

In partnership with:

**CERIDIAN**

**MAKE**uk  
The Manufacturers' Organisation

# ABSENCE BENCHMARK 2021

## **MAKE**uk **INSIGHT:**

This year's Absence Benchmark has some very interesting results – sickness absence (both as a % and days lost to sickness absence) was lower in 2020 compared to both 2018 and 2016. Despite the obvious concerns the pandemic brought employers, in terms of employee sickness, absence from work does not seem to have directly resulted in the way we may have initially expected.

Several factors could have influenced these results, starting with the biggest change in 2020 to previous years - the introduction of furlough. Make UK research found that at its peak 85% of manufacturers were using the Job Retention Scheme (furlough). Therefore, a large proportion of workers will not have been in work and therefore any sickness absence in the period would have gone unreported.

In addition, with many people working from home, it may be the case that employees were less likely to formally report sickness absence which typically would be prompted by having to travel into work and be around colleagues and customers.

Finally, with increased uncertainty and insecurity around their employment, an element of presenteeism could be at play. With half of manufacturers having made redundancies last year it may have been the case that employees felt a clean absence record would benefit them in any redundancy or furlough selection process.

Although lower absence rates are clearly preferable for an employer it is important that a deeper dive is undertaken to ensure that the reasons for the lower rates are not counterproductive with staff morale, engagement and ultimately productivity. Presenteeism although initially great for productivity will always ultimately bring with it an overall reduction in productivity and staff morale if the uncertainty feeding it is not addressed.

With support from:



# CERIDIAN INSIGHT:

Furlough, home working and the desire to keep a clean absence record have all played into reduced absence levels for 2020. However, throughout the year, employees have experienced higher levels of stress. They're worried about finances, the state of the economy, the health and well-being of family members, and much more. Absence is inextricably linked to employee wellbeing and both need to be measured and managed.

This is where a comprehensive, modern cloud Human Capital Management (HCM) technology that manages the entire employee lifecycle can really prove its worth. Managers can track absences in real-time to respond more immediately to any issues. The insights from real-time data can also help managers have more informed conversations with employees that will help address and improve their performance if required. And in terms of employee wellbeing, using engagement software to stay in touch with employees, strengthen team interactions and check in with people allows you to gauge real time sentiment and pick up possible health issues before they occur.

With proven applications within manufacturing companies worldwide, our award-winning cloud-based Human Capital Management technology can support your whole people management process including; talent acquisition, onboarding, compensation and benefits, learning, workforce management and payroll.

We engineer innovative technology that organisations around the world use to manage compliance, make better decisions, build great teams, and drive engagement with their employees.

Find out more. Visit [www.ceridian.com/uk](http://www.ceridian.com/uk)



## METHODOLOGY

This is based on a survey undertaken between 1 February 2021 and 20 February 2021 with 169 manufacturers responding.

**Measuring absence:** the survey covers all lengths of sickness absence, but excludes training leave, holidays, maternity, paternity, parental and adoption leave and time off for dependents.

### The calculations:

$$\text{Average number of days absent per employee} = \frac{\text{Total number of working days lost to absence}}{\text{Average number of employees across the year}}$$

$$\text{Absence rate} = \frac{\text{Total number of working days lost to absence}}{228 \text{ days} \times \text{Average number of employees across the year}}$$

\* insufficient sample size

# IN 2020:



THE AVERAGE  
NUMBER OF  
DAYS LOST TO  
SICKNESS ABSENCE  
WAS  
**5.2**



THE AVERAGE  
NUMBER OF DAYS  
LOST TO SICKNESS  
ABSENCE IN  
TEXTILES WAS  
**11.9**



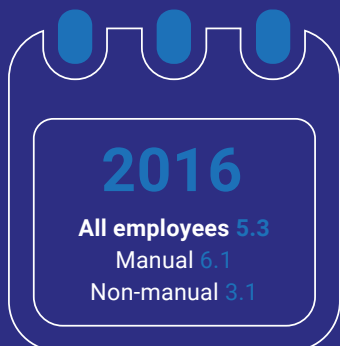
THE SICKNESS  
ABSENCE RATE FOR  
MANUFACTURING  
WAS  
**2.3%**



