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Working from Home in Russia: What Has Changed over Two Decades

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ABSTRACT

Relevance. The development of digital communication and connectivity technologies has significantly influenced labor markets in many countries. One of the consequences of technological progress in this area has been a shift in the geography of job performance, including an increase in the share of people working from home. The COVID-19 pandemic further contributed to the normalization of these processes, forcing a significant portion of workers to switch to remote employment. This article is dedicated to the study of this phenomenon in the Russian labor market from 2006 to 2023. **Methods.** Based on data from representative population surveys (RLMS-HSE), the scale of remote work in Russia is assessed, the composition of remote workers is described, and major changes in their profile are identified. Using logistic regression methods, the authors identify factors associated with a higher probability of this type of employment. **Findings.** The authors show that the key determinants are primarily characteristics of the workplace, the individual's education level, gender, and health status. The results of econometric regressions also indicate an increase in regular remote employment in Russia and a decrease in irregular remote work. **Practical significance.** The results suggest that the spread of remote work formats could help increase labor force participation and, at least partially, meet the demand for labor in the context of its shortage in Russia.

Keywords: work from home; remote employment; labor relations; COVID-19 pandemic; labor demand

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most notable transformations in global labor markets over the past few decades has been the spread of remote work, particularly home-based employment. In the previous century, this form of labor relationship remained outside the mainstream and was typically limited to small-scale artisanal work or to rare cases among creative professionals such as writers, musicians, and artists. Often, such work served merely as an additional source of income alongside a main occupation. Office employees only occasionally took part of their work home.

Technological innovation has been a major driver of the expansion of home-based employment. On the one hand, modern technologies enable effective remote communication, while the personal computer or work laptop has freed employees from being tied to a physical office. For example, in the United States, the share of remote workers was only 0.6% in 1975, but by 1985 — the year when personal computers first appeared on the market — it had already reached 4.8% [1]. On the other hand, the past decade has seen the emergence of numerous marketplaces, freelance platforms, and other digital ecosystems that allow workers and service providers to connect with clients regardless of their physical location. Thus, the rise of remote and platform-based employment has occurred in parallel with the increasing number of people working from home.

Nevertheless, working from home remained relatively rare for a long time, even when technological barriers to remote work had largely disappeared. A turning point came with the COVID-19 pandemic: in 2020, most developed and developing countries, including Russia, introduced various measures to slow the spread of the virus by restricting mobility and banning large gatherings. As a result, many employers were forced to switch their employees to remote work wherever their job functions made it possible.

In light of these developments, this study pursues the following objectives:

- to assess the scale and identify the main models of home-based employment in Russia from 2006 to 2023;

- to examine the changes in the socio-demographic profile of home-based workers over this period;

- to analyze the determinants influencing both the likelihood and the intensity of participation in this form of employment.

HOME-BASED EMPLOYMENT IN RUSSIA AND WORLDWIDE: STATISTICS AND RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This study follows the definitions proposed in the ILO Guidelines for Measuring Decent Work Indicators (2020¹), which provide an international framework for collecting labor market statistics. According to these guidelines, work at home refers to any job or task performed by an individual from their home for at least one hour during the reference period. In addition, the ILO distinguishes several related, though not identical, concepts:

- Telework — work that does not necessarily take place at home but requires the use of electronic devices such as a computer, tablet, or phone (in contrast to home-based work, which may be performed without such devices). It should be noted that many empirical studies do not clearly separate these concepts and often treat them as equivalent.
- Home-based work — a narrower concept referring to work for which the home is the main place of employment.
- Unpaid domestic work — activities such as cleaning, cooking, household repairs, or caring for dependent family members, which, from the perspective of labor statistics, do not constitute employment.

In this paper, the terms “home-based employment” and “remote work” are used interchangeably.

The most comprehensive and consistent statistical data on home-based employment are available for European countries. Based on the EU Labour Force Survey, it is possible to trace how the prevalence of this form of work has changed in the European Union as a whole since 2002, and for individual

¹ URL: <https://rtc-cea.cepal.org/sites/default/files/document/files/ILO-remote%20work.pdf>

