

**ECONOMIST
IMPACT**

In search of lost focus

Appendix: model and survey data



Sponsored by



Dropbox

Contents

- 3** Introduction
- 4** Economic model data
- 9** Survey data

Introduction



This appendix presents a summary of results from the 2023 economic model and survey. The first section contains a sampling of charts illustrating various costs of lost focus in terms of both time and monetary value. The second section features charts illustrating the aggregate results from our survey of global knowledge workers.

The economic model, based on the 2020 study methodology, estimates the costs of lost focus at work due to distractions like meetings, emails, work-related messages and personal diversions. The methodology employs a bottom-up approach, calculating the total time the average employee was affected by lost focus for each country, industry and occupation type. The model also calculates the associated economic costs, such as the salary cost (ie, salaries paid by businesses for unproductive time) and the potential gains to economic contribution (ie, increases to gross value added that could be realized in the absence of lost focus). Note that the economic model relies on 2022 macroeconomic data, and average exchange rates over that period should be used to make any inferences about local currency values.

The survey results, collected between February and April 2023, reflect the responses of 1,079 knowledge workers from ten selected countries, including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Poland, South Korea, the United Kingdom and the United States. Respondents encompass a broad range of seniority levels, from general staff to C-suite executives, and come from various industries, such as consumer packaged goods, retail, manufacturing, media, entertainment and publishing, education, professional services, and technology.

Economic model data

Figure 1. Annual hours of lost focus per knowledge worker

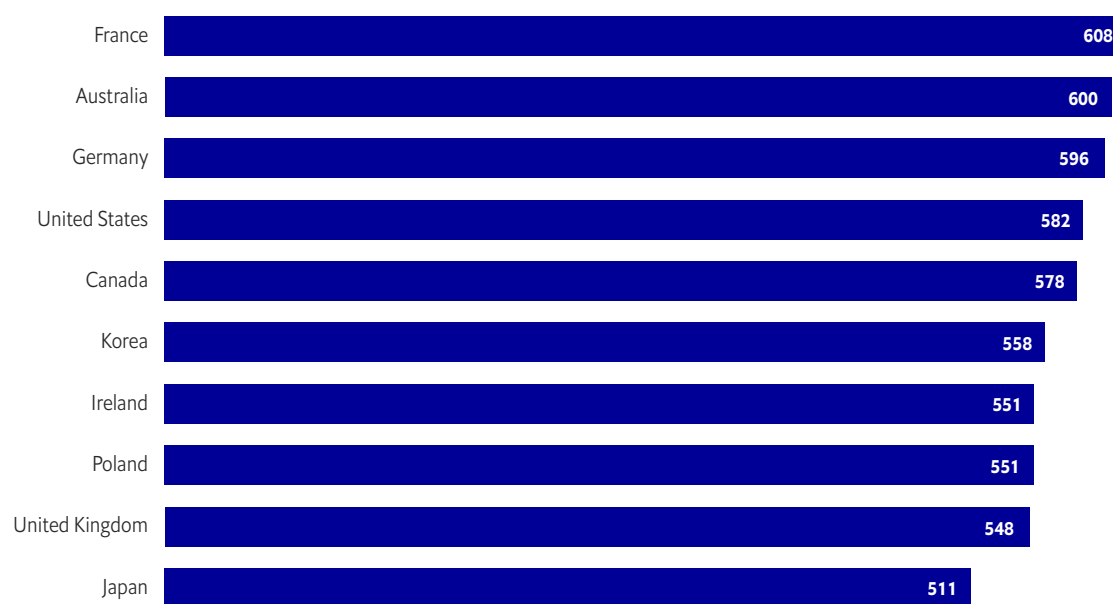


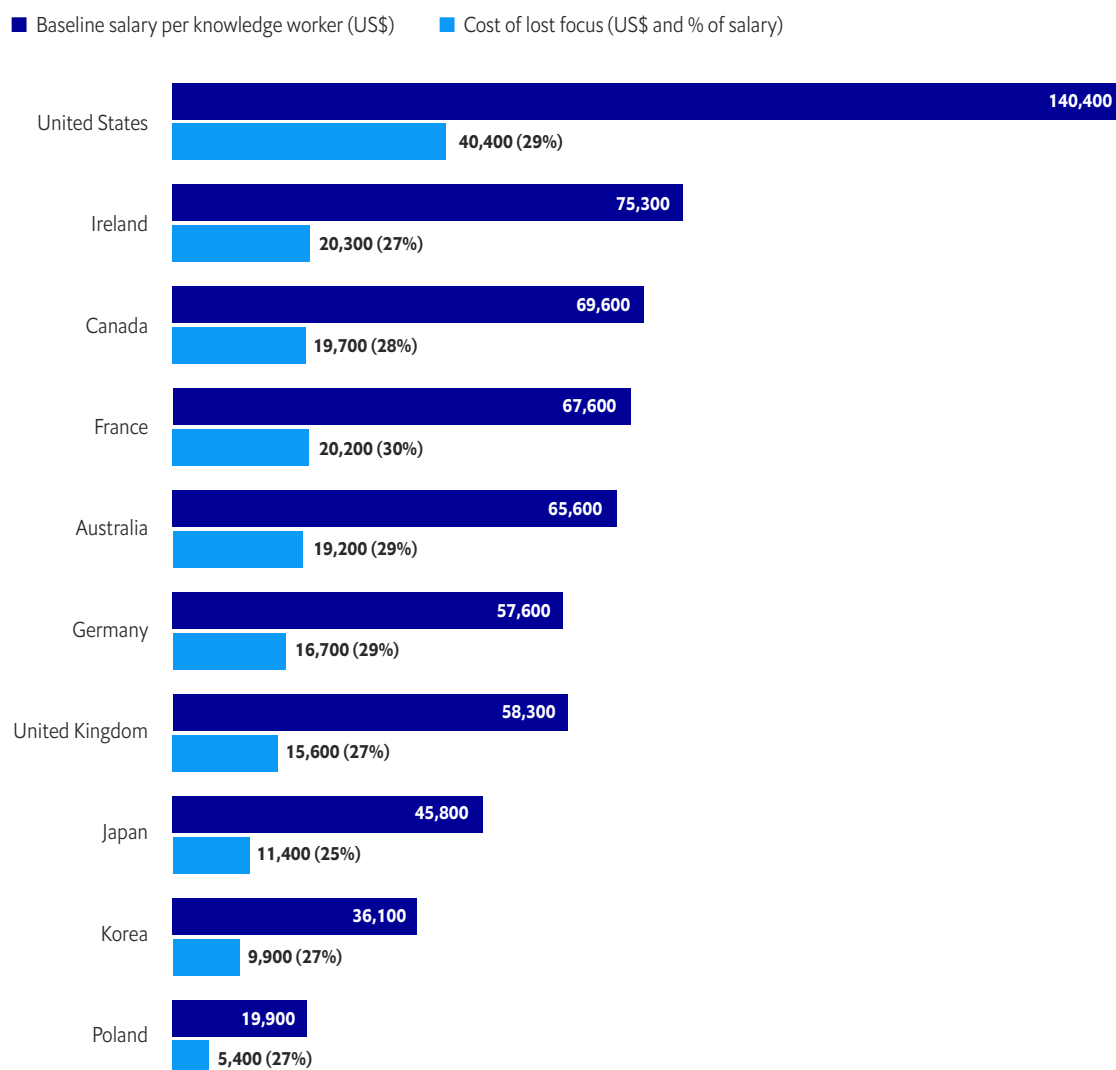
Figure 2. Cost of lost focus for the average knowledge worker (in terms of salary)

Figure 3. Potential gain to the average knowledge worker's economic contribution (US\$) if lost focus time was fully productive

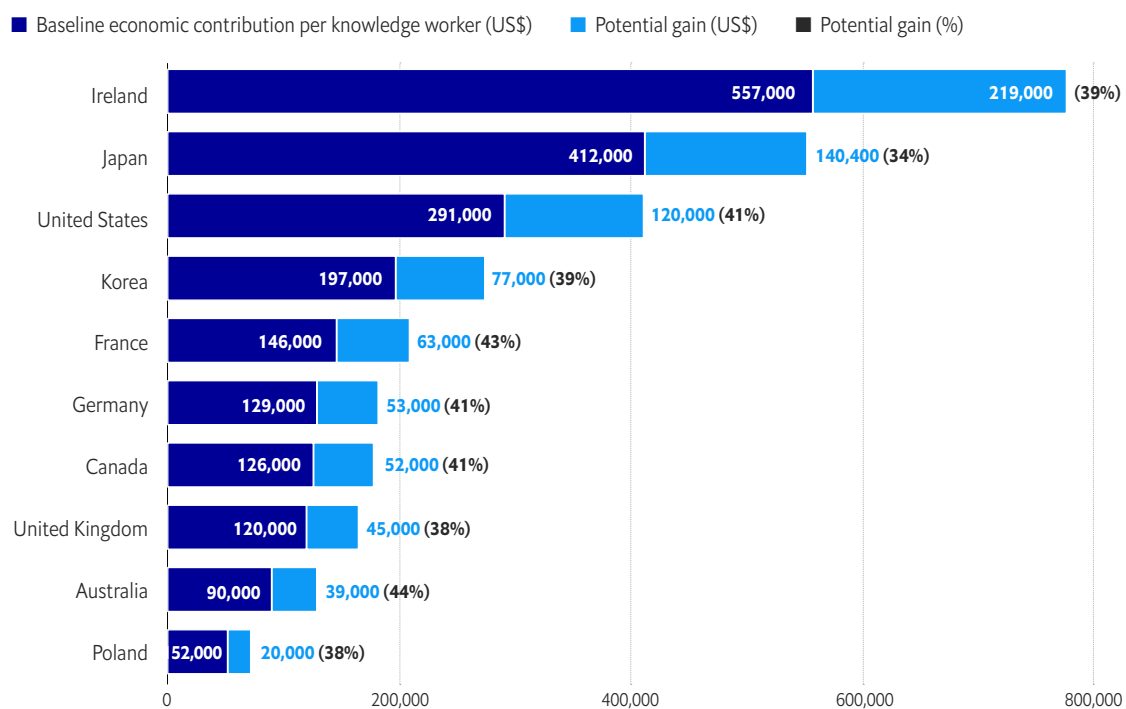


Figure 4. Annual hours of lost focus per knowledge worker, by source of distraction

