

12 Coworkers in the Netherlands during the COVID-19 pandemic

Milan la Fleur, Martijn Smit, and Ivana Pais

Introduction

Coworking spaces (CSs) are booming, with *Deskmag* counting an impressive number of 26,300 locations all around the world and an estimated 2,680,000 million coworkers (Statista, 2020). The movement is also said to have grown from the first recognized space in San Francisco (Merkel, 2015), but many subtypes of co-working spaces had existed long before, including incubators and (university) libraries as places of study.

Not only do the types and sizes of local CSs and communities vary, but the ways in which people view CSs and value them also differ around the globe (Fuzi, 2015; Mariotti et al., 2017; Vanichvatana, 2018). Different geographical landscapes affect user preferences and their attitudes towards coworking. These differences in preferences and the way such preferences change over time are of major importance in how CSs are shaped and their level of success (Seo et al., 2017).

In the literature, the relationship with regional attitudes and coworking preferences in different geographical and economic landscapes is rarely studied (some exceptions are discussed below). We do this for the Netherlands, which is in some regards different from the dominant narrative on CSs. In particular, the sense of community and social relationships do not seem to be crucial for Dutch coworking spaces (cf. Weijs-Perrée et al., 2019 for the Dutch case with Mariotti et al., 2017). However, the Netherlands is a very dense, polycentric country, at least morphologically speaking (Burger & Meijers, 2012), where part-time work and dual-earner households are the norm (van der Straaten & Rouwendal, 2005), which suggests great attachment to healthy work-life balances but also complicated commutes. It also suggests great potential for alternative ways of organizing daily work routines in space and time.

In particular, we look at users' reasons for working at CSs and the way in which they value different CS characteristics. Our results are not only important for CS managers and owners when designing attractive coworking spaces, but also for policymakers wishing to benefit from the rise of CSs.

Background

With the opening of the first coworking space, the Spiral Muse in San Francisco in 2005, a ‘third way’ of working was introduced. Gandini (2015) described this new way of working as the possibility of working in an environment halfway between the ‘traditional’ working life in a community-like environment, and an independent working life. These relatively new workspaces bring together workers from a wide range of professions, leading to a creative and dynamic atmosphere wherein a diverse group of workers can interact, share expertise, and cooperate (Capdevila, 2015; Fuzi, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012; Weijjs-Perrée et al., 2019).

Heterogeneity among CSs

The term ‘coworking space’ is quite broad and includes many different types of offices. Since almost no CSs are homogenous, there is no clear, unanimous demarcation for them. Different studies have tried to categorize coworking spaces into different groups. Whereas Capdevila (2015) identified three groups of CSs based on their sense of community, Kojo and Nenonen (2016) identified six groups based on the business model and users’ level of access. Although the dividing line between different types of coworking spaces is rather vague, some claim that at least all CSs share the same core values: openness, communication, collaboration, accessibility, and sustainability (Fuzi et al., 2014; Han, 2013; Kwiatkowski & Buczynski, 2011).

Not only is there a lot of heterogeneity between coworking spaces themselves, the group of people using CSs is also quite varied with regard to both sector and employment type. In most countries, the vast majority of CS users are freelancers and entrepreneurs, but people working for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) or large firms and students also make use of coworking spaces (e.g. Orel, 2015; Fuzi, 2015; Weijjs-Perrée et al., 2019). Parrino (2015) divided these users into three groups: freelancers in the strict sense, microbusinesses based in coworking spaces, and self-employed workers or employees working on behalf of a company based outside the CS.

Reasons for co-working

Several studies have touched upon the various reasons why workers have decided to work at a CS instead of working at a ‘normal’ office or from home. According to Brown (2017), these motives can be grouped into three categories:

- productivity (Bueno et al., 2018; Merkel, 2015) – there are fewer distractions than at home;
- professionalization (Bouncken et al., 2018; Brown, 2017) – towards clients and business partners;
- socialization – meeting people to avoid social isolation at home (Boboc et al., 2014), to use its creative atmosphere (Capdevila, 2013; Parrino, 2015), and to find support and inspiration within a community of peers (Garrett et al., 2017; Rus & Orel, 2015).

