

New  
Working  
World

# Workplace wellbeing report Returning to the workplace

August edition

The second in a series of in-depth looks at how companies and employees are embracing the New Working World



# So what's a workplace wellbeing report?

This is our second workplace wellbeing report which surveyed 6,273 employees and 301 business leaders to understand how companies and workforces are coping with transitioning back to the workplace. The findings will help you focus on what's working and how best to support employees at this time.

We're tracking how workplace wellbeing is changing from month to month to identify trends, flag potential problems and offer our advice. Each report we produce will be compared with the data previously collected. Each one will also take a deep look at other areas which will affect the New Working World. The next edition will be available in September.

For July's edition, we surveyed employees and business leaders in June to see how the events of 2020 have affected employee wellbeing.

For August's edition, the one you're reading now, we surveyed employees and business leaders in July to see how returning to the workplace has affected employee wellbeing – as well as benchmarking against findings from the previous edition.

## By reading this report, you'll take away:

- ▶ The current state of employee wellbeing
- ▶ The biggest return to work challenges
- ▶ How employees feel about being furloughed
- ▶ What you can do to further support employees
- ▶ Extra resources to help navigate the New Working World

July's edition of our workplace wellbeing report is also available for download:



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# Welcome to August's workplace wellbeing report

Welcome to the second in our series of reports to track workplace wellbeing – taking a deep dive into how employees are feeling right now and how employers can provide the best employee experience. In case you missed our first edition, you can get it [here](#).

Employee wellbeing is at the heart of our mission at Perkbox. The health and safety of our customers, their employees and the Perkbox team is our number one priority during this unprecedented time. And that's why we're putting these reports together – to see how the state of workplace wellbeing is changing each month and offer our advice where we can.

Addressing the wellbeing concerns of our workforces now is a big part of building a successful, employee-centric business post-coronavirus. We're calling this

shift 'the New Working World'. It's the recognition that employees need to be at the centre of how we do business, specifically their wellbeing and overall experience at work.

## For example, this report has found:

- ▶ 58% of employees say their emotional wellbeing has been negatively affected in July
- ▶ 64% of employees say health and safety is their biggest return to work concern
- ▶ 61% of furloughed employees are concerned about the future security of their jobs

And those three stats alone can help us shape our businesses to put staff at the core, improve the right areas of wellbeing and embrace the benefits of providing a positive employee experience.

At Perkbox, we've already been doing all we can to support our employees in all areas of their lives, helping them to be their happiest, most productive selves.

All the best,

Saurav Chopra  
Co-Founder & CEO, Perkbox



# An intro to Perkbox

## Helping employees live better, in life and at work

At Perkbox, we believe that happy, healthy, engaged employees perform better, stick around for longer and create more attractive workplaces.

Our all-in-one platform supports employees at work and in life – whether at home or the workplace – helping you build a happier, healthier, more engaged workforce.



## Employee wellbeing is at the heart of our mission

We know COVID-19 and the events of 2020 have had a massive impact on the way we work and how we think about workplace wellbeing.

With online workouts, food discounts and GP video appointments, our platform helps everyone maintain their physical, mental and financial wellbeing. Find out more [here](#).

# Workplace wellbeing: Key findings

The need-to-know stats about  
the current state of workplace wellbeing

August edition

# Month on month key findings

**61%** of companies have now announced a back-to-work plan to employees – a **21%** increase from the previous month

**17%** of businesses are hiring more than the previous month – **29%** saying they've paused hiring new staff indefinitely compared to **46%** previously

**14%** fewer office-based businesses have had to freeze pay rises/promotions – a drop from **49%** the previous month to **35%**

**32%** of businesses haven't addressed the coronavirus with their employees – this stood at **40%** in the previous month

**12%** more non-office-based businesses have had to cut wellbeing budgets – an increase from **10% to 22%** from the previous month



# What can we learn from the month on month key findings?

We found a lot of positives when comparing the data month on month. For starters, 61% of companies have now announced a back-to-work plan to employees – a 21% increase from the previous month.

There are signs of business starting to return to 'as normal'. 17% of companies are hiring more than in July and 14% fewer office-based businesses have had to freeze pay rises/promotions. These are all positives which show we're slowly starting to come out the other side of the pandemic.

Less positive, nearly a third of companies (32%) haven't addressed coronavirus with their employees – this was 40% in the previous month. We also uncovered that 22% of businesses have cut wellbeing budgets – a 10% rise from the previous month.

While we understand this may be done for business reasons, what we've discovered in this report is that employees need more help with their emotional wellbeing. Cutting budgets at this time could leave them at risk of burnout which will ultimately cost businesses much more.



# Biggest wellbeing challenges

## The three biggest wellbeing challenges for business leaders currently are:

- ▶ Making their employees feel supported
- ▶ Ensuring employees feel safe when they're able to return to work
- ▶ Keeping morale high when adapting to remote working

## The three biggest wellbeing challenges for employees currently are:

- ▶ Feeling less connected to company/colleagues
- ▶ Burnout due to balancing work/life in a home environment
- ▶ Increased loneliness/feelings of isolation



## What can we learn from the current biggest wellbeing challenges?

The biggest wellbeing challenges for business leaders currently are the same as the previous month, although they now rank them as less of a challenge. For example, making employees feel supported was stated as a challenge by 14% fewer business leaders in the previous month.

For employees, they're now ranking burnout has a bigger challenge than the previous month. Despite this, managers don't see it as big of a concern as the top three wellbeing challenges they stated.

This could point to managers seeing the current wellbeing of employees as the new base line, which is especially dangerous if their people are already struggling. It's clear that now is the time to ramp up wellbeing efforts rather than wind them down.

# Workplace wellbeing key findings

95% of businesses took measures to support the wellbeing of furloughed staff

More than half (51%) of non-office-based businesses have told employees they'll be investing more in wellbeing after lockdown

49% of office-based employees say their social wellbeing has been negatively affected in July – 46% of office-based employers say they've seen this too

Health and safety is the biggest concern for both employers and employees when returning to the workplace

Employees still rank financial wellbeing initiatives as the most important element to job attraction and retention



# What can we learn about workplace wellbeing currently?

On the whole, it looks like everyone shares the belief that people who feel supported by their company at this unsettling time will go a long way in building employee/employer relationships.

That shines through in the 95% of companies who supported the wellbeing of furloughed employees, and the 51% of non-office-based businesses who've told staff that they'll be investing more in wellbeing after lockdown. Employees also still view the value of financial wellbeing initiatives highly as they continue to say it's the most important element to job attraction and retention.

49% of office-based employees say their social wellbeing is in decline, with 46% of

office-based employers also recognising this in their workforce. If you're office-based and are prepared to look after people's health and safety, transitioning people back to the workplace will hopefully make them feel better by seeing colleagues in person. You might also want to consider introducing remote social activities for those who can't make it to the office.

With returning to work in mind, health and safety is the biggest concern for both employers and employees. We recently produced a [return to work checklist](#) which you can use to help employees transition back to the office with a five-step back to work plan.



# Emotional wellbeing key findings

**57%** of employers think the emotional wellbeing of employees has been negatively impacted in July – **58%** of employees agree

**40%** of employees say managing their emotional wellbeing is a challenge when working remotely – only **18%** of employers recognise this as a key challenge

**37%** of managers and **26%** of employees say they've struggled to cope in July

**22%** of non-office-based companies have implemented emotional wellbeing initiatives in July

Two thirds (**66%**) of non-office employers say the emotional wellbeing of their staff has suffered in July



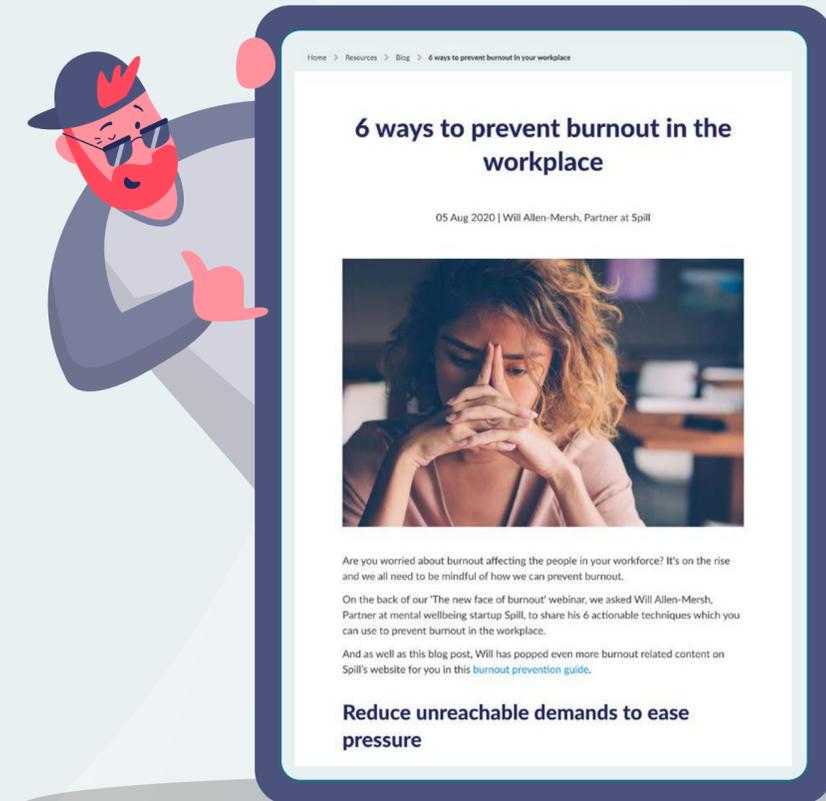
# What can we learn about emotional wellbeing currently?

During July, emotional wellbeing has been the most negatively affected area of wellbeing – observed by 57% of employers and 58% of employees. Despite this, both employers and employees only rank emotional wellbeing initiatives as the 8th most important element in job attraction and retention.

66% of non-office-based employers have seen those impacts, compared to 49% office-based. In the previous month, this was much more equal at 56% vs. 59%. With more non-office businesses opening in the last month, it's possible the pressure for employees to work has taken a toll on their emotional wellbeing.

For office-based businesses, only 18% of employers say supporting employee emotional wellbeing is a key challenge to remote working – compared to 40% of employees. As employees say maintaining work/life balance is their biggest remote working challenge, employers should take more steps to stop employees from burning out.

In a recent [Perkbox webinar](#), we covered the six reasons for burnout: Unreachable demands, randomness, low emotional pay off, the game feeling rigged, mixed messages and misaligned goals.



Read our blog post on six ways to prevent burnout in your workplace [here](#).

# Workplace return key findings

64% of employees say their biggest return to work challenge is health and safety of the workplace

More than 1 in 5 businesses (21%) are switching to remote working completely

Nearly a quarter of employees (24%) say they feel unsafe about returning to work

68% of employers now offer remote working options and 63% offer flexible working hours

40% of businesses say one of their biggest return to work challenges is convincing employees it's necessary to come back to the workplace





# What can we learn about returning to the workplace currently?

A shift to more remote working in the New Working World seems to be gathering pace as more than 1 in 5 (21%) businesses are switching to full-time remote working. 68% of employers say they're also now offering remote working options and 63% are offering flexible working hours.

This is not welcomed by all though. 40% of businesses say one of their biggest return to work challenges is convincing employees it's necessary to come back to the workplace. And with 12% of employees believing it's unnecessary to return to work, employers will need to manage remote working expectations carefully.

To ensure this is done fairly, we recommend comparing the business needs against employee expectations and then drawing up a new flexible working policy from there. For example, you may allow non-office-based employees to carry out administrative tasks at home rather than the workplace. For office-based staff, you might set mandatory days for coming to the office.

Health and safety dominates the workplace return conversation. 64% of employees say their biggest challenge is health and safety and 24% say they actively feel unsafe about coming back. We recently produced a [return to work checklist](#) which you can use to help employees safely transition back to the office with a five-step back to work plan.

# Furlough and redundancies

## key findings

**39%** of businesses have used the furlough scheme to prolong inevitable redundancies – **47%** non-office and **31%** office-based

More than **1 in 5** businesses (**22%**) have abused the furlough scheme by asking furloughed staff to work

**29%** of leaders would consider a pay cut before making redundancies

**65%** of employees believe leaders should reduce their pay before making redundancies

**61%** of employees said being on furlough has made them worried about the future security of their job





# What can we learn about furlough and redundancies currently?

Despite furlough being a job retention scheme, a huge 61% of furloughed employees are worried about the future security of their job, 42% are also concerned about the future of their employer due to participation within the scheme. Showing employees who are on furlough and those who've returned that their jobs are safe will help reduce any anxieties they may have.

With so many employees concerned about their job security, employees expect senior leadership to take personal action before considering redundancies for staff. 65% of employees stated that they believe senior leadership should take a pay cut before redundancies – but only 29% of senior leaders said they'd be willing to do so.

The moral conundrum of how to use the furlough scheme is also raised – 22% of managers have asked employees to work while on it and 39% have used the scheme to prolong inevitable redundancies.

The first is cut and dry. It's illegal to put employees on furlough and then ask them to work. The second is more ambiguous, as while furloughing employees keeps them in employment, it's taking taxpayers' money away at a time when it's arguably needed most.

# Small vs. large companies

## key findings

We've defined companies with 50–99 employees as small and 500+ employees as large.

**27%** of leaders at small companies say they've had no clear guidance on returning to work – compared to **13%** of large companies

**48%** of large companies say workspace wellbeing has been negatively affected in July – compared to **29%** of small companies

**52%** of small businesses have implemented emotional wellbeing solutions during the pandemic – **22%** more than the previous month

**51%** of large companies say supporting employees return to the physical workplace is a new challenge faced in 2020 – compared to **30%** of small companies

**60%** of large companies say ensuring employees feel safe when returning to work is a new challenge faced in 2020 – compared to **44%** of small companies





# What can we learn about small vs. large companies currently?

It appears large companies are finding it harder to manage the wellbeing of their employees during the pandemic – most notably in the return to the workplace. 51% of large companies say supporting employees return to the physical workplace is a challenge and 60% say ensuring employees feel safe during the return is also a challenge. This reduces to 30% and 44% respectively for small companies.

Large companies are also lagging behind their smaller counterparts in workspace wellbeing, with 48% saying it's been negatively affected in July compared to 29% of small companies. There does seem to be better communication at larger companies between the most senior

leaders and managers below. 27% of managers at small companies say they've had no clear guidance on returning to work from decision makers above them, with just 13% at larger companies saying the same.

The reason for this disparity possibly comes from larger companies having both more employees to move back to the workplace and bigger health and safety concerns in industries such as manufacturing and construction.

# Workplace wellbeing: Deep dive

The complete report on  
the current state of workplace wellbeing

August edition

# How we brought this report together

This is the second in a series of reports tracking workplace wellbeing and what employers should focus on to provide the best employee experience. We're doing this by surveying both employees and business leaders to see if they're aligned and to understand their different points of view. If you missed July's edition, you can get it [here](#).

