

# SWAA January 2022 Updates

Jose Maria Barrero, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis

19 January 2022



Latest survey wave included: December 2021

To sign up for regular results updates, please sign up [here](#).

- **Source of all data (unless noted):** Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes (SWAA), see [www.wfhresearch.com](http://www.wfhresearch.com)

- **When referring to these results please cite:**

Barrero, Jose Maria, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis, 2021. “Why working from home will stick,” National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 28731.

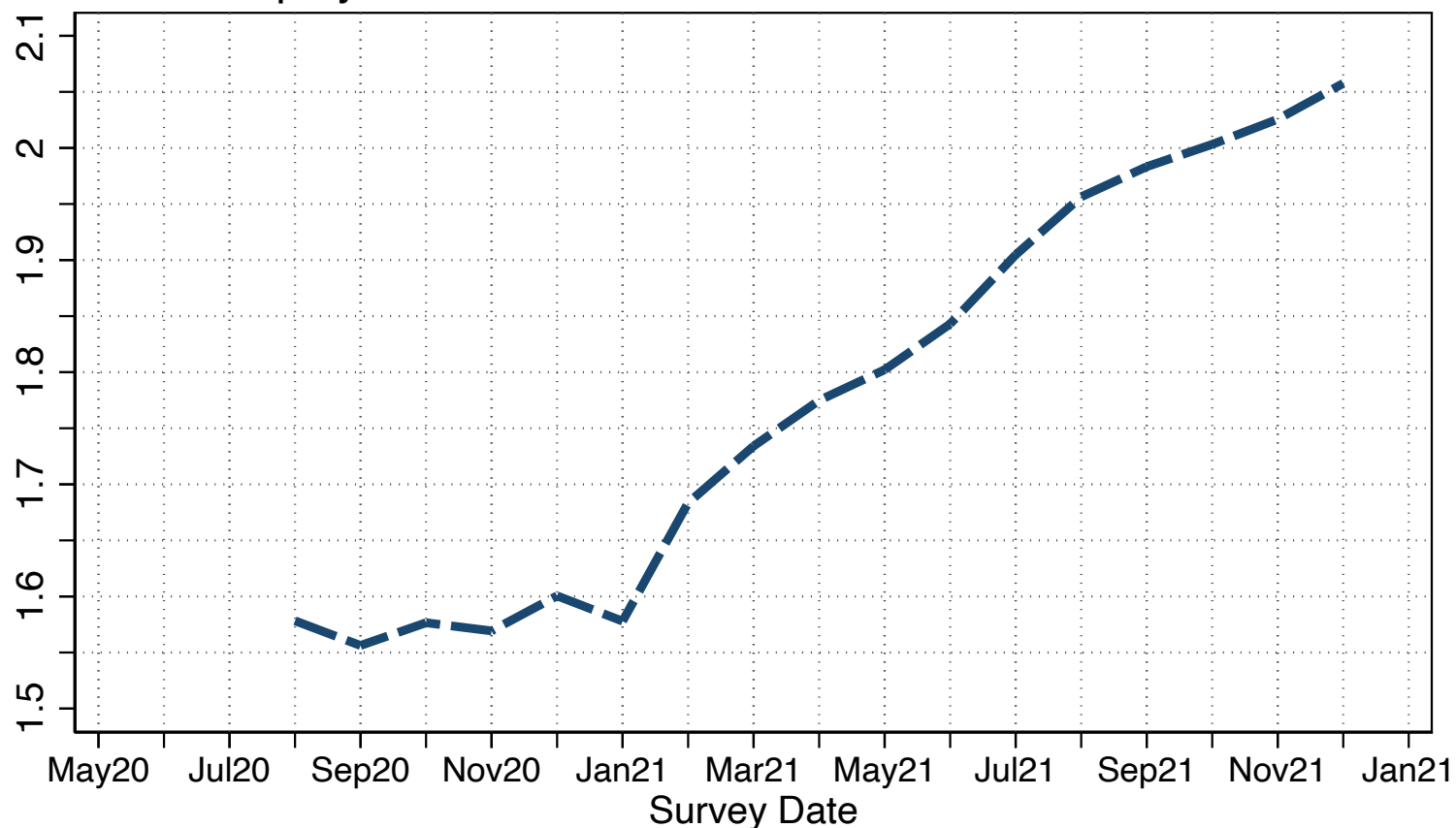
[www.wfhresearch.com](http://www.wfhresearch.com)

## Introduction & Methodology (2/2)

- **Target population:** US residents aged 20 to 64 who earned \$20k or more in 2019. Between April and September 2021 we gradually moved to include individuals who earned \$10k to \$20k in 2019.
  - Each survey wave goes into the field on the 3rd Tuesday of the month and data collection typically takes 10 to 12 days.
  - Each wave collects 2,500 or 5,000 responses.
    - April 2021 and later waves collect 5,000 responses
    - Prior to April 2021 most waves collected 2,500 responses, but August 2020, December 2020, and January 2021 collected 5,000.
    - We drop respondents who “speed” through the survey, so the actual usable number of responses in each wave is somewhat less than the number we collect.
- **Representativeness:** Commercial providers field the survey on our behalf, drawing from a variety of sources for potential respondents.
  - We reweight the raw survey data to match the share of the population in a given {age x sex x education x earnings} cell in a pooled sample of 2010-2019 Current Population Survey data. See Figure 2 in Barrero, Bloom, and Davis (2021).
  - Unless noted, all statistics and charts use reweighted data.

