Workforce Insights from Central Governments

Findings of the 2024 OECD/EU Survey of Public Servants

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FINDINGS OF THE 2024 OECD/EU SURVEY OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

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Foreword

This report presents insights from 56 980 central administration employees across ten OECD/EU members in 2024, offering a comprehensive overview of factors influencing workforce performance. It explores key areas such as leadership quality, organisational performance, employee engagement, well-being, learning and innovation, and working arrangements. Serving as a valuable resource for policymakers, organisational leaders, and human resource professionals, this report aims to foster a resilient and high-performing public sector workforce. By highlighting common challenges and successful practices, it provides actionable insights to support continuous improvement across public administrations, which in turn can lead to better public policies and services for the citizens.

This report was coordinated by Ayeesha Abbasi and Nina Handlos Thomassen under the guidance of Daniel Gerson and Natalia Nolan Flecha, senior project managers in the Public Management and Budgeting division of the OECD Public Governance Directorate, which is led by Elsa Pilichowski, Director. Jón Blöndal, Head of Division, and Andrew Blazey, Deputy Head of Division provided strategic oversight.

Ayeesha Abbasi and Nina Handlos Thomassen drafted Chapter 1 ‘Overview’, Nina Handlos Thomassen and Omer Faruk Metin drafted Chapter 2 ‘Employee engagement and well-being’, Ayeesha Abbasi drafted Chapter 3 ‘Team and organisational performance’, Nina Handlos Thomassen and Ayeesha Abbasi drafted Chapter 4 ‘Leadership and management’, Ayeesha Abbasi drafted Chapter 5 ‘Learning, development, and innovation’, Nina Handlos Thomassen drafted Chapter 6 ‘Pay, working conditions and remote working arrangements’. Supporting technical documentation (Annex A) was drafted by Nina Handlos Thomassen, Manuela Sánchez Parra and Ayeesha Abbasi. Data visualisations and statistical support was provided by Manuela Sanchez Parra and Ömer Faruk Metin.

Santiago Gonzales, Lech Marcinkowski, Toby Baker, Angela Hanson, Piret Tonurist, Alana Baker provided valuable feedback. The report also benefitted from extensive feedback from the project’s advisory group comprised of public officials from the eight project countries as well as the two observer countries, and the European Commission SG REFORM, Cristina Luchici and Mina Shoylekova. The report was prepared for publication by Meral Gedik.

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Executive summary

Governments today face rapidly evolving challenges that require strong, people-focused leadership across central administrations. A resilient and high-performing workforce is essential, but it cannot be achieved without understanding the lived experiences of public servants. Leadership and management practices play a critical role in shaping these experiences, yet many governments lack the tools to systematically assess their impact. Large-scale employee surveys offer a valuable lens into this dynamic and can help leaders navigate the complexities of organisational transformation. When used strategically, they provide actionable insights that can drive meaningful change, foster trust, and guide sustainable and impactful reforms.

This report summarises the results of the 2024 Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants - a first-of-its-kind cross-country survey that provides leaders with high-quality, comparative data to drive insight into a wide range of organisational domains including leadership quality, organisational performance, employee engagement, well-being, learning and innovation, and working arrangements. The Survey and this synthesis report are the flagship outputs of a project conducted by the OECD with funding and support from the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument.

This project collected and compared data from 56 980 employees from central government ministries and agencies in eight participating EU countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and the Netherlands (hereafter EU8), as well as partial data from Denmark and Norway. This provides unique insight into what matters to government employees, how leaders can create workplaces for them to thrive, and in turn deliver the best possible public services to citizens.

Key findings

- Public employees are generally engaged with their work, and mission-driven – a large majority report being satisfied with their job (76%), willing to do extra work (70%), and identify with the mission of their organisation (68%). Employees tend to be more engaged when they see opportunities for professional development and growth and hold a positive impression of their senior leadership.
- Public employees who have opportunities for mobility and to develop their digital skills tend to have more positive perceptions of organisational performance, and professional growth is particularly important for employee engagement. However, only half of employees feel that they are growing professionally, or that their organisation provides regular opportunities to build their digital skills, while only a third feel that their organisation supports mobility for career building.
- Public employees generally view their organisations as effective and accountable but are more critical when it comes to the efficiency of their organisations and their responsiveness to change. Employees feel that their organisations perform better when they support bottom-up innovation and have capable, forward-looking senior leaders. Half of employees feel that the rules and procedures within their organisation make it difficult and complicated to work effectively and efficiently.

- Employees are very positive regarding their direct employee-manager relationship. A large majority report their manager treats them with respect (85%), lets them be reasonably autonomous (83%), and trusts their judgement (79%). Managers who plan the work well, maintain high standards of honesty and integrity, and trust their employees' judgement, tend to drive the most positive impression of team performance.
- Innovation climate is the strongest driver of perceived organisational performance, however, less than half of employees view their organisations' innovation climate favourably. Employees evaluate their organisation's performance more positively when their organisation learns from past problems and encourages employees to look for new ways of doing things. Employee participation in innovation projects is higher when there is a strong innovation climate.
- Employees are generally positive regarding the values-based and strategic leadership of their senior leaders. Over half of employees (56%) feel that senior leaders generally manage the organisation well. Only 44% of employees feel their senior leaders provide frank, evidence-based advice to political leaders and only 42% agree that they effectively lead change in their organisation. Overall, employees are pessimistic that senior leaders will act on the results of the employee survey.
- Public employees are very positive regarding the performance of their team. Quality of management and the extent to which employees feel engaged in their work are important in shaping how employees evaluate the performance of their team. However, managing underperformance remains a key challenge with half of employees reporting that underperformers typically remain in their organisations and continue to underperform.
- Well-being is important for productivity, as employees take more sick leave when their well-being deteriorates. However, half of employees report feeling exhaustion at the end of the day, while over a quarter feel burnt out. Employees report better well-being when they have access to meaningful opportunities for learning and development and are managed by skilled and effective line managers.
- Most public servants express low satisfaction with pay and benefits, especially when compared to the private sector, but are satisfied with their employment security. Remote work is commonly used and appreciated, although there is significant variation across the countries in the study.

1 Overview

The rapidly evolving challenges facing governments today require a public workforce that is resilient, adaptable, and agile. Underpinning this is a need for data-driven insights to inform strategic decision-making and support effective workforce management. The 2024 Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants collected data from 56 980 employees across 10 countries. The results of this survey provide valuable insights into emerging trends and common strengths and areas for improvement across central administrations. This chapter highlights key insights into the experiences of public servants, the drivers of important employee and organisational outcomes including engagement, well-being, performance and turnover, and outlines the overarching analytical framework.

Overview of the report's key findings

Employee Engagement

Public employees are generally engaged with their work, and mission-driven – a large majority report being satisfied with their job (76%), willing to do extra work (70%), and identify with the mission of their organisation (68%). Employees tend to be more engaged when they see opportunities for professional development and growth and hold a positive impression of their senior leadership.

Learning and Development

Public employees who have opportunities for mobility and to develop their digital skills tend to have more positive perceptions of organisational performance, and professional growth is particularly important for employee engagement. However, only half of employees feel that they are growing professionally (50%), or that their organisation provides regular opportunities to build their digital skills (52%), and only a third feel that their organisation supports mobility for career building (32%).

Organisational Performance

Public employees generally view their organisations are effective and accountable but are more critical when it comes to the efficiency of their organisations and their responsiveness to change. While 73% of employees feel their organisation service citizens well, 41% feel it uses resources efficiently or is quick to respond when change is needed. Employees feel that their organisations perform better when they support bottom-up innovation and have capable, forward-looking senior leaders.

Innovation Climate

Innovation climate is the strongest driver of perceived organisational performance, however, less than half of employees view their organisations' innovation climate favourably. Only 43% employees feel that their organisation learns from past mistakes or continuously encourages them to look for new ways of doing things.

Senior Leadership

Employees are generally positive regarding the values-based and strategic leadership of their senior leaders. Over half of employees (56%) feel that senior leaders generally manage the organisation well. Only 44% of employees feel their senior leaders provide frank, evidence-backed advice to political leaders and only 42% are positive about effective change leadership in their organisation. Overall, employees are pessimistic that senior leaders will act on the results of the employee survey.

Line Management

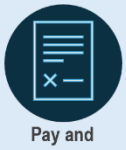
While employees are very positive regarding their direct employee-manager relationship. A large majority report their manager treats them with respect (85%), lets them be reasonably autonomous (83%), and trusts their judgement (79%). Managers who plan the work well, maintain high standards of honesty and integrity, and trust their employees' judgement, tend to drive the most positive impression of team performance.

Team Performance

Public employees are very positive regarding the performance of their team. Quality of management and the extent to which employees feel engaged in their work are important in shaping how employees evaluate the performance of their team. However, managing underperformance remains a key challenge with half of employees reporting that underperformers typically remain in their organisations and continue to underperform (52%).

Employee Well-being

Well-being is important for productivity, as employees take more sick leave when their well-being deteriorates. However, half of employees report feeling exhaustion at the end of the day (50%), while over a quarter feel burnt out (29%). Employees report better well-being when they have access to meaningful opportunities for learning and development and are managed by skilled and effective line managers.



Pay and Conditions

Most public servants express low satisfaction with pay and benefits (40%), especially when compared to the private sector, but are satisfied with their employment security (75%). Remote work is commonly used by employees (63%) and appreciated, although there is significant variation across the countries in the study.

Governments today face rapidly evolving challenges that demand a public workforce that is resilient, adaptable and agile. Simultaneously, public institutions are competing in increasingly tight labour markets to attract and retain the necessary talent to tackle complex policy problems, drive innovative solutions and support organisational and service-wide transformations. At the heart of this is effective people-centred leadership and management. However, governments often lack mechanisms to assess and monitor the quality of leadership and people management.

Employee surveys are powerful tools to identify strengths and weaknesses in leadership and people management systems, and make necessary adjustments, thereby improving public sector organisations' effectiveness, efficiency and productivity. Leaders can use the results of employee surveys to gain valuable insights into workplace culture and areas of employee dissatisfaction. By analysing this feedback, they can identify trends and implement targeted strategies to address concerns, enhance motivation, and foster a more productive work environment. Addressing key issues raised in surveys can lead to improved employee engagement and well-being, well-managed turnover, and increased collaboration. Ultimately, acting on survey findings allows leaders to make informed decisions that drive performance, boost efficiency, and raise overall productivity across the organisation.

Though many governments already collect data through regular employee surveys, these surveys are often conducted on an ad-hoc basis and are not centralised. Additionally, capacities for collecting and analysing this data are often underdeveloped, and results do not always feed into the decision-making process to improve people management practices. Addressing the limited availability of high-quality, comparable data is therefore important in identifying common challenges, drivers and best practices to inform effective workforce decisions.

The 2024 Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants is a first-of-its-kind cross-country survey that provides leaders with high-quality, comparative data to drive insight into a wide range of organisational domains including leadership quality, organisational performance, employee engagement, well-being, learning and innovation, and working arrangements. The Survey and this synthesis report is the flagship output of a project conducted by the OECD with funding and support from the European Commission's Technical Support Instrument. This project collected and compared data from eight participating EU countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia and the Netherlands (hereafter EU8). Additional data supplied by Denmark and Norway from concurrent collections have also been included in cross-country comparisons. The overall evidence-base includes data from 56 980 employees from central government ministries and agencies. This provides unique insight into what matters to government employees, how leaders can create workplaces for them to thrive, and in turn deliver the best possible public services to citizens.

This report provides a comprehensive overview of employees' perceptions of their workplace. It examines how these attitudes vary across countries as well as by different employee groups, for example women and men, age, tenure, managerial status, and organisational size. The report also explores the relationships between key drivers and outcomes. Based on these insights, it offers policy recommendations to support governments and enable public sector leaders to build adaptable, high-performing organisations, an overview of these recommendations can be found in Section 1.4.

1.1. How do public servants see their workplace?

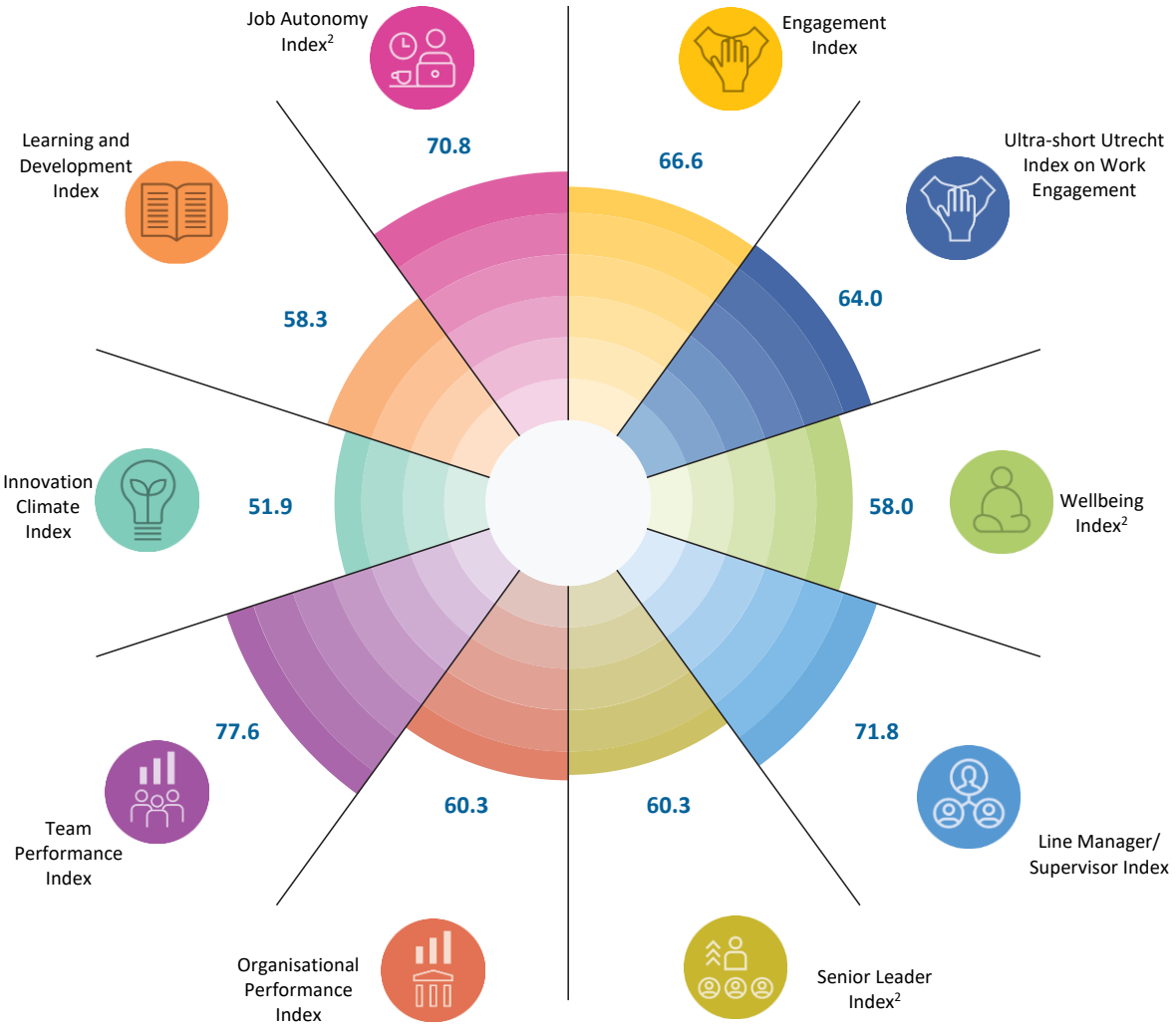
This report examines employees' perceptions of key aspects of their work including innovation climate, learning and development, team performance, organisational performance, management practices, leadership quality, employee engagement, and well-being. To capture the complexity of these experiences, each aspect is explored through multiple dimensions. These dimensions are summarised using composite indices (Figure 1.1), a common method in public employee surveys.

Among the EU8 countries, employees' overall perceptions of their teams (77.6), their line management (71.8) and, relatedly, their levels of job autonomy (70.8) are positive. These aspects are critical for day-to-day work and the generally observed positivity is a promising indicator of a healthy work environment. Consequently, these positive experiences of everyday work are reflected by the generally positive levels of engagement (66.6). However, there are opportunities for improvement in terms of employee well-being (58.0) and access to meaningful learning and development opportunities (58.3). While also important for employees' experiences of work, these aspects of work score lower in comparison to other indices.

Employees are less positive in their perceptions of their organisations, including their leadership (60.3), performance (60.3), and support for innovation (51.9). While this may reflect lower visibility of these aspects of their work, as employees often have less direct interaction with senior leaders and key decision-making processes, it may also reflect broader challenges employees are grappling with as public service organisations strive to adapt and transform to meet evolving demands of the public and broader operating environment. These aspects are explored in greater depth in subsequent chapters.

Most of the drivers and outcomes presented in this report are measured using composite indices (Figure 1.2), a common approach in public employee surveys. Composite indices offer an effective way to capture complex concepts by combining multiple questionnaire items into a single, interpretable score. These indices range from 0 ('Strongly disagree') to 100 ('Strongly agree') and are constructed based on theoretical assumptions about the coherence of the underlying items. They have also undergone rigorous reliability testing, including Cronbach's alpha analysis. Working conditions, such as pay, benefits, and flexible work arrangements, are measured using individual survey items rather than composite indices. Further information on the construction of the indices and the items they comprise can be found in the accompanying supporting technical documentation (Annex A). Among the EU8 countries, the highest-scoring index is team performance (77.6), while the lowest is the innovation index (51.9).

Figure 1.1. Employee perceptions of key aspects of work



Note: The figure presents the average scores across compositive indices. Composite indices offer an effective way to capture complex concepts by combining multiple questionnaire items into a single, interpretable score. These indices range from 0 ('Strongly disagree') to 100 ('Strongly agree') and are constructed based on theoretical assumptions about the coherence of the underlying items. They have also undergone rigorous reliability testing, including Cronbach's alpha analysis. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Further information on the construction of the indices and the items they comprise can be found in the accompanying supporting technical documentation (Annex A).

1. The EU8 average includes Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Netherlands, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia.
2. The average excludes the Netherlands.

Source: The Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants.

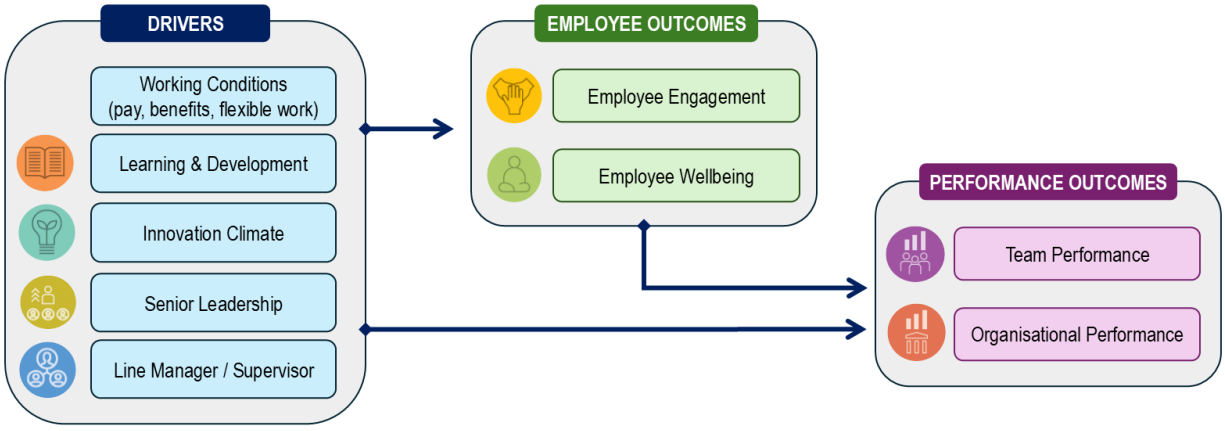
1.2. How do leadership and workforce management practices shape engagement, well-being and performance?

A key aim of this report is to understand how leadership and workforce management practices shape employee and organisational outcomes. To unpack this, key aspects of employees' experiences were examined in relation to their well-being, engagement and perceptions of team and organisational performance. In doing so, this report identifies key drivers of these outcomes. These are expanded on in the following section.

The analytical framework (Figure 1.2) guiding the data analysis of the survey results is developed by the OECD, drawing inspiration from the ideas behind the widely established Job-Demands-Resources theory (JDR). The JDR theory demonstrates how various resources, personal, job-specific, and organisational, initiate a motivational process that empowers employees to meet workplace demands effectively (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017[1]). These resources strengthen employee engagement and well-being, which ultimately enhance performance outcomes. The framework also recognises a direct pathway between resources and performance outcomes, represented by a connecting arrow. While resources indirectly affect performance through improved engagement and well-being, they can also directly contribute to organisational effectiveness by promoting team cohesion, providing clearer direction and vision, enhancing cooperation, and establishing better policies and processes. This dual-pathway approach acknowledges the complex relationship between workplace resources and organisational performance.

This report analyses the relationship between the drivers and outcomes (employee and performance outcomes) with the expected direction of the relationship as visualised in the analytical framework (Figure 1.2). While the framework illustrates the expected direction of these relationships, the available dataset does not allow for testing or drawing definitive causal conclusions. The directional arrows in the framework reflect the most commonly identified directions of the relationships in the academic literature. However, it is important to note that many of these relationships can be bidirectional (Cristian et al, 2011[2]). For example, a positive innovation climate can foster greater employee engagement, but engaged employees can also contribute to a stronger innovation climate (Kwon and Kim, 2020[3]). Similarly, employees with higher levels of well-being often report more favourable perceptions of leadership and management, suggesting that outcomes may also influence perceptions of the workplace environment. While this survey round does not support causal inference, future survey waves that replicate the same measures over time, enabling longitudinal or lagged analysis, could provide stronger evidence to test the model's assumptions.

Figure 1.2. Analytical framework

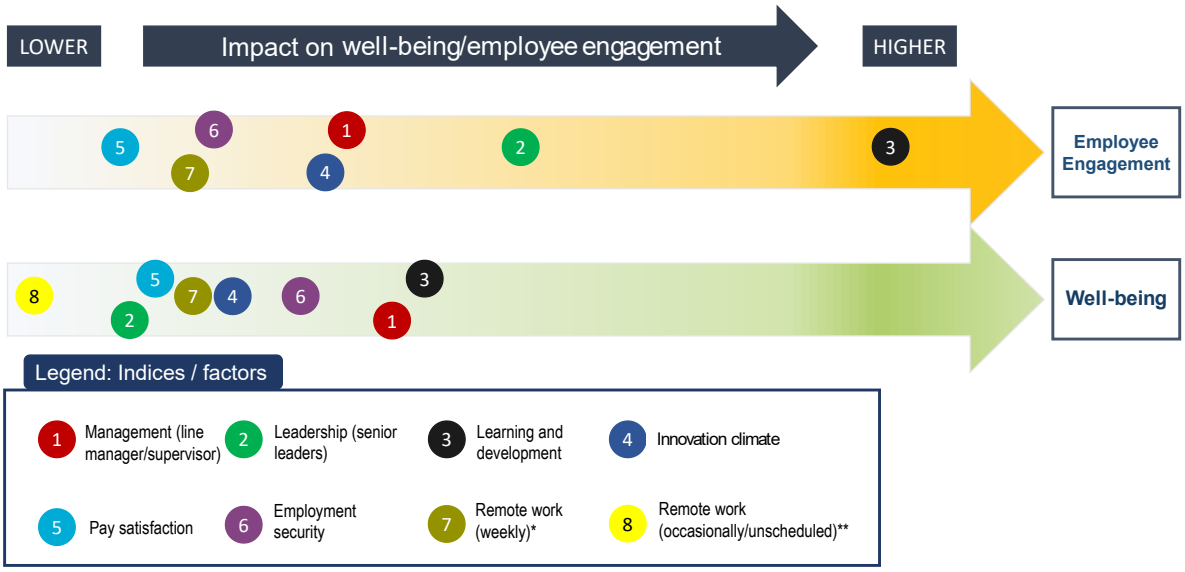


		OUTCOME INDICES			
		EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES		PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES	
		Model - 1 ***Employee Engagement***	*Model - 2* ***Employee Wellbeing***	*Model - 3* ***Team Performance***	*Model - 4* ***Organisational Performance***
DRIVERS	Working Conditions (pay, benefits, flexible work)	☑	☑	☑	☑
	Learning & Development	☑	☑	☑	☑
	Innovation Climate	☑	☑	☑	☑
	Senior Leadership	☑	☑	☑	☑
	Line Manager / Supervisor	☑	☑	☑	☑
Employee Outcomes	Employee Engagement	☒	☒	☑	☑
	Employee Wellbeing	☒	☒	☑	☑
Control variables	Gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure and country fixed effects	☑	☑	☑	☑

1.2.1. Employee Engagement and Well-being

Chapter 2 takes a detailed view of employee engagement and well-being and examines how different aspects of employees' experiences drives these outcomes. This chapter also provides insights into the use of sick leave, turnover intentions and experiences of harassment and discrimination. Figure 1.3 summarises the key aspects of employees' work experience (the drivers) that significantly enhance employee engagement and well-being (employee outcomes), along with their relative impact on these outcomes.

Figure 1.3. Drivers of employee engagement and well-being, ranked from lowest to highest



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of employee engagement and well-being based on separate mixed-effects regression models that control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and country fixed effects. The positioning of the drivers indicates their relative impact—referring to the estimated effect of each driver on the engagement or well-being score, while controlling for the influence of all other drivers, as well as demographic and organisational variables. With the exception of remote work, the effect sizes represent the change in engagement or well-being when moving from one response category to the next (e.g., from "strongly disagree" to "disagree"). For remote work, the effect reflects the change from never working remotely to working remotely either weekly or occasionally.
* Weekly remote work has negative statistical effect on employee engagement. The relationship is positive for all other drivers.
Source: The Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

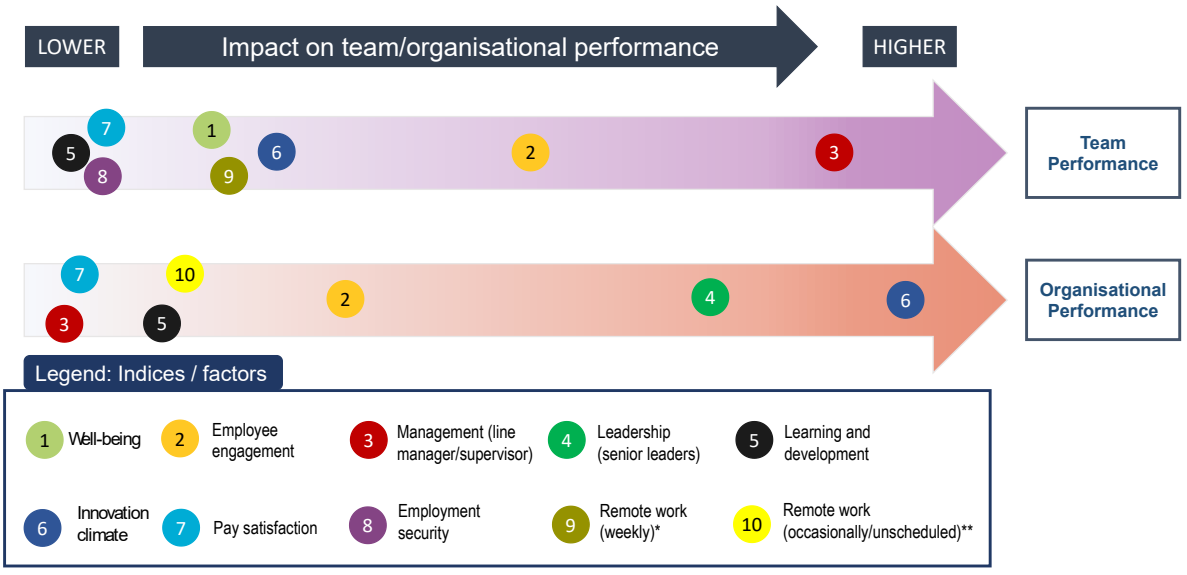
The analysis of the survey results finds that learning and development is the most influential driver of employee engagement, followed by senior leadership (Figure 1.3). Learning and development provide employees with opportunities to build their skills and progress in their careers, which, in turn, can enhance their motivation and commitment to the organisation, as well as increase their job satisfaction and sense of purpose. Fulfilling careers that support lifelong learning are important for developing and retaining highly skilled workforces. This relationship is explored further in Chapter 4. Senior leadership plays a crucial role in setting the organisation's vision and direction and shaping the organisational culture, both of which are essential for fostering engagement. This relationship is explored further in Chapter 5.

Learning and development are also the most influential driver of employee well-being, followed by management (Figure 1.3). Learning and development are crucial for well-being, as continuous learning equips employees with the necessary skills to build resilience, adapt to change and manage workplace pressures. Line management also plays a pivotal role by determining workload, providing feedback and creating an environment of psychological safety where employees feel comfortable voicing their opinion and contributing to the betterment of their workplace. The third most influential driver is employment security, which is currently at a high level. Given its strong impact, a decline in satisfaction with employment security could have significant consequences for overall well-being. This relationship is explored further in Chapter 6.

1.2.2. Team and organisational performance

Chapter 3 extends this analysis by examining how both the drivers and employee outcomes influence performance outcomes, namely perceived team and organisational performance as well as management of individual underperformers. Figure 1.4 summarises the key aspects of employees' work experience (the drivers) that significantly enhance perceptions of team and organisational performance, along with their relative impact on these outcomes.

Figure 1.4. Impact of key drivers of team and organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of team and organisational performance based on separate mixed-effects regression models that control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and country fixed effects. The positioning of the drivers indicates their relative impact—referring to the estimated effect of each driver on the engagement or well-being score, while controlling for the influence of all other drivers, as well as demographic and organisational variables. With the exception of remote work, the effect sizes represent the change in engagement or well-being when moving from one response category to the next (e.g., from "strongly disagree" to "disagree"). For remote work, the effect reflects the change from never working remotely to working remotely either weekly or occasionally.
* Pay satisfaction has a negative statistical relationship with team and organisational performance.
Source: The Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

Line managers are the most influential driver of team performance, followed by employee engagement (Figure 1.4). Supportive and capable managers provide clear direction and support to employees in achieving individual and team objectives. Meanwhile, engaged employees are motivated to excel in their roles and support team goals more broadly, contributing to the team's overall success. This relationship is explored further in Chapter 5.

Innovation climate is the most influential driver of organisational performance, followed by senior leadership (Figure 1.4). These drivers, which operate at the organisational level, have broad, top-down impacts on the organisation by shaping the overarching conditions within which individual employees work. This highlights the critical role of strategic organisational elements in shaping performance outcomes. This relationship is explored further in Chapter 4.

1.3. What can leaders and workforce managers learn from this report?

1.3.1. Public sector transformation remains the toughest leadership challenge

Results of this survey provides insights for leaders of public service organisations. Previous OECD work on public service leadership has emphasised their role in leading transformations (Gerson, 2020[4]). Leaders are expected to set a direction for change and align organisational resources and incentives to enable their workforce to translate that vision into reality. This brings into focus the necessity for leaders to develop their workforce and bring them along with the change they are leading. However, findings from this survey highlight that transformation remains the most challenging element of leadership to get right.

While 57% of employees agree that their senior leadership clearly articulates the direction and priorities of the organisation, only 44% agree that they are effectively of leading this change. Furthermore, only 42% of surveyed employees believe that their senior leadership will take action based on the survey results, implying low levels of trust that leadership is willing and/or able to enact positive organisational change. While this suggests room for improvement, it should also be noted that 32% of those surveyed selected neutral responses (neither agree nor disagree) to the change management question, which may suggest that senior leaders' transformational practices are not visible to them. Leaders may benefit from making these practices more visible and improving employees' understanding of the work they are doing in these areas.

Leaders need to rely on their skilled and committed workforce to make transformation happen, and here too the survey highlight opportunities for improvement. For example, only around 50% of employees feel that their judgement is trusted by senior leaders or that their work is recognised and appreciated. Furthermore, only 52% agree that their organisation provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees. These findings are particularly important as they are shown to have a significant impact on employee engagement, and hence employee's personal productivity and readiness to engage as partners in transformational initiatives.

Leaders also need to be politically impartial, yet trusted advisors of political decision making to design and implement transformations that will work and be sustainable over time. Less than half (42%) of public employees agree that their senior leaders provide evidence-based advice to political leadership, even if it goes against their political position. How senior leaders carry out and communicate their role as public service stewards to employees further signals how employees understand the value of their work and their organisations.

1.3.2. Employees can help leaders improve the functioning of public organisations

While many leaders focus their transformational efforts on developing new public policies and services, employees, through their responses in this survey, highlight opportunities to improve the internal functioning of public organisations. Overall, employees are cautiously optimistic about the future, with 56% agreeing their organisation is ready and able to take on new and emerging challenges, and 14% disagreeing. However, less than half of employees feel that their organisation is quick to respond when changes need to be made (40%) or makes best use of technology (38%). Furthermore, around a third feel that their organisation effectively resources innovation projects (36%) or has a sufficiently flexible regulatory framework to incorporate new ideas (31%). Half of surveyed employees feel that the rules and procedures in place make it difficult and complicated to work efficiently and effectively. These findings point to significant opportunities for leaders to focus on improving the way their organisation functions, by reviewing and updating rules and procedures and implementing new technologies to speed up decision making and responsiveness.

One way to complement this activity is to ensure that employees have opportunities to contribute their knowledge and experience to innovation projects. The survey finds that employees who have participated in innovation implementation are more likely to view their organisation's innovation climate positively. This may suggest the existence of a virtuous cycle and an opportunity to use short term assignments and mobility to give employees opportunities to engage in innovative projects. However, only around one third of employees feel that mobility is effectively supported in their organisation.

1.3.3. Leaders can attract and retain employees by emphasising opportunities for professional growth, linked to mission

The results of this survey provide useful insights for public administrations seeking to better attract and retain critical talent for a high performing public service workforce.

Over half of employes recommend their organisation as a good place to work (57%) reflecting that the majority of employees are relatively engaged with their work and satisfied with their jobs. Most employees are mission-driven – identifying with the mission of their organisations (67.9%), are proud to work there (60%), and feel a sense of accomplishment (60%). Emphasising organisational mission and impact is likely a powerful element in any policy to attract and retain needed employees.

For leaders aiming to retain key skills, the strong relationship between employee engagement and retention highlights how efforts to engage employees can significantly reduce their intentions to leave. Encouragingly, only 13% of employees declare an intent to leave their organisations in the 12 months. Where employees do want to leave, they typically cite better pay (47.5% of those intending to leave) and poor management (44.3%) as primary reasons. Consideration of pay structures and investing in strengthening managerial capability is one means by which high-performing talent can be retained.

Additionally, the survey results highlight the importance of learning and development for employee engagement. However, only half of employees feel they are growing professionally. Results further demonstrate that investing in employees' digital skills and offering mobility opportunities can also significantly enhance feelings of engagement. Taking a more intentional approach to these tools—and communicating them clearly in recruitment materials—can help attract and retain capabilities needed for a high performing workforce.

1.3.4. Maintaining public service capability is essential, especially when faced with budgetary pressures

One of the most significant transformational challenges facing public service leaders in many OECD countries is how to meet increasing budgetary pressures while still maintaining, or even boosting, public service capability and productivity. The survey contains insights that can inform smart reform strategies. For example, only 41% of employees feel that their organisation uses their resources efficiently, suggesting that employees may have practical and untapped ideas for improving efficiency.

Previous OECD studies (OECD, 2016[5]) have shown how public sector austerity negatively impacts learning and development, career growth, pay and perceptions of job stability. This survey shows how each of these elements are significantly related to employee engagement, and thereby to the commitment and productivity of individual public servants. The survey also shows that public servants are working hard, with heavy workloads and are already at risk of negative health effects in many countries – half of the respondents feel exhausted at the end of the day, while more than a quarter (29%) report feeling burnt out.

Therefore, the challenge for public service leaders is to reshape the workforce while maintaining high levels of engagement and well-being. This includes maintaining job satisfaction, supporting professional development and managing workloads. One approach is to align workforce planning with broader organisational and technological changes, identifying tasks that can be streamlined or redefined while providing employees with appropriate opportunities for upskilling or reskilling into these emerging or redefined functions. While this may lead to gradual workforce shifts, the focus remains on building capability and supporting staff through these transitions. These themes will be further explored as part of the OECD's ongoing work on restoring public finances.

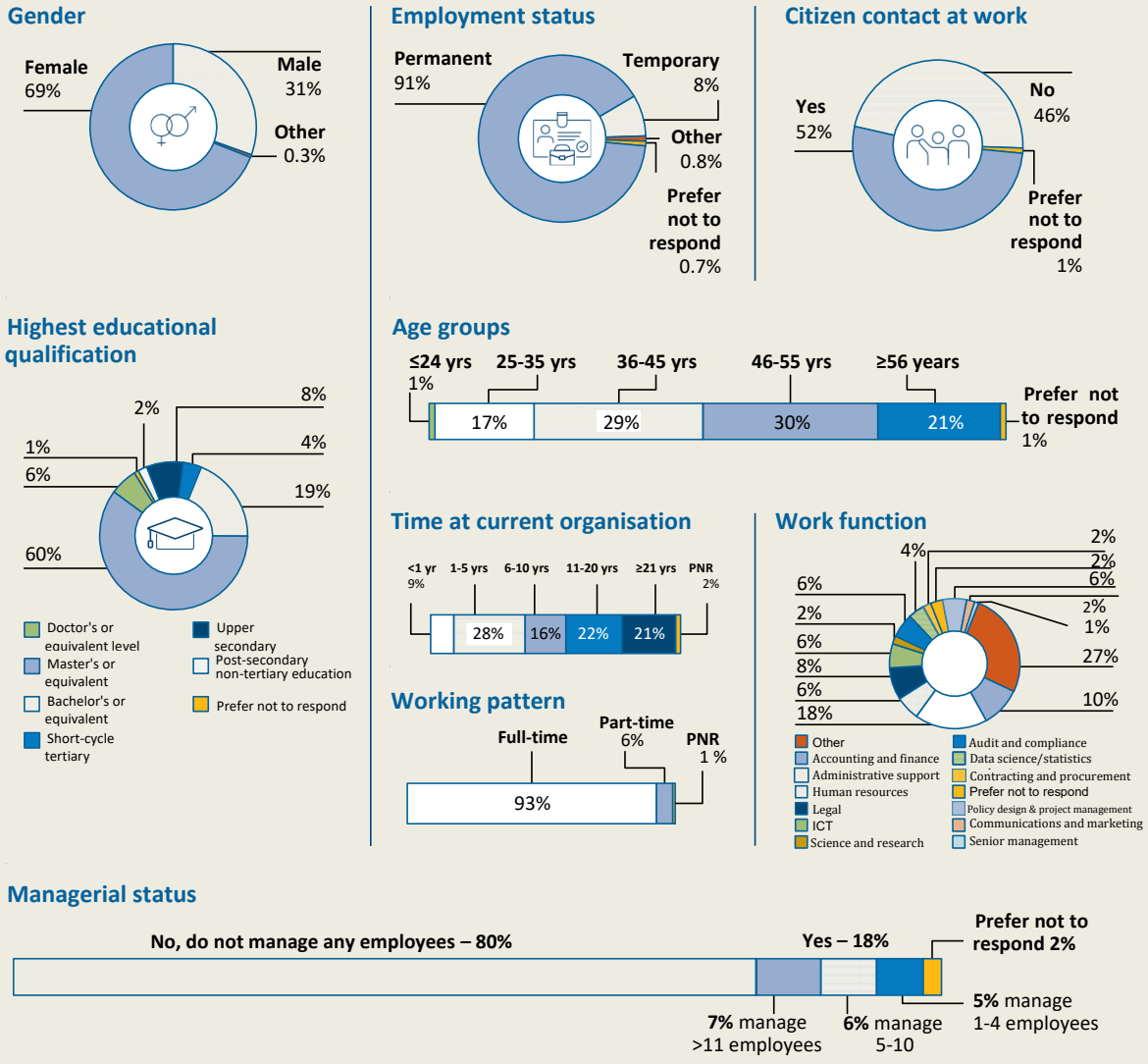
Box 1.1. Overview of the data collection and methodology

The data used in this report was collected from May to June 2024 for seven of the eight countries, and from September to October for Belgium. Part of the survey was also run in Denmark from November to December and in Norway from October to November 2024. The survey targeted public servants working in central government ministries and agencies in the participating countries[1]. The final sample size comprises 51 761 valid responses from the eight project countries, and 56 980[2] valid responses when counting the responses of Denmark[3] and Norway who implemented part of the questionnaire through their own surveys. The data collection was conducted through online anonymous surveys. All surveys were conducted in the country's national language(s).

All aggregate data presented in this report is weighted using equal country weights to ensure that each country is equally represented, regardless of the sample size. The questionnaire including detailed information on the survey design, data collection processes, data cleaning procedures, index methodology, and data analysis approach can be found in the technical documentation supporting the 2024 EU/OECD Survey of Public Servants (see Annex A).

The Figure 1.5 shows the distribution of employees across a range of demographic variables. It shows that the sample of employees, are mostly women (69%), the vast majority have a permanent employment contract (91%), work full-time (93%), are highly educated with the majority holding a master's degree or equivalent (60%). The largest group of employees are in the age range of 46-55 years old (30%), the majority are relatively new to their organisation with a tenure between 1-5 years (28%) and 80% are non-managerial staff.

Figure 1.5. Respondent demographics



Note: Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding adjustments. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: The Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

1. excluding public servants employed by state, territorial, regional, and municipal governments. Furthermore, state-owned enterprises, public corporations, and government-owned non-profit institutions were not included in the survey. Additionally, it excluded government-employed doctors and nurses working in hospitals, teachers, police officers, judges, firefighters, and military personnel (with the exception of civilian military staff).
2. Samples sizes by country: Belgium (n=5 175), Bulgaria (n=11,770), Croatia (n=4 261), Latvia (n=7 261), Lithuania (n=12 521), Slovak Republic (n= 1 771), Slovenia (n=4 148), the Netherlands (n=4 854), Denmark (n=767), Norway (n=4 452)
3. The survey was distributed via Digital Post, a secure public communication channel used for correspondence between citizens and the government, unlike in the other countries, where respondents received the survey through their work email address.

1.4. Considerations for policy action

The following policy considerations offer a strategic starting point for leaders and managers seeking to strengthen public service development. These recommendations are grounded in the analysis presented throughout the report and are intended to provoke reflection and guide action. While not exhaustive, they highlight key areas where targeted interventions can foster more responsive, resilient, and effective public service systems.

1.4.1. Employee engagement and well-being

- Enhancing learning and development activities, including supporting mobility and career growth, can result in improvements in both employee engagement and well-being. As the strongest driver of both employee engagement and well-being, investing in learning and development could lead to significant improvements in these areas. The overall satisfaction with learning and development is at 58.3, slightly above neutral, which means there is room for improvement.
- Strengthening leadership and management is another important area of focus. Senior leadership is the second strongest driver of employee engagement, playing a key role in shaping organisational direction and culture. Line managers, meanwhile, are the second strongest driver of employee well-being, directly influencing employees' daily work. Currently, senior leadership presents the greatest opportunity for improvement, with a satisfaction score of 60.3, standing at 10 percentage points lower than line managers at 71.8.
- Improving engagement reduces excessive turnover, which can disrupt workflows and increase recruitment and training costs. Employees with higher engagement levels are less likely to cite negative reasons to leave their organisation, such as poor management or a lack of interesting work. However, they are more likely to leave for positive reasons, such as career progression, suggesting a rather healthy turnover.
- The fact that over 40% of respondents report feeling burned out underlines the importance of implementing comprehensive well-being initiatives that go beyond physical health to address mental, emotional, and social well-being. Promoting open communication, recognition, and inclusive management practices can also contribute to a healthier and more resilient workforce, ultimately reducing absenteeism and improving overall organisational performance.

1.4.2. Team and organisational performance

- Organisations should regularly review existing policies and procedures within their organisation to reduce bureaucracy. Feedback from employees suggests that, particularly in extra-large organisations, current processes frustrate effective and efficient performance. Regularly reviewing policies and processes is important for ensuring that they remain relevant and appropriate, as well as for reducing bottlenecks.
- Employees feel less positively about their organisation's ability to respond quickly when change is needed. Organisations should consider enhancing mechanisms for bottom-up innovation and the sharing of employee views on necessary change can help ensure that change priorities are informed by both high-level strategy and the unique insights of employees on day-to-day operations. This can enhance environmental scanning and strategic planning, enabling better responsiveness to the evolving operational context.
- Senior leadership plays an important role in shaping employees' perceptions of their organisation's performance. Organisations should consider how senior leaders can highlight organisational achievements and efforts related to continuous improvement, including monitoring and evaluation. This may help strengthen employee perceptions of organisational performance.

- Managers are integral to the effective performance of teams. Organisations can strengthen management capability and accountability for team performance by investing in targeted training, providing practical resources (e.g. handbooks), and aligning performance agreements of managers to incentivise team outcomes and staff development. Organisations should also consider how the administrative burden of addressing performance issues for managers may be addressed including streamlining processes and providing clear guidance to managers on appropriate interventions, timing and documentation.

1.4.3. Leadership and management

- Senior leaders who communicate a clear direction, manage change effectively, and show trust and appreciation for employees are associated with higher engagement and more positive perceptions of organisational performance. This highlights the importance of supportive, communicative leadership styles that empower employees and make change visible. Since change management is one of the lowest-scoring dimensions of the senior management index, this could be an area to improve upon.
- Enhance the visibility of senior leadership and organisational responsiveness by encouraging senior leaders to recognise employee contributions, clearly communicate organisational direction and priorities, and make change efforts visible. These behaviours are linked to higher engagement and improved perceptions of performance. Strengthening supportive and transparent communication may help strengthen change management and transformation practices.
- Sustaining strong team performance requires continued investment in managerial capabilities particularly in the areas of effective planning and inclusive talent management. Supporting manager with practical tools can also help build these skills. Providing guidance to managers on how to clearly communicate decisions, have career conversations with staff and structure workflows may further help to embed learning.
- Identify visible, quick to implement actions and communicate them clearly to demonstrate that survey feedback is being acted upon. When employees see their input leading to meaningful change, it reinforces their sense that their feedback matters and strengthens trust in leadership. Moreover, visible follow-up actions can help maintain or even increase participation in future survey rounds.
- Ensuring that employees have the necessary supports to work autonomously and allow for clear delegation of tasks. When managed effectively, job autonomy can improve employee engagement. However, greater autonomy also means greater responsibility, making a supportive environment, both in terms of well-being but also clear expectations, appropriate access to information and fair treatment is essential to fully realise its benefits.

1.4.4. Learning, development, and innovation

- Efforts to strengthen and leverage innovation climate to support organisational performance should include a focus on the mechanisms to institutionalise past learnings to enhance planning and adaptive capabilities without introducing additional bureaucracy. Interventions like central risk registries, information repositories, and regular retrospectives among others, can help enhance institutional capacity to learn from past problems without introducing additional approval processes.
- Efforts to strengthen and leverage learning and development to support organisational performance should include a focus on investing in employees' digital capabilities and creating and supporting mobility. Job rotations, temporary assignments, task forces provide opportunities for organisations to leverage existing skills while further developing skills of employees. Mobility also provides opportunities to involve underrepresented staff groups in innovation efforts and support

building a more innovative culture. By building in-demand skills internally and creating mechanisms to leverage existing skills organisations can better respond to emerging trends and new demands.

- Employees feel more engaged when they are growing professionally and developing in-demand skills. Organisations should consider how this can be leveraged when implementing upskilling and reskilling efforts. By framing these programmes as supporting long-term career and professional development, organisations can improve participation and engagement, particularly for voluntary opportunities.
- Organisations should consider integrating informal learning and knowledge management mechanism to complement existing training. While important for engagement and perceived organisational performance, access to and quality of learning activities were the least influential dimensions of learning and development. Strengthening informal, experiential learning mechanisms can help to support a more holistic approach to staff development.

