## Sickness Absence



## TUC

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$26^{\text {th }}$ February 2010

## Background

Opinium Research carried out an online poll of 2,003 UK adults from the $24^{\text {th }}$ to the $26^{\text {th }}$ of February 2010. Results have been weighted to nationally representative criteria. [OP1400]

## Topline

- Of the 2003 adults surveyed, $42 \%$ are in full time work. A further $15 \%$ work part time for between 8 and 29 hours per week, and $2 \%$ for 8 hours or less per week. $42 \%$ are not currently in work.
- Of those currently in work, $57 \%$ are employed in the private sector, and $30 \%$ in the public sector. A further $13 \%$ work for charities, as a volunteer, or within another sector.
- More males work in the private sector ( $68 \%$ vs. $47 \%$ of females). This pattern is reversed in the public sector, where $38 \%$ of females are employed, compared to $22 \%$ of males.
- Within the last month, a fifth have been to work when they were really too ill to do so (20\%). A further $36 \%$ have done so within the last year, though not in the last month. $13 \%$ claim they have never been into work when they were too ill to go.
- Within the last month, more females have gone into work when ill than males (23\% vs. $17 \%$.)
- Younger people (aged 18-34) are also more likely to have gone into work when ill over the last month ( $24 \%$, vs. $23 \%$ of $35-54$ year olds and $11 \%$ of $55+$ year olds).
- Overall, the most popular reason for going into work when ill is 'people depend on the job I do' $-31 \%$. Other common reasons are not wanting to let an employer down (20\%), and not being able to afford to take time off (20\%).
- Males are more worried about loss of pay than females ( $25 \%$ vs. $15 \%$ ), while females are more concerned about letting an employer down (21\% vs. 19\%).
- Younger people (aged 18-34) are more concerned about loss of pay than older people ( $23 \%$ vs. $20 \%$ aged $35-54$ and $15 \%$ aged $55+$ ), and letting an employer down ( $25 \%$ vs. $18 \%$ aged $35-54$ and $18 \%$ aged 55+).
- Older people are more likely to worry about people depending on them to do their job (42\% aged $55+$ vs. $30 \%$ aged $35-54$ and $25 \%$ aged $18-34$ ).

Opinium Research carried out an online poll of 2,003 UK adults from the $24^{\text {th }}$ to the $26^{\text {th }}$ of February 2010. Results have been weighted to nationally representative criteria. [OP1400] www.opinium.co.uk


The pure element of opinion

## Opinium Research Results/ Tables February 2010

2,003 Online Interviews (UK Nat. Rep)
Field: 24th to 26th February 2010

If the Base is not otherwise specified, the table is based on the full sample and is representative of all UK adults

| Which of these applies to you? | Male |  | e Total |  | $4 \quad 35-54$ |  | 55+ |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 2003 | 975 | 1028 | 2003 | 577 | 709 | 717 |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| Working full time (30 or more | 834 | 478 | 356 | 834 | 314 | 377 | 143 |
| hours per week) | 42\% | 49\% | 35\% | 42\% | 55\% | 53\% | 20\% |
| Working part time (8-29 hours | 299 | 88 | 211 | 299 | 68 | 119 | 112 |
| per week) | 15\% | 9\% | 21\% | 15\% | 12\% | 17\% | 16\% |
| Working part time (Less than 8 | 43 | 14 | 28 | 43 | 15 | 15 | 13 |
| hours a week) | 2\% | 1\% | 3\% | 2\% | 3\% | 2\% | 2\% |
|  | 104 | 43 | 60 | 104 | 97 | 7 | 0 |
| Full time student | 5\% | 4\% | 6\% | 5\% | 17\% | 1\% | 0 |
|  | 374 | 213 | 161 | 374 | 2 | 13 | 358 |
| Retired | 19\% | 22\% | 16\% | 19\% | 0\% | 2\% | 50\% |
|  | 135 | 69 | 66 | 135 | 53 | 59 | 23 |
| Unemployed | 7\% | 7\% | 6\% | 7\% | 9\% | 8\% | 3\% |
|  | 215 | 69 | 146 | 215 | 27 | 119 | 68 |
| Other not working | 11\% | 7\% | 14\% | 11\% | 5\% | 17\% | 9\% |


