

Report Expectations of IT employees towards employers in Łódź



PARTNERS:



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Introduction

- We are pleased to present to you a unique report, “IT Employees’ Expectations towards Employers in Łódź,” which focuses on the IT industry and professional development opportunities in the Łódź agglomeration. This report is the first joint publication of the HRK ICT team, Invest in Łódź, and Colliers.

Łódź is the fourth largest city in Poland, with a population of over 670,000 people, and it is also a place for learning with nineteen higher education institutions offering education in technical, medical, humanistic, and artistic fields. The entire agglomeration, with around 1.2 million residents, is one of the largest job markets in our country.

To gain a comprehensive understanding of the preferences of individuals employed in the IT and telecommunications industry, as well as those in IT-related positions in other sectors of the economy, respondents were asked 16 thematically diverse questions. The survey covered topics such as the job market, the preferred work mode of candidates for IT

positions, and current and predicted trends in the IT industry. A total of 433 individuals from Łódź and other regions of Poland participated in this cross-sectional study, with over a quarter of the respondents being residents of Łódź. The surveys were conducted between March 28th and May 10th, 2023.

We are confident that the data presented in the report will be a valuable source of knowledge and provide a better understanding of the technology industry.

We hope you enjoy reading it!

HRK ICT Team

Invest in Łódź

Colliers





Investment potential of Łódź - IT industry

- This year, Łódź celebrates its 600th anniversary, providing a perfect opportunity to discover the city's perspectives and its journey from being a mono-industrial textile center to a modern metropolis. It's also a great time to discuss future development plans.

Today, Łódź is a significant and rapidly growing economic hub in Central and Eastern Europe. Its strategic location in the heart of Poland makes it an attractive destination for both current and potential investors. In addition to its excellent location, companies are willing to invest in Łódź because of the availability of competitive employees at every stage of their career paths - from fresh graduates who are just starting their professional careers to highly skilled managers.

The strength of Łódź lies in its people - ambitious, entrepreneurial, and resourceful individuals who have helped the city endure numerous crises and periods of economic downturn. With the help of its residents

and investors who recognized its potential, Łódź has become a significant and dynamically developing economic hub in Central and Eastern Europe, successfully competing with other large cities for both talent and investments. It's worth noting that already in the 19th century, the city was characterized by multiculturalism and openness, and tolerance towards people of different nationalities and religions.

Today, foreigners from both within and outside the European Union feel comfortable and safe in Łódź, actively engaging in the life and affairs of the local community, taking up jobs and studies in Łódź-based companies, schools, and universities.



Adam Pustelnik

First Deputy Mayor of the City of Łódź



In today's world of enormous demographic, economic, and geopolitical challenges, both investors and cities compete for the most important resource - people, who are both residents and employees. I believe that Łódź and its companies have successfully completed an important task. Over the past few years, through joint efforts of the city and private sector, Łódź has undergone a tremendous transformation towards becoming a more attractive place to live, work, study, as well as invest and scale businesses.

In recent years, significant efforts have been made to improve the quality of life of residents of Łódź, as well as the growing number of tourists who visit our city. The Municipal Revitalization Program, supported by EU funds, has entered its implementation phase, and comprehensive renovations have been carried out on post-industrial buildings, tenement houses, and other public spaces such as streets, parks and squares. In addition, Łódź offers excellent conditions for its residents, ensuring a high quality of life, a compact urban layout, and efficient transportation infrastructure. The revitalization programs, particularly those focused on historic post-factory buildings in the city center, have created a unique urban landscape that sets Łódź apart from other cities in Poland.

Łódź is a city that listens to its residents, consistently striving to improve the quality of their daily lives.

Its multicultural makeup intertwines with new technologies and opportunities provided by this modern city, allowing us to collectively build a contemporary metropolis.

Łódź - the city without 'the pressure of a metropolis'. Everything is within reach here. Employers and employees appreciate the compact character of the city, which provides them with a proper balance between professional and personal life. The unique post-industrial urban space, famous red brick architecture, high-quality co-working spaces, and original offices stimulate creativity and foster integration. Competitive living costs compared to other large cities make Łódź an attractive alternative for young professionals and entrepreneurs seeking comfortable work and a high-quality life at an affordable price. Moreover, Łódź is open-minded,

and its residents quickly shorten the distance. The traditions of the four cultures on which the city was built make everyone feel at home here.

Additionally, its central location in Poland and Europe makes it a dynamic hub for development, attracting both current and future investors. The city is currently undergoing several key infrastructural investments, such as closing the only motorway ring in the country around the city, constructing a central tunnel between the main railway stations with urban railway stations in the city center, and launching the New Łódź Center, a centrally located district that combines business, residential, and cultural functions and is attractive to developers, entrepreneurs, tourists, and residents themselves.

The slogan "Łódź Kreuje" (The Łódź Creates) has become ingrained in the city's DNA, and it is far more than a mere catchphrase. The creative sector, which includes companies from various industries such as fashion, design, film production (including VR), gamedev, and digital marketing agencies, thrives here and sees this place as a hub for their growth plans. The burgeoning city tourism sector is also a significant contributor to this growth. With its post-industrial heritage, historic city center, attractive green areas, and ever-expanding leisure options (such as the EC1 complex, Orientarium, Light Move Festival), as well as an improving quality of hotel accommodations, Łódź is a magnet for both domestic and international visitors.