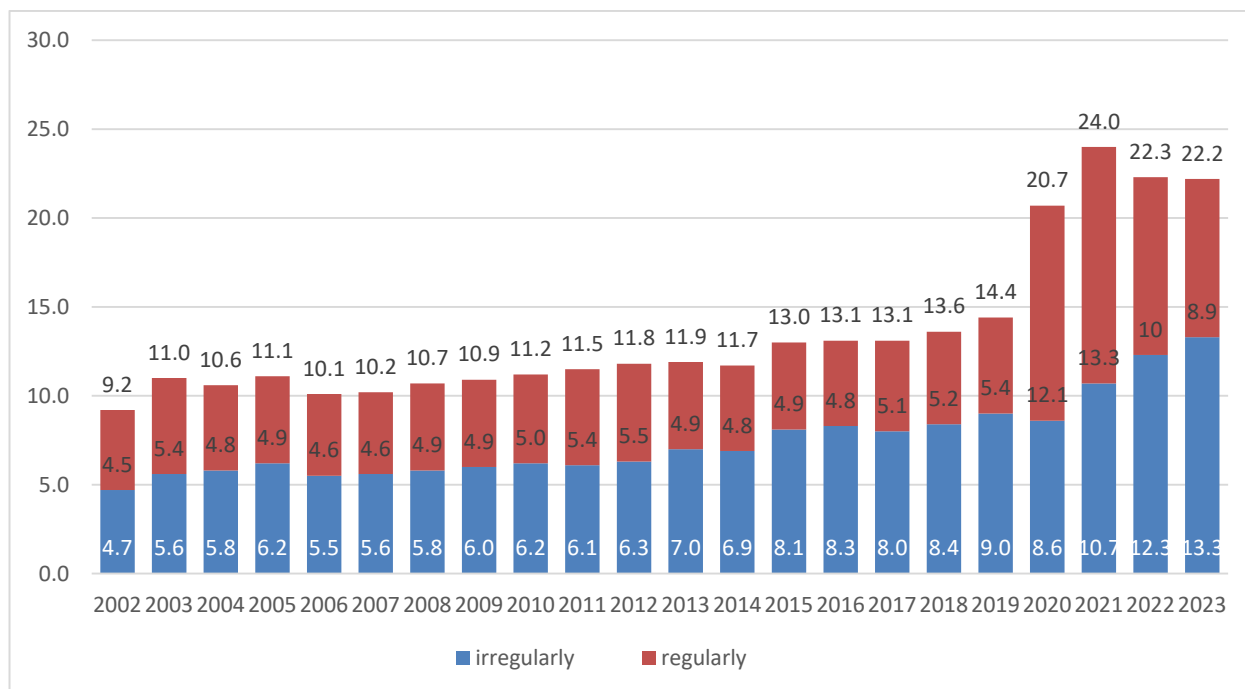


Fig. 1. Extent of Work-from-Home Employment in the European Union (2002–2023), % of employees aged 15–64

Source: compiled by the authors on: URL: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/>

countries since even earlier periods. The European statistics distinguish between two categories:

1. Individuals who regularly worked from home in their main job (at least half of their working days during the past four weeks).

2. Individuals who worked from home occasionally or irregularly (less than half of their working days).

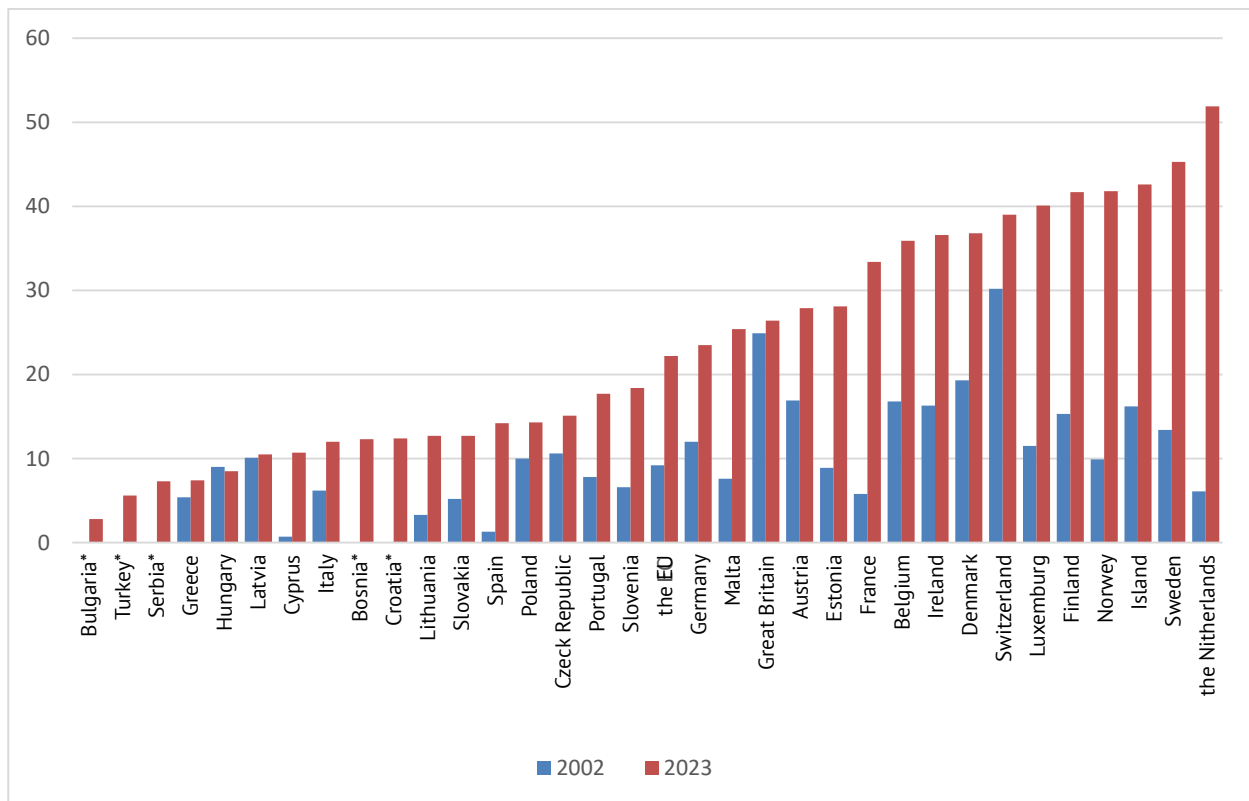
In the European Union, the share of people working from home has grown substantially since 2002. Until 2019, this growth was relatively gradual — from 9.2% at the beginning of the period to 14.4% by its end. In 2020, a sharp increase occurred, and by 2021 almost one in four employed persons worked from home. In 2022–2023, this figure slightly declined, stabilizing at around 22.2–22.3%.