| Which of these applies to you? | Total Scotland |  | Northern Ireland | North East | North West | Yorkshire and the Humber | East Midlands | West Midlands | Wales | East of England | London | South East | South West |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 2003 | 168 | 53 | 86 | 226 | 170 | 144 | 178 | 98 | 186 | 248 | 272 | 170 |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| Working full time (30 or more | 834 | 75 | 24 | 34 | 99 | 67 | 57 | 68 | 44 | 66 | 120 | 116 | 64 |
| hours per week) | 42\% | 45\% | 44\% | 39\% | 44\% | 40\% | 39\% | 38\% | 44\% | 36\% | 48\% | 43\% | 37\% |
| Working part time (8-29 hours | 299 | 21 | 5 | 12 | 44 | 23 | 14 | 26 | 8 | 43 | 30 | 50 | 24 |
| per week) ( | 15\% | 12\% | 9\% | 13\% | 19\% | 13\% | 10\% | 15\% | 8\% | 23\% | 12\% | 18\% | 14\% |
| Working part time (Less than 8 | 43 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 |
| hours a week) | 2\% | 3\% | 0 | 3\% | 1\% | 1\% | 2\% | 1\% | 1\% | 4\% | 3\% | 3\% | 2\% |
|  | 104 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 9 | 10 | 3 | 13 | 12 | 9 |
| Full time student | 5\% | 4\% | 8\% | 6\% | 6\% | 8\% | 3\% | 5\% | 10\% | 1\% | 5\% | 4\% | 6\% |
|  | 374 | 27 | 12 | 21 | 36 | 35 | 38 | 43 | 19 | 31 | 39 | 37 | 37 |
| Retired | 19\% | 16\% | 23\% | 24\% | 16\% | 20\% | 26\% | 24\% | 20\% | 16\% | 16\% | 14\% | 22\% |
|  | 135 | 14 | 2 | 7 | 11 | 10 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 14 | 13 | 18 | 13 |
| Unemployed | 7\% | 8\% | 4\% | 8\% | 5\% | 6\% | 10\% | 7\% | 5\% | 8\% | 5\% | 7\% | 8\% |
|  | 215 | 21 | 6 | 5 | 20 | 20 | 13 | 17 | 12 | 23 | 27 | 32 | 20 |
| Other not working | 11\% | 12\% | 11\% | 6\% | 9\% | 12\% | 9\% | 9\% | 12\% | 12\% | 11\% | 12\% | 11\% |

Working Status

| Working |  | Working |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| full time (30 Working | part time |  |
| or more | part time ( 8 | (Less than |
| hours per | -29 hours | 8 hours a |

hours per - 29 hours 8 hours a
Total week) per week) week)

Which Sector
Pe.g. limited Government, Civil (e.g. limited Service, LEA, NHS, Charity/vol companies and Police, armed forces etc.)

| Which of these applies to you? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  | 2003 | 834 | 299 | 43 | 1176 | 672 | 352 | 51 | 101 |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| Working full time (30 or more hours per week) | 834 | 834 | 0 | 0 | 834 | 512 | 248 | 27 | 48 |
|  | 42\% | 100\% | 0 | 0 | 71\% | 76\% | 70\% | 52\% | 48\% |
| Working part time (8-29 hours per week) | 299 | 0 | 299 | 0 | 299 | 144 | 93 | 20 | 42 |
|  | 15\% | 0 | 100\% | 0 | 25\% | 21\% | 26\% | 39\% | 42\% |
| Working part time (Less than 8 hours a week) | 43 | 0 | 0 | 43 | 43 | 16 | 11 | 5 | 11 |
|  | 2\% | 0 | 0 | 100\% | 4\% | 2\% | 3\% | 9\% | 11\% |
| Full time student | 104 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | 5\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Retired | 374 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | 19\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Unemployed | 135 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | 7\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
|  | 215 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other not working | 11\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |




| In which of the following sectors do you work? | Working Status |  |  |  | Which Sector |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Working full time (30 or more hours per week) | Working part time (8 - 29 hours per week) | Working part time (Less than 8 hours a week) | Total | Private sector (e.g. limited companies and PLCs) | Public sector (e.g. Central <br> Government, Civil Service, LEA, NHS, Police, armed forces etc.) | Charity/vol untary sector | Other |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1176 | 834 | 299 | 43 | 1176 | 672 | 352 | 51 | 101 |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
|  | 672 | 512 | 144 | 16 | 672 | 672 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| and PLCs) | 57\% | 61\% | 48\% | 38\% | 57\% | 100\% | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public sector (e.g. Central | 352 | 248 | 93 | 11 | 352 | - | 352 | 0 | 0 |
| Government, Civil Service, LEA, NHS, Police, armed forces etc.) | 30\% | 30\% | 31\% | 27\% | 30\% | 0 | 100\% | 0 | 0 |
|  | 51 | 27 | 20 | 5 | 51 | 0 | 0 | 51 | 0 |
| Charity/voluntary sector | 4\% | 3\% | 7\% | 11\% | 4\% | - 0 | 0 | 100\% | 0 |
|  | 101 | 48 | 42 | 11 | 101 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 101 |
| Other | 9\% | 6\% | 14\% | 25\% | 9\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100\% |

When was the last time you went to work when you were really too ill to do so?

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| :--- | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: | ---: |
| Base | $\mathbf{1 1 7 6}$ | $\mathbf{5 8 1}$ | $\mathbf{5 9 5}$ | $\mathbf{1 1 7 6}$ | $\mathbf{3 9 8}$ | $\mathbf{5 1 1}$ | $\mathbf{2 6 7}$ |
|  | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ | $100 \%$ |
| Within the last month | $\mathbf{2 4 0}$ | $\mathbf{1 0 0}$ | $\mathbf{1 3 9}$ | $\mathbf{2 4 0}$ | $\mathbf{9 5}$ | $\mathbf{1 1 5}$ | $\mathbf{2 9}$ |
| Not within the last month but | $20 \%$ | $17 \%$ | $23 \%$ | $20 \%$ | $24 \%$ | $23 \%$ | $11 \%$ |
| within the last year | 429 | $\mathbf{2 1 9}$ | $\mathbf{2 0 9}$ | $\mathbf{4 2 9}$ | $\mathbf{1 6 2}$ | $\mathbf{1 7 5}$ | $\mathbf{9 1}$ |
|  | $36 \%$ | $38 \%$ | $35 \%$ | $36 \%$ | $41 \%$ | $34 \%$ | $34 \%$ |
| More than a year ago | 315 | $\mathbf{1 6 0}$ | $\mathbf{1 5 5}$ | 315 | $\mathbf{8 5}$ | $\mathbf{1 4 2}$ | $\mathbf{8 9}$ |
|  | $27 \%$ | $28 \%$ | $26 \%$ | $27 \%$ | $21 \%$ | $28 \%$ | $33 \%$ |
| Never | 155 | $\mathbf{8 1}$ | $\mathbf{7 4}$ | $\mathbf{1 5 5}$ | $\mathbf{4 2}$ | $\mathbf{6 0}$ | $\mathbf{5 2}$ |
|  | $13 \%$ | $14 \%$ | $12 \%$ | $13 \%$ | $11 \%$ | $12 \%$ | $\mathbf{2 0 \%}$ |
| Don't know | $\mathbf{3 8}$ | $\mathbf{2 0}$ | $\mathbf{1 8}$ | $\mathbf{3 8}$ | $\mathbf{1 4}$ | $\mathbf{1 9}$ | $\mathbf{5}$ |

Region
Scotland
Northern
Ireland

East West Midlands Midlands Wales

East of

England London South East South West

When was the last time you went to work when you were really too ill to do so?

