

What's in it for me...?

Willis Towers Watson Employee Health, Wellbeing and Benefits Barometer 2019

Attitudes of UK employees

Introduction

Effective employee health, wellbeing and benefit strategies – both today and in the future – call for meaningful insights and perspectives from the individuals they are designed to help and support.

The 2019 Employee Health, Wellbeing and Benefits Barometer has been devised with this very much in mind – a resource that builds on the wealth of evidence-based business intelligence from Willis Towers Watson to help HRs and business managers shape their policies and provision.

A range of important issues, trends and emerging health and wellbeing considerations have been examined – from benefit preferences to employee lifestyle choices, from musculoskeletal conditions to neurodevelopmental disorders.

There are certainly grounds for optimism within the findings that follow.

A minority of workers – just 14 per cent – say that they're dissatisfied with their current benefits package, and according to the findings from the employee survey base, organisational support is being provided by many UK businesses to meet a range of health needs.

Neurodiversity, for example, is being embraced, with employees revealing a large number of companies (more than half) are recognising the value of differing cognitive characteristics and the importance of assisting employees

with these, where required. More than one in three workers say their employer is also offering support for employees with musculoskeletal issues and a similar number say their companies encourage workers to take regular breaks from their daily tasks.

Such progressive thinking and proactive inclusivity must be welcomed.

Elsewhere, however, the barometer shines a light on areas of concern. Consultation over rewards and benefits preferences remains limited, for example, despite their clear importance in recruiting and retaining talent.

Few employees are offered health advice by their employer on alcohol consumption, a contributing factor to physical and mental ill-health. Meanwhile, more than two-thirds of workers with musculoskeletal conditions say their job has contributed to their condition, and almost half believe the nature of their jobs hinders efforts to lose weight.

We hope the 2019 barometer, a spotlight on health and benefit issues through the lens of workers, will help provide UK plc with a deeper of understanding of the pressing needs and priorities of the modern workforce.

Willis Towers Watson

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About the research

The research was conducted through online and mobile polling by research consultancy OnePoll. It was conducted among 2,000 permanently employed UK adults.

Key findings

Employee Benefits

- **Benefits pull:** Almost nine in ten (89%) employees believe benefit provision is important when deciding to work for a company, especially in higher earners (94%).
- **Pensions top but health important:** While pensions were the most-valued benefit (selected by 62% of respondents in their top five benefits), health insurance was also held in high regard (43%) along with life insurance (40%).
- **It's not all about me:** More than two-thirds (67%) of workers claim they were not consulted about their benefits preference by their current employer, although there are marked variations by salary and gender.
- **Happier higher earners:** 60% of higher earners state they are happy with their current benefits package, with the figure dipping to 40% in those earning less than the national average. However, 14% of UK employees claim they are fairly or very dissatisfied with the benefits they currently receive.
- **Disconnection with lower earners:** Almost half (46%) of those surveyed said their employer makes provision for their health and wellbeing but this figure drops to 39% among lower earners.

Lifestyle

- **Crossing the line:** More than half (52%) of employees feel uncomfortable with their employer for getting involved in their lifestyle choices. Crossing a personal/work life boundary is the biggest reason for this.
- **A moral obligation:** One in three workers (30%) believe their employer has a moral responsibility to help employees lead a fit and healthy lifestyle. This opinion is particularly strong in the 18 to 24 age group (39%).

Neurodiversity

- **Neurodiverse individuals well-represented in workforce:** More than one in ten (15%) of respondents say they or a work colleague lives with a neurodevelopmental disorder, such as Autism or Dyspraxia.
- **Support not universal:** Nearly a third (32%) of those surveyed say their employer fails to give any additional support or help to those workers with a neurodevelopment disorder.

Alcohol

- **Booze Britain:** Almost one in five (16%) of employees have taken at least one sickness absence day off work in the last 12 months due to a hangover, with more than half (51%) not admitting the real reason to their employer.
- **Hindered productivity:** 27% of workers revealed at least one hangover a month has an impact on productivity at work. Older employees were found to be less affected (42% of 18 to 24-year-olds compared to 10% of over 55s).
- **Dangerous driving:** 15% of respondents admit they have been to work still feeling drunk after a night out in the last 12 months, with younger employees the biggest culprits (24% of 25 to 34-year-olds and 23% in 18 to 24-year-olds). Almost half (47%) said they drove to work in these situations.
- **Putting the pressure on:** Almost one in five (19%) workers believe their employer contributes to unhealthy levels of drinking among staff.

Regular breaks

- **Too busy to break:** 64% of employees don't take regular breaks from their work, with workers putting the blame on being too busy.
- **Taking a breather beneficial:** Even though more than half (52%) of employees claim taking regular breaks would improve their health and wellbeing, 46% revealed their company doesn't encourage them to do so.

Key findings

Obesity

- **Weight loss prevention:** Almost half (47%) of employees believe their job prevents them from losing weight, with 49% of blaming skipped gym visits due to longer working hours (49%).
- **Impact on productivity:** A fifth (20%) of workers say their weight has a negative impact on their job or career, with consequences felt the most among 25 to 34-year-olds (29%). The biggest reason cited was low energy levels that affect productivity (61%).

Musculoskeletal

- **Third of older workers suffering:** Almost a quarter (23%) of employees say they suffer from a musculoskeletal condition, which rises - perhaps unsurprisingly - in the 55+ age group (33%).
- **Breaking their back for the job:** More than two-thirds of workers claim their current occupation has been a contributing factor to their condition while 22% blame their job entirely.
- **Support not provided:** Even though more than half of employees (51%) say their musculoskeletal condition has an impact on their ability to do their job, a third (33%) revealed their employer doesn't offer adequate support, even though they are aware of their condition.
- **NHS worries:** 36% of respondents won't be turning to the NHS for treatment of their condition, with 71% of employees expressing concern that access to future treatment via the NHS may be restricted.

Fertility

- **Employer support sought:** One in five (20%) workers think employers should offer fertility treatments as a benefit – especially those aged 18 to 24 (31%) and 25 to 34 (31%).
- **Workers divided over egg freezing:** 31% of employees would view their employer as forward-thinking if egg freezing was offered. But almost a quarter (24%) sees it as a selfish attempt to retain talent for longer.

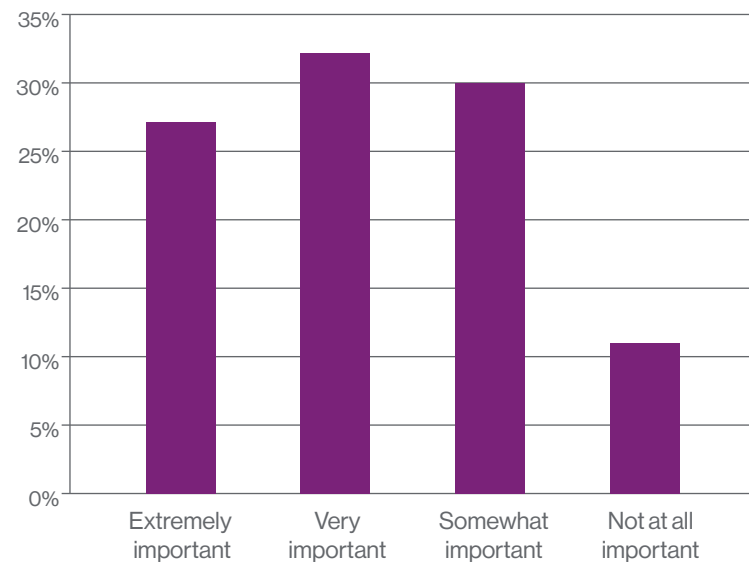
Q1: How important is benefit provision (such as a pension scheme, health or life insurance) in your decision to work for a company?

Almost nine in ten workers (89%) say that benefits play an important role when it comes to choosing whether to work for a company or not. Of those, more than a quarter (27%) said they were 'extremely important'.

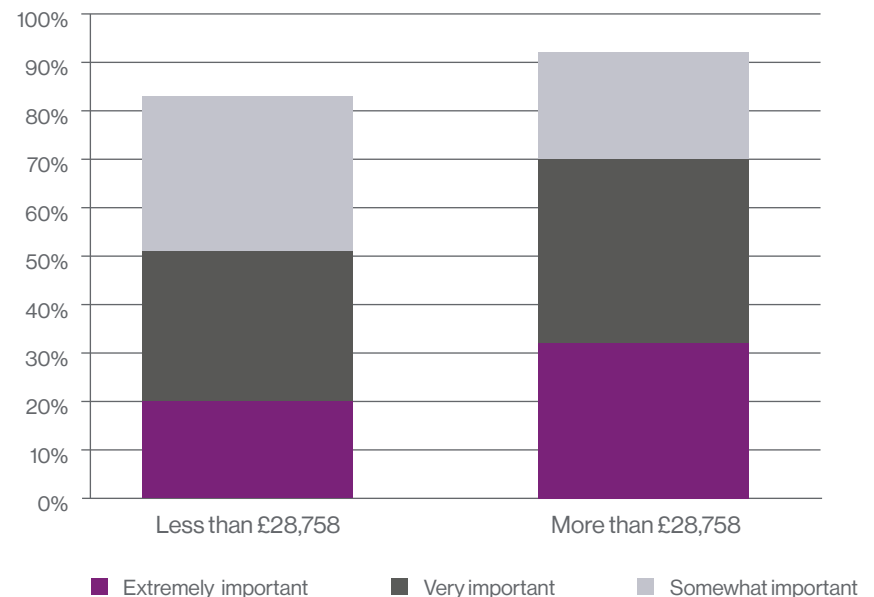
An organisation's benefits offering was more likely to influence higher earners (94%), although it was still a high percentage in those earning lower than the national average (85%).

Men appeared to place more importance on benefits than women with 33% of male employees claiming benefits were extremely important to them, compared to only 21% of female workers.

How important is benefit provision (such as a pension scheme, health or life insurance) in your decision to work for a company?



Importance, by salary

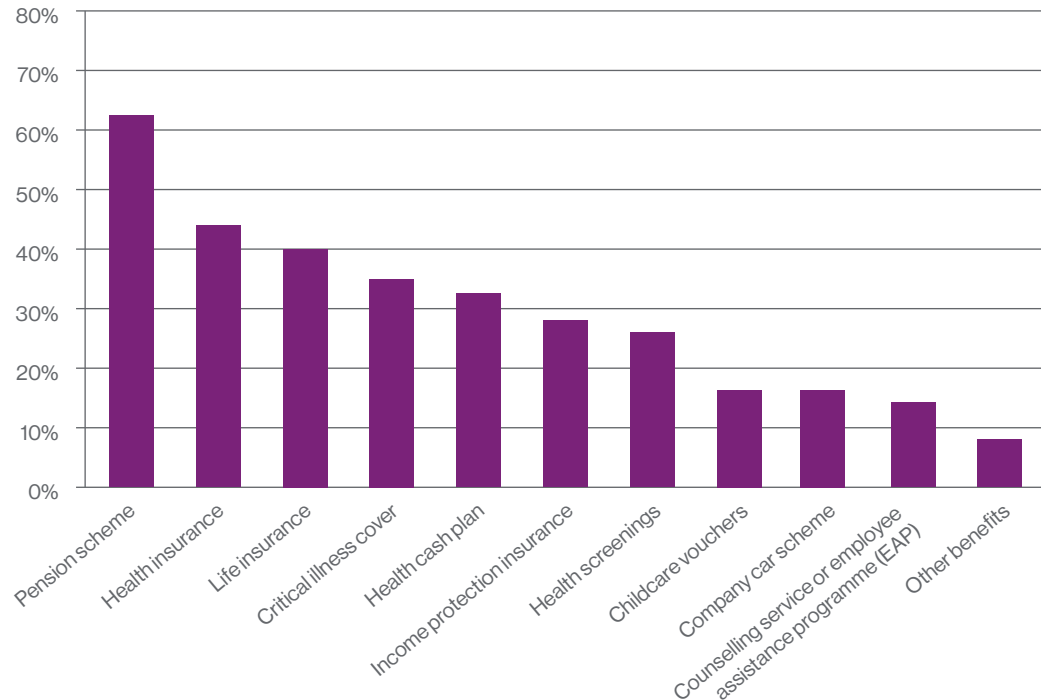


Q2: Which of the following benefits do you/would you value the most?

Pensions are the most popular employee benefit, selected by 62% of respondents when asked to choose their top five benefits.

In second place came health insurance (43%), closely followed by life insurance (40%) then critical illness (35%).

Percentage of employees putting benefit in top five



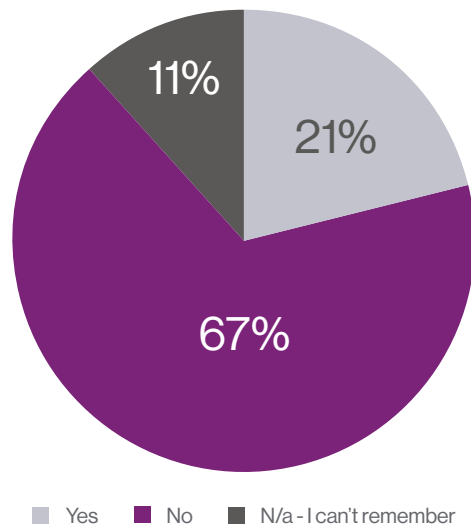
Q3: Has your current employer ever consulted you over your rewards and benefits preferences?

More than two-thirds (67%) of employees revealed they had never been consulted about their rewards and benefits preferences, a surprising figure given how a more tailored package can help attract and retain workers.

Higher earners are consulted more than their peers earning less than the national average (26% compared to 18%).

Male workers (25%) appear to be consulted more than their female colleagues (18%).

Has your employer ever consulted you over your rewards and benefits preferences?



Yes, by salary

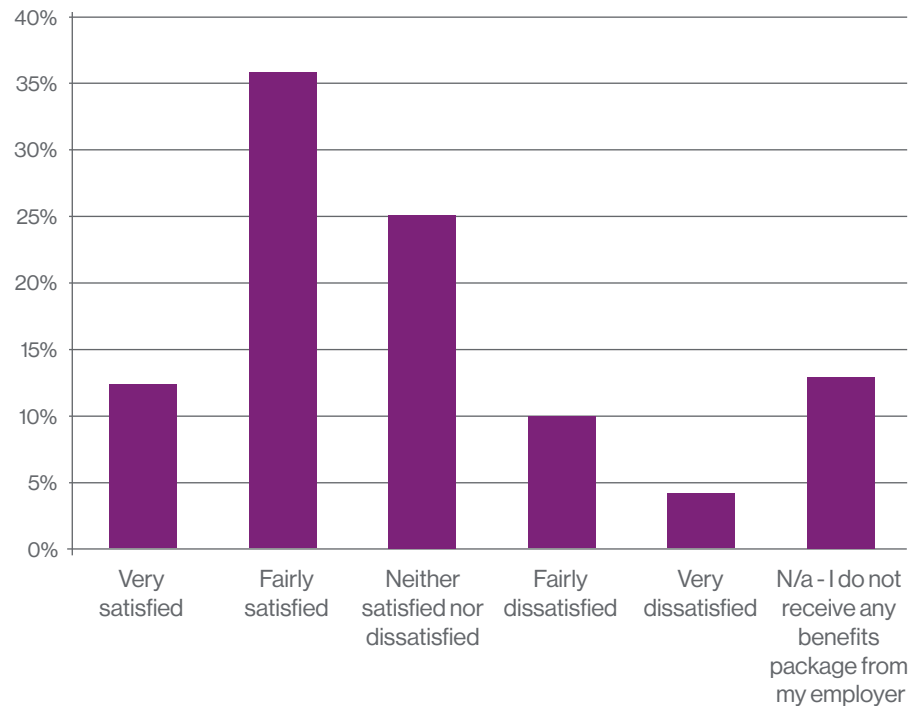


Q4: How satisfied are you with the overall benefits package you receive from your current employer?

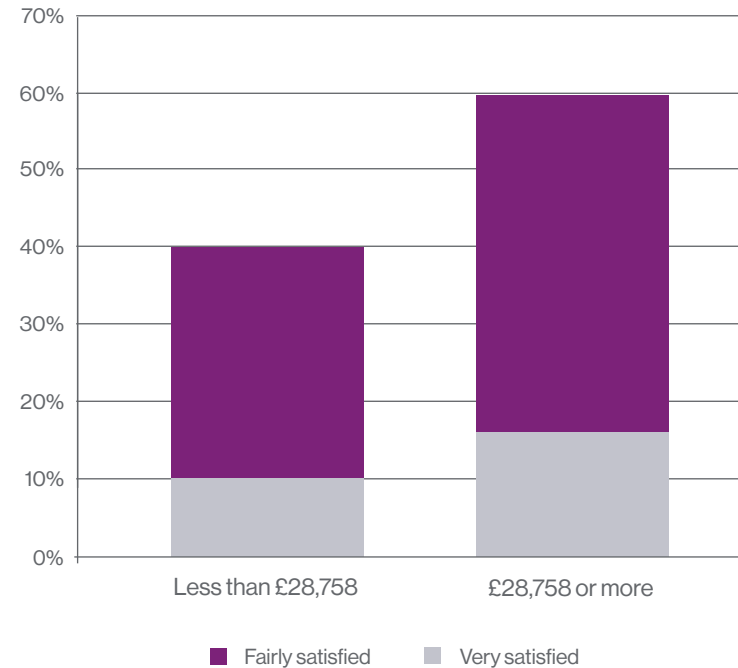
While nearly half (48%) of workers claim they are satisfied with their benefits package, there's still room for improvement with 14% saying they are fairly or very dissatisfied.

