



INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE

Managing Mental Health  
in the Workplace 2018  
#MentalHealthAwarenessWeek2018



There has never been greater awareness of the intrinsic link between employee mental wellbeing and business productivity across the UK workforce than there is today. Equally, there has been an evolution in our collective expectation of what employers should do to support the mental health of their workers.



*Paul Devoy*  
**Paul Devoy**  
CEO,  
Investors in  
People

health is not something that affects a select few, it is something that we all have to bear in mind, just as we have our physical health.

This is why Investors in People felt compelled to measure how important mental health support at work is to UK employees. We intended to ascertain how important trust is in discussing their mental health with more senior staff and indeed how this trust, or lack thereof, fed into stress, worry and anxiety in their professional and personal lives.

Our results showed that 80% of UK workers have felt stress at work, with more than half (54%) saying that this stress also impacted their home life. The very fact that the vast majority of respondents identified stress as a factor in their working lives should be enough to convince business leaders that they must do more.

Beyond being the ethical thing to do, an employer who actively cares for the emotional, physical and social wellbeing of their workers can also expect tangible business benefits. Indeed, last year's research into the impact of mental health at work by Paul Farmer and Dennis Stevenson in their 'Thriving at Work' report proved that a failure to appropriately support employees could cost businesses as much as £42 billion per year, with a cost to the entire economy amounting to £99 billion in lost output.

For me, the most shocking suggestion to come from the report was that nearly 300,000 people with a long term mental health condition lose their jobs every year<sup>1</sup>. It impressed upon me the fact that mental health must be given equal credence to physical health by employers. This is because mental

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/658145/thriving-at-work-stevenson-farmer-review.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658145/thriving-at-work-stevenson-farmer-review.pdf), 5.

By launching its first ever Managing Mental Health report, Investors in People hopes to build on the insights provided by existing research and prove that improving the UK's approach to workplace support for mental wellbeing is vital if we are to boost the nation's productivity. This report intends to provide employers and employees alike with useful insights into how their organisations could better consider and support workplace mental health.



[www.investorsinpeople.com](http://www.investorsinpeople.com)



[@IIP](https://twitter.com/IIP)



[/InvestorsInPeopleUK](https://www.facebook.com/InvestorsInPeopleUK)

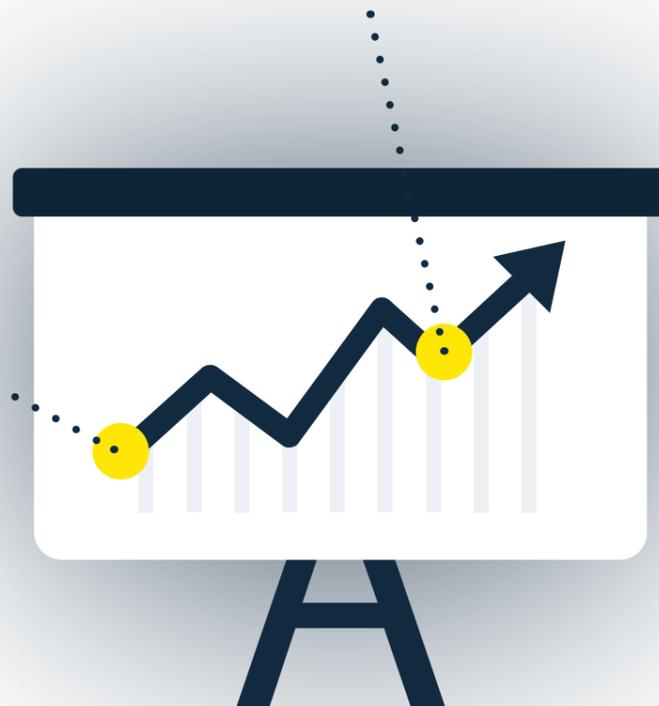
## Mental Health: The National Picture

The last few years have seen unprecedented attention focussed on how organisations should be responsible for supporting the mental health of their employees. According to the Health & Safety Executive, in 2016/17 12.5 million days were lost to stress and other mental health issues<sup>2</sup>, a figure compounded by the Stevenson & Farmer Thriving at Work report, which suggested that poor mental health could be costing the UK economy more than £99 billion per year.

