

# What The Future Holds

2020 Home Working Industry Analysis



## About This White Paper

This white paper contains results and analysis from a study of the home working industry, conducted by HomeWorkingClub.com in July 2020. This was in the midst of a period when home working went unexpectedly mainstream.

HomeWorkingClub.com is a global portal for home workers of all kinds, from freelancers to remote workers. Launched in 2017, the site has received over two million page views, and helps around 30,000 people each month.

We surveyed over 350 readers, with fascinating results that are explained in detail over the coming pages.



# Some of Our Key Findings

- **87.82%** of respondents believe that the working world has changed forever.
- People universally want to **work to live, not live to work**. Nowadays, career progression, professional development, and even money take a clear backseat compared to health, home life and happiness.
- Home working isn't a panacea; Issues such as feeling disconnected from colleagues and inconsistent income from freelancing are widely recognised.

Read on for the data behind these findings, and many more. More details on our demographics and methodologies are available at the end of the paper.



## People Want to Work to Live, Not Live to Work



### Quality of Life

Regardless of their current work status, respondents consistently emphasized that their career is not their first priority.

People want to have control over their lives so that they can invest in their families and in themselves. The working style they choose to adopt is a reflection of this. Covid-19 has changed many things, and clearly caused people to give thought to what truly matters.

All of these things are important, but can you put them in the order they most matter to you?

#### Home/Family Life



#### Health



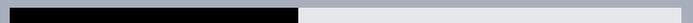
#### Personal Development



#### Money



#### Professional Development

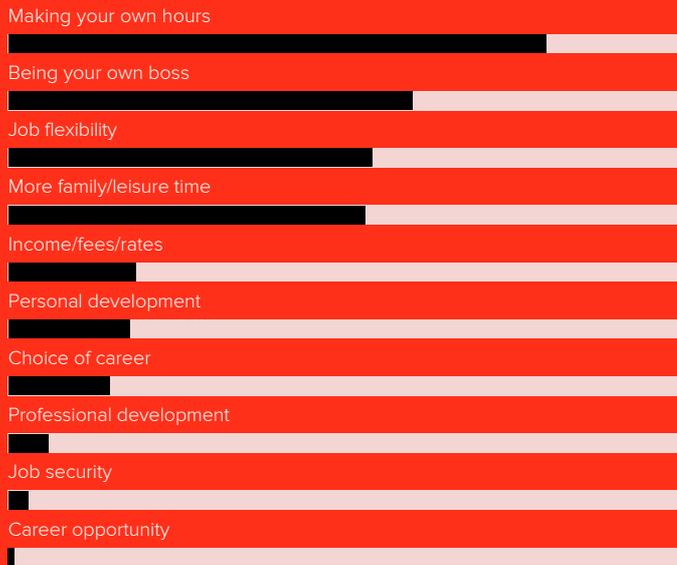


#### Career Progression

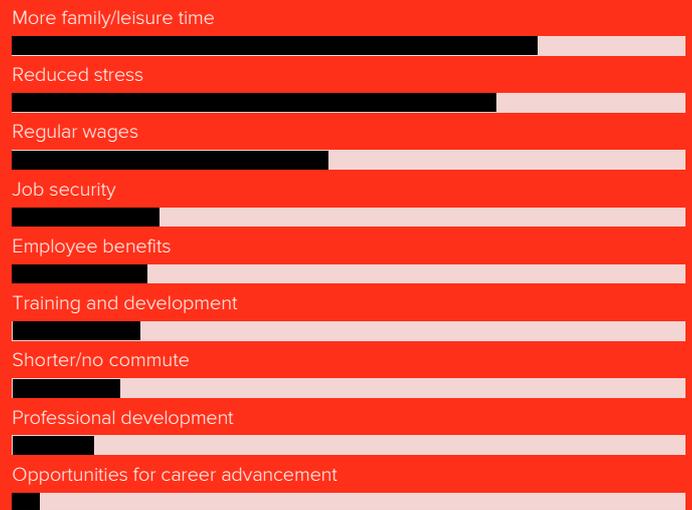


# People Want to Work to Live, Not Live to Work

## The Best Things About Freelancing



## The Best Things about Working Remotely



# People Want to Work to Live, Not Live to Work

## Willingness to Take Action

Not only are workers more interested in their quality of life, but they are also willing to take action to maintain or achieve it.

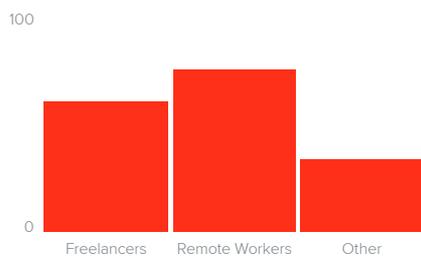
The extent to which working from home during Covid-19 lockdowns has influenced opinions is not easy to discern. What is clear is that workers want to do more remote work.

