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# **TELEWORKING IN ORGANIZATIONS**

**Author: Gema Bertomeu Roglà**

**Tutor: Alma María Rodríguez Sánchez**

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## **Abstract**

This report analyses the evolution of telework between the periods 2010 - 2020 in general terms to have a previous vision of telework before Covid19 and, in specific terms from different perspectives such as the profile of workers studying gender and age and another perspective is the Autonomous Communities, all these between the years 2018 - 2021 (Q1). In reference to the company, it has been analysed which company has made greater use of teleworking according to the size of the company and according to the sector of activity to which they are dedicated.

In addition, we have studied the physical and psychosocial risks that teleworking causes for employees and the advantages and disadvantages for both companies and workers. From this, we have developed a SWOT analysis from which, based on the weaknesses, we have defined improvements in the implementation of telework in organisations. Finally, we have studied the case of the company BBVA and the expected future trends in teleworking after Covid-19.

Regarding the methodology, various sources of information have been used to carry out the analysis, such as the National Institute of Statistics, the Report on Telework in Spain by Research Randstad, and finally the report on Flash Telework data from the second and third quarter of the Ontsi website. In addition, use has also been made of the most important books and articles on the subject under study and scientific reports in official databases such as the Official State Gazette (BOE) for the study of the legal framework.

Keywords: telework, Covid-19, pandemic.

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

As in all countries, but especially in Spain, teleworking was a modality of work that was not widespread, with only a few companies implementing this method of work in their companies. However, with the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic, which caused a drastic worldwide confinement at the beginning of the year 2020, all this was overturned with the aim of reducing mobility and contact between people and thus not becoming infected, which led to a boom in teleworking. Today, teleworking is a trend that is becoming increasingly fashionable and is gaining ground in the global world in which we live.

According to a scientific report written by (Anghel, Cazzolino , & Lacuesta, 2020), home-based teleworking has been gaining momentum around the world for the last decade, and European Union (EU) countries are no exception. In general terms, northern countries are the ones that make the greatest use of teleworking, while in southern and eastern countries, the practice is not so widely used. Spain is below the European average with 7.5%, 6 percentage points (pp) below the European average.

In this era of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) transformation plus digitalisation, telework is here to stay for a prolonged period of time. Telework is no longer an option, but a necessity in organisations. More companies are promoting telework in their companies and this is due to the new generations who are becoming increasingly internalised with technologies and have a unique way of living their professional life. They are looking for a work-life balance, flexible working hours, autonomy, and freedom to make their own decisions

The aim of this final degree thesis entitled Teleworking in organisations is to analyse the changes and evolution of teleworking between 2018-2021 and how companies (especially workers) have been affected and then to establish some proposals for improvement for the implementation of teleworking based on the weaknesses, advantages, disadvantages, and risks identified according to the scientific studies examined.

Therefore, once the study has been completed, we will have to answer a number of questions such as: How has telework evolved during Covid-19?, What is expected from telework once the pandemic is under control?, how has telework affected companies and workers?, Are all companies able to implement telework?, Which company and worker profiles have made greater use of telework?, What are the main reasons for telework?



## **2. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY TELEWORK?**

### **2.1 Concept**

Teleworking is defined as a work activity which is carried out outside the usual workplace in which employees use communication networks to carry out their work with flexible working hours. The teleworker is the one who decides where to carry out the telework, although it is usually in the employee's own home, however, there are other modalities that we will explain in the following point. The place of work does not always have to be the same but can change. In addition, the employee does not have to be absent from the organisation's headquarters but combines it with physical presence. (Peiró & Soler, 2020)

But to talk about telework we must go back to the 1970s. Telework came about thanks to the physicist and engineer Jack Nilles because of the oil crisis in the USA. This physicist applied telework in the insurance company where he was employed with the aim of connecting all his colleagues' computers to remote sites close to the headquarters to reduce travel, thus consuming less oil and contributing to the reduction of pollution. He stated that "if one in seven urban workers did not have to commute to work, the United States would not need to import oil". (Nilles, 2020).

According to (Gorostiola, 2022), Remote working is developing positive results, but also negative effects that are not seen in the short term but are evident in the long term. These are the isolation of people and the loss of social contact, which are necessary for the development of individuals, and the loss of relationships that are essential for the dissemination of culture and values within the company. There is also the loss of efficiency that is created in activities that are carried out at a distance, such as innovation and negotiation. This is why many companies are now starting to implement a hybrid telework model to meet the needs of both individuals and the company itself and to develop a sustainable organisation in the long term.

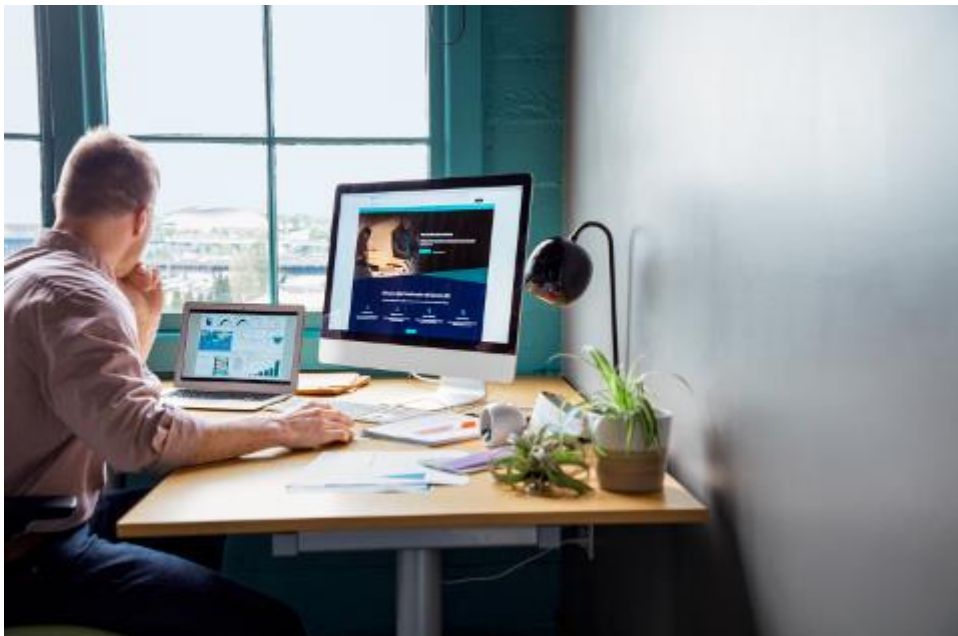
## **2.2 Modalities of teleworking**

According to the website based on data analysis in the personnel area (Wellbeing, 2021), Teleworking can be distinguished **in three modalities** according to the place where the activity is carried out.

Firstly, there is **teleworking at home or at a distance**. In this case, the activity is carried out from the employee's own home and is currently the strongest due to the health crisis that has hit many companies hard, and they have had to reorganise the way they work. Moreover, it is carried out using ICT from the employee's home.

This allows for greater time flexibility and the possibility of being able to reconcile work and private life. It also facilitates cost savings by not having to travel to the usual place of work. However, it can also lead to a false sense of isolation and distance from the company, and we must have a workplace with sufficient adaptations to be able to carry out certain activities.

**Illustration 1: Person teleworking from home.**



*Source:* (Ticpymes, 2020)

Secondly, **teleworking in telecentres**, i.e., the activity is carried out in places suitable for all types of worker profiles and equipped with the necessary technological and telecommunication facilities and furniture to be able to carry out the work. In addition, there must be a team or person in charge of maintaining and organising the space. An example of this is coworking.

There are several types of telecentres:

- Satellite offices: these are work offices that are electronically connected to the company's head office where activities are carried out that, due to their characteristics, can be carried out independently..
- Shared resource centres: these are centres that have their own technology equipment equipped for any activity to be carried out. These facilities are provided for those companies where it is impossible for them to carry out such an investment.