In late-2017 the Health & Safety Executive announced that stress across the UK workforce had risen to become the most common work place illness<sup>3</sup>.

2016/17 Mental health accounted for 40% of workplace absences

2015/16 Mental health accounted for 37% of workplace absence



<sup>2</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/labourproductivity/articles/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket/2016>

<sup>3</sup><http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/>



Poor mental health could be costing UK businesses as much as

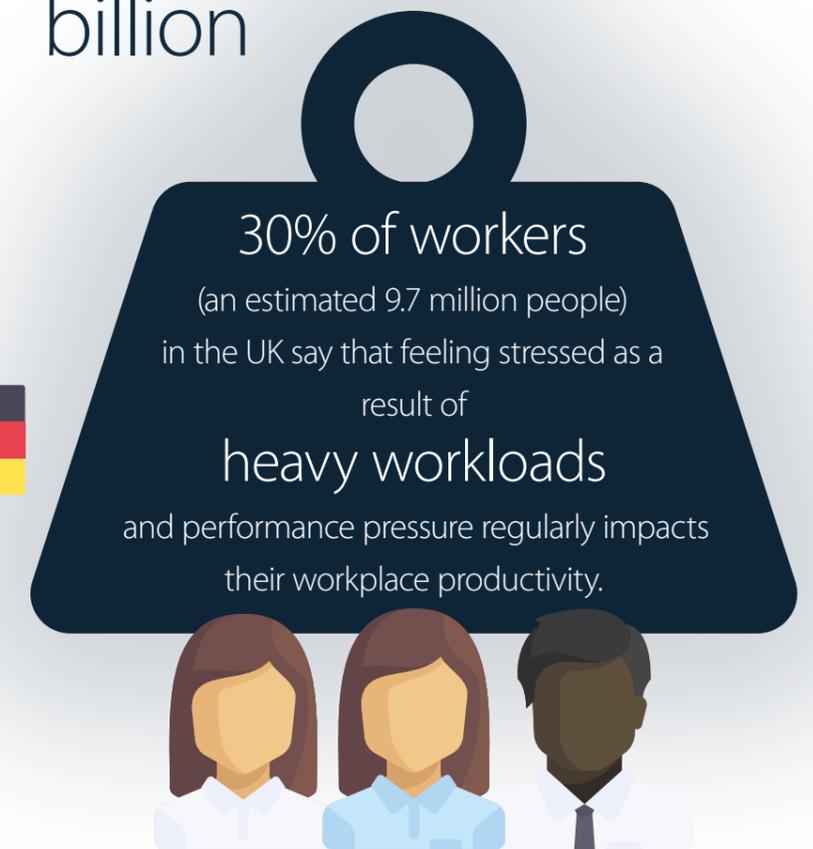
£42 billion

and poor mental health could be costing the UK economy as much as

£99 billion



Productivity in the UK is currently lagging at around 20% behind our G7 counterparts like Germany and France. This means we would have to work six days a week to match the output of these nations.



<sup>2</sup><https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/labourproductivity/articles/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket/2016>

