New Workspaces, Telework and Tele-migration:

The Great Confusion

Translation from French to English via « DeepL" Tool. We apologize for any approximation or potential mistakes due to translation.

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Content

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1. Summary

New workplace concepts often form the basis for the establishment of new companies to improve both space utilisation rates and employee satisfaction.

Teleworking and/or tele-migration are new options made possible by technology and, in many countries, by the liberalisation of labour practices and customs.

It is proposed that these themes be approached as complementary, even if some people try, sometimes for obscure reasons, to describe them as opposing elements.

This paper seeks to present the themes and options as objectively as possible, while being limited to the ideas and not to an extensive presentation of the concepts themselves.

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2. Introduction

2.1. Objectives of the document

Initially, this document constitutes an internal working and reference base for the author in the context of his professional activities.

This paper makes it possible to always use the same sources and above all to have a base of references that can be cited and used during discussions or presentations made by the author.

2.2. Definitions

Several "generic" terms are regularly used in the document and/or in specialized presentations, conversations, or articles. The main definitions are listed below:

Name	Usual Definition	(*Source*) and comments
Activity Based Working	In French, " travail basé sur l'activité ". The workplace is no longer assigned to a person, but the employee chooses the workspace during the day according to the activities he or she performs.	
Co-Working	In French " travail partagé ". With this concept, the workplace is no longer located in the company itself but in a suitable place where several small companies meet either for professional interests, economic reasons, or flexibility. These places are either rented per month or per day. "Regus" or "Spaces" are examples of companies that specialise in the rental of these workspaces.	*Ch. Hadorn* This form of work is highly valued by start-ups or micro-enterprises needing to exchange with other companies with the same needs. However, this concept does not meet the needs of larger companies in most cases because certain aspects of confidentiality or business secrecy are not or only partially regulated.
Do's and Dont's	Do's and Dont's In French "faire et ne pas faire". Rules and practices to be put in place when implementing a workplace concept involving mobility and flexibility.	*Ch. Hadorn* In principle, the number of these rules is limited to 10-12 points. It is recommended to work with the entities concerned.
Mobility	In the specific context of workspaces, mobility is understood to mean the ability to move within a space, between spaces in the same building or between spaces in several buildings of a company or between the company and other	*Ch. Hadorn* It should be noted that many companies have a very restrictive reading of mobility and their employees often only have a workspace with a few alternatives for sessions, phone calls, etc.

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	external places, of which the workers' home may be part.	
New Workspaces	Large workspaces made up of various constructive or movable elements that consider employees' activities according to the principle of "Activity Based Working" (travail basé sur l'activité)	*Ch. Hadorn* The term "new" should no longer be used in view of the number of places installed in such concepts. The term is only used to differentiate between a traditional space and the concept
Open-Space	In French "espace ouvert". In principle, large open office areas in which many workers carry out various activities.	*Ch. Hadorn* This term is totally usurped and is hardly used anymore by specialists because most people confuse "open space" with the new concepts of workplaces including mobility, flexibility, etc..
Teleworking	Carrying out one's professional activities outside the normal framework of the undertaking where the work is normally to be delivered.	*Ch. Hadorn* With the digitalisation and dematerialisation of operations, teleworking is becoming increasingly important in companies in the tertiary sector or for the administrative sectors of companies.
Tele-migration	This new term means that the worker is outside the country in which the company is located and therefore carries out his or her activity using technology only	*Ch. Hadorn* This phenomenon has already been practiced by large global groups that have entrusted certain administrative tasks to external companies located outside their main countries of activity (particularly in Asia) or employ employees who live and work outside the countries in which the company is active.
VOIP *ou* **Voice over IP**	Being able to make or receive calls from/to your computer via the internet	

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2.3. Sources

There are many sources and documents dealing with the fields of work and workspaces. A personal choice has been made as to the selection of these sources or documents.

