



Questions and Answers about TELEWORK: A Sloan Work and Family Research Network Fact Sheet

Introduction

The Sloan Work and Family Research Network has prepared Fact Sheets that provide statistical answers to some important questions about work–family and work–life issues. This Fact Sheet includes statistics about Telework. (Last updated: September 2009)



How many employees are teleworking?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “The number of Americans whose employer allows them to work from home at least one day per month increased to 12.4 million in 2006, up from approximately 9.9 million in 2005. . . . The rise represents a 25–percent one–year increase, and a 63–percent two–year increase. In 2004, the number of employees allowed to work from home at least one day per month was approximately 7.6 million” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 2).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “Based on government estimates of 149.3 million workers in the U.S. labor force (2005), the 2006 data means that roughly 8 percent of American workers have an employer that allows them to telework one day per month” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 2).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Since 2002, the total number of U.S. once–a–month teleworkers has risen by roughly 39 percent” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 2).
- ✔ **Fact 4** More than 23 million U.S. workers telework on a part–time or full–time basis (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2004).
- ✔ **Fact 5** In April 2001, 53,389 federal employees were teleworkers. In October 2001, that number jumped to 72,844. In October 2002, it jumped again to 90,010, and in October 2003, to 102,921 (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2004).
- ✔ **Fact 6** “The number of telework–eligible and teleworking employees continues to grow. Seventy–four agencies with more than 1.7 million employees responded to the 2003 telework survey. The agencies reported a total of 751,844 employees (43%) are eligible to telework, compared with 625,313 employees (35%) in 2002. This represents a gain of more than 126,531 telework–eligible employees or a gain of more than 20%” (U.S. Office of Personnel Management, 2004).
- ✔ **Fact 7** “About 18 percent of all wage and salaried employees use a computer at home to read and send job–related email outside regular work hours” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 23).



✔ **Fact 8** “More than one-third of employees (35%) sometimes use a computer at home for job-related work” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 22).



How many hours per week are employees teleworking?

✔ **Fact 1** “On days that they (employees) worked at home, about 28 percent of the full-time self-employed worked more than 7 hours at home, compared with 8 percent of wage and salary workers. Conversely, on days that they worked at home, 52 percent of full-time wage and salary workers spent 1 hour or less working at home, compared with 30 percent of self-employed workers” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).



Which employees are most likely to telework?

✔ **Fact 1** “Self-employed workers were over three times more likely to do some work at home than wage and salary workers. About 34 percent of the self-employed did at least some work at home on an average day, compared with 10 percent of wage and salary workers” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).

✔ **Fact 2** Small business owners (23%) are more likely to sometimes work regular paid hours at home than either self-employed independents (15%) or wage and salaried employees (9%) (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 59).

✔ **Fact 3** According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in 2001, the rate at which men and women worked from their homes at least once a week was approximately comparable: 14.8% and 15.2%, respectively (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

✔ **Fact 4** Of the total U.S. population employed in 2001, 16.3% of White wage and salary workers were paid to work at home at least once a week as part of their primary job; in comparison, 7.6% of Black employees and 6.7% of Hispanic employees were paid to work at home at least once a week as part of their primary job (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).

✔ **Fact 5** “[This report] provides a selective sample of the profile data from the survey for ‘employee teleworkers’ who worked remotely at least one day a month in 2006. The data illustrates that three out of five employee teleworkers are male, teleworkers are predominantly married or living with a partner, and the single largest group of teleworkers (43%) live in a household that earns \$75,000 USD or more per year” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 6).



Which professions are most conducive to telework?

✔ **Fact 1** According to the National Study of the Changing Workforce, “employees in managerial and professional occupations are much more likely (62%) than employees in other occupations (22%) to use a computer at home for job-related work” (Bond, Thompson, Galinsky, & Prottas, 2002, p. 23).



