

The 2018 **Indicators of a Thriving Workplace** survey measures the **current state** against the **desired state** of a thriving or mentally healthy workplace, by asking people currently employed about their experience in their workplace.

# GENDER IDENTITY

## PROFILE REPORT



### A SNAPSHOT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING BASED ON GENDER IDENTITY IN THE AUSTRALIAN WORKFORCE

People who identify as female are referred to as women throughout this report, and self-identified males as men. Due to low numbers of people who identified as transgender or whose gender identity was not stated it was not possible to include detailed results for this group.

One of the most significant differences\* between women and men is that women are far more likely to report experiencing a mental health condition than men over their lifetime (55.3% for women vs 43.7% for men). 23.9% of women reported experiencing a mental health condition when the research was conducted in July 2018 (compared to 15.2% of men), and 31.3% reported previous experiences (28.5% of men).

The 2018 indicators of thriving workplaces show that men and women have similar perceptions and experiences of their workplace overall (index scores of 63.0 for men and 62.3 for women). The connectedness domain index score is substantially higher than the other domain scores for both men (67.5) and women (67.3). In terms of gender differences, it appears that men have a better experience than women for policy (+1.8 index points higher than women) and capability (+1.1), whereas the other index scores are fairly similar.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The index methodology was revised in early 2019 to provide a more robust view of workplace mental health and wellbeing and is based on all responses from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The national index scores in this report have been recalculated to ensure ongoing comparability with profile-specific index scores.

\* Significant differences were based on Pearson's chi-squared test where alpha = 0.05.

MEN

WOMEN



26.3%

23.2%

Experience very high levels of stress in their job



11.7%

10.3%

Are strongly optimistic that the state of mental health and wellbeing at their workplace will improve in the foreseeable future



