

# Tackling the Challenges of an Aging Workforce and Waning Interest in the Automotive Industry in Slovakia

A Master's Thesis submitted for the degree of  
“Executive Master of Business Administration”

supervised by  
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Vienna, 10.12.2024

# Affidavit

I, **IVAN SZILVA**, hereby declare

1. that I am the sole author of the present Master's Thesis, "TACKLING THE CHALLENGES OF AN AGING WORKFORCE AND WANING INTEREST IN THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN SLOVAKIA", 82 pages, bound, and that I have not used any source or tool other than those referenced or any other illicit aid or tool, and
2. that I have not prior to this date submitted this Master's Thesis as an examination paper in any form in Austria or abroad.

Vienna, 10.12.2024

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Signature

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## Abstract

The thesis focuses on two main effects that is being observed by many employers in Slovakia and Europe in general. These effects influence wide variety of industries but are especially tangible in the automotive industry. One of them is the aging workforce, that is proven to be experienced by nearly all the European countries in the theoretical part of the thesis. The other one is the waning interest of the employees in the Automotive industry, which is especially present in Slovakia. The thesis further explores the criticality of the employee engagement strategies in the employee retention process.

The applied part of the thesis focuses on a comprehensive employee survey, that is focused on identifying the key pain points of the employees with a focus on the possible increase of the employee engagement. Based on the survey results, the applied part continues with a suggestion of various initiatives that are aimed at eliminating of the root causes of the dissatisfaction.

The final part of the thesis provides a first glance that the early results from these actions where the company already can quantify the impact on unwanted turnover of the employees as well as notable increase in the job applications per job advertisement.

The thesis not only addresses the challenges that many of the employer's face or will face withing the upcoming decades, but also highlights the importance of company culture and employee engagement on the stability of personnel in the company. The study provides practical recommendations for sustaining of the applied efforts as well as identifies the potential areas for further studies and research. The research contributes with insights into the role of targeted engagement strategies in the area of workforce stability and increasing interest in the company, suggesting that such actions have a direct impact on increased organizational success.

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# 1 Introduction

The European Union, along with many other advanced economies, is undergoing a profound demographic transformation. By end of 2022 half of EU's population was older than 44.4 years. [1] The aging of the population is a gradual but persistent process, which entails an ageing population and an increasing demographic burden. These phenomena result from declining fertility rates and rising longevity, which lead to a higher proportion of retirees relative to workers. This trend will intensify in the next fifteen years, as the large baby boom generation reaches retirement age and the working-age population declines. [2]. During one decade (between 2012 to 2022) the indicator of median age increased throughout all the EU member states (except Sweden, where it decreased slightly by 0.1 year). In average the increase during this decade was by 2.5 years. [1]

Without an adequate policy and industry responses, population ageing in the euro area poses a significant challenge for the entire economy and it's potential growth together with monetary policy and public finances. Population ageing is widely expected to have a negative effect on potential growth, labor supply and productivity. [2]

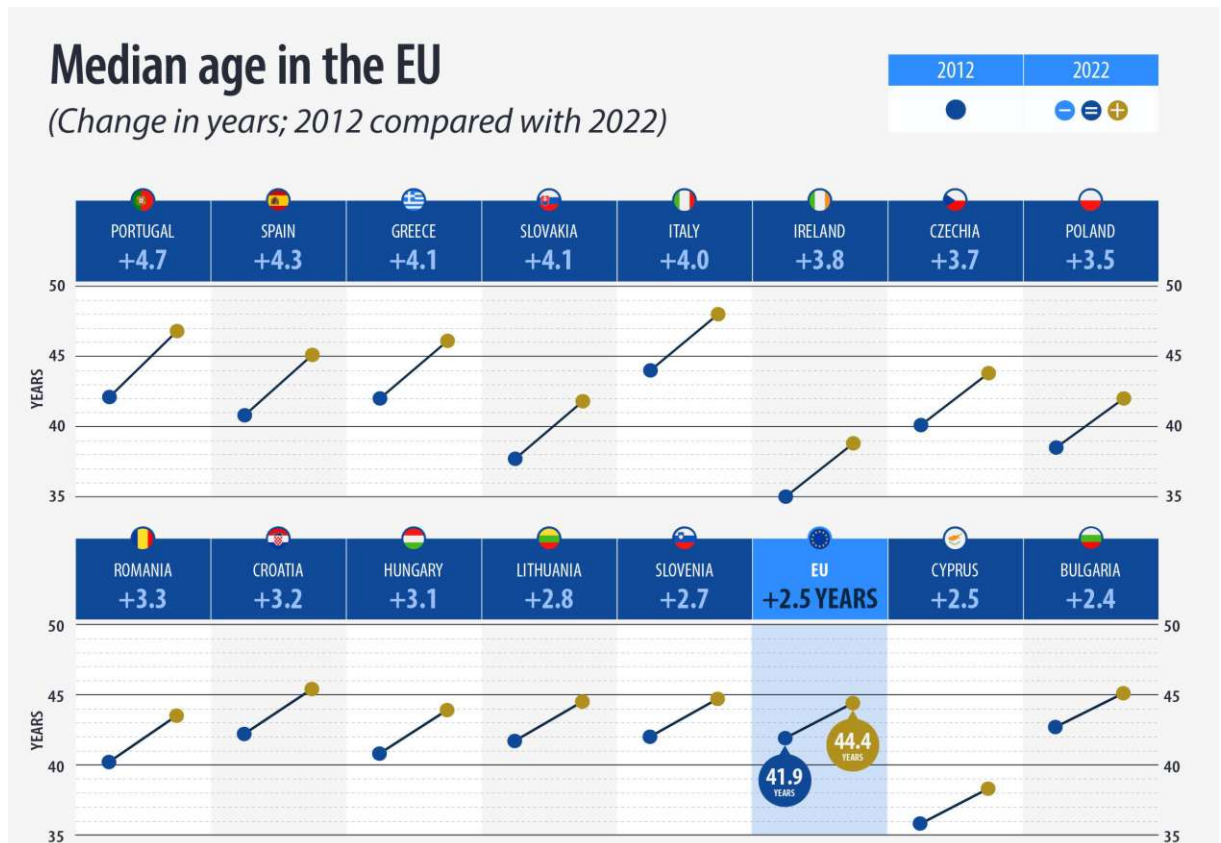
The trend of aging population has mainly two ways to be tackled. One way is to increase the fertility rates in the EU member states, where the EU has been unsuccessful in the past decades [3] [4]. The second way is to fight the population stagnation and it's aging by migration, where the EU has been steadily active during the last decades [5]. The migration has certainly played an important role for the EU to avoid an even sharper decline in the aging and the population decline. [6]

Looking ahead however, the situation does not seem to be improving. The total population of the EU is not only projected to be shrinking from around 2035 but also the working-age population is expected to be shrinking by double digit percentages in the majority of the EU countries. [2]

All in all, the age of the population is one of the best predictable economic parameters and based on the information stated in the introduction, this has been and may most likely become one of the biggest issues of the EU states and their economies in the coming decades. [6] As the title of the thesis suggests, the focus of the thesis will be primarily put on Slovak economy, industry and implications on these.

## 1.1 Motivation, Research Problem Definition

The demographic change described in the Introduction has been perceived by nearly all the EU countries. Some however experience the impact more than the others. The change in the median age in the Slovak Republic ranked as third (together with Greece) when it comes to the biggest change between 2012 and 2022. [1]



Picture 1 Average age development during 2012 - 2022 in the EU [1]

Together with the fact that Slovakia has experienced a stable fertility level below the replacement level (2.1 children per woman) after the early 1990s (minimum of 1.2 children per woman in the early 2000s) which continues up until today (1.6 children per woman [7]) it can be stated that the Slovak economy is facing a problem where the scissors tend to be opening more and more by each year.

While fertility does not seem to provide the solution for the Slovak Republic, nor does the migration. Slovak culture is by most perceived as immutable, and the general public perceives migrants as threatening for the Slovak culture. [8] Slovak Republic has also been consequently strict in migration policies and the industry has been struggling with getting the labor force with immigrant background. [9]



Together with the fact that Slovakia has the third lowest (5.13%) proportion of foreigners within the EU member states [10], [11], [12] (only above Poland with 1.21% and Romania with 0.75%) it is hard to see a route to success on the horizon when it comes to the future manpower shortage.

The recent boost of the Slovak economy by the Ukrainian refugees that has been initiated by the Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 has presented previously unprecedented inflow of manpower to Slovakia. Just during the first year of Russia's aggression against Ukraine a little over 110 000 refugees have asked for a temporary protection within Slovakia. The population of these ranging between 18 to 64 year old amounted to ~65 000, what accounted for nearly 2.6% of the Slovak labor force in 2021. [13]

Slovakia however does not benefit from the inflow of the refugees to the labor market as well as majority of the western EU countries. For example, the share of tertiary-educated Ukrainian refugees was nearly half when we compare Germany, United Kingdom with Slovakia. [14] [15]

This situation has evolved over time as the long-term conflict and the refugee population have undergone changes, such as the refugees' tendency to migrate from the countries bordering Ukraine, which were their initial destinations, to the countries with more generous social benefits and higher wages. [16] It is estimated that approximately one third of refugees who obtained the refugee status left Slovakia during the first year of the Ukrainian war. [13]

As explained above, the Slovak Republic indeed faces a demographic challenge of low fertility and high emigration, which results in a shrinking and aging population in the productive age. The influx of Ukrainian refugees since 2022 has temporarily boosted the labor force, but does not sufficiently solve the long-term problem. The topic of aging workforce is extremely important and up to date, since neither fertility nor immigration seems to be providing a silver bullet for the labor shortage within the Slovak economy. Therefore it's expected that the solution lies in a combination of many factors ranging from immigration, automation, change in the industry focus to a production with higher added value, industry 4.0 and many others that will be further discussed within the thesis. [17] [18] [19]

## 1.2 Outline of the Main Research Problem

The automotive industry is a cornerstone of Slovakia's economy, contributing significantly to GDP, employment, and exports. The significance of the Automotive industry within Slovakia can be demonstrated by the following parameters [20]:

- 50% share of the automotive industry on total industrial production
- 11% Share of the automotive industry on the entire GDP of Slovakia
- 176 000 People employed directly by the Car producers and Tier 1 suppliers
- 261 000 People employed directly and indirectly by the automotive industry (~10% of the total labor force). [20]
- World leader in cars produced per capita (184 cars per 1000 inhabitants in 2022) [21]

However, the sector is facing critical challenges: an aging workforce and a decreasing interest in automotive careers among younger generations. This thesis aims to explore these issues comprehensively and propose effective strategies to increase workforce engagement and reduce attrition rates, ensuring that skilled employees remain with the company post-training. [22]

HELLA Slovakia Lighting is one of the most important automotive employers in Slovakia as well one of the most important production sites in the global HELLA network. [23] The research part of the thesis is going to be conducted in this company as the data gathering has been made possible through a wide survey done on the entire employee population. A short introduction of the company is to be found in paragraph 1.5 HELLA Slovakia Lighting

As it is virtually impossible for a single company or even an industry branch to address the demographic trends of a country, or significantly affect its migration policies, the main research problem has been state as follows:

### **Propose strategies to increase engagement and reduce attrition rates in the automotive workforce**

- **Objective:** To develop and recommend strategies that can enhance employee engagement and loyalty, reducing turnover and retaining skilled workers.
- **Rationale:** Implementing effective engagement and retention strategies is crucial for maintaining and hiring a skilled and stable workforce.

- **Methodology:** Conduct a broad survey with employees of HELLA Slovakia Lighting to gather insights and suggestions. Explore best practices in employee engagement and retention from other industries and regions. Develop a framework for engagement and retention strategies that might be specific to the automotive industry.

Considering the strategies suggested and the choices available at the company where the thesis will take place, it would be advisable to assess how well these strategies work by implementing a trial program. The objective of the evaluation would be to implement and assess the effectiveness of the proposed engagement and retention strategies through pilot programs in HELLA Slovakia Lighting.

The rationale behind the test would be to confront the strategies with real-world settings and to provide practical insights and allow for adjustments before broader implementation.

### **Expected Outcomes**

1. **Comprehensive Understanding of Workforce Perceptions and Moods:**
  - Detailed insights into the trends and the employee opinions.
2. **Identification of Key Factors for Declining Interest:**
  - A clear understanding of the reasons behind the declining interest in automotive careers among younger generations.
3. **Actionable Engagement and Retention Strategies:**
  - Practical recommendations for increasing workforce engagement and reducing attrition rates.
4. **Enhanced Training and Development Programs:**
  - Tailored training programs that improve workforce skills and loyalty.
  - Validate the strategies and programs.

By addressing these research objectives, the thesis will provide a comprehensive analysis of the challenges posed by an aging workforce and declining interest in the automotive industry. It will offer actionable solutions to enhance engagement, reduce attrition, and ensure the sustainability and growth of the automotive sector in Slovakia. The findings and recommendations will be valuable for industry stakeholders, policymakers, and researchers, contributing to the long-term resilience and competitiveness of Slovakia's automotive industry.

### 1.3 Hypothesis of the Research

Before testing of the hypothesis defined below, a survey is going to be conducted where the opinions of the employees of HELLA Slovakia Lighting are going to be researched and based on the result strategies will be derived in order to increase retention and satisfaction of the labor force.

**Scope and Scale:** The thesis will be grounded in the results of a comprehensive survey conducted with over 3,600 employees at Hella Slovakia Lighting, the largest employer in the Trenčín area. Such a large-scale survey is uncommon in Slovak measures and is expected to provide valuable insights into the opinions and attitudes of employees across various job types, offering a holistic understanding of the workforce's perspective.

**Hypothesis:** "Implementing targeted engagement strategies, such as enhanced training programs, career development opportunities, and workplace innovations, will significantly increase the interest and retention of the labor force in the Slovak automotive industry."

**Expected results of the suggestions based on the survey results are expected to be:**

- **Enhanced Training Programs:** By providing comprehensive training and development programs, employees can acquire new skills and see clear pathways for career advancement, making the industry more attractive. [24] [25]
- **Career Development Opportunities:** Offering clear and attainable career progression opportunities can motivate employees to stay and grow within the industry. [24] [25]
- **Workplace Innovations:** Introducing new technologies and innovative workplace practices can make the automotive industry more dynamic and appealing to both current and potential employees, particularly younger generations who are interested in tech-driven careers. [24] These hypotheses provide a foundation for exploring the broader economic impacts of an aging population and specific strategies to rejuvenate interest in a vital yet currently unattractive industry. [24]

## 1.4 Aim and Structure of the Thesis

The primary aim of this thesis is to investigate the impact of an aging workforce on the automotive industry in the Slovak Republic and to identify effective management strategies to tackle this issue.

By examining the experiences and solutions implemented by economies that have already faced similar challenges, such as Japan, the thesis aims to provide a comprehensive framework for addressing not only the workforce aging in Slovakia but also the issue of waning interest in the Automotive industry. The research will focus on age-inclusive policies, talent management, and methods to enhance employee engagement, with the goal of offering practical recommendations for industrial companies in the Slovak automotive sector.

