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Abstract

The four-day workweek (4DWW) has emerged as a prominent policy proposal in contemporary debates on the future of work, productivity and employee well-being. Despite growing interest, empirical evidence on workers' preferences for the 4DWW remains limited, particularly regarding how the costs of reduced working time should be shared between employers and employees. Existing research largely assumes that employers will bear these costs in full, leaving unresolved the crucial question of what contribution-level workers are willing to accept.

This study addresses that gap by providing systematic evidence on employees' willingness to support different cost-sharing arrangements for a 4DWW in the German labor market. Drawing on an early 2024 vignette-based survey of 379 employees, respondents chose between a standard five-day workweek (35 hours, full pay) and seven alternative 4DWW arrangements varying in weekly hours and wage adjustments. This design allows for a detailed assessment of the trade-offs workers are willing to make between time and income.

Results show support for the 4DWW is substantial but clearly conditional. While employees accept compressed schedules or moderate working hour reductions, support declines markedly when wage reductions exceed what is perceived as a fair sharing of costs. On average, respondents will bear approximately half the costs of shorter working hours, expecting employers to absorb the remainder. Preferences differ systematically across social groups, including gender, age, and family situation. Furthermore, respondents express a pronounced preference for having either Friday or Monday off, primarily driven – apart from care – by the desire for more leisure time.

Overall, findings demonstrate that worker support for the 4DWW depends fundamentally on perceptions of fairness in cost sharing. By highlighting the limits of trading wages for time, this study contributes important evidence to current debates and underscores the need for institutional safeguards preventing the disproportionate transfer of adjustment costs onto workers.

Keywords: four-day workweek, work-hour reduction, employee preferences, cost-sharing, vignette study

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1. Introduction

The four-day workweek (4DWW) has emerged as a prominent and potentially transformative topic in organizational and labor economics. While trials conducted by pioneering organizations frequently attract public attention, surprisingly little is known about employees' preferences for a 4DWW and the motivations underlying these preferences. Are workers genuinely willing to accept higher work intensity or lower wages? Who is interested in work 4DWW and what is their main reason?

The current state of the debate centers around the assumption, that work time compression - working 80% of the regular time while reaching 100% productivity and receiving 100% of the wage is possible (the so-called 100-80-100 model). This would be the case, if employees can improve their performance in their work time easily or if the work time now consists to 20% out of unproductive activities that can be easily cut from every job. This seems to be surprising, as current theory must suggest that having inefficiencies in the firm on this scale should result in deselection from the market for the firm. However, there are many non-profit organizations around the globe that try to advocate for the idea, typically coordinating trials with self-selected firms and evaluating outcomes with varying degrees of scientific rigor. These pilot studies, spanning industries from services to manufacturing, have challenged long-standing assumptions about productivity and work-life balance (Backmann et al., 2024). Early initiatives in Iceland (2015–2021), the United Kingdom (2022–2023), and Germany (2024–2025) suggest that reducing weekly working hours without reducing pay can generate substantial benefits, including improved employee well-being, lower burnout rates, and stable or even increased productivity (Backmann et al., 2024; Autonomy, 2023; Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021). For example, the UK trial – covering 61 firms and nearly 3,000 employees – reported a 1.4% increase in revenue, a 57% decline in staff turnover, and a 71% reduction in burnout symptoms (Autonomy, 2023). It is noteworthy here, that, in addition to using company's administrative data, the effects are primarily self-reported by the employees and measured at only three points in time: immediately before the change in working time regulations, halfway through the 6-month trial, and immediately after the trial ended. However, these findings position the 4DWW as a compelling alternative to the traditional five-day model, particularly in sectors facing challenges related to talent retention and mental health of their employees.

But even though the results seem impressive, many of the participating firms have abandoned their 4DWW and returned to more regular working schedules. For instance, only about 41% of UK firms participating in the 2023 pilot continue to operate a 4DWW today (own research, see

Appendix A). The follow-up survey on the German pilot shows a similar picture, with only 49% of companies reporting that they continue to use a 4DWW (Backmann et al., 2026).

Even though the 4DWW appears to be not universally advantageous for firms, many employees seem to be interested in this working arrangement. Hamermesh and Biddle (2025), for instance, report that the share of U.S. full-time employees (with 30+ weekly hours) working four days per week tripled between 1973 and 2018 – corresponding to an increase of roughly seven million workers (from 1.91% to 6.55% of all full-time employees). A survey of German workers (N= 2.575) also reveals a comparable trend, with 80% of respondents expressing a general desire for a 4DWW, citing a lighter workload and more personal free time as their reasons (Lott and Windscheid, 2023).

Consequently, measures to reduce work-time emphasize the psychological and health benefits (Fan et al., 2025; Schiller et al., 2018; Von Thiele Schwarz et al., 2011) of shorter working hours, which could be manifest, for instance, in more people being in better health upon reaching retirement age or in people taking sick leave less frequently. However, these long-term studies are missing.

At the same time theoretical work on working-time regulation demonstrates that reducing standard hours inevitably has distributional consequences for wages, profits, and employment, even when employment may rise for moderate cuts (Marimon & Zilibotti, 2000). From a distributional perspective, any durable work-time reduction therefore entails an explicit or implicit decision about how costs are shared between workers, firms, and the state rather than being “costless” by assumption (Baltes et al., 1999; Marimon & Zilibotti, 2000). This creates a critical research gap: the neglect of the economic concession threshold – the maximum cost share employees are willing to bear. Identifying these boundary conditions is essential for developing sustainable labor market policies that move beyond subsidized trials toward market-ready, co-financed models. This study addresses this gap by quantifying the trade-off between temporal gain and financial loss.

Empirical evidence also suggests that preferences for a 4DWW vary systematically across workers. Interestingly, employees who favor a shorter workweek are often those with limited scope for productivity increases, such as shop assistants. Hamermesh and Biddle (2025) provide the most comprehensive cross-country analysis to date – covering the United States, South Korea, Germany, and the Netherlands – and find that younger, less-educated men are particularly likely to prefer fewer working days. Occupational patterns, however, remain mixed. While Moen and Chu (2023) report stronger preferences among office and retail workers, Hamermesh and Biddle (2025) find higher prevalence in healthcare, policing, and

hospitality. Taken together, these findings suggest that service-sector employees and those in roles requiring direct customer interaction may be especially inclined toward fewer working days, rather than workers primarily seeking recovery from physically demanding labor.

To better understand the drivers of possible employees' preferences for 4DWW, we conducted a vignette study with 379 employees in Germany between February and March 2024. Participants evaluated seven scenarios comparing a traditional five-day work schedule with various 4DWW configurations that differed in cost-sharing arrangements, productivity expectations, and wage adjustments. These scenarios ranged from pure time compression (unchanged weekly hours distributed over fewer days) to reductions of up to 20% in working hours combined with proportional wage cuts. In addition, we collected detailed information on organizational context, job characteristics, demographics, and individual preferences regarding days off and intended leisure activities. This design enables a nuanced analysis of employees' willingness to accept different trade-offs associated with the 4DWW.

This study contributes to the literature by explicitly examining employee preferences for alternative cost- and wage-sharing models—an aspect often overlooked in employer-centered research which typically employs the 100-80-100 model. Using a scenario-based vignette experiment with a heterogeneous German sample, we provide novel evidence on the trade-offs workers are willing to make when exchanging reduced working time for financial or productivity-related concessions. Our results reveal widespread openness to 4DWW arrangements, surprisingly high willingness to share costs (or even pay additional fees). We also find a strong preference for long weekends (Monday or Friday off) and a strong preference for leisure and household activities on the day off. By documenting variation across demographic and occupational groups, the study offers a richer understanding of the economic, organizational, and social viability of the 4DWW. The results may be helpful for employers when facing a shortage of skilled labor.

2. Related Literature

Evidence from 4DWW studies

The 4DWW has emerged as a central policy proposal in contemporary labor market debates, yet implementation remains constrained by fragmented evidence and unresolved questions. A comprehensive scoping review by Jahal et al. (2024) spanning 1.769 records from five decades identified a critical research discontinuity: 61% of 33 peer-reviewed articles originated from 1970s American manufacturing, followed by minimal research activity until 2022, when

renewed interest emerged post-pandemic. Post 2022 research, particularly the trials from NGOs often lack a systematic foundation in previous organizational insights.

In Iceland (Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021), two government-backed trials with over 2.500 participants (around 1% of the workforce) reduced weekly hours from 40 to 35–36 at full pay. These studies were conducted between 2015 and 2019 and between 2017 and 2021, respectively, and were continuously monitored using quantitative and qualitative measurements in comparison with control groups. Across most workplaces, self-reported stress, burnout and work–life balance improved, while productivity and service provision were maintained or even increased, and the reforms remained cost-neutral for employers (Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021). Following the successful evaluations, Icelandic trade unions renegotiated national contracts, resulting in approximately 86% of the country's entire workforce either moving to shorter working hours or gaining the contractual right to do so by 2021). A follow-up study from 2024, which analyzed subsequent labor market data, indicates the long-term sustainability of the nationwide implementation, as 97% of participating employees reported a consistent or improved work-life balance. Furthermore, the nationwide reduction in working hours had no negative impact on the overall economy; productivity remained stable, and Iceland recorded economic growth of 5% in 2023, which was above the EU average (Haraldsson et al., 2024). In the UK (Autonomy, 2023), a six-month trial conducted between June and December 2022 with 61 organizations (approx. 2.900 employees) tested a 100-80-100 model (100% pay, 80% time, 100% output). Continuous monitoring through employee surveys and administrative data revealed stable business revenues, a 65% drop in sickness absence, a 71% reduction in employee burnout, and high levels of employee satisfaction (Autonomy, 2023). A one-year follow-up study conducted in 2024 show the long-term sustainability of the program: 82% of the companies surveyed reported lasting positive effects on employee well-being, and 50% highlighted a sustained decline in turnover. Business metrics also underscore the model's economic viability, as companies maintained financial success during the trial and average revenue increased by 1.4% (Autonomy, 2024). In Germany, a six-month pilot program involving 45 organizations was launched in 2024 to test the 4DWW. The pilot, which was evaluated using self-reported data and physiological metrics such as smartwatch readings, showed a significant reduction in stress levels while maintaining stable company revenue and productivity (Backmann et al., 2024). The follow-up study from 2026 found that 94% of the companies that continued using the model (48% 4DWW, 20% mixed models) reported sustained improvements in their employees' work-life balance, and 75% reported increased attractiveness as employers (Backmann et al., 2026).

