



The Office

WHAT KEEPS ME HERE...?

March 2024

Fundamentals

- Handshakes
- Small talk
- ?





The COVID-19 pandemic that has hit the global workplace has caused significant changes in people's work habits and paradigms.

Not only has it resulted in a mass shift to remote working, but it has also prompted a rethinking of traditional office models. This transformation, which can be described as the "new normal," has affected the way individuals perceive and conduct their work activities.

Colliers conducted a survey in **November 2023** to find out how employees perceive and experience the work environment and the way they work, and what these two aspects should meet in order to feel productive and satisfied.



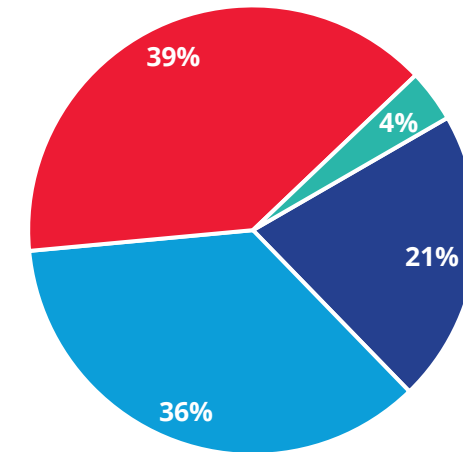
A total of
503
respondents
from the Czech Republic

Who participated?

The majority of respondents **were from the Gen X and Millennial age groups - 27 to 58 years old**. There were slightly fewer employees under the age of 26 (Gen Z). A minority were those over 59 years of age, the so-called Boomers.



Age distribution



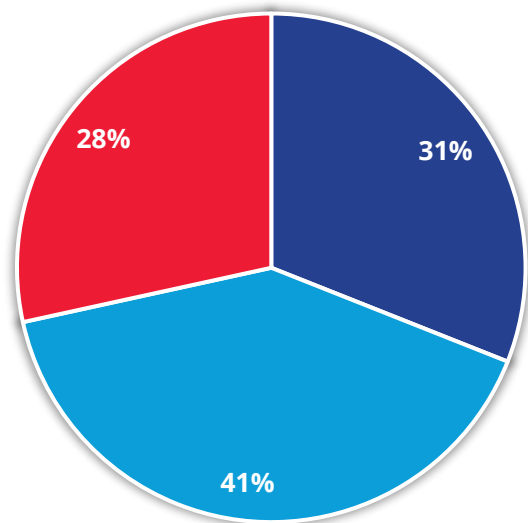
- To 26 years (Gen Z)
- 27 - 42 years (Millennials)
- 43 - 58 years (Gen X)
- 59 - 68 years (Boomers)

- **Gen Z** - Born approximately between 1997 and 2012. They grew up with technologies such as social networks, smartphones and tablets.
- **Millennials** - Born approximately between 1981 and 1996. They experienced the advent of the internet and social networking in their teens and early careers.
- **Gen X** - Born approximately between 1965 and 1980. They grew up in the computer age, but without the internet. They are more independent and technologically savvy than previous generations.
- **Boomers** - Born in the period after World War II until 1964. They are generally hard-working, optimistic and tend to be materially secure.

Who participated?

Another indicator was the size of the company for which the respondents work. Here we can see **fairly equal** representation with a slightly predominant group of medium-sized companies.

