

The connection between work during non-work time and extended availability for work of servants in the public sector

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Abstract

Nowadays, many societal changes are affecting organisations and employees and the distribution of their time. The way work is done is changing increasingly, which is drastically affecting the organisation and duration of employees' work time and rest time, as they work during non-work time. As a general social problem, the so-called "Always on culture" is emerging. Existing research shows that employees experience extended availability for work, which includes certain forms of behaviour, as a result of working during non-work time. These have a negative impact on the well-being and health of employees, as well as on the work–life balance and the increased incidence of work–life conflict. Research also confirms that it is not only societal changes that influence employees' extended availability for work, but also a variety of reasons that are immanent in organisations and employees that influence their decision to work during non-work time. Servants of public sector organisations and bodies are no exception, as the environment of public administration and the wider public sector is becoming increasingly complex and unpredictable. A review of the literature and sources also reveals that there is a lack of research involving servants in public administration and public sector. Based on this, the doctoral dissertation will include research within administrative science which will be focused on the organisational aspect and, more narrowly, on the management of human resources in Slovenian public sector bodies and organisations. The focus of the research will be on the issue of performing work during non-work time and extended availability of employees for work and the reasons for extended availability of employees for work. The purpose of this doctoral dissertation is to investigate and establish the correlation between working during non-work time and extended availability for work and the reasons for extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. The objectives of the doctoral dissertation are to identify and critically evaluate work during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants from an organisational and human resource management perspective, to present the results of a survey carried out with public servants in separate groups according to the field of work or the Standard Classification of Activities in the Slovenian public sector and to develop a model of the connection between working during non-work time and employees' extended availability for work and to provide guidelines for the appropriate distribution of work time of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. In the doctoral dissertation, we will use the quantitative method to carry out the planned research, and we will design our own online survey questionnaire based on existing questionnaires. The target group of the doctoral dissertation research will be public servants in the Slovenian public sector. The main criterion for stratified sampling will be employment by activities or employment organisation in the Slovenian public sector. We expect at least 5% of the total population of public servants in the Slovenian public sector to participate in the survey.

Points for Practitioners

The originality and topicality of the doctoral dissertation topic is reflected in the lack of scientific research on the connection between working during non-work time and extended availability for work in the public sector, as this research practically can't be found. The theoretical contributions of the doctoral dissertation to science will be the definition of working during non-work time, extended availability for work and organisational and individual reasons for extended availability for work of public servants in the public sector, and a structural model of the connection between working during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector will be formulated. The empirical contribution will be the results of the doctoral dissertation research, based on which we expect to confirm the positive and negative relationship between working during non-work time and employees' extended availability for work in the Slovenian public sector. In this context, we also expect to confirm the differences in the Standard Classification of Activities (SKD) and the socio-demographic characteristics of public servants in the Slovenian public sector, to clarify and justify the organisational and individual reasons and their impact on the extended availability for work. The methodological contribution of the doctoral dissertation will be the development of a measurement instrument (a survey questionnaire), which will be designed to measure work during

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non-work time and extended availability for work and reasons in public sector practice. The practical contribution of the doctoral dissertation will be the formulation of guidelines and measures to improve the management of human resources in the public sector in the area of appropriate distribution of work time.

Key words: extended availability for work, non-work time, public sector in Slovenia, public servants in the public sector, reasons for extended availability for work

