UNIVERSITY OF TWENTE.

ENGAGED AT A DISTANCE

Report of the results of the 2021 well-being study among UT employees Wave 1 (April 2021)

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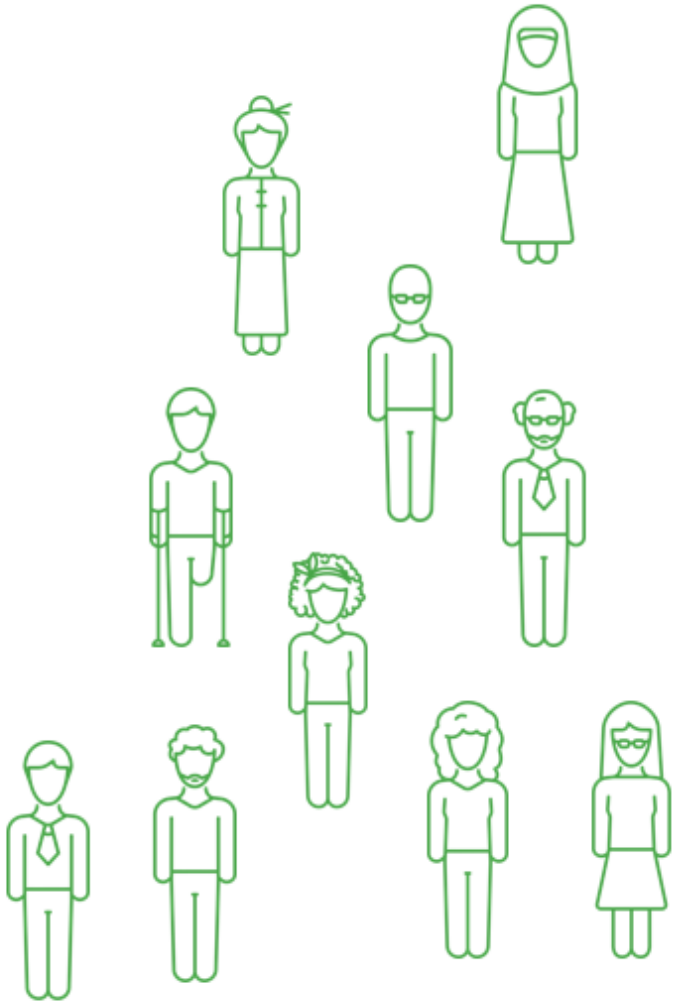

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

During April 2021 – the second year of the pandemic – the University of Twente (UT) is measuring the well-being of its employees. Still, most of the common work of employees is done from home, although some activities are allowed on campus. What does it mean for the well-being of the employees, to work primarily from home for such a long time. Do we see a drop in commitment to the organisation? What does it mean for the perception of workload and excessive work hours? How do we think about the quality of work?

For exploring employee experiences and needs under these circumstances, a bilingual online survey was distributed to one-third of the employees (employed at 1 April, 2021). Unlike previous years, we are not surveying all of our staff at the same time. As the current circumstances are unique and we can't yet predict how things will be in three months, we have decided to divide staff into three representative groups and hold the survey in three waves (April, Summer and Autumn). This report is about the results of Wave 1: the questionnaire was online available for completion from 15 April until 9 May 2021. The survey was largely based on the well-being survey of 2019 and a selection of questions of the Well-being under Covid-19 survey held in 2020. A few new questions were included.

In total 1225 emails with links to the questionnaires were distributed. The response was satisfying: in total 469 responses were counted with valid answers, which is a net response rate of 37.5%.

Most important findings

1. In general, UT employees are both engaged and strained. They have much energy and dedication to their job, however, at the same time they feel strained by the amount of demands and role overload.
2. Still, most respondents are satisfied with the UT, on average they grade the UT with a 7.5, which is similar to 2020 (7.6) and still somewhat higher than 2019 (7.2).
3. Commitment to the organisation is on a lower level than 2019. The organisational stimuli, like job crafting and HRM satisfaction, are on a similar level compared with 2019. The same applies for the job demands and job resources. The only one exception is organisational commitment, which is lower than in 2019. Of course, we cannot compare the results in a strict sense of a repeated measurement, because we have two different samples. Still, the averages of both groups are similar for every antecedent, except commitment. We assume that the long period of homeworking has its impact on the emotional attachment to the university as a whole.
4. The high strain is also reflected in the perceived workload. 45% of the respondents in wave 1 perceive a (way) too high workload. In 2020 it was 38% and in 2019 it was 44%. Especially scientific staff (teachers, assistant, associate and full professors) are mostly perceiving a high workload, with managers close behind and support staff is experiencing the least workload.

5. 52% work fully from home (in 2020 72%), while 43% work partly from home and on campus (was 24%); these numbers reflect the different situation of spring 2021 compared to early Summer 2020.
6. Since last year, the UT employees in general learned to cope with homework and working fully online. At least the perceived teaching quality has been improved. Also, work-life balance has been improved a little. Still, rather large amounts of people are struggling with work-life balance (34%).
7. The preferences for working from home by and large remained the same: the majority want to work not more than 2 days from home. However, the preference for three or four days at home is higher in wave 1. Age is important here: two-third of the younger employees (under 30s) want to work from home a maximum of one-two days. Apparently, individual differences are relevant in these preferences. The preferences for homeworking were not different between organisational units and function groups.

Recommendations
Based on the findings of the first wave, it is possible to derive a few preliminary recommendations, however, these recommendations will be elaborated after wave 2 and wave 3.

1. Since hybrid working will be the norm for most employee groups, the UT should accommodate the diverse preferences of the employees. Do not develop a standard norm for e.g. two days at home, be flexible about it and adapt the norm to personal circumstances. Younger employees in general want to be more on campus, other age groups less, this is across organisational units and functions. A 'one fits all' approach towards the working time spend at home and on campus is inadvisable.

2. Scientific staff (Teachers/lecturers, Assistant, Associate and Full professors) experiences the highest workload. Next to scientific staff, the managers perceive a too high workload. Reducing the amount of work is an unquestionable precondition for well-being. Especially reducing meetings and administrative work that academic professionals have to do is a key to achieve this. In developing new policies, adapting existing policies, the focus should not only be on the students or managerial issues, the primary focus should be on staff and its well-being. This is a UT-wide challenge.

3. Continue with the well-being initiatives. It has been observed and appreciated by the employees. Pay attention to specific groups: the managers, young employees, new employees, employees with unsecure contracts.

4. Pay attention to the role of the direct supervisor. Despite the fact that certain attention or target groups could be identified, never forget that also within groups (large) differences between apparently equal group members concerning desires and needs do exist. For finding individual differences and adequate solutions that both affect

employee well-being and productivity, the role of direct supervisors is crucial. Direct communications between supervisors and individual staff members is inevitable for continuing a fit between organisational policies and practices and employees.

1 AIMS AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Aims of the study

Scientific research, education and valorisation are performed by people. Therefore, Executive Board (CvB) of the University of Twente (UT) and the indirect participation bodies (university council and OPUT) ascribe great importance to safeguarding employee well-being at UT. The EB therefore commissioned on-going studies into employee well-being and its antecedents. Moreover, regulations on working conditions (in Dutch: ARBO) pose the requirement to monitor the psychological strain of employees as part of the Risico-inventarisatie & Evaluatie (RIE). In line with this requirement, this well-being study assesses the risks of work pressure (strain) and its antecedents.

Taken together the aims of the survey are therefore

1. To measure the trends in employee well-being, defined as employees' perceptions of work engagement and work pressure (strain).
2. To measure relevant antecedents – i.e. human resource management (HRM), job crafting, job demands and job resources – of employee well-being.
3. To measure the current employee experiences and preferences about working from home and working on campus, due to the Covid-19 measures; this includes measuring the trends in well-being.
4. To measure employees' perceptions of aggression and violence at work.
5. The fulfilment of the aforementioned aims can contribute to an improvement of the UT's HRM policies and practices as well as support priority setting.

On the basis of the research results, recommendations for policy and management will be formulated on how to safeguard employee well-being at the UT. With the results of this survey, we hope to contribute to the plans – required by the CAO – of the university to reduce work pressure, taken into account the complicated situation of hybrid working.

To achieve these five aims, the survey is based on the conceptual model developed for the Well-being survey of 2019[1]. We followed the Job-Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al, 2001; Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006) and enriched this model by adding insights from recent job crafting studies (Tims et al, 2012) and scholarly work into human resource management (HRM). The conceptual model served as the basis for the development of an employee survey used to measure employee well-being and its antecedents at the UT. To this survey, we added additional questions to measure employees' experiences of specific UT facilities as well as perceived aggression and

[1] De Leede, Meijerink & Torka (2019). Work engagement and work pressure: still in balance? A well-being study among UT employees. Report ref nr CvB UIT – 3998, 23-04-2019.

violence at work. In addition, selected questions of the Well-being under Covid-19 survey[2] were used to enable insights in the developments within well-being.

Based on the research results, recommendations for policy and management will be formulated for safeguarding employee well-being at the UT during COVID-19. With the results of this survey, we aim to contribute to both management and employees of the UT community.

1.2 Research design: three waves

This survey was distributed in Dutch and English. See Appendix 1 for the questionnaire. Unlike previous years, the questionnaire was not sent to all of our staff at the same time. During the presentations of the Well-being under Covid-19 among faculties and service departments, the most often heard remark was to repeat such a measurement more frequently. As the current circumstances are unique, the decision was made to have three waves of the 2021 survey: in April, Summer and Autumn 2021. Accordingly, staff was divided into three representative groups. One-third of the employees with a UT employment contract at 1 April 2021 were included in the sample of Wave 1. The PhD candidates without a labour contract with the UT (e.g. scholarships) will be included in the 2nd and 3rd Wave. Also the service departments with <100 employees were allocated to one of the three waves, in order to minimise the possibilities for non-anonymity due to small groups.

Table 1. Division of employees in three waves (in yellow the units fully assigned to one wave)

[2] De Leede, De Jager & Torka (2020). Working at home alone? A Well-being study among UT employees under Covid-19. 30-09-2020.

	Total UT employees in sample			Fully in wave
	Total	WP	OBP	
BMS	531	419	112	
EEMCS	642	496	146	
ET	522	403	119	
ITC	254	176	78	
TNW	827	563	264	
CES	170		170	
CFM	168		169	
FIN	48		48	2
GA	60		60	1
HR	49		49	1
LISA	165		165	
MC	85		85	3
SBD	31	2	29	1
SP	40		40	3
UCT	16	9	7	1
Pre-U	13	4	9	2
FPC	19	14	5	2
Total	**3640**	**2086**	**1555**	

In total 1225 emails with links to the questionnaires were distributed. The survey was open from April 15 until May 9, 2021. Two reminders were sent out on April 30 and May 7.
The response was satisfying: in total 469 responses were counted with valid answers, which is a net response rate of 37.5%. This is lower compared to the 47% response rate of the well-being UT 2019 survey and the 54% of the 2020 survey.

Table 2. Representativeness

	In wave 1	University of Twente	Response group wave 1
Organisational unit			
Faculty of Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences (BMS)	1/3	14.4%	14.5%
Faculty of Engineering Technology (ET)	1/3	14.4%	12.2%
Faculty of Electrical Engineering, Mathematics and Computer Science (EEMCS/EWI)	1/3	17.2%	15.6%
Faculty of Science and Technology (TNW)	1/3	22.5%	14.7%
Faculty of Geo-Information Science and Earth Observation (ITC)	1/3	7.4%	10.4%
General Affairs (GA)	complete	2.2%	6.8%
Campus & Facility Management (CFM)	1/3	4.9%	2.9%
Centre for Educational Support (CES)	1/3	4.8%	8.4%
Finance (FIN)	no	1.4%	Not included
Human Resources (HR)	complete	1.5%	5.2%
Library, ICT services & Archive (LISA)	1/3	4.4%	4.8%
Marketing & Communication (MC)	no	2.3%	Not included
Strategic Business Development (SBD)	complete	0.9%	3.8%
Strategy & Policy (SP)	no	1.1%	Not included
Not answered			5.7%
Job category			
Scientific staff		57.2%	48%
Support and management staff		42.8%	52%

Gender			
Female		42.2%	49.0%
Male		57.7%	49.0%
Other			0.7%

Analysis for representativeness shows that employees for the Science and Technology faculty and males have a slight under-representation. Due to the inclusion of some departments completely in this wave, these departments are slightly overrepresented. This was a deliberate choice for reasons of anonymity of the respondents of smaller departments.

1.3 Research model

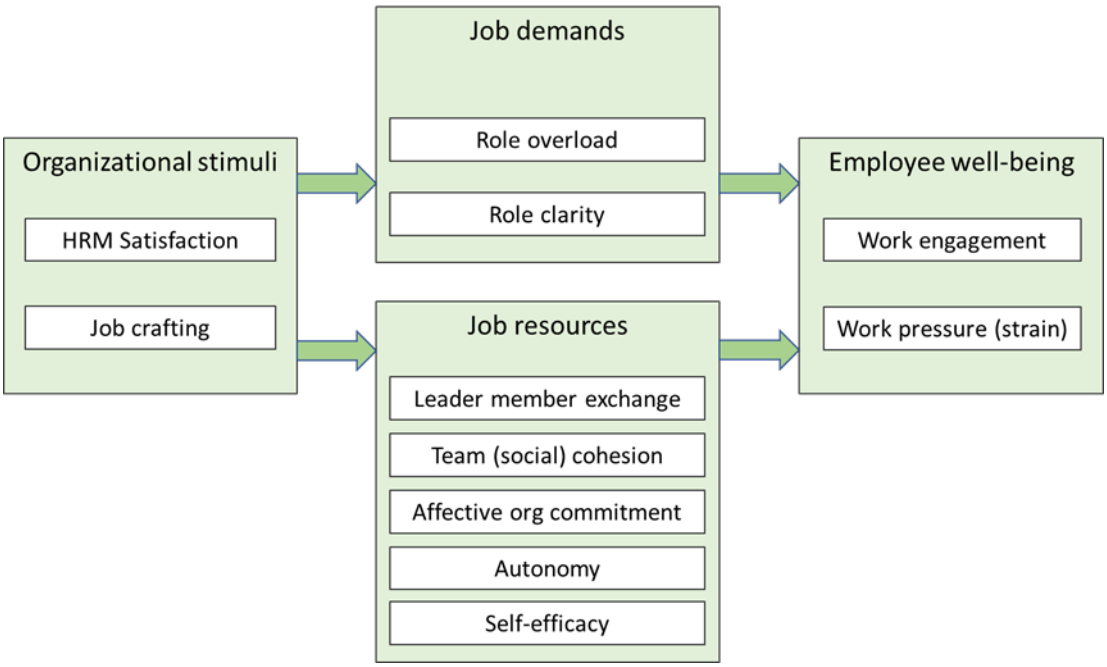
This 2021 Well-being study re-uses the conceptual model of the well-being study of 2019. Two major reasons are: (1) the possibility to compare the results of 2021 and 2019 and (2) the conceptual model of 2019 is well grounded in the academic literature on well-being ate work.