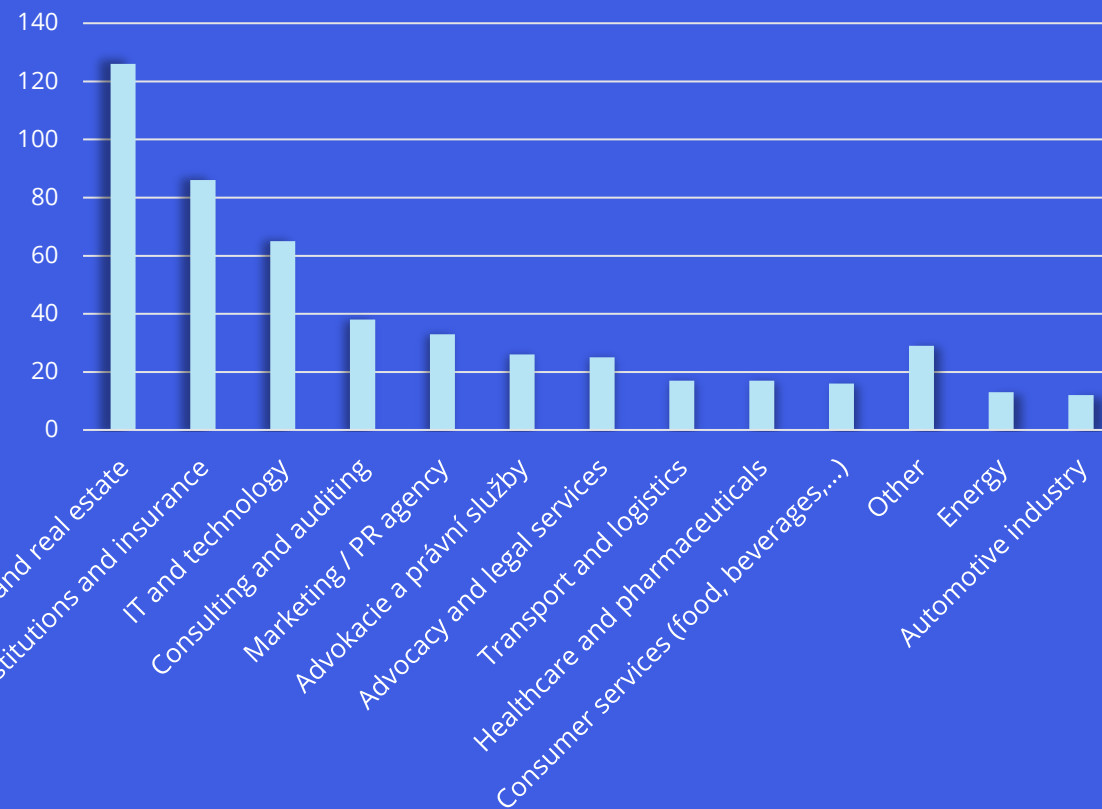
Size of a company



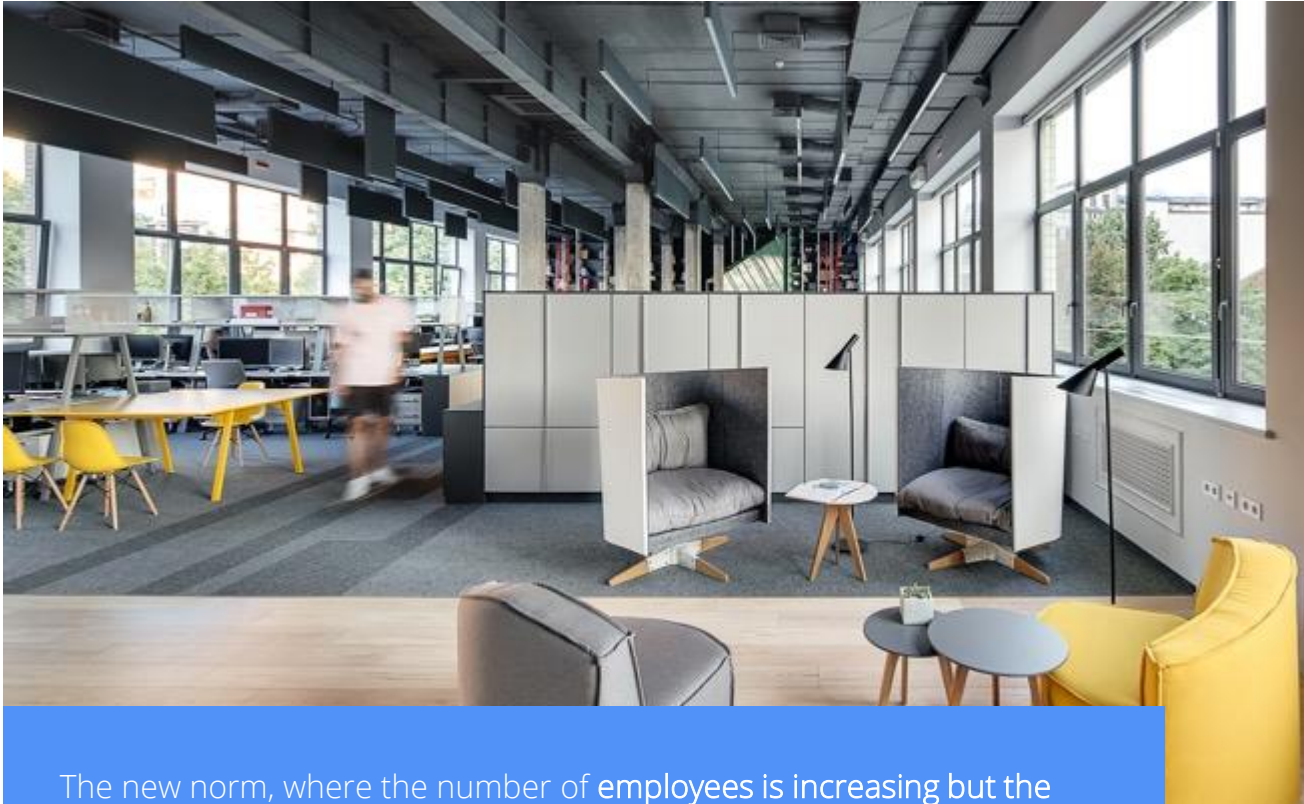
- Small enterprises (less than 25 employees)
- Medium-sized enterprises (25 to 499 employees)
- Large enterprises (500 or more employees)

It is evident that the representation of respondents in the sectors is not even. Construction, property development and real estate, financial institutions and insurance, IT and technology are the most strongly represented. These companies are traditionally larger in terms of number of employees, hence their broad representation. The rest of the sectors are represented in the range of percentages.

