



FRAME

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ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN SALARY SURVEY AND EMPLOYMENT REVIEW 2023

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Welcome

FRAME

FRAME is a people specialist in architecture and interior design recruitment. We are part of the Faststream Recruitment Group, employing over 100 people and with a history beginning in 1999.

We are proud of the relationships we have made across the industry and have helped thousands of people find new roles as well as aided practices with their recruitment strategies. Our team recruits across all industry sectors including commercial, education, healthcare, hospitality, leisure, mixed-use, residential, retail and transport.

Architecture and interior design are a huge part of our lives. They have the power to impact our environment, our homes, our workplaces and even where we spend our leisure time. Being able to be part of these sectors is a privilege and we enthusiastically immerse ourselves in the community that works so hard to improve our surroundings. We are passionate about people and getting to know every individual, whether they are a graduate job hunter or a managing director of a large practice. People are what we know, and people are our passion.

Our parent company, the Faststream Recruitment Group is a global people specialist in shipping, maritime, and energy recruitment. We know what it is to be a true specialist in a generalist recruitment marketplace.

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MARTIN BENNELL

Martin Bennell is the Managing Director of FRAME Recruitment. He is a recruitment veteran, starting his recruitment career in 2000. He has spent the last five years leading FRAME Recruitment.

He has a wealth of knowledge and experience in recruiting in high-demand, skill short sectors globally. As a Fellow of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation, he is a renowned thought leader in specialist recruitment. Martin's involvement as a speaker, panellist and writer provides a head hunters perspective into human factors in the workplace.

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This report has been produced internally by FRAME Recruitment. The data was collected in November and December 2022. All salary data is listed in GBP.

Please note, quotes from survey respondents represent their thoughts and views and not those of FRAME Recruitment.

Foreword

In a step change from thriving, to surviving and recovering, and embracing a fast-paced comeback in 2022, architecture and interior design practices are faced with new people problems in a changed recruitment marketplace. Reward, workforce engagement, recruitment, retention, skill gaps, and benefits are at the top of the agenda.

2022 has not been a year where hiring managers and human resources professionals have been able to pick up the old rulebook. The marketplace has changed, as has the demand for candidates and their corresponding needs. People strategies have had to be re-evaluated. What is still current? What is not? What do people care about? Do we need more external help with recruitment?

Reinventing people strategies is taking a mix of strategic thinking, decision making and research. Being able to create solutions that solve short-term problems has needed to balance with medium and long-term business needs. How do we retain people? How do we attract new talent? What can we offer to give ourselves a competitive advantage? How do we deal with the rising cost of living?

As a business supporting the architecture and interior design sectors, we design our survey to reflect the conversations we are having with our clients and candidates, as well as ensure that it is reflective of how we see the wider marketplace.

My team and I have created this one of a kind survey to establish how the events of 2022 have impacted the UK's architecture and interior design recruitment market. We share highlights and trends in retention, remuneration, benefits, overtime, working styles, career progression and more.

It covers areas such as: Have you been promoted? When did you last receive a pay rise? Are you being paid for overtime? Why will you stay with your employer over the next 12 months? Do you feel secure in your role? What benefits do you want in your next job? Does an employer's policy on diversity and inclusion matter to you? These are just a few of the questions and ones that only the people in architecture and interior design themselves will answer.



Market trends



There is never a dull moment in recruitment in the architecture and interior design sectors, and 2022 has been no exception. Continuing from the previous year, we are still experiencing a candidate-led market. Employment has continued to rise, job applications have slowed down, and when sourcing candidates specialist headhunting techniques have been needed. It took some time, but Brexit is now making its mark. Some candidates have returned to their home country leaving skill gaps in the sectors and many employers do not have the appetite to administer time and cost-consuming visa sponsorships.

There is no lack of jobs in the marketplace either. We have seen a growth in vacancies year on year of nearly 40%. Permanent vacancies have grown by 59% and it is not slowing down despite all the talk of the

recession. Contract opportunities have dropped by 15% year on year. We attribute this to a couple of different factors. Employers increasingly want more stability in the skill resources of their teams, and we

Market trends *continued*



WE HEAR **GENUINE EXCITEMENT** WHEN WE **TALK TO CANDIDATES** ABOUT A **CLIENT** WHO IS **WORKING ON SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS**. NOT ONLY IS IT AN **OPPORTUNITY TO BROADEN** THEIR **EXPERIENCE** BUT THEY ARE **BOUGHT INTO THE MORE HOLISTIC BENEFITS** THAT **SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS** CAN BRING. FROM THE **IMPACT ON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT** AND **REDUCING BUILDINGS' CARBON FOOTPRINT** TO PROVIDING **HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENTS FOR USERS**. BY DESIGNING **SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS AND INTERIORS** IT MEANS THEY CAN **CONTRIBUTE TO A MORE EQUITABLE AND LIVEABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL**.

have seen many change their recruitment strategy to a longer-term view. IR35 has also had an impact, with some practices citing that the perceived complexities of the new rules have made them favour hiring permanent employees.

"The reality is that if you are a good candidate, you will be highly sought after. These candidates are interviewing for multiple roles and considering several offers at once. On top of this, counteroffers are rife and are becoming a key part of retention strategies in practices. Recruitment teams know it will be costly and time-consuming to replace people, and so counteroffers are becoming well used with varying results."

Candidates with technical skills, particularly senior and project architects are in high demand. Employers want plug and play employees who can take on projects. These people need less training and supervision and show their value very early on.

What else do employers want? In interior design, hiring managers are becoming increasingly particular about project experience. If they are hiring for a residential project, the candidate must have residential experience, for example. In architecture, employers are less project fussy, however, the scale of projects has become a key factor in the selection process. Revit remains highly sought after and hiring managers will insist on competency tests to move candidates further along in the recruitment process.

Are there any trends in what candidates want? And is there anything that employers can do to make themselves more attractive? We will cover more on this later using the results from the survey but one of the biggest changes we have seen in candidate motivation is their interest in working for businesses that value ethical and sustainable projects. Some candidates have cited they are tired of the big corporations that seemingly have no interest in the long-term impact of the projects they are delivering.

"We hear genuine excitement when we talk to candidates about a client who is working on sustainable projects. Not only is it an opportunity to broaden their experience but they are bought into the more holistic benefits that sustainable projects can bring. From the impact on the natural environment and reducing buildings' carbon footprint to providing healthier

CANDIDATES BY PROJECT								
	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Commercial	24%	23%	24%	19%	21%	20%	24%	24%
Education	5%	6%	5%	6%	2%	5%	4%	5%
Healthcare	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	6%
Hospitality	3%	6%	7%	13%	13%	12%	9%	11%
Leisure	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Mixed use	13%	11%	12%	11%	12%	11%	15%	10%
Residential	44%	45%	40%	36%	39%	37%	36%	36%
Retail	3.50%	3%	5%	5%	6%	5%	3%	3%
Transport	2.50%	1%	1%	5%	3%	4%	3%	4%

environments for users. By designing sustainable buildings and interiors it means they can contribute to a more equitable and liveable environment for all."

Another trend we are seeing is the demand from candidates for good communication with their employers and external hiring managers. Internally they want to know what is happening with their projects – silence is creating anxiety and is making some candidates more open to hearing about job opportunities. On the other side, those that are in a recruitment process have lost patience for poor communication. If decisions are taking too long, employment contracts are being delayed or if they endure poor interview experiences, these are all becoming a turnoff. With so many candidates interviewing for multiple roles, they have more choices and can be brutal if they want to be.

Are there any new trends in projects this year? Residential and commercial have remained steady year on year with no change in the number of people working on these types of projects. The 'office versus home' debate continues and the demand for innovative workplace design remains. Executive boards continue to ask, 'how can we get more people back in the office?'

and this is reflective of the changes that we are seeing in office space.

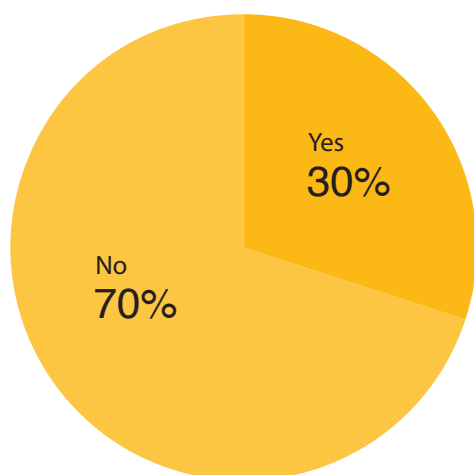
We have seen a slight lift in opportunities in hospitality, with an increase in candidates working on these projects being reflective of this. It has taken time for hospitality to regain some of its former glory. Hotels, restaurants and bars have been success dependent on getting people out and about again. Redesigns and 'instagrammable' interiors are highly sought after.

