Working Anytime, Anywhere: The Effects on the World of Work

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Definition of T/ICTM Work

Telework/ICT-mobile work (T/ICTM) is third generation telework (the "virtual office").

It includes all work performed by workers using Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) outside the employer's premises.

Scope

COUNTRIES:

- Europe: Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom
- Other regions of the world: Argentina, Brazil, India, Japan and the United States

POPULATION:

- Focus on employees but comparing with self-employed where relevant

T/ICTM worker categories

Category	Use of ICT	Place of work	
Regular home-based telework	Always or almost of all the time	Working in at least one other location than the employer's premises several times a month.	From home at least several times a month and in all other locations (except employer's premises) less often than several times a month.
High mobile T/ICTM			At least several times a week in at least two locations other than the employer's premises or working daily in at least one other location.
Occasional T/ICTM			Less frequently and/or fewer locations than high T/ICTM.
Always at the employer's premises	All categories	Always at the employer's premises.	

Source: *Sixth EWCS (2015)*

Methodology

Joint ILO-Eurofound Expert Questionnaire (2015)

1. Incidence of Telework / ICT Mobile work

2 Effects of Telework / ICT Mobile work

      Hours of work and work schedules

      Individual/Job performance and organisational performance

      Work-life balance

      Health and Well-being: risks and outcomes

3 Policy responses to Telework / ICT Mobile work
      Examples of companies
      National and sectoral agreements
      Government initiatives

4 Comments

European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS, 2015)

Typologies based on incidence and place

Country comparison

Effects

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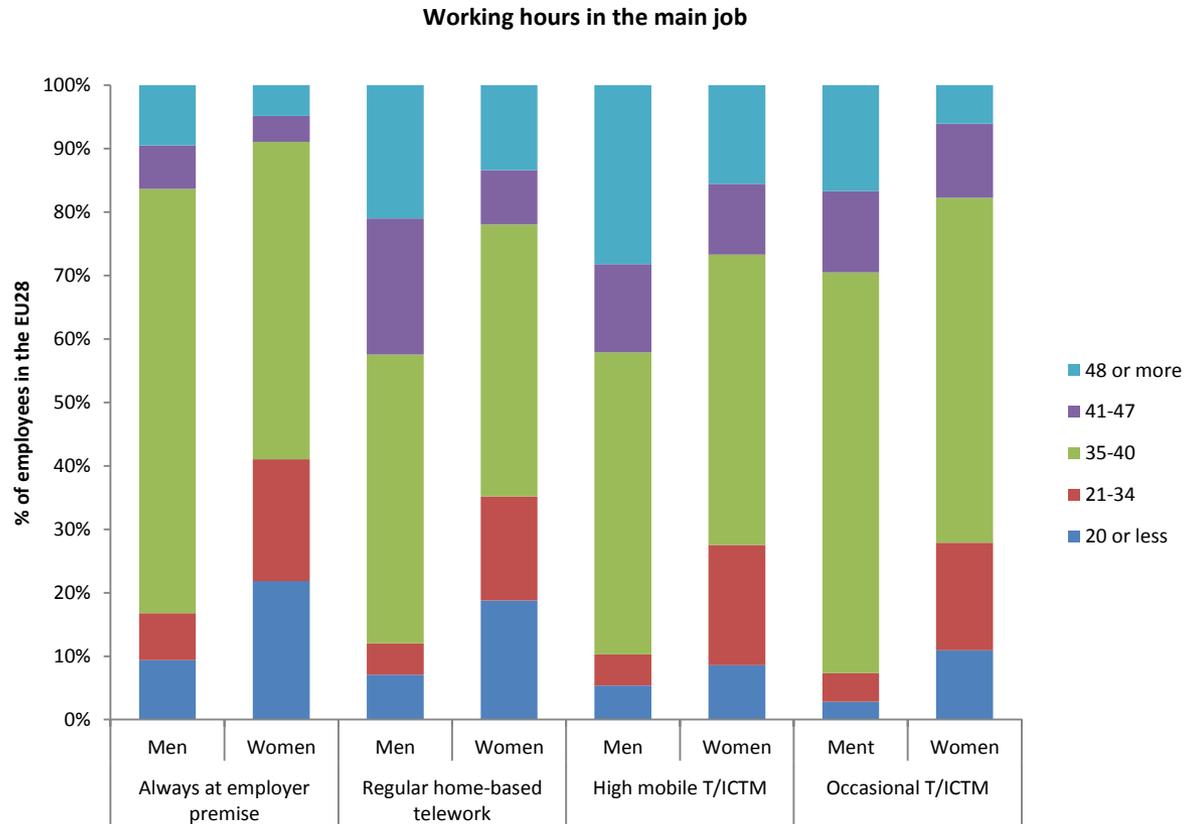
Incidence of T/ICTM Work

