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**The impacts of modern multilocality  
and unilocality of working and living  
on individuals' well-being:  
advantages and disadvantages for  
Norwegian public health.**

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### **Title**

The impacts of modern multilocality and unilocality of working and living on individuals' well-being: advantages and disadvantages for Norwegian public health.

### **Working topic**

The main topic of my master thesis is to explore how the academic staff at the Norwegian University of Life Science personally perceive the benefits and disadvantages of multilocality and unilocality of living and working habits on their health and well-being.

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## 1. Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has triggered a series of societal changes because of the massive lockdowns happening globally which have limited physical movements, interpersonal encounters, and opportunities for togetherness. There were large proportions of the knowledge working force in Western countries who had to adapt to working from home. During the Covid-19 pandemic, they were forced to work from home, and working and living were blended into one. Under the pandemic, a new norm was born (Pajević & Shearmur, 2021).

The lockdowns imposed by the government have brought about restrictions that have affected every unit of society, including families. Due to these restrictions, multilocal people (working and living in multiple places) were most affected. They had to turn their homes into home offices, and thus have become unilocal over time. This was also the case for children who were going to schools or kindergartens, but had to stay at home for schooling (Merla et al., 2021). In other words, the home was like a haven where family members had to merge their private, social, and professional lives.

In the Nordic countries, the restrictions introduced by the governments during the Covid-19 pandemic impacted different forms of multilocality and caused several unilocal habits. In this context, knowledge workers were also affected by these changes. Bürgin et al. (December 2021) suggested that it is necessary to explore how the home office has been experienced by knowledge workers during the Covid-19 pandemic. Generally, highly intensive knowledge workers (academics) are privileged to work multilocally because of flexible working practices (Bürgin et al., December 2021).

However, during the pandemic, they were forced to spend most of their time in one location (e.g., first or second home). This unilocality must be further explored considering the circumstances under the Covid-19 pandemic which led to feelings of isolation (Zoonen & Sivunen, 2021). Feelings of isolation implicate the psychological distress of employees (Zoonen & Sivunen, 2021). But further research is required to study the effects of the restrictions on different aspects of employees' lives and in different contexts.

## 1.1 Problem Statement

In Norway, there have been several lockdowns with varying degrees of intensity during the Covid-19 pandemic. People might have felt isolated and suffered since they could not visit the workplace. The trend was mainly about being unilocal (staying in one place) (Kalajdzic et al., 2020) and the health implications of multilocal and unilocal habits in Norway have not been explored yet. During the pandemic, the academic staff was asked to work from home (*hjemmekontor*).

Before Covid-19, the academic staff could already choose to be multilocal (between the office, public libraries, and coffee shops), while during the pandemic, they were asked to work remotely, since the main office was not safe and healthy. One might see their private and professional lives mixed. I argue that academic staff in Norway might have been 'forced' to work from home (or between two places such as first and second home), since the office was not available. They could not commute to the university campus as a result of the restrictions/recommendations from employers and municipalities. This situation pushed people to adopt unilocal habits.

This study focuses on the multilocal and unilocal experiences of academic staff at the Norwegian University of Life Science as the result of the pandemic and how these have affected their subjective well-being. Given this context, in this master thesis, I am interested in exploring i) how multilocality and unilocality are understood and experienced by academic staff in Norway and ii) how multilocal and/or unilocal habits have impacted their well-being. The findings of this study may be significant for Norwegian public health as it elucidates how multilocality and unilocality can be detrimental or beneficial for the well-being of the employees.

## 1.2 Objectives of the Study and Research Questions

The main objective of my master thesis is to explore how the academic staff at the Norwegian University of Life Science perceive the benefits and disadvantages of multilocality and unilocality and the impacts on health and well-being. The following research questions are going to be addressed:

**RQ1** How do academic staff perceive multilocality and unilocality and how has this changed as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic?

**RQ2** How do multilocal and unilocal habits affect the well-being of academic staff?

## 2 Literature Review

In this chapter, I present a review of some empirical studies which have been recently conducted on multilocality. I will introduce the concepts of multilocality and unilocality and identify interactions between them. There are two main themes that I identified within this literature review, which show the existing knowledge in my inquiry. One main theme is about the dynamics of multilocal living and its associated components such as places, spatial mobility, workplaces, and peripheries. The second theme refers to how multilocal and unilocal habits of working and living can affect individual well-being at the micro level, as well as the environment at the macro level. I will explore this interface between lifescape and well-being.

### 2.1 Multilocality and unilocality

Multilocality and unilocality are relevant and highly timely topic to be studied in Norway, especially after the recent developments that have created new environments in which workers may choose other places to live and work. The pandemic has caused significant societal changes including setting new working conditions, such as working from home (Henning Holgersen, 2021). Prior to Covid-19 not all jobs were suitable for working from home, and the literature shows that higher education is positively correlated with working from home (Henning Holgersen, 2021).

#### 2.1.1. Multilocality

Multilocality is an emerging phenomenon that has been receiving attention in academia, especially in recent years. Multilocality is about how we practice our daily activities by moving between several places such as workplace, university (e.g. full-time and part-time students and professors), home, (e.g. first and second; home in rural and cabin in the nature), train stations, airports, trains, cafés, library, coworking space to share with others, and parks (Marino & Lapintie, 2018). It involves spatial-

temporal strategies when one moves from one residence to another for daily practices (Nadler, 2016). In such circumstances, there are several factors to consider, including access to the internet and flexibility to work anywhere at any time (Llave & Messenger, 2018). It can be also about how creative knowledge workers develop knowledge for enhancing their capabilities to have a multilocal life (Nadler, 2014). It is also claimed that people feel connected to places through their perceptions and feelings which explains why they may navigate and choose certain places to work over others (Buttimer, 1976). For an individual, having the freedom to choose their workplace is an act of autonomy and self-determination which, if violated, can have an impact on employees' well-being, as their motivation, power, and desire to be free will be affected (Bhaskar, 1993).

### 2.1.2. Unilocality

Unilocality was first mentioned in the literature by (Lapintie, 2022), who placed multilocality and unilocality on a horizontal axis and said the two are in opposition. Unilocality (which has previously been called monolocality in the literature) is a phenomenon that can be seen from different perspectives. For example, where the individual lives, works, and resides being the same place for a prolonged time. It is also the emotional perception of the individuals who spend their lives in a specific place. In psychology literature, unilocality is a psychosocial condition where people do not have many possibilities of moving, are resourceless, or do not like to move between different places. Unilocality and multilocality actively interact and are connected through ICT technologies. When the Covid-19 pandemic occurred, professors, academics, and students had to find a way to live a unilocal life. People may have had to cancel travel and vacation plans due to this new unilocal life, which might mean increased sharing of living spaces. Demotivation and dissatisfaction with life may have become more common with unilocality (Lapintie, 2022).

## 2.2 Localities, lifescapes and public health

Individual lifescapes can be introduced as a new concept to understand how and to what extent individuals live multilocally or unilocally (Lapintie, 2022). Obtaining a more accurate picture of the psychological background of an individual's lifescape can give



us a piece of richer collected information about the mechanism that underlies and generates the complex foundations of individual health. Interviewing different individuals and asking them to describe their perceptions, feelings, and emotions, can give us a rich spectrum of emotions that could or will arise, depending on whether a person is living and working a unilocality or multilocality lifestyle.

Health, in a holistic view, involves several aspects namely mental, physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and sexual that make the health of an individual, while these dimensions are under the societal, environmental and global impressions (Naidoo & Wills, 2016).

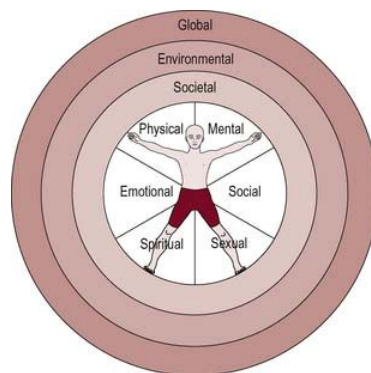


Figure 1. Dimensions of Health retrieved from [www.nursekey.com/concepts-of-health/](http://www.nursekey.com/concepts-of-health/)

From the public health perspective, multilocality can have positive and negative implications for the well-being of multilocal workers. As a positive experience, multilocality can help workers be creative, for example when they sit in a café, library, or other lively and picturesque places in the city for work. This can be beneficial for their well-being as they experience an enjoyable and different time and space when performing the same working activities that they would do in their regular working spaces. But all of this is conditional on certain factors such as free and safe wireless internet connection, a socket to plug in their devices, and other conditions that make their work tasks possible.

As a negative aspect, workers may get isolated as they could minimize their in-person interactions and social aspects of their work. So, if they choose to work at other places other than the office, they may feel alone, and therefore it may affect their well-being. Our well-being can get adversely affected by solitude which is supported by

Belongingness Hypothesis which suggests that humans are inherently driven to have interpersonal relationships with others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). There are empirical studies that suggest the link between isolation and deteriorated well-being especially through creating job stressors (Guthier et al., 2020; Zoonen & Sivunen, 2021).

In addition, it is also important to consider how multilocal individuals adapt to new situations and places that are characterized by local cultures, new lifestyles, new values, and mindsets that might be unknown to them and might cause some isolation. (Garde, 2021).

It is also crucial to operationalize what we mean by well-being in this thesis. Well-being is not only about the absence of illness, but rather it is more concerned with how well a person feels and functions (Naidoo & Wills, 2016). To achieve well-being, a person is involved in reciprocally interacting states of physical, mental, and social well-being, in a way that one component affects others and vice versa (Wilcock & Hocking, 2015). When it comes to the well-being of multilocal workers, the working environment, such as the physical, emotional, and social characteristics of the libraries, train stations, and cafes, can also support their basic psychological needs including their autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2014). To obtain well-being, several steps need to be followed including connecting, being active, taking notice, giving, keeping learning, and caring (Government Office for Science, 2008).

The implications of multilocality and unilocality on subjective well-being have not been explored. The health implications for academic staff could be varied, especially when it comes to the resilience of individuals. Resilient individuals are in a better position to cope with new conditions that have caused imbalances in their well-being (Duggan & Moyer, 2009). It becomes relevant to look at the way the academic staff has adapted to the new realities including unilocality in Norway. Such exploration would provide us with revealing insights into how multilocality and unilocality can affect well-being, considering the challenges in balancing the private and professional life of academic staff in Norway, as well as in another context.

## 2.3 Who are the multilocal people?

Multilocal people are employees who work multilocal and they are considered modern nomads or mobile people. They might be under pressure to navigate between different locations as objects of their daily life (Weichhart, 1990). According to Nadler, these nomads have developed multilocal creative knowledge that gives them self-reliance to manage multilocal habits of living and working in a post-modern era. The process of adding a new place to a mobile person's lifeworld is very subjective and can be based on the needs of each multilocal person (Nadler, 2016). Overall, there is a need for developing further studies on how modern nomads and multilocal people manage multilocal habits (e.g. through a new standardization of places that people use for plugging and playing (Nadler, 2016).

The work environment of the multilocal workers has not been clearly defined, even though digital tools and ICT devices are often considered as part of multilocal working characteristics (Sjöblom et al., 2019). So, it is important to provide a better understanding of the work environments in which employees are situated to conduct their work-related tasks.

## 2.4 Empirical Studies on Multilocality

Multilocality can be relevant to different types of migrations, especially for knowledge workers. Spatial mobility also impacts several working tasks. For example, there was a study in 2004 that examined how transnational dual-career households have experienced spatial mobility in their life in Canada, the US, and the UK (Hardill, 2004). This phenomenon may impact the purchase of one or more residences, the life of kids who spend most of their time with only one parent, and several unbalances between the professional and private life of parents.

There is no evidence of studies on multilocality (from the working perspective) in Norway, but there are some statistical data that can be pertinent to multilocality and can provide an interesting overview of the potential multi-local workers in Norway. A recent statistical analysis reveals that higher education is correlated with working from home (Henning Holgersen, 2021).

