

Adecco

Disconnect to Reconnect Survey

Adecco Global Communications
Research conducted through
Customer Advisory Panel

July 2022





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Executive Summary

Has the pandemic influenced workers' ways of working?

The global pandemic caused a profound shift in the way people think about work. It forced companies and workers to adapt to new remote working practices, which have become part of the new normal. Flexible working, both in terms of hours and location are a major feature of this new normal, with 30% of our respondents working from home on average 3 days a week. Of course, working from home isn't possible for all roles. 86% of these home/office workers are in administrative/office-based roles, compared to those working in industrial or customer-facing positions.

Our survey also explored stress and anxiety from work in relation to the pandemic, and uncovered some interesting insights. We found that 68% of workers feel stressed or anxious some of the time or often, but the pandemic does not seem to have negatively influenced these stress levels or workload. Only 3 out of 10 workers suggested that it has had an impact, mainly those working in customer-facing roles, Gen Y & Gen X, and women.

One of the most telling insights gathered from this survey was the fact that workers were already feeling stressed because of work before the pandemic. Companies were not aware of this until Covid hit, as 59% of employers believed that the pandemic increased workers stress levels. However, only 25% of workers felt that this was true. What this data has also uncovered is that the pandemic has helped people re-evaluate their work/life balance, rather than increasing their stress and anxiety levels. This shift in thinking about the importance of work/life balance is now crucial for companies to embrace in order to keep their workers satisfied and engaged in their roles.

Are workers able to easily disconnect from work?

The ability to maintain a healthy work/life balance is an important foundation for both personal and professional satisfaction. However, in a hyper-connected digital environment, disconnecting from our work is harder than it was for previous generations. Our survey showed that 45% of workers continued working after business hours on average 3 days a week, and 60% checked their emails outside of business hours 4 days a week.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it is the more tech-savvy younger generation (Gen Z) that are more likely to work outside business hours. Our survey showed that 61% were working after business hours and 69% checked their mail. However, the more employees found themselves working outside of business hours, the more stressed they were and the more they had difficulties in disconnecting from work.

When employees felt like they had a heavy workload, the research showed their stress levels tended to be higher. This potentially has direct repercussions for employers – as those with higher stress levels were more likely to leave the company within the next 2 years. When employees felt like they had a heavy workload, the higher their stress levels tended to be. They suggested that they were expecting both the worker turnover and sick leave (outside Covid) to increase in the coming months (+39% sick leave and +47% of turnover in the next 6 months). The question is what are companies doing to ensure wellbeing of their employees and to reduce stress and anxiety.

Are companies offering the right initiatives to improve their worker's wellbeing?

The pandemic has put every company's ability to support their employee's wellbeing to the test. 73% of companies we surveyed agreed that this is particularly important to improving employee engagement (39%) and satisfaction (24%). However, when analysing the initiatives offered by companies to support workers' wellbeing, they were only offered by 1 in 3 of the companies we asked (aside from flexible location and schedule). This seems to be a good explanation as to why 45% of workers don't feel supported by their companies in terms of wellbeing.

It has highlighted the need for companies to focus on improving their well-being initiatives and how they communicate with them internally. This can help tackle the concerning correlation between the lack of support from a company, higher stress levels, and willingness to leave the company within the next 2 years.

Further observations:

Our survey also uncovered some other key points worthy of consideration:

- Workers with no flexible location to work (working only from the office) are more likely to leave their jobs within the next 2 years. (29% vs 15%).
- Workers working from home are less stressed than working from the office, and less difficulty disconnecting from work.
- Smaller companies are less in favour of a hybrid approach and therefore, more likely to lose workers within the next 2 years (31% Vs 24% average).
- Workers with customer-facing roles felt an increase in stress, but the increase in workload is higher for office-based roles.
- The larger the company, the bigger the workload increase.
- 35% of workers in customer-facing roles intend to leave their company within the next 2 years (vs 23% average).

Home VS Office

Workload & Stress

Activities to disconnect from work

- 1 Spending time with friends & family (41%)
- 2 Watching TV / exercising (29%)
- 3 Listening to music (27%)

Activities proposed by companies & considered useful for workers

- 1 Flexible location to work
- 2 Flexible hours
- 3 Health insurance



Since the pandemic, companies granted more days off to workers, alongside offering mental & psychological support. They felt that employees placed more importance on additional days off from work.

Workers' ability to disconnect from work

Replies : 1116 Workers & 131 Companies



Has the pandemic influenced workers' way of working?

Work flexibility is now part of the new normal:

30%

working from home on average **3** days a week.