Nonetheless, many organizations have abandoned the FDWW again (Backmann et al., 2026) (see Appendix A).

Recent psychological research identifies critical mechanisms that explain why productivity could remain stable despite reduced working hours. First, extended periods of sleep and rest can optimize prefrontal cortex function and default mode network activity, which promotes strategic thinking (Rae & Russell, 2025). Second, at the behavioral change level, the four-day structure can act as a salience trigger for increased intrinsic motivation and efforts to optimize efficiency (fewer meetings, task focus) (Rae & Russell, 2025). At the same time, there are clear implementation gaps and limitations in the evidence base. The results of qualitative interviews (14 employees; 6 industries) conducted by Jain et al. (2025) on perceptions of the 4DWW point to potential benefits for work-life balance, but also describe serious, cross-sector concerns regarding increased workload, coordination difficulties, maintaining uninterrupted operations, and financial viability. The same applies to the threat of failure without government/management support. Most pilots are employer-financed models with full wage retention, often accompanied by extensive process optimization, technology investments and upfront productivity agreements. Systematic control groups are rare, samples are self-selected, and evaluations rely heavily on self-reports, which raises concerns about selection and reporting bias (Campbell, 2024). Moreover, sustainability data reveals significant implementation gaps: approximately 41% of UK (based on own research, see Appendix A) and 49% of German pilot companies discontinued 4DWW arrangements post-trial (Backmann et al., 2026), suggesting initial enthusiasm does not reliably translate into durable organizational change (Autonomy, 2023).

Reduced and compressed working models

Beyond pure hour-reduction models under the label of 4DWW, there is a longer tradition of research on compressed workweeks, in which employees work their contracted hours in fewer, longer days. A classic meta-analysis by Baltes et al. (1999), covering 39 studies, found that compressed schedules tend to increase job and schedule satisfaction and sometimes also resulted in increased perceived performance, while effects on absenteeism and objective productivity are small or absent on average.

While Baltes et al. (1999) shows generic patterns, recent work highlights the thresholds of compression. Pencavel (2018) argues that individuals can only perform optimally for a finite number of hours per day before fatigue reduces productivity. Empirically, Mühl & Korunka (2024) find that 9.75-hour days (39 hours/week compressed) do not impair productivity, but

higher compression (e.g., 12 hours) could become critical. Longitudinal data from IKEA Belgium (n=559) reveal an important limitation: while compressed working hours are associated with increased psychological work distance, this does not reduce exhaustion or the risk of burnout (du Bois et al., 2025). These findings are central to German labor law (*Arbeitszeitgesetz - ArbZG*, 2024), which allows for an 8-hour standard with flexibility up to 10 hours per day. Deery et al. (2017) extend this line of work by showing, in a longitudinal study of 236 contact-center employees, that satisfaction with compressed 12-hour shifts is associated with lower absenteeism via sequential reductions in emotional exhaustion and improvements in self-rated physical health, with stronger effects for women than for men. These findings are consistent with work-adjustment theory, which posits that employees experience less strain when work schedules fit their non-work responsibilities (reduction of inter-role conflicts) (Pierce & Newstrom, 1980). Recent research (Wang & Zhang, 2025) on nonstandard work schedules confirms that work stress, work-family conflict, and job satisfaction mediate the relationship between schedule arrangements and mental health outcomes. These findings converge on a central mechanism: schedule predictability and autonomy could reduce psychological strain and improve health perceptions. Consistent with this logic, emerging 4DWW studies report higher employee satisfaction, sustained or improved productivity, and better work–life balance (Araújo et al., 2025).

Contrary to the widespread positive attitude of employees toward 4DWW (Abrams, 2024; Lott & Windscheid, 2023), more recent qualitative case studies of reduced-hours trials highlight possible downsides. Delaney & Casey (2022), examining an eight-month 4DWW experiment in a New Zealand company, document intensified performance monitoring, increased work pacing and employees' sense of “doing five days of work in four,” despite positive headline indicators for wellbeing and retention. Similar findings surface in agile software teams operating with shorter weeks, where employees report higher efficiency but also longer individual days and less informal social interaction (Topp et al., 2022). Overall, existing evidence suggests that four-day models can work, but only under specific design and implementation conditions; they are not an automatic productivity lever.

The German work context

Germany provides a distinctive institutional context for 4DWW concepts because reduced weekly hours are already widespread in the form of part-time work. Almost one third of all employees work part-time but usage is highly gendered: in 2024, about half of all women in employment subject to social insurance contributions worked part-time, compared to roughly

13% of men (Destatis, 2025). Time-series analyses by Ilieva & Wrohlich (2022) show that the combination of high female part-time rates and a persistent “part-time penalty” in hourly wages is a key driver of Germany’s comparatively large unadjusted gender pay gap (around 17–18%, well above the EU average) (Eurostat, 2023). Recent evidence further documents that the gender pay gap widens markedly with age and is closely linked to gendered working-time patterns over the life course in Germany (Herrmann & Wrohlich, 2025).

Part-time work is particularly concentrated in low-wage service sectors (retail, hospitality, care), in which women are overrepresented. Although the Part-Time and Fixed-Term Employment Act (TzBfG) formally guarantees equal treatment of part-time and full-time workers (*Teilzeit- Und Befristungsgesetz - TzBfG*, 2022), empirical wage data indicate enduring hourly pay disadvantages for part-time employees across the observation period, also in the adjusted gender pay gap (Ilieva & Wrohlich, 2022). Trade-union analyses similarly warn that many women would like to work more hours but are constrained by care responsibilities, lack of childcare or rigid scheduling models. In Germany, the question of how to finance a 4DWW is consequently not only a question of costs at the corporate level, but also an issue of distribution and gender equality (Ilieva & Wrohlich, 2022). 4DWW models that are mainly financed through wage cuts, longer days, or informal work intensification therefore risk reinforcing existing part-time and gender inequalities rather than alleviating them, particularly in feminized service occupations.

Legally, the German Working Time Act restricts daily working time to generally 8 hours, extendable to a maximum of 10 hours under averaging rules, which effectively limits classic Anglo-American “4×10-hour” compressed weeks (*Arbeitszeitgesetz - ArbZG*, 2024). This means that most realistic four-day configurations in Germany either require an actual reduction in weekly hours (and thus, in many implementations, a wage cut) or complex shift systems that do not always result in a fixed, predictable extra day off. From this perspective, it is not obvious that introducing a 4DWW constitutes a wholly new instrument in the German context; rather, it may partly re-label existing patterns of part-time work and marginal employment – particularly if reduced hours are primarily financed by employees through lower pay or career opportunities (Goerlich & Vis, 2024).

Cost models, preferences and open questions

4DWW arrangements are a specific form of work-time reduction with unresolved incidence: existing studies rarely specify how the burden of shorter weeks is divided between workers and employers (Baltes et al., 1999; Marimon & Zilibotti, 2000). Evidence on reduced hours and

compressed workweeks shows that effects depend crucially on whether monthly pay is preserved, how hourly wages and workloads change, and how organizations redesign work processes (Baltes et al., 1999; Schiller et al., 2018; Von Thiele Schwarz & Hasson, 2012). At the same time, labor-supply research documents that workers are willing to trade income for shorter hours only when hours–wage packages better match their preferences and constraints, yet four-day week studies rarely quantify how much wage loss, compression, or intensification employees are prepared to accept (Altonji & Paxson, 1988).

Building on this, most academic and practitioner discussions implicitly treat either employer-financed 4DWW models with full pay or strongly compressed schedules as default models, assuming that productivity gains or organizational slack can absorb the additional costs (Facer II & Wadsworth, 2008; Hyatt & Coslor, 2018). Such employer-centered cost models raise scalability issues, especially for SMEs and low-margin industries, and intersect with unresolved productivity questions at the organizational level. Yet there is almost no systematic evidence on how much cost employees themselves are willing to bear under different 4DWW designs: What level of wage reduction would they accept? At what degree of daily hour compression does a model become unattractive? And how do such preferences vary by gender, income, household composition or sector?

From a rational perspective, any sustainable 4DWW implementation implies that employees are either currently underpaid relative to their productivity or can increase their productivity when working four instead of five days. Current key research strands – productivity, employee acceptance, time perception, leisure and gender – provide important conceptual insights (Jahal et al., 2024), but they address the distribution of costs between employers and employees only indirectly.