Occupational group	Percent remote friendly			No. of Jobs
	Estimate	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Managers	66.8	40.7	83.8	222,678
Professionals	49.1	40.2	56.4	652,356
Technicians and associate professionals	40.3	24.4	53.6	374,858
Clerical support workers	62.3	57.4	64.9	169,230
Service and sales workers	34.2	7.7	59.9	573,415
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fishery workers	17.3	16.7	18.2	21,631
Craft and related trades workers	16.5	2.0	27.9	219,843
Plant and machine operators and assemblers	6.9	6.6	7.2	163,197
Elementary occupations	1.7	1.7	1.7	134,400
All occupations	38.5	24.0	50.9	2,531,608

Figure 2. Percentage of occupations that are remote-friendly across the occupational group (Henning Holgersen, 2021).

They also found that 42% of the jobs in Oslo could be done from home during the Covid-19 Pandemic (Henning Holgersen, 2021). This study provides some insights about an increased number of people that work remotely and may adopt some multilocal habits, but it does not go deeper into how such habits are being practiced.

Furthermore, a comprehensive study conducted in the Canadian context tried to explore where and how knowledge workers perform their work focusing on blurred boundaries between work and life that can occur (Pajević & Shearmur, 2021). The study revealed that these blurred boundaries contribute to blurring the definitions of workspaces, including virtual work. These changes are in connection to new ways of working which have been recently observed in Europe (Pajević & Shearmur, 2021).

Another empirical study was conducted in 2017 to investigate the prevalent multilocal working habits in Europe, especially with a focus on knowledge-intensive workers (Ojala & Pyöriä, 2017). The study revealed that Northern European countries had the highest percentage of mobile and flexible working practices compared to the rest of Europe. This is mainly because knowledge-intensive jobs were much higher in terms of number in the Nordic regions. An interesting finding of this study shows that flexibility and autonomy in the workplace do not necessarily lead to more multilocal work, as was the case in the Nordic countries, where employees were working largely on the employer's premises. It is concluded that ICT does not automatically allow intensive knowledge workers to work from home, even though high-intensive jobs have the necessary features that can be performed in a multilocal way (Ojala & Pyöriä, 2017).

An exploratory study was conducted in Switzerland about the working practices of multilocal knowledge workers who mainly work at their employer's premises (Bürgin et al., December 2021). The results showed that cyclical working between the center and periphery areas can contribute to better work efficiency and more work-life balance. Physical and social distance has been introduced as a downside of this practice because of more limited in-person interaction and a reduced chance of influencing work projects. The results also revealed that those multilocal workers observed in the periphery used fewer digital tools, such as their laptops and phone, while they spent more time on analog tasks (Bürgin et al., December 2021).

If workers use at least one location other than the main premise of the companies, they are considered mobile workers. Mobile multilocal work can be subsumed under telework (Vartiainen, 2021). The use of ICT tools is a common practice of mobile workers to work and communicate with their colleagues which is also termed a virtual team in the literature (Vartiainen, 2021). The mobile workers, according to Vartiainen (2021), are constantly in search of a new place which can imply that they are necessarily part of any community, including when they work at home or when they are at the main office (Vartiainen, 2021). The main obstacles identified in the context of mobile multilocal work include ICT limitations such as a bad internet connection (Vartiainen, 2021).

According to Stadtler (2021), there has been an increase in work mobility as the labor markets are becoming more deregulated and more flexible. There is an empirical focus on the work mobility of knowledge workers and the way employers can affect their decisions by increasing flexibility and mobility requirements, Stadtler argued that, in general, companies are not much concerned with the multilocality living conditions of their workers. However, Stadtler (2021), showed that companies should provide proper support to the employees in developing an attachment to the company. This will make companies themselves more attractive to knowledge workers (Stadtler, 2021).

## 2.5 Studies on Health Implications of Multilocality

It is often argued that it is a positive thing to be able to work anytime anywhere as is the case with multilocal working and living, and this has been even further facilitated

especially by the emergent new technologies (Towers et al., 2006). However, the literature shows that there are significant limitations associated with working in a multilocal way (Axtell & Hislop, 2008; Perry et al., 2001).

Previously, it has been shown that multilocal workers may use a variety of places to conduct their daily tasks that may also include public places. This implies several challenges including compromised privacy and possibly disturbing settings (Forlano, 2008; Lynos et al., 2008).

One of the main issues that have direct implications for working at third places (any place other than the main workplace and home) is related to information technology. Wi-fi is free from a fixed place of work (Büscher, 2014). So having access to safe and cheap or free IT facilities at home or other places is important. Büscher (2014) also considered socio-economic and political contexts that were effective in her studies on nomadic work. There have been other studies gathering empirical evidence to show that IT-related issues matter in the workplace. For example, a study was conducted recently to examine the impact of the use of IT on traditional work stressors such as relationships, work-life balance, and overload (Wall et al., 2021). Another impact on the well-being, especially the psychological well-being of employees who must work remotely is related to having good and stable access to the internet and other technological systems (Galanxhi & Nah, 2021).

Today, technology-related facilities are considered a key component affecting employees, especially those who choose to work in a multilocal way, even though other dimensions have also been explored including labor markets, work-life balance, and other aspects of a job, other than just incomes (Gallie et al., 2012).

Before Covid-19, studies mainly focused on how we could work in places other than the main regular workplace (Liegl, 2014; Martins, 2015; Urry, 2000). In a study conducted in 2020, it was found that only 8% of people in London were working from home during the Pre-Covid-19 period, while it reached almost 60% just a month into the lockdown (Felstead & Reuschke, 2020).

While the studies have demonstrated that people started working from home more often, the quality of working life at home has also been under scrutiny, especially how it could implicate the well-being and efficiency of workers. There have been studies establishing some links between suitable conditions at home and well-being and higher

efficacy of performance (Bloom et al., 2015; Felstead & Henseke, 2017; Menezes & Kelliher, 2011).

The issue of well-being is a central concept that still needs further exploration concerning multilocal lifestyles. There have been studies that looked at various factors that might contribute to the constitution and perception of well-being by employees. For example, it was found that four dimensions are especially significant in constructing the well-being of employees with a focus on employees working in IT, IT and Enabled Services, and Financial and Banking sectors. These dimensions included purpose in life, work-life balance, job well-being, and physical well-being (Khatri & Gupta, 2019).

However, multilocal work remains highly under-researched on how it could affect people's well-being especially if it is imposed upon them rather than something they choose to do. There have been studies showing that job quality could impact multilocal workers, especially if the workplace contained features that could improve the prospects of job quality (Wheatley, 2021).

By the start of the pandemic, a new dimension of inquiry was opened into the spatialities of work in urban areas (Reuschke & Carol Ekinsmyth, 2021). This study provided adequate evidence through an interdisciplinary approach in urban studies that aimed to demonstrate the impact that spatiotemporal changes could have on people living in urban areas (Reuschke & Carol Ekinsmyth, 2021).

Under the Covid-19 pandemic, a survey in a Finnish context was used to explore how ICT and working remotely could have influenced the way workers may perceive isolation. The results showed, on one hand, that there is a positive association between the presence of ICT tools and reduced perceived isolation. On the other hand, some workers felt increasingly isolated when they were working remotely. The study reveals the way psychological distress contributes to the perceptions of isolation by the worker (Zoonen & Sivunen, 2021).

Another interesting study from the Finnish context conducted a training program to boost the well-being and productivity of the workers through improving awareness skills and behavioural strategies, concerning knowledge work and digital tools among others. The findings indicate that the training was beneficial for both individuals and organizations because more productivity and well-being were achieved, once the

workers were able to effectively use the modern spaces and tools in their daily work tasks (Sjöblom et al., 2019).

The third study from Finland also explored productivity and well-being, especially with a focus on multilocal workers. The study offered a measuring tool for the self-regulatory skills of multilocal workers. This tool was at the individual level, focusing on everyday strategies including behavioural self-regulation, cognitive-emotional self-regulation, and self-regulation of recovery (Sjöblom et al., 2020).

When the issue of resilience is brought up and dealt with being multilocality, it is significant to consider how the childhood experience has affected a person. The bedroom is tremendously significant for the identity of young people. This seems to support their autonomy, belonging, and relationships, and it is a process to build up identity by living in a stable, single-reference dwelling. Psychologists, sociologists, and lawyers consider the bedroom as a necessary condition for children's development, while a lack of such "stability" will expose children to the risk of an 'identity breakdown' (Bovill, Livingstone, 2001; Zaffran, 2014 and Ramos, 2018, as cited in Merla et al., 2021). The arrangements under unilocality also affected those children who had to move out of their bedrooms, because the parents decided to transform children's bedrooms into home offices. In such circumstances, the children might perceive strain which may affect their stability in their homes. It can be assumed that the forced unilocality has changed the family configurations in a negative way (Merla et al., 2021).

In this last part, I want to present a recent study conducted in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and Australia which has focused on the work situation of the academic staff and the way their work-related practices were affected as the result of the Covid-19 Pandemic (Sjølie et al., 2020).

I want to specifically emphasize two key findings from this study. One of the main outcomes showed that even though working from home did provide flexibility to the academic staff, it also limited their freedom. There was a big effort at planning tasks and communicating when all working practices were transformed into a digital format. The second key finding of the study was that the isolation of working from home instead of the physical office discouraged them to contact their colleagues; while they were



conducting their work-related tasks, especially those academics who were working asynchronously (Sjølie et al., 2020).

## 2.6 Universities under the pandemic and institutionalization of home

During the Covid-19 crisis, being in one place (mainly at home) was recommended by the municipalities to limit the spread of the disease among the population. This meant that all organizations had to set up working practices and work structures in new ways to enable life to go as normally as possible. Only viable organizations could send their employees to work from other locations outside the head office to maintain work processes and pay salaries during the pandemic. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, foreign students could not fly the long journey to Norway. The universities have lost part of its funding, and to get funding from other resources, the number of students from inland had to be increased. On the other hand, many Norwegian students could not exchange studies abroad. On the other hand, the number of employees in Norway who needed requalification increased due to the growing need in society for new technologies and innovative knowledge. These processes put the NMBU university under pressure to increase the number of students from Norway and open digital teaching with many more than this capacity. The university lecturers got more students in the courses when they were digitized, and this put greater pressure on the teaching. Thus, professors and students had to change the safe and traditional teaching, with smaller groups and physically present, to massive classes of students that were accessible only in virtual space, and they were present elsewhere outside the university to carry out the teaching.

It is conceivable that NMBU University's management took it for granted that a detachment from work would provide an equivalent attachment to home conditions, during the Covid-19 period. Thus, professors could continue to carry out their meaningful work during the pandemic at home. Another thing is that university academics, unlike other professions, had an attachment to a life-work balanced life with mixed work from home and work from the university already in the time before the pandemic. The other thing that may have been taken for granted is to imagine that the professors had a sustainable set of social resources, family relationships, material

resources well equipped homes, and properties, which would keep it painless to cope with their work-life balance in periods of crisis.

According to modern change management theory in Norway (Hennestad & Revang, 2017) to adapt to the changing environment, organizations need to change. To succeed with the change processes in the organization, they should be used strategies in advance to prepare employees for the organizational changes. If employees have not been involved in change processes in the organization, there is a risk that they reply with feeling resistance and despair over their work situation, as they will feel that their autonomy is being threatened and that they will not be able to decide on their work practices for long. Here it is thought that the induced emotion may constitute an important component of the power of this element. To confront a system of new organization's decisions, and new rules, supported by the enforcement machinery, is to experience one extremely powerful emotion like fear, shame, and anger or at the other relief, innocence, and justification (Scott, 2014).

This can lead to some established professional academics may feel undervalued by their organization and strongly detached from the workplace, and they will feel empowered to look around to find other jobs. While other academics will comply with the new work conditions, they will continue to work with a sense of powerlessness. In both cases, it is expected that the self-esteem and well-being of academicians will suffer in one way or another.