Although 60% of higher earners say they're satisfied with their benefits package, just 40% of lower earners feel the same.

How satisfied are you with the range of benefits you receive from your employer?



Satisfied, by salary

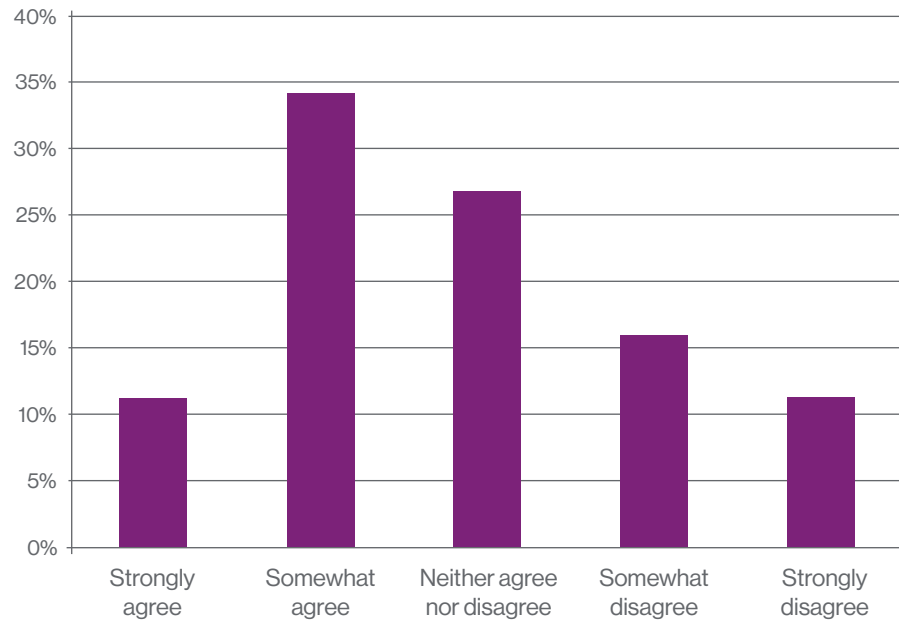


Q5: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My employer makes provisions to look after my personal health and wellbeing'?

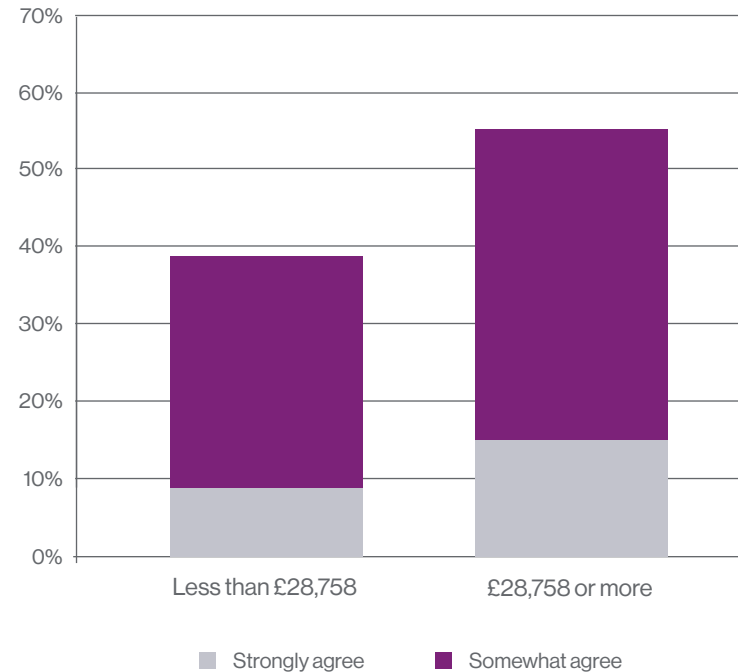
Less than half (46%) of workers said their employer makes provisions to look after their personal health and wellbeing

Again, there appears to be a bias towards higher earners, as 55% claim their employers make these provisions. This is contrast to just 39% of employees earning below the national average.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My employer makes provisions to look after my personal health and wellbeing'?



Agree, by salary

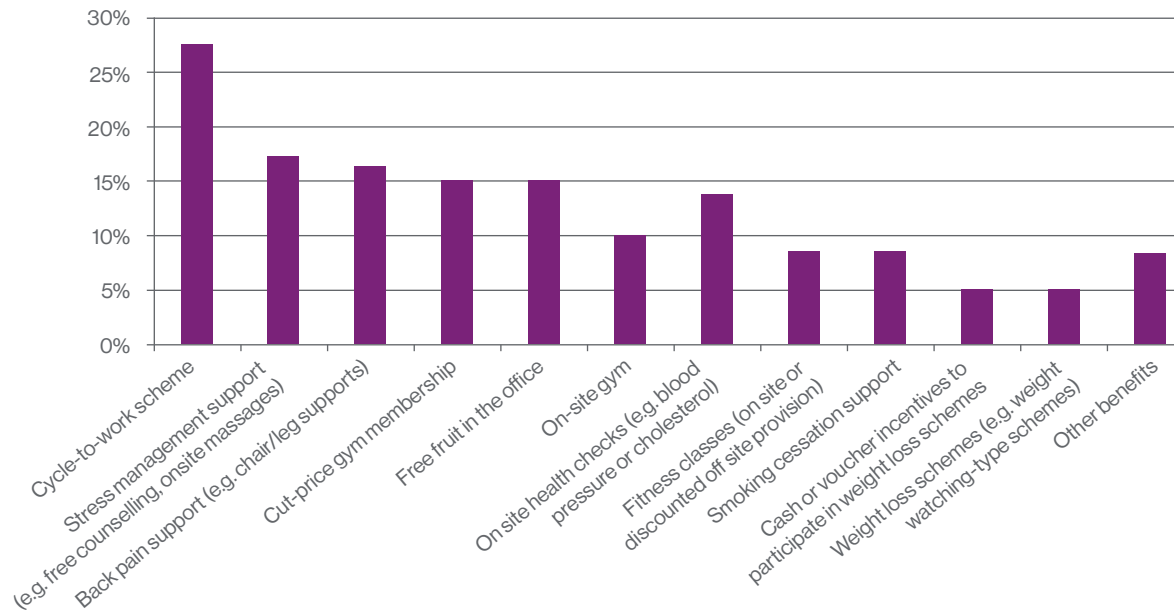


Q6: Which benefits, if any, does your employer provide to look after the health and wellbeing of you or your colleagues?

The cycle-to-work scheme remains the most popular health and wellbeing benefit offered by employers (28%), up 4% on 2017.

The other benefits, however, have stayed relatively consistent in terms of popularity. Stress management support remains second (17%), dipping 1% since last year, while third place back pain support has plateaued with 16%.

Which benefits, if any, does your employer provide to look after the health and wellbeing of you or your colleagues?

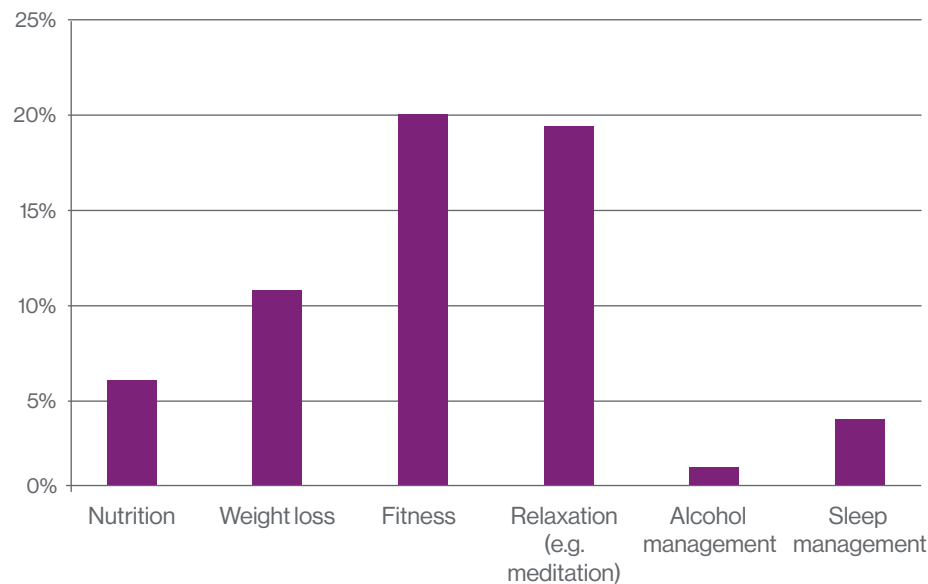


Q7: In which of the following lifestyle areas would you MOST like your employer to offer advice and support (e.g. benefits, voluntary wellbeing schemes, advice via internal comms/intranet/newsletter etc)?

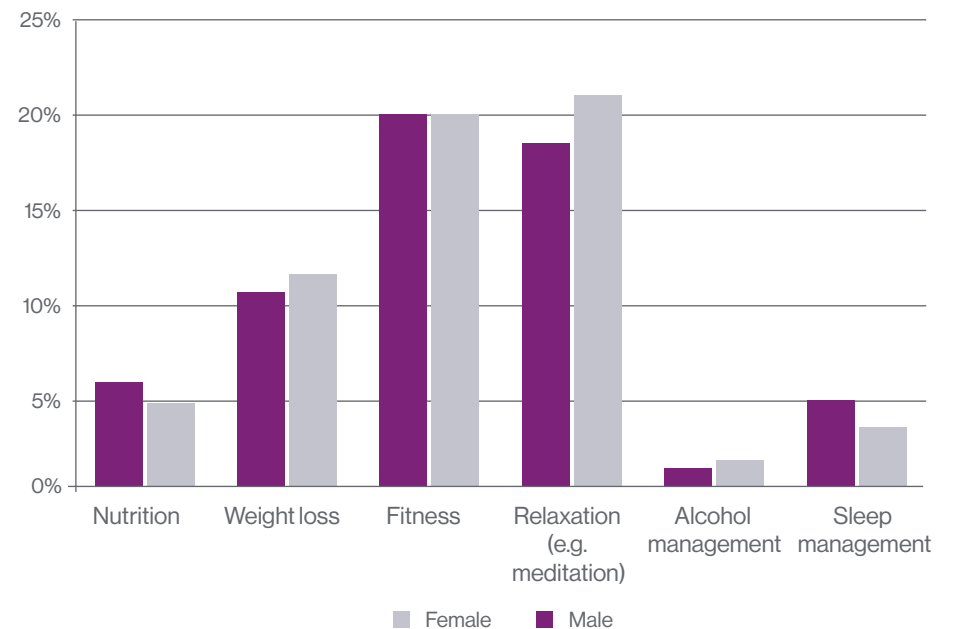
Fitness seemed to be the area where most workers would like advice and support from their employers (20%), followed by relaxation techniques, such as meditation (19%).

In females, relaxation (21%) leapfrogs fitness (20%) into first place, while the former comes top for 18 to 24-year-olds and over 55s.

In which of the following lifestyle areas would you MOST like your employer to offer advice and support (e.g. benefits, voluntary wellbeing schemes, advice via internal comms/intranet/newsletter etc)?



Lifestyle areas, by gender



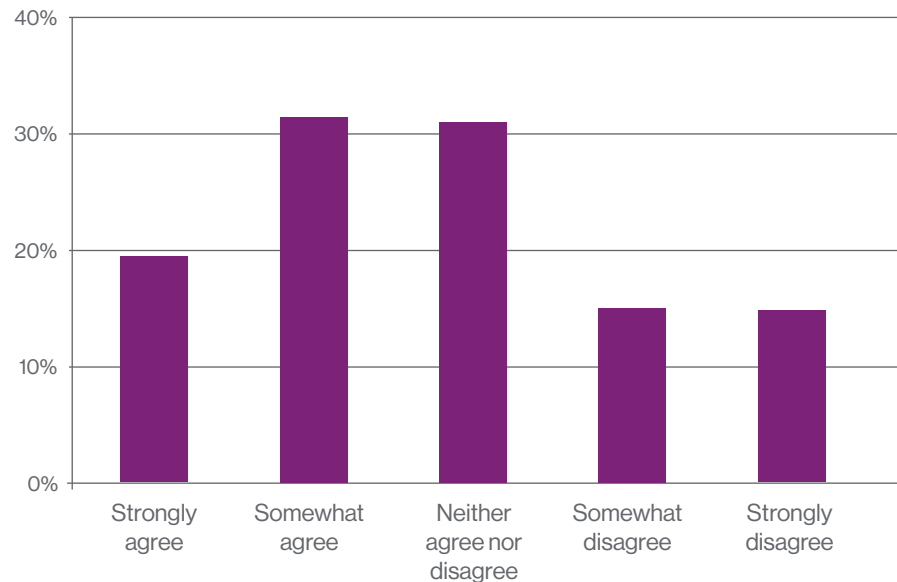
Q8: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I am uncomfortable with my employer getting involved in my personal lifestyle choices (e.g. diet, exercise, alcohol consumption etc)'?

More than half (52%) would be uncomfortable with their employer getting involved with their lifestyle choices.

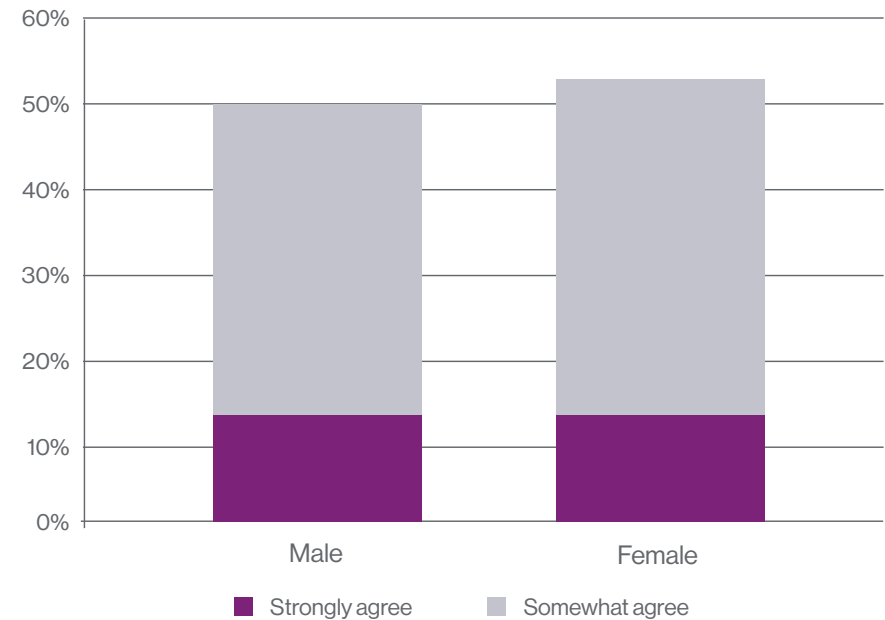
These findings may act as a call to action to employers to ensure they're communicating effectively and sensitively around health-related lifestyle choices.

There's a fairly even split between the genders when it comes to this subject, with half (50%) of males and 53% of females confirming their discomfort.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I am uncomfortable with my employer getting involved in my personal lifestyle choices (e.g. diet, exercise, alcohol consumption etc)'?



Agree, by gender



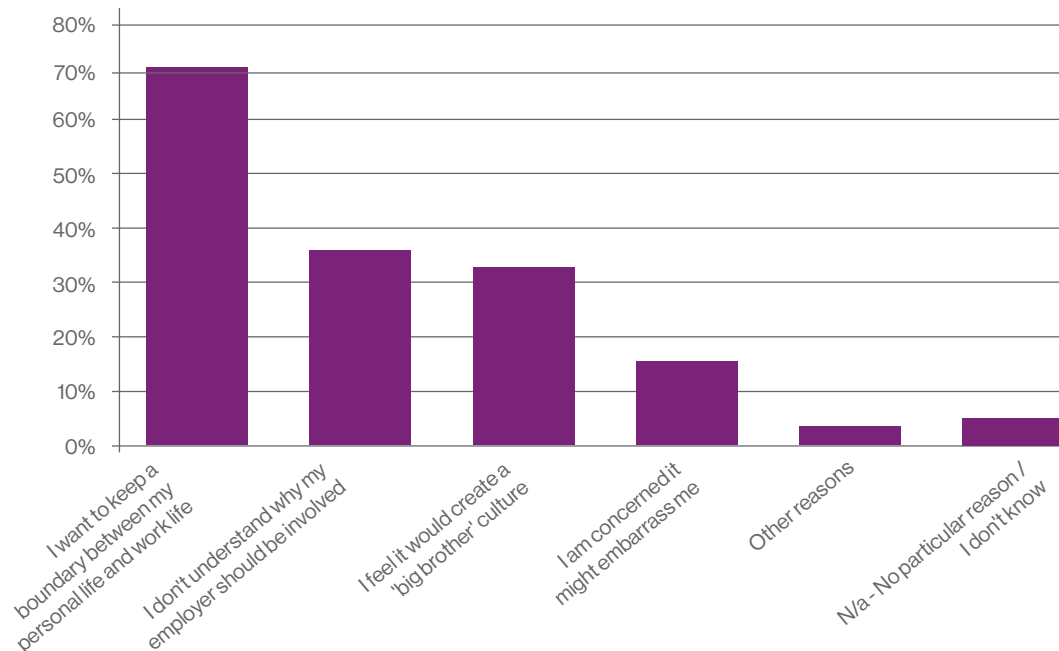
Q9: Why do you feel uncomfortable with your employer getting involved in your personal lifestyle choices?

