

Facility Management and Office Development Strategies to Support the Hybrid Work Model

Raja Kočanova¹, Iveta Amoliņa¹, Katrīna Ruņģe¹, Sanda Lapuķe^{1*}, Leo Jansons^{1**},
Nikita Kočanovs², Pēteris Druķis³, Edgars Pudzis³

¹ Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management, Riga Technical University, Riga, Latvia

² Oberon Engineering Services Ltd., Riga, Latvia

³ Faculty of Civil and Mechanical Engineering, Riga Technical University, Riga, Latvia

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Abstract

This study makes a significant contribution to the evolving field of strategic facility management by addressing the underexplored intersection of hybrid work models and office space transformation in the post-COVID-19 era. Unlike earlier research that predominantly focused on remote work effectiveness or real estate cost reduction in isolation, this study provides a holistic evaluation of how hybrid work trends are shaping corporate facility strategies in the Baltic context. The originality of the research lies in its empirical basis – grounded in qualitative interviews, survey responses from leading Baltic corporations, and document analysis, which has produced a context-specific framework adaptable to regional economic and social conditions. Another novel contribution is the application of the seven-step redesign process model, developed by the authors, which guides organisations in transitioning from traditional office use to a hybrid work ecosystem. This model integrates technological, psychological, spatial, and managerial components – elements that are rarely combined systematically in similar research. It reflects how organisations can build agility into facility planning while maintaining productivity and employee satisfaction.

The study also introduces a nuanced categorisation of office work models in Latvia, such as activity-based offices and shared workplaces, and correlates them with performance metrics. This typology has not been previously explored in the Latvian context with such specificity. By highlighting the diverse interpretations and implementations of hybrid work strategies across sectors, the research challenges the assumption of a one-size-fits-all model and opens new avenues for adaptive facility planning. These findings significantly enrich the academic and practical understanding of post-pandemic workplace restructuring.

Introduction

The 21st century is characterised by rapid changes, and companies should be capable of operating in so that they can use the changes in their favour and adjust to the changing circumstances of the external environment. With the development of different technologies, the society perception, the way we live, study and work change as well. Modern reality cannot be imagined without mobile phones, computers and daily usage of the internet – what seemed to be impossible 30 years ago, has now become the reality.

Regardless of the fact whether a facility is a factory, office, hospital, shopping centre, airport, museum or stadium, there is someone who makes sure that the building

and all its constituent parts are functioning properly. This person is a facilities manager who is mostly associated with building maintenance and management. Whereas facilities managers provide much more – they make sure that systems in the built-up environment function together, as required, that the building is used in conformity with its intended goals and that employees are healthy and productive. Facilities managers have different positions and different career paths. Often they are not called facilities managers, although they are responsible for facility management aspects, including planning, valuation and maintenance of building systems.

The topicality of this study is related to several existing challenges in strategic management of

*Corresponding author. E-mail address: sanda.lapuke@rtu.lv

**Corresponding author. E-mail address: leo.jansons@rtu.lv

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facilities of organisations because of impact of different circumstances of the external and internal environment, such as restrictions and changes caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and later the invasion of Russia in Ukraine, which strengthened the intention of the Baltic States to become energy independent [1], [2], self-reliant and able to withstand energy supply stress situation related challenges in the future [3]. All these processes significantly affected the real estate market, including the development of the commercial sector and office facilities [4].

Energy efficiency improvement measures and more intensive employment of on-site renewable energy sources, hybrid technologies and energy consumption optimisation [5]–[8] as well as growing awareness and professional knowledge of housing managers regarding climate change are means to ensure sustainable energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance overall energy security [9], [10], [11].

Sustainability is also a key factor [12]. To promote a more sustainable environment, methods for assessing buildings and ensuring maintenance of building-specific indicators should be introduced that significantly contribute to the achievement of the sustainable development objective in office space reconstruction projects [13], [14].

One of the most significant factors affecting the office environment in the last five years was the COVID-19 pandemic, which has reinforced and normalised the remote work phenomenon and changed office work in the entire world [15].

The COVID-19 pandemic marked a profound shift in work practices across Europe, triggering a rapid and widespread adoption of remote work arrangements. Before the pandemic, teleworking was relatively limited in most EU Member States, with considerable variation in uptake across sectors and regions. However, with the onset of lockdowns and social distancing measures in early 2020, remote work transformed from a niche arrangement into a vital operational necessity. According to [16], the proportion of employees working from home in the EU rose from about 12 % pre-pandemic to nearly 40 % during the height of the crisis, with countries such as Finland, Belgium, and the Netherlands registering the highest rates of teleworking.

This sudden transition revealed both advantages and challenges. On the one hand, it demonstrated the resilience and flexibility of digital infrastructure and the potential for greater work-life balance. Workers in knowledge-based sectors such as IT, finance, and education adjusted relatively smoothly, and some employers reported increased productivity. On the other hand, the shift also highlighted disparities in digital access and exposed difficulties in maintaining collaboration, team cohesion, and mental well-being over prolonged periods of physical isolation [17].

COVID-19 also accelerated the adoption of digital communication tools and cloud-based collaboration

platforms, effectively embedding hybrid work models into the post-pandemic future. Companies across the EU have since reevaluated office space needs and workplace policies. For instance, several major firms have reduced physical office footprints and introduced permanent remote work options, fostering a paradigm shift in organisational culture and human resource management [18].

In addition, regulatory frameworks have started adapting to this new reality. The EU institutions and national governments are increasingly considering the legal implications of remote work, including the right to disconnect, cross-border taxation, and occupational health obligations. The pandemic thus catalysed long-term structural changes, pushing the boundaries of where, when, and how work is performed within the EU labour market. As remote and hybrid work models continue to evolve, policymakers and businesses must address emerging challenges to ensure equitable access, protect worker rights, and harness the productivity potential of a digitally enabled workforce [19].

As stated in [20], however, having reacted to COVID-19, offices change, although many of these changes are not always new, and not all of them will remain. Still, it is becoming increasingly more obvious that the pandemic has accelerated the natural development of offices from productivity facilities to something different – both training premises and areas for complex problem solution.

