



Corona Monitor 1

VU Amsterdam

MAIN REPORT

July 2020

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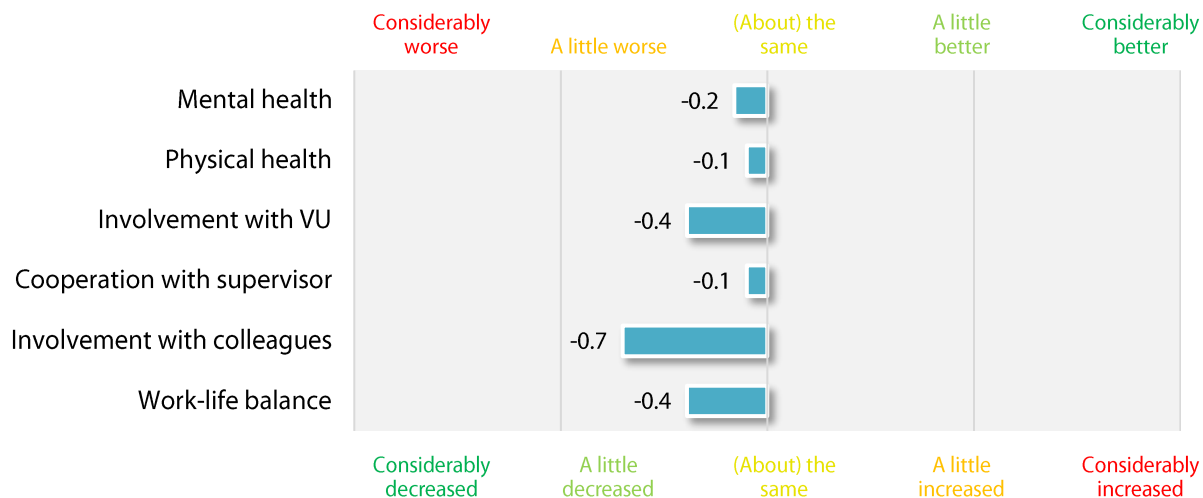
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Factsheet 2020 VU Corona Monitor



IMPACT CORONA



WORKING FROM HOME

In the past three months, over 80% of the employees worked from home

Positive experiences:

- No travelling time or expenses
- More flexibility
- More calmness

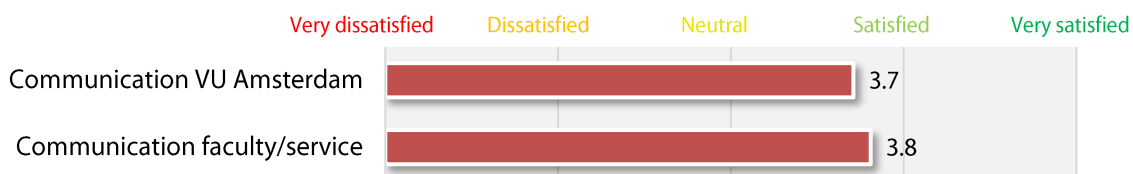
Difficulties:

- (Too) little contact with colleagues
- (Too) little change of environment
- Unpleasant workplace

After the Corona crisis, 80% of the employees would like to work from home for at least 25% of their working hours



COMMUNICATION








RETURNING TO VU CAMPUS

Over 40% does *not* make use of the possibilities to work on VU campus

Reasons:

- ✗ No added value (yet)
- ✗ Others have priority
- ✗ Follow up request
- ✗ Use of public transport

Expectation transport to VU

	- 15%
	+ 10%
	+ 3%
Other	+ 1%



COMPARISON WITH 2018 EMPLOYEE MONITOR

Difference experienced and desirable workload



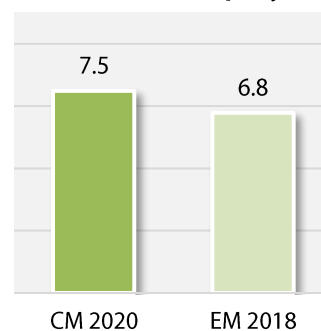
(About) the same

Assessment working at VU Amsterdam



(About) the same

Assessment VU Amsterdam as an employer



Increased

1 Introduction

Objective

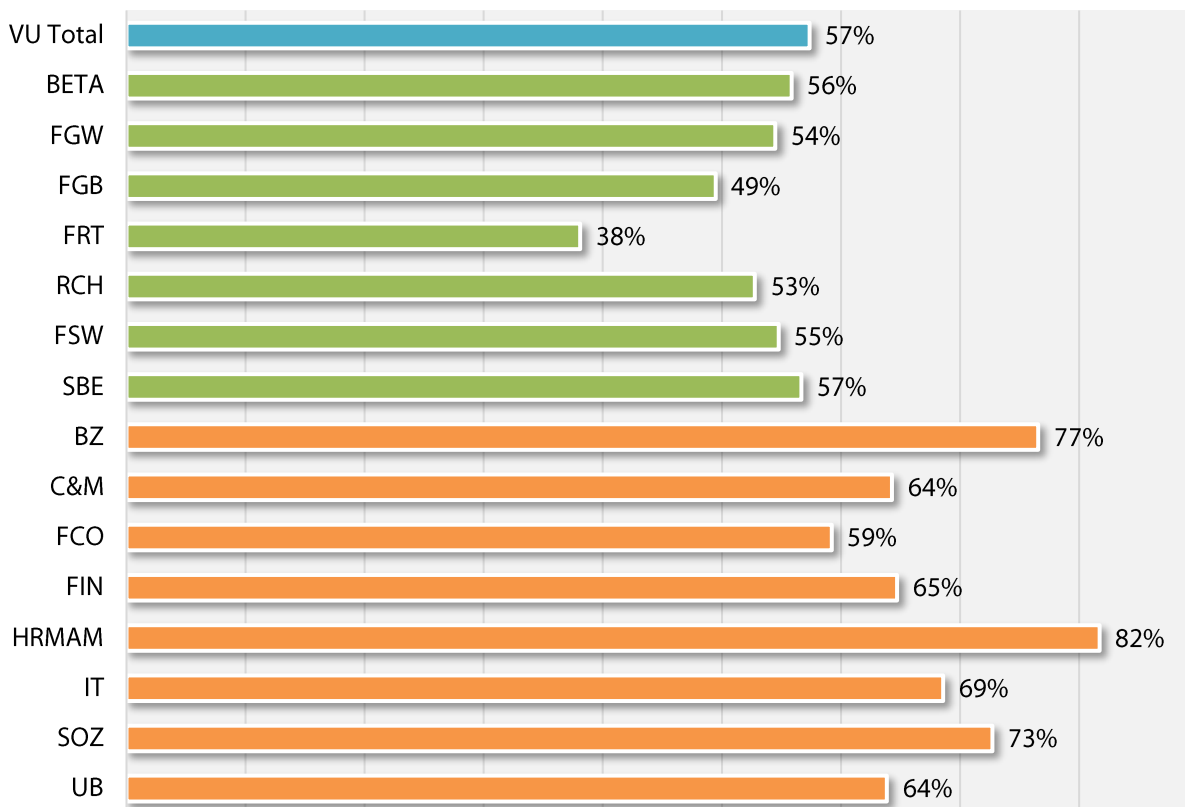
As a result of the Corona crisis, working from home was the standard at VU Amsterdam during March, April, and May. From June onwards, VU Amsterdam has gradually and partly reopened the activities on campus. This means, among other things, that there are limited possibilities to work on campus again.

To examine how employees are doing and to choose the right interventions, the first measurement of the Corona Monitor was held in June 2020. To monitor changes, a second measurement will follow in the autumn of 2020. The results will also be used to interpret the results of the Work Experience Survey in the right context. The monitor includes a short questionnaire about, for example, the well-being of employees, communication by VU Amsterdam, involvement with colleagues/VU Amsterdam, working from home and possible difficulties and future wishes. The results of the monitor are the basis for the evaluation of the VU Amsterdam policy during the corona crisis and the formulation of areas for action.

Response

On 18 June 2020, 4,310 VU Amsterdam employees received an e-mail containing a link to the online questionnaire. Several measures were taken to stimulate the response. For instance, the research was announced by the Executive Board and a brief explanation was part of in the invitation e-mail. Also, two reminders were sent to employees who had not yet (fully) completed the questionnaire at the time of sending. Furthermore, the employees could ask the IVA Onderwijs Helpdesk for help. Finally, within VU Amsterdam attention was paid to the Corona Monitor in various ways.

After closing the survey on 2 July 2020, 2,470 employees (57.3%) had returned a usable survey. The response was considered usable when at least the first content-related question was completed. IVA Onderwijs read through the answers to the open questions and the most important or frequently mentioned remarks have been included in this report.



Representativity

To assess whether the response group is a proper reflection of the total population, we examined whether the response group matches the total population in terms of faculty/unit, job category (AS/SMS), gender, and age. The results indicate that the response group is a good reflection of the total population within VU Amsterdam for all characteristics. The deviations are relatively small, meaning it is not necessary to correct the results for particular characteristics through weighing.

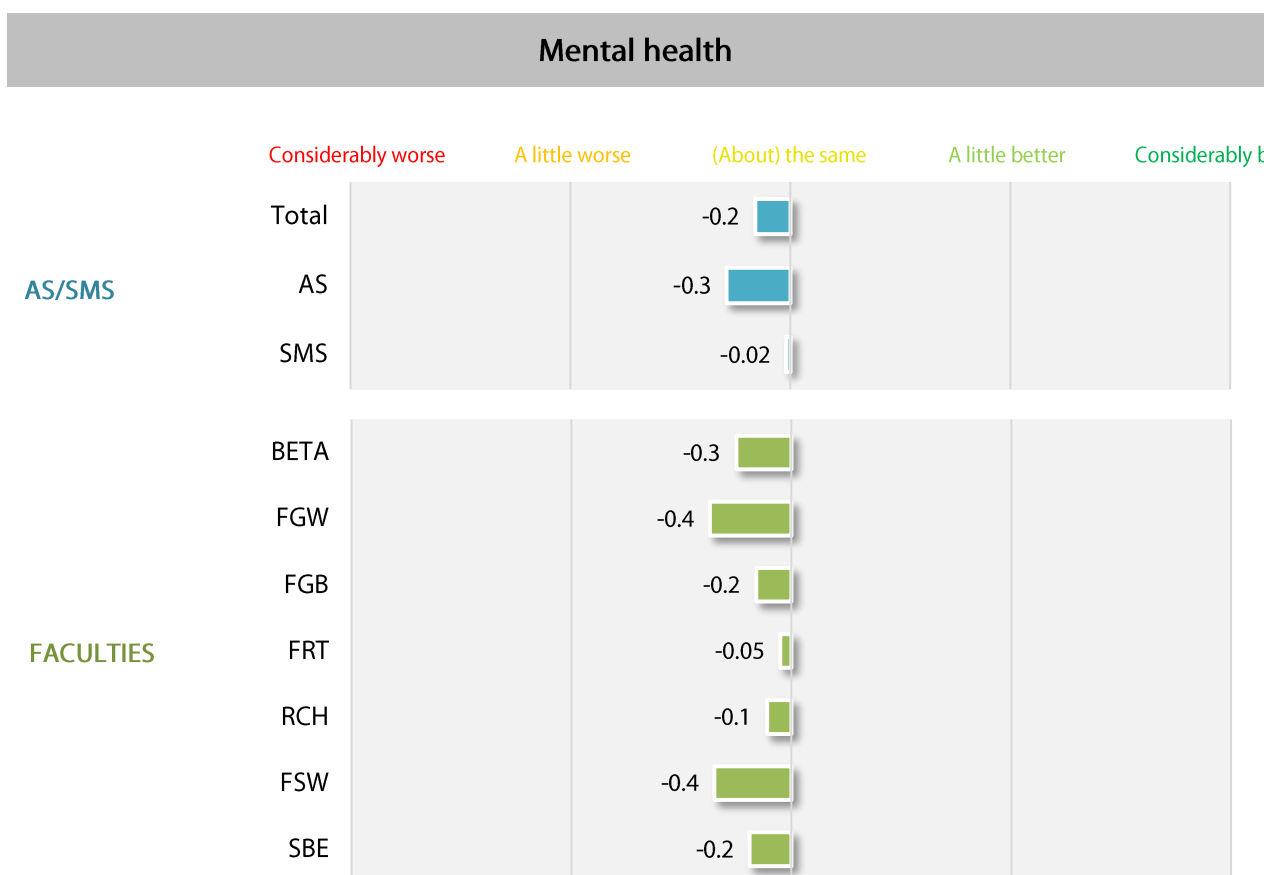
Leeswijzer

- As a result of rounding off, in bar charts, bars with the same scores may differ in length. E.g., a bar with a score of 3.47 is shorter than a bar with a score of 3.53. However, both scores are rounded off to 3.5.
- As a result of rounding off, in some cases, the sum of the column or row percentages may not be exactly 100%.
- When a group contains less than ten respondents, we will not report on it for reasons of anonymity. In the tables, we put a dash in place (-).
- Not all respondents answered all questions due to, for example, excluding specific respondents from a question or by leaving out the category of 'do not know/n/a'.

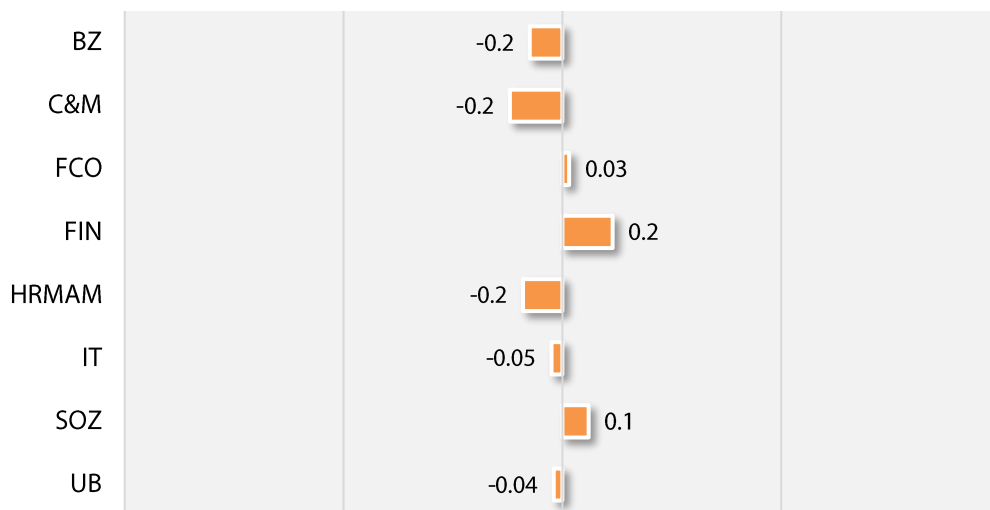
2 Changes

Working from home leads, among other things, to a changed relationship between the organisation and employees and between fellow workers. It can also be mentally stressful, for example, because it is more difficult to separate work and private life, because they miss social contacts, or because of frustrations about an unpleasant workplace at home. This chapter shows to what extent some aspects have changed in the past three months.

The largest changes are seen in the involvement with VU Amsterdam (decreased), the involvement with colleagues (decreased), the workload (increased) and the number of caring tasks (increased).



