

Key insights into the global workforce from Kelly®

THE COLLABORATIVE WORK ENVIRONMENT IN EUROPE






KELLY

The collaborative work environment

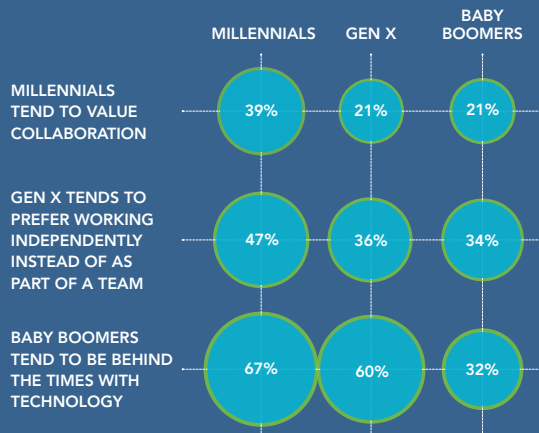
Is there a key workplace factor that would improve both a company's profitability and their ability to attract and retain top talent? Collaboration is becoming just that factor.

The top three features European workers use to define their ideal work environment are:

-  60% Highly collaborative environment
-  44% A culture of innovation and creativity
-  43% Flexible work arrangements



Generational perceptions

How generational cohorts feel about each other's capabilities around collaboration greatly impacts the effectiveness in leveraging its benefits. So, how do their perceptions differ?



FEATURES OF AN IDEAL WORK ENVIRONMENT CITED BY EUROPEAN TALENT, BY REGION

Highly collaborative environment vs highly individualized work

-  Highly collaborative environment, cross-functional teams (preference ranging from 41%–80%)
-  Highly individualized work with limited teamwork and opportunities to collaborate with others (preference ranging from 5%–30%)



Contents

4 / Introduction

5 / Collaboration and empathy as drivers of business success

7 / Building a collaborative culture

8 / Workers' perspectives on the collaborative workplace culture

10 / The ideal work environment is collaborative

13 / There are still challenges to establishing a collaborative environment

15 / A mismatch of skills

17 / Collaboration and the bottom line

19 / Millennials value collaborative work environments

22 / Myth busting: national and generational perceptions of collaborative habits

24 / Recommendation to employers: avoid burnout in top collaborators

26 / Overview and methodology

Introduction

Is there a key workplace factor that can improve both a company's profitability and its ability to attract and retain top talent?

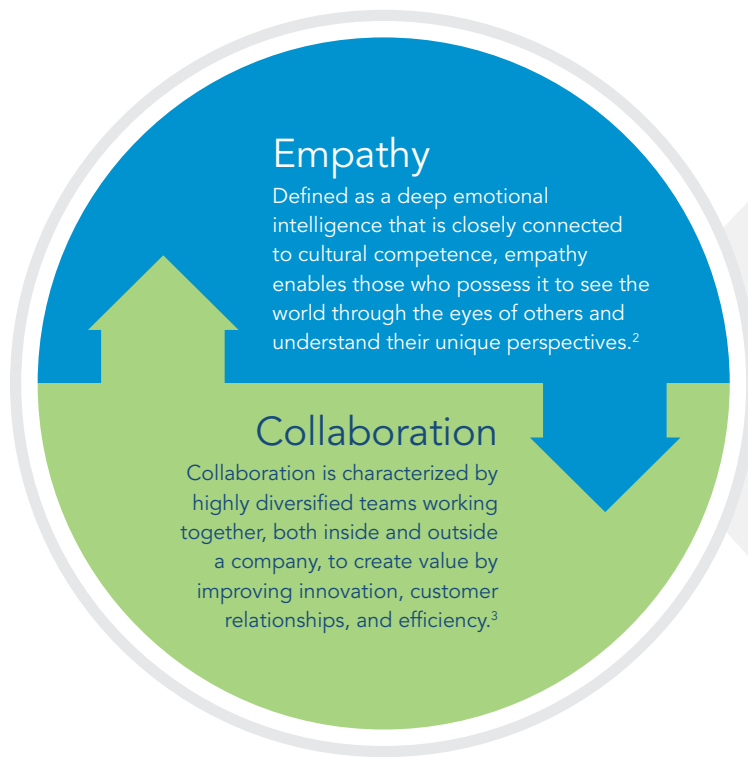
Across Europe, collaboration is becoming just that opportunity. Two-thirds of European business leaders agree that enabling flexible working environments has a bigger financial impact on their bottom line than cutting operational costs. They also report a 39% increase in employee productivity when flexible work arrangements are allowed.¹

Meanwhile, millennial talent—a segment of the population with critical future-ready skills—stand out with an above-average desire to work in agile, inclusive, and collaborative environments. With skilled candidates in short supply in many European industries, it's important for employers to understand that they can attain a **collaborative work environment**, and that such an environment can help to foster worker engagement and capture a competitive advantage.