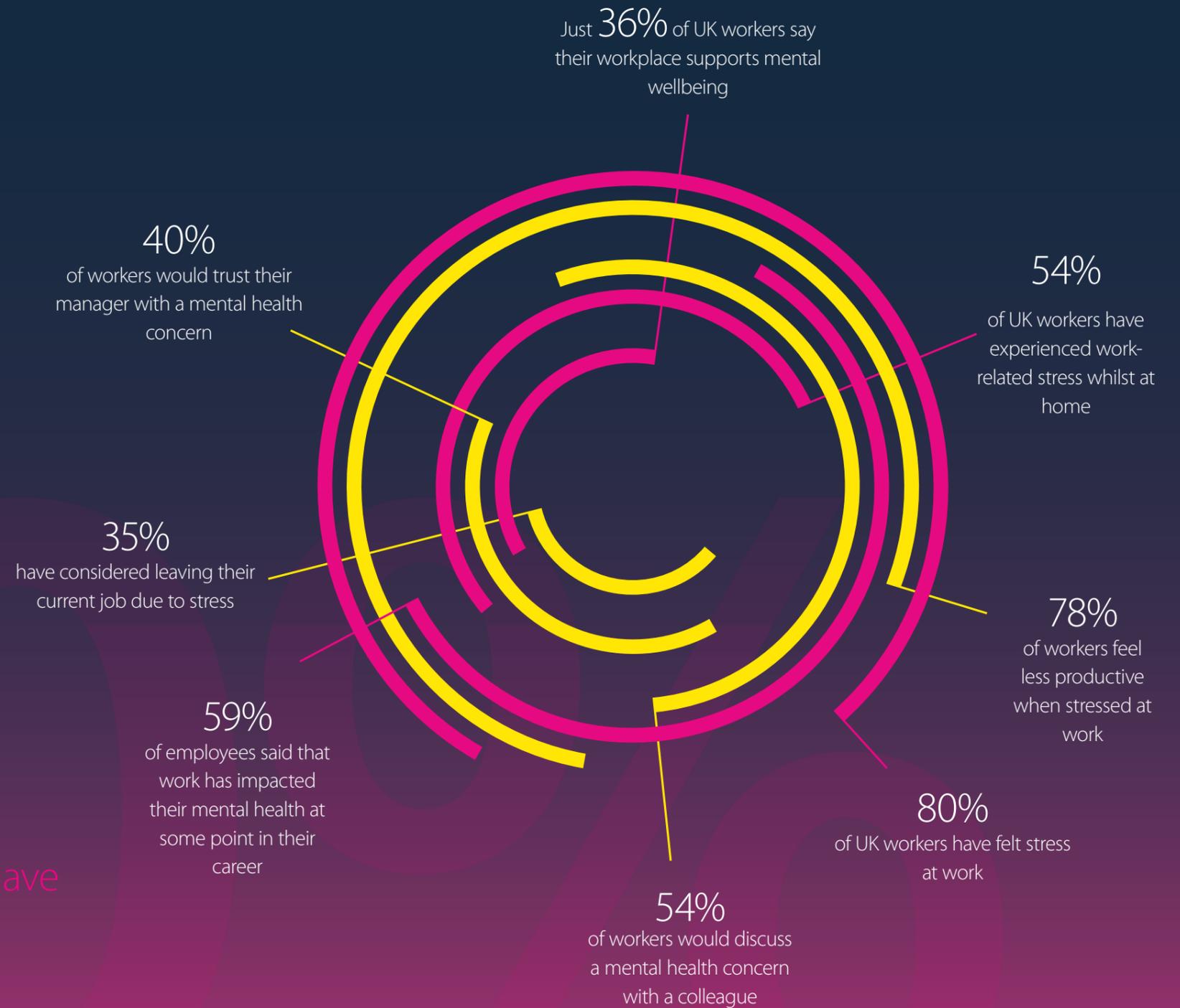
<sup>3</sup><http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/>

## Headline Trends

In conducting Investors in People's first Managing Mental Health survey, several important trends were revealed, providing significant insight into the way workers in the UK feel about their mental health at work. Our core finding was that the vast majority (80%) of employees have felt stress at work. In addition, our findings also showed that workplace stress is encroaching on home- life for the majority of workers. Given these insights, employers must be willing to embrace their responsibility to safeguard employee mental health to ensure that employees are satisfied at work and happy at home.

**80%**

UK workers have felt stress at work



## Causes of Stress

Having ascertained that stress is endemic across the UK workforce, it's important for employers to understand which factors contribute most to their workers feeling this way. The Managing Mental Health survey found that the greatest pressure felt by workers was workload, with 40% claiming that having too much on their agenda resulted in stress. The survey also revealed that a significant proportion of the labour market would feel that their mental health would be better supported at work if their organisation were to provide more training for line managers.