In the public sector of Latvia, changes also take place gradually owing to the State Joint Stock Company Valsts Nekustamie īpašumi (VNĪ), which uses the hybrid work model and functions in the activity-based office, as well as regularly shares its experience in the management of changes and establishment of an activity-based office. To facilitate the transfer of other state institutions to the introduction of the principle of a more modern office, VNĪ have developed the Guidelines for the Public Sector Office Establishment, which is publicly accessible, and consults the public sector on different issues about office work and arrangement. VNĪ states that a modern office is not a specific type of arrangement of work facilities – it is neither the room model, nor the open and activity-based office [21]. It is a change of approach, where the work environment becomes an aggregate of supporting resources, which helps people not only to work efficiently in the modern times of dynamic changes, but also to achieve the company goals purposefully and knowingly, i.e., the office arrangement should serve for the implementation of the company's (institution's) strategy and work plan (for the coming five years).

Whereas, to successfully organise the office work, purposeful and professional facility management is of importance. It is in the centre of attention of many office facility managers to ensure that their offices comply with the changing needs of organisations and the labour force, and to guarantee the safest workplaces possible. Facility management not only takes care of building

management and ensuring its technical functions, but it also starts influencing environmental, social and corporate management issues. Facility managers help to support the way each organisation operates in order to achieve social goals, including responsible and ethical contribution, sustainability and positive general impact of the facilities [22].

In 2022, a survey was conducted in the Baltic States by Colliers, obtaining the opinion of over 2550 respondents representing different big companies of the Baltic States. A big part of the respondents (45 %) in this poll acknowledged that, following the pandemic, they would prefer to work at home for 2–3 days a week. A similarly big part of respondents prefer to perform individual work (where concentration is required) at home, whereas from the office they expect mostly ensuring the cooperation and socialisation functions [23]. Sustainability administration and its integration may be evaluated from several viewpoints [24].

For the operation of the hybrid work model, it is required to introduce technologies that encompass the physical and virtual environment. To facilitate a meaningful interaction at the workplace, employees need to know who will be present in the office and what facilities will be available when working on the spot [25]. Work environment technology tools help employees to find their colleagues, reserve work and meeting premises and use the conveniences provided in the building, when staying in the office. Whereas, the productivity technologies, e.g., improved video conference tools and asynchronous communication platforms, connect office and remote employees.

The goal of the study is to investigate and analyse the spread of the hybrid work model, the approach of this operation model and, based on the research results, to provide conclusions on the introduction of the office facility management strategy in the hybrid work.

The generally accepted quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods of economics have been used in the research, including different analysis methods, induction and deduction methods. Industry specialists have been interviewed, including analysis and interpretation of the results, based on the information obtained during the study.

I. Strategic Frameworks and Models of Facility Management

In 1994, D. Kincaid conducted research regarding the role, goals and potential of facility management, making a conclusion that facility management at the initial stage is an administration that manages the infrastructure of an organisation, to support its main activities. Moreover, it integrates with property management (real

estate), property operations, maintenance and office administration. These three fields contribute significantly to supporting main activities, and their diversity has a financial effect and requires special skills to create a strategic environment. Kincaid created a system to demonstrate integrated facility management in a simplified way – it is divided into four main aspects consisting of roles of administration, operational activities, knowledge of administration and knowledge about the object. He defined facility management as a support role in an organisation to connect strategic, tactical and operational goals, as well as managers' need to know about facility management to perform its integrated support role [26].

In 1995, P. Barets analysed two types of management levels – operational level and strategic level. The focus of the operational level is on cooperation of the facility management department with other operational employees, communication with main business functions and determining their needs and evaluation of the existing facilities. The significance of the strategic level determines the interaction of facility management specialists with the main business functions, the interaction of facility management specialists between themselves, to determine the future trends in facility management, as well as the interaction of strategic and operational decisions.

From these two management levels, Barets improved his research on strategic facility management in 2000, referring to knowledge contribution, determining that:

- The organisation environment can be divided depending on the time scale, starting from the immediate to the long-term needs, and the organisation should react respectively to the introduction of each zone. Such introductions will differ quite considerably in their characteristics, with very wide conceptual data related to long-term and short-term contradictions in different issues.
- Every interaction between the organisation and its environment will be balanced. The same refers to the interaction between different parts of the organisation [27], [28].

B. Nutt again focused on facility management as a strategic vision that would create added value, to increase and achieve possible results. He mentioned that the strategic goal of facility management was to ensure the best infrastructure and logistical support for business and public events of all types and industries. B. Nuts introduced a model named “general future trails”, which consisted of four competing facility management future curves – business, people, property and information. It is also essential to respect the principles of project management [29].

Facilities managers are responsible for different expenses related to the provision of facilities or buildings, as well as commercial operation and personnel support services. A typical classification of facility management expenses includes property (lease of facilities, insurance,

etc.) and facility costs (maintenance, reconstruction and arrangement, cleaning, guard and public utilities), as well as commercial operation support (archiving, stationery, IT services, transport and car park, trip management, furniture, business equipment, etc.) and personnel support (catering, fitness hall, occupational health service, etc.) costs. F. Booty reckons that each facilities manager wishes to reduce the property and facility costs, and the simplest way to achieve it is better usage of the existing facilities. One of the ways to save the area is shared usage of the desks of employees who spend much of their time beyond the office. Other ways for regaining facilities include the reduction of the number of meeting rooms [30].

Employees with high autonomy and high interaction can be involved in offices which are called clubs, as they remind the old-time coffee houses in Great Britain, or social clubs. Due to the high quality of work and the necessity of face-to-face communication, such employees will be regularly involved in the office work, but only as much as is needed to satisfy the need for interaction. Considering their high ability to work from anywhere, their need to be present in the office can also be replaced with a virtual office system. For example, in modern perception, a higher office flexibility is offered by joint work companies such as Industrious, WeWork and Reguss, which rather literally model offices as clubs for companies and employees of their members [31].