Tele cottages (Rural Telework Centres): these are centres located in small towns that can carry out the activity with appropriate facilities and provide their services to companies located in cities.

**Illustration 2: Coworking in Valencia "La Centrifugadora".**



Source: (empresa, 2019)

Finally, there is **mobile or itinerant teleworking**. This type of work combines face-to-face work at the regular workplace with work at home. In this type of work, employees make use of mobile phones or other devices such as laptops, et cetera., always staying connected with the company via ICT. Normally these jobs include visiting customers and suppliers. However, it is not suitable for all types of jobs as it involves a lot of mobility.

**Illustration 3: Mobile telecommuting in a quiet place.**

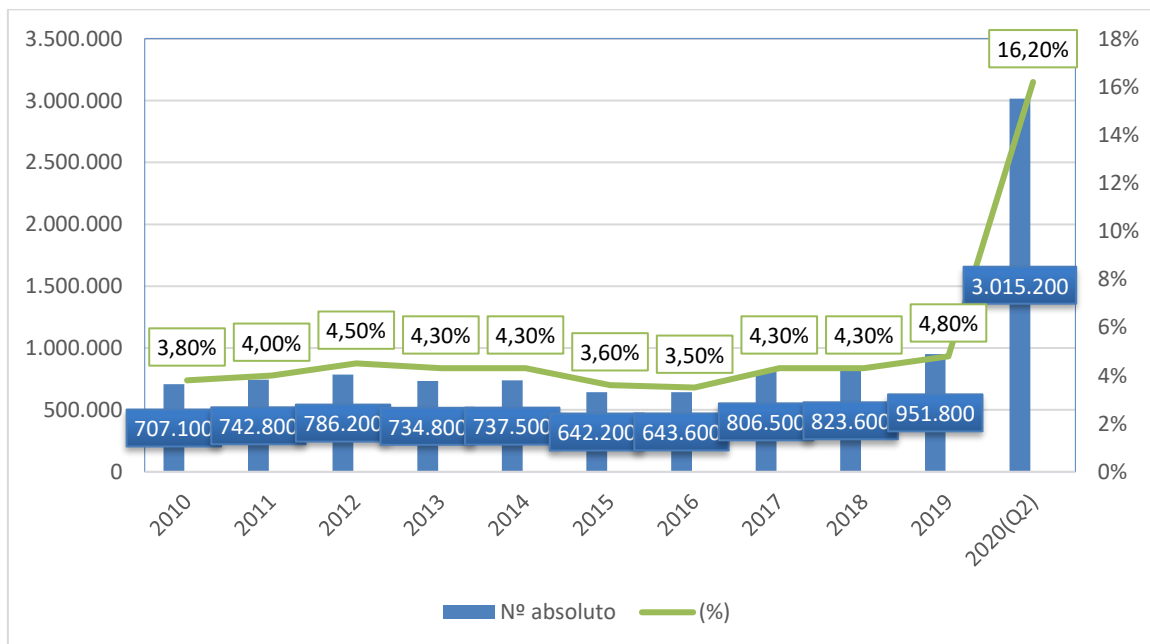


Source: (CepymeNews, 2020)

### 3. EVOLUTION OF TELEWORKING IN SPAIN

In the following, we will show and analyse the annual evolution of telework in Spain from 2010 until the pandemic (2010-2020). These data only include statistics up to 2020, when teleworking will boom due to the pandemic.

**Chart 1: Evolution of the number and percentage of employed people who usually telework in Spain.**



Source: Own elaboration, Date: (Research, 2021)

The human resources company, (Research, 2021), has conducted a study on the evolution of the number of employed people who telework from home on a regular basis, i.e., more than half of the days of the week. The data used for this research are from the National Statistics Institute (INE) for the period (2010-2020 (Q2)).

In graph 1 we can see that teleworking has been increasing over the years, ranging between 700,000 and 790,000, until 2015 and 2016, when it experienced a decrease, these two years being the lowest of the period, 3.60% and 3.50% respectively. In the following years, an increase is observed over the years, but it is not until the second quarter of 2020, when telework experiences the moment of greatest growth so far. The number of professional employees teleworking was around 3,015,200 at 16.2%, up 11.4 points on the previous year's figure of 4.8%. This is due to the confinement due to the global pandemic as many companies had to adapt and implement teleworking.

### **3.1 Before, during and after confinement.**

We will now expand on the above by examining telework before, during and after confinement. To do this, we will need to make a brief commentary on the waves of the pandemic and the beginning of confinement to situate ourselves in time.

The confinement began on 15 March 2020 when the state of alarm was decreed by the government and lasted until 21 June, a total of 99 days of house confinement. From then on, the de-escalation began. So far, we have had a total of six waves spread over the following dates:

- First wave: March - May (2020)
- Second wave: June - November (2020)
- Third wave: December (2020) - mid-March (2021)
- Fourth wave: mid-March - June (2021)
- Fifth wave: July – September
- Sixth wave: October – present

**Illustration 4: Cumulative incidence in Spain during the pandemic.**

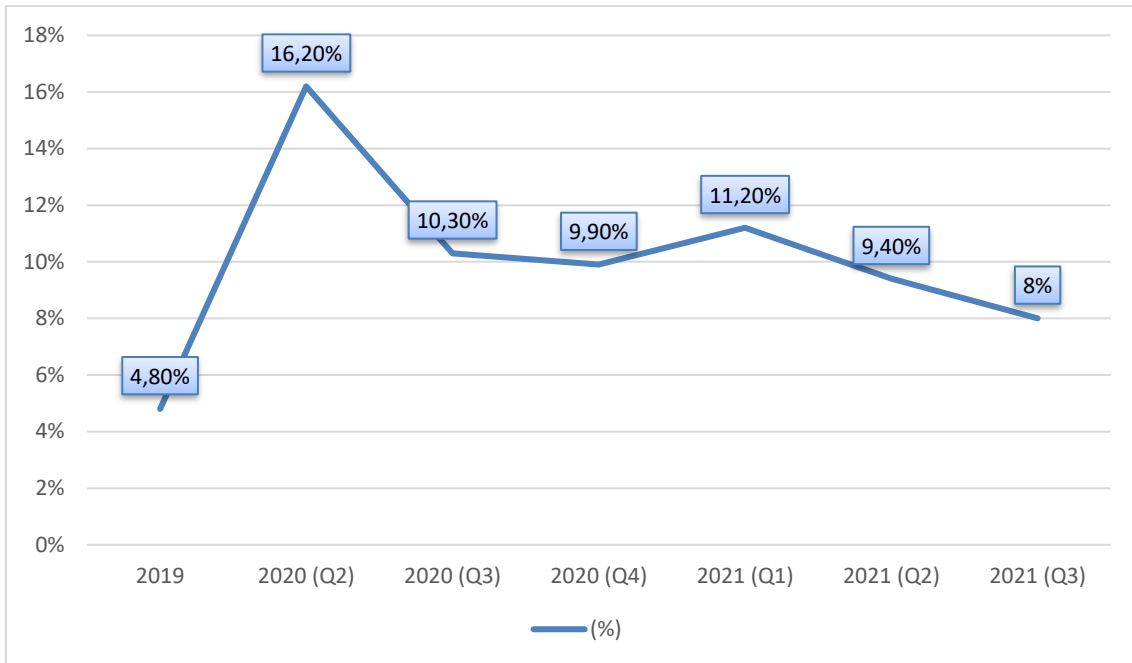


Source: (Viñas, 2021)

Now from the data extracted from (Viñas, 2021) and (Ontsi, 2021), We will proceed to comment on the following graph (graph 2) on the percentages of employees who teleworked before, during and after containment.

In graph 2, we can observe an increase in the number of employees adapting the telework mode. Between 2019 and the second quarter of 2020, we find a difference of 11.4 points, the highest of the entire pandemic. This is due to the state of alarm decree that lasted for part of the first quarter and the whole of the second quarter of 2020. From then on, a decline was observed until the fourth quarter of 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, when the 3rd wave began, this being one of the strongest with an incidence of 899.9. This wave saw a peak of 11.20% of employees teleworking. Since then, teleworking has been decreasing until nowadays as, despite experiencing high incidences in COVID, teleworking has not been affected too much as the severity of the symptoms of these variants has not been strong and has been controlled in the health centres.

