



7th St. Gallen Diversity & Inclusion Week

Flexible Work Arrangements: An Opportunity or a Challenge for Inclusion?
11. – 15. September 2023

Our Speakers



Stephan Böhm is Associate Professor for Diversity Management and Leadership and Director of the Center for Disability and Integration at the University of St. Gallen (CDI-HSG). His research focuses on inclusion, leadership, human resources and diversity management. He advises numerous companies on topics of healthy leadership, digitalisation and the management of demographic change.



Magdalena Schertler, MA MSc, studied psychology and applied ethics in Graz. Since 2021, she has been a research associate and doctoral candidate at the Center for Disability and Integration at the University of St. Gallen (CDI-HSG). There, she conducts research on the topic of diversity and inclusion in today's working world.

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Agenda

1. Flexible Work Arrangements and Inclusion:
Two Megatrends Shape the Modern Working World
2. Remote Work: An Opportunity or a Challenge for
Inclusion?
3. How to Foster Inclusion: Tips for Flexible Teams
4. Questions & Answers





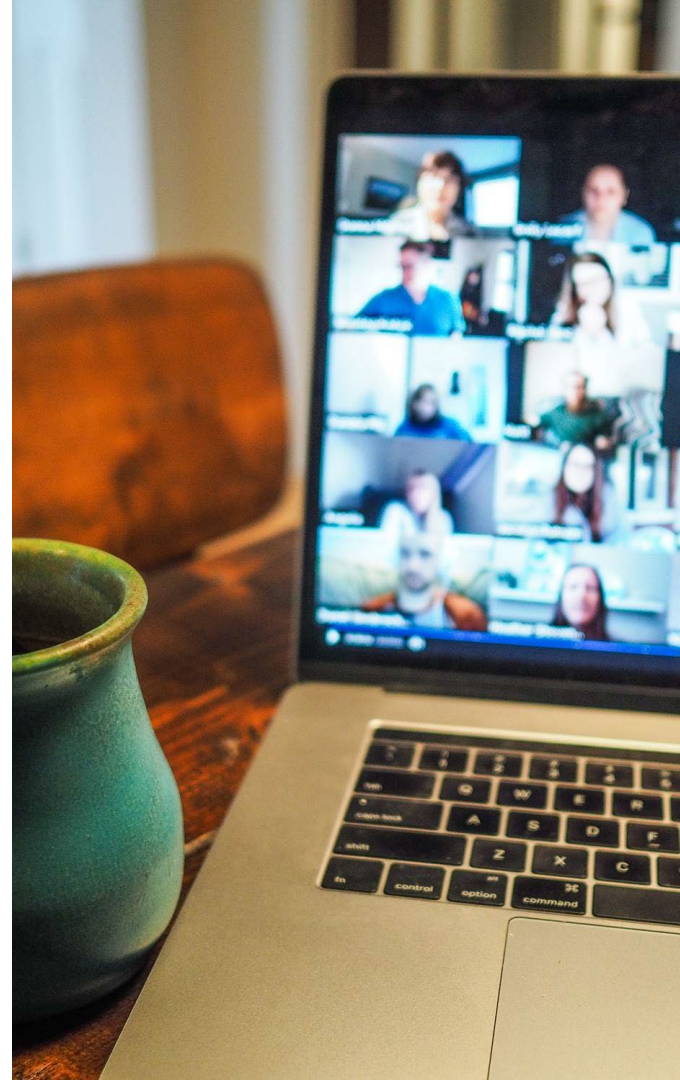
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Flexible Work Arrangements and Inclusion

Two Megatrends Shape the Modern Working World

From insight to impact.



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Remote work use

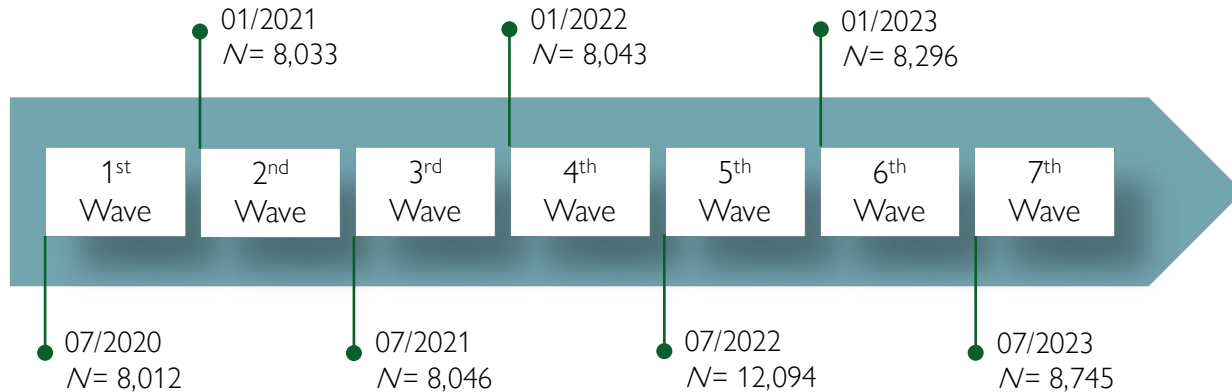
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Insights from the German working population I