We used these categories to classify the motives identified in the coworking literature, selecting a series of recent empirical papers from different countries (see Appendix 3; all appendices are available online at <http://martijnjsmit.nl/wp/coworking/>). The only motive considered in all the papers is ‘social interaction with other workers’; other recurring reasons are evenly distributed among the four categories of ‘space outside home’, ‘opportunity to network’, ‘work-related conversations’, and ‘being part of a community’.

Preferences and office characteristics

Along with the decision to work in a coworking space, (future) coworkers need to decide which CS best suits their needs. As Remøy and Van der Voordt (2014) and Rothe et al. (2011) have shown, this decision is based on personal characteristics (age, family situation, gender, type of job) and personal preferences. It is impossible to meet everybody’s needs and preferences without infringing on characteristics someone else dislikes. Different studies have investigated user preferences regarding coworking characteristics, which can be grouped into four different categories: work climate, interior design, building characteristics/location, and the type of lease contract (see online appendix 3, Table A3.2).

Work climate

The work climate includes all characteristics pertaining to work-related issues and the prevailing atmosphere around the coworkers. A higher level of productivity is also a key target. As Kim and de Dear (2013) argue, however, a lack of privacy or bad noise control at a CS could decrease productivity. Meeting new people is also a leading reason for coworking. Proximity to and, especially, the diversity of other workers are aspects that people prefer about working at a coworking space (Fuji et al., 2014; Kim & de Dear, 2013). This networking process is stimulated by the creation of a community and the organization of events and workshops (Capdevila, 2015; Garrett et al., 2017; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017).

The building

Coworker preferences are, of course, not only related to work activities, but also to the appearance and organization of the workspace (Budie, 2016). Some coworkers prefer to have a fixed desk so they can customize their own spot, whereas others prefer to have a flexible spot so they can sit anywhere at any time (Fuji, 2014; Parrino, 2015). The diversity of rooms can also influence users’ decisions. By providing multiple types of rooms (e.g. concentration rooms, meeting rooms, and spaces to take a break), CSs attract more coworkers (Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018; Fuji, 2014). A workspace that looks different from a traditional office is also an asset (Ross & Ressia, 2015). Different characteristics contribute to the right look and feel that coworkers prefer.

Characteristics such as the total size of the CS and the indoor climate (de Been & Beijer, 2014; Kim & de Dear, 2013), the presence of enough (day) light and windows (Kim & de Dear, 2013; Lee, 2018), and the interior design combined with the ergonomics and furniture (Balakrishnan et al., 2016; Fabri & Charue-Duboc, 2014; Merkel, 2015) influence the decision of whether or not to work at a certain CS. Furthermore, some coworkers, especially those from the creative class, prefer to work at a unique location, which is due to their desire for ‘authenticity’ (Usai, 2019; Florida, 2002).

Location

The area where the coworking space is located can be a decisive factor in this decision. CS users not only look at the facilities, amenities, and attractiveness of the neighborhood, but also its accessibility (Weijs-Perrée et al., 2019; Zhou, 2019). For convenience, CSs should be relatively easy to access, by either public or private transport (i.e. car, bike, or foot).

Type of lease contract

Finally, the type of lease contract is an important aspect when choosing a coworking space (Fuzi, 2014; Spinuzzi, 2012). According to van de Koevering (2017), the type of lease contract is the most preferred characteristic in a coworking space, with the preference for no contract or a short lease.

The important characteristics of the spaces identified through multiple searches are ‘virtual platform/community’, ‘networking events and workshops’, ‘proximity of coworkers’ – all in the category ‘working climate’ – added to the flexibility of the lease contract. It is interesting to note that the location of the building is scarcely considered in the literature.

The Netherlands

One of the possible results of working alongside others is knowledge spillover; however, co-location alone does not automatically lead to interaction or innovation (Cabral & van Winden, 2016). Policy makers in the Netherlands have therefore attempted to leverage *related variety* – bringing together firms from different sectors that have certain common skills, ideas, or routines to foster knowledge spillover among CS users (Hamers, 2016, Sect. 4.2). In particular, government investment has gone towards so-called *broedplaatsen*, startup ‘nurseries’ (Cnossen & Olma, 2014) where startup companies can not only share services but also exchange ideas and information.