At the same time, attitudinal data suggest substantial latent demand for shorter weeks. In the American Psychological Association’s 2024 Work in America survey, over 80% of US workers agreed they could be just as effective in four days and would be happier at work if they only worked four days a week; 67% believed a four-day week would become the norm in their lifetime (Abrams, 2024). Expectation effects are central here: Mühl and Korunka (2024) show that employee expectations prospectively determine the effectiveness of compressed arrangements (e.g., more positive expectations lead to greater relief from feelings of time pressure and fatigue). In Germany, a survey commissioned by the Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health found that a clear majority of employees favor shorter rather than longer weekly working hours and see a four-day week as a promising way to improve

work-life balance and gain more time for hobbies, volunteer work, and self-care (BAuA, 2022). Conversely, other surveys show that many Germans doubt the practicality of a fully paid 4DWW, especially in the manufacturing industry and in small businesses (DW, 2023). Conceptually, the allocation of costs in 4DWW models can be viewed as an issue of distributive justice and perceived fairness (Colquitt et al., 2001). Research on organizational justice shows that employees evaluate reward and schedule arrangements not only by their instrumental outcomes but also by whether the underlying allocation of burdens is seen as legitimate and equitable (Colquitt et al., 2001). Empirical work on reduced working hours and alternative schedules suggests that acceptance and well-being are higher when related changes in income and workload are experienced as fair, transparent, and predictable (Baltes et al., 1999; Schiller et al., 2018). By eliciting detailed preferences over alternative cost-sharing regimes, our study thus speaks to four-day week models not only as efficiency devices but as contested distributional arrangements.

Research gaps and study purpose

Despite existing literature on 4DWW pilots and flexible work arrangements, which position the 4DWW as a compelling, more flexible alternative to the five-day model in work design, particularly in industries struggling with talent retention and mental health crises, three critical empirical gaps persist:

First, employee cost-sharing preferences are largely unknown. Existing work rarely quantifies employees' willingness to accept wage reductions, daily hour increases or workload changes across differentiated 4DWW scenarios. Without such data, it remains unclear which models are economically and psychologically acceptable beyond highly selected pilot firms.

Second, contemporary preferences for using an additional free day are poorly documented. Classic 1970s studies describe that additional days off were mainly used for leisure and family time, but they do not reflect current digital leisure cultures, changed family structures or modern work-life priorities (Hamermesh and Biddle, 2025). Recent 4DWW pilots report that employees spend more time with family, friends, hobbies and self-care, but these outcomes are usually captured in coarse survey items and not linked systematically to individual acceptance of specific cost configurations.

Third, German-specific implementation feasibility remains under-researched. No published research has systematically examined how German institutional constraints (labor law, collective bargaining traditions, part-time employment equity concerns) shape employee preferences for 4DWW arrangements compared to other contexts. Given Germany's distinct

legal environment, part-time work prevalence, and gender-differentiated labor market outcomes, transferring findings from UK or Icelandic pilots without contextual adaptation risks policy misalignment.

Taken together, this literature points to a central unresolved question: under which concrete constellations of wage adjustments, daily hours, and workload are employees in a highly regulated, part-time-intensive labor market such as Germany willing to accept a 4DWW, and who should bear the associated costs? Existing evidence on work-time reductions and four-day interventions documents beneficial effects on health, well-being, and sometimes performance, but provides little guidance on the extent to which workers themselves perceive wage cuts, compressed days, or work intensification as acceptable and fair (Baltes et al., 1999; Fan et al., 2025; Schiller et al., 2018; Von Thiele Schwarz & Hasson, 2012). The present vignette study addresses this gap by experimentally varying wages, weekly hours, and daily length across four-day scenarios and examining how different groups of employees evaluate these alternative cost-sharing arrangements (Altonji & Paxson, 1988).

Study objectives and research questions

Considering these gaps, this study aims to clarify the preference-side conditions for different 4DWW models from the perspective of employees in Germany. Three research questions guide the analysis:

- (1) Cost-bearing preferences: What proportional wage reductions, work intensifications, and schedule configurations are employees willing to accept across seven differentiated 4DWW scenarios, and how do preferences vary by gender, income, household composition, and occupational sector?
- (2) Temporal preferences: Which weekdays are preferred as an additional day off, and how stable are these preferences across scenarios with different economic trade-offs?
- (3) Leisure utilization profiles: What specific activities do employees anticipate prioritizing on an additional free day, and how do activity profiles – reflecting leisure, household, family, and self-care orientations – predict acceptance across cost-bearing scenarios?

By examining differentiated, context-specific preferences rather than aggregate approval of the 4DWW, this study provides an empirical basis for assessing which four-day models can be considered sustainable and equitable under realistic cost assumptions in Germany's regulated labor market – and which are more likely to remain limited to symbolic pilots in a narrow set of organizations.

3. Method

Participants were asked to choose between a reference job (five-day workweek/35 hours per week) and one of seven 4DWW scenarios (A–G) (table 1).⁴ The choice of a 35-hour workweek as a baseline is rooted in the collective bargaining realities of the key sectors of the German labor market and ensures a high level of ecological validity. While actual working hours are often longer due to overtime, the 35-hour workweek serves as the central sociopolitical anchor for full-time employment in Germany (Schulten, 2026), particularly in the industry from which many of the employees in this survey stem.

Table 1. Vignette Scenarios

Scenario	Wage	Days/Week	Hours/Week	Hours/Day	Change in Hours
Reference	100%	5	35	7.00	0%
A	100%	4	35	8.75	0%
B	100%	4	31.5	7.88	–10%
C	95%	4	28	7.00	–20%
D	90%	4	28	7.00	–20%
E	85%	4	28	7.00	–20%
F	80%	4	28	7.00	–20%
G	100%	4	36.75	9.20	+5%

Vignette scenarios A and B illustrate compressed schedules: in A, weekly hours remain unchanged, while in B, hours are reduced by 10% but employees are assumed to increase productivity. This resembles the “100-80-100” model (100% pay, 80% working time, 100% output) (Abrams, 2024). Scenarios C–F distribute costs between employees and employers, from minimal wage cuts (C) to proportional reductions (F). Scenario G tests willingness to work slightly longer weeks under a compressed four-day schedule.

Scenarios A and B reflect a situation in which the employee works either more hours per day than before with the same weekly working hours to receive the same wage (scenario A) or works a little more per day with reduced weekly working hours to receive the same wage and must assume a productivity increase of 10% for themselves. This configuration corresponds to

⁴ See Appendix B for the question and the exact wording of the scenarios in the national language, and Appendix C for a translation into English.

a lesser extent to the logic of the frequently conceived “100-80-100” model (100% wage, 80 % working time, 100% productivity received).

Scenarios C-F reflect different degrees of splitting the burden between employee and employer for having a 4DWW, ranging from more unequal splits in favor of the employee (scenario C) to an equivalent reduction of hourly wages (scenario F). Scenario G offers the option of a 4DWW, contingent upon an increase in weekly working hours.

Next to the Vignette experiment, we also asked to answer a short questionnaire concerning their organization (industry, number of employees), their employment characteristics (working time arrangement, home office, physical demand of their job, income), their personal characteristics (gender, age, household situation, education), and personal preferences in relation to the 4DWW.⁵ We asked how individuals would spend their extra day (preferred activity) and also what day they would prefer as a day off, ranking them accordingly. The Vignette experiment and the survey were conducted at the same point in time and online between February 8, 2024, and March 4, 2024.

The sample consists of a convenience-based snowball sample of individuals who are currently employed and have more than two months of uninterrupted working experience at the time of the experiment. The final sample consists of 379 individuals from all parts of Germany and self-selected into the survey via convenience-based sampling. 58.05% of the final sample are female, the average age is 40.7 years. 87% are working full-time, and 93% are not currently working a 4DWW. The average net monthly income was €3,160. 71.24% are working mainly without having any physically demanding work (medium level: 12.93%, heavy physical work: 14.78%). 57.26% are working in firms with more than 249 employees, 25.86% in medium sized firms with 50-249 employees. About $\frac{1}{3}$ (37.47%) of the respondents work in the public sector, 30.61% work in the producing industry and 24.0% work in the service sector (0.53% in forestry and agriculture; 7.39% other).

4. Results

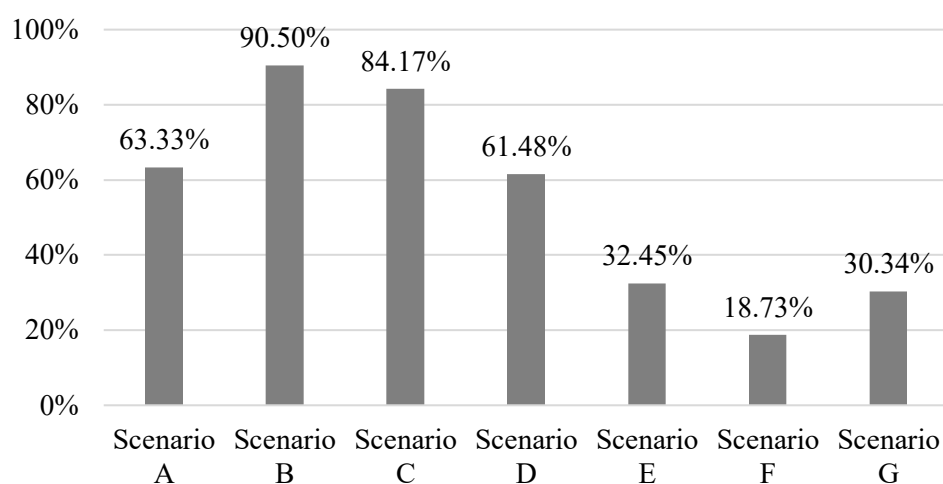
4.1 Choice Behavior

Figure 1 shows the descriptive results of vignette scenarios A to G. Our results demonstrate that over 60% of respondents choose the 4DWW in the case of a pure compression in working hours (scenario A). This tendency increases with improved employee conditions in the 4DWW (10% shorter working week; scenario B) to an employee choice of 90.50%. When choosing

⁵ See Appendix D for an overview of the variables used in the analysis.

between the five-day week (control) and a 4DWW with a 20% reduction in weekly working hours (28 hours/week) and a 5% wage cut (scenario C), almost as many employees (84.17%) still opted for the 4DWW as in scenario B. Where in scenario D (10% pay cut) the majority (61.48%) were still in favor of the reduction in working hours, the picture changes increasingly with a 15% (32.45%; scenario E) and 20% wage cut (18.73%; scenario F). Around a third (30.34%) of employees choose a 5% increase in weekly working hours, with the same wage and compressed 4DWW (scenario G), which corresponds to a deterioration in working conditions.

