



**THE
GLOBAL
CITY**

nudge

Workplace Financial Wellbeing: from intent to impact



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1. Executive summary

Workforce financial wellbeing has a pivotal role in delivering the UK's economic growth, productivity and global competitiveness ambitions.

Across the UK workforce, living costs, low financial capability, and growing pressure on finances mean that, although fair pay is essential, many need financial support beyond salary alone. Businesses are uniquely placed to deliver this support due to their connection with their employees' finances regarding pay and pensions, and the trust built as a result. While more than half of employers see financial wellbeing as a major business priority,¹ many organisations struggle to translate their intentions into meaningful outcomes. This has led to the emergence of an 'intent versus impact' gap, visible across design, engagement, measurement and delivery of financial wellbeing programmes.

Improving financial wellbeing across the nation is essential for delivering the UK's broader growth agenda. Initiatives such as the City of London Corporation's Mansion House Accord illustrate how workplace pensions can mobilise investment in UK businesses, infrastructure, and high-growth sectors. Achieving this growth depends on employees engaging with their pensions, saving adequately, and making informed long-term financial decisions.

Without stronger financial capability and workplace support, the UK risks undermining its productivity, innovation, and long-term economic potential.

¹ City of London Corporation and nudge employer censuswide data

The benefits of effective financial wellbeing support extend beyond employee flourishing. They can strengthen workforce engagement, improve retention, and facilitate greater participation in saving and investing. Conversely, organisations that neglect financial stress risk employee disengagement, poorer performance, and workforce instability.

This, in turn, risks weakening economic resilience, dampening productivity, and eroding household financial security across the UK.



The future of financial wellbeing will be defined by experiences that are personalised, connected, and embedded into everyday working life. This report and Framework reflect the collective insight of employers, industry leaders and practitioners working to move financial wellbeing from isolated initiatives towards more effective, measurable, and human-centred support.

Employers now have a real opportunity to build financially resilient workforces by helping people better understand their finances and change their lives because of it.

TIM PERKINS, NUDGE CEO AND CO-FOUNDER



Millions of people across the UK are understandably struggling with their finances.

Despite the challenging economic environment, many were never taught how to build resilience to manage shocks, nor how to plan for the future.

Without urgent action to improve financial literacy and support in the workplace, too many people will continue to face unnecessary financial stress and uncertainty.

CHRIS HAYWARD, POLICY CHAIRMAN OF THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION

Headline findings

1

Priority is not yet translating into delivery

More than half of UK firms now see financial wellbeing as a major business priority, but half of employers still offer incomplete or fragmented support programmes.

Meaning: Employers need clearer guidance on effective programme design, integration, and implementation.

2

Confidence does not equal financial resilience

94% of employers believe employees are confident managing retirement savings.² However, only 27% of UK employees say that they are happy with their retirement contributions and investments, while 44% of the workforce either do not know whether they are contributing enough or do not understand how their retirement savings work.³

Meaning: Businesses may be overestimating workforce financial confidence, highlighting the need for clearer, more personalised retirement support is needed in order to boost pensions confidence.

Bridging the workforce financial wellbeing 'intention-impact' gap is critical for unlocking the UK's economic growth.

² City of London Corporation and nudge employer censuswide data

³ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

⁴ City of London Corporation and nudge employer censuswide data

⁵ City of London Corporation and nudge employer censuswide data

3

Financial stress is affecting the “squeezed middle”

Financial pressure is no longer limited to lower-income households. More than a quarter (29%) of employees earning £95,001 or more report experiencing stress linked to their financial situation, alongside 18% reporting anxiety and 17% reporting sleep problems.

Meaning: Financial wellbeing strategies should reflect the growing financial pressures across all salary segments.

4

Personalised support delivers stronger outcomes

Businesses offering personalised, life-stage specific (e.g. maternity leave or approaching retirement age) financial wellbeing support are up to 47%⁴ more likely to report measurable ROI than those relying primarily on broader financial benefits alone.

Meaning: More tailored, behaviourally informed, and life-stage relevant support is more effective for driving engagement and measurable workforce outcomes.

5

Measurement remains underdeveloped

More than half (56%) of businesses report measurable impact from financial wellbeing initiatives, but only around 3 in 10 consistently measure business ROI such as retention, productivity, or employee satisfaction.⁵

Meaning: Many organisations still lack mature measurement frameworks, limiting their ability to evidence impact, secure investment, and scale programmes effectively.

6

Trust in employers is high but underutilised:

UK employees place high levels of trust in their employers, 75% trust their employer to do what is right, according to Edelman,⁶ creating an opportunity for employers to play a greater role in supporting financial wellbeing.

Meaning: Employers must cultivate this trust and connection to employees through payroll and pensions by providing transparent communication and fostering open discussions about financial wellbeing.

7

UK financial literacy lag:

UK financial literacy levels continue to trail behind other countries. 72% of UK employees rated their financial literacy as “good” or “excellent”, compared with 85% in South Africa and 84% in India, highlighting concerns about a national knowledge gap.



Meaning: The UK’s financial capability lag is not just an individual knowledge issue, it has profound implications for labour market performance, economic participation, and the UK’s global competitiveness.

A practical tool, the **Workplace Financial Wellbeing Impact Framework**, accompanies this report and **helps businesses translate insight into action**. The report sets out the key findings, challenges, and evidence on workplace financial wellbeing, while the Framework gives employers **practical recommendations, implementation considerations, and case studies to strengthen programme design, delivery, and measurement**.

Together, they help businesses realise the benefit of strong employee financial literacy and bridge the UK’s financial wellbeing gap.

In summary, the critical challenge today is no longer in persuading employers that financial wellbeing matters. The mission now is in turning employer intent into real impact on financial wellbeing across the UK workforce with tangible business benefit. Addressing this gap is imperative for the nation’s growth and competitiveness.

Recommendations

|  For employers |  For government and regulators |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration: Shift from fragmented benefits to integrated, strategic support • Prioritisation: Prioritise personalised, life-stage financial wellbeing support • Outcomes: Focus on measurable outcomes, not just participation • Strategy: Embed financial wellbeing into workforce strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification: Clarify guidance vs. regulated advice boundaries • Expansion: Expand trusted financial education support • Coordination: Improve coordination across policy and regulation • Support: Support consistent employer standards |

⁶ Edelman 2024 Trust Barometer - Trust at Work report

Commissioned by the City of London Corporation and delivered in partnership with nudge, this report provides guidance to UK businesses in strengthening the design, delivery, and impact of workplace financial wellbeing programmes.

It combines business insights from qualitative research – including two roundtables and eight stakeholder interviews with industry experts and employers representing a collective headcount of over 104,300 – with a survey of 1,000 senior HR, reward, or benefit decision-makers in UK-operating multinational employers, delivered by Censuswide.⁷ The report also draws on findings from nudge’s 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research covering 11,500 employees across 17 countries, with 2,102 UK employed consumers.⁸



Key definitions

- ▶ **Financial wellbeing** refers to an individual’s overall financial health, including their ability to manage day-to-day finances, absorb financial shocks, feel financially secure, and make progress towards future goals.
- ▶ **Financial literacy** refers to knowledge and understanding of financial concepts, products, and risks.
- ▶ **Financial capability** refers to an individual’s ability and confidence to apply financial knowledge in real-world financial decisions and behaviours.
- ▶ **Financial resilience** refers to the ability to withstand and recover from financial shocks or periods of financial stress, including through savings, planning, and financial flexibility.
- ▶ **ROI** refers to measurable workforce and business outcomes attributable to financial wellbeing investment, including but not limited to improvements in employee retention, productivity, absenteeism reduction, and benefits utilisation.

⁷ City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report – see section 5.6 for methodology.

⁸ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing report

Framework summary

The Framework identifies ten core components of effective workplace financial wellbeing programmes.

Foundations:

Early-stage actions focused on establishing ownership, purpose, and core support infrastructure.

1. Clarify the role of businesses.
2. Build strong financial foundations before adding interventions.
3. Embed financial wellbeing as a strategic business priority.

Developing approaches:

Actions focused on improving relevance, engagement, and accessibility for employees.

1. Design for workforce reality, not 'one-size-fits-all' approaches.
2. Match support to level of employee need.
3. Use behavioural design to drive employee engagement.
4. Build trust through proactive, supportive language and psychological safety.

Advanced and embedded approaches:

Actions focused on long-term integration, measurement, and wider organisational impact.

1. Integrate financial wellbeing into existing systems, rather than as a standalone offer.
2. Measure impact that matters and use metrics to drive programme design.
3. Enable collaboration with other departments and teams to support wider organisational change

2. Introduction: Financial wellbeing in the UK

Key message



Financial wellbeing is a social, economic, and workforce issue in the UK. Low levels of savings, pension preparedness, and investments are increasing pressure on businesses to bear the economic cost of supporting their employees' resilience and long-term financial security.



Key findings

► Low financial resilience

1 in 4 UK adults have low financial resilience.⁹

► Lack of confidence in financial decisions

Almost half of workers (48%) are not confident making decisions about financial products and services.¹⁰

► Financial capability deficit

UK financial capability continues to lag behind several comparable economies, with only 72% of UK respondents rating their financial literacy as “good” or “excellent” and 13% saying improving their knowledge is not a priority.

