

Time use and teleworkers: Highlights from the 2022 Time Use Survey

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Today, Statistics Canada is releasing new data from the 2022 Time Use Survey, including a new study on how telework is linked to time use and well-being. The 2022 Time Use Survey, for which data were collected from July 2022 to July 2023, is the seventh iteration of the survey since its inception in 1986. This also marks the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began that data have been collected on how people spend time in their daily lives.

The pandemic led to a major shift in working arrangements, especially a rapid rise in working from home. The [percentage of Canadians working most of their hours from home](#) rose from 7% in May 2016 to 24% in July 2022, then dropped to 21% in July 2023. Since the start of the pandemic, Statistics Canada has published a [wide variety of data and research](#) on teleworking. However, this release is the agency's first study on both teleworking and time use since the pandemic's onset, and the [first in over 10 years](#).

The new study uses data from the survey's time diary to compare three groups of employees (not self-employed). Those are: work-from-home (WFH) teleworkers, who worked at home on the reference day (i.e., diary day); on-site teleworkers, who teleworked in the week prior to the diary day but worked on-site on that day; and non-teleworkers, who did not telework in the week prior to the diary day and worked on-site on that day. The study discusses the differences in time use and well-being that remain between these groups after accounting for socioeconomic characteristics—such as gender, age, the type of job, or usual work hours (see Note to readers).

Teleworkers saved more than one hour per day by not commuting

Teleworkers saved over an hour, on average, by not having to commute on the days that they worked from home. In contrast, non-teleworkers commuted 63 minutes and on-site teleworkers commuted 74 minutes.

However, paid work time was not associated with teleworking status. Paid work time on the diary day did not differ between WFH teleworkers, on-site teleworkers, and non-teleworkers after accounting for sociodemographic and job characteristics (such as industry, occupation, usual work hours, and so on).

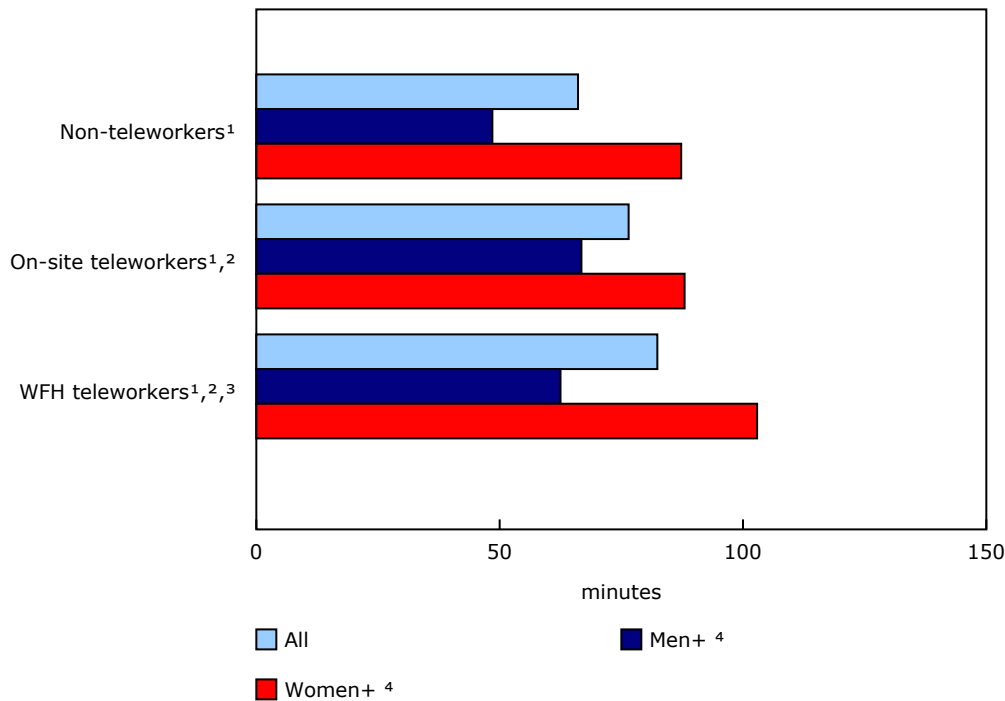
If teleworkers did not change their paid work time, but did save time on commuting, where was this time reallocated across the day?

