

## Flexible Crisis Management Through Teleworking

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### ABSTRACT

This study examines flexible crisis management through teleworking and home office practices in a large multinational company during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines a literature review with empirical data from a questionnaire survey (N=104) and in-depth interviews with a manager, an HR professional, and an employee. The findings show that the pandemic accelerated the adoption of teleworking and contributed to organisational innovation. Remote work generally improved employee efficiency, supported work-life balance, and strengthened employee engagement, despite initial challenges related to managerial control, trust, and IT infrastructure. These challenges were largely addressed through performance-based monitoring, digital tools, and hybrid working models. The study concludes that teleworking, when supported by trust-based leadership and a flexible organisational culture, represents a sustainable and effective long-term strategy for crisis management and organisational resilience. From a sustainability perspective, efficiency-oriented organisational practices contribute to long-term resilience and resource optimisation, supporting the strategic relevance of teleworking beyond crisis periods (Kálmán, 2024).

**Keywords:** Crisis Management, Teleworking/Home Office, Organisational Culture, Employee Engagement, Multinational Companies

### INTRODUCTION

Is the coronavirus outbreak an option we didn't ask for? At the beginning of 2019, we had no idea that the world as a whole would be shaken by a period that would last indefinitely and present the whole world with countless challenges and trials. Initially, we had to cope with the now familiar global pandemic COVID-19, followed by the energy and food crises caused by war, and the global recession that is still ongoing. The economic and labour market impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic showed significant regional differences in Central Europe, which intensified organisational pressure for adaptive and flexible crisis management solutions (Kálmán, 2024). The convergence of these crises has had an increasingly severe impact on people, but also on businesses. It has brought about a sense of uncertainty, vulnerability and threat on a scale and scale never seen before, and the unpredictable reactions that have emerged in their wake.

My research explores resilient crisis management in a large company (Emerson Process Management) and its relationship to the day-to-day work practices of the organization, with a particular focus on the work culture of employees within the organizational culture. I present attitudes and workplace behavioural cultures of multinationals' employees in relation to teleworking and home office working. The origins of the term Multinational Company (MNC) or multinational can be traced back to the 1960s and IBM. In essence, an MNC is a company or group of companies operating in at least two countries. It is therefore a company whose owners are of different nationalities, but where this separation of ownership is not directly reflected in the operation of the company.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In my research, I use in-depth interviews to investigate the flexible crisis management of large firms, which has led to the spread of teleworking. With the possibility of working from home and the use of teleworking, the spread of atypical work started. In line with current trends, employees prefer to work from home or in a home office. This also has an impact on organisational culture, as in some jobs working remotely from the workplace can influence the sense of belonging to the organisation at employee level. From an employer's perspective, the promotion of trust and the creation of a home office can be the subject of my research.

My study is an empirical research on the impact of teleworking and home office on employees and employers. My research aims to address a well-known phenomenon such as the psychological effects and good practice of atypical working.

In my secondary research I conduct a literature review, which is closely related to my research topic. I analyse and evaluate the facts and statistics found in the literature.

In my primary research, I opted for questionnaire research and in-depth interviews as the method of data collection. My intrinsic motivation was to find out about the involvement of workers in different jobs (Managers, Counsellors, HR staff, manual workers, office workers) and their role in crisis management, their perspectives, their experiences and practices. The interviews will be recorded using language-based methods.

Considering the size and structure of the company, I plan to interview 2-3 employees, selected in a theory-driven way, in order to obtain truly relevant and diverse information. The interviews will be structured as individual in-depth interviews. During the interviews I ask questions, but to a certain extent I allow the individual to give their own opinion, I believe listening to managers is an important part of my research.

In my research, I conducted three interviews in which I also explored the home office phenomenon from the company side. I conducted in-depth interviews with the Front End Manager, an HR employee and a full-time employee. The interviewees are represented from all levels of the company.

In my research I plan to prove or, in the absence of proof, disprove the following hypotheses:

- Flexible crisis management by companies has a major impact on innovation efforts during the crisis.
- The introduction of teleworking has significantly improved the efficiency of workers.
- The pandemic has encouraged the adoption of teleworking in the company.
- On the issue of teleworking, there are differences of opinion between employees and employers.

I believe that the opportunity to work remotely has brought about a change in organisational culture, but it has also contributed to employee engagement and work-life balance. With the creation of a modern work environment, organisational communication in companies is changing. I will also examine whether the flexibility and adaptability of the organisational culture is coming to the fore or resisting change.

In my research, I investigate the extent to which the measures taken by large companies to deal with the crisis have determined the work culture of employees and the long-term reactions of employee commitment and loyalty. This is a topic close to my heart, as I have experienced it first hand in my current workplace. In my opinion, the topicality of the subject remains unquestionable, as companies need to focus on the impact of their crisis management tools on their employees. It is safe to say that in the current climate of uncertainty, most of us want to feel comfortable and secure in our workplace. For this reason, I analyse whether crisis management measures can make a positive contribution to ensuring that workers' engagement and sense of security in their workplace is not diminished. From the results, I aim to show whether the measures taken have a continued relevance or positive perception from the employees' perspective once the crisis situation has subsided. I will also analyse whether the measures may have been timely or whether they became indispensable entirely because the crisis situation emerged.

Examining the links between the home office and organisational culture can help a company to be more effective in its use of teleworking and support its employees to work successfully remotely. A positive organisational culture can foster employee commitment to the company and lead to innovation within the company organisation.