One of the key factors for businesses in every sector is having a qualified workforce, which in Łódź includes experienced high and middle-level managers, industry specialists and experts, as well as students and graduates from local schools and universities. The city's economic ecosystem is focused on development and is complemented by excellent collaboration with higher education institutions and organizations such as the best in Poland, Łódź Special Economic Zone. The Economic Development and International Cooperation Office in the City Hall of Łódź also provides support at every stage of investment projects. The Invest in Łódź team is made up of

Key data about Łódź

Population – the fourth most populated city in Poland, 671000 (of which **385 000 are of working age**)

Universities »

19 public and private universities
75000 students
18800 graduates
5000 foreign students

Potential of the Łódź labor market (IT, Finance Accounting, HR, Customer Service) »

35000 employees in the BPO/SSC industry
29500 jobs in the IT industry
200 IT centers

Selected Awards of the City of Łódź »

FDI's European Cities and Regions Top 10 European Cities and Regions of the Future 2022/2023, categories: FDI Strategy And Business Friendliness

Emerging Europe's Business Friendly Cities, 2nd place in 2022

ABSL, cooperation with universities and local investment agencies, cost and space availability, 1st and 2nd place.

passionate and highly experienced professionals who are ready to comprehensively respond to the changing needs of investors.

In pursuit of economic, social, and infrastructural development, Łódź has managed to maintain its spirit of creativity, entrepreneurship, and authenticity. With a multitude of initiatives and projects undertaken by both the city and private sector, as well as the experiences gathered in the past, there is no doubt that Łódź is on a stable course towards economic success. Despite any fluctuations in the market or geopolitical challenges, the city's future looks bright.

The current economic ecosystem is powered by two dynamic sectors that have experienced significant growth in recent years. These are IT and BPO/SSC, as well as FinTech. In addition, traditional sectors such as production, logistics, e-commerce and life science have always been the pride of Łódź. At the heart of our partnership with companies is genuine and direct communication, a collaborative approach and a focus on integration between the city and the business environment. Our priority is to ensure the growth and development of our partners, as we see it as integral to the development of our city. Join our community, where entrepreneurship, creativity, and energy thrive!



About the study

- The report “Expectations of IT Employees Regarding Employers in Łódź” was conducted based on online surveys (CAWI) and telephone interviews (CATI). The study was conducted from March 28 to May 10, 2023 and involved 433 participants from Łódź and other regions of Poland working in IT companies, telecommunication firms, and IT-related positions in other sectors. A quarter of the research group consisted of Łódź residents.

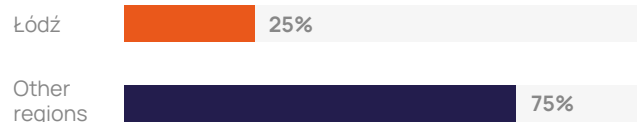
The objective of this cross-sectional study was to analyze the IT industry in terms of working models, employment forms, the most popular benefits, and the expectations of employees and candidates regarding organizations and corporations located in Łódź.

Our study participants come from all over Poland, with the majority being from the Mazowieckie Voivodeship (33%), the city of Łódź (25%), and Wielkopolska (9%). Additionally, we have participants from various other regions such as Śląsk, Pomorze, Dolny Śląsk, Kujawsko-Pomorskie, Lubelskie, Zachodnio-Pomorskie, and more.

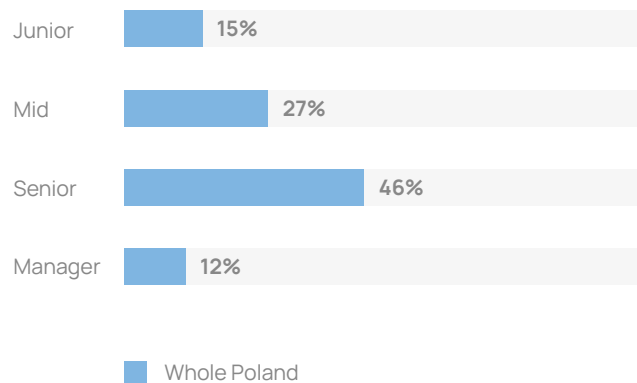
It's worth noting that our survey respondents come from different stages of their career and professional development. Junior-level employees who are still learning their trade and have up to 2 years of experience make up 14% of the research group. Mid-level employees, also known as specialists who have been in their professional role for 3 to 5 years, make up 26% of those surveyed.

The largest representation comes from individuals employed in independent senior positions (46%) with over 5 years of experience. Managing teams and independently leading projects are daily duties for managers, who are the least common group in our study, representing only 13%.

Place of living



Job positions in the whole Poland - seniority

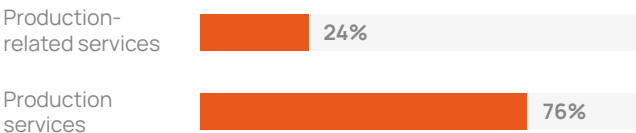


We conducted a similar analysis of employment areas and found that over 75% of experts specialize in production-related roles such as DevOps, Development Engineering, and Admin. Only 24% of professionals work in non-production teams, performing roles such as Project Manager, Scrum Master, Analyst, and Product Owner within organizations.

We surveyed both the residents of Łódź and the entire country of Poland, asking what type of job offers they are seeking. The results showed that most respondents do not prioritize the nature of the job they are looking for. 29% of Lodz residents and 32% of those from other parts of the country prefer to work directly for an employer. However, only 4% of Lodz residents and a mere 1% of those from other cities showed interest in the flexible option of IT contracting. Why such a low percentage?

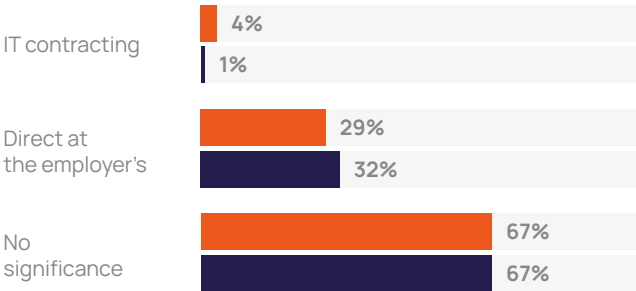
IT contracting involves outsourcing and temporarily hiring IT specialists through personnel consulting firms. In this type of employment, programmers, developers, etc. work on specific projects for a set period for a given company. Organizations benefit from this type of collaboration, as it accelerates the start of the project and allows them to find experts for their venture. Meanwhile, the employees themselves can build a broader portfolio and gain experience working with diverse technologies across several companies.

