

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the full findings of the world's largest four-day working week trial to date, comprising 61 companies and around 2,900 workers, that took place in the UK from June to December 2022.

- » The design of the trial involved two months of preparation for participants, with workshops, coaching, mentoring and peer support, drawing on the experience of companies who had already moved to a shorter working week, as well as leading research and consultancy organisations.
- » Companies, which included a range of organisations from diverse sectors and sizes, were not required to rigidly deploy one particular type of working time reduction or four-day week, so long as pay was maintained at 100% and employees had a 'meaningful' reduction in work time.
- » Resisting the idea that the four-day week must be 'one-size-fits-all', each company designed a policy tailored to its particular industry, organisational challenges, departmental structures and work culture. A range of four-day weeks were therefore developed, from classic 'Friday off' models, to 'staggered', 'decentralised', 'annualised', and 'conditional' structures.

- » The report results draw on administrative data from companies, survey data from employees, alongside a range of interviews conducted over the pilot period, providing measurement points at the beginning, middle and end of the trial.
- » The trial was a resounding success. Of the 61 companies that participated, 56 are continuing with the four-day week (92%), with 18 confirming the policy is a permanent change.
- » Some of the most extensive benefits of shorter working hours were found in employees' well-being. 'Before and after' data shows that 39% of employees were less stressed, and 71% had reduced levels of burnout at the end of the trial. Likewise, levels of anxiety, fatigue and sleep issues decreased, while mental and physical health both improved.
- » Measures of work-life balance also improved across the trial period. Employees also found it easier to balance their work with both family and social commitments - for 54%, it was easier to balance work with household jobs - and employees were also more satisfied with their household finances, relationships and how their time was being managed.
- » 60% of employees found an increased ability to combine paid work with care responsibilities, and 62% reported it easier to combine work with social life.

- » However, other key business metrics also showed signs of positive effects from shorter working hours. Companies' revenue, for instance, stayed broadly the same over the trial period, rising by 1.4% on average, weighted by company size, across respondent organisations. When compared to a similar period from previous years, organisations reported revenue increases of 35% on average - which indicates healthy growth during this period of working time reduction.
- » The number of staff leaving participating companies decreased significantly, dropping by 57% over the trial period.
- » For many, the positive effects of a four-day week were worth more than their weight in money. 15% of employees said that no amount of money would induce them to accept a five-day schedule over the four-day week to which they were now accustomed.