1.4.5. Pay, working conditions and remote working arrangements

- The findings indicate that increasing pay satisfaction could boost employee engagement and reduce intentions to leave the organisation. Although raising pay will not be feasible or desirable in many countries, the results highlight the usefulness of conducting comparative analysis to identify existing pay gaps with the private sector and using the available pay envelope as a strategic tool to boost perceptions of pay fairness and satisfaction for key roles where attraction and retention risks are high.
- As many governments look to identify efficiency savings to restore public finances, the survey identifies a risk that pay cuts and reforms to overall employment security could lead to lower, and hence lower workforce productivity. While workforce reductions are sometimes necessary, the challenge is to design them in ways that limit the direct threat to the remaining employees' perceptions of their job stability and pay satisfaction. For example, workforce strategy could be focused on reducing the size, but improving the skill of the workforce, thereby reducing redundant roles and simultaneously investing in new skills and mobility opportunities for the remaining workforce.
- Offering some flexible working opportunities could help attract and retain talent. Around half of employees aged 55 or younger would prefer to work remotely more often, while fewer than 3% across all age groups wish to do so less. Younger employees not only work remotely most frequently but also express the strongest desire to do so even more. This highlights the opportunity to tailor flexible arrangements in the public sector, to find the right balance for operational coherence and employee flexibility. Findings also highlight the importance of ensuring that managers are well prepared to support flexible working, as among all aspects of the remote work environment, the strongest driver of both engagement and well-being is managers' trust in employees.

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2 Employee engagement and well-being

Engaged, motivated and healthy employees are the foundation of an effective public administration. Their experience at work shapes not only their individual performance, but also the capacity of public institutions to deliver, innovate, and adapt. This chapter finds that the most impactful driver of employee engagement and well-being is learning and development. Further, it explores how engagement and well-being vary across countries and key demographic characteristics. It analyses key risks such as turnover, and absenteeism associated with lower levels of engagement and well-being. Finally, this chapter provides recommendations for policy actions based on these insights.

Key findings

- Across the EU8 countries employees tend to be relatively engaged. Three in four employees report being satisfied with their job (76.25%), while only about half say they feel enthusiastic about it (51.4%).
- Employee well-being is slightly lower, but with high variation across dimensions, around four in five report having clear responsibilities (80.7%), while only four in five employees refrain from working when feeling unwell (18.1%).
- Learning and development is the most influential driver of employee engagement and well-being, underlining the importance of providing opportunities for professional development and growth.
- Managers play a key role in supporting employee well-being, and high-quality senior leadership drives employee engagement, as these factors are the second most influential drivers of well-being and engagement.
- On average 13% of employees intend to leave their organisation. Engaged employees are less likely to express such an intent, except in cases of retirement or for career progression. The most common reasons for employees wanting to leave their organisations are poor pay (47.5% of those intending to leave), poor management (44.3%), and a lack of interesting work (35.6%).
- Data shows a clear link between well-being and absenteeism as employees tend to take more sick days as their well-being deteriorates. More than half (54%) of all public servants reported not having taken any sick leave within the past 6 months.
- One in ten civil servants reported being a victim of harassment at work, and 7% reported experiencing workplace discrimination. This shows opportunities to continue to develop management skills and psychological safety in public sector organisations.

Employee engagement and well-being are two measurable concepts that have been linked to performance, productivity and innovation. Employees who are engaged in their work and have a high level of well-being tend to have higher levels of motivation, commitment and energy to contribute to their organisations' goals and objectives. Engagement and well-being are both multidimensional concepts and have been measured in various ways in the literature (see Box 2.1). In this report, they are measured through two indices (see Figure 2.2 and Figure 2.3, and Annex A for more details). This survey's employee engagement index encompasses employees' feelings of job satisfaction, motivation, organisational commitment, enthusiasm, accomplishment and their willingness to go beyond expectations. This survey's employee well-being index encompasses workload management, a supportive well-being environment, as well as the physical and mental well-being of the employees. Measuring and analysing the engagement and well-being of employees can provide valuable insights into people management in public administrations, as they are determined by factors such as the quality of leadership, working conditions, and the innovation and learning climate.

This chapter begins by presenting overall trends in engagement and well-being, how different employee sub-groups perform against these indices and how they may impact organisational productivity through turnover and absenteeism. Then, the chapter analyses how key drivers (i.e. leadership and management, learning and development, and innovation climate) affect engagement and well-being, resulting in actionable insights for policymakers. It does this through two linear regression models[1], treating engagement and well-being as outcome variables, and analysing the effect of an increase in the drivers' scores on the engagement and well-being scores. Lastly, it provides recommendations on how to leverage these insights to improve employee engagement and well-being, thereby boosting workforce performance and productivity.

Box 2.1. Measuring Employee Engagement

Empirical evidence links employee engagement and related concepts of organisational commitment and staff motivation to better organisational outcomes, including efficiency, productivity, public sector innovation, citizen trust in public sector institutions, and employee trust in organisational leadership. Employee engagement strengthens organisational capacity as it is positively related to individual performance and employee retention (OECD, 2016[1]).

Employee engagement is defined in many ways in the literature; however, there is general agreement that it refers to the alignment of individual behaviour with organisational goals, fostering motivation and performance. It contrasts with compliance-based approaches, which can be costly and ineffective. A widely used definition describes engagement as a positive, fulfilling work-related state characterised by vigour, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker and Salanova, 2006[2]). Engagement involves motivation and decision-making processes that drive employees to achieve organisational goals effectively. In addition to these, many engagement indices also measure dimensions such as overall job satisfaction, job pride, and organisational promotion, commitment and alignment.

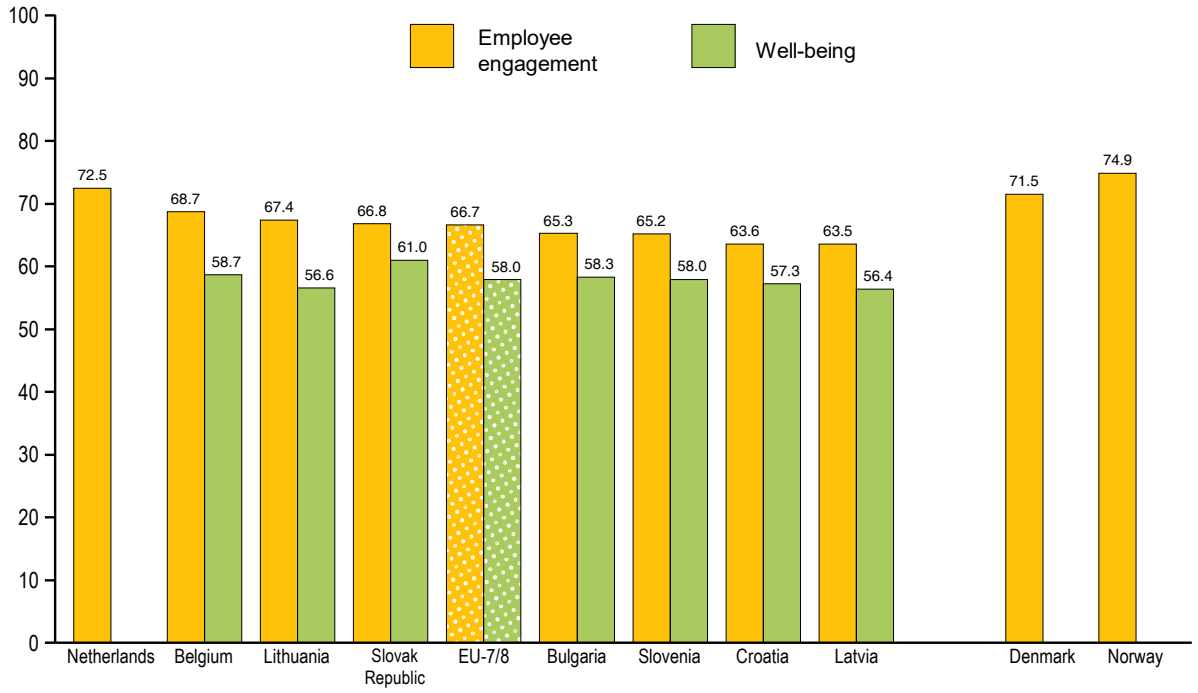
As employee engagement is multifaceted, the best practice is to measure it through an index combining several questions into one common measure. Doing so provides a data-driven approach to track and benchmark the performance of organisational leadership, people management, and HRM, and to inform policies and reforms in these areas. According to many of the leading practitioners in this field, engagement can be measured at both an individual and an organisational level, and this can provide evidence-based insight into the organisational culture and health of an organisation.

Sources: Australia's Public Service Census 2024 (APS, 2024[3]), Irelands Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey (Gov.ie, 2024[4]), United Kingdom Civil Service People Survey 2023 Results Highlights (Gov.uk, 2024[5]), United States Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Summary (OPM, 2024[6]).

2.1. Employee engagement and well-being in EU8 central administrations

Overall, employee engagement is moderately positive across the EU8 countries, with a mean score of 66.7 (Figure 2.1). In contrast, employee well-being scores lower in the EU7 with a mean score of 58. Employee engagement is highest in the Netherlands (72.5) and Belgium (68.7), and lowest in Latvia (63.5) and Croatia (63.6). Meanwhile, well-being is highest in the Slovak Republic (61) and Belgium (58.7), and lowest in Latvia (56.4) and Lithuania (56.6) (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1. Employee engagement and well-being by country



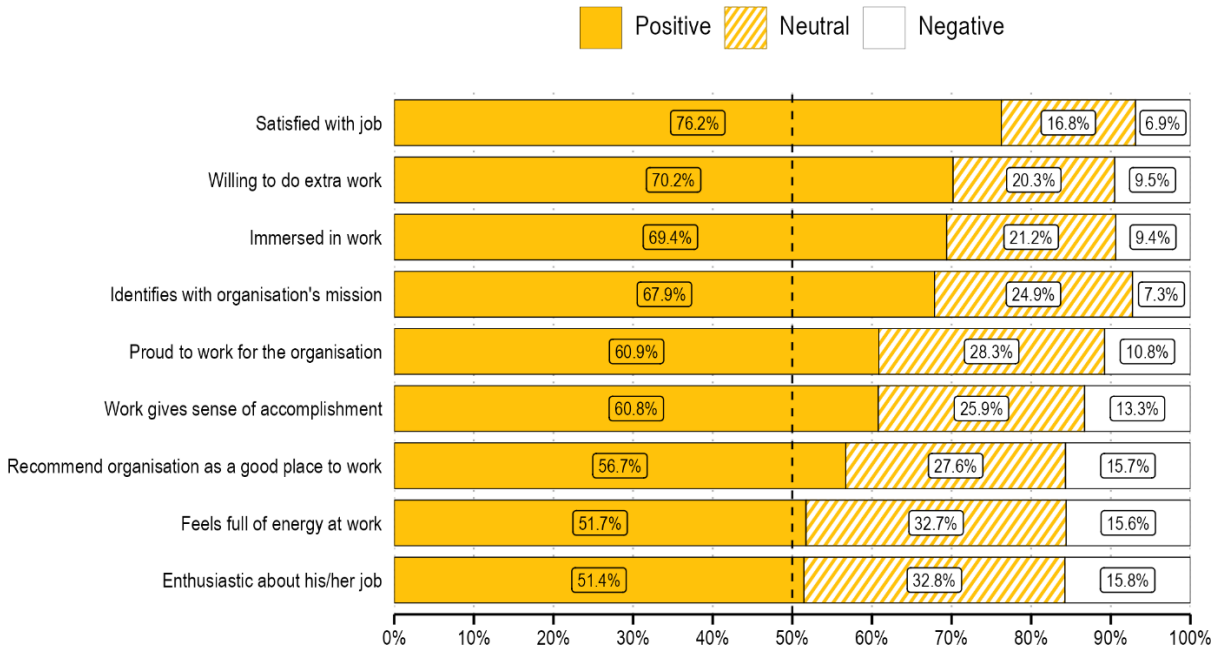
Note: The figure presents employee engagement and well-being index scores by country on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). Scores are calculated as the average of responses across the index items. For details on index construction and scoring, refer to Annex A. The EU average for the employee engagement index (EU8) includes all project countries, while the EU average for the well-being index (EU7) includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between the employee engagement and well-being indices are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in all countries where both indices are available.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/04v2wm

2.2. Employee engagement by subitem

Overall, around three in four employees in central administrations are satisfied with their jobs (76.2%) and are willing to go beyond expectations when it comes to carrying out their work (70.2%). In contrast, only slightly more than half of the employees feel energetic at work (51.7%) and enthusiastic about their jobs (51.4%).

Figure 2.2. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Employee engagement



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the employee engagement index. EU8 includes all project countries. Positive responses refers to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the supporting technical documentation (Annex A).
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/321csh

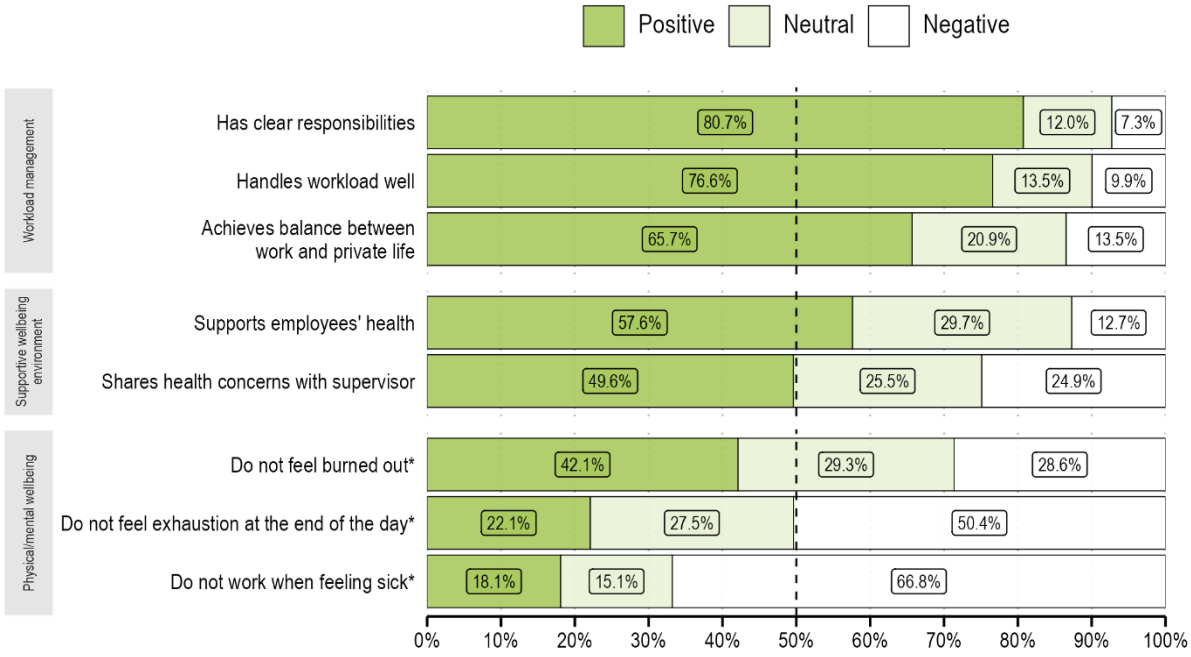
2.3. Employee well-being by subitem

The well-being index is grouped into three key subcategories: workload management, supportive well-being environment, and physical/mental well-being. Public servants generally perceive their responsibilities as clear and manageable (Figure 2.3). Across EU7 countries, around eight out of ten (80.7%) civil servants are satisfied with the clarity of responsibilities and work expectations. This is followed by the ability to manage workload effectively (76.6%) and to achieve work-life balance (65.7%).

The physical and mental well-being dimension stands out with lower scores in contrast to relatively more favourable results observed across other well-being dimensions. Only a little more than one-fifth of employees (22.1%) reported not feeling exhausted at the end of the day, and an even lower share (18.1%) stated that they refrain from working when feeling sick. Additionally, approximately one-third of employees reported feeling burned out, pointing to persistent challenges related to stress and mental strain in the workplace.

Across EU7 countries, employees are more likely to support colleagues dealing with mental health issues (57.6%) than to share their own difficulties with their immediate supervisors (49.6%). However, this eight-percentage-point gap masks significant variations across countries. In several countries, particularly Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, and The Slovak Republic, this gap exceeds 10 percentage points, indicating a stronger reluctance to discuss personal challenges with supervisors. Conversely, in Denmark and Lithuania, the gap is negative or negligible, meaning that employees are equally or more inclined to share their health concerns with supervisors as they are to offer support to colleagues facing similar issues. This is relevant as previous studies show that when public sector employees face personal challenges, whether work-related or not, strong workplace support systems and open dialogue contribute to increased well-being among employees (Medina-Garrido, Biedma-Ferrer and Sanchez-Ortiz, 2020[7]; Nielsen et al., 2017[8]).

Figure 2.3. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Employee well-being



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average for the underlying items of the employee well-being index. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Positive responses refers to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Items marked with an asterisk (*) "I sometimes work despite feeling sick," "I feel burned out," and "I often feel exhausted at the end of the working day." These items were reverse-coded in the visualisation to align with the direction of other items. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the supporting technical documentation (Annex A).
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/nqwuo5

2.4. Employee engagement and well-being indices by subgroups

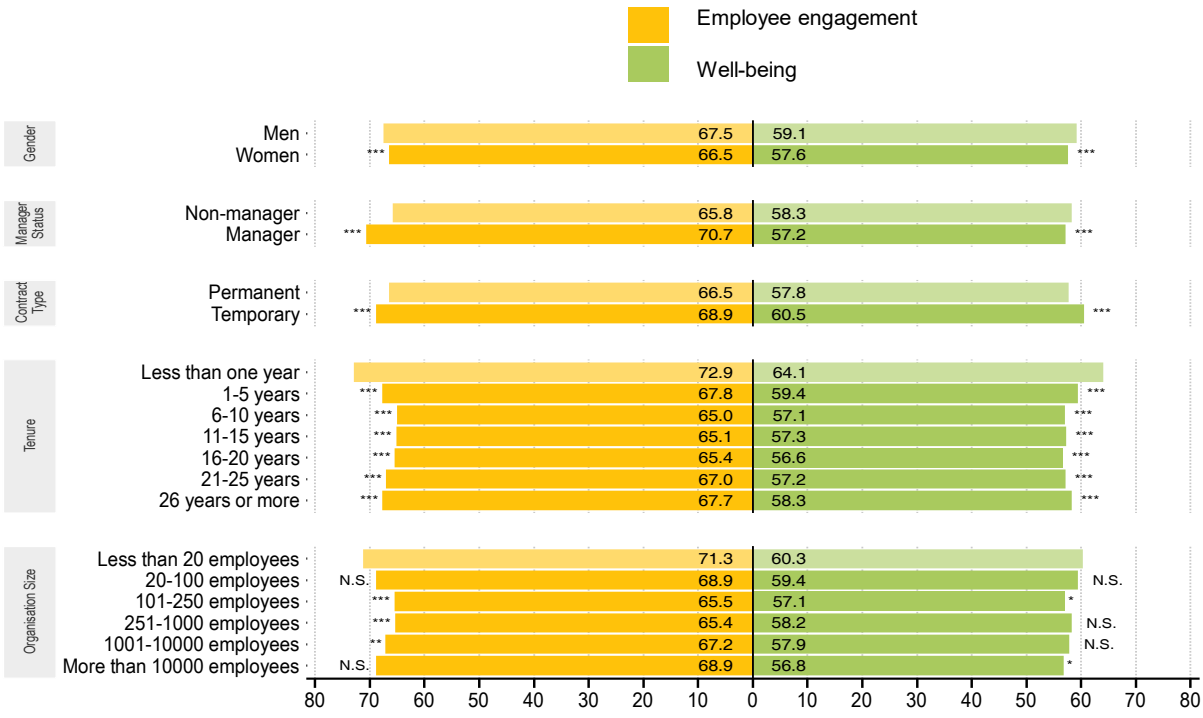
Employee engagement and well-being vary across key demographic and organisational characteristics. Managers' report higher engagement levels (70.7) compared to non-managers (65.8), likely due to key engagement drivers such as higher compensation and greater decision-making authority. In contrast, well-being trends follow a different pattern, employees with no managerial responsibilities report slightly higher well-being (58.3) than managers (57.2). This may be attributed to the additional stress and responsibilities associated with leadership roles, which can reduce overall well-being despite higher engagement levels.

Employee tenure follows a U-shaped pattern for both employee engagement and well-being. Employees with less than one year of service report the highest levels of engagement (72.9) and well-being (64.1), whereas those with 6 to 20 years of service have the lowest scores in both areas (Figure 2.4). This pattern aligns with research suggesting that early-career employees experience a "honeymoon effect," characterised by excitement and optimism that sustain both engagement and well-being as they develop skills. Mid-career employees, however, often face career plateaus and potential disillusionment. Late-career engagement typically rises again, potentially due to self-selection (with less engaged employees having departed), achievement of more senior positions, and proximity to retirement (Borst, Kruyen and Lako, 2017[9]).

The gender gap in both engagement and well-being is relatively small but significant. Men show slightly higher engagement (67.5) than women (66.5), though this difference is modest and may be partially explained by the higher proportion of men in managerial positions (see Chapter 1). Similarly, gender differences in well-being follow this trend, with men (59.1) reporting slightly higher well-being than women (57.6).

Organisation size shows slightly different trends for engagement and well-being. Engagement follows a U-shaped pattern, with employees working in the smallest and largest organisations reporting the highest levels of engagement compared to mid-sized organisations. However, there is no statistically significant relationship for well-being across different organisation sizes.

Figure 2.4. Differences in employee engagement and well-being by key demographics



Note: The figure presents the average EU8/EU7 scores for the employee engagement (EU8) and well-being indices (EU7), disaggregated by subgroups. Index scores are shown on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). EU8 includes all project countries, EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex. Statistical significance between sub-groups is indicated by stars next to each bar. A single asterisk (*) indicates significance at the 90% level, two asterisks (**) at the 95% level, and three asterisks (***) at the 99% level. 'N.S.' denotes a non-significant difference compared to the reference group. The reference group is shown in light yellow or light green.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/kc43yl

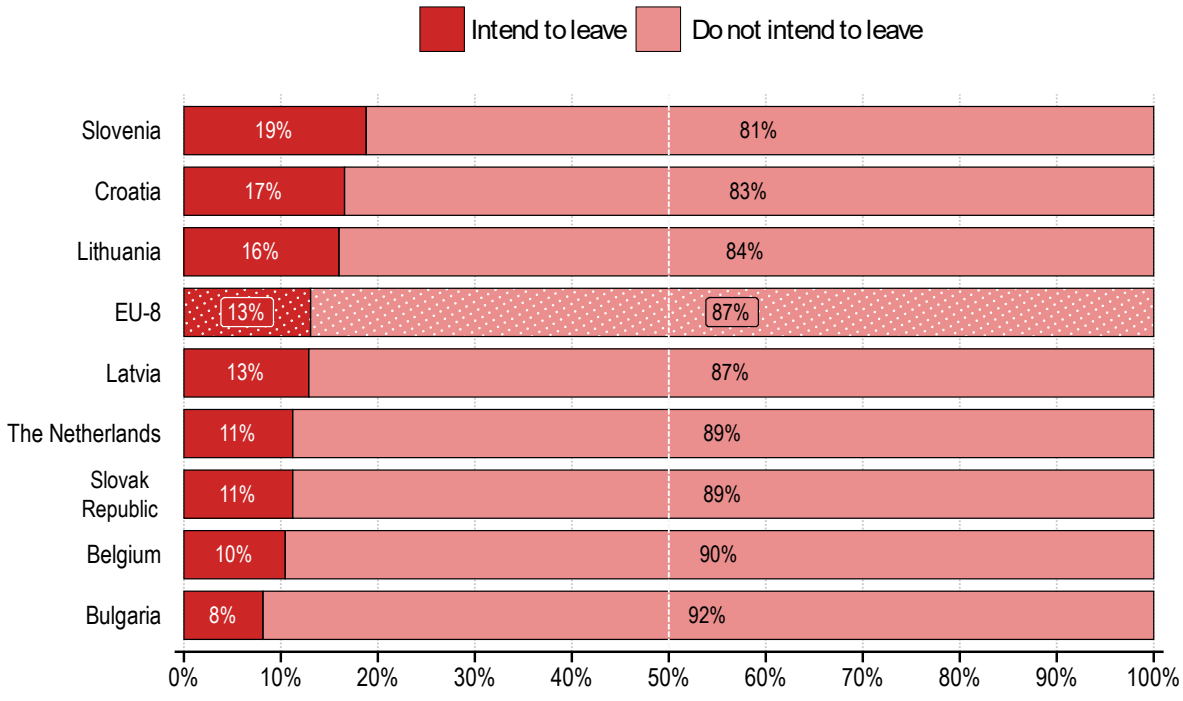
2.5. Turnover intentions

Employee turnover is important as it influences organisational effectiveness, service delivery, and institutional knowledge retention. While some turnover can bring fresh skills and perspectives, excessive turnover can disrupt workflows and increase recruitment and training costs. In public administration, where expertise, continuity, and institutional memory are crucial for policy implementation, high turnover can undermine long-term strategic goals.

Turnover is measured by asking respondents whether they intend to leave their organisation within the next 12 months. This self-reported intention to leave, not actual turnover, may not always align with actual rates, as stated intentions might not materialise due to barriers such as limited external opportunities or financial constraints. While comparing these intentions with actual turnover data is valuable, tracking self-reported intent over time can effectively indicate potential turnover risk, as numerous studies have shown it to be a strong predictor of actual departures.

In the EU8 countries, 13% of respondents indicated an intention to leave, with the highest rates in Slovenia (18.8%) and Croatia (16.6%), and the lowest in Bulgaria (8.2%) and Belgium (10.4%). Even in countries with a healthy turnover rate, it is important to consider organisational differences that are hidden by the national averages presented here. Both high and low turnover can signal potential management issues within organisations and should be carefully assessed. Excessively high or low turnover should be addressed, taking into account the underlying reasons provided by employees.

Figure 2.5. Turnover intentions by country



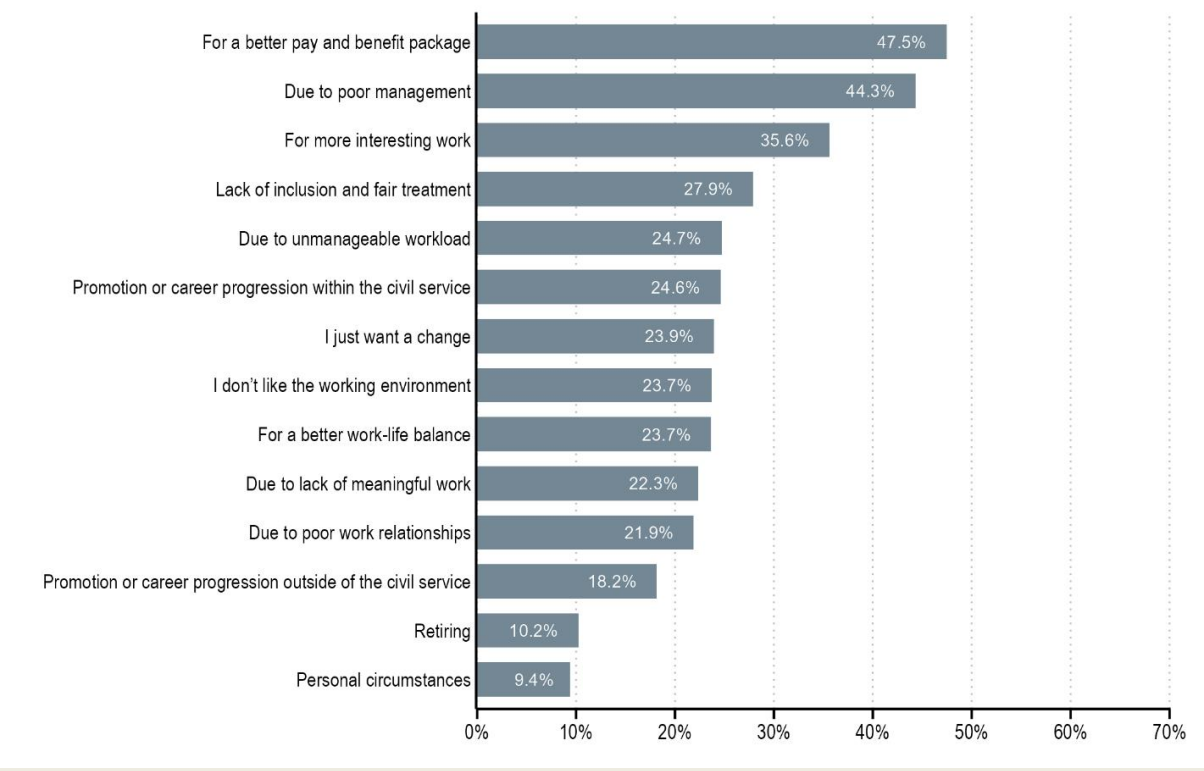
Note: The figure presents the country-level and EU8 average responses of "yes" (Intend to leave) and "no" (Do not intend to leave) to the question: "I want to leave my organisation within the next 12 months." EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/peaw69

Box 2.2. Turnover intentions across the EU8 countries

Amongst those who intend to leave their organisation, the top reasons cited are pay (47.5%), poor management (44.3%) and lack of interesting work (35.6%), while less common reasons include personal circumstances (9.4%), retiring (10.2%), and promotion or career progression outside of the civil service (18.2%) (Figure 2.6). At the country level, pay and benefits are the most cited reasons for intention to leave in all countries except the Netherlands and Belgium. Poor management ranks second in all countries except for Latvia and Lithuania, where unmanageable workload ranks second instead. Respondents could select all the reasons that applied.

Figure 2.6. Most frequently selected reasons for wanting to leave the organisation



Note: The figure presents the average responses to the question: "Why do you want to leave your organisation within the next 12 months?". EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Respondents could select all that apply, and are therefore represented across multiple answer categories.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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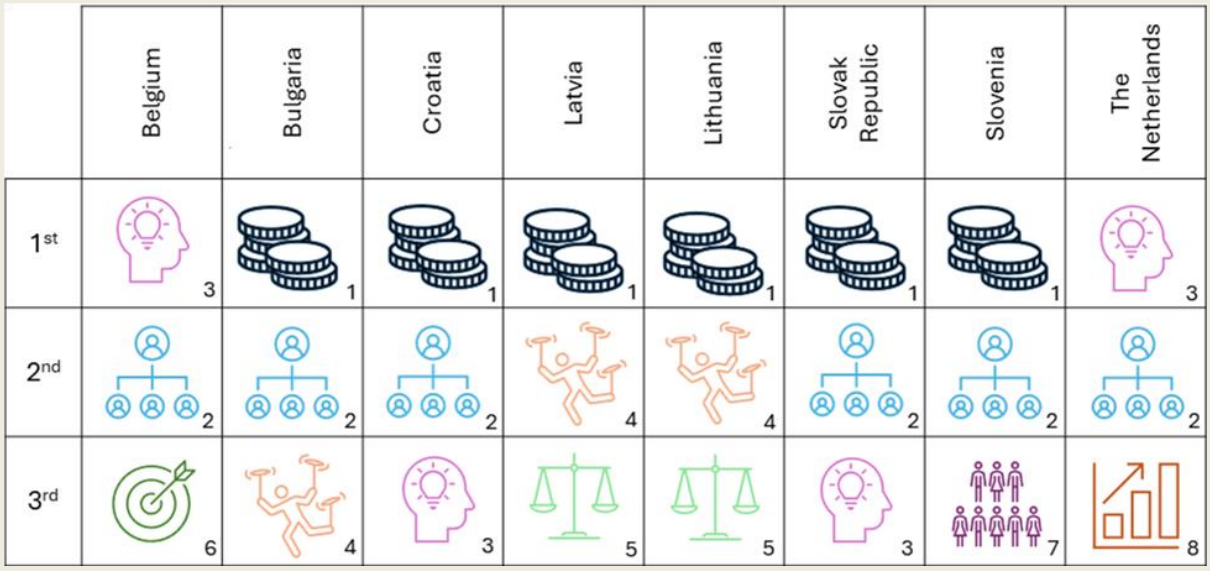
Figure 2.7. Top three reasons for wanting to leave the organisation within 12 months



Note: The figure presents the top selected reasons to the question: "Why do you want to leave the organisation within the next 12 months?: 1. For a better pay and benefit package, 2. Due to poor management, 3. For more interesting work, 4. Due to unmanageable workload, 5. For a better work-life balance, 6. Due to lack of meaningful work, 7. Due to lack of inclusion and fair treatment, 8. Due to a promotion or career progression within the civil service". Respondents could select all that apply, and are therefore represented across multiple answer categories.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

2.6. Effect of employee engagement on turnover

Employee engagement is important not only for how the current workforce performs but also for workforce planning, as employee engagement strongly affects retention. Engagement reduces risks of turnover as more engaged employees are less likely to want to leave their organisation. Specifically, an increase in engagement equivalent to an employee shifting their responses to all engagement items from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree' reduces the likelihood of wanting to leave the organisation by 80.1%[2] (Figure 2.8).

Examining the reasons behind intentions to leave reveals that higher engagement decreases turnover likelihood for most reasons, with notable exceptions: retirement and a promotion or career progression outside the civil service. Retirement stands apart, as employees approaching retirement age may remain highly engaged regardless of their intention to leave. Meanwhile, those seeking career progression often maintain high engagement, reflecting 'positive' motivations for departure. Ambitious and career-focused employees, in particular, may actively pursue new opportunities while continuing to be engaged in their current roles.

This distinction highlights two types of departure motivations. Positive motivations, such as career advancement, are often driven by highly engaged employees seeking growth opportunities, meaning that employees with higher engagement levels may still choose to leave. In contrast, negative reasons, such as an unmanageable workload, poor working conditions, or ineffective management, typically reflect workplace dissatisfaction. The likelihood of selecting these reasons for leaving decreases as engagement increases.

Figure 2.8. Engagements effect on turnover intentions

Note: The figure presents the EU8 increased or decreased likelihood of intending to leave the organisation when moving from one engagement response category to another. EU8 includes all project countries The positive scores indicate an increase in the likelihood of intending to leave, while the negative scores indicate a decreased likelihood of intending to leave. The grey bar represents values that are not statistically significant (on a 0.05% significance level). The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

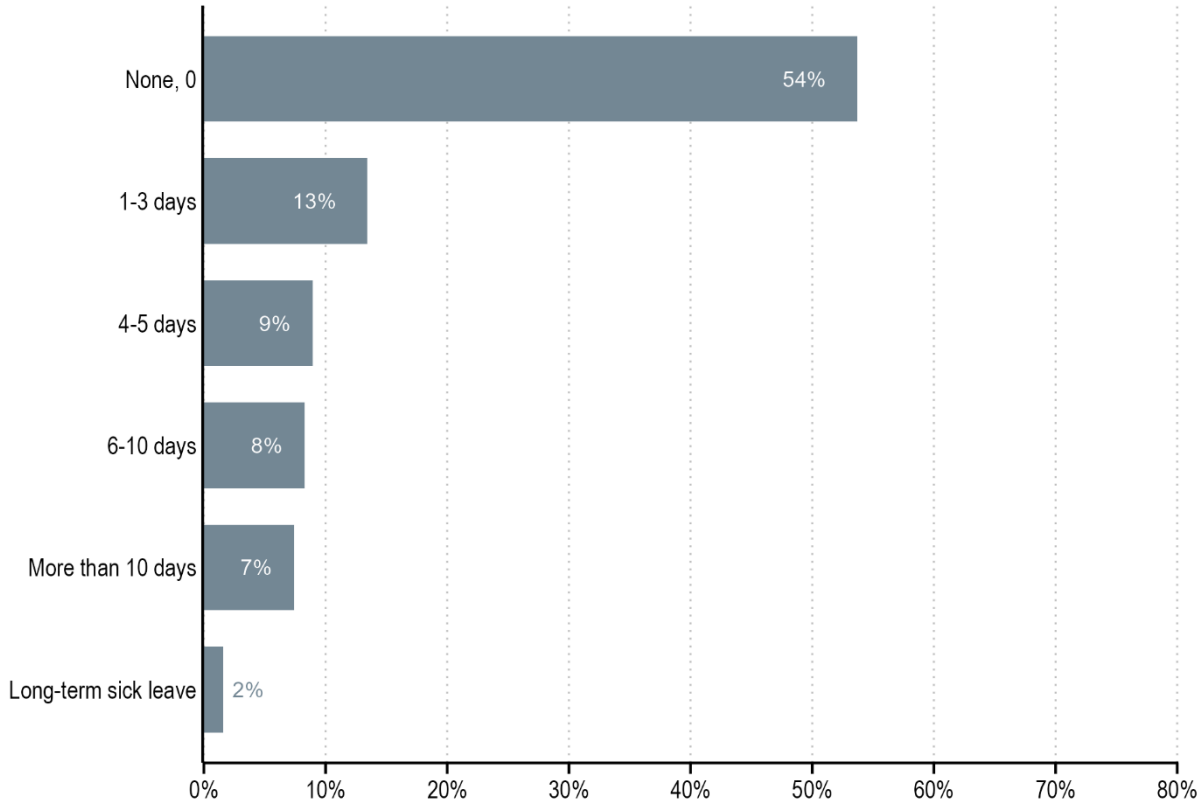
StatLink https://stat.link/tx4yn7

2.7. Effect of employee well-being on absenteeism

Employee well-being plays a critical role in workplace productivity and absenteeism. Poor well-being is closely linked to increased incidences and duration of sick leave, reducing overall workforce availability. In OECD countries, workers experiencing mental health problems take over 50% more sick days than their counterparts without such conditions (OECD, 2021[10]; OECD, 2022[11]). This issue is particularly relevant in the public sector, as previous studies showed that absenteeism rates tend to be higher than in private sector organisations (Mastekaasa, 2020[12]; Office for National Statistics, 2023[13]).

This survey finds that most public servants across EU7 countries report taking minimal or no sick leave. As illustrated inFigure 2.9, more than half (54%) of public servants across EU7 countries reported not taking any sick leave in the past six months. 13% took between 1-3 days, 9% took 4-5 days, and 8% took 6-10 days. While short-term absences are relatively common, long-term leave remains less frequent. It should, however, be noted that this represent self-reported sick-leave, and actual sick leave might be higher, as employees may not remember the exact number, or may want to underreport their sick leave due to stigmas associated with a high share of sick leave. It is also possible that individuals on long-term sick leave did not respond to the survey, particularly if they were still on leave during the period the survey was run. Despite these methodological challenges, individual trends in absenteeism can be explained by the levels of employee well-being. When comparing to the group of employees who took 0 days of sick leave one response category increase in an employee's well-being (i.e. from strongly disagree to disagree) is associated with a 21% lower likelihood of moving to the next sick leave category.[3]

Figure 2.9. Proportion of employees by number of reported sick leave days in the past 6 months



Note: The figure presents the average self-reported sick leave based on responses to the question: "During the last six months, how many sick leave days have you taken?" Results show the averages for six EU project countries: Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Slovak Republic, Slovenia, and the Netherlands. Latvia and Lithuania were excluded due to data availability. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Respondents selected from multiple response options.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/g9825w

2.8. Combating harassment and discrimination

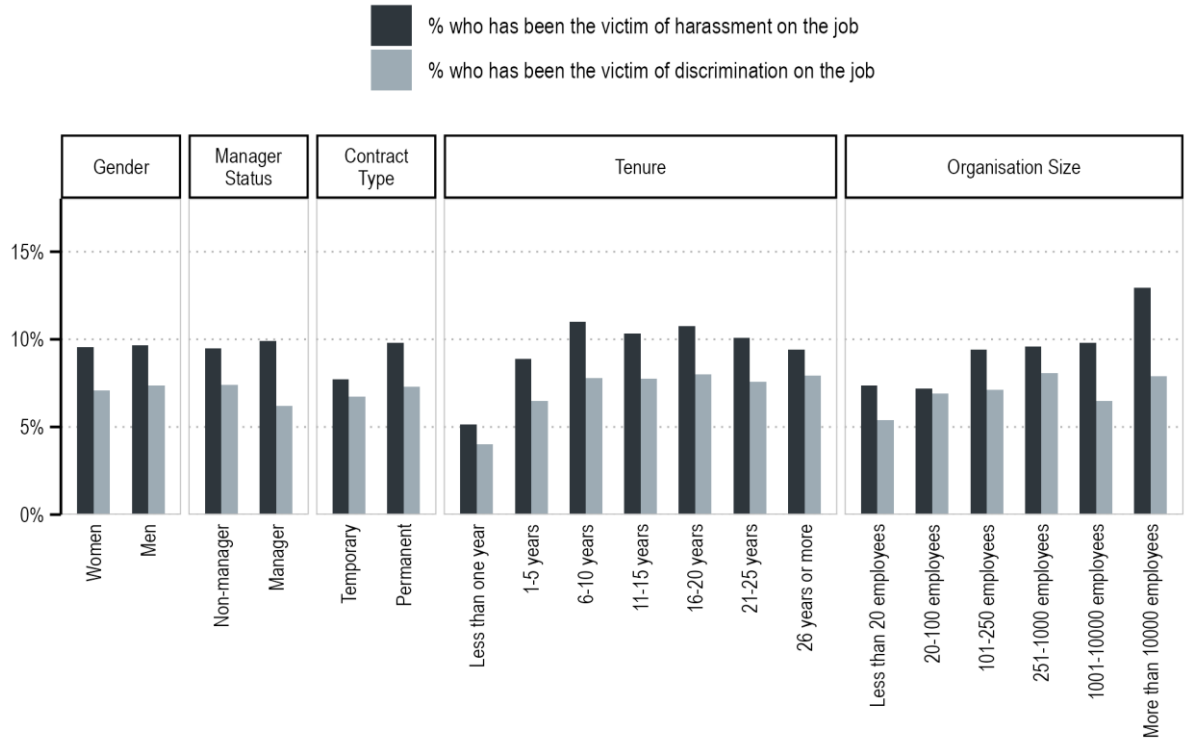
The public sector can attract and retain skilled professionals by demonstrating a strong commitment to combating all forms of harassment and discrimination. Employees who experience these adverse behaviours are more likely to face mental health challenges and are at greater risk of taking prolonged sick leave (Clark et al., 2021[14]). Beyond the direct impact on employees, government institutions, often seen as role models for broader society, risk losing credibility and public trust if they fail to effectively address these issues.

Across EU7 countries, 13.4% of civil servants reported experiencing harassment, discrimination, or both in the previous 12 months. In most countries, harassment was reported more frequently than discrimination. Harassment can range from bullying and psychological abuse to sexual harassment or insults. International Labour Organization (ILO) defines harassment as "*a range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence*" (ILO, 2019[15]). Based on this definition, 9.7% of public servants across participating countries

reported being victims of workplace harassment. Discrimination, on the other hand, involves *unfair treatment based on characteristics such as race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national origin, or social background. It results in the denial or impairment of equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation* (Convention ILO, 1958). According to this definition, 7.3% of public servants across the EU7 countries reported experiencing workplace discrimination in the last 12 months.

Workplace harassment and discrimination rates vary across demographic and employment groups in the public sector, however this survey finds no significant gender gap, as men and women report similar rates for both harassment and discrimination. The likelihood of experiencing harassment and discrimination peaks after six years in an organisation and remains relatively stable thereafter. Non-managers report slightly higher rates of discrimination (7.4%) compared to managers (6.2%), while rates of harassment are nearly identical (9.5% vs. 9.9%). Organisation size is another factor; as organisations grow, the frequency of harassment increases, peaking at 13% in extra-large organisations (Figure 2.10).

Figure 2.10. Harassment and discrimination by subgroups in the past 12 months



Note: The figure presents the average EU7 distribution of responses to the self-reported workplace harassment question: "Having carefully read the definition of harassment below, have you been the victim of harassment on the job in the past 12 months?" and the discrimination question: "Having carefully read the definition of discrimination, have you been the victim of discrimination on the job in the past 12 months?" EU7 includes all project countries except Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size, and are broken down by gender, managerial status, contract type, tenure, and organisation size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

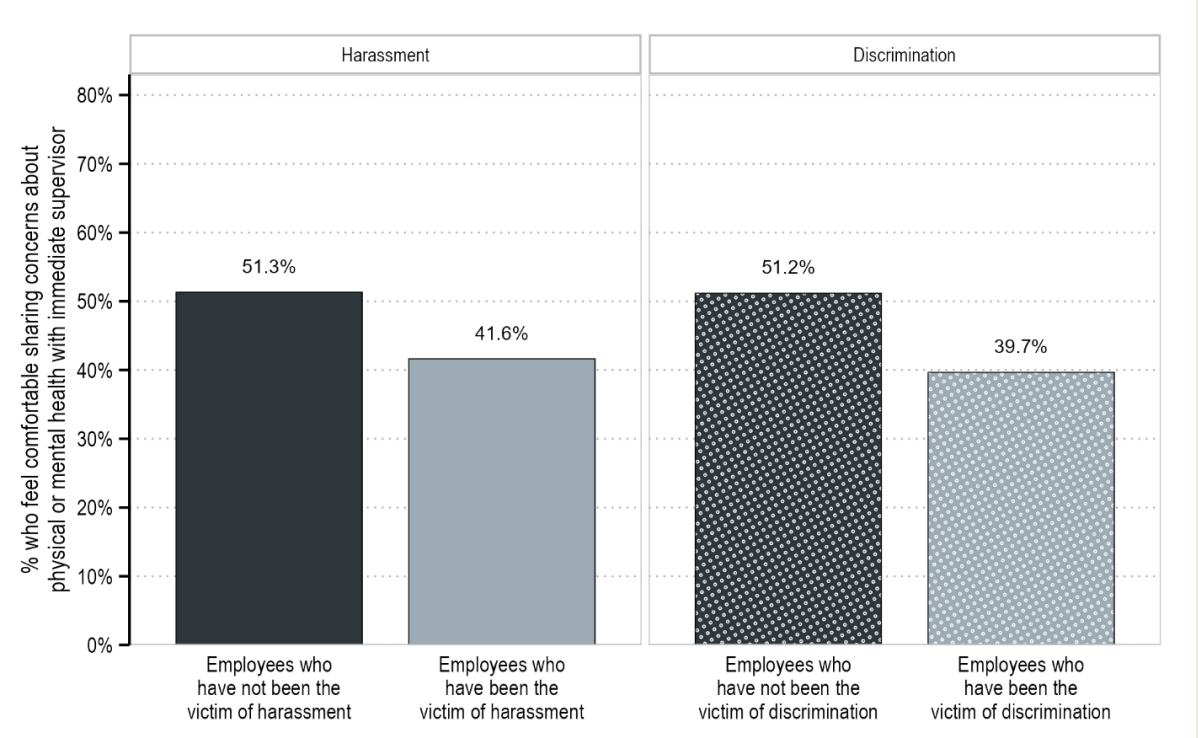
StatLink https://stat.link/fsl7qo

Box 2.3. Harassment and discrimination weaken open communication about well-being

Employees who have recently experienced discrimination or harassment are less likely to share concerns about their physical or mental well-being with their immediate supervisors (Figure 2.11). Additionally, they feel less capable of supporting colleagues in their work units who are experiencing mental health challenges.

Experiencing harassment and discrimination in the workplace not only harms individual well-being but may also create an environment of distrust. When individuals face mistreatment or feel marginalised, they may fear that disclosing health-related concerns could lead to further mistreatment, negative career consequences, or being perceived as weak or incapable. To avoid these risks, employees may choose to voice concerns about issues that matter to them outside the internal mechanisms rather than through HR processes or via their reporting lines (i.e. line or senior management). For instance, they might share concerns or emotions informally, such as in casual workplace conversations, in ways that are not recognised by the organisational voice system and may even be perceived as counterproductive. Neglecting these voices can harm organisational performance and reputation while also diminishing employee well-being and motivation at work (Klaas, Olson-Buchanan and Ward, 2011[16]).

Figure 2.11. Victims of discrimination and harassment feel less comfortable sharing concerns about their well-being with their immediate supervisors



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average of responses to the question: 'I would feel comfortable sharing concerns about my physical or mental health with my immediate supervisor' broken down by experiences of workplace harassment and discrimination in the last 12 months. EU8 includes all project countries. The mean differences are statistically significant for both items at the $p < 0.01$ level.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/vsflt2

2.9. Key drivers of employee engagement and well-being

Figure 2.12 and Figure 2.13 illustrate the impact of key drivers on engagement and well-being on the horizontal axis, and the index scores of the drivers on the vertical axis. This analysis helps identify which areas should be prioritised for intervention, and where maintaining existing strengths is essential for sustaining employee engagement and well-being.

