

workthere 

The Ideal Working Week





The Boutique Workplace Company, 29 Clerkenwell Road

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The working landscape has changed drastically since the UK went into lockdown in March. COVID-19 has impacted broader real estate strategies, as well as the way people work on a day-to-day basis. In this report, we focus on the latter. We asked over 1,000 UK office workers about their current working week, their ideal working week, their flexible working arrangements and what they have missed about their office during lockdown.

How has Covid impacted working hours?

In May last year, we published a similar report showing that UK workers spent 38 hours on average in the office. Since then, a lot has changed and this has resulted in shorter working hours. The current working week now is just 32 hours, 16% fewer than May last year. This differs by office type, with a 30 hour work week typical for those based in serviced offices and a 33 hour work week typical for those based in traditional offices.

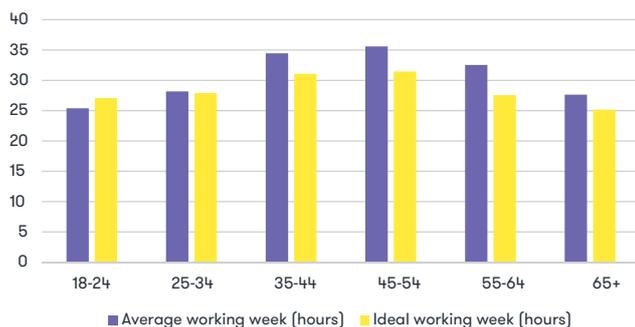
Going into lockdown, workers and managers throughout the UK speculated how working from home would impact productivity and working hours. To some extent, this depends on demographics. Workers aged 45-54 years currently work the longest week (36 hours), followed by the 35-44 age group (34 hours). The upper and lower age groups of 18-24 and 65+ years are working the shortest hours at the moment.

What does the ideal working week look like now?

In our report last year, we found that the ideal working week would be 32 hours, so office workers are currently working what were viewed as the ideal working hours early last year. However, as situations change, so do expectations and the ideal working week is now 29 hours.

The trend of ideal working hours mirrors that of the actual working hours, in the sense that the 35-54 age group would prefer to slightly work longer hours, which could well explain why they actually do.

The current working week by age



COVID-19 has impacted broader real estate strategies, as well as the way people work on a day-to-day basis

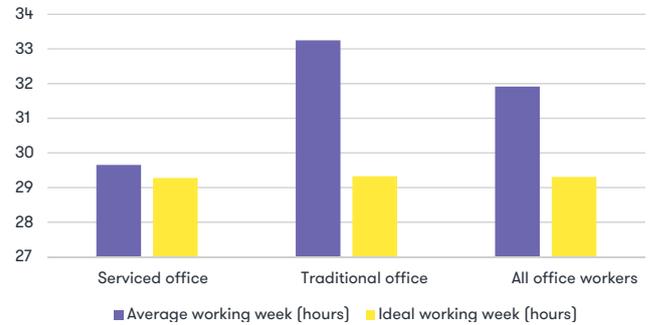
Will work be more flexible going forwards?

29% of workers had access to flexible working arrangements pre-Covid and an additional 47% expect them going forwards. Workers in East Anglia were most likely to have access to flexible working before Covid and Londoners appear most likely to be able to work flexibly going forwards, with only 7% saying that they don't think they will be able to work flexibly.

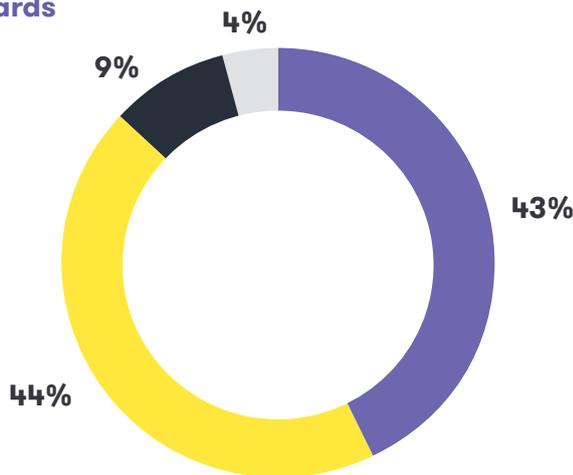
43% of serviced office workers were able to work flexibly before the pandemic, with an additional 44% expecting to be able to post-Covid. Only 21% of traditional office workers were able to work flexibly pre-Covid and an additional 48% now expect to in the future.