As a pioneer in the staffing industry, and in the study of workforce preferences, Kelly takes a high-level look at collaboration as it pertains to the global worker today. In addition to analyzing worker preferences and psychographic insights based on survey data from the 2015 and 2014 Kelly Global Workforce Index™ (KGWI), this report collects insights from the *Kelly Free Agent Survey* (2015) and other research sources. Unless otherwise noted, all statistics come from recent Kelly workforce research data.

Visit kellyservices.com for additional reports, articles, and insights.

Collaboration and empathy as drivers of business success



To be successful, businesses need to hire people capable of both collaboration and empathy, and create an environment that nurtures and encourages these skills.

Recruiting and retaining more collaborative and empathetic people:

- Strengthens employer brand
- Has greater appeal to millennials, improving both recruitment and retention
- Encourages a more diverse talent pool by promoting inclusive decision-making
- Results in higher engagement of talent from a greater sense of satisfaction, belonging, and trust in co-workers and managers when given opportunities to participate in collaborative activities
- Improves employee health and wellness.

Top- and bottom-line returns include:

- More productive knowledge workers
- Improve profitability.

Better product development:

- Ensures consumer-centric design
- Decreases time to market
- Encourages more innovation.



LEAD

“Change is constant. Problems are global. Information is at our fingertips. In the era of Wikipedia®, does it really matter how much you can memorize? What’s more important is that you can take the perspective of others—whether you’re designing a new technology, or negotiating, or anticipating the uncertain. Indeed, how well we do—whether in the classroom or the boardroom—depends more than ever on how well we forge and navigate relationships. In this way, empathy is the new literacy: essential for us to communicate, collaborate, and lead.”

—Stuart Foundation⁴

Building a collaborative culture

CORE BUILDING BLOCKS

LEAD FROM THE TOP

In a recent global survey, McKinsey found that 89% of variance between strong and weak organizations in terms of leadership effectiveness is driven by four traits⁵:

1. Being supportive
2. Seeking different perspectives
3. Solving problems effectively
4. Operating with a strong results orientation.

Having an open door policy helps, as does transparency into corporate strategies and goals.

TRAIN ALL TALENT

Don't just train full-time employees. Encourage all employees to:

- Develop critical soft skills such as listening, empathy, and communication
- Help smooth out differences in generational working styles and bust generational myths.

Training and development programs are important to 66% of global talent.

BUILD AND USE DIVERSE TEAMS

For all mission-critical decisions and projects, engage teams that cross:

- Talent categories (including employees, independent contractors, and partners)
- Functional areas
- Demographic factors (including age and ethnicity).

Keep teams to a manageable size and use intelligent workforce design to support formal and informal collaboration.

USE COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Play a supportive role in creating cultural building blocks that can help drive better outcomes. For instance:

- The McKinsey Global Institute suggests that fully connecting talent via social networking technologies can improve knowledge-worker productivity by 20% to 25%.⁶
- Using video conferencing (which is still underutilized) gives employees "presence" when working remotely.

Innovative enterprises make creating a collaborative work culture a top priority to compete effectively in rapidly changing and volatile market conditions. They aren't hampered by older ways of thinking about collaboration as activity-based or "extra" work.

CULTURE SHIFT

Collaboration skills are a new currency in the age of career resilience and employability. Skill building, and training and development become part of a compensation package.

Fresh ideas cross-pollinate across silos and boundaries within an organization (via partners and vendors), and also stimulate debate through greater trust and communication.

Collaborative behaviors are recognised and rewarded over competitive behaviors.

A culture that is truly supportive of empathy and collaboration requires constant nurturing and leadership from the top.

IMPROVED OUTCOMES

The employer brand is stronger, attracting and retaining diverse, highly skilled talent—especially millennials and those with professional or technical skill sets.

Talent is more engaged, leading to greater discretionary work efforts and productivity.

Time to market is faster, improving market position.

Both talent and the organization as a whole are more resilient to market fluctuations.

Top- and bottom-line returns are higher.

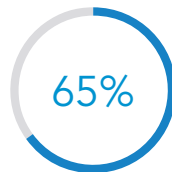
Workers' perspectives on the collaborative workplace culture

In Europe, as in the United States (U.S.), companies can do better in encouraging a collaborative work environment. Less than half (47%) of European workers feel that their current or most recent employer's (physical and virtual) workplace promotes collaboration and inclusion. Norway (52%) and Russia (57%) lead the region in this regard, while the United Kingdom (U.K.) and Denmark lag behind on 35%.

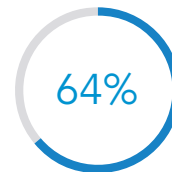
Similarly, only 40% of surveyed Europeans believe their organizations structure promotes collaboration and inclusion. With 57% and 24% respectively, Russia and Denmark sit at opposing ends of the spectrum.

Given the strong business case for a collaborative work environment, there is an urgent need for improvement. According to the 2015 and 2014 KGWI, European talent sees professional growth and personal development as key areas that improve work environments.

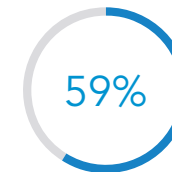
Professional growth and personal development are key to making work environments more attractive.



65% of European workers say initiatives to improve workers' work-life balance contribute to an employer's attractiveness.