- **The top-right corner** represents the ideal position, where a driver has both a strong effect and a high index score. This means employees already perceive this driver positively, so efforts should focus on maintaining its current level to avoid sharp declines in well-being and engagement.
- **The top-left corner** indicates a driver with a limited effect but a high index score. While this aspect does not significantly influence engagement and well-being, it is still worth maintaining, as neglecting it could erode employee satisfaction over time. Monitoring trends in these drivers can help organisations respond proactively if their importance increases.
- **The bottom-right corner** signals an area with high potential for improvement. Here, the driver has a strong effect but a low index score. Investing in improvements in this area could yield substantial gains in engagement and well-being. Policy interventions, leadership strategies, or targeted organisational changes should prioritise these drivers to maximise impact on employee satisfaction and productivity.
- **The bottom-left corner** represents drivers with both a low effect size and a low index score. While the immediate impact of improving these drivers may be smaller than those in the bottom-right quadrant, their low starting point suggests there is still meaningful room for improvement.

2.9.1. Employee Engagement

Learning and development are the most influential driver of employee engagement, followed by senior leadership (Figure 2.12). Learning and development provide employees with opportunities to build their skills and progress in their careers, which, in turn, can enhance their motivation and commitment to the organisation, as well as increase their job satisfaction and sense of purpose (see Chapter 5). Senior leadership plays a crucial role in setting the organisation's vision and direction and shaping the organisational culture, both of which are essential for fostering engagement (see Chapter 4).

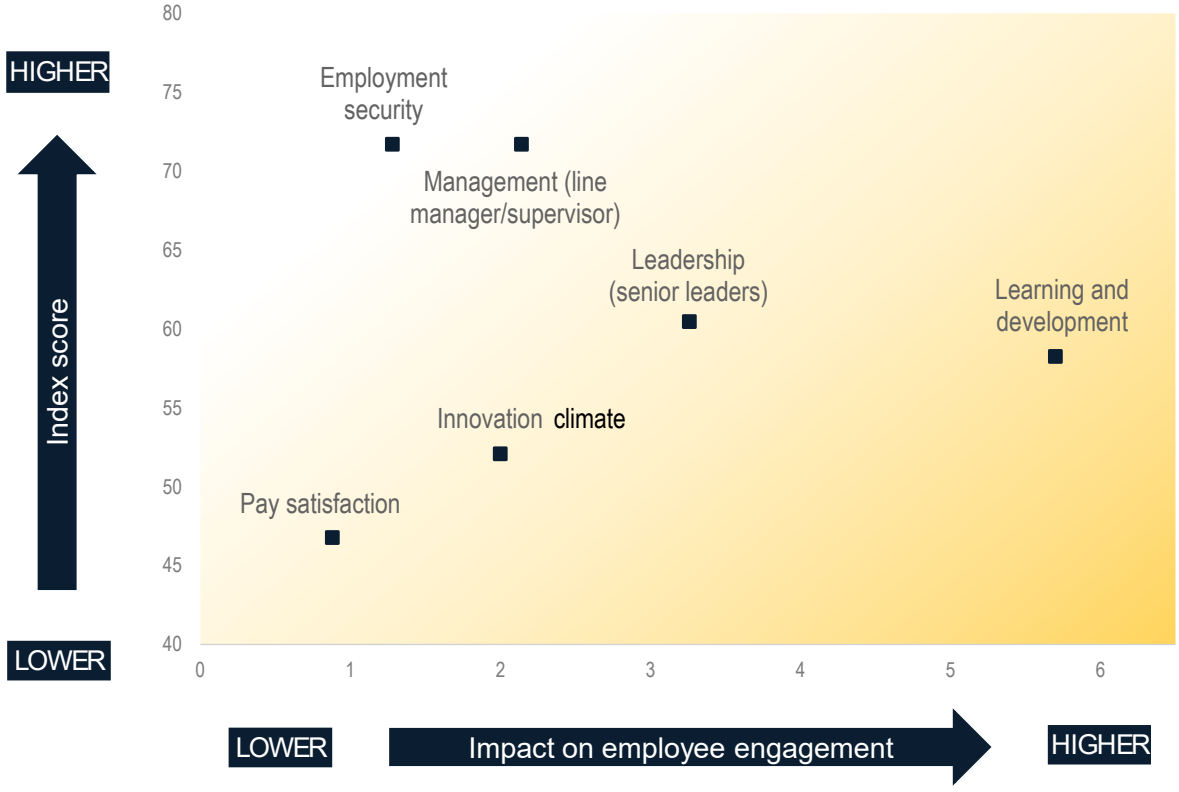
By contrast, pay satisfaction has a weaker direct effect on engagement. However, it is important to note that the effect remains significant. Given that overall pay satisfaction is low, there is substantial room for improvement, which could in turn increase the engagement substantively. However, the costs and efforts associated could be high.

2.9.2. Employee Well-being

Learning and development are also the most influential driver of employee well-being, followed by management (Figure 2.13). Learning and development are crucial for well-being, as continuous learning equips employees with the necessary skills to build resilience, adapt to change and manage workplace pressures. Line management also plays a pivotal role by determining workload, providing feedback and accommodating flexible working arrangements. The third most influential driver is employment security, which is currently at a high level. However, it should be noted that this factor can be volatile over time, particularly when threatened by fiscal pressures. Given its strong impact, a decline in satisfaction with employment security could have significant consequences for overall well-being.

Compared to engagement, the effect of senior leadership on well-being is weaker, out of all the drivers it has the weakest direct effect on well-being. This is unsurprising, as senior leadership is more removed from individual employees. While they are responsible for setting the direction of workplace well-being policies, they are not in direct contact with employees nor responsible for the day-to-day distribution of work.

Figure 2.12. Drivers of employee engagement



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of employee engagement in a mixed-effects regression model that controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. All indices depicted are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. The x-axis presents the effect sizes of each index on engagement, while the y-axis shows the index scores. Pay satisfaction and employment security are not indices, but represent the average scores on the questions: 'I am satisfied with my salary' and 'I am satisfied with the security of my employment.' The data covers the EU7, which includes all project countries except the Netherlands.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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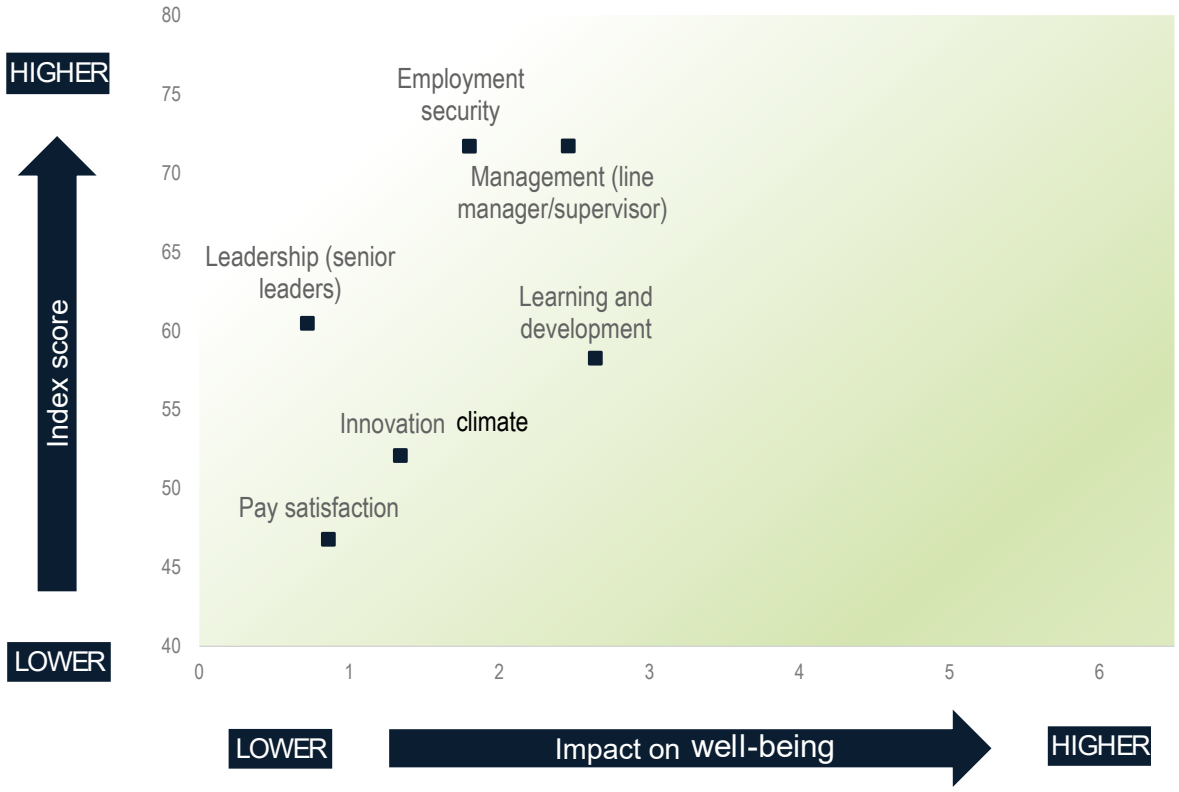
Figure 2.13. Drivers of employee well-being



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of employee well-being in a mixed effect regression model that controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure and organisational and country fixed effects. All indices depicted are statistically significant at the p<0.01 level. The x-axis presents the effect sizes for each index on engagement, while y-axis shows the index scores. Pay satisfaction and employment security are not indices, but the average scores for the questions: 'I am satisfied with my salary' and 'I am satisfied with the security of my employment'. Data includes the EU7, all project countries except the Netherlands.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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2.10. Conclusions and considerations for policy actions

Across the EU8 countries, employees tend to be relatively engaged. Around three in four employees report being satisfied with their job, although only about half say they feel enthusiastic about it. Engagement levels are highest among male managers, temporary staff, early-career employees, and those working in small organisations. Two of the most important factors shaping engagement are opportunities for learning and development and the quality of senior leadership, yet employees tend to view both these areas with ambivalence, highlighting clear opportunities for improvement.

In contrast to work engagement, employees express less satisfaction with their overall well-being. While a majority (around four in five) report having clear responsibilities and managing their workload well, significant concerns remain regarding both physical and mental health. Notably, only one in five employees refrain from working when feeling unwell. Well-being tends to be higher among men, non-managers, employees on temporary contracts, those in the early stages of their careers, and those working in small organisations. Employee well-being is strongly influenced by access to learning and development opportunities and the quality of line management. However, employees often view learning and development with ambivalence, highlighting room for substantial improvement in this area. Given this, public service leaders, managers and those designing reforms may wish to consider the following key considerations for policy actions:

- Enhancing learning and development activities, including supporting mobility and career growth, can result in improvements in both employee engagement and well-being. As the strongest driver of both employee engagement and well-being, investing in learning and development could lead to significant improvements in these areas. The overall satisfaction with learning and development is at 58.3, slightly above neutral, which means there is room for improvement.
- Strengthening leadership and management is another important area of focus. Senior leadership is the second strongest driver of employee engagement, playing a key role in shaping organisational direction and culture. Line managers, meanwhile, are the second strongest driver of employee well-being, directly influencing employees' daily work. Currently, senior leadership presents the greatest opportunity for improvement, with a satisfaction score of 60.3, standing at 10 percentage points lower than line managers at 71.8.
- Improving engagement reduces excessive turnover, which can disrupt workflows and increase recruitment and training costs. Employees with higher engagement levels are less likely to cite negative reasons to leave their organisation, such as poor management or a lack of interesting work. However, they are more likely to leave for positive reasons, such as career progression, suggesting a rather healthy turnover.
- The fact that over 40% of respondents report feeling burned out underlines the importance of implementing comprehensive well-being initiatives that go beyond physical health to address mental, emotional, and social well-being. Promoting open communication, recognition, and inclusive management practices can also contribute to a healthier and more resilient workforce, ultimately reducing absenteeism and improving overall organisational performance.

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Notes

[1] All regressions models in this chapter control for gender, age, educational attainment, contract type, working pattern (full/part-time), managerial status, tenure, country, organisational ID, organisational size.

[2] The relationship between employee engagement and turnover was tested using a mixed-effects logistic regression model. Turnover intention was measured through the question "Do you want to leave your organisation within the next 12 months?" (yes/no), combined with the follow-up question "Why do you want to leave your organisation within the next 12 months?". Respondents could select multiple reasons, so individuals may appear in several answer categories. The dependent variable therefore captures whether respondents who expressed an intention to leave cited a specific reason. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and country fixed effects. The relationship is statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

[3] The relationship between well-being and sick leave was tested using an ordinal logistic regression model. Well-being was measured on a 0–100 scale, while sick leave was categorised into six response items. The model controlled for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and country fixed effects. The relationship is statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level.

3 Team and organisational performance

Strong team and organisational performance are essential for public services to deliver on their mandates and provide value to citizens. Understanding what drives that performance from the perspective of employees provides valuable insights into the internal conditions that support or hinder organisational effectiveness. This chapter examines how different aspects of the employee experience shape perceptions, identifying line managers and the innovation climate as the most influential drivers of perceived team and organisational performance, respectively. It also explores how perceptions of performance vary across countries and key demographic characteristics. This chapter then provides recommendations for policy actions based on these insights.

Key findings

- Employees believe that their organisations are effective and accountable but are less positive regarding the efficiency and responsiveness of their organisations. While 72.8% of employees believe their organisations serves citizens well, only 41.2% feel that resources are used efficiently.
- Employees are very positive regarding the performance of their team with 86.1% of employees believe their team contributes positively the performance of the organisation.
- Innovation climate and senior leadership emerge as the two most influential drivers of perceived organisational performance, underlining the importance of perceived support for innovation and capable, forward-looking senior leaders.
- Management and employee engagement emerge as the two most influential drivers of perceived team performance, underlining the importance of quality of management and the extent to which employees feel engaged in their work.
- Managing underperformance is a key challenge in central administrations with half of employees (51.6%) reporting underperformers typically remain in their organisations and continue to underperform.

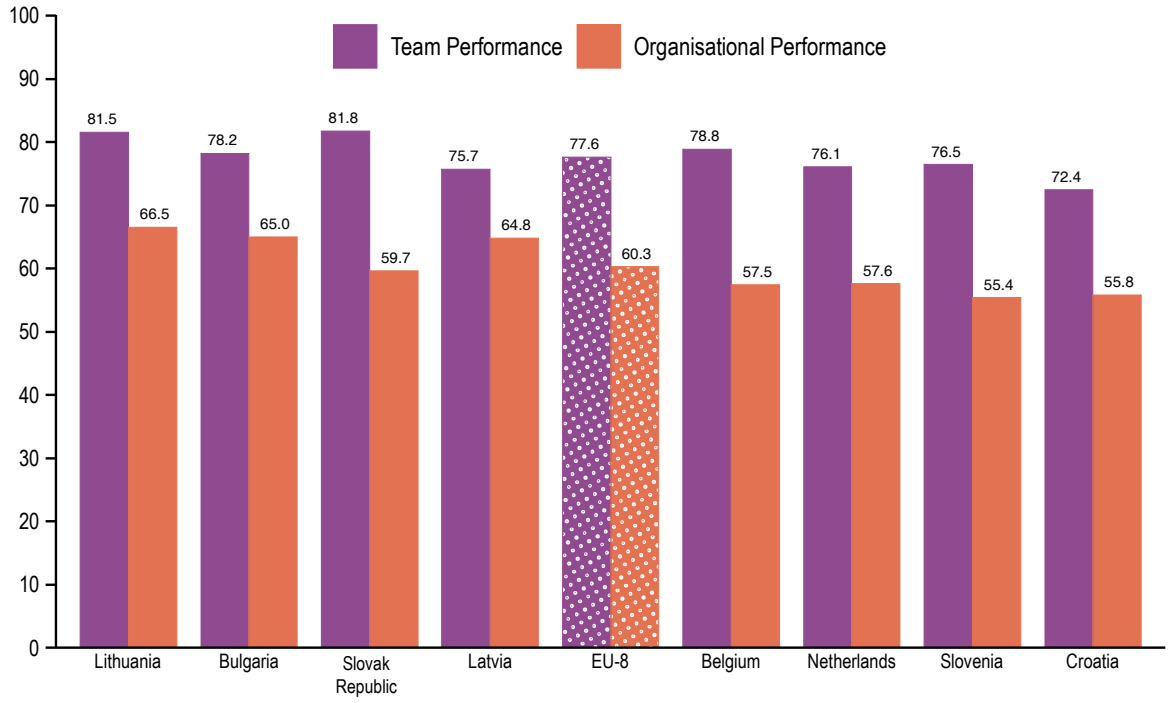
Enhancing the performance of public services to deliver for citizens is a top priority of central governments. In the face of growing fiscal pressures, greater uncertainty and increasingly complex policy challenges, public service organisations must be efficient, accountable and responsive in order to successfully meet the needs of the public and maintain trust in central government institutions. Building high-performing teams is also essential for addressing complex challenges and adapting to a dynamic environment. The remainder of this chapter explores findings from the survey on the relationships between various aspects of employees' work experience and their perceptions of team and organisational performance and identifies key drivers of these important outcomes.

It is important to note that the analysis in this chapter relies on employees' perceptions of team and organisational performance rather than objective performance metrics. The use of perception data is useful for taking a broad, multi-faceted view of performance and sheds light on how employee experiences of HRM practices shape team and organisational dynamics. These insights enable the identification of areas for improvement and recommendations that address employees' needs and expectations to enhance collective performance.

3.1. Perceptions of organisational and team performance in EU8 central administrations

Overall, the survey shows that employee perceptions of organisational performance across EU8 countries are somewhat neutral with a mean score of 60.3 (Figure 3.1). In contrast, perceptions of team performance are more positive than organisational performance with a mean score of 77.6 (17.3 p.p.). The Slovak Republic exhibits the largest difference (22 p.p.) between perceptions of team and organisational performance while Latvia reports the smallest (10.9 p.p.).

Figure 3.1. Team and organisational performance by country



Note: The figure presents team and organisational index scores by country on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). Scores are calculated as the average of responses across the index items. For details on index construction and scoring, refer to Annex A. The EU average for team and organisational performance (EU8) includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between the team performance and organisational performance indices are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in all countries where both indices are available.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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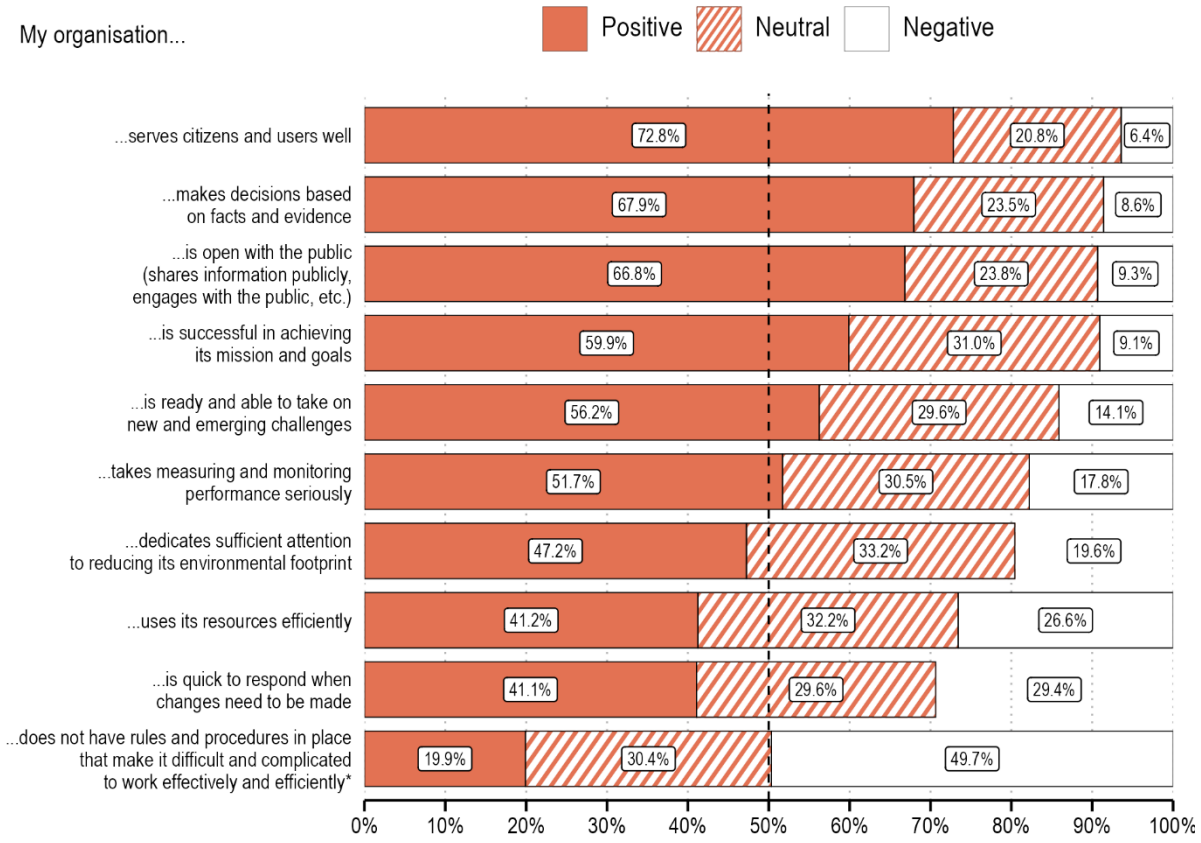
3.2. Organisational performance by subitem

Overall, employees hold nuanced views of their organisation's performance in which they typically evaluate their organisations as effective and accountable but also limited in their efficiency and responsiveness. As illustrated in Figure 3.2, most responding employees believe that their organisation is effective in that it serves citizens and users well (72.8%) and successfully delivers on its mission and goals (59.9%). The 13-percentage point difference between these dimensions may suggest that employees are less knowledgeable in regard to the organisations mission or goals but do feel as though the work of their organisations has positive impacts on the public. Employees also believe that their organisations are acting with accountability and transparency with two-thirds reporting that their organisations make decisions based on evidence (67.9%) and are open with the public (66.8%). Evidence-based decision-making and openness are crucial drivers of public trust in both government and public services (OECD, 2024[1]). Collectively, these results suggest that employees feel that their organisation is effective in delivering results and upholding public service values.

At the same time, however, employees are less positive about the efficiency of their organisations. Less than half of employees believe that their organisation uses resources efficiently (41.2%) or is dedicating sufficient attention to reducing its environmental footprint (47.2%). Additionally, half of employees (49.7%) believe that the rules and procedures of their organisation impact its efficiency.

Figure 3.2. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses- Organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the organisational performance index. EU8 includes all project countries. Positive responses refer to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.' Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. The original item question, formulated as "has rules and procedures in place that make it difficult and complicated to work effectively and efficiently," has been reverse-coded and reworded in the visualisation to align with the direction of other items. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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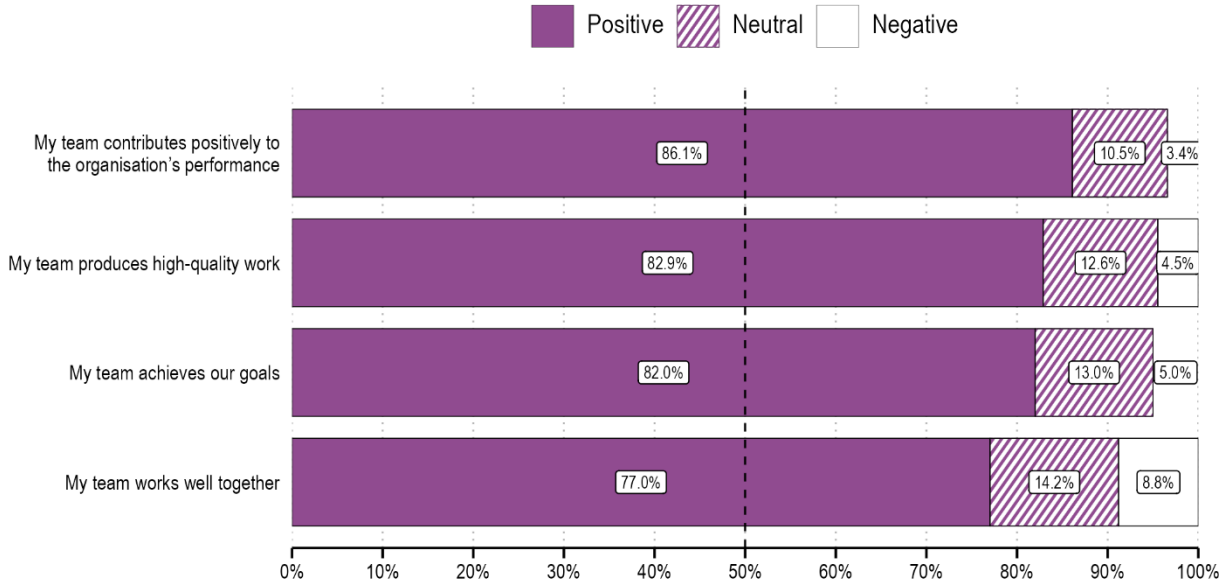
3.3. Team performance by subitem

Across EU8 countries, responding employees are very positive about the performance of their respective teams (Figure 3.3). As observed in perceptions of organisational performance, employees are particularly positive regarding the ability of their team to deliver results. Specifically, more than 4 out of 5 employees believe that their team contributes to the performance of the organisation (86.1%), produces high-quality work (82.9%) and achieves their goals (82.0%). In contrast, employees were marginally less positive (77.0%) in their perceptions of team dynamics and how well their team works together.

Figure 3.3. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses- Team performance



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the team performance index. the EU8 average for the underlying items of the team performance index. EU8 includes all project countries. Positive responses refer to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.' Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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3.4. Organisational and team performance indices by subgroups

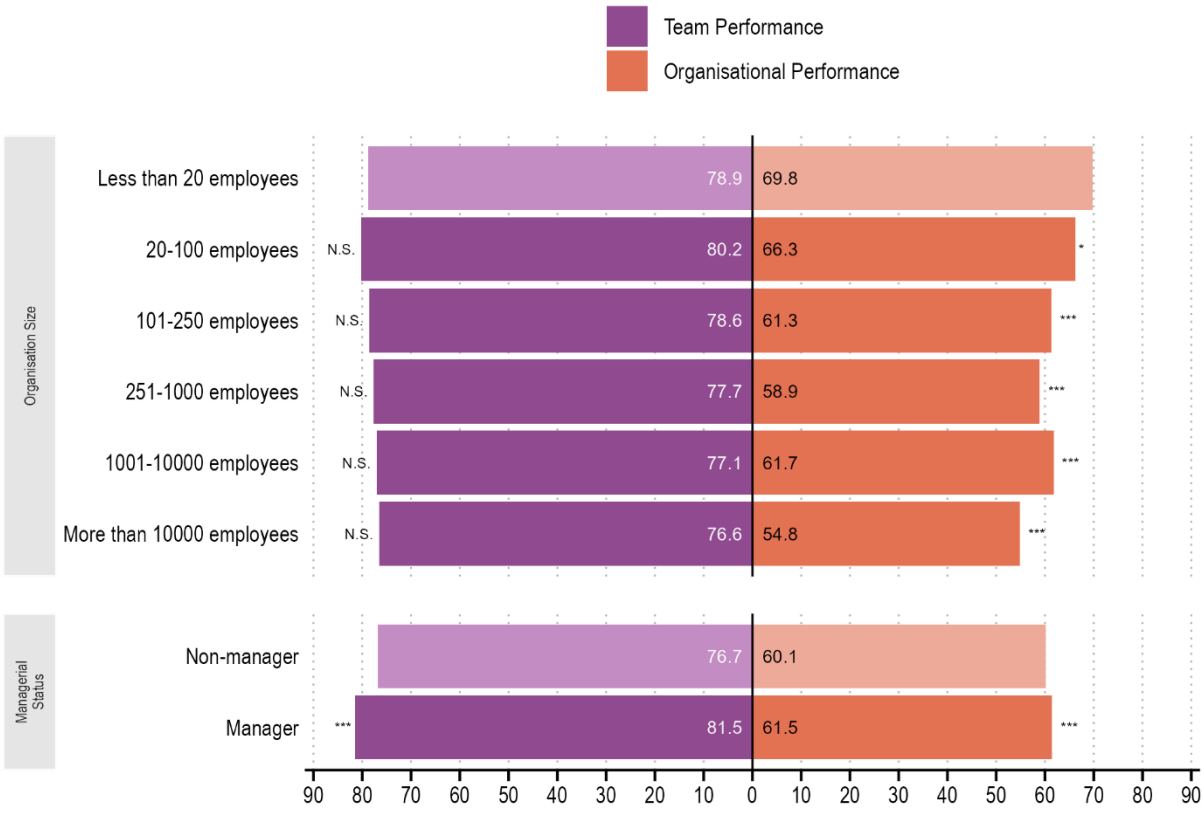
Employee perceptions of organisational performance vary considerably by organisational size; however, perceptions of team performance remain relatively stable (Figure 3.4). For team performance, very large organisations (more than 10 000 employees) score the lowest (76.5) while micro-organisations (less than 20 employees) score the highest (80.2), a difference of just 3.7 percentage points. Conversely, perceptions of organisational performance are highest in micro-organisations (69.8) and lowest in very large organisations (56.5), a difference of almost 13 percentage points.

Among dimensions of organisational performance, less than a third of employees in very large organisations believe their organisation is quick to respond when changes need to be made (29.2%), much lower than in micro (67.3%) or very small (53.7%) organisations. Similarly, the proportion of employees who believe their organisation uses its resources efficiently is smaller in extra-large organisations (27.3%) compared to organisations with micro (64.5%) or very small (57.3%) organisations. More than half of those in extra-large organisations (59.7%) believe the rules and procedures in place make it difficult to work effectively and efficiently, compared to only a third of employees in micro (34.6%) or very small (36.6%) organisations.

One explanation for this different could be the higher amount of bureaucracy in large organisations. As larger organisations are required to coordinate across a greater number of employees, they frequently adopt additional control processes to ensure alignment across the organisation. This additional bureaucracy can in turn result in slower decision-making. From a practical standpoint, as organisations grow, maintaining effective communication and coordination across various functions can become more challenging, increasing the risk of siloing and duplication of efforts.

Managers are marginally more positive in their perceptions of team performance (81.5) compared to non-managerial employees (76.7). However, perceptions of organisational performance remained stable across managers (61.5) and non-managerial employees (60.1). Managers may be more inclined to view their teams' performance positively owing to their leadership role. At the same time, the greater exposure of managers to the strategic concerns of the organisation and awareness of broader challenges may explain why this positive bias does not extend to the performance of the organisation.

Figure 3.4. Difference in perceptions of team & organisational performance by key demographics



Note: The figure presents the average EU8 scores for the team and organisational performance indices (EU7), disaggregated by subgroups. Index scores are shown on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). EU8 includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex. Statistical significance between sub-groups is indicated by stars next to each bar. A single asterisk (*) indicates significance at the 90% level, two asterisks (**) at the 95% level, and three asterisks (***) at the 99% level. 'N.S.' denotes a non-significant difference compared to the reference group. The reference group is shown in light purple or light orange.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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3.5. Key drivers of organisational and team performance

For public service organisations to perform effectively, their workforce must be empowered and enabled to deliver results. Employees' experiences within their organisations have important implications for their performance, productivity and commitment. This section examines how various dimensions of the employee experience drive perceived organisational and team performance, highlighting the critical role of a supportive and engaging work environment in fostering collective success.

As described in Chapter 1, team and organisational performance are treated as outcomes influenced by various key drivers, including employee engagement and well-being. While it is also likely that employees benefit from being in high-performing teams and organisations, and subsequently may evaluate aspects of their environment more positively, the broader academic literature highlights the relevance of these drivers for performance outcomes (Shin, 2017[2]; Koys, 2001[3]).

3.5.1. Organisational Performance

Figure 3.5 illustrates the impact of key drivers on organisational performance on the horizontal axis, and the current score of those key drivers on the vertical axis. It shows that innovation climate (see Chapter 5 on "Learning, Development, and Innovation" for further analysis) is the most influential driver of organisational performance, followed by senior leadership (see chapter 4 for further analysis).

These drivers, which operate at the organisational level, have the potential for broad, top-down impacts on the organisation by shaping the overarching conditions within which individual employees operate. This highlights the critical role of strategic organisational elements in shaping performance outcomes.

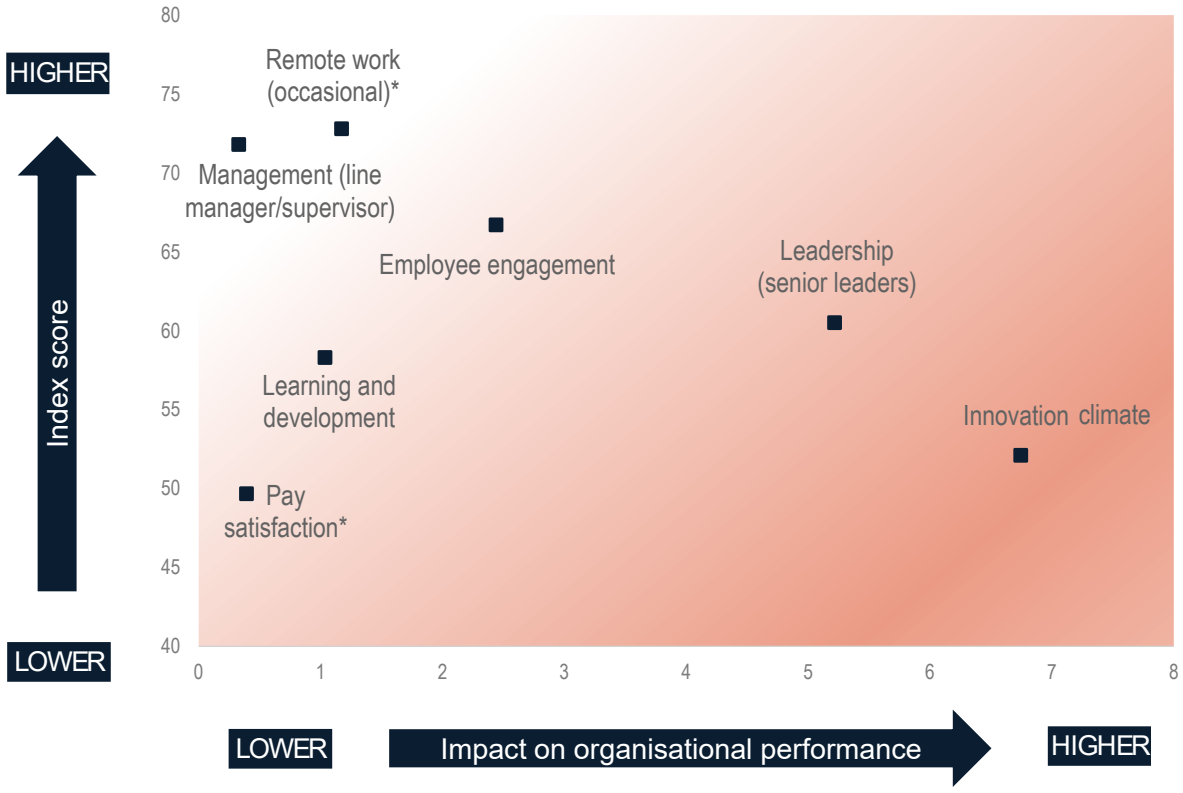
Among dimensions of organisational performance, employees feel less positively about their organisation's ability to respond quickly when change is needed (Figure 3.2). As such, high-performing organisations can be differentiated, in part, by their responsiveness. One explanation then is that innovation climate, by shaping how public service organisations evolve and respond to changes in the operating environment, influences how employees perceive the responsiveness of their organisation. By encouraging new ideas and continuous improvement, a strong innovation climate can enable organisations to be proactive in identifying when change is needed and implementing solutions.

Senior leaders are responsible for setting the mission, priorities, and strategic direction of the organisation. They are also critical in shaping the culture of the organisation including the upholding of public service values. Collectively, this shapes how public service organisations deliver on their mandate, and by extension, how effectively and efficiently they deliver for citizens. Innovation climate and senior leadership therefore may play an integral to employees' belief in their organisation's ability to achieve their overarching objectives and deliver sustainably.

In contrast, more tangible aspects of day-to-day work, such as pay satisfaction, remote working arrangements, and line management, were relatively less influential in driving perceptions of organisational performance. This is not to suggest, however, that these aspects of employee working life are not important for building high performing public service organisations. While the *direct* effects of working conditions on perceived organisational performance are weak, these conditions still influence organisational performance *indirectly* by enhancing employee engagement and productivity.

Chapter 2 demonstrates the significant impacts of learning and development opportunities, line management, employment security and pay for employees' engagement with their work. The results of the survey also highlight that employee engagement, in turn, shapes perceptions of organisational performance. Thus, while innovation climate and senior leadership may shape the overarching environment in which employees deliver work, it is important that employees are engaged sufficiently to be effective within this environment.

Figure 3.5. Drivers of organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of organisational performance in a mixed-effects regression model that controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. All indices depicted are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. The x-axis presents the effect sizes of each index on organisational performance, while the y-axis shows the index scores. Pay satisfaction and employment security are not indices but represent the average scores for the questions: "I am satisfied with my salary" and "I am satisfied with the security of my employment." The data includes the EU7, comprising all project countries except the Netherlands. An asterisk (*) denotes a negative effect of the driver.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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3.5.2. Team Performance

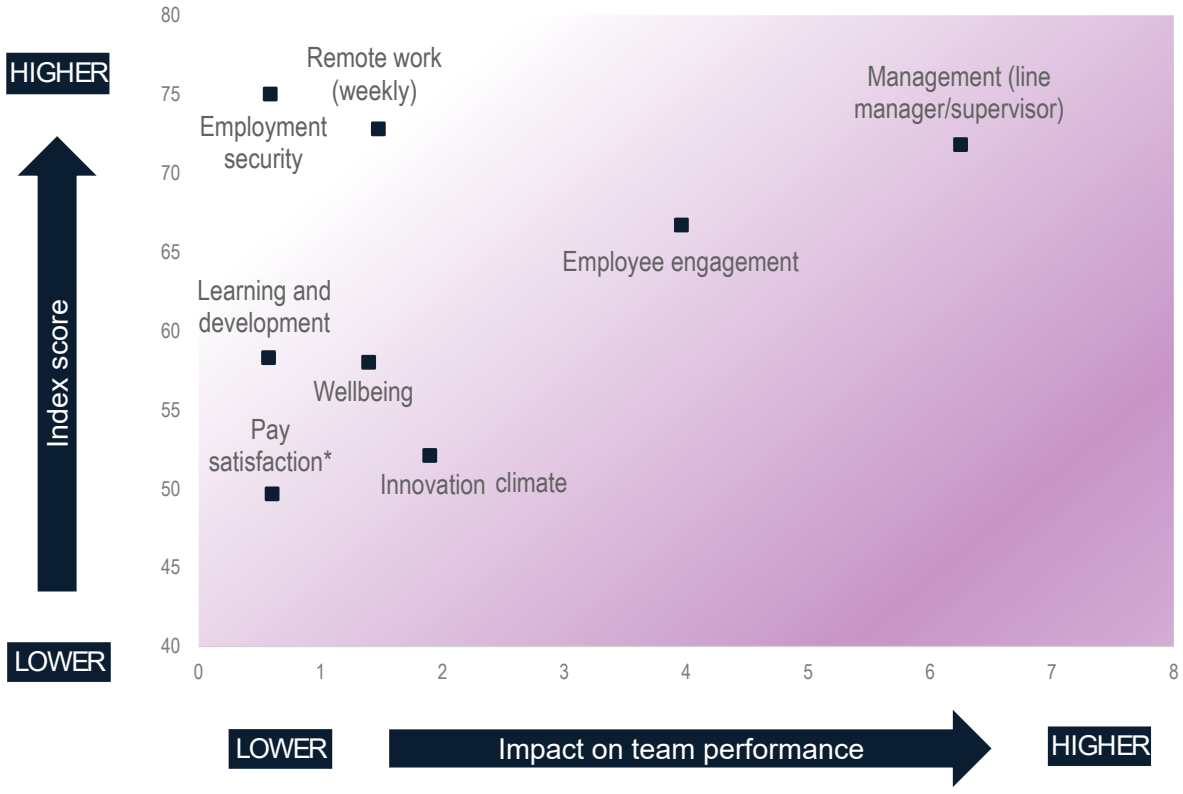
Figure 3.6 illustrates the impact of key drivers of team performance on the horizontal axis, and the current score of those key drivers on the vertical axis. It shows that line managers are the most influential driver of team performance (see Chapter 4 on "Leadership and management" for further analysis), followed by employee engagement.

The results of this survey show that while line managers are critical in driving team performance, perceptions of senior leaders are not. The highly influential role of managers likely reflects their role in monitoring performance, providing feedback, and identifying and supporting opportunities for the professional development of their staff, all of which can support strengthening individual and, subsequently, team performance. Line managers also play an important role in employee motivation, by helping employees connect their work to that of the organisation as well as providing practical guidance, necessary support and resources to help employees achieve. Line managers are also highly influential in the overall cohesion of their team by encouraging collaboration, resolving conflict and setting the tone of interpersonal exchanges within the team.

The results of this survey further demonstrate that team performance is strongly influenced by employee engagement. This likely reflects that in addition to be motivated and committed to performing well in their own work, engaged employees are also more willing to work beyond what is required in their formal role. Such extra-role behaviours can include supporting colleagues, pursuing team goals and acting as good organisational citizens. These extra-role efforts can help to build more collaborative, cohesive and higher-performing teams.

Results of this survey also highlight that, unlike perceptions of organisational performance, team performance is influenced by employees' well-being and feelings of job security. This may be because employees who experience positive well-being and have clear, manageable tasks are better equipped to focus their energy and attention productively within their teams. In addition, employees' willingness to discuss health concerns with their supervisor and felt ability to support colleagues, may also help support team cohesion and performance as members provide encouragement and support to one another. The positive effects of job security may reflect a greater willingness to take risks, both in suggesting new ideas and in their openness overall, thereby helping to promote stronger team performance and cohesion. These interpersonal dynamics may be less visible at the level of the organisation.

Figure 3.6. Drivers of team performance



Note: The figure presents the statistically significant drivers of team performance in a mixed-effects regression model that controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. All indices depicted are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. The x-axis presents the effect sizes of each index on organisational performance, while the y-axis shows the index scores. Pay satisfaction and employment security are not indices but represent the average scores for the questions: "I am satisfied with my salary" and "I am satisfied with the security of my employment." The data includes the EU7, comprising all project countries except the Netherlands. An asterisk (*) denotes a negative effect of the driver. Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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Box 3.1. Performance management in central administrations

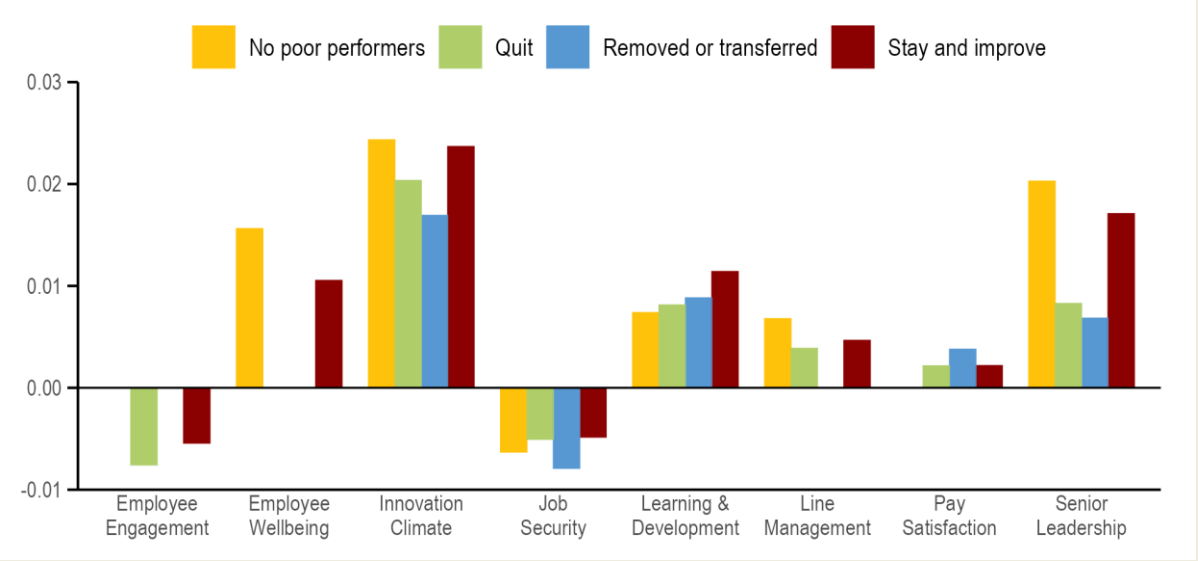
Performance management is used widely across central administrations (OECD, 2025[4]; OECD, forthcoming[5]). When implemented effectively, performance management strengthens organisational performance by identifying staff development needs, setting clear expectations that align to organisational objectives, and correcting underperformance. For many public services, however, performance management remains a significant challenge. Bureaucratic hurdles, high time investments, and an emphasis on short-term delivery mean that performance management is often deprioritised in the face of immediate demands (Gunn, Zwickert and Hilyard, 2021[6]).

Half of responding employees (51.6%) report that within their organisations, poor performers usually stay and continue to underperform. Following this, approximately 1 in 5 employees report that there are no poor performers (18.2%) while only 16.2% report that poor performers stay and improve over time . Few employees, however, report that poor performers quit (7.7%) or are removed or transferred (6.2%), though all countries have mechanisms to dismiss employees for poor performance (OECD, forthcoming[5]).

Figure 3.7 displays the effects of drivers on the likelihood of different outcomes for poor performers compared to them staying and continuing to underperform. The likelihood that poor performers are managed effectively (or that there are no poor performers) compared to them staying and underperforming, increases with the quality of senior leadership, learning and development, and the innovation climate. In such environments, managers may be more encouraged and supported to invest in the development of their staff. In contrast, employee engagement and job security are negatively related to the effective management of poor performers. Highly engaged employees often set high standards for performance which may sometimes lead them to perceive underperformance more critically within their organisation. Additionally, high job security can further impede efforts to manage underperformance by additional bureaucracy to taking corrective measures.

Figure 3.7. Effect of drivers on effective performance management

Effects of drivers on likelihood of selected outcome relative to “stay and continue to underperform”



Note: The figure presents the EU7/8 coefficients from a multilogit regression analysis, illustrating the key drivers that influence the likelihood of different performance outcomes. Specifically, it displays the effects of significant drivers and change in probability of a specified outcome for poor performers relative to staying and continuing to underperform. EU8, representing all project countries, is used for all indices except those on employee well-being, senior leadership, and learning and development, which exclude the Netherlands and are therefore based on EU7. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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3.6. Conclusions and considerations for policy actions

Across EU 8 countries, employees generally perceive their organisations as effective, yet many are less confident in their organisation's ability to respond to change or use resources efficiently. This concern is particularly pronounced for large organisations where fewer than one in three employees believe their organisation responds quickly to change or uses its resources efficiently. These perceptions are shaped significantly by the innovation climate and quality of senior leadership—yet employees tend to view both these areas with ambivalence, highlighting clear opportunities for improvement.

In contrast, employees are very positive regarding the performance of their immediate teams. Employees' evaluation of their team's performance is highly influenced by their own engagement and the quality of their immediate management. While managers are generally well regarded, many employees report lower levels of personal engagement. Continuing to investment in strong managerial capabilities and prioritising strategies that enhance employee motivation and involvement are therefore critical to sustaining high team performance.

Given this, public service leaders, managers and those designing reforms may wish to consider the following key considerations for policy actions:

- Organisations should regularly review existing policies and procedures within their organisation to reduce bureaucracy. Feedback from employees suggests that, particularly in extra-large organisations, current processes frustrate effective and efficient performance. Regularly reviewing policies and processes is important for ensuring that they remain relevant and appropriate, as well as for reducing bottlenecks.
- Employees feel less positively about their organisation's ability to respond quickly when change is needed. Organisations should consider enhancing mechanisms for bottom-up innovation and the sharing of employee views on necessary change can help ensure that change priorities are informed by both high-level strategy and the unique insights of employees on day-to-day operations. This can enhance environmental scanning and strategic planning, enabling better responsiveness to the evolving operational context.
- Senior leadership plays an important role in shaping employees' perceptions of their organisation's performance. Organisations should consider how senior leaders can highlight organisational achievements and efforts related to continuous improvement, including monitoring and evaluation. This may help strengthen employee perceptions of organisational performance.
- Managers are integral to the effective performance of teams. Organisations can strengthen management capability and accountability for team performance by investing in targeted training, providing practical resources (e.g. handbooks), and aligning performance agreements of managers to incentivise team outcomes and staff development. Organisations should also consider how the administrative burden of addressing performance issues for managers may be addressed including streamlining processes and providing clear guidance to managers on appropriate interventions, timing and documentation.