► Widespread financial stress

Financial stress and low financial confidence affect UK adults across income levels, including higher earners.¹¹

► Insufficient savings

1 in 4 UK adults have no cash savings, while a further 21% have less than £1,000 available in an emergency fund.¹²

⁹ Financial lives survey 2024 key findings

¹⁰ MAPS Moneyview

¹¹ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

¹² 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

Financial wellbeing underpins household resilience, financial security, and long-term economic participation across the UK. Rising living costs, low financial capability, and growing pressure on finances mean employees expect support that goes beyond salary alone, with 58% of employees saying that having diverse benefits helps build a stronger employee-employer commitment.¹³ At the same time, employers are recognising that financial stress has a direct impact on engagement, absenteeism, and long-term workforce performance.

Strengthening financial wellbeing can also support wider UK growth ambitions by improving productivity, increasing household resilience, and encouraging greater participation in long-term saving and investment.

Research from the Financial Conduct Authority found that nearly 1 in 4 UK adults have low financial resilience, while almost half (48%) are not confident making decisions about financial products and services.

nudge's 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research found that, while a majority of UK employees consider themselves financially literate, the UK does not perform as strongly as other countries. 72% rate their financial literacy as "good" or "excellent", compared with 84% in India and 85% in South Africa. The research also found that 13% of UK employees do not see improving their financial knowledge as a priority, compared with just 2% in India and South Africa.

While financial stress is most acute among lower-income households, many middle-income households are increasingly squeezed by rising housing and living costs, growing debt, and limited savings. This reflects wider OECD¹⁴ findings that the cost of a middle-class lifestyle has risen faster than incomes, leaving many households financially vulnerable.

These financial pressures extends into higher-income groups, with more than a quarter (29%) of employees earning £95,001 or more reporting stress linked to their financial situation, alongside 18% reporting anxiety and 17% reporting sleep problems.

These findings suggest that effective financial wellbeing strategies must go beyond pay alone. While fair and competitive compensation remains fundamental, businesses should also focus on strengthening financial capability, confidence, and resilience through education, guidance, and support.

This is particularly important given that financial stress is evident across all income levels and is often driven by factors such as debt, financial complexity, and inadequate emergency savings, rather than income alone.

¹³ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data

¹⁴ OECD Under Pressure: The Squeezed Middle Class

This suggests that financial wellbeing is influenced as much by an individual's ability to manage financial demands and navigate financial decisions as by their level of earnings, highlighting the limitations of income as a standalone measure of financial resilience.

The FCA Financial Lives 2024 data similarly found that one in four UK adults have low financial resilience, while one in ten have no cash savings, and a further 21% have less than £1,000 available in an emergency fund.

This report examines:

- Why financial wellbeing matters for businesses and the wider economy
- Where current programmes are succeeding and failing
- What barriers are limiting the impact of financial wellbeing initiatives
- How businesses, regulators, and government can accelerate progress.

A central finding runs throughout the research: businesses say financial wellbeing is a strategic priority, but many programmes still fail to improve employee financial wellbeing outcomes.

The research shows that this "intent-to-impact" gap is evident across programme design, engagement, measurement, and delivery.

So what?

Financial wellbeing has evolved from a discretionary employee benefit into a broader social, workforce, and business planning issue. However, while employer awareness and investment are increasing, many organisations are still at an early stage of translating their intent into measurable employee and business impact, hindering business growth.



3. Why financial wellbeing matters for businesses

Key message



Financial stress affects employee engagement, productivity, and retention, strengthening the business case for businesses investment in financial wellbeing.



Key findings

► Financial instability and mental health

Financial instability is a key predictor of poor mental health, which costs UK firms an estimated £51 billion annually through absenteeism, presenteeism, and turnover.¹⁵

► Employee vulnerability

Nearly half (47%) of the workforce are not saving enough to meet their financial goals, 24% have no emergency savings, and 13% feel overwhelmed by debt.¹⁶

► Negative impact of low financial literacy

Employees with low financial literacy are less likely to have emergency savings. 75% report having no emergency fund - compared with just 16% of those with strong financial literacy - one-third (33%) report having no retirement fund at all (vs. 7%), and overspend their income each month (49% vs. 12%).¹⁷

► Effects of financial support

Employees receiving financial wellbeing support are less likely to report stress (32% vs. 41%) and anxiety (27% vs. 38%) at work.¹⁸

¹⁵ Deloitte reports poor mental health costs UK employers 51 billion a year

¹⁶ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

¹⁷ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

¹⁸ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

Financial wellbeing is a workforce issue with implications for organisational resilience and performance. Financial stress can affect concentration, confidence, and decision-making, reducing employees' ability to perform at their best. As businesses face ongoing challenges around productivity, retention, and workforce engagement, financial wellbeing must be viewed as a fundamental component of broader people and performance strategies.

Poor mental health costs UK businesses an estimated £51 billion annually through absenteeism, presenteeism, and employee turnover. While financial stress is not the sole cause, it is a significant contributor to those costs.

A lack of savings and long-term financial preparedness remains widespread across the workforce. nudge's 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research found that 47% of employees do not feel they are saving enough to achieve their financial goals, while 24% have no emergency savings and 13% feel overwhelmed by debt.

Financial literacy appears to be a significant contributing factor: employees with lower financial literacy are substantially less likely to have emergency savings, with 75% reporting no emergency fund compared with just 16% of those with strong financial literacy. One-third (33%) report having no retirement fund at all (vs. 7%), and nearly half (49%) overspend their income each month compared with 12% of employees with strong financial literacy.

For businesses, the ramifications of financial vulnerability are direct and significant.

The Money and Mental Health Policy Institute found that 86% of UK adults with mental health issues said their financial situation had made their mental health worse, underscoring the close relationship between financial pressure, wellbeing, and day-to-day functioning.

Furthermore, nudge's 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research found that employees receiving financial wellbeing support were less likely to report stress (32% vs. 41%) and anxiety (27% vs. 38%), highlighting the role of financial wellbeing support in strengthening workforce resilience and engagement.

At the same time, many firms find themselves at an early stage in evaluating the impact of their financial wellbeing programmes. Fewer than half of these businesses measure productivity or employee engagement outcomes associated with their financial wellbeing initiatives, and nearly two-thirds do not track retention impacts. Additionally, many do not assess changes in absenteeism or presenteeism attributed to their financial support programmes.

This suggests that, while the business case for financial wellbeing is becoming clearer, many organisations still struggle to demonstrate its full workforce impact. Without stronger evidence of ROI, the business case is harder to articulate and organisations may struggle to sustain investment in financial wellbeing, limiting its potential contribution to productivity and economic growth.

In response to these drivers, firms are beginning to integrate financial wellbeing strategies within wider people, reward, and engagement frameworks, rather than treating them as isolated benefits.

Financial wellbeing has evolved from a discretionary employee benefit into a broader social, workforce, and business planning issue. Low financial resilience, limited savings, and gaps in financial capability leave many UK households vulnerable to financial shocks and can constrain long-term economic participation.

So what?



While awareness of these challenges is growing, many organisations are still at an early stage of translating their intent into measurable employee and business outcomes that support long-term UK growth and competitiveness.

3.1 Workplace financial wellbeing: provision and progress

Key message



Financial wellbeing is rising on the corporate agenda, but programme maturity and measurable impact remains uneven across businesses.

Key findings

► **Prioritisation of financial wellbeing**

More than half of employers identify financial wellbeing as a major organisational priority.¹⁹

► **Effectiveness ratings**

Only 2 in 5 employers who currently offer any type of financial wellbeing support rate their programmes as “very effective”.

► **Integration into business strategy**

Around 4 in 10 employers have embedded financial wellbeing into broader business strategy and governance.

Financial wellbeing continues to climb the corporate agenda. In response, employers are investing in workplace financial wellbeing support. More than half now identify financial wellbeing as a major organisational priority.

¹⁹ All key findings section 3.1 are City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

The most common forms of support are:

WHAT, IF ANY, TYPE OF FINANCIAL WELLBEING SUPPORT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION CURRENTLY OFFER? (TOP 4 RESPONSES)

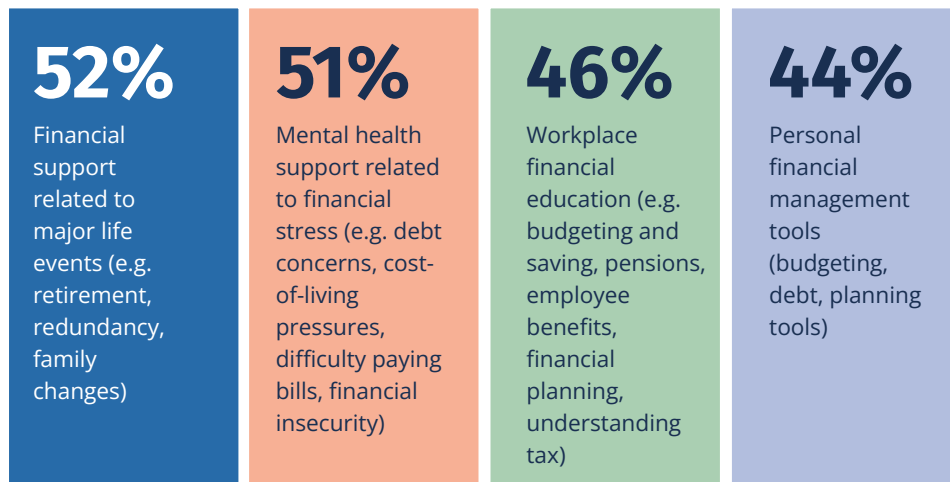
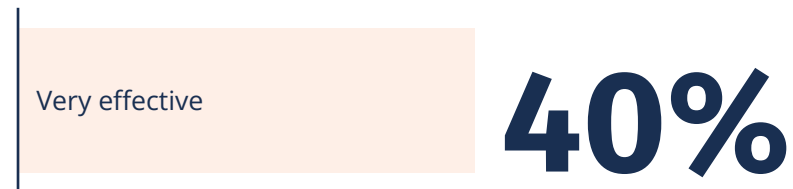


FIGURE 1

Despite these efforts, programme maturity shows variation among employers:

- Only 2 in 5 businesses rate their financial wellbeing initiatives as "very effective".
- 1 in 5 cite low employee engagement as a key challenge.
- 2 in 5 struggle to clearly evidence return on investment.