At the same time, over the past two decades, the share of employees who regularly worked from home remained almost unchanged throughout the entire pre-pandemic period — around 5% of all wage earners. In contrast, the proportion of those working from home on an occasional basis increased from 4.7% in 2002 to 9.0% in 2019. As a result of the pandemic, the share of individuals working from home for more

than half of their working time rose within a single year — from 5.4% to 12.1% — while by 2021 the structure began to revert to its pre-pandemic proportions.

It is important to note the significant cross-country variation in the prevalence of home-based work across the EU, both before and after the pandemic. The highest shares were observed in Central and Northern European countries (such as the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and Iceland), whereas in Southern and Eastern Europe this form of employment was almost non-existent (*Fig. 2*). The determinants of these differences may include both the economic structure — in which the share of jobs suitable for home-based work is considerably smaller than in most other European countries — and national characteristics of labor organization, including management traditions, workplace norms, and cultural attitudes [2]. Such heterogeneity calls for further investigation and, in our view, has not yet received adequate attention in the academic literature.

The spread of home-based employment in the United States has followed a trajectory broadly similar to that observed in the European Union. Its share



**Fig. 2. Extent of Work-from-Home Employment in EU Countries in 2002 and 2023
(% of employed aged 15–64)**

Source: compiled by the authors on: URL: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

Note: * There are no data for 2002.

increased from 0.4% in 1965 to 7.2% in 2019. During the pandemic, this indicator surged to 61.5%, which is substantially higher than in most European countries, and by 2023 it had stabilized at 28.1%, slightly above the European average [1].

Before 2020,² there were relatively few Russian or international studies addressing the phenomenon of home-based work. Most of these focused on the evolution of this form of employment as a result of technological progress in communication tools [3]; its impact on the work–life balance [4, 5]; and the assessment of the likelihood and productivity of such employment across different population groups [6, 7].

The number of academic publications on this topic increased manifold after the outbreak of

the COVID-19 pandemic. The main research directions included analyzing who transitioned to remote work and how successfully this transition occurred following the introduction of various virus-containment measures [1, 2, 8], as well as examining worker satisfaction [9]. Several studies also reviewed pre-pandemic experiences of home-based work across countries [10, 11].

A number of articles have focused on the efficiency of working from home and its impact on labor productivity [12–14]. These studies employed experimental research designs in which two randomly assigned groups within the same organization were compared: the treatment group — employees transferred partially or fully to home-based work — and the control group, which continued to work in the office. The estimates obtained through this approach are robust and statistically reliable; however, they cannot be directly generalized to the entire economy.

² It should be noted that even before 2020, the topic of remote work was actively explored in management studies, albeit in a specific context — primarily from the perspective of personnel management in this work format. An analysis of these studies falls outside the scope of our article.

Evidence from many countries shows a broadly similar profile of individuals working from home. This type of employment was more prevalent among highly qualified workers, and consequently, among higher-income groups. Such workers were concentrated mainly in the fields of IT, telecommunications, education, business services, legal and accounting support, management consulting, and marketing. In professional terms, they were most often teachers, researchers, and IT specialists [10, 15]. In demographic terms, they tended to be younger individuals, while gender differences in home-based employment largely reflected occupational and sectoral heterogeneity in job structures [16].

Following the onset of the pandemic, researchers began to study the spread of remote employment during the period of restrictive measures and to construct a typical profile of remote workers based on various surveys [17–19]. Some studies have shown that such forms of employment in Russia are often associated with higher levels of job satisfaction and a greater amount of free time compared to standard forms of work [20, 21].