Crossing the personal/work life boundary was the main reason why employees feel uncomfortable with their employers getting involved with their lifestyle choices, chosen by 71% of workers. 37% didn't understand why their employer should be involved and more than a third (34%) were concerned it would create a 'Big Brother' culture.

Older respondents between 35 and 54 were most likely to harbour a 'Big Brother' fear (37%) while young employees aged 18 to 24 were more concerned about being embarrassed (24% compared to 13% of over 55s).

These findings further reinforce the need for treading carefully around personal lifestyle choices.

Why do you feel uncomfortable with your employer getting involved in your personal lifestyle choices?

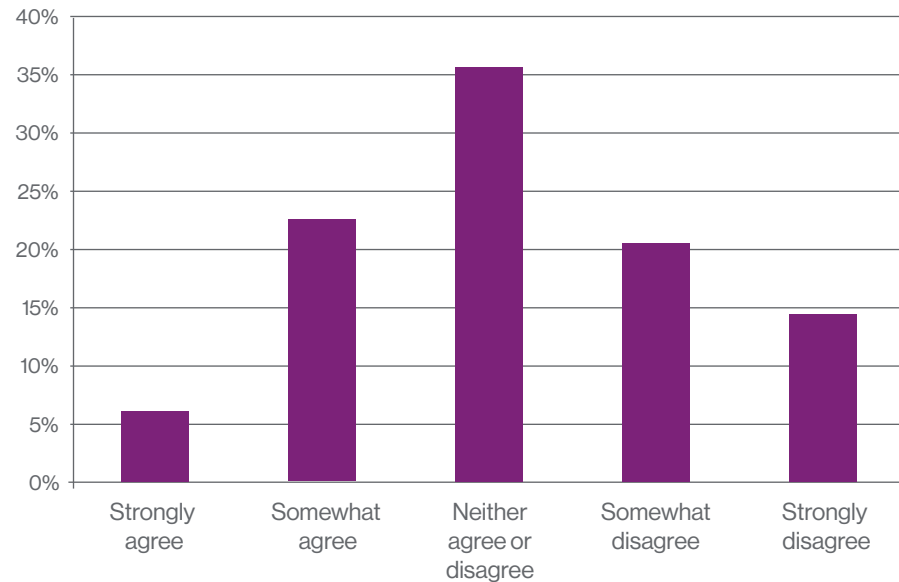


Q10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My employer has a moral responsibility to help me lead a fit and healthy lifestyle'?

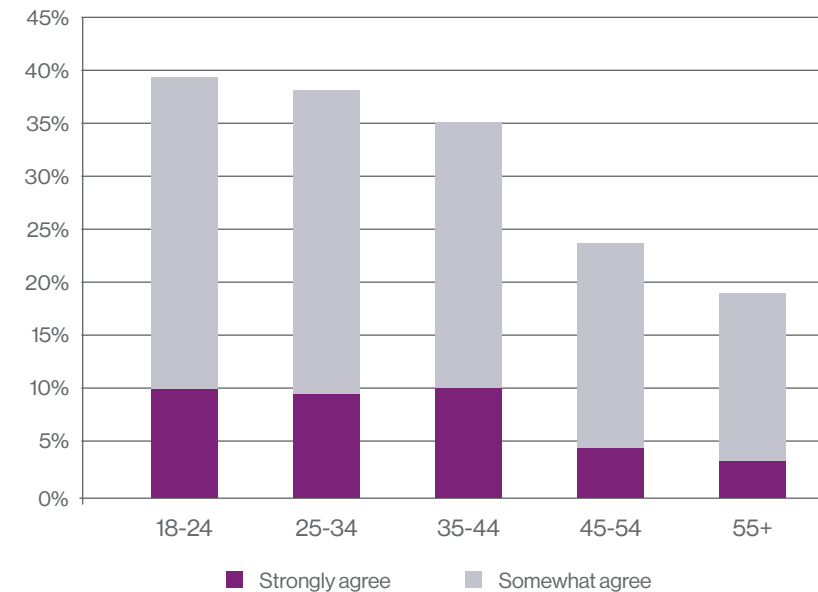
Despite a large percentage of employees not wanting companies to get involved with their personal lifestyle choices, nearly one in three workers (30%) believe their employers have a moral responsibility to help them lead a fit and healthy lifestyle.

Millennials are the most entitled age group, with almost two-fifths (39%) believing their employers have an obligation to look after their health. In contrast, just 19% of workers aged 55 and over think the same. This could be due to 'employee wellbeing' being a relatively new concept so older workers have spent the majority of their working lives without it.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My employer has a moral responsibility to help me lead a fit and healthy lifestyle'?



Agree, by age



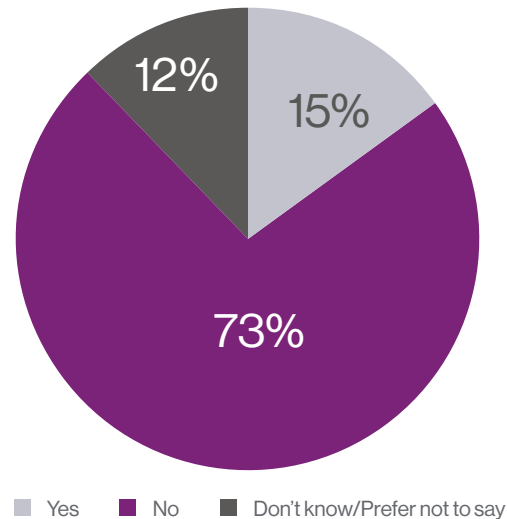
Q11: Do you, or someone you work with, live with a neurodevelopmental disorder (e.g. Autism, Aspergers, Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, ADHD, Tourette's, Dyscalculia)?

Neurodiversity* is an emerging concept in the workplace. While common perceptions have in the past been negative, times are changing and businesses are recognising the benefits of employing workers with neurological differences.

Given more than one in ten (15%) of respondents in our survey said they, or someone they work with, lives with a neurodevelopmental disorder, organisations should be looking to establish a fully inclusive working environment. (It should be noted that this statistic should not be interpreted as representing the total number of workers with neurodevelopmental disorders in the UK.)

*Neurodevelopmental conditions are impairments of the growth and development of the brain or central nervous system.

Do you, or someone you work with, live with a neurodevelopmental disorder?



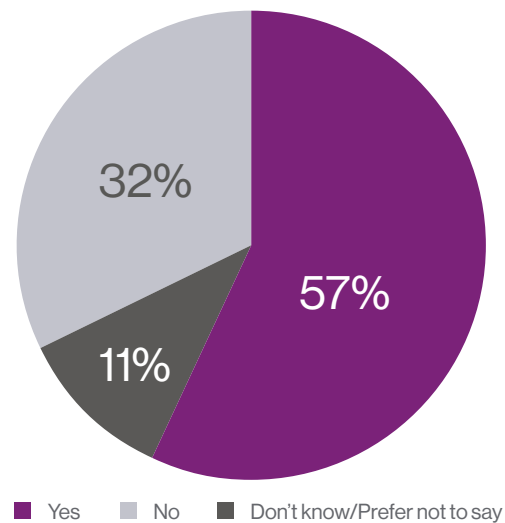
Q12: Have you / the affected person received any additional support or help?

Almost a third (32%) of those surveyed said their employer fails to offer any additional help or support for employees who have a neurodevelopment disorder.

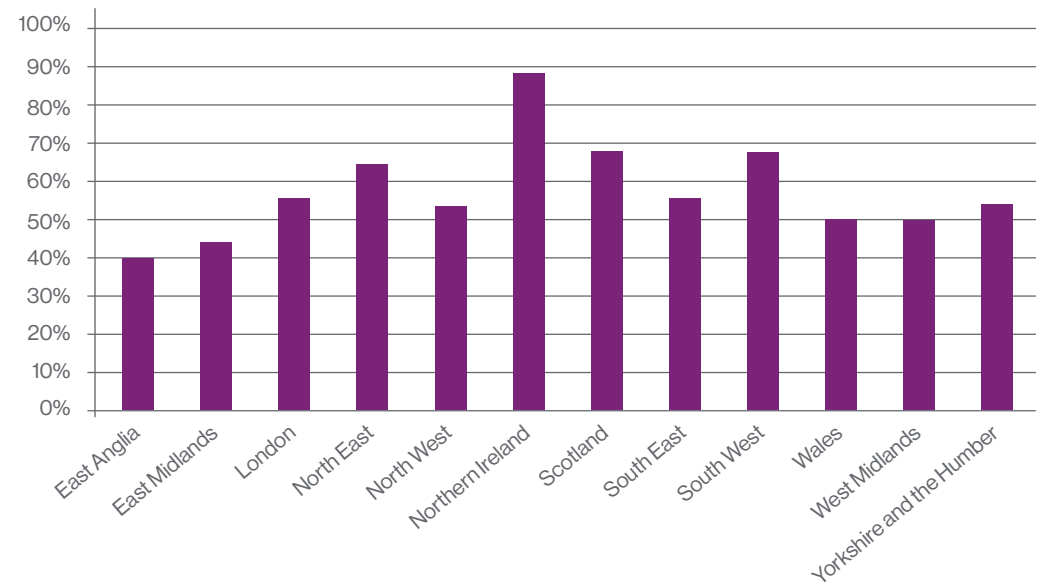
This could include making workplace adjustments for the worker or carrying out workshops to help colleagues better understand the disorder.

Northern Ireland leads the way in this respect, with 88% of employees saying their employer gives support to their neurodiverse workforce. In sharp contrast, only 40% of East Anglian respondents said support is given at work and the figure is also relatively low in the East Midlands (43%).

Have you / the affected person received any additional support or help?



Yes, by region

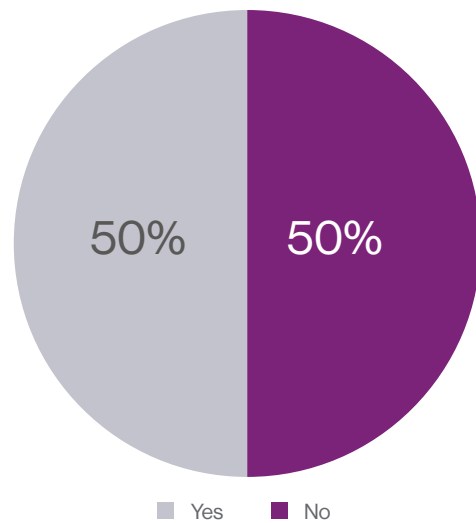


Q13: If a fellow worker(s) lives / lived with a neurodevelopmental disorder, have you ever received any education or advice from your employer on the condition(s)?

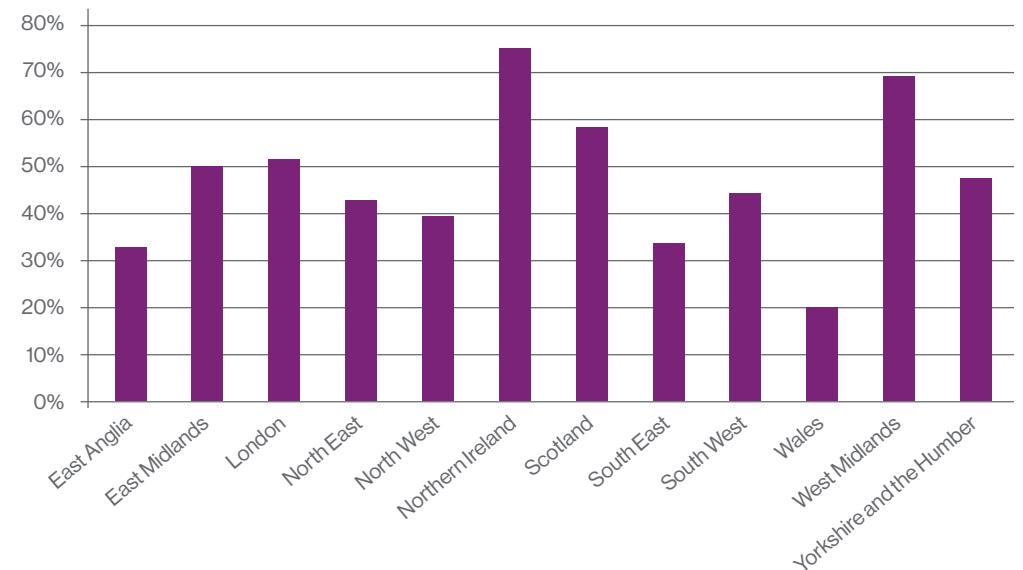
For employees who said a colleague lived with a neurodevelopment disorder, just half (50%) said they had received any education or advice from their employer on the condition.

Only 20% of respondents in Wales said they had received guidance on their fellow worker's condition in contrast to 76% in Northern Ireland.

If a fellow worker(s) lives / lived with a neurodevelopmental disorder, have you ever received any education or advice from your employer on the condition(s)?



Yes, by region



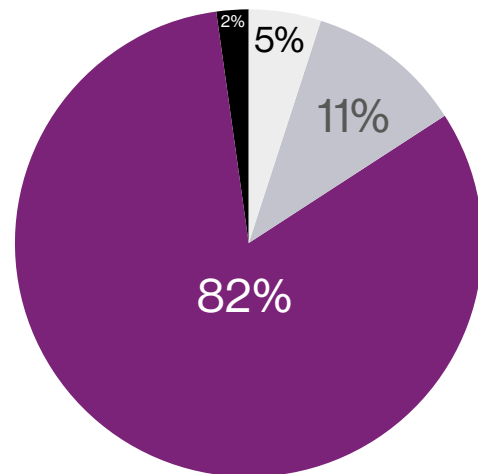
Q14: Have you taken any sickness absence days off work in the last 12 months as a result of suffering a hangover?

Hangovers are a huge financial burden to businesses, costing the UK economy an estimated £1.9 billion due to absenteeism.

In fact, almost one in five (16%) employees said they have taken at least one sick day in the last 12 months as a result of a hangover, with 5% of those doing so 'at least a few times'.

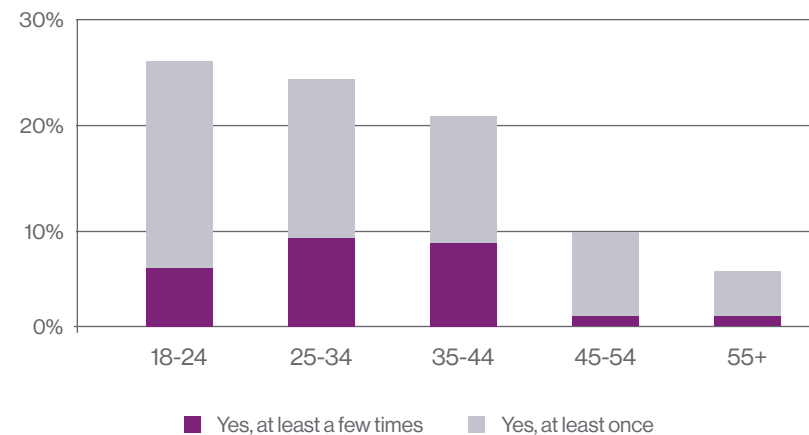
The data seems to suggest younger workers are also more likely to take 'hangover days', as 26% of 18 to 24-year-olds and 24% of 25 to 34-year-olds have claimed to have taken at least one, with the figures dipping to only 6% among 55 and overs.

Have you taken any sickness absence days off work in the last 12 months as a result of suffering a hangover?



Yes, at least a few times Yes, at least once No Cannot remember

Yes, by age



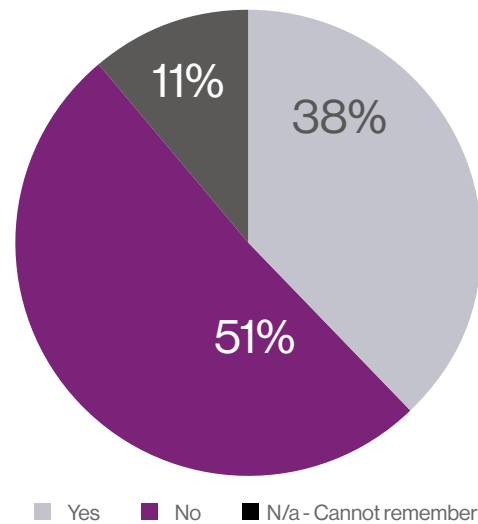
Q15: Did you admit to being absent due to a hangover to your employer?