# Respondents who have worked from home during the pandemic now expect to do so 2 days/week on average after the end of the pandemic

Average Days per Week Working From Home  
After the Pandemic Ends:  
Employer Plans for Workers Able to Work From Home



## Responses to the question:

- ***After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?***

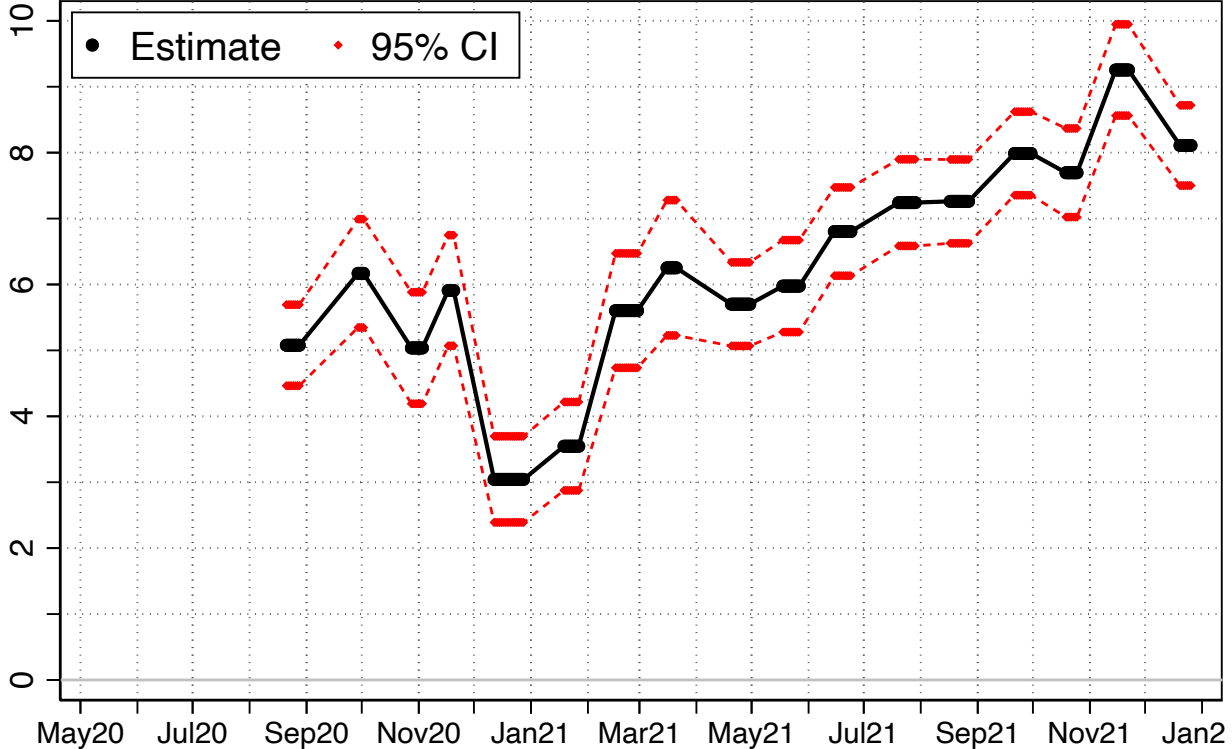
**Sample:** Data are from all SWAA waves, covering July 2020 to December 2021. The sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for post-COVID WFH and who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic. In particular, we exclude respondents who report having no employer.

**N = 42,501**

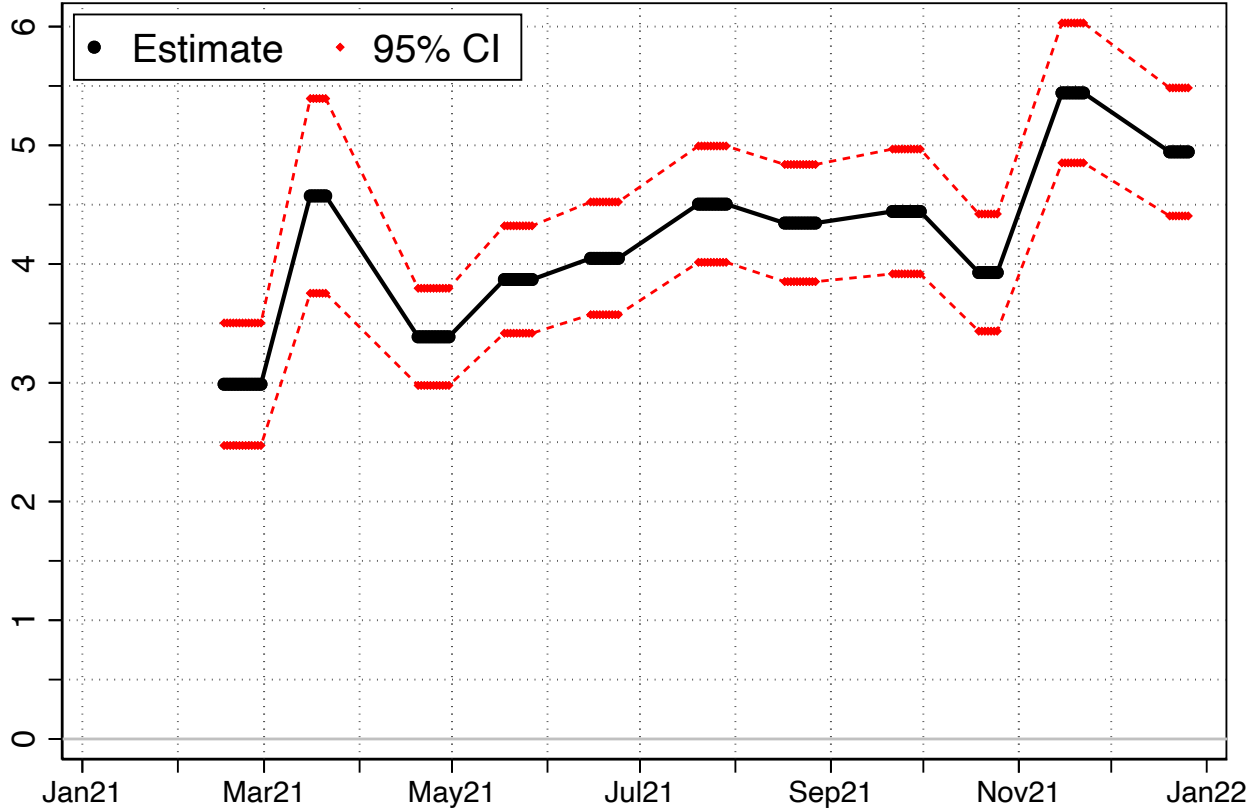
# Work-from-home efficiency has risen since the start of the pandemic (raw data)



