



“ WHERE IS  
MAINE  
WORKING?

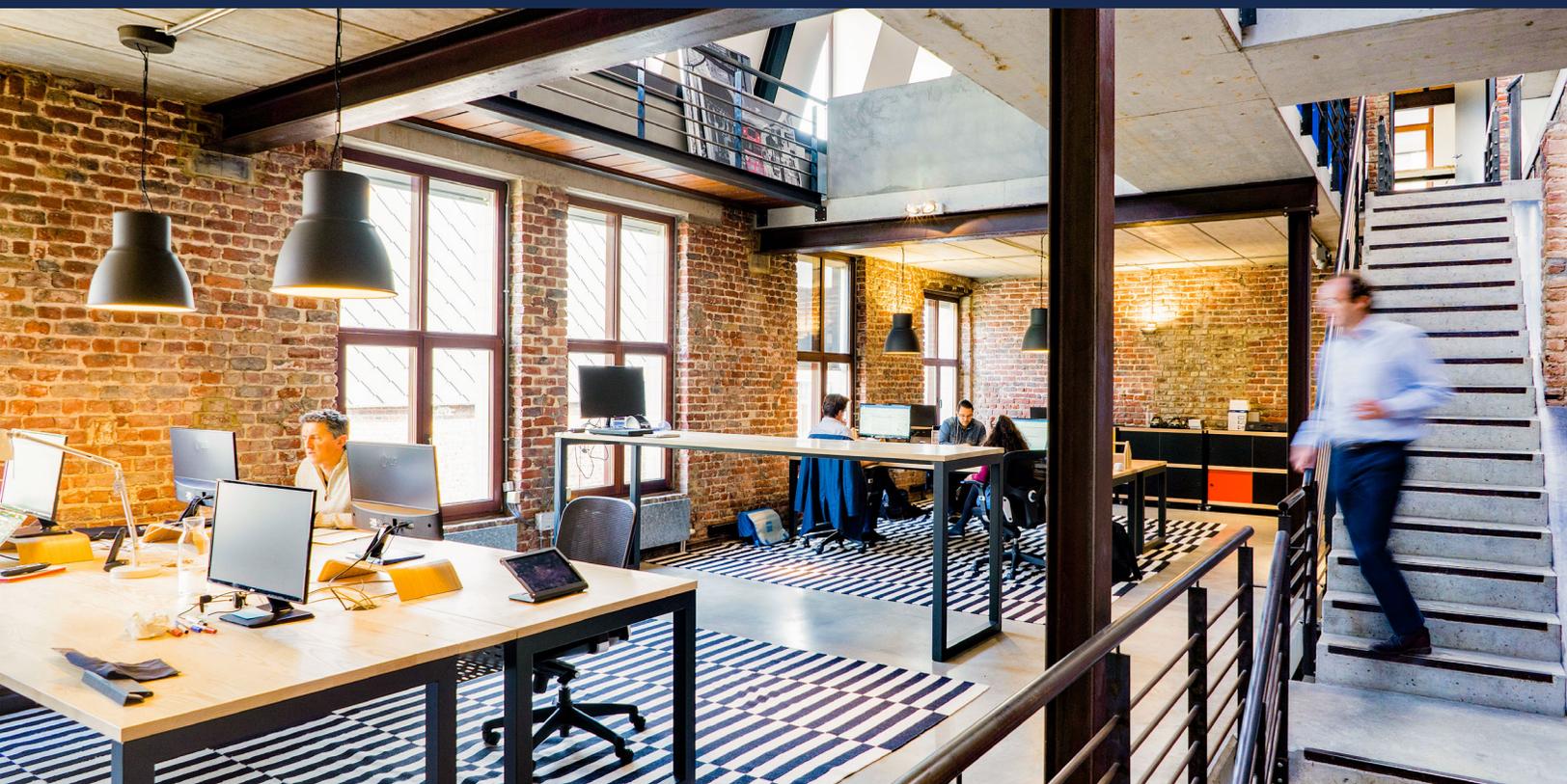
V.2

THE WFH OFFICE IMPACT SURVEY

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# INTRODUCTION

In February 2021, The Boulos Company released the results of the “Where’s Maine Working” survey - which detailed the impacts of COVID-19 on Maine’s Commercial Office Market.

The factors that impact the market now include staggered office-reopening plans, a tightening labor market, and a full spectrum of hybrid work plans incorporating both office and remote work.

As Maine’s commercial real estate leader, we conducted the “Where’s Maine Working V.2” survey to gain additional insight into the shifting workplace landscape, and to enable Maine’s business community to make decisions on this impact, now and in the future.

The survey data is broken up into sections based on responses regarding **company demographics, current work locations and office reopenings, return to work plans (WFH vs office work vs hybrid models), workplace sentiments, preferences and incentives, and office size and plans for reconfiguration.**

140 professionals from across Maine participated in this survey. The respondents represented a range of company sizes and geographic markets. Most identified themselves as decision makers regarding their office lease, as displayed in our demographics section.

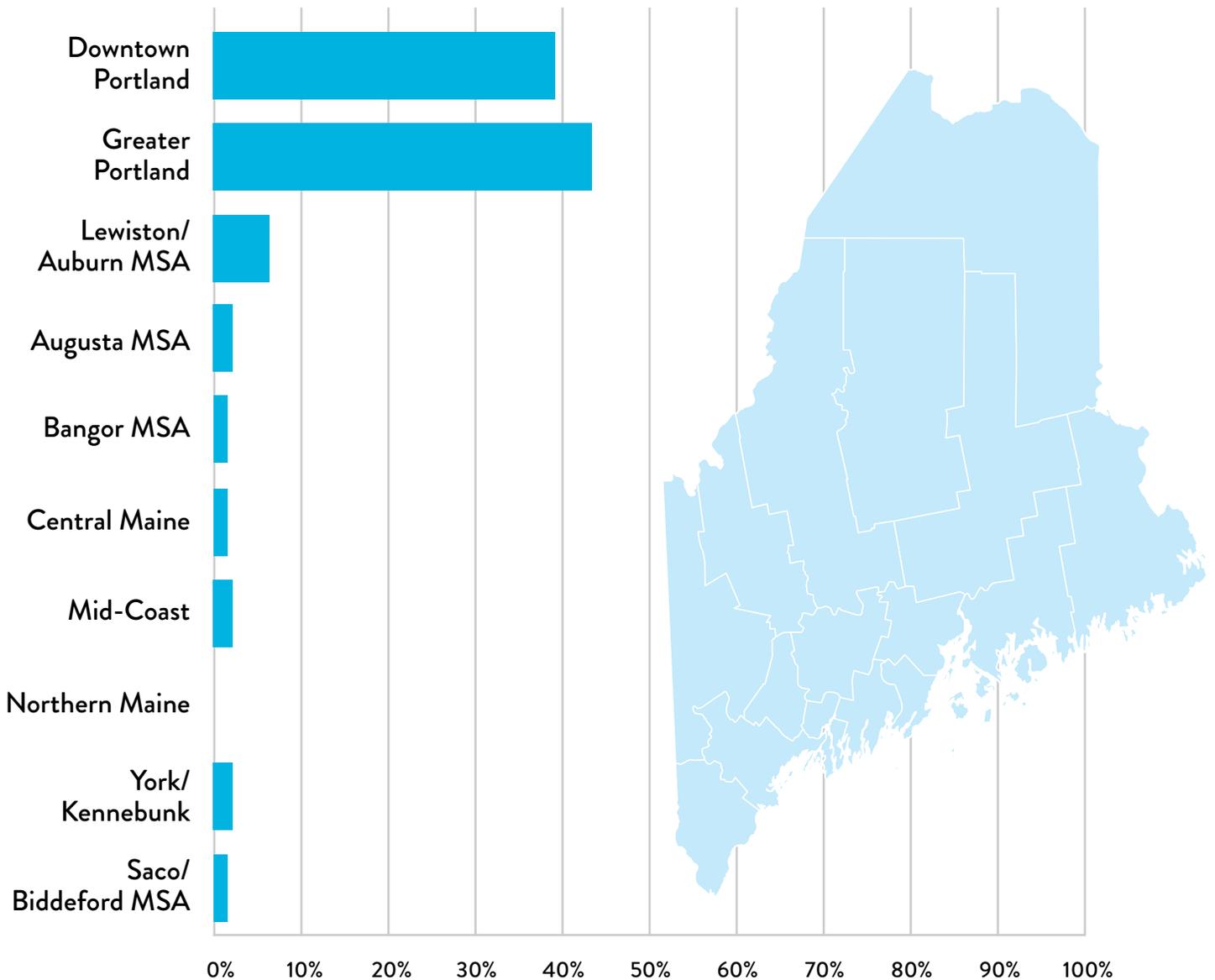
Thank you all for your participation in this survey. For those who need help determining how to move forward with their workplace, please contact The Boulos Company to hear how we can assist you.

