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The Digitalization of Work and the (Im)Mobilities/Boundaries Paradox of IT Specialists: The End of Highly Skilled Migration?

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Research Questions

This study investigates the impact of digitalization on IT specialists' work and mobilities, as well as on the organizational arrangements in the context of Switzerland, particularly following the outbreak of the pandemic :

1) At the organizational level, we explore how boundaries are redefined within organizations as a result of the intensification of virtual remote work as well as the challenges of these new boundaries for organizations and their members;

2) At the Individual level, we look at the remote work and im/mobility practices of IT professionals working remotely for Swiss-based companies.

Key Findings

Findings highlight an increasing need for virtual remote work stimulated by the Covid-19 as well as the increasing flexibilization of work, but also identify limits and constraints of virtual remote work practices:

At the organizational level:
- Spatial, temporal, organizational boundaries
- Identification and culture
- Managerial challenges
- Current and future work arrangements

At the individual level :
- Work-life boundaries Paradox
- The "Controlled Freedom" Paradox
- The Im/Mobility Paradox
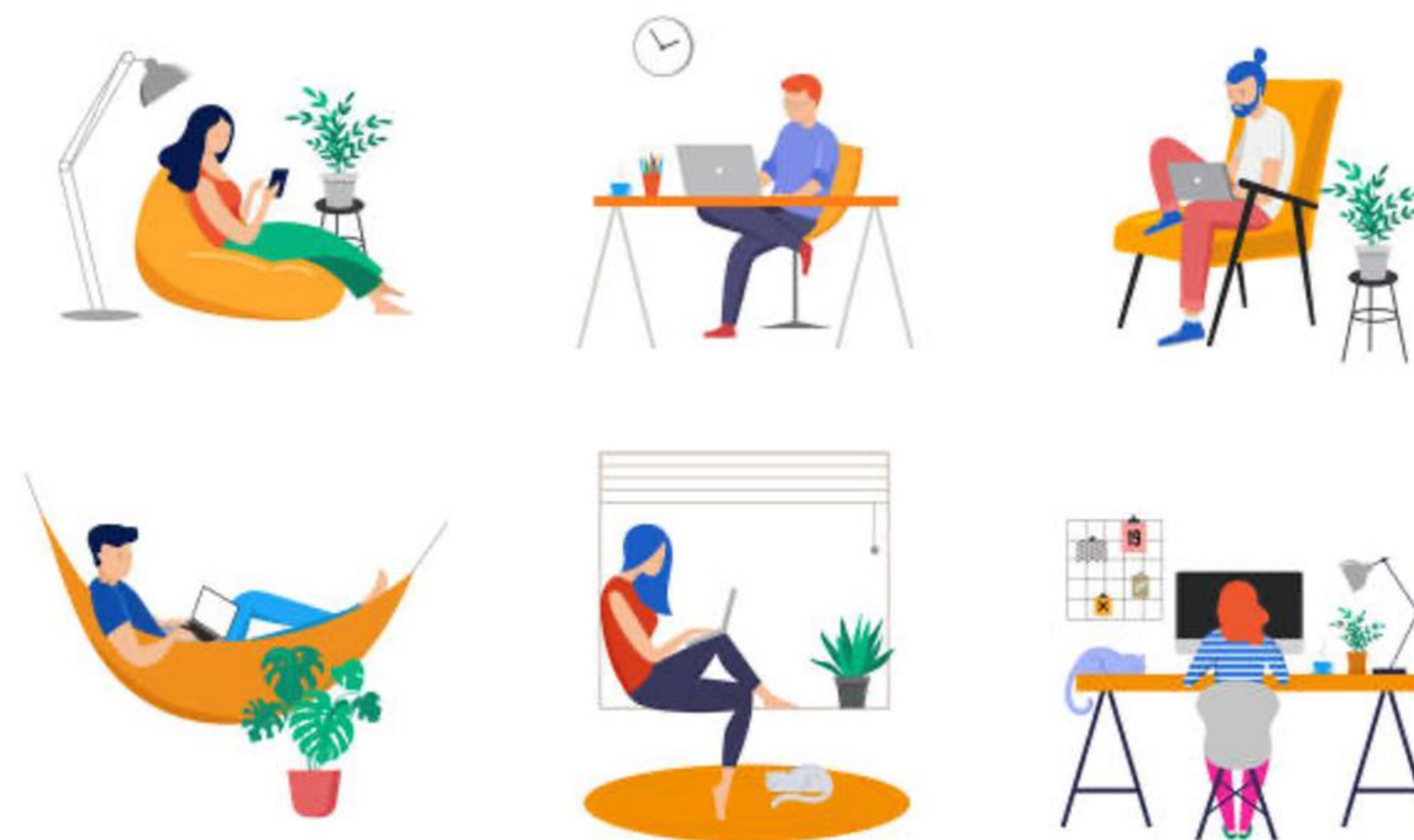
Main Outputs

Papers and scientific reports:
Davoine, E., Salamin, X., Audrin, B., Cangià, F., Tawfik, S., (November 2021): "Pratiques virtuelles et nouvelles frontières organisationnelles : quelles tendances en Suisse romande?" *HR Today, Vol. 6/2021, pp. 38-39.*

