



TELUS Mental Health Index.

New Zealand | January 2025

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What you need to know for January 2025.

Two in five workers are feeling anxious and do not have emergency savings to cover basic needs; one in three are feeling isolated, depressed, and say their mental health is negatively impacting work productivity.

- At 59.9, the mental health of workers has improved modestly from the previous period
- 39 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 45 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 16 per cent have a low mental health risk
- All mental health sub-scores, except for financial risk and depression, have improved compared to the previous period
- Anxiety remains the lowest mental health sub-score for two years
- The lowest mental health score is in Northland, whereas the highest mental health score is in the region of Marlborough, Nelson, Tasman, and West Coast
- Managers have a slightly lower mental health score than non-managers
- Labourers continue to have a lower mental health score than service industry and office workers

Two in five workers feel under constant stress, with the concern disproportionately among younger workers.

- 41 per cent of workers feel under constant stress; the mental health score of this group is nearly 28 points lower than workers not feeling constant stress and nearly 14 points lower than the national average
- 28 per cent of workers are feeling angrier and more distrustful of others
- 27 per cent of workers are skeptical of others' motives
- 24 per cent of workers get easily frustrated in daily situations
- Workers under 40 are more likely to feel under constant stress, to feel angrier and more distrustful of others, and to be easily frustrated



Workers identify health benefits as the most significant opportunity for improvement; more than one-third value better support for their wellbeing over financial rewards.

- 49 per cent of workers say their organisation excels in flexible work, while 27 per cent say their organisation needs to improve flexible work
- 38 per cent of workers say their organisation excels at workload management, while 32 per cent say their organisation needs to improve workload management
- 21 per cent of workers say their organisation excels in health benefits, while 43 per cent say their organisation needs to improve health benefits
- 33 per cent of workers say their organisation excels in diversity and inclusion
- 62 per cent of workers trust their organisation to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees
- 36 per cent of employees would prefer better support for their wellbeing over a 10 per cent increase in salary



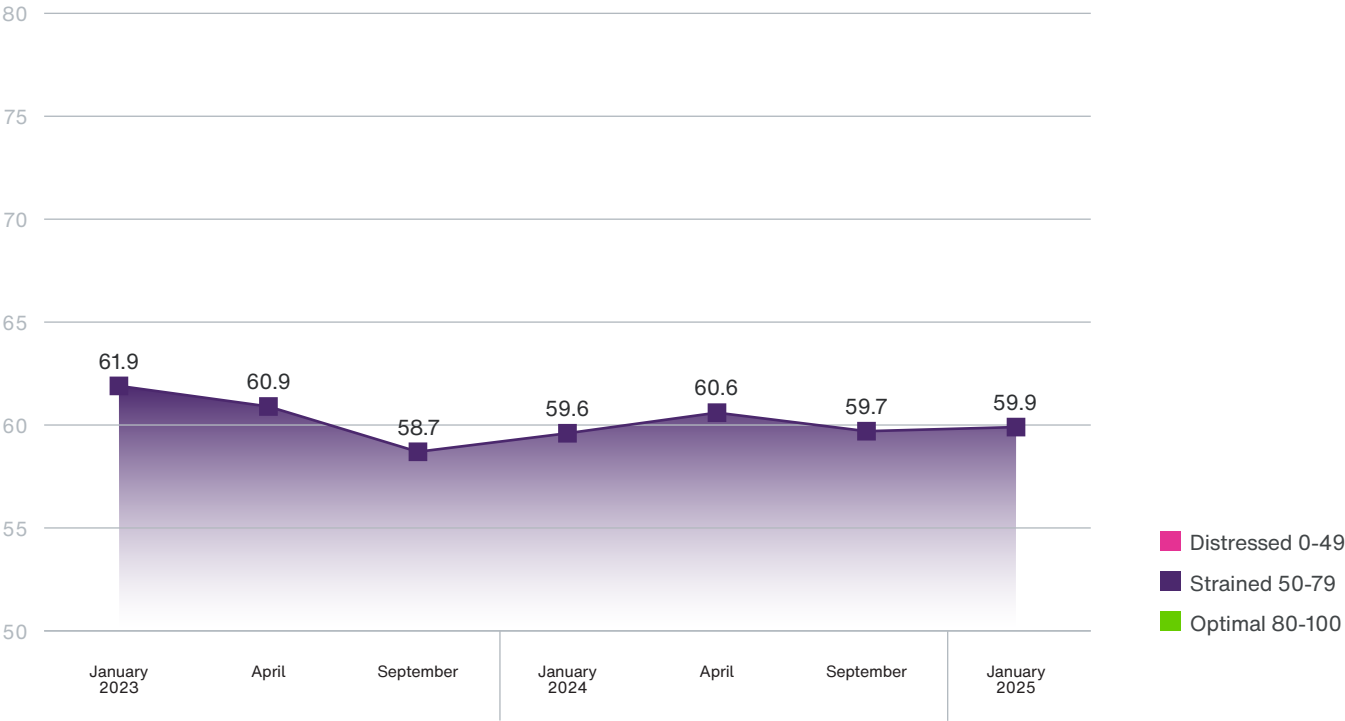
Cost, wait times, and stigma cited as reasons for delaying or avoiding mental health support in 2024.

- 40 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking dental care in 2024, 26 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking medical care in 2024, and 18 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking vision care in 2024
- 19 per cent of workers delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- 56 per cent of workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 41 per cent of workers cite long wait times as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 26 per cent cite stigma as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 25 per cent say they didn't know where to get help/ how to access support as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024
- 17 per cent cite lack of insurance coverage as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024

The Mental Health Index.

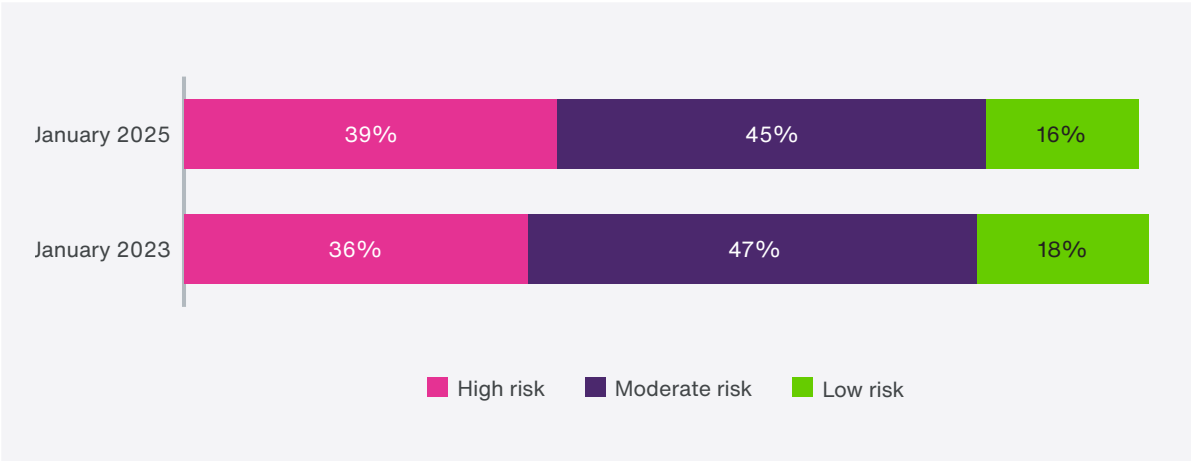
The overall Mental Health Index (MHI) for January 2025 is 59.9. The mental health score of workers in New Zealand improved modestly from September 2024, yet remains significantly strained.

MHI Current Month January 2025	September 2024
59.9	59.7



Mental health risk.

In January 2025, 39 per cent of workers have a high mental health risk, 45 per cent have a moderate mental health risk, and 16 per cent have a low mental health risk. Two years since the launch of the MHI in January 2023, the proportion of workers with a high mental health risk has increased by three per cent.