Out of it, **86%**

of whom work in administrative roles

How often workers feel anxious or stressed:

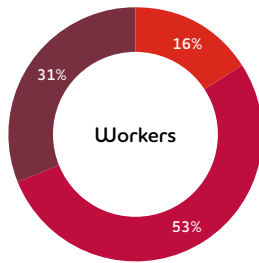
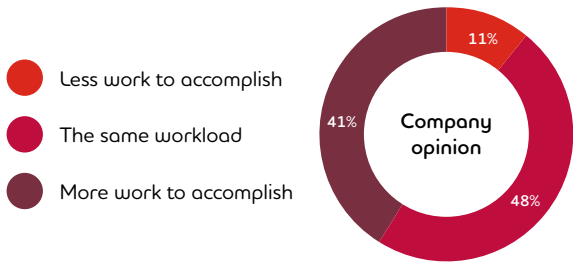


COVID seems not to have further effected an already anxious/stressed work force.

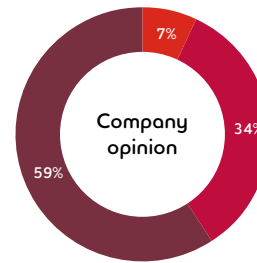
68%

of workers are sometimes/often stressed

Since the pandemic, workers have:



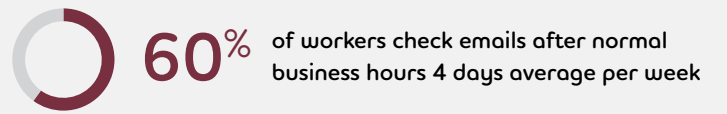
Since the pandemic, workers feel they are:



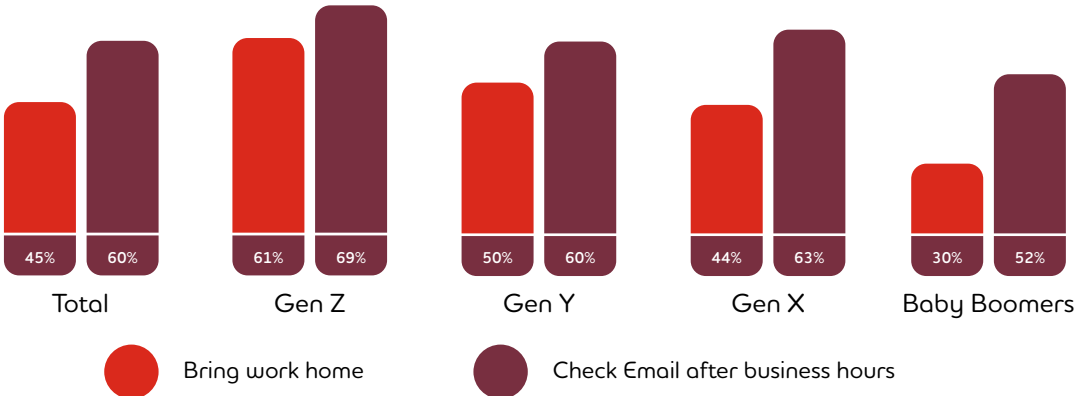
The levels of stress were already present, but companies were not aware of it.

From the different segments, those that feel stressed more often vs the average are the younger generations (Gen Z 77%, Gen Y 73%), Women (72%), and Italian workers (79%).

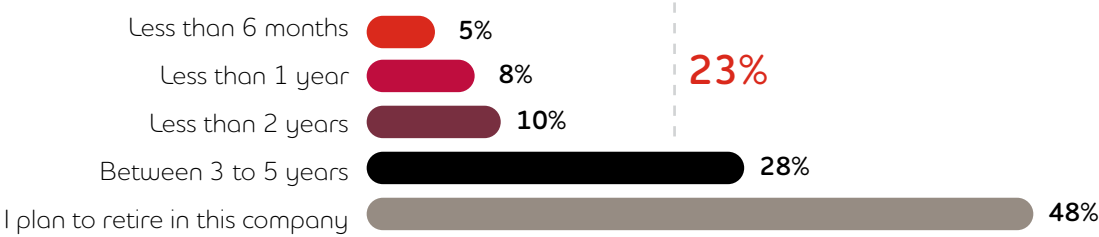
Are workers able to easily disconnect from work?



How many days a week do workers...



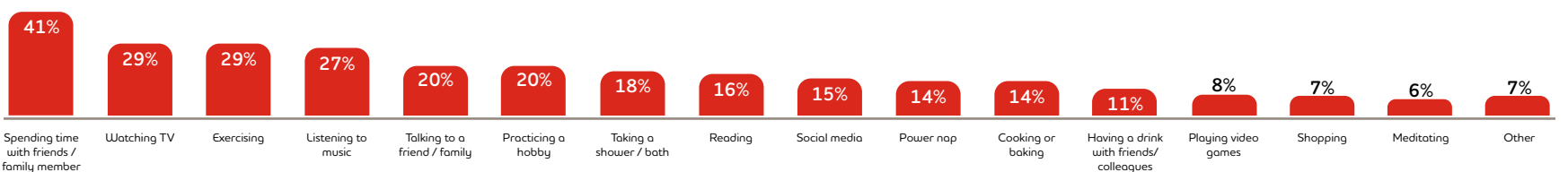
The younger the generation (Gen Z), the more likely they are to work after business hours (61% work, 69% check mails). This coincides with them being more stressed and having more difficulties in disconnecting from work



The level of workload has a direct influence on the stress levels of workers. The higher the stress levels, the greater chance of them leaving the company within the next 2 years.