- General increase in T/ICTM in recent years (especially in other places different from home)
  - It ranges from 2% to 40% of employees, depending on the country, occupation, sector and the frequency with which employees engage in such work.

- T/ICTM is most common in the following industries: information and communication, finance and insurance, and professional, scientific and technical activities

- T/ICTM is most common among professionals and managers, but is also significant among clerical support and sales workers

- In relation to gender:
  - In general men are more likely to perform T/ICTM than women
  - However, women carry out more regular home-based telework than men.

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Effects of T/ICTM: Working Time

- <u>All</u> the national studies report that T/ICTM workers work longer hours than average employees in the country

- The national studies report that T/ICTM workers also work more atypical work schedules (evenings, weekends), but also perform personal tasks during normal working hours
  - E.g., Belgium, Finland, Spain, India, Japan

- The national studies also suggest that T/ICTM workers have greater working time autonomy/ "time sovereignty"
 - E.g., Belgium, Finland, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK and the US

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Effects of T/ICTM: Working Time

Percentage of employees by type of T/ICTM, gender and working hours, EU28

Working hours in the main job

Legend:
- 48 or more
- 41-47
- 35-40
- 21-34
- 20 or less

Y-axis: % of employees in the EU28

Categories:
- Always at employer premise (Men, Women)
- Regular home-based telework (Men, Women)
- High mobile T/ICTM (Men, Women)
- Occasional T/ICTM (Ment, Women)