The authors of the article indicate that modern organisations often unite several business lines, gathering different types of specialists in one company, as, for instance, consultants, employees and IT specialists of a call centre or other support function providers. Therefore, office organisation types can also differ within the same company, in different business lines. Thus, facilities managers need to be very much aware of the goals and needs of the specific organisation to develop the appropriate facility management strategies.

II. Adjustment to the Hybrid Work Model

The hybrid work model is an approach that allows employees to divide their working time between working from the office and working from home or any other place beyond the office. This model provides an opportunity for companies and their employees to choose the way how employees will fulfil their duties, as well as the place where these duties will be implemented.

The post-pandemic age starts opening the way for a sustainable introduction of new and more elastic work organisation types that unite remote and intramural work aspects, for example, hybrid work [32].

Different principles can be used in the formation of facility management strategies, adjusting to the hybrid work model.

Building management system emerges as an important instrument for boosting operational [33].

The authors of the article offer a seven-step process for redesigning work, which in essence is like a planning cycle (Fig. 1):

- To draw attention to and to find out what is important. What is necessary for work productivity and efficiency? What can be done to avoid a decrease in work productivity? How is information exchanged at the company? How is the information feedback implemented? What do employees expect from their work and the company administration? How do people experience their work throughout their entire employment period?
- To prepare working conditions for the hybrid work. Based on an understanding of the hybrid work, one can start developing an optimal work organisation model. To plan opportunities for remote work implementation (online opportunities: Zoom, Microsoft Teams and other platforms). To reconsider technical provision for employees and other conditions when work is performed beyond the office.
- To model and test ideas. Further on, these ideas can be modelled and tested against different factors that could be sources of risk. Is the specific work organisation model sustainable? How will changes affect employees, and what is required for their support? To consider elastic hours, a model can anticipate the work schedule that allows employees to select certain days or times to work from home or the office.
- To train and educate employees. Training of employees in technologies that ensure access to the required work resources and remote communication tools. As a result, polling of employees is arranged to find out their satisfaction level with hybrid work opportunities and the skills required when working with technologies. Results of the poll are analysed, and further decisions are taken regarding the increase of knowledge, skills and work productivity of employees.
- To adjust to individual needs. To summarise information required for hybrid work and to allow employees to select the best combination of remote and office work, based on their individual needs and goals.
- To act in conformity with the model and create new ways of working. To ensure that a new work organisation model is integrated into the company's practice and culture, the role of leaders in the management of changes should be emphasised. It means to acknowledge and support the important roles of managers and to implement widely the joint creativity process involving people in the process of changes.
- To continuously develop the hybrid work model. To consider, especially in this process, the "virtual fatigue", which is sometimes called "zoom fatigue" (it appears at the time when a lot of meetings and communication take place by using virtual platforms). It is characterised

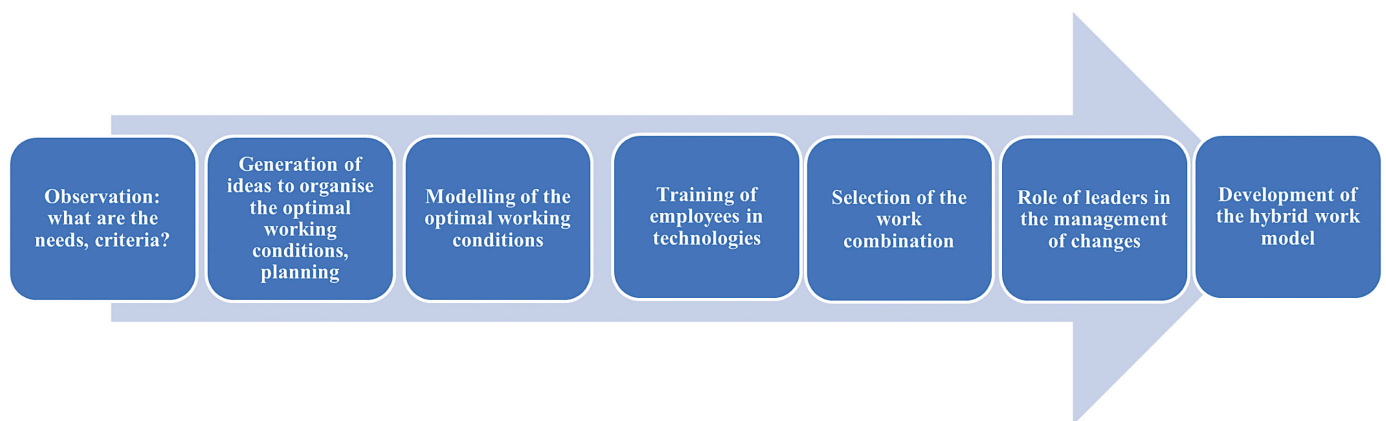


Fig. 1. The seven-step process in redesigning work to the hybrid work model (created by authors).

by the feeling of work capability exhaustion, burnout, decreased productivity due to excessive virtual interaction and spending long hours in front of the computer screen.

Hybrid work raises the issue of the distribution of time and facilities among employees. Although the hybrid model allows for working elastically, social interaction is still of big importance, and the distance of remote work can cause concerns, especially with regard to the ability to retain relations, the cooperation potential, in view of the distance between people who work remotely [34].

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on office work indicates convincingly that entrepreneurs select hybrid work increasingly more often. And the reason for it is not only the benefits that are essential for the employer (for example, productivity, optimisation of costs, competitiveness of the company), but also benefits for employees, like, for example, satisfaction of employees, well-being, and elasticity.

The transfer to hybrid work among entrepreneurs was organised gradually. With the start of the pandemic, employees were initially forced to work remotely 100 %. However, when the situation improved, companies started changing their orientation – a part of them transferred to the initial intramural form and a part transferred to hybrid work. Therefore, for such work to be managed efficiently, the authors of the article reckon that it would be necessary to observe the offered seven-step process.