The conceptual model explains employee well-being and its antecedents (see Figure 1). The core of the conceptual model is based on the Job-Demands-Resources (JD-R) model[3]. The JD-R model predicts that employee well-being is a function of job demands (i.e. job characteristics that drain energy, such as role overload and poor role clarity (also called: role ambiguity)) versus job resources (i.e. job characteristics which enable employees to realize their goals and which are energising). We included job resources that relate to the job (autonomy and self-efficacy), the supervisor (leader-member exchange (LMX)), the team (team cohesion) and the organisation (commitment).

To examine how organisational policies/practices impact job demands and job resources, and how employees themselves can safeguard their well-being, we decided to examine employee satisfaction with HRM activities such as development opportunities, appraisal and feedback (as relevant organisational policies/practices that may impact well-being) as well as employee reports of job crafting (i.e. employee-initiated changes to job demands/resources for sustaining well-being). Since HRM activities and job crafting are unlikely to have a direct relationship with employee well-being, we hypothesize that job demands and job resources mediate between employee satisfaction with HRM / job crafting and employee well-being. Employee well-being is conceptualized as work engagement and work pressure/strain to tap into both the desirable dimensions of well-being (i.e. work engagement) as well as its undesirable dimensions (i.e. work pressure/strain).

[3] Bakker, A.B. and Demerouti, E. (2007), "The job demands-resources model: state of the art", Journal of Managerial Psychology, Vol. 22, pp. 309-28.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual model



2 FINDINGS ON SATISFACTION, WORK ENGAGEMENT AND STRAIN

2.1 Satisfaction with UT, engagement and strain

On average, the respondents assess the UT with 7.5 (scale 1-10), which is almost comparable with 2020 and still somewhat higher compared with 2019.

Figure 2.1 Satisfaction with UT

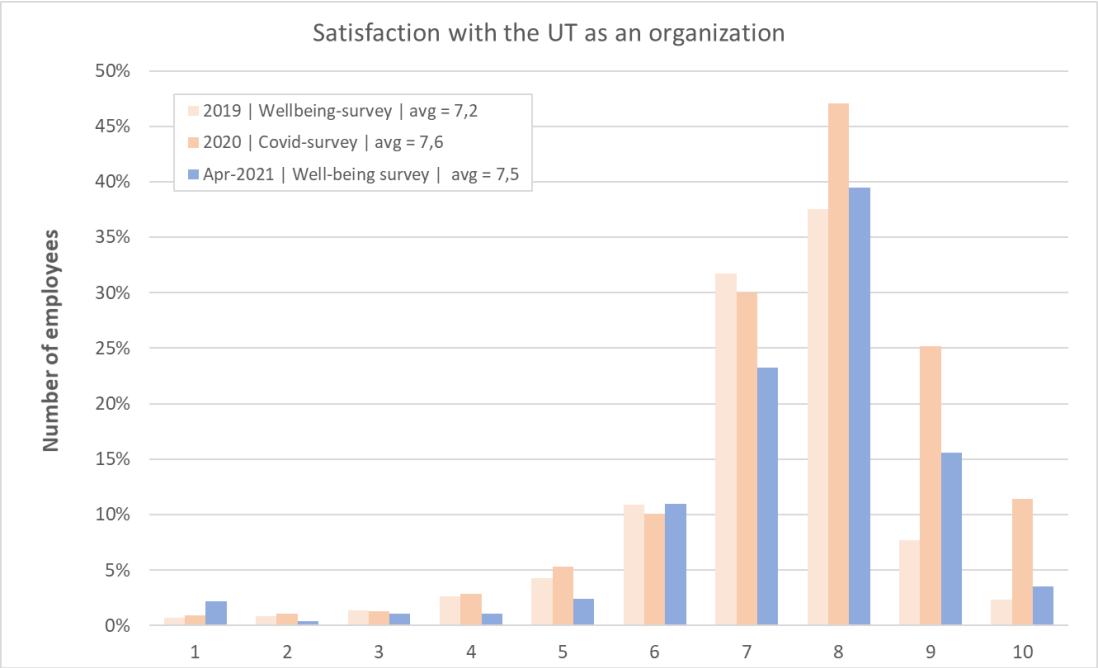


Table 2.1: General satisfaction with UT, engagement and strain per organisational unit

Organisational unit	General satisfaction[1]		Engagement[2]		Strain[3]	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	SD	*Mean*	*SD*
BMS	7.30	*1.57*	5.16	*.92*	3.41	*.91*
ET	7.26	*1.70*	5.21	*.87*	3.38	*1.01*
EEMCS/EWI	7.49	*1.54*	5.14	*1.04*	3.59	*.84*
TNW	7.34	*1.47*	5.20	*.98*	3.50	*.77*
ITC	7.41	*1.27*	5.36	*1.08*	3.36	*.99*
GA	8.10	*1.18*	5.03	*.89*	3.12	*.86*
CFM	7.62	*1.04*	4.78	*.64*	3.56	*.93*
CES	7.97	*.73*	5.16	*.71*	3.09	*.94*
HR	7.83	*.83*	5.25	*1.07*	3.43	*.58*
LISA	7.86	*1.10*	5.13	*.93*	3.35	*1.01*
SBD	7.53	*1.06*	5.38	*1.13*	3.29	*1.07*
UT wave1	**7.52**	***1.39***	**5.18**	***.95***	**3.39**	***.91***

[1] Scale = 1 to 10
[2] Scale = 1 to 7
[3] Scale = 1 to 5
SD = standard deviation

Table 2.1 shows the means and standard deviations of general satisfaction, engagement and strain across organisational units. Anova/Bonferroni analysis was used to investigate whether the differences between organisational units are significant. No significant difference was found ($p < .05$).

Table 2.2: General satisfaction with UT, engagement and strain per function

Function	General satisfaction[1]		Engagement[2]		Strain[3]	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
PhD Candidate / PhD Student	7.54	*1.81*	4.98	*1.13*	3.62	*.80*
Researcher / Postdoc	6.65	*1.78*	5.23	*.90*	3.72	*.79*
Teacher / lecturer	7.04	*1.22*	5.25	*.84*	3.59	*.94*
Assistant Professor	7.20	*1.69*	5.39	*1.04*	3.55	*.91*
Associate Professor	7.00	*1.52*	5.20	*.93*	3.56	*.93*
Full professor	7.85	*.88*	5.42	*1.15*	3.32	*1.03*
Manager (service dept)	8.16	*.83*	4.92	*.70*	3.35	*.84*
Manager (faculties)	7.33	*.81*	5.56	*1.01*	3.17	*.35*
Support staff	7.80	*1.12*	5.17	*.89*	3.13	*.88*
I prefer not to answer this question	6.86	*1.06*	5.19	*1.11*	3.92	*.88*

[1] Scale = 1 to 10
[2] Scale = 1 to 7
[3] Scale = 1 to 5
SD = standard deviation

Table 2.2 shows the means and standard deviations of general satisfaction, engagement and strain across functions. Anova/Bonferroni analysis showed that a few differences between groups are significant ($p < .05$). For General satisfaction, the Researchers/Postdocs are significantly less satisfied compared with managers (service departments) and support staff. No significant differences were found for Engagement. For Strain the difference between support staff and PhD candidates is significant: PhD candidates showed more strain compared with support staff.

2.2 Organisational stimuli, job demands and job resources

Table 2.3 shows the means and standard deviations of the two organisational stimuli: job crafting (increasing structural and social job resources and increasing challenging demands) and HRM satisfaction across functions. Anova/Bonferroni analysis showed that a few differences between groups are significant ($p < .05$), such as BMS showing some less HRM satisfaction compared to CES.

Table 2.3: Organisational stimuli: Job crafting and HRM satisfaction per organisational unit

Organisational unit	Increasing structural job resources		Increasing social job resources		Increasing challenging job demands		HRM satisfaction	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	SD	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
BMS	5.36	*.73*	3.41	*.97*	4.11	*1.22*	3.42	*.61*
ET	5.50	*.85*	3.49	*.99*	4.00	*1.11*	3.55	*.66*
EEMCS/EW	5.44	*.90*	3.60	*.90*	3.92	*1.18*	3.64	*.67*
TNW	5.29	*.77*	3.44	*.93*	4.46	*1.13*	3.60	*.74*
ITC	5.14	*.99*	3.21	*.89*	4.42	*1.14*	3.52	*.83*
GA	5.39	*.73*	4.08	*.95*	4.61	*1.03*	3.87	*.67*
CFM	5.38	*.69*	3.78	*.66*	4.76	*1.42*	3.47	*.64*
CES	5.06	*.82*	3.55	*1.00*	4.05	*1.03*	3.90	*.62*
HR	5.40	*.66*	3.91	*.94*	4.47	*1.12*	3.88	*.49*
LISA	5.54	*.47*	4.15	*.83*	4.52	*.90*	3.64	*.69*
SBD	5.05	*.83*	3.77	*.97*	3.74	*1.28*	3.37	*.55*
UT wave1	**5.33**	***.81***	**3.57**	***.96***	**4.23**	***1.15***	**3.61**	***.68***

Only two significant (p<.05) differences in Table 2.4: CES has significantly more role overload compared with BMS and EEMCS. The other differences are not significant.

Table 2.4: Job demands: Role overload and Role ambiguity per organisational unit

Organisational unit	Role overload		Role ambiguity	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
BMS	1,80	*,29*	3.82	*.82*
ET	1,81	*,26*	3.93	*.67*
EEMCS/EW	1,84	*,26*	3.83	*.73*
TNW	1,83	*,27*	4.07	*.67*
ITC	1,79	*,27*	4.01	*.78*
GA	1,90	*,20*	4.18	*.67*
CFM	1,96	*,14*	4.30	*.56*
CES	1,89	*,24*	4.40	*.47*
HR	1,91	*,19*	4.11	*.50*
LISA	1,95	*,15*	4.07	*.54*
SBD	1,76	*,31*	3.74	*1.15*
UT wave1	**1,84**	***,26***	**3.79**	***.72***

Table 2.5 shows the means per unit for the job resources, however, no significant differences between organisational units here.

Table 2.5: Job resources: Leadership (LMX), team cohesion, autonomy, self-efficacy and commitment per organisational unit

Organisational unit	LMX		Team cohesion		Autonomy		Self-efficacy		Commitment	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
BMS	3.62	*.73*	4.01	*.69*	4.11	*.56*	4.00	*.73*	2.76	*.70*
ET	3.77	*.66*	3.80	*.64*	4.15	*.74*	3.95	*.64*	2.84	*.81*
EEMCS/EW	3.83	*.69*	3.81	*.63*	4.06	*.81*	3.83	*.71*	2.80	*.74*
TNW	3.80	*.61*	4.01	*.51*	4.20	*.73*	3.93	*.78*	2.71	*.77*
ITC	3.73	*.65*	4.03	*.67*	4.07	*.65*	3.95	*.65*	2.91	*.61*
GA	4.01	*.72*	4.23	*.75*	4.24	*.64*	4.00	*.75*	2.91	*.59*
CFM	3.88	*.90*	3.94	*.44*	4.17	*.63*	4.30	*.63*	2.88	*.48*
CES	3.96	*.62*	4.12	*.59*	3.99	*.65*	4.33	*.52*	3.02	*.59*
HR	3.91	*.42*	4.01	*.53*	4.14	*.58*	4.05	*.61*	2.81	*.52*
LISA	3.54	*.85*	4.12	*.44*	3.98	*.56*	4.01	*.55*	2.92	*.47*
SBD	3.80	*.65*	4.00	*.37*	4.35	*.53*	3.92	*.78*	3.01	*.74*
UT wave1	**3.79**	***.69***	**3.98**	***.61***	**4.12**	***.67***	**3.99**	***.69***	**2.84**	***.69***

Table 2.6 shows the results of the job crafting and HRM satisfaction. For increasing structural job resources full professors show significantly (p<.05) more compared with teachers/lecturers. An interesting significant difference is also in increasing social job resources between PhD Students and teachers, assistant, associate and full professors: they show all less social job resources compared with PhD students. Apparently, PhD students are asking more advice and coaching from their supervisors and colleagues, compared with the other scientific staff.

Table 2.6: Organisational stimuli: Job crafting and HRM satisfaction per function

Function	Increasing structural job resources		Increasing social job resources		Increasing challenging job demands		HRM satisfaction	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	SD	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
PhD Candidate / Student	5.50	*.94*	3.91	*.98*	3.42	*1.37*	3.64	*.68*
Researcher / Postdoc	5.38	*.75*	3.53	*.82*	3.82	*.96*	3.35	*.72*
Teacher / Lecturer	4.93	*.99*	3.14	*.87*	4.28	*1.13*	3.22	*.62*
Assistant Professor	5.45	*.90*	3.02	*.86*	4.35	*.97*	3.44	*.72*
Associate Professor	5.23	*.73*	2.82	*.82*	4.38	*.82*	3.43	*.59*
Full professor	5.83	*.68*	3.11	*.95*	5.05	*1.06*	4.06	*.58*
Manager (service dept)	5.65	*.65*	4.06	*.87*	5.07	*.85*	3.93	*.55*
Manager (faculties)	5.20	*.55*	3.75	*.59*	4.58	*1.06*	4.01	*.26*
Support staff	5.22	*.73*	3.72	*.93*	4.28	*1.04*	3.71	*.64*
I prefer not to answer this question	5.20	*.74*	3.46	*.91*	4.37	*1.09*	3.12	*.68*
UT wave1	**5.33**	***.81***	**3.57**	***.96***	**4.23**	***1.15***	**3.61**	***.68***

In Table 2.7 the job demands are presented per function, and Table 2.8 shows the result for de job resources per funtion.

