



*“I can’t come in, I’m flat on my back...”*

## **MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDERS IN THE WORKPLACE & THE IMPACT OF BACK PAIN ON THE LIVES OF EMPLOYEES**

**ifop contact :**  
"Politics / Current affairs" Hub  
+33 (0) 6 61 00 37 76 / +33 (0) 1 72 34 94 34  
François Kraus / Gautier Jardon / Adélie Aubin  
[francois.kraus@ifop.com](mailto:francois.kraus@ifop.com) / [gautier.jardon@ifop.com](mailto:gautier.jardon@ifop.com)

An **ifop** study commissioned by **IPK PERCKO**

# METHODOLOGY: CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH THE SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED



An **Ifop** study commissioned by **PERCKO**



## Sample

The survey was conducted on **1,004 people**, a representative sample of the French working population.



## Methodology

The representativity of the sample was ensured by the quota method with regard to :

- **Socio-demographic criteria:** gender and age of the individual
- **Socio-professional criteria:** the individual's socio-professional category, sector of activity and company size
- **Geographical criteria:** region



## Data gathering

The interviews were conducted via an online self-reporting questionnaire between 6 and 8 December 2022.



**IMPORTANT:** If you quote from this study, please comply with the **law of 25 April 2016**, which requires that you quote the name of the polling institute, the name and position of the sponsor, the number of people questioned and the dates on which the interviews were conducted. Ifop reminds that "the fact of publishing or allowing to be published, broadcasting or allowing to be broadcast a survey in violation of the present law and the applicable regulatory texts" is now **punishable by a fine of €75,000**.

*TO QUOTE THIS STUDY YOU MUST USE THE FOLLOWING REFERENCE AS A MINIMUM:*

*"An Ifop study for PERCKO, conducted via an online self-reporting questionnaire between 6 and 8 December 2022 on a sample of 1004 people, representative of the working French population."*





A

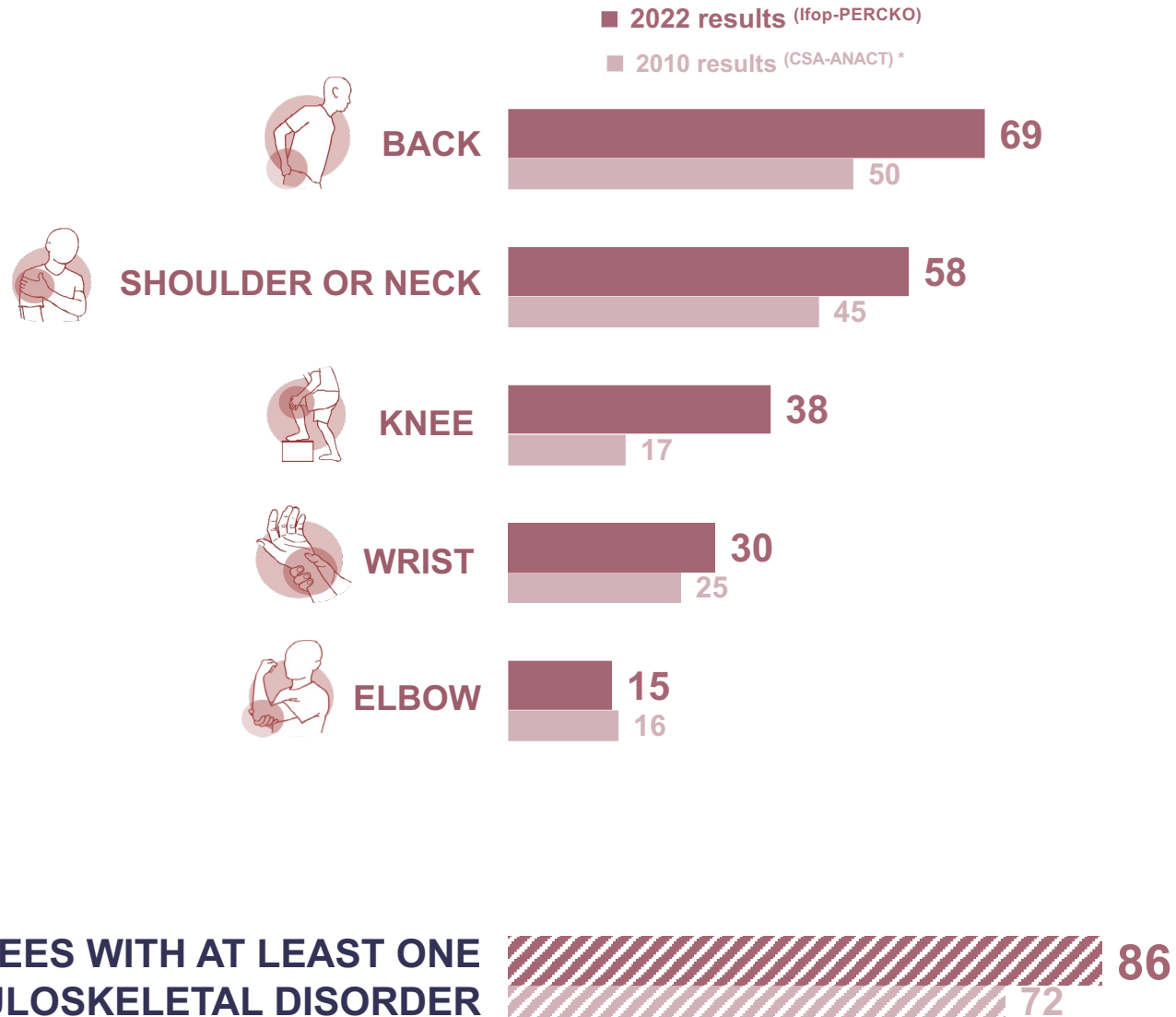
The incidence of back pain and other musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) among employees

# BACK PAIN IS STILL THE MOST COMMON MUSCULOSKELETAL DISORDER AMONG FRENCH EMPLOYEES



Q: Do you ever feel ... pain?

