Great Place To Work®

European
Workforce
Study 2025

Leadership In Focus Series

The Business Benefits of a Psychologically Healthy Workplace

United Kingdom & Europe Focus

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About Great Place To Work, Certification™ and Best Workplaces™ Lists

For over 30 years, Great Place To Work's Certification, Best Workplaces Lists, and global benchmarks have become the industry standard—built on data, updated annually, from more than 20 million employees in 170 countries around the world.

We are the global authority on workplace culture, providing leaders and organisations with the recognition and tools needed to foster a thriving workforce and robust employee engagement that ultimately leads to a healthier bottom line.

Our employee sentiment data is captured directly and confidentially from employees, empowering employers to use their workplace culture insights to achieve tangible business gains and a clear return on investment through enhancing their employee experience.

The global authority on workplace culture

1 survey.
21,000 customers.
20m employees.
170+ countries.
Annually.

Certification & Lists

Our recognition is the most coveted and respected in the world for elevating employer brands to attract and retain the right people.

Platform & Data

Our proprietary methodology and survey platform enables organisations to truly capture, analyse, and understand the experience of all employees.

Research & Insights

Our tenable research empowers organisations to build cultures that retain talent and unlock the potential of every employee.

Resources & Community

Our experienced culture experts, data-driven content, and For All Community connect the boldest leaders, ideas, and innovations in employee experience.

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Claire Knights
Chief Growth Officer, Great Place To Work

About this report...

Exploring the psychological health of workplaces across Europe

Great Place To Work has been measuring the full spectrum of workplace culture through confidential employee surveys for over 30 years globally. Part of this process includes capturing survey data which can support our clients to understand their organisation's leadership skills, strengths, and areas for improvement.

Our 'Leadership In Focus' series of reports examines the average employee and leader experiences across Europe on a number of topics, including psychological health within the workplace.

It's important to state that this report is not intended to be a highly academic analysis, but rather a walkthrough of the data and insights rgarding workplace psychological health across Europe. The metrics contained within this report are grassroots indicators, reflecting the perception of nearly 25,000 employees in the region.

Our study included 80 Likert scale statements, with the bulk covering workplace culture and leadership. An additional 20 statements covered specific workplace challenges that are not measured in the Great Place To Work Trust Index™.

Throughout the European Workforce Study 2025, and this mini report on psychological health, some statements have been shortened for readability. Multiple regression was used to quantify relationships between different variables to identify key relationships and drivers of business outcomes.

European Workforce Study 2025

24,938
Respondents

Annual Online Quantatitive Survey
Fieldwork conducted in Summer 2024 and compiled in Jan 2025

19
Countries

Austria	France	Luxembourg	Spain
Belgium	Germany	Netherlands	Sweden
Cyprus	Greece	Norway	Switzerland
Denmark	Ireland	Poland	U.K.
Finland	Italy	Portugal	

Approx 1,500 respondents per country with the exception of Austria (500), Finland (500), Luxembourg (1000), Spain (900) and Poland (700).

Note: The abbreviation 'pp' is used in this report to denote 'percentage points'

A special thank you to Ozoda Muminova at The Good Insight, whose independent thrid-party data analysis was pivotal to this research.

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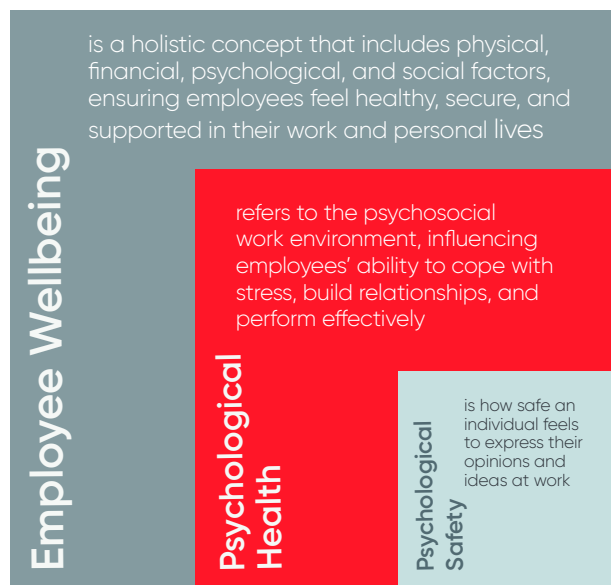## Is psychological health the same as psychological safety?