Sector of respondents



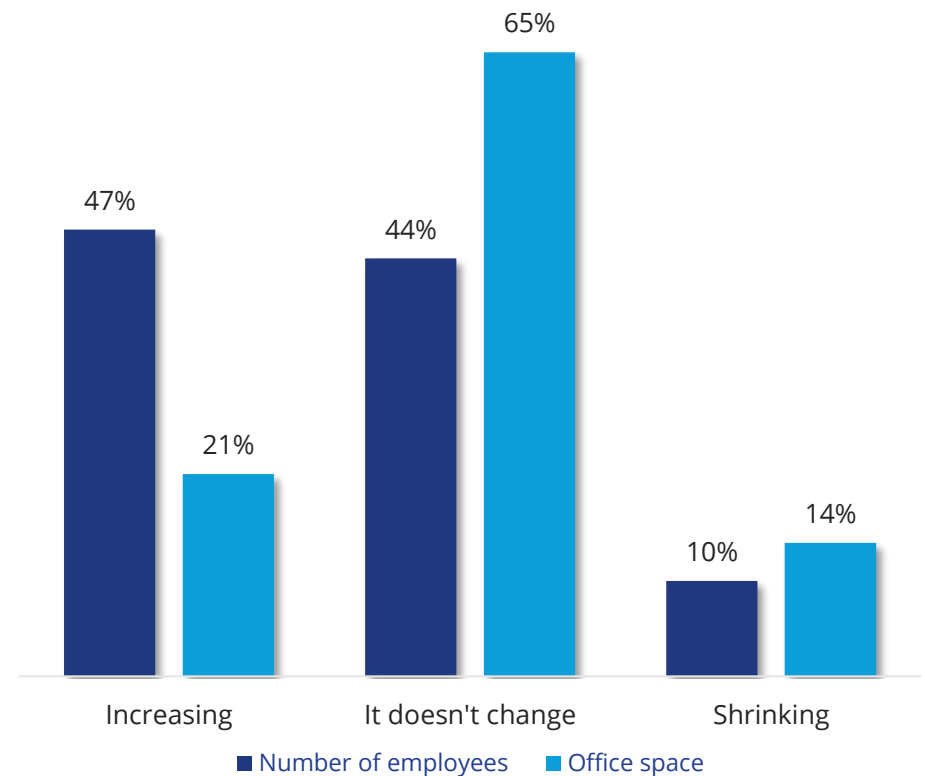
More employees, same sq m?



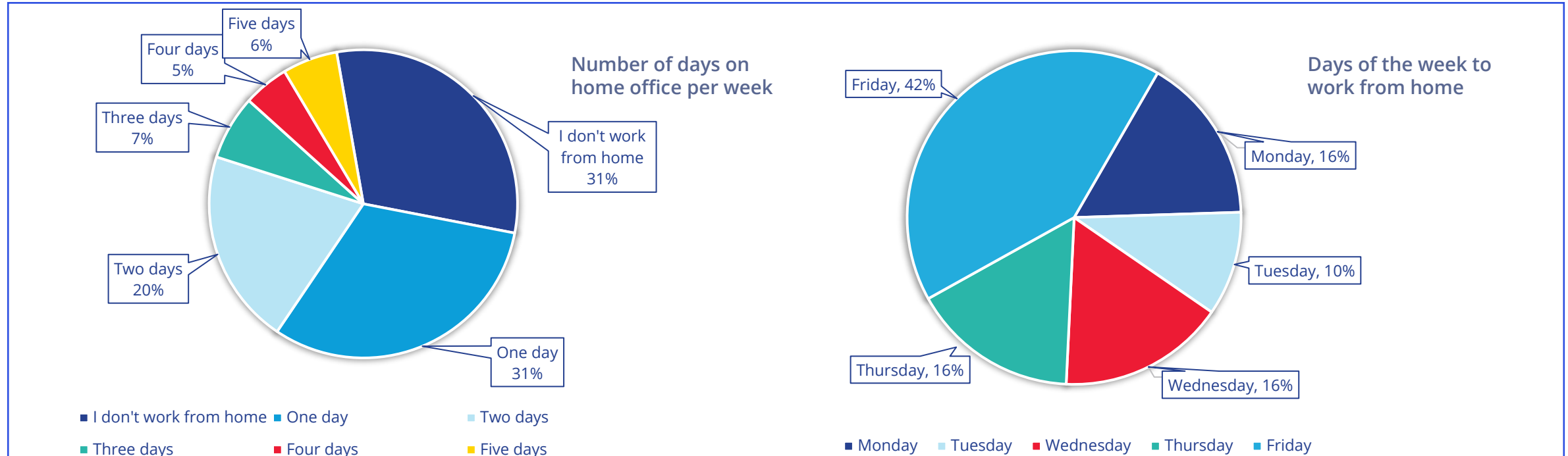
The new norm, where the number of employees is increasing but the size of the office is not changing, is also evident in the respondents' answers to the changes in the number of employees and the size of the office. Here it is evident that office floor area is now unchanged while staff numbers are increasing.

This confirms the trend towards more efficient use of office space. The opposite balance is seen for shrinking employee numbers, where the change in office space does not respond as quickly.

Office size per number of employees



When do you work from home?



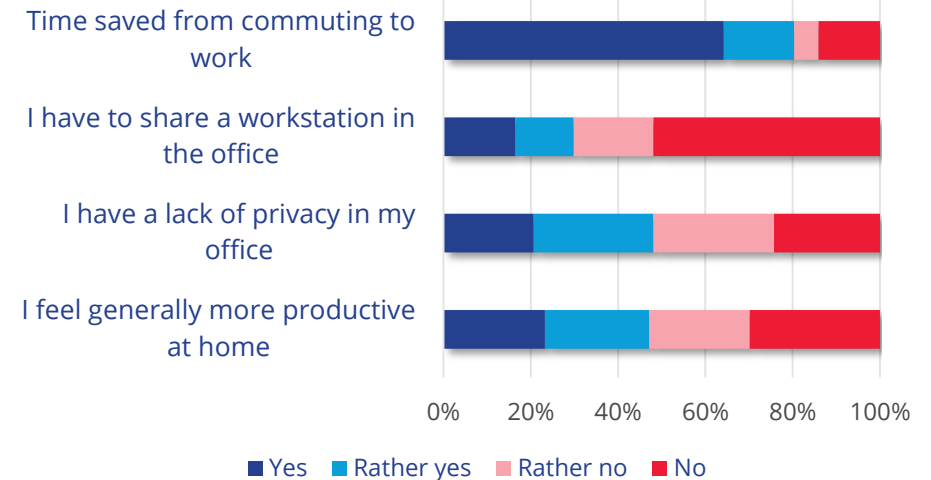
To the question "Do you have the possibility to use home office regularly?" 31% of respondents answered that they do not work from home at all or only in exceptional situations. Most people work from home 1-2 days, i.e. 51% of respondents. This suggests that **most companies operate in a hybrid 3+2 model**, where employees commute to the office 3 days a week and work from home 2 days a week.

