

Befimmo

[FUTURE OF WORKING] ————— BE / 2026

OFFICE BAROMETER

Belgians want to go to the office.
Layout makes the difference.

INITIATED BY
BEFIMMO

EDITION
2026 / 2ND

RESEARCH
IVOX / BELGIUM

Summary



- 01 Back to the office, for two generations at once
- 02 Layout makes the difference, and it is measurable
- 03 A gap between employees and students
- 04 Meetings still win, in-person
- 05 Coworking still convinces the next generation
- 06 HR directors and CFOs on AI
- 07 Methodology

Why the office still wins.



41%

cite collaboration and connection with colleagues as their main reason for coming into the office

CHAPTER 01

64%

of workers in offices combining open and closed spaces say they can concentrate, compared with 33% in a flexdesk environment

CHAPTER 02

73%

explicitly choose a face-to-face meeting for an important conversation with a client or external partner

CHAPTER 04

7.6_{/10}

is the score given for how much physical client contact strengthens the business relationship

CHAPTER 04

01 CHAPTER 01 / RETURN

Back to the office, for **two generations** at once

KEY FIGURES

BASE 1,000 WORKERS / 200 STUDENTS

**33%** ↑ 8 PP

of workers say they never want to work from home again, an 8-percentage-point increase on last year

18% ↑ 8 PP

of students say they want to come into the office every day, an 8-percentage-point rise

59% ↑ 9%

of workers no longer have a fixed home-working day this year, up from 50% last year

55% ↑ 9%

of workers now never work from home, compared with 46% a year earlier

22% ↓ 6%

of workers still work from home on Fridays, historically the classic remote-work day, down from 28%

**2.5%** ↓ 5.5%

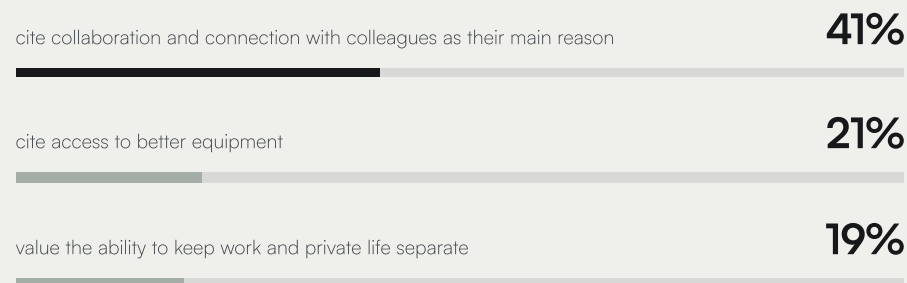
of students now prefer full-time home working, down from 8% last year

Two independent samples moving in the same direction, and by the same magnitude, making the return to the office the clearest trend in this edition of the Barometer.



WBE OFFICES AT PACHECO

FIG. 1.1 — THE REASONS FOR COMING INTO THE OFFICE



☰ CHAPTER 02 / LAYOUT

Layout makes
the difference, and
it is **measurable**

KEY FIGURES

BASE 1,000 WORKERS

26%

↓ 9 PP

of workers feel their office layout supports creativity, down 9 percentage points compared with last year

42%

↓ 5 PP

of workers say it supports teamwork, down 5 percentage points compared with last year

**32%**

↓ 7 PP

of workers say it supports the ability to find quiet space, down 7 percentage points compared with last year

64%

of workers in offices combining open and closed spaces say they can concentrate, compared with 33% in a flexdesk environment

51%

of workers in an open space with flexible seating say noise and distraction affect their productivity, compared with 37% on average

12%

of workers currently work in this type of combined environment



FIG. 2.1 — OPEN + PRIVATE VS FLEXDESK			
	AVERAGE	OPEN + PRIVATE	FLEXDESK
Concentration	47%	64%	33%
Layout stimulates teamwork	42%	60%	38%
Layout stimulates creativity	26%	32%	18%
Able to find quiet space	32%	45%	30%

Workers in environments combining open and closed spaces score significantly higher than average on every single measure.