However, companies seems to be aware of this effect since they are expecting both worker turnover and sick leave (outside Covid) to increase in the upcoming months. (+39% sick leaves and +47% of turnover in the 6 months).

How do workers prefer to disconnect from work?



TOP 1 by generation :

Gen Z



listening to music

Gen Y & X



spending time with friends

Baby boomers



watching TV

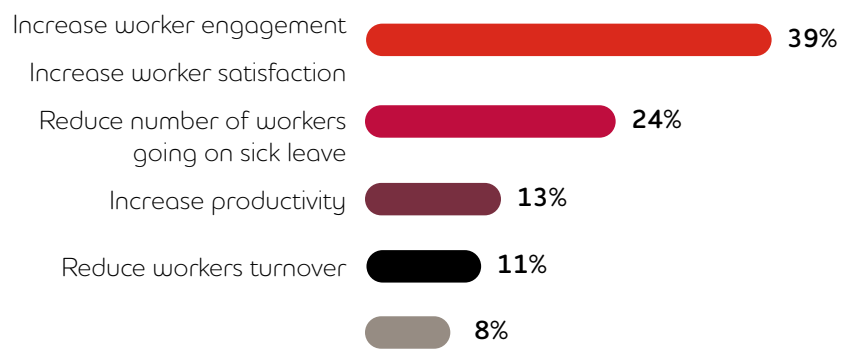
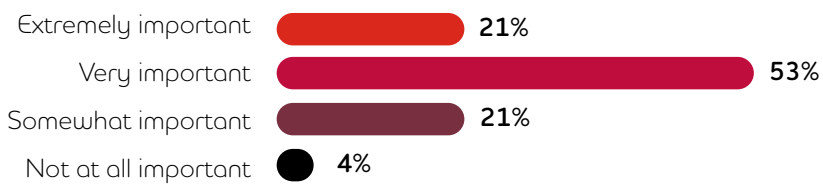
The younger the generation, the more they use exercising and power naps to disconnect, while the older generations tend to watch TV and read more.

Workers' ability to disconnect from work

Are companies offering the right initiatives to improve worker's wellbeing?

Clients: How important has the wellbeing of your workers become?

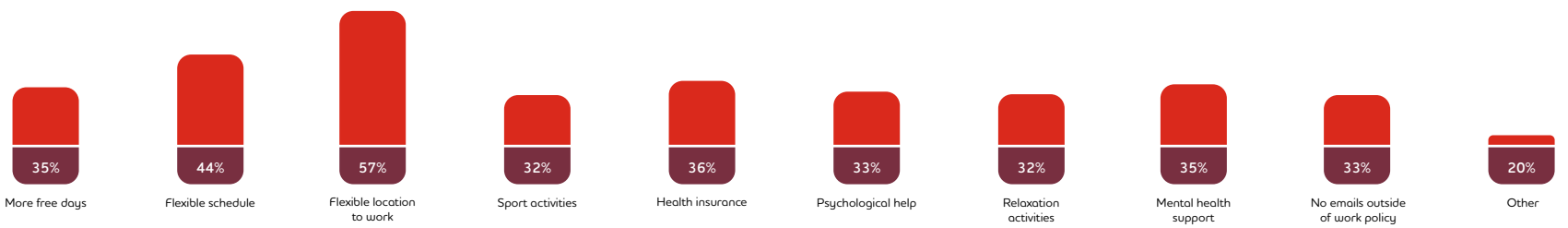
Apart from trying to improve your workers' lives, what is your company's desired outcome in implementing mental health measures?



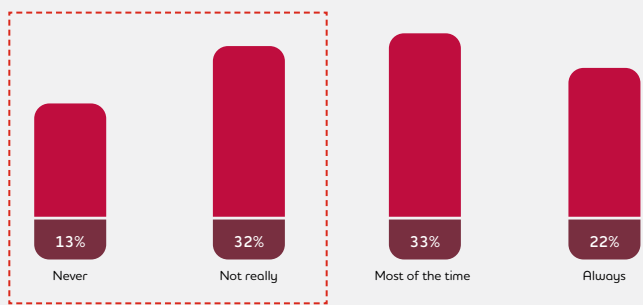
73% of companies feel the wellbeing of their workers has become more important to improve worker engagement (39%) and satisfaction (24%).