47.3%

44.4%

Will definitely stay with their current employer over the next 12 months



37.9%

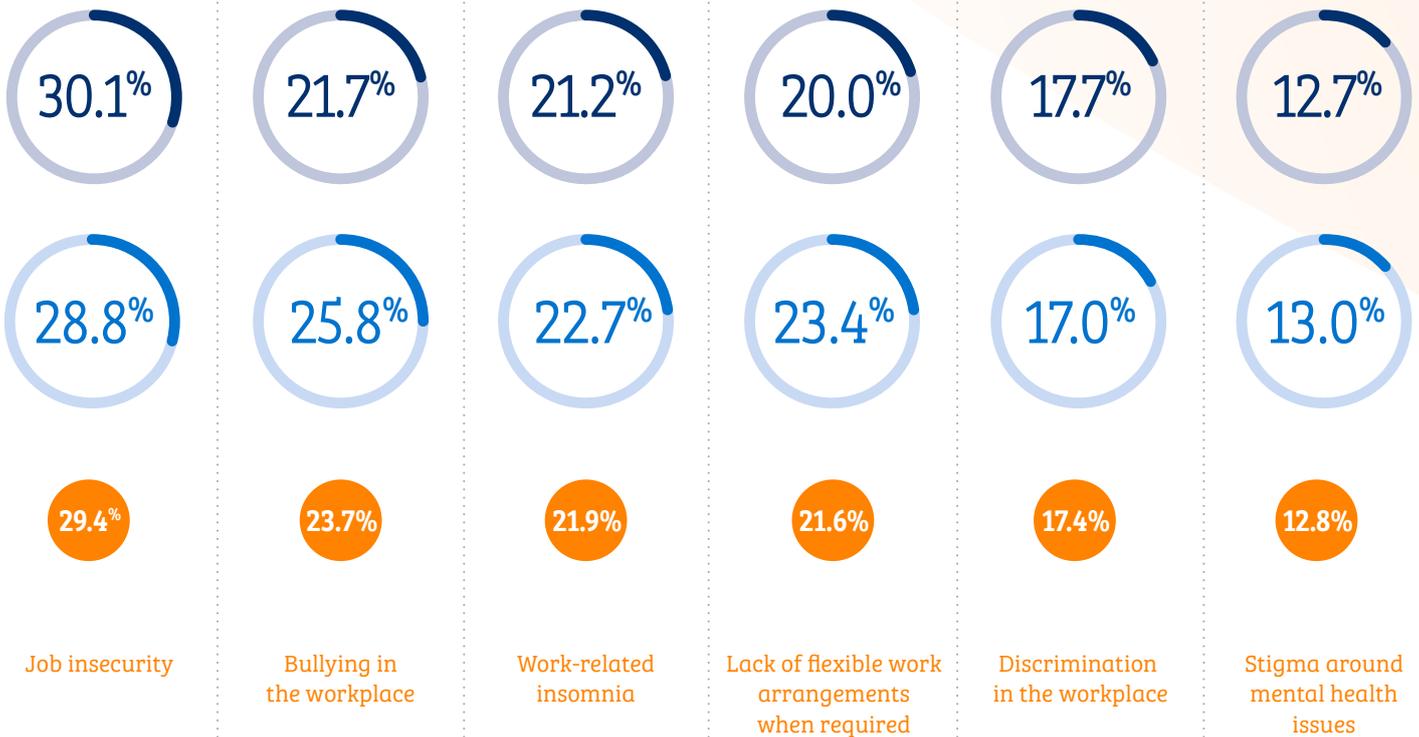
35.8%

Strongly believe their employer is among the best in its industry at creating and sustaining positive mental health and wellbeing for its employees

### Biggest opportunities to improve workplace mental health and wellbeing for women AND men:

- ▶ Establish policies to ensure that any changes are managed in a clear, supportive and positive way
- ▶ Help people to become more highly engaged with their work so that they are happy to stay
- ▶ Develop clear structures to ensure transparent decision making

## MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES EXPERIENCED AT WORK



■ MEN
 ■ WOMEN
