

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

## Definitions and measurement

Michael Frosch  
Senior Statistician, ILO

Advancing social justice, promoting decent work



# 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
  - Lock downs, social distances etc. Working at home, telework has become an important response to this.
- ▶ 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

## Guidance

- ▶ Conceptual and operational definitions of; remote work, telework, work at home and home-based work
- ▶ Explaining differences and similarities in concepts, how they relate to each other and how they can be combined
- ▶ Includes modules that can be used for measurement in a HH-survey.
- ▶ Different modules can be used based on the need and interest of the country
- ▶ Also include additional questions that can be used to provide a further context

# Concepts

## Work at home, Home-based work

## ▶ Concepts: work at home

- ▶ *Work at home*: Work that takes place fully or partly within the worker's own residence or other type of dwelling in which the worker normally resides
  - Includes: outside areas immediately adjacent to the residence, such as yards and gardens
  - Excludes: Premises such as retail shops or repair workshops attached to the residence that are not an integral part of the residence (if, for example, they have their own entrance), and agricultural and garden fields, pastures or plots used primarily for the purposes of crop, livestock, forestry, fishery and aquaculture production
  - Work at home is independent of the status in employment, and both independent and dependent workers can carry out work at home.

## ▶ **Concepts: Home-based work**

- ▶ *Home-based work*: workers whose main place of work is their own home
- ▶ Workers who usually carry out their work at home
- ▶ Sub-category to the concept of *work at home*

# Remote work and Telework



## ▶ Concepts: Remote work and telework

- ▶ In order to define remote work and telework we need to understand the concept of *alternative location* and the theoretical concept of *default place of work*.
- ▶ Based on these two concepts, remote work and telework can be derived

## ▶ **Concepts: Default place of work**

- ▶ A theoretical concept needed to provide a reference for defining “alternative location”
- ▶ Default expectation of where the work should be carried out, taking into account the workers:
  - Status in employment
  - Profession
- ▶ Differ from the concept of main place of work, and physical place of work
  - 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

