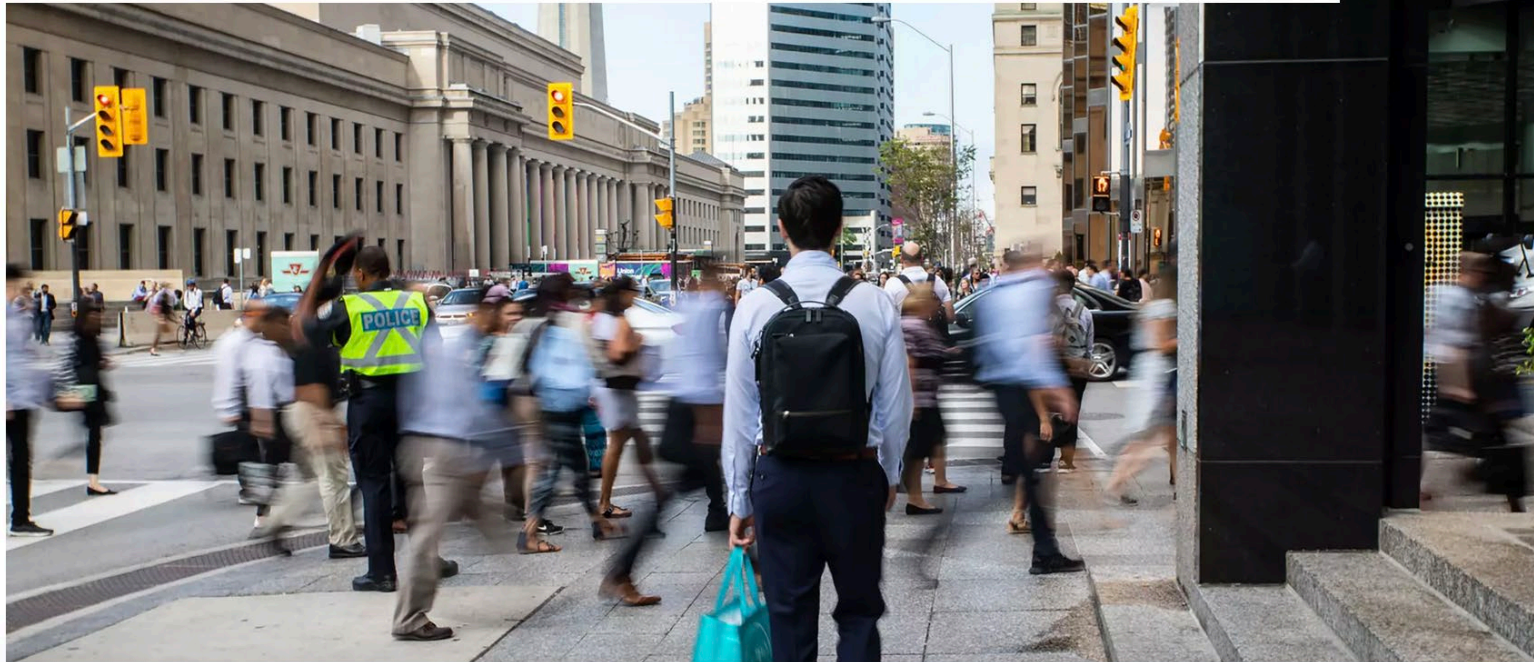


Working Hard? Or Hardly Working?

