



BETTERWORK



WELL-BEING
AND HEALTH
AT WORK

TELEWORKING: WHAT ARE THE TRENDS IN TERMS OF MATERIAL CONDITIONS, CONCENTRATION AND FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS?

Teleworking remains popular in Luxembourg despite a drop in comparison with the pandemic: 29% of workers teleworked regularly in 2023 compared with 40% in 2021 (between June and September).

However, 57% of all workers wanted to work from home at least once a week every week and 32% preferred to telework most of the time.

In 2023, 70% of teleworkers felt well equipped, but only 24% of employers covered communication costs.

Equipment is provided for 64% of teleworkers, especially in industry and financial services. In 2023, 85% of teleworkers found it easy to concentrate at home, and 7% looked after children while working.

As for flexibility, 60% have variable teleworking days, often at their own request. Work-life conflicts and the risk of burnout are higher among those who have to reconcile work and childcare or who have variable teleworking days at the employer's request.



1. Teleworking: less frequent but as popular as ever

According to the *Quality of Work* survey, the use of teleworking has changed significantly in recent years (Chambre des salariés, 2024). When the survey was first conducted in 2017, 21% of respondents regularly worked from home. With the Covid pandemic in 2020, outside the curfew period, this number rose to 33%, then to 40% in 2021, mainly due to an increase in teleworking among cross-border commuters. Since 2022, teleworking has fallen to 35%, then to 29% in 2023, mainly among cross-border commuters.

When asked how they would like to divide their working time between working on the company's premises and teleworking from home, 57% of all professional categories would like to telework at least one day each week, and a third (32%) would like to work more than half or all of their working time from home (Chambre des salariés, 2024). Since 20 October 2020, there has also been a new generally bind-

ing agreement between the social partners on telework, replacing the 2006 agreement. It defines the legal framework for teleworking, for example with regard to the equipment to be provided to teleworkers, and is binding on all employers and employees.

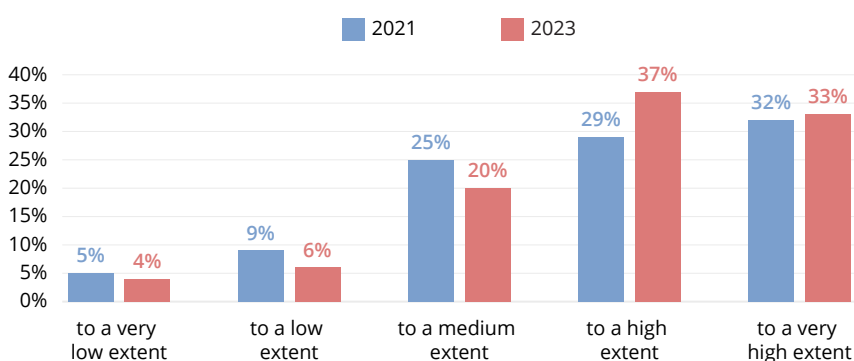
In the *Quality of Work* 2023 survey – a representative annual survey of Luxembourg workers (for more details, see box: Method) – a number of data are available to assess the conditions in which workers find themselves when they work from home, in particular on the material conditions for working from home, on being able to concentrate on work without disturbance and on the flexibility of teleworking days. In this newsletter, these data will be analysed, as will the links between these different teleworking conditions and the dimensions of well-being.

2. The material conditions for teleworking

Figure 1 shows how employees and civil servants rate their equipment for working from home in 2021 and 2023. Whereas in 2021, 14% thought they were poorly or very poorly equipped for teleworking, this percentage fell to 10% in 2023.

In 2021, 25% thought they were moderately equipped, compared with 20% in 2023. As a result, 70% thought they were well or very well equipped for teleworking in 2023, an improvement on 61% in 2021.

Figure 1: Assessment of the level of equipment for working at home



Note: QoW 2021 and 2023 data; percentages

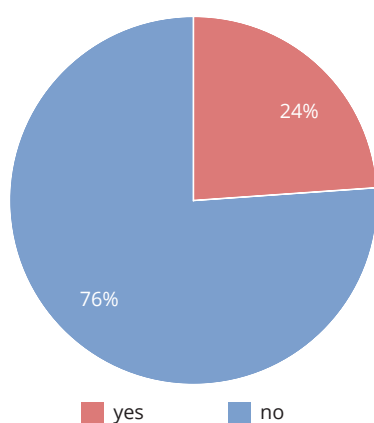
In this newsletter, only the masculine generic is used for the purpose of clarifying the text. It refers to any gender identity and thus includes both female and male persons, transgender persons as well as persons who do not feel they belong to either gender or persons who feel they belong to both genders.

Do employers contribute to their employees' material arrangements to facilitate working from home? The first question on this subject is whether the employer covers the communication costs associated with teleworking, for example by reimbursing the costs on a lump-sum basis.