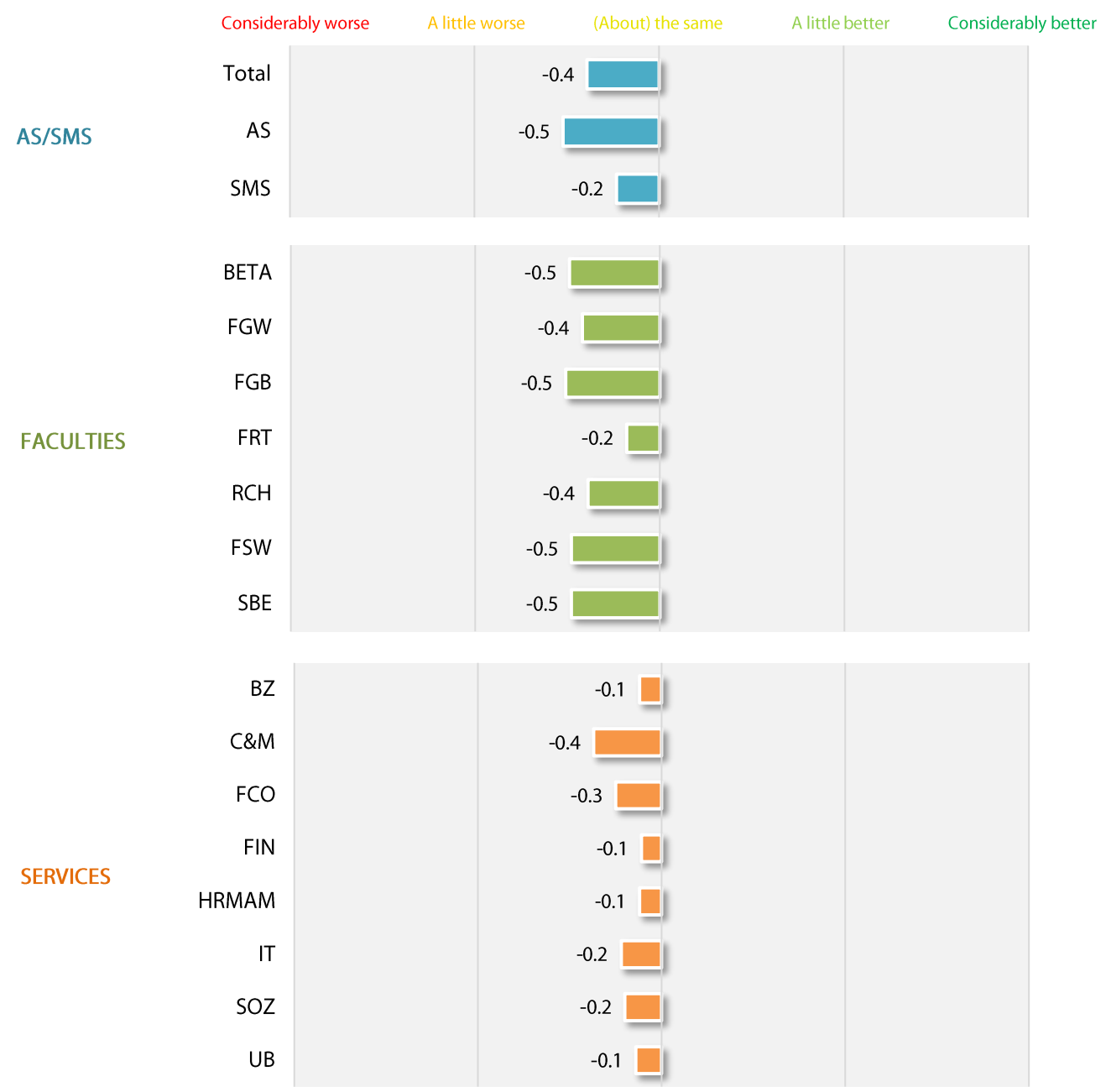
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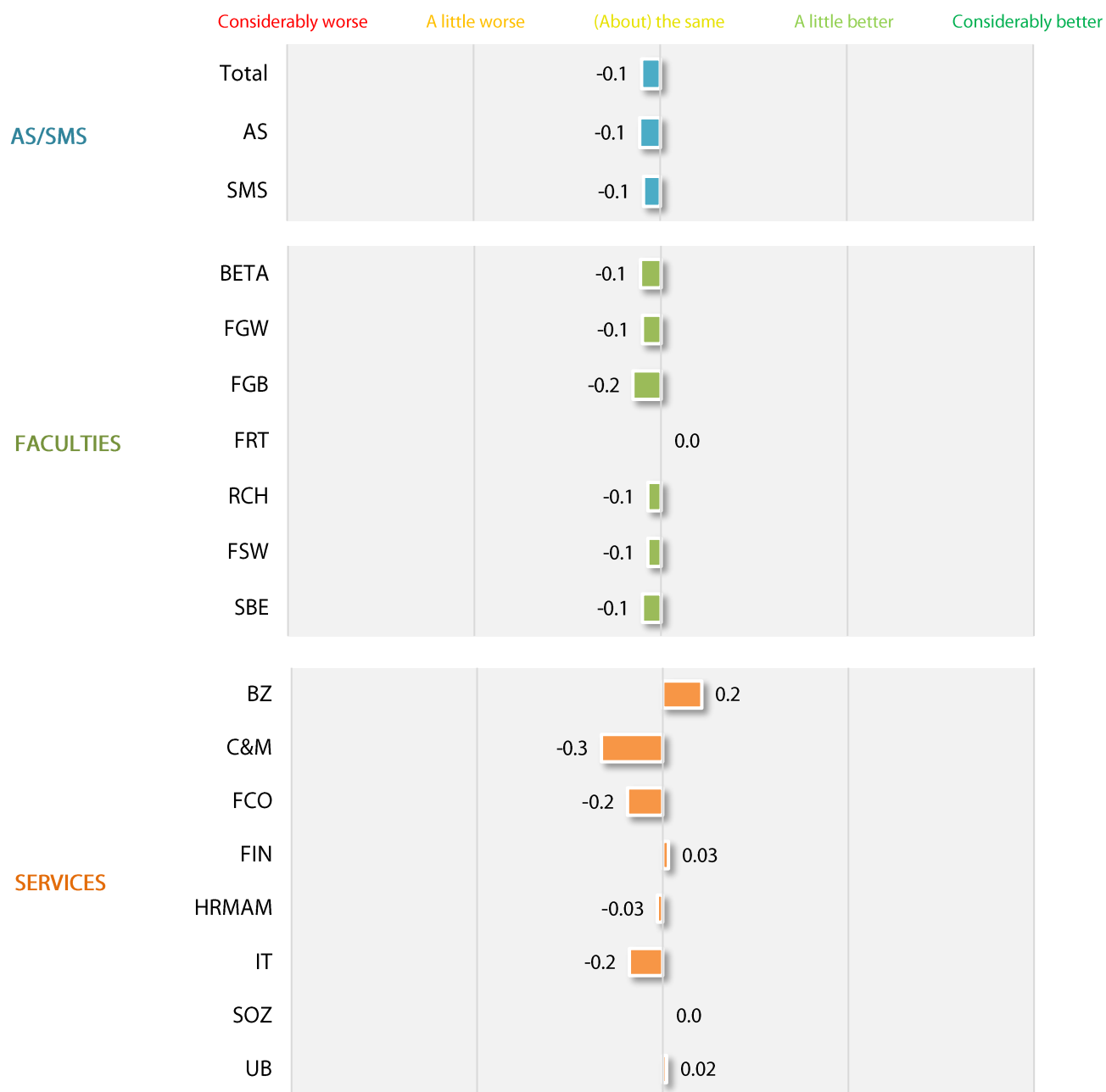
Physical health



