



CIPD

Summary report and
practical guidance

June 2023

CIPD Good

Work Index 2023

Wales

The CIPD has been championing better work and working lives for over 100 years. It helps organisations thrive by focusing on their people, supporting our economies and societies. It's the professional body for HR, L&D, OD and all people professionals – experts in people, work and change. With almost 160,000 members globally – and a growing community using its research, insights and learning – it gives trusted advice and offers independent thought leadership. It's a leading voice in the call for good work that creates value for everyone.

Summary report and practical guidance

CIPD Good Work Index 2023: Wales

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1 Introduction

Good work in the UK undoubtedly looks different in 2023. The cost-of-living crisis and prevailing geopolitical tensions have meant that a lot of uncertainty remains in many people's personal and working lives, and employers have a real responsibility to support their people. These issues are prevalent in Wales – although most employees are satisfied with their jobs and experience good relationships at work, many are experiencing hardship in their working lives in 2023, notably dissatisfaction with pay, financial distress, and clear discontent and disengagement among public sector workers.

Nevertheless, the Welsh Government has acknowledged the importance of improving job quality and has made several steps towards doing so. The Fair Work Commission published its [Fair Work Wales](#) report in 2019, making a series of recommendations around defining, promoting, responsibility for and legislating for fair work.

Since then, the success of the report and its recommendations have been revisited with a February 2023 progress report. The report highlights that the Welsh Government has:

- engaged with social partners on all aspects of fair work, but there are capacity issues which mean a comprehensive approach is not always possible
- begun to progress its commitment to explore legislative opportunities in relation to pay gaps
- continued to press the case with the UK Government for strengthened employment rights and enforcement, including introducing new rights and protections for flexible and remote working, and ensuring all workers have a right to a minimum wage that provides a decent standard of living
- developed and delivered a workers' rights and responsibilities campaign to raise awareness of workers' rights and avenues of information and guidance.

These developments highlight the progress that can be made when good work is prioritised. There is, however, work still to do on assessing and improving job quality in Wales and the rest of the UK. This report seeks to highlight the areas of most importance.

We believe that work can and should be a force for good. Measuring good work or job quality is increasingly acknowledged as central to assessing employment itself, our relationship to our work, its impact on our lives and how we can make improvements to working life where possible. The [CIPD Good Work Index](#) provides an annual snapshot of job quality in the UK, giving insight to drive improvement in working lives.

Each year, we survey more than 5,000 workers across different sectors and occupations about key aspects of their work and employment.

Our model covers seven dimensions of job quality:

- pay and benefits
- employment contracts
- work–life balance
- job design
- relationships at work
- employee voice
- health and wellbeing.

This short report highlights headline findings from our national *CIPD Good Work Index 2023 survey report* with a focus on job quality in Wales, across seven dimensions. Our first Good Work Index report for Wales, it comprises an unweighted sample of 545 respondents of the total 5,139 employees across the UK.

The data is weighted to be representative of employees in Wales, with the exception of comparisons across regions and countries of the UK, where the data is representative of employees in the UK as a whole.

2 Key findings

- Job satisfaction is relatively high in Wales in 2023. Two-thirds of workers are satisfied with their job; this is comparable with the rest of the UK.
- Pay satisfaction is less positive; less than half of workers in Wales feel they are paid appropriately.
- Relationships at work in Wales are good; employees get on best with line managers, teammates and line reports.
- Satisfaction with line managers is generally positive this year in Wales. Employees feel they're treated fairly, respected and recognised for their contribution by managers, but would like more support for long-term career development.
- The discontent of public sector workers in the UK-wide sample carries over to Wales, where those in the public sector are more dissatisfied than their private sector counterparts with pay and non-pay-related issues.
- Public sector workers are more likely to feel the negative effects of work on their mental health, including excessive pressure, exhaustion and too great a workload.
- Employees in Wales report mixed feelings on the effect of work on their health. Only around one-third of respondents think work affects their mental and physical health positively.
- Around half of employees are willing to work harder than needed to help their organisation, but a similar number feel work is transactional – purely for money.

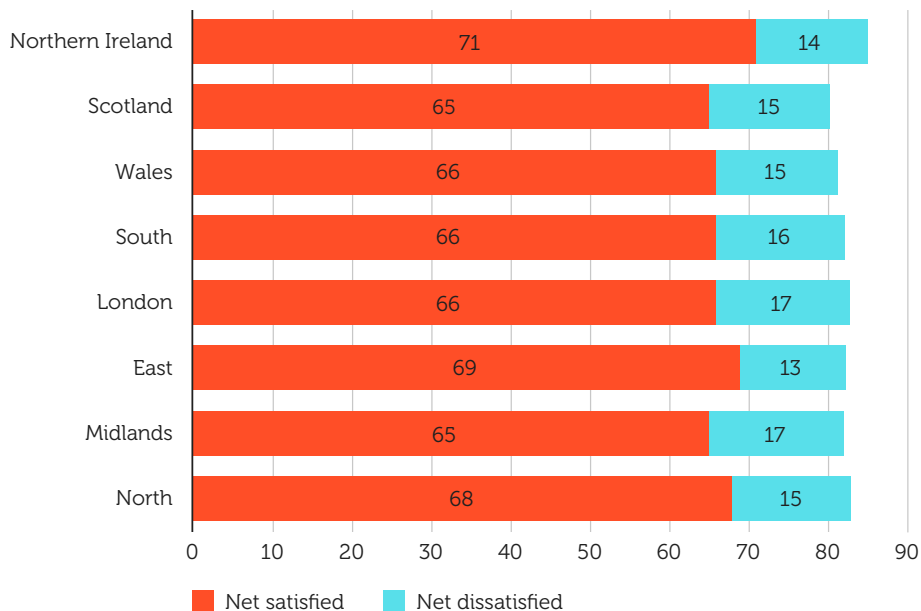
- Financial wellbeing is relatively low in Wales, with less than half of respondents able to keep up with bills and commitments without any difficulties.
- Most people in Wales say they're able maintain a good work–life balance and take advantage of flexible working arrangements.
- Perceptions of managers' ability to enable employee voice are mixed – they are good at keeping employees informed of management discussions and decisions, but are less effective at enabling employees to influence those decisions.
- While workers in Wales report low confidence in finding a new job as good as their current one in 2023, feelings of job security are high.
- Most employees in Wales have a good level of autonomy over how they work in 2023.