Several studies demonstrate the wish of employees to work remotely. Thus, for instance, scientists from the USA and Belgium, by making wide-scale research and having studied groups of employees, have found out that almost 40 % of the respondents indicated a wish to continue their work in the hybrid model form [35]. The result of this research was taken into account by employers, as many of them found it necessary to consider the transfer to an efficient policy that would facilitate the elastic mode of work, to attract and retain talented persons and improve work productivity.

Such changes in the work process organisation will have a lasting effect on the workplace reorganisation, remodelling the work hour proportions between office facilities and work facilities, establishing more elastic office facilities, etc.

The authors of the research held interviews with employees of ten leading real estate companies to clarify the main reasons for the transfer to the hybrid work model. As a result of the interviews, the authors of the article have distinguished the following main criteria:

- Optimisation of costs. This is a significant criterion that allows a company's management to transition to hybrid work, as expenses for facility maintenance decrease (lease of premises, electric energy, heat energy, costs of cleaning premises, as well as costs such as coffee, tea, etc.). A significant saving is also on transport expenses, as many employees have their trip to and from work paid for, as well as the related costs of vehicle amortisation, etc. Hybrid work has also confirmed the correlation with the place of residence and with the selection of employees [36]. Respectively, optimisation of costs is not only for companies, but also for employees, as by not going to work every day, they can reduce their transport expenses and costs of meals.
- Disease reduction risk. The hybrid work model promotes the reduction of the density of employees in offices, thus decreasing the risk of spreading infections and diseases. As acknowledged by leading employees, before applying the hybrid work model, it was habitual that employees came to the office even in cases when their state of health was unstable, when they felt unwell, caught a cold, or had a higher temperature. Still, an employee being aware that work has to be performed in any case (there is no one to substitute) or even being concerned that the employer will regard their absence as a negative attitude to their duties, as well as competition between employees, is a factor that makes

employees to come to work even with such state of health that indicates to an enhanced risk with regards to the health of all persons in the office, including cooperation partners and clients.

- Digitalisation development. At present, digitalisation occupies an increasingly bigger place in the lives of all people, and its usage in performing job duties makes remote work easy to implement. The introduction of digitalisation allows for a decrease in the proportion of monotonous work for employees and devote more time to other important activities and creative work. Many researchers emphasise the positive effect of technologies on the workplace. For example, it helps to improve competitiveness and efficiency [37], promotes new types of work, the company's identity and social interaction [38], increases interaction and communication, and facilitates cooperation and knowledge transfer [39].
- Social and team dynamics. Hybrid work means that work is performed not only remotely, but also in the office. One should not forget that social links form among employees during intramural work, when mutual relations are established, cooperation develops, and teamwork is promoted. Such a stage of work promotes cooperation and communication, which are significant indicators in work implementation. Communication is of special significance, as it is unavoidable both when working in the office and remotely. Here, the leading employees have to contribute more effort, consideration and perspicacity, inspiring other employees for productive work. It has to be noted which employees can organise their work constructively and which have this capability less developed, and to consider the possibilities of helping them.
Training sessions are also often more easily organised in the intramural process, and the activity of employees during intramural training is higher. All these indicators are significant for the professional growth of employees.
- Work productivity and efficiency. Employees who can plan their work constructively often are more productive when working remotely, as they have fewer disturbances and can better manage their working time. The hybrid model provides an opportunity to work more flexibly, allowing employees to better balance their work and private life. This can reduce stress and improve general satisfaction with work. In such conditions, it is easier to motivate the entire team to achieve the common goals and coordinated activities.
- Well-being of employees. Caring about employees is an investment in the future. The opportunity of an elastic work schedule promotes the satisfaction of employees, as they can adjust work to their personal needs. By

offering a hybrid work model, companies can attract a wider circle of professional employees, including those who prefer the elastic mode of work. This factor is significant for retaining employees at the company. At the time, when work was performed remotely 100 %, the so-called "virtual fatigue" appeared. It is a state of mental exhaustion caused by long-lasting connections with the help of virtual communication platforms (Zoom, Webex, Microsoft Teams, etc.) and other virtual communication tools. Therefore, it is important to think about activities such as the organisation of a safe, modern, healthy and harmless work environment, competitive remuneration, professional training and team events.

When working in a hybrid way, one should understand its environment, the provided opportunities, challenges and risks (Fig. 2).

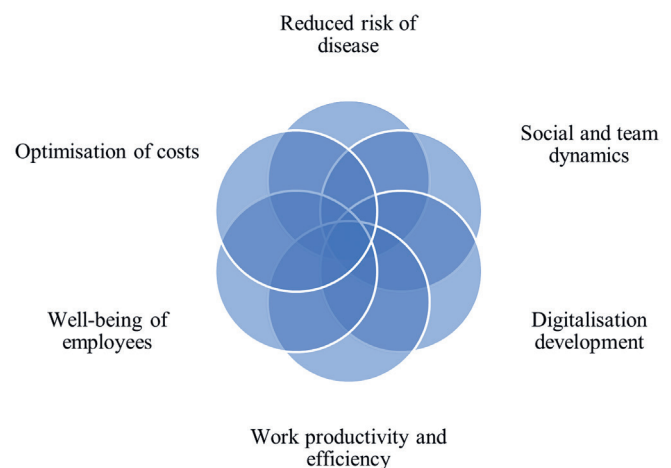


Fig. 2. Hybrid work model criteria (created by authors).

In the hybrid work environment, presence and distance interact, and the decisive factors in this case are the skills of employees to use modern technologies, skills to plan one's work [38], as well as the wish to change and adjust to the latest labour tendencies on the part of the company management.

It is expected that, within the framework of hybrid work, technologies will be used strategically correctly, depending on the given work tasks, location and nature of time, depending on the order given by the manager and cooperation with colleagues.

Digital skills of employees are among the success factors and form an integral part of the new work approach, in order to find, evaluate, create and send information [40].

In general, it must be provided that the hybrid work model offers an opportunity for companies to unite the benefits of remote and office work, creating an elastic and effective work environment that is appropriate for the needs of both companies and employees.