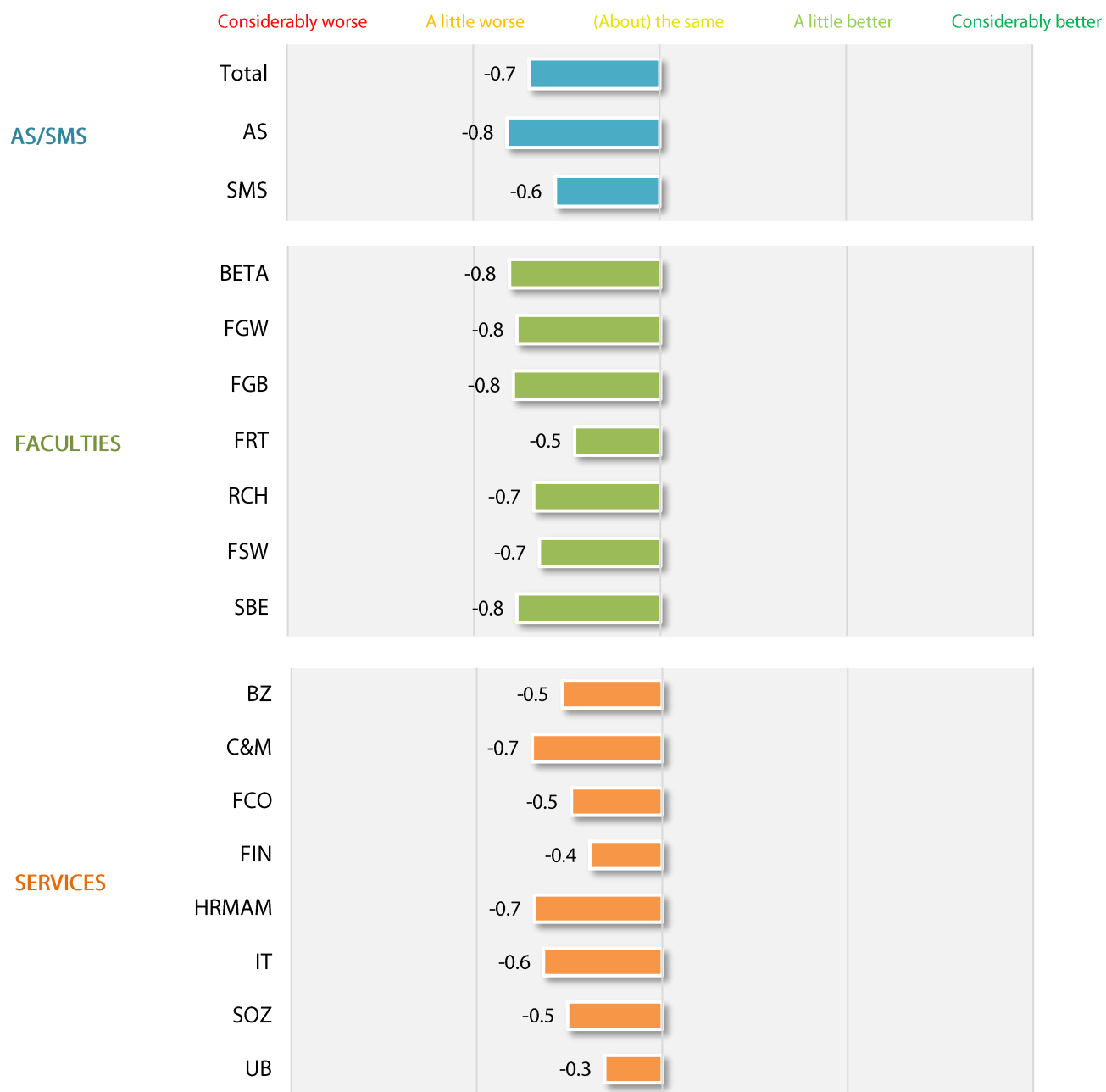
Involvement with VU Amsterdam



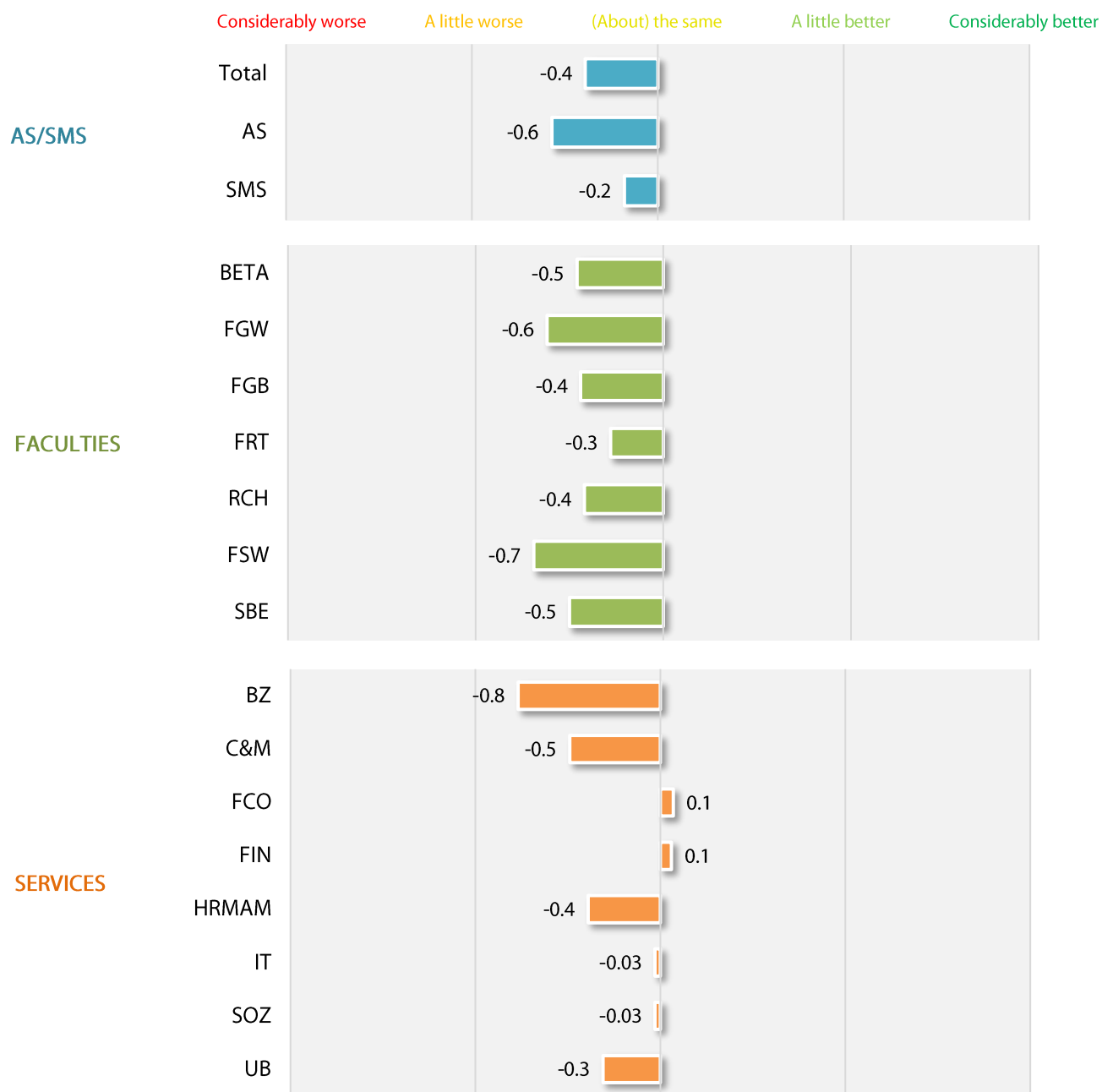
Cooperation with supervisor



Involvement with colleagues

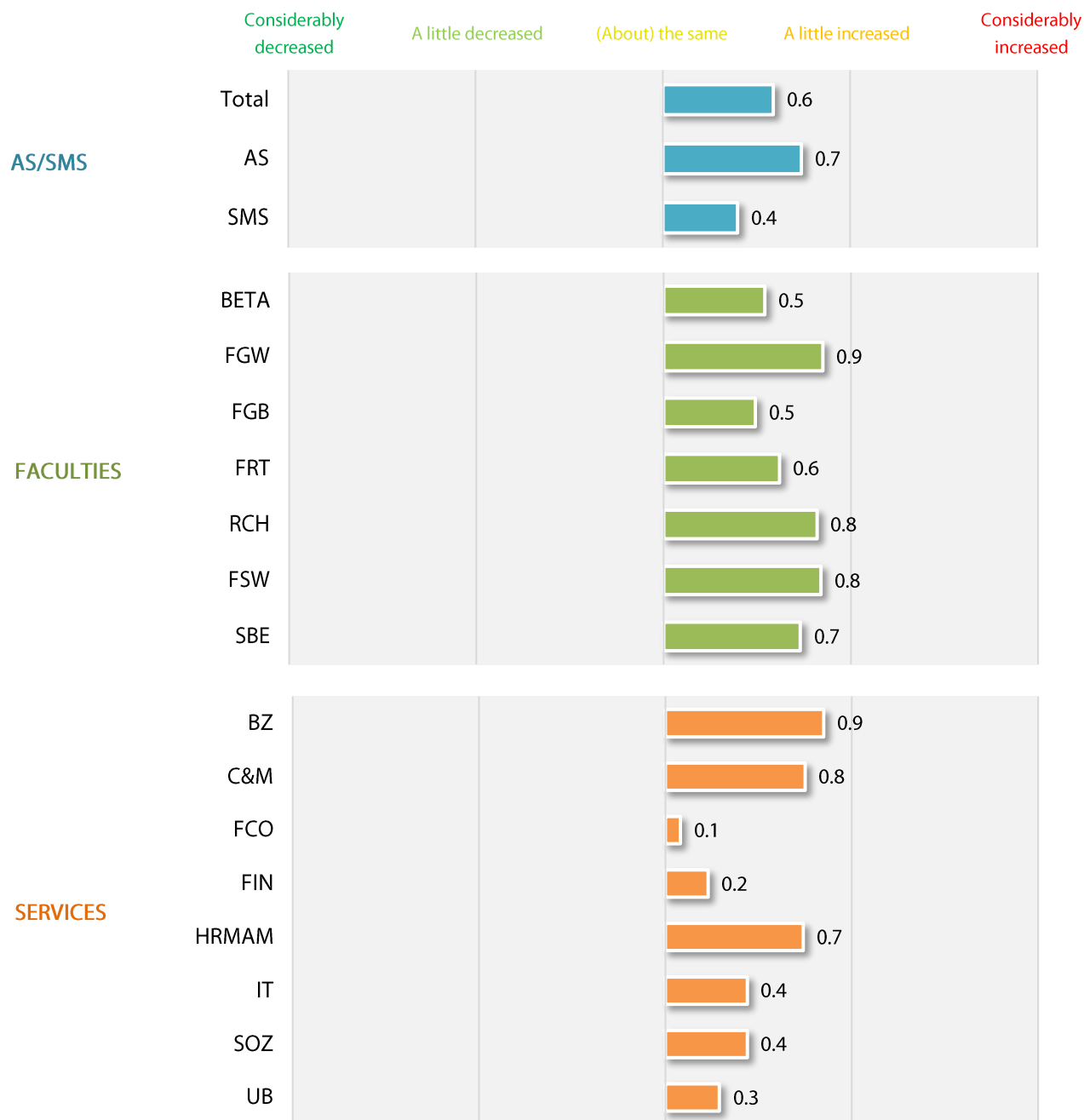


Work/life balance¹



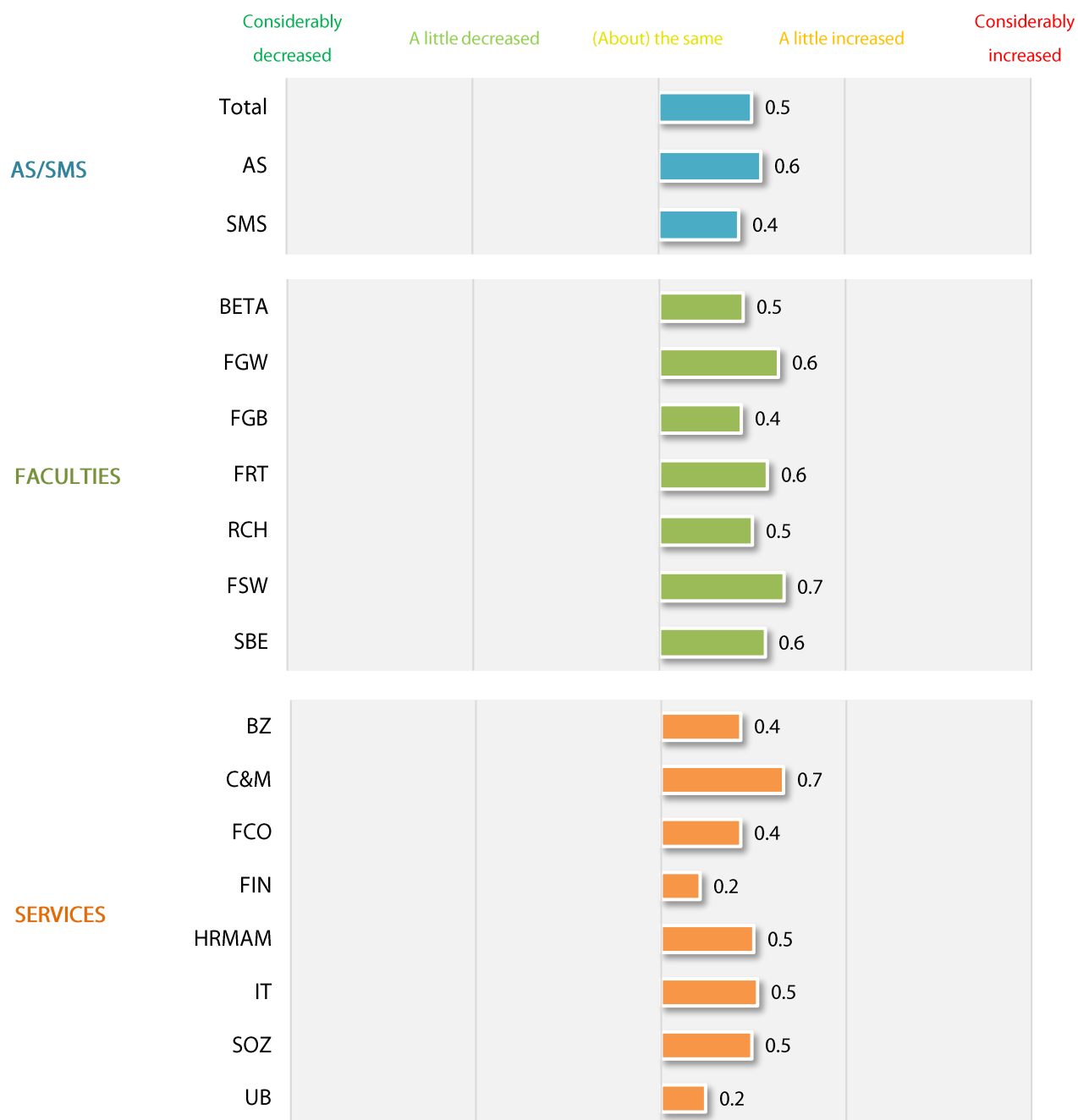
¹ Additional analyses show that the standard deviation (the average spread around the mean) of the change in work/life balance (SD > 1.0) scores higher than the standard deviations of the other aspects (SD < 1.0). This indicates that the employees have more differing opinions about the change in work/life balance in the past three months than about the other aspects.

Workload²



² Additional analyses show that there is little or no correlation between age and the change in workload ($r = -0.03$; $p = 0.205$), the experienced workload ($r = 0.04$; $p = 0.043$), and the acceptable workload ($r = 0.07$; $p = 0.002$).

Number of care tasks³



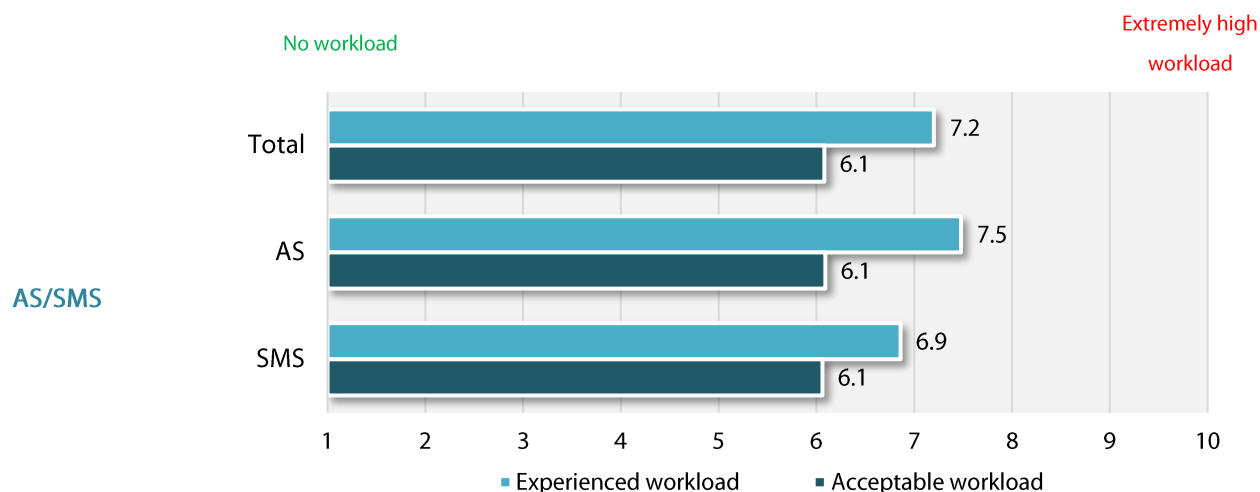
³ Additional analyses show no significant difference between men (+0.4) and women (+0.5) for the change in the number of care tasks.

3 Experienced/acceptable workload

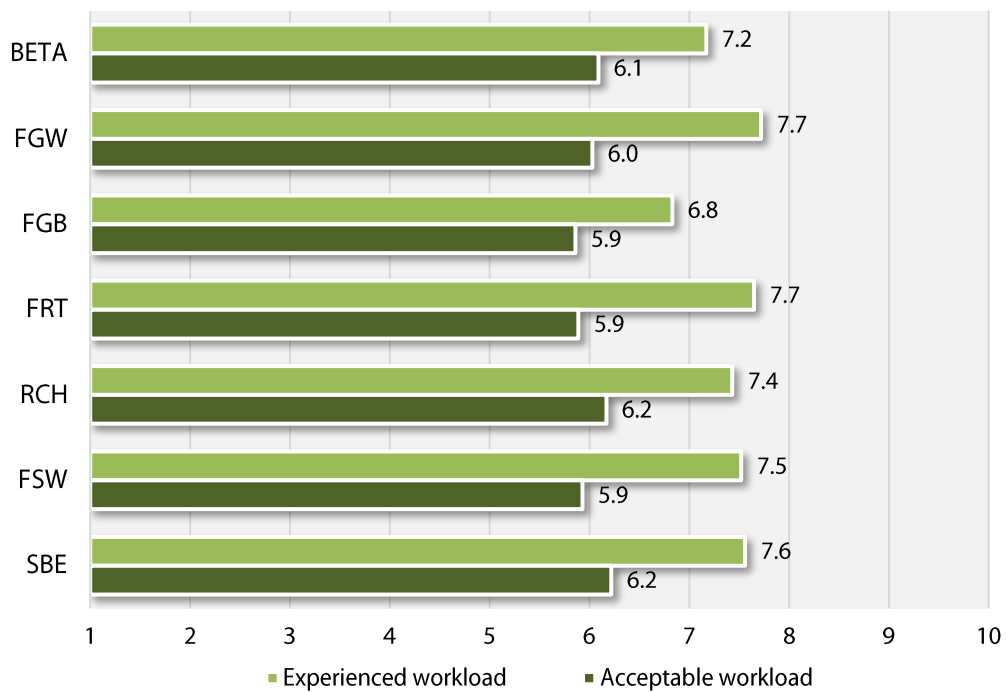
Employees were asked to express the work pressure of the past three months and the acceptable workload for the past three months in marks ranging from 1 (no workload) to 10 (extremely high workload).

Overall, the experienced workload exceeds the acceptable workload with more than a point. If we compare this with figures from the most recent Employee Monitor (2018), it appears that the difference between experienced and acceptable workload in 2020 is virtually the same as in 2018.