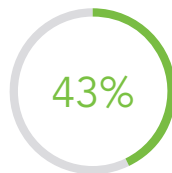


64% consider opportunities for advancement a key driver in their decision to accept one job over another.

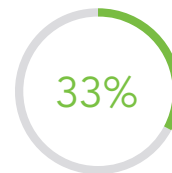


59% value training and development programs.

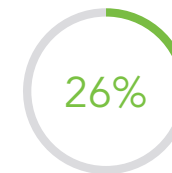
Collaborative structures, processes, and innovations can increase employee engagement.



43% of European workers say their employer continually fosters and encourages a culture of engagement.



33% say special efforts are made to retain innovators and key knowledge workers.



26% feel fully engaged with their current employer.

Workers' perspectives on the collaborative workplace culture (continued)

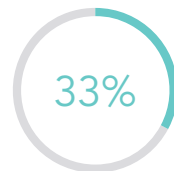
The shortcomings of region-wide labor policies lead to important disparities between countries.



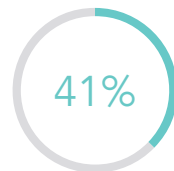
4% of Italian workers feel fully engaged with their employer, versus 39% of Norwegians.



8% of Portuguese workers feel highly valued by their employer, versus 22% of workers in Norway and Russia.



33% of Irish workers feel more loyal to their employer compared to the previous year.



41% of Hungarian and British workers feel less loyal compared to the previous year.

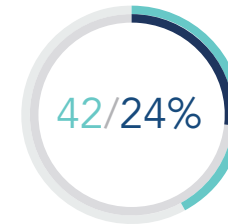


Collaborative work cultures are far from being widespread.

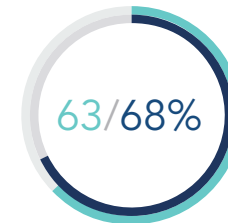
In Europe, as in the U.S., much progress has been made in making work environments more conducive to, and supportive of, collaboration. However, these kinds of work environments are not common.

84% of European workers say working for an innovative or progressive company is important to them, but only 18% strongly agree that their company culture embraces innovation and change, and only 14% strongly agree that the organization's structure actively promotes collaboration and inclusion.

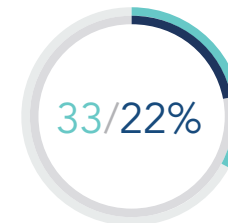
Generational insights*



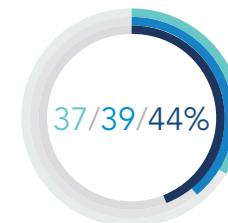
International opportunities make an organization attractive to 42% of millennials, versus 24% of baby boomers.



Work-life balance is important to 63% of millennials, versus 68% of Gen Xers.



Non-traditional perks and benefits are important to 33% of millennials, versus only 22% of baby boomers.



Deriving a sense of purpose from work is important to 37% of millennials, versus 39% of Gen Xers and 44% of baby boomers.

*See page 18 for more generational insight.

The ideal work environment is collaborative

When asked to describe their ideal work environment, European workers focus on elements that make their day-to-day lives more flexible and collaborative.

The top three features they look for in their ideal work environment are flexible work arrangements (43%), a culture of innovation and creativity (44%), and a highly collaborative environment (60%).

A highly collaborative environment ranks highest in Belgium, France, Italy, and Portugal (from 63% to 80%). Flexible work arrangements are more of a priority for German, Hungarian, Dutch, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, and British workers (from 54% to 64%).

Similar to the trend in the U.S., professional/technical talent in Europe stands out with an above-average appetite for these same elements. The IT, science, and engineering segments consistently place more emphasis on a company's ability to expose them to the latest technologies and top-notch equipment (from 63% to 80%).

Features of an ideal work environment cited by European talent (regional versus occupational averages):

	Europe
Highly collaborative environment, cross-functional teams	60%
Culture of innovation and creativity where the status quo is challenged	44%
Flexible work arrangements such as remote work options, flexible schedules/hours	43%
Exposure to latest technologies and top-notch equipment	39%
Virtual teams	32%
Matrixed organizational structure	29%
Rapid pace with constant change—always something new	28%
Traditional hierarchical organizational structure	25%
Traditional work arrangements—9–5 schedule for all	25%
Competitive, where the rewards and risks are high	14%
Highly individualized work with limited teamwork and limited opportunities to collaborate with others	14%

Percentage of respondents with professional/technical skills who rank ideal work environment features **above**, **below**, or **on par with** (+/-2%) the regional average

	Engineering	Finance and accounting	Information technology	Science
Highly collaborative environment, cross-functional teams	62%	59%	63%	71%
Culture of innovation and creativity where the status quo is challenged	49%	39%	54%	54%
Flexible work arrangements such as remote work options, flexible schedules/hours	41%	46%	57%	43%
Exposure to latest technologies and top-notch equipment	52%	37%	61%	49%
Virtual teams	37%	31%	47%	25%
Matrixed organizational structure	35%	29%	36%	32%
Rapid pace with constant change—always something new	29%	26%	31%	27%
Traditional hierarchical organizational structure	25%	26%	21%	22%
Traditional work arrangements—9–5 schedule for all	20%	21%	18%	22%
Competitive, where the rewards and risks are high	17%	14%	15%	9%
Highly individualized work with limited teamwork and limited opportunities to collaborate with others	14%	15%	16%	9%

