

Employer expectations of working practices after coronavirus (COVID-19) Great Britain June 2021

15 July 2021

1. Main points

- Over half of employers (55%) expect an increase in staff working from home or remotely part of the week after the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.
- Nearly half of employers (49%) expect an increase in staff working from home or remotely all week.

2. Expected changes to working practices after the COVID-19 pandemic

Acas commissioned YouGov to ask businesses in Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) how they expect working practices to change once the COVID-19 pandemic is over, compared to before the pandemic.

Employers were asked "Thinking about once we come out of the COVID-19 pandemic... Compared to before the pandemic, to what extent do you expect the following working practices to change at your company?"

- 55% of employers expect an increase in 'the proportion of staff working remotely or at home part of the week'.
- 54% of employers expect an increase in 'employee demands for flexible forms of working'.
- 49% of employers expect an increase in 'the proportion of staff working remotely or at home all of the week'.

Table 1: Extent of change expected by employers for specific working practices, June 2021

Type of working practice	Significant increase	Slight increase	No change	Slight decrease	Significant decrease	Don't know
The proportion of staff working remotely or at home part of the week	33%	23%	37%	2%	2%	4%
The proportion of staff working remotely or at home all of the week	25%	24%	42%	2%	3%	4%
Emphasis on health and safety practices at work	16%	31%	46%	2%	1%	4%

Type of working practice	Significant increase	Slight increase	No change	Slight decrease	Significant decrease	Don't know
Employee demands for flexible forms of working	24%	29%	39%	1%	1%	5%
Investment in staff training and development	7%	21%	62%	4%	1%	5%
Shorter work hours for all staff	4%	10%	74%	4%	2%	6%
Need for management and staff to work more collaboratively	13%	27%	53%	1%	1%	5%

Table 2: Proportion of employers expecting an increase or decrease in a type of working practice

Type of working practice	Net: increase	Net: decrease
The proportion of staff working remotely or at home part of the week	55%	4%
The proportion of staff working remotely or at home all of the week	49%	5%
Emphasis on health and safety practices at work	48%	2%
Employee demands for flexible forms of working	54%	2%
Investment in staff training and development	28%	5%
Shorter work hours for all staff	14%	6%
Need for management and staff to work more collaboratively	40%	2%

Notes:

- 'Net: increase' is the total of 'Significant increase' and 'Slight increase'. It represents the percentage of organisations that expect an increase in the type of working practice.
- 'Net: decrease' is the total of 'Significant decrease' and 'Slight decrease'. It represents the percentage of organisations that expect a decrease in the type of working practice.
- Percentages may not sum exactly add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

3. Measuring the data

This poll was conducted using an online survey sent to members of the YouGov Plc UK panel of more than 800,000 individuals who have agreed to take part in surveys. Emails are sent to panellists selected at random from the base sample. The email invites them to take part in a survey and provides a generic survey link. Once a panel member clicks on the link they are sent to the survey that they are most required for, according to the sample definition and quotas. (The sample definition could be 'Great Britain adult population' or a subset such as 'Great Britain adult females').

Invitations to surveys do not expire and respondents can be sent to any available survey. The responding sample is weighted to the profile of the sample definition to provide a representative reporting sample. The profile is normally derived from census data or, if not available from the census, from industry accepted data.

The study population is 'Senior Decision Makers' in organisations (businesses) in Great Britain.

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from YouGov Plc. Total sample size was 2,030 adults. Fieldwork was carried out online from 15 to 28 June 2021. The figures have been weighted and are representative of British business sizes.

4. Related links

[Press release – New study reveals half of employers expect more flexible working requests from staff after the pandemic is over](#)

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5. About this data

For more information about this poll data contact research@acas.org.uk.