

Comparative Perspectives on Human Resource Management in the Era of Telework: Legal, Cultural, and Strategic Challenges in Hungary, the Netherlands, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates

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Abstract

The rapid normalisation of telework has fundamentally transformed traditional Human Resource Management (HRM) paradigms, shifting it from a circumstantial practice to a structural mode of employment across industries. This paper explores how HRM adapts within the evolving telework environment by examining its intersection with legal regulation, organisational policy, and cultural governance. Using a comparative doctrinal approach, the study investigates four distinct jurisdictions-Hungary, the Netherlands, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)-which embody contrasting labour governance systems and socio-economic contexts. The analysis reveals that while EU member states such as Hungary and the Netherlands benefit from institutionalised labour standards and worker representation, Gulf nations like Qatar and the UAE adopt state-driven, top-down models with limited union participation. These structural divergences influence HRM strategies related to performance monitoring, employee well-being, data protection, and labour flexibility. The findings highlight the pressing need for a harmonised global framework to regulate telework and balance innovation with worker protection. The study contributes to academic discourse by situating HRM as a mediating actor between legal compliance and strategic adaptability in the digital economy.

Keywords

Telework, Human Resource Management, Comparative Labour Law, Digital Economy

1. Introduction

The shift in telework from a fringe working practice to a hegemonic mode of employment has compelled a fundamental reorientation of traditional human resource management (HRM) systems and labour governance.[1] Although it offers greater freedom than high productivity, it also poses a threat to conventional legal norms and HRM practices, particularly regarding workers' rights, managerial control, and intergroup harmony in the workplace. This is worsened by the fact that there exists no uniform regulation across the jurisdictions. As this paper claims, countries have highly divergent national legal frameworks for telework, leading to distinct personnel management problems and mitigation approaches under different geopolitical and socio-economic conditions. The paper situates HRM precisely between labour law regulation and organisational policy, highlighting how it tends to adjust to new telework norms across the various regimes.[2] It dwells on the comparative study of telework-related HRM issues in four selected jurisdictions-Hungary, the Netherlands, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)-and their implementation.[3] These nations represent opposing governing principles: two are EU member states with well-established labour market institutions and prominent social negotiation, and two are Gulf monarchies that have been undergoing rapid financial diversification, alongside changes driven by state laws. The paper is based on doctrinal legal research and interrogation of comparative jurisdiction.[4] The global conflict between the protection of workers on one hand and adaptability to the laws and the need for flexibility in the labour market amidst the digital economy comes out in such a comparison.[5]

2. The Concept of Hrm in the Telework Employment Relationship

The concept of Human Resource Management in the telework environment is much more complex than many may think, as it becomes organically integrated with the areas of legal framework of operation, digital infrastructural creation and implementation, and the psychological comfort of the person themselves. There is an inability to monitor the performance, the risk of social isolation, the loss of boundaries between work and life, and cybersecurity threats as the main issues that relate to teleworking cores and are in full compliance with newly emerging HR tasks. Classical approaches to HRM were very much based on ensuring workplace productivity in a closed physical workspace with companies knowing their workers are in a safe and compliant position with requirements. Telework manages to erode all such boundaries making it extremely difficult for an employer to exert control and yet be able to comply with the law as regards health and safety codes, regulation of working time, fair treatment of employee. In responding to this

paradigm shift, national legal systems have reacted with more or less foresight and comprehensiveness, leaving a complex picture in the face of HR professionals to deal with.[6]

