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Telework: bridging the past and present through technological advancements. European Union and Romania's case.

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The purpose of the paper is to briefly describe the evolution of remote work in tight relationship with specific technological achievements that have occurred over time. Also the concepts, parallels, and distinctions between remote work and conventional work, tracing their historical evolution will be explored. Notably, the significant technological advancements that have played a pivotal role in shaping remote work will be emphasized, shedding light on their influence on the labor market. Moreover, similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages between remote work and traditional work will be mentioned, from the perspective for both employees and employers. Regulation addressing remote work in European Union (and in Romania's particular case) and finally main official statistics sources as Eurostat and Eurofound Surveys will be compared and discussed.

Key words: remote work, work from home, computer technology , European Union, Romania

JEL classification : J81, J21, J24, O52

Introduction

Remote work *is not a new concept*, both in practical application and in the literature. Its increasing appeal can be credited to technological progress, including the widespread adoption of personal computers, Internet connectivity, and public Wi-Fi. Nowadays, individuals keeping a laptop or a smartphone with internet access can effortlessly interact with colleagues remotely and even carry out their work from the convenience of their homes, or any other location, mirroring the time when physical presence at the employer's premises was mandatory for such tasks.

Reflecting back on the computers of the 1960^s, employees needed to travel to the location of the mainframe computer or send magnetic tapes by mail to access specific information and/or share their work publicly. In 1975, the first personal and portable computer was developed, enabling employees to finally transfer their work outside the office environment. This computer, known as the IBM-5100, was quite different from today's laptops but marked the beginning of their evolution. Since then, companies have continuously strived to innovate and enhance computer technology, making them increasingly powerful.

In April 1981, Adam Osborne introduced what is recognized today as the world's first true portable laptop, named the Osborne I. Weighing 24 ½ kilograms, it featured a 5-inch display, a relatively narrow monitor, and lacked storage space. Despite these limitations and its high market price, sales reached approximately 1 million dollars at that time, as evident even by today's standards.

Furthermore, following the era of the 24-kilogram computer, the next milestone in laptop development emerged in 1989 with the introduction of a new NEC-manufactured laptop, weighing 2.26 kilograms. This particular device is considered the world's first electronic notebook. Subsequently, in 1992, Olivetti released the main series of laptops featuring a touchpad, marking a significant advancement in user interface technology. In 2002 Toshiba created the thinnest laptop ever, measuring a mere 3/4 inch (1.9 centimeters) in thickness. In parallel the tablets appeared to follow a similar trajectory between 1972 and 2002, when Microsoft introduced the Windows XP tablet. A defining moment for tablets occurred in 2010, when Apple (Steve Jobs) unveiled the iPad, revolutionizing the market and becoming an iconic device in the realm of mobile computing.

About historical context, on January 1, 1983, the Internet officially marked a significant juncture in the evolution of computer networking. Prior to this, only limited networks of computers existed without standardized communication between. Many scientists, engineers, computer programmers, worked together to create the information superhighway we know today (Andrews, 2019). Computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web (WWW) in 1990 - often confused with the Internet. But, in reality, the World Wide Web allows us to access data through websites and hyperlinks, including online content. While distinct from the Internet, the Web played a pivotal role in popularizing it, contributing to the vast informational network that the public experiences today like never before. Moreover, the Web has facilitated global connectivity, enabling people from all over the world to communicate through email and various visual tools.

The first access to wireless Internet became possible in 1991 (as part of the second generation „2G” of mobile phones). Then, around 1994-1995 companies like American Express, IBM, and AT&T adopted the practice of permitting their employees to work remotely from locations outside the employer's headquarters. By 1999, Internet users had reached 400 million. In the 2000s, wireless Internet and broadband acted as two interconnected components, liberating employees from a specific physical location as their workplace. Subsequently, during the period of 2001-2006, there were advancements in Internet speeds, thanks to the third generation (3G) and fourth generation (4G) technologies.

Jack Nilles is the first author ever using expressions like "telecommuting" and "remote work" in his book published in 1973 and entitled "The Telecommunications-Transportation Tradeoff: Options for Tomorrow." This pioneering work addressed the concept of working remotely using telecommunications technology, thus anticipating the development of remote work in the following decades. Jack Nilles's contribution was essential in popularizing and further advancing this concept in the professional landscape (Nilles, 1973).