III. Facility Management in Latvia

The authors of the article conducted a survey of big Latvian companies and facility management specialists to clarify the current situation in offices of big companies after the COVID-19 pandemic. 32 representatives of companies were interviewed. Participants of the polling were chosen based on the TOP 50 of Best Employers, published by CV Online, of which 23 companies performing office work were thoroughly selected. Six internationally recognised companies performing office work, such as Visma, PWC, KPMG, Deloitte, EY and Cognizant, were added to the list.

Representatives of the companies were searched for and addressed on the LinkedIn social media platform, which is the world's biggest professional network on the internet. Out of the selected 32 companies, facilities managers or real estate project managers were found at 10 companies, persons responsible for office facilities at 10 companies were office managers or office coordinators, whereas at 11 companies, the author could not find positions related to office facilities or their management and, thus, heads of human resources departments were addressed.

With a very few exceptions, all the respondents acknowledged that currently they operated in the hybrid work model, organising their work both intramurally and remotely. Table I represents the wide spectrum of work process organisation models employed by the selected four companies, shortlisting advantages and disadvantages, as well as risks.

The data summarised in Table I highlight the diversity of hybrid work arrangements implemented by the four analysed companies. Although all respondents confirmed operating under a hybrid model, the specific configurations reveal distinct organisational strategies shaped by company culture, operational needs, and workforce characteristics. The analysis demonstrates that hybrid work in practice exists on a continuum between full office presence and predominantly remote operation. Each company has adapted its approach to balance productivity, flexibility, and employee engagement.

The case of SEB illustrates a fixed hybrid model, where employees attend the office for two to three days per week. This arrangement emphasises teamwork and a cohesive corporate culture while ensuring predictability in space use. However, the fixed schedule limits employee flexibility and may reduce autonomy. Tietoevry, by contrast, has adopted an activity-based or flexible hybrid model, reflecting its digital and international orientation. This model promotes efficient space utilisation and personal autonomy but poses challenges for coordinating physically dispersed teams.

VNĪ maintains a model of continued office presence, consistent with public sector norms that prioritise supervision and organisational discipline. While this approach provides control and adherence to institutional procedures, it also limits employee independence and may lower satisfaction. Finally, Printful operates under a remote-first hybrid model, granting employees maximum flexibility to work from any location. This configuration enhances global collaboration and cost efficiency but introduces risks of social isolation and weakened interpersonal connections.

Across the analysed organisations, the results reveal a clear trend toward hybridisation as a structural response to changing work patterns and technological development. The models differ in the degree of flexibility they provide but share the goal of optimising performance and employee experience. The analysis indicates that no single model is universally applicable; instead, the effectiveness of hybrid arrangements depends on sectoral context, leadership practices, and organisational maturity. In all, the data support the conclusion that hybrid work is a dominant paradigm, requiring adaptive management and spatial design strategies that align with evolving professional and social expectations.

However, when analysing the available information about the hybrid work model, results of the polling and interviews, the authors of the article conclude that understanding of the hybrid work model and its application at companies differ. If, according to the definition, the hybrid work is a model where, within the framework of one company, employees can work both intramurally and remotely, then, in practice, every company has its unique

TABLE I
Models of Work Process Organisation (created by authors)

Company	Chosen model	Main arguments	Advantages	Disadvantages/ risks
SEB	Fixed hybrid (2–3 days in office)	Encourages collaboration and corporate culture	Predictable occupancy; supports teamwork	Less flexibility for employees
Tietoevry	Activity-based / flexible hybrid	Supports digital teamwork across countries	Efficient space use; autonomy	Harder to coordinate teams physically
VNĪ	Continued office presence	Easier supervision; aligns with public institution requirements	Discipline; control	Limited employee freedom; lower satisfaction
Printful	Remote-first hybrid	Creative staff prefer autonomy, global teams	Cost savings; talent retention	Risk of social isolation

conditions regarding which employees may work remotely and how often.

For example, in the Bite office, employees are allowed to work remotely only on Fridays; Printful has employees, who, due to their work specifics, are allowed to work only intramurally (production workers), employees, who are allowed to work only remotely (client consultants in other time zones, e.g., USA), as well as employees, who can choose themselves how often to work intramurally or remotely (other office employees); whereas, all office employees of Tietoevry and VNĪ can choose themselves how often to work intramurally or remotely, on condition their working duties are completely fulfilled.

Understanding how the office supports the hybrid work model differs as well, for example, SEB Global Services, Tietoevry and VNĪ operate in the activity-based office; however, each of the companies has differences in their work zones and equipment. For example, SEB Global Services operates in an activity-based office but prefers its employees to work mostly in the office. Therefore, for ~1200 employees, ~900 traditional workplaces are anticipated, which also means a much bigger office area (~10 000 m² – GUSTAVS office) [41]. Tietoevry observes the shared workplace principle (for ~1100 employees, office of 4500 m²), and there are five divided work zones – areas for concentration, communication, cooperation, rest and team. VNĪ also observes the shared workplace principle (for ~270 employees, office of ~2030 m²), but has 10 divided work zones: classical workplaces with a stationary computer, quiet work zone, work zone with height-regulated tables, seminar premises, library of documents (projects), floor administrator's workplace, work booths with a different

number of workplaces, IDS premise (special security regulations), children-friendly work zone, copying and printing work zone.

There are companies that operate with other office models. For example, the Printful office has teamwork zones, where there are fixed workplaces for employees, also the ones divided between several team members (hotel seats), “hot” worktables (hot seats) accessible to all employees (not fixed for any specific team) upon reservation, meeting and rest premises of different sizes. However, as Denijs Nēriņš, the Facility Management and Occupational Safety Director of Printful, acknowledges, “our office lacks closed work zones or rooms for focused work”. The list of basic variations of the hybrid work models is presented in Fig. 3.