## RESULTS AND DEBATE

### Theoretical Overview

#### Situation Analysis

By April 2020, around half of large companies reported that more than 80% of their employees were working from home due to COVID-19. Three in five workers who teleworked during the epidemic said they would prefer to work from home after the epidemic. 50% of workers think they are as productive at home as they are in the office. The option to work from home was given to those who worked in a job that relied on an internet connection. Most teleworking companies are located in Budapest. The vast majority of those working in atypical employment have a tertiary education, are typically women and aged 25-44. The possibility to work from home is determined by the main activity of the employer. Information and communication (39%), scientific and technical (33%), financial services (30%) and education (21%) were the main sectors with the highest share of teleworkers in 2020 (KSH, 2023). The use of online communication tools, teleconferencing and digital workflows were already popular and growing before the pandemic hit. In some jobs, working from home has become a maximum option. The question is therefore whether the pace of take-up will continue to accelerate, and to what extent workers have the influence, choice and demand to do so. Nevertheless, large companies globally are struggling to maintain employee engagement and retain their best professionals and employees. This is particularly true in the current context, where in February 2022, more than 4 million people will have decided to leave their jobs and seek another working environment. Most crisis management studies assume that crises can be prepared for and managed to some extent by adhering to certain principles, which need to be embedded in institutional structures, rules and procedures.

#### Definition of Teleworking and Home Office

Organisational culture determines the relationship of the organisation to atypical forms of work, in the case of the teleworking and home office work that I studied in my research. However, organisational culture can also influence atypical forms of work. In the case of employees working away from their place of work or in jobs that may be carried out at the headquarters and premises of partner companies.

The issue of teleworking and the home office has been and continues to be the subject of much research. The changes brought about by the pandemic and the need to make home office work more compatible with family life have led to a need to understand the justification for these forms of work.

I will examine the main conceptual definitions in order to treat atypical forms of employment separately, as they have different effects on organisational culture, as working conditions are not the same. The differences between teleworking and home office are examined in the light of labour law, i.e. the Labour Code.

Teleworking is a form of work carried out separately from the employer's premises, using computer equipment, and the results of the work are transmitted electronically. In many cases, teleworking takes place at the employee's home, but there may be different cases. The fact that teleworking is done away from the workplace makes it telework. It is also an important aspect that the work is carried out using computer equipment, as required by law. In the case of teleworking, as a general rule, the employee works on an informal basis and can organise his or her own time. The work equipment must be provided by the employer, but the employee is allowed to use his or her own equipment. The employer determines the procedure whereby the worker may be subject to supervision. The control must be carried out in such a way as not to disturb the worker, especially when the activity is carried out in the worker's own home.

The concept of home office is not specifically mentioned in the Labour Code. The difference with teleworking is that there is a different regularity to the possibility of working from home. Home office work can be carried out on an ad hoc basis, reduced to a few days a week. In the case of home office, you are obliged to be available to your employer during working hours. Contracts must provide for a fixed working time, i.e. core hours. In principle, the employer provides the equipment, but there may be different arrangements. Checks must also respect the privacy of the worker and must not impose a disproportionate burden on the worker. The employer is obliged to reimburse the employee's costs, which should be set out in a contract (Kocsis, 2023).

#### Teleworking and Home Office

I will present the advantages and disadvantages of teleworking and home office for the employer and the employee. I will describe the management views on working outside the office, and present the employment protection and labour law regulations. I analyse the work-life balance and the mental risks of disconnectedness.

## **Advantages and disadvantages of teleworking and home office for employees**

Teleworking allows for more flexibility in working conditions and more flexibility in working hours. Previous research confirms that workplace flexibility has become a decisive factor in employees' perception of an ideal workplace, with significant differences across social and demographic groups in the V4 countries (Kálmán, 2025). Commuting to and from work is eliminated, giving workers more free time. Teleworking reduces stress and makes it easier to achieve a good work-life balance. Job satisfaction can be improved and individuals can feel that they have more individual freedom. It may be easier to reconcile private matters, such as doctor's appointments and office visits, with work. Age discrimination situations can be eliminated and teleworkers can work from different parts of the country. It is an excellent way to employ parents with young children, carers of sick relatives and workers with disabilities.

The disadvantages include insecurity and social and professional isolation due to the lack of a traditional working environment. Professional development can be stunted and career opportunities are more limited. Household utility costs may rise and home-based work, i.e. housework and other domestic tasks, may be confused with actual work. Workers may work without union protection and without the personal contacts of their colleagues, which may reduce an individual's communication skills (Blahó, et al., 2021).

However, from the employee's point of view, teleworking has a number of advantages and I believe that the majority of employees prefer teleworking to working in the office. Less conflict and more freedom in scheduling make it easier to balance work at home, which can increase the employee's commitment to the company.

The advantages and disadvantages of teleworking and home office from an employer's point of view

The employer side does not always prefer teleworking, believing that the employee may not work as efficiently or conscientiously in the absence of employer supervision.

On the employer side, we can emphasise the economically viable workplace, as the company will be able to maintain a smaller office and thus lower its operating costs. It becomes more cost-effective to maintain office infrastructure. Your chances of attracting a better quality workforce may be improved, as you are no longer constrained by geographical barriers. You will be able to attract talented workers to your business, as groups more vulnerable to discrimination (e.g. older workers and women) can become effective members of your organisation. Studies show that teleworkers are 30% more productive than their office-based counterparts (László, 2021). Greater productivity and productivity can be achieved, with reduced sick leave and lower turnover.

From the employer's point of view, disadvantageous criteria can also be met. This form of work is still a new form of work, which also poses new challenges for managers. This can lead to conflict situations in the organisation. Managers may find it more difficult to control employees and the possibility of direct communication within the organisation may be lost. Compliance with data protection and data security legislation can also be a challenge for the organisation. There may be higher start-up costs for introducing teleworking, and there may be a need to balance working hours with private employee activities. Engagement with the employer may be lower due to a lack of personal relationships. Team spirit and a sense of belonging to the company may be difficult to develop due to physical distance, as may communication in the workplace (Blahó, et al., 2021). I believe that atypical forms of employment still need to be accepted by employers, as I believe that both parties share the goal of increasing productivity and creating good working conditions.

