

# Ben's Health & Wellbeing survey of the automotive industry: a report

APRIL 2023

# Introduction

This report is a summarised set of results following the 6th wave of Ben's Annual Health & Wellbeing survey of those working in the automotive industry.

The objective of the survey is to understand the health and wellbeing issues that most affect automotive industry workers to inform Ben's service provision. The survey results help ensure that Ben continues to provide the relevant support for automotive people now and in the future.

We've measured the prevalence of 74 different issues that impact on the health and wellbeing of automotive industry employees.

Our most recent survey, wave 6, took place between November 2022 and January 2023 and had over 1,000 responses. The sample represents automotive workers across all UK regions, ages, gender and working environments.

1,001 online responses



10-minute survey



Fieldwork:  
Nov '22 -  
Jan '23

Stress is the biggest issue in the automotive industry, followed by 'poor sleep' and 'low mood'

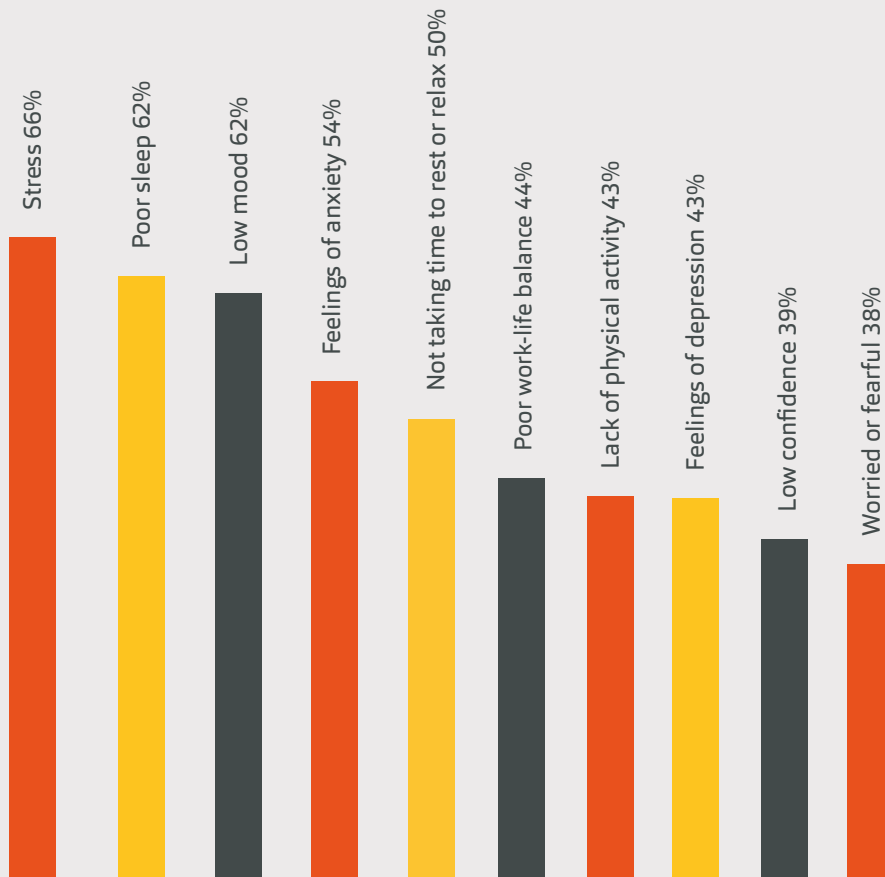


99%



of automotive workers were personally affected by a health and wellbeing issue in the past 12 months.

Q Which, if any, of the following have you been personally affected by in the past 12 months?