However, **1/3** of companies only offer the researched wellbeing initiatives (aside from flexible hours and location)

Wellbeing activities offered by companies: workers' perception



Does your employer support your wellbeing?



This fact could explain why **45%** of workers don't feel supported by their companies in terms of wellbeing.

Wellbeing initiatives: workers vs company perception

Activities workers find helpful to disconnect or improve their wellbeing:

- 1 Flexible location
- 2 Flexible schedule
- 3 Health insurance

VS

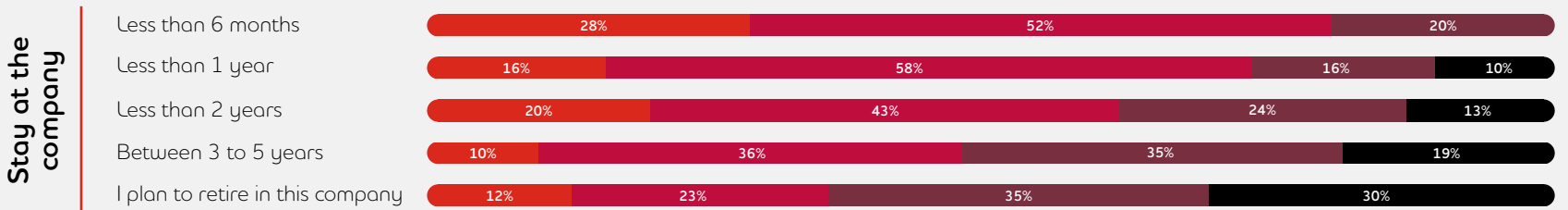
Company perception about the more used activities to disconnect/improve wellbeing:

- 1 Flexible schedule
- 2 More free days
- 3 Flexible location

These are the main initiatives proposed by companies and the ones that workers find beneficial for their wellbeing.

Since the pandemic, companies have offered additional days off and mental & psychological support. They also believe that workers give more importance to having additional days off (Top2 consideration).

Turnover impact due to the lack of mental health and wellbeing support



Does your current employer support enough your wellbeing?



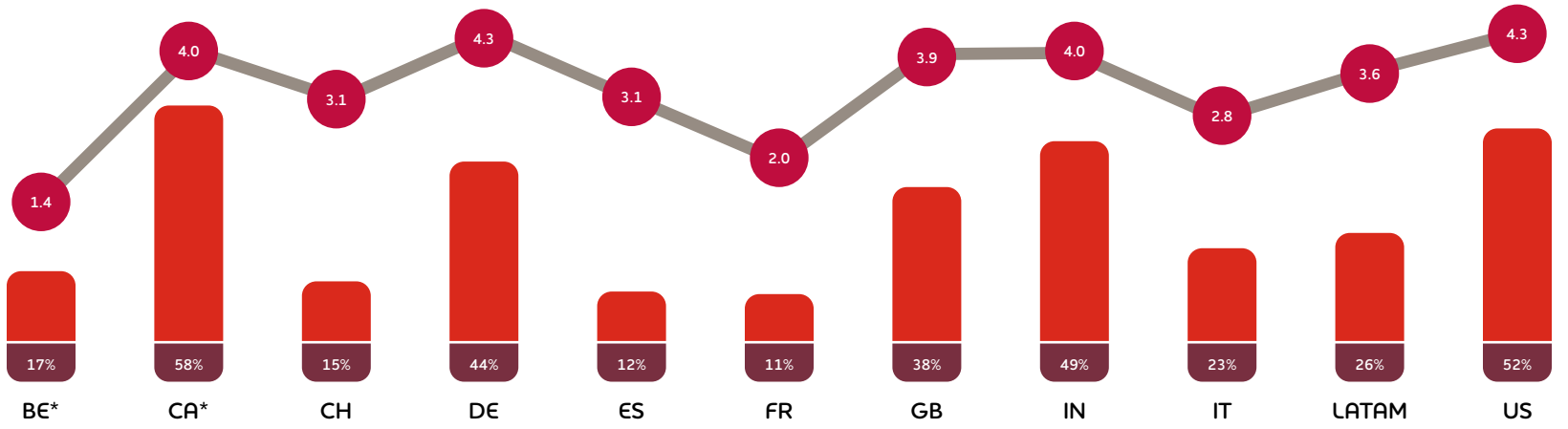
Companies should reinforce their well-being initiatives and the way they communicate them to counter the correlation between the lack of support shown from company, high stress, and willingness to leave the company within 2 years.

Workers' capacity to disconnect from work – Country comparisons

Work flexibility is part of the new normal

Has the pandemic influenced workers' way of working?