Effects of T/ICTM: Working Time

Percentage of employees with working time autonomy by type of T/ICTM and gender, EU28
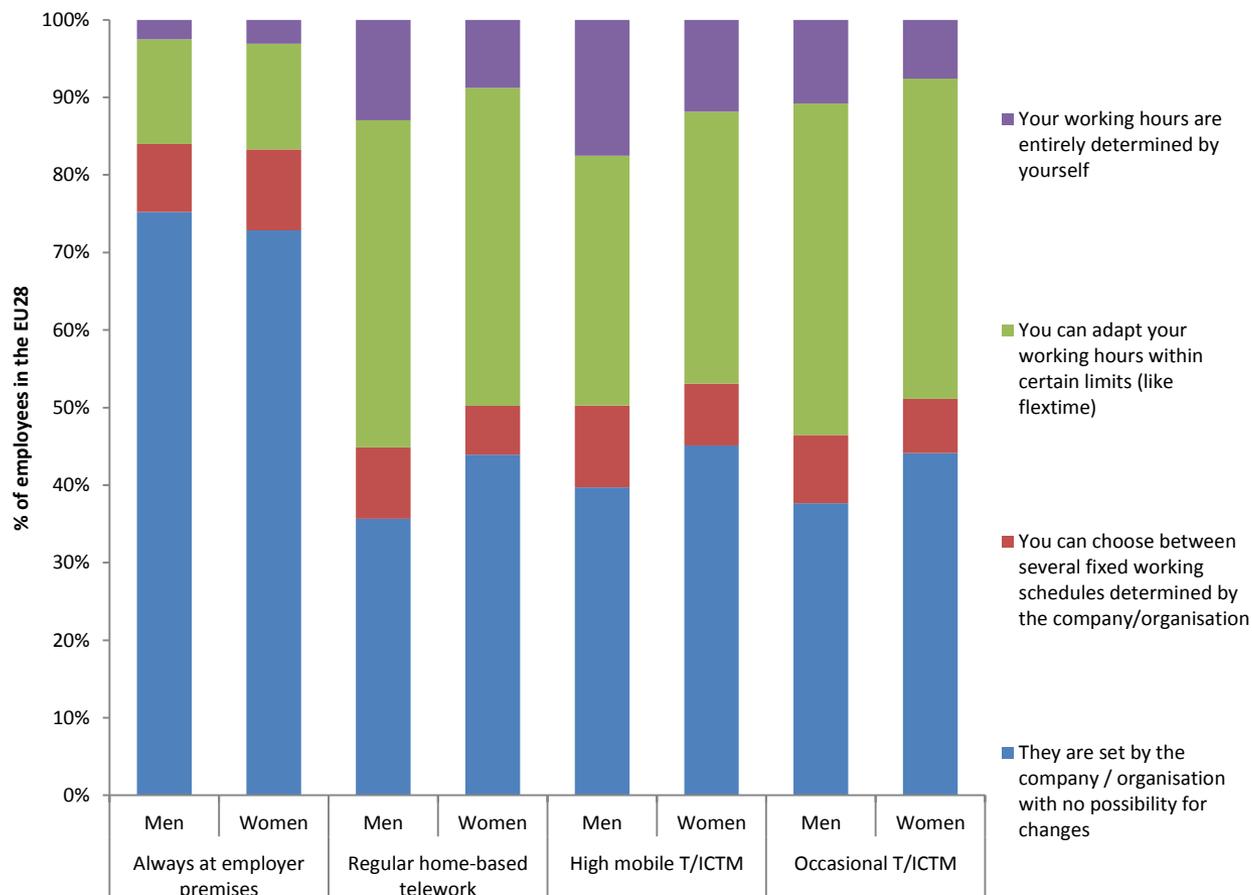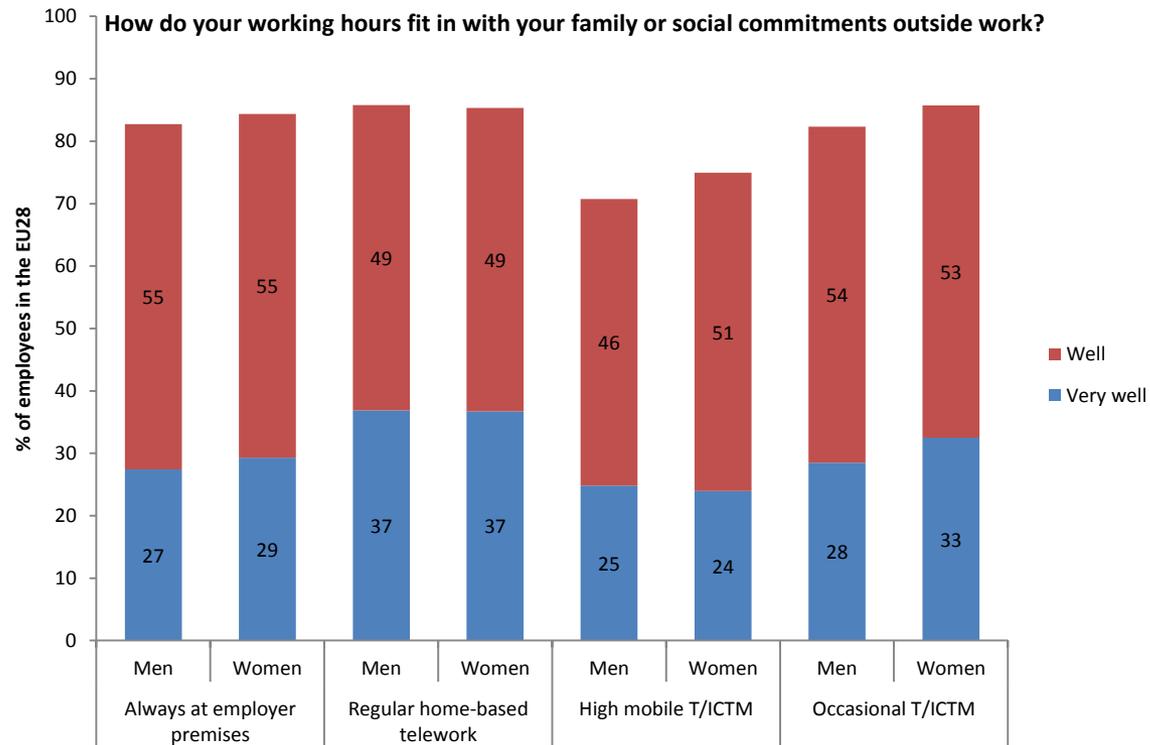
Effects of T/ICTM: Work-Life Balance