**140**  
SURVEY RESPONSES

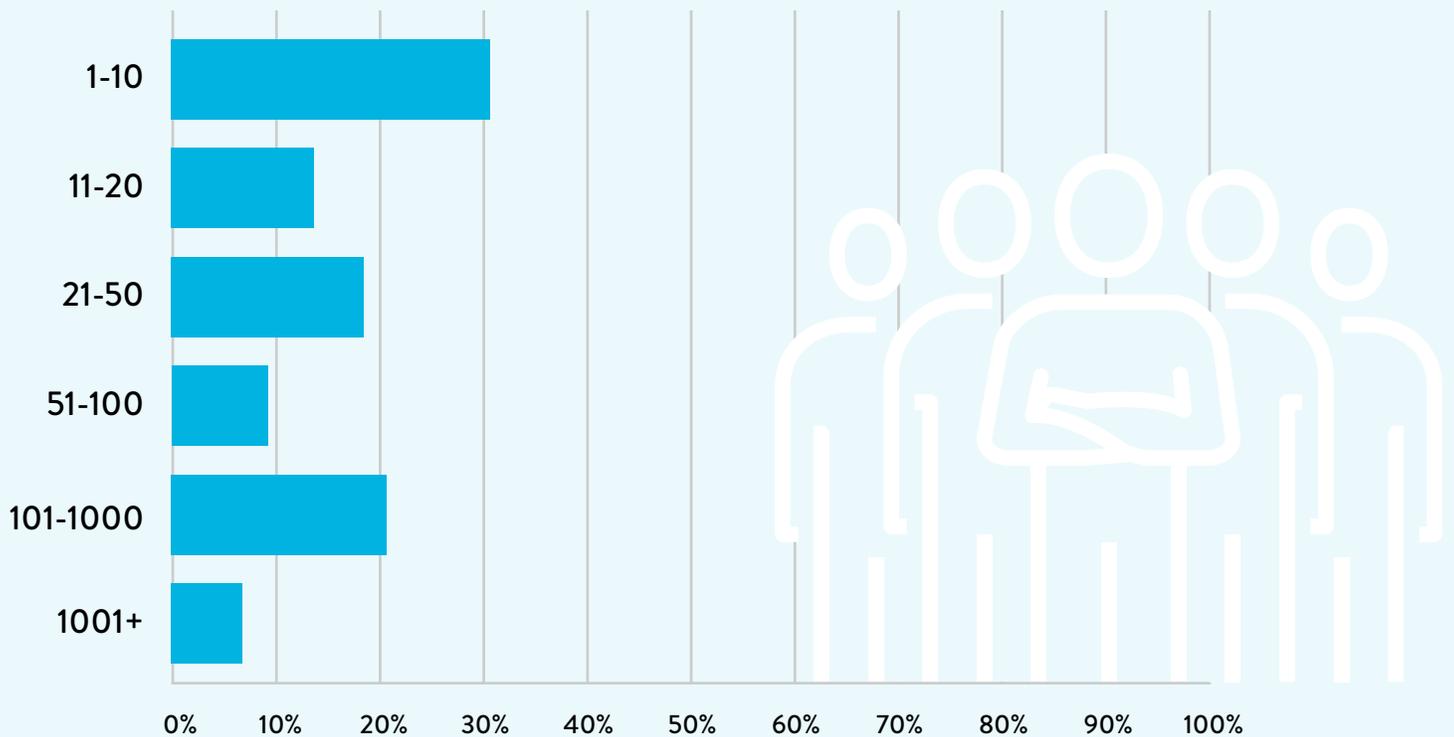
**Aug - Sept** 2021  
DATE CONDUCTED

\*Due to rounding and multi-select options, percentages may not always appear to add up to 100%

# Where is your office located?



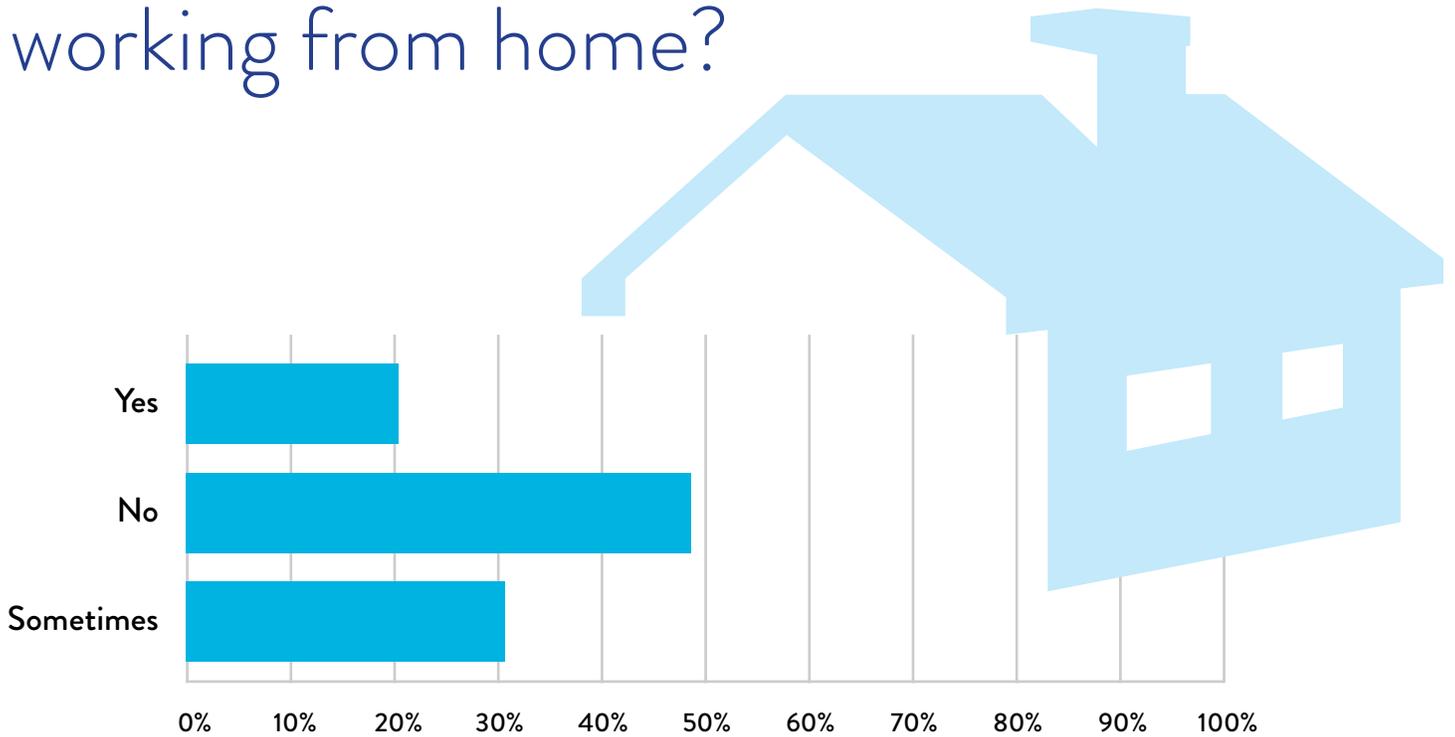
# How many employees work for your company?



The most common office location of respondents is Greater Portland, followed closely by Downtown Portland, and most respondents' companies employ between 1-10 people, followed by those who employ 101-1,000 people. 65% of respondents are involved in configuration and leasing decisions at their company.