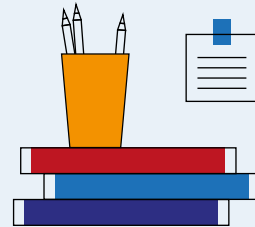
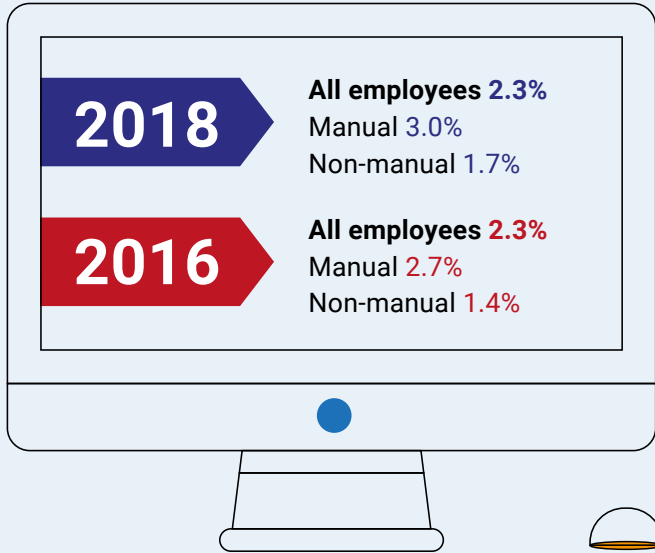
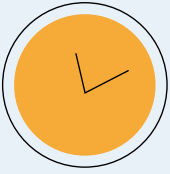
THE LOWEST SICKNESS  
ABSENCE WAS IN  
EAST ANGLIA WITH  
**2.8 DAYS**  
LOST TO SICKNESS  
ABSENCE ON AVERAGE

IN THE SOUTH WEST  
THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF  
DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS  
ABSENCE WAS  
**13.2**

## DAYS LOST TO SICKNESS ABSENCE BY EMPLOYEE TYPE:

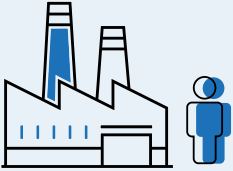


# SICKNESS ABSENCE RATE BY EMPLOYEE TYPE



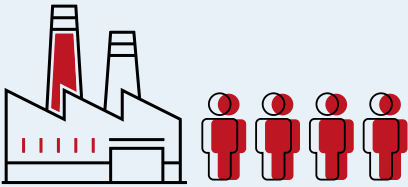
# SICKNESS ABSENCE BY SIZE OF COMPANY (BY EMPLOYEE NUMBER)

AVERAGE DAYS LOST DUE TO SICKNESS ABSENCE | AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE RATE (%)



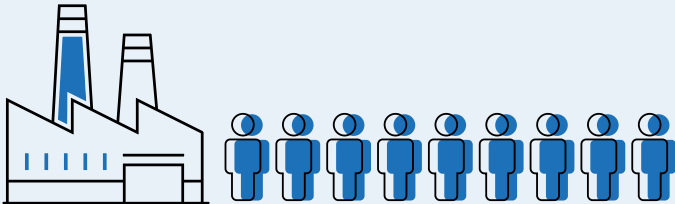
**All employees 0.7 | 0.3%**  
Manual 2.7 | **1.2%**  
Non-manual 1.0 | **0.4%**

1-9 EMPLOYEES



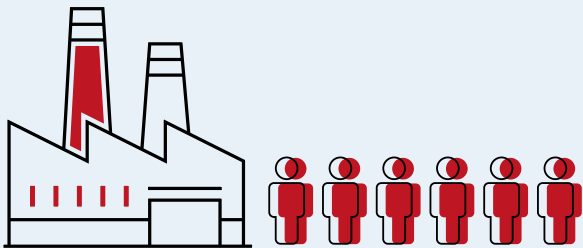
**All employees 4.4 | 1.9%**  
Manual 5.4 | **2.4%**  
Non-manual 2.4 | **1.1%**