Relative Efficiency of Working From Home (%) in Comparison with Working on Business Premises



True Productivity Gain (%): Efficiency + Commuting Time

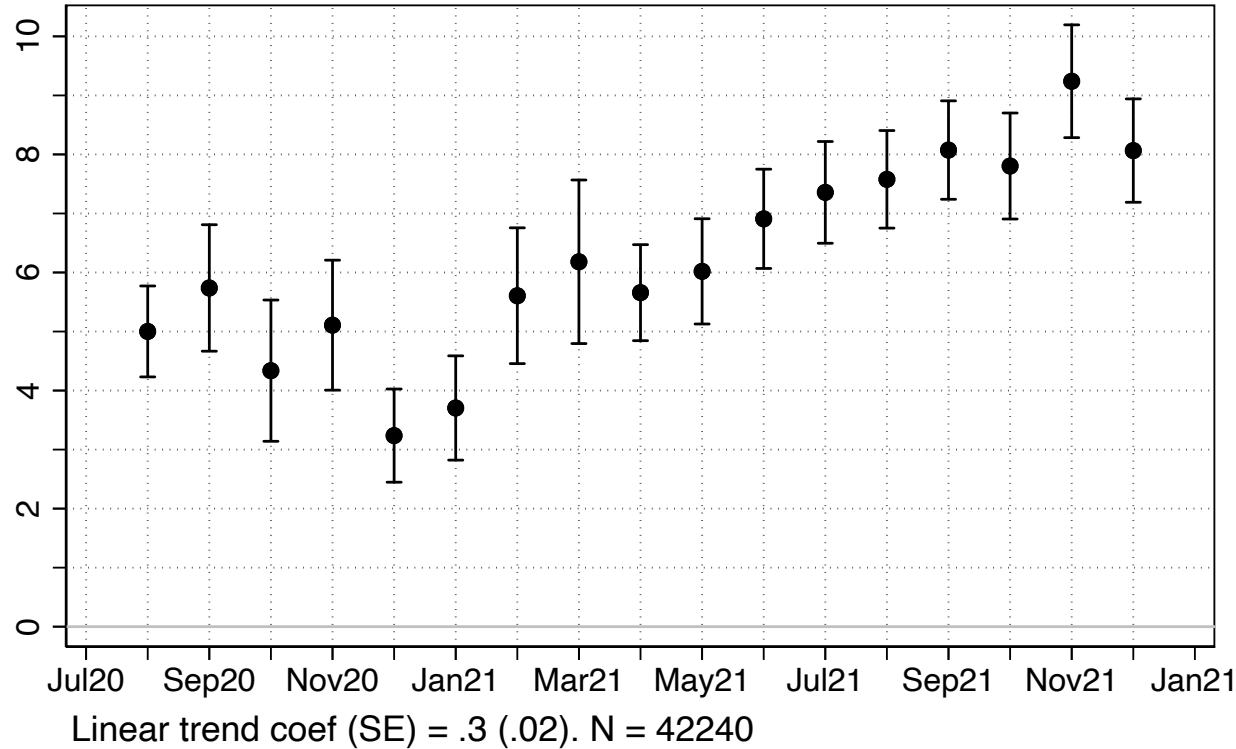


**Notes:** The figures show time series of means and 95% confidence intervals of the evolution of work-from-home productivity across survey waves. The left figure shows self-reported efficiency of working from home relative to working on business premises for those with work-from-home experience during the pandemic. The right figure shows projected true productivity gains from the shift to work-from-home, which we estimate from self-assessed relative efficiency, the projected amount of post-COVID work-from-home for each respondent, and savings in commute time, if those are not already included in the self-assessed relative efficiency. **N = 42,333 (left) and 15,589 (right)**

