

‘FOUR-DAY WEEK’ PILOT IS PROVING VERY POPULAR

New research has revealed that companies who gave their staff an extra day off per week, with no reduction in pay, as part of the new Four-Day Week pilot programme experienced increased revenue alongside reduced absenteeism and resignations, while workers felt less stressed and burnt out and reported higher rates of life satisfaction.

Findings from the Four-Day Week pilot scheme have also shown significant declines in the duration and frequency of commuting, plus other positive environmental outcomes. None of the participating organisations are returning to a five-day week.

This comes after more than 30 companies and almost 1,000 employees in countries including Ireland, the USA and Australia concluded a six-month four-day week pilot programme, co-ordinated by the non-profit organisation 4 Day Week Global (4DWG).

Companies rated the trial 9 out of 10, expressing extreme satisfaction with their overall productivity and performance. Revenue increased by more than a percentage point each month, with a total rise of 8% during the trial. When compared to the same six months in 2021, it rose by 38% for 2022.

Employees also rated the pilot highly, with 97% saying they want to continue on a four-day week. When asked about the monetary value of their extra day off, 70% said their next job would need to offer between 10 to 50% more pay for them to go back to a five-day schedule, with over one in ten saying no amount of money could make them go back.

POSITIVE HEALTH OUTCOMES

The health and well-being of participants also improved, as Associate Professor Wen Fan of Boston College explains. “A wide range of well-being metrics showed significant improvement, including stress levels, burnout, fatigue and work-family conflict. Physical and mental health also improved, alongside satisfaction across multiple domains of life which may be linked to people getting better sleep and more exercise,” she said.

Lead researcher Prof Juliet Schor from Boston College also noted an important outcome. “We were encouraged that participants did not experience an increase in the intensity of work. This suggests that the work re-organisation strategy succeeded, while performance was not achieved via speedup, which is neither sustainable nor desirable,” Prof Schor added.

Speaking about their experience on the trial, pilot participant Jon Leland, Chief Strategy Officer at US crowd-funding platform Kickstarter, said, “The four-day week has been transformative for our business and our people. Staff are more focused, more engaged and more dedicated, helping us hit our goals better than before.”



Reflecting on the journey so far, 4DWG campaign co-founder Charlotte Lockhart believes this is only the beginning.

“Greater employee retention and faster hiring has been surprisingly powerful in driving improved business outcomes too. We’re achieving more as an organization, while giving people time to start new creative projects, rest, and be with their families. It’s a true win-win.”

PLANS TO EXPAND RESEARCH

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“When co-founder Andrew Barnes and I first witnessed the benefits of the four-day week in 2018, we knew we had to share our learnings.

“The results in this report further prove what we already know, and we look forward to expanding this research over the coming months, as other organisations from a range of industries and economies make the switch to reduced-hour, output-focused working. Change is imminent and I commend all involved in this trial for making history happen,” she said.

For the full report’s findings visit www.4dayweek.com/us-ireland-results



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