Our study social health@work

Method

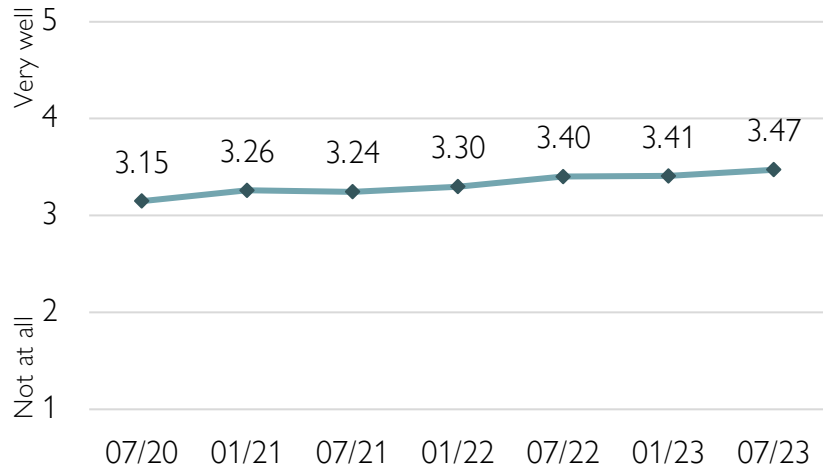
- Quantitative longitudinal study
- Representative for the German working population
- Eight waves in total (July 2020 – January 2024)
- Data for seven waves already available



Insights from the German working population II

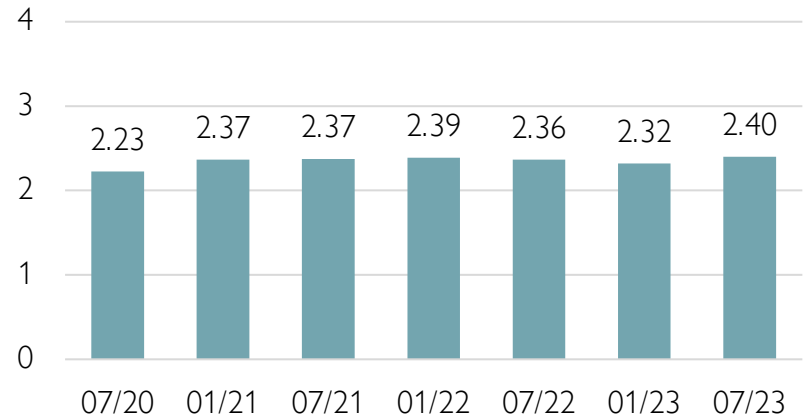
How much remote work do people want?

Suitability of job for remote working



- Employees state that their jobs are increasingly better suited for remote working.

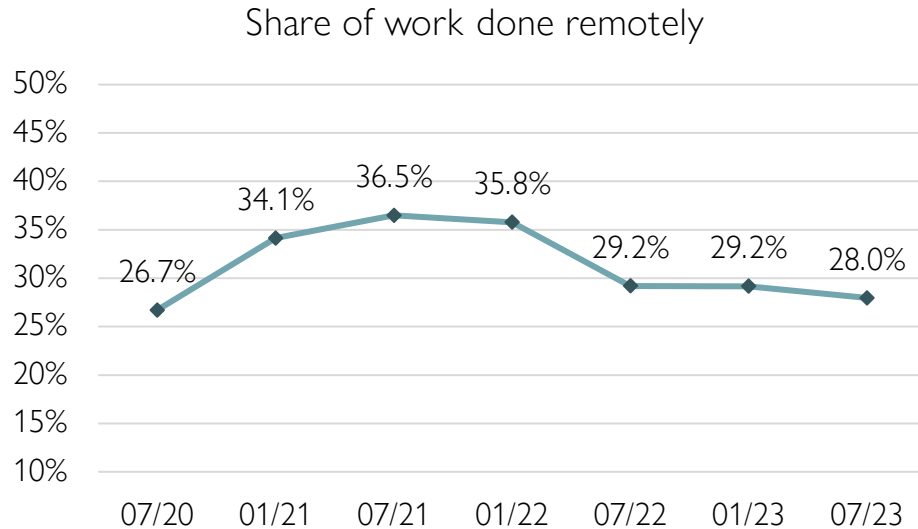
Desired amount of remote work (days/week)



- Accordingly, the desire for remote work remains. On average, employees would like two to two and a half remote working days per week.

Insights from the German working population III

How much remote work do people get?



- After an increase in remote work during the peak of the pandemic, **the amount of remote work has decreased in the last year.**
- This data reflects the current debate on return-to-office policies.

LEADERSHIP

Mark Zuckerberg's new return-to-office mandate is a clear problem, says Harvard expert: It'll cause a 'huge amount of distrust'

Published Fri, Aug 25 2023 10:27 AM EDT • Updated Fri, Aug 25 2023 10:29 AM EDT

Ashley Jackson @ASHLEYJACKSON

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Amazon CEO to Workers: Return to Office—Or It's 'Not Going To Work Out'

At an internal meeting, Andy Jassy told workers it was past the time to disagree about Amazon's RTO policy and time to commit

Published 08/29/23 10:42 AM ET • Updated 21hr ago
Jody Serrano

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Smucker's Employees Actually Want to Go Into the Office — Here's Why The Company's Return-to-Office Policy Works

Unlike other companies that have mandated strict in-person attendance, Smucker's strategy allows its 1,300 corporate workers to be on site primarily during 22 designated "core" weeks each year.

