

**PART 1 – How the world of work is changing****Test 1 - Four-day week: ‘major breakthrough’ as most UK firms in trial extend changes**

*Adapted from The Guardian, February 2023*

The vast majority of companies taking part in the world’s largest trial of a four-day week have opted to continue with the new working pattern, in a result hailed as evidence that it could work across the UK economy.

Of the 61 companies that entered the six-month trial, 56 have extended the four-day week, including 18 who have made it permanent. The findings will be presented to MPs on Tuesday as part of a push urging politicians to give all workers in Britain a 32-hour week.

Joe Ryle, the director of the 4 Day Week Campaign, called the trial a “major breakthrough moment”, adding: “Across a wide variety of sectors, wellbeing has improved dramatically for staff; and business productivity has either been maintained or improved in nearly every case. “We’re really pleased with the results and hopefully it does show that the time to roll out a four-day week more widely has surely come.”

At Sheffield-based Rivelin Robotics, one of the participating firms that plans to continue with the new approach, the chief product officer, David Mason, said he hoped offering a shorter working week would help with future recruitment. “It’s certainly something that makes us a little bit different from the average.”

The UK pilot, which kicked off last June, has been promoted by 4 Day Week Global, a not-for-profit organisation founded in New Zealand, and overseen by the thinktank Autonomy and a team of academics.

Companies taking part were offered workshops and mentoring to help them rethink working practices. Staff were given the opportunity to remain on their existing salary, working across four days instead of five.

Since last summer, staff at Rivelin Robotics have been enjoying a three-day weekend. David Alatorre, its chief technology officer, said: “We wanted to instil a culture in the company of putting wellbeing first, making sure that everybody is rested and has a good work-life balance.”

Based in a bright industrial unit close to the River Don, the company makes robots that meticulously finish 3D-printed parts for manufacturers, for industries including aerospace and medicine. In consultation with colleagues, they opted to take Fridays off, and extend the working day to 8am-5.30pm on the other days of the week.

In total, about 2,900 employees across the UK have taken part in the pilot. Surveys of staff taken before and after found that 39% said they were less stressed, 40% were sleeping better and 54% said it was easier to balance work and home responsibilities.

The number of sick days taken during the trial fell by about two-thirds and 57% fewer staff left the firms taking part compared with the same period a year earlier.

The vast majority of companies reported that they were satisfied with productivity and business performance over the trial period. [...] (460 words)

**Text 2 - Why hybrid work is emotionally exhausting**

By Alex Christian, **BBC.com**, 21st January 2022

When Klara was offered a hybrid working arrangement, she thought it would be the best of both worlds. The account manager had initially joined her London-based firm on a full-time office contract, only for successive waves of Covid-19 to force her to work from home.

Klara’s boss introduced the hybrid policy in September 2021, when UK government guidance recommending home working came to an end: Tuesdays and Thursdays would be home-working days, with the remainder of the week spent in the office during normal contracted hours. “Having a permanent hybrid set-up initially came as a relief,” says Klara. (...)

As the months rolled by, however, the novelty of hybrid work soon gave way to hassle and a jarring one-day-in, one-day-out routine. Klara feels she now has two workplaces to maintain – one in the office and one at home. “It’s the psychological shift – the change of setting every day – that’s so tiring” she says.

As the pandemic has dragged on, and workers’ flexible working habits have become more ingrained, a full-time return to the office seems a relic of the past. But while some companies have implemented work-from-anywhere policies, a large swath of businesses have landed on hybrid as the default working model, once it’s deemed safe to return to offices in large numbers.

In theory, hybrid offers the best deal for both employer and employee. It combines pre-Covid-19 patterns of office-based working with remote days, in a working schedule that would allow both in-person collaboration and team building, as well as greater flexibility and the opportunity for focused work at home. It seemed a win-win for workers; in one May 2021 study, 83% said they wanted to go hybrid after the pandemic.

“There was a feeling that hybrid would be the best of both worlds,” says Elora Voyles, an industrial organisational psychologist and people scientist at Tinypulse, based in California. “For bosses, it means they retain a sense of control and that they can see their workers in person. For employees, it offers more flexibility than full-time in the office and means they can work safely during the pandemic.”

However, as the novelty of hybrid working has faded, so too has workers’ enthusiasm. Optimism among workers soon gave way to fatigue. In Tinypulse’s survey of 100 global workers, 72% reported exhaustion from working hybrid – nearly double the figures for fully remote employees and also greater than those based fully in the office.

“A predictable, consistent routine can help people cope with feelings of stress and uncertainty – especially during a pandemic,” says Voyles. “Hybrid, however, requires frequent changes to those daily habits: workers have to constantly switch things up, so it’s hard to find a routine when your schedule is always in-and-out the office” Voyle says.

Hybrid can also come with a greater risk of digital presenteeism, adds Kinman, compared to fully remote jobs which imply employer trust from the get-go. “If an employer sets up hybrid without trusting their workforce, it can become little more than a token gesture: workers feel pressure to show their boss they’re not taking advantage of home working. That could lead to overwork and burnout, the effects of which can be devastating but take a long time to show up.” (...)

Yet Klara’s experience doesn’t necessarily mean that workers should head back to their office desks five days a week, or seek jobs that are permanently remote.

Hybrid can still be a perfect harmony for workers – so long as their employer gets it right. “Where the arrangement goes wrong is when it’s a hybrid schedule dictated by a supervisor,” explains Voyles. “Employees end up with a working week they have no control over: it’s like the fixed full-time office schedule of old, which just happens to be in the worker’s home twice a week.”