The structure of the thesis will be divided into five main parts:

### 1. Introduction

- Description of the current state of economy with the background describing the current status and issues

### 2. Theoretical part

- Overview of the workforce and the specific challenges faced by the Slovak economy and automotive industry
- Exploration of age-inclusive policies, talent management techniques and methods that have a positive impact on employee engagement
- Focusing and exploring successful policies and practices from economies that have faced similar issues in the past

### 3. Research part

- Survey design and implementation
- Data analysis

### 4. Conclusion and practical contributions

- Recap of the main problems, objectives and findings
- Discussion on how the findings can be applied in real world settings, particularly in the Slovak automotive industry
- Suggestions for further research to continue addressing the aging workforce issue

## 1.5 HELLA Slovakia Lighting

There is a wide variety of automotive companies within Slovak Republic ranging from OEM (VW, PSA, JLR, KIA with 5<sup>th</sup> big player – Volvo being under construction in Kosice region with scheduled SOP 2026 [26] [27]) to Tier X suppliers (over 350 suppliers). Automotive industry is the strongest sector in Slovak economy in terms of its share on the Slovak GDP, export as well as job creation. [28]

For the purpose of this thesis, the company HELLA Slovakia Lighting has been selected for the survey and practical application of the thesis results. HELLA as a Tier 1 company plays an important role in the Slovak automotive map. With the sales a little over 712 Mil. Eur for the fiscal year 2023 Hella closes the top 10 rank of biggest automotive companies in Slovakia [29]

The company specializes in the development, production, and distribution of innovative lighting systems for vehicles. Hella Slovakia Lighting was established through the merger of Hella Slovakia Front-Lighting and Hella Slovakia Signal-Lighting on June 1, 2021. The company has multiple production sites, including plants in Trenčín, Bánovce nad Bebravou, and Kočovce, with its headquarters located in Kočovce [30]

1. **Trenčín Plant:** Specializes in interior and car body lighting.
2. **Bánovce nad Bebravou Plant:** Focuses on the production of rear combination lamps.
3. **Kočovce Plant:** Dedicated to manufacturing headlamps.

Hella Slovakia Lighting is actively working on strengthening its position through various strategic initiatives. One notable effort is the establishment of an R&D center for rear combination lamps in Bánovce nad Bebravou, aimed at fostering sustainable development and creating expert positions within the company. Additionally, the company is focused on synchronizing regional competencies and system integration across all Slovak sites to enhance operational efficiency. HELLA Slovakia Lighting stands out not only as a major employer in the Trenčín area but also as a vital component of the Slovak automotive industry. The company's strategic initiatives and investments in R&D are expected to secure its long-term growth and adaptability to future industry trends. [30]

## 2 Theoretical research

### 2.1 Impact of Aging on the Level of State and Company

#### 2.1.1 Definition of Aging Workforce

The concept of an aging workforce in the European Union refers to the increasing proportion of older workers, typically those aged 55 and above, in the labor market. This demographic shift is mostly driven by several factors that have been mentioned into more details in the previous paragraphs (eg. longer life expectancies, declining birth rates, and policies that encourage extended working lives). The share of older workers in the EU has grown significantly; for example, the employment rate for individuals aged 55-64 has seen a substantial rise over the past decade. In 2019, older workers accounted for approximately 20% of the employed population, with many continuing to work part-time or in self-employment roles beyond the typical retirement age. [31] [32]

This demographic shift poses both challenges and opportunities for the EU. On one hand, the aging workforce can make the skill shortages worse, necessitate adjustments in pension systems, and increase healthcare costs. [33] On the other hand, retaining older workers can help mitigate the labor shortages and leverage the experience and skills of this demographic. However, barriers such as ageism, gender disparities, and the need for continuous upskilling still makes the participation of older workers relatively complicated. [34]

Several EU member states have implemented policies to address these challenges, focusing on improving working conditions, promoting lifelong learning, and encouraging flexible retirement schemes. For example, countries like Sweden have successfully maintained high employment rates of 55-64 year-olds at rates of 77.3% in 2022 [35] among older workers through a combination of favorable working conditions, continuous training, and flexible pension systems. [36]

In summary, the aging workforce in the European Union is a critical issue with wide-ranging implications for labor markets, social security systems, and economic growth. Addressing these challenges requires coordinated efforts at both national and EU levels, with a focus on creating sustainable work environments that accommodate an older and more diverse workforce. [32]

### 2.1.2 Status of Workforce in Slovakia

The workforce within Slovakia's automotive sector mirrors the broader demographic trends seen across Europe, where an aging population is becoming more prominent. A significant proportion of workers in this industry are over the age of 40 [37], a reflection of Slovakia's overall demographic profile. This aging trend poses particular challenges for the automotive sector, especially as it faces a critical transition towards electric vehicles. [28]

As Slovakia moves towards electrification, driven by EU regulations mandating that only zero-emission vehicles be sold by 2035 [38], the automotive sector is facing substantial changes. Electric vehicles are simpler to build, requiring fewer parts and less manual labor. This shift is expected to reduce the demand for traditional automotive manufacturing jobs, many of which are currently filled by older workers. These workers may struggle to adapt to the new skills required for EV production, such as expertise in battery technology and digital manufacturing processes. [39]

The transition is particularly concerning for older employees who might find it difficult to retrain or relocate, leading to potential job losses if these workers cannot adapt to new roles. Moreover, the traditional skills that these workers possess are becoming less relevant, creating a pressing need for comprehensive retraining programs [40]

The Slovak government, in collaboration with industry stakeholders, has recognized the need to address these challenges. Initiatives are underway to provide retraining and upskilling opportunities aimed at helping the current workforce transition into the evolving automotive industry. These efforts include programs focused on enhancing digital literacy and technical skills required for electric vehicle production. [41]

Additionally, there are plans to attract younger workers into the industry through vocational training and partnerships with educational institutions. However, balancing this with the need to support an aging workforce remains a complex issue, especially as the industry adapts to technological advancements and changes in production methods. [42]

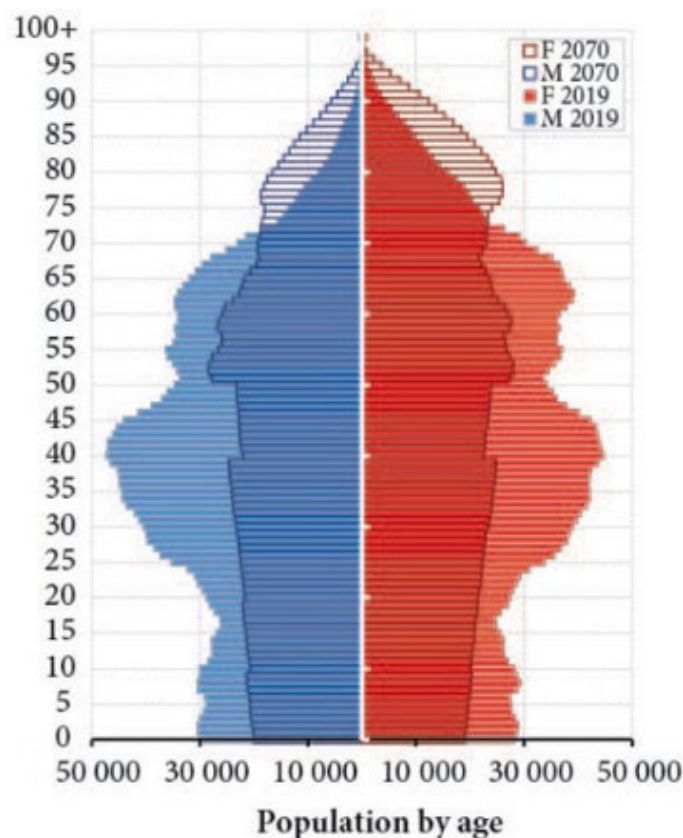
The aging workforce is a pressing concern not only at the national level but also within individual companies, particularly in industries that are in a certain extent heavily reliant on manual labor, such as automotive manufacturing. While Slovakia's automotive sector struggles with the need to adapt older workers to the dynamically evolving demands of EV production, industry 4.0 and Automation, these broader



trends manifest clearly within companies like HELLA Slovakia Lighting. HELLA's workforce mirrors the national demographic shifts (see Picture 3), with an aging employee base that could potentially face similar challenges in terms of productivity, adaptability, and health. [43]

As the company tackles these demographic shifts (see Picture 2), it finds itself aligned with the national imperative to retrain and reskill older workers to meet new technological demands. This argument validates the importance of analyzing HELLA Slovakia Lighting's approach in managing its workforce, as it provides a concrete example of how demographic challenges play out at the organizational level. [44]

Analyzing the specific initiatives taken by HELLA Slovakia Lighting in the field of increased employee engagement, talent management and other forms of gaining, keeping and motivating employees provides an insight into how Slovakia's industrial sector can manage the challenges associated with an aging labor force while maintaining competitiveness in global markets. [45]



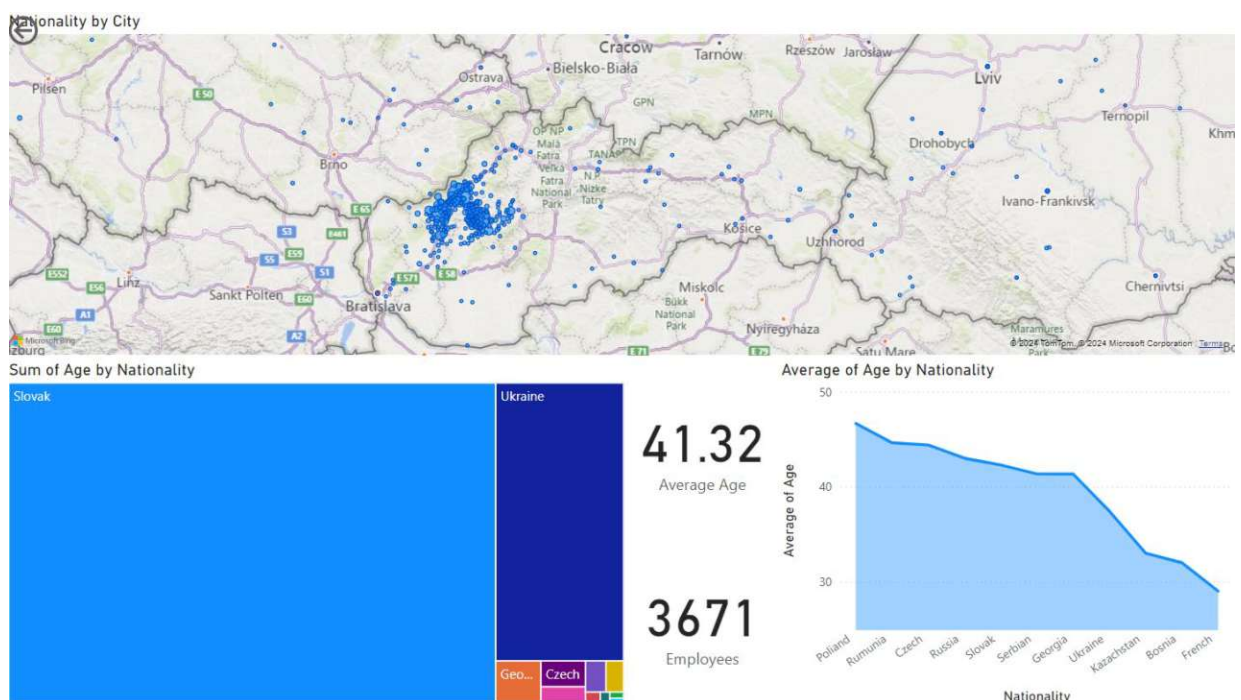
Picture 2 Population piramide of Slovakia showing 2019 vs 2070 projection [46]

### 2.1.3 Workforce Status of HELLA Slovakia Lighting

Based on a comprehensive internal analysis conducted on the entire workforce of nearly 3,700 employees at HELLA Slovakia Lighting (see Picture 3), there has been observed a significant correlation between the average age of HELLA Slovakia Lighting population and the broader age trends prevalent within the Slovak Republic. This parallel development is indicative of larger demographic shifts occurring across the country, as detailed in demographic studies such as those published by the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic. [47]

These findings underline a limited potential for deviation from these aging trends within the organization, given the national scope of demographic aging.

The labor-intensive nature of the work, especially within production sectors, raises notable concerns regarding the sustainability of current workforce demographics. The increasing average age could potentially lead to decreased productivity and increased health-related absences, which are consistent with findings from labor studies in similar industrial settings. These potential issues are critical as they could impact overall trational efficiency and the health and safety of our employees. [48]



Picture 3 Dashboard with overview of employees within HELLA Slovakia Lighting [own representation]

The top part of Picture 3 shows the distribution of workers within HELLA Slovakia Lighting based on their permanent residency. The locations naturally reflect the location of three HELLA plants located in Trenčín, Kocovce and Banovce nad Bebravou having however a greater reach besides these regions with hundreds of employees from abroad (mainly Ukraine, Georgia, Serbia, Czech).

The distribution of amount of workers based on their nationality is seen on the bottom left part of the picture. Lastly on the bottom right part of the picture there is an average age of the workers based on the nationalities. This average age does not seem to be influenced by nationalities and seems to copy the trends described in the previous paragraphs. The deviation from the average age of approx. 40 is only seen by Bosnian and French nationalities – this however is caused by the very low number of employees of these nationalities that are predominantly young trainees.

The following sections of this thesis will further explore these challenges. This includes investment in ergonomic improvements, the introduction of more flexible working arrangements, and enhanced health and wellness programs, all aimed at extending the work life of older employees.

To effectively address the needs and expectations of HELLA Slovakia Lighting employees, the initial step involves conducting a comprehensive engagement survey. This survey was designed to gather detailed insights into the various aspects of HELLA employee workplace experience and overall satisfaction.

By directly capturing their perspectives and feedback, the aim is to identify the most important issues and opportunities for improvement. The findings from this engagement survey will play a crucial role in shaping targeted actions that genuinely resonate with and fulfill the employee expectations, ensuring that the undertaken initiatives are both relevant and impactful.

The expectation out of these actions is that this proactive approach may not only enhance employee satisfaction but might also contribute to a more positive and productive work environment.

## 2.2 Addressing the Aging Workforce on a Managerial Level

Addressing the aging workforce is a complicated challenge that requires a comprehensive approach at both the managerial and organizational levels. [49] While there are various methods to tackle this issue, it is important to acknowledge that the influence of any single company or management team on Europe-wide demographic trends is relatively limited. Despite these constraints, there are several effective strategies that can be adopted to mitigate the impact of an aging workforce. [50]

One of the primary methods is enhancing employee engagement. Decades of research have shown that engaged employees are more productive, perform better, and are less likely to leave the company. [51] [52] By fostering a workplace environment that promotes engagement, companies can improve the overall satisfaction and retention of older employees. This, in turn, can help to maintain productivity levels and reduce health-related absences. Implementing engagement initiatives requires ongoing effort and alignment with the company's goals and values, ensuring that employees feel connected and committed to the organization's success. [53]

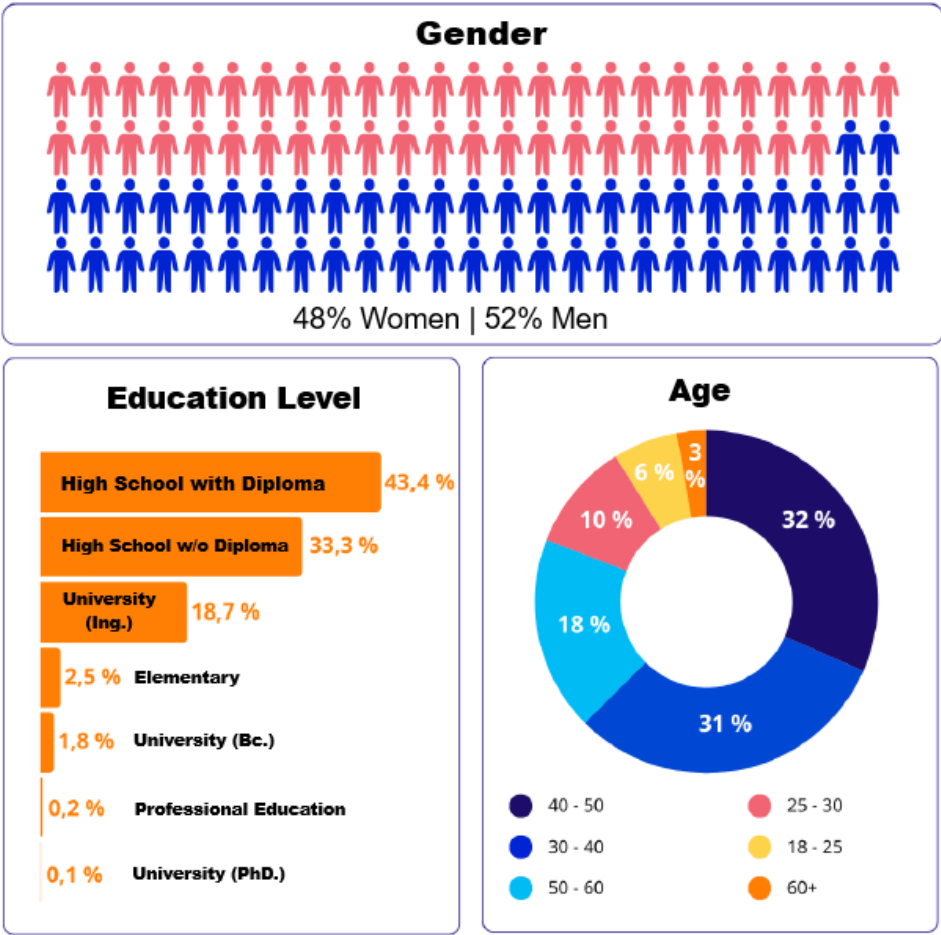
Another crucial strategy is the adoption of age-inclusive policies. These policies are designed to cater to the specific needs of older employees, enabling them to continue contributing effectively to the organization. Examples include ergonomic improvements in the workplace, flexible working arrangements, and enhanced health and wellness programs. Such policies not only support the physical well-being of older employees but also demonstrate the company's commitment to inclusivity and diversity, fostering a more supportive and harmonious work environment. [54]

Talent management is also an essential component in addressing the aging workforce. This involves identifying, developing, and retaining skilled employees through targeted training and career development programs. By investing in the continuous growth of their workforce, companies can ensure that older employees remain competitive and valuable assets. Talent management strategies also include succession planning, which helps prepare the organization for future leadership transitions and maintains operational stability. [55]

In conclusion, while the ability of individual companies to influence broader demographic trends is very limited, there are several effective methods to address the challenges of an aging workforce. By increasing employee engagement,

implementing age-inclusive policies, and adopting robust talent management practices, organizations can create a supportive environment that maximizes the contributions of their older employees and sustains long-term productivity.

