



**New Work Culture**

to get equipped for more flexible occupations



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# POLICY PAPER

**VERSIONE ITALIANA**

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## INTRODUZIONE

La pandemia di Covid-19 ha colpito nel 2020 tutti i Paesi dell'Unione Europea e del mondo. Oltre ai problemi socio-sanitari, gli stati hanno dato direttive molto rigide per limitare la mobilità dei cittadini e quindi fermare la trasmissione del virus. Una situazione del genere ha colto di sorpresa tutte le organizzazioni del settore pubblico e privato di tutto il mondo che hanno dovuto trovare soluzioni per portare avanti le proprie attività. Di conseguenza, il lavoro flessibile ha rapidamente guadagnato terreno a livello globale. Il progetto New Work Culture (NWC) mira a fornire ai responsabili delle risorse umane e ai fornitori di IFP le conoscenze, le competenze e gli strumenti appropriati per supportare i dipendenti nell'adattarsi efficacemente alle pratiche di lavoro flessibili e affrontare eventuali sfide che potrebbero sorgere. Pertanto il progetto mira a coinvolgere le entità identificate come potenziali candidati che implementano modalità di lavoro remoto e flessibili. Queste diverse entità appartengono sia al settore pubblico che a quello privato, includendo le amministrazioni pubbliche locali, le istituzioni educative, le aziende, gli enti del terzo settore e le associazioni.

Il presente *Policy Paper* ha un **triplice obiettivo**:

1. **Mira a illustrare la necessità di una transizione verso pratiche di lavoro più flessibili.** Presentandone le ragioni, il documento sottolinea l'importanza di questo cambiamento di paradigma nei moderni ambienti di lavoro.
2. **Descrive le diverse politiche per il lavoro flessibile nei vari paesi dell'Unione Europea .** L'esame approfondito di ciascuna politica fa luce sui rispettivi vantaggi e svantaggi, offrendo una comprensione completa del loro impatto sulle dinamiche lavorative.
3. **Basandosi sulle preziose esperienze e lezioni apprese durante il progetto NWC, il documento politico sostiene una linea d'azione adeguatamente documentata.**

Il documento fornisce raccomandazioni pratiche e basate sull'evidenza sintetizzando approfondimenti provenienti da diverse ricerche documentali, testimonianze autentiche dei dipendenti e dettagliate ricerche sul campo. Queste raccomandazioni sono una "risorsa di ispirazione", che consente alle organizzazioni di coltivare e implementare modalità efficaci di lavoro a distanza in linea con il panorama lavorativo in evoluzione.

Sulla base di questi obiettivi, il presente documento riassume dapprima gli elementi qualificanti del progetto NWC, poi illustra i risultati delle ricerche desk e sul campo, quindi delinea le lezioni apprese e le relative raccomandazioni e infine espone alcune conclusioni generali di carattere prospettico.



## IL PROGETTO

**NWC - New Work Culture** è un progetto realizzato nell'ambito del programma Erasmus Plus e mira ad affrontare una delle **maggiori sfide** che le nazioni europee e il mondo del lavoro si troveranno ad affrontare nel prossimo futuro: **la necessità di flessibilità e adattabilità**. NWC vuole fornire uno spazio di riflessione e un quadro formativo/operativo sul **nuovo modo di lavorare in un ambiente "ibrido"**.

## IL CONTESTO

I luoghi di lavoro stanno diventando più flessibili e diversificati. In questo nuovo mondo del lavoro con **rapidi progressi tecnologici**, alimentato dalla crisi del COVID 19, le aziende hanno dovuto **riadattare le proprie procedure, strutture e persino il proprio ambiente di lavoro fisico**. Il lavoro ha preso una nuova svolta con l'avvento del lavoro da remoto.

**Le organizzazioni, i formatori e i lavoratori devono ora prendere in considerazione nuovi modi di lavorare insieme sulla flessibilità sul lavoro**. Questo progetto fa parte del desiderio comune di fornire ai professionisti il know-how e gli strumenti necessari per adattarsi alla costruzione di una nuova cultura del lavoro.

## GLI OBIETTIVI

L'obiettivo generale di NWC è **sviluppare la capacità delle PMI, dei professionisti dell'IFP e dei dipendenti della Pubblica Amministrazione di affrontare la trasformazione digitale nell'organizzazione del lavoro**. Il progetto intende contribuire allo sviluppo di **soluzioni innovative per la gestione di team e persone in un ambiente di lavoro ibrido**, ponendo l'accento su

- rafforzare l'**interconnessione tra tutti gli attori** coinvolti in un'azienda,
- la necessità di dotare e/o rafforzare **adeguate competenze trasversali**
- favorire l'armonia tra **vita privata e professionale**.

## LE AZIONI CHIAVE

- Identificare e mettere insieme le **pratiche europee** per costruire curriculum, competenze e conoscenze necessarie per sviluppare una **nuova cultura del lavoro**.
- Sviluppare e testare un **quadro di formazione e strumenti** per migliorare la flessibilità e le competenze trasversali sul lavoro.
- Diffondere i risultati raggiunti con l'obiettivo di **integrare buone pratiche tra organizzazioni del settore privato e pubblico**.



## I TARGET

Il progetto NWC è rivolto a **organizzazioni, fornitori di IFP e lavoratori** e si basa sull'idea che i **responsabili delle risorse umane, i lavoratori, i formatori e i professionisti** devono acquisire know-how, competenze trasversali e specialistiche per adattarsi a un mondo del lavoro in evoluzione sia **nel pubblico** (pubbliche amministrazioni locali, scuole, ecc.) che **nel privato** (aziende, enti del terzo settore, associazioni, ecc.).

Tra i beneficiari diretti del progetto figurano anche i **dipendenti delle organizzazioni partecipanti**.

## I RISULTATI

Il partenariato ha sviluppato i seguenti prodotti intellettuali:

1. **NWC Training Framework**, una tabella di marcia metodologica innovativa che comprende curriculum, strumenti, metodi e materiali di formazione per insegnare/formare manager e responsabili delle risorse umane
2. **Guida NWC sulla gestione del team**, nelle varie forme di lavoro flessibile
3. **Casi di studio NWC**: una raccolta di buone e cattive pratiche da cui trarre ispirazione
4. **Hub di e-learning NWC** che include i contenuti dei risultati del progetto di cui sopra e la fornitura di Open Badge, una risorsa innovativa per la gestione della carriera e dei talenti per il riconoscimento degli apprendimenti
5. **Policy Paper NWC**: piano d'azione e raccomandazioni per i fornitori di politiche e le parti interessate

## LA VALUTAZIONE E LE AZIONI PILOTA

La **valutazione** funge da bussola che guida la partnership verso il **miglioramento, il perfezionamento e la convalida**, garantendo che gli sforzi siano in linea con gli scopi e gli obiettivi previsti. L'obiettivo del consorzio è stato quindi quello di **far luce sui diversi strumenti progettati e utilizzati per misurare l'utilità e l'adeguatezza** dei risultati del progetto. Questi risultati sono stati oggetto di fasi pilota specifiche e ponderate con diversi gruppi al fine di migliorare e modificare i prodotti preliminari, se necessario.

Le **"azioni pilota"** si sono svolte online o in presenza, a seconda delle preferenze dei partner e dei partecipanti, coinvolgendo un **minimo di 35 formatori/rappresentanti dell'IFP** (5 per ciascuna organizzazione partner) e un **minimo di 70 manager, dipendenti ed esperti** (10 per ciascuna organizzazione partner).



## IL PARTENARIATO

Il partenariato del progetto NWC riunisce 7 organizzazioni provenienti da 7 paesi europei:

- **Association de Gestion des Fonds Européens – AGFE** (Francia) - *Coordinatore*  
<https://www.agfe95.eu/>
- **Business Development Friesland –BDF** (Olanda)  
[www.bdfriesland.nl](http://www.bdfriesland.nl)
- **Danmar Computers** (Polonia)  
[www.danmar-computers.com.pl](http://www.danmar-computers.com.pl)
- **Emphasys Centre'** (Cipro)  
<http://www.emphasyscentre.com/>
- **Forum Citoyens – Burgers asbl – FCB** (Belgio)  
<https://forumcitoyens.be/>
- **G12 Grupo Empresarial de Servicios – Gdoce** (Spagna)  
<http://www.gdoce.es/>
- **Med.O.R.O. scarl** (Italia)  
[www.medoroscarl.eu](http://www.medoroscarl.eu)

<https://newworkculture.erasmus.site/it/>



## LA STRUTTURA DEL DOCUMENTO

### RICERCA “DESK” ED “ON FIELD”

Ciascun partner ha redatto un **rapporto nazionale** riguardante:

- **buone pratiche normative, organizzative e relazionali relative agli ambienti di lavoro flessibili e ibridi** adottate in ciascun Paese partner
- situazione attuale e tendenze relative al **ruolo dei professionisti dell'istruzione e formazione professionale (IFP)** e ai loro partenariati con enti pubblici e privati volti a mantenere una forza lavoro qualificata e formata

Ogni rapporto nazionale si basa su:

- **una ricerca desk** realizzata consultando siti web specializzati e altre pubblicazioni disponibili con tutti i **riferimenti (testi e siti web)** utilizzati
- **una ricerca sul campo** basata sui risultati di **un questionario** sottoposto ad un proprio **gruppo di esperti, operatori e professionisti** appartenenti al settore privato e pubblico

In questa parte sono **riprodotte solo le conclusioni finali** di ciascun rapporto nazionale, mentre i singoli rapporti integrali sono inseriti in appendice (solo in Inglese) per la loro specifica consultazione

### LEZIONI APPRESE E RACCOMANDAZIONI

Con riferimento ai temi più importanti emersi sia dalla ricerca che dall'esperienza progettuale di ciascun partner nei rispettivi Paesi, vengono illustrate le cosiddette “lezioni apprese” e sono rappresentate da:

- una serie di **buone e cattive pratiche** rilevate nelle diverse situazioni di lavoro ibrido considerate
- le **indicazioni** emerse dai **35 casi di studio** complessivamente elaborati
- le **indicazioni** emerse a seguito delle **azioni pilota**, ossia i test di verifica e valutazione degli “strumenti” progettati che ciascun partner ha sottoposto al proprio gruppo di “esperti” qualificati nel campo dell'organizzazione aziendale, della gestione delle risorse umane e della formazione professionale

Sulla base di queste “lezioni” vengono infine proposte una serie di **raccomandazioni** per la **migliore efficienza ed efficacia del lavoro flessibile** in vista di un suo forte sviluppo nel prossimo futuro



## **CONCLUSIONI GENERALI**

Considerazioni finali sul progetto NWC nella situazione attuale e nella prospettiva futura

## **APPENDICE**

### **GLOSSARIO**

Questo glossario ha principalmente lo scopo di spiegare il significato di vari termini relativi al lavoro flessibile presenti in regolamenti o in articoli o rapporti e che potrebbero sembrare sinonimi , pur non essendolo, o il cui significato non è sempre univoco.

### **RAPPORTI NAZIONALI**

Sono riprodotti i rapporti nazionali completi relativi alle ricerche, sia desk che on-field, che ciascun partner ha svolto con riferimento alla situazione nel proprio Paese riguardo all'esperienza di lavoro flessibile.





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# **RICERCA DESK AND ON-FIELD**

## **RAPPORTI NAZIONALI**

### ***SINTESI FINALE***



## RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

### AGFE - FRANCIA

L'esplorazione delle esperienze di lavoro ibride nel contesto francese rivela una vasta gamma di intuizioni e sfide. L'adozione di modalità di lavoro flessibili, in particolare durante la pandemia di Covid-19, ha portato in primo piano sia elementi positivi che negativi. La flessibilità e il migliore equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata rappresentano evidenti vantaggi, con incrementi di produttività segnalati nelle attività amministrative. Tuttavia, sono state rilevate anche sfide come la riduzione della comunicazione diretta, la potenziale frammentazione del team e la difficoltà di separare la vita personale da quella professionale.

La distribuzione dei contenuti formativi riflette l'attenzione agli aspetti organizzativi, relazionali e tecnici, ciascuno con diversa enfasi. Sebbene sia stata offerta formazione, la valutazione moderata di "3" in termini di efficacia suggerisce margini di miglioramento. Una scoperta notevole è l'importanza di mantenere le connessioni sociali, favorire la coesione del team e facilitare una comunicazione chiara per contrastare potenziali sentimenti di isolamento.

Le raccomandazioni per prestazioni efficaci in un ambiente ibrido includono la necessità di robusti strumenti di comunicazione remota, attività ben definite comunicate attraverso programmi condivisi e interazioni regolari per sostenere i legami sociali. Il quadro giuridico in Francia sottolinea l'importanza di accordi chiari e della protezione dei diritti dei lavoratori in contesti di lavoro ibridi. In definitiva, un ambiente di lavoro ibrido di successo dipende da un attento equilibrio tra flessibilità, comunicazione e adattamento continuo per affrontare le sfide e le opportunità uniche che si presentano.

## RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

## BDF - OLANDA

La trasformazione del panorama lavorativo è stata significativamente influenzata dall'aumento del lavoro flessibile e a distanza. Nei Paesi Bassi, questo cambiamento è stato particolarmente pronunciato a causa del progressivo approccio del paese verso l'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata e dell'enfasi sull'autonomia dei dipendenti.

Il lavoro flessibile, caratterizzato da adeguamenti dell'orario di lavoro tradizionale, e il lavoro a distanza, che consente ai dipendenti di operare fuori dai confini dell'ufficio, hanno offerto una miriade di vantaggi. I dipendenti hanno notato il miglioramento dell'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata, l'autonomia, la riduzione dei tempi di spostamento e la flessibilità generale offerta da questi modelli. Allo stesso tempo, i datori di lavoro hanno beneficiato della riduzione dei costi operativi e del miglioramento della soddisfazione dei dipendenti. Tuttavia, persistono sfide, soprattutto nel mantenere la coesione del team, la sicurezza dei dati e un monitoraggio efficace delle prestazioni. Statistiche recenti rivelano l'integrazione profondamente radicata del lavoro ibrido nella cultura del lavoro olandese. Un notevole aumento dell'orario di lavoro da casa post-COVID-19, la tradizione olandese del lavoro part-time e il desiderio costante tra i dipendenti di mantenere un certo grado di lavoro a distanza ne testimoniano l'importanza.

Il quadro giuridico nei Paesi Bassi si è evoluto per affrontare questo cambiamento. Sebbene non esista alcun diritto legale per i dipendenti di lavorare da casa, i recenti movimenti legislativi suggeriscono un'inclinazione verso il riconoscimento dei diritti del lavoro a distanza. Nonostante ciò, il sentimento rimane diviso, con una parte significativa degli intervistati che ritiene che tali decisioni dovrebbero essere concordate di comune accordo tra datori di lavoro e dipendenti, piuttosto che imposte dalla legge.

Al centro dell'approccio olandese nei confronti del lavoro flessibile e a distanza sono i professionisti dell'istruzione e della formazione professionale (IFP). Le loro collaborazioni con enti del settore pubblico e privato sottolineano l'impegno della nazione ad allineare l'istruzione con le esigenze in evoluzione del mercato del lavoro. L'enfasi sull'apprendimento permanente, sulla digitalizzazione e sui percorsi di apprendimento personalizzati accentua ulteriormente l'importanza dei professionisti dell'IFP. La ricerca sul campo rivela che, sebbene la maggioranza abbia sperimentato un ambiente ibrido continuo, l'adozione del lavoro flessibile è accelerata principalmente a causa della pandemia. Nonostante le sfide, tra cui la riduzione delle interazioni informali e le sfide nella coesione del team, i benefici come la riduzione degli spostamenti casa-lavoro e gli orari flessibili sembrano superarli.

La legislazione e le politiche hanno svolto un ruolo fondamentale nel plasmare il panorama del lavoro flessibile. Hanno contribuito la legge sul lavoro flessibile, l'enfasi sul lavoro part-time, l'introduzione di strumenti digitali e orari di inizio e fine flessibili. Inoltre, le considerazioni sulla sicurezza e sull'ergonomia per i lavoratori a distanza rimangono fondamentali.

Di fronte all'evoluzione delle dinamiche lavorative, i Paesi Bassi si distinguono come una nazione progressista, adattandosi in modo rapido ed efficiente alle esigenze dell'era moderna. Il passaggio a un modello di lavoro ibrido non è semplicemente una reazione alla pandemia; rappresenta un profondo cambiamento nell'etica del lavoro olandese, enfatizzando l'efficienza, la flessibilità e uno stile di vita equilibrato.



# RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

## DANMAR - POLONIA

Negli ultimi anni il lavoro ibrido in Polonia ha visto progressi significativi e sfide condivise. L'accelerazione della digitalizzazione dei luoghi di lavoro ha suscitato l'interesse e l'interesse sia dei datori di lavoro che dei dipendenti, portando all'esplorazione di nuovi paradigmi di lavoro. Questa sintesi cerca di fornire una panoramica approfondita del panorama del lavoro ibrido in Polonia, approfondendo le tendenze emergenti, i vantaggi e gli ostacoli incontrati da imprese e individui.

Esaminando il suo impatto sulla produttività, sull'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata e sulla soddisfazione dei dipendenti, questa analisi mira a far luce sul potenziale del lavoro ibrido come soluzione innovativa per le esigenze in evoluzione della forza lavoro polacca. Il lavoro ibrido sta guadagnando popolarità in Polonia, sia nel settore pubblico che in quello privato.

Le aziende stanno introducendo sempre più modelli di lavoro flessibili, consentendo ai dipendenti di combinare lavoro a distanza e in ufficio. Il lavoro ibrido comporta sia vantaggi, come un migliore equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata e una maggiore flessibilità, sia sfide, come l'isolamento sociale, le difficoltà di comunicazione e il monitoraggio del lavoro a distanza.

La pandemia di coronavirus ha notevolmente accelerato l'adozione del lavoro ibrido. Nel 2020, molte aziende hanno dovuto passare al lavoro a distanza, rendendo molte più flessibili nel proprio modello di lavoro. Molte aziende hanno introdotto un modello ibrido, in cui i dipendenti hanno la possibilità di lavorare sia in ufficio che da remoto. Ciò consente una maggiore flessibilità e personalizzazione del lavoro in base alla natura delle attività.



# RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

## EMPHASYS - CIPRO

Cipro abbraccia progressivamente pratiche di lavoro flessibili, supportate da un quadro giuridico rivolto ai settori pubblico e privato. Il quadro giuridico nel settore pubblico offre ai dipendenti pubblici varie opzioni per modalità di lavoro flessibili, concentrandosi sulla promozione dell'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata e sulla gestione delle responsabilità personali.

Al contrario, il settore privato consente ai datori di lavoro e ai dipendenti di negoziare modalità di lavoro flessibili a condizioni reciprocamente accettabili, promuovendo vari approcci lavorativi innovativi. Tuttavia, l'adozione di pratiche di lavoro flessibili può variare a seconda dei settori e delle organizzazioni, con le aziende più grandi che sono più ricettive grazie alle loro risorse e capacità, mentre le PMI potrebbero dover affrontare sfide nell'implementazione.

