

# 'The right to health through work'.

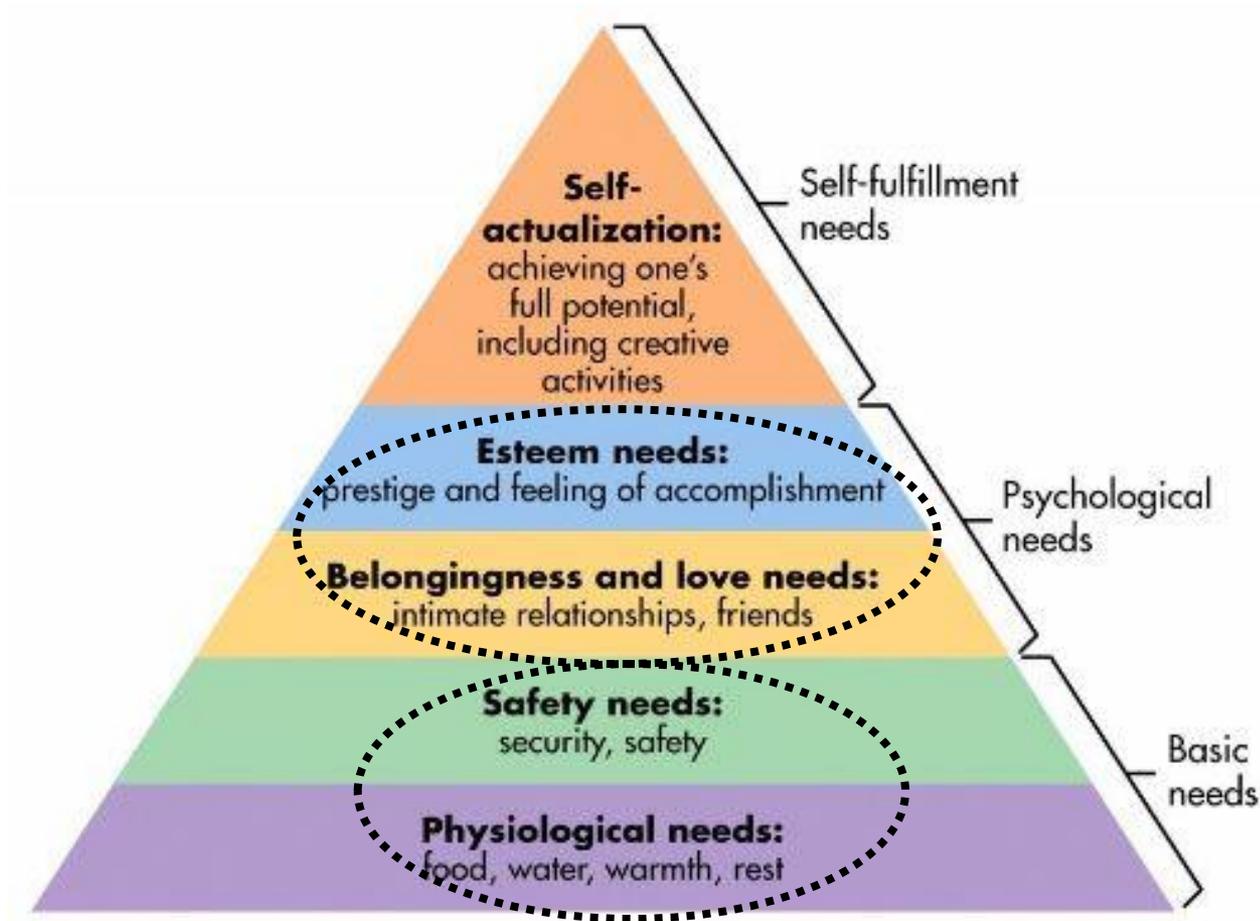
Dr Richard JL Heron FRCP FFOM  
President Faculty of Occupational Medicine

Association of Directors of Public Health Meeting, November 2016

# The questions

- Health and work - human needs?
- Health and work - human rights?
- What are our rights to health through work?