Figure 1. Results of the vignette scenarios A–G



Note. Percentage of respondents who choose a 4DWW specification in the different scenarios; N = 379.

To examine sectoral differences in the individual dichotomous vignettes, demographic variables were included in the statistical consideration using logistic regression analyses. Table 2 shows the regression results (coefficients, standard errors, significance levels) between all predictors included in the analysis and the individual vignette decisions A-G as target variables. In addition, the constants, model fits, and significance levels of the regression models are included.

The analysis of the combined overall factor group is supplemented by individual analyses of the factor groups “sociodemographic characteristics” (Appendix E) and “workplace characteristics” (Appendix F). This prevents spurious correlations while reflecting real conditions/interactions and increases the validity of the model.

When analyzing the standardized residuals/potential outliers of the model in scenarios A-G, no values greater than 3 or less than -3 can be found. Similarly, less than 5% of the values in the

models are above +2 or below -2. With VIF values (variance inflation factor) of < 3 and tolerance values of > 0.3 , none of the logistic regression models exhibit multicollinearity.

The vignette scenarios (with a moderate predictive power between $R^2 = .131$ and $.089$) reveal a consistent pattern in the relationships between personal characteristics and the choice of a 4DWW, with age showing consistently negative effects in several scenarios. Older employees were less willing to accept four-day arrangements in Scenarios A ($p = .05$), B ($p = .08$), and E ($p = .072$), suggesting diminishing appeal with age across various wage-hour combinations. Full-time employment status emerged as the strongest predictor, with robust negative effects across Scenarios C through F ($p = .035$; $p = .002$; $p = < .001$; $p = < .001$). This shows that part-time employees are potentially more willing to accept reduced working hours in combination with reduced wages, which could be due to the greater compatibility of part-time work and flexible working models.

Employees who work predominantly standing or walking – with increased physical strain – reported lower acceptance of 4DWW (scenario B: $p = .031$; scenario F: $p = .06$). It is noteworthy that this is consistent even under the improved employee conditions (–10% weekly working hours for the same wage) in scenario B, indicating that an increase in related working hours is particularly stressful for physically demanding occupations. Home office availability was negatively associated with 4DWW acceptance in Scenarios A and G ($p = .053$; $p = .02$), indicating that existing remote work flexibility substitutes for the flexibility benefits of compressed schedules.

Table 2. Results of the logistic regressions for vignette scenarios A-G (overall factor group)

	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E	Scenario F	Scenario G
Wage	100%	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	100%
Hours/week	35	31.5	28	28	28	28	36.75
Gender (2=Male)	.281 (.262)	-.972** (.462)	-.180 (.328)	-.359 (.251)	-.260 (.273)	.198 (.333)	.677** (.267)
Age	-.023** (.012)	-.035* (.020)	-.010 (.015)	-.023** (.012)	-.023* (.013)	-.006 (.016)	-.003 (.012)
Academic degree (1=yes)	-.178 (.256)	-.461 (.444)	-.289 (.346)	-.247 (.255)	-.441 (.269)	.025 (.323)	-.234 (.272)
Unmarried (0=yes)	-.027 (.305)	.353 (.551)	.249 (.402)	.073 (.299)	.374 (.321)	.170 (.394)	-.343 (.328)
No children (compared to children under 16 years of age)	.575** (.271)	.593 (.442)	.074 (.363)	-.117 (.274)	.096 (.293)	-.108 (.343)	.175 (.293)
Large firm (more than 249 employees vs. SME)	.204 (.271)	.146 (.449)	-.009 (.354)	-.155 (.267)	-.153 (.278)	.007 (.335)	.550* (.293)
Job predominantly seated with additional standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	.032 (.384)	-.788 (.641)	-.310 (.491)	-.348 (.364)	-.501 (.403)	-.723 (.496)	.369 (.378)
Predominantly standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-.231 (.433)	-1.581** (.731)	-.706 (.507)	-.050 (.401)	-.077 (.417)	-1.042* (.554)	-.396 (.407)
Full-time job (vs part-time)	.531 (.360)	.619 (.606)	-2.201** (1.046)	-1.427*** (.456)	-1.603*** (.377)	-1.657*** (.401)	.313 (.435)
Option to work from home (1=yes)	-.711* (.368)	-.051 (.473)	-.051 (.473)	-.095 (.352)	-.280 (.368)	-.538 (.435)	-.859** (.368)
Income: € 3.500 to under € 4.500 (vs. less than € 3.500)	.379 (.351)	-.372 (.605)	.655 (.519)	.444 (.353)	.492 (.364)	.494 (.425)	-.168 (.385)
Income: € 4.500 and above (vs. less than € 3.500)	.510* (.302)	-.264 (.524)	-.092 (.386)	.122 (.295)	.080 (.314)	-.326 (.395)	.140 (.316)
Constant	.729 (.703)	4.539 (1.280)	4.363 (1.307)	3.101 (.759)	1.835 (.750)	.571 (.873)	-1.004 (.763)
Nagelkerke R ²	.101	.130	.089	.087	.127	.131	.095
p	.004	.027	.072	.017	< .001	.002	.011

Note. N= 372; df= (12, 360); * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

Among childless respondents, willingness is significantly higher in scenario A ($p = .033$), suggesting that compressed working hours are more difficult to combine with childcare. Gender demonstrated scenario-specific, ambivalent effects, with male significantly less willing in Scenario B ($p = .035$) but more willing in Scenario G ($p = .011$), indicating complex interactions between gender role expectations, and specific schedule parameters. Employees who fall into the highest income bracket (income: €4,500 and above) show a significantly more positive attitude ($p = .092$) toward the 4DWW option with compressed working hours exclusively in scenario A.

The sociodemographic-only model maintained predictive power (Nagelkerke $R^2 = .024$ to $.097$) and remained statistically significant in all scenarios except C ($p = .365$). Within this factor group, gender emerged with larger effect sizes: Males were significantly less willing in Scenarios B, D, and E ($p = .011$; $p = .025$; $p = .085$) but more willing in Scenario A and G ($p = .033$; $p = .001$) to choose the 4DWW scenario – which is consistent with the overall factor group. This signaled once again that the 4DWW option tends to remain attractive to male employees only without a general reduction in working hours and wage concessions. The negative effects of age on the 4DWW options replicated those in the combined model in Scenarios A, B, and D ($p = .058$; $p = .080$; $p = .078$). Childless individuals again showed significantly higher acceptance in scenario A ($p = .016$). Academic degree surprisingly showed negative effects in Scenario E ($p = .050$), suggesting higher-educated workers are more reluctant at lower wage compensation.

The job-related model showed comparable predictive power (Nagelkerke $R^2 = .048$ to $.126$) and was statistically significant in all scenarios except B ($p = .306$). Full-time employment once again dominated as the strongest predictor for rejecting the 4DWW option in scenarios C–F ($p = .039$; $p = .001$; $p < .001$; $p < .001$), confirming robustness across model specifications. Only in scenario A do full-time employees (compared to part-time employees) significantly more often prefer a 4DWW with compressed working hours ($p = .012$). The availability of working from home again achieved a similarly significant importance in scenarios A and G ($p = .036$; $p = .005$), with compressed working hours being rejected more strongly. Similar to the results for the overall factor group, employees with higher physical demands (standing/walking) in B ($p = .026$) and F ($p = .064$) show significantly lower acceptance. Income and firm size were not significant predictors in domain-specific models, suggesting these effects observed in the combined model are confounded with sociodemographic characteristics.

4.2 Wage cut choice

A metric variable, “wage cut,” was derived from the gradual wage cuts in scenarios C–F to summarize the respondents’ willingness to accept income losses in exchange for a 4DWW. This result was analyzed descriptively and using linear regression based on the personal characteristics collected in the survey.

On average, participants were willing to sacrifice 9.84 % ($SD = 6.62$) of their salary in order to obtain a 4DWW with a 20 % reduction in working hours. The regression results show that full-time employees are significantly less willing to accept wage cuts in favor of a 4DWW ($p < 0.001$) and that older respondents tend to show a lower willingness to forego wages ($p = 0.085$; see Table 3).