On days they worked from home, teleworkers did more unpaid work, including housework and care for children

Working at home may be a key tool in balancing the competing demands of paid work and unpaid work, including household chores, and caring for children. Teleworkers may reallocate their commute time to taking care of their children, or they may be able to do more household chores on days when they work from home.

Working from home was associated with about 16 more minutes, or 21% more time spent on unpaid housework, compared with non-teleworkers on paid workdays. In fact, both men and women who teleworked from home spent more time on housework. Previous research has shown that [women consistently do more unpaid housework than men](#). This study finds that this gender gap in time spent on unpaid housework remains for both non-teleworkers and WFH teleworkers.

Chart 1
Predicted daily minutes in unpaid housework, by telework status and gender, 2022



1. Significantly different ($p < 0.05$) from the reference category (men), for women, within telework status.
 2. Significantly different ($p < 0.05$) from the reference category (non-teleworkers) for men.
 3. Significantly different ($p < 0.05$) from the reference category (non-teleworkers) for women.
 4. Given that the non-binary population is small, data aggregation to a two-category gender variable is sometimes necessary to protect the confidentiality of responses. In these cases, individuals in the category "non-binary persons" are distributed into the other two gender categories and are denoted by the "+" symbol.
Note(s): WFH = work-from-home. The daily minutes presented above are predicted using ordinary-least-squares linear regression models, estimated separately by gender, and adjusting for socioeconomic characteristics. See the full study for more information on the methodology.
Source(s): Time Use Survey, 2022 (4503).

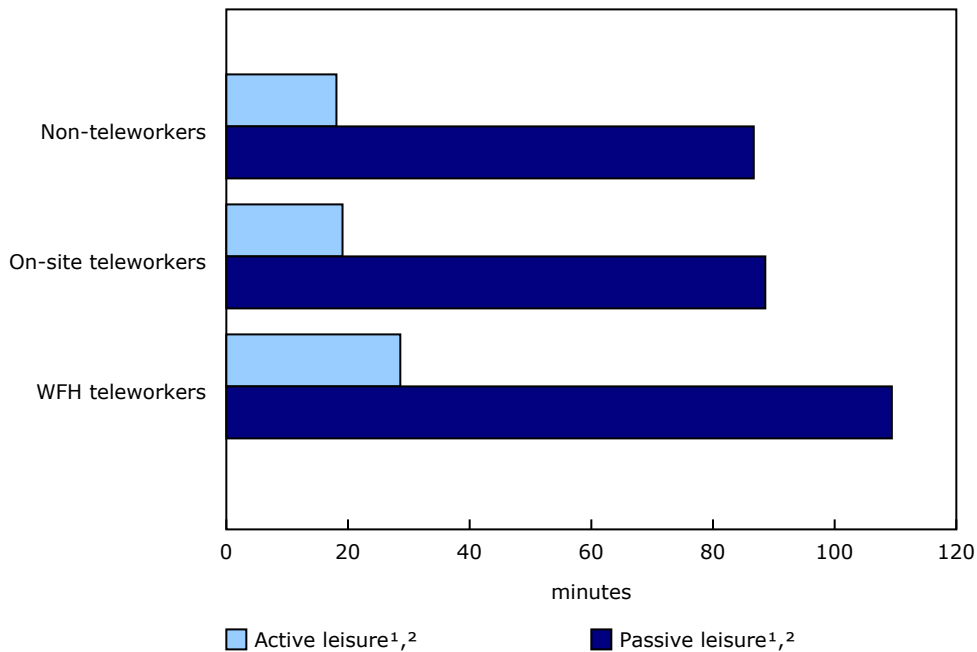
For parents, teleworking at home was also associated with more time spent caring for children. In total, both fathers and mothers who worked from home on the diary day spent about 1.2 hours (71 minutes) more per day actively caring for, supervising, or being with their children, compared with parents who did not telework. However, there is still a gender gap: on average, mothers spent 52 minutes more with children than fathers, whether they worked from home or not.