Experienced and acceptable workload



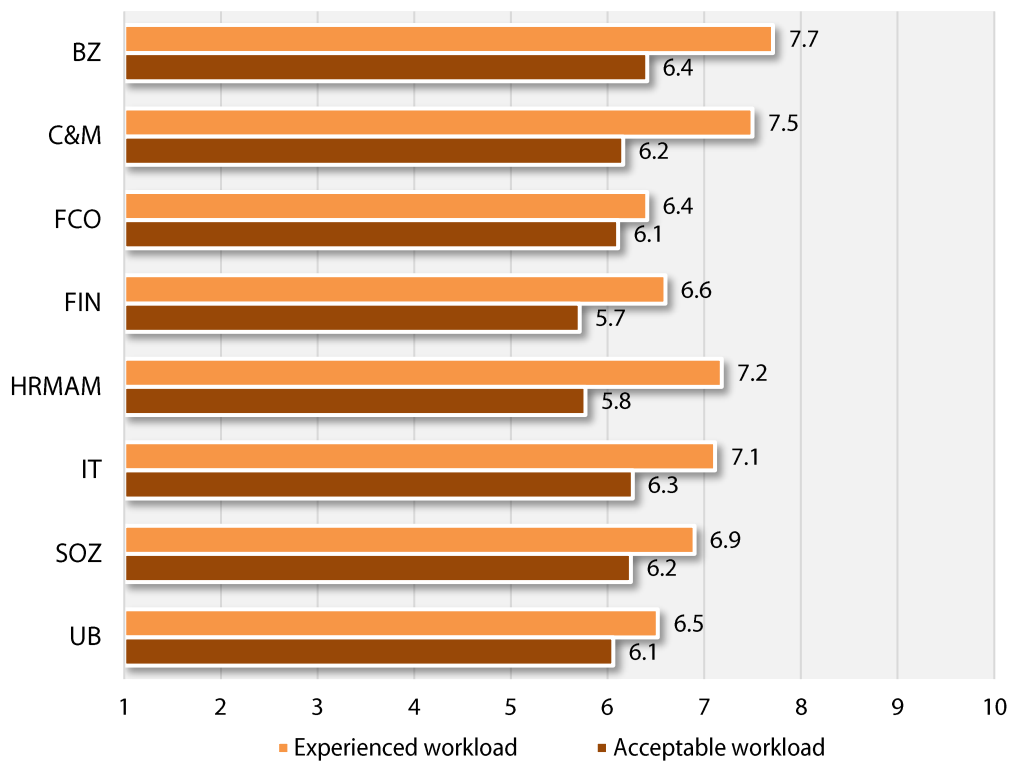
FACULTIES



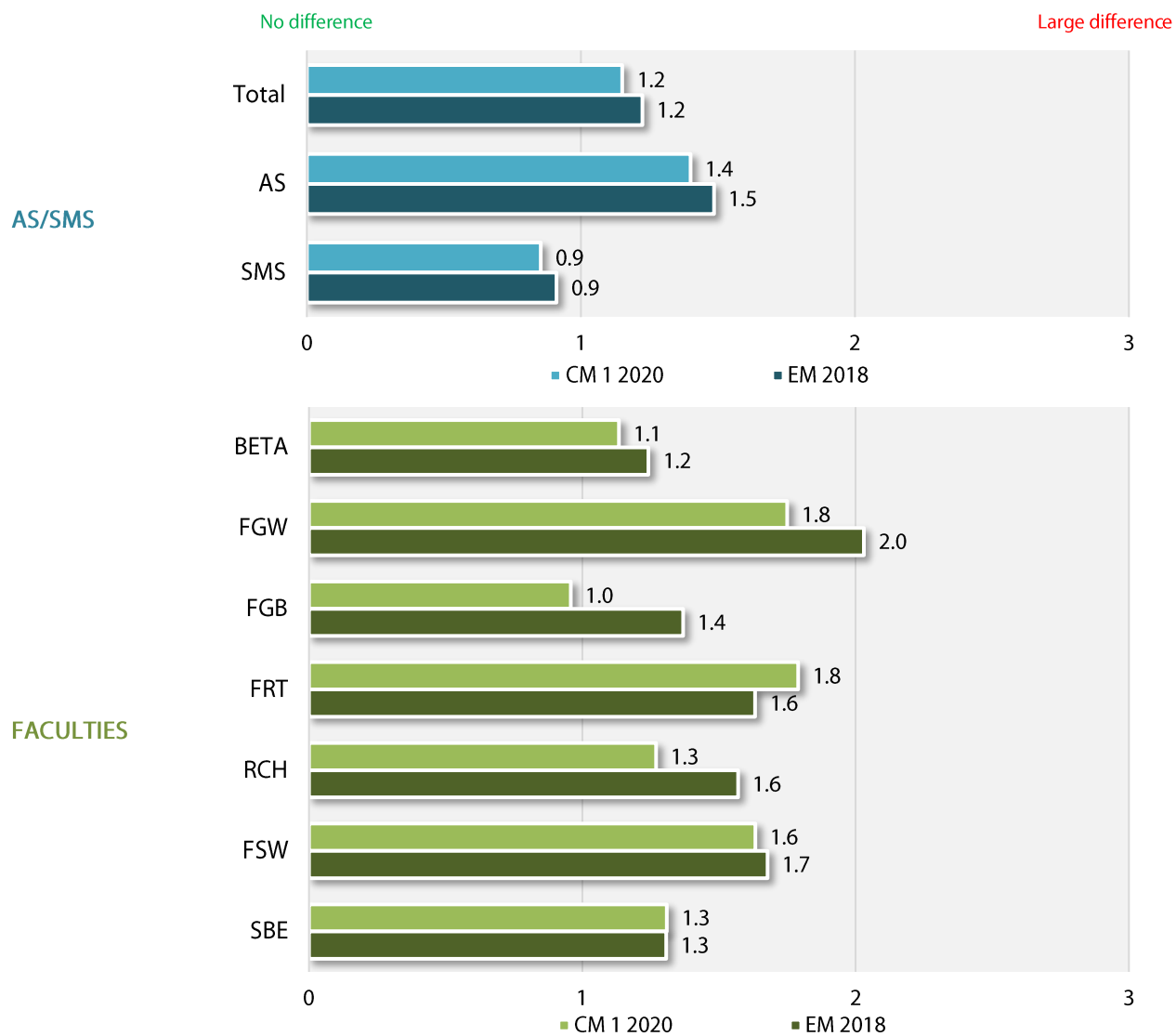
No workload

Extremely high workload

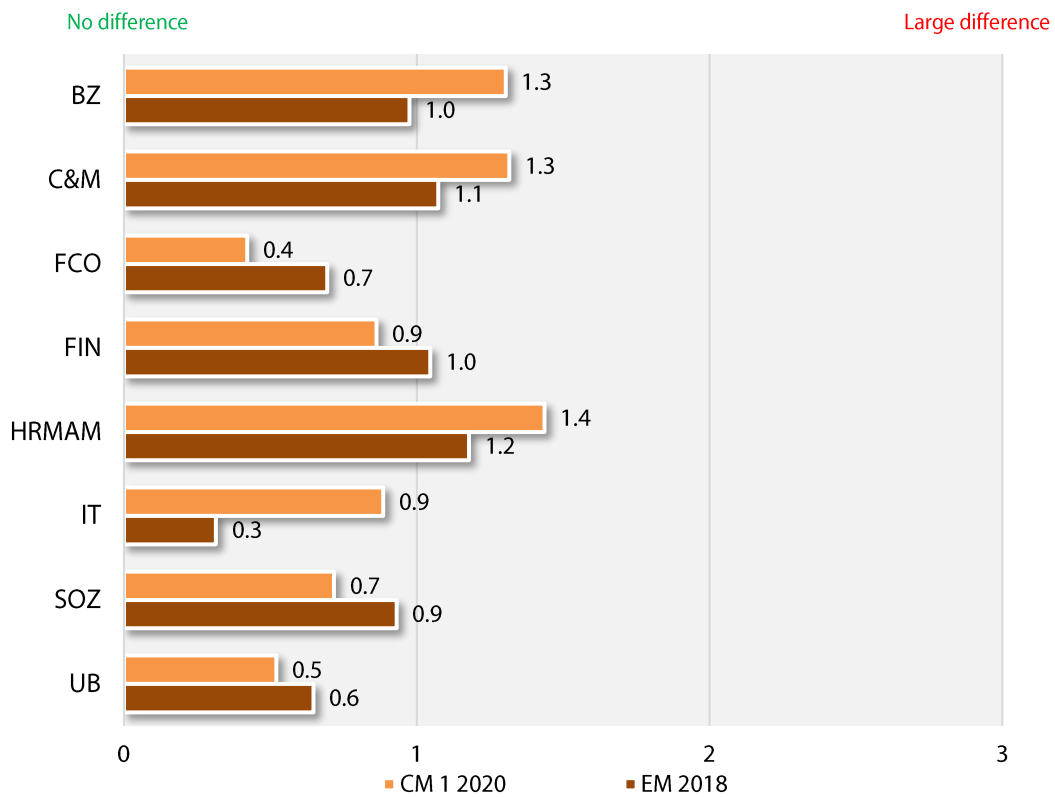
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Difference experienced and acceptable workload (incl. comparison with 2018 EM)



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4 Working from home

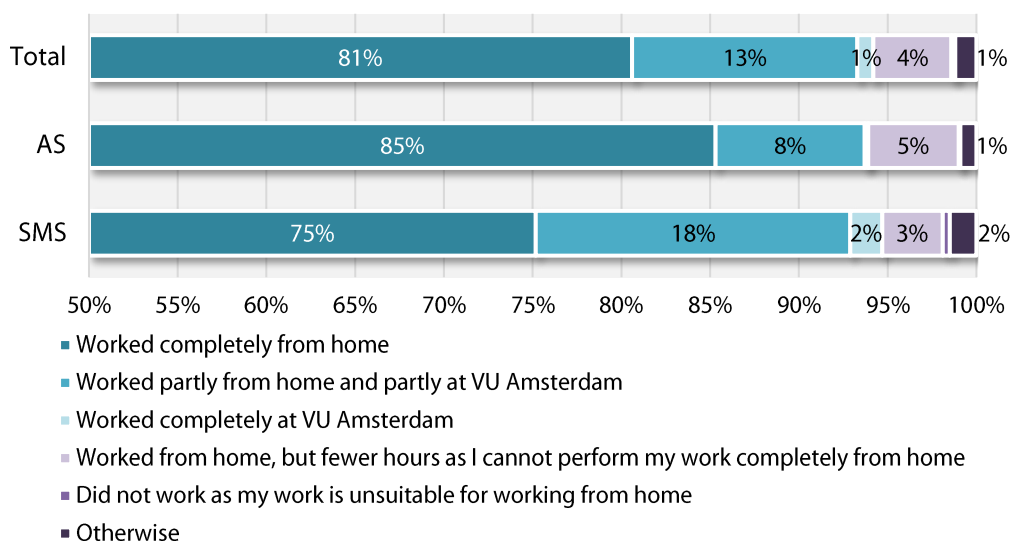
This chapter discusses various aspects of working from home: to what extent have the employees worked from home in the past three months, what difficulties and/or positive points have they encountered, and (to what extent) would they also want to work from home after the Corona crisis?

The results show that averagely over 80% of the employees have worked from home during the past three months. The most important difficulties were the lack of contact with colleagues and the lack of change of environment. The most important positive experiences with working from home were no travelling time/costs and increased flexibility. In the future, 80% of the employees would prefer to work from home for at least 25% of their hours.

Work situation past three months

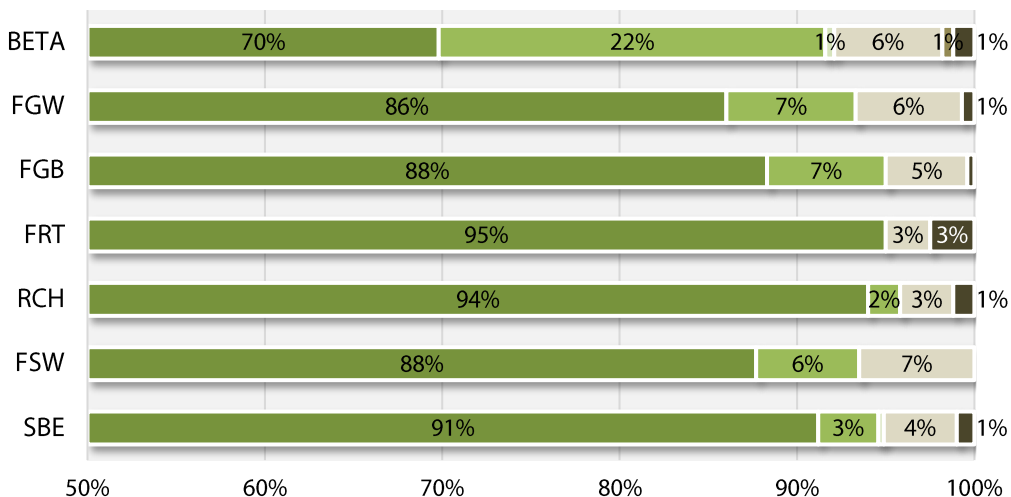
AS/SMS

x-axis starts at 50%.



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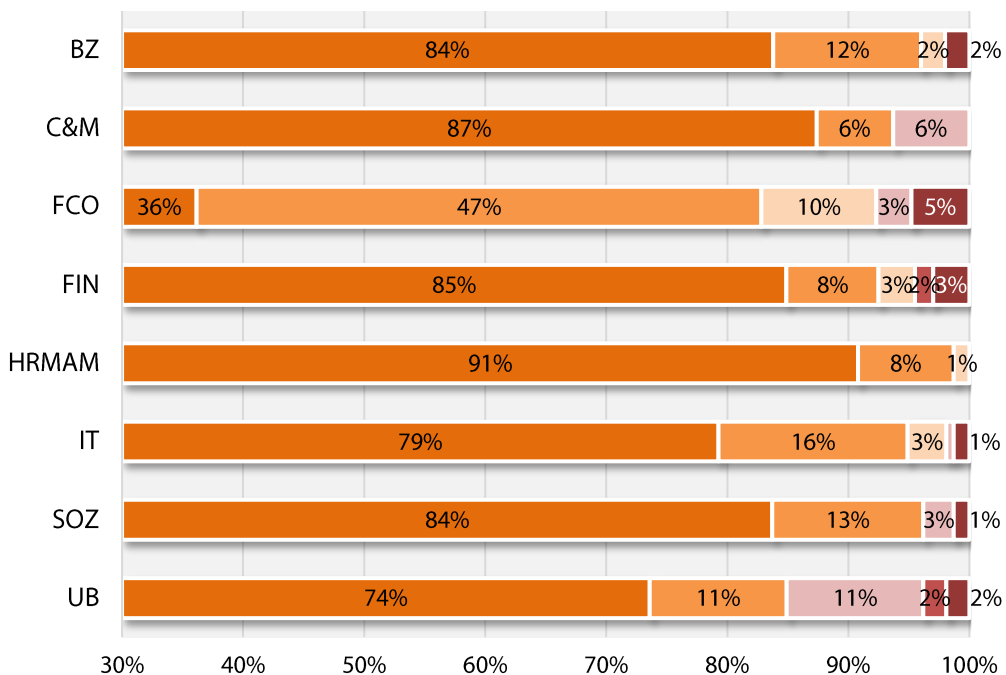
x-axis starts at 50%.



- Worked completely from home
- Worked partly from home and partly at VU Amsterdam
- Worked completely at VU Amsterdam
- Worked from home, but fewer hours as I cannot perform my work completely from home
- Did not work as my work is unsuitable for working from home
- Otherwise

SERVICES

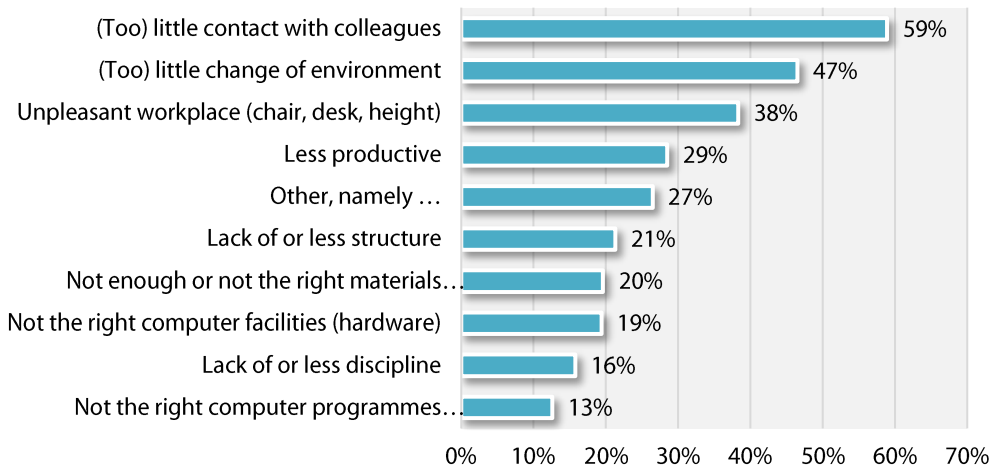
x-axis starts at 30%.



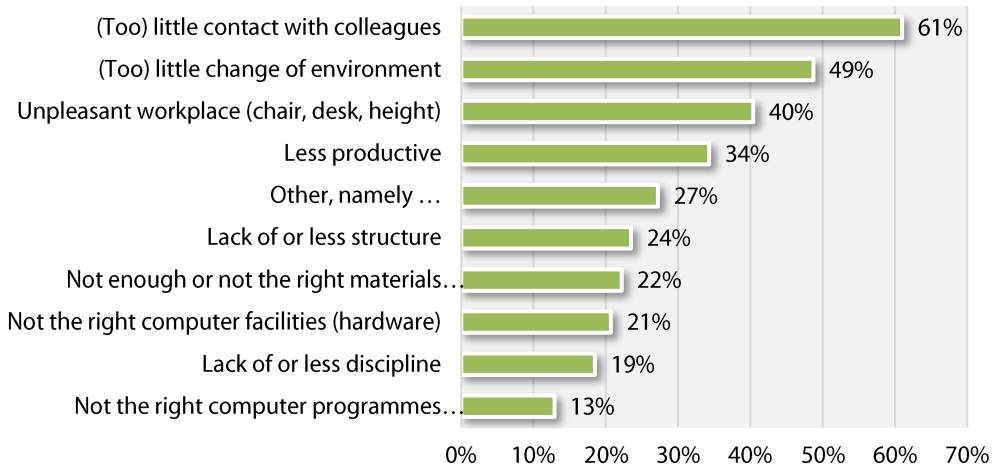
- Worked completely from home
- Worked partly from home and partly at VU Amsterdam
- Worked completely at VU Amsterdam
- Worked from home, but fewer hours as I cannot perform my work completely from home
- Did not work as my work is unsuitable for working from home
- Otherwise

Difficulties working from home

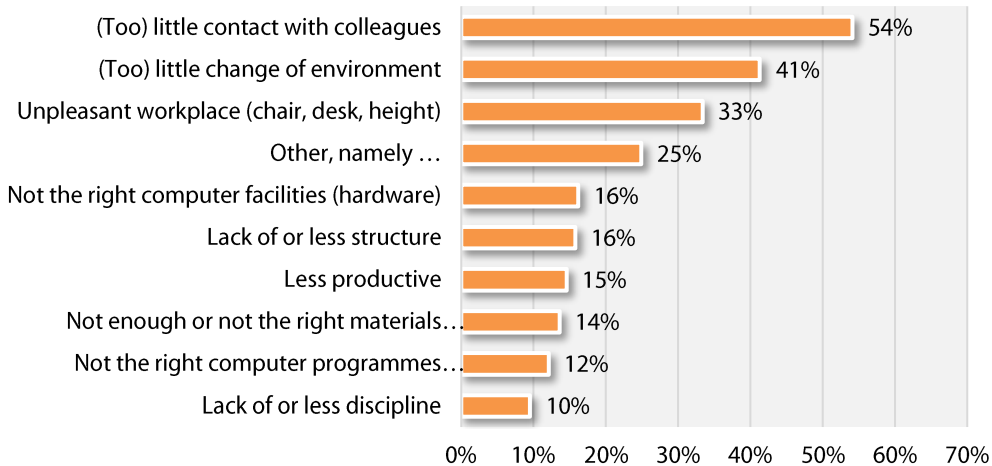
TOTAL



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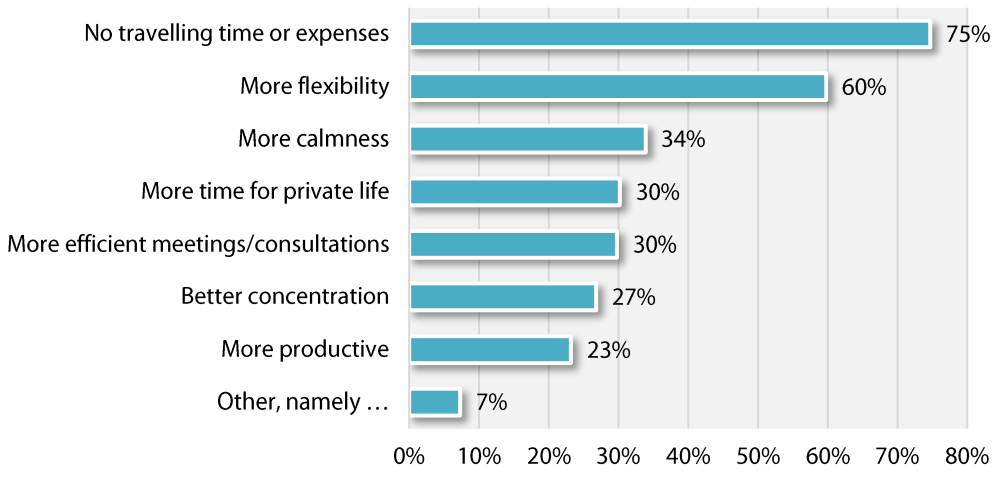