# The human need for work?



# The human right to health

- *The right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health*
- ...“a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”

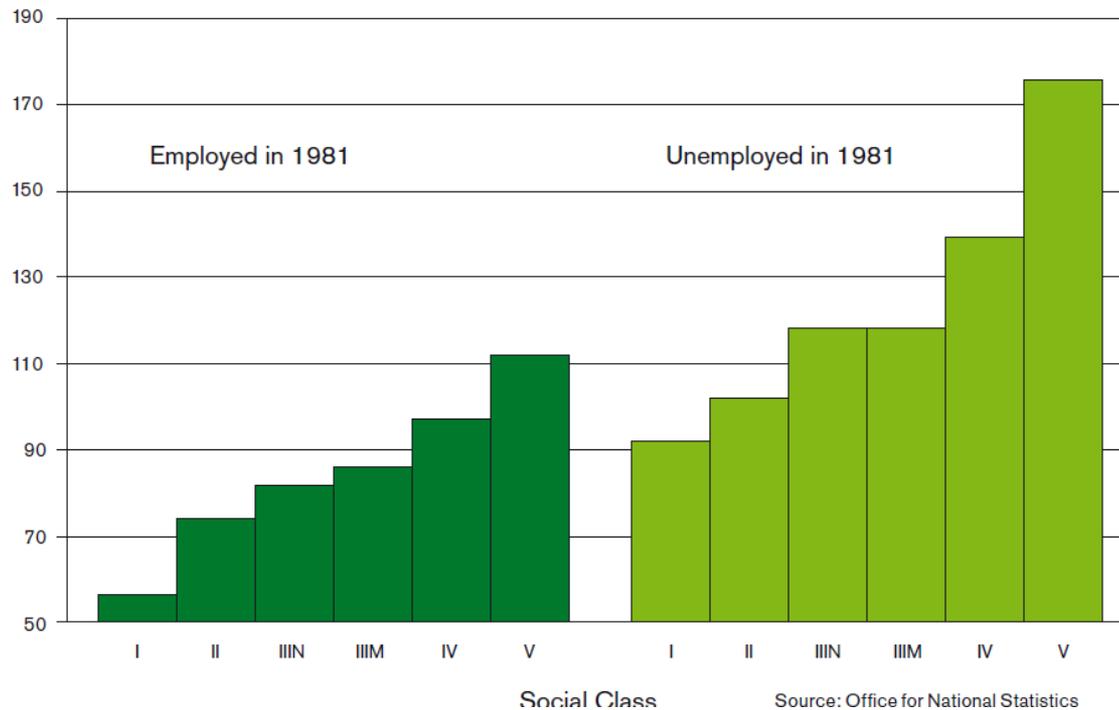


# The human right to work

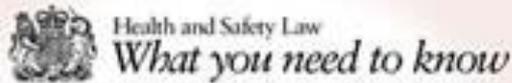
Article 23.1 of the Universal Declaration of **Human Rights** states: (1) Everyone has the **right** to work, to free choice of **employment**, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

# The right to health through work

Standardised  
Mortality Rate



# Regulating (or deregulating) for good work?



Health and Safety Law  
*What you need to know*

All workers have a right to work in places where risks to their health and safety are properly controlled. Health and safety is often stopping you getting hurt at work or ill through work. Your employer is responsible for health and safety, but you must help.