Teleworking from home was associated with more time sleeping, eating, and doing leisure activities

Public discussion on teleworking, as well as past studies on the topic, suggest that working at home may be associated with changes in sleep patterns. For example, teleworkers who do not have to commute may be able to sleep in later. Teleworking is also associated with increased flexibility in when employees can start their workday, which may also contribute to different sleep times. This study finds that WFH teleworkers slept for 23 minutes more than non-teleworkers and 19 minutes more than on-site teleworkers.

Another way teleworkers may spend time differently, or shift time saved by not commuting, is by having more free time. Teleworkers spent about 30 minutes more in leisure activities than non-teleworkers and on-site teleworkers. This included more time in active leisure activities, such as exercising or hobbies, as well as passive leisure activities, such as watching television.

Chart 2
Predicted daily minutes in active and passive leisure, by telework status, 2022



1. Significantly different ($p < 0.05$) from reference category (WFH teleworkers), for non-teleworkers.

2. Significantly different ($p < 0.05$) from reference category (WFH teleworkers), for on-site teleworkers.

Note(s): WFH = work-from-home. The minutes presented above are predicted using separate ordinary-least-squares linear regression models and adjusting for socioeconomic characteristics. See the full study for more information on the methodology.

Source(s): Time Use Survey, 2022 (4503).

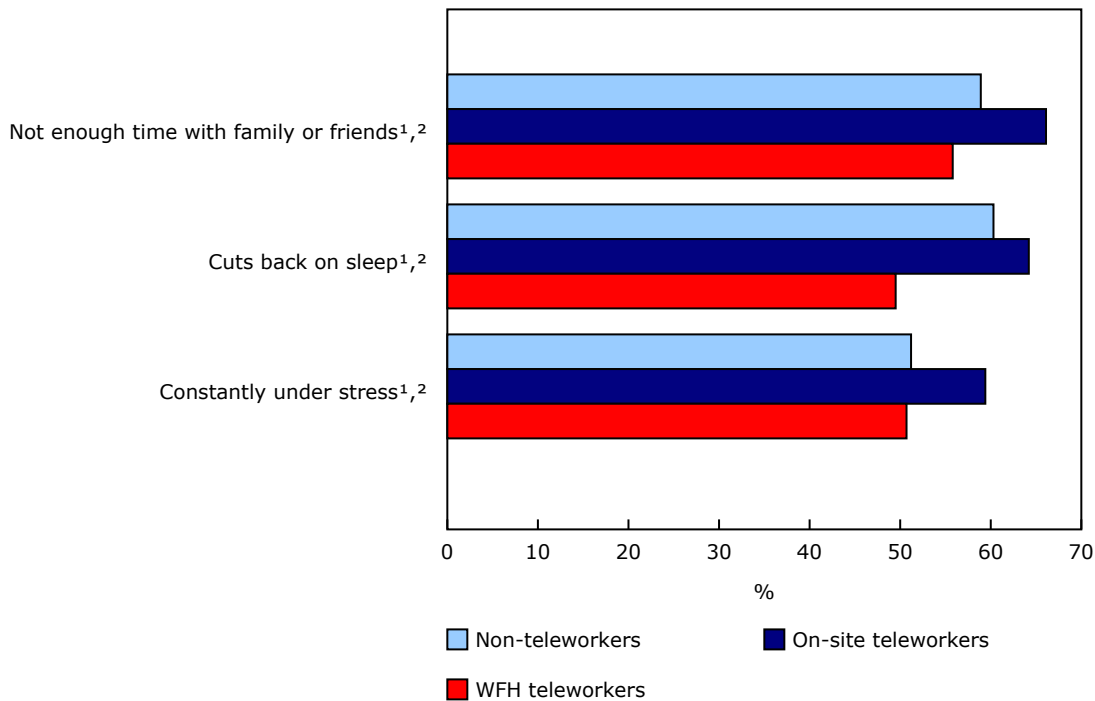
However, WFH teleworkers spent half the amount of time on personal care as non-teleworkers—24 minutes less than non-teleworkers and 17 minutes less than on-site teleworkers. This may be due to lower pressure on those working from home to spend time on activities such as grooming or personal hygiene, compared with those who work at an office or another workplace.

