SWAA February 2023 Updates

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12 February 2023

Latest survey wave included: January 2023

To sign up for regular results updates, please sign up here.

Source of Data and Citation

- **Source of all data (unless noted):** Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes (SWAA), see 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

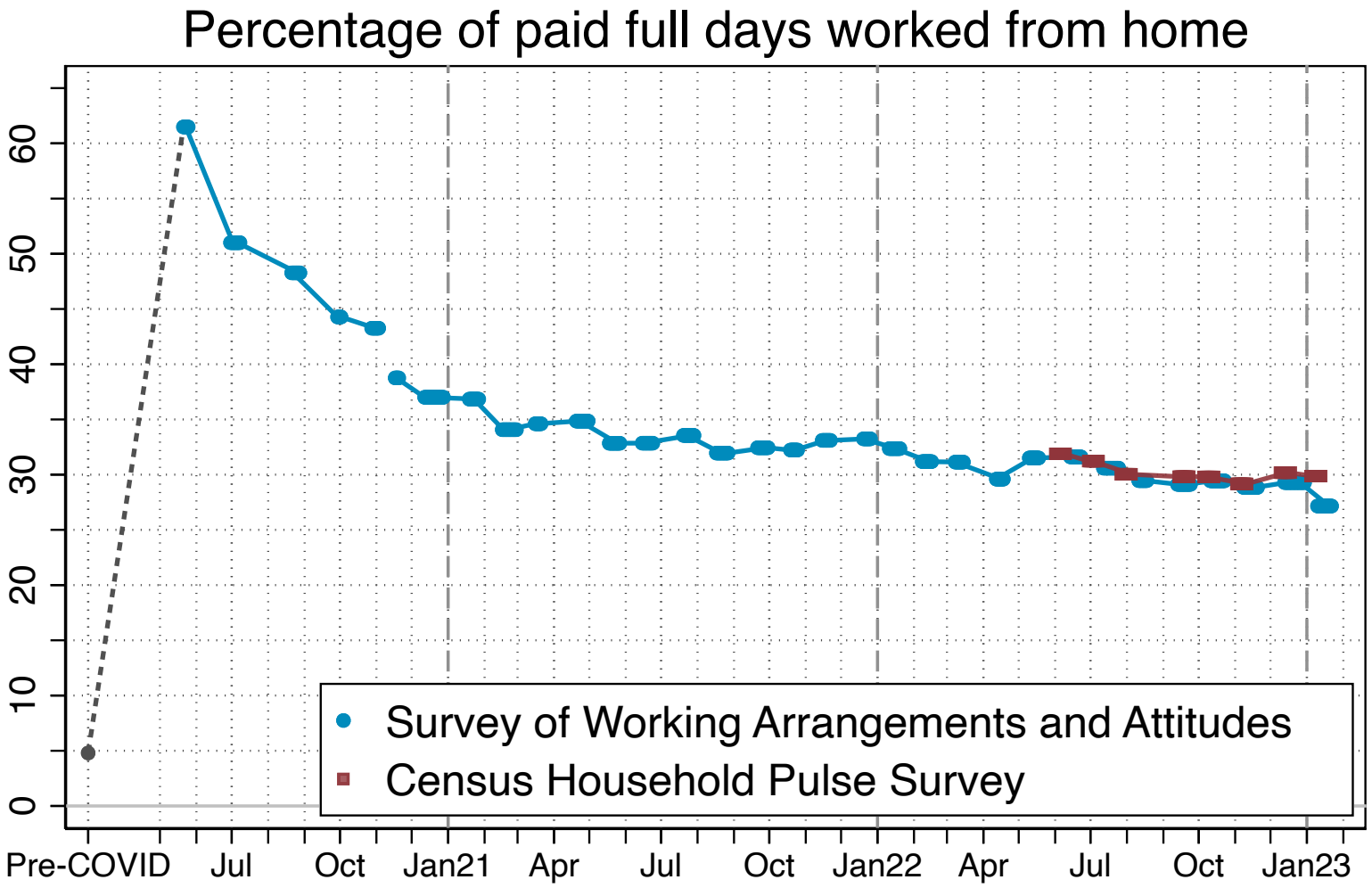
The Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes

- Monthly online survey since May 2020, >100,000 observations to date.
- We design the survey instrument.
- Target population: U.S. residents, 20-64, who earned ≥ $10K in 2019 (≥$20K in early survey waves). From January to March 2022, we transitioned to earned ≥ $10K in prior year.
- The SWAA is fielded by market research firms that rely on wholesale aggregators (e.g., Lucid) for lists of potential survey participants.
- After dropping "speeders" (~16% of sample), we re-weight to match 2010-2019 CPS worker shares in age-sex-education-earnings cells. Dropping those who fail attention checks (roughly another 12%) sharpens some results.
- Median response time: 7 to 12 minutes, after dropping speeders
- Results, micro data, survey instruments, and more are freely available at www.WFHresearch.com.

Representativeness

- By design, we focus on persons who exhibit some attachment to the workforce, as evidenced by prior earnings.
- No respondents are recruited based on an interest in our topics.
- Since respondents take the survey using a computer, smartphone, iPad or like device, we miss people who never use such devices.
- Before re-weighting, the SWAA under samples the less educated, particularly those who did not finish high school.
- Even after re-weighting, we may over sample those who are more tech and internet savvy, especially among the least educated.

Days Worked from Home are Dropped In January to 27%



*Pre-COVID estimate taken from the 2017-2018 American Time Use Survey

*The break in the series in November 2020 reflects a change in the survey question.

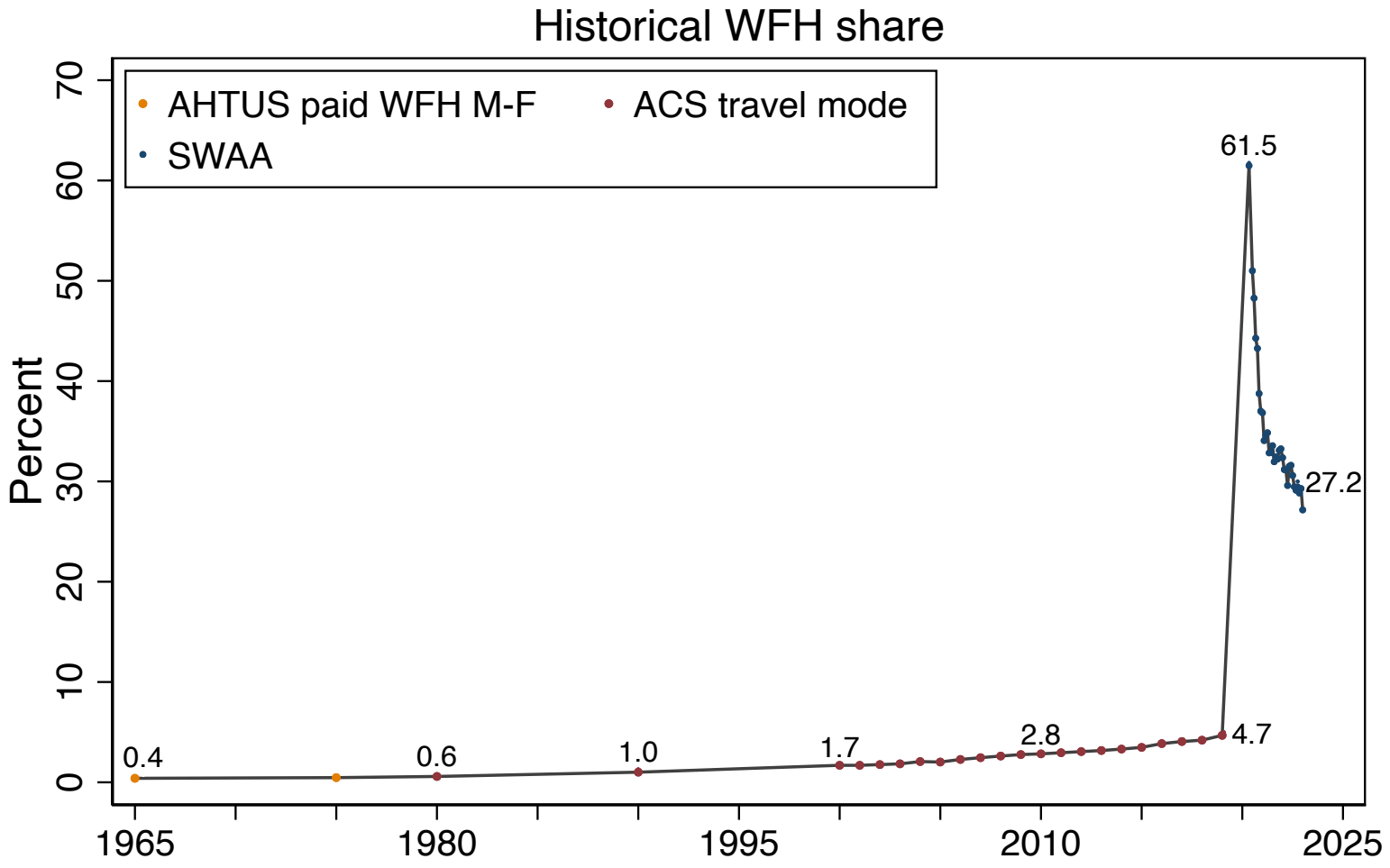
Source: Responses to the questions:

- **Currently (this week)** *what is your work status? (SWAA)*
- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?** (SWAA)
- *In the last 7 days, have you…teleworked or worked from home? (HHP)*

Notes: For each wave, we compute the percent of paid full days worked from home in the SWAA and Household Pulse Survey (HHP) and plot it on the vertical axis. The horizontal-axis location shows when the survey was in the field. The pre-COVID figure is from the 2017-2018 American Time Use Survey. SWAA: Before November 2020, we asked the first question above. Since November 2021, we have asked the second question. From November 2020 to October 2021, we back-cast responses to the current question using a regression model based on current-question responses and another question (not shown). We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells. HHP: We focus on individuals aged 20 to 64 with household incomes above $25,000 per year. We assign 30% of days WFH if the respondent did so for "for 1-2 days;" 70% if they did so "for 3-4 days;" 100% if "5 or more days;" and 0 for "No."

N = 114,117 (SWAA) N = 241,491 (HHP)

The Pandemic Permanently Increased WFH, Equivalent to Almost 40 Years of Pre-Pandemic Growth



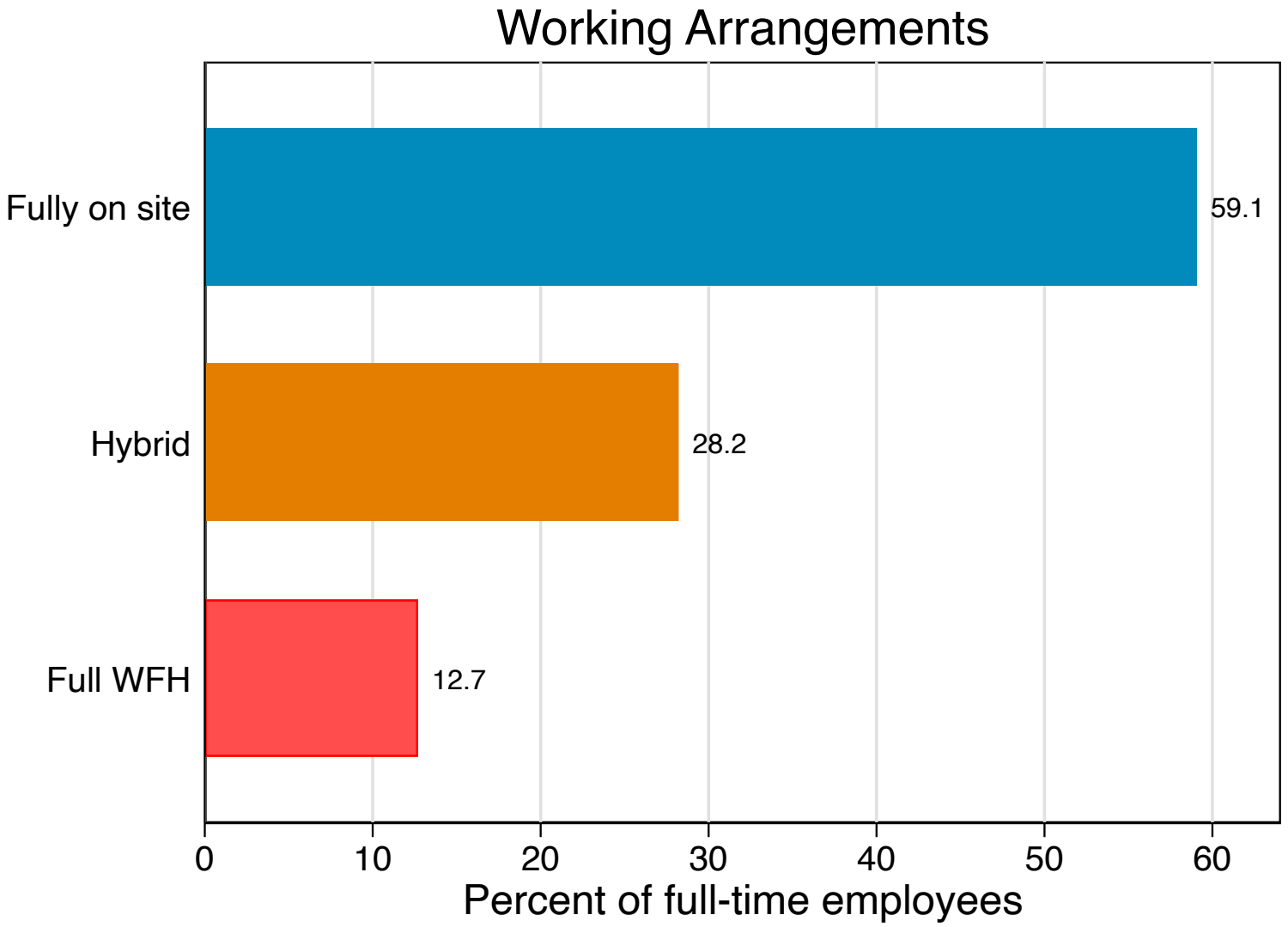
1965-1975 uses data from the American Historical Time Use Survey.
1980-2019 uses data from American Community Survey.
May 2020 - January 2022 uses data from the Survey of Working Arrangements and Attitudes.

Source: Responses to the questions:

- *In their time diary the respondent listed the activity "Paid work at home" for **6 or more hours.** (AHTUS)*
- *How did this person **usually** get to work last week? (ACS)*
- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and, if so,* **where?** *(SWAA)*

Notes: For each dataset, we compute the percent of working individuals who worked full days at home during the survey's reference period. For the AHTUS and ACS, if an individual reports usually working from home, we mark them as working from home 100% of the time. In SWAA we compute the percent of full paid days at home to account for a hybrid work schedule. Then we plot each percentage on the vertical axis. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $20,000 or more in 2019 dollars to overall population shares.

In Jan'23: 13% of Full-Time Employees are Fully Remote, 59% are Full-Time on Site, and 28% are in a Hybrid Arrangement



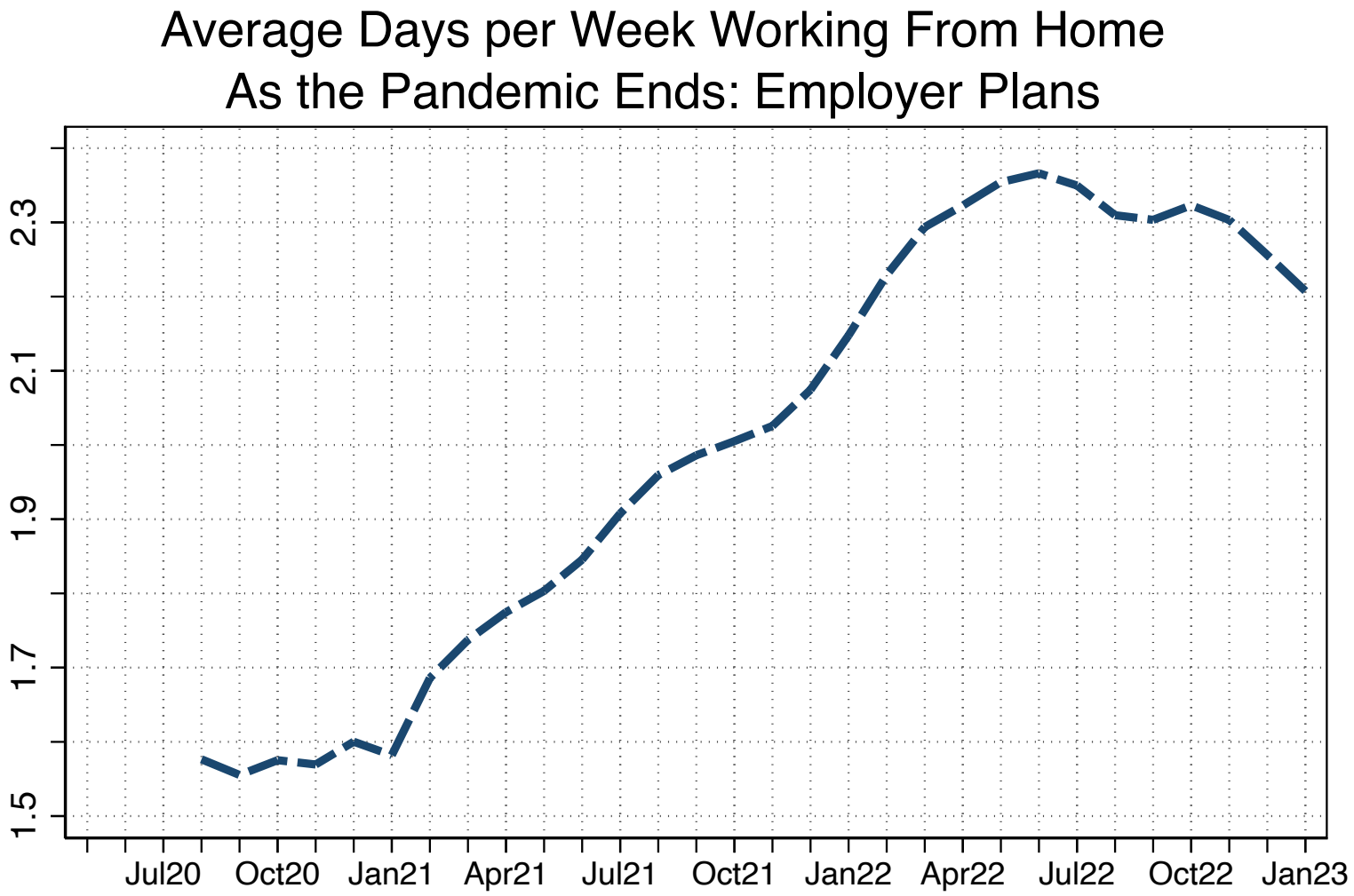
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