Inoltre, i professionisti dell'IFP svolgono un ruolo fondamentale nel miglioramento delle competenze della forza lavoro e le partnership e le collaborazioni tra questi esperti ed entità in entrambi i settori sono diventate più diffuse. Queste collaborazioni creano una situazione vantaggiosa per tutti, consentendo alle organizzazioni di allineare la formazione ai propri obiettivi, alla cultura e alle pratiche di lavoro flessibili, mentre i dipendenti acquisiscono competenze preziose per una maggiore produttività e adattabilità.

Infine, l'indagine di ricerca sul campo fa luce sulle esperienze e le percezioni dei dipendenti che lavorano in un ambiente ibrido a Cipro. I partecipanti hanno evidenziato sia gli aspetti positivi che quelli negativi del lavoro flessibile, con tra i vantaggi maggiore concentrazione, produttività e risparmio di tempo. Tuttavia, la sensazione di isolamento, la ridotta interazione sociale e le difficoltà tecniche sono state menzionate come svantaggi.

I risultati sottolineano l'importanza di fornire formazione e supporto ai dipendenti in contesti di lavoro ibridi e di implementare procedure chiare e un monitoraggio efficace per garantire un adattamento efficace a questo modello di lavoro.



## RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

### FCB - BELGIO

Prima della crisi Covid la pratica del lavoro ibrido era marginale in Belgio, in particolare nel settore privato. Riguardava ancora una piccola percentuale di lavoratori ed era generalmente limitata ad una parte ristretta del loro orario di lavoro. A poco a poco, però, si è cominciato a sentire parlare di una crescente domanda di telelavoro tra i lavoratori, in nome di un migliore equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata, ma da parte di aziende per la maggior parte ancora piuttosto reticenti.

In soli tre anni il lavoro è cambiato radicalmente. In Belgio, combinando la natura del lavoro svolto (la professione) e il settore di attività dell'impresa, diversi studi recenti hanno stimato che quasi la metà dei posti di lavoro salariati situati nella regione di Bruxelles (la capitale) potrebbero essere interessati dall'applicazione di contratti di lavoro ibrido o più in generale flessibile.

Va notato che l'esperienza dei partecipanti a questo studio mostra che l'avvento del lavoro ibrido è un'esperienza relativamente giovane in Belgio, radicata nelle pratiche post-Covid e non ancora percepita dai partecipanti al percorso di formazione professionale come una soluzione sostenibile o organizzazione acquisita, anche se sottolineano una migliore qualità del lavoro in generale, che consente loro di conciliare vita professionale e vita privata.

Va inoltre notato che le esigenze dei partecipanti non sembrano risiedere a livello tecnico, ma piuttosto riflettono la necessità di una migliore comprensione delle nuove tecnologie.



# RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

## GDOCE - SPAGNA

Il concetto di ambiente di lavoro ibrido è diventato popolare in Spagna, soprattutto sulla scia della pandemia di COVID-19. Prima di marzo 2020, il lavoro a distanza era relativamente limitato, ma la crisi ha provocato un cambiamento sostanziale, con circa un terzo della forza lavoro spagnola che è passata al lavoro a distanza. Sebbene il volume delle ore di lavoro a distanza sia diminuito un anno dopo, l'impatto sugli individui è stato profondo, portando a preferire questa modalità di lavoro (come indicato dall'83,7% che esprime una forte propensione per essa).

Il governo spagnolo è stato spinto a mettersi al passo con questa nuova realtà e a regolamentare questa "nuova cultura del lavoro". L'obiettivo era quello di creare un quadro coeso per l'intero territorio, bilanciando al tempo stesso i vantaggi delle nuove modalità occupazionali sia per le aziende che per i lavoratori. Come descritto in precedenza, la legislazione incoraggia l'adozione di modelli di lavoro innovativi, pur sostenendo un insieme completo di diritti che tutelano i principi essenziali. Tuttavia, il settore pubblico continua ad attendere una legislazione dedicata al riguardo.

In termini di formazione, vi è un riconoscimento unanime tra le aziende, le parti interessate sociali e i governi centrali e regionali sull'importanza di migliorare le competenze della forza lavoro attraverso un ampio spettro di competenze. Dai dati disponibili emerge che la formazione è in continua crescita, raggiungendo 5,3 milioni di lavoratori. Prevalentemente, l'approccio abituale prevede l'offerta di corsi di gestione e amministrazione, spesso condotti internamente e in presenza. Da segnalare infine l'investimento complessivo di 888,6 milioni di euro per agevolare la formazione dei dipendenti da parte delle aziende.

Il panorama delle pratiche di lavoro flessibile in Spagna è vario ed ampio, il che rende un compito impegnativo comprendere l'intero spettro nell'elenco fornito. La raccolta, sebbene selettiva, mira a catturare una miscela di approcci comuni e all'avanguardia. Da un lato, pratiche come il telelavoro e il lavoro intelligente sono state la prima e la seconda opzione adottata dalla maggior parte delle organizzazioni. D'altro canto, pratiche come le banche orarie e il job sharing sono esempi perfetti di strategie innovative per migliorare sia la produttività che il benessere dei dipendenti. Questa gamma completa di pratiche mostra gli sforzi delle organizzazioni per mantenere produttività ed efficienza ottimali, senza compromettere la motivazione e l'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata della propria forza lavoro.

La ricerca sul campo è servita come convalida pratica per quasi tutti gli elementi discussi in precedenza. Si è evidenziato che la formulazione di accordi di lavoro ibridi è nata da una miscela di negoziati interni informali e dal quadro delle legislazioni nazionali e regionali. Numerosi aspetti positivi sono stati molto apprezzati dai partecipanti, tuttavia è importante non perdere di vista i miglioramenti realizzabili. La sensazione generale è che gli intervistati siano soddisfatti di questa modalità, anche se alcune delle aziende per cui lavorano potrebbero non mantenerla nel prossimo futuro. Infine, a differenza degli studi presentati in precedenza, la formazione è risultata effettivamente scarsa nel campione selezionato.



# RAPPORTO NAZIONALE

## MEDORO - ITALIA

Il sistema normativo in Italia riguarda lo “smart working” ed è tutto sommato abbastanza snello ed efficace anche operativamente.

Per il settore privato, infatti, esiste una sola “legge madre” del 2017 (aggiornata solo nel 2022), quindi già esistente prima della pandemia, che è particolarmente centrata sulla tutela dei diritti e della sicurezza dei lavoratori e sulla “riserva” per i soggetti svantaggiati (per motivi di salute o familiari), mentre la definizione concreta delle condizioni e delle modalità di svolgimento dello smart working è stata affidata a un Protocollo d’intesa sottoscritto dallo Stato con le organizzazioni sindacali.

Anche per la Pubblica Amministrazione esiste una sola legge di riferimento che è stata invece approvata nel 2020, proprio in occasione della pandemia, e un documento del Ministero che indica una serie di linee guida di carattere operativo che fanno riferimento anche agli accordi individuali con dipendenti.

Sia per il settore privato che per quello pubblico, il principio base è quello dell’adesione volontaria allo smart working da parte dei lavoratori: a nostro avviso questo principio, se da un lato salvaguarda la libertà di scelta del dipendente (magari influenzata dalla propria configurazione di vita) dall’altro, però, potrebbe rendere molto difficile un’organizzazione efficiente ed efficace del lavoro, soprattutto se basata su piccoli gruppi che lavorano per obiettivi con un adeguato livello di coesione.

I pochi dati che abbiamo riportato sono sufficienti per dimostrare che, per quanto riguarda il settore privato (essenzialmente quello delle imprese), anche dopo la crisi pandemica, solo le grandi aziende mantengono una percentuale molto elevata di lavoratori in smart working e sono riuscite ad organizzare un ambiente di lavoro ibrido di media efficienza su base permanente. Le medie, piccole e micro imprese, invece, soffrono ancora di un ritardo fondamentalmente culturale, che si traduce poi in difficoltà organizzative, tecniche e formative. Anche nella Pubblica Amministrazione i margini di miglioramento sono ancora ampi e sono ancora più evidenti i ritardi e le difficoltà segnalate per le piccole imprese.

Il ruolo della formazione nell’accompagnare questo processo di necessario adattamento alla nuova modalità ibrida di lavoro appare quindi assolutamente essenziale, come testimoniano i risultati lusinghieri riscontrati in occasione delle poche esperienze formative riscontrate.

Sia da parte dei lavoratori che dei datori di lavoro, i vantaggi dello smart working ed in genere del lavoro flessibile si sostanziano in un maggiore benessere organizzativo con conseguente maggiore produttività oltre che in una migliore qualità della vita soprattutto in termini di equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata. Le criticità invece si riscontrano principalmente dal punto di vista relazionale e mentale e molto spesso anche in ambito tecnologico.

In conseguenza di quanto emerso, la migliore prospettiva di un’organizzazione del lavoro che prevede sempre più modalità flessibili e “ibride” è affidata alla capacità di:

- disporre di adeguati strumenti digitali e di adeguate competenze nel loro proficuo utilizzo
- definire a livello organizzativo regole precise e modalità verificabili
- adottare un approccio lavorativo basato sugli obiettivi e sul lavoro di squadra
- avere una mentalità flessibile e adattiva (dai capi ai collaboratori)
- accompagnare la transizione “ibrida” con interventi formativi adeguati e sistematici
- gestire al meglio il proprio tempo soprattutto per ottimizzare l’equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata





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# **LEZIONI APPRESE E RACCOMANDAZIONI**



## INTRODUZIONE

Questo capitolo è composto da due parti.

Nella prima – **lezioni apprese** – potete trovare:

➤ le esperienze legate al lavoro in ambiente ibrido, riassunte in termini di **buone e cattive pratiche, vantaggi e svantaggi**, rilevate sia attraverso i 51 questionari sottoposti a soggetti qualificati in rappresentanza di diverse realtà private e pubbliche, sia attraverso i 35 casi studio elaborati. Tali esperienze sono state selezionate e riconducibili a **quattro ambiti**:

- **organizzazione/gestione**
- **strumenti tecnologici**
- **benessere personale/equilibrio vita-lavoro**
- **formazione**

➤ le indicazioni emerse a seguito delle **azioni pilota**, ovvero i **test di verifica e valutazione degli “strumenti”** progettati che ciascun partner ha sottoposto al proprio gruppo di “esperti” qualificati nel campo dell'organizzazione aziendale, della gestione delle risorse umane e della formazione professionale

La seconda parte riassume le **raccomandazioni**, cioè precise **indicazioni di indirizzo** che verranno poi concretamente recepite da ciascun ente in modi e con strumenti diversi, frutto anche dei feedback sul campo (questionari e casi di studio).

Tali raccomandazioni sono riassunte in **cinque “power ideas”**, una generale e le altre più o meno corrispondenti alle 4 aree sopra indicate per le lezioni apprese: per ciascuna di esse sono previste alcune specificazioni di contenuto o di metodo.

In questo capitolo viene dunque descritta la **linea di azione per il prossimo futuro** proposta dal progetto per garantire o almeno facilitare la **migliore efficienza ed efficacia del lavoro flessibile**.

Dal punto di vista territoriale non c'è ovviamente alcuna suddivisione ma **i dati si riferiscono complessivamente al territorio dell'intero partenariato**. Per trovare il dettaglio per i singoli Paesi basta consultare i rapporti nazionali completi contenuti in appendice.



## 1 – LEZIONI APPRESE

### 1.1 Vantaggi e buone pratiche riscontrate sul campo

#### Organizzazione/management

##### Vantaggi

- ❖ La flessibilità del lavoro facilita:
  - migliori risultati e performance;
  - miglioramento della produttività;
  - sviluppo dell'iniziativa dei dipendenti;
  - reclutamento nonostante la distanza geografica.
- ❖ Il fattore di successo del lavoro flessibile si basa esclusivamente sui risultati, anche se è necessario un certo coordinamento con il manager e il team.

##### Buone pratiche

- ❖ L'Ufficio Risorse Umane (per grandi imprese o pubbliche amministrazioni) o il titolare dell'azienda e/o 1-2 dirigenti (per piccole o microimprese) sono responsabili di:
  - sviluppare e comunicare politiche relative a modalità di lavoro flessibili
  - formare manager e dipendenti su come gestire e lavorare in modo efficace in un ambiente remoto o flessibile, su come utilizzare gli strumenti tecnologici e su come mantenere una comunicazione efficace con i colleghi mentre si lavora in remoto.
- ❖ Condivisione iniziale e successiva di un sistema di lavoro ibrido o di un programma FlexWork, con il contributo di dipendenti, manager e professionisti HR, attraverso:
  - accordo di telelavoro che delinei le condizioni per il lavoro a distanza, compresi i criteri di ammissibilità, l'orario di lavoro e il luogo di lavoro a distanza
  - linee guida sulla comunicazione che incoraggino contatti regolari tra dipendenti e loro manager quando lavorano da remoto
  - comunicazione interna che avviene tramite e-mail, assemblee generali, riunioni di dipartimento e riunioni di team, nonché riunioni individuali tenute con ciascun dipendente.
  - informazioni sulla flessibilità disponibili sulla intranet, alla quale tutti hanno accesso
  - sondaggi e focus group con i dipendenti per comprendere meglio le loro esigenze e preferenze, utilizzando queste informazioni come base per lo sviluppo



- ❖ Verifica periodica di un programma FlexWork misurandone (normalmente ogni anno) i benefici tramite sondaggi (benessere, soddisfazione, produttività, clima lavorativo ecc.)
- ❖ Elenchi di priorità per le attività in sede e fuori sede al fine di ottimizzare gli orari per il lavoro ibrido.
- ❖ Diversi modi per distribuire il lavoro ibrido tra i dipendenti:
  - 2-3 giorni a settimana, con un requisito minimo del 40% di presenza in sede su un periodo di quindici giorni;
  - dare ai dipendenti la flessibilità di continuare a lavorare da casa come parte del lavoro misto, con l'aspettativa che le persone trascorreranno in media il 40-60% del loro tempo co-locati con i colleghi, negli uffici o presso le sedi dei clienti;
  - il dipendente sceglie e decide autonomamente tale rapporto, a condizione che sia presente in ufficio per almeno il 30% dell'orario di lavoro.
- ❖ Una volta al mese, i dipendenti votano se vogliono lavorare la mattina o partecipare ad un'attività di legame con i loro colleghi.
- ❖ Per quanto riguarda il job sharing, il processo inizia tipicamente quando un dipendente, che desidera lavorare con un orario ridotto e conosce qualcun altro in una situazione simile, ovvero con desideri e competenze compatibili, richiede un accordo di job sharing.
- ❖ Gli incontri tra genitori e insegnanti si svolgono solo a distanza; questo migliora la gestione del tempo e la partecipazione dei genitori (per le scuole).

### Strumenti tecnologici

#### Vantaggi

- ❖ Incremento generale delle competenze tecniche dei lavoratori e degli insegnanti (per la scuola)

#### Buone pratiche

- ❖ Investire in nuove tecnologie e strumenti digitali che consentano il lavoro a distanza, come videoconferenze, strumenti di collaborazione e piattaforme basate su cloud, affinché i dipendenti possano rimanere in contatto.
- ❖ Fornitura di dispositivi digitali che consentano ai dipendenti di lavorare in remoto come sedie da scrivania ergonomiche, laptop, monitor, fotocamere e cuffie.
- ❖ Fornitura di attrezzature gratuite (ad esempio mouse, tastiere o cuffie) nonché un'indennità ai telelavoratori affinché possano acquistare le attrezzature tecnologiche necessarie.



## *Benessere personale/equilibrio lavoro-vita privata*

### *Vantaggi*

- ❖ Tempo risparmiato negli spostamenti mattutini e serali, riduzione dello stress, dei costi e del tempo sprecato nei trasporti.
- ❖ La semplice comodità di lavorare da casa, riducendo lo stress legato al pendolarismo e creando un ambiente di lavoro adatto alle proprie preferenze ed esigenze.
- ❖ Avere la possibilità di dormire di più e soprattutto di avere più tempo per perseguire gli interessi personali, portare a termine le faccende domestiche, intrattenere rapporti sociali e fare altre cose che normalmente si accumulano nel fine settimana.
- ❖ La libertà di organizzare e dividere il proprio tempo e la fiducia nel portare a termine i propri compiti.

### *Buone pratiche*

- ❖ Legge relativa al diritto di disconnessione (in Francia, ad esempio)
- ❖ Settimana compressa (4 giorni con un programma più lungo, ad esempio)
- ❖ I telelavoratori riceveranno un budget per l'allestimento dell'ufficio da casa e avranno la possibilità di ricevere buoni pasto per i giorni di telelavoro.
- ❖ Risorse virtuali per la salute mentale a disposizione dei dipendenti, come valutazioni online della salute mentale e strumenti di auto-aiuto.
- ❖ Linee guida sull'equilibrio tra lavoro e vita privata che sottolineano l'importanza di stabilire dei confini tra lavoro e vita personale.
- ❖ Orari di lavoro flessibili e definizione del proprio programma in base alle proprie esigenze familiari o personali, compresi accordi di lavoro part-time.
- ❖ Le donne incinte possono beneficiare di orari di lavoro ridotti o rimanere a casa con il loro bambino più a lungo dopo il parto.
- ❖ Fornendo vari quiz e sfide giornalieri online, l'azienda mira a fornire un modo di comunicazione tra i dipendenti per argomenti non legati al lavoro.



## Formazione

### Buone pratiche

- ❖ Una formazione specifica per manager basata su come supportare la salute mentale e il benessere dei dipendenti in un ambiente di lavoro remoto.
- ❖ Un sistema di apprendimento e formazione personale online con due opzioni:
  - l'uso di piattaforme di e-conferencing come Meet e Zoom per fornire formazione online;
  - per tematiche complesse, piattaforme e-learning utilizzate per migliorare struttura e risultati.
- ❖ Programmi di formazione solo per supervisori, come manager e senior manager.
- ❖ Cercare, consultare e utilizzare i risultati di alcuni progetti europei, finanziati principalmente dal programma Erasmus+ (come WF4, Netiquette+, Stratagame, Future for Education) riguardanti competenze trasversali, corretto utilizzo dei social network, formazione on-line, soprattutto per ulteriore sviluppo competenze su alcuni temi importanti (il miglior lavoratore; conciliazione vita privata/lavoro; automotivazione; esercizi di formazione, ecc.)



## 1.2 Svantaggi e cattive prassi riscontrate sul campo

### Organizzazione/management

#### Svantaggi

- ❖ Difetti e problemi di comunicazione come:
  - mancanza di strumenti di comunicazione diretta e di scambio in tempo reale;
  - nessuna informazione su cosa stanno facendo gli altri membri del team, quali sono le loro priorità e se hanno bisogno di aiuto;
  - frammentazione dei team e distanziamento professionale tra colleghi;
  - ritardi nella condivisione delle informazioni;
  - nessuna riunione online regolare;
  - mancanza di incontri faccia a faccia;
  - troppe riunioni on-line affinché i lavoratori, essendo “sempre connessi”, siano indotti a trascurare il proprio lavoro essenziale, con conseguente perdita di produttività e stress;
  - normali conversazioni sulla scrivania sostituite da e-mail o messaggi su app di comunicazione, il che a volte porta a ritardi e confusione.
- ❖ Mancanza di motivazione (come conseguenza del punto precedente).
- ❖ Lunghi tempi di adattamento.
- ❖ Complessità nella definizione degli orari di lavoro
- ❖ (per le scuole) L'isolamento dovuto alla pandemia ha prodotto diversi problemi alle capacità relazionali dei singoli, a soffrirne maggiormente è la popolazione più giovane, necessaria l'introduzione della figura dello Psicologo d'Istituto.