The commitment to having more control over lifestyle is very clear. A significant percentage of workers plan to increase their hours of work, or start a second job/side gig in order to do so.

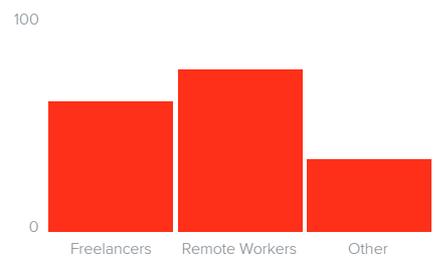
**The trend towards remote working and freelancing clearly has nothing to do with an aversion to hard work.**

Despite the recent decrease in freelance wages reported in the news, and confirmed by our survey data, **12.94% of remote workers say they will likely switch to freelancing in the next year.** This reflects an underlying desire to have more control over one's life and is coherent with all the other data collected.

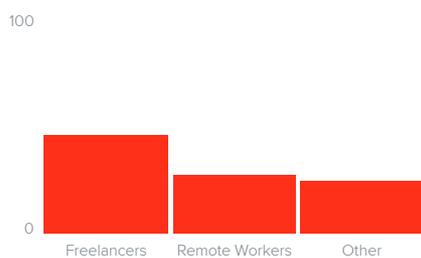
### Plan to do more of current work from home or remotely



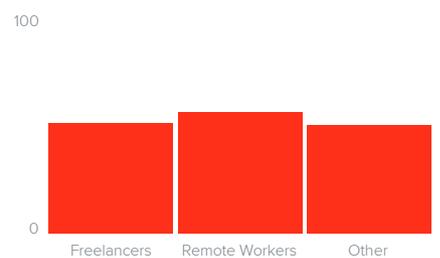
### Plan to change clients, employer or industry to work more remotely



### Plan to increase hours of work



### Plan to start a second job or side gig



# The Future of Work

## Things Are Changing

The long-term effects of the changes forced upon workers by the Covid-19 crisis remain to be seen, but millions more people have now been exposed to remote work.

The general consensus is that workers would like to continue working remotely, at least part of the time. This has been confirmed by many surveys, including our own. In fact, **37.80% of our respondents who don't currently work freelance or remotely plan to change their industry in the next year so that they can do so.** Another 29.13% say that they will probably change employer in order to be able to work more from home.

Many companies, such as Google and Twitter, have apparently realized that those who can't stay at home to stay safe with their current roles/employers may take matters into their own hands. Many household name firms have begun implementing longer-term remote or hybrid arrangements.

All indications are that freelancing and remote working are set to increase.

# 87.82%

think the working world has changed forever

# 90.37%

believe the Covid-19 pandemic has removed barriers to working remotely

# The Future of Work

## Freelancers

### Change in Income Over the Last Year



### Expected Change in Income over the Next Year



### How secure do you feel now compared to a year ago?



## Remote Workers

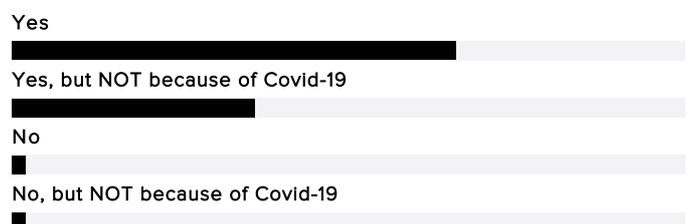
### Change in Income Over the Last Year



### Expected Change in Income over the Next Year



### Will you work remotely more in the future as a direct result of Covid-19?



# The Future of Work

## Security Is Key

In the past freelancing and remote working have been considered less secure than on-site jobs. But times have changed.

**The current crisis has shown workers that job security depends on the ability to adapt.**

People are no longer willing to rely on an employer in order to secure their lifestyle. **52% are willing to take on a second job or side gig.** 33% are prepared to work more hours. They are will to change employers (14%), industries (16%) and clients (22%).

Remote working allows employees to retain the benefit of regular wages and job security. However, businesses do sometimes have issues adapting to collaborating from a distance. Nevertheless, its increased popularity is not solely due to Covid-19. More family/leisure time, less stress, and less commuting are very appealing to many.

When it comes to freelancing, inconsistent income is considered, by far, to be the worst disadvantage. Still, despite this and the decrease in income over the last year, freelancers are very optimistic about the future and 12.94% of remote workers are thinking of switching to freelancing in the next year. The fact that "making your own hours" and "being your own boss" are the biggest benefits of freelancing help explain its appeal.