- ✔ **Fact 2** “Among wage and salary workers, those employed in education, training, and library occupations worked some of the largest percentages of their total weekly work hours at home (12 percent)” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Wage and salary workers employed in computer and mathematical science occupations also worked among the largest percentage of their total weekly work hours at home (10 percent)” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 4** “The largest difference between self-employed and wage and salary workers occurred among arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media occupations. Self-employed workers in these occupations worked about 55 percent of their total weekly work hours at home, compared with only 7 percent for wage and salary workers” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 5** “Self-employed workers in personal care occupations, which include childcare workers, also worked a large share of their total weekly work hours at home (about 43 percent), compared with 9 percent for wage and salary workers in these occupations” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 6** Of people employed in 2001, 29.8% of managerial and professional employees; 12.2% of technical, sales, and administrative support employees; and 5.3% of service employees worked from home at least once a week (U.S. Census Bureau, 2003).



Which professions are least conducive to telework?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Among wage and salary workers, the occupational groups with some of the smallest percentages of total weekly work hours spent at home (about 1 percent) include food preparation and serving occupations, production occupations, and building and grounds cleaning and maintenance occupations” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “Among self-employed workers, those employed in construction and extraction occupations and health care practitioner and technical occupations worked some of the smallest percentages of their total weekly work hours at home (about 8 percent)” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Workers in transportation occupations also worked among the smallest share of total weekly work hours at home, regardless of whether they were wage and salary workers (1 percent) or self-employed (11 percent)” (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2009, p. 1).



What are the employee benefits of teleworking?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Employees in all work-from-home arrangements report less emotional and physical fatigue than on-site workers” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 25).



- ✔ **Fact 2** “Regular tele-workers (46%) are less likely to respond that they are drained at the end of a work day than are on-site workers (58%)” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 25).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Remote workers (54%) and regular tele-workers (45%) are the most satisfied with their work arrangements; about half of them report they are ‘very satisfied’” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 21).
- ✔ **Fact 4** “Telework arrangements support employees who need a reasonable accommodation for a disability or have a temporary health problem. In 2002, there were 1,749 employees who fell into these two categories. In 2003 that number grew to 3,849 (an increase of more than 120%)” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002).



How does telework affect business?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Regular tele-workers and remote workers report that 84% and 86% of their interactions with co-workers are about work-related issues” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 68).



How does telework affect home life?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “Most family members (83%) experience very little or no stress as a result of someone in the family working from home” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 28).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “Two-thirds of family members (of employees who regularly work from home) report a ‘very positive’ or ‘somewhat positive’ impact (of these work arrangements) on the family (65%)” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 27).
- ✔ **Fact 3** “Very few family members feel the employee’s working at home has a negative impact on either the family (8%) or their relationship with the employee (9%)” (Richman, Noble, & Johnson, 2002, p. 27).
- ✔ **Fact 4** “In 2005, people identified as ‘employed teleworkers’ were 4.1 times as likely to say that they conducted work while on vacation as all Americans in general. In 2006, this ratio changed little” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 5).



How does broadband access affect telework?

- ✔ **Fact 1** “In 2004, 8 million home-based ‘employed teleworkers’ used broadband; in 2006 the number is 19.1 million” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 4).
- ✔ **Fact 2** “The number of teleworkers using a broadband connection at home increased by more than 45 percent in the 2006 survey, following an even-larger 65 percent rise in the previous survey (2005)” (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 4).



The Network has additional resources related to this topic.

1. Visit a topic page on Telework at: <http://wfnetwork.bc.edu/topic.php?id=4>
Topic pages provide resources and information, including statistics, definitions, overviews & briefs, bills & statutes, interviews, teaching resources, audio/video, suggested readings, and links.
2. Visit our database of academic literature with citations and annotations of literature related to the issue of Telework. You can connect to this database at:
http://library.bc.edu/F?func=find-b-0&local_base=BCL_WF



References

Bond, J. T., Thompson, C., Galinsky, E., & Prttas, D. (2002). *Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce*. New York: Families and Work Institute.

"The NSCW surveys representative samples of the nation's workforce once every five years (1992, 1997, 2002). Sample sizes average 3,500, including both wage and salaried employees and self-employed workers" (Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce, 2002, p. v).

Several of the questions in the National Study of the Changing Workforce were taken from or based upon questions in the Quality of Employment Survey (QES) conducted three times by the Department of Labor from 1969 to 1977. Although the NSCW is more comprehensive than the QES in addressing issues related to both work and personal life and has a stronger business perspective, having comparable data from over a 25 year period has provided a unique opportunity to look at trends over time. The 2002 NSCW uses 25 years of trend data to examine five topics in depth: women in the workforce; dual earner couples, the role of technology in employees' lives on and off the job, work-life supports on the job, and working for oneself versus someone else" (Highlights of the National Study of the Changing Workforce, 2002).