The emergence of teleworking as being structural rather than circumstantial in nature of employment has started to break a lot of conventional paradigms of human resource management.[7] A temporary or sector-specific practice transformed into a standardised, possibly inherent, mode of work in the different industries-especially those in the knowledge economy, professional services and the tech industry.[8] However, this normalisation is not just a story of technological and logistical revolution, but also of deep-seated legal and cultural re-arrangement that compels HRM to act within landscapes of ambivalence, transnational conformity and values in a state of constant flux between employees and employers.[9] In this respect, HRM acts as an intermediary between legality and adjustability in an organisation. It has to coordinate national labour regulations, data protection policies, and occupational health policies, contrary to strategic goals, like talent management, employee retention, and inclusive work culture.[10] This adjustment is particularly complicated where there is a lack of harmonisation of global regulations.[11] However, unlike physical workplace standards, where international standards are provided by intergovernmental organisations (such as the International Labour Organisation or the EU), telework standards are determined mainly by national interpretations of the law and the speed with which various governments have responded to emerging realities.[12] On the one hand, there are places where such remote work rights have been successfully codified in law, like the Netherlands, but on the other hand, we have places such as Qatar where the issue is still being addressed through informal instructions issued by the relevant ministers. The disjointed legal regulation of telework also makes it harder for HR to develop consistent, scalable strategies, especially in multinational companies, as HRs need to work across multiple legal systems at once.

Moreover, the nature of the interaction between the modes of employment and the labor traditions and the governance philosophies is contrasted on how telework and traditional employment modes work.[13] As an example, EU nations tend to institutionalize social dialogue and representation of workers in lawmaking and HRM, but Gulf nations tend to resort to top-down and state-centred approaches most of the time with little union power.[14] Such structural discrepancy is not only influential during the development of telework regulations, but it can also alter the culturally predicted values, such as flexibility, trust, productivity, and employee rights.

It is thus important to consider a comparative approach, not only to realise the particular problems each jurisdiction creates about HRM, but also to derive some best practices and policy framework that may be applicable internationally. A comparative and jurisdiction-based analysis sheds light on the broader impacts of teleworking regulation on labour marketplace equity, digital inclusiveness and management monitoring. It exposes the anxieties of innovation and protection, flexibility and standardisation, disengagement and responsibility.

Conceptual Framework: Telework within an HRM Context

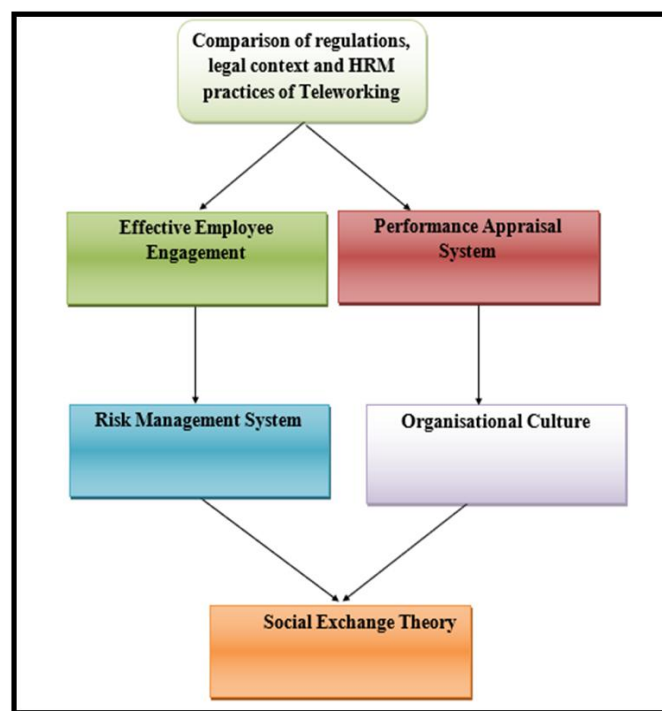


Figure 1. Conceptual framework illustrating the relationship between teleworking regulations, HRM practices, and the Social Exchange Theory.

(Source: Self-designed)

As illustrated in figure 1, the comparison of regulation, legal context, and HRM challenges of teleworking is the independent variable. The dependent variables of the study are primary pillars of HRM practices in Teleworking across

the four countries, such as effective employee engagement, performance appraisal systems, risk management systems, and organisational culture.

These interrelated HRM components collectively influence the social and professional dynamics between employers and employees in remote working environments. The framework is theoretically grounded in the Social Exchange Theory, which explains how mutual trust, reciprocity, and perceived fairness govern the exchange of resources and obligations in employment relationships.