Work area of specialists in Lodz



Łódź

Job offers



Łódź

Other regions





IT professionals in Łódź exhibit exceptional levels of loyalty to their employers.

It comes as no surprise that the most important aspect of a job offer for respondents is the salary. This has remained a constant point of emphasis over the years and is often reiterated as a key expectation in job postings. While employers are seeking individuals who will collaborate with them for reasons beyond financial gain, it cannot be denied that finances are a primary motivator for switching employers, with other factors only coming into play when considering offers of similar value. However, employers need not fear an increased turnover rate due to this financial motivation. **IT industry employees are exceptionally loyal - 86% of respondents wish to remain with their employer for at least 3 years, with one-third indicating their desire to stay with the same company for over 5 years.** While financial incentives are important in the initial decision to change employers, they alone do not drive turnover.

When considering a job opportunity, an exciting project that utilizes modern technology and provides opportunities for growth is a top priority for many. However, in the IT industry, development may not always refer to vertical advancement in career hierarchy, but rather the ability to take on new roles, technologies, and solutions. **Most job seekers value the acquisition of new**



Ewa Paprocka, Senior Executive Manager, HRK ICT

technological competencies as essential to their personal development. Additionally, the possibility of working remotely ranks third on their list of important factors.

For 68% of candidates, the place of employment is not a decisive factor when considering a job offer, regardless of whether they are directly employed by the company or through an external firm. Other factors such as the job offer and project itself play a significant role in their decision-making process. However, **approximately 1/3 of candidates still prefer direct employment with the company, indicating their desire to be more closely tied to the organization.** This preference is often driven by the interest in greater job stability and greater influence over the organization's decision-making process, particularly in areas of technology development. This trend is likely to intensify as the current job market continues to face challenges, with fewer job offers available and news of large companies laying off employees every few months.

Less than half of Łódź's employees prefer remote work, compared to 7 out of 10 people in other large cities. It is, among other reasons, connected with the fact that many of people have moved out of cities entirely, or temporarily, due to the pandemic.

The commute time is also a factor, with Łódź having an advantage over cities like Warsaw due to its size. Additionally, many respondents who prefer remote work said that their willingness to work in a hybrid model would increase with easier access to urban infrastructure and parking. A large percentage of people in Łódź are willing to commute to the office for a few days a month or even a few days a week. Uniquely in Poland, a high percentage of people are willing to commute to the office daily, although this response was most given by respondents at the managerial level or positions at the intersection of IT and business. **Many residents of Łódź work for companies based in other cities, mainly in Warsaw, which makes them naturally more mobile when it comes to commuting to offices located more than 100 km away from their place of residence. They can make such trips several times a month.**

One year ago, after the introduction of the "New Deal," the form of employment based on sole proprietorship gained record popularity on the Polish labour market. Based on our interactions with candidates, it was found that 70-80% of them preferred this type of employment, depending on their job specialization and technology, around 60% categorically rejected offers with a contract of employment. However, **the uncertain situation experienced by the IT industry in the last six months has pushed this form of employment down to sixth place, and it is now only a deciding factor for less than half of the surveyed individuals.** It appears that the employment contract is back in favor among experts in this field.

Post-employment benefits are relatively low on the hierarchy of selection criteria. There are two reasons for this - at high salary levels, employees can afford to pay for their own benefits (especially fruits and good coffee), but above all, their ubiquity. Even a desirable offer of private care, a sports card, and a training package is a complete standard. A slight differentiator can be gained by the training budget managed by the employee with the need to justify it. **Among the benefits that realistically have a chance to attract attention due to interest in them, but also rarity on the market, is a 4-day workweek.** IT has had flexible schedules for a long time, companies are open to people working part-time, hence this extra day off during the week makes a difference for candidates.

Interestingly, one of the least significant factors affecting the attractiveness of a job offer is the internationality of the employer. According to a survey conducted in Łódź and other locations, 68% and 69% of respondents, respectively, do not consider it when choosing between an international and a Polish company. Instead, they are more interested in the exciting projects that their future employer can offer them. Candidates explain their preferences for international companies with a wider range of projects and benefits, while choosing a local company is often linked to a lack of English language skills. It is also noteworthy that there is relatively little interest in working for a foreign company without a presence in Poland - only 6% in Łódź and twice as much in other cities in Poland.

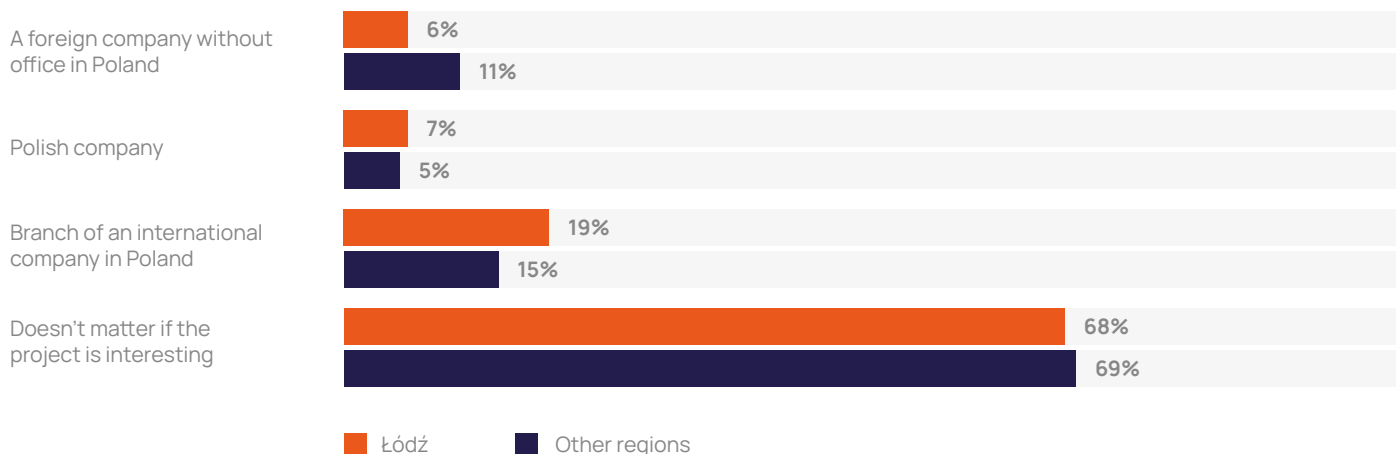
Preferences towards employer

- As we have already explored the general needs of IT industry employees related to their career choices, work areas and positions, let's take a closer look at how residents of Łódź can be compared to the inhabitants of other cities. Where do they prefer to work? What makes an attractive job offer for them? What non-financial benefits do they expect? And what do they think about a 4-day work week?