1 Introduction

In organisations, employees face many changes and challenges that affect the way they organise and do their work. The environment of public administration and the wider public sector is also becoming more and more unstable, which is why, in the context of public administration reforms, more and more attention is being paid to the area of human resources management and thus to the overall well-being of servants in the public administration and the public sector (Demmke, 2020). In Slovenia, the public sector is made up of all public and private organisations that ensure the priority satisfaction of public interests through the distribution of public services and publicly available goods at national, regional or local level (Tičar & Rakar, 2011). According to the Public Employees Act (ZJU³), the public sector is made up of "state authorities and administrations of self-governing local communities, public agencies, public funds, public institutions and public economic institutions" and "other entities governed by public law that are indirect users of the state budget or the budgets of local communities". According to Pečarič (2011), the public sector and public administration are interlinked and interdependent, and the public sector includes public administration in a broad sense. In functional terms, public administration is part of the decision-making process on public affairs, which takes place at executive level, and in organisational terms, it is a set of authorities and organisations that provide professional bases for political decision-making, and directly implement political decisions (Virant, 2009). The term 'public servants', in the foreign literature, or more commonly, public servants in the public sector, is used to refer to individuals who enter into an employment relationship to carry out an administrative activity (Haček, 2015). However, the definition of a public servant is broad, as it includes all employees of state authorities, municipalities and legal persons governed by public law other than public companies (Virant & Rakar, 2018). The ZJU defines senior public servants, officials and technical and professional public servants in more detail. In addition to general labour law provisions such as the Employment Relationships Act (ZDR-1⁴), the specificities of the public administration system and the status of public servants are regulated in the ZJU, the Public Sector Salary System Act (ZSPJS⁵), sectoral laws applicable to specific professions and collective agreements⁶, and the internal acts of individual bodies and entities governed by public law (Virant, 2009).

Flexible work arrangements are constantly being implemented in the workplace (Demmke, 2020; Korunka, Kubicek & Risak, 2018), as the use of information and communication technology (ICT) allows employees to work at any time, including during rest periods or during non-work time (Eurofound, 2021; Mar & Buzeti, 2021; Eurofound, 2020; DeFilippis et al., 2020; McCulley, 2020; Reisenwitz, 2020; WEF, 2020; ILO & Eurofound, 2019; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019; Vayre & Vonthron, 2019; Houdmont, Elliot-Davies & Donnelly, 2018; Eurofound, 2016), and as a consequence the societal problem "Always on" culture is emerging (Von Bergen, Bressler & Proctor, 2019; Voss & Riede, 2018; McDowall & Kinman, 2017). The concept of "Extended Availability for Work" or "Work-Related Extended Availability – WREA" or "Excessive Availability for Work – EAW" is used in literature to refer to employees who are working during non-work time, when rest periods are formally in place (Thörel, Pauls & Göritz,

³Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 63/07 – official consolidated version, 65/08, 69/08 – ZTFI-A, 69/08 – ZZavar-E, 40/12 – ZUJF, 158/20 – ZIntPK-C.

⁴Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 21/13, 78/13 – corr., 47/15 – ZZSDT, 33/16 – PZ-F, 52/16, 15/17 – Dec. of the CC, 22/19 – ZPosS and 81/19.

⁵Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 108/09 – official consolidated version, 13/10, 59/10, 85/10, 107/10, 35/11 – ORZSPJS49a, 27/12 – dec. of the CC, 40/12 – ZUJF, 46/13, 25/14 – ZFU, 50/14, 95/14 – ZUPPJS15, 82/15, 23/17 – ZDOdv, 67/17 and 84/18.

⁶Collective Agreement for the Public Sector (KPJS), Collective Agreement for the Education Sector in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Police Officers, Collective Agreement for Non-Economic Activities in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Persons Employed in Health Care, Collective Agreement for Doctors and Dentists in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Cultural Activities in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Research Activities.

2020; Cooper & Lou, 2019; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Dettmers, Bamberg & Seffzek, 2016). This concept is multi-layered in nature, encompassing certain behaviour forms of employees (Cooper & Lu, 2019). There are various reasons why employees work during non-work time and for the extended availability for work. In literature these are divided (Lutz, Schneider & Vorderer, 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Schmoll, 2019; Schlachter et al., 2018) into organisational reasons, which arise in the context of the socio-normative context, work characteristics and processes, and individual reasons, which are linked to employees, as they are influenced by employees' personality traits and personal choices. It is therefore particularly important that human resources management takes into account the appropriate distribution of work time and rest time for employees (ILO, 2019; van Muiswinkel, in UNECE, 2013), which must be consistent with the minimum standards for the legal regulation of work time.