# Workplace stress has increased by 8% this year

Higher workloads and pressure to meet targets are driving the increase

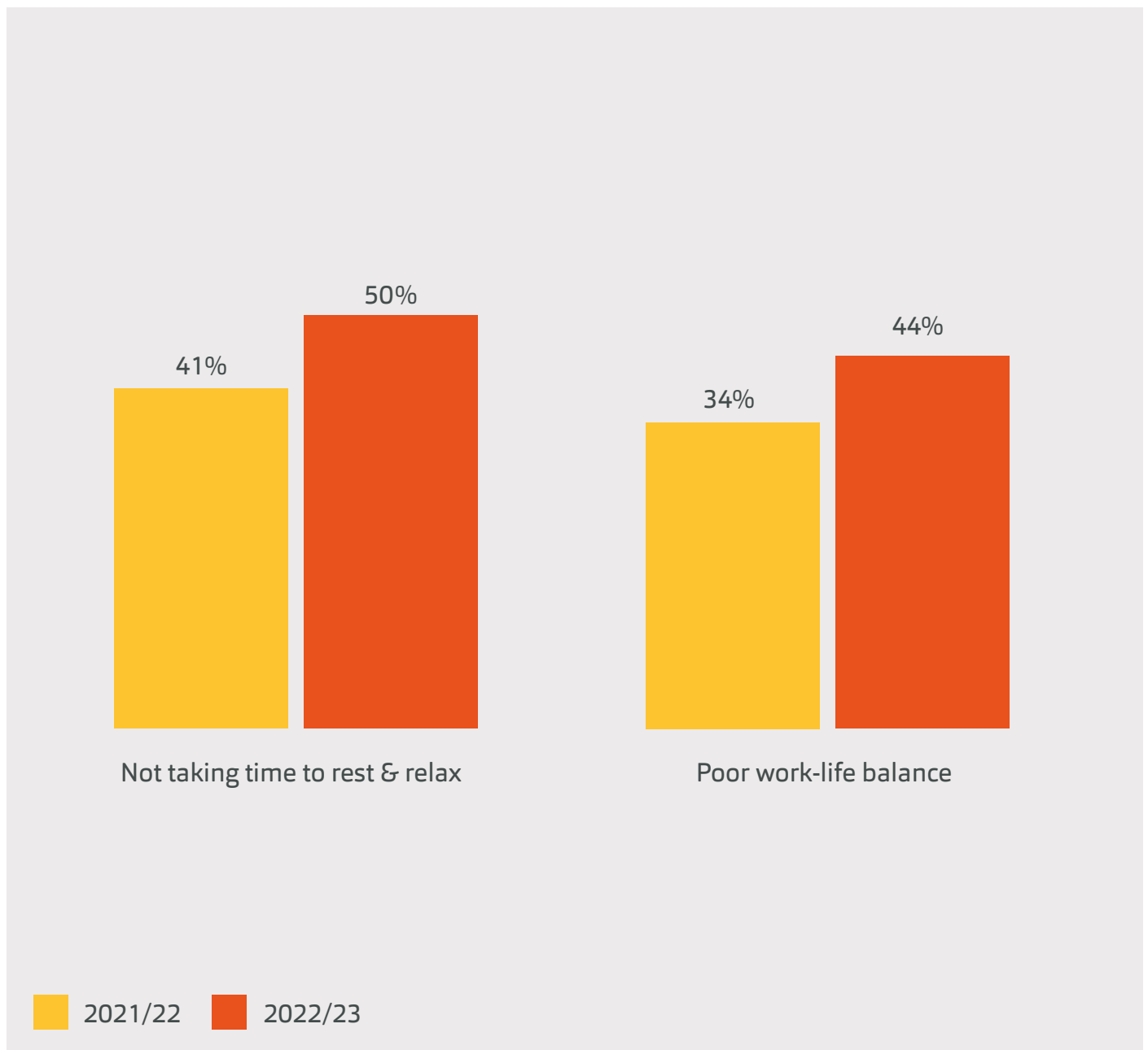
**Q** What is or was causing workplace stress?

2021/22 2022/23



# More automotive workers are not taking time to rest and relax which could be due to an increase in poor work-life balance

% current workers that have been personally affected by 'not taking time to rest & relax' & 'poor work-life balance'

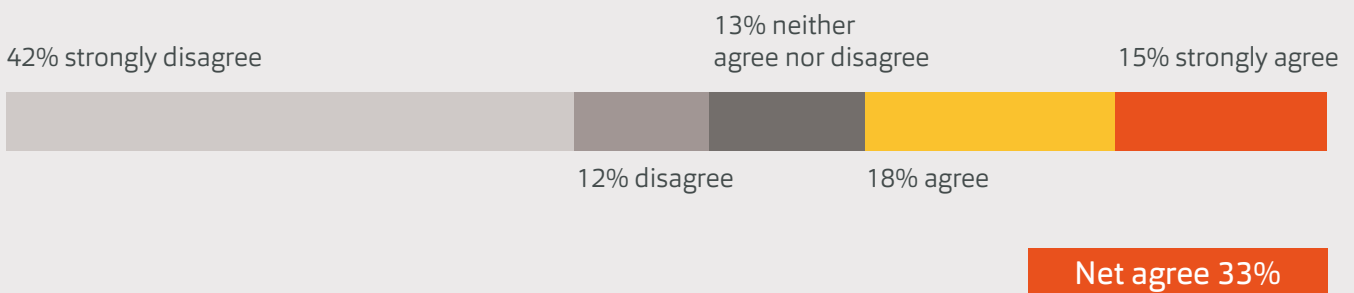


# Presenteeism is an issue for 4 in 5 automotive workers; 1 in 3 automotive employees disclosed they have worked while on leave in the last 12 months\*