OVERALL, HOW EFFECTIVE, IF AT ALL, DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR ORGANISATION'S FINANCIAL WELLBEING INITIATIVES ARE?



WHAT, IF ANY, ARE THE BIGGEST BARRIERS PREVENTING YOUR ORGANISATION FROM EXPANDING FINANCIAL WELLBEING SUPPORT?



TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION BELIEVE ITS FINANCIAL WELLBEING INITIATIVES DELIVER A MEASURABLE RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)?

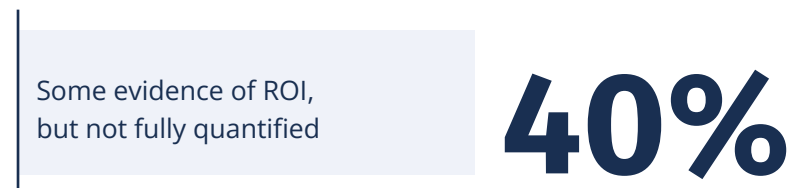


FIGURE 2

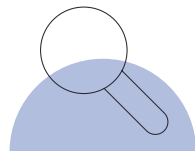
These findings expose the gap between employer intent and full programme implementation and impact.

Cross-analysis callout



Businesses say financial wellbeing is a major priority – yet nearly two in five (39%) do not offer support across all financial wellbeing areas.

Why this matters



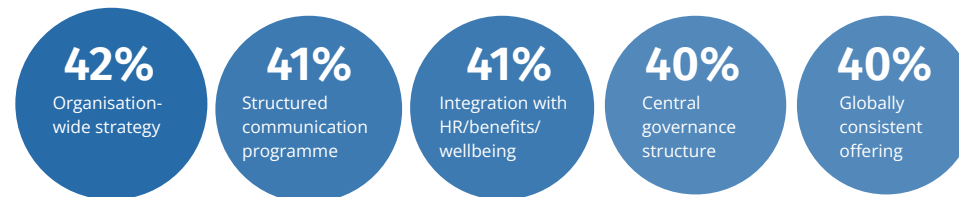
This means many businesses who say that financial wellbeing is a major priority are delivering incomplete support, again, exposing a clear gap between intent and action.

Some UK firms are already taking a more advanced approach. While businesses agree that financial wellbeing is important, only around 4 in 10 employers are advancing their programmes by embedding financial wellbeing into broader HR and benefits strategies, supported by:

- Integration with other areas of the business (41%).
- Senior leadership sponsorship (39%).
- Defined objectives and success measures (38%).
- Use of data and analytics (38%).

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION CURRENTLY HAVE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS IN PLACE AS PART OF ITS FINANCIAL WELLBEING PROGRAMME?

Most established programme elements operating effectively



Least established programme elements operating effectively



FIGURE 3

Few businesses fully integrate financial wellbeing into their broader business strategy with senior leadership sponsorship, clear objectives, and data-driven decision-making.

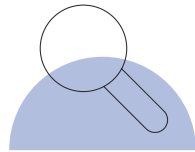
Many organisations still struggle to convert their investment in financial wellbeing support into measurable workforce outcomes. While the belief in the value of financial wellbeing is strong, measurement maturity is less developed.

Cross-analysis callout



73% of employers who see financial wellbeing as a major priority report clear ROI, but around three in ten (27%) still rely on partial or unquantified impact.

Why this matters



Nearly 4 in 10 employers who say financial wellbeing is a major priority are still consistently unable to clearly evidence business and employee impact. Without demonstrating ROI, financial wellbeing programmes risk being deprioritised despite growing evidence that financial stress affects productivity, absenteeism, and retention.

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION BELIEVE ITS FINANCIAL WELLBEING INITIATIVES DELIVER A MEASURABLE RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)?

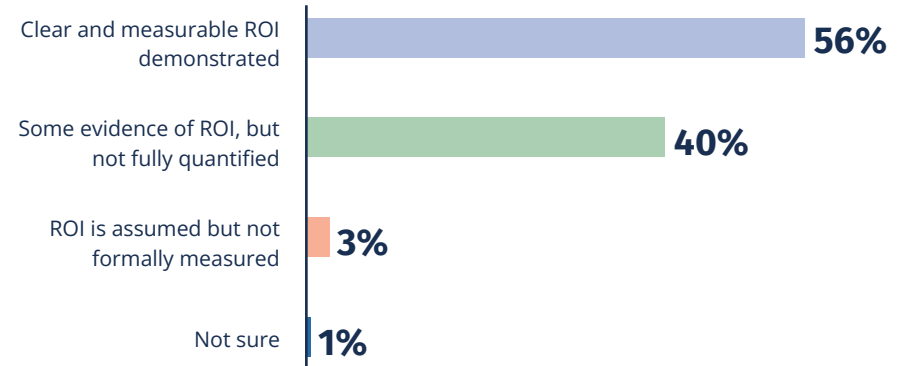


FIGURE 5

This highlights a disconnect between employers' belief in financial wellbeing and their ability to evidence its impact, limiting the case for scaling programmes and sustaining investment.

Overall, employer provision is evolving, but delivery remains uneven in depth, consistency, and measurable impact.

HOW MUCH OF A PRIORITY, IF AT ALL, IS EMPLOYEE FINANCIAL WELLBEING WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION?



FIGURE 4

So what?



Financial wellbeing is no longer solely an employee welfare issue; it is increasingly a business performance issue. Financial stress affects productivity, engagement, absence, and retention, creating direct costs for employers and limiting workforce resilience. In a more productivity-constrained and competitive economy, this is not simply a people challenge but a strategic business risk.

4. Key challenges: Barriers and gaps limiting action

Key message



Despite growing momentum, structural and behavioural barriers continue to limit the effectiveness of financial wellbeing programmes, restricting their economic benefits.



4.1 Capability gap

Employees may appear financially confident, but their underlying financial capability often falls short.

Key message



Employee confidence in managing their finances may be high; however, financial capability is mixed and resilience is often weak.

Key findings

► Confidence perception

94% of businesses believe that their employees are confident managing their retirement savings.²⁰

► Employee financial confidence

Only 27% of UK employees say they are happy with their retirement contributions and investments, while 41% either do not know whether they are contributing enough or do not understand how their retirement savings work.²¹

► Literacy disparity

Employees with low financial literacy are more likely to lack a retirement fund (33%), compared with those with high financial literacy (7%).²²

²⁰ City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

²¹ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

²² 2026 global employee financial wellbeing report - looking at UK only

Many businesses assume that their employees are financially capable, but the evidence indicates otherwise. While the vast majority of employers surveyed (94%) believe their workforce is confident in managing retirement savings, employee data tells a different story. Only 27% of UK employees say that they are happy with their retirement contributions and investments, while many lack confidence in understanding contribution levels, investment choices, or long-term retirement adequacy.

Employees may appear comfortable discussing money while still lacking the knowledge to make informed decisions, particularly on complex issues such as pensions and investing. This highlights that awareness and confidence alone are insufficient to drive meaningful financial behaviours. Businesses must therefore move beyond simply providing information and focus on supporting action, helping employees build financial resilience in ways that can strengthen workforce productivity and long-term economic participation.

This challenge appears most clearly in pensions engagement, where employees may contribute automatically but still lack confidence in understanding contribution levels, investment choices or long-term retirement adequacy. As a result, employees can be participating in retirement saving without being fully equipped to make decisions that support their long-term financial goals.



When describing our products and services, we often use language that makes sense to us, but not necessarily to the people we're trying to support.

KITTY MCCORMICK, CEO OF CATER ALLEN PRIVATE BANK

HOW CONFIDENT, IF AT ALL, DO YOU THINK EMPLOYEES IN YOUR ORGANISATION FEEL ABOUT MANAGING THEIR RETIREMENT SAVINGS OR PENSION FUNDS?