10-249 EMPLOYEES



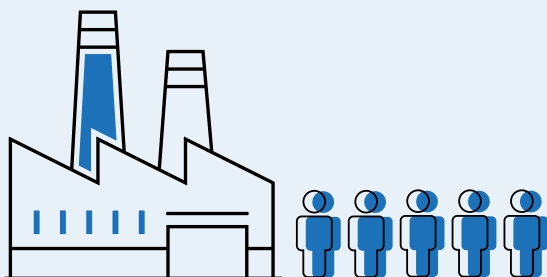
**All employees 9.2 | 4.1%**  
Manual 7.7 | **3.4%**  
Non-manual 3.6 | **1.6%**

250-499 EMPLOYEES



**All employees 6.0 | 2.6%**  
Manual 7.0 | **3.1%**  
Non-manual 3.6 | **1.6%**

500-999 EMPLOYEES



**All employees 4.6 | 2.0%**  
Manual 10.6 | **4.7%**  
Non-manual 3.2 | **1.4%**

1000+ EMPLOYEES

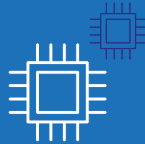
# SICKNESS ABSENCE BY SECTOR

AVERAGE DAYS LOST DUE TO SICKNESS ABSENCE | AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE RATE (%)