In short, no. Before we delve into the data, it's important to clarify that having a psychologically *healthy* workplace is not the same as feeling psychologically *safe* at work, although the two are closely related.

> *"The psychological health of an organisation refers to whether the intangible work environment – all the bits you cannot see – provides a conducive foundation for high-performing, thriving employees"*,

Sara Silvonen, Senior Consultant & Wellbeing Lead at Great Place To Work explains.

> *"It encompasses a wide range of psychosocial factors such as transparency, empowerment, managerial values, support and relationships."*

The core statement used in our report asks respondents to assess whether their organisation is a 'psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work.' This statement serves as a standalone *outcome measure*, forming part of the broader employee wellbeing framework within our Wellbeing Index.

Psychological health at work encompasses a wide range of psychosocial factors such as transparency, empowerment, managerial values, support and relationships...

Employee Wellbeing is a holistic concept that includes physical, financial, psychological, and social factors, ensuring employees feel healthy, secure, and supported in their work and personal lives

Psychological Health refers to the psychosocial work environment, influencing employees' ability to cope with stress, build relationships, and perform effectively

Psychological Safety is how safe an individual feels to express their opinions and ideas at work

Psychological **health** is one component of employee wellbeing

Psychological **safety** is one component of psychological health

Psychological safety, on the other hand, is one component of a psychologically healthy workplace; where employees feel supported and empowered to express their opinions and ideas without fear of retribution.

> *"A psychologically safe workplace can contribute to better psychological health, as employees who feel safe and supported are more likely to experience less stress and anxiety and have better overall employee wellbeing"*

explains Marcus Erb, Vice President of Data Science & Innovation at Great Place To Work.

While psychological safety and psychological health are closely intertwined, they are not interchangeable. The former refers to the specific experience of freely speaking one's mind; the latter is a more general assessment of the psychosocial work environment. Both are however important factors in promoting overall wellbeing, productivity and performance.

...Psychological safety is component of a psychologically healthy work environment

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The European Outlook

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How psychologically healthy are workplaces across Europe?

In our study of approximately 25,000 employees, Northern European countries are leading the way in providing psychologically healthy workplaces

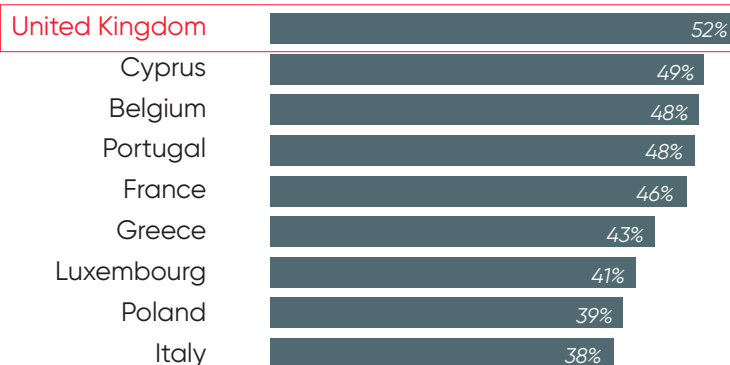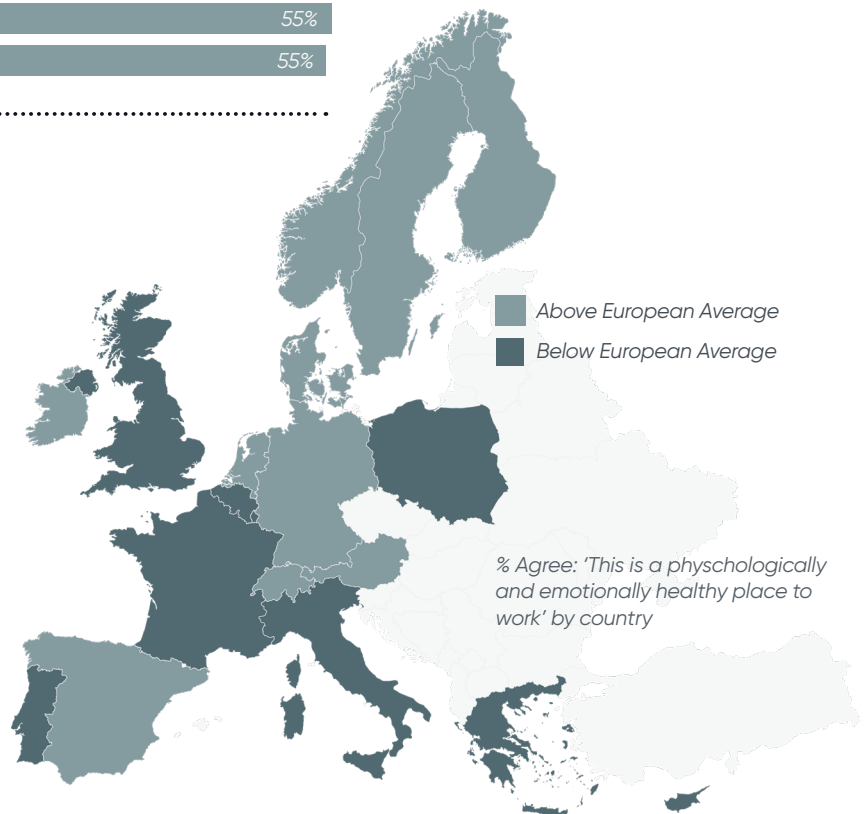| Country	%
Norway	65%
Denmark	64%
Netherlands	62%
Switzerland	59%
Germany	58%
Finland	57%
Austria	57%
Sweden	56%
Spain	55%
Ireland	55%