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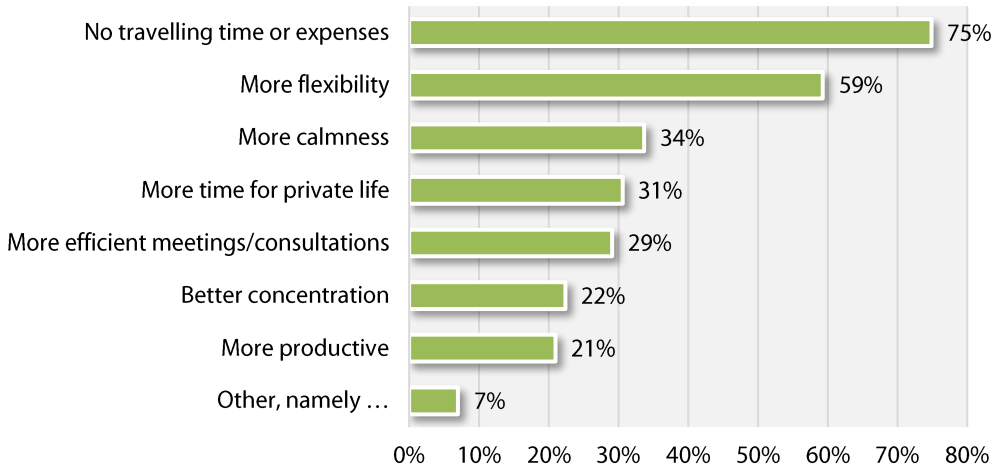


Positive experiences working from home

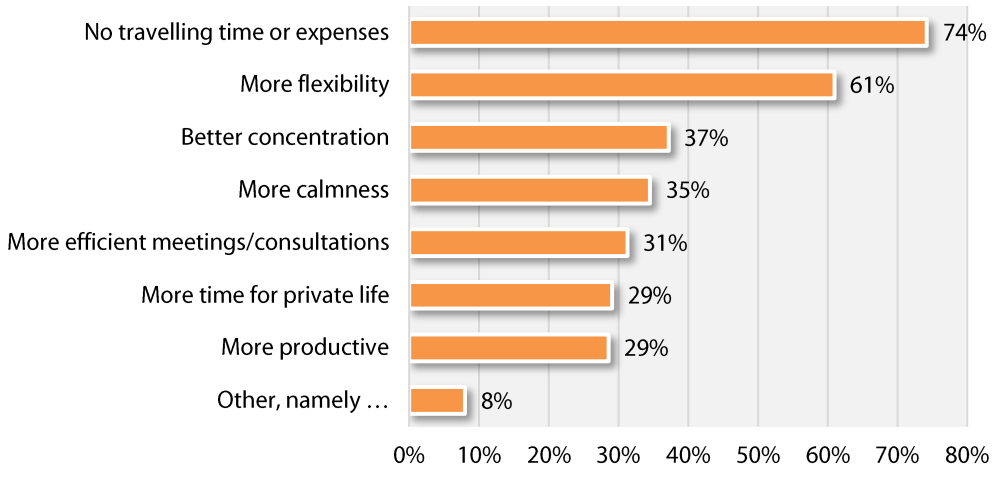
TOTAL



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Difficulties often mentioned ('Otherwise, namely')

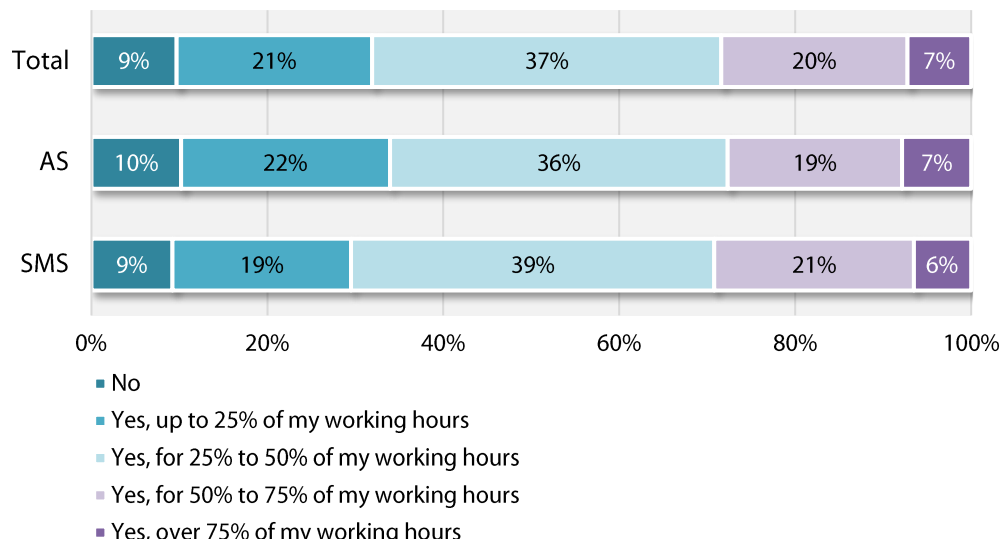
- Care/homeschooling for children
- Fading work/life balance
- Problems with Citrix
- (Too) little/only online contact with students
- Working online (conferencing, teaching, communicating) is more exhausting / more difficult
- (Too) little distraction from work/working too long
- Hard(er) to protect leisure time
- Less motivation
- (Too) little physical activity

Positive experiences often mentioned ('Otherwise, namely')

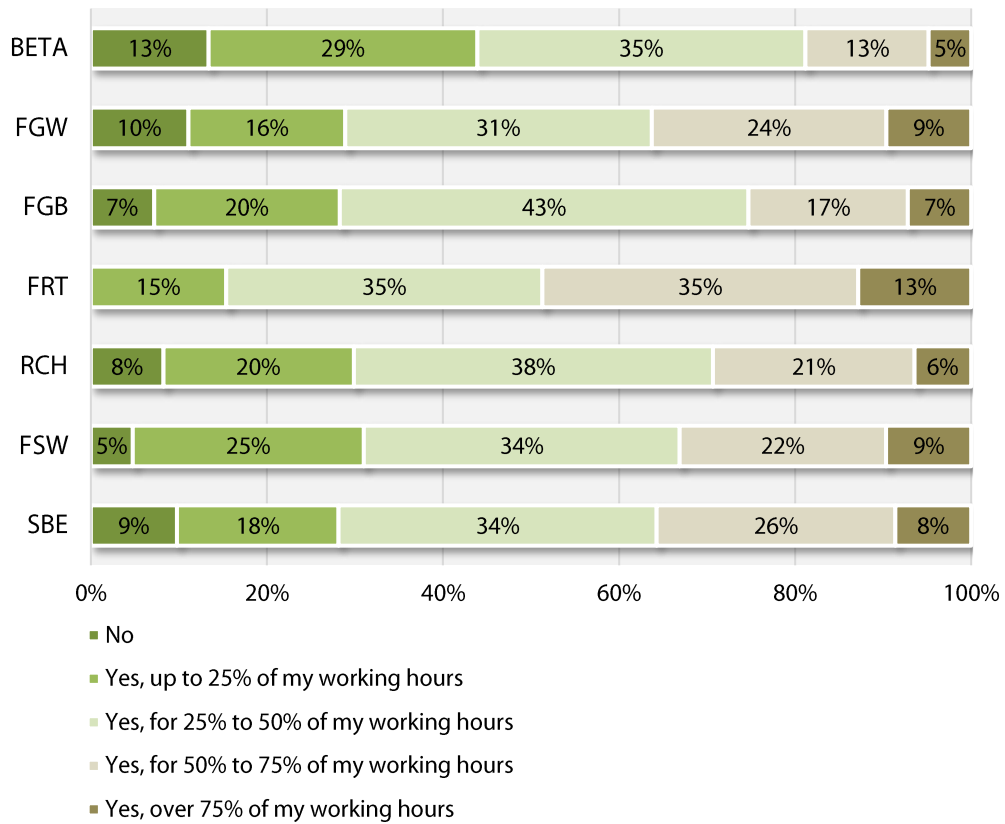
- More family time
- More autonomy/flexibility in daily schedule
- Less stress/rushed
- Acceleration of digital developments

Working from home after Corona

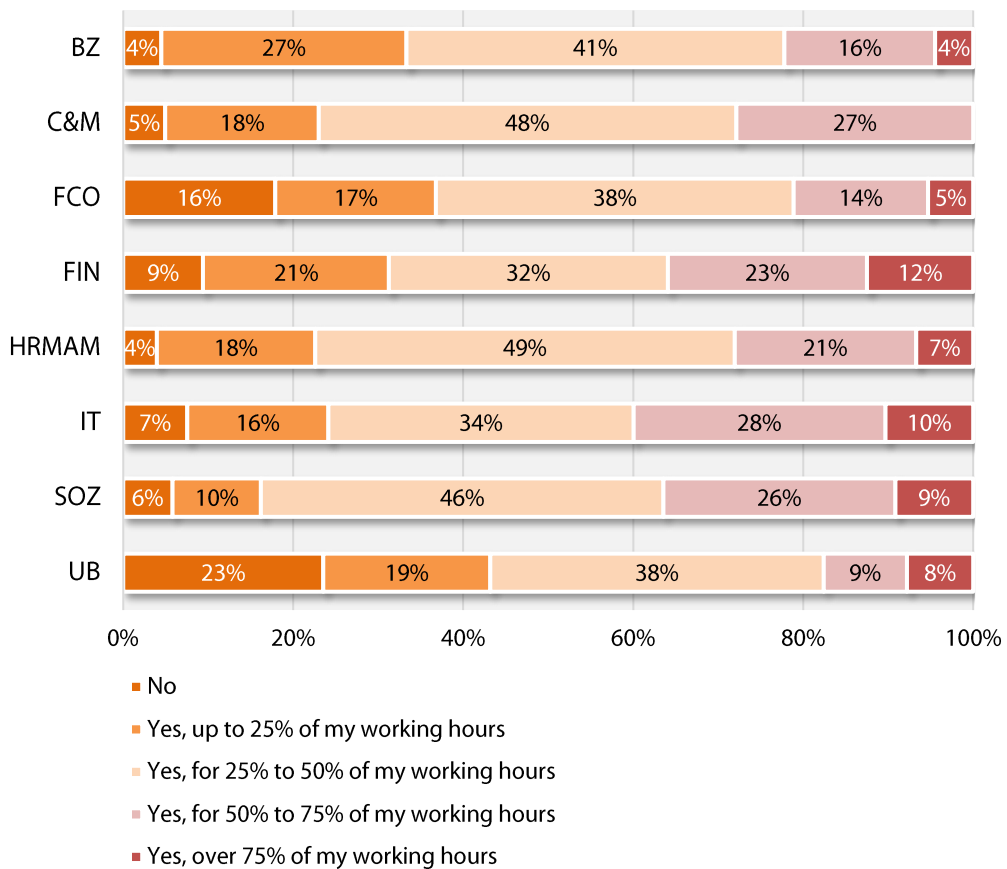
TOTAL



FACULTIES



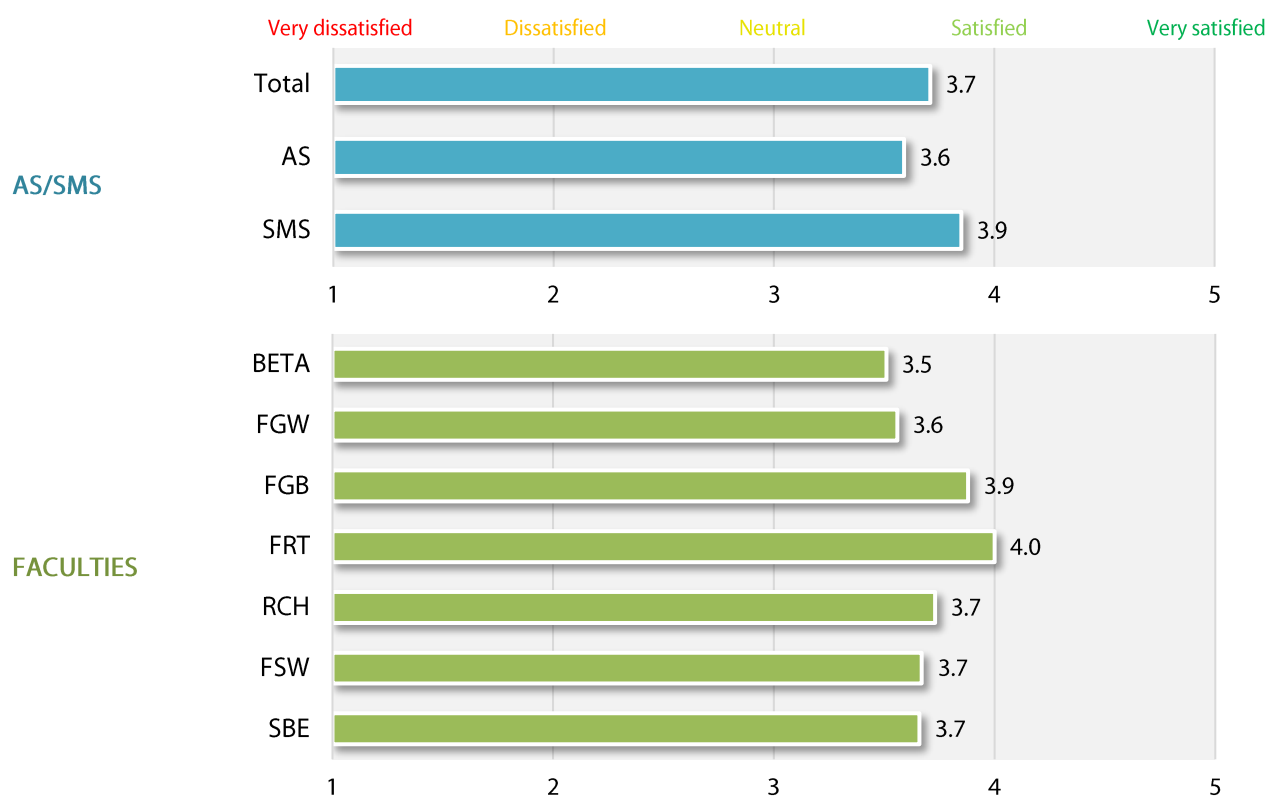
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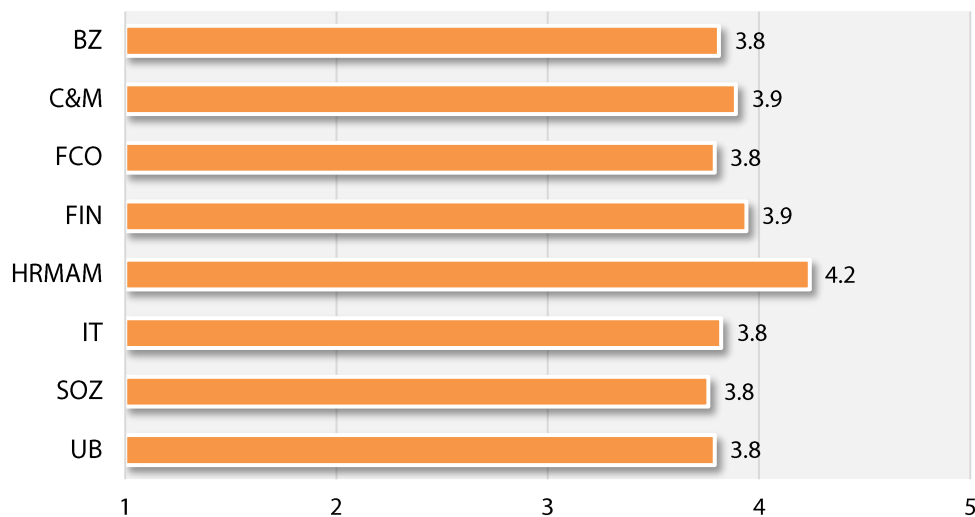
5 Communication

This chapter focuses on satisfaction with communication about the Corona crisis over the past three months. In general, employees are (reasonably) satisfied with both the communication from VU Amsterdam and that from the faculty or service.