The Impact of Remote, Hybrid and Compressed Work in
the Public Sector

Zac Spicer
School of Public Policy and Administration
York University

Ontario to mandate all businesses switch to 4 day-work week starting in 2023

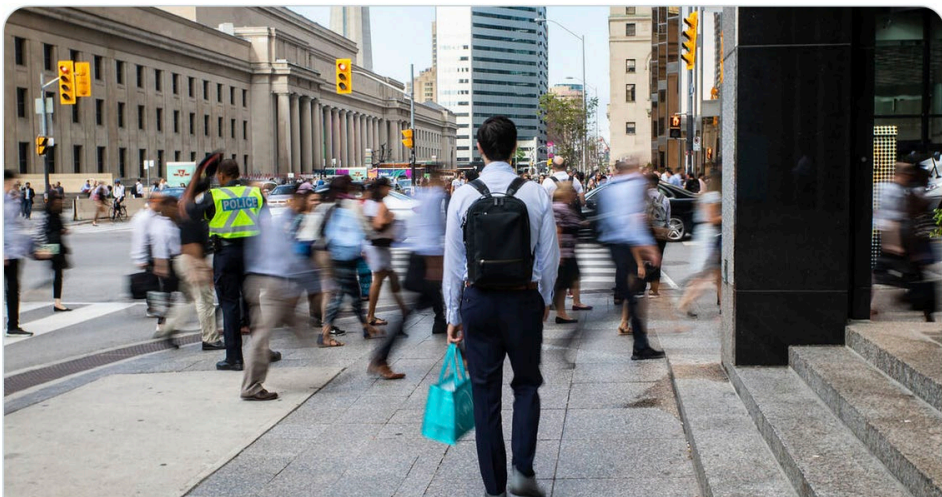




blogTO
@blogTO

...

Ontario to mandate all businesses switch to 4 day-work week starting in 2023 bit.ly/3uSTVtU #Ontario #ONpoli



blogto.com

Ontario to mandate all businesses switch to 4 day-work week starting in 2023
The Ontario government is gearing up to introduce new workplace legislation on Friday afternoon that, if passed, would eventually turn every weeken...



Evan @Cooking_Math · Apr 1

...

Replying to @blogTO

Lol Ive been burning out for two years and thought my life was going to significantly improve for a second but it's not. Good one guys 😂

1

↻

83

↑



P. @shadesofpeppa · Apr 1

...

Replying to @blogTO

This is the worst April Fools joke ever.

1

↻ 2

240

↑



Krista Kais-Prial @kkaisprial · Apr 1

...

Replying to @blogTO

I don't think anyone needs this joke right now! Everyone's tired. No one needs to be taunted 😞

💬

↻ 2

22

↑



Matt @matttomic · Apr 1

...

Replying to @blogTO

yeah man this sucks, what exactly is the "joke" here

💬

↻

31

↑



Erika Hoffman @echo_works · Apr 1

...

Replying to @blogTO

As there are many instances where this works successfully, this made me happy and then very sad. Why joke about this when people are already running on midnight oil? Sigh.

💬

↻


17

↑

Is remote work a perk or a right? Depends who you ask



Federal worker strike entering 11th day on Saturday

 [Guy Quenneville](#) · CBC News · Posted: Apr 29, 2023 4:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: April 29



90%

OF OUR MEMBERS

WANT

TO CONTINUE WORKING REMOTELY AFTER THE PANDEMIC.



Work in the public sector is changing.

Is it changing for the better?

1. Compressed Work Weeks
2. Hybrid and Remote Work

What are the organizational impacts of new modes of work?

What are the impacts on the productivity and wellness of public servants?



Robert Benzie  @robertbenzie · Apr 1



FACT CHECK: A local website report that @ONgov would legislate a four-day work week is apparently an April Fool's joke.

[#onpoli](#)

[#onlab](#)



10



22



60





Steven Del Duca ✓ @StevenDelDuca · Apr 1



Hey @blogTO, four-day work weeks won't be an April Fool's joke if you vote @OntLiberal to get rid of Doug Ford on June 2. #onpoli



blogTO ✓ @blogTO · Apr 1

Ontario to mandate all businesses switch to 4 day-work week starting in 2023 bit.ly/3uSTVtU #Ontario #ONpoli

[Show this thread](#)



144



275



1,169



Editor's Note

April 1, 2022, 12:01 p.m.: April Fools! Sorry for tricking you, folks. To our knowledge, Ontario's current provincial government is not considering a four day-work week mandate. The story above was written as a joke. If you really want this to happen, talk to your employer or local government official or maybe just vote Liberal in the next provincial election on June 2 since **this is something they have said they'll make happen.**