Table 3. Results of linear regressions for the variable wage cut (overall factor group)

Variable	B
Gender (2=Male)	-.657 (.756)
Age	-.060* (.035)
Academic degree (1=yes)	-.861 (.752)
Unmarried (0=yes)	.740 (.897)
No children (compared to children under 16 years of age)	-.053 (.808)
Large firm (more than 249 employees vs. SME)	-.296 (.784)
Job predominantly seated with additional standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-1.595 (1.098)
Predominantly standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-1.357 (1.208)
Full-time job (vs part-time)	-5.439*** (1.103)
Option to work from home (1=yes)	-.834* (1.044)
Income: € 3.500 to under € 4.500 (vs. less than € 3.500)	1.694 (1.038)
Income: € 4.500 and above (vs. less than € 3.500)	-.069 (.881)
Constant	18.238 (2.081)
R ²	.108
p	< .001

Note. N= 372; df= (12, 360); * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

4.3 Additional Results

Employee preferences regarding the scheduling of the additional day off were assessed both as absolute attractiveness ratings and as relative rankings of the days of the week. Table 4 shows the average values on a 5-point scale from 1 = “very attractive” to 5 = “very unattractive.” Friday ($M = 1.40$, $SD = 0.97$) and Monday ($M = 1.70$, $SD = 1.10$) are clearly the most attractive days for a day off, while Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday receive significantly fewer positive ratings.

Table 4. Rating of weekday preferences

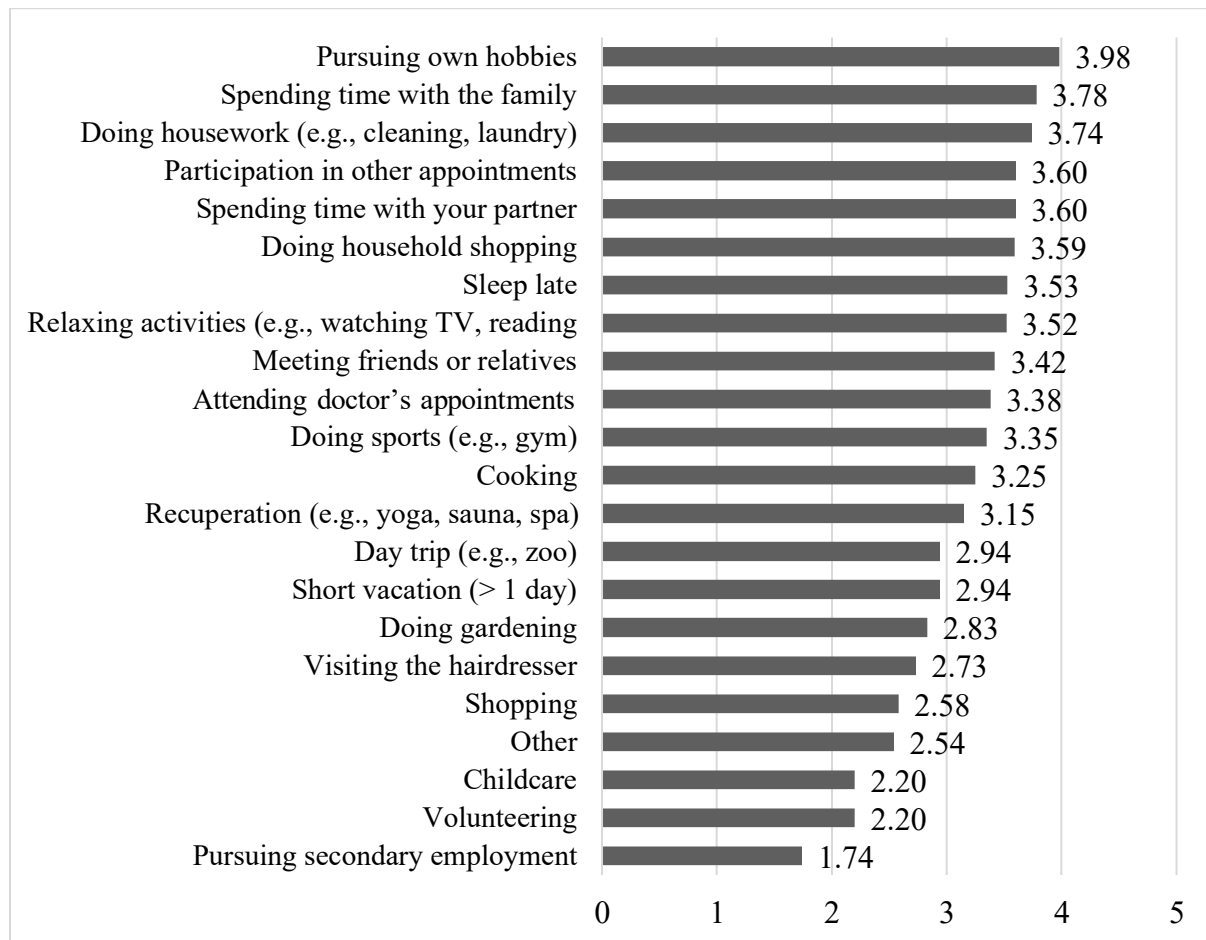
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<i>MD</i>	1.70	3.75	3.15	3.64	1.40
<i>SD</i>	1.10	1.05	1.27	1.08	0.97
Median	1	4	3	4	1

Note. N= 379

The ranking data show a very similar pattern: Friday is chosen as the preferred day off on average ($M = 1.56$, $SD = 0.97$), while Thursday ranks lowest ($M = 4.14$, $SD = 0.85$). To test whether these differences are statistically significant, paired Wilcoxon rank sum tests were performed for both the ratings and the rankings; all comparisons yielded significant p-values, indicating systematic differences in preferences for weekdays. No statistically significant correlations were found between preferred weekdays, vignette selection, or individual wage reduction.

We also asked which activities employees would most like to pursue on their additional day off. The 22 individual free-time activities were rated by the respondents according to their potential frequency from 1= “never” to 5= “very often”. As the descriptive results in Figure 2 show, “pursuing own hobbies” ($M = 3.98$; $SD = 0.96$), “spending time with the family” ($M = 3.78$; $SD = 1.08$) and “doing housework” ($M = 3.74$; $SD = 1.05$) are the three most popular categories. The rather unpopular activities include “pursuing secondary employment” ($M = 1.74$; $SD = 1.16$), “childcare” ($M = 2.20$; $SD = 1.44$) and “volunteering” ($M = 2.20$; $SD = 1.27$).

Figure 2. Preferred free-time activities on an additional day off



Note. X-axis: Average frequency of use (M) per activity rated on a 5-point scale (1 = never, 5 = very often); N = 379.

The “childcare” activity warrants separate consideration, as it demonstrates substantively different relevance across subgroups. Given that childcare is fundamentally a parental responsibility, this item is naturally more salient for parents than for non-parents. Mean scores differed substantially between respondents with children under 16 years ($M = 3.46$; $SD = 1.29$) and childless participants ($M = 1.64$; $SD = 1.12$), $t(377) = 13.896$, $p < .001$, Cohen's $d = 1.549$. An independent samples t-test (Welch's t-test due to unequal variances) confirmed this large effect size, indicating that childcare concerns would substantially benefit from additional discretionary time for parents specifically.

Further linear regressions examine the extent to which sociodemographic and job-related selection criteria are related to the intended use of the additional day off (Tabel 5). An exploratory factor analysis with Promax rotation ($KMO = .774$, $\chi^2 = 1787.77$, $p < .001$) and an internal consistency analysis via Cronbach's α identified three leisure dimensions:

social activities & regeneration ($\alpha = .734$), health and administration ($\alpha = .758$), and family life ($\alpha = .63$). Volunteering was excluded from clustering due to extreme isolated loading (.960). Other activities with a cluster value $\alpha < .60$ were also analyzed individually. The tolerance and VIF values of all regressions do not indicate any problematic multicollinearity; all variables are within the acceptable range (tolerance > 0.2 ; VIF < 5).

Social activities & regeneration: This cluster demonstrated the strongest overall predictive model ($R^2 = .136$, $p < .001$). The absence of children was the strongest positive predictor ($p < .001$), suggesting that social leisure activities and regeneration are significantly more important or can take up more space in the free time of childless people. Similarly, unmarried individuals ($p = .088$) and employees in larger firms (> 249 employees) reported higher preferences ($p = .006$). Conversely, men reported significantly lower interest than women ($p = .012$), as did employees with the option to work from home ($p = .071$) and those engaged in predominantly standing/walking work ($p = .05$).

Health & administration: Age emerged as a significant predictor in this domain ($p < .001$), with older employees tending to show less interest in performing every day or administrative tasks with one day more off. Women also indicated higher preferences than men ($p < .001$). This cluster explained 10% of variance ($R^2 = .100$, $p < .001$), suggesting these necessity-driven activities are relatively stable across demographic groups.

Family life: This smaller cluster ($R^2 = 0.061$, $p = .027$) showed negative correlations with higher education ($p = .026$), increasing age ($p = .049$), unmarried status ($p = 0.02$), and jobs with varying physical demands ($p = .065$). These partly counterintuitive correlations require cautious interpretation, as the moderate internal consistency ($\alpha = .63$) could indicate possible heterogeneity in this group.

Childcare: The strongest model overall ($R^2 = .374$, $p < .001$) examines childcare preferences. Not surprisingly, childlessness was the dominant negative predictor ($p < .001$), showing that those who do not have own children also spend less free time to care for other children (e.g., family members). Older and unmarried employees also showed significantly lower preferences for childcare ($p < .001$; $p < .001$). Only employees in the middle income range (€ 3.500 to under € 4.500) show significantly higher interest in this leisure cluster ($p = .087$).