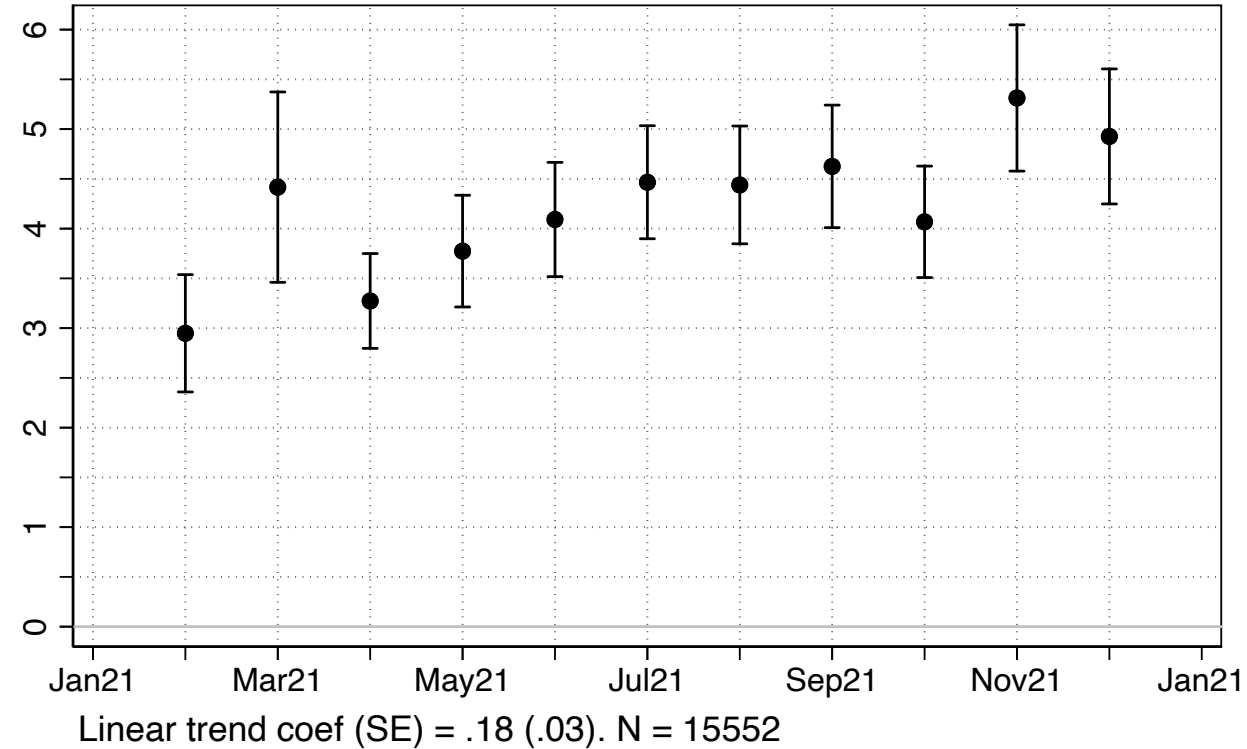
# Work-from-home efficiency has risen since the start of the pandemic (controlling for respondent characteristics)



Efficiency of Working From Home  
Relative to Working on Business Premises (%)