POLITICS

Ontario Liberals to explore 4-day workweek if elected in 2022

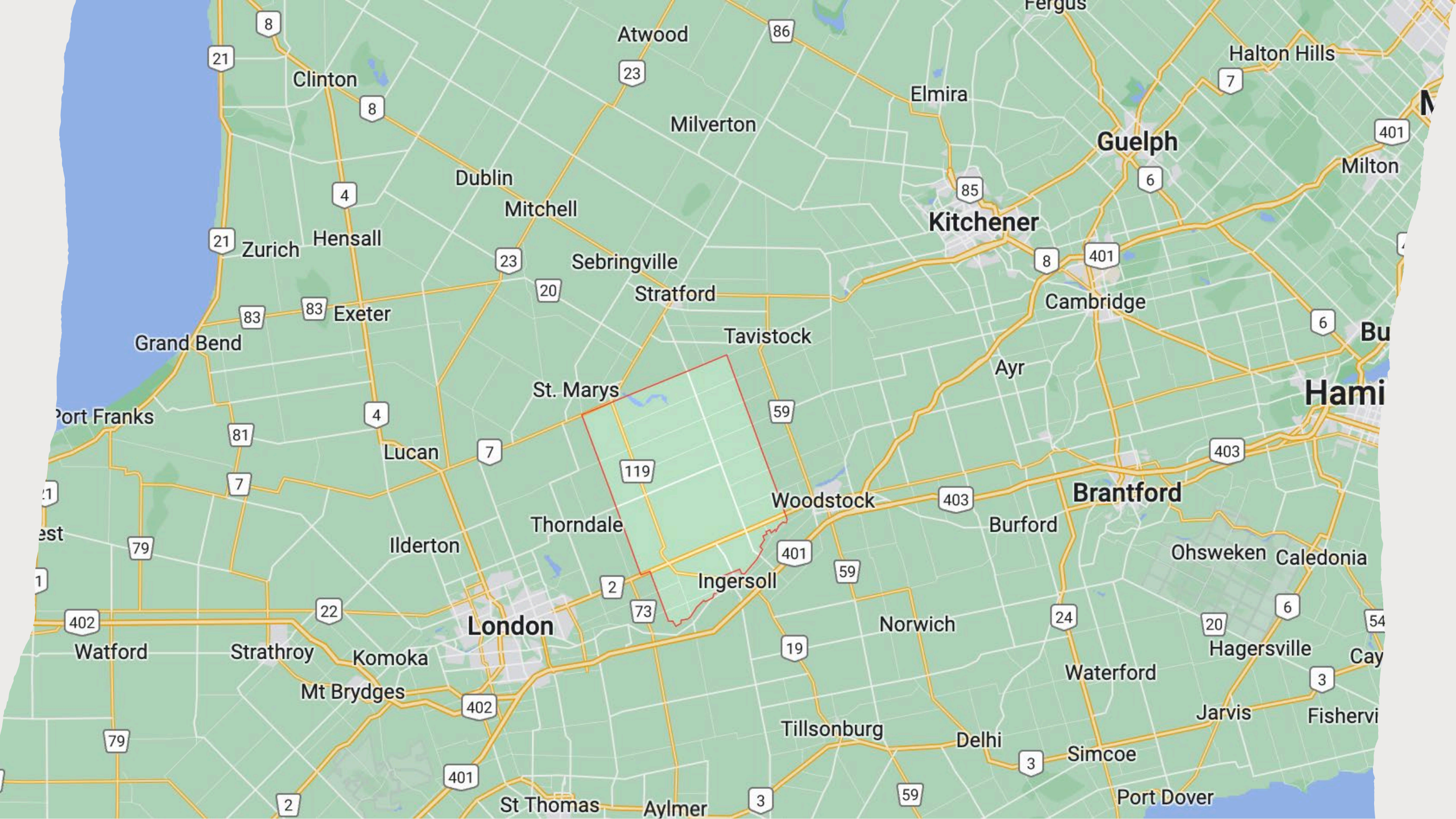


By [Don Mitchell](#) • Global News

Posted October 18, 2021 10:58 am · Updated October 20, 2021 8:48 am







Context - Pilot

- Full-time workforce of 31 employees
- Alternate team work schedule
 - Team A: Monday to Thursday, 8am – 5pm
 - Team B: Tuesday to Friday, 8am – 5pm
- Work week consists of 35 hours; 30 min lunch break, elimination of one 15 minute break

Context – Drivers for Pilot

- Increase in employee satisfaction
- Better work-life balance
- Increase in recruitment and retention