The ideal work environment is collaborative (continued)

Percentage of respondents from Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) who rank ideal work environment features **above**, **below**, or **on par with** (+/-2%) the regional average

Features of an ideal work environment cited by European talent (regional versus national averages):

	Europe	Global	Belgium	Denmark	France	Germany	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Luxembourg	Netherlands	Norway	Poland	Portugal	Russia	Sweden	Switzerland	United Kingdom
Highly collaborative environment, cross-functional teams	60%	57%	68%	70%	63%	54%	44%	56%	80%	58%	55%	69%	52%	67%	55%	41%	57%	54%
Culture of innovation and creativity where the status quo is challenged	44%	39%	50%	19%	41%	35%	50%	40%	50%	46%	41%	40%	38%	43%	46%	56%	42%	42%
Flexible work arrangements such as remote work options, flexible schedules/hours	43%	54%	49%	64%	30%	62%	61%	43%	34%	38%	57%	57%	50%	29%	47%	57%	50%	54%
Exposure to latest technologies and top-notch equipment	39%	44%	43%	24%	27%	41%	33%	44%	54%	30%	39%	33%	35%	43%	54%	36%	34%	46%
Virtual teams	32%	37%	38%	26%	27%	20%	36%	32%	41%	46%	34%	34%	41%	38%	32%	42%	25%	37%
Matrixed organizational structure	29%	29%	23%	30%	24%	35%	33%	25%	34%	24%	27%	29%	31%	26%	29%	35%	30%	30%
Rapid pace with constant change—always something new	28%	32%	29%	23%	25%	14%	16%	25%	47%	36%	24%	34%	33%	28%	35%	26%	21%	33%
Traditional hierarchical organizational structure	25%	27%	21%	21%	27%	21%	24%	25%	18%	22%	24%	15%	28%	25%	28%	18%	25%	31%
Traditional work arrangements—9–5 schedule for all	24%	32%	21%	28%	30%	15%	20%	27%	19%	22%	15%	10%	46%	28%	20%	17%	21%	28%
Competitive, where the rewards and risks are high	14%	21%	14%	6%	12%	5%	8%	21%	12%	10%	12%	20%	15%	21%	18%	14%	9%	21%
Highly individualized work with limited teamwork and limited opportunities to collaborate with others	14%	18%	10%	15%	9%	6%	16%	12%	6%	12%	14%	27%	20%	5%	30%	16%	9%	15%



FRESH

“With collaboration comes the chance for fresh thinking to emerge and disparate skills to be utilized, which can improve the way your company does business—often in unexpected ways and from unexpected sources. That’s why a reliable talent supply chain is so important. It can help ensure that you maintain a consistent business footprint, which is especially critical when you are faced with unexpected challenges that require cost-effective solutions.”

—Mark Lanfear, KellyOCG Global Practice lead, Life Sciences⁷

There are still challenges to establishing a collaborative environment

Effective teamwork makes everyone look better, but change can be hard. Across Europe, a positive and conducive work climate can improve an organization's bottom line by up to 30% while sensibly reducing absence and turnover rates.⁸ But collaboration can initially be uncomfortable. When putting top talent together in new or varied working arrangements, workers can be resistant and can overlook learning opportunities because they are more focused on competing with each other.

Adjusting to the culture of collaboration requires two important steps. First, identify and empower top collaborators who can ease the rest of the workforce into more flexible and collaborative processes. Across Europe, up to 70% of a team's work environment is influenced by its leaders' style and approach, but many are still struggling to create a

collaborative environment despite wanting to move in this direction.⁹ Second, companies must effectively track the impact of changing practices on top collaborators and their teams. If not properly managed, the sheer abundance of options and possibilities can lead to burnout, lower engagement, and attrition due to collaboration overload.¹⁰

There are still challenges to establishing a collaborative environment (continued)

Challenges

As organizations grow and adapt to current market conditions, new work arrangements have emerged that span the talent supply chain, including dealing with remote and geographically disparate teams, independent contractors, and other flexible arrangements. At the same time, organizations continue to attempt to do more with less, expanding workloads while shrinking budgets. All this adds to the challenge of fostering a collaborative environment.

Specific challenges include:

- Breaking down entrenched knowledge and management silos
- Moving beyond collaboration's "messiness" and reputation for being time-consuming
- Managing different work arrangements and styles within the same team
- Sharing a team reputation when it hinges on everyone in that team
- Changing the rules of engagement that might have worked for some talent
- Finding people with the right soft skills, including the ability to collaborate
- Ensuring that collaboration is used effectively to drive business results, rather than becoming an excuse for "meeting overload". Talent should be included in meetings where appropriate—when their contacts, insights, or information can't be obtained in a briefer or more effective manner.¹¹



Opportunities

Collaboration can reinvigorate organizations by fully engaging employees, improving retention, and increasing innovation. Even with all the known benefits of collaboration, many organizations feel pressure to keep the status quo.