### Main causes of stress for UK workers



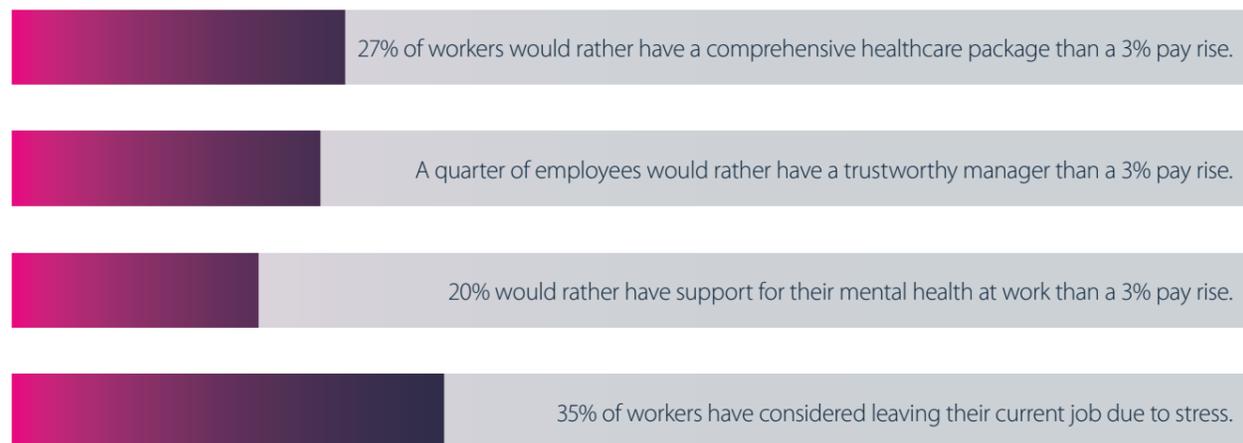
Workload 40%



Poor Management 21%



Challenging Targets 12%



UK workers are most likely to say that giving line managers better training would be the best way for workplaces to support their mental health.

## Gender Headlines

Breaking down the survey results by gender revealed some interesting trends in how men and women interact with and explore their mental health in different ways. Men are less likely to say they felt stressed, less likely to take this stress home and also less likely to feel like they could talk to their colleagues about their mental health. In contrast, 83% of women admit to feeling stressed at work and wanting a more trustworthy manager than a 3% pay rise. The fact that men and women experience their mental health in different ways means that employers must ensure flexibility in the workplace support that is available; a man suffering from stress may not want to talk to a colleague, but he might like to know that there's anonymous support available.

### Have you ever experienced stress at work?



Men  
Yes 74%  
No 26%



Women  
Yes 83%  
No 17%

### Have you ever felt workplace stress whilst at home?

Men  
Yes 49%



Women  
Yes 57%



Women would rather have a trustworthy manager than a 3% pay rise.