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4 Leadership and management

In today's rapidly changing public sector environment, effective leadership and management are catalysts for organisational performance and employee engagement and well-being. This chapter explores these relationships further to identify the dimensions that most significantly influence central administration employees' perceptions of these outcomes. Additionally, it explores how different groups of employees perceive their leadership and management, and how managers themselves perceive their workplace compared to non-managerial employees. Finally, this chapter provides recommendations for policy actions based on these insights.

Key findings

- Quality of senior leadership is among the most important drivers of organisational performance. Among dimension of senior leadership, the ability to articulate priorities and lead change are particularly important.
- Employees tend to have poorer perceptions of senior leaders (average score of 60.5) compared to their managers (71.8), particularly in very large organisations where employees have the poorest perceptions of their leaders (53.2).
- Less than half of employees believe that senior leaders will act on the results of the employee survey (42.2%) or are able to lead change more generally (43.9%).
- Quality of line management is among the most important drivers of team performance and employee well-being. Among dimensions of line management, the ability to plan work effectively is particularly important.
- While employees are positive regarding their direct employee-manager relationship they are less positive regarding their manager's ability to promote effective inter-employee relationships. Notably, 85% of employees feel that their manager treats them with respect while only 61.7% feel that their manager is good at resolving conflicts.
- Integrity and honesty at all levels of leadership is important for building an engaged and high performing workforce. Employees who believe that their manager and senior leaders maintain high standards of honesty and integrity report greater engagement, team and organisational performance.

Public service leaders are at the forefront of building effective, efficient and ethical public service organisations. They role model and transmit public service values through their interactions with employees and communicate the priorities, direction and mission of the organisation. It is from the senior leaders that employees understand the culture, purpose and objectives of their organisations. Senior leaders are also central to driving and sustaining transformation in the public sector. They set the vision for change, mobilise support across the organisation, and ensure that reforms are aligned with core public service values. Managers also play a pivotal role in bridging the divide between senior leaders and employees. Managers help to translate the strategic direction and priorities of the organisation into team level objectives. In doing so, managers help employees to feel connected and see the contribution of their work to the organisation's broader purpose. They are also vital in communicating and reinforcing expected and valued behaviours and attitudes through feedback, rewards and recognition, and day-to-day interactions with employees, thereby upholding the culture of the organisation (for more recent OECD work on leadership and management, see (OECD, 2021[1]) and (Gerson, 2020[2])).

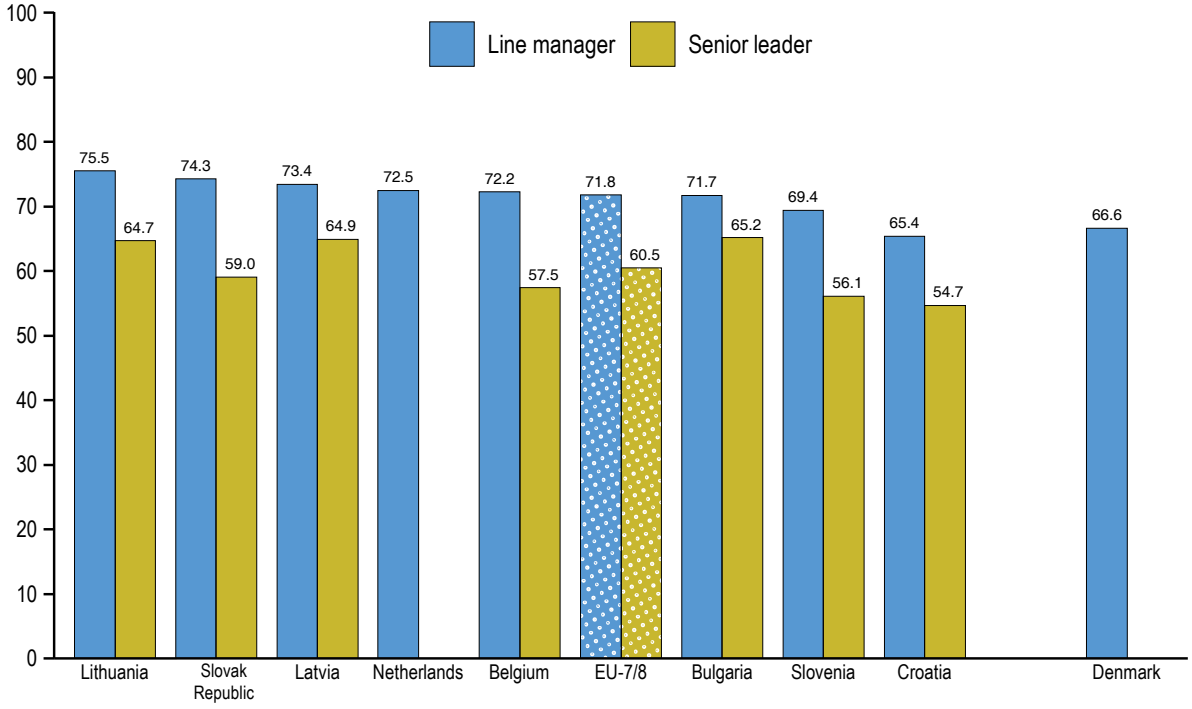
Effective leadership and management therefore play a significant role in shaping employee and organisational outcomes and fostering workforces that are resilient, adaptive and productive. This chapter examines employee perceptions of their organisation's leadership and managers. This is particularly important as survey analysis shows that senior leadership is the second strongest driver of perceived organisational performance and employee engagement; while management is the strongest driver of team

performance and second strongest driver of well-being (see Chapters 2 and 3). The remainder of this chapter dives deeper into the findings of the senior leadership and management indices and looks at how they influence key outcomes including employee engagement, team and organisational performance.

4.1. Perceptions of senior leadership and management in the EU8 central administrations

Overall, employees view their managers more favourably than they do their senior leaders across EU8 countries (Figure 4.1). Perceptions of senior leaders are somewhat neutral with a mean score of 60.5 compared to 71.8 for management (11.3 p.p. higher). Perceptions of management are most positive among employees in Lithuania (75.5) while perceptions of senior leadership are most positive among employees in Bulgaria (65.2). Belgium exhibits the largest difference (14.7 p.p.) between perceptions of management and leadership while Bulgaria reports the smallest (6.5 p.p.).

Figure 4.1. Senior leadership and line manager by country



Note: The figure presents line manager and senior leader index scores by country on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). Scores are calculated as the average of responses across the index items. For details on index construction and scoring, refer to the technical annex. The EU average for the senior leader index (EU8) includes all project countries, while the EU average for the line manager index (EU7) includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between the line manager and senior leader indices are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in all countries where both indices are available. In Denmark, line manager questions were only asked to respondents who were not in managerial positions.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

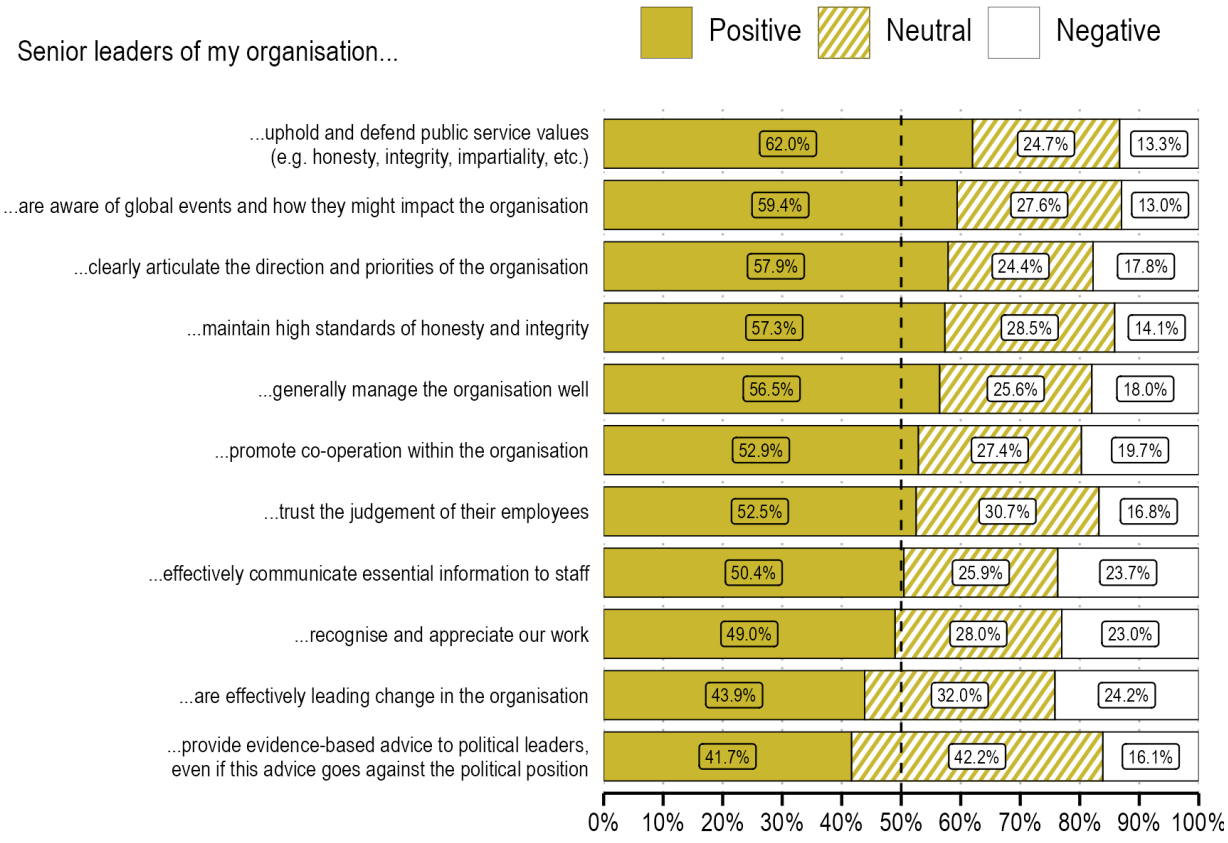
StatLink https://stat.link/jg8c6d

4.2. Senior leadership by subitem

Overall perceptions of senior leaders are nuanced in EU8 countries with employees generally perceiving their leaders to be values-based and strategic, but less capable in leading transformation (Figure 4.2). Most employees believe that their senior leaders uphold and defend public service values (62%) and maintain high standards of honesty and integrity (57.3%). When it comes to strategic leadership, most employees feel that their leaders are aware of global events and their possible impact (59.4%), clearly articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation (57.9%) and generally manage the organisation well (56.5%).

Conversely, employees are less positive regarding the transformational role of their senior leaders. Less than half of employees believe that their senior leaders provide evidence-based advice to political leaders, even if this advice goes against the political position (41.7%) or effectively lead change in the organisation (43.9%). These indicators suggest that further emphasis may be required to establish senior leaders as stewards of public sector organisations, responsible for long-term reforms that extend beyond political cycles and ensure the sustained capabilities of public organisations to serve elected officials of any political orientation.

Figure 4.2. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Senior leadership



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average for the underlying items of the senior leadership index, EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Positive responses represent the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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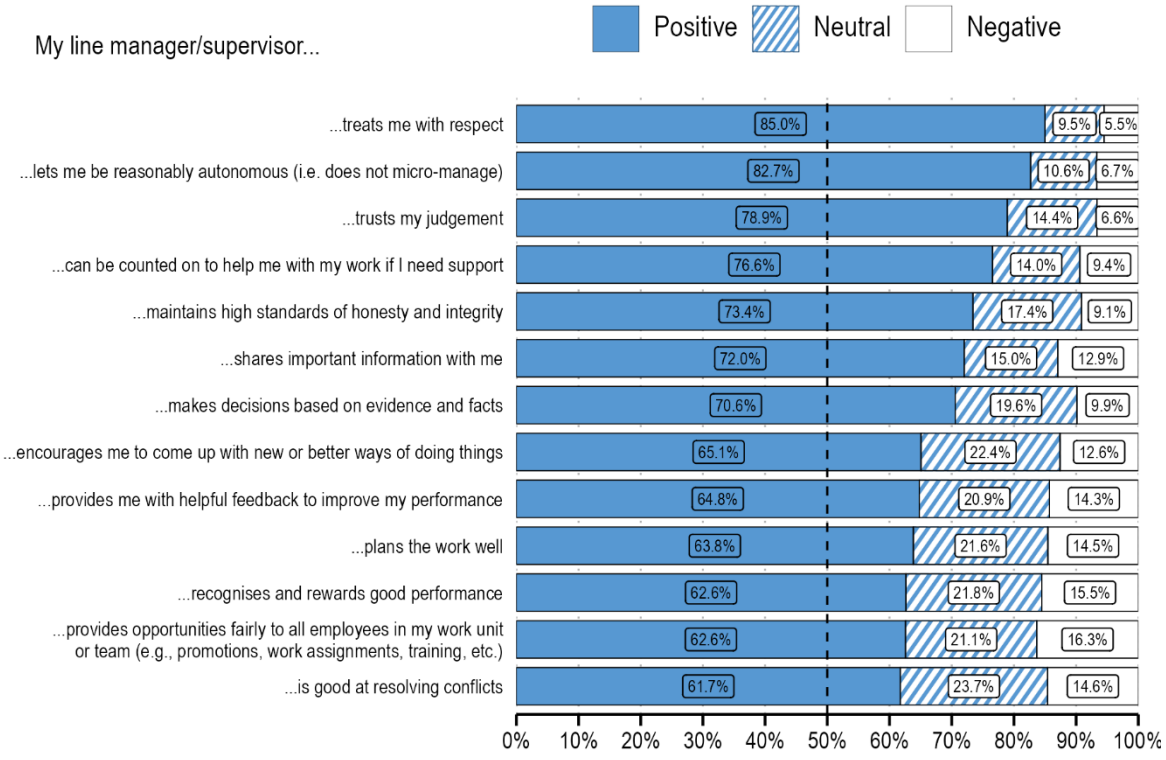
4.3. Line management by subitem

Overall, responding employees in EU8 countries view their immediate manager favourably (Figure 4.3). Most employees feel that they are treated with respect (85%), have reasonable levels of autonomy (82.7%), are trusted by their manager (78.9%) and will be supported by their manager if needed (76.6%). However, employees are less positive regarding how their manager handles conflict (61.7%) and develops their team. Specifically, less than two-thirds of employees feel that opportunities are provided fairly to all employees in the team (62.6%), that good performance is rewarded and recognised (63.6%) and that managers provide useful feedback to improve performance (64.8%). This suggests that while employees are generally positive regarding the direct employee-manager relationship (respect, autonomy), they are less positive regarding inter-employee relationships and team dynamics (fairness, conflict resolution), as well as manager-led development.

Figure 4.3. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Line management



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the line manager index. EU8 includes all project countries. Positive responses represent the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/cbypds

4.4. Senior leadership and line management indices by subgroups

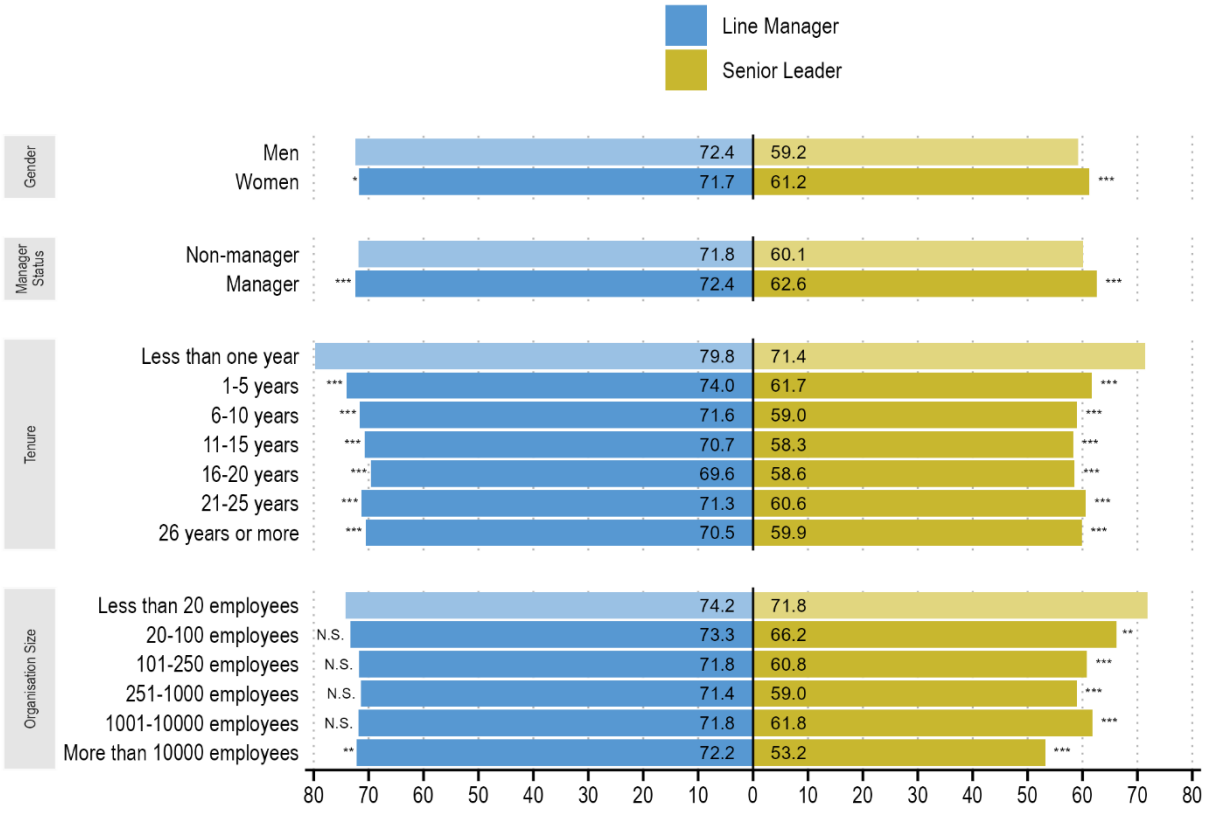
Perceptions of senior leadership and management also varies across key demographic and organisational characteristics (Figure 4.4). Managers are more favourable in their perceptions of both senior leadership (62.6) and management (72.4) compared to non-managers, for whom the average score is 60.1 and 71.8, respectively. This difference may reflect the greater proximity and access of those in managerial positions. Managers typically have more interaction with other managers as well as senior leaders within the organisation and therefore benefit from greater visibility of information and strategic decisions. It could also reflect similarity in roles as managers likely have greater understanding of managerial and leadership responsibilities and may be more inclined to evaluate behaviours more positively in light of this.

Differences also emerge across genders. While women are more favourable in their perceptions of senior leadership (61.2) compared to men (59.2), men (72.4) report slightly more positive perceptions of management than women (71.7). However, this latter difference is modest and may partially reflect the higher proportion of men in managerial positions (see Chapter 1).

Employee perceptions of senior leaders and their immediate manager are also influenced by the size of their organisation. Employees' perceptions of their senior leadership are more positive as organisational size decreases. The gap in positive perceptions between very small and very large organisations is substantial (18.6 p. p). A similar pattern is observed for managers, though the difference is much smaller (2 p.p.). This may be because managers are typically more involved in employees' day-to-day work, regardless of organisational size. As such, the contact and visibility employees have of their managers and their interpersonal interactions are likely to depend on the individual manager rather than size of the organisation. In contrast, as organisational size increases, employees tend to have less and less contact or visibility of their senior leadership team. This limited visibility may result in less positive perceptions owing to greater uncertainty around their vision, priorities and role within the organisation.

Perceptions also vary by employee tenure in central administration. New starters (less than one year) have the most positive perceptions of senior leadership (71.4) and their managers (79.8). This declines as tenure increases, with mid-career public servants holding the least positive perceptions. This decline may reflect increasing responsibilities and expectations as employees accumulate experience within public services. Perceptions improve among the longest-serving staff who have self-selected to remain with their organisation.

Figure 4.4. Differences in perceptions of senior leadership and line management by key demographics



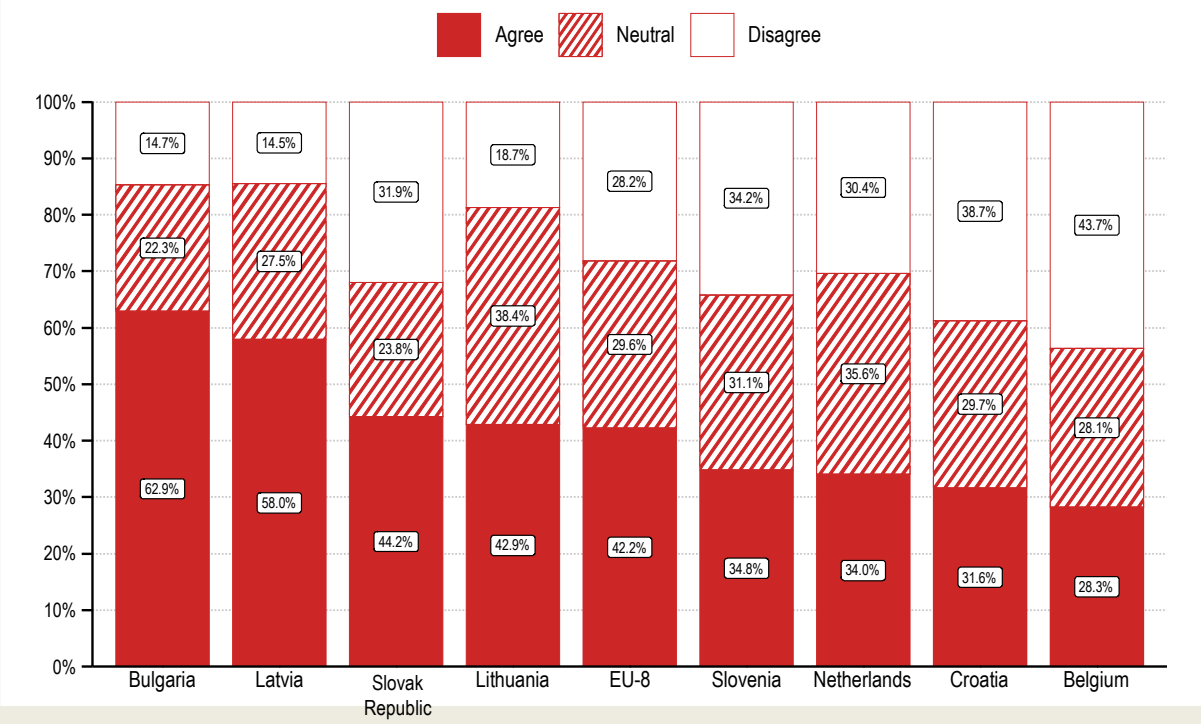
Note: The figure presents the average EU8/EU7 scores for the line manager (EU8) and senior leader indices (EU7), disaggregated by subgroups. Index scores are shown on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). EU8 includes all project countries, EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex. Statistical significance between sub-groups is indicated by stars next to each bar. A single asterisk (*) indicates significance at the 90% level, two asterisks (**) at the 95% level, and three asterisks (***) at the 99% level. 'N.S.' denotes a non-significant difference compared to the reference group. The reference group is shown in light blue or light olive green.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/zrhi2s

Box 4.1. Will my organisational leadership take action based on the survey results?

On average, only 42.2% of responding employees in EU8 countries believe that their senior leaders will take action based on survey results (Figure 4.5). However, this varies substantially across countries. In Bulgaria (62.9%) and Latvia (58%), most employees believe this to be the case, while in Belgium (28.3%) and Croatia (31.6%) less than a third of employees expect action to be taken. This question is a significant indicator of trust in organisational leadership, reflecting employees' confidence in their leaders' willingness and ability to use their feedback to drive improvement.

Figure 4.5. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses - Belief that organisational leadership will take action based on the survey result by countries

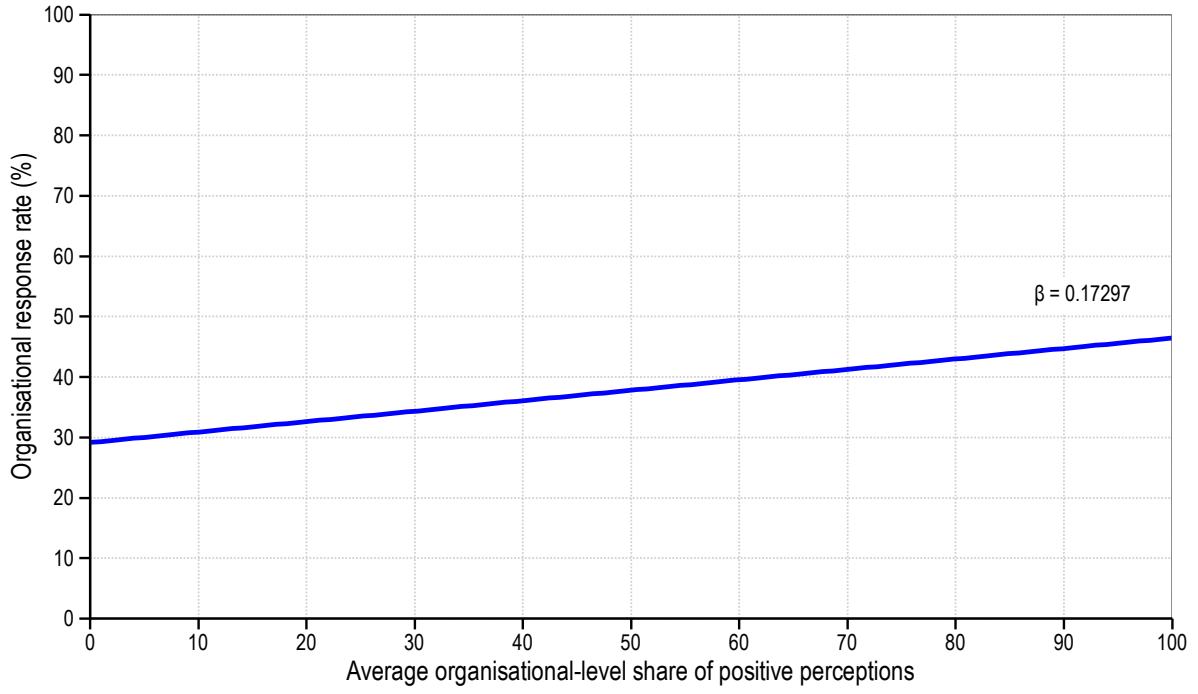


Note: The figure presents the country-level and EU8 average responses to the question: "I believe that my organisation's leadership will take actions based on the results of this survey." EU8 includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/vczn2d

Senior leaders play an important role in ensuring that employee survey results are utilised effectively to inform workforce decisions and address underlying issues. When the senior leaders actively show that actions are taken based on survey results, it can also help improve the response rate and in turn the reliability of the results. Figure 4.6 shows that response rates tend to be higher in organisations with a higher share of respondents believing that their leadership will take action based on the results.

Figure 4.6. Relationship between organisational response rate and proportion of employees in organisation that believe that leadership will take action based on the results



Note: The figure presents the average organisational-level positive perceptions (combined responses of "strongly agree" and "agree") to the question: "I believe that my organisation's leadership will take action based on the results of this survey." The y-axis shows the corresponding organisational-level response rates. The data is normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. One-percentage-point increase in the share of positive perceptions at the organisational level is associated with a 0.17-percentage-point increase in the response rate.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

4.5. Effect of senior leadership on employee engagement

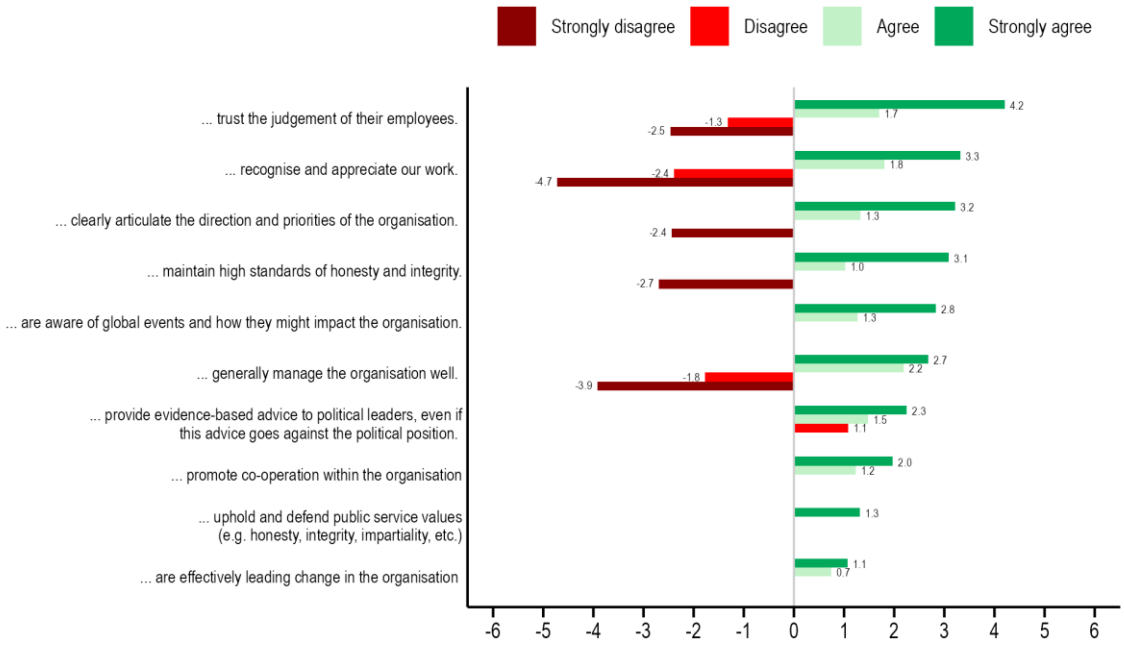
Senior leadership plays an important role in shaping the priorities, culture, and practices of the organisation, greatly impacting how employees experience and relate to their work, and how effectively and efficiently their organisations perform. This survey shows that, of all the drivers examined, senior leadership is the second most influential driver of employee engagement[1] and perceived organisational performance.[2] While important for both, how senior leaders influence employee engagement and organisational performance differs, as seen in Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5.

As shown in Figure 4.5, while all dimensions of senior leadership influence employee engagement their effects are nuanced. Engagement is higher among employees who strongly agree that their leaders trust the judgement of their employees (4.2 p.p.), recognise and appreciate their work (3.3 p.p.), clearly articulate direction and priorities (3.2 p.p.) and uphold high standards of honesty and integrity (3.1. p.p.) compared to those who neither agree nor disagree. The absence of these aspects has detrimental effects on engagement. Notably, engagement is 4.7 percentage points lower among employees who strongly disagree that senior leaders recognise and appreciate their work. In contrast, while engagement is higher among employees who strongly agree that their senior leaders promote co-operation within the organisation (2 p.p.) and effectively lead change (1.1 p.p.), engagement is not significantly diminished by the absence of these behaviours.

The results are consistent with previous research that has shown that senior leaders can inspire and motivate staff by setting a clear vision for the organisation, fostering trust, and supporting professional development (Day et al., 2014[3]). Feeling trusted and recognised by senior leadership signals that the organisation values its employees and their contributions and empowers employees by reinforcing their sense of autonomy in their work. Setting clear direction and priorities can help staff to connect their work to the broader purpose of the organisation. The absence of these, to the extent that employees feel they lack autonomy and impact, can be detrimental to their engagement with their work and the broader organisation.

Figure 4.7. Relationship between senior leadership dimensions and employee engagement

Relative effect size of senior leadership dimensions on employee engagement



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of senior leadership dimensions in relation to employee engagement in the EU7 countries. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, the results should be interpreted as indicating the relative importance of the dimensions within the relevant index, rather than as standalone effects on the outcome variable. Effect sizes reflect the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/mpeh5z

4.6. Effect of senior leadership on perceived organisational performance

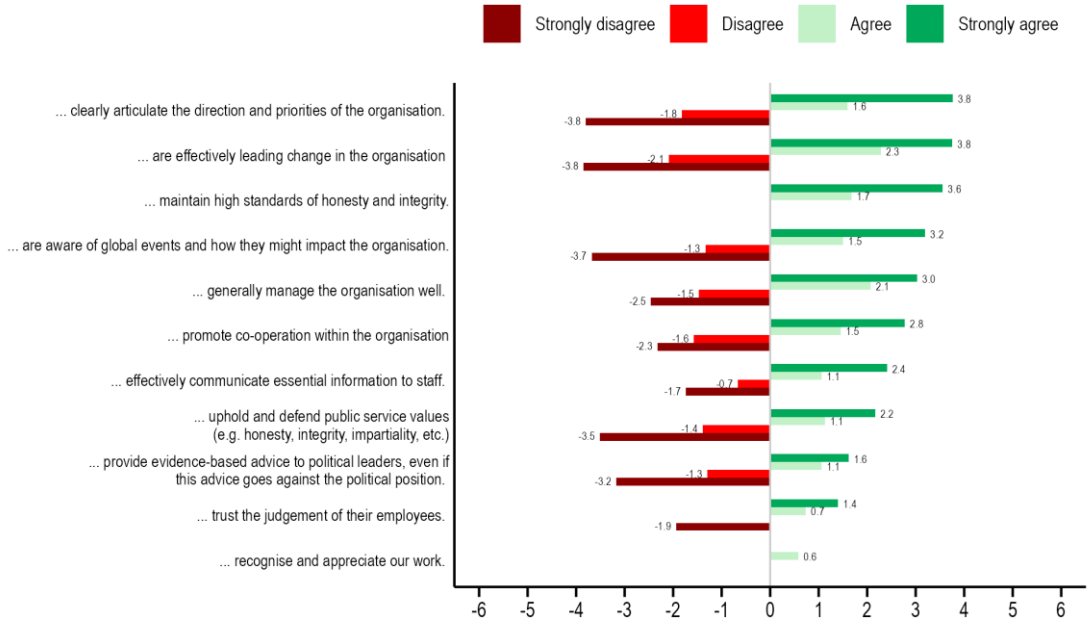
Among all dimensions examined, the ability of senior leaders to clearly articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation and effectively lead change are equally the most influential in shaping employee perceptions of organisational performance (Figure 4.8). Perception of organisational performance are significantly higher among employees who strongly agree that their senior leaders clear articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation (3.8 p.p.) and effectively lead change (3.8 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views ('neither agree nor disagree'). Perceptions of organisational performance are 3.8 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree. In contrast to its importance for employee

engagement, whether employees feel they are recognised and trusted by their senior leaders is less influential in shaping their perceptions of organisational performance, ranking second last among dimensions examined. For example, employees who strongly agree that their senior leaders trust employee judgement rate organisational performance slightly higher (1.4 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views and lower (1.9 p.p.) when they strongly disagree. Notably, a lack of perceived recognition had no significant impact on employee perceptions of organisational performance.

Overall, the results show that when senior leaders clearly communicate the organisation's direction and priorities, employees are more likely to understand how their work contributes to broader goals, reinforcing a sense of purpose and enabling more coordinated efforts. Likewise, leaders who manage change effectively help the organisation adapt smoothly and with minimal resistance, strengthening its ability to respond to a changing policy environment and enhancing perceptions of organisational capability. Together these dimensions also signal to employees the future of the organisation and how well it is likely to continue to meet the evolving needs of the public. Though the direct effects of employees feeling trusted and recognised play a limited role in shaping their perceptions of performance, they do influence their sense of engagement and commitment, which can in turn impact on their performance.

Figure 4.8. Relationship between senior leadership dimensions and organisational performance

Relative effect size of senior leadership dimensions on organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of senior leadership dimensions in relation to organisational performance in the EU7 countries. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results should be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable. Interpretation of effect size the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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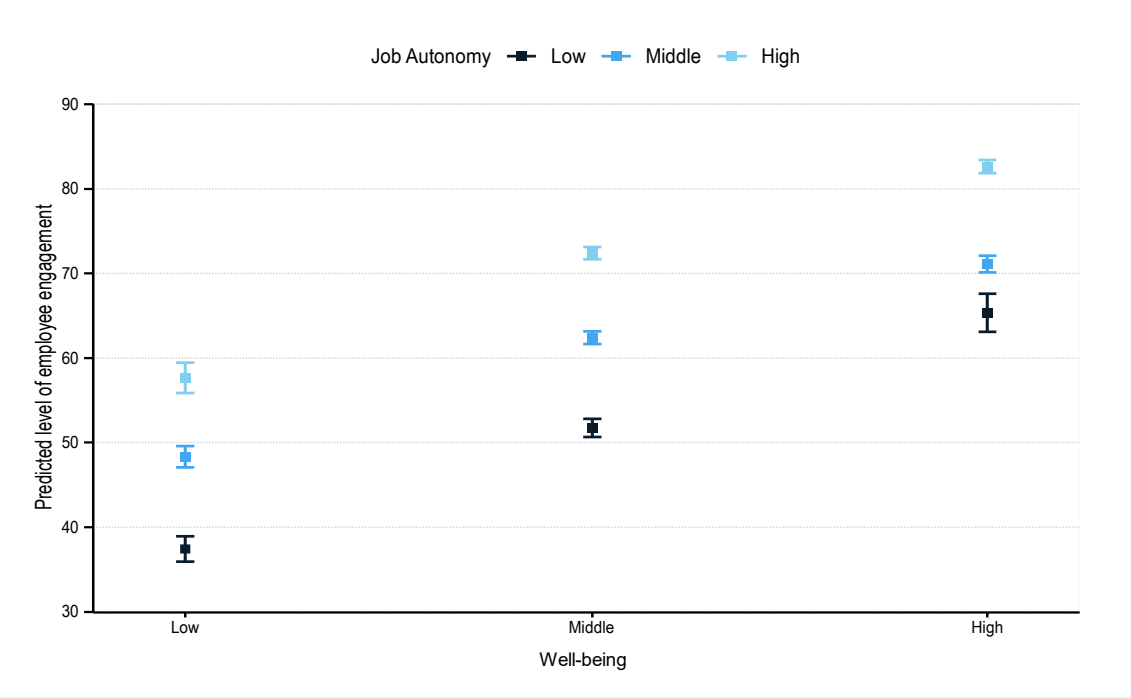
Box 4.2. Job autonomy and engagement moderated by employee well-being

Promoting job autonomy is a core component of effective management, as it reflects the ability to delegate responsibility and empower employees. By allowing employees to make decisions about how they plan and carry out their work, managers not only support individual growth and motivation but also encourage a sense of ownership. These, in turn, can enhance employees' intrinsic motivation, creativity, and commitment to work. When employees feel trusted to make decisions, they are more likely to be engaged, proactive, and satisfied in their roles. With greater autonomy, however, comes greater responsibility. If not balanced with adequate resources and support, this can lead to stress and pressure, which in turn can undermine engagement

Job autonomy is measured through the index composed of three items from both the senior leader index 'The senior leaders of my organisation trust the judgement of their employees' and management index 'My line manager/supervisor trusts my judgement' and 'My line manager/supervisor lets me be reasonably autonomous (i.e. does not micro-manage)'. Results show that job autonomy overall increases engagement, with a coefficient of 0.049, corresponding to an effect of 0.97 percentage points in change from one answer category to another (i.e. from strongly disagree to disagree). The relationship is, however, moderated by employee well-being. Figure 4.9 demonstrates the moderating effect of well-being on the relationship between job autonomy and employee engagement, showing that job autonomy has a greater impact on engagement with higher levels of well-being. The positive relationship between job autonomy and engagement is thus strongest with employees who report already high levels of well-being, which underlines that without a supportive well-being environment the potential benefits of job autonomy are diminished. A supportive well-being environment is one in which managers prioritise their employees' health, ensure that workloads are manageable, and enable staff to maintain a healthy work-life balance and avoid burnout (see Chapter 2).

Figure 4.9. Effect of job autonomy on employee engagement moderated by well-being

Effect of job autonomy on employee engagement at different levels of well-being



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average results based on a mixed-effects regression model examining the relationship between the indices: employee engagement, well-being, and job autonomy. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. For details on index methodology, refer to the technical annex. As the model does not account for other key drivers, the results should be interpreted as reflecting the relative importance of job autonomy and are not directly comparable with the overall findings from the full model. Well-being and job autonomy are grouped into categories based on the original index scores ranging from 0 to 100, with the categories defined as low (0–33), medium (34–66), and high (67–100). The analysis uses normalised averages, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

4.7. Effect of line management on employee well-being

Line managers, as employees' direct supervisors, often work closely with their employees on a daily basis and are therefore central to shaping employees' experiences at work, with a direct and meaningful impact on their well-being and performance. This survey shows that, of all the drivers examined, line management is the most influential driver of team performance[3] and the second most influential driver of well-being.[4] While important for both, how line management influences employee well-being and team performance differs, as seen in Figure 4.10 and Figure 4.11.

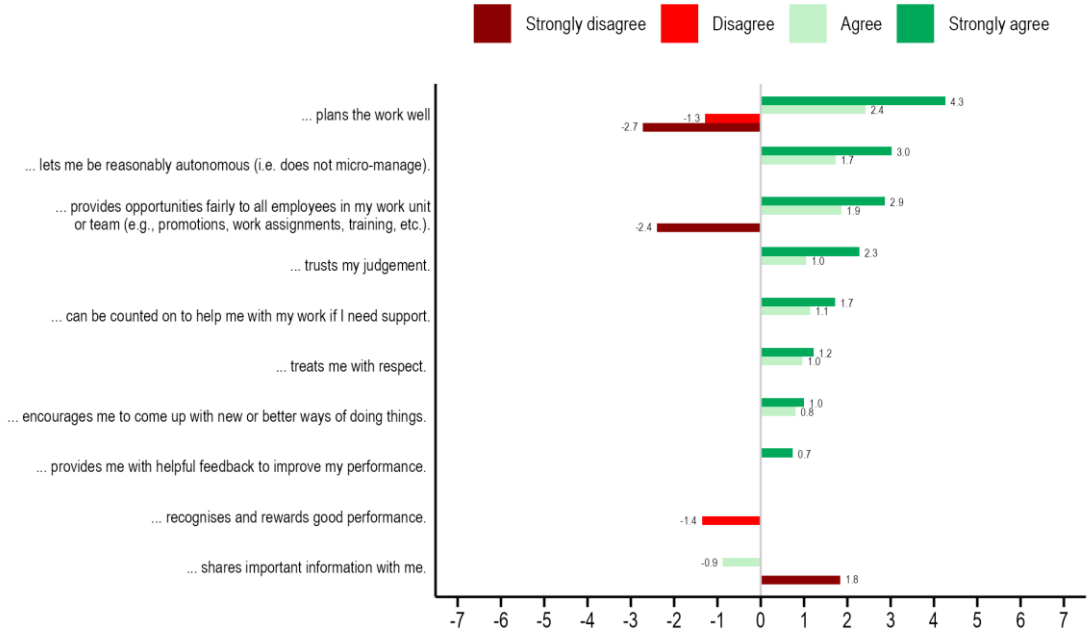
As shown in Figure 4.10, employees who have positive views of their manager report higher well-being compared to those with neutral views ('neither agree nor disagree') for most dimensions of management. Among these, the extent to which employees feel that their manager plans work well is the most influential dimension on well-being. Well-being is significantly higher among employees who strongly agree that their manager plans work well (4.3 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views. Well-being is also higher among employees who strongly agree that they can be reasonably autonomous (3 p.p.), are treated fairly (2.9 p.p.) and are trusted (2.3. p.p.). In contrast, across most dimensions of line management there are no significant difference in well-being between employees with neutral views and those with negative views of these

dimensions. Notably, well-being is significantly worse among those who strongly disagree that their manager plans work well (2.7 p.p.) and provides opportunities fairly (2.4 p.p.) or disagrees that they recognise and reward good performance (1.4 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views. Interestingly, after accounting for other important dimensions of management, employees who strongly disagree that their manager shares important information report higher well-being (1.8 p.p.), while those that agree report lower well-being (0.9 p.p.).

Overall, results of this survey highlight that employees thrive when they have capable managers who empower them. Managers who plan the work well and provide clarity around roles, responsibilities and expectations are instrumental in enabling employees to manage their workloads effectively. This in turn can help to reduce job-related pressures, enabling better work-life balance and lessening the risks of burnout. Supportive managers also help to foster a positive working environment by offering emotional support, recognising employees' efforts, and setting the tone for positive, respectful interactions within the team further promoting well-being. Managers who are perceived to show favouritism or do not provide employees with recognition may have an especially detrimental effect on well-being by undermining employees' sense of control and agency. Results also suggest that contrary to expectations, withholding important information from employees may reduce feelings of stress. This may indicate managers playing a protective role, by filtering the information that is provided to their employees. However, this may have trade-offs for other employee and team outcomes.

Figure 4.10. Relationship between line management dimensions and employee well-being

Relative effect size of management dimensions on employee well-being



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of line management dimensions in relation to employee well-being in the EU7 countries. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, the results should be interpreted as indicating the relative importance of the dimensions within the relevant index, rather than as standalone effects on the outcome variable. Effect sizes represent the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

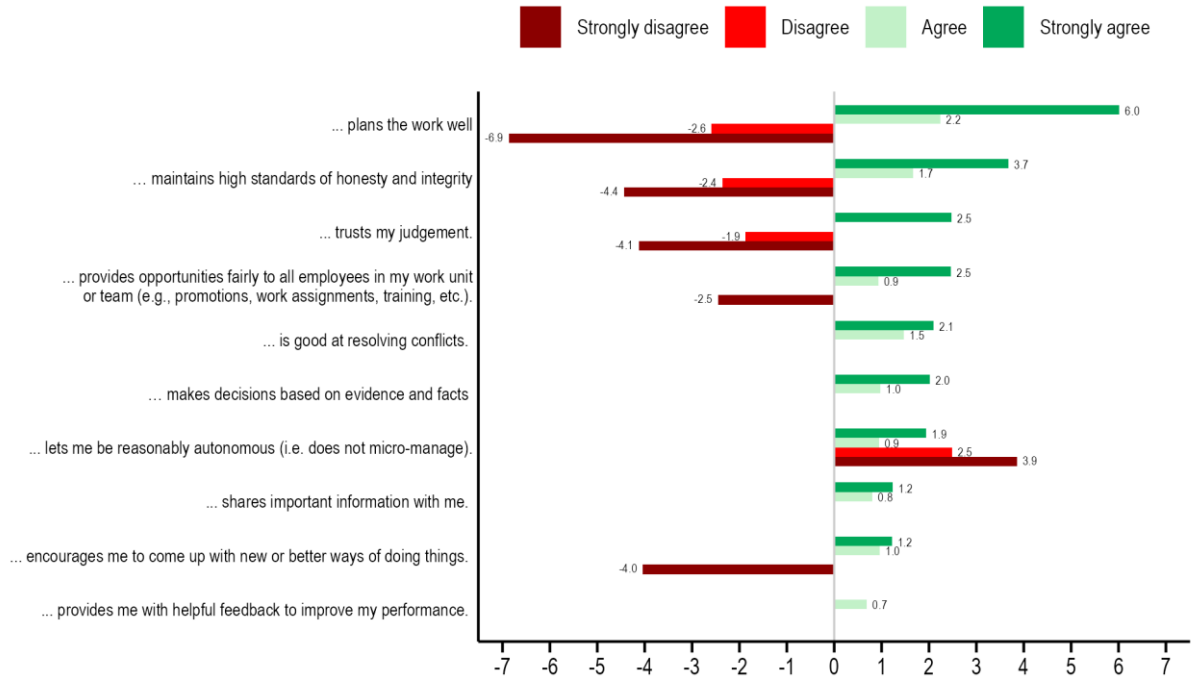
StatLink https://stat.link/mtjprw

4.8. Effect of line management on perceived team performance

As is the case for employee well-being, the extent to which employees believe their manager plans work is also the most influential dimension in shaping perceptions of team performance (Figure 4.11). Perceived team performance is significantly higher among employees who strongly agree that their manager plans work well (6.0 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views ('neither agree nor disagree'). In contrast, perceived team performance is 6.9 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree that this is the case. The extent to which employees believe their managers maintain high standards of honesty and integrity is also highly influential. Team performance is 3.7 percentage points higher among those who strongly agree compared to those with neutral views. Among those who strongly disagree, perceptions of team performance are 4.4 percentage points lower. After accounting for other dimensions of management, perceived team performance is higher among both employees who strongly agree they can be reasonably autonomous (1.9 p.p.) and who strongly disagree (3.9 p.p.) compared to those with neutral views. Surprisingly, performance management dimensions, feedback and recognition, are largely unrelated to employees' perceptions of their team performance. Whether employees feel their manager recognises and rewards good performance does not significantly influence perceived team performance while only employees who agree that their manager provides helpful feedback are more positive regarding team performance (0.7 p.p.).