Table 2.7: Job demands: Role overload and Role ambiguity per function

Function	Role overload		Role ambiguity	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
PhD Candidate / Student	1,83	*,27*	3/66	*.81*
Researcher / Postdoc	1,85	*,27*	3.93	*.73*
Teacher / Lecturer	1,76	*,30*	3.86	*.72*
Assistant Professor	1,69	*,29*	3.91	*.74*
Associate Professor	1,73	*,26*	3.94	*.44*
Full professor	1,73	*,29*	4.20	*.58*
Manager (service dept)	1,89	*,21*	4.29	*.51*
Manager (faculties)	1,92	*,20*	4.05	*.87*
Support staff	1,92	*,20*	4.16	*.66*
I prefer not to answer this question	1,75	*,32*	3.74	*.90*
UT wave1	**1,84**	***,26***	**4.00**	***.72***

Table 2.8: Job resources: Leadership (LMX), team cohesion, autonomy, self-efficacy and commitment per function

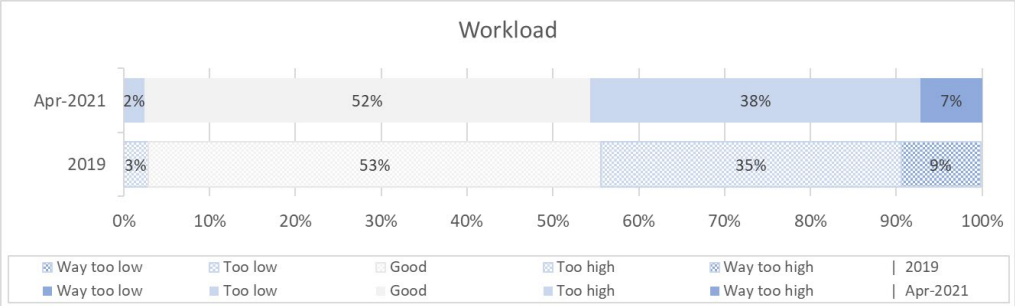
Function	LMX		Team cohesion		Autonomy		Self-efficacy		Commit ment	
	Mean	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
PhD Candidate / Student	3.78	*.61*	3.75	*.71*	4.05	*.84*	3.45	*.86*	2.72	*.85*
Researcher / Postdoc	3.70	*.63*	3.82	*.66*	4.11	*.72*	3.82	*.70*	2.61	*.82*
Teacher / Lecturer	3.36	*.84*	3.92	*.41*	3.92	*.95*	4.05	*.52*	2.71	*.58*
Assistant Professor	3.83	*.63*	4.09	*.69*	4.21	*.62*	4.18	*.58*	2.96	*.78*
Associate Professor	3.73	*.57*	3.92	*.33*	4.17	*.50*	4.10	*.56*	2.78	*.58*
Full professor	3.57	*.69*	4.19	*.54*	4.30	*.61*	4,16	*.44*	3.25	*.79*
Manager (service dept)	4.00	*.68*	4.36	*.48*	4.49	*.51*	4.16	*.46*	3.14	*.49*
Manager (faculties)	3.47	*.99*	4.05	*.80*	4.61	*.49*	3.94	*.64*	3.08	*.60*
Support staff	3.91	*.65*	4.01	*.59*	4.09	*.60*	4.08	*.62*	2.84	*.58*
I prefer not to answer this question	3.48	*.82*	3.85	*.53*	3.87	*.59*	3.97	*.77*	2.63	*.63*
UT wave1	**3.79**	***.69***	**3.98**	***.61***	**4.12**	***.67***	**3.99**	***.69***	**2.84**	***.69***

2.3 Perceived workload and excessive work hours

This section presents the data on perceived workload, overtime hours and on which activities the respondents spend their time.

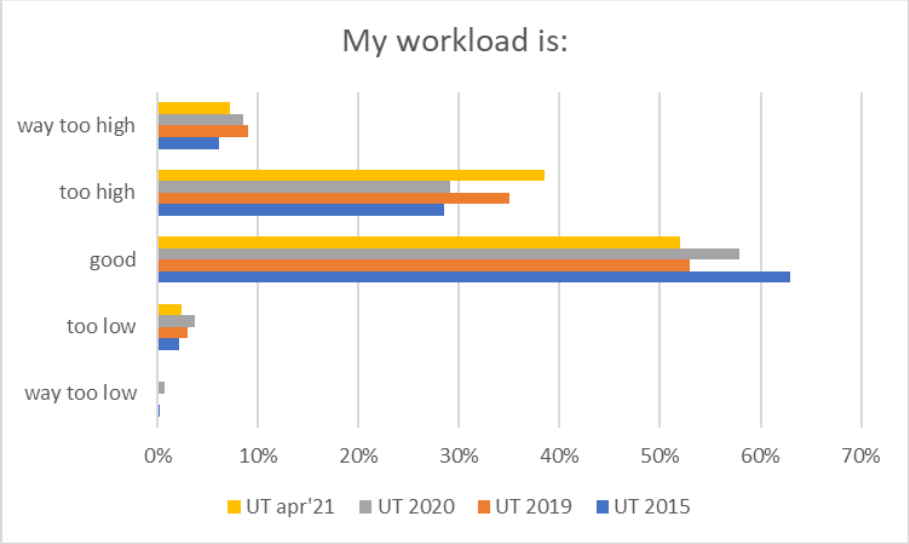
Figure 2.2 on perceived workload shows a rather similar result on the perception of workload compared with the Well-being study of 2019. With 45% of the respondents that experience a (way) too high workload it is even 1% higher compared with 2019.

Figure 2.2 Perceived workload 2019-2021



Looking at the trend, the observation is that perceived workload is back again on the level of 2019, even somewhat higher. In 2020 it was lower, and in 2015 also, as we can see in Figure 2.3. Again, we have to mention here that the samples in all four surveys are different, so it is 'dangerous' to draw conclusions. Nevertheless, the sample of wave 1 perceive on average as much workload as the average of the sample of 2019.

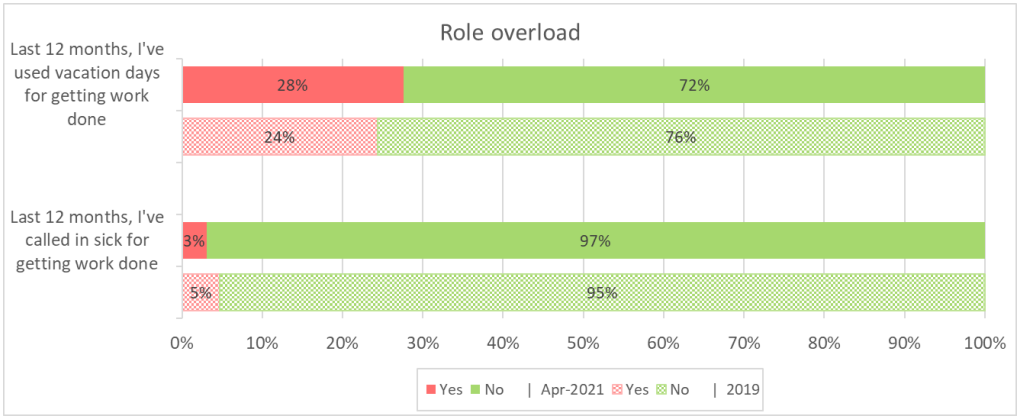
Figure 2.3 Perceived workload 2015-2021



It is possible to zoom in the workload by three ways: role overload, overtime and time spent on activities.

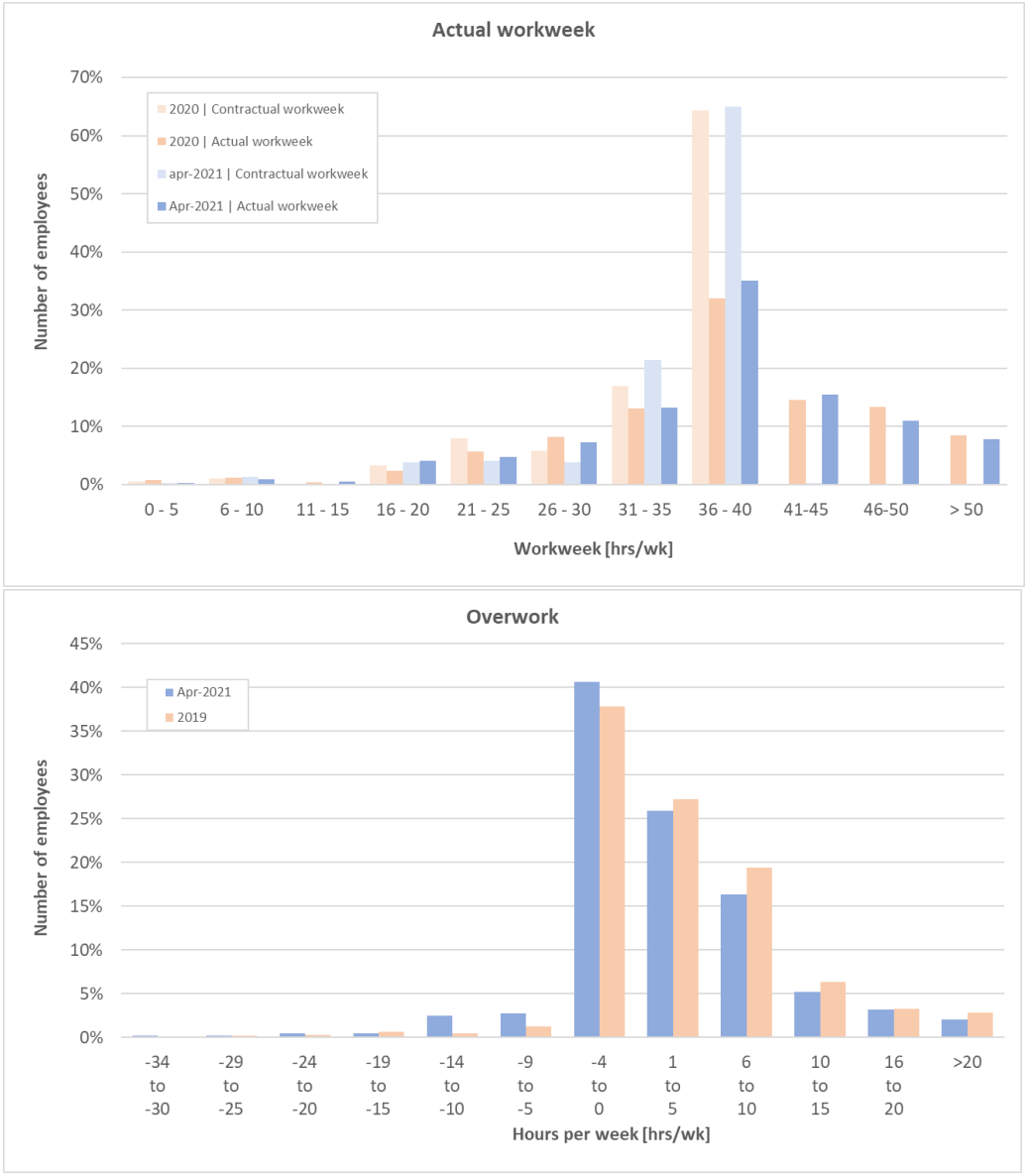
Figure 2.4 shows that 28% of the respondents indicating they are using vacation days for getting their work done. That is even 4% higher compared to the 2019 survey. Calling sick for getting work done however has decreased from 5% to 3%.

Figure 2.4 Role overload (2019-2021)



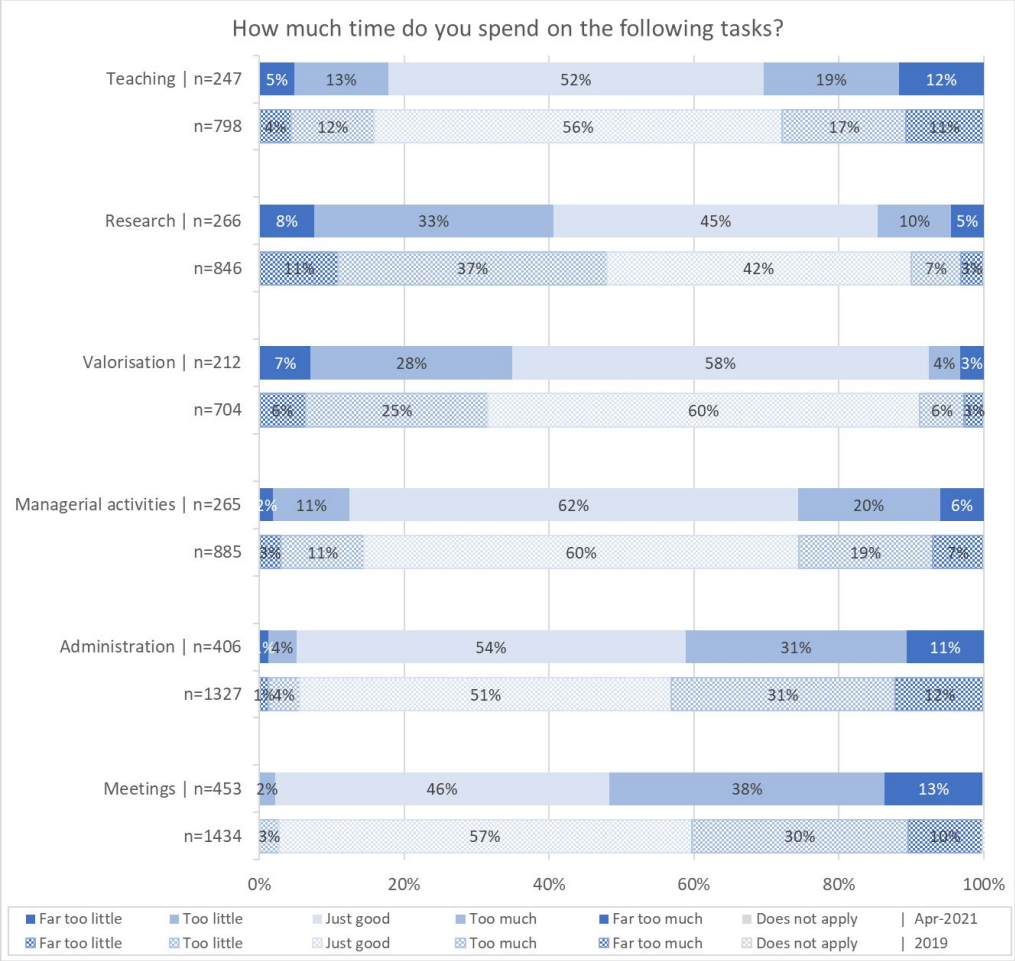
The actual hours worked compared to the contractual hours per week is represented in Figure 2.5. We can observe that 34% of the respondents work longer than 40 hours a week. Some of them are really making long hours: 10% are making more than 10 hours overtime per week.