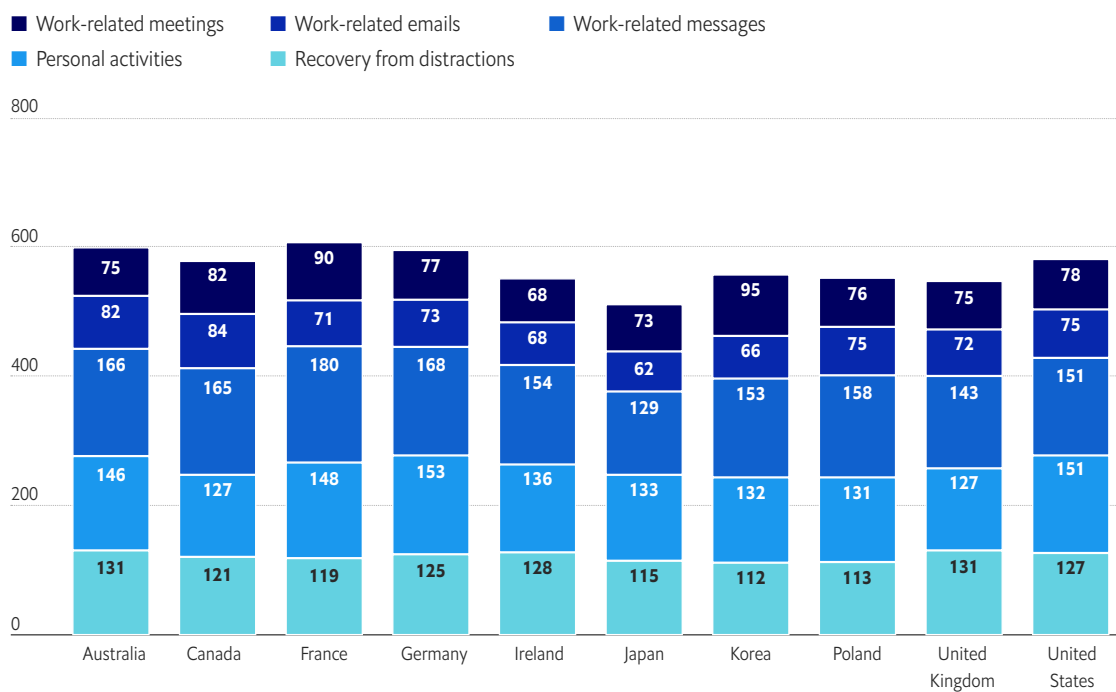
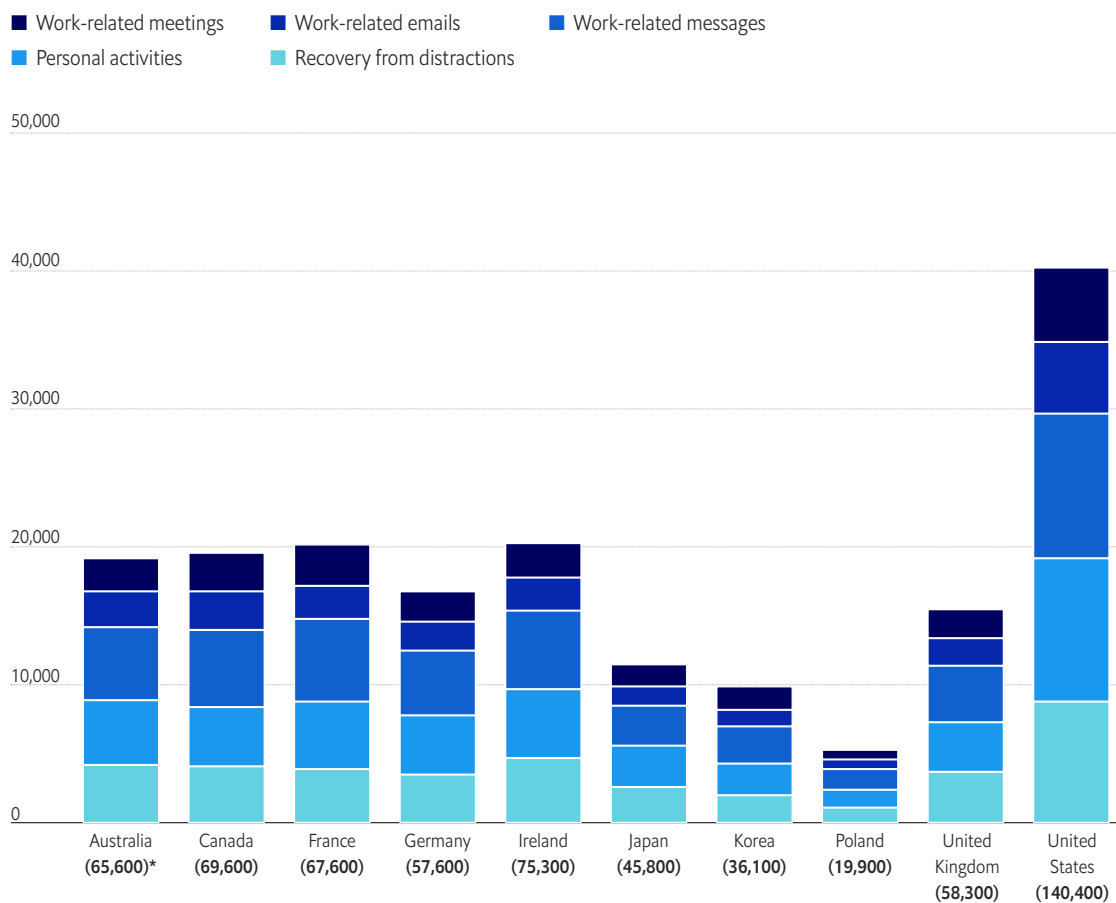


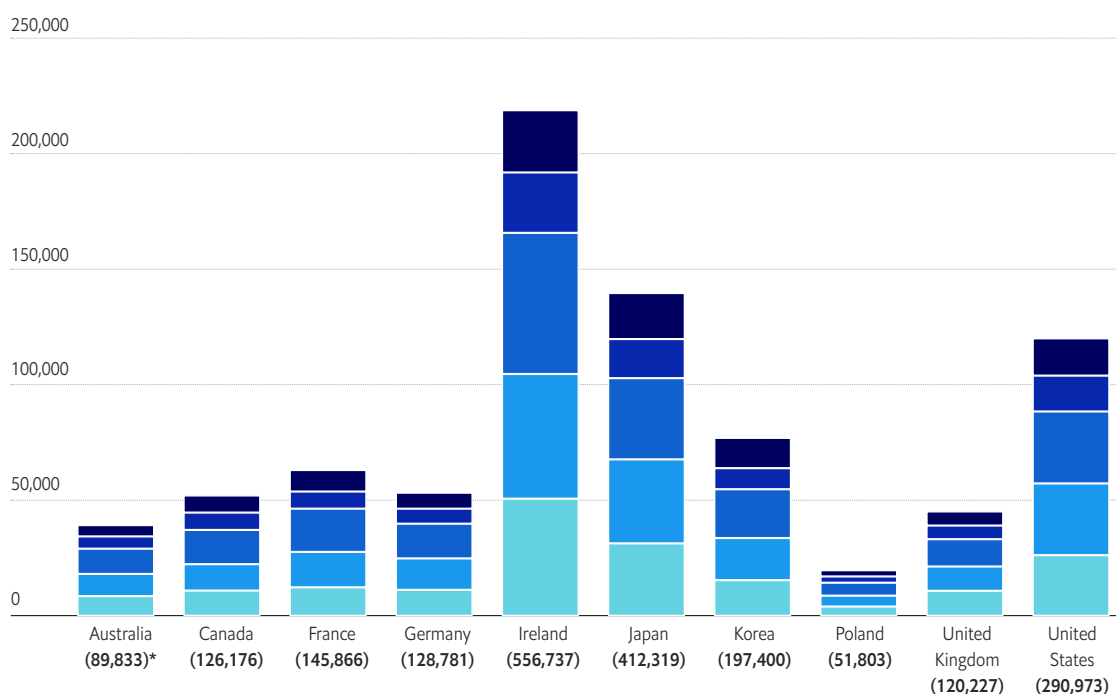
Figure 5. Cost of lost focus (US\$), by source of distraction

*Parentheses = baseline salary per knowledge worker (US\$)

	Work-related meetings	Work-related emails	Work-related messages	Personal activities	Recovery from distractions
Australia	2,400	2,600	5,300	4,700	4,200
Canada	2,800	2,800	5,600	4,300	4,100
France	3,000	2,400	6,000	4,900	3,900
Germany	2,200	2,100	4,700	4,300	3,500
Ireland	2,500	2,400	5,700	5,000	4,700
Japan	1,600	1,400	2,900	3,000	2,600
Korea	1,700	1,200	2,700	2,300	2,000
Poland	700	700	1,500	1,300	1,100
United Kingdom	2,100	2,000	4,100	3,600	3,700
United States	5,400	5,200	10,500	10,400	8,800

Figure 6. Potential gain to the average knowledge worker's economic contribution (US\$) if lost focus time was fully productive, by source of distraction

- Potential gain from addressing: Work-related meetings
- Potential gain from addressing: Work-related emails
- Potential gain from addressing: Work-related messages
- Potential gain from addressing: Personal activities
- Potential gain from addressing: Recovery from distractions