Yorkshir and the<br>North East North West Humber

|  | 1176 | 100 | 28 | 48 | 146 | 92 | 74 | 97 | 52 | 116 | 157 | 172 | 91 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
|  | 240 | 13 | 7 | 10 | 28 | 17 | 19 | 17 | 14 | 32 | 29 | 33 | 20 |
| Within the last month | 20\% | 13\% | 25\% | 21\% | 19\% | 19\% | 25\% | 18\% | 27\% | 28\% | 18\% | 19\% | 22\% |
| Not within the last month but | 429 | 42 | 10 | 19 | 55 | 36 | 31 | 30 | 14 | 36 | 58 | 58 | 40 |
| within the last year | 36\% | 42\% | 36\% | 40\% | 38\% | 39\% | 41\% | 31\% | 26\% | 31\% | 37\% | 33\% | 44\% |
|  | 315 | 28 | 7 | 12 | 43 | 28 | 11 | 30 | 15 | 26 | 42 | 55 | 17 |
| More than a year ago | 27\% | 28\% | 24\% | 25\% | 29\% | 30\% | 15\% | 31\% | 29\% | 22\% | 27\% | 32\% | 19\% |
|  | 155 | 13 | 4 | 5 | 16 | 8 | 11 | 16 | 9 | 18 | 22 | 20 | 12 |
| Never | 13\% | 13\% | 15\% | 11\% | 11\% | 9\% | 15\% | 16\% | 16\% | 15\% | 14\% | 12\% | 13\% |
|  | 38 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 2 |
| Don't know | 3\% | 4\% | 0 | 2\% | 3\% | 2\% | 4\% | 3\% | 2\% | 3\% | 4\% | 3\% | 2\% |

Working Status

| Working | Working |  |
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| full time (30 Working | part time |  |
| or more | part time (8) 8 (Less than |  |
| hours per | -29 hours | 8 hours a | hours per - 29 hours 8 hours a week) per week) week)

Which Sector

Private sector Government, Civil (e.g. limited Service, LEA, NHS, Charity/vol companies and Police, armed untary PLCs) forces etc.) sector Other

When was the last time you went to work when you were really too ill to do so?

|  | 1176 | 834 | 299 | 43 | 1176 | 672 | 352 | 51 | 101 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
|  | 240 | 191 | 44 | 4 | 240 | 131 | 75 | 8 | 26 |
| Within the last month | 20\% | 23\% | 15\% | 10\% | 20\% | 19\% | 21\% | 16\% | 26\% |
| Not within the last month but | 429 | 317 | 101 | 10 | 429 | 242 | 145 | 19 | 22 |
| within the last year | 36\% | 38\% | 34\% | 24\% | 36\% | 36\% | 41\% | 37\% | 22\% |
|  | 315 | 201 | 96 | 17 | 315 | 187 | 82 | 18 | 27 |
| More than a year ago | 27\% | 24\% | 32\% | 41\% | 27\% | 28\% | 23\% | 36\% | 27\% |
|  | 155 | 96 | 49 | 10 | 155 | 92 | 39 | 6 | 18 |
| Never | 13\% | 12\% | 16\% | 23\% | 13\% | 14\% | 11\% | 11\% | 18\% |
|  | 38 | 29 | 9 | 1 | 38 | 19 | 11 | 0 | 8 |
| Don't know | 3\% | 3\% | 3\% | 2\% | 3\% | 3\% | 3\% | 0 | 8\% |

Thinking about the last time you
went to work when you were really
too ill to do so, which one of the
following statements best
describes why you went to work?

|  | 983 | 480 | 504 | 983 | 342 | 432 | 209 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| I didn't want to let my employer down | 200 | 92 | 108 | 200 | 85 | 77 | 38 |
|  | 20\% | 19\% | 21\% | 20\% | 25\% | 18\% | 18\% |
| I didn't want to give my colleagues extra work | 133 | 54 | 79 | 133 | 50 | 62 | 21 |
|  | 13\% | 11\% | 16\% | 13\% | 15\% | 14\% | 10\% |
| People depend on the job I do and I didn't want to let them down | 303 | 144 | 159 | 303 | 87 | 128 | 89 |
|  | 31\% | 30\% | 32\% | 31\% | 25\% | 30\% | 42\% |
| I was worried that my boss would take action against me | 64 | 27 | 37 | 64 | 24 | 32 | 8 |
|  | 6\% | 6\% | 7\% | 6\% | 7\% | 7\% | 4\% |
| I would have lost pay and I couldn't afford to | 197 | 119 | 77 | 197 | 78 | 87 | 31 |
|  | 20\% | 25\% | 15\% | 20\% | 23\% | 20\% | 15\% |
| Other | 74 | 36 | 38 | 74 | 19 | 38 | 18 |
|  | 8\% | 8\% | 8\% | 8\% | 5\% | 9\% | 8\% |
|  | 13 | 8 | 6 | 13 | 0 | 10 | 4 |
| Don't know | 1\% | 2\% | 1\% | 1\% | 0 | 2\% | 2\% |



Thinking about the last time you
went to work when you were really
too ill to do so, which one of the
following statements best
describes why you went to work?