Approximately 30 per cent of workers in the high-risk group report diagnosed anxiety or depression, seven per cent report diagnosed anxiety or depression in the moderate-risk group, and one per cent of workers in the low-risk group report diagnosed anxiety or depression.



Mental Health Index sub-scores.

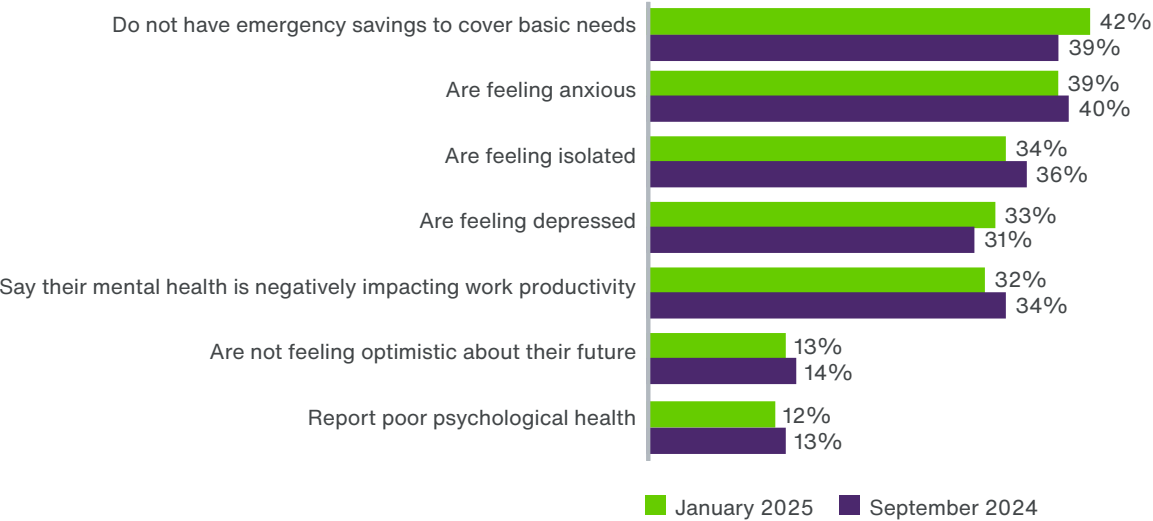
For two years, anxiety (52.3) has been the lowest Mental Health Index sub-score. Depression (56.7), isolation (57.0), financial risk (57.2), work productivity (58.2), and optimism (66.6) follow. General psychological health (69.2) continues to be the most favourable mental health measure in January 2025.

- All mental health sub-scores, except for financial risk and depression, have improved compared to September 2024
- The most significant improvement is in the optimism sub-score, up 1.6 points from the previous period

Nearly two in five (37 per cent) workers feel anxious, 34 per cent feel isolated, 34 per cent do not have emergency savings for basic needs, 31 per cent say their mental health is negatively impacting work productivity, 31 per cent feel depressed, 15 per cent do not feel optimistic about their future, and 13 per cent of workers generally cite poor psychological health.

Mental Health Index Sub-scores	January 2025	September 2024
Anxiety	52.3	52.0
Depression	56.7	58.3
Financial risk	57.2	57.8
Isolation	57.0	56.9
Work productivity	58.2	56.7
Optimism	66.6	65.0
Psychological health	69.2	68.1

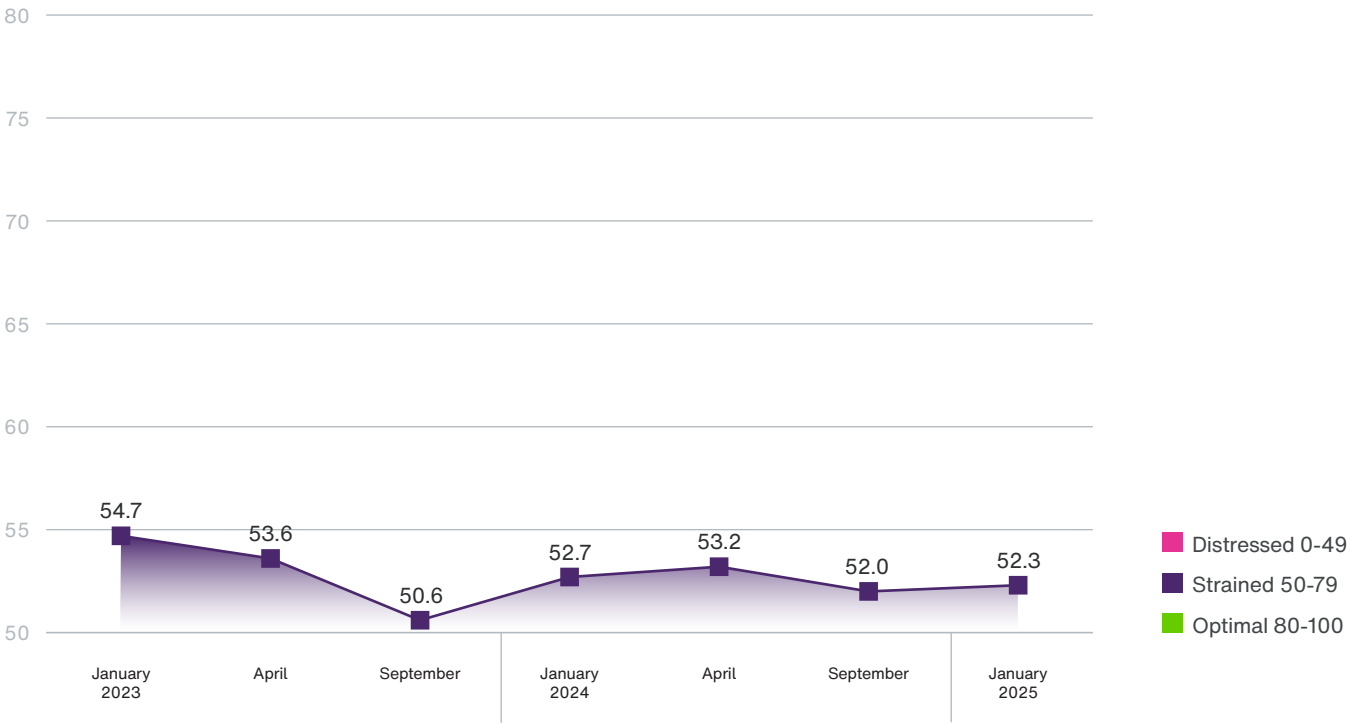
Percentage at risk by MHI sub-score



Anxiety

In January 2025, 39 per cent of workers say they often feel unsettled and nervous.