 ● NATIONAL AVERAGE

### Action ideas:

1. Invest in mental health and wellbeing awareness activities and training
2. Encourage a good level of organisational communication on mental health and wellbeing safety promotion
3. Explore the six research-informed strategies for designing mentally healthy workplaces\*:
  - a. Design and manage work to minimise harm
  - b. Promote protective factors at the organisational level
  - c. Enhance personal resilience
  - d. Promote and facilitate early help seeking
  - e. Support workers recovering from mental illness
  - f. Increase awareness of mental illness and reduce stigma.

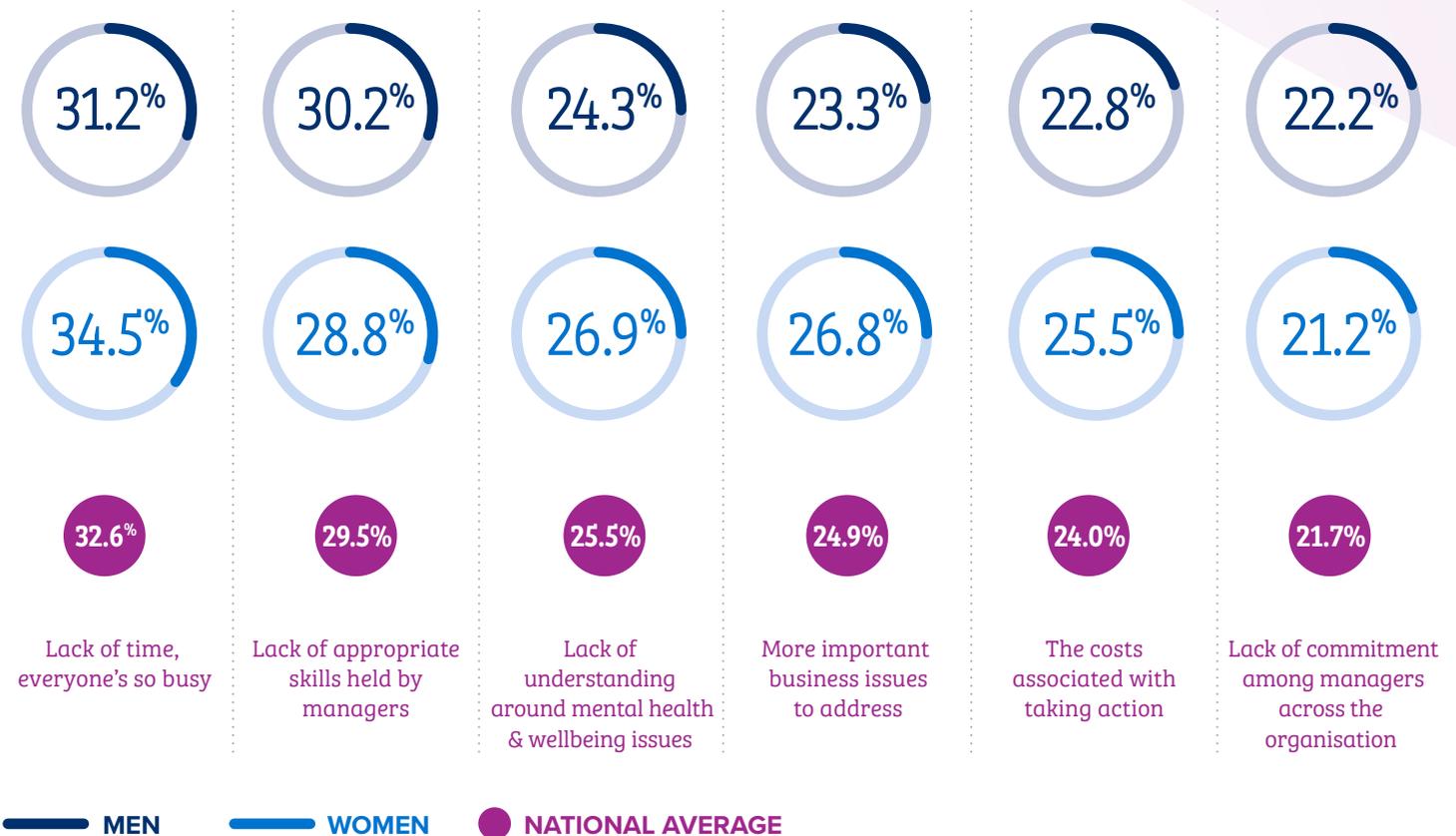
\* National Mental Health Commission and Mentally Healthy Workplace Alliance.

