Smart Working and Teleworking: two possible approaches to lean organisation management

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New needs for new employees

- The wired global society in which we all live has brought with it enormous opportunities

- The size and rhythm of the changes have created new challenges for people

- In Digital Society increases the spatial and temporal complexity that individuals have to deal with

- Employees (specially the digital generation) are requesting more space-time flexibility at workplace

TW and SW: what are they?

- Telework is a way to work independently of the geographic location of the office. With telework the worker will not necessarily requested to go to an office every morning: job, thanks to the Internet, can be anywhere (mainly at home).
  Telework is regulated by laws and contracts

- Smart Working is an innovative workflow based on a strong element of flexibility in terms of hours and location of job, which applies to companies with flexible organizational models.
  Smart Working is not yet regulated.

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Why use them?

- Telework was simultaneously:
  - unsuccessful (where it claimed to replace office-work with home-work),
  - Endemically diffused (in ICT-based jobs),
  - transformed in flexible work.
- Telework and smart working are a possible response to the needs of both workers and businesses, a *win-win strategy*.

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Diffusion of Teleworking and Smart Working in Europe
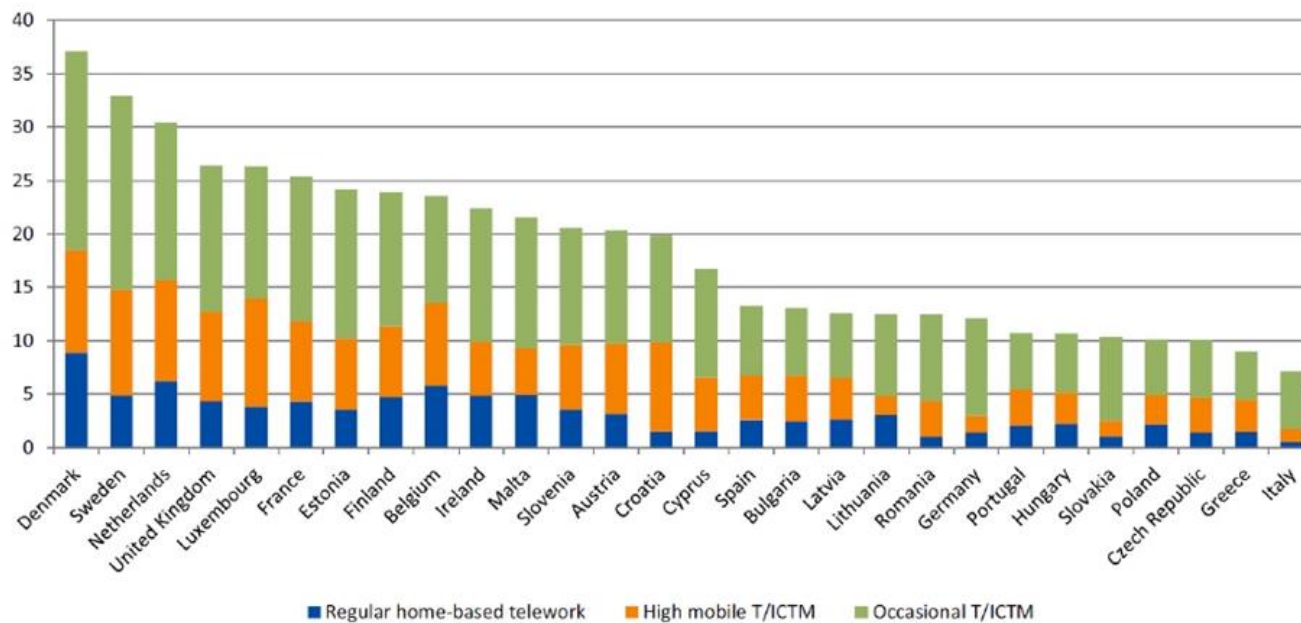
Source: EWCS 2015.

TW and SW in the Public Sector

- The new challenges of the Information Age have led Public Administrations to deal with cost-effective business policies, digitization and entrepreneurship in decision making (from Government to Governance).