This model thus provides a holistic understanding of how telework-related legal and institutional structures shape HRM practices across different jurisdictions, forming the analytical basis for the comparative assessment presented in this study

3. Legal Context Analysis

The Netherlands can serve as an example of how telework can become part of national labour policy, with a well-developed legal framework supported by a strong social partnership. The backbone is made up of two large statutes: 1. Flexible Working Act (Wet flexibel werken, WFW 2016). [15] And 2. Working Conditions Act (Arbowet).[16] Employees who have at least 26 weeks of service have the right to request flexible working time, place, and schedule. Such requests have to be taken seriously by employers, and they can only be rejected on grounds stated and with business significance. Puts a permanent requirement on employers to promote a healthy and safe working environment and expressly extends this responsibility to none in or out of an office. Employers should carry out a risk assessment and provide equipment and directions.

The COVID-19 pandemic rapidly accelerated a well-established cultural trend towards the normalisation of telework, followed by widespread further guidance and model policies from employers' associations (AWVN) and trade unions (FNV, CNV).[17] More importantly, the provisions of collective labour agreements (CLAs) often include telework as a key concept, further clarifying statutory protections and harmonising employers' approaches to telework across industries, thereby simplifying HR implementation. Similar to measures to enhance telework protection in other countries, the Netherlands has in recent years also considered legislative breakthroughs to raise telework protection, including the introduction of the so-called Work Where You Want" Act (Wet werken waar je wilt) that would further enshrine the right of employees to the location where they work, including home. Even though it is not fully introduced, the bill represents the political will to make telework an advancement in the long-term structural planning of labor. The institutional framework of the Dutch HRM also includes the presence of labor inspectorates and occupational health services that can guarantee the employer upholds the quality of remote work. Furthermore, the taxes will subsidise home office costs to some degree, thereby promoting teleworking across all industries.

On the other hand, in Qatar, no single form of work, such as telework, is codified as such by Law No. 14 of 2004 (as amended) as the primary labour legislation of Qatar. Regulatory guidelines were created reactively: the Ministry of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs (MADLSA) published circulars relating to the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. Circular No. 17 of 2020) to promote remote work in both the government and the private sector, but these do not have the force of law and are not particularly detailed.

The result of such absence in formal legal codification is high unpredictability for both employers and employees regarding the rights and obligations concerning telework in Qatar. The main labour concerns (working hours, the ability to wear overtime, standards of occupational health and safety, right to disconnect) still operate under obsolete frameworks that assume the presence of a physical workplace. Moreover, legal viability of work-at-home arrangements opens the door to unequal HR practices, particularly in smaller companies and domestic employers that are not familiar with international labour standards. The legal gap also limits employees' ability to obtain compensation for grievances arising from remote working arrangements, since the systems set up to resolve disputes do not adapt to the dynamics of the virtual world of work. Moreover, the lack of binding regulations hinders contract creation, parties' involvement in the benefits section, and performance monitoring in the remote arrangements. In this regard, most multinational companies operating in Qatar are guided by internal policies that align with internationally recognised best practices, which, unintentionally, create a fractured regulatory environment.

The law lacks detailed legal tools that regulate telework, so the task of working out and enforcing remote work policies in Qatar is usually left entirely to individual employers. This produces significant variance in telework practices by industry, with a large gap between multinational companies and local firms. There is also the issue of how the system of employment in Qatar, based on sponsorship (kafala), which is gradually being reformed, may complicate the voluntary status of telework, and this applies in particular to foreign workers whose freedom of movement and workplace are partially dependent on the goodwill of the employer. The informal nature of telework is also a drawback to data gathering and policy evaluation, where policymakers stand to deliberate to provide evidence-based reforms to digitalised workplaces with the changing needs of its workforce.

