



At the What Works Centre for Wellbeing we believe that improving people's wellbeing is the ultimate goal of effective business, policy and community action.

We are an independent collaborating centre that develops and shares robust and accessible wellbeing evidence to improve decision making that is used by governments, businesses, and charities.

## Make the most of this benchmark data

When we measure things, it can be helpful to know how other people in the UK respond. Find out how your survey results compare to these benchmarks.

[See the evidence-informed 'snapshot' wellbeing survey questions we recommend using on our website.](#)

You can then use these benchmarks to help make sense of the results.

The data here is the most up-to-date available. But it doesn't take into account the wellbeing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, so we advise caution when interpreting the results.

You can also access our [online guidance about steps you can take to improve wellbeing in your organisation](#), along with [international evidence on what works when it comes to a range of work-related issues](#), from training to team building to organisational resilience.

If you would like tailored support to measure, analyse, and improve wellbeing within your organisation, please get in touch with our work and wellbeing analyst, Magdalena Soffia, at [magdalena.soffia@whatworkswellbeing.org](mailto:magdalena.soffia@whatworkswellbeing.org)

## The wellbeing snapshot survey benchmarks

### Go beyond averages and focus on the 'wellbeing worst off'

The benchmarks here show average and mean scores as a snapshot to help you get a sense of your organisation's wellbeing. It is important that you look beyond the averages in your organisation and pay attention to the groups of employees who are scoring particularly low in the different wellbeing dimensions.

### Wellbeing in your area

If you wish to know more about subjective wellbeing benchmarks in your local authority area, take a look at Centre for Thriving Places's [local level case studies](#).

### Wellbeing over time

If you wish to know more about trends in personal wellbeing over time, look at the [Centre's blog](#) on this topic.

# LIFE SATISFACTION

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

The UK population had a **mean score of 7.69** in life satisfaction as of September 2019 (ONS, 2020).

According to the latest ONS estimates, of the UK population:

- 30.5% have **very high** life satisfaction (scoring between 9-10)
- 51.7% have **high** life satisfaction (scoring 7-8)
- 13.5% have **medium** life satisfaction (scoring 5-6)
- 4.5% have **very low** life satisfaction (scoring 0-4)

## The picture by regions, age and gender

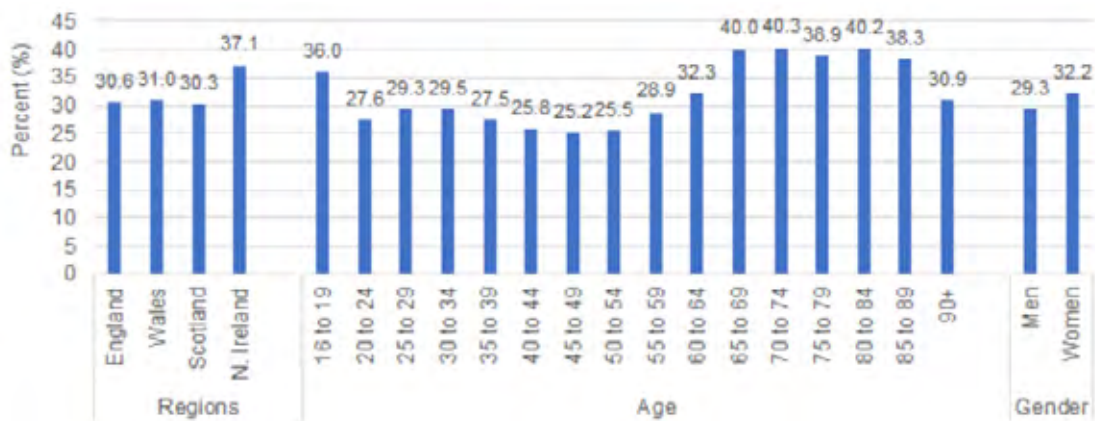
Looking only at the segment of people who report very high life satisfaction (Chart 3), we see that:

- that this is higher in Northern Ireland (37%) compared to other UK regions
- the proportion of men reporting very high life satisfaction is slightly lower than women (29% versus 32%)
- those in their mid-working age are comparatively worse off.