**Q** To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements?

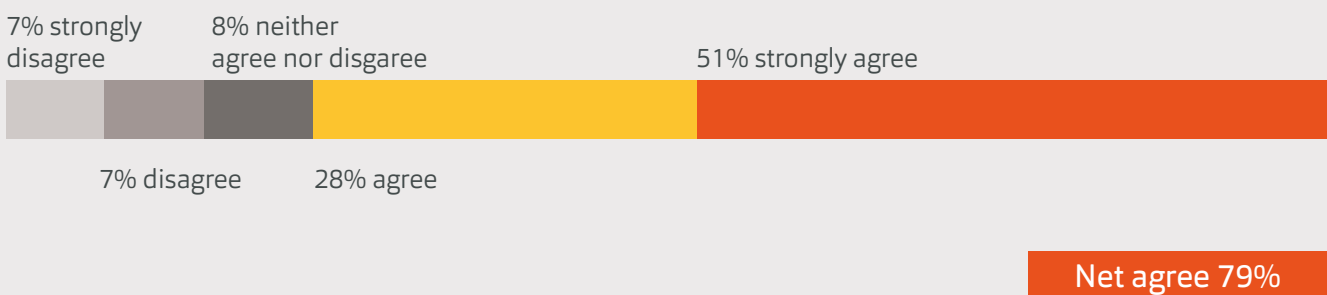
## Leavism

I have used days of annual leave to come into work




## Presenteeism

In the last 12 months, I have come into work despite not being physically or mentally well



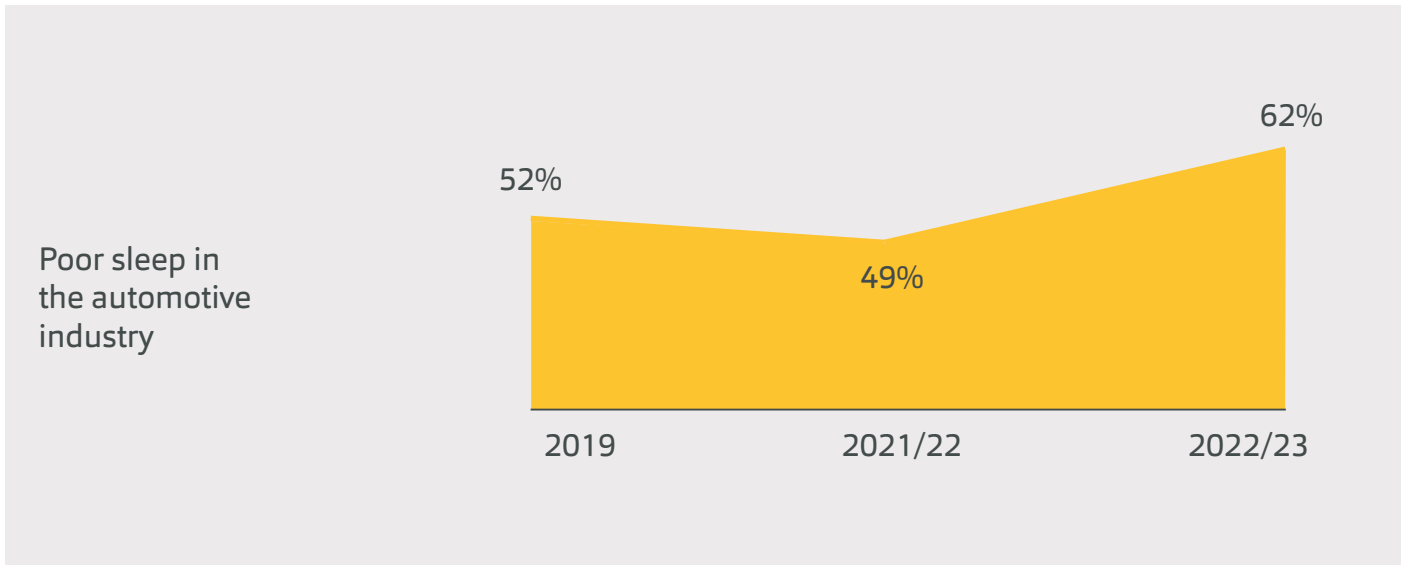
\*a growing issue known as 'leavism'