According to the responses in 2023 (**figure 2**), only 24% of employers cover the communication costs associated with teleworking, compared with 76% who do not, even though this is provided for in point 8 of the agreement of 20 October 2020 on the legal framework for regular teleworking.

Public administration (6%) and the information and communication sector (15%) in particular have the lowest proportions of responses indicating that communication costs are covered by the employer, and the financial and insurance activities (41%) and specialised, scientific and technical activities and other administrative and support services (30%) sectors have the highest.

Figure 2: Coverage of telework-related communication costs by the employer



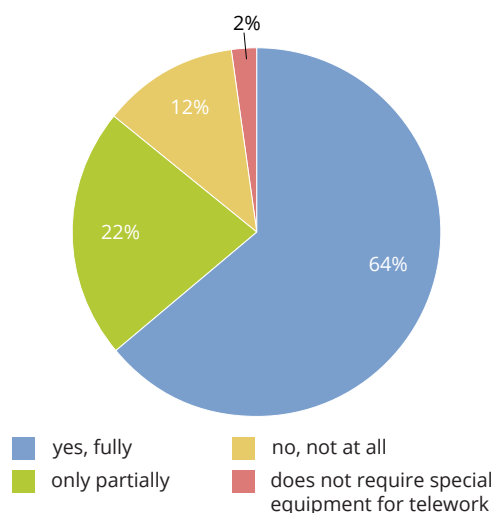
Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

Another aspect of the material conditions is whether workers have to work with their own equipment or whether, as required by point 8 of the agreement of 20 October 2020 on the legal framework for telework, the employer provides workers who telework regularly with the necessary work equipment.

Figure 3 shows that in 2023, 64% of respondents stated that the necessary IT equipment was made available to them, 22% that this was partially the case and 12% that this was not the case. 2% said they did not need any equipment for teleworking.

Industry (77%) and financial and insurance activities (71%) have the highest percentage of respondents stating that all the IT equipment needed for teleworking is provided by the employer, while public administration (45%) and construction (48%) have the lowest.

Figure 3: Provision of IT equipment for teleworking



Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

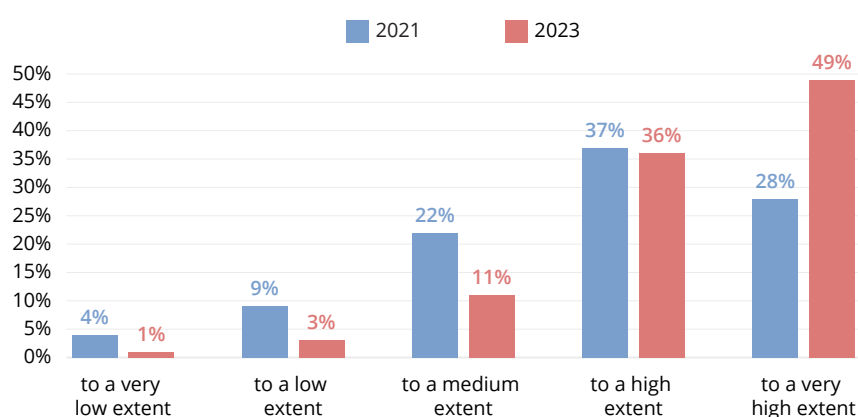
3. Working from home without being disturbed?

After the material conditions, the question now is whether the teleworkers' environment is also conducive to enabling them to concentrate on their work and not be bothered by interruptions.

Figure 4 shows the extent to which workers feel they can work without being disturbed, comparing responses in 2021

and 2023. Whereas in 2021, 13% said they could work to a (very) small extent without being disturbed, this value fell to 4% in 2023. The average response value has also fallen from 22% to 11%. Overall, 85% of those questioned said they could work from home without being disturbed in 2023, compared with 65% in 2021.

Figure 4: Evaluation of the level of being able to work without being disturbed



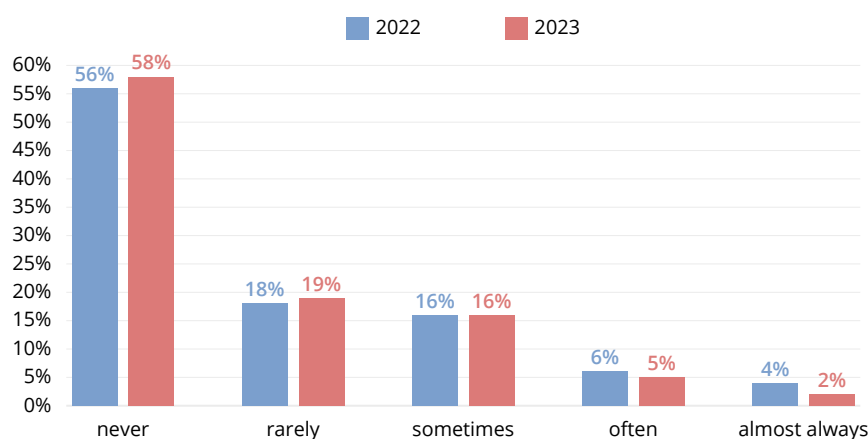
Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

One of the reasons that makes teleworking difficult is taking care of children while at work. Responses concerning the frequency of this situation are compared between the years 2022 and 2023 (**Figure 5**).