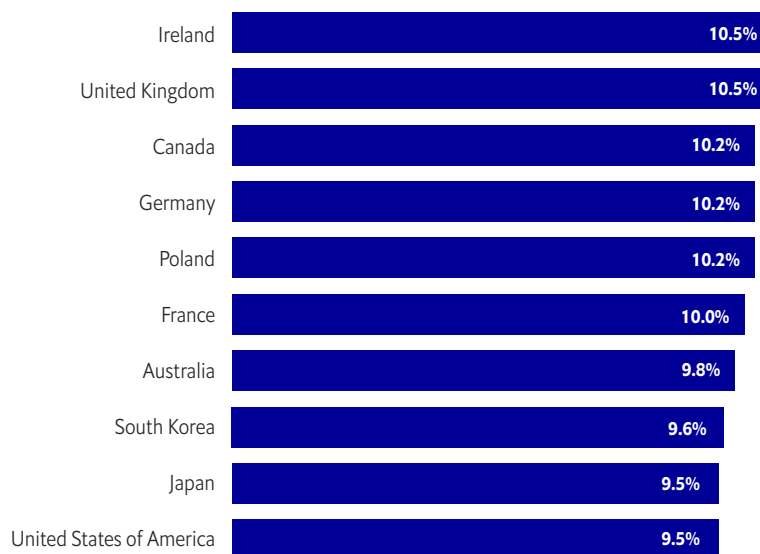


*Parentheses = baseline economic contribution per knowledge worker (US\$)

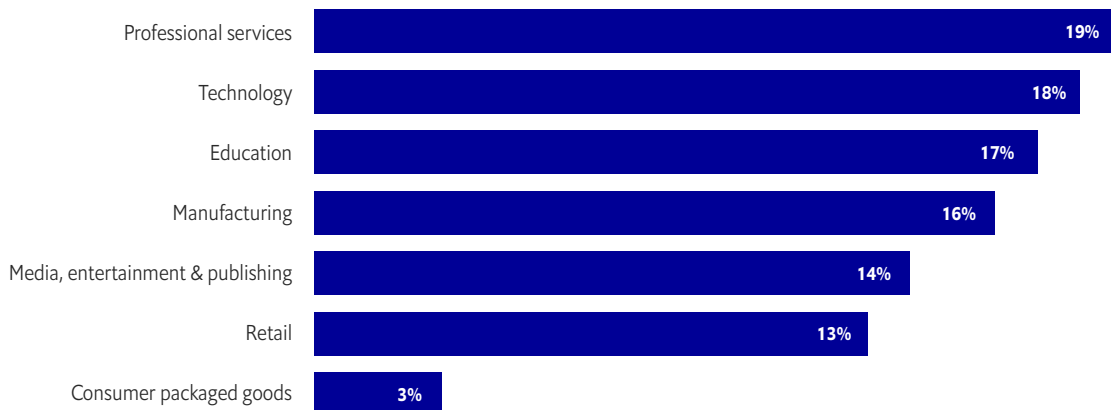
	Potential gain from addressing:				
	Work-related meetings	Work-related emails	Work-related messages	Personal activities	Recovery from distractions
Australia	4,900	5,300	10,900	9,600	8,500
Canada	7,400	7,500	14,800	11,400	10,900
France	9,300	7,400	18,700	15,300	12,300
Germany	6,900	6,500	15,000	13,600	11,200
Ireland	26,900	26,100	61,000	53,900	50,600
Japan	19,900	16,900	35,100	36,300	31,300
Korea	13,100	9,100	21,100	18,200	15,400
Poland	2,700	2,700	5,600	4,700	4,000
United Kingdom	6,100	5,900	11,800	10,500	10,800
United States	16,100	15,500	31,100	31,000	26,200

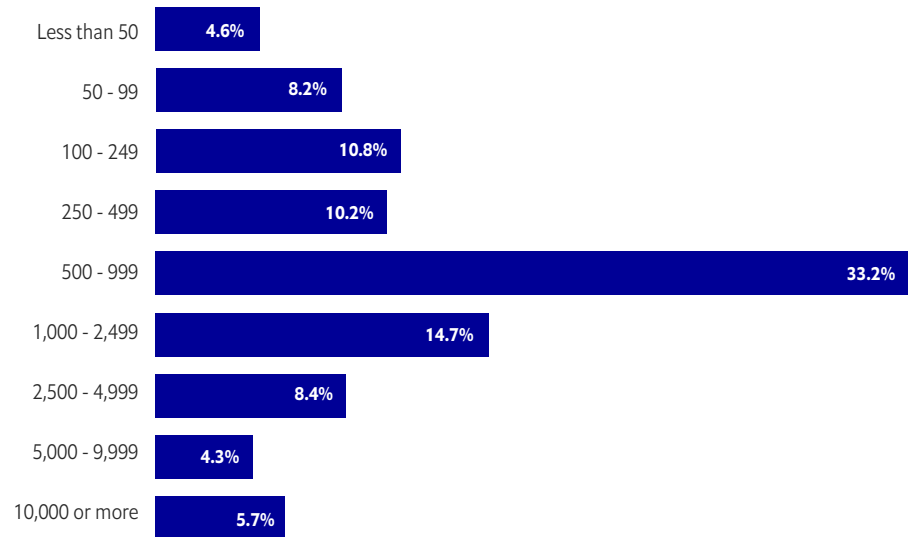
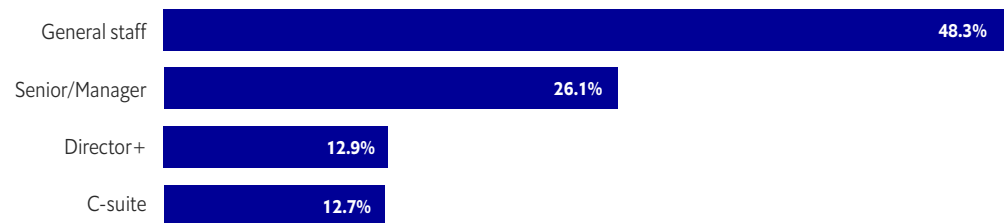
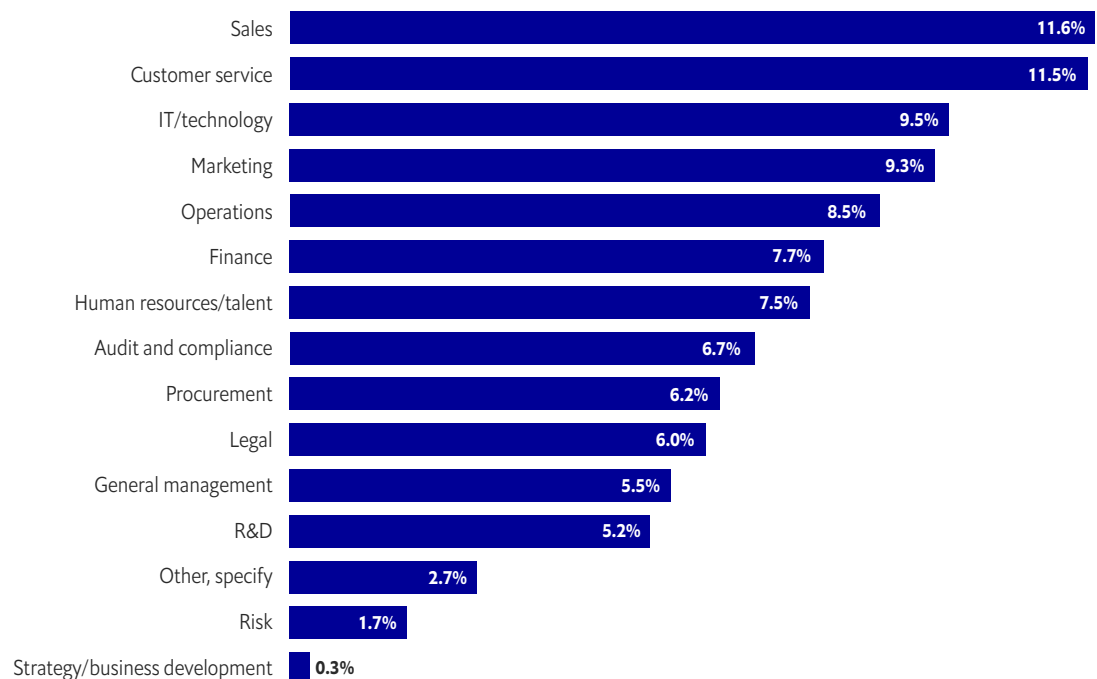
Survey data

D1: In which country do you live? Select one.



D2: What is your organization's primary industry? Select one.

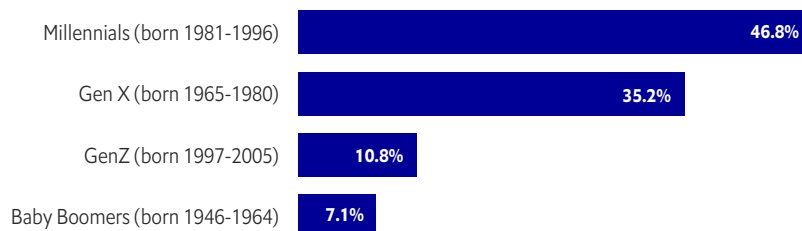


D3: How many employees work for your organization globally? Select one.**D4: Which of the following best describes your title? Select one.****D5: What is your main functional role? Select one.**

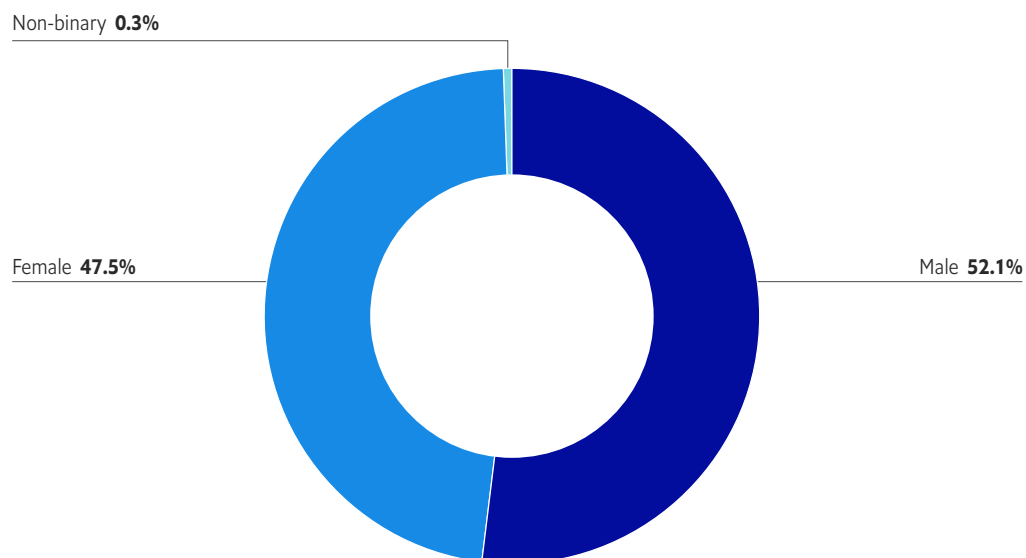
D6: By this definition, would you consider yourself to be a knowledge worker? Select one.