In the European Union (EU) and Slovenia, minimum standards regarding the organisation and duration of working hours and rest periods are laid down in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) conventions, the European Social Charter adopted within the framework of the Council of Europe and European Union acts, and Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (Šenčur Peček, 2018). In accordance with the European Directive 2003/88/EC⁷ and ZDR-1, employees in Slovenia are required to perform their work duties and be at the employer's disposal during work time, which may not exceed 48 hours per week, including overtime hours⁸. In addition, employees are entitled to a minimum daily rest period of 11 hours between two working days, a minimum weekly rest period of 35 hours and the right to annual leave⁹. In addition to ZDR-1, working hours and rest periods for employees in the Slovenian public sector are regulated in more detail in the Decree on working time in state administration bodies¹⁰, in the Collective Agreements of individual activities or areas of work, as well as in the internal acts (regulations) of each body and in the employment contract.

The doctoral dissertation will include research within administrative science which will be focused on the organisational aspect and, more narrowly, on the management of human resources in Slovenian public sector bodies and organisations. In the context of the study of human resource management, the focus of the research will be on the issue of work during the rest period of public servants, for which the doctoral thesis will use the term 'non-work time', and on the issue of extended availability for work of public servants. In addition, we will focus on identifying the characteristics of organisational and individual reasons on a general level, while justifying their impact on the increase or decrease of the extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector.

In this paper, we will first summarise the findings of existing research in the field of work during non-work time and extended availability for work and the reasons why employees are extendedly available for work. We will also explain the research questions and the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses of the doctoral dissertation. This will be followed by a presentation of the research design and a description of the research methods to be used in the doctoral dissertation. Based on the findings of the existing research, the discussion will provide an opinion on the topic of the doctoral dissertation, and finally, it will also provide an outlook for further research on the topic of the doctoral dissertation.

2 Literature review

Employees in organisations respond differently to situations in the work environment (Buzeti, 2020) and it is therefore not surprising that the issue of working during non-work time is highlighted in existing research (Eurofound, 2021; Mar & Buzeti, 2021; Eurofound, 2020; Eurofound & ILO, 2019; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019; Vayre & Vonhron, 2019; Houdmont et al., 2018; Eurofound, 2016; Gerich, 2015; Hesketh, Cooper and Ivy, 2014). In addition, research (Thörel et al., 2020; Cooper & Lu, 2019; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Palm, Seubert & Glaser, 2019; Gadeyne et al., 2018; Dettmers, 2017; Dettmers et al., 2016) determined that employees who work during non-work time are extendedly available for work and that there are a number of reasons that influence the occurrence of extended availability for work among employees (Nöhammer and Stichlberger 2019; Palm et al., 2019; Schlachter et al., 2018; Taylor, 2018). However, after reviewing and analysing the existing literature and sources, we

⁷ From Article 3 to Article 5.

⁸ From Article 2 to Article 5 of European Directive 2003/88/EC.

⁹ From Article 3 to Article 7 of European Directive 2003/88/EC, from Article 155 to Article 156 of ZDR-1.

¹⁰ Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, Nos. 115/07, 122/07 – corr., 28/16, 40/17 and 44/19.

find that there is not much research involving servants in the public sector. Therefore, below are the general findings of the research gathered.

2.1 Overview of research findings in the field of working during non-work time and extended availability of employees for work

Non-work time is of utmost importance for employees as it is used to psychologically detach and recover from work, which also has an impact on their well-being and health (Sonnetag & Niessen, 2020). Non-work time includes periods when employees are entitled to daily rest (time before the start of official working hours, e.g. in the morning, or after the end of official working hours, e.g. in the evening or at night), time at weekends or the corresponding weekly rest period (Mar & Buzeti, 2021; Eurofound & ILO, 2017), and annual leave (CIPD, 2020; Houdmont et al., 2018). However, according to Eurofound and ILO (2019), 22% of respondents from the European Union confirmed that they work during non-work time, and 23% reported that at least once a month their daily rest period lasted less than 11 hours. The Eurofound (2016) report also shows that in Slovenia, more than half (53%) of those surveyed in the public administration, education and health sectors worked during non-work time. With the declaration of the COVID-19 epidemic in 2020 and the introduction of measures to protect the health of employees and the order to conduct work from home, 57.2% of those surveyed in Slovenia, including servants in the public sector, confirmed that they had worked during non-work time (Eurofound, 2021). A similar finding was also observed in the survey (Mar & Buzeti, 2021), where 80% of the surveyed public servants in the Slovenian public administration confirmed that they work during non-work time (Mar & Buzeti, 2021). In general, public servants in public sector and employees in private sector organisations most frequently work during non-work time in the afternoon after the end of official working hours, during weekends and late in the evening (Mar & Buzeti, 2021; Reisenwitz, 2020; Eurofound & ILO, 2019; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019). Employees also work in the morning, before the start of official working hours, on public holidays, during annual leave and also during sick leave (Mar & Buzeti, 2021; CIPD, 2020; Houdmont et al., 2018; Hesketh et al., 2014).