The survey confirmed the general awareness that **the most popular day for home office is Friday**. The day people work from home the least is Tuesday. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday are then evenly represented for working from home. The useful information here is that, apart from Friday, all other days of the week for working from home are comparably attractive to employees. Office utilization is fairly evenly distributed.

Why working from home?



Why working from home?

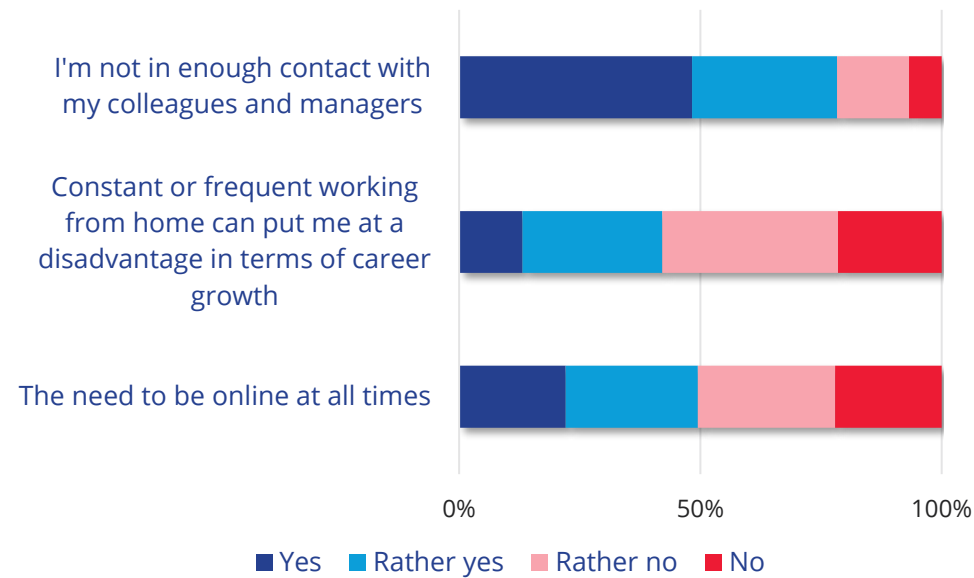


However, the reason that an employee does not have his or her own desk in the office does not have a major impact on working from home.

- Why is working from home a benefit for many employees? The biggest benefit is the time saved on the road. More than 80% of respondents see it that way.
- On the contrary, a surprising conclusion was drawn from the answer to the question whether people choose to work from home because they do not have a dedicated desk in the office. Here 70% of respondents said that not having their own desk in the office was not a significant factor for them.
- If we compare productivity at home and in the office, there is only a negligible difference. Similarly, the feeling of privacy is similar at home and in the office.

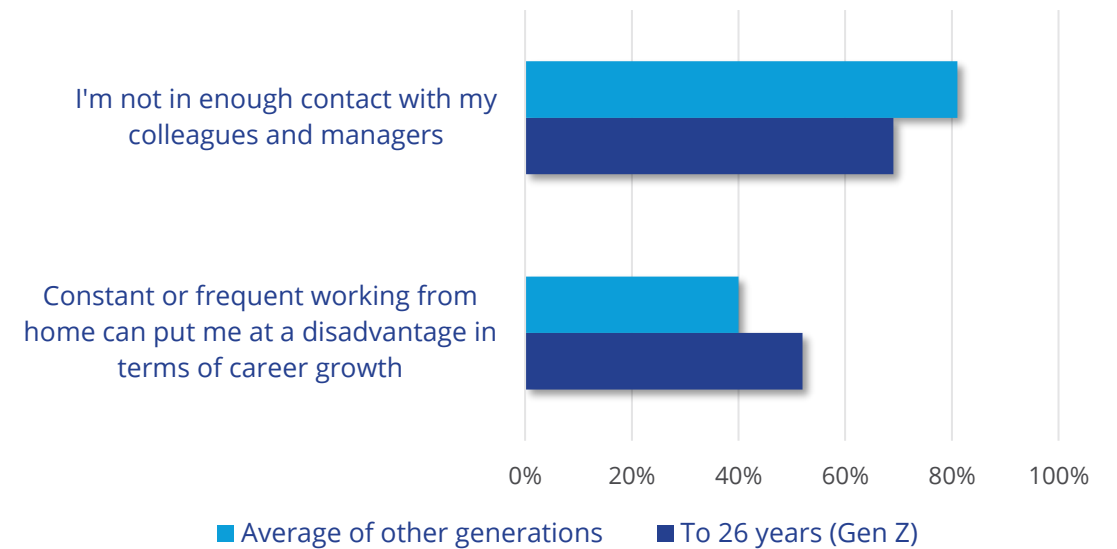
Why working in the office?

Do you perceive these possible negatives of working from home?



How are the young ones*?