BY MADELINE GARFINKLE • AUG 28, 2023

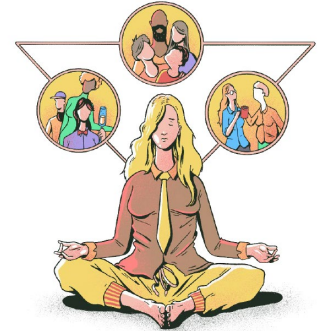
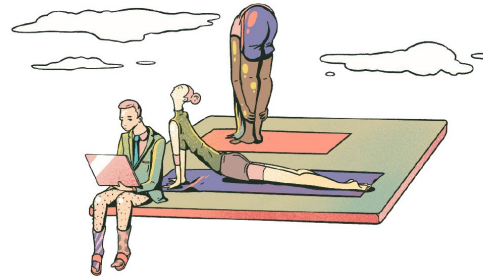
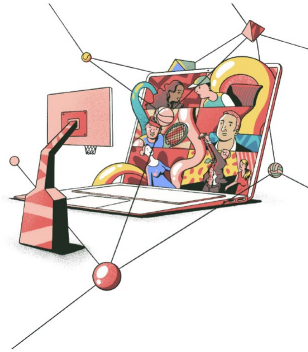
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Insights from the German working population IV

The impact of new work on social health

Investigating social health on different levels

- Navigate: What is the best way to organize your own work?
- Include and coordinate: What roles do inclusion and leadership play in the context of modern work settings?
- Orchestrate: How is new work managed at the organizational level?



«Diversity is being invited to the party,
inclusion is being asked to dance!»

Authenticity

When everybody can
dress and dance in one's
style!

Synergy

When the dance
looks great!



Belongingness

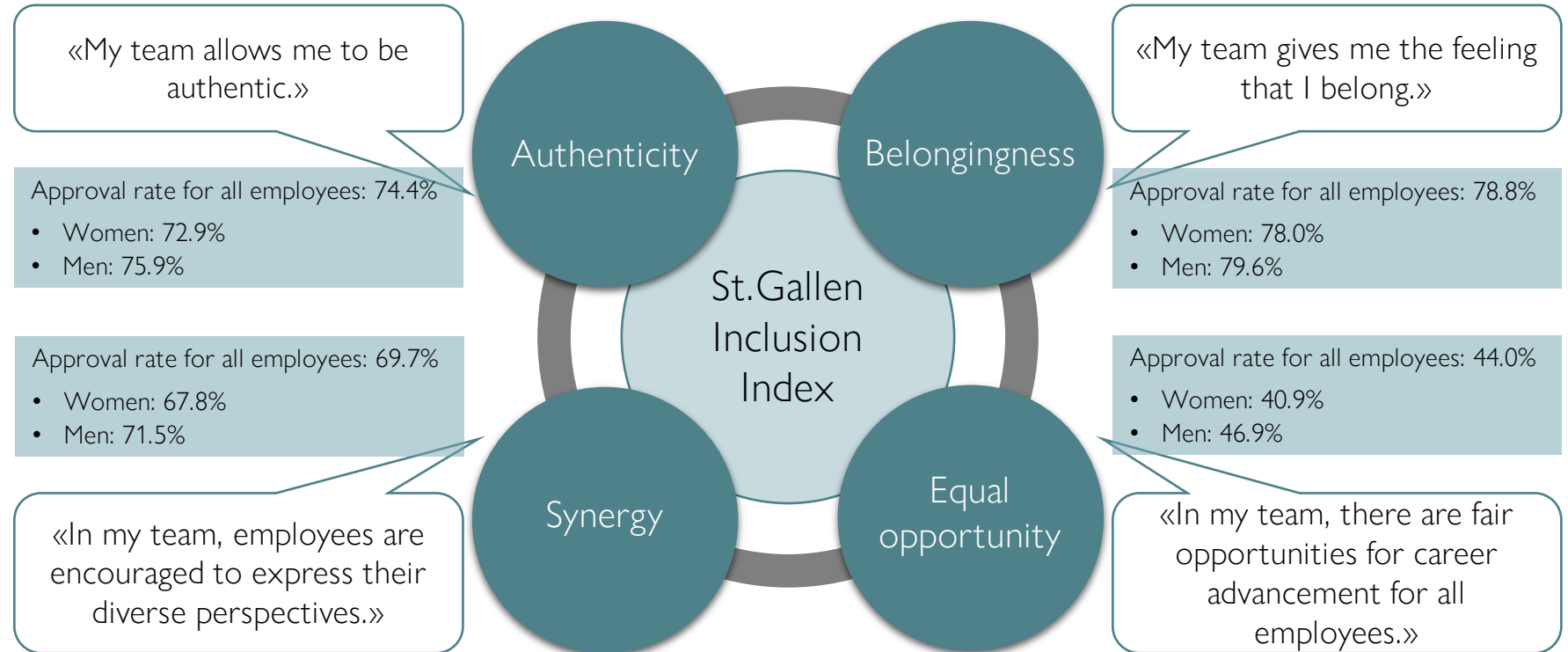
When you dance like
no one's watching!

Equal Opportunity

When the DJ plays
everybody's favorite songs!