Norway, Denmark and the Netherlands top the list on psychological health, outperforming the bottom-ranked countries (Greece, Luxembourg, Poland and Italy) by 20pp+
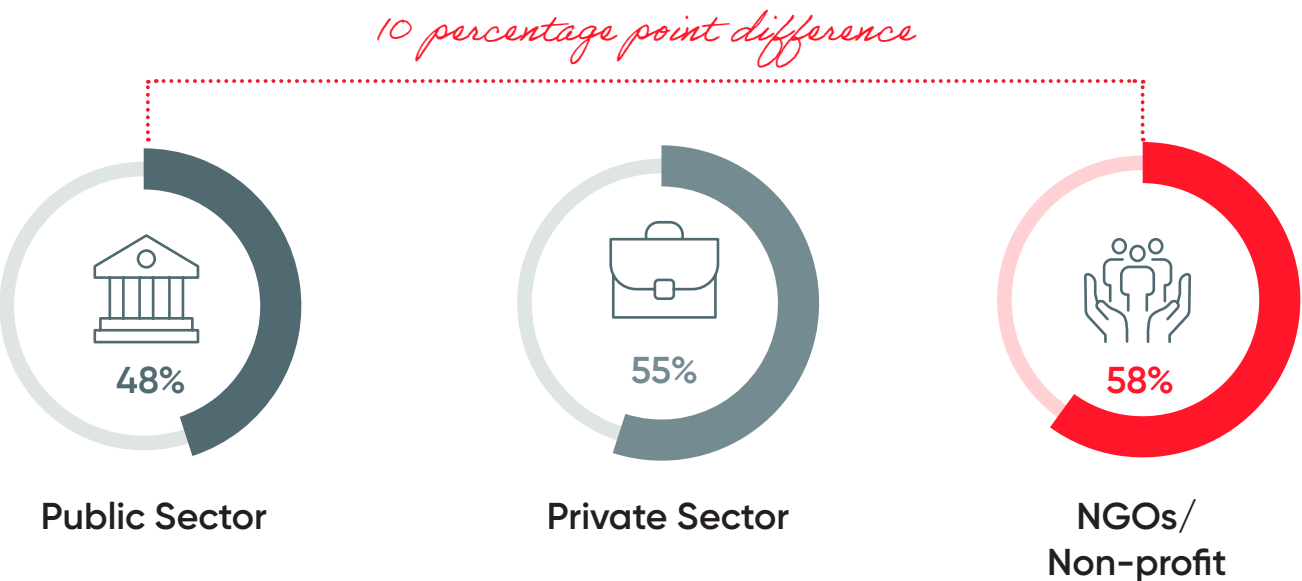
On average only

53%

of the European workforce have psychologically healthy workplaces

Above European Average
Below European Average

% Agree: 'This is a phsychologically and emotionally healthy place to work' by country

Country	%
United Kingdom	52%
Cyprus	49%
Belgium	48%
Portugal	48%
France	46%
Greece	43%
Luxembourg	41%
Poland	39%
Italy	38%

The United Kingdom ranks just below average. This presents substantial opportunities for improvement, and important lessons can be drawn from top European counterparts as well as organisations awarded UK's Best Workplaces™ recognition.

