



A NEW REALITY: HOW WILL OFFICES CHANGE?

TRENDS — INSIGHTS — INSPIRATIONS

narbutas

A new reality raising new questions

The world we live in is constantly changing and challenging us to be flexible, learn new things and adapt to the new reality. The recent virus outbreak worldwide drew our attention to the most important asset we have, and that is our health. Companies have to rethink their strategies and workplace planning to keep employees safe, healthy and enabling them to focus on work.

There are so many questions regarding what's coming next: Will things go back to the way they used to be? How and where will we work? How to communicate with each other and not to put anyone in danger?

We can't be sure of what the future holds for us, but we definitely can share useful information and our insights for creating a safer workplace at the office or home.

“

Now, more than ever, we need to stand together. Now, more than ever, we need to uphold our values – and those values are what we will be basing all our decisions on.

”

Petras Narbutas, Founder and Owner of NARBUTAS

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Trends of working in the new reality

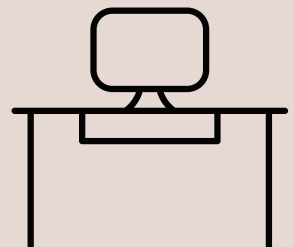
1 Increased hygiene standards

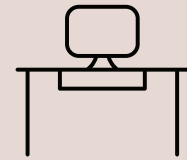


2 Working remotely from home



3 Rethinking workspace planning





Increased hygiene standards

- Sanitary products will be integrated into office settings.
- All surfaces, handles and the areas where people usually gather will be frequently cleaned.
- Upholstery materials may lose attractiveness and hard, plastic surfaces which are easy to clean will become more popular.
- Increased regulations will influence our greeting habits as we will avoid the usual handshakes or kisses on the cheek.
- Hands-free solutions will be integrated to avoid unnecessary contacts.
- Anti-microbial technologies will be used when creating new products and materials.

Working remotely from home

- By working remotely employees are helping companies to follow the physical distance recommendations.
- When team members cannot work together in person, it is important to ensure the virtual connection, IT tools, but we should not forget to maintain company's foundation by fostering community bonds and cultural values.
- A large part of employees is getting used to the home office concept and may choose to continue working remotely on a regular basis or at least partly.
- Not allowing employees to work from home will no longer be an option in order to attract and keep new talents.
- People will consider having a space dedicated for work in order not to interfere with personal life.
- Easily assembled and ergonomic home office workplace solutions will be in high demand.

Rethinking workspace planning

- Products which can create division and maintain physical distancing will be in high demand.
- Benching systems with screens will become essential.
- Modular and mobile furniture will become even more popular to ensure the flexibility in the open space.
- We will get more accustomed to the online tool for meetings and will need convenient spaces in the office to adapt to this need.
- Assigned desking and cabinets will be more preferable.
- New workspace layouts aimed at reducing density and keeping distance between employees will increase in popularity.

From the perspective of architects and designers

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Christina Strand and Niels Hvass

Designers, Strand+Hvass

“There will be a demand for more silent spaces where you can concentrate during online meetings and online work. Corona teaches us to keep distance, and the distance demands even better acoustic solutions in social areas. Social furniture for small groups and for bigger groups too, will be popular. Furniture in which the distance feels natural, where we can see each other and feel close, even with safe distance.”

Sabina Daugėlienė

Architect, DO ARCHITECTS

“The majority of our clients are considering how to follow the recommendations in the current premises, or even reduce their total area rather than expanding it. Such discussions are interesting, since we talk not only about furniture and premises, but also about the habits and values of working and being with colleagues. No matter how much we discuss it, we reach the same conclusion - many things will change, yet many things will stay the same because people will always want to meet and see each other, so together we are looking for ways to make it safer.”





Annie Lee

IIDA, LEED AP ID+C, Principal, Interior Design at ENV

“The aspect of human well-being in design, which has always been a major topic, now holds the utmost importance. It is our duty as designers to understand and help promote the materials and design elements that consider the health and safety of our interior environments. We strive to combine these ideals with the creation of welcoming and inviting spaces, as a solution for both physical and emotional comfort.”

Adriano Baldanzi

Designer, Baldanzi & Novelli Designers

“The possibility to work from home will be boosted by what we are experiencing now, and certainly will remain as an occasion for the further development of the ways of working. Certain domestic spaces will probably have to be thought over, and this will further reduce the line between Office and Home.”