Apart from personal reflections and experiences, the following sources have been used to write this working paper:

Date	Source	Author	Comments
31.05.2020	Ce que le télétravail va changer dans les pratiques et la loi	Quotidien « Tribune de Genève »	
05.06.2020	Télétravail : L'épineuse question des frais	Quotidien « Le Temps »	
06.06.2020	Reportage sur le « Télétravail » et la « Télé-migration »	Télévision Suisse Romande	
06.06.2020	Etude GEG-COVID-19, sur les tendances, les conséquences de la « Télé-migration »	Cyprien Batut, Haute Ecole d'Economie de Paris	

2.4. Complements

In addition to the traditional sources or those cited above, the document is also based on the following elements:

Element	Designation	Comments
IFMA	International Facility Management Organisation. Organisation producing numerous training courses, documentation, conferences in the fields of Facility Management but also concerning workspaces through its "WE Evolutionnaries" section, notably	*Member of this organisation since 2013 via the employer (UBS) and in a personal capacity since 2019*
Expérience professionnelle	More than 15 years of experience in the field of workspaces, including new concepts introducing the sharing of space.	*Initiator and manager of the "Workplace for the Future" project/concept, then of "Workplace Now" at UBS, which now covers more than 26,000 employees*

2.5. Miscellaneous

The document has several limitations and cannot represent all opinions and options in relation to workspace, telework and/or tele-migration.

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It is an "essay" with solid references and many and varied experiences. Nevertheless, this document cannot replace the professional literature produced both by specialised institutes and public institutions such as universities.

For the sake of simplification and ease of reading, the document is not gendered and does not include inclusive writing. Therefore, the masculine is used interchangeably for both women and men.

2.6. Rights & Copyright

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3. What are we talking about?

3.1. Generic approach

Before we can address the main topics of new workplace concepts, teleworking, or tele-migration, it is necessary to discuss the context. In a very schematic way, the following elements and/or components should be integrated into the reflection of principle:
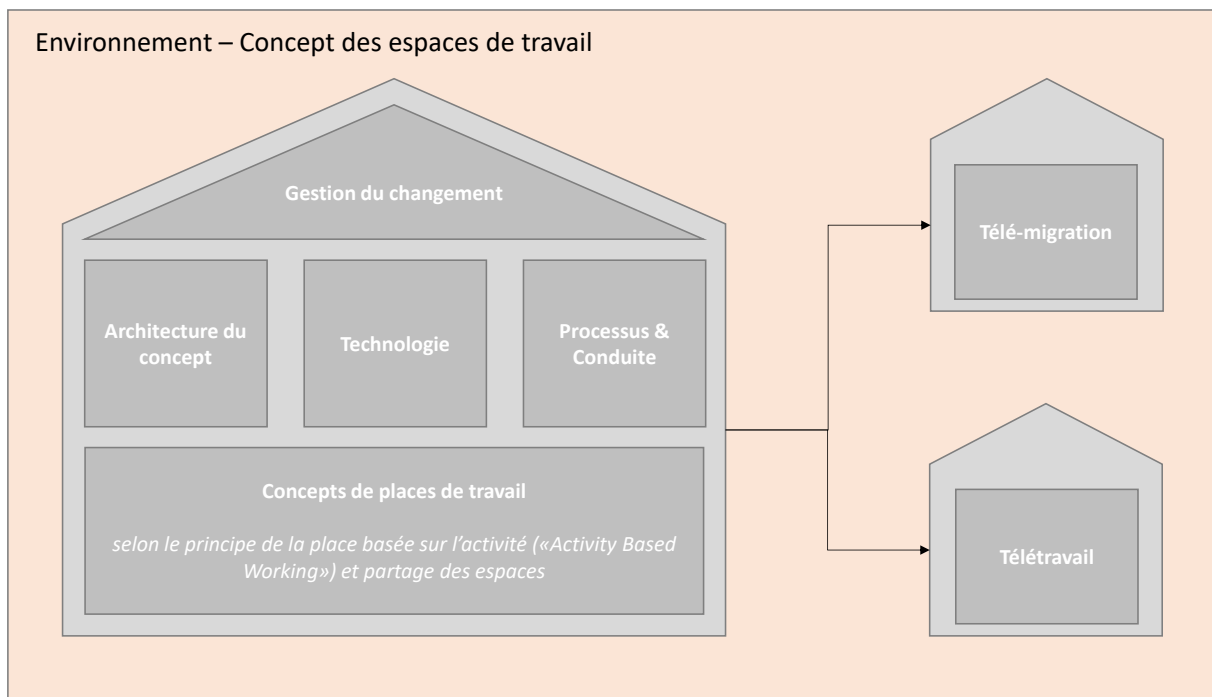
Subsequently, and depending on the strategy developed, it is always possible to exclude the "external modules" (telework and/or tele-migration), the other components being, in our view, basic elements that should always be included.