While in the UAE, there is a significant push to legitimise flexible work arrangements. The law No. 33 of 2021 on Regulation of Labour Relations (effective February 2022).[18] which supersedes the 1980 law, acknowledges the existence of a work mode called "Remote Work" (Article 9). Ministerial Resolution No. 31 of 2022 also detailed the conditions for flexible, part-time, and off-site work and outlined the fundamental terms of an agreement. Programs such

as the Dubai Remote Work Visa indicate a governmental effort to recruit remote workers abroad, and although full safeguards for remote workers within the national labour law framework are still in development, they are generally known as international digital nomads.

Along with those legal developments, the UAE government has been actively promoting remote work among public institutions of the sector, especially during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. There are diverse emirates that have embraced the need for digital transformation, incorporating telework as part of their long-term administrative plans, such as Abu Dhabi and Dubai. Yet, there is a discrepancy in the application of these policies throughout the private sector, especially in free zones, where labour standards might be compromised as compared to federal levels. In addition, though it is the high-skilled expatriates in the field of information technology, finance and consulting that gain the option of remote work, this is not the case with the lower-skilled migrant workers. This gap raises questions about inclusion and fair access to flex rights.

These progressive developments notwithstanding, the telework system in the UAE faces issues with uniform enforcement and fair application. One of them is the absence of an operationalised monitoring system to help the employer maintain compliance with the new flexible work policies, especially in industries where labour protection provisions are underdeveloped. Moreover, the contract is unclear, and the majority of remote work relations are established informally or on a case-by-case basis through internal solutions, which places employees at risk of unilateral changes to working conditions and employment terms. Although the government has developed programs such as the provision of digital infrastructure and the implementation of paperless offices, there is minimal integration of these programs with HRM practices in the private sector. Also, the law governing data protection, although increasingly established, is not as comprehensive as the GDPR, which poses threats to digital monitoring and employee privacy in remote environments. To achieve an inclusive teleworking regulation in the future, the UAE will have to strengthen the application of legal provisions, cover all classes of workers, and address the regulatory gap between the state and the business world.

Hungary also has a well-developed and explicit legislative framework for telework. Telework is clearly defined and regulated, and provides a degree of employment flexibility, as a new form of employment under the Hungarian Labour Code (Act I of 2012), especially since a major amendment was implemented after 2021.[19] The legal definition can be found in Section 196: Telework is a form of employment in which the employee regularly performs the work not at the employer's workplace but at another location, and uses information technologies to transfer the results. Moreover, the Government Decree 487/2020 created the comprehensive framework of health and safety requirements, data protection, and the duties of employers in the context of remote work during the pandemic, some of which were later referred to the permanent law, revealing its suitability to the EU Framework Agreement on Telework (2002).

In addition to the outlined legal provisions, Hungary has issued extensive administrative instructions to support employers in implementing their telework policies. These comprise regulations of embarking on remote workstations, essential written contracts clarifying the terms of telework, and exemptions of any tax on the allowances of telework. Additionally, the Hungarian labour law also underlines the notion of voluntary engagement, as the choice of employer and employee should be mutually agreed upon prior to the commencement of remote work. In spite of these developments, there is no level playing field in the actual implementation, especially among the small and medium-sized firms (SMEs), and adherence to the safety and monitoring requirements proved to be costly.[20] However, the Hungarian policy also implies a strategic adjustment towards more general practices of the EU labour policy toward flexibility and protection of workers.

The spread of telework in the European Union (EU) has presented several compliance and implementation issues, especially with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).[21] Employers, in some cases, have to struggle with productivity monitoring on one hand and the right to privacy of the employees on the other, as remote work requires more and more digital surveillance and processing of the collected data. Most HR offices find it difficult to put in place proper measures to avert potential breaches of the GDPR provisions on consent, data minimisation, and security.[22] In addition, the European Framework Agreement on Telework (2002), a landmark in encouraging flexible work, lacks consistency in how member states apply it. It does not set binding measures, and there are serious flaws in national accommodations, especially regarding the right to disconnect, ergonomics for workstations at home, and fair access to professional training. HRM practices have faced further complications arising from the broader digital transformation of work. Conventional HR systems that operate in centralised offices have to contend with emerging needs in distributed teams, cloud-based workflows, and virtual communication rules. In this environment, the HRM process is an essential integrative one, joining the issues of legal compliance and operational business performance with the welfare of personnel. Savvy HR practices would bridge gaps across legal requirements, technological usages and the reliance on psychosocial resources, ensuring that telework becomes a conscientious as well as an accommodating method of work in the EU.