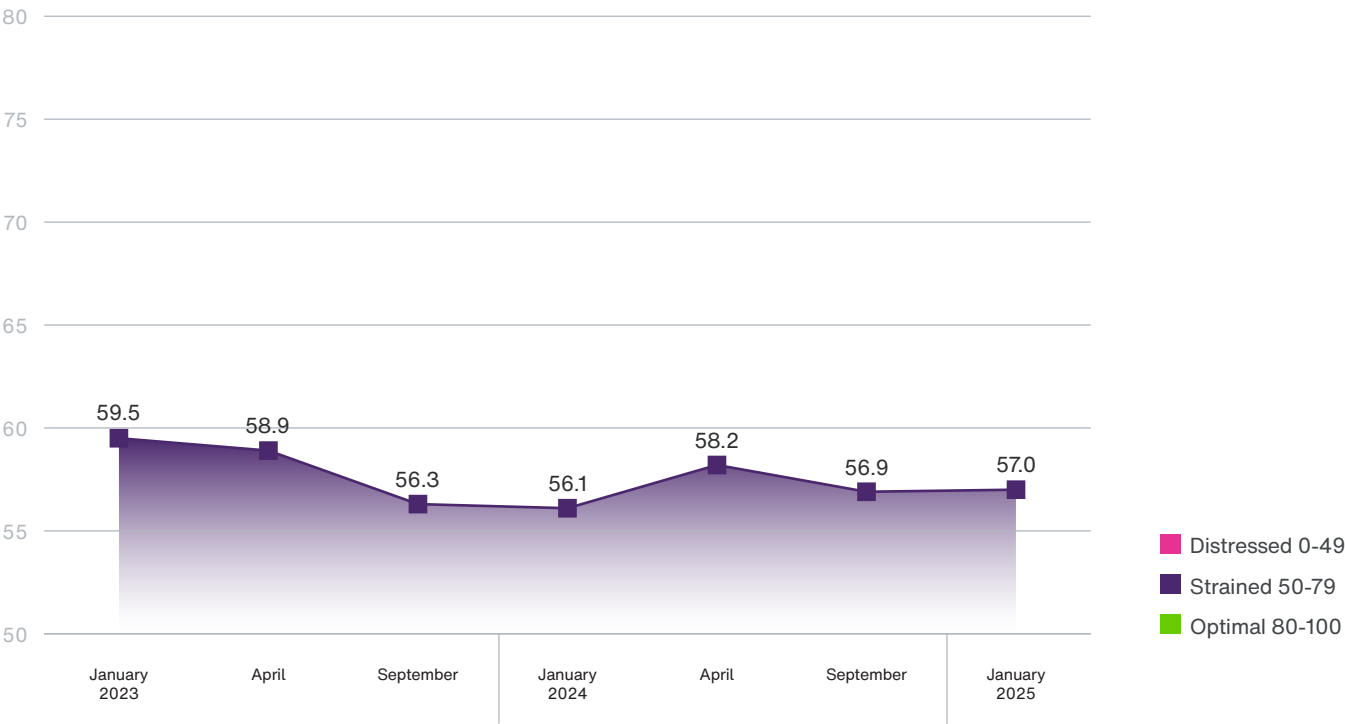
Anxiety sub-scores have fluctuated since the launch of the MHI in January 2023. Following a notable decline in September 2024, the score shows modest improvement in January 2025. However, anxiety remains the lowest among mental health sub-scores for two years.



Isolation

In January 2025, 34 per cent of workers say they often feel alone.

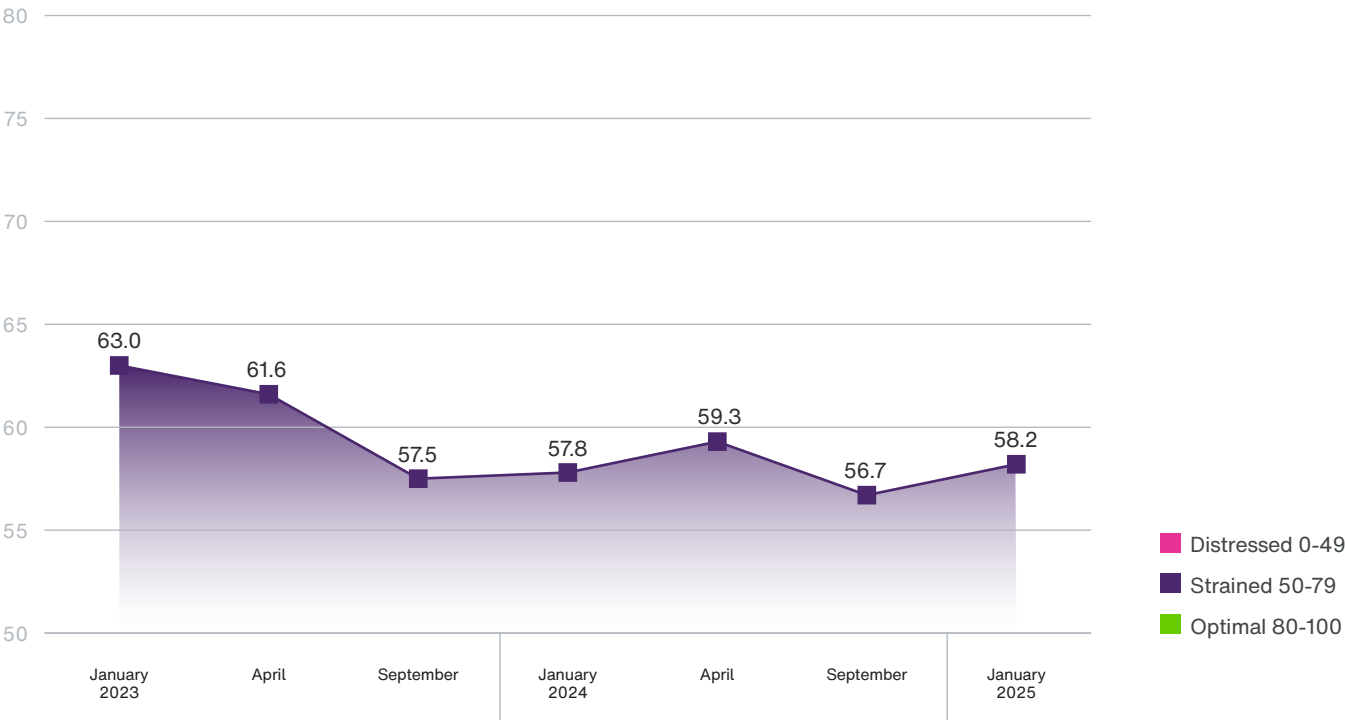
From January 2023 to January 2024, the isolation sub-score steadily declined. Despite rebounding with a two-point improvement in April 2024, the isolation score declined in September. In January 2025, the isolation sub-score remains nearly unchanged from the prior period.



Work productivity

In January 2025, 32 per cent of workers say their mental health is negatively impacting their work productivity and goals.

Work productivity has generally declined since January 2023. After hitting its lowest point in September 2024 (56.7), the work productivity sub-score rebounded in January 2025 with a notable 1.5-point increase.



Mental health by gender and age.

- Since the launch of the MHI, women have had significantly lower mental health scores than men. In January 2025, the mental health score of women is 57.7 compared to 62.5 for men
- Since January 2023, mental health scores have improved with age
- Differences in mental health scores between workers with and without minor children are evident. Workers with at least one child have a lower score (58.4) than workers without children (61.8)

Mental health by employment status.

- Overall, four per cent of respondents are unemployed¹ and 13 per cent report reduced hours or reduced salary
- Workers reporting reduced salary compared to the previous month have the lowest mental health score (45.3), followed by respondents not currently employed (49.5), workers reporting fewer hours than the last month (53.6), and workers with no change to salary or hours (61.6)
- Labourers have a lower mental health score (57.8) than service industry (59.3) and office workers (61.1)
- Managers have a slightly lower mental health score (60.0) than non-managers (60.5).
- Respondents working for companies with more than 10,000 employees have the highest mental health score (64.6)
- Respondents working for companies with 51-100 employees have the lowest mental health score (57.6)



Emergency savings

- Workers without emergency savings continue to experience a lower mental health score (42.5) than the overall group (59.9). Workers with emergency savings have a mental health score of 69.1

¹ MHI respondents employed in the past six months are included in the poll.

The Mental Health Index by region.

The mental health score of workers on the South Island (61.4) is higher than the mental health score of workers on the North Island (59.5).