These demographics are similar to our original survey, with a higher concentration of offices in Greater Portland vs. Downtown, and more respondents that work at smaller companies.

# Are you (personally) currently working from home?



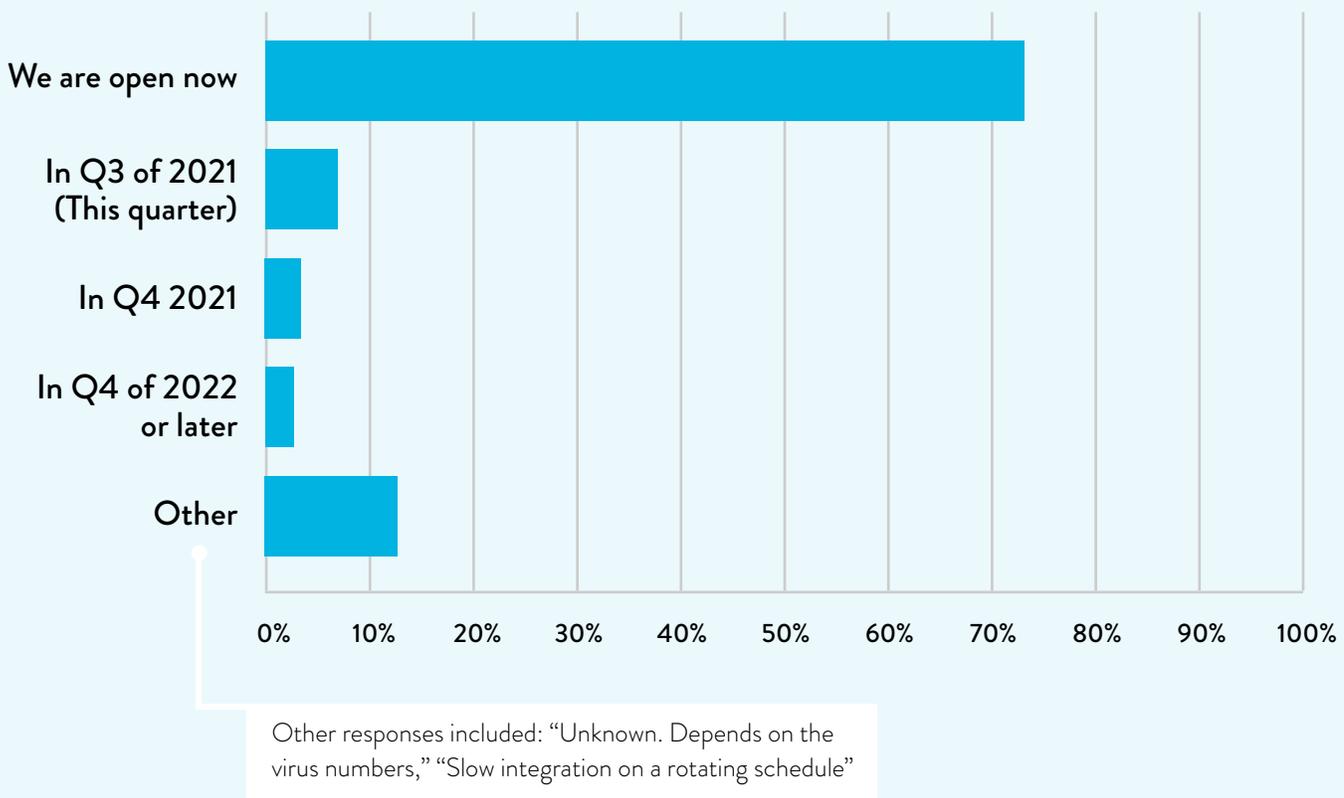
The majority of respondents (48%) answered “No, I’m fully back in the office”, while 31% “Sometimes” work from home, and 21% answered “Yes”.

In our previous survey, the majority indicated that they were “Sometimes” working from home, and those who were not working from home were in the minority at 28%.

It’s worth noting that for respondents whose companies employ over 101 people, only 33% indicated that they were fully back in the office.

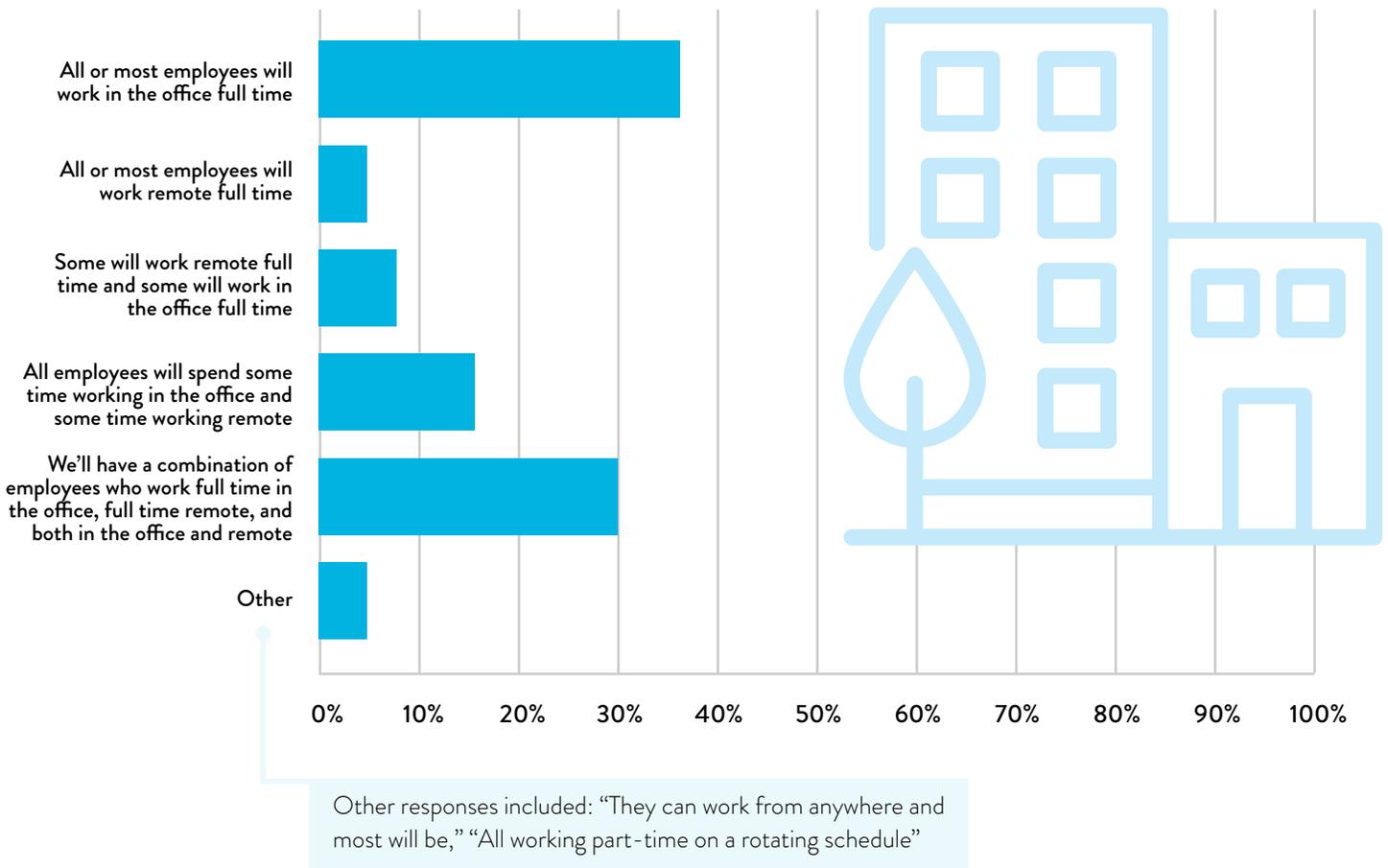
# When does your company plan to open its office?

(for those who plan to work there in-person)



The vast majority of respondents, 74%, responded that their office is already open for those who want to work there. When accounting for only respondents whose companies employ over 101 people, this percentage dropped to 56%.