Kinman says it comes down to what organisations mean by ‘hybrid’. “It’s a broad definition that can be interpreted in many ways: from going into the office three days a week, to once a month. Hybrid can still be the future of work and represent the best of both worlds – but it still needs refining.” (684 words)

### **Text 3 - The AI industrial revolution puts middle-class workers under threat this time**

Larry Elliott, economics editor, *The Guardian*, February 18, 2023

The machines are coming and they will eat your job. That’s been a familiar refrain down the years, stretching back to the Luddites in the early 19th century. In the past, step-changes in technology have replaced low-paid jobs with a greater number of higher-paid jobs. This time, with the arrival of artificial intelligence, there are those who think it will be different.

Politicians know that even in the best case AI will cause massive disruption to labour markets, but they are fooling themselves if they think they have years to come up with a suitable response. As the tech entrepreneur Mihir Shukla said at the recent World Economic Forum in Davos: “People keep saying AI is coming but it is already here.”

Developments in machine learning and robotics have been moving on rapidly while the world has been preoccupied by the pandemic, inflation and war. AI stands to be to the fourth industrial revolution what the

spinning jenny and the steam engine were to the first in the 18th century: a transformative technology that will fundamentally reshape economies.

Change will not happen overnight but, as was the case in previous industrial revolutions, it will be painful for those affected, as millions of workers will be. Previously, machines replaced manual labour, leaving jobs that required cognitive skills to humans. Advances in AI – symbolised by ChatGPT – shows that machines can now have a decent stab at doing the creative stuff as well.

ChatGPT is a machine that can write intelligently. Asked to come up with a version of Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg address in the style of Donald Trump, it will search its datasets for suitable source material and generate original content.

Launched by the San Francisco-based research laboratory OpenAI in November last year, ChatGPT notched up its 100 millionth user in 60 days. By contrast, it took Facebook two years to reach the same milestone.

Other new products will follow. The number of AI patents increased 30-fold between 2015 and 2021, according to a report from Stanford University in California. Robots are becoming cheaper and more sophisticated all the time.

History suggests profound technological change presents significant challenges for policymakers. Each of the three previous industrial revolutions had a similar initial impact: it hollowed out jobs across the economy, it led to an increase in inequality and to a decline in the share of income going to labour.

AI threatens to have precisely the same effects, but with one key difference. Left unchecked, owners of the new machines will make enormous sums of money out of their innovations. Capital will see its share of income rise at the expense of labour. There will be a hollowing out of some sectors of the economy but there will be employment growth in other sectors.

The difference this time is that the jobs most at risk will be white-collar, middle-class jobs, while many of the jobs created might be of the low-paid, dead-end variety. As Shukla noted in Davos, the days of humans processing mortgage applications are already numbered.

There are ways of dealing with some of these issues. Governments could invest more in education and training, so that workers have the skills they need to make a decent living. They might explore ways of spreading the gains from the new technology. Silicon Valley entrepreneurs have been among the most vocal supporters of a universal basic income.

But whatever they do, policymakers need to act with care as well as speed. The economist Joseph Schumpeter popularised a phrase to describe how capitalism periodically reinvents itself. He called it creative destruction, and just such a process is in its early stages now.

## Text 4 - How A.I. Can Help

**ChatGPT is changing how people work. That can be scary. But for now, most jobs are still safe.**

**Newsletter The Morning, from *The New York Times*, By Lauren Jackson, March 2, 2023**

Eli Snyder, a special-education teacher in Colorado, wanted to play basketball with his students. He had questions: How could he adapt the game for a child with cerebral palsy? And how could he help his students with autism play a highly stimulating activity?

ChatGPT had answers.

The artificial intelligence chatbot had analyzed the internet's vast amount of data, including information about disabilities and basketball. It used patterns it found in all that text to generate recommendations: Shrink the court size to reduce the distance players need to travel in wheelchairs. Lower the hoop and install a ramp leading up to it so students can roll the basketball into the net. Pair up players so each person has a buddy for support.

Snyder could have found this information through a simple Google search. He turned to ChatGPT because it produced complete paragraphs instead of delivering links that would have left him with more clicking and synthesizing to do. The chatbot's response helped him quickly write adapted lesson plans for each of his students.

"It's been revolutionary," Snyder, 30, said. "What used to take me an hour now takes me five minutes."

Tech giants are heralding ChatGPT as revolutionary, too. With millions of users, the chatbot has started an A.I. arms race. Companies are rushing to release their own chatbots, and some seem eerily human.

Beyond the excitement, the technology's possibilities can feel scary — as if science fiction has become reality. ChatGPT has already inspired many people to ask: Will A.I. take my job? It's a familiar panic, one that resurfaces every time a groundbreaking innovation emerges, like the car or the internet. Still, questioning how A.I. could replace jobs in the future misses a more urgent point: The platform is changing how people work right now.

### **How workers use A.I.**

Artificial intelligence already pervades our lives, powering voice assistants like Siri and Alexa, unlocking phones with facial recognition and auto-completing sentences in emails. ChatGPT gave millions of people the opportunity to test and interact with a version of the technology called generative A.I., which can write text and create images.

Many workers are already using the tool in their jobs. The chatbot has written home descriptions for real estate agents, job descriptions for hiring managers and sales pitches for marketers.

It excels at formulaic writing tasks because it mimics text that already exists online. House listings often feel canned, as do sales pitches, making it easy for ChatGPT to complete first drafts of those types of assignments.