To make this report possible, we surveyed 6,273 UK employees and 301 business leaders from companies with 20+ employees. We defined business leaders as: senior managers, directors, and business owners. Throughout the report we also refer to small and large companies – we've defined companies with 50–99 employees as small and 500+ employees as large.

The employee survey was completed by users of the Perkbox platform, while business leaders were surveyed through research company Censuswide. Both were conducted between 15/07/20–21/07/20.

After that, we added some visual magic to save you from staring at spreadsheets upon spreadsheets of data!

Please be aware that due to the rounding up and down of percentages, totals may not always add up to 100%. We're happy to share more specific stats if you need them.

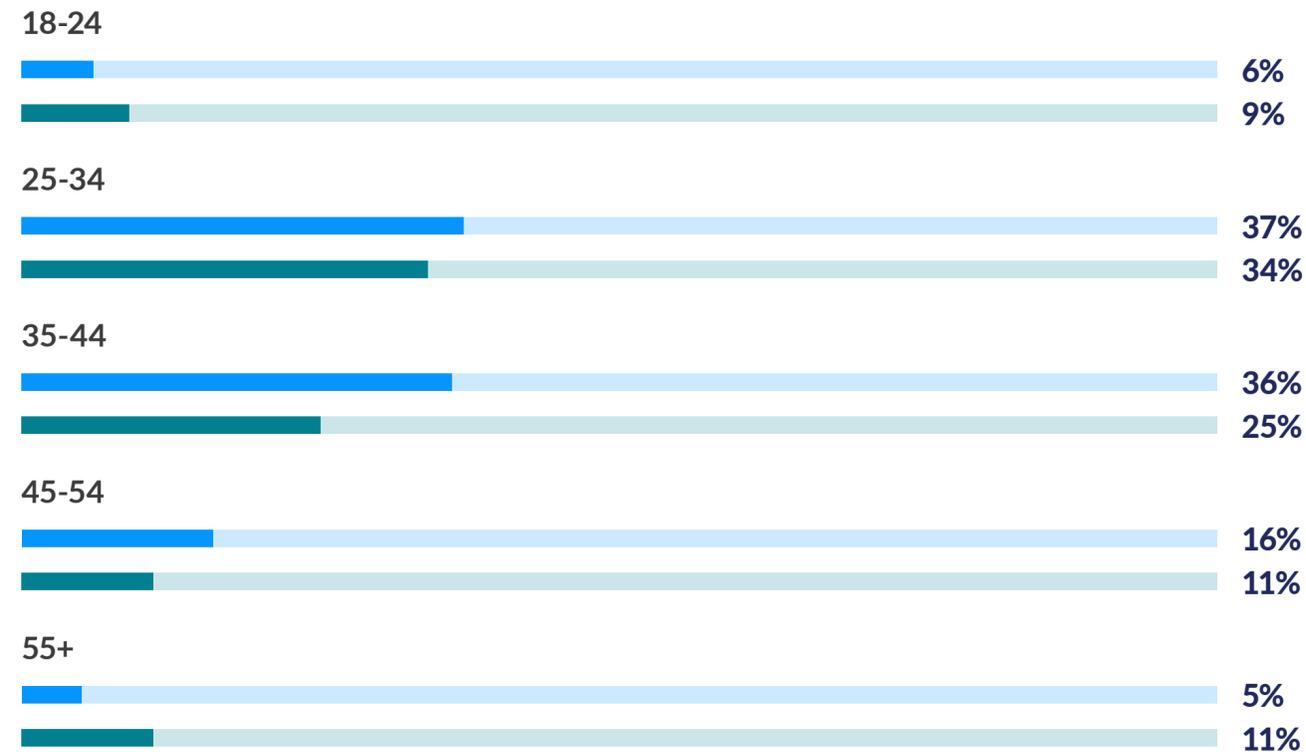


# Our sample sizes

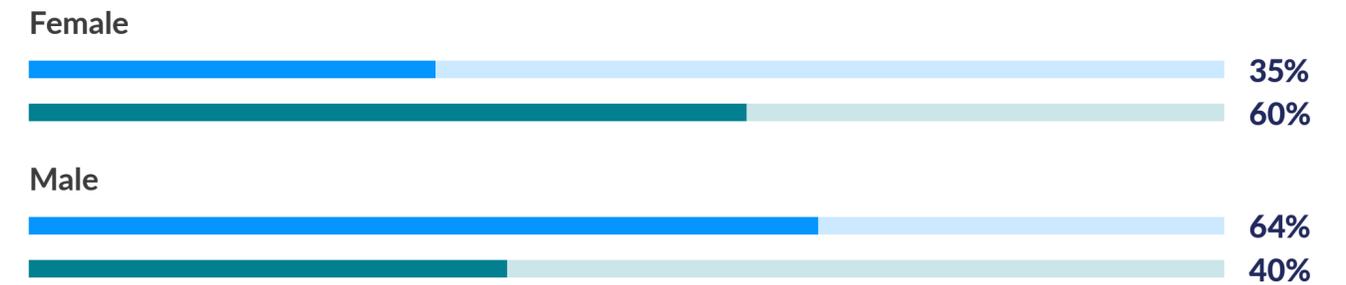
Business leader survey: 301 respondents

Employee survey: 6,273 respondents

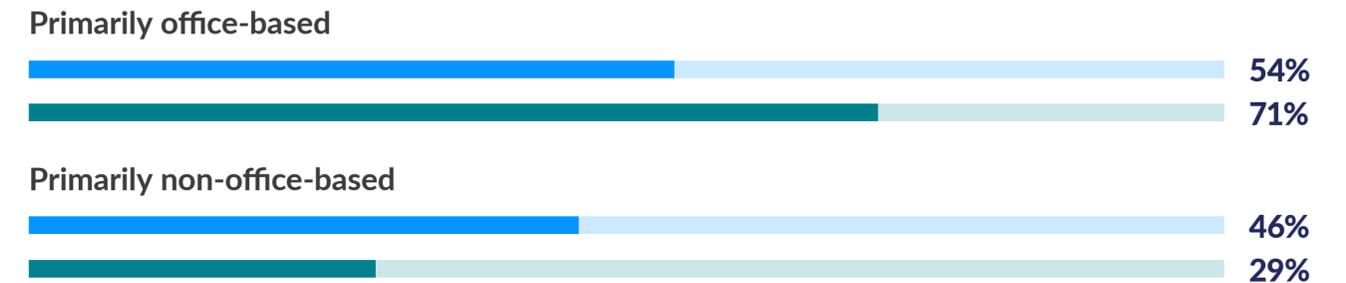
## Age



## Gender



## Office/Non-office-based



Employees Business leaders

## Employee survey

### Location



South East	22%
Greater London	19%
South West	12%
North West	10%
East Midlands	7%
West Midlands	7%
Yorkshire and the Humber	6%
East of England	6%
Scotland	4%
North East	3%
Wales	3%
Northern Ireland	1%

## Business leader survey

### Location



Greater London	32%
North West	11%
West Midlands	10%
South East	8%
East Midlands	7%
East of England	6%
South West	5%
Yorkshire and the Humber	5%
North East	5%
Wales	5%
Scotland	4%
Northern Ireland	1%

## Employee survey

### Industry

13%	IT and technology	3%	Charity
12%	Other	3%	Business, consulting and management
11%	Healthcare	3%	Property
9%	Retail, catering and hospitality	2%	Energy and utilities
8%	Education	2%	HR, staffing and recruitment
8%	Financial services	2%	Public services
6%	Manufacturing and transport	2%	Leisure, sport and tourism
5%	Legal and professional services	1%	Research and development
5%	Media, marketing and PR	1%	Arts, culture and entertainment
4%	Architecture, engineering and building	1%	Local and national government

## Business leader survey

### Industry

24%	IT and technology	2%	Architecture, engineering and building
20%	Retail, catering and hospitality	2%	HR, staffing and recruitment
11%	Financial services	2%	Arts, culture and entertainment
8%	Manufacturing and transport	2%	Local and national government
7%	Business, consulting and management	1%	Property
5%	Other	1%	Public services
5%	Legal and professional services	0.7%	Energy and utilities
4%	Education	0.7%	Leisure, sport and tourism
3%	Healthcare	0.3%	Charity
2%	Media, marketing and PR	0.3%	Research and development

# How does your company stack up against the current state of the nation?

We surveyed business leaders to give you insight on how other companies are reacting to the events of 2020

August edition

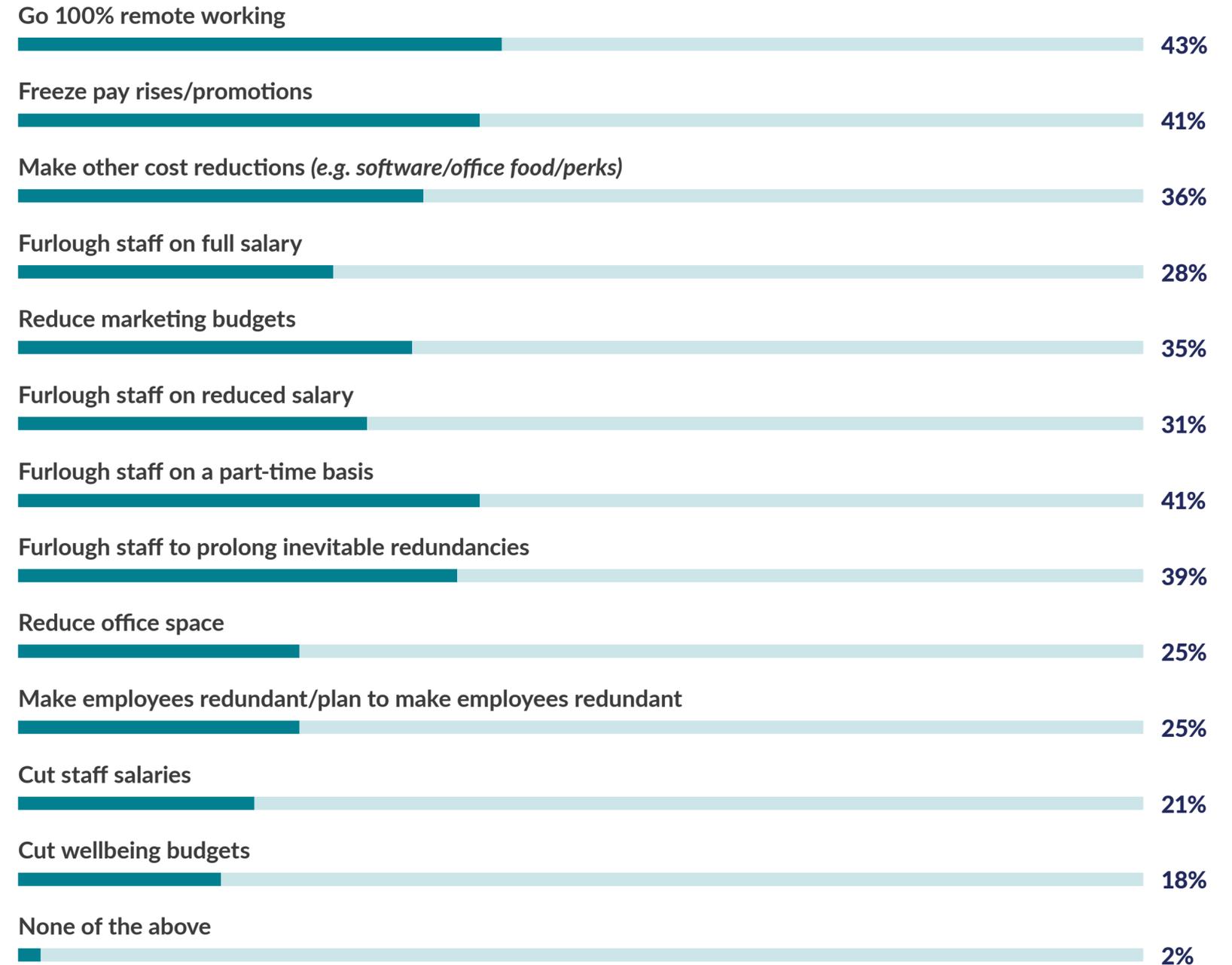
## Business leaders

# What have business leaders had to do in light of coronavirus?

44% of businesses have gone 100% remote working in light of coronavirus.

39% of businesses have used the furlough scheme to prolong inevitable redundancies. This was much higher for non-office-based businesses (47%) than office-based businesses (31%).

12% more non-office businesses have had to cut wellbeing budgets in light of coronavirus – an increase from 10% to 22% from the previous month. The opposite is true of those office-based, with 10% fewer having to cut wellbeing budgets – 24% in the previous month to 14% currently.



Business leaders

## Which wellbeing initiatives do businesses have in their workplace and for how long?

There's been a steady increase across all areas month on month. This could point to an economic recovery and companies being able to increase their wellbeing budgets.

52% of small companies implemented emotional wellbeing solutions during the pandemic – a 22% increase from the previous month. A further 15% are currently looking to do the same. Large companies are less active but have more initiatives already in place.

The biggest difference between what office-based and non-office-based businesses chose to implement are:

- ▶ **Financial:** 9% increase for office-based vs. 4% non-office
- ▶ **Emotional:** 1% increase for office-based vs. 23% non-office
- ▶ **Physical:** 8% increase for office-based vs. 16% non-office
- ▶ **Social:** 0% increase for office-based vs. 13% for non-office

## Financial wellbeing

(e.g. how secure you feel in having enough money to meet your needs)



Implemented before COVID-19	31%
Implemented during COVID-19	36%
Currently looking to implement	20%
No plans to implement	14%

## Emotional wellbeing

(e.g. stress, anxiety, mental health)



Implemented before COVID-19	43%
Implemented during COVID-19	38%
Currently looking to implement	14%
No plans to implement	6%

## Physical wellbeing

(e.g. physical health and fitness)



Implemented before COVID-19	40%
Implemented during COVID-19	35%
Currently looking to implement	15%
No plans to implement	11%

## Social wellbeing

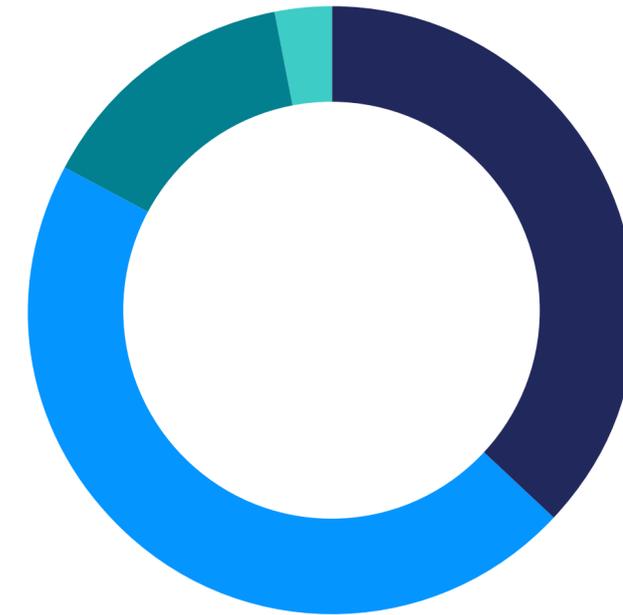
(e.g. how connected you feel with your team)



Implemented before COVID-19	40%
Implemented during COVID-19	37%
Currently looking to implement	18%
No plans to implement	6%

## Workspace wellbeing

(e.g. your work environment and ability to work well from home and/or feeling safe in the workplace)



Implemented before COVID-19	37%
Implemented during COVID-19	46%
Currently looking to implement	14%
No plans to implement	3%

## Business leaders

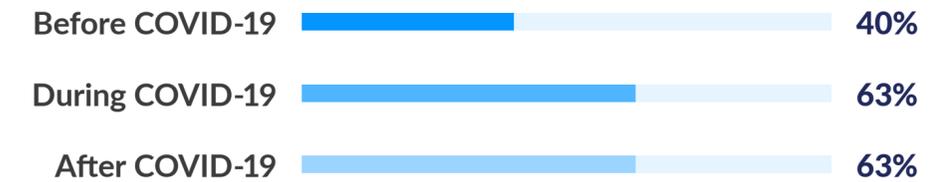
# What have businesses offered employees before/during/after the pandemic?