3.2. Changes in the world of work

The world of work has taken on a different face and a different rhythm over the last fifteen years or so, with in particular:

- Dematerialization
- Digitization
- Offshoring
- Globalization

While not all companies are affected to the same degree, it must nevertheless be noted that even small companies with local or regional roots are seeing their environments changed, some of them

cannibalized, and the rules that used to surround supply and demand being totally challenged by new players and new approaches.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and the shutdown of much of the world's economy has further accelerated the movement and we can reasonably expect that the effects will be felt even more profoundly in the coming years.

The price war, often politely referred to as "competitiveness", will certainly continue in all countries of the world, even those with very low wages and in competition with others with even worse working conditions. Fragmentation in the production of products, with each piece of a whole being produced in another part of the world or in another factory, further weakens the edifice.

The line between dematerialization and digitalization is blurred in many contexts and enterprises, and the two often complement each other.

3.3. Dematerialization

Thanks to technology and artificial intelligence, more and more processes are being dematerialized, or no longer require human intervention to be carried out.

The creation and use of electronic money as a means of payment for almost all financial transactions worldwide is certainly the most obvious example. Whether one pays a million francs or a few cents for a service or product, the transaction is dematerialised. The purchased product can also be dematerialized in whole or in part.

While some countries have not yet taken the plunge, it is reasonable to assume that this will be the case in the next decade. It is a complete paradigm shift and many companies have had to restructure, and for some have disappeared, with dematerialisation.

Banks are a good example because the dematerialisation phenomenon is already old - we are talking about the years 1980-1990 with the appearance of cash dispensers, the disappearance of savings books and physical securities, electronic customer accounts, etc. - and it is now a reality. - This has had a direct impact on their business models, which have been completely overturned. There will be a further reduction in the massive physical presence in favour of "satellites" which are only useful for essential customer contacts.

It must be seen that behind this example, thousands of jobs are hidden around the world and certain functions no longer exist or almost no longer exist in these financial institutions. Dematerialization has meant that workspaces have also been modified, or even greatly reduced.

Finally, dematerializing a product, an article or a process makes it possible to "produce" it from any part of the world. From this new situation, there is only one step towards delocalization or tele-migration.

The industries most affected are certainly those active in the service or administrative sectors: banks, insurance, consulting, auditing, or legal firms are the first to be affected.

The massive use of internet shopping will once again upset the already unstable balance of many companies in Switzerland and around the world.

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3.4. Digitalisation

Digitisation, which is a phenomenon related to dematerialisation, was strongly established as soon as document registration tools were put on the market and solutions with integrated automated processes were developed.

The creation and/or transformation of a physical tool, product, or process into something virtual has taken off extraordinarily quickly in recent years. Some examples are concert, train, or plane tickets.

Initially anecdotal, the scanning of documents has become highly professionalized to the point of being a key element in the work processes of many companies.

If we exaggerate a little, we can say that almost everything has become "virtual". From the creation and management of a team "remotely" thanks to digitalisation to communication and the production of articles or products.

Digitisation certainly has many advantages, but it should not make us forget the purpose of the product: why are we making this article? what is the most suitable process? what platform to use? what is the customer experience? are just a few aspects of digitisation. Moreover, "digitalization" does not yet mean "optimization": it has been observed that some companies are launching such a project headlong without thinking about the whole process and its optimization.

Without going into detail here, as this is not the point, outsourcing or digitisation provides a real operational or financial advantage when the optimisation work has first been carried out in-house. Believing that digitizing or outsourcing one's "problems" can solve them is unfortunately a serious mistake that many companies make.

This last aspect should not make us forget another phenomenon or consequence of digitisation: the ecological footprint.

For most respondents, the use of digitized or dematerialized products means that they contribute to reducing the carbon footprint. Unfortunately, the answer is not as simple as this, since the production of energy for computer centres, computers and other smartphones and the use of scarce materials for their production also have their "grey areas".

