



What people think,
feel and do

www.opinium.com
research@opinium.com
[@opiniumresearch](https://twitter.com/opiniumresearch)

Vodafone Menopause Research



Key findings

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Our registered office is 24A St John Street, London, EC1M 4AY, where our list of members is available for inspection

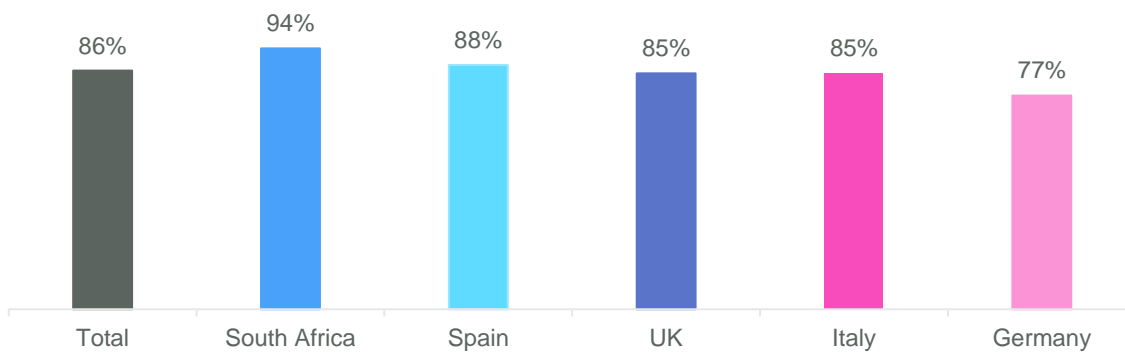
C2 General

Symptoms

Eight in ten working women who go through menopause experience menopause related symptoms

Over eight in ten (86%) women who are going through or have been through menopause while working have experienced symptoms related to this experience. There are some variations by country with this increasing to over nine in ten (94%) women in South Africa and falling to three quarters of women (77%) in Germany.

Those who have experienced symptoms due to menopause

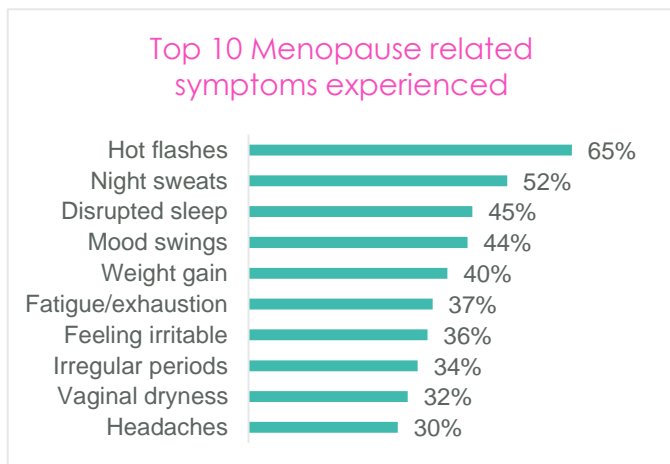


Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

Hot flushes and night sweats are the most common symptoms related to menopause

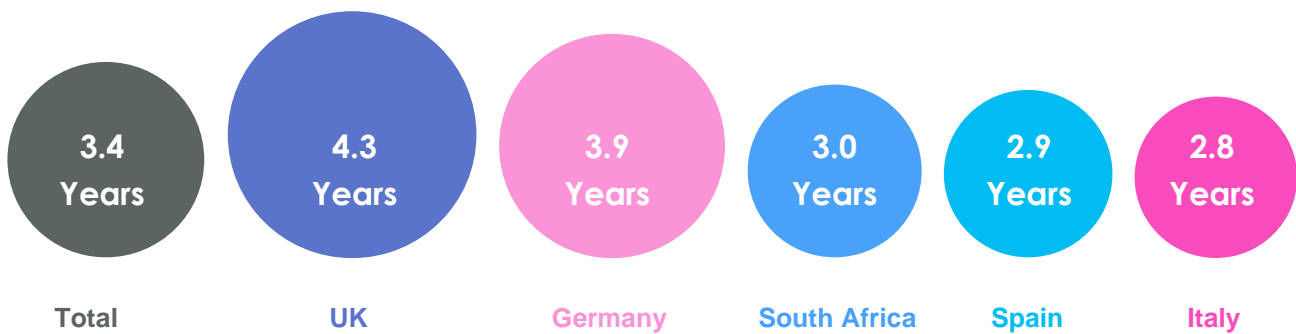
The most common menopause symptoms are hot flushes (65%), night sweats (52%) and disrupted sleep (45%). Two fifths (40%) of women also mention experiencing weight gain.