To move towards a more collaborative environment, consider these approaches:

- Make sure workers understand the benefits of collaboration.
- Nurture, encourage, and reward collaborative behaviors through strong leadership.
- Invest in collaborative technology and supportive leaders to move projects along between working sessions.
- Track the outcomes of collaborative efforts and showcase the return on investment.



A mismatch of skills

Despite all the talk about hard-skill needs, soft skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, persistence, collaboration, and curiosity are crucial for workers to thrive in a rapidly evolving, technology-driven world.¹²

An OECD survey conducted across 33 European countries showed that proficiency in soft skills is positively associated with many aspects of individual wellbeing, including health, trust in others, and participation in volunteer or community activities.¹³

However, it is a challenge to find the right soft skills in European candidates. This is partly due to the region's significant skills mismatch, a trend that's closely linked to lower job satisfaction and increased staff turnover.

In 2014, 43% of European Union (EU) employees were working in jobs that did not match their skills or qualifications. This has a more severe affect on young people, migrant workers, and those working in part-time or contract-based jobs. Over-skilled workers were more prevalent in Romania, Greece, Cyprus, Slovenia, and the U.K., while under-skilling was

more of an issue in Austria, Germany, Estonia, and Lithuania.¹⁴

What people do with what they know is just as important as what they know. Employers can play an important role in ensuring European workers' skills and competences are used in the most productive way. Enabling worker empowerment by increasing their autonomy, task discretion, control, and responsibility—all elements of collaboration—can encourage employees to fully use or further develop their soft skills.

A mismatch of skills (continued)

The "skills mismatch" phenomenon in Europe.



Source: European Commission, "Skills challenges in Europe," July 2014, http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUSP_AH_SkillsChallenges_0.pdf.

Collaboration and the bottom line

Collaboration is seen as having a direct effect on profitability. It helps companies accelerate innovation and consolidate competitive market positions.

According to a Hay Group study on favorable work climates in Europe, an organizational climate that's positive and conducive to collaboration can improve an organization's bottom line by up to 30% while sensibly reducing employee absence and turnover rates.¹⁵ Additionally, a recent A.T. Kearney study on collaborative innovation showed that 71% of organizations expect more than a quarter of their revenue to be generated through collaborative innovation by 2030.¹⁶

The main issue is that European countries vary greatly in their ability to gain competitive advantages through collaboration and

innovation. According to a European Commission report on innovation performance, some of the world's most innovative economies are in Europe, but so are many countries that urgently need to improve their capabilities.¹⁷

According to the Summary Innovation Index, European countries can be divided into four performance groups when it comes to innovation:

- **Innovation leaders:** Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, and Sweden, which perform well above the EU average
- **Strong innovators:** Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Slovenia, and U.K., which perform above or close to the EU average

- **Moderate innovators:** Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Spain, which perform below the EU average
- **Modest innovators:** Bulgaria and Romania, which perform well below the EU average.

Innovation driven by collaboration may just be the region's solution to sustainably addressing a number of looming global trends. These include the increasing innovativeness of other regions, the shortage of young and skilled talent, and unprecedented business models driven by digitization.¹⁸



IMPACT

“Efficient, ongoing collaboration has a fundamental impact on business innovation, performance, culture, and the bottom line.”¹⁹

Millennials value collaborative work environments

All around the world, generational dynamics are reshaping work environments, and Europe is no exception. More than one in three (34%) workers in the U.S.²⁰ are millennials²¹, and they are taking organizations in unprecedented directions. From flat organizational structures to flexible, collaborative, and hyper-connected work spaces, millennials' preferences are actively redefining the very notions of success, career, teamwork, and productivity.

This general trend is largely echoed in Europe. When asked how well their current or most recent employer fosters a collaborative, innovative, and creative workplace, European millennials consistently give scores higher or on par with those of baby boomers and Gen Xers. This suggests that current or recent employers largely satisfy millennials' priorities.

This propensity to make workplaces as welcoming as possible for millennials could be

explained by a key demographic characteristic: approximately one-fifth of Europe's under-25 population is unemployed²², and millennials account for only 24% of its working-age adult population.²³ The fact that millennials are essentially a scarce resource in Europe is a challenge for businesses that rely on agility, dynamism, and innovation to grow and expand. In order to attract and retain millennials, work environments must accommodate them as much as possible.

Millennials value collaborative work environments (continued)

The survey shows that collaboration does not come naturally for most employees, particularly those born before millennials. Changing the mindset of older generations is not an easy endeavor, but an approach that takes generational differences into account could help them adapt to more collaborative environments while improving millennial retention strategies.²⁴

A generational review of what employees' current or most recent employers are doing to foster a collaborative environment.