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3.5. Globalisation and offshoring

In addition to dematerialization and digitalization, there are two other essential phenomena in the economy: globalization and its corollary, delocalization.

While globalization is not new in the strict sense of the term, the scale of the phenomenon in recent years is enormous and is, unfortunately, not without consequences.

To optimize costs, a product is made up of parts produced by countless different companies located in many countries. Not to mention assembly, which can be done in stages in different companies located perhaps thousands of kilometres away from each other.

Thanks to digitalisation in particular, it is now possible to place an order for an item or product on the other side of the world, to not know or never see the people you are dealing with and to receive the finished product without knowing where it was actually created, assembled, packaged and sent.

Offshoring often goes through several stages or phases. After an initial phase of offshoring within countries, then in neighbouring countries and then on the same continents, offshoring has been to the benefit of emerging countries with labour costs well below European or American standards.

Without wishing to advocate one cause or another, it must be admitted that these massive relocations have impoverished sections of the population in Europe or the USA and have generated "side effects" which, in the macro-economic sense, may have been underestimated: equal opportunities, the training system, social assistance, etc.

The "COVID-19" pandemic may have shown the limits of globalization and relocation, but we must be careful not to draw too hasty conclusions: the economic world afterwards will be very similar to the one before, even if some options will be slightly modified and some relocations will be made to "old" countries for sensitive sectors or elements.

One of the questions, which will directly affect the world of work, will be whether consumers will be prepared to pay 10, 20 or 30% more to be sure of buying an item produced in Europe or the USA for example: we allow ourselves to doubt this strongly.

In spite of these remarks, which may raise questions related to business ethics or make one believe in a certain political orientation, the idea here is not to "put on trial" globalisation and relocations, but to show some of their consequences on the world and the labour market

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4. New Workspaces

4.1. Principles and important remark

This chapter presents in a very succinct way the "new" workspaces implying total mobility and flexibility. It cannot replace the information contained in a basic and/or detailed concept.

4.2. Definition

It's better to say it right away, the notion of "new" when talking about workspaces no longer makes much sense when we know that most of the concepts introducing:

- - Mobility
- - Flexibility
- - Non-territoriality and job sharing
- - Teleworking

have their origins in the IT sectors in the late 1970s and early 1980s, particularly in the United States.

At that time, large IT companies found that most workplaces were not or only partially occupied throughout the year, with employees working in shifts in large spaces or meeting rooms or, where already possible, from other buildings or locations.

Therefore, the term "innovative workspaces" or "activity-based workspaces" should be used instead (see definition under "Activity Based Working").

The following definition can be found in Wikipedia (Status as of 08.06.2020 / translated from French version):

Activity Based Work ("ABW") is a "Business Strategy" that offers people a choice of parameters for a variety of activities in the "workplace". In addition to offices with a fixed framework (everyone has their own office), ABW-offices gives staff the opportunity to choose a place in the office where it is most appropriate for them to perform their tasks. The spaces are designed to create opportunities for a variety of activities in the workplace, from intense and concentrated work to impromptu and informal meetings or more formal meetings.

This "definition" makes it possible to indicate, at least to non-specialists, what it means in relation to the concept of the "open-space" office, a concept that should be banished from the vocabulary, given how much it has been overused and misunderstood.

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4.3. Main Ideas

The concept originates from the fact that companies need more and more flexibility and mobility and must be able to adapt to market trends in a quick, simple, and pragmatic way. In a very schematic and deliberately simplistic way, such a concept is implemented for three reasons:

- Financial aspects: by reducing real estate costs by optimising, densifying the use of space, and by reducing the cost of the building.
- Human aspects: by increasing employee satisfaction with the choice of workplace daily and thereby increasing productivity.
- Combined approach: The combination of the two previous points.

In principle, a combination of human and financial factors should be chosen to achieve the best results.

As already mentioned above, the concept includes, in principle and with some exceptions, the following elements:

- Generic layouts that include several spaces according to proven ratios, which are copied as many times as necessary depending on the size of the building.
- Spaces shared by all staff, managers, and employees (= almost total elimination of private offices)
- Spaces focused on work, communication, concentration and/or silence, technique, and relaxation.
- Open and closed spaces to consider specific needs, confidentiality, the need for communication or concentration, etc.
- Except in exceptional cases, no space can be reserved (first come, first served).