True Productivity Gain (%):  
Projected Efficiency + Commuting Time Gains

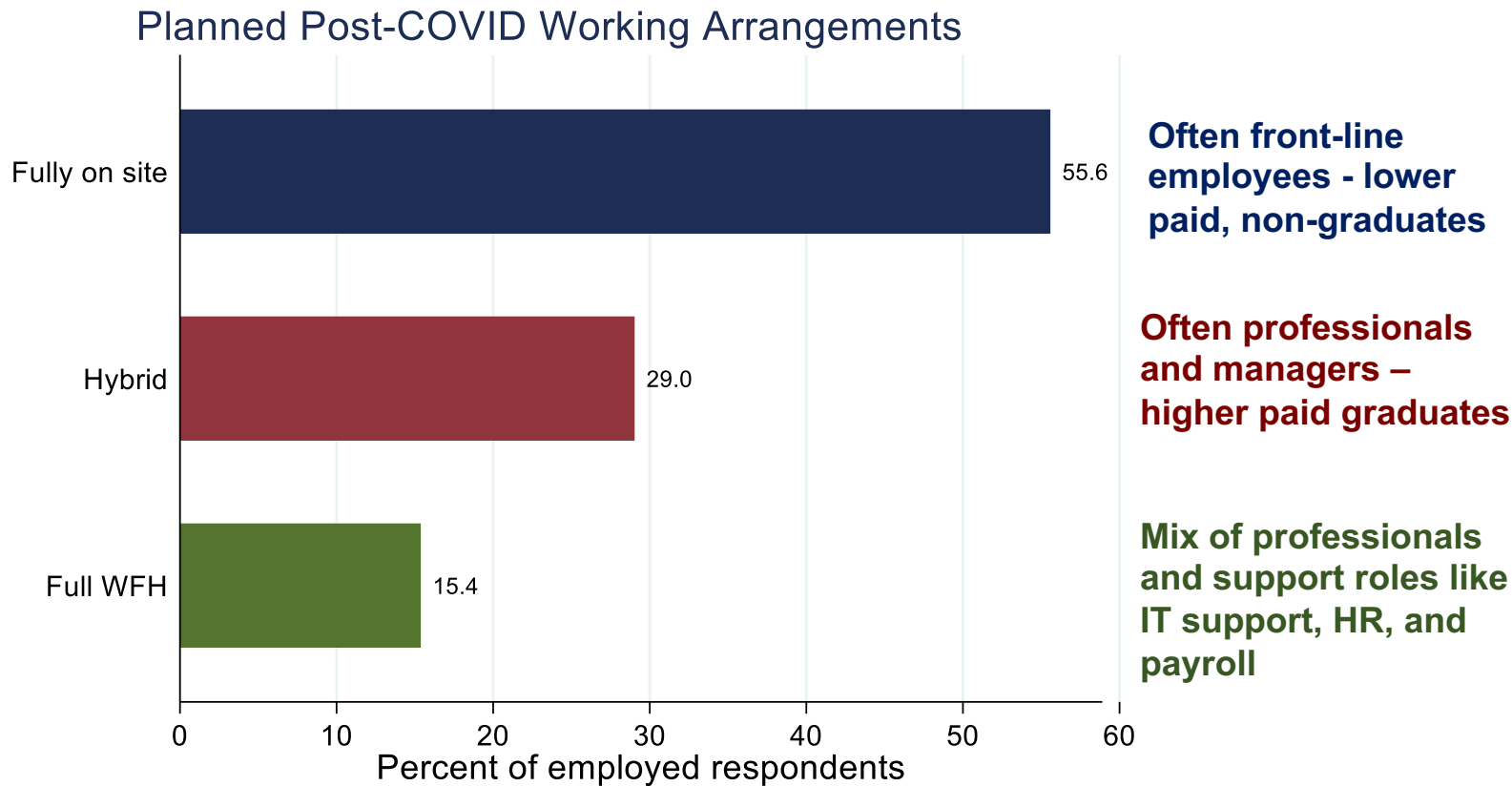


**Notes:** The figures show binned scatter plots and 95% confidence intervals of the evolution of work-from-home productivity across survey waves, after controlling for age, gender, the presence of children, industry of current (or most recent) job, race/ethnicity, log(2019 earnings) and years of education. The dependent variables are self-reported efficiency of working from home relative to working on business premises for those with work-from-home experience during the pandemic (left), and projected true productivity gains from the shift to work-from-home, which we estimate from self-assessed relative efficiency, the projected amount of post-COVID work-from-home for each respondent, and savings in commute time, if those are not already included in the self-assessed relative efficiency.

# Just over half of US workers will work fully on site after the end of the pandemic.



## About 30% will have “hybrid” working arrangements, twice as many as will be fully remote.



**Responses to the question:**

*- After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?*

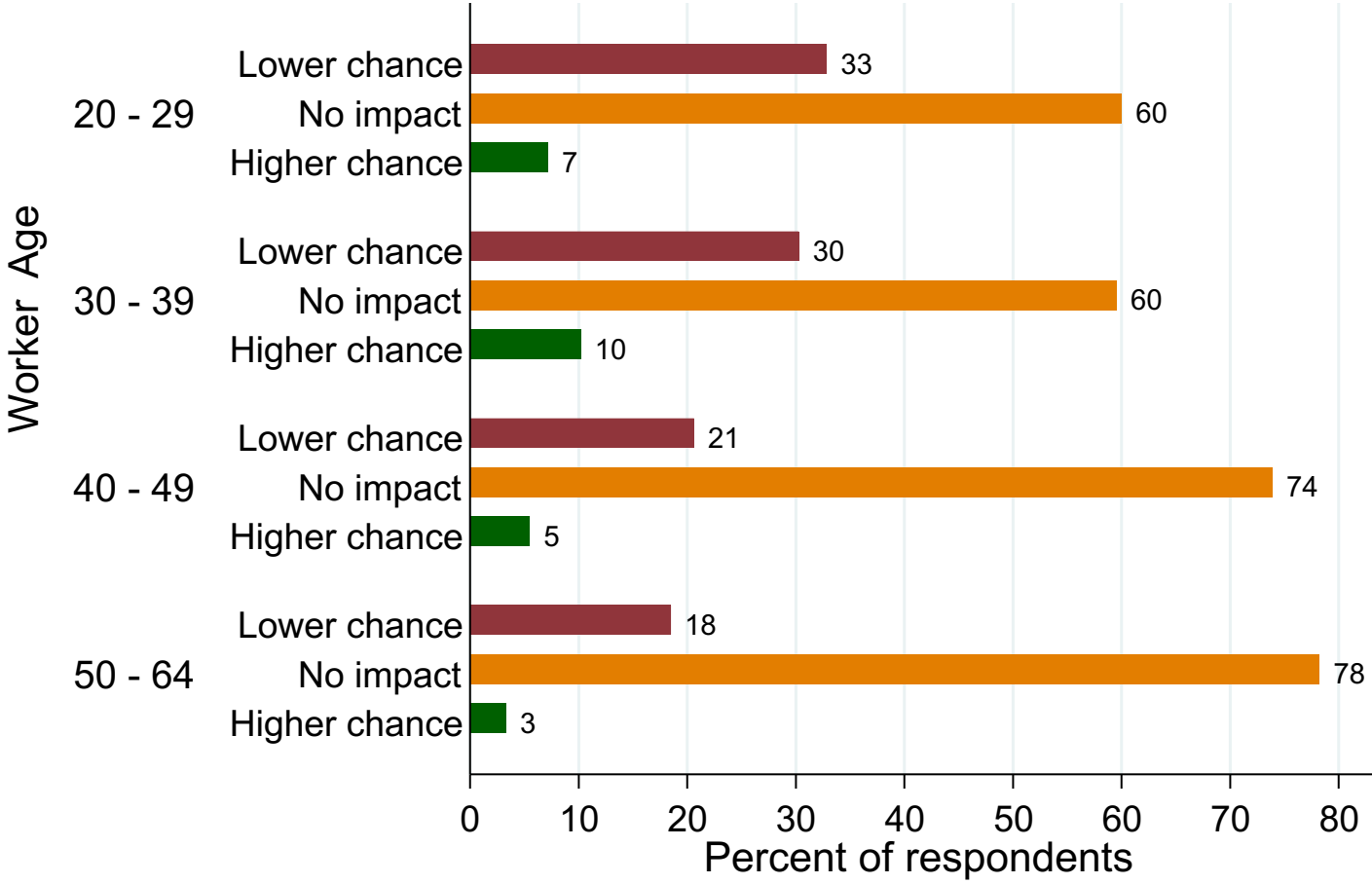
**Notes:** Data from 16,575 US responses in August through December 2021, reweighted to match the US population. We include responses from workers who can and who can't work from home. Please see <https://wfhresearch.com/> for more details

