
Teleworking and Remote Work in Local Government Administration Management in Poland

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Abstract

Purpose: The research goal adopted in this article is to identify the factors determining remote work, as well as to determine the potential of this form of work in the context of increasing the functionality and efficiency of local government institutions not only in the daily work of these institutions, but above all in crisis situations.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The research methodology was based on the construction of a research tool that would allow to collect data on remote work and teleworking in Polish local government administration. The research method used was related to an online survey, which was addressed to all members of the Union of Polish Metropolises (union of the 12 largest cities in Poland).

Findings: The main conclusions from the analysis performed include: (1) implementation of tasks in the form of teleworking has not been the object of interest of Polish local governments so far; (2) more than a half of the surveyed local governments assessed positively the preparation of these units to remote work implementation in the period of the SARS-Cov-2 pandemic; (3) the experience regarding remote work gained during the pandemic shows that employees no longer fear this particular form of work.

Practical implications: The result of the conducted research was to obtain information on the experience of the surveyed organizations in the field of remote work process implementation before the pandemic period, during its duration, as well as to consider this form of work in the future, taking into account the conclusions presented in the article.

Originality/Value: The conducted research is the first of its kind carried out in Poland since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The obtained results are undoubtedly a valuable source of information on how to prepare Polish local governments to carry out work remotely.

Keywords: Public management, teleworking, remote work, local government administration, COVID-19 pandemic.

JEL codes: O35, J24, M15, M20.

Paper type: Research article.

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1. Introduction

The rapid spread of SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus and the resulting pandemic state is an extremely difficult time for society, mainly because it is a phenomenon that directly affects human health and life. However, it is worth emphasizing that this is not the only area where the pandemic poses a significant threat. It has a significant impact on economic processes, the functioning of institutions, the ways of organizing the work process and broadly understood education. The new reality has significantly changed people's lifestyle and habits. It caused the need to re-learn interpersonal communication, being among a group of people or applying new forms of coexistence (Grima *et al.*, 2020). The changes caused by the pandemic undoubtedly had a huge impact on the functioning of many organizations as well, which were forced to implement various, rarely used solutions. One of such aspects was the introduction of flexible forms of work, including solutions modelled on telework, which most often took the form of remote work (Khan *et al.*, 2020).

The current situation and the dynamically introduced changes regarding the area of the work process were an inspiration to analyse this issue as part of a scientific research project. Its authors decided that the subject of the study would be work process carried out in local government administration. The aim of the study was to identify the factors determining remote work, as well as to determine the potential of this form of work in relation to the possibility of increasing the functionality and efficiency of local government institutions especially in crisis situations. To fulfil the purpose, a questionnaire was prepared, the structure of which was built on the basis of four research areas. In the first one, the authors focused on obtaining information about the experience of the studied institutions regarding the implementation of official duties, which were possible to perform remotely before the pandemic period. The second part of the questionnaire was devoted to assessing the experience of local governments in the remote work field, which was acquired during the pandemic. Additionally, the third area studied is the analysis of the flexible forms of work potential for local government administration in the future. The last part of the questionnaire was devoted to the characteristics of the respondent.

Due to the still prevailing pandemic, the study was conducted in the online survey form survey and conducted between September 21 and October 28, 2020 using Google tools. The survey questionnaire was addressed to persons acting as the City Secretary in the largest Polish cities, which are associated in the Union of Polish Metropolises. It is worth emphasizing that the survey achieved a very high level of manoeuvrability – 100% of the total number of respondents took part.

The implemented research project was to provide the data necessary to carry out an in-depth analysis of the situation in local government administration in Poland. Additional intention of the authors was to contribute to the effective organization of work in local government units in the future using remote work tools in a much wider range than has been the case so far.

2. The Essence of Flexible Forms of Employment

Non-standard forms of employment have been known for a long time, while the increased interest in them in highly developed countries took place in the 90s of the last century. This situation was mainly influenced by the adoption of the European Employment Strategy and the adaptation of national strategies by the Member States of the European Union in 1997. One of the most important issues that were particularly taken into account when developing the Strategy was the need to contribute to the growth of adaptability of both enterprises and employees, which would keep pace with the dynamically changing environment.