● % of workers ● Avg days



Of those working from home, the more the country allow it, the higher the time spent working from home (all the countries above 35%, average at least 4 days at home). Also, countries with more office-based roles (IT, Admin, Finance, Marketing, HR, etc...) are more likely to have a higher rate of home working.

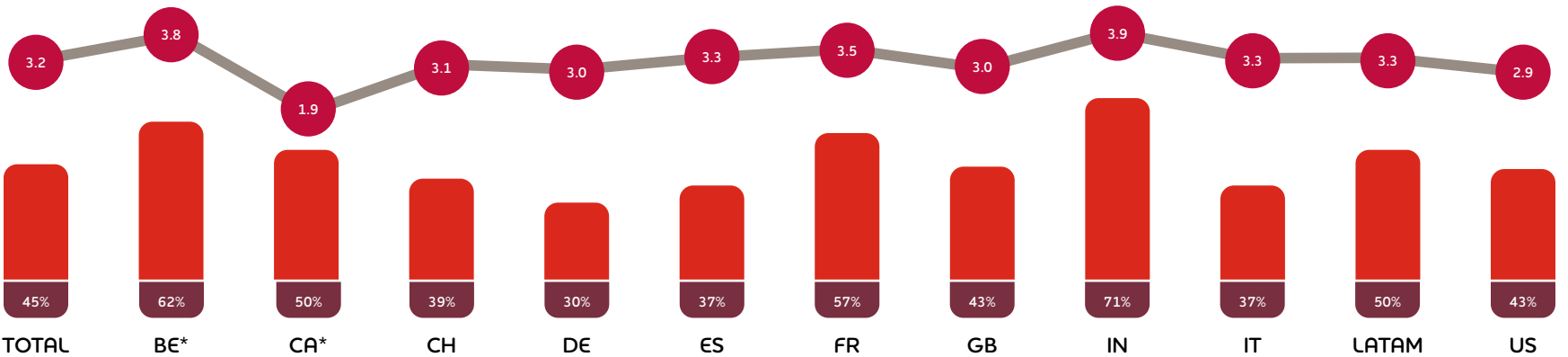
Impact of the pandemic on workload & stress levels

USA, India, and the UK are the top 3 countries that have a higher workload since the pandemic. However, the countries where stress has increased since the pandemic are Belgium, Switzerland, and Italy.

Are workers able to easily disconnect from work?

Working after business hours

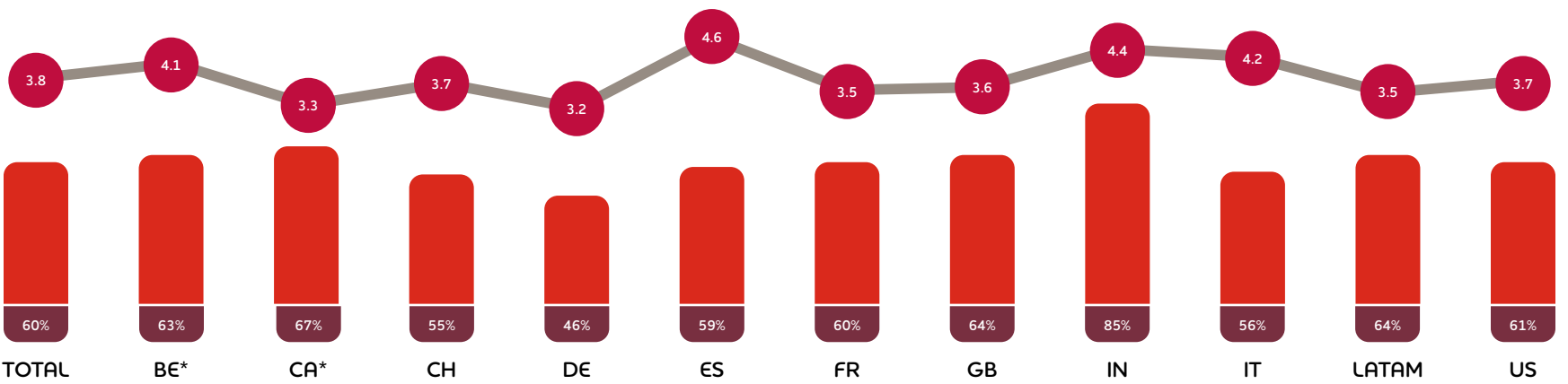
● % of workers ● Avg days



India, Belgium, France, and Canada work more after business hours (mail + work).