# Presenteeism bias is more concerning to younger workers.

## They perceive extra days working from home to have more of a negative effect on promotions than do older workers.



Would WFH 1 more day per week impact your promotion?



### Responses to the question:

- *If you were to **work from home one more day per week than your co-workers**, how might this affect your **chance of a promotion in the next 3 years?***

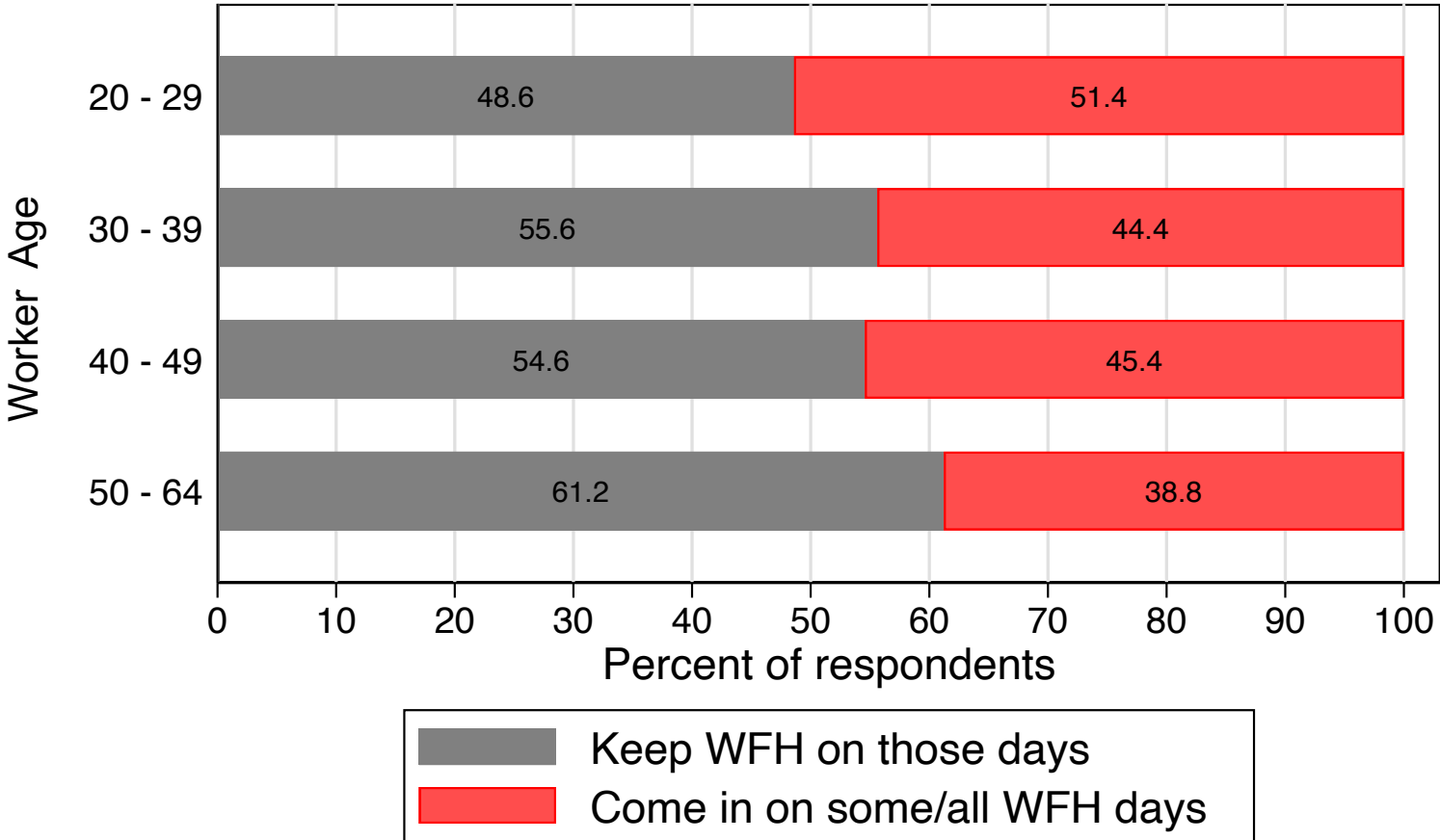
**Notes:** Data are from 3,477 respondents to the May 2021 survey wave who are currently employed. We reweight the sample to match the US population on age, sex, education, and earnings. For details, please see <https://wfhresearch.com/>