Workers weren't entirely truthful about their absence either. More than half of respondents (51%) didn't admit the real reason behind their sick day, possibly for fear of repercussions.

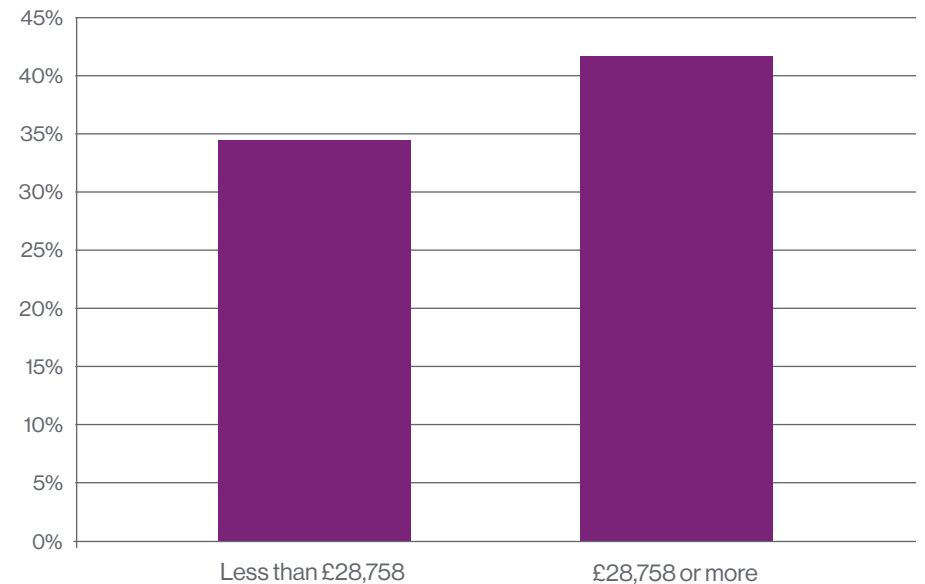
Lower earners were also found to be less open than their higher-earning counterparts (34% compared to 42%). This could be put down to the belief that higher earners have the freedom to be more honest with their employers.

Men appeared to be more open and honest about their hangovers with 44% admitting the alcohol-related cause behind their absence compared to just 32% of their female colleagues.

Did you admit to being absent due to a hangover to your employer?



Yes, by salary

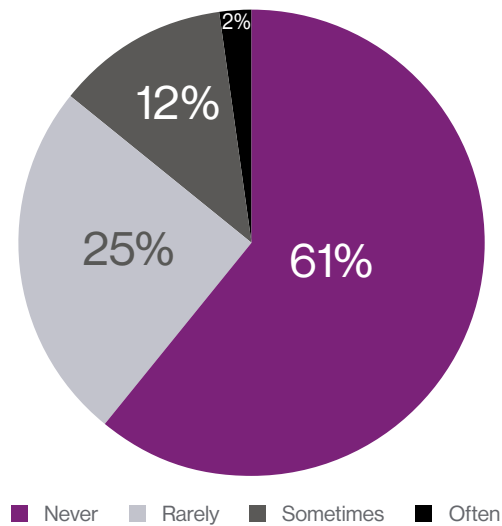


Q16: How often do you go to work with a hangover?

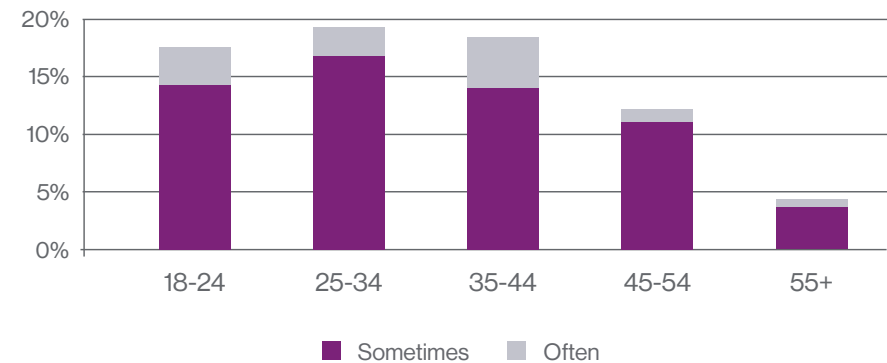
There are times, however, when employees choose to go in work with a hangover. More than one in ten (12%) workers said it happens sometimes, with 2% saying it happens often.

Younger workers are more likely to make an appearance in work with a hangover. 19% of 25 to 34-year-olds say it happens sometimes and often, compared to 4% of 55-year-olds and over.

How often do you go to work with a hangover?



Sometimes or often, by age

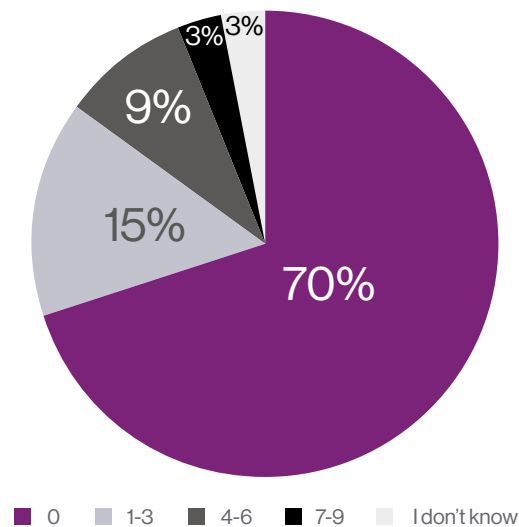


Q17: On an average month, how many hangovers do you suffer from that affect your productivity at work?

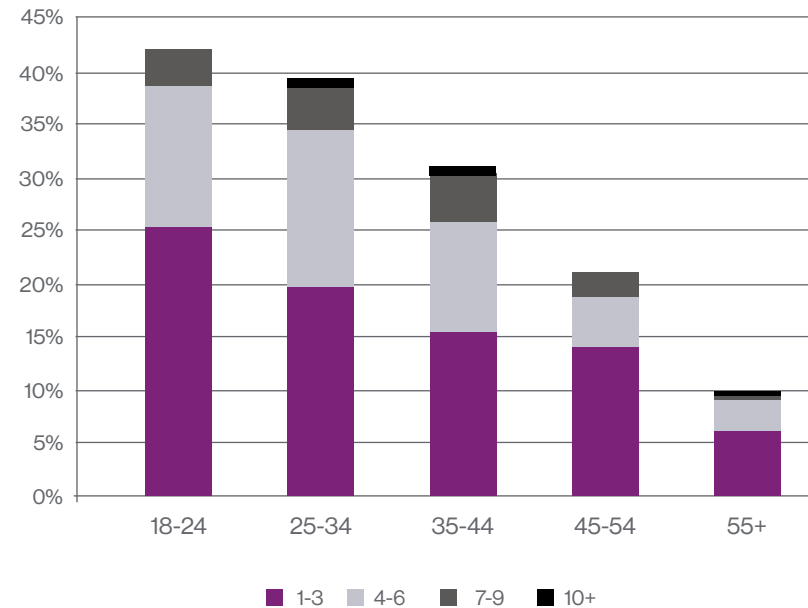
Typical symptoms of a hangover include nausea, fatigue and headaches so it perhaps doesn't come as a shock that they have an impact on productivity at work, with more than a quarter (27%) of employees saying at least one hangover a month has an effect.

Older workers seem less likely to be affected by their hangovers as 42% of workers aged 18 to 24 said at least one hangover affected their productivity per month, compared to just one in ten (10%) of over 55s.

On an average month, how many hangovers do you suffer from that affect your productivity at work?



At least one hangover has had an impact on productivity, by age

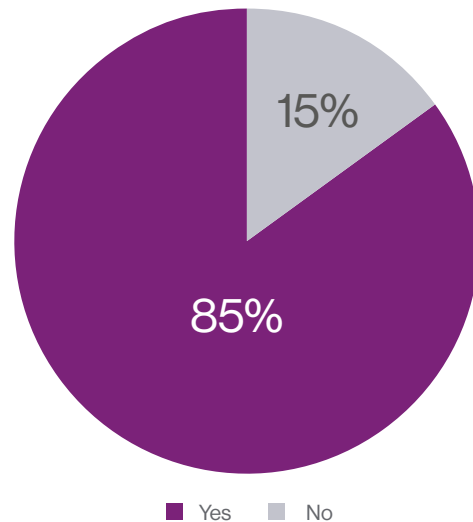


Q18: Have you gone to work still feeling drunk after a night out in the last 12 months?

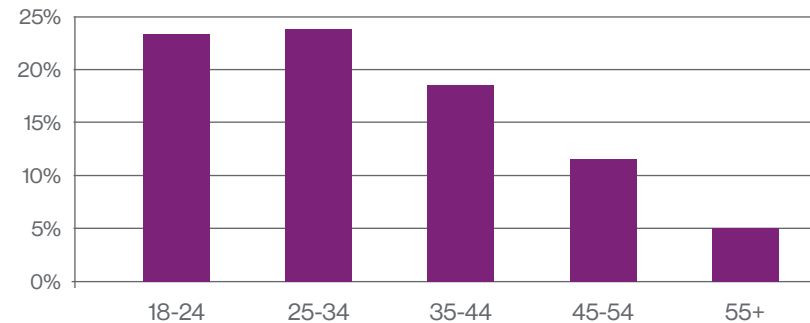
Alcohol inebriation poses risks and dangers to everyone, especially if heavy machinery is being operated yet 15% of employees admitted they went to work still feeling drunk after a night out in the last 12 months. This figure rises to 24% in 25 to 34-year-olds and 23% in 18 to 24-year olds.

Younger workers' relaxed attitude towards their drinking habits affecting their work could not only prove problematic for businesses but could also have serious implications for the worker's health, both mental and physical.

Have you gone to work still feeling drunk after a night out in the last 12 months?



Yes, by age

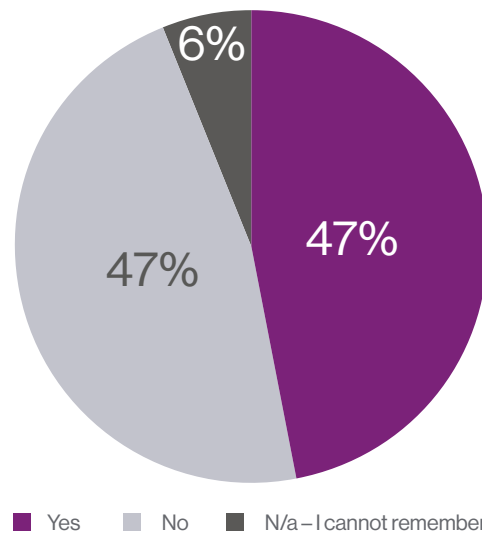


Q19: Have you ever driven to work on any of these occasions where you have gone to work still feeling drunk in the last 12 months?

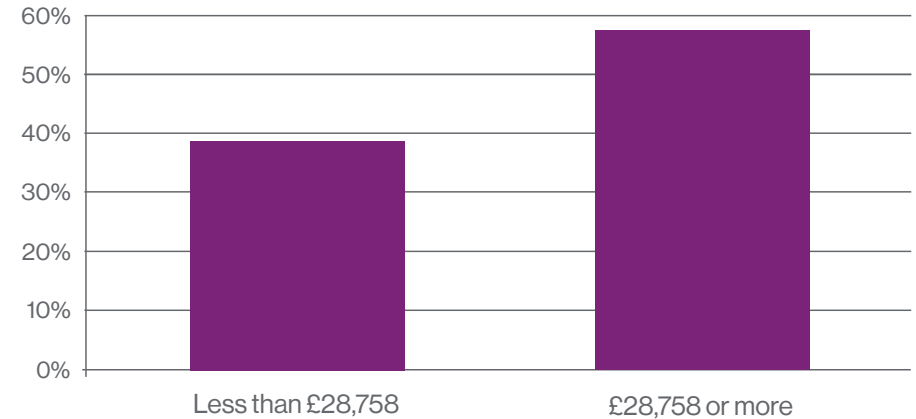
Of those workers who said they went into work still feeling drunk from the night before, 47% said they drove there, putting not only their safety at risk but other people's too. The figure was even higher among 25 to 34-year-olds (53%).

Employees earning more than the national average were also more prone to potential drink driving, with almost three-fifths (57%) saying they had drunk-driven to work in the last year.

Have you ever driven to work on any of these occasions where you have gone to work still feeling drunk in the last 12 months?



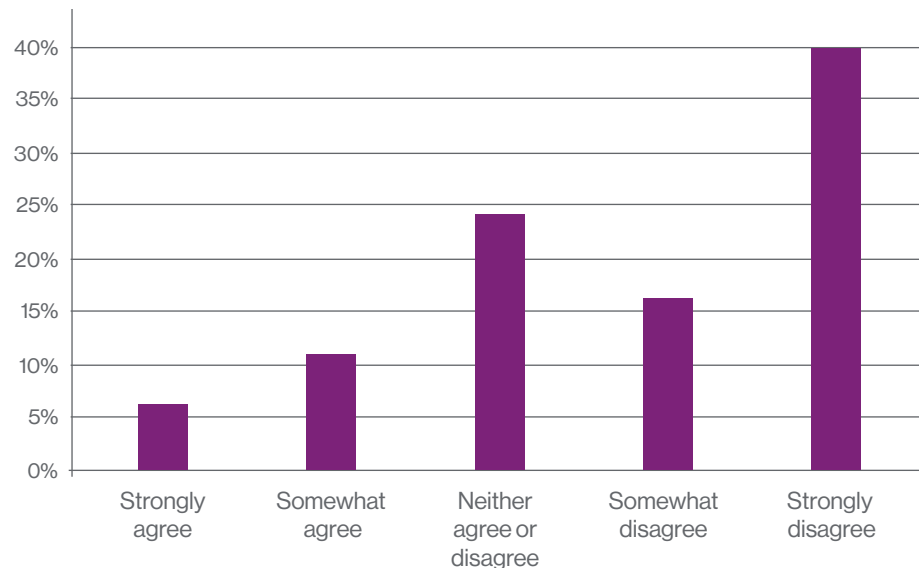
Yes, by salary



Q20: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My employer contributes to unhealthy levels of drinking among staff (e.g. pressure to drink on staff nights out, paying for alcohol on nights out, encouraging a 'work hard, play hard' culture etc)'?

Almost one in five (19%) of workers said their employer contributed to unhealthy levels of drinking among employees, a troubling statistic.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
'My employer contributes to unhealthy levels of drinking among staff
(e.g. pressure to drink on staff nights out, paying for alcohol on nights out,
encouraging a 'work hard, play hard' culture etc)'?**



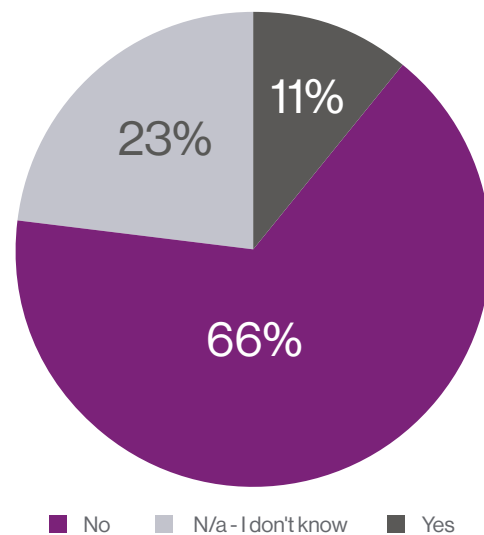
Q21: Does your employer offer staff any health advice on alcohol consumption?

Despite businesses seemingly being affected by alcohol-related incidents, such as drunk employees and less productive, hungover workers, employers still aren't offering support on alcohol consumption.

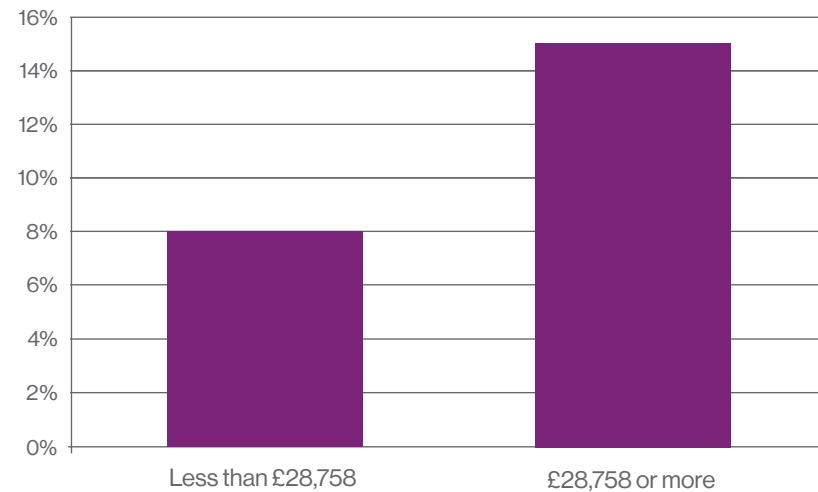
Just 11% of employees say their company issues health advice on the subject, with the figure dipping to 8% among those who earn less than the national average.