Jokūbas Jurgelis

Architect, 2XJ studio

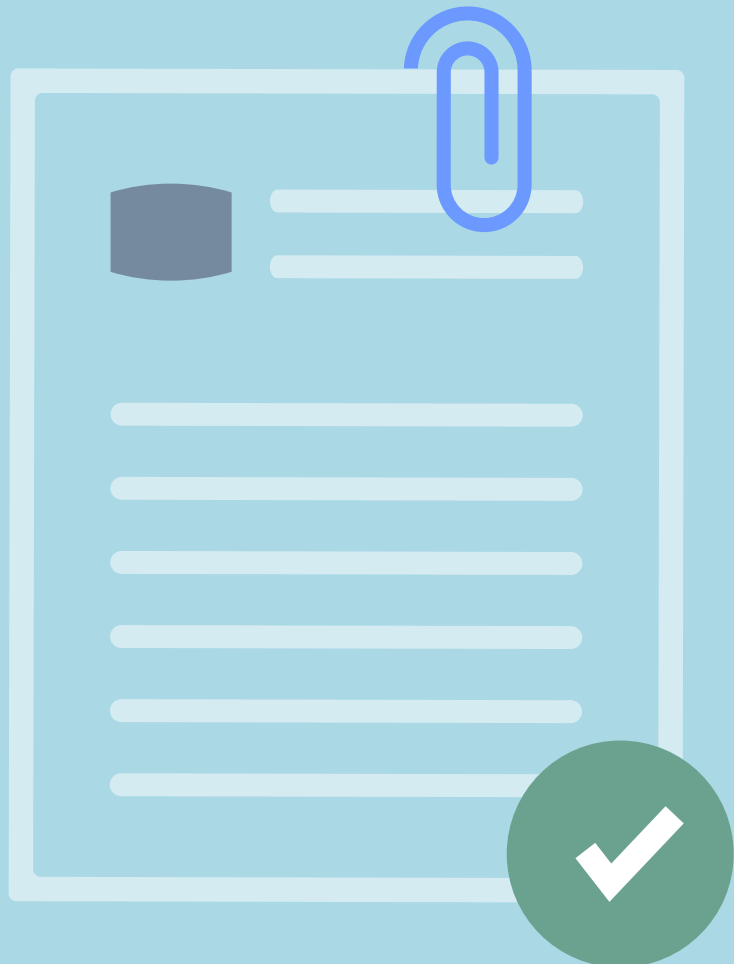
“I think now we understand the real mission of design: design is not just an act of shaping something aesthetically; design is fundamentally a problem-solving process, the result of which only takes shape afterwards. It is a great opportunity for creators to show their true abilities and potential.”



”

Preventive recommendations

We provide you the general recommendations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infections in your workplace, thus protecting your employees and office guests. These are the insights you should consider when reopening your offices and bringing back your employees to work. Simple precautions and planning can make a big difference. The following information references recommendations published by the World Health Organization^{1,2}, as well as governmental statements.



Please note that the regulations in different countries and businesses may vary.

1. [World Health Organization. \(2020\): Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19: How COVID-19 spreads, 19 March, 2020.](#)

2. [World Health Organization. \(2020\): Considerations for public health and social measures in the workplace in the context of COVID-19, 10 May, 2020.](#)

Simple ways to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in your workplace



Maintain a clean and hygienic workspace. Frequently touched surfaces (e.g. desks and tables) and objects (e.g. telephones, keyboards) need to be wiped with disinfectant regularly (every two hours).



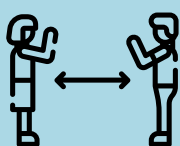
Promote regular and thorough hand-washing by displaying posters and communicating information on intranet sites. Make sure that the office has sanitizing hand rub dispensers in prominent places and they are regularly refilled. Employees and office guests must have access to places where they can wash their hands with soap and water.



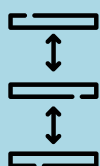
Promote good respiratory hygiene by displaying posters and communicating information on intranet sites. Make sure that face masks are available at your workplaces. Also, it is very important to ensure safe and proper use, care and disposal.



Ensure fresh air is available. The premises need to be ventilated every hour.



Make sure there would be enough space to keep a safe physical distance between people (at least 1 metre). This could be done by reducing workplace density.



Control the external access and manage queues by marking the floor and creating barriers.



Promote the message that people need to stay at home even if they have only mild symptoms of COVID-19 in your commonly used communication channels.