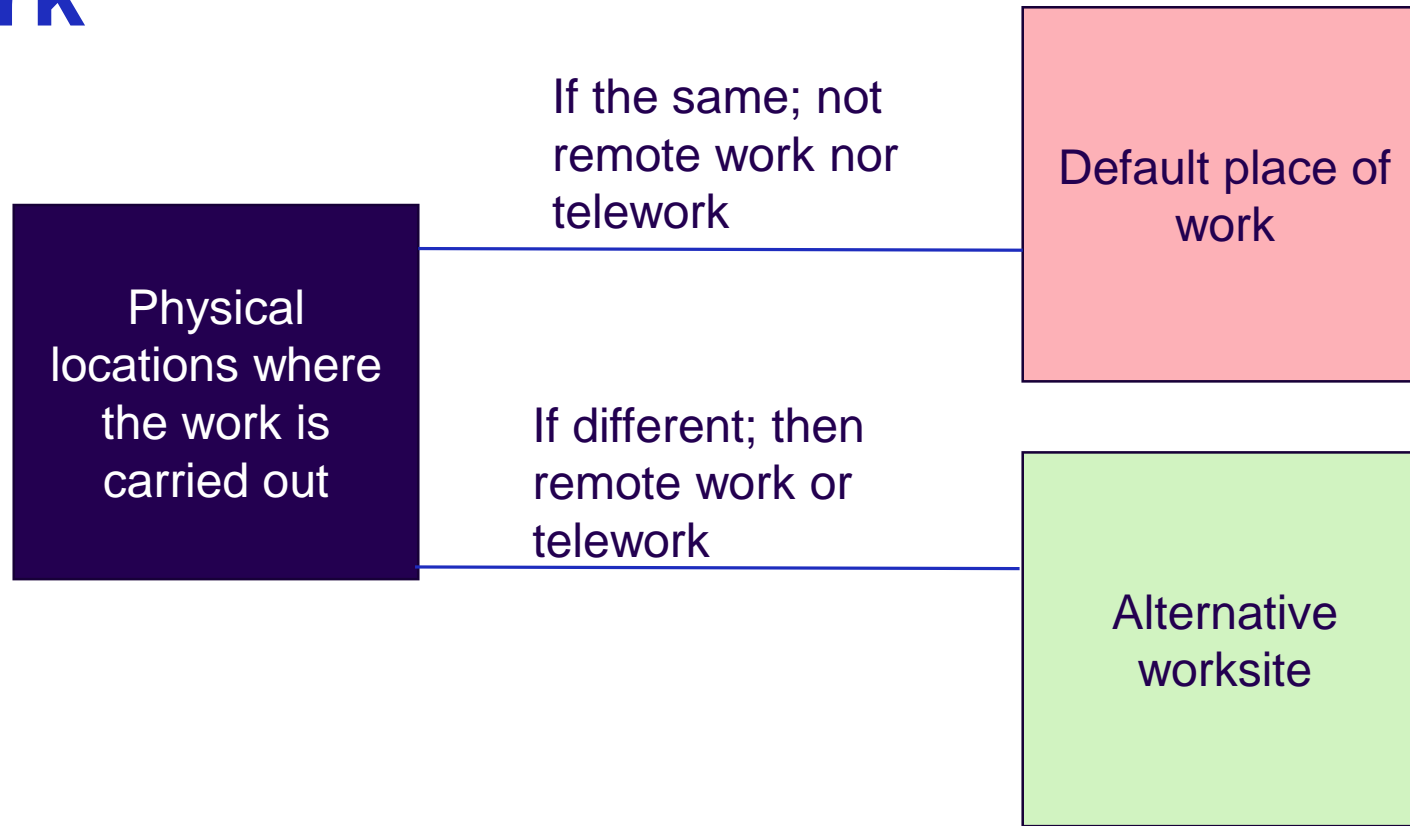
## ▶ Concepts: Default place of work

- ▶ The premises, facilities or site of the economic unit for which the work is carried out
  - ❖ Office building, Shop, factory, fields and plots etc. owned or controlled by the independent worker; or if a dependent worker owned or controlled by the employer or the economic unit on which the worker is dependent.
  
- ▶ A client's premises, facilities or site
  - ❖ could include a factory, mine, construction site, farm, office building, shop, restaurant, warehouse, a client's home, or other type of business premises or sites owned or controlled by the client's to the independent worker or if a dependent worker to the employer of economic unit of which the worker is dependent
  
- ▶ Public spaces
  - ❖ a street, highway, public park, car park or railway station
  - ❖ if the work is required to take place in the public space **due to the nature of the work** such as a street vendors, push-cart operators and police officers on patrol
  
- ▶ Work carried out in the default place of work are excluded from the concepts of remote work and telework

## ▶ Concepts: alternative location

- ▶ *Remote work* and *telework* refers to an arrangement where work is fully or partly conducted from an *alternative location* i.e. not carried out at the default place of work
- ▶ Alternative needs to be understood as an alternative for the default expectation that work is performed in a specific place (default place of work):
  - Workers own home
  - Co-working space
  - Café
  - Library etc.

# ► Concepts: Default place of work, remote work, telework



## ▶ **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 dependent (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