3 Job satisfaction

Overall satisfaction

Employees' overall satisfaction with their current job is relatively high in Wales this year. Two-thirds of workers say that they are satisfied in their job. This figure in Wales is stable with other countries and regions across the UK.

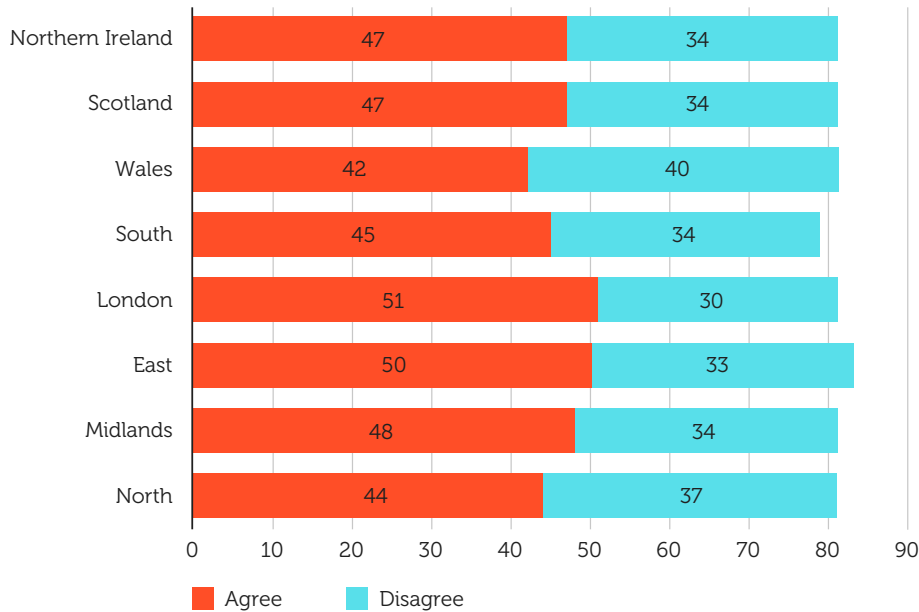
Figure 1: Overall job satisfaction in the UK, by country and region (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

Satisfaction with pay is less positive, with just 42% of workers in Wales feeling they are paid appropriately given their responsibilities and achievements at work. Employees in Wales feel relatively dissatisfied with their pay, but figures are consistent across countries and regions in the UK.

Figure 2: Job satisfaction in the UK, by country and region (%)
Considering my responsibilities and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately

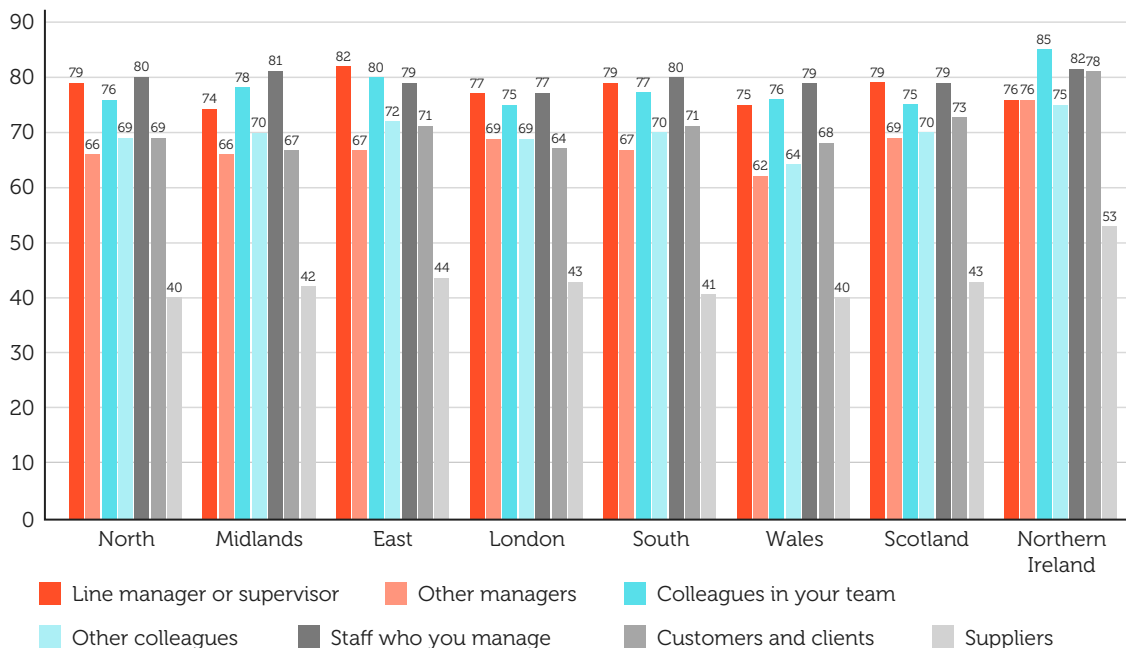


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

4 Relationships at work

Employees in Wales indicate good-quality relationships at work in 2023, especially those with line managers, colleagues in their team and line reports. Perceptions of these relationships vary by country and region but are generally very positive.