A short overview of the basic demographic statistics of HELLA Slovakia Lighting employees is to be seen on the picture below.



Picture 4 Basic Workforce Statistics of HELLA Slovakia Lighting [56]

### 2.2.1 Employee Engagement

Decades of research have firmly linked employee engagement with corporate success. Enhancing employee engagement most likely leads to increased productivity, superior performance, reduced turnover, more effective recruitment, and even higher earnings per share (EPS). [51] [52]

Employee engagement reflects how dedicated employees are to the company's goals and values. According to Gallup, U.S. employee engagement peaked at 36% in 2020 but has declined since then. As of 2022, 32% of employees are engaged, while 17% are actively disengaged. [57]

These numbers suggest two insights: achieving and maintaining engagement requires ongoing effort (see Picture 5), and it begins with the company's goals and values that employees are expected to embrace. [57]



Picture 5 Top 8 elements of Employee Engagement according to [58]

Engaging older workers can also alleviate some of the physical and mental challenges that come with aging by creating a supportive work environment. By implementing tailored engagement strategies, such as offering flexible work arrangements, providing opportunities for professional development, and recognizing the contributions of older employees, companies can enhance the job satisfaction of this



demographic. A study by Schaufeli and Bakker highlights the connection between employee engagement and well-being, noting that engaged workers are more resilient, healthier, and have a stronger sense of belonging to their organization. [59] This is particularly crucial for older workers, as engagement can foster a sense of purpose and reduce the likelihood of early retirement or disengagement from their roles. [60]

Increased employee engagement also contributes to smoother transitions in workforce dynamics. By keeping older employees engaged, organizations can create opportunities for mentorship and knowledge transfer, ensuring that valuable skills and expertise are passed down to younger generations. This not only aids in the professional development of younger employees but also enables companies to maintain continuity in performance as the workforce ages. As Kahn suggests, engaged employees are more likely to invest themselves in roles that promote growth and development, making engagement a key factor in managing the aging workforce. In this context, focusing on engagement can help organizations not only retain older workers but also effectively manage the generational shift in the labor market. [61]

### **2.2.2 Age-inclusive Policies**

Research into age-inclusive policies in Europe and Japan highlights important strategies and insights as these regions are the most exposed to the challenges of aging workforces. [62] Both Europe and Japan have been facing significant demographic shifts, with rising numbers of older workers and an emphasis on retaining their participation in the labor market for economic and social reasons.

In Europe, age-inclusive policies have focused on extending working life, reforming pension systems, and implementing anti-age-discrimination legislation. Many European countries have raised retirement ages and introduced financial incentives to keep older workers employed. These efforts have successfully led to a rise in the average retirement age and increased participation of older workers. A key factor in Europe's approach has been the push for active aging, which integrates older people into the labor market and the broader social fabric, aiming to harness the potential of an aging population rather than view it solely as a burden. This has been complemented by reforms to healthcare and social support systems to address the growing prevalence of chronic diseases and multi-morbidity among older adults [63] [64]

Japan, on the other hand, was one of the first nations to face a rapidly aging population, and it has long implemented policies that incentivize companies to hire and retain older workers. The government has promoted the "Silver Employment" initiative, which encourages businesses to keep older employees past retirement age. Japan's emphasis has been on creating flexible employment conditions for older workers, such as part-time or contract work, while providing support through continued skills training. In contrast to Europe, Japan's policies have been more top-down, driven by the government with less emphasis on the cultural shift seen in some European countries. [65]

Despite differences, both regions recognize the economic imperative of including older workers in the labor market. In the long term, these policies are likely to lead to more age-diverse workplaces. In Europe, there is optimism about the rise of a "silver economy," driven by older consumers and workers, while Japan's challenge will continue to focus on how to balance the health needs of its aging population with economic productivity [64] [66]

The long-term impact of these policies on businesses in Europe will likely include a shift toward more flexible working environments, lifelong learning opportunities, and greater efforts to mitigate age-based discrimination. Companies that adapt successfully may benefit from the experience and reliability of older workers, while those that fail to adjust might struggle with labor shortages and reduced productivity. [63]

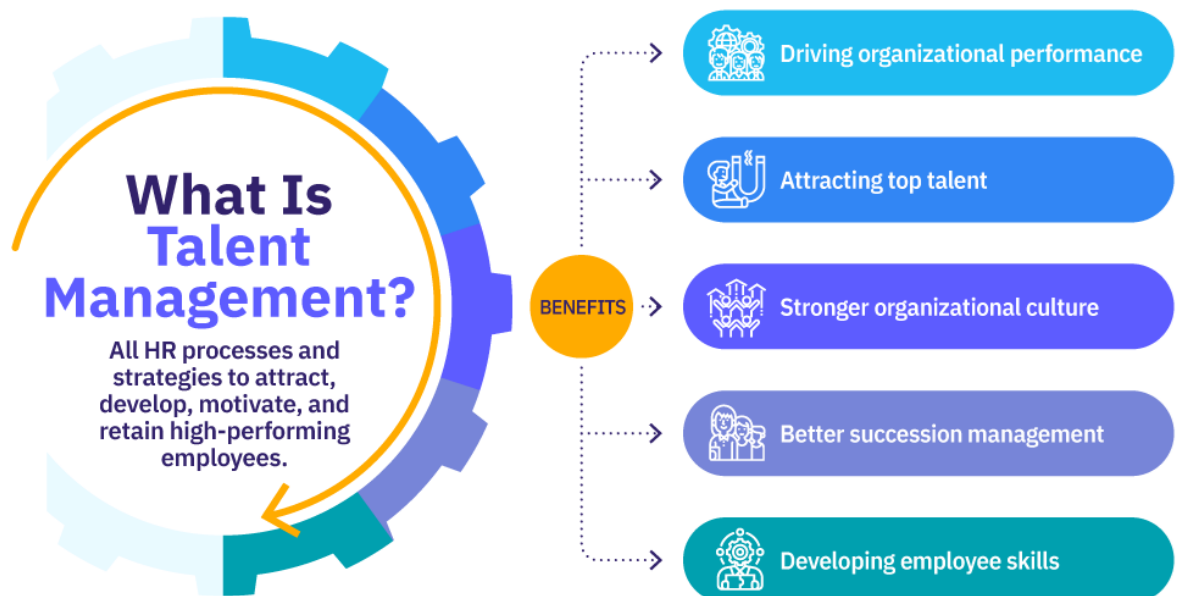
### **2.2.3 Talent Management and Other Methods**

Talent management may also, in the future, play even more crucial role in addressing the aging workforce issue within Europe. With population across many European countries aging rapidly, businesses must adapt by retaining and developing the talents of older employees while also attracting younger generations. Talent management strategies often emphasize lifelong learning, skill development, and flexible career paths to ensure that older employees continue to contribute effectively to the workforce. This approach not only aids in succession planning but also helps mitigate the knowledge loss that occurs when experienced workers retire. In the European context, such strategies align with broader governmental policies aimed at extending working lives and promoting active aging, creating synergies between public and private initiatives. [67]



Employee engagement is intrinsically connected to talent management (and other pillars displayed on Picture 6) in this context. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with their organizations longer, a critical factor when dealing with an aging workforce. In Europe, where many companies are striving to increase retirement ages, fostering engagement through meaningful work, recognition, and opportunities for development is essential. Besides talent management and employee engagement, other strategies such as promoting flexible working arrangements and combating age discrimination are equally vital. Flexible working allows older employees to balance work and personal life better, while anti-discrimination policies ensure that they are valued for their experience rather than sidelined due to their age. [68]

By integrating these diverse approaches, European companies can create a more inclusive and resilient workforce, better prepared to meet the demographic challenges ahead. [69]



Picture 6 Main pillars of talent management according to [70]

Focusing more on the automotive sector, several distinct talent management methods stand out, driven by the industry's unique challenges such as rapid technological advancements, digital transformation, and the need to balance an aging workforce

with the influx of younger talent. Below, there are some key methods that companies within the sector use to manage talent effectively:

### **1. Dual Education Systems**

A hallmark of the automotive industry, particularly in Germany, is the use of dual education systems. Companies like BMW and Daimler integrate theoretical learning with hands-on apprenticeships, ensuring that employees gain practical skills alongside academic knowledge. This approach creates a steady pipeline of skilled workers who are job-ready upon graduation, which is especially valuable as the industry shifts toward electric vehicles and digital systems. This model is not only useful for young talent but also provides older employees with pathways to continuous education, helping them stay relevant in the industry. [71] [72]

### **2. Reskilling and Upskilling Programs**

With the automotive sector undergoing significant transformations, especially toward electric mobility, companies like Volkswagen have launched large-scale reskilling initiatives. Volkswagen's training centers focus on teaching workers the latest in battery technology, software development, and sustainable manufacturing. By doing so, the company ensures that its existing workforce can transition to new roles and technologies. These programs are often supplemented by partnerships with universities and technical institutes, aligning corporate talent needs with cutting-edge research and education. [73]

### **3. Job Rotation and Internal Mobility**

Job rotation is another effective talent management strategy used by automotive companies. Employees are given the opportunity to work in different departments or projects, which helps them build a broad skill set and a deeper understanding of the business. This not only prepares employees for leadership roles but also keeps them engaged by offering diverse work experiences. Additionally, internal mobility programs allow companies to fill skill gaps by redeploying talent from within, which is crucial in addressing the challenges posed by the aging workforce. [74]

### **4. Flexible Working Arrangements**

As automotive companies focus on retaining older employees while attracting younger talent, flexible working arrangements have become an essential talent management tool. Daimler, for example, has introduced various part-time, remote,

and flexible job options to help employees maintain work-life balance, particularly as they age. These programs not only improve retention but also enhance employee engagement across different age groups, addressing the specific needs of an aging workforce while remaining attractive to younger professionals. [75]

## 5. Leadership Development and Succession Planning

Leadership development (as presented on Picture 7) is a critical focus in talent management within the automotive sector. Automotive companies, among others, emphasize identifying high-potential employees early in their careers and nurturing them through mentoring, special assignments, and leadership training programs. This ensures a strong pipeline of future leaders who can steer the company through technological and market transitions. Succession planning is also integrated into this, allowing companies to prepare for key retirements while ensuring business continuity . [76]

By leveraging these specialized talent management methods, automotive companies can effectively address the dual challenges of technological change and an aging workforce, while keeping employees engaged and future-ready. [77]



Picture 7 4 E's of Leadership development according to [78]

## 3 The Research Problem, Barriers and Evaluation Hurdles

### 3.1 Exploring the Employee Engagement

The global demographics shift has been discussed in the theoretical part of the thesis. It has been proven that particularly in the developed economies, the workforce is aging rapidly. In many countries, mainly those in Europe and Japan, there is a growing proportion of employees over the age of 50, and this trend is expected to continue. This demographic change has been and will be presenting a critical challenge for organizations as they strive to maintain productivity, innovation, and competitiveness.

As shown in the 2.2.1 Employee Engagement, one of the most effective strategies to address these challenges is fostering strong employee engagement, particularly among older workers. Employee engagement plays a crucial role in ensuring that organizations can harness the experience, knowledge, and productivity of their aging workforce. The significance of focusing on employee engagement in the context of an aging workforce lies in its impact on several key areas: productivity, knowledge retention, well-being, and organizational commitment.

#### 3.1.1 The Research Problem

The main research problem lies in the identification of the factors that most significantly influence employee engagement in a particular organization. Since the research as well as the survey will be conducted on employees of HELLA Slovakia Lighting, the research will be mainly valid for this specific company, but in a broader perspective it could be applied for a variety of Automotive companies within Slovakia, or also companies with a different focus from the region of Trencin.

Although numerous models and frameworks exist to define and measure engagement [79], the drivers of engagement can vary based on organizational culture, leadership style, employee demographics, and industry-specific factors. [80] In this context the research problem can and will be approached from two perspectives:

- a) **Understanding Engagement Levels Across Diverse Groups:** Employees may experience different levels of engagement depending on their role, department, length of their employment, age, or even personal circumstances. For instance, older employees may value job stability and work-life balance, while younger employees might prioritize career development opportunities and recognition.

Capturing these diverse perspectives in a survey is critical for obtaining meaningful insights. [81]

- b) **Translating Data into Actionable Strategies:** Once the factors influencing engagement are identified, the next challenge is determining what specific actions the company can take to improve engagement levels. General recommendations, such as better communication or more recognition, may not address the unique needs of the organization's workforce or may not be significant enough to result into the expected results. Therefore, the research problem also involves translating the survey results into tailored, effective strategies for boosting engagement. [82]

### **3.1.2 Complexity of Defining and Measuring of the Employee Engagement**

One of the fundamental challenges in researching employee engagement is the unclarity when it comes to its definition and measurement. Engagement can include a wide range of factors, from job satisfaction and motivation to emotional investment in the company's mission and vision. [83]

Various models (e.g., Gallup's Q12, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale) propose different ways to measure engagement, which may not capture the specific dynamics of a particular organization [84] [85]. For example, while some frameworks emphasize the psychological connection employees feel toward their work (e.g. Zinger model, Kahn model) [86] [87], others may focus on behaviors like exceeding the bare minimum that's required of the employee or job satisfaction (e.g. JD-R model) [88] . All in all, this entire complexity makes it difficult to design a one-size-fits-all survey to measure engagement effectively.

### **3.1.3 Subjectivity and Perception of Engagement**

Engagement is, to a very high level, subjective. Employees' perceptions of engagement can vary based on their personal experiences and emotional states. Two employees working in the same role under similar conditions may report vastly different engagement levels based on how they interpret their work environment. [83]

This subjectivity adds to the difficulty of diagnosing engagement issues, as it is to a huge extent influenced by the following factors [89]:

- **Organizational culture:** How open and supportive the company is in fostering communication, feedback, and recognition.
- **Leadership style:** Whether employees feel valued and listened to by their direct supervisors and the wider leadership team.
- **Work environment:** Factors like workload, stress levels, autonomy, and opportunities for personal growth also play a role in how engaged employees feel.

Addressing this subjectivity is a significant challenge. A survey should to the biggest possible extent capture both tangible engagement drivers (e.g., pay, workload) and intangible factors (e.g., recognition, feelings of belonging), ensuring that the results reflect the true engagement levels across the organization. [90]

At the same time however, it has to remain anonymous [90], in order to provide the most reliable data and not to have the results influenced by fears or doubts of employees concerning about being taken accountable for their honest answers.