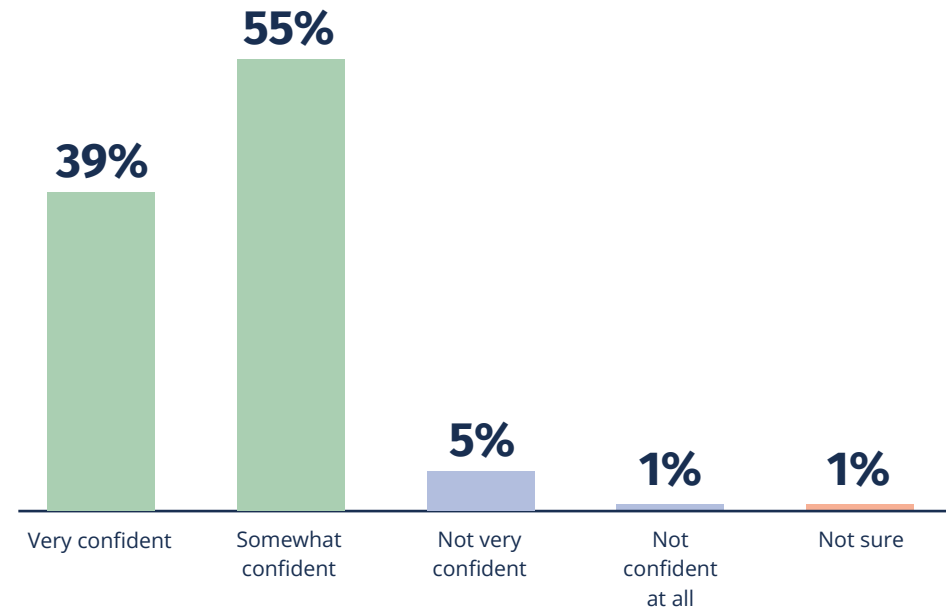


FIGURE 6

Perceived overconfidence can conceal employees' low financial capability and reduce the likelihood that employees will then seek help and support.

Additionally, nudge's 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research reveals retirement preparedness remains uneven. Employees with low financial literacy are more likely to lack a retirement fund (33%) compared with those with high financial literacy (7%), reinforcing the link between capability and long-term financial resilience. This has a direct impact on the UK savings, investment and pensions market.

Businesses should respond with support that not only improves understanding but also helps employees make informed financial decisions and take practical steps towards their goals.

Businesses may be overestimating the financial resilience of their workforce. Without simpler, more personalised, and actionable support, employees may continue to struggle with long-term financial decision-making, despite appearing financially confident.

So what?



Poor engagement with pensions and long-term saving can leave employees less prepared for retirement, while also limiting the long-term investment capital that pension schemes provide to support business investment, productivity, and economic growth across the UK.

4.2 Engagement gap

Awareness alone is not consistently driving employee action.

Key message



Organisations have improved awareness of financial wellbeing support, but employee engagement remains inconsistent and often limited.

Key findings

► **Engagement levels**

Only 39% of employers report high engagement with financial wellbeing communications.²³

► **Effective channels**

Manager-led communications are rated as the most engaging approach (43%), but the small differences between channels suggest a multi-channel approach is likely to be most effective.

► **Opt-in approach is broken**

Traditional opt-in approaches continue to underperform.

Awareness of financial wellbeing support has improved over the past decade,²⁴ but employee engagement remains weak. Many workers are unaware of what support is available or do not see it as relevant to their personal circumstances.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO THE FOLLOWING COMMUNICATION APPROACHES USED FOR FINANCIAL WELLBEING SUPPORT GENERATE HIGH ENGAGEMENT WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION?

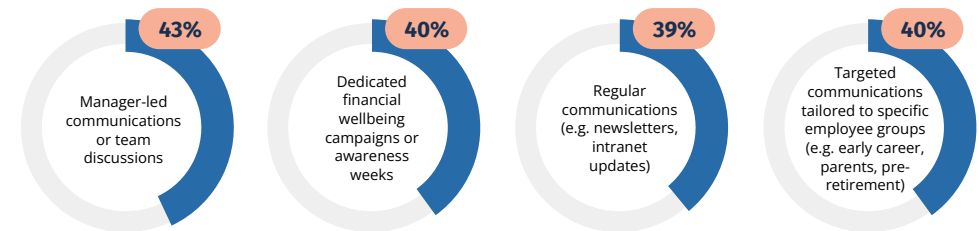


FIGURE 7

²³ All key findings section 4.2: City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

²⁴ CIPD financial wellbeing evidence review practice summary

Just over 1 in 3 businesses report high levels of employee engagement with financial wellbeing communications. Even manager-led conversations, which are often seen as more trusted and personal, are viewed by less than half (43%) of employers as generating employee engagement.

Several factors may contribute to this situation. Employees often juggle competing priorities and experience decision fatigue, making it easier to ignore or postpone financial communications. Additionally, employees report that financial wellbeing communications often feel generic or detached from real life situations.

Employees respond more frequently when communications are personalised, connected to life events (like buying a home or starting a family), and use clear and relatable language.

 See case study 2 in the Framework for practical example. **33**



We have lots of products, but our people don't necessarily understand what they are, how they could use them, and what they mean for them at different stages in their lives.

ANNA CARTER, HEAD OF BENEFIT PROGRAMMES AT DIAGEO

Some businesses reduce friction by embedding support into existing employee journeys through timely prompts, payroll-linked savings tools, automatic enrolment, and simpler decision-making.

So what?



Awareness alone is not enough to drive behaviour change. If employees do not engage with available support, improvements in financial capability, resilience and wellbeing are unlikely to follow. For employers, unaddressed engagement barriers represent a direct cost: investment in financial wellbeing that fails to reach employees cannot generate the productivity, retention, or performance returns that make a business case for continued investment.

4.3 Trust, readiness and personalisation gaps

Employees engage differently depending on trust, readiness, and personal context.

Key message



Employees' ability to engage with financial wellbeing support, depends heavily on trust, readiness and personal circumstances.

Key findings

► Engagement under pressure

Employees under the greatest financial pressure are often least able to engage.²⁵

► Trust in employers

75% of UK employees say they trust their employer more than they trust the government, media, or NGOs.²⁶

► Personalisation proves ROI

Employers offering personalised, life-stage support are more likely to report measurable ROI.²⁷

► AI utilisation

More than half of employers are using or trialling AI tools to better understand employee engagement with financial wellbeing programmes (52%) and personalised support (48%).²⁸



People struggle to save: 1 in 6 have zero savings. Unless people are ready to hear it, they won't really engage.

MUNTAZIR HADADI, HEAD OF PENSIONS AT FIRST BUS

Businesses are uniquely positioned to influence workforce financial wellbeing. As employers, they have high trust, regular access to employees, existing benefits infrastructure, payroll connection, and pension connection.

The ability to act on financial guidance depends heavily on individual readiness. Employees under the most financial pressure are often least able to engage, constrained by immediate concerns such as debt, cash flow, or day-to-day financial security.

Workforce needs also vary significantly across income levels, job roles, and life stages. Frontline, lower-paid, non-desk-based workers may face different barriers from office-based employees. While many middle-income households continue to experience “squeezed middle” pressures linked to housing costs, childcare, and debt. Financial priorities also shift across major life stages such as starting a family, home ownership, or retirement planning.

Employers report stronger workforce and business outcomes when they offer personalised, life-stage-relevant support. Employers offering personalised financial wellbeing support were significantly more likely to report measurable ROI than those relying primarily on broader or untargeted benefits. Cross-analysis found 56% of employers offering personalised, life-stage support reported measurable impact, compared with 38% offering equity schemes and 42% offering emergency financial assistance alone. This suggests that personalised support may be up to 47% more likely to deliver a measurable impact than broader financial benefits approaches.

²⁵ Roundtable discussion point

²⁶ Edelman 2024 Trust Barometer report Trust at Work

²⁷ City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

²⁸ City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

HOW, IF AT ALL, IS AI CURRENTLY BEING USED OR EXPLORED WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION'S FINANCIAL WELLBEING SUPPORT?

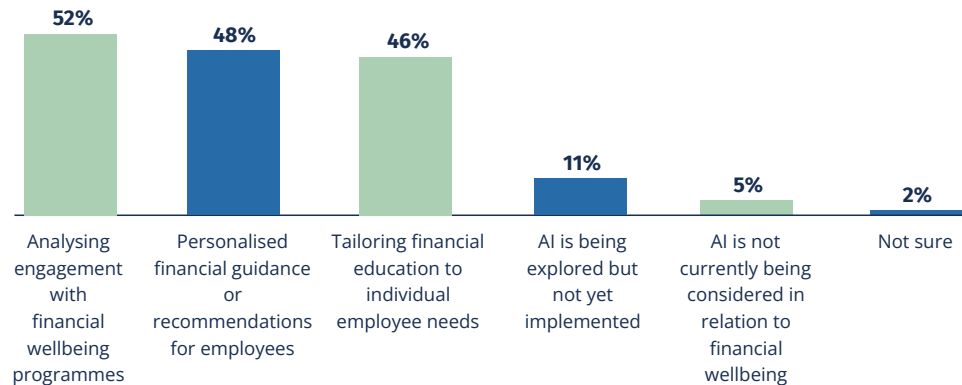


FIGURE 8

More than half of employers are already using or trialling AI tools to understand their employees' behaviour (52%) and to personalise support (48%), although these systems remain at an early stage of development or are restricted to limited use cases.

Many organisations apply personalisation to engagement tracking rather than to targeted interventions or coaching. AI-driven personalisation raises important questions around data privacy, employee consent, and algorithmic fairness, particularly for lower-paid or more financially vulnerable workers. Employers should ensure AI tools comply with UK GDPR and are subject to regular equity audits.

Trust is another limiting factor. While money remains a sensitive subject at work, UK employees are significantly more likely to trust their employer than other major institutions.

The 2026 Edelman Trust Barometer found that 75% of UK employees trust their employer to do what is right, compared with 51% who trust business generally, 50% who trust NGOs, 39% who trust media, and 36% who trust government.²⁹

This gives businesses a unique opportunity to provide trusted financial wellbeing support, particularly as stigma around financial difficulty can discourage employees from disclosing concerns or accessing available help.

