

## WORKIN' 9 TO 5

## Flexible working patterns will become the norm

H1	ACT	PLAN	TRACK	PARK	OPP	THR	NEU
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As professionals juggle the demands of work-life and home-life all in the same place, many employers have relaxed rules about workers starting and ending their days at a set time.

"I think you'll see a new norm around trust and respect" in the ways employers manage their staff moving forward, [says career coach Julie Kratz](#). "By all means, it's not about throwing out all the rules," she emphasises, "but it's about letting people co-create them".

This may also benefit women in the workplace - allowing them more flexibility to balance working, caring and home life. According to Elise Gould, senior economist at the Economic Policy Institute, [these policies could have a positive benefit on working women](#), allowing them to "make a schedule around the other responsibilities they have."

In 2019, [Henley Business School](#) ran a research project involving over 500 business leaders and 2,000 employees, including businesses that have already implemented a four-day working week (33% of businesses surveyed), looking into the benefits, challenges and alternatives to a four-day working week. The main benefits found were:

-  Improving the ability to attract and retain talent
-  Increasing overall employee satisfaction
-  Reporting lower employee sickness levels
-  Increasing productivity.

These benefits have a huge financial impact: the combined savings to UK business is already as high as £92 billion a year, 2% of total annual turnover. And 75% of the businesses surveyed said that offering staff flexible working is important in retaining the 'Quadgen' workforce.

## FAIR'S FAIR

## Rising inequality has been made worse by the pandemic

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[The Deaton review of Inequality in Britain](#) demonstrates:

-  The COVID crisis has exacerbated inequalities between the high- and low-paid and between graduates and non-graduates. The crisis has hit the self-employed and others in insecure and non-traditional forms of employment especially hard. Educational inequalities will almost certainly have been exacerbated by the crisis. The crisis has had very different impacts on different BAME groups
-  Through 2020, pensioners have on average reported becoming financially better off, whilst the young have borne the brunt of job and income loss.
-  Covid mortality rates have been highest among some black groups and in the most deprived areas.

It is important to think about policies that will be needed to repair the damage and that focus on those who have suffered the most. "We need to build a country in which everyone feels that they belong."

An LSE survey from November 2020, found that overall [the rate of not working is 12.7%](#). [That is one in eight of the workforce, or over four million people effectively not working](#). Those most affected are younger people, the self-employed, and those from poorer backgrounds. For example, the rate of worklessness is twice as high for 16-25-year-olds as compared to 26-65-year-olds.

They argue that job guarantees are needed to avert the catastrophe of long-term unemployment.

Others are arguing that the government should institute a universal basic income (UBI) scheme. [Experts told a recent London Assembly committee](#) that "modelling showed child poverty could be reduced by 40 per cent if everyone received between £60 and £75 per week regardless of income."

## FURTHER READING