Notes: For each wave, we compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work 5+ days/week) wage and salary employees who either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. The sample covers the October 2022 to January 2023 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 15,485

Employer Plans for WFH Decline Towards to 2.2 Days per Week (for Persons Able to Work From Home)



Sample: Workers able to work from home

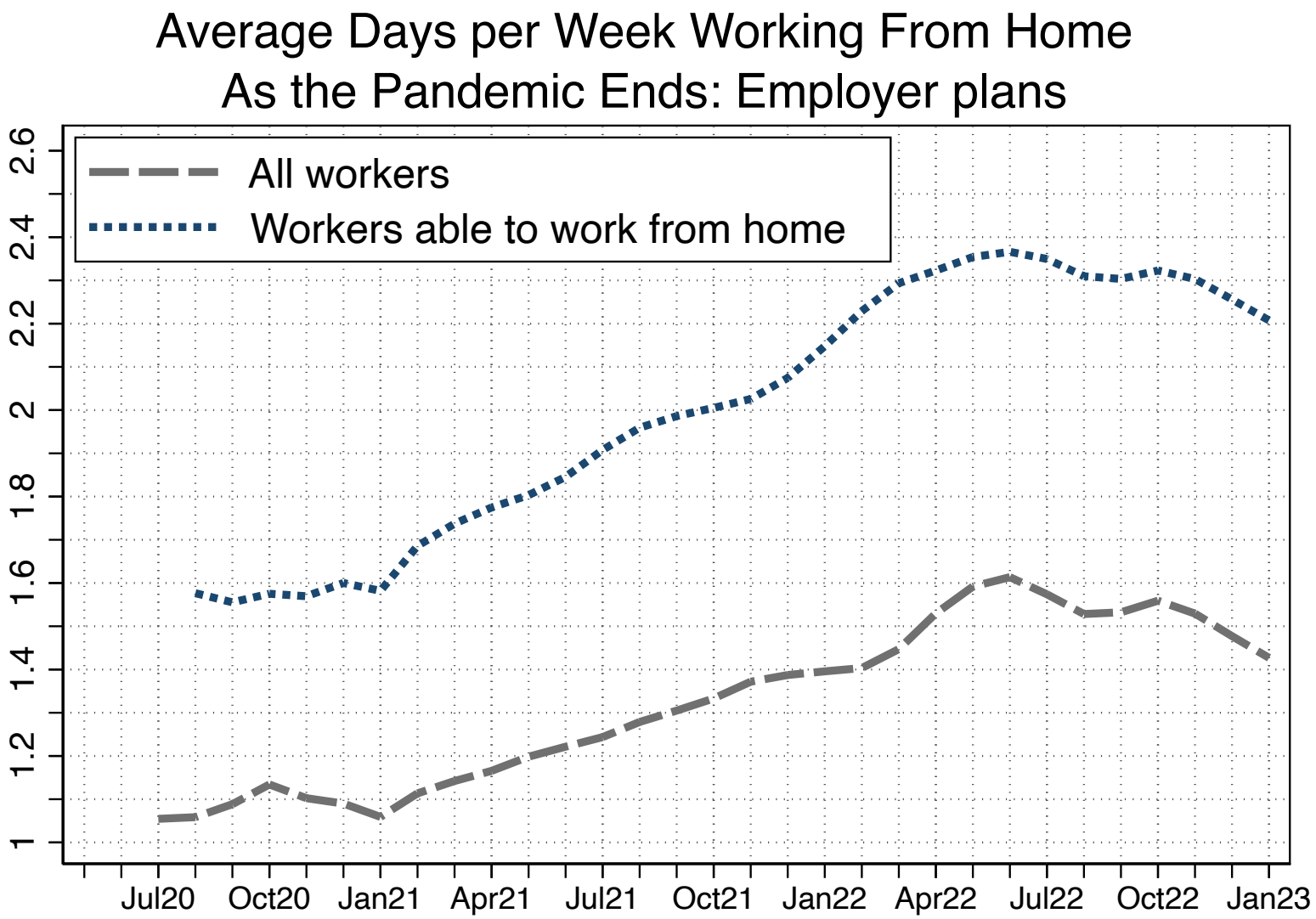
Responses to the question:

- ***As the pandemic ends,*** *how often* ***is your employer planning*** *for you to work full days at home?*

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering August 2020 to December 2022. The sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for WFH as the pandemic ends and who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic (thus able to work from home). We exclude respondents who report having no employer. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.

N = 89,963 (able to work from home)

Employer plans for Full Paid Days Worked from Home as the Pandemic Ends



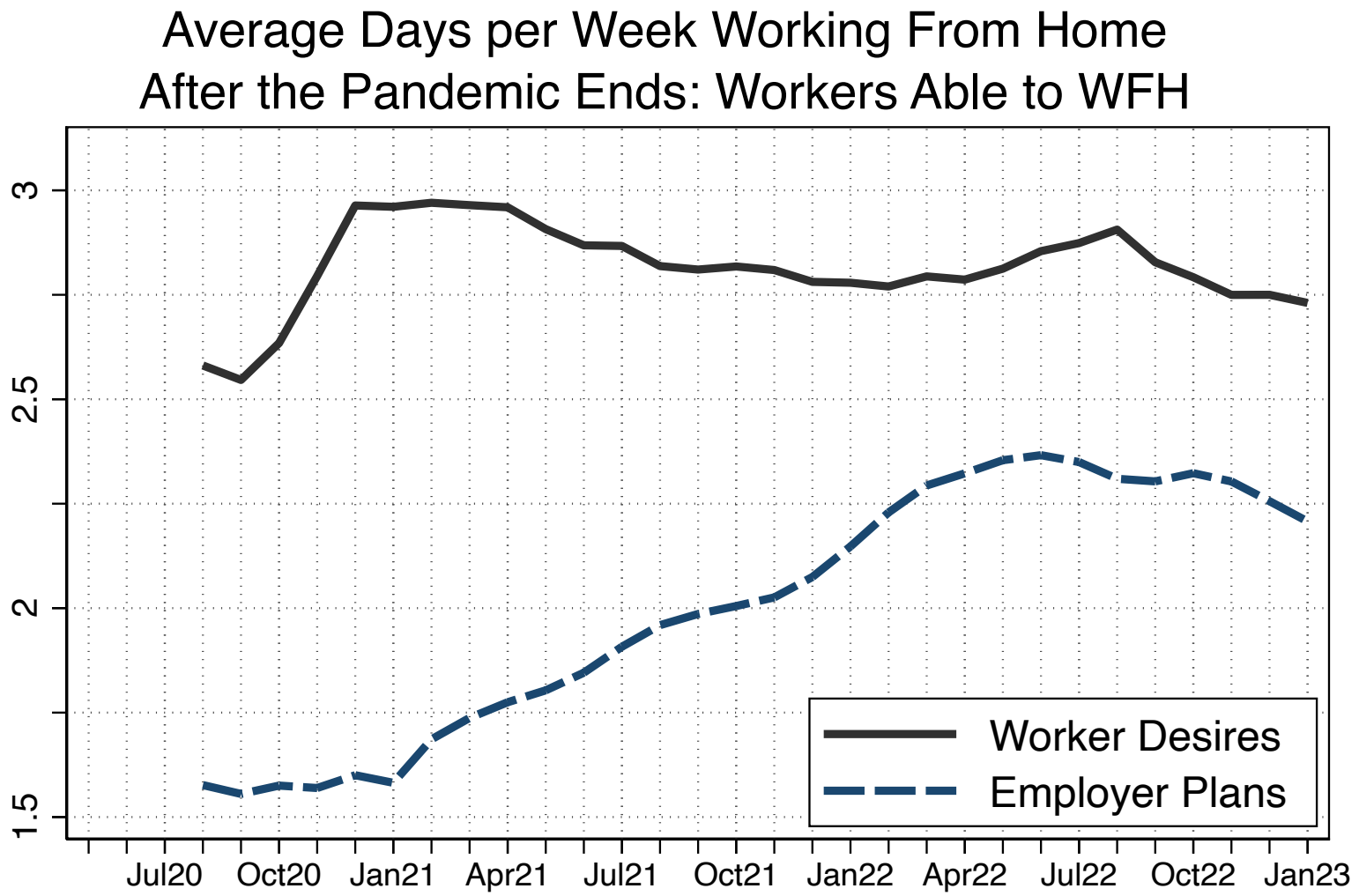
Responses to the question:

- ***As the pandemic ends,*** *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 2022. The sample includes all respondents who reported their employer's plans for WFH as the pandemic ends ("All workers" series), but the series labeled "Workers able to work from home" restricts attention to workers who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic. In both cases, we exclude respondents who report having no employer. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.

N = 126,806 (all respondents) and 89,963 (able to work from home)

The Gap Between How Much Employees Want to Work from Home and Employer is Stable at About 0.5 Days



Sample: Workers able to work from home

Responses to the questions:

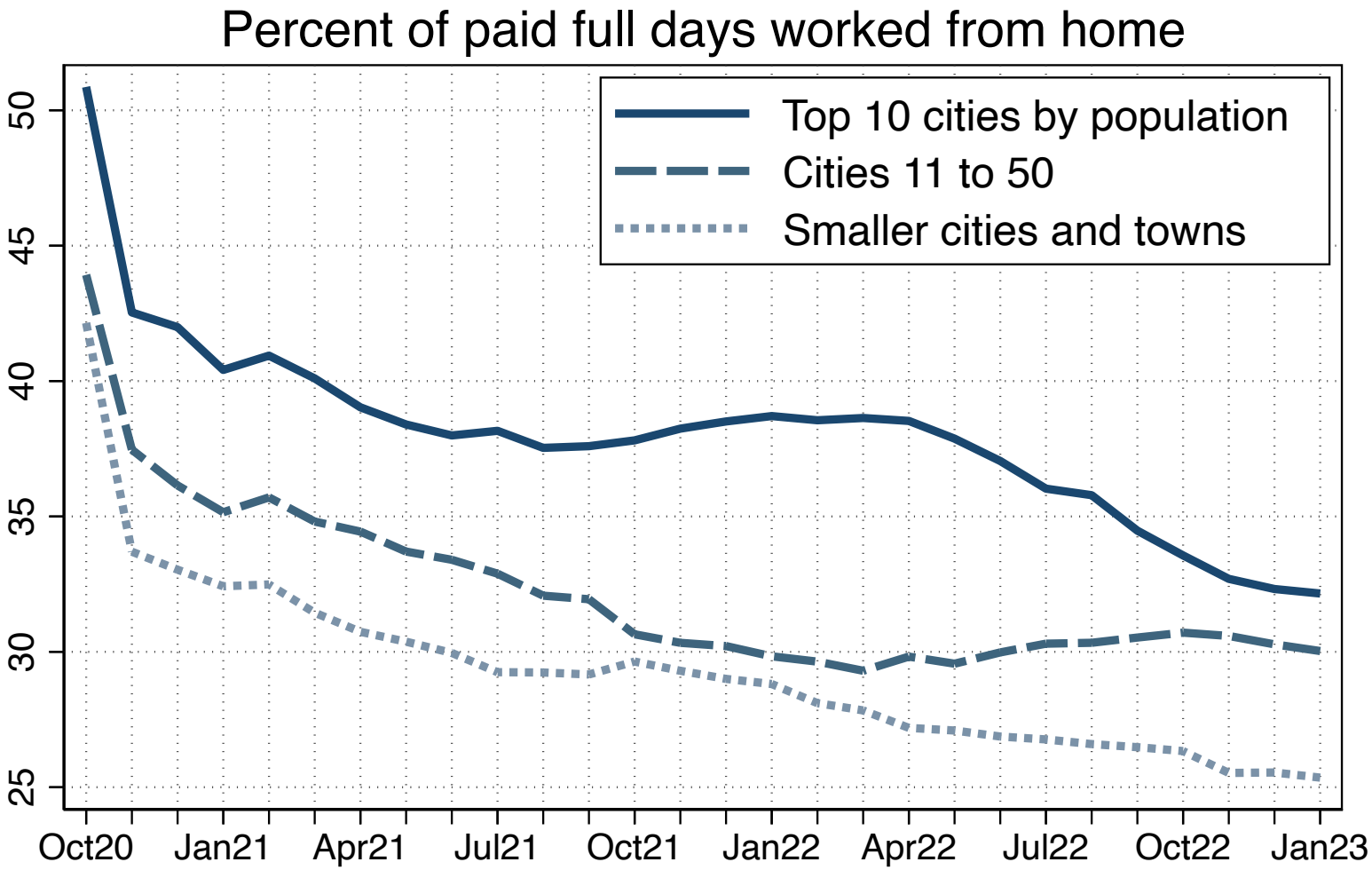
- **As the pandemic ends,** *how often would you like to have full paid days at home?*
- **As the pandemic ends,** *how often* **is your employer planning** *for you to work full days at home?*

Sample: Data are from all SWAA waves, covering August 2020 to December 2022. The sample includes all respondents who responded to the relevant survey and have work-from-home experience during the pandemic. For the employer plans series, we exclude respondents who report having no employer.

N = 89,963 (employer plans, able to work from home)

N = 96,895 (worker desires, able to work from home)

Working From Home is More Common in Major Cities than in Smaller Cities and Towns (but Declining as of Early 2023)



*We define cities using Combined Statistical Areas and use the location of the respondent's current job.

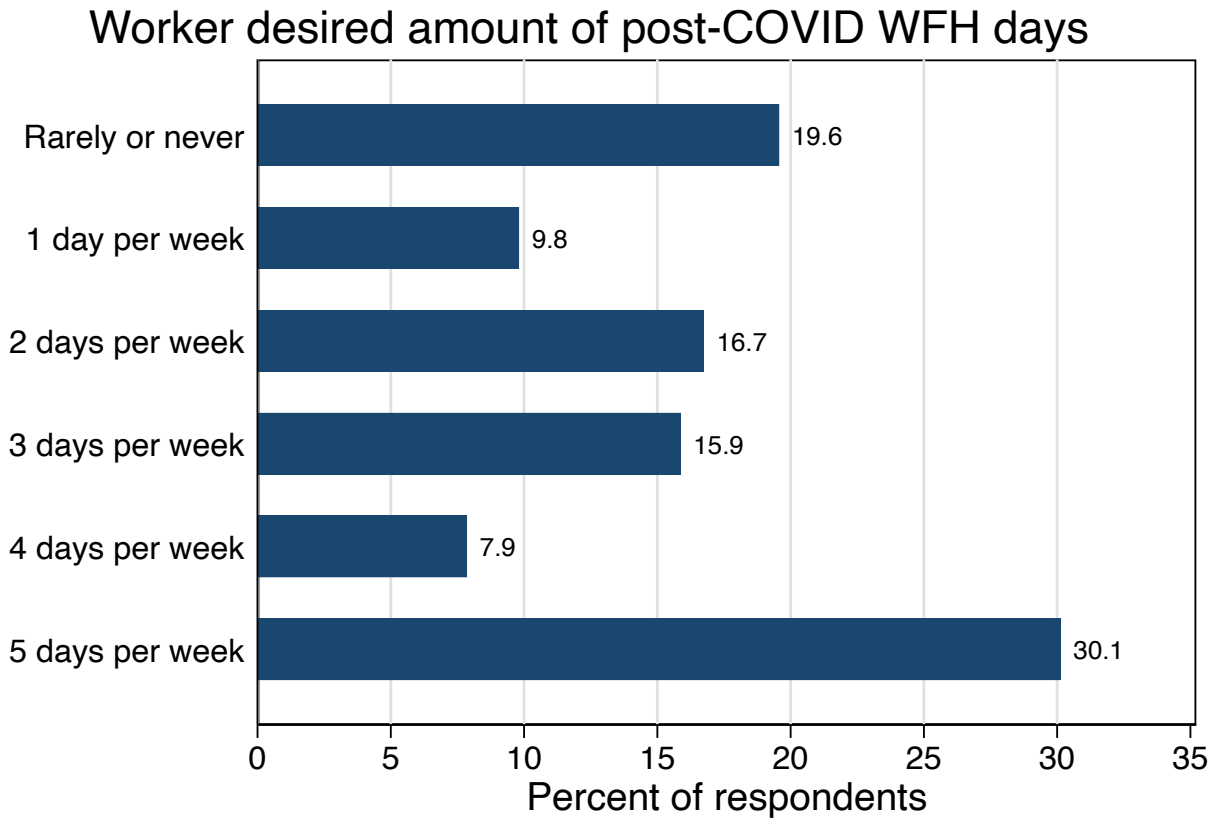
Source: Responses to the questions:

- **Currently (this week)** *what is your work status?*
- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

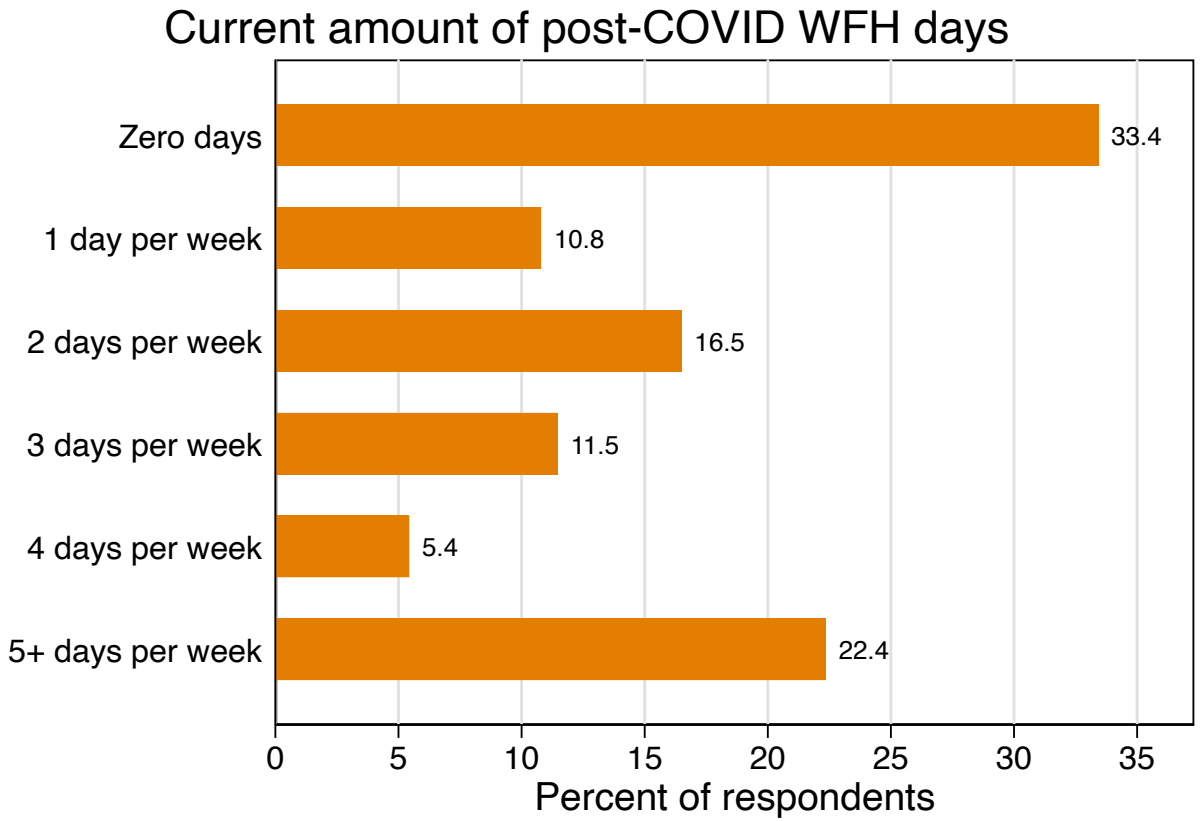
Notes: The chart plots 6-month moving averages where available and 3-month moving averages prior to November 2020. For each wave, we compute the percent of paid full days worked from home and plot it on the vertical axis, after sorting respondents into cities (i.e., Combined Statistical Areas) by the location of their current job's busines spremises. Before November 2020, we asked the first question above. Since November 2021, we have asked the second question. From November 2020 to October 2021, we back-cast responses to the current question using a regression model that relates the current-question responses to the responses to another question (not shown). We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 105,360

Employers Offer Fewer Fully Remote Jobs and More Fully Onsite Jobs Than Employees Want



Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. N = 10419

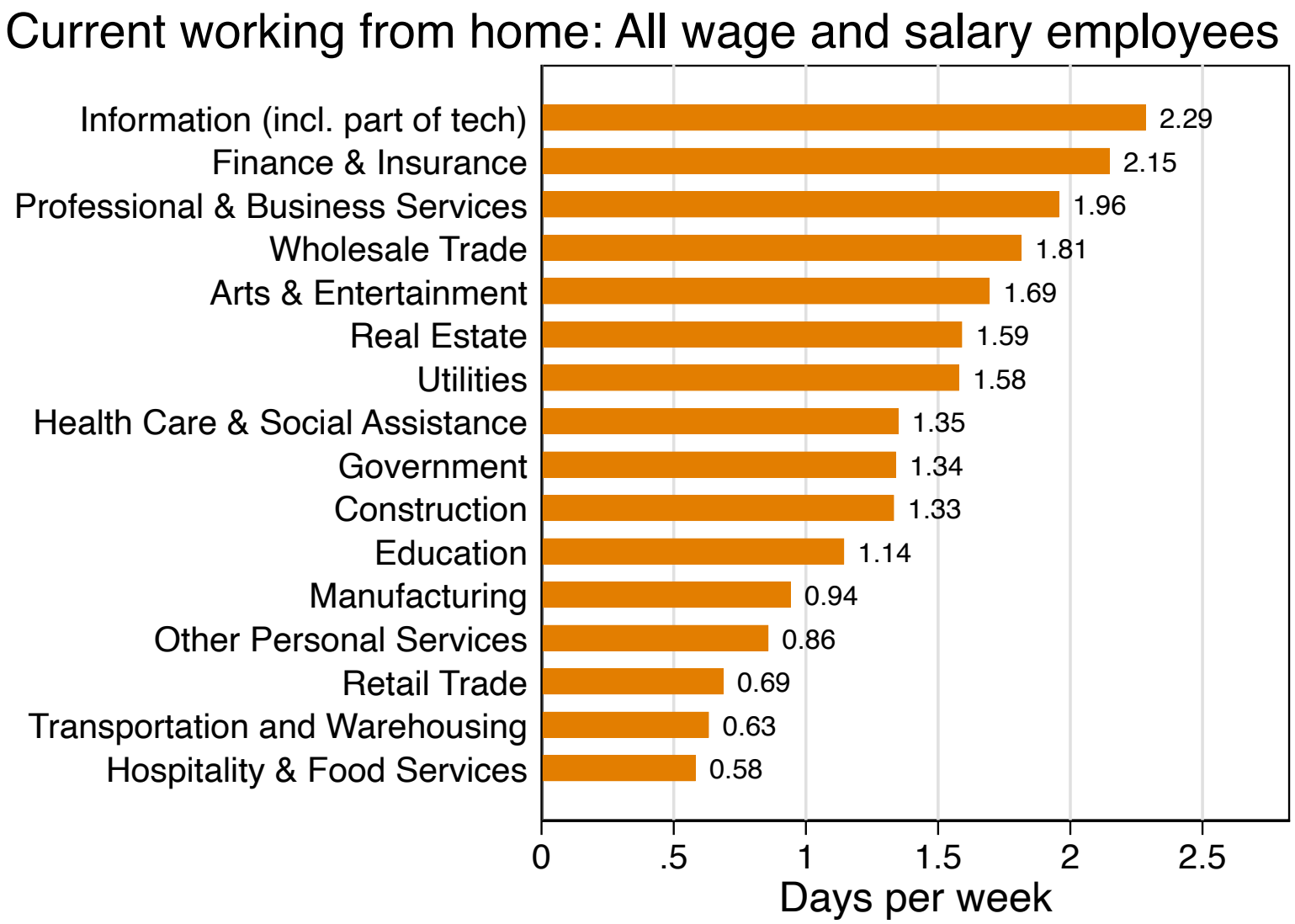


Sample: Full-time wage and salary employees who are able to WFH. N = 9879

Responses to the questions: ***As the pandemic ends,*** how often would you ***like to*** have paid workdays at home? *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

Sample: Data are from the October 2022 to January 2023 SWAA waves. The sample includes full-time wage and salary employees (i.e. who worked 5 or more days during the survey reference week) who have work-from-home experience during the pandemic and pass the attention-check questions. Numbers for "5 days per week" in the right chart include responses for 6 or 7 full days worked from home. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.