#### Cattive prassi

- ❖ Nessun controllo chiaro sull'orario di lavoro, problemi nel tenere traccia delle ore extra e dell'orario di lavoro più lungo
- ❖ Mancanza di politiche e linee guida nel contesto del lavoro a distanza.
- ❖ Gli obiettivi a lungo termine non sono chiaramente definiti.
- ❖ Nessuno strumento strutturato per gestire i progetti e monitorare i progressi.
- ❖ Nessuna connessione telematica funzionale, nessun rapporto professionale con i colleghi, eliminazione quasi totale dello smart working dopo la pandemia (principalmente per il settore pubblico)



### **Strumenti tecnologici**

#### **Cattive prassi**

- ❖ Trasferimento di attrezzature tra casa e ufficio.
- ❖ Difficoltà tecniche durante le riunioni online, soprattutto con la connessione.
- ❖ Problemi di compatibilità tra diverse tecnologie.
- ❖ I sistemi di chiamata non funzionano in modo efficiente.
- ❖ Divieto di accesso alle apparecchiature d'ufficio.
- ❖ Le piattaforme non funzionavano adeguatamente: crash costanti a causa di sovraccarichi, le applicazioni client venivano spesso perse, difficoltà nel caricare documenti, ecc.

### **Benessere personale/equilibrio lavoro-vita privata**

#### **Svantaggi**

- ❖ Isolamento mentale e difficoltà a separare lavoro e vita personale.
- ❖ Confusione tra lavoro e vita privata o possibile aumento del carico di lavoro.

#### **Cattive prassi**

- ❖ Assenza di “diritto alla disconnessione” o aspettativa implicita di disponibilità in ogni momento con conseguente equilibrio precario tra lavoro e vita personale.
- ❖ Mancanza di separazione fisica tra lo spazio domestico e il luogo di lavoro.

### **Training**

In generale non viene erogata alcuna formazione programmata e mirata né per i datori di lavoro né per i dipendenti, salvo alcune eccezioni.





### 1.3 Risultati dell'azione pilota

Le azioni pilota hanno consentito a qualificati “esperti”, sia dipendenti che professionisti, di acquisire una serie di preziose indicazioni per una maggiore efficacia formativa e consulenziale degli strumenti realizzati, fornendo così anche suggerimenti operativi e comportamentali per migliorare la concreta attuazione delle diverse forme di flessibilità nel lavoro. Ecco una sintesi delle raccomandazioni emerse:

1. **Coerenza nella progettazione e chiarezza negli obiettivi:** standardizzare gli elementi di progettazione tra i moduli e fornire descrizioni concise degli obiettivi delle attività per migliorare l'esperienza e la comprensione dell'utente.
2. **Incorporazione di esercizi pratici e suggerimenti chiave:** includere esercizi più pratici ed evidenziare suggerimenti chiave all'interno della guida per soddisfare diversi stili di apprendimento e rafforzare i concetti chiave.
3. **Specificazione del gruppo target e presenza del facilitatore:** specificare chiaramente i gruppi target per adattare di conseguenza i materiali formativi e incoraggiare la presenza di facilitatori per migliorare l'efficacia della formazione.
4. **Continuazione della formazione online e miglioramento della presentazione:** sviluppare ulteriormente le capacità di gestione del team attraverso la formazione online, migliorare la leggibilità del contenuto della guida ed esplorare progetti per massimizzare l'utilità.
5. **Miglioramento dell'interattività della piattaforma e ottimizzazione del design:** migliorare l'interattività e la navigazione della piattaforma per aumentare il coinvolgimento degli utenti e la facilità d'uso e condensare moduli lunghi per un migliore trasferimento delle conoscenze.
6. **Chiarezza della guida alla navigazione e delle attività:** semplificare la navigazione della guida, chiarire le istruzioni e gli obiettivi delle attività, integrare le attività all'interno del contenuto del modulo e includere esempi più pratici.
7. **Integrazione di elementi interattivi e personalizzazione dei contenuti:** incorporare più elementi interattivi all'interno della guida, ottimizzare la navigazione, fornire opzioni per la personalizzazione dei contenuti e implementare monitoraggio e valutazione continui.

Le intuizioni collettive e le raccomandazioni derivate dalle sessioni pilota globali sottolineano un impegno condiviso per far migliorare le pratiche della gestione dei team nell'era digitale.

Sintetizzando diverse prospettive e affrontando sfide diversamente sfaccettate, gli strumenti NWC possono essere ulteriormente perfezionati per supportare meglio i lavoratori “remoti”, i professionisti delle risorse umane, i manager e i formatori in tutto il mondo.



## 2 –RACCOMANDAZIONI

### 2.1 - Garantire la condivisione completa e generale dei principali fondamenti di un programma FlexWork, dai vertici alla base

- ❖ Approccio al lavoro **basato sui risultati**
- ❖ Mentalità **adattiva e flessibile**

### 2.2 - Adottare un'adeguata governance del sistema in un ambiente ibrido soprattutto in termini di comunicazione, divisione dei compiti e controllo dei processi e dei risultati

- ❖ Raccogliere regolarmente feedback dai dipendenti e valutare l'efficacia del modello di lavoro ibrido/flessibile per aiutare le organizzazioni a migliorare continuamente il proprio approccio e ad affrontare eventuali sfide che potrebbero sorgere (tramite sessioni di brainstorming, box ideas, ecc.)
- ❖ Definire chiari obiettivi qualitativi e quantitativi, fissare regole precise e rivederle periodicamente sulla base di adeguati KPI (Key Performance Indicators).
- ❖ Pianificare e condurre riunioni virtuali periodiche e incontri periodici in presenza tra colleghi e/o responsabili, né troppo rari, per favorire la “valorizzazione” del lavoro di squadra, né troppo frequenti, per evitare il rischio di non lasciare ai collaboratori il tempo adeguato per svolgere le attività previste
- ❖ Sviluppare relazioni/affinità umane tra le persone, facilitando il processo per conoscere meglio le persone (federazione, sviluppo della creatività, svolgimento di alcune attività "ricreative" almeno una volta all'anno in un contesto non formale, ecc.)
- ❖ Stabilire procedure fisse per i compiti organizzativi con scadenze interne chiare e processi di revisione.



- ❖ **Suddividere il carico di lavoro in base all'ambiente di lavoro** (ufficio o casa) e prevedere, per quanto possibile, una **pianificazione dettagliata del lavoro** nel contesto di ciascun dipendente.
- ❖ Prestare attenzione ai numerosi **cambiamenti nella legislazione del lavoro** e ai **problemi** connessi ai metodi di **reclutamento online**, alla **valutazione e motivazione del personale** e ai relativi **rischi psicosociali** (per responsabili delle risorse umane o proprietari di piccolo o microimprese)

## 2.3 - Garantire gli strumenti tecnologici adeguati a tutti i collaboratori

- ❖ L'organizzazione dovrebbe disporre di **strumenti di comunicazione remota affidabili e funzionali** (es. piattaforma che può essere utilizzata anche per la comunicazione 'interna' tra colleghi/management, sistemi cloud, ecc.).
- ❖ Garantire che i dipendenti dispongano di una **connessione Internet affidabile a casa**.
- ❖ Assicurarsi che tutti dispongano di **attrezzature adeguate e performanti** per il lavoro ibrido

## 2.4 - Prendersi più cura del benessere personale (indicazione per i datori di lavoro e per i dipendenti)

- ❖ Mantenere un'adeguata **separazione tra lavoro e vita privata**, anche dal punto di vista **logistico** (ad esempio disponendo di uno spazio riservato al lavoro a casa).
- ❖ Difendere, anzi incrementare i propri **spazi per la famiglia, le altre relazioni sociali, gli interessi culturali, gli interessi sportivi, ecc.**
- ❖ Garantire un **tempo effettivo di disconnessione** a tutti i collaboratori.
- ❖ Offrire un **compenso per le spese legate al lavoro a distanza**.



## **2.5 - Accompagnare e sostenere il processo di adattamento al lavoro ibrido/flessibile**

- ❖ Fornire formazione **sull'utilizzo degli strumenti digitali e una transizione graduale verso condizioni di lavoro ibrido/flessibile** (netiquette, GDrive, ecc.)
- ❖ Supporto/formazione alla **conciliazione vita-lavoro** (gestione del tempo, configurazione logistica, relazioni familiari, scelte alimentari, ecc.).
- ❖ Offrire formazione regolare **non solo sugli aspetti tecnici ma anche su quelli organizzativi e motivazionali** (attività di team building on e off-line, soft skills, ecc..)
- ❖ Valorizzare le **competenze acquisite**: sistema di **riconoscimento non formale (badge) e/o formale**



## CONCLUSIONI GENERALI

L'esperienza complessiva del progetto NWC maturata soprattutto attraverso le indagini sul campo, le prime sperimentazioni degli strumenti realizzati (necessariamente brevi e concisi) ed i relativi feedback, nonché quanto emerso dal rapporto sull'impatto del progetto atteso a breve e a medio termine, ci dicono che **le prospettive del lavoro flessibile in Europa sono promettenti**, grazie anche al quadro giuridico che sostiene sia il settore pubblico che quello privato, e che la sperimentazione di processi di lavoro flessibile nei diversi paesi è intensificata dai **cambiamenti nella cultura del lavoro**, in particolare tra le **generazioni X, Y e Z post-Covid**, ed evidenzia il **potenziale di trasformazione di questi nuovi modi di lavorare** in un ambiente ibrido/flessibile

Ci sembra opportuno fare un breve **cenno particolare al settore pubblico**, data la sua grande importanza nel panorama lavorativo di una nazione ma anche la sua peculiarità, caratterizzata da una maggiore difficoltà nell'attuare il cambiamento, sia in termini di mentalità che di processi organizzativi consolidati. Le organizzazioni pubbliche dovrebbero apportare modifiche al più presto per non essere lasciate separate/disconnesse dal mondo in movimento. Quindi, per le pubbliche amministrazioni **un buon sistema di lavoro flessibile** può e deve essere un'opportunità per attuare un **cambiamento profondo, incentrato sul lavoro per obiettivi e su una digitalizzazione intelligente delle attività**. Questo cambiamento epocale consiste nel passare **da una gestione tradizionale**, orientata al presentismo e al controllo degli obblighi, **a una nuova** che ha principi profondamente diversi, come il **superamento della cultura del sospetto e del formalismo** in favore di una **fiducia misurata e controllata nel lavoratore**, l'importanza della **collaborazione**, la capacità della persona di **essere responsabile, la meritocrazia, l'apertura e la flessibilità**. Pertanto, per migliorare l'efficacia delle pratiche di lavoro flessibile nel settore pubblico, è fondamentale **affrontare le potenziali barriere e promuovere l'inclusività**, attraverso politiche che considerino le diverse esigenze dei dipendenti pubblici, promuovendo un ambiente di lavoro che soddisfi le diverse preferenze ed esigenze.

Emerge chiaramente che il successo dell'adozione del lavoro flessibile è strettamente legato alla **collaborazione tra i professionisti e gli enti dell'istruzione e della formazione professionale (IFP) sia nel settore pubblico che in quello privato**. I professionisti dell'IFP, in quanto sostenitori dello **sviluppo delle competenze e dell'adattabilità**, svolgono un ruolo fondamentale nella progettazione e attuazione di **programmi di formazione adattati alle esigenze dei dipendenti e dei datori di lavoro**. Le partnership instaurate tra queste figure professionali ed organizzazioni devono mirare ad **iniziative formative personalizzate** in linea con gli obiettivi organizzativi, la cultura e il panorama in evoluzione delle pratiche di lavoro flessibile e per questo devono essere **continuative e "fedelizzate"**, affinché il coinvolgimento dei professionisti della formazione garantisca che i **programmi formativi siano rilevanti, di grande impatto e rispondenti alle esigenze dinamiche della forza lavoro**.



Tutte le raccomandazioni illustrate nel presente documento e individuate come necessarie per massimizzare l'efficacia dell'adozione di sistemi di lavoro flessibili, devono pertanto essere costantemente supportate da tre indicazioni fondamentali:

- **riconoscimento del cambiamento culturale**, vale a dire riconoscere il cambiamento della cultura del lavoro, soprattutto tra le nuove generazioni, e adattare le pratiche di lavoro flessibili per allinearsi a questi cambiamenti culturali
- **processo di valutazione continua**, ovvero condurre valutazioni continue dell'impatto delle pratiche di lavoro flessibili, tenendo conto delle tendenze sociali in evoluzione, per garantire pertinenza e reattività
- **osservazione costante delle “best practices” internazionali**, ovvero imparare dalla sperimentazione di best practices europee e anche extraeuropee nella formalizzazione ed estensione di processi di lavoro flessibili, adattandoli al proprio contesto locale

Ci auguriamo che il progetto NWC abbia contribuito a facilitare e stimolare uno **sforzo collaborativo** tra tutte le componenti che gravitano verso il mondo del lavoro, come passo fondamentale verso la **promozione dell'innovazione e del miglioramento continuo dell'ambiente di lavoro**, attraverso il proficuo accompagnamento verso una **flessibilità** che possa coniugare una **maggiore efficienza ed efficacia** dei processi con una **miglior qualità della vita**.



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# **APPENDIX**

## **GLOSSARY**

## **NATIONAL REPORTS**



# GLOSSARY

## **FLEXIBLE WORK**

With the expression **flexible work** we can characterize all forms of work that are outside the traditional constraints of time, place, mode of action and performance evaluation. All the forms of work defined below therefore fall, more or less, into the category of flexible work.

### **Hybrid work**

Hybrid work can be defined as a working arrangement where some staff will work on-site, some will work off-site via telecommuting or remote working, and others will have the freedom to work on-site on some days and off-site on others, based on circumstances, objectives, and personal preferences. In a hybrid work model, employees can work remotely from anywhere, work from home, or physically attend the workplace environment every couple of days, as companies maintain their physical spaces. Hybrid work brings the most outstanding levels of productivity when following a schedule where people work on-site two to three times a week and the rest are spent in a remote location.

### **Telecommuting**

Telecommuting is the practice of working from outside of the employer's office or physical workplace. Often it will mean working from home, but it could equally mean working from a public library, co-working space, coffee shop, or anywhere else with public wi-fi, depending on the devices available and the individual company policy. Workers in telecommuting may still need to attend the workplace on occasions, such as for meetings or catch-up sessions. For this reason, telecommuting typically describes off-site work for people who live nearby.

### **Remote work = Flexible location (1)**

A remote work arrangement allows employees to perform their tasks beyond the traditional workplace environment too. The terms remote work and telecommuting are often used interchangeably, and there are no strict definitions separating the two concepts. However, remote work can differ from telecommuting in terms of whether physical attendance is ever required and whether employees need to live in close proximity to the workplace. Remote workers are not usually required to attend team-building sessions or office-based meetings, although they may participate through video conferencing





### **Part-time work**

Part-time work means you work a smaller number of hours per week (less than full-time). The number of days you work in a week and the number of hours you work in an average day are generally considered “part-time” if they are less than 30 hours. Part-time employees receive the same employment benefits as full-time employees, with benefits prorated based on hours worked. For employers, part-time positions can be useful, allowing them to employ people to carry out work that will not take up sufficient time to justify a full-time position. For employees, part-time work can often be desirable, allowing them to earn money alongside other responsibilities, such as studying or raising children.

### **Flexitime = flexible schedule = flexible job**

As a basic definition, flexitime – also known as flexitime – refers to flexible working arrangements where employees are given the freedom to select when their working day begins and ends, as long as they work their contracted number of hours. Most commonly, this means simply adjusting precisely when their daily working hours take place. This lets employees customise their own working schedules and is especially beneficial for companies whose team members have very different sets of personal commitments and responsibilities.

### **Job sharing**

Job sharing is another flexible work arrangement, where two people are employed on a part-time basis, combining to carry out the work that would otherwise be done by one person employed on a full-time basis-----for workers who need to juggle their professional lives with family obligations, are pursuing an education, or simply want to lighten their workload without having to quit a role entirely. It's great for retaining top talent who may otherwise resign because they aren't able to handle their full responsibilities at the moment. It's also worth it to consider job-sharing as your company scales. Certain roles may generate more work than one person can reasonably complete, but not enough to warrant hiring a second full-time role. By dividing those responsibilities among two people sharing the same position, each one will be able to focus on their individual tasks without feeling overwhelmed.

### **Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE)**

ROWE is a management strategy that favours performance over presence. Employees are evaluated by their quality of work and results instead of the number of hours worked or their attendance. The ROWE system prides itself on creating a culture of opportunity and shifts the focus to employee autonomy and creating an accountability-first mindset.



### **Smart working**

The term "smart working" is essentially used in Italy, both in English and translated into Italian (which is found above all in the regulatory field). These two words indicate a precise work model based on three essential elements: technology, work flexibility (of time and place) and equal economic treatment with permanent workers on site. Smart working is distinguished from flexible working and remote working and is perhaps closer to hybrid working but its meaning still remains broad and complex as its objectives must also be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound

### **Compressed workweek**

A condensed workweek, also known as a compressed workweek, is an arrangement where the standard full-time working hours are still worked, but they are condensed down into fewer days than normal. Most often, this will result in a four-day working week rather than a five-day working week, although the exact arrangement may vary. employees working four, 10-hour days instead of the usual five. Compressed work-weeks are often beneficial for companies with heavy workloads throughout the year and is most popular in industries such as retail, utilities, mining, healthcare services, and manufacturing.

### **Shift Work**

Shift work describes an arrangement where the working day is divided into different shifts, which are then allocated to employees, meaning different groups of workers will be carrying out their duties at different times of the day. It is an especially common approach for employers who operate 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

### **Phased retirement**

Retirement can be a stressful transition for employees and the company as a whole. The employee has to reconfigure their daily schedule without the structure of the job, and your company loses a valuable resource with years of hard-wired knowledge, skills, and abilities. As a result, phased retirement plans are becoming increasingly popular. During phased retirement, employees slowly reduce their working hours until their actual retirement date. During their stay in the company before retirement they will support the new employees destined to take on their role, working together on the same activities and projects and transferring their precious know-how to them.

- (1) **Freelance work:** *Many people think that remote work and freelance work are the same things. But they're not. Remote work is a permanent job or contract. Freelance work is project-based and ends when the project is completed.*



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# **DESK AND ON-FIELD RESEARCH NATIONAL REPORTS**

***COMPLETE VERSIONS***



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# **NATIONAL REPORT**

## **AGFE - FRANCE**



## I/ Desk research

This national desk research focuses on remote work in France, examining the legal and regulatory framework in both the public and private sectors (A). Additionally, we will analyse the current situation and trends related to the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals and their partnerships with public and private entities aimed at maintaining a skilled and trained workforce (B). Finally, we will explore the existing policies and practices surrounding flexible work in public and private organizations, highlighting their respective advantages and disadvantages (C).