Our survey respondents have provided answers to these and many other key questions. Upon delving into the research results, we realize that for most IT sector employees, the company they work for doesn't matter as much as whether the project is interesting and allows for personal growth. This preference is shared by Łódź residents and other regions of Poland (68% and 69%, respectively). The second most common response among Łódź residents was the desire to work for an international company with a presence in Poland (19%), followed by a Polish company (7%) or a foreign corporation without a presence in our country (6%).

Finding a tailor-made job offer that meets the needs of candidates is a demanding process, which is why we included a question about the factors that attract their attention in our survey. The top 5 answers are obvious and can apply to practically any employment sector. In IT, the most attractive factor in a job offer was deemed to be the level of compensation. The attractiveness and developmental potential of the projects were ranked at second place, followed by the technologies used in the projects and the opportunity to work 100% remotely. The list is concluded with the possibility of self-development offered by employers in the IT industry or other sectors of the economy that employ IT-related positions.

Work for...

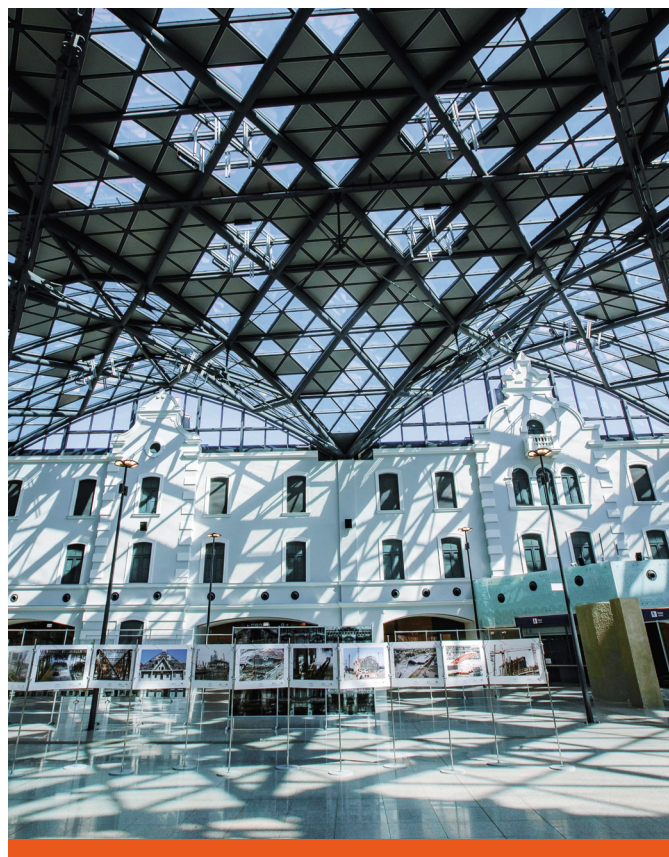


What makes job offers attractive?

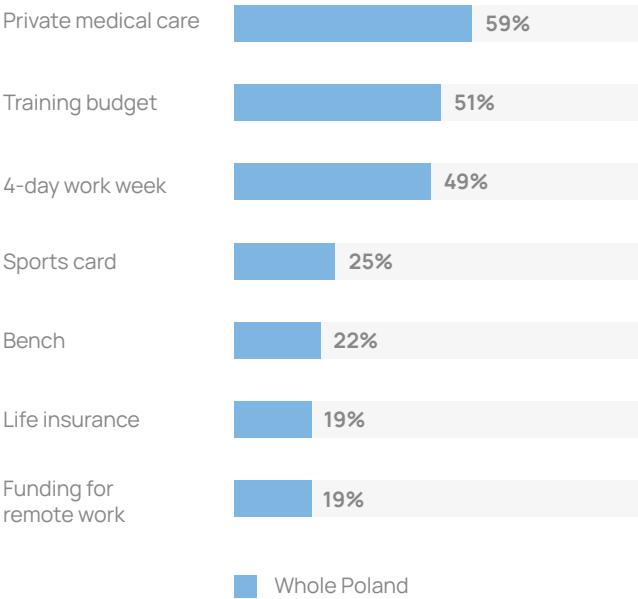
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1 Salary | 6 Form of employment |
| 2 Captivating and educational project | 7 Work methodology |
| 3 Full time remote work | 8 Hybrid work mode |
| 4 Technologies | 9 Benefits |
| 5 Professional development | 10 Working environment |

Apart from matters related to working hours, type of contract, level of position or scope of professional responsibilities, non-financial benefits are of great importance for candidates. The goal of these benefits is primarily to attract new talent to the organization, but also to retain current specialists in the company. The more interesting and original they are, the more they enable the brand to stand out in the market.

