

The Four-Day Workweek: What Trials Show

Most trials pair about 32 hours across four days with no loss of pay. Studies mostly report higher productivity and lower stress, though experts doubt it transfers easily to blue collar work.

100-80-100

Pilot results

Work-life balance

● Built for image-led stories, dense insights, and motion-first reveals.

SPOTLIGHT

THIS WEEK

Secondary image for product, people, or process context.

Visual anchor for the deck. Use this frame to establish tone, environment, and momentum.

Third perspective to keep the slide cinematic and content-rich.

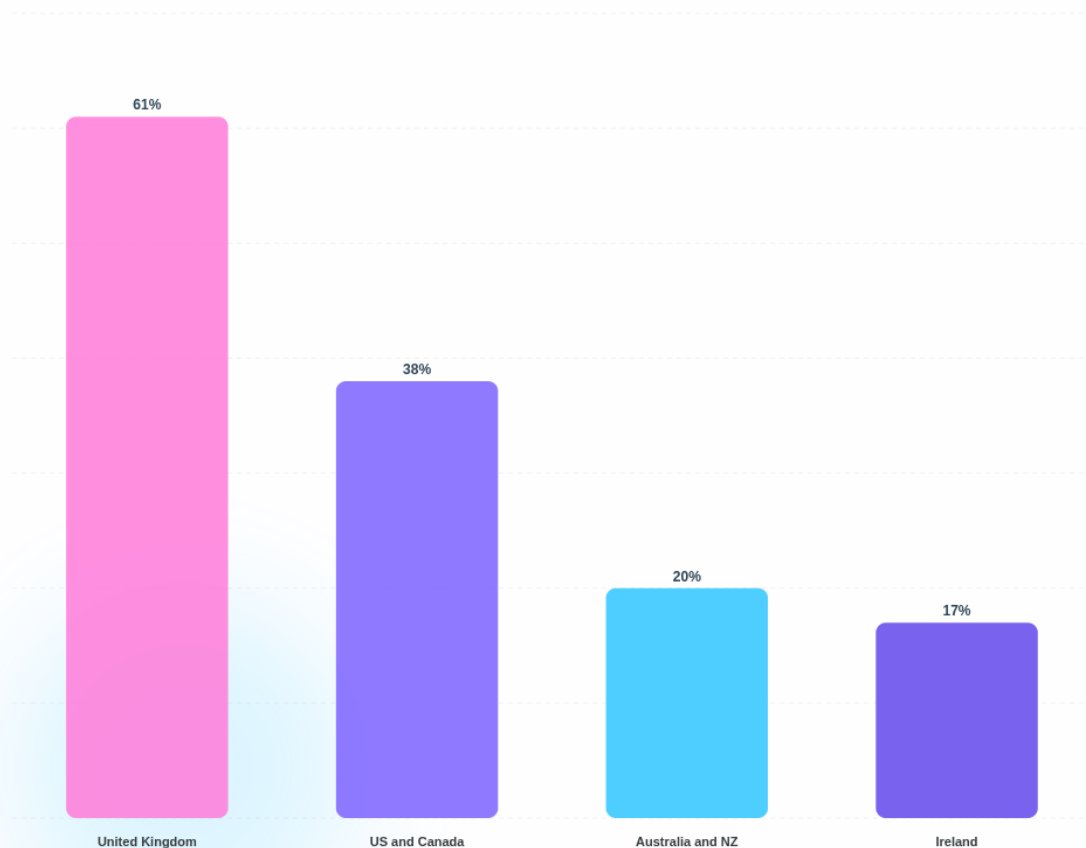


Made with MagicSlides

4 Day Week Global's six-month pilots

Participating companies

2022 TO 2023



Companies taking part, by region, as listed in the article.

Core Analysis

Largest trial

The UK pilot covered around 2,900 employees on 100% pay for 80% of hours.

Wide mix

Fish and chip shops, charities, software developers and recruiters took part.

Who studied it

Autonomy with researchers from Cambridge, Oxford and Boston College.



A century of shorter-week promises

The five-day week is itself a result of early 1900s union advocacy.



1930

Keynes predicts 15 hours

He expected productivity to allow a 15-hour week within a couple of generations.



1933

US 30-hour bill fails

Opposed by big business, it collapsed during the Great Depression.



1956

Nixon's four-day promise

The US Vice President promised a four-day week in the not-too-distant future.



2020s

Post-pandemic revival

Burnout concerns renew interest, and the 2023 UAW strike pushed for 32 hours.

Interest returned **after COVID-19** raised concerns over burnout and flexibility.



Selected trials and what they reported

Results come from the trials cited in the article.
Designs differ, so compare with care.

TRIAL	SETUP	REPORTED RESULT	CAVEAT
Iceland, 2015–2019	2,500 workers to 35–36 hours	Well-being up, productivity same or better	Fewer hours, not four days
Microsoft Japan, 2019	Fridays off, 30-minute meetings	Sales per employee up 40%	One summer trial
Perpetual Guardian, 2018	240+ staff, full pay	Productivity up, stress down	Some felt deadline pressure
Utah, 2008–2011	Four 10-hour days	Aimed at lower operating costs	Ended by the legislature

Iceland's result led to **86% of wage workers** later getting permanent hour reductions.



MODELS

Not every four-day week is the same

Advocates mostly favor a fixed 32-hour week. Some firms instead compress the usual 40 hours, which changes what workers actually gain.

100-80-100

100% pay for 80% of the time, with at least 100% productivity.

4/10

40 hours spread over four 10-hour days.

9/80

A four-day week alternates with a five-day week.

Juliet Schor's study of 200+ companies and 8,000 employees found gains in all 20 well-being metrics.



Made with MagicSlides

What the evidence supports, and what it does not

Well-being

Lower stress and burnout reported across most studies.

Productivity

Gains mainly come from cutting wasted work time.

Four-day week

Blue collar limits

Little wasted time means faster work and more risk.

Costs

Microsoft Japan cut electricity costs by 23%.