

Drees & Sommer Workspace Benchmark Report 2022:

‘People like to go to the office if they can also choose to stay at home.’



When colleagues see each other less often due to remote working from home and mobile working, communication areas – such as those in the new office building of Drees & Sommer at the company’s headquarters in Stuttgart – become all the more important for teamwork and sharing information.

© Drees & Sommer SE

Stuttgart, Germany, November 7, 2022. The working environment is changing, as shown by a survey conducted by Drees & Sommer. 230 experts from the fields of IT, real estate and human resources and around 20 sectors participated in this survey. While the office has lost its monopoly as the primary place of work due to the increase in mobile working, it is nevertheless more important than ever: the office has to handle anything that cannot be done remotely: from ‘A’ as ‘after-work hours’ through ‘C’ like ‘chance meeting’ to ‘Z’ like ‘zero business time’. Office space must adapt to users’ changing requirements, with regard to both design and floor space requirements. Companies will need a clear strategy to make progress in the ever-changing world of work.

By this year at the latest, it has become very apparent that remote working from home and mobile working are here to stay. This is what around 93 percent of those surveyed think.

Barbara Wiesneth

Head of Media and Public Relations

phone +49 (0)711 1317 2411 • mobile +49 (0)172 7995752

barbara.wiesneth@dreso.com

Lisa Fehrentz

Media and Public Relations Manager

phone +49 (0)711 1317 10202 • mobile +49 (0)172 7692202

lisa.fehrentz@dreso.com

While companies in Germany tended to approach this with caution pre-Covid, the pandemic has shaken the culture of on-site attendance to the core, while also paving the way for modern, decentralized patterns of work in many industries. This has undeniable advantages for employees: less time spent on the road, more leisure time, and more flexibility in scheduling working hours. Yet companies are asking themselves how they can then maintain loyalty and the spirit of innovation among their employees.

Good news. 'The office is certainly not dead. Going forward, it will merely play a different role in everyday work than it did before the pandemic,' commented Sven Mylius, senior manager and expert for *New Work* concepts at Drees & Sommer SE. Teamwork together with both formal and informal communication will become more prominent. In short: people go to the office because of people. Almost half of respondents see this trend as a change compared to the pre-pandemic position. 'Offices now have to adapt to the new requirements, for example by providing creative areas and project rooms, communication space, and recreational facilities. This also requires a new approach to working methods, work locations and structures, including a rethink in corporate management,' explained Drees & Sommer's *New Work* expert.

The Office Has a 'Human' Side

Many employers are concerned that the introduction of working from home and mobile working will result in empty offices. This is unfounded, as the results of the trend study show: around two-thirds of respondents would like to work in a mobile setting two or maximum three days a week (34 and 32 percent). This preference is not only theory, but is also reflected in actual practice, as respondents who are able to work remotely two to three days per week usually take advantage of this option. But those who are allowed to work mobile up to five days per week tend to do so only on three days. Reality does indeed correspond to personal preferences. 'People like to go to the office if they can also choose to stay at home, while deciding for themselves how often to go,' concludes Sven Mylius and continued: 'if we view the office and mobile working as complementary rather than competing approaches, they can interact to develop their full potential and deliver added value.'

More Flexibility Needed for Floor Space

At present, respondents estimate their office space utilization to be between 31 and 40 percent. This figure for utilization is higher than a year ago, according to the Workspace Benchmark Report 2021. Around two-thirds of those surveyed make use of the desk-sharing principle.

Barbara Wiesneth
Head of Media and Public Relations
phone +49 (0)711 1317 2411 • mobile +49 (0)172 7995752
barbara.wiesneth@dreso.com

Lisa Fehrentz
Media and Public Relations Manager
phone +49 (0)711 1317 10202 • mobile +49 (0)172 7692202
lisa.fehrentz@dreso.com

This trend is on the rise. The anticipated rate is about 76 percent. Significantly less people used shared desks in their offices in the year before (52 percent of the respondents).

Less space will probably be needed for the new models of work. Around 61 percent of those surveyed expect the space required per workplace to be reduced, for example by doing away with individual offices. These employees anticipate a reduction, between 21 and 30 percent, in office space. However, one-third is of the opinion that there will be no change at all. While a small number of respondents – about 6 percent – think that office space will increase in a range from 11 to 20 percent. *New Work* concepts do not necessarily involve a reduction in floor space. But one thing is certain: the office of the future will use space differently than before. Shared spaces will take up the biggest area, while conventional workspace will continue to shrink.

The Office as a Flagship Store

In a *New Work* environment, not only the layout of the space is important, but also its design. ‘In the competition for talent, the office will be the company’s calling card for attracting and retaining staff. Anyone who wants to stay ahead in this regard has to invest in the quality of the space. Just as in a flagship store, I experience the employer brand in the office. This makes it essential for brand values and the corporate culture to be experienced and tangible in the office space. People come to the office to meet their colleagues in person and to identify with their employer. So the space will increasingly become a filling station for identity and integrity,’ says Martin Becker, Partner at Drees & Sommer.’

This will make it more and more important for companies to develop a strategy for dealing with *New Work*. Around three-quarters of respondents indicate that their company already has a strategy for this, or is developing one. The *New Work* strategy should feed into the corporate strategy in order to gain an overall insight. If this insight exists internally within the company, *New Work* can also be accepted externally, thus contributing to employer attractiveness.

About the Workspace Benchmark Report 2022:

A total of 230 managers from the fields of IT, real estate and human resources and 20 different sectors participated in an anonymous survey. 46 percent of those surveyed work in companies with more than 1,500 employees, 25 percent in mid-sized enterprises with a workforce of between 201 and 1,500 people. And 29 percent represent smaller companies with 50 to 200 staff members.

Barbara Wiesneth

Head of Media and Public Relations

phone +49 (0)711 1317 2411 • mobile +49 (0)172 7995752

barbara.wiesneth@dreso.com

Lisa Fehrentz

Media and Public Relations Manager

phone +49 (0)711 1317 10202 • mobile +49 (0)172 7692202

lisa.fehrentz@dreso.com

Most experts were from the automotive sector, property companies and information and communication technology (ICT) industry.

The full version of the Workspace Benchmark Report 2022 (in German) can be downloaded at:

www.dreso.com/de/workspace-benchmark-report

* * *

Drees & Sommer: Your Innovative Partner for Consulting, Planning, Construction and Operation.

As the leading international consulting, planning and project management enterprise with headquarters in the German city of Stuttgart, Drees & Sommer SE has worked with private and public clients from construction bodies to investors on all types of real estate and infrastructure projects – both analog and digital – for more than 50 years. With its pioneering and future-shaping consulting, the company offers solutions for successful buildings, high-return portfolios, powerful infrastructure and livable cities. Around 4,500 employees in interdisciplinary teams based at 51 locations worldwide support clients across a wide spectrum of sectors. All the services provided by the partner-run company take into consideration both economic and ecological concerns. Drees & Sommer calls this holistic approach ‘the blue way’.

Barbara Wiesneth
Head of Media and Public Relations
phone +49 (0)711 1317 2411 • mobile +49 (0)172 7995752
barbara.wiesneth@dreso.com

Lisa Fehrentz
Media and Public Relations Manager
phone +49 (0)711 1317 10202 • mobile +49 (0)172 7692202
lisa.fehrentz@dreso.com