Base: 4,300 people who have experienced menopause related symptoms or are not sure (UK: 866, South Africa: 943, Germany: 768, Italy: 846, Spain: 877)



Half (49%) of women experience symptoms for 1-2 years, with the average duration of symptoms lasting for around 3 and a half years. There are some differences across the countries, with women in the UK and Germany experiencing symptoms for 4 years, on average, compared with those in Spain, Italy and South Africa where the average duration is around 3 years, on average.

Length of menopause symptoms, by country



Two fifths (39%) of women who have menopause symptoms have had to seek medical advice to cope with these, although many women (31%) still find that they have not had enough medical support to help with their symptoms.

Impact at work

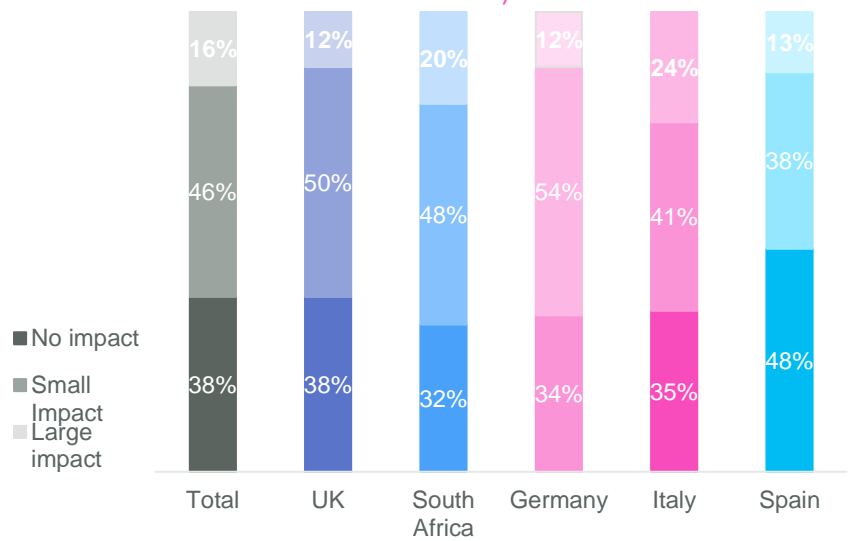
Menopause symptoms are impacting women at work

Menopause symptoms are having a clear impact on women at work. Three in five (62%) women say their symptoms impacted their work, with half (46%) saying this was a small impact and one in six (16%) saying it had a large impact.

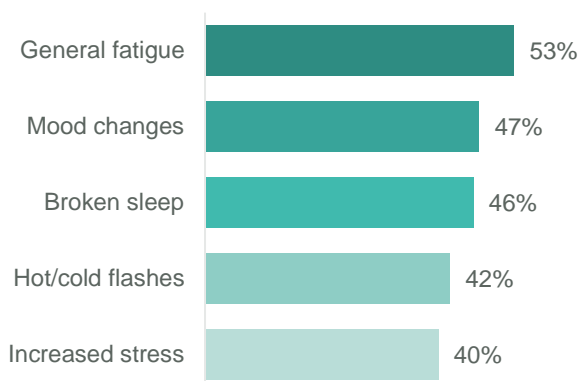
South African women are more likely to say their symptoms had an impact on their work (68%) as were women in Germany (66%). Meanwhile, Spanish women were the least likely to say their symptoms impacted their work (52%).