When Covid-19 hit and the institutions were closed, the home was also turned into the institution for everything. The home was converted into work, school, medical, and social institutions. Due to Covid-19, children lost their private rights to their homes, and parents occupied the children's bedroom and turn it into home offices. Isolation from friends, colleagues, and family has impacted the most vulnerable persons in every part of society, be it the elderly.

The Working Environment Act of Norway helped with the institutionalizing of home, by equating work from home with work from a traditional workplace. The living rooms and bedrooms of people have acquired institutionalizing values turning into halls for discourses on zoom with colleagues and partners.

The home becomes a newly created institution consisting of regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive as well as symbolic elements which, together with related activities and material and human resources, are expected to give stability and meaning to our social life. However, all homes are different and have distinctive characteristics and they can be relatively stable and relatively resistant to change.

Following the process of sending the employees from the institutions to work in the homes, the servants can react to the decisions made by the organization in different and emotional ways. Servants can remain passive and accept the new conditions without a murmur. When the organization and the home together acquire the characteristic of an institution, here too it is assumed that those with whom the home is shared also become involuntary servants of the same organization. Some members of the immediate family circle can remain passive, including children. It is also assumed that others can react to the circumstances.

### 3 Methods

This study aims to delve into the perceptions of academic staff at NMBU, concerning how multilocality and unilocality have been for them during and after the pandemic. To address the two research questions: RQ1 How do we understand multilocality and unilocality today from the academic staff perspective? and RQ2 How do multilocal and unilocal habits affect the well-being of academic staff? I have conducted in-depth interviews with selected academic staff at NMBU. So that I can elicit necessary qualitative information about how they perceive the impacts of multilocal and unilocal conditions in their work life. I believe that conducting in-depth interviews would be appropriate for my study since the nature of my study is mainly qualitative and I find such data valuable as it can give us adequate insights into how they find multilocality and unilocality beneficial or detrimental to their well-being as well as how their resilience could change the effects of multilocal and unilocal conditions on their perceived wellness.

As far as the sampling of my study is concerned, I chose my study group based on purposive sampling so that I can make sure that my sample includes academic staff

with different backgrounds including age, nationality, faculty, and gender. I have conducted in-depth interviews with ten informants at NMBU.

I have contacted interviewees from different faculties at NMBU via email describing the topic of my project. I did not reveal all the details of my project so that it would not affect their responses, even though they had a very good understanding of the main research objectives of my topic, since I sent them the consent form based on the guidelines retrieved from and approved by the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). From the contacted faculty members, I received ten signed consent forms which allowed me to interview them.

I used in-depth interviews to give the informants the necessary flexibility to express their perceptions concerning my topic. The main issues that were discussed during my interviews had to do with the main research questions of this study including how they perceive multilocality today (e.g., in which ways they consider themselves being multilocal, from which place they work and how often from different places) and how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected their multilocal habits and impacted their well-being, related benefits and disadvantages. The respondents were also asked how they have adapted to new ways of working and living during and after the pandemic, and whether being multilocal contributed to some extent to be more resilient (see the Appendix). To this end, during the interviews, several respondents depicted several changes from multilocal to unilocal habits, since they had to stay at one place (e.g., first or second home) due to the Covid-19 restrictions. The interviews lasted between forty-five minutes to one hour and fifteen minutes. Some of the interviews took place digitally and some of them were in person according to the preference of the interviewee.

After conducting interviews, I transcribed the tape-recorded interviews. Data about personal perceptions, feelings, experiences, human behavior, multilocal and unilocal possessions, and multilocal and unilocal habits were also collected and transcribed. Furthermore, in the results, I anonymized the ten respondents by following the NSD rules.

### 3.1 Data analysis

This study of multilocality and unilocality covers academics from different faculties and majors (including the Norwegian School of Business, Faculty of Landscape and Society, and the departments of Urban and Regional Planning, Landscape Architecture and Public Health, among others), as well as a diversity of marital status, age, economic quality, number of children in the family, various family units, and genetic ancestry and ethnicity. The age of the participants covers the entire spectrum between 40 and 70 years. The analysis of the background of each academic and their habits was the basis for further analyses. The development of their stories helped to answer to the two Research Questions (i) RQ1 How do we understand multilocality and unilocality today from the academic staff perspective? ii) RQ2 How do multilocal and unilocal perceived habits affect the well-being of academic staff?

The in-depth interviews helped to explore the profiles of these academics and named them, based on the background, working and living habits, the characteristics of the home place (see Table 1).

Table 1. Description of respondents

<b>Interviewee</b>	<b>Short description (of living situation, lifescape)</b>	<b>Age group</b>
The Local Tourist, an introvert	Young immigrant family of a female academic, four people (from Far East Asia), two spouses, two sons under ten, live in rented apartment in small block of flats in rural	40-45
The Urban Mover, an extrovert	Young immigrant family of a female academic, four people (from Western Europe), two spouses, two sons under ten, live in rented apartment in high-rise block of flats in Oslo	45-50
The Islander, an extrovert	Female immigrant, live alone in rented apartment in small block of flats in rural town	45-50
The Pragmatist, an introvert	Ethnic Norwegian female, live alone in large house property with a garden in a city in the municipality	50-55

The Farmers' Daughter, an extrovert	Ethnic Norwegian female, live alone in town house property with a garden in a municipality	55-60
The Landowner, an ambivert	Ethnic Norwegian family, of a female academic live in multiple large mansions with garden in rural, two spouses, (three adult sons have moved out), one son live in area near the main house of the parents, the other two sons live in Oslo, but the two generations share the family cabin and the family boathouse in the water line in nature	55-60
The House Hopper, an ambivert	Ethnic Norwegian male, divorced (adult children has moved out) live alone, in multiple large house properties with a garden in municipality in two countries but share life with a girlfriend	55-60
The Scientist, an extrovert	Ethnic Norwegian family, of a male academic live in multiple large mansions with garden in rural, two spouses, (three adult sons have moved out), the youngest daughter is serving military and lives in far district area, the other two sons live in Oslo, one of them is married with 8 mound old child (the academic`s granddaughter), but the two generations share the family cabin in nature	55-60
The Hunter, An ambivert	Ethnic Norwegian family, of a male academic live in multiple large mansions with garden in rural, they are three people in family: two spouses, one son who is twenty year and go to school	65-70
The Globe Trotter, an ambivert	Ethnic Norwegian male, divorced (adult children has moved out) live alone, in multiple large house properties with a garden in Oslo which borders the woodland but share life with a girlfriend and her cabin in nature	70-75

I also think that these representatives of multilocal academics can open the way for me to clarify the concept of unilocality and multilocality because they have different experience in examining the qualities and characteristics of places to work and live.

After all, the academic profiled as 'Local Tourist' is the youngest and have shortest life path, while the academic named as 'The Globe Trotter' is the oldest and has the longest life path among the respondents. In this study, I would like to share the story of all academics' lifescapes.

As this is a qualitative study, the results cannot be overgeneralized. But different perceptions, sensations, experiences, reactions, and feelings of a personal nature have emerged from academics. This might help to find better solutions to increase the quality of work and related health benefits of academics when discussing with colleagues and their employer about the working environment and its evolving (virtual and physical).

The interviewees have been individually profiled, as mentioned above. The most important elements discussed during the interviews are reported in the results. The interviews have been analysed using narrative analysis; The profiles have been structured according to academics' arguments and perceptions about i) the spatial dimension, with a major focus on the multiple (or single) places where academics used to live and work before the pandemic, and the changes during the pandemic; ii) the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on their multilocal and/or unilocal habits on the well-being, such as social (dis)connectivity and use of technology, and iii) adaptation to the new ways of living and working during and after the pandemic.

### 3.2 Ethical considerations

In my study I interviewed individuals by following ethical considerations. First, I have received the approval from Norwegian Data Protection Authority for my study by attaching a project description, an interview guide, and informed consent. Second, I have clarified to my participants that their participation in my study is voluntary and that I have made sure that they have given me consent based on all the information relevant to the interviews and how the data would be used and handled. Third, I have clarified to them that they have every right to withdraw from my data

collection at any point in my study before the publication of my work. Fourth, considering interviews may include questions that could be disturbing as they may recall negative moments in their life, I have made clear to all the participants that they have every right to decline to answer any questions that they do not want to. Fifth, the recordings of the interviews have handled with care and will be deleted after a given time when the work has been published, to ensure that the information of the participants is not put in jeopardy. Sixth and the last consideration was about keeping all the information of the participants confidential and anonymous in my research.

## 4 Findings

In this section, I have analysed and interpreted the data collected for each profile. The 10 academics are presented in separate sections by covering the following aspects of i) spatial dimension (where did the academic spend time before the pandemic? How did this change because of the pandemic?); ii) impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on multilocal and/or unilocal habits and well-being, with a major focus on social (dis)connectivity and use of technology; and iii) new ways of living and working (how did the academics change their ways of living and working during and after the pandemic).

### 4.1 The Local Tourist

#### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic, the 'Local Tourist' worked mostly in the area with a little bit of commute between the living and working space. The respondent experienced some strain before the pandemic because he had to spend more time at work than they ideally wanted. This meant that the academic came to work and left work in darkness and spend the whole day at work. The family used to travel around a lot and go on different trips.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*



Due to the pandemic, this respondent had to work from home. She complemented working from home with spending time outside, going for walks. She experienced less pressure from work as she did not have to commute, this gave an increased sense of calmness. Due to the pandemic, the academic (and her family) started to gain a new appreciation for the near surroundings, they learned to use the nearby environment for holidays and other forms of recreation (therefore 'Local Tourist'). There she adds an exiting experience: *"I think because of the pandemic, we discovered a lot. We found out that we can use our homes for work and holidays. It is good, working from home is productive, it is a time saver, you don't need to commute. I would use my extra time to walk more or spend time with my family"*.

### **Impacts on well-being**

#### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The academic created 'artificial' walks from work to home by going for a walk around the block. She was able to manage her workload better than before the pandemic because she did not spend additional time in the office. Instead of feeling pressure to remain in the office until the work is done, she was able to leave work in her home office for the next day. She gained the discipline to not work during the evening but spend time with their family instead. This allowed her to spend more time playing with her children and her spouse, which gave her a less absent feeling. Because their spouse is unemployed, they get to spend a lot of time with the children. Now that the mover is working from home, she feels less absent for their children and gets to spend more time with them. The family made a programme of different activities to do during lockdowns; there was a plan of where to go when so that the family could 'have a holiday from home'.

#### *Technology*

The 'Local Tourist' learned to relieve work pressure during her holidays, she did not look at her computer/e-mail, she only used her phone for small things, such as games. It took discipline from this person not to use her computer and work, but they consciously made the effort to use her work technology at selected times, e.g., not opening the e-mail before 8 a.m.

## **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The academic built the habit of going for a 20-minute walk before starting work to give herself the idea of 'walking to work'. She also started to take more breaks and enjoy the outdoors while it was light outside. This is something she could not do before. The respondent changed her routines, they took more breaks and spend more time walking outside. She got the idea of pretending to be a tourist in her own place, which gave her a new appreciation for the area in which she was living. There she adds an exciting experience: *"I live conveniently in a rural area. I think the benefits of multilocality depend on your working and living environments. Like here in my town, it is very rural. During July, nobody is here, and if the weather is good, you could have a perfect lifestyle. Last summer in July I was on holiday here in my hometown. I could separate from my work stuff and not think about my academic work. I went for long walks. I did not use a computer, I used my phone, but it was for fun, not work"*.

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The 'Local Tourist' changed her working routine, since she started working later so she could enjoy the daylight in the morning. This person experienced more autonomy in her work life while they worked from home, she could take her own breaks and spend time outside, which they did not do while they were in the office.

## **4.2 The Urban Mover**

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic, the 'Urban Mover' and her spouse where both are radical multilocal in the family since they had to separate their lives and live and work between two countries (Norway and Italy). The respondent also had to divide her life, working and living hybrid while staying in Norway. She had to work two days from her home office in their apartment in Oslo and three days from the university in the countryside. She also worked from the train while traveling between the center and the periphery.