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, only 32% of businesses offered remote working options and 40% offered flexible working hours. Now, 68% offer remote working options and 63% offer flexible working hours.

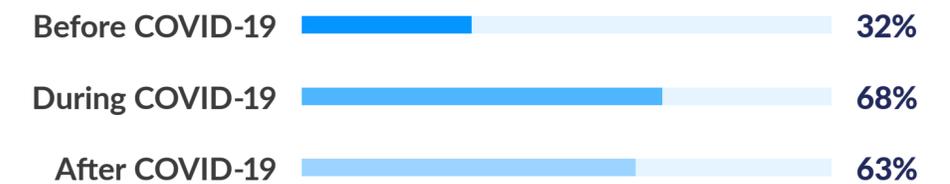
While it's easy to say that these upswings are based on the coronavirus outbreak, many businesses plan to keep offering them as policies in the New Working World – with 63% of businesses stating they'll keep remote working options post-pandemic, and 63% also stating they'll keep flexible working.

The largest concessions for both seem to come from non-office-based businesses. Before the pandemic only 38% offered flexible hours and 32% offered remote working. After the pandemic this has increased to 71% and 63% respectively.

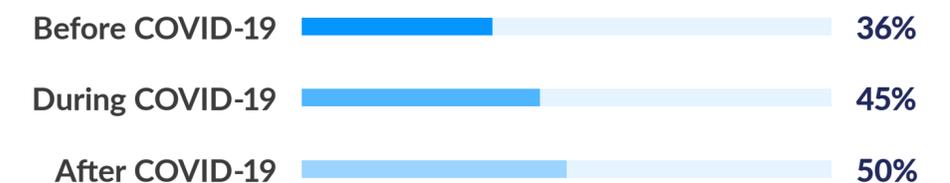
## Flexible working hours



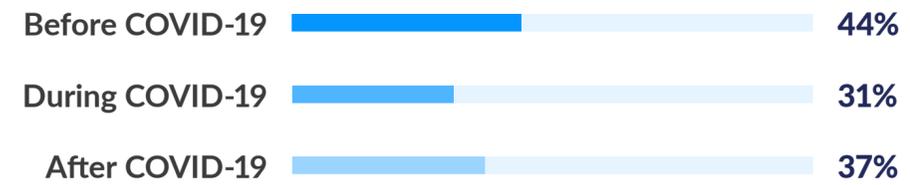
## Remote working options



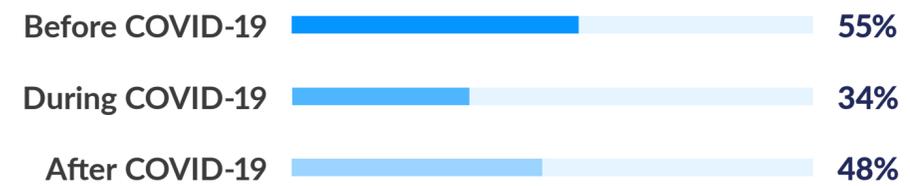
## Carrying over holiday/annual leave



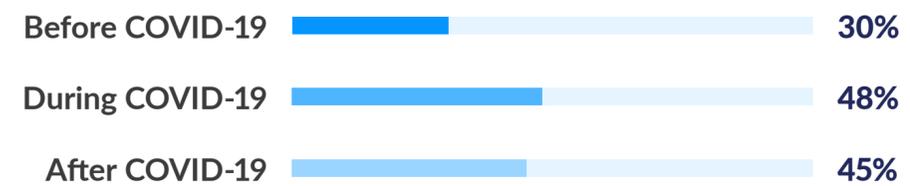
### Perks and rewards



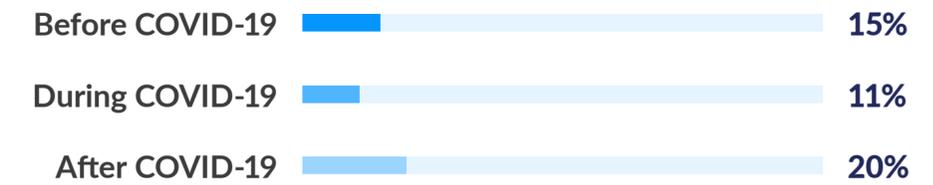
### Learning and development



### Equipment (e.g. laptops, work phones)



### Allocating time to support a charity



### None of these



# What are businesses addressing internally and externally?

The charts on the next two pages show what employers have addressed internally with employees and externally with customers or through marketing.

There are still 32% of businesses who haven't addressed the coronavirus with their employees. While this is an improvement on 40% from the previous month, there's still close to a third of businesses who are leaving employees in the dark despite the government now saying people should return to work.

61% of companies have now announced a back-to-work plan to

employees, a 21% increase from the previous month.

More non-office-based businesses have addressed their company diversity and inclusion strategy internally with employees (50%) and externally (40%) than office-based businesses (45% internally, 29% externally). But they both fall short on officially reporting about diversity and inclusion externally (31%).

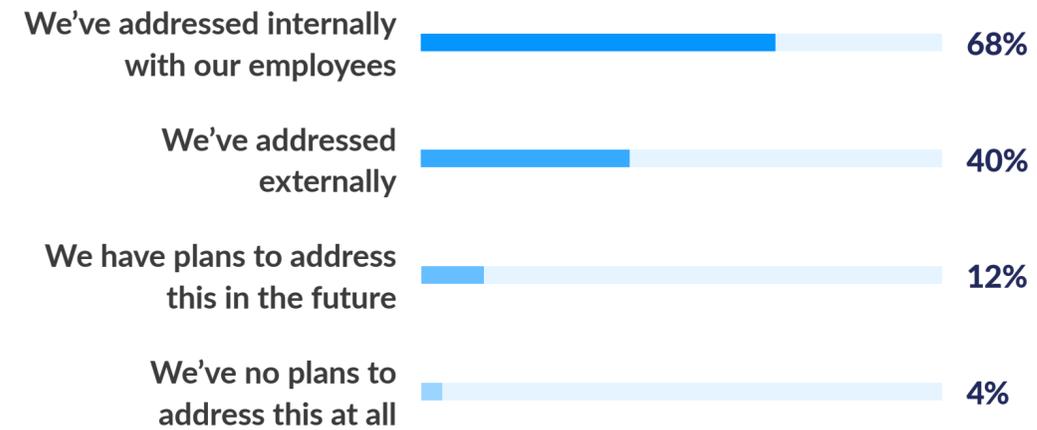
Interestingly, many more female business leaders (58%) than male (42%) say they've addressed the Black Lives Matter movement with employees.

51% of non-office-based businesses have told employees they plan to invest more into wellbeing initiatives after lockdown, compared with just 38% of office-based businesses.

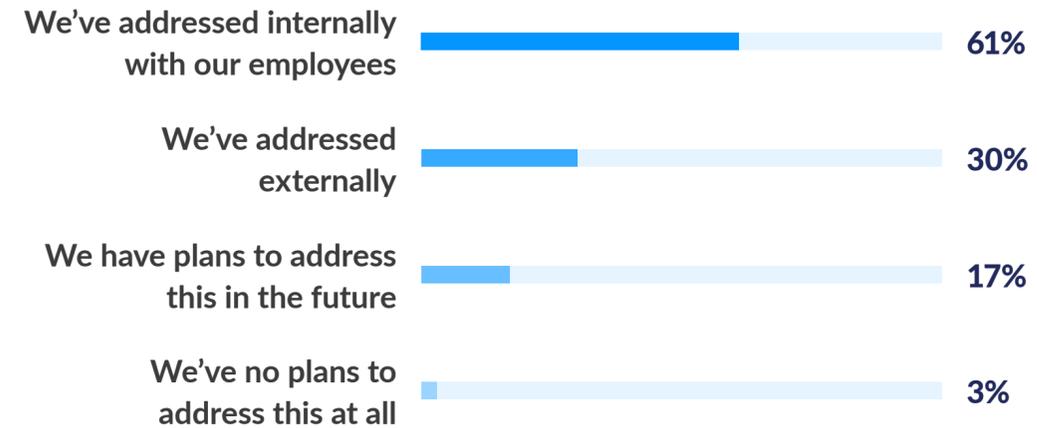
Environmental concerns sparked by the Australian bushfires are still a low concern for businesses both internally and externally. This is reinforced by more than a third (38%) of businesses have no plans to address environmental concerns at all.



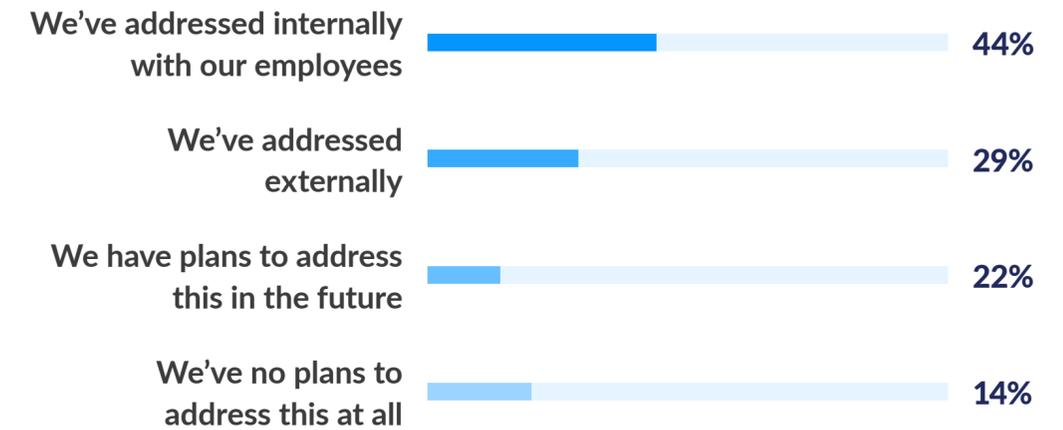
## Coronavirus



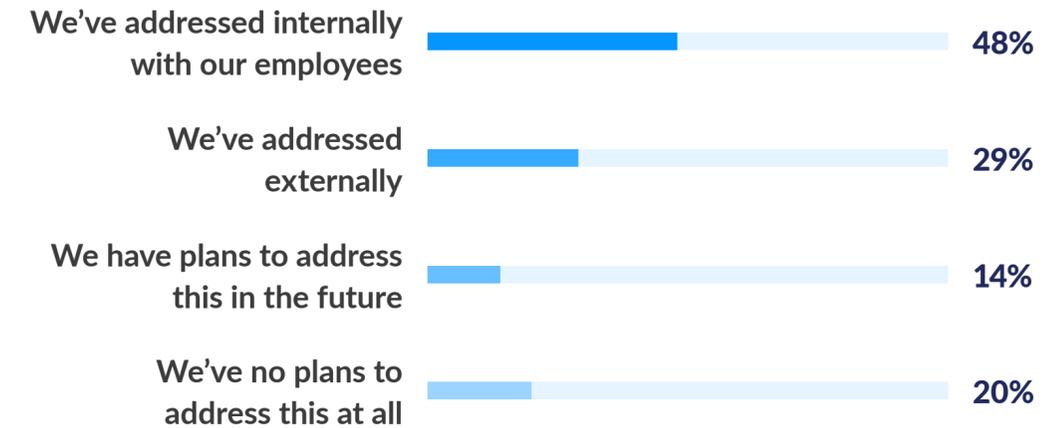
## A back to work plan



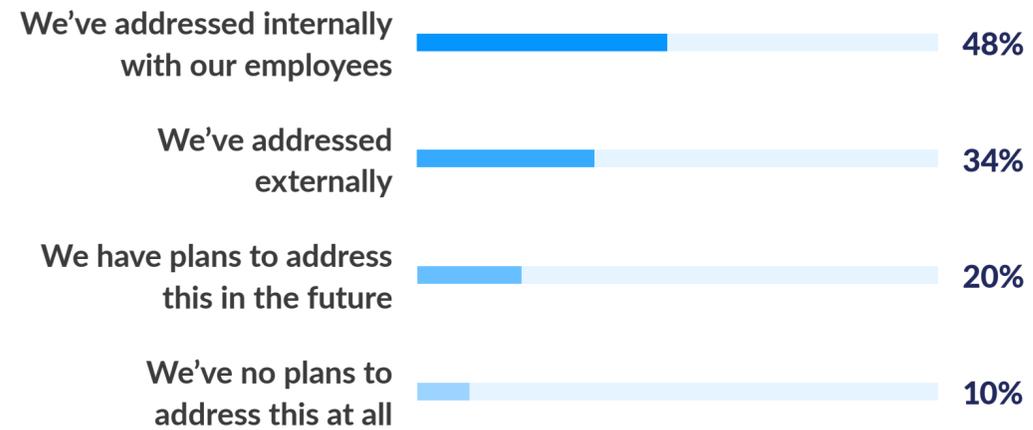
## Plans to invest more in wellbeing post-lockdown