Poor sleep has  
increased from  
1 in 2 (49%) to  
2 in 3 (62%)



# Poor sleep has increased from 1 in 2 (49%) to 2 in 3 (62%)



## How does working in automotive impact sleep?...

“Affects sleep, ability to relax when not working. Raised stress levels creates anxiety and magnifies other issues outside of work. Feeling of general exhaustion affects ability to go and exercise or engage with hobbies outside of work.” (Male, 35-44, Vehicle brand & testing, North West)

“Can impact my mood & ability to focus on life outside of work, occasionally sleep.” (Male, 45-54, Engineer, West Midlands)

“Not sleeping, unable to switch off.” (Male, 45-54, New Vehicle retail, East Midlands)

“Poor diet and poor sleep patterns - perm night worker.” (Male, 45-54, Transport & logistics, North West)

“Lack of sleep. Not enough time for a proper break - no canteen on site to relax in anyway.” (Female, 25-34, Warehouse, West Midlands)



# Automotive workers struggle more with their mental health than other UK workers

Automotive workers



Automotive workers had issues managing their mental health

UK workers



Around 1 in 6 (18%) UK workers reported having been personally affected by issues managing their mental health during the last 12 months

...of which 1,115 were workers [by which we mean employed in a full or part time capacity] - YouGov sample

# Automotive workers are also more likely to say the workplace had a **direct negative effect** on their mental health

Automotive workers



Automotive workers say the workplace had a direct negative effect

UK workers



Around 1 in 6 (17%) UK workers said work had caused a direct negative effect on their mental health in the last 12 months and it had personally affected them

...of which 1,115 were workers [by which we mean employed in a full or part time capacity] - YouGov sample



## 1 in 10 of our automotive worker sample have a disability

**1 in 4 (24%)** employees with disabilities claim there has been a lack of understanding of disability in the workplace. 29% of disabled employees with workplace stress say it was caused by a lack of support for their disability.

**28%** have been unable to work due to mental health issues and 1 in 5 (21%)

have been unable to work due to physical health issues. 76% suffer from poor sleep, more than other employees.

**83%** of those that reported a disability said that they have come into work despite not being mentally or physically well.

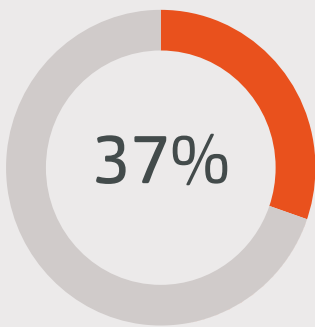
“Being in pain when conducting my role at work.”

“Disability is acknowledged but quickly forgotten day to day.”

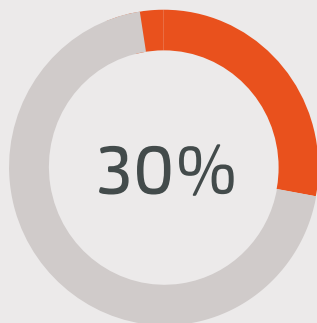
“Yes I’m not as strong as I used to be find it hard to compete in the workplace but they don’t care I’m just a number.”

# 4 in 10 (38%) have been personally affected by musculoskeletal issues

**Q** Which, if any, of the following have you been personally affected by in the past 12 months?



reported back & joint issues



reported body image issues



reported arthritis

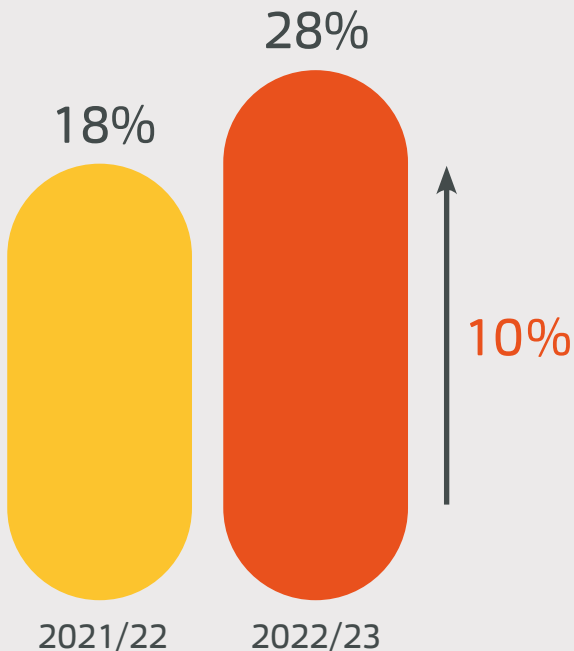
Around 9 in 10 (92%) adults reported their cost of living had increased compared with a year ago (ONS).