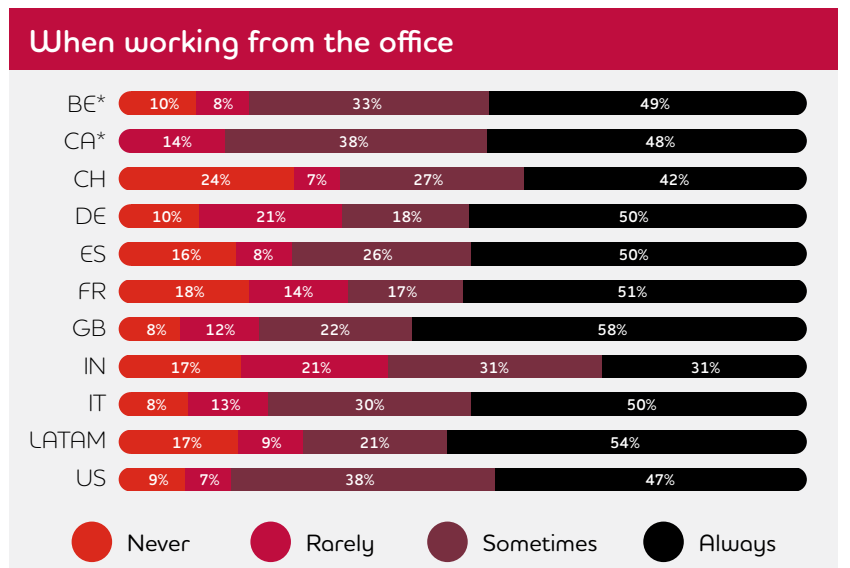
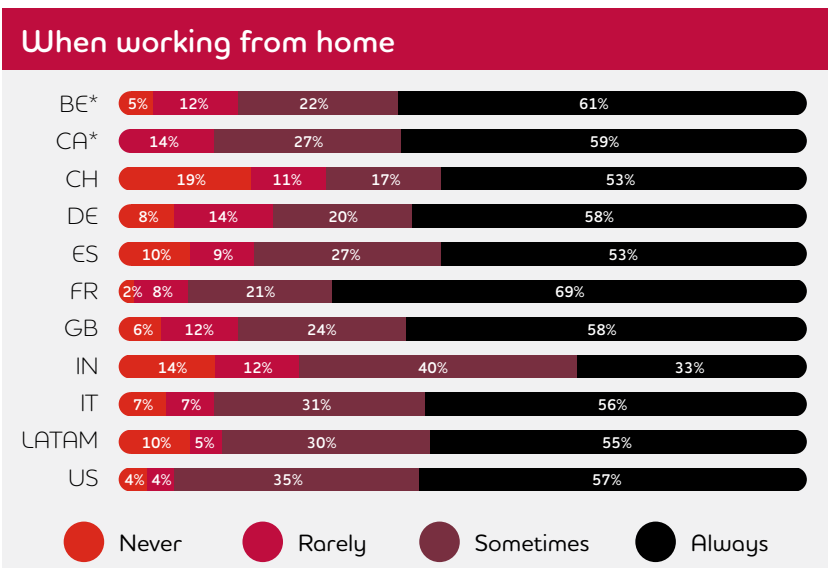
Check emails after business hours

● % of workers ● Avg days



India remain the country with the highest number of days per week, followed by Belgium and Spain (for checking emails).