### **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors**

- a) In France, in the private sector, the practice of remote work is governed by regulatory and contractual measures. The current legal framework for remote work consists of both regulatory provisions and agreements. A national inter-professional agreement (ANI) was signed on July 19, 2005, well before the Covid-19 pandemic. In 2012, the law introduced provisions on remote work into the Labour Code, partially incorporating the initial agreements and setting forth employers' obligations and the employment conditions for teleworkers.
- Ordinance No. 2017-1387 of September 22, 2017, concerning predictability and security in labour relations, and the ratification law of March 2018, have redefined the legal framework of remote work and its implementation methods.
- The current legal provisions regarding remote work are found in Articles L.1222-9 to L.1222-11 of the Labour Code and are complemented by the contractual provisions of the new ANI "for a successful implementation of remote work," signed in November 2020. Extended by decree in April 2021, this agreement became mandatory in the commercial sector.  
**The legal definition of remote work:** It is a specific mode of work organization defined by the Labour Code. Remote work refers to "any form of work organization in which an employee performs tasks, which could also be done on the employer's premises, voluntarily outside those premises using information and communication technologies." Any employee who voluntarily carries out remote work, either from the beginning of their employment or at a later stage, is considered a remote worker.

The current legal definition covers three forms of remote work:

1. Regular remote work,
2. Occasional remote work,
3. Remote work in exceptional circumstances or force majeure: in this case, remote work may be imposed by the employer due to the circumstances (Article L.1222-11).



Remote work must involve tasks that could have been performed on the company's offices. Employees whose nature of work requires non-sedentary presence in the company's premises are not considered remote workers; they are known as "nomadic" or "distance" workers. This remote work can be carried out in a location different from the company's premises, typically at the employee's home, but it may also occur at third-party locations with the employer's consent.

- b) In the public sector : the implementation procedures for remote work across the civil service are defined by Article L430-1 of the General Code of Civil Service (which incorporates the provisions initially outlined in Article 133 of Law No. 2012-347 of March 12, 2012), the Decree No. 2016-151 of February 11, 2016 (which has been amended by Decree No. 2019-637 of June 25, 2019, Decree No. 2020-524 of May 5, 2020, and Decree No. 2021-1725 of December 21, 2021), and the agreement of July 13, 2021, concerning the implementation of remote work in the civil service.

The agreement of July 13, 2021 outlines specific criteria that differentiate remote work from other forms of working remotely:

- The employee engaged in remote work has received authorization to perform some of their work at one or more remote locations, which they could have otherwise done on-site.
- This arrangement involves alternating between a minimum amount of time spent working on-site and a portion of their work conducted remotely.
- The use of information and communication technologies is an integral part of this remote work arrangement.

## **B - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees.**

The role of vocational training is crucial in integrating remote work as a new form of employment, it aims to develop workers' skills and knowledge to meet the evolving needs of the job market.

In France, since the 1980s, the State has initiated a decentralisation operation of responsibilities that strengthens the role of local authorities. The municipality, department, and region participate in the functioning of the public education service. The region adopts the regional plan for the anticipated provision of education and training in middle schools, high schools, and establishments for special education. In conjunction with the central power, it defines and implements the regional public service for lifelong career guidance. It organizes the regional public service for lifelong career guidance, ensuring, in particular, the networking of all services, structures, and programmes that contribute within its territory to the implementation of this public service.

The region is responsible for the regional policy on vocational training for young people and adults seeking employment or a new career path. Additionally, it develops the regional contract for the development of vocational training and career guidance.



In response to the evolving job market and the need to address unemployment, investing in workforce training and skills development becomes essential for achieving sustainable and inclusive growth. The **Skills Investment Plan** reflects the government's commitment to expand training opportunities for those facing employment challenges and to explore innovative approaches to education.

Since the Covid-19 crisis, which emphasized the urgency of digitalization and hybridization in education, a comprehensive transformation and digitalization plan with a budget of 300 million euros was launched as part of the **France Reliance Plan**. The goal is to drive education into a new era of transformation. Led by the High Commissioner for Skills, the Transformation and Digitalization Plan for Education demonstrates the government's determination to integrate digital, immersive, and cognitive science advancements into the learning process.

This initiative is based on a well-structured action plan, informed by extensive consultations with stakeholders, experimentation, and working groups, and is further supported by two surveys conducted among training organizations and CFA (Apprenticeship Training Centres) to assess their tools and requirements for accelerating the digitalization and hybridization of education

A comprehensive approach based on consultation, active involvement of stakeholders, and a "test & learn" strategy is employed. The consultation process aims to identify key strategies for the transformation plan while establishing a reliable and effective methodology.

- This includes conducting bilateral meetings with approximately fifty stakeholders from both public and private sectors between late 2020 and early 2021.
- Organizing workshops to explore specific themes during the spring and summer of 2021.
- Additionally, a consultation cycle facilitated by the FFFOD (French Forum for Open Training) in May-June 2022, with support from the Ministry of Labour, Employment, and Inclusion, is focused on crafting a "Framework for Supporting Training Organizations and Apprenticeship Training Centres in Hybridization of Education."

This framework is collaboratively shared among various stakeholders within the education ecosystem.

## **C - The existing policies/ practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with the respective advantages and disadvantages**

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a spectacular rise in remote work in France, disrupting traditional modes of work organization for both public and private entities. The CNIL (National Commission on Informatics and Liberty) reminds about the rules to be followed and provides advice for employers and employees.

If the conditions for implementing remote work have gradually become more flexible over the years its implementation requires an agreement with the employer, formalized through collective or individual agreements, or even through a charter (Article L. 1222-9 of the Labor Code). However, in certain exceptional cases, such as during the COVID-19 pandemic, an agreement was not necessary, and remote work could be imposed on employees by the employer.



Certain implementation modalities are legally regulated:

- The employer may monitor the employees' activities if it does not go upon their rights and freedoms and adheres to specific rules. As remote work is merely a method of organizing work, the employer retains the authority, just as when work is performed on-site, to supervise and control the tasks assigned to their employees.

Nevertheless, the courts have consistently emphasized that this authority must not be exercised excessively. Article L. 1121-1 of the Labour Code stipulates that "No one may go upon the rights and individual and collective liberties of persons with unjustified restrictions, which are not proportionate to the intended purpose."

- It is forbidden to use continuous surveillance tools: like any processing of personal data, a system for monitoring working hours or activities, whether remote or on-site, must, in particular:
  - Have a clearly defined objective and not be used for other purposes.
  - Be proportionate and appropriate to that objective.
  - Require prior information to the individuals concerned.
- The regulation on personal data protection requires that the level of security and confidentiality of processed personal data remains the same, regardless of the equipment used. The employer remains responsible for the security of personal data within the company, even when stored on devices over which the employer has no physical or legal control, but has authorized their use to access the company's IT resources. The adoption of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) is a decision that should be made after weighing the advantages and disadvantages presented by this practice, which blurs the boundary between personal and professional life.
- Activating cameras during a video conference can enhance communication flow and contribute to the meeting's conviviality. However, it involves the processing of personal data under the GDPR, which may lead to the disclosure of intimate information.  
When possible, the use of video conferencing from employees' homes should not lead to the revelation of more personal information than during a meeting at their workplace. Therefore, the CNIL encourages employers to prioritize video conferencing solutions that allow users to blur the background, enabling participants to avoid displaying images of their homes (which may reveal private information) or any third parties passing through the camera's field of vision." However, in specific cases (such as an HR interview, a meeting with external clients, or the introduction of new team members, etc.), the employer may require the activation of the camera. When feasible, it is preferable to have informed the employee(s) in advance, allowing them to make necessary arrangements (such as choosing an appropriate room, etc.).

*The reference texts are as follows:*

- *Articles L. 1222-9 and subsequent articles of the Labour Code (articles related to remote work).*
- *Law No. 2012-347 of March 12, 2012, concerning access to permanent employment and improvement of employment conditions for contractual employees in the public service, specifically Article 133.*
- *Decree No. 2016-151 of February 11, 2016, regarding the conditions and procedures for implementing remote work in the public service and judiciary.*
- *Ordinance No. 2017-1387 of September 22, 2017, concerning predictability and security of employment relationships.*





## II/ On field research

"Hybrid Work Environment Experience" questionnaire : in France, six participants from various sectors, including public administration, micro-enterprises, and third-sector entities participated to the survey. These participants hold diverse roles, ranging from intermediate and senior management to entrepreneurs, independent consultants, and executive leaders.

Their insights shape recommendations that redefine the roles of Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals and adapt legal frameworks to align with emerging work practices. Thank you for contributing your experiences to this transformative initiative.

### I/ Understanding different regulatory tools: State Laws, Local Rules, and Internal Regulations

In the course of this study, respondents reported experiencing hybrid work environments across diverse professional contexts. Participants indicated encountering hybrid setups within the public administration, micro-enterprises with fewer than ten employees as well as within the purview of third-sector entities, such as cooperatives, associations, and foundations.

- Most participants – 5 out of 6 – declared experiencing continuously the hybrid experience. In the context of flexible work adoption in France, the basis of legislation varies from one answer to another :
  - National law: 2 respondents mentioned this.
  - Regional/local law: 1 respondent indicated this.
  - Formal internal agreements: 2 respondents cited these agreements.
  - Informal internal agreements: 1 respondent pointed out the influence of such agreements.
  - No regulations: In one instance, a decision made by management without specific regulations was mentioned.
    - ☒ The formal internal agreements supporting flexible work arrangements in France include local telecommuting agreements and company-level agreements integrated into the Internal Regulations.
    - ☒ The informal internal agreements supporting flexible work in this context involve personalized daily organization for a specific group of employees and a temporary hybrid work option resulting from Covid-19 related travel restrictions.
- The adoption of flexible forms of work was experienced differently among the respondents:
  - 5 respondents indicated that the introduction of flexible work arrangements took place during the Covid-19 pandemic.
  - 1 respondent mentioned that flexible work arrangements were already present in their working context before the pandemic.
- the flexible working arrangements that have been adopted in your work environment to create a "hybrid" setup:
  - "Video conference meetings, communication via email and phone, webinars."
  - "Case studies or study case-by-case."
  - "Permanent telecommuting/Video conferencing."
  - "Based on availability."
  - "Regular online team meetings, in particular."



These responses indicate that the hybrid work environment involves a mix of video conference meetings, communication through various digital channels, permanent telecommuting with video conferencing, case-by-case considerations, and regular online team meetings.

## II/ Details of training: Sources, Contents, and Methods.

Responses regarding training opportunities in the hybrid work setting reveal a mix of experiences, with a majority of five participants indicating no exposure to such training, while one respondent affirmed receiving training in adapting to this new work environment." Among those who received training in the hybrid work environment, two individuals reported that the training was facilitated using internal resources and solutions.

This suggests that the organization developed and delivered the training materials, possibly drawing on its own expertise and knowledge to provide guidance on navigating the intricacies of hybrid work. We can note that training session was occasionally proposed for one respondent and more systematically for the other one. One answered that it was intense sessions when it is more light for the other one, involving direct instructions and case studies.

All respondents who received training on adapting to the hybrid work environment provided a consistent rating of 3 on the evaluation scale. This indicates a neutral stance in their assessment of the training results, suggesting that the effectiveness and impact of the training were perceived as moderate by all participants.

- The training content for adapting to the hybrid work environment was divided into several categories. The respondents' feedback indicated the following distribution:

### 1. Organizational Content:

- One respondent allocated 10% of the training content to functional and logistical profiles required by the hybrid work environment.
- Another respondent allocated a larger portion, 40%, to this aspect.

### 2. Relational Content:

- Both respondents allocated 10% of the training content to addressing interaction dynamics between 'bosses' and collaborators, as well as among collaborators themselves.

### 3. Technical Content:

- One respondent attributed 10% of the training content to teaching about the usage of digital tools.
- The second respondent allocated a more substantial portion, 30%, to this category.

### 4. Other Content:

- The final respondent assigned 20% of the training content to a category labeled as 'Other,' which suggests that this respondent considered additional or unique content relevant to adapting to the hybrid work environment.



In summary, the distribution of training content percentages varied among the respondents. The categories of organizational content, relational content, and technical content received differing emphasis. Additionally, one respondent included a separate category for other content, indicating individualized aspects considered important for training in the context of hybrid work adaptation.

For most respondents of the survey, the training content will be strengthened at least a little bit.

### III/ Personal reflections: assessing individual experiences.

- The main negative elements of the experience in a hybrid work environment based on the provided responses are as follow :
  1. Lack of direct communication and real-time exchange tools.
  2. Fragmentation of teams and professional distancing among colleagues.
  3. Lack of sharing with the team.
  4. Isolation and difficulty separating work and personal life.
  5. The human factor in general – meaning that being away from work and from management supervision can generate a lack of motivation.

In summary, the negative aspects of the hybrid work experience include challenges with communication, team cohesion, work-life balance, and a concern for the human aspect, although one respondent did not report any negative experiences.

- The main positive elements of the experience in a hybrid work environment based on the provided responses:
  1. Flexibility and improved productivity in administrative tasks.
  2. Work flexibility and the development of employee initiative.
  3. Personal and professional organisation.
  4. Time saved on commuting in the mornings and evenings.
  5. Reduced stress and time wasted in transportation.
  6. Enhanced adaptability and a less stressful combination of work and family life for some individuals.
  7. Skilled employees were recruited despite geographic distance, allowing them to be physically present at the workplace only twice a week.

In summary, the positive aspects of the hybrid work experience include increased flexibility, productivity improvements, enhanced work-life balance, and the ability to attract skilled talent regardless of geographical distance.

Summary of the recommendations for effective performance in a hybrid working environment, based on the provided responses:



1. The organization should have reliable and functional remote communication tools.
2. Clear tasks should be communicated through shared schedules for better tracking.
3. Social connections should be maintained through regular scheduled interactions.
4. Establish clear guidelines and rules of engagement.
5. Embrace work flexibility while maintaining structure.
6. Implement mandatory weekly in-person attendance days.
7. Ensure a rigorous CRM update, daily phone calls with colleagues, and clear qualitative and quantitative objectives.
8. Organize and provide a framework for telecommuting.
9. Incorporate intermittent breaks.
10. Increase video interactions among colleagues to maintain a human dimension, empathy, and motivation.
11. Recommend a mix of in-person and remote work rather than 100% hybrid.
12. Arrange regular online meetings to foster connection.
13. Despite distance, employees should have opportunities to meet online or in person to establish relationships that enhance communication.
14. In a hybrid or fully remote setting, employees' organizational abilities and their alignment with central communication are vital for team cohesion. This should be emphasized during recruitment or when integrating new team members.

In summary, the recommendations include optimizing communication tools, establishing clear guidelines, balancing flexibility with structure, prioritizing social connections, and fostering effective organizational skills for a successful hybrid work environment.

### III/ Conclusion

In conclusion, the exploration of hybrid work experiences within the context of France reveals a diverse range of insights and challenges. The adoption of flexible work arrangements, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic, has brought both positive and negative elements to the forefront. Flexibility and improved work-life balance stand out as clear advantages, with productivity gains reported in administrative tasks. However, challenges such as reduced direct communication, potential team fragmentation, and difficulty separating personal and professional lives have also been noted.

The distribution of training content reflects a focus on organizational, relational, and technical aspects, each varying in emphasis. While training has been offered, the moderate rating of 3 in terms of effectiveness suggests room for improvement. A notable finding is the importance of maintaining social connections, fostering team cohesion, and facilitating clear communication to counteract potential feelings of isolation.

Recommendations for effective performance in a hybrid environment include the need for robust remote communication tools, well-defined tasks communicated through shared schedules, and regular interactions to sustain social ties. The legal framework in France emphasizes the significance of clear agreements and the protection of employees' rights in hybrid work settings. Ultimately, a successful hybrid work environment hinges on a careful balance of flexibility, communication, and continuous adaptation to address the unique challenges and opportunities that arise.



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# **NATIONAL REPORT**

## **BDF - THE NETHERLANDS**



## I/ Desk research

Flexible and remote working has transformed the landscape of traditional employment, providing employees with the freedom to balance their personal and professional lives while maintaining productivity. In the context of the Netherlands, this practice has gained considerable traction due to its progressive approach to work-life balance.

Flexible working involves adjusting the traditional 9-to-5 work hours to accommodate employees' needs and preferences. This can include options like flexitime, compressed workweeks, and job sharing. Remote working, on the other hand, allows employees to carry out their tasks from locations outside the office, often from their homes or other remote setups.

Within this overview, it's important to highlight the benefits and challenges associated with flexible and remote working. Employees appreciate the improved work-life balance, reduced commute time, and increased autonomy over their schedules. Employers can benefit from increased employee satisfaction, lower overhead costs, and the potential to tap into a wider talent pool. However, challenges like maintaining team cohesion, ensuring data security, and monitoring employee performance must also be addressed.

Some statistics on hybrid working in the Netherlands:

1. The average number of hours worked from home are expected to increase from 3.8 hours per week before the COVID-19 crisis to 8 hours per week after<sup>1</sup>. The pandemic situation intensified the shift towards more working from home, and at its peak, around 50% of the Dutch working population was working from home, according to CBS (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek).
2. Flexibility in Work Hours: The Netherlands has a long-standing tradition of part-time work. Since at least from 2017 onwards, CBS reported that nearly half of the working population (between 47 and 49%) was employed part-time<sup>2</sup>, making the transition to a flexible hybrid model smoother than in countries with a more rigid work culture.
3. Employee Preference: After COVID employees would like to work on average 9 hours per week at home, which is just 1 hour more than they expected to work from home<sup>3</sup>. In 2021 88% of the employees indicated that they would like to keep working from home to some degree, and now, in 2023 this number remained the same, 85%. Only 15% of the employees want to go to the office all the time<sup>4</sup>.

This move towards a hybrid working model is not just about adapting to a post-pandemic world. It reflects a deeper shift in the Dutch work ethos, prioritizing efficiency, flexibility, and a balanced lifestyle. Organizations and employees alike are recognizing the benefits of this approach, which include reduced commuting times, decreased office overheads, and a better work-life balance.



In conclusion, hybrid working is more than just a fleeting trend in the Netherlands—it's a transformative approach that's reshaping the very fabric of its work culture.

## **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors.**

In principal, it is the employer which decides to allow or not working from home, there is no specific law for that. You can request to work from home, but it is the employer that decides (no legal right). In 2022 a law has been agreed by the Tweede Kamer, which states that an employer should accept a request for working from home, in principal. However, it has not been approved yet by the Eerste Kamer.

Employees are also divided about a law that is stating the right to work from home. 41% of the respondents in this research<sup>5</sup> agrees that it should become easier to facilitate working from home for employees, but 42% does not agree with that. They believe that this should be arranged by employers and employees together, not by the government. The entrepreneurs/business owners in the research are fully against a law like this, 85%.

In the Netherlands, the legal framework governing flexible and remote work is robust and comprehensive. This framework prioritizes the rights of employees while also considering the needs of employers and the overall business environment. Key laws and regulations that are pertinent to this framework include:

### **Working Hours Act (Arbeidstijdenwet)**

The Working Hours Act establishes rules regarding the maximum length of the workweek, rest breaks, and daily rest periods. It also includes provisions for night work and overtime. This act ensures that employees are not overworked and have time to rest and recharge, whether they are working in the office or remotely<sup>6</sup>.

### **Working Conditions Act (Arbeidsomstandighedenwet)**

The Working Conditions Act focuses on creating a safe and healthy work environment, regardless of where work is performed. It mandates that employers ensure their employees have the necessary tools, training, and support to carry out their tasks safely. This includes providing ergonomic equipment for remote work setups to prevent health issues caused by prolonged sitting or poor posture.