Sample: All employees







# FOCUS French employees suffering from at least one MSD



Worth noting: 90% of women fall into this category

AVERAGE **86**



### Sex



### Age



### Education level



### Employment classification



### Public or private sector



### Net monthly income by consumption unit



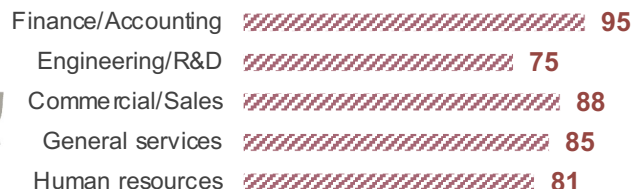
### Region



### Position relative to CEO



### Role



### Sector



### Size of company



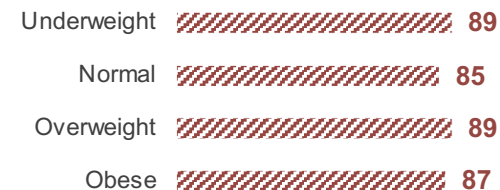
### Work From Home



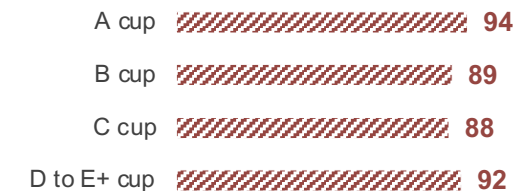
### Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months



### Body Mass Index



### Cup size (women)



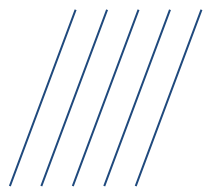
### Height



### Frequency of lifting heavy loads

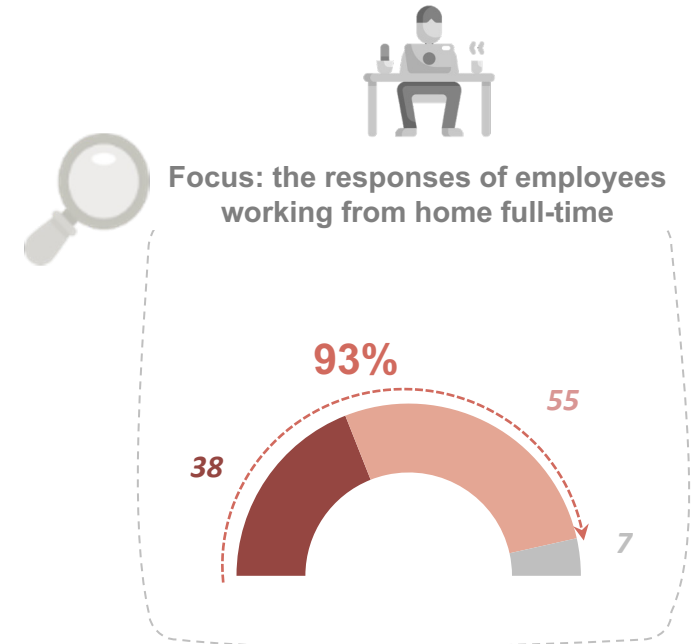
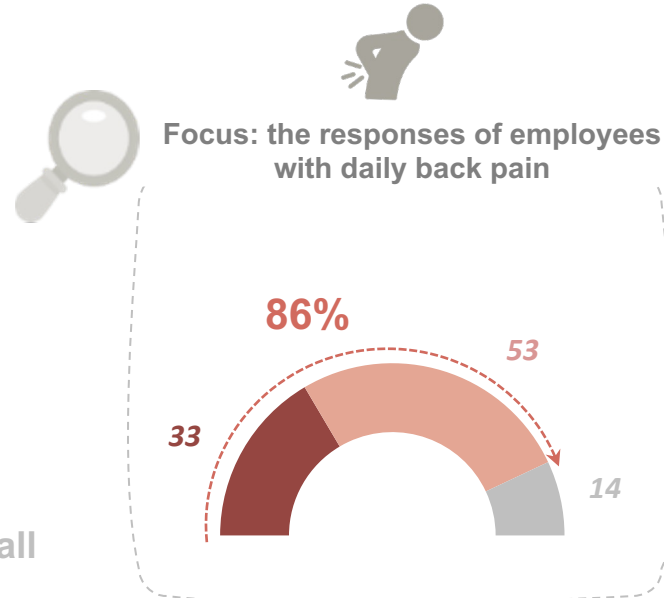
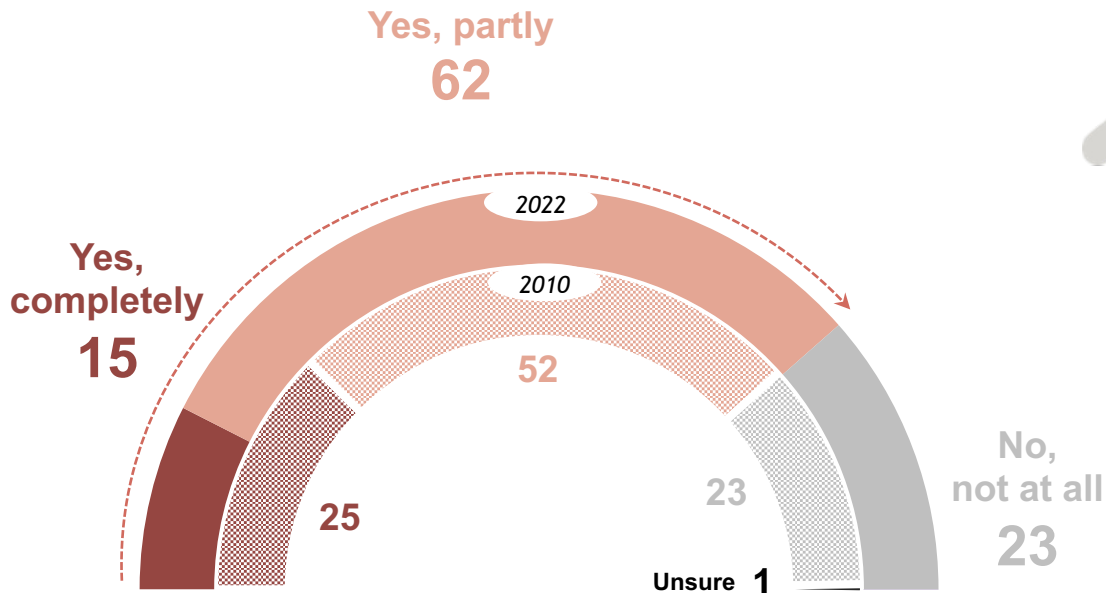


