

Working long hours is a health risk that kills hundreds of thousands of people every year.

According to a publication recently **released** by the World Health Organisation (WHO) people who work 55 hours and more every week have a 35% higher risk of **suffering a stroke** and a 17% higher risk of a heart attack compared to normal **labourers** who work 35 to 40 hours a week.



500 million people all over the world, 9% of the **global** working population, were **exposed** to long working hours in 2016. 745,000 people died, a 30% **increase** since 2000. In the last two **decades**, stress-related heart diseases **rose** by 43% and strokes increased by 19%.

Middle-aged men were the group hardest hit by overworking. While workers in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific region were most at risk, workers in Europe suffered the least.

The WHO report **states** that health dangers were **caused** not only by psychological stress but also by bad living **habits** like smoking, a bad **diet**, **lack** of sleep and **alcohol abuse**.

The study **focuses on** the period before the COVID-19 **pandemic engulfed** the world. The lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 increased work at home by 10%. As a result, there were no clear **boundaries** between work and private life. Workers suffered from a higher stress level because they were not sure if they could keep their job.

In its **publication** WHO **officials recommend measures** to **improve** the health of workers, including labour **standards** on working time.

Words

- **according to** = as reported by ...
- **alcohol abuse** = drinking too much alcohol
- **boundary** = here: line between two things or events
- **cause** = the reason for something
- **decade** = a period of 10 years
- **diet** = the food that you eat regularly
- **engulf** = here: hit, sweep across
- **exposed to** = to be in a certain situation
- **focus on** = concentrate on
- **global** = worldwide
- **habit** = regular things you do every day
- **improve** = make better
- **increase** = to go up
- **labourer** = worker
- **lack** = not enough
- **measure** = action that a government should take
- **official** = person who is in a high position in an organisation
- **pandemic** = disease that affects many people in the world
- **publication** = when information or a report is printed
- **recommend** = suggest
- **release** = to make public for everyone to see
- **rise – rose – risen** = to go up
- **standard** = here: level that should be achieved
- **stroke** = when a blood vessel in your brain is blocked or breaks
- **state** = to say something officially
- **suffer** = experience; if something bad happens to someone

Match the sentence beginnings with the endings. There are TWO endings you will not need.

1	Over half a billion people
2	People who work longer hours are
3	Stress-related strokes and heart diseases
4	The group most at risk were
5	Workers in Europe do not
6	Many diseases are also caused
7	The pandemic probably caused
8	Boundaries between work and private life fade
9	During the pandemic many workers
10	Health officials suggest introducing

A	have increased over the past two decades.
B	middle-aged men
C	are afraid of losing their jobs
D	work longer than normal every week.
E	through increased working at home
F	by working less than 40 hours
G	at a higher risk of suffering from strokes and heart attacks
H	standards on working hours
I	more stress in the lives of many workers
J	suffer from heart attacks every year
K	suffer as much as those from Southeast Asia
L	by a bad diet and not enough sleep

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Complete the text by filling in the missing words from the box on the right. There are **THREE** words you will not need.

Working long hours is a health **(1)** _____ that kills hundreds of thousands of people every year. **(2)** _____ to a publication recently released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) people who work 55 hours and more every week have a 35% higher risk of **(3)** _____ a stroke and a 17% higher risk of a heart attack **(4)** _____ to normal labourers who work 35 to 40 hours a week.

500 million people all over the world, 9% of the **(5)** _____ working population, were exposed to long working hours in 2016. 745,000 people died, a 30% **(6)** _____ since 2000. In the last two **(7)** _____, stress-related heart diseases rose by 43% and strokes increased by 19%.

