

Today's office design does not support mental wellbeing for the modern workforce

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A study has revealed that most office spaces are not set-up to support mental wellbeing in today's hybrid working environment. That's according to the Mental health and the office: Understanding the current, and future relationship, between workspaces and wellbeing, published by global leader in creating bespoke workplaces, [Unispace](#).

Reflecting on World Mental Health Day as celebrated yesterday – a time to make mental health and wellbeing for all a global priority – Unispace has cautioned that the majority of offices are not set-up to support mental wellbeing in a hybrid environment. According to research from the firm, a staggering 95% of employees would like to see improvements to their physical office space, suggesting that many are unhappy with their current workplace.

In its report – which surveyed 3,000 office workers across Europe – Unispace also found that almost half (47%) of the workforce felt that remote working had had a positive impact on their mental health. This suggests that a significant proportion of office workers believe that going into the office could have an impact on their mental wellbeing. With many employers discussing mandating full-time returns to the workplace, considerations must be made to ensure the wellbeing of workforces are being protected.

According to Unispace, a lack of appropriate facilities and designs that do not support hybrid working are driving much of this sentiment. While 74% indicated a desire for separate spaces to collaborate and work individually, a further 21% indicated they wanted access to more outdoor spaces or greenery at work.

The report also revealed that 75% of office workers across Europe have missed the social element of the office. With social interaction known to bolster mental wellbeing, Unispace has warned that failure to adapt offices to ensure staff can thrive at work could be detrimental to staff wellbeing.

Claire Shepherd, Chief Operating Officer, at Unispace, commented: “The link between office design and mental wellbeing is often overlooked, but the fact that almost half of the workforce felt that their mental health improved while working from home, highlights that too many workplaces do not meet the needs of the people that use them. We know that the office – a place that many of us are returning to on a more regular basis – can support mental wellbeing, from the positive collaboration and socialization opportunities our colleagues afford us, to easy access to amenities, and much more.

Small changes can have a huge impact as well, from color schemes, to lighting and representations of nature, to acoustics, and room temperatures. But it all starts with truly understanding your colleagues and their needs. Having gone through a difficult period that has tested the resilience of us all, businesses need to consider what more they can do to proactively support the mental wellbeing of their workforce.”