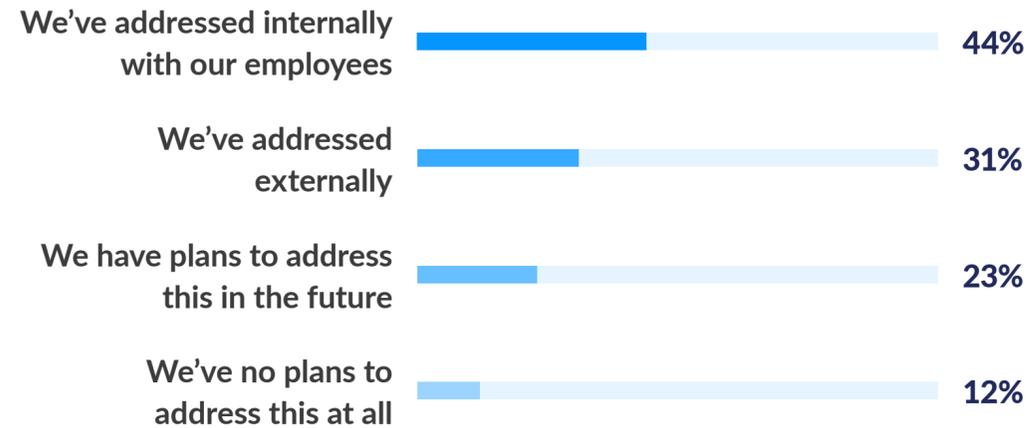
## Black Lives Matter movement



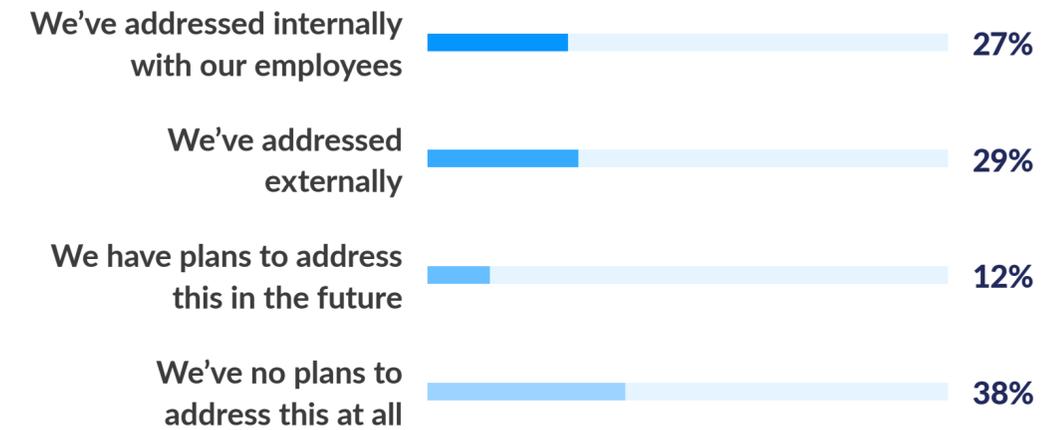
### Diversity and inclusion strategy



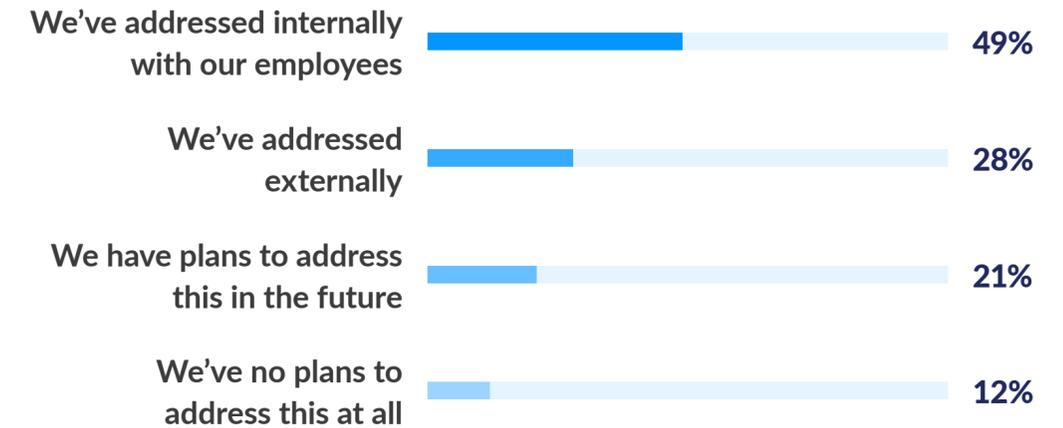
### Reporting on diversity and inclusion



### Environmental concerns sparked by the Australian bushfires



### Brexit



## Business leaders

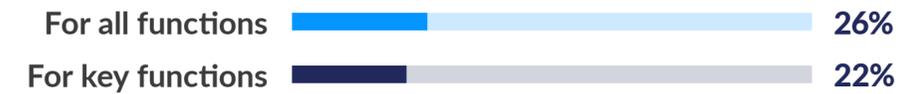
# How are business leaders approaching their hiring strategies?

29% of businesses say they've paused hiring new staff indefinitely – 17% less than the previous month. It's an even bigger drop in non-office employers, with 48% saying they paused hiring staff in the previous month compared to 28% currently. There's also a 13% decrease in companies who've paused hiring for key roles indefinitely.

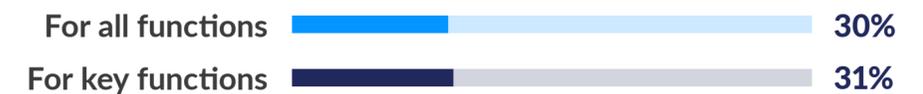
Between both sets of businesses, there's been an average 9% increase in hiring for roles which were available before the pandemic. It's even larger for office-based companies, with 34% now hiring for those same roles compared to 20% in the previous month.

This could point to employees being less willing to leave their employer during this time and so more open roles are needing to be filled.

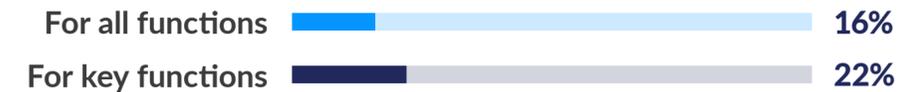
### We are in the process of hiring new roles (which have appeared during, or as a result of lockdown)



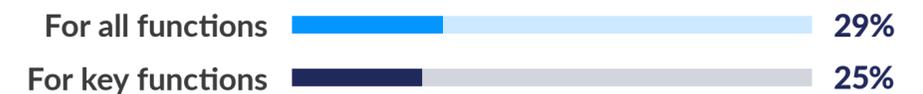
### We are in the process of hiring roles that have been open since before lockdown



### We plan to restart hiring soon



### We have paused hiring indefinitely



# How well do employers know their employees' wellbeing?

We surveyed employees and employers to see if, and how, their views align on workplace wellbeing

August edition

# How well do employers know their employees?

The data on the next page shows how 57% of employers think the emotional wellbeing of employees has been most negatively impacted in July – 58% of employees agree.

66% of non-office-based employers have seen those impacts more compared to 49% office-based. In the previous month, this was much more equal at 56% vs. 59%. With more non-office businesses opening in the last month, it's possible the pressure for employees to work has taken a toll on their emotional wellbeing.

What's surprising is that only 30% of employees say financial wellbeing has been negatively affected. Employers believe it's 50%. The number shrinks to 27% for office-based employees but rises to 36% for those non-office-based.

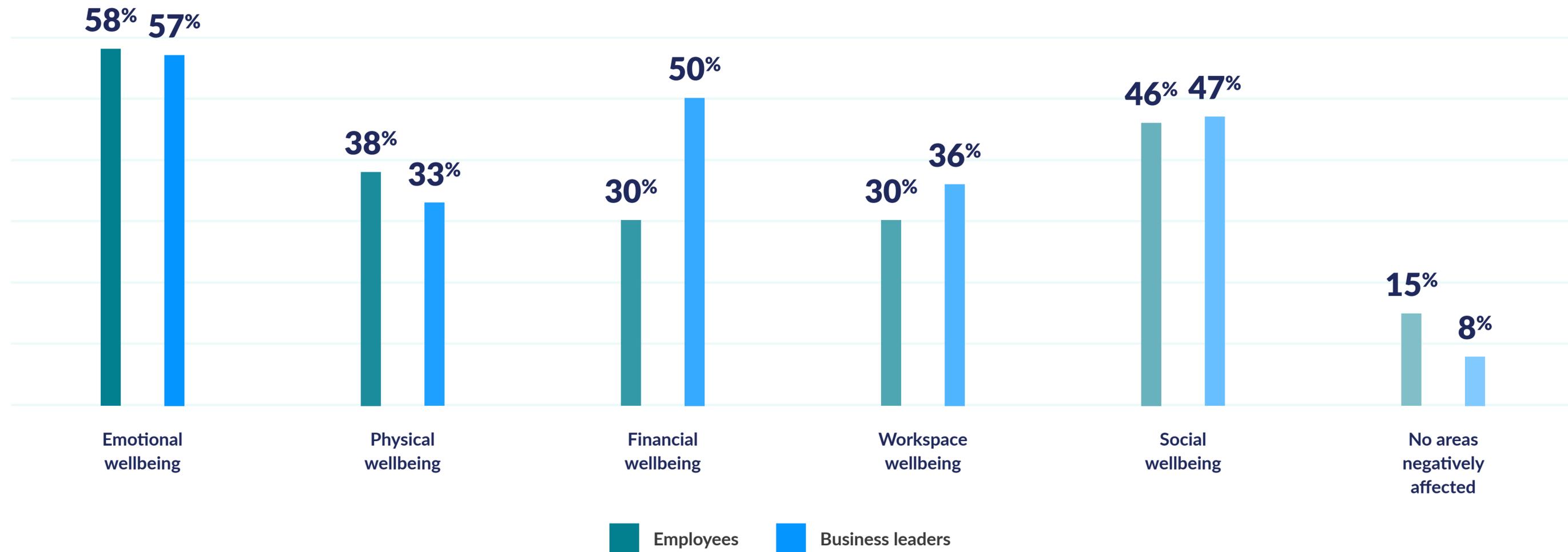
There's a big difference between office-based employees negatively rating their social wellbeing (49%) compared to non-office-based employees (36%). Office-based employers see this, with 46% saying social wellbeing has been negatively affected – 4% higher than in the previous month.

If you're office-based and prepared to look after people's health and safety, we recently produced a [return to work checklist](#) which you can use to help employees transition back to the office – hopefully feeling better from seeing colleagues in person.

48% of large companies say workspace wellbeing has been negatively affected in July compared to 29% of small companies. This trend has carried over from June, showing that bigger companies still need to improve working standards – both at home and in the workplace.



## Which areas of their wellbeing do employees say have been negatively affected in July? Vs. Which areas of employee wellbeing do employers say have been negatively affected in July?



## How supported do employees and managers feel?

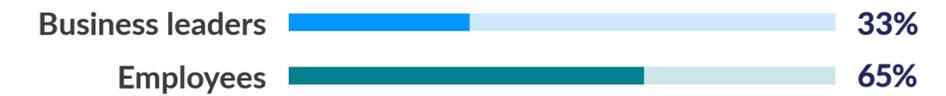
37% of business leaders struggled to cope in July compared to 26% of employees. With pressures to keep employees happy, safe and productive during this time, their own personal wellbeing can get overlooked.

This gets higher when looking at different types of businesses. 41% of non-office-based managers say they're struggling to cope compared to 33% of those office-based.

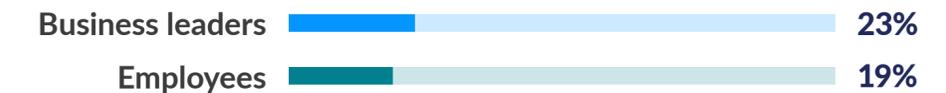
It's commendable to put on a brave face and make sure your employees are looked after – but you need to be wary of your own wellbeing!

Think of the advice you'd give and apply the same to yourself. Don't be afraid to open up – you might find that your team members have ways of coping which can help.

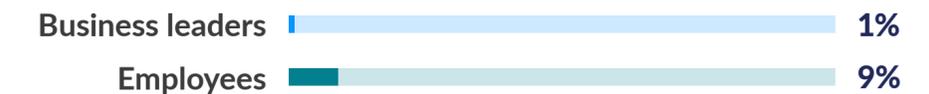
### My business is supportive and I'm coping well



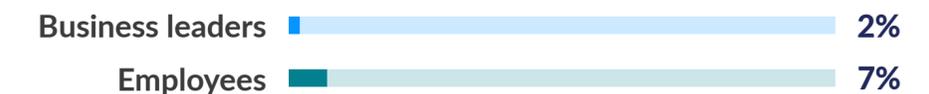
### My business is supportive but I'm still struggling



### My business is unsupportive but I'm coping well



### My business is unsupportive and I'm struggling



### I'm most senior in the company and I'm struggling



### I'm most senior in the company and I'm coping well



## Business leaders

# What new wellbeing challenges have businesses faced in 2020?

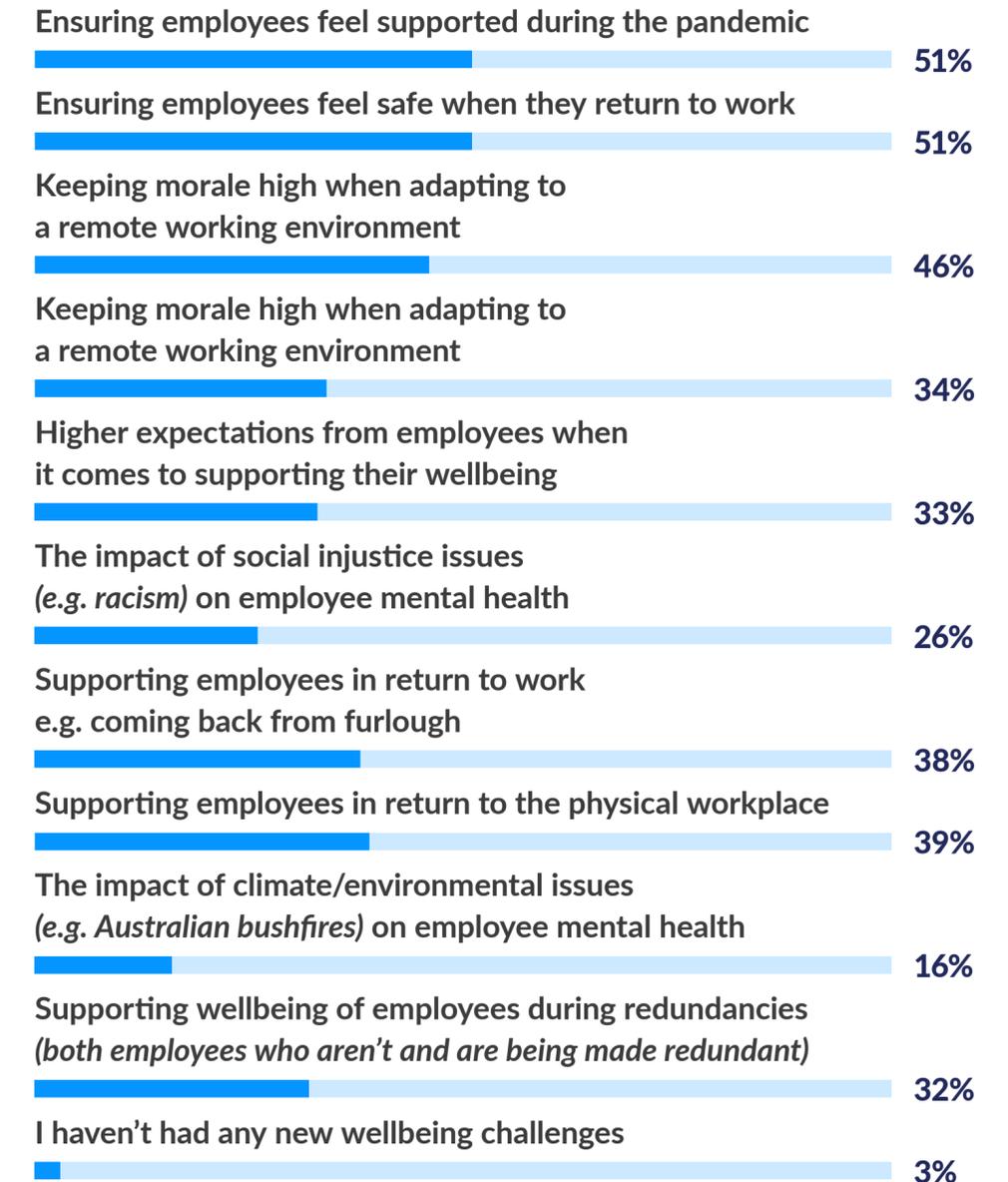
Compared to the previous month, business leaders state the same wellbeing challenges as the top three but fewer have said they see them as a challenge:

- ▶ **Making their employees feel supported:** 14% less
- ▶ **Ensuring employees feel safe when returning to work:** 13% less
- ▶ **Keeping morale high when adapting to remote working:** 15% less

Still ranking these as the biggest wellbeing challenges but giving much less importance to them could indicate that the current state of employee wellbeing is now the new normal.