The issue of remote work efficiency has generally not been addressed by Russian scholars. The only notable exception concerns analyses of university faculty perceptions of the transition to large-scale online education during the pandemic, based on survey data [22–24]. It should be noted, however, that the studies mentioned above primarily focus on the periods immediately preceding, during, or following the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, working from home is not an entirely new phenomenon for the Russian labor market — it has been practiced in several industries for the past few decades.

DATA AND RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

The analysis of home-based employment in Russia was conducted using data from the Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey (RLMS-HSE) — a series of representative annual surveys carried out since 1994³ by the National Research Uni-

³ The Russian Longitudinal Monitoring Survey of the Economic Situation and Health of the Population (RLMS-HSE), conducted by the National Research University “Higher School of Economics” and LLC “Demoscope” with the participation of the Carolina Population

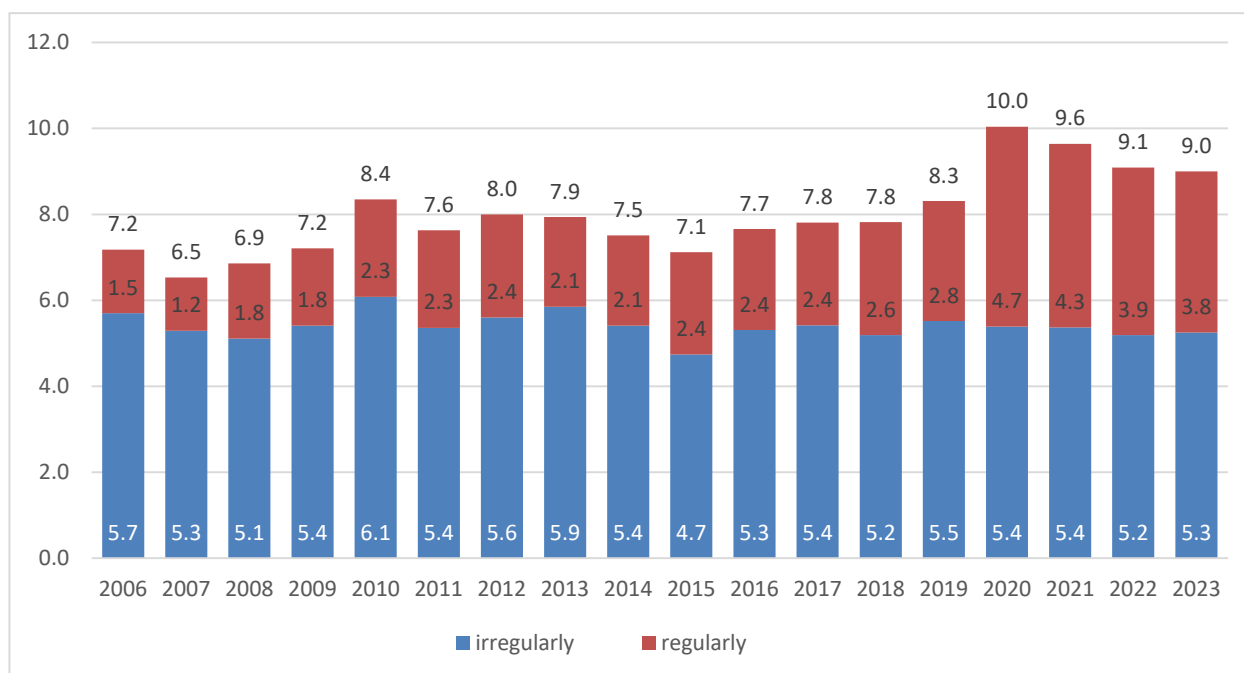


Fig. 3. Trends in the Share of People Working from Home in Russia, 2006–2023, % of all employed

Source: compiled by the authors.

versity Higher School of Economics. The micro-data provide detailed information on individuals' socio-demographic and family characteristics, as well as their educational and employment trajectories.

Since 2006, the questionnaire has included the question: "Have you worked from home at your main job during the past 30 days?" Respondents

who answered affirmatively were classified in this study as home-based workers. It should be noted that this formulation allows identification of home-based employment only for the respondent's main job, which likely leads to an underestimation of the true scale of the phenomenon. To assess the intensity of home-based work, the following question was used: "How many hours did you actually spend working from home during the past 30 days?" Regular home-based employment was defined as working from home for at least half of the total hours devoted to one's main

Center at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Institute of Sociology of the Federal Research Sociological Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences. ((RLMS-HSE survey websites. URL: <http://www.hse.ru/rlms>; <https://rlms-hse.cpc.unc.edu>)

Table 1

Socio-demographic Composition of People Working from Home, %

Indicator / Period	2006–2009	2010–2019	2020–2023
Gender			
Women	70.7	68.8	67.5
Men	29.3	31.2	32.5
Age group, years			
15–24	8.6	6.3	6.0
25–34	26.0	26.7	22.3
35–44	24.5	30.6	32.9
45–54	27.6	24.0	25.9
55+	13.2	12.4	12.8
Education			
Secondary or lower	13.6	11.6	9.3
Initial vocational	1.9	1.8	1.5
Secondary vocational	24.6	18.9	1.9
Higher education	59.9	67.7	72.4
Place of residence			
Rural area	25.4	21.0	18.8
City	56.2	61.6	59.3
Moscow or St. Petersburg	18.4	17.4	22.0
Self-assessed health			
Poor or very poor	8.0	5.5	3.0
Average	64.8	55.3	48.1
Good or very good	27.3	39.2	48.9

Source: compiled by the authors.

job over the past month; otherwise, such activity was classified as irregular.

