

UK STATE OF REMOTE WORK



How employees across the UK feel about working remotely in a post-COVID-19 world, their new workplace expectations and what employers need to know to recruit and retain top talent.

OWLLabs

2020 is the year the world went remote.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced organisations around the world to quickly adapt to a new remote reality, in some cases for the first time, in the largest work-from-home shift ever. We've officially fast-tracked to the future of work.

Meetings suddenly became Zoom meetings, with video calls happening at a rate not seen before COVID-19. Not only did people embrace remote work, they have now grown to expect it. After six months of working from home full-time, we learned that UK workers prefer remote work, with almost one in two workers willing to take a pay cut to continue working from home in the long term.

For Owl Labs' 2020 UK State of Remote Work report, we learn more about the current state of remote work in 2020 and UK workers new expectations. We wanted to uncover remote work statistics and gather the current work from home trends to provide you with a comprehensive remote work benchmark report during COVID-19.

In this report, you'll learn:

- Current remote work statistics and trends
- How people are adapting to and now desire remote work
- How companies are handling the COVID-19 guidelines for telework
- Challenges employees feel about returning to the office
- What leaders and companies should know to support today's employees' needs
- How key findings from our UK 2020 report compare to the [Owl Labs State of Remote Work Report 2020 US report](#)



Remote Work Statistics and Trends During COVID-19

- 84% of UK full-time workers are planning on working remotely in some form for the rest of 2020
- 41% would be likely to resign if they were forced to return to the office against their will
- Almost half (44%) of UK full-time workers plan to work a full five day working-week from home, with 55% planning a more hybrid role with one to four days in the office
- 45% of office workers are willing to take a pay cut in order to continue working from home in the long-term
- 15% would be willing to take a pay cut of 5%, the equivalent to £1,518 a year when looking at the average full-time UK salary of £30,353*
- 1 in 2 office workers (46%) would be likely to resign from their current role if their company were to cut their pay as part of cost savings across the business
- 41% would resign if their employer cut their pay if they chose to move to a suburban or rural location to work from home permanently
- Over half of employees (51%) would find a cost of living adjustment unfair and would start looking for other roles, whilst 8% would find it unfair and quit, even if they didn't have another job to go to
- 74% believe their company should pay for, or provide, office technology equipment (including laptops, printers, and extra screens) when they work from home
- 50% believe their company should provide office furniture (including desks and ergonomic chairs)
- 50% of employees believe their companies should contribute to WiFi and phone bills, and 48% to electricity bills when working from home, something not regularly supported by companies
- 62% of workers believe their employers should provide free COVID-19 tests, with 65% saying free PPE (such as masks, gloves, and antibacterial gel and wipes) should be provided as standard when working from the office
- When working from home, 61% of employees would be concerned if their company brought in remote activity and productivity monitoring, with over a third (36%) saying they'd be likely to resign if so

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE 4 SECTION 1
Who They Are - Background and Demographics

PAGE 5 SECTION 2
Remote Work is the Preferred Way to Work

PAGE 7 SECTION 3
Return to Office Challenges

PAGE 9 SECTION 4
Resignations Could Be Real

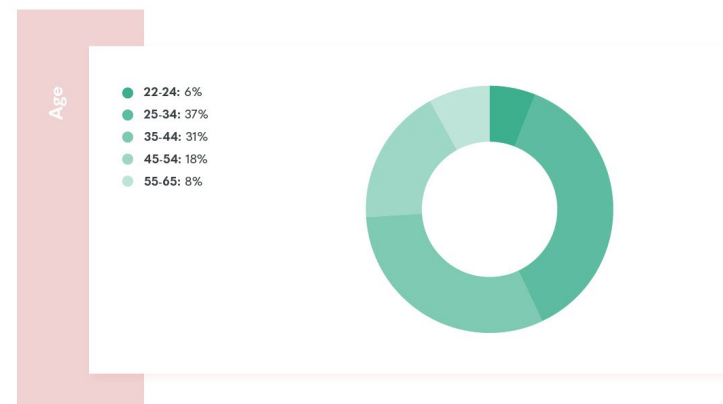
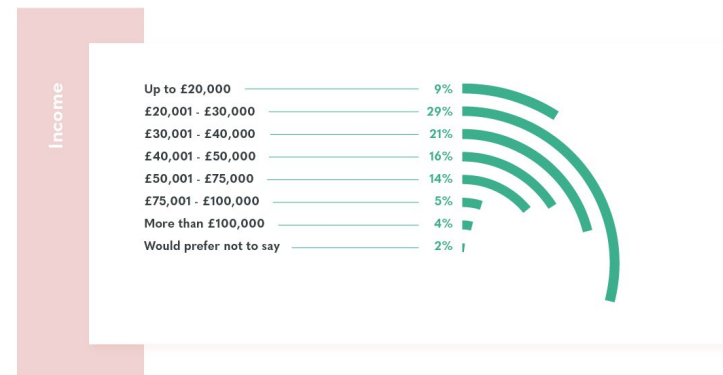
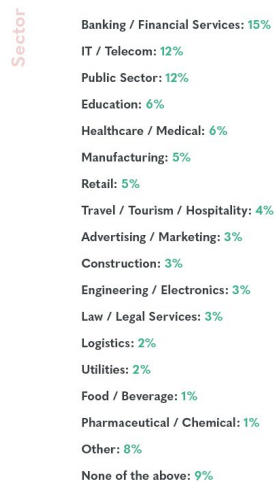
PAGE 10 SECTION 5
Privacy Monitoring and Productivity Apps