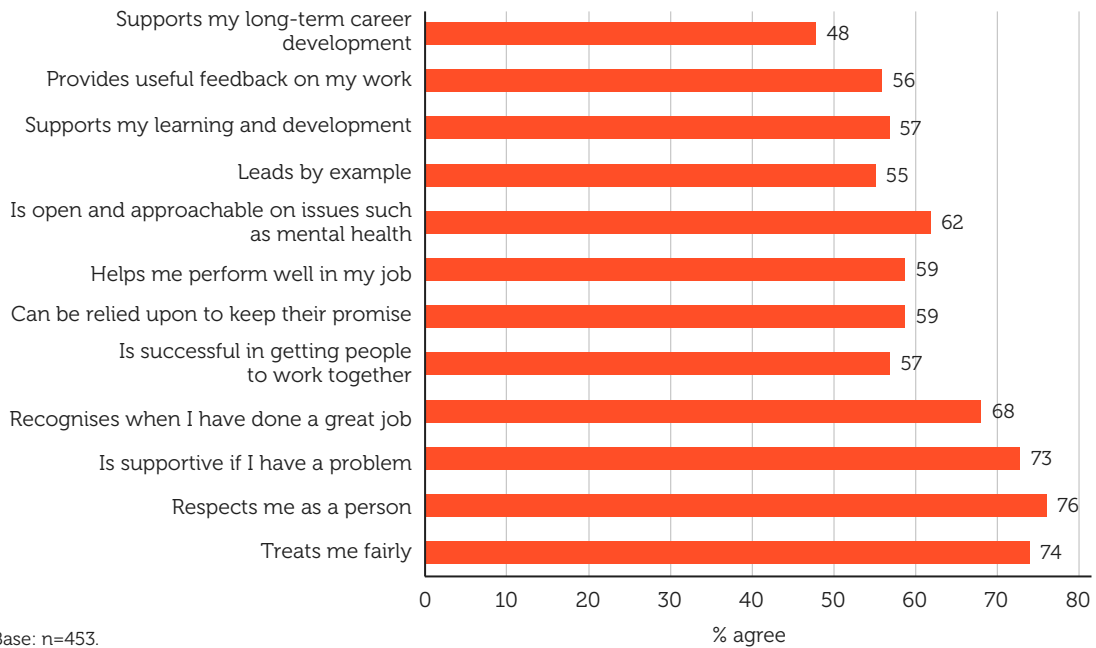
Figure 3: Percentage of respondents who report their relationships as 'good' in the UK, by region and country (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); all Wales (n=545); all Wales with a line manager (n=453); all Wales who are line managers themselves (n=232).

Employees in Wales also feel generally positive about their relationships with line managers and supervisors. Most say they're treated fairly by managers and are respected, supported and recognised for their contributions.

Figure 4: Perceptions of managers/supervisors (%)



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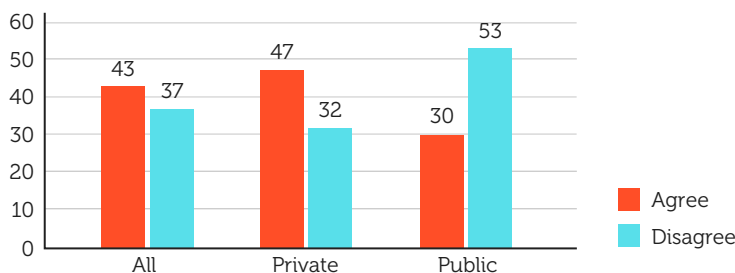
Discontent among public sector workers

Dissatisfaction among public sector workers is a recurring key theme in our national *CIPD Good Work Index 2023* survey report. This story extends to employees in Wales. Nevertheless, it should be noted that our Wales sample also highlights the positive aspects of public sector work.

Public sector workers in Wales are less likely to feel they are paid appropriately in their role than private sector workers.

Figure 5: Satisfaction with pay in Wales, by sector (%)

Considering my responsibilities and achievements in my job, I feel I get paid appropriately



Base: all (n=545); private sector (n=371); public sector (n=154).