Based on findings from studies in European countries, the following main hypotheses were formulated:

1. Individuals with higher levels of education are more likely to engage in home-based employment.
2. Employment in small organizations and self-employment increase the likelihood of working from home.
3. Living in urban areas has a positive effect on the probability of home-based employment.
4. Younger workers are more likely to work from home.

Before the pandemic, home-based work was not a widespread form of labor relations in the Russian labor market, similar to the situation in Eastern European countries. According to RLMS-HSE data (see Fig. 3), the share of respondents working from home ranged between 6.5% and 8.4% up to 2019, showing considerable volatility and no clear trend. In 2020, the proportion of home-based workers increased by only 1.7 percentage points compared to 2019. Population surveys indicate that at the peak of restrictions (May 2020), up to one-quarter of all employees were transferred to remote work, and in sectors such as education, IT, communications, culture, and sports, the share reached up to one-half [25]. However, the RLMS-HSE data show a much smaller increase, most likely because the survey was conducted between October and December, thus excluding the periods of the strictest COVID-19 restrictions. Over the next three years, the prevalence of home-based employment gradually declined, although by 2023 it remained above the pre-pandemic level. It is also noteworthy that in 2006, only one in five remote workers worked from home for at least half of their total working hours, whereas in 2020–2023, this figure rose to 42–46%, indicating a significant shift toward more regular home-based employment.

Table 1 presents the socio-demographic profile of individuals working from home in 2006–2009, when internet technologies were still relatively underdeveloped and access to the web remained

limited; in 2010–2019, characterized by the rapid expansion of fast and inexpensive communication technologies; and in 2020–2023.

According to the RLMS-HSE data, the majority of remote workers were women. Although the share of men has shown a slight increase since 2006, they still accounted for only 32.5% of home-based workers in 2020–2023. The average age of such workers remained stable at 42 years throughout the observation period. At the same time, the proportion of both younger groups (aged 15–24 and 25–34) and older groups (aged 45–54 and 55 and over) declined. As a result, the largest share of those working from home currently falls within the 35–44 age group.

Another distinctive characteristic of those working from home is the predominance of individuals with higher education, a proportion that has steadily increased over time. While 59.9% of remote workers held a completed higher education degree in 2006–2009, this figure rose to 72.4% in 2020–2023. Accordingly, the share of those with lower levels of education declined significantly, most notably among individuals with secondary vocational education, whose proportion fell from 24.6% in 2006–2009 to 16.9% in 2020–2023.

Changes are also evident in the geographic distribution of remote workers. Whereas in 2006–2009 one in four remote employees lived in rural areas, by 2020–2023 this had decreased to one in five. At the same time, the number of urban residents, including those living in Moscow and St. Petersburg, increased. Currently, a remote worker is more likely to reside in a major city than in a rural area, a reversal of the pattern observed in 2006–2009.

Finally, the proportion of remote workers who rated their health as good or very good rose from 27.3% in 2006–2009 to 48.9% in 2020–2023. It should be noted that self-assessed health cannot serve as an objective indicator of the presence of medical conditions; nevertheless, such a substantial change likely reflects an actual improvement in the health of remote workers rather than solely shifts in perception. Moreover, the average age and gender composition of these employees