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% Agree: 'This is a physchologically and emotionally healthy place to work' by country

10 percentage point difference

48%

Public Sector

55%

Private Sector

58%

NGOs/
Non-profit

Government and public sector organisations rank lowest on our league table for psychological health, presumably due to their reputation for overwhelming workloads, resource constraints, and the emotional toll of managing complex social issues. Despite some progress, many also lack adequate mental health funding and support mechanisms.

Hybrid working best supports psychological health, potentially because this combines flexibility (work-life balance) and autonomy, with opportunities for both structured and spontaneous social interactions.
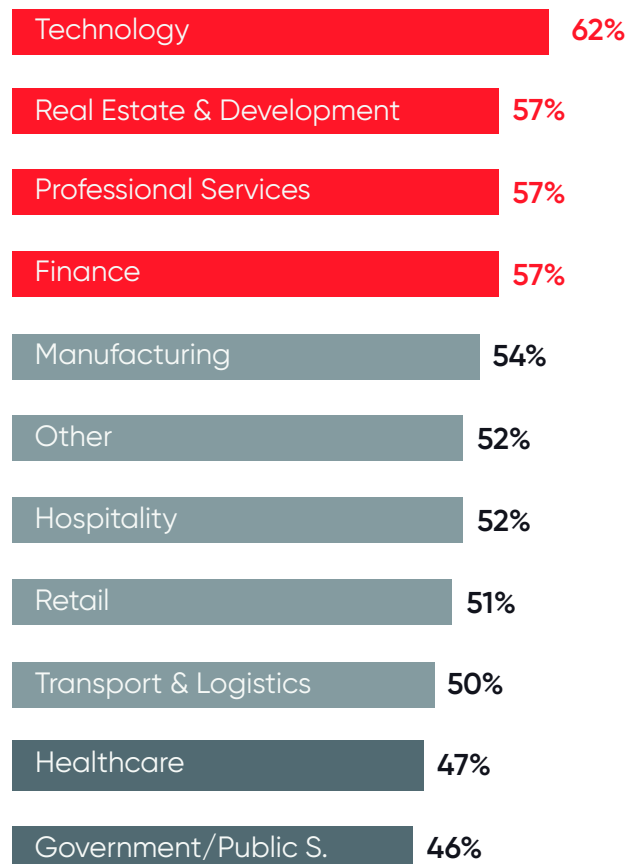
Hybrid

UK Average	**59**%
European Average	**60**%

Onsite

UK Average	**50**%
European Average	**50**%

Remote

UK Average	**46**%
European Average	**50**%

% Agree: 'This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work', by mode of work – (UK and Europe)

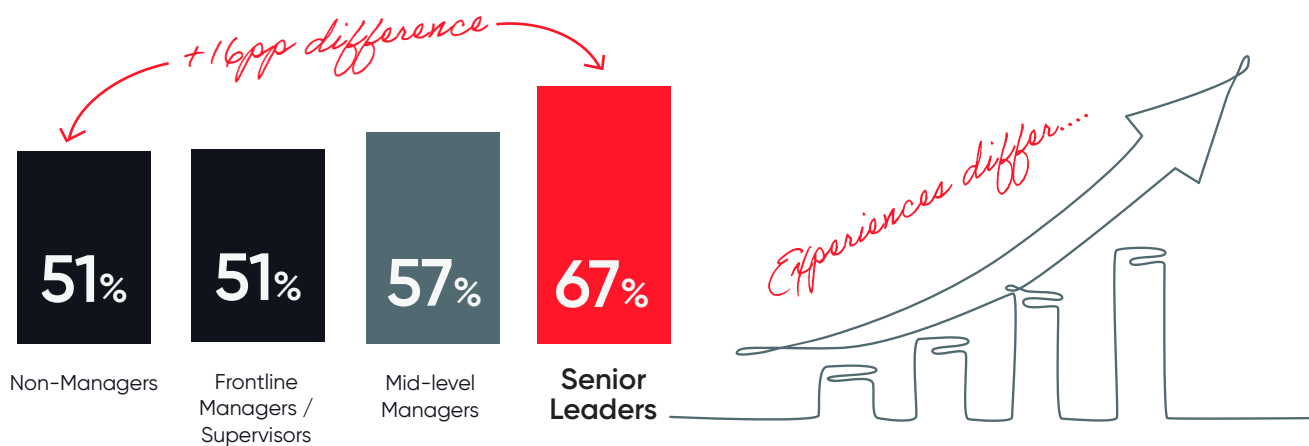### European breakdown of psychologically healthy workplaces by sector

Technology	**62%**
Real Estate & Development	**57%**
Professional Services	**57%**
Finance	**57%**
Manufacturing	**54%**
Other	**52%**
Hospitality	**52%**
Retail	**51%**
Transport & Logistics	**50%**
Healthcare	**47%**
Government/Public S.	**46%**

% True: 'This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work', by Industry (Europe)

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Recognising the ~~perception~~ *reality* gap of psychological health in the workplace

Leaders must become comfortable with the knowledge that differing levels of pyschological health is <u>not</u> a perception gap, it is a reality gap!