## **Atypical forms of Employment Across the Generations**

Managers need to be aware of the generation to which their employees belong. Generation X (1965-1978) also experienced their childhood with more autonomy and space from their parents. Many major changes have taken place in their lives, typically in technological advances. They spent most of their time socialising, this age group still hanging out with friends. Accordingly, team unity is important to them, but flexible working may be beneficial for them, making home office or remote working suitable.

For Generation Y (1979-1994), the digital world was already in place when they were born. For them, there was no need to learn how to use technology, they picked up the knowledge automatically. They are a savvy generation, characterised by a high degree of confidence. A large part of their interactions are conducted online, using the internet. This generation also has very different expectations of the workplace than Generation X. They now expect the work environment to provide them with a work-life balance. They do not prefer strict rules, so Generation X may prefer to telework.

For Generation Z (1995-2009), the online space has become a necessity and they want to access information quickly. They are flexible and can multitask. They can use the Internet to connect anywhere in the world. Flexibility in the workplace is an important factor in the employment of this generation, but they also value a good working environment and expect to feel comfortable at work. Surveys suggest that the home office option is not a

motivating factor for this generation, who prefer to work in a team environment. They feel it is important to be supported, but a more flexible working time framework may be a motivating factor for them (Stréhli, 2023).

### **Management Presence for Teleworking and Home Office**

A key issue in atypical forms of work is how the employer can monitor the effectiveness of the employee's work. The manager cannot "see" the employee at work and can therefore determine the employee's worth based on the quality of the tasks performed. There are programs that monitor the activities on the device by installing them on ICT (Information and Communication Technology) devices. The worker can do the work at his/her own pace and typically under more relaxed conditions than in an office environment. Assuming that the worker is given the maximum possible conditions for working at home (quiet room, technical equipment, secure internet connection), he/she will face fewer distractions in his/her daily activities.

Surveys show that the growth of teleworking and home offices is limited by the mindset of managers. The employer side is not very supportive of home working, due to a lack of control. The organisational culture at home is also characterised by an authoritarian attitude, with tight control over the control of employees. A manager with a task-oriented leadership style does not favour working from home, while a relationship-oriented manager is more effective in encouraging the possibility of working from home. Managers with a managerial attitude are clear about their expectations, but they have rigorous checks on the tasks they have completed. An empowering leader, on the other hand, delegates responsibility to employees, which helps atypical forms of employment to spread (Stréhli, 2023).

Managers need to understand the many factors that affect workers in atypical employment. Managers often express concern about the lack of personal interaction. Managers fear that employees will not work as hard or as effectively. Conversely, many employees feel that their managers do not provide enough support to help them do their jobs. For new employees, it can take longer to find the information they need to do their job on the company's interface. Employee monitoring can be achieved through video calls. Video calls can involve several workers together, or during the meetings, the workers concerned can also join the ongoing discussions. However, it is also more convenient for workers if the calls are predictable (Larson, et al., 2020).

Employers can use remote employee monitoring software to ensure that employees can work from home. This software (e.g. Trello) allows employers to monitor employee activity, including computer use, emailing and web browsing. In addition, employers can set up alerts to notify them if an employee is inactive for a period of time. With these strategies, employers can effectively monitor remote employees and ensure their productivity (Saleh, 2023).

Employer monitoring is an important part of a teleworker's daily activities. I believe that monitoring and supervision should not be discriminatory or degrading to the worker. Any element of atypical forms of employment will be effective in those jobs in which employee performance can be monitored. In these forms of work, it may be more certain that pay for performance is defined in terms of the number of hours worked, regardless of the number of hours worked. This gives both parties an interest in performance. The employee will be motivated to work efficiently, while the employer will not have to worry about whether the task he has been assigned will be completed.

Articles 24 and 25 of the GDPR provide for lawful processing by the employer. The legislation sets out the powers of control that employers have over e-mail accounts and computer equipment. In the policy, the employer may address whether a computing device and company email account owned by the employer can be used for private purposes.

They also set out the rules for backing up data and the date on which it is permanently deleted. They also set out detailed rules for the control of e-mail accounts and computer equipment.

Under Article 13 of the GDPR, employees must be informed in advance of workplace checks, which include checks on their email accounts and computer equipment. If the employer is allowed to control the e-mail account, it must have a clearly defined purpose for data processing, which will be set out in the internal rules. The employee must be informed prior to the check. It is also necessary to ensure the presence of the employee during the check, which is a general rule in the legislation.

For e-mails, the principle of gradualism must be respected. The sender and subject of the e-mail should be checked first, followed by the content of the e-mails. Private e-mails should not be subject to control (gdpr.blog, 2019).

### **Work Protection for Teleworking and Home Office**

New employees receive training in work safety and fire safety before starting work. Traditional health and safety training is also being adapted to teleworking and home office working. The employer or a person authorised

by the employer must carry out checks at the telework site to ensure that conditions are suitable for the work. They must then carry out a risk assessment. The premises where teleworking is carried out must be well ventilated and heated. In addition to natural lighting, artificial lighting must be provided and the work equipment must be safe and not endanger the physical safety of the worker. If teleworking is carried out in the employee's home, the entire home is not considered a workplace, so the work desk, work chair, computer, filing cabinet and other work equipment can only be considered as workplace equipment, so that the employer can control these items in case of inspection (Horváth-Farkas, 2022).

The parties may agree in the employment contract to carry out health and safety inspections. The inspection must not impose an unreasonable burden on the worker. An injury at a telework site is considered an accident at work if it occurs at a predetermined place and during work activities (Ergonom, 2022).