Context - Compressed Work Week

- Benefits

- Improved work-life balance & more time for leisure activities (Amendola et al. 2011)
- Higher job satisfaction (Stone et al. 2006)
- Decreases in paid overtime (Facer and Wadsworth 2010)
- Reductions in turnover and richer recruitment pools (Vega and Gilbert 1997)

- Challenges

- Working longer hours (Vega and Gilbert 1997)
- No effect on productivity (Baltes et al. 1999; Campolo et al. 1998)
- Increased levels of fatigue and decreasing levels of cognitive performance as shift length increases (Rosa and Colligon 1992)
- Problems with scheduling, inadequate supervision and employees moonlighting (Vega and Gilbert 1997)

Context - Compressed Work Week

- Political considerations
 - Negative perceptions about public servant job performance, efficiency and levels of compensation (Pandy et al 2007; Marvel 2016)

Context – Survey

- Pre-Pilot Survey
 - Distributed on August 24, 2020; remained open for three weeks
 - Received 24 responses
- Post-Pilot Survey
 - Launched on October 6, 2021; remained open for three weeks
 - Received 25 responses

Information on Pilot Project

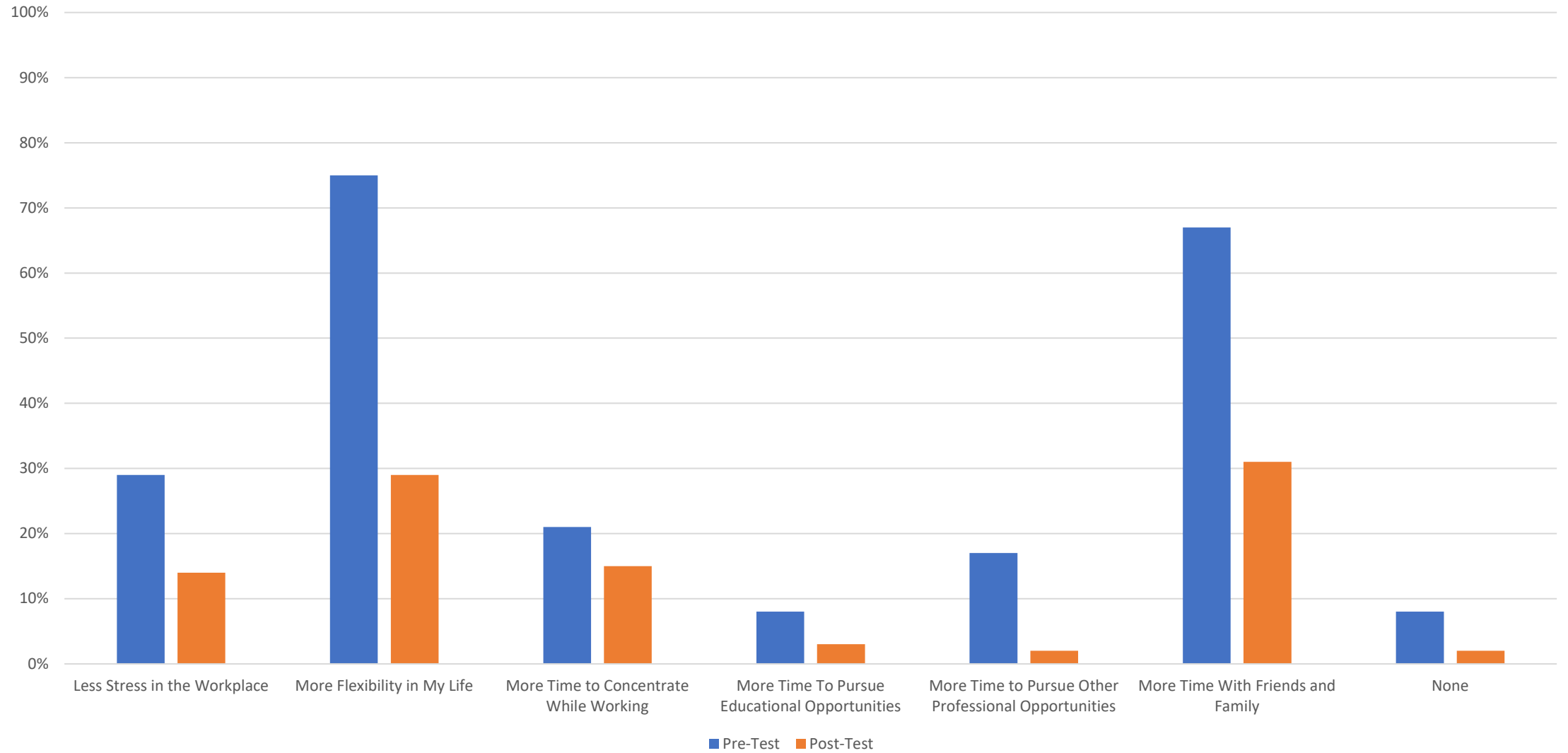
- Most (62.5%) indicated they had received enough information about the pilot project prior to initiation and were satisfied with what they received
- In the post-pilot survey, most (57.6%) again indicated they received enough information about the pilot; 26.9% indicated they did not receive enough information prior to launch
- 79% of respondents to the pre-test indicated they planned to participate