In 2023, this happened rarely or never to 77% of respondents, a figure only slightly higher than in 2022 (74%). In both years, this happened sometimes to 16%. In 2023, 7% of respondents did often or almost always perform childcare tasks in parallel with their work at home, compared to 10% in 2022.

This habit is more common in the 35-44 age group (13%), among direct service workers, shopkeepers and sales-people (31%), workers in public administration, defense and education (16%) and those in wholesale and retail trade, transport, hotels and restaurants (10%), parents working atypical hours in the evening, at night or at weekends (10%) and part-time workers (12%).

Figure 5: Frequency of childcare while teleworking



Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

4. Teleworking on fixed or variable days?

Even for regular telework, the agreement of 20 October 2020 on the legal regime for telework leaves some leeway for employers and employees to set the hours or days of the week during which the teleworker teleworks, provided that the arrangements for determining these methods are laid down by mutual written agreement between the employer and the employee.

Figure 6 shows that in 2023, the majority of respondents, 60%, say they do not always work the same days at home, compared with 40% who always work the same days of the week at home.

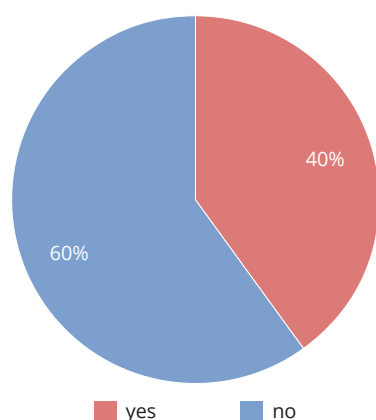
It is cross-border workers (between 71% and 75% depending on the country) who most often vary their teleworking days,

as do teleworkers in construction (79%), health and social work (70%) and other services (70%)

Flexibility is therefore used, but in some cases it is at the employee's request and in others it is a condition imposed by the employer. In 88% of cases, teleworking days vary at the employee's request, and in 12% at the employer's request (**Figure 7**).

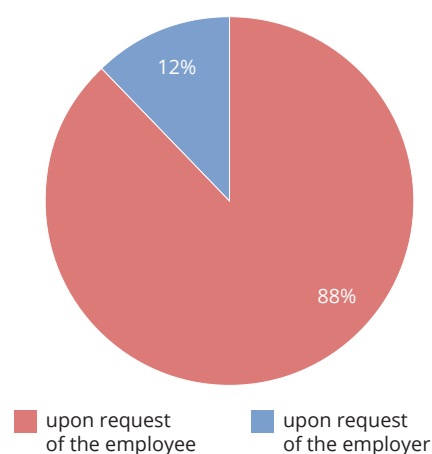
It is in the human health and social work (28%), construction (21%) and public administration, defence and education (20%) sectors that the number of days teleworked per week varies most often at the employer's request.

Figure 6: Do you usually telework on the same days?



Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

Figure 7: Why telework is not mainly done on the same days of the week



Note: QoW 2023 data; percentages.

5. Dimensions of well-being in the case of childcare while teleworking and in the case of variable teleworking days

Figure 8 shows the relationship between the taking on of childcare tasks while teleworking or the absence of taking on childcare tasks while teleworking and the various dimensions of well-being in the *Quality of Work* survey. In addition, it shows the relationship between the absence of variable teleworking days, the fact that teleworking is variable at the request of the employee or, on the contrary, at the request of the employer, and the different dimensions of well-being.

As far as job satisfaction, motivation at work and general well-being are concerned, there is no difference if childcare duties are performed alongside teleworking. However, as far as work-life conflict and health problems are concerned, significantly higher values are observed among employees and civil servants who say they regularly take on childcare duties while teleworking. In addition, the higher values for burnout

are just at the limit of significance, which can be explained statistically by the fact that this group of people is relatively small.

The fact of having or not having variable teleworking days is a significant difference only for motivation at work, which is slightly higher among workers with variable teleworking days. Other differences appear, however, in the dimensions of well-being, depending on whether it is the employee or the employer who decides on the teleworking days. For example, respondents' job satisfaction is significantly lower when teleworking days are variable at the employer's request, and values for work-life conflict and the risk of burnout are significantly higher than when teleworking days are variable at the worker's request.

