


# Chapter 10

## Hybrid Working in the Canadian Federal Public Service

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### **ABSTRACT**

*With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, remote and hybrid working has become a necessity for both the private and public sectors. This study aims to explain general rules of hybrid working system in Canadian Federal public service in historical point of view and discuss its implementation through the example of The Department of National Defense of Canada. The literature review provides an overview of the concepts of teleworking, remote working and hybrid working and how hybrid working evolve in the public sector. In the second section, the study try to explain general characteristics of Canadian public service. In the last section of the study examines the historical background of Hybrid working and its current state in Canada and provides an implementation example from Department of National Defence. This study argues that, hybrid policies accepted by the Canadian Government have general recognition, but they create some disputes between the parties and the demands of parties with influence in the federal public service must be carefully considered.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Hybrid working in the public sector is still very new. Although concepts such as remote working, working from home, and hybrid working, frequently heard with the COVID-19 pandemic, historically, can be traced back to the Industrial Revolution

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-2312-1.ch010

(Felstead, 2022). Today, as a flexible working scheme, they have started to refer to the people working from home and/or outside the office with digital tools in the twenty-first century.

Although hybrid working seems to have come to the fore with the pandemic, the concept is much older. Flexible working schemes such as work from home, remote working, teleworking, hybrid working are now widely practiced in both the private and public sectors of most countries. With the pandemic, these schemes have become a necessity for both the private and public sectors. Flexible working schemes or arrangements have spread around the world due to the social restrictions as of public health measures (Economist Impact, 2021). After the easing pandemic restrictions on working life, governments had to take various measures to ensure employees return to their workplaces. Remote or hybrid working agreements were one of the measures taken by the governments.

Some of the countries like France, The UK and Canada have practices for remote working under the name of teleworking in the pre pandemic era. For example, France has a well-defined legal framework for telework, which extends to hybrid work arrangements since 2017. French Labor Law, requires a formal agreement between the employer and employee for remote work. Beside this, to protect the remote employees working rights, France has “Right to Disconnect Law” (Deskbird, 2025). Another example is The United Kingdom (UK). According to the UK’s statistics about working from home, 14.2 percent of the UK workforce mainly worked from home in 1998. Beside this, formal regulations have been in force since 2014 and updated in 2024 in the UK (Acas, 2024). And Canada is one of the earliest examples of the application of flexible working arrangements; such as teleworking, remote working and hybrid working for public sector. Government of Canada adopted “The Telework Policy” in 1999 for federal public services. (Government of Canada, 1999).

Canada is a unique country with its diverse culture and society. “Canadians come from a vast range of nations, races, religions and heritage. As a result, a diverse population is now one of the distinctive features of Canadian society” (Association for New Canadians, 2023). Canada's public service system is characterized by a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion. In this context, employment equality policies and different social practices to increase the participation of groups in public service, play an important role in the fair and accessible implementation of flexible working models such as remote and hybrid working.

Canada provides a rich example for the development and implementation of remote and hybrid working policies in public services. These models, which were adopted before and especially with the COVID-19 pandemic, were integrated into public policies by various public institutions. In this respect, Canada’s perspective of remote and hybrid working, provides a comprehensive and up-to-date examination of its transformation in the context of public administration. Beside this, Canada's

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