"ChatGPT solves the blank page problem," Cody Gough, a marketing professional outside of Chicago, told me. "The worst thing in the world is opening an empty document. ChatGPT helps you start."

### **The limitations**

As we've covered in this newsletter, A.I. chatbots are flawed. They often make mistakes — like the one that led to a \$100 billion drop in Google's cumulative stock market value when it appeared in an ad.

The workers I spoke to mostly use ChatGPT as a brainstorming tool and writing aid. They say the work of chatbots is sometimes inaccurate and often of lower quality than they could produce themselves, but that chatbots can still be useful.

Alexia Mandeville, a video game designer in Texas, uses ChatGPT to help her brainstorm character names, conceive ideas for trailers and produce news releases for her games. "I'm making something that doesn't need to be factual," Mandeville said. Because her work is fictional, she added, ChatGPT needs to be creative, not accurate.

The chatbot is still the tool, not the creator. It can copy writing styles, often replicating our weird internet behavior, as my colleague Cade Metz wrote. ChatGPT's outputs are only as good as its inputs, so it struggles to reason, use logic, discern the truth and write imaginative work. It has tried and failed to write science fiction, for example. The human capacity for original thought is keeping white-collar professionals employed, even as A.I. poses more of a threat to them than earlier advancements did.

### **Freeing up more time**

A.I. can't do Snyder's job of teaching music and gym classes. It can't play the piano or the basketball game HORSE, and it can't facilitate students' social and emotional learning. But it gives Snyder more time for that work.

"Everyone is talking about how A.I. is going to replace us," Snyder said. "I don't agree with that. It's going to free up more time at our jobs to do other, more productive things."

A.I. will continue to transform industries as companies integrate it into a variety of tasks, like customer service from virtual agents, predictive product inventory and medical tests. ChatGPT will probably eliminate some roles while creating new jobs. That's already started to happen: Companies are hiring workers to test and sell the most effective chatbot queries.

The technology will only get better. A.I. is designed to learn, and companies are investing billions to develop more powerful versions of the tool. At some point, chatbots could write finished products instead of just often-inaccurate first drafts — and eliminate far more jobs.

Until then, most of them are safe.

## TEXT 5 - Les DRH confrontés au phénomène insidieux du « quiet quitting »

Mercenaires ou désengagés, les salariés sont de plus en plus nombreux à prendre leurs distances avec leur travail. Un concept baptisé « démission silencieuse ».

Par Anne Rodier, *Le Monde*, 14 décembre 2022

Savoir manager les profils mercenaires pourrait bien être le défi 2023 pour les directeurs des ressources humaines. Un nouveau concept nourrit depuis quelques mois la littérature managériale, celui de *quiet quitting*. D'aucuns parlent de « démission silencieuse », pour désigner les salariés qui réduisent leur travail à ce qu'exige leur fiche de poste. Ils ne travaillent plus au-delà de leurs heures de travail, ne répondent plus aux mails, ne viennent pas toujours aux réunions.

Mais parler simplement de « désengagement » serait réducteur, voire erroné. « *Les salariés ont rééquilibré leur niveau d'exigence entre ce qu'ils donnent et ce qu'ils reçoivent* », expliquait Benoît Serre, vice-président délégué de l'Association nationale des DRH (ANDRH), lors d'une conférence bilan 2022 sur « *les nouvelles organisations du travail* ».

« *Le désengagement est progressif et n'est pas exprimé. C'est pour ça qu'on parle de quiet quitting* », témoigne Elliot Boucher, cofondateur d'Edusign, une start-up d'une vingtaine de salariés dans le secteur de l'éducation, qui a récemment été confrontée au problème : « *Un de nos développeurs en poste depuis un an et demi s'est ainsi mis à travailler un peu plus lentement que d'habitude, jusqu'à s'effacer et finalement quitter l'entreprise. Un deuxième salarié, arrivé depuis quelques mois seulement, a reproduit le même scénario, jusqu'à ce qu'on le mette sur un nouveau projet. Le premier était sur un projet peut-être moins intéressant que celui de ses collègues.* »

Une fois le *quiet quitting* détecté, la start-up a pris des mesures de prévention pour casser la dynamique insidieuse et éviter l'hémorragie des départs : « *La particularité d'Edusign est qu'on est tous à distance. Quand on demandait aux collaborateurs si tout allait bien, la réponse était toujours "oui". Alors on a mis en place un processus pour suivre les salariés, en instaurant des entretiens trimestriels, avec des objectifs sur le travail et sur leurs aspirations personnelles, afin de maintenir l'équilibre vie privée-vie professionnelle. On a ainsi décelé un troisième cas qui a été réglé. On va essayer de trouver le bon équilibre pour chacun.* »

L'importance de la place préservée pour la vie privée est régulièrement exprimée par les jeunes dans les sondages d'opinion. Dans la dernière édition du baromètre « les

jeunes et l'entreprise » réalisé par BVA pour La fondation Jean Jaurès et la Macif et publié fin novembre, 30 % des jeunes estiment ainsi qu'une entreprise doit leur permettre d'avoir du temps libre pour leur vie personnelle (36 % à partir de bac +3).

### Recherche de la réponse adaptée

Le phénomène de *quiet quitting* regroupe des démissionnaires (pas tous) et des salariés en poste et en recherche active d'emploi. Son ampleur est difficile à chiffrer. « *Ceux qui sont en veille [de changement de poste] sont de plus en plus nombreux dans la mesure où le marché de l'emploi se porte bien* », note Benoît Serre. Plus d'un actif sur trois (37 %) serait concerné, selon un sondage IFOP réalisé mi-octobre auprès de 2 000 personnes. Ce qui est établi, c'est que le nombre de démissions n'a cessé de progresser depuis un an, jusqu'à atteindre 523 107 au premier trimestre 2022, selon le ministère du travail.

