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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE SURVEY – Q3/2021

Return to the workplace : Full-time work onsite and hybrid work on an equal footing

37% of Belgian employers expect workers to return to work full time at their workplace by the end of the year, but 38% of them will also offer hybrid work arrangements.

Brussels, Belgium 29 June 2021 – With the implementation of the second phase of the summer plan, the return to normality will accelerate in many sectors of society, and in companies as well. Although teleworking is no longer mandatory, it remains highly recommended. According to a ManpowerGroup survey, 37% of Belgian employers expect workers to be back in the workplace full time by the end of the year, but 38% of them will offer hybrid work arrangements. HR will play a crucial role in this post-covid world, where it will be a question of balancing companies' needs, with the workers' new expectations in the context of increasing talent shortages.

Over the next few months, the world of work will continue to operate in hybrid mode, alternating workplace based working and remote working. According to the ManpowerGroup survey, 37% of the 318 employers surveyed in Belgium will ask their workers to be back in the workplace all the time, 27% of them will favour a hybrid model that supports teleworking, while 19% of employers surveyed will choose a hybrid model prioritizing tasks performed in the workplace. Only 13% of employers surveyed will maintain full remote working and 4% of employers are undecided. More globally, 3 out of 4 Belgian employers will require at least 50% of their workforce to be based in the workplace all or most of the time, due to the type of roles they fulfill.

" As the economic recovery gets underway, employers must mobilize their employees yet remain vigilant about compliance with health guidelines" explains Philippe Lacroix, Managing Director of ManpowerGroup BeLux. "During this phase, HR must design new organizational methods and reconcile their priorities with the new flexibility demands of employees. As our survey confirms, teleworking has shown there are limits in terms of well-being, productivity, collaboration and corporate culture. But it would be unrealistic to aim to get back to working life as it was before the health crisis. On the contrary, the challenge lies in offering more meaning to working together and to be creative in providing the life balance that we all aspire to. It is crucial to find ways to meet these expectations, since 83% of Belgian employers find it difficult to fill their vacancies. Flexibility has become a key element in attracting and retaining talent. "

Beware of the mis-match between what employers expect and what workers want

The survey highlighted employers' reservations about teleworking: 25% of employers surveyed in Belgium believe that teleworking has had an adverse impact on the well-being of employees. Other concerns employers cited included productivity (23%), collaboration (19%) and corporate culture (11%). Innovation was mentioned by only 4% of employers.



Introduce more flexibility within the company

But teleworking is not the only way to add flexibility to company life, and the employers surveyed were open to building in new kinds of flexibility for roles traditionally seen as inflexible. Among the solutions proposed, 42% of the employers surveyed say they want to offer a blend of remote and workplace-based working, 40% recommend flexible start and finish times, 39% are moving towards flexible or shorter hours, 28% offer the choice between various work locations, 22% offer job sharing, while 16% say they do not want to offer any kind of flexibility.

Role of HR in the post-covid world

The health, economic and social crisis has strengthened the strategic role of HR, which will have to develop new organizational models and meet the many challenges companies face. The HR leaders interviewed in Belgium want to put people back at the heart of their action and have set new priorities: in order, worker health and safety (68%), new work models - New Way of Working/NWOW - (40%), more upskilling, learning and development (16%), a more data-driven approach (9%), leadership and manager development (9%) and finally diversity, equality and inclusion (6%).

5 ways employers can improve the new normal for everyone

" Now we have an opportunity to re-shape a future that is closer to what we know workers have wanted all along – more flexible, more virtual, more trusting and enabling a better blend of work and home life, whilst still allowing organizations to access talent that can work from anywhere " explains Philippe Lacroix.

To achieve this, ManpowerGroup makes five recommendations for this transition phase:

- 1. Ask why. Why come back?** Tasks that were never intended to be done remotely were performed efficiently. During this phase of returning to the workplace, it is important to answer the question: 'Why come back?' by giving meaning and providing added value.
- 2. Prioritize upskilling and learning and development.** During the health crisis, digital transformation accelerated by putting skills under pressure. Encourage all of your staff to take ownership of their career paths by upgrading their skills.
- 3. Offer flexibility for the many, not the few.** Offering employees the opportunity to work remotely isn't the only way to offer flexible work and a better balance between work and home. For roles that need to be done in the workplace, offer staggered start and finish times, more flexible scheduling or better project management.
- 4. Pay attention to physical and emotional wellbeing.** Feelings of isolation, stress, fear and anxiety will be a COVID-19 legacy. Prioritize emotional wellbeing, granting it the same importance as physical and organizational measures, so that your employees are confident, healthy and productive.
- 5. Build resilience and anchor it in the company culture.** Companies must build a climate of trust and and be prepared to listen, to allow their staff to manage their priorities and work with less stress. To achieve this, invest in strong leadership and implement transparent communication and a culture promoting access to well-being.