Which benefits do IT experts prefer? Experts in IT prefer certain benefits over others. The most common is private health insurance (59%), followed by a training budget (51%) which ensures continuous development - something essential in the dynamic field of technology. Almost half of the respondents (49%) would also like to have a 4-day work week, an option that only a few companies in Poland currently offer, but has been implemented in Portugal, Belgium, and is being tested in Spain. Additionally, a quarter of the sector would like to take advantage of sports cards and a "bench" benefit. The so-called "bench" refers to specialists who have completed a project,



Most valued benefits in the whole Poland



*multiple-choice question

but the company does not yet have a new task for them. This benefit helps to limit turnover within the organization. Typically, individuals with highly sought-after skills on the job market are placed on the bench, as they can be relatively easily relocated to a new project. When a specialist is placed on the bench, they begin to receive a portion of their salary while the company searches for a new area for them. This period typically lasts from a few days to 1-2 months. This benefit is often offered by companies specializing in IT outsourcing. Other benefits that employees look for include life insurance (19%) and subsidies for remote work (19%).

After discovering that almost half of the respondents mentioned a 4-day work week as an appealing benefit in our previous survey, we decided to delve deeper and ask if they would consider joining a company that offers it. Surprisingly, even though the respondents



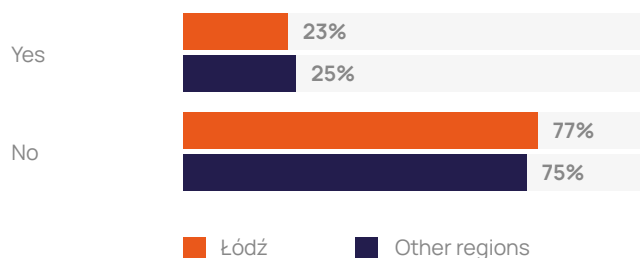
found it attractive, three-quarters of them had not applied to companies with a 4-day work week. This trend was consistent across Poland, with a mere 2% difference between the results from Łódź and the rest of the country. Such results may be since this mode of working has yet not been introduced in Poland and is currently only practiced by foreign corporations that employ remote workers.

Employers often ask themselves how to build team loyalty, retain talents within their organization for as long as possible, and how to motivate and develop their people to engage with the company's daily operations and commit to it for years to come. However, the increasing dynamics of the job market has resulted in employees staying in one organization for only a few years and being open to change. This trend is becoming more noticeable, particularly among

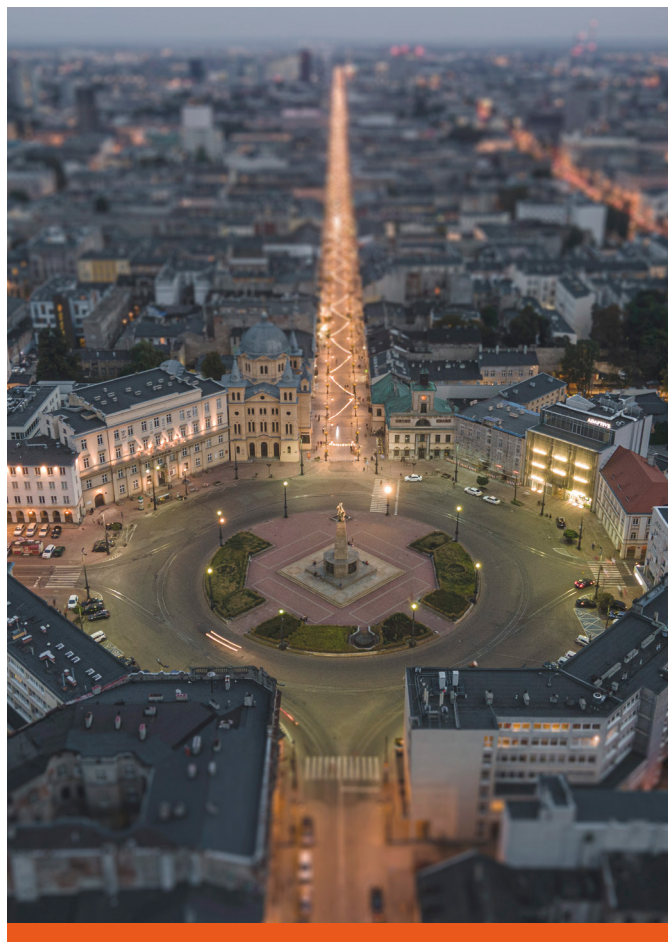
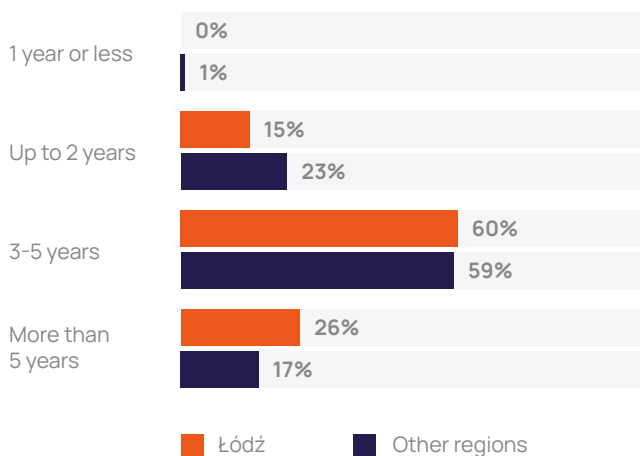
Generation Z, who are just entering the job market or taking their first steps in their careers. According to our analysis, the optimal length of time for working in one company is an average of 3-5 years among residents of Łódź (60%) and almost the same in other regions (59%). Interestingly, **inhabitants of the Łódź agglomeration are more attached to their workplace than those in other parts of Poland.**

In comparison to other regions where only 17% of employees work in one company for more than 5 years, an impressive 26% of them in Łódź stay loyal to their employers for extended periods. Additionally, while almost 23% of workers in other cities switch jobs every two years, **only 15%** of employees in Łódź do the same. These statistics suggest that workers in this area are more committed to their companies, which skillfully motivate and engage them to work towards the organization's success.

Recruitment for companies with 4-day work week



Optimal working time in one company



Attractive city for IT employers



Michał Gąszczyk, CEO inhire.io

As creators of the most comprehensive salary report in Poland specializing in analyzing job offers in the IT industry, we can confirm that **Łódź is an attractive location for employers** in the country's technology centers for several reasons.