*sum of values rather yes and yes



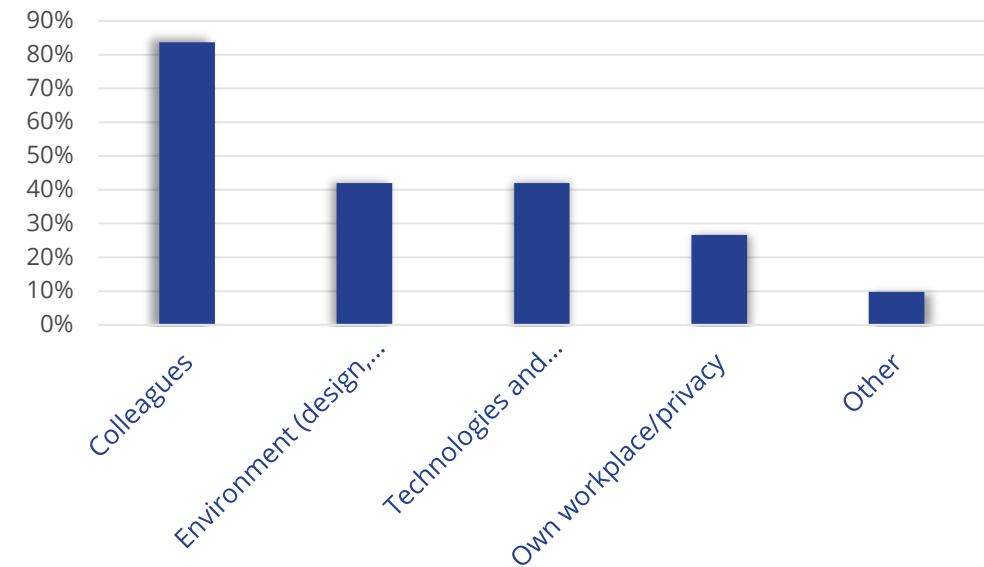
- The main advantage of working from the office is **the contact with colleagues and managers**. More than 78 % of respondents feel this way. Approx. 40 % of employees see the disadvantage of working from home as a worsened possibility of career growth.
- Young people are less likely (12 % less) to see limited contact with colleagues and managers as a potential negative of working from home compared to the average of the three older generations. On the other hand, by the same percentage, **they are worried about worsened prospects for career growth**.

What will attract you to the office?



Many companies invest in the design of a quality working environment to attract employees to the office. However, research confirms that **colleagues**, i.e. company culture, are the **biggest motivator for returning to the office**. A quality environment and technical equipment are then considered to be pretty much the standard that employees expect from their companies nowadays.

What most often attracts you to the office?



- Man is a social creature. And so no video chat with small, blurry faces can replace the collective effort to get the printer to cooperate or a random small-talk in the kitchen with a colleague whose name you couldn't remember until that moment.
- Humour aside, meeting in the office promotes **company culture, team bonding, transfer of experience and connection to the company**.

Satisfaction at work

What motivates you to stay with your company?



The good news is that almost half of the respondents are generally satisfied in their work. Most respondents (73 %) are motivated to stay with the company by their relationships with colleagues, followed closely by company culture. Interestingly, financial compensation came in third in our survey with 54 %. It's still more than half of respondents, but in a time of high inflation, it's actually low percentage, showing that *"money isn't everything"*.

The survey shows that **company culture and team are key elements** that influence the way employees work together and the values they share. In addition, company culture significantly influences the internal atmosphere, employee motivation and the overall success of the organisation.

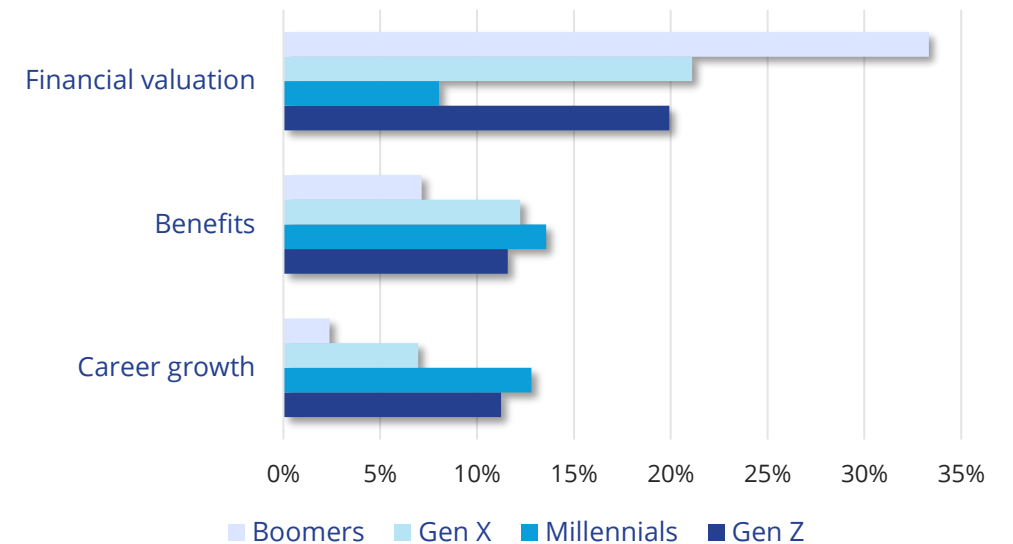
14% of respondents lack the motivation to stay with the company and may already be in the process of looking for a new job.

Satisfaction at work



Age has no bearing on questions about culture, relationships with colleagues or loss of motivation. What are the differences?

