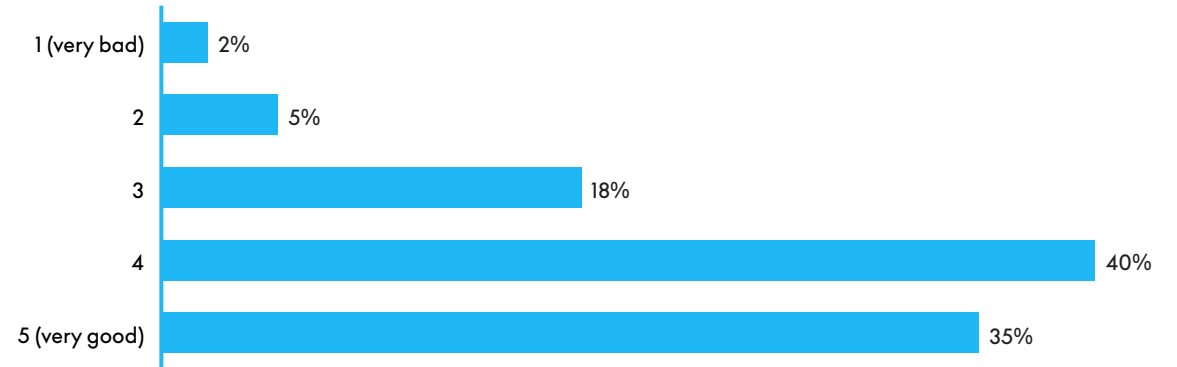
Britons were asked to rate the quality of family relationships on a scale from one to five, with one being "very bad" and five being "very good".

- Three-quarters (75 per cent) rate the quality of family relationships as four or more. The mental health of this group is significantly higher than those who rate the quality of family relationships as bad or very bad.
- Individuals with a low mental health risk are 70 per cent more likely than those with a high mental health risk to rate the quality of family relationships more favourably.

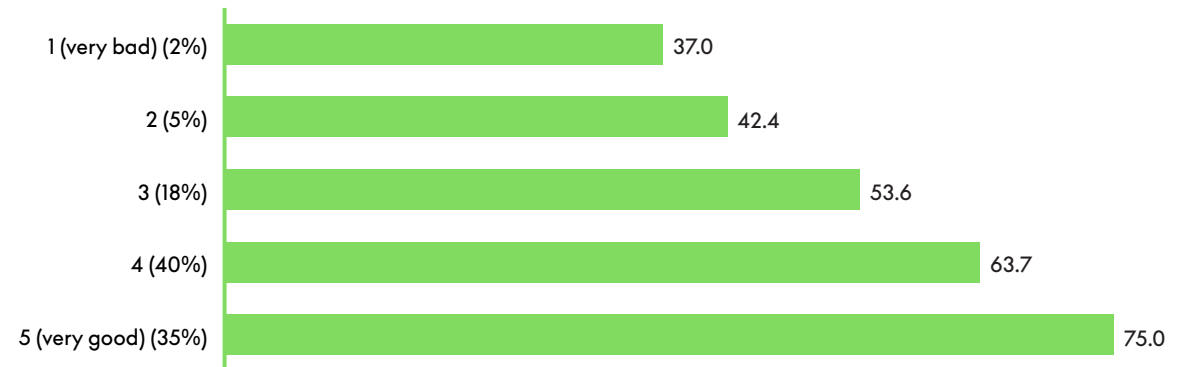
### Mental health risk by quality of family relationships