Firstly, despite being the fourth-largest urban area in Poland, Łódź ranks sixth in terms of the number of jobs offers directly targeted at IT professionals. Therefore, local competition is lower than in other major cities. Łódź ranks higher in this regard than Warsaw, Krakow, Wrocław, Poznań, and Katowice.

Secondly, Łódź is **very well connected** and commuting to work takes less time than in other cities such as Warsaw. This may explain why respondents from Łódź in our report **tend to appear in the office more frequently**.

Thirdly, the location of Łódź on the map of Poland is a huge advantage for employers in the area. With great connectivity to the rest of the country, companies based in Łódź have access to a vast talent pool from across the nation.

In fact, over 70% of IT job offers in Poland now provide the option of remote work, making this factor even more crucial. By embracing remote work, companies can welcome candidates from all over the country while still maintaining a strong organizational culture and team bond. For employers, having a base in Łódź means that they can benefit from both remote work and a physical office location.

Rather than opening multiple smaller offices in different cities, having a main base in Łódź allows companies to tap into a larger talent pool while still offering the option of commuting to the office occasionally in just three hours.

I am convinced that combining remote work with a main office in Łódź (as an alternative to opening several smaller offices in other cities) is an extremely optimal solution for any technology employer who wants to effectively compete for the best IT talent in Poland.



Candidate preferences regarding remote work

- ▶▶▶ Working remotely, hybrid or in the office? This has been one of the most discussed topics in Poland in recent months. Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic until April 6th of this year, companies introduced remote work based on the so-called COVID special law. From April 7th onwards, an amendment to the Labor Code came into force, which regulated and expanded the rights and obligations related to remote work.

This mode of work has its pros and cons. It reduces costs for employers in maintaining large office spaces, saves time and expenses for employees commuting to work, and allows for greater concentration on analytical tasks. On the other hand, it reduces engagement in the functioning of the organization, attachment, and negatively affects the ability to build relationships within teams.

Looking at the advantages and disadvantages of different modes of work, we decided to ask employees themselves about their needs. In this case, employees from Łódź stand out once again compared to residents of other regions in Poland. 49% of Łódź residents choose hybrid work, while 8% prefer working solely from the office. This contrasts with other workers, where 67% opt for remote work and only 25% prefer a hybrid model, with a mere 3% choosing to work solely from the office. Clearly, the location of the employees' city plays a significant role

in their preferences, with access to office districts and investment zones being a key factor. In the case of Łódź, the city's The Łódź Special Economic Zone located near the city center, with convenient access to public transportation and numerous parking spots, is a particularly appealing option.

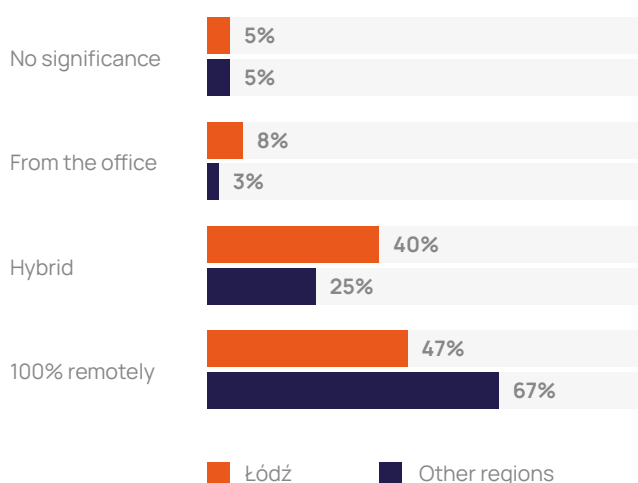
When we asked our respondents about their preferred work arrangements, we also inquired how often they would like to work from the office if it is in their city or the nearest city. Among non-Łódź residents employed in IT, the majority (27%) do not consider hybrid work arrangements or can only work from the office for a maximum of one day a week. Almost a quarter of respondents indicated they would like to visit the company's headquarters a few times a month. **On the other hand, residents of Łódź demonstrated more flexibility in their work arrangements and a willingness to participate in their organization's office culture. As much as 26% of those living in the city can work from the office a few times a month.**

Interesting findings show that 19% of people living in Łódź can work from the office three days per week, compared to 7% in other regions. Surprisingly, four days of office work, which

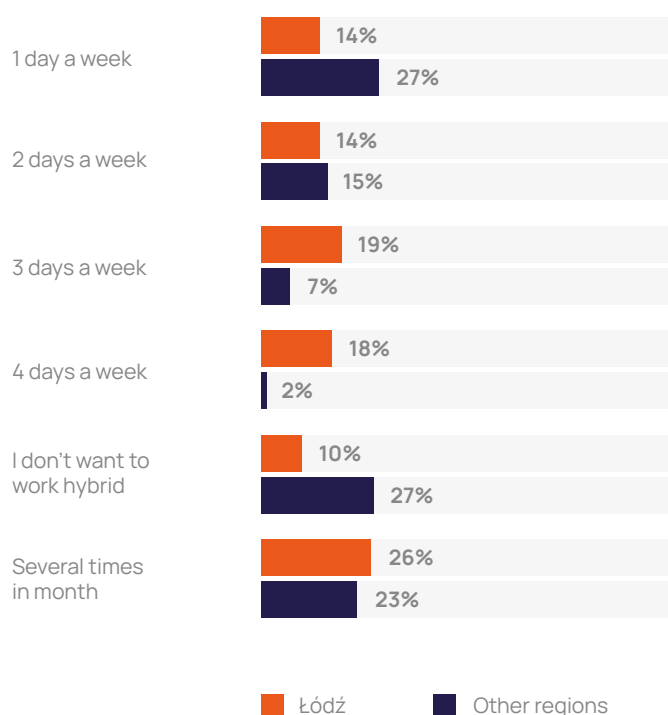
can pose a challenge for the IT sector in other regions, receive positive feedback from 18% of those surveyed in Łódź. Similarly, when it comes to working from the office for one or two days per week, 14% of people from Łódź express their willingness to do so. These results demonstrate the unique and adaptable work culture in Łódź.