The concept often includes a pre-assignment of fields to entities. With rare exceptions, the "hotelling" system, favoured by audit companies, is not applied or applicable. In other words, this pre-allocation allows the employee to know in which part of a building he or she will be able to meet up with his or her team as well as the "neighbouring" entities.

This approach also makes it possible to facilitate interaction between entities with the same profile or working closely together in "physical" collaboration (virtual collaboration has no impact on this point). Examples include HR with training; communication with marketing; logistics management with real estate.

When the concept is deployed in several company buildings, the same approach, the same modules and the same "design" of the concept is desirable because it allows staff to work in one building or another without having to "rediscover" a new working environment.

Finally, but it must be a matter of course, it is necessary to have a high-performance, efficient, and user-oriented computer technology before or with the implementation of the concept. Without a computer system worthy of the name, the concept will never work.

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4.4. Experiences & Feedbacks

The introduction of such a concept has operational, financial and staff benefits. Among the operational benefits is the seat occupancy rate, which generally increases by +20%.

Still according to experience and despite a 1.2 sharing of work places (120 people per 100 places), the vacancy rate remains at around 20 to 30%, which is normal: a rate close to zero would mean that users would have to look for work places all the time, which would be totally counterproductive.

The "new" concept generally leads to an increase in employee satisfaction of between 10% and 15%.

According to a regular survey of thousands of people around the world conducted by the Leesman Institute, it is known that around 30% of employees working in a traditional environment are not satisfied with it, so the potential for improvement is enormous.

This leads to a significant change in behaviour. Because of the permanent proximity between managers and their employees, interaction is facilitated but also accelerated. This has many advantages, but also requires several adjustments and behavioural changes.

The number of planned sessions tends to decrease in favour of a more spontaneous communication, which better meets the efficiency needs of both parties.

Because of the "freedom of movement" given to all staff in the various areas to carry out their activities, interactions are modified, and the number of informal discussions increases drastically.

Finally, faster, and more informal exchanges result in a decrease in the number of emails exchanged internally (often cited estimates: -20%).

Problems related to confidentiality and noise are often mentioned in staff surveys. There are several solutions on the market, but these need to be considered in the design phase:

- - Noise barriers / panels between groups of workplaces
- - Micro-perforations or sound-absorbent panels on some furniture
- - Systematic use of small rooms / booths for concentration
- - Audio headsets for telephoning (Voice over IP)
- - Etc.

Finally, a certain number of operating rules ("do's and dont's") must be enacted in order to facilitate interaction and life in community.

5. Teleworking

5.1. Definition

The concept of teleworking as it is known to most people today has been particularly developed thanks to technology and especially telecommunications.

However, it should not be forgotten that some forms of telework existed long before the arrival of communication tools. Two particularly striking examples which were highly developed in Switzerland and elsewhere in Europe can be cited:

- The watch industry, which employed many workers at home, who received the workpieces by courier, machined them according to the requirements of the watch manufacturers and returned them to the factory again by courier.

- The textile industry used small private weaving workshops that were responsible for preparing certain pieces of fabric or weaving patterns on pieces that had already been prepared.

Preparation and production were thus almost completely decentralised, with only the final assembly of the watches or pieces of fabric taking place in the factories.

The following definition can be found in Wikipedia (as of 08.06.2020, translated from French version):

> **Teleworking** is an organisation of work carried out wholly or partly at a distance from the place where the result of the work is expected. It is opposed to on-site work, i.e. work carried out on the employer's premises. Telework can be carried out from home, a "telecentre", a satellite office or in a nomadic way (different workplaces depending on the activity to be carried out), in the context of salaried work, but also from "Coworking", in the context of self-employed telework. Its development has been made possible by information technologies (Internet, mobile telephony, fax, etc.), in particular - in certain businesses - by ADSL and then high-speed Internet access, then made possible by fibre optics. Nomadic teleworking" has been encouraged by economic globalisation.

