



# Working from home policies for in-house lawyers

Survey results and analysis April 2024

# Introduction

In summer 2023, we conducted our first survey of the in-house legal market on current working from home policies.

What prompted this was both how pervasive a topic it had become during our everyday conversations with clients and candidates, and a sense that it remained a fluid (and in some instances contentious) area. Consequently, we wanted to continue to take the temperature and run the survey again to see how the landscape has evolved.

Our own perspective is that in the context of recruitment, this continues to be a core factor for candidates when they are considering new opportunities. In many cases, it is as important to them as location, salary, role content and company culture. Indeed, many will extrapolate the working

from home policy as a key indicator of company culture.

Obviously, there is a tendency to jump to the conclusion that the default position of most people is that the more flexibility there is, the better. However, in our experience this isn't always the case. It is not uncommon for us to have conversations with candidates who aren't interested in a new opportunity because they feel there isn't enough office time, or who have moved into largely or fully remote roles thinking the working pattern would be ideal, only to find themselves feeling lonely or isolated in the role.

In short, candidates' attitudes to this can be as mixed as companies' policies. Our candidate polls at the end of the document bear this out.



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Working from home policies continue to be a **core factor** for candidates when they are considering new career opportunities.

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# Working from home survey responses continued

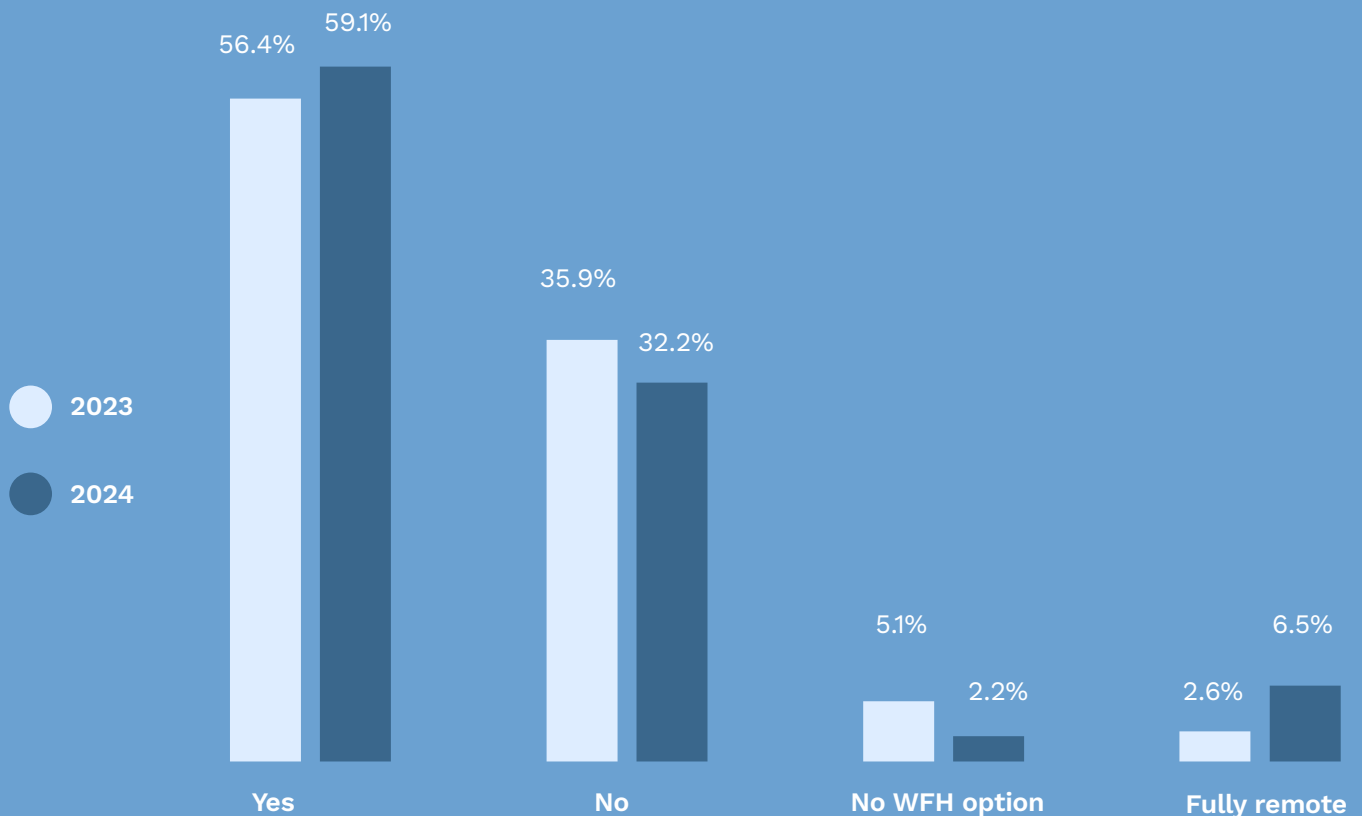
Aside from the variations mentioned previously around the increase in respondees with fully remote working patterns, it's apparent from the below set of results that there has been a small increase in the proportion of businesses requiring a set number of days in the office.