Chart 1: UK mean score in life satisfaction (0-10)



Chart 3: Proportion of UK people with very high life satisfaction, by region, age and gender.



[See the survey questions the following data refers to on our website.](#)

The UK population had a **mean score of 7.88** as of September 2019 (ONS, 2020).

According to the latest ONS estimates, of the UK population:

- 35.8% score **very high** (between 9-10)
- 48.6% score **high** in worthwhileness (7-8)
- 11.9% have a **mild** experience of worthwhileness (scoring 5-6)
- 3.8% report **very low** scores (0-4).

## The picture by regions, age and gender

Looking only at the segment of people who report very high worthwhileness (Chart 6), we see that:

- 41.5% of people in Northern Ireland rate their sense of worthwhileness as very high
- on average, there are significantly fewer men than women scoring very high (32% versus 40%).
- workers just entering the labour market (aged 20-29) and those in an advanced stage of their working careers (aged 40-54) seem to do relatively worse in finding the things they do are worthwhile.

Chart 4: UK mean score in worthwhile scale (0-10)

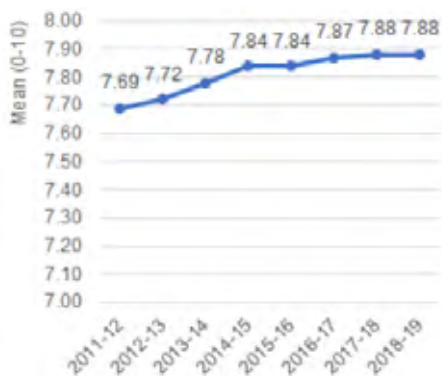
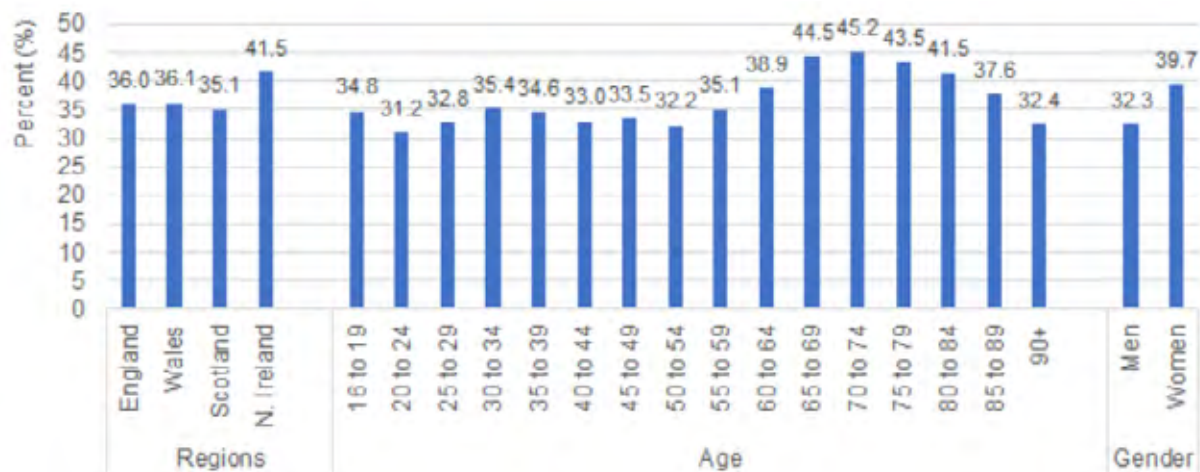


Chart 6: Proportion of UK people with very high worthwhile score, by region, age, gender.



[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

The UK population had a **mean happiness score of 7.54** as of September 2019 (ONS, 2020). As with the life satisfaction and worthwhile scales, the happiness average also has been increasing slightly since 2011 (Chart 7).

The ONS estimates that:

- 35.2% of the UK population feel **very or completely happy** (scoring between 9-10)
- 41% are **highly happy** (between 7-8)
- 15.6% are **medium happy** (scoring between 5-6)
- 8.3% feel **not happy** at all (scoring between 0-4).