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause related symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

Menopause symptoms impact at work, by country



Top 5 menopause symptoms that impact at work:



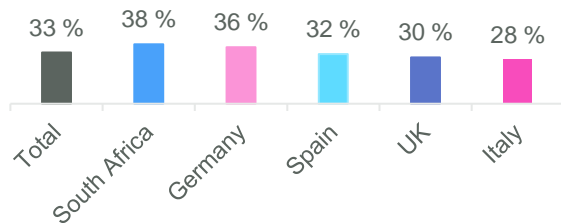
There are a wide variety of impacts that affect the work of women going through menopause. The three most common types of impact menopause is having on the work lives of women, include a feeling of general fatigue (53%), mood changes (47%), and broken sleep (46%).

The types of impact did vary by country. Women in the UK were most commonly impacted by temperature fluctuations (56%), it was mood changes in South Africa (64%), broken sleep in Germany (50%), and general fatigue in Italy (52%) and Spain (52%).

MOST COMMON IMPACTS	UK	SOUTH AFRICA	GERMANY	ITALY	SPAIN
1st	Temperature fluctuations (56%)	Mood changes (64%)	Broken sleep (50%)	General fatigue (52%)	General fatigue (52%)
2 nd	Broken sleep (50%)	General fatigue (62%)	General fatigue (48%)	Experienced more stress (45%)	Mood changes (51%)
3 rd	General fatigue (47%)	Temperature fluctuations (57%)	Mood changes (43%)	Mood changes (44%)	Felt anxious (47%)

Base: 2,677 people whose menopause related symptoms have impacted their work (UK: 531, South Africa: 642, Germany: 506, Italy: 547, Spain: 451)

Those who have hidden their symptoms at work



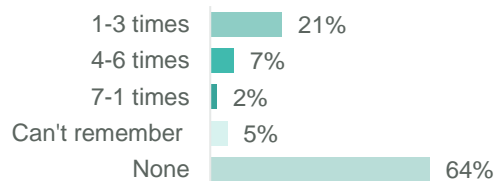
Further to this, a third of those who have experienced symptoms said they hid them at work (33%), while one in ten (9%) had to reduce their work hours, and 9% even considered leaving their job.

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause related symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

In addition, menopause related symptoms are causing women to have to take time off work. Over a third (36%) of women that have symptoms have had to take time off work, with one in five (21%) taking 1-3 times off work.

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause related symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

Number of times taken off work because of symptoms:



There are a substantial number of days that women are having to take off because of their symptoms, with women that have had to take time off taking an average of 13 days off. There is again variation among different countries with women in the UK having had to take the most time off (average of 21 days).

Average amount of days taken off work because of menopause related symptoms



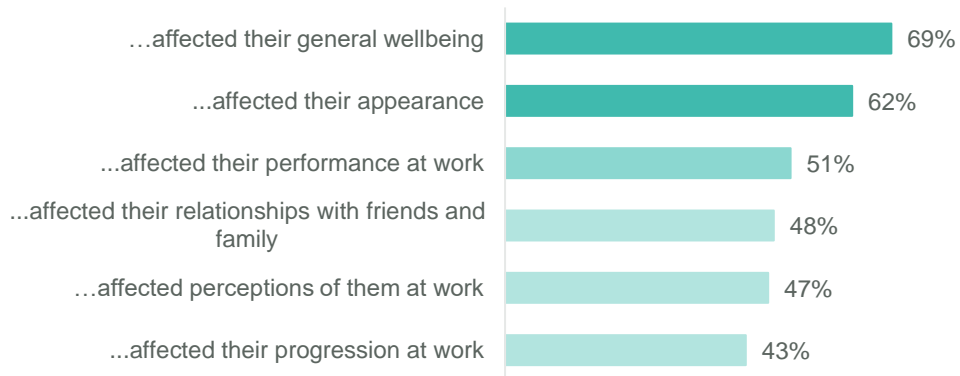
Base: 1,563 people who have taken time off work because of their menopause related symptoms (UK: 214, South Africa: 413, Germany:289, Italy: 348, Spain: 299)