- Most of the national studies suggest that, overall, T/ICTM work has positive effects on work-life balance
  - Reported results most positive in Argentina, Belgium, Italy, Spain

- However, most national studies *also* report a "blurring of the boundaries" with more work-home and home-work interference
  - E.g., Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, India, the Netherlands, Sweden, the UK and the US

- Home-based teleworkers seem to report better work–life balance, while the 'high-mobile' workers report more negative outcomes.

- Partial and occasional forms of T/ICTM appear to result in a more positive balance than T/ICTM at higher frequency

- From a gender perspective, women doing T/ICTM tend to work shorter hours than men, and women seem to achieve slightly better work–life balance results
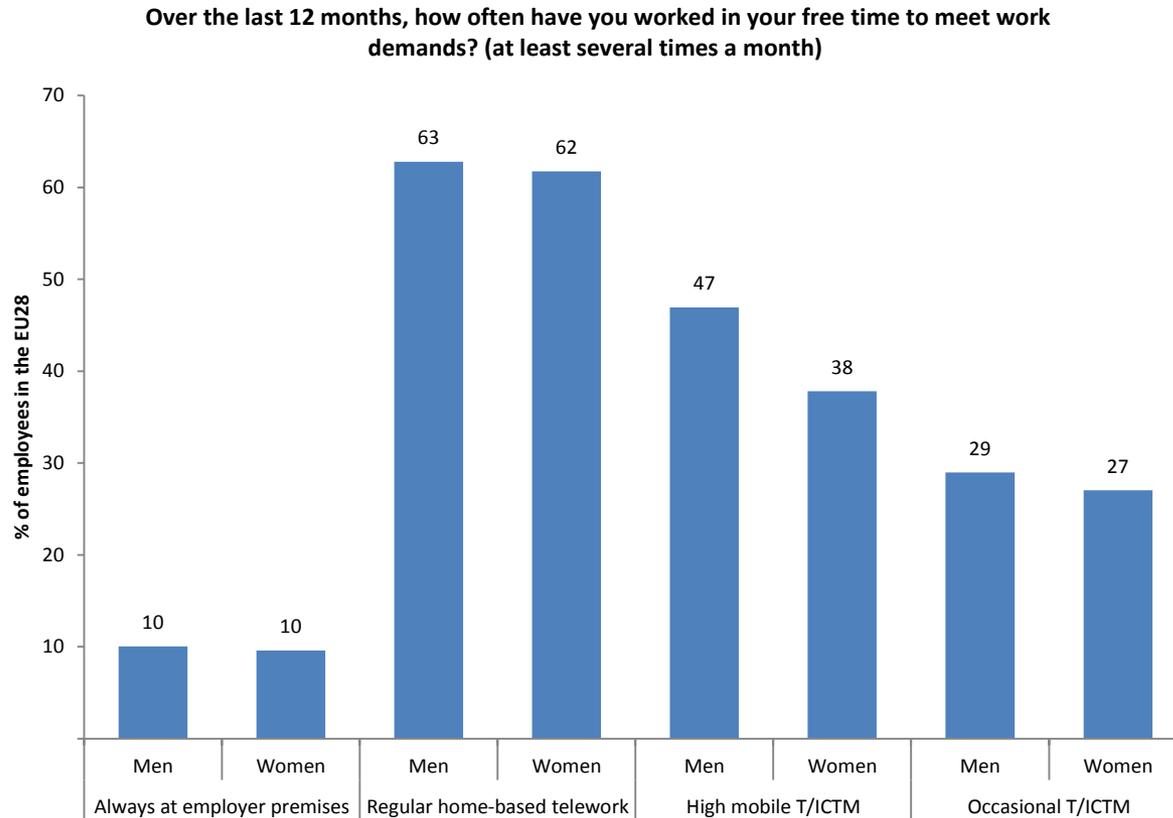
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Effects of T/ICTM: Work-Life Balance

