

## THE IMPACT OF TELEWORK ON THE INTENTION TO CHANGE RESIDENTIAL LOCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF THE LISBON METROPOLITAN AREA IN THE POST COVID-19 ERA

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**Summary:** Telework has gained attention during and after Covid 19 pandemic, and is believed to continue as an important practice, shaping work practices and the dynamics of cities. The widespread adoption of telework is expected to introduce major changes in the spatial organization of cities as telework has been associated with suburban living. Recent research undertaken in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA) has concluded that the intention to telework is associated with longer commutes and with suburban residential references. Supporting the hypothesis that telework is essentially a mechanism to cope with longer commutes and, as such it doesn't lead directly to sprawl. But it could help dissatisfied individuals with suburban residential preferences to move away from more central areas. Thus, studying the influence of telework adoption on the intention to move could provide relevant policy insights and assess its impact in urban sprawl. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the impact of telework adoption and related attitudes on the intention to change residential location. To achieve this objective, we use data from a survey implemented in 2023 in the LMA, with a sample size of 1900 valid responses. This survey collects data on telework practices before, during and after the pandemic, telework attitudes and perceptions, as well as the intention to telework in the future. The survey also gathers data on, residential preferences and residential satisfaction, house characteristics (e.g. type of house, size and location) and socio-economic data (e.g. gender, age, income, education, household size, etc.). Complementary with the survey data we also have collected secondary data characterizing the area surrounding the residence of the respondents. To assess the role of telework practices and related attitudes on the intention to change the residence location, a Structural Equation Model (SEM) is built. SEM is particularly adequate to tackle this problem as we are including several mediating effects as well as latent constructs related with attitudes and satisfaction levels. Two potential causes for residential relocation namely residential satisfaction and telework satisfaction are taken into considerations. Residential satisfaction considers two major dimensions the first related with the accessibility to relevant activities and the second to urban space characteristics. The model considers that more dissatisfied individuals are more likely to relocate and that more frequent teleworkers are more likely to be unsatisfied with accessibility levels surrounding the residence. The model incorporates also other variables which could influence telework frequency, namely commuting distance, land use patterns surrounding the residence and attitudes about telework. Commuting distance and land use patterns are also hypothesized to influence residential satisfaction. All these variables and constructs are endogenous to the model which also incorporates, as exogenous variables socioeconomic and house characteristic variables known to influence both telework engagement, residential satisfaction and relocation are included in the model. The obtained results are discussed in terms of their potential impacts on the structure of cities and as potential drivers of urban sprawl.