D7: In what year were you born? Select one.



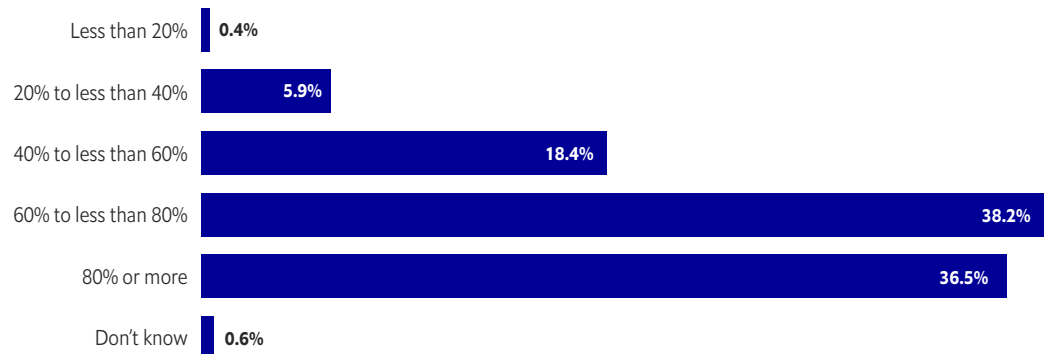
D8: Which best represents your gender? Select one.



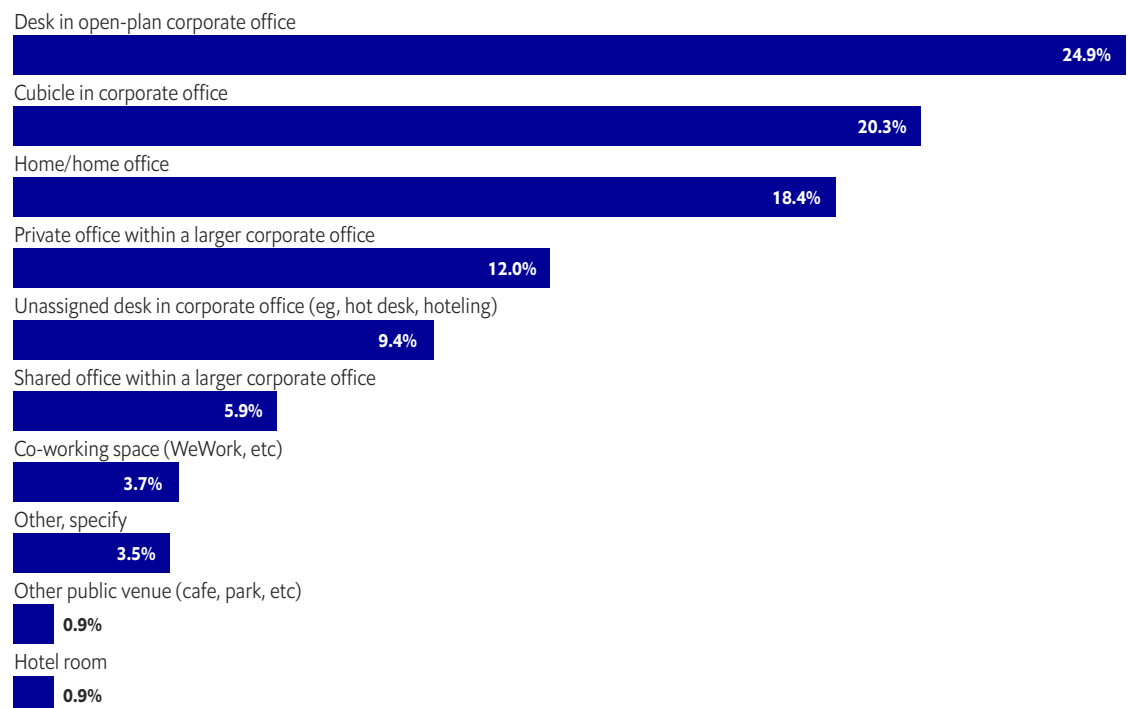
Q1: On a typical workday, how many hours a day do you spend at work (including working remotely)? Select one.

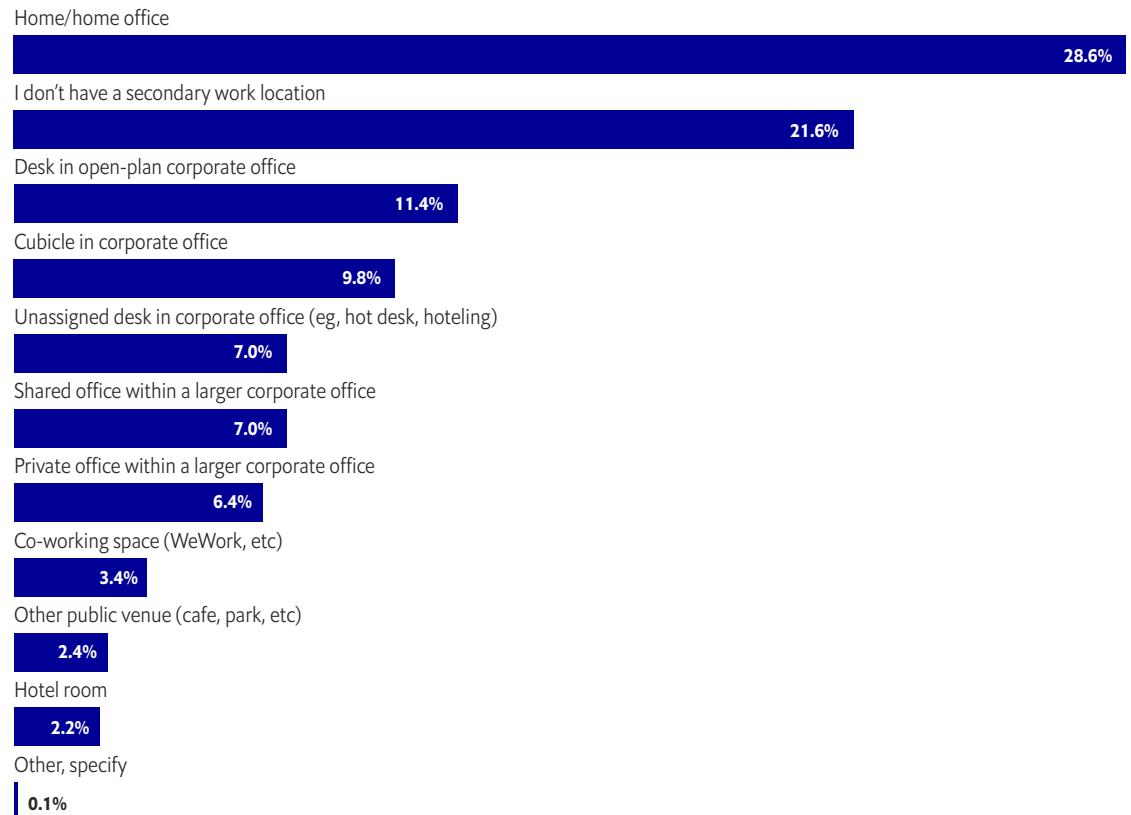
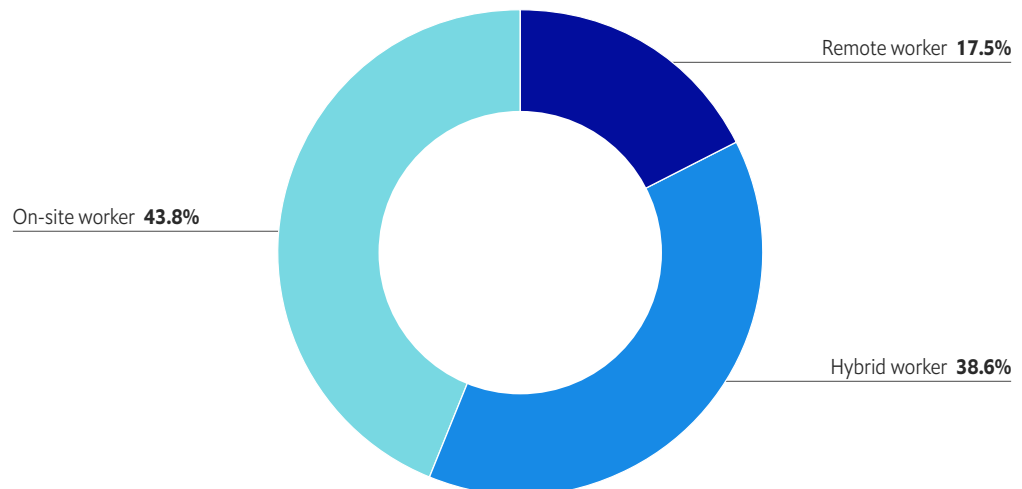


Q2: On a typical workday, what overall percentage of your working hours do you devote to productive work? Select one.