# MSD-RELATED PAIN IS OVERWHELMINGLY ATTRIBUTED TO WORK, ESPECIALLY BY EMPLOYEES WITH BACK PROBLEMS AND THOSE WHO WORK FROM HOME FULL-TIME



Q: In your opinion, is your pain related to your professional activity?

Sample: employees suffering from at least one MSD (86% of the total sample)



**77%** of employees suffering from a musculoskeletal disorder believe that their pain is related to their work

*Stable since 2010 \**

\* CSA study for ANACT, carried out from 29 March to 3 April 2010 by telephone, on a sample of 1,002 people, representative of the population of employed French workers aged 18 and over.





# FOCUS Employees who feel that the pain their MSD causes is related to their work



Worth noting: 91% of labourers believe that the pain their MSD causes is related to their work

AVERAGE **77**

### Sex



Men **77**  
Women **77**

### Age



Under 30 **78**  
30 to 39 **79**  
40 to 49 **75**  
50 to 59 **78**  
60 and over **73**

### Education level



Higher than bachelor's **72**  
Bachelor's **80**  
Below bachelor's **87**

### Employment classification



Senior or executive management **70**  
Middle management **68**  
Employee **79**  
Labourer **91**

### Public or private sector



Private sector **80**  
Public sector **73**

### Net monthly income by consumption unit



Upper class (> 2 465 €) **60**  
Upper middle class (1 862 - 2 466 €) **74**  
Lower middle class (1 317 - 1 863 €) **79**  
Working class (893 - 1 318 €) **84**  
Poor (< 894 €) **75**

### Region



Île de France (Paris) **74**  
Province **78**

### Position relative to CEO



N-1 **72**  
N-2 **75**  
N-3 **79**  
N-4 **70**  
Other **80**

### Role



Finance/Accounting **76**  
Engineering/R&D **73**  
Commercial/Sales **76**  
General services **70**  
Human resources **67**

### Sector



Manufacturing **80**  
Construction **74**  
Sales **83**  
Services (non-administration) **78**  
Administration **72**

### Size of company



Less than 20 employees **75**  
20 to 249 employees **85**  
250 to 499 employees **81**  
500 to 1999 employees **69**  
2000 to 4999 employees **73**  
5000 employees or more **72**

### Work From Home



Full-time **93**  
Part-time **67**  
Not currently, but have done before **77**  
Never **80**

### Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months



Every day **86**  
Every week but not daily **84**  
Rarely **74**  
Never **45**

### Body Mass Index



Underweight **79**  
Normal **75**  
Overweight **79**  
Obese **80**

### Cup size (women)



A cup **78**  
B cup **73**  
C cup **78**  
D to E+ cup **82**

### Height



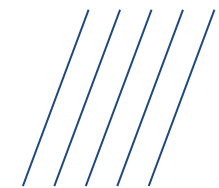
Under 1m60 **85**  
1m60 to 1m79 **75**  
1m80 and over **81**

### Frequency of lifting heavy loads

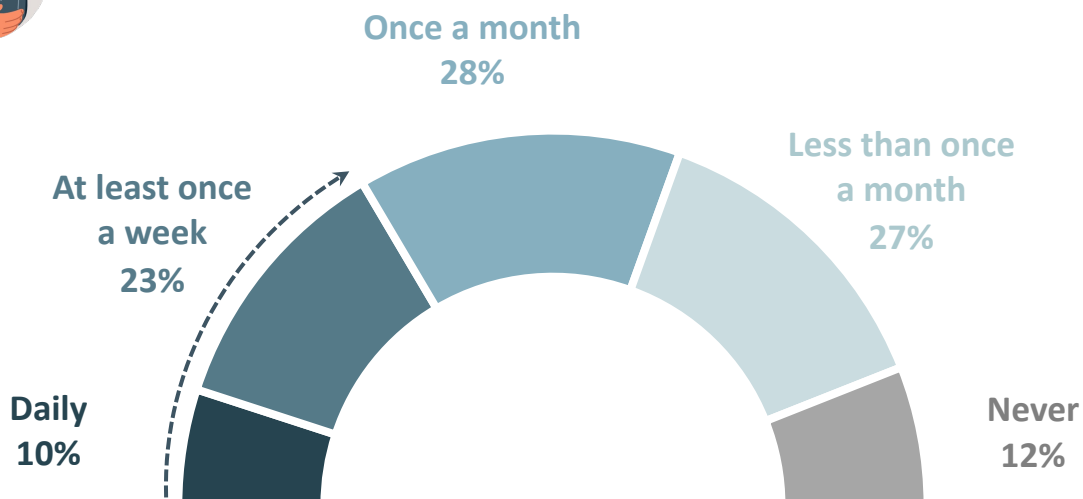


Regularly **89**  
Sometimes **84**  
Never **64**

# ONE THIRD OF THE WORKFORCE IS AFFECTED BY BACK PAIN AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK, ESPECIALLY WOMEN AND THOSE WORKING FROM HOME

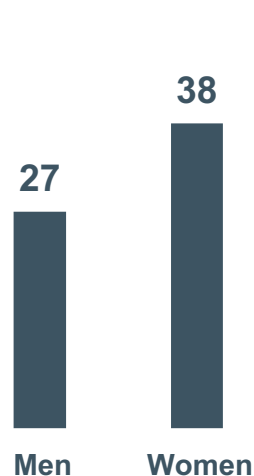


Q: In the past 12 months, how often have you suffered from back pain?