Soit 2,7 % de démissionnaires parmi les salariés du privé sur la période. Ce taux, le plus élevé depuis 2008, « *n'est pas associé à un nombre inhabituel de retraits du marché du travail* », précise la Dares. De quoi conforter l'idée d'une hausse du turnover nourrie par un rééquilibrage entre les différentes aspirations des salariés, plutôt qu'une hypothèse de désengagement. Les salariés veulent pouvoir privilégier leurs propres choix en permanence : famille, changement de rythme, changement d'activité.

Le vice-président délégué de l'ANDRH, qui regroupe quelque 5 000 grandes et moyennes entreprises (PME et ETI), a identifié trois profils de salariés en *quiet quitting* : celui qui fait uniquement ce pour quoi on le rémunère, en s'assurant du bon équilibre vie privée-vie professionnelle ; celui qui a « *le nez à la fenêtre* », davantage concentré sur les occasions à l'extérieur que sur son travail ; et enfin le collaborateur à qui les conditions de travail ne conviennent plus, comme dans l'hôtellerie-restauration, où les employeurs ont réagi en augmentant la rémunération. A chaque profil, les DRH devront trouver une réponse adaptée.

### Rémunération et autonomie

Chaque cas est différent. La prise de distance s'amorce dès le recrutement. « *Le candidat a pris le pouvoir* », traduisent les recruteurs. Sur le métier de développeur,

la concurrence est certes rude entre employeurs. « Mais le quiet quitting ne touche pas que ce métier », précise Elliot Boucher.

« Cette tendance concerne principalement les professions intellectuelles qui subissent un épuisement professionnel et ont besoin de comprendre ce qu'elles font et pourquoi, notamment dans le secteur des services », affirme Davy Tessier, CEO de la start-up Furious. « Le phénomène concerne en particulier les métiers techniques, peu qualifiés, et en particulier le secteur de l'hôtellerie-restauration », constate de son côté Adrien Scemama, responsable France du site d'annonces d'emploi Talent.com : « Il y a une grande fatigue des salariés, les entreprises ont trop tiré sur la corde », analyse-t-il.

En appui de son propos, il rappelle l'étude Gallup *State of the Global Workplace Report 2022*, selon laquelle les salariés en Europe sont les moins investis du monde avec un taux d'engagement à 14 %. La France affiche un niveau d'engagement parmi les plus bas, avec un taux de 6 %, mesuré notamment sur leur possibilité de contribuer à l'entreprise et leur sentiment d'appartenance au collectif.

« Je ne pense pas que l'engagement soit touché, relativise Benoît Serre. Pendant deux ans les salariés ont vécu le travail autrement. Il s'agit de travailler tout autant, mais dans un modèle beaucoup moins contraignant. Il y a, en revanche, une certaine

impatience à ce que les entreprises intègrent les alternatives découvertes pendant le Covid. »

Pour contrer le phénomène du *quiet quitting*, les DRH mènent des actions conjoncturelles ou structurelles selon les cas : rémunération variable introduite plus tôt dans la carrière dans le secteur high-tech, des avantages matériels au cas par cas, et plus d'autonomie dans l'organisation du travail pour tous. « Il y a une logique à redonner de la qualité du travail en s'assurant que les salariés se retrouvent dans la chaîne de valeur », analyse M. Serre. Le *quiet quitting* est une charge de plus sur les épaules du management de proximité.

Les chiffres

### 37 %

C'est la part d'actifs qui se déclarent proches du « quiet quitting », selon un sondage IFOP-Les Makers réalisé en ligne à la mi-octobre.

### 469 610

C'est le nombre de démissions de CDI dans le secteur privé au premier trimestre 2022, selon la direction de l'animation de la recherche, des études et des statistiques du ministère du travail (Dares). Avec les CDD, le total est de 523 107.

### 2,7 %

C'est le taux de démissions en France au premier trimestre 2022, au plus haut depuis la crise financière de 2008.

## PART 2 – Migrant workers

### TEXT 6 -Tech Layoffs in U.S. Send Foreign Workers Scrambling to Find New Jobs

*Workers on visas, many of them waiting years for green cards, now face having to leave the country unless they get hired within 60 days.*

By Miriam Jordan, *The New York Times*, Dec. 9, 2022

Since Microsoft brought him to the United States 14 years ago, Abhishikt Jain has excelled professionally, raised a family and settled into a four-bedroom house with a garage “full of unnecessary stuff,” he said. “You could say I achieved the American dream,” said the software engineer, now 43, who is from India and lives in Bellevue, Wash.

But in October, Mr. Jain fell victim to layoffs battering the tech industry, and suddenly his family's future was thrust into uncertainty. On the cusp of securing permanent U.S. residency after a 12-year wait, Mr. Jain instead faced the prospect of packing up and leaving the United States unless he quickly found another job or finally received his green card.

After years of galloping growth, the U.S. tech sector has slammed on the brakes amid rising inflation and worries about a recession. A hiring bonanza has given way to drastic head count reductions to slash costs.

Getting sacked during the holiday season is a blow to any worker. But for foreigners on temporary work visas, the challenges go far beyond managing without paychecks. They must find jobs within 60 days at another company

willing to sponsor them for a visa, or they must leave the country. And many stand to lose their shot at U.S. permanent residency after spending years in a green-card backlog.