Working from Home is Most Prevalent in the Tech, Finance, and Professional and Business Services Sectors



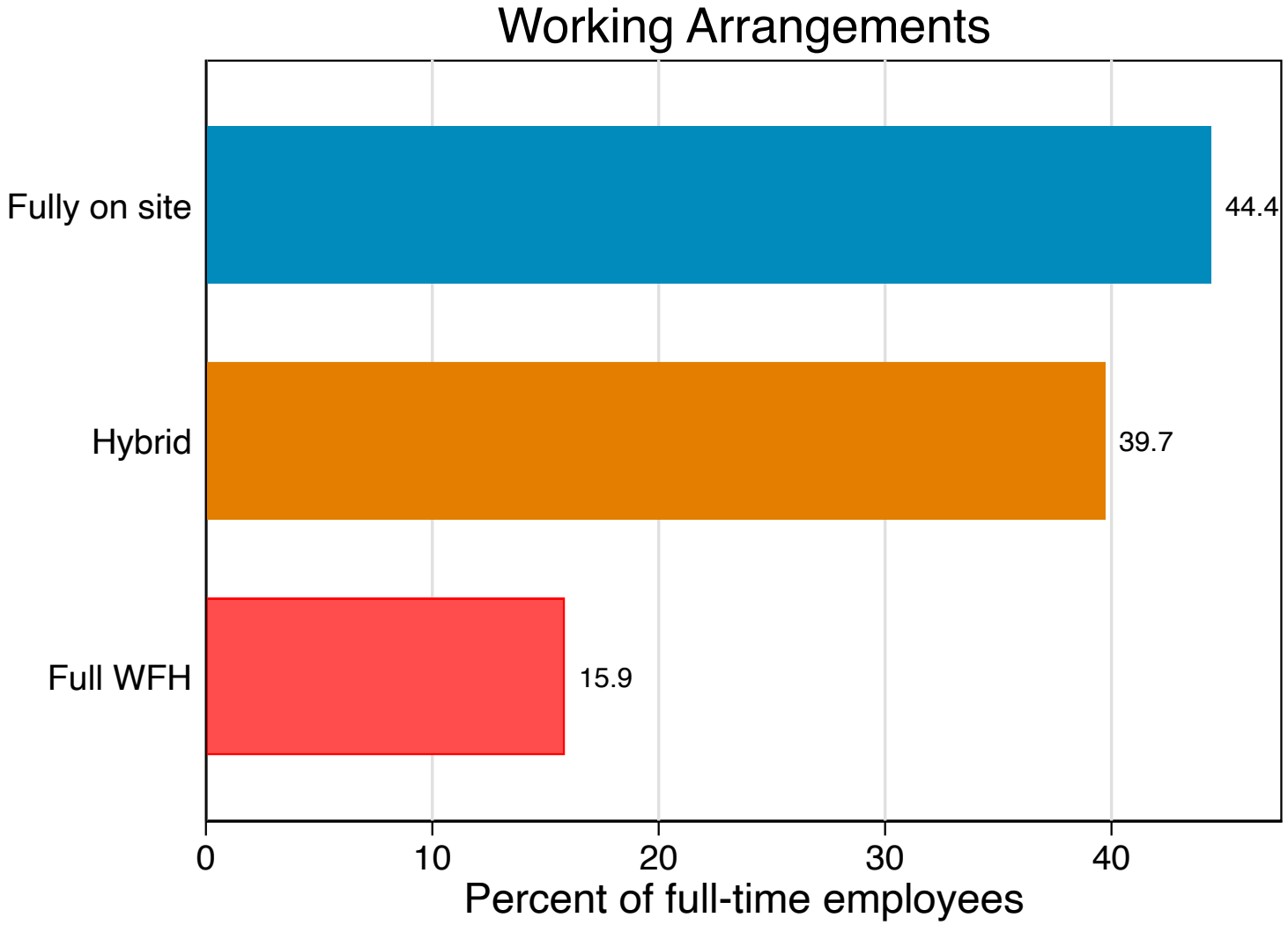
Responses to the question:

- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

Sample: Data are from the August 2022 to January 2023 SWAA waves. The sample includes all wage and salary employees who pass the attention-check questions. We exclude mining due to insufficient observations and agriculture to focus on non-farm jobs. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match Current Population Survey on age, sex, education, and earnings.

N = 26,819

For Graduates Fully On-Site and Hybrid are the Most Common Working Patterns



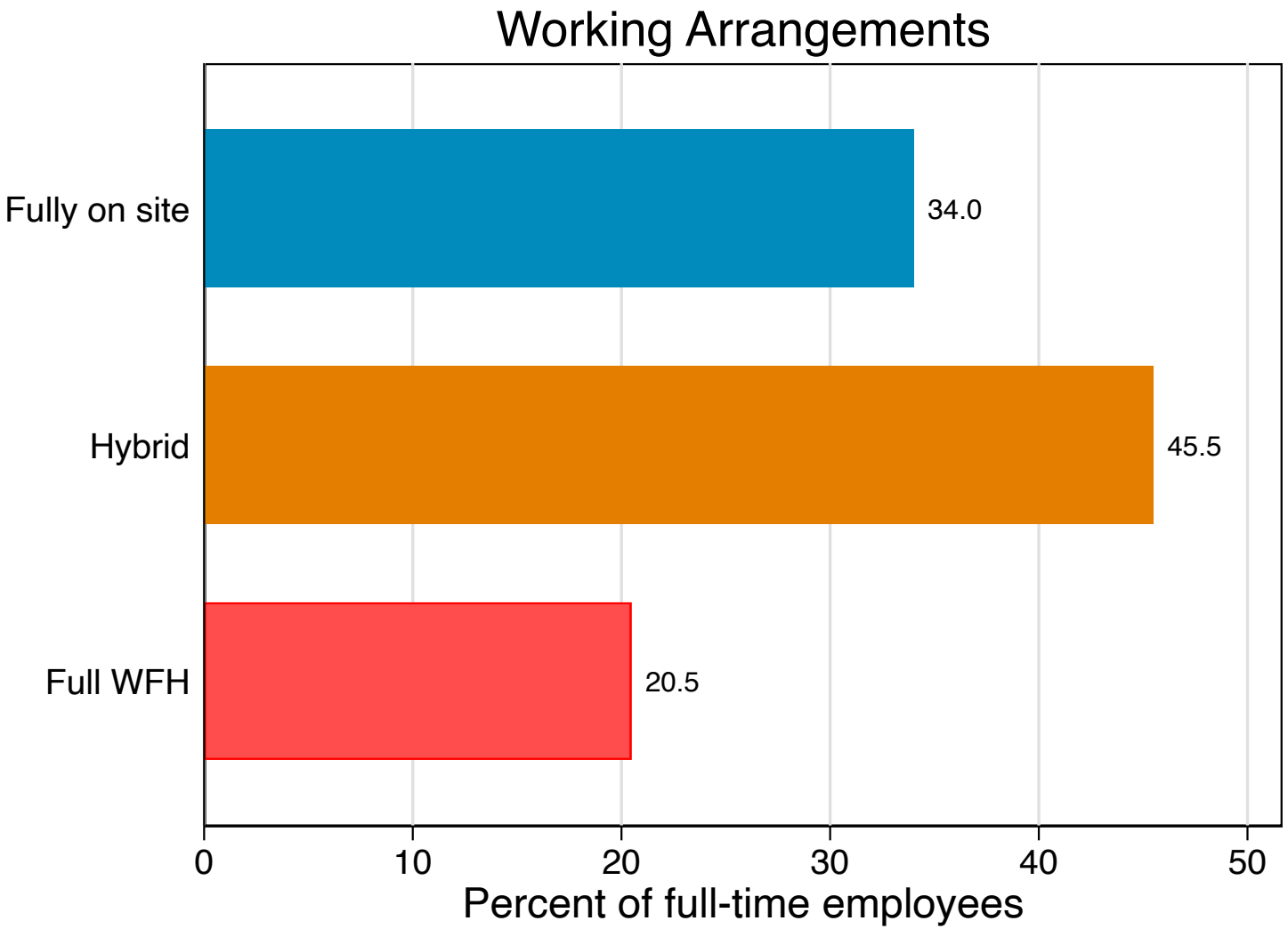
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

Notes: For each wave, we compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work 5+ days/week) wage and salary employees with at least a 4-year college degree who either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. The sample covers the October 2022 to January 2023 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 8,832