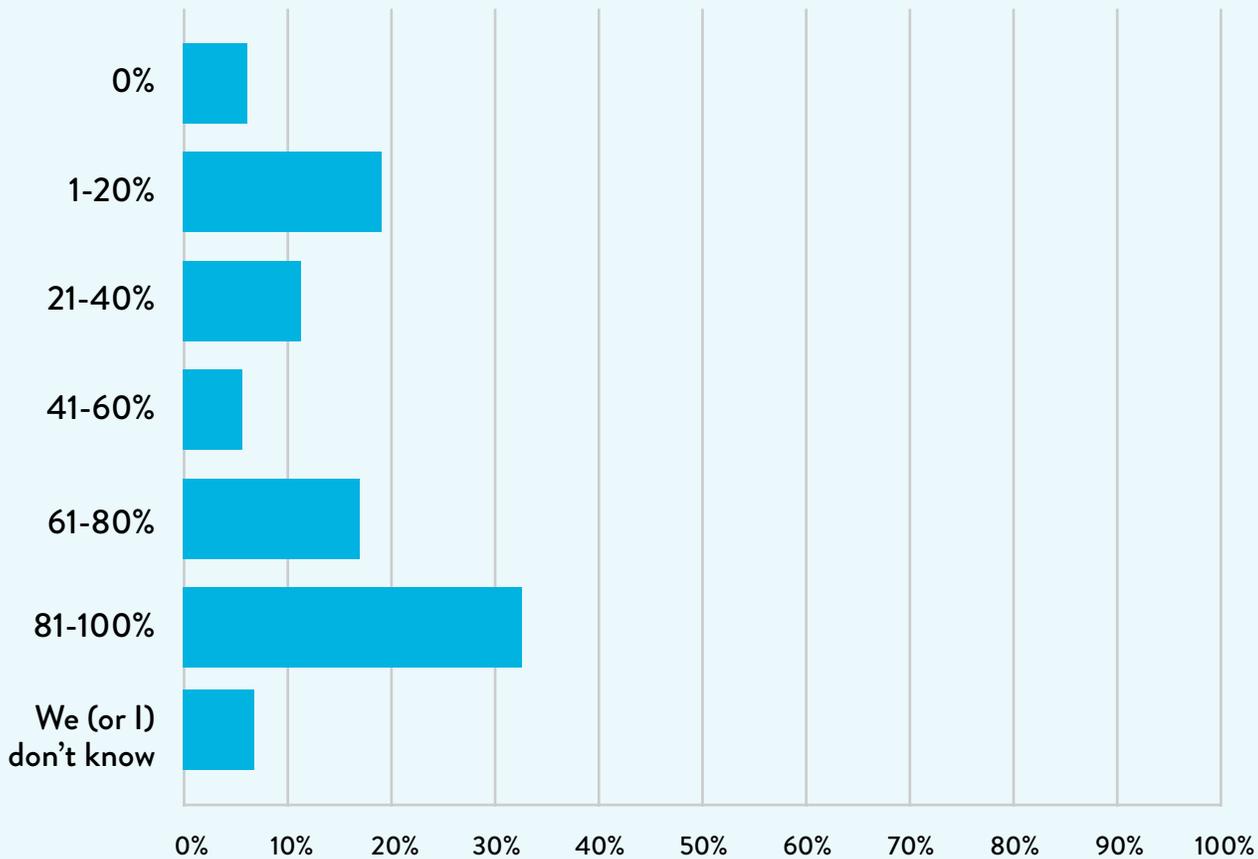
# What does “return to the office” look like for your company?



36% of respondents answered “All or most employees will work in the office full time”, only 5% indicated that the majority of their employees would work remote full time. However, it is important to note that 59% of respondents indicated that they’ll be using a hybrid model incorporating remote work moving forward (including those who answered “Other”).

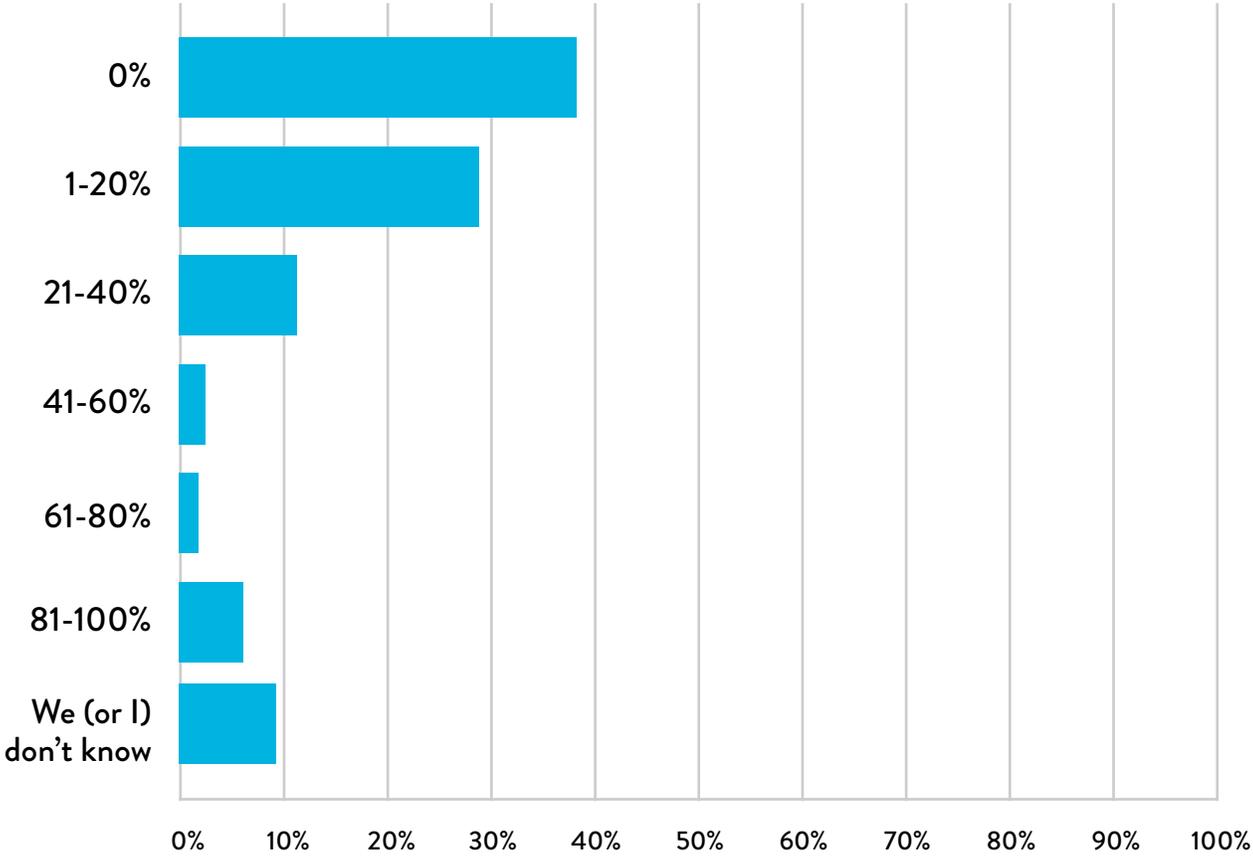
Of the hybrid work models presented, the most common selection was the combination approach - “We’ll have a combination of employees who work full time in the office, some who work full time remote, and some who spend time both in the office and working remote.”

# What percent of your company will work from the office full time?



The majority (33%) said up to 81-100% of their company will work from the office full time, followed by 19% of respondents who reported that only a small portion (1-20%) of their company will work from the office full time.