### **Collective Labor Agreements (Collectieve Arbeidsovereenkomst or CAO)**

Collective Labour Agreements are industry-specific agreements negotiated between employers and trade unions. These agreements often address flexible work arrangements, working hours, and compensation. They play a crucial role in shaping the terms and conditions of employment in various sectors.

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<sup>5</sup>

<sup>6</sup>





### **Right to Request Flexible Working Hours**

The Netherlands also grants employees the legal right to request flexible working hours, regardless of their reason. While employers have the right to decline these requests based on valid business reasons, this legislation demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting work-life balance and employee autonomy.

Studying these laws in depth provides a solid foundation for understanding the legal parameters that shape flexible and remote working arrangements in the Netherlands. It also highlights the country's commitment to fostering a healthy work environment that prioritizes employee well-being and rights.

In conclusion, by beginning with an overview of flexible and remote working and delving into the Netherlands' legal framework, researchers gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic. This understanding paves the way for exploring regulations, safety considerations, and implications for both employees and employers. Furthermore, it underscores the Netherlands' progressive approach to adapting to the evolving landscape of work in the digital age.

### **Understand Regulations for Remote Work**

Remote work has become a prominent aspect of modern work dynamics, and the legal framework in the Netherlands recognizes the importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of remote workers. Here are the key aspects to consider:

#### **Ergonomic Requirements**

The Working Conditions Act extends to remote work, mandating that employers provide ergonomic equipment and resources to remote employees. This includes ergonomic chairs, proper lighting, and equipment that supports healthy posture. By adhering to these regulations, employers ensure that remote workers are protected from musculoskeletal issues and other health concerns associated with prolonged sitting and inadequate work setups.

#### **Safety Considerations**

Employers are responsible for maintaining a safe remote work environment, just as they would in a traditional office setting. This involves conducting risk assessments of remote workspaces, identifying potential hazards, and taking appropriate measures to mitigate them. Adequate training on emergency protocols, data security, and proper use of equipment is essential to ensure the well-being of remote employees.



## **B - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees.**

Vocational Education and Training (VET, often referred to as MBO in the Netherlands, which stands for "Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs") plays a pivotal role in the Dutch labour market and educational system. With the rise of hybrid working, where employees operate both on-site and remotely, vocational education can play a crucial role in preparing students for this new work environment.

The role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals in the Netherlands, particularly within the context of partnerships and collaborations with public and private entities, is evolving.

Current situation:

1. **Integral Role of VET Professionals:** VET professionals in the Netherlands play a central role in connecting theoretical knowledge with practical skills, ensuring that students are well-equipped to enter the job market upon graduation.
2. **Public-Private Partnerships:** The Dutch VET system is characterized by strong public-private partnerships. Sectors and companies are involved in defining qualifications and standards for training, ensuring that curricula stay relevant to the evolving needs of the job market.
3. **Work-based Learning:** A hallmark of Dutch VET is the dual system, which combines classroom instruction with on-the-job training. Most VET students in the Netherlands undertake internships or apprenticeships, facilitated by collaborations between educational institutions and employers.

Trends:

1. **Increasing emphasis on Lifelong Learning:** There's a growing recognition that learning doesn't stop after formal education. This has led to an increasing role for VET professionals in offering post-initial training and courses for adults, ensuring that the workforce remains up-to-date with the latest skills and knowledge.
2. **Digitalization:** With the increasing role of technology in the workplace, VET institutions are placing more emphasis on digital skills. This includes not only technical know-how but also the soft skills required to navigate a digital workplace effectively.
3. **Customized Learning Pathways:** Recognizing that learners have diverse needs, there's a move towards offering more customized learning pathways. This involves close collaboration between VET professionals and industry stakeholders to ensure that training is tailored to the needs of individual sectors or even specific companies.



4. **Internationalization:** Given the globalized nature of the job market, there's a trend towards internationalizing VET curricula. This includes offering students opportunities for international internships and exchanges and ensuring that qualifications are recognized beyond the Netherlands.
5. **Collaborative Platforms:** Various platforms and networks have been set up to facilitate collaboration between VET institutions and industry. These platforms play a pivotal role in knowledge exchange, best practice sharing, and ensuring alignment between education and industry needs.
6. **Green and Sustainable Training:** As sustainability becomes a key concern across industries, there's a growing emphasis on training students in green skills. This involves preparing them for jobs in the green economy and ensuring that they're aware of sustainable practices regardless of their field.

In conclusion, VET professionals in the Netherlands are at the forefront of bridging the gap between education and the job market. Their role, particularly in collaboration with public and private sector entities, is vital in ensuring a skilled, knowledgeable, and adaptive workforce. Given the rapid pace of change in the job market, these collaborations are only expected to become more integral in the future.

## C - The existing policies/ practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with the respective advantages and disadvantages

Flexible work has gained significant traction in the Netherlands, both in the public and private sectors. The adoption of flexible work policies has been influenced by cultural factors, technological advancements, and legal provisions. Here's an overview of some of the existing policies and practices for flexible work in the Netherlands.

### 1. Flexible Working Act (Wet flexibel werken):

- **Public & Private Entities:** Both sectors are influenced by the Flexible Working Act introduced in 2016. This act allows employees (after a minimum period of employment) to request changes to their work hours, location, and times.
- **Advantages:** Empowers employees to maintain a work-life balance and can lead to increased productivity and job satisfaction.
- **Disadvantages:** Can pose logistical challenges for employers, especially for those who may not have the infrastructure in place for remote work.

### 2. Part-time Work:

- **Public & Private Entities:** The Netherlands is known for its high percentage of part-time workers. Both sectors facilitate part-time work options.
- **Advantages:** Increases employee satisfaction, allows for greater flexibility, and attracts talent who might not be available for full-time positions.
- **Disadvantages:** Coordination between part-time employees can be challenging, and some roles might not be suited for part-time hours.



### **3. Remote Work & Digital Tools:**

- Public & Private Entities: With technological advancements, there's a trend toward facilitating remote work using digital tools.
- Advantages: Offers flexibility to employees, reduces commuting, and can lead to a wider talent pool for employers.
- Disadvantages: Potential for feelings of isolation among employees, challenges in team coordination, and potential cybersecurity risks.

### **4. Flexible Start and Finish Times:**

- Public & Private Entities: Instead of the traditional 9-to-5, many organizations allow for variable starting and finishing times.
- Advantages: Reduces rush-hour congestion and allows employees to adapt work hours to personal circumstances.
- Disadvantages: Might lead to potential overlaps or gaps in employee availability.

#### **Additional Points:**

**Culture:** The Dutch working culture values work-life balance, which naturally inclines businesses and public entities to consider flexible working arrangements.

**Infrastructure:** The Netherlands' robust digital infrastructure supports the shift toward more flexible and remote work.

**COVID-19 Impact:** The pandemic accelerated the adoption of flexible and remote work practices, pushing organizations to adapt quickly.

In conclusion, while flexible working policies in the Netherlands provide numerous advantages in terms of employee well-being, engagement, and even productivity, they do pose challenges that organizations, both public and private, must navigate. Effective communication, robust infrastructure, and clear policies are essential for reaping the benefits while minimizing the drawbacks.

To get insight into the implementation and impact of flexible work arrangements in different contexts, we have asked input from experts by means of a survey. Below you will find the results of this survey.

#### *General*

In the research in the Netherlands 5 participants have completed the survey. Three of them worked for an SME, 1 in a third sector body and 1 in a micro-enterprise. Two respondents held support roles, 1 was in middle management, 1 was an individual contributor without leadership roles and 1 with leadership roles.

#### *Experience with hybrid environment*

Four out of the five respondents indicated that they have experienced a hybrid environment continuously, and only one of them intermittently.



For three of the respondents the flexible work was introduced on the occasion of COVID-19, for 1 respondent flexible work was already present and for the last one flexible work was already somewhat present, but reinforced after COVID-19.

Regarding the hybrid workplace, three respondents believe that it will remain to the same extent in the future. One respondent believed that they will return to only face-to-face working methods and 1 respondent was unsure.

We have also asked about the main positive and main negative elements of the experience in a hybrid environment. You can find them in table below.

Main negative elements	Main positive elements
Less informal interaction between coworkers	For some people less time to spend on travelling
Don't see your colleagues, it's difficult to track what someone is doing	Less time to travel to work
No clear control of working hours. The call system did not work efficiently.	Allowed workers to work from home for small home errands.
When teams were changed, it was difficult to get to know the new team and colleagues on a more personal basis. Which makes it also more difficult to build a team feeling.	The freedom of organizing and dividing your own time and the trust in you finishing your own tasks.
Less bonding between colleagues	Flexible work hours

### *Legislation and policies*

Then the respondents have been asked on the basis of what type of legislation the forms of flexible work have been adopted in their working context (multiple options possible). Below you can find an overview of the results.

On the basis of what type of legislation have forms of flexible work been adopted in your working context? (multiple options)

5 antwoorden





As can be seen in the figure, flexible work has never been adopted based on regional/local law or by formal internal agreements according to the participants. It has been either adopted by national law, or informal internal agreement, or no regulations at all.

Examples of informal internal agreements that have been made as basis for flexible working:

- Working from home partially, no formal rules on how many days at home/in the office
- Flexible start- and finish times, as long as tasks are being completed and you participate in the start of the day at 9 AM.
- Regular online coffee breaks
- Office visits were allowed but not obligatory.

60% of the respondents have indicated that flexible forms of work were introduced on the occasion of COVID-19, and 40% indicated that it was already present (20% of it indicated 'somewhat' present).

We have also asked the experts about which flexible working arrangements have been adopted in their work environment to make it hybrid:

- Allowed/encouraged to work partially from home (if the nature of the job allows it)
- Budget for workplace at home
- Office closes after 6 PM (so everyone who needs to work after 6 PM has to work from home)
- Every day an online start-of-the-day
- Weekly online meetings to discuss work-related matters
- Regular online coffee breaks for informal chats

### *Trainings regarding hybrid working environments*

The majority of the experts (80%) indicated that there has been offered training(s) to learn about how to work in the hybrid work environment. In the majority of the cases this training had been made with internal solutions, in 1 case it was by external specialized bodies.

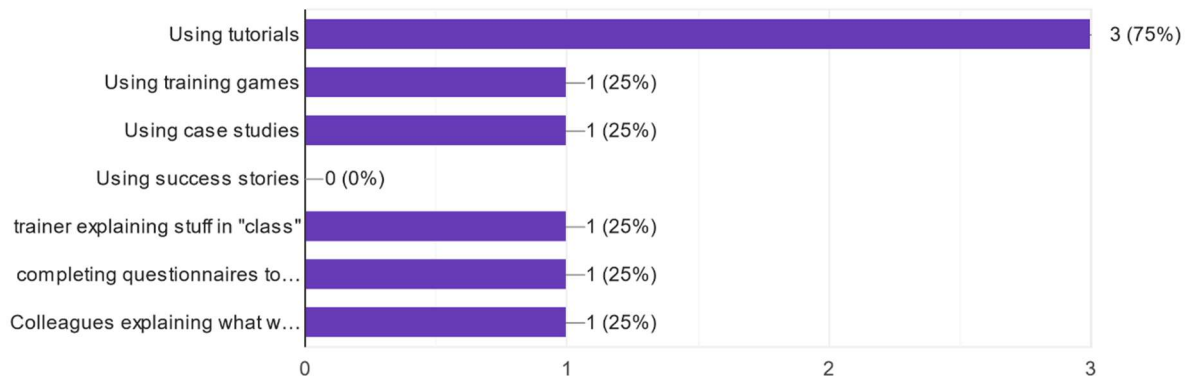
In all cases the training was occasional, so no systematic trainings have been offered. Half of the trainings were held in a few very intense sessions and half of them indicated that the training has been held in more numerous but lighter sessions.

In the following table you can find more information about the training materials used:



If training has been offered, please give some extra information:

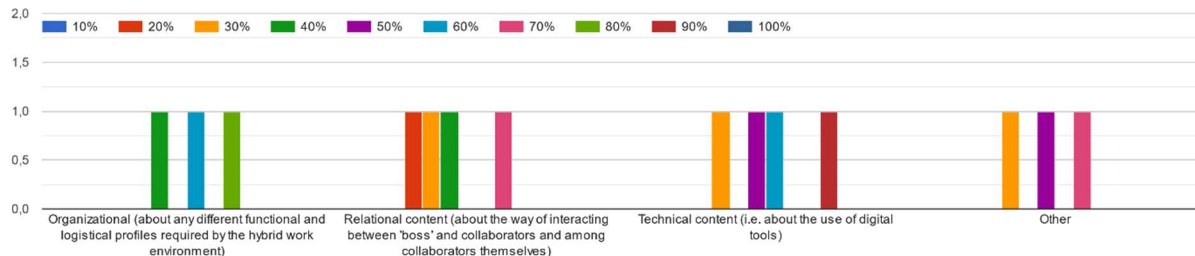
4 antwoorden



In general participants have experienced the training results as positive: in 75% they rated it a 4 (out of 5 where 5 is very positive) and in 25% a 5 (out of 5).

In the next figure you will find the distribution of content in percentages. On average the organizational content and technical content have been discussed more than the relational content.

If training has been offered, please indicate the distribution of content in percentages:



### *Future of hybrid workplace*

In the last part of the survey we have asked the experts about the future of the hybrid workplace. 60% of the experts indicate that the hybrid workplace will stay in the future, in the same extent as now. One person indicated that they will return to only face-to-face working methods and one person indicated that he/she does not know.

### ***Recommendations for the most effective performance in a hybrid working environment***

And then lastly, we have asked each respondent for three recommendations for the most effective performance of a 'hybrid' working environment concerning their organization, also in comparison with colleagues/friends working in other context. We have also asked if they could indicate the category of human resources they are more focused on, if deemed useful.





The following recommendations were given:

- |   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. clear communication</li><li>2. involve all 'levels' of the hierarchy, if that's applicable (not only decide top-down)</li><li>3. make sure that everyone has the right hardware for hybrid working</li></ol>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. make sure to keep in touch with your team by for example daily online meetings to start the day.</li><li>2. arrange right equipment for a home office</li><li>3. stay in contact with your employees, in the sense that also issues/problems with hybrid working come to your ear.</li></ol>   |
| <p>In my company we have quite a hierarchical company, in which the managers prefer to have control of what their staff is doing. The "hybrid" working lacks the control and has in some cases proven to result in personal not working at all. Comparing this to others, it quite depends on the person, but I believe this is not always a good working environment for those who have the ability to take responsibility. While working together in the office has as a benefit that people see what you are doing, working from home gives people with some tasks more time to focus without being "disturbed" by colleagues.</p>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Have an online working environment, with the camera on, so that you see if somebody is working.</li><li>2. As some parts of the job are done with a lot of phone calls. If the calling system from home would be more efficient, those working from home would more likely be calling more.</li><li>3. A more clear path on working from home would be more beneficiary, making those who can take responsibility more able to enjoy their work.</li></ol>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Communicate clearly. Let the employees know what is expected from them and what they can expect from the organization. And ensure that everyone knows what the agreements among the team are.</li><li>2. Involve all team members. When working from home, some people tend to turn to the background. Make agreements on everyone turning their cameras on, and also talk on a regular basis one to one with employees. Moreover, I found the regular coffee breaks very useful to have informal chats with the colleagues, especially when you are in a new team. I would recommend to do this in rather small groups then with the entire team, to prevent the same people always talking.</li><li>3. Make sure the team manager/ boss is both approachable and accessible. It is important for teams to know they can reach their manager without any hesitation, whether that is in the office or online.</li></ol> |





### III/ Conclusion

The transformation of the work landscape has been significantly influenced by the rise of flexible and remote working. In the Netherlands, this shift has been particularly pronounced due to the country's progressive approach towards work-life balance and an emphasis on employee autonomy.

Flexible working, characterized by adjustments in traditional work hours, and remote working, which allows employees to operate outside office confines, have offered myriad benefits. Employees have noted the improved work-life balance, autonomy, reduced commuting times, and the general flexibility that these models afford. Simultaneously, employers have benefited from reduced operational costs and improved employee satisfaction. However, challenges persist, especially in maintaining team cohesion, data security, and effective performance monitoring.

Recent statistics reveal the deep-rooted integration of hybrid working in the Dutch work culture. A notable surge in home working hours post-COVID-19, the Netherlands' tradition of part-time work, and the consistent desire among employees to retain a degree of remote working all testify to its significance.

The legal framework in the Netherlands has evolved to address this change. While there's no legal right for employees to work from home, recent legislative movements suggest a tilt towards recognizing remote work rights. Despite this, the sentiment remains divided, with a significant portion of respondents believing that such decisions should be mutually agreed upon by employers and employees, rather than mandated by law.

Central to the Dutch approach towards flexible and remote work are Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals. Their collaborations with public and private sector entities underscore the nation's commitment to aligning education with the evolving

demands of the job market. The emphasis on lifelong learning, digitalization, and customized learning pathways further accentuates the significance of VET professionals.

On-field research reveals that while the majority have experienced a continuous hybrid environment, the adoption of flexible work primarily accelerated due to the pandemic. Despite the challenges, including reduced informal interactions and challenges in team cohesion, the benefits like reduced commute and flexible hours seem to outweigh them.

Legislation and policies have played a pivotal role in shaping the flexible work landscape. The Flexible Working Act, emphasis on part-time work, introduction of digital tools, and flexible start and finish times have all contributed. Moreover, safety and ergonomic considerations for remote workers remain paramount.

In the face of evolving work dynamics, the Netherlands stands out as a progressive nation, adapting swiftly and efficiently to the demands of the modern age. The move towards a hybrid working model isn't merely a reaction to the pandemic; it represents a profound shift in the Dutch work ethos, emphasizing efficiency, flexibility, and a balanced lifestyle.



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# NATIONAL REPORT

## DANMAR - POLAND



## I/ Desk research

Since the appearance of the Internet several decades ago, the way we work, learn, play, spend leisure time, communicate, and gather information has changed significantly.

Remote work, also known as telecommuting or teleworking, has been growing in popularity worldwide, including in Poland. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, remote work was not as common in Poland as in some other countries, but it was still present in various industries. The pandemic, however, significantly accelerated the adoption of remote work due to lockdowns and social distancing measures.

### **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors.**

In Poland, the most important act regulating the rights and obligations of both employees and employers is the Labour Code which, despite all the changes that have taken place in Poland, has been modified to a greater or lesser extent, is still in force.

"Labour is under the protection of the Republic of Poland. The State shall exercise supervision over the conditions under which work is performed". - reads Article 24. of the Constitution of the Republic of Poland of 2 April 1997. Detailed rules applicable in the world of work, however, can be found in regulations, and above all in the Labour Code.

The Act of 18 July 2002 on the provision of electronic services (Journal of Laws No. 144, item 1204 as amended) defined the notion of electronic telecommunications and teleworkers. A teleworker is an employee who performs telework and communicates the results of the work to the employer by means of electronic communication.

On August 24, 2007, an amendment to the Labour Code was enacted, introducing detailed regulations for telecommuting. At that time, telework and teleworker were defined in detail. This was very important because previously a teleworker was considered a person who performs work outside the workplace, but is not a teleworker. According to the Code's definition, **telecommuting** is work performed regularly outside the workplace, using electronic communications. **A teleworker**, in contrast, is an employee who performs telework and communicates the results of the work to the employer via electronic communication means. The regulations also include guarantees to treat a teleworker like other employees - working in traditional forms of employment on the same or similar work - with regard to the establishment and termination of the employment relationship, terms, and conditions of employment, promotion, and access to training. The employee could not be discriminated against for taking up telecommuting as well as for refusing to do so.

