

Strategy 2. Accept telework and diverse work styles

With the use of online and digital technologies, a diversity of work styles has been introduced in a variety of industries. The rise of telework also contributes to the diversity of work styles. On the other hand, it will also be important to ensure that various disparities do not arise between occupations or industries that can accommodate teleworking versus those that cannot (e.g., essential workers).

Key points for achieving the SDGs

1. It will be important to accommodate diverse work styles through measures such as infrastructure improvements as more people are encouraged to go online, and the introduction of new arrangements or systems to improve the environment for working from home. In addition, in cases where office space is to be reduced by promoting telework, it may also be necessary to provide incentives for promoting telework. It will be important to create synergies tied with strategies for promoting and securing opportunities for women. This could include finding ways to ensure that workers have options to choose between occupations suited for (or not suited for) remote work, depending on the person's stage of life. It will also be important to start with what is feasible and create an environment where business dealings and selling activities can be done online, and to offer choices (e.g., relocating versus not relocating for work, hours of work, the option of remote work, and options other than having working hours fixed at eight hours a day).⁶ To promote options such as these, it will be important to develop new approaches to evaluate performance in ways that reflect changes in work styles. In terms of policy, one approach might be to offer financial support (e.g., financial measures such as tax incentives), mainly for small and medium-sized enterprises that may not have the finances to make the shift to working from home or remote work.
2. It will be important to create systems to alleviate poverty and leave no one behind, by promoting diverse work styles and by creating decent work for

⁶ Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (2020): Report of study group on the future of telework (in Japanese) <https://www.mhlw.go.jp/content/11911500/000711687.pdf>

all and creating flexibility in human resources in response to changes in employment patterns.

Key targets to help achieve the SDGs

- 5.1 (End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere)
- 5.4 (Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work)
- 5.5 (Ensure women's opportunities for leadership)
- 8.5 (Achieve decent work)
- 9.2 (Significantly raise industry's share of employment and gross domestic product, in line with national circumstances)
- 12.8 (Sustainable development and lifestyles in harmony with nature)
- 13.1 (Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to natural disasters)