**Chart 2: Percentage of employees teleworking usually before, during and after the confinement.**



Source: Own elaboration, Date: (Ontsi, 2021)

#### **4. LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR TELEWORK**

Prior to Covid-19, at national level, teleworking only accounted for 5%, but with the arrival of the pandemic it multiplied to over 30%. This is why they were forced to urgently reform article 13 of the Workers' Statute, which had become obsolete, so they approved Royal Decree 28/2020 published in the BOE on 23 September and came into force on 13 October of the same year. It regulates telecommuting, including teleworking, which is of significant importance nowadays in comparison with traditional organisations. The new lay contains the following new features:

##### **Scope of application:**

- As regards the scope of application, this will apply to all workers under the general regime. To be considered as teleworking, the employee must telework at least 30% of his working day in a period of 3 months or the equivalent percentage depending on the duration of his contract.

- For workers who are under 18 years of age and who have an internship or training contract, they will be excluded from this modality and will be able to telework if they work at least 50% of their working day in person.
- This modality may not be applied to staff in the service of the public administration.
- Employees shall have the right to be provided by the company with all the necessary means to carry out teleworking, as well as their maintenance and care in the event of technical difficulties they may encounter.

### **Equal treatment:**

- All companies must pay their employees the minimum wage that corresponds to their professional group and the level they occupy in the organisation. They should also include incentives linked to their personal conditions, or characteristics of the group.
- They have the same rights as those who opt for the 100% face-to-face mode in terms of work-life balance.

### **Agreement:**

- Teleworking should be voluntary for both the employee and the company. However, it must be agreed in writing and formalised within 3 months of the implementation of the decree..
- Those who work remotely from the start of the employment relationship for the entire working day will be prioritised for work performed wholly or partly on a face-to-face basis.

### **Rights:**

- To training or career advancement
- Sufficient provision and maintenance of the necessary equipment and tools to be able to carry out this modality.
- The development of telework should be paid or compensated by the company, and workers should not have to bear the costs associated with the development of their work activities, equipment, tools and means.
- Collective bargaining agreements may establish mechanisms for determining, compensating, or paying these costs.



- Any teleworking employee may customise his or her schedule, always considering mandatory and break times from work.  
Right to digital disconnection outside working hours.

## 5. OCCUPATIONAL RISKS OF TELEWORK

All employees who work remotely are entitled to receive adequate protection in terms of health and safety at work, in accordance with the provisions of Law 31/1995, of 8 November, on the Prevention of Occupational Risks, and its implementing regulations (art. 15 of the LTD) (BOE, 2021). Therefore, all organisations should be concerned about the occupational health and safety of their employees.

When we talk about the risks that may arise in the development of telework, we must consider a series of factors that have to do with them. These factors are the physical place or space where the work activity is carried out, the work equipment used, the communication system that exists between the teleworker and the employer, and the personal and professional characteristics of the employee himself/herself.

The different physical and psychosocial risks for employees and their prevention will be discussed below

### 5.1 Physical risks

Physical risks that may occur because of inadequate working space are **muscular or bone problems** due to improper posture over a prolonged period. **Eye problems** can also be caused by too little or too much light. In addition, it is important to ensure that the workspace is separate from the rest of the home if teleworking at home, as this is essential to avoid interruptions to the worker's work that may lead to a reduced ability to **concentrate** and consequently a reduced **capacity for work performance**, which can lead to **stress** and health problems.

In short, the most prominent physical occupational hazards are feelings of fatigue, headaches, sleep disorders, digestive disorders, muscle tension, respiratory problems, dizziness, and musculoskeletal problems.

However, it is also worth mentioning the **sedentary** lifestyle of the employee, as this type of work entails a lot of time spent sitting in front of a computer screen. The consequences

of this are: chronic diseases such as colon and breast cancer (these are the main causes of death), heart diseases, elevated levels of overweight, osteoporosis, cerebrovascular injuries and finally the development of high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

## **5.2 Psychosocial risks**

This type of risk has to do especially with the personality of the worker and with the new ways of working, especially with the intensive use of ICT, therefore, we must focus on both the personal and professional characteristics of the worker.

According to (Granado, 2020), We find various psychosocial risks that negatively affect the health of the worker, such as:

- **Technostress** which may be due to lack of IT training and poor adaptation or fear of IT. This can lead to episodes of feelings of inadequacy and underestimation leading to lower productivity.
- **Addiction:** information and work overload during the working day can lead to technology addiction and not being able to switch off at the end of the working day.
- **Anxiety:** worries about job loss, fear of the unknown, fear of change can provoke anxiety in the future.
- **Family-work conflict:** the lack of separation of family and professional life can lead to mental exhaustion and demotivation.
- **Depression:** one of the disadvantages of teleworking is the isolation that can lead to feelings of loneliness and stress, resulting in emotional instability such as depression.
- **Depersonalisation:** the lack of communication between employees and the organisation caused by distancing can lead to a lack of engagement and motivation on the part of employees.

### **5.2.1 Measures to prevent psychosocial hazards**

Having explained the different physical and psychosocial risks, a series of measures to prevent them are set out below.

According to (Preving, 2020), or musculoskeletal problems, it is first necessary to have a work surface suitable for the size of the person. The work chair should be ergonomic,

with adequate support for the shoulders, arms and feet, and the height of the chair should be reclining and adjustable so that the employee can adjust it to his or her height.

In addition, the mouse and keyboard should be as independent of the monitor as possible to ensure that the employee's arms and hands are as comfortable as possible..

On the other hand, to prevent **visual problems**, we must consider the correct positioning of devices such as monitors in relation to the distance from the eyes, as this is essential to avoid visual fatigue. In addition, we should place them in a space where the lighting is natural and that we do not have any reflections or glare on the screen of the device. The screen should be of the highest possible quality and the brightness should be adjustable when necessary to prevent eye fatigue.

## **6. ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF TELEWORK FOR COMPANIES AND WORKERS**

Telework can provide a range of advantages and disadvantages at both employee and company level. In the following, we will look at both the advantages and disadvantages from both perspectives.

### **6.1 Advantages**

#### **6.1.1 For companies**

For companies, the main advantages of teleworking are as follows:

- **Reduction of infrastructure costs**, as no activity is carried out in the headquarter offices, the buildings are not used and the company's fixed costs, such as office maintenance, electricity, et cetera., are reduced.
- **Reduced absenteeism** as they have greater time autonomy when working from home, i.e., they are free to regulate their time.
- **It facilitates the selection of professional staff** who are located in other geographical areas and who have better skills for the development of the activity.
- **Technological innovation in the company:** in order to be able to implement telework, the company must be up to date in technology.
- **Increased worker productivity as workers** will feel more autonomous and flexible, which will make them more motivated to perform their work.

### **6.1.2 For employees**

For workers, we can find the following advantages:

- **Flexible working hours.** Employees have a greater degree of autonomy when it comes to setting their timetables, adapting the working hours to the needs of each of them, but always respecting the timetable set by their superiors.
- **Improved work-life balance** by having more flexible working hours, which leads to increased employee motivation and thus increased productivity.
- **Reduced risks of accidents** by reducing commuting to the workplace, thus **contributing to the reduction of pollution and transport costs.**
- **Reduced stress** by being able to work in a quieter environment without any office clutter.