Percentage of respondents rated **above**, **below**, or **on par with** (+/- 2%) with the EMEA average

	EMEA average	Millennials	Gen X	Baby boomers
Workplace (physical and virtual) promotes collaboration and inclusion	47%	●	●	●
Organizational structure promotes collaboration and inclusion	40%	●	●	●
Culture embraces innovation and change	43%	●	●	●
Managers continually foster and encourage a culture of engagement	43%	●	●	●
Company makes special efforts to retain innovators and key knowledge workers	33%	●	●	●
Work environment (including training, communication, and leadership) supports employees to deliver high levels of performance	46%	●	●	●
It's important to work for an innovative and progressive company	84%	●	●	●



DRIVE

Across the board, millennial talent stands out with an above-average desire for collaborative environment attributes. While changing the mindset of older generations is not a short-term, easy endeavor, research shows that collaborative behaviors such as showing empathy can be learned.²⁵ A generational approach to those programs could be useful to companies looking to foster a collaborative environment while at the same time improving their millennial retention strategies.

Myth busting: national and generational perceptions of collaborative habits

National misconceptions

In Europe, as elsewhere, national stereotypes are common. When asked about the attributes of their fellow Europeans, most people tend to associate Germany with trustworthiness, while Italians and Greeks are seen as the least dependable.²⁶

As a Hay Group study on European countries' work environments points out, such clichés are simply not true.²⁷ The research reveals that Mediterranean countries are no more easygoing or relaxed when they do business than other European countries. Similarly, people from Northern Europe are not as strict and rigorous as some stereotypes would suggest.

Russia and the Ukraine have the warmest working environments, with more than half (55%) of senior managers creating a positive atmosphere for workers. More than two-thirds (68%) of Italian managers create demotivating working environments for their staff. Despite being among the least authoritarian in Europe, British and Irish leaders fail to motivate workers, with 38% rated as creating a demotivating atmosphere.



Source: interactive map at <https://www.haygroup.com/uk/flash/index.aspx?file=climatemap.27.07.swf>.

Myth busting: national and generational perceptions of collaborative habits (continued)

Generational blind spots

How generational cohorts feel about each other's capabilities and habits around collaboration greatly affects a team's or an organization's ability to benefit from collaboration.

Co-workers from different generations often disagree with each other when it comes to assessing the skills and abilities of each generation in their workplace. This creates a delicate situation that needs to be addressed to foster a truly collaborative work environment.

Millennials in Europe see their dependence on technological tools as proof of their natural savviness and penchant for teamwork, while Gen Xers and baby boomers see it more as a way to avoid collaboration in general, and face-to-face communications in particular. Conversely, baby boomers see themselves as largely adaptable to new processes and tools, while millennials and Gen Xers see them as unable—even unwilling—to embrace change.

Generational stereotypes: European workers share their perceptions of their own generation and other generations. **Above, below or on par with** (+/- 2%) the **average** (%)

	EMEA average	Millennials	Gen X	Baby boomers
Relative to their co-workers:				
Millennials tend to value team collaboration	31%	39%	21%	20%
Millennials tend to communicate electronically instead of face to face	47%	43%	53%	60%
Gen Xers tend to prefer working independently instead of as part of a team	42%	47%	36%	34%
Gen Xers tend to prefer collaboration instead of independent work	23%	17%	30%	33%
Baby boomers tend to be out of touch and disinterested in learning new things	53%	60%	51%	21%
Baby boomers tend to be behind the times with technology	61%	67%	60%	32%
How satisfied are you with:				
your occupation (field of work)?		68%	69%	74%
the camaraderie with your co-workers?		66%	65%	65%
your work environment or setting?		59%	60%	65%
the expectations of your boss/manager/supervisor?		56%	52%	55%
your work-life balance?		55%	56%	62%

Out of five key workplace satisfaction criteria, millennials in 60 countries (including in Europe) are least satisfied with their work-life balance and their supervisors' expectations. Gen Xers and baby boomers are more satisfied than millennials in three out of five criteria: occupation, work environment, and work-life balance.

These generational discrepancies are a consistent trend in Europe and elsewhere. They may also explain why millennials are roughly twice as likely to leave a job after two years, 1.5 times more likely to leave after five years, and half as likely to stay after 10 years, compared to Gen Xers and baby boomers.²⁸

Recommendation to employers: avoid burnout in top collaborators

Research recently published in the *Harvard Business Review* points to the potential downside of overdoing collaboration in U.S. organizations.²⁹

Employees who are viewed as valuable resources for information, ideas, and connections can easily become overloaded with demands for their time and unnecessary meeting requests. This leads to a surprising research finding: those viewed by their peers as the most effective collaborators often have the lowest engagement and career satisfaction scores, leading to burnout, and lower morale and/or attrition.

Collaboration is often lopsided

- In the U.S., up to a third of value-added collaborations come from only 3% to 5% of employees (according to research conducted across more than 300 firms).

- A single “extra miler”—an employee who frequently contributes beyond the scope of his or her role—can drive team performance more than all the other members combined.
- Women often bear more of the collaborative work burden. They’re stereotyped as communal and caring, and others often lean on them for extra help—for instance, asking them to attend optional meetings.

All collaborative resources are not equal

Effective collaborators possess three types of resources. The key is to ensure that others in the organization use the most efficient resource. For instance:

- **Informational resources**—knowledge and skills—can be captured and passed along to others.
- **Social resources**—a collaborator’s network and access—can be used to help colleagues better collaborate without a significant time investment.