*“I was bullied at work and am currently taking them to the [Australian] Human Rights Commission. I am on a Work Cover medical certificate and they were not insured. They have stopped paying me and have not paid my doctor’s bills. It seems to be very hard to get a company to do the right thing... I miss working and I was outgoing but now struggle to leave the house.”*



## WHAT IS PREVENTING EMPLOYERS FROM TAKING ACTION?

Lack of time is considered the biggest barrier, particularly for women. This perception is supported by the belief that there's a lack of understanding about mental health and wellbeing and more important business issues to address. Men are more likely to believe that managerial deficiencies are key barriers, particularly the lack of appropriate skills and commitment among managers.

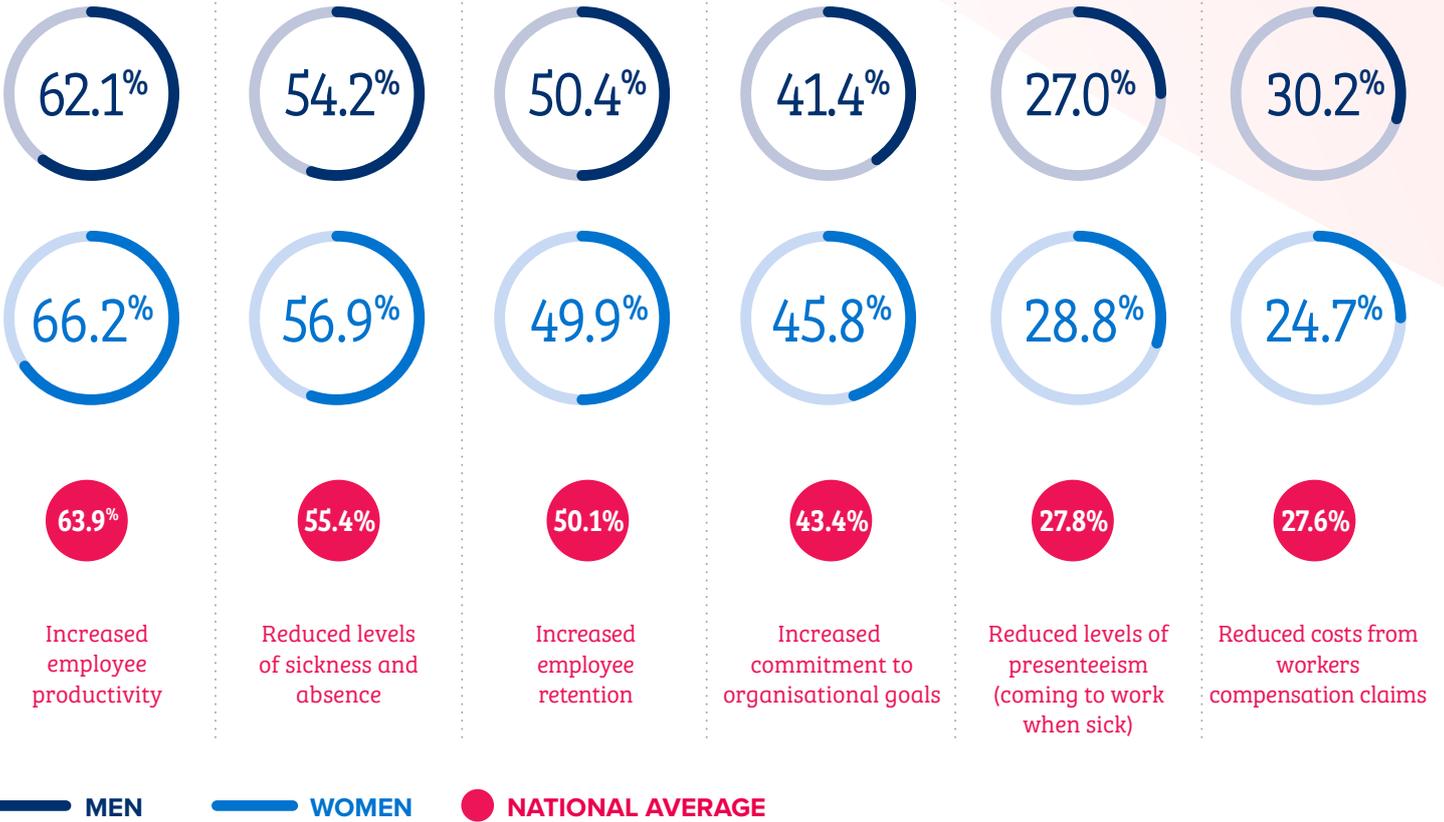


### Action ideas:

- 1. Engage leaders.** Help them understand the return on investment and business benefits that come from investing in workplace mental health
- 2. Diagnose and determine priority areas** for change (look at sick leave, employee survey data, etc.)
- 3. Agree on scope.** Link your strategy, policy and workplace interventions to your business plan and values. Highlight those things already in place, the new positive practices you'll implement – and how you'll measure success.

*"I work at a special needs school as an Education Assistant [and have] spent 4 years working in a class of Primary School age kids. I am a 50kg, 53 year-old woman and despite voicing my misgivings to the Principal, I was moved to the Secondary classes where I was repeatedly punched, kicked, scratched and bitten by students ... I felt highly anxious for my safety every day. I reached a point where I crumbled emotionally, but when I tried to speak with the Principal all I got was a message that he 'was busy'... I sought counselling and have now been moved to a different class where I feel safer. The lack of concern by our 'Leader' is the thing that stays with me..."*

# BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



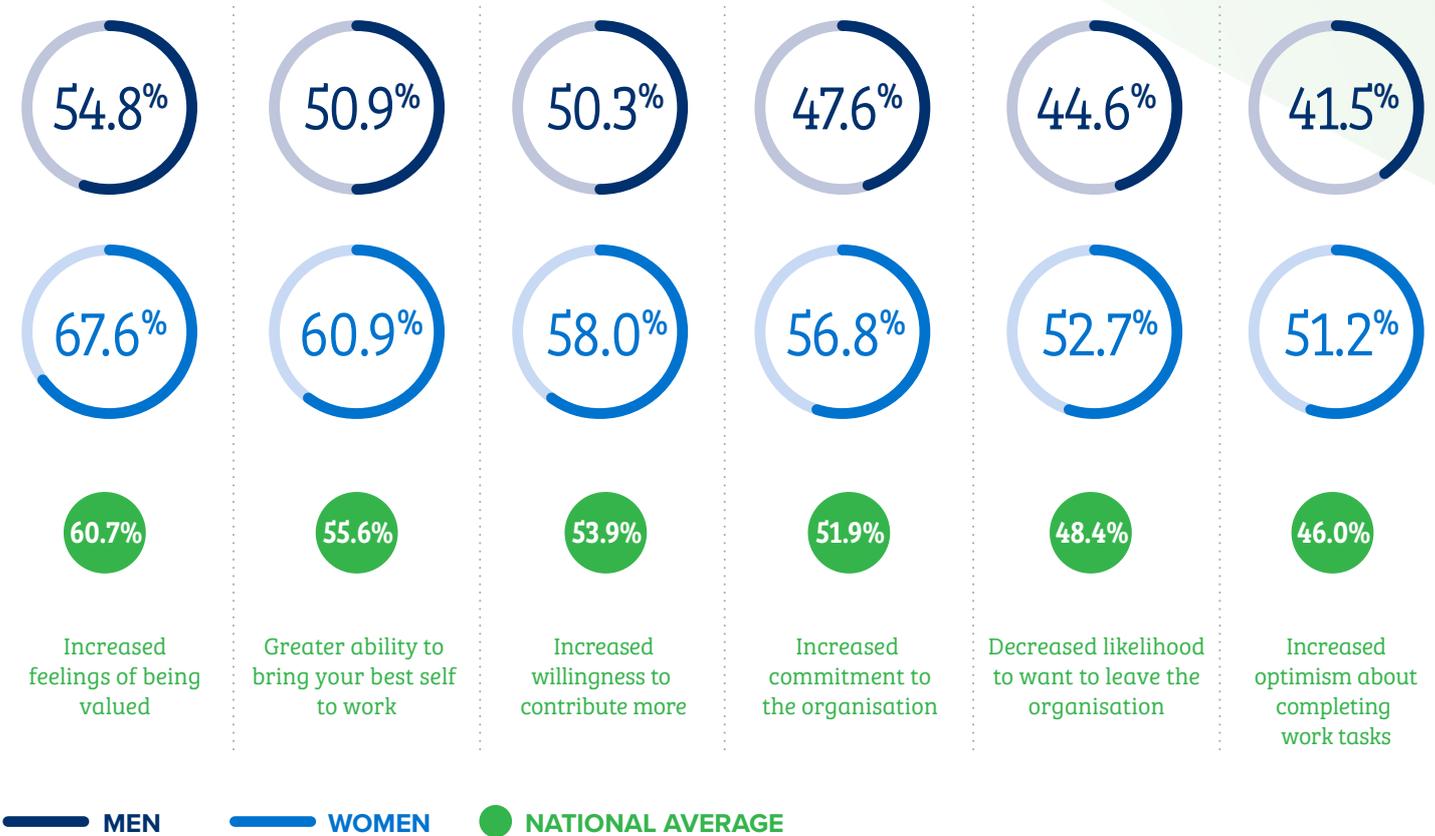
## How do the numbers stack up?

- 1 in 5** Australians report having experienced a mental health issue each year, and **2 in 5** have left a job because of poor workplace mental health.
- According to PwC, lost productivity due to staff turnover is estimated to cost Australian businesses \$3.8 billion annually – and \$385 million in ‘avoidable’ recruitment costs.
- There’s a **\$2.30 return on investment for every \$1 spent** on successfully implementing an appropriate action.
- Thriving workers are more committed to workplace goals, build better relationships with peers, and produce higher output.



## HOW DO INDIVIDUALS BENEFIT?

Women are far more likely to identify how they would personally benefit from mentally healthy workplaces than men, particularly in terms of feeling more valued as an employee.