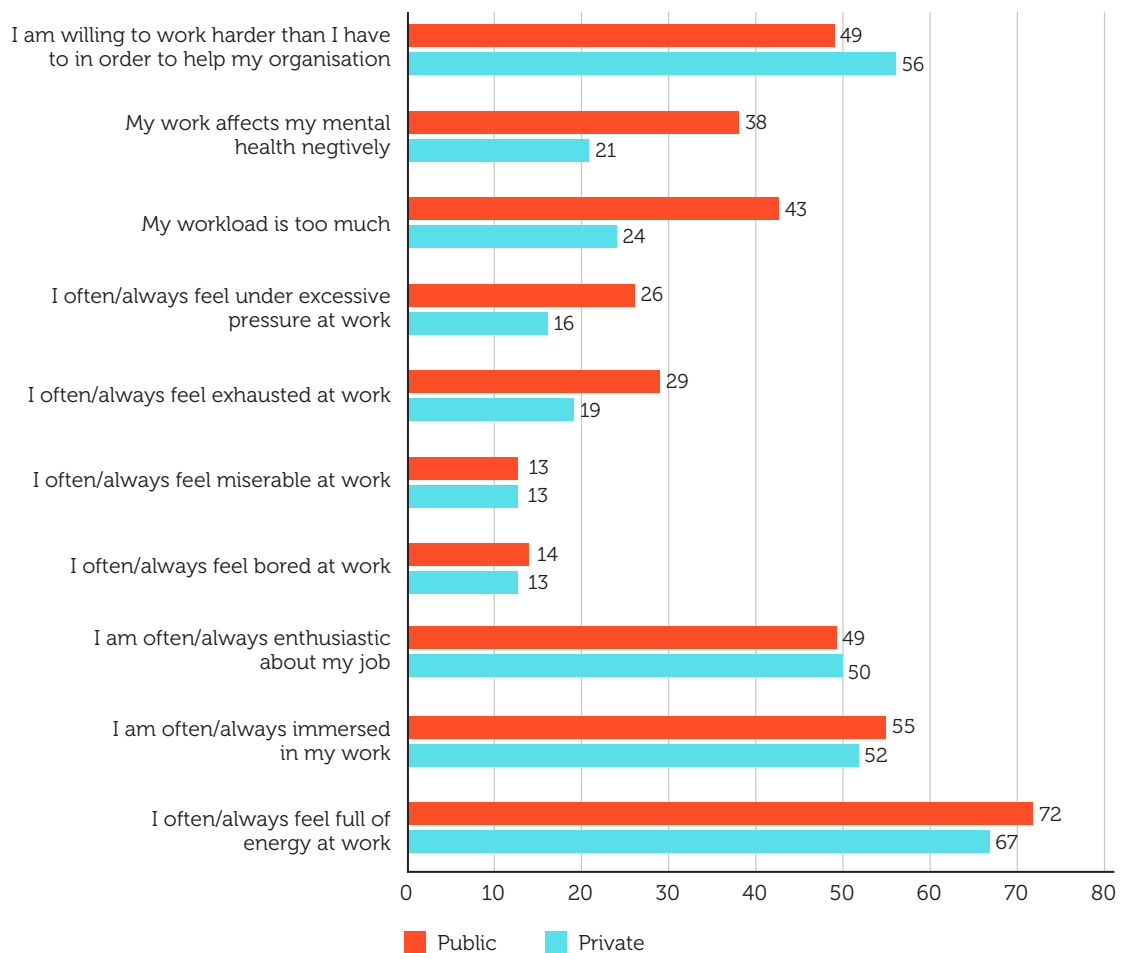
Looking at non-pay-related issues, public sector workers are more likely to suffer from an excessive workload, high pressure and feelings of exhaustion compared with their private sector counterparts. They also feel the negative effects of work on their mental health more strongly than those in the private sector.

In addition, responses in Wales appear to be reflective of the wider UK population, where public sector workers are less willing than those in the private sector to work harder than needed to help their organisation¹.

However, there are little-to-no differences in feeling miserable, bored or enthusiastic between public and private sector workers.

More positively for public sector employees, they feel immersed in their work and full of energy at work.

Figure 6: Experiences of work in Wales, by sector (%)



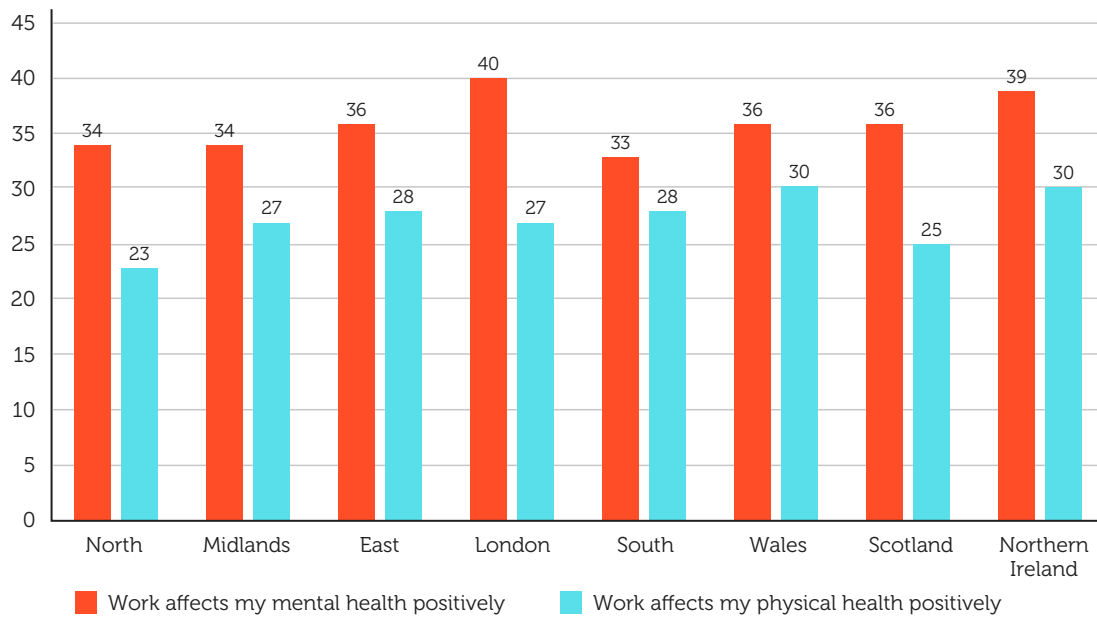
Base: all (n=545); private sector (n=371); public sector (n=154).

¹ In Wales, the difference between public and private sector employees' willingness to work harder than needed to help their organisation is not statistically significant, where significance is indicated by a p-value of ≤ 0.05 .

6 Health and wellbeing

Employees in 2023 report mixed feelings on the effect of work on their health. In Wales, just over a third of respondents think that work affects their mental health positively, and less than a third feel work affects their physical health positively. Differences between countries and regions are minimal, but Wales sits around the middle of the scale for this indicator.