PAGE 12 SECTION 6
Why They Want to Return to Office

SECTION 1

State of Remote Work 2020: Who They Are - Background and Demographics

Owl Labs surveyed 2,000 full-time workers in the United Kingdom between the ages of 22 and 65. This survey data was collected in August 2020.



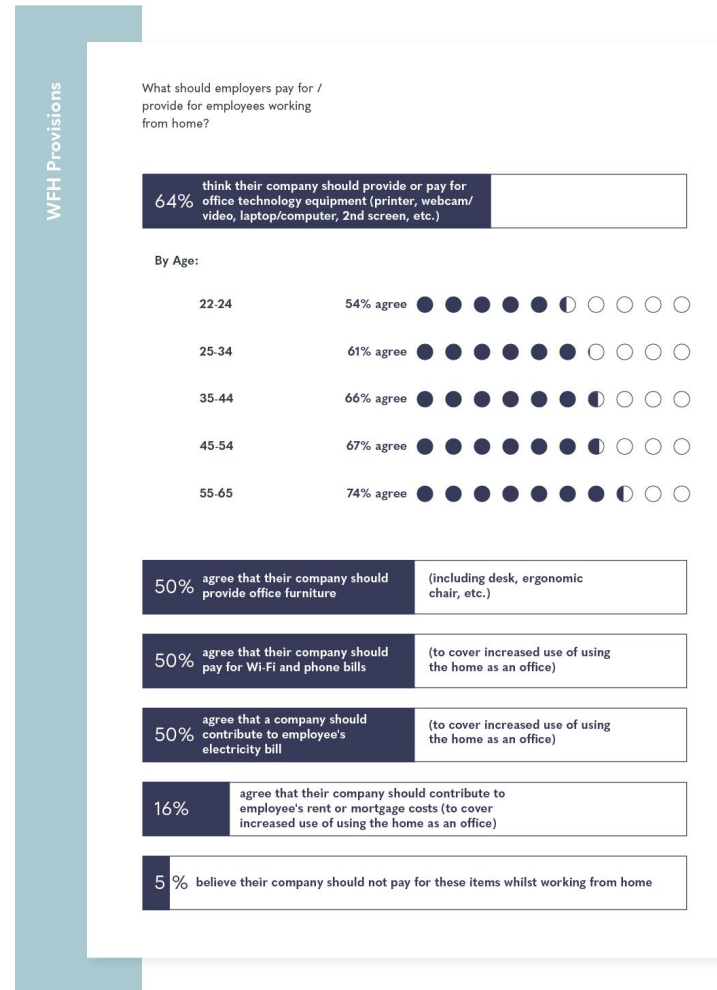
SECTION 2

Remote Work is the Preferred Way to Work

Remote work has proven to be the preferable way to operate. So much, in fact, that employees would be willing to take a pay cut in order to keep a flexible working schedule. Leaders, take note. Incorporating flexible and hybrid work policies may be a necessity to retain and recruit top talent.



SECTION 2: Remote Work is Preferred



Owl Labs Takeaway:

The higher the salary, the more apt they are to participate in a pay cut to keep a remote working schedule.

Whilst employees are keen to continue working from home, they do have certain expectations on what employers should be providing them with, or supporting the cost of, so companies take note.

SECTION 3

Return to Office Challenges

It seems like employees are not quite ready to return to the office. Leading the concerns is COVID-19 and the threat of a second wave of the virus. Second to this, are the costs of commuting versus the perceived safety of public transport. Read on to learn more about employees' concerns as they consider going back to the office.