The work contract should set out the basic rules that the employee must follow when working in the home. It is important that safe working conditions are maintained and the employer must also provide the employee with training in occupational safety and fire safety.

### **Teleworking and home office work-life balance**

Work-life balance means that employees have enough time for both their professional and private lives. Working remotely gives employees more autonomy over their work schedule and often allows them to achieve a better work-life balance. However, role conflict and ambiguity, lack of technology and work schedules will affect the balance (Prasad & Satyaprasad, 2023).

The European Union has implemented Directive 2019/1152/EU, which aims to achieve predictable working conditions. The directive requires ensuring gender equality and promoting equal treatment requirements in the workplace (Parliament's Office, 2022).

An employee is satisfied with his or her job if a series of positions in which he or she is in a good position in many respects is achieved. One of the conditions for this is the balance between work and private life, but there are many other aspects that can be considered as factors influencing employee satisfaction:

- nature of work: work activities that make maximum use of the worker's abilities and do not consist of a series of routine tasks,
- autonomy: the ability of the worker to make decisions about his or her work,
- career progression: feel that you are developing in your job, gaining professional experience and opening up opportunities,
- financial incentives: wages that the employee considers appropriate, financial incentives such as cafeteria elements and bonuses.
- management support: professional support from your superior,
- communication: the possibility of direct communication with managers, staff and appropriate feedback,
- workload: even distribution of work in a stress-free environment (Saane, et al., 2003).

### **Mental Health Risks of Teleworking**

Only limited social interaction is allowed when using the internet. Social connections at work can be the solution to workplace stress and its reduction. However, when teleworking or working from home office, the employee may be left alone with his or her problems. This issue has received little attention in surveys of teleworkers.

In teleworking, mobile communication ensures that employees can be available in their home office, even outside normal working hours. In socially isolated work situations, personal needs, i.e. personal workplace relationships, cannot be met. Internal communication serves not only the exchange of work-related information, but also the maintenance of interpersonal relationships and the exchange of personal ideas. Therefore, teleworking can result in teleworkers not participating in the organisational culture or feeling disconnected from the organisation (Hager, 2018). Individual coping strategies play a crucial role in managing stress and uncertainty during crisis situations, which may also influence employees' adaptation to remote working conditions (Kálmán, 2025)

Social support and workplace autonomy are also important issues in telework research. Not only because of their role in coping with workloads, but also because they are structurally important for the success of telework. The social isolation mentioned above is almost inevitably linked to a decline in social support.

In stressful jobs, the lack of social support has a negative impact on the employee and their work performance. However, in the absence of an extreme stress effect, there is not as great a need for social support, so its absence will not cause mental health problems (Osca, et al., 2005).

The limited communication that results from bridging the distance between two communicating parties can be resolved by stepping outside the digital environment, more often through physical contact. However, the risks

of teleworking start with the selection of teleworkers. Choosing the right employees for home offices is a key to a healthy workforce because, as mentioned above, not everyone is suited to this form of work (Hager, 2018).

I believe that it is necessary to screen employees during the selection process and assess their suitability and other competences for teleworking. A teleworker must have a high degree of autonomy and be able to carry out the tasks delegated to him/her independently, as the distances involved mean that feedback is not always immediate. Workers who prefer to work independently and who do not find the distance from the workplace organisation a psychological burden will be just as useful members of the organisation as workers who work in an office

## Evaluation of my Primary Research

### Evaluation of the Questionnaire

My survey used a questionnaire to investigate the catalytic effect of the crisis on the organisation. The focus of my analysis is on companies' crisis management, which manifested itself in teleworking and home office working during the pandemic.

My questionnaire was completed by 104 people. 61.5% of the respondents were women and 38.5% were men. Respondents varied in age and shared their opinions. A significant proportion of respondents were in the 25-35 age group (36.5%) and the 35-45 age group (29.8%). The 45-55 age group accounted for 17.3% of respondents, while the 65+ age group represented 12.5% and the 55-65 age group 3.8%.

In terms of marital status, nearly half of respondents (43.3%) are married, 22.1% are in a relationship, 18.3% are single, 11.5% are in a civil partnership and 4.8% are divorced. In terms of number of children, more than half of respondents (54.8%) have no children, 26% have two children, 15.4% have one child, while 3.8% of respondents have more than two children.

By place of residence, 43.3% of respondents live in a large city or county. 22.1% live in the capital city, 20.2% in a small town and 14.4% in a village or hamlet.

To the central question of my research, i.e. whether the respondents' workplaces also used teleworking or home office during the pandemic, I received the following answers. A significant proportion of respondents (78%) had the opportunity to work remotely during the pandemic. 15% said they had the opportunity, but the job they were working in was not suitable for them to work from home. However, a minority of respondents (7%) said that they had not had the opportunity to work from home during the Covid.

I also looked at whether workplaces have implemented innovative ways of working from home. The responses showed that more than half of the respondents (62%) had the opportunity to work from home, i.e. that their employer allowed them to work from home. 24% of respondents said that both home office and teleworking were possible. For 11% of respondents, no home office or teleworking option was available at all. However, a small proportion of respondents (3%) said that their employer had agreed to teleworking, which was not home office work but an activity that took place away from home and involved working for a longer period of time.

During the epidemic, employers and workers were caught unawares by the distancing and lockdown that resulted from working from home. Even before the epidemic, there were jobs where employers allowed telecommuting. However, in domestic practice it was hardly widespread and employers preferred to work under managerial supervision. The sudden change has led to innovation in those organisations that

I have examined the factors that affect the internal processes of the pandemic company, as I believe that working remotely from the workplace or home office work affects the internal processes of companies. Respondents reported that they had introduced the possibility of working from home in their workplace (71%). 17% of respondents said that it had not caused any change to the internal processes of the company, while 12% said that it had caused disruption to the organisation.