The contractor market remains relatively unchanged, although vacancies have decreased slightly – it continues to be candidate short across all project types. If we were to comment on where we are potentially going to hit a candidate crisis, it would be in architecture. Hiring managers are still seeking technical individuals with excellent Revit skills but this candidate pool has turned into a puddle. Yet, we continue to struggle to place contractors who want to work fully remotely, it is limiting their opportunities. Most practices will not consider them, citing that they need people available for last minute meetings and site visits, plus many just believe it is a collaborative sector and people need to be together in the office to be successful.

Career progression

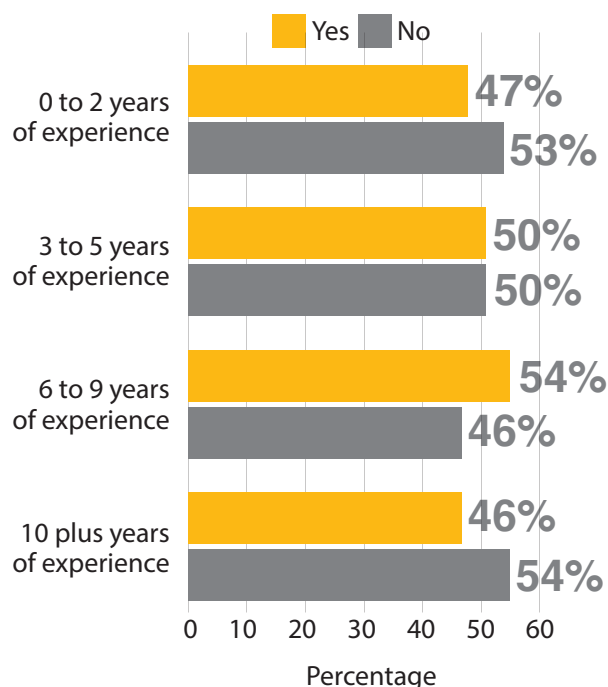
For many people, it can be important that their job offers more than just an occupation. Many want a job that offers a rewarding career and the opportunity to continuously progress. We asked respondents, "Have you received a promotion in the last 12 months?" 30% agreed that they had. Those who were now working in an associate role were the most likely to have been given a promotion out of all the job positions. Respondents working on commercial and mixed-use projects were more likely to be promoted at 35% and 39% respectively.

HAVE YOU RECEIVED A PROMOTION IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?



We continued to find out how many believed they were due a promotion. 49% agreed that they were. Those with six to nine years of experience were the most likely to believe they were due a promotion at 54%.

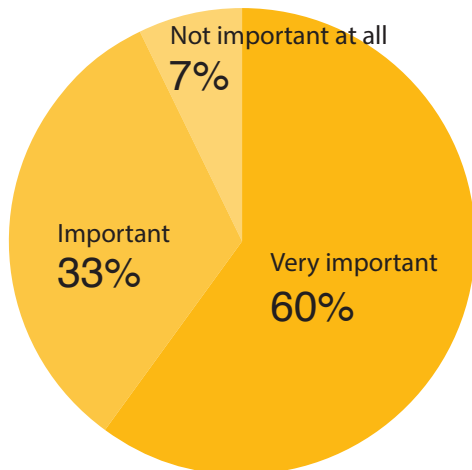
DO YOU FEEL YOU ARE DUE A PROMOTION? BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE



We saw that during the height of the pandemic period, when practice leaders, managers and human resources teams were faced with multiple challenges, performance evaluations took a back seat. Do employees care whether these return and do they make an impact? We asked respondents, "How important are regular progression and development reviews to you?" 93% agreed that they were either very important or important to them, and just 7% did not see them as important.

When we looked at these figures in comparison to whether they had a promotion or thought they were due one, made an impact. 65% of respondents who believed they were due a promotion saw them as very important, as did 68% of those who had received a promotion over the last 12 months.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE REGULAR PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS TO YOU?



So, we have established how important these progression and development reviews are to employees, but how many of the respondents were receiving them? 64% agreed that they were.

"It may seem encouraging that nearly two-thirds of respondents are receiving regular reviews, but how about

the remainder who are not? Yes, performance evaluations can take up a lot of time and focus for everyone involved but they have so many benefits too. Setting expectations and goals, boosting communication and transparency and two-way feedback is integral for employers and employees alike."

When we looked at the respondents who had received a promotion, 72% received regular progression and development reviews, creating clarity that employees need these to achieve promotional opportunities.



OVER ONE THIRD OF EMPLOYEES ARE NOT RECEIVING REGULAR PROGRESSION AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS.

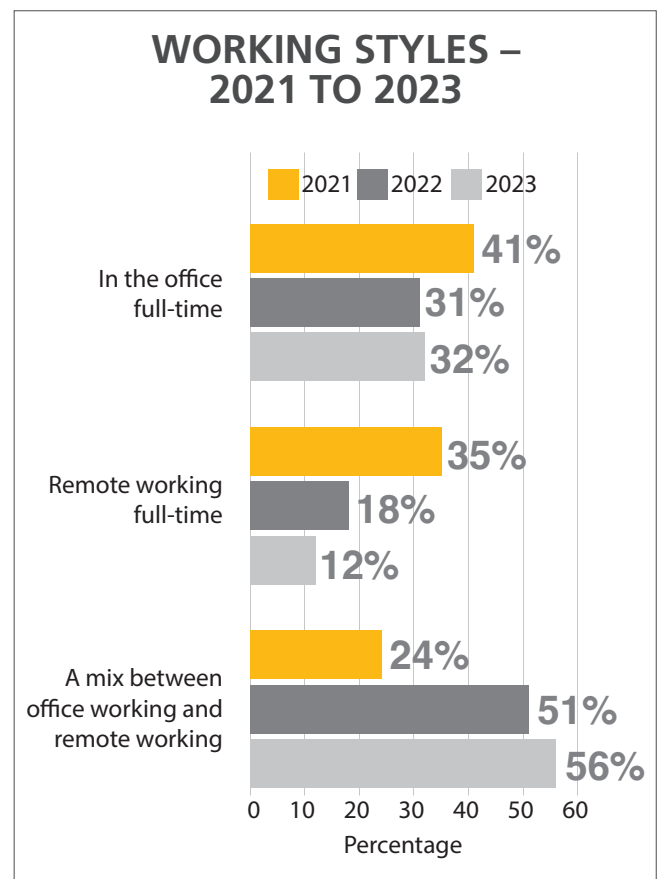


Working styles

It appears the 'office versus home' working debate will not end soon. We continue to have conversations with our clients who want to know what other practices are doing. Candidates are equally as keen to understand what a potential employer's policy on working styles is.

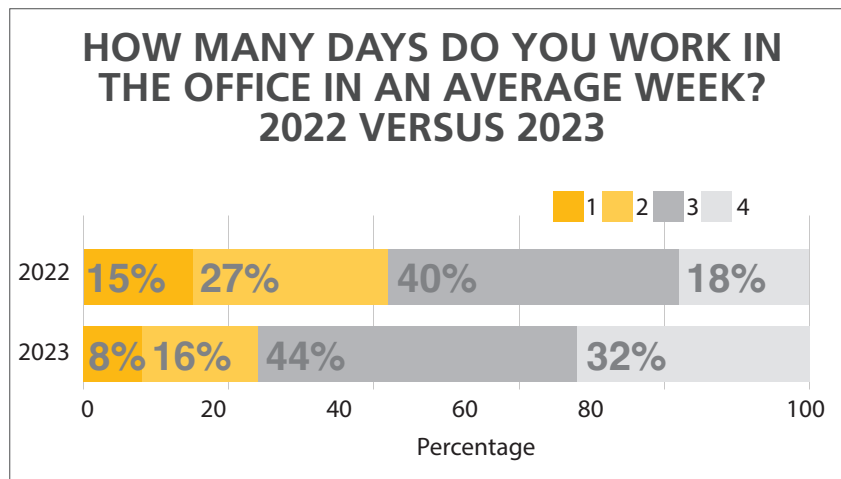


For the third year running, we asked respondents, "How are you currently working?" 32% were working in the office full-time, 12% were working remotely full-time and 56% were working in a hybrid style between the office and remotely. We can see a tiny increase in full-time office work but a decrease in full-time remote working. Hybrid working has increased year on year.