For Employees that Can Work from Home, the Most Common Practice is Hybrid



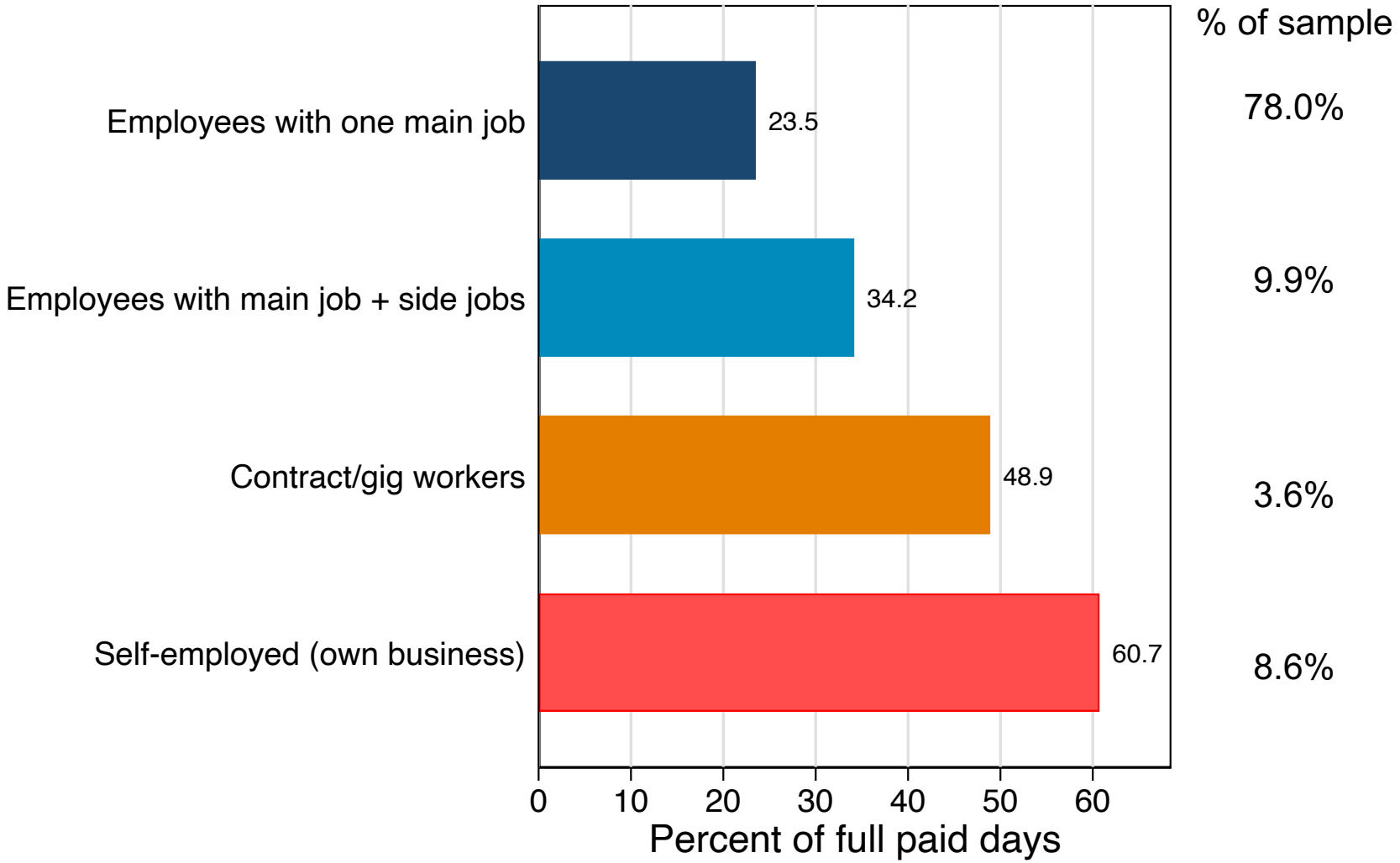
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**

Notes: For each wave, we compute the percent of full-time (i.e. work 5+ days/week) wage and salary employees who are able to work from home and either i) worked all their days on business premises; ii) worked some days on busines premises and some days at home; or iiii) worked all all days at home during the survey's reference week. Then we show the percentage for each group. We infer that somebody is able to work from home if they currently do so 1+ days per week, or did so at some point since the start of COVID.The sample covers the October 2022 to Janaury 2023 waves of the SWAA. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 11,281

Self-employed and Contract/Gig Workers Work from Home at Higher Rates than Wage & Salary Employees



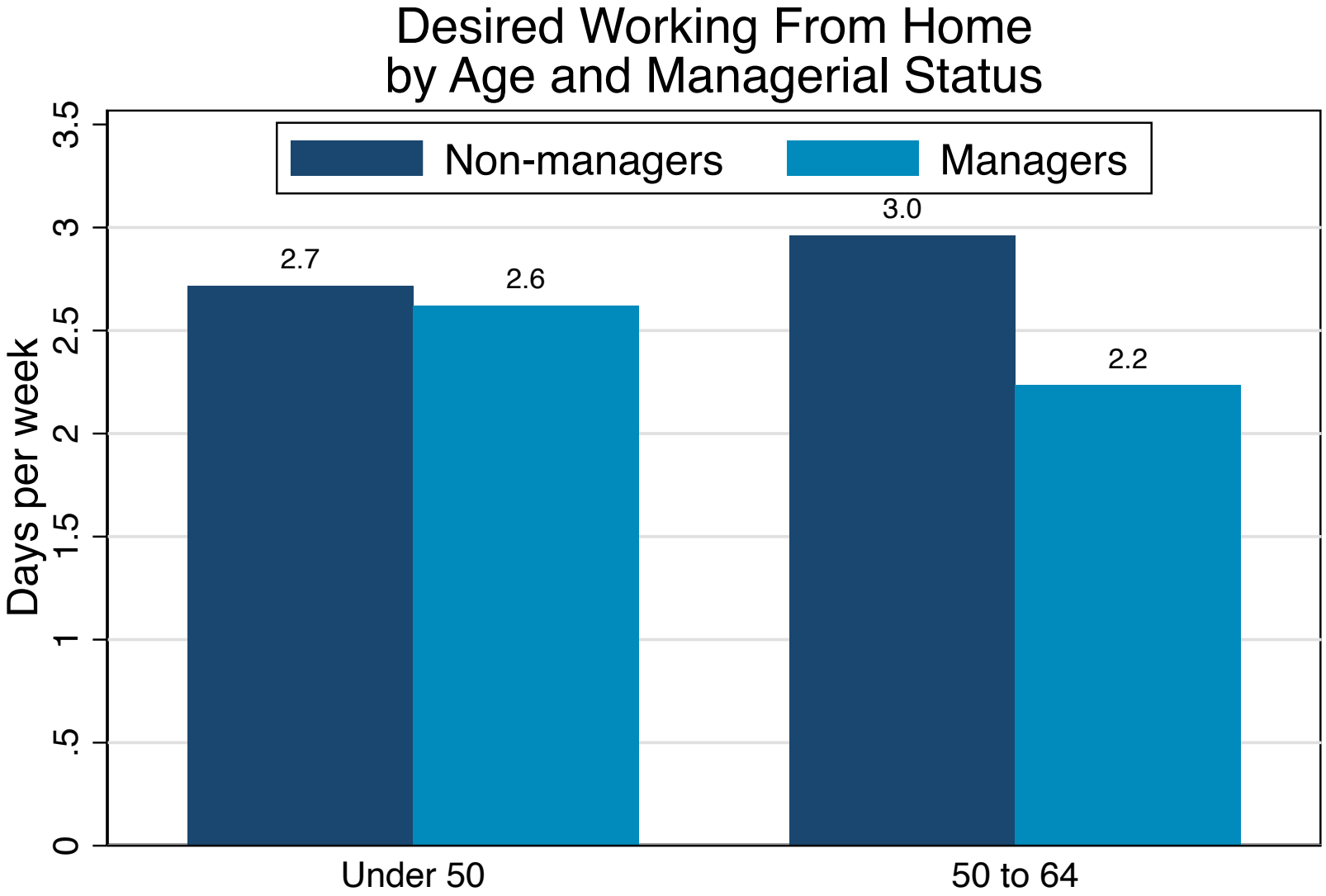
Source: Responses to the questions:

- *For each day* **last week**, *did you* **work a full day (6 or more hours)**, *and if so* **where?**
- *Which of the following best describes your current employment situation?*

Notes: The sample includes all respondents who worked during the reference week and who pass the attention-check questions in the October 2022 to January 2023. For each category of work, we compute the percent of days worked that were working from home days. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 18,391

Desired WFH is Similar for Managers & Non-managers Under 50. Over 50, Managers Want to WFH Almost 1 Fewer Day/Week.



Sample: Respondents able to work from home.