Belgium Results RETURN TO THE WORKPLACE - Q3/2021



PUTTING THE HUMAN BACK INTO HR – SHIFTING PRIORITIES



Employee Health & Wellbeing



New Work Models – incl part-time, contract, flexible



More Upskilling, Learning & Development



Become More Data-Driven



Leadership & Manager Development



Diversity, Equity & Inclusion



Mind the Gap: What Employers Are Planning Compared to What Workers Want



3 of every 4 Belgian employers will require at least 50% of their workforce to be based in the workplace all or most of the time, due to the type of roles they are in. Yet most are working to build new kinds of flexibility into roles traditionally seen as inflexible:*

42% OFFER A MIX OF REMOTE WORKING & WORKPLACE-BASED WORKING

40% FLEXIBLE START & FINISH TIMES

39% FLEXIBLE / CONDENSED HOURS

28% A CHOICE OF LOCATIONS TO WORK FROM

22% JOB SHARING

16% WE WILL NOT OFFER ANY OF THESE FLEXIBILITY OPTIONS

4% DON'T KNOW

*Employers selected all options that applied

After health concerns, the top worry for Belgian workers is going back to the way things were – losing their newfound flexibility and being required to be back in the workplace daily (**Future for Workers By Workers**).

9 in 10

workers say simply keeping their job is most important

91%

say keeping their job is a top priority for workers in all countries and sectors, with the exception of IT workers who value flexibility most

8 in 10

want a better work-life balance in the future

43%

believe this marks the end of full time 9-5

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Belgium Results



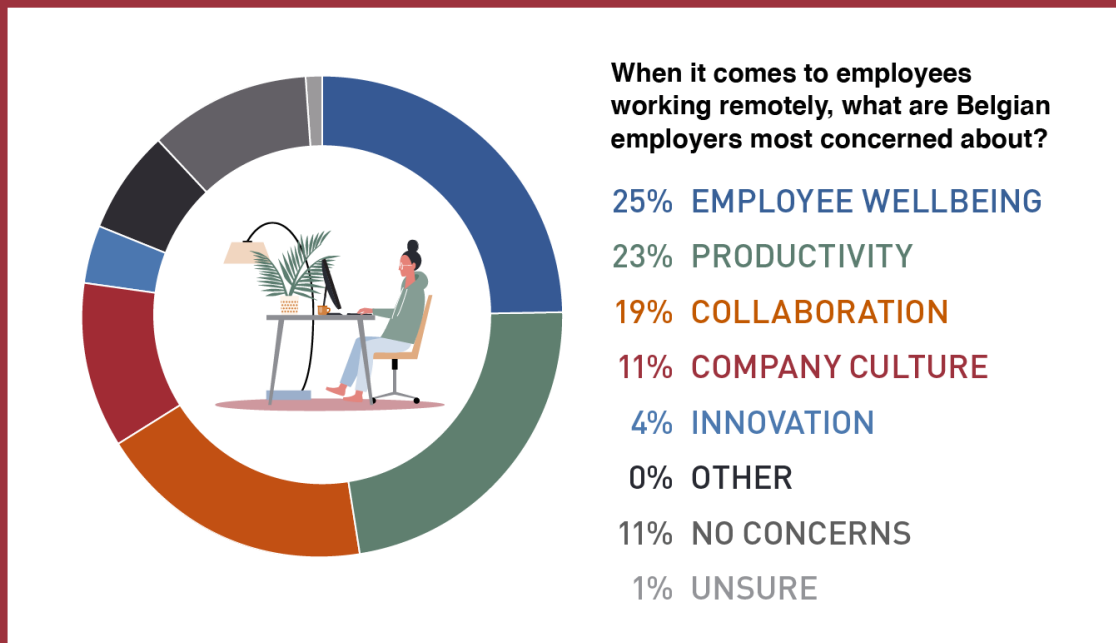
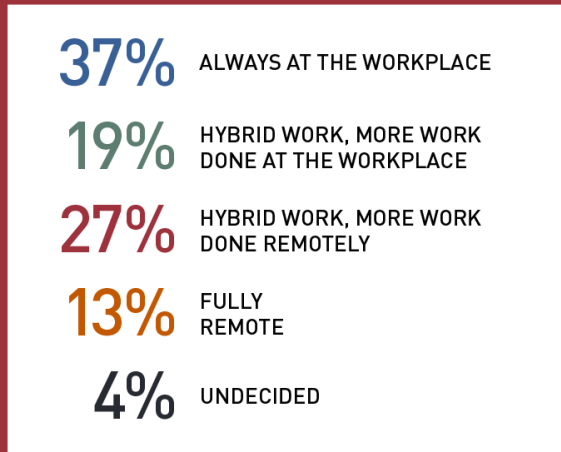
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Better Together: For Remote-Possible Roles, Belgian Employers Still Prepare For On-Site Return Due to Concerns Around WellBeing and Productivity