## The picture by regions, age and gender

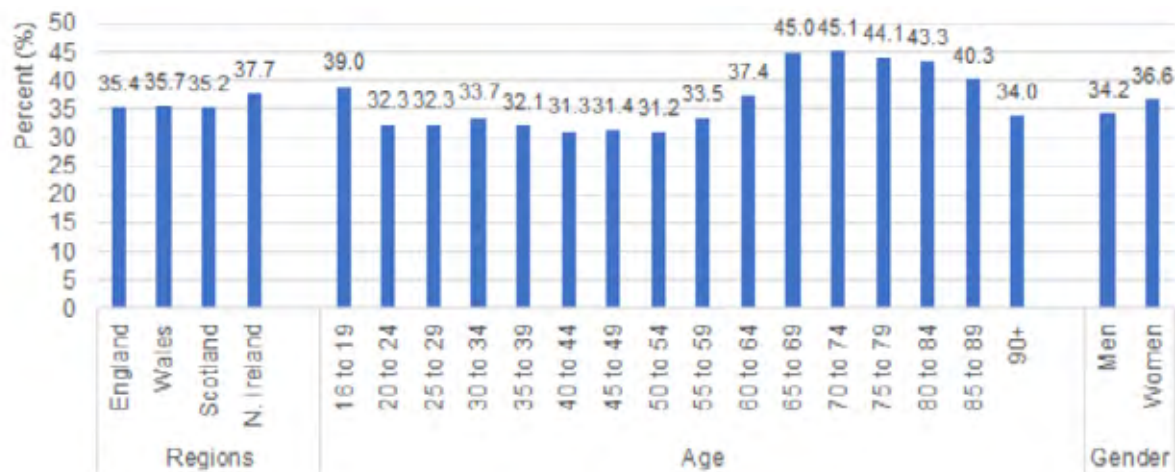
Looking only at the segment of people who report very high happiness (Chart 9), we see that:

- there is, on average, a lower proportion of men feeling very happy (34% compared to 37% in women).
- happiness is also lower among those aged 20-29 and those aged 40-54.

Chart 7: UK mean score in happiness scale (0-10)



Chart 9: Proportion of UK people with very high happiness, by region, age, gender.



# ANXIETY

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

The UK population has a **mean anxiety rating of 2.91** as of September 2019 (ONS, 2020).

The ONS estimates that:

- 40.4% of the UK population rate their anxiety as **very low** (scoring between 0-1)
- 23.1% report **low** anxiety (2-3)
- 16.2% report **medium** anxiety (4-5)
- 20.4% report **very high** anxiety (between 6-10).

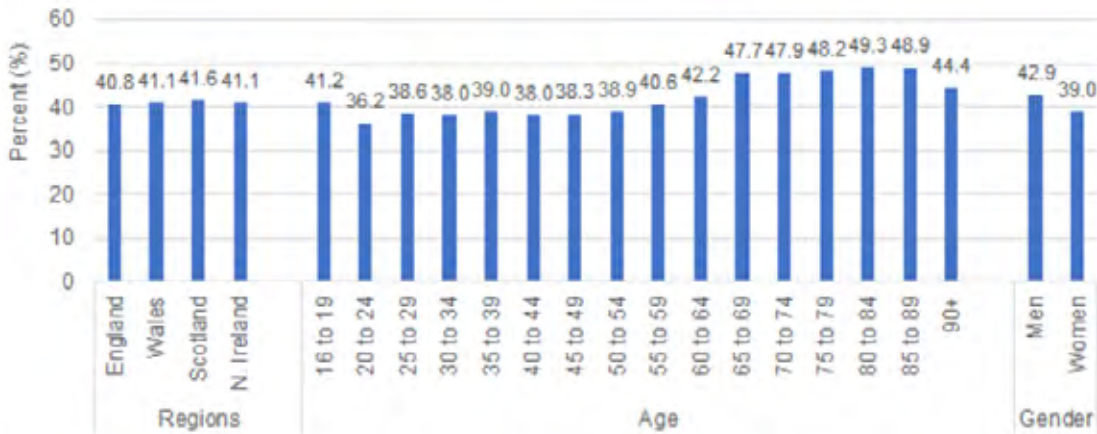
## The picture by regions, age and gender

Chart 12 shows the proportion of people with very low anxiety does not differ much by region, but is comparatively worse for those in working ages and for women compared to men.

