

PEOPLE AND PRODUCTIVITY

# Flexible working



Since 2007, productivity in the UK has plateaued. HSBC UK Commercial Banking has been exploring how businesses can address this challenge.

Over three reports we hope to capture the obstacles businesses are facing and show what steps can be taken to overcome them.

# Flexible working hours are more important than financial incentives



British workers believe their motivation and productivity levels would be higher if their employer offered them a better balance between their work and home lives – specifically the opportunity to work more flexibly.

**89%**

of British workers believe that flexible working hours would motivate them to be more productive at work.

81% say remote working would encourage them to increase their productivity levels. In fact, workers rated them more valuable than monetary rewards such as bonuses or discounted retail and leisure experiences.

*“Our research shows that for an overwhelming number of workers, wellbeing initiatives are more motivating than financial incentives.”*

**Amanda Murphy,**  
**Head of Commercial**  
**Banking at HSBC UK**

Should I stay or **should I go?**

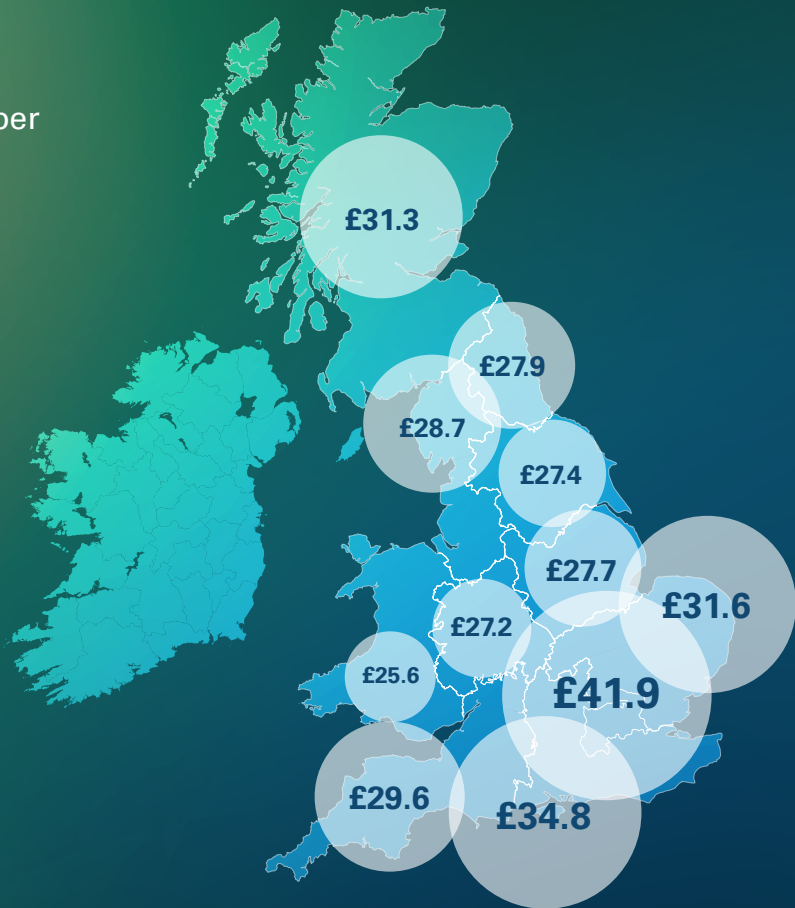
**18%**

With finding the right balance between work and home life so valuable to British workers it's unsurprising that almost one in five (18%) cited a poor work/life balance as the reason for leaving their last job – ranking above limited opportunities for a pay increase (16%).

# UK regions with the highest levels of productivity\* are also **more likely** to offer employees the opportunity to work flexibly

Almost a third (32%) of employees in the South East and 30% of workers in London – where productivity is among the highest – say they can work flexibly.

| Region                   | Output per hour £ |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| London                   | £41.9             |
| South East               | £34.8             |
| East                     | £31.6             |
| Scotland                 | £31.3             |
| South West               | £29.6             |
| North West               | £28.7             |
| North East               | £27.9             |
| East Midlands            | £27.7             |
| Yorkshire and the Humber | £27.4             |
| West Midlands            | £27.2             |
| Wales                    | £25.6             |



The sectors most likely to offer employees flexible working are also the most productive. More than a third (36%) of employees in the professional services industry are offered flexible working – where productivity reaches £68.10 an hour – more than doubling the national average of £32.20.



In the retail, hospitality and leisure industry – where productivity is lowest – almost a quarter (24%) of workers are not offered benefits or perks (including flexible working).



Despite the emphasis placed on flexible working by employees, just 30% of businesses offer it



Almost nine out of ten employees say flexible working would motivate them to be more productive. Less than three in ten workers are offered it by their employer.



Today's workforce want a better balance between their work and home lives, and the companies that are recognising and making provision for this are creating happier and more productive workplaces.

\* Productivity is calculated as per ONS data and defined as output per worker or output per hour worked. All data was provided by the Centre for Economic and Business Research (Cebr) and YouGov surveys of 2,006 consumers and 1,027 business decision makers in October 2017.