When it comes to working remotely from a location more than 100 km away from the office, over half of the employees from various parts of Poland (52%) claim that they do not consider hybrid work in such a location. For residents of Łódź, 33% declare that they are not interested in a hybrid work model in a city 100 km away. Despite Łódź being well-connected to the rest of the country via highways A1 and A2, several express roads, a bypass, an extensive railway network, and numerous bus carriers, **locals prefer to work from their own area**. Exactly 36% of them would be willing to fulfill their professional responsibilities from an office located 100 km away once a month. 26% of respondents choose to commute to the office a few days a month, while 14% of IT experts agree to work from an office in another location for one or two weeks.

Preferred model of work



Work from the office in my city





Hybrid office – a place you want to come to



Grzegorz Rajca

Senior Associate
People & Places Advisory | Define
Colliers

Hybrid working has now become the norm. The Hybrid and Beyond report published by Colliers shows that nine out of ten companies have opted for some form of hybrid work. However, in practice, it turns out that the term 'hybrid' is very capacious and accommodates many different models of work.

The discussion about remote working is still ongoing in many organisations. Differences of opinion regarding the optimal model are rooted in two different narratives – those of employees and employers. Employees value remote working, emphasising that they are more efficient when they work from home, do not waste time commuting to the office and can more easily reconcile professional and private roles. Employers, on the other hand, would like to see employees in the office more often, arguing for a better flow of information and more efficient coordination of tasks and processes, which translates into team effectiveness. Their concerns also relate to issues of organisational culture, relationships within teams and employee engagement.

Companies are looking to encourage employees to return to the office rather than forcing them to do so. As a result, they are looking for ways to make employees themselves want to come into the office more often. Many companies organise events in the office where they offer catering, but these only have a short-term effect. Long-term solutions are therefore sought today, and one area of focus is adapting the workplace to the new needs of its users.

This adaptation usually involves 3 aspects of the office:

Reducing and sharing workstations – in a 50:50 hybrid model (2-3 days out of the office, 2-3 days remote) at least half of the workstations stand empty. Companies rightly conclude that it does not make sense to pay for empty desks and that the space occupied by unused workstations, can be used to provide other types of space, more appropriate to the new model of work. They are therefore deciding to reduce the number of desks and are implementing desk-sharing.

Opening up – in offices where the number of workstations is smaller than the number of employees, it is important to provide flexible team zones. To make this flexibility a practice and not just a theory, companies are abandoning closed rooms in favour of open plan arrangements. In an open plan, the fluidity of boundaries is easier to maintain, and the various psychological barriers that occur when we have to use a free desk located in a closed room disappear.

Increasing the number of meeting areas – our workstyle differs depending on whether we work from the office or remotely. The research we conduct among our clients shows that the purpose of employees showing up at the office is usually to participate in meetings and interactions. Individual work that requires focus is more likely to be done remotely by employees. As a result, hybrid offices are designed with significantly more meeting spaces compared to offices designed before the pandemic.

Many factors influence whether employees will want to turn up at the office. Some of them, such as conditions at home or ease of commuting, organisations have little control over. With office design it is different. Creating a workplace that is fit for purpose and supports new working styles provides an effective long-term incentive to visit the office more often.

The evolution of work models, the desire to integrate teams, and the concern for employee comfort are reflected in the current development projects. Newly built properties located within the urban areas of Łódź are particularly popular, with excellent connections to residential neighborhoods and a wide range of services within a short walking distance. As a result, mixed-use projects are gaining a stronger foothold, offering customers a variety of functions to meet their daily needs in one location. While some may argue that there is nothing new, the combination of these factors is essential for designing a hybrid workplace that meets the needs of modern workers.

Thanks to the accessibility of modern office buildings on the Łódź market, companies are increasingly considering relocations and preparing spaces tailored to the needs of today's work models. This is also confirmed by statistics, with demand in Q1 2023 reaching 14,600 and returning to average levels from before 2020. The strength of the IT sector, modern services sector, standardization of the number of employees in offices, and the creation of excellent workspaces are all contributing to the continued development of the Łódź office market, according to **Marcin Włodarczyk, the Regional Director of Colliers in Łódź.**



Bartek Szymański
Managing Director,
IDEMIA



Anna Stawicka
HR Manager, IDEMIA

„At IDEMIA in Łódź, our employees have the autonomy to decide how often they work from the office.”

- Bartek Szymański and Anna Stawicka from IDEMIA's Polish branch discuss organizational culture and their experiences working in two offices located in Łódź. IDEMIA, a French company, is a leader in identity technologies with a mission to unlock the world and make it safer. Backed by cutting-edge R&D, IDEMIA provides unique technologies, underpinned by long-standing expertise in biometrics, cryptography, data analytics, systems and smart devices. It offers its public and private customers payment, connectivity, access control, travel, identity and public security solutions. Every day, around the world, IDEMIA secures billions of interactions in the physical and digital worlds.

Ewa Paprocka, HRK S.A.: How did IDEMIA, a company that mainly serves international clients, choose Łódź as its headquarters in Poland? What factors did you consider when deciding to open an office?

Bartek Szymański, Managing Director: Our presence in Łódź is no coincidence. We came to realize that Łódź was an ideal location for our operations. Not only did it offer direct flights to Paris and Munich (at that time), but it also provided us with access to highly qualified graduates with technical and technological expertise. Additionally, the city's favorable economic environment and strong tradition of technological innovation made it an attractive destination for us. After starting our operations in December 2014, we grew rapidly, with 80 employees on board within a year and 150 by the following year. Today, we employ 340 people in Łódź, spread across two offices.