- The greatest decline in mental health is in Waikato, down 2.4 points from September 2024
- With a significant 2.2-point increase, the mental health score in the region of Manawatū-Whanganui and Taranaki (62.5) has seen the greatest improvement from September 2024
- The region of Marlborough, Nelson, Tasman, and West Coast continues to have the highest mental health score in January 2025



Region	January 2025	September 2024	Change
Manawatū-Whanganui and Taranaki	62.5	60.3	2.2
Auckland	59.4	58.2	1.2
Otago and Southland	57.2	56.2	1.0
Canterbury	62.3	61.5	0.8
Marlborough, Nelson, Tasman, and West Coast	65.1	64.7	0.4
Gisborne and Hawke’s Bay	60.7	60.6	0.1
Northland	55.7	56.3	-0.6
Bay of Plenty	61.8	62.5	-0.7
Wellington	56.4	58.4	-2.0
Waikato	60.5	62.9	-2.4

N vs S Island	January 2025	September 2024	Change
North Island	59.5	59.3	0.2
South Island	61.4	60.9	0.5

Numbers highlighted in pink are the lowest/worst scores in the group.
Numbers highlighted in green are the highest/best scores in the group.

Employment status	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Employed (no change in hours/salary)	61.6	60.7
Employed (fewer hours compared to last month)	53.6	55.1
Employed (reduced salary compared to last month)	45.3	58.3
Not currently employed	49.5	52.0

Age group	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Age 20-29	53.9	53.8
Age 30-39	57.0	57.7
Age 40-49	60.9	57.9
Age 50-59	66.0	67.2
Age 60-69	75.8	74.7

Number of children	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
No children in household	61.8	60.4
1 child	58.4	58.2
2 children	56.7	59.2
3 children or more	57.2	61.7

Gender	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Men	62.5	60.7
Women	57.7	58.8

Household income/annum	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
<\$30K	48.0	51.1
\$30K to <\$60K	53.6	55.4
\$60K to <\$100K	59.3	59.6
\$100K to <\$150K	61.8	60.5
\$150K or more	64.6	63.6

Employer size	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Self-employed/sole proprietor	59.7	62.1
2-50 employees	61.8	61.7
51-100 employees	57.6	59.2
101-500 employees	60.3	58.6
501-1,000 employees	57.8	57.8
1,001-5,000 employees	58.6	58.3
5,001-10,000 employees	60.7	58.7
More than 10,000 employees	64.6	60.4

Manager	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Manager	60.0	61.0
Non-manager	60.5	59.1

Work environment	Jan. 2025	Sept. 2024
Labour	57.8	55.8
Office/desk	61.1	60.2
Service	59.3	61.5

Numbers highlighted in pink are the lowest/worst scores in the group.
Numbers highlighted in green are the highest/best scores in the group.

The Mental Health Index by industry.

Full-time post-secondary students have the lowest mental health score (46.5), followed by workers in Accommodation (49.7).

Workers in Professional, Scientific and Technical Services (65.5), Construction (65.4), and Finance and Insurance (64.9) have the highest mental health scores this month.



Industry	January 2025	September 2024	Change
Manufacturing	63.0	56.2	6.8
Finance and Insurance	64.9	58.4	6.5
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	59.8	53.5	6.3
Retail Trade	58.9	55.5	3.4
Construction	65.4	62.3	3.1
Transportation and Warehousing	59.8	57.0	2.7
Wholesale Trade	61.7	59.8	1.8
Administrative and Support services	55.0	53.7	1.4
Other services (except Public Administration)	55.9	54.8	1.2
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	65.5	64.4	1.0
Technology	62.7	62.2	0.5
Health Care and Social Assistance	63.3	63.4	-0.2
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	58.6	60.7	-2.0
Public Administration	62.5	64.9	-2.4
Educational Services	63.0	65.7	-2.7
Food Services	54.5	57.6	-3.1
Information and Cultural Industries	55.2	59.5	-4.3
Other	53.4	58.5	-5.1
Full-time post-secondary student	46.5	51.8	-5.3
Real Estate, Rental and Leasing	62.7	68.5	-5.8
Accommodation	49.7	55.7	-6.0
Utilities	51.8	58.5	-6.7

Spotlight

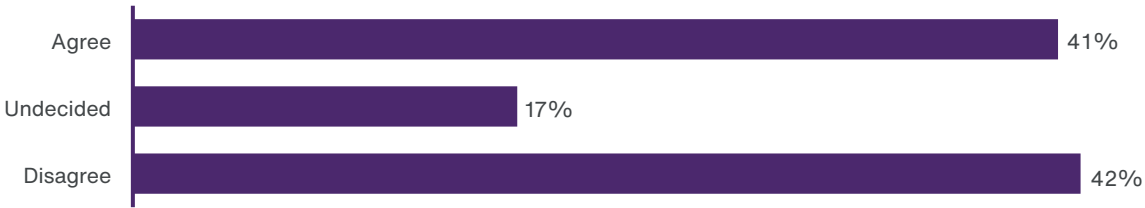
Stress, skepticism, and optimism.

Two in five workers feel under constant stress, with the concern disproportionately among younger workers.

- More than two in five (41 per cent) workers are feeling under constant stress; this group has the lowest mental health score (46.3), nearly 28 points lower than workers not feeling constant stress (73.9) and nearly 14 points lower than the national average (59.9)
- Workers under 40 are twice as likely as workers over 50 to feel under constant stress
- More than two in five (42 per cent) are not under constant stress; this group has the highest mental health score (73.9), 14 points higher than the national average (59.9)



I feel under constant stress



MHI score by “I feel under constant stress”

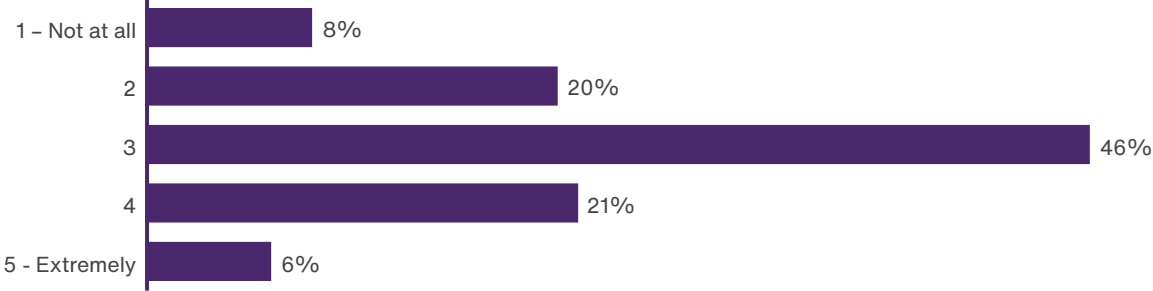


Nearly three in ten workers are highly skeptical about others' motives.

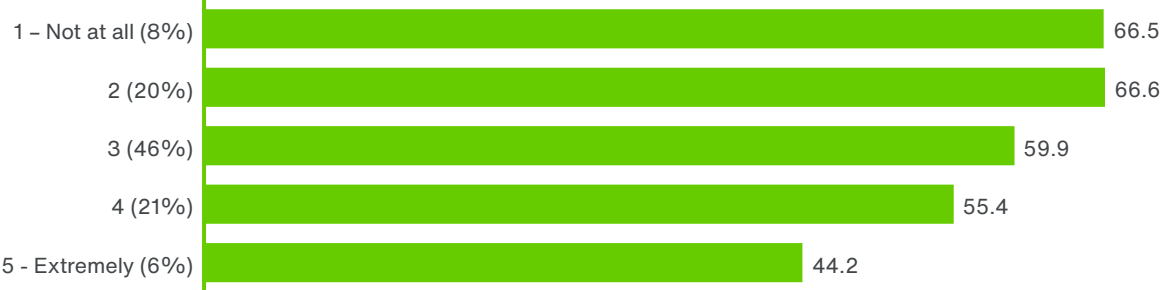
- Nearly three in ten (27 per cent) workers are skeptical (rating of 4 or 5) about others' motives; this group has the lowest mental health scores (55.4 and 44.2, respectively), at least four points lower than the national average (59.9)
- Nearly three in ten (28 per cent) are unlikely to be skeptical (rating of 1 or 2) about others' motives; this group has the highest mental health scores (66.5 and 66.6, respectively), at least six points higher than the national average (59.9)



On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how skeptical are you about others' motives?



