

IBA  
PROFESSIONAL  
WELLBEING  
COMMISSION

**ADVANCING WELLBEING  
IN THE GLOBAL LEGAL  
PROFESSION.**

International Conference of Legal Regulators  
+ Conference of Regulatory Officers 2024



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# WHO WE ARE

- We were established in October 2022 as an independent entity sitting within the Public and Professional Interest Division (PPID) of the IBA.
- We work collaboratively with IBA Committees, the Bar Issues Commission, IBA's Human Rights Institute, and the IBA Legal Policy and Research Unit.
- We are governed by two co-chairs and 15 commissioners from around the world.
- We have access to a global network of wellbeing experts on psychological health and safety at work.





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# OUR OBJECTIVES

- To promote the importance of wellbeing as a core issue and priority for the global legal community;
- To identify, coordinate and organise the various global stakeholders in changing or modifying the culture and mindset of the legal profession;
- To raise awareness of the challenges and stigma surrounding discussions of wellbeing, while bearing in mind cultural differences when engaging with this issue at an international and a local level;
- To highlight the ways in which wellbeing issues, needs, and responses vary between different demographic groups; and
- To promote and share policies and working practices that help to promote positive and sustainable wellbeing within the legal profession, and where possible, make recommendations to change or modify the practical and regulatory environment of the legal profession at all levels.





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# IBA WELLBEING PRINCIPLES

1. Mental wellbeing matters.
2. Poor mental wellbeing is not weakness.
3. Raising awareness is fundamental.
4. A commitment to change, and regular continuing assessment, is needed.
5. Policies matter.
6. Maintain an open dialogue and communication.
7. Address systemic problems.
8. Recognise intersectionalities.
9. Share good practices.
10. Learn from others.





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# WHO WE ENGAGE WITH



## Legal Educators

Supporting legal education providers to integrate wellbeing into their curricula.



## Legal Businesses

Supporting leaders of the profession to adopt wellbeing best practices in their workplaces.



## The Judiciary

Supporting the development of best practices for judicial wellbeing across the globe.



## Bars and Regulators

Supporting bar associations, law societies, and legal regulators in promoting and supporting professional wellbeing at the systemic level.

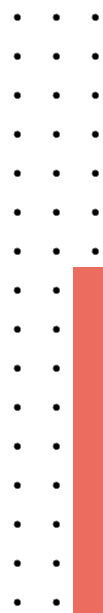




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# HOW WE WORK

- We serve as a global hub to bring together representatives of organisations from different jurisdictions, sections of the IBA, and outside experts.
- We develop guidelines, recommendations, and outreach initiatives to advance wellbeing in the legal profession globally, with a focus on sharing best practices.
- Through our research, we identify issues and concerns which are common across jurisdictions and where collaboration will be beneficial, while also highlighting and acknowledging the need for targeted jurisdictional interventions, based on local attitudes and responses to these issues.





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# Mental Wellbeing in the Legal Profession: A Global Study



**A report prepared by the IBA Presidential Task Force  
on mental wellbeing in the legal profession**



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## OUR RESEARCH

- First of its kind global survey of mental wellbeing in the legal profession.
- Published in 2021.
- Individuals - 3256 responses - majority worked in law firms (73%)
- Institutions - 186 responses - majority were law firms (81%)





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# LEVELS OF MENTAL WELLBEING