Individual Activities: Secondary employment preferences are positively predicted by academic degree ($p = .005$), male gender ($p = .019$), and the existing possibility of working from home ($p = .065$). Negative connections can be seen with larger companies ($p < .001$), suggesting that educated workers in smaller organizations seek supplemental income.

Gardening interest increased with income (€4.500 and above; $p = .027$) but decreased with home office availability ($p = .047$).

Table 5. Results of linear regressions of free-time activities and overall factor group

Variable	Social activities & regeneration (cluster 1)	Health & administration (cluster 2)	Family life (cluster 3)	Childcare	Doing gardening	Pursuing secondary employment	Volunteering
Gender (2=Male)	-.190** (.075)	-.274*** (.077)	.115 (.115)	.154 (.138)	-.027 (.149)	.315** (.134)	.310** (.151)
Age	-.003 (.003)	-.013*** (.004)	-.010** (.005)	-.021*** (.006)	.016** (.007)	-.001 (.006)	-.002 (.007)
Academic degree (1=yes)	-.098 (.074)	-.016 (.077)	-.255** (.114)	-.140 (.137)	.067 (.148)	.375*** (.133)	.252* (.150)
Unmarried (0=yes)	.152* (.089)	-.092 (.092)	-.317** (.136)	-.552*** (.164)	-.343* (.176)	.113 (.159)	.083 (.179)
No children (compared to children under 16 years of age)	.267*** (.080)	< .001 (.083)	.096 (.123)	-1.595*** (.148)	-.04 (.159)	-.058 (.143)	.290* (.161)
Large firm (more than 249 employees vs. SME)	.215*** (.078)	.056 (.080)	.023 (.119)	.060 (.143)	.183 (.154)	-.497*** (.139)	.233 (.157)
Job predominantly seated with additional standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-.121 (.109)	-.081 (.112)	-.308* (.167)	-.012 (.201)	-.250 (.216)	.274 (.194)	.196 (.219)
Predominantly standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-.235** (.119)	-.193 (.124)	-.048 (.183)	.231 (.221)	-.168 (.238)	.309 (.214)	.051 (.241)
Full-time job (vs part-time)	.065 (.109)	.031 (.113)	-.079 (.167)	-.189 (.202)	-.290 (.217)	.074 (.195)	-.109 (.220)
Option to work from home (1=yes)	-.187* (.103)	-.035* (.107)	-.255* (.158)	.050 (.191)	-.409** (.205)	.342* (.185)	-.060 (.209)
Income: € 3.500 to under €4.500 (vs. less than € 3.500)	-.052 (.103)	-.047 (.106)	.153 (.157)	.326* (.190)	.330 (.204)	-.098 (.183)	-.003 (.207)
Income: € 4.500 and above (vs. less than € 3.500)	-.010 (.087)	-.125 (.090)	.167 (.134)	.060 (.161)	0.384** (.173)	-.226 (.156)	-.073 (.176)
Constant	3.354 (0.206)	4.006 (.213)	4.446 (.316)	4.369 (0.380)	2.582 (.409)	1.499 (.368)	1.782 (0.416)
R ²	.136	.100	.061	.374	.103	.102	.043
p	< .001	< .001	.027	< .001	< .001	< .001	.184

Note. N= 372; df= (12, 360); * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

Volunteering showed no significant model fit ($R^2 = .043$, $p = .184$), indicating it is driven by factors beyond standard sociodemographic and job variables. However, we find male respondents more likely to engage in volunteering than female respondents.

5. Discussion

The growing interest in the 4DWW is reflected in various pilot programs and research initiatives worldwide, although important economic factors have not yet been sufficiently considered. This study examined the conditions under which German employees are willing to accept a 4DWW, with a particular focus on the distribution of implementation costs – an aspect that is largely overlooked in current debates that rely heavily on the employer-financed 100-80-100 model (Autonomy, 2023; Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021). Our findings demonstrate that employee support is conditional, bounded by strict fairness expectations, and fundamentally sensitive to job characteristics.

The limits of the 100-80-100 assumption

Our findings confirm the broad acceptance of the 4DWW model described in the existing literature (Abrams, 2024; Lott & Windscheid, 2023), with over 90% of respondents supporting a 10% reduction in working hours without pay cuts (Scenario B). However, existing research and trials conducted by NGOs often implicitly assume that employers can easily offset the costs of reduced working hours through process optimizations and productivity gains (Autonomy, 2023; Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021).

Our findings challenge this one-sided cost assumption by revealing that employees themselves are surprisingly willing to bear a significant portion of the financial burden. Acceptance of a 20% reduction in working hours remained remarkably high (84%) when accompanied by a 5% pay cut, and the majority (61%) supported the model even with a 10% pay cut. This suggests an average economic concession threshold of nearly 10%. Employees thus demonstrate a rational cost-benefit analysis consistent with equity theory (Adams, 1965): they are willing to share up to 50% of the implementation costs with employers. However, acceptance drops dramatically to just 19% when proportional cuts are threatened (20% less working time with 20% less pay), which illustrates that employees enforce strict, non-negotiable limits regarding distributive justice (Colquitt et al., 2001). Companies that attempt to pass on disproportionate costs to employees will encounter significant resistance, which contradicts the assumption that employees desire shorter working hours at any financial cost. There is, however, one notable exception: one in three employees accepted a scenario that involved a 5% increase in working

hours as part of a compressed 4DWW work schedule (Scenario G), even though working conditions objectively deteriorated. This minority preference is consistent with self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), which posits that autonomy needs (including temporal autonomy and predictability) are more important to some people than income considerations.

Compression thresholds and job characteristics

We found significant support (> 60%) for a pure time-compression model (Scenario A: 4 days, 35 hours, 100% pay). This is consistent with earlier meta-analytic findings by Baltes et al. (1999), which indicate that compressed work schedules improve job satisfaction. However, our subgroup analyses highlight critical limits to compression, thereby confirming current physiological and psychological research findings. Employees in physically demanding jobs (standing/walking) strongly rejected compressed work schedules and work hour reductions that required high productivity gains, which mirrors the findings of Mühl and Korunka (2024) as well as Pencavel (2018), who argue that extreme compression can lead to fatigue and burnout risks. Furthermore, the negative correlation between the availability of remote work and the preference for compressed workweeks in our data suggests an autonomy substitution effect. While previous studies show that telework already offers a high degree of spatiotemporal autonomy (Gajendran & Harrison, 2007), our results add that for these employees, the marginal utility of a formal 4DWW decreases if it requires extreme time compression. For remote workers, the loss of unobservable daily flexibility may outweigh the benefits of an additional formal day off, adding a vital nuance to current flexible work theories (Wang & Zhang, 2025).

Demographic inequalities and institutional context

Our data show that full-time employees are significantly more opposed to wage cut scenarios than part-time employees. This is of great significance in the German institutional context, which is characterized by a large part-time sector dominated by women, a factor that contributes to a persistent gender pay gap (Destatis, 2025; Ilieva & Wrohlich, 2022). While Hamermesh and Biddle (2025) found that younger, less-educated men in the U.S. and other countries tended to prefer fewer workdays, our results suggest that full-time workers in Germany (who have stable career paths and financial buffers) perceive 4DWW models involving wage cuts as involuntary downward mobility rather than a gain in flexibility. If 4DWW models are primarily financed through wage cuts or informal intensification of work,

there is a risk that they will merely rebrand and reinforce existing part-time inequalities (Goerlich & Vis, 2024) rather than functioning as a universal redistribution of working hours.

Leisure profiles and time preferences

Contrary to early 1970s studies (e.g., Hamermesh & Biddle, 2025) and some recent qualitative assumptions that additional days off are strictly used for recovery (Lott & Windscheid, 2023; Wang & Zhang, 2025), our respondents prioritized household management, administration, and family care alongside hobbies. This indicates that modern working routines leave insufficient margins for basic everyday obligations, driving the high demand for temporal relief to manage work-family conflicts.

Additionally, the pronounced preference for Fridays and Mondays as days off aligns with the psychological need for uninterrupted recovery to optimize cognitive functions (Rae & Russell, 2025). However, this strong clustering of preferences poses severe organizational challenges. As noted by Jain et al. (2025), maintaining uninterrupted operations is a primary concern for employers. If employees predominantly refuse mid-weekdays off, the scalability of the 4DWW in continuous-service and client-facing industries will be heavily constrained.

Overall, our vignette study bridges the gap between employer-oriented pilot studies (Autonomy, 2023; Backmann et al., 2024; Haraldsson & Kellam, 2021) and theoretical labor supply models (Altonji & Paxson, 1988). We show that the 4DWW model is feasible and highly desirable, but only under specific, fair cost-sharing conditions. To move beyond subsidized, temporary NGO trials, institutional mechanisms – such as collective bargaining and regulatory frameworks – are necessary to safeguard the fairness thresholds identified in this study. Without such safeguards, the 4DWW model risks becoming either economically unsustainable for firms or socially regressive for workers.

6. Limitations & future research

Despite its added value, this study has several limitations. First, the vignette-based design involves hypothetical decision scenarios rather than actual implementation decisions; respondents may overestimate their actual willingness to accept compressed working hours when faced with actual implementation. Second, while our convenience snowball sample is geographically distributed across Germany, it likely overrepresents digitally engaged and relatively satisfied workers, which could lead to an upward bias in preferences compared to the broader working population. Third, cross-sectional data prevent causal conclusions;

preferences expressed in February/March 2024 may reflect temporary labor market conditions or seasonal factors (data reliability) that are not captured in longitudinal designs. Fourth, due to low cell counts, we excluded several categorical variables (employment status categories, working conditions categories), which reduced the complexity of the model but limited the explanatory detail regarding occupational and sectoral differences. Finally, income was measured using ordinal categories rather than precise amounts, which limited our ability to test hypotheses about income elasticity with all its nuances. Despite these limitations, the study provides new empirical insights into German employees' preferences regarding cost sharing, which advances the current political discussion on 4DWW beyond the general enthusiasm for international pilot projects.