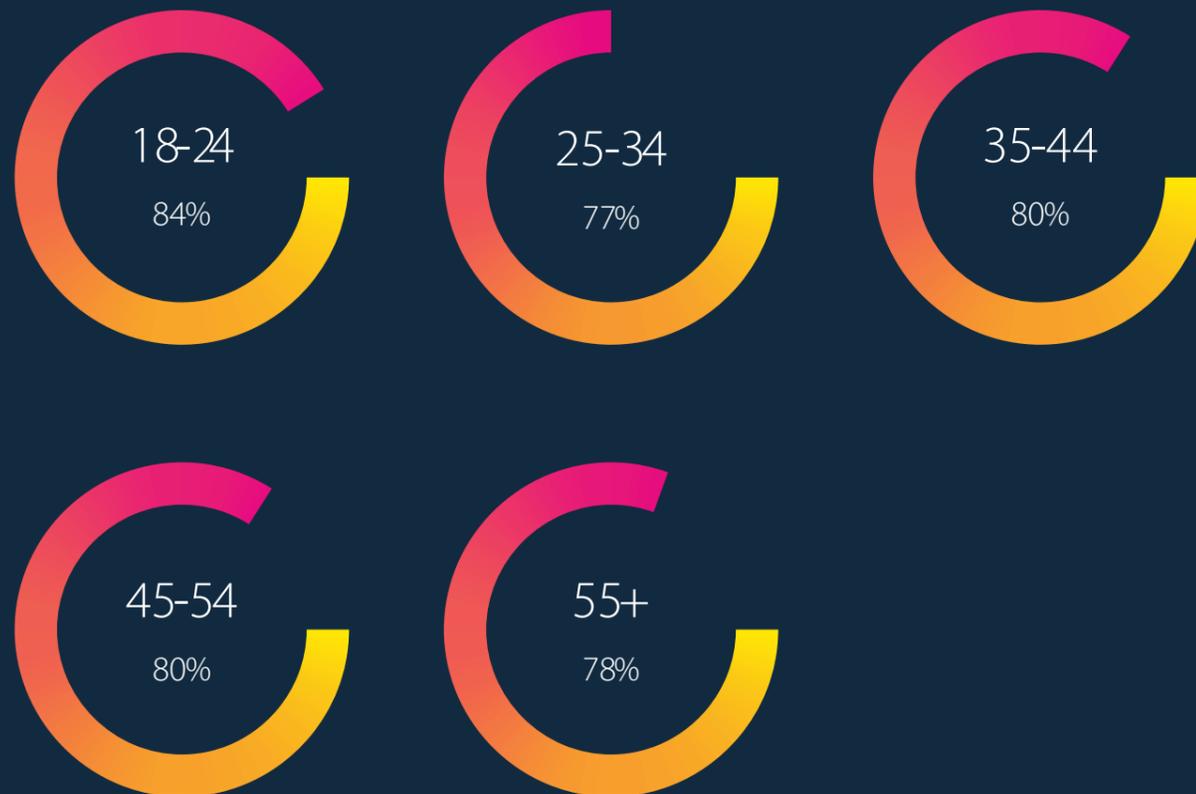


Men would rather have a comprehensive healthcare package than a 3% pay rise.