The increased pace of telework in the EU has also raised concerns about cross-border employment regulation, especially for employees working remotely across member states.[23] Different tax implications, social security contributions and employment laws may be complicated in such a case where an employee is based in one country and working under a company in a different country. The EU has failed to develop a completely unified system that would

handle these issues and the two categories of employers and employees are stuck in a quilt of various national regulations.

The other emerging problem is the digital divide within the EU, where inequality in online infrastructure and digital literacy includes the imperfect use of remote work.[24] In rural or underdeveloped areas, employees might have connectivity issues and would not be able to work full-time under telework arrangements. This raises the issue of access to remote work opportunities and whether EU policies should encourage infrastructure improvements to aid digital inclusion. Also, the psychological effects of long-term telework should not be disregarded.

4. Specific Challenges of HRM

4.1 The Main HRM Issues in Hungary

1.Compliance Monitoring & Safety: HR departments are confronted with the challenge of ensuring that those who work in the confines of their homes can be checked to see whether they are meeting the occupational health and safety standards, which are bound by the law. Although there is an implied obligation on the employers to provide safety according to the Labour Code (Section 75), it does not allow the intrusive supervision beyond strict limits in order to guarantee employee privacy (Section 9). In the case of smaller enterprises (SMEs) and government departments, a compliance gap arises due to the administrative burden of conducting remote safety audits while respecting privacy boundaries.[25]

2.Cost Allocation and Reimbursement: Though the Labour Code (and, in certain interpretations, allows (and indeed legally anticipates) issuing allowances on the expenses associated with teleworking (such as utilities, internet), such a decision is primarily at the discretion (Section 159).[26] This results in incompatible practices within the firms, which creates a sense of unfairness and confusion within HR departments.[27]

3.Performance Appraisal and Engagement: Although the legal framework is in place, the on-the-ground development and implementation of HR policies in relation to the fair and output-oriented performance evaluation and maintaining employee motivation and attachment in the remote environment is undeveloped. The survey responses showed that there is some HR anxiety about quantifying productivity measures without excessive monitoring.[28]

Despite these business challenges, Hungary's legislative environment is among the more mature in Eastern Europe. The major HRM strategic dilemma is how to effect lawful clarity into consistent, compliant, and productive practices, more so beyond major multinational businesses.

4.2 The Main HRM Issues in Netherlands

1.Right to Disconnect & Well-being: The right to disconnect and well-being is not specified yet in independent legislation but a powerful cultural norm and CLA provisions favor the healthy state of contrasting work.[29] HR teams are also expected to fight the so-called digital presenteeism and mental fatigue which became the systemic effect of ceaseless connectivity, which was apparent in feedback given by the respondents in the questionnaires regarding the issue of digital fatigue in Dutch HR professionals.

2.Equal Treatment and Inclusion: Among the essential personnel management issues accompanying remote employees is that they are not deprived of a chance to be promoted, development opportunities through informal learning or group integration.[30] The HR in the Netherlands, therefore, is paying particular attention to the concept of inclusiveness in remote policy by providing an equal chance to improve and be seen.

3.Tensions concerning the data privacy and subdivision: As a strict implementation of the GDPR and the case law of the Dutch Data Protection Authority (AP), the electronic surveillance of employees is heavily restricted by Dutch law.[31] This is conflicting with employers who want to implement productivity or security through surveillance software at the expense of HR having to identify legally acceptable surveillance options. The Dutch model provides a successful, negotiated, continuous, albeit preferred, balance between the independence of workers and the flexibility of employees, as a model for other EU states, through a union of law interlinked with collective bargaining and cultural agreement.