Several approaches for future research can be identified: Longitudinal studies that follow employees before, during, and after the actual introduction of 4DWW would clarify whether the preferences indicated in the vignettes lead to lasting satisfaction and whether the experiences change the original preferences. Because the generalizability to other regions and labor frameworks – such as typical US 40-hour workweeks – remains unclear, comparative cross-national studies examining how institutional contexts (labor law, bargaining, gender norms) shape 4DWW receptivity would clarify which preferences reflect universal patterns versus Germany-specific constraints. An analysis at the household level that considers family structure, dual-income dynamics, and task distribution would deepen our understanding of how family composition influences working time preferences. Sector-specific feasibility studies in manufacturing, healthcare, retail, and professional services would go beyond blanket recommendations by identifying sector-specific technical and organizational constraints. Finally, ethical analyses of wage reduction provisions are essential: Against the backdrop of stagnating wages, accepting reductions of 15 to 20% may represent an implicit wage cut rather than an optimization of working hours, which necessitates a comparative study of how cost-sharing agreements affect income inequality and the gender pay gap.

7. Conclusion

This study shows that although employee support for 4DWW models is high, it is conditional. Between 60% and 90% of employees are open to 4DWW under favorable cost-sharing conditions, but this support depends crucially on a fair distribution of implementation costs. If wage cuts reach or exceed the threshold of proportional fairness implicitly demanded by employees, acceptance declines sharply. Employees demonstrate a rational cost-benefit

analysis that is consistent with the principles of justice and fairness: they accept 10% wage cuts for 20% fewer working hours, thereby sharing 50% of the implementation costs with employers, but reject a disproportionate distribution of costs.

Demographic variation in preferences raises equity concerns. Part-time workers and employees with limited flexibility in working time arrangements show greater tolerance for wage cuts, while full-time workers with existing flexibility show less enthusiasm. If 4DWW adoption proceeds voluntarily, it risks functioning as a targeted benefit for economically vulnerable populations rather than universal work-time redistribution.

Preferences for days off clearly focus on long weekends (Friday/Monday), reflecting psychological recovery needs and practical considerations (e.g., commuting stress). However, this preference can lead to organizational planning problems if, for example, start-up phases for peak cognitive performance are artificially shortened in the middle of the week and critical deadlines still must be still met. Whether this tension affects long-term productivity remains an open question that requires long-term study.

Anticipated uses of additional time emphasize intrinsic motivations – family, hobbies, household management – rather than economic gain. This suggests that employees value 4DWW for the relaxation and autonomy it offers, in line with their desire for a better work-life balance. This motivational orientation is consistent with previous German studies in which over 80% of employees cited activities such as “time for oneself,” “time for family,” or “time for hobbies” as reasons for wanting a 4DWW (Lott and Windscheid, 2023).

Notably, with the lowest average rating among respondents, secondary employments are one of the least frequently planned activities on the fifth day, indicating employees protect the additional day from work encroachment.

However, this protection is conditional on wage stability; wage reductions threatening household financial stability would undermine the regenerative potential employees anticipate. Based on the results, the following implications may be drawn:

- (1) Cost sharing as a limit: Employees enforce implicit fairness thresholds regarding cost distribution. Our pattern suggests that companies attempting to shift disproportionate costs will encounter considerable resistance. Institutional mechanisms, such as collective bargaining and regulatory safeguards, may be necessary to establish and maintain fair cost sharing.
- (2) Risk of inequality: If the introduction of 4DWW is voluntary at the company level, demographic patterns suggest a concentration among part-time and low-wage workers. This carries the risk that 4DWW will not function as an approach to universal working time

redistribution, but only as another tool for shaping the employment relationships of economically disadvantaged population groups.

(3) Considerations regarding scheduling: While employees predominantly prefer extended weekends, a longer-term study of performance patterns in various organizational contexts would clarify whether employee preferences and organizational efficiency are compatible. Current pilot studies are typically based on self-reports and cannot assess the sustainability of anticipated 4DWW-effects.

(4) Protecting leisure time: The additional daily capacity to promote well-being depends on protection from work-related intrusions. Implementation frameworks that ensure the financial stability of households would increase the likelihood that the promised benefits for well-being will be realized.

(5) German context: Legal restrictions on daily working hours, strong collective bargaining traditions, and the high prevalence of part-time work among women create conditions in Germany that differ from the Anglo-American context. Implementation approaches must be adapted to the context.

The 4DWW is neither a utopian remedy nor an economic fantasy. Under conditions of fair cost distribution and appropriate organizational design, there is considerable demand for it on the part of employees. This attitude reflects a broader desire for autonomy and holistic well-being in the modern workplace as suggested by both our findings and prior survey evidence (Lott & Windscheid, 2023). Its feasibility depends on conscious institutional decisions: Will the costs be distributed fairly between employers and employees? Will the benefits be widely distributed or concentrated among privileged/vulnerable employees? Will attention be paid to scheduling and long-term sustainability during implementation? These are political and management-related questions that require evidence-based argumentation and institutional attention rather than ideological positioning. This study provides an initial empirical basis for answering these questions and highlights both the potential of the 4DWW under fair implementation conditions and the real risks of unfair outcomes without institutional safeguards.

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Appendix A:

Company	Still active?	Still 4DWW?	Evidence
1. 24/Three Consultants - Construction / Architecture (Rushden, northamptonshire)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
2. 5 Squirrels - Health Manufacturing and Retail (Brighton and Hove)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
3. Adzooma - Tech/Advertising (nottingham, Manchester and London)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
4. AKA Case Management - Domiciliary Care (nottingham, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
5. Amplitude Media Limited - Marketing (northampton)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
6. Ascendancy - Marketing (Newport, Shropshire)	yes	unknown	
7. Bedrock Learning Ltd - Software / Education (norwich)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
8. Bookishly - Retail (northamptonshire)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
9. Boom! Studios - Creative (Bangor)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
10. Charity Bank - Banking (Tonbridge, Kent)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
11. Citizens Advice Gateshead - not for profit (Gateshead, Tyne)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
12. Clarkson and Woods Limited - Environmental consulting (Somerset)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
13. Debt Justice - not for profit (London)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
14. Everledger - Technology (London, Birmingham, Manchester (and global)	no	unknown	(https://www.afr.com/technology/government-and-tencent-backed-aussie-blockchain-firm-collapses-20230503-p5d58l)
15. Evolution Money - Financial Services (Manchester)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW, 40 hours working week
16. Flatpack - not for profit (Birmingham)	yes	unknown	
17. Furness Insurance Services - Insurance (London)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
18. Frame 25 - Recruitment, Broadcasting & Media (Oxford)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
19. Happy - Learning (London)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
20. Helping Hands - Housing/Health and Social Care (Alcester, Warwickshire & branches nationwide)	yes	unknown	
21. Hutch - Games (London)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW

22. Kingston First - not for profit (London)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
23. Knights Absorb - Education provider (Guildford) new: : https://www.kasorb.com/	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
24. Literal Humans - Marketing/Advertising (London)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
25. Loudmouth Media - Digital Marketing (Belfast, Dublin, Glasgow, London)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
26. Merthyr Valley Homes - Housing (Merthyr Tydfil, Wales)	yes	yes	
27. Mox London - Creative Agency (London)	yes	unknown	
28. Outcomes Based Healthcare - Healthcare Analytics (London)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
29. Outcomes First Group - Care and Education services (Bolton)	yes	yes	
30. Plattens Fish and Chips - Hospitality (Wells-next-the-sea, norfolk)	yes	unknown	
31. Pressure Drop Brewing - Brewing / manufacturing (London)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
32. Rivelin Robotics - Digital Manufacturing (Sheffield)	yes	no	
33. Royal Society of Biology - Science & charity (London)	yes	unknown	
34. Scotland's International Development Alliance - not for profit (Edinburgh)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 5DWW
35. Sensat - Construction Software (London)	yes	no	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
36. SideQuest Ltd - VR / Gaming (Belfast)	yes	yes	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
37. Sounds Like These - Audio Production (London)	yes	yes	
38. Stellar Asset Management - Finance (Liverpool)	yes	unknown	
39. Stemettes - Social enterprise (London)	yes	unknown	
40. TBL Services - Consultancy (Lancaster)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
41. The Story Mob - Comms & PR Consultancy / Video games (London)	yes	yes	
42. Trio Media - Digital Marketing (Leeds and London)	yes	unknown	Job Advertisement with 4DWW
43. Tyler Grange - Environmental Consulting (Rendcomb, Cirencester)	yes	yes	
44. Unity - PR and communications (London) -> (not found)	unknown		Job Advertisement with 4DWW
45. Waterwise - not for profit (London)	yes	yes	
46. We Are Purposeful - not for profit (London)	yes	unknown	

Appendix B – Vignettes and exact wording of the choice question

T110

Information zu den Jobangeboten

!BITTE LESEN!

In dem folgenden Abschnitt werden Ihnen verschiedene Jobangebote unterbreitet.