Encouraging openness and protecting confidentiality are essential to closing this "trust gap." The most effective programmes combine personalised support, confidentiality, and trusted communication.

[➤ See case study 3 in the Framework for practical example.](#) **35**

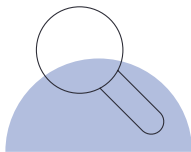
²⁹ Edelman 2024 Trust Barometer report Trust at Work

Cross-analysis callout



Employers offering personalised, life-stage financial wellbeing support are more likely to report clear and measurable ROI than those offering broader financial benefits – 56% versus 38% for equity schemes and 42% for emergency financial assistance.³⁰

Why this matters



Personalised support is more effective at driving measurable workforce and business outcomes than broader, untargeted benefits.

Businesses are uniquely positioned to support employee financial wellbeing because they are trusted more than most other institutions. However, trust alone is not enough. To improve engagement and outcomes, organisations must provide support that reflects employees' differing financial circumstances, life stages, and levels of readiness. Without this, investment in financial wellbeing may fail to translate into meaningful workforce or business outcomes that promote wider UK economic prosperity.

So what?



4.4 Measurement gap

Firms are struggling to prove value and ROI of financial wellbeing

Key message



Financial wellbeing programmes deliver value, but organisations still fail to measure workforce and business outcomes consistently.

Key findings

► Measurable ROI reported

More than half (56%) of businesses report measurable ROI of their programmes.³¹

► Partial impact observed

A further 40% report only partial or indirect impact.

► Focus on engagement metrics

Measurement focuses heavily on participation and engagement metrics.

More than half of businesses (56%) report measurable ROI from financial wellbeing programmes, but the evidence base remains inconsistent and still focuses more heavily on employee outcomes than broader business impact. Many businesses report improvements in areas such as employee wellbeing, confidence, or engagement, yet fewer firms have robust frameworks in place to systematically measure organisational outcomes such as productivity, retention, or absenteeism. Moreover, a further a further two in five businesses can see only a partial or indirect impact from their programmes.

In practice, businesses often observe positive indicators such as higher employee engagement, stronger benefits utilisation, or employee survey scores, but lack sufficient data to demonstrate a direct link to organisational outcomes such as improved productivity, reduced absenteeism, or higher retention.

Businesses typically focus their programme impact measurement on staff participation (attendance, survey feedback) and engagement metrics, rather than on tracking longer-term workforce ROI, such as productivity, absenteeism, or retention.

Without stronger evidence of impact, businesses may struggle to maintain long-term leadership buy-in to invest in the expansion and continuation of their programmes.

HOW DOES YOUR ORGANISATION MEASURE, TRACK, AND DEMONSTRATE THE IMPACT AND RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI) OF FINANCIAL WELLBEING INITIATIVES?

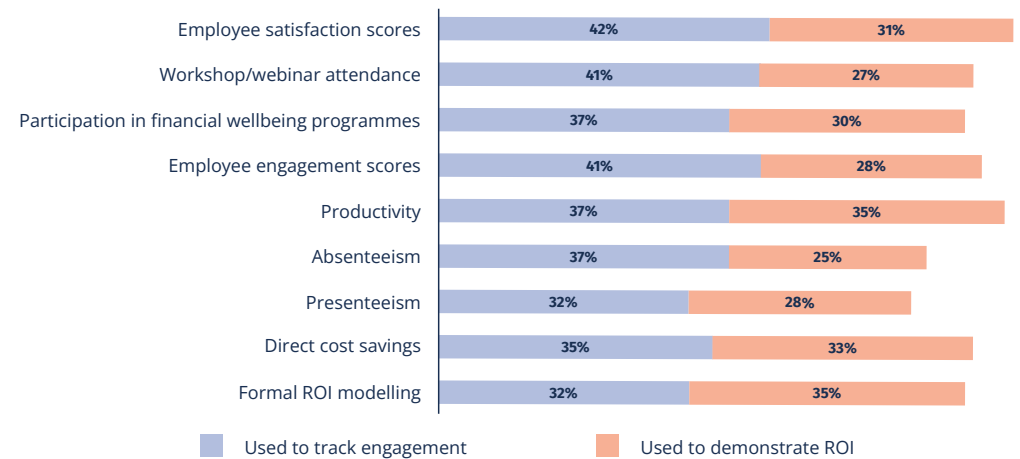


FIGURE 9

Businesses with more strategically embedded financial wellbeing programmes are more likely to measure workforce and business outcomes of their programmes, rather than relying solely on participation or engagement metrics. This builds up an increasingly compelling internal business case for expanding and enhancing financial wellbeing provision, yielding ever greater business growth outcomes.



What's the impact? That's the harder bit to articulate. We can see people are engaging, we can see the activity, but connecting that through to business outcomes is where it becomes more complex.

ANNA CARTER, HEAD OF BENEFIT PROGRAMMES AT DIAGEO

This shift towards measuring employee behavioural impact and delivering organisational ROI is key to building a stronger internal business case for financial wellbeing.

Many organisations believe financial wellbeing programmes are valuable, but fewer can consistently demonstrate their impact on employee outcomes or business performance. As a result, financial wellbeing remains vulnerable to the "intent versus impact" gap identified throughout this report, where growing employer commitment is not always matched by clear evidence of measurable outcomes.

So what?



Firms that cannot evidence clear ROI risk deprioritising financial wellbeing entirely, with consequences not just for employee outcomes, but for productivity, talent retention, and the UK's wider competitiveness as a place to do business.

4.5 Structural and integration gap

Fragmented ownership and disconnected delivery are barriers to programme effectiveness

Key message



Better developed and integrated programmes are associated with stronger employee financial confidence and wellbeing outcomes.

Key findings

► Lack of defined strategy

Fewer than half (42%) of businesses have a clearly defined and effective financial wellbeing strategy.

► Fragmented governance

Financial wellbeing ownership and governance often remains fragmented in the workplace.

► Employee perception of care

Employees with access to financial wellbeing support are far more likely to feel cared for by their employer (79% vs. 47%), rising to 83% among those with access to workplace financial education, and 62% say feeling financially cared for at work positively impacts their life.³²

► Higher confidence ratings

More developed programmes are associated with 15–20 percentage-point higher employee confidence ratings.³³

► Improved engagement and wellbeing outcomes

Integrated programmes increase employee engagement, lower stress and improve wellbeing outcomes.³⁴

TO WHAT EXTENT DOES YOUR ORGANISATION CURRENTLY HAVE THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS IN PLACE AS PART OF ITS FINANCIAL WELLBEING PROGRAMME?

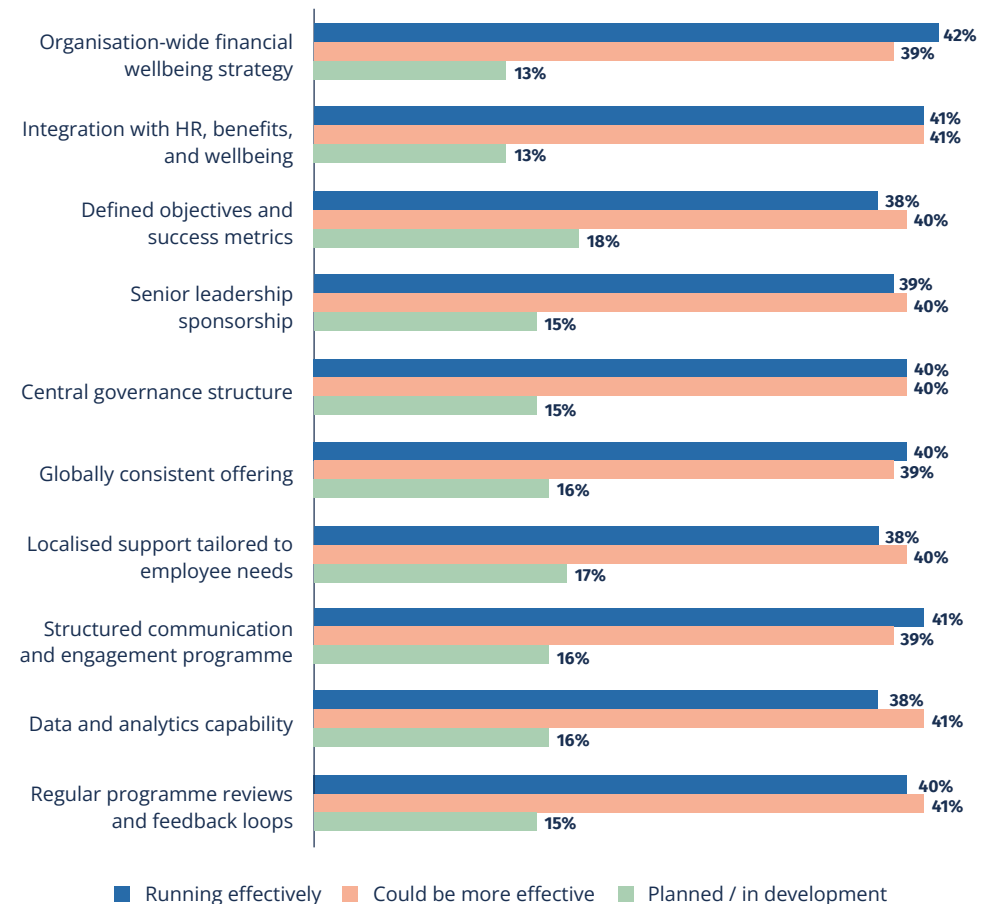


FIGURE 10

³² 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

³³ Key findings 1 and 3 section 4.5: City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

³⁴ 2026 global employee financial wellbeing data – looking at UK only

Responsibility for financial wellbeing often sits across multiple teams – HR, benefits, reward, or learning – which reduces clarity and accountability of programme delivery and impact.