Those that have **struggled** with the cost of living have increased too.

**Q** Which, if any, of the following have you been personally affected by in the past 12 months?

% Struggled with the increasing cost of living  
(e.g. energy bills, petrol, food etc.)

Number of automotive workers say they have skipped meals



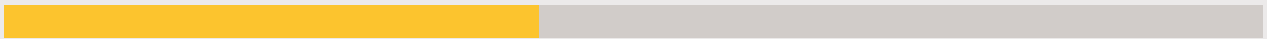
# The cost of living crisis will have the biggest negative impact on the UK automotive industry over the next 12 months according to employees

**Q** Which of the following in your view, if any, will have the biggest negative impact on the UK automotive industry over the next 12 months?

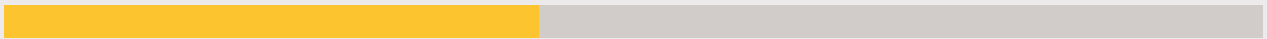
Cost of living crisis - 52%



Supply chain shortage e.g. chips - 33%



Staff shortages - 31%



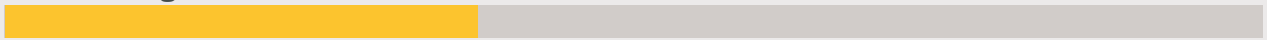
Economic climate - 31%



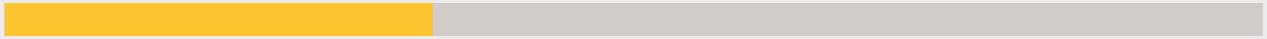
The move to electric vehicles - 24%



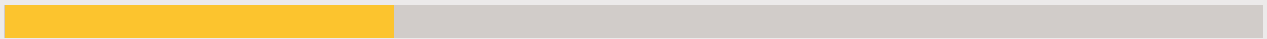
Poor management - 20%



War in Ukraine - 17%



Not having the right skills - 15%



Brexit - 15%



Poor mental health - 12%



# Next steps for employers



Next steps for employers

## Check your stress risk assessment

It is a legal requirement for all employers to complete a stress risk assessment, so make sure that your company is covered. We have partnered with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) to ensure your business has the right solutions to help you support your employees.

[Click here to find out more about the HSE stress risk indicator.](#)

## Improving the wellbeing of your workforce

We partner with businesses to help them improve the health and wellbeing of their workforces, supporting greater employee satisfaction, productivity and retention. We deliver effective health and wellbeing training to people working in automotive, supporting everyone from shop floor to top floor to build the self-awareness and good habits that promote resilient mental health, and the skills to help others. We work together to create a tailored programme of awareness, training and support, and encourage fundraising activity to support Ben's vital work.

**Find out more online:**

[ben.org.uk/how-we-help/for-my-business](https://ben.org.uk/how-we-help/for-my-business)

**Email:** [partnerships@ben.org.uk](mailto:partnerships@ben.org.uk)

**Telephone:** 01344 892135

## Next steps for employers

# Inform your employees about Ben

As an employer, you can spread the word to your employees about Ben and the support we provide, by providing the following information and our contact details.

Ben supports individuals to navigate through life's challenges, empowering them to make positive, lasting change. We work with people to improve their lives by enhancing their health and wellbeing through our free and confidential **online self-help, helpline** and **support services**.

Ben provides life-changing support to those struggling or facing crisis as well as helping them prevent crisis. Ben is here for automotive people, day or night, 24/7.

You can chat with us online or call our helpline. It's free & confidential and available Monday to Friday - 8am to 8pm.

 08081 311 333

 [supportservices@ben.org.uk](mailto:supportservices@ben.org.uk)

 [www.ben.org.uk](http://www.ben.org.uk)

Ben also operates an out-of-hours text support service, to access this service you can text BEN to 85258.



Next steps for employers

## Promote our channels and content:

### How we help

Share more details with your employees about how we can support them: [www.ben.org.uk/howwehelp](http://www.ben.org.uk/howwehelp)

### Tips, advice & tools via email

Individuals can sign up to receive regular tips, advice & tools from Ben via email:

[www.ben.org.uk/signup](http://www.ben.org.uk/signup)

### Connect with us on social media



Thank you for  
reading our report