The term "extended availability for work" is used in the literature (Thörel et al., 2020; Cooper & Lu, 2019; Dettmers et al., 2016) to refer to employees who work during non-work time. The latter means the state of availability of employees for work-related matters formally during non-work time, but during this time (e.g. due to the possibility of using ICT) the employees respond to work requirements (for various reasons) and perform work obligations. The concept of extended availability for work is multi-layered and includes certain behaviour forms such as working long hours with overtime¹¹, the concept of presentism, the concept of "leaveism"¹², and working during non-work time at another location (Cooper & Lu, 2019).

Working during non-work time and extended availability for work are characteristic especially for employees in managerial positions (Vayre & Vonthron, 2019; Houdmont et al., 2018), employees in service activities (Lutz et al., 2020; Eurofound, 2017) and employees who conducted work remotely (McCulley, 2020; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019; Thulin, Vilhelmson & Johansson, 2019). In terms of socio-demographic factors, the employees with extended availability are in particular those working full-time (Eurofound, 2017), and they are more likely to be male (Eurofound, 2021; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019), as they are more likely to be better paid and more focused on career progression and professional development (Eurofound, 2021) than women and younger employees (Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019), who are more likely to work during non-work time compared to older employees (Andrade & Matias, 2021). Research has also found that employees with greater autonomy over their distribution of work time and work schedules find constant accessibility through ICT to be beneficial, as they find it easier to influence their well-being, and they are more productive and efficient in their work (Farivar & Richardson, 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Schlachter et al., 2018). However, employees with extended availability for work have also experienced a deterioration in their well-being and health (Thörel et al., 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger,

¹¹ Long working hours are working hours which exceed the standard work week of a full-time employee. Overtime refers to hours which exceed the employee's contractual hours. Accordingly, long working hours by definition imply a certain amount of overtime, but the reverse is not always true, as an employee with a part-time contract may also work overtime (Beckers et al., 2007).

¹² The concept of "leaveism" first mentioned in 2013 by Hesketh and Cooper. In case of health problems, the respondents used leave (dimension 1) instead of sick leave and performed work tasks during non-work time, which they were not able to complete during working hours (dimension 2), as they were convinced that they would make up for missed work (dimension 3).

2019; Dettmers et al., 2016), alongside changes in their behaviour (Cooper & Lu, 2019; Palm et al., 2019), and they also experienced an inability to psychologically detach from work (Belkin, Becker & Conroy, 2020; Thörel et al., 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019) and an increase in emotional exhaustion (Eurofound, 2020; Lutz et al., 2020). These employees are more likely to experience conflicts between work and family life (Belkin et al., 2020; Thörel et al., 2020; Palm et al., 2019; Dettmers, 2017), and their job satisfaction is reduced also (Belkin et al., 2020). Some are also considering resigning (Taylor, 2018).

In context of research question 1: "Is there a link between working during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector?" the doctoral dissertation will therefore include the set hypothesis 1: "There is a positive relationship between working during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector". In addition, based on research question 2: "What are the differences between public servants according to their field of work or activity according to the SKD classification, job, employment status, gender and age?" the hypothesis 2 will be set: "There are differences among public servants in the Slovenian public sector in terms of working during non-work time and extended availability for work according to their field of work or activity according to the SKD classification, job title, employment status, gender and age."