It was the period when he worked as an engineer at NASA, and he experimented with some of these in a communication system. The concept of telecommuting was used here by the author as an "alternative" to traditional operations to innovatively address the new deficit of non-renewable resources – telecommuting was thus an "alternative mode of transportation." Nilles writes, "...either employees' job sites must be redesigned to be autonomous at each individual location, or a telecommunications and information storage system sophisticated enough to permit the transfer of information as efficiently as if the employees were centrally located must be developed much as in the past." Later, in 1979, Frank Schiff wrote an article in the "Washington Post," emphasizing the same idea: working from home could help at least reduce/save the total fuel consumption at a national level - and it should not be overlooked that 1979 was the year of the OPEC oil embargo. Moreover, it could potentially have a cascading effect on alleviating traffic congestion, air pollution, and mental and physical stress for everyone. Schiff directly refers to the (previous) energy crisis and expresses concern about ways to counteract it, with telecommuting being one of the potential solutions for one or two days (Daniels, 2021). Furthermore, Schiff proved to be a

visionary writer on technological advancements, envisioning the ability to transform any initial location of anyone's home into a space where "the functions of televisions, videophones, computer terminals, electronic files, and word and data processing systems can be brought together and directly linked to offices and other residences."

In addition, the author equally anticipates criticisms that the idea of working from home would attract, getting aware that there could be no control over how each employee approaches this idea - for example, possible disruption of essential interpersonal contacts with colleagues, too many distractions and the lack of a quiet place to work. Ultimately, the pandemic of 2020-2021 served to address all these theoretical issues raised by Schiff in practice.

In a book authored by Woody Leonhard and published in 1995, work is conceptually approached as "*what we do, not where we do it*". This perspective emphasizes the idea that work is defined by the tasks and responsibilities performed, rather than being tied to a specific physical location. This notion aligns with the evolving concept of remote work, which places emphasis on the flexibility of completing tasks from various locations, including outside the traditional office environment. Woody Leonhard's viewpoint highlights the importance of focusing on the nature of work itself, regardless the geographical setting in which it is carried out (Woody, 1995).

The author appears to emphasize that the future success in business would be dependent of the presence of a virtual environment as the infrastructure for all communications and collaboration. By highlighting the importance of the virtual realm, including digital communication tools and platforms, the author implies that businesses must embrace and leverage technology to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. This perspective underscores the transformative power of the virtual space in facilitating efficient communication, cooperation, and business operations, and suggests that failing to embrace this technological shift may hinder a company's competitiveness and growth prospects in the long run. Currently, the English Dictionary defines telecommuting as the use of computers, smartphones, and other new technical devices from home by those who work remotely, similar to their previous office-based work. This means that they can maintain direct contact with colleagues, clients, and the central office while working from home¹.

Remote work is synonymous with telecommuting, as described above, representing a form of work arrangement where employees do not need to travel to a central workplace to fulfill their duties. Individuals who engage in remote work may be named: telecommuters, teleworkers, home-based employees, or individuals working from home.

Eurofund² (The European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions) defines remote work as an arrangement where work is conducted outside a predetermined location, typically the employer's place, and facilitated by Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The concept of ICT implies that technology enables workers to be "location-independent, as their workplaces," emphasizing the idea that technology allows employees to carry out their tasks from various locations, not limited to a traditional office setting.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) defines work from home (WFH) as a work arrangement in which the worker carries out his/her tasks using Information and Communication Technology (ICT) while simultaneously forgoing the traditional office-based work. This definition highlights the shift towards utilizing technology to perform work remotely, allowing employees to work from the comfort of their homes or other remote locations, thus departing from the conventional office setting.

¹ <https://educalingo.com/ro/dic-en/teleworking>

² European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound)

In 1996, the ILO provided its version of such a definition: It is work that a person carries out at her home or at other locations outside the employer's premises under specific conditions, ensuring that what is effectively produced meets the employer's requirements, and the remuneration for the work is equal to that of other workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021 brought about a significant shift in the perception of WFH (Work from Home) within the International Labour Organization (ILO) and other entities. The term WFH became commonly used as a temporary solution, reflecting the collective commitments of both employees and employers to ensure continuity and productivity in their operations during challenging times.