This matches the focus on work productivity that has been shown in literature on the Netherlands (Deijl, 2011). The studies also point out, however, that the role of managers is crucial: they have to work hard to achieve the necessary knowledge sharing (Cabral & van Winden, 2016; Parrino, 2015).

An opposite perspective also exists, wherein users are not pulled towards CSs but rather pushed away from other non-office work places, i.e. the home.



Figure 12.1 CSs in and around the city of Utrecht. Data gathered under the guidance of Veronique Schutjens and Martijn Smit by Casper Leerssen, Joey O'Dell, and six other students; situation as of June 2021. Each grey circle indicates a CS and the size of the circle corresponds to the number of spots offered; open circles represent CSs with an unknown number of spots.

Weijjs-Perrée et al. (2019) point in this direction and see an important push factor in the Netherlands, where there is a large demand for space outside the home, since houses are generally small.

Dutch CSs are not only located in city centres. In fact, they are scattered all over the city, as shown in Figure 12.1. Although the city centre (to the right of the label 'Utrecht') has a large concentration, so does the industrial area on the northwest side of the city, which is partly functioning industrial real estate and partly in the process of being regenerated. Moreover, the fringes of the city are also well represented.

Methods and data

To empirically analyze and update Dutch motivations and preferences for CSs and to investigate what has happened during the pandemic, both quantitative and qualitative research approaches are used. We held semi-structured exploratory interviews with three coworkers (online appendix 1), allowing us to find out people's thoughts, the reasons underlying their decision-making process, and their preferences (Patton, 2002). These allowed us to construct an extensive questionnaire to identify the motives and preferences of coworkers in the Netherlands.

Table 12.1 Descriptors of the sample, n = 47.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>43%</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i><€15k</i>	<i>0%</i>
	Male	57%		€15k–€30k	32%
Education	Tertiary	89%		€30k–€50k	21%
	Other	11%		€50k–€80k	23%
Children	Yes	43%		>€80k	13%
	No	55%		No answer	11%
Employment	Employee	38%	Why CS?	My own decision	77%
	Self-employed	62%		My employer's decision	17%
				Other	6%
	Time spent at the CS				
Work week	0–20	20–30	30–40	40+	n
0–20	100%				1
20–30	33%	67%			6
30–40	50%	36%	14%		28
40+	67%	8%	8%	17%	12

Source: Authors.

In the questionnaire, which was based on our literature review, respondents were asked about their motives and preferences (see online appendix 2 for the survey). To reduce the effect of biased results, the preferences within the matrices were displayed in random order (Wiseman, 1972). Respondents were also asked about different sociodemographic characteristics (e.g. age, gender, educational level) and information about their current job.

Through an internet search,¹ 151 coworking spaces in the Netherlands were identified and approached via email. Managers were asked to distribute the survey among their coworkers. Along with distribution via email, social networks and online platforms were used to reach coworkers, both for interviews and to fill in the questionnaire. In total, 47 CS users from all over the Netherlands completed the survey. The characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 12.1. We note in particular the low share of workers without tertiary education (11%) and the high number of freelancers and other self-employed workers (62%), which is not high, however, compared to coworkers in other countries. Almost all responses came from cities, with Amsterdam and Utrecht both contributing 19%. Seats2Meet (19%) was the only major chain in the sample. The bottom panel of Table 12.1 shows the number of hours spent at the CS compared to the total number of hours worked per week. Part-time work is rather prevalent in the Netherlands, which is reflected here. Of those working at least 30 hours a week, only a very small portion spends all of their time at a CS, suggesting they also have access to an office, spend a lot of time with customers, or have a home with suitable facilities.

Results

Motivation

Dutch coworkers choose to work at a CS because they want to find a spot to work outside home, as well as a more productive workspace (compared to their homes, presumably). Figure 12.2 shows that networking and work-related conversations score considerably lower; social interactions fall in between.