Cangià, F., Tawfik, S., Davoine, E., Salamin, X., (under review) "From 'digital nomadism' to 'rooted digitalism': The virtual work and (im)mobilities of IT professionals in times of Covid-19" *Transitions Journal*
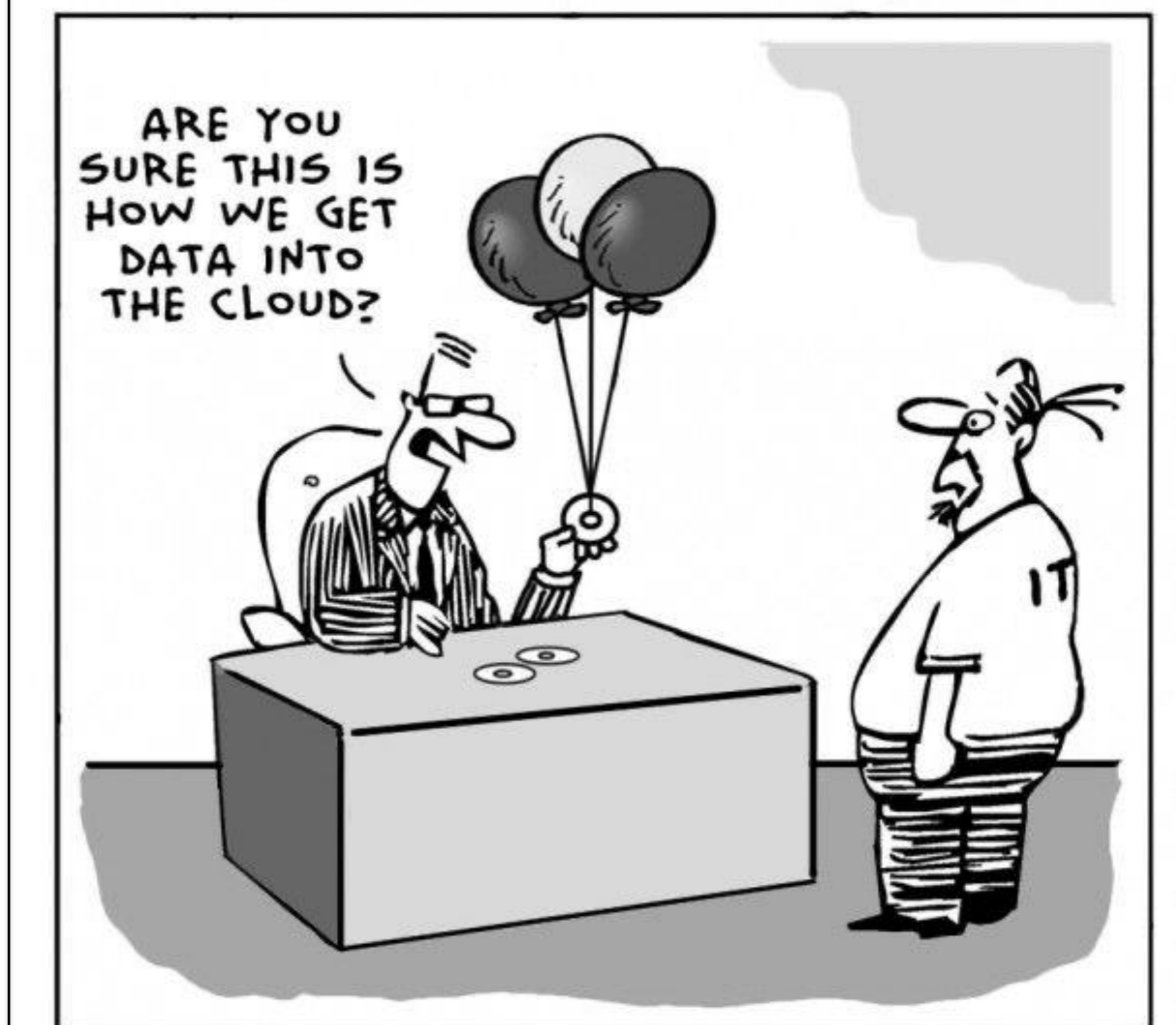
Davoine, E., Salamin, X., Cangià, F., Tawfik, S. (under review). "Virtualisation des pratiques de travail et redéfinition des frontières au travail : une étude prospective en Suisse romande", Revue Internationale de Psychosociologie et de gestion des Comportements Organisationnels (RIPCO).

Davoine, E., Salamin, X., Tawfik, S. Audrin, B., Cangià, F. (2021), " Nouvelles virtualités – nouvelles (im)mobilités. Quels enjeux pour la relation au travail ? ", Research report, University of Fribourg and Congrès RH Romand.

Presentations at conferences:
Davoine, E., Salamin, X., Cangià, F., Tawfik, S. (2022). "Virtualization of work practices and redefinition of boundaries at work: a prospective study in French-speaking Switzerland", 37th EIASM Workshop on Strategic HRM, 21-22 April 2022, University of Minho, Portugal.

Cangià, F., (2021). Australian Mobilities Research Network (AusMob) Symposium 2021 Transforming Mobilities. Paper: "From 'digital nomadism' to 'rooted digitalism': The virtual work and (im)mobilities of IT professionals in times of Covid-19".

Method

	IT Managers	HR Managers	IT Specialists
Interview period	Oct. 2020 – Feb. 2021	Mar. 2021 – Sept. 2021	Mar. 2021 - ongoing
Collected data	11 interviews	21 interviews & questionnaires 3 focus groups Survey study (182 companies)	22 interviews
Industries	Finance, Pharma, Consulting, IT Hardware, Robotics, University, Agriculture, Service	Labor union, Pharma, Services, Banking, Watch industry, Insurance, Infrastructure, Manufacturing, Finance, Food processing, University	Web, Telecom, Consulting, IT security, Banking, Pharma, Transport

Project Team

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