"There are no shockers here and we were pleased to see the increase in hybrid working following the feedback from last year. In our 2022 report, we revealed that 67% of respondents preferred working a mix between the office and remotely. It appears practices have listened, and more people than ever are working in this style."

For those who were working in a hybrid style, how many days were they working in the office? 8% worked one day per week in the office, 16% worked two, 44% worked three and 32% worked four days in the office.



We can see a reduction year on year in the number of employees who are only working one or two days in the office. This is mirrored by the increase in employees being in the office three or four days a week.

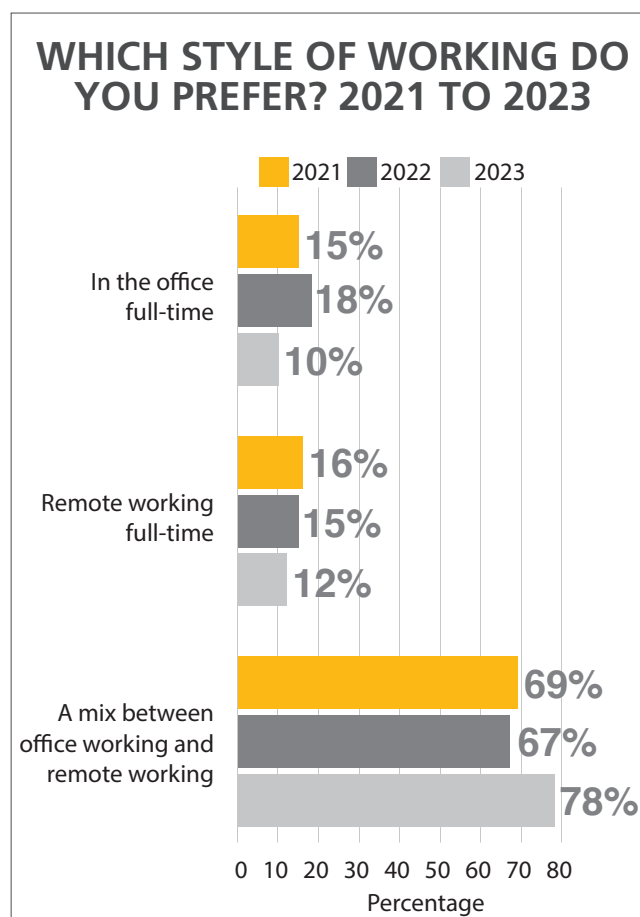
As we see increased numbers of workers working in a hybrid style, what does this mean for leaders and employees?

“WHETHER YOU WANT TO CALL IT PRODUCTIVITY PARANOIA, MICROMANAGEMENT OR HELICOPTER MANAGEMENT, SOME PEOPLE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO TRUST THEIR EMPLOYEES TO GET ON WITH THE JOB REMOTELY.

“Some practices have been very successful in implementing hybrid working and are reaping the benefits of their employees being more productive, using their time wisely at home and in the office to complete certain tasks.

On the other side, some practices are still struggling to adjust to hybrid and remote working. Whether you want to call it productivity paranoia, micromanagement or helicopter management, some people find it difficult to trust their employees to get on with the job remotely. Whilst I understand the principles behind people wanting to work from home, I can’t help but think that if you are being constantly checked on, is it any better than being in the office?”

We asked our respondents what working style they preferred. 10% preferred working in the office full-time, 12% preferred working remotely full-time and 78% preferred working in a hybrid style, a mix between the office and remote working.



Working styles *continued*

When you look at how people are working versus their preferred working style, we can still see disparities. Whilst nearly a third are working in the office full time, in reality, only one in ten want to work this way. Although hybrid working has increased year on year, so has the desire to work this way. In 2022, the difference between actual and desired was 16%, this year it is 22%. We do see, however, a parity between those who are remote working and those who want to work this way.

"My concern for employers is that if they can't provide an employee with their desired working style, another employer in this market is likely to be able to. It isn't just retention in its purest form that employers might need to worry about. Dysfunctional retention is also an issue. If employees stay and underperform because their needs are not met, it may mean you have reluctant stayers who could cause more issues amongst projects and the rest of the team."

We wanted to look at the respondents who preferred working in a hybrid style and what their preferred number of days in the office would be. The biggest

difference was between those working four days in the office versus the desire to do so. Just 7% wanted to be in the office one day a week, 27% wanted to be in the office two days, 50% wanted to be in the office three days and 16% wanted to be in the office for four days. Year on year the number of respondents who wanted to be in the office three or four days a week has increased from 54% to 66%.

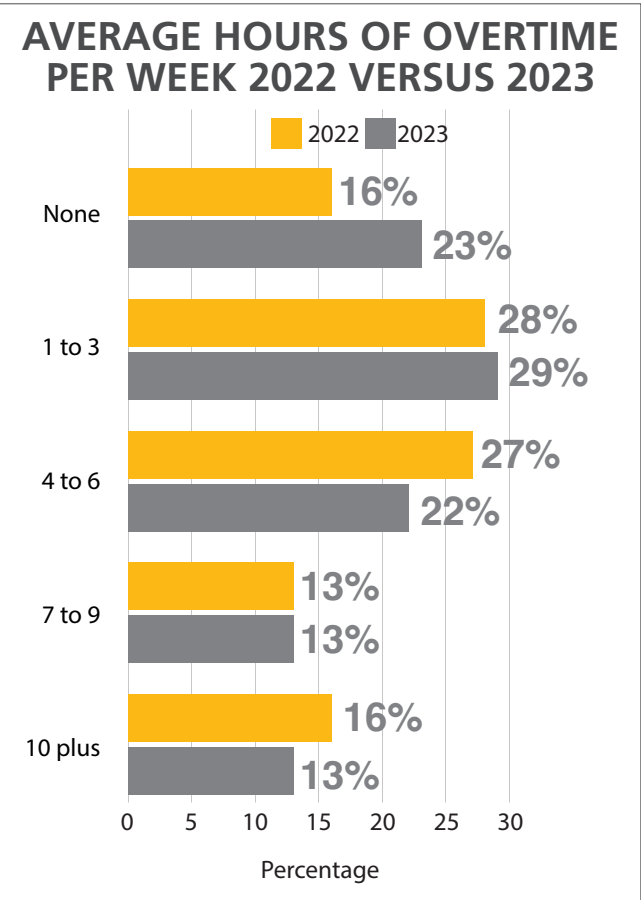
"The Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday trend in workplaces and city centres has been dominating some media headlines. The early fears in the COVID-19 pandemic that people would never return to workplaces were unfounded, but so were the hopes that people's working patterns would return to normal. Instead, we see many cities busy and thriving from Tuesday to Thursday with a decline in footfall on Mondays and Fridays. For workplaces, this could be an opportunity to ensure that collaborative work, celebrations, and staff events happen on these three days when everyone is together. However, we must consider what happens on the remaining days and whether employers are willing to effectively have an active office for only three days a week?"



Overtime

Is the balance between home life and work being disrupted by employers pressuring employees to work overtime without proper compensation? Overtime continues to secure the industry’s media attention and there have been various reports about this issue. We want to determine the situation by asking those who are potentially facing it and to see if there have been any improvements since we asked last year.

We asked respondents, “On average, how many hours of overtime do you work per week?” 13% worked over 10 hours, 13% worked between seven and nine, 22% worked between four and six, 29% worked one to three and 23% worked none, working strictly to their contracted hours.



When we analysed the responses further, we started to see some trends in who was doing overtime and who was not. Respondents working in London were more likely to work overtime than their counterparts working



81% OF PRACTICES DO NOT PAY FOR OVERTIME.



Overtime *continued*

outside of London, with 82% and 65% doing overtime respectively. Employees employed permanently were more likely than contractors to be working overtime with 80% and 62% responding respectively.

Did the number of years of experience in the sectors have any impact? Comparing the more highly experienced versus the less experienced proved interesting. 84% of those with six to nine years of experience and 80% of respondents with ten plus years of experience agreed they were doing overtime every week. On the other end of the experience scale, 68% with zero to two years of experience and 72% with three to five years of experience were doing overtime.