Many women are not telling their managers the reason why they are taking this time off. Only a quarter (25%) of those that had to take time off told their manager every time they took time off because of their symptoms, while three in ten (29%) told their manager some of the time, but not every time, and two fifths (42%) did not ever tell their manager.

Women have high levels of concern about the impact of menopause symptoms at work

Levels of concerns about the impact of menopause related symptoms on various aspects of work are high across the board. Half (51%) of women have been concerned about how their symptoms affect their performance at work. Meanwhile, two in five (43%) are concerned about how their symptoms affected their progression at work and almost half (47%) were concerned about how their symptoms affected perceptions of them at work. Beyond the workplace, levels of concern are high regarding general wellbeing (69%) and impact on their appearance (62%).

Those who are **concerned** about how their symptoms...



Base: 4,283 people who have experienced menopause symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 941, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 872)

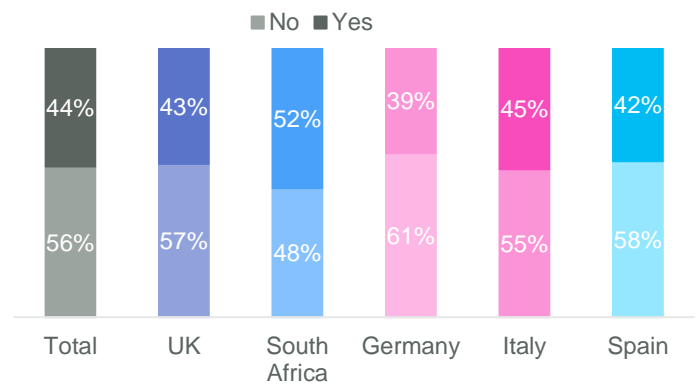
Stigma

A stigma still exists for many women around menopause

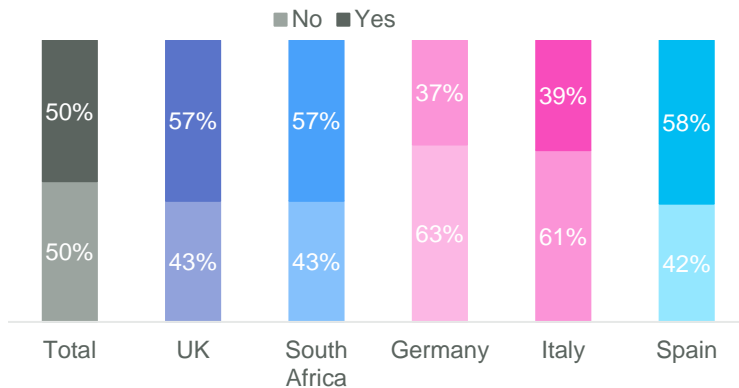
Just under half (44%) of women who experienced menopause symptoms said that they have felt too embarrassed to ask for support in the workplace about this, with women in South Africa the most likely to feel too embarrassed (52%)

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

Embarrassed to ask for support at work?



% that Feel there is a stigma around talking about menopause at work?

