



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Time to Talk Public Health

Findings of Neath Port Talbot Regional Survey 2025:

Health and well-being, financial insecurity, information sources, and changes at TATA Steel

Published: July 2025



Introduction

- **Time to Talk Public Health (TTPH)** is a national panel of residents aged 16+ years established by Public Health Wales to enable regular public engagement to inform public health policy and practice. The established mechanism provides an opportunity to undertake additional tailored surveys to coincide with the delivery of the national survey to gather insights on specific regions or topics.
- To support the response of the Community Relations and Wellbeing Workstream of the TATA Steel UK Transition Board, Public Health Wales commissioned a regional survey as part of TTPH to investigate the health, social and financial status of people living in Neath Port Talbot as the area experiences the changes at TATA Steel.
- This report presents findings of the Neath Port Talbot Regional Survey that was conducted with 301 people living in the area between January and March 2025.
- The regional survey was conducted in tandem with the routine national survey ([TTPH February 2025 survey report](#); opens in new window), with some matched questions being included in both surveys. Comparisons between the regional data and the national data collected in the same period is possible but should be treated with caution due to different recruitment methods. The national data is collected via a panel of participants who partially self-select to take part in surveys focused on public health topics and thus may be affected by bias towards residents with a greater interest in public health and healthcare issues.
- More information on TTPH and the findings of the national survey are published on our website ([Time to Talk Public Health Panel Publications - Public Health Wales](#); opens in new window).

Purpose of the Neath Port Talbot regional survey

- Since 2024, over 2,000 people in Neath Port Talbot have been made redundant by TATA Steel, thus the area has been experiencing a mass unemployment event, or MUE. An MUE is where major changes in a single large employer result in a high loss of jobs in a localised area ([Davies et al., 2017](#); opens in new window). It impacts those directly employed by the single large employer, as well as indirectly impacting the wider supply chain and local businesses. For more information on the MUE in Neath Port Talbot, visit [Written Statement: Tata Steel UK Ltd \(25 April 2024\) | GOV.WALES](#) (opens in new window).
- Evidence shows that an MUE can significantly impact the health, social and economic situation of individuals, families and communities (see [Davies et al. 2017](#) for a review from a public health lens). In summary, people have been reported to engage in more unhealthy behaviours (e.g. drinking more alcohol, drug misuse), have increased risk of physical and mental ill-health (e.g. risk of hospitalisation due to alcohol-related disease, cardiovascular and circulatory disease, loss of self-esteem, increased anxiety), and experience lower levels of well-being (e.g. experiencing financial hardship, low life satisfaction). Additionally, a community is impacted through loss of community cohesion, increased competition for jobs, and devaluation of homes, which can all in turn lead to financial insecurity. Financial insecurity is when an individual or household does not have the finances to meet their current financial obligations and maintain a reasonable standard of living.
- Understanding the impacts of an MUE on an area can inform the public health response to lessen the negative consequences and to design resilience measures that support the community (those impacted as well as their family, friends and wider community).



[Davies, Homolova, Grey & Bellis. \(2019\). Mass Unemployment Events \(MUEs\) – Prevention and Response from a Public Health Perspective. Cardiff: Public Health Wales](#)

- **Key findings:** 301 people took part in the Neath Port Talbot Regional Survey 2025 (28th January to 15th March 2025).

Health and well-being

- When asked how much of a positive or negative impact eight factors had been having on their health and well-being over the previous two weeks, the top four positive and negative factors were:

Positive impact:

- Social relationships (83%),
- The area they live in (68%),
- Housing security (65%), and
- Ability to access support for health concerns (43%).

Negative impact:

- Ability to access support for health concerns (31%),
- Future job prospects (12%),
- The area they live in (12%), and
- Housing security (9%).
- A high feeling of worthwhile (74%), happiness (72%), and life satisfaction (67%) were reported by over two thirds of people.

Financial insecurity

- 15% of people reported having needed financial support in the last six months.
- 32% of people reported being currently financially insecure.
- Financial concerns for the next six months included the cost of:
 - Energy (56%),
 - Food (44%), and
 - Housing (26%).

Information sources

- The top three ways of getting information to people about support available to them were: social media (57%), websites (26%), and email (24%).
- 49% of people knew mental health support was available in the area.

Changes at TATA Steel

- 8% of people said they or someone in their household were personally affected by the changes at TATA Steel.
- Overall, 44% of people said they knew someone (including themselves) who was affected by the changes.
- When asked what type of impact they thought changes at TATA Steel would have on Neath Port Talbot across nine different areas, more than half felt the following would be negatively impacted:
 - Employment opportunities (89%),
 - People's mental health (83%),
 - Community spirit (73%),
 - Housing market (58%), and
 - Children and young people (58%).
- More than three quarters of people (76%) felt the changes would have a positive impact on air quality in the area.

Method

- A target of 300 face-to-face interviews of people aged 16 years and over, living in Neath Port Talbot was set.
- Quota sampling was used to set target interview numbers required by age, sex, deprivation quintile and ethnicity from the county borough Neath Port Talbot based on available population data for the area ([Census 2021](#)).
- Participants were recruited from the general population as a whole; they were not recruited based on their association to the MUE. The employment status of participants has been provided to illustrate this.
- Data were collected between 28th January and 15th March 2025.
- The regional survey was developed in partnership with the Neath Port Talbot Community and Cohesion Well-being Group.
- The survey focused on:
 - Health and well-being,
 - Financial insecurity,
 - Information sources, and
 - Changes at TATA Steel
- No financial incentive was provided to participants for taking part. We are very grateful to the residents of Neath Port Talbot who gave their valuable time to participate in the survey.