Table 2

Employment Characteristics of People Working from Home, %

Indicator / Period	2006–2009	2010–2019	2020–2023
Wage quintile			
1 (lowest wages)	12.7	12.9	11.8
2	17.0	18.8	16.4
3	26.0	22.1	17.3
4	18.6	20.1	20.8
5 (highest wages)	25.7	26.2	33.7
Employment status			
Self-employed	12.5	13.9	16.4
Employee (informal)	4.4	4.2	4.6
Employee (formal)	83.1	81.9	79.0
Occupation			
Managers	16.2	16.1	13.4
Professionals (high-skilled)	49.8	50.0	46.6
Associate professionals (medium-skilled)	18.0	18.3	23.2
Clerical support workers	2.3	2.2	3.9
Sales workers	6.8	7.8	7.5
Skilled manual workers	6.2	5.2	4.8
Unskilled workers	0.8	0.5	0.6
Industry			
Industry and agriculture	11.4	9.1	8.7
Construction	5.7	5.0	4.5
Transport	5.4	4.4	4.3
Public administration and security	5.4	4.8	3.2
Education and science	34.0	33.1	26.0
Healthcare	4.5	4.2	3.8
Knowledge-intensive services	10.9	14.2	19.7
Other services	22.7	25.1	29.8
Working time			
Part-time (<30 hours per week)	14.4	13.5	11.1
Full-time (30–40 hours)	52.6	55.5	62.7
Overtime (>40 hours per week)	33.1	31.1	26.3
Ownership of the enterprise*			
State-owned	60.8	57.2	45.2
Foreign-owned	3.0	3.2	4.4
Russian private owner	36.6	40.0	53.3
Respondent-owned	7.4	9.2	9.8
Enterprise size			
Micro	19.6	23.8	22.6
Small	53.7	52.7	52.9
Medium	11.6	9.9	8.9
Large	15.0	13.7	15.6

Source: compiled by the authors.

Note: * the amount in the column exceeds 100%, as there were several possible answers.

have remained largely unchanged, as noted above. This suggests that poor health is currently a less significant factor in the decision to engage in remote work than it was in 2006–2009.

At the same time, over the period under study, certain changes occurred regarding the typical workplace and nature of remote work, as shown in *Table 2*.

As shown in *Table 2*, since 2006 there has been an increase in the share of the fifth wage quintile (high-income groups) — from 25.7% in 2006–2009 to 33.7% in 2020–2023 — while the shares of the first three quintiles have gradually declined. In other words, home-based work today is primarily a prerogative of higher-income workers. However, even in 2006–2009 a similar pattern was observed, although the gap between groups was not as large as it is now.

According to RLMS-HSE data, most remote workers are employees, and only 4–5% of them work without formal employment contracts. At the same time, the share of the self-employed has somewhat increased — from 12.5% in 2006–2009 to 16.4% in 2020–2023.

Roughly half of all home-based workers are high-skilled professionals, and this indicator has remained relatively stable throughout the entire period. Meanwhile, the share of medium-skilled specialists increased from 18.0% in 2006–2009 to 23.2% in 2020–2023. Skilled and especially unskilled manual workers are underrepresented in this group, and their proportion has even slightly declined since the beginning of the observation period. Conversely, the share of sales workers has grown, most likely due to the development of technologies that make it possible to conduct such activities from home. Between 2006 and 2019, 16.1–16.2% of home-based workers were managers, but after 2020 this figure dropped to 13.4%.

In terms of industry, the distribution is also uneven: home-based workers are predominantly concentrated in services, education, and science. At the same time, the share of those employed in education and science has been steadily declining, while the share of those working in services has been growing — both in knowledge-intensive

sectors (finance, law, IT) and in other services (trade, housing and utilities, catering). Thus, while in 2006–2009 33.6% of remote workers were employed in various service sectors (excluding the public and transport sectors), by 2020–2023 this figure had risen to 49.5%.

Only 11–15% of all remote workers put in less than 30 hours per week, while 26–33% work more than 40 hours. This suggests that for many, working from home remains a forced choice in the context of overtime. At the same time, part-time home-based work is relatively rare in Russia.

Over the period under study, the share of employees in state-owned organizations declined significantly — from 60.8% in 2006–2009 to 45.2% in 2020–2023. Meanwhile, the proportion of employees in privately-owned Russian enterprises increased — from 36.6% to 53.3% — as did the share of the self-employed, from 7.4% to 9.8%.

Furthermore, home-based workers are most often employed in enterprises or organizations with fewer than 100 employees, and this trend has remained consistent throughout the period. Specifically, 22.6% work in micro-enterprises (up to 15 employees), 52.9% in small enterprises (15–99 employees), and 8.9% and 15.6% in medium and large enterprises, respectively.

In summary, the typical home-based worker is a middle-aged woman with a higher education degree, living in a large city. In 2006–2009, there were more rural residents, younger and older employees, and individuals with secondary vocational or general education diplomas.

At the same time, since 2006, the range of professions and sectors where remote work occurs has remained largely unchanged: most often, these are individuals employed in education, science, or various service sectors, typically highly or moderately skilled specialists. The most significant change over the past decades has been a decline in the public sector share. This likely reflects the fact that in education, many workers have traditionally taken some work home — a pattern that has changed little over the last twenty years — whereas the number of home-based workers in other economic sectors has continued to grow.