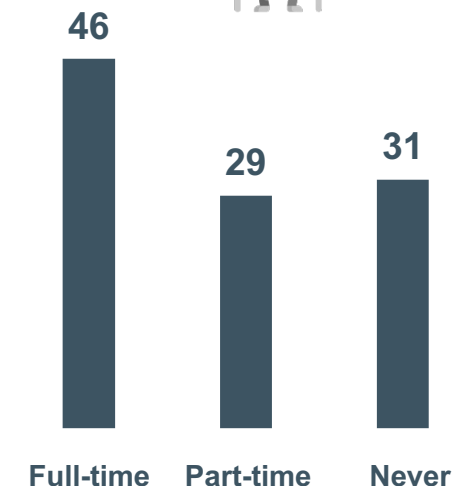


Percentage of employees who suffer from back pain at least once a week...

by sex



by tendency to Work From Home



**33%** of employees suffer from back pain at least once a week





# FOCUS Employees who have experienced back pain AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK over the past 12 months



Worth noting: 38% of women fall into this category

AVERAGE **33**



**Sex**



**Age**



**Education level**



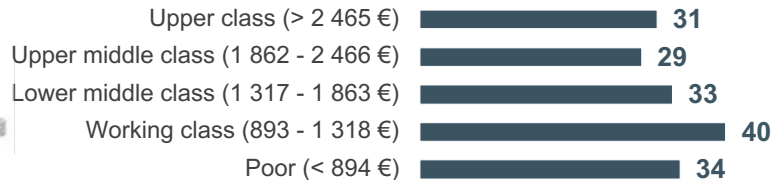
**Employment classification**



**Public or private sector**



**Net monthly income by consumption unit**



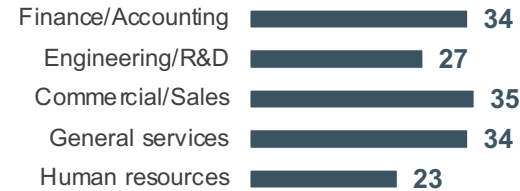
**Region**



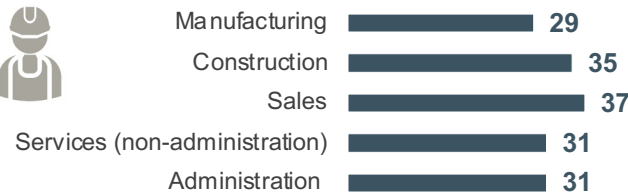
**Position relative to CEO**



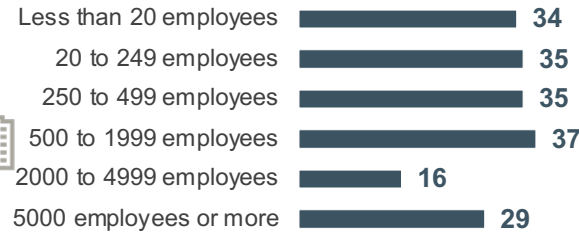
**Role**



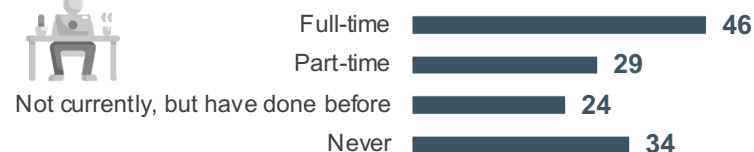
**Sector**



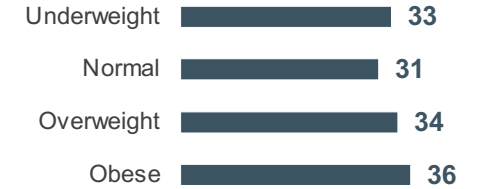
**Size of company**



**Work From Home**



**Body Mass Index**



**Cup size (women)**



**Height**



**Frequency of lifting heavy loads**





B

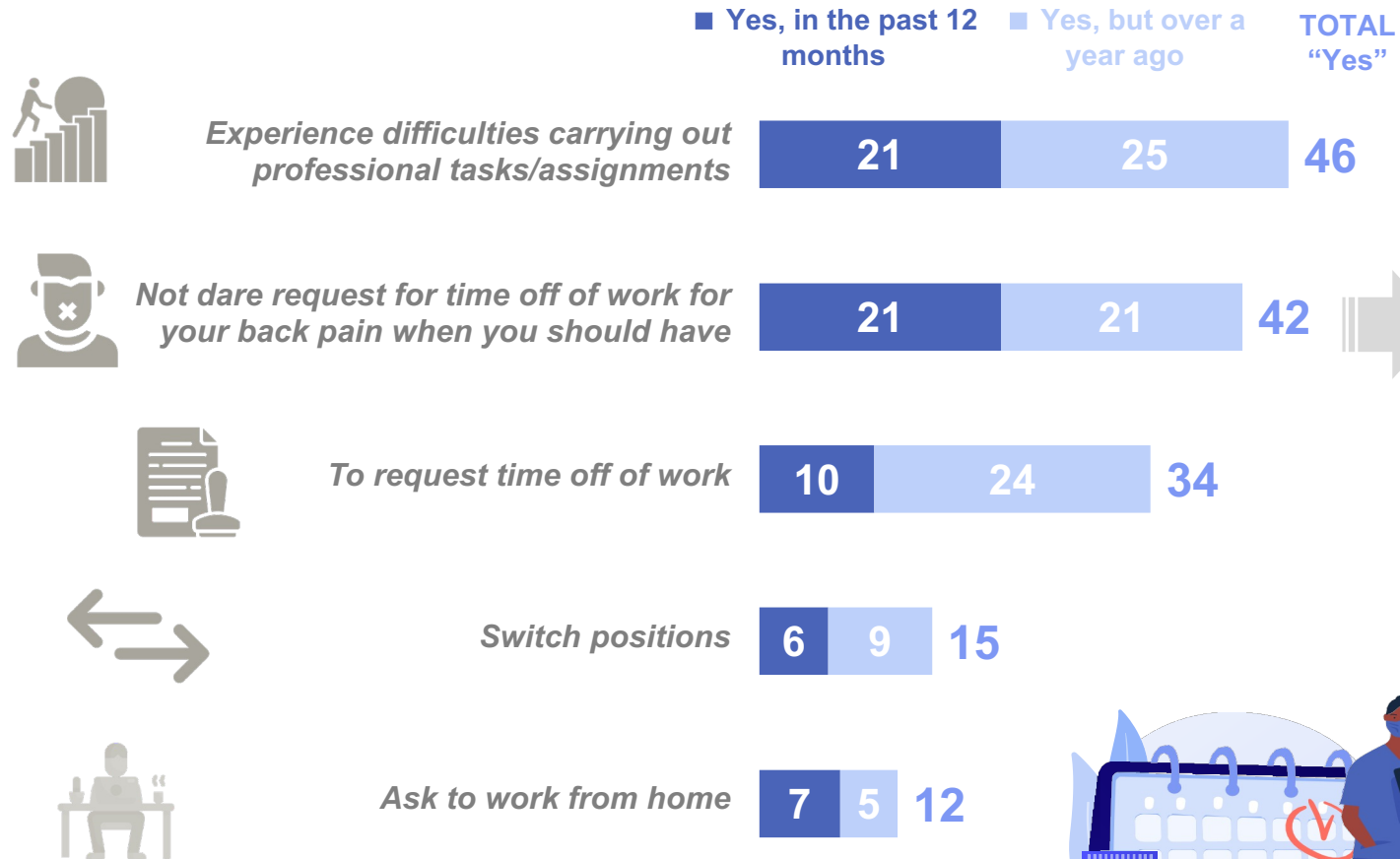
The impact of back pain on the lives of employees



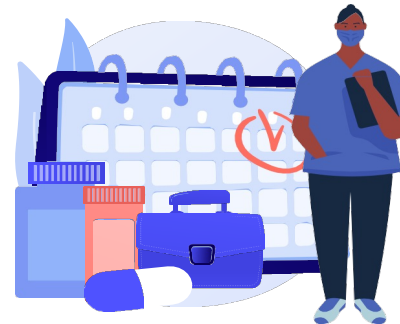
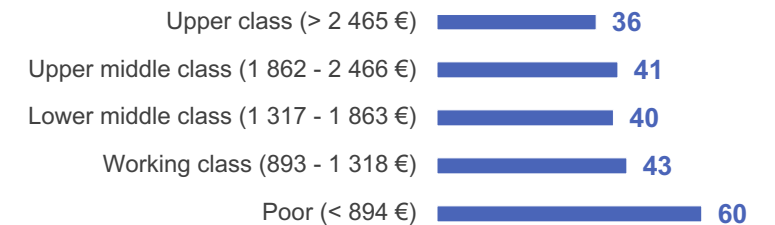
# BACK PAIN AFFECTS THE WORKING LIVES OF EMPLOYEES, ESPECIALLY THE POOREST AND THOSE WORKING FROM HOME

Q: During your career, has your back pain ever caused you to...?

Sample: employees who have suffered from back pain in the past 12 months (88% of the total sample)



Percentage of employees WHO DIDN'T DARE ASK FOR TIME OFF WORK WHEN THEY SHOULD HAVE based on monthly income per unit of consumption





# FOCUS Employees who didn't dare ask for time off work when they should have



Worth noting: 60% of poor workers who have experienced back pain are in this situation

AVERAGE **42**



**Sex**  
Men **43**  
Women **41**



**Age**  
Under 30 **38**  
30 to 39 **37**  
40 to 49 **42**  
50 to 59 **50**  
60 and over **44**