The Strategy pays particular attention to the fact that it is possible to positively influence the development of adaptation abilities of employees, e.g. by introducing changes to the organization of work, with particular emphasis on the following factors: working time, innovative forms of work, modernization of employment contracts and creating motivation for self-employment (Goetschy, 1999). Flexible work forms occupy an extremely important place among innovative forms of work and at this point they need further explanation.

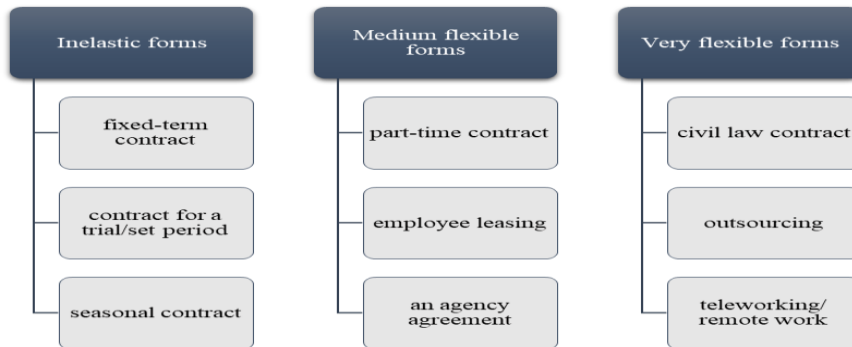
The literature on the subject most often states that this term regards to atypical forms of employment, which are characterized by the flexibility of many elements that make up the work process. These are among others the workplace – kind of spatial flexibility, which means that the employee is given the freedom to choose the place of work; working time, i.e. enabling the employee to organize working time in an individual manner, deviating from the established norms; scope of duties, i.e. offering the employee various tasks to be performed and various functions to be performed in the organization, remuneration, and therefore the dependence of the remuneration and its volatility on the market situation and currently performed tasks, the formula of the employment relationship, as well as the forms of relations between the employee and the employer (Brzeziński, 2017).

It can therefore be concluded that the flexibility of the labour market appeared with changes in the global organization of the labour process, trade liberalization, economic restructuring or reforms of national legislation and introduced a completely new type and new possibilities of the work process.

When analyzing the essence of flexible forms of employment, it is also necessary to explain a certain inaccuracy that appears on this date. Namely, the flexibility of employment forms can be considered in the context of the organization of working time or a non-standard employment formula. In the literature on the subject, the term “flexible forms of employment” much more often refers to the characterization of a method other than the traditional method of providing work (Grabowska, 2012). Therefore, it is a type of work performed by people who, for example, may be employed for a fixed period or for a specific task, work part-time, independent workers or people who work from home or in the teleworking system (Jacukowicz,

2004). In order to systematize information on flexible forms of employment, the most popular and most frequently used alternative types of work are presented below, taking into consideration the flexibility criterion (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Forms of employment of employees according to the criterion of the degree of flexibility



Source: Own study.

Most often, it is believed that the main advantage of flexible forms of employment is increasing the competitiveness of institutions operating in a turbulent environment full of dynamically changing technologies. However, it cannot be ignored that another often mentioned and important advantage of flexible forms of employment is the possibility of using them in times of crisis, which in fact is a great support for the proper functioning of the organization under unfavourable circumstances. (Hofacker and Konig, 2013).

At this point, it is worth mentioning the existence of three theories determining the reasons for the emergence of the need to increase work flexibility. The first theory assumes that it was technological innovations that caused the implementation of changes in work organization in enterprises. According to the second approach, it is the growing competitiveness in the world and changes introduced in the organization of production that have led to the need to look for ways to reduce costs and increase labour productivity. The third perspective emphasizes the political nature of flexibility perceived as striving for governments, enterprises and workers to get the most benefit from changes introduced in regulations related to the organization of work (Eyck, 2003).