- Which aspects were respondents most concerned about prior to the start of the pilot?
 - 52%: Working Longer Hours Each Day
 - 19%: Interruptions to Work Flow
 - 14%: Being Unable to Finish All Work
 - 14%: Fewer Indirect Interactions with Supervisors and Subordinates
- 43% indicated they had no concerns at all

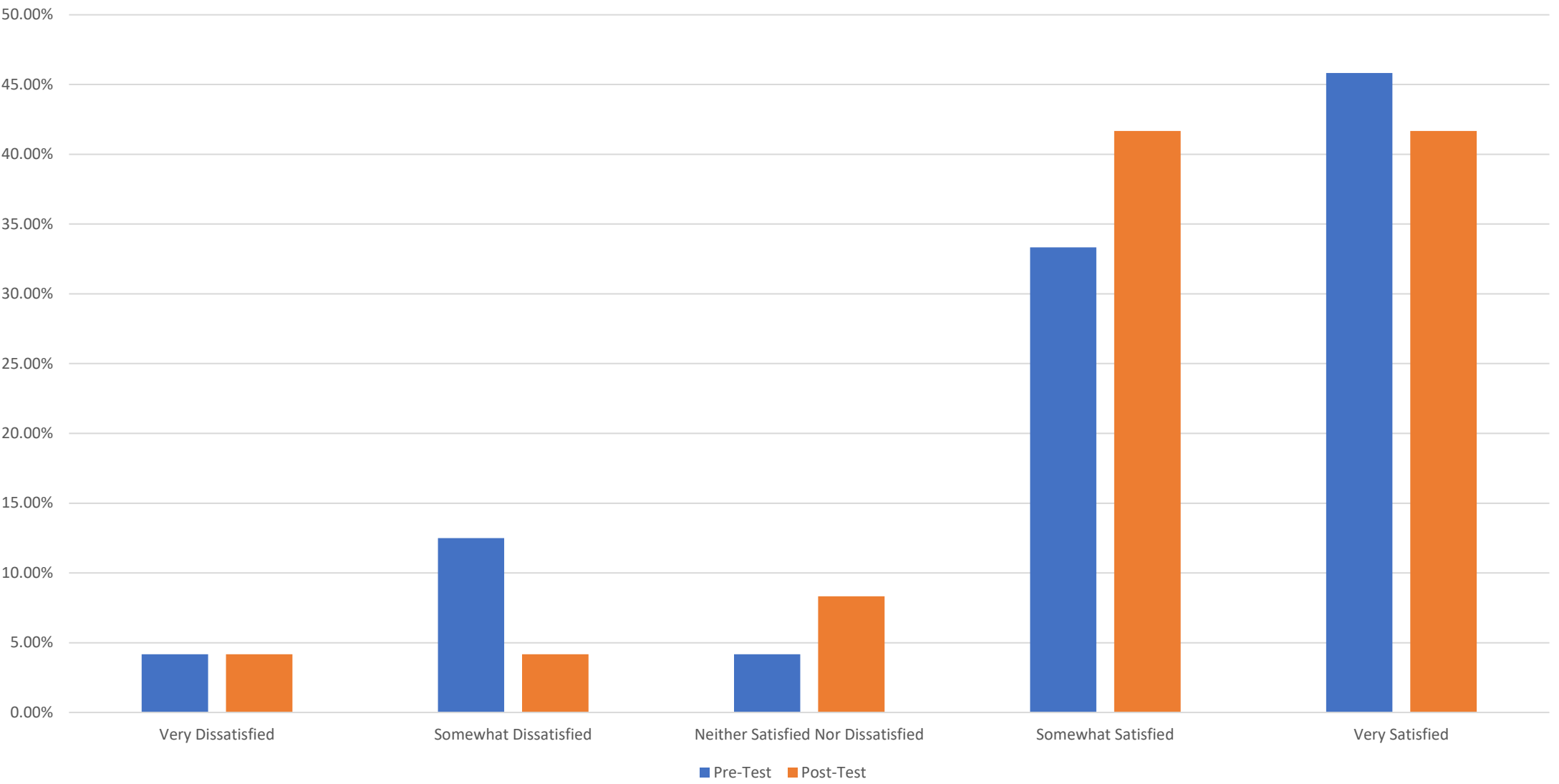
Statement	Pre-Test	Post-Test
I am proud to work for Zorra Township	4.42	4.29
I feel like I am part of a team in Zorra Township	4.04	3.92
I have a good work-life balance	3.96	4.17
I understand the expectations of my position	4.33	4.30
I feel respected by my colleagues and supervisors	3.92	3.74
My colleagues and I work well together	4.04	4.13
I like serving the residents of Zorra Township	4.54	4.39
I am fairly compensated for the work I do	3.96	3.65
I feel secure in my employment	4.29	4.17
I am enthusiastic about coming to work	3.92	4.17
I provide a comfortable life for myself and my family	4.04	4.00