**Education level**  
Higher than bachelor's **39**  
Bachelor's **42**  
Below bachelor's **50**



**Employment classification**  
Senior or executive management **36**  
Middle management **39**  
Employee **45**  
Labourer **46**



**Public or private sector**  
Private sector **42**  
Public sector **41**

## Net monthly income by consumption unit

Upper class (> 2 465 €) **36**  
Upper middle class (1 862 - 2 466 €) **41**  
Lower middle class (1 317 - 1 863 €) **40**  
Working class (893 - 1 318 €) **43**  
Poor (< 894 €) **60**



**Region**  
Île de France (Paris) **42**  
Province **42**

## Position relative to CEO



N-1 **44**  
N-2 **44**  
N-3 **46**  
N-4 **34**  
Other **41**



**Role**  
Finance/Accounting **51**  
Engineering/R&D **37**  
Commercial/Sales **42**  
General services **43**  
Human resources **39**



**Sector**  
Manufacturing **40**  
Construction **38**  
Sales **45**  
Services (non-administration) **43**  
Administration **39**



**Size of company**  
Less than 20 employees **36**  
20 to 249 employees **48**  
250 to 499 employees **53**  
500 to 1999 employees **40**  
2000 to 4999 employees **32**  
5000 employees or more **38**



**Work From Home**  
Full-time **67**  
Part-time **38**  
Not currently, but have done before **36**  
Never **42**

## Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months



Every day **62**  
Every week but not daily **53**  
Rarely **32**

## Body Mass Index



Underweight **36**  
Normal **42**  
Overweight **40**  
Obese **49**

## Cup size (women)



A cup **47**  
B cup **37**  
C cup **44**  
D to E+ cup **41**

## Height



Under 1m60 **53**  
1m60 to 1m79 **40**  
1m80 and over **44**

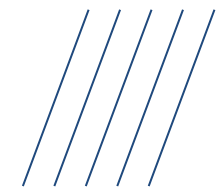
## Frequency of lifting heavy loads



Regularly **61**  
Sometimes **48**  
Never **27**



# BACK PAIN IS A FACTOR IN THE DETERIORATION OF THE PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH OF A LARGE PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES



**Q: Has your back pain ever caused a deterioration of...?**

*Sample: employees who have suffered back pain in the last 12 months (88% of the total sample)*

■ Yes, significantly    ■ Yes, but not significantly    TOTAL "Yes"



**Your overall physical health**



**Your morale, your level of psychological well-being**



**Your social life**  
*(attending parties, picnics, moving, Housework,...)*



**Your sex life**



## Percentage of employees WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A DECLINE IN MORALE DUE TO BACK PAIN

based on employment classification



## Percentage of employees WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED A DETERIORATION OF THEIR SEX LIFE DUE TO BACK PAIN

based on sex





# FOCUS Employees who have experienced a deterioration of their sex life due to back pain



Worth noting: 36% of male employees who have experienced back pain fall into this category

AVERAGE **33**



**Sex**  
Men **36**  
Women **29**



**Age**  
Under 30 **28**  
30 to 39 **29**  
40 to 49 **41**  
50 to 59 **29**  
60 and over **33**



**Education level**  
Higher than bachelor's **31**  
Bachelor's **30**  
Below bachelor's **39**



**Employment classification**  
Senior or executive management **28**  
Middle management **29**  
Employee **35**  
Labourer **36**



**Public or private sector**  
Private sector **32**  
Public sector **32**

**Net monthly income by consumption unit**

Upper class (> 2 465 €) **35**  
Upper middle class (1 862 - 2 466 €) **32**  
Lower middle class (1 317 - 1 863 €) **29**  
Working class (893 - 1 318 €) **34**  
Poor (< 894 €) **43**



**Region**  
Île de France (Paris) **35**  
Province **31**

**Position relative to CEO**



N-1 **35**  
N-2 **43**  
N-3 **38**  
N-4 **25**  
Other **28**



**Role**  
Finance/Accounting **32**  
Engineering/R&D **28**  
Commercial/Sales **26**  
General services **37**  
Human resources **41**



**Sector**  
Manufacturing **30**  
Construction **30**  
Sales **35**  
Services (non-administration) **30**  
Administration **32**



**Size of company**  
Less than 20 employees **26**  
20 to 249 employees **36**  
250 to 499 employees **44**  
500 to 1999 employees **35**  
2000 to 4999 employees **32**  
5000 employees or more **26**