Telework has not gained much popularity in the Polish labour market, most likely due to the low flexibility of telework and the need to establish its principles in the form of intra-company regulations. Remote work, outside of the telecommuting regime, should also be performed with the employee's



consent. Quite often, moreover, intra-company regulations provide for incidental remote work at the request of the employee, with the approval of the supervisor. To introduce such remote work, there was no need for regulations. Shortly after the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the Polish legislature decided to introduce regulations on remote work performed at the behest of the employer. This was aimed, first and foremost, at limiting as widely as possible the accumulation of workers in workplaces. As a result, where remote work is possible, it has made it easier for employers to comply with recommendations for organizing work during a pandemic, if only to ensure distance between employees. In many cases, the presence of the entire workforce in a small office space would make it essentially impossible to provide social distance. In 2020, when the coronavirus pandemic broke out, the possibility of remote work was introduced in the Law on Special Arrangements Related to the Prevention, Prevention, and Control of COVID-19. The Law of 2.03.2020. on special solutions related to the prevention, counteraction, and suppression of COVID-19, other infectious diseases, and emergencies caused by them (Journal of Laws, item 374, as amended), these rules were temporary and could only be applied during an epidemic emergency, an epidemic state declared due to COVID-19 and for three months after they were revoked. After the end of the epidemic, we did not return to stationary work as fully as before the pandemic, and remote work has entered the Polish labor market on a much wider scale.

As a result, the Polish government has decided to regulate remote work in a more comprehensive way than telework.

The Act of December 1, 2022, amending the Labour Code and certain other acts (Journal of Laws 2023, item 240) introduced remote work into the Labour Code while repealing the provisions on telework. The new regulations governing remote work came into force on April 7, 2023, when a new definition of remote work was introduced.

**Remote work** consists of performing work completely or partially at a location designated by the employee (including the employee's home address) and agreed upon with the employer in each case. The Labour Code provides for both total remote work and hybrid remote work (partly at home, partly at the company), according to the needs of the specific employee and employer. Remote work is divided into two parts. The first can be fully or partially performed at a location agreed upon between the employee and the employer. It can be laboriously referred to as permanent remote work. The second type is remote work at the request of the employee, or occasional remote.



## **B - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees.**

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a key component of lifelong learning, equipping young people with the competencies and useful experience required for particular professions.

The initial Vocational Education and Training (I-VET) usually takes place within the framework of a second-level secondary school, prior to students entering vocational activities. It takes place at the school and in a work environment, such as a training centre or company. Countries use different systems, depending on the national system and economic structure.

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) management system in Poland comprises three levels: national (relevant departments), regional (school curators, mainly as part of pedagogical supervision), and local (cities and county governments, which run the vast majority of schools). The Ministry of National Education conducts educational policy on vocational education in the educational system, with the support of other ministries responsible for specific professions. In turn, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education is responsible for policy on VET in higher education. The social partners also play an advisory role in VET.

In Poland, a worrying trend can be observed in the labour market: despite unemployment among young people, employers invariably indicate that they cannot find people with the qualifications they expect. Surveys of employers' needs clearly show that skilled manual workers are the most sought-after. The pioneer of dual education in Poland is craftsmanship. At the same time, companies such as Solaris, Volkswagen Poznań, and many others have also started practical vocational training at the workplace. Cooperation between employers and vocational schools most often takes place in an informal way and is definitely insufficient. In countries with a dual education system, the unemployment rate among young people is definitely the benefits of the dual education method that have been discussed for many years. To meet these expectations, the Polish Government in July 2023 adopted a draft amendment to the Law on Education, which provides for the formation of a national network of branch skill centres (**BCU**). This is a completely new project in the Polish education system linking schools, universities, leading bodies, and individual industries. - The combination of vocational schools, the bodies that run these schools, most often local governments, but not exclusively, as well as industries that are relevant and particularly important to particular regions and higher vocational-technical schools will create centres for the development of vocational education in Poland.



These are nationwide education, training, and examination centres available to students, undergraduates, doctoral students, industry workers, and other learners. BCUs are expected to conduct education and training activities. They will also integrate education with business and disseminate innovations and new technologies in a given industry. In addition, BCUs will conduct theoretical retraining courses for young workers, as well as other courses that enable them to obtain and supplement their knowledge, skills, and professional qualifications, and change their qualifications. Local governments, individuals, and legal entities (including professional organizations), as well as government departments (including agriculture, environment, internal affairs, and health, among others), will become the governing body of the BCU. In order to establish a BCU, it will become necessary to reach an agreement with an industry organization specific to the professional field. Work on the establishment of BCUs had already been underway since September 2022. For the first three years, the project is to be financed under the National Reconstruction Plan; by the end of 2024, 120 such centres are to be established.

BCUs are to prepare staff for entry into specific industries but in cooperation with their representatives. During education at the centres, it will be possible to upgrade and change knowledge and professional qualifications. They will make it easier for schools and universities to cooperate with employers. They will support career counselling for students and career activation of students, Ph.D. students, and graduates.

## **C - The existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with their respective advantages and disadvantages.**

Nowadays, so-called flexible forms of employment are gaining popularity. They can attract new employees to the employer offering them and help them maintain a work-life balance

In Poland, as in other countries, flexible forms of work are gaining popularity in both the public and private sectors.

Although the Labour Law does not use or define the concept of flexible working time in practice, the concept does appear. Flexible working time, or moving working hours, is introduced by Article 140 of the Labour Code. It reads that the working time schedule may provide for different starting times on days that, according to the schedule, are working days for employees. The working time schedule may provide for an interval in which the employee decides the time to start work on a day that, according to the schedule, is a working day for the employee.

The existing flexible working time in Poland is sometimes described alternatively as mobile working time. In practical terms, it makes it possible to adjust the schedule to the needs expressed by the employer as well as the employee. The key point is that each flexible working time rule of the Labour Code must be honoured.



Flexible working hours entail the employer setting the time slot, and the employee himself decides the time to start work, however, he must work a certain number of hours per day.

The time of leaving work will therefore depend on the time at which the employee arrived at the company.

The second way to implement flexible working hours is to set a weekly norm for employees to spend on their work duties. The most common is 40 hours. In this case, it is entirely up to the employee how he distributes his working time throughout the week - for example, one day he can work 10 hours, another, for example, 6.

The choice of flexible working hours allows a change in the organization and distribution of working hours. Usually, this is the consequence of shift work. Any entrepreneur who runs his own business can choose his own working time system. To a considerable extent, this decision is determined by the specifics of the company, as well as the tasks that one performs on the job.

### **Flexible working time - advantages and disadvantages**

Movable working hours allow you to more easily reconcile your professional and personal life. This includes combining work and parenting responsibilities. Working with a flexible schedule also makes it possible to gain work experience while attending college or to further improve your skills in intensive training and courses. Irregular working hours are perfect for people who need a lot of time for their hobbies, such as traveling.

Flexible working hours can increase the attractiveness of a recruitment offer. Such a system of employment is valued both by working parents and people who like individually tailored hours of professional activity. Irregular working hours are one of the more desirable benefits a company can offer

**The advantages of a flexible working time system** include savings related to overtime. It is also an asset for the company during recruitment processes. Many candidates are open to job offers from companies that use flexible working hours. Flexible hours will help employees reconcile work duties with training or postgraduate studies.

Flexible working hours also allow you to match the demand for employees' services with the current needs of the company.

### **Disadvantages of flexible working hours**

A disadvantage of flexible working time is the difficulty of reconciling employee shifts.

Such a solution can help entrepreneurs adjust the demand for work only to their own needs and thus reduce wages for the period when work is not provided. The employer may also encounter difficulties in organizing joint meetings as well as performing group tasks.





## II/On-field research

The survey was completed by 8 employees, most of whom work in a medium-small sized company (37.5%), 25% at the university, and the rest respectively represent public administration, schools, and micro-enterprise.

Most of the survey participants (37.5 %) have experienced the "hybrid" environment for 2 years, only one person for 3 years, and the rest (25%) 6 months and one person a year and one for 5 months respectively.

We asked respondents the question: "Did you experience continuously or intermittently the 'hybrid' environment?"

62.5% answered: continuously which means that the majority of respondents have experienced the hybrid work environment on a continuous basis and 37.5% intermittently.

Flexible work arrangements may be influenced by various types of legislation, regulations, and policies. In the context of flexible work adoption in Poland, the basis of legislation varies from one answer to another: 5 respondents mentioned National Law, 3 mentioned: no regulations: decisions taken by the bosses, and the rest of the respondents listed respectively: Regional/local law (1 person), Formal internal agreements (1 person), Informal internal agreements (1 person). The basis for flexible work in the case of an informal internal agreement was quoted: "setting a policy for shifting to the home office in times of covid-19"

To all respondents to the survey, the adoption of flexible work arrangements was introduced at Covid-19

62.5% of participants in the survey did not receive any training when it comes to working remotely, and if the training was introduced it was in the form of internal solutions introduced occasionally, and for 66.7% of respondents the training was in the form of a few intensive sessions, and for 33.3% of these sessions were more but very light.

As for the evaluation of the training and its results, 66.7% of respondents rated it 3 (on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very negative and 5 is very positive), and 33.3 % rated it 4.

According to the respondents, hybrid work will become permanent: 50% answered: yes, but to a lesser extent, 25% don't know.

At the very end, we surveyed what they thought were the positive and negative aspects of hybrid work.

On the positive side, hybrid work offers flexibility and work-life balance, as employees can create their own schedules and avoid commuting. Furthermore, many respondents pointed to reduced stress as the main benefit. Additionally, it allows for harnessing a diverse talent pool by overcoming geographical constraints, improving productivity, and reducing overhead costs for organizations. However, negative aspects must also be acknowledged. Hybrid work may lead to feelings of isolation and reduced team cohesion, as face-to-face interaction and spontaneous collaboration are limited.



Further, the blurring of boundaries between work and personal life can cause stress and hamper work-life balance.

In the end, we asked the respondents to indicate based on their experience recommendations for the most effective performance of a hybrid working environment. The following recommendations were given:

*Establish clear rules, goals, expectations, and communication, stick to a daily plan(to-do-list), better training, use better tools for communication, and set up a system of checking in for work-from-home days, the best would be a platform that can also be used for 'in-house' communication between co-workers/management*

*Have a list of tools/programs/websites that are useful to your co-workers (if it's divided into departments even better), collecting feedback from employees and assessing the effectiveness of the hybrid work model can help organizations continuously improve their approach and address any challenges that may arise.*

*Foster effective communication and collaboration.*

### III/ Conclusion

Hybrid work in Poland has witnessed significant advancements and shared challenges in recent years. As the digitisation of workplaces accelerates, it has roused the interest and intrigue of both employers and employees alike, leading to an exploration of new work paradigms. This summary seeks to provide an insightful overview of the hybrid work landscape in Poland, delving into its emerging trends, benefits, and obstacles encountered by businesses and individuals. By examining its impact on productivity, work-life balance, and employee satisfaction, this analysis aims to shed light on the potential of hybrid work as an innovative solution for the evolving needs of the Polish workforce. Hybrid work is gaining popularity in Poland, both in the public and private sectors. Companies are increasingly introducing flexible work models, allowing employees to combine remote and in-office work. Hybrid work brings both benefits, such as better work-life balance and greater flexibility, and challenges, such as social isolation, difficulties in communication, and monitoring remote work.

The coronavirus pandemic has greatly accelerated the adoption of hybrid work. In 2020, many companies had to switch to remote work, causing many to become more flexible in their work model. Many companies have introduced a hybrid model, where employees have the option to work both in the office and remotely. This allows for greater flexibility and customisation of work according to the nature of the tasks.



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# NATIONAL REPORT

## ENPHASYS - CYPRUS



## I / Desk Research

The concept of flexible working has gained significant momentum globally, and Cyprus is no exception. With its focus on promoting work-life balance, increasing productivity, and attracting skilled professionals, the country has been making strides in adopting and implementing flexible work policies. Below you can find insights into the legal and regulatory framework surrounding flexible work in both public and private sectors, the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals, and the partnership/collaboration trends between VET entities and public/private organizations to maintain a knowledgeable and trained workforce, in the Cypriot context as well as the existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with their respective advantages and disadvantages.

### **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors**

In Cyprus, the legal framework for flexible working in the public sector is primarily established by the Civil Service Law and relevant decrees. These regulations are designed to provide civil servants with various options for flexible work arrangements, reflecting a commitment to promoting work-life balance and accommodating personal responsibilities. Among the flexible arrangements available are part-time work, job-sharing, teleworking, and compressed workweeks. To ensure a stable work environment, civil servants can request such arrangements only after completing six months of service in their positions. The focus on work-life balance and employee well-being is evident in the legal provisions governing flexible working in the public sector. By offering these options, the government aims to support its workforce in managing their commitments while contributing effectively to their roles and maintaining productivity.

On the other hand, the private sector in Cyprus adheres to the Cyprus Labour Law, which permits employers and employees to negotiate flexible working arrangements on mutually agreeable terms. This legal flexibility encourages a wide range of innovative work approaches, including remote work, flexible working hours, and alternative work weeks. This adaptability recognizes that different individuals may have distinct needs and preferences regarding their work arrangements. While the legal framework allows for such flexibility, the actual adoption of flexible work practices may vary across industries and organizations. Larger corporations, which often have more resources and organizational capacity, are generally more open to implementing flexible work policies and accommodating their employees' preferences. They recognize the potential benefits of such practices, such as improved employee satisfaction, increased retention, and enhanced productivity.



On the other hand, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) may encounter challenges in adopting and implementing flexible work policies. Resource constraints, limited administrative capacity, and a traditional organizational culture may hinder the integration of such practices in smaller businesses.

## **B- Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees**

Vocational Education and Training (VET) professionals are critical in championing and facilitating the adoption of flexible work practices in the workforce. As advocates for skill development and workplace adaptability, these experts play a pivotal part in designing and implementing tailored training programs that cater to the specific needs of both employees and employers.

Recognizing the dynamic nature of modern workplaces and the growing importance of work-life balance, VET professionals identify the essential skills required to thrive in flexible work arrangements. Time management, communication, adaptability, and remote collaboration skills are among their target competencies in their training initiatives. By focusing on these areas, VET professionals equip the workforce with the tools to successfully embrace flexible work options.

Public and private sector entities have increasingly realized the value of investing in their employee's professional development. Consequently, they have sought partnerships with VET providers to develop customized training programs. These collaborations create a win-win situation, as organizations can tailor the training content to meet their workforce's unique requirements.

For employers, partnering with VET providers means delivering training that aligns with the company's objectives, culture, and specific flexible work practices. Such training enhances employee engagement and job satisfaction, as workers feel valued and supported by their employers in their career growth and work-life balance aspirations.

Moreover, these training programs also benefit the employees, as they gain valuable skills that boost their productivity and make them more adaptable to changing work environments. Employees become better equipped to handle the challenges and opportunities presented by flexible work arrangements, which, in turn, positively impacts their overall job performance and job satisfaction.

Public-private partnerships, particularly, have gained popularity as an effective approach to fostering flexible work practices. Public and private sector entities can pool their resources and expertise by joining forces to create comprehensive and impactful training initiatives. Such collaborations also help address the specific needs of various industries and sectors, enabling a more inclusive and holistic approach to workforce development.



## **C- The existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with their respective advantages and disadvantages.**

**Flexible Work Hours:** The "Flexible working arrangements for work-life balance Law of 2022" in Cyprus allows companies to offer employees who are carers and parents the option to set their work hours within certain parameters. In the case of civil servants, the flexible working hours have been extended from one hour provided under the current legislation to one and a half hours in order to reduce traffic during rush hour. Either way, flexible working hours improve work-life balance, as employees can choose their start and end times based on their preference, benefiting from increased satisfaction, reduced commuting time, and improved productivity. However, it could lead to team collaboration challenges and require clear communication guidelines to ensure a smooth workflow.

**Remote Work Options:** Many private companies in Cyprus have embraced remote work, especially after Covid-19. The Cypriot parliament is discussing a bill that outlines voluntary remote work agreements between employees and employers, with provisions for necessary remote work, and fines up to 10,000 for non-compliance. Remote work offers flexibility, cost reduction, and access to talent from various locations. The bill also protects remote employees from discrimination. In addition, employees working remotely are protected from any discrimination, and additional costs of remote work, such as the cost of buying and maintaining equipment, will be covered by employers. Challenges include reduced in-person collaboration, potential isolation, and maintaining team cohesion.

**Performance-Based Assessment:** Many private firms have shifted their performance evaluation criteria to focus more on outcomes than the number of hours worked in the office. This approach fosters a results-oriented culture and recognizes quality work regardless of location, increasing trust and efficiency. However, clear and objective performance metrics are necessary to ensure fairness and avoid biases.

## **II/ On-field research**

The field research survey was completed by eight employees, the majority of whom worked for a medium-sized company. The participants had experienced a hybrid work arrangement for 1 to 3 years. Only one participant continuously worked in a hybrid environment, while others experienced it intermittently. Formal internal agreements did not impose the adoption of this arrangement; instead, it was primarily due to informal internal agreements (because of health safety concerns or preference for such working arrangements), or leadership decisions. Only one participant had experienced flexible working arrangements before Covid-19.



Five of the eight employees mentioned that they had not received any training for working in a hybrid environment. Those who did receive training stated that it was occasionally provided through internal solutions in two cases and systematically in one case. The training included tutorials (3 participants), training games (2 participants), case studies, and success stories (2 participants). The content covered organizational matters (65%), technical aspects like digital tool usage (60%), other matters (60%), and relational aspects with bosses and colleagues 50%).

Regarding the future of the hybrid workplace, three participants believed it would become less permanent than it is now, two supported it staying the same, two were uncertain, and one mentioned a return to only face-to-face working methods.

Participants highlighted several negative aspects of hybrid work arrangements, including isolation, reduced social interaction, lack of teamwork, blurred work-life boundaries, increased workload, transferring equipment between home and office, and technical difficulties during online meetings. On the other hand, participants mentioned positive aspects of hybrid work, such as increased concentration and productivity, saved commuting time and costs, flexibility in organizing their schedules, the comfort of working from home, feeling restful as they have the opportunity to sleep more and having more time to pursue personal interests, complete house chores, and other obligations that would usually pile up for the weekend.

To effectively perform in a hybrid environment, participants recommended the following organizational policies and good practices:

1. Implement good monitoring of work progress.
2. Conduct regular virtual meetings for better communication and collaboration.
3. Provide training for digital tool usage and a smooth transition to hybrid working conditions.
4. Systematically adopt hybrid work, allowing employees to choose which days to work from home.
5. Establish fixed procedures for organizational tasks with clear internal deadlines and review processes.
6. Divide workload based on the working environment (office or home).
7. Ensure that employees have a reliable internet connection at home.





### III / Conclusion

Cyprus progressively embraces flexible work practices, supported by a legal framework catering to the public and private sectors. The legal framework in the public sector provides civil servants with various options for flexible work arrangements, focusing on promoting work-life balance and accommodating personal responsibilities. In contrast, the private sector allows employers and employees to negotiate flexible working arrangements on mutually agreeable terms, promoting various innovative work approaches. However, adopting flexible work practices may vary across industries and organizations, with larger corporations being more receptive due to their resources and capacity, while SMEs may face challenges in implementation.