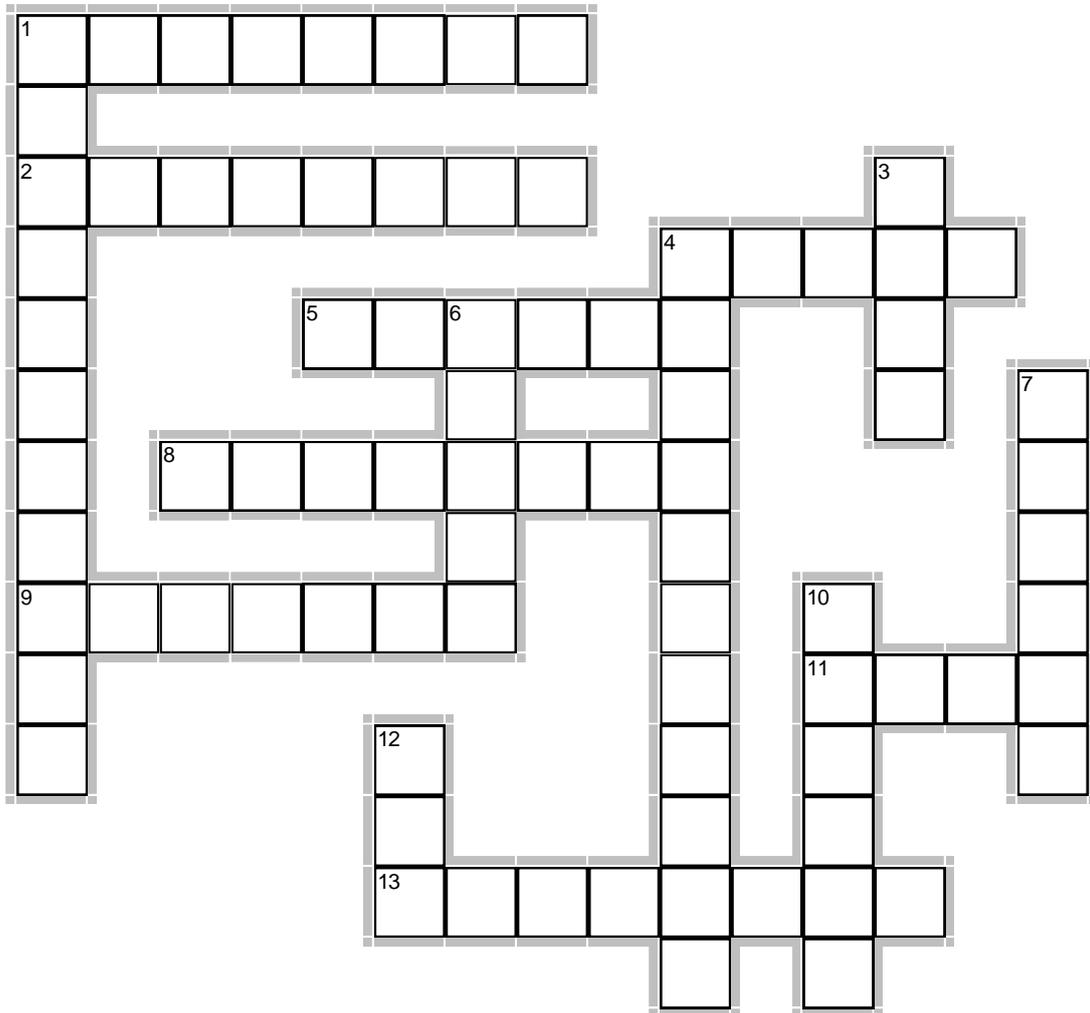
Middle-aged men were the group hardest hit by **(8)** _____. While workers in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific region were most at risk, workers in Europe suffered the **(9)** _____.

The WHO report states that health dangers were caused not only by **(10)** _____ stress but also by bad living habits like smoking, a bad diet, lack of sleep and alcohol **(11)** _____.

The study focuses on the period before the COVID-19 **(12)** _____ engulfed the world. The lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 increased work at home by 10%. As a result, there were no clear **(13)** _____ between work and private life. Workers suffered from a higher stress level because they were not sure if they could keep their job.

In its **(14)** _____ WHO officials recommend measures to **(15)** _____ the health of workers, including labour **(16)** _____ on working time.

abuse
according
boundaries
compared
decades
diseases
extend
global
improve
increase
lack
least
overworking
pandemic
psychological
publication
risk
standards
suffering



Across

1. disease that affects many people around the world
2. line between two objects
4. thing that you do regularly; all the time
5. a period of ten years
8. another word for "worker"
9. to make better
11. not enough of
13. person in a high position in an organisation

Down

1. reported that is printed for everyone to see
3. the food that you normally eat
4. when your heart suddenly stops working (2 words)
6. the reason for something
7. when a blood vessel in your brain is blocked or breaks
10. worldwide
12. World Health Organisation (short word)

Essay: Work – Life Balance**Work to live or live to work?**

Write an argumentative essay about the work-life balance. Include the following aspects:

- Comment on the introductory line above.
- How important is it to spend enough leisure time?
- In which ways is "*being available at all times*" important for a job. Give a few examples.
- Does working from home lead to more stress in your family?



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KEY

Match the sentence beginnings with the endings. There are TWO endings you will not need.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
D	G	A	B	K	L	I	E	C	H

Complete the text by filling in the missing words from the box on the right. There are THREE words you will not need.

Working long hours is a health **(1) risk** that kills hundreds of thousands of people every year. **(2) According** to a publication recently released by the World Health Organisation (WHO) people who work 55 hours and more every week have a 35% higher risk of **(3) suffering** a stroke and a 17% higher risk of a heart attack **(4) compared** to normal labourers who work 35 to 40 hours a week.

500 million people all over the world, 9% of the **(5) global** working population, were exposed to long working hours in 2016. 745,000 people died, a 30% **(6) increase** since 2000. In the last two **(7) decades**, stress-related heart diseases rose by 43% and strokes increased by 19%.

Middle-aged men were the group hardest hit by **(8) overworking**. While workers in Southeast Asia and the Western Pacific region were most at risk, workers in Europe suffered the **(9) least**.

The WHO report states that health dangers were caused not only by **(10) psychological** stress but also by bad living habits like smoking, a bad diet, lack of sleep and alcohol **(11) abuse**.

The study focuses on the period before the COVID-19 **(12) pandemic** engulfed the world. The lockdowns during 2020 and 2021 increased work at home by 10%. As a result, there were no clear **(13) boundaries** between work and private life. Workers suffered from a higher stress level because they were not sure if they could keep their job.

In its **(14) publication** WHO officials recommend measures to **(15) improve** the health of workers, including labour **(16) standards** on working time.