# Accordingly, younger workers are more willing to break with the agreed-upon hybrid model to get face time with their manager.



If your manager starts coming in on some of your work-from-home days, what will you do?



### Responses to the questions:

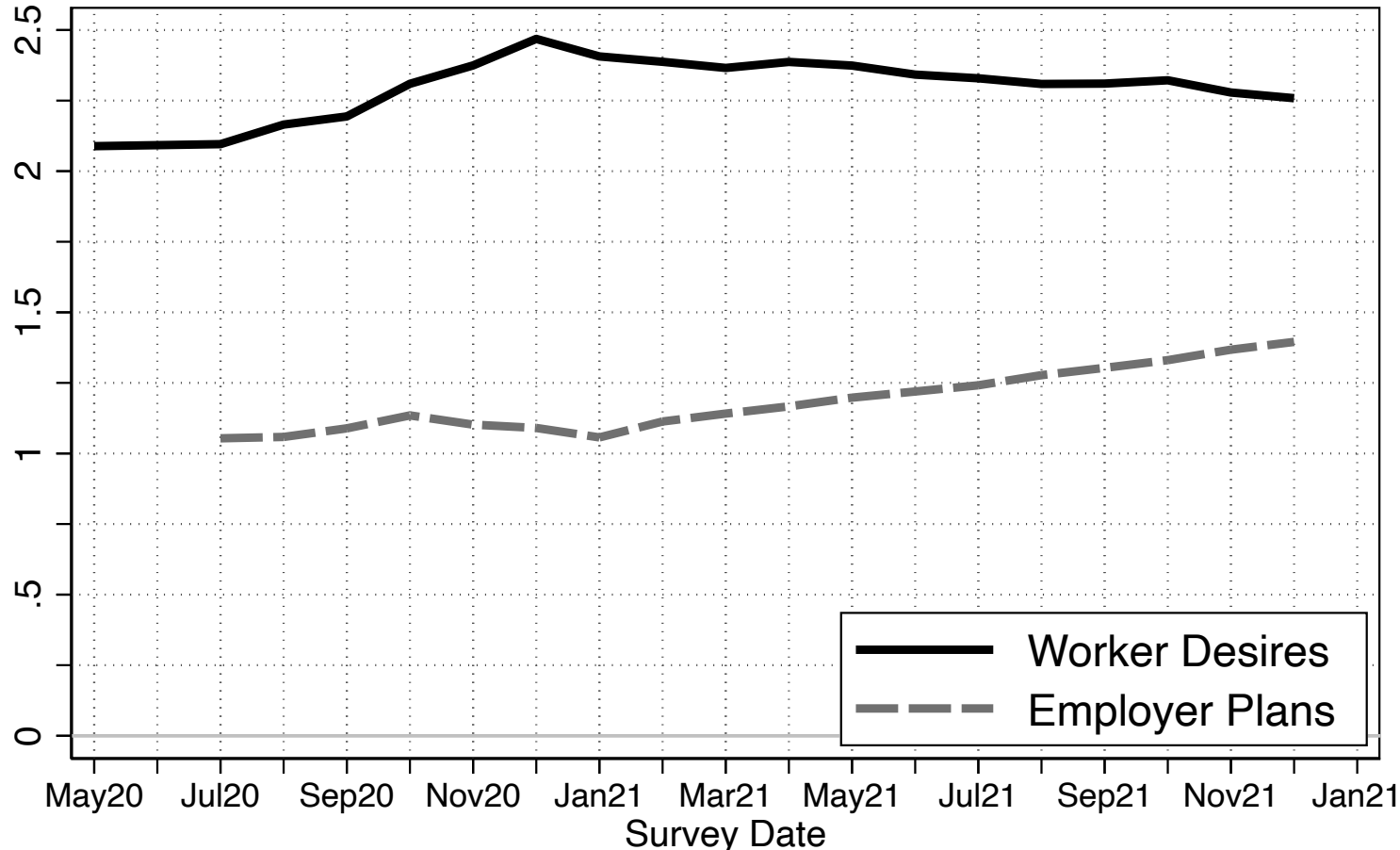
- Will your coworkers work from home on the same days as you after the pandemic is over?
- If your **coworkers** start coming into your employer's place of business on some of your work-from-home days, what will you do?