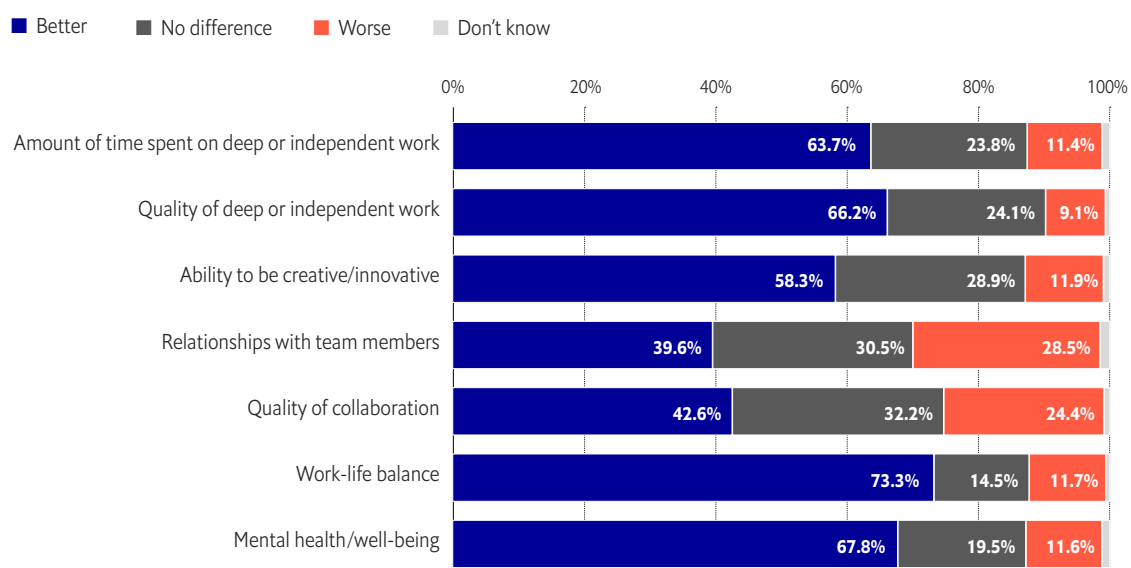


Q3: What are your primary and secondary working locations? Select one. - Primary location

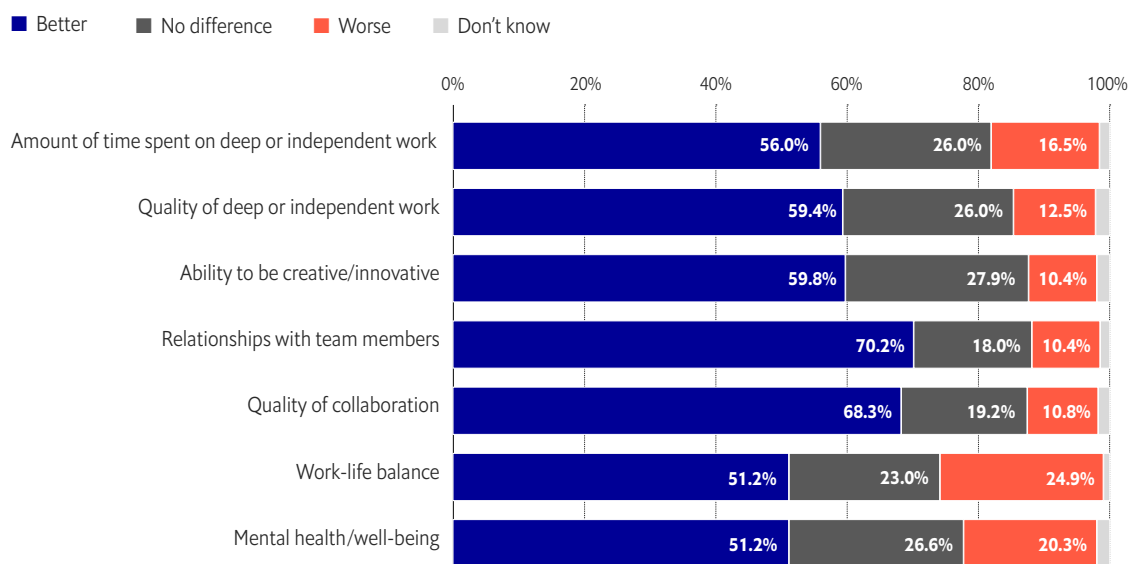


Q4: What are your primary and secondary working locations? Select one. - Secondary location**Q5: Which of the following most accurately describes your current working arrangement? Select one.**

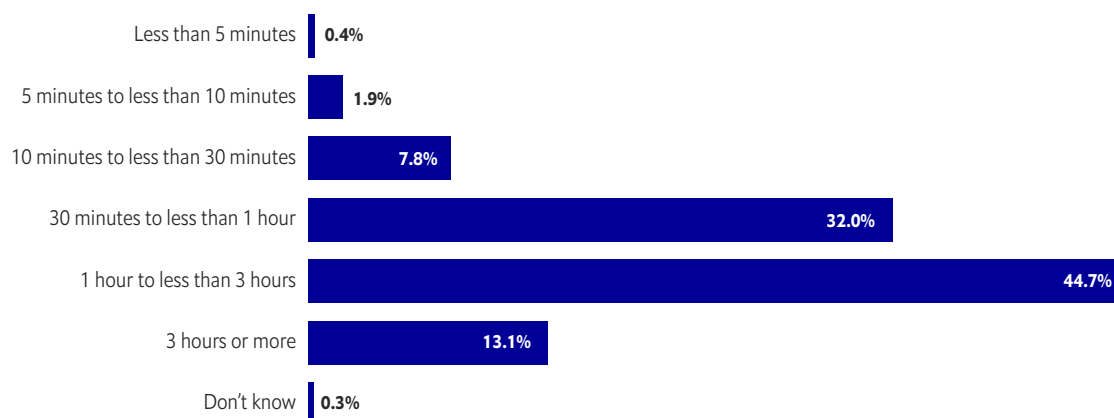
Q6A: How would you compare the following aspects of your experience with remote/hybrid work to fully in-person work? Select one for each row. (Question for remote and hybrid workers only)



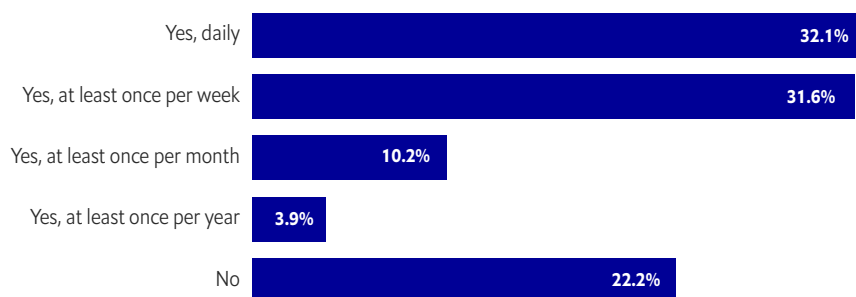
Q6B: How would you compare the following aspects of your experience with fully in-person work to remote/hybrid work? Select one for each row. (Question for on-site workers only)



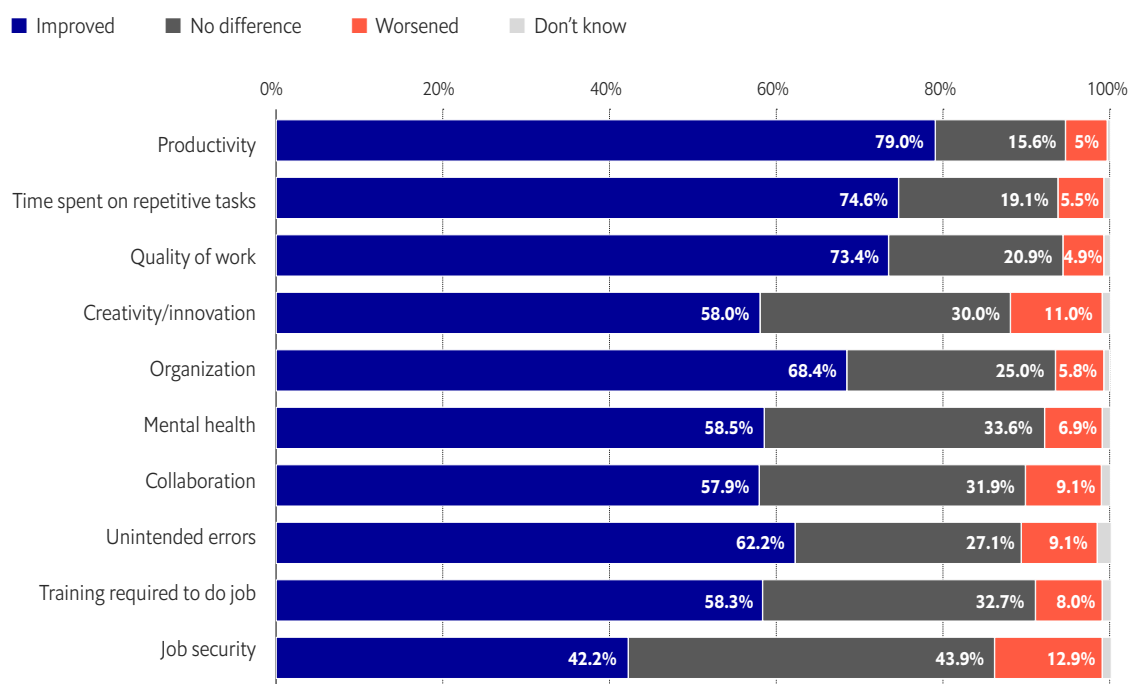
Q7: On a typical workday, what is the average length of time you typically spend focused on any given piece of productive work without any break or distraction? Select one.