### 3.1.4 Dynamic Nature of Employee Engagement

Engagement is not static. It fluctuates over time, influenced by external and internal factors such as changes in leadership, economic conditions, work conditions (e.g., during a pandemic), and organizational restructuring [91]. The dynamic nature of engagement introduces another research problem of how to capture a snapshot of engagement that reflects both the current state and allows for future predictive insights.

Given these fluctuations, a survey must be designed not only to assess the current state of engagement but also to detect early warning signals of disengagement and identify trends that could jeopardize future engagement levels. However, doing this effectively within the constraints of a single survey poses a significant challenge for researchers.

## 4 Methodological Framework: Data Collection strategies and Survey Design

To address the defined research problem, a company can implement a well-structured employee engagement survey.

The survey has been conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the key issues affecting employee satisfaction and engagement within the company. Recognizing that employee concerns directly influence productivity, morale, and retention, it's essential to define what the workforce perceives as its primary struggles. [92] A particular focus of this survey is on compensation, benefits, and other workplace factors, as these could be significant drivers of employee engagement. [93] By identifying the most pressing challenges employees face, the company will be more agile and precise in implementing targeted strategies to address these areas, creating a more supportive, motivated, and productive work environment. [94]

Knowing the biggest struggles of employees is important for several reasons. First, it highlights underlying issues that may go unnoticed in day-to-day operations, such as dissatisfaction with salary and benefits, limited growth opportunities, or work-life balance challenges. [53] Second, understanding these concerns can help the company design and implement policies that directly impact employee well-being, satisfaction, and engagement. By addressing these areas, the company can enhance retention, reduce turnover costs, and build a positive company culture that supports employee growth and loyalty. [91]

Conducting an anonymous survey is one of the most efficient approaches to obtain honest and reliable insights from the employees. [95] Anonymity encourages employees to share honest feedback without fearing potential consequences. This level of openness is crucial, as it provides a more accurate picture of employee sentiment and allows for more informed decision-making. Additionally, when employees feel safe to share their true thoughts, they are more likely to address sensitive issues, such as compensation or workload, leading to richer data and a clearer understanding of employee needs. [90]

In planning, conducting, and evaluating the survey, several key steps must be followed. First, the survey should be carefully designed, with questions that accurately capture various aspects of employee satisfaction, including compensation, benefits, work-life balance, and career development. Then, a clear communication strategy



should be established to inform employees about the purpose of the survey, the anonymity assurance, and how their feedback will contribute to meaningful change. Following data collection, responses should be analyzed systematically to identify common themes, patterns, and high-priority issues. [90]

Finally, based on the survey results, the company will be positioned to implement specific, targeted actions to address employee concerns more effectively. This approach not only demonstrates a commitment to employee well-being but also builds trust by showing that the company listens to and values its workforce's input. [90]

#### 4.1.1 Survey Design

The conducted survey should be targeting a specific business field – in this case Automotive. Therefore, there has been several key steps involved to ensure that the data collected is relevant, actionable, and accurately reflects the concerns of the employee population. A few general must-do's [90] during the survey design process have been respected but also adjusted to a context of automotive manufacturing company:

- **Setting Clear Objectives on Motivation and Engagement:** In order to identify key factors affecting motivation in automotive business - such as compensation, shift scheduling, safety, career growth, and production goals. This is to ensure the survey gathers data that directly supports engagement improvements.
- **Focus on Automotive-Specific Workplace Drivers:** Design questions around aspects that are highly relevant in automotive manufacturing, like meeting production targets, safety measures, work-life balance, and recognition. This approach ensures that the survey covers the most impactful areas for employee satisfaction.
- **Use Simple, Practical Questions:** Ask direct, easy-to-understand questions that relate to daily work experiences on the factory floor, including closed-ended questions for quantitative insights and open-ended questions for deeper feedback on workplace motivation. The employees mainly from the production have often less tendency to answer complex questions that might be confusing to them.
- **Ensure Anonymity to Encourage Honest Responses:** Emphasize confidentiality, which is essential in a structured environment like automotive



manufacturing, so employees feel safe discussing sensitive topics like management support, workload, and workplace culture.

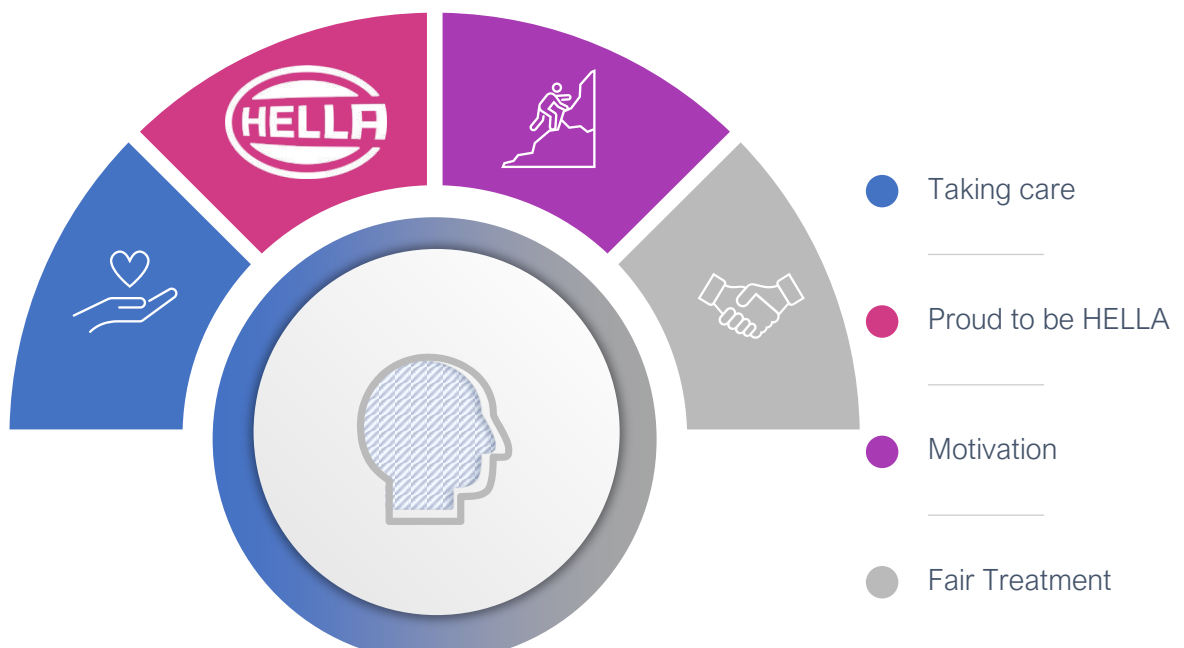
- **Pilot with Diverse Roles Across Shifts:** Test the survey with a representative mix of workers - assembly line, maintenance, quality control. The goal of this step was mainly to redefine questions based on their feedback, ensuring the survey resonates across all areas.
- **Distribute at Optimal Times and Channels:** Release the survey at times that avoid peak production demands, and offer it in formats accessible to all employees, such as mobile-friendly versions or paper options during shift meetings. This was expected to be a challenge due to the nature of production process, where breaks are often used for private purposes and employees show little tendency to spend time on filling a survey. Based on past experience it has been planned to allow a full production stop for each shift, to have time to fill out the form.
- **Communicate the Purpose Clearly:** Explain that the survey will drive changes based on employee feedback on engagement and motivation, highlighting specific improvements like shift flexibility, safety, and recognition.
- **Prepare for Targeted Data Analysis:** Structure data collection to enable clear reporting on areas like recognition, safety, and development opportunities. This will support focused actions that directly address employees' needs in the automotive context.

For gaining a clearer view of the questions asked, but also about the format, sequence and wording of the questions there is the entire survey presented in the Appendix 1 of the thesis.

#### 4.1.2 Survey Focus Areas

Structuring and evaluating survey questions within specific focus areas is important to gain targeted insights that reflect the unique dynamics and priorities within an organization. By organizing questions into well-defined focus areas, the survey can more effectively highlight the distinct aspects of the employee experience. This structure not only allows for more precise data collection but also makes it easier to identify strengths and challenges in each area, providing a clearer foundation for implementing relevant improvements. A well-structured survey helps ensure that each area of interest is explored comprehensively, leading to actionable results that can directly influence leadership decisions. [96]

In this case, the focus area “Proud be HELLA” was specifically added following the recent merger of Faurecia and Hella, that has still not been entirely perceived as FORVIA by the broader business. Mergers often lead to significant cultural and operational shifts, which can impact employees' sense of loyalty and pride in their workplace. [97] Including this focus area allows FORVIA to assess whether employees feel connected to the newly merged company's vision and brand. By evaluating responses in this area, FORVIA can address any concerns related to company identity and cohesion, helping employees feel a stronger sense of belonging and unity within the new organizational structure.



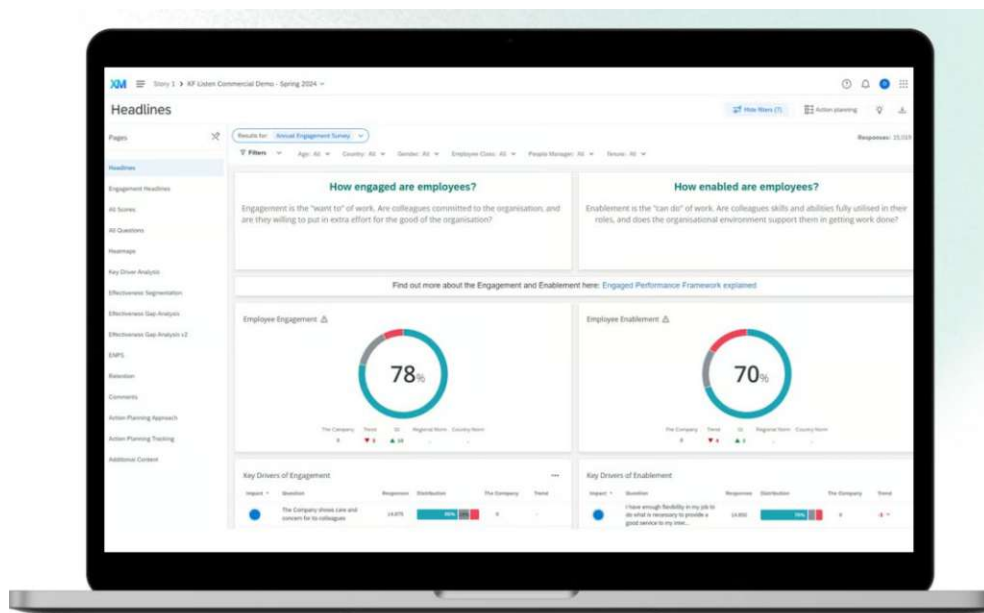
Picture 8 Main Focus Areas of the Survey [own representation]

The focus area of “Taking care” was referring to the questions focused on employee perception of social & sport events, trainings and general perception of the employee regarding the internal/external communication of the employer and how well she/he feels informed and treated well.

“Motivation” focus area has been targeting mainly the inner motivation of the employee to keep working for HELLA and stay loyal to the brand/employer. The general perception of the working environment, adaptation and benefits of being the employee of the biggest employer in the region have been asked about.

“Fair Treatment” part has been investigating into how the employees feel about being treated well, whether the policies are consistent, fair and clear. Equal opportunities are also playing an important role.

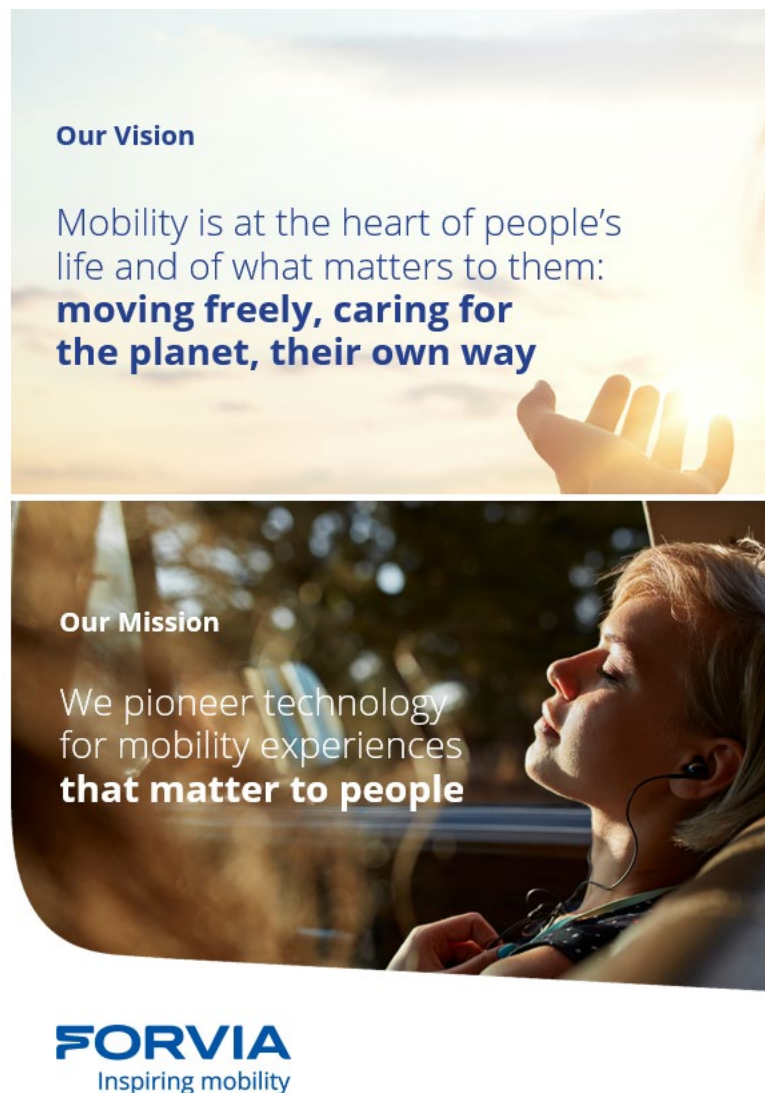
All in all, by focusing on questions targeting loyalty and fair treatment, the survey also sends a clear signal towards the employees that the company not only values their feedback, but also equality and integrity. When it comes down to employee engagement, it's very important for the employees to feel that the company not only cares about the feedback, but also implements the feedback into actionable strategies. Should the feedback stay without any actions taken, the further survey would be jeopardized not only from the perspective of participation, but mainly from the feedback to be more negative as in the previous round of survey.



Picture 9 Example of Korn Ferry Employee Engagement Result Dashboard Overview [98]

Understanding of how employees perceive and approach having a strong mission and vision is crucial, especially in times of uncertainty and following a merger – both the cases for Forvia. Vision and Mission (see Picture 10) provides employees with a clear sense of purpose and direction. A compelling mission and vision help unify teams, provide confidence, sense of purpose, and offer a guiding framework that reassures employees during periods of change. [99]

In the case of a merger, these elements are essential for building a shared identity and fostering a sense of belonging within the newly formed company. [97] By surveying employees on their perception of the company's mission and vision, leadership can measure alignment and identify any areas needing reinforcement, ultimately supporting a smoother transition and stronger employee engagement. [99]



Picture 10 Mission and Vision of Forvia [100]

### 4.1.3 Data Analysis

After survey data is gathered, it will first be segmented and analyzed across the defined focus areas.

Basic statistical tools and data visualization methods (e.g averages, standard deviations, bar charts) may be used to highlight key trends, correlations, and any notable patterns, such as whether employees in certain departments or roles have differing levels of engagement or satisfaction. Additionally, open-ended responses will be reviewed to capture qualitative insights, providing deeper context to the quantitative findings.

Based on this analysis, a comprehensive action plan will be created. There are two main areas that the plan will be focusing on.

- How to tackle the issue of aging workforce & maximize the retention ?
- How to increase the interest of new employees in the automotive industry ?