So far this year, more than 146,000 tech workers have been laid off, according to Layoffs.fyi, which tracks them, including 51,000 in November alone. A substantial share of those terminated were foreigners, even though employers have not disclosed how many workers on temporary visas have been let go.

*The cutbacks have sent anxious foreign workers scrambling to find new jobs, and as the clock ticks, looking for possible workarounds, such as transferring to temporary visitor status to buy a little more time to job hunt.*

“The magnitude of the layoffs is of the likes I have never seen before. There is chaos and confusion,” said Tahmina Watson, an immigration lawyer in Seattle who has been barraged with queries from laid-off foreign workers. “Not only are tech companies laying people off in unprecedented numbers, but they are also implementing hiring freezes,” she said, “and thus, there are likely few alternative jobs for immigrant workers.”

Mr. Jain, who lost his job at Microsoft in October, is among tens of thousands of Indian engineers who for years have been creating software at information technology companies like Cisco, social-media platforms like Meta and online retailers like Amazon. Because of their crucial role, and a dearth of American STEM graduates, many foreign workers are being sponsored by their employers for U.S. permanent residency.

While parked in the backlog waiting for approval, the immigrants have built lives in the United States: They have had American children, taken out mortgages and become rooted in their communities.

Most are on high-skilled worker visas known as H-1Bs. More than 500,000 people are in the United States under the visas, the largest number hailing from India, followed by China, with the majority in science and technology fields.

Demand for such talent has soared as the U.S. economy has become increasingly reliant on technology. Between 2000 and 2019, the number of tech workers in the United States jumped by 44 percent, to 10.8 million from 7.5 million. For their programming, coding and other skills, many receive six-figure salaries.

As of 2019, foreign-born workers made up almost a quarter of all STEM workers in the country, up from about 16 percent in the year 2000, according to an analysis of census data by the American Immigration Council.

The visa holders are concentrated in California, home to Twitter, Meta and Apple, and in Washington State, home to Amazon, Microsoft, Zillow and Expedia. But they are also in states like Arkansas, toiling at the headquarters of Tyson, the poultry processor, to improve production efficiencies, and at Walmart, to design systems for self-checkouts.

This year, U.S. employers filed more than 480,000 petitions for the 85,000 H-1B visas available, and as in previous years, the government turned to a lottery to allocate them because of the large volume of applications.

But recent layoffs in the tech industry have abruptly upended the lives of workers already here. If H-1B workers and their families return to their country of origin after being laid off, their employer is obligated to pay for their airfare home. To stay in the United States, they must find a company willing to shoulder the costs of renewing their H-1B visa, and to pay fees associated with their green-card applications, if they are in process, which are employment-based. (...)

Layoffs have occurred steadily at tech titans and midsize firms but also at smaller companies and start-ups. Many companies that boomed during the coronavirus pandemic, such as Amazon, DoorDash and Netflix, have seen lower demand as consumer behavior returns to pre-pandemic patterns. (...)

Some employers have offered generous severance packages.

Yet even with his deep experience, finding a new job has been challenging because the wave of layoffs coupled with hiring freezes has created stiff competition. (842 words)

## TEXT 7 - Britain has entered a third phase of post-war immigration

*The Economist*, Apr 7th 2022 | GLOUCESTER

Last May Raymond Padilla, a former journalist from the Philippines who arrived in Britain in 2005, was elected to Gloucester City Council. Filipino reporters called his victory historic; it also seemed improbable. Gloucester, in the west of England, is not hugely diverse. At the time of the most recent published census, in 2011, only 14% of its inhabitants were anything other than white and British. The city does not even have a Filipino restaurant. When immigrants want a taste of home, they make do with Thai food.

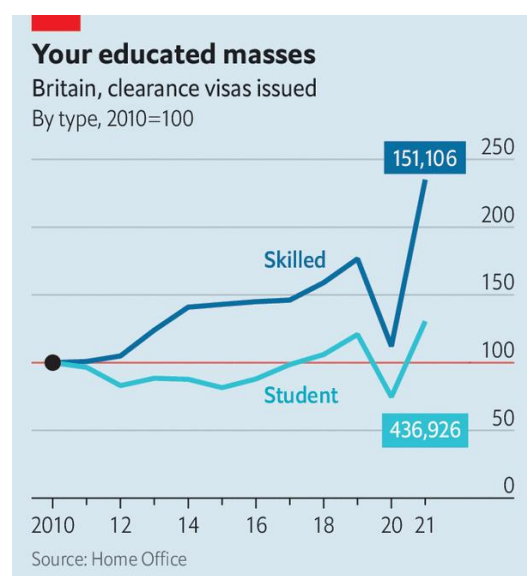
But the number of Filipinos in Gloucester is growing. That is largely because of its hospital, where Mr Padilla works as a nurse. “We’re all over the place because hospitals and care homes are all over the place,” he says. And that growth hints at a profound change in the pattern of immigration to Britain.

Since the second world war Britain has gone through two big phases of immigration. First came migrants from former colonies such as India, Pakistan and Jamaica, who often availed themselves of free movement within the empire and Commonwealth, just as the British colonists had done. As the Sri Lankan writer and activist Ambalavaner Sivanandan put it: “We are here because you were there.”

Then came a European phase. In 2004 Britain was one of only three EU countries to open its labour market to citizens of the Baltic and eastern European countries that had just joined the bloc. In the two decades to 2020-21 the European-born population in Britain rose from 1.5m to 3.9m, and from 35% to 41% of the foreign-born population, according to the Labour Force Survey.