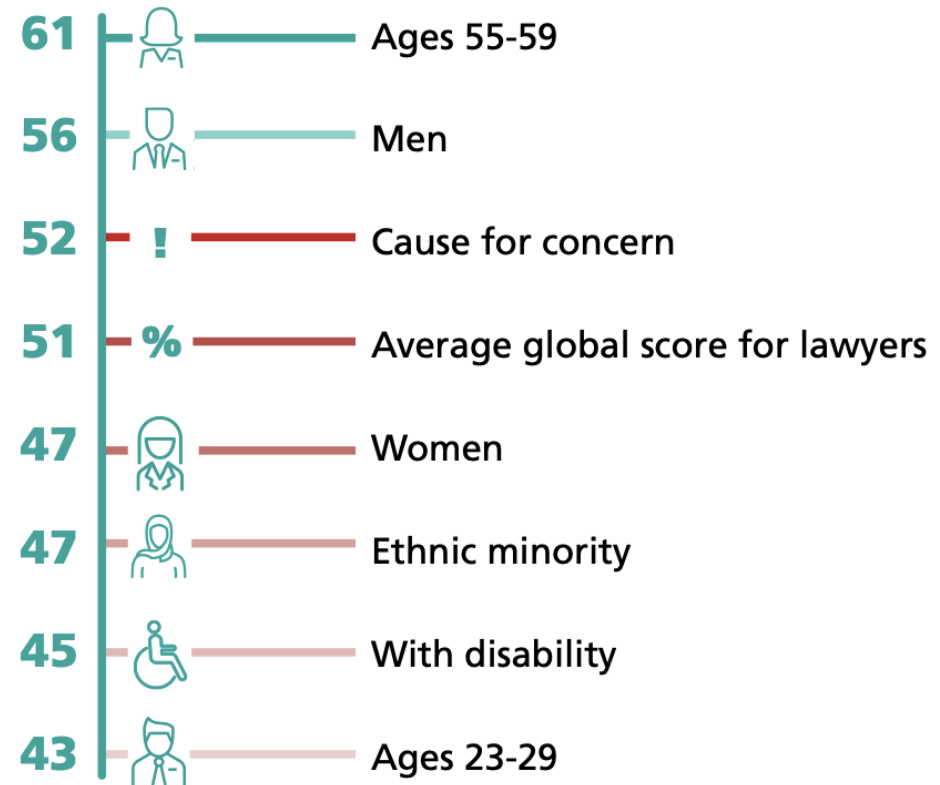


## WHO-5 Mental Wellbeing Index Scores:

This World Health Organization scale allows comparisons across groups, regions, and with previous studies. For an individual, a score below 52 per cent is an indicator for a health professional to screen for depression, and suggests a more formal assessment of mental wellbeing problems is warranted. The average overall score of respondents to the IBA Survey of Individuals was 51 per cent.

## Discrepancy in Wellbeing Index scores:

scores:







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# STIGMA REMAINS AN ISSUE

## Reasons why people don't speak out:



### Impact of stigma:

41 per cent would not discuss mental wellbeing concerns with their employer for fear it may have a negative impact on their career.



**32.1%**

Fear of being treated differently as a result



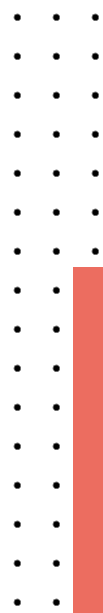
**24.1%**

Employer does not sufficiently recognise mental wellbeing issues



**17.2%**

Fear of not being believed/taken seriously



## KEY STRESSORS

- Intensive work / time demands
- Poor work-life balance
- High levels of pressure
- Bullying and harassment – where this was reported, it had the most detrimental effect.



**1** in **3** say their work has a negative, or extremely negative impact on their wellbeing



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### **Lack of training:**

82 per cent of institutions say they take mental wellbeing seriously – only 16 per cent provide training for senior management.



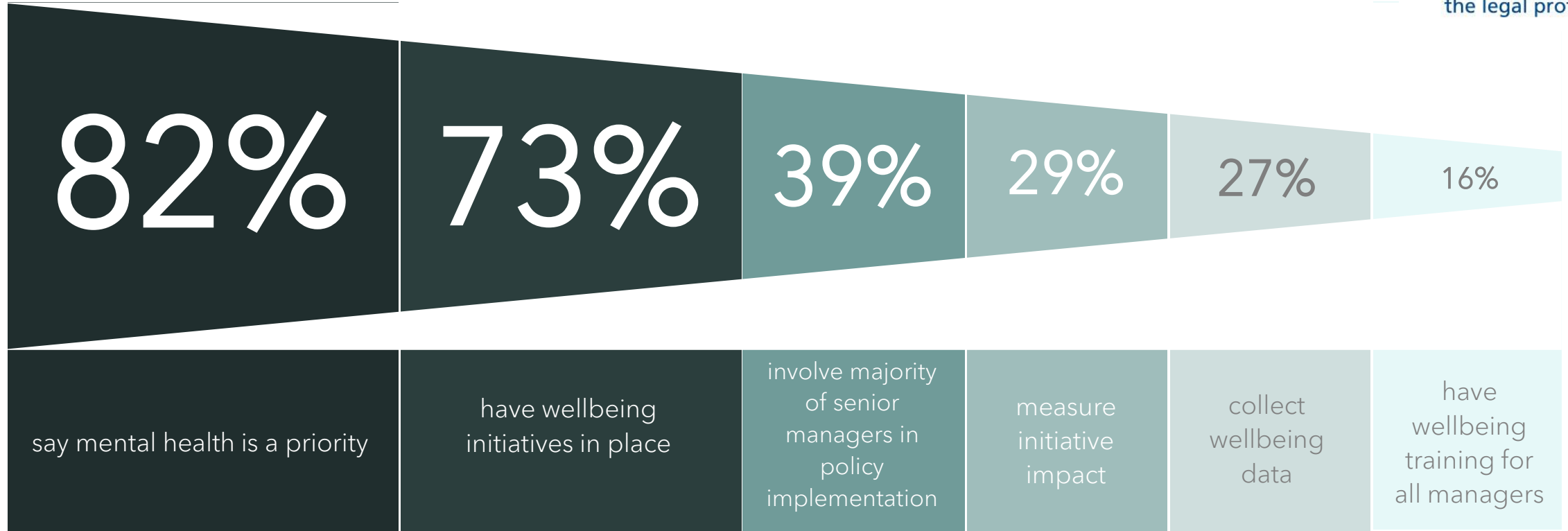
### **28% want to see improved workplace culture:**