Our data reveals that perceptions of psychological health within an organisation improve significantly with seniority. As a leader, your perspective on the organisation's culture likely differs from that of most employees – yet both are rooted in genuine, lived experiences.

% Agree their workplace is 'psychologically and emotionally healthy'

+16pp difference

Experiences differ....

Non-Managers	Frontline Managers / Supervisors	Mid-level Managers	Senior Leaders
51%	**51%**	**57%**	**67%**

% Agree: 'This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work', by seniority (Europe)
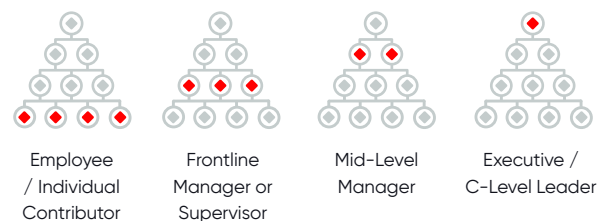

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While senior leaders consistently report the highest levels of psychological health throughout Europe, countries where organisations are traditionally less hierarchical tend to offer a healthier environment for junior employees and individual contributors too

Overall across Europe, frontline employees and managers tend to experience the poorest perception of psychological health within their organisation, indicating that much more support is needed for psychological wellbeing.

Denmark ranks among the top two countries for psychological and emotional health (the other being Norway), and offers a compelling case study. Known for its flat hierarchies and consistently high ranking on the Global Competitiveness Index, Denmark defies the typical trend: here, individual contributors report the second-highest psychological health scores by seniority, surpassed only by Executive/C-Level leaders.

However, Denmark's 18 percentage point gap between mid-level managers and senior executives, suggests a need for better support for middle management in highly autonomous organisations.

	Employee / Individual Contributor	Frontline Manager or Supervisor	Mid-Level Manager	Executive / C-Level Leader
Luxembourg	39%	41%	41%	51%
France	43%	43%	51%	72%
Portugal	44%	50%	53%	69%
UK	46%	49%	64%	81%
Germany	53%	55%	66%	80%
Austria	55%	56%	62%	93%
Switzerland	58%	58%	62%	75%
Norway	63%	65%	70%	76%

	Employee / Individual Contributor	Frontline Manager or Supervisor	Mid-Level Manager	Executive / C-Level Leader
Denmark	64%	61%	58%	76%

employees have a better experience than managers

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Creating psychologically healthy workplaces

Almost Always Untrue	Often Untrue	Sometimes True Sometimes Untrue	Often True	Almost Always True

Key drivers of psychological health

53% of the European workforce believe that they belong to a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work

Trust in **Leaders**: Respect — Management shows interest in employees as people

Trust in **Leaders**: Respect — Management are genuinely open to suggestions and ideas

Trust in **Leaders**: Respect — Management involve staff in decisions affecting their work

Trust in **Leaders**: Respect — Work-life balance is actively encouraged

Trust in **Leaders**: Fairness — Employees are paid fairly

Team Camaraderie: Culture — Employees feel free to be themselves

Team Camaraderie: Culture — Employees are made to feel welcome when they join

DRIVERS

"This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work"

Psychological health for UK-based employees starts to decline after 2 years, and then plateaus.

