

SWEDEN EXPERIENCES THE 6-HOUR WORKDAY

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Sweden is a country that really values work-life balance and work-life balance. With the collective idea that the well-being of workers contributes to business objectives, the Scandinavian country has long been a world benchmark in work-life balance initiatives: flexible hours, maternity and paternity leave, access to childcare. Along these lines, last year the government began an experiment with a 30-hour work week, and the results obtained reflect an increase in

productivity and an improvement in the health of workers, reports the [*New York Times*](#).

The Svartedalens nursing home was one of the workplaces selected for the experiment, and the information collected over a year shows that absenteeism was lower in the group of employees with a 30-hour shift, and that productivity and quality of service have improved. Many small Swedish companies have embraced part-time, arguing that efficiency and concentration are higher when fewer hours are worked.

Actually, the idea is not new in Sweden: the [Toyota plant in Gothenburg](#) adopted the 30-hour week thirteen years ago and they continue with it due to the increase in benefits. They have also had less positive experiences: several Swedish cities introduced the 30-hour day for municipal employees in the 1990s and early 2000s and abandoned it, citing high costs and resentment from those not part of the program.

The nursing home report joins a [2014 Stanford University study](#) that showed that working too much hurts productivity.

Despite the results obtained, it will be difficult for the moment for the experience to extend to countries where we have a more deeply rooted culture of face-to-face attendance.

Many will doubt that the experience in a residence that measures the result based on the quality of the service can be transferred to companies with other types of objectives, and will point out that it remains to be measured whether the increase in productivity replaces the cost of hiring more workers. In the absence of being able to reduce the working day, labor flexibility, giving workers greater control over their schedules, is presented as a good alternative.

There are no comments yet.