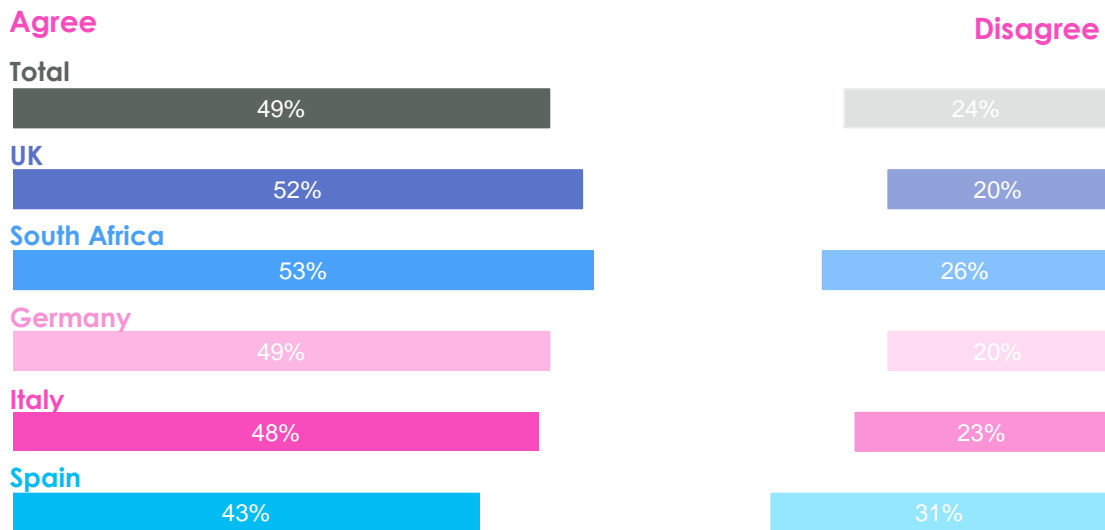


Further to this, half (50%) of women think that there is a stigma around talking about menopause in the workplace. Feelings about stigma varies by country, with it being highest in Spain (58%), the UK (57%) and South Africa (57%), compared to Germany (37%) and Italy (39%).

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

In line with the above, half (49%) of women think that menopause is a taboo subject in the workplace. Women in the UK and South Africa are the most likely to agree with this (52% vs 53% respectively), while women in Spain were less likely to agree in comparison (43%).

"Discussing menopause is a taboo subject in the workplace"

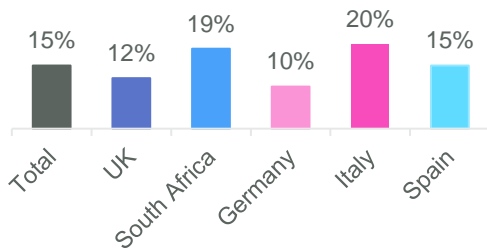


Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

Support

Workplace support for women going through menopause is lacking

"Work place offers some support"



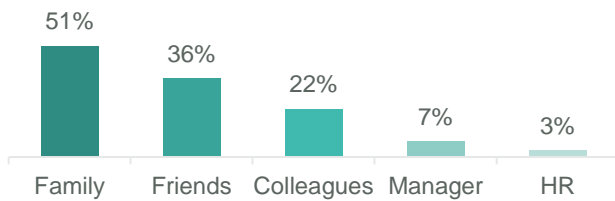
Just one in six (15%) women said their workplace offered some form of support related to menopause, with this varying across countries.

Women in Italy and South Africa reported the highest levels of workplace support, although this was still severely lacking with 20% and 19% respectively saying there was workplace support. Women in Germany had the lowest levels of workplace support, with only one in ten (10%) saying their workplace had support related to menopause.

Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

The most common types of support offered in the workplace are access to menopause clinicians (4%), medical insurance covering menopause (4%) and menopause awareness sessions for all employees (4%).

Who have you felt supported by when experiencing menopausal symptoms?



Given the low levels of support available, it is therefore not a surprise that many women are less likely to cite the workplace as a source of support when they are experiencing menopause symptoms. Women are more likely to say they felt supported by their family (51%), followed by their friends (36%). Under a quarter (22%) say they have felt supported by a colleague, while only 7% have felt supported by a manager, and only 3% by HR.