The respondent experienced some stress before the pandemic as she had to adapt to the work habits of her husband. The latter was away from their home for long periods and travelled for work between different cities in two countries (Norway and Italy). This means she has had to look after their two young children and spend more time at home than she would like. The respondent rushed out and worked close to home, from a nearby coffee shop or local library, for a little variety and a break from the stress at home when her husband could work the relevant day from home and at the same time help take care of their little children.

The uncertainties due to the pandemic made the spouses both exhausting. The family travelled a lot and went on various trips to Italy. The respondent worked in her multiple homes (in rural area and the city of Milano), while her relatives in the town or countryside looked after her children and making her work possible.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

The pandemic greatly affected the respondent's ability to move. And she had to stay and work in one place during the pandemic, mostly at home. Also, another problem was that her husband had to stay and work at home every day. Another problem for the 'Urban Mover' was that their children had less opportunity to go out and spend time away from home; they stayed outside and enjoyed other services and activities. They also had to stay home all the time because the city was closed after a while. So, it became burdensome, and she desperately was keeping going to the library and a coffee shop when possible. Thus, she said that escaping to the library was good, but that was when the library was open. During the lockdown, the inability to move around became very difficult for her. She was more used to working online. She has been to all meetings online during the pandemic.

## **Impacts on well-being**

### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The disconnectivity from society made the mover very stressed and uncertain about the future. She said: *"I am very disappointed because I think there are too few contacts and because it was difficult for immigrants because we have not seen our family for a year"*. The 'Urban Mover' explained that the dysconnectivity from society during the pandemic turned to positive connectivity with her spouse; they get closer to each other

like never before. Then she adds a nice story: *“Of course, it was a very stressful environment to share under the pandemic for so many years, I think, and my husband gave me sometimes support and sometimes a heavy week, it depended, but we found the balance.”*

### *Technology*

As stated by the ‘Urban Mover’, the connectivity with her international partners increased significantly during the pandemic because she has learned to work more online with these international colleagues. She had work conversations and opportunities for socializing online. In the end, she found more forum for socialization online. She said they were even closer to each other after the pandemic because they knew more about each other. She then adds a pleasant experience: *“It is like learning some technical skills; I exchange files, some different kinds of things also for online teaching; I understand some online teaching skills to be more human to people.”* Another thing is that the creativity of the team's connectedness with her partners during the pandemic has increased her confidence to connect online and with her family from abroad. She felt great when she talked to her family and was happy to be able to connect to them, it gave her the feeling of being multilocal online.

### **New ways of living**

#### *How did the academic change their way of living?*

The pandemic helped the ‘Urban Mover’ and her husband improve the balance in their connectedness, they got a great life after the pandemic. The academic said that she respects that her husband is multi-local because he stays in Oslo but works for a company in Bøde (another city in Norway). He works a lot in Venice (in Italy) and usually travels a lot, which affects their family's work-life balance.

But that was okay because she felt she was the central pillar of her family, and she must keep in touch with her family every day. The ‘Urban Mover’ says that her children are usually at school, and when they come back, she is home or with her spouse because they communicate well and have a renewed appreciation for one another, after going through a stressful home situation during the pandemic.

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The respondent says that she knows how to deepen her humanizing relationship according to innovative methods that she uses actively now in teaching students and colleagues because of the knowledge she gained about the human touch in using technology and connectivity during the pandemic. She communicated with people through sharing sketches and drawings, online teaching methods and interpersonal sharing of experiences that she gained from online connectivity with her foreign partners during the pandemic; she was in demand at the university. And the students loved her and have positively influenced her lectures. Working online gave her more confidence. When she teaches online courses and has a physical presence, she has new ways of working, for example, through the mixed use of humanity and technology.

But she can feel the energy from all the multilocal working people around her when working from a cafe and from the library. She wants to continue travelling and visiting her parent's house in the rural area in Italy. They can look after their children when she needs. This help is impossible to get when the family stays in Oslo.

### 4.3 The Islander

#### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic the 'Islander' worked mostly in the area with a little bit of commute between the living and working space.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

The 'Islander' says that the pandemic and all the rapid and unexpected changes in the habits of life and work made her more unstable. So, the significance caused the changes are at the level of character and personality. Moreover The 'Islander' says: "*I think this pandemic is getting used to all these different work habits. I definitely can see myself feeling different like six months ago; I would have said, you know, read started, I was ok working from home, then I wasn't. Then I got used to it. Then I was not. Now I am kind of happy again. But you know, it is interesting every time. You see, it changes. I know that. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I think depending on what is going on as*

*well, yeah.*” The ‘Islander’ said that one significant change in her work habits during the pandemic was that she was so overwhelmed with work duties that she gave up her usual 20-minute walk to work.

### **Impacts on well-being**

#### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The ‘Islander’ explains the negative impact of social disconnectivity during the pandemic: *“I did not see my colleagues. You know you like it. You are laughing with your colleagues, and you know, fun. Yeah, it was not OK. It's just that you were working all the time, there was not much fun. I would say, like; you thought it was severe. It was all very work”*. The ‘Islander’ added that social dysconnectivity became an issue for her mental health. Precisely the thing she missed from these contacts with her colleagues was the energy and excitement; thus, when she spent days working on her own, she felt it did not help her mental health.

#### *Technology*

The interviewee explained that part of the counter-effects of social disconnectivity and disruption of physical presence between people during the pandemic is that non-professional and external Zoom contacts have replaced it.

She mentioned that all contacts (from teaching students to meeting colleagues and administrative tasks) took place through Zoom. She also connected with her family by chatting on virtual sites like Zoom and WhatsApp. The interviewee described how this state of being on the computer all day made her not want to be on the computer with her family in the evening. So, she reduced the use of computer time to less contact with her family in Ireland and friends in England. Eventually, she and her family and friends got fed up and had to cut contact with each other due to prioritizing work over taking care of their mental health.

### **New ways of living**

#### *How did the academic change their way of living?*

The respondent referred to some aspects of the daily life: *“I think I have slowed down. I don't think I have the same drive that I had. I believe the pandemic made. Listen to the birds and look at the sun and you know, I enjoy life more and I do not think I want*

*to go back to working all the time, what we have learned. It cannot be a more living and working strain."*

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The 'Islander' explained that the experiences during the pandemic make her aware of what suits her so that she can adjust. Whereas before the pandemic, she did not think she had choices by saying: *"You went first to work in an office and went home. It was all work. I guess the good thing with this is that now I know I have choices and can change if I want. And you can take this autonomy and use it"*. The respondent says that she is determined to work at home one day a week. That will give her a kind of calmness when she wants to be of quiet and concentrate.

#### 4.4 The Pragmatist

##### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

The 'Pragmatist' says that, before the pandemic, she worked at least one day from her home and spread her work the rest of the week, driving long distances from her main offices at two different universities in different cities and universities. She mentions that she is the head of a department at two universities and has many other responsibilities and roles in her life and career: *"Due to my position as head of the department, I have to be present at meetings; I have to come four days a week to work from the head office and I work one day a week at home"*.

The 'Pragmatist' says that she also works on her free time frequently with colleagues in small group of people from the second home (cabins, sea, mountains, hills etc.) and they go there to have a seminar on articles and they work quite actively with writing articles, while it is good to get variation: *"This is an excellent way to concentrate on doing some other tasks, having focused on the hill."*

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

The 'Pragmatist'. like other people, had to stay at home and work and try to feel the connectivity gap between her and all people she was feeling that she has responsibility

to support as a mother, spouse, daughter, chief of two departments and over hundred employees, students, and relatives, friends, partners, and significant others that she is connected to in the real world. She explained it like that: *“It was, of course, too much-using ICT technology in the end, both with my family and for the job, because all communication was through virtual rooms and virtual places and computer screens”*.

The ‘Pragmatist’ explained that it was very pragmatic when she and her relatives fine out that they could use technology in a new way to strengthen the family connectivity and help each other include their old parents to came through the pandemic without trauma: *“We were together virtual with the whole family, my and my three siblings, and the families. It was very joyful when we turned to play family games on the screen, after that we played games with questions and answers, and that was a joy, and I say that my old mother and father it was good to see all of us 16 people in the family that we are together”*.

### **Impacts on well-being**

#### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The academic mentioned the effects of social isolation *“I am an adult, and I live alone because my children are moved out, and I am divorced. I have no husband, and I feel isolated because of that, but of course, I was having contact with people having a walk, but it did not help so much; I still felt strange. I think we all feel odd for all of us”*.

Also, one of the things she missed was teaching students in presence. Teaching only through screens was not the same. She had to look at empty screens and pictures, not knowing if the students were there and whom you were talking to at all. She added *‘It was crazy because you are sitting alone in your house, speaking, and you do not know if or who is listening to you’*. And you cannot see if students are following”. Also, the supervision was done digitally, but she said: *“That was working better because that was at least one to one conversation.”*

From the family perspective, the ‘Pragmatist’ added that all the family members were isolated from each other’s. They could not visit them because they were afraid of bringing the infection to them. She added *“You know my siblings and I keep in touch with Skype and other virtual contacts. Still, the worse was for my parents”*



## Technology

Prior to the Covid-19, it was very unusual for the academic to have digital meetings. This used to happen to her only if they had to talk to somebody in another country. The 'Pragmatist' stated *"I think I never had [Microsoft] Teams or Zoom on my computer before Covid-19, but that is what has come because of the Pandemic. So, I feel more emotional, but I am better prepared because I know what it is like, but I also think, primarily technical, I am better prepared"*.

## New ways of living

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The 'Pragmatist' depicted her work-life during the pandemic saying that: *"I had to be always in the home office. So, I tried every Friday to have a variety and celebrate the weekend. I was working from a local coffee shop that was open during the pandemic in my hometown. So, then I went home like Friday afternoon. And I will keep that possibility after the pandemic"*. The pandemic seems to change the academic's habits who is searching for more flexibility and alternative spaces for working.

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The academic mentioned that she does not want to keep working from home at any time, because it will make her 'some kind of crazy' because she lives alone. *"You know when it was lockdown, I just had my company, and that was some kind of difficult. Maybe if I had some meetings at 2.00 PM you know, my voice gets dry, because I had not used my voice the previous day, so I would not keep that"*.

For the 'Pragmatist' is important to keep some balance between going to the office some days and working some days at home and from the café': *"You don't need to commute every day, so this kind of work-life balance saves my well-being. I will keep it in the future. For me, I think it is good for my well-being to have a work-life balance. I think it can help my well-being because it helps me to reduce work strain and job stress"*. This way of working can help to skip traffic jumps and long-distance driving. The possibility to work at least once a week from home gives to the 'Pragmatist' some calmness too.

## 4.5 The Farmers' Daughter

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic, the 'Farmer's Daughter' mostly worked in the area, with some commuting as a short drive or cycling between the living and working space. The respondent experienced a particular strain before the pandemic because they had to spend more time at work than they ideally wanted. This meant that the person came to work when it was dark, left a job in the dark, and spent the whole day at work. It was tough to work in the winter when it was cold and dark outside; then, she preferred to stay at home, light the fireplace and make it warm instead of going outside and scraping the ice off her car windows. *"I marked in the winter when I had to go to work, and it was cold and dark, so I could prefer to be at home at work, light the fireplace and make it warm at home. It was not nice to go out to scrape the ice off the car window."*

The respondent used to travel a lot around Norway and make a long drive trip to visit her elderly parents and her home place, a distant farm. She left her old farm when she filled 18 years old because she left to move to a bigger city and moving with her life.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

During the pandemic, the respondent worked from her terraced house in the local area. She had made it through the tough times during the pandemic by going for many walks in nature outside the house and doing strength training by joining an online training program available from the local gym. *"But I used to go on all these trips outside. Also, because gyms were closed during the pandemic, the other daughter came. We used to train different physical strength training. It was nice to be social with my daughter."* The respondent says that despite working from the miserable chair at the kitchen table, as she did not have the perfect home for working conditions, she managed because she was pushed to develop creativity and found some techniques independently.

