

# Remote work, telework, work at home home-based work

Definitions and measurement

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- There is a lack of international statistical standards for these concepts and guidance for measurement

Different terms are used, sometimes interchangeably, difficult to know what is measured and to access international harmonized data

## Background

- Working from a distance and working at home are not new phenomena
- Analytical and policy interest of flexible working arrangements, impact of technology, work-life balance
- Increased attention due to Covid-19
  - Working at home, telework became an important response to Covid-19, lock downs, social distances etc.
  - Likely to have a longer term impact in the way we will organize our work.
- Guidance for defining and measuring remote work, telework, work at home and home-based work
- Provides recommendations for how to:
  - statistically define these concepts
  - measure them in a HH-survey
- Can be accessed at: <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/covid-19/>

# Concepts and definitions

# Work at home, Home-based work

Concepts: work at home

- *Work at home:* Work that takes place fully or partly (at least once in the last four working weeks) within the worker's own residence or other type of dwelling in which the worker normally resides.



## Independent of the status in employment

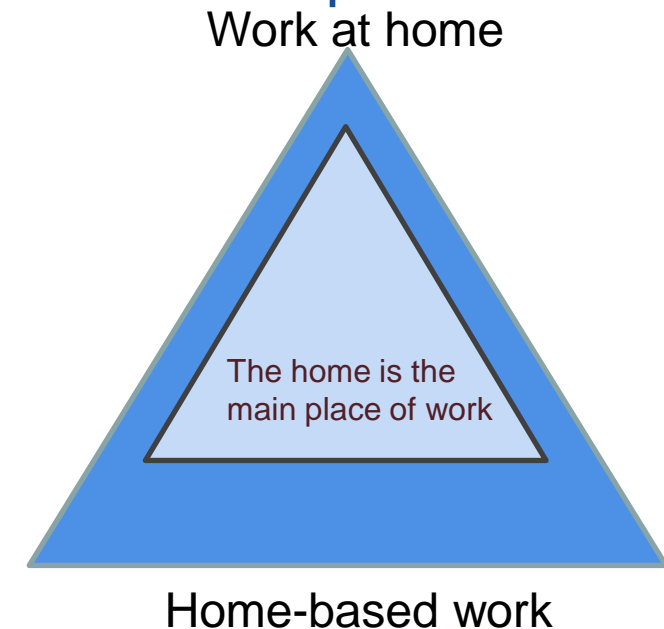
- All persons in employment can carry out work at home:
- **Independent workers:**
  - Employers
  - Own-account workers
- **Dependent workers:**
  - Dependent contractors
  - Employees
  - Contributing family workers
- Can all carry out employment at home

# Home-based work



### Concepts: Home-based work

- *Home-based work*: persons carrying out work whose main place of work is their own home.
- Workers who usually/mainly carry out their work at home.
- Straight forward under normal circumstances, but was a challenge during lock downs.
- Depending on objective it might be a need for a reference period.  
E.g. Workers who have carried out at least half of the working days of the last working month at own-home?
- Sub-category to the concept of work at home



# Remote work and Telework

Why are these concepts more complex?

- Remote work and telework is not limited to work at home, can take place in different locations.
- Needs to be work carried out “away from something” but what is that something?
- In many cases it is straight forward.  
E.g. for many employees it would be working in an alternative location from the premises of the employer, typically the office.
- But what about independent workers that do not have an office, street vendors, or patrolling police officers etc. etc.?



## Concepts: Remote work and telework

- In order to conceptually define remote work and telework we need to add the underlying concepts of:
    - the *default place of work* and
    - an *alternative location*
  - Based on these two concepts, remote work and telework can be conceptually derived
  - Default place of work
- A theoretical concept needed to provide a reference for defining “alternative location”
- Can be the workers main place of work
  - But the worker might not carry out any work at all in the default place of work

Concept: Remote work

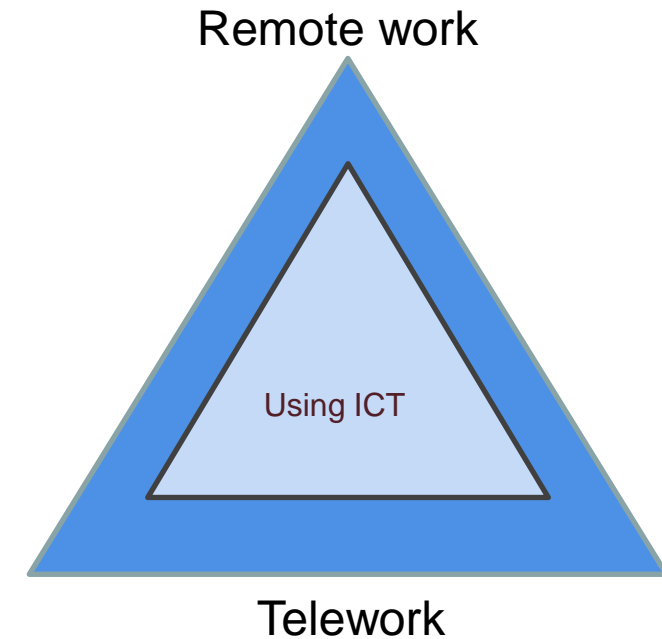
- **Remote work:** *work that is fully or partly carried out on an alternative worksite other than the default place of work.*
  