Figure 4.11. Relationship between line management dimensions and team performance

Relative effect size of line manager dimensions on team performance



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of line management dimensions in relation to perceived team performance in the EU8 countries. The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, the results should be interpreted as indicating the relative importance of the dimensions within the relevant index, rather than as standalone effects on the outcome variable. Effect sizes represent the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU8 includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/p5mftk

The results of this survey highlight that employees feel that teams perform well when their managers plan work effectively and act with integrity. When managers plan work effectively, teams may benefit from clear priorities, realistic timelines, and better coordination. This can reduce confusion and inefficiencies, allowing team members to focus on delivering high-quality results, thereby enhancing perceptions of team performance. When managers uphold high standards of honesty and integrity, they set the tone for ethical behaviour, which can build trust within the team, enhancing team cohesion, and foster a culture of accountability thereby further contributing to teams' delivery and performance.

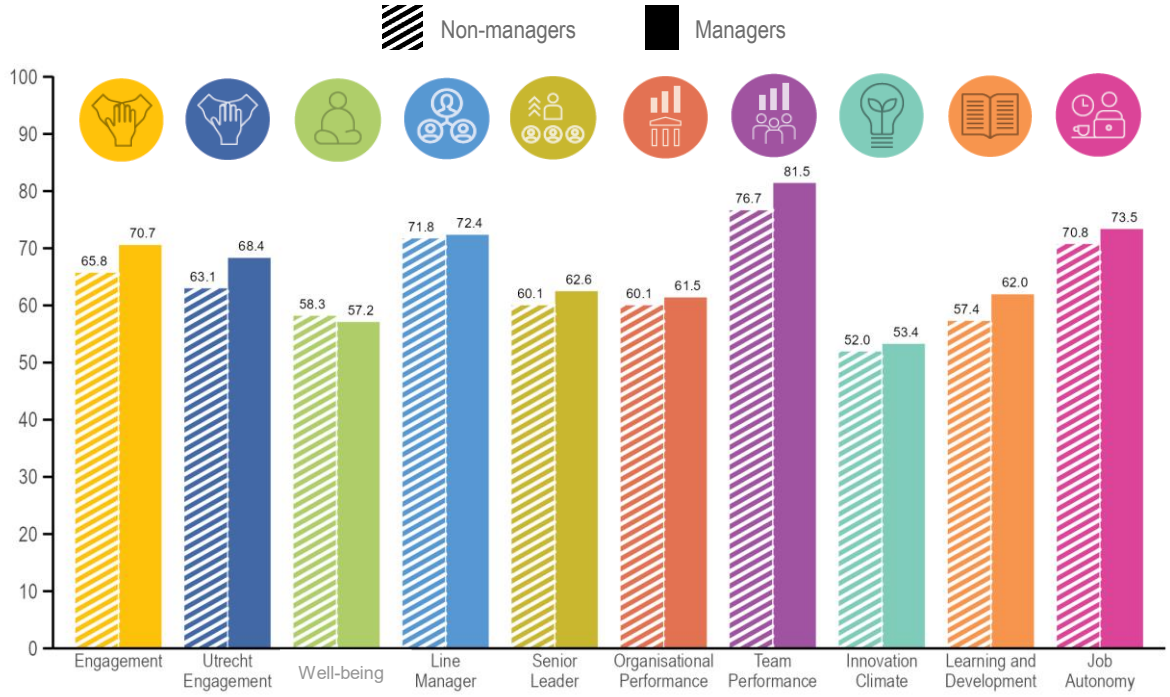
Other results provide a more nuanced view of how managers shape perceptions of team performance. That perceived performance is lower among employees who are neutral regarding their ability to act with reasonable autonomy may suggest that it is not necessarily the extent of autonomy that enhances performance, but the certainty. Among employees who feel they can and cannot be autonomous, may have a better understanding of their role and responsibilities within the team. In contrast, ambiguity in these areas may lead to greater confusion and inefficiency, negatively impacting perceived performance. The limited effects of performance management behaviours (i.e. recognition and feedback) on perceived team performance may reflect that while employees benefit individually from feedback and recognition, this does not influence how they perceive the ability of their team, as a unit, to deliver.

4.9. What do the managers think about their workplace?

Figure 4.12 compares how managers and non-managers perceive various aspects of their daily work and environment. Overall, managers are generally more positive compared to non-managers with the exception of well-being where non-managers (58.3) report marginally better well-being compared to managers (57.2).

As managers typically have greater access to strategic information and are more involved in decision-making processes, they may have better understanding of the rationale behind organisational initiatives. This insider perspective may lead to more positive perceptions of their workplace compared to non-managers who lack this visibility. Furthermore, managers often develop stronger ownership of organisational outcomes and greater identification with the organisation. By implementing and championing organisational initiatives, managers may become personally invested in their success and evaluate them more positively as a reflection of their own performance. Consistent with this explanation, the largest difference between managers and non-managers is in their perceptions of team performance index (4.8 p.p.). Owing to the nature of their role, managers likely view the performance of their team as an extension of their own performance leading that team. Conversely, slightly lower well-being among managers may reflect the greater responsibilities and workload typically associated with managerial roles. For line managers specifically, there can also be the cross-pressure of meeting expectations from the team they manage and the senior leadership.

Figure 4.12. Index scores for managers and non-managers



Note: The figure presents the EU8/EU7 index scores on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). Scores are calculated as the average of responses across the index items. For details on index construction and scoring, refer to the technical annex. Country inclusion varies by index: EU8, representing all project countries, is used for all indices except those on well-being, senior leadership, learning and development, and job autonomy, which exclude the Netherlands and are therefore based on EU7. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between managers and non-managers are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level across all indices.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/w7kyv3

4.10. Conclusions and considerations for policy action

Understanding employees' perceptions of public service leadership and management offers valuable insights into factors that influence both employee outcomes and organisational performance. In the EU8 countries, employees tend to view their direct line managers more positively than senior leaders. However, these perceptions vary considerably across different dimensions of leadership and management.

Employees' perceptions of senior leadership are most positive in relation to values-based and strategic leadership. Around two-thirds of employees believe their senior leaders uphold and defend public service values. In contrast, employees are less positive about their leaders' ability to challenge the status quo and lead organisational change, only two in five report confidence in their senior leaders' capacity to drive change effectively. This latter dimension is the most important leadership factor associated with perceived organisational performance. Meanwhile, the perception that senior leaders trust employees' judgement emerges as the strongest driver of employee engagement.

When it comes to management, employee perceptions are most positive regarding the direct relationship with their line manager. Over four in five employees feel they are treated with respect. In contrast, perceptions are less favourable concerning managers' handling of relationships among team members, only three in five believe their manager is effective at managing conflicts. Among the various aspects of management, employees' perception that their line manager plans work well is the strongest driver of both employee well-being and perceived team performance.

Given this, public service leaders, managers and those designing reforms may wish to consider the following key considerations for policy actions:

- Senior leaders who communicate a clear direction, manage change effectively, and show trust and appreciation for employees are associated with higher engagement and more positive perceptions of organisational performance. This highlights the importance of supportive, communicative leadership styles that empower employees and make change visible. Since change management is one of the lowest-scoring dimensions of the senior management index, this could be an area to improve upon.
- Enhance the visibility of senior leadership and organisational responsiveness by encouraging senior leaders to recognise employee contributions, clearly communicate organisational direction and priorities, and make change efforts visible. These behaviours are linked to higher engagement and improved perceptions of performance. Strengthening supportive and transparent communication may help strengthen change management and transformation practices.
- Sustaining strong team performance requires continued investment in managerial capabilities particularly in the areas of effective planning and inclusive talent management. Supporting manager with practical tools can also help build these skills. Providing guidance to managers on how to clearly communicate decisions, have career conversations with staff and structure workflows may further help to embed learning.
- Identify visible, quick to implement actions and communicate them clearly to demonstrate that survey feedback is being acted upon. When employees see their input leading to meaningful change, it reinforces their sense that their feedback matters and strengthens trust in leadership. Moreover, visible follow-up actions can help maintain or even increase participation in future survey rounds.
- Ensuring that employees have the necessary supports to work autonomously and allow for clear delegation of tasks. When managed effectively, job autonomy can improve employee engagement. However, greater autonomy also means greater responsibility, making a supportive environment, both in terms of well-being but also clear expectations, appropriate access to information and fair treatment is essential to fully realise its benefits.

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Gerson, D. (2020), "Leadership for a high performing civil service: Towards senior civil service systems in OECD countries", *OECD Working Papers on Public Governance*, No. 40, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/ed8235c8-en. [2]

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Notes

[1] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. This model evaluated management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of employee engagement.

[2] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. This model evaluated employee well-being, employee engagement, management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of organisational performance.

[3] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. This model evaluated employee well-being, employee engagement, management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of team.

[4] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. This model evaluated management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of employee well-being.

5 Learning, development, and innovation

Continuous learning and innovation are essential for public service employees and organisations to adapt, grow and deliver for citizens both now and into the future. Innovation climate and learning and development opportunities are key drivers of employee engagement and performance. This chapter examines these relationships further to identify the dimensions of innovation climate and learning and development that most significantly influence these outcomes. Additionally, it explores the relationship between innovation climate and participation in innovation projects and the relationships between learning and development and time spent on learning activities and perceived skill gaps. This chapter then provides recommendations for policy actions based on these insights.

Key findings

- Less than half of employees view their organisations' innovation climate favourably. Employees are most positive regarding the extent to which they feel encouraged by their organistion to look for new ways of doing things (43.0%) and least positive regarding the extent to which their organistion has sufficiently flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks (31.1%).
- Employees perceive learning and development somewhat more positively. Employees are most positive regarding the extent to which learning activities have helped improve their performance (62.6%) and least positive regarding the extent to which their organistion supports mobility (32.4%).
- Innovation climate is among the most important drivers of employees' perceptions of organisational and team performance. Among dimensions of innovation climate, the extent to which organisations are seen to learn from past problems and encourage employees to look for new ways of doing things are particularly important.
- Employees who have recently participated in innovation implementation perceive their organisation's innovation climate more positively (6.1 p.p. higher) than those who have not.
- Learning and development is among the most important drivers of employee engagement. Among dimensions of learning and development, professional growth is more important for employee engagement than access to learning or training. However, only half of employees feel that they are growing professionally (50.4%).
- Employees' opportunities for learning and development shape their perceptions of their organisation's performance. Providing employees with opportunities for mobility and investing in developing their digital skills are particularly important. However, only half of employees (51.6%) feel their organisation invests in their digital skills, while a third feel that their organisation supports mobility for career building (32.4%).

The ability to adapt and learn is more critical than ever for both public service organisations and workforces alike. Globally, public services are grappling with large-scale, fast-paced changes in their work driven by increasingly complex policy and regulatory contexts, rapidly evolving technologies, and shifting social and workforce dynamics. These pervasive trends necessitate new, flexible approaches to delivering public services and a workforce that is committed to continuous, lifelong learning and development.

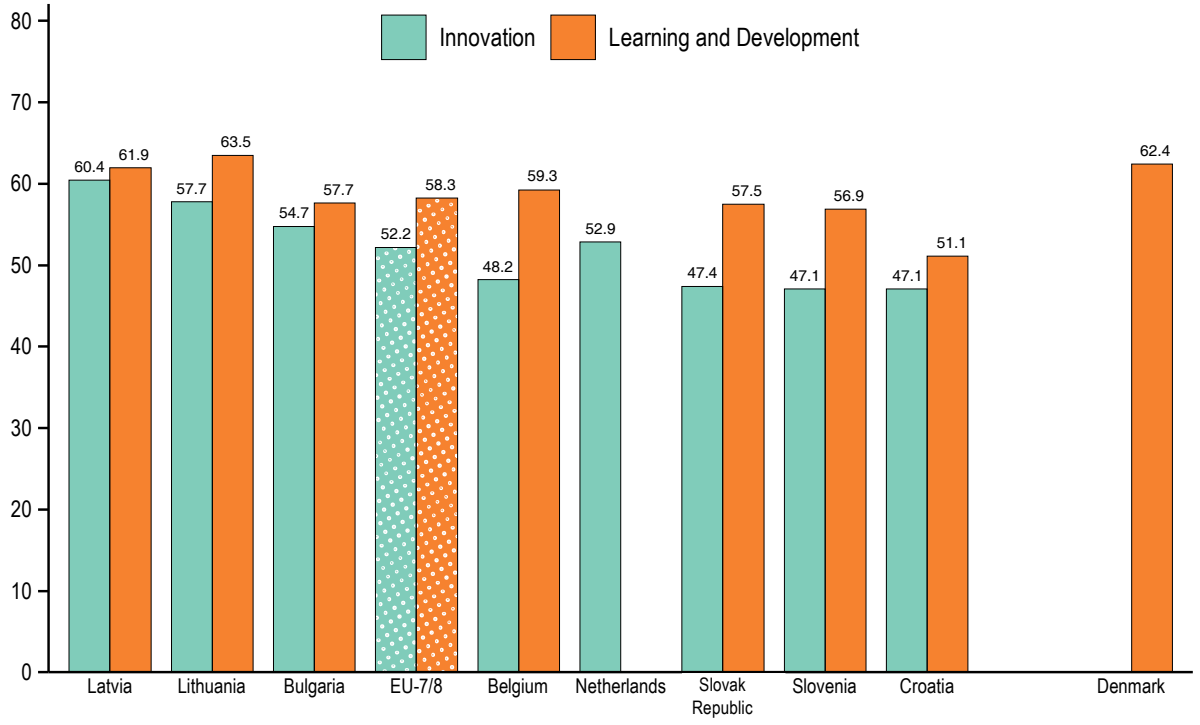
This chapter examines employee perceptions of innovation climate—the strongest driver of perceived organisational performance—and learning and development—the strongest driver of employee engagement. This is particularly relevant, as public service organisations that foster a strong innovation climate, where teams have the right skills, tools, and resources to develop and implement new ideas and learning from past problems is embraced, may be better positioned to navigate uncertainty and adapt to changes. At the same time, employees who feel that they are growing professionally and are supported in their development may be more committed and motivated in their work. Together these drivers can help foster a culture of continuous improvement, driving high-performing public services that are responsive, future-oriented, and highly skilled. The remainder of this chapter explores the relationships between

innovation climate and learning and development with important outcomes including employee engagement, team and organisational performance.

5.1. Perceptions of innovation climate and learning and development in EU8 central administrations

Overall, employee perceptions of innovation climate across EU8 countries are somewhat neutral with a mean score of 51.9 (Figure 5.1). In contrast, perceptions of learning and development are marginally more positive with a mean score of 58.3 (6.2 p.p. higher). Perceptions of innovation climate are most positive among employees in Latvia (60.4), while perceptions of learning and development are most positive among employees in Lithuania (63.5).

Figure 5.1. Innovation climate and learning and development by country



Note: The figure presents innovation climate and learning and development index scores by country on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). Scores are calculated as the average of responses across the index items. For details on index construction and scoring, refer to the technical annex. The EU average for the innovation climate index (EU8) includes all project countries, while the EU average for the learning and development index (EU7) includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Innovation climate items were not available for Denmark. For the learning and development index, the item "My organisation provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees" was not available for Denmark; as such, the index score for Denmark is based on the mean of the four remaining items. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between the innovation climate and learning and development indices are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in all countries where both indices are available.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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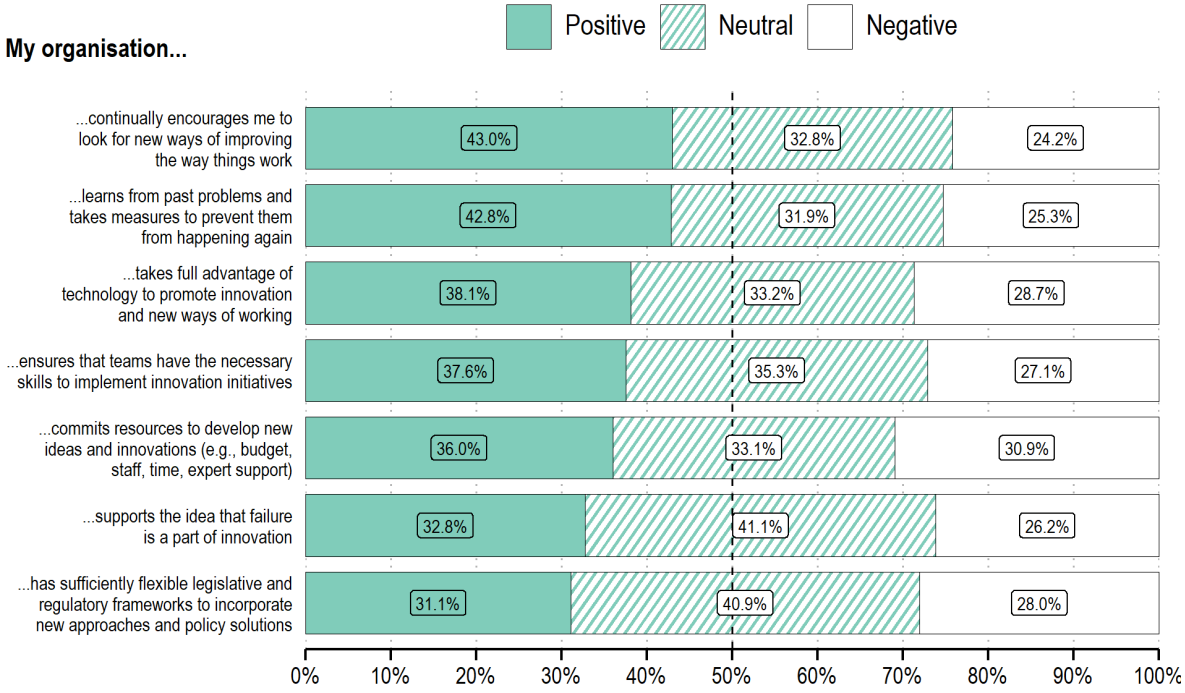
5.2. Innovation climate by subitem

Less than half of responding employees in EU8 countries perceive dimensions of their organisation's innovation climate positively (Figure 5.2). While 43.0% of employees feel that their organisation empowers innovation by encouraging them to look for new ways of improving things, fewer believe their organisation enables it. Approximately a third of employees feel their organisation has sufficiently flexible legislative or regulatory frameworks (31.1%) or commits resources to develop new ideas and innovations (36.0%). Overall, employee perceptions suggest challenges to bottom-up innovation within public service organisations.

Figure 5.2. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Innovation climate



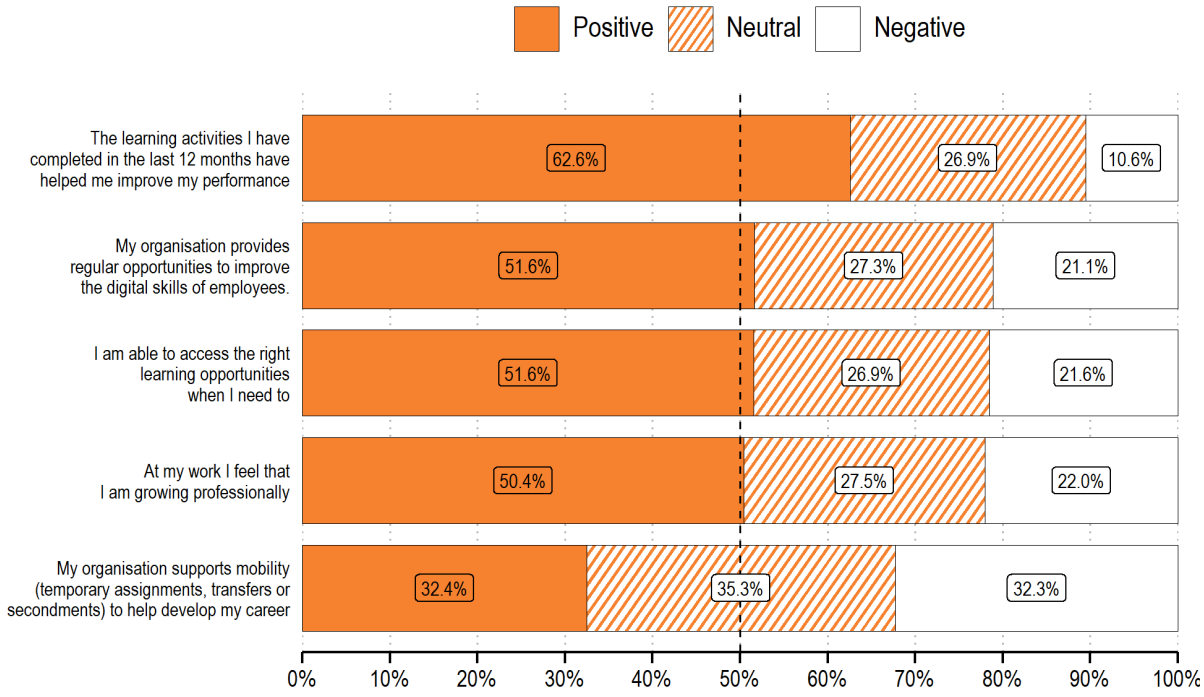
Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the innovation climate index. EU8 includes all project countries, Positive responses refer to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/u31pey

5.3. Learning and development by subitem

Only half of employees across EU8 countries feel that they can access appropriate learning opportunities when needed (51.6%) or that they are growing professionally (50.4%; Figure 5.3). Opportunities for mobility are particularly limited with only a third of employees (31.1%) believing that their organisation supports career development through temporary assignments or transfers. This is consistent with challenges in incentivising managers to release staff for temporary assignments, particularly where these staff are high performing. Across OECD countries, lack of managerial support is the most common barrier to mobility (OECD, 2023[1]).

Figure 5.3. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Learning and development



Note: The figure presents the EU8 average for the underlying items of the learning and development index, EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Positive responses refer to the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/hk7j4u

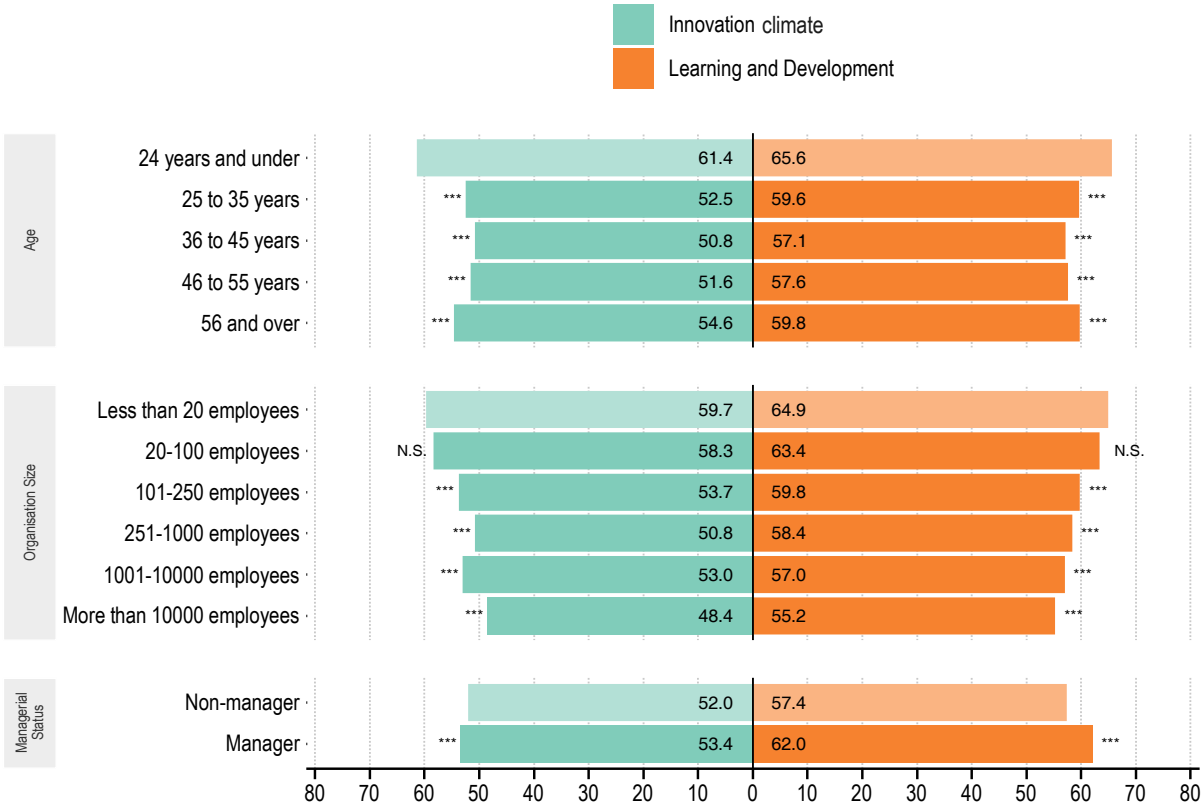
5.4. Innovation climate and learning and development indices by subgroups

Perceptions of innovation climate and learning and development also vary across key demographic and organisational characteristics (Figure 5.4). Respondents aged 24 and younger have the most positive perceptions of both innovation climate (61.4) and learning and development (65.6). This might be because, as new entrants to public administration, younger workers often benefit from structured onboarding and development activities aimed at building essential public service skills and knowledge. This learning, coupled with exposure to new tools and ways of working, may also enhance perceptions of innovation climate.

Employee perceptions are also influenced by the size of their organisation. Perceptions of innovation climate and learning and development are most positive among organisations with less than 20 employees (64.9) or between 20 and 100 employees (63.4) and become less positive as organisation size increases. This is somewhat surprising, since larger organisations often have more diverse functional areas and greater resources, which could act as structural advantage in fostering internal mobility and innovation. One possible explanation could be that employees in smaller organisations may feel more empowered to suggest new ways of working and benefit from diverse learning and development opportunities owing to the broader scopes of work and greater proximity to leaders.

Managers (62.0) hold more positive views of learning and development compared to non-managers (57.4). This could be because managerial and leadership capabilities are a strong focus of public administration learning activities (OECD, 2023[1]; OECD, 2014[2]), providing ample opportunities and signalling strong support for managers' development. In contrast, perceptions of innovation climate were similar across managers (53.4) and non-managers (52.0). This may suggest that managers and non-managers face similar opportunities and constraints when it comes innovating within their organisations. In the public sector context, innovation is often driven by senior leaders and elected officials and in response to external budgetary pressures, changes to legislation or regulations, shifting political priorities or mandates for new services (Jung and Lee, 2016[3]; Arundel, Casali and Hollanders, 2015[4]). As such, support and opportunities for employees and middle-managers to generate and develop innovations can be limited. Within the Bulgaria Central Administration, for example, innovation efforts were largely top-down and permission to engage in innovation was lower among less senior staff (OECD, 2024[5]).

Figure 5.4. Differences in perceived innovation climate and learning and development by key demographics



Note: The figure presents the average EU8/EU7 scores for the innovation climate (EU8) and learning and development (EU7) indices, disaggregated by subgroups. Index scores are shown on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). EU8 includes all project countries, EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex. Statistical significance between sub-groups is indicated by stars next to each bar. A single asterisk (*) indicates significance at the 90% level, two asterisks (**) at the 95% level, and three asterisks (***) at the 99% level. 'N.S.' denotes a non-significant difference compared to the reference group. The reference group is shown in light turquoise or light orange.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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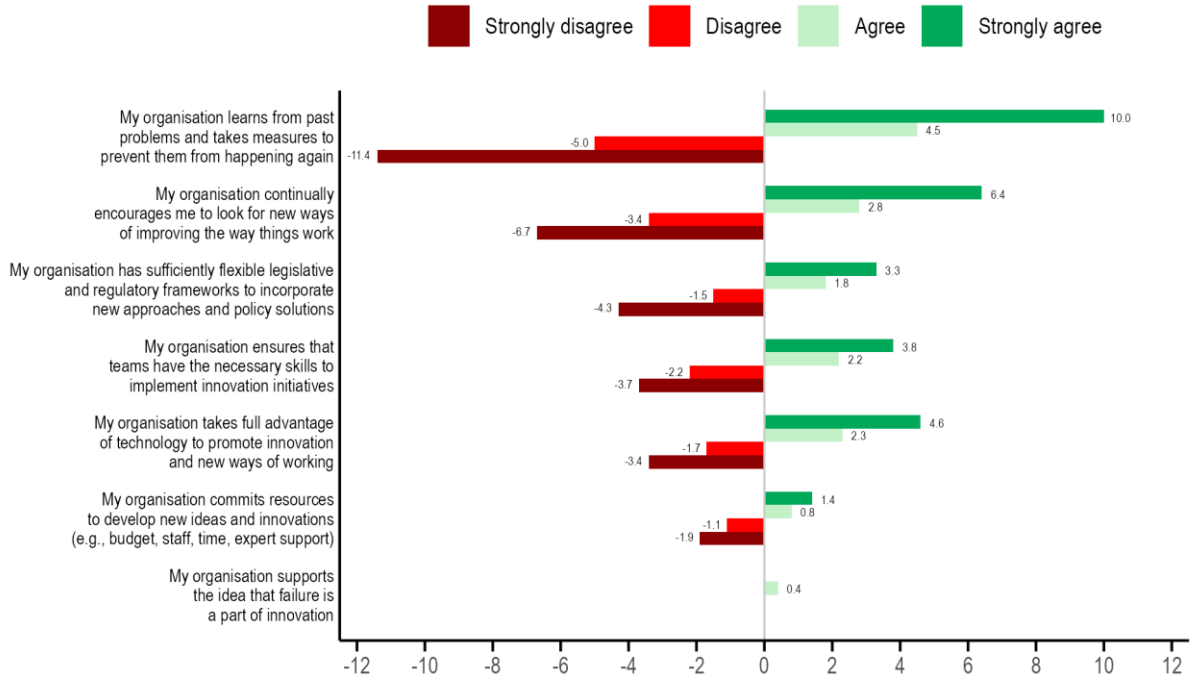
5.5. Effect of innovation climate on organisational performance

This survey shows that, of all the drivers examined, innovation climate is the most influential driver of organisational performance and the third most influential driver of team performance (see Chapter 3).[1] While important for both, how innovation climate relates to team and organisational performance differs, as seen in Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.5. Relationship between innovation climate dimensions and organisational performance

Relative effect size of innovation climate dimensions on perceived organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of innovation dimensions in relation to perceived organisational performance in the EU8 countries The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results should be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable. Interpretation of effect size the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/40xlda

As shown in Figure 5.5, all dimensions of innovation climate are significantly and positively related to organisational performance. Among these dimensions, the ability of organisations to learn from past problems and implement measures to prevent them from happening again is the most strongly related to perceived organisational performance. Perceived organisational performance is 10 percentage points higher among employees who strongly agree that their organisation learns from past mistakes, compared to those who neither agree or disagree, and 11.4 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree. In contrast, that organisations support the idea that failure is part of innovation is least strongly related to perceived organisational performance. Organisational performance was rated 0.4 percentage points higher by those who agree compared to those who neither agree nor disagree, however disagreeing at all or strongly agreeing is not associated with any meaningful change in perceived organisational performance.

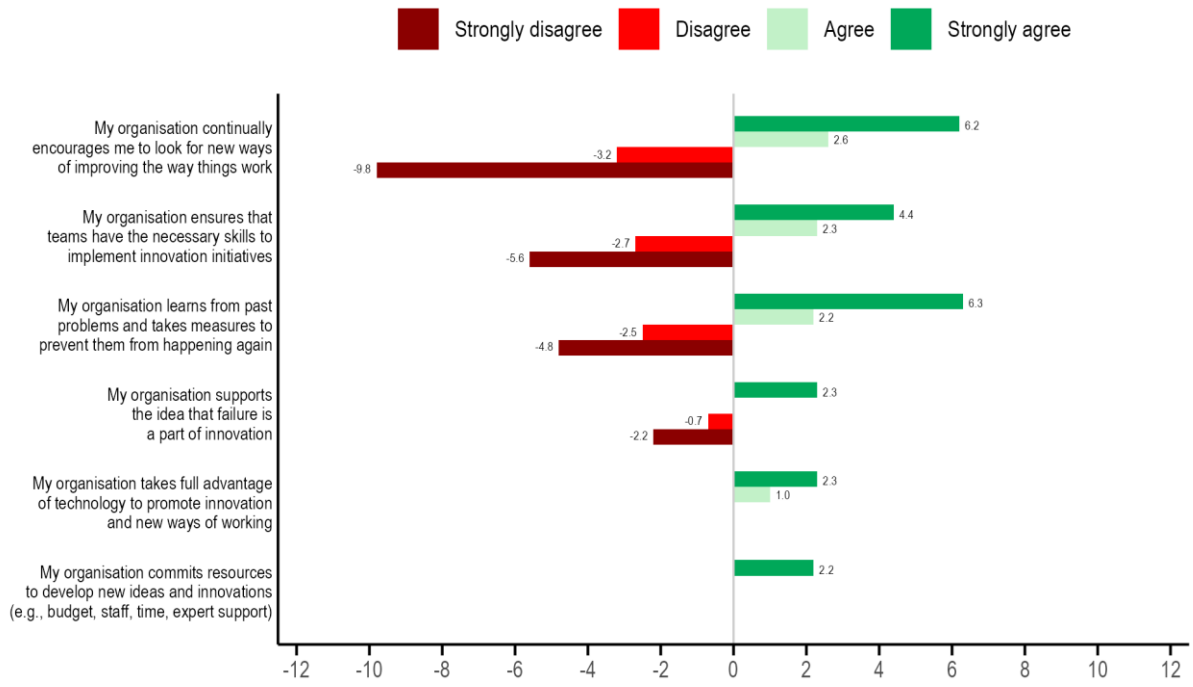
While both learning from past problems and supporting the idea of failure as part of innovation are important aspects of innovation climate, they may operate differently in the public service context. Failure poses risk to the delivery of essential services which can have enduring consequences for public trust. Thus, the benefits of organisational tolerance for failure may be limited by tolerance from the broader authorising environment and subsequently be constrained to low-risk or auxiliary areas of operation (OECD, 2023[6]) thereby limiting the benefit for organisational performance. In contrast, continuous improvements arising from an organisation's ability to learn from past problems and prevent them from happening again may have more visible benefits to employees thereby directly influencing perceptions of organisational performance. This pattern of results may also reflect the current state of public sector innovation more broadly. Innovation is commonly driven by a desire for greater efficiency or reduced complexity, translating to incremental improvements of existing practices rather than systematic, transformational change (OECD, 2024[7]; OECD, 2024[5]; Kaur et al., 2022[8]). In such contexts, learning from past problems and finding new ways of improving the way employees work is likely to be important factors for successful innovation and subsequent organisational improvement.

5.6. Effect of innovation climate on team performance

As shown in Figure 5.6, all dimensions of innovation climate are significantly and positively related to team performance. Among these dimensions, the extent to which employees are encouraged to look for new ways to improve how things work is the most influential. Team performance is 6.2 percentage points higher among those who strongly agree that they are encouraged to look for new ways of doing things and 9.8 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree.

Figure 5.6. Relationship between innovation climate dimensions and team performance

Relative effect size of innovation climate dimensions on perceived organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of innovation climate dimensions in relation to perceived team performance in the EU8 countries The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results should be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable. Interpretation of effect size the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/w70ozd

Though less strong than other dimensions, tolerance for failure is more highly related to team performance compared to its effects on organisational performance. Perceived team performance is 2.3 percentage points higher for employees who strongly agree that their organisation views failure as a part of innovation compared to those who neither agree nor disagree and 2.2 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree. Such tolerance is important for individuals to suggest and test new ideas, without fear of repercussion.

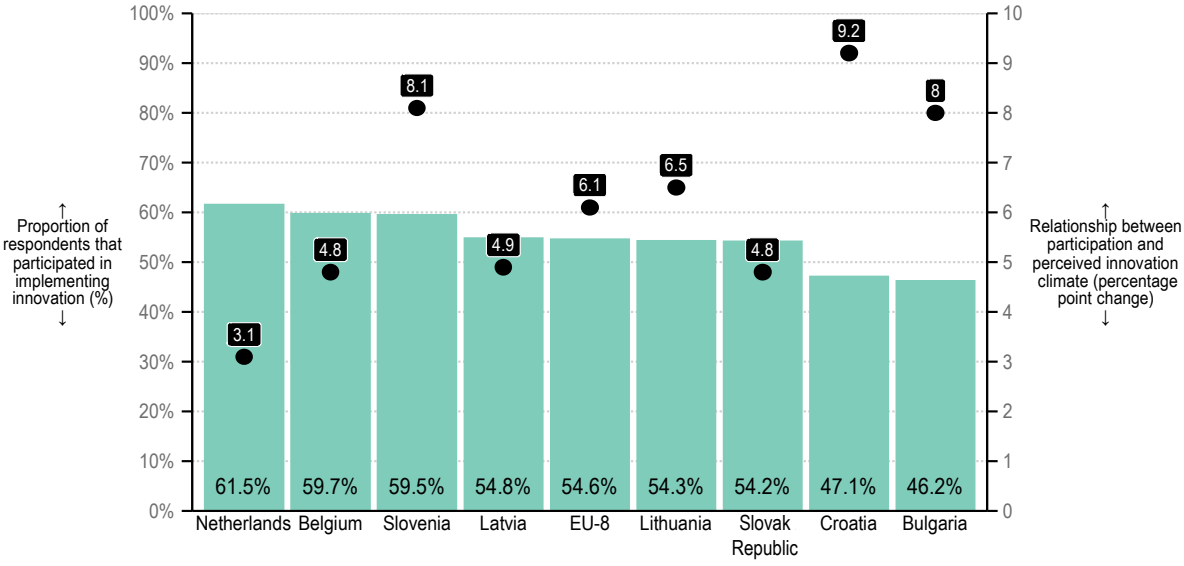
One explanation is that these two dimensions partially point to the notion of psychological safety as the processes and practices that support open and trustful interactions (Baer and Frese, 2002[9]). By promoting collaboration, communication, and sense of belonging (Lee and Jung, 2024[10]) as well as helping to harness the benefits of team diversity (Valls, González-Romá and Tomás, 2016[11]), these empowering aspects of innovation climate may be particularly important for team performance. In contrast, enabling aspects, such a flexible legislation, technology and budget allocations while needed, may have less of a direct influence on day-to-day team dynamics and subsequent performance in teams.

5.7. Innovation climate and innovation implementation

Perceived innovation climate is important as an enabler of actual innovation efforts within public service organisations. More than half of respondents (54.6%) report participating in the implementation of some form of innovation within their organisation in the past two years. These span service delivery (13.8%), process (39.5%), and policy or legislative (15.2%) innovations with some respondents reporting involvement in multiple types.

Employees who participated in some form of innovation typically held more positive views (a 6.1% increase) of their organisation's innovation climate. This relationship is significant, controlling for demographic and organisational factors, however the causal direction is unclear. Hence, this finding may suggest that improving innovation climate results in more innovation activity; however, it could also suggest that employees involved in innovation activities typically have positive experiences, which, in turn, improve their perception of innovation climate. Regardless, this relationship varies across countries (Figure 5.7). For example, in Croatia where 47.1% of respondents report participating in innovation, participation was associated with a 9.2% increase in perceived innovation climate. In contrast, in the Netherlands, which has the highest rate of participation (61.5%), participation was associated with only a 3.1% increase in perceived innovation climate.

Figure 5.7. Participation in innovation implementation and relationship to innovation climate by country



Note: The figure presents the innovation participation rate as the proportion of respondents of each country and the EU8 average that report being involved in any implementation of an innovation in the past two years (Q78). Effect size of participation on perceived innovation climate refers to the difference in average perceived innovation climate based on the innovation climate index between those who participated in innovation and those who did not for each country. EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

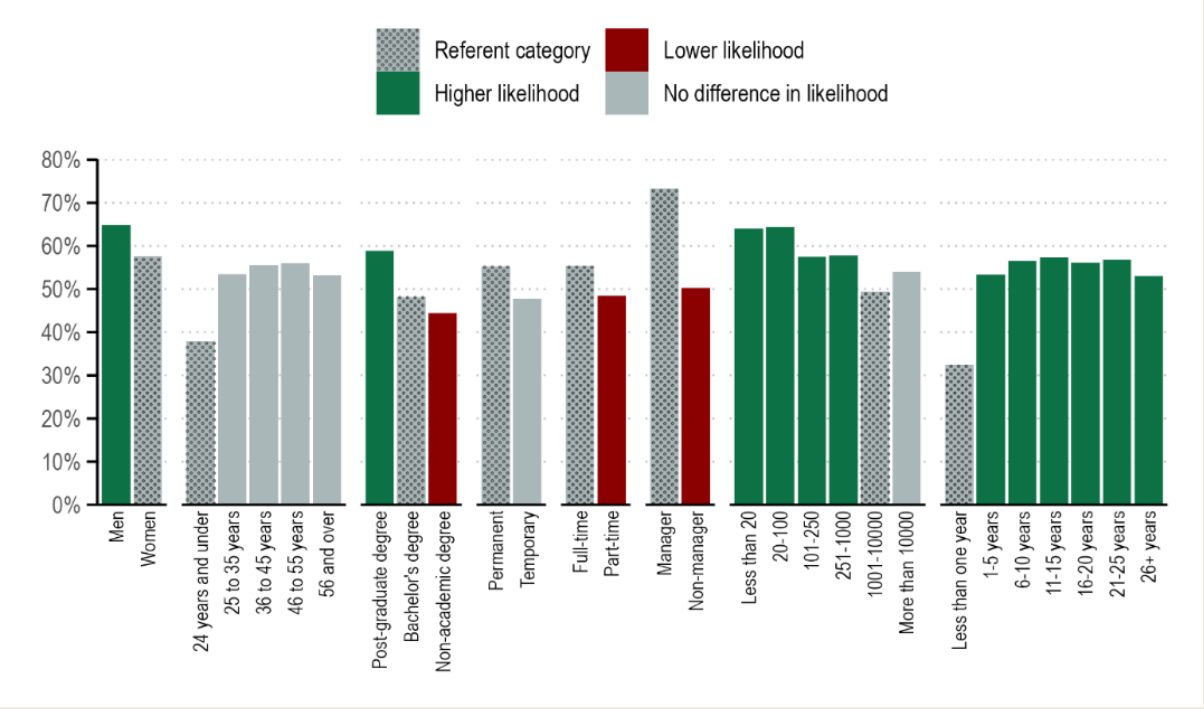
StatLink https://stat.link/atk72b

Box 5.1. Age is just a number: Exploring characteristics related to participation in innovation projects

Organisations benefit when all employees feel that they have the opportunity and ability to contribute to innovative efforts. At the same time, differences in representation of groups across public service workforces necessitates a balanced approach to ensuring that underrepresented voices are actively sought out. Strengthening innovation outcomes therefore requires diverse initiatives that align to the needs of the workforce.

Figure 5.8. Who participates in innovation projects?

Proportion of respondents reporting participation in any innovation projects in the past two years



Note: The figure presents the EU8 proportion of respondents who report participating in any innovation projects in the past two years. A random-intercepts logistic model predicting participation in any innovation project (binary) was fit on all control variables: gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and organisation and country. Referent categories as displayed in blue. Interpretation of other categories are relative to the referent category and whether there is an increase (green), decrease (red) or no change (grey) in the odds of engaging in innovation compared. The figure does not display missing or 'other' categories. EU8 includes all project countries, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/l2r6ni

Among EU8 countries, older workers are no less likely to be involved in the implementation of innovation than any other age group. Negative stereotypes of aging frequently portray older workers as inflexible, difficult to train and resistant to change. That innovation is not age dependent suggests that for EU8 countries, public services are accessing diverse views and experiences of their multi-generational workforces.

In contrast, women report significantly less involvement in innovation than men (8 p.p. lower). Likewise, staff with non-tertiary educational attainment are significantly less likely to participate than those with

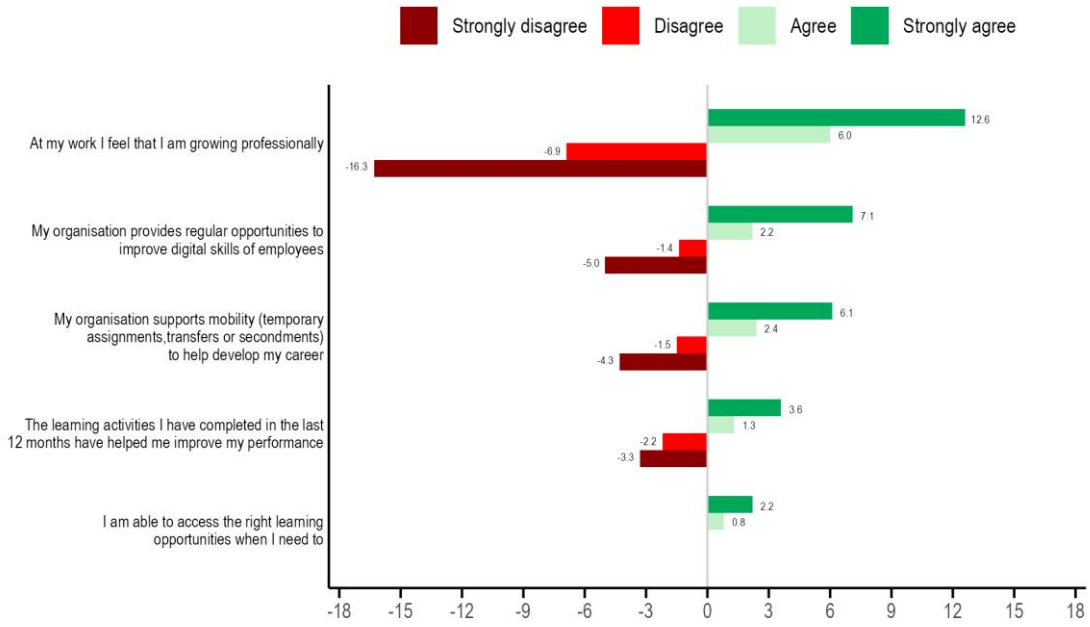
bachelor's degrees (4 p.p. lower) or higher (15 p.p. lower). These differences persist even after controlling for managerial status and working patterns suggesting deeper biases in how organisations recognise and encourage innovation, putting certain groups at risk of being left behind, particularly in digital transformation (OECD, 2024[12]). As women make up close to 80 percent of some EU8 public services (OECD, 2025[13]), organisations risk limiting the development of a significant segment of their workforce. Initiatives that target participation such as enhancing cross-functional collaboration or mobility opportunities can increase involvement of groups that are likely to be most impacted by public service innovation.

5.8. Effect of learning and development on employee engagement

This survey demonstrates that, of all drivers examined, learning and development is the most influential driver of employee engagement (see Chapter 2).[2] This significant finding suggests that a strong learning and development culture can promote engagement among employees by fostering greater commitment, motivation and feelings of efficacy. By investing in their development, organisations signal to employees that they are valued, which can inspire greater commitment and effort. Additionally, by equipping employees with new skills and capabilities, a strong learning and development culture can enhance employees' sense of efficacy in their jobs while also helping to reduce feelings of stagnation.

Figure 5.9. Relationship between learning and development dimensions and engagement

Relative effect size of learning and development dimensions on employee engagement



Note: The figure presents relative effect sizes of learning and development dimensions in relation to engagement in the EU7 countries The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results should be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable. Interpretation of effect size the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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Professional growth has the strongest influence on employee engagement among the specific dimensions of learning and development (Figure 5.9). Engagement is 12.6 percentage points higher for employees who strongly agree that they are growing professionally compared to those who neither agree nor disagree and 16.3 percentage points lower for those who strongly disagree. This presents a key challenge as opportunities for vertical progression are often limited, particularly for middle- and late-career public servants.

