

OUR OWN TIME

*The Newsletter of the European Network
for the Fair Sharing of Working Time*

Welcome

The debate on working time is one of the most salient topics on work and politics across Europe today, with a growing movement pushing for a more just distribution of labour and leisure time.

The European Network for the Fair Sharing of Working Time coordinates organisations, be they trade unions, political parties or civil society organisations, around the subject of working time reduction and adaptation.

This newsletter collates and shares the latest information on working time reduction from across Europe. The newsletter is released quarterly, and this is the **12th issue**. If you would like to see the first ten issues, please use this [link](#). You can access the 11th issue onward from [here](#).

The newsletter is produced by Autonomy, and is coordinated by ATTAC (Germany – Group ArbeitFAIRTeilen) and Réseau Roosevelt (France). It is supported by the Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung's Brussels Office and funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.

If you would like to subscribe to receive this email, please sign up [here](#).



COLLECTIF
ROOSEVELT

ROSA
LUXEMBURG
STIFTUNG
BRUSSELS OFFICE



In this issue - #12

<u>Call for submissions</u>	2
<u>Conference - Reminder</u>	3
<u>Belgium</u>	4
<u>Germany</u>	5
<u>Greece</u>	6
<u>Iceland</u>	7
<u>Lithuania</u>	8
<u>Portugal</u>	9
<u>Spain</u>	10
<u>Switzerland</u>	11
<u>United Kingdom</u>	12
<u>Beyond Europe</u>	14

Call for submissions

The newsletter is dependent on contributions from the Network's members.

If you would like to become a Lead Contact, or have any information you think should be included in the next newsletter, please contact the Network Coordinator, India, at:

workingtimenetwork.europe@gmail.com

European Network for the Fair Sharing of Working Time Conference 2022 - Reminder

When: Thursday 20th - Friday
21st October 2022

Where: [venue to be
confirmed], Brussels

The biannual conference will be held in person and virtually this year, following the online events in Autumn 2020.

**More details will be confirmed soon,
including the programme and speakers.**

Belgium

The Brussels Economic Forum discusses a four-day week

The European Commission's flagship annual economic event in 2022 debated the introduction of a four-day week in May.

The debate considered whether a four-day week would contribute to a more sustainable economic model by increasing wellbeing, boosting productivity and reducing emissions.

The final vote at the end of the debate found that 69% of attendees were in favour of the benefits of a four-day work week.

See the Twitter coverage of the event [here](#).

Germany

The Network will host a workshop at the European Summer University of Social Movements on 19th August.

Margareta Steinrücke, Alexandra Arntsen and Adrien Tusseau will present the Network's mission, objectives and activities at a workshop on 19th August 2022 in Mönchengladbach.

Alongside a discussion of the trends and actions around working time reduction across Europe, participants will be invited to join an open debate on strategies for achieving working time reduction.

See details about the Summer University programme [here](#).

Greece

The Institute of Alternative Policies at the ENA interviews the European Network

Margareta Steinrücke and Adrien Tusseau were [interviewed](#) by Dora Kotsakas of the Institute of Alternative Policies at the ENA in May.

The Institute became a member of the Network in March 2022, and the interview discusses the Network's goals and actions within the movement for working time reduction.

See coverage of the interview in [News247](#), [Left](#), [Pressenza](#), [Sofokleousin](#), [Politicus](#), [Anatropi News](#), [Ναυτεμπορική](#) and [Avgi](#).

Iceland

Update on working time reduction initiatives

A recent survey conducted amongst public sector workers in Iceland reveals that a large majority of workers, 71%, are satisfied with the shorter hours introduced last year.

The dissatisfaction of 15% of public sector workers is attributed to a lack of collaboration with workers on irregular hours and a lack of additional government funding to support those in shift work.

Read the full update, with more information on the survey sources [here](#).

Lithuania

Parents in the public sector with children under the age of three given a four-day work week

Under legislation [passed](#) in April, employees working in the public sector will be permitted to work a 32-hour week at full-pay if they have children under the age of three. The law will come into effect next year, and is intended to address the persistent gender pay gap in Lithuania.

The initiative is limited, as fewer than 30% of Lithuania's employees work in the public sector, but it could act as a litmus test for expanded legislation.

Portugal

Movement towards introducing a four-day week

A snap general election held in January saw the re-election of Prime Minister António Costa with a landslide victory. As part of the government's State Budget 2022, a proposal to study and debate new labour organisation models was [approved](#).

The majority of Portuguese political parties pledged to consider a shorter working week, and to promote a pilot programme for new models of work organisation.

Spain

Global 4-Day week summit held in Valencia

The first ever international conference on the four-day week was held at the end of May in Valencia.

The two-day summit had representatives from the Spanish and Valencian governments, speakers from civil society organisations around the world, private sector representatives, academics and international politicians.

The conference demonstrates that momentum has grown behind the movement towards working time reduction since the pandemic.

See the first day of the conference [here](#).

See the second day of the conference [here](#).

Find news coverage of the events [here](#).

Switzerland

Davos debates the four-day work week

At the World Economic Forum's 2022 annual meeting, the four-day week was debated by representatives from the private and public sector. This included Ohood Bint Khalfan Al Roumi, Minister of State for Government Development and the Future in the United Arab Emirates Government.

The debate, entitled "The Four-Day Week: Necessity or Luxury?", discussed whether the 40-hour working week has had its day.

Watch the debate [here](#).

United Kingdom

World's largest 4-day week pilot launches in the UK

Over 70 companies are taking part in the UK's four-day week trial for the next six months.

Launched at the start of June, over 3,000 workers will see their hours reduced to 32 per week with no loss of pay.

Companies include charities, IT organisations, breweries and a fish and chip shop.

Academics from the University of Oxford, University of Boston and University of Cambridge will work with Autonomy, the 4 Day Week UK campaign and 4 Day Week Global to run the pilot.

View news coverage from the BBC [here](#), and the New York Times [here](#). See video reporting on City Wire [here](#).

New research project launched studying psychological and biological changes of a 4 day week

Researchers at the University of Sussex have launched a new research project studying the changes that take place in the mind, brain, and body when employees switch to a 4 day week.

Participants from local employers are taking part in MRI brain scans, blood tests, and mental health and occupational psychology assessments, to find out why a 4 day week can be so effective in improving wellbeing and workplace performance.

The study team are continuing to recruit employers to the research through 2022, with the results anticipated later in the year.

See Charlotte Rae, the project's lead contact, [here](#).

130,000 people sign petition calling for a four-day week

The [petition](#), launched on change.org, calls for a four-day week to cut the UK's carbon footprint.

The petition cites the potential to reduce the UK's carbon emissions by a fifth, the equivalent of taking 27 million cars off the road, as a reason to reduce working hours to 32 per week.

See news coverage of the petition [here](#).

Four day week video launched by Change the Week

An animation directed by award-winning Ian Pons Jewell designed by a number of talented artists has been released.

The video is voiced-over by Stephen Fry, and considers the meaning of work and working time reduction.

Watch the full video [here](#).

See Autonomy's launch [here](#).

Beyond Europe

California proposes a four-day week for companies with more than 500 employees

Around one fifth of the state's companies would be affected. Firms would be forced to pay overtime to anyone working more than 32 hours per week.

The [proposed](#) bill would exclude gig economy workers from overtime pay requirements.

Juliet Schor TED Talk on the Four Day Week

Economist Juliet Schor, Professor of Sociology at the University of Boston, makes the case for a four-day, 32-hour work week with five days of pay.

She [argues](#) that this model could address challenges such as burnout and the climate crisis.