Figure 7: The effect of work on health in the UK, by region and country (%)

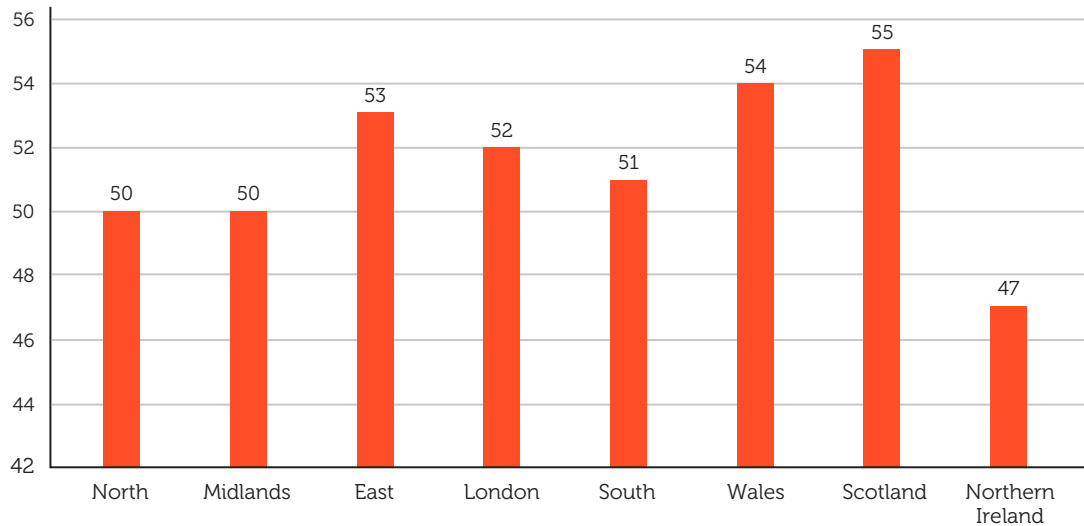


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

7 Work centrality and discretionary effort

Just over half of employees in Wales indicate they are willing to work harder than needed to help their organisation. Although responses vary, these figures are stable across different regions and countries in the UK.

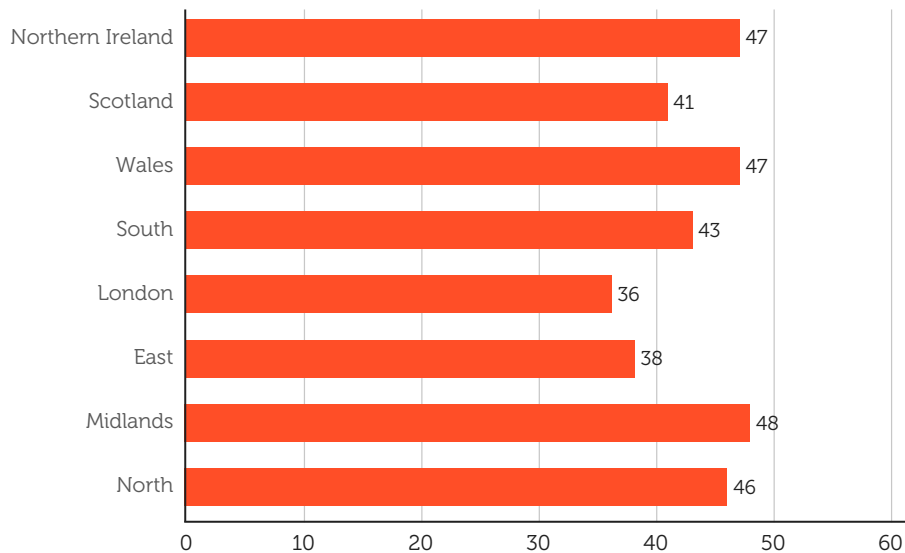
Figure 8: Willingness to work harder than necessary to help the organisation in the UK, by region and country (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

However, nearly half of respondents view work as purely transactional – for money and nothing more. Employees in Wales are relatively likely to view work this way, but figures are consistent across countries and regions in the UK.

Figure 9: A job is just a way of earning money, by country and region (%)