"Whilst I am pleased to see we have seen a decline in overtime overall, this seems too much with groups of workers being hit harder than others. From my own experience, I have observed that overtime can either be mandatory or voluntary, and it often elicits different responses from employees. Some may view it as a normal part of their job, while others may feel resentment towards it. The fact is that in the business world, deadlines must be met, and work must be completed. However, the real question is who bears the burden of overtime and who benefits from it?"

We continued with our questioning and asked, "Does your practice pay for overtime worked?" 81% did not. 10% were paid for overtime by their practice and a further 9% said there were inconsistent rules on it.

"Unpaid overtime can hurt people. It can lead to increased stress and burnout, as employees may feel pressure to work long hours without proper compensation. This can also lead to a decrease in work-life balance, as employees may have less time for personal and family commitments. Unpaid overtime can also have financial consequences, as employees are not

being fairly compensated for their time and effort. In addition, unpaid overtime can create imbalances within a practice, as some employees may be more willing or able to work additional hours without pay."

We are increasingly having more conversations about overtime with candidates too. They want to know the policy before they even agree to an interview. The rise in social media and employer review sites like Glassdoor is leaving practices with no place to hide. Current and previous employees are happy to share with their community about overtime policies.

"In a world embodied by choice, career options are nearly limitless for young people. The Institute for the Future (ITF) predicts that 85% of the jobs in 2030 have yet to be created. Not only are architecture and interior design competing against alternative sectors and professions today, but also potential new jobs we don't even know about yet. We must consider the impact that overtime could have on the continued attractiveness of the profession in the future."

We wanted to hear from the respondents directly on what impact overtime was having on them:

- ◆ The scumbags have us tied to unlimited hour contracts and say, 'just get it done'. **Visualiser working outside of London**
- ◆ Overtime should be compensated for either with time off or additional pay. I don't care about free food for overtime, we need the cash. **Architect working in London**
- ◆ Overtime is expected in this industry. Nobody pays for it. Nobody applauds it. Timescales for projects are based on a 60-hour work week rather than the 40



UNPAID OVERTIME CAN CREATE IMBALANCES WITHIN A PRACTICE, AS SOME EMPLOYEES MAY BE MORE WILLING OR ABLE TO WORK ADDITIONAL HOURS WITHOUT PAY.

hours that we are contracted. **Senior Interior Designer working in London**

◆ Paid overtime would be a good industry standard. **Architect working in London**

◆ During the pandemic, I worked 15-20 hours of overtime per week. This was necessary and I was happy to contribute so that fewer people had to lose their jobs. However, now, this needs to come back to not even just pre-pandemic standards. We need to change industry expectations. Burnout is experienced by many, including myself, and it's saddening to know that there's no way around it whilst staying in this industry. **Senior Interior Designer working outside of London**

◆ I recently changed jobs because I was doing an average of 15-20 hours of unpaid overtime, and this led me to sickness, stress and burnout. **Architect working in London**

◆ This is a standard in the industry that we have not been able to correct, but this is also down to the individual and the work culture in the UK, where it seems that it is important to look busy. **Architect working in London**

◆ Overtime is the slavery of this century; it should be banned from the RIBA practices. They often get projects with very low fees which means hundreds of unpaid hours of overtime. I am sick of this exploitative culture. **Architect working in London**

◆ Unpaid overtime should simply be illegal. It's bad for the individuals and it's bad for the industry and our profession which is worth less and less because basically, people are working for free. **Project Architect working in London**

“

THE SCUMBAGS HAVE US TIED TO UNLIMITED HOUR CONTRACTS AND SAY, 'JUST GET IT DONE'. SURVEY RESPONDENT



Remuneration

The rising cost of living means many are looking for salary increases in line with rising inflation rates. If we look at the UK alone, the cost of living is at a 30 year high and this is mainly because of the price of energy, fuel, and food. With inflation rates set to soar further in 2023, this means that people will need to make financial sacrifices and make crucial changes to their lifestyles if they can't secure pay rises in line with it.

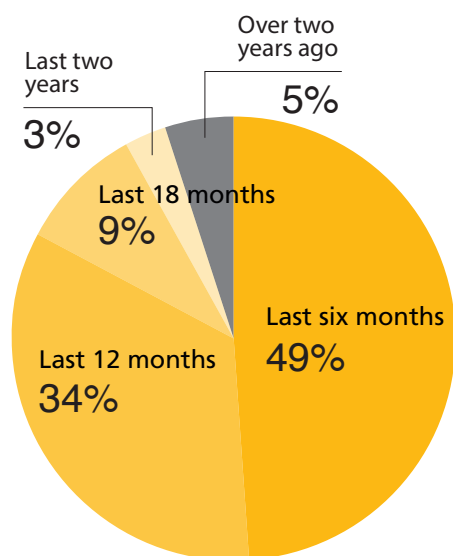


I PREDICT THAT 2023 WILL BE A YEAR WITH MORE REMUNERATION CRISIS TALKS THAN EVER BEFORE.

So, what is the situation with pay rises? We asked, "Have you received a pay rise in the last five years?" 86% agreed that they had. We continued and asked, "When did you last receive a pay rise?" 49% received a pay rise in the last six months, 34% in the last 12 months, 9% in the last 18 months, 3% in the last two years and 5% over two years ago.

"There were no surprises here. You can see the lack of pay rises during the worst part of the pandemic. 83% of pay rises were given in the last 12 months which aligns with the architecture and interior design sectors' recovery. You can also see that a further 5% of pay rises were before the pandemic started."

WHEN DID YOU LAST RECEIVE A PAY RISE?



AVERAGE SALARY BY ROLE AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Role	0 to 2 years	3 to 5 years	6 to 9 years	10 years plus
3D Visualiser	£27,888	£35,000	£38,950	£49,500
Architect	£35,125	£38,416	£46,260	£49,419
Architectural Assistant	£28,745	£33,000	£37,665	£39,875
Architectural Technician	£28,950	£35,150	£42,085	£48,950
Project Architect	£38,000	£45,375	£49,450	£53,600
Interior Designer	£25,750	£33,326	£43,725	£52,730
Interior Technician	£24,250	£30,500	£43,075	£51,750



"Amid the pandemic, I think people were understanding that pay rises were off the cards and people accepted it for the good of their practice. I don't see this goodwill holding out for much longer. People will expect their pay to reach inflation rates and cost of living levels. I predict that 2023 will be a year with more remuneration crisis talks than ever before, direct from employees but also up to board level."

The percentage of a pay rise can make a big difference to the recipient, especially when we consider the rise in the cost of living. We asked respondents what percentage of their salary their pay rise was. Overall, 31% had a pay rise of under five per cent, 44% received a five to ten per cent pay rise, 18% received a ten to twenty per cent pay rise and just 7% received a pay rise of over twenty per cent.

If we consider that inflation rates have now surpassed 5% and are set to continue to rise these pay increases will simply not be enough.

"Inflation and the price of goods have been going up and often not in line with the percentage of pay rises. People don't just want pay increases to match the uptick in the cost of living or have to continually live payslip to payslip. Many want pay rises to ultimately improve their lives and advance their opportunity to better things."

We asked respondents if they believed salaries were keeping up with the cost of living in their sector. 92% said no. We wanted to hear directly from these respondents:

◆ As inflation rises, architects' salaries seem to be slipping even further behind other professions. **Project Architect working in London**

◆ I just wish everyone would know how much work an architect or an interior designer does like drafting and making the full project on sketchup. It is very hectic and the time in front of LED laptop screens gives you bad headaches. I just wish we would get a respectable salary for this job. Everyone dreams of big lavish houses and



92% OF RESPONDENTS DO NOT THINK SALARIES ARE KEEPING UP WITH THE COST OF LIVING.

Remuneration *continued*

who makes it possible? The designers, architects, and engineers. **Junior Interior Designer working outside of London**

◆ Eight years of study to be paid the same wage I did when I worked as a bar manager. **Architect working in London**

◆ Businesses and studios need to get with the times. Treating staff fairly will ensure you don't have high staff turnover. The only way to receive pay rises nowadays is to move companies. **FF&E Designer working in London**

◆ Too much responsibility for too little money. **Architect working in London**

◆ The architecture industry is deeply involved in a culture of exploitation, long hours, unpaid overtime, and poor management. Salaries are a joke, we have great responsibilities and very little recognition, progression is a slippery slope, and pay rises never catch up with the cost of living, especially in London. **Architect working in London**

◆ It is truly outrageous how low salaries are in the architecture industry, especially for architects given the workload, responsibilities, stress, and deadline demands. Architects should unionise and demand higher fees and pay given the value that we bring to projects. No doubt architects are fleeing to client/contractor side jobs given the horrendous state of our profession. Why study for eight years to get a mediocre job and be expected to work overtime? **Architect working in London**

◆ I am not aware if salaries are higher since I care about flexibility more than the salary. But with the high expenses, I believe there should be a raise in general.