### Quality of family relationships



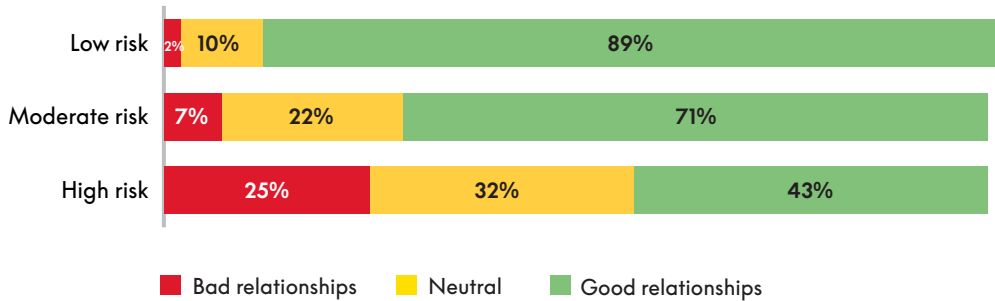
### MHI score by quality of family relationships



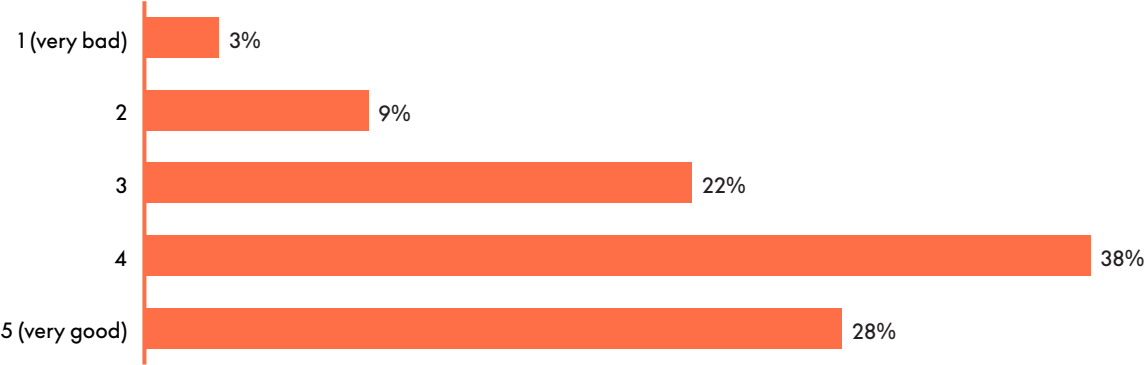
Britons were asked to rate the quality of their friendships on a scale from one to five, with one being “very bad” and five being “very good”.

- Two-thirds (66 per cent) rate the quality of their friendships as four or more. The mental health of this group is significantly higher than those who rate the quality of friendships as bad or very bad.
- Individuals with a low mental health risk are twice as likely as those with a high mental health risk to rate the quality of their friendships more favourably.

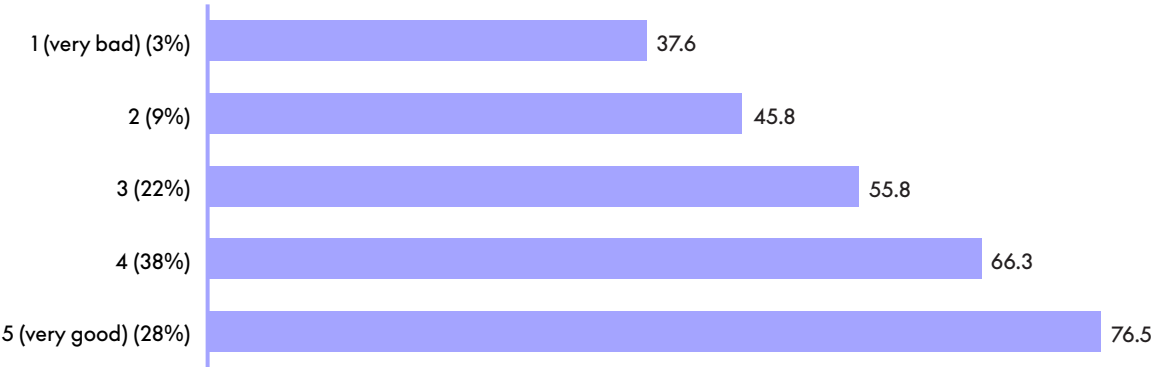
Mental health risk by quality of friendships