Figure 2.5 Actual workweek and overtime in hours per week



On what type of activities do the respondents spend their time and how satisfied are they with this? Figure 2.6 presents the results, from which we may conclude that the respondents spend too much time in their opinion on meetings (51%) and administration (42%). From the core processes, teaching takes too much time according to one third of the respondents. It is particularly interesting that the number of people complaining about the time spent on meetings has increased from 40% to 51%; during Covid-times apparently we have been witnessed more meetings than before.

Figure 2.6 Time spent on activities



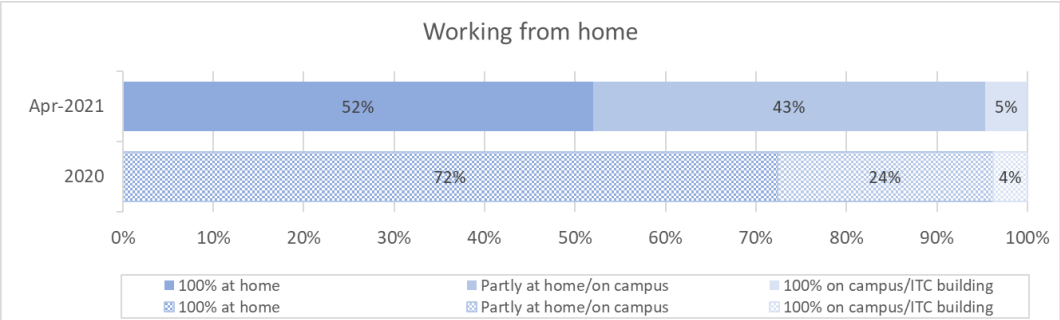
3 FINDINGS ON HOME WORKING

This chapter reports on the main findings of the survey related to work experiences due to enforced homeworking.

3.1 Perceived general effects of the enforced homeworking

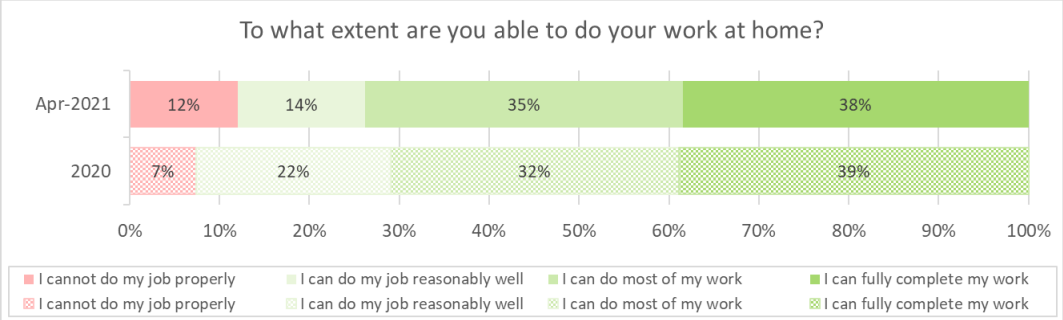
Figure 3.1 shows that half of the employees work from home full-time (compared to 72% in 2020) and 43% work partly from home and partly on campus or in the ITC building, and a minority works on campus full-time (5%). This seems to be a good reflection of the time (April-May 2021) at the data collection.

Figure 3.1 Working situation



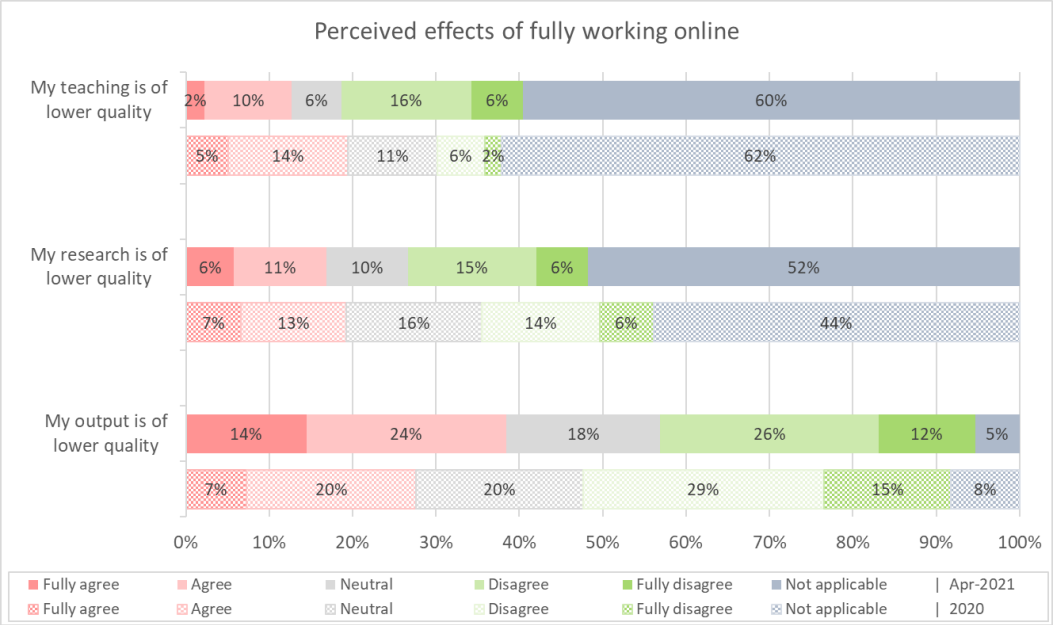
73% of all respondents report that they can still fully complete their work (38%) or most of their work (35%), slightly more than last year. However, a minority of 12% cannot do their job properly which might represent a larger group compare to 2020, see Figure 3.2.

Figure 3.2 Effect of homework on performance of work in general



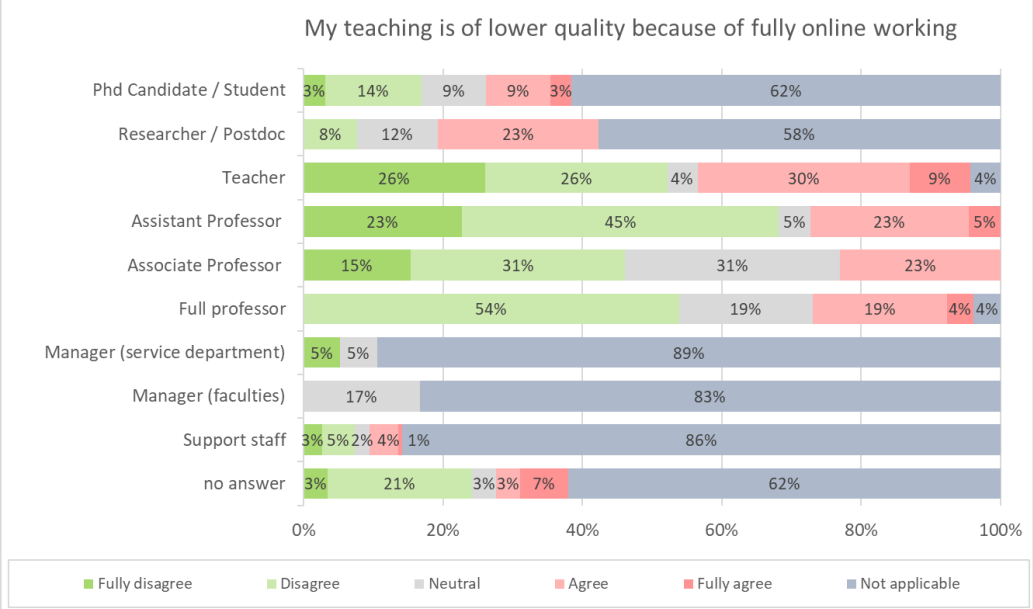
Three questions were asked to explore possible links between fully online working and work quality related to output, research and teaching. In general, for all three work quality topics, a minority reports a decreased perceived quality (Output 38%, Research 18% and Teaching 12%). Moreover, the data show an improvement compared to the 2020 survey: more people report an increase in the quality of working online, see Figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Perceived effects of fully working online on quality of teaching, research, output



Further analysis of the percentages presented in Figure 3.3 for the relevant groups reveal the same trend. In 2020, about 60% of the respondents who teach (Teachers/Lecturers, Assistant, Associate and Full professors) perceive their teaching was of lower quality because of fully online working, now it is half of it 23-39%. These data reflect the enormous effort that many academic and support staff put in enhancing the quality of teaching online.

Figure 3.4 Perceived teaching quality for different positions



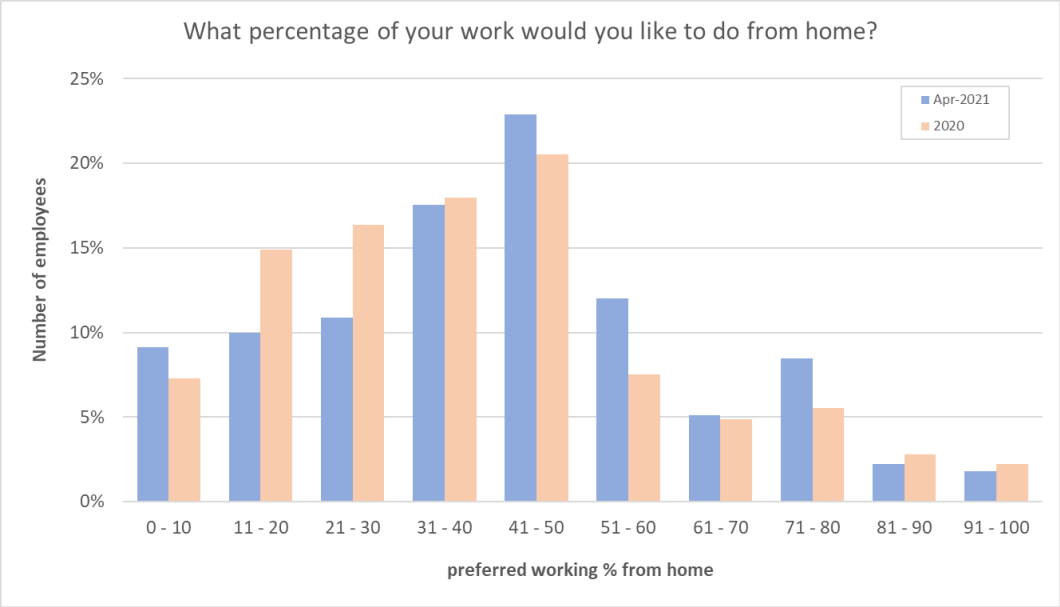
We found no significant differences between age or tenure and loss of perceived teaching quality.

3.2 Preferences for hybrid working

The preferences for working in a hybrid way, both home and at campus/ITC building were included in the survey. In general the percentages for working home followed the same pattern like 2020: the majority want to work from home around two days (half of the contractual hours), see Figure 3.5. Nevertheless, we observe two differences.

Firstly, somewhat higher percentage wants to work more from home compared with one year ago: want to work around three days from home (51-70% of work) and 12% want to work even four days (71-90% of work) at home. We must keep in mind again that both samples might be different, however, the group that want to do their work most days from home is increasing and now almost one-third of the total population.

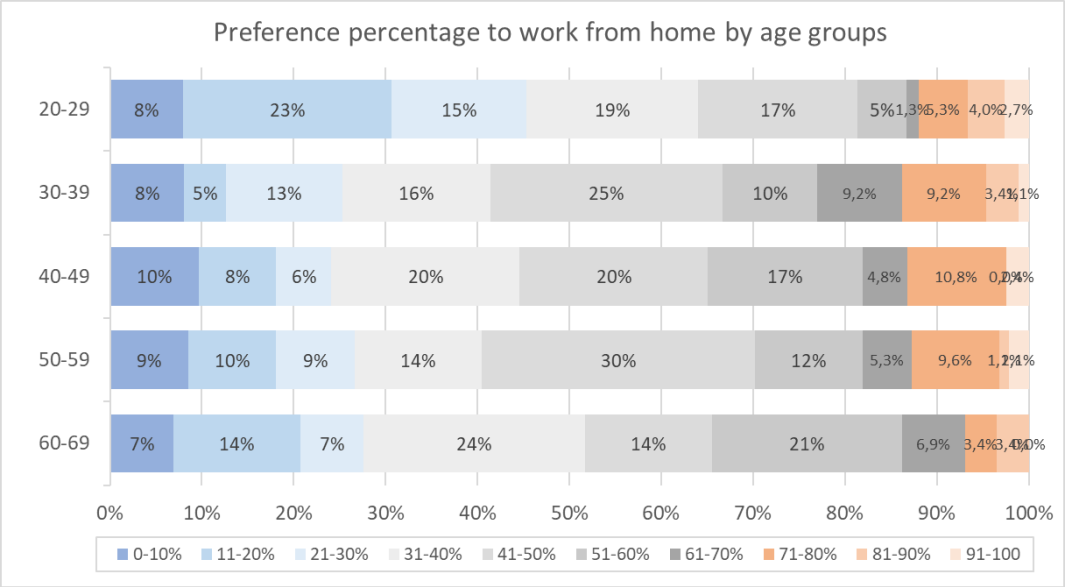
Figure 3.5 Preference home working (in % of worktime)



Secondly, especially the younger employees want to work from home less compared to their older colleagues. As can be seen from Figure 3.6 the employees under 30 years old want to work from home around 1-2 days (at least 64% want to work from home max 2 days or 40% of their working time). For the other age groups, that percentage is around 40%.