Landscape Architect working in London

◆ I appreciate that my current employer respects my family commitments and is prepared to help me achieve my goals in the workplace whilst also balancing the care of my young family; they respect the skills I have accrued over more than a decade of working in the industry, pay me fairly for my time, and are compassionate towards my work-life balance, which is the most important aspect of working life for me right now. In return for this respect and support, I work with an intense focus on achieving the best quality of work and giving value for money, using my time at work in the best possible way. I would not wish to work for an employer who demands long hours as standard with no regard for family life.

Senior Interior Designer working outside of London

◆ The contract hourly rate has not risen in 10 years and tax has increased due to IR35. I plan to leave the industry at some point due to this. **Architect working outside of London**

◆ Salaries have stagnated for decades. The salary raise I received simply put me in the right pay grade, of very low salary bands. The RIBA pay scale is still used by employers to keep our fees down and the ones produced by recruiters are not accepted. More needs to be done to push salaries up as those working in architecture can no longer afford to do so. **Project Architect working in London**



THE ARCHITECTURE INDUSTRY IS DEEPLY INVOLVED IN A CULTURE OF EXPLOITATION, LONG HOURS, UNPAID OVERTIME, AND POOR MANAGEMENT. SALARIES ARE A JOKE, WE HAVE GREAT RESPONSIBILITIES AND VERY LITTLE RECOGNITION, PROGRESSION IS A SLIPPERY SLOPE, AND PAY RISES NEVER CATCH UP WITH THE COST OF LIVING, ESPECIALLY IN LONDON. SURVEY RESPONDENT

Benefits and bonuses

Employee benefits are an important part of an overall remuneration package. Like an employee's salary, they are vital to any practice in the successful retention, as well as the attraction of new employees. We asked respondents out of a series of options, what benefits they receive in their current role.

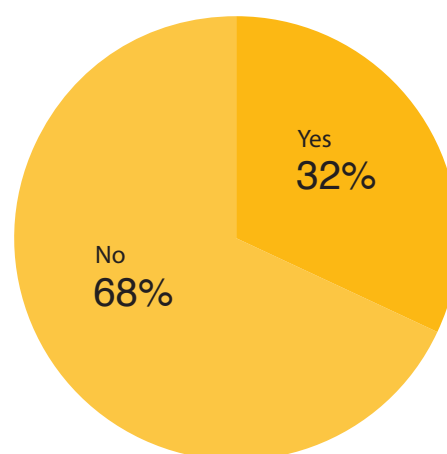
BENEFITS RECEIVED	
Benefit	Percentage received
Bonus	47%
Company Car/Car Allowance	5%
Duvet Days	1%
Enhanced Maternity/Adoption/Paternity Benefits	10%
Enhanced Pension	13%
Flexi-Time	26%
Four-day work week	5%
Gallery/Event Passes	4%
Gym Membership	10%
Industry Magazine Subscriptions	6%
Mental Health Apps E.G. Calm / Headspace	10%
Mobile Phone / Laptop	38%
Personal Development Fund	4%
Private Dental Care	11%
Private Medical (Individual and Family)	12%
Private Medical (Individual only)	18%
Shares	4%
Staff Events	38%
Working From Home	76%
Other	6%
None of the above	14%

Whilst this is an extensive list, it could prove useful to employers when they consider their overall benefits packages. Other benefits mentioned by respondents included a ride to work scheme, lunches, transportation, and their Birthday off.

"One of the most significant changes we have seen in recruitment over the last 12 months is how job offers are presented. Hiring managers have identified that an offer with just a salary is not enough anymore. Candidates' expectations have changed - they want to see the full package. We are now seeing offers that include annual leave entitlement, healthcare provision, pension, and death in service, working styles and other value-adding benefits. The best hiring managers are presenting offers that include professional development and in-house training information too. This is an innovative and simple way to show a potential employee you are invested in them right from the start."

We asked respondents, "Do you think your employer offers enough benefits?" Only 32% thought that they did.

DO YOU THINK YOUR EMPLOYER OFFERS ENOUGH BENEFITS?



"What I have found in my many years of recruitment is that employees don't always know what benefits their role includes. It is imperative when working on recruitment campaigns as well as when you are driving employee retention, that the communication about benefits is clear, concise, and shared regularly. A hidden list on a staff noticeboard or omitting benefits from a job advert won't cut it in today's market. Regular communications with your current

Benefits and bonuses *continued*



team are necessary. As is making sure it is at the forefront of your recruitment process. This will produce excellent results in both retention and attraction in the long term."

Keeping up to date with current and prospective employees' needs in terms of benefits and pay, could be the difference between maintaining employment retention levels as well as having the ability to secure the best talent in the market.

"Balancing what different employees need and being transparent will be key. Utilising current employees to have

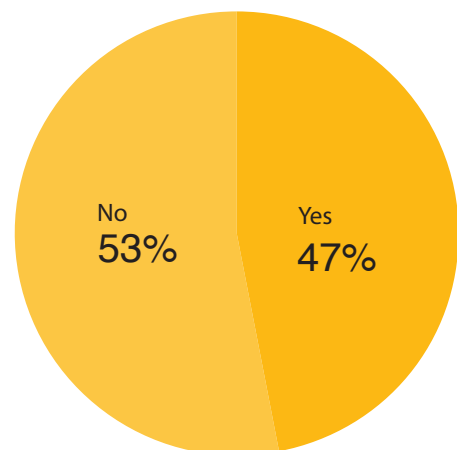
conversations about what they see as valuable in a benefits package, instead of making assumptions will be a huge step forward. Ensuring that the benefits that an employer offers include ways of improving work-life balance rather than just monetary benefits could be a real distinguisher in the market as an employer of choice."

Bonuses, like benefits, can have a significant impact on a remuneration package. We asked, "Do you receive a bonus?". 47% agreed that they did.

“

A HIDDEN LIST OF BENEFITS ON A STAFF NOTICEBOARD OR OMITTING BENEFITS FROM A JOB ADVERT WON'T CUT IT IN TODAY'S MARKET.

DO YOU RECEIVE A BONUS?





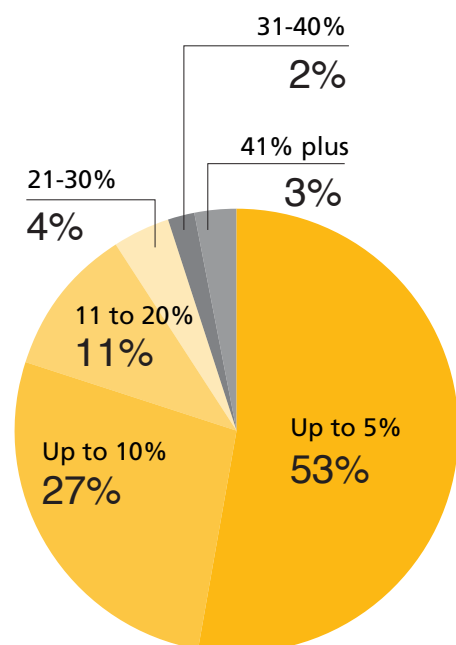
BONUSES, PARTICULARLY PERFORMANCE-BASED, HAVE HISTORICALLY BEEN AN EFFECTIVE WAY FOR PRACTICES TO INCREASE THE POTENTIAL EARNING OF EMPLOYEES IN A WAY THAT IS ECONOMICAL AND COST-EFFECTIVE.

"Bonuses, particularly performance-based, have historically been an effective way for practices to increase the potential earning of employees in a way that is economical and cost-effective."