If anything, we would have expected this to be

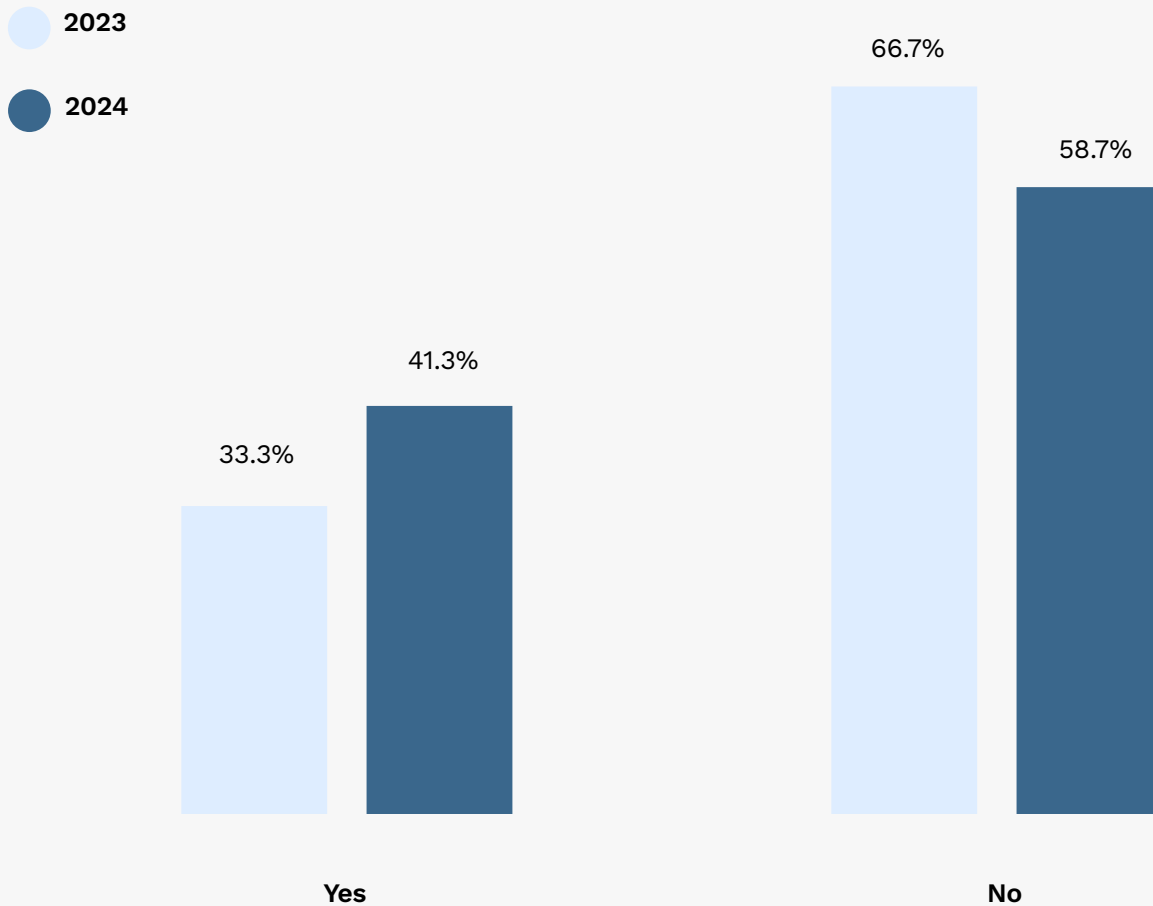
even a little higher. One of the things we do see sometimes is that whilst companies don't mandate a set number of days, they will encourage a stated minimum level of office attendance. Accordingly, the percentage of businesses with "an expectation" around this might be a little higher than the proportion who expressly require a set number of days.



Do you currently have a set number of days in the office?



# Working from home survey responses continued



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## Does your company offer overseas remote work?