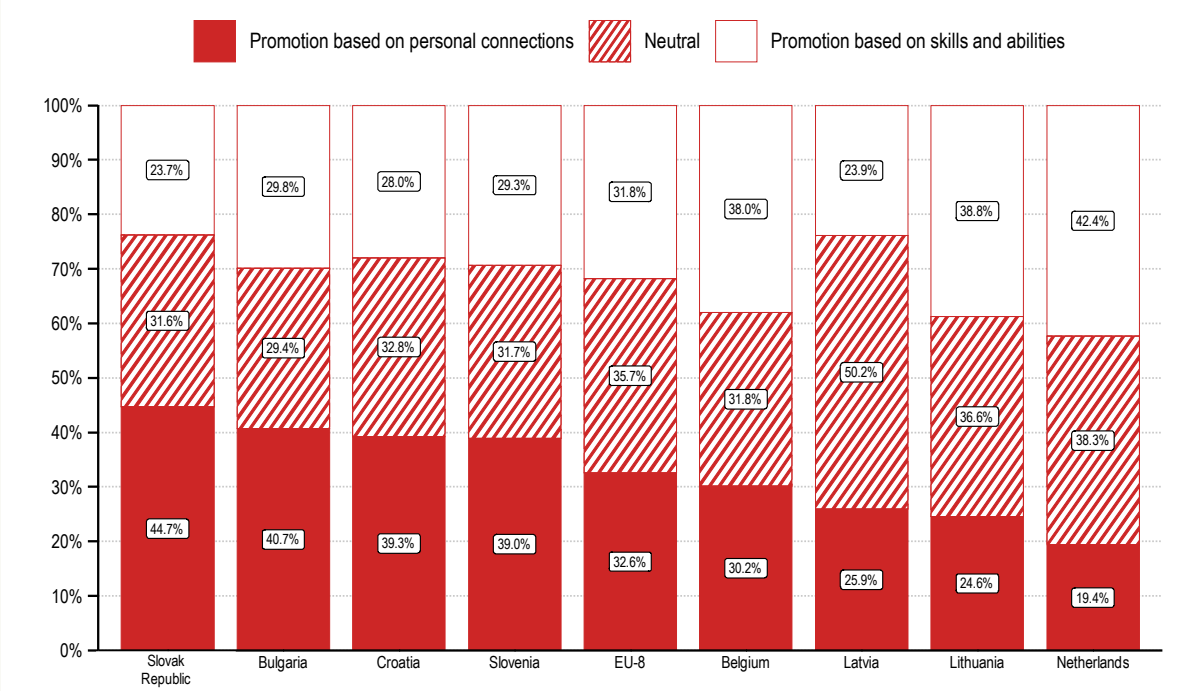
Lateral mobility and other opportunities that grow and utilise employees' skills become even more important for supporting their continuous development and sense of professional growth, and the data show that improving digital skills and support for mobility are also strongly associated with employee engagement. This is likely because, by increasing skill and task variety, mobility can promote feelings of growth while opportunities to develop in-demand skills can help maintain functional fitness and ensure employees feel supported in their long-term career plans. Opportunities to develop digital skills may be particularly important for employees in roles facing disproportionate impacts from new technologies, such as artificial intelligence (David et al., 2024[14]). The strong relationship to engagement suggests that central administration employees are appreciative of organisation's upskilling and reskilling efforts. In contrast, dimensions that were more related to learning and training, such as access or relevance for performance, were less strongly associated with engagement.

Box 5.2. Perceptions of fairness in promotions and career development

On average, employees in EU8 countries are almost evenly divided in their perceptions of how promotions and career development opportunities are awarded. Approximately one-third (32.5%) believe that these are granted based on personal connections rather than merit. A similar proportion (31.7%) disagrees, instead perceiving that these opportunities are based on employee skills and abilities. The remaining (35.7%) hold a neutral view, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Within countries, perceptions vary significantly with the proportion of employees who feel that opportunities are awarded based on personal connections ranging from a high of 44.7% to a low of 19.4%.

The extent to which employees feel that promotion and career development opportunities are granted based on merit impacts on how employees view their future within organisations. Of those who believe opportunities are awarded based on personal connections, 39.9% report intentions to leave the organisation in the next 12 months compared to 24.4% of those who feel that this is not the case. Employees are also more likely to feel that they are growing professionally when they perceive that promotion and career advancement opportunities are awarded based on merit. When employees believe that advancement is based on personal connections rather than merit, it can undermine motivation, and drive away talented individuals from the organisation. This can weaken the organisational capacity and disrupt continuity, particularly in roles requiring experience and specialised expertise. Transparent, competency-based promotion practices help ensure that the right people are in the right positions.

Figure 5.10. Perceptions of promotion and career development fairness by country



Note: The figure presents the country and EU8 responses to the question: "My organisation grants promotions and career development opportunities based on personal connections rather than on skills and abilities." 'Promotion based on skills and abilities' includes respondents who replied 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree' to the statement. 'Promotion based on personal connections' includes those who replied 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' and 'neutral' includes those who replied 'neither agree nor disagree.' EU8 includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants.

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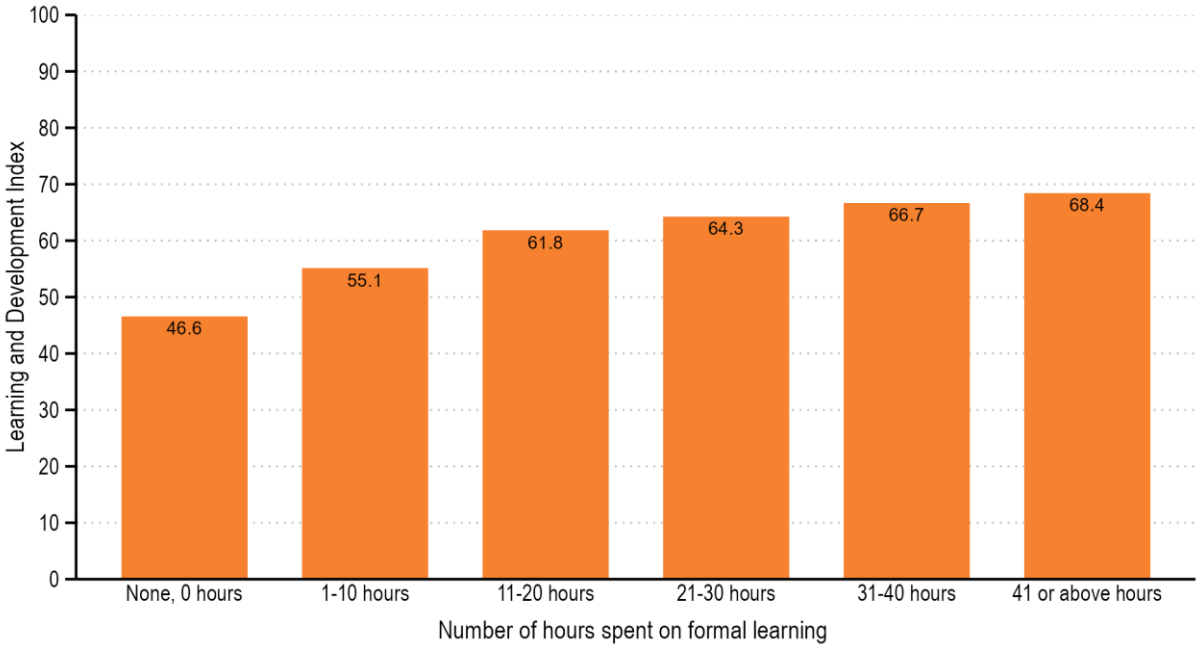
Employees who rate learning and development more positively are more likely to have spent time on learning activities in the past 12 months, as shown in Figure 5.11. Conversely, perceptions of learning and development were lowest for employees who did not participate in learning activities. This may reflect both an absence of learning opportunities as well as challenges in gaining managerial support to access opportunities, particularly where resource constraints may make it difficult to justify employees' release. In this sense, engaging in any hours of learning in the past 12 months may lead employees to evaluate their organisation's learning and development more positively. Overall, however, more time spent on learning activities more likely reflects signals by the organisation that such efforts are expected, valued, and supported.

Figure 5.11. Relationship between learning and development and hours spent on learning activities



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average learning and development index scores by question: 'In the last 12 months, how many hours of training or learning courses (in relation to your job) have you undertaken?' EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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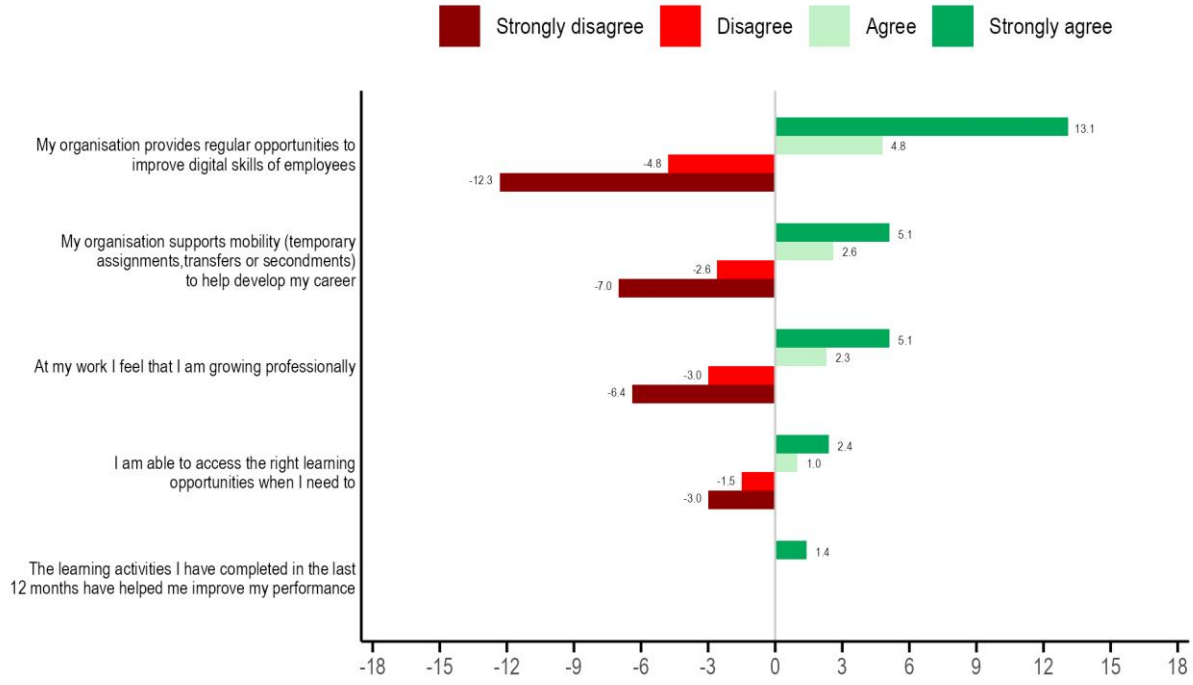
5.9. Effect of learning and development on organisational performance

This survey finds that, of all drivers examined, learning and development is the fifth most influential driver of organisational performance (see Chapter 3).[3] However, it is important to note that the effects of learning and development may be partially mediated through its strong relationship with employee engagement, which was the third most influential driver of organisational performance.

Among specific dimensions of learning and development, opportunities to improve digital skills is most strongly associated with organisational performance (Figure 5.12). Perceived organisational performance is 13.1 percentage points higher among employees who strongly agree that their organisation provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees compared to those who neither agree nor disagree. For those who strongly disagree, organisational performance is 12.3 percentage points lower. This is particularly important, since the rapidly evolving technologies and the digital transformation of government require strong digital competencies across public service workforces. Organisations that invest in the digital competencies of their workforce are better equipped to harness the benefits of digital transformation including for more efficient and effective delivery of services, new ways of working and tailored policy design (David et al., 2024[14]). Visibly investing in digital skills may signal to employees that their organisation is committed to maintaining the skill currency of its workforce and responding to emerging challenges.

Figure 5.12. Relationship between learning and development dimensions and organisational performance

Relative effect size of learning and development dimensions on organisational performance



Note: The figure presents the relative effect sizes of learning and development dimensions in relation to perceived organisational performance in the EU7 countries The model controls for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisation size, tenure, and organisational and country fixed effects. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results should be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable. Interpretation of effect size the expected change in the outcome variable following a change in response category from the reference category 'neither agree nor disagree' to another category (e.g. moving from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). Non-significant effects are not displayed. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands, averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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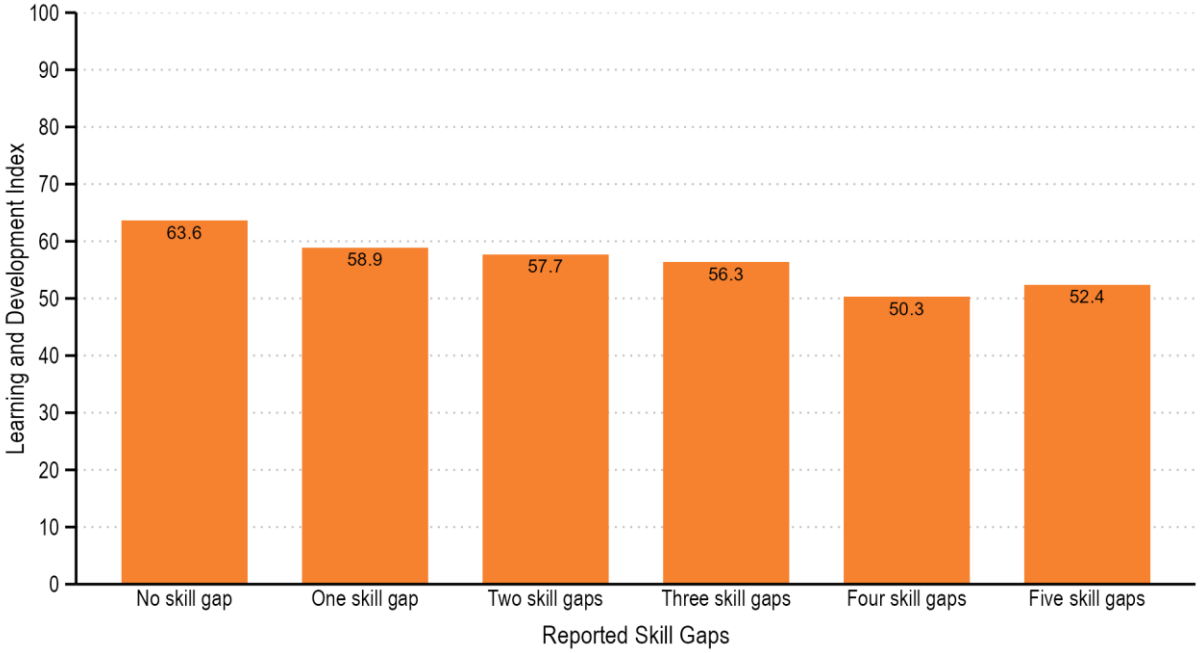
Support for mobility is also influential in shaping employees' perceptions of performance. Organisational performance is 5.1 percentage points higher among employees who strongly agree that their organisation supports mobility opportunities for development compared to those who neither agree or disagree and 7 percentage points lower among those who strongly disagree. In addition to expanding employees' skills and enhancing cross-functional collaboration, mobility opportunities, such as job rotations, secondments and internal assignments, help to build skills, and may also support organisations to leverage existing skills to respond to new demands (OECD, 2023[1]).

Figure 5.13. Relationship between learning and development and skill gaps in teams



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average learning and development index scores by the count of reported skill gaps in question: 'Are there currently skills or capacities missing within your immediate work unit or team? If yes, which are the most important skills missing?' Respondents could select up to a maximum of five skill gaps. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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The value of a strong learning and development culture for organisational performance is further evidenced by its relationship to perceived skill gaps. As show in Figure 5.13, perceptions of learning and development were most positive among those who report no skill gaps in their immediate team or work group. This may be because, when learning and development is embedded in organisational culture, employees are supported to proactively develop new skills enabling them to keep pace with evolving job demands. It can also help with the identification and prioritisation of development needs by encouraging managers to be active in developing their staff and teams. The ability to address skill gaps internally is critical for organisational capability in a time of high global competition for skills.

5.10. Conclusions and considerations for policy actions

Public service organisations continue to face significant challenges in fostering bottom-up innovation and continuous learning among employees. In EU8 countries, fewer than half of employees view their organisation's innovation climate positively. When employees do not feel encouraged to propose new ideas, it negatively affects how they perceive the performance of their teams and the organisation as a whole. This suggests that while employees may have valuable insights for improvement, they often lack the support to voice them. Cultivating a culture that actively supports innovation—one where employees are empowered to share ideas and enabled, by equipping teams with the skills and resources needed to implement them, is important for ensuring public service organisations are able to respond and adapt to changing demands.

Although perceptions of learning and development are slightly more positive, only half of employees feel they are growing professionally in their current roles. This sense of stagnation can significantly undermine engagement. A key challenge in light of changing technologies is that only half of employees feel they have opportunities to improve their digital capabilities. Visible investment in maintaining the currency of employee skills shapes their perceptions of organisational performance. Creating meaningful development opportunities and investing in future-proof skills are therefore critical to sustaining a motivated, high-performing workforce.

Given this, public service leaders, managers and those designing reforms may wish to consider the following key considerations for policy actions:

- Efforts to strengthen and leverage innovation climate to support organisational performance should include a focus on the mechanisms to institutionalise past learnings to enhance planning and adaptive capabilities without introducing additional bureaucracy. Interventions like central risk registries, information repositories, and regular retrospectives among others, can help enhance institutional capacity to learn from past problems without introducing additional approval processes.
- Efforts to strengthen and leverage learning and development to support organisational performance should include a focus on investing in employees' digital capabilities and creating and supporting mobility. Job rotations, temporary assignments, task forces provide opportunities for organisations to leverage existing skills while further developing skills of employees. Mobility also provides opportunities to involve underrepresented staff groups in innovation efforts and support building a more innovative culture. By building in-demand skills internally and creating mechanisms to leverage existing skills organisations can better respond to emerging trends and new demands.
- Employees feel more engaged when they are growing professionally and developing in-demand skills. Organisations should consider how this can be leveraged when implementing upskilling and reskilling efforts. By framing these programmes as supporting long-term career and professional development, organisations can improve participation and engagement, particularly for voluntary opportunities.
- Organisations should consider integrating informal learning and knowledge management mechanism to complement existing training. While important for engagement and perceived organisational performance, access to and quality of learning activities were the least influential dimensions of learning and development. Strengthening informal, experiential learning mechanisms can help to support a more holistic approach to staff development.

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Notes

[1] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. These models evaluated employee well-being, employee engagement, management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of team and organisational performance.

[2] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. These models evaluated employee management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of employee engagement.

[3] Based on results of separate mixed effect regression models which control for gender, age, education, contract type (temporary/ permanent), working pattern (full-time/part-time), managerial status, organisational size, tenure and country fixed effects. These models evaluated employee well-being, employee engagement, management, leadership, learning and development, innovation climate, pay satisfaction, employment security, and remote work as drivers of team and organisational performance.

6 Pay, working conditions and remote working arrangements

Fair pay, supportive working conditions, and flexible arrangements are fundamental to attracting, motivating and retaining talent in the public sector as they are important drivers of employee engagement and well-being. This chapter examines central administration employees' satisfaction with their pay, benefits, working arrangements and physical and remote work environment. It also explores the extent to which employees use remote working arrangements across countries, alongside employees' satisfaction with both remote working conditions and physical working environments. Finally, the chapter analyses how these factors impact employees' overall engagement and well-being.

Key findings

- Less than half (41%) of public employees are satisfied with their pay, and even fewer feel they are fairly compensated when compared to those doing similar jobs in the private sector.
- An increase in pay satisfaction is associated with increased engagement. It also reduces the likelihood of employees declaring an intent to leave their organisation.
- Public employees are much more positive about their employment security, with 75% expressing satisfaction.
- Employees who are satisfied with their pay, compared to those that are neutral, are 28.7% less likely to intend to leave their organisation.
- Remote work is commonly used and appreciated, as 43% of public employees work remotely on a weekly basis. Among those who already work remotely, around half would like to do so more frequently, and less than 3% would like to do so less frequently.
- Younger employees report the highest levels of remote work and the highest desire to do so more frequently. More than half of those under the age of 46 wish to work remotely more than they currently do (51.2-53%).

The conditions under which people work are important to their job satisfaction, engagement, and overall well-being. Pay and job security remain critical factors influencing employee retention and motivation. While adequate compensation and job security are inherently valuable to employees, they also serve strategic purposes, as they affect staff engagement and turnover. At the same time, the nature of work has evolved, with remote and hybrid working arrangements becoming a more common part of public service employment (OECD, 2023[1]). These shifts have transformed workplace dynamics, presenting both opportunities and challenges for employees and employers alike. As governments confront emerging challenges such as an ageing workforce (OECD, forthcoming 2025) that create additional financial pressure on public administrations, understanding the effects of employee's perceptions of pay, employment security, and working conditions can help design more effective and sustainable reform strategies.

This chapter examines three key aspects of working life: satisfaction with pay and employment security, remote working arrangements, and satisfaction with the physical and remote working environment. It explores how these dimensions affect key outcomes including employee engagement, well-being and team performance.

6.1. Satisfaction with pay and employment security in EU8 central administrations

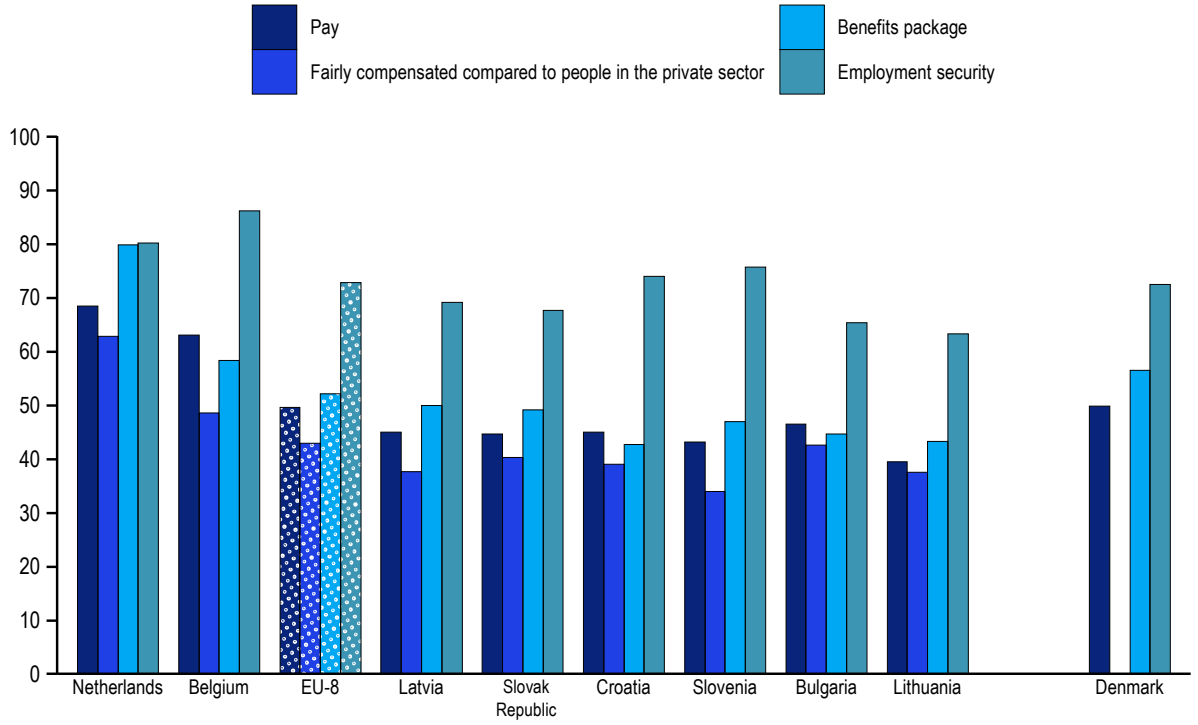
Public employees' satisfaction with their pay and broader benefits package is relatively low across the EU8 countries, as is perceptions of compensation fairness relative to the private sector. The mean across these three items is 48.3, reflecting relatively neutral views from employees (Figure 6.1). Perceived fairness of

compensation compared to the private sector was especially low, with a mean of 43. This may be detrimental to attracting and retaining employees with in-demand skills within central public administrations.

Across remuneration items, there is a high degree of variation across countries. For the three items related to pay and benefit satisfaction, the Netherlands and Belgium have the highest scores; for example, pay satisfaction in the Netherlands has a score of 68.5 (Figure 6.1). Conversely, at the other end of the ranking, Slovenia and Lithuania report pay satisfaction scores of 44.6 and 39.6, respectively. It should be noted that these findings reflect public servants' perceived satisfaction with their remuneration rather than objective pay comparisons.

Employment security is relatively high across the EU8, with a mean score of 72.8. This is 24.5 percentage points higher than the average score for remuneration items (Figure 6.1). Public service employees may make trade-offs between perceived potential earnings and employment security. Employment security is generally considered high in the central administration, where public servants are traditionally hired under a specific legal status that emphasises stability and lifelong employment, which entrails high levels of job security (OECD, 2021[2]). The ranking of countries is similar to the pattern observed for satisfaction with remuneration, with the Netherlands scoring highest at 86.3, and Lithuania at the other end with a score 23 percentage points lower (63.3).

Figure 6.1. Satisfaction with pay, benefits and employment security by country



Note: The figure presents country averages for questions measuring employee satisfaction with pay, benefits, and employment security on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). The exact wording of the question items is: "I am satisfied with my salary," "I am satisfied with my benefits package (monetary and non-monetary benefits)," "Compared to people doing a similar job in the private sector, I feel that I am fairly compensated," and "I am satisfied with the security of my employment." Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. Mean differences between the items are statistically significant at the $p < 0.01$ level in all countries where both indices are available.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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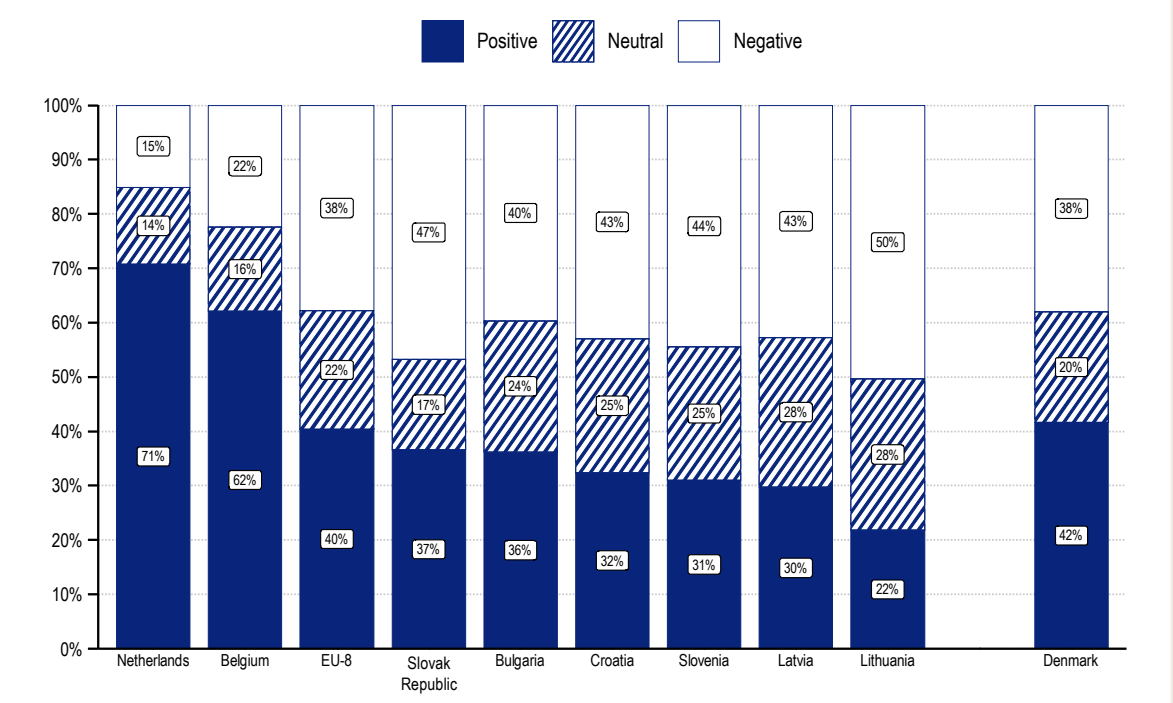
Box 6.1. Satisfaction with pay and employment security in Australia, Ireland, United Kingdom and the United States

Figure 6.2 and Figure 6.3 illustrate the distribution of positive, neutral and negative scores across the countries regarding their satisfaction with pay and employment security. These two topics are often included in government-run employee engagement surveys across other OECD countries; however, identifying broader trends remains valuable.

Pay satisfaction is assessed across OECD countries using varying survey items. In Australia, 63% of employees feel adequately remunerated; in Ireland, 42% report feeling positive about their remuneration; in the United Kingdom, 50% express satisfaction with their total benefits package; and in the United States, 59% report positive scores on their pay satisfaction. For the EU8, the average share of positive responses for pay satisfaction is 41%, placing it at the lower end of the spectrum compared to other OECD countries.

For employment security, the average share of positive responses for the EU8 is 74%. This is comparable to Australia, where 85% of employees report positive perceptions of job stability and security, and higher than Ireland, where 65% of respondents express positive views on terms and conditions of employment.

Figure 6.2. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Pay satisfaction



Note: The figure presents country and EU8 average of responses to the question: "I am satisfied with my salary". EU8 includes all project countries, Positive responses represent the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree'. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.

Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

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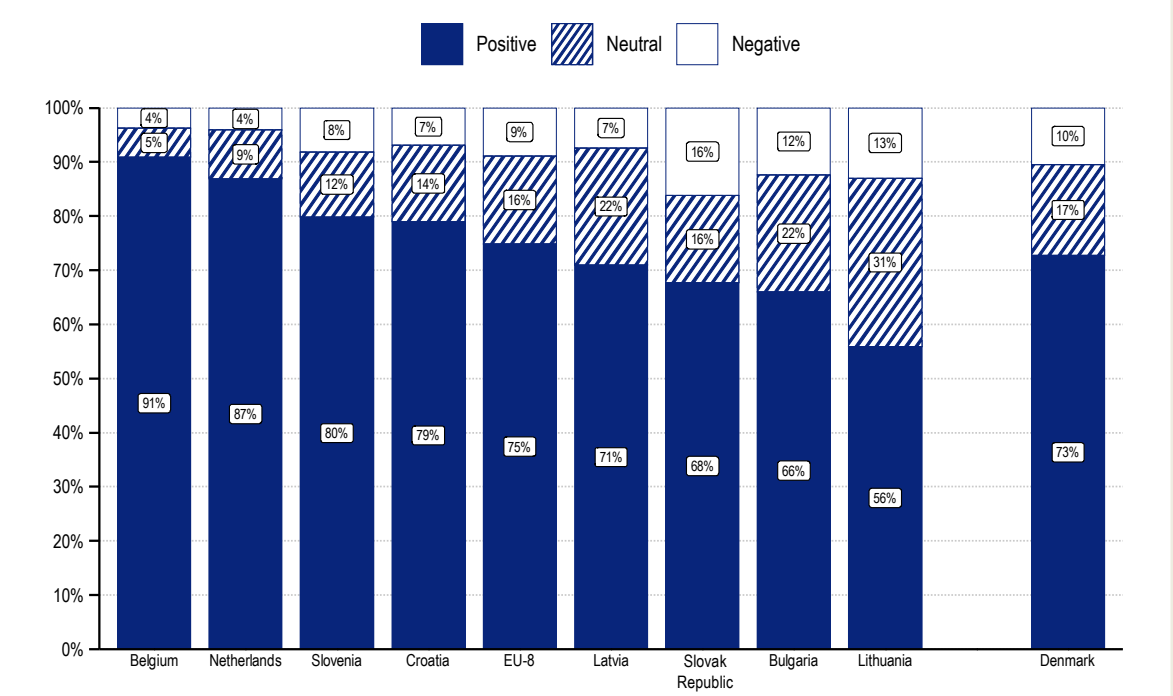
Figure 6.3. Distribution of positive, neutral and negative responses – Employment security



Note: The figure presents country and EU8 averages of responses to the question: "I am satisfied with the security of my employment." EU8 includes all project countries. Positive responses represent the combined share of respondents selecting 'strongly agree' or 'agree,' neutral responses those selecting 'neither agree nor disagree,' and negative responses those selecting 'strongly disagree' or 'disagree.' Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/lkopzr

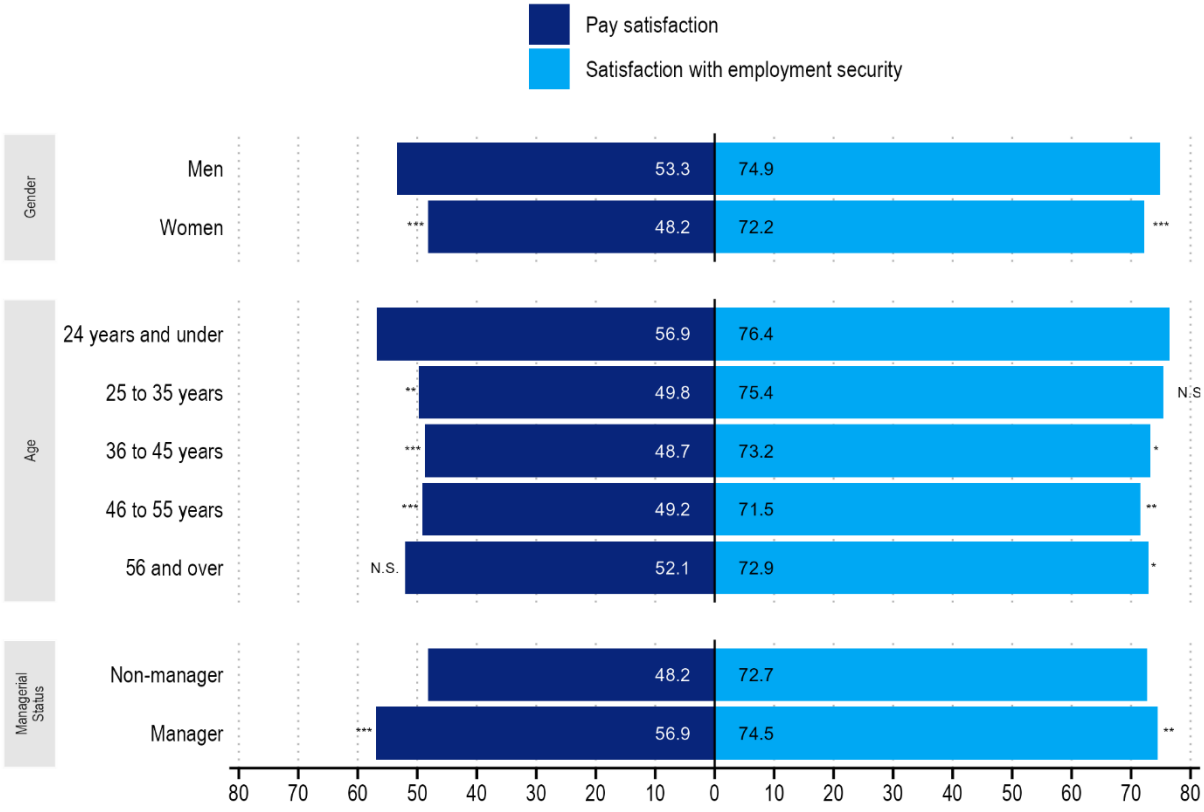
Note: **Exact wording of salary-related questions**: In Australia, the question was phrased as "I am fairly remunerated (e.g., salary, superannuation) for the work that I do." In Ireland, it was "Compared to people doing a similar job to me, I feel that my pay is reasonable." In the United Kingdom, respondents were asked, "I am satisfied with the total benefits package," and in the United States, the question was "Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your pay?". **Exact wording of employment security questions**: In Australia, the question was "I am satisfied with the stability and security of my job," while in Ireland, it was "I am satisfied with the terms and conditions of my employment."
Sources: Australia's Public Service Census 2024 (APS, 2024[3]), Irelands Civil Service Employee Engagement Survey (Gov.ie, 2024[4]), United Kingdom Civil Service People Survey 2023 Results Highlights (Gov.uk, 2024[5]), United States Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey Summary (OPM, 2024[6])

6.2. Pay and employment security satisfaction by subgroups

Pay satisfaction and satisfaction with employment security vary across key demographic characteristics (Figure 6.4). Men have a 5.1 percentage point higher level of pay satisfaction (53.3) than women (48.2). This difference may reflect underlying gender pay gaps, which may be influenced by disparities in job positions. This is further illustrated by the notable 12.1 percentage point difference in pay satisfaction between managers (56.9) and non-managers (44.8). While women make up a high share of respondents overall, only 17% of responding managers are women, compared to 21% of men (see Chapter 1).

The youngest age group, employees aged 24 years and under, have the highest level of salary satisfaction (53.3), whereafter the satisfaction gradually decreases until the oldest age group (56 years and older), where it again slightly increases to 52.8. This U-shaped pattern could be attributed to younger employees having lower salary expectations at career entry and feeling optimistic about future growth potential, while mid-career professionals may face growing financial responsibilities and heightened salary expectations. The slight increase at the highest age level could reflect potential career progression and benefits towards the end of the career. The same pattern persists for employment security, where men, the young group of employees and managers report a higher level of satisfaction; however, the within-group differences are smaller compared to pay satisfaction (Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4. Satisfaction with pay and employment security by key demographics



Note: The figure presents the average EU8 scores for the questions: "I am satisfied with my salary" and "I am satisfied with the security of my employment," disaggregated by subgroups. Scores are shown on a scale from 0 ('strongly disagree') to 100 ('strongly agree'). EU8 includes all project countries. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size. For details on the exact wording of the items, please refer to the technical annex. Statistical significance between subgroups is indicated by stars next to each bar: a single asterisk (*) indicates significance at the 90% level, two asterisks (**) at the 95% level, and three asterisks (***) at the 99% level. 'N.S.' denotes a non-significant difference compared to the reference group. "Men", those who are "24 years and under" and "non-managers" are reference groups.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/8co9nh

6.3. Effect of pay and employment security satisfaction on employee engagement and turnover

Pay satisfaction affects employee engagement positively. A gradual increase in pay satisfaction is associated with a corresponding increase in employee engagement. Specifically, employees who 'strongly agree' are 10.9 percentage points more engaged, and those who 'strongly disagree' are 11 percentage points less engaged, compared to the neutral pay satisfaction category ('neither agree nor disagree').[1] Unpacking this relationship, particularly for groups low in pay satisfaction, is important for identifying potential engagement and retention risks in the face of growing fiscal pressures, as employee engagement is important for the workforce's ability to deliver quality public services.

Employees who are more satisfied with their pay are also less likely to report turnover intent[2]. Specifically, those who are satisfied are 28.7% less likely to intend to leave their organisation, and those who are unsatisfied are 67.8% more likely to intend to leave their organsiation, when compared to employees with neutral views on their pay satisfaction ('neither agree nor disagree'). This high increase in likelihood should be considered in the context of the relatively small group of employees (12.8%) who intend to leave. However, it is noticeable that 19% of those who are dissatisfied with their pay indicate turnover intent.

Satisfaction with employment security likewise affects employee engagement positively. A gradual increase in employment security satisfaction is associated with a corresponding increase in engagement.[3] Specifically, when comparing to the neutral employment security satisfaction category ('neither agree nor disagree'), employees who 'strongly agree' are 14.1 percentage points more engaged, and those who 'strongly disagree' are 12 percentage points less engaged. Employment security thus shows a slightly stronger effect compared to pay satisfaction.

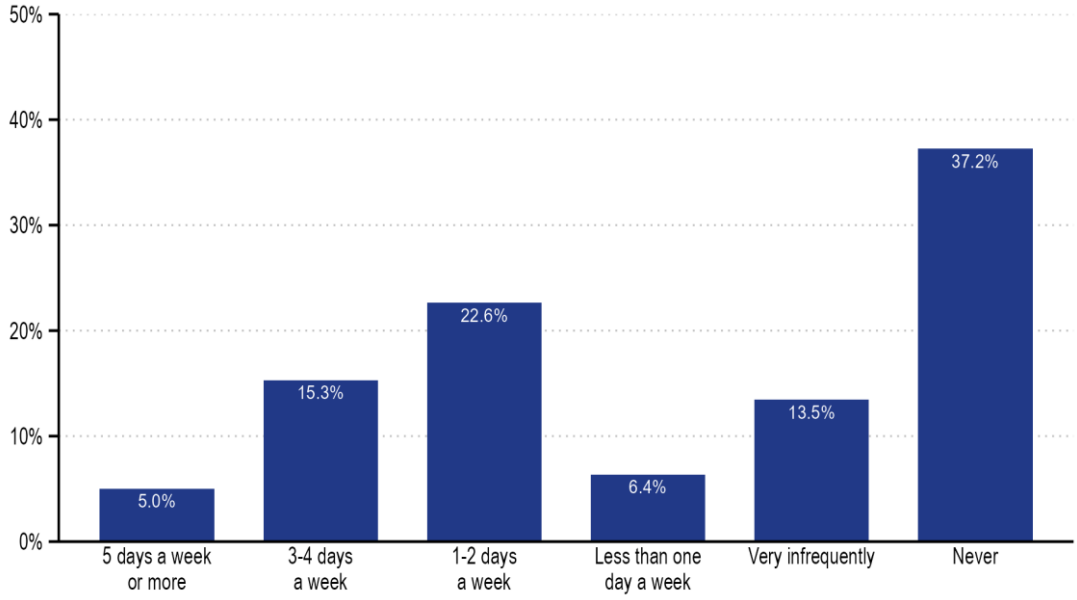
6.4. Remote working arrangements in EU8 central administrations

This subsection examines how different remote working arrangements affect employee engagement, well-being and team performance. Around two in five employees never work remotely (37.2%), and one in five work remote 1-2 days a week (22.6%) (Figure 6.5). Figure 6.6 shows the remote working modalities combined into three categories. On average in the EU7, 43% work remotely on a weekly basis, 20% occasionally and the remaining 37% never work remotely. Working modalities vary a lot by country. Belgium has the highest share of employees working remotely, with 88% doing so weekly. At the other end of the scale, Bulgaria has only 2% working remotely on a weekly basis. With 15%, The Slovak Republic has the second-lowest share of employees working remotely weekly, but it has the highest share of employees doing so occasionally or on an infrequent basis. This shows the wide diversity not only in the extent employees work remotely but how these arrangements are structured.

This data illustrates the uneven impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had in accelerating the adoption of flexible working arrangements in the public sector (OECD, 2023[1]). In many countries, the increased use of remote work has transformed the traditional workplace dynamics, offering flexibility while introducing new challenges. Previous studies have shown mixed results of remote work's effect on employee engagement and well-being depending on individual circumstances and organisational practices. For some employees remote work enhances work-life balance and productivity, fostering greater engagement (Weideman and Hofmeyr, 2020[7]) For others, it can lead to feelings of isolation or blurred boundaries between work and personal life, potentially affecting well-being and engagement (Darouei and Pluut, 2021[8]). Given the relatively recent adoption of remote work arrangements, particularly in the public sector, their effects on engagement and well-being remains limited. Understanding these relationships is essential for developing evidence-based remote work policies.

This survey contributes to this research with a more nuanced and mixed set of findings. On the one hand, remote working at any frequency, whether weekly or occasionally, is linked to higher levels of well-being (see Chapter 2); while remote working on a weekly basis is associated with higher perceptions of team performance (see Chapter 3). On the other hand, weekly remote work is associated with lower levels of engagement (see Chapter 2).

Figure 6.5. Proportion of responding employees by number of days worked remotely



Note: The figure presents the EU7 average scores for the question: "How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e. from home or from another approved location)?" EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/t6v74r

Figure 6.6. Frequency of remote work by country

Note: The figure presents the country and EU7 results for the question: "How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e. from home or from another approved location)?". The responses are grouped into three recoded categories: 'Weekly (more than one day per week)' includes respondents who selected '5 days a week or more,' '3–4 days a week,' or '1–2 days a week'; 'Occasionally/Infrequently/Unscheduled' includes those who selected 'Less than one day a week' or 'Very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis'; and 'Never' includes respondents who selected "Never." EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

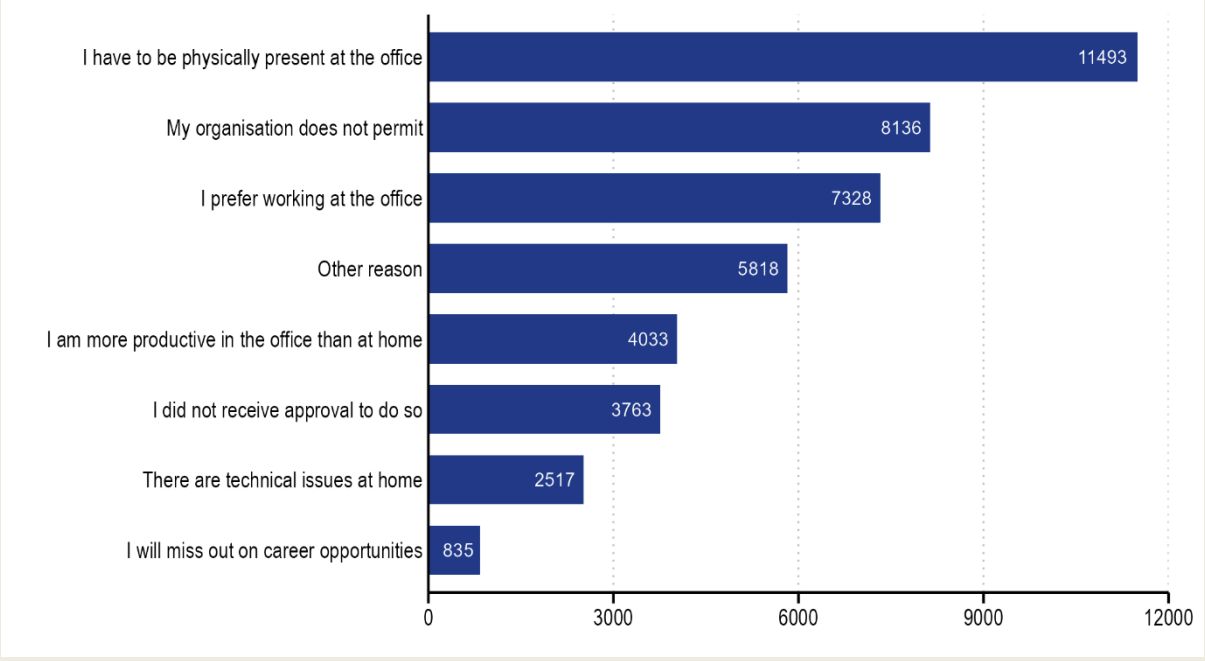
StatLink https://stat.link/yfqv3t

Remote work patterns vary by age, with younger public employees using it the most—and wanting more of it. The age groups 25-35 years and 36-45 old works remotely most frequently: with respective 66.3% and 66.7% of employees working remotely do so either weekly or occasionally, while this share gradually declines with the increase in age (Figure 6.7). Furthermore, for employees under 55, more than half would like to remote work more frequently than they currently do, and fewer than 4% across all age groups would like to remote work less frequently than they currently do (Figure 6.8). This finding confirms previous studies showing that the possibility of working remotely significantly increases job attraction and retention (Moens et al., 2024[9]).

Box 6.2. Reasons employees do not work remotely more frequently

The most commonly selected reason employees do not work remotely more frequently is that they have to be physically present at the office to do their job (selected by 11 493 respondents). The second most common reason is that their organisation does not permit remote work (8 136). Both of these reasons reflect structural and organisational constraints. The third most commonly selected reason relates to employees' personal preference to work at the office (7 328). At the lower end, a few respondents expressed concern about missing out on career opportunities if they are not in the office as much as others (835), or reported experiencing technical issues that prevent them from working remotely (2 517).