A World Bank Group Flagship Report

14<sup>TH</sup> EDITION

**Doing Business 2017**

Equal Opportunity for All

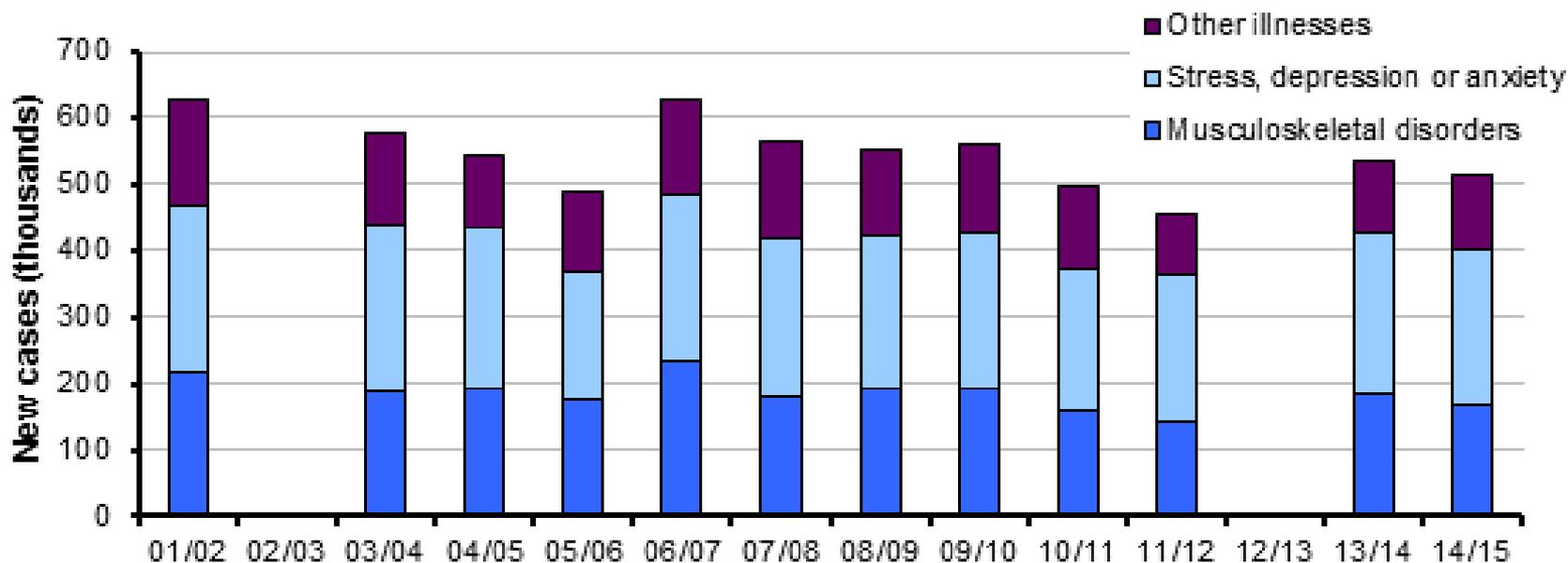


Comparing Business Regulation  
for Domestic Firms in **190** Economies

WORLD BANK GROUP

- UK HSE: Employers' duty of care' to:
- World Bank: Right to favourable business opportunities
  - Reforms reducing complexity and cost of regulatory processes
  - 48 regulatory reforms making it easier to do business (190 economies)

# New cases of self-reported work-related illness amongst people who worked in the last 12 months



## Notes:

- 95% confidence interval on average +/- 7% on the total
- No data on work-related illness from the LFS was collected in 2002/03 and 2012/13
- 2001/02-2013/14 estimates were revised (10/15), as LFS data sets have been reweighted to reflect population estimates based on the 2011 Census