Base: 4,286 people who have experienced menopause symptoms while working (UK: 861, South Africa: 943, Germany: 764, Italy: 845, Spain: 873)

There is a gap between what workplaces offer and what people who go through menopause would like to see in place

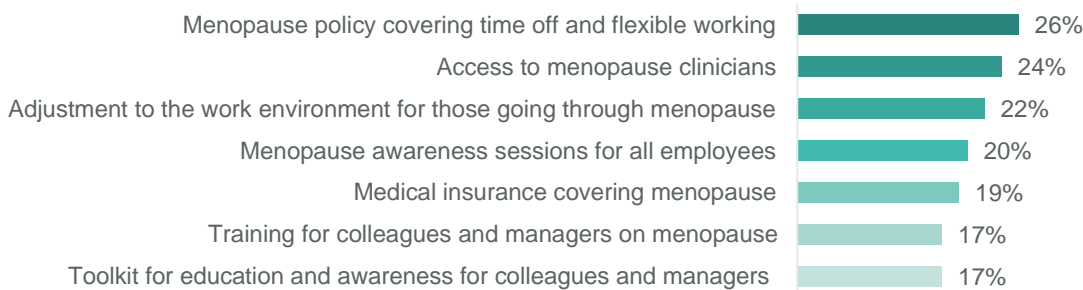
Three fifths (60%) said they would like to see their workplace offer some form of support in relation to menopause. Women in South Africa are the most likely to want to see their workplaces offer support (81%), while much fewer women in Germany saying they would like to see this type of support (37%).

COUNTRY	% WANT THEIR WORKPLACE TO OFFER MENOPAUSE RELATED SUPPORT
Total	60%
South Africa	81%
Spain	66%
Italy	66%
UK	52%
Germany	37%

Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

A menopause policy that covers time off and flexible working is the support that was most selected by women that want to see support offered by their workplace (26%). A similar proportion would also like to be given access to menopause clinicians through their workplace (24%).

What they want to see offered in the workplace:



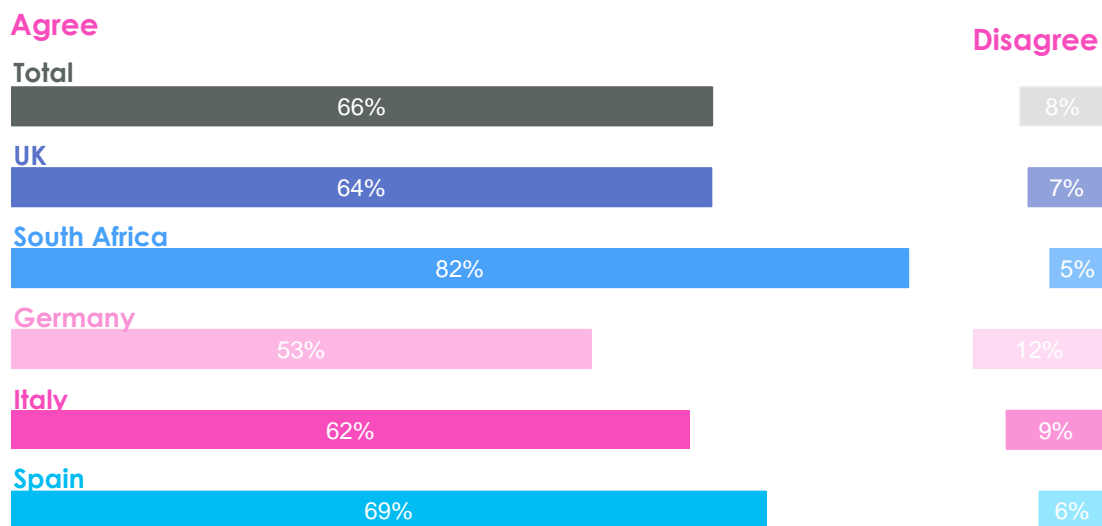
Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

The types of policies most wanted do vary by country. Women in South Africa are most concerned with raising awareness with almost half (46%) wanting their workplace to provide menopause awareness sessions for all their employees. Meanwhile, the third most commonly selected type of support in Italy was medical insurance that covers menopause (24%).