Furniture cleaning and care instructions

Now more than ever employers and employees are concerned with the cleanliness of their office. To help understand what are the best ways to clean the materials our furniture is made of we asked our suppliers for recommendations and compiled a list of instructions below. Our suppliers' statements are also available, thus please contact our sales team if needed.

The instructions are split into two parts – regular cleaning and disinfection. These are similar, but not the same:



Cleaning is the process of removing dust, dirt and staining from the surface.



Disinfection is intended to kill germs – micro-organisms such as bacteria, viruses and fungi – which can cause infection and spread disease.

Some methods, notably using soap and water, bleach or steam – are effective at both cleaning and disinfecting, but certain methods can only be carried out on specific material types.

Melamine and HPL *



Regular cleaning

- Due to their resistant and hygienic surfaces, melamine faced boards and high-pressure laminates are generally easy to clean; this also applies to textured surfaces.
- Clean with warm water, a clean rag or microfiber cloth, a soft sponge or soft brush. Use domestic cleaners or sponges that have no abrasive ingredients. Then wipe with fresh water, removing all traces of cleaning agent, to prevent streaks from forming. Dry the surface with clean, absorbent cloth or paper towels.

The following cleaning agents should not be used under any circumstances:

- Scouring and abrasive agents (abrasive powders, scouring pads, steel wool).
- Polish, washing powder, furniture cleaner, bleach.
- Detergents with strong acids or acidic salts.
- Steam cleaning equipment.

Disinfection

According to our supplier Egger melamine faced wood-based materials are highly resistant against the impact of staining agents. However, the variety of available disinfectants with different compositions, effects and application recommendations makes it impossible to approve their use on melamine.



All our melamine boards meet the requirements of the EN 14322 standard, which defines the requirements for melamine faced boards for interior applications. The EN14322 standard imposes specific requirements regarding the surface resistance of melamine faced wood-based materials. This includes testing the surface against various substances for resistance to stains. But even chemical-based disinfectants that are used to verify the quality of the surface successfully according to EN 14323 may cause severe damage when following the manufacturer's directions for use. Many of them are also asking for applying disinfectant covering the whole surface to allow good evaporation. Exposure to high levels of moisture for extended periods may damage the transition from the board face to the edge which can cause swelling along the edges.

Based on the above reasons and examples, we recommend testing the disinfectant on the surface of melamine in all cases. Only this approach guarantees the durability of the material in the desired application Full list of already tested chemicals can be forwarded upon request.

* including Fenix HPL

Metal



Regular cleaning

- Instructions of regular cleaning are similar to that of melamine (see above) with an exception that steam cleaning equipment can be used for metal.



Disinfection

- Ethanol, Isopropanol, rubbing alcohol, fuel type E & F, white spirit, undyed petroleum, window cleaning products can be used, but it is still advised to test on small area first.

The following cleaning agents should not be used under any circumstances:

- Alkaline detergent (pH > 9) bleach (depending on concentration).
- Sulphuric, acetic, nitric, hydrochloric, oxalic acids (depending on concentration).
- Soda potash, ammonia.
- Hydrocarbon and solvents: unleaded petrol acetate, MED MIBK toluene, xylene, trichloroethylene, nail polishes remover and similar (information chart available from supplier upon request).

Veneer



Regular cleaning

- Use slightly damp, soft, lint-free cloth. Gently wipe the surface in the direction of the wood grain to remove any surface dust. Wipe dry immediately with a new, clean, lint-free microfiber cloth in the direction of the wood grain until the surface is completely dry.
- Don't use oil or ammonia-based products to clean wood veneer. They can damage the surface or create a cloudy finish.



Disinfection

- Veneer furniture is supplied with a lacquer coating. It provides a strong layer of protection that can last for years if cared for properly. Sanitisers break down the chemical properties of lacquer causing it to soften and softer lacquer is more likely to peel or discolour and is more easily marked - including ring marks from hot and/or wet glasses and cups.
 - Sanitisers that contain abrasives, ammonia, bleach, spirit or other aggressive chemicals will all corrode the lacquer and damage the veneer surface, thus sanitizing veneer surfaces is not recommended. Regular cleaning instructions can be observed as above.
-

Plexiglas and plastic



Regular cleaning

- Wash with a mild soap or detergent and a lukewarm water solution. Use a soft, lint-free microfiber cloth or sponge and as much solution as possible. Rinse well. Dry by blotting with a damp cloth or chamois.
- Avoid any cleaning products that contain alcohol, ammonia, aromatics, and other abrasives. Alcohol can cause cracks and microfractures in the surface, while ammonia can eat into the surface and leave it looking cloudy. Also do not use traditional glass cleaners, halogens, and ketones.