Chart 10. UK mean score in anxiety (0-10).



Chart 12. Proportion of UK people with very low anxiety, by region, age and gender.



## JOB SATISFACTION

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

The most recently available estimates (Understanding Society, 2018) indicate that:

- 57% of UK employed are **mostly or completely satisfied** with their job
- 4.4% are **mostly or completely dissatisfied** with it.

**Job satisfaction is slightly higher for women** (58%) compared with men (55%).

**It is lower for younger workers aged 25-34** (53%) compared with older workers aged 55 or over (ONS, 2018).

### I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work

There are no national benchmarks for this measure. We know that an average (median) of **54%** of UK workers employed in the public service **agree or strongly agree** with the statement 'I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work' (Cabinet Office, 2020).

## OVERALL PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

### Physical health

Early records (ONS, 2013) estimate that:

- 81% of the UK population self-reporting **very good or good** physical health
- 6% with **very bad or bad** physical health.

### Mental health

The Mental Health Foundation reports that of the UK in paid employment:

- 11% report their mental health as positive
- 76% report their mental health as **average**
- 13% report it as negative. ([Mental Health Foundation, 2017](#))

More recent national benchmarks on physical and mental health are not directly comparable as these aspects of wellbeing have been asked in different ways over time. As a reference, though, we know that **86.4%** of UK workers self-reported **good or very good general health** and only 1.1% say their health is bad or very bad. More male workers rate their general health as good or very good compared with women (87.2% vs 85.4%) (Eurofound, 2017).

## SUPPORT FROM MANAGERS

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

The proportion of UK employees reporting that their manager supports them is:

- 73.5% for **always or most of the time**
- 8.7% for **never or rarely** (Eurofound, 2017).

At the national level, support from managers is significantly more frequent for female employees (77.1% compared with 69.7% for men).

## SUPPORT FROM COLLEAGUES

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

- 81.1% of UK employees report that their colleagues help and support them always or most of the time
- 5.3% say they never or rarely do so (Eurofound, 2017).

Support from colleagues is somewhat higher for women (82.6% compared with 79.8% of men).

## FEELING OF WORK WELL DONE

[See the survey questions this data refers to on our website.](#)

Among the UK employed population:

- 75.1% of workers feel that their work has been well done **always or most of the time**
- 7.2% **never or rarely** get this perception (Eurofound, 2017).

Female employees have the feeling of work well done more often than their male counterparts (77.4% vs 73.1%).

### Sources:

[Cabinet Office, 2020](#)

Civil Service People Survey: 2019 results [data collection]. Eleventh annual survey of 308,556 civil servants, across 106 Civil Service organisations, with 67% response rate.

[Eurofound, 2017](#)

European Working Conditions Survey, 2015. [data collection]. 4th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 8098, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-8098-4>. Face-to-face interviews of 43,850 people in employment (1,500 in the UK, with 41% response rate).

[Mental Health Foundation, 2017](#)

Surviving or Thriving? The state of the UK's mental health [report]. March 2017 Survey conducted by NatCen, 2,290 interviews were completed with 82% online and 18% by phone.

[ONS, 2019](#)

Estimates of personal well-being from the Annual Population Survey (APS): UK, year ending September 2012 to year ending September 2019 [data collection]. Release date: 6 February 2020.

[ONS, 2018](#)

Measuring national well-being: domains and measures [data collection]. Based on Understanding Society UK Household Longitudinal Study, Wave 8, 2016–2017. Release date: 23 October 2019.

[ONS, 2013](#)

General Health in England and Wales: 2011 and comparison with 2001 [report]. Estimates based on 2011 Census Population and Household Estimates for England & Wales Release date: 30 January 2013.

[Understanding Society, 2018](#)

The UK Household Longitudinal Study, Wave 9, 2017–2018 [data collection]. Longitudinal survey of the members of approximately 40,000 households in the United Kingdom.