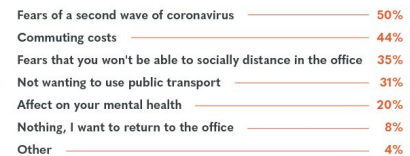
Biggest Driver

1 in 2

report that they are fearful of a second wave of coronavirus being the biggest driver in not wanting to return to the office

Other Drivers

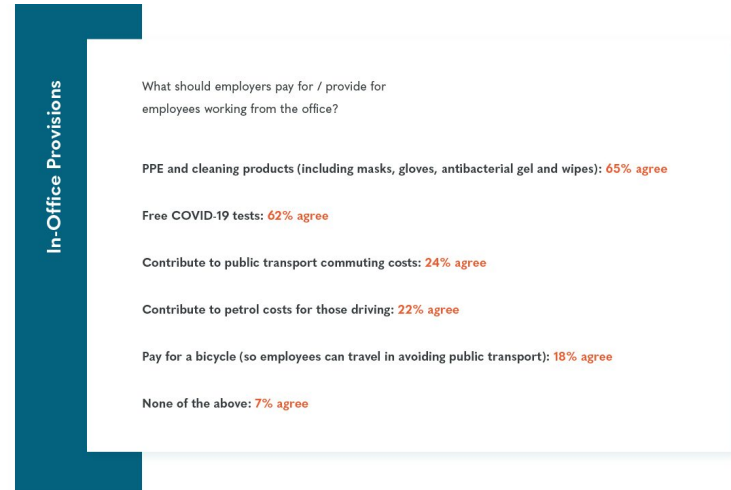
Which of the following reasons are the biggest drivers for you not wishing to return to the office?



SECTION 3: Return to Office Challenges



In a shifting work landscape, when it comes to working in an office, employees have shifted their expectations on what employers should be providing.



Owl Labs Takeaway:

It comes as no surprise that those most concerned with COVID-19 are those in the oldest age group and therefore most at risk from COVID-19.

Commuting costs and not wanting to use public transport concerns remained consistent across the board by age.

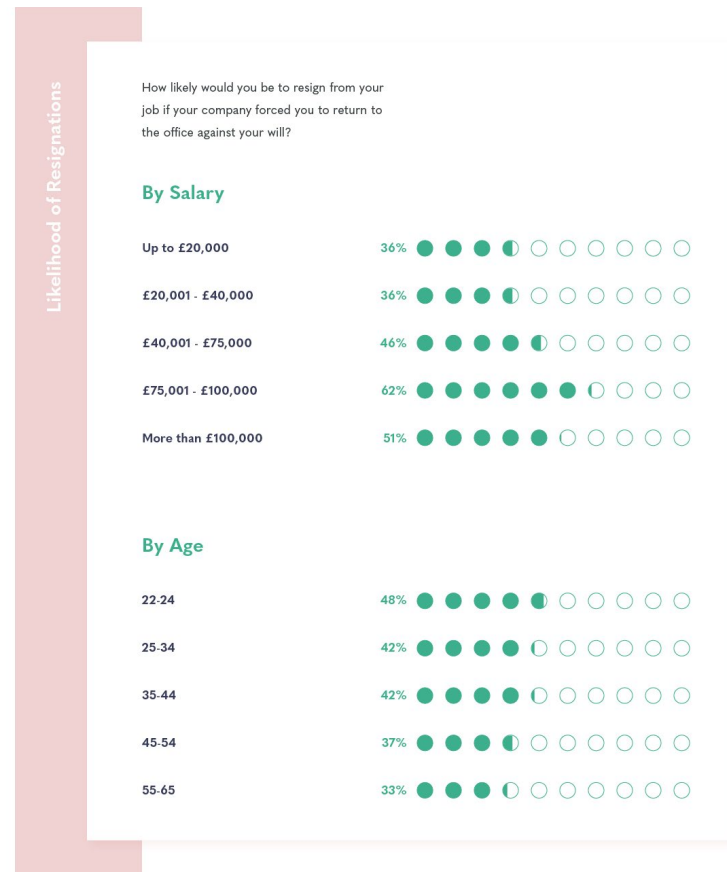
Respondents aged 45-54 were more than twice as likely to want to return to office than any other age group (average 6.5% and 45-54: 13% want to return to the office).

When breaking it down by gender, females and males were consistent in their responses regarding concerns, with men only 3% more concerned about not being able to socially-distance in the office.

SECTION 4

Resignations Could Be Real

COVID-19 is a real concern for many, and employees are deeply concerned about being forced to return to an office when it doesn't feel safe to do so. We believe remote work and hybrid teams are here to stay, and employers should start to adapt to this next wave of working to keep employees safe, and happy.



Owl Labs Takeaway:

The younger the age, the more likely they are to resign if they were forced to return to the office before they felt it was safe, or ready to return.

SECTION 5

Privacy Monitoring and Productivity Apps

Working from home can be a challenge for employees and employers alike. Employees are adapting to new schedules and communication tactics, and employers are trying to get a grasp on productivity and output. [Data shows](#) that 75% of people are the same or more productive during COVID-19 whilst working from home, but some employers still feel the need to more clearly understand what their employees are accomplishing daily. So we asked, how would you feel about employee monitoring, and this is what respondents said.