The use of flexible forms of employment is a solution that has grown in importance today. The difficult epidemic situation forced many organizations to modify the current way of carrying out the work process. Thanks to the quick response to the changing environment and the use of flexible forms of employment, these enterprises are able to survive the period of economic slowdown. Moreover, they can obtain additional benefits resulting from the implementation of flexible forms of work. The undisputed benefits for entrepreneurs may be: reduction of fixed labour

costs, reduction of unproductive working time of employees, better use of machinery and production equipment, reduction of the space needed for running a business, increased mobility of the workforce, increase in labour productivity and competitiveness of enterprises, employment to individual needs and possibilities (Kryńska, 2001). It should be emphasized, however, that this does not mean that the benefits of such a method of cooperation are achieved only by employers, what is more – the profits from flexible forms of employment are also drawn by employees, who more and more often initiate this particular form of work. For many employees, one of the most important benefits achieved thanks to flexible form of work is the ability to continue to be employed, also when they find themselves in a situation that makes it difficult to perform work under traditional subordinate employment.

3. Teleworking and Remote Work – Theoretical Approach

The term teleworking, which describes a certain innovative way of getting work done, is not a new formula. The term was first used in 1973, when J.M. Nilles in the face of the fuel crisis suggested that organizations should perform their basic functions through teleworking (Nilles, 2003). Since then, teleworking has been increasingly used by enterprises and public institutions. Also today, it is a popular form of performing tasks, but not always properly understood and interpreted. It should be emphasized that with the growing interest in such a tool, there were similar terms for a similar way of working, e.g. remote work, mobile work, e-work or distance work. Therefore, along to the research project carried out by the authors of this study, it was extremely important to correctly define the differences between teleworking and remote work.

There are many definitions of teleworking in the subject literature. One of the more frequently used ones is the one proposed by the creator of the term describing the phenomenon. According to Nilles, teleworking should be considered as any kind of information technology replacing work-related travel. Nilles also formulated teleworking categories, i.e. telecommuting, which define periodic work outside the company's premises, it can also be work from home, a telecentre or at the client's place, performed at least one day a week (Nilles, 2003). A similar definition was proposed by Harker and MacDonell – according to their views teleworking is the use of communication technology during business trips, paid work from home, from remote offices, teleworking centres and other workplaces away from the office, at least one day a week (Harker and MacDonnell, 2012).

Teleworking as one of the methods of performing work is reflected in the Polish Labour Code. Art. 67 states that work may be performed regularly outside the workplace, using electronic means of communication within the meaning of the provisions on the electronic services. It is also specified that an employee who performs work under teleworking conditions is obliged to provide the employer with the results of her/his work, in particular via electronic means of communication (Labour Code, 1974 with amendments).

Summarizing the above considerations on teleworking, it can be concluded that it is a way of organizing work that allows the employee to perform official tasks outside the organization premises with the use of information technology.

On the other hand, remote work, unlike teleworking, has not been codified in the Polish Labour Code. Moreover, it is also difficult to find its definition in the literature on the subject. It should be emphasized, however, that teleworking and remote work are not identical concepts and should not be used interchangeably. Therefore, it became necessary to define this term and define the features that distinguish remote work and from teleworking. Remote work should be considered temporary or less formalized possibility of carrying out the work process in the form of the so-called home office. What distinguishes remote work is that there is no need to regulate this method of work in writing in the employment contract (at least – so far). In practice, it means that usually on the basis of an oral agreement (although in the time of a pandemic such agreements tend to occur also in a written form more and more frequently), the employee can perform the duties previously performed in organization premises directly from home (Blumberga and Pylinskaya, 2019).

Therefore, it can be concluded that work in remote mode is incidental. As a rule, the employee performs work in the workplace, and only from time to time the employer allows her/him to work remotely. The most common reasons contributing to remote work are extraordinary circumstances (e.g. inability to travel to work – public transport strike; the need to stay at home – pandemic state, etc.). In such cases, the general employment relationship law should apply to the domestic worker as well. Unfortunately, this form of carrying out work from outside the office raises many doubts, as well as organizational and formal problems. Some organizational issues can be efficiently resolved using modern tools and by building appropriate relationships with the employee team (Łaniewski, 2020).

