

94pc of workers in favour of working remotely going forward

The second phase of the national remote working employee survey shows that 94pc of workers are in favour of working remotely for some or all of the time.

94 per cent of employees who have been working at home since the outbreak of Covid-19 in March are in favour of working remotely on an on-going basis for some or all of the time.

This research comes from a survey carried out by researchers from the Whitaker Institute at NUI Galway and the Western Development Commission. The survey, which gathered responses from more than 5,600 employees six months after lockdown, focused on employees who are currently working fully remotely or a mix of and onsite and remote.

Led by professor Alma McCarthy and Dr Katerina Bohle-Carbonell at NUI Galway, and Tomás Ó Síocháin and Deirdre Frost at Western Development Commission, the survey found that of the 94pc who were in favour of continuing to work remotely, 54pc, said they would like to work remotely several times a week, 27pc said five days a week, and 13pc said several times a month.

Overwhelming majority

The figure for those who want to remain working remotely five days a week (27pc) has more than doubled when compared to the figure from the first national survey conducted by the NUI Galway and the Western Development Commission team in April, when it was 12pc in the immediate aftermath of the lockdown.

The overwhelming majority (94pc) also represents an 11pc increase from those who wanted to work remotely in the April survey (83pc).

Conversely, only 6pc of respondents indicated in the second phase that they did not wish to work remotely to any extent – a 10pc drop from the response in April.

Nearly one quarter of those surveyed (23pc) said they would consider relocating within Ireland based on their experience of remote working since the outbreak of the virus.

A further 7pc said they had already moved and the west (Galway, Mayo, Roscommon), the south-west (Cork and Kerry) and the mid-west (Clare, Limerick, Tipperary) were the top regions respondents have relocated to. 16pc said they may consider moving, while just over half (54pc) said they would not consider relocating.

Speaking about the second national survey, professor Alma McCarthy said; “The second NUI Galway and Western Development Commission national remote working survey has, once again, gained huge interest with over 5,600 responses.

“There is a resounding demand from employees to continue to work remotely post-crisis. The remote working experience presents a game-changer for how many organisations will manage their workforce into the future. For those who can work remotely, they seem to have settled into it quite effectively six months on from lockdown.”

Tomás Ó Síocháin, CEO of the Western Development Commission, added; “The information collected in these surveys will help to ensure that the correct measures are in place to support those working remotely.

“Identifying the opportunities and challenges will mean that remote working infrastructure such as broadband and remote working hubs, for example, will allow both individuals and communities to minimise the challenges and to make the most of this fundamental shift in the way we work.”

The results of the second national survey showed that there was no change to the top three benefits of working remotely; identified as no traffic and no commute, greater flexibility in how to manage the working day and reduced costs of going to work and commuting.

By Stephen Larkin

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