### **Impacts on well-being**

*Social (dis)connectivity*

The academic mentioned some aspects of social isolation saying, *"It is difficult to ask somebody for help when you are sitting alone at home"*. The respondent referred also

to the situation of her parents struggling a lot. *“I remembered springtime in 2020, so my father lived in a nursing home while my mother lived outside the elderly home. She did not have a visit from him; she called me all the time, but I could not help her.”*

In addition, she could not travel to visit her oldest daughter, who lives in another Scandinavian country, because of the Covid-19 restriction. *“That was very tough, and I feel I was suffering”*. Moreover, during the Covid-19 pandemic, there was a private social group with her colleagues on Facebook and Messenger, where people were free to post stories and photos of their private trips out in nature. Also, they used to take some “walk for talk” meetings on Ås campus some days by keeping a physical distance, when possible, but she said that *“None of that could help me with my needs”*. She added *“You must stay alone at home and feel isolated, and I am not so clever as to take the first step to contact others. Other people told me not to forget that I can always bring contact. Still, I feel this cannot be easy to not pass (suits) to people, that I can take contact and that’s why I don’t contact people to do not disturb. I do not want to be a nuisance to others”*.

### *Technology*

The respondent says that due to a significant increase in digital teaching and student numbers in autumn 2020, she had to learn many new digital tools: ZOOM, Teams, and Mentimeter to interact with the students. She found the latest digital learning applicable and gratifying after discovering it as a positive result of the pandemic. She also likes to attend short work meetings on ZOOM or TEAMS as they are an advantage for saving time on physical attendance and travel.

### **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The ‘Farmer’s Daughter’ considered the freedom and autonomy as important aspects of her work-life. *“I can, for example, take free from my job if I am tired and decide to go home, eat dinner, relax, and work after that. The freedom is excellent. I do not work so many extra hours, but I think it is nice of been able to take one hour free at work at the main office and work this hour later from home. That is what I think is nice that I can come later to my office one day and go earlier when you know that you can work from*

*home*". According to her, this autonomy is excellent when people can decide which job to do and from where. During the winter when she was supposed to leave for the job, and it was cold and dark, so she would rather prefer to stay at home for work in front of the fireplace. Working from home means also for her that people can take a break from work. She added "*For example, you can go outside for walking a trip in the middle of the day when it is light. While sitting at the main office, I sit all day and come back home when it is dark in the winter. This winter was lovely sunshine, and I walked out when it was sunny because I could take a break from working from home in the middle of the day, and it has been acceptable to do that.*"

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The respondent says that she primarily wanted to work five days a week from the office at universities because she feels that this is good for her mental health. The idea was to socialize daily with her colleagues at work. However, she could not do this because the majority of colleagues had introduced hybrid working weeks with work three days a week at the workplace and two days at home. The person adds that this is unfortunate because she felt chased out of the work building to be at home instead of at the office. She argues that her only social contact took place at the workplace and that she needs to meet her colleagues physically because the opposite leads to a loss of energy for her.

## 4.6 The Landowner

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic, the 'Landowner' worked mostly in the surroundings of NMBU campus, with a little bit of commute between the living and working space. She preferred to walk or take a bicycle while she commuted to the workplace, sometimes she went by car, but it takes just five minutes trip.

The respondent referred to the multiple places that she uses for living and working. Her family owns a very large boat that it can be used for work, as a second home and

cabin. She says that the family uses the boat for sleeping, dinner, and house parties. It is a place to live and work for the whole family. She uses to be very flexible by using different family properties *"I used to travel to visit my mother-in-law's estate house in Hammar for many years and I could work from there very often before the pandemic "*. She and her spouse used also to visit the café 'and library in city where to work from.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

The respondent says that the pandemic period was a positive experience because she and her family could get out into nature much more during the pandemic: *"So you've gotten out into nature much more during the pandemic."* The Landowner had benefited mostly positive outcomes from the pandemic. *"During pandemic I got a Covid house (greenhouse) where I got a new multilocal habit during the Pandemic; I started to work from my greenhouse and stayed there at a new time and place. I have a cottage home with my siblings, but I do not define it as my second home. I have tried to work there and have had twice Virtual supervising with students, but it wasn't easy."*

The academic used the phone with internet access for virtual conversations with students. Sometimes she connected the telephone phone to the PC at that time to have virtual room guidance with students. During this time, some creative solutions were found to connect to a PC, and she discovered that it was possible to get the job done. The pandemic changed her habits: *"Wow, I can take an extra day at the cabin and work from there. Taking it, for example, on a Monday or Friday and working from the house would have been nice."* The Covid 19 opened up many job opportunities for all and she felt more productive saying *"I had never thought that I could work from home or be so efficient at working from home as I was proven to do during the Pandemic was very surprising. But I have noticed that the effectiveness is there"*.

## **Impacts on well-being**

### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The social connectivity toward the family of the 'Landowner' generated positive outcomes as the academic described: *"I was lucky that my husband was laid off during the pandemic. He runs his own small company with his son spring from home: so, it became possible to realize my dream of having my greenhouse in my garden. I got a*

*greenhouse already in the first year during the pandemic; I didn't think it was possible, but it sure was when we had a better time to be together as a family, and my husband was very generous in giving me a greenhouse. My husband and son made this greenhouse for me, and I think it was nice to enjoy it during the pandemic".*

Increasing connectivity toward family of the 'Landowner' was related to the possibility of intimacy and togetherness between the spouses and sons and connection to spend more time with the family, as she stated: "*My husband and I worked from every room at home and had a great time during the pandemic Eating lunch together and or going out in the garden was very friendly*". Increasing connectivity toward the family was very well explained by the academic saying "*My husband spoiled me like a princess. He served me exceptional lunches and dinners, which he prepared for a long time in the kitchen with various fruits and vegetables from our garden. He also used freshly caught fish and game. I was privileged to be with my son and my man. It was an advantage when we were close to working in the home office; we were more together, with my husband and son*".

However, there were some negative aspects related to the disconnectivity that was an issue during pandemic also for the 'Landowner'. The 'Landowner' talks about disconnectivity from the physical interaction with her "significant others" at work and disconnection from participating with other academics in discourses in halls and lunchrooms and in the corridors where she was feeling like an issue during a pandemic. Moreover, she said that her well-being at work depends on recognizing, hearing, and listening to the various voices that come from human talk and the intellectual discourses in the workplace meeting places that she used to pay close attention to on regular working days and wait for an invitation to collaborate with other academics. When any of the academics started a project, she was the first to be asked to collaborate to write an article or two.

The 'Landowner' adds a sad story similar to "Farmers' daughter" story that she had gone to seek out the empty job building during the pandemic and tried to listen for the voices in the halls and corridors, but no one had been there due to the mass sending of people to their homes during the massive unilocality during pandemic: "*I came to work because I thought it was nice to be with others, but because no one else was there, I went home immediately and felt I would not stay at work because of loneliness. I miss much the discourse in the hallways, these colleagues' voices*".

She had to run back to her home at full speed and depravity and didn't want to be alone in the empty job building during the pandemic because no one else was there. And the whole experience felt miserable and meaningless, and the silence in the halls was terrifying to her because she was frightened by the silence of the corridors at work and realized that she had become entirely dependent on listening daily to these diverse voices of the academics discussing scientific conversations among themselves to feel at ease.

The 'Landowner' added: *"Oh, I had missed these discourses that had gone on here in the corridors when people used to be here and work. This social and intellectual interaction with my academic colleagues is essential to me. I have become particularly aware during pandemic because such colleagues' sessions and scientific discourses were absent. Hearing the voices of these colleagues and these unplanned meeting topics is the most important thing to me, and I have become much more focused on this missing now that the pandemic is over"*.

The 'Landowner' agrees that connectivity is the missing link that they do not imagine that collaboration can take place using virtual methods because the physical interaction between colleagues and listening to the active language is crucial for them can talk together and discussing topics, this type of solidarity will not be the same on Zoom or Teams.

### *Technology*

The 'Landowner' explained the negative effect from Technology is dysconnectivity from opportunity for togetherness like she explained it is: *"Meeting on PC screens is not the same (...). And then you get very tired of teaching at ZOOM afterward. And then you get exhausted and tired of sitting in front of the screen teaching virtually all day. And then, when it has stopped calculating the time between meetings, man must go from one meeting session to the other in virtual places."* There was not enough time to eat lunch and other types of breaks during the day.

## **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

Also, the pandemic positively contributed to develop multilocal habits among the 'Landowner' spouse, and one of their sons. Because they live in the countryside and nature, it made them intensify the use of their multi-properties. *"Covid-19 is making my spouse and I more willing to get out and use the mansions, vacation homes, and our boat-house for leisure and work because of the work-life balance."*

*How did the academic change their way working?*

Furthermore, the 'Landowner' said *"I also traveled to my childhood home and worked when I have been there on a visit, but so my parents are now dead, so I do not stay there long, but I have that home with my siblings and can travel and live or work from there. Or can I travel to Hammar (another district area) to visit my mother-in-law's house and property and work from there during my visit there? And I have a new greenhouse. It is right next to my house, and there is a new house for wellbeing"*.

The Landowner used to work from the office daily, but sometimes she could work from home. *"For example, yesterday, I was supposed to sit and work virtually on a screen, so I decided to stay and work from home."* The respondent claims that after the pandemic, she commutes every day at least four times a week to the primary office because she likes coming to the office for work and meeting different people when she works. The 'Landowner' suggested to implement new routines for living and working after the pandemic: *"I am probably considering starting to work from home every Friday of the week where I can choose to work from my greenhouse, my garden, from a cabin or our large family boat. Or I can travel all weekend and work from a second home like the summer house, cabin, or family boat. I have multiple choices to live a multidimensional life for that is what it means the concept of multilocality for me"*.



## 4.7 The House Hopper

### The spatial dimension

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

The 'House Hopper' travels a lot around the country and abroad because of research work and business, he connects multilocality with the senses and extraordinary experiences with the transcendence of experiencing a variety of looking at different places and meeting different people: *"You get much more typical in life., navigate between and visit other sites, see variations of fantasies about places, cities, landscapes, and nature, and meet different people and additions"*.

He and his new girl-friend benefit of living and working multilocally. They have the necessary good economy, time and resources to move between different places for work and leisure. The 'House hopper' benefits from the owners of houses and properties in the countryside who have more space and lower living costs in general because they live on the periphery of the country in Norway: *"And suppose you know that you were confined to a small apartment for a year. In that case, there begins to be a considerable lack of well-being and a considerable lack of not having two large houses and a summer house from which you can choose to work. The way it is for people like me, if we don't like the walls in the place we are, we can move to some other place somewhere else, because of we are privileged of having a solid economy, we can by houses and properties and travel and be in different places and countries, and my company can provide it or I can pay for by myself."*

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

According to the respondent, unilocality and multilocality were mixed during the pandemic, as he and his girlfriend experienced it. It was a two ways process. One of them was health protection, but the other was getting other health issues because of new technology.

What was the advantage of multilocality is that he was doing well and working from two large properties with two mansions with extensive gardens fifteen minutes away from each other. He believes it is a lifesaver to have two houses to himself with access to a sizeable green property where he can relax as much as he wants while working from home and protecting himself from the Covid-19 infection. He and his girlfriend felt

comfortable around the two properties, during the isolation of society: *"I think the advantages you need to deviate between protection against Covid-19 infection and disease and for outsiders what kind of advantages are more than multilocality can provide for you. And that multilocality was an advantage during Covid-19 because we could not move anywhere else if we wanted to."*

He says that the disadvantages were mainly from the implementation and use of new technologies. They required more attention and physical strain on the body and postures that are harmful to the body because they result cramps in the limbs, headaches, pains in the back, eyes, etc. *"I am working from home more than before, and of course, I've been with digital media more than before the pandemic. That's a lot more standing and sitting work than before Covid-19; to me, he was very straight and seated. I am working from home more than I used to, and I've been with digital media a lot more."* He realized how these workloads were negatively affecting his well-being. This experience did not help him adapt to a better work-life balance, since the boundaries between leisure time, rest and work disappeared.