On the other hand, the greatest challenge faced by employers is the need to ensure the safety of work of people performing work tasks remotely. It is an extremely difficult area of work to regulate, hence it is undoubtedly one of the most serious problems related to the use of flexible forms of work, for which no effective solution has yet been found.

In order to summarize the considerations on teleworking and remote work, a comparative analysis of these two phenomena is presented below. The first noticeable difference concerns the way this type of work is formalized in Polish legislation. Teleworking is legally regulated and permanent, and is described in detail in Art. 67 of the Labour Code. However, remote work has not yet been included in the applicable labour law. Another difference is that, as part of telework, an employee may perform her/his official duties outside the workplace, as the agreement on this is contained in the employment contract. In turn, remote work is usually based on an oral agreement between the employee and the employer. Another difference concerns the consent of the employee to perform work in this

formula. Teleworking is established on the basis of the agreement of both parties, while remote work takes place only with the consent of the employer (Czubińska, 2020). It is also worth emphasizing that despite the noticeable differences, teleworking and remote work have certain common features. Among them, it should be emphasized that the employer must provide employees with the tools necessary for their work. Moreover, the same rights and obligations under the Labour Code apply to both teleworkers and remotely workers.

4. Teleworking and Remote Work - Empirical Research

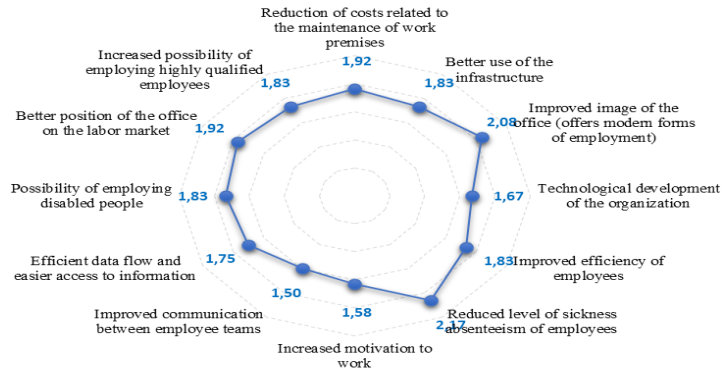
Based on research conducted on a group of 12 largest metropolises in Poland, it can be concluded that the experience of local governments regarding the use of flexible forms of employment in the period before the pandemic was practically negligible. The form and procedure of employing employees in local government administration are set out in the provisions of the above mentioned Labour Code and, in particular, in the Act on Local Government Employees (2019), which generally focus on the obligations and rights of employees, the process of entering into employment relationships or periodic assessments. An additional element minimizing the interest of local government authorities in the organization of work in offices with the use of tools such as teleworking or remote work are highly hierarchical relationships and reporting lines as well as vertical (vertical) organizational structures.

Taking into account the presented conditions, the local government administration has so far carried out its statutory tasks based on its own staff traditionally working in the office's premises. As a result of the research, it turned out that only one city (Łódź) used, but to a very minimal extent, the employment of workers in the form of telework. The lack of practical experience of local government authorities regarding the use of teleworking as a flexible form of employment of employees influenced the assessment of both potential benefits and threats related to employing employees in the discussed formula, because both examined areas were assessed relatively low – respondents do not see significant benefits and threats related to teleworking (Figures 1-2).

According to the respondents, the most important benefits include the following elements: reduced sickness absenteeism, improved image of the office and better position of the office on the labour market. In turn, the main threats to the office resulting from the provision of teleworking were indicated as: threats to data security, the need to use appropriate computer hardware and software necessary to provide telework, high labour costs, and the lack of proper employee control. The period of a pandemic is undoubtedly a very difficult time in which individual tasks of local governments are subjected to appropriate regrouping and re-evaluation. Due to the circumstances, many of these tasks must be performed in the new formula.

Thus, from the cognitive side, this forced reorganization of the work of local government administration also has its positive effects – for the first time on such a large scale, remote work tools are tested, implemented and used.