**Work From Home**  
Full-time **59**  
Part-time **38**  
Not currently, but have done before **21**  
Never **30**

**Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months**



Every day **47**  
Once a week but not daily **38**  
Rarely **27**

**Body Mass Index**



Underweight **31**  
Normal **32**  
Overweight **35**  
Obese **28**

**Cup size (women)**



A cup **18**  
B cup **32**  
C cup **27**  
D to E+ cup **31**

**Height**



Under 1m60 **27**  
1m60 to 1m79 **31**  
1m80 and over **38**

**Frequency of lifting heavy loads**

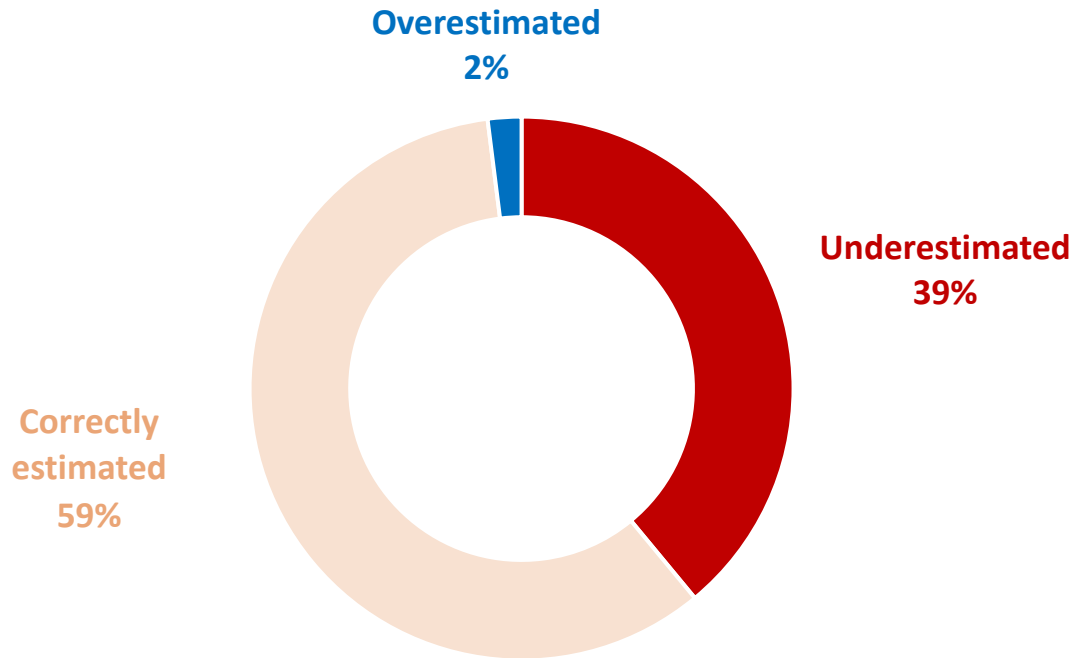


Regularly **49**  
Sometimes **35**  
Never **22**

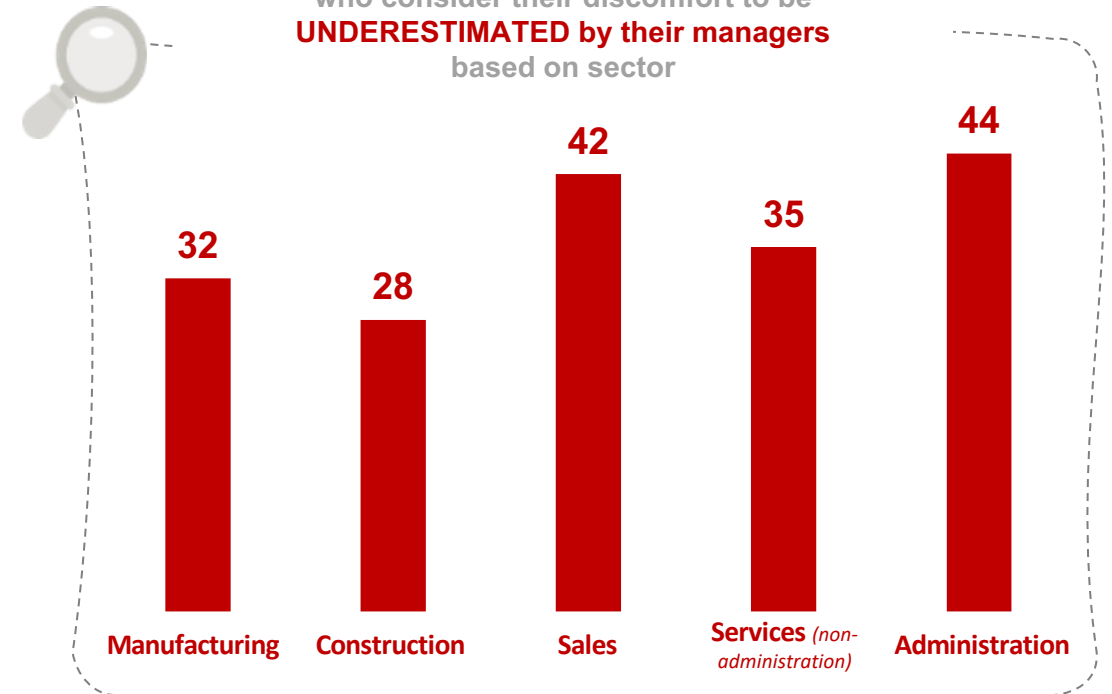
# FOUR OUT OF TEN EMPLOYEES SAY BACK PAIN IS UNDERESTIMATED BY MANAGERS

Q: In general, do you feel that the discomfort caused by your back pain is underestimated, correctly estimated or overestimated by your managers?

Sample: employees who have suffered back pain in the past 12 months (88% of the total sample)



Percentage of employees suffering from back pain who consider their discomfort to be **UNDERESTIMATED** by their managers based on sector



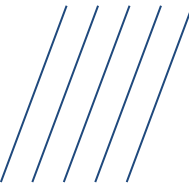




C

Employees' position on the purchase of equipment to improve their working environment

# A MAJORITY OF THOSE WORKING FROM HOME FEEL THAT THEIR EMPLOYERS' CONTRIBUTION TO THE PURCHASE OF ERGONOMIC EQUIPMENT IS INSUFFICIENT

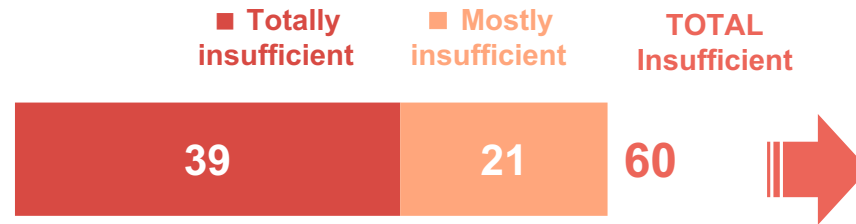


Q: How do you rate your employer's contribution for the purchase of ergonomic equipment to improve the quality of your working environment...?



**At home**

Sample: employees working from home

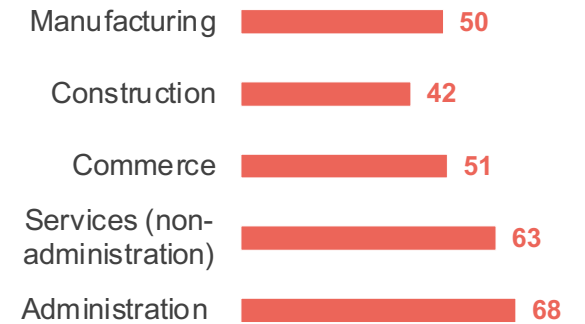


**In the workplace**

Sample: all employees



Percentage of employees working from home who consider that their employers' contribution for the purchase of ergonomic equipment is **INSUFFICIENT** based on sector







# Employees who consider their employers' contribution to the purchase of ergonomic equipment in their workplace to be "insufficient"



Worth noting: 55% of employees in the administration sector fall into this category