Table 3

Results of Estimating the Determinants of Working from Home (Odds Ratios)

Indicator	Model (1)	Model (2)	
Variable	Working from home	Irregular work from home	Regular work from home
Men	0.718***	0.751***	0.643***
Age	1.007	1.005	1.008
Age squared	1.000	1.000	1.000
Place of residence (reference group – city)			
Rural area	0.932	0.915	0.986
Moscow or St. Petersburg	1.151*	1.078	1.376***
Education (reference group – secondary general or lower)			
Initial vocational	0.903	0.974	0.769
Secondary vocational	1.300***	1.323***	1.229
Higher education	2.291***	2.449***	1.857***
Self-rated health (reference group – average)			
Poor or very poor	1.396***	1.423***	1.325**
Good or very good	0.808***	0.786***	0.894*
) Wage (logarithm)	1.508***	1.487***	1.594***
Occupational group (reference group – high-skilled specialists)			
Managers	0.855**	0.911	0.638***
Mid-level specialists	0.480***	0.461***	0.519***
Office staff	0.265***	0.231***	0.350***
Service and trade workers	0.142***	0.133***	0.165***
Skilled workers	0.136***	0.121***	0.181***
Unskilled workers	0.043***	0.034***	0.048***
Industry (reference group – industry and agriculture)			
Construction	1.269**	1.507***	0.727
Transport	1.220*	1.232*	1.166
Public administration	1.079	1.088	0.989
Education and science	4.359***	4.657***	3.369***
Healthcare	0.750***	0.782*	0.627**
Knowledge-intensive services	2.141***	1.983***	2.469***
Other services	1.901***	2.029***	1.623***
Ownership – state-owned	0.867**	0.987	0.587***
Firm size (reference group – small, 15–100 employees)			
Microenterprise (≤15 employees) / self-employed	1.290***	1.288***	1.324***
Medium (101–250 employees)	1.006	1.032	0.863
Large (>250 employees)	0.896	0.887	0.912
Employment type (reference group – formal employee)			
Not in organization	2.464***	1.812***	3.964***
Informal employment	1.582***	1.292**	2.264***
Working hours (reference group – full-time)			
Part-time	1.706***	1.093	4.449***
Overtime	0.825***	0.745***	1.113
Year	0.991**	0.981***	1.026***
2020–2021 r.	1.247***	1.065	1.685***
Federal district	+	+	+
Pseudo R ²	0.224	0.209	
Observations	86798	86798	

Source: compiled by the authors.

Note: *, **, *** indicate that the coefficient estimate is statistically significant at the 10%, 5%, and 1% levels, respectively.

ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS OF DETERMINANTS OF HOME-BASED WORK

To analyze the determinants of working from home, a model was constructed and estimated, the general form of which is represented by the following formula:

$$Y_i = \alpha + \beta_1 \times X_{it} + \beta_2 \times Z_{it} + \beta_3 \times H_{it} + \varepsilon_{it},$$

Where:

Y_i — the dependent variable, indicating whether the individual worked from home;

X_{it} — a vector of variables representing the individual's socio-demographic characteristics (gender, age, level of education, place of residence, self-assessed health);

Z_{it} — a vector of variables describing the respondent's workplace (occupational group, industry, form of employment, enterprise size, ownership type, and working hours);

H_{it} — a vector of variables controlling for regional and temporal effects (federal district, annual trend, and a dummy variable capturing changes during the pandemic, equal to one for the 2020–2021 survey waves).

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ — regression coefficients;

ε_{it} — random error term.

Two model specifications were employed.

In the first specification, the aim was to assess the impact of various factors on the probability of working from home. The dependent variable in this model took the value of “0” if the respondent had not worked from home in the last 30 days and “1” if they had. A logistic regression model was used for estimation, with standard errors clustered at the individual level.

In the second specification, the contribution of different determinants was evaluated not only for the probability of remote work but also for its duration. Accordingly, the dependent variable took the value of “0” if the respondent had not worked from home in the last 30 days, “1” if they had worked less than half of their total working time (irregular work from home), and “2” if they had worked more than half of their total work-

ing time (regular remote work). A multinomial logistic regression model was used to estimate the effect of the determinants on the duration of working from home, with standard errors similarly clustered at the individual level.

The estimation results are presented in *Table 3*. For each factor, the odds ratio is reported. For dummy variables, which constitute the majority in both model specifications, this value can be interpreted as the odds of working from home for an individual in the focal group (i.e., where the dummy variable = 1) relative to the odds for an individual in the reference group (where the dummy variable = 0). A value greater than 1 indicates higher odds of remote work for the focal group; a value less than 1 indicates lower odds. For continuous variables, a one-unit increase is expected to multiply the odds ratio by $\exp(b)$, where b is the coefficient for the variable.

As shown in *Table 3*, the estimates from both model specifications are largely similar, though the second specification provides a more nuanced and detailed picture for certain determinants.

Among socio-demographic characteristics, gender and education level emerge as the most important factors. Men are significantly less likely than women to engage in remote work. Holding a secondary vocational or higher education degree increases the likelihood of irregular work from home, whereas regular remote work is primarily influenced by the presence of a higher education degree. Age does not have a significant effect. Residents of Moscow or St. Petersburg are more likely to work from home, particularly on a regular basis, while living in a rural area does not have a statistically significant impact on the probability of remote employment.