In its modern form, telework must be subdivided into two categories with different legal and other implications:

o   Telework as a permanent and recurrent activity for some or all employees of a company. The company does not have the premises or workplaces for all its employees.

o   Telework as a complement to the activities carried out in the company in normal times. This complement is often authorized but not compulsory and takes place for a maximum of 1 to 2 days per week. In this case, the company must, by law, have sufficient space for its employees.

This segregation between the two approaches may seem subtle, but it takes on its full importance to regulate very different notions such as attendance, insurance, responsibilities, remuneration, taxation, etc.

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This paper is limited to the notion of telework as a complement to pre-existing activities in the company.

It is interesting to note that most of the speakers in the media or at conferences hardly ever talk about the complementarity of the "new" concepts of workplaces and teleworking but focus on one or the other.

On the contrary, experience shows that telework - in its current interpretation - should only be understood as a complement to the corporate workplace. Most of the respondents who have practised or are practising telework confirm that it is this complementarity which represents the major asset.

5.2. Main Ideas

Telework must allow all or part of the activities entrusted to staff to be carried out outside the company's premises.

However, according to the study conducted by C. Batut (Ecole d'Economie de Pars) and published in May 2020, telework only applies to 33% of companies, the others having industrial or other activities that require permanent presence.

According to our experiences and the figures contained in Leesman's studies, we can assume that this proportion also applies to "new" workspaces.

If it is well established, telework has the following advantages**:**

- Form of independence in activities (prioritization according to personal wishes or constraints)
- Flexibility in working hours, with the aim of staying within the legal or contractually agreed duration
- Optimization of the time spent at home by combining professional and private activities in the timeliest manner possible
- Obligation of leaders to give clear orders and to focus on the delivery of work and not on attendance
- Potential reduction in the need for workspace if teleworking is practised by many workers
- Reduction in the number of commuters on public transport and reduction in the number of vehicles on the roads at peak times

Conversely, teleworking can have the following disadvantages**:**

- - Potential loss of corporate cultural identity and sense of belonging to a team
- - More difficult socialization due to the physical "absence" of employees from their workplaces
- - Obligation to find "the" day of the week on which to organize "on" sessions and the general attendance
- - If supervisors are not familiar with the activities of their employees, there is a risk of over- or undervaluing the services provided by their employees.

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- - Work on screen and via videoconferencing is more constraining and more demanding in terms of health (eye fatigue, back pain in non-ergonomic environments).

In all cases, technology must be considered as the cornerstone of telework.

If the performance of IT tools, transmission speed, stability of communications, etc. are not guaranteed, the quality of telework performance and employee satisfaction will be poor.

Finally, it should be stressed that, apart from the legal aspects, an obligation to practice telework without any other alternative can be very constraining or even impossible for some people and some social-cultural contexts.

In addition, it should be realised that telework is often not possible in a whole series of countries with insufficient technological infrastructure or where private spaces (size of apartments) are tiny and do not allow for dignified work.

5.3. Experiences & Feedbacks

Numerous studies and analyses have been carried out in the context of telework and it must be noted that:

- Globally, and in Europe and the USA, teleworking is appreciated by employees working in the service or administrative sectors.

- Telework should be limited to 1-2 days per week and not exceed this threshold, as it risks destabilising interpersonal relations within the company and creating a form of distancing from the team.

- Telework does not replace the activities carried out in the company as part of a team but complements them.

- If the technology is not adequate, telework does not work and quickly loses its attractiveness to employees.

- Limiting access to applications and data outside the company's normal working hours is generally not appreciated by employees, even if it meets a laudable desire on the part of the company to preserve the employees' rest. They want to be able to modulate their work as they wish.

- As already mentioned, telework can only be applied in a sustainable and positive way if the conditions at home are good (available space, tools, communication).

It can therefore be concluded that telework is a very good complement to the activities carried out in companies provided that the framework conditions are optimal but cannot replace the interpersonal relations developed at the workplace.

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6. Tele-migration

6.1. Definition

From a review of the literature and some recent articles, the term "tele-migration" appears to be new, although activities along this model have been in existence for some time.

It seems that the very definition of "tele-migration" or relocation of skilled jobs is somewhat unclear and, to our knowledge, does not appear or has not yet appeared in French dictionaries.