User preferences for coworking spaces

We then explored which CS characteristics make users choose one CS over another. The highest-rated characteristics were the following:²

- Sufficient (day)light (4.349)
- Location of the coworking space (4.302)
- Windows (4.233)
- Comfortable indoor climate (4.209)
- Space/size (4.209)
- Accessibility (4.186)
- Concentration/noise control (4.140)

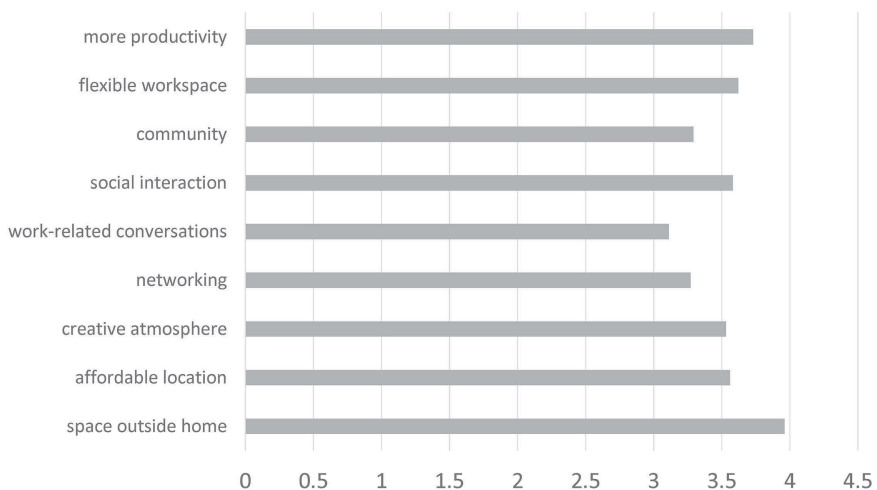


Figure 12.2 Reasons to work at a CS.

Source: Authors, 2021.

Although options also included the diversity of coworkers, for example, all factors chosen relate to the layout and design of the CS, aspects that were also ranked as important in an Indonesian study (Drestanti Inggar et al., 2018). We tested for a variation of preferences with respect to gender, age, income group, and employment situation, but the results were rather consistent. Nor was any difference seen by zooming in on those who spent all their time working at a CS (as in Table 12.1).

Impact of the pandemic

In the interviews, the respondents pointed to the importance of events at the CS, whether for networking, training, or simply social interaction. The lack of such events has therefore been a key problem during the pandemic; even where small isolated spaces can be opened, interaction suffers. The need for such interaction has, of course, only increased. In the surveys, all respondents mentioned that they miss contact with their colleagues most, particularly in social situations (parties, game nights, and the office dog are mentioned). The change of setting between the home and office also comes up in several surveys. On the positive side, several respondents replied in late May that they had already returned to work at the CS and that they missed nothing, although the number of people per square metre had presumably decreased, which they were happy with.

Conclusion

We investigated the preferences of Dutch coworkers during the pandemic, both those who use CSs for all of their working time, and those who spend only part of their working week there.

Compared to previous research, which highlighted the centrality of networking and events, our survey showed that the decision to work at a CS is rooted in a search for productivity and that for many, this seems to imply personal productivity, tied to a search for enough space to work outside the home. The characteristics of the physical space play an important role in their choice of which CS to use; daylight, windows, indoor climate, and an attractive area are important. We interpret this as a shift due to the pandemic: instead of the usual freelancers and creative class, more regular workers are suddenly unable to access their offices and have discovered CSs as a viable alternative. This expansion with different types of workers, and therefore different preferences and motivations, may change the CS landscape considerably in the post-pandemic world.

