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## **DOMINANT WORK PATTERNS IN THE IT SECTOR OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**Abstract:** The conducted research focuses on work patterns in the IT sector, analyzing office-based work, the hybrid work model, and remote work. Previous studies have highlighted the choice of work pattern as a significant factor in organizational efficiency and employee well-being within the IT sector. The primary objective of this research is to determine the most dominant work pattern in organizations operating within the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia. The study was conducted on a sample of 190 employees from organizations in the Serbian IT sector. Data collection took place from September to December 2024 using an electronic questionnaire via Google Forms. The most dominant work pattern was identified through descriptive statistics using the statistical software SPSS IBM. The main findings indicate that the hybrid work model (a combination of office-based and remote work) is the most prevalent work pattern. Organizations that implement the hybrid work model can retain and attract highly qualified talent while providing greater flexibility to employees.

**Keywords:** Work patterns, employees, IT sector, Republic of Serbia

## **INTRODUCTION**

Digitization and technological development have transformed the work environment and ways of working in the IT sector, encouraging the wider application of flexible work arrangements (Paulišić et al., 2024; Tang, 2024). The COVID-19 pandemic has further accelerated transformation, forcing organizations to redefine traditional ways of working (Savic & Dobrijević, 2022; Moon et al., 2022).

Global trends in the IT sector indicate an increased application of flexible work arrangements, with a special emphasis on remote work and the hybrid work model (Saygılı & Öztürk, 2024). Each of them brings certain advantages and challenges, both for organizations and for employees. The hybrid work model stood out as a compromise solution that creates a balance between productivity and flexibility (Balamurugan & Priyanka, 2023). The goal of this research is to analyze and determine the dominant work pattern in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia, considering the preferences of employees and the needs of organizations.

This paper is structured as follows. Chapter 2 presents a theoretical overview that includes an analysis of office work, the hybrid model and remote work, examining their characteristics, advantages and challenges. Chapter 3 describes the research methodology, including sampling, the method of data collection and the methods of analysis used. Chapter 4 presents the research results and their discussion, through which the implications of the findings are analyzed. In the last chapter, the concluding part of the work, the main findings of the research are synthesized and their wider consequences for the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia are considered, while highlighting possible directions for future research.

# 1. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

## 1.1. Office work, hybrid work model and remote work

Technological development and the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a rethinking of the traditional office work model, pointing to its limited adaptability to modern business requirements, efficiency and innovation that the market demands today (Chang & Chiu, 2022; Lamovšek et al., 2025). According to Gangisetty et al. (2024) in addition to traditional office work, the hybrid model and remote work stand out as the main approaches currently present in the IT sector.

Working from the office, as a traditional form of work, implies the physical presence of employees in the organization's workspace. This work pattern has a significant impact on various aspects of the work environment and employee performance, enables direct interaction between employees, facilitates team cooperation and contributes to strengthening the organizational culture. The advantages of working from the office include easier communication, better monitoring of work processes and greater connectivity among colleagues. However, this model can also have disadvantages, such as high costs of maintaining office space, limited flexibility, and potential reduction in productivity due to distractions in the work environment (Davis et al., 2011). Working from the office has a complex impact on the performance and well-being of employees, depending on the design and organization of the space. The employee's physical environment, i.e. the office, can significantly influence the motivation, job satisfaction and productivity of employees. Traditional offices, which are often private and closed, can improve concentration and reduce distractions, while open offices can improve communication and teamwork, but often cause problems such as noise and lack of privacy (Lee & Brand, 2005; Haapakangas et al., 2018). According to Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara & Sharifiatashgah (2019) the perception of crowding and lack of personal space in offices can lead to deviant behavior of employees, especially when they feel threatened in terms of privacy. Integrating the workspace with organizational goals and opportunities for social interactions can positively impact employee well-being. The symbolism of the workspace and opportunities for interaction play a key role in the social sustainability of the work environment (Vilnai-Yavetz & Rafaeli, 2021). These factors can affect employee productivity and motivation, suggesting a need for a balance between working from the office and more flexible options such as working from home.