- **Personal resources**—direct access to a collaborator’s time and energy—should only be available to others if the other two options are not sufficient.

If more than 25% of colleagues’ requests are for personal time or meetings, the collaborator risks burnout, as they won’t have enough time left for their own work

Reward effective collaboration

Roughly 20% of organizational “stars” in the U.S. don’t help colleagues at all. They are rewarded for hitting their individual targets, even though they don’t help their colleagues succeed.

At the same time, top collaborators may help the organization succeed but underperform in their own work because they are overwhelmed. Firms must learn to identify and reward people who are both stars and collaborators.

Recommendation to employers: avoid burnout in top collaborators (continued)

Consider structural changes

One option is to designate “utility players” who are available to field requests and lessen demand for the busiest employees.

As an example, some hospitals now assign a nurse preceptor—someone with no patient responsibilities—to each floor, allowing them to respond to requests as they emerge.

Identify top collaborators at risk of overload

Network analysis tools can help here—for example, Do.com monitors employees’

calendars and reports on time spent in meetings versus solo work. Customer relationship management programs can pinpoint the volume, type, origin, and destination of requests. Organizations should identify talent at the greatest risk of overload and focus on potential levers of change.

Encourage behavioral change

Show the most overburdened talent how to filter and prioritize requests, giving them permission to either say “no: or refer the request to someone else who is better suited to handle it. Reset norms regarding

meeting requests. Sometimes a little culture shock is needed. For example, Dropbox eliminated all recurring meetings for two weeks.

Use the organization’s technology and physical layout

Co-locate highly interdependent talent to facilitate shorter, face-to-face collaborations and information exchanges, rather than formal meetings. Slack and Chatter facilitate open discussion threads. Syndio and VoloMetrix help talent make informed decisions about collaborative activities.

Overview and methodology

A high-level look at workforce trends from Kelly

Background

To better understand the motivations behind the empowered workforce, and how employers can best act and react to worker expectations, Kelly Services® developed the Kelly Global Workforce Index (KGWI), an annual global survey that is the largest study of its kind. In 2015, Kelly collected feedback from 164,000 workers across 28 countries, covering a multitude of industries and occupations. In 2014, nearly 230,000 were polled in 31 countries.

This study takes a high-level look at the collaborative work environment as it pertains to the global worker today. In addition to analyzing worker preferences and psychographic insights based on 2015 and

2014 KGWI survey data, this study collects insights from 2015 PT Hiring Manager survey data (U.S. and Canada), and explores macro employer and employee trends using standard secondary research sources.

Skilled candidates are in short supply across the globe. Employers in search of workers to support growth and innovation have to contend with a market in which organizations face intense competition to secure and retain the best talent. Understanding the collaborative work environment as a strategic opportunity that fosters innovation, engagement, and empathy—a strategy that can be applied to attraction, retention, and workflow strategies—can unlock a much-needed advantage for companies and talent alike.

KGWI response detail

By category	Number of responses	
	2015	2014
Global workforce total	164,021	229,794
Employment status		
Employed full time	57,908	66,216
Employed part time	11,814	16,482
Temporary/casual/contract work	16,299	23,680
Unemployed	12,754	21,451
Looking for work	22,425	22,161
Retired	1,060	1,262
Industry breakout		
Engineering	11,942	10,792
Finance and accounting	10,287	16,150
Information technology	9,847	10,501
Science	5,694	6,920
Geographic breakout		
The Americas	102,321	135,049
EMEA	50,107	71,134
Asia-Pacific	11,593	21,080
Generational breakout		
Gen Y (1980–1995)	56,998	64,475
Gen X (1965–1979)	37,428	51,073
Baby boomers (1946–1964)	20,382	28,789