2.2 Presentation of research findings on organisational and individual reasons for extended availability of employees for work

Employees who are active during non-work time are influenced by a number of reasons (Thörel et al., 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Schlachter et al., 2018). Societal changes or organisational and individual reasons to be constantly available and to work during non-work time cause employees to be extendedly available for work (Thörel et al., 2020; Schlachter et al., 2018). As can be seen in Table 1, employees are extendedly available for work due to the social-normative organisational context and work-related characteristics and work processes, and there are demands from superiors, colleagues and customers for their constant availability (Thörel et al., 2020; Schlachter et al., 2018). Employees' decisions to work during non-work time are also influenced by their personal characteristics (e.g. self-discipline, hard work ethics, commitment to work, career orientation) and personal choices in the form of motives and individual preferences (Thörel et al., 2020; Palm et al., 2019; Taylor, 2018; Schlachter, 2017). But Thörel et al. (2020) point out the shortcomings of the theoretical basis of the reasons for employees' extended availability for work.

Table 1: Organisational and individual reasons

Organisational reasons	Individual reasons
Job characteristics, which include expectations and supervision of managers, colleagues and customers of the constant availability of employees.	Motives and conscious choice of employees.
Changes in the organisation of work and work processes.	High professional ambitions and career orientation.
Increased scope and amount of work.	Desire for promotion.
The flexibility of work.	Desire for constant information about events in the organisation.
Work-related contacts (sending emails and other short messages, business calls during non-work time).	Way of thinking.
Timely performance of work tasks.	Sense of responsibility and duty.
Fulfilment of set results and goals.	Uncertainty and fear of losing their job.

Source: Own

In the doctoral dissertation, we will therefore in context of research question 3: "What are the reasons behind the extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector?" set a hypothesis and two sub-hypotheses. In hypothesis 3: "There are organisational and individual reasons why public servants who work during non-work time are extendedly available for work." the following will be set:

- Sub-hypothesis 3.1: "For public servants who work during non-work time, certain organisational reasons (the possibility of using ICT, increased workload, work intensity, work demands and expectations from superiors, colleagues and customers and time pressures, changed work organisation and work processes, and flexible working) and individual reasons (employees' conscious choice to work during non-work time, high professional ambition, desire for career advancement, a strong sense of belonging to the organisation, a sense of duty to do the job, responsibility to do the job, a sense of insecurity and fear of losing the job, the ability of employees to make decisions not to conduct work tasks during non-work time and not to respond to work demands from superiors, colleagues and customers via ICT, and the ability to psychologically detach themselves from work during non-work time) all have an impact on increasing their extended availability for work."

- Sub-hypothesis 3.2: "For public servants who work during non-work time, certain organisational reasons (the possibility to use ICT, increased workload, work intensity, work demands and expectations from superiors, colleagues and customers and time pressures, changed work organisation and work processes, and flexible working) and individual reasons (employees' conscious choice to work during non-work time, high professional ambition, desire for career advancement, a strong sense of belonging to the organisation, a sense of duty to do the job, responsibility to do the job, a sense of job insecurity and fear of losing the job, the ability of employees to choose not to conduct work tasks during non-work time and not to respond to work demands from superiors, colleagues and customers via ICT, and the ability to psychologically detach themselves from work during non-work time) have an impact on reducing their extended availability for work."

3 Methodology

In the doctoral dissertation, we will use the quantitative method to carry out the planned research, as we want to obtain accurate and reliable data on the number of public servants in the Slovenian public sector who work during non-work time, at which time periods during non-work time they most often conduct work, and whether they are extendedly available for work as a result, as well as the reasons for extended availability for work.

3.1 Research design and description of the research methods of the doctoral dissertation

In the doctoral dissertation research we will design our own online survey questionnaire as a research instrument, based on the questionnaires already used (Eurofound, 2020; Mohd Fauzi et al., 2020; Eurofound, 2017; Hesketh et al., 2014; Siegrist, Li & Montano, 2014; Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007; Kreiner, 2006). The survey questionnaire will consist of four content sets, with open- and closed-ended questions.