While some authors exclude from "tele-migration" activities carried out by employees working for a company's service provider, others on the contrary consider that this is part of "tele-migration" even if we speak of indirect activities (a form of "offshoring").

In all cases, the result is the same: the services are provided by a worker living and working outside the country where the company is located.

Tele-migration could therefore be defined as the fact that an enterprise has all or part of an activity carried out by a worker who does not live and work in the country of origin where the result of the activity will be effective..

6.2. Main Ideas

Tele-migration aims at migrating the service out of the country of origin rather than migrating the employee to the country in which the final product or service is delivered.

The following criteria can be mentioned:

- The service is provided "off-shore" by the employee.
- The employee lives and works outside the "target" country of the product or service.

In view of the limited experience and especially the relatively new use of the term "tele-migration", it is highly likely that adjustments will be made to both the definition and the interpretation in the coming years.

Beyond the highly political and sensitive aspects of this subject, tele-migration has, in our view, several direct consequences on jobs:

- The location of the company and of the skilled jobs is no longer the same.
- The company "diverts" the notion of internal use by separating the activity from the place where it is produced and where the result will be recorded.

We believe that the States will soon have to legislate on this matter, even though many companies have been using these facilities de facto for quite some time already.

There are two main arguments for introducing tele-migration in a company:

- - The knowledge or training aspects: the company must seek knowledge in another country because it cannot find the necessary resources in its own country.

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- - The financial aspects: the compensation aspects (salaries, social benefits, etc.) are much more attractive in the "third" country, thus allowing to take advantage of reduced costs.

Some companies will use this "leverage" for the two reasons mentioned above.

6.3. Experiences & Feedbacks

To our knowledge, there are no serious and in-depth studies on the subject of "tele-migration". One can imagine that the topic has not been very "promising" up to now or marginal enough to be studied. One of the only known studies was conducted by a doctoral student at the Paris School of Economics in May 2020.

Furthermore, most companies seeking to optimise their costs have most likely opted to outsource services to third party suppliers.

We can therefore legitimately think that the theme of "outsourcing" has been given more prominence than one of the "specific forms" of this outsourcing.

Nevertheless, it will be interesting to see how smaller structures, including start-ups, will use their external resources. Knowing that these micro-enterprises work in a network, it is easy to imagine that they are already resorting to "tele-migration", looking for the best resources where they are without worrying about the more "societal" aspects.

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7. Great Confusion

7.1. Basis

Reading the articles and reference documents dealing with the three topics, new workspaces, telework and tele-migration, it is easy to see that there is often a "soft mix" between themes and approaches.

As with many topics with emotional components that are new to the media landscape, these inconsistencies are not serious in themselves: the misinterpretation of information and recommendations, or even definitive statements on these topics, are much more serious.

7.2. Reasons for confusion

We must note that everything and its opposite is regularly written or said about new workplace concepts and teleworking.

There is a great deal of confusion in these areas: the complexity of the approaches and their economic and psychological consequences are certainly not unrelated to this situation.

It is currently difficult to form an opinion on the motivations and underpinnings of these numerous positions, as opinions differ so much from one person to another.

While some articles or positions are very well documented and researched, it must be said that a very large number of "pseudo-specialists" shed a unique and focused light on these important themes that deserve better.

The topic of tele-migration still seems too "new" now - even though the practice has been around for quite some time - to be the subject of much debate.

Nevertheless, the "problem" of tele-migration will certainly give rise to debate and controversy in the near future, especially in the wake of the pandemic and its economic consequences and the fact that the number of complete and sometimes unreasonable relocations will be reviewed.

Indeed, there is a good chance that, beyond certain aspects, a form of protectionism will reappear, deeming both the practice of relocation and "tele-migration" unethical, or even contrary to tax law, etc.

This is a highly political subject that goes beyond the scope of this document and is therefore not dealt with further. But let us return to the reasons for the confusion of themes.

The confusion often stems from the fact that these subjects are dealt with in silos, completely independently of each other, whereas they can - and must - be perfectly complementary.

Even if it may seem normal to focus on one point, since the field is so vast and therefore impossible to deal with in a few lines or words, ethics should encourage the various authors and other writers to evoke, at least succinctly, the other themes and to put them into perspective.