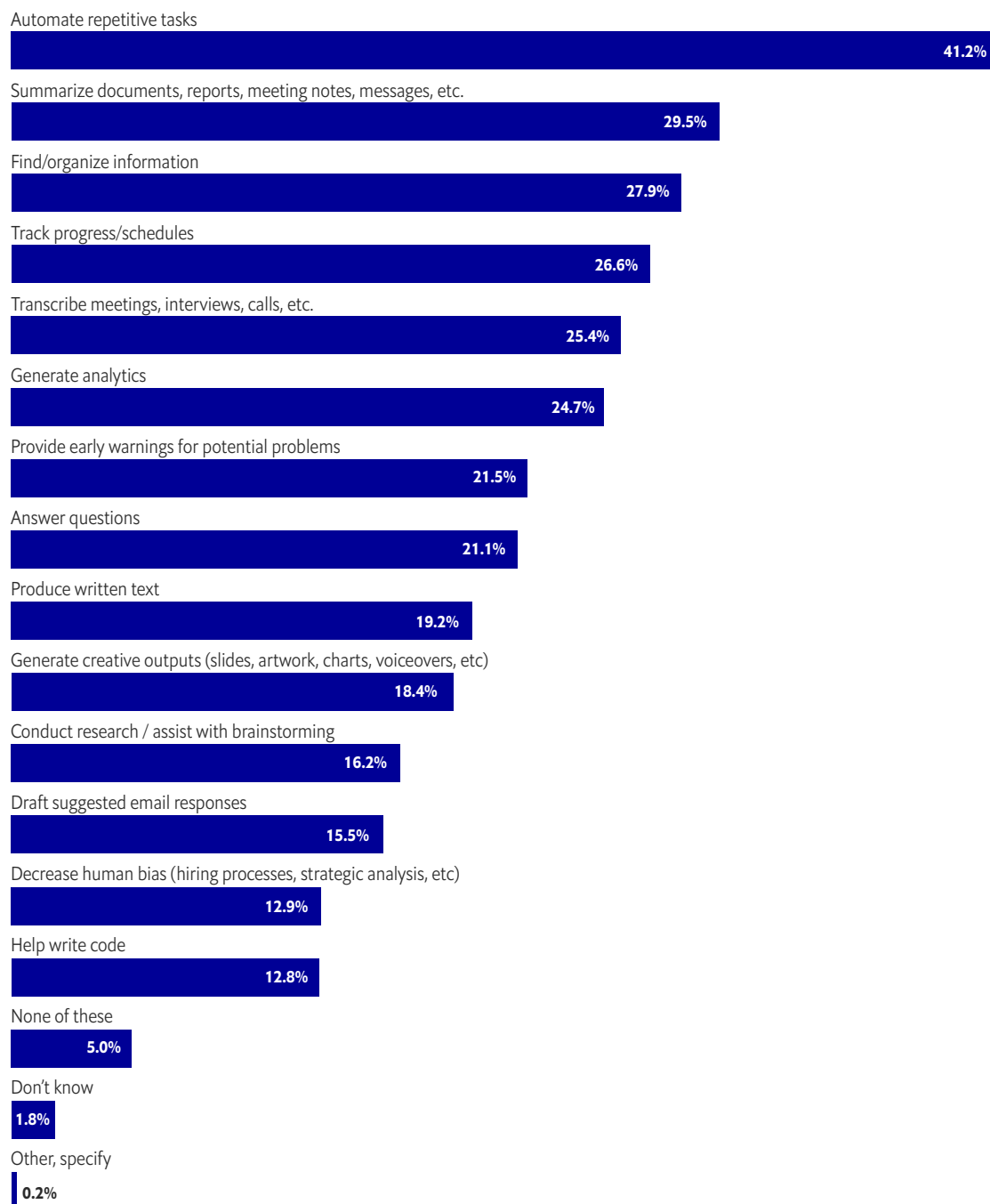
Q8: Do you regularly employ any automation tools in your work? Select one.

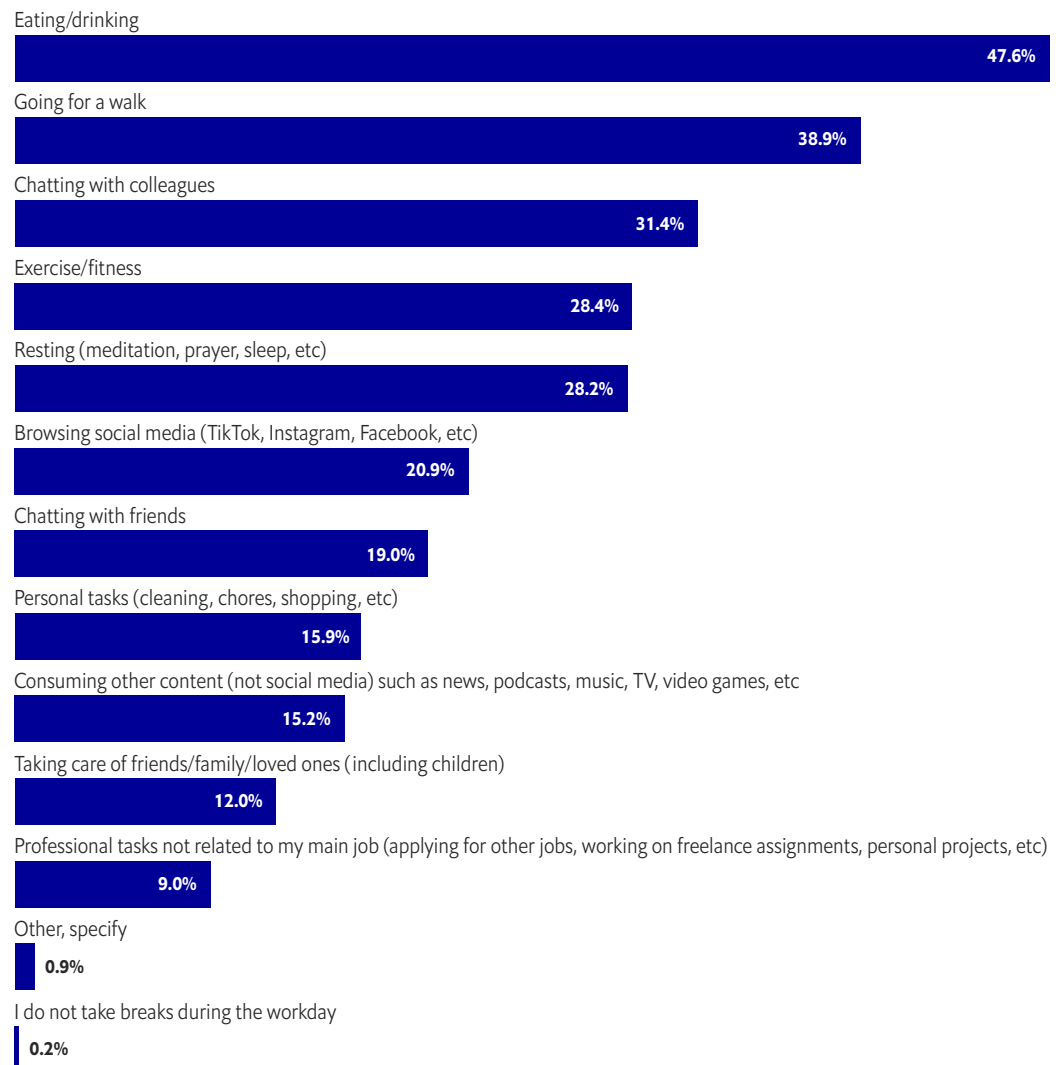


Q9: How has your use of automation tools impacted the following aspects of your work? Please select one in each row.

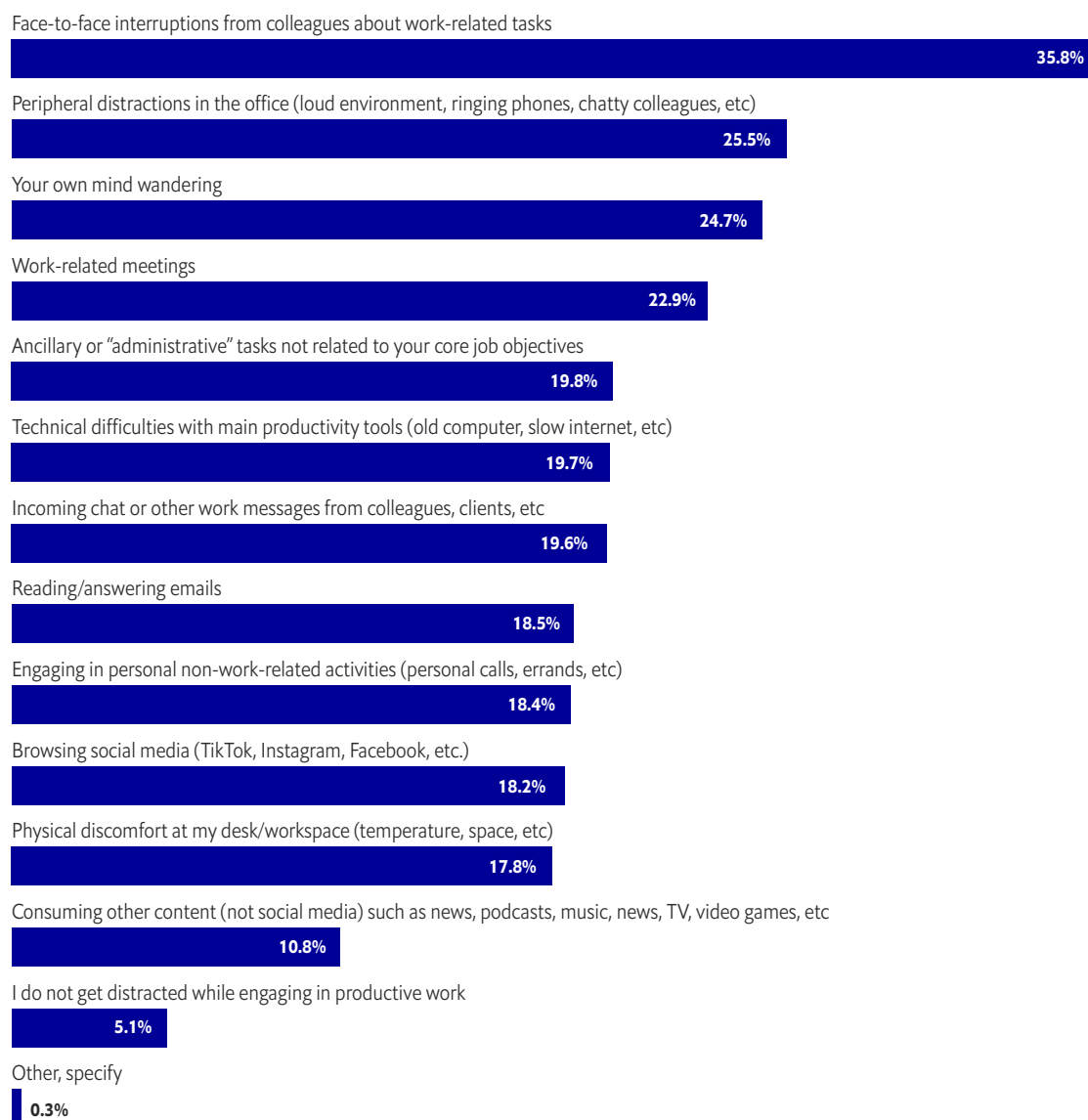


Q10: As AI-related tools become more common, how would you most prefer to use these tools for work? Select up to 4.