Employees reporting that their working hours fit well or very well with family or social commitments, by type of T/ICTM and gender, EU28 (%)
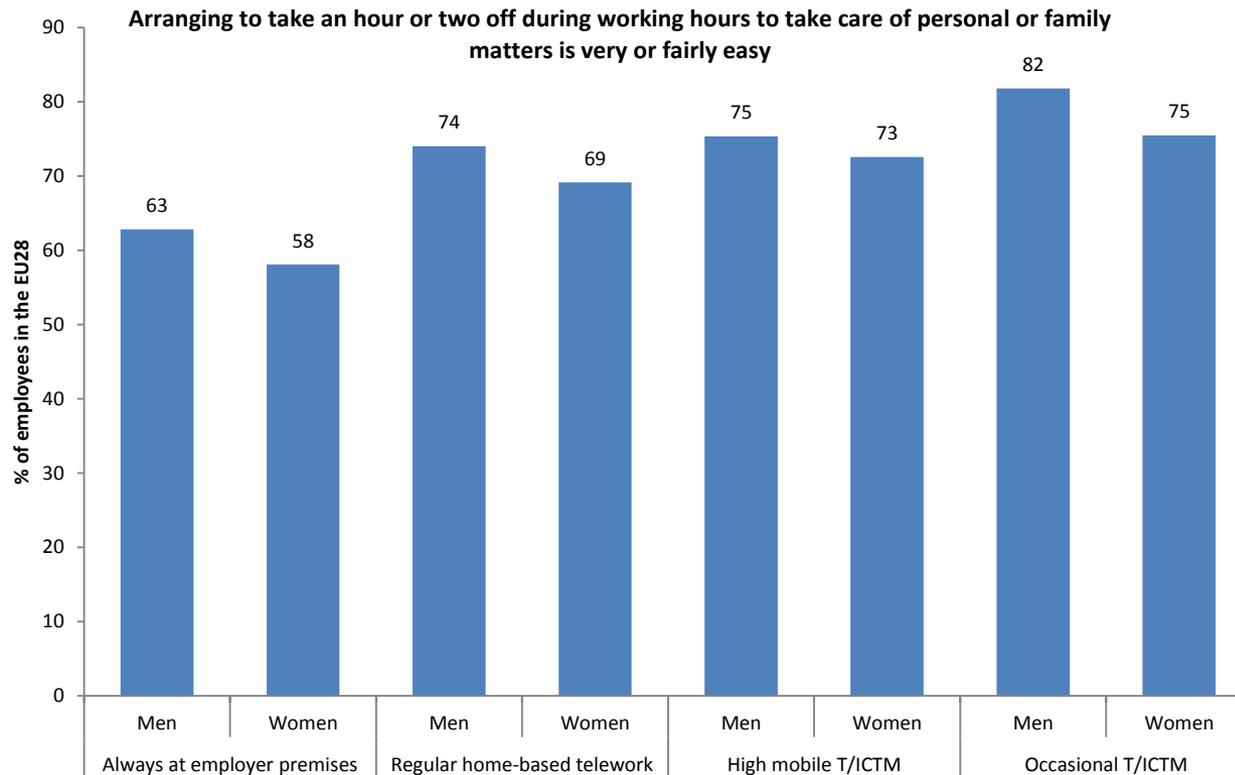

How do your working hours fit in with your family or social commitments outside work?