### **Impacts on well-being**

#### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The 'House hopper' said that due to the social disconnectivity his family was plenty of space in his two mansions with large estates and green spaces outside. He invited his new girlfriend to stay with him on the large property so as not to be lonely. However, during the pandemic, they had to isolate themselves in large rooms around the castle. They arranged a home office in different spaces from each other: *"I can see that when my children have moved out of our vast mansion with the house, we have more space to work at home, and me and my girlfriend I work at the same place, but we do not meet during the day because of work, and we even have lunch at different rooms and at other times."*

#### *Technology*

'House hopper' says that new technologies have a different impact on teaching, which has become more complicated. On the one hand, the technology is disadvantageous while it refers to university lectures; because it is much more stressful than before because it takes a lot more effort to write and because research has to be done via

ZOOM. While on the other hand, new technologies are beneficial because they make meetings more accessible; it is another thing that is much more effective, sometimes even better than using a computer for a meeting, because you need to be more efficient and structured in the ZOOM meeting because everyone has to speak, and time is limited.

### **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The 'House hopper' focused on both benefits and disadvantage of a new multilocal life. He explains that the hybrid work (performed on-site and on-line) can be a disadvantage because it provides decoupling of workload and stress from communication. On the other hand, there is some balance between work and private life. He argues for the well-being benefits of working from home: *"It's nice when I work from home because I have better equipment than I have in the office. And I have a desktop PC, MAC (laptop), and advanced furniture way home, and that is easy to leave to get to work, so I don't have any travel time; I can decide and relax more in my garden without stress; I appreciate that".*

The 'House Hopper' says that the increase in his multilocal working causes some difficulties in scheduling tasks considering that meetings can happen in different locations (both physical and virtual and distances. Also, the disadvantage of multilocality is having to spend time in advance for planning of job travels and dealing with unpredictable complications *"I think there are significant well-being disadvantages to being multilocal. There is travel time and planning to where you will be and when. And there are too many reasons, too many problems you must plan where you are going to be and how to get there, and too many reasons, too many problems that can get in the way of where you are going and how and what job".*

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The 'House Hopper' took a giant leap in career growth during the pandemic. *"Since Covid-19, I have become more multi-local because now I have two jobs. I drive my car to work from different cities because the train has become more expensive. I prefer the comfort of sitting in my car when I drive to work because it helps me concentrate better on tasks."*

The 'House Hopper' also explains that after Covid-19, he expanded his previous position at the university and started working to develop and improve courses for students as a facilitator. He no longer teaches in person in front of classes in the rooms as much as he used to and reflects on this, adding: "*So I started working more with my experience and having to spread it across multiple jobs and environments, and I became more multi-local in how I work and live, because I travel more and use more digital meeting and lecturing after Covid-19.*"

The 'House hopper' depicted very clearly his new habits and his unique style of working in different places saying that "*I travel every day to a different job. I drive a car. I work from the main office of my private company, Nor-Consult, in another municipality four days a week. One day a week, I work at NMBU on the campus in a country town in another city. One day a week, I work elsewhere; I travel between three cities as one city in the municipality when I have a meeting, and I work in a private company. Then I lecture to students or develop courses at the university in another rural town in another municipality. After that, I go to one of the company's head offices in the center of the capital Oslo for work and to conferences at the company's headquarters elsewhere in Oslo*".

He reflects on his priority saying that he likes working from different places, such as his house in the hometown and the second home, a huge house with a property in another area. But in the last six months he must have rented it out because he could not manage multiple properties and new job positions simultaneously.

## 4.8 The Scientist

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

Before the pandemic, the 'Scientist' mainly worked and lived in the immediate rural area to the NMBU campus, while commuting by bike or a short car drive between the living and working space. He works five days a week from the main office and a little bit in the evenings and weekends at home without hurrying.

The 'Scientist' feels excited to meet every day his students and colleagues at work and receive good energy, which stimulates him in what he does. He and his wife live alone (while their three adult children have moved out) in a tidy house with a garden.

The respondent described his work-life balance before the pandemic because he had divided equivalent time at work and leisure time like he ideally wanted, as his wife. He follows the perfect routines. He goes to sleep in the evenings, and he wakes up in the mornings at the same time to take good care of his brain health. He had a strict routine for spending enjoyable time every Saturday evening in solitude at his home and brainstorming games, like solving a difficult theorem. The 'Scientist' feels that "*Life could not be more perfect.*"

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

In addition, the 'Scientist' says that he is multilocal as his wife, but they have been forced to be unilocal, thus stay at home and working from there during the Covid-19.

The 'Scientist' explained that, during the pandemic, from 2019 until the latest, in the second part of 2021, he was working from home. He also referred to the time he had to spend time in one location, by adding: "*Covid-19 pandemic have big impact on me and my multilocal habits. It affected how I worked very much; I exchanged working from the office for working from home every day*". He says that the husbands had to make themselves invisible to each other while they stayed home in order to get their work done.

## **Impacts on well-being**

### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The 'Scientist' explains the impacts of the pandemic on his well-being and his multilocal habits. He lost the connectivity with people, and he started to feel that he was pushed out to be in different places. It was because the university imposed on him and his colleagues to increase the use of ICT technologies which created more pressure on teaching and learning. For the 'Scientist', this was a dramatic time during the Covid-19.

## *Technology*

The 'Scientist' experiences some stress with technology while working every day at home; he suddenly feels that he has to work harder than before. Because teaching has gone digital and so many things must be solved in a short time, he noted that they don't have that arena with digital education. Instead, everything takes much longer. Students indicated that they needed much more attention during regular classes. However, he could not give the students all the attention they needed because digitizing mathematical theorems required a lot of brain activity and took up much of his time.

He had to work late into the evening and could not follow his routines and could not even sleep when he had to work longer hours due to using technology to prepare for the next day's lecture—the technology created 'an unreal world' as he said. There were black screens where he couldn't see or hear what the students were thinking or doing. He felt disconnected from the human touch. The human collision with reality is replaced by a disconnection due to the border of technology with his students, and everything becomes unreal.

The Scientist' had to stop spending the time he usually spent on his hobby of mental activities playing brainstorming games on Saturday nights, because he had to prepare for the upcoming digital lecture next week. This pleasant time was inevitably taken from him. He has lost his joy in life due to the disruption of his routines, and his 'perfect life' has been destroyed.

## **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The 'Scientist' approached a new way of living and working: *"During the Covid-19, I obtained a sabbatical year which I am currently having. I am living in a second home, in another central city and working and lecturing at the University."* There he adds a nice experience on how he is planning to be more multilocal together with his whole family after Covid-19 by adding: *"With our grown children and their families, my whole family and I decided to join forces financially and bought a villa in the far countryside right after the pandemic".*

Furthermore, the 'Scientist' lives with his wife, who is a teacher too, in a large house. He also referred to the time after Covid-19 by adding: *"I like to work from my workplace and from a cabin. I usually work from the main office which is at the university for four days a week and at home in the evenings and during the weekends. Thus, I work long weekends from Fridays to Mondays, mainly from the cabin. When I live in my cabin which is in a small town which is located in the valley of Valdres. Both villages are rural."*

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The 'Scientist' has also predicted the use of the technology within future pandemic: *"Maybe we must use this digital solution differently, always use the camera, for example. I believe that if the new Pandemic starts next month, I will use different technology and avoid a large group with students during the sessions as much as possible. I think it will be better for my mental health, for productivity and everything".*

## 4.9 The Hunter

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

The 'Hunter' says that he perceives himself as multilocal because he has worked at the same time from both Norway and from abroad for many years and he was visiting more than 70 countries while traveling and living for a long period at all over the globe. For example, he works and lived in US and South Sudan for many years to help the locals in socio-economic and business trade developing of the local society and municipalities. The 'Hunter' is also multilocal because he also works in academia as part of an international research team and had many international contacts.

The 'Hunter' lives with his twenty years old son. He goes to school and his unemployed wife in a municipal town in a mansion on a large residential property with large green areas, located about 25 km east of the nearest city to the university campus. The 'Hunter' explained his multilocal habits before Covid-19: *"I am pretty much multilocal both when I am at home and when I am traveling in congestions with my research projects; I always try to find some places to make my work possible, looking to find all*

*sites with good internet connection with meetings stuff like that, like libraries, halls, all this kind of suitable locations. And I can work from both places".* Before Covid-19, he used to work four to five days a week from the workplace, while in the evenings and weekends, he worked from home. He commutes to the workplace four to five times a week by car.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

During Covid-19, the 'Hunter', as he continues to say, was staying at his sizeable residential property and working predominantly from home. He is a charismatic and loving husband and father. He takes care of the family's sustenance as he regularly goes in the month moose hunting in the remote forests of Norway to provide his family with a fresh catch of meat to feed his family in the best way. During Covid-19, he did not have the opportunity to go out because the pandemic forced him to stay mostly at home. He says he was happy to be with his family at home, but it was difficult for him to be organized in personal freedom during the pandemic, and he mostly sat and worked from home. He also experienced some strain because he had to make himself invisible for his family while he was at home to get work done. But his spouse and children complained that was missing a human touch with him while he was working at home during the pandemic.

### **Impacts on well-being**

#### *Social (dis)connectivity*

The respondent says that the pandemic has affected him because he has been forced into isolation and gradually moved to this idea of working from home and limited social contacts, which most people have understand and accepted. He added: *"You can see that the Covid-19 affects us and our well-being. However, out of loyalty because we like the team, everyone has agreed to isolate themselves in their homes because of the enforcement of the policy"*. He says that the disadvantage of isolation is the vibrant disconnectivity of the collective. At the same time, the advantage of multilocality is that we have deep connectivity with our work colleagues when we are at the workplace and meet them in person. *"But now I see and hear from my colleagues as well that it is an excellent idea to meet in the office finally, and I appreciate that I came back again all this time to be with colleagues."*



## *Technology*

The 'Hunter' had to work primarily from his home and have much time on the accessibilities and expertise and training of all technologies that allowed him to be more flexible in a way he was doing his jobs.

## **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

The 'Hunter' says that due to the rapprochement between him, his wife, and his young son, he is glad that the pandemic helps them to increase positive connectivity. Now they plan to join him next time he is hunting moose in the far distance in the Norwegian wood, and he appreciates that very much".

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The 'Hunter' also referred to the time after Covid-19 that he is working like before Covid-19, four to five days a week; in the evenings and weekends, he works from home. He prefers to work at places with a good internet connection for meetings, like libraries, halls, and all these good locations. And he can work from both places.

## 4.10 The Globe Trotter

### **The spatial dimension**

*Where did the academic spend time before the pandemic?*

The 'Globe Trotter' says that he perceives himself as multilocal because he has worked in academia as part of an international research team and had many international contacts. The academic talks about his experiences of getting married on one trip to Denmark and started a family there. He was living, working, and travelling between the two countries and he was living together apart with his family from abroad. *"I am from Norway, but I went to Denmark for a professorship at the Aalborg University of Denmark in 1998 [...] I also worked here at the same time, And I regularly travelled from Aalborg to Copenhagen every week and worked periodically with my computer on the train. The office was on my train, and I was publishing many articles 90 % of*

*mainly the leading academic writing has been taken outside my workplace. And I have been doing this for 20 years”.*

The respondent explains that his multilocal way of life involves moving within countries, across countries, and crossing continents. Another feature of multilocality is how he was sitting and working from a cafe, ferry, subway, and on the train every day. Sometimes at the station, he sat and worked, such as if he had to wait a long time until the arrival or departure of the train or ferry for his commute.

*How did this change because of the pandemic?*

The ‘Globe Trotter’ viewed working from home positively, as he saved 3 hours a day not having to commute. Working from home allowed him to participate in his hobbies during the day, like orienteering and playing guitar. After Covid-19, he continued to mostly work from home and commuted to the office at least once a week.