The European phase ended in December 2020 when Britain enacted a new, post-Brexit immigration system. Free movement to and from continental Europe ceased. But Boris Johnson’s government made work permits easier to obtain.

Companies no longer had to prove that they had tried to hire a native Briton for a role, and the salary threshold that skilled migrants are required to clear was lowered from £30,000 (\$39,000) to £25,600. For health-care workers the threshold is even lower, at a mere £20,480. In another change, foreign students in British universities are now allowed to work for at least two years after graduating, restoring a right that they had held under the previous Labour government.



*The Economist*

Sixteen months into the new regime, the consequences are clear. Despite the many disruptions of covid-19, Britain is issuing more work and study visas (see chart). The vast majority are not going to Europeans. In 2021 people from India received almost 99,000 study visas, up from a low point of 16,000 in 2015. Nigerians were granted 10,000 skilled-worker visas and 43,000 study visas—about as many as in the previous four years put together.

Filipinos received almost 10,000 skilled-worker visas, putting them in third place behind Indians and Nigerians. The country has become an essential source of nurses. In the six months to September 2021, fully 3,040 Philippines-trained nurses joined the National Health Service. That is more than the number of new NHS nurses trained in



Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales put together. Britain's covid-19 vaccination drive began in December 2020 when a Filipina matron, May Parsons, injected Margaret Keenan.

Britain's third phase of immigration looks in some ways like the first, post-imperial phase. As well as Indians and Nigerians, Britain is issuing more skilled-worker visas to people from Kenya, Pakistan and Zimbabwe—all former British territories. But the rising number of visas going to Filipinos and others with scant historical ties to Britain, such as Brazilians, reveals the difference. If the first phase of immigration was post-imperial, and the second European, this one is global and middle-class. Britain smiles on nurses, coders and students from everywhere, and on fruit-pickers from nowhere (although they are eligible for temporary-worker visas).

Filipinos are likely to keep moving to Britain, at least for a few years. The government has pledged to hire 50,000 nurses by 2024, points out Billy Palmer of the Nuffield Trust, a health-care think-tank, and “we’re not going to get it from our domestic supply.” (...)

Another reason to think it will continue is that Britons, who showed their dislike of free movement from Europe by voting to leave the EU, seem happier with the focus on skilled immigrants. Polling by Ipsos mori shows that the proportion who want to see immigration reduced fell from 67% to 42% between February 2015 and February 2022. Three-quarters of Britons favour letting immigrants take health-care jobs (asylum-seekers coming across the Channel are less popular). (755 words)

## **PART 3 – A New Wave of Unionisation**

### **TEXT 6 - Unions and Video Games**

*Gaming is a huge industry, and workers are trying to unionize.*

By German Lopez, The Morning Newsletter, *The New York Times*, Jan. 24, 2023

Tonight, tens of millions of Americans will wind down from a day of work or school with a leisure activity that did not exist a century ago: video games.

Until fairly recently, games were considered a niche hobby, typically associated with children. But the industry has grown widely in recent decades. About two-thirds of Americans, most of them adults, play video games. The video game industry was worth nearly \$200 billion in 2021 — more than music, U.S. book publishing and North American sports combined. It employs hundreds of thousands of people in the U.S. alone.

Some of you non-gamers are probably wondering why you should care. My answer is that the game industry's story is a universal one, of a new business growing up and becoming a major cultural institution, one that hundreds of millions of Americans regularly engage with. It is similar to the rise of the movie industry or football over the past century. They are now cornerstones of American life that started as niche forms of entertainment.

And similar to the types of abuses and tragedies in Hollywood or the N.F.L. that reverberate beyond fans of movies and sports, the game industry has also faced accusations of brutal work conditions, discrimination and harassment. The conditions have prompted more workers to move to unionize. This month, Microsoft recognized its first union after video game testers organized. Today's newsletter will look at how game developers are confronting problems that have entangled other companies, including Amazon and Starbucks, as workers push to shape a relatively new industry.

“Game developers are not alone in this,” said Johanna Weststar, an expert on labor in the game industry at Western University in Ontario. “There’s been a rise in worker activism across many different sectors.”

#### **Unsafe workplaces**

A common refrain in the video game industry is that no one goes into it for the money; they could earn more doing similar jobs at other software companies, but instead passion drives them to games. Industry workers have accused employers of taking advantage of this devotion to allow poor conditions to flourish.

“The impact so many games have had on me — I want to be part of giving that to someone else,” said Amanda Laven, a game tester at the company Activision Blizzard. “Corporate leadership know we’d rather be here testing a video game than another piece of software, so they can pay us way less.”

Among the more criticized practices of the industry is “crunch,” when employees are pushed to work 60 to 100 hours a week for up to several months to hit a milestone on a project. Jason Schreier, a video game journalist, highlighted the issue in Times Opinion in 2017. While crunching, one programmer working on The Elder Scrolls V: Skyrim in 2011 ended up at an emergency room three times because of severe stomach pain. After he stopped crunching, the pain disappeared.

Video game companies say that they sometimes need crunch to finish projects on time and on budget, but are working to minimize their use of it. Workers like Laven argue that many companies have done too little and continue to overuse crunch.

Activision Blizzard says it pays employees more than its competitors on average and tries to mitigate crunch by paying overtime, spreading hours among team members and expensing meals. “We care deeply for our employees,” said Joe Christinat, a spokesman for Activision Blizzard. “We don’t want any of them to feel like they have to make unfair sacrifices.”