Effects of T/ICTM: Work-Life Balance

Employees reporting working in their free time to meet
work demands by type of T/ICTM and gender, EU28 (%)

Over the last 12 months, how often have you worked in your free time to meet work demands? (at least several times a month)

Effects of T/ICTM: Work-Life Balance

Employees reporting that it is very or fairly easy to take time off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters, by type of T/ICTM and gender, EU28 (%)

Arranging to take an hour or two off during working hours to take care of personal or family matters is very or fairly easy

Y-axis: % of employees in the EU28

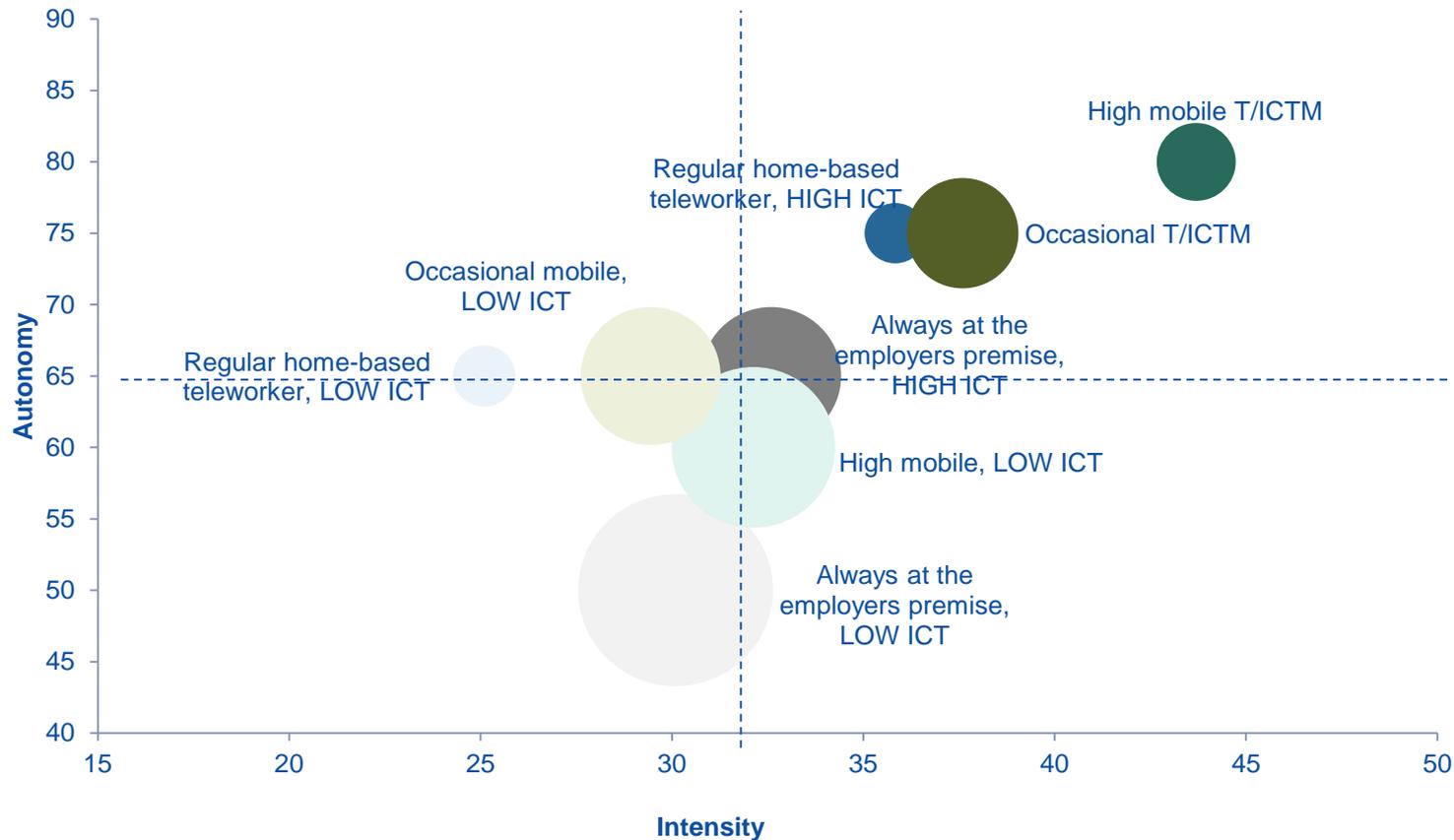|	Always at employer premises		Regular home-based telework		High mobile T/ICTM		Occasional T/ICTM	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
%	63	58	74	69	75	73	82	75