## BASIC METALS

All employees 2.7 | 1.2%  
Manual \* | \*  
Non-manual \* | \*



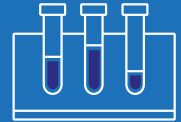
## ELECTRONICS

All employees 3.9 | 1.7%  
Manual 7.2 | 3.2%  
Non-manual 2.8 | 1.2%



## TEXTILES

All employees 11.9 | 5.2%  
Manual 16.4 | 7.2%  
Non-manual 9.6 | 4.2%



## CHEMICALS

All employees 4.4 | 1.9%  
Manual 3.3 | 1.5%  
Non-manual 3.3 | 1.4%



## RUBBER & PLASTICS

All employees 7.4 | 3.2%  
Manual 5.3 | 2.3%  
Non-manual 1.6 | 0.7%



## ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

All employees 2.7 | 1.2%  
Manual 3.2 | 1.4%  
Non-manual 1.6 | 0.7%



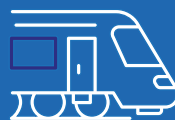
## OTHER MANUFACTURING

All employees 5.4 | 2.4%  
Manual 6.8 | 3.0%  
Non-manual 3.0 | 1.3%



## PAPER & PRINTING

All employees 6.5 | 2.9%  
Manual \* | \*  
Non-manual \* | \*



## OTHER TRANSPORT

All employees 4.5 | 2.0%  
Manual \* | \*  
Non-manual \* | \*



## MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT

All employees 4.3 | 1.9%  
Manual 5.0 | 2.2%  
Non-manual 2.6 | 1.1%



## METAL PRODUCTS

All employees 6.6 | 2.9%  
Manual 5.1 | 2.2%  
Non-manual 1.4 | 0.6%



## FOOD AND DRINK

All employees 3.9 | 1.7%  
Manual 4.5 | 2.0%  
Non-manual 1.3 | 0.6%

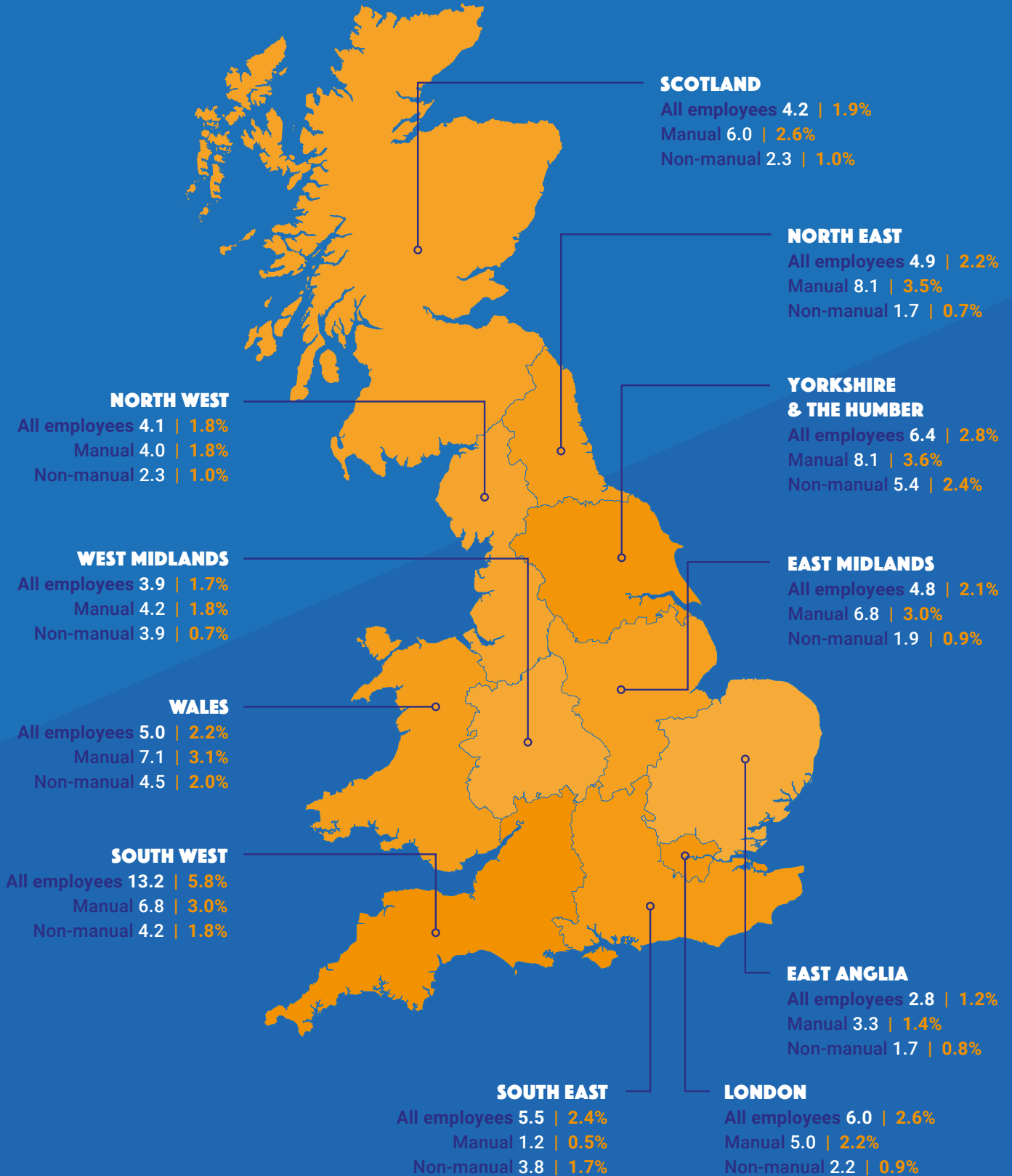


## MOTOR VEHICLES

All employees 4.7 | 2.0%  
Manual 6.3 | 2.8%  
Non-manual 1.4 | 0.6%

# SICKNESS ABSENCE BY REGION

AVERAGE DAYS LOST DUE TO SICKNESS ABSENCE | AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE RATE (%)





Make UK is a powerful voice at local, national and international level for all companies from small to large in the manufacturing and engineering sector.

We create the most supportive environment for UK manufacturing growth and success, and we represent the issues that are most important to our members, working hard to ensure UK manufacturing remains in the government and media spotlight.

Our services help manufacturers increase efficiency, productivity, and capability across areas such as HR & legal support; health, safety & sustainability; compliance; and training & skills.

Our HR experts are on hand to support you through the entire employment cycle, from challenges around recruitment, retention and employee engagement to broader strategic issues involving your workforce.

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## CERIDIAN


At Ceridian, we create innovative technology that manufacturers around the world use to attract, develop, manage, and pay their people. Our award-winning Dayforce solution helps our customers manage compliance, make better decisions, build great teams, and drive engagement with their employees. Ceridian has solutions for manufacturers of all sizes.

Ceridian. Makes Work Life Better™


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To find out how we can support you, speak to one of our HR consultants by calling **0808 168 5874** or email **[HRenquiries@MakeUK.org](mailto:HRenquiries@MakeUK.org)**


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