Measuring inclusion

The St.Gallen Inclusion Index





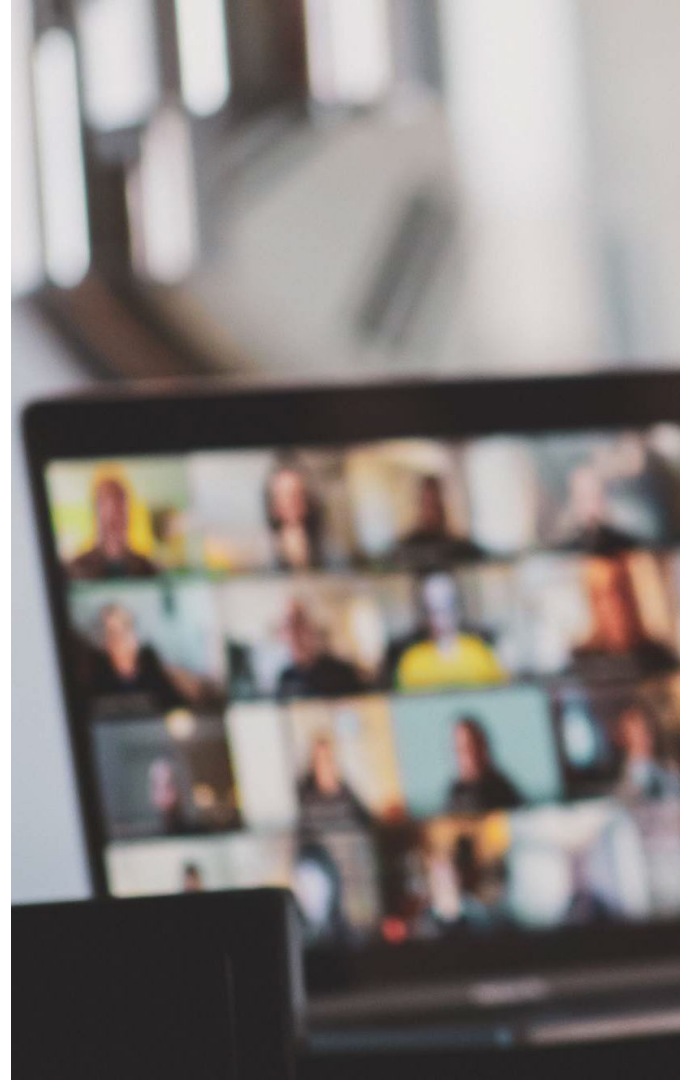
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Remote Work

An Opportunity or a Challenge for
Inclusion?

From insight to impact.



How two megatrends affect each other

Studying the interplay of remote work and workplace inclusion with a random intercept cross-lagged panel model

- Recently accepted paper based on waves 1 to 3 of the social health@work study
- Longitudinal data allows to investigate causal effects
- Two research questions:
 1. How do remote work and workplace inclusion affect each other?
 2. Do these effects depend on the gender of the employee?
- Focus on **belongingness** and **authenticity** – the two dimensions of inclusion on the individual level



The screenshot shows the top portion of a journal article page from the Academy of Management. The header includes the Academy of Management logo and navigation links for Journals, Subscriptions, Membership, Collections, For Authors/Contributors, and About Us. The article title is "How Two Megatrends Affect Each Other: Studying the Interplay of Remote Work and Workplace Inclusion with a Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Model" by Magdalena Schertler, Nicola V. Glumann, and Stephan A. Boehm. It is published online on June 27, 2023. The abstract begins by discussing the modern working world, the impact of remote work, and the need to study the relationship between remote work and workplace inclusion using a random intercept cross-lagged panel model.

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How Two Megatrends Affect Each Other: Studying the Interplay of Remote Work and Workplace Inclusion with a Random Intercept Cross-Lagged Panel Model

Magdalena Schertler , Nicola V. Glumann and Stephan A. Boehm

Published Online: 27 Jun 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.5465/amd.2022.0133>

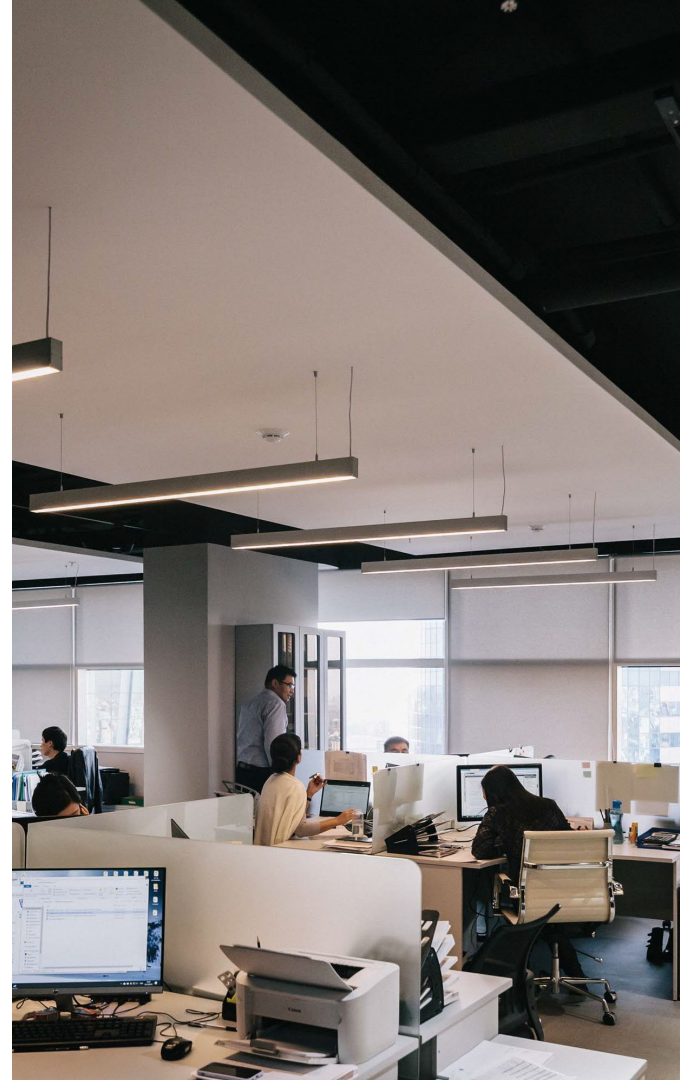
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Abstract

