

Remote Working in Ireland – Evidence from National Surveys

RSA Conference 6th November 2020 Tele-working in Ireland-Beyond Covid

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Western Development Commission (WDC)



- State body Department of Rural and Community Development (DRCD), Minister Humphreys
- 7 county Western Region
- WDC Act 1998

'....foster and promote the economic and social development of the Western Region'





WDC and Teleworking, e-working and Remote Working

- WDC has a long history both operating and researching the practice.
- E-work a policy for staff from the start-1999/2000
- Represented on Govt E-Work Action Forum in early 2000s
- Tele-work, e-work, Remote work research
 - https://westerndevelopment.ie/insights/working-from-home-the-new-normal/
 - https://westerndevelopment.ie/insights/working-from-home-what-are-the-regional-patter
 - https://westerndevelopment.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/WDC Policy-Briefing-no-7.pdf

WDC –Whitaker NUIG National Remote Working Study – Pre Covid – Late 2019:
 The overall objective is to examine issues, challenges and opportunities in extending the practice of remote working, to highlight best practice and to make proposals to inform public policy.





WDC- NUIG Remote Work Survey – profile of respondents (Phase II)

- 50% private sector
- Industry sectors: Education 17%, Financial, banking,& Ins 12.8%, ICT 12%, Public & Civil Service 13.5%, Prof, Scientific & technical 9.8%
- Org size: 500+ (50%), 250-499 (11%), 50-249 (18%), 11-49 (13%), 1-10 (7%).
- 75% female
- 54% no dependents
- Region: Dublin (33%), West (25%, Mid-East (13%, South-west (9%), Mid-west (6%), Border (5%), Midlands & Southeast (4%)
- Age Profile: 18-30yrs (13%), 31-40 (29%), 41-50 (36%), 51-60 (19%), 60+ (3%)





NATIONAL REMOTE WORKING STUDY

THEN...
PHASE I - APRIL 2020

7,241 respondents

87% working remotely

11% mix onsite and remote 2%
fully onsite/
not working

NOW... 6 MONTHS ON PHASE II - OCTOBER 2020

5,639 respondents

68% working remotely

24% mix onsite and remote 8% fully onsite/not working



Majority want to work remotely some or all of the time post-crisis

12%

would like to work remotely on a daily basis



would like to work remotely several times a week



would like to work remotely several times a month



they do not want to continue working remotely 94%

Majority want to work remotely some or all of the time post-crisis

27%

would like to work remotely on a daily basis 54%

would like to work remotely several times a week 13%

would like to work remotely several time a month 6%

they do not want to continue working remotely **never**worked remotely before COVID-19

want to continue to work remotely some or all of the time post-COVID-19

neverworked remotely before COVID-19

49% 92% want to continue to work remotely some or all of the time post-COVID-19





NATIONAL REMOTE WORKING STUDY

PHASE II OCTOBER 2020

ADVANTAGES
OF REMOTE WORKING

TOP 3

BIGGEST PROBLEMS
OF REMOTE WORKING

no traffic and no commute

- greater flexibility as to how I manage the working day
- reduced costs of going to work and commuting



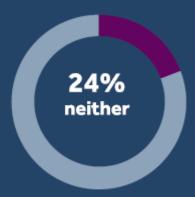
- loneliness/
- 2 staying motivated
- 3 physical workspace



WORKING REMOTELY INCREASES MY PRODUCTIVITY









COMPARED TO WHEN YOU STARTED REMOTE WORKING DUE TO COVID-19, HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT REMOTE WORKING?



52% more optimistic



31% about the same



16% more pessimistic





52% work more hours



41% work same hours



7% work less hours

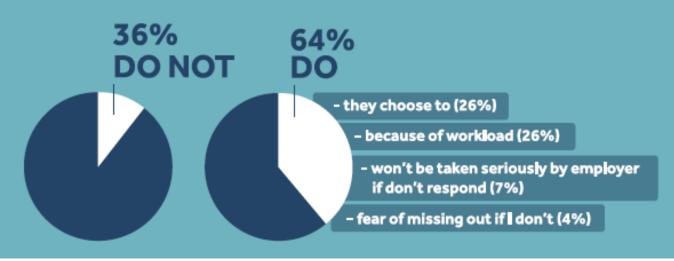




NATIONAL REMOTE WORKING STUDY

PHASE II OCTOBER 2020







Post pandemic patterns?

Will the new normal (rate of RW) be significantly higher than previously?

Considerations against:

- 1. A relationship between economic growth, unemployment levels and no's WFH?. E.g, over last 20 yrs as unemployment rate declined the % wfh increased.
- 2. Post pandemic higher unemployment rates?.. with lower employment levels & lower congestion on transport networks.
- 3. But current circumstances unprecedented so maybe any correlation with RW & high unemployment will not apply.
- 4. The cultural shift much discussed is overstated (supported by media) & only confined to specific sectors, e.g technology (some of whom have a commercial interest). Post pandemic revert to normal.



Post pandemic patterns?

Will the new normal (rate of RW) be significantly higher than previously?

Considerations for:

- 1. Technology more advanced with V Conferencing widely available useful in maintaining the employment relationship.
- 2. Extensive unprecedented Covid practice of RW has created a shift in thinking, for employees & especially for employers on productivity.
- 3. WFH (before the pandemic) a feature of some company's business models, illustrating that some companies can operate successfully with all staff RW (e.g Shopify, Wayfair)
- 4. Government policy more supportive??



Q & A Thank You

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