4.3 Challenges of HRM in Qatar

1.Deficiencies in statutory protections & undefined: No telework-specific statutory policy exists, and employers revert to broader policies or statutory protection covering work where there is a fixed location and physical supervision. This creates significant uncertainties for HR in establishing enforceable working time, defining safety requirements beyond the workplace premises, and establishing strict disciplinary resolution channels for remote working issues.[32] According to HR professionals, there has been significant ambiguity about how to formulate a policy due to a lack of nationally accepted standards.

2.Intersections of Kafala System: Although reforms started to take place, as evident in (Law No. 18 of 2020, Law No. 19 of 2020), the residual effect of the sponsorship system continues to shape the labour process.[33] A larger workforce of expatriate workers may find themselves restricted in their mobility between jobs, which may affect the perceived voluntariness of the telework agreement and the potential for coercion in the context of residency.

3. Technological and Structural Barriers: The HR profession usually does not have well-developed systems of work and education about collaboration with remote productivity.[34] More importantly, telework options are organizationally restricted to higher-level professions, excluding lower-level administrative employees and being virtually closed to manual workers, creating a serious digital divide. Multinational companies tend to have internal protocols regarding telework in line with corporate international practice, which uses a two-tier system: a well-developed internal HR policy, with a gap in national jurisprudence.

The grey area goes a long way toward creating a significant compliance risk for HR departments. The formulation of policy is discretionary and more ad hoc than it should be, particularly because of the overwhelming reasons given by multinationals or because of government concerns.

4.4 Challenges of HRM in the UAE

1. Unequal Occasion and a Two-Tier System: The advantages of teleworking have been constrained to the high-skilled employees in such occupations as finance, technology, professional services, etc. [35] The low-skilled, mainly the migrant labourers, are systematically shut out, and as such, the telework economy is highly stratified. The HR policies, therefore, differ immensely across the different domains of the workforce.

2. Spread of Contractual Ambiguity and Policy Vertices: Entrenched as they are, the old employment contracts are silent in many instances on telework arrangements, even with the new legislation.[36] It often results in inconsistency and the possibility of confrontation when HR departments are forced to come up with ad hoc policies in between or even improvise ad hoc addenda to written policies. The survey findings indicated that HR-related issues in the UAE highlighted the absence of standardised templates for remote working contracts.

3. Surveillance threats and Employee Well-being: To overcome the issue of productivity, employers are testing out different monitoring applications.[37] Nevertheless, where there are no GDPR-grade data protection legislations specifically governing and regulating surveillance in the workplace (the umbrella UAE data protection law is in effect), there is a fear that over-monitoring can debase trust and well-being. HR needs to act in a way which balances control and ethics.

At the cultural level, the change has become popular among federal bodies and developed Emirati businesses. Nevertheless, HRM systems in various free zones (with their own rules) and in the private sector, in general, are quite heterogeneous. Conformance of the new provisions is another fundamental concern for HRM strategy.

4.4.1 Challenges of HRM in the EU

1. The EU Framework Agreement on Telework (2002): The EU Framework Agreement on Telework is erratically being executed. Although the Framework Agreement established a guiding principle on telework as a non-binding agreement, there has been uneven uptake across the EU member states. There is also a disparity in the countries with great legal support for telework, like the Netherlands and Germany, and those with little protection, which leaves HR practice fragmented in multinational companies.

2. GDPR and Data Protection: Telework imposes new data protection and employee privacy problems. HR departments have to deal with digital monitoring, tools to ensure productivity and collect data, with a strong focus on the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). [38] Finding the balance between controlling the performance and protecting the personal data is a constantly raised issue.

3. Access to Telework Inequality: Telework presents a dilemma in terms of providing equal access to the telework opportunity by HR managers. The option of remote work has been to the advantage of white-collar ARU and high-skilled professionals, leaving low-income or manual labour sectors out of the opportunity, causing workplace stratification and the potential to fuel resentment.