37% of organizations in Belgium expect employees to be back in the workplace all of the time.



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An Opportunity to Build Back Better: 5 Ways Employers Can Make the New Normal Better for All

Now is our opportunity to re-shape a future that is closer to what we know workers have wanted all along – more flexible, more virtual, more trusting and allowing people to better blend work and home, while allowing organizations to tap talent that can work from wherever.



01 Ask Why. Why Return?



Tasks we thought could never be done remotely have transformed overnight – closing the books, payroll, customer service and even information security - so now is a good time to be asking why return in order to be planful and fair. What do managers need to lead remotely? How can workers be more productive at home? Help managers understand individuals' needs to avoid assumptions and prevent unconscious biases in playing out.

02 Skills are Evolving – Prepare for that Reality



The skills employers need in the future will be different to the past. Encourage all of the workforce to reskill and engage in continuous learning, not just those who would have upskilled anyway. Encourage remote learning and support workers to reclaim their commute with curated learning opportunities aligned to the skills your business needs.

03 Flexibility & Balance for the Many, Not the Few



Offering employees the opportunity to work remotely isn't the only way to enable people to work flexibly and balance work and home. For roles that need to be done in the workplace, offer staggered start and finish times, more flexible scheduling, and understand the priorities people have to balance in order to get their work done.

04 Physical & Emotional Wellbeing = New Health & Safety



Feelings of isolation, stress, fear and anxiety will be a COVID-19 legacy, and so too will be our reflections on the value of health, wellbeing, family and community. Prioritize emotional wellbeing with the same importance as physical and organizational measures like temperature taking and social distancing, to ensure people are confident, healthy and productive.

05 Build Resilience – In People & The Organization



Companies need to build trust, listen to people, and respond to their needs and help workers prioritize and recharge. The initial adrenalin of workers needs to shift to resilience for the long term and employers must lead this charge. When stress is on the rise and the number one concern on the minds of many workers is losing their jobs, strong remote leadership, transparent frequent communication, and a culture that is fit for the hybrid work /home workplace and accessible wellbeing support is key.

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About ManpowerGroup®

ManpowerGroup® (NYSE: MAN), the leading global workforce solutions company, helps organizations transform in a fast-changing world of work by sourcing, assessing, developing and managing the talent that enables them to win. We develop innovative solutions for hundreds of thousands of organizations every year, providing them with skilled talent while finding meaningful, sustainable employment for millions of people across a wide range of industries and skills. Our expert family of brands – Manpower, Experis, Talent Solutions and Jefferson Wells – creates substantial value for candidates and clients across 80 countries and territories and has done so for over 70 years. We are recognized consistently for our diversity - as a best place to work for Women, Inclusion, Equality and Disability. In 2021, ManpowerGroup was named one of the World's Most Ethical Companies for the twelfth consecutive year. We also earned globally and in Belgium a Platinum and a Gold CSR & sustainability rating on EcoVadis's environmental, social and ethical supplier performance assessment. ManpowerGroup Belgium received the Diversity Label from the Brussels-Capital Region and was named 'Best Staffing, Sourcing & Contingent Workforce Company at the HR Excellence Awards 2020. All these recognitions confirm our position as the brand of choice for in-demand talent.

See how ManpowerGroup® is powering the future of work → www.manpowergroup.com

Ready for the new era The Human Age, where talent is the engine of the economy? Visit our ManpowerGroup Knowledge Center → www.manpowergroup.be

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