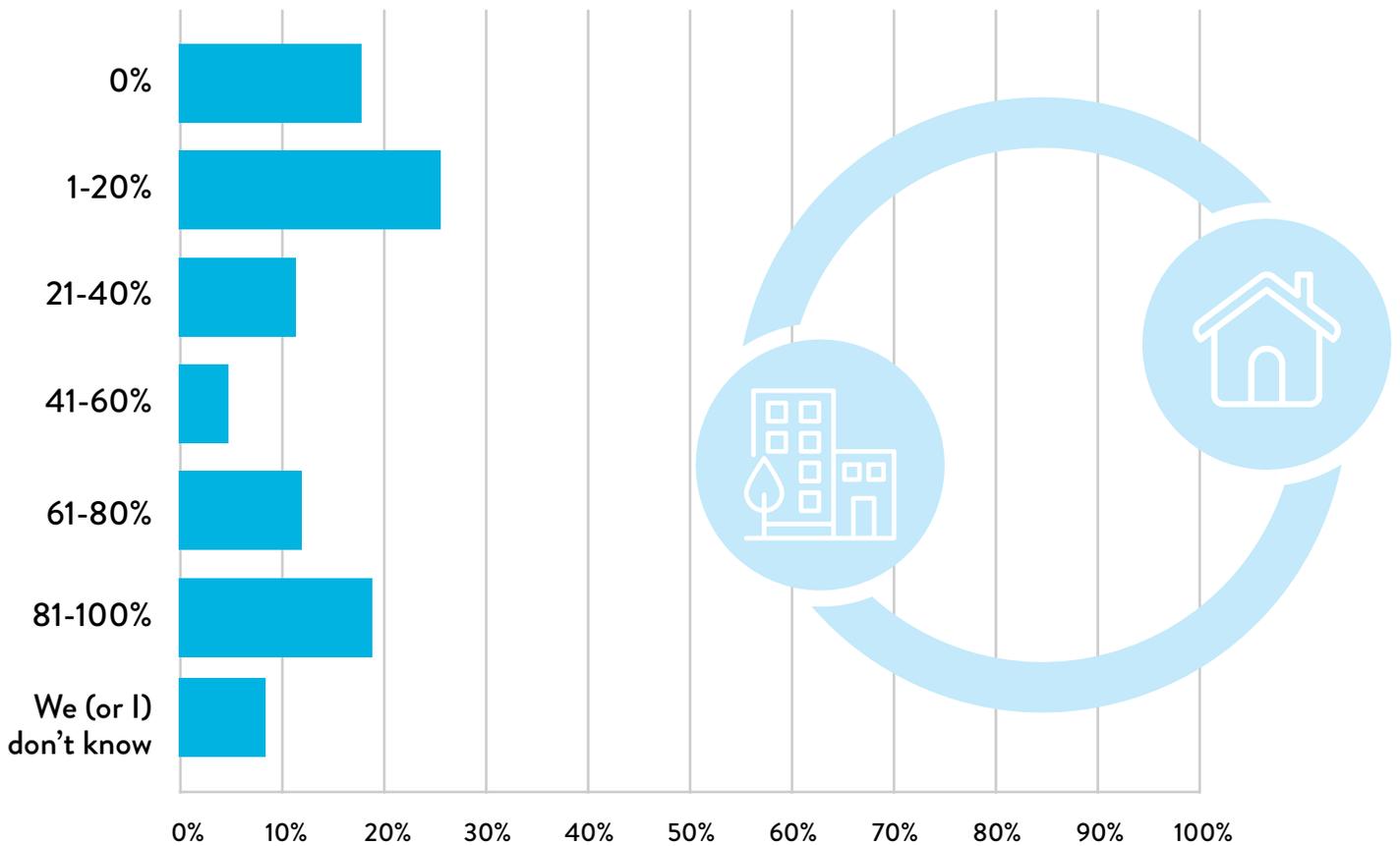
# What percent of your company will work from home full time?



The majority selected 0% followed by 29% who indicated 1-20% of their companies' employees will work from home full time. Of respondents at companies with over 101 employees, 44% selected 1-20%.

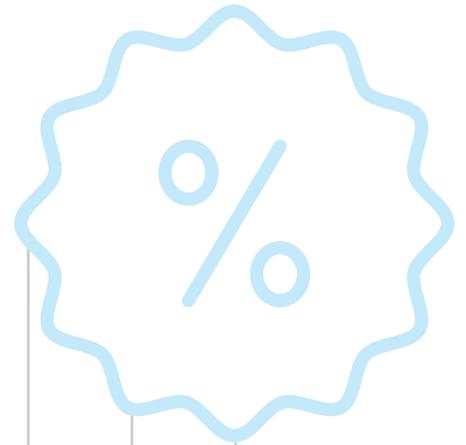
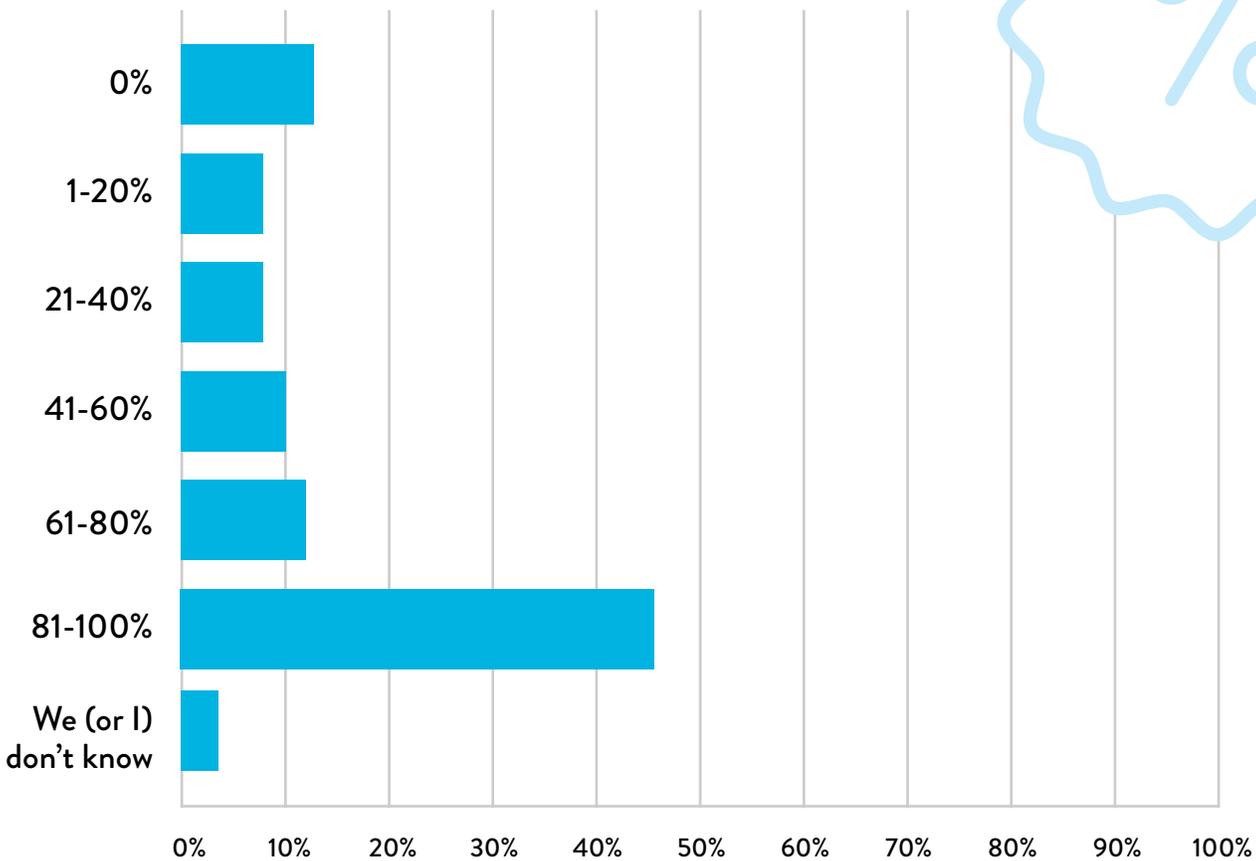