I analysed the extent to which the crisis has changed company culture and attitudes to working from home. A significant proportion of respondents (76%) said that the possibility of working from home had become more widespread in their work, but that they had not experienced any change in their organisation. 22% said that it had not caused any significant change in company culture. Only 2% of respondents said that teleworking had become more prevalent in their organisation, which may have had an impact on company culture.

I analysed the percentage of employees who telework at the respondents' workplace. There was significant variation in the responses. 38% said that 0-10% of employees teleworked, 26% said that half of employees teleworked at work. 13% said that 11-20% of employees teleworked at work. A further 13% said 21-30%, 10% said 31-40% telecommute and 8% said half of employees telecommuted at work.

My research shows that home office working, which was widespread during the pandemic, has continued after the end of the pandemic emergency, as employers have recognised its positive impact and employees "expect" the possibility to work from home, thus striving to ensure work-life balance.

I examined the impact of teleworking or home office on employee efficiency. 37% of respondents said that there is a small and positive change in employee efficiency, 29% said that there is no change in work efficiency, 21% said that there is a large and positive change in efficiency and 13% said that there is a change in efficiency but it is negative.

Overall, workers feel that working from home is more efficient, as there are fewer distractions than working in a noisy workplace. If workers are able to manage their daily working time and to coordinate all their activities, they will be able to complete their work assignments and their personal errands more efficiently. Working from home saves considerable time that is not spent trying to get to work. The time freed up can make your work more stress-free and efficient

I have examined the emergence of technological changes in the organisation that have facilitated the emergence of the home office or teleworking from home. The majority of employers 63% provided laptops to their employees. 40% of respondents said that the employee provided an extra monitor in addition to other computing devices. 20% of respondents said that the company where they work did not provide any support for home office working. 8% said that they received financial support from their employer by covering the cost of the internet.

In my questionnaire research, I investigated the challenges of the company after the introduction of teleworking, as this form of work was not expected by the companies. 41% of the respondents said that the biggest challenge for their organisation was controlling the work done. 30% of respondents said that the company they worked for during the pandemic did not face any challenges in the roll-out of teleworking and home office. 29% said that technical challenges made the initial phase of teleworking difficult.

When I asked how the innovations that emerged during the pandemic had taught the organisation how to operate, I received the following most frequently published answers:

"Labour inspection is difficult, they didn't trust the workers."

"Most of the time, a face-to-face meeting is not necessary, which saves a lot on travel costs."

"It has proven to the company that this way, employees can carry out their tasks with the same efficiency."

"Employees are happy with the home office, they appreciate the flexibility, old and new employees want to work from home at least 2-3 times a week."

"The efficiency of working in a home office is no worse, and often better, than working in an office."

"The home office option is negatively valued. They think it's just a way to take time off work. Employees work when they come in."

"He started to rent back building wings and offices, so it's cheaper to provide a home office than to rent an office."

Respondents identified the following aspects of the impact of the home office pose:

- Difficulties in monitoring work: some respondents mentioned that monitoring the home office system was difficult for employers and that they did not trust the efficiency of workers.

- The benefits of online meetings: many respondents noted that they also felt that online meetings were effective rather than face-to-face meetings, and that the savings in travel costs and time were also seen as positive.

- Home office efficiency: according to those who completed the questionnaire, a large proportion of employees feel that their own work in the home office is efficient.

- Employee satisfaction: a significant proportion of employees feel positive about the home office and feel more engaged in their workplace as a result. Some feel that isolation is detrimental to efficiency and yet prefer the personal touch of a face-to-face presence.

Employees benefit when their employer offers the possibility to telework. However, it can be observed that practices vary from one workplace to another. 35% of respondents consider their workplace's home office practices to be good, while 17.5% consider them to be very good.

Respondents found that some workplaces have very poor (11.7%) or barely satisfactory (9.7%) teleworking practices. 26.2% of respondents said that company practices in relation to teleworking are neutral.

A large majority of respondents (92.3%) said that employees prefer to work from home, while 7.7% said that employees prefer to work in the office.

I also looked at what plans companies have for working from home. Respondents said that they had reduced or limited this possibility at the end of the pandemic. In other workplaces, it was reduced to 1 day a week, under strict management supervision. I received a number of responses that up to 2-3 days a week is allowed and that companies consider the effectiveness of the home office to be adequate and therefore want to maintain this form of work in the long term. There were also some respondents who thought that 2-3 days was sufficient, otherwise they would require working from home. Based on the responses of the respondents to the questionnaire, it was found that a significant number of employers do not support home office working because they are disturbed by not seeing the employee at work and assume that the employee is not doing his/her job. The responses therefore give a mixed picture of the extent to which employers support or oppose the home office. It was also found that not all employees prefer remote working.



Another question I asked was about the advantages and disadvantages of working from home office for employees. The jobs and the

employee attitudes may also contribute to the differences in the way individuals value this opportunity based on their responses. Respondents see the flexibility of this form of work, with less travel, as an advantage, and thus greater opportunities to maintain a work-life balance. Several respondents described the home office as a way of working more efficiently, as there are no distractions and having their own time schedule allows them to work more stress-free. Many of the respondents also reported higher levels of employee engagement, as they find it easier to balance their personal activities through flexible working hours. Looking at the cost side, responses were received stating that

"the employer saves money, the employee gains time", a statement that accurately reflects the benefits for both parties. Respondents also said that there are therefore many advantages to the home office option, but that it is those workers who do not abuse this option but conscientiously carry out their work who will be successful in this form of work.