Figure 8: Dimensions of well-being in the case of childcare while teleworking and in the case of variable teleworking days



Note: Data from QoW 2023; mean value of the scales from 0 to 100 with a confidence interval of 95%. The overall average for each scale includes employees and civil servants who do not telework.

6. Summary

Teleworking, although down from its peak during the pandemic, remains very popular. In 2023, 29% of Luxembourg workers were teleworking, compared with 40% in 2021. Despite this drop, 57% of workers would like to continue teleworking every week, and 32% would prefer to telework more than half the time, or even entirely.

A telework agreement, in force since October 2020, imposes a legal framework for all employers and employees. The agreement includes provisions on the material conditions for teleworking. In 2023, 70% of workers felt well equipped to telework, an improvement on 61% in 2021. However, only 24% of employers cover the communication costs associated with teleworking, despite the legal obligation to do so.

The equipment needed for teleworking is provided by the employer for 64% of workers in 2023. However, sectors vary widely, with the highest rates in industry and financial services.

Teleworkers also find it easier to concentrate at home in 2023 than in 2021, with 85% saying they are able to work without interruption. Childcare while teleworking is common practice for 7% of them, compared with 10% in 2021.

As for the flexibility of teleworking days, 60% of workers had variable rather than fixed teleworking days in 2023, mainly at their own request. Frontier workers and those in the construction and health and social care sectors vary their teleworking days the most.

Finally, childcare while teleworking and flexibility of days influence dimensions of workers' well-being. Conflicts between work and private life, as well as the risk of burnout, are higher among those who have to reconcile work and childcare or when teleworking days are set by the employer rather than the employee.

7. References

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Method

For the "Quality of Work Index" study, on the work situation and quality of work of employees in Luxembourg, approx. 1,500-2,700 interviews (CATI; CAWI) have been conducted annually since 2013 by Infas (since 2014) on behalf of the Chambre des salariés Luxembourg and the University of Luxembourg (Table 1). The findings presented in this report refer to the surveys since 2014 (Sischka & Steffgen, 2023).

Table 1: Methodological background of the QoW survey

Aim of the survey	Study of the labour situation and quality of work of employees in Luxembourg					
Conception, realisation, analysis	University of Luxembourg: Department of Behavioural and Cognitive Sciences, Chambre des salariés Luxembourg, since 2014 Infas Institute, previously TNS-ILRES					
Type of survey	Telephone survey (CATI) or online survey (CAWI; since 2018) in Luxembourgish, German, French, Portuguese or English					
Sample size	2014: 1,532; 2015: 1,526; 2016: 1,506; 2017: 1,522; 2018: 1,689; 2019: 1,495; 2020: 2,364; 2021: 2,594; 2022: 2,696; 2023: 2,732					
Well-being scales	Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha <i>[between 2014 and 2023]</i>	Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's Alpha <i>[between 2014 and 2023]</i>
	Job satisfaction	3	0.79-0.85	General well-being (WHO-5)	5	0.83-0.90
	Work motivation	3	0.65-0.76	Health problems	7	0.72-0.79
	Burnout	6	0.80-0.86			

Questions about teleworking

Item wording	Response categories
How often, while carrying out your work, do you work in the following places? At home (telework)	0 (= never/less often), 1 (= several times a month/several times a week/every day)
If you had a choice, how much of your work time would you like to work at home? I would prefer...	1 (= ...working exclusively in the company.), 2 (= ...working less than half of my working hours at home.), 3 (= ...working at least half of my working hours at home.), 4 (= ...working exclusively at home.), 5 (= I can't do my job from home.)
My home office is well-equipped for working from home. Is it...	1 (= to a very low extent), 2 (= to a low extent), 3 (= to a medium extent), 4 (= to a high extent), 5 (= to a very high extent)
I can work undisturbed in the home office. Is it...	1 (= to a very low extent), 2 (= to a low extent), 3 (= to a medium extent), 4 (= to a high extent), 5 (= to a very high extent)
Does your employer cover the costs of communication that arise from working in a home office? This means reimbursement of costs in the form of a monthly lump sum.	0 (= no), 1 (= yes)
Is the necessary equipment for working in a home office – such as a computer – provided by your employer?	1 (= yes fully), 2 (= only partly), 3 (= no, not at all), 4 (=I don't need special equipment to work from my home office)
Do you predominantly work in the home office on the same days?	0 (= no), 1 (= yes)
You have indicated that you work in the home office on different days. Does this occur...?	1 (= at your own request), 2 (= at the request of the employer)
How often do you have to deal with childcare tasks in addition to work when working at home?	1 (= never), 2 (= rarely), 3 (= sometimes), 4 (= often), 5 (= almost always)

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