The pandemic forced many organizations to rapidly adopt remote work as a means to safeguard their employees' health and adhere to social distancing measures. This unprecedented situation highlighted the importance of leveraging technology and flexible work arrangements to maintain business operations while ensuring the safety and well-being of the workforce.

During this period, work from home(WFH) was not just a matter of flexibility, but a crucial strategy for business survival making many companies to rethink their approach to work and consider remote work as a viable long-term option beyond the pandemic.

The Framework Agreement on Telework - The Primary EU Regulation Addressing Remote Work

In July 1997 the European Commission (EC) adopted a series of policy recommendations concerning the labor market and the social dimension of the information society. These recommendations included provisions for remote work as one of the opportunities and tools for expanding employment in the information society. The EC commenced an investigation into telework within its own operational area, initiating a pilot project in 1998 through its departments named "Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities" and "Directorate-General for the Information Society."

In the year 2000 the European Council convened in that Lisbon summit with its objectives set on shaping the future dynamics of the economy in Europe, aiming to create a "knowledge-based" economy³. In this context labor-related reports were to be modernized, focusing on both companies - their productivity and competitiveness - and individual job positions - their quality. The aim was to improve and update the reporting mechanisms to better assess and address the overall performance of businesses as well as the working conditions and job satisfaction of individual employees. This approach aimed to foster a more efficient and competitive business environment while also ensuring the well-being and job satisfaction of workers within the European Union.

The Framework Agreement on Telework – also referred to as the primary "EU regulation addressing telework" – was concluded following negotiations between September 2001 and July 2002. This framework primarily focuses on the working conditions for those expected to engage in telework. Article 2 of this agreement defines telework as an arrangement where an employee, while being able to perform their duties at the employer's

³ *Lisbon Summit or the Lisbon European Council took place on March 23-24, 2000. It was a pivotal meeting where the European Union set an ambitious goal to make the EU the "most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" by 2010. The summit aimed to address the challenges of globalization, technological advancements, and social cohesion within the EU. The Lisbon Strategy focused on enhancing innovation, education, and research to drive economic growth and social development across member states.*

premises, frequently carries out the same tasks outside of these locations using information and communication technology (ICT) and other materials⁴. Furthermore, the responsibility for providing and maintaining these latest techniques lies with the employer. Regarding the alternative workplace, the employee's home takes precedence. However, the definition and provisions of the Law do not exclude other locations that can ensure safe working conditions, health, and data protection⁵.

The terms of this European agreement were reached in 2002, among the 15 member states of the EU at that time. Regarding the social partners who fully participated in the social dialogue, they represented only these countries. However, the agreement became applicable to all 27 member states from that point onwards (ILO, 2021). The status and regulation of remote work in the European Union (EU-OSHA, 2021) can be categorized into two groups of member states:

Most of EU countries have not a specific law regarding telework before Covid19 pandemic, but just as part of their Labor Code or other specific laws (Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Spain, Germany, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Croatia, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, and Slovakia) (EU-OSHA, 2021). For some other countries telework is included in some other regulations - for example, related to data protection, safety or healthcare (Austria, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, and Sweden) (EU-OSHA, 2021).

In response to the changes brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, several European Union countries have adapted their legislation to accommodate remote work. The Netherlands⁶ became one of the first countries to establish remote work as a legal right in July 2022. Following this, other EU nations have also introduced new laws or amended existing ones to support remote work (Molina,2022). Working from home in the Netherlands was already popular, even before the pandemic. In 2018, about 14% of employed people worked remotely, the highest rate in the European Union (Eurostat,2020).

The Government in Ireland⁷ approved on 9 November 2022 the integration of the right to request remote work for all workers into the *Work Life Balance and Miscellaneous Provisions Bill*. Public consultations were conducted with input from employer and employee representatives. In Spain⁸ on 9 July 2021, *Law 10/2021(art.13)* on remote working, replaced *Royal Decree-law 28/2020*. According to this law, employees can work remotely outside of the workplace for at least 30% of their working day, in a reference period of 3 months. The law also emphasizes that remote working cannot be imposed unilaterally by the company or by the employee, it should be agreed between both parties⁹.