|  | 983 | 83 | 24 | 41 | 126 | 82 | 60 | 78 | 43 | 95 | 129 | 146 | 77 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| I didn't want to let my employer down | 200 | 12 | 6 | 6 | 31 | 11 | 16 | 16 | 8 | 17 | 35 | 31 | 10 |
|  | 20\% | 15\% | 25\% | 14\% | 24\% | 14\% | 27\% | 20\% | 19\% | 18\% | 27\% | 21\% | 13\% |
| I didn't want to give my colleagues extra work | 133 | 12 | 3 | 2 | 17 | 11 | 7 | 14 | 10 | 14 | 17 | 16 | 10 |
|  | 13\% | 15\% | 14\% | 5\% | 14\% | 14\% | 11\% | 18\% | 23\% | 14\% | 13\% | 11\% | 12\% |
| People depend on the job I do and I didn't want to let them | 303 | 24 | 5 | 13 | 37 | 26 | 16 | 22 | 16 | 30 | 42 | 44 | 26 |
| down | 31\% | 29\% | 23\% | 31\% | 29\% | 32\% | 26\% | 29\% | 38\% | 32\% | 33\% | 30\% | 33\% |
| I was worried that my boss would take action against me | 64 | 6 | 3 | 7 | 11 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 12 | 6 |
|  | 6\% | 7\% | 12\% | 17\% | 8\% | 5\% | 2\% | 5\% | 5\% | 3\% | 4\% | 8\% | 7\% |
| I would have lost pay and I couldn't afford to | 197 | 21 | 3 | 12 | 22 | 21 | 14 | 19 | 4 | 20 | 13 | 28 | 20 |
|  | 20\% | 26\% | 12\% | 28\% | 17\% | 25\% | 23\% | 24\% | 8\% | 22\% | 10\% | 19\% | 26\% |
| Other | 74 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 13 | 12 | 5 |
|  | 8\% | 8\% | 15\% | 5\% | 5\% | 9\% | 8\% | 4\% | 5\% | 9\% | 10\% | 8\% | 7\% |
|  | 13 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Don't know | 1\% | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2\% | 1\% | 2\% | 0 | 0 | 2\% | 2\% | 2\% | 1\% |



Working Status $\begin{array}{lll}\text { hours per } & -29 \text { hours } 8 \text { hours a }\end{array}$ Total week) per week) week)

Thinking about the last time you
went to work when you were really
too ill to do so, which one of the
following statements best
describes why you went to work?

|  | 983 | 709 | 242 | 32 | 983 | 561 | 302 | 45 | 75 |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| Base | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% | 100\% |
| I didn't want to let my employer down | 200 | 135 | 55 | 10 | 200 | 124 | 56 | 9 | 12 |
|  | 20\% | 19\% | 23\% | 32\% | 20\% | 22\% | 18\% | 19\% | 15\% |
| I didn't want to give my colleagues extra work | 133 | 106 | 25 | 2 | 133 | 65 | 54 | 7 | 6 |
|  | 13\% | 15\% | 10\% | 6\% | 13\% | 12\% | 18\% | 15\% | 8\% |
| People depend on the job I do and I didn't want to let them | 303 | 222 | 75 | 6 | 303 | 168 | 99 | 17 | 20 |
| down | 31\% | 31\% | 31\% | 20\% | 31\% | 30\% | 33\% | 37\% | 26\% |
| I was worried that my boss would take action against me | 64 | 54 | 5 | 4 | 64 | 32 | 25 | 4 | 3 |
|  | 6\% | 8\% | 2\% | 14\% | 6\% | 6\% | 8\% | 9\% | 4\% |
| I would have lost pay and I couldn't afford to | 197 | 131 | 58 | 8 | 197 | 129 | 35 | 6 | 27 |
|  | 20\% | 18\% | 24\% | 26\% | 20\% | 23\% | 12\% | 13\% | 36\% |
| Other | 74 | 57 | 17 | 1 | 74 | 37 | 28 | 2 | 7 |
|  | 8\% | 8\% | 7\% | 3\% | 8\% | 7\% | 9\% | 4\% | 10\% |
| Don't know | 13 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 13 | 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
|  | 1\% | 1\% | 3\% | 0 | 1\% | 1\% | 2\% | 2\% | 1\% |