- **Independent workers:** work that is carried out in a different location than:
  - Premises, facilities or sites controlled by the independent worker for the purpose of carrying out the work
  - Own home if this is the main place of work
  - Client's facilities or sites
  - Public space, if the nature of the duties means that they have to be carried out in a public space
  
- Independent workers who do not control any fixed premises used for carrying out the work and who do not work mainly from their own home are excluded from remote work

Concept: Remote work

- **Dependent workers:** work that is carried out in a different location than:
  - the premises, facilities or sites of the economic unit on which the worker is dependend (such as an employer's office, a construction site, a farm or a workshop).
  - the client's facilities or sites of the economic unit on which the worker is dependent .
  - a public space, if the nature of the duties means that they have to be carried out in a public space.

## Concept: Telework

- **Telework:** work is fully or partly carried out at an alternative location other than the default place of work i.e. remote work; **and**
- The worker use information and communications technology (ICT) or landline telephones as part of carrying out the work.
- Telework can be viewed as a sub-category to remote work



## Combining the concepts

- **The four core concepts can be combined adding to the understanding or the combined concepts can also be targeted for a given measurement.**
  - Remote work at home
  - **Telework from home** (highly relevant during Covid-19)
  - **Home-based teleworker**
  - Home-based remote worker



# Data collection in a HH-Survey

# What is the target group, target concept

- The questions to use will be impacted by the scope of the measurement and the concept that is targeted.
- Target group?
  - Is the interest among employees only, or also among independent workers?
- Targeted concept(s)?
  - Is it a need to collect data only on *telework from home, home based teleworker* or broader e.g. interest to capture all *remote work*.

# WORK AT HOME AND HOME-BASED WORKERS

## Q1. In what kind of place do you typically work?

1. At (your/name's) own home **Home-based work**
2. At the client's or employer's home
3. At a farm, agricultural land or fishing site
4. At a business, office, factory, fixed premises or site
5. On the street or another public space without a fixed structure
6. In/on a vehicle (without daily work base)
7. Door-to-door
8. Other
9. Cannot say

## Q2. (In your main job) have you spent at least one full day in the last four weeks working...

(READ ALL)

1. In your own home? **Work at home**
2. In the same grounds or buildings as your home, but in a separated space?
3. I have not worked at home in the last four weeks.

## Q3. How frequently did you work from home in the last four weeks?

(READ ALL)

1. More than half of your working days **Home-based work (Last month)**
2. Once a week but less than half of your working days **Regular WaH**
3. Less than once a week **Occasionally WaH**

# TELEWORK AT HOME

**Q4. Did you use a computer, smartphone or tablet to carry out your work at home?**

1. Yes Telework

2. No

Which in combination with main place of work, work at home question and status in employment allows us to identify telework at home and home-based telework

**These questions are sufficient in order to identify:**

- work at home
- Home-based work
- Telework at home
- Home-based telework

# REMOTE WORK NOT AT HOME

If the aim is to measure all remote work then remote work outside own-home also needs to be identified

## Independent workers, CFW working from own office or own-home

(Filter: independent workers, contributing family workers and (Main place=4) or (main place=1))

**Q5A. In the last four weeks, did you (in your main job) work in a place other than your own home, own premises/office, client's premises?**

- 1. Yes Remote work not at home
- 2. No

## For all employees and dependent contractors

(Filter: All employees, dependent contractor's main job).

**Q5B. In the last four weeks, did you (in your main job) work in a place other than your own home, or (INSERT TEXT FROM MAIN PLACE OF WORK)**

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

(Filter: Employees, dependent contractors and MPLA\_TELEWK=1)

**MPLA\_REMOU**

**Was this outside your own premises, an employer's premises or a client's premises?**

- 1. Yes Remote work not at home
- 2. No

# TELEWORK NOT AT HOME

**Q6. Did you use a computer, smartphone or tablet to carry out the work that took place in this/these different locations?**

1. Yes

Telework not at home

2. No

**Thank you very much!**

**The guidelines can be accessed at:**

<https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/covid-19/#guidance>

# A global picture: Home-based workers

- Pre-covid-19
- The ILO estimates that there were about 260 million home-based workers in the world in 2019, representing 7.9 per cent of global employment
- Most home-based workers are women. According to ILO estimates women accounting for 56 per cent of all homebased workers
- Heterogenic group:
- In low- and middle-income countries, most home-based workers were own-account workers (Not working remotely or teleworking).
- But in high-income countries, employees were the largest group (Home-based teleworkers).
- Earnings are typical lower than those of non-home-based workers
- But there is also a subset of homeworkers (professional and managerial teleworkers) who earn more than non-home-based workers.

(From ILO publication: Working from home From invisibility to decent work,

[https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/forthcoming-publications/WCMS\\_765806/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/forthcoming-publications/WCMS_765806/lang--en/index.htm))