



PRESS RELEASE

2016 SFL/Ifop Paris Workplace Survey OFFICES: PARIS VERSUS LONDON

Since 2014, the annual SFL/Ifop Paris Workplace Survey has analysed the perceptions and expectations of employees in Paris and the inner suburbs with regard to their Workplace.

This year, the third Paris Workplace Survey has crossed the Channel to find out how Paris stacks up against London, looking at the pros and cons of each city and differences in terms of lifestyles and views of the office. Carried out on a greater scale than any before it, the survey asked nearly 3,000 people to reply to 90 questions. The results are summarised below along with a ranking of the top districts as voted by Paris and London employees.

ABOUT SFL

Leader on the prime segment of the Parisian tertiary real estate market, Société Foncière Lyonnaise stands out for the quality of its property portfolio, which is valued at €5.2 billion and is concentrated on the Central Business District of Paris (Louvre Saint-Honoré, Edouard VII, Washington Plaza, etc.), and for the quality of its client portfolio, which is composed of prestigious companies in the consulting, media, digital, luxury, finance and insurance sectors.

MEDIA CONTACT: Galivel & Associés: Carol Galivel / Doriane Fougères
21-23, rue Klock 92110 Clichy - Phone +33 (0)1 41 05 02 02 - Fax : 01 41 05 02 03 - galivel@galivel.com

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Do Paris employees dream of leaving?

- Despite the gloomy economic environment, state of emergency and repeated strikes, a large majority of Paris employees say they are attached to their city (77%) – so much so that they do not want to leave. If given the choice of moving to London, only 20% would. Similarly, just 17% of Londoners would cross the Channel if given the opportunity. Both cities therefore enjoy comparable levels of attractiveness, despite a more dynamic job market and higher salaries in London.
- Given recent events, Parisians seem surprisingly cool-headed. A full 80% of employees in Paris proper say they do not feel unsafe commuting to work, with the figure rising to 81% in districts targeted by the 2015 terrorist attacks (10th and 11th arrondissements).
- According to Parisians, the three words that best describe their city are “beautiful”, “dynamic” and “lively”, showing that local employees think of Paris as a commercial and cultural capital. London residents, on the other hand, portray their home as a cosmopolitan, pioneering city, with the three words that best sum it up being “open to the world”, “dynamic” and “innovative”.
- The only downside is the weather, with four out of ten employees on both sides of the Channel agreeing that their cities’ climates are “depressing”.

Relationship with the Workplace: radically different local cultures

- The Workplace has much greater symbolic and social importance in Paris than in London. Fully 89% of Parisians believe that their office has an impact on their well-being (versus 64% of Londoners) and 80% say that it impacts their company’s performance (versus 53%).
- Paris employees are also twice as likely as their London counterparts to say that socialising with colleagues is one of the three main reasons for going to work (42% versus 18%). They see the Workplace as a venue for social interaction, where lunch plays an essential role. Indeed, Parisians take an average break of 72 minutes for lunch (compared with just 48 minutes for Londoners), with 84% saying they regularly eat with colleagues (compared with 58%).
- In London, on the other hand, the Workplace is seen essentially as a functional resource for boosting individual and collective productivity. Here, employees prize measures that improve flexibility, such as mobile working, streamlined office layouts and around the clock opening hours. Socialising takes place outside the office during after work drinks, which are still held as sacrosanct. Indeed, 70% of Londoners regularly have drinks with colleagues after work, compared with 25% of Parisians.

- Acceptance of open-plan offices is another cultural divide. In London, 80% of employees in open-plan offices say they are satisfied with their Workplace, compared with only 54% in Paris. Conversely, 82% of Paris employees working in closed offices – private or shared – express satisfaction with their Workplace.
- It is worth mentioning that in London open-plan offices have become part of the culture, with 58% of London employees working in such a layout versus 43% of their Paris peers. Londoners are also three times more likely than Parisians not to have a dedicated workstation (10% versus 3%). In Paris, on the other hand, most employees work in closed office layouts (54% compared with 32% in London).

Paris or London: which is best for working?

- In terms of commuting times, Paris is the clear winner. Paris employees spend 24 minutes less time commuting each day than London workers, which adds up to the equivalent of eight days' work every year. This is because Paris's high density and more affordable housing – with prices half those of London – generally enables residents to live a “reasonable” distance from their Workplace.
- In terms of office layout and services, London has the advantage. The satisfaction levels of Londoners are three to ten points higher for items such as layout efficiency, workstation comfort, common area design and meeting room standards. This difference can be put down to the fact that London office prices began rising a long time ago, forcing companies to optimise space while improving the user experience by carefully planning the overall design, collaborative areas and services on offer.
- In terms of business districts and working environments, the cities tie. Respondents in Paris and London report almost identical levels of satisfaction with respect to safety, quality of life and distance to shops and restaurants. Paris has a slight lead when it comes to architecture, but London comes out on top for parks.
- In terms of working hours, employees spend an average 8 hours and 6 minutes a day at work in the City of Light, compared with 8 hours and 24 minutes in the Smoke. In short, Parisians spend less time commuting, less time at work and more time at lunch, rating their overall quality of life as satisfactory.

Top districts for work in London and Paris

The 2015 Paris Workplace Survey mapped out the top districts for work in Paris and the inner suburbs. This year, Ifop not only repeated the exercise with Paris employees but also surveyed London workers too, asking locals in both cities to rate their level of satisfaction with regard to 30 items related to the Workplace. The results are presented below.

- **In London, the central districts rank the highest**, with the “historic” Victorian districts of Westminster (1st place) and Kensington and Chelsea (2nd place) beating the traditional business district of the City of London (3rd place).

London workers' preferred districts



- In Paris, there is a clear preference for the western suburbs, which are home to the top five districts out of the 13 surveyed. Paris Centre-Ouest (West Central Paris), which includes Paris's Central Business District, maintained its No. 1 spot this year ahead of Paris Rive Gauche (the Left Bank) at No. 2, while La Défense moved up a place to third, overtaking Boucle Sud (Boulogne-Billancourt and Issy-les-Moulineaux).

Paris workers' preferred districts



In Paris, there is a clear preference for the western suburbs, which are home to the top five districts

- Central location, with nearby public transport and short commuting times.
- Mixed-used development, balancing shops, residential properties and offices.
- Feeling of security.
- High architectural and living standards.

The top-ranking districts garnered satisfaction ratings of between 80-95% in all four categories – a full 10 to 20 points higher than the other districts.