Large and small companies share the same view on most wellbeing challenges, except for two. 51% of large companies say supporting employees return to work is a new wellbeing challenge they've faced in 2020, compared to 30% of small companies.

And 60% of large companies say ensuring employees feel safe when returning to work is a bigger challenge compared to 44% of small companies.



## Employees

# What new wellbeing challenges have employees faced in 2020?

Compared to the previous month, employees now rank 'burnout due to balancing work/life in a home environment' as a bigger challenge than their financial concerns. With the lines continuing to blur between where work ends and home begins, it's not surprising to see this rise.

What's worrying is that employees are now ranking burnout higher when employers say supporting employees is 14% less of a challenge and keeping morale high for at home working is 15% less.

Managers and leaders can't rest on their laurels to keep people from burning out – it's a continued effort. For ideas, you can see our on-demand 'The new face of burnout' webinar [here](#).



**In light of coronavirus, what steps has your manager or employer taken to support you? [Vs.](#)**

**In light of coronavirus, what new steps have you taken as a manager?**

The following refers to the data sets on the next page.

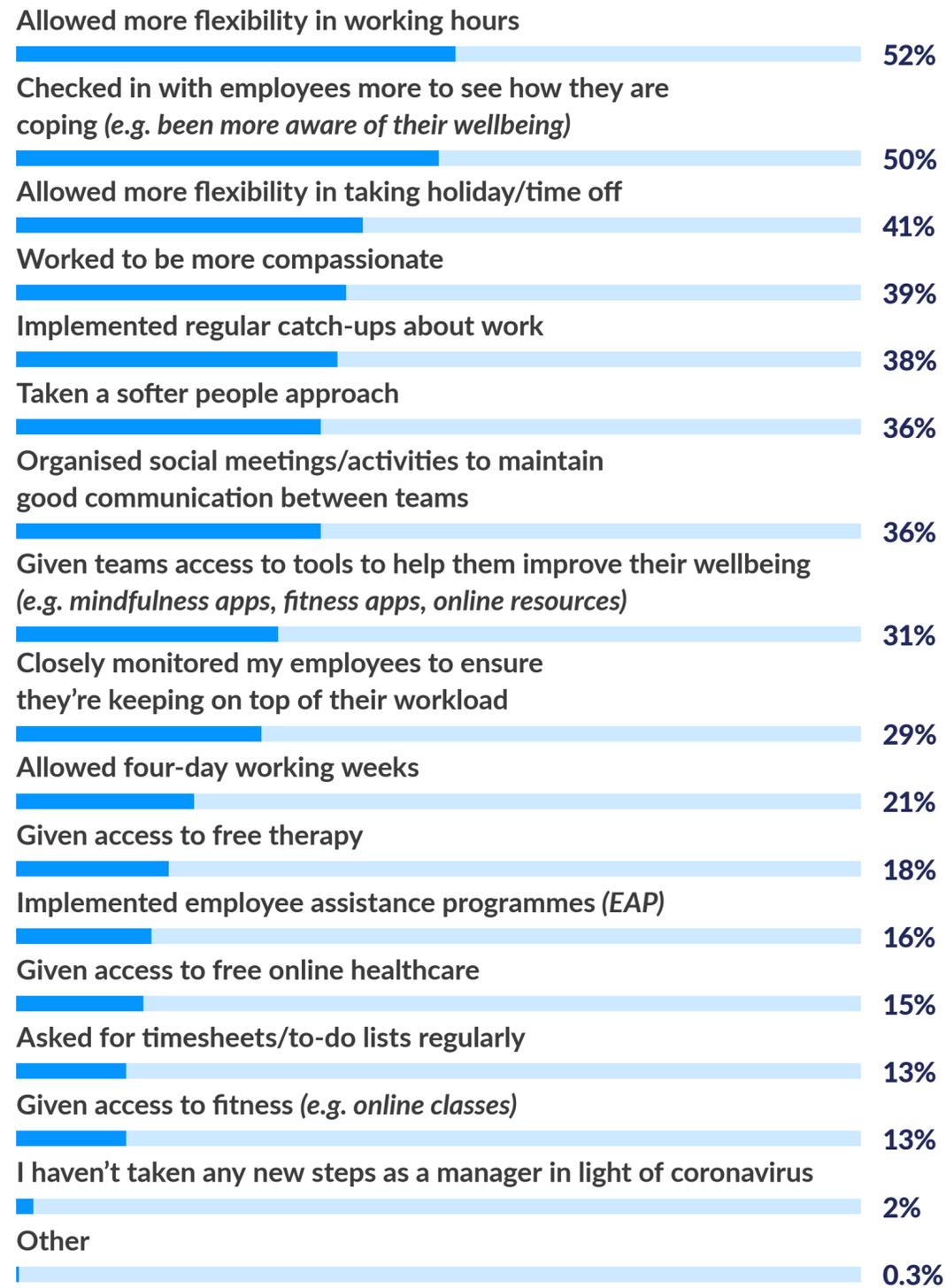
Looking month on month, fewer managers are interacting with employees to see how they're coping – a combination of 10% fewer regular catch-ups about work and 5% fewer check-ins to see how they're coping.

Those figures rise for non-office-based businesses to 13% fewer regular catch-ups about work and 11% fewer check-ins to see how employees are coping.

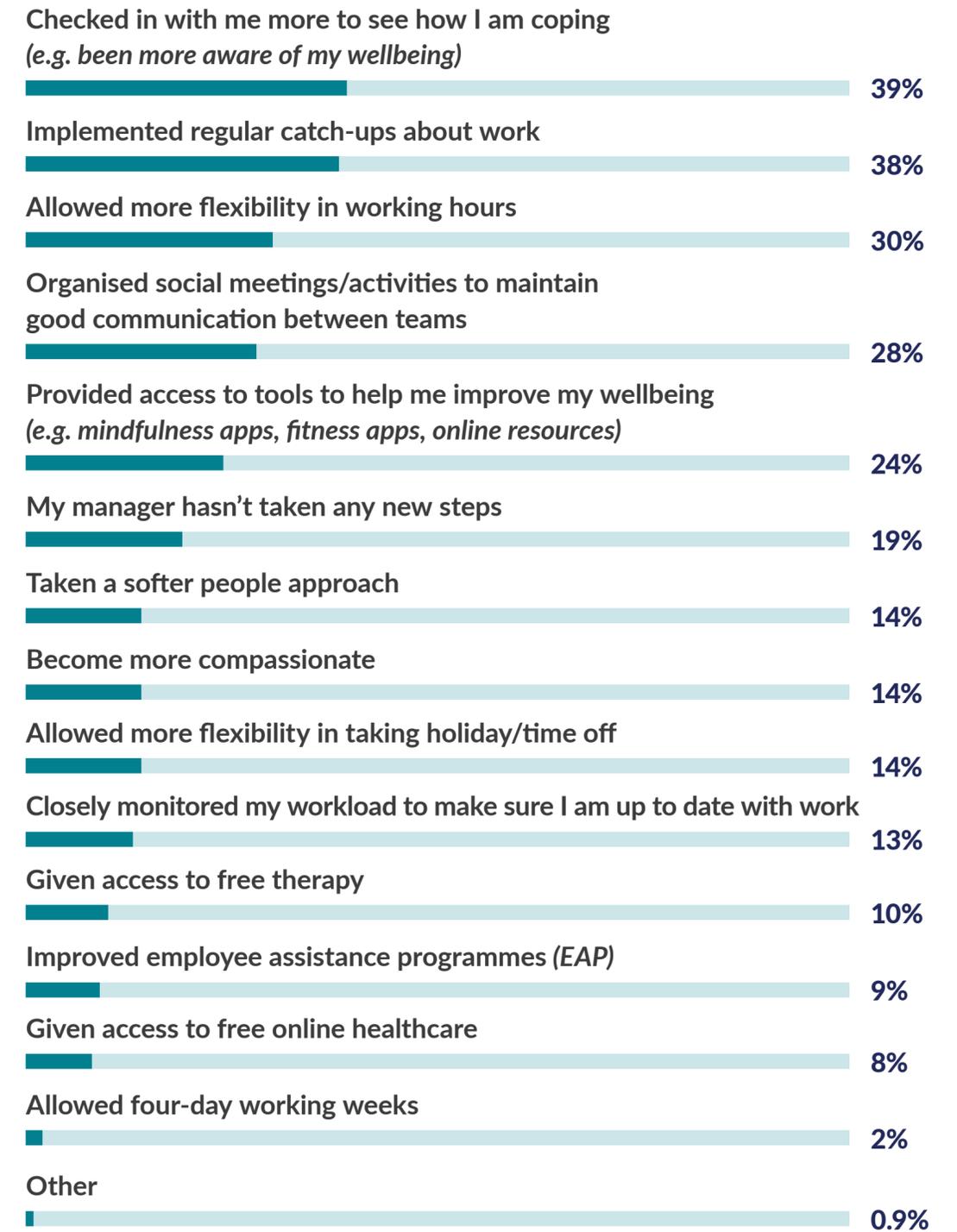
These employer stats are backed up by employees, with 13% fewer feeling that their managers are taking the time to see how they're coping. Drilling down further, this has made 5% fewer employees say that their boss is more compassionate due to the coronavirus.



## Business leaders



## Employees



## How often do employers look to understand employee needs?

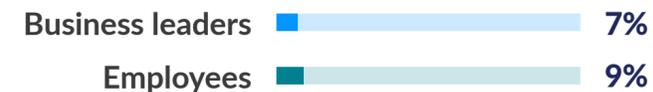
Business leaders are currently taking steps to understand employee needs every 12 days – much more frequently than the 17 days seen in the previous month.

Employees feel their employer is currently taking steps to understand their needs every 17 days – 5 days less frequently than employers believe.

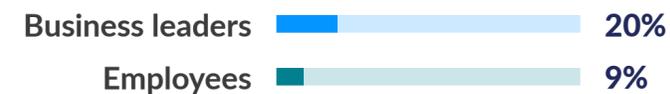
It's possible that employees state this difference as they're not engaged with their employer's efforts. Employers may be sending surveys out regularly, but if employees don't notice or fill them out, they won't be as engaged with your efforts.

This is made more plausible when you see 13% of employees say their employer makes no attempt to understand their needs, but only 1% of managers believe this to be true.

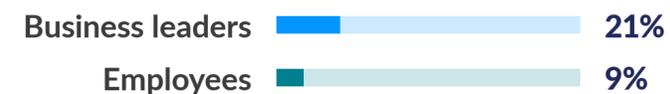
### Less than a day ago



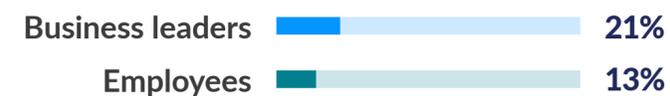
### One day, up to two days ago



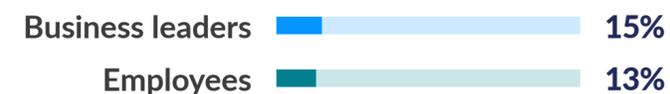
### More than two days, up to three days ago



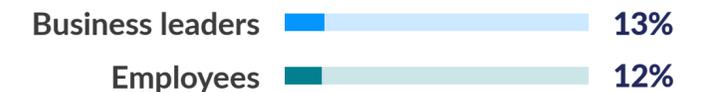
### More than three days, up to a week ago



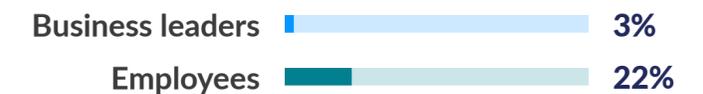
### More than a week, up to two weeks ago



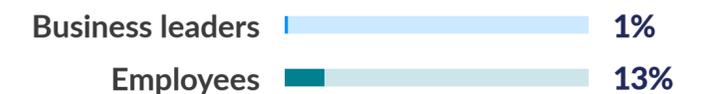
### More than two weeks, up to a month ago



### More than a month ago



### Never taken steps



### Averages

12 days

Business leaders

17 days

Employees

# What elements do employees/employers feel are the most important for job attraction and retention?

The data on the next page shows what employees and employers feel are the most important for job attraction and retention.

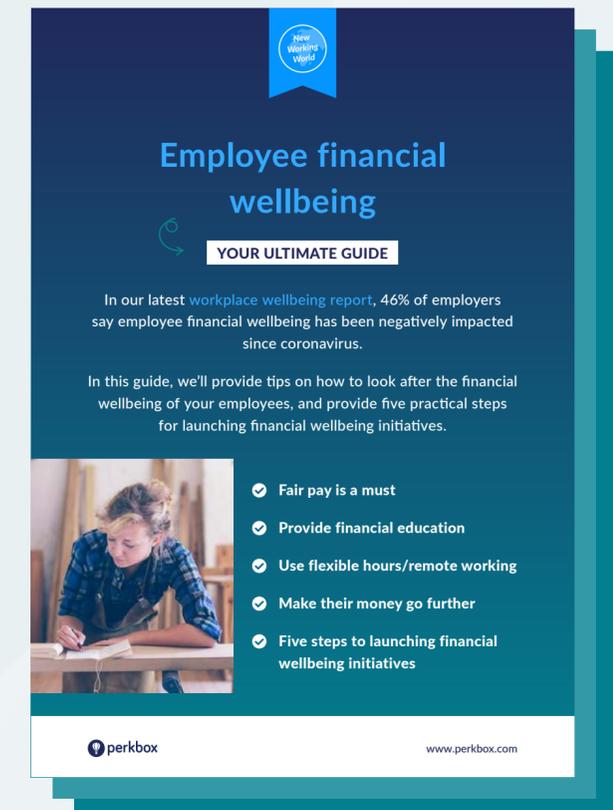
Employees still rank financial wellbeing initiatives, a competitive salary and flexible hours as their top three elements to job attraction and retention.