To read the Executive Summary or the press release, or to purchase the full report as a PDF E-product, please visit <http://www.familiesandwork.org/announce/2002NSCW.html>

DiNatale, M., & Boraas, S. (2002). The labor force experience of women from "Generation X." *Monthly Labor Review*, 125, 3-15.

"Most of the data in this chapter were derived from the Current Population Survey (CPS), a monthly sample survey of households conducted by the Bureau of the Census for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. For more information regarding the Current Population Survey, see Current Population Survey: Design and Methodology, Bureau of Labor Statistics Technical Paper 63, March 2000" (p.15).

U.S. Office of Personnel Management. (2004). *The status of telework in the federal government 2004*. Retrieved from http://www.telework.gov/Reports_and_Studies/tw_rpt04/index.aspx

Data were collected from 74 federal agencies with more than 1.7 million employees. Though 77 agencies responded in 2002 and 74 responded in 2003, the two data sets are comparable with regard to the federal population. Four small agencies, with a total of 18 teleworkers, reported in 2002, but not 2003. Two small agencies, with a total of 18 teleworkers, reported in 2003, but not 2002. Two larger agencies that had reported independently in 2003 reported as parts of parent organizations in 2003. The new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) reported for the first time in 2003. The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) reported separately in 2002 and as part of the Department of Commerce in 2003. Thus, changes from 2002 to 2003 can be used to evaluate overall progress of the federal telework program. However, because 2003 was a year of transition, with many agencies moving all or part of their staffs into DHS, taking their teleworkers with them, caution must be used in evaluating the progress of specific agencies or comparing agencies with one another.

For a description of data sources, see http://www.telework.gov/documents/tw_rpt04/status-results.asp#data
See http://www.telework.gov/documents/tw_rpt04/status-conclusion.asp for conclusions of the study.



Richman, A., Noble, K., & Johnson, A. (2002). *When the workplace is many places. The extent and nature of off-site work today*. Watertown, MA: WFD Consulting Inc.

This report, sponsored by the American Business Collaboration for Quality Dependent Care, studies off-site work in organizations with at least 500 employees. Findings are based on "a nationally representative sample of 2057 adults who are either full-time employees of companies with 500 or more employees, or family members of employees" (p. 1).

To download the report's Executive Summary: http://www.abcdpendentcare.com/docs/ABC_Executive_Summary_final.pdf

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2009). Work-at-home patterns by occupation. *Issues in Labor Statistics, 9* (2). Retrieved from <http://www.bls.gov/opub/ils/pdf/opbils72.pdf>

This paper provides the percentages of full-time workers with a single job who worked at home on an average day as well as the percent of total weekly hours spent at various locations by class of worker and occupation.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2003). Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2003, The National Data Book, Section 12, Labor Force, Employment, and Earnings, Table No. 605, Persons Doing Job-Related Work at Home: 2001. Washington DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

The chief source of these data is the Current Population Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The sample includes employed full-time wage and salary workers 16 years old and over in the U.S. and excludes the self employed. Data relate to the primary job.

For a description of data sources, see <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/labor.pdf>
See <http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/03statab/app3.pdf> for limitations of data.

WorldatWork. (2007). *Telework trendlines for 2006: 2007 survey brief*. Retrieved from http://www.workingfromanywhere.org/news/Trendlines_2006.pdf

"The following report includes data from the Telework Module of the '2006 American Interactive Consumer Survey,' a random digit dialed (RDD) telephone survey conducted Oct. 17 through Nov. 5, 2006, by The Dieringer Research Group, Inc. The telecommuting questions in the '2006 American Interactive Consumer Survey' are commissioned by WorldatWork through a special arrangement with The Dieringer Research Group.

One thousand and one telephone interviews were conducted with adults 19 years and older in the United States using computer generated random digit telephone lists. The data were weighted to match current population norms for U.S. adults 18 years and older, using four weighting factors: age, gender, educational attainment and U.S. Census region" (WorldatWork, 2007, p. 1).