Health also plays an important role. Respondents who rate their health as poor or very poor are more likely to work from home, whereas positive self-assessments are associated with a lower likelihood of remote work.

Remote work — both regular and irregular — is significantly more common among higher-paid employees. This relationship remains robust even when controlling for industry, occupation, and

other workplace characteristics. High-skilled specialists are much more likely to work from home compared to other professional groups, while manual workers are the least likely. Remote employment is particularly concentrated in the education and science sectors, as well as in other service industries. Irregular remote work is relatively more common in construction and transport than in agriculture and industry, although no statistically significant differences are observed for regular remote work.

At state-owned enterprises, the probability of regular remote work is lower, while irregular remote work occurs at similar rates across different types of ownership. Employees of microenterprises, the self-employed, and workers without formal employment relationships are more likely to work remotely, which appears to reflect necessity rather than choice, as these individuals typically lack a designated workplace.

Working hours are an important determinant: regular work from home is significantly more likely among part-time employees (i.e., those working fewer than 30 hours per week) than among full-time or overtime workers, while irregular remote work is less common among those working overtime compared to full- or part-time workers.

Before 2020, a weak negative trend in remote work could be observed. The second specification of the model reveals a more complex pattern: irregular remote work declined, while regular remote work increased. The COVID-19 pandemic had a particularly strong impact on this trend: during 2020–2021, the odds of working remotely for an average worker increased by almost 25% when controlling for socio-demographic and occupational characteristics. Importantly, this effect applies only to regular remote work, as the probability of irregular remote work remained unchanged.

The results for Russia are consistent with international findings: individuals with higher education are more likely to work remotely. The hypothesis that employees of microenterprises and the self-employed, as well as residents of Moscow and St. Petersburg, are more likely to

engage in work from home is also confirmed. However, the hypothesis that younger workers are more likely to work remotely is not supported: age was not found to have a significant effect in either model specification.

CONCLUSION

New technologies are transforming labor markets in most countries worldwide. The advent of the Internet, mobile communication, email, and the substantial increase in data transfer speeds has dramatically reduced the cost of remote communication over the past decades. Video conferencing, the ability to transmit large volumes of information, and instant delivery of official documents have become feasible. One consequence of the information and communication technology revolution has been a shift in the geography of work. The share of individuals working from home has steadily increased since the early 2000s in most developed countries. Thus, these new communication tools enabled countries in 2020 to implement strict measures to curb the spread of COVID-19 while mitigating the economic and social impact, as a substantial portion of the population was able to transition to remote work, many continuing to do so at least part-time. It can be assumed that fifty years ago, the societal consequences would have been far more severe.

Russia, however, has followed international trends only partially. According to HSE RLMS data, the share of people working from home in Russia between 2006 and 2019 remained largely unchanged. After a sharp increase during the pandemic, this figure has returned almost to pre-pandemic levels, meaning that remote work is currently less widespread in Russia than in Europe or the United States.

Nonetheless, the transformation of remote work into a distinct segment of the labor market aligns Russia with other countries worldwide. Since 2006, the prevalence of regular work from home (more than half of total working hours) has been increasing. The profile of remote workers has also changed: in 2006–2009, a significant portion comprised low- and medium-skilled in-

dividuals, including both younger and older age groups, often with average or poor health, and many residing in rural areas. By 2020–2023, the majority are middle-aged individuals with higher education, urban residents — particularly in large cities — and in relatively good health. Remote work is now almost exclusively concentrated in the service sector, with digital telework likely becoming the dominant format. However, it is important not to overstate the scale of these changes: even before 2010, remote work was primarily prevalent among higher-income groups.

At the same time, the share of irregular remote work in Russia remains comparatively low. Even amid recent labor shortages, employers have not actively sought to provide employees with more flexible working conditions, despite a substantial portion of workers expressing a desire to adopt hybrid schedules. This may be explained by managerial concerns that such arrangements could lead to significant declines in labor productivity. Consequently, the recent

growth in remote work has largely been driven by its expansion among the self-employed and employees of microenterprises.

The shift of organizations toward remote work has the potential to partially mitigate the effects of labor shortages in Russia. Although there is currently increased demand for manual and engineering-technical professions, which cannot be performed remotely, the spread of work-from-home arrangements could reduce regional labor imbalances if employers in labor-deficit regions begin to attract employees from areas with a surplus of labor and high unemployment. Moreover, flexible forms of employment may engage previously excluded population groups in economic activity. This would lead to higher overall labor force participation and partially offset the shortage of human resources exacerbated by the demographic crisis. However, to achieve maximum impact, development of digital infrastructure and adjustments in corporate strategies are required.

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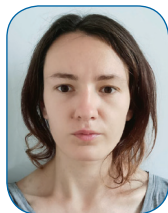
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