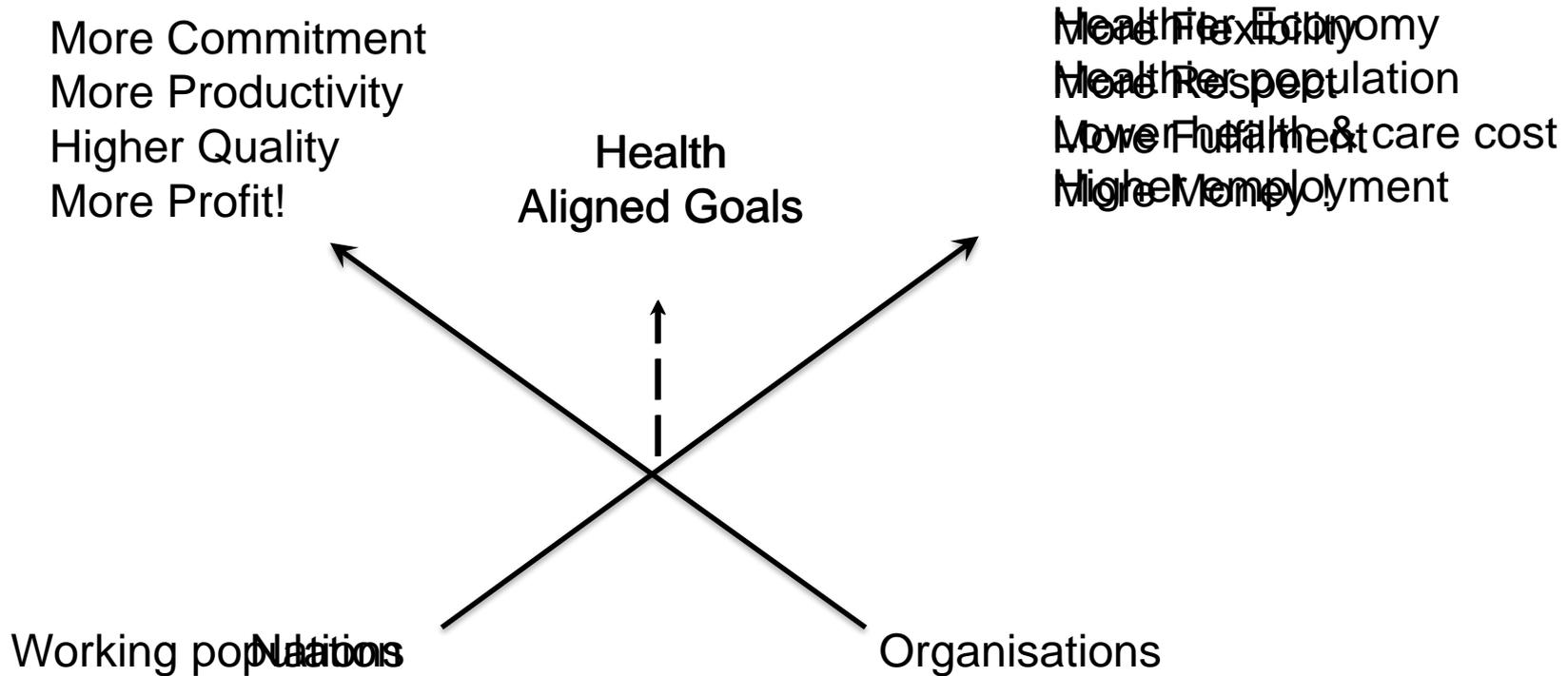
Source: Labour Force Survey

# “Work” as a pathway to health

- Health & Work Strategy
- “Good Work”
- Work as a social determinant
- Absence from work
- “Fit-for-work”
- Work as a health outcome

