

A New Approach for Work-Life Success:

The Dutch Perspective on Workplace Culture



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Over the years, the Dutch workplace culture has shown higher job satisfaction among employees. According to the [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#), the Netherlands ranks in the top 5 countries with the best work-life balance.

With employees constantly facing the pressures of a disruptive and volatile business landscape, fostering a culture that promotes a healthy work-life balance leads to win-win outcomes. Employees are much more motivated to work where companies can visualise and measure their contributions and achievements.

1 The Gig Economy, Freelancers & Side Hustles

In recent years, the rise of the freelance or "slasher community" and the Gig Economy as a new global trend has grown in popularity.

The "slasher community" or freelancers refers to people taking on multiple careers instead of sticking to one position - like a side hustle. On the other hand, the Gig Economy portrays a working relationship where corporations enter short-term contracts with independent workers under a free market. As this relationship between the "slasher community" and the Gig Economy strengthens, these freelancers continue to find opportunities to grow and develop within today's mainstream workforce.



2 Work-Life Balance in the Netherlands

Around **1.1 M** people work as freelancers in the Netherlands
(approximately **13%** of the nation's workforce)

This number has been steadily increasing since **2003**.

You may be wondering: Why do so many people prefer freelance work? One important reason is the pursuit of a better work-life balance. Since 2018, only 0.5% of Dutch employees have worked traditional long hours, the lowest rate ever recorded by the OECD. On the contrary, the average is 13% in the rest of the world.



• Why do the Dutch value and pursue work-life balance?

The situation in the Netherlands is vastly different compared to Asia and China. For employees with families and children, parenting requires a significant investment of time, energy and money.



Within the country, working parents either rely on themselves or seek support from "out-of-school care" or buitenschoolse opvang (BSO). However, these out-of-school care options can be expensive, giving rise to the need for work-life balance among working parents and employees.

2 Work-Life Balance in the Netherlands

• Why is this balance important?

An article published by OECD states that achieving work-life balance is an important goal and vital for mental health, physical health, and long-term economic success.



The pursuit of freedom and the ability to explore, create, change and progress is intrinsic to human psychology. Employees gravitate to the gig economy and freelancing due to its perceived benefits that combine the work-life balance while being gainfully employed and reducing unemployment.

Freelancing also reflects the workplace culture in the Netherlands. For example, most Dutch prefer to separate work and personal life. The Dutch value equality and tolerance of differences, and most workplaces aim to provide a welcoming, cohesive, and friendly environment. This approach to life, or quality of life in the Netherlands, is vital in attracting an international talent pool and companies looking to expand their global presence.

Additionally, companies must improve work-life balance in today's increasingly hybrid workplace. By improving this balance, employee motivation and overall job satisfaction can be enhanced, thus improving workplace performance and output.