Unless stated otherwise, data presented in this report are weighted to reflect population demographics of Neath Port Talbot by age, sex and deprivation quintile.

Please note. Percentages in this report may not total 100% due to rounding.

Survey sample

- A total of 301 interviews were achieved, with the survey taking an average 14 minutes and 11 seconds to complete.
- This table provides a breakdown of the survey sample achieved across the quota areas of age, sex, deprivation quintile and ethnicity. The target area population quotas were based on Census 2021 data for Neath Port Talbot and are shown here for comparison with the survey sample.
- The employment status of the survey sample was:
 - Full time employed: 26%
 - Part time employed: 17%
 - Self-employed: 3%
 - Student: 6%
 - Unemployed: 7%
 - Long-term sick, disabled or carer: 12%
 - Retired: 28%
 - Other: 1%

		Survey sample (N = 301)		Area population
		n	%	%
Age group (years)	16-29	76	25%	20%
	30-49	77	26%	29%
	50-69	91	30%	32%
	70+	57	19%	19%
Sex	Male	143	48%	49%
	Female	158	53%	51%
Deprivation quintile	1 - Most deprived	120	40%	35%
	2	79	26%	30%
	3	27	9%	15%
	4	49	16%	10%
	5 - Least deprived	26	9%	11%
Ethnicity	White	292	97%	97%
	Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups	5	2%	2%
	Asian, Asian Welsh or Asian British	<5	1%	<1%
	Black, African, Caribbean, Black Welsh or Black British	<5	1%	1%
	Other Ethnic Group	0	0%	<1%



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

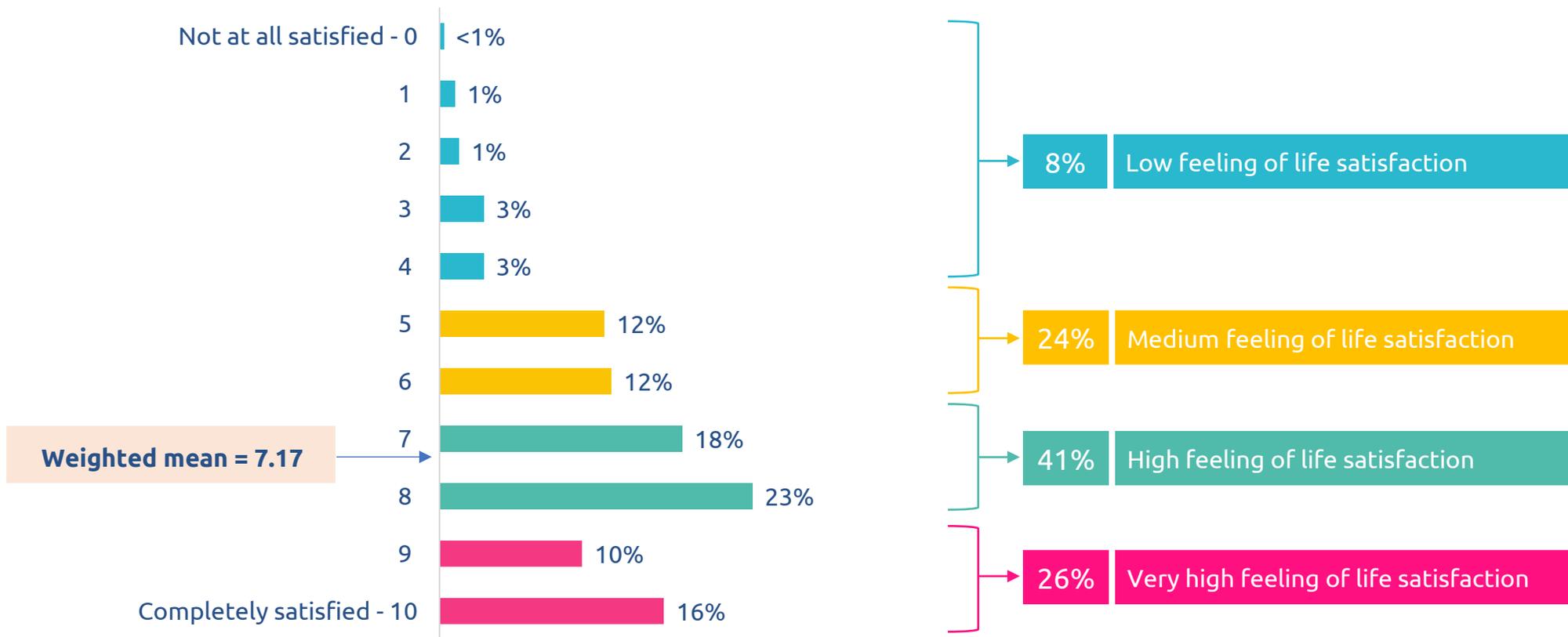
Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Health and well-being

This section includes the Office for National Statistics personal well-being questions (ONS4) in which responses were categorised from an 11-point Likert scale to four categories in line with ONS guidance ([Personal well-being user guidance - Office for National Statistics](#); opens in new window). Thresholds for 'life satisfaction', 'worthwhile' and 'happiness' were categorised as: low (0 to 4), medium (5 to 6), high (7 to 8), and very high (9 to 10), while 'anxiety' was categorised as: very low (0 to 1), low (2 to 3), medium (4 to 5), and high (6 to 10). The 11-point Likert scale was used to calculate the weighted mean.