In short, we may observe here a lot of individual preferences, partly explained by age, and not so much by position (academic or support staff) or organisational unit.

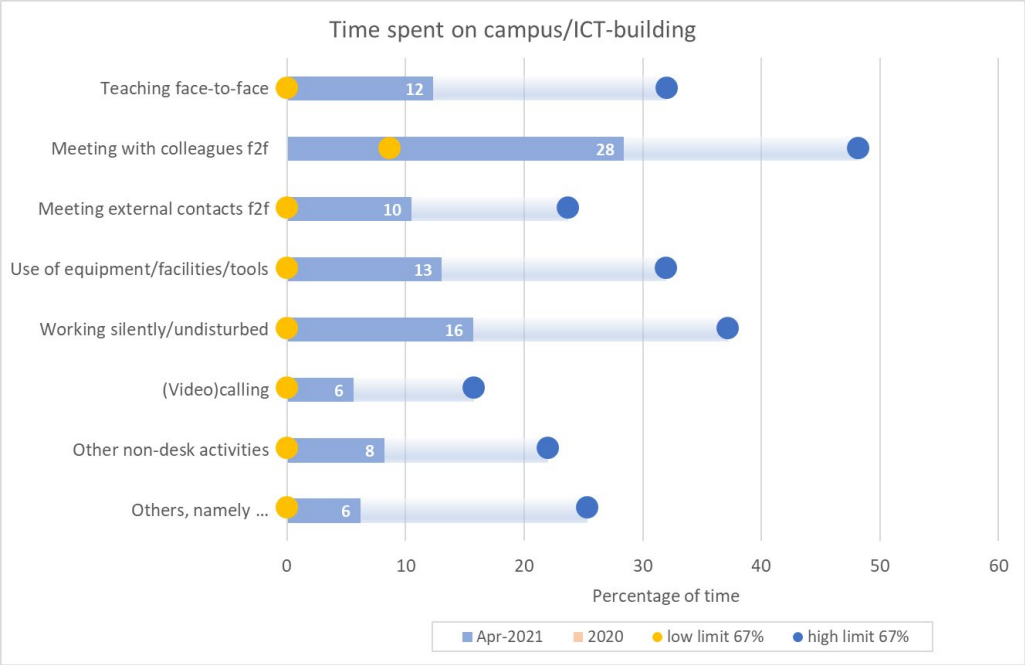
Figure 3.6 Homework preferences by age groups



Looking at the type of activities the respondents want to do at the return to the campus, we see the following top-4 (see Figure 3.7):

1. Meeting with colleagues
2. Working undisturbed
3. Use of equipment/facilities/tools
4. Teaching face-to-face.

Figure 3.7 Time spent on activities at the return on campus

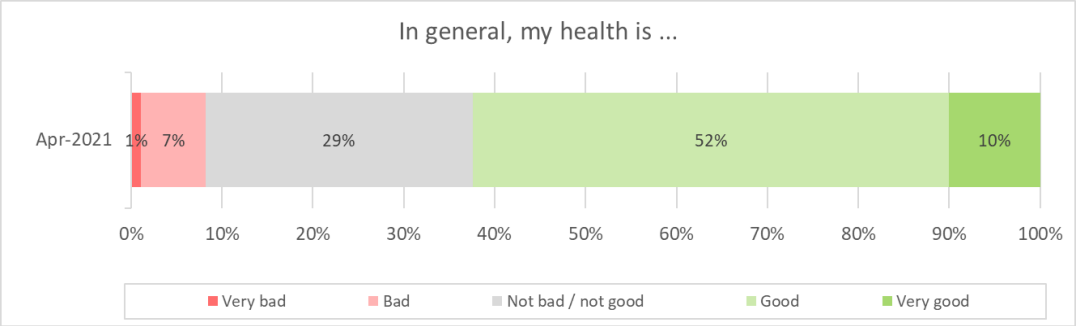


4 FINDINGS ON HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4.1 Perceived health effects

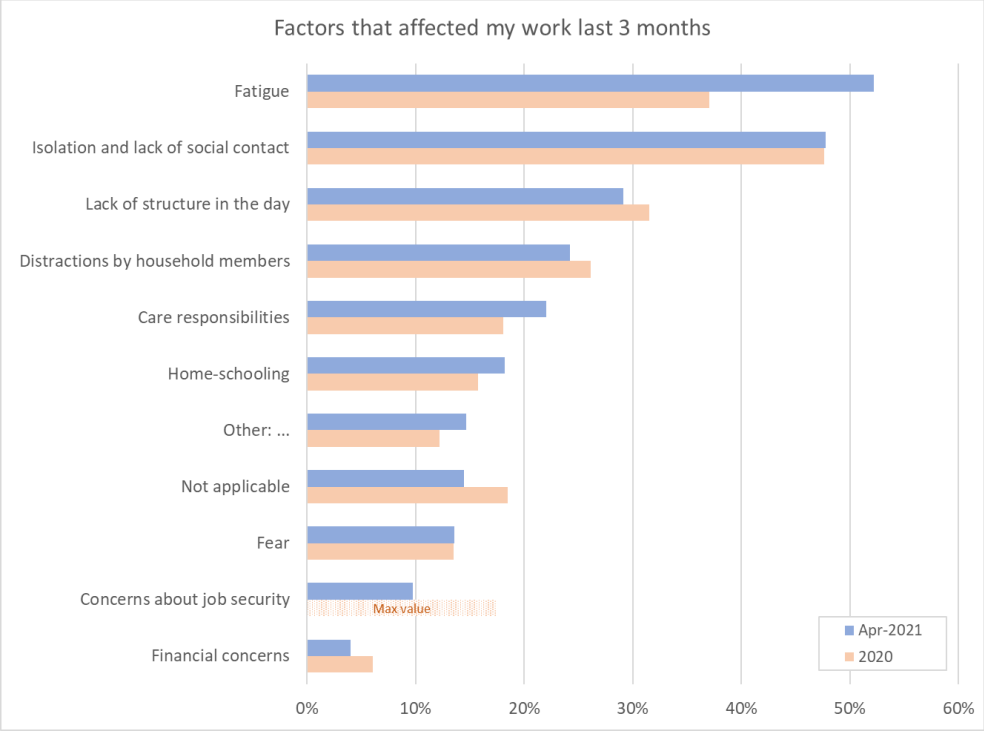
A majority of respondents reports a good or very good health (62%), while 8% report a (very) bad health, see Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Perceived health



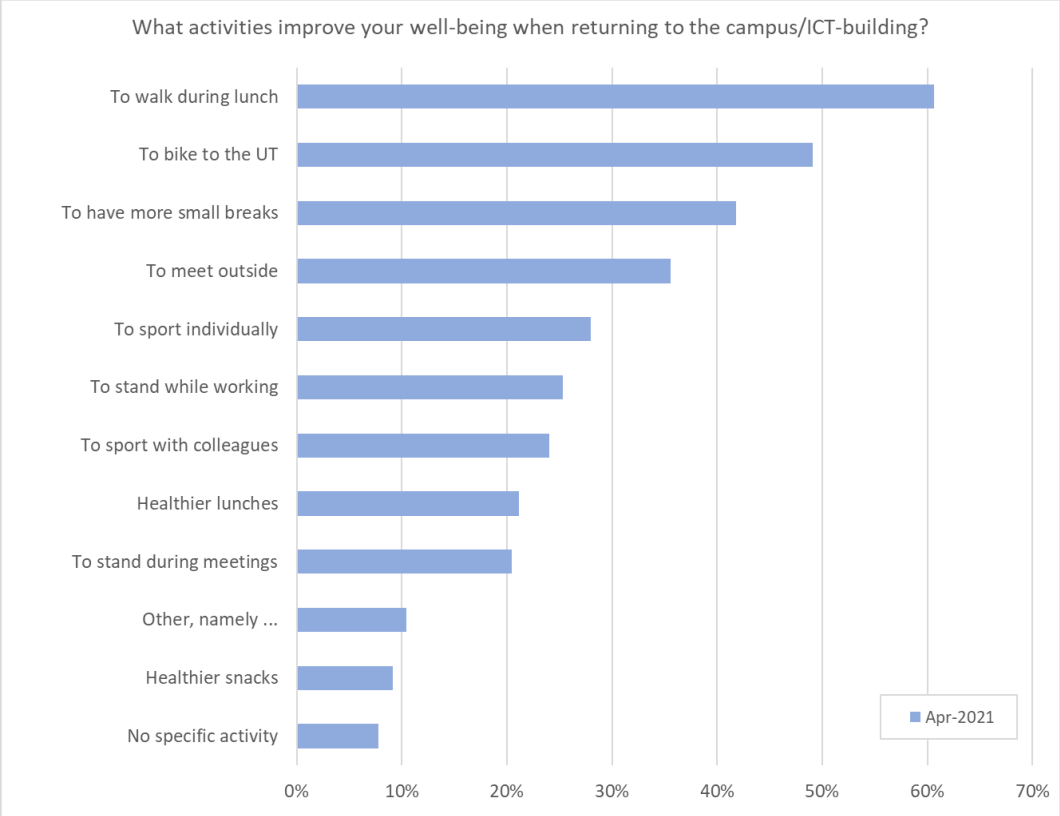
Top-4 of factors that are affecting work did not change since last year: (1) Fatigue, (2) Isolation, (3) Lack of structure in the day and (4) Distractions by household members. Now, even more respondents (53%) say fatigue is the number 1 factor.

Figure 4.2 Factors affecting work



Most respondents indicate to do more exercising (walking, biking) and better planning of breaks and meeting outside, see Figure4.3.

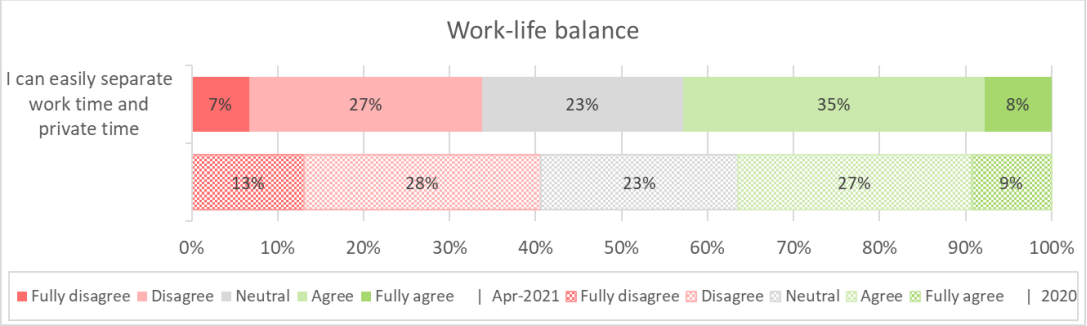
Figure 4.3 Activities to improve well-being when back-on-campus



4.2 Perceived effects on home-work interference

Figure 4.4 presents the perceived home-work interference. In 2020, in spite of the corona crisis, 36% agreed that they can separate work time and private time, while now this percentage increased to 43%. In line with this, a smaller group is struggling with work-life balance, however, this groups is still 34%; they report a negative interaction between the work and home domains. In other words, one of each three UT employees is not satisfied about work-life balance.

Figure 4.4 Perceived home-work interference



5 FINDINGS ON INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIORS

To be added in the final report after full data collection of Wave 1, 2 and 3.

6 OPEN REMARKS

Some selected remarks will be presented here, the analysis will be done after Wave 3.

“I appreciate the wellbeing opportunities created at the UT. Even doing this questionnaire is a sign that the organisation takes the topic seriously. But my feeling is that, at the UT, wellbeing is mostly framed as an individual responsibility and not as a organisational responsibility. More can be done to change the culture in the organisation to create environments and cultures that support wellbeing (inclusive, less competitive, more collaborative, less hierarchical, less rigid...etc.) and you will see a positive influence on wellbeing. We are all products of the cultures we live in - including organisational cultures.”

“Although I understand it is difficult to predict, I would like the UT to inform employees / students about their plans for after the corona crisis. It is unclear what changes are to be expected. Will we be allowed to partly work / study from home? Will we retain our flexibility? Answers to these questions would provide an outlook, an idea of what the future holds - once the pandemic allows.”

"Having worked for a different organisation during the first Covid lockdown in March 2020 I have to say the efforts that are made to keep staff of the UT connected and feeling appreciated has really impressed me. No effort was made in my previous employment, we were just expected to get on with it! And it makes a huge difference, it has been a really nice experience working for the UT for the past 6 months, even though it has been a little tricky to learn and become acquainted with procedures while working remotely. My one comment about new staff members is to perhaps encourage/implement increased feedback from supervisors whilst working remotely. I was relieved to have my FJUT so that I could receive feedback on my performance so far (but I suppose if it wasn't satisfactory I would have received feedback sooner!)"

“It somehow has become acceptable to plan whole days full of meetings, disregarding the possibility of (lunch or regular) breaks. Although the responsibility to take a (lunch or regular) break is that of the individual, it is something that I notice with colleagues too. This worries me.”

“Thanks for all the efforts you made to improve our campus lives all the way.”

“It worries me that several junior colleagues are not well”

"Ik denk dat sommige mensen heel goed passen in de 'rat race' van de academische wereld. Anderen wat minder, diegene die daar moeite mee hebben en ook nog eens een zwakke sociale basis hebben verdienen wat mij betreft goede opvang. Ik krijg niet het gevoel dat de Universiteit daar als organisatie slecht mee bezig is, wel vraag ik me soms af of sommige vakgroepen een gezonde werkcultuur hebben. Binnen mijn vakgroep is dat wel het geval, er is een open sfeer, veel discussie onderling maar ook sociale cohesie. Dat zorgt er voor mij in ieder geval voor dat ik altijd een stapje extra wil zetten, ook al is dat onbetaald. Collega's zijn zich hier gelukkig bewust van en waarderen dat ook van elkaar."