The first part of the questionnaire will consist of socio-demographic questions. In the second set, questions will be developed from previous research (Eurofound, 2020; Eurofound, 2017; Hesketh et al., 2014) to obtain data on how often and during which time periods public servants work during non-work time. The third set will cover questions on extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. The "WANTS Questionnaire"¹³ will measure their work activities during non-work time and the "Recovery Experience Questionnaire"¹⁴ will measure experiences of their ability to psychologically detach from work. To measure organisations' views on extended availability of for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector, the "Perceived Segmentation Norm Scale"¹⁵ will provide data on their integrative behaviour and the "Effort-Reward Imbalance Questionnaire"¹⁶ will provide data on the complexity of the work environment on the workload of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. In the fourth part of the questionnaire, two sets of statements will be developed to obtain information on organisational and individual reasons and their impact on the extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. In the first set on organisational reasons, we will measure the organisational reasons that cause public servants to be extendedly available for work, using statements from the Schlachter (2017) research. We will measure the impact of an increase in the volume and quantity of work on public servants using the statements from Eurofound (2020) and the impact of expectations and work demands from superiors, colleagues and customers on public servants using the "Temporal flexibility requirements scale" (Höge, 2011, in Palm et al., 2019). In the second set on individual reasons, we will use the statements from the Nöhammer and Stichlberger (2019) and Schlachter (2017) research to measure the existence of individual reasons that cause public servants to be extendedly

¹³ Work-Related Activities during Non-Work Time Scale (Mohd Fauzi et al., 2020).

¹⁴ Sonnentag & Fritz, 2007.

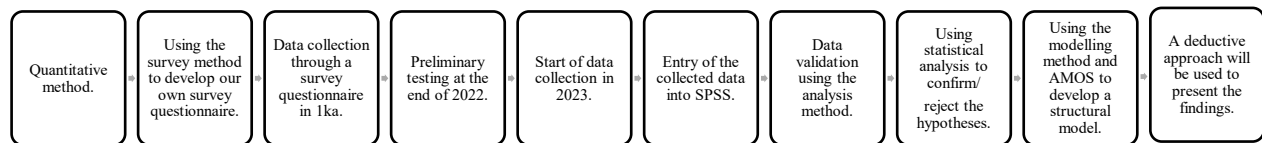
¹⁵ Kreiner, 2006.

¹⁶ Siegrist et al., 2014.

available for work and also use the "Principal Constructs with Items" (Schmoll, 2019) to measure the degree of behavioural change of individuals during non-work time. With the "Boundary control scale" (Kossek, 2012, in Palm et al., 2019) we will measure their ability to control their own decisions and, using the statements from IAG Report 1/2012 (2012), the degree to which public servants are able to cope with the time pressures of work tasks.

In Chart 1 we present the process of using the research tool (method) to conduct the survey and the process of analysing and processing the survey data and modelling. To collect the data, we will upload the survey questionnaire to the Ika online tool. The latter will be pre-tested (end of 2022) on a defined survey sample (at least 100 public servants) and adjusted accordingly in case of perceived shortcomings. In accordance with the permissions obtained from the heads of public sector bodies and organisations, we will start collecting data (in 2023) by individual groups of public servants in the public sector and then enter the collected data into the SPSS software package. To test hypothesis 1, we will use the data from the second and third set of our questionnaire; for hypothesis 2, we will use the data from the first, second and third sets; and for hypothesis 3 and sub-hypotheses 3.1, 3.2, we will use the data from the fourth set of our questionnaire, and we will use the analysis method to process, analyse and compare them with each other. Within the statistical method, we will use various statistical analyses such as regression analyses, T-tests and other statistical forms that will allow us to present the results in an appropriate way and on the basis of which we expect to confirm/reject the hypotheses and sub-hypotheses of the doctoral dissertation. Using the AMOS software package, we will use the modelling method to build a structural model of the relationship between working during non-work time and the extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector. We will use the deductive approach to present the findings of our research on the relationship between working during non-work time and extended availability for work and the reasons for extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector.