Appendix 1: Interviews

<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>General info</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Job</i>	<i>Weekly working hours</i>	<i>Weekly co-working hours</i>	<i>Choice to work in co-working space?</i>
M.V.		54	M	Freelancer, copywriter	55	16	Own choice
S.S.		37	F	Freelancer, project and event management	32	24	Own choice
K.G.		36	F	Freelancer, project management	30	Differs over time	Own choice

Motivations: motivations of the interviewees regarding their choice to choose to work in a co-working space

<i>Interviewee</i> <i>I was looking for . . .</i>	<i>M.vl.R.</i>	<i>G.B.</i>	<i>E.G.</i>	<i>M.V.</i>	<i>S.S.</i>	<i>K.G.</i>
a place outside home	X	X	X	X	X	X
an affordable location	X			X	X	
a creative atmosphere	X		X		X	
opportunities to network		X	X		X	
work-related conversations (expertise)		X	X		X	
social interaction with other workers	X	X			X	X
being part of a community	X	X				
a flexible workplace	X		X			X
a more productive workplace			X	X	X	X

Characteristics: characteristics of co-working spaces that the interviewees mentioned

<i>Interviewee</i> <i>Characteristics</i>	<i>M.vl.R.</i>	<i>G.B.</i>	<i>E.G.</i>	<i>M.V.</i>	<i>S.S.</i>	<i>K.G.</i>
Working climate						
Privacy			X	X	X	X
Concentration/noise control				X	X	
Proximity of co-workers	X	X	X		X	X

<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>M.vl.R.</i>	<i>G.B.</i>	<i>E.G.</i>	<i>M.V.</i>	<i>S.S.</i>	<i>K.G.</i>
<i>Characteristics</i>						
Diversity of tenants		X			X	X
Virtual platform/community	X	X	X	X	X	
Networking events and workshops	X	X	X	X		X
Interior design						
Space (size)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Ergonomics and comfort (furniture)	X	X	X	X	X	
Comfortable indoor climate						X
Sufficient (day)light	X		X	X	X	X
Windows			X	X		X
Interior aesthetics	X	X	X	X		X
The building/location						
Accessibility	X			X		X
Area wherein the co-working space is located	X	X		X		X
Uniqueness of co-working building				X		
Other characteristics						
Freedom in choice of working spot		X			X	X
Customizability of working spot		X		X		X
Diversity of rooms	X	X	X	X	X	X
Possibilities to relax		X	X		X	X
Flexible (lease) contract	X			X		

Benefits: benefits the interviewees received because of working in a co-working space

<i>Interviewee</i>	<i>M.vl.R.</i>	<i>G.B.</i>	<i>E.G.</i>	<i>M.V.</i>	<i>S.S.</i>	<i>K.G.</i>
<i>Benefits</i>						
Expanding network (work-related)	X	X	X		X	
Expanding network (social aspect)	X	X	X		X	X
New project opportunities		X			X	
Improvement of knowledge/expertise	X	X			X	
Job opportunities		X				
Increase in productivity				X	X	X
Higher level of concentration		X		X		X
Being less lonely	X	X	X		X	X
Higher level of creativity	X		X		X	

Ideas: ideas of the interviewees about improvement of (their current) co-working space(s)

- Co-working spaces should cooperate instead of competing. This will improve the quality of co-working spaces overall and consequently the working experience will also improve. – M.vl.R.
- More social attitude and more interaction within co-working spaces. People choose when they want to go to a co-working space; not only looking at the time but also to the people that are working at that moment. – M.vl.R.
- Co-working spaces should be as diverse as possible; a diverse set of co-workers, high diversity of rooms and diverse set of events organized. – G.B.

- More activity, events and workshops within the co-working space. This will lead to more interaction with other co-workers. – M.V.
- When possible, co-working spaces should be located in multifunctional buildings like in Shanghai where also other activities besides work are located in the same building. – S.S.
- More events and workshops should be organized but should not feel as mandatory while this will have an opposite effect. – K.G.