4. The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Responsibilities: Regarding EU law, employees working at home are always a health and safety risk to employers.[39] Nevertheless, risk-mitigating and OHS compliance checks on a remote basis are not only logistically challenging to organise but also rather intrusive, which makes HR management challenging.

5. Employee well-being and psychosocial Risks: Telework causes isolation, digital exhaustion, and a lack of teamwork.[40] In the long-term hybrid work environment, to maintain employee morale and productivity, HR departments must be particularly engaged in addressing mental health, incentivising remote interaction, and preventing burnout.

4.4.2 Country HRM Strategy Legal Alignment

Qatar's HRM approach to telework is deeply shaped by its reliance on expatriate labor and the rigidity of traditional workforce structures. While the Labor Law No. 14 of 2004 outlines general employment standards, it remains largely silent on telework, creating ambiguity and implementation gaps. This is further compounded by the Kafala system, which links expatriate workers to their employers and restricts flexibility in remote arrangements. However, Qatar has begun shifting toward establishing telework-focused hubs, particularly in free zones such as Qatar Science and Technology Park, to increase digital job opportunities for both nationals and expatriates. Contract reforms in Qatar

remain limited in scope. Most employment contracts lack explicit clauses addressing remote work responsibilities, hours, tools, and data use protocols. For telework to be sustainable and legally secure, contracts must incorporate these elements. The lack of comprehensive data privacy laws further complicates remote work management. Therefore, HRM departments must take internal initiative to implement robust cybersecurity measures and introduce privacy guidelines aligned with emerging global standards.[41]

From an employee welfare perspective, disparity in access to benefits remains a concern. Expatriate teleworkers often lack access to mental health services, ergonomic support, and structured engagement initiatives. HRM professionals must design home-office support programs that include the provision of digital tools, wellness checks, and regular virtual communication routines. Strategically, Qatar's HRM needs to transition from reactive adjustments to structural policy reform.

In case of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) represents one of the more proactive Gulf countries in integrating telework into its HRM strategies. Through Federal Decree Law No. 33 of 2021, the UAE formally recognised flexible and remote work arrangements, particularly in the federal public sector. This legal evolution reflects the government's focus on digital transformation and performance efficiency. Key HRM innovations include the introduction of federal-level certification systems for remote roles and the adoption of AI-powered platforms to allocate tasks and assess performance. These tools streamline remote operations but also raise ethical concerns. Monitoring software can be perceived as intrusive, which HR departments must manage through transparent communication and strict boundaries around data collection.

Despite progress, the UAE's data protection framework is still evolving. The UAE Digital Law offers some protections, but HR departments must independently implement cybersecurity training, encrypted communication tools, and privacy protocols to ensure remote compliance. Teleworkers need to be educated on safe digital conduct and their rights regarding personal data. Work-life balance remains a significant challenge. While the labour law outlines general working hours and rest provisions, cultural expectations often pressure employees to remain digitally available beyond formal hours. HRM systems should actively promote the right to disconnect through policy documents and digital wellness campaigns. Strategic alignment in the UAE requires not just legal compliance but ethical governance.

Moving to the Netherlands, we notice that the Netherlands has been used as an example of a country that has pioneered telework preparedness and the integration of HRM at the international level. The national regulations, such as the Flexible Work Act and the Balanced Labour Market Act (WAB), promote the provision of remote work and balanced working conditions for employees. Such laws are progressive and provide a strong legal framework for HRM to manage telework effectively. One of the most unusual aspects of Dutch HRM is the implementation of the Results-Only Work Environment (ROWE), which changes the way performance is evaluated, shifting the focus to an outcome-based model.[42] This philosophy supports a culture of adaptable remote employment and fosters trust and independence. The HR department's format should be clear on the teleworking aspects, including the duties or job, the communication modes to be used, and the availability period.