Chart 1: Presentation of the research process and the application of research methods in the doctoral dissertation



Source: Own

The target group of the doctoral dissertation research will be 171,473¹⁷ public servants in the Slovenian public sector. Since, in addition to the ZDR-1, working hours and non-work time of public servants in the public sector are laid down in the Decree on working time in state administration bodies and in the Collective Agreements¹⁸ of the individual activities, the target group of our study will be divided according to the fields of work or activities¹⁹. The first group will include public servants in the public administration and defence and compulsory social security sectors. In general, this group includes the activities of the public administration and the economic and social policy of the community, which includes the general activities of the public administration, the regulation of healthcare, education, cultural and other social services (except compulsory social security) and specific activities for the whole social community, such as the regulation of foreign affairs, defence, the judiciary, activities for public order and safety, protection and rescue in the event of fire and disaster, and the activity of compulsory social security (SKD,

¹⁷ 31 August 2020. Some data could not be obtained on the OPSI portal.

¹⁸ Collective Agreement for the Public Sector (KPJS), Collective Agreement for the Education Sector in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Police Officers, Collective Agreement for Non-Economic Activities in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Persons Employed in Health Care, Collective Agreement for Doctors and Dentists in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Cultural Activities in the Republic of Slovenia, Collective Agreement for Research Activities.

¹⁹ Standard Classification of Activities 2008, SKD (2010).

2010). In more detail, according to the SKD (2010), the general activity of public administration comprises the executive and legislative services of national, regional and local authorities, the management and control of public finance and taxation, the implementation of the national budget, the management of public finances and public debt, the management of basic research and development policy and the administration of the related funds, the management and implementation of activities in the field of general economic and social planning, and the provision of statistical services at the various levels of the state, as well as the management of public funds that raise their resources on the financial markets. The second group will include public servants in education, the third group will include public servants in healthcare and social work, the fourth group will include public servants in cultural, entertainment and recreational activities, and the fifth group will include public servants in extraterritorial organisations and bodies. The main criterion for stratified sampling will be employment by activities or employment organisation in the public sector. We expect at least 5% of the total population of public servants in the Slovenian public sector to participate in the survey.

4 Results of previous research

Based on our analysis of the literature and sources of the research field of the doctoral dissertation, we find that the majority of research on working during non-work time and extended availability for work involves employees of the private sector (Andrade & Matias, 2021; Lutz et al., 2020; Craig Field & Chan, 2018; Hadjisolomou, Newsome & Cunningham, 2017). However, there is also some rare research conducted with public servants of the public sector (deSpiegelaere & Piasna, 2017), especially in public administration (Mar & Buzeti, 2021), education (Bauwens et al., 2020; Haque et al., 2020; Garrick et al., 2017), police (Houdmont et al., 2018; Gerich, 2015; Hesketh et al., 2014) and healthcare (Fauzi Mohd et al., 2020; Bavafa & Terwiesch, 2019).

In the context of research question 1: "Is there a link between working during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector?" and the set hypothesis 1: "There is a positive relationship between working during non-work time and extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector." it is found that employees in private sector and public servants in public sector bodies and organisations work at different times during non-work time (in the morning before the start of working hours, late in the afternoon after the end of working hours, in the evening, during weekends, holidays and sick leave) (Mar & Buzeti, 2021; Reisenwitz, 2020; Eurofound & ILO, 2019; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019). For these employees, however, boundary theory (Bergman & Gardiner, 2007; Clark, 2005; Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000) suggests that the permeability of the boundaries between their work and private lives and their associated social roles is increased. Therefore, the objective of hypothesis 1 is to clarify whether public servants in the Slovenian public sector work during non-work time and during which time periods they most frequently work during non-work time. In addition, we will argue whether work during non-work time makes public servants in the Slovenian public sector extendedly available for work and confirm or refute the existence of a positive correlation between work during non-work time and extended availability for work in the Slovenian public sector.