Statement	Pre-Test	Post-Test
Communication from management is clear	3.13	3.00
I am able to relax and unwind when not working	3.83	3.74
I understand the goals of my organization well	3.92	3.70
Residents are generally satisfied with the work myself and my colleagues perform	3.83	3.71
I have adequate opportunity to advance within the organization	3.08	3.21
I feel my career goals are supported by senior management	3.54	3.43
I feel appreciated for the work I do	3.75	3.61

Which Aspects of a Compressed Work Week Do You Find Most Attractive?



Overall, How Satisfied Are You as an Employee of Zorra Township?



- Which aspects did you like least about the compressed work week pilot?
 - 12.5%: Working longer days
 - 12.5%: Interrupted workflow
 - 9.38%: Fewer direct interactions with supervisors or subordinates
- 34% indicated they had no concerns
- 73% indicated that they would continue to participate in the compressed work week schedule despite any concerns
- Biggest concerns revolve around working longer hours each day, which impacts ability to find child care or manage responsibilities at home
- Flexibility in opting-in/out of pilot is key in overcoming these problems

Results

- Respondents were satisfied with their employment with Zorra prior to pilot; consistent through and after pilot
- Key for many respondents is the flexibility in managing their work/life balance
 - Additional day off allowed for more leisure/family activities; lower reported burnout
 - Allowed for family care/doctors/dentist appointments

Results

- Did not detect many of the negative aspects of compressed work week identified in literature
 - No reports of additional fatigue, staffing challenges, outside work
- Township office also open an additional 5 hours per week (12.5% extra)
- Longer hours creased challenges finding child care
- Critical success factor: organizational scale