3 What can businesses do to support better work-life balance?

• Flexibility

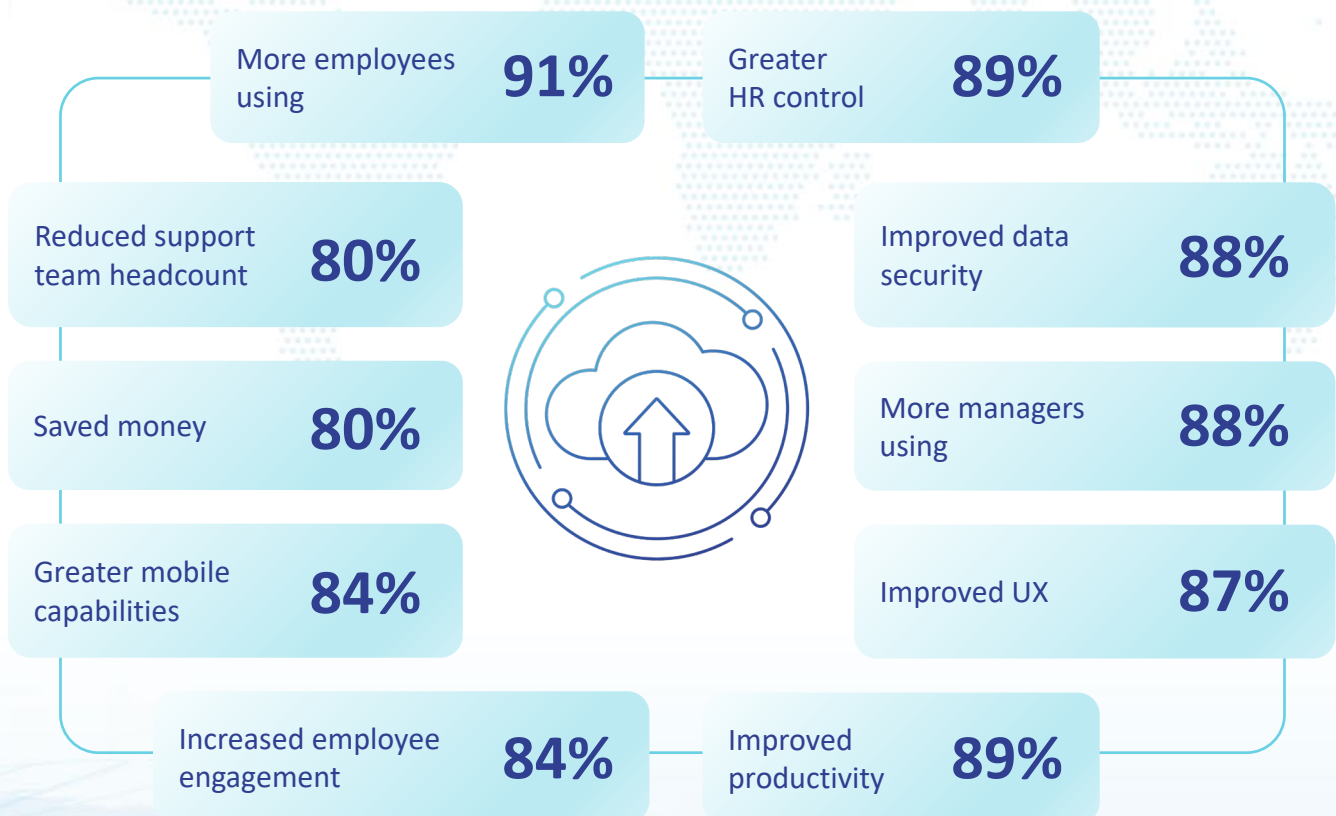
Flexible working hours, part-time work, alternative working hours/arrangements and working from home provide options for employees to take care of both professional and personal responsibilities.

In addition, offering flexibility with work schedules enables employees to take ownership and accountability by prioritising their responsibilities and ultimately, delivery of results within agreed timelines.

• Technology

Including cloud technology and collaboration tools will boost workplace productivity and output. Globally, HR leaders expect the cloud to increase productivity, while 35% see the cloud as a way to reduce costs. In addition, over 60% of executives wish to raise spending on virtual collaboration tools and manager training.

Benefits of Core HR on Cloud



Source: [PwC HR Tech Survey 2022](#)