Communication from VU Amsterdam

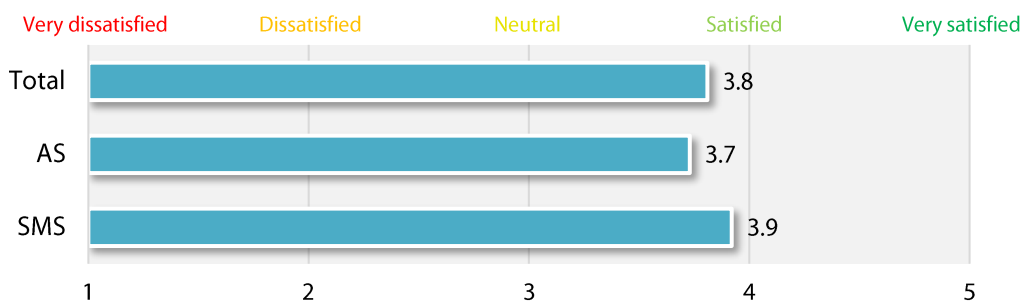


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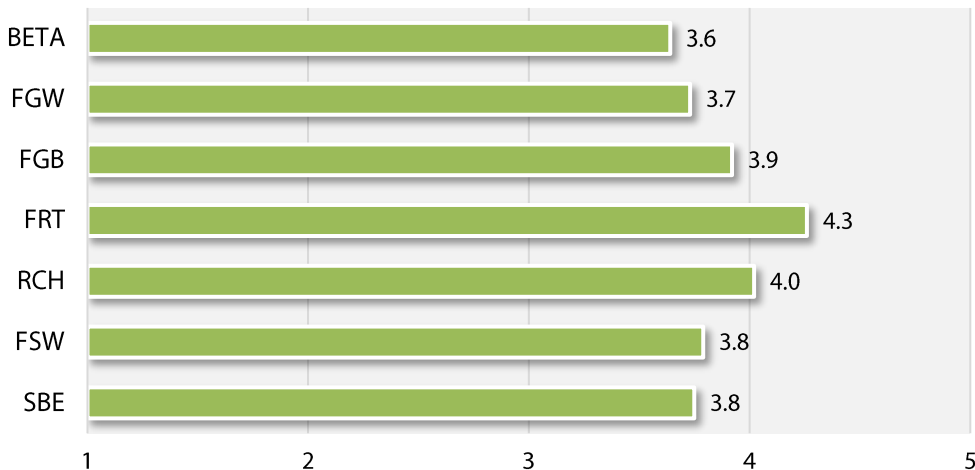


Communication from faculty/service

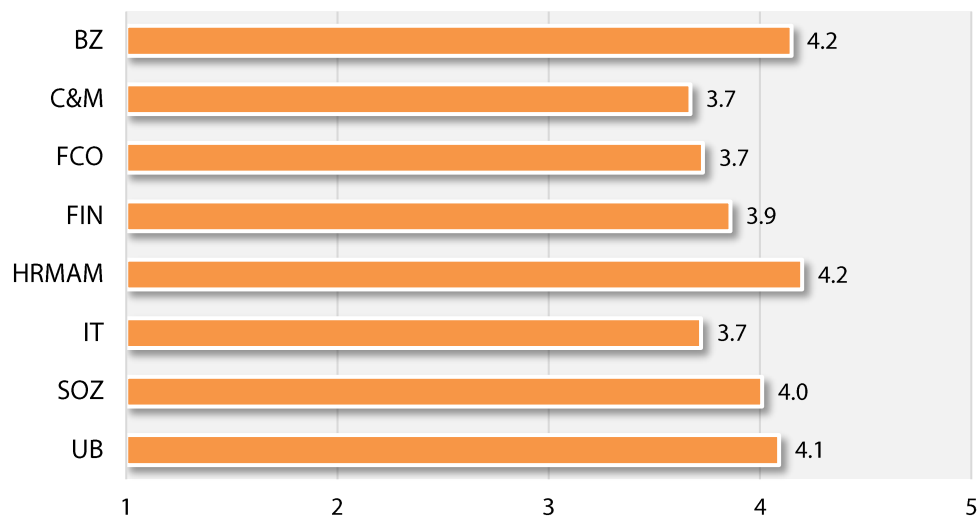
AS/SMS



FACULTIES



SERVICES

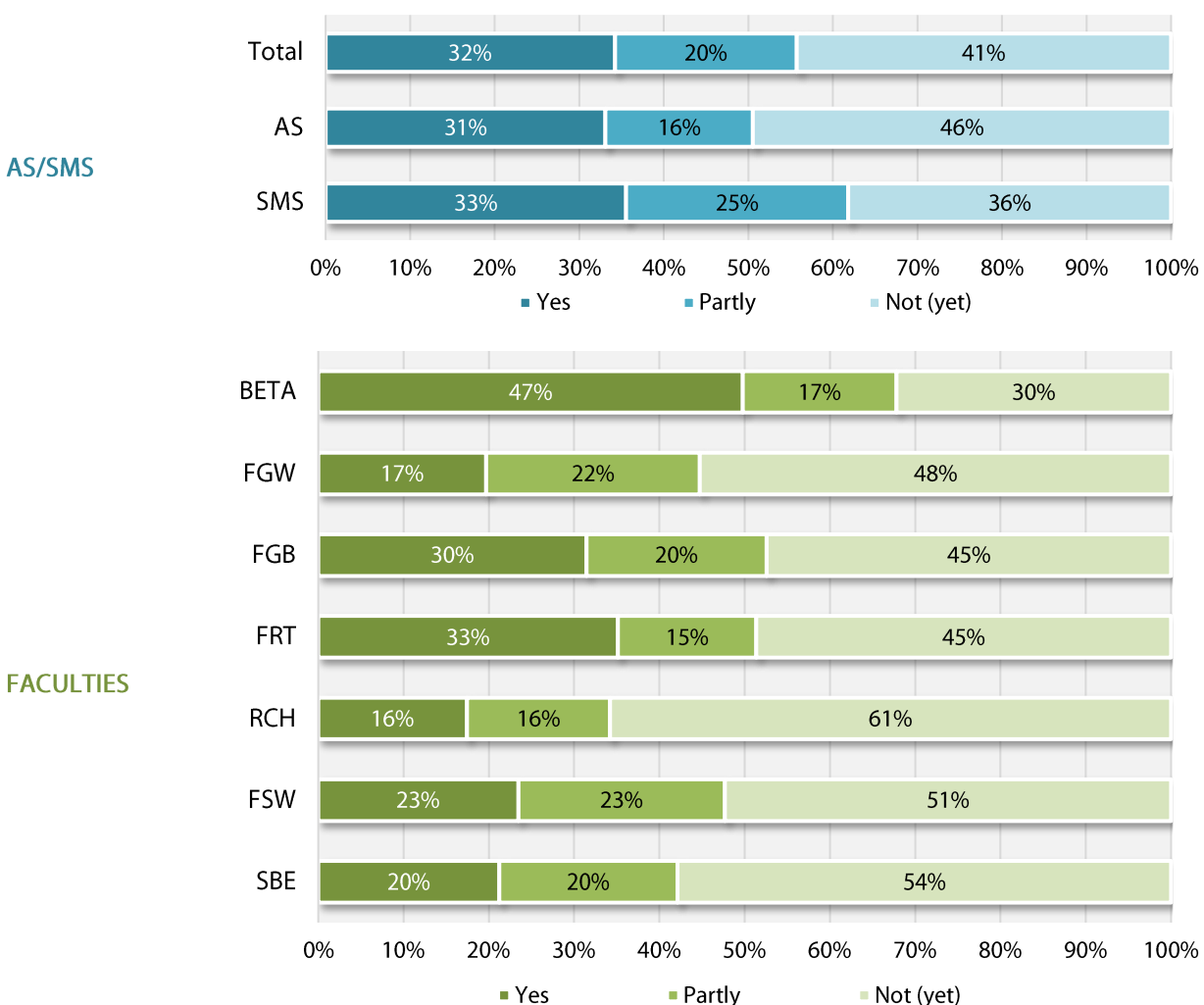


6 Return to VU Amsterdam

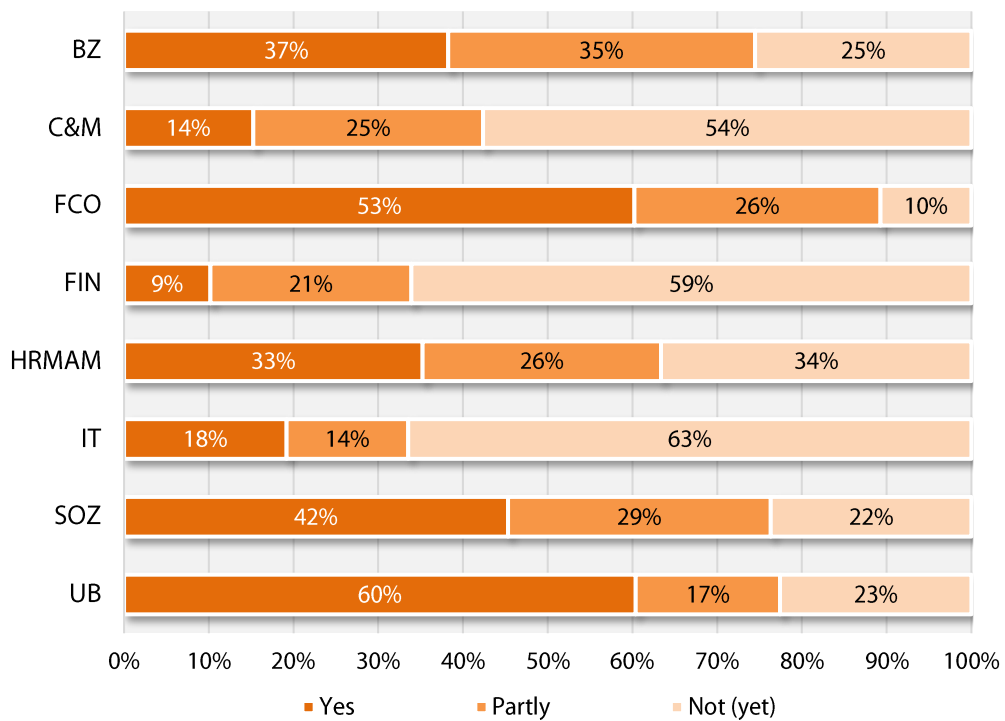
From June onwards, VU Amsterdam has gradually and partly reopened the activities on campus. This means, among other things, that there are limited possibilities to work on campus again. Within faculties and services, this can be implemented differently in practice.

Over 40% of the employees do not (yet) use these possibilities and 20% partially. The main reasons are the lack of added value (e.g., colleagues not there) and leaving the scarce capacity to employees with more priorities. When employees will return to VU Amsterdam, 15% expect to go by car (10%), bicycle (3%) or other means instead of public transport.

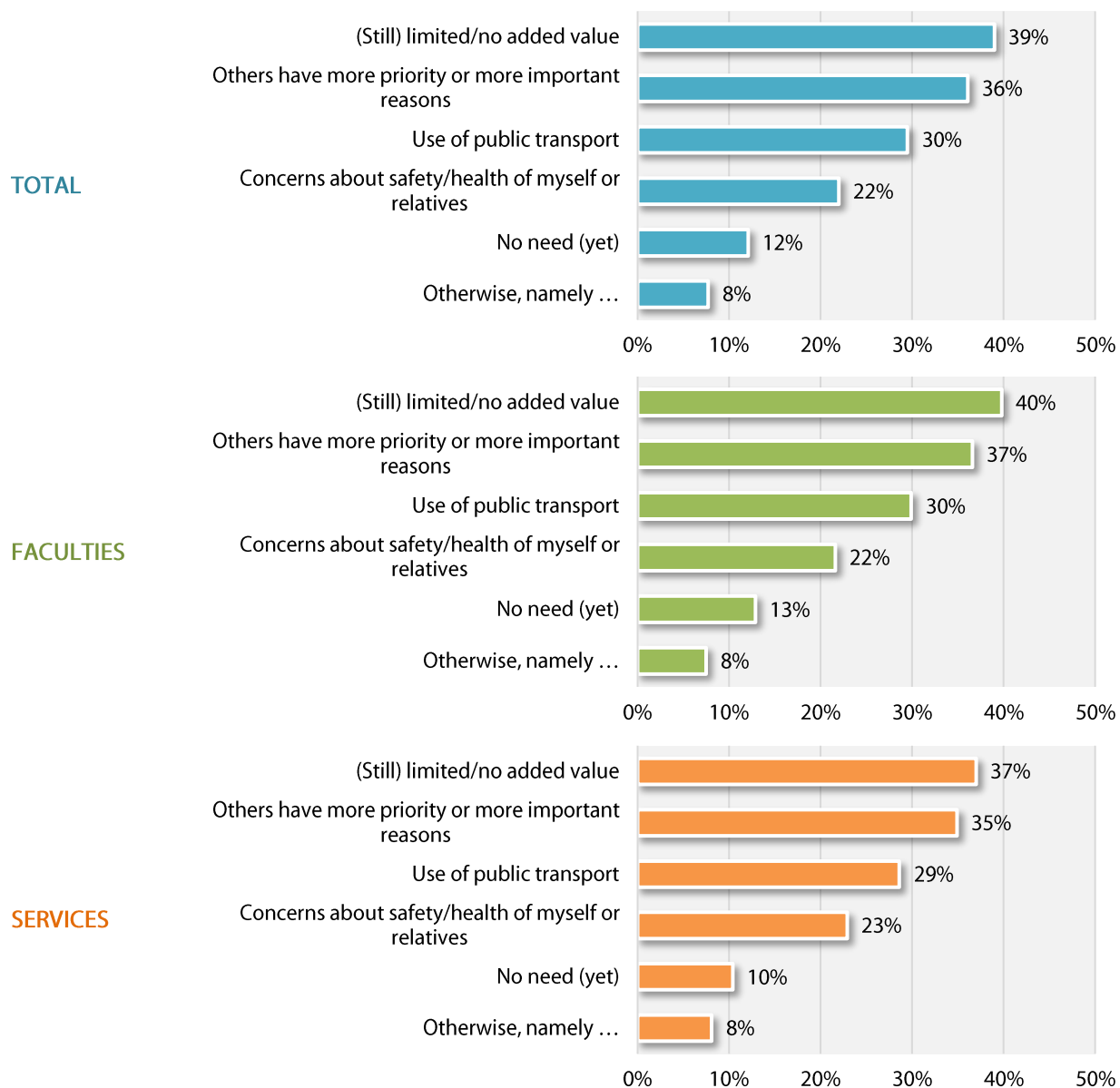
Use of possibilities to work partly at VU campus



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Considerations to work only partly or not (yet) at all at VU campus