Therefore, the authors of the article conclude that companies, when creating their office work models, can adjust the already available office concepts, like, for instance, activity-based office, or create their own, fully unique work models. Still, regardless of the selected work organisation model or concept, to support hybrid work, it is required to ensure diversity of premises and zones in the office, anticipating not only standard workplaces, but also meeting premises of different sizes, informal zones and separate premises or zones for focused work (see Table II). To achieve this, knowledgeable facility management specialists are needed.

The data presented in Table II shows the structural composition of modern office environments designed to support hybrid working models. The results indicate that the functional zoning of offices is characterised by a deliberate balance between spaces dedicated to individual

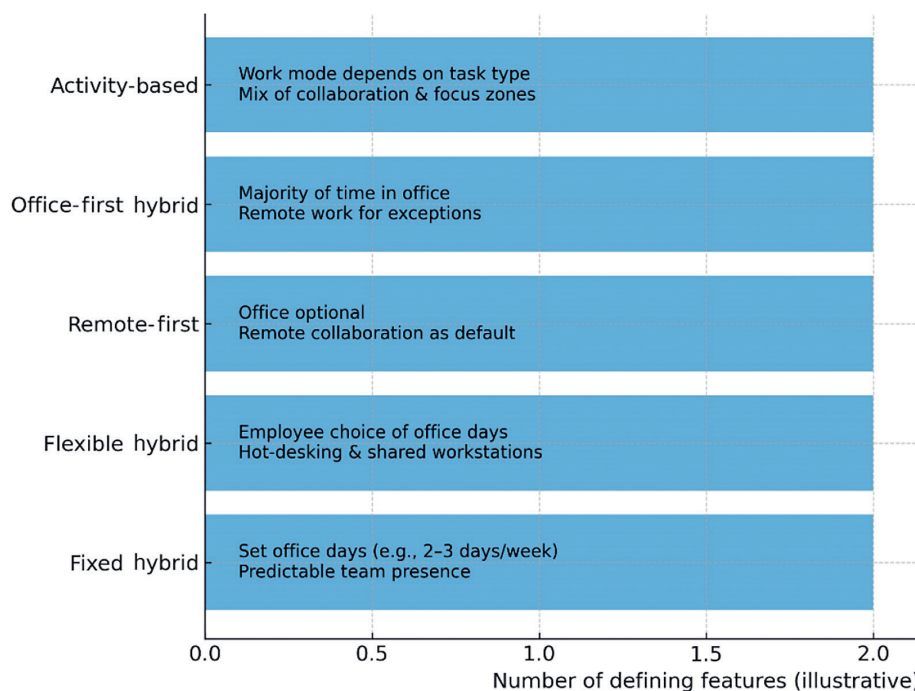


Fig. 3. Basic variations of the hybrid work model (created by authors).

TABLE II
Diversity of Premises and Zones in the Office (in %, created by authors)

Functional zone	Average share (%)	Most represented in the company	Typical use
Focus and concentration areas	30	SEB, Tietoevry	Individual, quiet work
Collaboration areas (meeting and project rooms)	25	VNĪ, SEB	Team discussion, creative work
Flexible and hot-desk areas	15	Tietoevry, Printful	Hybrid and mobile employees
Social and informal zones	15	Printful, SEB	Informal meetings, social interactions
Support areas (storage, kitchen, printing, circulation)	10	All	Operational support
Rest and well-being zones	5	Printful	Relaxation, mental recovery

concentration and those facilitating collaboration. Focus and concentration areas constitute, on average, 30 % of total office space, making them the dominant category across the analysed companies. This finding reflects the sustained need for quiet, uninterrupted environments, particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors. Collaboration areas, again, comprising approximately 25 %, represent the second largest category and demonstrate the growing emphasis on teamwork, creativity, and collective problem-solving. The presence of such zones is especially notable in companies like SEB and VNĪ, where organisational culture values direct communication and cross-functional interaction. The data confirm that hybrid work models require spatial adaptability that integrates both focused and cooperative work conditions.

Flexible and hot-desk areas account for 15 % of total office space, signalling the ongoing transition toward dynamic, shared work environments. This proportion reflects the rising number of hybrid and mobile employees who do not require permanent desks. Similarly, social and informal zones occupy 15 %, emphasising the growing role of social capital and informal communication in sustaining corporate culture and employee well-being.

Support areas such as kitchens, storage, and printing rooms make up roughly 10 %, providing essential operational infrastructure that sustains daily work processes. Although functionally secondary, their inclusion underscores the importance of logistical efficiency and spatial continuity in hybrid office layouts. Finally, rest and well-being zones represent around 5 %, indicating a modest but symbolically significant commitment to employee health and psychological recovery. The analysis suggests that hybrid office design integrates spatial diversity as a core strategy to enhance flexibility, creativity, and well-being. Companies tend to adjust traditional office typologies, adopting elements from activity-based design while retaining components that ensure operational stability. These findings affirm that functional diversity in office zoning is a prerequisite for effective hybrid work implementation, reflecting broader transformations in organisational culture, technology use, and employee expectations.

Most respondents, or 64.3 %, acknowledge that their company has full-time employees or a team of employees, who are responsible for office facility management issues; however, names of their positions differ greatly, e.g., property manager, administration project manager, internal project manager, facilities coordinator, workplace lead, and facilities lead. 21.4 % of the respondents mention that such duties are divided between several employees, for example, office administration and the procurement team, or outsourcing is used for complex issues. Whereas 16 % of respondents mention that there are no such positions in the company, and there is no need for them. Thus, the conclusion has been confirmed that facility management specialists can have positions named differently and, in some cases, facility management can be only a part of one's general duties.

When asking whether the respondent companies have developed an office facility management strategy and whether main performance indicators are set, only a third of the respondents mentioned that the company had developed an office facility management strategy, of which facility management guidelines set by the organisation were used at nine respondent companies. As some of the main office performance indicators, usage of workplaces (%), area (m²) per one employee and/or workplace, workplace sharing ratio, costs per one workplace, office usage (%), premise microclimate indicators and safety compliance indicators have been mentioned. These indicators are significant in developing the facility management strategy. Half of the respondents mentioned that the specific office facility management strategy was not developed, which could be for different reasons. One of the most significant, in the opinion of the authors of the article, could be the insufficiently evaluated role of facility management in the company and the lack of strategic thinking regarding facility management.