Remote and Hybrid Work

- Benefits

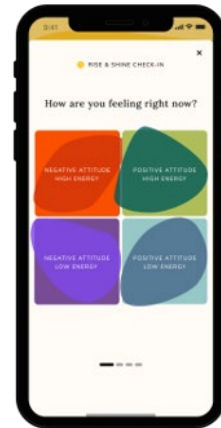
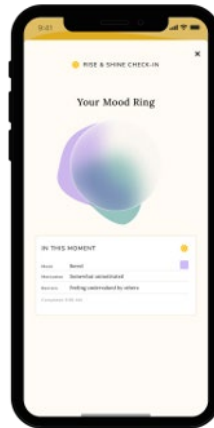
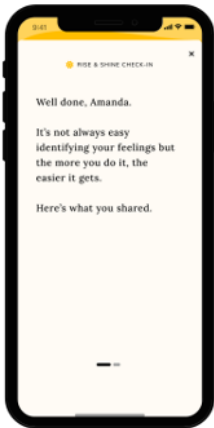
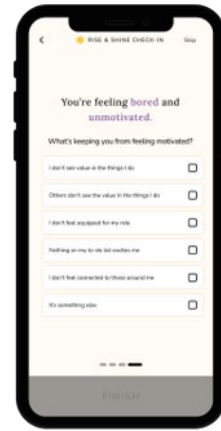
- Some productivity gains by maximizing minutes worked per shift (Bloom et al. 2015)
- Greater levels of job satisfaction and lower attrition levels (Fonner and Rolonoff 2010)
- Greater work-life balance (Troup and Rose 2012)

- Challenges

- Challenging to build cohesive workplace culture (Popovici and Popovici 2020)
- Difficulty tracking workflow (Peters et al. 2016)
- Challenges assessing training opportunities (Leslie et al. 2012)
- Social isolation and mental health challenges (Charlampoo et al. 2019; Vargain-Llave et al. 2020)
- Irregular working hours (Beauregard and Basile 2016)