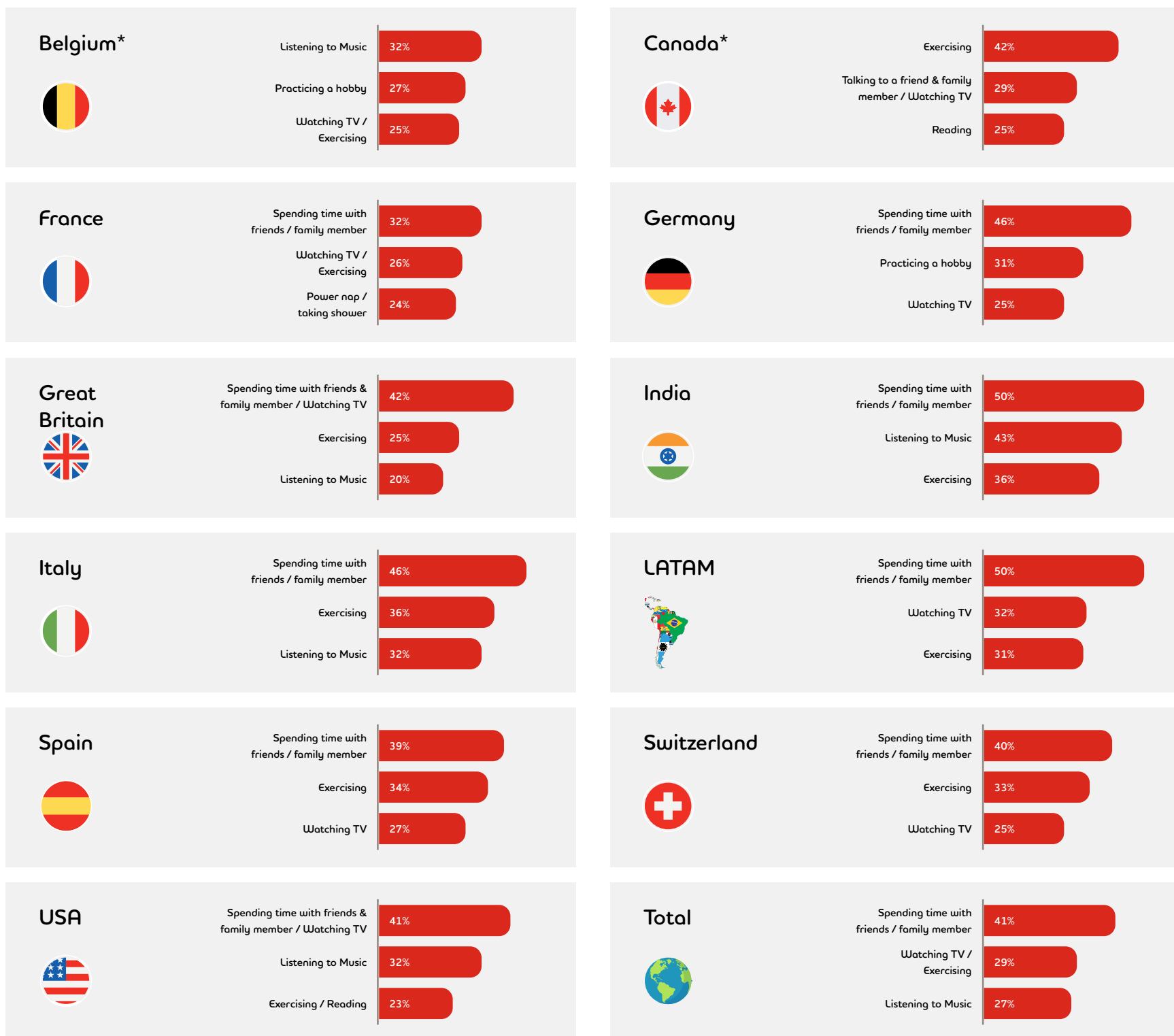
Do workers manage to easily switch from professional to personal life?



Switching from professional to personal life when working from the office is more difficult than from home, especially for France, India, LATAM and Germany.

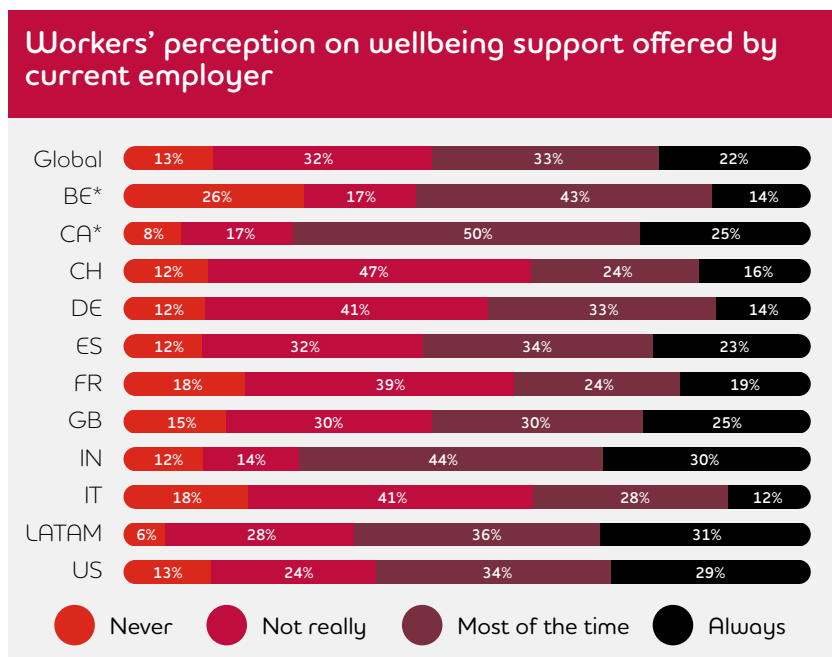
Workers' ability to disconnect from work – Country comparisons

Activities to disconnect from work



Except for Belgium, whose workers prefer to listen to music, and Canadians who prefer exercising, the TOP1 is spending time with friends & family member. UK & US TOP1 are equally spending time with friends & family and watching TV!

Are companies offering the right support to improve their worker's wellbeing?



Switzerland, Italy, and France perceive that their employer is not supportive enough.

This could be linked with:

- These 3 countries have a high number of industrial jobs.
- In Switzerland workers have more difficulties in disconnecting.
- In Italy, workers who work outside business hours spend more time than the average mainly in checking e-mails.
- France has the most workers who bring work home.