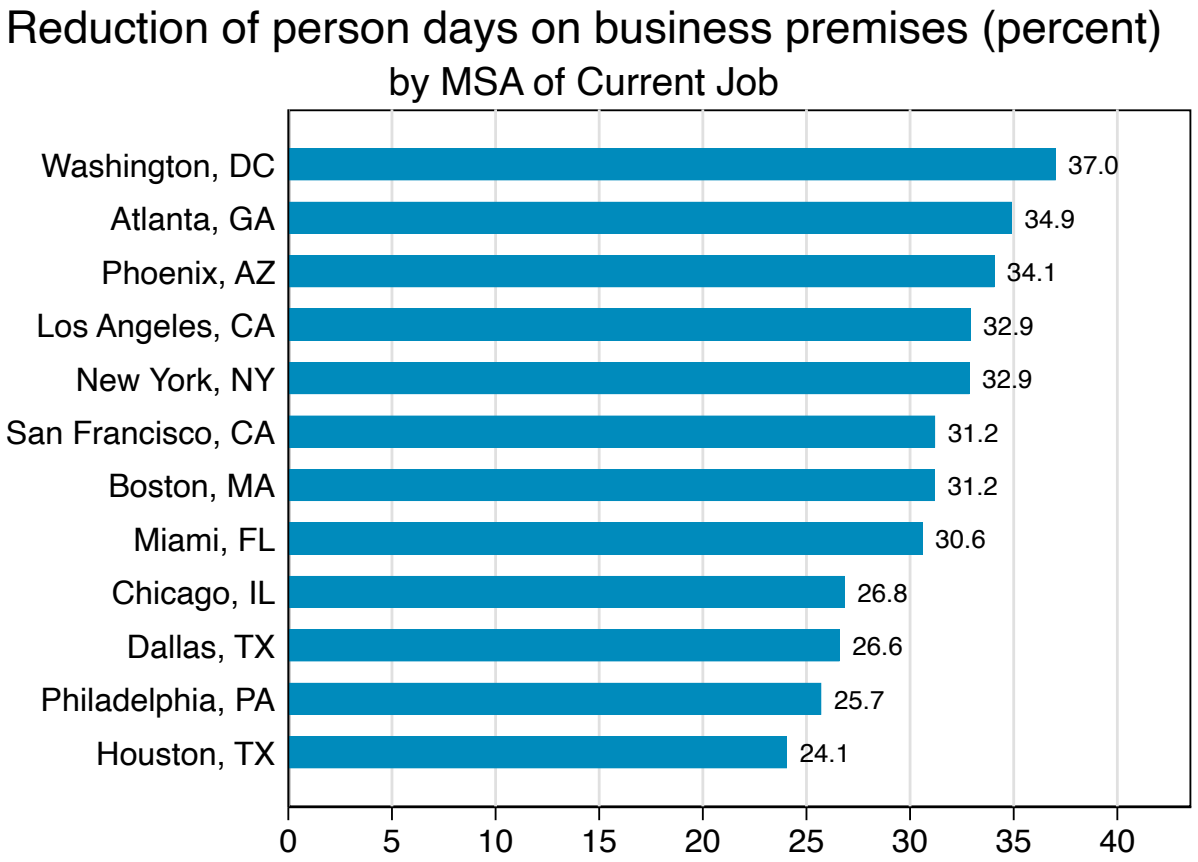
Responses to the questions:

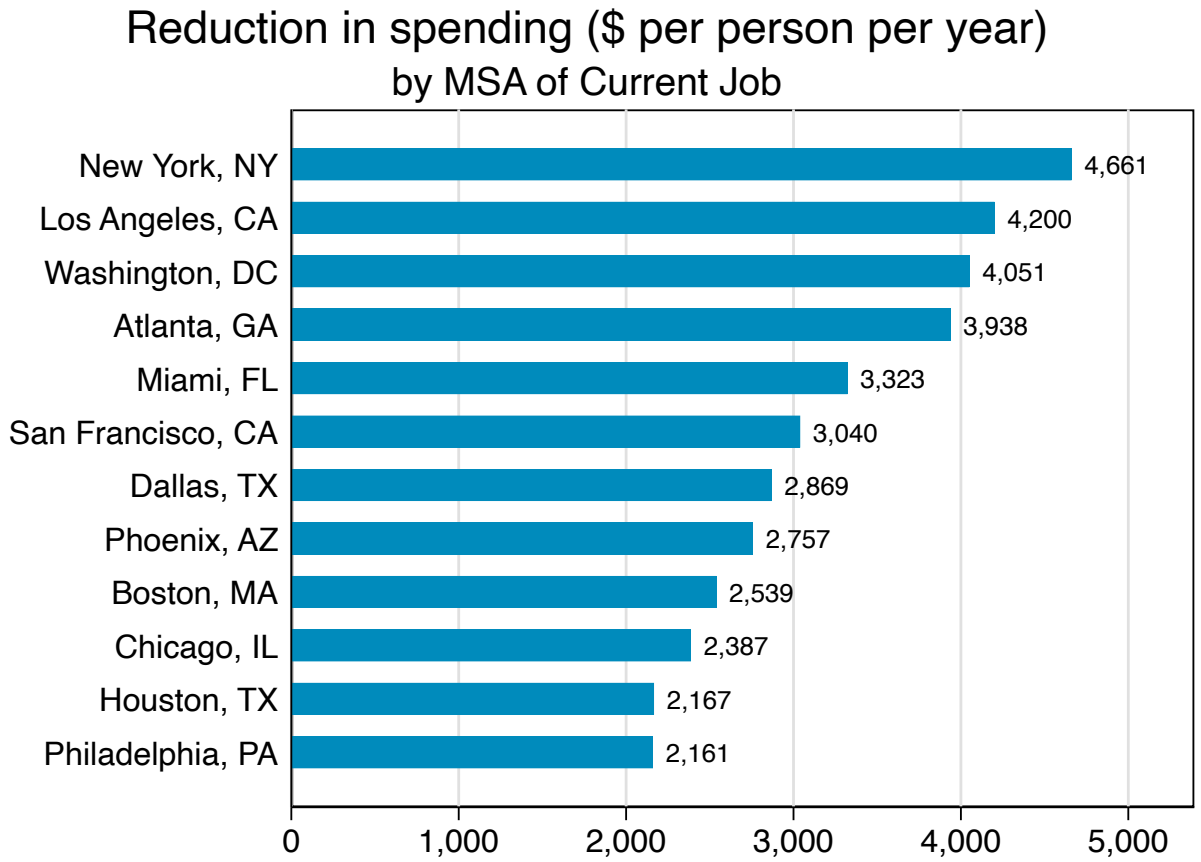
- **As the pandemic ends,** *how often would you like to have full paid days at home?*
- *Do you* **directly manage or supervise** *other employees in your organization?*

Notes: The sample includes all employed respondents in the January 2023 wave of the SWAA who are able to worked from home. We re-weight the sample of US residents aged 20 to 64 earning $10,000 or more in 2019 or 2021 to match CPS shares by age-sex-education-earnings cells.

N = 3,501

Large US Cities are Seeing Large Reductions in Spending from WFH days, at Between $2000 to $5000 per Employee in the City





Notes: We obtain current working from home rates from the June to November 2022 SWAA waves and weekly expenditure near work from questions that asked about meals, entertainment and shopping near work in 2019, asked from July 2020 to January 2021. For each of 12 top metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) we compute the average amount of post-COVID work-from-home days in the June to November period of 2022. We also compute the average *weekly expenditure near work in 2019* for each MSA. We estimate the reduction in person days on business premises as WFH rates (as % of full paid working days) – 5 (%, based on our estimates of pre-COVID working from home from the American Time Use Survey). Finally, we estimate the annual loss in spending ($ per worker per year) for each city as:
*(weekly expenditure near work*50)* (% reduction in expenditure)*(1.115, cumulative PCE inflation from 2020Q1).*
N = 28,824 (WFH Plans reported in 2022Q1) N = 14,527 (weekly spending near work pre-pandemic)

Questions about 2019 spending near work used in the previous two slides. (Asked July 2020 to January 2021)

In 2019, when you worked at your employer's business premises, roughly how much money did you spend during a ***typical day*** on food and drinks (e.g., lunch, coffee, snacks, etc.)?

Number | Required | Min: 0 | Max: 100

$ _____

In 2019, when you worked at your employer's business premises, roughly how much money did you spend during a ***typical week*** on shopping near work (e.g., gifts or clothes shopping during your lunch break or after work)?

Number | Required | Min: 0 | Max: 500

$ _____

In 2019, when you worked at your employer's business premises, roughly how much money did you spend during a ***typical week*** in bars, restaurants, and other entertainment venues that are near to your workplace?

Number | Required | Min: 0 | Max: 500

$ _____

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.