

Flexexpansion drives EMEA flex market to record heights

2 months ago



Demand shifts from co-working to corporate-grade utility

The European flexible office market is undergoing a dramatic transformation as companies across EMEA increasingly pivot towards premium, agile workspace solutions. According to [Colliers'](#) latest report, *Flexexpansion: The Architecture of Agility*, EMEA's flex office footprint expanded by over 348,000 sqm in 2024 – a 4.4% year-on-year increase – despite economic headwinds and tighter capital markets.

Across 46 EMEA markets, flex inventory has reached a total of 8.3 million sqm, with growth driven not only by Tier 1 cities like London, Paris, and Berlin, but also by rapid uptake in emerging hubs such as Riga, Athens, Tallinn and Ljubljana.

“What we’re witnessing is the evolution of flex from a coworking-led trend into a mature, strategic pillar of corporate real estate,” said Andrew Hallissey, CEO – Occupiers Services | Global & EMEA at Colliers.

“Occupiers are demanding more control, privacy and service – and flex providers are answering that call with highly tailored, amenity-rich solutions that rival traditional offices in quality and brand experience.”

Growth despite constraints

In 2024, 283 new flex centres opened across EMEA – the highest figure in five years – while closures fell 15% compared to 2023. Significantly, more than 80 new providers entered the market, showcasing a renewed investor and operator appetite despite inflationary pressures and high construction costs.

Meanwhile, leasing by flex operators accounted for 3.6% of total office take-up – down slightly from 2023 but still well above pandemic lows – with Leeds, Copenhagen and Barcelona emerging as hotspots.

The new architecture of agility

Colliers' report underscores a key shift from coworking models to "managed" and enterprise-grade flex environments that combine high customisation with shorter lease commitments. Demand is particularly strong for centrally located, character-rich buildings with strong transport connectivity – a trend fuelling the adaptive reuse of historic properties across the region.

"This is no longer just about desks and coffee machines," said James Walton, Director, Head of Global Flex Advisory, EMEA Occupier Services at Colliers. "Flex has become a lever for workplace transformation. Landlords and corporates alike are embedding flexible space into their core strategies, and that's reshaping how offices are designed, delivered and activated across Europe and beyond."

Challenges and opportunities ahead

As flex markets mature, the challenges of saturation, consolidation and rising quality expectations will intensify. Operators must differentiate on brand, service, sustainability, and location. At the same time, constrained office development pipelines – due to high construction costs and ESG compliance pressures – are expected to accelerate demand for flexible, ready-to-use workspaces into 2026 and beyond.

"The key opportunity lies in helping clients adapt faster than their competitors," Hallissey added. "That means thinking not only in terms of space, but also in terms of speed, scalability and experience."

From historic textile factories in Budapest to high-tech hubs in Stockholm, the *Flexpansion* report positions flexible workspace as a defining force in the future of global work – with EMEA at the vanguard of that change.