The Netherlands is also a pioneer in safeguarding work-life balance. The Right to Disconnect is legally supported and actively enforced by HRM through organisational policies. This ensures that remote employees are not overburdened or constantly on call, helping prevent burnout. Health and safety for teleworkers are taken seriously. Employers are obligated to assess the safety of home offices and provide ergonomic tools or financial support for home workstation setup. This legal requirement is embedded in HRM policy through risk assessments and employee surveys. Data protection, underpinned by GDPR, is rigorously applied. HRM systems enforce employee training, secure file-sharing platforms, and routine audits to guarantee compliance. These efforts combine to create a resilient, employee-centred telework model.

As for the Hungarian case, Hungary's approach to telework in HRM remains underdeveloped despite the legal foundation provided by the Labour Code (Act I of 2012). While the law offers a general framework for employment, it does not explicitly address telework. This gap led to the implementation of ad-hoc pandemic-era policies, many of which lacked permanence. HRM strategy in Hungary is often dependent on EU-funded programs aimed at boosting digital skills, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).[43] Although these initiatives offer training and subsidised tools, they fail to establish long-term policy structures. Consequently, HR departments are frequently left to interpret telework standards independently. Contractual provisions for remote work are inconsistent. Few employment contracts contain clauses tailored to telework, leading to ambiguity in responsibilities and expectations. Hungarian HRM professionals must take the lead in drafting standard telework policies that cover hours, tools, communication, and performance metrics.[44]

Health and safety regulations are another grey area. The Labour Code does not include specific requirements for home offices, leaving employers uncertain about their obligations. However, voluntary measures like providing ergonomic assessments and wellness programs are being adopted by forward-thinking companies. From a data compliance perspective, Hungary aligns with GDPR, providing a solid base for data protection. Still, enforcement often varies, especially among smaller firms.[45] HRM departments need to institutionalise regular audits, employee data handling training, and transparent consent policies to ensure compliance. Strategic alignment in Hungary should prioritise structural reform. By integrating telework clauses into national labour laws and incentivising best practices across

industries, HRM systems can move from reactive to proactive management. Establishing clear national standards, supported by EU guidelines, will be essential in professionalising and sustaining remote work across sectors.[46]

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, telework has redefined the scope of HRM. Its challenges are diverse, spanning legal, operational, cultural, and technological dimensions. However, through responsive legal frameworks, thoughtful HR strategies, and unified global cooperation, telework can become a catalyst for more flexible, inclusive, and productive workplaces worldwide. The growing relevance of telework in today's labour market has forced organisations and HRM systems to reassess how they manage people, performance, and compliance. The main areas of concern in Qatar and the UAE are incomplete legal systems and cultural limitations, which make workforce independence and data privacy challenging. Nevertheless, both nations are pursuing the formalisation of remote work, with the UAE at the forefront through its hybrid work charters and federal telework certification. Sponsorship systems, still in place in Qatar, and direct regulations on telework do not yet exist, creating significant legal and operational gaps in protecting the workforce. European nations such as the Netherlands, by contrast, provide solid examples of mature telework strategies. Other legal tools, such as the Flexible Work Act and the Right to Disconnect law, not only protect employees but also enable HRM professionals to design the work environment by providing them with freedom and safety. Still within the EU, Hungary is restricted in its own laws on telework, yet has EU-paid assistance to help contend with digital change and work versatility. The juxtaposition highlights the notion that telework issues and solutions strongly depend on regional legal development level, socio-economic priorities, and institutional preparedness.

The key lesson is the urgency of creating universal, adaptable international teleworking regulations. Whereas the applicability of labour laws and HRM approaches will always remain contextual, globalisation and digital transformation require unity in fundamental concepts, particularly in such spheres as data security, employee surveillance, and acceptable working conditions. As telework becomes increasingly transnational, organisations must have remote policies that comply with local labour laws and international best practices. To the HRM theorists and policy-makers, this change is an alarming opportunity. The further integration of HRM and the legal system, investment in digital infrastructure, and changes in HR education regarding hybrid management of workforce preparation of future professionals are needed. Making sure that this shift towards telework is strategic, ethical and inclusive is more than just a compliance concern; it is about the sustainability of the organisation and global workforce equality.

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