Teleworkers who worked from home were more satisfied with work-life balance and felt less time pressure

Given these shifts in the daily lives of teleworkers, how might teleworking from home be linked to different measures of well-being?

Teleworkers who worked from home were more likely to report being more satisfied with their work-life balance, compared with both on-site teleworkers and non-teleworkers. After accounting for sociodemographic and job characteristics, WFH teleworkers were 12 percentage points more likely than non-teleworkers and 14 percentage points more likely than on-site teleworkers to be satisfied or very satisfied with their work-life balance.

Chart 3
Predicted probability of certain dimensions of time pressure, by telework status, 2022



1. Significantly different (p<0.05) from reference category (on-site teleworkers), for non-teleworkers.
 2. Significantly different (p<0.05) from reference category (on-site teleworkers), for WFH teleworkers.
Note(s): WFH = work-from-home. The predicted probabilities (%) are estimated using logistic regression models, separately for each outcome, adjusting for socioeconomic characteristics. See the full study for more information on the methodology.
Source(s): Time Use Survey, 2022 (4503).

Unexpectedly, those who teleworked the week prior to the diary day but worked on-site on that day were most likely to have higher levels of time pressure. These differences persisted even after controlling for sociodemographic and job characteristics that might impact time pressure. For example, on-site teleworkers were more likely to report constantly being under stress, cutting back on sleep, and being worried that they did not spend enough time with their family and friends, compared with both WFH teleworkers and non-teleworkers. It is not clear why on-site teleworkers may feel more time pressure. Having to alternate between the workplace and working at home might contribute to decreased stability in schedules, possibly contributing to increased time pressure.

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Note to readers

The *Time Use Survey* is part of the General Social Statistics Program and is a cross-sectional survey with a target population of non-institutionalized persons aged 15 and older living in the 10 provinces. It uses a 24-hour time diary to collect accurate and reliable data on how Canadians spend their time. To ensure data are collected equally between different days of the week, respondents are assigned a reference day, called a diary day (usually the previous day). Respondents are asked about what they were doing, the length of time spent on each activity, the location, if another activity was done simultaneously (i.e., multitasking), and who else was present for each activity reported.

The analyses presented here are adapted from a new study, "[Telework, time use, and well-being: Evidence from the 2022 Time Use Survey](#)." This study defines teleworking based on two measures: first, whether an employee (not self-employed) reported working from home, a co-working space, or elsewhere, while using telecommunications tools (e.g., laptop, phone, tablet) in the previous week before the survey; and second, the location of paid work (home or workplace) in the time diary on the diary day. Telework status is thus compared across three categories: non-teleworkers (did not telework the week prior to the diary day and worked on-site on that day), on-site teleworkers (teleworked the week prior to the diary day but worked on-site on that day), and work-from-home teleworkers (teleworked the week prior to the diary day and worked at home on that day). The analysis only included employees (not self-employed) who reported at least two hours of paid work on their diary day.

The central aim of this study is to uncover whether teleworking at home is associated with different patterns of time use. Previous research shows that teleworkers and non-teleworkers differ in meaningful ways in terms of their socioeconomic characteristics. As such, all analyses presented here are estimated using regression models that adjust for these factors to isolate the relationship between telework and time use or well-being. The estimates can therefore be interpreted as the predicted time in an activity, holding all other characteristics constant. More information on the methods is provided in the full study.

Available tables: table [45-10-0104-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [4503](#).

The article "[Telework, time use, and well-being: Evidence from the 2022 Time Use Survey](#)," which is part of *Spotlight on Canadians: Results from the General Social Survey (89-652-X)*, is now available.

The infographic, "[How does teleworking impact time use?](#)," which is part of *Statistics Canada — Infographics (11-627-M)*, is also available.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).