This plan will outline targeted actions designed to address the top-priority areas identified in the survey. For example, if data shows that fair treatment is a significant area for improvement, specific actions may include updating policies on equal opportunities, revising management training, or enhancing recognition programs. Each action will have measurable objectives, assigned accountability, and clear timelines to ensure effective implementation. Progress on these actions will be closely monitored, with regular check-ins and progress tracking to maintain momentum and address any barriers that could potentially come up.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken, the conduction a follow-up survey has already been scheduled after a year. This follow-up survey will mirror the original structure to allow for a comparative analysis, directly measuring improvements and shifts in employee perception across each focus area. By comparing pre- and post-action survey results, one can assess the tangible impact of these interventions, identifying areas where improvements were successful as well as any areas needing further refinement. This cycle of continuous evaluation and adjustment will help to ensure an engaged, motivated, and consistent alignment of workforce with the company's mission and vision, creating a culture of ongoing improvement.

## Survey set-up for Optimal Data Analysis

As mentioned in the previous paragraph, the survey needed to take into account the fact that the majority of employees are blue collar workers that might not have the will or time to spend too much time during the working hours on filling the survey. At the same time, they might prefer to answer closed-ended questions instead of open-ended questions. These also allows for easier data analysis and evaluation.

Another vital precondition next to the usage of closed-ended questions was the usage of Likert scale. For this purpose, a symmetric Likert scale has been used. The symmetric variant of Likert scale provides the position of neutrality (neutral/don't know) as well as two extremes of strongly disagree to strongly agree. It provides the independence to a participant to choose any response in a balanced and symmetric way in either direction. [101] Besides majority of questions having the symmetric Likert scale, there are certain questions with various options (age, plant, position etc.) that help to identify the group of employees and their perception to allow for a more specific and targeted actions.

The data is going to be processed by using standard tools (MS Excel, Power BI). These allow for an easy data cleaning and organization. While there are more sophisticated statistical tools out there (R, Minitab), the standard tools provide ease of sharing and collaboration having custom visuals and basic data modeling capabilities.

With Likert scale data we cannot use the mean as a measure of central tendency as it has no meaning (i.e. what is the average of Strongly agree and disagree) ? The most appropriate measure of is the mode the most frequent responses, or the median. The best way to display the distribution of responses i.e. (% that agree, disagree etc) is to use a bar chart. [102] Together with bar charts , the histograms are one of the best ways to visualize Likert data - they have two real axes, showing counts by score value or category, so one can parse the visual and understand the results very quickly. [103]

## 5 Main Findings, Discussion and Implications

The employee satisfaction survey has been filled and submitted by 2082 participants from HELLA Slovakia. The survey was made available to be submitted between 02/Sep/2024 and 11/Oct/2024 (taking 6 weeks in total).

Before the deep dive into the evaluation of individual questions, the main findings of the survey could be summed up as follows:

### Company Strengths

The best results was perceived in the field of communal facilities (77% positive). The company is also successful in the customer focus and ability to understand and meet the customer needs (66% positive). The risk hunting and work safety in the working areas is a positive highlight based on the opinion of the employees (63% positive). Cooperation and relationship between the employees is perceived very well (63% positive). The learning and development process provided by the company has also been welcomed by the participants (61% positive).

### Company Weaknesses

Worst perception was seen in the filed of sustainable development and CO2 neutrality program launched by FORVIA (73% negative). This has been followed by the perception of a company value focused on people taking initiatives as entrepreneurs (64% negative). The discrimination again people based on their background (mainly gender) has been designated as a problem (59% negative). Benefits offered by the company have been suggested to be insufficient (54% negative). People also did not feel recognized for a good job done (50% negative).

These findings present a dual narrative. While the company shows an excellent result in areas like facilities, safety and teamwork, it faces significant challenges in sustainability, inclusivity and employee recognition. Addressing these problems would require a focus on creating a culture that is more inclusive, focused on employee engagement, improves the benefits package and finally implements effective recognition programs to ensure that the employees feel motivated and valued. The enhancement of communication about environmental initiatives – especially in the European context is an initiative that requires a special attention.

In order to keep the thesis comfortable to be read, the survey results will be shown in Likert scale data plotted in a bar chart form where the question number will be shown



on Y-axis and percentual ratio of the responses on the X-axis. For majority of the questions, there has been approximately 1 to 2% responses indicating “Do Not Know/Not applicable”, that haven’t been shown in this interpretation. The entire results are added to the Appendix of the thesis.

Certain questions have not been designed to be answered with the standard Likert scale (ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree) therefore these have been taken out of the clustered evaluation and evaluated separately at the end of the paragraph 5.1. These questions mostly served as an identification of specific variables of the respondents (such as age, location, personal point of view or was an opened question)

Some of the survey results presented in this analysis may have been adjusted slightly or modified to protect the intellectual property and proprietary information of the organization. These changes were made with care and do not alter the overall results, trends or conclusions drawn from the original survey results.



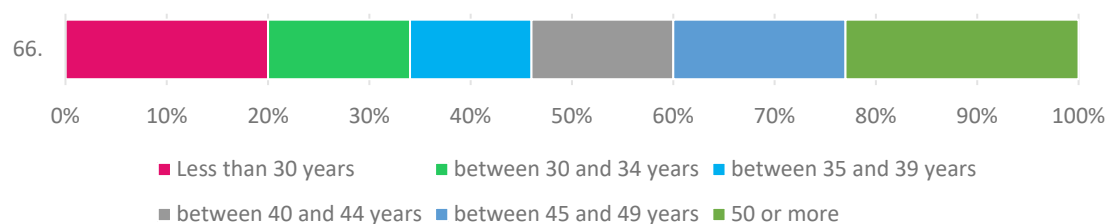
## 5.1 Survey Findings and Interpretations

The survey was consisting of 66 questions, while majority of them were a Likert survey type question. The evaluation of them is to be seen in the figures below.

By analysis of the responses, it is expected to identify patterns of the employee satisfaction, engagement as well as their overall work experience. Understanding of these results is not only important for shaping the future strategies, but also to enhance the company culture, efficiency and most importantly, the employee well-being. As it has been suggested by [104], the workplace wellbeing factors play a crucial role on

While question nr. 66 was the last one in the survey, in context of the thesis topic as well as putting the answers into perspective it will be shown as the first result. Next questions continue based on their numerical order.

66. What is your age?



Picture 11 Results of question nr. 66

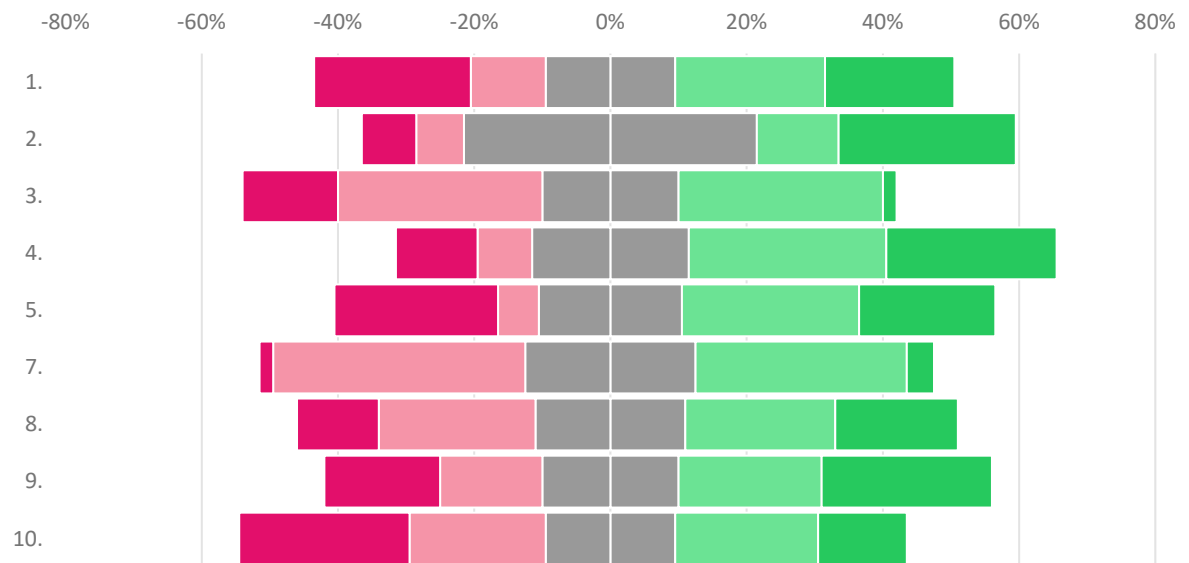
20% of the respondents were younger than 30 years, 26% were between 30-40 years old and 54% of the respondents were aged over 40 (the approximate value of the company median age shown on the Picture 3 Dashboard with overview of employees within HELLA Slovakia Lighting).

The legend used for Likert survey type questions is the following:



Picture 12 Legend for the questions of Likert type [own representation]

1. I understand the company's strategic priorities and goals well.
2. I trust in the company's Global leadership team (Global leadership team is Group, Business group and Division management teams).
3. Senior leader's behaviors are consistent with the company's values.
4. I believe that the company will be successful over the next 2-3 years.
5. I have a good understanding of my GAP Team's goals and objectives.
7. The company is responding effectively to changes in the business environment (where markets are characterized by uncertainty and complexity).
8. The company is transforming so that it can respond effectively to the business environment.
9. The company competes well against other companies in the industry.
10. In the company, decisions are generally made in a timely manner.



Picture 13 Likert style representation of questions 1-10 [own representation]

In the 1<sup>st</sup> question slightly more employees (41% vs. 34%) claimed to understand the company priorities well, relatively good results compared to the short time the priorities of the merged companies have been set in place.

The answers to the 2<sup>nd</sup> question was surprising due to the considerable amount of employees having undecided option about the company Global leadership team (~44%). This may indicate a low impact of the leadership team on employees in lower-level positions.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> question on the other side have been perceived negatively by over 40% respondents indicating that the actions taken by senior leadership are not being perceived to be in line with the company values.

On the other hand, the 4<sup>th</sup> question has been perceived most positively. This may be due to the latest merger of HELLA and Faurecia forming seventh largest automotive supplier worldwide.

The GAP team lead role in the 5<sup>th</sup> question have not been perceived well in nearly ¼ of the employees. This important production role will have to be promoted better in the future.

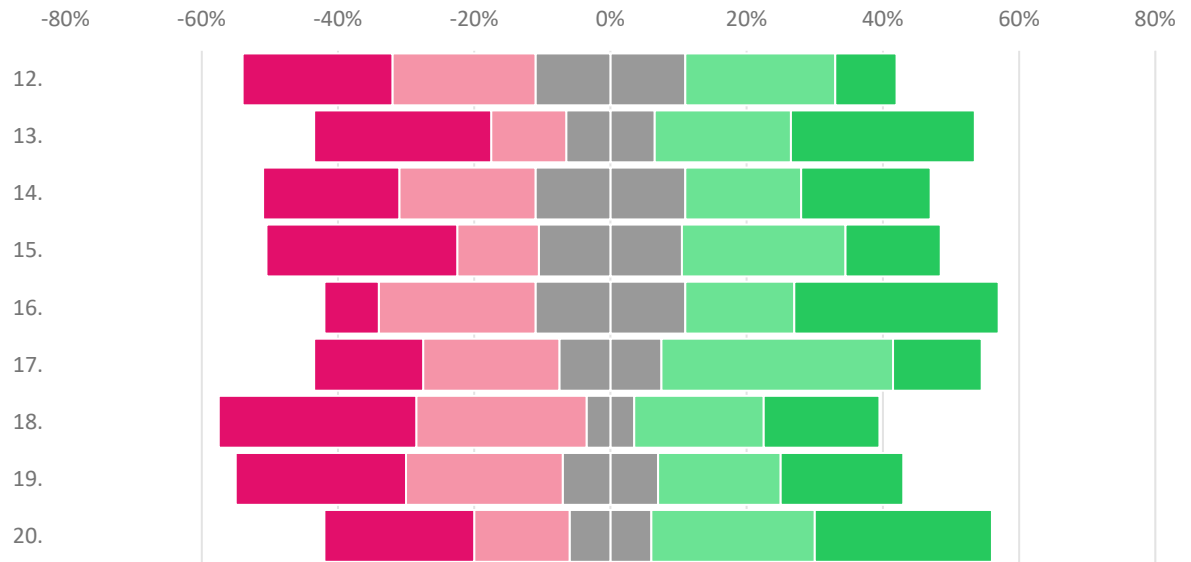
6<sup>th</sup> question evaluated separately at the end of the paragraph.

The ability of the company to reflect to market needs has been perceived badly by almost 40% of the employees in the 7<sup>th</sup> question, indicating low adaptability level.

The 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> question suggest a slightly positive perception of the employees when it comes to the company being able to respond to the business environment and its ability to compete against the competitors

The 10<sup>th</sup> question nearly half of the employees stated that the decisions are not made in a timely manner.

12. I have trust and have confidence in my immediate manager.
13. My immediate manager behaves with honesty and integrity (Role Model).
14. My immediate manager provides me with clear and regular feedback.
15. My immediate manager supports me in my learning and career development.
16. My immediate manager's actions and behaviors are consistent with the company's values
17. My immediate supervisor/manager listens to my requests and is open and accessible.
18. Employee benefits provided by the company are competitive with benefits offered by other companies in our industry.
19. The company shows care for its employees.
20. The company values and promotes employee diversity.



Picture 14 Likert style representation of questions 12-20 [own representation]

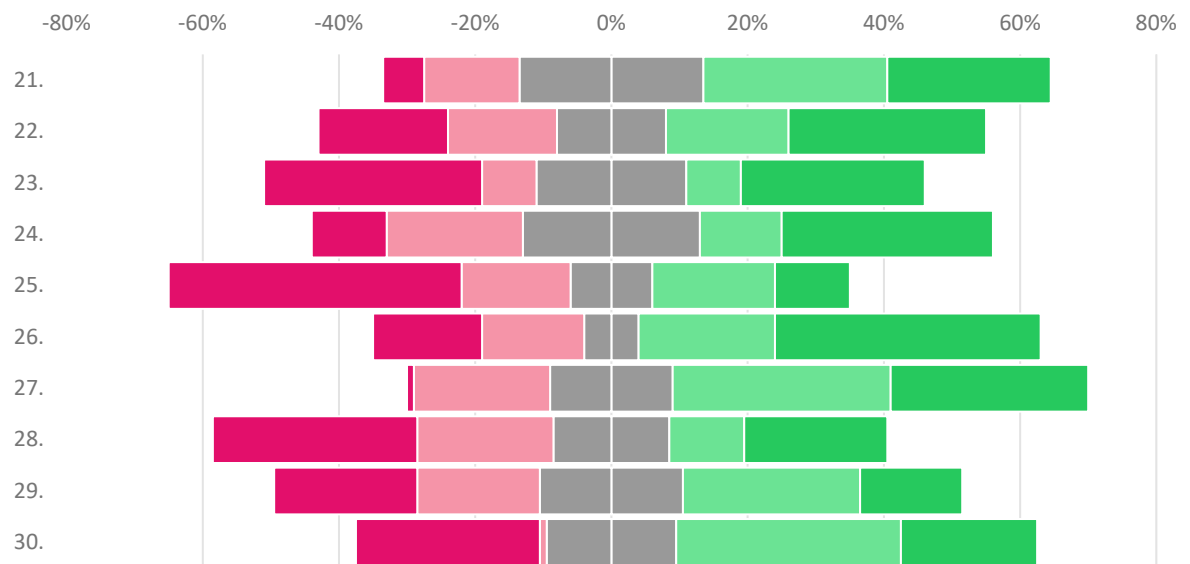
While the global management scored just a little worse (2<sup>nd</sup> question), the immediate managers have been perceived almost as negatively (~43%) by the employees in the 12<sup>th</sup> question. This may already indicate a structural issue in the management team, or at least in the perception of its results. Question nr. 11 is evaluated separately

Questions from 13 to 17 were focused on the perception of the employee to his/her immediate manager. Overall, the score was leaning towards positive opinions when it comes to integrity, feedback provision, consistency with company values and accessibility of the manager. Slight negative perception was in the 15<sup>th</sup> question focused on the managers ability to support learning and career development of the employees.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> question the employees perceived negatively the benefits offered by the company as well as the employee care provided by the company. Having the target of increasing the employee retention and increasing engagement, these results need to be addressed with a high importance.