Health and well-being

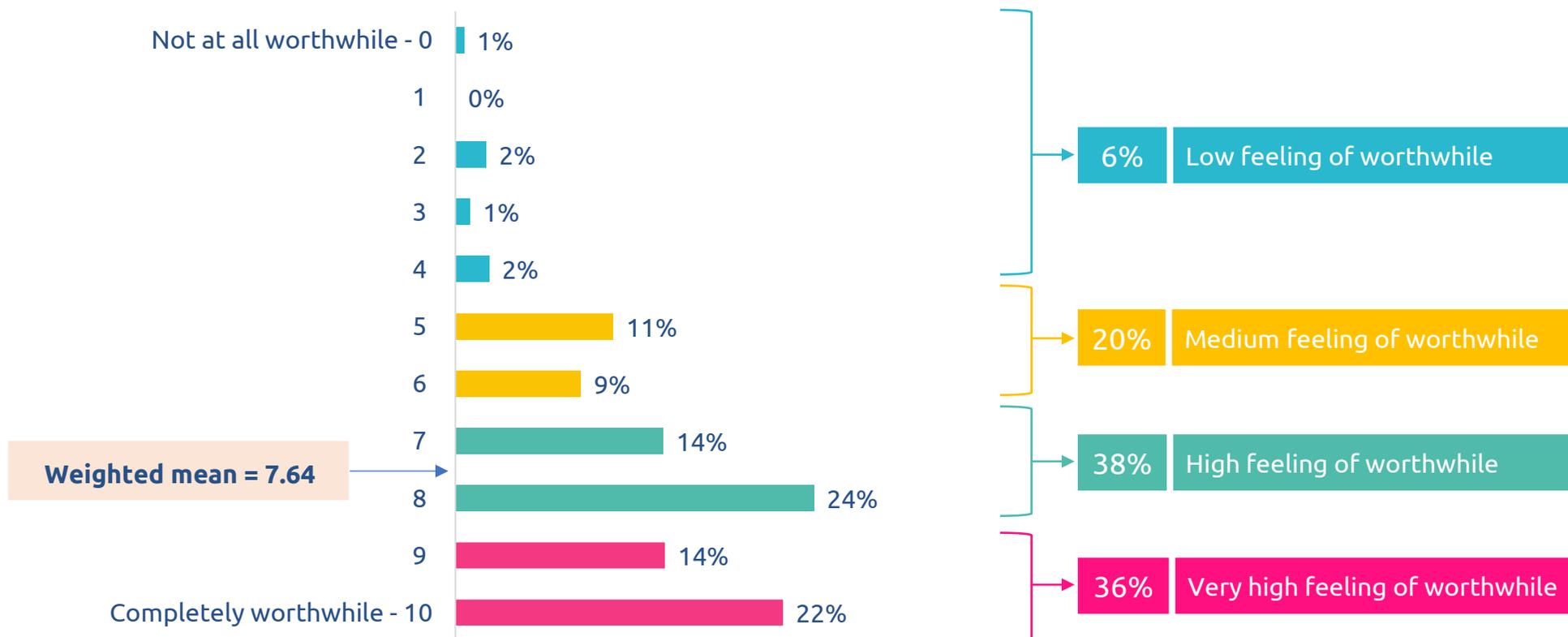
Overall, how satisfied are you with your life nowadays, where 0 is "not at all satisfied" and 10 is "completely satisfied"?



Prefer not to say: 0%

Health and well-being

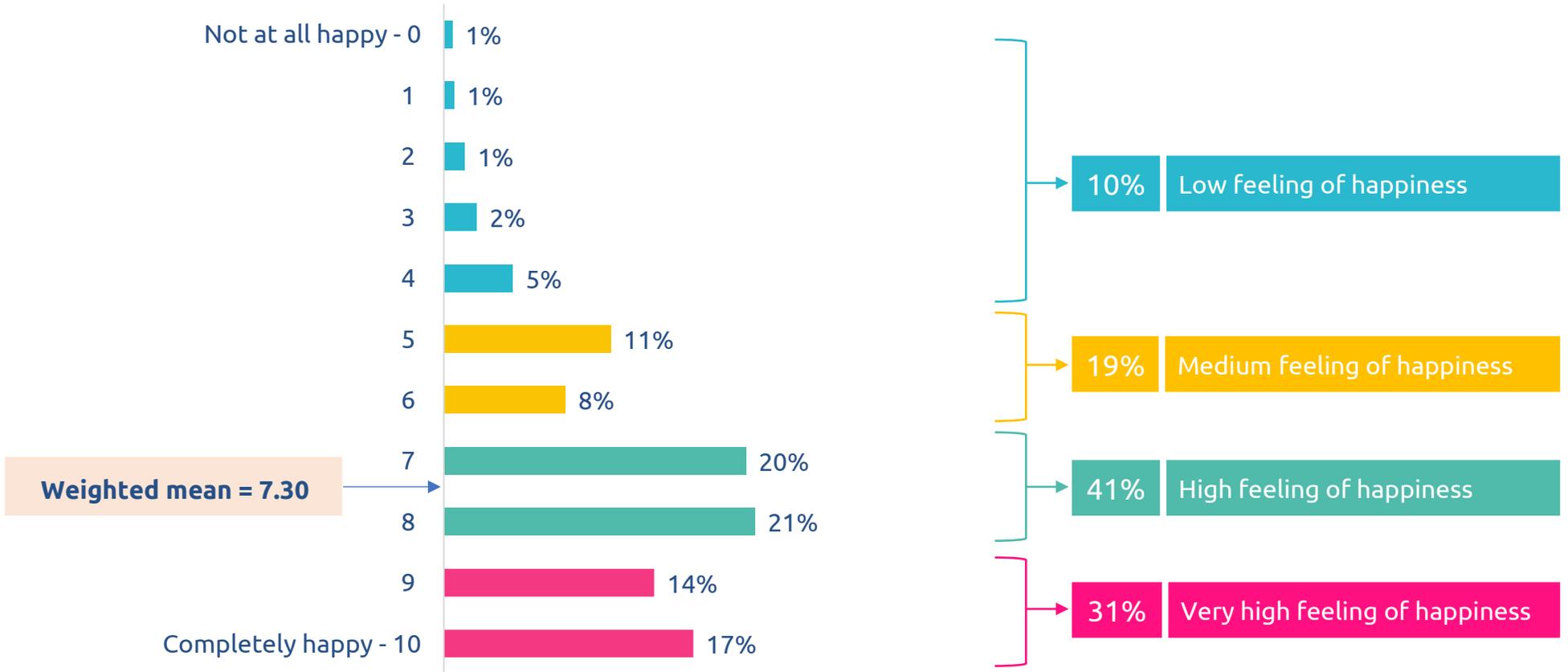
Overall, to what extent do you feel that the things you do in your life are worthwhile, where 0 is "not at all worthwhile" and 10 is "completely worthwhile"?