In addition, VET professionals play a pivotal role in upskilling the workforce, and partnerships and collaborations between these experts and entities in both sectors have become more prevalent. These collaborations create a win-win situation, allowing organizations to align training with their objectives, culture, and flexible work practices, while employees gain valuable skills for increased productivity and adaptability. Finally, the on-field research survey sheds light on the experiences and perceptions of employees working in a hybrid environment in Cyprus. Participants highlighted both positive and negative aspects of flexible work, with increased concentration, productivity, and time savings among the benefits. However, feelings of isolation, reduced social interaction, and technical difficulties were mentioned as drawbacks.

The findings emphasize the importance of providing training and support to employees in hybrid work settings and implementing clear procedures and effective monitoring to ensure successful adaptation to this work model.



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# **NATIONAL REPORT**

## **FCB - BELGIQUE**



## I /Desk Research

This national literature search focuses on telework in Belgium, examining the legal and regulatory framework in both the public and private sectors. We will also analyse the current situation and trends related to the role of vocational education and training (VET) professionals and their partnerships with public and private entities aimed at maintaining a skilled and trained workforce. Finally, we will explore existing policies and practices surrounding flexible working in public and private organizations, highlighting their respective advantages and disadvantages.

### **A - Legal and regulatory framework in the public and private sectors**

#### **a) Private sector**

In Belgium, telecommuting in the private sector is essentially regulated by collective labour agreement no. 85 .

**Telework** is legally defined as a form of organization and/or performance of work, using information technology within the framework of an employment contract, in which work which could have been carried out on the employer's premises is carried out away from these premises on a regular and not occasional basis.

In Belgium, a clear distinction must be made between the regulation of regularly organized telework (relating to labour agreement no. 85) and that of occasional telework, for which the law of March 5, 2017 concerning feasible and manageable work has created a different regulatory framework. Occasional teleworking is available in cases of force majeure, i.e., when the employee, due to unforeseen circumstances beyond his or her control, is unable to work at his or her usual place of work (e.g. in the event of an unforeseen train strike or severe weather conditions causing serious traffic problems).

In order to transpose the aforementioned European framework agreement of July 16, 2002, on telework, Belgium adopted National Labour Convention no. 85 of November 9, 2005, on telework, which enables private sector companies to introduce telework on a regular and permanent basis as a form of work organization. In this context, telecommuting is seen as a special form of remote working, not covered by a specific employment contract.



## Voluntary teleworking: the need for a written agreement

The rule is as follows: Teleworking must always be voluntary. In Belgium, it must therefore be the subject of a written agreement between employer and employee, at the latest when the teleworker begins to telework. In the case of an existing employment contract, the agreement must be the subject of an amendment to the employment contract. If teleworking is not part of the initial job description, the decision to move to teleworking can be reversed by individual and/or collective agreement. A written document must mention the following points:

- frequency of teleworking and, where applicable, the days and hours during which teleworking is carried out, or the days and hours during which the employee is present at the company.
- times and periods when the worker must be contactable, and by what means.
- arrangements for covering the costs of equipment required for teleworking.
- times when the teleworker can call on technical support.
- procedures for returning to work on the company's premises and, if applicable, the notice period and/or duration of teleworking and its renewal.
- the location(s) where the teleworker has chosen to work.

The teleworker must be informed of the working conditions:

- a description of the work to be performed.
- the company department to which the teleworker is attached.
- identification of their immediate superior and other persons to whom they can turn for personal or professional advice.
- reporting procedures.

## Working conditions

- Teleworkers must enjoy working conditions comparable to those of employees working on the company's premises.
- In this respect, they must enjoy the same rights in terms of training, career opportunities, assessment policy and collective rights as other employees.
- - Teleworkers manage the organization of their work within the framework of the working hours applicable in the company. Their workload must be comparable to that of workers on the employer's premises.
- The employer must supply, install and maintain the equipment required for teleworking. It must also cover the cost of telework-related communications and connections.



## Safety and health control

Internal prevention services may inspect the teleworking location, with the consent of the teleworker if it is the home.

### b) Public sector

In Belgium, in the public sector, the government itself determines the rules applicable to teleworking at each level: for example, for the federal government, the Royal Decree of November 22, 2006 on teleworking and satellite office working in the federal administrative civil service applies. According to Digital Wallonia's 2022 barometer, 33% of public sector workers have the option of teleworking. In the federal administrative civil service: the regulatory framework is set by the Royal Decree of March 9, 2017. In parallel to the private sector, many public services have adopted specific regulations aimed at framing the practice of teleworking within the public sector. For many years, the use of telecommuting as a means of organizing work has been more widespread in the public sector than in the private sector. We will simply list the main regulations in this area, with the dates of those currently in force: for the federal civil service, the Royal Decree of November 22, 2006 on telecommuting and satellite office working in the federal administrative civil service -for the French Community, the French Community Government Decree of November 15, 2017 on teleworking for the Walloon Region, the Walloon Government Decree of December 5, 2019 on teleworking.



## **B - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees**

Belgium is a federal state made up of three regions (Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels-Capital) and three communities (Flemish Community (BEFL), French Community (BEFR) and German-speaking Community, BEDG). The multiplicity of education and training authorities and the diversity of education and training systems do not prevent policy coherence around common objectives, as defined in the 2014 National Reform Program: reducing the school dropout rate, increasing the rate of participation in lifelong learning, developing access to and valuing qualifications, reducing inequalities within each region.

At all levels, vocational education and training (VET) policies closely involve the social partners. In Belgium, vocational training is a lever for effective employment policy. In 2020, the Brussels Government has earmarked an additional 3,600,000 euros to strengthen the training offer in sectors in demand in 2021 and 2022. In Brussels, for example, the “Pôles Formation Emploi” are currently being set up. A “Pôle Formation Emploi” is the result of a public/private partnership. The aim is to improve the economic situation of a sector by meeting companies' needs for skilled workers, training job seekers, workers and students in the latest technologies in the sector, and anticipating the needs of the future.

## **C - The existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with their respective advantages and disadvantages.**

The COVID-19 pandemic triggered a spectacular rise in teleworking in Belgium, overturning traditional ways of organizing work for both public and private entities.

Its implementation and policy, however, remain highly innovative.

Some advantages and disadvantages:

### **A lack of work policy in structures**

In the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, more and more companies have decided that telecommuting will continue to have a place in their organization, not only when activities resume after containment, but also in the more distant future. The majority of Belgian workers, too, want to move towards a system of alternating office work and telecommuting in the future. A survey conducted by the University of Ghent (2023) even indicates that 60% of Belgian workers want to telework at least two days a week. But while demand is growing, half of Belgian companies currently have no "teleworking



policy or charter". Many organizations are therefore wondering how to properly implement an effective and sustainable teleworking policy.

### **Employers have the right to monitor their employees Internet activity**

Employers not only have the right to monitor their employees' web browsing, they also have an obligation to do so in order to justify any illicit activities. Indeed, employers are legally considered to be Internet Service Providers (ISPs), and can be held responsible for the actions of their employees. The URLs consulted can be recorded and kept for a year. On the other hand, the employer is not authorized to view or take screenshots of the content of the pages when they are consulted by the employee. For example, the employer will be able to see the URL of the personal mailbox, but not its content. Employers must also inform employees before implementing these systems.

**Employees' right to disconnect** The Belgian law of October 3, 2022 provides for a right to disconnect, i.e. the right for workers not to be connected to professional digital tools (mobile phone, smartphone, PC, e-mail, etc.) outside their working hours. The aim is twofold: to guarantee respect for the worker's rest and vacation periods, but also for his or her private and family life. This right is inserted in the March 26, 2018 law on strengthening economic growth and social cohesion (art. 16 to 17/2). The right to disconnect participates in the fight against psychosocial risks such as burn out and aims to protect the worker's work-life balance. In accordance with this law, all employers with 20 or more employees must at least sign the following agreements on the use of digital tools: practical arrangements for implementing the employee's right not to be contacted outside working hours; instructions on how to use digital tools in such a way as to guarantee rest periods, vacations, privacy and family life; training and awareness-raising initiatives for employees and management on the sensible use of digital tools and the risks associated with excessive connection.

## **II /On field research**

Our field survey focused on 8 salaried workers, the majority of whom (62.5%) came from third-sector organizations (cooperatives, associations, foundations), but also from the public administration, university and high school sectors.

It should be noted that all the participants testified to a recent, post-covid experience of working in a hybrid environment, no more than two and a half years old.

Here are the salient features of this study:

- 100% of participants had intermittent experience of the hybrid environment.
- 100% of participants had been offered one or more training courses to integrate this environment, with a large predominance for training courses carried out by their own structures and not by specialized external organizations. With regard to the teaching methods used, the most common were tutorials (100%), games (62.5%) and success stories (37%). All participants rated the training courses positively on a scale of 1 to 5. These training courses focus more on technical content (i.e. the use of digital tools).





- 50% of participants felt that this hybrid work is not destined to become permanent and will return to a face-to-face mode, 37, 5% think that it will return to face-to-face to a lesser extent, only 12.5% think that hybrid work will be reinforced.
- As for the disadvantages of hybrid working, 9 participants felt that "isolation and loss of social contact" was the most negative aspect of their experience. Also cited were the dilution of team spirit and low interactivity.
- As for the benefits, a better work-life balance was highlighted, followed by "savings in terms of time (travel) and money (fuel)".
- The 8 participants' tips for improving the hybrid remote working experience are, according to their own experience within their current organization:

1. Ensuring regular face-to-face contact between colleagues, providing high-performance, appropriate equipment, working together to achieve objectives instead of spending time in front of a controlled screen.

2. Acquire good equipment, have solid training in technical tools, and have regular feedback and consultation with colleagues.

3. Equip learners with computer equipment, especially those from poor families, set aside a time for face-to-face meetings to maintain team spirit, offer regular training not only on technical aspects, but also on organizational and motivational aspects.

4. Planning regular formal meetings.

5. Offer intensive training on all aspects of hybrid work, provide quality materials, ensure team coordination.

6. Staff training; provision of good equipment; designation of a "teleworking" coordinator/referent within the organization.

7. Training on motivation in addition to training on technical aspects; explore all existing technical solutions before making the choice; update networks and servers.

8. Ensure better coordination of remote workers; provide solid training on all aspects of telecommuting and hybrid working; equip workers.



### III / Conclusion

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, the practice of hybrid working was marginal in Belgium, particularly in the private sector. It still concerned a small percentage of workers and was generally limited to a restricted part of their working time. Gradually, however, we began to hear of a growing demand for telecommuting among workers, in the name of a better work-life balance, but of companies that were for the most part still rather reticent.

In just three years, work has changed radically. In Belgium, by combining the nature of the work performed (the profession) and the establishment's sector of activity, several recent studies have estimated that almost half of salaried jobs located in the Brussels Region (the capital) could be concerned by the application of hybrid working.

It should be noted that the experience of the participants in this study shows that the advent of hybrid working is a relatively young experience in Belgium, rooted in post-Covid-19 practices and not yet perceived by the participants in the professional training course as a sustainable or acquired organization, even if they emphasize a better quality of work in general, enabling them to reconcile their professional and private lives. It should also be noted that the participants' needs do not seem to lie at a technical level, but rather reflect a need for a better understanding of the new technologies.



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# NATIONAL REPORT

## GDOCE - SPAIN



## I/ Desk research

Amidst the recent pandemic and the restrictions it imposed, the importance of flexibility in the workspace and the adoption of hybrid environments policies surged across many productive sectors in Spain. Organisations recognized the need to adapt swiftly, embracing hybrid work models to strike a balance between remote and on-site work, ensuring continuity, productivity and efficiency in the face of unprecedented challenges.

Despite the potential offered by technological advancements in recent decades that could have facilitated office-home working arrangements long before the COVID-19 outbreak in early 2020, Spain lagged behind other EU countries with a mere 25.5% of its workers having prior remote working experience. Not to mention socio-cultural barriers, both public administrations and companies faced significant challenges in implementing remote work into their operations.

During the height of the health crisis, 31.7% of the Spanish workforce swiftly transitioned to remote work, and similar data could be observed for Cyprus and Poland. However, these figures were still far from the remarkably higher rates of Luxembourg (56.1%) and Finland (60.5%). A year later, as restrictions were lifted, remote working hours decreased from 16.7 to 15.1 hours per week (equivalent to 35.6% of the weekly hours). Nonetheless, an overwhelming 83.7% of Spanish workers surveyed expressed a strong inclination for this work modality, indicating a lasting impact on the country's work culture.

According to the latest report released by the Spanish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Digital Transformation in March 2023, the percentage of people engaged in remote work has seen a decline from 13.6% (2,742,000 people) to 12.5% (2,563,000 people), staying below the EU average. Notably, the post-pandemic trend indicates a convergence between regular and casual remote work, with the latter experiencing the most significant increase.

Analysing the type of employment relationship, self-employed individuals stand out, with almost triple the percentage of employees engaging in remote work at any frequency. Regarding sex, while women initially participated more in remote work during the early stages of the pandemic, the gender gap has narrowed by the end of 2022. At that point, 12.6% of women were teleworking, compared to 12.5% of men, demonstrating a more balanced distribution of remote work participation between sexes. Furthermore, remote work appears to be more prevalent among individuals over the age of 25, indicating that older employees are more likely to embrace teleworking as a viable work option.



## **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors.**

In Spain, remote work is subject to regulation by the law enacted on the 9th of July 2021, which replaced the previous Royal Decree-Law 28/2020, in effect since the 13th of October 2020. This current law is notably shaped by various national regulations that have evolved over the past decade, as well as the influence of international agreements.

The aim of this Law is to provide sufficient, cross-cutting and integrated regulation in a single substantive rule that responds to various needs while striking a balance between the utilisation of emerging employment arrangements and the benefits they bring for both companies and workers. On one hand, the Law seeks to foster the implementation of these innovative forms of employment, while, on the other hand, ensuring a robust framework of rights that safeguard various principles.

These principles encompass the voluntary and reversible nature of the new employment modalities, allowing workers to make informed choices about their work arrangements. Moreover, the Law emphasises the principle of equal treatment in professional conditions, guaranteeing fair pay, including compensation for expenses, and promoting equitable opportunities for career advancement and vocational training. Furthermore, the Law seeks to safeguard collective rights, ensuring workers have a collective voice and are able to collectively negotiate for their interests. It also addresses the crucial aspects of maximum working hours and minimum rest periods to protect workers' well-being and work-life balance.

Equal opportunities across territories are a key focus, as the Law aims to eliminate geographical disparities and promote fairness in employment opportunities across different regions. At the same time, flexibility in the distribution of working time is encouraged, allowing workers to adapt their schedules to better align with their personal commitments and responsibilities. Additionally, the Law places significant importance on preventive measures, especially related to physical and mental fatigue, as well as the use of data display screens. It aims to mitigate the risks of work-related strain and isolation to ensure the overall health and well-being of workers.

The second additional provision establishes that the stipulations contained in this Law shall not apply to the civil servants of the Public Administrations, which shall be governed in this matter by their specific regulations, whereby we can understand that the scope of application is limited to the private sector.

The Royal Decree aimed at regulating remote work in the State Administration was made available for public information on the 15th of December 2021. The proposed framework emphasises the role of remote work in enhancing work organisation by setting clear objectives and evaluating their accomplishment. It seeks to promote cost reduction and address the organisational needs of ministerial departments and public bodies. Additionally, the decree aims to support the residence of public employees in areas facing demographic decline, contributing to regional development. Under this proposal, remote work is designed to complement face-to-face work and is intended to be voluntary and reversible, except for justified special circumstances. The option to work remotely is not considered an entitlement for public employees, nor is it associated with the occupation of a specific position in the corresponding job list. Nonetheless, this proposed framework remains pending as of now, subject to further developments and potential revisions in the future.



As the government undertakes the revision of the Civil Service Law that governs the activities of public employees, it is noteworthy that the incorporation of the teleworking aspect has been excluded from the current proposal. As a result, there is currently no specific regulatory framework for remote work in the public sector. However, there is growing social pressure to address this gap and introduce provisions for teleworking in the public service.

## **B - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees.**

At the national level in Spain, similar to the European context, vocational training holds a central position in policy measures, including education, labour, and economic spheres. Strategies and plans devised in recent years are not solely addressed to appeal to young individuals but also aim to give response to the needs of the entire population, emphasising the importance of a lifelong learning approach. The focus is on establishing a unified, flexible, and easily accessible VET system to ensure continuous learning opportunities for everyone.

The current VET policy prioritises the modernization and regular updates of vocational training, with the goal of enhancing qualification levels and employability across the workforce. Additionally, the policy framework actively encourages innovation and entrepreneurship within the VET sector, fostering a dynamic environment that aligns with the evolving demands of the job market.

Social partners and regional authorities play a crucial role in ensuring the success of national VET strategies. According to Fundae, the foundation for on-the-job training, the year 2022 witnessed a significant participation in training programs, with 5.3 million workers benefiting from the initiatives provided by 343,677 firms. Impressively, both figures presented annual increases of 6.5% and 10%, respectively.

Out of the 5.3 million participants, a substantial 3.1 million (58%) received in-house training, indicating the commitment of companies to upskill and empower their workforce. Face-to-face training prevailed as the primary modality in 63% of cases, while online courses (37%) had double the duration.

Regarding the training topics, management and administration emerged as the most popular choice, with nearly one-third of participants enrolling in such courses. The importance of safety and environment was also highlighted, as 25% of participants opted for courses related to these critical areas.

In terms of economic resources, companies employed 573.1 million of the training credit available, showcasing the dedication of businesses towards investing in their employees' development. The private contribution of companies to training costs amounted to a total of 888.6 million.



## **C- The existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with the respective advantages and disadvantages .**

**Job Sharing:** flexible work arrangement that involves two or more employees jointly sharing the responsibilities and duties of a full-time position. In this setup, each job-sharing employee usually works part-time, with overlapping hours to ensure smooth communication and collaboration. The distribution of responsibilities, tasks, and workload is based on the individual employees' skills, preferences, and availability, allowing for a balanced and efficient division of labour. Depending on the agreed arrangement, job-sharing employees may alternate days, weeks, or shifts to accommodate their respective schedules. *Advantages:* Reduction of staff turnover, retaining talent, reducing stress and better work-life balance. *Disadvantages:* Limited career progression, misunderstandings, job insecurity and it is challenging to find the perfect partner.

**Telework:** refers to the execution of tasks from a location outside the employer's office, facilitated by the utilization of information and communication technologies (ICT). When ICT is not involved, this arrangement is commonly known as remote work. In both cases, the employees are enabled to work remotely, contributing to enhanced work flexibility and the potential for increased productivity. *Advantages:* No time spent in commuting, cost savings, environmental benefits and access to a broader talent pool. *Disadvantages:* Communication might be challenging, isolation, lack of teamwork, difficulty in monitoring progress and blurred work-life boundaries.

**Smartwork:** encompasses not only the freedom to choose the location of work but also the flexibility to determine the most suitable working hours. In this modern work approach, employees have the autonomy to decide not only where they work but also when they work, allowing for a personalised and adaptive work schedule. *Advantages:* Being able to combine work with other duties and activities, focus on outcomes and adaptability. *Disadvantages:* overemphasis on metrics, neverending working days and working hours out of sync with the rest of the workforce.