Fewer than half (42%) of businesses have a defined financial wellbeing strategy which is being delivered effectively, and nearly as many respondents (39%) say it “could be more effective.”

The roundtables showed that many employers still run financial wellbeing as a collection of disconnected initiatives, rather than an embedded corporate strategy. Fragmented ownership weakens accountability for impactful programme delivery and creates inconsistent delivery. Employers described how standalone financial wellbeing initiatives often compete with other priorities, including mental health campaigns, employee engagement programmes, and DEI initiatives, limiting visibility and reducing the overall impact of support.

nudge’s 2026 global employee financial wellbeing report highlights that programme effectiveness depends not only on the availability of support, but on how well education, benefits and communication are connected.

The research suggests a strong relationship between feeling financially supported at work and overall employee wellbeing. Employees with access to financial wellbeing support are substantially more likely to feel cared for by their employer (79% vs. 47%), rising to 83% among those who receive workplace financial education. With 62% of employees agreeing that feeling financially cared for at work positively impacts their life, the findings suggest that financial wellbeing support can play an important role in strengthening employee loyalty, improving engagement, and boosting productivity, while also improving individual financial outcomes.

TO WHAT EXTENT IS YOUR FINANCIAL WELLBEING PROGRAMME MATURE? VS HOW CONFIDENT, IF AT ALL, DO YOU THINK EMPLOYEES IN YOUR ORGANISATION FEEL ABOUT MANAGING THEIR RETIREMENT SAVINGS OR PENSION FUNDS?

| Programme maturity | Employees perceived as “very confident” | Employees perceived as “somewhat confident” |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Programme elements running effectively | 57–61% | 25–31% |
| Running, but could be more effective | 29–34% | 43–48% |
| Planned / in development | 8–10% | 18–23% |
| Not currently in place | 1–2% | 3–6% |

FIGURE 11

Employers with more developed and integrated financial wellbeing programmes report employee confidence levels with managing pensions, that are typically 15-20 percentage points higher than those with less mature provision.

A joined-up approach to financial wellbeing leads to stronger employee wellbeing, with lower levels of stress, anxiety, and other finance-related mental health challenges among employees who receive support.



Programme effectiveness depends not only on what support is offered, but how it is coordinated and delivered. Fragmented ownership can reduce accountability, limit visibility, and create disconnected employee experiences, weakening the impact of financial wellbeing initiatives. Businesses are more likely to achieve meaningful workforce outcomes - and therefore increased economic activity - when financial wellbeing is embedded within a broader people strategy, supported by clear ownership, integrated delivery, and consistent measurement.

So what?



4.6 Regulatory gap

Regulatory uncertainty and lack of support slow business action.

Key message



Regulatory uncertainty, fragmented guidance, and weak external support continue to limit business confidence, programme development, and innovation.

Key findings

► Demand for government resources

39% of employers want government-backed financial education resources.³⁵

► Need for more public awareness

37% want public awareness campaigns.

► Desire for clearer guidance

34% want clearer boundaries between financial guidance and regulated advice.

³⁵ All key findings section 4.6: City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

Regulatory uncertainty around financial wellbeing continues to limit businesses' confidence and programme development³⁶. Employers are unsure where financial education ends and regulated advice begins, often leading to overly cautious or restricted support for employees. Survey data highlights the strong demand for regulatory support (see Figure 12.)

Businesses also call for deeper government policy coordination across employment, pensions, and financial services. A more coordinated policy framework would help employers scale effective financial wellbeing support without fear of breaching regulatory boundaries. Similar regulatory approaches can be seen in the 'Mental Health First Aid' framework where clearer coordination between employers, regulators, healthcare providers, and policymakers helps define employer responsibilities, improve referral pathways, and support wider adoption of preventative wellbeing approaches.

The UK's Thriving at Work³⁷ review provides a useful model, establishing a clear set of employer standards and encouraging coordination between employers, healthcare providers, and policymakers. A similar approach could help clarify employer responsibilities for financial wellbeing while improving access to specialist support and promoting more consistent adoption across workplaces.

³⁶ All key findings section 4.6: City of London Corporation and nudge employer report workplace financial wellbeing report

³⁷ UK Government's thriving at work: a review of mental health and employers

WHAT, IF ANY, ACTIONS FROM THE GOVERNMENT WOULD MOST HELP YOUR ORGANISATION STRENGTHEN OR EXPAND FINANCIAL WELLBEING PROGRAMMES?

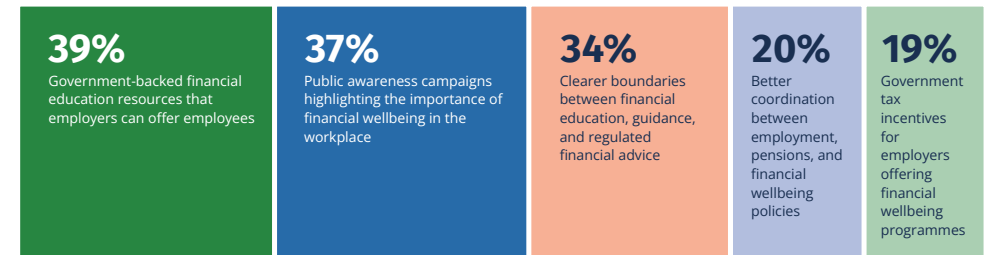


FIGURE 12

Financial wellbeing spans multiple systems – such as tax, benefits, savings, and pensions. Fragmented regulatory oversight is slowing its progress across the UK workforce.

Regulators, policymakers, and providers must collaborate to unlock consistent and impactful nationwide adoption.

So what?



Regulatory uncertainty represents a structural barrier to closing the intent-to-impact gap identified throughout this report. Even where employers recognise the importance of financial wellbeing and want to do more, unclear regulatory boundaries can limit programme development, innovation, and personalisation. Removing regulatory friction is not just about making it easier internally for businesses to deliver financial wellbeing interventions. It is about unlocking one of the most scalable channels for improving workforce financial capability, resilience, and economic participation across the UK.

5. Recommendations and conclusion

5.1 Recommendations for businesses

This report is supported by **the Workplace Financial Wellbeing Impact Framework**, which helps firms translate insight into action. The Framework is informed by the research findings, and it provides practical recommendations, implementation considerations, and case studies to support more effective programme design, delivery, and impact measurement.

The findings show that firms achieve stronger outcomes when financial wellbeing is embedded within broader people and reward



strategies. Successful organisations also prioritise personalised, life-stage support, use behavioural design to improve engagement, and measure outcomes such as retention, engagement, and resilience.

5.2 The Workplace Financial Wellbeing Impact Framework

Insights, recommendations, and employer case studies to define a clearer, scalable model for financial wellbeing across the UK workforce.

How to use this Framework

- ▶ **Use it as a diagnostic tool:** Assess your current programme against the framework to identify gaps, overlaps and strengths.
- ▶ **Prioritise based on impact and readiness:** Focus first on areas that will have the greatest impact and are most feasible to implement.
- ▶ **Apply it flexibly, not sequentially:** Use the framework in a way that reflects your organisation's maturity and existing provision.
- ▶ **Translate principles into your context:** Adapt each element to your workforce, geography and organisational needs.
- ▶ **Use it to align stakeholders:** Create a shared language across HR, Reward, leadership and external partners.
- ▶ **Track progress over time:** Revisit the framework regularly to assess progress, refine your approach and scale what works.

1. Clarify the role of businesses

Insight

31% of employers cite implementation complexity as a barrier for financial wellbeing delivery, which 25% blame competing priorities, and 24% cite regulatory concerns as key barriers. Together, these issues highlight a lack of clarity around the role of employers, particularly with regard to where financial guidance ends and regulated financial advice begins. This ambiguity limits employers' confidence, and therefore the scope of their financial wellbeing support.

Business view

Firms recognise the importance of supporting financial wellbeing but remain cautious about overstepping their remit. Uncertainty around regulation, combined with sensitivity around employee trust, creates hesitation to expand their provision, especially when considering more personalised or proactive interventions

Recommendation for businesses

Establish a clear role centred on education, guidance, and signposting, not advice. Work within existing regulatory frameworks and partner with trusted providers to deliver support that is credible, impartial, and empowers employees without overstepping regulatory and legal boundaries.



A case study [1] from leading businesses

Firms are addressing this ambiguity by clearly defining their role around financial education, guidance and decision support, rather than regulated financial advice. In practice, this often means providing access to personalised financial education, budgeting tools, pension guidance and life-stage support, while partnering with regulated advisers or specialist providers for more complex needs.

For example, a global insurance firm partnered with nudge to deliver tailored financial education linked to key employee moments, including retirement planning, bonus sacrifice and share plans, alongside targeted support for women, carers and frontline workers.