Prefer not to say: 0%

Health and well-being

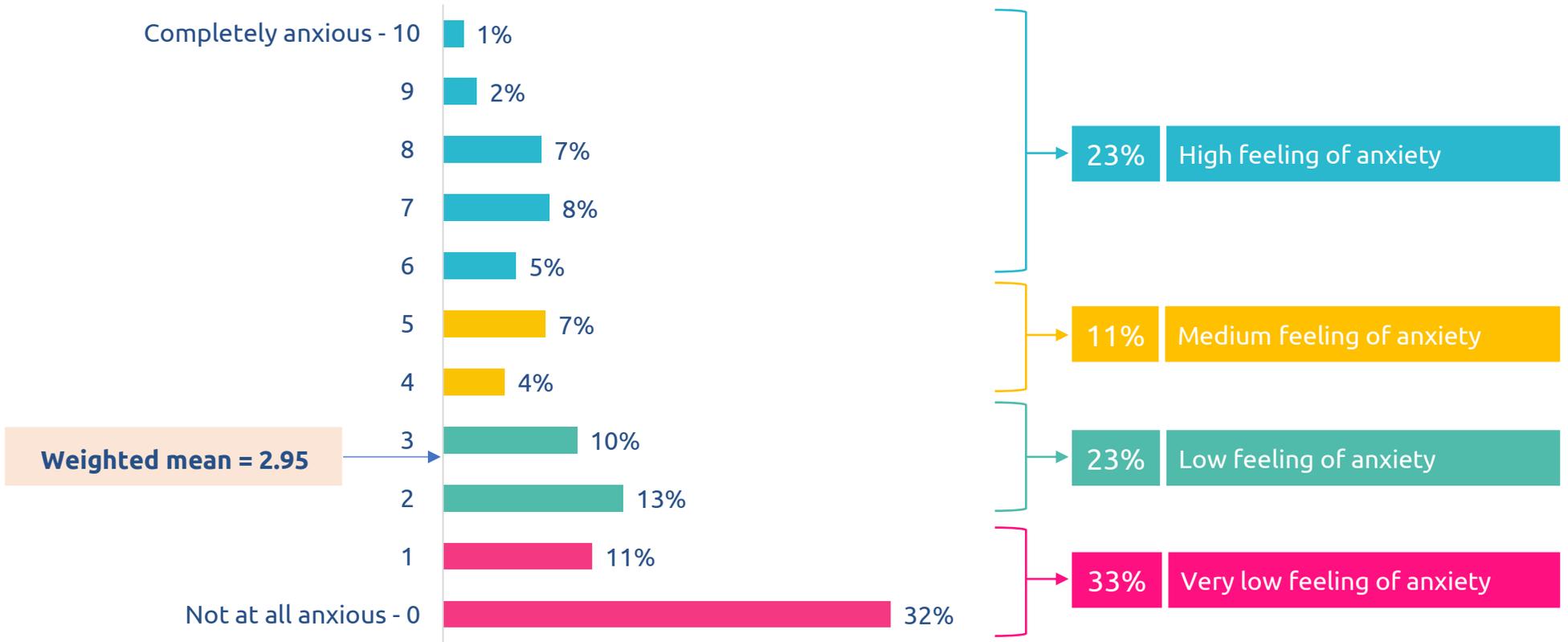
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday, where 0 is "not at all happy" and 10 is "completely happy"?



Prefer not to say: 0%

Health and well-being

On a scale where 0 is "not at all anxious" and 10 is "completely anxious", overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?



Prefer not to say: 0%



Health and well-being

Over the last two weeks, how much of a positive or negative impact have the following been having on your health and well-being?

	Very positive	Somewhat positive	No impact	Somewhat negative	Very negative	Not applicable
Your social relationships (e.g. family, close friends)	51%	32%	12%	4%	Less than 1%	-
Your housing security	40%	25%	26%	7%	2%	-
The area you live in	30%	38%	19%	11%	1%	-
Your parenting or childcare responsibilities	21%	10%	16%	4%	1%	48%
Your job security	19%	9%	18%	5%	2%	48%
Your ability to access support for any health concerns	14%	29%	21%	23%	8%	4%
Your job prospects for the future	13%	16%	22%	9%	3%	36%
Volunteering within your community (formal and informal)	10%	11%	21%	1%	Less than 1%	57%

Prefer not to say for each statement: equal to or less than 1%.