## **6.2 Disadvantages**

### **6.2.1 For companies**

In reference to the disadvantages, we find several disadvantages from the point of view of the companies, which are:

- **Equipment and telecommunication line costs.** With the shift from face-to-face to home-based work, employees no longer use office internet connections, but use their home internet connections. This increases equipment costs (internet connection, specific software, et cetera.).
- **Increased difficulties in teamwork.** Joint meetings are becoming increasingly common in companies, but teleworking makes it impossible to meet physically in a space. Although it can be done through online meetings, the outcome is not always the same as if it were face-to-face
- **Lack of physical control over the employee,** making it difficult to monitor the performance of each worker.
- **Difficulty in measuring productivity** by not having the employee physically in the offices

### **6.2.2 For employees**

Finally, as far as employees are concerned, we find the following disadvantages:

- **Isolation:** employees create a feeling of isolation by not having direct contact with their colleagues and bosses, creating a feeling of **disengagement with the company..**
- As a consequence, we find the **difficulty of communication internally and the absence of support** in certain situations.
- **Difficulty in separating work and family.** If the employee is not able to separate working hours at the office and at home from family hours, it can lead to stress and work tension.
- ICT can allow 24-hour availability of the employee, which can lead to **over-exploitation of the employee and loss of privacy.** These guidelines should be clearly formalised in the agreement and contract signed at the time.

## **7. ANALYSIS OF TELEWORK IN SPAIN**

In this section we will carry out an analysis of the situation of telework in Spain from different points such as the profile of the worker studying age, gender and according to the Autonomous Communities between 2018 and 2021 (Q1) as well as exploring according to company size and sector of activity in the year 2021.

In addition, at this point we will also carry out a SWOT analysis based on the advantages and disadvantages and the risks studied in the previous points in order to develop implementation strategies based on the weaknesses extracted from the SWOT analysis. It should be noted that the data according to age and gender will be studied according to whether teleworking is carried out occasionally or regularly (more than half of the days), while those of the Autonomous Regions, company size and sector of activity will be in total.

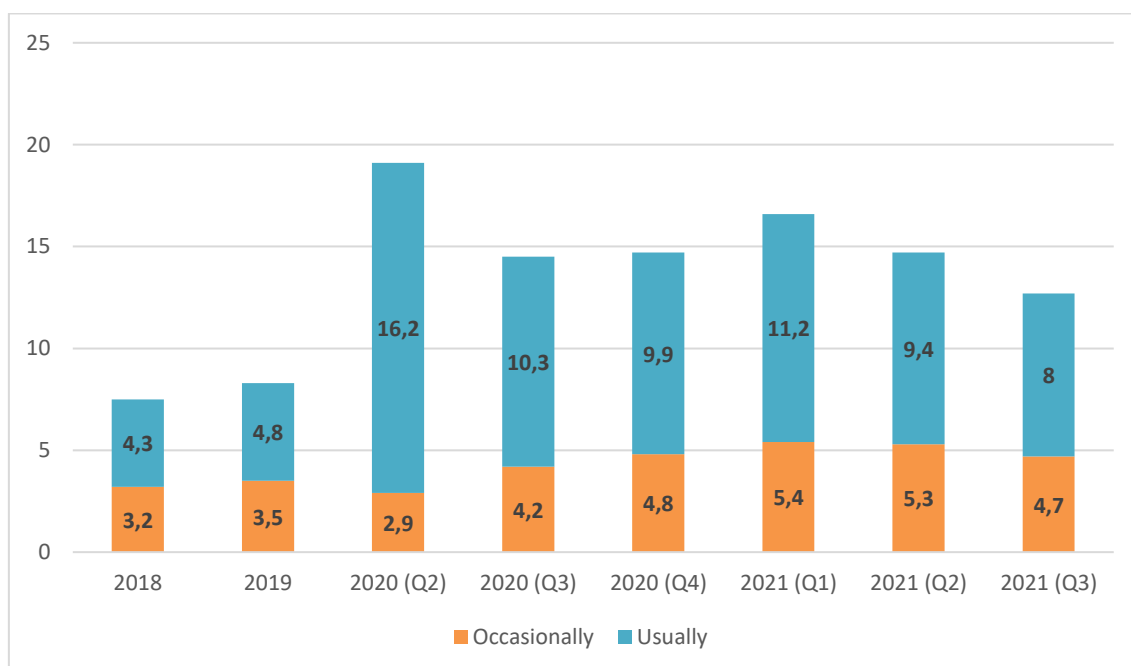
The data used in this analysis are collected from the National Institute of Statistics. (INE, 2021), from the Research Randstad Telework in Spain Report (Research, 2021) and finally from the Telework Flash data report of the second and third quarter of the Ontsi website. (Ontsi, Flash datos del teletrabajo segundo trimestres 2021, 2021), (Ontsi, Flash datos del teletrabajo tercer trimestre 2021, 2021) for the period 2018 - 2021(Q1).

First of all, we will look at telework in general terms (without any variables), on an occasional and regular basis.

As we can see in Chart 3, between 2018 and 2019 there has not been much change in the percentage of employed people who worked from home occasionally and regularly. However, in the second quarter of 2020, regular telework increased, from 4.8% in 2019 to 16.2% in 2020 (Q2). In Q3 2021, 8% of the employed worked from home on a regular basis (more than half of the days), compared to 9.4% in Q2 2021 and 10.3% in Q3 2020.

Occasional teleworking does not show much change over the whole period. This, too, is decreasing, with 4.7% of those employed doing so in the second quarter of 2021, which is six tenths of a percentage point less than in the previous quarter. The highest level of occasional telework is found in the first quarter of 2021 with 5.4%.

**Chart 3: Percentage of employed people who telework occasionally and usually.**



Source: Own elaboration, Date: (Ontsi, Flash datos del teletrabajo tercer trimestre 2021, 2021)

## **7.1 Analysis according to the profile of the worker**

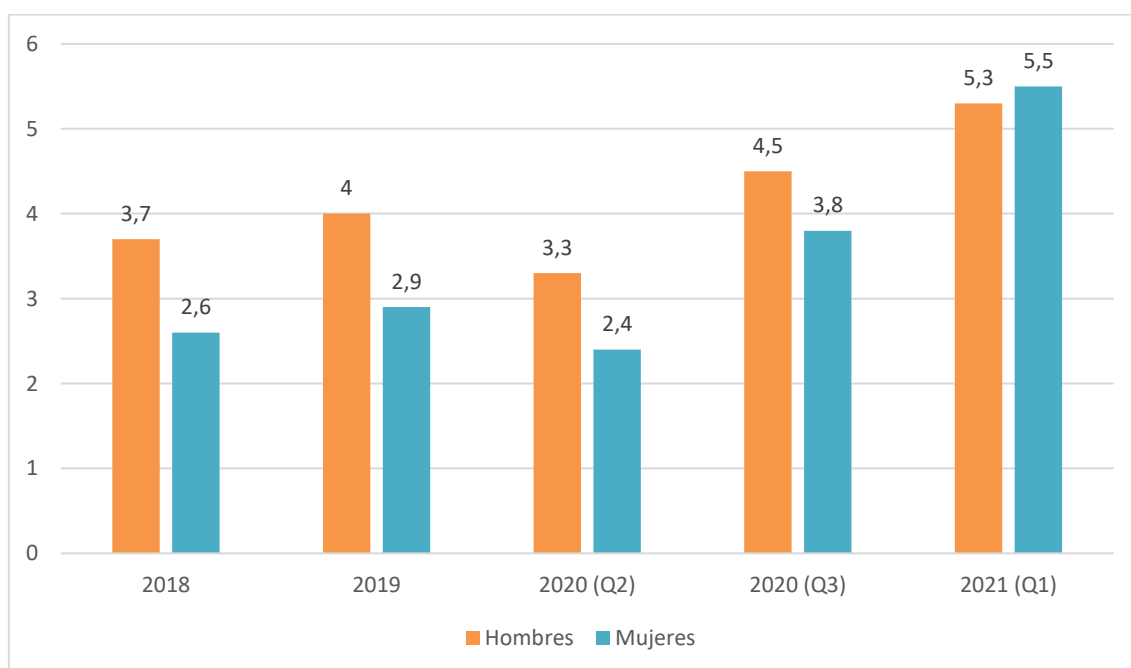
Firstly, we will look at teleworking according to the profile of workers by analysing gender and age, both occasional and regular (more than half of the days) use of teleworking.