to create a culture of mutual respect and address poor behaviour.



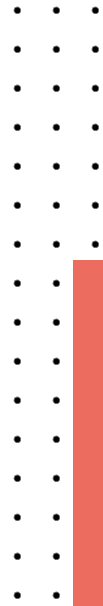
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# INSTITUTIONS SUMMARY



43% Promote internal or external mental wellbeing activities

33% Provide external mental wellbeing funding

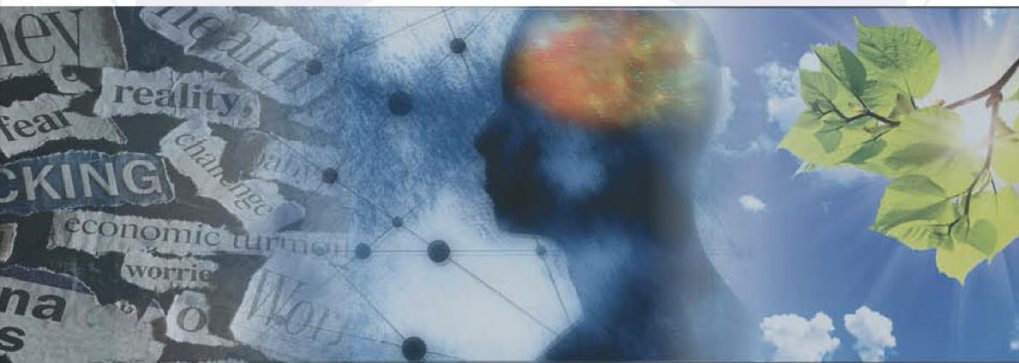




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IBA PROFESSIONAL WELLBEING COMMISSION

# International Guidelines for Wellbeing in Legal Education



Emma Jones, Caroline Strevens, Rachael Field and Colin James



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## WHAT'S NEW AND UPCOMING

- NEW international guidelines for wellbeing in legal education - a comprehensive resource designed to promote wellbeing in the lawyers of the future.
- COMING SOON... international guidelines for wellbeing in legal workplaces.
- COMING SOON... more podcasts and webinars continuing the conversation with legal workplaces, the judiciary, bars and regulators.





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# OUR RESOURCES



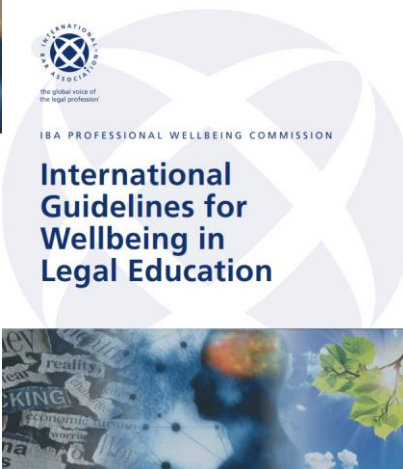
Read



Listen



Watch



A Priority Issue: Mental Wellness

Africa Legal

Wellbeing and positive mental health: Does being a lawyer help?

Law Society of Scotland

ERF Wellbeing Session 6

International Bar Association

Proactive versus reactive: regulatory challenges when considering professional wellbeing

International Bar Association

1:00:49



[www.ibanet.org/mental-wellbeing-in-the-legal-profession](http://www.ibanet.org/mental-wellbeing-in-the-legal-profession)