Workers' ability to disconnect from work

Are companies offering the right support to improve their worker's wellbeing?

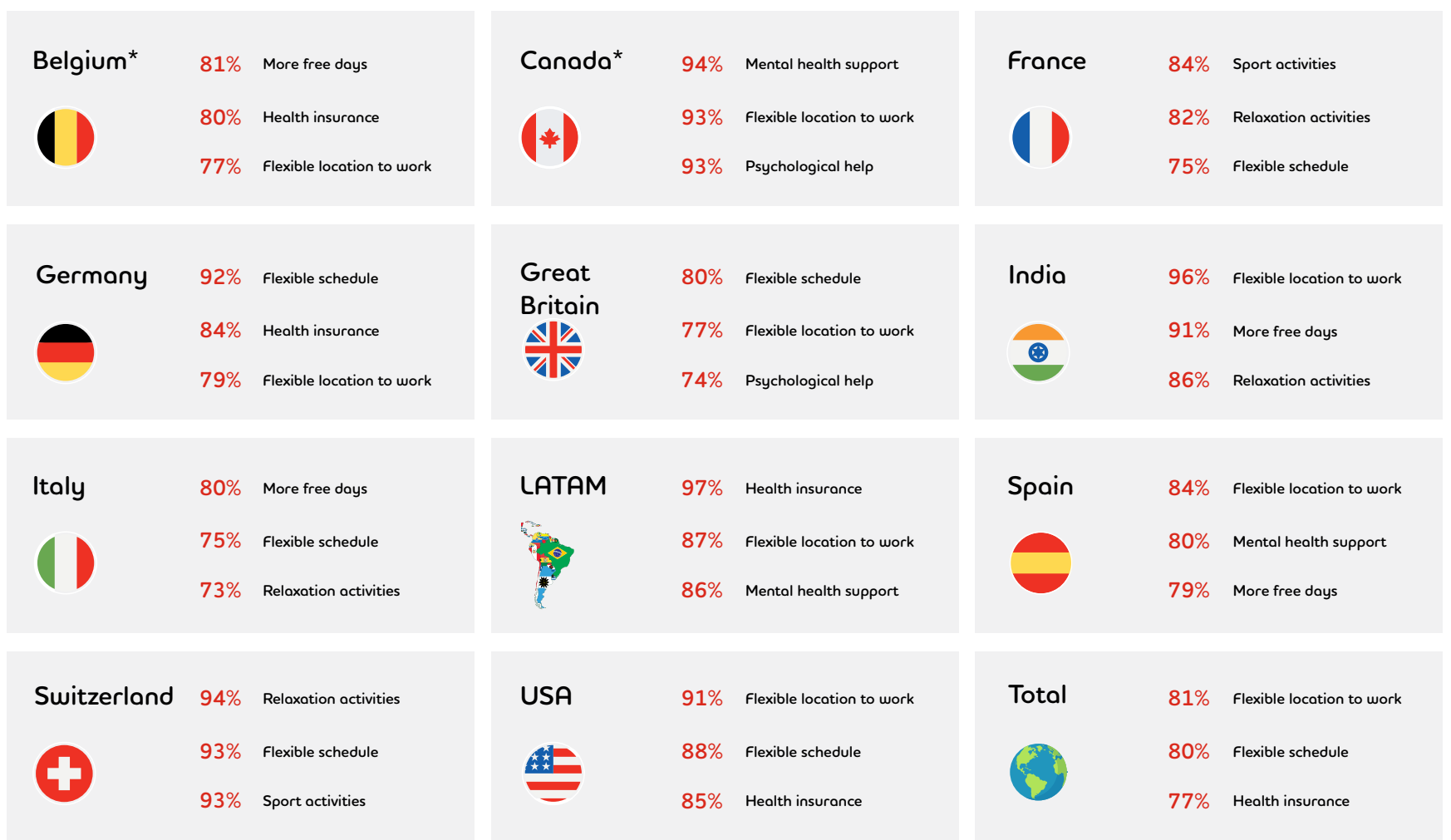
Top 3 wellbeing initiatives offered by their employer



From the companies that do offer well-being initiatives to their workers, the ones related to flexibility (location & schedule), health insurance coverage, and mental health support are the ones most popular among the different countries.

Top 3 initiatives workers find helpful for their well-being

% of workers who find that activity useful to disconnect from work



In line with what companies developed (such as flexible schedule & location, and more free days), workers consider health insurance important, ranking it third amongst the main initiatives and benefits they find helpful in improving their well-being.

In France, workers find sports activities useful.

Thanks

GLOBAL CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TEAM
ADECCO GLOBAL COMMUNICATIONS TEAM

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