On the other hand, the employee diversity has been perceived very positively in question nr. 20. The reason might be the recent increase of employees from 3<sup>rd</sup> countries (majority being Ukrainian and Filipino).

21. Opportunities for advancement are available to employees regardless of personal background or characteristics.
22. Training is available on an ongoing basis so that I can continue with my learning and career development.
23. In my work environment, everyone is treated fairly, regardless of personal background or characteristics.
24. All in all, would you say that between what you invest in your work (skills, time, energy, etc.) and what you receive in return (remuneration, career, responsibilities, learning), the result is;
25. The company will not tolerate behavior that discriminates against people based on personal background or characteristics (For example gender, race, background).
26. I have enough autonomy to do my job well.
27. I have good opportunities for learning and development at the company.
28. I receive recognition when I do a good job.
29. The amount of work expected of me is reasonable
30. The company is environmentally responsible



Picture 15 Likert style representation of questions 21-30 [own representation]

A Relative good result (over 50% positive) has been shown for advancement of employees regardless of their personal background in the 21<sup>th</sup> question. A slightly positive tendency for availability of trainings has been evaluated in question nr. 22. This might be connected to the recent rollout of online learning through an inhouse application „my talent compass“.

In the 23<sup>rd</sup> question a lot of „strong disagree“ responses have been recorded of employees not feeling to be treated fairly. The answers was most often provided by the Ukrainian workers who, in fact, are underrepresented in the white collar positions.

24<sup>th</sup> question on the other hand had a relative high percentage (31%) of strong agree responses, indicating that employees find the ratio between the resources invested to work vs. what they receive in return as well balanced.

One of the worst results have been documented in question nr. 25. Based on a drilldown on the specific question, the most negative answers were given by women employees. Together with the fact that the management is having less than 15% women employees, the discrimination might be mostly perceived on gender base.

The level of autonomy was perceived positively in the question nr. 26

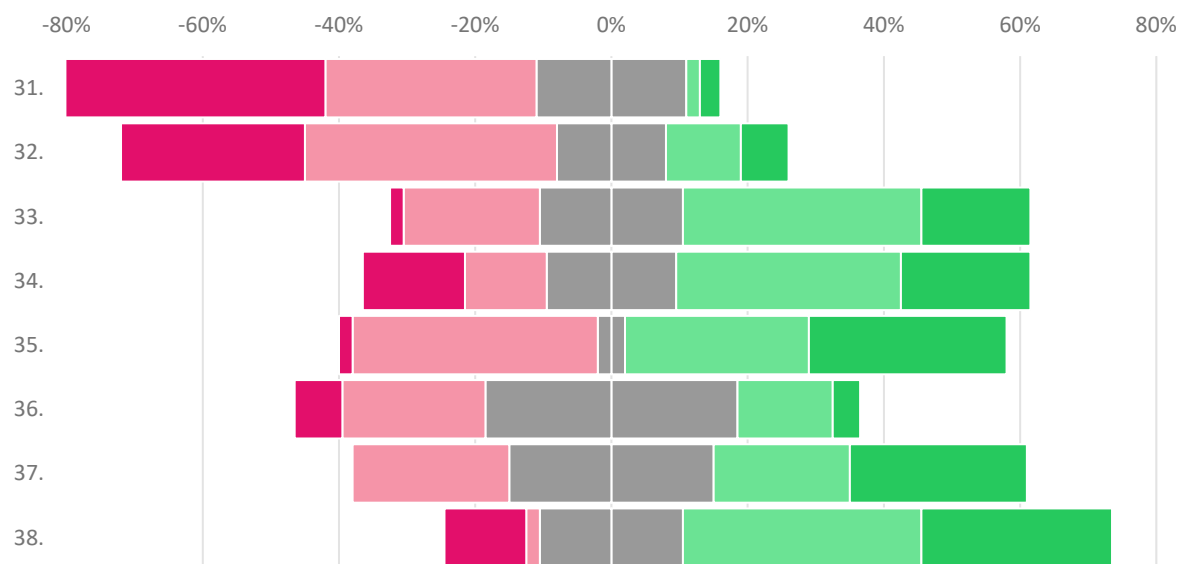
One of the best results overall was experienced in 27<sup>th</sup> question. The employees indicate a very good opportunity for personal and professional development. Not only there are many tailor-made training courses within HELLA, but also there is a wide roll-out of 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, which is a self-leadership training program widely recognized within many industries.

Recognition of a good job done was designated as a weakness by nearly 50% of the employees in question nr. 28. Slightly positive result was however shown in the question focused on the reasonability of workload in 29<sup>th</sup> question.

A peculiar result was seen in the question nr. 30 with 53% of the employees being slightly or strongly positive about the environmental responsibility of the company. On the other hand nearly 30% employees were strongly disagreeing this statement while the next question regarding the CO2 neutrality was ranged among the worst perceived part of the entire survey.

This fact might be caused by the intensively discussed Green deal targets set by the European Union and the employees being separated into groups of those finding these targets beneficial and those who are not at all in favor of these („Petrol Heads“ vs. „Eco-conscious“).

- FORVIA has launched an overall approach for sustainable development, based on our six (6) convictions, with a specific focus on CO2 neutrality and a more inclusive culture. I am confident that we are making real progress on this important matter.
31. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People take initiatives as entrepreneurs
  32. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People work in an autonomous way
  33. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People are accountable for their work
  34. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People are respectful of others
  35. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People demonstrate exemplarity
  36. Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People work with passion and energy
  37. How do you rate the cooperation between members of your own team?
  - 38.



Picture 16 Likert style representation of questions 31-38 [own representation]

The recently launched of CO2 neutrality approach has been perceived very negatively by vast majority of the employees in the 31<sup>th</sup> question. While it was not the movement itself that has been taken negatively, it was the very ambitious target and the probability of reaching it in the set time.

The 32<sup>th</sup> question had similarly negative results. The employees indicated that they do not take initiatives as entrepreneurs. This might be tightly connected with the fact that they did not feel to be praised for the good results (see results of 28<sup>th</sup> question)

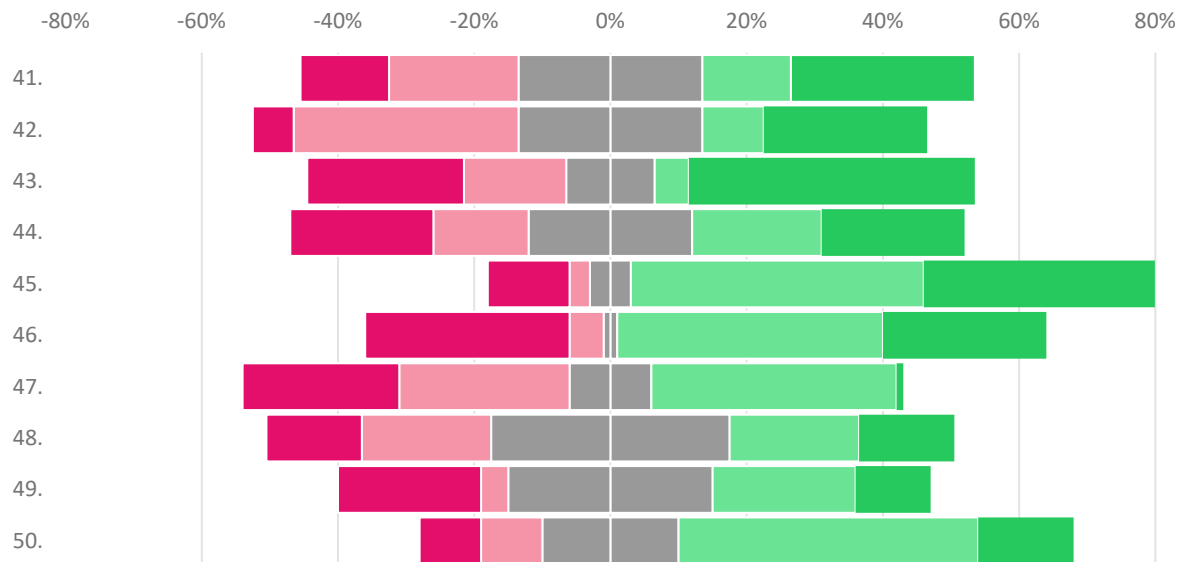
The values were in general perceived predominantly positively in the questions 33 to 37 with a slight exception of question 36, where employees were rather neutral about the people demonstrating exemplarity in the company.

The question nr. 38 was evaluated very positively by over 60% of the people. The team members seem to appreciate the team work and find it very efficient. This would also correspond with results of the 37<sup>th</sup> question, where nearly 50% of people



indicated that people work with passion in energy in HELLA. 39th question was evaluated separately.

41. If I had to report unethical behavior or misconduct, I am confident that the company would handle it effectively.
42. FORVIA supports me in achieving a reasonable balance between my work life and my personal life.
43. My work area is safe.
44. I have received the appropriate information/training about the health safety requirements of my working area (For example PPE, ergonomics, safety systems, etc.).
45. On my site, communal facilities (For example toilets, canteen, changing rooms, etc.) are up to the standard expected from a company such as FORVIA
46. I am regularly involved in activities that aim to identify eliminate potential health safety risks in my working area.
47. The Improvement ideas system is a valid adequate tool to improve my working conditions.
48. The information I receive through daily regular communication (For example Top5, regular meeting, etc.) helps me to understand and achieve my objectives.
49. When I have to follow a standardized system of work, I am involved in the resolution of problems occurring in my working area (KATA QRCI / Problem solving).
50. Considering everything, I am satisfied with the company.



Picture 17 Likert style representation of questions 41-50 [own representation]

Question nr. 40 was evaluated separately. Still a shocking amount of employees (a little over 30%) did not believe in the question nr. 41 that a reported misconduct would be handled by the company.

A relatively neutral average (skewed slightly to negative perception) was seen for the work-live balance offered by the company in the 42<sup>nd</sup> question.

A very strong approval of the work area safety was seen in question nr. 43 with still a relative positive (40% positive) perception of appropriate HSE training/information in 44<sup>th</sup> question.

One of the most positive evaluation was regarding the question nr. 45. The communal facilities are being perceived as up to date, fulfilling majority of the visual and hygiene requirements. While HELLA is a production company, it is essential to offer adequate changing rooms, rooms for resting as well as provide decent level of rest rooms and high quality canteen.

46<sup>th</sup> question again indicated the strength in Health and safety standards of the company, where employees indicated to be often a part of elimination of hazards at their work area.

The improvements idea system in 47<sup>th</sup> question has not been evaluated as an additional value added in order to improve quality of the working conditions by 48% of the employees. While it is a system that has been working for decades, it may need a certain upgrade providing more applicability and easing of user interface.

The employees felt a slight disappointment when it comes to the information they receive through daily communication channels (Top5, regular meetings etc.) with nearly 70% having negative or neutral answer in question nr. 48.

Same kind of neutral to negative result has been experienced in 49<sup>th</sup> question asking about involvement of the employees in the problem resolution.

In the question nr. 50 almost 60% of the employees indicated to be glad to be working in the company. Only less than 20% of the employees were not agreeing to this statement.



Picture 18 Likert style representation of questions 51-63 [own representation]

A slightly positive tendency is seen by employees recommending the company as a good place to work (40% positive vs. 32% negative) in 51<sup>th</sup> question.

48% employees respondents were proud to be working for HELLA while again, relatively low percentage disagreeing with this statement in question nr. 52.

Nearly 50% of the participants did not believe in the FORVIA strategic goals in 53<sup>th</sup> question. The Forvia strategic goals have been introduced only relatively recently, that might be the reason of employees not being entirely aligned with those.

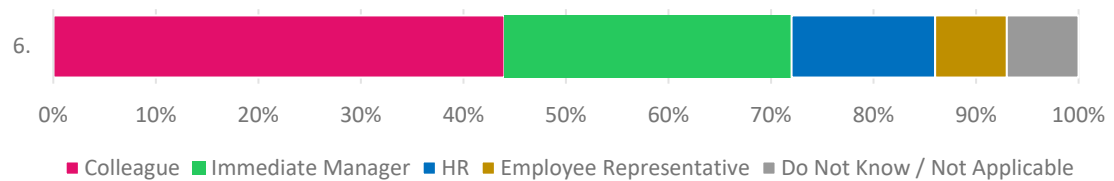
Employees also showed a very little motivation to do more than the minimum that is being asked from them to be done in the 54<sup>th</sup> question. This was seen in the question nr. 55 where 47% of employees disagreed with the statement of being motivated to do more than expected from them. Question nr. 56 was evaluated separately.

Question nr. 57 showed a relative strong positive attitude was towards the job making a good use of employee skills.

The conditions of the jobs to enable productivity as well as it having no barriers to do the job well have been perceived positively in the question 58 and 59 respectively. The majority of respondents also designated their job to be providing challenging and interesting opportunities question nr. 60. Question nr. 61 was evaluated separately

The employee perception of the company being customer focused and innovative when it comes to development of new products were confirmed by the employees in the questions 62 and 63.

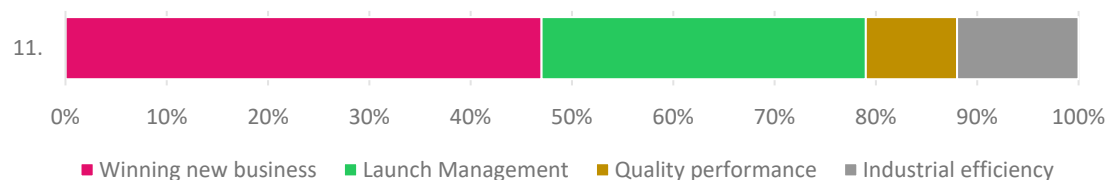
6. When I need clarification or do not understand a company decision, I prefer to consult with a;



Picture 19 Results of question nr. 6

Hand in hand with the perception of good colleague relationship perception from question nr. 38, we see an over 40% rate of responses when it comes to clarification of company decision. In this matter over third of employees would primarily turn to the colleagues for a clarification.

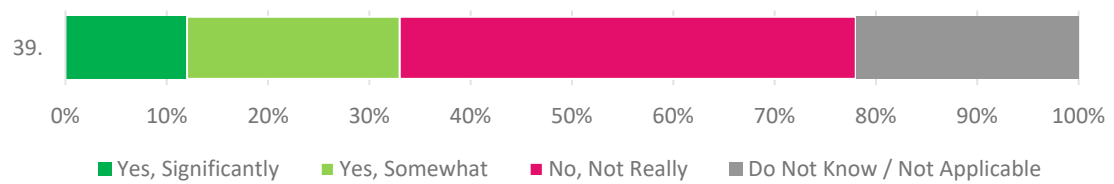
11. On which of the topics listed below do you think that our competitors perform better than FORVIA



Picture 20 Results of question nr. 11

Even though the perception of providing innovative product prevalent among the employees, the winning of new business has been perceived negatively for FORVIA. Even after winning the new business it seems that launching it is not perceived as a strength by the employees.

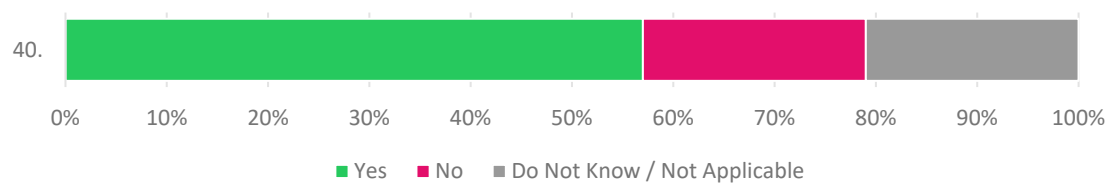
39. About 'Being FORVIA' - Do you think that Being FORVIA is improving our ways of working?