Psychological Health By Tenure

UK's Best Workplaces   Non-Best Workplaces

-5pp

-8pp

90%
85%
80%
75%
70%
65%
60%

Less than 2 years | 2-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-15 years   Less than 2 years | 2-5 years | 6-10 years | 11-15 years
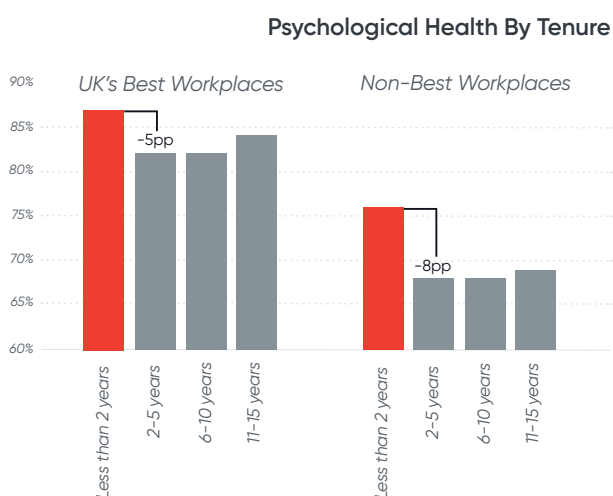
% Agree: 'This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work', Great Place To Work UK Client Data 2024

Reference: https://www.cipd.org/uk/views-and-insights/thought-leadership/cipd-voice/benchmarking-employee-turnover/

Key Drivers
Our European Workforce Study found that just over half of Europeans agree with the statement, *"This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work."* Using multiple regression analysis, we identified key factors influencing perceptions of psychological health, many of which are tied to psychological safety. Supporting leaders to create a safe environment that fosters open communication, encourages idea-sharing, and involves employees in work-related decisions is therefore essential.

Length of Service
According to the CIPD, the most common length of service in the UK is between two and five years. Even in top-performing organisations, this length of time correlates with the largest decline in psychological health. Whilst there is such a thing as 'healthy churn', leaders are also likely to be losing experienced and valuable talent.

TIP: Quantitative survey data in the Great Place To Work Trust Index™ helps leaders to understand employee experiences across different demographics. Why not analyse responses by length of service in your organisation, and build a business case for additional mechanisms or initiatives that can better support long-serving employees?

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Best Workplaces™ work on both improving experience AND closing the gaps

Supporting psychological health is not a one-off initiative. It requires ongoing effort, consistency, and reinforcement to become a sustained part of an organisation's culture. The UK's Best Workplaces have shown a commitment to improving their employees' experience and closing the gaps.

The UK Best 'reality gap' is less than half that of the UK average

**Psychological Health:
UK Responses (European Workforce Study)**

+34pp

Employees & Junior Managers

Mid-level Managers

Senior Leaders

**Psychological Health:
UK's Best Workplaces 2025**

+12pp

40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

Sources: European Workforce Study (all Europe) & Best Workplaces 2025 (UK)
% Agree: 'This is a psychologically and emotionally healthy place to work', by seniority

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Top 3 Leadership Traits

All Other Employees' Perspective

1. Is Approachable & Listens
2. Advocates Employee Wellbeing & Development
3. Is Transparent & Strong Communicator

Executive Leadership's Perspective

1. Is Approachable & Listens
2. Showcases Integrity & Ethics
3. Is Transparent & Strong Communicator

Source: European Workforce Study (all Europe); Top three ranking senior leadership qualities (out of 10) split by seniority

Understanding psychological health: A data-driven approach

Don't Underestimate Leadership's Role
What is clear from the survey results is that employees at all levels expect the advocacy of employee wellbeing to be championed by their C-Suite. Leaders set the tone for workplace culture, workloads, and priorities. When leadership fails to prioritise wellbeing, no HR policy can compensate for the lack of support or a toxic work environment.

Leverage Your Employee Survey Data
TIP: It is vital to use any quantitative data available to identify who is most disadvantaged, uncover experience gaps, and understand the factors influencing low psychological health within your organisation.

Identify Key Drivers
Applying key driver analysis at organisational level can reveal the specific nuances of your workforce and highlight areas for improvement.

Create a Targeted Action Plan
Complement quantitative data with qualitative insights to gain a full picture of psychological health. Methods such as focus groups, behavioural observations, and interviews can provide valuable context to your findings, enabling you to develop a comprehensive and actionable plan for fostering a healthier workplace.