Two megatrends characterize the modern working world. First, remote work has become the “new normal” for many employees. Second, the increasing heterogeneity of the workforce has made a case for inclusion, i.e., belongingness and the opportunity for authenticity, that employees must perceive to reap the benefits of diversity. However, it is unclear whether the relationship between remote work and inclusion is positive or negative and if these two factors cause a unidirectional or reciprocal impact on each other. Furthermore, it is unresolved whether diversity dimensions, such as gender, have a moderating impact on the relationship. To address these questions, we collect a large-scale longitudinal dataset (N = 2,380) and use an advanced methodology (random intercept cross-lagged panel model) to separate the between-person from the within-person variances, thereby allowing for causal conclusions from the within-person effect. Our results show opposing effects at the between-person and within-person levels: although the employees who worked remotely more experienced more opportunity for authenticity and belongingness in general (between-person variance), an increase in remote work led to lower belongingness and authenticity within a single employee (within-person variance). A gender effect was observed for the opportunity for authenticity, with only negative within-person effects being shown for women.

Sample

- Inclusion criteria
 - Occupation allowed for remote work
 - Passed attention check
 - Participated at least two out of three times
- Final sample
 - $N = 2,380$
 - Men: 1,210 (50.84%), women: 1,170 (49.16%)
 - Age: $M = 42.74$, $SD = 10.95$, $Range = 19-77$ years



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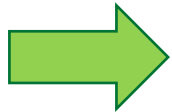
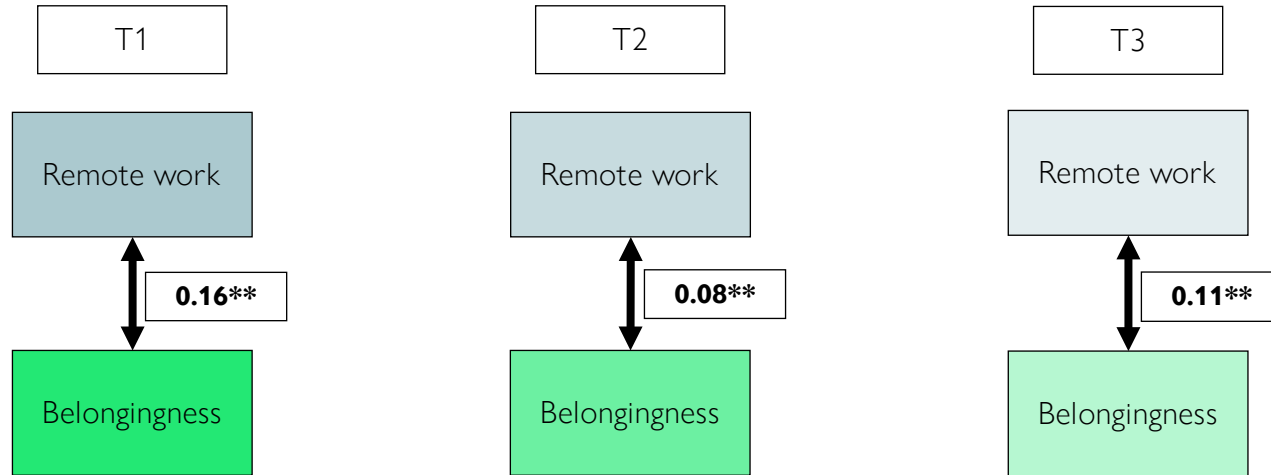


How do you think remote work affects the inclusion of employees?

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Results – cross-sectional

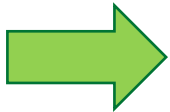
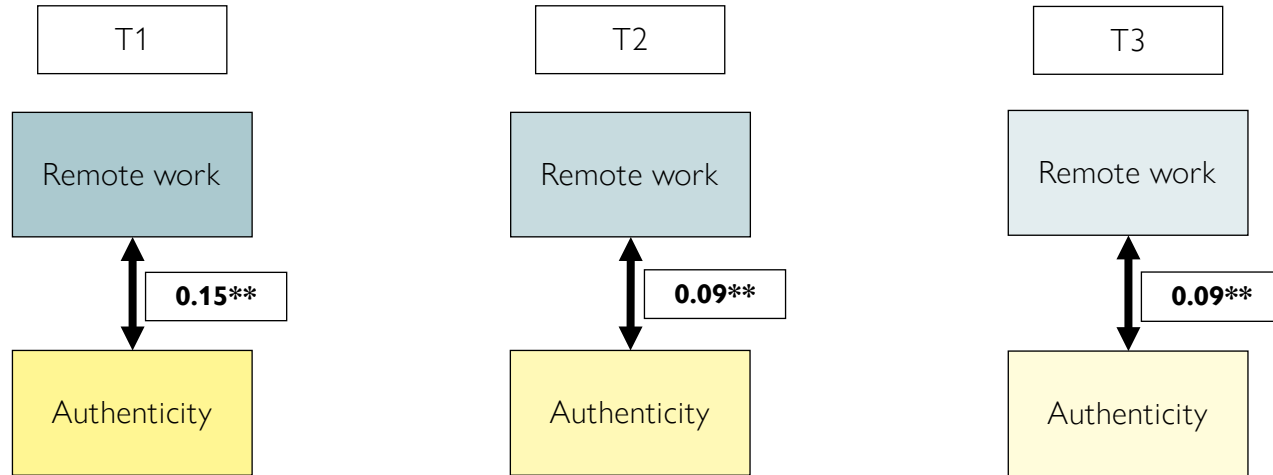
Belongingness (whole sample)