Q11: Which types of breaks or activities help you most to recharge/regain focus during the workday? Select up to 3.

Q12: Which of the following most distracts you from engaging in productive work when you are working in the office? Select up to 3. (Question for on-site and hybrid workers only)



Q13: Which of the following most distracts you from engaging in productive work when you are working from home? Select up to 3. (Question for remote and hybrid workers only)

The need to respond to immediate demands from others in the household (family, roommates, pets, etc)

23.9%

Household-related chores (cooking, cleaning, etc)

23.9%

Browsing social media (TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, etc.)

20.6%

Incoming chat or other work messages from colleagues, clients, etc

20.0%

Ancillary or “administrative” tasks not related to your core job objectives

17.7%

Reading/answering emails

17.3%

Feeling disconnected from colleagues

17.3%

Work-related meetings

16.7%

Technical difficulties with main productivity tools (old computer, slow internet etc)

16.5%

Consuming other content (not social media) such as news, podcasts, music, news, TV, video games, etc

15.2%

Lack of a feeling of office “buzz”

12.7%

Lack of the proper tools/materials to do the job

10.9%

Inability to find a quiet space

10.1%

Discomfort with the physical home working space

9.7%

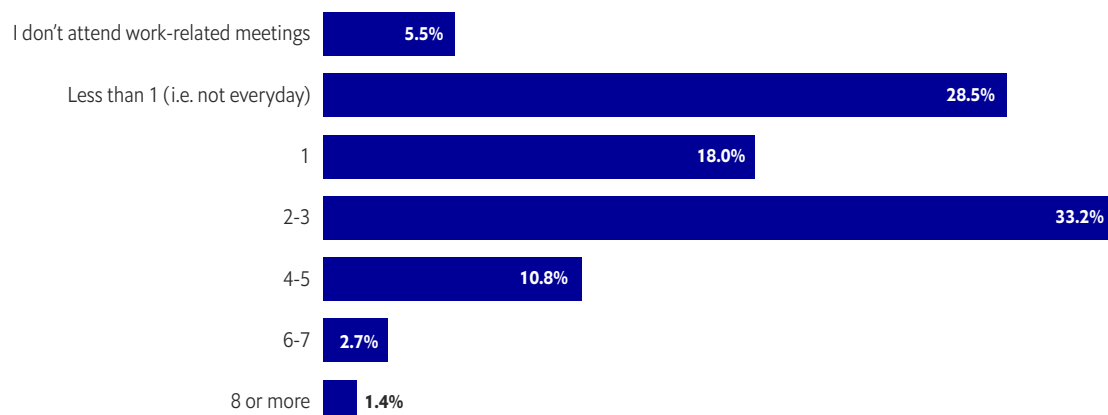
I do not get distracted while engaging in productive work

8.3%

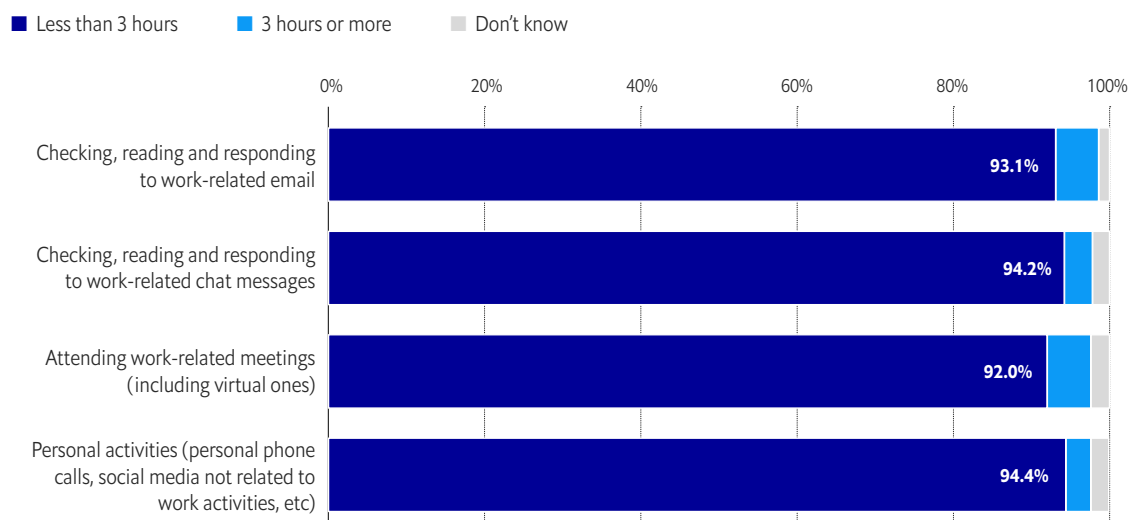
Other, specify

0.7%

Q14: On a typical workday, how many work-related meetings (including virtual ones) do you attend? Select one.

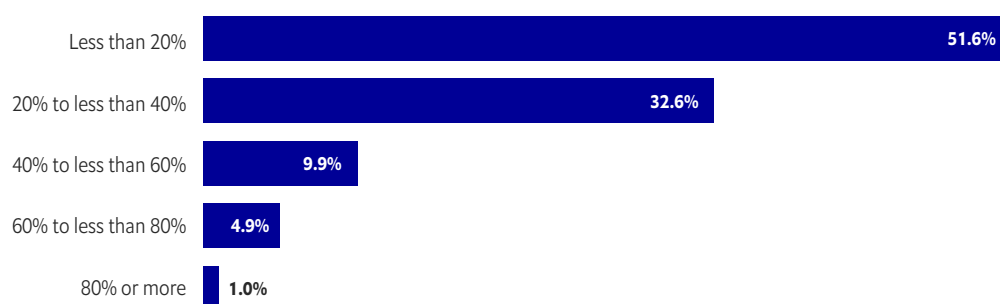


Q15: On a typical workday, how many hours per day do you spend doing the following activities? Select one in each row.

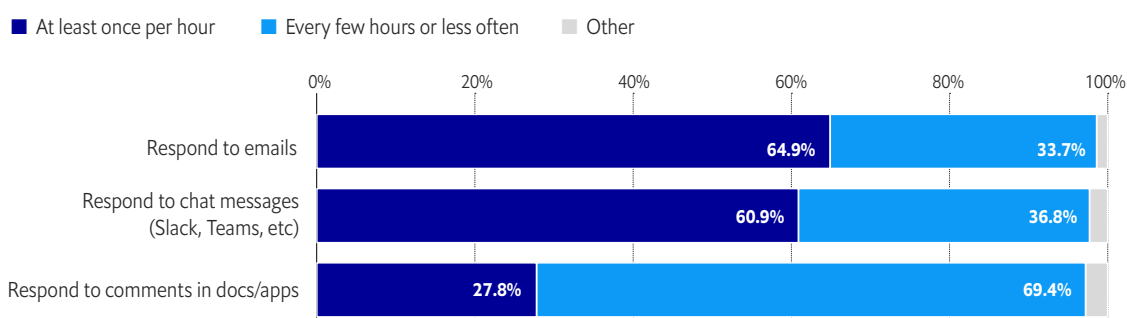


	Less than 3 hours	3 hours or more	Don't know
Checking, reading and responding to work-related email	93.1%	5.5%	1.4%
Checking, reading and responding to work-related chat messages	94.2%	3.6%	2.2%
Attending work-related meetings (including virtual ones)	92.0%	5.6%	2.4%
Personal activities (personal phone calls, social media not related to work activities, etc)	94.4%	3.2%	2.3%

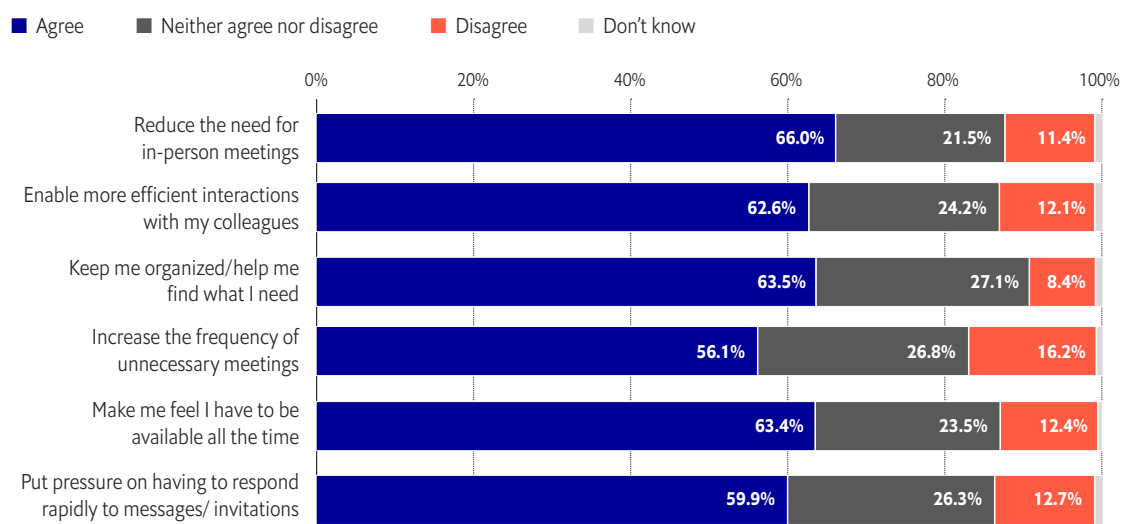
Q16: On a typical workday, what share, if any, of the time you spend in meetings (including virtual ones) would you consider a waste of time? Select one.