All respondents acknowledged that currently they operated in the hybrid work model, organising their work both intramurally and remotely. When replying to the question "What has been changed in your office due to COVID-19?", 78.6 % acknowledged that during the COVID-19 pandemic, employees started working remotely, whereas 42.9 % stated that the office arrangements was

changed, and half of the respondents acknowledged that, following the pandemic, they invited employees to return to the office. 42.9 % of companies reduced the total office area, whereas one company increased its office premises. Four of the respondents stated that “nothing changed in the office due to the COVID-19 pandemic”.

In practice, the situation can differ in each country, as well as there can be specific customer requirements, e.g.:

- the principle of shared workplaces is observed in all offices, which has allowed for a reduction of the total office area and the number of workplaces;
- the customer employees are requested to stay in the office five days a week;
- every employee still has their own workplace;
- the principle of shared workplaces has been introduced.

When asking whether the respondent offices use any smart technological solutions, the majority, or 64.3 %, acknowledge that they use meeting premise reservation screens; 42.9 % use solutions for workplace registration or counting office visits; 35.7 % use CO2 sensors; whereas 14.3 % mentioned that they did not use any smart technological solutions in the office.

Findings regarding the main benefits of allowing employees to work remotely: the opportunity to reduce the time spent travelling to and from work. When allowing employees to work remotely, their satisfaction and freedom increase, and:

- it is easier to attract new employees this way;
- remote work allows reducing expenses for office premises.
- However, there are the following challenges:
- the main challenge when employees work remotely is that the attachment of the employees to the company decreases;
- management of employees is more complicated; managers tend to be sceptical and do not trust employees;
- it is difficult to determine the productivity of employees, and the company's control over employees decreases;
- it is more difficult to involve employees in office intramural activities, “not recognising” employees, much more time is spent at meetings, it is harder to plan one's daily work.

Main findings about work productivity:

- 50 % of the respondents acknowledged that they did not observe changes in productivity, whereas 30 % of respondents mentioned that the satisfaction of employees and productivity had increased.
- 35 % of the respondents confirmed that the team productivity was higher when working intramurally in the office, whereas for individual productivity, when working remotely.
- Remote work has given more opportunities and elasticity for employees, which is evaluated positively. Therefore, the work productivity of many employees

has increased. Still, it pertains more to experienced employees.

- For less experienced and new employees, it is still observed that intramural work is needed more, and it helps to reorientate, work and train more efficiently.
- In the bulk of the cases, companies do not measure the productivity of employees separately. However, general business indicators during the COVID-19 pandemic and after it are positive. Therefore, there is no reason to think that it would be required to measure the productivity of employees who work intramurally or remotely.
- The productivity of some employees was measured by using the time registration app Desktop installed on the computers of employees, which registered how much time the employee spent at the computer and what activities were performed. Still, specialists acknowledge that it is required to reconsider the criteria for measuring productivity of employees in the future, as the current solution is obsolete and does not conform to the hybrid work reality.

Results of the polling have confirmed that the office role is changing, and companies look for new ways to adjust to the new hybrid work model. Besides, interest in new, modern and energy-efficient office facilities has been expressed.

CONCLUSION

The office market at present has been mostly affected by such factors as the spread of remote work, strengthened by the COVID-19 pandemic, modern appropriate technological provision, some macroeconomic factors and the related challenges, as well as sustainable commercial activities.

The situation at Latvian companies differs. Still, in most cases, under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, work in the offices of big companies has been organised using a hybrid model. As a result, companies change their office arrangement and choose to reduce the total office area.

Under the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the change of practices is observed – to work more remotely than in the office, and, thus, bold decisions are taken to gradually reduce the existing office area. Facility management specialists and their vision play a significant role in the optimisation of office expenses, office modernisation and transfer of obsolete management methods to modern approaches.

In general, remote work is evaluated positively at Latvian big companies, and it has not reduced the productivity of employees. However, offices still play a significant role in team-work promotion and training of new employees, as well as in the operation of the hybrid work model, the results-based management style is important. When allowing employees to work remotely, the

conveniences and well-being of employees are taken care of. However, on the part of companies, it requires adjustment, a change of thinking of managers and the introduction of new cooperation and coordination mechanisms.

At present, there is no unified institution that would regulate facility management in Latvia or train respective specialists. As a result, understanding of the significance and opportunities of facility management differs a lot among the companies and is directly related to the organisation's goals, as well as experience and knowledge of the respective specialists. Therefore, the authors of the article appeal to Latvian educational institutions to consider the inclusion of a course regarding modern facility management principles in the study programmes, to further educate respective facility management specialists.

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Raja Kočanova, Dr. sc. admin., MBA, Dipl. ing., has long-term practical experience in the implementation of the Latvian national sustainability projects. Her research interests are: business strategic management, problems in the sustainability of real estate market development, the construction industry and

institutional economics. She is the author and co-author of more than 20 scientific publications. She has developed and published a scientific monograph dedicated to ensuring the sustainable development of strategic management problems of a company. She has participated in many scientific conferences, congresses and workshops



Iveta Amoliņa, PhD, is an experienced real estate management expert with more than 20 years of professional experience in real estate management and project management. She is an expert in social and economic geography at the Latvian Council of Science. She holds a PhD in Economics and

Entrepreneurship from Riga Technical University (2022) and a Master's degree in Management Sciences from the University of Latvia (2006). Her academic activities include research and teaching at Riga Technical University, where she is actively involved in research focused on housing life cycle management systems and housing policy, as well as teaching courses on the legal regulation of real estate and movable property, real estate management, and project management in construction and real estate management. Since 2011, Iveta Amoliņa has been the Head of the Real Estate Management Department at a professional real estate management company, where she is in charge of management and technical maintenance processes, as well as residential energy efficiency projects. Her research interests include housing life cycle management systems, housing management issues, energy efficiency and renovation of multi-apartment residential buildings, the decision-making processes in multi-apartment building management, as well as sustainable construction and housing policy. She is the author and co-author of more than 35 scientific publications. Since 2015, she has participated in more than 20 scientific conferences and in three international scientific and practical projects. She is the author of 2 books (Real Estate Management) and co-author (first author) of one book.