Based on research question 2: "What are the differences between public servants according to their field of work or activity according to the SKD classification, job, employment status, gender and age?" and hypothesis 2: "There are differences among public servants in the Slovenian public sector in terms of working during non-work time and extended availability for work according to their field of work or activity according to the SKD classification, job title, employment status, gender and age." studies (Andrade & Matias, 2021; Eurofound, 2021; Lutz et al., 2020; McCulley, 2020; Gschwind & Vargas, 2019; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Vayre & Vonthron, 2019; Thulin et al., 2019; Houdmont et al., 2018; Eurofound, 2017) confirmed that work during non-work time and extended availability for work depend on socio-demographic factors. These include the organisation of employment, gender, degree of education, age, employment status, length of service in the organisation of current employment, agreement on working time in the employment contract and the employees' field of work. In this context, the objective of hypothesis 2 is to demonstrate and explain the differences between public servants in the Slovenian public sector. At the same time, we want to determine whether the differences (between activities according to the SKD classification and the socio-demographic characteristics of public servants) are significantly related to working during non-work time and to the extended availability for work.

In addition, the results of existing research (Lutz et al., 2020; Nöhammer & Stichlberger, 2019; Schmoll, 2019; Schlachter et al., 2018; Taylor, 2018; Dettmers, 2017; Dettmers et al., 2016) in the context of research question 3:

"What are the reasons behind the extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector?" and hypothesis 3: "There are organisational and individual reasons why public servants who work during non-work time are extendedly available for work." suggest that organisational reasons, which arise within the socio-normative context, work characteristics and processes, and individual reasons, which are linked to employees as they are influenced by their personal characteristics and personal choices, have an impact on employees' extended availability for work. Therefore, the aim of hypothesis 3 is to test and identify, at a general level, the characteristics of organisational and individual reasons. While also, based on the sub-hypothesis 3.1: "For public servants who work during non-work time, certain organisational reasons (the possibility of using ICT, increased workload, work intensity, work demands and expectations from superiors, colleagues and customers and time pressures, changed work organisation and work processes, and flexible working) and individual reasons (employees' conscious choice to work during non-work time, high professional ambition, desire for career advancement, a strong sense of belonging to the organisation, a sense of duty to do the job, responsibility to do the job, a sense of insecurity and fear of losing the job, the ability of employees to make decisions not to conduct work tasks during non-work time and not to respond to work demands from superiors, colleagues and customers via ICT, and the ability to psychologically detach themselves from work during non-work time) all have an impact on increasing their extended availability for work." and sub-hypothesis 3.2: "For public servants who work during non-work time, certain organisational reasons (the possibility to use ICT, increased workload, work intensity, work demands and expectations from superiors, colleagues and customers and time pressures, changed work organisation and work processes, and flexible working) and individual reasons (employees' conscious choice to work during non-work time, high professional ambition, desire for career advancement, a strong sense of belonging to the organisation, a sense of duty to do the job, responsibility to do the job, a sense of job insecurity and fear of losing the job, the ability of employees to choose not to conduct work tasks during non-work time and not to respond to work demands from superiors, colleagues and customers via ICT, and the ability to psychologically detach themselves from work during non-work time) have an impact on reducing their extended availability for work." to establish the impact of organisational and individual reasons on the increase or decrease of extended availability for work of public servants in the Slovenian public sector.

5 Conclusion

Although there is little research involving public servants in the public administration and the wider public sector, it is confirmed in practice and in the existing literature that they work during non-work time, and as a consequence are extendedly available for work because of organisational and individual reasons. For this reason, within administrative science, it is necessary to pay particular attention to the functioning of the administrative organisation and to place the management of human resources at the forefront of the study. Employees and their resources are the essential part of any organisation (Stewart & Brown, 2020), and the leader plays an important role by influencing and helping employees through his/her behaviour (Buzeti, 2021). For this reason, our research in this doctoral dissertation will focus on a detailed examination of the work time of public servants in the public sector and the existence of a link between working during non-work time and their extended availability for work, identifying the characteristics and determining the impact of organisational and individual reasons that make public servants in the Slovenian public sector extendedly available for work.

6 References

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