**Source:** The sample includes respondents who (1) report their employer plans for them to work from home 1, 2, 3, or 4 days per week after COVID in 2022 and later, and (2) who report their coworkers will work from home on the same days as them after the pandemic, and (3) are not small business owners with zero staff. Data are from 3,333 responses to the October through December 2021 survey waves. We reweight responses to match the US population along the dimensions of age, sex, education, and earnings. Details on <https://wfhresearch.com/>

# The gap between employer plans and worker desires for post-COVID working from home has shrunk but remains large as of December 2021



Average Days per Week Working From Home  
After the Pandemic Ends



## Responses to the questions:

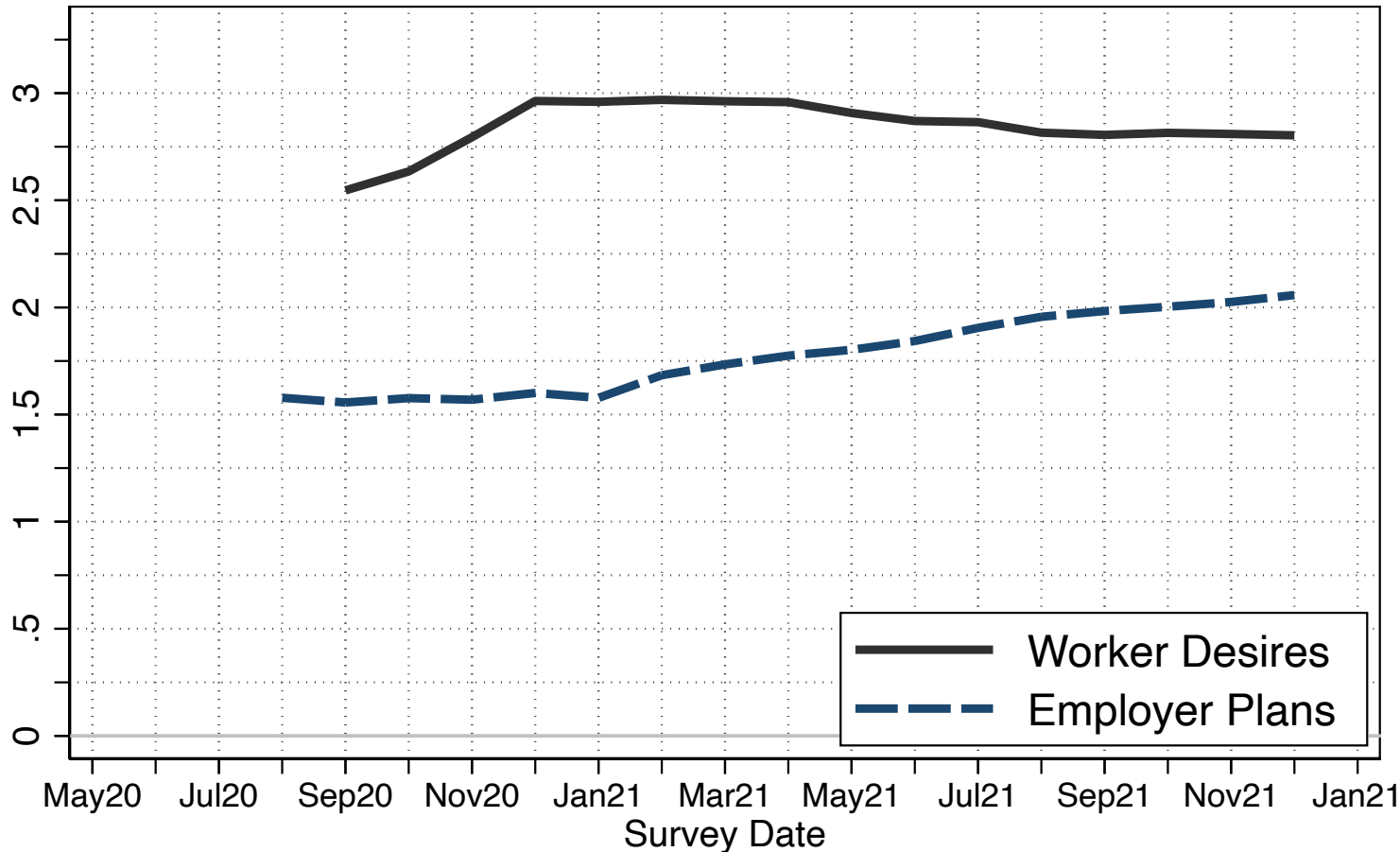
- *After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?*
- *After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often would you like to have paid workdays at home?*

**Sample:** Data from all SWAA waves, covering May 2020 to December 2021. For worker desires, the sample includes all respondents. **N = 66,780** For employer plans, the sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for post-COVID WFH. In particular, we exclude respondents who report having no employer. **N = 56,697**

# For respondents who have worked from home during COVID the gap between employer plans and worker desires is smaller and has also been shrinking



Average Days per Week Working From Home  
After the Pandemic Ends



## Responses to the questions:

- *After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often is your employer planning for you to work full days at home?*
- *After COVID, in 2022 and later, how often would you like to have paid workdays at home?*

**Sample:** Data from all SWAA waves, covering May 2020 to December 2021. For worker desires, the sample includes all respondents who have worked from home during COVID. **N = 42,501** For employer plans, the sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for post-COVID WFH and worked from home during COVID. In particular, we exclude respondents who report having no employer. **N = 39,633**

# References



- Barrero, Jose Maria, Nicholas Bloom, and Steven J. Davis, 2021. “Why working from home will stick,” National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 28731.