### **7.1.1 Gender analysis**

In the following graphs, we will analyse the percentage of employees who telework occasionally and regularly by gender.

As we can see in chart 4, from 2018 to the first quarter of 2021, an increase of 2.9 pp is observed for women, while for men it was somewhat lower at 1.6 pp. In addition, the percentage of men who telework occasionally is always higher than that of women. In the case of women, they always tend to increase except in the second quarter of 2020 where we find a small decline in teleworking due to the return of face-to-face teleworking because of the low cumulative incidence we counted in that period. This decrease is also observed in the case of men.

**Chart 4: Percentage of employed people who telework occasionally according to sex.**



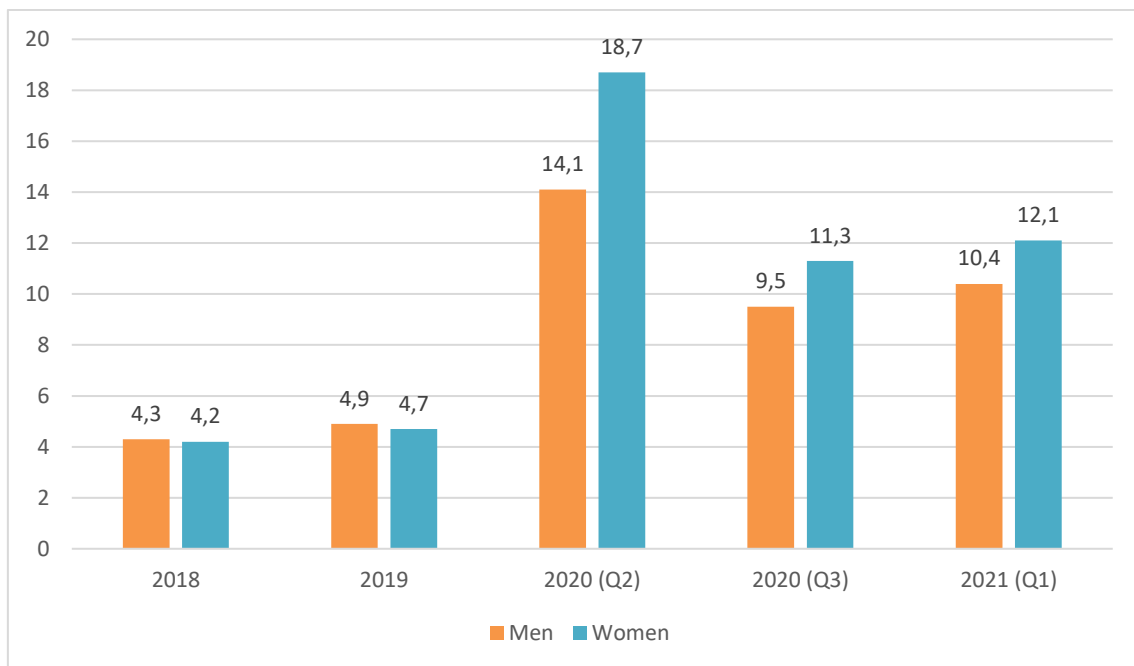
Source: Own elaboration, Date: (INE, 2021), (Research, 2021)

As we can see in Chart 5, prior to the pandemic (i.e., 2018 and 2019), the number of people who routinely teleworked were equal in terms of men and women. However, with the advent of Covid-19, in the second quarter of 2020, these numbers have shot up sharply with a difference of 9.2% for men and 14% for women, with women outnumbering men (which had not been the case so far).

During the pandemic, the percentage gradually remained the same, with a higher percentage of women. In the third quarter of 2020, there was a decrease in the percentage, reflecting the de-escalation of confinement, with many organisations deciding to return to face-to-face work and only teleworking in the event of the virus.

In the first quarter of 2021, we observed a small boom with the arrival of the omicron, a stronger variant of contagion, but with weaker symptoms. This is why many companies have decided to return to teleworking in order to avoid and reduce the number of infected people.

**Chart 5: Percentage of employed people who usually telework according to sex.**



Source: Own elaboration, Date: (INE, 2021), (Research, 2021)



### **7.1.2 Age analysis**

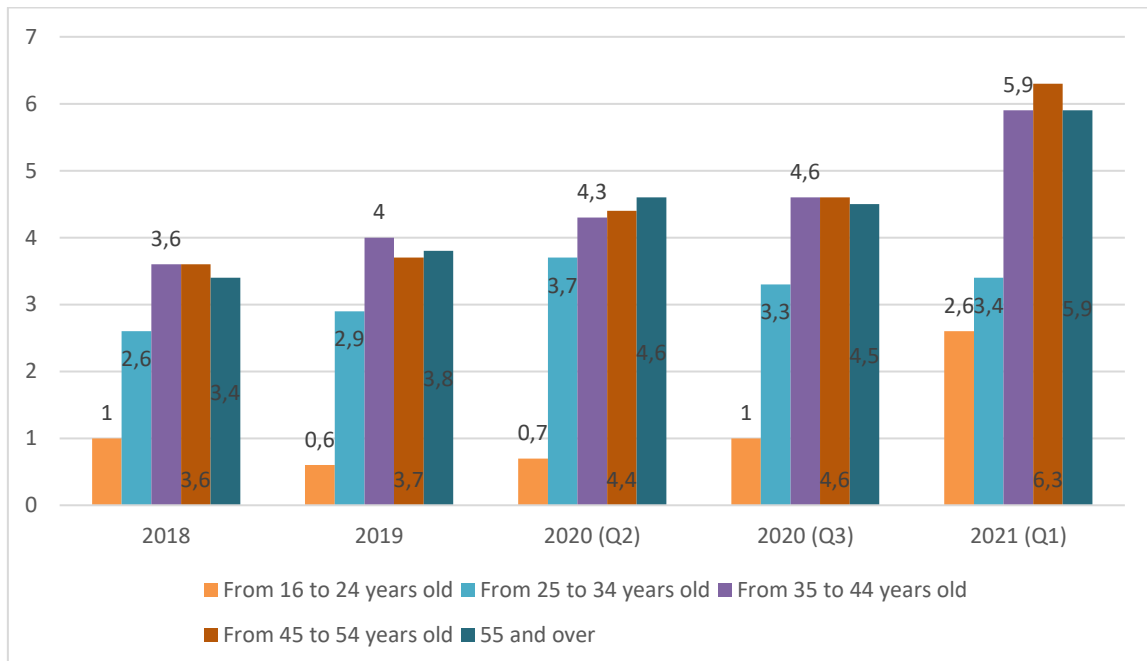
Another important variable to analyse from a teleworking perspective is the age of people using teleworking. The charts below show the percentage of employees who telework occasionally and regularly by **age**, from 2018 to the first quarter of 2021.

It can be seen from Chart 6 that, in general, occasional teleworking has experienced growth between 2018 and 2021. Workers aged 45-54 have made the most use of telework, increasing by 2.7 percentage points between 2018 and 2021 (Q1). Those who have experienced less use are workers in the 25-34 age range.

In particular, if we look at data from before the pandemic, the age range that made most use of teleworking was 35–44-year-old employees, however, this data has changed after the pandemic with 45–54-year-olds being the age range that makes most use of teleworking.

Workers aged 16-24 years as we can see is always the range that makes less use of telework and this could be due to the little training and experience they have in the workplace and require face-to-face work compared to the other age groups that already have more training.