# What percent of your company will work in a hybrid model with both office and remote work?



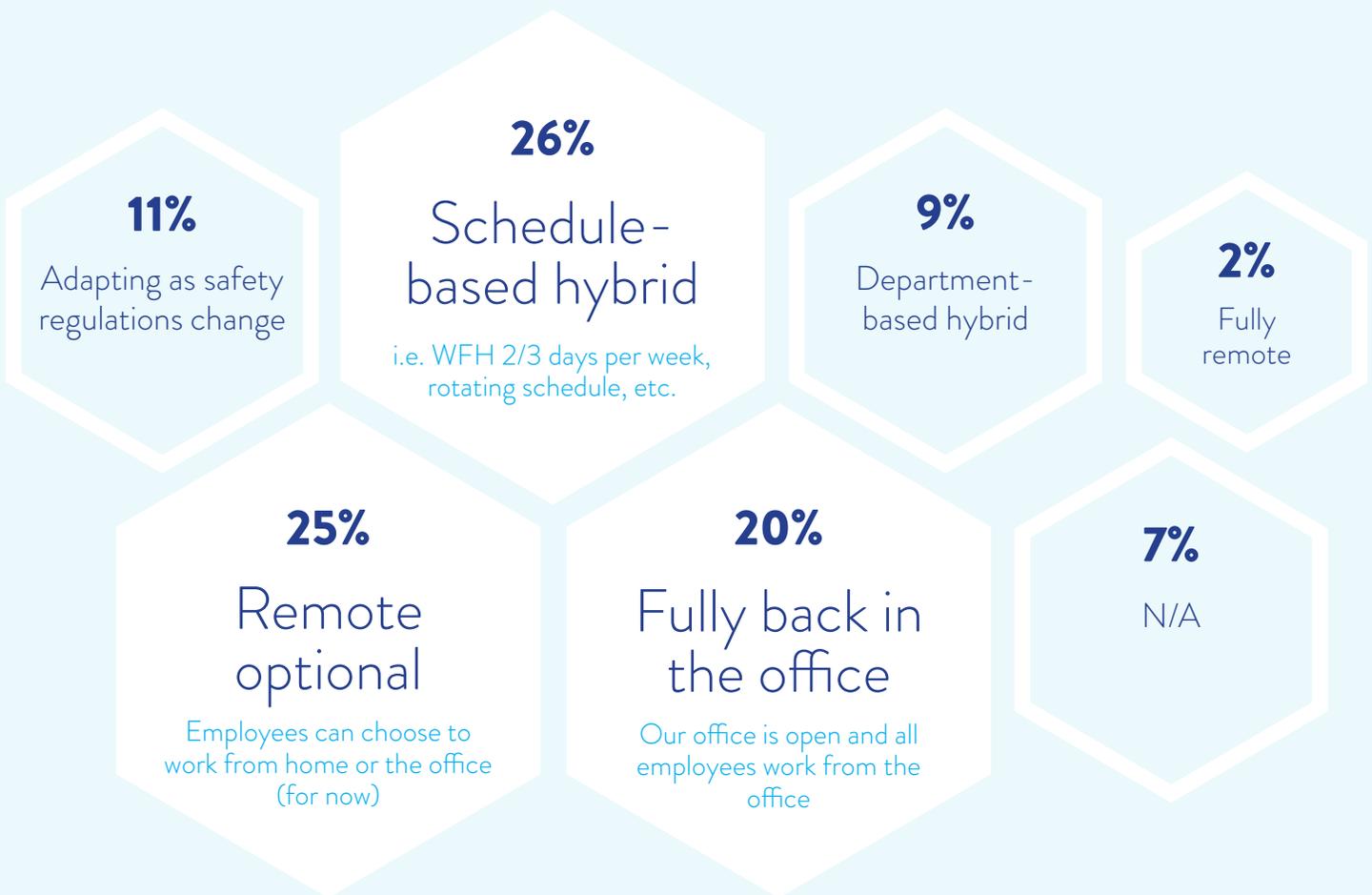
1-20% was the most common response. It is worth noting that when accounting for respondents who work at companies with 101 employees or more, only 3% indicated that 0% of their company will work in a hybrid model - indicating that hybrid models will likely be more common for larger employers.

# What percent of your workday would you personally prefer to spend working in the office?



The most common response was 81-100%. The amount of respondents who selected this answer dropped from 46% to 31% when accounting only for companies with 101 employees or more; however, it was still the most common answer.

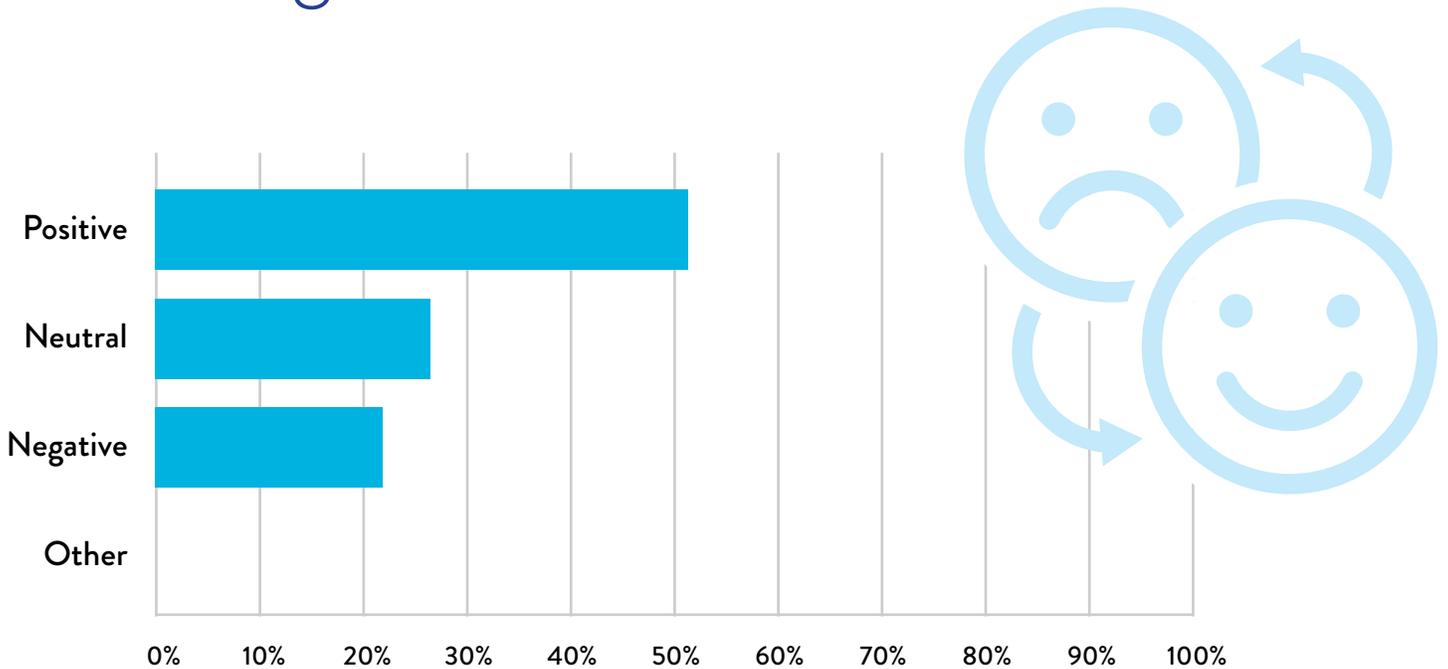
Summarize your company's return to work plan in 1-3 sentences.



While this question may be redundant in light of question 8, we wanted to give respondents a chance to summarize their company's work model in their own words, given there are so many variations of hybrid work plans.