MHI score by “On a scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how skeptical are you about others' motives?”

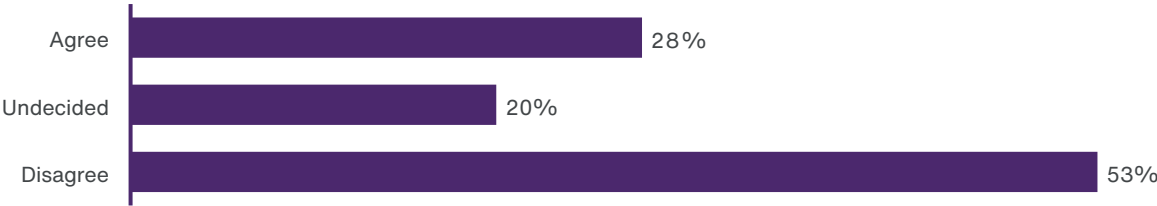


Nearly three in ten workers feel angrier and more distrustful of others.

- More than one-quarter (28 per cent) of workers are feeling angrier and more distrustful of others; this group has the lowest mental health score (45.7), 24 points lower than workers not feeling angrier and more distrustful of others (69.7) and more than 14 points lower than the national average (59.9)
- Workers under 40 are nearly twice as likely as workers over 50 to be feeling angrier and more distrustful of others
- More than half (53 per cent) of workers are not feeling angrier and more distrustful of others; this group has the highest mental health score (69.7), nearly 10 points higher than the national average (59.9)



I am feeling angrier and more distrustful of others



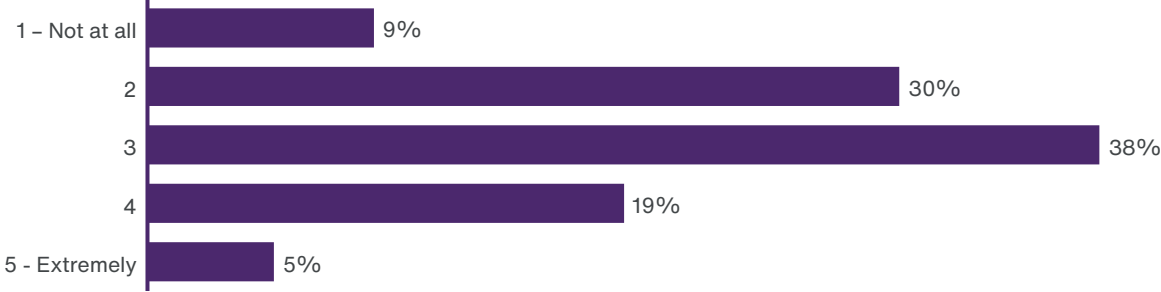
MHI score by “I am feeling angrier and more distrustful of others”



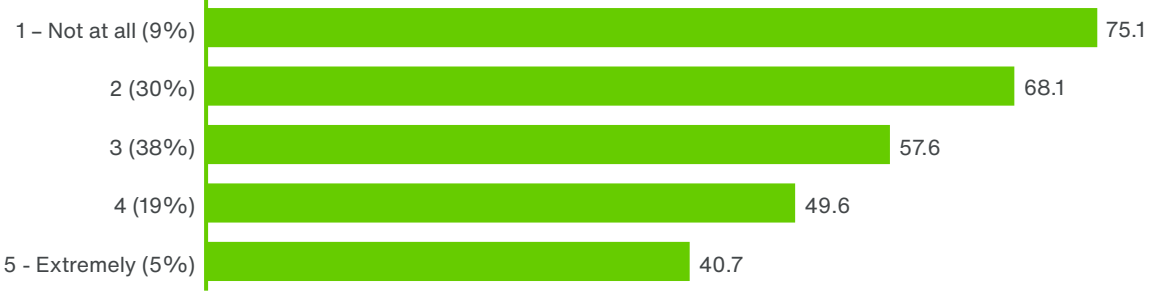
Nearly one in four workers report getting easily frustrated in daily situations.

- Nearly one-quarter (24 per cent) of workers report being easily frustrated in daily situations (rating of 4 or 5); this group has the lowest mental health scores (49.6 and 40.7, respectively), at least 10 points lower than the national average (59.9)
- Workers under 40 are 80 per cent more likely than workers over 50 to report being easily frustrated in daily situations
- Parents are 50 per cent more likely than non-parents to report being easily frustrated in daily situations
- Nearly two in five (39 per cent) report not being easily frustrated in daily situations (rating of 1 or 2); this group has the highest mental health scores (75.1 and 68.1, respectively), at least eight points higher than the national average (59.9)

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how easily do you get frustrated in daily situations?



MHI score by “On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being not at all, 5 being extremely), how easily do you get frustrated in daily situations?”

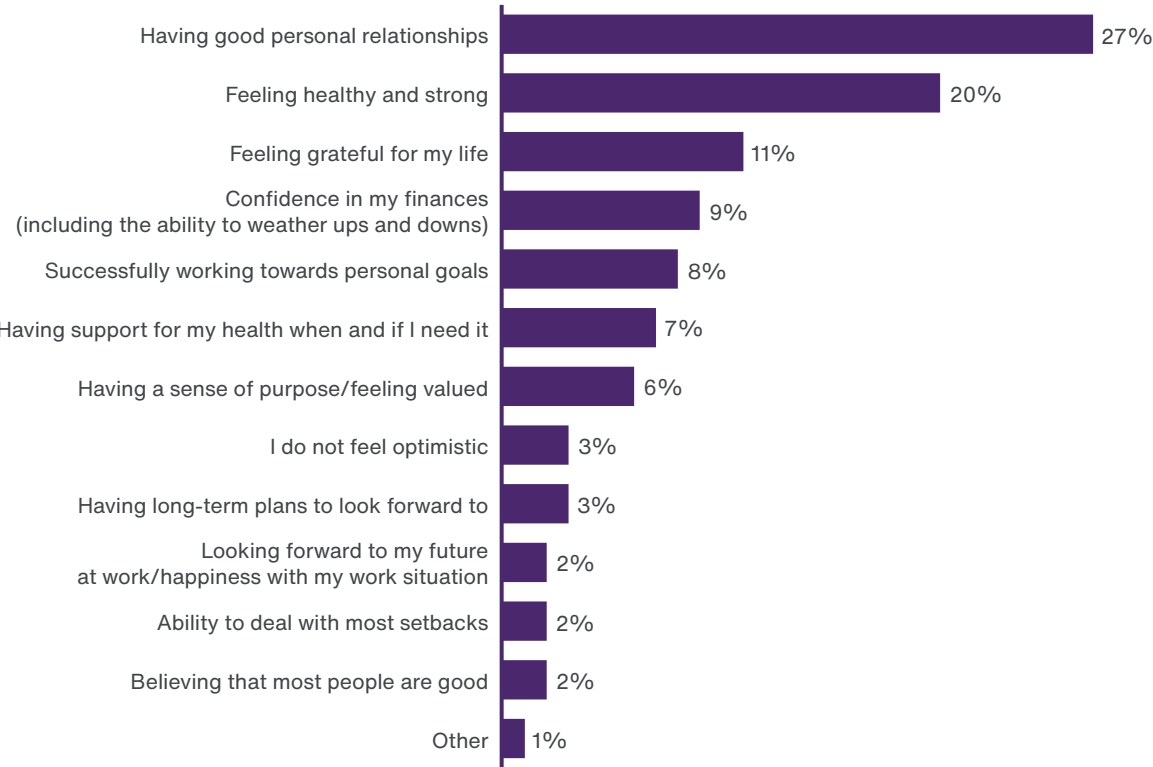


Good personal relationships, feeling healthy and strong, gratitude, and confidence in financial stability drive personal optimism.