**Chart 6: Percentage of employed people who telework occasionally depending on age.**

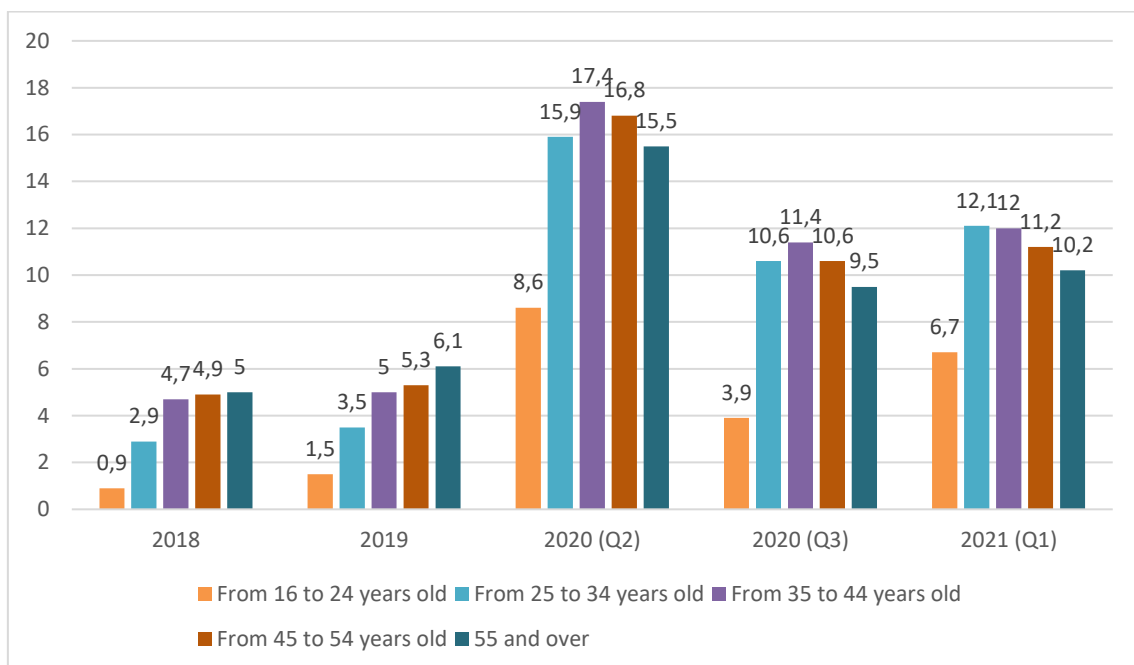


Source: Own elaboration, Date: (INE, 2021), (Research, 2021)

On the other hand, Chart 7 shows the percentages of workers who make regular use of telework. If we compare the years before the pandemic and 2020 (Q2), the time of full confinement, we observe a significant increase in teleworking. In general terms, the age group that has experienced the greatest growth is the 25-34 age group, with a difference of thirteen percentage points. From the second quarter of 2020, there is a decrease in use across all age groups, this is due to increased pandemic control, with many companies opting for hybrid teleworking in the event of illness.

The group that has developed less use of telework is the 16-24 age group as they have less education, and experience in the labour market and require more face-to-face work.

**Chart 7: Percentage of employed people who usually telework according to age.**



Source: Own elaboration, Date: (INE, 2021), (Research, 2021)

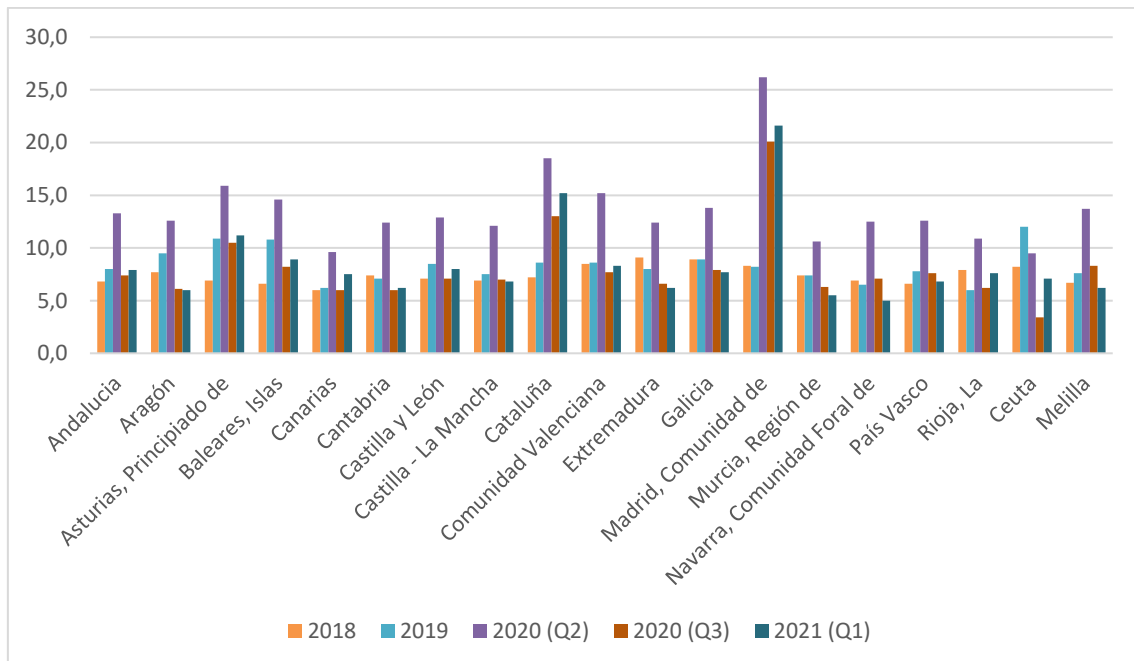
## 7.2 Analysis by Autonomous Community

Another variable to consider is the Autonomous Communities. In the following graph we can see the percentage of employees who telework according to the Autonomous Communities.

As we can see, in the years prior to the pandemic, the regions that made most use of this modality were Ceuta, Asturias and the Balearic Islands. In the middle of the pandemic, all the Autonomous Regions, except Ceuta, have seen a notable increase in the use of telework in the year 2020 (Q2), the peak of Covid-19. We found that the regions that made most use of this modality were Madrid and Catalonia, as they are the regions with the largest populations and the ones that were hit hardest in terms of cumulative incidence during the peak period of Covid-19.

In contrast, the regions with the lowest usage were the Canary Islands and Ceuta with a percentage of less than 10%. In addition, we can observe that, during the following periods, the regions that continued to make the greatest use of teleworking were Madrid and Catalonia.

**Chart 8: Percentage of employed people who telework according to the Autonomous Community.**

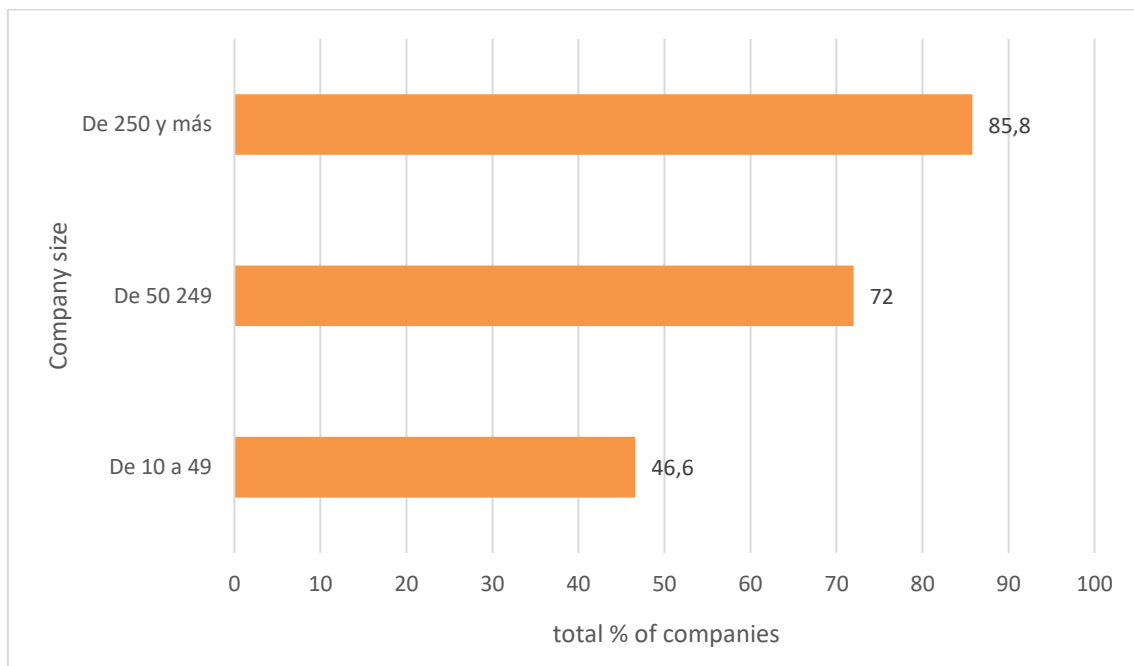


Source: Own elaboration, Date: (INE, 2021), (Ontsi, 2021)