Figure 1. Potential benefits of teleworking



Note: Responses fall into the following scale: from 1 to 5, where the element 1 is not relevant, and the element 5 is very important

Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

Figure 2. Potential threats regarding teleworking



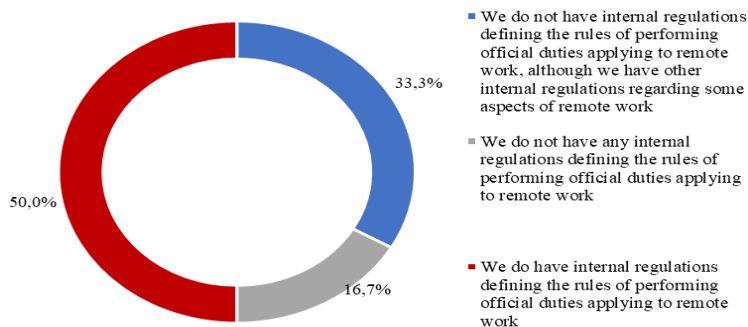
Note: Responses fall into the following scale: from 1 to 5, where the element 1 is not relevant, and the element 5 is very important

Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

In a relatively short time, local governments implemented the necessary internal legal regulations enabling employees to perform their official duties as part of remote work (Figure 3). It is also worth paying attention to the fact that when implementing internal legal regulations in the field of remote work, local governments limited themselves only to the most important formal issues (Figure 4), such as: rules for recording working time (25%), employee obligations to comply with provisions of the GDPR and confidentiality of information (13.9%) and the rules of using company computer equipment (13.9%).

During the pandemic, the share of employees working remotely was 21-40% (83% of respondents' indications). Employees' openness to this form of work may prove the potential of remote work and may be a promising forecast for the future. It is worth noting that in more than half of the studied cases, it was the employees themselves who applied for the possibility of remote work during the pandemic or the idea was developed together with the management of the office.

Figure 3. *The scope of implementation of internal regulations regarding remote work in local government administration*



Source: Own study based on the conducted research

Figure 4. *Objective scope of internal regulations regarding remote work in local government administration*



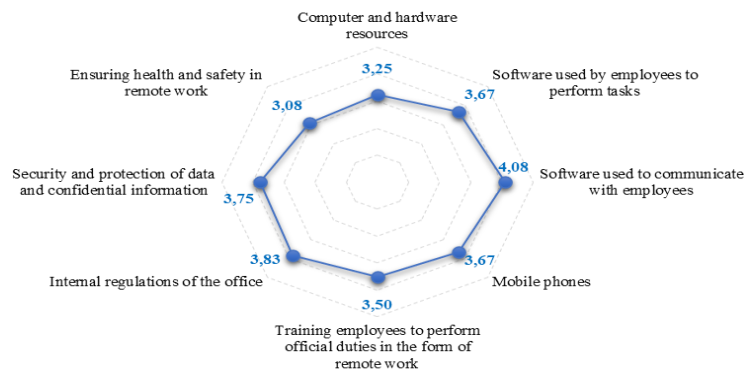
Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

Moreover, as many as 92% of respondents indicated that the local government administration assessed this form of performance of official duties very well or at least well. It is clearly visible that flexible forms of employment of local government administration employees have great potential for future use. On the other hand the assessment of the preparation of local governments for remote work during the pandemic is not so clear. Nearly 60% of respondents assessed the preparation of

offices for remote work as good and on satisfactory level, but at the same time over 40% were not able to unambiguously assess this topic. During the assessment of individual areas of local government institutions preparation for remote work, the respondents rated highly the preparation in the area of ensuring data security and protection and the quality of the software used for communication with employees.

Another, highly rated group of factors were: software used by employees to perform official tasks and internal regulations existing in the office. A positive aspect is undoubtedly the fact that the respondents did not assess any of the elements indicated in the survey as very poorly prepared. In their opinion, the areas that should be given more attention were: occupational health and safety during performing remote work and training of employees in the scope of carrying out work in this non-typical form (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Assessment of the preparation of individual areas of local government administration for performing remote work

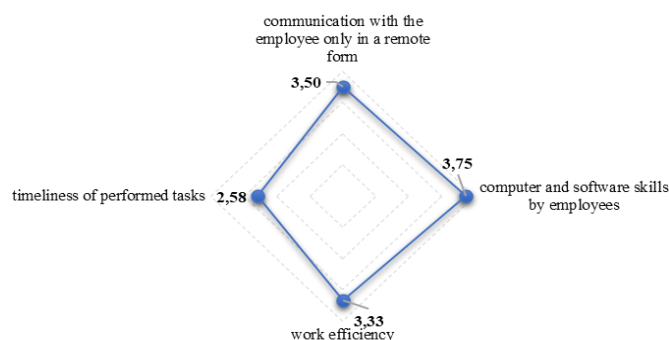


Note: Responses fall into the following scale: from 1 to 5, where the grade 1 is very bad and the grade 5 is very good.

Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

As previously indicated in the study, the respondents unanimously admitted that office employees were open to the new organization of work and that they efficiently operated teleinformation equipment used for remote work without much difficulty. Unfortunately, performing duties remotely had a negative impact primarily on two areas of work: promptness of tasks delivery and work efficiency. The respondents also emphasize that contact with employees only with the help of ICT tools is not always the most effective way of communication (Figure 6). The problem of the deterioration of work efficiency observed in the study and regarding insufficient promptness of task delivery results from several reasons. Firstly, local government administration employees generally use desktop computers at work, while portable computers are primarily used by management (at various levels). In a situation where an employee needs to work from home, there was a problem with properly equipping employees with adequate work tools.

Figure 6. Evaluation of the effectiveness of local government employees working remotely



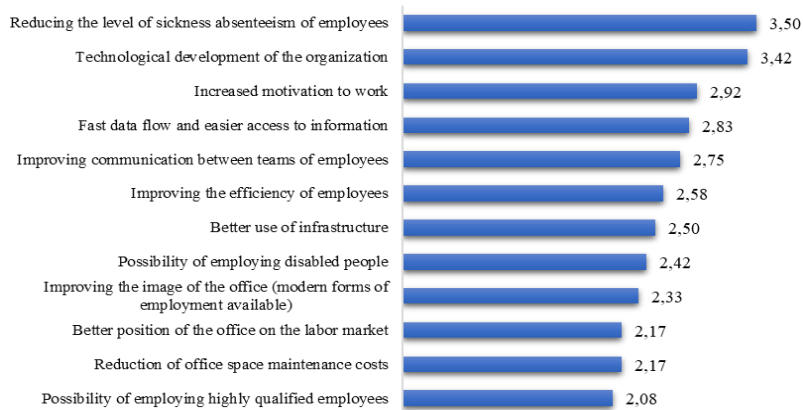
Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

This problem did not arise in the case of software, as more and more used applications are based on the so-called cloud solutions, thus enabling remote logging in and remote work. Secondly, access to information and documents outside the office premises was significantly limited, which could also have a negative impact on the promptness of duties performed by employees. The third, but still extremely important element was the lack or too little training of employees in the field of remote work organization and self-discipline, both among employees and managers.

The research carried out regarding the implementation of business tools by local governments (Modrzyński *et al.*, 2018; 2019) confirms that local government administration participates almost exclusively in training directly related to professional activities and/or on-the-job training. Training in improving soft skills – for both employees and managerial staff, managerial training, training in work organization or conducting negotiations are areas that, unfortunately, are not implemented. Lack of general managerial skills, lack of skills to manage a dispersed team of employees or poor organization of task work are factors that negatively affect the effectiveness of remote work.

A very important element in the assessment of remote work is to identify a set of potential benefits that individual offices may obtain as a result of changing the work organization model. According to the respondents, the most important benefits include the following elements: reducing the level of sickness absence of employees and the technological development of the organization. On the other hand, the benefits from the categories which are not the most important, but have a significant impact on organizations, were indicated: fast data flow and easier access to information, increased motivation to work, improved communication between employee teams and increased employee efficiency. On the other hand, the benefits that turned out to be insignificant from the offices point of view were as follows: reduction of costs related to the maintenance of work premises, better position on the labour market and greater ease of employment of qualified employees (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Potential benefits of remote work in local government administration



Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

The presented assessment of the respondents shows again the existence of a huge potential for applying remote work in local government offices. Primarily, local government administration is strongly motivated to carry out official duties in the form of remote work, secondly – the management of offices sees remote work as a tool to improve its effectiveness and efficiency. In addition, the main threats to the office resulting from applying remote work include: lack of sufficient regulations regarding remote work, the problem with ensuring data security, the need to use appropriate hardware and software, and the lack of proper employee control. The next group of threats regarding factors that offices are less concerned about include: the lack of appropriate systems and tools ensuring the appropriate quality of remote work or high costs of organizing remote work (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Potential threats to remote work in local government administration

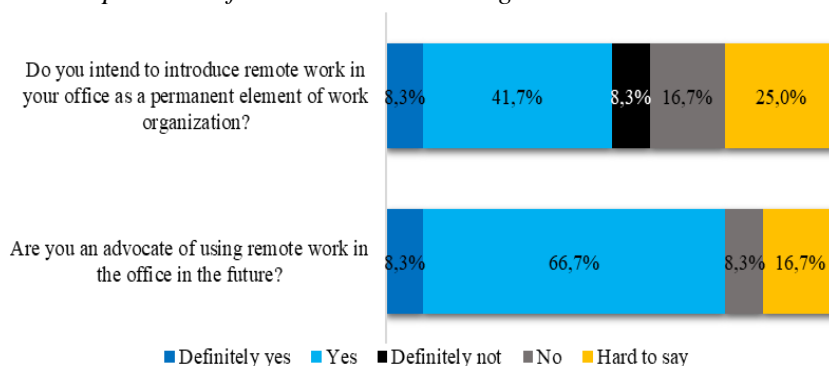


Source: Own study based on the conducted research

Based on the experience of local governments in the organization of statutory tasks in the form of remote work, its potential and usefulness in local government administration were also assessed. It turns out that the experience gained in the field of remote work during the pandemic means that employees are no longer afraid of this form of work. Moreover, as many as 83.4% of respondents admitted that they are supporters of using remote work or teleworking in the office in the future.

The experience gained in the crisis period allowed for the development of various types of solutions, which in many cases improved the work and made the duties carried out by local government administration executed without significant downtime. In this area, the respondents' opinion is rather positive. 8.3% of the respondents assessed the new work organization developed very well, while 41.7% of the respondents assessed it as good. It may be surprising that as many as 50% of the respondents felt it was difficult to give an unambiguous answer, which does not mean, however, that in their opinion the work organization created for the pandemic is assessed negatively (Figure 9). Moreover, thanks to the necessity of working remotely, 50% of respondents admit that their offices plan to introduce this type of work as a permanent element of the work process. However, it is not perceived as a convenient form of work by all respondents – 25% of respondents do not intend to perform their official tasks remotely in the future. The remaining group of respondents was not able to clearly answer this question.

Figure 9. *The potential of remote work in local-government administration*



Source: *Own study based on the conducted research*

When analysing the possibilities of carrying out work remotely in the future, attention was paid to the actions that would be necessary for providing remote work also after the pandemic is over. Undoubtedly, one of the most important elements in the opinion of the respondents would be the purchase of new software and ICT equipment necessary for the efficient provision of remote work. Local government administration is facing an important systemic challenge, which would allow for a new approach to currently performed tasks. The widespread use of mobile computer hardware, software based on "cloud" solutions and the widespread digitization of

resources and documents are key elements of securing the functioning of local government administration in similar crisis situations in the future. The subsequent stages of the research conducted confirmed that a very important element of the effective implementation of flexible forms of work is the prior training of employees regarding use of modern tools. It is interesting that despite the positive assessment of internal regulations concerning the organization and functioning of remote work in offices introduced during the pandemic, the respondents still indicate the need for further modifications. This may result either from the implementation of underdeveloped regulations, or from the development of the first models and good practices only during the pandemic, as well as the acquisition of experience, which should now be included in the rules for organizing remote work in offices. As important activities necessary for implementation the following issues were mentioned: adapting the management style to the new reality and to managing dispersed teams, as well as the need to create support teams and common development of good practices (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Areas for improvement before implementing remote work in local government administration in the future



Source: Own study based on the conducted research.