03 CHAPTER 03 / GENERATIONS

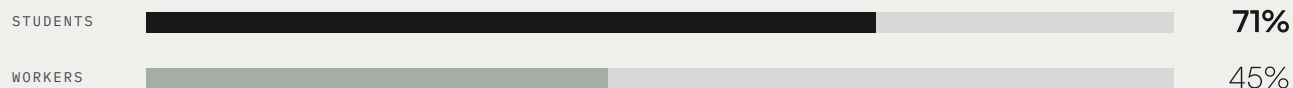
A gap between employees and students

FIG. 3.1 — STUDENTS VS WORKERS

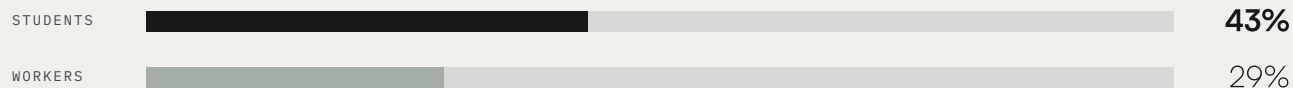
consider good public transport accessibility important in an office



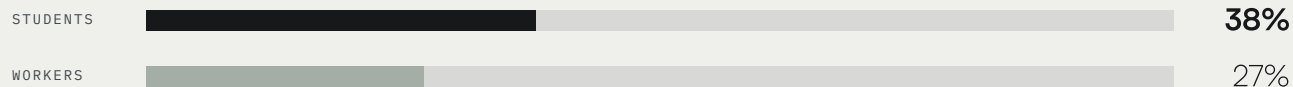
say sustainability initiatives influence their choice between two employers



value proximity to shops



value proximity to bars and restaurants



Anyone designing tomorrow's office today would do well not to approach these two generations in the same way.

CHAPTER 04 / MEETINGS

Meetings still win, in-person

KEY FIGURES

BASE 1,000 WORKERS

35%

of workers think there are too many meetings



6.1₁₀

is the average "digital fatigue" score given by those who meet online



The routine online meeting is under pressure, rather than meetings as a whole.

1%

meet exclusively online, compared with 32% who meet exclusively in person

73%

explicitly choose a face-to-face meeting for an important conversation with a client or external partner

81%

among 18-34 year-olds choose face-to-face meetings for an important meeting

7.6₁₀

is the score given for how much physical client contact strengthens the business relationship

Physical meeting space makes a demonstrable strategic difference.

FIG. 4.1 — DEMAND FOR EXTERNAL MEETING ROOMS

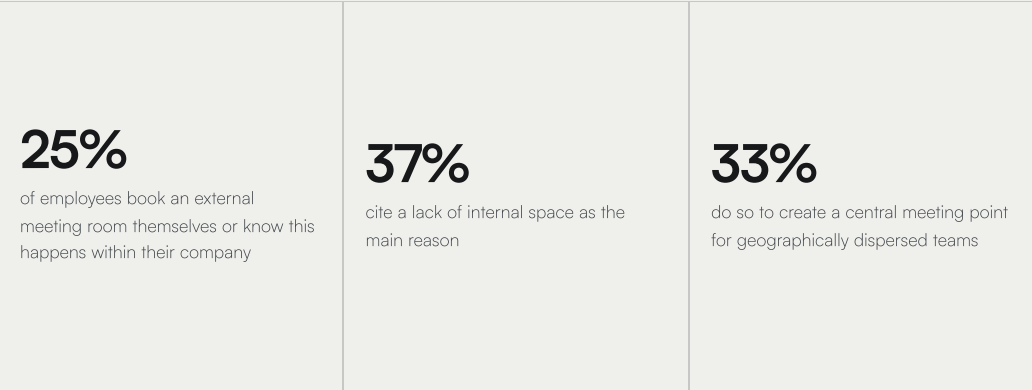
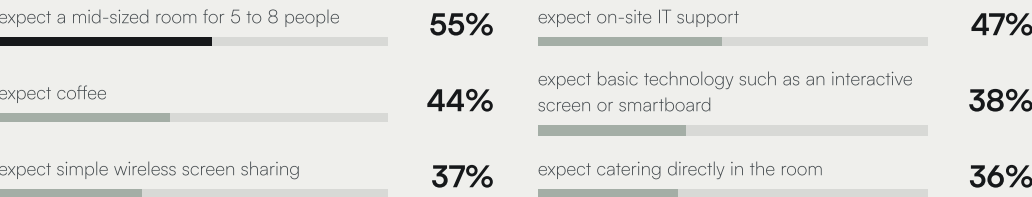