Appendix 2: Survey³

Information about you

Q1 *What is your age?*

- 0–20 years
- 20–30 years
- 30–40 years
- 40–50 years
- 50–60 years
- 60 years or older

Q2 *What is your gender?*

- Male
- Female
- Neutral/other

Q3 *What is your highest level of education?*

- Elementary school
- Secondary school
- Higher professional education (HBO)/academic education bachelor's degree
- Academic education master's degree/Ph.D.
- Prefer not to answer

Q4 *Do you have children?*

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to answer

Q5 *What is the country that you were born in?*

Information about the job

Q6 *What is the name of the co-working space you use most?*

Q7 *Which working situation applies to you?*

- Employed within a company
- Freelance/self-employed/entrepreneur

Q8 *Which type of organization applies to your job?*

- Non-profit organization
- For-profit organization
- Other (specify) -----

Q9 *How many hours per week do you work on average?*

- 0–20 hours
- 20–30 hours
- 30–40 hours
- 40 hours or more

Q10 *How many hours per week do you work on average at a co-working space?*

- 0–20 hours
- 20–30 hours
- 30–40 hours
- 40 hours or more

Q11 *Which places do you make use of ‘normally’ (when not in lockdown) for your current job? Select all that apply to your situation*

- Co-working space
- Bar/restaurants
- Normal office
- Home
- Other (specify) -----

Q12 *What is your personal annual income?*

- €0 – €15.000
- €15.000 – €30.000
- €30.000 – €50.000

- o €50.000 – €80.000
- o €80.000 or more
- o Prefer not to answer

Motivations of working in a co-working space

Q13 The choice to work in a co-working space is . . .

- o My own choice
- o A choice made by the company I work for
- o Other (specify) -----

Q14 How important are the following reasons regarding the choice to work in a co-working space?

	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>Fairly unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
I wanted to work in a place outside home	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for an affordable location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for a creative atmosphere	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for opportunities to network (social and/or work related)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for work-related conversations with other workers (expertise)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for social interaction with other co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I wanted to be part of a community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for a flexible workplace	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was looking for a workplace where I can be more productive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Characteristics of co-working spaces

Q15 How important are the following characteristics regarding working climate of co-working spaces for you?

	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>Fairly unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
Privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concentration/noise control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity of co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of tenants/co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Virtual platform for community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking events and workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q16 How satisfied are you with the following characteristics regarding working climate at the co-working spaces you work at?

	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>
Privacy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Concentration/noise control	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Proximity of co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of tenants/co-workers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Virtual platform for community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking events and workshops	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q17 How important are the following characteristics regarding interior design of co-working spaces for you?

	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>Fairly unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
Space (size)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ergonomics and comfort (furniture)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comfortable indoor climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sufficient (day)light	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Windows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interior aesthetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q18 How satisfied are you with the following characteristics regarding interior design at the co-working spaces you work at?

	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>
Space (size)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ergonomics and comfort (furniture)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Comfortable indoor climate	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sufficient (day)light	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Windows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interior aesthetics	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 How important are the following characteristics regarding the building/location of co-working spaces for you?

	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>Fairly unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
Accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Area wherein the co-working space is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uniqueness of co-working building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 How satisfied are you with the following characteristics regarding the building/location at the co-working spaces you work at?

	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>
Accessibility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Area wherein the co-working space is located	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uniqueness of co-working building	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q21 How important are the other characteristics of co-working spaces for you?

	<i>Not important at all</i>	<i>Fairly unimportant</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very important</i>
Freedom in choice of working spot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personalization/customization of working spot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of rooms (concentration rooms, meeting rooms, collaborative spaces)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possibilities to relax	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible (lease) contract	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q22 How satisfied are you with the other characteristics at the co-working spaces you work at?

	<i>Very dissatisfied</i>	<i>Dissatisfied</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Satisfied</i>	<i>Very satisfied</i>
Freedom in choice of working spot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personalization/customization of working spot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversity of rooms (concentration rooms, meeting rooms, collaborative spaces)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Possibilities to relax	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Flexible (lease contract)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Satisfaction of co-working space**Q23 Are you happy with your current co-working space?**

- Not at all
- No
- Neutral

- o Yes
- o Definitely yes

Q24 *Has your working experience improved since you started working in a co-working space?*

- o Not at all
- o No
- o Neutral
- o Yes
- o Definitely yes

Q25 What should your co-working space improve to give you the best possible working experien____