Katrīna Ruņģe, MREM, is a Senior Facilities Specialist at "Tietoevry Latvia". She has long-term practical experience in creating offices for international companies in Latvia. Her research interests are: office facility management, workplace strategies to support the hybrid work model, and

change management in global organisations. Katrīna Ruņģe has participated in real estate conferences and workshops.



Sanda Lapuķe, Dr.oec., MREM, is an Associate Professor and Senior Researcher at Riga Technical University. She is an expert in economics and entrepreneurship, social and economic geography, and political science at the Latvian Council of Science. She obtained a Master's degree in Construction and Real

Estate Management (2007), and a Doctor of Economics (2014) from Riga Technical University. She gained work experience in the private and public sectors. Her research interests are: real estate development, housing policy, energy efficiency, spatial development, sustainable building and energy, resource efficiency, socio-economic indicators, and sustainable development. Sanda Lapuķe is the author and co-author of more than 115 scientific publications, including the scientific monograph "Real Estate and Economic Development: Synergy of Science and Practice" (2019), "Management System of the Real Estate Market Development in Latvia" (2015), etc. Two doctoral theses have been defended under her supervision. She has participated in 11 scientific and interregional projects. Sanda Lapuķe has significant project management experience as a scientific project leader and principal investigator in both Latvian and European projects.



Leo Jansons, MBA, is a PhD student at Riga Technical University in the field of economics and business. Since 2021, he has been an assistant professor and researcher at the Faculty of Engineering Economics and Management. He teaches several academic subjects: Price Formation in Construction, Risk and Quality

Management in Construction, The Real Estate Market in the National Economy, and Research Methods in the Field of Construction Business and Real Estate. Leo Jansons' research interests include, but are not limited to, the energy transition, various aspects of the smart built environment, including the housing lifecycle management system, energy efficiency and performance optimisation of buildings, advanced construction techniques, innovations, renewable energy sources, and the production, storage, transportation, and use of renewable gases. In the last five years, he has participated in five scientific projects and has authored or co-authored around 50 scientific publications across the fields of construction, energy performance of buildings, environmental engineering and smart design.



Ņikita Kočanovs, Mg. sc. ing., MBA, MA, is an accomplished engineering and project management professional with over 20 years of experience in electrical engineering, power construction, and infrastructure development. Leadership positions such as Chief Technical Officer and Head of Electrical Engineering have included the

successful design and execution of more than 500 projects across diverse sectors: commercial, residential, industrial, public, and infrastructure, both locally and internationally. International collaborations and involvement in cross-border projects have contributed to a broad perspective on engineering standards, sustainability practices, and regulatory compliance. Academic involvement includes a teaching role at Riga Technical University, where advanced-level courses in Planning of the Built Environment, Lighting Design, and Design Thinking have been developed and delivered. A strong foundation in both technical execution and theoretical instruction supports contributions to the development of future professionals. His areas of interest include real estate development, smart infrastructure, and sustainable engineering solutions. He is open to collaborative roles such as consultant, technical advisor, controller, educator, and evaluator, particularly in international or hybrid contexts that prioritise innovation, efficiency, and long-term impact.



Pēteris Druķis, Dr. sc. ing., is a seasoned civil engineering expert with over 15 years of professional experience in building reliability and technical assessment. Since 2024, he has served as the Director of the Civil Engineering Institute at Riga Technical University, where he is actively engaged

in research focused on reliability and risk assessment of buildings and building performance measurements. His academic work includes several scientific publications in international journals and conferences, covering topics such as structural optimisation, safety factor analysis, and the implementation of sustainable construction solutions. Pēteris Druķis actively collaborates with other industry professionals and students, promoting the development of young engineers' skills and fostering innovation at Riga Technical University. From 2014 to 2017, Pēteris Druķis was the Head of the State Construction Control Bureau (BVKB), where he led significant improvements in building technical inspection and safety systems. During this time, he earned a reputation as a straightforward and goal-oriented leader who does not hesitate to address industry challenges and propose solutions



Edgars Pudzis, PhD, holds a Bachelor's degree in Finance from the BA School of Business and Finance (2007), a Master's degree in Project Management from the Latvia University of Life Sciences and Technologies (2011), and a second Master's degree in Spatial Development Planning

from the University of Latvia (2015). In 2024, he obtained a PhD in the field of social and economic geography from Riga Technical University. His academic and scientific interests revolve around sustainable development, community engagement, and local development planning.

He has worked in various government institutions and municipalities, including seven years as Head of the Development and Planning Department of Carnikava Municipality. Since 2020, he has served as Head of the Speaker's Office of the Saeima (Parliament of Latvia) in Riga. He has been affiliated with Riga Technical University since 2016, initially as a Research Assistant and later as a Researcher at Riga Technical University. His current research continues to focus on regional development, participatory planning, and sustainable community strategies.

Contact Data

Raja Kočanova

E-mail: raja.kocanova@rtu.lv

Iveta Amoliņa

E-mail: iveta.amolina@rtu.lv

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2500-0501>

Katrīna Ruņģe

E-mail: katrina.runge@edu.rtu.lv

Sanda Lapuķe

E-mail: sanda.lapuke@rtu.lv

ORCID iD: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-4721-5944>

Leo Jansons

E-mail: leo.jansons@rtu.lv

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7321-4083>

Ņikita Kočanovs

E-mail: nikita.kocanovs@rtu.lv

Pēteris Druķis

E-mail: peteris.drukis@rtu.lv

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-3453-1354>

Edgars Pudzis

E-mail: edgars.pudzis@rtu.lv

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3842-0126>