### Action ideas:

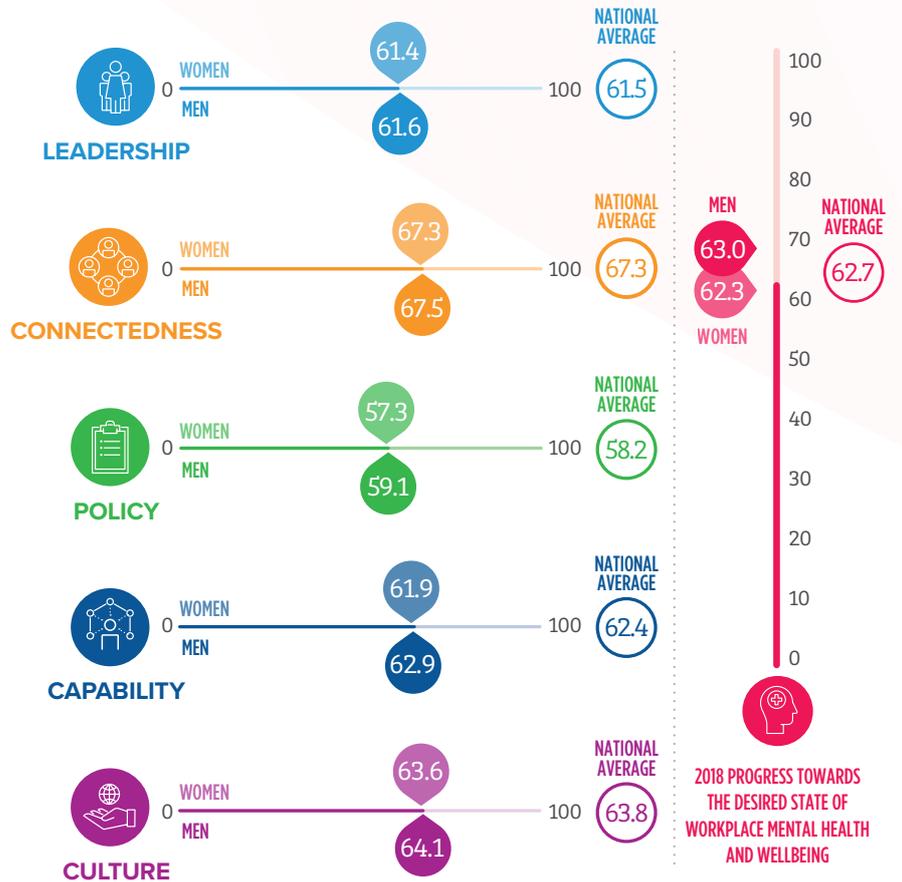
- Foster high quality connections.** Include time within meetings to check in with how people are feeling, stop by to say hello or check in on colleagues and, if possible, maximise opportunities for discussion and minimise forums where everyone looks at their laptops
- Build workplace communities.** Look for opportunities to build team-based projects, and host collaborative meetings that allow for working together on a business challenge or opportunity
- Conduct worker opinion or engagement surveys.** Share key findings and include workers in action planning.



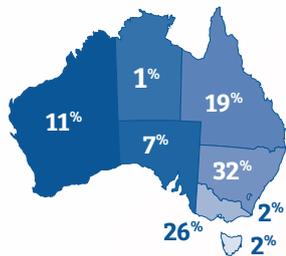
## ARE WE THERE YET?

The 2018 results show that men and women have similar perceptions and experiences of their workplace overall (index scores of 63.0 for men and 62.3 for women). The connectedness domain index score is substantially higher than the other domain scores for both men (67.5) and women (67.3). In terms of gender differences, it appears that men have a better experience than women for policy (+1.8 index points higher than women) and capability (+1.1), whereas the other index scores are fairly similar. Compared to women, men believe significantly more strongly that people have the skills and expertise to support each other's mental health and wellbeing (+1.9pp^ higher than women) and can successfully overcome most of the challenges they face (+1.5pp).

^ pp denotes percentage points.



### PRIMARY PLACE OF WORK



### INDUSTRY



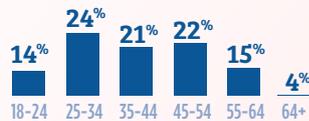
### PARTICIPANTS

5,047

### GENDER



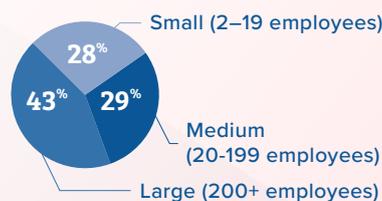
### AGE



### WORK ROLE



### WORK ROLE



## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The aim of the Indicators of a Thriving Workplace survey is to measure the current state against the desired state of a thriving or mentally healthy workplace, by asking people currently employed about their experience in their workplace. The survey was completed online by 5,047 working Australians in July 2018, and asked respondents to rate the extent to which each of the scientifically-validated 40 characteristics of a mentally healthy workplace are present in their own workplace using a 6-point scale: 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' and 'don't know'. The survey also asked questions about people's perceptions, attitudes and experiences in relation to workplace mental health and wellbeing.