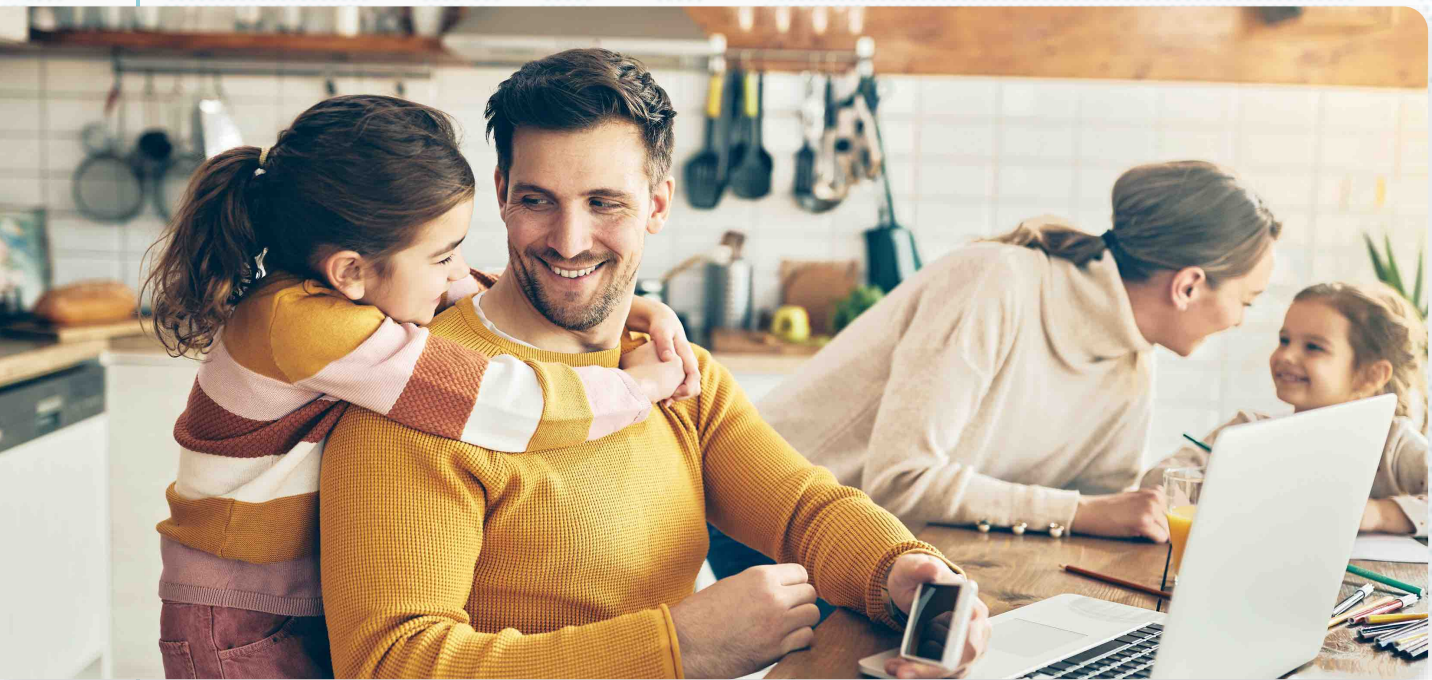
3 What can businesses do to support better work-life balance?

- **Technology (Cont.)**

Cloud-based Human Capital Management (HCM) solutions such as BIPO HRMS combine strategic HR with core HR modules to improve business processes and streamline HR workflows.

The use of technology, especially cloud-based platforms, enables employees to perform critical tasks and collaborate with colleagues from anywhere in the world. Such tools empower employees to take ownership of projects across different time zones and geographies to improve performance.

- **Employee-centric Culture**



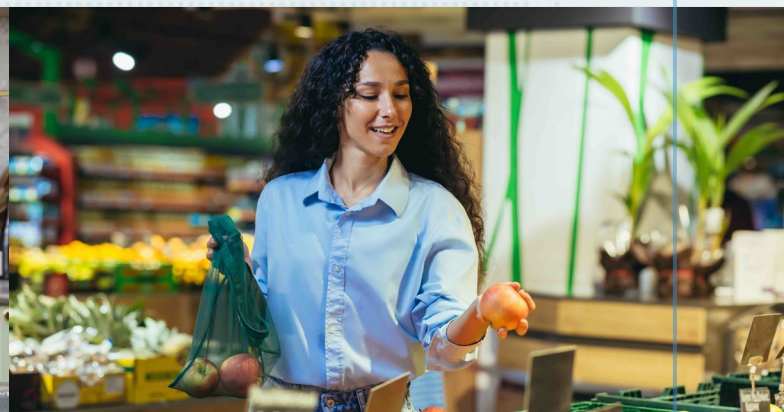
Understanding employees' family obligations, supporting family time and respecting each employee's unique circumstances and differences are essential in the modern workplace. In addition, maintaining transparent and open communication channels supports employee well-being and mental wellness. Globally recognised as a country with excellent work-life balance, full-time employees in the Netherlands devote an average of 64% (or 15.4 hours) to personal care and leisure activities.

The Highlights

Championing Work-Life Success

Companies that wish to emulate the Netherlands' success with work-life balance must respect and adapt to the local workplace culture and policies of the country in which they operate. Doing so ensures success within the company, develops and builds personal employee growth, and ultimately, brings multiple benefits for the organisation, employees and business ecosystem.

While there is no "one size fits all" approach to work-life success, companies can empower employees with choices to impact the business positively.



Find out how to scale your business compliantly in the Netherlands and across Europe with BIPO's comprehensive payroll and people solutions - from HCM, global payroll outsourcing and Employer of Record (EOR) services.