Hungary has introduced in 2021 the new "*home office law package*", a bill amending the *Labor Code*, the *Labor Protection Act*, and the *Personal Income Tax Act* in order to accommodate remote work (Szabó,2022). The updated rules in the Labor Code now include provisions for full-time and part-time work from home. For regular home office setups, a "*telework contract*" will be necessary. Employees who choose telework can spend 1/3 of their working days in the office. *The Labor Protection Act in Hungary* now makes the difference between telework done using a computer and telework done with other tools. Employees can use their own work equipment if approved by the employer after a risk assessment. When teleworking from their homes and so using personal resources like heating, electricity, and internet, is made by the *Personal Income Tax Act* to include a new

⁴ <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2010/telework-in-the-european-union>

⁵ <https://filipandcompany.com/telemunca/>

⁶ Netherlands: New legislation on remote work.

<https://industrialrelationsnews.ioe-emp.org/news/article/netherlands-new-bill-on-remote-work>

⁷ <https://enterprise.gov.ie/en/news-and-events/department-news/2022/november/202211092.html>

⁸ <https://www.lexology.com/library/detail.aspx?g=80d8896b-1533-4a4f-bec8-e105fb477d20>

⁹ <https://cms.law/en/int/expert-guides/cms-expert-guide-to-remote-working/spain>

payment method exempt from personal income tax called the "lump sum cost reimbursement" which refers to a form of financial compensation to the employee to cover work-related expenses without requiring a detailed presentation of the incurred costs.

Italy implemented the "*Italian National Protocol on Remote Working*" on 7 December 2021, which provides a clearer definition of remote or "smart working"(remote working). It allows flexibility in working hours, with the possibility for parties to agree on specific availability slots. The law also guarantees the right to disconnect, giving employees the freedom to choose their remote work location (Molina, 2022)

Technological evolution from 2002 until now has influenced the expansion of telework, leading to an increase in worker mobility. Currently, the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC,2021) uses the *term telework* for employees who work remotely/outside the established enterprise and utilize information and communication technology (ICT). According to the EESC, *the workplace and the ICT used* are the two defining pillars of telework, and therefore, the laws and practices of each nation should have their own versions of telework regulations (Trindade, 2021).

Work from home and telework: similarities and differences

The *similarities* concern the location, the organization of work and activities, the transportation of related materials, and the employer's control over the employee's activities as a worker/employee. In short, as mentioned above, both types of work can be carried out at the employee's home; the organization of work shifts from the employer's responsibility to that of the employee; the employer is responsible for transporting work-related materials; the same employer has the right to monitor the employee's activities; the employee's rights remain the same as those of all other employees (NDI Law , 2020).

The *differences* between the two start with the most obvious one - the source of regulation (Trindade,2021). On the other hand, telework is based on specific work contracts using methodologies related to information and communication technologies (ICT). Additionally, employees engaged in telework are referred to as teleworkers, which is not the same for employees working from home. Working from home is limited to the employee's home; teleworkers are not constrained to such a limitation but rather to the use of ICT tools. Employees working from home can set their own work schedule but teleworkers must agree on a schedule beforehand that is convenient for the employer.

Since working from home often involves the use of conventional mechanical and/or electrical tools ,remote work is exclusively reliant on ICT usage. Lastly, working from home is usually a permanent arrangement and telework is considered at least one day per month or possibly more, as agreed upon between the employee and employer.

Work from home and telework: advantages and disadvantages

Both remote work and telecommuting have advantages and disadvantages for both employers and employees. Employers benefit from lower costs related to office space and work organization, while employees enjoy reduced transportation expenses compared to commuting to the traditional workplace at the employer's premises. However, employers may face challenges in monitoring employees due to the limitations set by specific contracts or additional agreements, as well as the responsibility to provide adequate technology and material transportation to remote workers.

On the other hand, employees may encounter new costs related to utilities to support their work, potential delays in completing tasks, partial isolation, communication difficulties

with colleagues, and even health consequences in the absence of suitable office equipment and furniture (ILO,2021 p. 4).

The Romania's case : regulations on working at home and telework

In Romania, first and foremost, the Labor Code¹⁰ regulates the category of work from home in articles 108, 109, and 110. This type of work involves the employee's home as the place of work, instead of the employer's premises. However, they are e subject to employer verification as per individual contracts¹¹.

On the other hand, the employer is committed to providing the necessary materials, raw materials, and transportation for work from home, as well as for the corresponding finished products, in both directions. However, work from home, as defined in the Labor Code of 2003, is limited to manual work involving physical and easily identifiable finished products and materials. It cannot conceptually extend to the technological complexity associated with the information society..