Quality of friendships



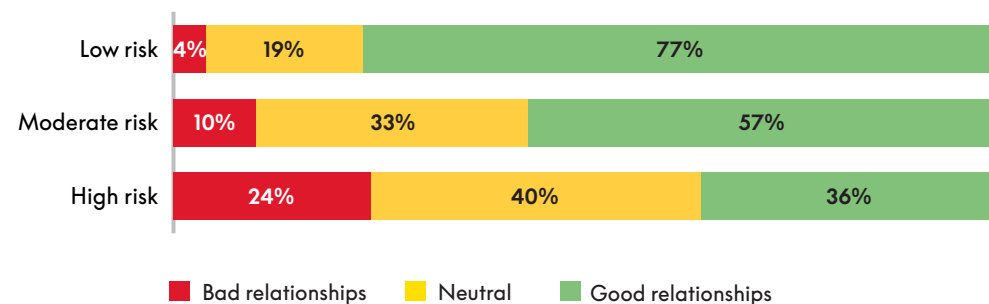
MHI score by quality of friendships



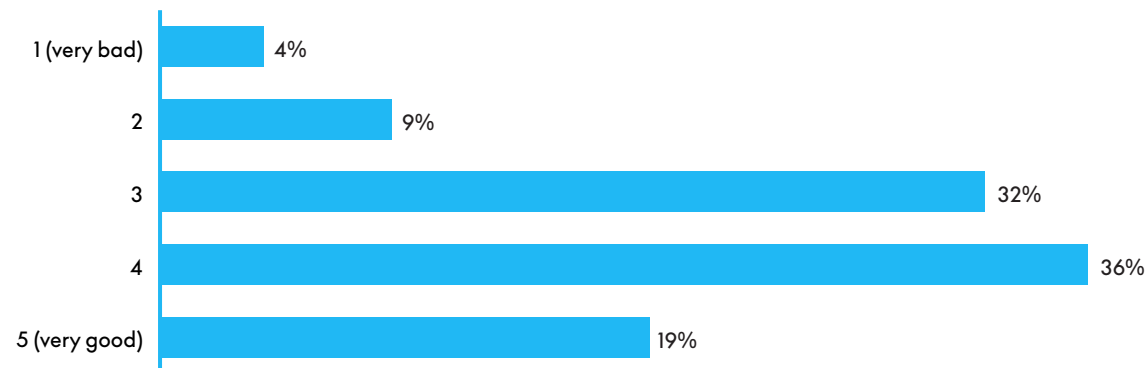
Britons were asked to rate the quality of co-worker relationships on a scale from one to five, with one being “very bad” and five being “very good”.

- More than half (55 per cent) rate the quality of co-worker relationships as four or more. The mental health of this group is significantly higher than those who rate the quality of co-worker relationships as bad or very bad.
- Individuals with a low mental health risk are more than twice as likely as those with a high mental health risk to rate the quality of co-worker relationships more favourably.

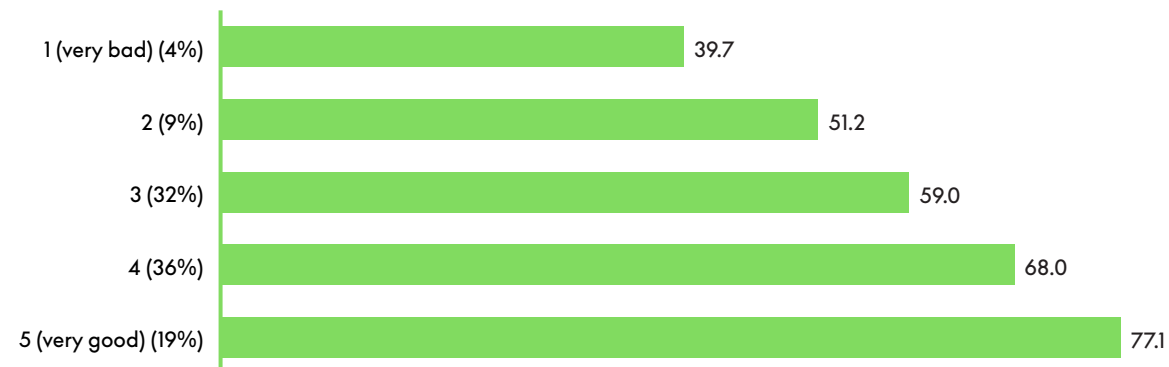
#### Mental health risk by quality of co-worker relationships