Endnotes

- ¹ Polycam, "European companies say flexible working strategies have more financial impact and benefits than cost cutting," 2012, <http://www.polycom.co.uk/company/news/press-release-filter/2012/20120619.html>.
- ² *Harvard Business Review*, "Empathy is still lacking in the leaders who need it most," Ernest J Wilson III, September 2015, <https://hbr.org/2015/09/empathy-is-still-lacking-in-the-leaders-who-need-it-most>.
- ³ Cisco blog, "Collaboration: what does it really mean," Carlos Domingos, February 2011, <http://blogs.cisco.com/news/collaboration-what-does-it-really-mean>.
- ⁴ Stuart Foundation, "Start Empathy," November 12, 2015 <http://www.stuartfoundation.org/NewsAndReports/InTheNews/NewsArchive>
- ⁵ *McKinsey Quarterly*, "Decoding leadership: What really matters," By Claudio Feser, Fernanda Mayol, and Ramesh Srinivasan, January 2015, http://www.mckinsey.com/insights/leading_in_the_21st_century/decoding_leadership_what_really_matters.
- ⁶ McKinsey Global Institute, "The social economy: Unlocking value and productivity through social technologies," Michael Chui, James Manyika, Jacques Bughin, Richard Dobbs, Charles Roxburgh, Hugo Sarrazin, Geoffrey Sands, and Magdalena Westergren, July 2012, <http://www.mckinsey.com/industries/high-tech/our-insights/the-social-economy>.
- ⁷ Lab Manager, "Working Together Makes Change Work," Mark Lanfear, February 12, 2015 <http://www.labmanager.com/business-management/2015/02/working-together-makes-change-work?fw1pk=2#.Vxjy-PkrLIU>
- ⁸ Hay Group, "Hay Group climate map," 2011, <https://www.haygroup.com/uk/downloads/details.aspx?id=31345>.
- ⁹ Hay Group, "Hay Group climate map," 2011, <https://www.haygroup.com/uk/downloads/details.aspx?id=31345>.
- ¹⁰ *Harvard Business Review*, "Collaboration Overload," January 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload>.
- ¹¹ *Harvard Business Review*, "Collaboration Overload," January 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload>.
- ¹² World Economic Forum, "New vision for education—Unlocking the potential of technology," 2015, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEFUSA_NewVisionforEducation_Report2015.pdf.
- ¹³ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), "Skills matter," 2016, <http://www.oecd.org/skills/skills-matter-9789264258051-en.htm>.
- ¹⁴ European Commission, "Skills challenges in Europe", July 2014, http://skillspanorama.cedefop.europa.eu/sites/default/files/EUSP_AH_SkillsChallenges_0.pdf.
- ¹⁵ Hay Group, "Hay Group climate map", 2011, <https://www.haygroup.com/uk/downloads/details.aspx?id=31345>.
- ¹⁶ A.T. Kearney, "What collaborative innovation means for Europe's future", Kai Engel, 2015, https://www.atkearney.com/web/davos-2015/home/-/blogs/what-collaborative-innovation-means-for-europe-s-futu-1?_33_redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.atkearney.com%2Fweb%2Fdavos-2015%2Fhome%2F-%2Fblogs%2Fwhat-collaborative-innovation-means-for-europe-s-futu-1.
- ¹⁷ European Commission, "European innovation scoreboard," 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards_en.
- ¹⁸ World Economic Forum (WEF), "Collaborative innovation: transforming business, driving growth," August 2015, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Collaborative_Innovation_report_2015.pdf.
- ¹⁹ Raconteur, "Collaboration is good for business," October 27, 2015 <http://raconteur.net/business/collaboration-is-good-for-business>
- ²⁰ Richard Fry, "Millennials surpass Gen Xers as the largest generation in U.S. labor force," May 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/05/11/millennials-surpass-gen-xers-as-the-largest-generation-in-u-s-labor-force>.
- ²¹ Generally defined as the generation born between 1980 and 1995. Also known as "Generation Y."
- ²² IEDP, "A European perspective on millennials," June 2012, <http://www.iedp.com/articles/a-european-perspective-on-millennials>.
- ²³ Bruce Stokes, "Who are Europe's millennials?," February 2015, <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/02/09/who-are-europes-millennials>.
- ²⁴ UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, Executive Development White Paper, "Creating a collaborative organizational culture," 2014, <http://www.kenan-flagler.unc.edu/~media/Files/documents/executive-development/unc-white-paper-creating-a-collaborative-organizational-culture.pdf>.
- ²⁵ Center for Creative Leadership, "Empathy in the Workplace A Tool for Effective Leadership," William A. Gentry, Todd J. Weber, and Golnaz Sadri, 2016 <http://insights.ccl.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/EmpathyInTheWorkplace.pdf>
- ²⁶ Pew Research Center "The new sick man of Europe: the European Union," May 2013, <http://www.pewglobal.org/2013/05/13/chapter-3-mixed-views-of-leaders-and-each-other>.
- ²⁷ Personnel Today, "Northern Europe has more collaborative work environments than the South", Laura Chamberlain, July 2011, <http://www.personneltoday.com/hr/northern-europe-has-more-collaborative-work-environments-than-the-south>.
- ²⁸ Nielsen, "Global Generational Lifestyles survey", 2015, <http://www.nielsen.com/us/en/insights/reports/2015/global-generational-lifestyles.html>.
- ²⁹ *Harvard Business Review*, "Collaboration Overload," January 2016, <https://hbr.org/2016/01/collaborative-overload>.



About Kelly Services

As a global leader in providing workforce solutions, Kelly Services, Inc. (Nasdaq®: KELYA, KELYB) and its subsidiaries offer a comprehensive array of outsourcing and consulting services as well as world-class staffing on a temporary, temporary-to-hire, and direct-hire basis. In 2016, the Company is commemorating 70 years of industry leadership. Kelly has a role in managing employment opportunities for more than one million workers around the globe by employing 550,000 of these individuals directly, with the remaining workers engaged through its talent supply chain network of supplier partners. Revenue in 2015 was \$5.5 billion. Visit kellyservices.com and connect with us on Facebook®, LinkedIn®, and Twitter®.



kellyservices.com

This information may not be published, broadcast, sold, or otherwise distributed without prior written permission from the authorized party.

All trademarks are property of their respective owners
An Equal Opportunity Employer. © 2016 Kelly Services, Inc. 16-0019

EXIT