Looking at the disadvantages, I was told that it is easier to mix work and home activities. Workers who require constant control and do not experience this in a home office will experience a decline in performance. Many perceive the isolation from colleagues and the slower flow of information in the organisation as a disadvantage. According to respondents, collegial relationships are damaged by greater distances. Respondents said that it is more difficult to control work, that team spirit is reduced and that it is easy to get distracted by tasks at home. Respondents also described a lack of trust from management in the workplace and technical problems being more difficult to solve.

When I asked whether they had received OSH training while working at home, half of the respondents said they had, while the other half had not.

I also looked at work-life balance. 74% of the respondents said it was possible to maintain a balance between the two, 21% said it might be possible and 5% said it was not possible to achieve and maintain a balance.

I analysed employees' views on the mental risks of working from home, which showed that a minority of respondents (5.8% and 4.8%) thought that there were no mental risks of working from home, as there is a work-life balance and fewer stressors than in the workplace. 35.6% say there is a mental risk, 25% say there is a high mental risk due to a feeling of loneliness or unmanageable work stress.

### **Evaluation of the in-depth Interview**

The three interviewees are represented from different levels in the organisation, so we can get an overall picture of the views of employees at each level of the company.

#### **Front End Manager**

According to the Manager, teleworking is more efficient than office work. In his opinion, it eliminates office distractions such as other colleagues and other sound effects. With the right KPI metrics, it is also possible to manage the effectiveness of working from home. Communication with teleworkers is easy with modern ICT tools, but has a negative impact on social relations.

I looked at the challenges that teleworking posed to the organisation and to the Front End Manager himself. The Manager told me that the organisation was affected by teleworking that started during the pandemic. The organisation was basically not set up for it and it was not feasible for all positions, thus causing tension in the organisation. It causes a change in organisational culture. From personal experience, he said that he experienced the audit as a challenge. It was more difficult to implement because of the lack of personal contact. Communication can also be ambiguous due to the lack of metacommunication tools. In recruitment, the lack of metacommunication also makes the candidate less recognisable. Interview tasks also had to be adapted. Motivation tools also had to be changed. The use of chat functions has become widespread in organisational communication. Different generations find it more difficult to understand each other in online platforms. The use of memes and gifs became widespread, etc. To maintain good relations, he consciously reached out to subordinates. It required awareness in all aspects of life so that time spent at home did not become monotonous.

I also looked at how the Manager perceives the impact of teleworking on mental health risks. He said that there are risks because social relationships break down, workers can feel isolated when working alone and this can lead to a disconnection from the team. On work-life balance, he said that commuting time could easily be used for family life, with which he fully agrees. He perceived a radical change in company culture. He did not believe in the effectiveness of the home office, but experience has shown otherwise. He feels that he needs to give employees confidence. Asked what proportion of the workforce would remain in the home office in the future, he said he would consider 2-3 days a week to be appropriate. He believes that home offices are appropriate for jobs that are

not physically stationary. Support jobs in general. Regarding managerial skills, he said that he feels that the right managers for home office workers are those who can vote confidence in the employee, but who can also implement strong performance-based control. In addition to this, he believes that modern thinking and openness are essential in managing workers in these jobs. The company prefers the hybrid working patterns that are currently working well. According to the Manager, hybrid working is fully embedded in the company culture, which benefits both the company and the employees.

According to my interviewee, the lack of laptops was a problem, and the lack of chips was a problem in the production of increased IT equipment. The managers made their decision because of the laptop shortage. Employees who did not have a laptop were called in to work for the company. Other problems included the control and maintenance of IT equipment and legal issues.

According to the Manager, the lesson of the situation is that "there is good in all bad". Because it turns out that teleworking is feasible and managers can trust their employees.

### **Full-time Staff Member**

My interviewee, who works as an employee in the organisation, said that she thinks teleworking is a good option. He believes that there is a demand for it from the employees. She also thinks that since Covid it has become an expectation from employees. "If I were looking for a new job, it would be a basic requirement for me."

He feels that he is used to this way of working. He finds it comfortable and would not want it to change as it makes his daily life easier. He often feels that he can create more relaxed conditions at home and thus work more efficiently from home. At times, he has problems with inadequate internet connectivity. He has to solve the IT problem himself, which causes time delays at work. He says that working from home means less time off work, which can easily become monotonous. While in the office, there is more to do to make you take a break sometimes. At home, he works in front of the computer without a break due to lack of company. He often eats his lunch sitting in front of the computer while working. He feels that this is a negative experience, and that he has to stop work to rest once or twice during the 8-9 hours.

It does not feel that there is a need for more control and does not consider that there is a need for more control. According to him, he does his job in the same way and even when he is present in person, someone may not do his job. KPIs are invariably representative of performance to managers. There have been so many changes to the monitoring that on home office days a summary of the tasks completed for the day must be written. This initially felt overwhelming because she was not sure whether the tasks completed would be considered sufficient by her manager. Especially if he had fewer but more complex tasks to write down compared to the previous day. He was worried that his manager might notice that the fewer tasks were more complex than the previous day's tasks. She believes that her manager does not necessarily see how much time a task took to complete. Then, over time, this was seen as part of the daily routine of writing notes. He now finds it useful. He says it is good to see how many cases he has closed and how much he has dealt with in the course of his daily work. Something he often doesn't even notice in the course of his day-to-day work, so it's a good feedback for himself as well.

When I asked him about the challenge, he said that he had initially worked as an intern. At that time, he did not have the opportunity to work from home. However, most of the team worked there, so he had no opportunity for personal contact and connection, and it was also harder for him to get to know his immediate colleagues. Information flow also felt more difficult on online platforms. Occasionally he could get lost in the group chat forums that he used on a daily basis, as sometimes more than 10 people used these platforms. Traceability of data information is difficult. He believes that sometimes being online all the time can be a hindrance to work. Organisationally, he perceives online training as a challenge, as there is less opportunity for feedback and less willingness to actively participate. Interactions in online training are not as strong as in face-to-face training. Meanwhile, participants can be occupied with other things.