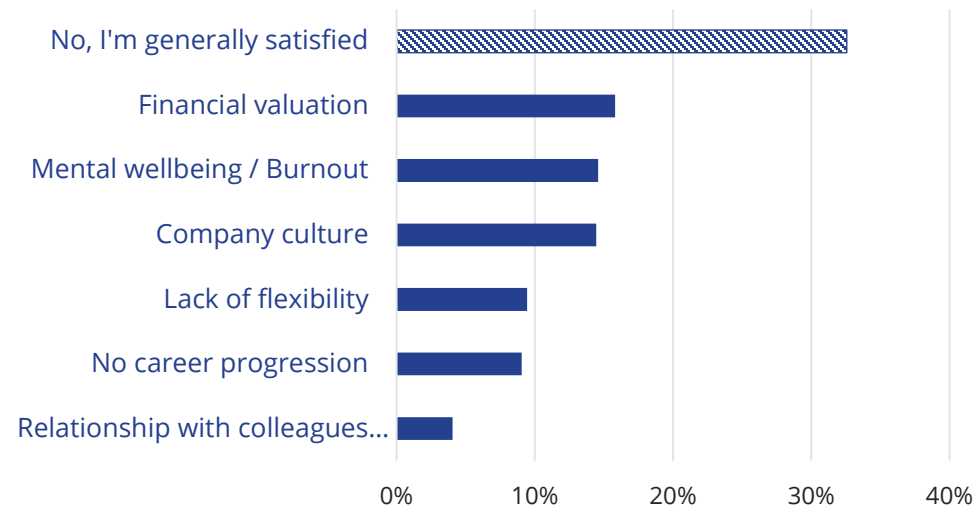
What motivates you to stay with your company? (by age)



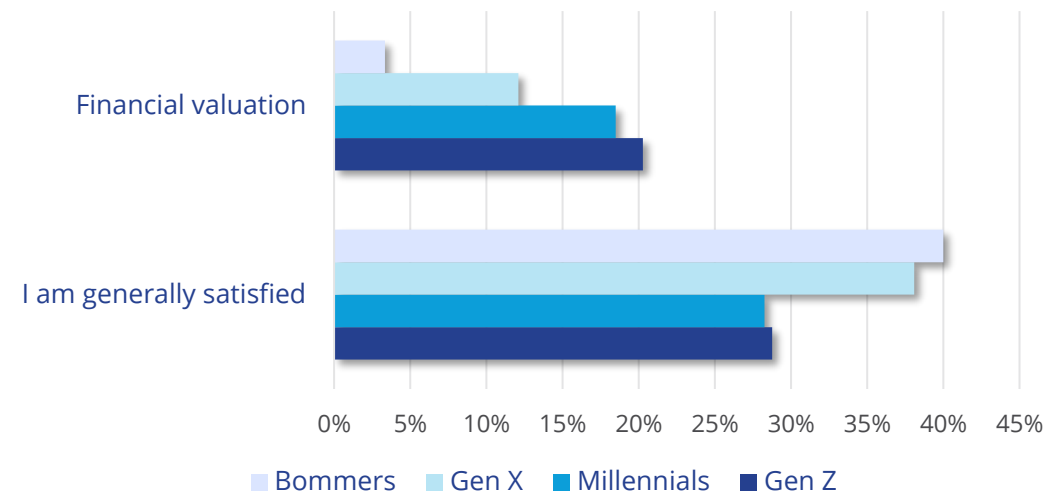
- The biggest differences in satisfaction with current employment by generation are observed for **financial compensation**. For boomers (59-68 years old), finances are clearly an important motive for staying with a company. However, they contrast sharply with millennials, for whom finance is only third behind benefits and career progression as a reason for staying with the company.
- In the importance of the possibility of **career growth**, the ages are interchanged. This is not a surprising result - boomers generally do not expect further career progression, while active age groups, up to 42, do.

What do you miss at work?

Do you feel any weaknesses in your company?