Disinfection

- Disinfection can be done with products used in clinical or hospital environments, classified as a medical surgical or medical device (e.g. Amuchina®, Peroxide hydrogen 10 vol., in their correct dilution) as well as other sanitizing products for domestic use but not aggressive products. It is advisable to test in a hidden zone. Full list of chemicals and their allowed concentrations can be forwarded upon request.

Fabric and mesh



Regular cleaning

- Vacuum your fabrics and meshes regularly to prevent buildup of dust and dirt on the fabric surface.
- Get to spills and stains quickly. Mop up the excess liquid using kitchen roll or a damp cloth. Then clean using upholstery shampoo, detergent or handwash.
- Always use a branded upholstery shampoo. Alternatively, both wool and polyester can be dry cleaned.
- Test the cleaning solution first on a hidden surface and check for fading or discoloration before using on full product.



Disinfection

- So far evidence suggests that textiles are not seen as a major carrier of the virus, as it does not survive as well on soft surfaces, such as fabrics, as it does on frequently touched hard surfaces such as plastics, laminates, metal and glass. On textiles, viruses can get trapped, lose water and therefore have reduced likelihood of spreading.
- Our supplier Gabriel does not recommend standard antibacterial and anti-viral agents for upholstery fabrics. The effects of the agents are uncertain, and they are likely to offer no more than a false sense of security.



- However, if considered needed polyester fabric can be sprayed with 70 % of ethyl alcohol. This under normal conditions should not affect the colour and longevity of polyester fabrics and meshes.
- On the other hand, disinfecting wool fabrics with ethanol will strip the wool of lanolin and may cause colour changes and reduce the lifetime of the fabric. This method should only be applied if there are no other alternatives.
- Never apply bleach, ammonia, alkali or strong acids to wool upholstery.

Artificial Leather



Regular cleaning

- Clean routinely with a white microfiber cloth, slightly moistened with clean water and dry well the surface.
- Do not use solvent, bleach, detergent with chloride or any other chemical cleaners. As well as, do not use steam equipment to clean the material.



Disinfection

- It is possible to clean NARBUTAS artificial leather with alcohol-based cleaners.

Inspirations for a safe office

Ensuring the wellbeing of employees is always the most important responsibility of companies, especially now when reopening the offices. We would like to suggest to you some configurations for the different office spaces which are adapted to the current situation.



INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE

- JAZZ Silent Box acoustic furniture
- ACTIVE sit-stand desk
- WIND visitor chair



Easily cleanable
plastic frame
and mesh

Space divider
ensures a separated
workplace

Seat upholstered
with easy to clean
leather look

Easily cleanable
surface



- MOON task chair
- MY SPACE Desking acoustic screens

INDIVIDUAL WORKPLACE

- SILENT ROOM L
- NOVA U desk
- WIND visitor chair
- CHOICE cabinet



Easily cleanable
surface


Seat upholstered
with easy to clean
leather look

Easily cleanable
plastic frame
and mesh

Separate room in a room
for less exposure and
improved concentration

GROUP WORKPLACE

- EASY sit-stand desks
- DESK 760 desk screens
- WIND task chairs
- CHOICE cabinets
- FREE STANDING acoustic screens
- Custom-made BOXI plant box

Hands-free height adjustment via smartphone	A back-to-back seating arrangement to avoid face-to-face communication	Screens create barriers between people to prevent from cough/sneeze
		
Chair upholstered with easy to clean leather look	Cabinets create a higher boundary between users	Easily cleanable desk and storage surface

GROUP WORKPLACE

- EASY sit-stand desk
- DESK 760 desk screens
- DIVA task chairs
- BOXI towers
- FREE STANDING acoustic screens

Planter box creates
a higher boundary and
plants promote cleaner air

Desk screens divide space between users,
serve as a barrier from cough/sneeze, especially
important for face-to-face seating arrangement

Movable free-standing
screens divide space and
ensure less exposure



Easily cleanable
plastic frame
and mesh

Seat upholstered
with easy to clean
leather look

Hands-free height
adjustment via
smartphone

Easily cleanable
surfaces

GROUP WORKPLACE

- MOTION bench desking
- Custom-made Plexiglas desk screens
- Custom-made FREE STANDING screens
- EVA.II task chairs