Q26 What do you miss most about working in a co-working space during these weird times due to the coronavir____

Gift Card

Q27 If you want to enter the draw for the gift card, please drop your email bel____

Appendix 3: Literature

Table A3.1 Motivations to work in a co-working space in general

Categories	Country	Bizzarri (2014)	Brown (2017)	Deijl (2011)	Fuzi et al. (2014)	Garret et al. (2017)	Kim and de Dear (2013)	Merkel (2015)	Parrino (2015)	Spinuzzi (2012)	Weijs-Perrée et al. (2019)
		Italy	England	Nether-lands	Wales	Ann Arbor, Michigan	world-wide	world-wide	Milan, Barcelona	Austin, Milan, Serbia	Nether-lands
Productivity	Space outside home	×	×	×	×	×			×	×	×
	Productive workplace		×	×				×			
Professionalization	Affordable location	×		×				×		×	×
	Flexible workplace			×	×	×					×
	Opportunities to network	×	×	×	×			×	×	×	×
	Work-related conversations (expertise)	×	×	×		×		×	×	×	×
Socialization	Social interaction with other workers	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
	Being part of a community	×		×	×	×		×	×	×	×
	Creative atmosphere	×	×	×	×			×			×

Table A3.2 User preferences for specific co-working spaces.

	<i>country</i>	<i>Bizzarri (2014)</i>	<i>Brown (2017)</i>	<i>Deijl (2011)</i>	<i>Fuzi et al. (2014)</i>	<i>Garret et al. (2017)</i>	<i>Kim and de Dear (2013)</i>	<i>Merkel (2015)</i>	<i>Parrino (2015)</i>	<i>Spinuzzi (2012)</i>	<i>Weijs-Perrée et al. (2019)</i>
	<i>Italy</i>	<i>England</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	<i>Wales</i>	<i>Ann Arbor, Michigan</i>	<i>world-wide</i>	<i>world-wide</i>	<i>Milan, Barcelona</i>	<i>Austin, Milan, Serbia</i>	<i>Netherlands</i>	
Working Climate	Privacy			×	×	×	×				×
	Concentration / noise control			×		×	×				×
	Proximity of (co-) workers	×	×				×	×	×	×	×
	Diversity of tenants	×	×		×					×	×
	Virtual platform / community	×	×	×	×	×		×	×	×	×
	Networking events and workshops	×	×	×		×		×	×	×	×
Interior Design	Possibilities to relax Space (size)	×	×		×			×			×
	Ergonomics and comfort (furniture)						×	×		×	
	Comfortable indoor climate						×				
	Sufficient (day)light						×	×			
	Windows						×				
	Interior aesthetics	×		×	×			×		×	×

(Continued)

Table A3.2 (Continued)

	country	Bizzarri (2014)	Brown (2017)	Deijl (2011)	Fuzi et al. (2014)	Garret et al. (2017)	Kim and de Dear (2013)	Merkel (2015)	Parrino (2015)	Spinuzzi (2012)	Weijs-Perrée et al. (2019)
		Italy	England	Nether- lands	Wales	Ann Arbor, Michigan	world-wide	world- wide	Milan, Barcelona	Austin, Milan, Serbia	Nether-lands
Building & Location	Freedom in choice of working spot		×		×						
	Customizability of working spot	×					×				
	Diversity of rooms	×	×		×			×		×	×
	Accessibility			×							×
	Area the co-working space is located	×		×						×	
The type of lease contract	Uniqueness of co-working building										
	Flexible contract	×	×	×	×			×		×	×

Notes

- 1 The search was done by La Fleur in April 2020. Surveys were then completed in May–June 2020. On *coworker.com*, a total of 268 CWS were listed as of May 2021, with up to half of these part of chains like Spaces and Tribes. A similar survey was sent to Italian respondents, but the response there was too biased towards employees to be of use.
- 2 In the questionnaire, most aspects appear twice: once for CWS in general, and once for the CWS where the respondent is currently working. The two are very correlated, and we show the highest of the two in this list.
- 3 The survey was available in both English and Dutch.

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