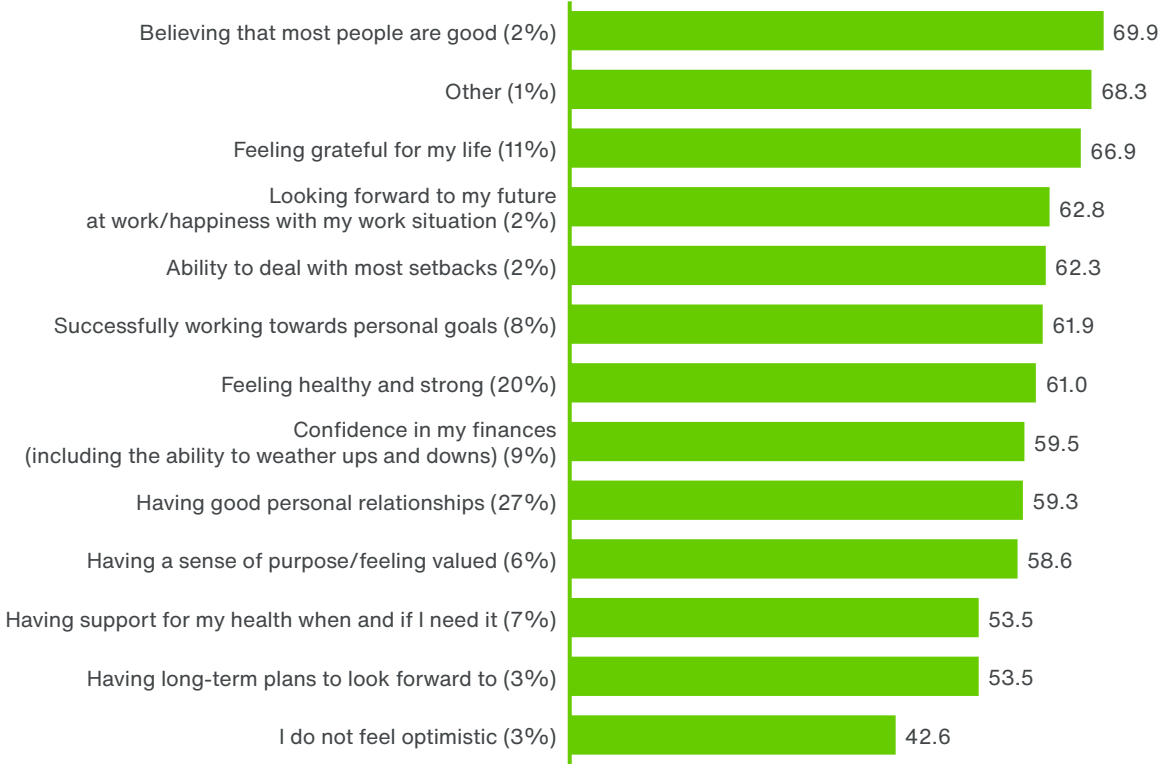
- Having good personal relationships is the leading factor most driving personal optimism (27 per cent), followed by feeling healthy and strong (20 per cent), feeling grateful for their life (11 per cent), and confidence in their finances (nine per cent)



What factor most drives your personal optimism?



MHI score by “What factor most drives your personal optimism?”



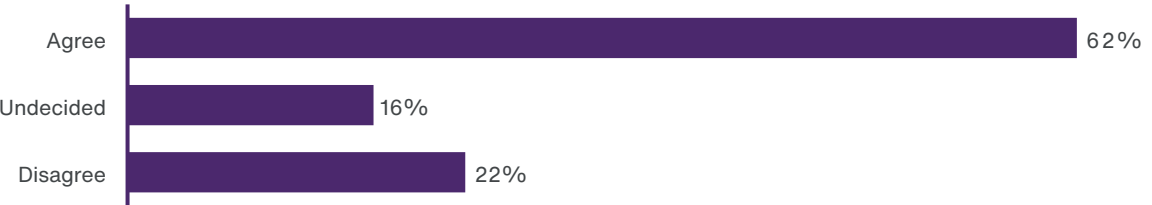
Perceptions of organisational fairness, strengths, and opportunities.

More than three in five workers trust their company to be fair and honest in dealing with employees.

- More than three in five (62 per cent) workers trust their company to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees; this group has the highest mental health score (63.7), nearly four points higher than the national average (59.9)
- More than one in five (22 per cent) don't trust their company to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees; this group has the lowest mental health score (54.2), more than nine points lower than workers who trust their company (63.7) and nearly six points lower than the national average (59.9)



I trust the company I work for to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees



MHI score by “I trust the company I work for to be fair and honest in how they deal with employees”

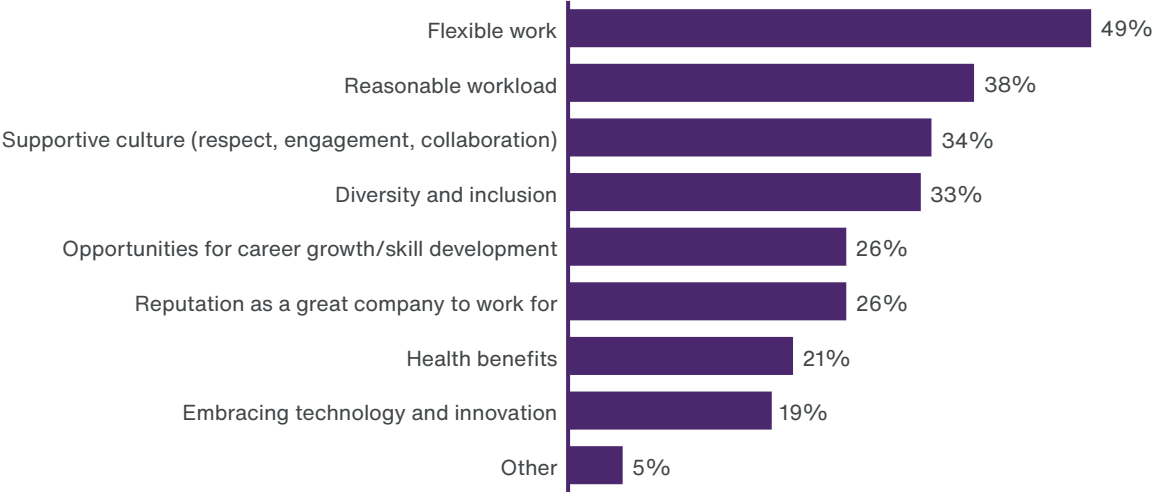


Workers rank flexible work as the area in which their organisation excels most.

- Nearly half (49 per cent) of workers say their organisation excels at flexible work, 38 per cent say their organisation excels at workload management, 34 per cent say their organisation excels because of its supportive culture, 33 per cent say diversity and inclusion is an area in which their organisation excels, and 26 per cent say their organisation excels at providing opportunities for growth



In which area(s) do you believe your organisation excels?



MHI score by “In which area(s) do you believe your organisation excels?”