#### Quality of co-worker relationships



#### MHI score by quality of co-worker relationships





# Mental health issues

Britons were asked to self-report a diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health condition or issue.

- More than one in ten (13 per cent) report having a mental health condition or issue and the mental health score of this group (44.3) is nearly 20 points below the national average (64.1).
- Fifteen per cent are unsure about whether they have a mental health condition or issue and the mental health score of this group (48.6) is 15 points below the national average (64.1).
- Respondents under 40 are nearly three times more likely than those over 50 to self-report a diagnosed or undiagnosed mental health condition/issue.

## Do you have a mental health condition or issue?



## MHI score by do you have a mental health condition or issue



Britons reporting a mental health condition or issue were asked whether it has changed compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Nearly one-third (30 per cent) report their mental health condition or issue worsened compared to before the pandemic, and this group has a mental health score (34.8), more than 29 points below the national average (64.1).
- Nearly one in four (24 per cent) indicate their mental health condition or issue improved compared to before the pandemic, yet the mental health of this group (51.2) is 13 points below the national average.
- Managers and parents are more likely to report an improvement in their mental health condition or issue compared to before the pandemic.

### Change in mental health condition or issue compared to before the pandemic



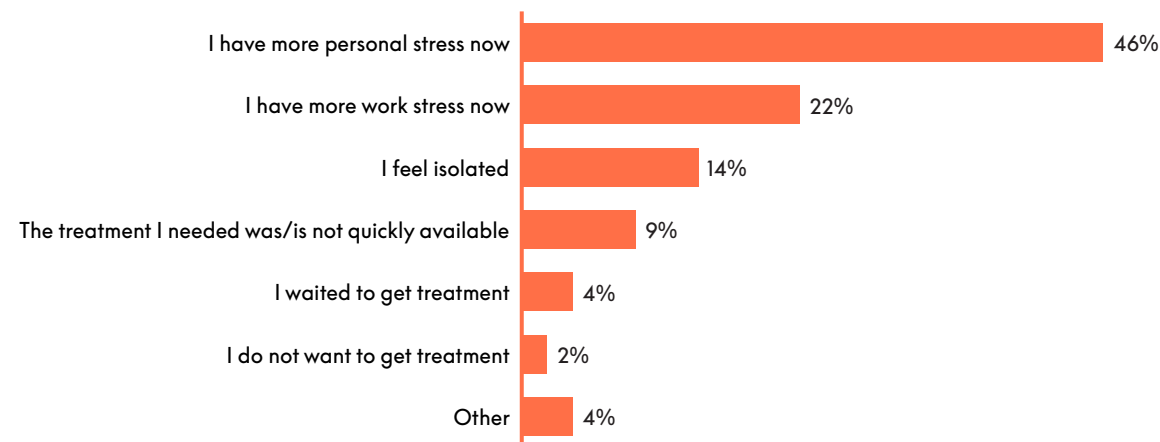
### MHI score by change in mental health condition/issue when compared to before the pandemic