FIG. 4.2 — EXPECTATIONS FOR MEETING ROOMS



Demand for external meeting rooms is real, but two practical barriers hold it back: 37% cite the rental price as too high, and 29% cite a booking process that is too slow or complex.

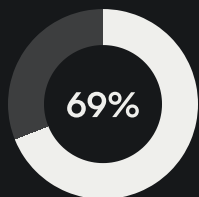


CHAPTER 05 / COWORKING

Coworking still convinces the **next generation**

FIG. 5.1

STUDENTS



69% of students have shown enthusiasm for coworking for two years running

55% of students value a better atmosphere

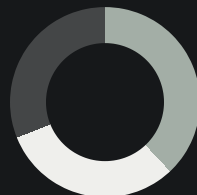
36% of students value a more collaborative environment

33% of students value access to relaxation spaces



FIG. 5.2

EMPLOYEES



- 38% of current employees have a positive view of coworking this year
- 31% of current employees have a negative view
- 32% have no opinion on it, up 6 percentage points

French speakers, younger employees and those with higher education levels remain the most positive.



✦ CHAPTER 06 / AI

HR directors and CFOs on **AI**

Befimmo also surveyed 50 HR directors and CFOs on the impact of artificial intelligence in the workplace.

FIG. 6.1 SKILLS LOSS VERSUS JOB LOSS

32% fear skills loss more than job losses among employees who use AI on a regular basis

14% fear job losses or reduced roles more than skills loss

24% see both risks as equally significant

30% see little risk either way

When forced to choose between two risks, skills loss weighs heavier than job loss.

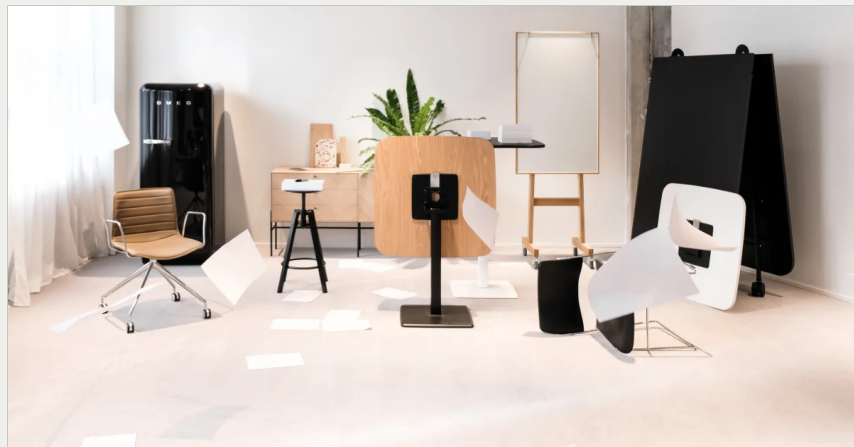


FIG. 6.2 CRITICAL THINKING

40% expect a negative influence on employees' critical thinking

40% expect a positive influence

20% expect no influence at all

52% of those who fear skills loss point to critical and analytical thinking, ahead of writing skills (48%) and problem-solving ability (48%)