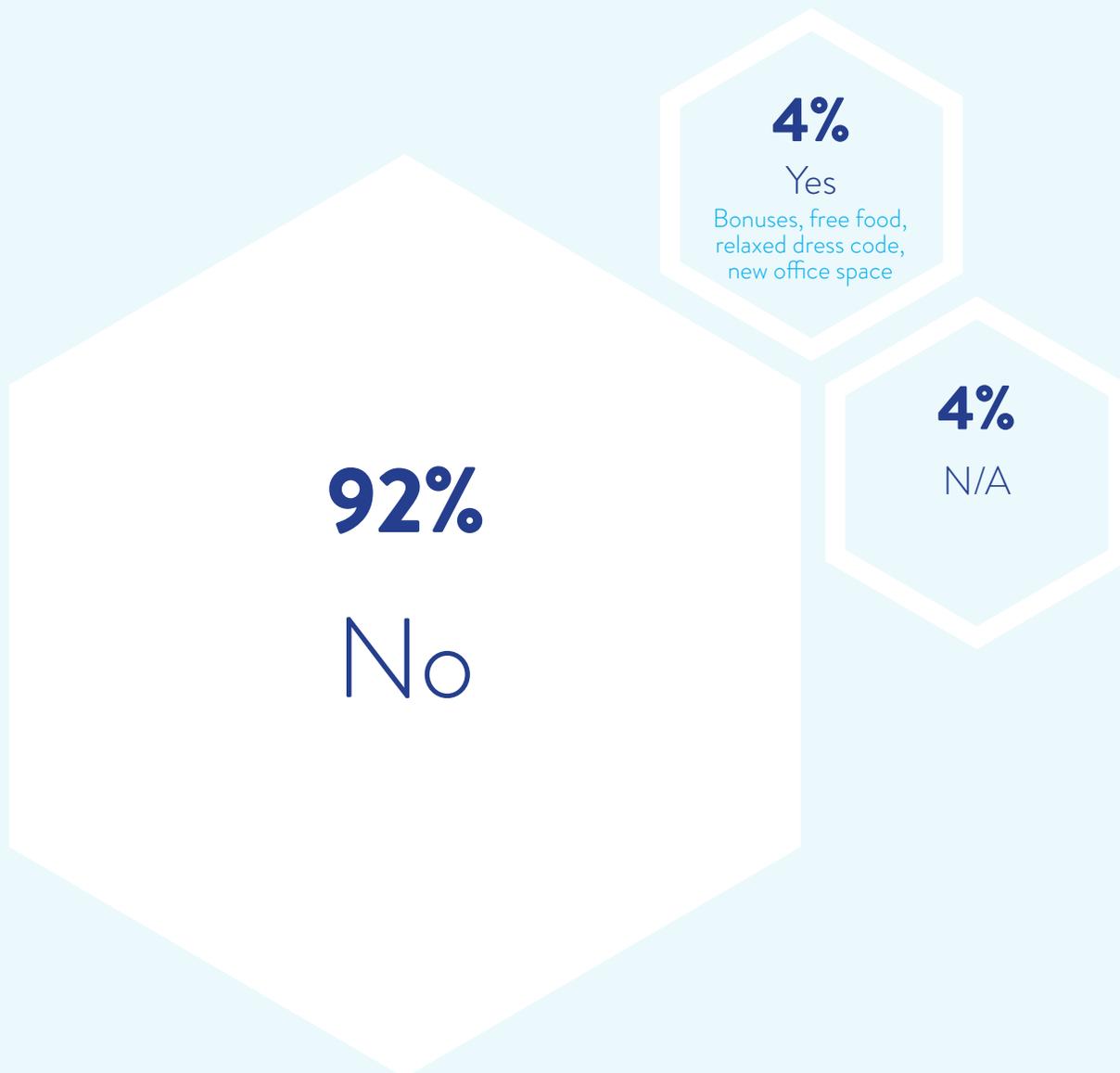
Answers indicated the "schedule-based hybrid" - where employees will work from home for a set number of days per week, and from the office a set number of days per week, or on a rotating schedule, is more common than the "department-based hybrid" - where some employees will work remote full time and others will work from the office full time.

# How do the majority of employees at your company feel about returning to the office?



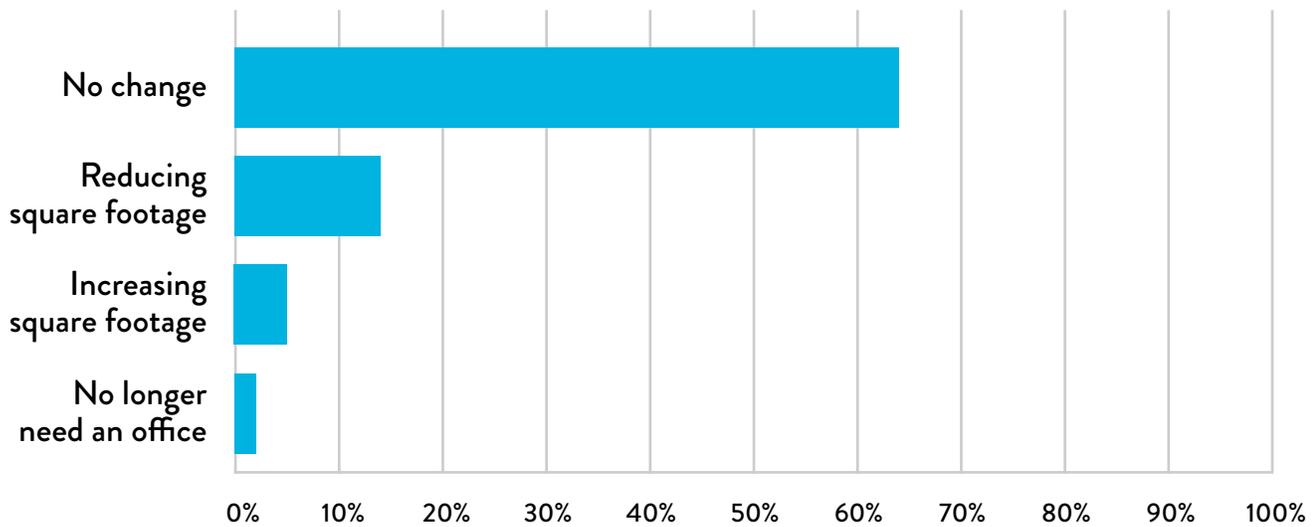
51% of respondents indicated that the majority of employees at their company feel positive about returning to the office, while 26% feel neutral and 22% feel negative. The sentiments become more evenly distributed when looking at respondents from companies with 101 employees or more.

# Is your company providing incentives to entice employees to come back to the office?



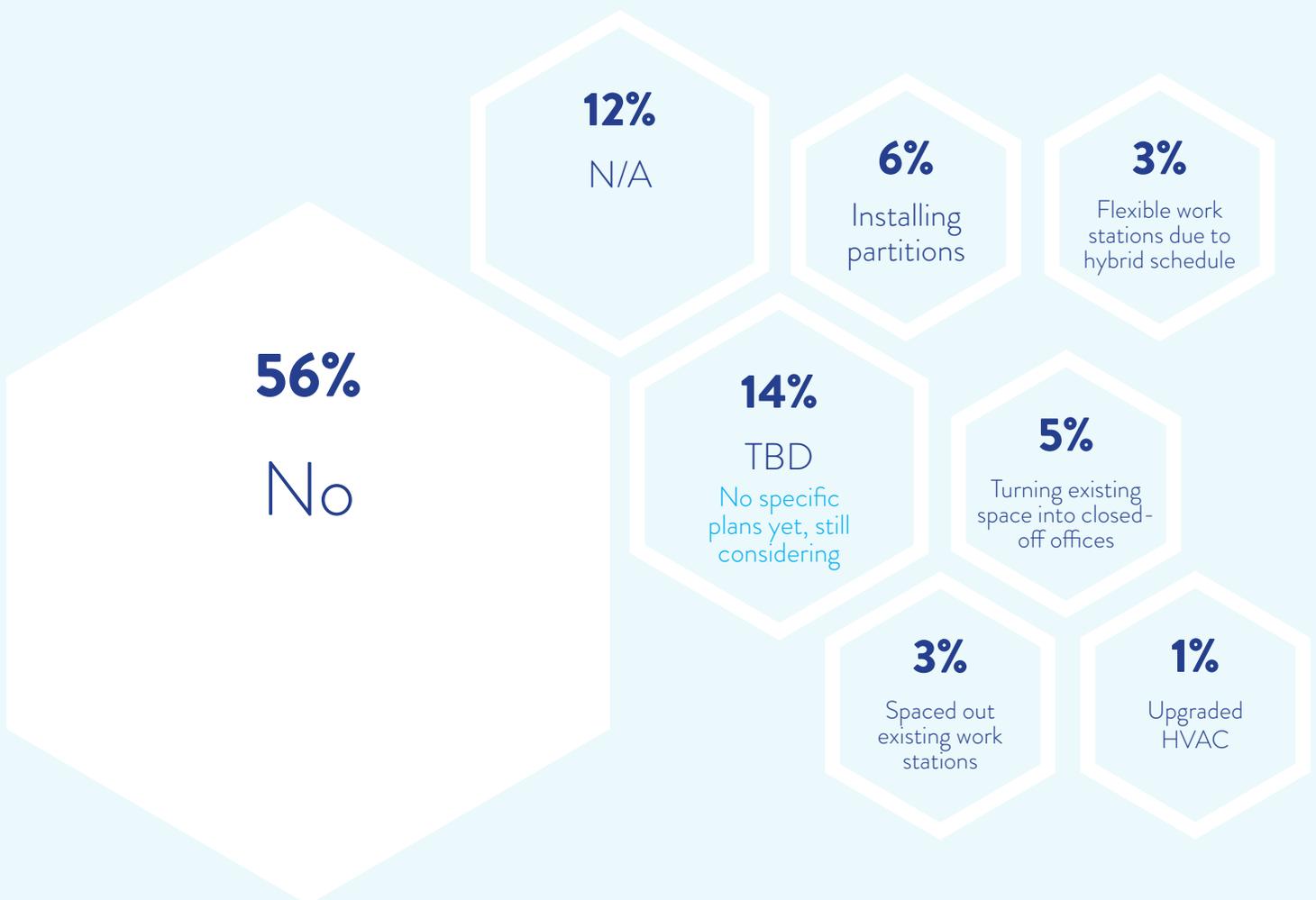
The vast majority of respondents indicated their companies are not providing incentives to entice employees back to the office, with only 4% indicating that they have. These incentives ranged from bonuses to free food or relaxed dress code, and a new office for one respondent.