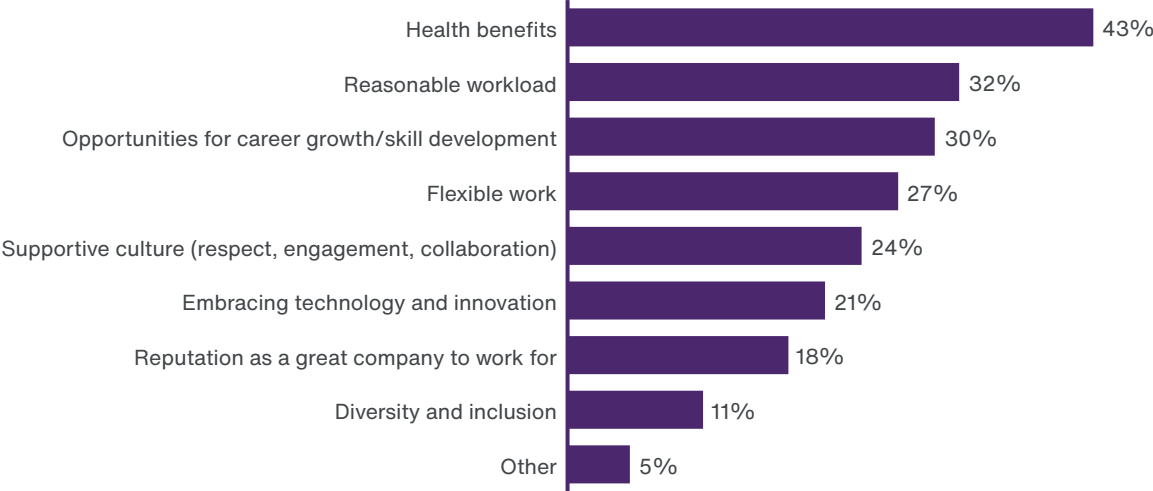


Workers identify health benefits as the greatest opportunity for improvement in their workplaces.

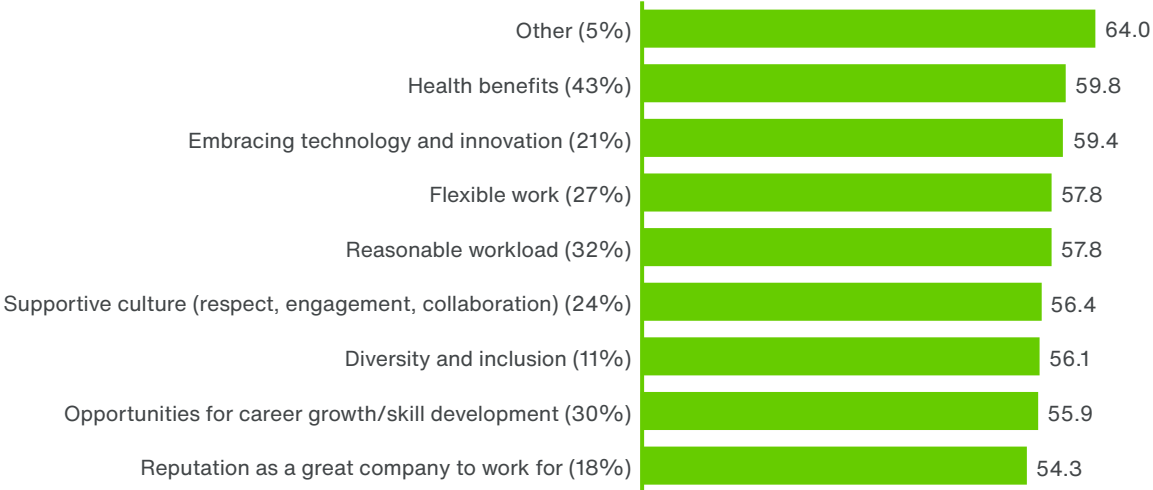
- More than two in five (43 per cent) workers say their organisation needs to improve health benefits, 32 per cent say their organisation needs to improve workload management, 30 per cent say opportunities for career growth/skills development needs to improve, 27 per cent say improvement is needed concerning flexible work, and 24 per cent say a supportive culture is an area requiring the most improvement in their organisation



In which area(s) do you believe your organisation needs to improve?



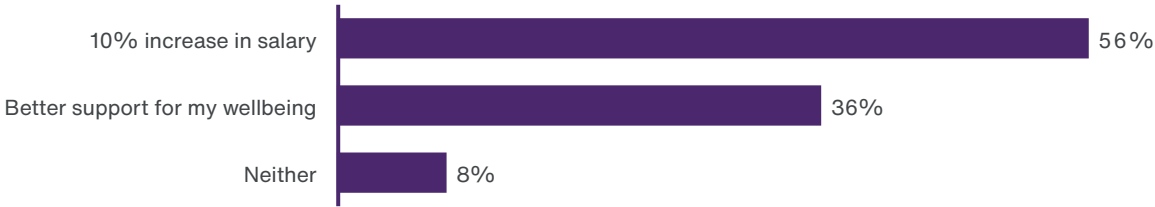
MHI score by “In which area(s) do you believe your organisation needs to improve?”



More than one-third value better support for their wellbeing over financial rewards.

- More than half (56 per cent) of workers say a 10% increase in salary is more important; this group has a mental health score (61.4) modestly higher than the national average (59.9)
- More than one-third (36 per cent) say better support for their wellbeing is more important; this group has the lowest mental health score (56.7), more than three points lower than the national average (59.9)

Which of the following is more important to you?



MHI score by “Which of the following is more important to you?”

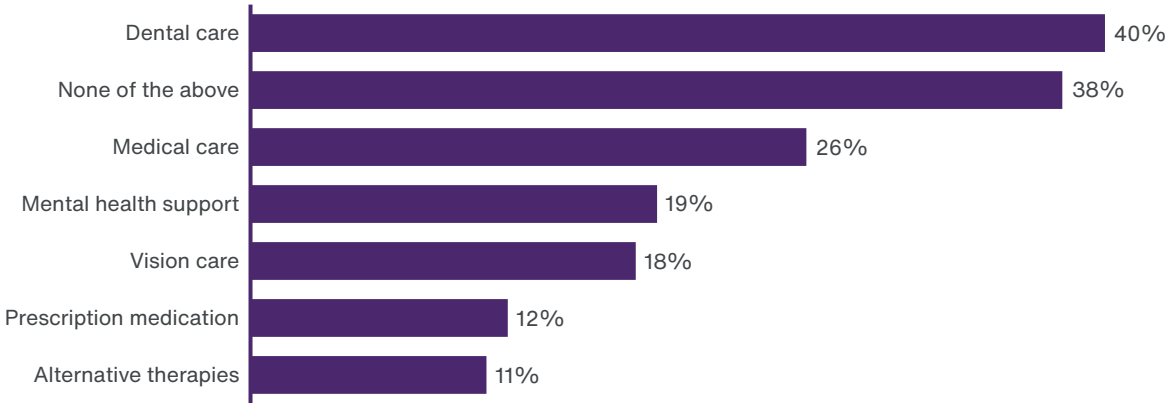


Use of and barriers to healthcare.

Younger workers and managers more often delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024.

- Two in five (40 per cent) workers delayed or avoided seeking dental care in 2024, 26 per cent have delayed or avoided seeking medical care, 19 per cent delayed or avoided seeking mental health support, and 18 per cent delayed or avoided seeking vision care in 2024
- The lowest mental health score (44.7) is among 19 per cent of workers who delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024, 25 points lower than workers who did not delay or avoid seeking care (69.7) and more than 15 points lower than the national average (59.9)
- Workers under 40 are more than three times as likely as workers over 50 to have delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- Managers are 40 per cent more likely than non-managers to have delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024
- Nearly two in five (38 per cent) did not delay or avoid seeking care in 2024; this group has the highest mental health score (69.7), nearly 10 points higher than the national average (59.9)
- Workers over 50 are 60 per cent more likely than workers under 40 not to have delayed or avoided seeking care in 2024

In the last year (2024), did you delay or avoid seeking any of the following?



MHI score by “In the last year (2024), did you delay or avoid seeking any of the following?”