46% expect AI to mainly reduce repetitive work

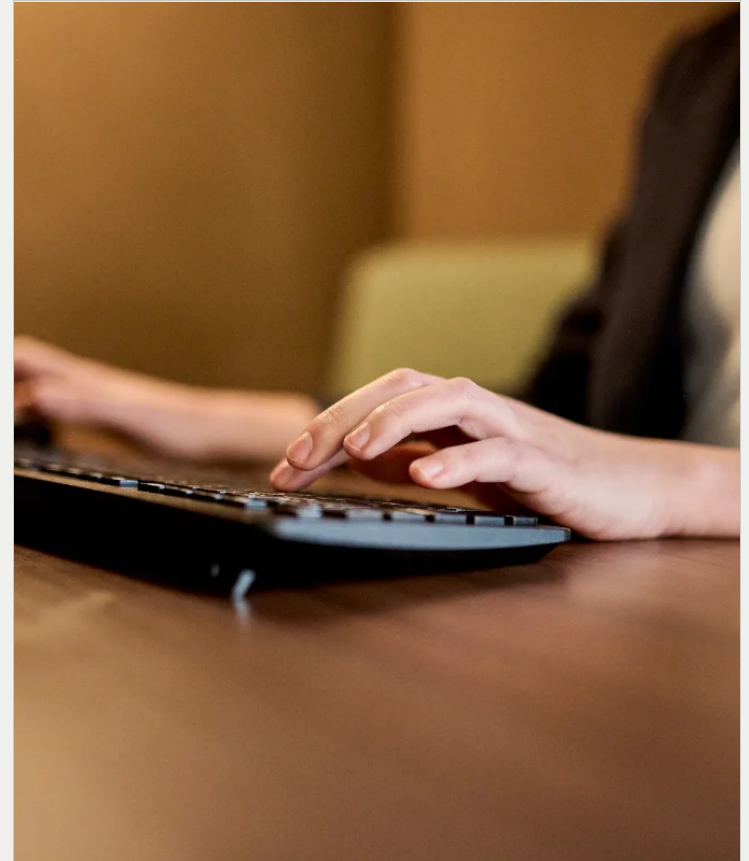
38% expect a productivity gain

Opinion on AI's effect on critical thinking is split exactly down the middle, though concern runs deep among those who expect a negative impact.

FIG. 6.3 — EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

38%	expect a fall in the number of full-time roles over the next three years
48%	expect no change
60%	estimate that 1% to 20% of today's roles will fundamentally change or disappear within five years
16%	expect a bigger impact
10%	expect AI to mainly replace jobs outright
30%	foresee a shift in tasks rather than job losses
32%	foresee a combination of both effects
36%	fear their own role could eventually be partly or fully taken over by AI

Uncertainty about AI doesn't spare the decision-makers themselves.



Methodology

The Office Barometer is an annual survey conducted by Befimmo. This year, the survey was carried out online by iVOX between 3 and 13 July 2026, among 1,000 working Belgians, representative by gender, age and level of education, as well as 200 students. The maximum margins of error are 3.02% and approximately 6.9% respectively, at a 95% confidence level. An additional online section was carried out between 19 and 26 August 2026, among 50 Belgian HR managers and CFOs.



INITIATED BY	BEFIMMO
CARRIED OUT BY	IVOX
FIELDWORK	3 TO 13 JULY 2026
WORKERS	1,000
STUDENTS	200
HR MANAGERS / CFOs	50
MARGIN OF ERROR / WORKERS	3.02%
MARGIN OF ERROR / STUDENTS	APPROX. 6.9%

Want to know more about the **Office Barometer**?

WEBSITE

www.befimmo.be

GENERAL

contact@befimmo.be

PHOTOGRAPHY

SAVE_AS_STUDIO
FERDINAND CHOFFRAY
JEAN-JACQUES DE NEYER