Given that alcohol consumption is a sensitive issue, the low numbers may be due to employers not wanting to overstep any personal boundaries. Instead, companies should look to tread the fine line between intrusive and supportive by offering advice without making workers feel judged or victimised.

Does your employer offer staff any health advice on alcohol consumption?



Yes, by salary



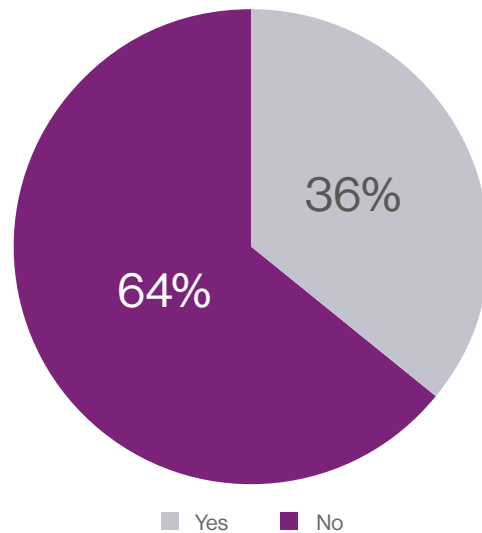
Q22: If you don't smoke/vape, do you take regular breaks from working tasks?

Many employees work through lunch believing it will make them more productive, when in fact it can do the opposite.

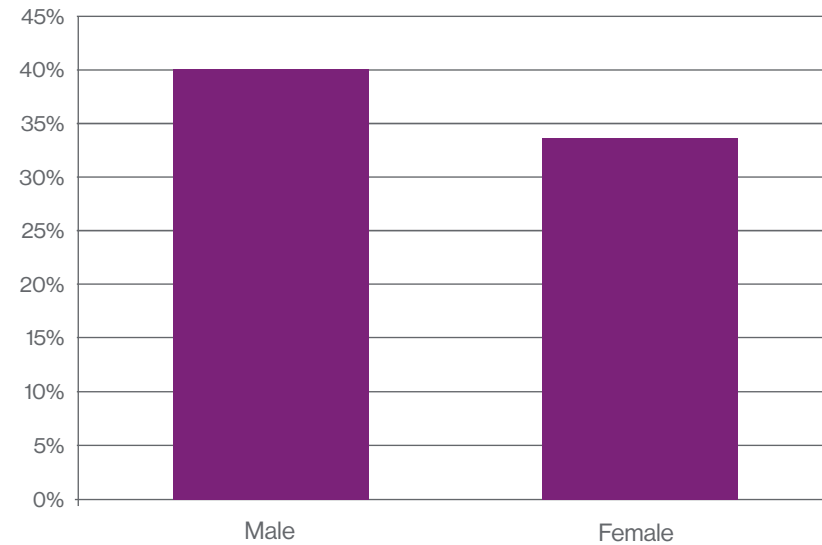
Taking regular breaks from work can help benefit both the health of the employee and the business yet almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents said they don't bother.

Here, we find another difference between the genders, with men (40%) more likely to take frequent breaks from their work tasks than women (33%).

If you don't smoke/vape, do you take regular breaks from working tasks?



Yes, by gender

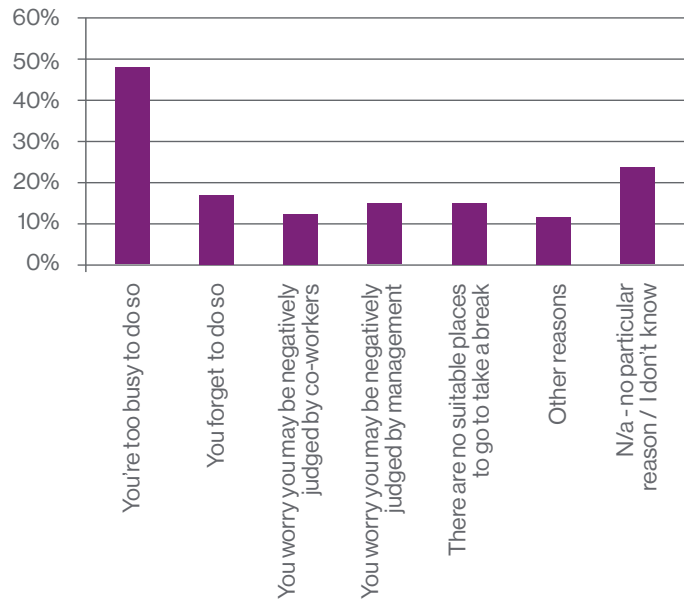


Q23: Why don't you take regular breaks from working tasks?

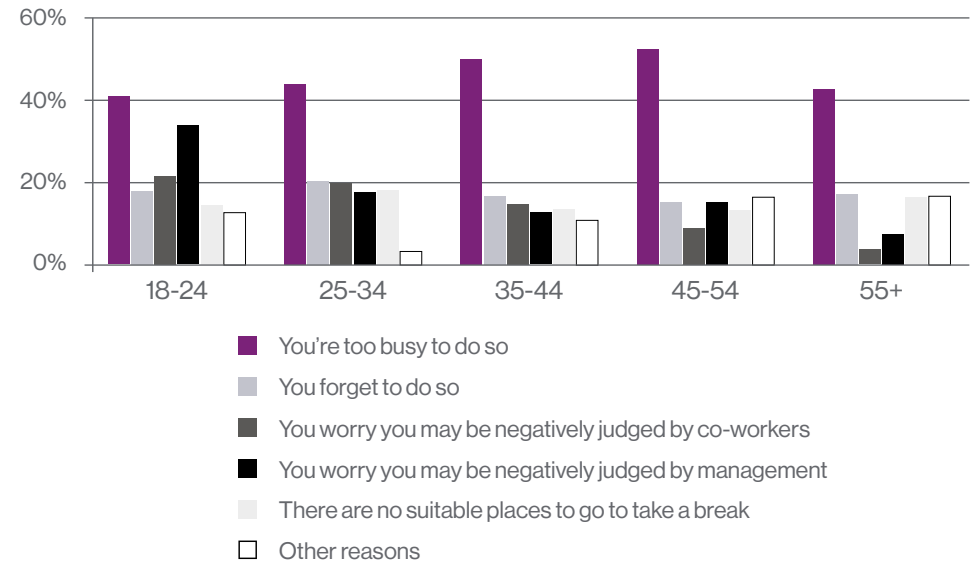
Being too busy and forgetfulness are the two top reasons why non-smokers and vapers say they don't take regular breaks away from work tasks.

Interestingly, younger workers are much more concerned with how they will be perceived by management (33%) and their co-workers (21%) than their older colleagues – just 7% and 6% of over 55s respectively. Perhaps this reinforces the belief that millennials and Generation Z are much more self-conscious due to the rise of social media 'perfection'.

Why don't you take regular breaks from working tasks?



Reasons for not taking regular breaks, by age



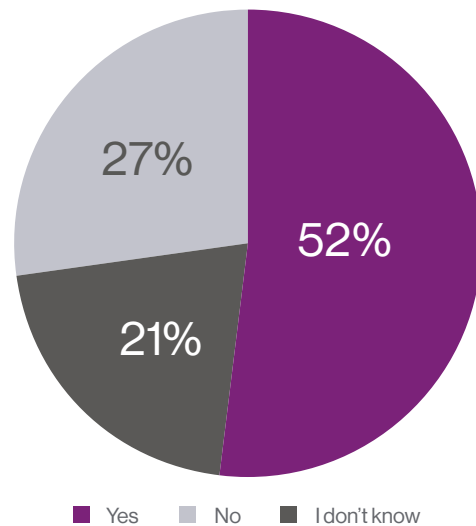
Q24: Do you believe that it would help improve your health and wellbeing (physical and mental health) if you did take regular breaks from work?

More than half (52%) of employees said that taking regular breaks would improve their health and wellbeing, demonstrating the business benefits of encouraging workers to take frequent breathers from work.

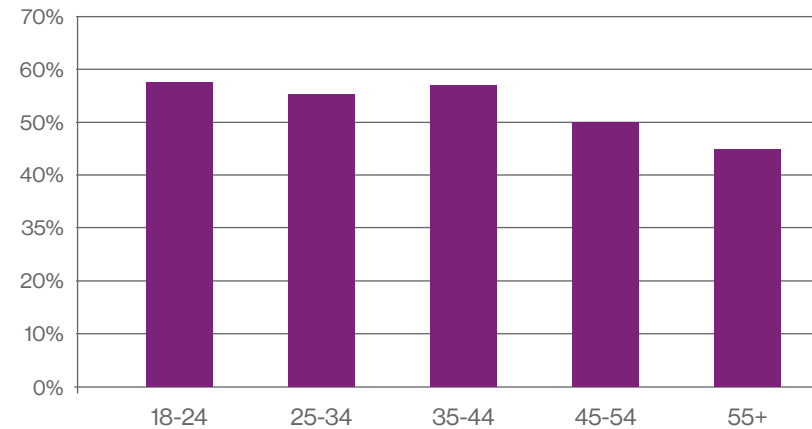
As taking regular breaks is a relatively new business concept, it stands to reason that older workers are less likely to believe in their health benefits given they have coped without them in their working lives thus far (45% of over 55s compared to 57% of 18 to 24-year-olds).

Women appear to believe in the restorative power of regular breaks more than men, with 57% of female workers agreeing to the statement, 10% more than their male counterparts (47%).

Do you believe that it would help improve your health and wellbeing (physical and mental health) if you did take regular breaks from work?



Yes, by age



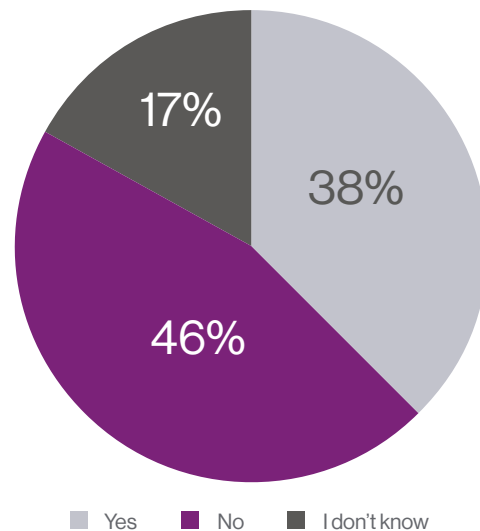
Q25: Does your employer/manager encourage all employees to take regular breaks from working tasks (other than when employees join the company)?

Despite the obvious benefits, it seems like employers are failing to encourage their workforce to take regular breaks, with almost half (46%) of respondents saying their company doesn't do so.

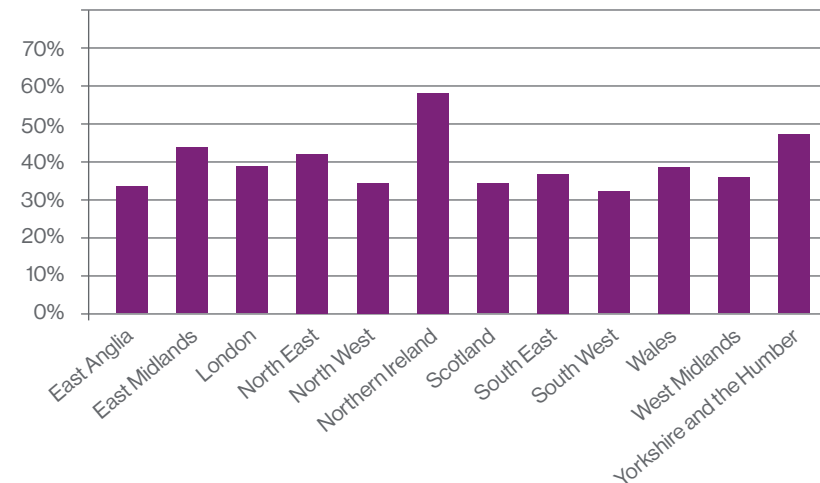
There seems to be disparity between the regions too. While 57% of Northern Irish workers say they're urged to take breaks, just 32% of those in the South West are.

Although they may be encouraged during staff inductions, it's important for businesses not to let the concept of regular breaks fall by the wayside. Instead, the benefits should be communicated to employees often, helping to dismiss the belief that they will be judged if they take a restorative break.

Does your employer/manager encourage all employees to take regular breaks from working tasks (other than when employees join the company)?



Yes, by region

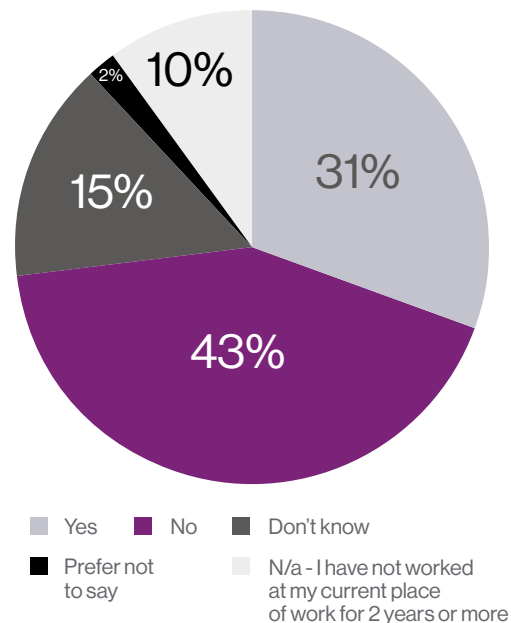


Q26: If you have worked at your current place of employment for 2 years or more, have you gained weight within the last 2 years?

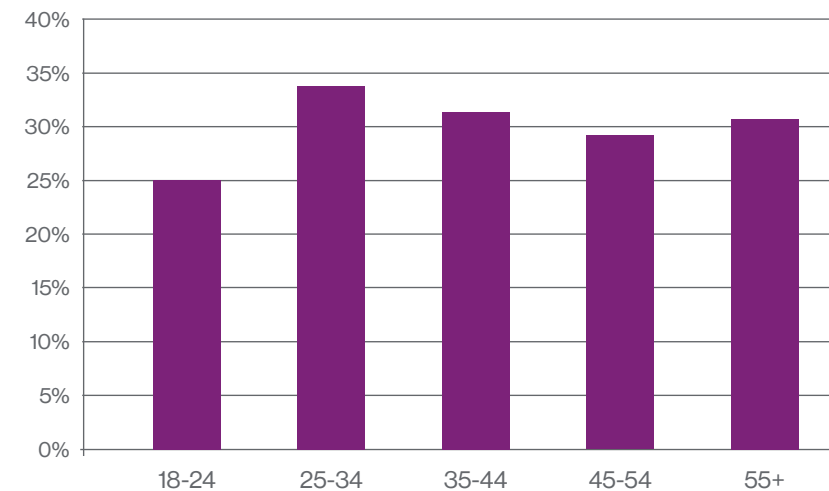
For those who have been in their current role for two years or more, almost a third (31%) said they have put on weight over the last couple of years.

As we get older, we tend to get less and less active, which could explain why less younger workers said they had put on weight in the last two years (25% of 18 to 24-year-olds). Yet the number peaks in 25 to 34-year-olds (34%), possibly due to many people finding their weight doesn't drop off as quickly as it does in the teenage years and early twenties.

If you have worked at your current place of employment for 2 years or more, have you gained weight within the last 2 years?