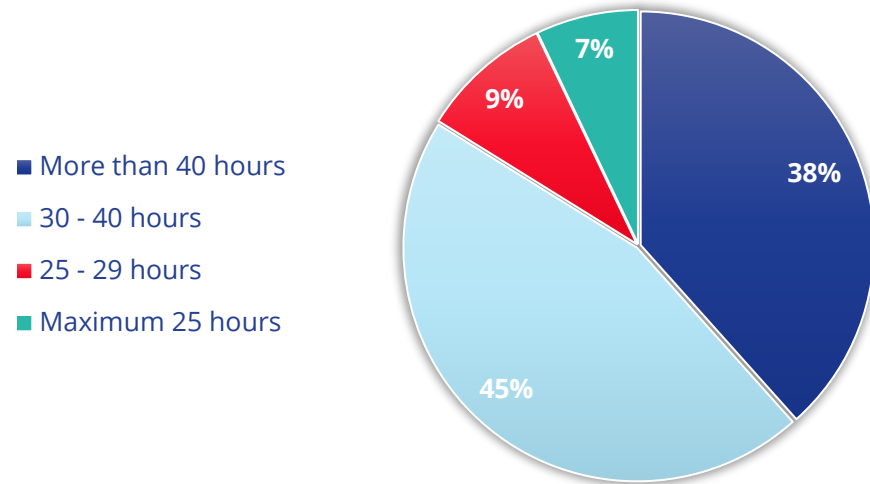
Difference by generation



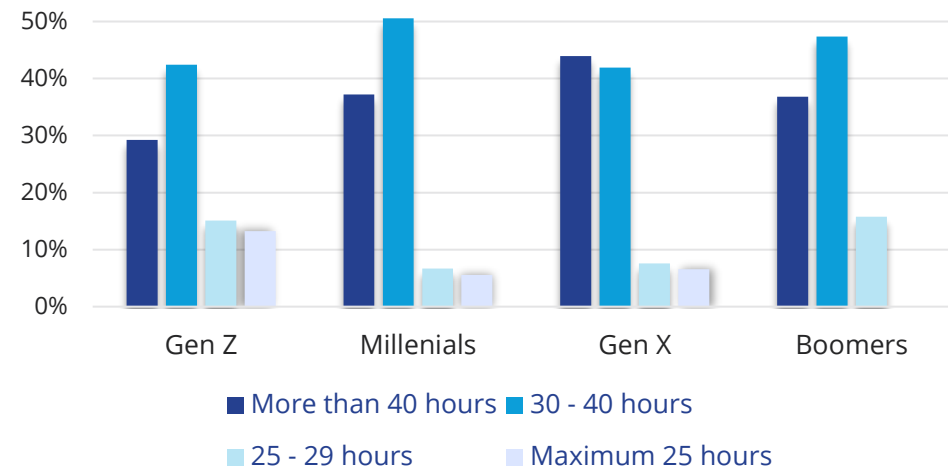
- A third of employees in our survey are generally satisfied with their company. If they have any reservations about the functioning of the company they work for, they relate to **financial compensation, psychological well-being or the company culture**. Only a minority of employees do not feel comfortable in their relationships with colleagues.
- Boomers are the **most satisfied** in their jobs, **40 %** in total. The least satisfied generation is **millennials, 28 %**.
- There was also an uneven distribution of responses regarding financial compensation, with **20 %** of respondents under the age of 26 being dissatisfied, compared to only **4 %** of employees over the age of 59.

How much time do you need to work?

The full scope of your work



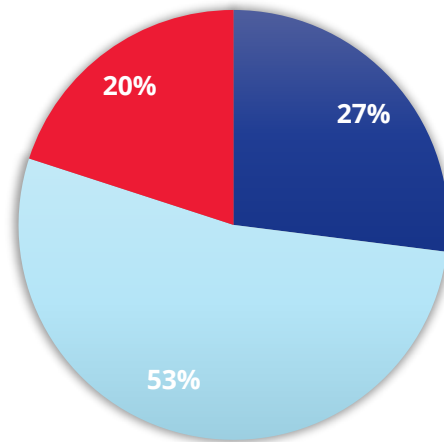
Load by generation



- Almost half of the respondents (45 %) states that their working hours are sufficient to handle their work agenda. However, **38 % said their work takes them more than 40 hours** a week. This is already reflected in the responses to the question about the shortcomings in the company, where 23 % (or 21 %) of respondents said that they feel poorly compensated financially or feel job burnout. On the other hand, 16 % of respondents could manage their agenda with a three-quarter time job.
- **The actual amount of work we do tends to be about 15 % less** than the amount of time we stay at work, which we consider to be full time. Correctly, we should subtract the time spent on small-talk over coffee or training, for example.
- When we look at workload by generation, it is clear **that Gen X (43-58 years old) feels the busiest**. They were dominated by the response (44 %) that they don't keep up with the agenda in standard working hours, which is up to 40 hours per week.
- In contrast, **Gen Z is the fastest** at getting their work done, with nearly 28% of respondents saying they get their agenda done in less than 30 hours per week. However, this response may be influenced by the fact that many are not yet working full-time.

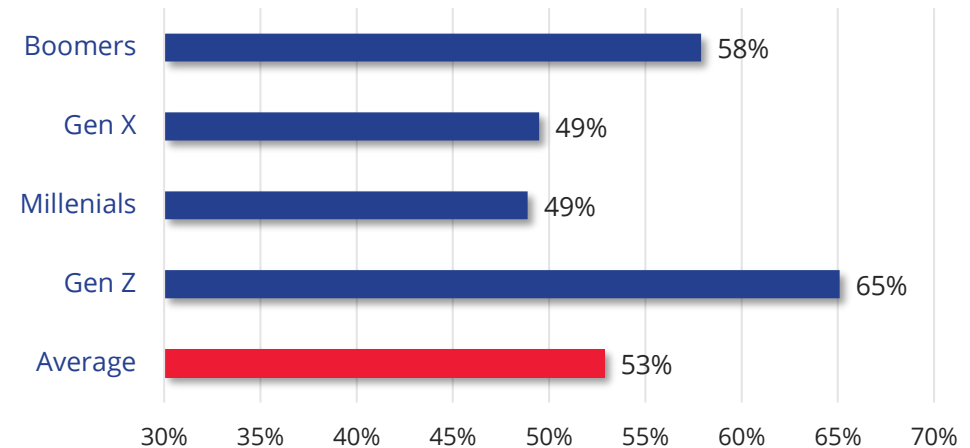
Four-day work week

Keeping the same salary, which option is closer to you?