TOP TYPES OF SUPPORT WANTED	UK	SOUTH AFRICA	GERMANY	ITALY	SPAIN
1st	Menopause policy inc. time off/ flexible working (26%)	Menopause awareness sessions (46%)	Menopause policy inc. time off/ flexible working (16%)	Menopause policy inc. time off/ flexible working (26%)	Menopause policy inc. time off/ flexible working (30%)
2nd	Adjustment to the work environment (19%)	Menopause policy inc. time off/ flexible working (37%)	Adjustment to the work environment (13%)	Access to menopause clinicians (25%)	Access to menopause clinicians (29%)
3rd	Menopause awareness sessions (19%)	Access to menopause clinicians (37%)	Access to menopause clinicians (11%)	Medical insurance covering menopause (24%)	Adjustment to the work environment (24%)

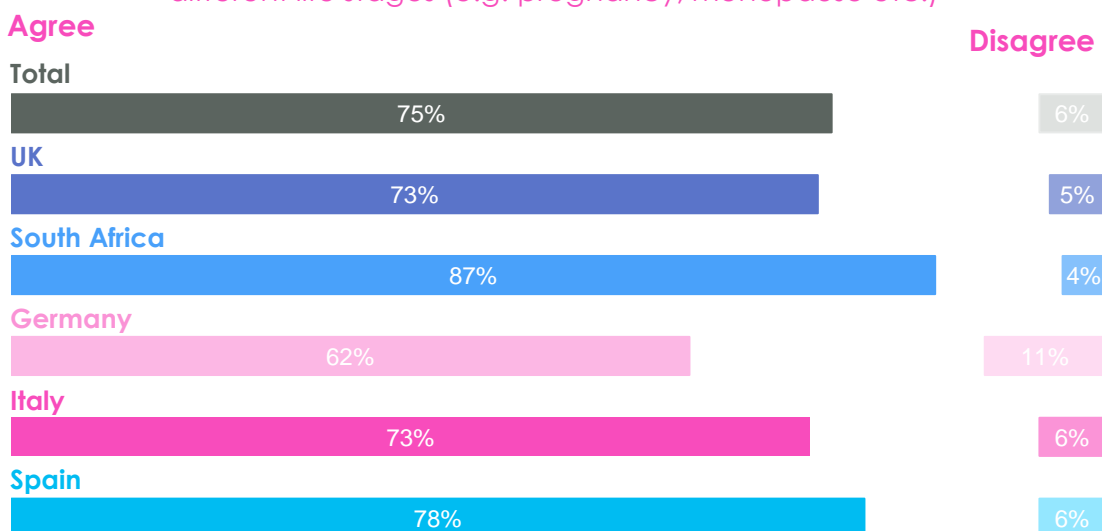
Asked more directly, two thirds (66%) of women agreed that there should be more support in the workplace for women going through menopause. There was majority agreement on this across all countries the countries, with agreement highest in South Africa (82%).

"There should be more support in the workplace for women going through menopause"



Interestingly, there was a feeling that support for women varies across life stages; seven in ten (69%) thought that women receive support in the workplace during pregnancy and following the birth of a child, but not during menopause. However, the majority of women (75%) felt that they need support in the workplace through all different life stages, again with majority agreement in all countries.

"Women need support in the workplace through all the different life stages (e.g. pregnancy, menopause etc.)"