Effects of T/ICTM: Health and Well-Being

- Ergonomics: more research is needed
  - Finland, Spain, the Netherlands
- Blurring boundaries and stress
  - Most of the EU national studies
- Commuting and stress reduction
  - Brazil, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, UK, US
- Isolation is a potential problem
  - Argentina, Brazil, Italy, Finland, Hungary, Japan, Netherlands, UK
- Flexibility, autonomy, work intensification, and stress

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Effects of T/ICTM: Health and Well-being

Indices of autonomy and intensity in relation to working outside the employer's premises and frequency of use of ICTs

Bubble chart. X-axis: Intensity (15 to 50). Y-axis: Autonomy (40 to 90).

- High mobile T/ICTM
- Regular home-based teleworker, HIGH ICT
- Occasional T/ICTM
- Occasional mobile, LOW ICT
- Always at the employers premise, HIGH ICT
- Regular home-based teleworker, LOW ICT
- High mobile, LOW ICT
- Always at the employers premise, LOW ICT

Effects of T/ICTM: Health and Well-being

Percentage of employees reporting stress always or almost all of the time by T/ICTM group, EU28
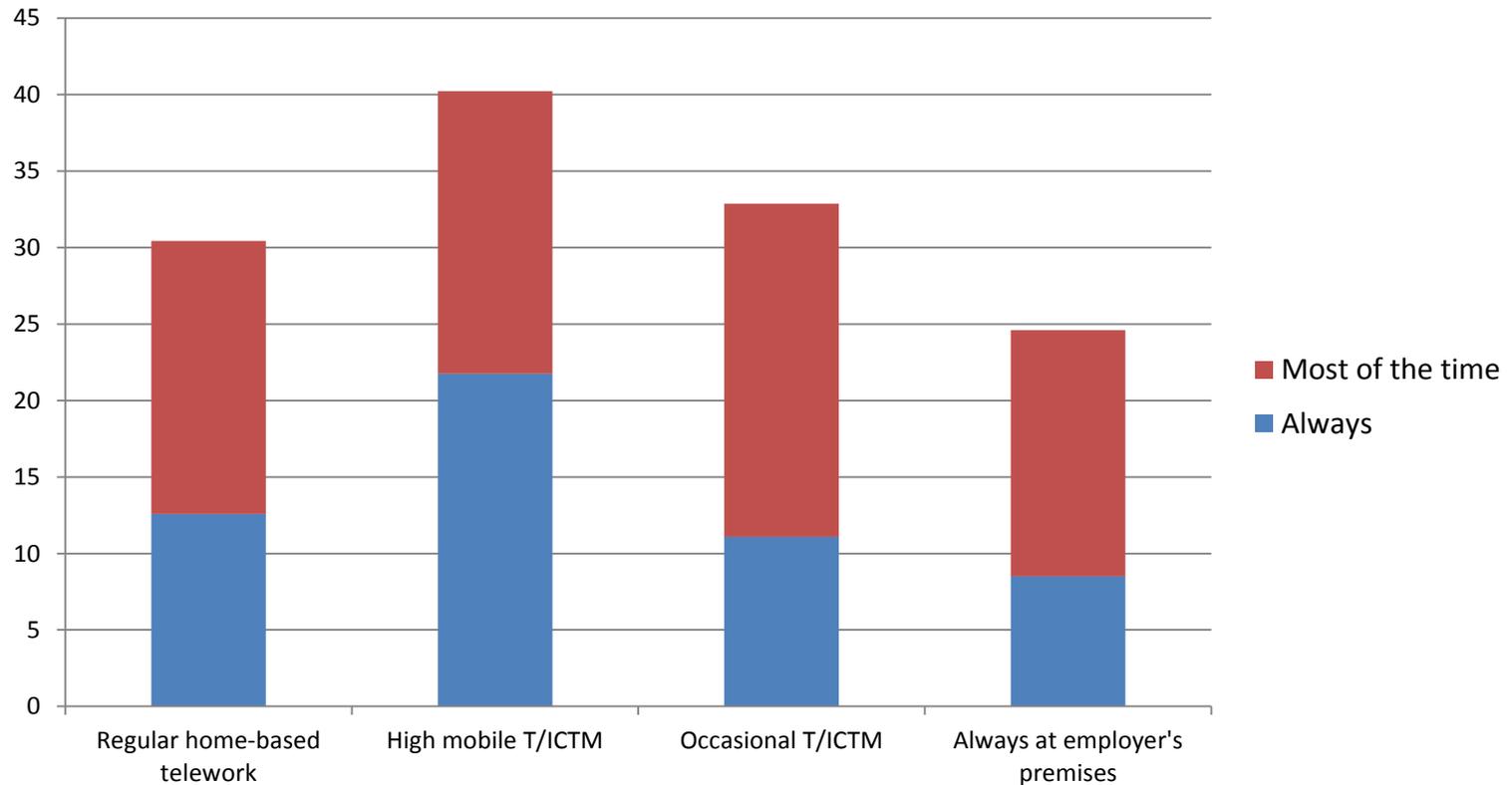
Main Effects on Job Quality: Summary