A hyphen in a cell is to illustrate that the 'not applicable' response option was not available for that statement.

Health and well-being

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements.

I am able to get the support I need from...

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	Not applicable
My family and close friends	63%	28%	5%	1%	Less than 1%	-	3%
My partner or spouse	41%	17%	8%	1%	1%	-	33%
My co-workers	14%	20%	13%	3%	1%	-	50%
My employer	12%	16%	13%	5%	1%	-	52%
My local community	16%	32%	27%	9%	1%	15%	-
My local health services	14%	38%	16%	22%	6%	4%	-
Community organisations	11%	19%	30%	9%	1%	28%	-
My local council	6%	21%	31%	14%	5%	24%	-

Prefer not to say for each statement: equal to or less than 1%.

A hyphen in a cell is to illustrate that the 'don't know' or 'not applicable' response options were not available for that statement.

Health and well-being

Compared to six months ago, would you say the following have increased, decreased, or stayed the same?

	Increased	Stayed the same	Decreased	Not applicable - I never do this
The amount of physical activity you do (e.g. walking, gym, running)	30%	51%	14%	5%
How healthily you eat	23%	66%	8%	2%
The time you spend socialising with other people	10%	65%	23%	2%
Your use of medication (i.e. prescribed and over the counter)	10%	58%	5%	27%
The amount you smoke (tobacco / vaping)	7%	13%	4%	75%
The amount of alcohol you drink	6%	50%	14%	30%
The amount you gamble	2%	11%	4%	83%
Your use of Illicit drugs	Less than 1%	6%	1%	93%

Prefer not to say for each statement: equal to or less than 1%



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

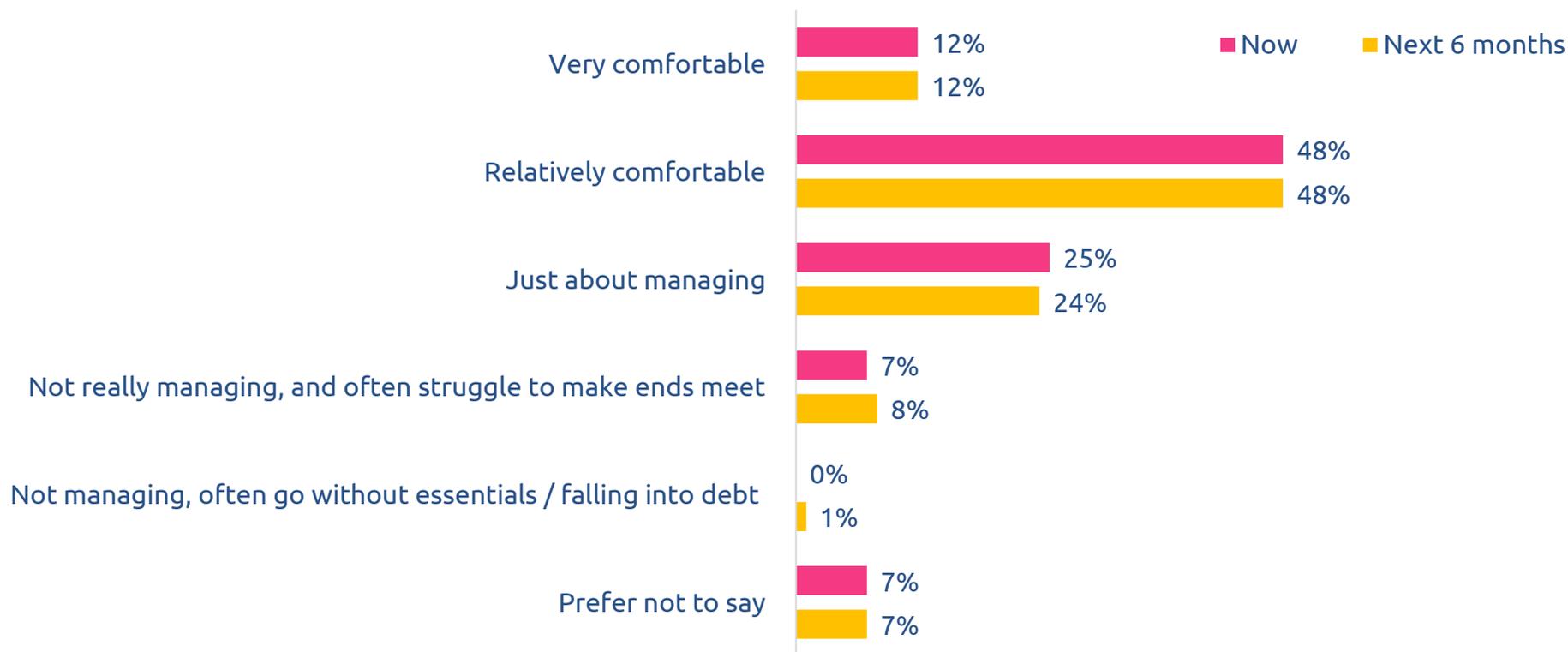
Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Financial insecurity

Financial insecurity is when an individual or household does not have the finances to confidently afford their financial obligations and maintain a reasonable standard of living. Evidence has shown financial insecurity can have a negative impact of people's physical and mental health, and should be considered at an individual, family and community level in the response to an MUE ([Davies et al., 2017](#); opens in new window).