Ewa Paprocka: This impressive growth in employment rate is truly remarkable. What do you think contributed to this success?

Bartek Szymański: We have successfully completed numerous projects, expanding our operations to new countries and venturing into new areas of business. Today, we specialize in Łódź in three areas: Connectivity, Payments, and Identity solutions.

Anna Stawicka, HR Manager: Our company has always been the top choice for many candidates, thanks to our state-of-the-art technology stack, utilization of the latest programming languages and ability to work with cutting-edge frameworks and libraries that have recently emerged on the market. Our commitment to staying ahead of the curve ensures that our team has access to some of the most advanced tools and resources available, allowing us to consistently deliver exceptional results for our clients.

Bartek Szymański: During the early stages of our company's development, we faced relatively little competition on the local market. Even as we expanded our team, we maintained a close-knit atmosphere within the company. Our employees know each other personally, and we operate using the "Spotify model," which was implemented in response to our employees' expectations. Here, our programmers have a significant impact on what happens and can choose the technologies and solutions they work with, giving them real influence over the products they create. We offer the opportunity to work directly on products utilized internationally, allowing our team members to work with international clients without the typical drawbacks associated with software houses. With remote work, we can efficiently complete projects for companies located in other European countries or all over the world, all from our office located in Łódź.

Ewa Paprocka: **Have you considered expanding your business beyond Łódź? With two offices already established in the city, it may seem like a natural next step to open a new office in either Warsaw or Wrocław.**

Anna Stawicka: Even before the pandemic, we sought out specialists from outside of Łódź. We were already working in a mode that is now known as the "new normal" before remote work became common in Poland. As a result, we no longer feel the need to venture beyond Łódź. During our recruitment process, candidates declare their preferred level of hybrid work, giving them the autonomy to decide how often they want to come into the office. This empowers our employees to choose the work arrangement that suits them best.

Ewa Paprocka: **How often do you usually work from the office?**

Anna Stawicka: The work mode is determined by the employees themselves. Even now, after the publication of the regulations on remote work, we do not want to limit this flexibility. Our principles have not changed with the introduction of the remote work regulations, previously we also operated in a flexible hybrid way and we allow the teams to decide on their work model.

On average, 1/3 of our population works from the office.

We believe in the power of relationships, which is why we create many opportunities for our employees to integrate at the team and the entire company level (...)

Bartek Szymański: On average, 1/3 of our population works from the office. We've observed that most of our employees come into the office from Tuesday to Thursday, and on sunny days, many of them take advantage of our garden workspaces. We've ensured that our Wi-Fi is of high quality, so working amidst nature is a popular option. Every two months, teams from specific product domains come together for meetings at our office. We also welcome remote workers to our Lodz office during these events, which fosters integration among teams and enables joint training sessions and introductions for new employees.

Additionally, once a year, the entire company gathers at our internal employee conference called EXPO. This event is accompanied by other meetings, so some employees stay in Lodz for up to a week.

Ewa Paprocka: How do you convince employees to visit the office? What makes them want to come?

Bartek Szymański: During the pandemic, we have not reduced the size of our office space. In fact, we have two separate buildings that are connected by a beautiful garden. Additionally, our employees have access to parking facilities, which is a strong incentive for them to work in our space.

Anna Stawicka: Our philosophy was and is to encourage, by showing the advantages of working from the office and direct contact with team members, rather than forcing employees to be present. In our offices we have attractive market offer – fresh fruit, specially selected coffee, comfortable spaces with a place to relax or play a quick game of ping-pong. Most of all, we believe in the power of relationships, which is why we create many opportunities for our employees to integrate at the team and the entire company level, for example: family picnics, board game evenings, crossfit classes or chess tournaments. We often provide support for bottom-up initiatives coming from our employees, which we also value very much.

Bartek Szymański: I believe that our employees are eager to come to the office to meet each other, not only because they are colleagues but also because they are friends outside of work. Many of our team members have met each other during their studies, and some of them were hired through our internal referral system. They simply enjoy spending time together, and it's easier for them to go out together in the evenings after work. Moreover, we have a solution that other companies are just starting to consider - two charging stations for electric cars.

Anna Stawicka: And of course, the FabLab, which is a room to develop hobbies.

Bartek Szymański: FabLab is equipped with cutting-edge technology including 3D printers, a laser cutter, and a soldering iron. In addition, we offer a wide range of materials to empower our employees to create and innovate on their own terms.

Author of the report

HRK S.A.

HRK S.A. is a Polish company that specializes in HR consulting and digitizing HR processes. With extensive experience in four key areas of HR - recruitment, employee assessment and development, employer branding, and payroll systems management - we provide our clients with top-quality services, even under tight deadlines.

Since 2000, we have been supporting managers in recruiting employees and effectively managing their personnel.

Our expert teams specialize in various sectors of the economy, ensuring that our clients receive specialized support tailored to their specific needs.

In the area of Executive Search, we are the only partner of Kestria network in Poland. We pride ourselves on delivering exceptional results and building long-term relationships with our clients.

Discover more about HRK on our website www.hrk.pl and on our [LinkedIn](#) profile.

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Colliers

Colliers (NASDAQ, TSX: CIGI) is a leading firm offering a wide range of premium real estate and investment management services. Operating in 66 countries, over 18,000 professionals work together to maximize property value for tenants, owners and investors. For more than 28 years, our experienced leadership team, with significant stakes in the company, has provided our shareholders with an annual return on investment of approximately 20%. With \$4.5 billion in annual company revenue and over \$98 billion in assets under management, we maximize real estate potential and accelerate the success of our clients and employees.

Colliers in Poland has been operating since 1997 and has offices in Warsaw, Kraków, Wrocław, Poznań, Gdańsk, Katowice and Łódź, employing a total of over 400 specialists. The company has been honored with many prestigious awards, including in competitions: Eurobuild, CIJ Journal, CEE Quality Awards, International Property Awards.

More about Colliers in Poland on www.colliers.com and [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#).



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