"Algemeen is de werkdruk hoog, over de gehele linie bij onderzoeker en ondersteund personeel. Doordat werk minder inspirerend is alleen maar kijkend naar een scherm (dit geldt voor gesprekken, onderwijs, trainingen etc), en zonder echte ontmoetingen, ervaar je meer werk'ongeluk' dan geluk. De echt positieve momenten deel je niet meer met elkaar en krijg je dus niet met elkaar mee. Thuis heb je, zonder afleiding van mensen om je heen, wel meer je werk gedaan. Ik denk alleen dat de

transitie naar 'kantoor' net zo'n grote aanpassing gaat geven dan 100% thuis. Omdat je het niet meer gewend bent ook. Het 'extra' concentreren terwijl collega's om je heen zijn kan net zo'n aanpassing zijn. Ik hoop dat de UT hier rekening mee blijft houden."

7 CONCLUSIONS

1. In general, UT employees are both engaged and strained. They have much energy and dedication to their job, however, at the same time they feel strained by the amount of demands and role overload.
2. Still, most respondents are satisfied with the UT, on average they grade the UT with a 7.5, which is similar to 2020 (7.6) and still somewhat higher than 2019 (7.2).
3. Commitment to the organisation is on a lower level than 2019. The organisational stimuli, like job crafting and HRM satisfaction, are on a similar level compared with 2019. The same applies for the job demands and job resources. The only one exception is organisational commitment, which is lower then in 2019. Of course, we cannot compare the results in a strict sense of a repeated measurement, because we have two different samples. Still, the averages of both groups are similar for every antecedent, except commitment. Apparently, the long period of homeworking has its impact on the emotional attachment to the university as a whole.
4. The high strain is also reflected in the perceived workload. 45% of the respondents in wave 1 perceive a (way) too high workload. In 2020 it was 38% and in 2019 it was 44%. Especially scientific staff (teachers, assistant, associate and full professors) are mostly perceiving a high workload, with managers close behind and support staff is experiencing the least workload.
5. 52% work fully from home (in 2020 72%), while 43% work partly from home and on campus (was 24%); these numbers reflect the different situation of spring 2021 compared to early Summer 2020.
6. Since last year, the UT employees in general learned to cope with homework and working fully online. At least the perceived teaching quality has been improved. Also, work-life balance has been improved a little. Still, big minorities are struggling with work-life balance (34%).
7. The preferences for working from home by and large remained the same: the majority want to work not more than 2 days from home. However, the preference for three or four days at home is higher in wave 1. Age is important here: two-third of the younger employees (under 30s) want to work from home a maximum of one-two days. Apparently, individual differences are relevant in these preferences.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Since hybrid working will be the norm for most employee groups, the UT should accommodate the diverse preferences of the employees. Do not develop a standard norm for e.g. two days at home, be flexible about it and adapt the norm to personal circumstances. Younger employees in general want to be more on campus, other age groups less, this is across organisational units and functions. A 'one fits all' approach towards the working time spend at home and on campus is inadvisable.

2. Scientific staff (Teachers/lecturers, Assistant, Associate and Full professors) experiences the highest workload. Next to scientific staff, the managers perceive a too high workload. Reducing the amount of work is an unquestionable precondition for well-being. Especially reducing meetings and administrative work that academic professionals have to do is a key to achieve this. In developing new policies, adapting existing policies, the focus should not only be on the students or managerial issues, the primary focus should be on staff and its well-being. This is a UT-wide challenge.

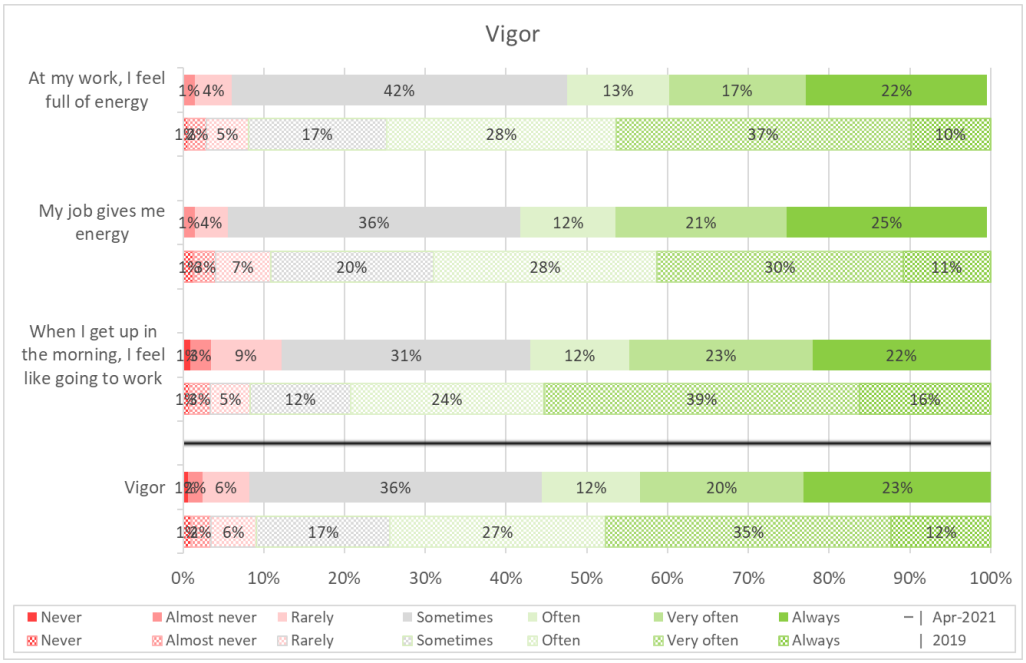
3. Continue with the well-being initiatives. It has been observed and appreciated by the employees. Pay attention to specific groups: the managers, young employees, new employees, employees with unsecure contracts.

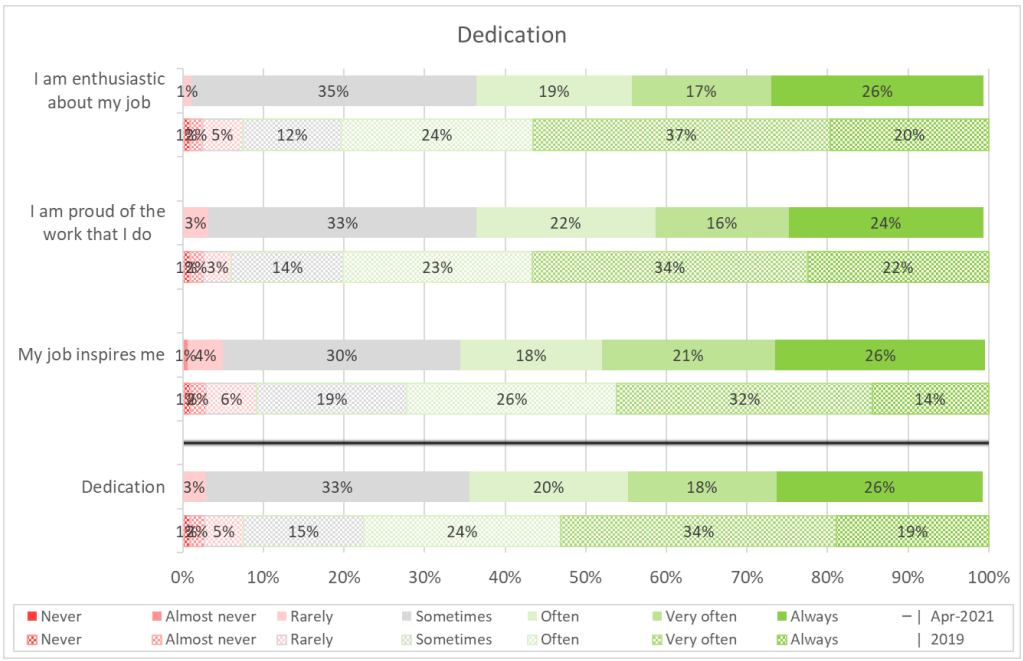
4. Pay attention to the role of the direct supervisor. Despite the fact that certain attention or target groups could be identified, never forget that also within groups (large) differences between apparently equal group members concerning desires and needs do exist. For finding individual differences and adequate solutions that both affect employee well-being and productivity, the role of direct supervisors is crucial. Direct communications between supervisors and individual staff members is inevitable for continuing a fit between organisational policies and practices and employees.

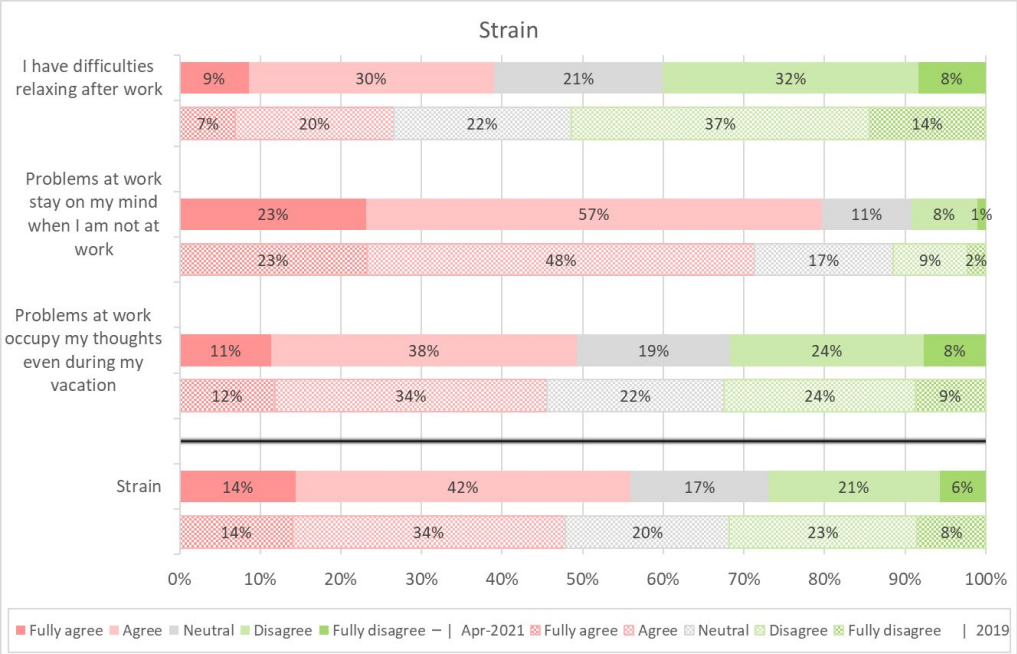
APPENDIX 1: QUESTIONNAIRE

APPENDIX 2: ANSWERS & COMPARISONS

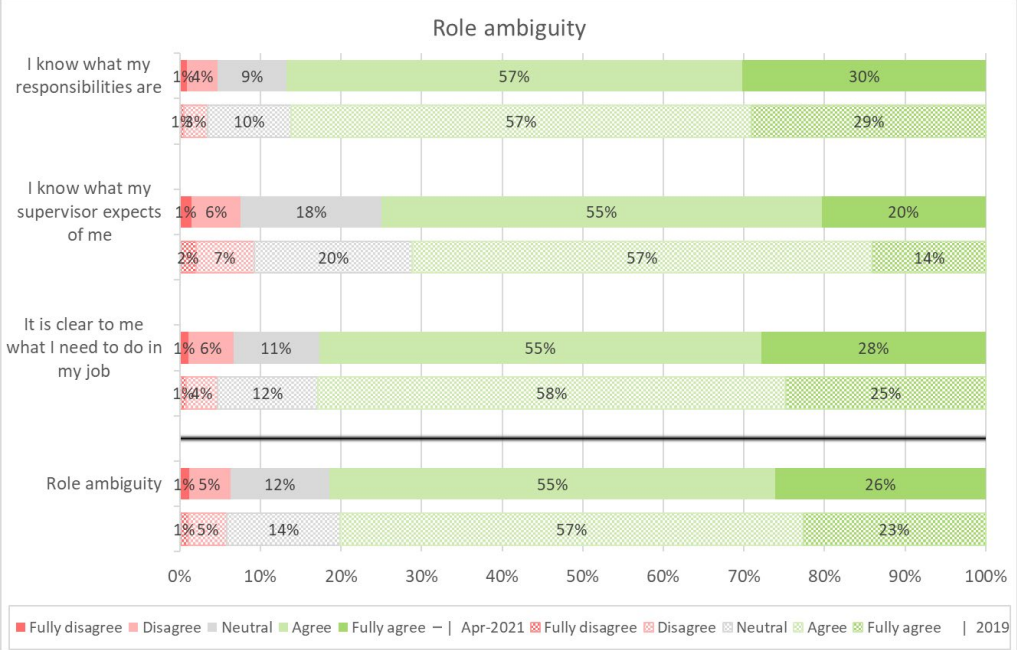
2.1 Engagement (vigor and dedication) and strain