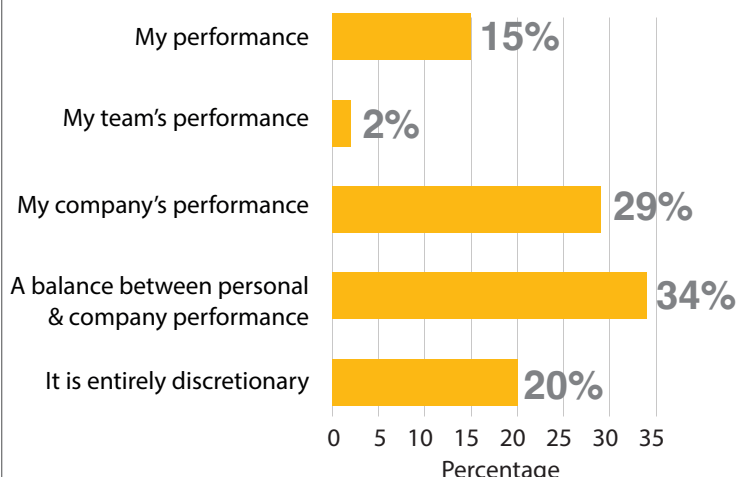
We wanted to find out from respondents who received a bonus what their bonus was based on. 15% said it was based on their performance, 2% said it was based on their team's performance, 29% said it was based on the company's performance, 34% said it was a balance between their performance and the company's and

finally 20% said it was entirely discretionary. How much of a bonus an employee receives is also important. We asked respondents, "What is your expected bonus amount (percentage of salary)?" 53% said up to five per cent, 27% said up to 10%, 11% responded it was between eleven and twenty per cent, 2% answered thirty one to forty per cent and 3% said forty one per cent plus.

WHAT IS YOUR EXPECTED BONUS AMOUNT (PERCENTAGE OF SALARY)?



WHAT IS YOUR BONUS BASED ON?



"I think in today's market, bonus amounts are going to receive a lot of attention. If employees fail to achieve a higher salary, bonuses are going to become more and more important. Bonuses can be a great way to motivate, reward and attract employees. However, with the pressure on the cost of living, I must raise the concern that employees could potentially burn themselves out in their desperation to secure their bonus."

Job security

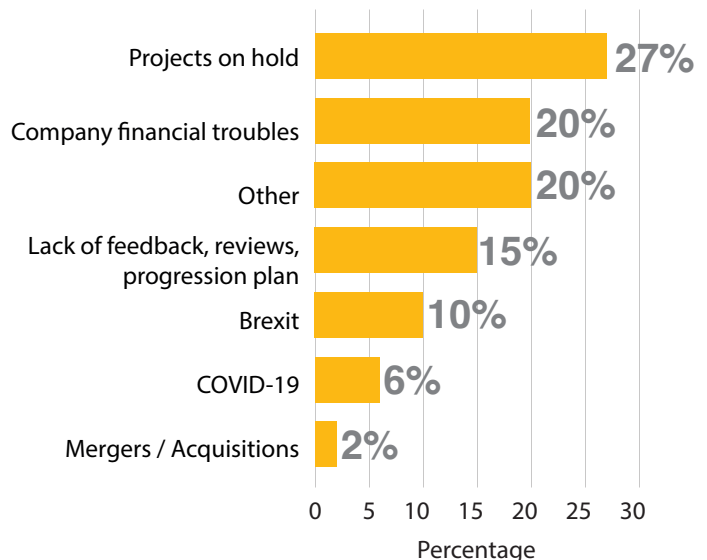
We asked respondents, “Are you concerned about your job security?” 36% agreed that they were, a small decrease year on year. Why are over a third of people still concerned about their jobs when the sectors have made such a good recovery? We asked respondents to choose a reason. This year, projects being on hold took the top answer.

“We already mentioned in the market trends section that candidates were experiencing anxiety when they weren’t being communicated with about their projects. If projects are on hold and they don’t know when they are expected to recommence, I can empathise that this will raise concerns about their job security. This is where communication will be key. The adage saying, ‘no news is good news’ clearly isn’t cutting it.”

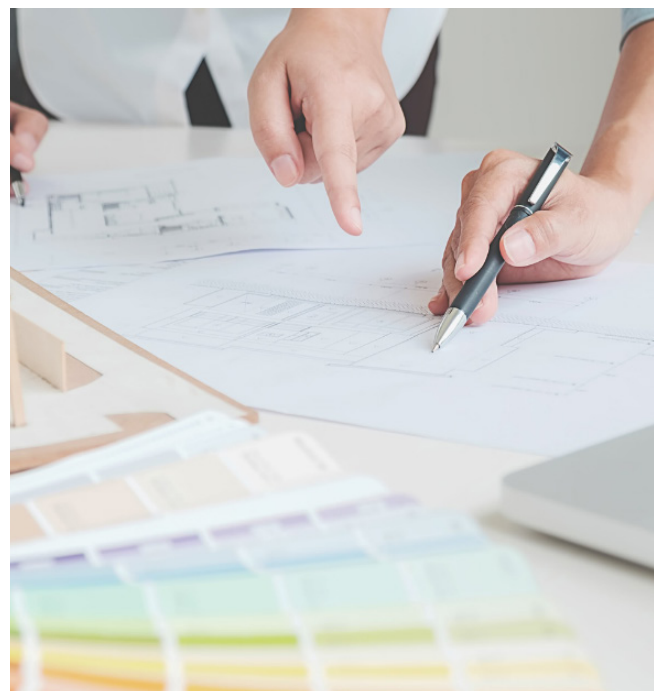
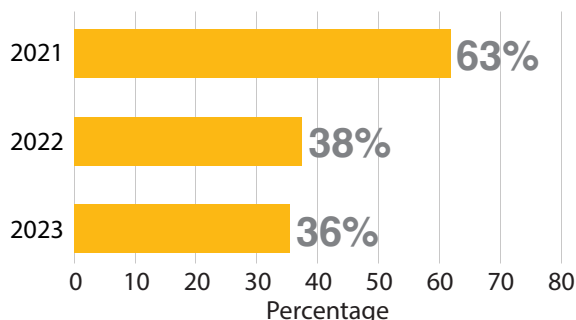
Company financial troubles was the joint second top answer. We opened the survey to let respondents choose their own reason and all the responses here were related to economic uncertainty and the potential recession.

“Again, I think this is about communication, or perhaps lack of it. Employees quickly understand if their practice is experiencing financial troubles and they can read any online news website to find stories on the economy. If employees are being regularly consulted on what is happening in the practice and what the impact of the economic situation potentially may have, it will help to create increased levels of trust and more reassurance.”

WHAT HAS MADE YOU CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR JOB SECURITY?



RESPONDENTS CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR JOB SECURITY – 2021 TO 2023



Retention



With employment rates back to pre-COVID-19 levels, retention has once again become a priority for architecture and interior design practices in their people strategies. With an increase in vacancies year on year, has this impacted people’s desire to change jobs? Is the great resignation upon us?

We asked respondents, “Do you plan to change jobs in the next 12 months?” 48% agreed that they were, a decrease from 50% year on year. When we looked at the response by years of experience, we saw retention increase at all levels apart from those with over ten years of experience, but this was minor.

“We are still seeing that nearly 50% are planning to change jobs over the next 12 months. I think that whilst this is not ideal for practice leaders to have to think about the need to replace people when they might be trying to make growth hires, it does show confidence in the future of the market. When the threat of a recession is looming, many employees sit tight in their safe port in a storm. This isn’t the case right now. We aren’t seeing an increase in applications but what

CHANGING JOBS BY YEARS OF EXPERIENCE – 2016 TO 2023								
Years of experience	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
0 - 2 years	33%	54%	40%	58%	52%	55%	69%	66%
3 - 5 years	41%	45%	47%	46%	48%	58%	51%	41%
6 - 9 years	49%	43%	47%	55%	29%	68%	56%	52%
10 years plus	32%	38%	36%	44%	36%	64%	46%	47%

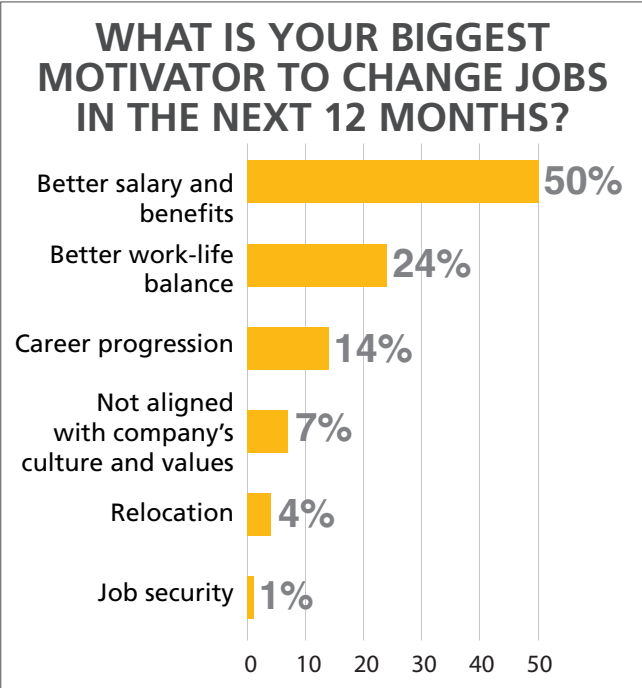
Retention *continued*

is apparent is people's willingness to have conversations with headhunters."