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The Business Impact

Psychologically healthy workplaces are more likely to be environments where employees feel empowered to innovate

Psychological health = more likely to innovate

Innovators

75%

Psychologically healthy workplace

Innovators

33%

Non-Psychologically healthy workplace
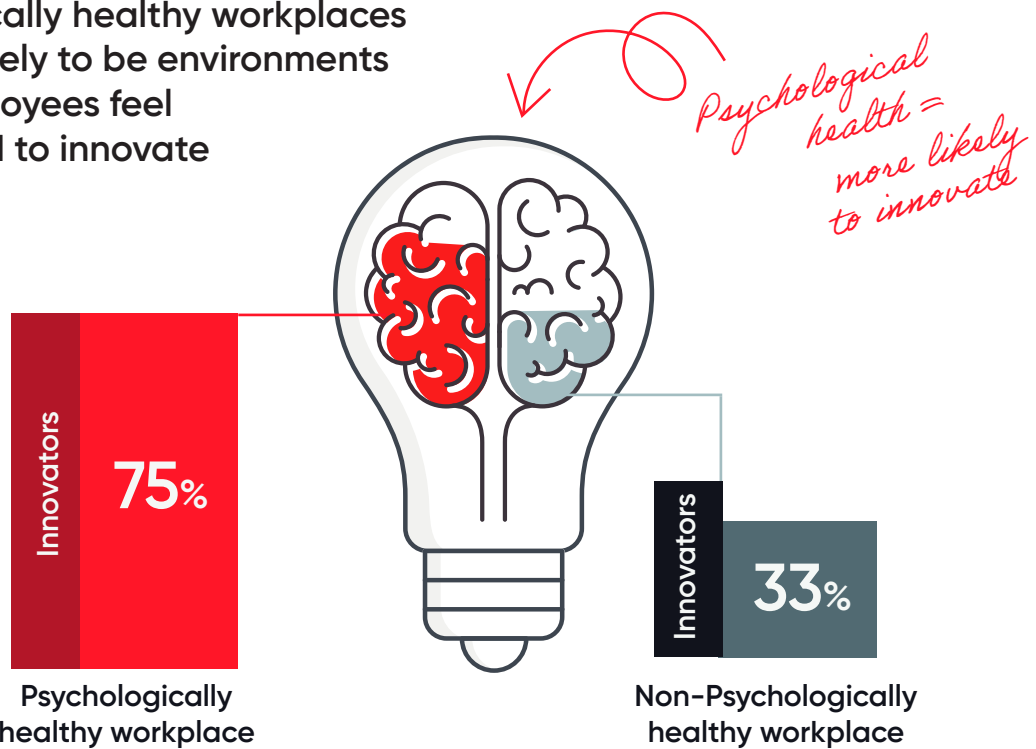
% Employees who had opportunities to innovate and work at a psychologically and emotionally healthy workplace (24,938 responses)

Psychological health is a foundational element of an innovative workplace because it creates an environment where employees feel free to share ideas, take risks, and challenge norms.

Link between psychological health and innovation (country level)

*Psychological health as driver: Link between psychological health and innovation*

% had an opportunity to innovate (y-axis)

% psychologically healthy workplace (x-axis)

As psychological health increases, so does innovation – and vice versa

Countries plotted: Switzerland, Denmark, Luxembourg, Portugal, Ireland, Germany, Norway, Finland, Belgium, Austria, Netherlands, Poland, UK, Sweden, Cyprus, Spain, Greece, Italy, France

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Psychologically healthy workplaces are more likely to retain their employees and have strong employee advocacy

UK-based employees working at psychologically healthy organisations are...
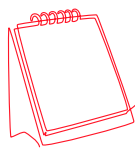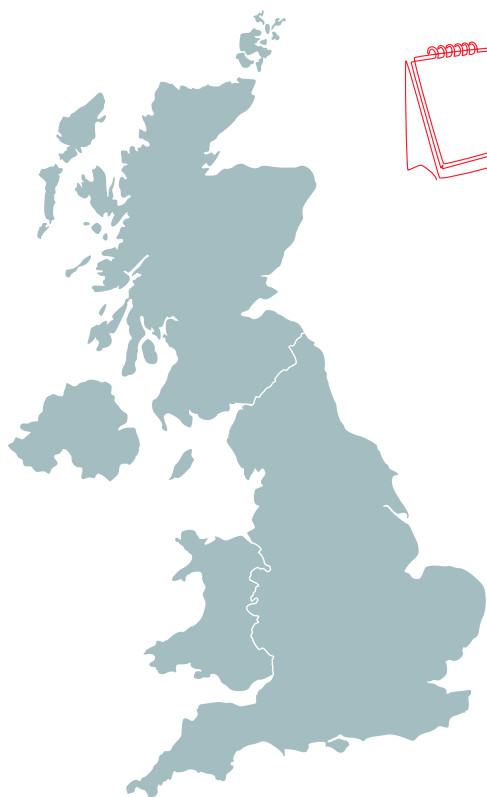
6x more likely to want to stay
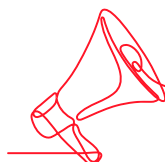
5x more likely to be strong advocates

Our data from the European Workforce Study shows that employees have far superior loyalty intention and are vastly more likely to recommend their organisation to friends and family when they work for a psychologically and emotionally healthy workplace.