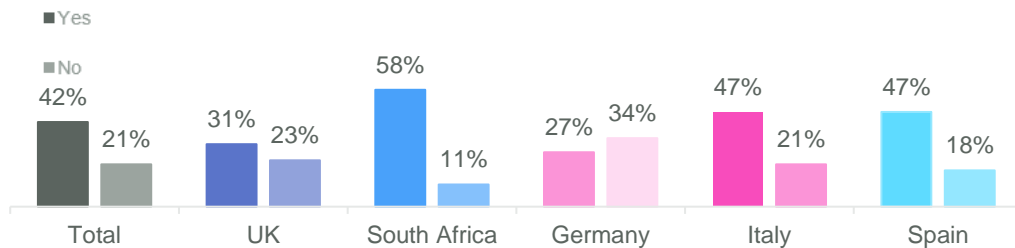


Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

More workplace support could have a positive impact on general wellbeing

Over two thirds (69%) of women who experienced menopause symptoms said they were concerned how this affected their general wellbeing. Having more support than is currently in the workplace could help women with their wellbeing. Two in five (42%) women said they feel more support at work during their menopause would have had a positive impact on their general wellbeing. This feeling was particularly strong among South African women (58%), as well as Italian and Spanish women (both 47%), but slightly weaker in the UK (31%) and Germany (27%).

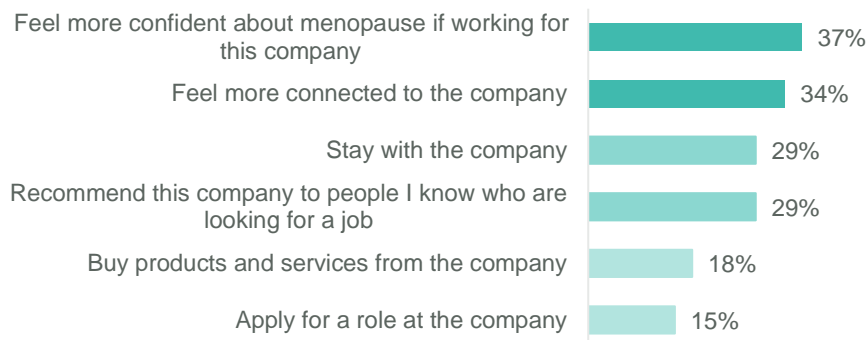
Do you feel that more support at work during your menopause would have had a positive impact on your overall wellbeing ?



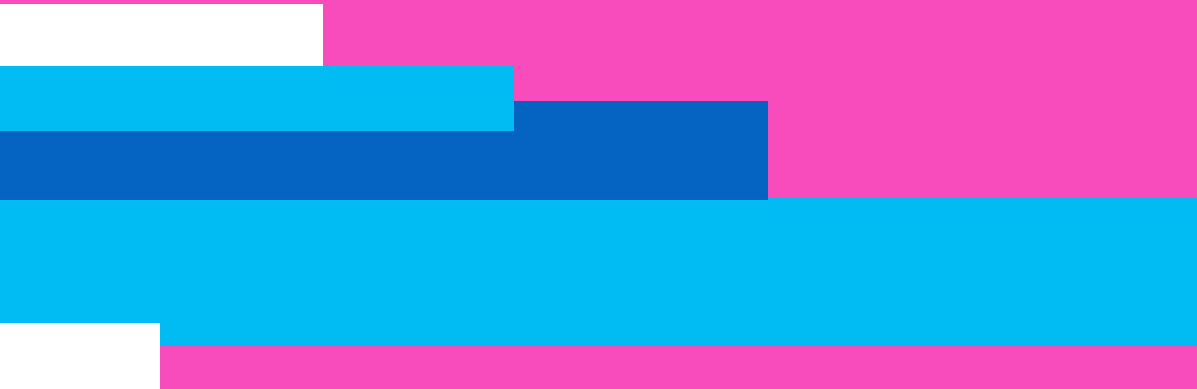
Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)

Workplaces offering more support to women going through menopause could also have other beneficial effects. Over a third (37%) of those who have been through menopause said they would feel more confident about menopause if they worked for a company that offered support. A similar proportion (34%) said they would feel more connected to the company. Meanwhile, three in ten women would stay with this type of company (29%) and would recommend it to people they know who are looking for a job (29%).

If a company offered support for women going through menopause, I would...



Base: 5,012 people who have been through or are going through menopause while working. (UK: 1008, South Africa: 1000, Germany: 1003, Italy: 1000, Spain: 1001)



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