"The future of work has changed for the better I believe. The "New Normal" puts greater reliance on the individual instead of the company or corporation. It's all about self-investment now. Self-reliance. And a greater focus on community collaboration."

- Kerry-Ann Mac Donald  
Accountant

# The Future of Work

"I don't expect to ever work in an office again...  
If my current employer said I needed  
to return to the office, I would quit and find a  
different job where I could work remotely."



- M.B.  
Data Engineer  
Colorado

## A Blend of Home and Office

The increased interest in remote working does not mean that office buildings will disappear. There are some jobs that cannot be done remotely and many people don't enjoy the isolation of working from home.

While offices may not disappear, the experience of going into the office is going to change.

**The majority of freelancers are in no hurry to head back to the office, whether that's a client's site, a shared working space, a café or anywhere else. 60.28% plan to do more of their work from home/remotely over the coming year. Remote workers are even more eager to stay at home, with 75.29% planning to work from home/remotely more in their current job during the coming 12 months.**

A staggering 66.86% of survey respondents said they have no intention of working in an office full-time in 10 years' time. This figure is probably higher than it would be in the general population but nevertheless reflects a growing interest in at least a hybrid form of remote work.

# The Future of Work

## Opinions about the Future

"I believe more jobs will accept people working remotely meaning there will be a shift away from jobs being centred in big cities. People will no longer have to move for a job."

- **Joanna Woodhouse**  
Freelance Writer, Lincolnshire, UK

"This is going to really hurt commercial real estate."

- **Patricia B.**  
Freelance writer, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

"The environmental benefits of working from home – even just a few times a week – will become a big consideration for employees. I am sure that there will be cost savings for employers too, like not having to pay a fortune for big offices, health and safety, etc."

- **Catriona Roberts**  
Freelance Proofreader, Birmingham, UK

"I do think COVID 19 is causing a paradigm shift in how we "work," because we have to and we have the technology. It seems that the virus is pushing remote capabilities, which I think is a great thing."

- **Gale Barr**  
Former IT Application Analyst (LIS), Michigan

"This pandemic has brought the necessity to change, has reminded us we are one world and we need to extend our hand to the other with empathy, altruism and compassion. Every job performed should have that in mind."

- **María Luz Polit**  
Family Therapist, Ecuador

"Regardless of whether or not office buildings fully reopen at some point in the future, I feel more companies have to now investigate how their business will be able to support (or where they need to improve) a remote workforce in the event something surfaces in the future that adversely affects the ability to have employees physically come into a work building."

- **Laura Sueoka**  
Operations/Supply Chain, California

"There will always be jobs that cannot be done remotely and people who won't stand the social isolation. Remote working is like marriage - not for everyone!"

- **Daniela R.G.**  
Freelance Translator and Writer, Faro, Portugal

## Remote Work Realities

### The Best of Both Worlds?

The Coronavirus has exposed many companies and their workers to remote working for the first time. Despite having been thrust into full-time remote work under the worst of circumstances, many workers wish to increase the amount of remote work they do.

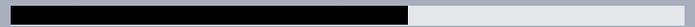
While a significant number of companies have implemented remote or hybrid work solutions, it's the employees themselves who experience the negative aspects of remote work.

Even remote-first companies, which have been purposely designed to facilitate the use of a distributed workforce, often struggle to totally remove feelings of social isolation and disconnect between colleagues.

Still, the security and stability of a full-time job without leaving the house can be very appealing. Not surprisingly, 32.94% of remote workers have been asked for advice on this style of working recently.

### The Worst Things about Working Remotely

Feeling disconnected from colleagues



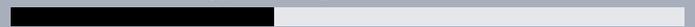
Technical issues



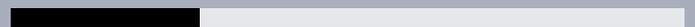
Social isolation



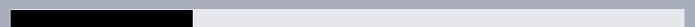
Lack of feedback/support/management



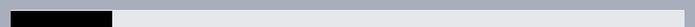
Insufficient time off



Lack of work/life balance



Different benefits to on-site staff



# Remote Work Realities

## Advice From Remote Workers

"Be certain what is expected from you and how you are expected to report back."

- **Lori Quinlan**  
*Balanced Bookkeeping Services*

"Take the time to set up an office space separate from your living areas... something that inspires creativity and calm, a place you enjoy being and that helps you focus."

- **Tara Hathcock**  
*Quiet + Kin Publishing*

"Create structure for your day to avoid letting work unintentionally blend into your home life."