Easy to clean high Plexiglas desk screens create a see-through barrier from cough/sneeze and allow team members to communicate freely

Free-standing screens divide space and ensure less exposure, especially in high traffic areas



Easily cleanable plastic frame and mesh

Seat upholstered with easy to clean leather look

Hands-free height adjustment via smartphone

Easily cleanable surfaces

GROUP WORKPLACE

- MY SPACE Desking acoustic screens
- FREE STANDING screens
- MOON task chairs

Movable free-standing screens divide space and ensure less exposure

Desk screens divide space between users, serve as a barrier from cough/sneeze, especially important for face-to-face seating arrangement



Chair upholstered with easy to clean leather look

Easily cleanable surface

Screens create an additional boundary and ensure less exposure

GROUP WORKPLACE

- ACTIVE sit-stand desks
- Custom-made screens with power fence spine
- Custom-made cabinets
- WIND task chairs

Desking configuration and orientation reduces face-to-face communication

Easy to clean Plexiglas part creates a see-through barrier from cough/sneeze, yet allows team members to see each other and communicate freely

Space divider for less exposure



Easily cleanable surfaces

Chair upholstered with easy to clean leather look

Screens create an additional boundary and ensure less exposure

GROUP WORKPLACE

- ACTIVE sit-stand desks
- Custom-made screens with power fence spine
- Custom-made cabinets
- WIND task chairs
- GIRO poufs

Easily cleanable
surfaces



Chairs and poufs are
upholstered with easy
to clean leather look

COLLABORATION AREA

- JAZZ acoustic screens
- JAZZ poufs
- NOVA Wood occasional tables
- GIRO poufs
- FREE STANDING acoustic screens



Easily cleanable
surface

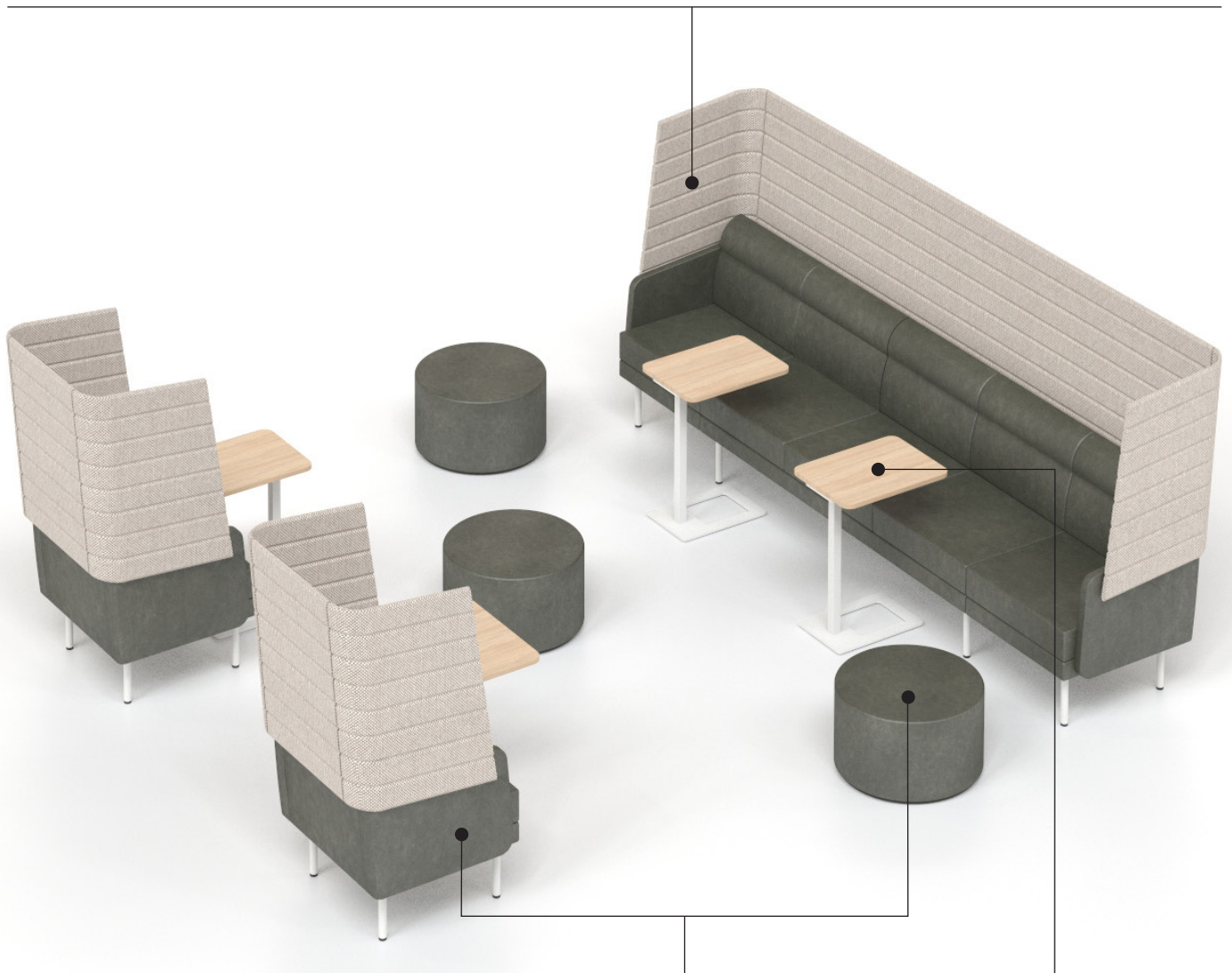
Poufs upholstered
with easy to clean
leather look