### **Impacts on well-being**

*Social (dis)connectivity*

The ‘Globe Trotter’ talks about positive connectivity when he visits his friends. He connected with his friends online and made music virtually and strived to meet once a month in person during the restrictions. He also visited his girlfriend and they travelled together to her cabin. Spending time with his friends and girlfriend and attending cultural events (like concerts) became his priority after Covid-19, especially after he started working from home and not spending time commuting.

*Technology*

After Covid-19, the ‘Globe Trotter’ recognised the importance of not being online all the time. Prior to Covid-19, he felt he spent too much time on his computer, especially during his 3-hour commute. However, during Covid-19 he realised that he could connect with his friends regularly, create music together, and continue being creative online.

### **New ways of living**

*How did the academic change their way of living?*

This academic adopted a hybrid working model because it was more effective for his well-being and achieved a healthier work-life balance. Working from home allowed him to take advantage of good weather during the day to participate in his hobbies, which he could not do when he was commuting to the office. He thinks this experience during the pandemic helped him to adopt to better work-life balance.

He can link his new way of living after the pandemic to bring love, passion, transcendence, and joy to his life. This includes falling in love, spending time with his loved one in the cabin, connecting with his friend, and cultivating his hobbies and cultural events.

*How did the academic change their way working?*

The respondent explained how he used to work by traveling using slower methods like trains and ferry boats. The 'Globe Trotter' also explains why it is essential for a multilocal like him to be able to concentrate when working from the road. He argues that working on planes is less focused and more inconvenient than his preferred slower travel methods. He prefers the autonomy of using his time in more efficient ways (e.g., working, resting, commuting) on slow travel methods.

## 5 Discussion

The main objective of this master's thesis was to explore the phenomena of multilocality and unilocality of a select group of academics from a Norwegian university, including the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on their habits and impacts on health and lives. Specifically, the study aimed to answer how academic staff perceive multilocality and unilocality and how this changed as a result of the pandemic, as well as how multi/unilocal habits affected the well-being of academic staff.

Reflecting the main findings, the master thesis contributes to the understanding of multilocal and unilocal habits of academics during the pandemic, and their adapting to the new reality. Compared to the current literature on multilocality, this master thesis provides a novel perspective when analyzing both multilocal and unilocal behaviors of modern times, against the background and under the influence of technology and all

other economic, social, psychological, political, and environmental factors that can affect a person at any time of his existence.

This study illustrates six different generations of diverse age groups within 40 to 70 years of human life of multinational Norwegians who have benefited from unilocality and multilocality, adapting to the rapid development of high technology in their society.

First, the main findings that are summarized below show the **main changes to the work life of the ten academics, personal perceptions, including new multilocal and unilocal habits.**

The 'Local Tourist' found more flexibility with the home office and now spends more quality time with family and started using her first home for home holidays. She became a tourist in her own community, and she started to use her outdoor environment more. The 'Local Tourist' uses the home as a base to rest during the day from home office, and she also spend seasonal and annual holidays in the same place, since there are several outdoor activities swimming in the local sea, walking, and attending cultural events that she does with the family.

The 'Local Tourist' presence in unilocality during the pandemic, because she is introverted, she analyzed the use of technology as the benefit for getting close to her international partners, colleagues, and students with multilocality online. She became talkative and willing to come in person and take part in hybrid meetings, ready to socialize with people, while before the pandemic, she was some shy and was staying in the corner of the room and never had the initiative to start to talk with people in the same room, but just sitting there and observing people's behavior. So, she changed to some extent to be an extrovert because of the unilocality. For the 'Local Tourist,' the pandemic opened new possibilities for many places.

Both for 'Local Tourist and 'Urban Mover,' the unilocality during the pandemic opened new possibilities for many places. Because they get involved in Multilocality online, they gain new skills such as online connectivity in virtual spaces, a deeper connection with their international partners, colleagues, and students, and more quality time with their bellowed family and family from abroad.

The 'Urban Mover', because of the increasing use of technology during the pandemic which is extrovert became to some extent introverted because she had time to spend all her time with her spouse and their two small children in a small area and getting more introverts to finding out what is real value in their lives. So, because she got a new deal, she became observant. Because she was introverted, she started to analyze people's behavior back screens and get more in human connectivity with people online, which made her more adaptive to the real world after the pandemic.

The 'Islander' began to value time with colleagues more when they are physically in the office because people work more from home and away from the main office. She changed her personality from extrovert to introvert to some extent. She tried to stay at home one day a week, so she can go outside and walk in the surroundings of her home and appreciate life itself more because it helped her mental health to be in a good condition. At the same time, she stopped suffering from the lack of colleagues at work because she became a stronger character and enjoyed the smallest thing she had.

The 'Pragmatist', as head of the department, worked hard to create a sense of home in the office. People feel cosy and pleasant at work as they feel at home and that they are important to other colleagues, so that they want to come to work in the office. She finds it meaningful and embraces the hybrid work, because she saves time from driving long distances, and commuting for some days. The hybrid works allows her to stay at home and being focus, as good for her mental health and well-being. The 'Pragmatist' gets more well-being, preventing social dysconnectivity by spending time in new places, such as working regularly from a cafe'.

The 'Farmer's Daughter' appreciates the flexibility and autonomy that comes from multilocality. She avoids travel time on a dark and cold day in winter, and she can be outside more when it is a sunny day. She can also take long nature walks outside the door in her municipality. Also, she is more willing to make long trips to the farm to see her aging father and run errands because Internet technologies cover the entire country, even her parents' remote farm.

While the 'Scientist', the 'Farmer's Daughters', and the 'Landowner', after spending time in one location during the pandemic, they start to see more opportunities to use new places after the pandemic, such as working from the green house, cabin, distant

farm, boat house, second apartments and country houses, and spending more time with family. The 'House Hopper' appreciates the positive outcomes of unilocality during the pandemic. Among them, there was the adaptation to work from home, new flexibility, and autonomy, as well as reducing car driving and having more time to travel with his girlfriend around in land and abroad, benefiting new possibilities for visiting new places, spending time in new houses for holiday and work in occasion visit the house property of his girlfriend in Spain after the pandemic.

In the sabbatical period, the 'Globe Trotter' has appreciated the new routine, habits, and social connectivity. This has given to him a greater perspective on life, new experiences of, learning and connecting with new people in new places. He wants to buy a cabin in the nature and arrange the home office in one's cottage, to get more well-being from nature when it is sunny.

Second, the outcomes from this master's thesis show that the use of technology helped to prevent social disconnection among academics. Some academics discovered the beneficial effects of using technologies during the pandemic while they were isolated in one location.

For example, the 'Urban Mover' discovered the forum for online social connectivity through international cooperations with academics. When the 'Pragmatist' discovered a new way for social connectivity, then she was able to play virtual games with her family during the pandemic, but meanwhile she had to stay in one place. The 'Globe Trotter' found a new way for online social connectivity with his friends and started to create music together. This was an opportunity for online togetherness, and it was good under unilocality during the pandemic.

The use of technology for social connectivity helped also 'House Hopper' and 'Local tourists' who are both introverts. At the same time, the two academics with 'Globe Trotter' appreciate having more time to spend with their loved ones, while there were unilocal. Moreover, the 'Hunter' experienced a positive change from introvert to became to some extent an extrovert, because he wants to spend more time with his colleagues at work after the pandemic.

The 'Globe Trotter' was ambivert before the pandemic. However, he experienced his character change by increasing his introversion and extroversion. Like an introvert, he received new skills by starting to analyze and observe people to get to the point of

deep human behavior and what people need and becoming more human to connect on a deeper level with his colleagues. So the 'Globe Trotter' bought a car during the pandemic and was willing to talk to his colleagues and ask how they are doing. But it was nobody in the administrative building, and he thought that before the pandemic, he could enjoy some talk discussion but not have the possibility to ask people how they were feeling and how it was going with their lives. So he became more human in his new connectivity to people because he received all these positive changes during the unilocality.

## 5.1 Changed perceptions towards multilocality and unilocality

From the previous studies, one can see that the multilocal knowledge workers are seen as an invisible group of workers for the company management, and at the same time, the companies are not particularly concerned with multi-local living conditions for their workers (Stadtler, 2021).

Referring to the main findings of this master thesis, in relation to unilocality and multilocality from the spatial perspective, unilocality has been seen as good to experience during the pandemic because this contributed to personal development and career growth for the participants in this study. Moreover, during the pandemic, the interviewees had the opportunity to learn how to be more flexible, and they want to continue to be flexible after the pandemic, considering the changes to the socio-economic environment in which they live.

Among the outcomes of this master thesis, **one can see that the benefits from multilocality for the well-being can be the hybrid use of cabin and nature.** Both the 'Pragmatist' and the 'Scientist' use the nature and cabin for work and rest. The 'Pragmatist' and other researchers from the network organize meetings, and workshops in the open nature and write articles together with other academics by gathering at their cottages in various places in nature (cabin in the mountain, and cabin near the sea with a suitable plug-and-play connection with internet technology at the cabin), spending creative time in groups with other scientists and researchers. The academics say that they achieve well-being by having this unique way of working quite

active and recovering because they can concentrate better, get the work done, and get good energy from the picturesque environment of the beauty of variance in nature.

A discovery here is that the 'Landowner' describes how their huge family yacht was originally a work office (because of a suitable plug-and-play connection with internet technology on the yacht), a place of privacy, and a way for her spouse to catch fresh fish. But after the pandemic, she found it exciting to start sharing a home office from the family boat with her spouse, and they also stayed on the yacht after the work session to rest and recover from the day, and the ship also became a second home on the water. They cooked long preparatory meals, slept over, and lived in a second home (the boat house) like they were staying at a hotel living in permanent, and on their free days, they gathered the whole family with their sons to spend a pleasant time together. It is a unique way to combine work and life in water or on the waterline.

The 'Landowner' finds the possibility of hybrid working and living from the greenhouse in her garden. She gets a solid attachment to it because of the unilocality during the pandemic. She used the greenhouse for recreation, working with planting and combining her academic work with writing articles, teaching students online, having dinner, for a sleepover and going camping in the greenhouse, and spending the greenhouse on many occasions during the day and their free time, also in occasion family gathering with her spouse and sons. That is a unique way of using the greenhouse that has not been described in the literature before.

While the 'Scientist' lived happily before the pandemic in his first home in the township while working in the area, but the pandemic made him live and work in the same place (house with a garden), asap the pandemic was over, the 'Scientist' wanted a variation in his live, so he got a new job and moved to a second home (apartment) in the central city in a different part of the country.

These new habits motivate him to enjoy his new multilocal lifestyle and new habits more after the pandemic. While he starts to enjoy his life in urban areas, he gets an excitement to buy a cabin in nature. He appreciates the changes in his new habits and feels he benefits well-being from his multilocal lifestyle by spending time between three different environment urban, rural, and faraway wildlife.

In comparison, he starts to work frequently long weekends from the cabin, combines with his work in the city he has all his extended family spending time with him at the



cottage. He appreciates his family's company while he stays at the cabin for rest and work. He says it is convenient to work and recover from the villa while his family is skiing nearby the snowy hills in the winter, and he is not feeling alone at the cabin.

All these examples describe the unique unilocal-and multilocal working and living habits of academics in Norway and create an entirely new perspective on the organization of work and leisure time that is achieving well-being, as well as good work-life balance, and do not exist in the previous literature on this topic.

Another finding is **a hybrid use of first homes for recreation and season holidays** which has positive effects on the well-being. This is also not described in the literature from other countries. For example, the 'Local Tourist' stays at home in her apartment, during their annual leave to enjoy it, to have family vacations in their home at municipality. The family organizes a program and schedule, imagining that they are tourists, thinking of which places to visit for a walk, swimming in the fjord or playing cards in the forest, or arranging a picnic in the nearby area, planning cultural events to visit as the imaginary tourist in their own country.