Telework was later defined by law in Romania in 2018 - Law no. 81, article 2: "a type of work organization in which the employee, on a regular and voluntary basis, fulfills work tasks in places other than those managed by the employer, at least once a month, using information and communication technology (ICT)." Therefore, two legal aspects have become evident in Romania regarding telework: the difference from the previous provisions of the Labor Code for work from home and the EU approach - telework means work done at home, but not exclusively or mandatory, but mandatory only in terms of using ICT.As a detail, telework involves legally the usual individual employment contract - the one for each employee - accompanied by an addendum that always contains provisions such as: the specific dates when the employee will be working remotely, in addition to the dates when they work at the employer's premises; the exact location for telemunca and the time frame for employer verification; methods of recording hours worked as telework; the employer's commitment to provide all necessary materials and equipment for telework, as well as transportation to the remote workplace; ensuring data protection, including personal data; informing the employee in telework about any changes to the collective labor agreement - if applicable; assisting the employee in dealing with any isolation from colleagues, and finally, the employer's commitment to cover all costs related to this type of work. This list of employer commitments is then followed or accompanied by corresponding commitments from the employee (Haiduc C., Iordăchescu & Asociates, 2021)¹².

In 2020, Romania made significant changes regarding telework Law No. 296 of 2020 introduced a new possibility for employers to fund utility costs for the teleworker's remote workplace. This includes costs such as electricity, heating, tap water, data subscriptions, and even furniture and office equipment, up to a monthly ceiling of 400 RON (R&S, 2022). Additionally, Government Emergency Ordinance No. 36 of 2021 removed the previous requirement that telework should be performed at least once a month. Instead, the focus shifted towards systematic and consistent use of telemunca, rather than occasional or sporadic utilization. Telework is now mandated not to cover the entirety or even the majority of working hours (R&S, 2022).

¹⁰ *Legea Nr. 53 / 2003.*

¹¹ https://www.codulmuncii.ro/titul_2/capitolul_9_1.html

¹² *Călin Haiduc, avocat, colaborator al "Iordăchescu & Asociates", Work-at-home and telework in the current legal regulation and its shortcomings;*

EU statistics regarding telework and work from home

Regarding EU statistics, before the pandemic, it was mentioned above the one conducted by Eurostat (EU-LFS - European Union Labour Force Survey), which is the largest European household-based sample survey (see Annex 1). While telework was measured, comparability between different data suffered. Subsequently, the International Labor Organization (ILO) provided specific recommendations concerning such reporting, but circumstances due to Covid19 pandemic, made these recommendations impractical for EU member states.

This led the International Labor Organization (ILO) and Eurofound to conduct a comprehensive survey about *telework* during the Covid19 Pandemic time in all EU member states (ILO 2020) - aiming to ensure data comparability for both aspects. Eurofound successfully unveils profound insights into the pandemic's effects, primarily focusing on human perception, including physical and mental well-being, as well as employees' preferences for the post-pandemic future.

Eurofound found that a majority of 65.4% of employees had never worked from home before the pandemic, while the remaining 34.6% had done so occasionally. In Romania, 68% of the respondents had never worked from home before the pandemic, while 32% had done so in various forms, such as daily, a few times per week/month, or less frequently.

Indeed, Eurofound has been collecting data since 2015 on a set of variables that allows for a comparative measurement of teleworking across EU member states, using the European Working Conditions Survey. The survey conducted by Eurofound during the pandemic, named "*Living, working, and Covid-19*" was developed in three stages in the EU member states. The first stage took place in April-May, the second stage in June-July of the same year, 2020, and the third stage returned in the following year, 2021, in February-March (Annex 2).

We found, based on Eurofound(2020) survey data, that during the Covid19 Pandemic time, around 36.3% of employees in the EU started to work from home. In Romania working from home has not a longer tradition; this percentage was lower, with only 19% of respondents, while in Finland, it reached the highest level in EU , with 61% (Eurofound,2020).