The programme combined personalised education with clear signposting, leading to stronger engagement with financial benefits and support. Outcomes included a **60% increase in employee benefit engagement, a 72% increase in share plan participation, and a 26% increase in bonus sacrifice uptake.**

2. Build strong financial foundations before adding additional benefits

Insight

Firms are offering a wide range of benefits. However, this breadth of provision is failing to translate into stronger financial foundations.

Employee data reinforces why: 24% of staff have few or no emergency savings and 25% have less than one month's salary saved, highlighting persistent financial fragility despite widespread support.

Business view

There is growing recognition that simply adding more interventions does not necessarily drive greater positive impact on their employees' financial wellbeing. When support is fragmented or layered onto financial instability, employees are both less able and less likely to engage.

Recommendation for businesses

Shift from breadth to effectiveness of offers. Focus on fewer and more connected benefits that address immediate financial resilience (e.g. savings, short-term support), and ensure that the benefits are simple, accessible, and clearly linked to actual employee needs.

3. Embed financial wellbeing as a strategic business priority

Insight

55% of firms now see financial wellbeing as a major business priority, with a further 38% viewing it as an emerging issue. Despite this, only 30% of firms consistently measure ROI against all of their financial wellbeing initiatives, and most focus on engagement (37%), rather than on tracking business outcomes.

This suggests that workforce financial wellbeing has reached strategic importance but is not consistently managed as a business-critical driver of growth.

Business view

In those firms where this approach is missing, financial wellbeing activity remains fragmented, and employee impact and business ROI are harder to demonstrate.

Recommendation for businesses

Embed financial wellbeing as a strategic lever for performance. Organisations making the most progress treat financial wellbeing as part of their core business strategy, with senior ownership, cross-functional delivery, and clear links to corporate outcomes, including staff retention and productivity.

4. Design for workforce reality, not 'one-size-fits-all' approaches

Insight

52% of businesses use AI to analyse engagement, 48% for guidance, and 46% for tailoring content, but fewer firms apply it to deeper personalisation of their offers – suggesting a stronger focus on tracking behaviour than understanding the underlying needs of their workforce. At the same time, the most commonly offered programmes are linked to major life events (52%), reinforcing growing recognition that employee financial needs vary across different life stages and circumstances.

Business view

Businesses recognise that financial wellbeing is shaped by individual context, life stage, income stability, job role, and geography. Frontline and “blue-collar” workers often face different financial challenges to their office-based colleagues, while global organisations must navigate varying financial and regulatory systems and cultural norms. Internationally, standardised programmes often miss this complexity, which limits their relevance and reduces engagement.



A case study [2] from leading businesses

Businesses are moving beyond generic financial wellbeing campaigns by tailoring support to specific workforce groups and key life moments. This can include strengthening financial foundations during onboarding, providing targeted support for parents and carers, or designing relevant experiences for frontline and shift-based workers.

For example, an engineering and defence organisation partnered with nudge to deliver more personalised financial wellbeing support tailored to employees' life stages, needs and interests. Through targeted education journeys and timely communications, the programme drove a **25% increase in platform engagement, a 90% increase in financial wellbeing assessments completed via the EAP, and a 209% increase in pension contribution increases following Pensions Week.**

Recommendation for businesses

Design financial wellbeing support around employees' lived reality, rather than basing programmes on generic workforce assumptions. Tailor support to different life stages, financial priorities, and workforce groups, using timely and relevant communications that empower employees to take practical action on managing their finances.

5. Match support to level of employee need

Insight

Employees' ability to engage with financial support is closely linked to their financial capability and confidence.

However, fewer than half of businesses consistently link their support to outcomes which are tied to financial stress, including productivity (41%), reduced financial stress-related claims (31%), or reduced hardship requests (30%). This highlights a disconnect, even when the impact of financial wellbeing programmes is robustly monitored and evaluated, measurement is not always aligned to employees' underlying financial stress or ability to manage this pressure.

Business view

Businesses recognise that those staff who are under the most severe financial pressure are often the least able to engage with offers. Workers' needs shift over time, so employers need flexible support that adapts to changing circumstances, rather than assuming consistent readiness to engage with financial wellbeing programmes.

Recommendation for businesses:

Financial wellbeing support is most effective when it is delivered as a structured pathway, aligned to employees' financial circumstances and evolving needs, including:

- **Crisis support:** Debt advice, hardship support, and specialist services
- **Stability support:** Savings tools, budgeting support, flexible pay
- **Capability support:** Personalised financial education and guidance.
- **Future planning:** Pensions, investing, and long-term financial health.

Ensure that employees can move easily between these stages of support, with timely access to the right help to match their current circumstances. The common theme across all of these stages is employees' ability to effectively manage their money.

6. Use behavioural design to drive engagement

Insight

Engagement with programmes remains a persistent challenge for UK firms, with 20% of businesses who currently offer any type of financial wellbeing support stating low employee engagement and 23% citing stigma as key barriers to delivery and expansion of their offers. In response, more than half (52%) of businesses are actively using or exploring AI as a tool to better understand employee behaviour and engagement patterns, while using behavioural design to simplify decisions, reduce friction, and encourage action.

Business view

Firms report that traditional opt-in models consistently underperform, even where support is valued by staff.

Employees often intend to act but are constrained by time, complexity, and competing priorities. In contrast, approaches such as automatic enrolment or pre-selected options significantly improve participation by removing friction and making adoption easier.

Recommendation for businesses

Design financial wellbeing programmes that make it easy for employees to take action. Use automatic enrolment, payroll-linked savings tools, simple step-by-step journeys, and timely prompts linked to key moments such as pay reviews, onboarding, or life events. Use data and AI-driven insights to deliver more relevant and personalised communications, while keeping support clear, accessible, and focused on helping employees take the next step.

7. Build trust through language and psychological safety

Insight

43% of businesses who currently offer any type of financial wellbeing support report high engagement from manager-led communications and 40% from targeted messaging, versus 35% for one-off communications, which also see the lowest engagement (16%). At the same time, 22% of businesses cite stigma around receiving support as a barrier to employee take-up. More informal, relevant channels outperform formal broadcasts, highlighting that engagement can be driven by trust and psychological safety, and not just widespread visibility and awareness.



A case study [3] from leading businesses

Employers are helping reduce stigma around financial wellbeing by using clear, jargon-free language, providing confidential access to guidance, and embedding financial education into regular employee communications and community initiatives. In practice, this can include tailored workshops, peer-led discussions, digital wellbeing hubs and ongoing communications designed to normalise financial conversations across the workforce.

For example, an IT company partnered with nudge to launch “Community Connect Live”, a tailored financial wellbeing masterclass programme for graduates and apprentices. The sessions focused on practical topics such as budgeting and money management using accessible, relatable language designed for younger employees starting out in their careers.

Follow-up personalised communications encouraged employees to continue engaging with support and financial education tools, helping normalise financial conversations within the wider employee community. The programme achieved 5-star feedback scores and 50% engagement with nudge following the masterclass.

Business view

Businesses note that many employees lack the language, understanding, and confidence to engage with financial topics, particularly where prior access to financial education has been limited. Financial stress is often hidden, with stigma and a fear of judgement discouraging employees from seeking the support they need. Compared with other wellbeing areas such as mental health, financial wellbeing remains less openly discussed.

Recommendation for businesses

Create a trusted and accessible environment for accessing financial wellbeing support. Use clear, simple and inclusive language, provide confidential access points, and design communication that reduces stigma and encourages engagement, particularly for employees who may be less confident in seeking help.

8. Integrate into existing systems, rather than just bolting on

Insight

42% of employers who currently offer any type of financial wellbeing support say that financial wellbeing is effectively integrated into wider business areas, while a further 39% say that support is in place but could be delivered more effectively.

This suggests that, although key components of financial wellbeing provision are in place across the UK, many programmes are not fully embedded within businesses, limiting their consistency, scalability, and impact.

Business view

Employers identify programme fragmentation as a key barrier to impact. Standalone initiatives, often delivered as one-off campaigns, tend to see lower workforce engagement and are difficult to sustain.

Embedding support within existing employee touch-points – such as onboarding, pay reviews, learning and development, and life events – helps normalise engagement and improve relevance. Financial education plays a foundational role. Without a baseline level of understanding, employees are less able to engage with benefits or make informed decisions, limiting the effectiveness of wider benefits.

Recommendation for businesses

Integrate financial wellbeing into existing strategies, systems, and employee touch-points. Establish financial education as a foundational layer, enabling employees to understand, engage with, and act on the available support, supported by behavioural design and personalised delivery to create a simpler, more connected experience.

9. Measure what matters and use it to drive action

Insight

56% of employers report clear, measurable ROI from financial wellbeing initiatives, with a further 40% seeing some evidence; however, measurement remains inconsistent in practice. While around 35–41% of firms track outcomes such as productivity, employee satisfaction, and retention, fewer employers consistently use this data to demonstrate ROI.

This gap suggests that, although impact is recognised, it is not systematically measured, limiting organisations' ability to evidence value and scale-up investment.

Business view

Employers highlight that programme measurement remains underdeveloped, with activity often tracked through engagement metrics such as participation rates, rather than evaluating outcomes like employee behaviour change or business ROI.

Data is frequently fragmented across HR, benefits, and wellbeing systems, limiting its visibility, and making it difficult to build up a comprehensive picture of programme effectiveness. At the same time, there is growing pressure to clearly demonstrate ROI, particularly in areas such as retention, productivity, and benefit utilisation.