- The effects of T/ICTM work are **_ambiguous_** and perhaps even contradictory

- Longer, more "porous" working hours, including supplemental working hours, BUT reduced commuting time, more working time autonomy for employees to organize work schedules based on personal needs

- Better overall work-life balance, BUT more work-home and home-work interference due to blurring of work-life boundaries

- Greater work intensity, BUT more working time autonomy appears to offset the greater intensity except for "high mobile" T/ICTM workers

- More stress for some T/ICTM workers, especially ICT-mobile workers

- Gender differences in the type of T/ICTM work

- **Partial (part-time) telework and occasional ICT-mobile work seem to produce most positive balance in relation to the effects of T/ICTM**

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Policy Responses at All Levels

- National and sectoral social dialogue
  - Most notably the European Framework Agreement on Telework (2002); national/sectoral social dialogue in Belgium, Finland, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden
- National legislation and other governmental measures
  - Objectives include promoting work-life balance (e.g., a number of European countries), increased labour force participation of target groups (e.g., Japan, Brazil), continuity of operations (e.g., US)
- The "right to disconnect" (e.g., le droit à la déconnexion in France) and related company policies (e.g., in Germany)
- Company and organisational policies
  - Mainly linked to two objectives: promoting work-life balance and improving productivity/efficiency competitiveness

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Policy Suggestions

- Because T/ICTM work, overall, brings benefits for both employees and enterprises, policymakers should aim to strengthen the positive effects and reduce the negative ones
  - E.g., by promoting partial or part-time T/ICTM work, while restricting informal, supplemental T/ICTM and high mobile T/ICTM involving long working hours.

- The organisation of working time is changing and working time regulations need to reflect this reality. It is particularly important to:
  - Address the issue of supplemental T/ICTM work, and
  - Ensure that minimum rest periods are respected.

- A major challenge to applying OSH prevention principles and health and safety legislation to T/ICTM is the difficulty in supervising working environments outside the employer's premises.
  - Training and awareness initiatives are needed for both employees and managers on the effective use of ICTs for working remotely, as well as the potential risks.

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Policy Suggestions

- T/ICTM work can play a part in policies that aim to promote inclusive labour markets and societies, such as older workers, women with young children, and people with disabilities.

- Governmental initiatives and national/sectoral collective agreements are important for providing overall framework for a T/ICTM strategy.
  - This framework needs to provide sufficient space for developing T/ICTM arrangements that serve the needs and preferences of both workers and employers.

- The findings regarding differences in the working conditions of those engaged in different types of T/ICTM work need to be considered, and policy measures should tackle the reasons underlying the negative effects on working conditions.

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Thank you for your attention!

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