Does your company plan to change its office size moving forward due to hybrid work-from-home models or COVID-19 and other health concerns? If so, what is the planned change?



The majority of respondents, 64%, indicated that they are making no change, while 14% are reducing square footage (up 3% from our last survey), and 5% are increasing square footage (up 2.5% from our last survey). 3 respondents indicated that they will no longer need an office.

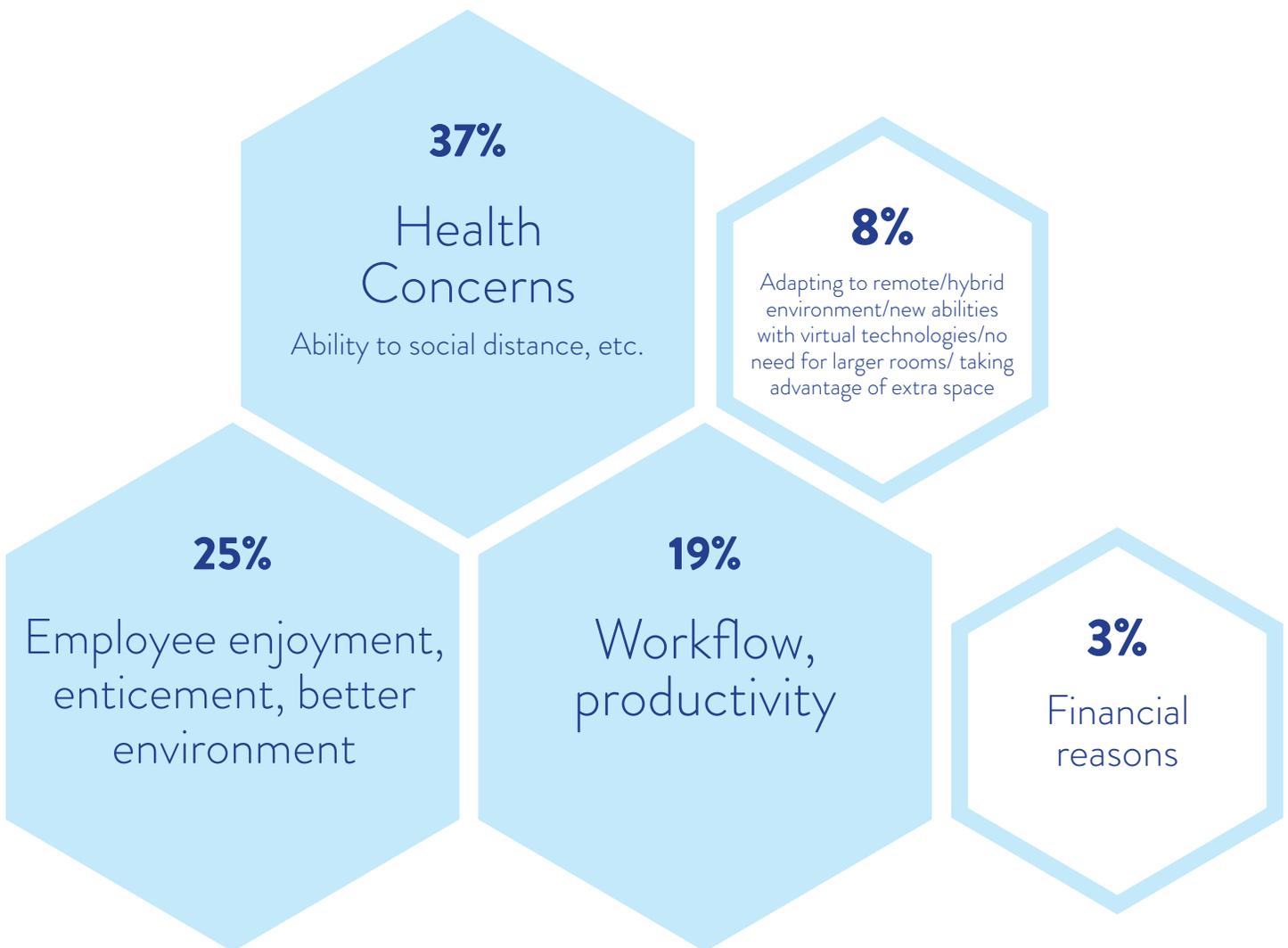
# Does your company plan to change its office configuration or layout moving forward due to hybrid work-from-home models or COVID-19 and other health concerns?



The majority of respondents, 56%, indicated their companies have no plans to change their office configuration. Of the 18% who have or plan to make changes, they include installing partitions and barriers (which was the most common), turning existing conference rooms into closed offices, creating more flex/ collaborative space, and spacing out work stations.

# What is the key driver of the changes you noted in questions 14 and 15?

For example: Health concerns, workflow, enticing employees to return to work, etc.



The primary drivers of office layout, configuration and square footage changes as reported by our respondents are health concerns at 37% and employee enjoyment/wellness at 25%, followed by work flow and productivity at 19%, indicating that workforce satisfaction is now driving changes in our office market alongside health concerns, which was not noted as a significant factor when we asked this question in our last survey.

# SUMMARY

## Employee Health & ENJOYMENT First

Last year's survey indicated that employee safety was at the forefront of the majority of office configuration, layout and scheduling decisions. Open-ended responses now indicate that in addition to employee health concerns, employee enjoyment is now one of the key considerations driving office-related decisions. It is likely that the tightening of the labor market has played a role in this shift.

## “The Office is Open”

The vast majority, 74% of respondents, noted that their companies' offices are currently open to those who want to work there. Additionally, 48% noted that they personally were fully back to working at the office.

## The Hybrid Work Model

When asked “What does ‘return to the office’ look like for your company?” 59% of respondents indicated that they'll be using a hybrid model incorporating remote work moving forward.

## The Combination Approach

Of the hybrid work models presented, the most common selection was the combination approach - “We'll have a combination of employees who work full time in the office, some who work full time remote, and some who spend time both in the office and working remote” - indicating for many, hybrid models won't be as simple as department-based models, or schedule-based models. Responses indicate that most companies will rely on a combination of “all of the above” hybrid work models, but that schedule-based models will be more common than department-based models.

# SUMMARY

## More Employees = More Complications

It is important to note that our survey results varied when different segments of the data were analyzed. Of the entire survey, 74% noted that their offices are open and 48% reported that they are fully back in the office. However, when looking at only respondents who work at companies with over 101 employees, those percentages drop to 56% and 33% respectively.

## Sentiments, Preferences & Incentives

51% of respondents noted that the majority of employees at their company feel positively about returning to the office. When asked what percent of their workday people would prefer to spend working in the office, the most common response (46%) was 81-100%. Most respondents (92%) noted that their companies are not providing any incentive for returning to the office.

## Office Size

The majority of respondents (64%) are not planning on making any change to their office footprint. 14% of respondents' companies are planning to reduce their square footage (up 3% from our last survey), and 5% are increasing their square footage (up 2.5% from our last survey).

THANK YOU.

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