By prioritising psychological health, organisations not only create a more positive and productive environment, they also build a loyal workforce that champions the company both internally and externally.

Source: European Workforce Study (all Europe). Data: *Employees who 'work at a psychologically and emotionally healthy workplace' and 'want to stay a long time' / 'would recommend working at their organisation to friends and family'*

Across Europe, employee and customer satisfaction skyrocket at psychologically healthy organisations

Employee Satisfaction
% Agree "*This is a great place to work*"

16%

low levels of psychological health

85%

high levels of psychological health

32%

79%

Customer Satisfaction
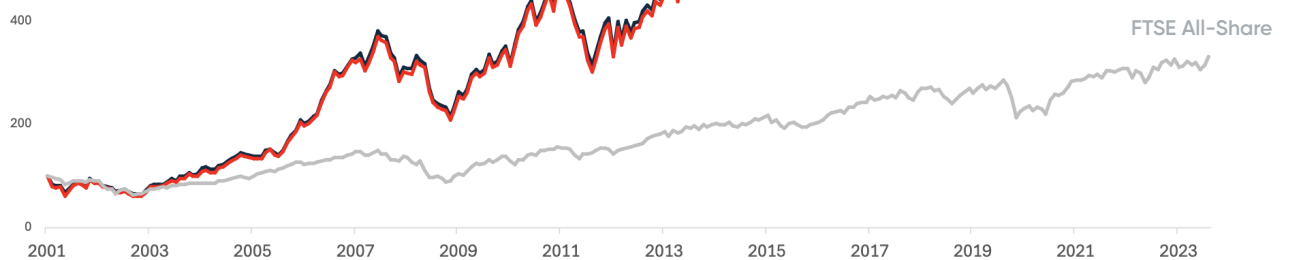% Agree "*Customers give us an excellent rating*"

Source: European Workforce Study (all Europe) Data

The UK's Best Workplaces surpass the national average psychological health score by 30 percentage points...

52%
UK average

Average
UK psychological
health score
vs. the UK's Best
Workplaces™

82%
UK's Best
Workplaces

Best
Workplaces™

Great
Place
To
Work.   UK
2025

...and financially perform more than 4x better than the market

Investing in the Best
Workplaces brings over
4X the returns of a
similar investment in the
FTSE All-Share

Value-weighted
Best Workplaces
Portfolio

Equal-weighted
Best Workplaces
Portfolio

FTSE All-Share

400

200

0

2001 2003 2005 2007 2009 2011 2013 2015 2017 2019 2021 2023

Sara Silvonen
Senior Consultant & Wellbeing Lead,
Great Place To Work UK

- Can you bring your full self to work; how wide is the gap between who you'd say you are, and who your colleagues or manager think you are?
- Are interactions grounded in kindness and trust; do people give each other the benefit of the doubt?
- Would you openly challenge something you disagreed with, or open up about personal issues affecting you at work?
- Do you need to be 'on guard' at work?

All of these questions give an indication of how psychologically and emotionally healthy your workplace is.

Whilst it's insightful to examine the employee experience around this via a European-wide lens, the more granular country-level variances reflect what we often see within countries and indeed organisations – some groups have a better experience than others.

In my consulting experience, if significant numbers of people feel an organisation is psychologically *unhealthy*, this is likely symptomatic of other things happening in the workplace, either recently or chronically, and these are the things that leaders need to unpick. This may relate to workload and stress, changes occurring, inter- and intra-team dynamics, or wider cultural phenomena.

Quantitative survey data provides a good pulse of how people are feeling about their psychosocial work environment. This is closely linked to trust and psychological safety, providing a foundation for thriving in the workplace – but it doesn't say enough on its own. The reasons and root causes driving this perception must be investigated, and actioned.

Because, as we've seen through the business impact, creating a psychologically healthy workplace is in everyone's best interests: it's better for business, better for people, and better for the world.

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Get Certified and start your journey to becoming the Best...

Certification is based on the results of an anoymous, company-wide survey. Organisations who surpass the required Trust Index™ score are Certified 'great' for 12-months.

Best Workplace recognition is awarded to a maximum of 100 companies, within each size category, annually. Great Place To Work have national Best Workplaces lists all around the world.

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