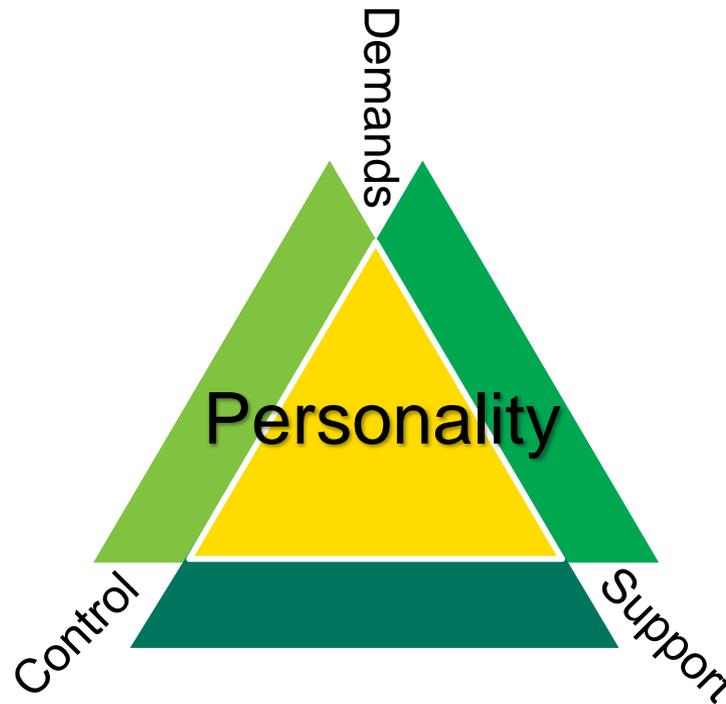


# Aligning, workers rights, their health and Organisational success



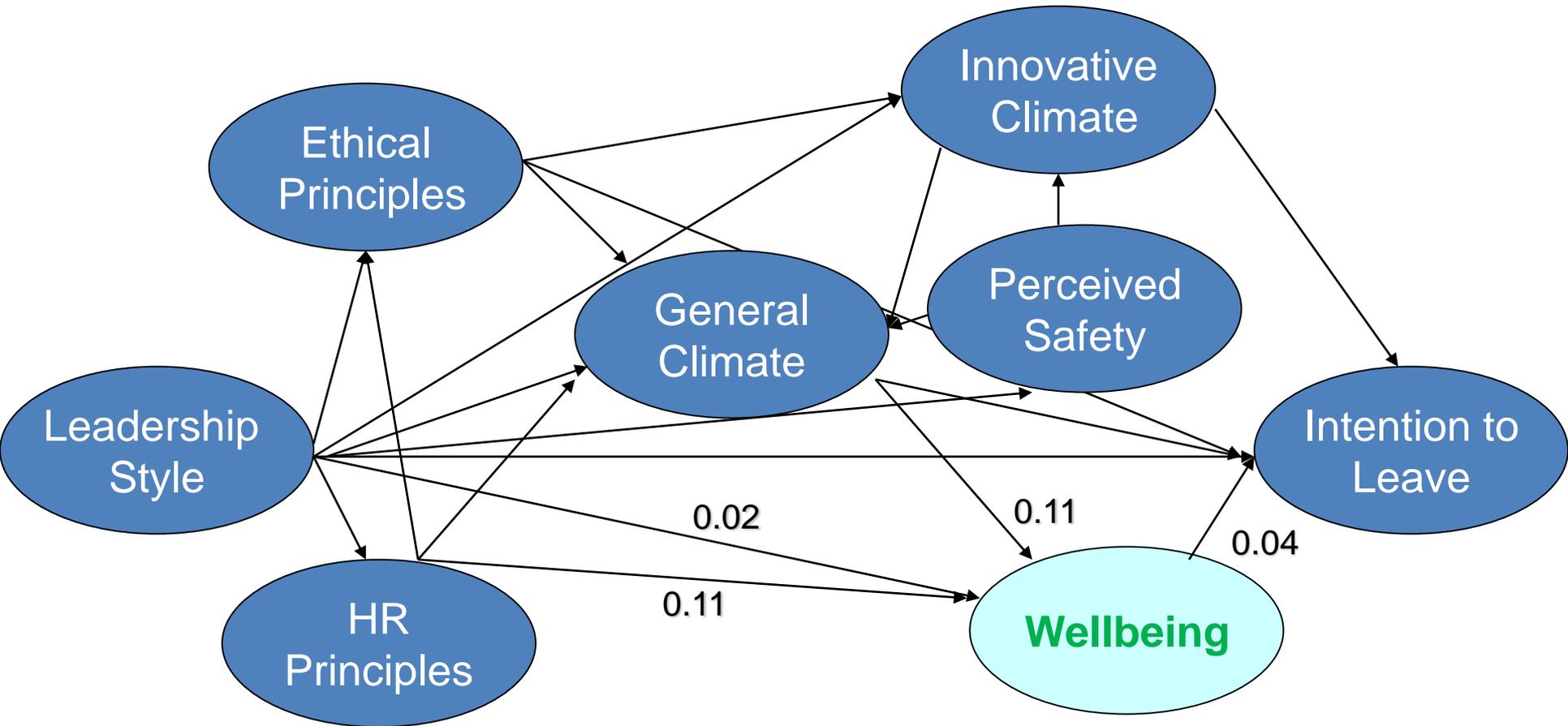
# Why should employers care deeply about (psychological) “wellbeing at work”

- I am often bothered by excessive work pressure in my job
- my workload is manageable and achievable most of the time



- My manager trusts me to make informed decisions and do the right thing
- My manager / supervisor involves me in decisions that affect me
- I believe “the company” really cares about my health & wellbeing
- My manager supports flexible working solutions for balancing work & personal life

# The Return on investment in wellbeing?



(Chi Square = 14.8, df = 10, P value = .14, RMSEA = 0.004)