Movable free-standing screens divide
space and ensure less exposure,
especially in high traffic areas

COLLABORATION AREA

- ARCIPELAGO lounge seating
- GIRO poufs
- MOBI occasional tables

Lounge seating with high-back
for less exposure



Poufs and lounge seating
upholstered with easy to
clean leather look

Easily cleanable surface

RECEPTION & WAITING AREA

- Custom-made DOMINO reception
- WIND task chairs
- ARCIPELAGO lounge seating
- TWIST&SIT lounge chair
- FREE STANDING acoustic screens
- NOVA Wood occasional table

Chair upholstered with easy to clean leather look

Free-standing screens divide space and ensure less exposure, especially in high traffic areas



Easy to clean Plexiglas desk screens create a see-through barrier from cough/sneeze and allow receptionists to see visitors, also each other, and communicate freely.

Easily cleanable surfaces

CHILL-OUT AND EATING AREA

- MY SPACE acoustic panels
- FREE STANDING acoustic screens
- TWIST&SIT lounge chairs
- GIRO poufs
- JAZZ poufs
- NOVA Wood occasional tables



CHILL-OUT AND EATING AREA

- FREE STANDING acoustic screens
- SITO occasional tables
- WAIT visitor chairs



Movable free-standing screens divide space and ensure less exposure

Easily cleanable surface

Chairs are made from easy to clean plastic

CHILL-OUT AND EATING AREA

- FREE STANDING acoustic screen
- NOVA Wood high table
- MOON Wood high chairs
- NOVA Wood occasional table
- TWIST&SIT lounge chairs
- GIRO poufs



Easily cleanable
surfaces

Free-standing screens divide
space and ensure less exposure,
especially in high traffic areas

Pouf and lounge chairs
upholstered with easy
to clean leather look

Home office ideas

Working from home concept is thriving at this time. We would like to share some ideas of how to create a comfortable home office depending on your needs and style choice.



COMBINATION FOR SEPARATE WORK ROOM

- MOTION sit-stand desk
- NORTH CAPE executive chair
- NOVA EXECUTIVE cabinet
- ARCIPELAGO lounge seating



COMBINATION WITH SIT-STAND DESK

- ACTIVE sit-stand desk
- WIND task chair
- OPTIMA pedestal
- Felt-lined metal drawer



COMBINATION WITH FIXED HEIGHT TABLE

- NOVA Wood desk
- TWIST&SIT armchair
- TWIST&SIT lounge chair



COMBINATION WITH FIXED HEIGHT TABLE

- AIR desk
- NORTH CAPE task chair
- NOVA EXECUTIVE cabinet



COMBINATION WITH HIGH TABLE

- FREE STANDING acoustic screen
- NOVA Wood high table
- WIND high swivel chair



Let's talk

We are here for you in this difficult time. It doesn't matter if your workplace is in an office or at home, we can help you make well-thought-out decisions and choose the right furniture for your spaces. Experienced NARBUTAS team can offer you custom-made solutions and adapt to your current office arrangements.

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