Looking at the motivations of job seekers can help to illustrate any pain points and areas of improvement that might be needed. Job-seeking motivations can vary and be impacted by multiple factors. We considered whether people this year were simply more confident and optimistic about seeking new employment due to the number of roles in the market. We also wondered whether people were simply less loyal than they once were.

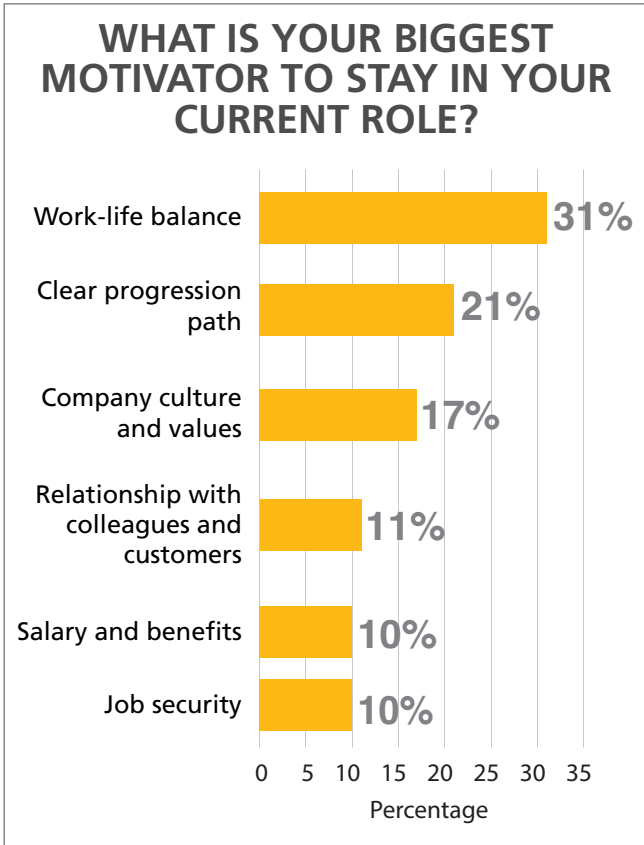
We asked those who said they would be job-seeking what their top motivation was. A better salary and benefits package was the top response at 50%, an increase from 33% in our survey last year. When we analysed the data further against other answers from the respondents, 60% of those who had not received a pay increase were planning on looking for a new job. Salary and benefits are having a huge impact on job seeking.

"We can see the impact that pay and benefits are having on job-seeking levels. People want more – more money and more benefits. We would never advocate increasing pay as a long-term retention strategy, but we are seeing candidates that will consider changing jobs for small salary rises, that for many will not even cover inflation increases."



With 52% of respondents stating that they were planning to stay put in their current job, we were interested to see what factors influenced this. The top motivator to stay with their employer was work-life balance at 31%, followed by a clear progression path at 21% and company culture and values at 17%. The top three motivators have not changed since last year.

"If we look at these top reasons you get a sense of why people are staying put. Firstly, having a clear progression path can help employees feel challenged. Setting goals for more responsibility and promotion through hard work can help keep employees interested and reduce job dissatisfaction. Providing a good work-life balance whether through hybrid working or flexible hours can make employees feel trusted and that they have greater autonomy and responsibility for their work, as well as having time to enjoy their free time with personal and family commitments. When an employee believes in an employer's values and culture, they can feel more involved and part of something. When people feel like this, they tend to become more loyal."



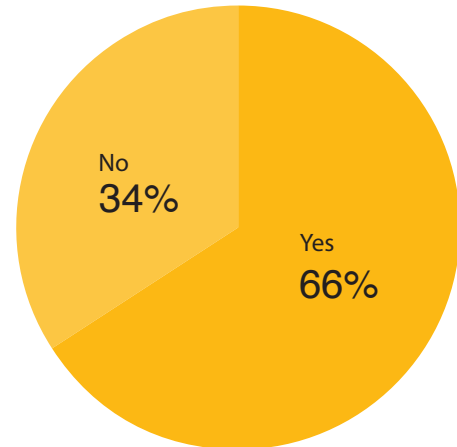
Career moves

Understanding why job seekers want to change jobs and what they are looking for in their next career move is going to be crucial in recruitment in 2023.

We started by asking respondents, "Would you turn down a job offer if it did not offer a minimum of one day per week remote working?" 66% agreed that they would, a significant increase since we asked last year when 46% responded this way.

"If this sentiment turns into reality, employers that will not allow remote or hybrid working could potentially be losing two-thirds of their target employees, thus limiting their choices in a competitive marketplace."

WOULD YOU TURN DOWN A JOB OFFER IF IT DID NOT OFFER A MINIMUM OF ONE DAY PER WEEK REMOTE WORKING?



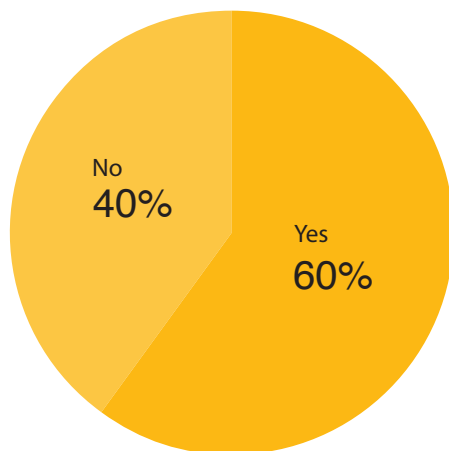
Career moves *continued*

When we compared the responses between females and males, females were more likely to turn down a job offer at 74% and 63% respectively. If employers are looking to create a diverse workforce of males and females, this might be something that they need to address.

We continued and asked respondents, "Would you turn down a job offer that did not offer flexible working hours?" 60% agreed that they would.

"The responses to these two questions are demonstrating that flexibility in the workplace is not a passing trend and looks like it is here to stay. Workplaces have experienced exponential change over the last three years, and I think we could see more yet to come."

WOULD YOU TURN DOWN A JOB OFFER IF IT DID NOT OFFER FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS?

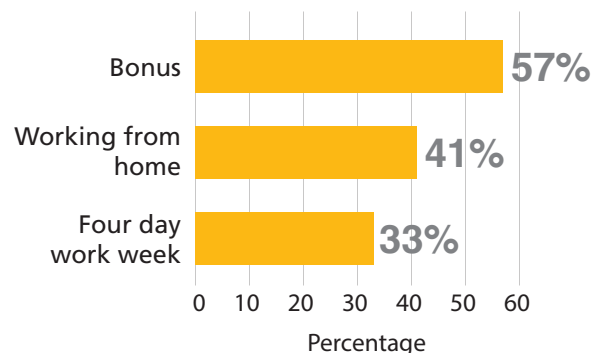


Over the last few years, we have shared that people working in architecture and interior design have prioritised work-life balance over salary. However, in a cost of living crisis, we wondered whether this would still be the case. We actually saw a further increase in those prioritising work-life balance over salary this year, from 75% in our 2022 report to 77% today.

Remuneration and benefits will always play some factor in choosing a new role, so we asked in our survey what the top three benefits would be the most important. Just like last year, bonus came out on top. Working from home, again mirroring the results from last year came out as

the second most important benefit. We added an answer option to this question this year of a four day work week. This came out as the third most popular benefit.

WHAT WOULD BE THE TOP THREE MOST IMPORTANT BENEFITS IN YOUR NEXT JOB?



"I've kept a close eye on the four day work week UK trial initiative by 4 Week Global and Autonomy, that the BBC has been covering through 2022. The pilot saw more than 70 firms taking part in the scheme where employees got 100% pay for 80% of their normal hours worked. What the trial has shown is that for most of the businesses, productivity has been maintained or even improved. However, some businesses that have comparatively fixed or inflexible systems or cultures are finding the transition much harder."