Employers now rank training and development, career development opportunities and a competitive salary as what they think are the top three

elements to attracting and retaining employees – stating them as ‘very important’ in our survey. Offering a competitive salary has slipped down from second highest in the previous month to third highest currently.

The importance of offering financial wellbeing initiatives has slipped from 8th to 9th place. Both of these movements show that employers are getting further away from what employees value most – financial stability.

To help, we’ve put together a guide which highlights important stats on financial wellbeing for you to share, as well as five steps which can help you to launch more engaging financial wellbeing initiatives.



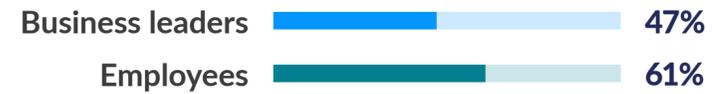
The image shows the cover of a guide titled "Employee financial wellbeing" with the subtitle "YOUR ULTIMATE GUIDE". It features a blue and white color scheme. A small badge in the top left corner says "New Working World". The main text on the cover includes: "In our latest workplace wellbeing report, 46% of employers say employee financial wellbeing has been negatively impacted since coronavirus." and "In this guide, we'll provide tips on how to look after the financial wellbeing of your employees, and provide five practical steps for launching financial wellbeing initiatives." Below this is a list of five steps: "Fair pay is a must", "Provide financial education", "Use flexible hours/remote working", "Make their money go further", and "Five steps to launching financial wellbeing initiatives". The cover also features a photo of a woman working at a desk and the Perkbox logo and website URL (www.perkbox.com) at the bottom.

You can find out more about our financial wellbeing initiative [here](#).

### Financial wellbeing initiatives



### Competitive salary



### Flexible hours



### Remote working options



### Training and development



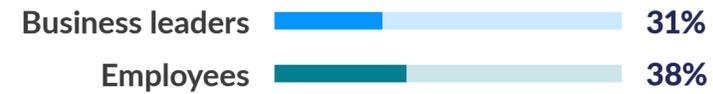
### Career development opportunities



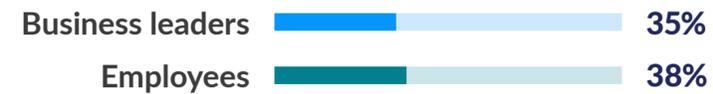
### Emotional wellbeing initiatives



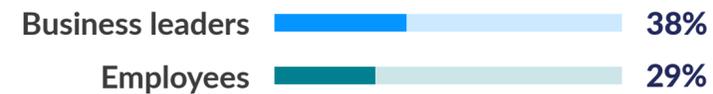
### Social wellbeing initiatives



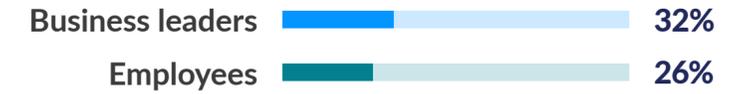
### Workspace wellbeing initiatives



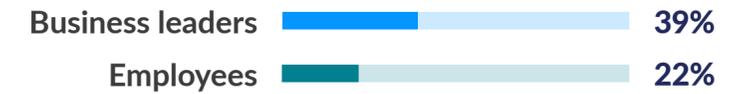
### Organisation having a purpose



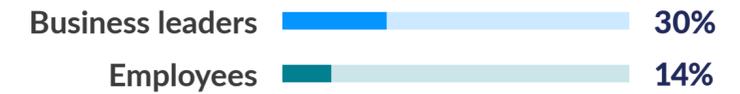
### Physical wellbeing initiatives



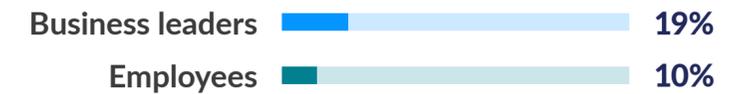
### Having a diverse workforce



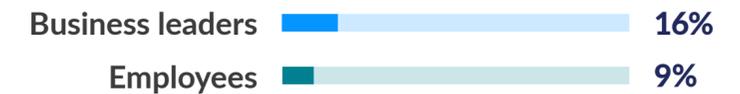
### Having a firm stance on social issues



### Organisation supporting charities / CSR



### Having a prime office location



# What's the reaction to remote working and getting back to work?

We surveyed employees and employers to see how they're coping with continued working from home and the prospect of coming back to work

August edition

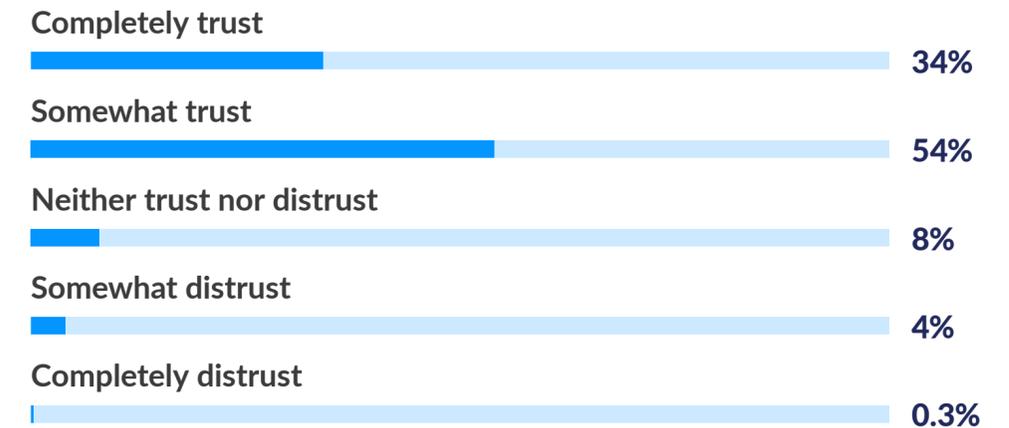
## How trusted do employees feel to be productive at home? **Vs.** How much do employers trust their employees to be at home?

88% of business leaders still either trust or somewhat trust their employees to be as productive at home as in the workplace – slightly higher than the previous month. Conversely, 73% of employees now feel like their employers trust them – slightly lower than in our previous report.

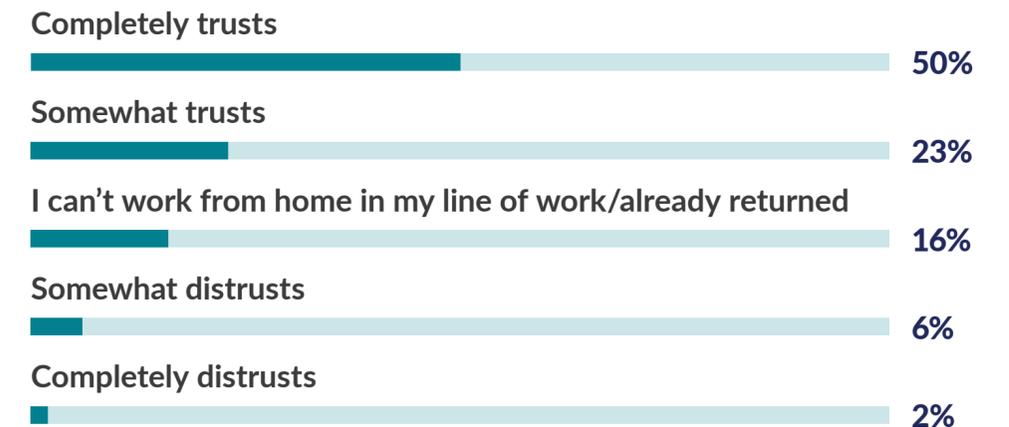
These changes may be small but they mean there's now a 15% difference in how trusted employees feel to work from home than how much employers say they trust them.

With this gap widening, it's clear more still needs to be done by businesses to show they trust their employees to be productive at home. This could come in the form of having better remote working policies, or just by telling their employees outright that they trust them to do their work to the same standard at home.

### Business leaders



### Employees

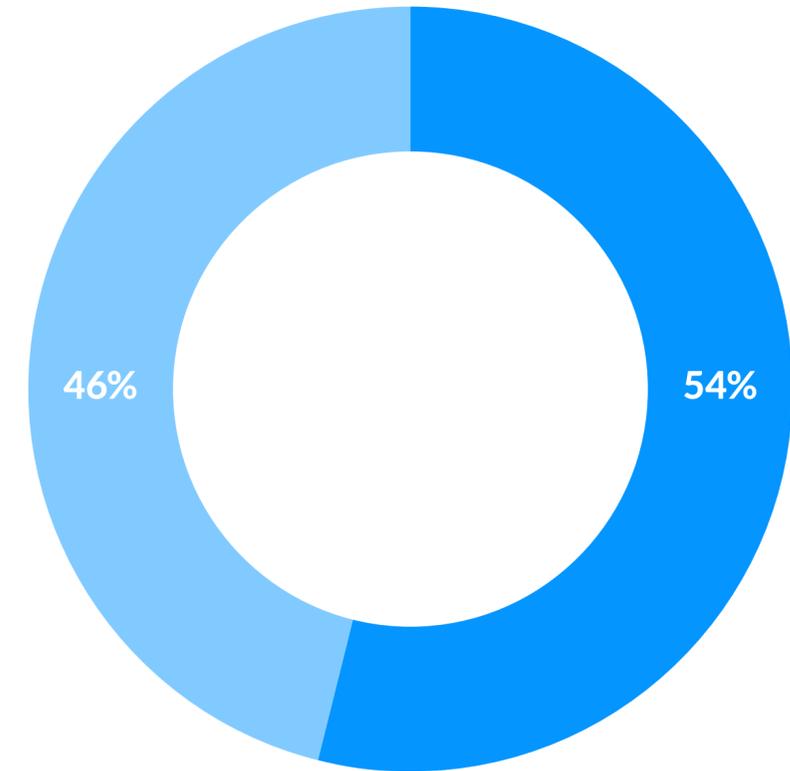


## Business leaders

### What's a bigger challenge for businesses, moving to remote working or bringing employees back to the physical workplace?

When asked to choose which was more difficult, the majority of business leaders believe bringing employees back from a remote working environment will be a bigger challenge than asking them to go remote in the first place.

It seems that company size also plays a part in how difficult they view each challenge. 65% of large businesses say bringing employees back will be a bigger issue. On the other hand, 58% of small businesses feel moving to a remote working environment is a bigger issue.



- Bringing them back from a remote working environment
- Getting people to move to a remote working environment

## What do employers and employees believe are the biggest challenges to continued remote working?

The following page shows that employees and employers both agree that keeping up with communications is harder remotely. Where they differ, employees rank work/life balance and staying productive/engaged rank higher as challenges.

If your employees will be working from home for the foreseeable future, you need to help them find a better work/life balance. Left unchecked it will have the adverse effect of reducing productivity.

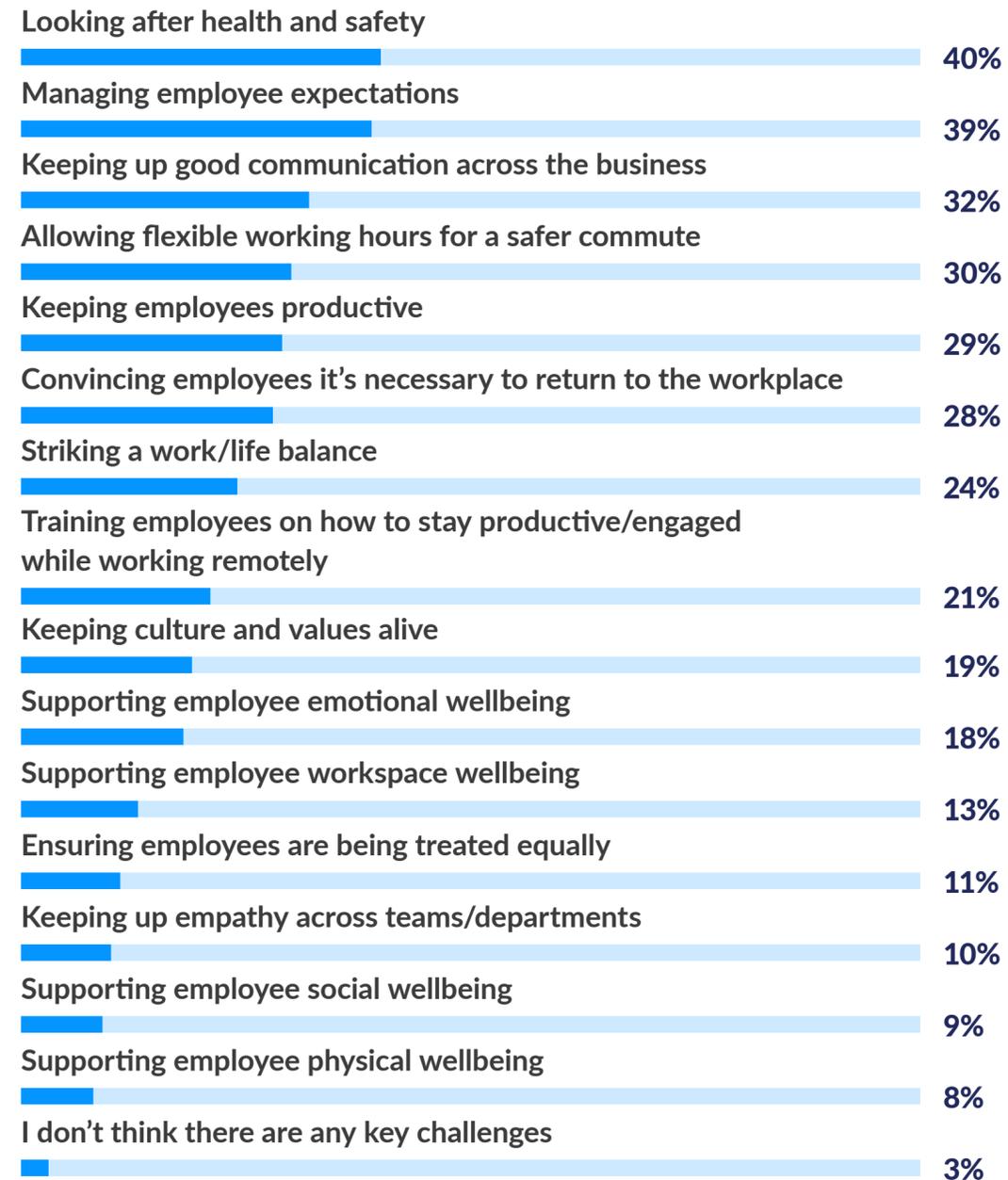
For office-based businesses, only 18% of employers say supporting employee emotional wellbeing is a remote

working challenge – compared to 40% of employees. As employees say maintaining work/life balance is their biggest remote working challenge, employers should take more steps to stop employees from burning out.