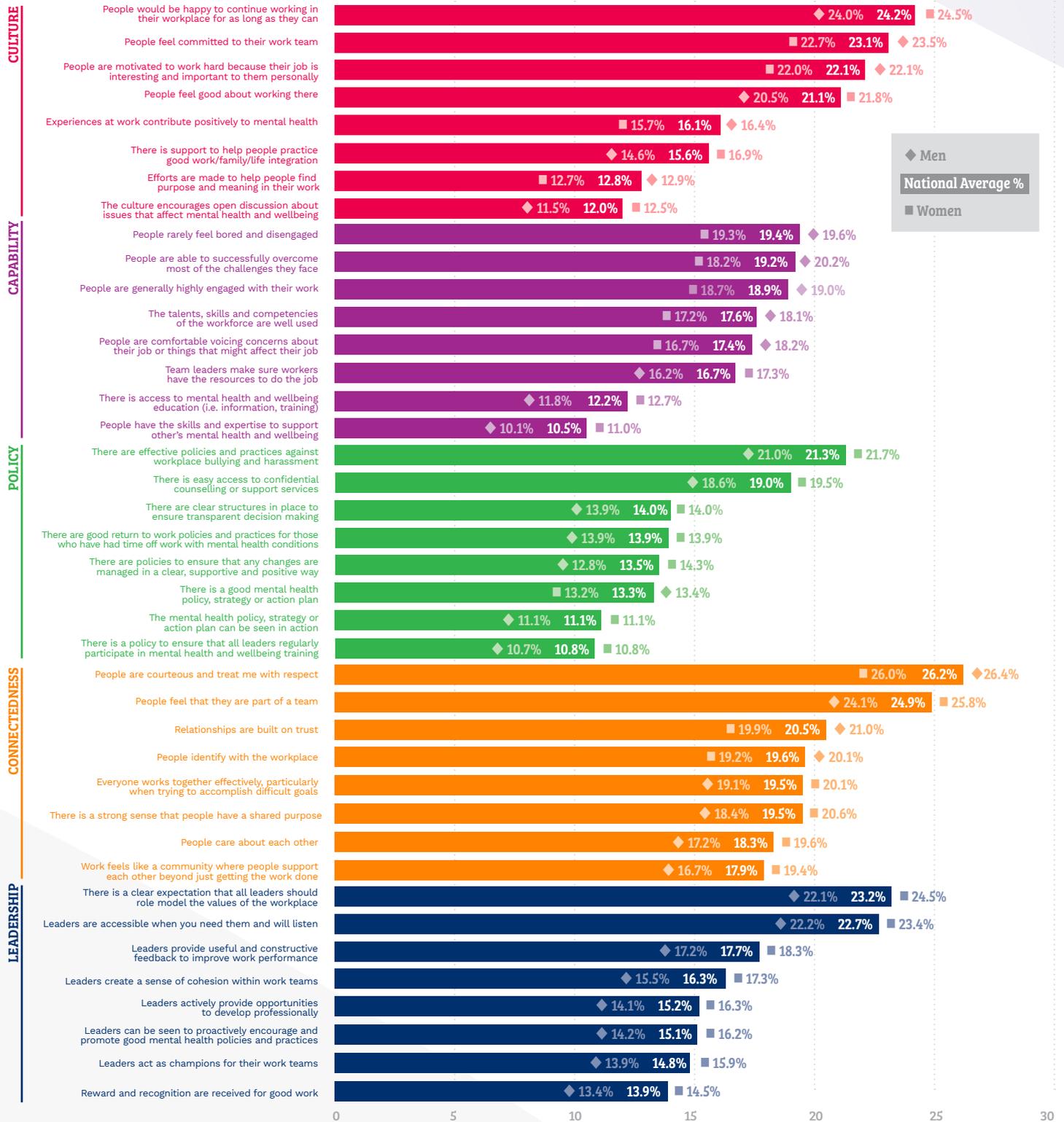
This report is based on responses from 5,032 people who identified as male or female.

DOWNLOAD THE NATIONAL REPORT:

[superfriend.com.au/resources/indicators-of-a-thriving-workplace-2018/](http://superfriend.com.au/resources/indicators-of-a-thriving-workplace-2018/)

# DOES GENDER INFLUENCE WHETHER PEOPLE ARE THRIVING IN WORKPLACES?

The 40 indicators of thriving workplaces are characteristics that optimise employees' mental health and ability to succeed at work. The following chart shows the proportion of respondents who 'strongly agree' with each indicator. The results below highlight that women typically experience better leadership and a stronger sense of connectedness in Australian workplaces than men. The policy and culture indicators are similar for men and women, while men tend to rate the capability indicators more highly than women.



*SuperFriend advocates for, equips and empowers profit-to-member superannuation funds and insurers to achieve mentally healthy workplaces for their staff and members.*

*Can you imagine an Australia where all workplaces are mentally healthy? That's our vision. Pure and simple.*

**You can find more information about workplace mental health and wellbeing solutions, free resources, and sign up to our regular newsletter at [superfriend.com.au](http://superfriend.com.au)**



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