Figure 6.9. Reasons for not working remotely more frequently



Note: The figure presents the EU7 responses to the question: "Why do you not work remotely more frequently?". This question was asked to all respondents who reported working remotely two days or less per week in response to the question: "How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e., from home or from another approved location)?" Respondents could select all applicable options, so the bars may add up to more than the total number of respondents. Averages are normalised to give equal weight to each country, regardless of sample size. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

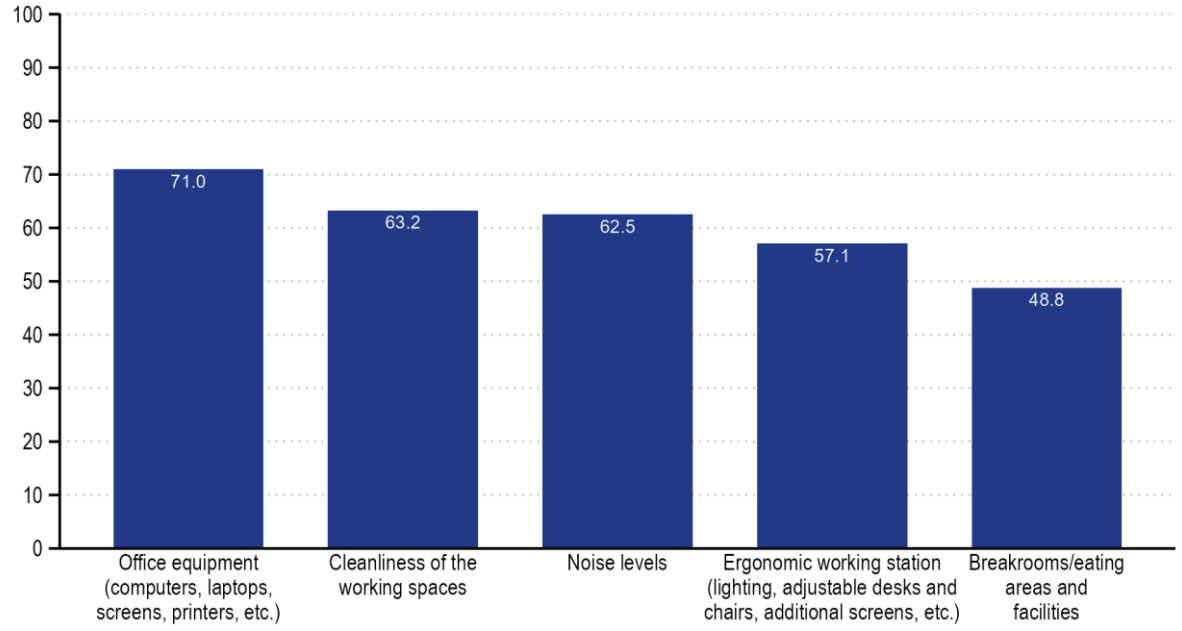
StatLink https://stat.link/0ikylu

6.5. Satisfaction with the physical working environment and support for remote work in EU8 central administrations

The working environment, whether in the physical office space or remotely, influences employee engagement and well-being. The physical workspace environment, including office layout, ergonomics, facilities, as well as ambient factors like noise, lighting, and cleanliness, has been found in previous studies to have a substantial impact on employee satisfaction (Vischer, 2008[10]). Remote working conditions go beyond the physical workspace at the remote work location by also considering factors such as trust from management and work-life balance when working remotely. This section examines satisfaction with both the physical and remote working environment and, in turn, how this affects employee engagement and well-being.

For the physical working environment, satisfaction is highest with office equipment (computers, laptops, screens, printers, etc.) (71.0), and lowest for breakrooms and eating areas and facilities (48.8) (Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10. Satisfaction with physical working environment



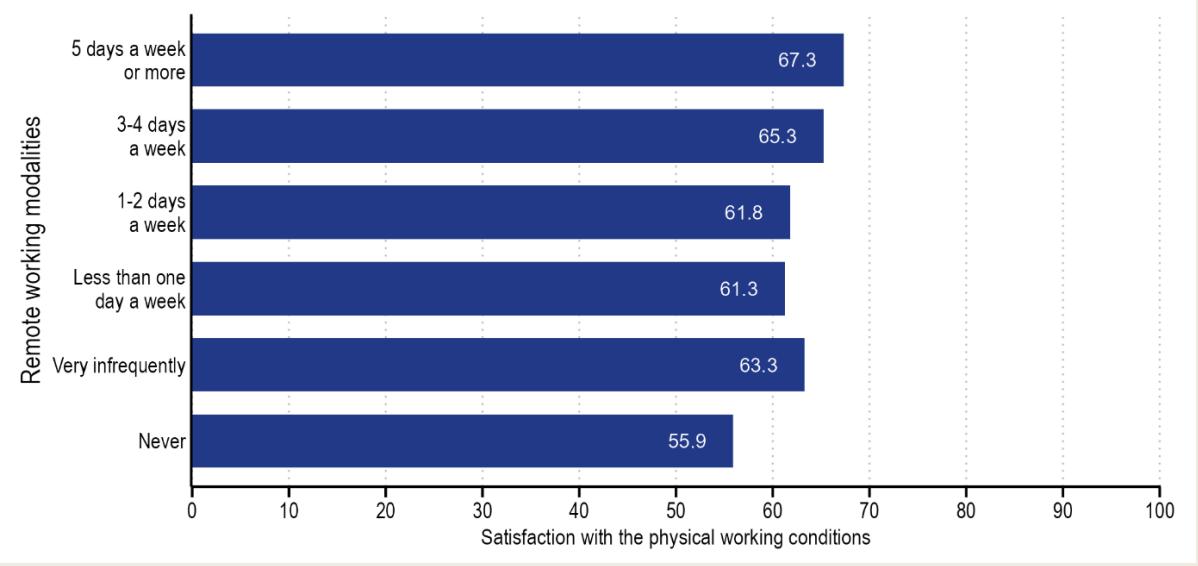
Note: The figure presents responses to five questions regarding satisfaction with physical workplace conditions: "Satisfaction with office equipment (e.g., computers, laptops, screens, printers)"; "Ergonomic workstations (e.g., lighting, adjustable desks and chairs, additional screens)"; "Cleanliness of workspaces"; "Noise levels"; and "Breakrooms or eating facilities." All responses are measured on a scale from 0 ("strongly disagree") to 100 ("strongly agree"). The data includes all project countries except Lithuania and the Netherlands. Averages are normalised to give equal weight to each country, regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/476v9z

Box 6.3. Satisfaction with physical working environment by remote working frequency

Figure 6.11 shows that satisfaction with the physical working environment is highest among those who work remotely the most, unsurprising as they are less exposed to this environment and therefore likely attribute less importance to it. Employees who work fully remotely have a physical working environment score of 67.3, and those who work remotely 1-2 days a week have a score of 61.8. Those who never work remotely and are therefore present full time in the physical office working environment have a score of 55.9, which is 11.4 percentage points lower than those who work fully remotely.

Figure 6.11. Satisfaction with the physical working conditions by remote working modalities

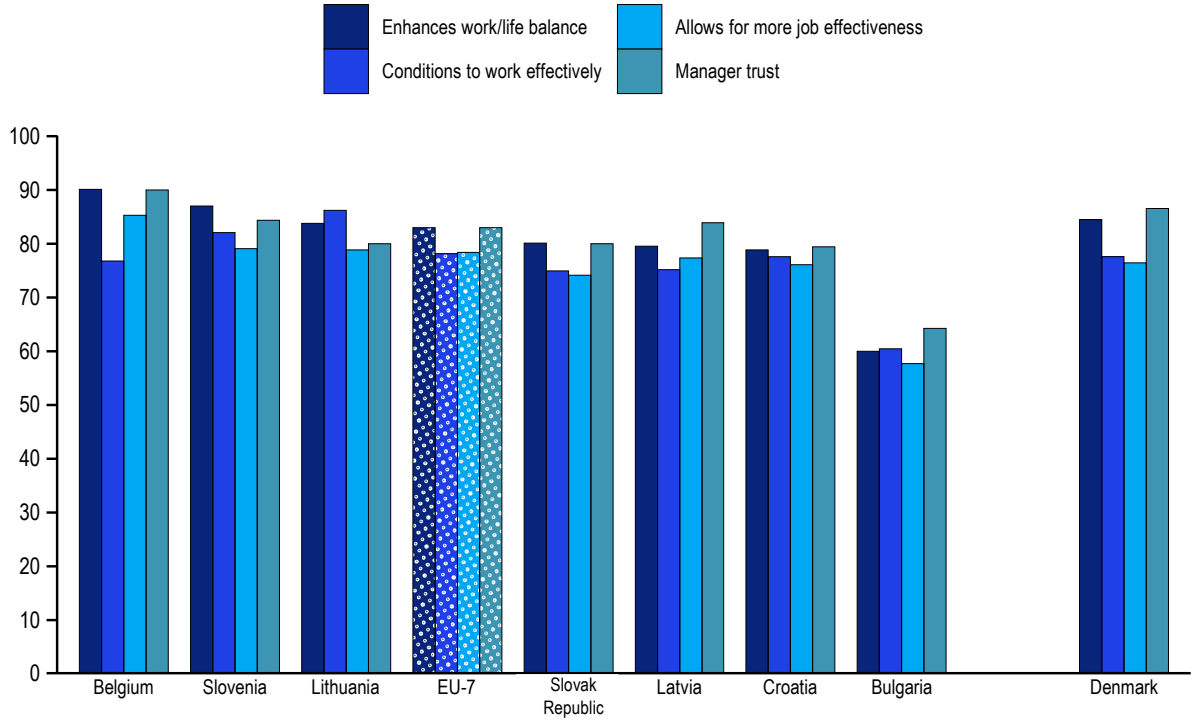


Note: The figure presents the EU7 results for the question: "Why do you not work remotely more frequently?" This question was asked to all respondents who reported working remotely two days or less per week in response to the question: "How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e., from home or from another approved location)?" Respondents could select all applicable options, so the bars may add up to more than the total number of respondents. Averages are normalised to give equal weight to each country, regardless of sample size. EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants'

StatLink https://stat.link/5w480j

Figure 6.12 shows satisfaction levels with the remote working environment. The highest score is for statement "My manager trusts me to do my job effectively, even if I am not working from the same location as them" with an average score of 81.1, and the lowest score is for the item "Remote work allows me to be more effective in my role" with an average score of 76.4. For three out of the four items, Belgium scores the highest and Bulgaria scores lowest. Figure 6.6 shows that these two countries also have, respectively, the highest and lowest share of employees working remotely. This could indicate that the conditions for remote work are better in countries where the remote work arrangements are more embedded in the working culture. In countries with a very low share of employees working remotely, such as Bulgaria where 85% of employees never work remotely (Figure 6.6)—those who do work remotely represent a minority, and the conditions and acceptance of remote work might not adequately reflect their needs.

Figure 6.12. Employee satisfaction with support for remote work by country



Note: The figure presents the country and EU7 results for four questions related to remote work: "I have the conditions I need to work effectively from home or remotely (i.e., space, equipment, digital tools, etc.)," "Home and remote work positively enhance my work/life balance," "Home and remote work allow me to be more effective in my job," and "My manager trusts me to do my job effectively, even when I am working from home or remotely." All responses are measured on a scale from 0 ("strongly disagree") to 100 ("strongly agree"). EU7 includes all project countries except the Netherlands. Averages are normalised, giving equal weight to each country regardless of sample size.
Source: Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants

StatLink https://stat.link/nig7pw

6.6. Effect of physical and remote working environments on employee engagement and well-being

The physical working environment[4] positively affects the employees' engagement and well-being[5]. For engagement, the coefficient is 0.34; this corresponds to an increase of 6.8 percentage points when moving from one answer category to another (i.e., from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). The effect on well-being is also positive, though slightly weaker, with a coefficient of 0.24, corresponding to a 4.8 percentage point increase when changing from one answer category to another. When comparing the effect size of the different sub-items of the physical environment, the strongest effect on well-being is linked to satisfaction with noise levels. For engagement, the strongest single statement effect is satisfaction with office equipment (computers, laptops, screens, printers, etc.).

The support for remote work[6] positively affects employee engagement and well-being.[7] For engagement the coefficient is 0.35; this corresponds to a an increase of 7 percentage points when changing from one answer category to another (i.e., from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree') The effect on well-being is also positive but slightly weaker with a coefficient of 0.3; this corresponds to a an increase of 6 percentage points when changing from one answer category to another (i.e., from 'neither agree nor disagree' to 'agree'). When comparing the effect sizes of the different sub-items of the remote work environment, the strongest single statement effect for both well-being and engagement is satisfaction with the statement: "My manager trusts me to do my job effectively, even when I am working from home or remotely".

6.7. Conclusions and recommendations for policy actions

While public employees generally express high levels of satisfaction with their employment security, satisfaction with pay, benefits, and perceived fairness of pay compared to the private sector remains low. In the EU8 countries, only two in five public employees report positive views about their pay. Low pay satisfaction is associated with reduced engagement, although its impact is modest compared to other aspects of the employee experience. However, low satisfaction with pay poses a greater risk for excessive staff turnover as employees who are dissatisfied with their salary are more likely to consider leaving their organisation, citing pay and benefits as key reasons for their intention to leave.

The use of remote work varies significantly across the EU8 countries. On average, around two in five public employees never work remotely. Despite this, there is a strong desire among employees to work remotely more often than they currently do. Very few would prefer to reduce their current level of remote work. Supporting remote work continues to be important for both employee engagement and well-being. In particular, managerial trust in employees who work remotely plays a key role, and tends to be lower in countries where remote work is less common.

Given this, public service leaders, managers and those designing reforms may wish to consider the following key considerations for policy actions:

- The findings indicate that increasing pay satisfaction could boost employee engagement and reduce intentions to leave the organisation. Although raising pay will not be feasible or desirable in many countries, the results highlight the usefulness of conducting comparative analysis to identify existing pay gaps with the private sector and using the available pay envelope as a strategic tool to boost perceptions of pay fairness and satisfaction for key roles where attraction and retention risks are high.
- As many governments look to identify efficiency savings to restore public finances, the survey identifies a risk that pay cuts and reforms to overall employment security could lead to lower engagement, and hence lower workforce productivity. While workforce reductions are sometimes necessary, the challenge is to design them in ways that limit the direct threat to the remaining employees' perceptions of their job stability and pay satisfaction. For example, workforce strategy could be focused on reducing the size, but improving the skill of the workforce, thereby reducing redundant roles and simultaneously investing in new skills and mobility opportunities for the remaining workforce.
- Offering some flexible working opportunities could help attract and retain talent. Around half of employees aged 55 or younger would prefer to work remotely more often, while fewer than 3% across all age groups wish to do so less. Younger employees not only work remotely most frequently but also express the strongest desire to do so even more. This highlights the opportunity to tailor flexible arrangements in the public sector, to find the right balance for operational coherence and employee flexibility. Findings also highlight the importance of ensuring that managers are well prepared to support flexible working, as among all aspects of the remote work environment, the strongest driver of both engagement and well-being is managers' trust in employees.

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Notes

[1] Based on a Linear Random-Effects regression model controlling for key demographic variables. As the model does not account for other key drivers, results reflect only that dimension and should not be interpreted as the relative importance of dimensions within the relevant index, and not as a standalone effect in relation the outcome variable.

[2] Measured through item Q41 ‘I want to leave my organisation within the next 12 months.’

[3] Based on a random-effects linear regression with all controls

[4] These are the questions Q03a-d combined into one score and rescaled from 0 ‘Strongly disagree’ -100 ‘Strongly agree’, this is not considered as an index as the alpha values are fulfilling the index requirement meeting the requirement.

[5] Based on a random-effects linear regression with all controls.

[6] These are the questions Q7-Q10 combined into one score rescaled from 0 ‘Strongly disagree’-100 ‘Strongly agree’,, this is not considered as a n index as the alpha values are fulfilling the index requirement meeting the requirement. N size etc.

[7] Based on a random-effects linear regression model with all controls

Glossary

Public service refers to the collective body of public servants and public service organisations. The term public services is used when referring to the public service of multiple countries. These terms are used interchangeably with central governments or public administrations.

Employees refer to public servants in central government administrations who took part or were eligible to take part in the survey. This excludes those employed by state, territorial, regional, and municipal governments, state-owned enterprises, public corporations, and government-owned non-profit institutions. Additionally, it excluded government-employed doctors and nurses working in hospitals, teachers, police officers, judges, firefighters, and military personnel (with the exception of civilian military staff).

Senior leadership, used interchangeably with 'senior leaders' or 'leaders', refers to the highest-ranking civil servant(s) of the organisation as well as those that lead departments , major workstreams or functional areas within organisations. They are generally responsible for directing the strategy, priorities, and policies of the organisation. In this survey, employees were asked to rate the senior leadership of their organisation, this may refer to one or multiple people.

Line managers, used interchangeably with 'manager' and 'management' through this chapter, refer to employees' immediate supervisor - generally responsible for setting the objectives of employees and teams, undertaking performance appraisals, approving leave, and overseeing individual and/or team tasks and progress. In this survey employees were asked to rate their line manager, that is their immediate supervisor.

Turnover or turnover intentions, in the context of the survey, refers to whether employees intend to leave their organisation within the next 12 months. This self-reported intention to leave, not actual turnover, may not always align with actual rates, as stated intentions might not materialise due to barriers such as limited external opportunities or financial constraints.

Productivity refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which public servants utilise available resources to deliver public services and achieve policy objectives. It encompasses the quantity and quality of outputs produced, the outcomes achieved for citizens, and the degree to which services are delivered in a timely, cost-effective, and responsive manner.

Annex A. Technical documentation supporting the 2024 EU/OECD Survey of Public Servants

Introduction

This technical annex complements the report 'Workforce Insights from Central Governments - Findings of the 2024 OECD/EU Survey of Public Servants'. It provides an overview of participating countries and organisations, the development and design of the survey, data collection methodology, a description of the sample, respondents anonymisation measures, data quality checks and analysis. This survey was conducted by the OECD with funding and support from the European Commission (SG REFORM).

The EU/OECD standard EU Survey of Central Government Public Servants was guided by an Advisory Group, comprised of representatives from the eight participating countries Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Netherlands, Latvia, Lithuania, The Slovak Republic, and Slovenia and The European Commission SG REFORM. The Advisory Group had Luxembourg, Denmark and Norway as observer countries and benefited from occasional participation from public employee survey experts from other OECD member countries who presented their national experiences.

The data was collected from May to June 2024 for seven of the eight countries, and from September to October for Belgium. The survey was also run in Denmark November-December and in Norway October-November 2024. The survey scope was public servants in the participating countries' central government ministries and agencies (Annex B provides an overview of all participating organisations). The final sample size was 51 761 valid responses from the eight project countries, and 56 980 valid responses when counting the responses of Denmark and Norway who ran part of the questionnaire. The data collection was conducted through online anonymous surveys. All surveys were conducted in the country's national language(s).

Survey preparation and implementation

Questionnaire development, translation and administration

The questionnaire was developed by the project Advisory Group (AG) comprised of members from each of the participating countries, the project officer responsible from the European Commission Reform and Investment Task Force (SG REFORM) and the project team of the OECD secretariat. The meetings of the AG also benefited from presentations and knowledge exchange with experts from other OECD countries with previous experience in running employees survey and using their results for evidence-based decision-making.

The AG developed the questionnaire through thematic discussions on their own national questionnaires as well as international best practices from other OECD countries. In the first phase, the Advisory Group (AG) identified and agreed on a set of key priority areas for the survey. In the following phase, the OECD Secretariat proposed a set of questions, drawing on examples from existing surveys as well as newly developed items, from which the AG selected and approved the final list. The final questionnaire features

a range of common employee survey questions in areas such as employee engagement, leadership, management and well-being, team and organisational performance, as well as emerging topics such as innovation, use of technology and remote and hybrid work. In addition, the questionnaire includes a section of sociodemographic questions such as age, gender, managerial status and length of service. (Table A A.1)

Questions were selected based on their relevance and ability to capture the key dimensions of the survey. Questions were carefully selected or constructed in clear and simple language to facilitate ease of understanding for respondents. Special attention was given to selecting or constructing questions that would translate effectively into all the languages of the participating countries. Efforts were also made to avoid questions that were overly specific to any one country, in line with the questionnaire's goal of enabling cross-country comparisons.

The sequencing of the questionnaire was randomised, meaning that the sections and their subsections after the first 'about me section' were presented in different orders to each respondent. The randomisation scheme was applied for three primary reasons. Firstly, to mitigate question order bias and fatigue, where respondents tend to pay more attention to the initial parts of the survey and less to the latter. Secondly, to minimise context effects, as the order of questions can influence responses to subsequent questions. For example, questions about pay satisfaction may affect responses to job satisfaction if the former are presented first and remain fresh in the respondent's mind. Lastly, randomisation was employed to ensure that those that did not complete the full survey did not disproportionately affect the number of responses per section or subsection, which would otherwise result in fewer responses for the latter sections of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire featured various types of questions, with the majority (77%) utilising a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 'Strongly Disagree' to 'Strongly Agree'. This approach aimed to streamline the questionnaire by displaying questions in a matrix format, grouping related questions from the same section, to make the survey more intuitive for the respondents and improve ease of completion.

Table A A.1. Survey sections and subsections

Section	Subsection
1. About me	Demographic questions i.e. organisation, gender, age group, educational attainment, contract type, managerial status full-time/part-time, tenure.
2. My personal work experience	2.1. My pay and employment conditions 2.2. My working arrangements 2.3. My well-being 2.4. My learning and development opportunities 2.5. My work experience
3. About my management and senior leadership	3.1. My immediate line manager or supervisor 3.2. My senior leadership
4. About my team and innovation	4.1. My organisations openness to innovation 4.2. My organisations use of technology 4.3. My team's performance 4.4. My organisations performance

Note: sections were randomised after the 'About me' section.

The final English version of the questionnaire, can be found in Annex A. The questionnaire has reviewed by relevant internal bodies in the OECD. All surveys were conducted in the national languages of each country. The baseline English version of the questionnaire was translated into the national language(s) of the participating countries using the European Commission's e-Translation tool[1]. Each country was responsible for reviewing and validating the translations to ensure accuracy. For countries sharing a common language such as Belgium and the Netherlands, translation efforts were coordinated to maintain

consistency and comparability. After the translated questionnaire was scripted by the OECD secretariat, the countries conducted final internal tests of the survey.

Survey scope and sampling design

The scope of the survey was carefully defined to ensure the comparability of results across countries, recognising that definitions of civil services vary slightly between countries. The survey was distributed to all public servants working in ministries and agencies at the central or federal level of government, excluding those employed by state, territorial, regional, and municipal governments. Furthermore, state-owned enterprises, public corporations, and government-owned non-profit institutions were not included in the survey. Additionally, it excluded government-employed doctors and nurses working in hospitals, teachers, police officers, judges, firefighters, and military personnel (with the exception of civilian military staff). The advisory group agreed to distribute the survey to all employees within this defined scope, making it a census sample. Table A B.1 in Annex B provides an overview of all organisations participating in the survey by country. The survey was specifically designed for public servants working in these organisations, and participating countries were advised to distribute the survey link exclusively to this group of employees. However, as the survey link was distributed within large organisations, the first page of the survey included a description of those employees who should not fill out the questionnaire, in order to discourage participation of those out of scope (see instruction page in Annex C).

Survey dissemination and communication

Different communication messages were designed by the OECD project team both prior and during the data collection period to have a wider reach within the participating organisations and maximise public servant's engagement with the survey and the response rate. These communications included email invitations, reminder emails to boost response rates, posters distributed in office spaces to raise awareness, and, in some countries, social media reminders. An official OECD contact channel was also established, providing an email address for participants to report technical issues or ask questions related to the survey.

Participating organisations in each country were strongly encouraged to send two to three reminder emails to their employees, depending on the length of the data collection period. Countries implemented a strategic schedule for reminder emails: the first reminder was sent two weeks after the survey's launch, a second midway through the survey period, and a final reminder in the last three to five days before the survey closed. The response rates of the countries and underlying organisations were monitored by the OECD secretariat to identify challenges such as stagnation in the number of daily responses and organisations with particularly low response rates, where tailored follow-up efforts were needed.

A single, standardised communication poster was developed for distribution by participating organisations (see Annex D). The poster highlighted key survey topics, the closing dates aligned with each country's data collection timeline, and contact details for inquiries, including direct support from the OECD. Additionally, the poster featured a QR code, enabling respondents to access the survey via their smartphones.

Beyond serving as a mean for accessing the survey via smartphones through a QR code, the poster played a key role in increasing survey visibility. Displayed in common work areas, it provided a constant, physical reminder that encouraged employees to participate, even outside of their usual email communications.

The poster was distributed in the official language of each country, with optional modifications requested by some countries to include contact information to a national contact point in addition to the OECD, so respondents could inquire in their national languages.

Data collection

For the majority of countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, The Slovak Republic, and Slovenia), the OECD Secretariat collected the data through the contracted survey platform, Qualtrics. For these countries, the OECD Secretariat scripted the survey, applying the agreed survey design and sequencing. Each country subsequently tested the survey in their national language, and where necessary, the OECD made any final adjustments.

The remaining countries (the Netherlands, Latvia, and Lithuania) opted for collecting the data themselves through their own survey platform tool. To ensure comparability, these countries were provided with the Qualtrics survey script, including the sequencing and randomisation scheme, to align their survey accordingly.

The data collection of the 2024 EU Survey of Central Government Public Servant took place from mid-May until the end of June in most of the countries, allowing a survey availability period from three to six weeks. For Belgium, the data collection took place from mid-September to late October, as the initial data collection period was during their EU Council presidency. A detailed overview of the data collection period is in Table A A.2.

The timing of the survey was carefully planned to be either before or after the summer holiday period to mitigate potential biases in response rates and the quality of responses. Surveys conducted during or close to holidays may face two types of biases: a positive bias, where employees may report higher satisfaction due to anticipation of upcoming leave, and a negative bias, where responses could be affected by work fatigue and eagerness for time off. Furthermore, it was important to conduct the surveys simultaneously across all participating countries to ensure data comparability. This timing prevented external factors, such as global events, and time-related influences, such as holidays, from affecting responses differently across countries, helping to minimise potential biases. The surveys were conducted online and distributed in the official language of each participating country. For Belgium, the survey was available in all three official languages: French, Dutch, and German. Each country's advisory group members were responsible for determining the distribution strategy. In most cases, the survey was disseminated to heads of departments or human resource management (HRM) offices, which were responsible for further distribution within their respective organisations.

Table A A.2. Data collection periods by country

Country	Launch date	Closing date	Survey Duration (days)
Belgium	16-Sep	31-Oct	46
Bulgaria	08-May	20-Jun	43
Croatia	25-May	14-Jun	20
Latvia	08-May	28-May	20
Lithuania	20-May	30-Jun	41
The Netherlands	05-Jun	1-Jul	27
Slovak Republic	17-May	30-Jun	44
Slovenia	16-May	14-Jun	29
Denmark	12-Dec	06-Jan	26
Norway	28-Oct	11-Nov	15

Response Rates

The total number of qualified responses across the eight countries was 51 761 valid responses from the eight project countries, and 56 980 valid responses when counting the responses of Denmark and Norway who ran part of the questionnaire. The number of qualified responses per country varied significantly,

ranging from 1 771 to 12 521, depending on each country's public service population size, which spanned from 10 580 to 73 259 employees (Table A A.3).

The median time to complete the survey across the entire sample was 21 minutes and 24 seconds per respondent[2]. However, this duration varied between countries, from a median of 10 minutes in the Netherlands to 25 minutes in Lithuania. These differences are largely due to country-specific adjustments to the survey distributed in these countries, such as the addition or removal of questions.

Response rates ranged from approximately 9.2% to 54.5% across the participating countries, and countries with more experience in conducting similar surveys, such as Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Latvia, had stronger participation rates, likely due to the established trust between employees and the organisations distributing the surveys in these countries. Belgium, despite being among the countries with prior experience conducting employee surveys, recorded low participation. This was likely due to survey fatigue, as several organisations were running surveys simultaneously. Additionally, some organisations were reluctant to distribute the survey via employee email and opted to share it only through the workplace intranet, which may have further limited reach.

Table A A.3. Response rates by country

Country	Employees receiving the survey	Completed surveys	Responses received	Qualified responses	Response rate	Median response time (minutes)
Belgium	73 259	4 610	5 484	5 117	9.2%	16
Bulgaria	60 993	11 119	12 632	11 770	19.3%	23
Croatia	23 342	3 928	4 563	4 261	18.3%	18
Latvia	20 272	7 261	7 446	7 261	35.8%	NA
Lithuania	22 974	10 891	12 580	12 521	54.5%	25
Netherlands	14 100	4 854	4 857	4 854	34.4%	10*
Slovak Republic	11 900	1 518	2 083	1 771	14.9%	21
Slovenia	10 580	3 713	4 678	4 148	39.2%	17
Denmark					24%	
Norway					54.4%	

* The median time was lower given that the Netherlands' survey didn't include all the questions from the EU Survey of Central Government Public Servant.
Note: qualified responses are those responses who submitted all demographic questions plus at least one question beyond this section.

Data cleaning and anonymisation

The integration of the cross-country data into the aggregate database required transforming each country's dataset to ensure consistency and a uniform structure across all the responses collected. All eight participating countries followed the same survey questionnaire, with some tailored exceptions listed below. In addition, the questionnaire included four optional questions, which each country could choose to include or exclude in their survey (see Table A A.4). In most participating countries, all survey questions were mandatory, with the option to select "prefer not to respond" available for respondents who wished to omit a particular question. Despite these modifications, the integrity of the survey's coding remained consistent across all countries to ensure comparability. The participating organisations for each country were determined by the initial selections made by the advisory groups, ensuring they fell within the scope of central ministries and agencies. As a result, the organisations included in the sample vary between countries. Lastly, all countries implemented the questionnaire with a randomised structure organised by

sections. The demographic section was always presented first, while the final question (Q99) was not randomised, regardless of any additional questions included or removed in their respective surveys.

Table A A.4. Inclusion of optional questions

Country	QO1. The best description of my work function is:	QO2. When I am in the office, my workspace is usually the following:	QO3. I am satisfied with the physical conditions at my workplace, such as:	QO4. To what extent do you trust the political leadership of your organisation?
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	
Bulgaria	✓	✓	✓	✓
Croatia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Latvia	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lithuania	✓			
Netherlands				
Slovak Republic	✓	✓	✓	✓
Slovenia		✓	✓	✓

As for countries' specificities, in **Belgium**, the variable on language was retained with the aim to see differences across French, Dutch and German speakers.

In **Latvia**, some questions did not provide the "prefer not to respond" option. The questions that included the "prefer not to respond" option was QH, Q21, Q27, Q39, Q40, Q41, Q43, Q44, Q58, Q70, and Q04[3]. In addition, respondents were initially asked to identify the ministry under which their agency was affiliated, followed by a question specifying the agency. If respondents selected a ministry but chose "prefer not to respond" when asked about their specific agency, they were allocated in the ministries they initially selected, as if they worked in the ministries' headquarters to avoid dropping these observations.

In **Lithuania,** certain demographic questions had some response options removed to align with the selected sample of respondents in each country. For demographic question C, "My highest educational qualification is:", option C referring to short-cycle tertiary education (ISCED category 5) was removed. For demographic question D, "My employment status is:", option A referring to Trainee/intern/apprentice, and option B referring to Entry-level civil service graduate scheme were removed. As with Latvia, respondents were first asked to identify the ministry their agency was affiliated with, followed by a question specifying the agency. "Prefer not to respond" selections for agencies were allocated to the ministry initially identified by the respondent.

In **Slovenia**, for demographic question C, "My highest educational qualification is:", option B referring to post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED category 4) was removed because the Slovenian education system does not have this ISCED category in their educational system. (OECD, 2023[1])

In **the Netherlands**, only select parts of the complete survey were included such as 10 demographic questions from the Section 1 – About me, 21 questions from the Section 2 – About my personal work experience, 14 questions from the Section 3 – About my management and senior leadership, 26 questions from Section 4 – About my team and organisation and the final question from the survey[4].

For demographic question B, "My age group is:", the option F referring to "66 years and over" was removed and instead, option E was modified to "56 years and over". For demographic question C, "My highest educational qualification is:", primary and lower secondary education (ISCED category 1 and 2) where included additionally to the existent options of this questions. Therefore, to preserve consistency with the structure of the original survey, respondents in the Netherlands who selected primary or lower secondary education were recoded with empty values in the education variable to ensure comparability across the aggregate data. For demographic question D, "My employment status is:", was removed from the

questionnaire as option B referring to entry-level civil service graduate scheme was deemed too small, and in combination with other information as organisation, age, gender, years employed, and type of contract created a possible identification risk. However, since all respondents in the Dutch sample held civil servant status, all observations were coded as such for question D. For demographic question G, "I manage other employees in my organisation", the options “Yes”, “No”, and “Prefer not to respond” were provided, instead of asking for the number of employees managed. This adjustment was made to ensure anonymity, as the research instrument used did not permit collecting data on the specific number of employees managed.

The Netherlands adopted a stratified sampling method for civil servants based on organisational type rather than sampling by individual organisation. This included three categories of organisations: policymaking, regulatory/audit/oversight, and service-delivery entities. As a result, the data regarding organisations participating in the survey was only available at the ministry level, rather than at the agency level.

In **Denmark**, a random sampling approach was used, based on a registry of Danish government employees. Only data on employees from the central government civil service were shared with the OECD, resulting in a sample of 767 individuals (24%). The survey was distributed via Digital Post, a secure public communication channel used for correspondence between citizens and the government, unlike in other countries, where respondents received the survey through their work email. Questions on satisfaction with line managers were only asked to non-managerial staff.

In **Norway**, a stratified sampling approach was used. In the first stage, a random sample was drawn, including a minimum of 1 000 individuals from each of the following strata: 1) Ministries and the Office of the Auditor General, 2) Public administration (excluding ministries), 3) Research and education, and 4) Public enterprises and construction. This resulted in an initial sample of 8 163 individuals. A second sampling stage was then conducted to ensure proportional representation of managers, yielding a final sample of 4 452 individuals (54.4%).

Data cleaning/suppression

Qualified responses were defined as those from public servants who completed all demographic questions and at least one substantive question, taking five minutes or more to finish the survey. This classification means that incomplete responses—those from individuals who did not answer any questions after the demographic section—and "super speeders", who completed the survey significantly faster than average and might therefore not have fully read the questions, were excluded to ensure data quality. The threshold for identifying "super speeders" varied based to the number of questions included in each country’s survey. In countries that included the full set of questions, respondents who completed the survey in five minutes or less, representing around 25% of the median completion time for these countries, were classified as "super speeders". Lithuania, with a longer survey, had a threshold of six minutes or less, while the Netherlands, with a shorter survey, had a threshold of three minutes or less. In the case of Latvia, this specific data cleaning step was not implemented, as the time taken to complete the survey was not available. Overall, an average of 6% of responses were discarded by country due to not meeting the qualification criteria.

Anonymised databases for countries

A set of data files was prepared for the distribution of survey results among the participating countries and organisations. These included: (i) a file with the aggregate data across all eight countries, (ii) a file with aggregate data by country, and (iii) a file with data disaggregated by organisation within each country.

To ensure the anonymity of all survey respondents, a series of anonymisation procedures were applied. No personal identifiers (e.g., names, emails, IP addresses) were collected, and participation in the survey was entirely voluntary. Respondents were informed at the beginning of the questionnaire about how their

data would be used and that they could withdraw from the survey at any point. For the aggregate country-level file and the organisational-level file, aggregated results were provided along with a breakdown by three demographic variables: gender, age, and the number of employees managed. At the country level, for the gender breakdown, the categories "other" and "prefer not to respond" were merged to prevent the re-identification of individuals based on multiple characteristics. At the organisational level, additional rules were in place to maintain anonymity. For organisations with 10 or fewer respondents, no results were reported at the organisational level; instead, their data was only accounted into the aggregated country-level results. For organisations with between 11 and 25 respondents, only aggregate results per question were shared. For those with over 26 responses, the breakdown by the three mentioned demographic variables were made.

For anonymity protection in the organisational level file, certain demographic groups that were too small in size were re-categorised to ensure confidentiality. In the gender category, responses of "other" and "prefer not to respond" were excluded from the crosstabs. In the age category, the youngest group, "24 years and under", and the oldest group, "66 and over", were merged with adjacent age groups. Similarly, for the "employees managed" variable, respondents were grouped into two categories: those managing no employees and those managing one or more. Additionally, on a case-by-case basis, crosstabs with fewer than 10 responses for any demographic breakdown were excluded from the files shared, though these data points were still incorporated in the overall analysis. This method helps preserve respondent confidentiality while ensuring that results are robust and reliable, particularly in protecting small demographic groups from potential identification.

Data analysis

Weighting

To address potential under- or overrepresentation in the sample, the possibility of applying weights to country samples was considered. While weighting is more straightforward in population surveys—where key demographic data, such as gender and age, are typically available through registers—this survey targeted public servants working in ministries and agencies. In some countries, such centralised registers were not available for this population.

Several challenges arose in considering weights: (1) the demographic data for the employees in our scope might not be updated or aligned with the survey's data collection period, and (2) age data, when available, was often grouped into categories that did not correspond to the age ranges used in the survey. Given these limitations, it was ultimately decided not to apply weights. The risk of introducing inaccuracies through inappropriate weighting could have diminished, rather than enhanced, the representativeness of the sample.

The Netherlands represents a special case, as they did not conduct the survey as a census but instead adopted a stratified sampling methodology, being unable to administer the survey across all central government organisations. From available registers, a stratified sample of 14 000 employees was drawn. To enhance the representativeness of the results, weights were applied based on the type of organisation (classified as: 1. ‘Policy design/regulatory drafting’, 2. ‘Inspections/oversight (audit/evaluation)’, or 3. ‘Service delivery to users/executive organisations’), as well as gender, age group, and managerial status. These weights were applied exclusively to the data from the Netherlands, as it was the only country to employ a stratified sampling methodology.

Composite indices

Some survey questions were combined into ten composite indices, grouping specific items into broader thematic dimensions or constructs. These dimensions include: Employee Engagement (two indices), Well-being, Management, Leadership, Organisational Performance, Team Performance, Innovation Climate, Learning and Development, and Job Autonomy.

All indices are based on questions using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly disagree" to "Strongly agree." Each index is calculated by aggregating the responses to the relevant questions and dividing by the total number of questions. To facilitate easier interpretation, the indices have been rescaled to a 0–100 range. On this scale, a response of "Strongly disagree" corresponds to 0, "Neither agree nor disagree" corresponds to 50, and "Strongly agree" corresponds to 100. An example of how the index score is calculated is provided below:

Table A A.5. Example of the rescaling of indices

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Score
Weight	0	25	50	75	100	
Q1		✓				25
Q2	✓					0
Q3			✓			50
Q4				✓		75
Q5				✓		75
Total score of questions						225
Index score (Total/5)						**45**

Eight out of the ten indices only include respondents who provided answers to all items in the index. This means that any responses with missing data—either due to early dropout or the selection of 'prefer not to respond' were excluded from the analysis. The exception of this is the Learning and Development Index, here missing data was imputed for the first item: Q23 "The learning activities I completed in the last 12 months have helped me improve my performance." This item was conditional, dependent on respondents' prior indication of having participated in learning activities. Given its importance to the Learning and Development Index, missing responses for this item were replaced by the average score of other respondents within the same organisation as a proxy of the quality of the learning activities available at the organisations.

To ensure consistency across indices, some items were recoded to reverse their original response scale. This was the case for Well-being Index items Q16-18 (e.g., Q16, "I feel burned out"), which were originally negatively framed, unlike the remaining positively framed well-being items. The recoding ensures that higher scores across all items consistently reflect higher levels of well-being.

The number of observations retained for each index is provided below. As the Netherlands did not include all sections of the survey, they are only included in the indices for Employee Engagement, Management, Organisational Performance, Team Performance, and Innovation Climate.

The indices used in this report have undergone rigorous statistical validation. Cronbach's Alpha scores for each index, presented in the , exceed 0.690, confirming strong internal consistency and the reliability of the items in measuring the same underlying constructs.

Employee Engagement	
Q29	Overall, I am satisfied with my job
Q30	At my work I feel full of energy.
Q31	The work I do gives me a sense of accomplishment.
Q32	I am enthusiastic about my job.
Q33	I am immersed in my work.
Q34	I am willing to do extra work for my job beyond what is expected of me.
Q36	I identify with the mission of my organisation.
Q37	I would recommend my organisation as a good place to work.
Q38	I am proud to work for this organisation.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.90, N=45 845

Employee Engagement (Utrecht 3)	
Q30	At my work I feel full of energy. (vigor)
Q32	I am enthusiastic about my job. (dedication)
Q33	I am immersed in my work. (absorption)

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.74, N=47 587

Well-being	
Subindex: Workload management	
Q13	I achieve a good balance between my work life.
Q14	I have clear responsibilities and know what is expected of me
Q15	I can usually handle my workload well
Physical/mental well-being	
Q16	I feel burned out
Q17	I often feel exhausted at the end of (..)
Q18	I sometimes work despite feeling sick
Supportive well-being environment	
Q19	I would feel comfortable sharing
Q20	I feel able to support employees (..) mental health

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.69, N=40 700, Q16-18 were reversed to align with the other index question where a higher value represents higher levels of well-being.

Management	
Q45	My line manager/supervisor plans the work well
Q46	… shares important information with me.
Q47	… trusts my judgement.
Q48	…lets me be reasonably autonomous (i.e. does not micro-manage).
Q49	… treats me with respect.
Q50	… is good at resolving conflicts
Q51	… can be counted on to help me with my work if I need support.
Q52	… encourages me to come up with new or better ways of doing things.
Q53	… provides me with helpful feedback to improve my performance.
Q54	… recognises and rewards good performance.
Q55	… provides opportunities fairly to all employees in my work unit or team (e.g., promotions, work assignments, training, etc.).
Q56	… makes decisions based on evidence and facts
Q57	… maintains high standards of honesty and integrity

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.74, N=45 527

Senior leadership	
Q59	The senior leaders of my organisation clearly articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation.
Q60	… are aware of global events and how they might impact the organisation.
Q61	… generally manage the organisation well.
Q62	…. effectively communicate essential information to staff.
Q63	… are effectively leading change in the organisation .
Q64	… promote co-operation within the organisation .
Q65	… recognise and appreciate our work.
Q66	... trust the judgement of their employees.
Q67	… uphold and defend public service values (e.g. honesty, integrity, impartiality, etc.)
Q68	… maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.
Q69	… provide evidence-based advice to political leaders, even if this advice goes against the political position.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.74, N=34 957

Organisational performance	
Q87	My organisation is quick to respond when changes need to be made
Q88	… uses its resources efficiently.
Q89	… has rules and procedures in place that make it difficult and complicated to work effectively and efficiently.
Q90	… takes measuring and monitoring performance seriously.
Q91	… dedicates sufficient attention to reducing its environmental footprint (saving energy, reducing waste, promoting sustainable travel, recycling, etc.)
Q92	… is open with the public (shares information publicly, engages with the public, etc.)
Q93	… serves citizens and users well.
Q94	… makes decisions based on facts and evidence
Q97	…. Is successful in achieving its mission and goals.
Q98	… is ready and able to take on new and emerging challenges.
Q75	… takes full advantage of technology to promote innovation and new ways of working.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.89, N=44 270 Q89 was reversed to align with the other index question where a higher value represents higher levels of organisational performance.

Team performance	
Q83	My team or work unit works well together.
Q84	… achieves our goals.
Q85	… produces high-quality work.
Q86	… contributes positively to the organisation's performance.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.91. N=48 487

Innovation climate	
Q71	My organisation conitunually encourages me to look for new ways of improving the way things work,
Q72	… supports the idea that failure is a part of innovation.
Q73	… commits resources to develop new ideas and innovations (e.g., budget, staff, time, expert support).
Q74	… ensures that teams have the necessary skills to implement innovation initiatives.
Q75	… takes full advantage of technology to promote innovation and new ways of working.
Q76	… has sufficiently flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks to incorporate new approaches and policy solutions.
Q77	… learns from past problems and takes measures to prevent them from happening again.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.91. N=43 486

Learning and development	
Q23	the learning activities that i have completed in the last 12 months have helped me improve my performance
Q24	I am able to access the right learning opportunities when I need to
Q25	at my work i feel that i am growing professionally
Q26	my organisation supports mobility (temporary assignments, transfers or secondments) to help develop my career.
Q80	my organisation provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees.

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.81, N=32 410 Q23 has imputed values for those employees that selected not to have undertaken any learning courses or selected 'prefer not to respond' in Q22. For those the average value for the organisation they belong to (answer to QH) has been imputed.

Job autonomy	
Q47	My line manager/supervisor trusts my judgement
Q48	My line manager/supervisor lets me be reasonable autonomous (i.e. does not micro-manage)
Q66	The senior leaders of my organisation trusts the judgement of their employees

Note: Cronbachs-alpha value of 0.74. N=40 144

Recoding of variables

Table A E.1 in Annex E present the variables included in the analysis of the report, some variables have been slightly recoded, i.e. answer categories merged in cases where there were too few observations in some categories (i.e. the 'other' category of gender) or order of answer categories changed to facilitate the communication of the results.

Regression analysis

All non-descriptive results presented in the aggregate report are based on various regression models. Models ae developed based on the analytical framework described in the Chapter 1 of this report. The data is analysed as mixed-effects models to account for the hierarchical structure of the data, where individuals are nested in organisations and countries, and potential intra-group correlation. This modelling approach incorporates both fixed effects, the relationships across the entire sample, and the random effects, accounting for unobserved heterogeneity across organisations and countries. Mixed effects models are particularly appropriate to analyse the dataset, where individual-level responses are nested within larger groupings (organisations and countries in this case), and where ignoring this nesting could lead to biased estimates and underestimated standard errors. By including random intercepts, it is possible to model the variation across groups and improve the precision and generalisability of the findings.

The analysis employs both linear and logistic regression models, depending on the nature of the dependent variable. Linear regression is applied when the dependent variable is continuous, as in models where composite indices serve as outcome variables. In contrast, logistic regression, including binary, multinomial, and ordinal models, is used when the dependent variable is categorical. For instance, binary logistic regression is applied to outcomes such as turnover intention (yes/no) and ordinal logistic regression for variables measured on an ordered scale such as sick leave (categories of sick leave days). Multinomial models are employed when the outcome has more than two categories, but categories do not have a clearly defined order (outcomes for poor performers).

Prefer not to respond answers

Table A E.3 in Annex E presents the share of "prefer not to respond" (PNR) answers for each survey question. This provides useful insights into both question quality and the sensitivity of certain topics

covered in the survey. The questionnaire did not include a “don’t know” option, meaning that PNR responses may reflect either difficulty in answering the question or discomfort with the topic.

On average, 3.9% of responses across all questions were PNR. Only eight questions exceeded a 10% PNR rate. The three questions with the highest PNR rates each above 20%, were: “In my organisation, poor performers usually…” (26.3%), “To what extent do you trust the political leadership of your organisation?” (23.1%), and “I want to leave my organisation within the next 12 months” (21.8%). The high PNR rates for these items likely reflect the sensitive nature of the topics. Reducing PNR rates is important, as a high proportion of non-responses can affect the reliability of the results, potentially leading to over- or underestimation of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Clear communication about the anonymity of the questionnaire is essential to lowering PNR rates, helping to reassure respondents that their answers, especially on sensitive topics, will remain confidential.

References

OECD (2023), “Slovenia”, in *Education at a Glance 2023: OECD Indicators*, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/80939f54-en. [1]

Notes

[1] eTranslation (europa.eu)

[2] The median was chosen over the mean because it is less influenced by outliers, such as respondents who began the survey but completed it days later. This makes the median a more accurate and reliable measure of the survey completion time tendency.

[3] Please refer to Annex A to review the survey questions.

[4] The following questions were included: Section 1: QA-QJ; Section 2: Q1-Q5, Q27-Q42; Section 3: Q45-Q58; and Section 4: Q71-Q78, Q81a-h_6, and Q82-Q99.

Annex B. Questionnaire

Section 1: About me

Qa. My gender is:

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

Qb. My age group is:

- 24 years and under
- 25 to 35 years
- 36 to 45 years
- 46 to 55 years
- 56 to 65 years
- 66 and over
- Prefer not to respond

Qc. My highest educational qualification is:

- **Upper secondary education** (Stronger specialisation than at lower secondary level. Programmes offered are differentiated by orientation: general or vocational. Typical duration is three years- **ISCED 3 category**).
- **Post-secondary non-tertiary education** (Serves to broaden rather than deepen the knowledge, skills and competencies gained in upper secondary level. Programmes may be designed to increase options for participants in the labour market, for further studies at tertiary level or both. Programmes at this level are usually vocationally oriented **ISCED 4 category**).
- **Short-cycle tertiary education** (Often designed to provide participants with professional knowledge, skills and competencies. Typically, they are practically based, occupation-specific and prepare students to enter the labour market directly. They may also provide a pathway to other tertiary education programmes (ISCED levels 6 or 7). The minimum duration is two years- **ISCED category 5**).
- **Bachelor's or equivalent level** (Designed to provide participants with intermediate academic and/or professional knowledge, skills and competencies, leading to a first degree or equivalent qualification. Typical duration: three to four years full-time study. This level is referred to as "bachelor's" in the publication. **ISCED category 6**).
- **Master's or equivalent level** (Stronger specialisation and more complex content than bachelor's level. Designed to provide participants with advanced academic and/or professional knowledge. May have a substantial research component. Programmes of at least five years' duration preparing for a long-first degree/qualification are included at this level if they are equivalent to a master's

level programme in terms of their complexity and content. This level is referred to as “master’s” in the publication. **ISCED category 7**).

