

Call for Papers

Time-Space Patterns in Work and Organizing

Guest Editors

Sonia Bertolini, *University of Torino*

Anna Carreri, *University of Verona and University of Hasselt*

Dawn Lyon, *University of Kent*

Lia Tirabeni, *University of Milano-Bicocca*

The evolving nature of work and organizations is giving rise to multiple and unprecedented time-space patterns across various organizational domains and occupations, not least following the increasing adoption of digital technologies accelerated by the pandemic. Some forms of contemporary work are increasingly believed to be an «ephemeral and precarious connective activity» occurring «everywhere and every time» (de Vaujany et al, 2021, p. 688), whilst others (such as care work and construction) on the contrary still remain highly constrained in time and space. At the same time, the pandemic has further spurred a change in the way people undertake white-collar/professional work in organizations especially. This challenges traditional understandings of work rooted in time and space for instance at an office with workload and schedules marked by the clock (Gregg and Kneese, 2019). Instead, productivity is detached from physical location and defined hours, increasing the «topographies of organization» (Beyes and Holt, 2020).

Although we have recently witnessed profound changes in the structures, practices and relations of work, and in modes of working and the ways people interact at work (e.g., Bertolini, Fullin, and Pacetti, 2022; Cappelli and Keller, 2013; Eurofound, 2023), these transformations have yet to be fully explored and understood, both theoretically and empirically. Consider, for instance, the diffusion of remote working and the adoption of a shorter workweek in traditional subordinate employment settings (e.g., in the public sector), alongside other hybrid forms of spatial and temporal management found in freelance and on-demand work, which have culminated in the concept of «digital nomadism» (e.g., Aroles, Granter, and de Vaujany, 2020). Or again, consider the rise and normalization of collaborative or shared workspaces (e.g., Resch, Hoyer, and Steyaert, 2021) (including coworking spaces, fab labs, office cafés, but also trains and metros) which are underpinned by the idea that organizations operate in fluid contexts, at the intersection between new and old organizing practices (Schreyögg and Sydow, 2010), across contexts of uncertain action arenas (Child and McGrath, 2001), and within the dynamics of transient relationships (O'Mahony and Bechky, 2008). In such a frame, technology, for instance, can play a central role but can even be – quite paradoxically – taken for granted (Sorrentino, Tirabeni, and Toraldo, 2022), a consideration that invites further reflection.

Furthermore, the blurring of traditional boundaries between life and work, production and consumption, autonomous and subordinated work, and paid and unpaid work is altering work practices and redefining frames of workplace interaction (Fineman, 2012). Unlike more traditional ways of working, new work modalities are frequently implemented outside of well-established and institutionalized frames of employment (OECD, 2018), leading to a diversity of work

configurations in terms of where, when and how work is performed (Ropo et al., 2015), and how our social identities are displayed in and through workspaces (Tyler and Cohen, 2010). In this vein, the freedom – in principle, if not always in practice – to work anywhere and at any time becomes a dominant trait of the contemporary gig economy (Rincón and Martínez, 2020), as supported by mainstream discourses that celebrate, on one hand, the entrepreneurialism of independent workers and the idea of ‘being their own boss’ (Luckman and Andrew, 2018) and, on the other, the role of technology as an ‘enabling’ tool that – quite independently from the context – impacts productivity and work dynamics. However, these positions overlook how organizational forces influence the application of technology in any given employment sector (e.g. Carreri et al., 2020; Fleming, 2019).

The disruption of a dominant time-space framework for work (first the factory, then the office) therefore necessitates a comprehensive redesign of the entire work process, both organizationally and individually, that recognizes work through the joint design of people and technologies (Butera, 2020). Companies are grappling with the development of new surveillance systems and leadership models, while employees must reconfigure autonomy, control, and the routine and mobile practices of work-life balance (Hughes and Silver, 2020). Time and space, whether considered through waiting (e.g., Bailey and Suddaby, 2023), rhythm (e.g. Lyon, 2020; Snyder, 2016), aesthetics (e.g. De Molli, 2019), or topology (e.g. Ratner, 2020) are therefore emergent becoming and increasingly critical dimensions not only for organizational and individual planning but also for the culture of organizations and work itself. This evolution is paving the way for a new phase in work regulation and potentially leading to renewed social conflict over work time and space, with the inherent risk of exacerbating social inequalities (Sharma, 2014).