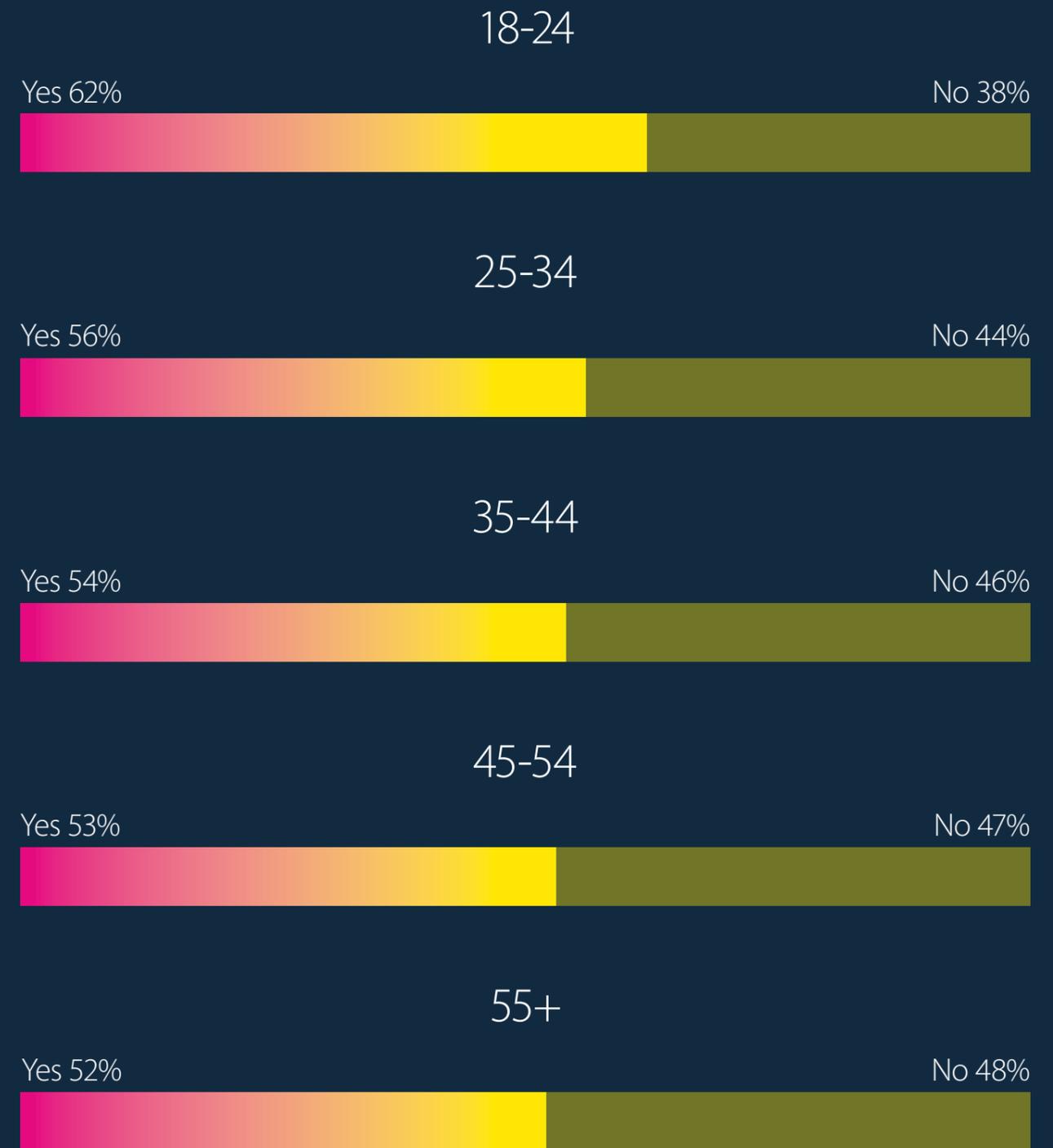
## Age Headlines

Not only did the Managing Mental Health survey show clear trends in how gender can affect how workers think about their mental wellbeing, it also suggested that age is a factor determining how we as employees consider this aspect of our health. Particularly clear is the impact that stress and worry has on the nation's youngest workers, with 84% of 18-24 year olds saying that they'd experienced stress at work. This trend was mimicked across other questions, where nearly half (48%) of this demographic admitted that stress had forced them to consider leaving their current job.

## Percentage of workers who say they've experienced stress at work



## Percentage of workers who say they've experienced work-related stress while at home?



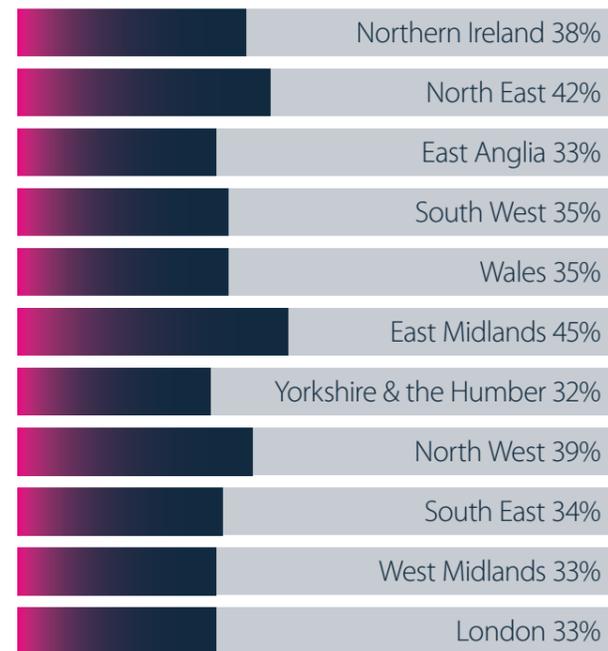
## Regional Headlines

According to our results, region is a factor in the level of stress experienced by full and part time workers in the UK. Employees in Northern Ireland are most stressed (85% saying that they'd experienced stress at work), compared to workers in London, 26% of whom claim to never have experienced stress at work. The fact that there is an 11% disparity between different regions of the UK is unacceptable as it suggests that wellbeing and stress management are not catered for equally by organisations operating in different regions of the UK.