- **Doctoral or equivalent level** (Designed to lead to an advanced research qualification. Programmes at this level are devoted to advanced study and original research, and exist in both academic and professional fields. This level is referred as “doctoral” in the publication. **ISCED category 8**).
- **Prefer not to respond**

Qd. My employment status is:

- Trainee/intern/apprentice
- Entry-level civil service graduate scheme
- Civil servant status
- Employee of public institution (non-civil servant contract)
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

Qe. My contract type is:

- Permanent
- Temporary
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

Qf. My working pattern is:

- Full-time
- Part-time (90% or less)
- Prefer not to respond

Qg. I manage other employees in my organisation:

- Yes, between 1-4 employees
- Yes, between 5-10 employees
- Yes, 11 or more employees
- No, I do not manage any employees
- Prefer not to respond

Qh. The organisation where I currently work is:
(drop-down list provided by AG members of organisations, including ‘prefer not to respond’ option)

Qi. The main responsibilities of my organisation are mostly:

- Policy design/regulatory drafting
- Inspections/oversight (audit)/evaluation
- Service delivery with users/executive organisations
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

OPTIONAL FOR COUNTRIES:

Q01. The best description of my work function is:

- Accounting and finance
- Administrative support
- Audit and compliance
- Communications and marketing
- Contracting and procurement
- Data science/statistics and evaluation
- Human resources
- Information and communications technology and digital solutions and/or knowledge management
- Legal
- Policy design and portfolio, program and project management
- Science and research
- Senior management
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

Qj. In my work, I am regularly in direct contact with citizens (by e-mail, mail, phone or in person):

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to respond

Randomisation: Please note that from here on out, the Sections (2, 3, 4) will be randomised in order in terms of how they appear to the respondent. The subsections within the sections will also be randomised within their same sections (i.e. section 4.2 will not appear along with 2.2). The sequencing of the individual questions in the tables/matrices however will not be randomised, but rather appear in the same order shown here.

Section 2: About my personal work experience

2.1 My pay and employment conditions

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q1. I am satisfied with my salary.						
Q2. I am satisfied with my benefits package (monetary and non-monetary benefits).						
Q3. Compared to people doing a similar job in the private sector, I feel that I am fairly compensated.						
Q4. I am satisfied with the security of my employment.						
Q5. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job well.						

OPTIONAL for countries:

Q02. When I am in the office, my workspace is usually the following:

- My own office

- Shared office
- Open space setting
- Cubicle in open space setting
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

QO3. I am satisfied with the physical conditions at my workplace, such as:

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q03a. Office equipment (computers, laptops, screens, printers, etc.)						
Q03b. Ergonomic working station (lighting, adjustable desks and chairs, additional screens, etc.)						
Q03c. Cleanliness of the working spaces						
QO3d. Noise levels						
QO3e. Breakrooms/eating areas and facilities						

2.2 My working arrangements

Q6. How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e. from home **or** from another approved location?)

- More than five days a week
- 5 days a week
- 3-4 days a week
- 1-2 days a week
- Less than one day a week
- Very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis
- Never
- Prefer not to respond

Q7-Q10 below are conditional on not answering 'never' above

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q7. I have the conditions I need to work effectively from home or remotely (i.e., space, equipment, digital tools, etc.).						
Q8. Home and remote work positively enhance my work/life balance.						
Q9. Home and remote work allow me to be more effective in my job.						
Q10. My manager trusts me to do my job effectively, even when I am working from home or remotely.						

Q11 below is conditional on having answered iii (1-2 days a week), iv (less than one day a week), 'Never' (vi) or 'I telework (v)very infrequently, on an unscheduled or short-term basis in Q6 above.

Q11. Why do you **not** work remotely more frequently? *Please select all that apply.*

- I prefer working at the office
- I am more productive in the office than at home or other remote location
- I have to be physically present at the office to do my job
- My organisation does not permit remote work
- I did not receive approval to do so, even though I have the type of job where I can work remotely or at home
- There are technical issues (e.g., connectivity, inadequate equipment) that prevent me from working remotely or at home
- I am concerned that I will miss out on career opportunities if I am not at the office as often as others
- Other reason
- Prefer not to respond

Q12. If I could choose freely, I would work from home or from another approved location….

- More frequently than I currently do
- Less frequently than I currently do
- As much as I currently do/no change desired
- Prefer not to respond

2.3 My well-being

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q13. I achieve a good balance between my work life and my private life.						
Q14. I have clear responsibilities and know what is expected of me.						
Q15. I can usually handle my workload well.						
Q16. I feel burned out.						
Q17. I often feel exhausted at the end of the working day.						
Q18. I sometimes work despite feeling sick.						
Q19. I would feel comfortable sharing concerns about my physical or mental health with my immediate supervisor.						
Q20. I feel I am able to support employees in my work unit who are experiencing mental health issues.						

Q21. During the last 6 months, how many sick leave days have you taken? Please select all applicable options, including periods of both short and long-term leave

- None, 0
- 1-3 days
- 4-5 days
- 6-10 days
- More than 10 days
- A period of long-term (approved) sick leave
- Prefer not to respond

2.4 My learning and development opportunities

Q22. In the last 12 months, how many hours of training or learning courses (in relation to your job) have you undertaken?

- None, 0 hours
- 1-10 hours
- 11-20 hours
- 21-30 hours
- 31-40 hours
- 41 or above hours
- Prefer not to respond

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Conditional on more than 0 in question on training hours in Q22 above. Also if they answered preferred not to respond. This question appears.						
Q23. The learning activities I have completed in the last 12 months have helped me improve my performance.						
Q24. I am able to access the right learning opportunities when I need to.						
Q25. At my work I feel that I am growing professionally.						
Q26. My organisation supports mobility (temporary assignments, transfers or secondments) to help develop my career.						

Q27. In my organisation, poor performers usually….

- Stay and improve their performance over time
- Stay and continue to underperform
- Leave because they are removed or transferred
- Leave because they quit
- There are no poor performers
- Prefer not to respond

Q28. Are there currently skills or capacities missing within your immediate work unit or team? If yes, which are the most important skills missing?

Please select up to 5 answer choices.

- No, no skills or capacities are missing
- Written and/or oral communication
- Collaboration
- Digital/IT
- Cybersecurity
- Service design
- Data analysis and statistics
- Monitoring and evaluation skills
- Change management

- Risk management
- Leadership/managerial skills
- Human resources management
- Project management
- Stakeholder engagement
- Creativity and innovation
- Contracting
- Budgeting/financial management
- Sustainability
- International relations
- EU regulations and directives
- Interpersonal skills (empathy, compassion, managing conflict, etc.)
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

2.5 My work experience

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q29. Overall, I am satisfied with my job.						
Q30. At my work I feel full of energy.						
Q31. The work I do gives me a sense of accomplishment.						
Q32. I am enthusiastic about my job.						
Q33. I am immersed in my work.						
Q34. I am willing to do extra work for my job beyond what is expected of me.						
Q35. It is important to me that my work contribute to the common good.						
Q36. I identify with the mission of my organisation.						
Q37. I would recommend my organisation as a good place to work.						
Q38. I am proud to work for this organisation.						

Q39. I have worked at my current organisation for:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26 years or more
- Prefer not to respond

Q40. I have worked in the central government public administration:

- Less than 1 year

- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26 years or more
- Prefer not to respond

Q41. I want to leave my organisation within the next 12 months.

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to respond

Q42. Conditional on answering yes above in Q41. If they answer prefer not to respond above, they should NOT be asked Q42.

Why do you want to leave the organisation within the next 12 months? *Please select all that apply*

- A promotion or career progression within the civil service
- A promotion or career progression outside of the civil service
- For a better pay and benefit package
- For more interesting work
- Due to unmanageable workload
- For a better work-life balance
- Lack of inclusion and fair treatment
- I don’t like the working environment
- Due to poor management
- Due to poor work relationships
- Due to lack of meaningful work
- Personal circumstances
- Retiring
- I just want a change
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

Q43. Having carefully read the below definition of harassment, have you been the victim of harassment on the job in the past 12 months?

ILO definition of harassment: *A range of unacceptable behaviours and practices, or threats thereof, whether a single occurrence or repeated, that aim at, result in, or are likely to result in physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm, and includes gender-based violence (Convention ILO, 2019)*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to respond

Q44. Having carefully read the definition of discrimination, have you been the victim of discrimination on the job in the past 12 months?

ILO definition of discrimination: *any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or treatment in employment or occupation. (Convention ILO, 1958)*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to respond

Section 3. About my management and senior leadership

3.1 My immediate line manager or supervisor

The following questions should be answered in relation to your immediate line manager or supervisor. Typically, immediate line managers or supervisors are responsible for setting your objectives, for your performance appraisal, for approving leave, and/or for overseeing your team/individual tasks and progress.

My line manager/supervisor……

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q45. … plans the work well.						
Q46. … shares important information with me.						
Q47. ….trusts my judgement.						
Q48. ….lets me be reasonably autonomous (i.e. does not micro-manage).						
Q49. …treats me with respect.						
Q50. … is good at resolving conflicts.						
Q51. … can be counted on to help me with my work if I need support.						
Q52. … encourages me to come up with new or better ways of doing things.						
Q53. … provides me with helpful feedback to improve my performance.						
Q54. ….recognises and rewards good performance.						
Q55… provides opportunities fairly to all employees in my work unit or team (e.g., promotions, work assignments, training, etc.).						
Q56. ...makes decisions based on evidence and facts						
Q57. … maintains high standards of honesty and integrity						

Q58. Overall, how good a job, do you feel is being done by your line manager?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good

- Prefer not to respond

3.2 My senior leadership

The following questions should be answered in relation to the senior leadership of your organisation. Senior leaders are defined here as those at the top/highest ranking civil servant(s) of the organisation, as well as those leading departments/DGs/agencies within the organisation, or major workstreams or functional areas of the organisation, and are generally responsible for directing the strategy, priorities, and policies of the organisation.

The senior leaders of my organisation …

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q59. … clearly articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation.						
Q60…are aware of global events and how they might impact the organisation.						
Q61. … generally manage the organisation well.						
Q62. …. effectively communicate essential information to staff.						
Q63. … are effectively leading change in the organisation .						
Q64. …promote co-operation within the organisation .						
Q65. … recognise and appreciate our work.						
Q66. ...trust the judgement of their employees.						
Q67. …uphold and defend public service values (e.g. honesty, integrity, impartiality, etc.)						
Q68. … maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.						
Q69. …provide evidence-based advice to political leaders, even if this advice goes against the political position.						

Q70. Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by the senior leadership in your organisation?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good
- Prefer not to respond

Q04. Optional for countries. To what extent do you trust the political leadership of your organisation?
Political leadership are senior leadership of the organisation which are politically appointed and are not generally civil servants.

- Strongly trust
- Trust
- Neither trust nor distrust
- Distrust

- Strongly distrust
- Prefer not to respond

Section 4: About my team and organisation

4.1 My organisation's openness to innovation

My organisation…….

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q71. .....continually encourages me to look for new ways of improving the way things work.						
Q72. .... supports the idea that failure is a part of innovation.						
Q73. .... commits resources to develop new ideas and innovations (e.g., budget, staff, time, expert support).						
Q74. .....ensures that teams have the necessary skills to implement innovation initiatives.						
Q75. ....takes full advantage of technology to promote innovation and new ways of working.						
Q76. .....has sufficiently flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks to incorporate new approaches and policy solutions .						
Q77. .....learns from past problems and takes measures to prevent them from happening again.						

*For the purpose this question, an innovation is defined as a new or improved **service or process** that **differs significantly** from the way your work unit or team did things before. Please consider only innovations that were fully implemented in practice.*

Q78. In the past two years I have participated in implementing a new…*please select all that apply*

- … service
- … process or way of doing things
- … policy or law
- I have not participated in any of the above

4.2 My organisation's use of technology

My organisation…….

	1 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q79. .... takes advantage of technology to improve its functioning and performance.						
Q80. .....provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees.						

Q81. How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work?

Please rate the following statements from never to always

	1 'Never'	2 'Rarely'	3 'Sometimes'	4 'Often'	5 'Always'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q81a. Tablet						
Q81b. Smart phone						
Q81c. Collaborative software programmes (i.e., Teams, Slack, Asana…)						
Q81d. Sharepoint/shared drives						
Q81e. Statistical analysis software						
Q81f. Artificial intelligence and machine learning						
Q81g. Social media (work related accounts)						
Q81h. Blockchain technology						

CONDITIONAL. If 4 or 5 to "Artificial Intelligence" option above Q81f.

Q82. How specifically have you used artificial intelligence in your work?

AI system: An AI system is a machine-based system that, for explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input it receives, how to generate outputs such as predictions, content, recommendations, or decisions that can influence physical or virtual environments. Different AI systems vary in their levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment. (OECD Legal Instruments). *Please select all that apply*

- Research
- Drafting
- Translating
- Automated data processing
- Data analytics
- For audit, monitoring and fraud detection
- Virtual assistant (automatic notetaking, scheduling, etc.)
- For economic or budgeting modeling
- Customer service, such as chat-bots
- Other
- Prefer not to respond

4.3 My team's performance

My team or work unit….

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q83…works well together.						
Q84….. achieves our goals.						
Q85….produces high-quality work.						
Q86…..contributes positively to the organisation's performance.						

4.4 My organisation's performance

My organisation….

	1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	99. Prefer not to respond
Q87. … is quick to respond when changes need to be made.						
Q88. ….uses its resources efficiently.						
Q89. ….has rules and procedures in place that make it **difficult** and complicated to work effectively and efficiently.						
Q90..takes measuring and monitoring performance seriously.						
Q91. ….dedicates sufficient attention to reducing its environmental footprint (saving energy, reducing waste, promoting sustainable travel, recycling, etc.)						
Q92. ….. is open with the public (shares information publicly, engages with the public, etc.)						
Q93. …..serves citizens and users well.						
Q94. … makes decisions based on facts and evidence.						
Q95. ….does **not** tolerate arbitrary action, personal favouritism and/or political coercion.						
Q96. …..grants promotions and career development opportunities based on personal connections rather than on skills and abilities.						
Q97…. Is successful in achieving its mission and goals.						
Q98….. is ready and able to take on new and emerging challenges.						

Non-randomised- final question for all:

Q99? I believe that my organisation's leadership will take actions based on the results of this survey.

1: 'Strongly disagree'	2 'Disagree'	3 'Neither agree nor disagree'	4 'Agree'	5 'Strongly agree'	Prefer not to respond

Annex C. Participating organisations

Table A C.1. Participating organisations per country

	Organisations
Belgium	National and Provincial State Archives, Belgian Institute for Postal Services and Telecommunications, Belnet, Federal agency for occupational hazards, Federal Agency for the Safety of the Food Chain (FASFC), Federal Agency for Medicines and Health Products (FAMHP), Health Care Knowledge Centre, Federal Planning Bureau, Federal Pension Office, FPS Policy and Support (FPS BOSA), FPS Home Affairs, FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, FPS Economy, SMEs, Self-Employed and Energy, FPS Finance, FPS Justice, FPS Chancellery of the Prime Minister, FPS Mobility and Transport, FPS Social Security, FPS Health, Food Chain Safety and Environment, FPS Employment, Labour and Social Dialogue, Auxiliary fund for unemployment benefits, Agency for health and disability insurance, Institute for the equality of women and men, Royal Institute of Natural Sciences, Royal Institute for Space Aeronomy, Royal Institute of Cultural Heritage, Royal Meteorological Institute of Belgium, Royal Museum of Central Africa, Royal Library of Belgium, Royal Museums of Art and History, Royal Museums of Fine Arts, Royal Observatory of Belgium and the Planetarium, Crossroads Bank for Social Security (CBSS), Ministry of Defence, National Geographic Institute (NGI), National Institute of Forensic Sciences and Criminology, PPS Social Integration, Fight against Poverty and Social Economy, PPS Science Policy, Belgian Buildings Agency, National Employment Office, National Office of Annual Vacation, National Social Security Office, National Institute for the Social Security of the Self-employed (NISSE), National Institute for Sickness and Disability Insurance, Sciensano, War Heritage Institute.
Bulgaria	Customs Agency , Road Infrastructure Agency, State Financial Inspection Agency, Agency for the Quality of Social Services, Agency for Social Assistance, Agency for Sustainable Energy Development, Agency for People with Disabilities, Agency for, Nuclear Regulation, Registry Agency, Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Agency, Employment Agency, Public Procurement Agency, Agency for Public Enterprises and Control, Administration of the Council of Ministers, Anti-Doping Centre, Bulgarian Investment Agency, Bulgarian Food Safety Agency, Bulgarian Institute of Metrology, Directorate General Civil Aviation Administration, General Directorate "Execution of Penalties", General Directorate "Security", Diplomatic Institute, Directorate for National Construction Control , State Cultural Institute, State Fund for Agriculture, State Archives Agency, State Road Safety Agency, State Agency "State Reserve and Wartime Stocks", State Agency for Refugees , State Agency for Child Protection, State Agency for Metrological and Technical Supervision, State Information Security Commission, State Commission for Commodity Exchanges and Auctions, Executive Agency "Automobile Administration", Executive Agency "Hail Control", Executive Agency "Bulgarian Accreditation Service", Military Clubs and Military Recreation Executive Agency, Executive Agency "General Labour Inspectorate", Railway Administration Executive Agency, Executive Agency for e-Government Infrastructure, Executive Agency "Medical Supervision", Maritime Administration Executive Agency, National Film Centre Executive Agency, Executive Agency "Audit of EU Funds", Education Programme Executive Agency, Danube River Research and Maintenance Executive Agency, Executive Agency "Certification Audit of EU Agricultural Funds", Executive Agency for Bulgarians Abroad, Executive Agency for Promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises, Executive Forestry Agency, Executive Agency for Medicines, Executive Agency for Vine and Wine, Executive, Agency for the Environment, Executive Agency for Fisheries and Aquaculture, Executive Agency for Selection and Reproduction in Animal Husbandry, Executive Agency for Varietal Testing, Approbation and Seed Control, Institute for Analyses and Forecasts, Institute of Defence "Professor Tsvetan Lazarov", Institute of Public Administration, Information Centre of the Ministry of Defence, Energy and Water Regulatory Commission, Commission for Protection of Competition , Commission for Personal Data Protection, Consumer Protection Commission, Commission for Protection against Discrimination, Commission for Confiscation of Illegally Acquired Property, Commission for Public Oversight of Registered Auditors, Commission for the Disclosure of Documents and for the Declaration of Belonging of Bulgarian Citizens to State Security and the Intelligence Services of the Bulgarian National Army Communications Regulation Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Electronic Government, Ministry of Energy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture and Food, Ministry of Economy and Industry, Ministry of Innovation and Growth, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Youth and Sport, Ministry of Education and Science, Ministry of Environment and Water, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Regional Development and Public Works, Ministry of Transport and Communications , Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Finance, National Air, Water and Rail Accident Investigation Board, National Education Inspectorate, National Institute for Immovable Cultural Heritage, National Institute for Conciliation and Arbitration, National Insurance Institute, National Institute of Statistics, National Student House, National Council on Prices and Reimbursement of Medicinal Products, National Fund "Culture", National Centre for Information and Documentation, National Agency for Evaluation and Accreditation, National Revenue Agency, National Agency for Vocational Education and Training, National Health Insurance Fund, National Commission for Combating Human Trafficking , National Agricultural Advisory Service, National Legal Aid Bureau, Patent Office, Council for Electronic Media, Research Fund, Social Protection Fund, Working Conditions Fund, Central Commission for Combating Juvenile Delinquency, Centre for Assisted Reproduction, Centre for the Promotion of Agricultural Cooperation between China and the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe, Centre for Educational Integration of, Children and Students from Ethnic Minorities, Centre for Human Resource, Development and Regional Initiatives, Centre for Human Resource Development, Centre for Food Chain Risk Assessment.

	Organisations
Croatia	Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Culture and Media, Ministry of Tourism and Sport, Ministry of Labour, Pension System, Family and Social Policy, Ministry of Physical Planning, Construction and State Assets, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds, Ministry of Science, Education and Youth, Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure, Ministry of Croatian Veterans' Affairs, Ministry of Health Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Finance, Customs Administration, Ministry of Finance, Tax Administration, Ministry of the Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Justice, Public Administration and Digital Transformation, Ministry of the Interior, Central State Office for Public Procurement, Central State Office for Croats Abroad, State Inspector's Office, Croatian Firefighting Association, State Office for Metrology, Croatian Bureau of Statistics, State Geodetic Administration, State Intellectual Property Office, Croatian Meteorological and Hydrological Service.
Netherlands	Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport, Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries, Food Security and Nature, Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment
Latvia	State Chancellery, State Administration School, Ministry of Foreign Affairs , Ministry of Economics, State Construction Control Bureau, Central Statistical Bureau, Competition Council, Investment and Development Agency, Latvian National, Accreditation Bureau, Consumer Rights Protection Centre, Ministry of Finance, Central Finance and Contracting Agency, Procurement Monitoring Bureau, Lotteries and Gambling Supervisory Inspection, State Revenue Service, State Treacury, Ministry of Agriculture, Agricultural Data Center, Rural Support Service, Food and Veterinary Service, State Plant Protection Service, State Forest Service, State Technical Supervision Agency, Ministry of Health, Latvian Anti-Doping Bureau, National Health Service, Center for Disease Prevention and Control, Health Inspectorate, State Agency of Medicines, Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development, Nature Conservation Agency, State Regional Development Agency, State Environmental Service, State Environmental Monitoring Bureau, Ministry of Justice, Data State Inspectorate, Insolvency Control Service, Patent Office, Enterprise Register, Administration of the Maintenance Guarantee Fund, State Probation Service, State Forensic Science Bureau, State Language Centre, State Land Service, Ministry of Transport, Transport Accident and Incident Investigation Bureau, State Agency "Civil Aviation Agency", State Railway administration, State Railway Technical Inspectorate, Ministry of Welfare, State Employment Agency, Social Integration State Agency, Child Protection Centre, State Labour Inspectorate, State Social Insurance Agency, State Medical Commission for the Assessment of Health Condition and Working Ability, Ministry of Culture, Culture Information Systems Centre, Latvian National Archives, Latvian National Culture Center, National Heritage Board, Ministry of Climate and Energy, Ministry of Education and Science, State Education Quality Service, Agency for Youth International Programs, Latvian Language Agency, Latvian Council of Science, State Education Development Agency, National Centre for Education, Ministry of the Interior, Financial Intelligence Unit, Internal Security Bureau, Information Centre of, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of the Interior Health and Sports Center, Provision State Agency, Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs, Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, The State Centre for Defence Logistics and Procurement

	Organisations
Lithuania	Environmental Protection Agency, Environmental Protection Department, Lithuanian Geological Service, Lithuanian Hydrometeorological Service, Environmental Project Management Agency, National Land Service, State Forest Service, State Protected Areas Service, Environmental Projects Management Agency, State Territorial Planning and Construction Inspectorate, Information Society Development Committee, Lithuanian Metrology Inspectorate, Lithuanian Standards Board, Lithuanian National Accreditation Bureau, Gaming Control Authority, Service of Technological Security State Documents, The Authority of Audit, Accounting, Property Valuation and Insolvency Management , State Tax Inspectorate, Centralized Finance and Property Service under the Ministry of National Defence, Defence Materiel Agency under the Ministry of National Defence, Information Technology Service under the Ministry of National Defence, Infrastructure Management Agency, Mobilization and Civil Resistance Department under the Ministry of National Defence, Central State Telecommunications Center, General Affairs Department, National Cyber Security Centre under the Ministry of National Defence, Department of Cultural Heritage under the Ministry of Culture, Lithuanian Film Centre under the Ministry of Culture, Lithuanian Culture Institute, Lithuanian council for culture, Cultural Infrastructure Center, Lithuanian National Culture Center, State Language Inspectorate, Agency for the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disability, Agency of Youth Affairs, State Labour Inspectorate, Department of Supervision of Social Services, Employment Service, State Child Rights Protection and Adoption Service, State Labor Inspectorate, Dispute Commission under the Ministry of Social Security and Labor, State Social Insurance Fund Board, Lithuanian Transport Safety Administration, Directorate of Border Crossing Infrastructure, Lithuanian Bioethics Committee, National Transplant Bureau, Radiation Protection Centre, Extreme Health Situations Centre, State Accreditation Service for Health Care Activities, State Health Insurance Fund under the Ministry of Health, Lithuanian National Forensic Psychiatry Service under the Ministry of Health, National Public Health Center, State Medicines Control Agency of Lithuania, National Sports Agency, National Agency for Education, Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education, Qualification and Vocational Education and Training Development Centre, Lithuanian Center for Inclusion in Education, Lithuanian centre of non-formal youth education, State Studies Foundation, State Patent Bureau of the Republic of Lithuania, Forensic Science Centre of Lithuania, The State Patent Bureau, State Forensic Medicine Service, State Consumer Rights, Protection Authority, Identity Documents Personalisation Centre, Information Technology and Communications Department, Resource Agency, Migration Department, National Payment Agency, State Plant Service, Agency of Agriculture, Fisheries Service, Ministry of Environment of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Energy of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of National Defence of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Transport and Communications of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania, Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Lithuania, Administrative Disputes Commission, Communications Regulatory Authority, Tax Disputes Commission, State Nuclear Power Safety Inspectorate, Public Procurement Office, Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania, National Energy Regulation Council, Parliament of the Republic of Lithuania, Council for the Safeguarding of Ethnic Culture, Genocide and Resistance Research Centre of Lithuania, Research Council of Lithuania , Office of the Ombudsperson for Academic Ethics and Procedures, Competition Council, Parliamentary Ombudspersons, Office of the Ombudsperson for Child's rights, National Commission for Cultural Heritage, Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Lithuania, The Office of the Equal Opportunities Ombudsperson, The State Commission of the Lithuanian Language, Chief Official Ethics Commission, The Office of the Inspector of Journalist Ethics, Office of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Office of the Chief Archivist of Lithuania, Vilnius Regional State Archives, Klaipėdos Regional State Archives, Šiauliai Regional State Archives, Kaunas Regional State Archives, Lithuanian Central State Archives, Lithuanian Special Archives, Lithuanian State History Archives, National Institute for Food and Veterinary Risk Assessment, Department for Drug, Tobacco and Alcohol Control, Department of National Minorities under the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, Government Strategic Analysis Center, State Data Agency, State Data Protection Inspectorate, State Food and Veterinary Service, Public Management Agency, Institution of government representatives, Public Institution Construction Sector Development Agency, Public Institution "Invest in Lithuania", Public Institution "Travel Lithuania", Public Institution CPO LT, Public Institution Innovation Agency, Public Institution Lithuanian Innovation Centre, Governance Coordination Centre, Public Institution Lithuanian Energy Agency, National Shared Functions Center, Public Institution "Center of Excellence in Anti-Money Laundering" , Public Institution "Central Project Management Agency", Public Institution "Lithuanian Assay Agency", Public Institution "Broadband Internet", Public Institution Transport Competence Agency, Public Institution "Studying in Lithuania", Public Institution Lithuanian Anti-Doping Agency, Public Institution Joint Technical Secretariat, Public Institution "Ekoagros", Public Institution "Lithuanian Agricultural Advisory Service", European Social Fund Agency, Education Exchange Support Fund, Public Institution "Media Support Fund", Bank of Lithuania, Radio and Television Commission of Lithuania, National Audit Office of Lithuania
Slovak Republic	Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Transport of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Investments, Regional Development and Informatization of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Defence of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Justice of the Slovak Republic, The Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of the Environment of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Education, Research, Development and Youth of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Tourism and Sports of the Slovak Republic, Government Office of the Slovak Republic, Antimonopoly Office of the Slovak Republic, Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, Geodesy, Cartography and Cadastre Authority of the Slovak Republic, Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic, Slovak Office of Standards, Metrology and Testing, Public Procurement Office, Industrial Property Office of the Slovak Republic, State Material Reserves of the Slovak Republic, National Security authority, Authority for Spatial Planning and Construction of the Slovak Republic Financial Administration

	Organisations
Slovenia	Office of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Slovenia, Secretariat-General of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, Protocol of the Republic of Slovenia Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Legislation, Government Communication Office, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, Government Office of the Republic of Slovenia for the Protection of Classified Information, Government Office for Slovenians Abroad, Government Office for National Minorities, Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for the Support and Integration of Migrants, Government Information Security Office, Service of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia for Recovery after Floods and Avalanches, Ministry of Finance, Office for Money Laundering Prevention of the Republic of Slovenia, Public Payments Administration of the Republic of Slovenia, Budget Supervision Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Recovery and Resilience, Ministry of Cohesion and Regional Development, Ministry of the Interior, Internal Affairs Inspectorate, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief, Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for, Protection against Natural and Other Disasters, Defence Inspectorate, Ministry of Justice, Probation Administration, Ministry of the Economy, Tourism and Sport, Slovenian Intellectual Property Office, Metrology Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Market Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Inspectorate for Sport, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food, Agency of the Republic of Slovenia for Agricultural Markets and Rural Development, Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia for Agriculture, Forestry, Hunting and Fisheries, Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Food Safety, Veterinary Sector and Plant Protection, Ministry of Infrastructure, Slovenian Infrastructure Agency, Slovenian Maritime Administration, Infrastructure Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Natural Resources and Spatial Planning, Surveying and Mapping Authority of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration, Natural Resources and Spatial Planning Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenian Water Agency, Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Energy, Slovenian Environment Agency, Inspectorate for Environment and Energy, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, Labour Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Health, Health Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Chemicals Office of the Republic of Slovenia, Slovenian Radiation Protection Administration, Office of the Republic of Slovenia for the Monitoring, Quality and Investments in Healthcare, Ministry of Solidarity-Based Future, Housing Inspectorate, Ministry of Public Administration, Public Sector Inspectorate, Ministry of Digital Transformation, Information Society Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia , Ministry of Education, Office of the Republic of Slovenia for Youth, Education Inspectorate of the Republic of Slovenia, Ministry of Culture, Archives of the Republic of Slovenia, Culture and Media Inspectorate, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Annex D. Instructions page

This survey has been designed specifically for public servants working in central government ministries and agencies.

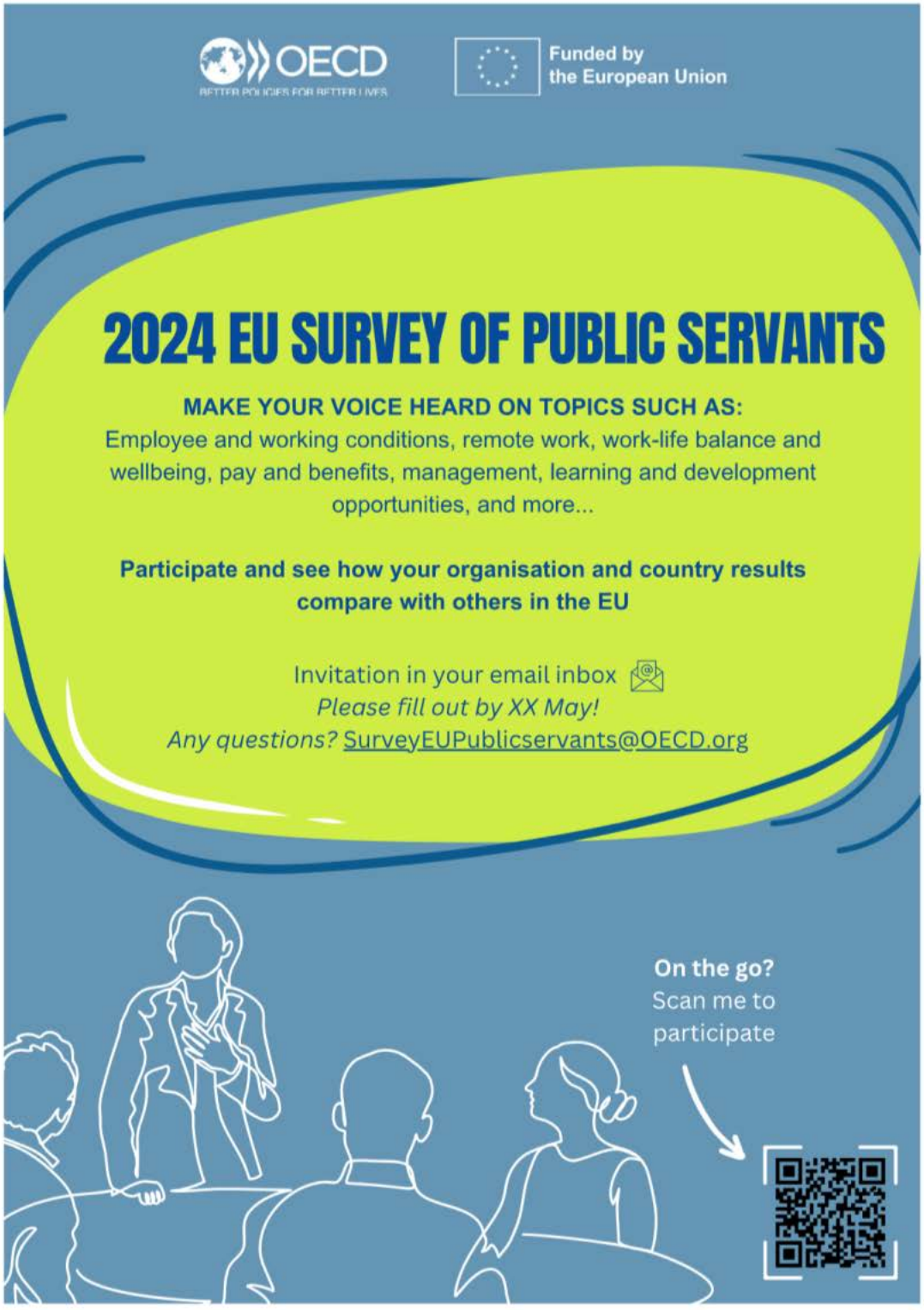
We ask that you kindly do not complete the survey if you fall into any of the following categories:

- Employees of state-owned enterprises or public corporations (companies in which the government has ownership. Often these are national railways or utilities, for instance).
- Employees of state-owned non-profit institutions (i.e. public foundations).
- Doctors, nurses or other medical professionals working in a public hospital.
- University professors, teachers in public universities or schools.
- Police, border guards, firefighters or other public emergency or security workers.
- Military personnel with the exception of civilian-military or civil servants working in the Ministry of Defence in policy or oversight roles.
- Judges and state prosecutors or defenders.

If you do not fall into any of the above categories of employment, we invite you to continue onto the survey.
Instructions

Please take note of the response scale when responding to each question, as they change slightly. However, in the majority of cases, you will be asked to rate the extent to which you agree with certain statements- ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. When navigating the survey, you may click next or previous at the bottom of each page to go forward or backwards in the survey.

Annex E. Poster sample



Annex F. Descriptive statistics

Table A F.1. Descriptive statistics, continuous variables

Variable	Obs	Mean (unweighted)	Mean (weighted)	Std. Deviation	Min	Max	Countries not included
Employee Engagement Index	50 918	67.3	66.6	17.51	0	100	
Employee well-being index*	40 700	57.5	58.0	14.36	0	100	Netherlands, Denmark, Norway
Team performance	48 487	78.0	77.6	18.49	0	100	Denmark, Norway
Organisational performance	44 270	62.2	60.3	16.89	0	100	Denmark, Norway
Innovation climate	45 400	54.1	51.9	20.17	0	100	Denmark, Norway
Learning and development*	39 066	59.3	58.3	19.00	0	100	Netherlands, Denmark, Norway
Line manager	46 118	72.4	71.8	21.38	0	100	Norway
Senior leader*	38 387	62.3	60.3	21.76	0	100	Netherlands, Denmark, Norway
Job autonomy*	41 523	71.6	70.8	19.05	0	100	Netherlands, Denmark, Norway

Table A F.2. Descriptive statistics, categorical/binary variables

Variable	Based on question	Obs.	Share (unweighted)	Std. Deviation	Countries not included
Gender	Qa	55 927		0.46	
Male		16 370	29.3		
Female		39 557	70.7		
Age group	Qb	55 833		1.05	
24 years and under		877	1.6		
25 to 35 years		8 944	16.0		
36 to 45 years		16 238	29.1		
46 to 55 years		17 274	30.9		
56 and over		12 500	22.4		
Educational	Qc			0.70	
Non-academic degree		6 880	12.3		
Bachelors level		12 985	23.2		
Masters or Doctoral level		36 174	64.6		
Contract type	Qe	56 547		1.27	
Permanent		52 604	93.0		
Temporary		3 469	6.1		
Other		474	0.8		
Working pattern	Qf	51 900		1.05	Norway
Full-time		49 513	95.2		
Part-time		2 477	4.8		

Variable	Based on question	Obs.	Share (unweighted)	Std. Deviation	Countries not included
Managerial status (yes/no)	Qg	55 817		0.38	
Manager		10 007	17.9		
Non-manager		45 810	82.1		
Organisational size	Data provided by countries	56 980		1.12	
Micro: less than 20		212	0.4		
Extra small 20-100		3 673	6.5		
Small: 101-250		7 261	12.7		
Medium: 251-1000		16 037	28.1		
Large: 1001-10000		20 359	35.7		
Extra-large: more than 10000		9 438	16.6		
Tenure	Q40	44 924		1.92	Norway
Less than 1 year		2 681	6.0		
1-5 years		9 260	20.6		
6-10 years		7 115	15.8		
11-15 years		5 911	13.2		
16-20 years		6 689	14.9		
21-25 years		5 669	12.6		
26 years and more		7 599	16.9		
Remote work (all categories)	Q6	49 252		1.75	Netherlands
More than five days a week		240	0.5		
5 days a week		2 850	5.8		
3-4 days a week		8 533	17.3		
1-2 days a week		10 322	21.0		
Less than one day a week		3 327	6.8		
Very infrequently		5 959	12.10		
Never	Q6	18 021	36.6		
Remote work (three cat)		49 252		0.89	Netherlands
Weekly (1-5 days a week)		21 770	44.2		
Occasionally/infrequent		9 405	19.1		
Never		18 077	36.6		

Note: the category highlighted in bold is used as a reference category in the regressions analysis

Table A F.3. Prefer not to respond answers by question

Question	Share of PNR answers
Qa My gender is:	1.5%
Qb My age group is:	2.1%
Qc My highest educational qualification is:	1.4%
Qd My employment status is:	0.8%
Qe My contract type is:	0.7%
Qf My working pattern is:	1.0%
Qg I manage other employees in my organisation:	2.1%
Qh The organisation where I currently work is:	1.4%
Qi The main responsibilities of my organisation are mostly:	2.8%
Q01 The best description of my work function is:	3.2%
Qj In my work, I am regularly in direct contact with citizens (by e-mail, mail, phone or in person):	1.7%
Q1 I am satisfied with my salary.	2.6%

Question	Share of PNR answers
Q2 I am satisfied with my benefits package (monetary and non-monetary benefits	2.8%
Q3 Compared to people doing a similar job in the private sector, I feel that I am fairly compensated	3.5%
Q4 I am satisfied with the security of my employment	2.3%
Q5 I have the tools and resources I need to do my job well.	1.7%
Q02 When I am in the office, my workspace is usually the following:	0.8%
Q03a Office equipment (computers, laptops, screens, printers, etc.)	0.9%
Q03b Ergonomic working station (lighting, adjustable desks and chairs, additional screens, etc.)	1.2%
Q03c Cleanliness of the working spaces	1.2%
Q03d Noise levels	1.3%
Q03e Breakrooms/eating areas and facilities	2.6%
Q6 How many days a week do you work remotely (i.e. from home **or** from another approved location?)	1.4%
Q7 I have the conditions I need to work effectively from home or remotely (i.e., space, equipment, digital tools, etc.).	1.6%
Q8 Home and remote work positively enhance my work/life balance.	2.1%
Q9 Home and remote work allow me to be more effective in my job.	2.0%
Q10 My manager trusts me to do my job effectively, even when I am working from home or remotely.	2.8%
Q11 Why do you not work remotely more frequently?	3.9%
Q12 If I could choose freely, I would work from home or from another approved location...	10.9%
Q13 I achieve a good balance between my work life and my private life.	1.7%
Q14 I have clear responsibilities and know what is expected of me	1.1%
Q15 I can usually handle my workload well.	1.2%
Q16 I feel burned out	2.7%
Q17 I often feel exhausted at the end of the working day.	1.7%
Q18 I sometimes work despite feeling sick.	2.2%
Q19 I would feel comfortable sharing concerns about my physical or mental health with my immediate supervisor.	4.4%
Q20 I feel I am able to support employees in my work unit who are experiencing mental health issues.	4.8%
Q21 During the last 6 months, how many sick leave days have you taken?	2.4%
Q22 In the last 12 months, how many hours of training or learning courses (in relation to your job) have you undertaken?	4.8%
Q23 The learning activities I have completed in the last 12 months have helped me improve my performance.	3.0%
Q24 I am able to access the right learning opportunities when I need to.	2.7%
Q25 At my work I feel that I am growing professionally.	3.0%
Q26 My organisation supports mobility (temporary assignments, transfers or secondments) to help develop my career	5.8%
Q27 In my organisation, poor performers usually…	26.3%
Q28 Are there currently skills or capacities missing within your immediate work unit or team? If yes, which are the most important skills missing?	18.4%
Q29 Overall, I am satisfied with my job.	1.2%
Q30 At my work I feel full of energy.	1.8%
Q31 The work I do gives me a sense of accomplishment.	2.1%
Q32 I am enthusiastic about my job.	1.7%
Q33 I am immersed in my work.	2.6%
Q34 I am willing to do extra work for my job beyond what is expected of me.	1.5%
Q35 It is important to me that my work contribute to the common good.	2.8%
Q36 I identify with the mission of my organisation.	2.9%
Q37 I would recommend my organisation as a good place to work.	3.0%
Q38 I am proud to work for this organisation	3.0%
Q39 I have worked at my current organisation for:	2.6%
Q40 I have worked in the central government public administration:	10%
Q41 I want to leave my organisation within the next 12 months.	21.8%
Q42 Why do you want to leave the organisation within the next 12 months?	1.3%
Q43 Having carefully read the below definition of harassment, have you been the victim of harassment on the job in the past 12 months?	7.1%
Q44 Having carefully read the definition of discrimination, have you been the victim of discrimination on the job in the past 12 months?	7.2%

Question	Share of PNR answers
Q45 My line manager/supervisor plans the work well.	2.6%
Q46 My line manager/supervisor shares important information with me.	2.5%
Q47 My line manager/supervisor trusts my judgement.	2.5%
Q48 My line manager/supervisor lets me be reasonably autonomous (i.e. does not micro-manage).	2.7%
Q49 My line manager/supervisor treats me with respect.	2.3%
Q50 My line manager/supervisor is good at resolving conflicts.	3.3%
Q51 My line manager/supervisor can be counted on to help me with my work if I need support.	2.5%
Q52 My line manager/supervisor encourages me to come up with new or better ways of doing things.	2.8%
Q53 My line manager/supervisor provides me with helpful feedback to improve my performance.	2.6%
Q54 My line manager/supervisor recognises and rewards good performance.	3.3%
Q55 My line manager/supervisor provides opportunities fairly to all employees in my work unit or team (e.g., promotions, work assignments, training, etc.).	3.9%
Q56 My line manager/supervisor makes decisions based on evidence and facts	3.3%
Q57 My line manager/supervisor maintains high standards of honesty and integrity	3.7%
Q58 Overall, how good a job, do you feel is being done by your line manager?	4.3%
Q59 The senior leaders of my organisation clearly articulate the direction and priorities of the organisation.	3.4%
Q60 The senior leaders of my organisation are aware of global events and how they might impact the organisation.	4.3%
Q61 The senior leaders of my organisation generally manage the organisation well.	3.5%
Q62 The senior leaders of my organisation effectively communicate essential information to staff.	3.1%
Q63 The senior leaders of my organisation are effectively stay change in the organisation	4.7%
Q64 The senior leaders of my organisation promote co-operation within the organisation	3.6%
Q65 The senior leaders of my organisation recognise and appreciate our work.	3.5%
Q66 The senior leaders of my organisation trust the judgement of their employees.	4.0%
Q67 The senior leaders of my organisation uphold and defend public service values (e.g. honesty, integrity, impartiality, etc.) (	4.3%
Q68 The senior leaders of my organisation maintain high standards of honesty and integrity.	4.9%
Q69 The senior leaders of my organisation provide evidence-based advice to political leaders, even if this advice goes against the political position.	12.3%
Q70 Overall, how good a job do you feel is being done by the senior leadership in your organisation?	7.6%
Q04 To what extent do you trust the political leadership of your organisation?	23.1%
Q71 My organisation continually encourages me to look for new ways of improving the way things work.	2.8%
Q72 My organisation supports the idea that failure is a part of innovation.	4.7%
Q73 My organisation commits resources to develop new ideas and innovations (e.g., budget, staff, time, expert support).	3.9%
Q74 My organisation ensures that teams have the necessary skills to implement innovation initiatives.	3.8%
Q75 My organisation takes full advantage of technology to promote innovation and new ways of working.	3.5%
Q76 My organisation has sufficiently flexible legislative and regulatory frameworks to incorporate new approaches and policy solutions.	5.5%
Q77 My organisation learns from past problems and takes measures to prevent them from happening again.	3.7%
Q78 *For the purpose of this questions, an innovation is defined as a* ***new or improved service or process*** *that* ***differs significantly*** *from the way your work unit or team did things before. Please consider only innovations that were fully implemented in practice.*	8.1%
Q79 My organisation takes advantage of technology to improve its functioning and performance.	1.9%
Q80 My organisation provides regular opportunities to improve the digital skills of employees.	2.5%
Q81a How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Tablet	1.9%
Q81b How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Smart phone	1.8%
Q81c How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Collaborative software programmes (i.e., Teams, Slack, Asana…)	3.0%
Q81d How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Sharepoint/shared drives	4.2%
Q81e How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Statistical analysis software	5.3%
Q81f How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Artificial intelligence and machine learning	4.2%
Q81g How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Social media (work related accounts)	3.7%
Q81h How often do you use the following technologies for performing your work? Blockchain technology	10.0%
Q82 How specifically have you used artificial intelligence in your work?	10.0%

Question	Share of PNR answers
Q83 My team or work unit works well together.	1.4%
Q84 My team or work unit achieves our goals.	1.4%
Q85 My team or work unit produces high-quality work.	1.5%
Q86 My team or work unit contributes positively to the organisation's performance.	1.5%
Q87 My organisation is quick to respond when changes need to be made.	2.5%
Q88 My organisation uses its resources efficiently.	2.9%
Q89 My organisation has rules and procedures in place that make it difficult and complicated to work effectively and efficiently.	3.5%
Q90 My organisation takes measuring and monitoring performance seriously.	3.1%
Q91 My organisation dedicates sufficient attention to reducing its environmental footprint (saving energy, reducing waste, promoting sustainable travel, recycling, etc.)	4.7%
Q92 My organisation is open with the public (shares information publicly, engages with the public, etc.)	3.5%
Q93 My organisation serves citizens and users well.	2.9%
Q94 My organisation makes decisions based on facts and evidence.	3.6%
Q95 My organisation does **not** tolerate arbitrary action, personal favouritism and/or political coercion.	3.5%
Q96 My organisation grants promotions and career development opportunities based on personal connections rather than on skills and abilities.	5.7%
Q97 My organisation is successful in achieving its mission and goals.	3.5%
Q98 My organisation is ready and able to take on new and emerging challenges.	3.5%
Q99. I believe that my organisation's leadership will take actions based on the results of this survey.	4.5%

Workforce Insights from Central Governments

Findings of the 2024 OECD/EU Survey of Public Servants

This synthesis report presents key findings and actionable insights from the 2024 Standard EU/OECD Survey of Central Government Public Servants, the first cross-country survey of its kind across ten countries. At a time when governments must respond to increasingly complex and fast-moving challenges, the evidence presented here is more vital than ever to help central administrations strengthen leadership and human resource practices to build high performing public service workforces. Drawing on robust, comparative data, collected from over 56 000 public service employees, it offers a unique, evidence-based look into the experiences and perceptions of public service employees. Key areas of investigation include leadership quality, organisational performance, employee engagement, well-being, learning and development, innovation, management and working conditions. By identifying what matters most to employees and where systems can improve, the findings support more resilient, agile, and high-performing public service workforces. Funded and supported from the Technical Support Instrument of the European Commission's SG Reform office, this flagship report is an essential resource for policymakers, human resources professionals, and public sector leaders.

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