Another pervasive claim: gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment. In 2021, California sued Activision Blizzard for what the state described as the company’s “frat boy” culture in which women were underpaid and sexually harassed. Activision Blizzard said that the accusations were a misrepresentation of the company’s inner workings, and that it had taken steps to improve its culture in recent years.

The accusations got a lot of attention, but those in the industry say the problems go beyond Activision Blizzard. Other big companies have also faced claims of discrimination and harassment, including Riot, Ubisoft and Sony. Those companies’ responses have ranged from saying they’re working to be more inclusive to dismissing some accusations.

Schreier has written that many of these problems go back to the early days of the industry, when game developers facilitated “a frat-like image of boys who pulled all-nighters to make their games, pounding Diet Cokes and pizzas and who kept pictures of scantily clad women on their desks.” But as games have grown, workers’ expectations have changed.

### **Moving to organize**

The conditions have driven more employees to try to unionize, including several studios at Activision Blizzard and Microsoft. Organizers told me that dozens more efforts are underway in the U.S., though most are not public yet. Most game developers support unionization, a recent survey found.

Companies have responded differently to the efforts. Microsoft pledged neutrality when its workers moved to unionize. Activision Blizzard (which Microsoft is trying to buy) has tried to block unionization drives. The push to unionize is part of a broader trend in relatively new industries, including tech and digital media. Spurred by what they see as poor conditions, many employees in those sectors have come to see unions as the best way to protect themselves. The total number of union members nationwide increased by nearly 300,000 last year, my colleague Noam Scheiber wrote.

Some workers described this drive as part of a process as the game industry is fairly new and still experiencing growing pains and professionalization. By leveraging the current moment, they hope to change the industry for good. “We are trying to help ourselves,” Laven said. “But we’re also trying to help everyone who comes after us.”

Related: The ability to work from home, create collective power and support co-workers are other reasons game developers gave for unionizing, the gaming website Polygon reported.

## **TEXT 7 - American Companies Have Always Been More Anti-Union Than International Ones. Here's Why**

BY RAISA BRUNER , TIME, APRIL 21, 2022

When Starbucks stores in upstate New York announced plans to unionize last December, labor historian Ileen Devault wasn’t sure if the U.S. was seeing the start of a trend or just a tiny blip in the history of workers’ activism in the country.

Now, as a wave of unionization has taken hold across shops and industries nationwide, Devault, a professor of labor history at Cornell University’s Industrial and Labor Relations School, knows it’s not just a blip. “It feels to me like a change in the air,” she says, and an indication of a meaningful shift in workers’ mindsets, even in the face of corporate

antagonism. In 1970, union membership peaked at about 17 million nationally, over 30% of private-sector employees. By 2002, it had dropped by nearly half. Today, however, membership appears to be on the upswing.

The pendulum swings of unionization in the U.S. are part of a bigger picture: the neverending tension between businesses and workers. “Businesses and unions in the United States have pretty literally always had a very contentious relationship,” Devault says. “And it’s a relationship that’s much more contentious than the relationships between companies and unions in other countries. Historians have been trying to figure out for years why it is that it’s so much more problematic in the United States.”

As large corporations like Amazon sink millions of dollars into anti-union campaigns even as their workers rally successfully to unionize, that relationship looks poised to remain just as thorny. But when it comes to the reason that companies have dug their feet in against unions, the answer isn’t so hard-and-fast.

#### **Why do companies fight unions?**

(...) The distinctly American value of revering private property over public goods has made this relationship particularly challenging, says Devault. “We’re all supposed to try to gain as much private property as we can, and then protect it from anybody who isn’t us, whatever that means,” she says. “And I think that emphasis—and the fact that the courts have bought into that emphasis on private property—has meant that unions have always been seen as somehow against the whole idea of private property.” Instead of viewing unionization as a net positive that supports better returns for everyone contributing to a company, companies view their bottom line and profits as property that needs to be protected from workers.

Plus, unions give workers power that doesn’t always jive with the preferences of corporate leaders. “Unions aren’t just about higher wages. They are very much about workers having a say about what happens in the workplace,” Devault says. “And that’s what employers don’t like.” When things like vacation policies, health care benefits, and firing practices are set by the union and not the employer, it means the employer becomes more responsible for its workers—and less capable of, say, instituting layoffs.

#### **How have companies been impacted by unionization?**

While labor historians point to the positive impact that unions have had on decreasing income inequality and growing the middle class, economists point instead to the more complicated impact that unionized workforces can have on corporate profits. A 2009 NBER working paper suggested that “the average effect of a union win at a workplace is to decrease the market value of the affected business by at least \$40,500 per worker eligible to vote, based on monthly stock prices... Calculations of the effects of a union victory suggest that it produces large negative returns of 10 to 14%.”

But these projections take into account stock value, which folds in the effects of public opinion, not just pure profit. “Organizing victories reduce growth in assets, because of decreased growth in plant, property, and equipment,” the study said, but “profit, and return on assets, appears unaffected by unionization.” In other words, organizing can slow down certain operations and growth plans, but bottom lines should be fundamentally unchanged.

(...)

There has long been rhetoric that unions do shift the employee-employer relationship—and may impact worker incentivization. When wages are standardized, good conditions are guaranteed, and layoffs are limited, workers have little motivation to work harder, companies argue.

But when unions are functioning well, Devault says, they aren’t just about pay—but about making sure that workers have more overall power in the workplace. “The pandemic has really changed the way people look at their work,” she says. “We’re starting to see now [that one of those changes is that] I want some say in what goes on in my workplace.” And when workers have more say, they can be more invested in their company’s future, too.