The weekly working hours in the EU decreased from 41.5 hours in June/July 2020 to 40.1 hours in February/March 2021. Compared to this. in Romania, number of weekly hours worked were significantly higher by around 50.9 hours per week in June/July 2020 and 48.5 hours worked in February/March 2021. About 33% of these weekly working hours have been done remotely: 14.2 hours per week during June/July 2020 increasing to 14.5 hours per week during February/March 2021(Eurofound,2020).In Romania, the time worked from home was lower with 10.6 hours per week in June/July 2020 (20.8% of the total weekly working hours) and 11 hours per week in February/March 2021 (22.6% of the total weekly working hours), below the EU average. Employees' responses about their work performance prove similar before and during the health crisis, with approximately 40-46% of respondents from the rest of the EU and 40.9-44.9% of Romanian respondents reporting no significant difference(Eurofound,2020).

Eurofound's survey also shows that most employees prefer to continue working from home several times a week after pandemic, which is comparable to others' preference to return to their former workplace (employer's premises).

Conclusions

Following the above analysis of concepts and historical evolution of remote work, several significant conclusions can be drawn. Remote work is not a new concept, and technological advancements in recent years have played a crucial role in its widespread adoption. The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated this trend, leading a substantial number of employees to work from home to retain their jobs and comply with social distancing rules.

Regarding the comparison between remote work and traditional work, some key aspects stand out. The similarities do see: location, organization of work and activities, transportation of related materials, and the employer's control over the employee's activity. The differences between the two start with the most obvious one - the source of regulation. Many countries had to adjust their legislation to meet the new requirements brought about by the Covid19 Pandemic and the increase in remote work. These aspects include employee rights, working hours, health and safety at the home workplace, and the right to digital disconnection after work hours. Legislative adaptations were necessary to ensure a suitable and fair working environment for employees.

Eurofound(2020) studies have highlighted a significant increase in the percentage of employees who started working from home during the pandemic, with varying proportions depending on the country. In Romania, the percentage was lower, while in Finland, it was higher. Moreover, the average weekly working hours in the EU decreased, but in Romania, they were higher than the EU average. Remote work contributed significantly to these hours, but the presence of remote work in Romania was lower compared to the EU average. Regarding work performance, employees in the EU and Romania perceived it to be similar both before and during the health crisis.

An important aspect is employees' preference to continue working from home during the pandemic, comparable to the option of returning to their traditional workplaces. This preference suggests that workers have discovered the advantages of remote work, and hybrid work models could become a viable option for the post-pandemic future.

In conclusion, remote work has become a strong trend in Europe and globally, significantly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic. This form of work brings both opportunities and challenges for both employees and employers. With appropriate adaptation of legislation, labor policies, and technological infrastructure, workers can benefit from increased flexibility in how they carry out their professional activities, and employers can leverage the advantages of a hybrid work environment to enhance productivity and maintain a balance between employees' professional and personal lives.

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ANNEX 1

Eurostat - European Union Labor Force Survey

The European Union Labor Force Survey (EU-LFS) represents the most extensive study of its nature conducted on households throughout the European continent. With a total of 35 European countries, it encompasses the 27 EU member states, as well as four candidate countries (Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Turkey), three member countries of EFTA (Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland), and the United Kingdom. Each of the participating countries is responsible for gathering data through national surveys pertaining to their respective labor forces. These collective efforts contribute to the comprehensive insights provided by the EU-LFS. Eurostat processes the data received from the participating countries of the continent to create comparable information among them - based on a "common language" of concepts, methods, structures, and technical standards. This work focuses on a part of this comprehensive study, namely the one called *"Employed persons working from home as a percentage of total employment, by sex, age, and professional status "* (Eurostat)

ANNEX 2

Eurofound's Survey titled "Living, Working, and COVID-19"(Eurofound 2020)

The survey was conducted online - that is, electronically - in all EU member countries. It is also considered a "real-time" study - meaning it covers both the EU area and the depth of the pandemic events. The International Labor Organization (ILO) participated in this endeavor to obtain comparable data resulting from the pandemic and its impact on people's lives. Decision-makers will be aided in managing and addressing crises, while researchers will use the data for their analyses comparing the crisis period with normal periods. At the time of this work, Eurofound has already published the results of three out of the total five phases previously announced on its official website: (i) April-May 2020, (ii) June/July 2020, and (iii) February-March 2021. Two more data publication phases were projected to be completed by the end of 2022. The Eurofound survey sample included approximately 190,000 employed respondents aged 18 and over from all EU-27 member countries, categorized by age and gender.