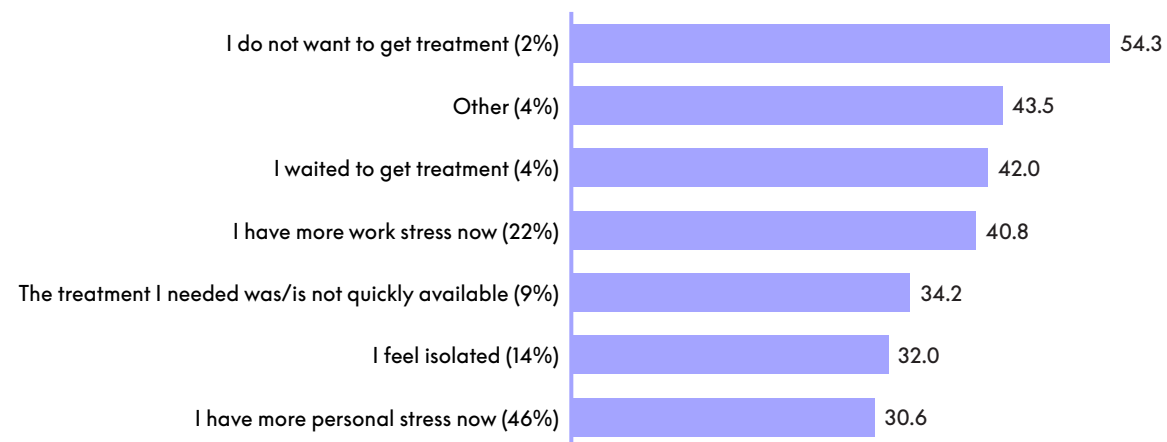
Britons reporting a worsening of their mental health condition or issue compared to before the pandemic were asked why their condition or issue worsened.

- Nearly half (46 per cent) indicate they have more personal stress, 22 per cent report more work stress, and 14 per cent report feeling isolated as reasons for their worsened mental health condition/issue.
- The mental health scores of these groups are significantly lower than the national average. Most notably, the mental health score of respondents who feel isolated (32.0) is 32 points lower than the national average (64.1).
- Women are 50 per cent more likely than men to identify personal stress as the reason for their worsened mental health condition/issue.
- Respondents over 50 are 70 per cent more likely than those under 40 to identify work stress as the reason for their worsened mental health condition or issue.

#### Reason for worsened condition or issue



#### MHI score by reason for worsened condition or issue



# 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. 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 two parts:

1. The overall Mental Health Index™ (MHI).
2. 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. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between September 12 and September 23, 2022.

## Calculations

Beginning in May 2022, corresponding to year 3 of the Mental Health Index by LifeWorks™, scores are represented as absolute. The move to absolute scores has been taken given the degree of change that has occurred over the last two years. It is unlikely that a return to pre-pandemic levels will be realized hence, the reference relative to that benchmark is no longer relevant.

To create the Mental Health Index, a response scoring system is applied to turn individual responses into point values. Higher point values are associated with better mental health and less mental health risk. The sum of scores is divided by the total number of possible points to generate a score out of 100. The raw score is the mathematical mean of the individual scores. Distribution of scores is defined according to the following scale:

**Distressed** 0 - 49    **Strained** 50-79    **Optimal** 80 - 100

## Additional data and analyses

Demographic breakdowns 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](mailto:MHI@lifeworks.com)



LifeWorks is a wholly owned subsidiary of TELUS now operating as part of TELUS Health as a result of its recent acquisition.

## About TELUS Health

TELUS Health is a global healthcare company serving people in more than 160 countries delivering both digital innovation and clinical services to improve total physical, mental and financial health and wellness across the full spectrum of primary and preventative care. By leveraging the power of technology to deliver connected solutions and services both in-person and virtually, TELUS Health is improving access to care and revolutionizing the flow of information while facilitating collaboration, efficiency, and productivity for physicians, pharmacists, health authorities, allied healthcare professionals, insurers, employers and people globally, progressing its vision of transforming healthcare and empowering people to live healthier lives.

Our clinical team is composed of renowned and passionate health professionals around the world delivering best-in-class people-centric care to hundreds of thousands of employers, professionals and their families.

For more information, please visit: [www.telushealth.com](https://www.telushealth.com).