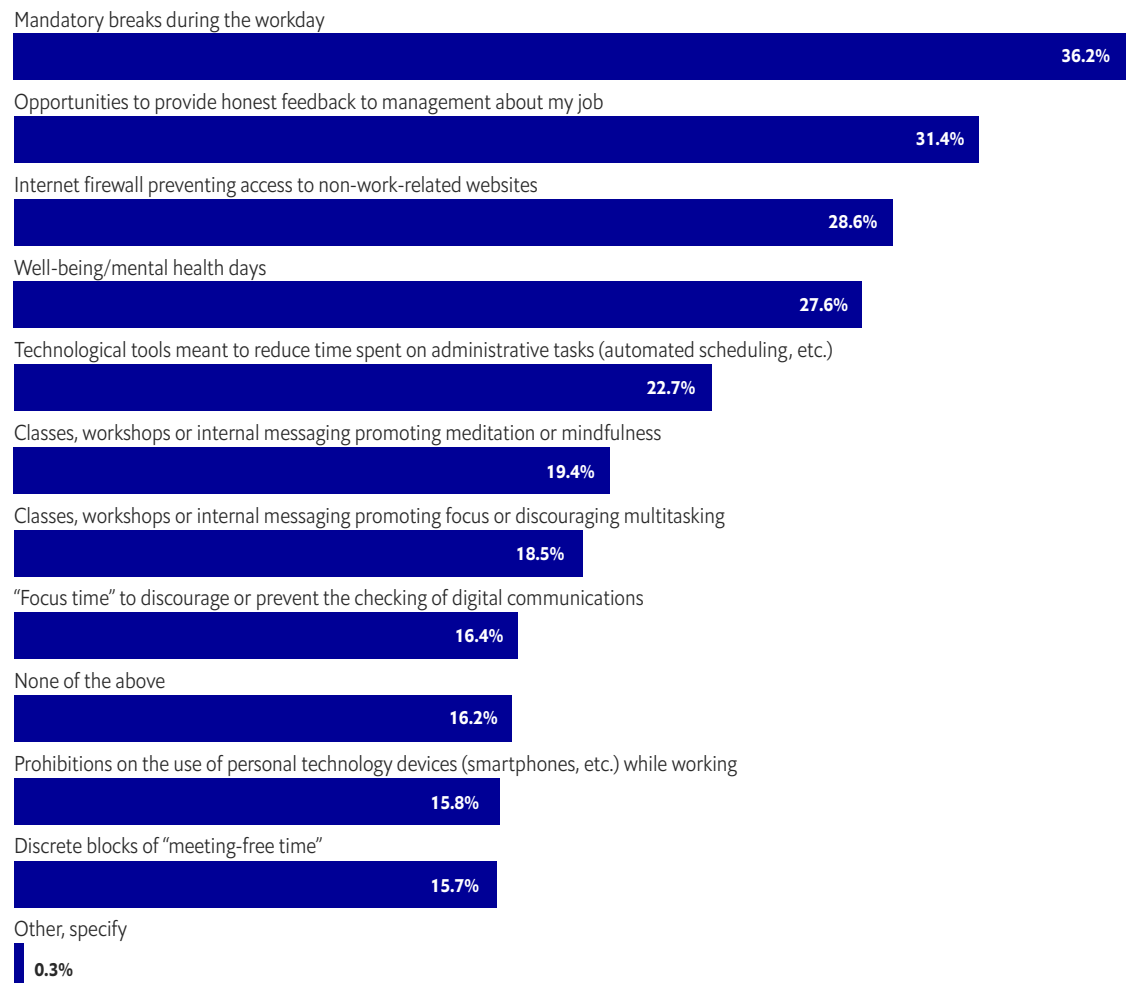
Q17: On a typical workday, how often do you do the following, on average? Select one in each row.



Q18: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements with regards to remote collaboration tools at work? Select one in each row.

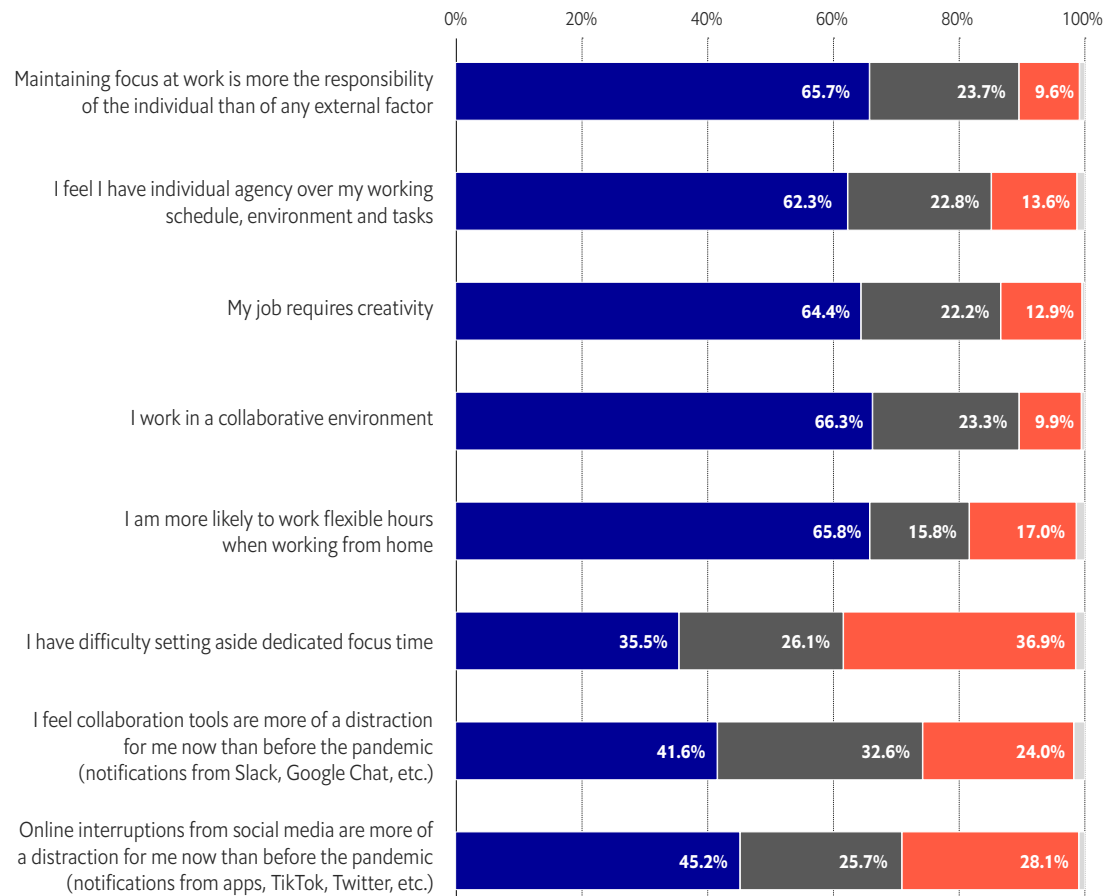


Q19: To the best of your knowledge, does your organization have any of the following policies or programs in place? Select all that apply.

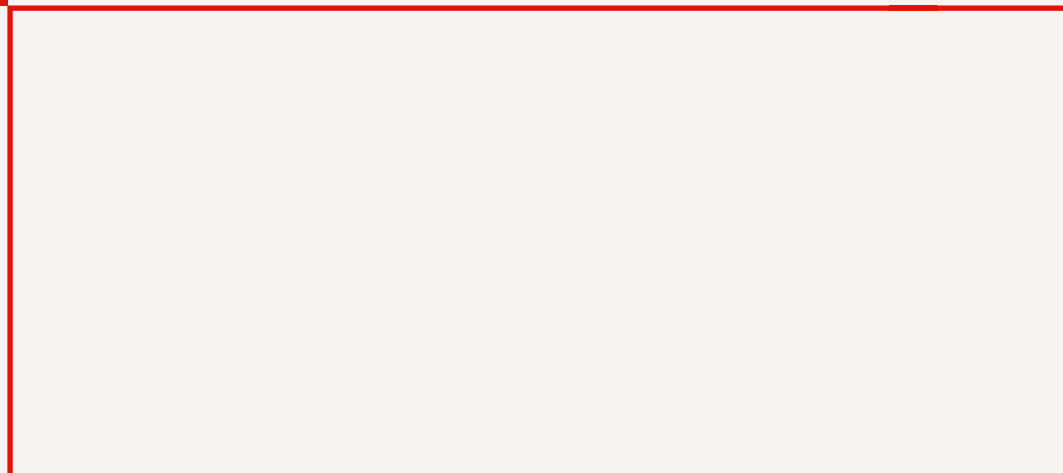


Q20: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Select one in each row.

■ Agree
 ■ Neither agree nor disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Don't know



While every effort has been taken to verify the accuracy of this information, Economist Impact cannot accept any responsibility or liability for reliance by any person on this report or any of the information, opinions or conclusions set out in this report. The findings and views expressed in the report do not necessarily reflect the views of the sponsor.



LONDON

The Adelphi
1-11 John Adam Street
London WC2N 6HT
United Kingdom
Tel: (44) 20 7830 7000
Email: london@economist.com

GENEVA

Rue de l'Athénée 32
1206 Geneva
Switzerland
Tel: (41) 22 566 2470
Fax: (41) 22 346 93 47
Email: geneva@economist.com

SÃO PAULO

Rua Joaquim Floriano,
1052, Conjunto 81
Itaim Bibi, São Paulo,
SP, 04534-004, Brasil
Tel: +5511 3073-1186
Email: americas@economist.com

NEW YORK

900 Third Avenue
16th Floor
New York, NY 10022
United States
Tel: (1.212) 554 0600
Fax: (1.212) 586 1181/2
Email: americas@economist.com

DUBAI

Office 1301a
Aurora Tower
Dubai Media City
Dubai
Tel: (971) 4 433 4202
Fax: (971) 4 438 0224
Email: dubai@economist.com

WASHINGTON DC

1920 L street NW Suite 500
Washington DC
20002
United States
Email: americas@economist.com

HONG KONG

1301
12 Taikoo Wan Road
Taikoo Shing
Hong Kong
Tel: (852) 2585 3888
Fax: (852) 2802 7638
Email: asia@economist.com

SINGAPORE

8 Cross Street
#23-01 Manulife Tower
Singapore
048424
Tel: (65) 6534 5177
Fax: (65) 6534 5077
Email: asia@economist.com