We asked our LinkedIn followers back in October 2022 whether they thought a four day work week sounded appealing and 97% agreed that it did.

"It would be easy for me to say that practice leaders should implement a four day work week based on the responses but there is a lot to consider here. I think what we are getting a clearer picture of is that people need different things today. I'm just not sure that businesses can carry on with the traditional 9 to 5 in the office everyday model."

How important is an employer's diversity and inclusion policy to people? 90% of respondents said it was important or very important to them. Diversity and inclusion are related but distinct concepts that are often used together in discussions about creating a fair and equitable workplace or society. Diversity refers to the presence of a wide range of individuals with different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives. Inclusion, on

the other hand, refers to the active effort to ensure that all individuals feel valued and included within a group or organisation. Let us consider the potential advantages employers will experience by working towards diversity and inclusion in their teams.

"Inclusion can help to create a sense of belonging which can improve morale and job satisfaction among people. If all people are treated equally and with respect, they will feel valued and supported. They are also more likely to promote innovation and resilience too, drawing on diverse perspectives and experiences from their colleagues. In this kind of positive work culture, people will feel more comfortable to speak up about their ideas, improvements or concerns and they will come together to address these."

The values of a potential employer can be important too. We asked respondents if it was important to them that their values matched with their employer's. 95% said it was very important or important.

"I think practices are already on to this and we are seeing more job adverts that include a practice's values right from the candidate attraction stage. Savvy human resources leaders will know that culture is important, not only for the practice but for the employees too. When values misalign, it can create a disconnect between employer and employee. Shared values also help create positive work environments. When employees' values match those of their employer they are more likely to be satisfied and fulfilled in their job and contribute more meaningfully. It makes it more likely that employees will be bought into an employer's goals and priorities too, fostering a sense of shared purpose and commitment. Overall, having values that align with your employer is important for both personal satisfaction and the success of the business."

We asked those who took part in the survey to leave any commentary that they wanted to on diversity, inclusion, and employer values:

◆ On paper, the employer boasts and has policies in line with my values- but in practice, these are not actioned.
Project Architect working in London

◆ When looking at new contract jobs, I ALWAYS request what the gender split is at the senior management level and avoid those of all/most men. **Senior Interior Designer working outside of London**

◆ You see your colleagues more than friends and family. It is very important that you are in an environment with supportive, friendly, like-minded people. **Mid-weight Interior Designer working in London**

◆ More diversity is needed in the workplace. I am the only person of colour in my company right now. **Junior Interior Design working outside of London**

◆ I have seen that values and inclusion have become a big part of the industry, however, there is still a long way to go. **Architectural Technician working outside of London**

◆ I couldn't give a hoot about the employer, I'm just there for the money in return for my services. **Architectural Assistant working outside of London**

◆ On changing jobs, I am more inclined to accept an offer from a company that has at least one female director, and architects from diverse backgrounds. **Architect working outside of London**

"As candidates' needs and wants change, so must attraction models. People want to know about an employer's values and whether they match their own. Many want to see representation and diversity. If you also factor in the demands of Generation Z and Generation Alpha (who are yet to enter our workforces) then traditional candidate attraction models might become obsolete. With social media platforms like TikTok, and technology such as Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, hiring managers will be under increasing pressure to create micro-moments for these generations in their attraction methods – their attention spans and patience are regarded as less than generations gone by."



**ON PAPER, THE EMPLOYER
BOASTS AND HAS POLICIES IN
LINE WITH MY VALUES- BUT IN
PRACTICE, THESE ARE NOT
ACTIONED. SURVEY RESPONDENT**

Final thoughts

After several tough years, we are so pleased to see the architecture and interior design sectors return with so much success. From both a personal and business perspective, we have enjoyed the opportunity to visit our clients once again and attend events across the country. Celebrating new projects, creating campaigns for growth hires, and helping people find their dream jobs have all been highlights for us this year.

Candidates are confident and our clients are still busy hiring. As we move forward through 2023, we hope the resilience and perseverance life lessons that we have all acquired from years gone by, will help to ensure that the architecture and interior design sectors weather any potential economic downturn that might be on the horizon.

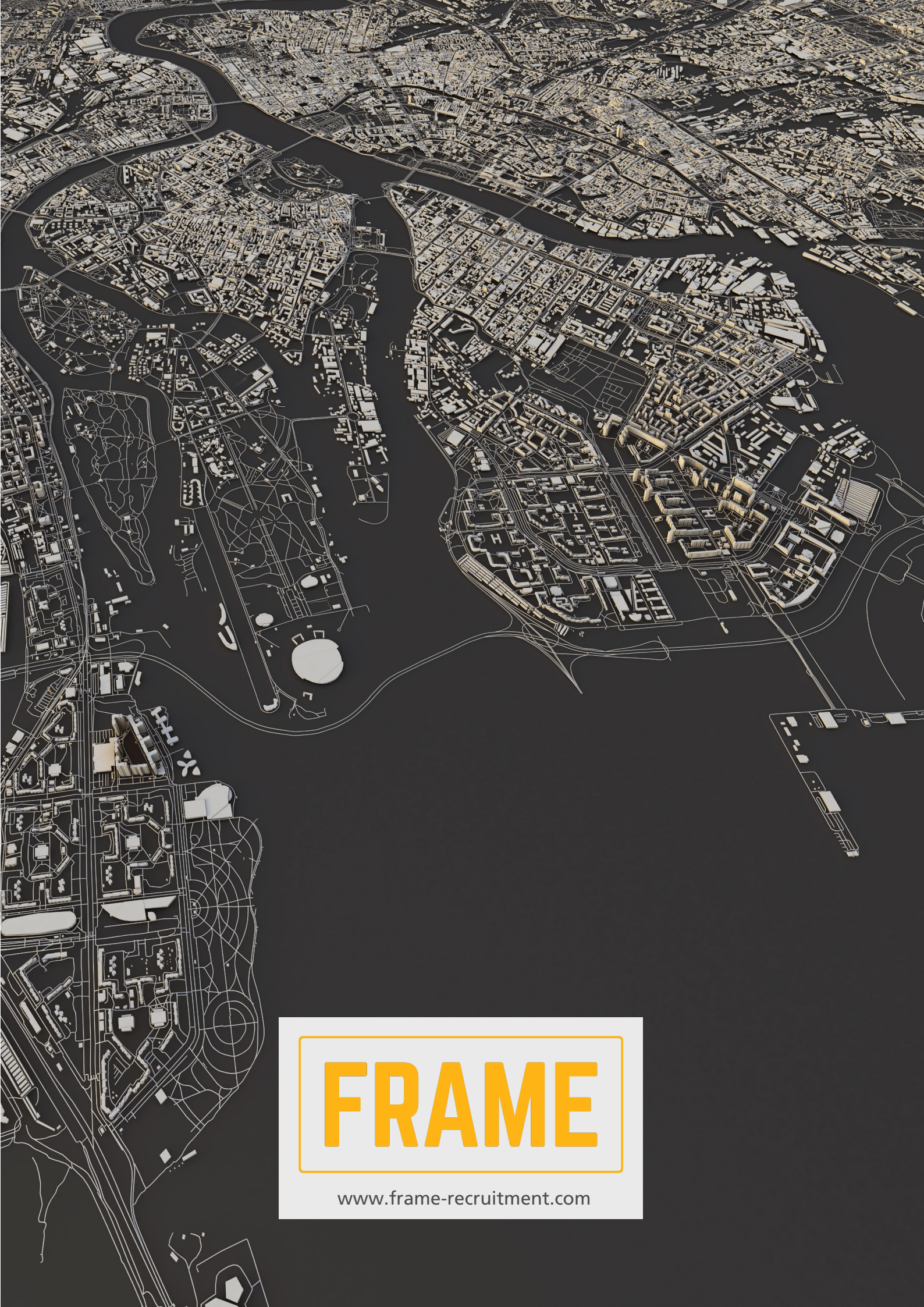
We are pleased we have been able to create this eighth consecutive survey. We would like to take this opportunity to say a heartfelt thank you to all the people who have taken part and supported us with our

research over the years. It is always a pleasure to create these reports. We feel privileged that so many people working in the architecture and interior design sectors trust us with their thoughts and feelings and we can share trends and key findings with the wider community.

We hope that you have found this year's report as interesting and enjoyable as it was to research, analyse and produce.

Martin





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