Recommendation for businesses

Define clear success metrics linked to business outcomes and use integrated Human Resources Information System (HRIS) and benefits data to create a joined-up view of employee need and programme impact. Track a mix of engagement, behaviour, and outcome metrics, for example:

- **Engagement:** benefit uptake, platform usage, participation in education.
- **Employee impact:** increases in savings or retirement contributions, reduced stress, increased financial confidence.
- **Business ROI:** retention, productivity, benefit utilisation.

Use these insights to improve delivery, target support more effectively, and scale the interventions that deliver the strongest impact.

10. Enable collaboration to support wider impact

Insight

Firms want more coordinated support to scale financial wellbeing. 39% of firms want government-backed financial education resources, 37% want public awareness campaigns, and 34% ask for clearer boundaries between education, guidance, and advice. This indicates that driving workplace financial wellbeing across the UK cannot be solved by businesses alone.

Business view

Employers recognise that financial wellbeing extends beyond the workplace, influencing households, families, and communities.

They also value collaboration with peers, providers, industry bodies, and the Government to share learning, reduce duplication, and build confidence around what works.

Recommendation for businesses

Collaborate beyond your organisation. Share examples of best practice, partner with trusted providers and industry bodies, and contribute to a more consistent and effective approach that improves financial capability across the wider UK workforce.



A case study [4] from leading employers

Firms are increasingly taking a more collaborative and joined-up approach to financial wellbeing, working with external providers, charities, and specialist organisations to broaden the support available to employees. In practice, this includes partnerships with financial education providers, pension providers, and wellbeing specialists, alongside greater participation in industry roundtables, employer forums, and cross-sector collaboration.

The City of London Corporation and nudge Workplace Financial Wellbeing Roundtables brought together employers, providers, and industry leaders to share experiences, identify common challenges, and explore what effective financial wellbeing support looks like in practice. Combined with employer interviews and wider research, these discussions directly informed the development of the Framework in this report.

5.3 Recommendations for the UK Government

Businesses consistently called for stronger government, businesses and regulatory coordination, backed by practical support to improve workplace financial wellbeing provision.

Key priorities for the Government include:

The findings suggest that improving workplace financial wellbeing will require coordinated action across employers, government, regulators, and industry bodies. Employers cannot address the wider structural barriers around financial capability, savings, debt, and long-term financial resilience on their own.

Categorising the recommendations by timeframe helps to distinguish between actions that could be implemented relatively quickly and those requiring longer-term policy or structural change.

Immediate priorities (0–12 months)

1. His Majesty's Treasury (HMT), Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), and Department for Business and Trade (DBT) should work together to support and scale national awareness campaigns that normalise conversations about money, savings, investing, and financial wellbeing. Building on initiatives such as the Talk Money Week, Invest for the Future campaigns can help to improve workers' financial confidence, increase engagement with long-term saving and investing, and reduce stigma around financial difficulties.

2. HMT, DWP and DBT should jointly support the National Payroll Savings Coalition to highlight cross-departmental support to increase workplace saving, improve financial resilience, and encourage greater participation in financial wellbeing initiatives. Opportunities to embed payroll savings within wider workplace financial wellbeing strategies should also be explored.

Medium-term priorities (1–3 years)

1. HMT should develop a workplace financial wellbeing strand within the UK Financial Inclusion Strategy, aligning policy across pensions, savings, debt, employment, and financial capability, with employers recognised as key stakeholders in delivery.
2. Introduce targeted tax incentives for employer investment in workplace financial wellbeing support, similar to existing approaches used for occupational health initiatives.
 - International examples of this already exist. In the US, IRC Section 127 allows employers to provide tax-free educational assistance benefits to employees, while also deducting the cost as a business expense. The scheme was made permanent in 2025 and demonstrates how targeted tax policy can encourage greater employer investment in employee financial capability and long-term financial resilience.

Longer-term priorities (3–10 years)

1. Consider introducing workforce financial wellbeing disclosure requirements for businesses with larger workforces, through existing reporting frameworks or a standardised set of workforce financial wellbeing indicators, enabling organisations to benchmark and track employee financial resilience, confidence, and preparedness over time.

1. HMT should use the Financial Inclusion Committee to strengthen collaboration between employers, providers, regulators, and policymakers, creating a more coordinated national approach to improving financial capability, savings, and long-term financial resilience. This should include clearer stakeholder responsibilities and support for scaling effective workplace interventions. Building on existing examples of efforts across the ecosystem, including the Mansion House Accord, which demonstrates how coordinated policy and industry action can influence long-term workplace financial behaviours at scale.

5.4 Recommendations for regulators

Immediate priorities (0–12 months)

1. The Financial Conduct Authority (the FCA) and Money and Pensions Service (MaPS) should publish clearer co-badged guidance clarifying the boundary between financial guidance and regulated advice in workplace settings, helping employers and providers deliver support with greater confidence.

2. The FCA should publish practical guidance on the application of targeted support within workplace financial wellbeing, including clear employer use cases and examples of compliant delivery models.

3. The FCA should explore the use of regulatory sandboxes for workplace financial wellbeing tools and models, enabling innovation while managing consumer protection risks.

Medium-term priorities (1–3 years)

4. The FCA should consider expanding targeted support permissions and simplifying regulatory pathways to encourage wider employer and provider participation.

5. The Pensions Regulator should strengthen employer engagement expectations within auto-enrolment communications, including greater emphasis on employee financial capability, retirement understanding, and long-term savings engagement.

Longer-term priorities (3–10 years)

6. Regulators and industry bodies should work together to establish clearer standards, quality benchmarks, and evaluation frameworks for workplace financial wellbeing programmes, helping employers identify credible and effective approaches.

5.5 Conclusion

Businesses across the UK now recognise that financial wellbeing is a growing workforce and economic prosperity issue, which has a fundamental impact on employee engagement, productivity, retention, and wider organisational resilience. In response to this risk more firms are ramping up their investment in this area and integrating financial wellbeing into broader corporate people and reward strategies.

However, a clear “intent versus impact” gap remains across financial wellbeing programmes. While many employers say financial wellbeing is a strategic priority, programme impact, consistency, and measurable outcomes remain uneven. At the same time, many employees continue to display low levels of financial resilience, despite appearing outwardly confident about managing their finances.

The findings show that low financial capability is not just a personal issue – it is shaping workforce resilience, employee health, engagement, and organisational performance. Without more effective action in this space, the UK risks continuing to lag behind global benchmarks for financial capability and resilience, with growing implications for economic growth through higher workforce stress, absenteeism, lower productivity, and weaker staff retention.

For businesses, the opportunity extends beyond employee financial wellbeing alone.

More effective financial wellbeing strategies have the potential to deliver measurable ROI through stronger workforce performance, engagement, and productivity linked to reduced financial stress. As financial wellbeing becomes even more important to attracting, supporting, and retaining talent, organisations that invest effectively are likely to be better positioned to build resilient, engaged, and productive workforces. Best practice financial wellbeing models should also be scalable and adaptable for SMEs with more limited capacity and resources.

The next phase of developing the UK’s workplace financial wellbeing provision is therefore not simply about expanding available support, but ensuring that programmes are effective, strategic, and capable of delivering measurable impact.

The findings show that effective financial wellbeing programmes:

- Are integrated rather than fragmented.
- Have personalised and life-stage-relevant delivery.
- Incorporate strong behavioural design to achieve high engagement.
- Show measurable workforce outcomes.
- Have clear ownership and governance.
- Provide practical, embedded support for employees.

By closing the gap between intent and impact, businesses can strengthen the financial confidence and resilience of the workforce, and deliver meaningful outcomes for businesses, workers and the wider UK economy.

5.6 Methodology

Drawing on multiple sources of employer and employee research, this report explores the current state of workplace financial wellbeing provision across the UK workforce and identifies opportunities for employers to strengthen the design, delivery, and impact of their financial wellbeing programmes.

Research included:

- Qualitative employer research, including two roundtables and eight stakeholder interviews with industry experts and senior HR, reward, and benefits decision-makers from organisations collectively representing over 104,300 UK employees.
- A survey of 1,000 senior decision-makers (Director-level and above) at UK employers with 500+ employees, delivered by Censuswide.
- Findings from nudge's 2026 global employee financial wellbeing research, covering 11,500 employees across 17 countries, with 2,102 UK employed consumers.
- Recurring themes and areas of broad consensus identified across qualitative discussions and interviews.

The research explored:

- Employer attitudes towards workplace financial wellbeing.
- Current levels and breadth of programme provision and maturity.
- Barriers limiting effectiveness and engagement.
- Approaches to measurement and ROI.
- Opportunities for employers, government, and regulators to strengthen current outcomes.

Limitations and considerations

This report combines quantitative and qualitative research to identify emerging trends, employer provision, best practice, and areas of consensus across the breadth of UK workplace financial wellbeing. As with all research, several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings.

The Censuswide survey focused on large UK multinational employers and may not fully reflect the experiences, priorities, or resource constraints of SMEs and smaller organisations. Findings relating to programme effectiveness, engagement, and ROI are also based on self-reported employer data, which may introduce response or selection bias, particularly among those organisations that are already investing in and delivering financial wellbeing initiatives.

In addition, while the report identifies relationships between financial wellbeing programmes, employee outcomes, and organisational performance, the findings are primarily correlational and should not be interpreted as demonstrating direct causation. Workplace outcomes are shaped by multiple overlapping factors, including pay, organisational culture, broader wellbeing support, and external economic conditions.



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