Financial insecurity

Thinking about your household finances, which of the following best reflects your current position and the position you think you will be in, in the next six months? This question was asked as two independent questions.



Financial insecurity

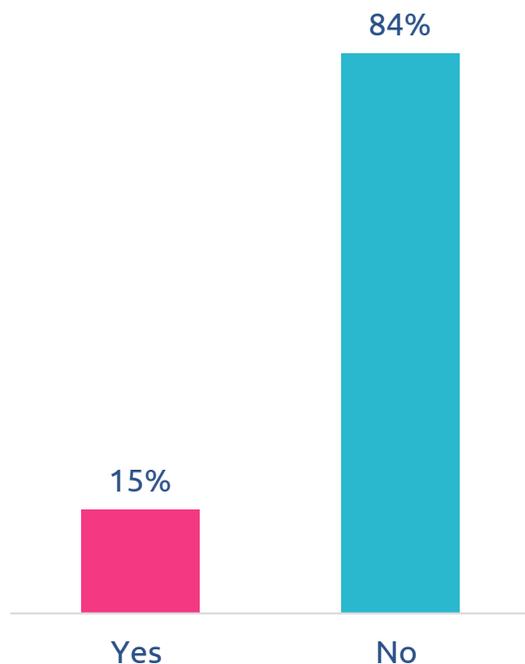
Which of the following, if any, do you think will be financial concerns for your household in the next six months? (Select all that apply)

	Yes
Energy costs (e.g. heating, cooking)	56%
Food costs	44%
Housing costs (e.g. rent/mortgage payments)	26%
Car/public transport costs	24%
Providing for the needs of my child/ren (under 18 years of age; excluding childcare)	13%
Childcare	5%
Other	2%
I do not think I will have any financial concerns in the next six months (exclusive response)	26%

Free text responses to 'Other' were re-coded into existing categories where appropriate. For example, responses relating to water bills and house maintenance costs were coded into 'housing costs'. Prefer not to say: 2%

Financial insecurity

Have you needed any financial support (e.g. loan, food bank, housing support) in the last six months?



Prefer not to say: 1%

Limited to those who said 'yes' they have needed financial support in the last six months (n = 46; unweighted).

Which of the following financial support options have you used in the last six months? (Select all that apply)

	Yes
Family or friends	60%
Food bank	21%
Bank or building society	14%
Other	6%
I have not used financial support even though I have needed it (exclusive response)	5%

The following listed response options were coded into 'other' due to low response numbers: emergency loan, housing support, employability and training support, Citizens Advice, emergency credit for heating your home. Prefer not to say: 0%

Financial insecurity

Limited to those who said they have used financial support in the last six months (n = 40; unweighted).

Did you experience any difficulties when accessing the support? (Select all the apply)



An open-text response received: "There is ostensibly support there, but it's not really support when you just get handed a list of websites to search. I do feel let down and swept under the carpet."

The following listed response options were coded into 'other' due to low response numbers: I did not meet the threshold(s) for support, I did not know how to access it, I was put on a waiting list. Prefer not to say: 0%

Financial insecurity

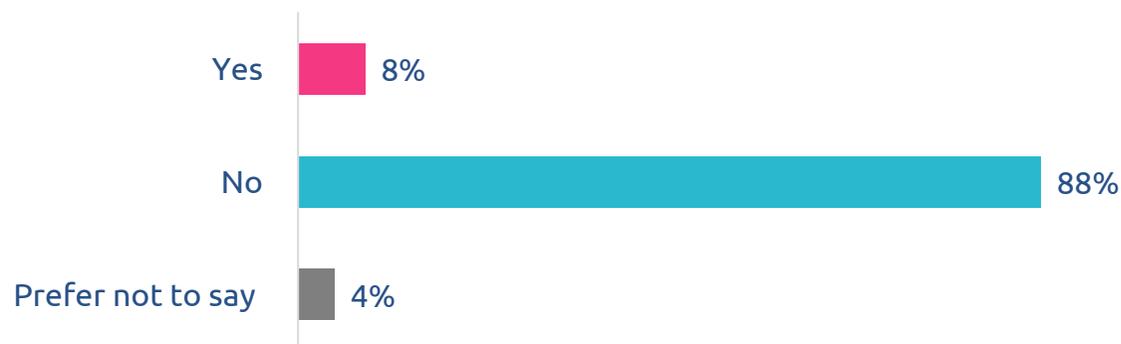
Has your employment status changed in the last six months?

Prefer not to say: less than 1%



Of the 28 people who reported their employment status had changed in the last six months, reasons for the change included retiring early or as planned, being made redundant, starting a new a job, remaining in the same job but hours either increased or decreased, promotion, maternity leave, or sickness and health reasons.

Do you expect your employment status to change in the next six months?





GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

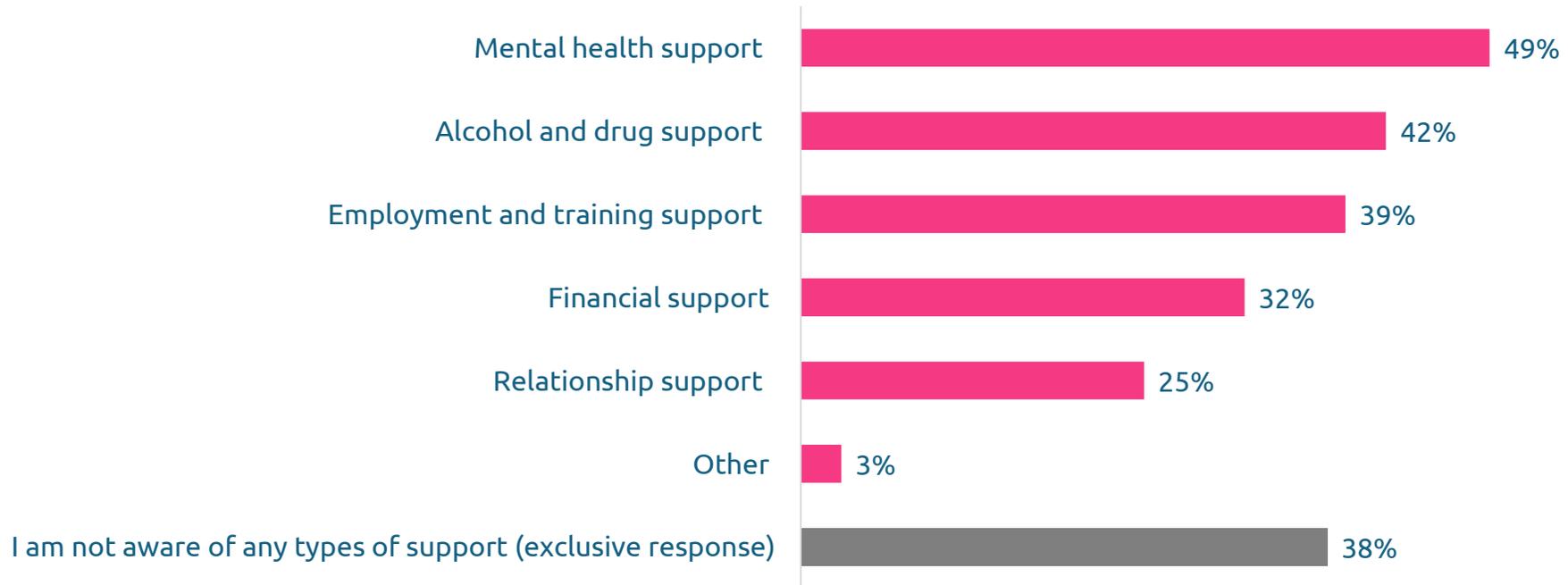
Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Information sources

This section asked people about their awareness of general information sources, and how they would like any support to be communicated to them. The questions were not focused on information relating to changes at TATA Steel.

Information sources

Which of the following types of support do you know are available to people in Neath Port Talbot?
(Select all that apply)

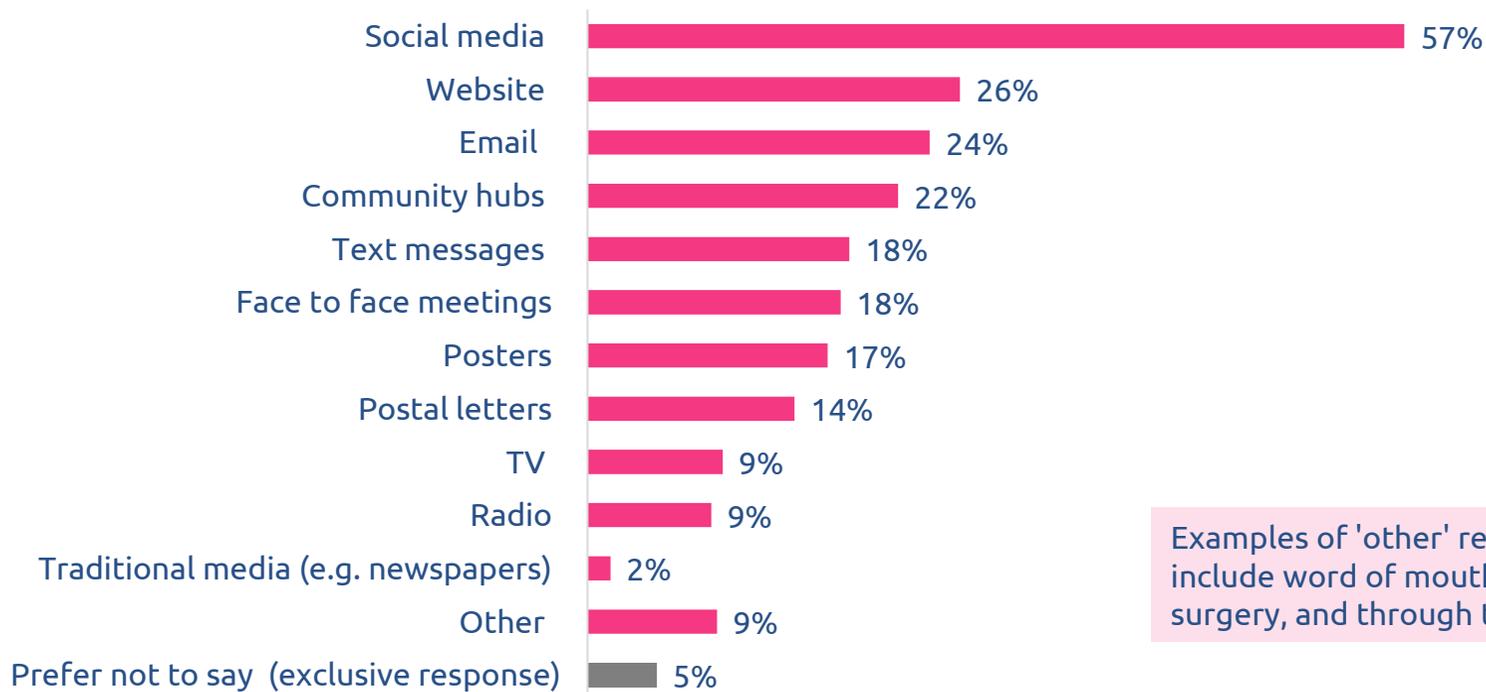


Prefer not to say: 3%



Information sources

There are lots of ways people can be told about support that is available for them. From the following list, what would be the best three ways of getting information to you?