## Union organizing soared in 2022, but companies pushed back

NPR, December 23, 2022

### Heard on All Things Considered

Union organizing soared in 2022, but companies pushed back to stop the momentum.

JUANA SUMMERS, HOST:

In the U.S., membership in labor unions peaked decades ago, but you wouldn't know it from the headlines of 2022. This year, a rare burst of union momentum produced some major victories, but also some losses and significant fights with employers. NPR's Alina Selyukh and Andrea Hsu have been covering these stories, and they both join us now. Hi there.

ANDREA HSU, BYLINE: Hello.

ALINA SELYUKH, BYLINE: Hello. Hello.

SUMMERS: So Alina, union activity at two big companies grabbed a whole lot of headlines this year. We are, of course, talking about Amazon and Starbucks. Where do things stand?

SELYUKH: Yeah. Perhaps the most high-profile union successes of the year happened at these two companies. Amazon has never had a union in the U.S. Now, it's faced five union elections in less than two years. Only one warehouse has so far voted to unionize, though it is huge - more than 8,000 workers. It's on Staten Island. But then, to this day, there is no union contract in sight, which is the ultimate goal - right? - a collective bargaining contract to negotiate higher wages or changes to the workplace. Amazon is still legally challenging the very existence of this union itself - trying to overturn its victory.

Now, if we look at Starbucks, around 270 stores have voted to unionize. That is a huge nationwide footprint in a matter of a year, which did spread into kind of a groundbreaking year for retail and food workers. We saw the first unions formed at Trader Joe's, REI, Apple Stores, Chipotle. Still, like with Amazon, none of these new unions have reached a collective bargaining contract yet.

SUMMERS: Andrea, when I hear that, it sounds like there's really been a big flurry of activity this year. But I'd like to ask you - was there actually an increase in union elections in 2022?

HSU: Yeah, actually, we did see an increase. The National Labor Relations Board tracks all of this. So in fiscal year 2022, elections were up about 50% over last year. And one of the share of elections that unions are winning is also up. Public support for unions is at a 60-year high. But certainly, Starbucks is also a contributor. Starbucks accounts for roughly a quarter of all the union elections this year. And Workers United - the union there - has won about 4 out of every 5 elections. So they're driving up the average.

SUMMERS: And Alina, how have these companies been responding?

SELYUKH: Companies that are facing big organizing pushes have really stepped up their pushback against unions. Some are flooding stores with managers or even closing stores and firing pro-union workers. In some cases, they will also raise wages or add new benefits and try to argue, you know, that workers don't need a union in the first place. This has had some success. Starbucks, for example, did see a big slowdown in union petitions over the year. Organizers accused the company of delay tactics and union busting to

discourage union support, which the company denies. Here's Jasmine Leli, a barista and organizer in Buffalo, N.Y.

JASMINE LELI: People are scared. I mean, we're scared. We're terrified. We just want to go to work like everybody else and do our jobs and not have to worry when the other shoe is going to drop.

SELYUKH: And a few workplaces have actually voted against unionizing, like a Home Depot in Philadelphia, a Trader Joe's in Brooklyn.

SUMMERS: OK, so we've talked about what's been going on in food and in retail. But Andrea, who else was organizing in 2022?

HSU: Well, some of the largest new unions that formed this year were at universities. MIT saw several thousand graduate student workers unionize in April. And there was also new union organizing in sectors where unions already have a strong foothold - health care, for example. We saw nurses, mental health practitioners, dieticians and speech pathologists joining unions. And then, a few weeks ago, United Autoworkers got a big win in Ohio at a plant making electric vehicle battery cells. It's co-owned by GM and the Korean company LG. Nine hundred workers there are now unionized, which is so important for the UAW, given the major job losses that are expected to come in the transition from gas cars to EVs.

SUMMERS: So this whole conversation leaves me wondering about wages and how union workers have fared in all of this.

HSU: Well, it has been interesting to watch collective bargaining play out with this backdrop of inflation. You know, some unions have been able to secure wage gains that keep up with inflation. Take rail workers, who threatened to strike twice this fall. And in the end, they didn't get everything they wanted in the final deal, but they did get a 7% raise for 2022 and a 4% raise for next year. And then there were the restaurant workers at the San Francisco airport, who did actually go on strike in September.

(SOUNDBITE OF ARCHIVED RECORDING)

UNIDENTIFIED GROUP: On strike.

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: SFO.

UNIDENTIFIED GROUP: On strike.

HSU: Those workers shut down most of the food and beverage options at the airport for three days, and they came out of it with a 30% wage increase over the next two years.

SUMMERS: Huh. So Alina, what if the economy goes south next year and there is a recession, as some have predicted? What do you think's going to happen with unions?

SELYUKH: The labor market tends to be one of the last to respond to, say, the Federal Reserve trying to slow inflation. So so far, what we're looking at is some big job cuts in the tech industry. And overall, data is starting to show companies are beginning to hire a bit less, fire a bit more. Now, if that turns into huge layoffs, economists say it's not a certainty that that would snuff out union enthusiasm. But historically, an economic downturn is not a great moment for labor organizing or pushing for big pay raises. So we'll have to see how next year changes people's sense of empowerment at work.

SUMMERS: That was NPR's Alina Selyukh and Andrea Hsu. Thanks to you both.

SELYUKH: Thank you.

HSU: Thank you.

<https://www.npr.org/2022/12/23/1145323102/union-organizing-soared-in-2022-but-companies-pushed-back>