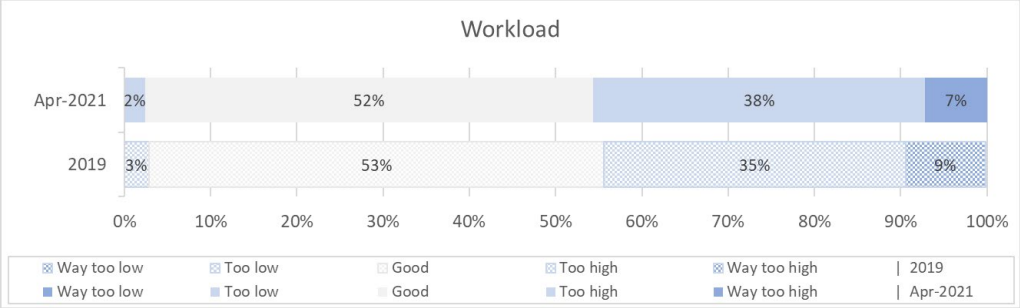


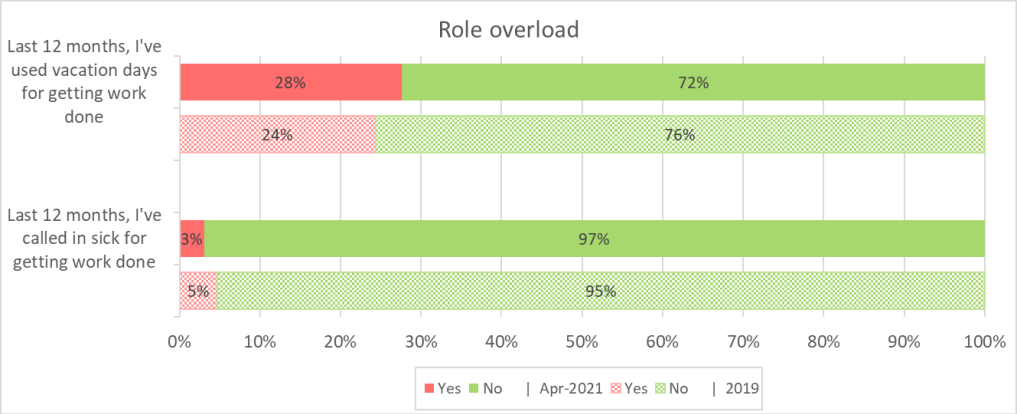




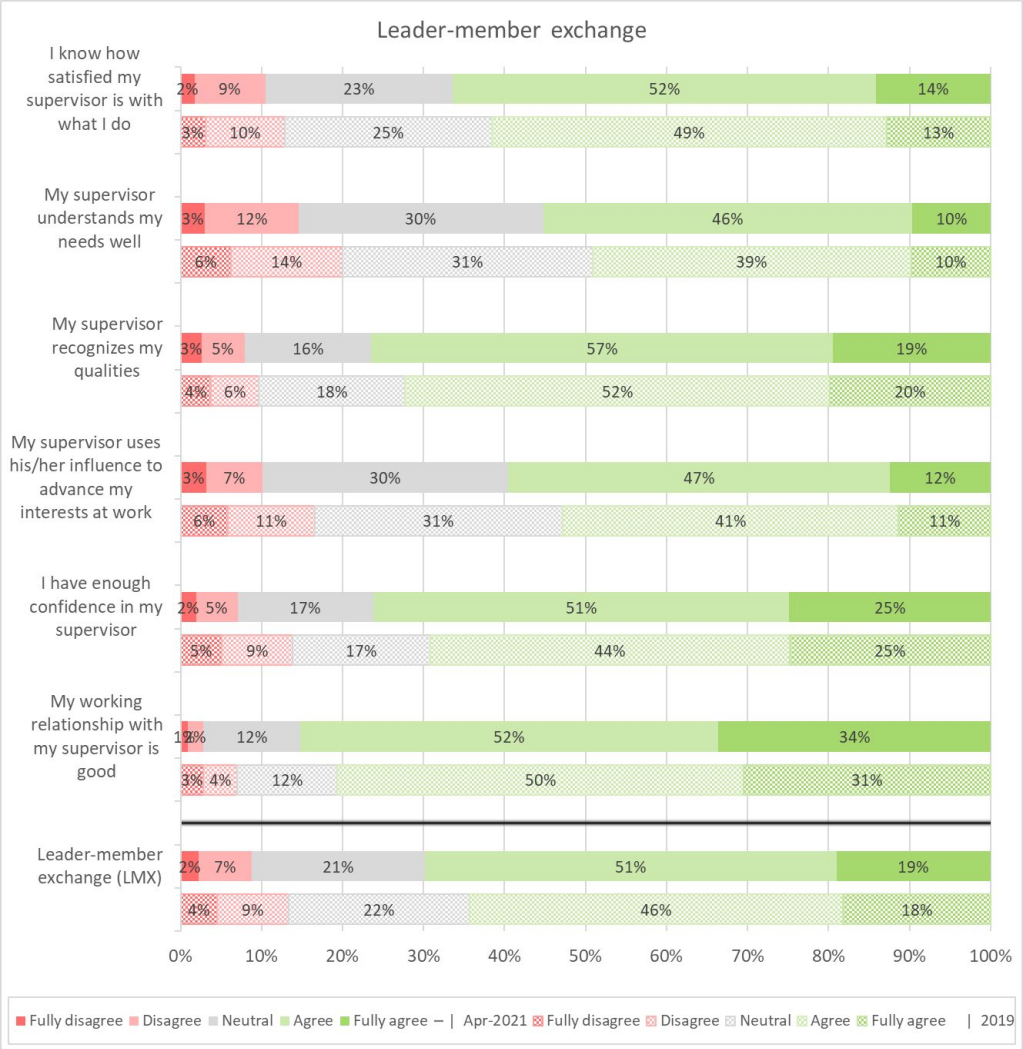
2.2 Job demands

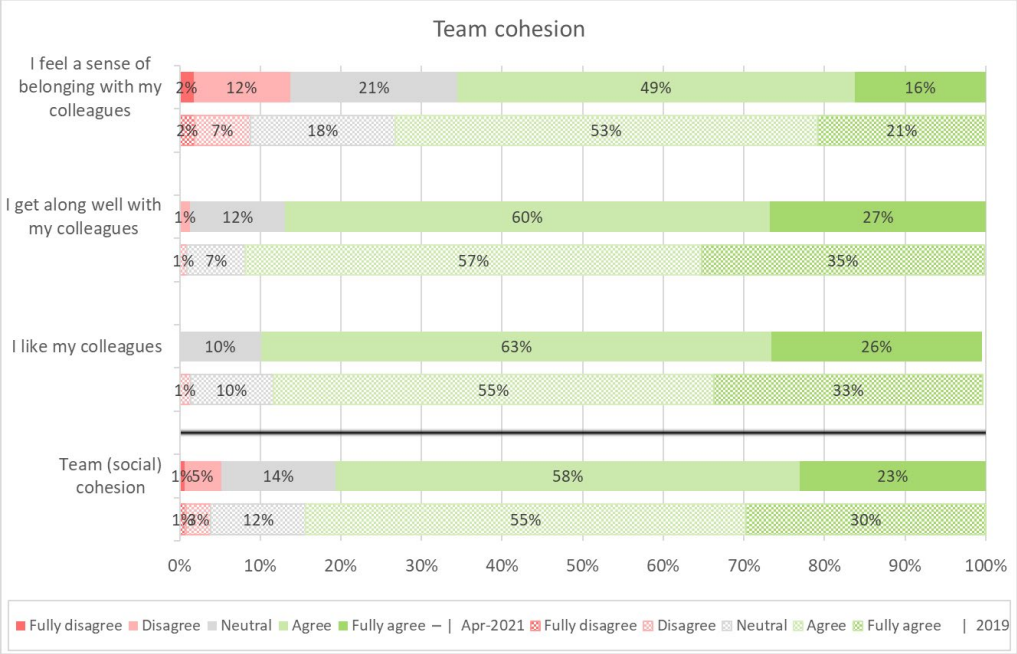


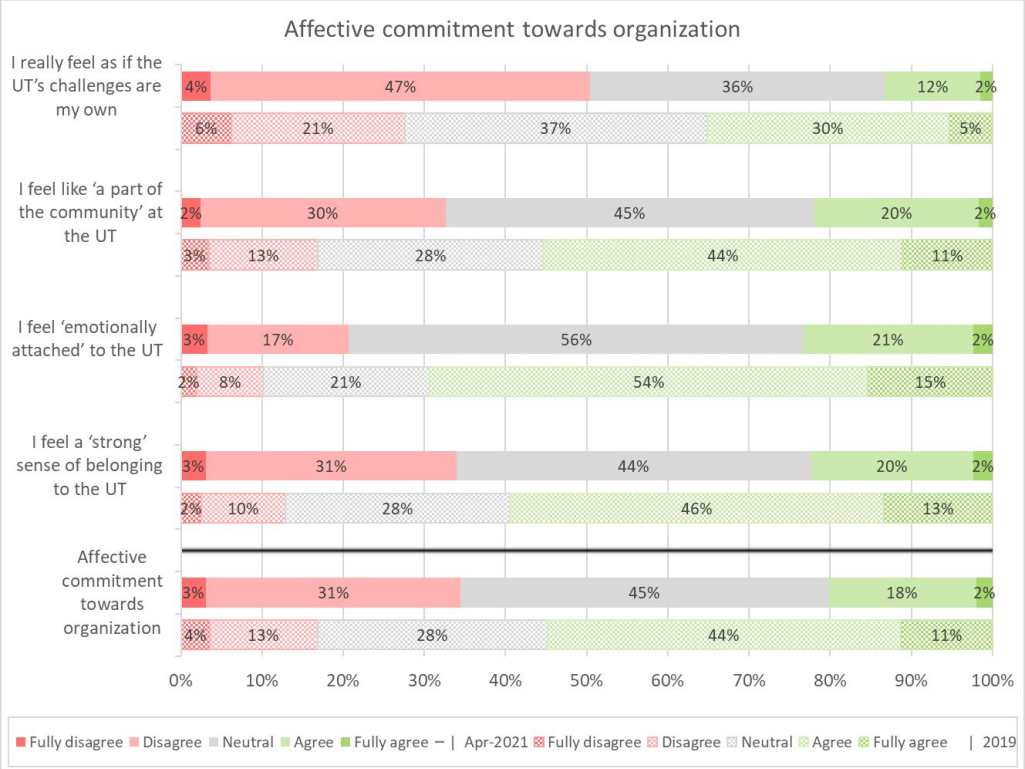

Workload
Apr-2021
2019
2%
52%
38%
7%
3%
53%
35%
9%
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Way too low
Too low
Good
Too high
Way too high
2019
Apr-2021

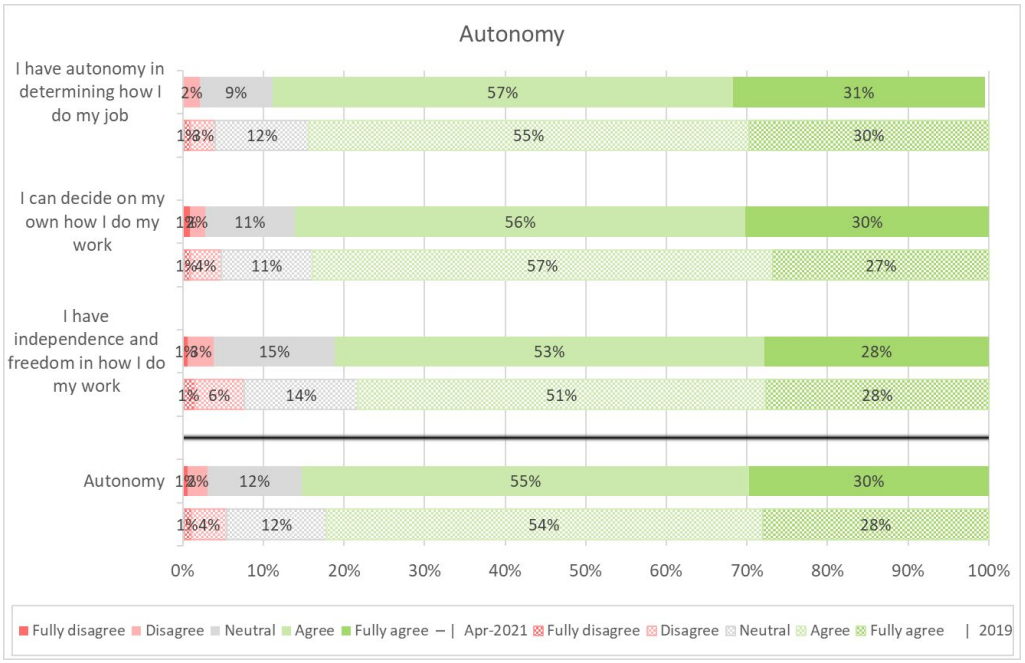

Role overload
Last 12 months, I've used vacation days for getting work done
Last 12 months, I've called in sick for getting work done
28%
72%
24%
76%
3%
97%
5%
95%
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Yes
No
Apr-2021
Yes
No
2019