In his opinion, the work-life balance is better with everyday office work. There is a beginning and an end to working hours, and there is less confusion between work and private life. For her, it is easier to close the work by leaving the workplace than when working at home. Because his private life at home begins and continues at the place where he works, and he finds the reverse to be true. It is difficult not to be thrown off and you have to be very conscious when, for example, a family member finishes work and comes home earlier than my interviewee's working hours would end. She feels that the arrival of a family member inadvertently distracts her, interrupts the task she is currently doing, so it has to be resumed later in the day. She finds it difficult to be distracted from work and has to get back into it. In his home office, he feels like he is blurring the whole day, as if he has been working all day. "It slows me down, it feels like I'm working more than the required number of hours because the whole day is taken up with work."

Asked which jobs he considers remote working to be appropriate for, he said that for all jobs that do not require personal presence, it is not production-related. In the interviewee's job, he said that this is as feasible as

possible, as he works mainly with foreign clients and colleagues. In addition, he thinks that for those who have a lot of meetings during the day, it may also be more convenient to do this from home. An open office such as the one you have undertaken to provide is often noisy during office days. It is harder to hear the other party.

I also asked about her views on mental risk and isolation, to which my interviewee said that she did not feel this was a possibility as she works two days in her home office and three days in the office.

### **HR Staff Member**

A member of staff in HR finds the home office useful. She believes it is a great contribution to maintaining a work-life balance. She says that it depends on the nature of the work. It requires careful planning for some of the work. It saves the employee time. Time spent travelling can be used for other activities. On monitoring, it was said that new metrics are needed to measure efficiency more accurately. Continuous online presence and scheduling regular Teams meetings is essential to keep colleagues consciously connected. According to the HR representative, this would make up for the lack of face-to-face presence.

During the interview, I asked about their experience of online interviewing. He told me that he believes there has been an increase in the number of interviews conducted online. However, he perceives this as a disadvantage, as the personality of the candidate cannot be known during an online interview and communication difficulties can occur during an online interview. The home office option is also mentioned by candidates during interviews, so he says that there is an absolute demand for it from employees. Especially for candidates who live far away from the company. There is also a demand for the first round interview to be online during the recruitment process. Candidates' interest is strongly influenced by the flexibility of the company in terms of home office. A further difficulty is that documents are not accessible from home, which is the cornerstone of an HR role. It is also difficult to manage contracts and other employee documents.

Regarding the mental risk of working from home, he said that he believes that working from home altogether has a mental risk. Individuals tend to become isolated. He believes that hybrid working is appropriate.

In terms of company culture, it gives flexibility, freedom and the opportunity for employees to take advantage of it, so in her opinion she has seen a positive change. For her, it is appropriate to work from home a few days a week.

As an HR professional, he perceives that there is a demand for home office and sees it as a growing trend. He believes that the IT sector and back office functions are well suited to effective home office working. Regarding leadership skills, he said that he believes flexibility and openness on the part of the leader is important. As he said, he believes that hybrid working is the right way to work in an organisation. He plans to maintain the current hybrid working arrangements. As for the challenges, he said that ways can be found to achieve effective communication through teleworking.

### **Factors that Increase and Decrease Satisfaction**

All trainees and new entrants who come for an interview at the company under study ask the first three questions about their need to work from home. Based on my experience, I can conclude that the option of working from home is successful from the employee side. During the epidemic, employees "got used" to starting their mornings more comfortably without travelling. Workers who prefer to work alone or to do their work without managerial supervision are the most suitable for remote working.

Factors that can increase satisfaction include:

- Management attitude: managers who support their employees and allow them to work from home have high levels of employee satisfaction.
- Positive workplace culture: in a workplace culture where there is a supportive atmosphere, colleagues who work from home will also feel the effects of teleworking, as they can communicate with colleagues and management on a daily basis through online contact.
- Career development opportunities: employees are satisfied if they feel that the workplace organisation provides them with opportunities for development.
- Work-life balance: for workers who value quality time in their personal lives alongside work, the opportunity to work from home will give them satisfaction.
- Communication: effective communication practices in the workplace organisation can help to promote satisfaction.
- Recognition and rewards: home workers also expect to be recognised and rewarded for their outstanding work.

Factors that can reduce satisfaction include:

- Bad management: employee dissatisfaction is ensured by the manager's incompetent attitude and unfair decision-making.
- Work-life balance: if the employee is unable to separate working time and leisure time when working from home, it can reduce job satisfaction.
- Workload: Too much work and workload, stressful tasks and unequal distribution of tasks all increase employee dissatisfaction.
- Lack of recognition: if the employee does not feel valued in the organisation it will affect their performance.
- Poor communication: inadequate communication and information sharing causes disruption in the organisation and in the employee's performance.
- Incompetence: jobs where employees are exploited and expected to work overtime do not serve employee satisfaction.

### **Corporate Community Building Programmes**

The company strives to create an inspiring and supportive environment where colleagues can recharge and build relationships with each other through a range of community-building programmes, preventing the isolation that can negatively affect employees' mental health.

The company's Social Committee, which is made up of colleagues from different areas of the company who volunteer to organise these events, plays a key role. Every year, the company organises a Family Day to bring the families of its employees and Emerson closer together. Throughout the year, there are a number of events and programmes for employees to enjoy online. One of these is the "What's your superpower?" initiative, where each time a different colleague is introduced in an interview, which is published by email among employees. In the online space, there is also a regular opportunity to join a live "Coffee break" to get to know the company's leaders. This is an informal discussion where questions can be asked on both professional and personal topics. Employees also have the opportunity to participate in a number of charitable initiatives.

As much as opinions are divided on working from home, workers need the workplace environment, the experience of being part of a team, even if it is only online. Community-building programmes can make workers feel not just a cog in the machine, but a valued member of a team.