### **7.3 Analysis by company size**

Another key point when looking deeper into teleworking is from the perspective of the company, i.e., from the size of the company. In Figure 9, we can see that the companies that allowed workers to telework in 2021 were large companies with 85% compared to 72% of medium-sized companies and 46% of small companies. This may be due to the technological differences between large and small companies, as large companies are more adaptable to digital technology than small companies.

**Chart 9: Companies that allowed teleworking by company size in 2021**

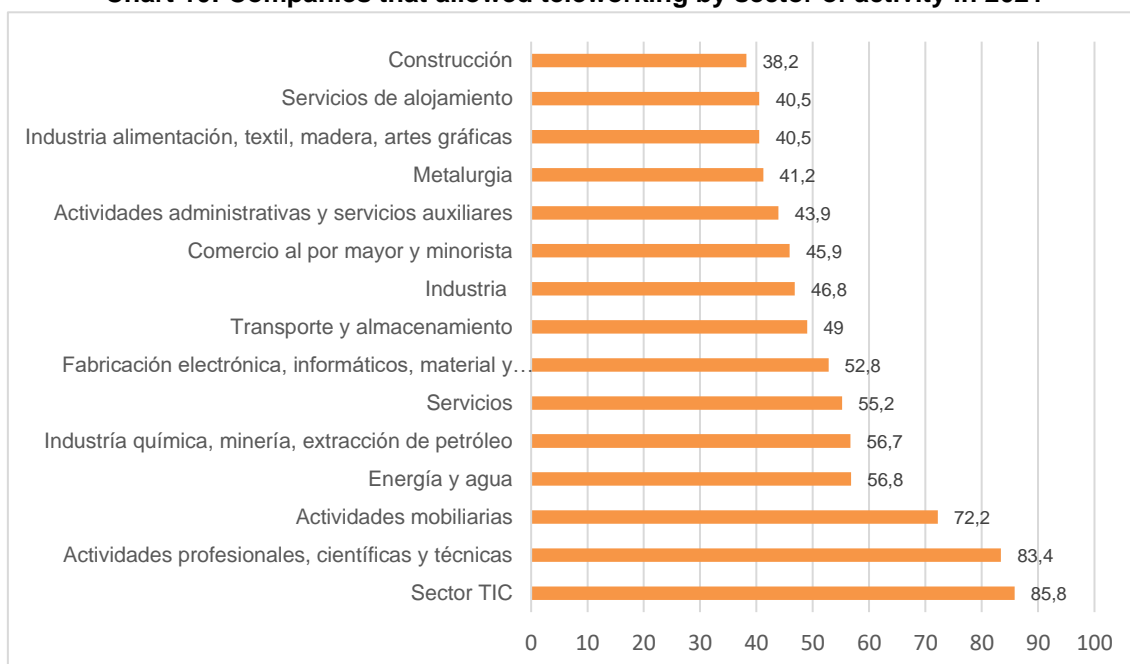


Source: Own elaboration, Date: (Onsi, Flash datos del teletrabajo tercer trimestre 2021, 2021)

## **7.4 Analysis by sector of activity**

In addition to the degree of digitisation of the company, the type of activity a company has can also influence the adoption of telework. In the graph below, we can see from lowest to highest percentage the industries related to the production of physical goods, such as construction (38.3%), accommodation services (40.5%), food (40.5%), metallurgy (41.2%), administrative activities and auxiliary services (43.9%). During this period, telework rates were lowest in wholesale and retail trade (45.9%) and transport and storage (49%). Contrary to this, there are the sectors that are more digitised and whose activities are more immaterial. This is the case of the information and communications sector (90.8%), ICT sector (85.8%), professional, scientific, and technical activities (83.4%) and real estate activities (72.2%).

**Chart 10: Companies that allowed teleworking by sector of activity in 2021**



*Source: Own elaboration, Date: (Ontsi, Flash datos del teletrabajo tercer trimestre 2021, 2021)*

## **7.5 Analysis DAFO**

From the advantages and disadvantages and the physical and psychosocial risks studied in several previous points, we will develop the SWOT analysis from which, based on the weaknesses, we will implement strategies for the implementation of telework in organisations.

**Table 1: Analysis DAFO**

<b>WEAKNESS</b>	<b>THREATS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Adequate training</li><li>- Lack of knowledge to lead</li><li>- Loss of control of employees</li><li>- Difficult communication between workers</li><li>- No fixed working hours</li><li>- Breakdown of social relations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Feelings of isolation</li><li>- Addiction to teleworking</li><li>- Stress and depression</li><li>- Family conflicts</li><li>- Loss of corporate culture</li><li>- Disengagement of workers with the company</li></ul>
<b>STRENGTHS</b>	<b>OPPORTUNITIES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Flexible working hours</li><li>- Greater confidence in workers</li><li>- Reduced commuting</li><li>- Reduced pollution</li><li>- Increased worker productivity</li><li>- Innovation for the company</li><li>- Reduced business costs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Work and business opportunities worldwide</li><li>- Good use of technological tools</li><li>- Increased market focus</li></ul>

Source: (Dominguez, 2020)

## **8. STRATEGIES TO IMPLEMENT TELEWORKING IN ORGANIZATIONS**

The current situation may force many companies to opt for telework in order to keep their business productive in these difficult times. However, not all companies are able to establish teleworking in their organisations. When implementing telework in companies, several aspects must be considered.

Based on the weaknesses analysed in the SWOT analysis, we will develop a series of guidelines or strategies that a company should follow in order to be able to implement telework safely in its organisation.

First of all, they must agree **on the prior working conditions** between the company and the employee in which they will establish the guidelines to be followed and which must be respected by both parties. This agreement must be formalised in writing and signed by both parties and must be included in the employee's contract. The rules are:

- General conditions regarding working hours, fixed working hours, and location.
- Working procedures and methods, especially in the way results are reported.
- The equipment and means that the company will provide to employees (mobile phones, computers, et cetera.).
- Responsibilities for employee data protection and cybersecurity policies.
- Payment of costs (telephone, electricity, furniture, et cetera.).

Secondly, the company must **set objectives** both collectively (for each team) and individually (for each worker). These should be quantifiable so that they can be observed and measured, and the company can assess the productivity of each of them.

Thirdly, it should be the company's responsibility to **train and educate its teleworking employees** to be able to perform the work efficiently and effectively in a safe and secure manner with the necessary equipment (both hardware and software) and appropriate training. In other words, it must ensure that its employees are prepared to carry out the work. This is why many companies have not been able to employ this modality in their organisations because they have not been able to train their workers.

Another responsibility of the organisation is **to provide and maintain the necessary equipment to be able to work safely**, such as printers, telephones, ergonomic chairs, computers, et cetera. Some workstations require a secure connection for certain applications, so the company must set up a private network connection (VPN). In addition, as mentioned above, the company will assume the costs derived from the work, including the cost of telecommunication services (telephone lines), as well as the proportional part of electricity.