Tracking Concerns

Almost

3 out of 4

employees would be concerned if their company implemented video tracking

Concerns Explored

If your company started monitoring your activity as a way to track productivity while you are working at home, how concerned would you be about the following?

Video tracking

72% would be concerned

By Gender

Female

75% would be concerned

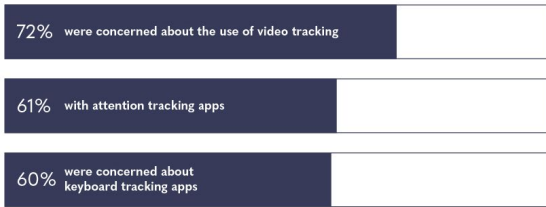
Male

69% would be concerned

SECTION 5: Privacy & Productivity

Productivity Concerns

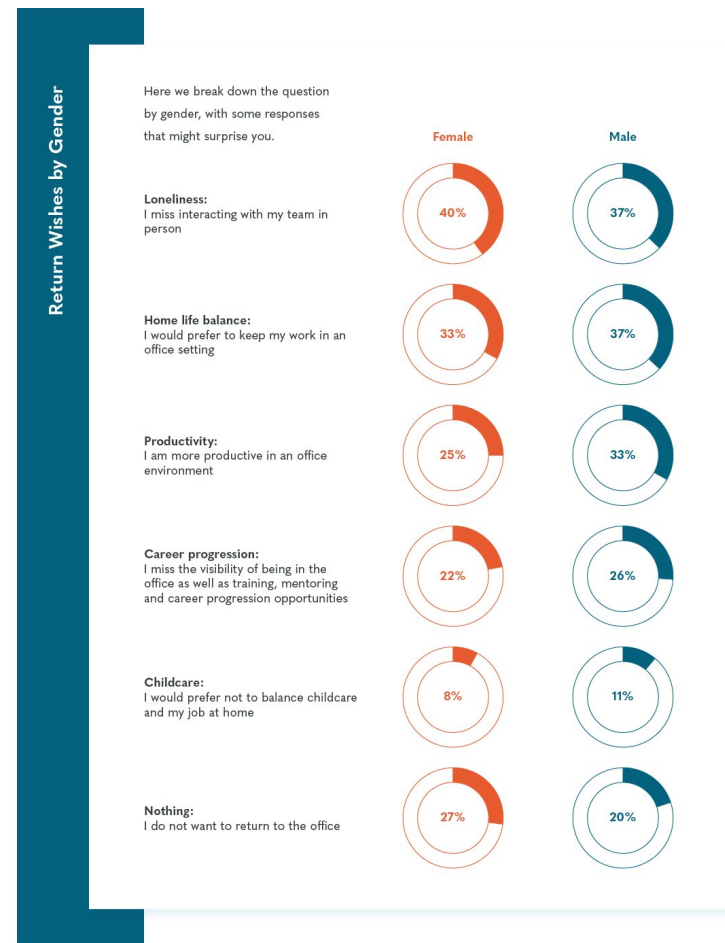
When working from home, 61% of employees would be concerned if their company brought in remote activity and productivity monitoring, with over a third (36%) saying they'd be likely to resign if so.



SECTION 6

Why They Want to Return to Office

Working from home has its benefits, but these benefits do come with their own set of unique challenges. Being distracted by children, spouses or pets throughout the day has proved a challenge for many. Not having a proper home office setup is another. Some people are just ready to get back to the office, and below we uncover the reasons why.



CONCLUSION

CLOSING

Conclusion

Whether you were ready for it or not, the future of work is here. Our lives will be forever changed due to COVID-19 and its implications, and what we've learned in our UK report is that employees have had a taste of remote work and they want it to continue.

What we also learned is that UK employees want to return to the office but at their own discretion. They want to return when they feel it is safe to do so, with over 40% saying they would consider resigning if forced against their will.

Businesses today now have a remote workforce with different needs, and companies that will ultimately succeed will embrace and benefit from it. It's time to rethink the way you work, and rethink the products, tools and strategies currently in place to better support remote work and hybrid teams.

Thanks for taking the time to read our report, we hope you found it insightful and useful.

For any press inquiries, please reach out to owlUK@clarity.pr.

Owl Labs is a collaborative technology company dedicated to creating a better workplace and learning experience for today's hybrid workforce and virtual classroom. The company's flagship product, the award-winning [Meeting Owl Pro](#), features a wifi-enabled, portable 360° camera, mic, and speaker with proprietary AI technology that automatically focuses on who is speaking using audio and visual cues. Learn more and join the Work and Learn From Anywhere Movement at www.owlabs.com.