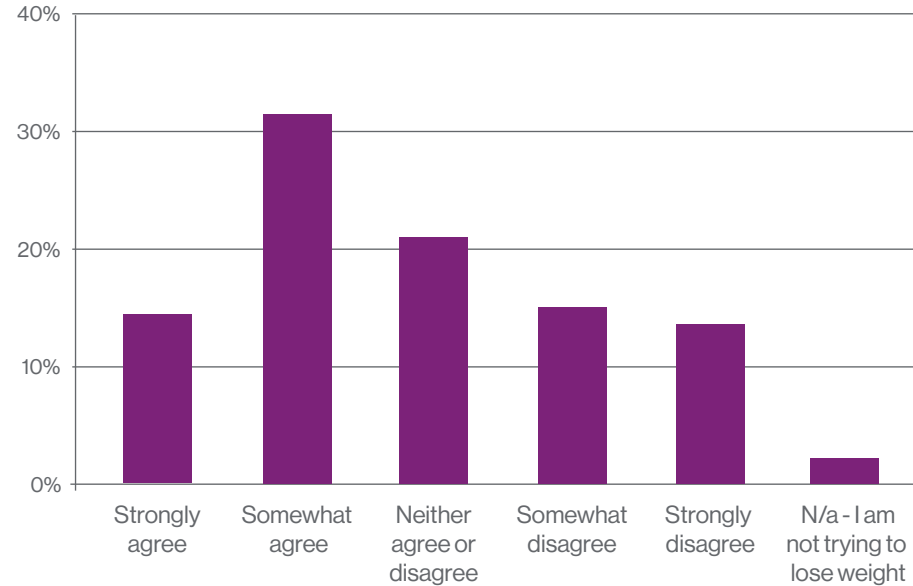
Yes, by age



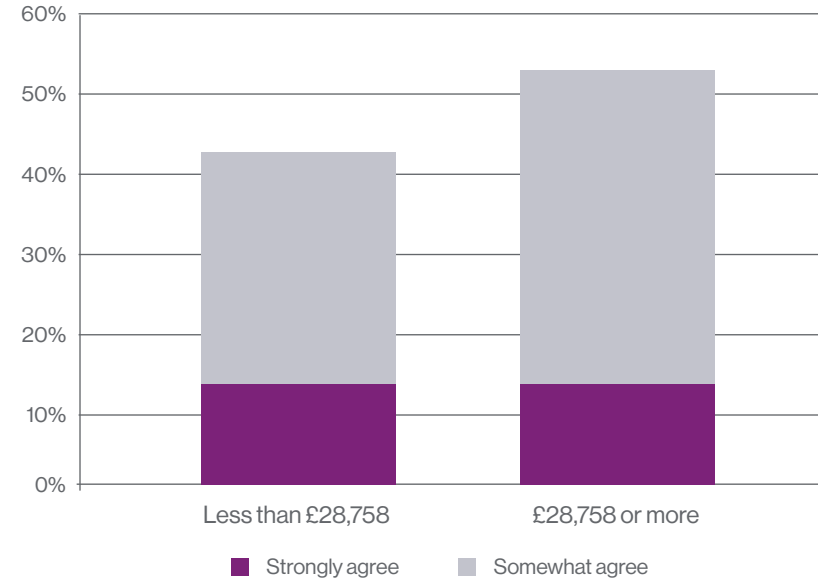
Q27: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My job prevents me from losing weight'?

Almost half (47%) of respondents say they believe their job hindered weight loss, with higher earners (54%) more likely to place the blame on their job (compared to 43% of lower earners).

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'My job prevents me from losing weight'?



Agree, by salary



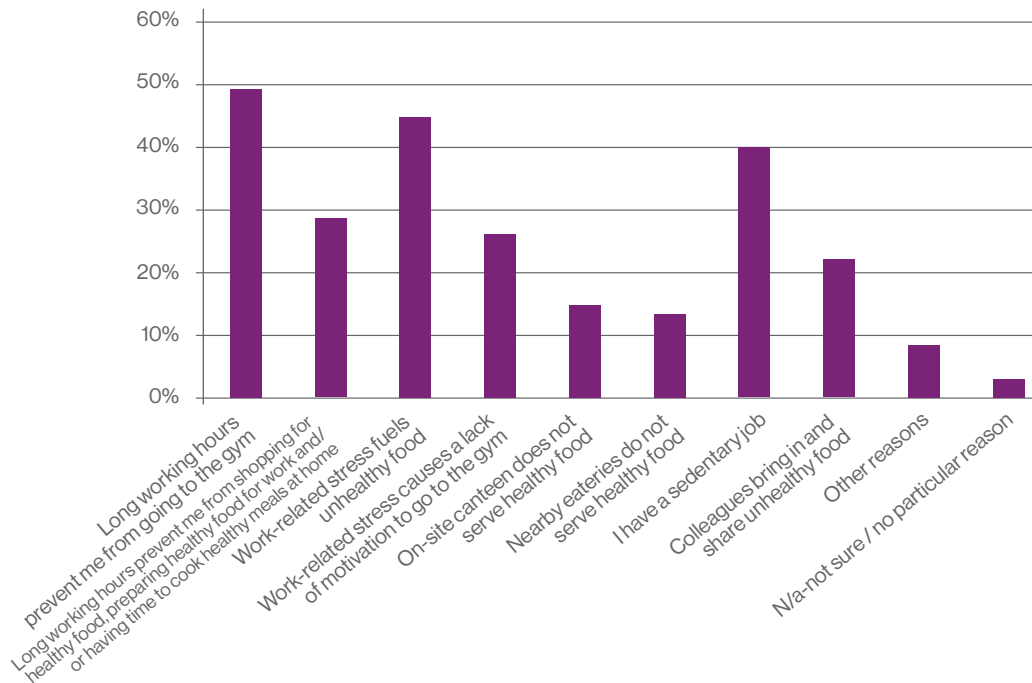
Q28: Why do you feel that your job prevents you from losing weight?

There is clearly scope for companies to promote a healthy work-life balance among employees as when asked why their job prevents weight loss, a sizable chunk (49%) pointed the finger at longer hours preventing gym visits.

It also seems like work-related stress plays a key factor, with 45% saying it prompts them to turn to unhealthy food options. Meanwhile, 40% blamed their sedentary job.

Longer hours were again a recurring theme, blamed by more than a quarter (27%) of employees who said they prevent them from shopping for healthy food or preparing healthy meals.

Why do you feel that your job prevents you from losing weight?



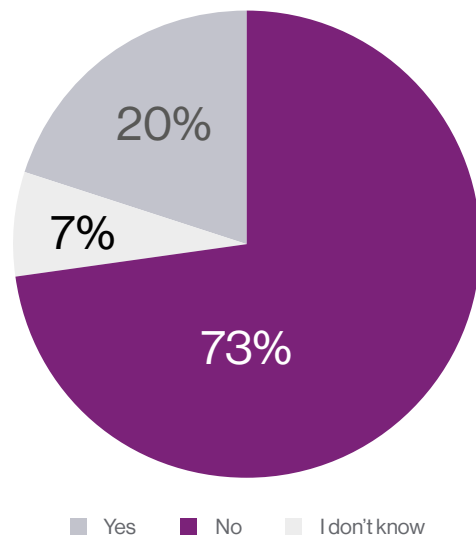
Q29: Do you feel that your weight negatively impacts on your job/career?

Excess weight can increase a person's risk of major health issues, such as heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Yet it can also have a negative impact on a person's working life.

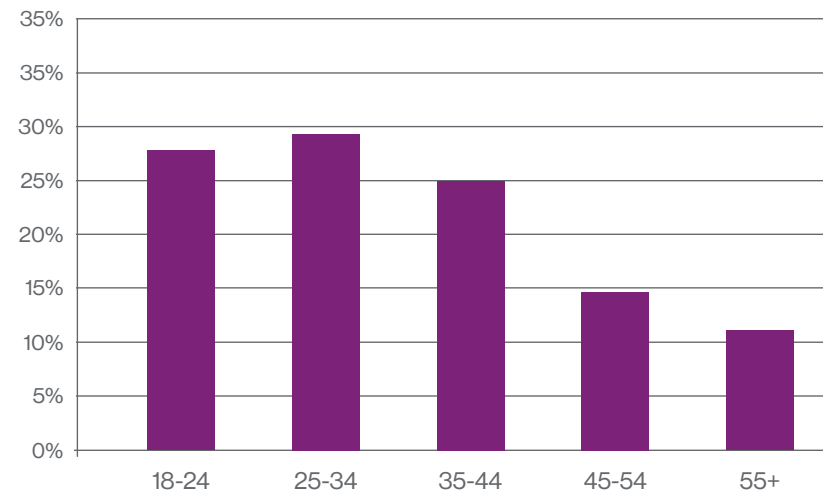
One in five (20%) employees said they believe their weight has a negative impact on their job or career.

Negative consequences are particularly felt more among younger workers with 29% of 25 to 34-year-olds and 28% of 18 to 24-year-olds claiming their weight negatively impacts on their working life, compared to just 11% of over 55s.

Do you feel that your weight negatively impacts on your job/career?



Yes, by age



Q30: How do you feel that your weight negatively impacts on your job/career?

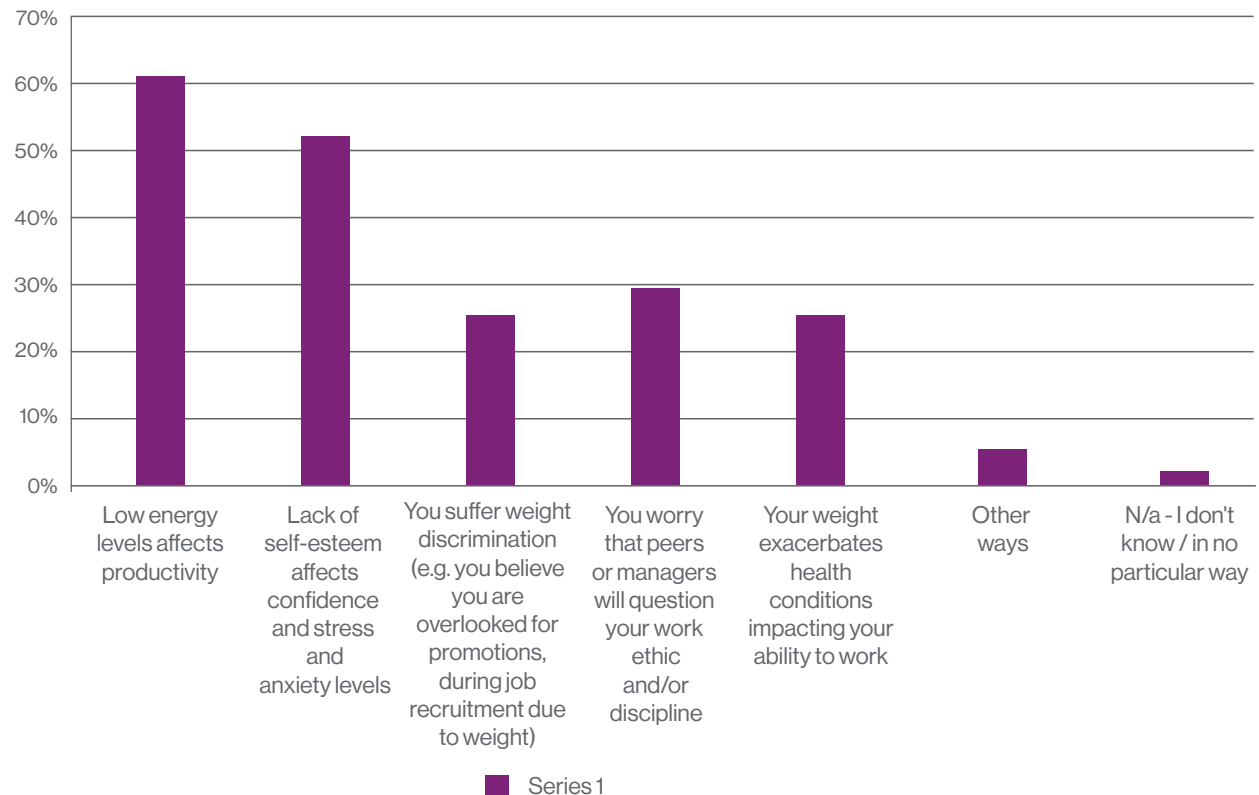
When asked why they believe their weight has had a negative impact on their job or career, 61% of employees said it induces low energy levels that affect their productivity.

More than half (52%) revealed their lack of self-esteem has a bearing on their confidence and stress and anxiety levels, while 29% fear their manager or colleagues will question their

work ethic or discipline.

Women appear to be more affected by weight-related self-esteem issues than men. 60% of female respondents claimed that their weight created a 'lack of self-esteem at work which affected their confidence and stress and anxiety levels' in sharp contrast to only 44% of men.

How do you feel that your weight negatively impacts on your job/career?

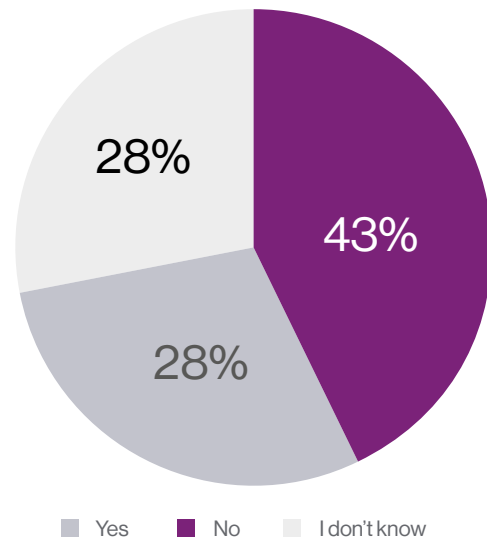


Q31: Do you believe employers should offer weight loss schemes to employees (e.g. weight watching-type schemes)?

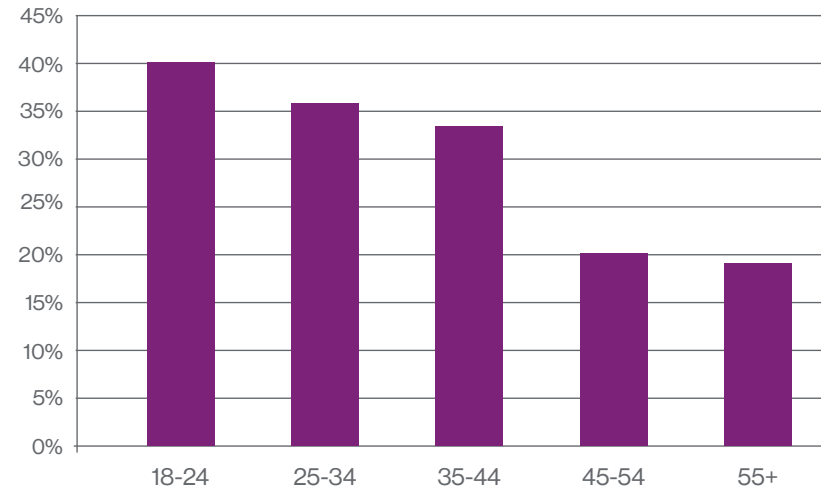
28% of employees believe their company should offer weight loss schemes to their workforce.

There seems to be a disparity between the generations, however, with older workers much less receptive to the idea than their younger colleagues (19% of over 55s compared to 40% of 18 to 24-year-olds.)

Do you believe employers should offer weight loss schemes to employees (e.g. weight watching-type schemes)?



Yes, by age

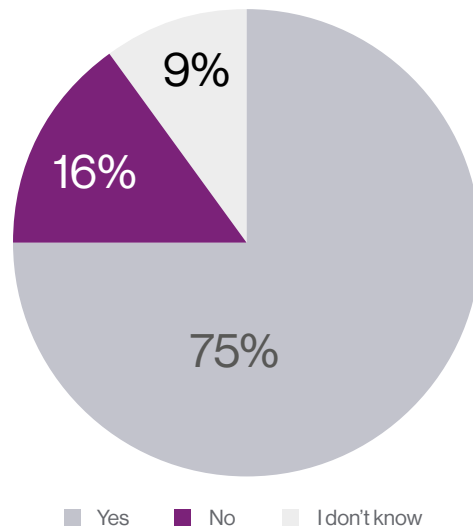


Q32: Do you believe that weight loss schemes at work should be incentivised?

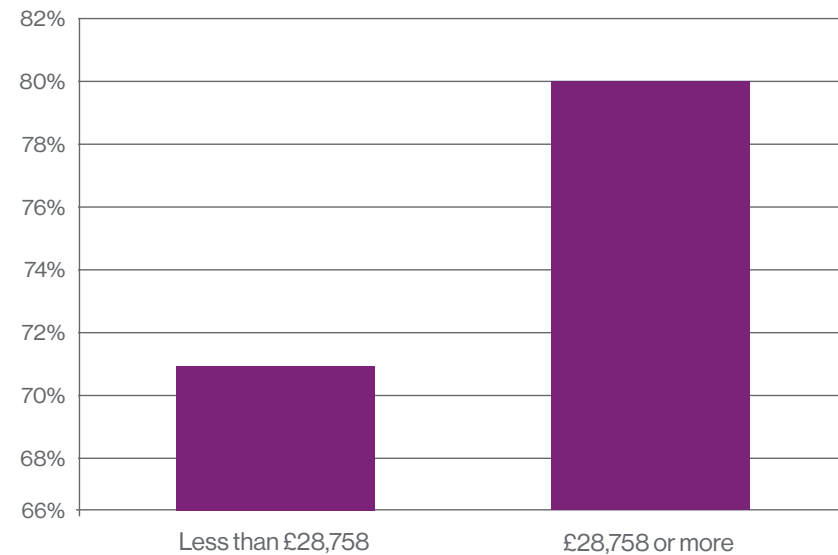
There seems to be a call from employees to incentivise weight loss schemes offered through work, with 75% of workers stating that they should be.

Interestingly, higher earners support incentivised schemes more. 71% of workers earning below the national average believe employers should take this proactive approach to weight loss, in contrast to 80% of higher earners.

Do you believe that weight loss schemes at work should be incentivised?