In a recent [Perkbox webinar](#), we covered the six reasons for burnout: Unreachable demands, randomness, low emotional pay off, the game feeling rigged, mixed messages and misaligned goals. For a deeper insight, check out our blog post [here](#).



## Business leaders



## Employees



## What do employers and employees believe the biggest challenges to continued remote working are?

The next page shows that health and safety is the biggest concern for both employers and employees when returning to the workplace. Understandable given the current circumstances. Where they differ is the importance given to staying safe while commuting and at-home working arrangements.

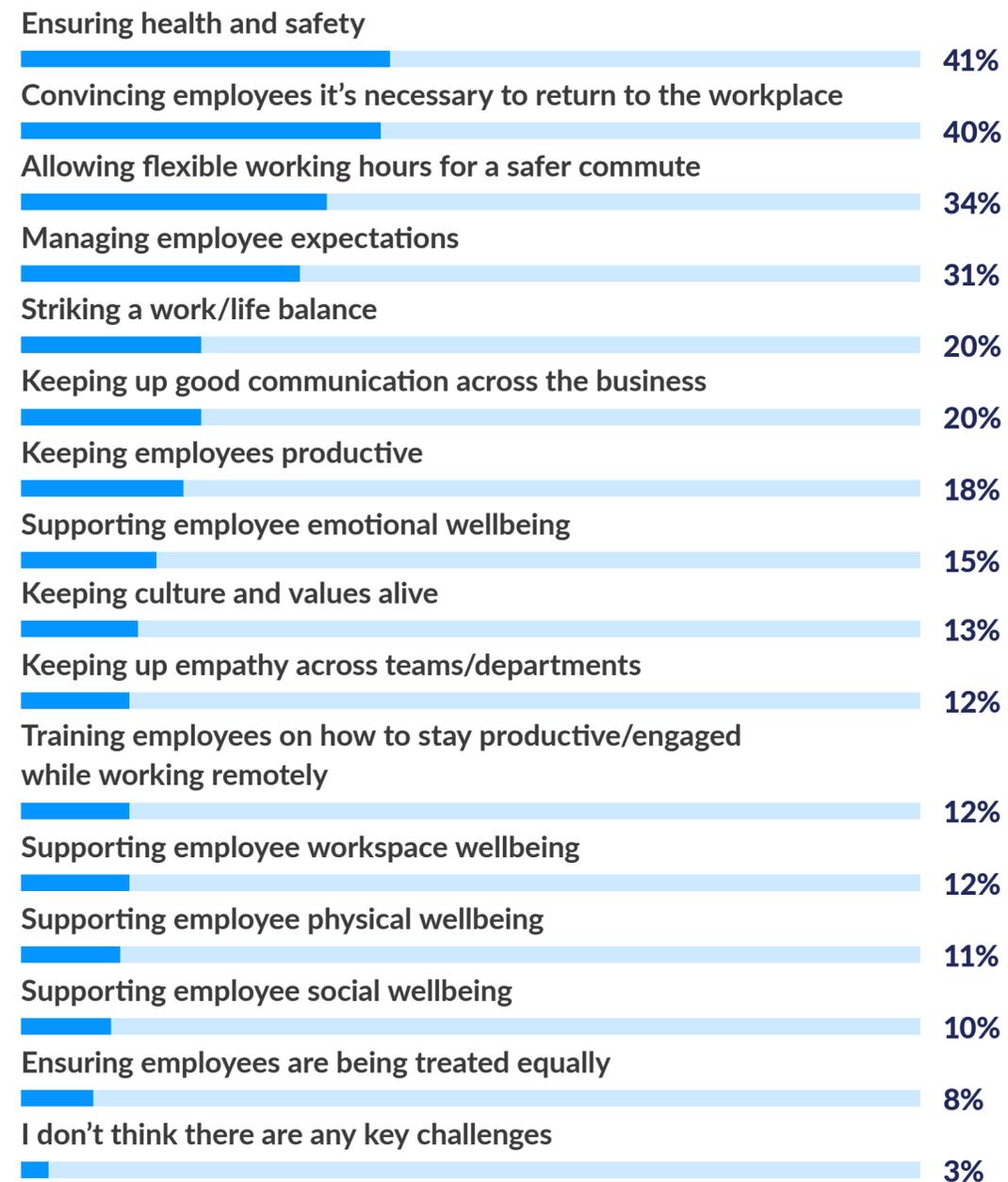
To help employees to stay safe while commuting you could:

- ▶ Provide face masks for public transport
- ▶ Alter start and finish times to avoid rush hour
- ▶ Make arrangements for/provide extra car parking
- ▶ Launch a cycle to work scheme

As 12% of employees believe it's unnecessary to return to work, employers will need to manage remote working expectations carefully. To ensure this is done fairly, we recommend comparing the business needs against employee expectations and then drawing up a new at-home working policy from there.



## Business leaders



## Employees



## What do employees say employers have done for returning to work? **Vs.**

## What do employers say they've done for returning to work?

More than 1 in 5 (21%) businesses are switching to remote working completely.

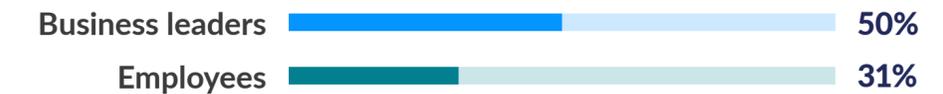
18% of business leaders say they've had no clear guidance on returning to work from within their organisation – despite the government already encouraging people back.

This is backed up by 22% of employees who say they've had no clear guidance on returning to work either. If both managers and employees are in the dark, more needs to be done by leaders at the top to communicate clearly.

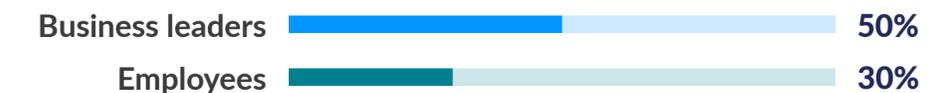
Looking at business size, 27% of leaders at small companies say they've had no clear guidance compared to 13% at large companies.

20% of non-office-based businesses say they've had no clear guidance but 60% have implemented all of the necessary safety equipment compared to 42% office-based businesses.

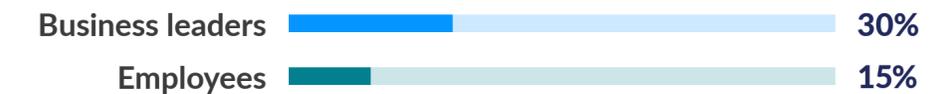
### Implemented all of the necessary safety equipment



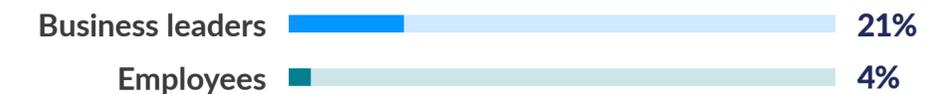
### Established a clear back to work plan



### Set a fixed date



### We are switching to completely remote working



### We've had no clear guidance on how to return to work



## How safe/unsafe do employees and employers feel about returning to the workplace?

24% of employees say they feel unsafe about returning to work compared to 13% of employers – a combination of feeling ‘very unsafe’ and ‘somewhat unsafe’.

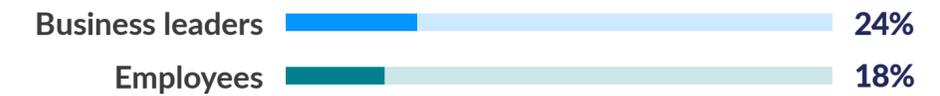
On the flip of that, 72% of employers feel safe about returning to work compared to 47% of employees who feel safe – a combination of feeling ‘very safe’ and ‘somewhat safe’.

This may be because managers haven’t taken the time to understand why employees feel unsafe or need to show

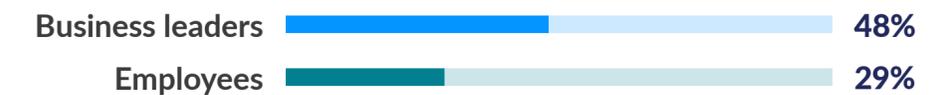
them what they’ve done to make the workplace safe. For help in this area, download our return to work checklist [here](#).

With all the talk of health and safety in non-office environments being a bigger issue, managers at those companies feel safer (76%) than their office counterparts (69%). This may be because more has been done by non-office companies to improve health and safety.

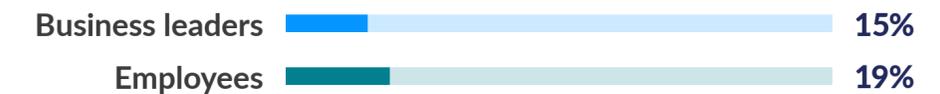
### Very safe



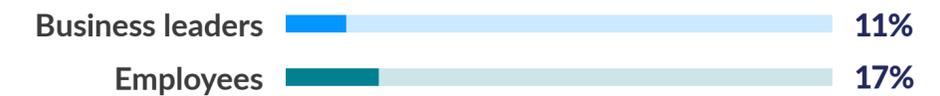
### Somewhat safe



### Neither safe nor unsafe



### Somewhat unsafe



### Very unsafe



# How have furlough and redundancies affected wellbeing?

We surveyed employees and employers to see how furlough and redundancies have had an affect on their wellbeing

August edition

## Business leaders

# What measures did employers take to support the wellbeing of furloughed employees?

22% of managers asked employees to work despite being on furlough!

Anecdotally, many have heard of businesses doing this but more than 1 in 5 businesses abusing the furlough scheme is a surprising amount.

On a happier tone, 95% of businesses took measures to support the wellbeing of furloughed staff. Feeling supported by your businesses at an unsettling time will go a long way in building employee/employer relationships.

61% of non-office-based businesses sent employees updates on important business decisions, compared to 48% of those office-based. This may be because non-office-based businesses have had more important decisions to make during this time.



## Employees

### How many employees found themselves furloughed and how do they think their employers handled it?

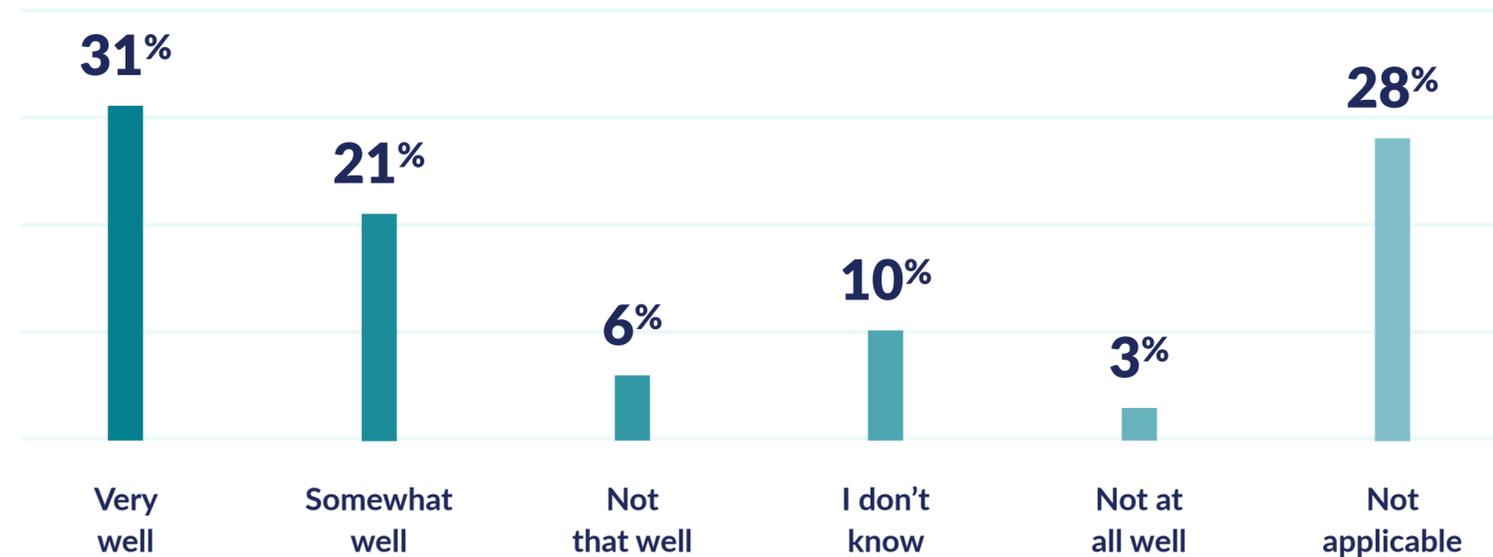
From the 28% in our survey who were placed on the scheme, 52% of employees said their employers handled furlough well.

When you factor in the 28% who this wasn't applicable too and only 9% saying it wasn't handled well, it seems the majority of employers got it right.