Picture 21 Results of question nr. 39

The fact that FORVIA is a relatively recent brand formed by the merger of HELLA and Faurecia, it seems that the it does not provide the strength the previous brand names were carrying. As mentioned in the theoretical part of the thesis - the merger periods are often perceived as turbulent and there are certain transitional period expected until the new brand stabilizes.

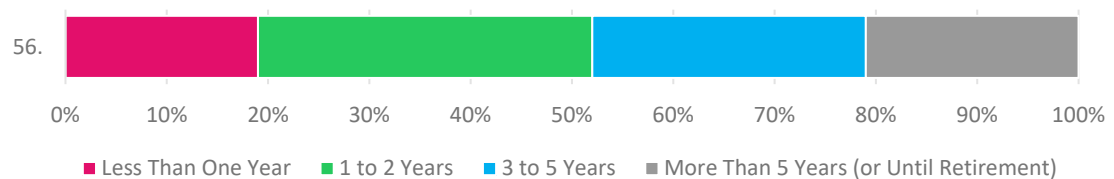
40. Are you aware that there is an alert system within FORVIA to report violations of the Code of ethics (unethical behavior/practices, i.e., corruption, discrimination, harassment, etc.)?



Picture 22 Results of question nr. 40

Majority of the employees were aware of the code of ethics alert system introduced by FORVIA – The target to reach 80% of awareness is set internally to be reached by end of 2025.

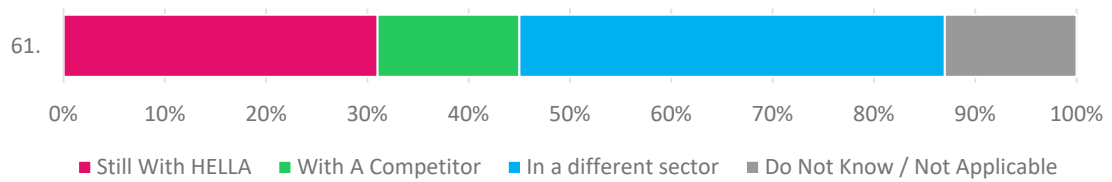
56. Given your choice, how long would you plan to continue working for the company?



Picture 23 Results of question nr. 56

Almost 50% of respondents indicated that they would love to keep working in the company from 3 years until the retirement. 33% indicated 1-2 years and 19% showed low willingness to stay with the company longer than 1 year.

61. Where do you see yourself in 3 years?



Picture 24 Results of question nr. 61

While 31% of employees indicate the willingness to stay in HELLA, 14% said they would be planning to work with the competitor located close to the HELLA locations (ZKW Lighting). A stunning 42% however mentioned the plan to work in a different sector. This might be closely tied with the waning interest in the automotive industry in the region as well as the recent automotive decline in the entire Europe.

Opened question nr. 64 was focusing on the good practices of FORVIA while Opened question 65 was focusing on the weaknesses of FORVIA.

## 5.2 Outlook Based on Survey Results

To address the problematic areas of the survey, the company should prioritize initiatives that strengthen **employee engagement**, as this is central to resolving many of the identified issues. For instance, improving perceptions around sustainable development and CO2 neutrality could involve actively involving employees in these initiatives through workshops, suggestion programs, or sustainability task forces. This would give employees a sense of ownership and pride in the company's environmental efforts. Similarly, fostering an entrepreneurial mindset can be achieved by creating platforms for employees to share ideas, providing resources for pilot projects, and recognizing innovation, thereby encouraging proactive engagement and creativity.

Personalized recognition programs that celebrate contributions at all levels—through peer nominations, team acknowledgments, and leadership support—can further strengthen engagement and morale.

By actively involving employees in shaping solutions and creating an environment where their voices are heard and valued, the company can foster a stronger sense of connection, satisfaction, and commitment among its workforce. This employee-centric approach will not only address the survey's concerns but also drive overall organizational success.

### **5.3 Strategies to Address Aging Workforce and Declining Interest in Automotive Jobs through Employee Engagement**

After the collection of survey data, there has been a thorough analysis performed on the responses. The analysis was serving the purpose of deriving actionable insights and actions in order to drive a meaningful change. At the same time there was a communication of the results through the entire company on all levels.

During this communication a special attention has been paid to communicate the results transparently to the employees while highlighting the steps the organization plans to take as a response.

For the plans to be able to be communicated an action plan was created targeting the biggest pain points identified by the survey. The action plan was created by engaging all the company departments (HR, Technical services, Quality, Production, Logistics, Project Management, and Operational Excellence). A close monitoring of the progress was assured by 21 team members (1 per department from each branch) and 7 managers (represented from different Slovak branches) nominated from all of the company departments.

A follow-up of the steps has been scheduled on monthly basis with the plant and country manager to assure the effectiveness of the interventions and maintain a cycle of continuous improvement. The follow up meetings started after the evaluation of the survey in Oct/24 with first action points being implemented right after the first meeting in the same month. Further meetings take place the first week of each month until all the action plant points are closed and/or until the next follow up survey results.

Based on the results and in respect to the clusters shown at Picture 8 the action plan has been divided into four focus areas. The focus areas had a target of covering the main weaknesses identified by the survey results. Shall the weakness be too specific (eg. CO2 neutrality) it is to be taken care about in a separate workstream.



“Taking care” has been the first cluster of the focus areas and actions to be performed (see Picture 25). This cluster has been targeting mainly the social aspect of the results.

1. Focus Area: Taking Care	
Employee Engagement Survey (EES) Results and Action Plan (AP) communication and follow-up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ensure that EES results and Action Plan (AP) communications are consistently delivered across all locations, including both HSK-level and location-specific updates.</li> <li>- Emphasize the active participation of Plant Managers and/or Departmental Managers in feedback sessions, in collaboration with HR, to strengthen personal involvement.</li> <li>- Provide AP follow-up updates at least quarterly during Town Hall Meetings at each location.</li> <li>- Display progress updates on AP posters on noticeboards, info screens, and distribute them internally via mass internal email.</li> <li>- Encourage employees to contribute additional proposals through their superiors, HR, or by using the idea box.</li> </ul>
Social & Sport Events and CSR Activities Calendar	- Create an Annual Calendar of Social, Sports, and Corporate Social Responsibility Activities, ensuring it is shared with employees at least quarterly in advance. This proactive approach will keep employees informed and encourage their participation.
Trainings roll-out in 2025	- Leadership training roll-out to first-line leaders as our critical mass to strengthen their roles and becoming effective leaders, mastering employee relations.
Mobile phone application	- Introduce a mobile application for employees to establish an instant, online communication channel between the organization and its workforce. The app will provide access to real-time company updates and news, promoting a proactive communication approach while streamlining information flow across the entire organization.

*Picture 25 First focus area based on the survey results [own representation]*

Taking care of employees is one of the most important parameter of a company success. A motivated and engaged workforce directly impacts the productivity, efficiency of source usage, and retention. Clear communication of management decisions and actions ensures transparency and builds trust, helping employees to feel valued and aligned with the organization's goals. [105]

Providing the leadership team with the right training enhances their ability to manage, inspire, and support their teams effectively, creating a positive work environment. Additionally, leveraging tools like a company app ensures timely and efficient communication, making important information easily accessible and fostering a sense of connection across all levels of the organization. These efforts do not only make the employee satisfaction stronger, but also contributes to a resilient and successful company culture. [106]

The second focus area has been dealing with Company Vision and the effort to make the employees to be proud to work for HELLA. The four action points are displayed on Picture 26. This area was mostly focused on brand promotion and strengthening of employee loyalty.

2. Focus Area: Company vision / Proud to be HELLA	
State of the Business	- At least once a year, a Board Member or a senior business executive shares the State of the Business during a personal visit to each location, aligned with their visit schedule
Service Years Promotion	- Display statistics on employee service anniversaries across HELLA Slovakia, such as during Town Hall meetings, to highlight their contributions. Recognize employees celebrating service milestones through annual informal gatherings at each location, attended by Plant Managers and HR. Presents for 10/20/30/40 years of employment to be introduced
HSK Employer Brand	- Enhance the HELLA employer brand and boost our appeal to current employees, their families, the labor market, and potential future talent by leveraging partnerships with service providers and external partners. Negotiate discounts and VIP programs that capitalize on the organization's size, offering substantial marketing reach and opportunities for significant engagement with a broad audience.
HELLA as a Love Brand	- Reinforce Corporate Identity by offering branded accessories such as T-shirts, shirts, hoodies, and caps, along with promotional items like diaries and pens.

*Picture 26 Second focus area based on the survey results [own representation]*

Employee being pride about working for HELLA is one of the most important goals set by the action plan. Not only does it help to build a strong, motivated workforce and fostering a positive organizational culture, but it could also potentially help with finding and hiring the new talent.

Survey results indicated that trust in management has been perceived as a weakness, highlighting the need for improved communication from top management to shopfloor employees. Transparent and regular communication can bridge this gap, bringing trust and alignment with company goals.

Additionally, recognizing and valuing long-serving employees demonstrates appreciation and contributes to a sense of belonging, which is highly valued. Strengthening HELLA's brand name, particularly in the Trenčín area where the company is the largest employer [107], is essential to restoring and maintaining its reputation as a desirable workplace. A focus on these areas will not only enhance employee satisfaction but also reinforce HELLA's position as an employer of choice in the region. [108] [109]

The third focus area had the inner motivation in scope. The target of the action points was to enable employees to adapt the company norms and standards as efficiently as possible while feeling included and heard. The three action points are seen in the table below.

3. Focus Area: Inner Motivation	
Adaptation Program	- Enhance the efficiency of the Adaptation Process by reducing administrative burdens and directing the Tutor's focus toward ensuring the quality of the process.
Get-to-know new hired employees	- Organize annual informal meetings with newly hired employees (primarily for leading roles) to gather insights on their onboarding experience, receive unbiased feedback, and foster open communication. These meetings will also provide an opportunity to connect them with management representatives and support their networking within the organization.
Loyalty Program	- Establish a Recognition Program to encourage engagement beyond job-related tasks and support employee-driven initiatives through activities such as contests, projects, buddy programs, and departmental showcases. Offer non-monetary rewards, such as loyalty points, that require no additional budget.

*Picture 27 Third focus area based on the survey results [own representation]*

Inner motivation of employees is an important factor to the success of a company business as it drives productivity, creativity, and commitment, which are often crucial for achieving organizational goals. The inner motivation however can hardly be „purchased“ in forms of higher pay or bonuses. These incentives very often work for a very limited time. [110]

Companies play an important role in making this motivation present by creating an environment where employees feel valued, supported and most importantly, heard. Implementing robust adaptation programs for new employees might help them integrate smoothly to be aligned with the company's culture, laying a strong foundation for the employee engagement. [111]

Facilitating networking opportunities among new hires during the adaptation program or the „get-to-know“ meetings can build connections and a sense of belonging, enhancing their motivation to contribute meaningfully. [112]

Additionally, introducing loyalty programs that reward the extra effort, and engagement fosters a deeper commitment to the organization, making employees feel recognized and appreciated. By focusing on these strategies, businesses can grow a motivated workforce that is both passionate and driven to succeed. [113]

Picture 28 shows the fourth focus area having in scope the „Fair Treatment approach“ of the company. Action points should diminish the feelings of nepotism.

4. Focus Area: Fair Treatment	
Open Door Policy Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Foster an Open Door Policy by implementing initiatives such as regular open-door hours with the Plant Manager or HR at each location</li> <li>- Breakfast sessions with the Plant Manager, HR coffee chats, an "Ask Your Plant Manager" communication channel</li> <li>- Transparent processes for handling obsolete IT equipment or items with no market value, such as old furniture. (selling for remaining value or giving out to the employees as rewards)</li> </ul>
Communication Map for Employees	- Develop a Communication Map (toolkit) for employees to enhance navigation of internal information, including areas, topics, and contact details of responsible individuals, while ensuring adherence to the communication escalation chain.
Regular Departmental Meetings	- In executing the Annual Communication Plan, prioritize holding monthly departmental meetings. Offer the option to invite an HR representative to address employee questions and provide clarity or alternatively equip departmental managers with a checklist of current topics to ensure consistent communication across all teams.

*Picture 28 Fourth focus area based on the survey results [own representation]*

Fair treatment is a critical organizational priority within HELLA, reflecting its commitment to excellence in trust, equality and a positive work environment. Research shows that treatment that is perceived as equal in the workplace enhances the employee morale, engagement and productivity in overall. [114]

Employees seem to universally value environments where opportunities are provided equally, and respect is shown regardless of the role or location of the employee. Such practices contribute to higher levels of commitment and satisfaction with the job. [115]

One of the initiatives that would illustrate this commitment is the Open-door policy that HELLA made available to all of the employees where a meeting with plant manager can be arranged in designated times. This approach also aligns with the findings of open communication and managerial accessibility to be promoting trust and transparency within the organization. [116] To further enhance the fairness, HELLA has also introduced a so called “Communication Map”, that has been designed in order to clarify the communication pathways and responsibilities, having in target to reduce the ambiguity and eliminating the perception of success depending on the informal networks or personal connections. This action is supported by the evidence that suggests that clear communication structured into frameworks reduce conflicts and increases satisfaction on the workplace. [117]

Finally, regular department meetings are set up to provide a platform for employees to express their concerns, seek answers and most importantly – stay informed. Regular dialogue and feedback align with the literature in order to create a collaborative and supportive workplace. [118]

### 5.3.1 Initiatives Triggered by the Survey Output

There have been several initiatives that have been triggered by the survey output. These had in scope to address the employee concerns and increase the engagement across all three Slovak HELLA branches in Kocovce, Trencin and Banovce and Bebravou.

Some initiatives were relatively simple to be implemented, while others have required a cross-functional team (Internal communication team) to be established. This team had representants from all three Slovak branches and also different departments to ensure a heterogeneity of the team.

The significance of each of the initiative may not be of the same impact, however it's the healthy mix of all of those that helps to address all the concerns and uncertainties of the employees that so far seems to be bringing positive results.

The key highlights introduced are:

- **Monthly Internal Newspaper** – this not only keeps the employees informed about the past events and happenings (family day, Christmas party etc.), but also keeps them on track of the current financial situation as well as the future planned events (sport activities that started to be organized by HELLA)
- **Leadership training rollout** – a thorough leadership program has been selected by a respected training company within Slovakia to train group leaders and middle management when it comes to leadership skills and people management. The trainings cover over 300 employees (engaging nearly 10% of the entire employee population).
- **Leadership communication** – regular meetings have been set up on different levels. A monthly meeting with the immediate supervisor for each department is set. The townhall meetings with the plant manager are set to a quarterly basis. Top management meetings (at least one representative from board of directors) is set to once a year.
- **Appreciation of long service** – besides the monetary advantages, employees with contract running longer than 10 years are obliged to request special brand clothing with HELLA logo. This clothing has been designed together with the local designer houses. While those serving 10+ years have 5 different options to choose from (Hoodie, shirt, cap), employees being in service for over 20 years have additional items (Suit, golf/sport jacket, etc.).

- **HELLA employer brand** – Partnering up with different companies not only from the region, but throughout the entire Slovakia. Leveraging the position of biggest regional employer (10<sup>th</sup> biggest in Automotive in Slovakia). Special VIP programs have been agreed with insurance companies, hotels, banks, online shops. These not only offer discounts for HELLA employees but also extra services that are not available for the “general public”
- **Adaptation program & Loyalty program** – Adaptation of new employees has been made a priority. Not only will they be given a tailor made adaptation program, but also a buddy to go through the first 3 months along with. After three months period an interview will be conducted to find out what the initial impressions of the employee are. Loyalty program on the other hand should serve for employees going the extra mile and/or above and beyond. Any work or off-work related activities could be rewarded by loyalty points (“diamonds”) that could be later on traded for special perks, such as additional holidays, better parking spot, etc.
- **Open door policy** – setting up certain time slots when any employee can sign up for a meeting with the plant manager. Also introducing “breakfast with the plant manager” that can be exchanged for the loyalty points. This step should make the top level management more approachable.

### 5.3.2 Thriving together – Workstream for Sustainability and Retaining of Experienced Talent

The aging workforce and sustainability are critical areas that demand focused attention. One of them is a threatened fact, the other one has been perceived as the most critical in the view of HELLA employees.