Examples of 'other' responses provided include word of mouth, through their GP surgery, and through the library.

Participants were able to select up to three choices; 57% selected three options, 14% selected two options, and 29% selected one option. The graph presents the percentage of participants who selected each option.



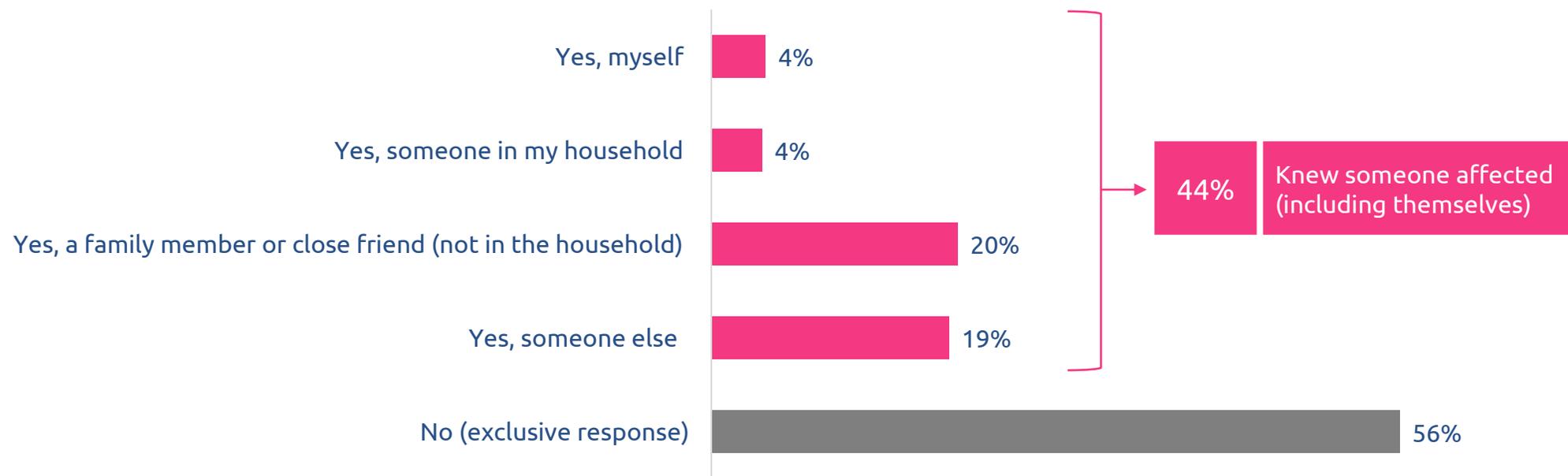
GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Changes at TATA Steel

Changes at TATA Steel

Have you or someone close to you been affected by the changes at TATA Steel? (Select all that apply)



Of the people who reported that they are personally affected and/or someone in their household has been affected by the changes at TATA Steel, some ways in which they have been affected were being made redundant, lost their job, or leaving/left due to uncertainty.

Prefer not to say: 1%



Changes at TATA Steel

What type of impact do you think the changes at TATA Steel will have on the following in Neath Port Talbot?

	Positive impact	No impact	Negative impact	Prefer not to say
Employment opportunities	1%	5%	89%	6%
People's mental health	3%	8%	83%	5%
Community spirit	6%	16%	73%	5%
Housing market	13%	20%	58%	9%
Children and young people	10%	26%	58%	6%
People's physical health	23%	20%	48%	10%
Crime rates	2%	35%	47%	16%
Tourism	14%	55%	21%	11%
Air quality	76%	16%	2%	6%

Want to be involved in Time to Talk Public Health?

Recruitment to Time to Talk Public Health is continuous as we want to speak with a broad range of individuals across Wales.

If you live in Wales and are aged 16+ years, this is your opportunity to be heard.

Want to learn more about how to live a healthy and prosperous life?

Want to find out how to help your community flourish?

Public Health Wales works to protect and improve health and well-being and reduce health inequalities for the people of Wales.



TalkPHWales.com



02920 227744



TalkPHWales@wales.nhs.uk

Join the Group

How does the panel work?

Have your say!

What is public health?

Make a difference!



Project contributors

Project Team:

Dr Catherine Sharp¹, Prof Karen Hughes¹, Dr Charlotte Grey², Lucia Homolova², Carys Dale¹

¹ Policy and International Health Directorate, WHO Collaborating Centre on Investment for Health & Well-being

² Research, Data and Digital Directorate

Wider Project Support Acknowledgements:

Policy and International Health Directorate, WHO CC: Dr Sumina Azam, Dr Rebecca Hill, Prof Liz Green

Research, Digital and Data Directorate: Prof Alisha Davies

Community Relations and Wellbeing Workstream of the TATA Steel UK Transition Board



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

Iechyd Cyhoeddus
Cymru
Public Health
Wales

Gweithio gyda'n gilydd i
greu Cymru iachach

Working together for a
healthier Wales