Yes, by salary



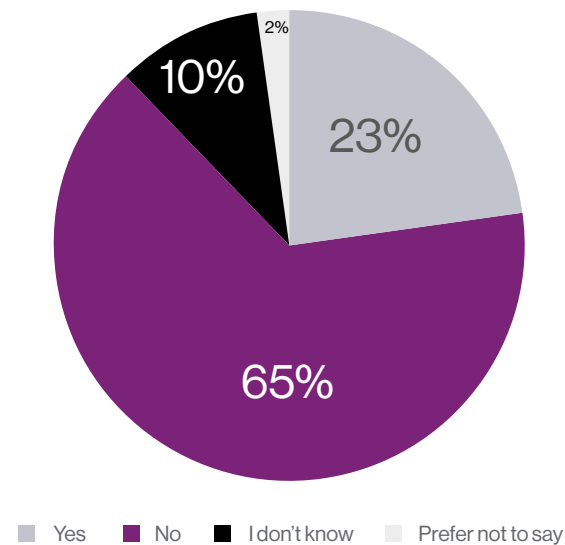
Q33: Do you suffer from a musculoskeletal condition (e.g. back pain, tendinitis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis etc)?

Musculoskeletal injuries are one of the biggest causes of long-term absences in the UK, with around 6.6 million working days lost in 2017/18.

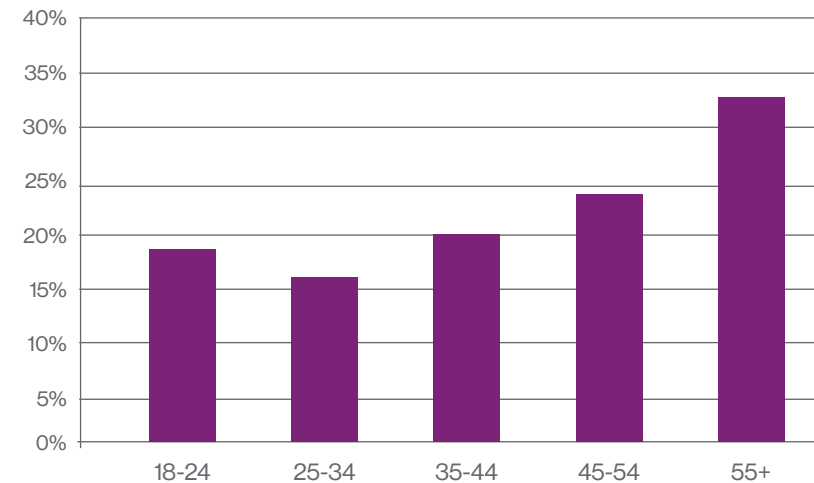
Almost a quarter (23%) of employees said they suffer with a musculoskeletal condition*. Unsurprisingly, older workers were the biggest victims with cases almost doubling in 55-year-olds and over (33%) compared to 18 to 24-year-olds (18%).

*Musculoskeletal conditions affect the joints, bones and muscles, and also include rarer autoimmune diseases and back pain.

Do you suffer from a musculoskeletal condition (e.g. back pain, tendinitis, osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis etc)?



Yes, by age



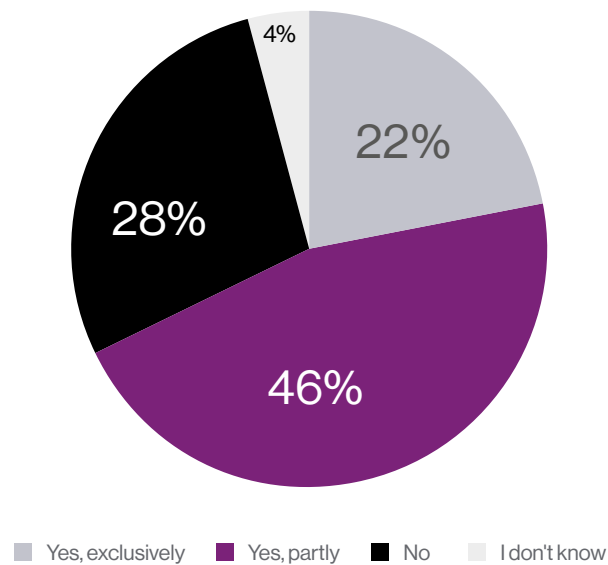
Q34: Do you believe your current occupation has been a contributing factor to your condition?

Heavy lifting, not sitting properly in a chair and even stress are just some of the main causes of musculoskeletal conditions in the workplace.

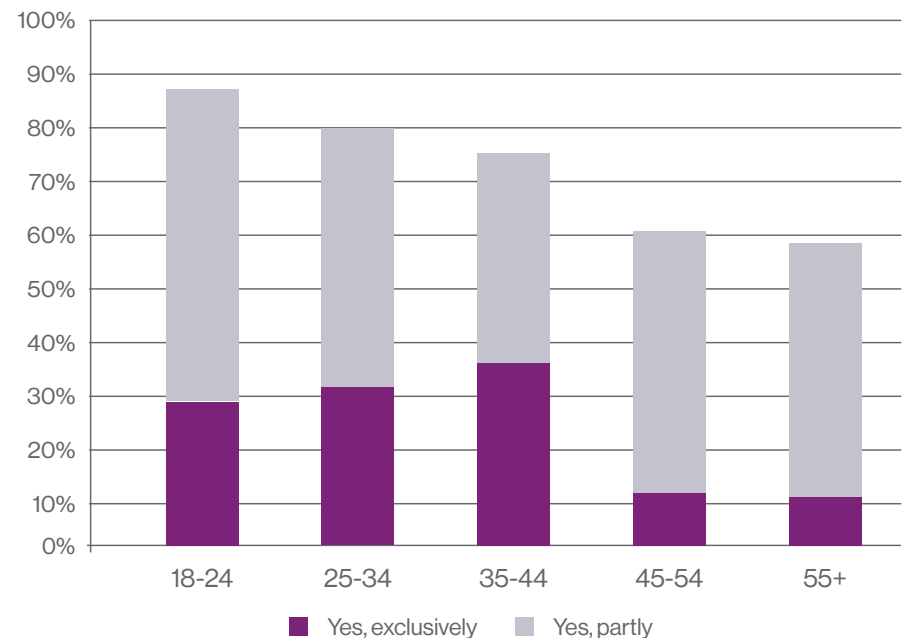
For those employees with a musculoskeletal issue, more than two-thirds (68%) say their job has been a contributing factor to their condition while 22% of those said it was the main reason.

It seems like older workers are less prone to blaming their current occupation (58% of over 55s compared to 87% of 18 to 24-year-olds), perhaps due to back problems naturally becoming more common as we age.

Do you believe your current occupation has been a contributing factor to your condition?



Yes, by age

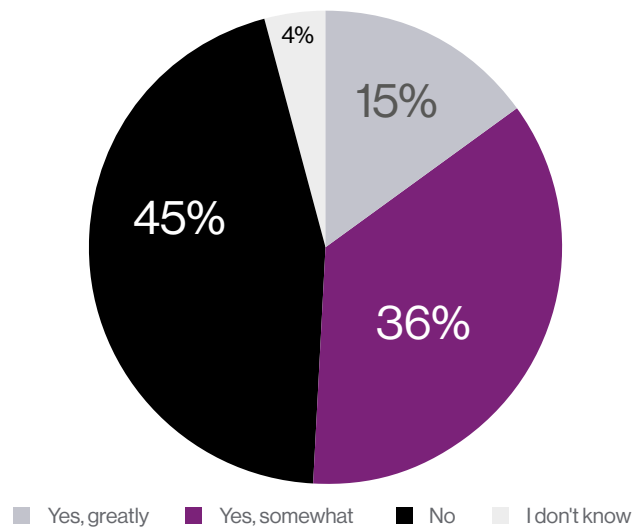


Q35: Does your musculoskeletal condition have an impact on your ability to do your job?

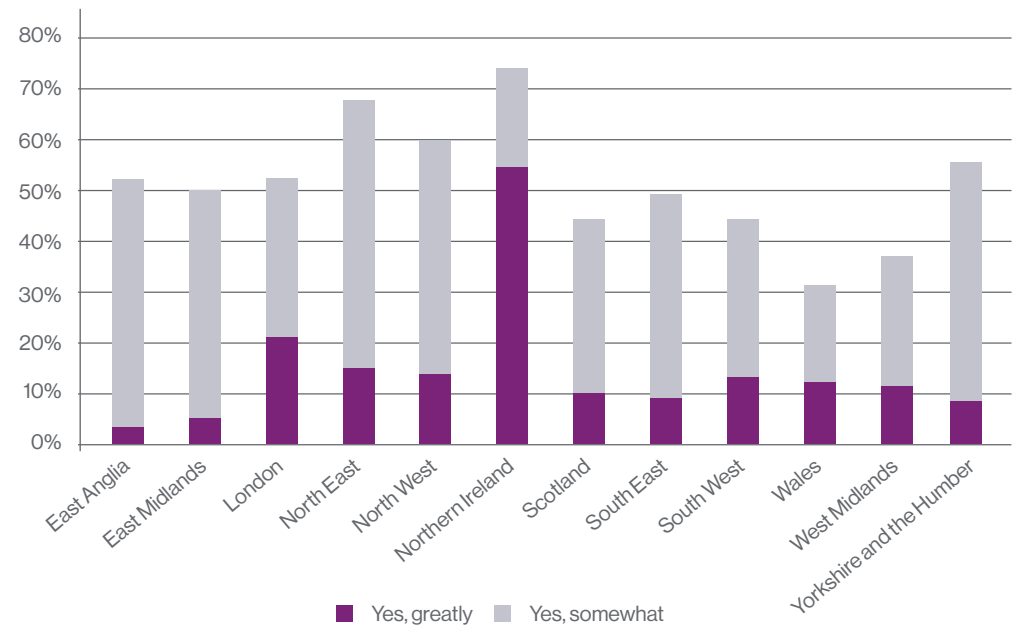
More than half (51%) of employees believe their condition has an impact on their ability to their job properly, indicating a costly problem for businesses.

Northern Irish organisations were the worst affected, with almost three-quarters (73%) of workers saying their musculoskeletal issue has an effect on job capabilities. Meanwhile, 31% of Welsh employees felt the same.

Does your musculoskeletal condition have an impact on your ability to do your job?



Yes, by region



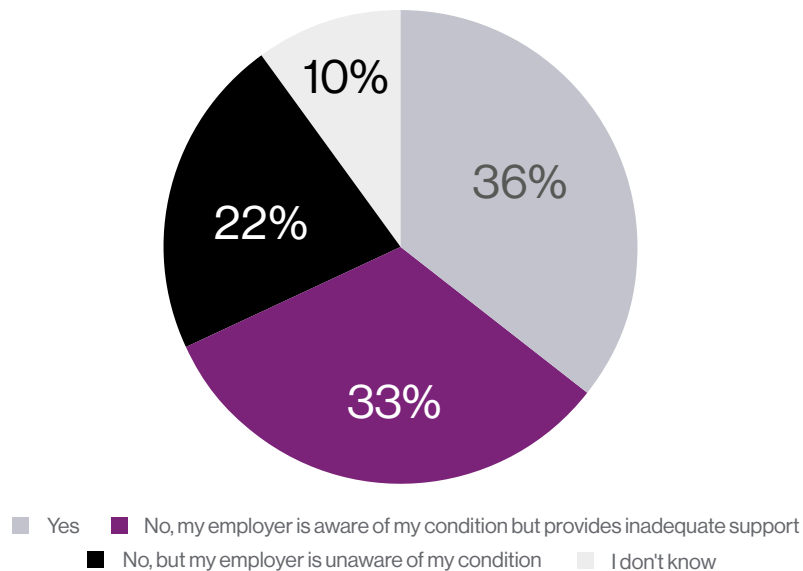
Q36: Does your employer offer adequate support to enable you to do your job?

While 36% of respondents said their employer gives adequate support with their musculoskeletal issues, a third (33%) said they aren't given any support, even though their company is aware of their condition.

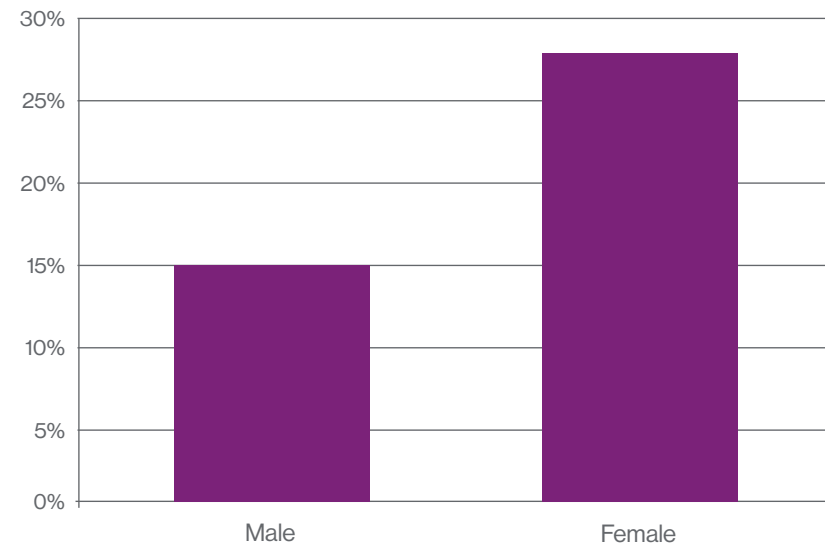
Interestingly, more than one in five (22%) revealed they hadn't told their employer about their condition, putting pressure on companies to ensure workers feel comfortable enough to disclose any medical problems.

Differences between men and women are highlighted in this question, with females more likely to keep their condition from their employer (28% compared to 15% of males).

Does your employer offer adequate support to enable you to do your job?



No, but my employer is unaware of my condition, by gender

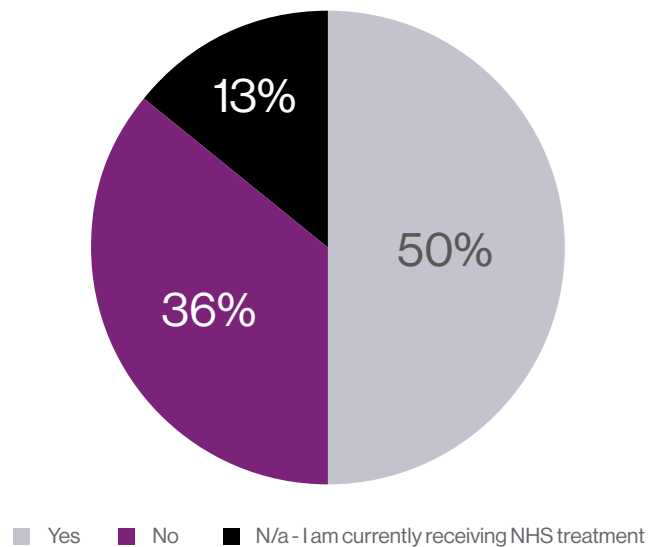


Q37: Will you be seeking future treatment for your musculoskeletal condition from the NHS?

Reports on lengthy NHS waiting times are a regular appearance in the UK media, so it is perhaps unsurprising that more than a third (36%) of employees revealed they would not be turning to the NHS for any future treatment of their musculoskeletal condition.

Surprisingly, however, higher earners were more likely to put their faith in the NHS (60% compared to 45% of lower earners).

Will you be seeking future treatment for your musculoskeletal condition from the NHS?



Yes, by salary



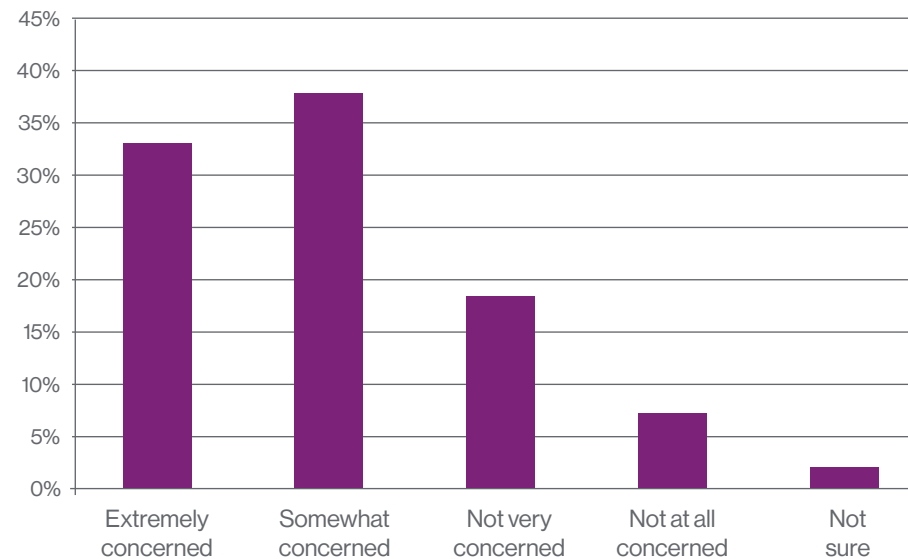
Q38: Are you concerned access to future NHS treatment may be restricted?

A significant majority of employees (71%) said they were concerned that access to NHS treatment may be limited.