### **CONCLUSION**

My interviewees told me that hybrid working is present in the organisation under study. Accordingly, they see no risk of isolation, as all employees spend 2-3 days a week in the office. According to the manager, it was initially difficult to monitor the performance of the workers, but the workers also felt that the monitoring of their work was not well done. For the tasks he had recorded, the manager could not see how much time was needed for the work because of its complexity or difficulty.

The interviewees agreed that the manager should be open and flexible and trust the employee. Home office or telecommuting presence requires the development of individual metrics to monitor employee activities more effectively.

The interviewees also agreed that in the event of technical or technical problems, the worker is left to his/her own devices, as these problems require the help of a professional.

The work-life balance is said to be helped by the home office. However, the employee feels that it can be confusing for him or her with family life, and that his or her attention can be more easily diverted from work.

During the interviews, I concluded that the company's practices were adequate and that the IT problems experienced during the initial pandemic period were no longer a challenge. Employee satisfaction also increases with 2-3 home office days per week. I believe that the company's practices are appropriate and has developed a system of telecommuting or home office practices that is appropriate for both employees and the employer

### **SUMMARY**

In my research, I examined the home office practices of a company during a Covid outbreak. I argue that the opportunity to work remotely has brought about a change in organisational culture and has helped to create a work-life balance. The home office option ensures employee engagement. I also looked at the home office as a phenomenon from the employer's side, where I also received positive feedback.

In terms of efficiency, I analysed the proportion of people working telework or in a home office in the secondary research part of my research. I then presented the main aspects of my research. On the one hand, I will examine the impact on organisational culture, as in the case of full teleworking or home office, employees do not meet face-to-face. However, in the company I study, hybrid working is implemented. With 2-3 days a week working

from home, there is no significant impact on the organisational culture. However, in terms of employee satisfaction, it strengthens the commitment to the company. According to the manager, commuting time can be used for family life. According to the employee, he/she gains useful time by not having to go to the office every day.

I also looked at the management of the crisis as the company did not have the right number of IT tools at the start of the pandemic. Some of the employees did not have access to laptops, so they were assigned to office work. This challenge has now been overcome, so that employees can now work in a hybrid environment, depending on their job. When I asked the manager, he told me that the attitude of the managers is positive towards home office working. However, at the beginning of the pandemic, they had reservations about whether the employee could really be controlled. This has been settled by using indicators for monitoring and by having the employee report daily on the activities carried out. The manager believes, which was confirmed by the employees, that in home office work, managers need to trust their employees and be open and accepting. I have examined the challenges of leadership, which is exclusively in the control. The practices of the company I examined are adequate. Neither mental risks are realised in hybrid working, nor is the chance of isolation low. There is no impact on the organisational culture as employees meet 2-3 days a week. Work efficiency is enhanced by home office working, as workers may even work better in the quiet conditions of home.

In conclusion, home office or teleworking offers a viable vision for companies and employees. In the case of the company under study, the practice of hybrid working is widespread. The research shows that the company still prefers hybrid working in suitable jobs. Accordingly, working from home 2-3 days per week is allowed. This type of work organisation is effective in jobs where there is no manufacturing activity and no fixed work.

Office, IT and back office jobs are the most suitable for this type of work organisation. Leadership skills show that managers who are open-minded and trust employees are able to manage employees well in telework.

In my research, I hypothesised the following:

H1: Flexible crisis management by companies has a major impact on innovation efforts during the crisis.

My hypothesis was proven, as the company in question was flexible in dealing with the crisis and allowed home office work to the extent of the laptops available. In the current situation, the innovation efforts introduced so far are maintained and the aim is to further develop and facilitate the process of working from home.

My questionnaire research also found that, despite initial difficulties, in those jobs where home office working was feasible, companies mandated it.

H2: The introduction of teleworking has significantly improved the efficiency of employees.

My second hypothesis has also been proven. In the case of the company, it was found that employees can work more efficiently from home because there is no noise and they are not disturbed by colleagues.

My questionnaire research also confirmed that teleworking improves employee performance by reducing stress and helping to achieve a better work-life balance.

H3: The pandemic has encouraged the adoption of teleworking in the company.

My third hypothesis has also been proven. According to the manager, they were initially unsure that this way of working could be effective, but practice has shown that it does not lead to a reduction in performance. Accordingly, they plan to continue to provide 2-3 working days per week for home working.

My questionnaire research confirmed that working from home works in practice in companies and that most of them maintain this option, as there is a demand for it from employees.

H4: There are differences between workers' and employers' views on teleworking.

My fourth hypothesis has not been proven. Both parties confirmed that teleworking or home office practices are appropriate. Employee performance can be measured during home office hours. They confirmed that working from home also helps work-life balance.

In my questionnaire research, respondents told me that the extent to which employers prefer to work from home depends on the workplace and the attitude of managers. On the employee side, however, there is strong support for home office working.

Crises always have an impact and bring about change. It can be seen as a catalyst for innovation. It is particularly important for large companies to be able to respond effectively to crisis situations. Adaptability and flexibility to different economic and market challenges facilitate the ability to react quickly. Companies that respond quickly to change often see new opportunities and emerge from periods of crisis with more efficient business models.

Resilience is not a solution to managing the crisis, but can be seen as a strategic competitive advantage. It is crucial for companies to adapt quickly to new challenges and changing needs.

The crisis can also be an advantage for companies, bringing with it a new innovative way of working. In my research, the pandemic-induced home office working is also seen as an advantage in the practices of companies that do not rule out its further use.

Corporate crisis management is therefore not about surviving difficulties, but about taking advantage of them to create a more successful company in the market. Proactivity and innovative solutions can help companies gain a long-term competitive advantage.

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