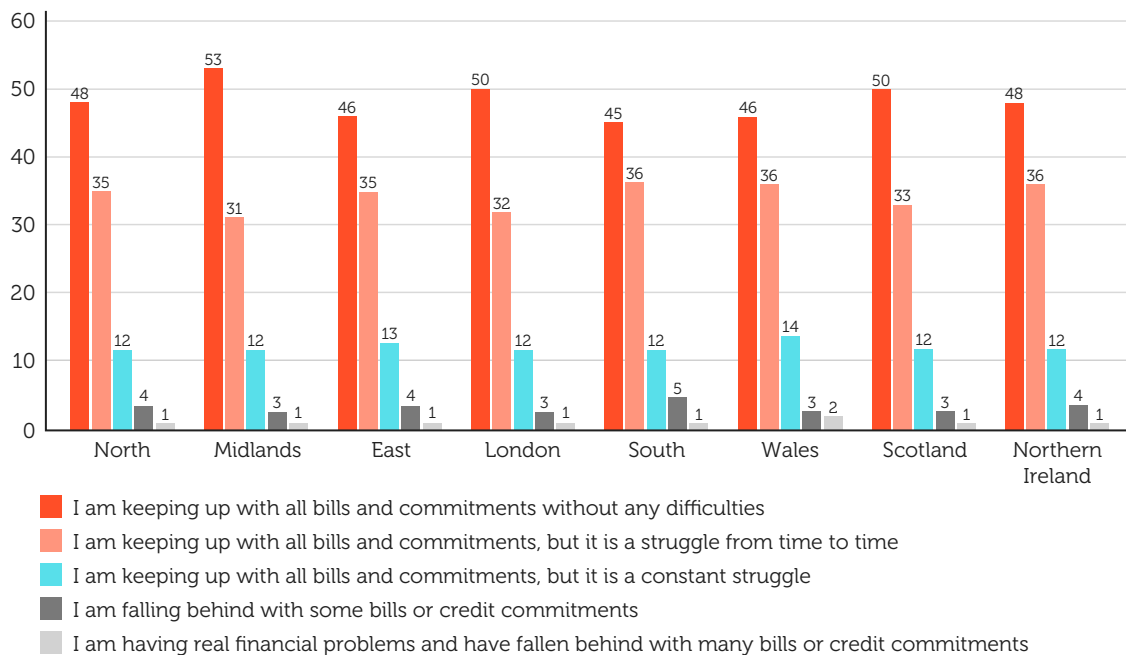


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

8 Cost-of-living crisis and financial wellbeing

Results from Wales reflect the wider cost-of-living crisis in the UK, with less than half of respondents able to keep up with bills and commitments without any difficulties. More than a third indicate that they can keep up with bills but struggle from time to time, while nearly a fifth suggest real financial worries, constantly struggling or falling behind on bills. While regional and national differences are minimal, respondents in Wales indicate serious financial hardship.

Figure 10: Ability to keep up with bills and credit commitments in the UK, by region and country (%)

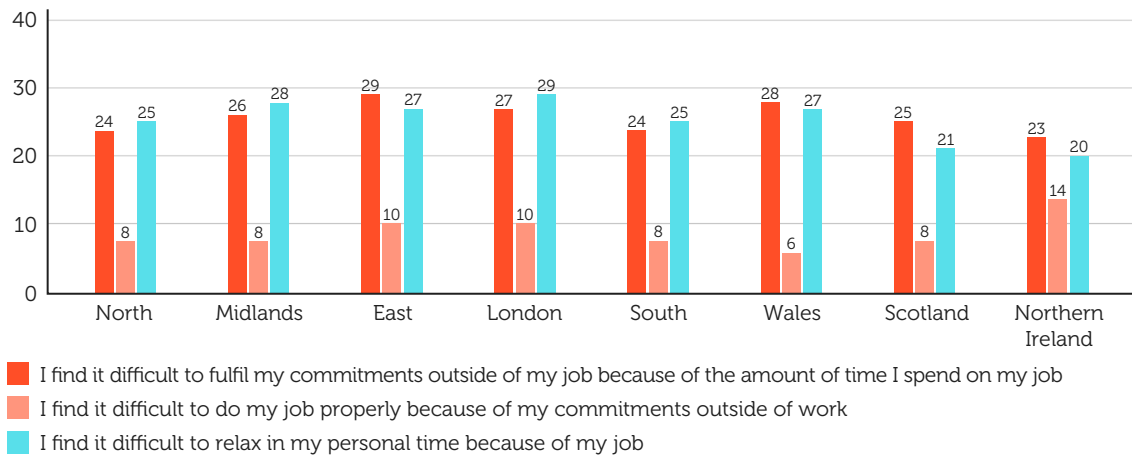


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

9 Work–life balance and flexible working

Relatively few employees in Wales report difficulty maintaining a healthy work–life balance in 2023. Just over a quarter find it difficult to fulfil outside commitments due to their job or relax in their personal time due to their job. Only a tiny minority experience their personal life interfering with their working life. These figures are stable across different regions and countries in the UK.

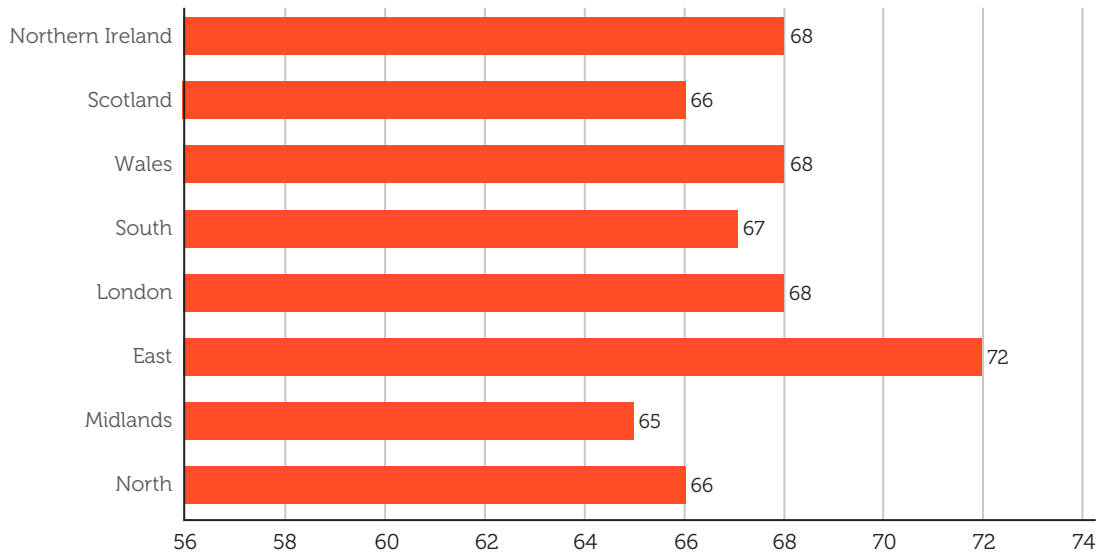
Figure 11: Ability to maintain a positive work-life balance in the UK, by region and country (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

Looking at informal work flexibility, employees in Wales generally find it easy to book off an hour or two during work to take care of personal or family matters. This remains similar to other countries and regions across the UK.