Bitte entscheiden Sie anhand der Konditionen, für welches Angebot Sie sich entscheiden würden. Nehmen Sie gerne einen Taschenrechner dazu, um prozentuale Anteile ihres Gehaltes ausrechnen zu können (bspw. 85% | (monatlicher Bruttolohn X 0,85)).

Wichtig: Die Jobangebote basieren auf einer **35 Stunden Woche**. Vergleichen Sie immer **nur** die zwei angezeigten Angebote miteinander!

Bitte nehmen Sie dementsprechend an, **dass Sie Ihr aktuelles Bruttogehalt bei einer 35 Stunden Woche verdienen würden**, dies entspricht dann **100%** ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes.

Des Weiteren wird Ihnen bei beiden Jobangeboten aufgezeigt, wie sich Ihr Stundenlohn verändern würde. Dieser kann niedriger, gleichbleibend oder höher als ihr derzeitiger Stundenlohn sein.

Alle **anderen Vertragskonditionen (Urlaub, Kündigung etc.)** sind bei beiden Verträgen **gleich!**

Arbeiten Sie in Teilzeit? Dann rechnen Sie ihre aktuelles Bruttogehalt bitte auf **35 Stunden** hoch.

Sind Sie arbeitslos/suchend? Verwenden Sie einfach ihr letztes monatlich verdientes Bruttogehalt. Bei Teilzeit bitte entsprechend auf 35 Stunden rechnen.

Nehmen Sie ansonsten fiktiv 4000 € monatliches Bruttogehalt an.

9. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T101

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A	Jobangebot B
100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn) - Fünf-Tage-Woche - Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden - Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden	100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn) - Vier-Tage-Woche - Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden - Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 8,75 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche 1,75 Stunden pro Tag** länger arbeiten.

T112

10. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T102

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Fünf-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Jobangebot B

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (höherer Stundenlohn)
- Vier-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 31,5 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7,88 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche 0,88 Stunden pro Tag** länger arbeiten.
Mit **31,5 Stunden** wöchentlicher Arbeitszeit haben Sie **3,5 Stunden weniger** wie bei **Jobangebot A**.

T113

11. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T103

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Fünf-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Jobangebot B

- 80% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Vier-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 28 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche auf 20% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes verzichten**.

T114

12. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T104

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Fünf-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Jobangebot B

- 90% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (höherer Stundenlohn)
- Vier-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 28 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche auf 10% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes verzichten**.

T115

13. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T105

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Fünf-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Jobangebot B

- 85% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (höherer Stundenlohn)
- Vier-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 28 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche** auf **15% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes verzichten**.

T117

14. Für welches dieser beiden Jobangebote würden Sie sich entscheiden?

T106

Bitte verwenden Sie ihr eigenes monatliches Bruttogehalt.

Ich entscheide mich für...

Jobangebot A

- 100% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (gleichbleibender Stundenlohn)
- Fünf-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 35 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Jobangebot B

- 95% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes (höherer Stundenlohn)
- Vier-Tage-Woche
- Wöchentliche Arbeitszeit von 28 Stunden
- Tägliche Arbeitszeit von 7 Stunden

Unterschied: Bei **Jobangebot B** müssen sie in einer **Vier-Tage-Woche** auf **5% ihres monatlichen Bruttogehaltes verzichten**.

T119

Appendix C – Vignettes translated into English (Author's translation)

Information about the job offers:

Please read!

In the following section, you will be presented with various job offers.

Please decide based on the conditions which offer you would choose. Feel free to use a calculator to work out the percentage share of your salary (e.g., 85% | (monthly gross salary $\times$ 0.85)).

Important: The job offers are based on a 35-hour work week. Always compare only the two displayed offers with each other!

Please proceed with the assumption that your current gross salary would be earned with a 35-hour work week. This corresponds to 100% of your monthly gross salary.

Further, for both job offers, you will be shown how your hourly wage would change. This can be lower, remain the same, or be higher than your current hourly wage.

All other contract conditions (vacation, notice period, etc.) are identical for both contracts!

If you work part-time, please adjust your current gross salary to a 35-hour work week.

If you are unemployed/seeking work, simply use your last monthly gross salary. For part-time, please adjust to 35 hours.

Otherwise, assume a monthly gross salary of 4000 €.

9. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)

- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 8.75 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must work 1.75 hours longer per day in a four-day work week.

10. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (higher hourly wage)
- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 31.5 hours
- Daily working hours of 7.88 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must work 0.88 hours more per day in a four-day work week.

With 31.5 weekly working hours, you have 3.5 hours less than with job offer A.

11. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week

- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 80% of your monthly gross salary (hourly wage unchanged)
- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 28 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must forgo 20% of your monthly gross salary for a four-day work week.

12. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 90% of your monthly gross salary (higher hourly wage)
- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 28 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must forgo 10% of your monthly gross salary for a four-day work week.

13. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 85% of your monthly gross salary (higher hourly wage)
- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 28 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must forgo 15% of your monthly gross salary for a four-day work week.

14. Which of these two job offers would you choose?

Please use your own monthly gross salary.

I choose...

Job offer A:

- 100% of your monthly gross salary (unchanged hourly wage)
- Five-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 35 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Job offer B:

- 95% of your monthly gross salary (higher hourly wage)
- Four-day work week
- Weekly working hours of 28 hours
- Daily working hours of 7 hours

Difference: With job offer B, you must forgo 5% of your monthly gross salary for a four-day work week.

Appendix D – Variables used in the analysis

Group	Variable	Description
Sociodemographic	Gender	Gender of respondents
	Age	(Metric) age of respondents
	Formal education	Dichotomous classification of the highest educational qualification (academics vs. non-academics)
	Marital status	Dichotomous assignment of married and unmarried respondents
	Kids	Dichotomous question asking whether respondents have children under the age of 16
Workplace	Number of employees	(Ordinal) intervals of workforce sizes in the respondent's company
	Workload	(Nominal) inquiry into the physical demands of the job (e.g., predominantly standing activities)
	Working time	Dichotomous distinction between full-time and part-time employment
	Homeoffice	Dichotomous distinction between the existing possibility of working from home or not
	Income	Income levels recorded in (ordinal) intervals

Appendix E – Results of the logistic regressions for vignette scenarios A-G (sociodemographic factor groups)

	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E	Scenario F	Scenario G
Wage	100%	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	100%
Hours/week	35	31.5	28	28	28	28	36.75
Gender (2=Male)	.482** (.226)	-.941** (.368)	-.603** (.288)	-.492** (.219)	-.399* (.232)	-.224 (.274)	.761** (.231)
Age	-.022* (.011)	-.034* (.019)	-.006 (.015)	-.20* (.011)	-.016 (.012)	.000 (.014)	-.005 (.012)
Academic degree (1=yes)	-.105 (.219)	-.292 (.366)	-.067 (.372)	-.227 (.216)	-.441** (.225)	-.010 (.266)	-.346 (.229)
Unmarried (0=yes)	-.115 (.288)	.350 (.515)	-.134 (.286)	.063 (.286)	.352 (.294)	.270 (.346)	-.267 (.313)
No children (compared to children under 16 years of age)	.620** (.256)	.638 (.415)	.274 (.391)	-.272 (.260)	-.210 (.268)	-.458 (.308)	.095 (.277)
Constant	.928 (.566)	3.813 (.983)	-.096 (.344)	1.771 (.567)	.298 (.584)	-1.193 (.691)	-.755 (.596)
Nagelkerke R ²	.056	.097	.024	.037	.044	.012	.052
p	.007	.003	.365	.063	.032	.008	.014

Note. N= 378; df= 373; * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$

Appendix F – Results of the logistic regressions for vignette scenarios A-G (workplace factor groups)

	Scenario A	Scenario B	Scenario C	Scenario D	Scenario E	Scenario F	Scenario G
Wage	100%	100%	95%	90%	85%	80%	100%
Hours/week	35	31.5	28	28	28	28	36.75
Large firm (more than 249 employees vs. SME)	.188 (.258)	.442 (.411)	.094 (.339)	-.037 (.255)	-.017 (.270)	-.017 (.331)	.432 (.282)
Job predominantly seated with additional standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	.028 (.374)	-.576 (.589)	-.282 (.480)	-.306 (.357)	-.410 (.395)	-.678 (.491)	.300 (.367)
Predominantly standing/walking activities (compared to seated only)	-.139 (.415)	-1.476** (.661)	-.691 (.490)	-.115 (.389)	-.076 (.405)	-1.016* (.548)	-.213 (.395)
Full-time job (vs part-time)	.855** (.342)	.549 (.549)	-2.130** (1.033)	-1.401*** (.441)	-1.388*** (.349)	-1.559*** (.370)	.487 (.414)
Option to work from home (1=yes)	-.739** (.353)	-.606 (.609)	-.090 (.456)	-.110 (.339)	-.335 (.358)	-.559 (.425)	-.996*** (.356)
Income: € 3.500 to under € 4.500 (vs. less than € 3.500)	.161 (.329)	-.551 (.563)	.478 (.499)	.277 (.333)	.153 (.339)	.391 (.396)	-.192 (.058)
Income: € 4.500 and above (vs. less than € 3.500)	.306 (.272)	-.680 (.456)	-.318 (.348)	-.117 (.265)	-.315 (.282)	-.398 (.354)	.178 (.281)
Constant	.034 (.417)	2.715 (.730)	3.912 (1.079)	1.863 (.495)	.816 (.420)	.427 (.451)	-.989 (.464)
Nagelkerke R ²	.061	.048	.077	.058	.086	.126	.066
p	.017	.306	.017	.023	.001	< .001	.013

Note. N= 372; df= 365; * $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$