At all three time points, there is a positive correlation between remote work and belongingness:
→ **more remote work, more inclusion?**

Results – cross-sectional

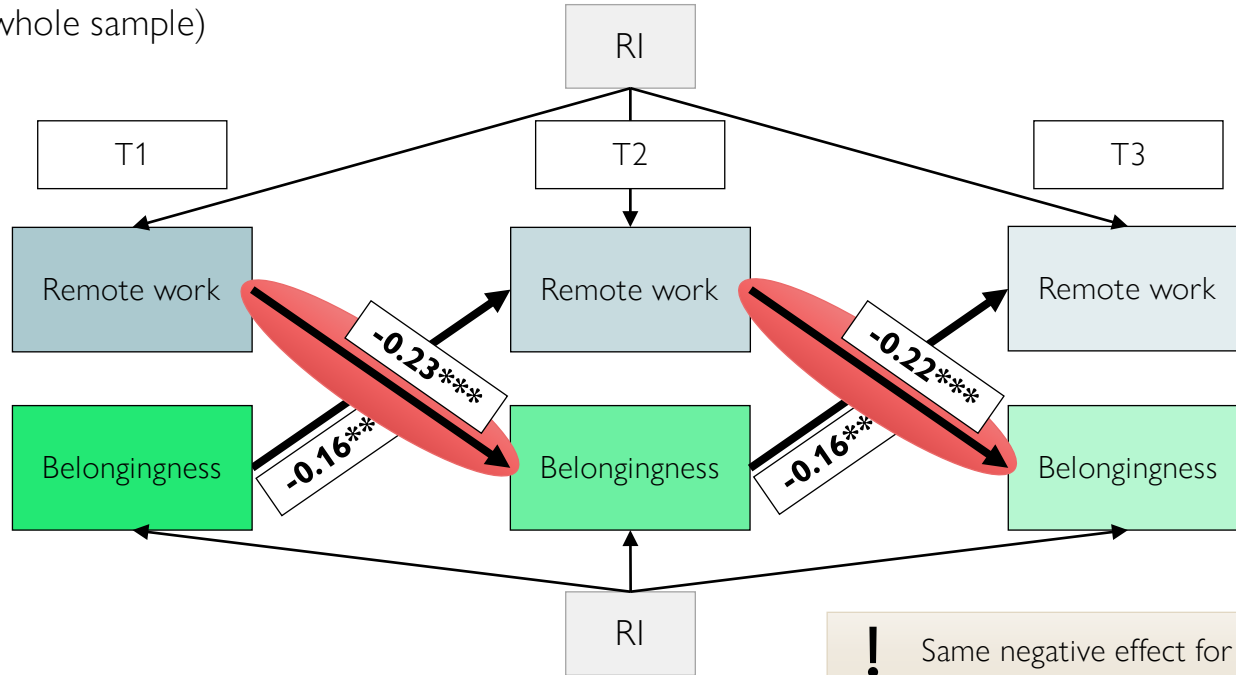
Authenticity (whole sample)



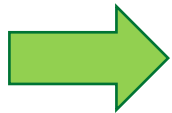
At all three time points, there is a positive correlation between remote work and authenticity:
→ **more remote work, more inclusion?**

Results – effect over time (RI-CLPM)

Belongingness (whole sample)



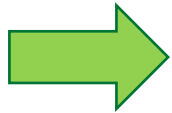
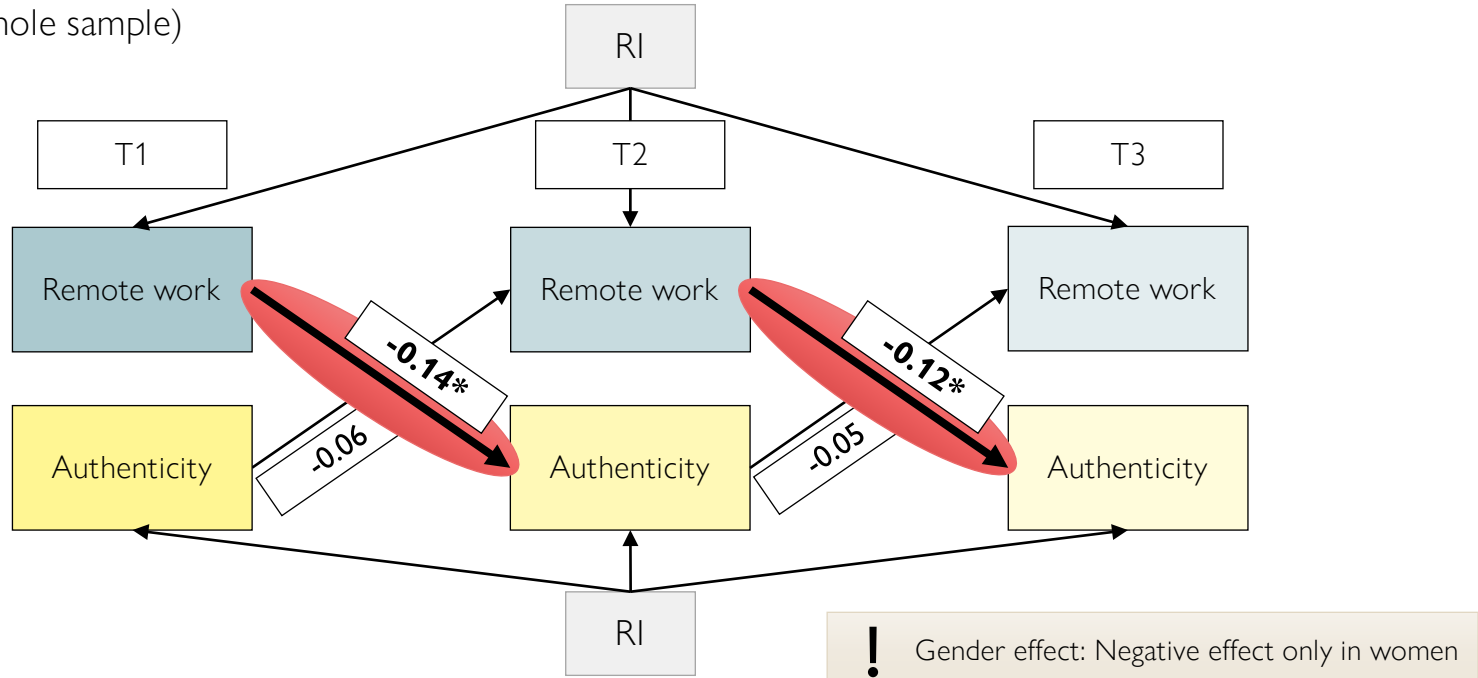
! Same negative effect for women and men