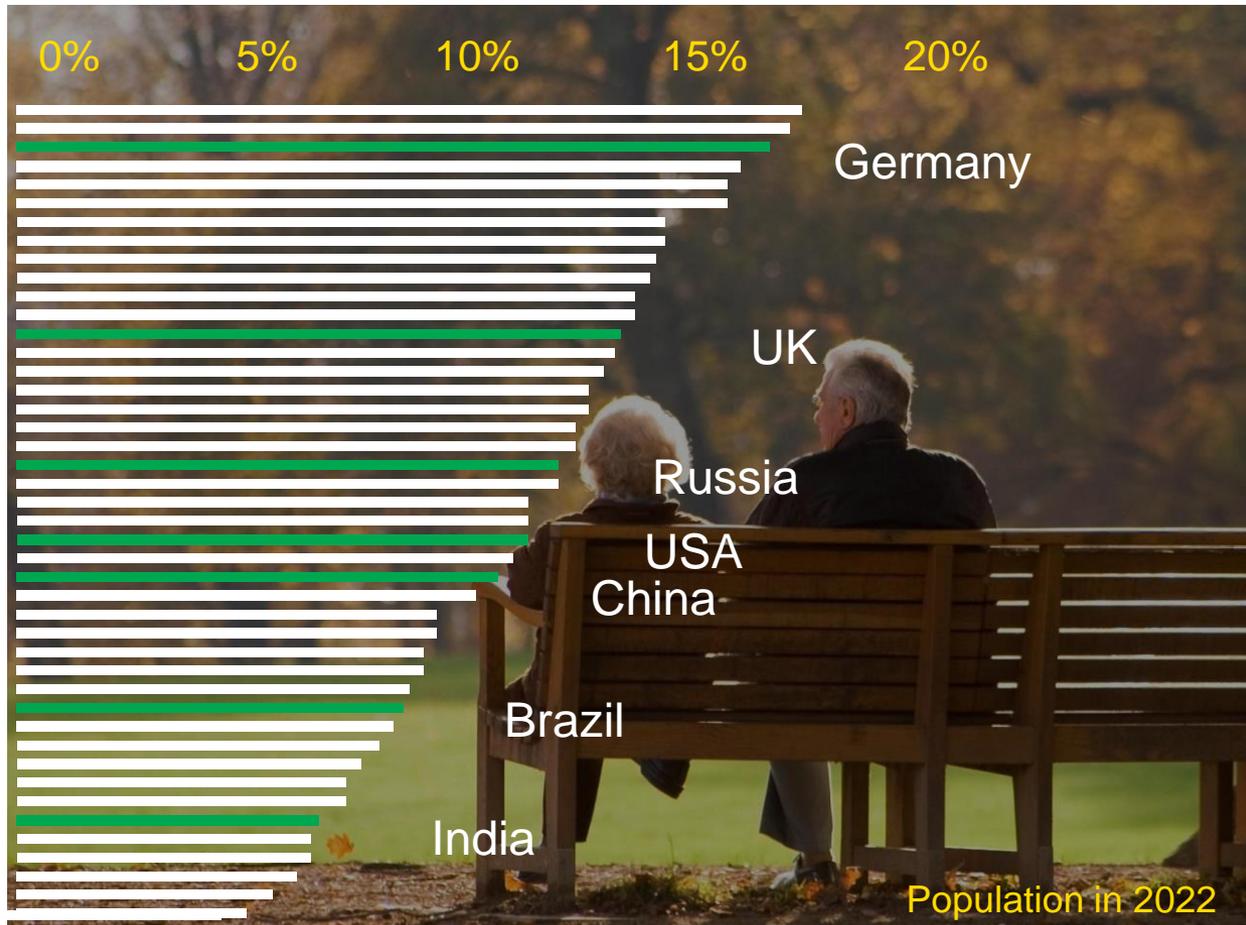
## What is the purpose of a business?



“Business that focuses just on money doesn’t invest in the future - in its employees, new ideas, markets or products, and won’t be around for long. Any successful business is part of society, and exists to meet society’s needs.”

John Browne (MIT, May 2006)

# Aligned Goals with an ageing population



# *What more could we do to meet our obligation to fulfil the right to health through work?*



**Joint Strategic Needs Assessment  
and joint health and wellbeing  
strategies explained**

*Commissioning for populations*

- Acknowledge the role of employment in JSNA's & through commissioning ?
  - employment (#1)
- Improve access to OH advice entering and staying in good work?
  - <40%

# End-piece

“Today’s most significant health risks are already well described. The greatest advances in public health will be alterations in policies and environments that shape these risks for entire populations”

Thomas A. Farley, MD, MPH