**Hour banks:** a system that permits workers to accumulate credits or debits for hours worked over an extended period, with specific limits in place. Employees can accumulate surplus hours worked, which can then be compensated with paid time off or utilised for planned vacations or time away from work. *Advantages:* employee motivation, improved attendance, attractive flexible arrangement and reduced overtime costs. *Disadvantages:* management complexity, potential for abuses, team coordination becomes challenging and legal compliance.

**Compressed week:** often referred to as the "4x3" or "4-day work week," is a work arrangement where the same total weekly hours are completed, but over fewer days per week, with longer working days. For example, employees may work for four days, each with a duration of ten hours, and enjoy three consecutive days off. *Advantages:* reduced commuting, focus on productivity, cost savings and attractive strategy to retain talent. *Disadvantages:* Longer working days, not applicable to every industry and impact on health.





## II/ On field research

Respondents to the questionnaire are mostly individuals working within medium-sized companies, occupying a diverse range of positions that span from interns to middle managers. Survey participants have been consistently engaged in a 'hybrid' work setup for a duration of at least 2 years, with some having experienced this arrangement for up to 6 years. These new working conditions have been brought upon them due to the COVID-19 outbreak, except in one single case where the hybrid model was somehow present..

The regulation governing flexible work arrangements drew from a combination of national and regional laws, with a notable emphasis on informal agreements made internally. Based on the responses, it became apparent that these agreements were initiated from “above” and significantly influenced the determination of the “where” tasks were performed. Online meetings became the common rule and in some cases the focus was on the finalisation of tasks rather than on working hours. In informal discussions aimed at filling in gaps in other answers, flexible working hours and hybrid meetings were again highlighted.

Regarding training, it appears that the adoption of this practice is not widespread. Merely one out of eight individuals asked participated in any form of training to be prepared for the hybrid work environment. In that case, it was provided by a third party, occasionally, delivered through tutorials, and covered organisational and technical aspects.

Looking ahead to the future of their hybrid workplace, almost three-quarters of the respondents believe that this arrangement will either persist in its current form or potentially become even more prominent. In contrast, one-third of the participants anticipate a return to face-to-face working methods, indicating different perspectives regarding the long-term trajectory of the hybrid work model.

Looking at the positive aspects of the hybrid work model, respondents pointed out several favourable outcomes. These included efficient time management, enhanced work organisation, minimised commuting time, cost saving, boosted productivity, higher employee satisfaction levels, and an improved work-life balance. On the less positive side, respondents mentioned issues such as miscommunication, the complexity of defining work schedules, the potential loss of collaborative synergies due to reduce in-person interactions, delays in information sharing, issues keeping track of extra hours and working longer hours.

Lastly, with regards to recommendations, participants in the survey stated relevant suggestions such as: the importance of sticking to working hours; incorporating breaks into one's schedule; ensuring effective disconnection; creating protocols for coordination; enhancing communication among team members to counter the potential isolation of remote work; offering compensation for the expenses associated with teleworking; a more balanced distribution of work; offering improved work tools and technical assistance; designating a dedicated work area and; maintaining a structured and organised approach to tasks.



### III/ Conclusion

The concept of a hybrid work environment has become popular in Spain, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to March 2020, remote work was relatively limited, but the crisis prompted a substantial shift, with around one-third of the Spanish workforce transitioning to remote work. Although the volume of remote working hours decreased a year later, the impact on individuals was profound, leading to a preference for this work modality (as indicated by 83.7% expressing a strong inclination for it).

The Spanish Government was pushed to catch up with this new reality and to regulate this “new work culture”. The goal was to establish a cohesive framework for the whole territory, while balancing the advantages of emerging employment arrangements for both companies and workers. As described previously, the legislation encourages the adoption of innovative work models while upholding a comprehensive set of rights that protect essential principles. However, the public sector continues to await its dedicated legislation in this regard.

In terms of training, there is a unanimous recognition among companies, social stakeholders, as well as central and regional governments about the importance of upskilling the workforce across a diverse spectrum of skills. Data available shows that training is continuously on the rise, reaching 5.3 million workers. Predominantly, the usual approach involves offering management and administration courses, often conducted in-house and face-to-face. Last, worth noting is the total investment of 888.6 million euros in facilitating employee training by companies.

The landscape of flexible work practices in Spain is diverse and expansive, making it a challenging task to encompass the entire spectrum in the list provided. The compilation, while selective, aims to capture a blend of both commonplace and cutting-edge approaches. On one end, practices like telework and smart work have been the number one and two options assumed by most organisations. On the other end, practices such as hour banks and job sharing are perfect examples of innovative strategies to enhance both productivity and employee well-being. This comprehensive range of practices show the efforts of organisations to maintain optimal productivity and efficiency, without undermining the motivation and work-life balance of their workforce.

The on-field research served as a practical validation for almost all of the earlier discussed elements. These insights highlighted that the formulation of hybrid work agreements arose from a blend of informal internal negotiations and the framework of national and regional legislations. Numerous positive aspects have been highly valued by participants, nonetheless it's important not to lose sight of feasible improvements. The general feeling is that respondents are pleased with this modality, although some of the companies they work for might not keep it in the near future. Last, in contrast to the studies presented previously, training was actually scarce in the chosen sample.



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# **NATIONAL REPORT**

## **MEDORO - ITALY**



## I/ Desk research

Also in Italy, with the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of smart working and more generally of smart working has spread massively, which has led to the increasingly frequent formation of "hybrid" work environments. Smart working has been promoted with (almost) full marks by employers and workers, as also emerges from recent studies by INAPP, the National Institute for the Analysis of Public Policies. For 66% of employers it increases productivity and saves costs of managing physical spaces, in particular for small businesses and for 72% of employers it increases organizational well-being and improves work-life balance of employees.

On the workers' side, on the other hand, it is the improvement in the quality of life that is particularly appreciated. For 80% it improves the organization and management of private-family commitments, for 72% it favours greater autonomy with respect to methods, schedules, rhythms, and places of work and, above all, saving time when traveling (90 %). There is no shortage of critical issues: isolation and difficulties in relationships with colleagues are the greatest for both companies and workers.

The public sector does not seem to have seized the opportunity of this change and already in 2022 only 57% of institutions adopted smart working forms, compared to 67% of the previous year. However, a trend reversal is expected in 2023, with a growth of around 20% in the number of workers involved.

## **A - Legal and regulatory framework in public and private sectors.**

In Italy, the "hybrid" work environment at the regulatory level is often referred to as "agile work" which basically involves the more or less intense and prolonged use of "smart working". Since the beginning of 2020, on the occasion of the Covid-19 pandemic, smart working has spread exponentially in Italy, so much so that the government has intervened on several occasions to review rules and regulations considered outdated. As mentioned, smart working has been significantly reduced in the public administration and currently only some categories of "disadvantaged" workers or some territories affected by some disasters or other emergencies benefit from it (for example the flood in Emilia-Romagna). For both the public and private sectors, when it comes to Smart Working in Italy, the reference discipline is the Law of 22 May 2017, n.81 (articles 18-24), as last amended by the Law of 4 August 2022, n. 122 (which converted, with amendments, Legislative Decree No. 73 of 21 June 2022, the so-called Tax Simplification Decree). In 2021, the National Agile Working protocol for the private sector was adopted, shared between the social partners, which set the rules for carrying out this working method.



### The essential elements of smart working in the private sector according to current legislation

1) The legislation in force on smart working provides that in order to adopt this form of agile work, a written agreement is required between the employer and employee which establishes the duration, conditions of withdrawal, methods of execution of the service, technological tools used, in compliance with the right to disconnect for the worker

2) The employer must communicate electronically to the Ministry of Labor and Social Policies:

- the names of the workers;
- the start and end date of work services in agile mode, according to certain methods identified with a specific Decree of the Ministry of Labor and of Social Policies (n. 149 of 22 August 2022).

3) The National agile working protocol for the private sector, signed in agreement between the Ministry of Labor and trade union representatives, provides for:

- written individual agreement (with obligation implemented from 1 January 2023), between employer and employee which clarifies terms, duration, methods, places, tools to use and criteria for training
- participation in Smart Working takes place on a voluntary basis
- any refusal by the worker does not imply the extremes of dismissal, nor can it be the subject of admonitions on a disciplinary level
- new protections for fragile workers, women, the disabled, as defined by the Work-Life Conciliation Decree

4) Smart Working remained a right for frail, disabled or immunosuppressed workers and for employees with children under the age of 14 until 31 December 2023. Starting from 13 August 2022, employers who enter into agreements for performance of work in smart working are required to recognize additional priorities for those with children up to 12 years of age or without any age limit in the case of children with disabilities and for caregivers.

### Smart working in the Public Administration

With the Covid-19 emergency, the Decree Law of 17 March 2020, n. 18 (article 87) introduced Smart Working as the only working method available in the public sector. As of October 15, 2021, this setting has been deprecated, but with some exceptions. In fact, recourse to smart working has remained a right only for frail, disabled or immunosuppressed workers, but for now only until 30 September 2023. Furthermore, the Ministry of Labor has published the "Guidelines on labor agile in public administrations", a document that links smart working "to individual agreement, to the security of the IT platform and to the quality of services for citizens" and which has become the canvas on which to reason on the subject for the near future.



**A - Current situation and trends relating to the role of VET professionals and the forms of partnership/collaboration between them and the entities of public and private sectors benefiting from VET mainly aimed in maintaining knowledgeable and trained employees.**

In Italy the public system of Vocational Education and Training is entrusted to the Regions in terms of planning and implementation through the training institutions that are accredited to access the training plans. The private circuit of the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system is overseen by Training Organizations (possibly accredited at national and/or regional level), by Bilateral Organizations (made up of Trade Unions and Entrepreneurial Associations) and by Inter-professional Funds (fuelled by contributions from companies to finance training when it is not subsidized by public funds). These three subjects are committed to becoming more and more strategic players in the still tenuous link between the worlds of business and knowledge and to contribute to a renewed conception of school-work alternation, above all through a renewed alliance with a still bewildered school world from the effects of the pandemic.

The "right" training, after the experience of "remote" work massively adopted during the pandemic period and in the perspective of an ever greater diffusion of "hybrid" work, must contribute to overcoming the concrete risk of isolation (which has led to a drop in the generativity of ideas in the workplace, as demonstrated by various studies - for example the research promoted by Microsoft "Building resilience & maintaining innovation in a hybrid world. Modernising the workplaces emerges as top business transformation priority", October 2020 ) aiming to strengthen and support a recovery of subjectivity in work precisely in the era of algorithms.

Furthermore, there will be a further evolution and profound revision of roles, professionalism, work organisation, which will lead to a situation with significant gaps in skills and knowledge in vast sections of the working population. However, these gaps will not be homogeneous and cannot be addressed with identical standard training for all but necessarily adapted to the particularities of people, roles, work environments, especially in adult training. A great role can be played by the workers' representation, at every level, enhancing and implementing some training tools already present in some national collective agreements of the category.

Training is also one of the strategic levers necessary to accompany public administrations in a process of progressive "hybridisation" which seems to be demonstrated by the fact that in 2023 an increase of around 20% of the workers involved is expected compared to around 600,000 in 2022, which by 33% compared to 2021 and by as much as 70% compared to 2020, the year the pandemic exploded (FPA Annual Report) This training will have to support in particular the adoption of 'true Smart Working', which must be for public administrations the opportunity to implement a profound change, focused on work by objectives and an intelligent digitisation of activities, to avoid the risk of reducing smart working to remote work only.





## **B - The existing policies /practices adopted for flexible work by public and private entities with the respective advantages and disadvantages .**

The significant diffusion of flexible working methods and therefore of "hybrid" work environments is still relatively "young" so it is difficult to identify consolidated support policies and/or universally adopted good practices, detectable from reliable statistics. However, thanks to some micro-surveys and/or targeted journalistic inquiries, some examples and some trends of a certain interest can already be found, above all in the private sector but also in some realities of the public sector. Here are three, attributable to different areas: training, financial support, organization and management.

### **The peer working group**

In defining and sharing training activities, it was useful to set up a joint working group on an experimental basis which:

- identifies the training needs, programmes, criteria and aims of the training offer, assessing its feasibility
- analyzes the quality and relative effectiveness of the training provided, in order to take any corrective actions
- promotes the use and implementation of financing instruments (bilateral bodies, interprofessional training funds, calls for tenders on public funds, etc.).

At the end of the experimental period, the company evaluates the effects, effectiveness and results of the working group and decides on its possible extension.

### **New Skills Fund**

An innovative financing tool consisting of a public fund co-financed by the European Social Fund, created to counter the economic effects of the Covid-19 epidemic. It allows companies to adapt workers' skills, allocating part of the working hours to training. The hours of salary of personnel in training are paid for by the fund, thanks to contributions from the State and the ESF, with the provision of validation through collective agreements which, in some areas, have had a territorial extension and involved small companies and workers often without direct union representation.

### **True smart working for public administrations**

The results of the 2022 Research of the Smart Working Observatory of the Politecnico di Milano highlight how organizations that maintain a traditional model of face-to-face work have had minor increases in the last year in terms of efficiency, effectiveness and capacity for innovation and they have diminished their ability to attract and retain resources. The situation of the realities that have stopped at remote work alone is little better. On the other hand, the situation of those realities that have adopted a complete Smart Working model, accompanying a progressive and increasingly differentiated flexibility in the choice of workplaces, with interventions on flexibility in managing working hours, on digital skills, on the redesign of spaces and on the evolution of the managerial and leadership model in the direction of work by objectives. Instead, these realities have favored an improvement in employee engagement and well-being and have therefore achieved better productivity and innovation capacity for the benefit of society and the environment as a whole.





## II/ On field research

The field survey was carried out on 8 interviewees, of which most (4) working in small or micro companies and each of the others working in the school, in the public administration (local authority), in the third sector (social) and as labor policy expert. With regards to their role, there are 2 top-managers, 2 middle-managers, 3 office heads or group heads and a freelancer, mostly with a hybrid work experience of at least 3 years and equally divided between subjects with continuous experience and with intermittent experience.

Most of their reference bodies relied on national rules complemented by formal internal agreements (which quite rigidly defined working conditions), 2 resorted to informal agreements (mostly based on personal empowerment and the achievement of certain results) and in others the "bosses" decided directly, while the division between entities that had already experimented with hybrid flexible working methods before Covid-19 and entities that activated it during the pandemic is in perfect balance.

As for the hybrid working methods, smart working (or sometimes simple teleworking) was mostly used to be carried out a few days a week or a month and more rarely inspired by a more "free" flexibility, in relation to certain objectives and / or in any case to specific working needs.

In relation to the training eventually received to adapt to hybrid work, only 50% of the interviewees stated that they had received it, almost all (3 out of 4) with interventions carried out directly within the institution, half systematically and half occasionally. For all the interviewees, the training was done through numerous but short or very short sessions mainly using tutorials (1), or success stories (1), or case studies (1) or other teaching tools (1). As regards the contents, technical issues prevailed (between 70% and 100%) compared to organizational and relational ones (present between 50% and 70% of incidence). The judgment on the quality and usefulness of this training was, however, on average very positive

As regards the perspective of the hybrid environment, the answers are also in this case quite balanced between an unchanged situation (3), one of a lower level (2) and one of a higher level (2)

Participants (not all, 6 out of 8) highlighted some negative aspects of hybrid work, including (mostly) isolation or in any case reduced social interaction and technical problems especially with connection, followed to a lesser extent by confusion between work and private life or possible increase of the workload. One interviewee pointed out, as a negative factor, that joining the "Hybrid" system is on a voluntary basis: an issue to think about.....

On the other hand, the participants highlighted a series of positive aspects mostly linked to the quality and organization of their lives such as reduction of transfer times and better management of their time to devote more to work or (mostly) to family, to the house, to social relationships, to one's interests in general. The possible advantages in terms of better work performance are less highlighted, which naturally depends on the "philosophical" and organizational quality of the setting of the hybrid environment

Finally, here is what the interviewees "recommended" as good policies or good practices to follow so that the hybrid work environment is increasingly "performing". They are grouped by "areas":



#### Technology area

- availability of appropriate digital tools and collaboration software, e.g. platforms for managing and sharing information
- ensure a minimum standard of ability to use technological tools

#### Management/organization area

- define precise rules and review them periodically on the basis of KPIs
- careful planning, shared timetables, systematic meetings between colleagues and/or managers to share and verify objectives and results and "enhance" teamwork.
- results-based work approach (from bosses to collaborators)
- flexible and adaptive mentality (from bosses to collaborators)
- short but effective training for the use of digital tools and a smooth transition to "hybrid" working conditions.

#### Quality of life area

- maintain adequate separation between work and private life
- defend, indeed increase, one's spaces for the family, other social relationships, one's cultural, sporting interests, etc...

### III/ Conclusion

The conclusions that we can draw from this research are of three kinds: normative, experiential and prospective.

#### **Regulatory aspect**

The regulatory system concerning "agile working", which in Italy is mostly synonymous with "smart working", is all in all quite streamlined and also operationally effective.

In fact, for the private sector there is only one "mother law" of 2017 (only updated in 2022), therefore already existing before the pandemic, which is particularly centered on the protection of workers' rights and safety and on the "reserve" for disadvantaged individuals (for health or family reasons), while the concrete definition of the conditions and methods of carrying out agile work (or smart working) has been entrusted to a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the State with the Trade union organizations, which time refers to the agreements that each company enters into with its employees.

Also for the public administration there is only one reference law which was instead approved in 2020, precisely on the occasion of the pandemic, and a document from the Ministry which indicates a series of guidelines of an operational nature which also refer to the agreements individual with employees. For both the private and public sectors, the basic principle is that of voluntary adherence to smart working by workers: in our opinion, this principle, if on the one hand safeguards the employee's freedom of choice (perhaps influenced by their own configuration of life) on the other hand, however, it could make an efficient and effective organization of work very difficult, especially if based on small groups that work towards objectives with an adequate level of cohesion. It is an issue that we think deserves some reflection.



## Experiential aspect

The few data that we have reported are sufficient to show that, as regards the private sector (basically that of companies), even after the pandemic crisis, only large companies maintain a very high percentage of workers in smart working and have managed to organize a medium efficient hybrid working environment on a permanent basis. Medium, small and micro enterprises, on the other hand, still suffer from a fundamentally cultural delay, which then translates into organisational, technical and training difficulties. Even in the public administration, the margins for improvement are still considerable and the delays and difficulties indicated for small companies are even more evident.

The role of training in accompanying this process of necessary adaptation to the new hybrid way of working therefore appears absolutely essential, as evidenced by the good quality and flattering results found on the occasion of the few training experiences found.

Both on the part of workers and employers, the advantages of "hybrid" work are substantiated in greater organizational well-being with consequent greater productivity as well as in a greater quality of life especially in terms of balance between work and private life. The critical issues, on the other hand, are found mainly from a relational and mental point of view and very often also in the technological field.

## Perspective aspect

As a consequence of what has emerged, the best prospect of a work organization that increasingly provides for flexible and "hybrid" methods is entrusted to the ability to:

- have adequate digital tools and adequate skills in their profitable use
- organizationally define precise rules and verifiable methods
- adopt a work approach based on objectives and teamwork
- have a flexible and adaptive mentality (from bosses to collaborators)
- accompany the "hybrid" transition with adequate and systematic training interventions
- better manage your time especially to optimize the balance between work and private life



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