When inter-individual differences are considered, it appears that the **increasing use of remote work** leads to **decreased belongingness over time (causal effect)**.

Results – effect over time (RI-CLPM)

Authenticity (whole sample)



When inter-individual differences are considered, it appears that the **increasing use of remote work** leads to **decreased authenticity over time (causal effect)**.

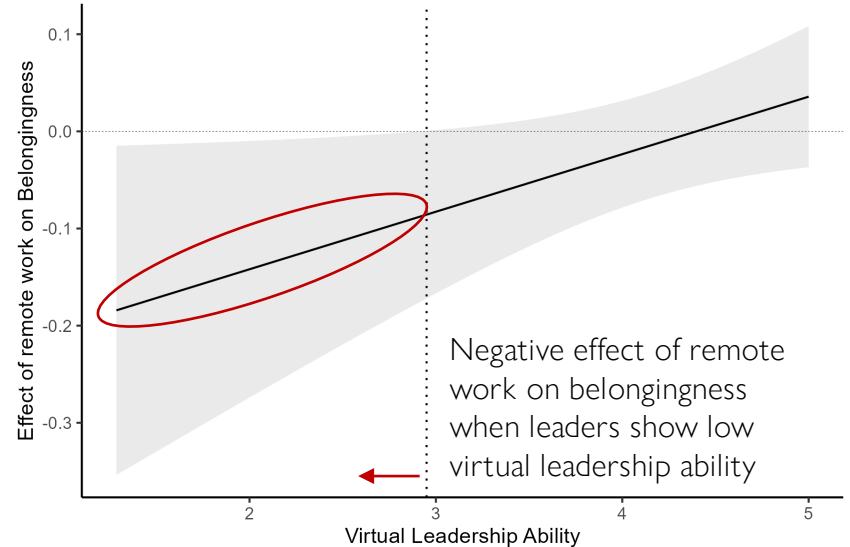
Does this mean we should all
go back to the office?

No – because leaders can do something I

New findings on the effect of virtual leadership

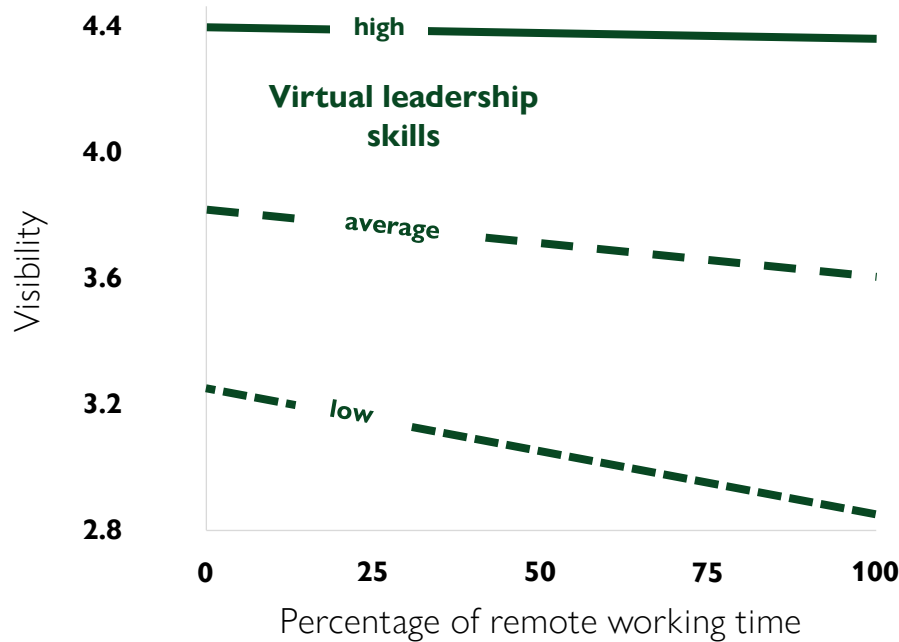
- Leadership is a critical enabler for successful inclusion.
- Virtual settings pose new challenges for leaders.
 - Communication as a key factor in virtual settings.
 - Leaders have to facilitate trust and relationship building within their team.
 - Specific skills are necessary (e.g., technologies, relationship-oriented abilities).
- Virtual leadership skills could buffer the negative effects of remote work on inclusion.