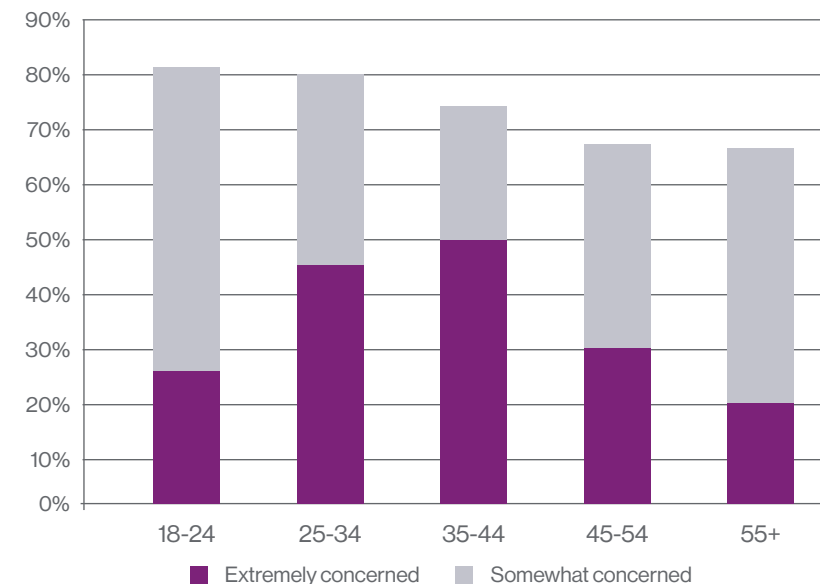
Pessimism peaks with youth, with more than eight in ten (81%) of 18 to 24-year-olds concerned compared to 66% of over 55s. This could be due to younger social media savvy employees having greater access to news stories which prompt fears of a bleaker future.

With wages for people in their twenties being 5% lower than they should be according to the Institute for Fiscal Studies, and other financial issues like the current housing crisis and student debt, their negativity around the future of the NHS perhaps doesn't come as much as a surprise.

Are you concerned access to future NHS treatment may be restricted?



Concerned, by age

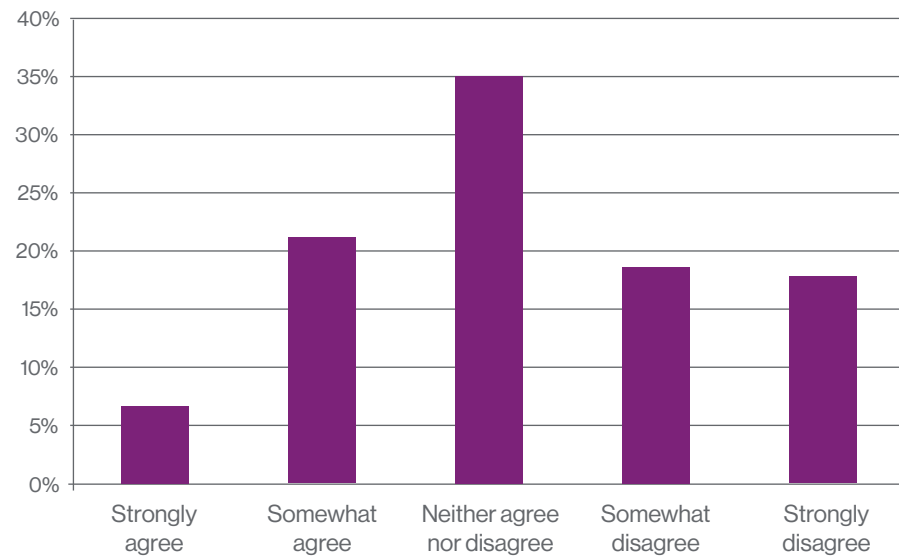


Q39: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I would rather use telemedicine services (remote access to medical advice/consultations and prescriptions via a secure video link) than visit my GP practice'?

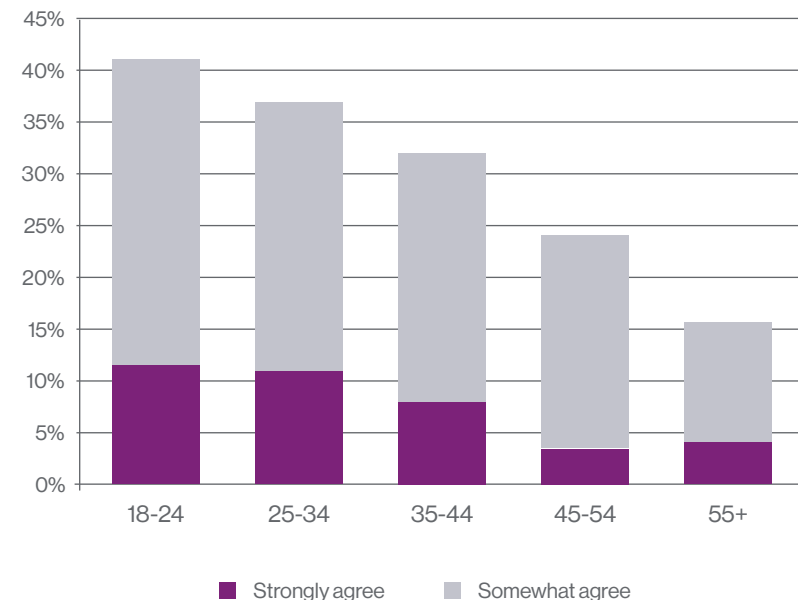
Almost three in ten (29%) employees would rather use telemedicine services than talk to a doctor face-to-face.

With technology already such a big part of their lives, it's unsurprising that younger people would be much more receptive to using these services than their older colleagues (41% of 18 to 24-year-olds compared to just 16% of 55-year-olds and over), highlighting the need for companies to look at incorporating them into their benefits offering.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'I would rather use telemedicine services (remote access to medical advice/consultations and prescriptions via a secure video link) than visit my GP practice'?



Agree, by age

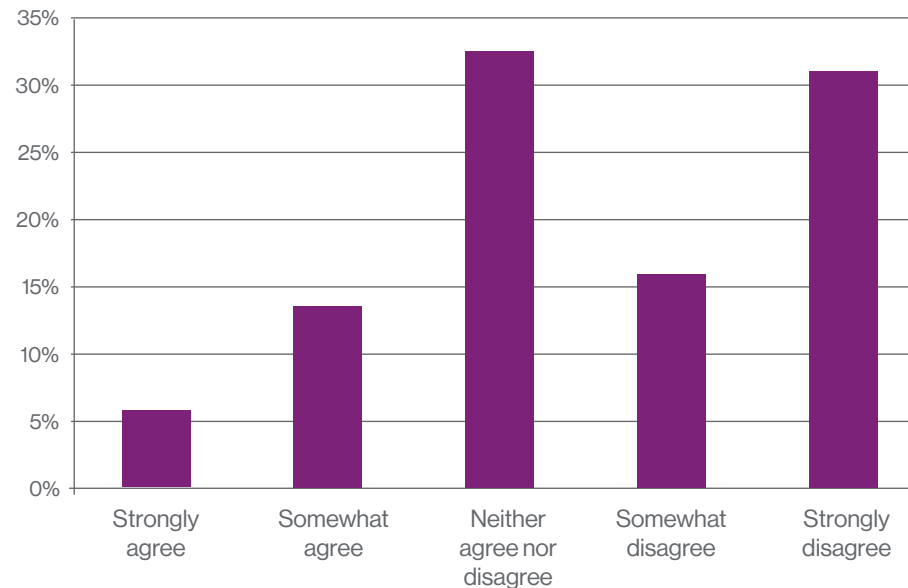


Q40: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Employers should offer fertility treatments as a benefit (e.g. egg freezing, subsidised fertility tests and treatment)'?

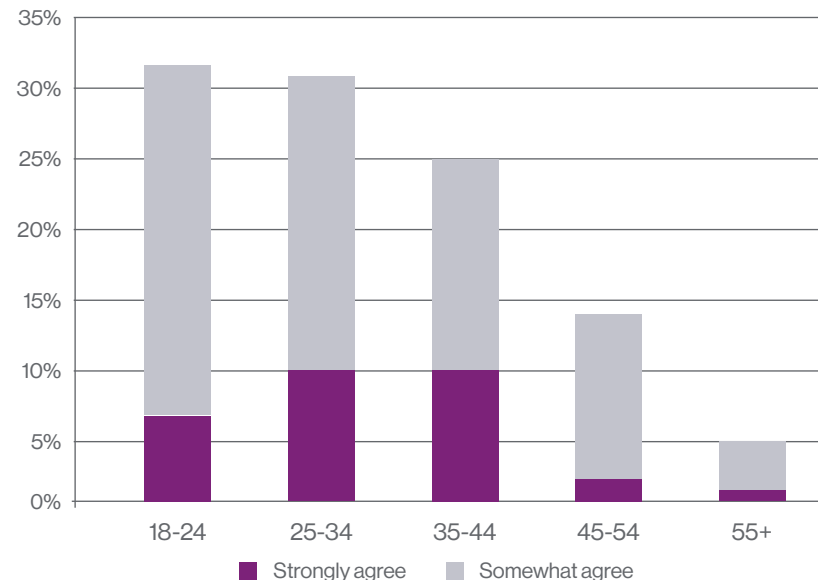
Whether companies should offer fertility treatments as part of an employee's benefits package has been a controversial issue over the last few years and this is reflected in our results.

One in five (20%) employees believe treatments such as egg freezing or subsidised fertility tests and treatment should be offered, rising to 31% among 18 to 24-year-olds and also in 25 to 34-year-olds. This is perhaps unsurprising given that the latest figures from the ONS show younger women are delaying having children, with conception rates dropping except in the over 40s age group where the pregnancy rate grew.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'Employers should offer fertility treatments as a benefit (e.g. egg freezing, subsidised fertility tests and treatment)'?



Agree, by age



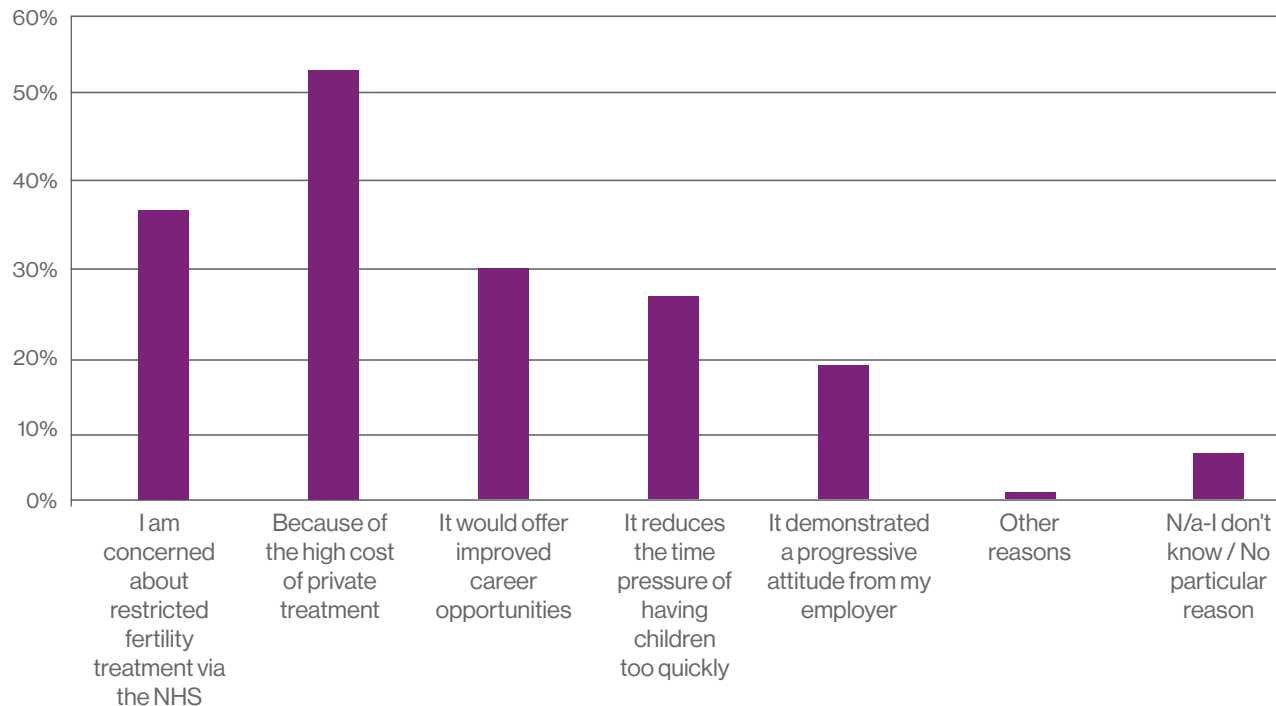
Q41: Why do you feel that employers should offer fertility treatments as a benefit?

The cost of IVF varies across the country but one cycle could cost more than £5,000, prohibitively expensive for many employees.

It stands to reason then that the high cost of private fertility treatment is the top reason (52%) why it should be an employee benefit among those respondents who said it should be offered, followed by concerns about restricted treatment on the NHS (36%).

While cost is the main reason across all ages, improved career opportunities scored fairly highly among 35 to 44-year-olds (40%). This may be due to the fact that women in that age bracket may have delayed having children until later to focus on their career.

Why do you feel that employers should offer fertility treatments as a benefit?



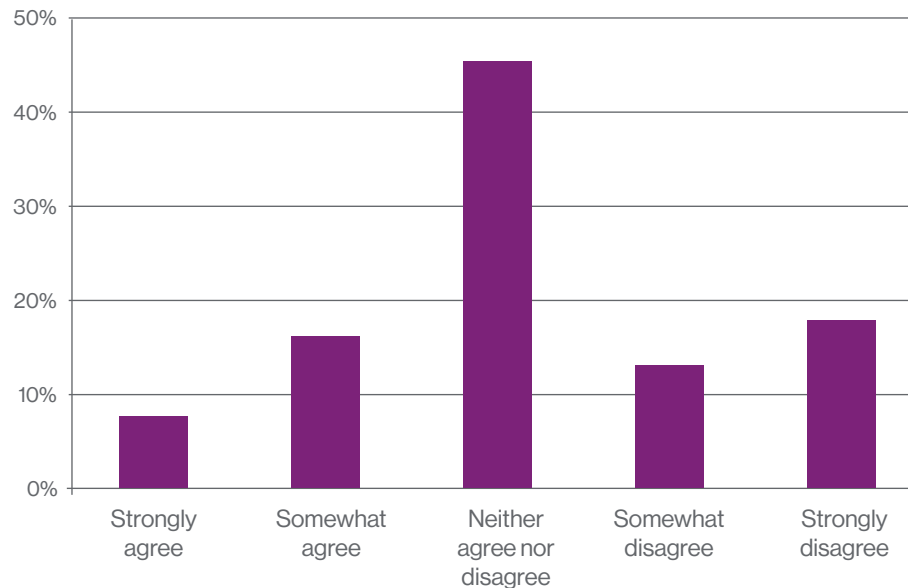
Q42: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'If my employer were to offer egg freezing, I would view this as a selfish attempt by my employer to retain talent for longer'?

Whereas almost a quarter (24%) of respondents thought employers would be being exploitative by offering egg freezing, almost a third (31%) disagreed, seeing companies as forward-thinking for offering fertility treatments.

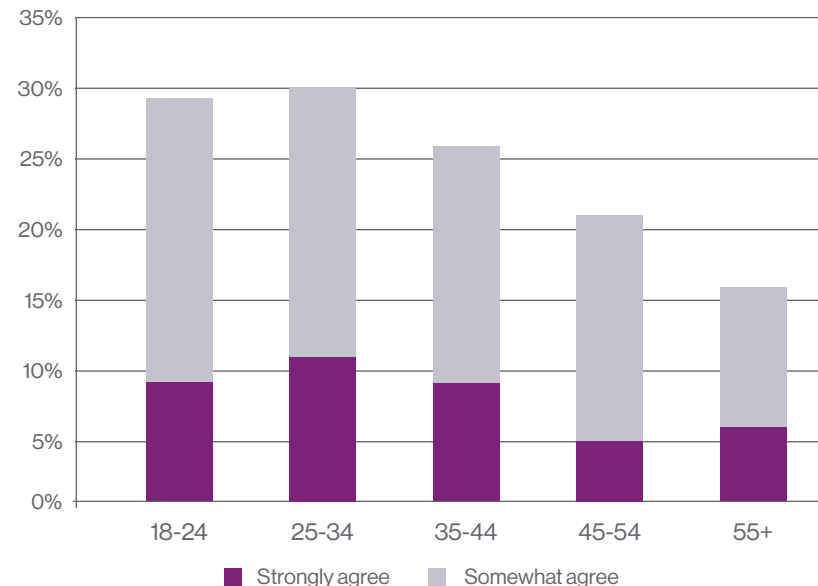
Interestingly, higher earners (31%) were more likely to question an employer's agenda and talent retention motivation, than lower earners (20%).

Suspensions peak among employees aged 25 to 35-years-old (30%), potentially due to them being the target demographic for egg freezing.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'If my employer were to offer egg freezing, I would view this as a selfish attempt by my employer to retain talent for longer'?



Agree, by age



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