On the basis of the conducted research, a correlation can be noticed between the possibility of using the outsourcing of certain tasks by local government administration and the possibility of implementing remote work. In principle third party entities providing/implementing specific tasks/services for the local government administration are accounted for final effects. Similar dependencies can be seen in the case of remote work, where the manager/supervisor does not directly supervise individual employees, but controls the effects of their work.

Therefore, a hypothesis can be formulated that where local governments see the possibility of using outsourcing, they also see areas where remote work can be implemented. IT and legal services are areas that are most often carried out or

supported by external companies, and thus local governments see the possibility of performing these tasks remotely. This fact confirms the previous conclusions that for the efficient implementation of flexible forms of employment in local government administration, training in the effective management of employee teams is of key importance.

Local government administration is still struggling with challenges and problems arising directly and indirectly from the pandemic, and as research results show, it is not the best time to consider remodelling the organization of work in the office - almost 60% of respondents indicated that they had not yet analysed this topic. Still, it does not mean that local government authorities do not see the potential and opportunities offered by the implementation of remote work. The best proof of the great potential existing in remote work seen by the public administration management is the fact that only 16% of the respondents indicated that they do not intend to use flexible forms of employment in the office or outsourcing services in the future.

5. Conclusion

The functioning of local government administration during the coronavirus pandemic forced officials to use new, previously unused solutions. The completed research project clearly shows that the experience of offices regarding the field of teleworking before the pandemic was negligible. Also, the provision of administrative work by employees remotely was not popular – largely due to the lack of appropriate regulations (i.e. in the Labour Code). It is, however, a puzzling fact, because in local government administration there is a group of jobs that could function as teleworking without any formal or organizational obstacles or, depending on the needs, remotely. It can be assumed that in the local government administration there has been no appropriate motivation either on the part of employees or office managers to undertake the organization of workplaces outside the seat of the institution or at least foresee the possibility of a situation requiring remote work, and thus – properly prepare employees and equip them with the appropriate tools.

Undoubtedly, a breakthrough and a factor that caused the introduction of remote work to offices was the declaration of a pandemic and the introduction of a lockdown, which resulted in the need to isolate a large part of the society. As a result, local government administration employees were also forced to implement changes and modifications in the area of their work. Interestingly, despite the fact that offices have never performed tasks in the form of telework or remote work, during the survey over half of the respondents admitted that they positively assessed the office's preparation for changes introduced during the pandemic. When examining individual areas of the functioning of local government administration and units in terms of their preparation for the implementation of duties in the form of remote work, it turned out that the respondents rated highly level of preparation in

terms of securing data and information protection and of the software used for communication with employees. In the opinion of the respondents, such a form of work is also characterized by significant benefits. First of all, remote work reduced the level of sickness absenteeism among employees and led to the technological development of the examined institutions. Unfortunately, the lack of appropriate regulations for remote work in Polish labour law is still a significant problem, which worries the respondents and generates a number of inaccuracies in the understanding of this phenomenon and its application in practice.

When summarizing the completed research project, it should be emphasized that over 80% of the respondents admitted that they would like to work remotely in the future. It also turns out that the crisis situation was, in a way, a motivator to generate a number of organizational and technical solutions that allowed to improve the work in the office and to continuously perform official duties. However, the respondents indicate that the implementation of remote work as a permanent element of the functioning of the office requires meeting certain conditions. First of all, the ICT infrastructure should be modernized, and then employees should be trained in the use of new systems, programs and applications for remote work. The pandemic, which was a big surprise, in many cases resulted in the need to use analogy tools in the digital world, which did not always give the desired results. Another important activity would be to adapt the management style to the new reality and to lead dispersed teams, as well as creating support teams and common developing good practices.

The authors believe that completed research project is an extremely valuable source of information on the experience and future prospects for remote work in local government administration. The respondents confirm that they are prepared and they want to take such action in the future. Of course, that considerably new for majority form of work may also generate concerns about the efficiency or the safety of an employee who is outside the institution's seat during work, but the current epidemic situation undoubtedly confirms that in times of crisis, working remotely brings more benefits than losses, therefore prediction and skillful preparing for similar crisis situations may be crucial for creating local government offices of the future.

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