### Were you placed on furlough during 2020?



### How well do you think your employer handled the furlough process?



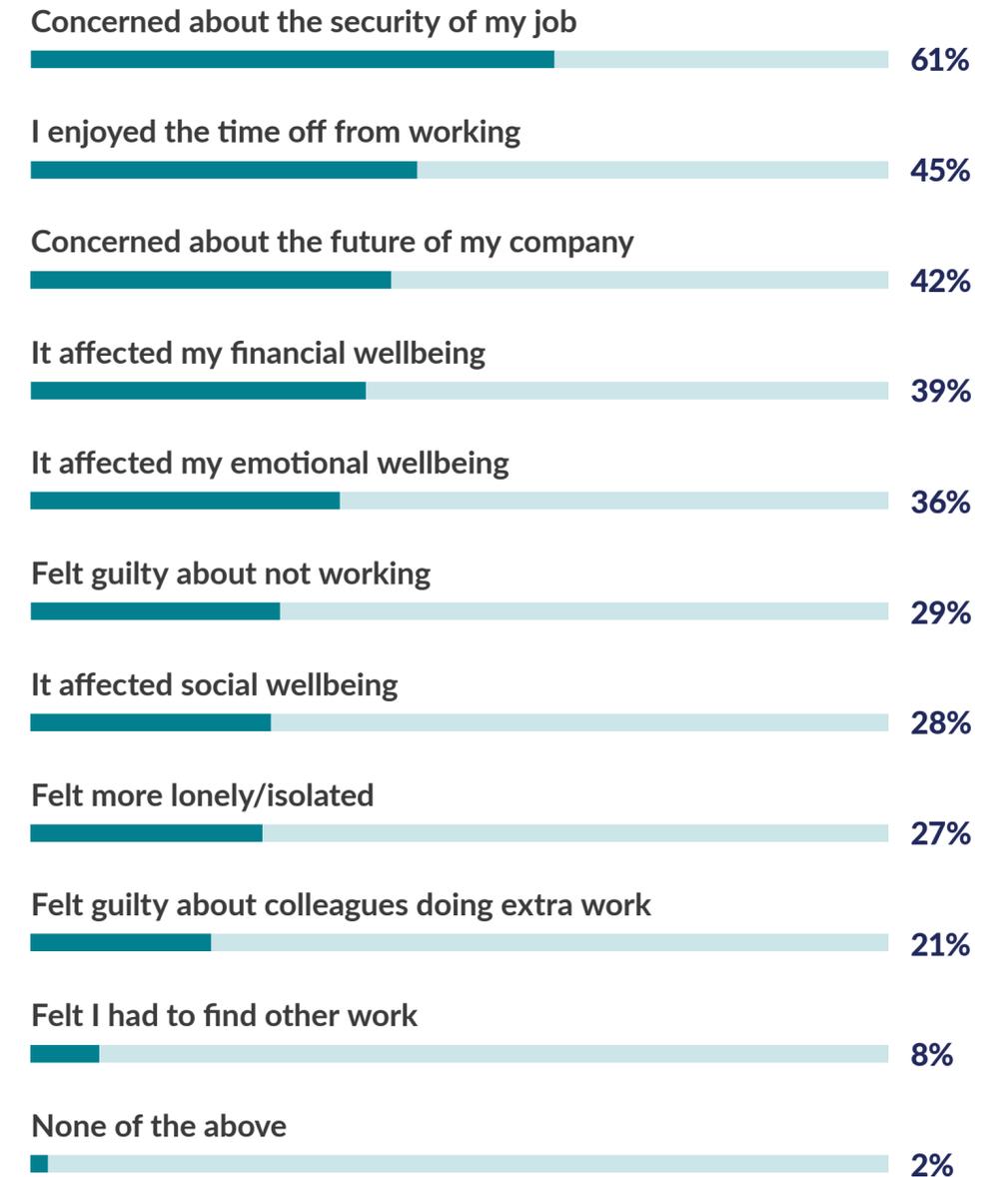
## Employees

# How was the wellbeing of furloughed employees affected?

Despite furlough being a job retention scheme, a huge 61% of furloughed employees are worried about the future security of their job, and 42% are concerned about the future of their employer due to participation within the scheme.

Furloughing employees on such a massive scale is new territory for all of us – no one was expected to get it 100% right. Take the areas highlighted here on this report and use them to support any employees who are still on furlough. For those that have returned, find out if any areas are still affecting them.

For example, with so many concerned about future job security, finding ways to show them that their jobs are safe and help reduce any anxieties they may have.



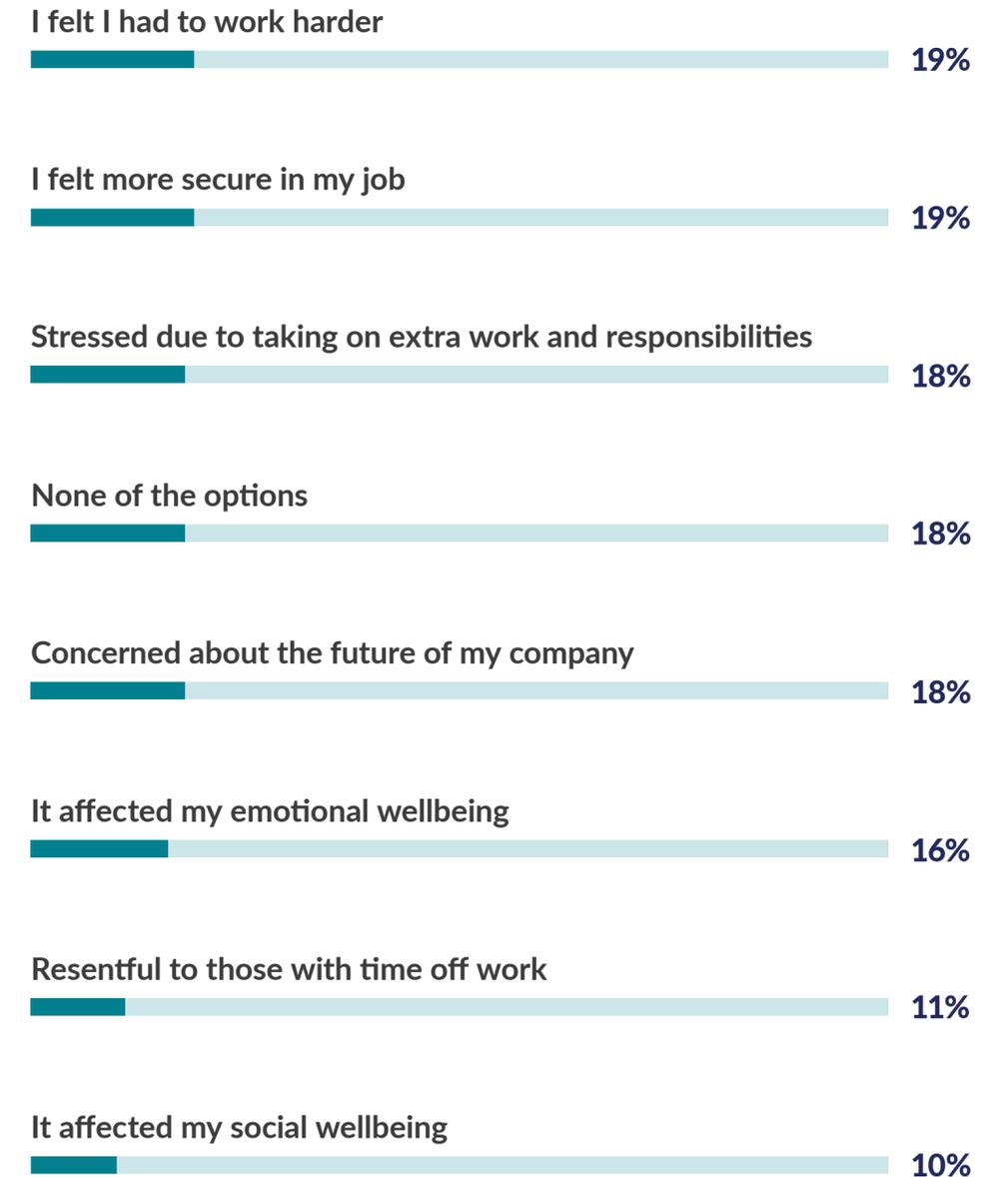
## Employees

# How was the wellbeing of non-furloughed employees affected?

From those who weren't furloughed, 19% said they felt they had to work harder – suggesting that businesses saw the potential to save money while maintaining the same output.

An open piece of feedback from the survey supports that theory, “Others were furloughed with 80% pay and the staff who were still working had a 20% pay cut so were working for 80% pay which felt very unfair”.

On the flip side, 19% of employees said that not being furloughed made them feel more secure in their job. While some may have had to work more, this did at least make them feel more needed by their employer.

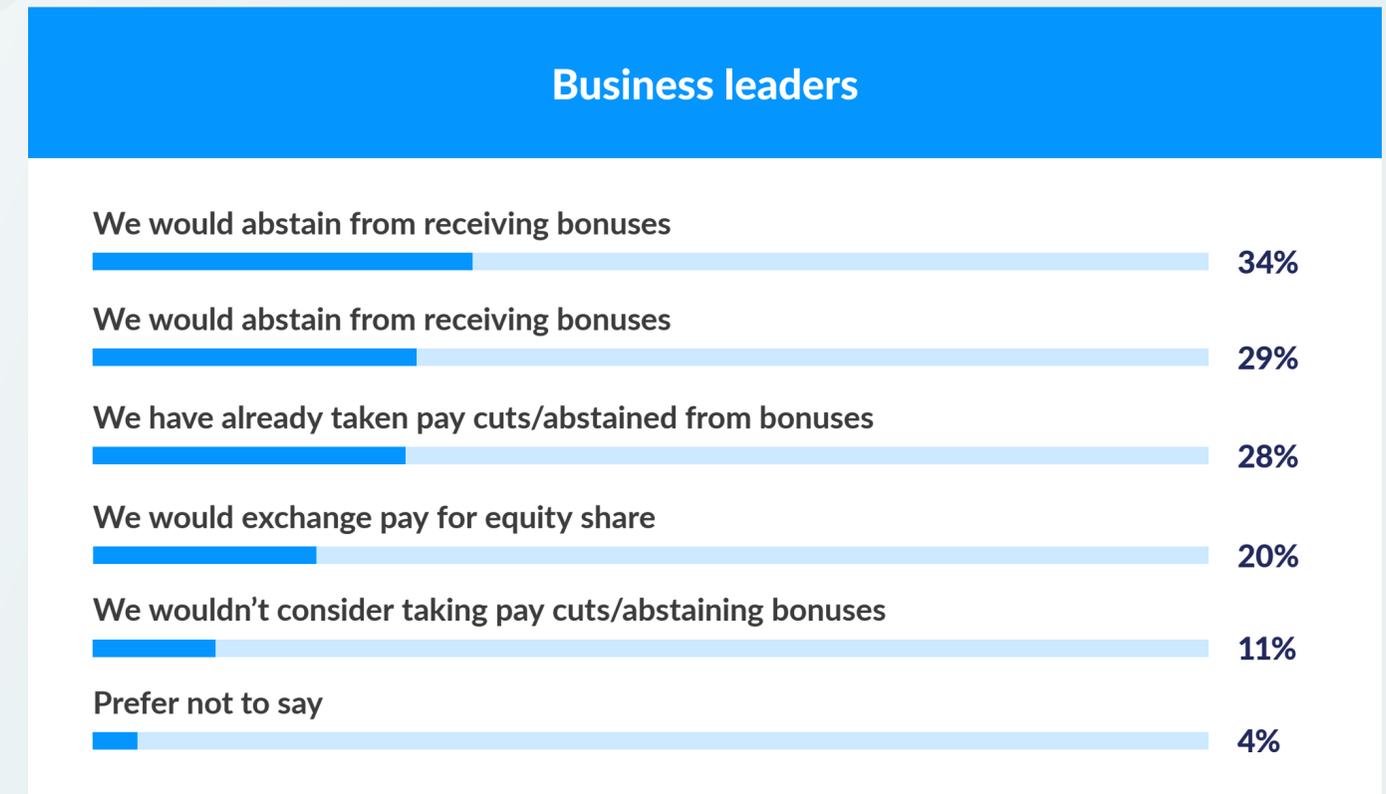


## How many employees believe leaders should take pay cuts before making redundancies? **Vs.** How many employers would/have taken pay cuts to avoid making redundancies?

Less than a third of employers (29%) would consider a pay cut before making employees redundant. In comparison, 65% of employees believe leaders should reduce their pay before redundancies need to happen.

It's good to see that 28% of employers have already reduced their income to prevent redundancies, and a further 34% would abstain from receiving bonuses.

On the opposite end, only 11% of employers would not consider a pay cut to prevent redundancies.



# Workplace wellbeing: Conclusion

What do we need to know to help create a New  
Working World which works for all?

August edition

# Getting closer to the New Working World

Our belief that happier, healthier workforces are more engaged and productive is shared with the majority of those we've surveyed. For starters, employers are mostly taking the right steps to improve and maintain the wellbeing of their employees.

This is seen in 95% of businesses taking measures to support the wellbeing of furloughed staff, 52% of small businesses implementing emotional wellbeing solutions during the pandemic and 51% of non-office-based businesses saying they'll be investing more in wellbeing after coronavirus.

Despite the efforts so far, there are still a range of challenges facing both employees and employers:

- ▶ **Emotional wellbeing:** 58% of employees say their emotional wellbeing has been negatively affected in July
- ▶ **Returning to the workplace:** 64% of employees say health and safety is their biggest return to work concern
- ▶ **Furlough:** 61% of furloughed employees are concerned about the future security of their jobs

While investments are being made by employers into wellbeing, it's yet to have a resoundingly positive effect on employees. Of course, we've never been in the grips of a global pandemic like this before, but there must be a reason for this disconnect.

Our recommendation is to see which areas are of most concern in this report and benchmark them against what your workforce says are their biggest issues. If you want to make the New Working World work for you, it's more important than ever to speak to and survey your employees to see what support they need right now.

Only then can we begin to start providing employees with exactly what they need to create the best possible employee experience for them as we enter the New Working World.

# How can Perkbox help?

## Connecting remote workforces

21% of businesses are switching to remote working completely. While this brings its benefits, it will only make two of the top wellbeing challenges more pressing for business leaders – making their employees feel supported and keeping morale high when remote working.

These challenges are new and require new solutions. Perkbox can help you look after your team's wellbeing, stay connected and keep everyone motivated while working remotely. You can see how the Perkbox platform does that [here](#).

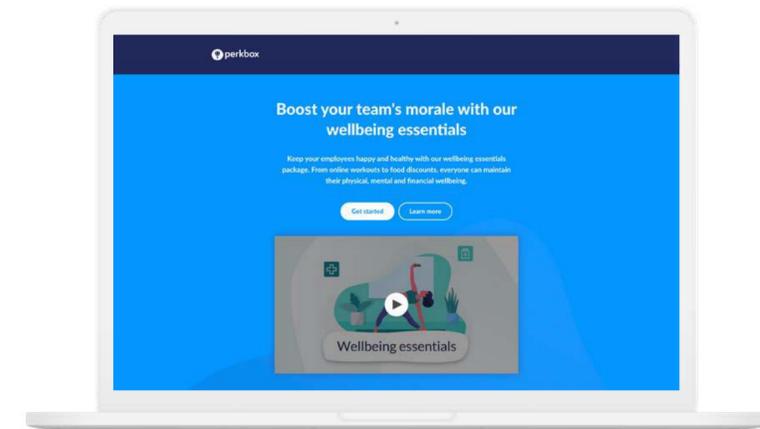
## New Working World hub

As outlined in this report, the events of 2020 have changed how we do business for good, given us new ways of working to adapt to and accelerated the need for better workplace wellbeing.

Our New Working World hub is a place to discover the latest research, opinions, reports and advice. It's packed with resources to help you shape your business with staff at the core, improve wellbeing and embrace the benefits of providing a positive employee experience.

On the New Working World hub, you'll find:

- ▶ Resources referred to in this report
- ▶ Live webinars
- ▶ Leadership guides
- ▶ Digestible blogs



[View hub](#)

**Thanks for reading.**

**This is the second in a series reports on workplace wellbeing in the New Working World. You can see the first [here](#).**

**The next will be released at the beginning of September.**

**Until then, stay safe!**