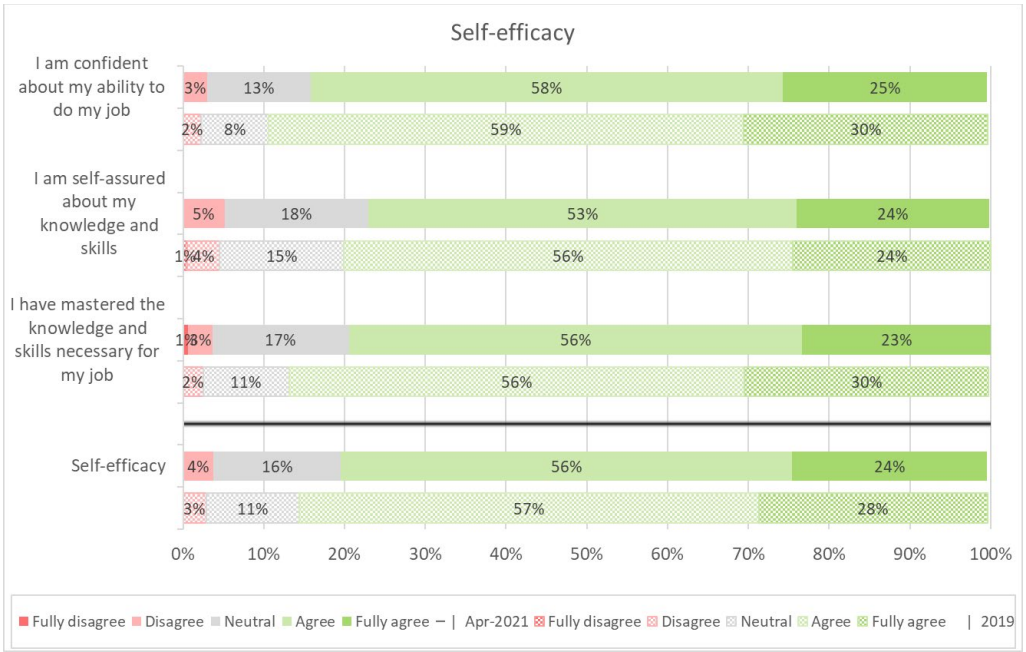
2.3 Job resources



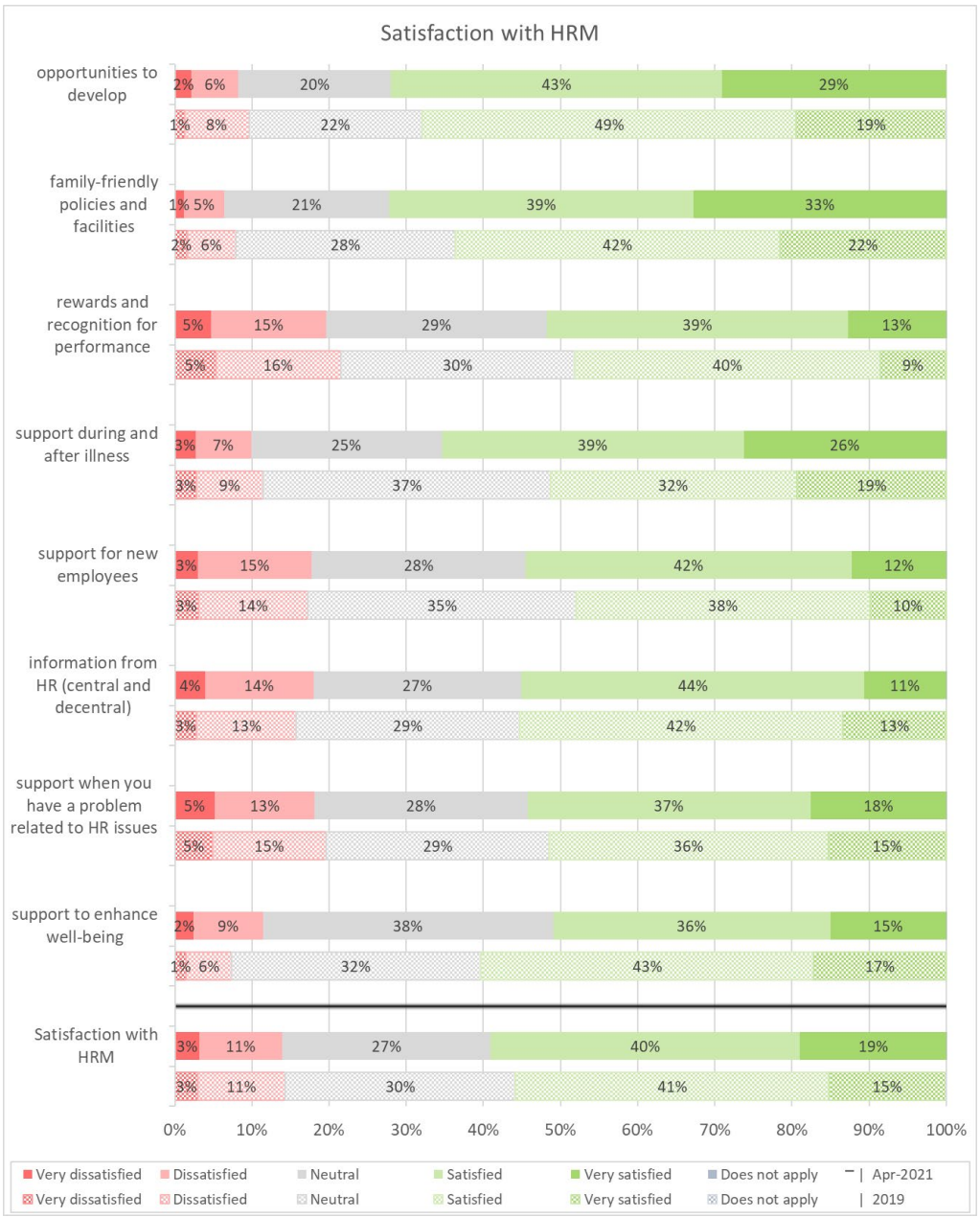

Team cohesion
I feel a sense of belonging with my colleagues
2% 12% 21% 49% 16%
2% 7% 18% 53% 21%
I get along well with my colleagues
1% 12% 60% 27%
1% 7% 57% 35%
I like my colleagues
10% 63% 26%
1% 10% 55% 33%
Team (social) cohesion
1% 5% 14% 58% 23%
1% 3% 12% 55% 30%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | Apr-2021 Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | 2019

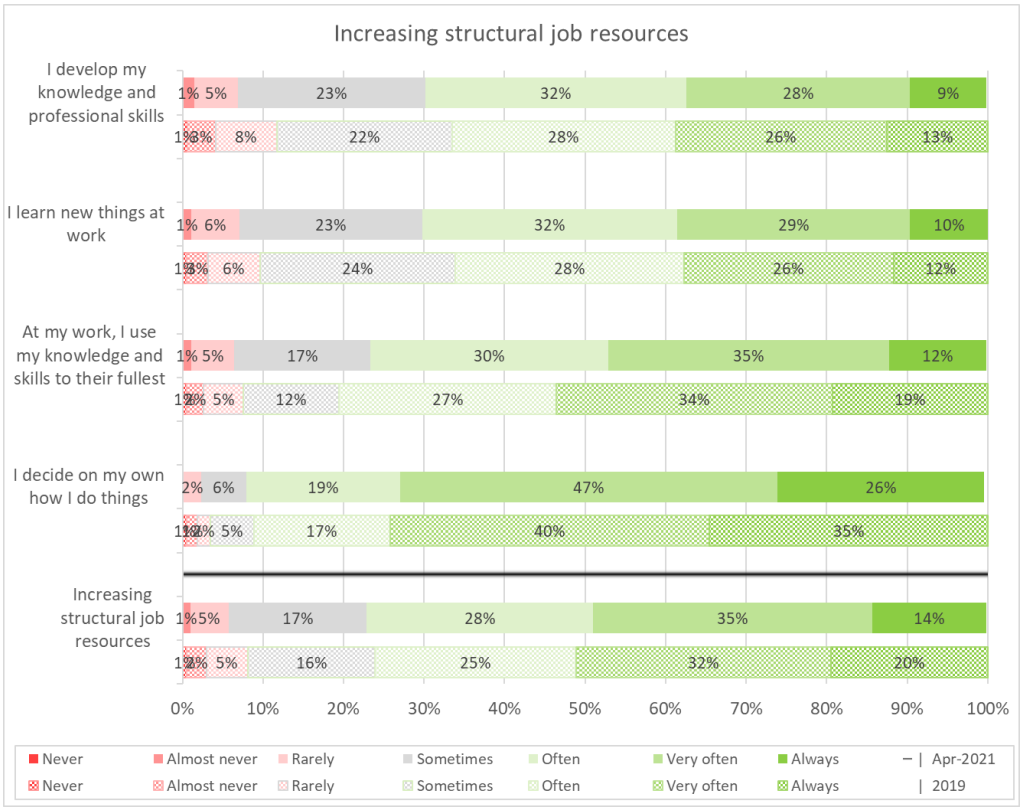

Affective commitment towards organization
I really feel as if the UT's challenges are my own
4% 47% 36% 12% 2%
6% 21% 37% 30% 5%
I feel like 'a part of the community' at the UT
2% 30% 45% 20% 2%
3% 13% 28% 44% 11%
I feel 'emotionally attached' to the UT
3% 17% 56% 21% 2%
2% 8% 21% 54% 15%
I feel a 'strong' sense of belonging to the UT
3% 31% 44% 20% 2%
2% 10% 28% 46% 13%
Affective commitment towards organization
3% 31% 45% 18% 2%
4% 13% 28% 44% 11%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | Apr-2021 Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | 2019

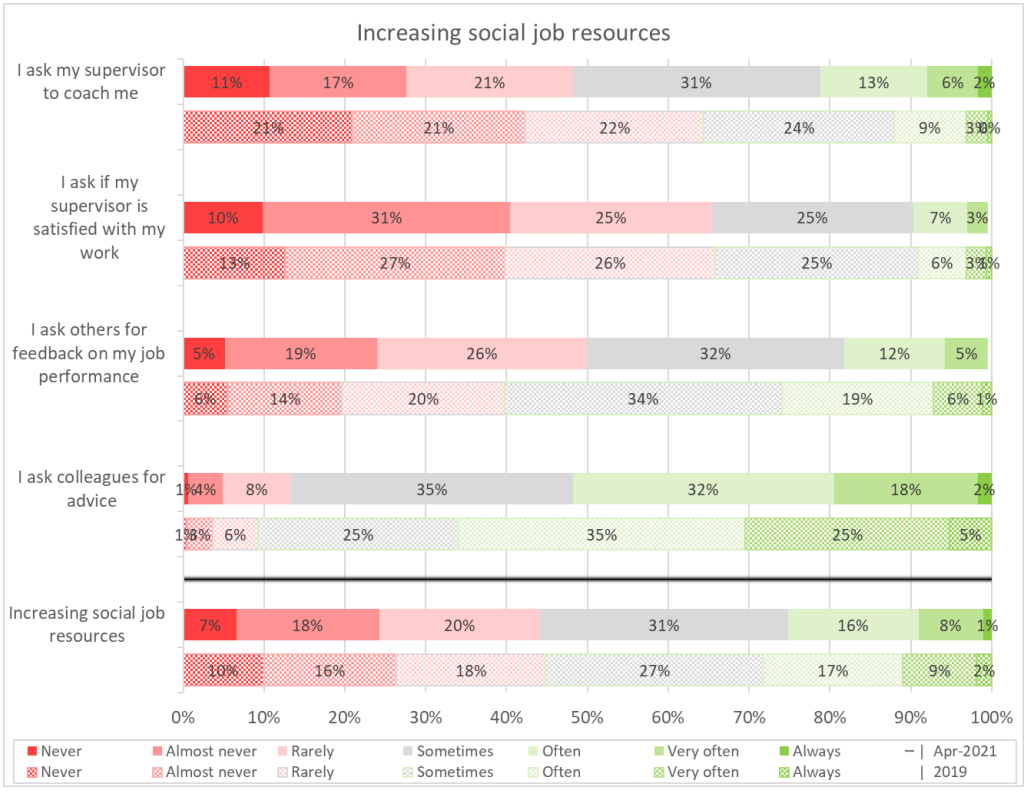

Autonomy
I have autonomy in determining how I do my job
2% 9% 57% 31%
1% 3% 12% 55% 30%
I can decide on my own how I do my work
1% 2% 11% 56% 30%
1% 4% 11% 57% 27%
I have independence and freedom in how I do my work
1% 3% 15% 53% 28%
1% 6% 14% 51% 28%
Autonomy
1% 2% 12% 55% 30%
1% 4% 12% 54% 28%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | Apr-2021 Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | 2019

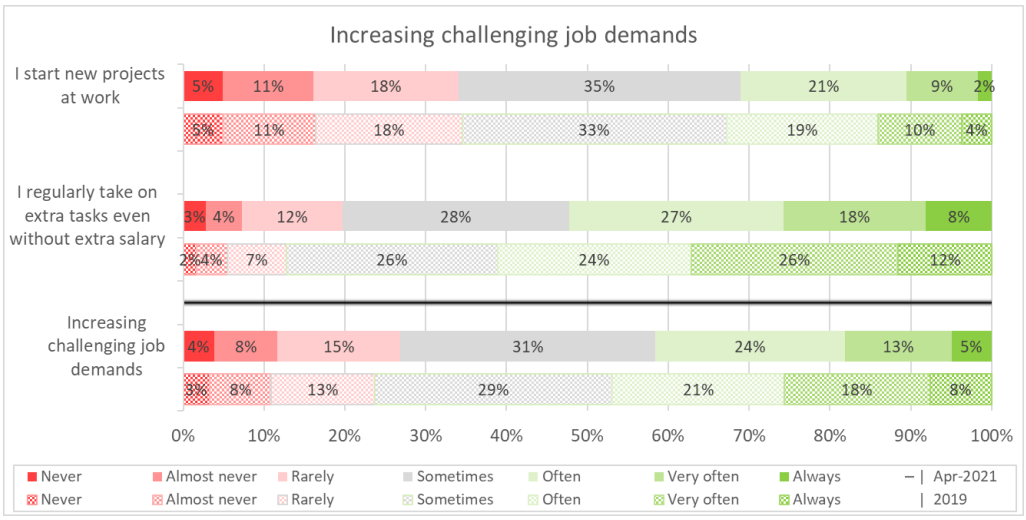

Self-efficacy
I am confident about my ability to do my job
3% 13% 58% 25%
2% 8% 59% 30%
I am self-assured about my knowledge and skills
5% 18% 53% 24%
1% 4% 15% 56% 24%
I have mastered the knowledge and skills necessary for my job
1% 3% 17% 56% 23%
2% 11% 56% 30%
Self-efficacy
4% 16% 56% 24%
3% 11% 57% 28%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | Apr-2021 Fully disagree Disagree Neutral Agree Fully agree | 2019

2.4 Organisational stimuli




Increasing structural job resources
I develop my knowledge and professional skills
I learn new things at work
At my work, I use my knowledge and skills to their fullest
I decide on my own how I do things
Increasing structural job resources
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Never
Almost never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very often
Always
Apr-2021
2019


Increasing social job resources
I ask my supervisor to coach me
I ask if my supervisor is satisfied with my work
I ask others for feedback on my job performance
I ask colleagues for advice
Increasing social job resources
0%
10%
20%
30%
40%
50%
60%
70%
80%
90%
100%
Never
Almost never
Rarely
Sometimes
Often
Very often
Always
Apr-2021
2019


Increasing challenging job demands
I start new projects at work
5% 11% 18% 35% 21% 9% 2%
5% 11% 18% 33% 19% 10% 4%
I regularly take on extra tasks even without extra salary
3% 4% 12% 28% 27% 18% 8%
2% 4% 7% 26% 24% 26% 12%
Increasing challenging job demands
4% 8% 15% 31% 24% 13% 5%
3% 8% 13% 29% 21% 18% 8%
0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%
Never Almost never Rarely Sometimes Often Very often Always | Apr-2021
Never Almost never Rarely Sometimes Often Very often Always | 2019

APPENDIX 3: CATEGORIZATION OF OPEN QUESTIONS

To be added after Wave 2 and 3