

# Software developer productivity declines 14% from pre-pandemic levels

*In the two years since the start of the pandemic, global software developer productivity declined over 14%*

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That we have seen such a decline in productivity shows that many companies struggle to support their software development teams. They need to identify where to focus their efforts to return to growth."

*Jason R. Rolles, Managing Director, BlueOptima*

Global Benchmark metrics from BlueOptima shows the sheer scale of the [decline in the productivity of software development teams](#) from pre-Covid 19 levels.

Author of the report, Khaled El Serafy, Senior Data Scientist, has identified that despite many organisations rapidly adopting remote working practices and the initial crisis response from software developers, and then more recently with enterprises starting to implement their 'Back to Office' programmes, the productivity of developers hasn't yet returned to the pre-pandemic levels, with [daily productivity 14% lower than the 2019 average](#).

## Key findings:

Productivity increased temporarily in the first two months following global lockdowns (+7% in April and +4% in May 2020).

In 2021, particularly the second half of the year, we saw a major and unprecedented decline in productivity (-4% in the first half of 2021 and -10% in the second half).

## Country Insights

### United States of America

Productivity in the USA declined by 15% in 2021 after seeing a temporary increase in the first 2 months of lockdowns after March 2020 before falling back to the previous level.

### India

India had an initial 17% increase in productivity, before returning to average, and then continuing to decline to 11% below pre-pandemic levels.

### UK

The United Kingdom fell by 7% in 2020, then by another 11% in the first half of 2021 and continued to fall by another 18% in the second half of the year.

Jason R. Rolles, Managing Director and CEO of BlueOptima observed: “The fact we have seen such significant declines in overall productivity, compared to the start of 2020, suggests that many companies are still struggling to meet the needs of their software development teams. Whether it’s inadequate tools and processes or ensuring their staff have the support structures they need, these organisations need to understand where to prioritise their efforts to return to productivity. Getting this right ensures that they remain competitive and ready to adapt to future macroeconomic factors”.

### The BlueOptima Global Benchmark

The BlueOptima Global Benchmark consists of data extracted from hundreds of thousands of software developers located in more than 30 countries, providing a quantitative analysis of their performance.

### BlueOptima Overview

BlueOptima's analytics platform empowers software developers and their companies to create better software in the most time and cost-efficient way.

The first solution of its kind, BlueOptima provides insight based on the world’s only objective software developer productivity metrics: Coding Effort. It’s a breakthrough for software development.

BlueOptima's SaaS platform facilitates analysis of productivity, together with quality, in enterprise software development, in terms of individuals, teams, tasks, projects, divisions, and outsourced suppliers. Understanding variations in performance across an enterprise empowers managers to optimise efficiency. BlueOptima is proven to identify savings of up to 20% for software budgets.

BlueOptima’s further offerings around benchmarking and recruiting allow organisations to cost-optimize as early as possible in software initiatives.

### Productivity

The data is analysed using BlueOptima’s Developer Analytics platform to calculate Coding Effort (CE), which sets a global standard for measuring software developer productivity. CE is a metric derived from objective measures of software developer work outputs, specifically source code changes, based on decades of academic and industry research. Coding Effort is used by large global enterprises to compare the productivity of software engineers across technologies and software development methodologies.

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