- Standard week with two or more days per week in the home office
- Four-day working week with one day a week in the home office
- I have no preference

Preferences by generation



- If a new employee benefit were to be introduced (benefits are a motivator at work for 29 % of respondents), **more than half of the respondents would opt for a shorter working week to four days, where they can work from home for an extra day.**
- The relationship to the four-day work week across generations is remarkable.
- The strongest preference is found, as expected, in the youngest Gen Z. The second are the boomers. It appears that work-life balance is very important to both of these generations. In addition, the older generation may believe that after several decades in the workforce, it is time to spend more time on, for example, family or travel.
- **The difference between Gen Z and Gen X, millennials, is a significant at 15 %.**

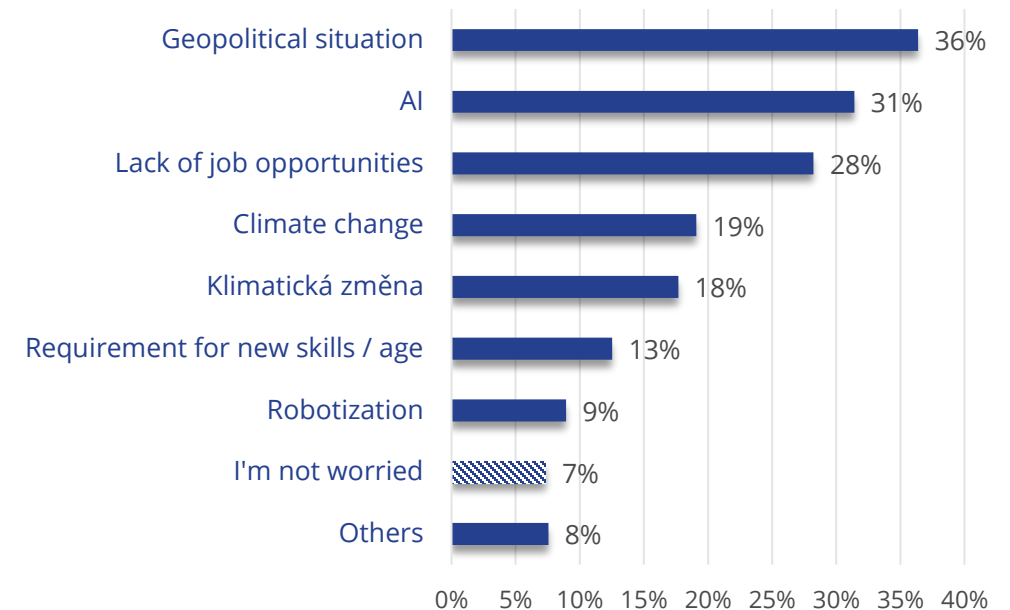
The future of work

Responses regarding concerns about the future of work did not differ between generations.

- For respondents to our survey, the **biggest concern** in relation to the future of work is the **geopolitical situation**. In the context of the times, war in Ukraine, high inflation, or the energy crisis, this is an expected outcome.*
- **Concerns about AI** among office workers far outweigh concerns about robotics. However, the fear of a lack of job opportunities is quite surprising in the context of very low unemployment in the Czech Republic.
- Also less expected is the relatively **low ranking of climate change**. One factor may be the provisional intangibility of this issue in the context of the work.



What motivates you to stay with your company? (by age)



* Employees' mental health and performance suffer when they fear external threats such as war, which reduces their productivity. Providing reassurance helps. Major geopolitical events impact global trade, cybersecurity, commodity prices, currency exchange rates, and even office operations. Fortune favours the prepared. At the same time, employees are looking for leaders during a crisis. Company leaders who reject this context risk appearing indifferent. Failure to acknowledge employee concerns can result in lower morale, frustration and disengagement. A caring culture is a competitive advantage in the battle for talent.

What to focus on?

Tips for employees

- Don't neglect your **mental health, well-being** and sense of security. Seek out employers who care about these things.
- **Lifelong learning** is important. Develop your skills, both creative and technical, to maintain your employability as AI develops.
- **Balance** face-to-face contact with colleagues with the flexibility of remote working. Don't neglect your working **relationships**.
- Don't hesitate to express your **preferences and concerns** about the future of work - you will help shape positive change.
- It's worth thinking about how you can make a **meaningful contribution** to society beyond your professional success.



Tips for employers

- Make the **health and work-life balance** of your employees a strategic priority. Create a working environment for people - wellbeing in the office includes quality acoustics, suitable interior colour combinations, quality lighting, natural materials and greenery, clean air or the possibility of a short relaxation. **Wellbeing no longer means fitness in the office, but a holistic approach to mental and physical well-being at work.**
- Invest in fostering a **company culture** - the office environment is designed to foster a company community, help develop work skills through sharing experiences and information, and quickly learn the principles of how the company works. **Support all of this with appropriate quality design, creating meeting areas along with space for focused work - small meeting rooms equipped for independent work or quiet zones.**
- **Prove you're listening.** Work changes as well as employee expectations and must adapt with them. The best **work environments will be designed to constantly evolve.** Piloting new ideas and testing them in the work environment, analyzing company data, and adapting offices to feedback are all important parts of future employee satisfaction with the

Conclusion

As the differences in the answers to a large part of the questions were based on the age category of the respondents, it is now important for employers to reflect this factor sufficiently.

All simply cannot be measured by the same yardstick.



- We are experiencing a time of very dynamic change in the workplace.
- The way forward requires the right balance between the scale of technology, innovation and flexibility and the satisfaction of critical human needs such as belonging, the search for meaning, personal development and security.
- By focusing on an experience-based company culture and building support for its people, any company can maximize productivity and overall satisfaction.

Our philosophy

Empower leaders to make great decisions based on the right data



Management compliance

Guide executives through a process that will help them clarify and align the future of the "hybrid" workplace.



Data first

Collect data that is relevant to understanding how people work and what a successful work experience looks like for you.



Human orientation

Human capital is the most expensive asset of a company. Everything we do must support employee acquisition and retention.



Smart solutions

Support and communicate your decisions with data that is unique to your company.



Solutions for the future

We focus on long-term solutions and design strategies that enable executives and stakeholders to test, measure, iterate and achieve success.



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