- **Spencer Anderson**  
*Epiq Global*

# Freelance Realities

## Freelancing is Not for Everyone

The freedom to control your destiny comes with a lot of responsibilities and risks. When you are self-employed you have to take charge of all the elements involved in running your business. Additionally, you generally receive no benefits such as sick pay, holiday pay, or insurance.

The inconsistent income associated with freelancing is very real. Still, freelancers are in a better position than other workers to make changes to accommodate fluctuations in income. **45% of freelancers intend to increase their working hours in the next 12 months.** The ability to do so explains the optimism of freelancers despite the reality of recent decreases in income.

Despite being in total control of their work-life, freelancers do still struggle with issues such as work/life balance, social isolation, and insufficient time off. Learning how to juggle everything and retain focus on self-care is not something that comes easily to most.

**The ability to adapt is critical to success. Change is a constant in freelance work.**

Freelancing is not an easy option, but many would not trade it for the regular wages and benefits of being employed, even remotely. It is worth noting that remote workers do show an interest in switching to freelancing and that **32.62% of freelancers have been asked for advice on freelancing recently.**

## The Worst Things About Working Freelance



# Freelance Realities

## Advice on Freelancing from Freelancers

"The first year (or even two years) will probably be tough, but taking the leap is definitely worth it. It's all about determination and perseverance. Don't get discouraged if things don't pan out right away."

- **Marisel Lettier**  
*Con todas las letras*

"When starting out, don't turn your nose up at small, lower-paying jobs. They add up quickly to pay the bills and you gain invaluable experience along the way."

- **Dr Natasha Beeton-Kempen**

"Have side gigs. It allows you to have income coming in when things are quieter and gives you time to look for the right clients and opportunities with less financial pressure."

- **Bria Weaver**  
*PR, Events & Content Creator*

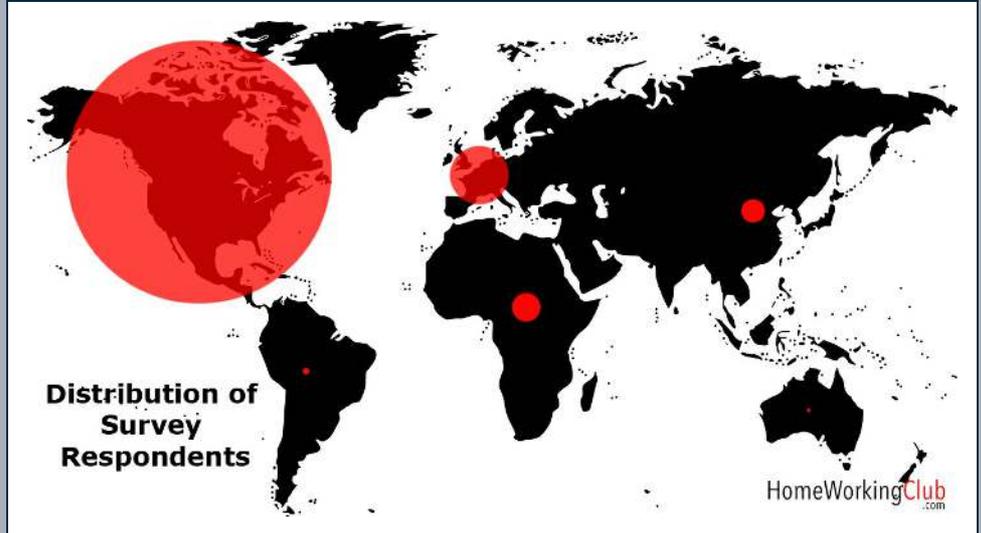
"Give yourself the chance to fall in awe with your immense source of abilities, trust you!"

- **Maria Luz Polit**

## Methodology

This white paper presents the results of a survey conducted by HomeWorkingClub.com in July 2020. Community members were invited to respond to the survey via our newsletters, and on social media. We received responses from 353 of our community members.

Since the respondents come from our community it is understood that they are likely more interested in and more knowledgeable about working from home than the population at large.

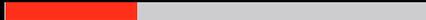


### Age

Just starting out (18-24)



Full of potential (25-34)



Top of your game (35-44)



Experienced and enthusiastic (45-54)



Jedi Master (54-64)



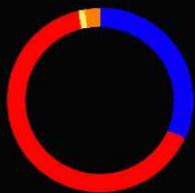
Silver superstar (65+)



Rather not say



### Gender



Male

Female

Other

Rather Not Say

## Press Enquiries and Interviews



Please feel free to share our findings (including graphs) however you wish, but please ensure to provide attribution.

If you require any further comment or commentary, please contact:

ben@homeworkingclub.com