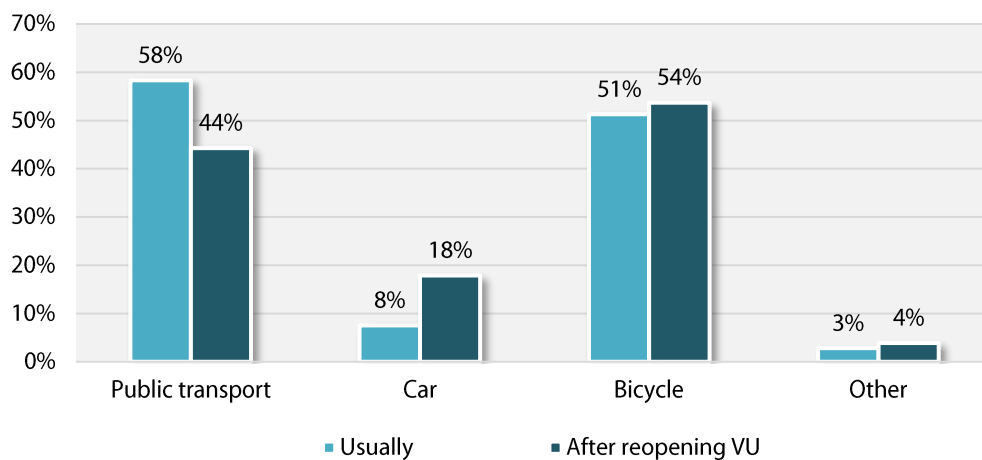


Considerations often mentioned ('Otherwise, namely')

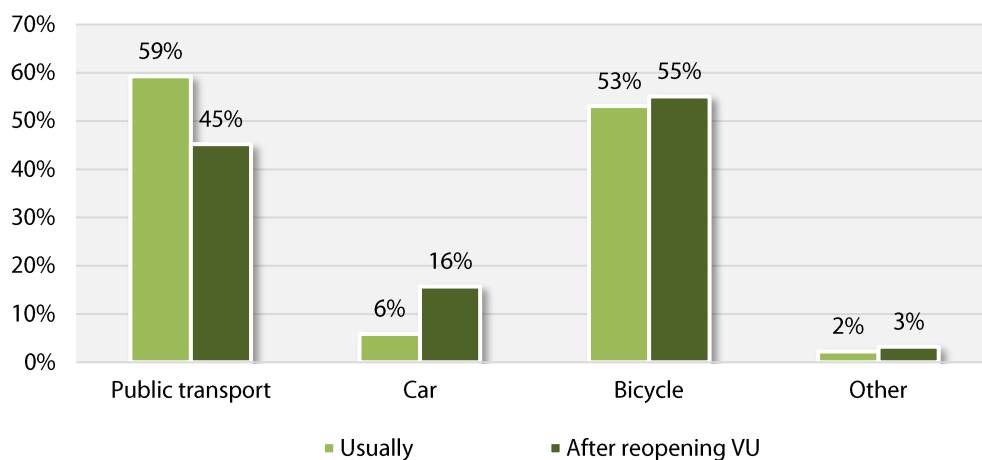
- Comply with the principle/request to work from home
- Like working at home
- Workplace is at home

Means of transport

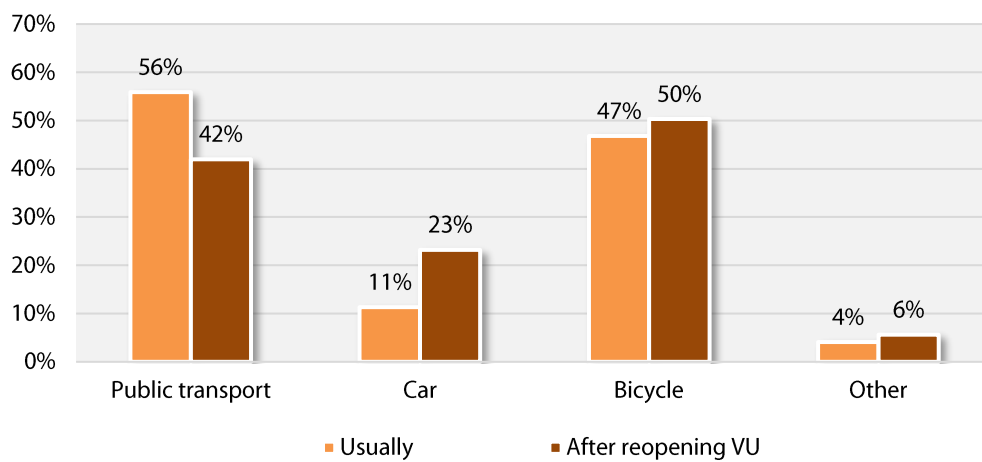
TOTAL



FACULTIES



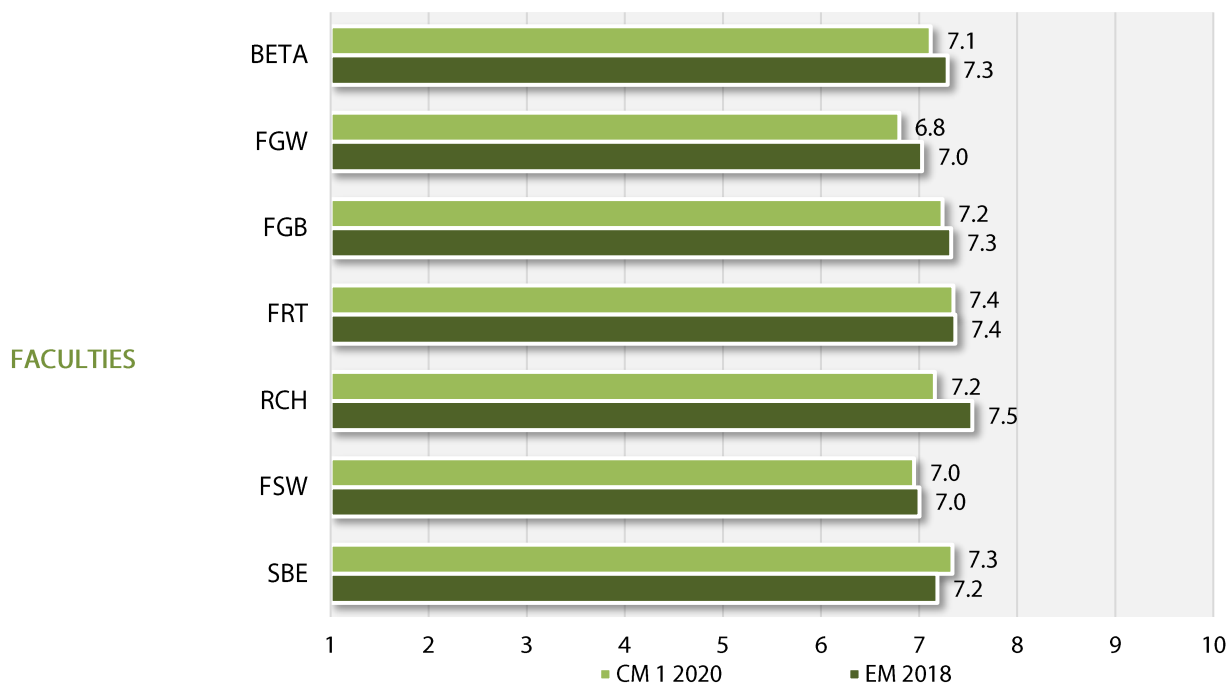
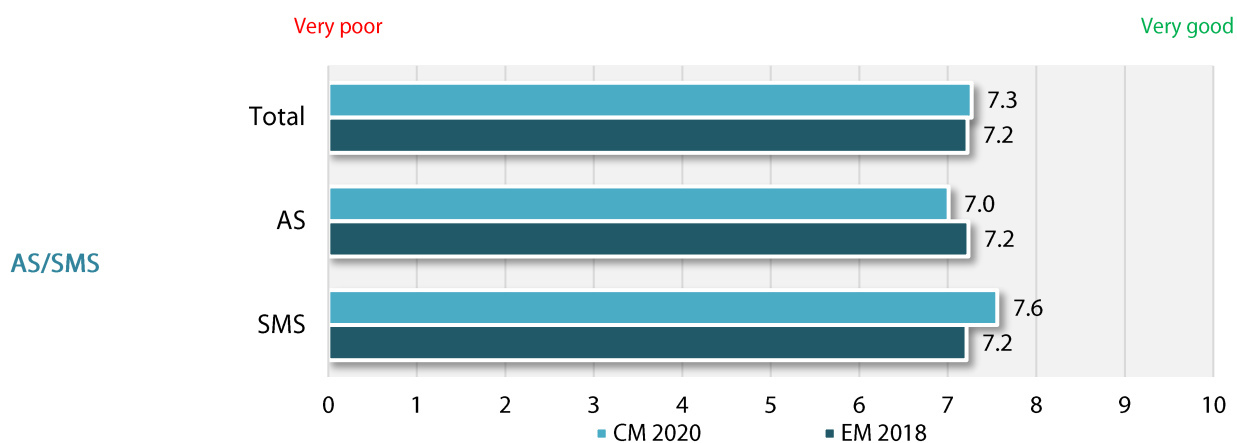
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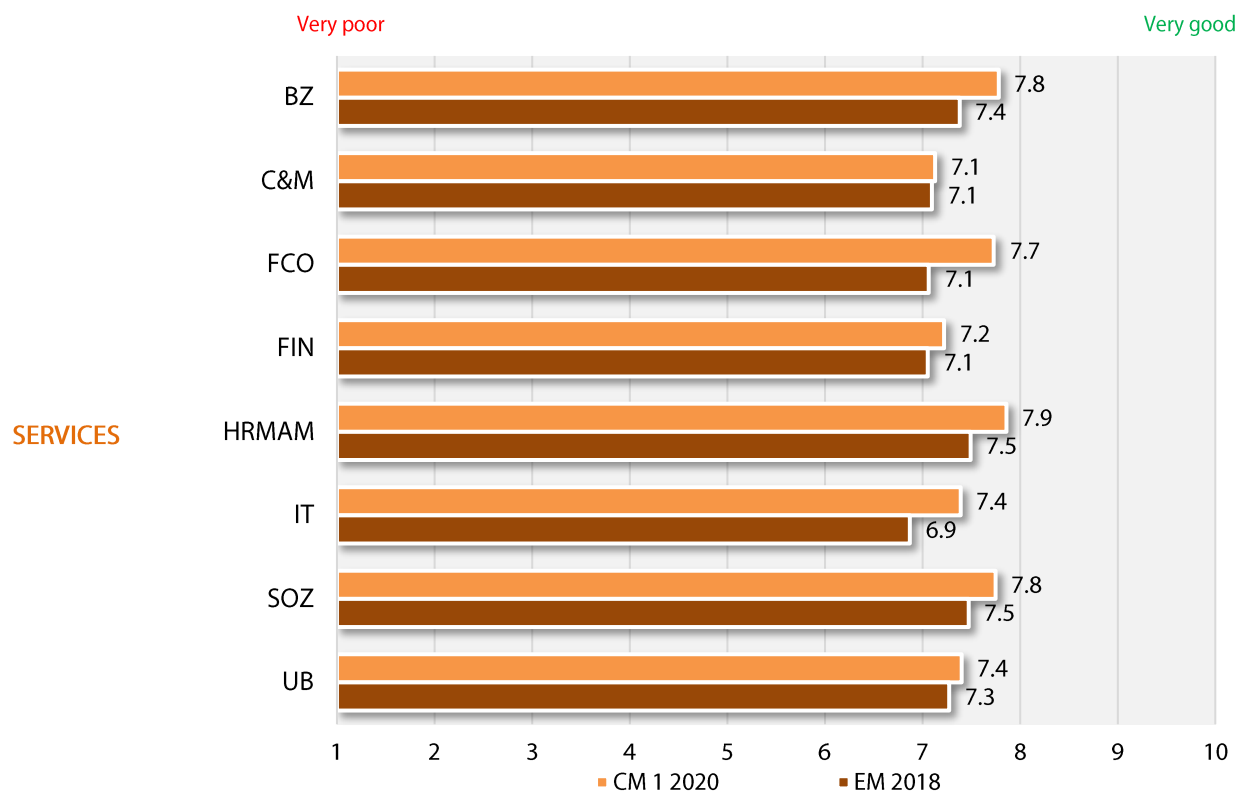


7 General assessment

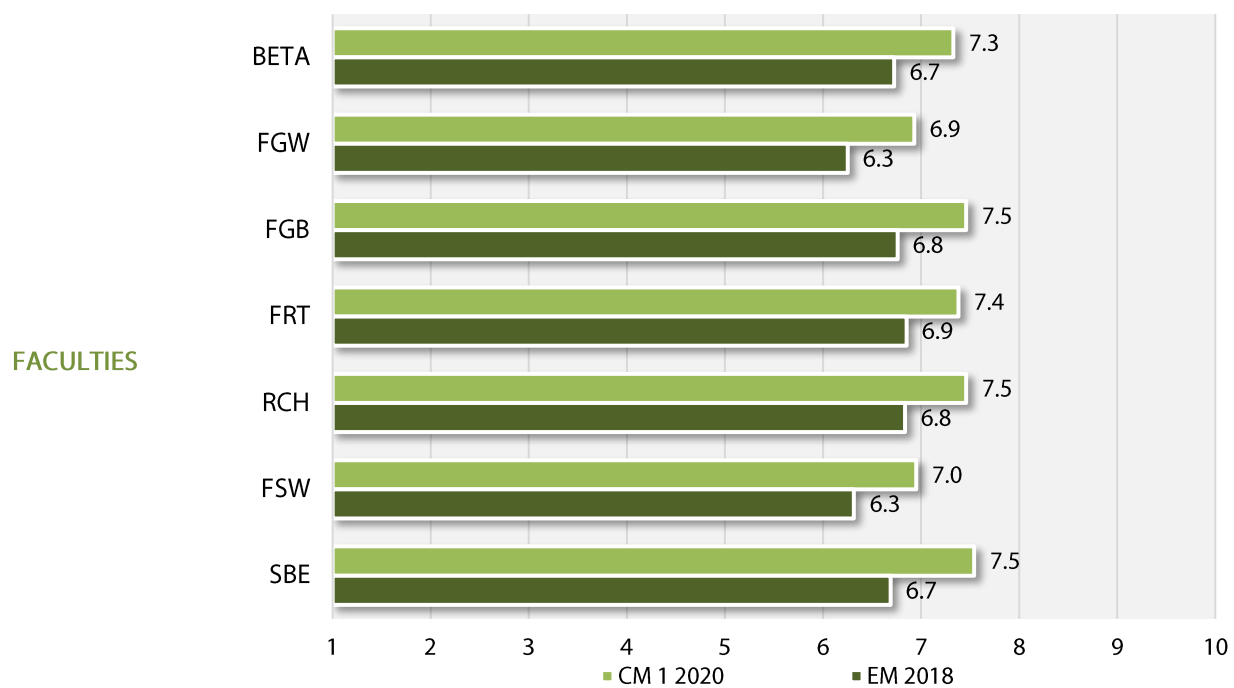
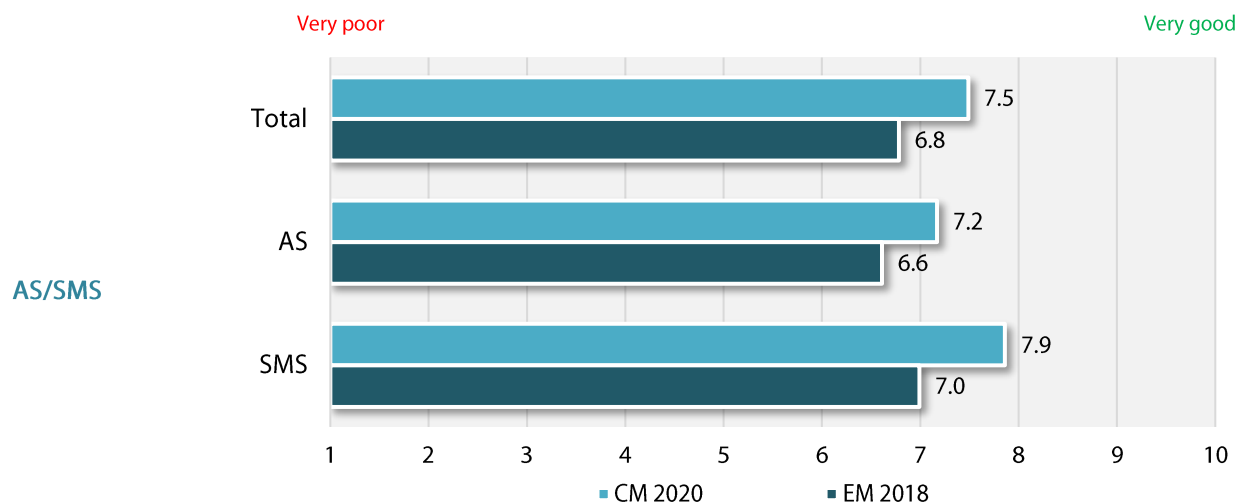
To get an overall picture of satisfaction with VU Amsterdam, employees were asked to assess both working at VU Amsterdam and VU Amsterdam as an employer. Compared to the 2018 Employee Monitor, employees are about as satisfied with working at VU Amsterdam but are significantly more satisfied with VU Amsterdam as an employer.