AVERAGE **47**

### Sex



Men **46**

Women **48**

### Age



Under 30 **37**

30 to 39 **44**

40 to 49 **53**

50 to 59 **55**

60 and over **29**

### Education level



Higher than bachelor's **47**

Bachelor's **48**

Below bachelor's **47**

### Employment classification



Senior or executive management **42**

Middle management **51**

Employee **50**

Labourer **44**

### Public or private sector



Private sector **46**

Public sector **50**

### Net monthly income by consumption unit

Upper class (> 2 465 €) **34**

Upper middle class (1 862 - 2 466 €) **46**

Lower middle class (1 317 - 1 863 €) **52**

Working class (893 - 1 318 €) **49**

Poor (< 894 €) **44**

### Region



Île de France (Paris) **45**

Province **48**

### Position relative to CEO



N-1 **39**

N-2 **32**

N-3 **43**

N-4 **48**

Other **54**

### Role

Finance/Accounting **32**

Engineering/R&D **41**

Commercial/Sales **45**

General services **48**

Human resources **43**



### Sector



Manufacturing **36**

Construction **35**

Sales **51**

Services (non-administration) **43**

Administration **55**

### Size of company



Less than 20 employees **41**

20 to 249 employees **52**

250 to 499 employees **39**

500 to 1999 employees **44**

2000 to 4999 employees **56**

5000 employees or more **48**

### Work From Home



Full-time **32**

Part-time **37**

Not currently, but have done before **47**

Never **54**

### Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months



Every day **46**

Every week but not daily **55**

Rarely **44**

Never **33**

### Body Mass Index



Underweight **39**

Normal **47**

Overweight **45**

Obese **53**

### Cup size (women)



A cup **49**

B cup **38**

C cup **55**

D to E+ cup **53**

### Height



Under 1m60 **55**

1m60 to 1m79 **47**

1m80 and over **47**

### Frequency of lifting heavy loads



Regularly **57**

Sometimes **47**

Never **43**

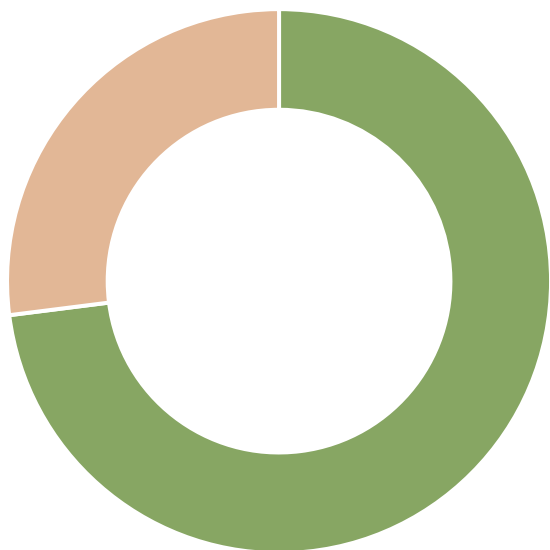


# THREE QUARTERS OF EMPLOYEES WANT EMPLOYERS TO FUND CHAIRS FOR THOSE WORKING FROM HOME, ESPECIALLY THOSE WORKING FROM HOME PART-TIME

Q: In your opinion, should employers finance the purchase of a quality office chair for each of their employees working from home?



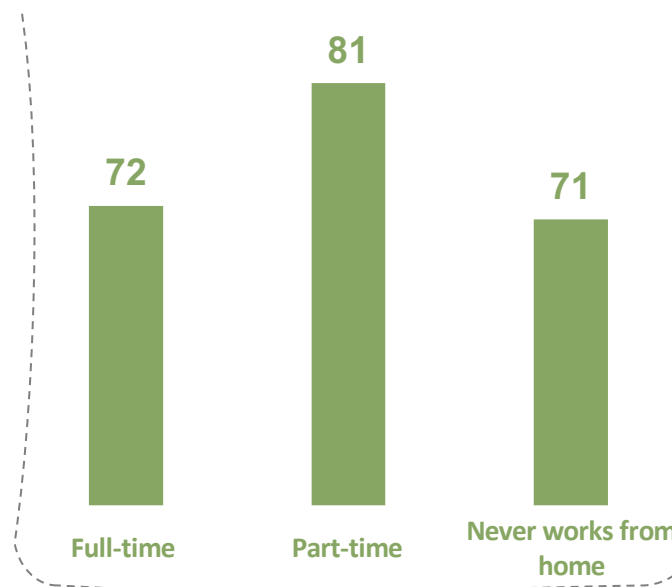
No  
27%



Yes  
73%

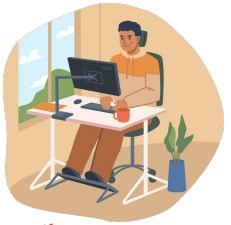


Percentage of employees who think employers **SHOULD** finance the purchase of quality office chairs for each of their employees working from home based on their WFH habits





# Employees who believe that employers should finance the purchase of a quality office chair for each of their employees working from home



Worth noting: 79% of senior or executive managers fall into this category

AVERAGE **73**



**Sex**  
Men 71  
Women 75



**Age**  
Under 30 70  
30 to 39 73  
40 to 49 74  
50 to 59 73  
60 and over 85



**Education level**  
Higher than bachelor's 77  
Bachelor's 70  
Below bachelor's 68



**Employment classification**  
Senior or executive management **79**  
Middle management 76  
Employee 73  
Labourer 66



**Public or private sector**  
Private sector 73  
Public sector 73

**Net monthly income by consumption unit**



Upper class (> 2 465 €) 80  
Upper middle class (1 862 - 2 466 €) 71  
Lower middle class (1 317 - 1 863 €) 70  
Working class (893 - 1 318 €) 74  
Poor (< 894 €) 73



**Region**  
Île de France (Paris) 75  
Province 73

**Position relative to CEO**



N-1 78  
N-2 72  
N-3 76  
N-4 70  
Other 73



**Role**  
Finance/Accounting 77  
Engineering/R&D 75  
Commercial/Sales 67  
General services 69  
Human resources 76



**Sector**  
Manufacturing 74  
Construction 57  
Commerce 67  
Services (non-administration) 79  
Administration 77



**Size of company**  
Less than 20 employees 71  
20 to 249 employees 75  
250 to 499 employees 69  
500 to 1999 employees 77  
2000 to 4999 employees 66  
5000 employees or more 78



**Work From Home**  
Full-time 72  
Part-time 81  
Not currently, but have done before 75  
Never 70

**Frequency of back pain in the past 12 months**



Every day 78  
Every week but not daily 78  
Rarely 76  
Never 50

**Body Mass Index**



Underweight 87  
Normal 73  
Overweight 74  
Obese 68

**Cup size (women)**



A cup 71  
B cup 73  
C cup 78  
D to E+ cup 75

**Height**



Under 1m60 75  
1m60 to 1m79 73  
1m80 and over 73

**Frequency of lifting heavy loads**



Regularly 80  
Sometimes 73  
Never 71