Therefore a dedicated workstream has been formed to effectively track and manage actions related to these topics. As the workforce ages, retaining experienced employees becomes increasingly vital, not only to preserve institutional knowledge but also to address the challenges posed by demographic shifts.

The company has decided to link the 13th and 14th salary directly to an employee's length of service, with the potential to amount to up to 80% of their standard monthly earnings. From the company's perspective, this approach is an excellent tool for increasing employee retention by rewarding loyalty and encouraging long-term commitment.

By progressively increasing these bonuses with the length of employment, employees are incentivized to remain with the organization, knowing their dedication will be financially recognized. This not only enhances job satisfaction but also reduces turnover, which can be costly in terms of recruitment, training, and lost expertise. Such a system reinforces the value the company places on experience and loyalty, creating a culture of stability and trust while ensuring a motivated and engaged workforce.

[119]

Contract Length	1 - 2 years	2 - 4 years	4-8 years	8-12 years	12 - 20 years	20+ years
Part of 13th and 14th salary	10%	15%	25%	40%	60%	80%

*Picture 29 Guaranteed % of base monthly salary as 13th and 14th salary based on employee contract length*



Sustainability has become a critical focus, particularly in the European context, where environmental responsibility is both a societal expectation and a regulatory priority. [120] [121]

Survey results have further highlighted the importance of sustainable practices, highlighting the need for companies like HELLA to take action. HELLA has become highly active in two key areas.

- First, efforts to reduce electricity consumption have been implemented through initiatives such as detecting and repairing compressed air leaks and automating lighting systems to minimize unnecessary usage. The electricity use in Nov/2024 compared to Nov/2025 has dropped by 14% only considering the two mentioned measures. Taking all electricity saving measures into account, the drop sums up for 17%.
- Second, the company has invested in renewable energy by installing a 2MWp photovoltaic power plant on the factory roof. Although this installation was part of long-term strategic planning, the survey results accelerated the investment, demonstrating the alignment of employee and organizational priorities. These actions underscore HELLA's commitment to sustainability, showcasing its role as an environmentally responsible leader in the industry.



*Picture 30 Installation of 2 MWp solar cells at HSK finished by Dec/24*

## 6 Conclusion

At the last chapter it is essential to reflect on the main findings and how the hypothesis align with the results obtained.

Through an in-depth analysis of organizational practices and the implementation of targeted initiatives, the research highlights the importance of creating a workplace environment built on trust, equity, and inclusivity. These factors are essential not only for enhancing employee morale and satisfaction but also for driving organizational success.

The early results of the thesis prove the effectiveness of targeted engagement strategies not only by retaining the skilled personnel but increasing the waning interest that has been perceived across the entire Automotive industry in the region.

The findings further highlight the significance of transparent communication and accessible leadership. These measures ensure that employees are empowered to raise their concerns. Regular management meetings, broad roll out of leadership trainings, valuation of loyalty further reinforce this culture of openness and support. These initiatives align with broader research indicating that equal and transparent workplace practices make employee commitment stronger, reduce conflict, and enhance overall organizational cohesion.

In conclusion, the thesis demonstrates how targeted strategies based on the employee feedback can significantly impact organizational outcomes. These efforts are not only vital for addressing current challenges but also for ensuring long-term sustainability in a competitive labor market.

A limitation of these findings might be the market situation that is out of control both the researcher and the company. The values may be influenced by worsening of the economic situation in the region (employees afraid to change jobs in a given period, less advertised positions in the region might automatically mean more for those advertised by HELLA). These assumptions however can not be confirmed when taking the indicators of the market into account (such as unemployment rate, open job positions).

## 6.1 Hypothesis Evaluation

The hypothesis was formulated as follows:

"Implementing targeted engagement strategies, such as enhanced training programs, career development opportunities, and workplace innovations, will significantly increase the interest and retention of the labor force in the Slovak automotive industry."

The conduction of the hypothesis evaluation has been evaluated on qualitative basis and exploratory research as the statistical analysis in this case was not perceived as feasible or appropriate. The approach of evaluation was predominantly approached by in-depth analysis of specific cases with provided evidence for (or against) the hypothesis. The evaluation process also involved identifying patterns and relationships with the data.

This hypothesis is so far supported by early evidence, since many initiatives to test this hypothesis have been implemented in the recent period, however the initial phase shows extremely promising results. The company has so far observed 34% decrease in unwanted attrition (attrition not initiated by the company, but by the employee). This dropped from 12% in total to 7.92% (comparing year to date values from 2024 vs 2023).

Additionally, there has been a 24% increase in the number of applications received per job advertisement, which may suggest a growing interest in the company as an employer. (comparing over 30 positions advertised in 2023 with comparable ones during the period between Oct/2024 – Dec/2024)

## 6.2 Theoretical and Practical Contribution of the Thesis

The thesis provides a contribution both from theoretical and practical perspective. Theoretical insights are blended with practical applications that address critical challenges facing both the organization and the broader demographic context.

From the theoretical standpoint, the thesis highlights and confirms the undeniable trend of an aging population, not only at the national level but also specifically within HELLA. The research confirms that this trend, driven by societal and demographic factors, is unlikely to reverse in the near future.

This finding is particularly significant as it underscores the urgency for businesses to adapt their workforce strategies to ensure sustainability and productivity in an increasingly age-diverse environment. The analysis deepens the understanding of how aging impacts organizational dynamics and offers valuable insights into long-term workforce planning. It further points at the importance of the employee engagement when it comes to the satisfaction of the employees resulting into an increasing retention rate.

On the practical side, the thesis has a direct impact through the successful execution of an extensive employee survey across HELLA. The high response rate demonstrates the workforce's engagement and interest in contributing to organizational improvement. The data collected offers management a clear and reliable perspective on employee opinions, concerns, and needs, which is invaluable for informed decision-making. Using these insights, an action plan was developed, addressing key areas such as employee retention, engagement, and satisfaction. Importantly, several aspects of this action plan have already been implemented, showing the thesis's immediate value in driving change. These actions not only enhance the employee experience but also position HELLA as a forward-thinking employer in a competitive market.

Overall, the thesis bridges theory and practice, contributing to the understanding of aging workforce and waning interest in automotive while providing HELLA with actionable solutions to sustain and engage its employees in the long term. This comprehensive approach ensures that the thesis has a theoretical significance as well as practical relevance.

## 6.3 Conclusion from the perspective of HELLA Slovakia Lighting

The findings and actions outlined in this thesis underscore the importance of understanding and addressing employee perceptions to build a stronger, more engaged workforce.

HELLA's comprehensive employee survey served as a crucial diagnostic tool, identifying key pain points and areas of improvement as perceived by its employees. These insights enabled the development of a robust and targeted action plan designed to address the root causes of identified weaknesses. By systematically implementing these actions, the company demonstrates its commitment to creating a workplace that values employee feedback and actively works to eliminate barriers to satisfaction and engagement.

These efforts are aimed to bring significant benefits to the company. By addressing employee concerns, the company is not only enhancing its internal culture but also makes its position in the labor market as an employer of choice. This enhanced reputation will help to attract top talent more effectively while fostering deeper employee loyalty and reducing turnover.

Increased engagement as a result of these initiatives ensures a more stable and motivated workforce, which directly contributes to operational efficiency and long-term business success.

In conclusion, the initiatives triggered by the survey findings prove that the company is proactive in the approach of workforce management and aligns its strategy with the employee needs. This alignment can not only strengthen the company's market position but also provides a competitive advantage in retaining and recruiting talent in an increasingly competitive labor market.

## 6.4 Potential for Further Studies

There are several options for further studies that could be drawn based on the findings and initiatives implemented in the company.

The most obvious one, that is scheduled to period of September – October 2025 is to perform the employee engagement survey again with similar questions on the employee population to see what changes in the employee's moods and concerns can be observed.

There are however also several other paths that could be explored from a different perspective:

### 1) Long-term impact of the engagement strategies

A study evaluating the long-term (years to decades) outcomes of the company engagement initiatives, such as reduced turnover, increased productivity, and sustained employee satisfaction. This research would assess whether the implemented action plan continues to yield benefits over time and identify areas requiring adjustments.

### 2) Evolving workforce demographic and aging population

Research focused on how the company and similar companies can further adapt to the challenges of an aging workforce. This could explore tailored retention strategies, health and well-being initiatives, and the role of older employees in knowledge transfer and mentoring.

### 3) Market reputation and recruitment success

A study examining how internal engagement strategies improved the influence of external reputation as an employer, including metrics like increased job applications, recruitment efficiency, and talent quality. This could also assess the impact of enhanced employer branding efforts on its competitiveness in the labor market.

### 4) Comparative analysis across locations or industries

Conducting a comparative study between other automotive employers and/or other locations or companies within non-automotive industries could offer insights into the effectiveness of similar strategies in different operational contexts.

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## Abbreviations

<b>OEM</b>	Original Equipment Manufacturer (Car producers)
<b>Tier X</b>	System suppliers (Tier 1), Component Manufacturers (Tier 2), Part suppliers (Tier 3)
<b>VW</b>	Volkswagen
<b>PSA</b>	Peugeot Société Anonyme (Peugeot Citroen)
<b>JLR</b>	Jaguar Land Rover
<b>EV</b>	Electric Vehicle
<b>e.g.</b>	Exempli Gratia
<b>i.e.</b>	id est (Latin for „that is“)
<b>HSE</b>	Health, Safety and Environment
<b>HSK</b>	HELLA Slovakia
<b>AP</b>	Action Plan
<b>EES</b>	Employee Engagement Survey
<b>CSR</b>	Corporate Social Responsibility

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1 – Employee Engagement Survey

Question Nr.	Question	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Option 4	Option 5	Option 6
1	I have a good understanding of the company's strategic priorities and goals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
2	I have trust and confidence in the company's Global leadership team (Global leadership team is Group, Business group and Division management teams).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
3	Senior leader's actions and behaviors are consistent with the company's values.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
4	I believe that the company will be successful over the next 2-3 years.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
5	I have a good understanding of my GAP Team's goals and objectives.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
6	When I need clarification or do not understand a company decision, I prefer to consult with a;	Colleague	Immediate Manager	HR	Employee Representative	Do Not Know / Not Applicable	
7	The company is responding effectively to changes in the business environment (where markets are characterized by uncertainty and complexity).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
8	The company is transforming so that it can respond effectively to the business environment.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
9	The company competes well against other companies in the industry.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
10	In the company, decisions are generally made in a timely manner.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
11	On which of the topics listed below do you think that our competitors perform better than FORVIA	Winning new business	Launch Management	Quality performance	Industrial efficiency		
12	I have trust and have confidence in my immediate manager.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
13	My immediate manager behaves with honesty and integrity (Role Model).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
14	My immediate manager provides me with clear and regular feedback.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable

15	My immediate manager supports me in my learning and career development.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
16	My immediate manager's actions and behaviors are consistent with the company's values	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
17	My immediate supervisor/manager listens to my requests and is open and accessible.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
18	Employee benefits provided by the company are competitive with benefits offered by other companies in our industry.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
19	The company shows care for its employees.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
20	The company values and promotes employee diversity.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
21	Opportunities for advancement are available to employees regardless of personal background or characteristics.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
22	Training is available on an ongoing basis so that I can continue with my learning and career development.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
23	In my work environment, everyone is treated fairly, regardless of personal background or characteristics.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
24	All in all, would you say that between what you invest in your work (skills, time, energy, etc.) and what you receive in return (remuneration, career, responsibilities, learning), the result is;	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
25	The company will not tolerate behavior that discriminates against people based on personal background or characteristics (For example gender, race, background).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
26	I have enough autonomy to do my job well.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
27	I have good opportunities for learning and development at the company.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
28	I receive recognition when I do a good job.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
29	The amount of work expected of me is reasonable	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
30	The company is environmentally responsible	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
31	FORVIA has launched an overall approach for sustainable development, based on our six (6) convictions, with a specific focus on CO2 neutrality and a more inclusive culture. I am confident that we are making real progress on this important matter.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
32	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People take initiatives as entrepreneurs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
33	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People work in an autonomous way	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
34	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People are accountable for their work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
35	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People are respectful of others	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
36	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People demonstrate exemplarity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
37	Our Values - How much to you perceive that: People work with passion and energy	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
38	How do you rate the cooperation between members of your own team?	Very Good	Good	Neither Good Nor Poor	Poor	Very Poor	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
39	About 'Being FORVIA' - Do you think that Being FORVIA is improving our ways of working?	Yes, Significantly	Yes, Somewhat	No, Not Really	Do Not Know / Not Applicable		
40	Are you aware that there is an alert system within FORVIA to report violations of the Code of ethics (unethical behavior/practices, i.e., corruption, discrimination, harassment, etc.)?	Yes	No	Do Not Know / Not Applicable			
41	If I had to report unethical behavior or misconduct, I am confident that the company would handle it effectively.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
42	FORVIA supports me in achieving a reasonable balance between my work life and my personal life.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable

30	The company is environmentally responsible	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
31	FORVIA has launched an overall approach for sustainable development, based on our six (6) convictions, with a specific focus on CO2 neutrality and a more inclusive culture. I am confident that we are making real progress on this important matter.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
32	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People take initiatives as entrepreneurs	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
33	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People work in an autonomous way	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
34	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People are accountable for their work	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
35	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People are respectful of others	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
36	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People demonstrate exemplarity	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
37	Our Values - How much do you perceive that: People work with passion and energy	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
38	How do you rate the cooperation between members of your own team?	Very Good	Good	Neither Good Nor Poor	Poor	Very Poor	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
39	About 'Being FORVIA' - Do you think that Being FORVIA is improving our ways of working?	Yes, Significantly	Yes, Somewhat	No, Not Really	Do Not Know / Not Applicable		
40	Are you aware that there is an alert system within FORVIA to report violations of the Code of ethics (unethical behavior/practices, i.e., corruption, discrimination, harassment, etc.)?	Yes	No	Do Not Know / Not Applicable			
41	If I had to report unethical behavior or misconduct, I am confident that the company would handle it effectively.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
42	FORVIA supports me in achieving a reasonable balance between my work life and my personal life.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
43	My work area is safe.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
44	I have received the appropriate information/training about the health safety requirements of my working area (For example PPE, ergonomics, safety systems, etc.).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
45	On my site, communal facilities (For example toilets, canteen, changing rooms, etc.) are up to the standard expected from a company such as FORVIA	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
46	I am regularly involved in activities that aim to identify eliminate potential health safety risks in my working area.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
47	The Improvement ideas system is a valid adequate tool to improve my working conditions.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
48	The information I receive through daily regular communication (For example Top5, regular meeting, etc.) helps me to understand and achieve my objectives.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
49	When I have to follow a standardized system of work, I am involved in the resolution of problems occurring in my working area (KATA QRCI / Problem solving).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
50	Considering everything, I am satisfied with the company.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
51	I would recommend the company as a good place to work.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
52	I feel proud to work for the company.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
53	I believe that FORVIA has the right strategic priorities and goals.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
54	The company motivates me to do more than is required.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
55	I feel motivated to do more than is required of me.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
56	Given your choice, how long would you plan to continue working for the company?	Less Than One Year	1 to 2 Years	3 to 5 Years	More than 5 Years (or Until Retirement)	Do Not Know / Not Applicable	
57	My job makes good use of my skills and abilities.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable

58	Conditions in my job allow me to be about as productive as I can be.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
59	There are no significant barriers at work to doing my job well.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
60	My job provides opportunities to do challenging and interesting work.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
61	Where do you see yourself in 3 years?	Still With Faurecia	With A Competitor	working in A Different Sector Of Activities	Do Not Know / Not Applicable		
62	The company is customer focused (always seeking to understand and meet customer needs).	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
63	The company is innovative in developing new products and services.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know / Not Applicable
64	What is one thing that FORVIA is doing well?	Open-ended question					
65	What is one thing that FORVIA needs to improve?	Open-ended question					
66	What is your age?	Less than 30 years	between 30 and 34 years	between 35 and 39 years	between 40 and 44 years	between 45 and 49 years	50 or more