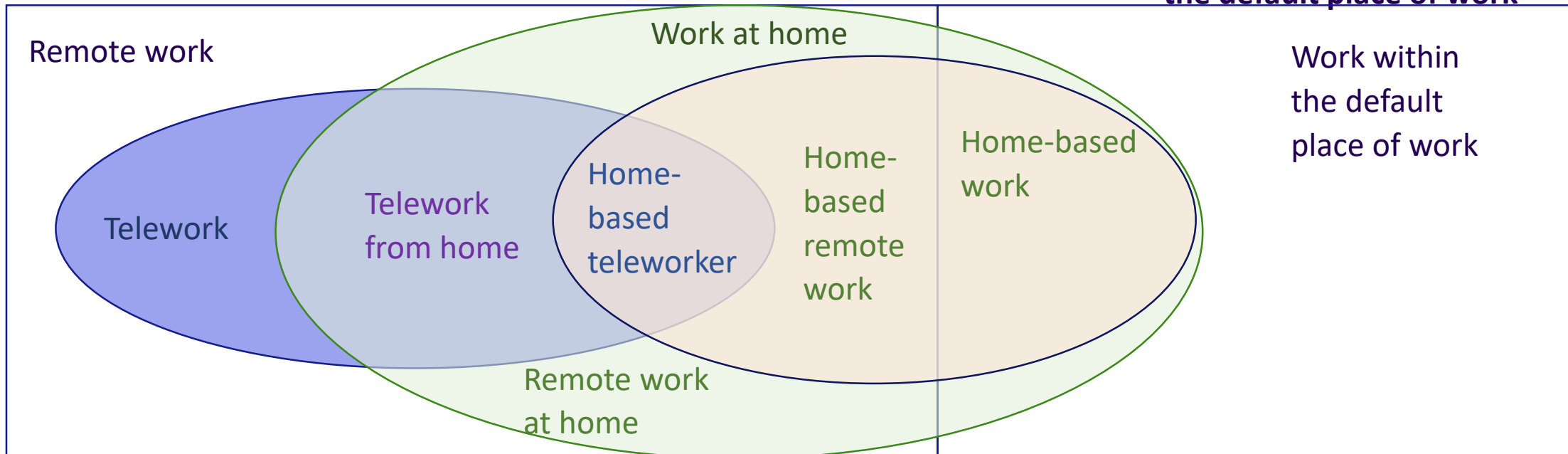


## ▶ Combining the concepts

- ▶ 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
  - Home-based remote worker
  - Home-based teleworker

**The work is carried in an alternative location to the default place of work**

**The work is carried out in the default place of work**



## ► Dimensions of frequency, mobility

### ► Frequency (relevant for all concepts):

- Usually: Home-based worker, main place of work
- Regularly: At least once a week in the last four weeks
- Occasionally: At least once in the last four weeks

### ► Mobility (relevant for remote work, telework):

- High mobility: At least twice a week in two different locations in the last four weeks
- Low mobility: At least once in the last four weeks

# Data collection HH-Survey

## WORK AT HOME AND HOME-BASED WORKERS

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

1. At (your/name's) own home
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?
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. Once a week or more
2. Less than once a week

# Data collection HH-Survey

## TELEWORK AT HOME

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

1. Yes
2. No

# Data collection HH-Survey

## REMOTE WORK NOT AT 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
2. No

(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 JOB?)**

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
2. No

# Data collection HH-Survey

## 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
2. No

# Data collection HH-Survey

## HIGH-MOBILITY TELEWORKERS

**INWK\_TELEWK** (Filter: ICT\_TELEWK =1)

**Q7. In the last four weeks, how frequently did you work in a place other than your own home, own premises or an employer's premises?**

**(READ ALL)**

1. Once a week or more
2. Less than once a week

**MOB\_TELWK** (Filter: REG\_HOMWK ne 1 and ICT\_HOMWK ne 1 and INWK\_TELEWK =1)

**Q8. In the last four weeks, have you (in your main job) worked at least twice a week in two different locations other than the employer's premises or your own office?**

1. Yes
2. No



## ► Based on that we can derive all categories

### **Work at home**

#### **Home-based work**

Regular work at home

Occasionally work at home

Telework from home

Home-based telework

Regularly telework from home

Occasionally telework from home

### **Remote work**

High-mobility remote work

Low-mobility remote work

#### **Telework**

High-mobility telework

Low-mobility remote work

**Thank you very much!**

The guidelines can be accessed at:

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