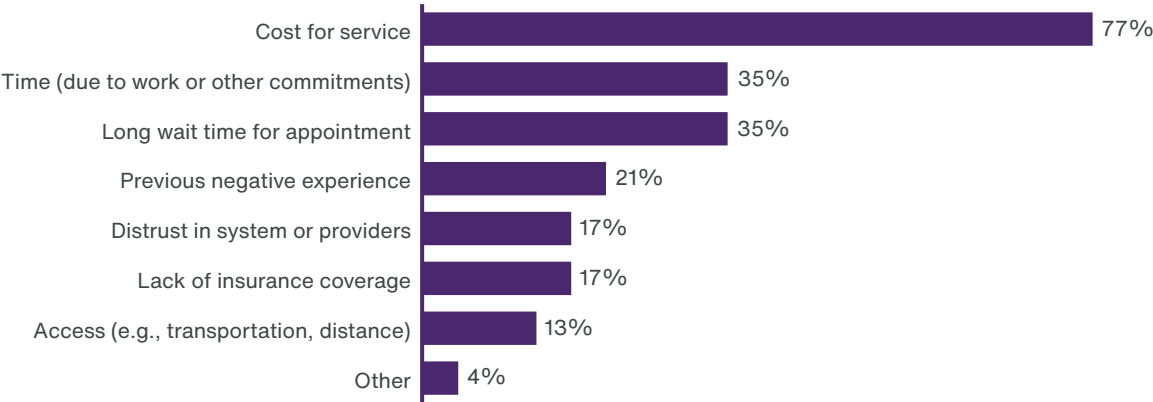


Cost is overwhelmingly cited as the top reason for delaying or avoiding medical care in 2024.

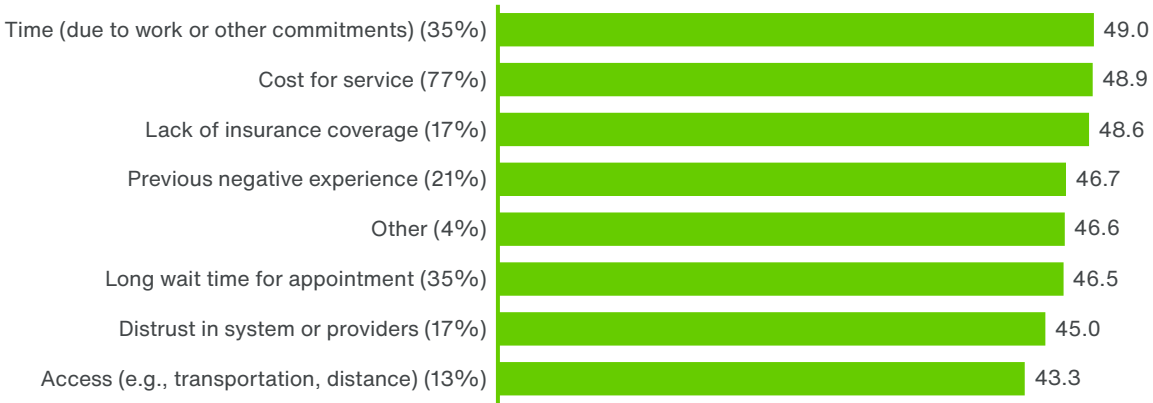
- More than three-quarters (77 per cent) of workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking medical care in 2024, 35 per cent cite lack of time, 35 per cent cite long wait times for an appointment, 21 per cent cite a previous negative experience, 17 per cent cite distrust in the system or providers, and 17 per cent cite a lack of insurance as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking medical care in 2024
- The lowest mental health score (43.3) is among 13 per cent of workers citing lack of access as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking medical care in 2024, nearly 17 points lower than the national average (59.9)



Why did you delay or avoid seeking medical care in 2024?



MHI score by “Why did you delay or avoid seeking medical care in 2024?”

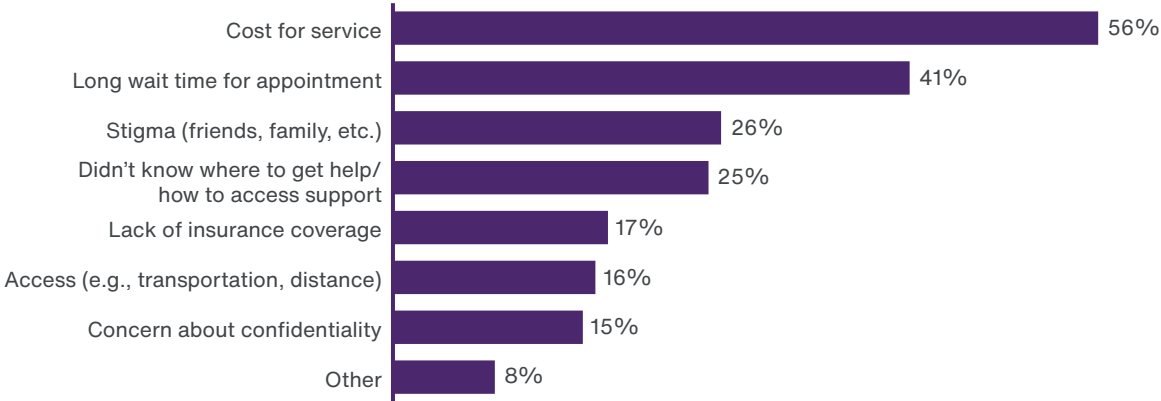


Workers overwhelmingly cite cost as the top barrier to having delayed or avoided seeking mental health support in 2024.

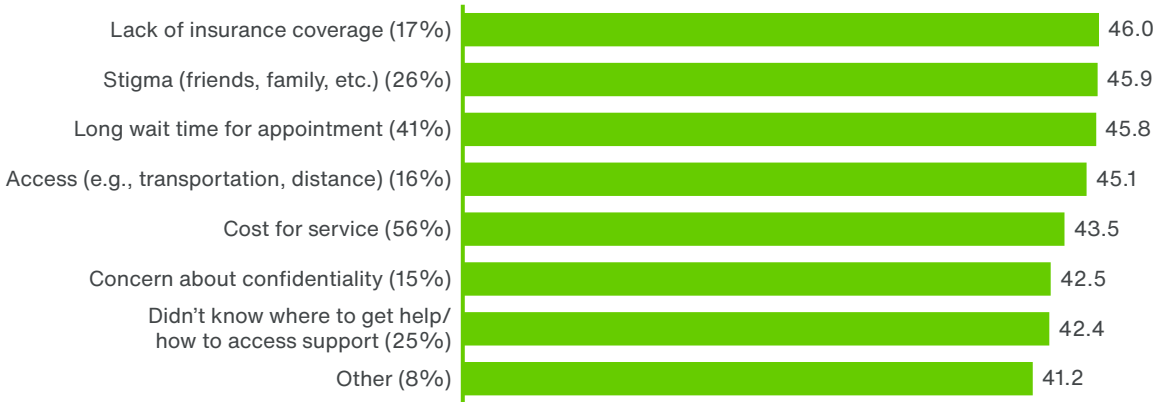
- More than half (56 per cent) of workers cite cost as the reason for delaying or avoiding seeking mental health support in 2024, 41 per cent cite long wait times for an appointment, and 26 per cent cite stigma
- One-quarter (25 per cent) of workers say they don't know where to get help or how to access mental health support; this group has a mental health score (42.4) more than 17 points lower than the national average (59.9)



Why did you delay or avoid seeking mental health support in 2024?



MHI score by “Why did you delay or avoid seeking mental health support in 2024?”



Overview of the TELUS Mental Health Index.

The mental health and wellbeing of a population are essential to overall health and work productivity. The Mental Health Index provides measures of the current mental health status of employed adults. 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 businesses and governments.

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 1,000 people who live in New Zealand and are currently employed or who were employed within the previous six months. Participants are selected to be representative of the age, gender, industry, and geographic distribution in New Zealand. Respondents are asked to consider the prior two weeks when answering each question. Data for the current report was collected between January 22 and January 31, 2025.

Calculations

A response scoring system, turning individual responses into point values, is used to create the Mental Health Index. 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. The 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 are available upon request.

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