Figure 12: Ease of taking time off during work hours in the UK, by country and region (%)

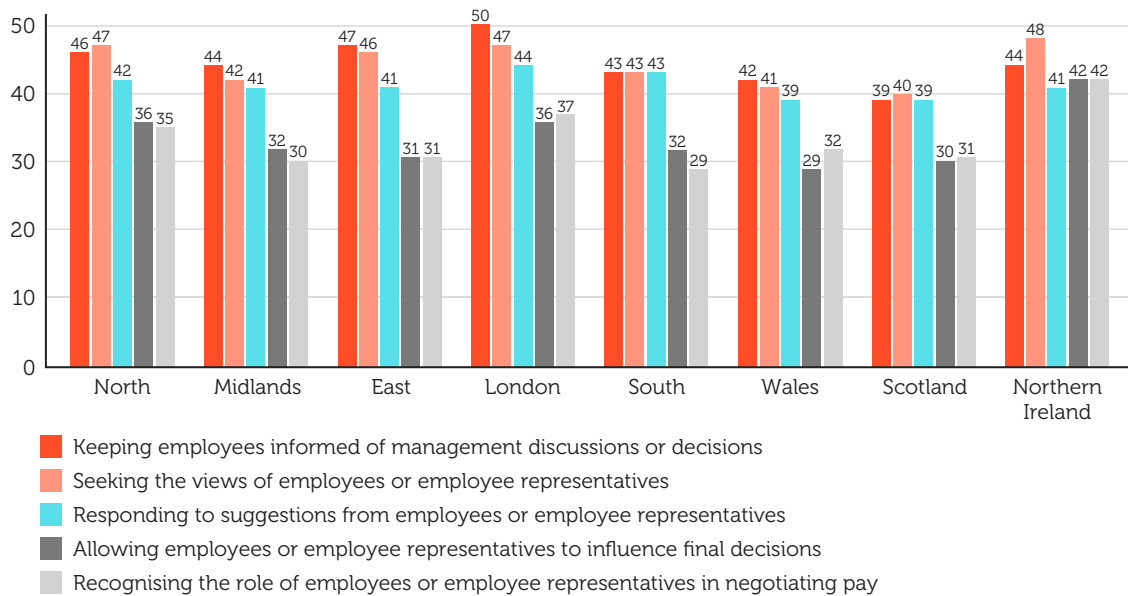


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

10 Voice

Employees in Wales report mixed feelings in 2023 on the extent to which managers enable them to use their voice at work. As with most other regions and countries across the UK, managers in Wales are perceived positively for keeping employees informed of discussions or decisions. Managers in Wales are, however, perceived less positively for allowing employees to negotiate their pay and influence final decisions.

Figure 13: The extent to which managers enable voice at work in the UK, by region and country (%)

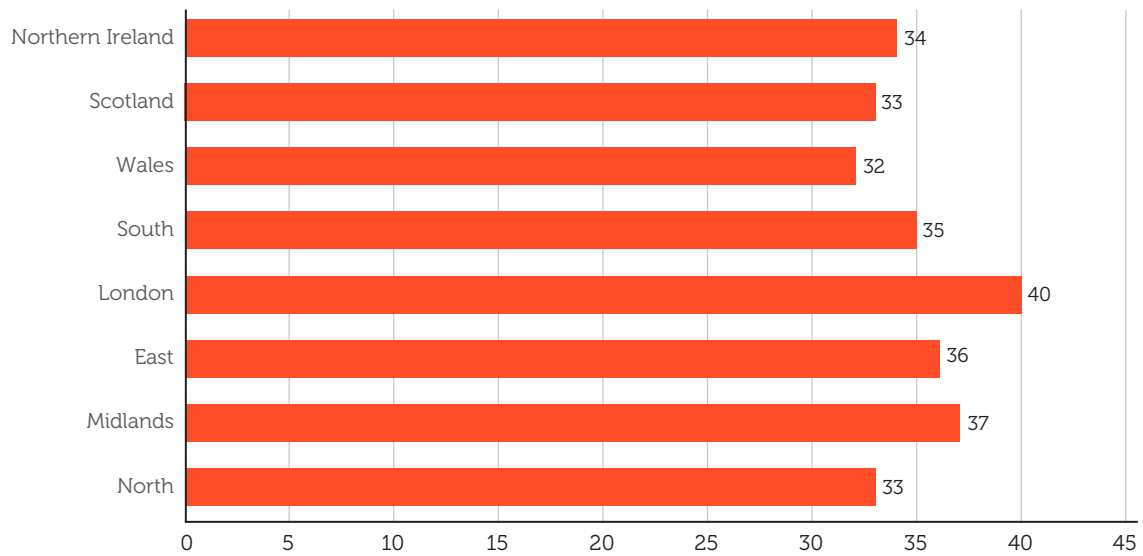


Base: all who are not self-employed (n=4,4634); all in Wales who are not self-employed (n=482).

11 Job security and intention to leave

Employees in Wales have mixed views on finding another job as good as their current one. Just less than a third think it would be very or fairly easy. These figures are stable across different countries and regions in the UK.

