Remote work at the Italian National Institute of Statistics (Istat): a snapshot

Antonio Ottaiano
Daniela Bonardo
Structure

✓ Overview
✓ Survey respondents
✓ Findings:
  • Main takeaways on remote work
  • Respondents’ expectations on return-to-work
✓ Final recommandations
Overview

Over the past months, we know that many employees have incurred a significant change in work and lifestyle habits, so…

we carried out a specific survey as a proposal for dialogue and listening between employees and organisation in order to figure out pros and cons of remote work
Survey respondents

1,258 (62% of total employees)

- DIRECTORATE GENERAL [167]
- DEPARTMENT FOR STATISTICAL PRODUCTION [570]
- DEPARTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF METHODS AND TECHNOLOGIES FOR PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS [444]
- PRESIDENT’S OFFICE [11]
Main takeaways on remote work (1/4)

Experience matters for remote work: workers found tools and strategies to boost collaboration and work satisfaction

**works mainly independently:** 74%

**works mainly in interaction with colleagues:** 47%

**stay smart (\*):**
- flexible work-life balance (88%)
- focusing better on the tasks (84%)
- working better, getting satisfactory results (82%)
- managing new technologies and/or organizational tools (79%)
- increasing responsibility on an individual level (77%)

\* % Strongly agree/Somewhat agree
Main takeaways on remote work (2/4)

Collaboration tools can help:

- **Network connection:** 88%
- **Cellular network:** 12%
- **Owned PC:** 63%
- **Istat-issued laptops, tablets:** 37%
- **Virtual desktops:** 89%
- **VPNs:** 10%
- **Regularly/very often participates in webmeetings:** 52%
  
  (sometimes: 37%; never: 11%)
- **IT difficulties [mainly VPN access and connection maintenance]:** 34%
- **Cloud-based applications:** 48%
Main takeaways on remote work (3/4)

The transition can strain habits of workers:
Just about half of remote workers say that working from home has negatively affected on...

Topics/Issues (*):
- I'm having trouble in maintaining the boundaries between work and private life (41%)
- I experienced excessive extension of working hours and stress from lack of disconnection (40%)
- Lacking of face-to-face interactions with manager (21%)

* % Strongly agree/Somewhat agree
Main takeaways on remote work (4/4)

What's the biggest challenge to working "smart" effectively?

8 out of 10 survey respondents say:

**Functional organization of work**

(contacts with managers, meetings, remote collaboration, organizational measures)

1 out of 2 people say:

**Skills on IT matters**

(how do IT tools the organisation provided work? How can I learn to use them?)
A textual analysis was carried out in order to transform the free text - “workers’ voice” - into structured content.
Final recommendations

• «Remote work» was successful in the end; however «smart working» has to go a different way

• A road map - with identified objectives, operational tasks and appropriate technological equipment - is required

• A strong investment on communication has to be done in order to re-build working dynamics within the organizational units, between management and its staff and among employees themselves

• Having, and making, always clear in which context we are, and why some decisions have to be taken