### Have you ever felt stress while at work?



### Have you ever considered leaving your job due to workplace stress?



### Do you feel that your workplace supports your mental health? (Highest and lowest yes)

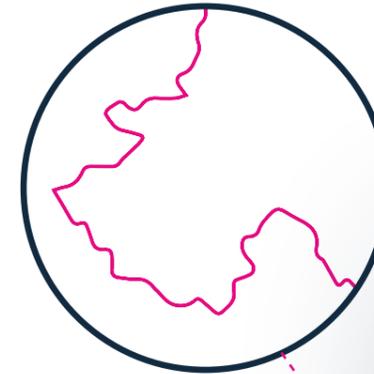


### Does your manager take your mental health into account? (Highest and lowest yes)



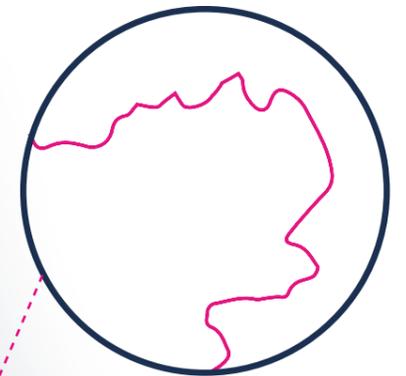
Across all regions, workload was the biggest cause of stress.

### Northern Ireland



Employees in Northern Ireland are most stressed (85% saying that they'd experienced stress at work).

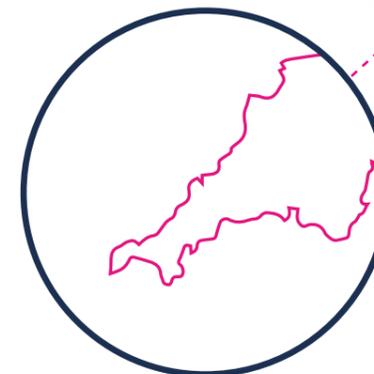
### East Midlands



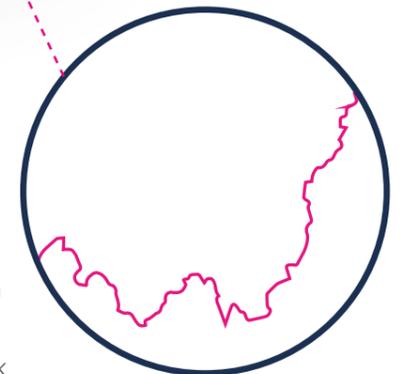
Across our questioning, workers in the East Midlands consistently felt more supported in their mental health, whilst employees in Northern Ireland seemed the least satisfied with the stress support on offer.

35% of workers in the South West have considered leaving their job due to workplace stress.

### South West



### London



26% of workers in London claim to never have experienced stress at work.

## Sector Headlines

The last twelve months have seen significant media attention falling on the strains faced by certain sectors and industries in the UK economy. Although several economic indicators have suggested that our economy is stabilising while unemployment falls, there are still major challenges facing the health and social care sectors, and indeed those trade-based businesses who have been waiting to hear how Britain's decision to leave the EU will impact their operations. Accordingly, there are clear sectoral trends revealing which factions of the labour market are feeling the pressure.

### Top 5 sectors with most stressed employees



Social Care 87%



Healthcare 87%



Charity 86%



Recruitment & HR 86%



Law 85%

### Poor management as a stressor



Law Enforcement 47%



Creative Arts 41%



Hospitality 33%

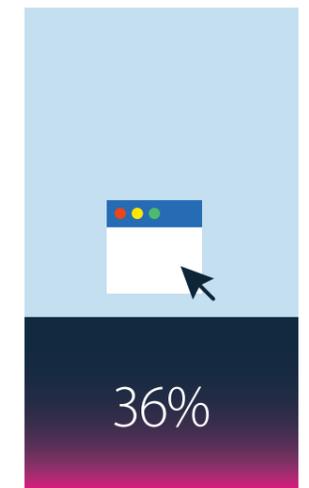
### Most/least trusting sectors

63% of workers in the charity sector would trust their line manager with their mental health concerns compared to just a third in the engineering and manufacturing sector.