Assessment working at VU Amsterdam (incl. comparison 2018 EM)

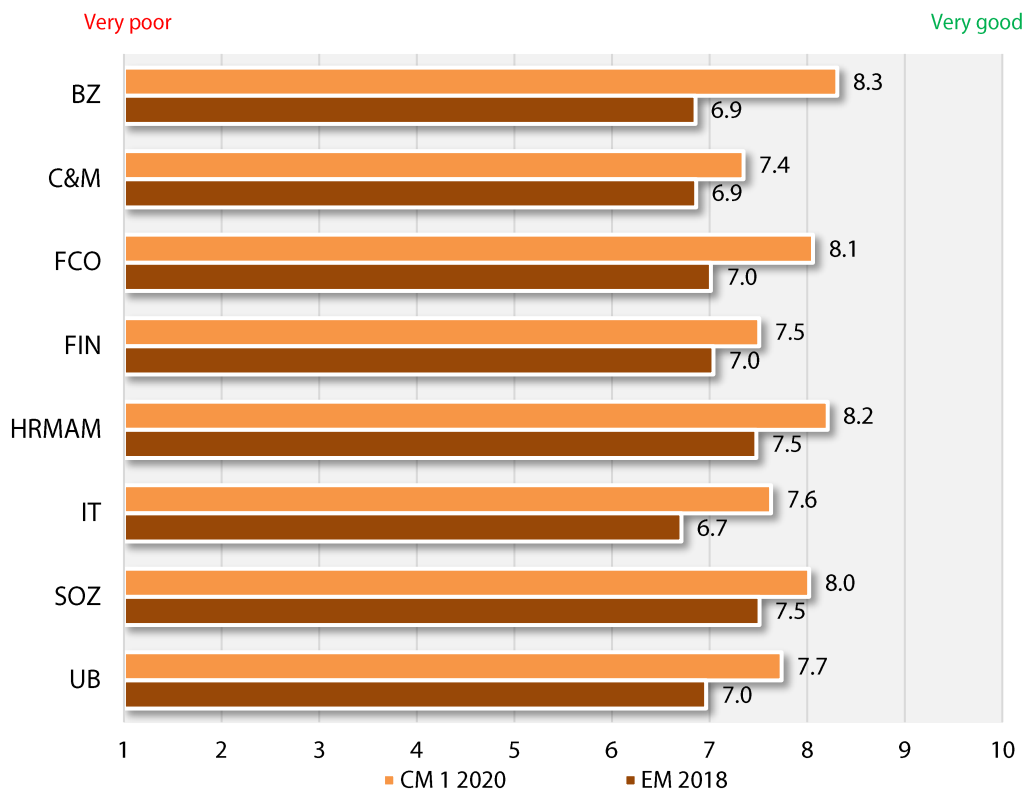




Assessment VU Amsterdam as an employer (incl. comparison with 2018 EM)

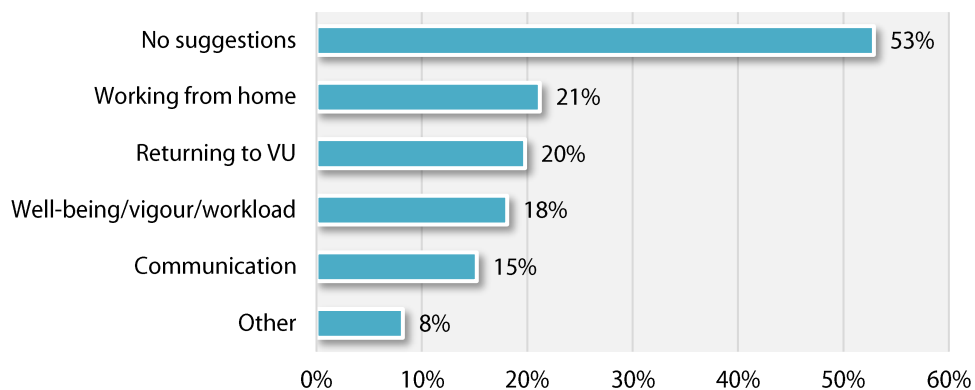


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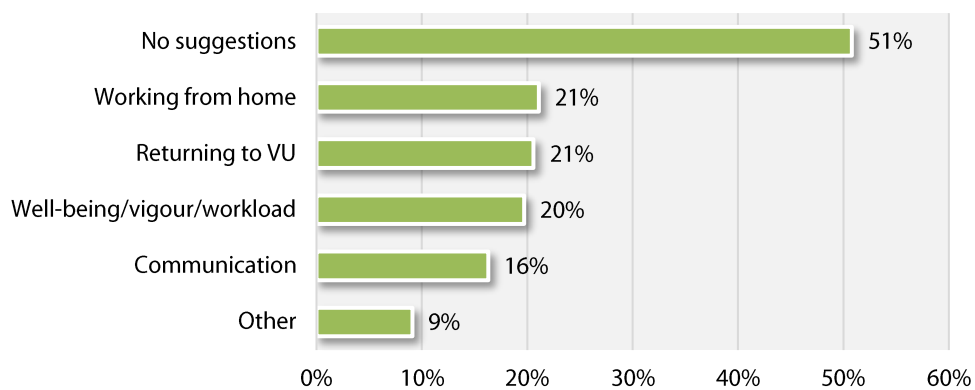


8 Remarks/suggestions

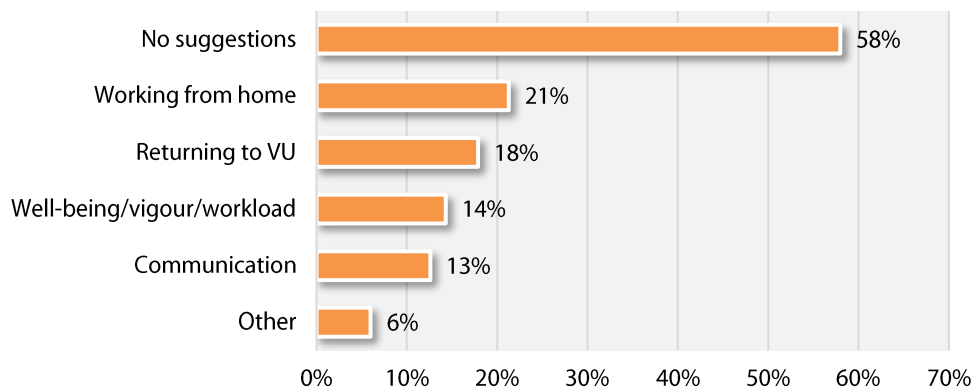
AS/SMS



FACULTIES



SERVICES



Suggestions often mentioned regarding well-being/vigour/workload

- Recognition/valuation/compensation for (extra) deployment
- (Periodic) attention to well-being and work/life balance
- Support with digitisation (both in set-up and fte)
- Facilitate (personal) contact
- Tackle workload, e.g., by better (re)distribution of work, adapting requirements/goals to circumstances, no 'business as usual' expectations, exams at VU campus.
- Maintain opportunities to work from home even after Corona time

Suggestions often mentioned regarding communication

- Communicate clearly(er) and concretely about expectations and possibilities this fall
- Communicate in a more structured and coordinated way
- Communication more concise, unambiguous and clear
- (Continue to) communicate regularly what is going on within the organisation

Suggestions often mentioned regarding working from home

- Maintain opportunities to work from home even after Corona time
- Facilitate or support financially equipment/hardware/furniture for home
- Improve Citrix connection
- Make software better/more available

Suggestions often mentioned regarding returning to VU Amsterdam

- Enable flexible working hours
- Affordable and more parking options
- (Central) reservation system for workplaces
- Check air conditioning and ventilation
- Clarity about how regulations/guidelines are implemented in practice
- Create workplaces in unused spaces
- (More) cleaning and offering of disinfection

Other suggestions often mentioned

- Prioritise opportunities for education and exams
- VU Amsterdam/the faculty did a good job
- Provide clarity about temporary contracts

Appendix: Questionnaire

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the Corona Monitor. VU Amsterdam considers it important to gain insight into the employees' wellbeing in times of working from home and other restrictive measures due to the Corona crisis.

If you close the questionnaire before completing it, your answers will be saved. When you want to continue, you will automatically begin at the question where you left off.

VU Amsterdam has charged IVA Onderwijs with conducting the survey. If you have any questions about this questionnaire, you can contact the researchers: contact@iva-onderwijs.nl.

Thank you for your cooperation!

Privacy disclaimer

The privacy of staff who take part in the Corona Monitor is ensured using the following measures:

- The survey is carried out by IVA Onderwijs, an independent research agency that adheres to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The agency is legally bound by a confidentiality agreement, which requires that information files are secured in different ways. VU Amsterdam will never have access to individual responses.
- The results are presented in such a way that they can never be traced back to the responses of individual employees. Reporting is based on groups with at least 10 respondents. Your responses are therefore never visible.

General questions

1. At which faculty or service do you work?

If you work at more than one faculty or service, please choose the one at which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

<Lijst faculteiten en diensten>

2. At which department do you work?

If you work at multiple departments, please fill in the one you work the most for. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

<Lijst afdelingen per aangevinkte faculteit/dienst>

3. In which category would you classify your position?

- Academic staff (WP)
- Support and management staff (OBP)

<als vraag 3 = WP, openklappen op zelfde pagina als v3>

4. Which position do you hold?

If you hold various positions, please choose the one in which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

- Dean
- Professor
- Associate professor (UHD)
- Assistant professor (UD)
- Teacher
- Researcher
- PhD student
- Special professor
- Other

<als vraag 3 = OBP, openklappen op zelfde pagina als v3>

5. To which function family ① does your function belong?

<pop-up bij ①: zie bijlage 1462 Functiefamilie VU WBO 2017>

If you have various functions, please choose the one in which you work the most hours. In case of an equal amount of hours, please choose the one for which you wish to fill in this questionnaire.

- Education and Research Support
- Administrative and Secretarial Support
- Student Support
- Facility Services
- Occupational Health, Safety and Environment
- ICT
- Management and administrative support

- PR, information and communication
- Personnel and organisation
- Other

6. Do you have a supervisory position?

- Yes
- No

7. What kind of employment do you have?

- Permanent appointment
- Temporary appointment
- Other

8. What is the total scope of your employment at VU Amsterdam?

- 0,8 fte or more
- 0,5 to 0,8 fte
- Less than 0,5 fte
- Do not know/n.a.

Changes in your health and work experience

9. To what extent have the aspects below changed in the past three months?

	Considerably worse	A little worse	(About) the same	A little better	Considerably better	Don't know/ N.A.
a. Your mental health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Your physical health	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. Your involvement with VU Amsterdam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. The cooperation with your supervisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Your involvement with your colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. Your work-life balance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	Considerably increased	A little increased	(About) the same	A little decreased	Considerably decreased	Don't know/ N.A.
g. Your workload	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. The number of care tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<volgende twee vragen op 1 pagina>

11. Can you express the work pressure of the past three months in a mark?

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| No work pressure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Extremely high work pressure |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
- Don't know / no opinion

12. What degree of work pressure do you consider acceptable for the past three months?

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| No work pressure | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Extremely high work pressure |
| | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | |
- Don't know / no opinion

Working from home

13. Which description best suits your work situation over the past three months?

- Worked completely from home
- Worked partly from home and partly at VU Amsterdam
- Worked completely at VU Amsterdam
- Worked from home, but fewer hours as I cannot perform my work completely from home
- Did not work as my work is unsuitable for working from home
- Otherwise

<als vraag 14 ≠ optie 3 OF optie 5>

14. Which difficulties do your experience when working from home?

You can give multiple answers.

- I don't experience any difficulties <uniek antwoord>
- Less productive
- Lack of or less discipline
- Lack of or less structure
- (Too) little contact with colleagues
- (Too) little change of environment
- Not enough or not the right materials available
- Not the right computer facilities (hardware)
- Not the right computer programmes (software)
- Unpleasant workplace (chair, desk, height)
- Other, namely ...

<als vraag 14 ≠ optie 3 OF optie 5>

15. Which positive experiences do you have with working from home?

You can give multiple answers

- I don't have any positive experiences <uniek antwoord>
- More productive

- Better concentration
- More flexibility
- No travelling time or expenses
- More calmness
- More efficient meetings/consultations
- More time for private life
- Other, namely ...

Communication

16. How satisfied are you with the communication about the Corona crisis?

		Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very satisfied	Don't know/N.A.
a.	Communication from VU Amsterdam	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b.	Communication from your faculty/service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Future

From June onwards, VU Amsterdam will gradually and partly reopen the activities on campus. This means, among other things, that there are limited possibilities to work on campus again. Within faculties and services, this can be implemented differently in practice.

17. Are you making use of these possibilities or do you intend to do so at short notice?

- Yes
- Partly
- Not (yet)
- Don't know

<als vorige vraag = optie 2 OF 3, openklappen op zelfde pagina>

18. What considerations play a role in your choice to work only partly or not (yet) at all at VU Amsterdam?

You can give multiple answers.

- Concerns about safety/health of myself or my relatives
- Use of public transport
- Working at VU Amsterdam has (still) limited/no added value (fewer colleagues, restrictive measures).
- Other employees have more priority or more important reasons to go to VU Amsterdam (make optimal use of scarce capacity)

- No need (yet)
- Otherwise, namely ...

19. Would you like to work from home in the future (after the Corona crisis)

- No
- Yes, up to 25% of my working hours
- Yes, for 25% to 50% of my working hours
- Yes, for 50% to 75% of my working hours
- Yes, over 75% of my working hours
- Don't know (yet)

<volgende twee vragen op één pagina>

20. Which mean(s) of transport do you usually use to go to work (before the Corona crisis)?

You can give multiple answers.

- Public transport
- Car
- Bicycle
- Other

21. Which mean(s) of transport will you use to go to work when VU Amsterdam (partly) reopens?

You can give multiple answers.

- Public transport
- Car
- Bicycle
- Other

General assessment

<volgende twee vragen op één pagina>

22. If you were asked to rate working at VU Amsterdam at this moment on a scale of 1 to 10, what grade would you give?

1 = very poor, 10 = very good

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Don't know/N.A. |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

23. If you were asked to rate VU Amsterdam as an employer at this moment on a scale of 1 to 10, what grade would you give?

1 = very poor, 10 = very good

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Don't know/N.A. |
| <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Finally

24. Do you have any suggestions about how VU Amsterdam can support you during or after the Corona crisis?

- No <uniek antwoord>
- Yes, regarding my well-being/vigour/workload: ...
- Yes, regarding communication: ...
- Yes, regarding working from home: ...
- Yes, regarding returning to VU Amsterdam: ...
- Other, namely:

<na verzenden vragenlijst>

Thank you for your cooperation!

The results and plans will be shared with all VU Amsterdam employees as soon as possible.

On VU.net, you will find more information about [working at VU Amsterdam in corona time and the one-and-a-half-meter university](#). If you need help or advice, please take a look at the information on [wellbeing and corona](#).