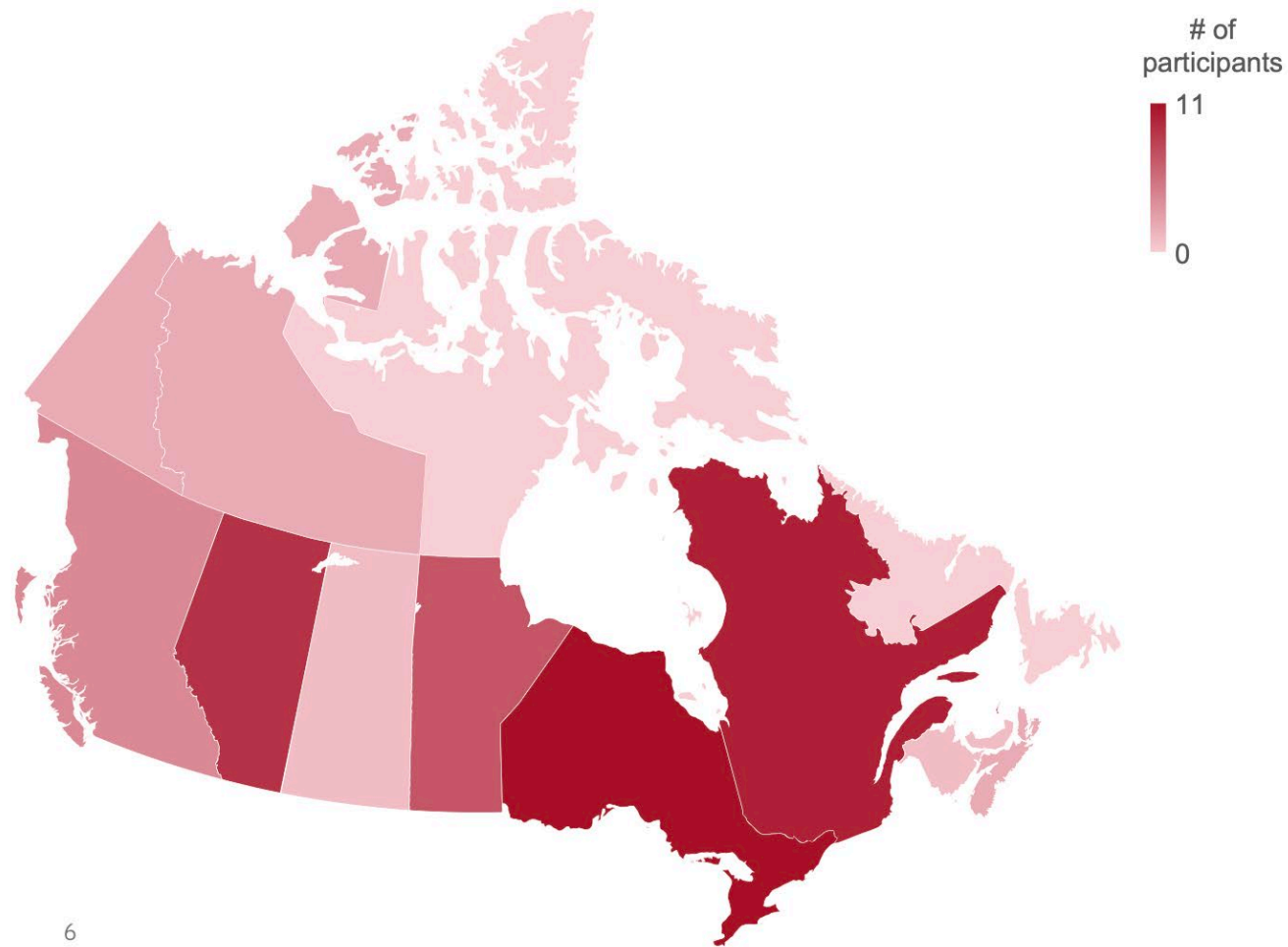


Up Being

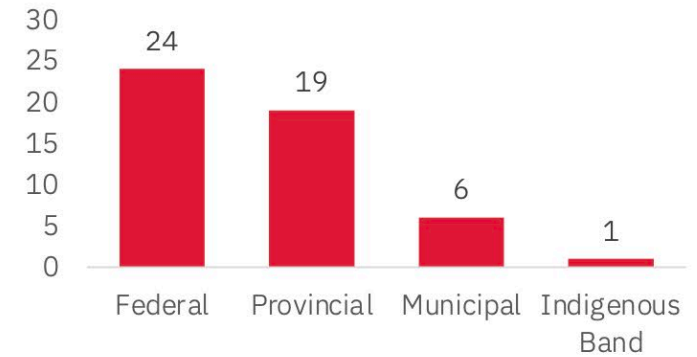


Participant information

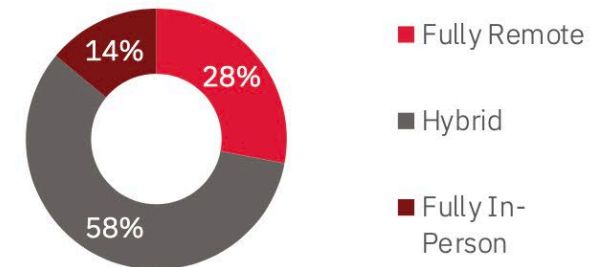
Location



Government



Work environment



Statement	Mean
I am satisfied with the work I do as a public servant	1.72
I am able to get the work done I need to throughout the day	2.16
I feel that I have ample growth opportunities with my current employer	2.24
I feel good being able to serve the public	1.52
I often feel stress throughout the work day	2.56
I have ample opportunity to connect with my colleagues	2.02
I feel lonely throughout my work day	3.70
I am currently seeking other employment	3.52

”Not many others in the office when I’m there”

“...working in an empty office while your co-workers are at home defeats the purpose of coming into the office”

”The work from home policy is arbitrary”

”I live close to the office so everyone expects me to come in often”

”I have to bring docs and equipment back and forth [between home and office]”

“I am the only one based from my team in my city so its an isolating experience”

”There’s an expectation that I work overtime all the time”

“The WFH policies keep changing. I don’t know if I’ll stay”

“I am forced into the office on specific days rather than having flexibility in my schedule”

“It feels isolating and lonely sometimes without coworkers and no meetups”

“Lack of collaboration”

”Our policy is too rigid...had to coordinate with who is in the office”

Initial Results

- 505 working days across group; 1434 check-ins completed
- 401 office check-ins; 1033 remote check-ins

Work From Home	Work From Office
Higher Energy	Higher Motivation Scores
Better Reported Attitude	Increased Productivity

- Wellbeing scores were even between both environments
- Younger and older workers tend to struggle with loneliness and social isolation
- Younger workers tend to struggle with adequate WFH facilities

Optimizing the Future of Work

- People appreciate flexibility
- Desire to take more control over work requirements
- The office is not only a key site for collaboration, but also social collision
- Workers also see a benefit to the office, but one that is used on their terms
- Not everyone can take part, which can lead to tension
- New work arrangements can result in new service benefits
- Work day shouldn't "bleed"; need clear boundaries
- Communication and social interaction are important for managers