### Most/least talkative cultures

Workers in the social care sector are most likely to say they would talk to a colleague about a mental health issue, 66% compared to just 36% in the media and internet sector.



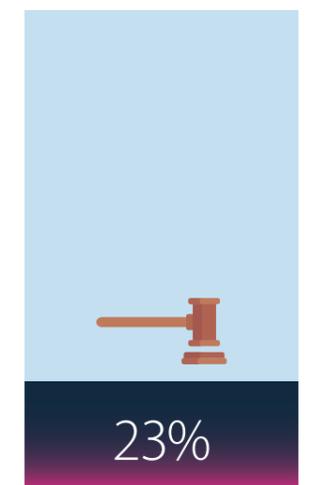
### Most/least open cultures

Workers in the consulting and management sector are most likely to feel like their organisation encourages an open culture around mental health, compared to just 19% in sport, leisure and tourism.



### Highest/lowest employee turnover

41% of social care workers have considered leaving their current job due to stress, whereas 77% of law enforcement workers have never considered quitting for this reason.



## IIP's 3 Top Tips for Employers

### 1 Train your line managers in how to support their team's mental health

The results of IIP's Managing Mental Health report have proven that across sectors, ages and genders, employees all want managers that they can trust and managers who are capable of offering effective support for their mental health concerns.

### 2 Listen to what employees want

Each workplace in each industry will have specific demands and stresses acting on its employees. It's vital that as a responsible employer, you recognise what these are and mitigate the impact. Listening to how employees feel about these stresses might be the most effective way of neutralising them.

### 3 Personalise your support offer

Everyone experiences mental health in different ways. This means that there is no one-size-fits-all approach for employees who are dealing with a mental health concern. Therefore, ensure that there is flexibility and the ability to tailor solutions in the support you offer.

## IIP's 3 Top Tips for Employees

### 1 If you're stressed, speak up

It is vital that if you are suffering from a mental health concern, such as stress, you speak to a colleague or line manager as soon as you feel comfortable to do so. Employers can only support their people if they're aware that they need additional support.

### 2 Be proactive

If you know how and where your line manager and organisation could better support mental health, gather as much information as you can and present it to change-makers in your organisation. This will also ensure that your employer is given every opportunity to appropriately support your wellbeing.

### 3 Support your peers

Unlike physical ailments, mental health conditions aren't always obvious in those who are suffering. By encouraging open and honest relationships with colleagues, you're bringing about the fundamental trust necessary to discuss issues like health and wellbeing.

## Methodology

In April this year, Investors in People launched its Managing Mental Health report for 2018. For the first time, IIP intended to seek out how the UK workforce feels about how mental health is discussed and supported in their workplaces. In conjunction with OnePoll, Investors in People surveyed 1,000 part-time and 1,000 full-time workers from 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> April 2018.

**For more information about this survey, or to access additional data sources and press information, please contact [press@investorsinpeople.com](mailto:press@investorsinpeople.com) or call 0300 303 3033**

## About Us

Investors in People is the Standard for people management. The international Standard defines what it takes to lead, support and manage people well for sustainable results.

Investors in People works with thousands of top businesses across the world, from Allianz Insurance, to McDonald's and Brompton Bikes. With a community of thousands of organisations across 58 countries, successful accreditation against the Standard is the sign of a great employer, an outperforming place to work and a clear commitment to sustained success.

Based on a tried and tested framework and a rigorous process of assessment, companies that meet the Investors in people Standard proudly display their accreditation because they understand that it's people who make the difference in their organisations.

**To find out more about Investors in People visit [www.investorsinpeople.com](http://www.investorsinpeople.com)**





INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE



[www.investorsinpeople.com](http://www.investorsinpeople.com)



@IIP



/InvestorsInPeopleUK