This may be a sign of the times, but there is often a 'polemical' or binary approach to these themes. Indeed, the presentation often takes a political turn or mentions divisive positions.

It should also be noted that some bad or counterexamples have added to the confusion. One example is the use of the word "open-space" or landscaped office to refer to new workspaces that include many more elements and are much more complex to manage, but whose benefits are greatly increased for both companies and employees compared to the old "open spaces".

Finally, one can imagine that the often very clear-cut approach of the presentations comes from the fact that the subject interests everyone and that the highly emotional components play a profound role. Indeed and to give just a few examples,

- - Who can remain insensitive to the fact that he will have to share his workplace with his colleagues, his space suddenly becoming a space for everyone?
-
- - Which leader can remain neutral when he learns that he will lose his private office and will have to work with his colleagues?
-
- - Which leader can spontaneously find sympathetic the idea that his collaborators will sometimes be 1-2 days a week out of the office while producing as much or more?
-
- - Which team can accept to change the method for the sessions without raising eyebrows?

As you can see, the human aspect and the management of teams are at the heart of the matter and can only generate questions or doubts.

In the numerous position papers, we finally notice that the topics are often approached in a technical way whereas it is the emotional part that must be considered.

These few statements show, if need be, that all the ingredients are there to create a great deal of confusion.

7.3. Ways to avoid this confusion

We modestly believe that this confusion could be easily avoided. We suggest:

- - Expose all three topics at the same time and as complementary while focusing on one of them if necessary.
- - Remain factual during the presentation, even if it means taking a stand at the end.
- - Recall the ins and outs of each topic, bearing in mind that most readers or listeners have little or no experience in these areas.

In addition, it is necessary to be curious in this field and to look for the various sources, to use the information in an intelligent way and perhaps to surround oneself with specialists who have studied these questions for many years.

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8. Expected Evolution

First, it must be admitted that this is an essential social issue. Whether we like it or not, workplaces are an important part of the lives of most active citizens around the world.

Moreover, the new generations entering the labour market (generations Y and Z) have a totally different approach to work and its conditions than their elders (the "baby boomers" generation in particular). Thus, work must provide satisfaction, allow for development, and enable people to learn new things.

The "new" approaches to the workplace, of which the innovative concepts of workspaces and teleworking are concrete representations, should therefore be integrated into the strategic thinking of companies.

Companies that evade these issues will certainly be deprived of an important competitive advantage and may eventually lose their strengths and talents. They will also find it difficult to recruit new employees.

State intervention is to be expected within a relatively short time frame regarding the regulation of telework and tele-migration, as the political and economic stakes are immense.

It will also be interesting to see the position of the OECD and the European Union on these issues, given that pressure from the USA and China in particular will be enormous, even if their deep political motivations may differ.

On the economic level, the implementation of these concepts will have a significant impact on certain branches of activity.

We are thinking in particular of office furniture manufacturers, whose volumes could fall sharply in the future, or the real estate sector managing office space with declining demand due to the optimisation of leased space and the use of teleworking, in particular

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9. Conclusion

Workspaces have never been the subject of as much study, documentation, analysis, or criticism as they have been in recent years. It is true that, very schematically, working people spend more than a third of their lives in their workplaces and it is normal that they are concerned about this.

On the other hand, the number of options, increasingly sophisticated technology, and the expectations of each other add to the complexity of the whole.

It would be counterproductive for companies, authorities, trade unions or employees themselves to try to pit the models against each other, and it would be particularly advisable to gather as much information as possible before taking major decisions in this area.

The sharing of workspaces, teleworking and, to a lesser extent, tele-migration will, in their own way, help to give a new face to work, to the relationship between the employee and his work, his bosses and his colleagues.

It would be unwise to deprive us of a debate on these subjects and, above all, it would destroy the many efforts that companies are making to improve the working spaces of their employees.

However, a pleasant and friendly workspace concept alone does not bring employee satisfaction. If the management is not up to the task and does not accompany or does not properly manage the changes, the level of satisfaction, and therefore of productivity, will remain at the current level or even worsen over time and with the arrival of new generations of employees.

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