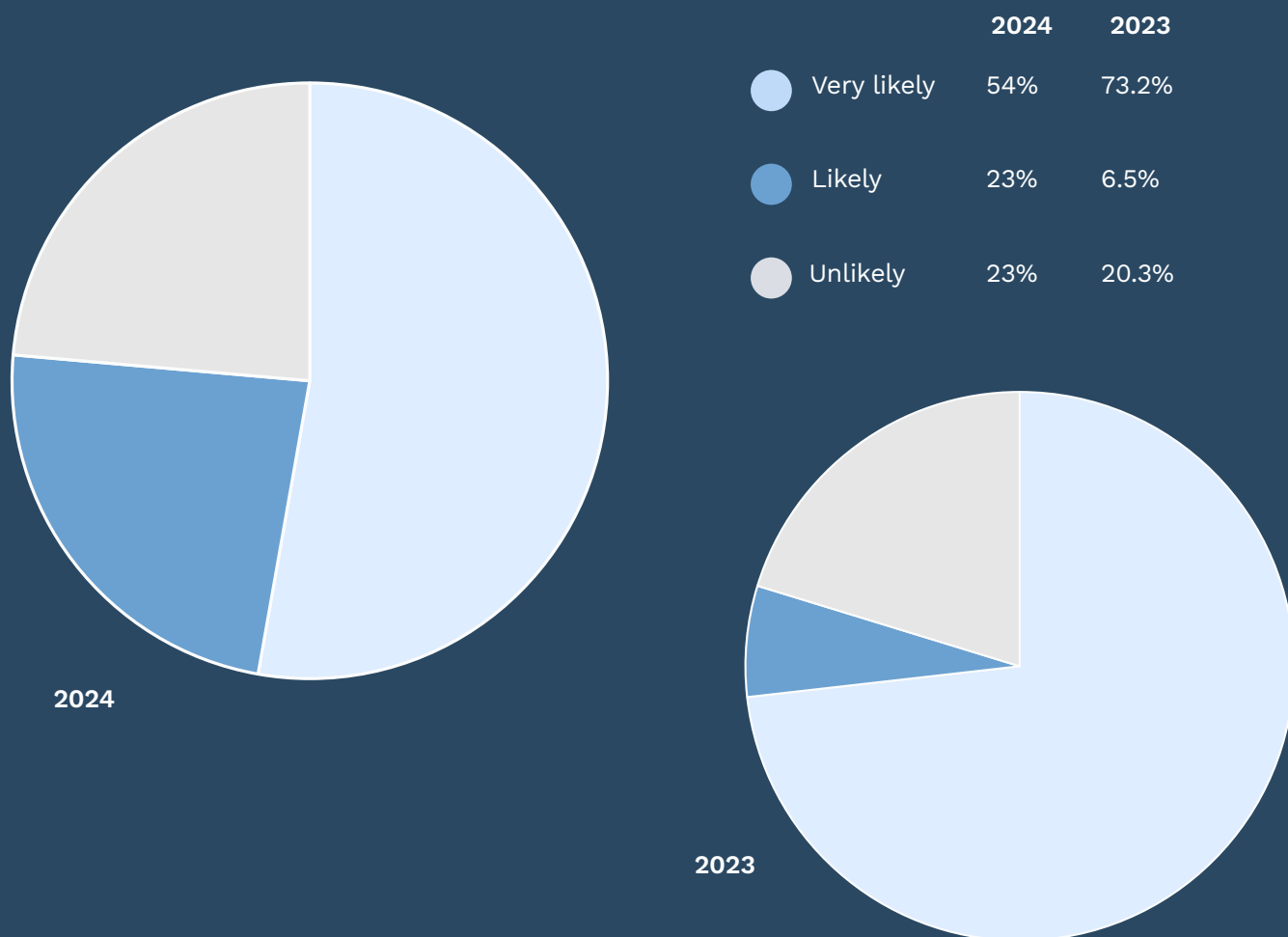
The responses to this question again demonstrate quite a significant shift towards allowing employees the ability to work remotely from overseas, with over 40% of the companies we surveyed offering this.

In our experience of this in practice, it tends to be time limited and there are of course tax implications that need to be considered for longer stints of being physically located overseas. Nonetheless, it would appear that this continues to be a sizeable benefit for many.

# Candidate poll results continued

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How likely is it you would look for a new job if your current employer required you to be in the office full time / five days a week?



This second poll demonstrates the same shift in candidate attitudes as the first. The proportion of respondents who would (very likely) seek a new role if required to work in the office full-time has dropped from just under three-quarters to just over a half. Whilst most of the difference would appear to be people becoming more sanguine (and shifting from very likely to likely), the percentage of voters unlikely to seek a move in these circumstances has also climbed a little.

We have definitely had some candidates who have approached us about a move for this reason. However, our impression (at least in terms of what candidates say they are looking for), is that most people don't require lots of flexibility, just some! Of course, a few will have particular requirements/circumstances that limit the number of days they can commute to/from an office but in terms of personal preference, most are after a balance without having strong views on what that balance should be.

# Contact us

We hope you find this an interesting report on a key discussion point in the in-house legal market. If you'd like to discuss any aspect of it, are looking to hire for your team, or are beginning to consider a move to an in-house position, please do get in touch with us.



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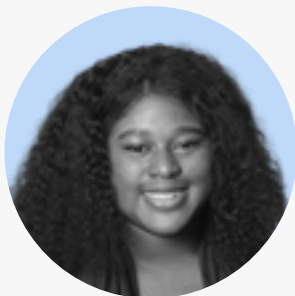
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