Flexible work arrangements, such as flexible working hours and telecommuting, help employees balance professional and personal commitments (Pulido & López, 2005). Full-time telecommuting has some disadvantages such as lack of communication, employee mental health, well-being and stress. In order to overcome this, organizations are adopting a new concept, i.e. a hybrid work model (Selvi & Madhavkumar, 2023). The hybrid work model, which combines office work and remote work, is becoming increasingly popular due to its flexibility and ability to adapt to the needs of employees. It allows employees to work wherever and whenever they are most productive (Ramachandaran, 2024). This work pattern allows employees to choose where they work, which can improve work-life balance and increase job satisfaction. A hybrid work model offers significant advantages in terms of flexibility, but also brings challenges in terms of communication and mental health (Dale et al., 2024). According to Hopkins & Bardoel (2023), there are four types of hybrid work models, namely the office-centered hybrid model, the fully flexible hybrid model, the split-week model, and the week-sharing model. In an office-centric hybrid model, employees mostly work from the office although they are allowed to work at any location for a day or two (Ateeq, 2022). According to Selvi & Madhavkumar, (2023) in this model, employees coordinate effectively and have a strong sense of belonging. In a fully flexible hybrid model, employees are allowed to choose how many days they want to work from home or in the office. But this model creates problems in the cooperation of employees, so the organizational structure is developed according to this model. In the split week model, employees telecommute some days and work in the office a few days a week. This model helps managers stay in touch with their teams, and employees often meet face-to-face with their colleagues and managers. In the week division model, the month is divided into weeks according to teamwork and based on the work, it is decided which department will work in which weeks in the office. It allows employees to work together for a week, which helps them complete the work on time. Organizations that successfully implement this model can expect improved productivity and employee satisfaction, but it is important to focus on strategies that will support employee well-being and effective communication (Sampat et al., 2022; Krajčák et al., 2023; Balamurugan & Priyanka, 2023). According to Santillan et al. (2023) and McConnell & Metz (2024) employees in a hybrid environment often achieve higher productivity and job satisfaction, because they can adapt the working conditions to their needs. Hybrid work conditions allow employees to satisfy basic human needs, such as safety, belonging, and self-confidence, which contribute to their overall satisfaction (McConnell & Metz, 2024).

Remote work, especially in the IT sector, has become a significant aspect of the modern work environment, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic. This shift has brought about various changes in organizational practices, employee expectations and work-life balance. The IT sector has used telecommuting as a competitive advantage, increasing adaptability, productivity and resilience in a digitized global economy (Pulido & López, 2005; Kautish et al., 2025). Telecommuting in the IT sector has been shown to positively affect employee well-being and job satisfaction (Kautish et al., 2025). The ability to work from home or remotely is associated with improved job satisfaction through better work-life balance and reduced commute stress (Pulido & López, 2005). However, challenges such as reduced communication with co-workers and the need for an appropriate work environment at home can affect work-life

balance. Organizational support is crucial in establishing an environment that empowers workers to effectively manage work-life balance (Aundhkar et al., 2000; Nakrošienė et al., 2019; Lipták et al., 2023).

## 2. METODOLOGY

In this part of the paper, the sampling procedure, the way in which the participants answered the questions, the time frame of data collection, as well as the analysis and description of the sample will be presented. During the research of the most dominant work pattern in the IT sector in the Republic of Serbia, the electronic questionnaire "Google forms" was used. The questionnaire included control questions such as gender, age, level of education, position in the organization, size of the organization, market served by the organization, work experience and work patterns. The questionnaire link was distributed exclusively to employees in the IT sector in the Republic of Serbia.

**Table 1:** Sample characteristics

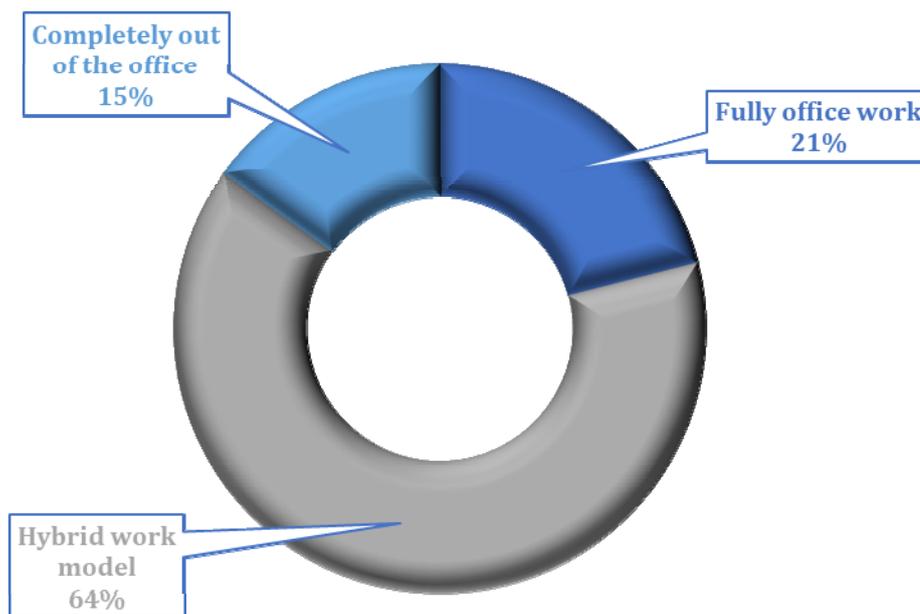
Sample characteristics	Number of respondents	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	111	58
Female	79	42
<b>Age structure</b>		
18 – 25	82	43
26 – 30	44	23
31 – 35	28	15
36 – 40	11	6
41 – 45	12	6
46 – 50	9	5
More than 50	4	2
<b>Level of education</b>		
High school	21	11
Three years of vocational studies	61	32
Beachelor's deree	65	34
Master's study	38	20
Ph.D.	5	3
<b>Position in company</b>		
Manager	54	28
Professional worker (software engineer)	136	72
<b>Size of the organization</b>		
Micro	8	4
Small	59	31
Medium	49	26
Big	74	39
<b>Target market</b>		
Locally	21	11
Regionally	19	10
Nationally	30	16
Internationally	55	29
Globally	65	34
<b>Work experience</b>		
Less than one year	24	13
1 – 5 years	97	51
6 – 10 years	35	18
11 – 15 years	11	6
16 – 20 years	10	5
More than 20 years	13	7
<b>Work form</b>		
Fully office work	39	21
Hybrid work model	122	64
Completely out of the office	29	15