Moreover, the **benefits from multilocality** for the well-being are **related to the social connectivity** from the hybrid use of home as workplace. When the departments accepted hybrid work, many people stayed at home to save on commuting costs. So, people who want to come to work at the office they may feel sad since they cannot socialize with absent colleagues. For example, the 'Pragmatist' has created a structure for people to work from the office at different times, so, certainly, they are always people at work for others who wish to come and work from the main office and socialize at their workplaces.

Another finding, also unique to this study, refer to **the benefits from multilocality** on people's well-being when **saving commuting time**. For example, the 'Pragmatist' and the 'House Hopper' believe that commuting to work is inconvenient because there are traffic jams on the roads, and queues of cars that make them nervous. The 'Pragmatist' had learned from his unilocal habit under the pandemic how he can stay at the local cafe in her community and/or work home. The 'Globe Trotter' has the same challenge of traveling to work because he uses public transport, like the subway and train. It takes at least 3 hours of the day for him to get to the workplace, so he can use that time at home for his hobbies like to run orienteering in the forest, playing the guitar, writing

music and songs and hanging out with friends, as well as visiting cultural events and rock-concerts in Oslo.

Another benefit from the multilocality for well-being is that **people gain more time to spend with family**. For example, the 'Local tourist' while working from home office spending a lot of time with family. While walking outside with her kids during the day, she avoids looking at her e-mails from work and she avoids bringing overload from work, but she waits and work the next day from her home-office to prevent her from overload. The same happened to the 'Urban mover' who lived with the family in an apartment in Oslo. She had more time to spend with the family, since everybody was at home, including her husband that usually travels a lot. The 'Farmers Daughter' appreciates the flexibility of a home-office because she can plan the long weekend and travel by car to visit her elderly father on the faraway farm. She can work on the laptop and spend time with her father at the same time which makes her happy. During the pandemic, the 'Landowner' worked from the boat that she used as a home office with her husband. But after the pandemic, they continue to spend time on the boat together for family gatherings, in addition to work.

## 5.2 How multilocal and unilocal habits affect well-being

**The autonomy that came from the flexible work and live was another discovery.** When the 'Farmers Daughter' and the 'Globe Trotter' started working in a hybrid way, they gained extra time and they wanted to spend and rediscover the beauty of their old places. The 'Farmer's Daughter' rediscovered the beauty of her remote farm, which is far from the road, and the independence of travelling, when she has regained the balance between work and life. For the 'Globe Trotter', it became significant, after the pandemic, to be able to visit cultural events in the city, the concerts, to calm down in peace and go more often in the cabin with the girl friend.

**A new phenomenon that this study discovers is the benefits for well-being when using the technology for online social connectivity with friends.** For example, the 'Globe Trotter', during the pandemic, in his own apartment, discovered new ways to connect and communicate with friends virtually and create music as well as writing songs together online with friends. In addition, the 'Pragmatist' during the pandemic, while staying at her house alone, discovered that she could socialize with 16 relatives'

people by playing family games, table games, and other games in a virtual way. They had an enjoyable time when they could not meet in person because of the restrictions.

### 5.3 Strengths and weaknesses of the study

The strength of this study is that it was a new way of exploring the phenomenon of multilocality and unilocality within our society, considering the current Covid-19 challenges and relating the phenomenon to public health. The master thesis explored multilocality together with new terminologies such as unilocality, and connectivity, including some references to the power of life scape, which were proposed by (Lapintie, 2022).

What was new here is that the old impression of social isolation, which in previous research literature has been presented as a social problem in modern society, in this study, it has been replaced with the social disconnectivity. I think that social disconnectivity helps examine the impacts of multilocality and unilocality in Norway and beyond. When you are temporally disconnected, it means that you must connect in one way or another, with others by you self-taking the initiative to move to different places to meet others. You can call someone, have a chat, or meet a person in person, and that you need multiple places to choose from among a net or technology to make it possible to connect with others.

Another strength of this study is that there were representatives of resident multi-ethnic Norwegians and from all generations in the following line 40-45(1), 45-50(1), 50-55(1), 55-60(3), 60-65(2), 65-70 (2), which gave a rich life perspective of experience in multilocality and unilocality that could not otherwise be obtained from other sources.

The third strong feature of this study is that it concerns the discovery of different personal types, among multilocal knowledge people, which together with different types of psycho-social, familial, economic beliefs of the individuals gives a deep understanding of the ways in which the habits of multilocality and unilocality affect the health and well-being of individuals.

Among the weaknesses, this was an exploratory study conducted within a limited time, as there was a very large proportion of those willing to participate in it. These types of

modern multilocality or unilocality that are presented in this study, should be further explored within a larger temporal window and sample of participants.

#### 5.4 Future research suggestions

The future study could use mixed methods both qualitative analyses (semi-structured and in-depth interviews) by involving further academics from NMBU, other Norwegian campuses, and beyond the country, as well as quantitative methods (e.g., surveys).

It would be interesting to explore to what extent the organization has learned from its employees' experiences with unilocality and multilocality during and after the pandemic and what contingency plans are in place for protecting health, environment, and safety as well as the risk of social dysconnectivity of people during a new pandemic.

In this master thesis, I looked at the phenomenon of the institutionalization of home, which became an institution for several institutions during the pandemic and continued to develop as such after people started working regularly from their homes. The science of Modern Organizations must find help from researchers to discover these processes of institutionalization.

The master thesis suggests further research on how human resources staff and leaders in modern companies care for the well-being of different personality types, such as ambiverts, extroverts, introverts, and highly sensitive in the workplace. Also, research is needed to find out what these multilocal and/or unilocal employees need to have well-being in the office and other locations.

## 6 Concluding remarks

The study shows that there are several opportunities for choosing unilocality and multilocality. The stories of the multilocal/unilocal academics interviewed show that they have become rather flexible, but they are more attached to different places, and they want to continue like that, in line with the theories about the power of lifescape.

To sum up, multilocal knowledge workers such as academics and others deserve more attention from researchers, considering that they are growing up very rapidly (see the growth of remote working and flexibility at work in many countries), but they may be a vulnerable group, as described in this master thesis.

What is relevant for this study here is that the academics who participated in the study demonstrated to be rather resilient when moving from unilocal to multilocal habits and vice-versa, and when adapting to the Covid-19 challenges and related changes and restrictions.

To conclude, this master's thesis provides some insights into urban planning and public health in Norway.

### 6.1 Perspectives for urban planning in peripheral areas

The master thesis calls for planning decision-makers, companies, and local authorities to start to survey the working and living of multilocal individuals in the country to find out in which workplaces they prefer to work as a variety of home offices in modern times after the pandemic.

As there is debate in the research literature there are possibilities of the building of tele-cottages in rural areas. Considering that the group of this research lives in the country, they move multilocally mainly in the areas between the big cities and nature. Tele-cottages along hiking trails, promenades in forests and fields, Boat-tele-cabins along the waterfront promenades, transport hubs, shuttle buses, railroad for arrival and departure, and the like to encourage people to stay active moving and to spend more time outside instead of staying for a prolonged time to work from home.

In this way, they can combine relaxation in nature, or nature walks with a stop at a tele-cottage if they need to capture significant thoughts, or ideas or carry out some necessary work tasks. For employees who live in Oslo or other cities far from the NMBU university which is rural it is useful to build co-working spaces near the place of departure for multilocals in collaboration with other businesses and ensure that incomers can use them.

This will increase attachment to the workplace as well as reduce mobility time and costs for commuting- employees, but also will bring them variations and will prevent them from staying longer to work from home. NMBU University may also think of buildings new settlements of low-rise buildings with garden plots for young academics and families of young academics, allowing them to live together in larger local communities.

## 6.2 Perspectives for Norwegian public health

The rapid development of technology is increasingly being used to cover the lack of general practitioners in this country. Personal contact and traditional health conversation with the GP has largely been covered by virtual services which are both impersonal and can help to inhibit the Norwegian user of healthcare services. This brings more responsibility to public health organizations and requires new ideas on how to prevent certain individuals in society from dropping out of the community due to the experience of isolation.

Public health centers for adults can provide a solution when they offer a low-threshold "Open door" health service that offers confidential health interviews in combination with an Internet cafe, Games rooms, and Library, and can depict a health center. Development of existing health centers for children with combined health services for adults can bring together vulnerable groups such as lonely parents, or unhappy in their relationships individuals, young adults, pensioners, and other adults of various ages who may need an offer against isolation.

Public health coordinators employed by the municipality must cooperate across municipal and regional borders to maintain ongoing preventive work against isolation among academics. The occupational medicine office at the NMBU should offer mobile

health services to academic staff at their homes and all possible other places of residence. Mobile services require effective communication (including visual, verbal, and body communication) with all faculty members of the academic staff through weekly attaching with individuals and inquiries about their condition and face-to-face on-site activities when home visits require meeting the individual because it requires a health interview for to get out of the feeling of isolation. This is a measure to prevent social isolation among multilocal knowledge workers. Because multilocal knowledge workers are mobile and require mobile multilocal public health services.

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## 8 Appendix

### Consent form

*Consent can be given in writing (including electronically) or orally. NB! You must be able to document/demonstrate that you have given information and gained consent from project participants i.e. from the people whose personal data you will be processing (data subjects). As a rule, we recommend written information and written consent.*

- *For written consent on paper you can use this template*
- *For written consent which is collected electronically, you must chose a procedure that will allow you to demonstrate that you have gained explicit consent (read more on our website)*
- *If the context dictates that you should give oral information and gain oral consent (e.g. for research in oral cultures or with people who are illiterate) we recommend that you make a sound recording of the information and consent.*

*If a parent/guardian will give consent on behalf of their child or someone without the capacity to consent, you must adjust this information accordingly. Remember that the name of the participant must be included.*

*Adjust the checkboxes in accordance with participation in your project. It is possible to use bullet points instead of checkboxes. However, if you intend to process special categories of personal data (sensitive personal data) and/or one of the last four points in the list below is applicable to your project, we recommend that you use checkboxes. This because of the requirement of explicit consent.*

---

I have received and understood information about the project [*The impacts of multilocality of working and living on individuals' well-being: advantages and disadvantages for Norwegian public health in Covid-19 period*] and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in (*an interview*)

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. [*31 December 2022*]

#### 8.1 The text of the email:

My name is Anjela Hovrud, and I am a final year student in Public Health Science at the Norwegian University of Life Science. As part of my final master's degree assignment, I am planning to interview with NMBU's academic staff, and I was wondering if you could participate in this interview. The main aim of my study is to find out how multi-local working impacts the well-being and work satisfaction of employees.

The interview will last **45 to 60 minutes**. It can take place **in person or digitally** and in Norwegian or English. The interview is recorded in a large server and transcribed later for data analysis.

All the collected data is stored anonymously for the entire period of the study and will eventually get deleted.

Please do not hesitate to contact me by email if you need further information about my study or the interview.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration,

Best regards  
Anjela Hovrud

## 8.2 Interview Guide

### Multilocality of working

*Interview questionnaire (English)*

#### General information for profiling the respondents

*Please specify*

- your ages.....
- level of education..... which sector.....
- NMBU department where you work .....
- Where you live.....
- How often do you commute per week to the campus.....
- If you have a second home.....where (e.g. urban/rural context)

#### Interview Questions

##### **Theme 1: How do we understand multilocality today from the academic staff perspective?**

1. In which ways do you consider of being multilocal?
2. From what kind of places do you work?
3. How often do you work from different places?
4. How does the Covid-19- pandemic affect your multilocal habits and impact your well-being?
5. Can you specify in which ways?
6. Can you explain the benefits of being multilocal?
7. Can you explain the disadvantages of being multilocal?

##### **Theme 2: How does multilocal habit affect the well-being of academic staff?**

1. How do you consider multilocality can help you to adapt to new changes in working and living during and after Covid-19- restriction period?
2. Have you been more resilient to the changes since you are multilocal?

3. How do you consider your resilience?

The last question

Since I am exploring resilience, I am wondering whether and how multilocal experience from childhood has influenced my current multilocal habits.



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