Our results support this expectation:



No – because leaders can do something II

Virtual leadership skills help to gain visibility



- Employees who work a lot remotely **feel less seen** by their leader.
 - Unless: the leader has high virtual leadership skills.
- Almost **regardless of where they work**, employees feel **very well perceived** by leaders with high virtual leadership skills.

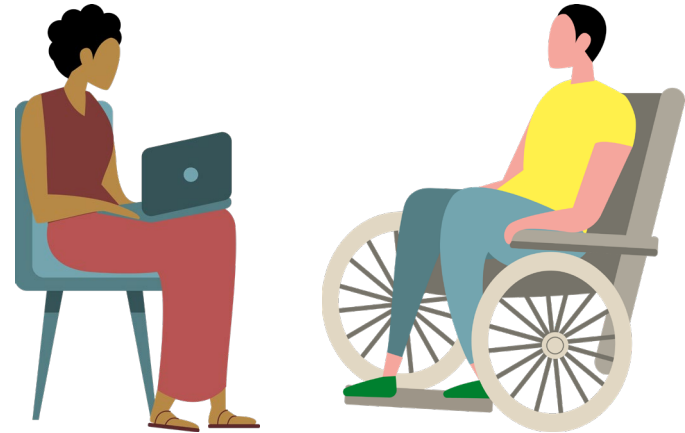
No – because some employees still profit from flexible work

For example, flexible work conditions can reduce barriers to including **people with disabilities**.

- Flexible work conditions can be effective workplace accommodations.
- It helps to manage health according to needs (e.g., fatigue, doctor appointments).
- It allows more people access to jobs who cannot work on location.

- **Still: The same challenges exist**

Leaders have to be aware and foster the inclusion of remote working employees with and without disabilities.



Conclusion

What does it mean?

- Sound research with strong data is necessary for evidence-based decisions in diversity management.
- Remote work poses challenges for employees to feel included.
- For some groups, these challenges can be more or less pronounced.

BUT

- Leaders can mitigate the negative effect of remote work on inclusion by applying virtual leadership skills.
- Remote work and other flexible work arrangements are still important for the inclusion of people with disabilities and other groups.
- More research on the topic is needed.



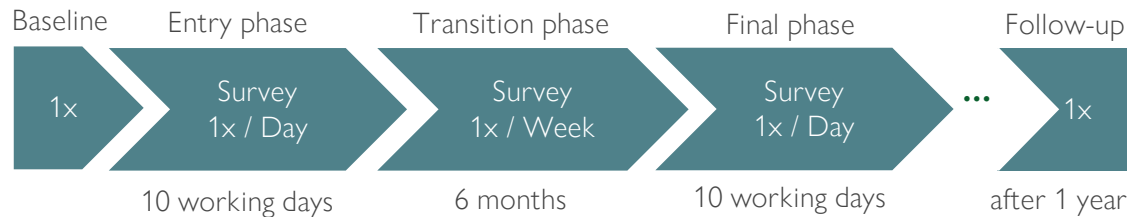
Inclusion Journey

Our upcoming research project

Research questions

- When and how do employees develop perceptions of inclusion during the onboarding process?
- What concrete experiences lead to employees' feelings of inclusion from the very start of their employment?
- How can we ensure employees develop feelings of inclusion in virtual and hybrid teams?

Research design: Diary study within selected companies





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How to Foster Inclusion

Tips for Flexible Teams

From insight to impact.



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**What do you miss when
you are not working in the
office?**

ⓘ Start presenting to display the poll results on this slide.

Three tips for fostering inclusion in flexible work environments



As an individual:
Be aware of marginalized groups

- Virtuality can be a double-edged sword for marginalized groups (e.g., women, people with disabilities).
- Be aware of this and speak up if you notice unfair behavior towards members of marginalized groups in your team (e.g., decreased attention or delayed access to information).



As a team:
Create opportunities for inclusion

- Create opportunities for social interactions that encourage belonging in the virtual environment (e.g., weekly check-ins together, positive kick-offs for meetings, etc.).
- Also rely on physical meetings, especially at the beginning and end of projects (hybrid model).



As a leader:
Provide fair access and feedback

- Ensure a conscious choice and good fit of work location, time, activity, and media choice (incl. tools like Padlet, Miro, etc.) to provide fair conditions for participation.
- Agree on clear goals and provide timely and specific feedback.
- Refrain from control methods and trust your employees.



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Questions & Answers

From insight to impact.



Thank you!

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Upcoming events CCDI

- **«Successful through Diversity & Inclusion»**
Next edition: May 28, 2024, Language: DE, Registration [here](#)
- **«Aiming Higher – Karriereentwicklung für Assistenzärztinnen»**
Next edition: March 2024, Language: DE, more infos [here](#)
- **Male Allyship Training,**
More infos [here](#), Language: EN (contact us if you are interested)
- **St. Galler Diversity Benchmarking 2024 – NEW digital as dashboard**
Registration and more infos [here](#)

All our offers can also be found at www.ccdi-unisg.ch and updates on upcoming events on our [LinkedIn page](#).

SAVE THE DATE: D&I Week 2024



The 8. St. Gallen Diversity & Inclusion Week will take place from **16 - 20 September 2024!**

You will find the slides and further information on our website www.inclusion-tagung.ch in a few weeks.

Note: The sponsors of the D&I Week are in no way responsible for the content presented by the University of St. Gallen.

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