A key point for effective and successful remote working is **communication**. There must be close communication and links between higher and lower positions or between the same level. For this, we must make use of technological tools such as videoconferencing or establish a number of weekly meetings, as well as their schedules.

Another important aspect is to carry out **regular monitoring** through monitoring tools to ensure the correct follow-up of tasks and results. Some of these tools are Trello, Asana, Microsoft Team, et cetera.

Finally, as they are not in the company's own offices, it can be a challenge for the organisation to **control the schedules** of employees who telework. This is why the company must establish a specific protocol for this type of employee, such as telematic tools like, for example, web applications in charge of carrying out the clocking in of each worker.. (34, 2021) (Durban, 2021)

## **9. FUTURE TRENDS IN TELEWORK**

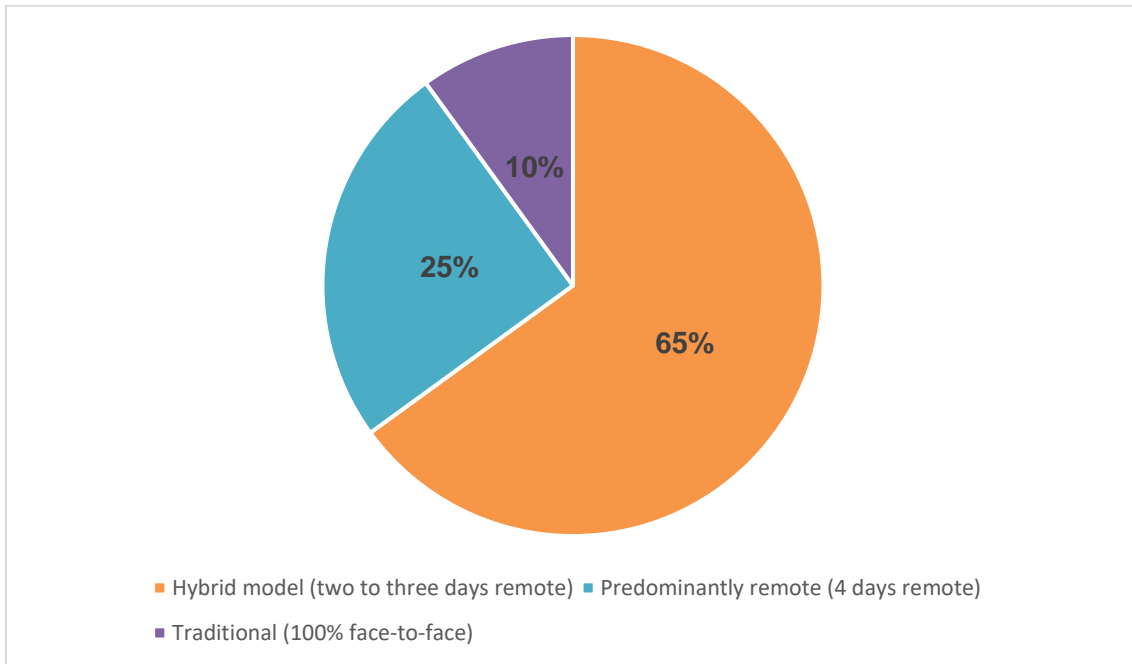
In order to talk about trends in the future of telework, we need to look back to the year 2021 and see where telework stood in that year.

In the year 2021, according to a survey conducted by (González, 2021), he tells us in a post that 70% of workers claim to have teleworked full time throughout the pandemic. In addition, the pandemic also had an effect on productivity, with 90% of employees who worked from home during the pandemic period revealing that they were equally or even more productive than if they worked in the company's offices. Also, 84% of respondents say they would be happier to continue teleworking from home or elsewhere and are even willing to take a pay cut.

On the other hand, in terms of future trends in telework by 2022, it is expected that the working model will shift towards a hybrid working model. In surveys conducted by (Vita, 2021), shows that 93% of managers want to retain hybrid working and 98% of employees want to have flexibility in the workplace. Furthermore, in this survey, in reference to companies (see graph 3), 65% of companies want to go for a hybrid model in which they work outside the office for around 2 or 3 days; 25% want 4 days at home and work in the office only in special cases and finally 10% want to be 100% on-site. Many of those who want face-to-face is because they want to share more time with their colleagues in a relaxed way and want to work in a team face-to-face.



**Chart 11: Percentages of companies that want to use the hybrid model in their organizations.**



Source: (Vita, 2021)

## **10. CASES OF COMPANIES THAT FACILITATE TELEWORKING FOR EMPLOYEES**

### **BBVA CASE**

In Spain, after the pandemic, many companies have opted to implement a hybrid working model in their organisations, as is the case of BBVA, a Spanish bank based in Bilbao. This bank is one of the Spanish companies that previously allowed its employees to work from home at the beginning of the pandemic and has maintained a voluntary on-site work programme in its central services for some time now. The months of the pandemic have allowed this flexibility to be tested at scale, with satisfactory results in terms of employee engagement and productivity.

According to an article published by (Contreras, 2022), Director Carlos Torres announced this March that he will definitively implement a mixed working model plan in his company. Employees who choose this plan will be able to work from home for up to

40% of their working day as long as it is possible, depending on the work required for the position, although they will have a minimum of 60% of the work to be done in person. Employees will be able to set these percentages on a quarterly basis. Employees who opt for this model will sign a voluntary telecommuting contract.

This measure will apply to a total of 12,000 employees in Spain, although in the future it will be extended to the rest of the countries where the bank is present, adapting it to the needs of each country and their respective local regulations. In addition, the bank will provide intraday flexibility with the possibility of working from two different addresses, but on the condition that both are in Spain.

Moreover, the bank already provided computers and mobile phones to employees, who can request mice, screens, keyboards and approved ergonomic chairs. In accordance with the provisions of Law 10/2021 on Teleworking in Spain, the bank will pay the compensation for teleworking provided for in the collective bargaining agreement, as BBVA has opted for a modality that exceeds the 30% teleworking rate required by this law.

According to (Baeza, 2022), in comparison to the times before the pandemic, BBVA was the first to close its offices at 7pm and to adopt work-life balance measures based on productivity as opposed to being in the office. Some of these measures were to reduce meetings to a maximum of 45 minutes or to provide flexibility in entering and leaving work. Thanks to this, the bank is positioned among the most innovative companies in the world dedicated to the same line and a leader in attracting and retaining talent. At BBVA, they were founders in eliminating status symbols, offices and implementing agile ways of working.

## **11. CONCLUSION**

Finally, after conducting the study on telework in organisations, we have concluded that, although telework is in recession, it is here to stay as, for many companies, especially large and medium-sized enterprises, it is a way of working that provides them with many advantages. At the height of the pandemic, the predominant age range for working from home was 35-44 years old, mainly women, because they had to take care of their children. Once the pandemic was under control, the age range with the highest use was 25-34 years. In terms of the Autonomous Communities, Catalonia and Madrid were the ones that most frequently used home-based work, as these were the ones that were

most affected during the waves of Covid19. On the other hand, Ceuta and the Canary Islands made the least use of home-based work.

Having consulted various sources of information it seems to me that a number of points need to be improved when developing telework:

Firstly, at the human level, healthy work dynamics and routines based on trust should be created in order to promote internal communication so that all employees feel familiar and not isolated. Another point to consider would be to promote teambuilding's, i.e., collaborative environments, through monthly, quarterly, or weekly events for company staff to get to know each other more personally. Excursions, dinners one day a month, or dynamic activities could also be organised.

On the other hand, at the organisational level, the company could establish internal communication protocols such as the SCRUM methodology, which consists of holding short meetings of approximately 15 minutes every day at the same time to review and communicate daily progress. This would reduce the number of incidents and resolve problems more quickly. The organisation should also provide professional training for staff who are not up to date or have difficulties in adapting to innovative technologies. Finally, a good practice would be to set monthly targets for each employee and if they achieve them, they would be rewarded with salary incentives if they so wish or with free travel vouchers to use during their holiday.

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