Age appeared to have an impact too, with 58% of 35-44 year olds expecting their employer to offer flexible working going forwards compared to only 16% of those in the 65+ age group.

The current working week by office type

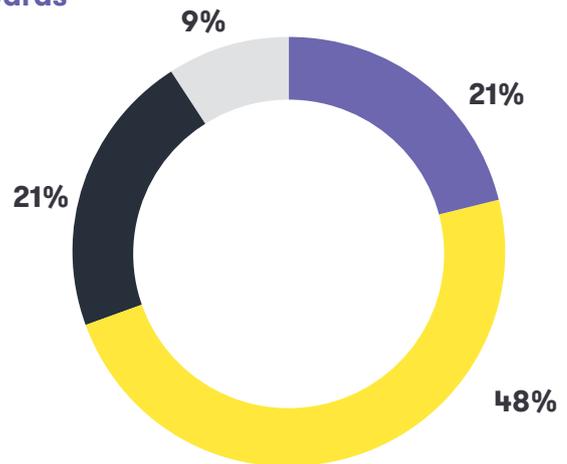


Serviced office workers that expect their employer to offer flexible working going forwards



- Yes, as they already did this before COVID-19
- Yes, I expect them to offer this from now on
- No, I don't expect my employer to offer this
- Don't know

Traditional office workers that expect their employer to offer flexible working going forwards



- Yes, as they already did this before COVID-19
- Yes, I expect them to offer this from now on
- No, I don't expect my employer to offer this
- Don't know



29% of workers had access to flexible working arrangements pre-Covid



The current working week now is just 32 hours, 16% fewer than May last year



Workers aged 45-54 years currently work the longest week (36 hours)



Hana, St Marys Axe

What have workers missed most about the office?

Top five aspects of the office the UK office workers miss/have missed

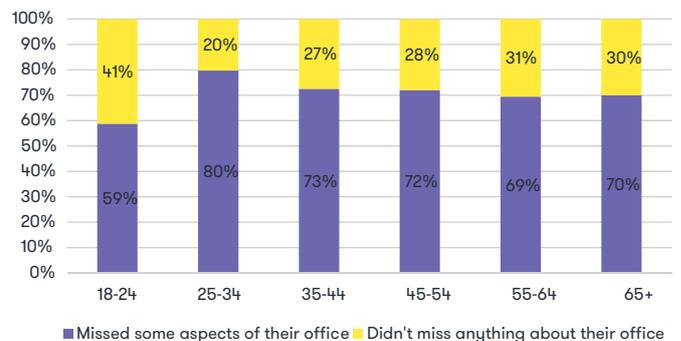


The younger generations were most likely to miss the office. The 25-34 age bracket led the way, with 80% missing some aspects of their office. The social aspect is, by far, what people miss most about their office (40%) but interestingly it is the 35-44 year olds who miss the social aspect most (44%), with the 25-34 age bracket coming second (42%). Londoners are most likely to miss social aspect (49%) and those based in the West Midlands least (26%).

The next most missed aspects of the office were bouncing ideas off colleagues (23%) and having a change of scenery (21%). 18% said they miss having a break from home life. 74% miss at least some aspects of their office, and serviced office workers (77%) more so than traditional office workers (72%).

Only 7% of office workers miss the commute and, somewhat surprisingly given the often overcrowded tubes (pre-COVID at least), 11% of Londoners missed the commute, which was the third highest after the South West (13%) and North East (13%).

Whether workers missed the office by age



Methodology

Our survey consisted of 1,001 UK office workers and the survey ran from 17th July 2020 to 20th July 2020.



Workthere.com

Workthere is a business by Savills focused solely on helping businesses find flexible office space, whether that's a serviced office, co-working or shared space.

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