Source: The authors' research

The questionnaire related to the determination of the most dominant work pattern was intended for managers and qualified workers (software engineers) in the IT sector in the Republic of Serbia. The created questionnaire was filled out by 190 employees in the IT sector on the territory of the Republic of Serbia. Sample collection lasted from September to December 2024. The most dominant work pattern was determined by applying descriptive statistics with the help of statistical software SPSS IBM. Table 1 shows the structure of the sample according to gender, age, level of education, position of the employee in the organization, size of the organization, market served by the organization, work experience and family history. The sample consisted of a higher representation of male respondents (58%), younger employees aged 18 to 25 (43%), with completed four-year academic studies (34%), in the position of software engineers (72%). The sample consisted mainly of employees in large organizations (39%) serving the global market (34%). In the structure of the sample, the work experience of the employees ranged from 1 to 5 years. The most dominant work pattern in the observed sample was the hybrid work model, which combines work from home and work in the office (64%).

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The results of the conducted research showed that the hybrid work model is the most dominant in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia. This model is applied in their organizations by 64% of respondents, while 21% of respondents work exclusively from the office, and 15% exclusively remotely. Figure 1 shows the structure of respondents according to work patterns. These results indicate that organizations have recognized the advantages of this model and are ready to implement it in their long-term business strategies. Analysis has shown that organizations that implement a hybrid work model are more successful in retaining employees and have a lower turnover rate (Sharma, 2024; Pulman & Fenge, 2024). Also, they can retain highly skilled talent and increase flexibility in performing work tasks (Selvi & Madhavkumar, 2023; Williams & Shaw, 2025). In addition, employees who can work from home feel less stress and report greater efficiency in performing work tasks (Kumari et al., 2025). It is assumed that organizations will increasingly experiment with customized work patterns to increase competitiveness and attract highly skilled professionals.



**Picture 1:** Sample structure based on working patterns  
Source: The authors' research

### CONCLUSION

Work patterns are evolving in line with global changes, including digital transformation and the consequences of pandemics. Digitization has enabled the wider adoption of remote work and flexible models, while pandemics such as COVID-19 have accelerated these changes and forced organizations to adopt new strategies (Paulišić et al., 2024). The future development of work patterns will depend on further technological innovations, the needs of employees and the business goals of companies, making flexible work models the standard in many industries, especially in the IT sector. The hybrid work model dominates the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia, enabling greater flexibility for employees

and better adaptability to organizations. This model proved to be the optimal solution for the balance between productivity and employee satisfaction. With the constant development of technology and changing market demands, it is expected that companies will continue to adapt work models to further improve efficiency and employee satisfaction. The research results indicate that the hybrid work model is the most dominant in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia, with 64% of respondents applying it. These findings suggest that organizations have recognized the benefits of combining remote and office work, enabling greater flexibility, a better work-life balance, and increased employee productivity. Additionally, organizations that implement this model are more successful in retaining talent and reducing employee turnover rates.

The analysis has shown that while traditional office work provides better control and enhances teamwork, it also has certain drawbacks, such as limited flexibility and potentially lower productivity due to workplace distractions. On the other hand, remote work allows for greater autonomy and reduces stress associated with commuting, but it may negatively impact communication and the sense of belonging to the organization. The hybrid work model represents an optimal solution that allows employees to enjoy the benefits of both approaches while enabling organizations to maintain a high level of employee engagement and efficiency.

It is expected that organizations will continue experimenting with and adapting work models in the future to enhance their competitiveness and attract highly skilled professionals. Additionally, it is crucial for organizations to provide adequate support and strategies that will help employees adapt to new ways of working, with a focus on mental health, effective communication, and long-term business sustainability.

One of the main limitations of this research is the limited sample, which includes 190 employees in the IT sector of the Republic of Serbia. Although this sample provides insight into dominant work patterns, future research could include a larger number of respondents and expand the sample to different sectors within the IT sector to obtain a more comprehensive picture. The research relies on descriptive statistics, while additional analyzes would provide insight into the factors influencing the choice of working model. Further research could focus on examining the impact of work patterns on productivity, employee satisfaction and well-being. In addition, future research could analyze the impact of work patterns on different categories of employees, such as juniors, seniors and managers, in order to gain insight into the needs of different groups within the IT sector.

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