- TW and SW are concrete opportunities for public offices to create a new time and space arrangements that can lead to better productivity and management practices.
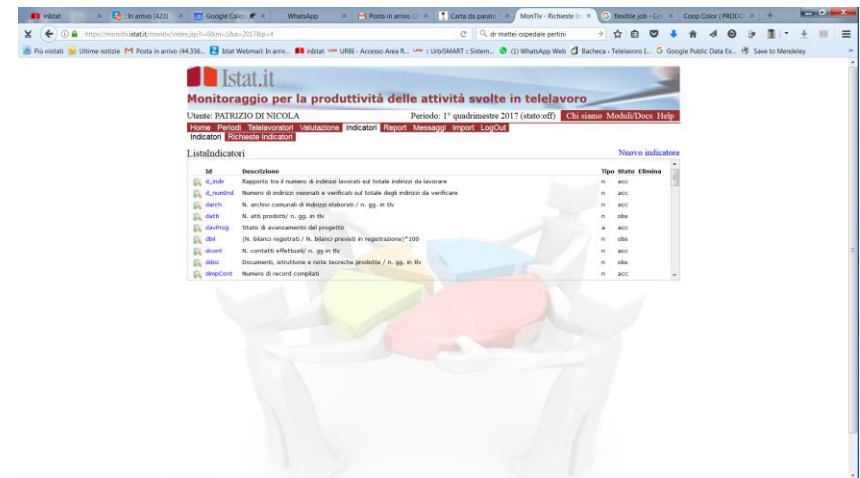
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TW and SW: the case of Istat

- The Istat teleworking experience began with a trial in 2006 and become operational in 2008 with 81 teleworking positions, which grew over time up the maximum of 175 (7.9% of total staff).

- By the end of 2016, active teleworkers were 169 (113 women and 56 men), and they are present in all the professions: administration, ICT, research and statistical area.

- 53.2% of teleworkers requested home-work for serious personal or family care needs.

Telework@Istat: some figures

- The distribution by gender reflects the composition of employees (two thirds female and one third male),

- Teleworkers spend more time to reach the office than the average of their collegues: they frequently live in different cities than the workplace, in some cases even in different Regions (11.3% of teleworkers compared with 3.6% of non-teleworkers).

- Teleworkers are over-represented in support staff, (more than 10% of the total) and they are, instead, less than 5% among researchers.

- Majority of teleworkers (144 out of 169) are in the age class 41 - 60, while young people are almost absent.

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Monitoring the productivity of teleworkers

- Data on the job done are collected quarterly through staff managers and processed to build indicators that allow to estimate the quantity and quality of the performance as well as the assessment of the organizational impact and effectiveness of the measurement system itself.

- The full process is done using a Web application developed by the Institute

The benefits of teleworking

- The existing literature attributes to telework a substantial increases in productivity. The case of Istat confirms the above:
    - Better work-life balance reduced by 2/3 absences of staff for personal or children illness.
    - Reduction of cost for supplying meals.
    - Increasing organisational efficiency: telework made simple the individual performance audits,
    - Virtualization of workstations increases computer security and reduced the total cost of ownership of equipment.
    - Office workstation not used by teleworkers can be shared with staff who move, on a day by day base, from one office to another

Criticalities

- A recent survey between middle managers reveal some divergences on the working climate, perceived, in most cases, as improved with the introduction of telework, although this has not resulted in improved collaboration between staff.

- Problematic, on the other hand, is the aspect of communication effectiveness: 77% of managers believe that virtual interactions cannot replace in-presence meetings (and therefore the shift between home-work and office-work is still crucial).

- Managers claim difficulties in the management of teleworkers, particularly for the monitoring of the activity

From Telework to Smart Work

- Teleworking experiences are running out of their ability to rethink organizational models in a heuristic sense. The shift to smart working, become for organisations a strategic step to achieve smart and lean management.

- The transition to smart working requires the definition of new organizational guidelines :
  - traditional telework should be targeted at those who often need to work from home;
  - smart working will be especially suitable for staff (including executive) who need to work out of the office (not necessarily at home) on occasional base, always maintaining a close link with the organisation;
  - desk sharing must be designed to support high mobile staff

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Conclusioni

Thank you for the attention

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