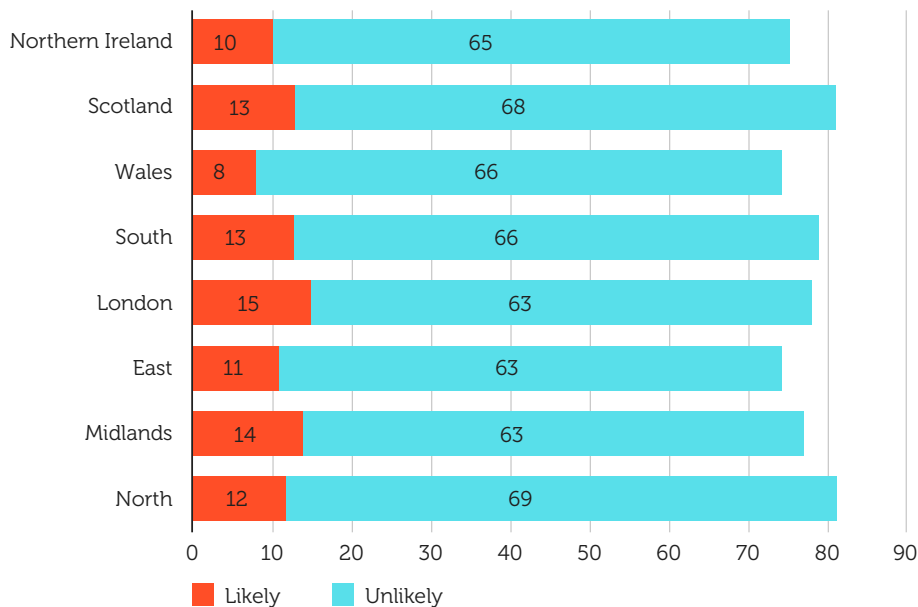
Figure 14: Ease of finding another job in the UK, by country and region (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

However, feelings of security at work remain relatively high for employees in Wales in 2023. Two-thirds of employees in Wales feel it is unlikely that they will lose their job in the next 12 months. This figure is comparable with the rest of the UK.

Figure 15: Likelihood of losing current job in next 12 months, by region and country (%)

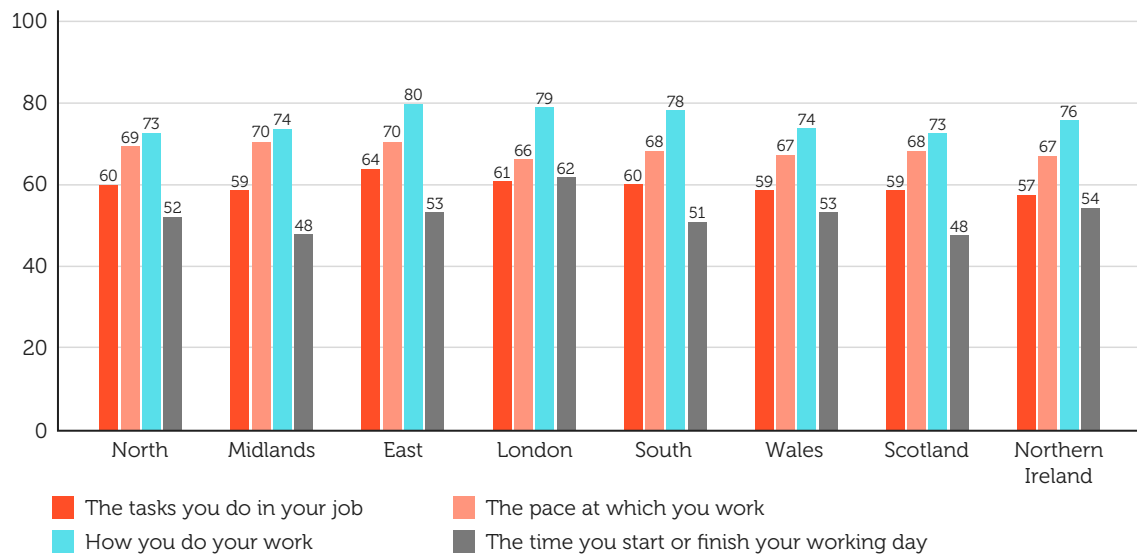


Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

12 Autonomy

Employees in Wales feel they have a strong level of control over the ways in which they work in 2023. As with other countries and regions in the UK, they feel they have particular autonomy over how they do their work and the pace at which they work.

Figure 16: Autonomy over ways of working in the UK, by region and country (%)



Base: all (n=5,139); Wales (n=545).

13 Conclusion

The picture of good work in Wales for 2023 is comparable with that in the UK as a whole. Most people are, overall, satisfied with their job. And there are aspects of job quality that are clearly showing signs of positivity, notably strong working relationships, satisfaction with line managers and maintaining a healthy work–life balance through working with flexibility and autonomy.

However, there are several aspects of job quality for which employee perceptions are mediocre at best and should be addressed to prevent a serious drop in good work. Notably, public sector workers are dissatisfied with both pay and non-pay-related aspects of work.

Employees of all sectors in Wales are mixed on how work affects their health, and many fail to see work as central to their lives. The cost-of-living crisis has particularly been felt in Wales, with many unable to keep up with bills as a consequence of the crisis.

These findings are vital in helping the CIPD and the people profession identify the elements of good work most in need of attention. Below are some practical recommendations for employers, people professionals and line managers:

- ✓ Develop trust, psychological safety and cohesion among teams at work to build strong interpersonal relationships and create high-performing teams.
- ✓ Boost recognition of financial wellbeing: understand the implications of financial distress for both employee wellbeing and performance and integrate a financial wellbeing strategy into your wider wellbeing strategy.
- ✓ Emphasise the importance of work–life balance and flexible working to staff from day one by consulting and collaborating with them to create hybrid working practices.
- ✓ Encourage managers to enable employee voice by providing them with training to build their understanding of how they can influence employees' confidence to raise important issues at work.
- ✓ Boost your organisation's attractiveness to both potential new recruits and those within the organisation, engaging employees through the recruitment process and helping them to perform at their best.
- ✓ Develop an engaged and motivated workforce through ensuring staff feel properly supported and have both the autonomy and resources to shape their jobs in ways that suit their lifestyles.



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