This *call for papers*, therefore, invites critical rethinking and centering of time-space perspectives in analyzing and (re)designing work processes (and their articulation with non-work), new organizational models (and their relations with more traditional ones), labor regulation, and the everyday experience of working life. We welcome both theoretical and empirical contributions (quantitative and/or qualitative, mixed methods and/or with a multimodality stance) from relevant disciplines that make use of different theoretical and methodological approaches.

Topics of interest for this *Special Issue* may include, but are not limited to:

- Time and space as dimensions that contribute to the shaping of new organizational models (changes in control systems, leadership models, organizational culture and power dynamics, decision making, formal and informal interactions between workers, etc.), including, for example, the different ways in which workers who perform tasks that can be done remotely (e.g., office work) relate to and coordinate with workers who perform tasks that cannot be done remotely (e.g., manual labor, construction work) from a spatiotemporal perspective within the same organizational setting;
- Innovative patterns of time-space and work organizing, including the role of technology (e.g., in platform work or remote maintenance);
- Time and space as emerging dimensions of work quality (e.g., in relation to autonomy, control, work-life balance) and organizational well-being (e.g., in terms of perceived subjective well-being and its different dimensions);
- Patterns of time-space in new forms of job between autonomous and subordinated;
- The display of social identities in and through workspaces, and the reconfiguration of work and life times and spaces from a subjective perspective (interpretations, adaptations, preferences, strategies, risks from the perspective of workers);
- Processes and practices of place-making at work and different rhythms and temporalities in organizing and performing work in the everyday;
- Time-space flexibility, the operation and power and inequalities among labor populations (e.g., regarding gender, sexuality, ethnicity, social class, age, disability, regions,

types of companies);

- Regulation of work and non-work time-space and individual and collective bargaining (role of social partners, conflicts, challenges, and strategies);
- How to better understand the connection between time and space in work and organizing from a methodological perspective, including multi-modal/creative methods.

This *call for papers* aims to deepen these emerging time-space dynamics, providing insights into how they can contribute to shaping organizational processes and contemporary work environments, and their broader socio-economic implications.

References

- Aroles, J., Granter, E., & de Vaujany, F. X. (2020). 'Becoming mainstream': the professionalisation and corporatisation of digital nomadism. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 35(1), 114-129.
- Bailey, C., & Suddaby, R. (2023). When time falls apart: Re-centring human time in organisations through the lived experience of waiting. *Organization Studies*, 44(7), 1033-1053.
- Bertolini S., Fullin G., & Pacetti V. (2022). Il lavoro da remoto tra terziarizzazione, digitalizzazione e trasformazioni delle relazioni di impiego. *Meridiana*, 104, 9-28.
- Beyes, T., & Holt, R. (2020). The Topographical Imagination: Space and organization theory. *Organization Theory*, 1(2).
- Butera, F. (2020). Valorizzare il lavoro attraverso la progettazione partecipata. *Studi Organizzativi*, suppl. 1/2020, 156-178.
- Cappelli, P., & Keller, J. R. (2013). Classifying work in the new economy. *Academy of Management Review*, 38(4), 575-596.
- Carreri, A., Gosetti, G., Poggio, B., & Zanoni, P. (2020) Lavoro e digitalizzazione: soggettività, controllo e qualità del lavoro nella quarta rivoluzione industriale. *Sociologia del lavoro*, 158: 51-73.
- Child, J., & McGrath, R. G. (2001). Organizations unfettered: organizational form in an information-intensive economy. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44(6), 1135-1148.
- De Molli, F. (2019). An aesthetic account of space: A report on recent developments in organizational research. *Studi Organizzativi*, 1/2019, pp 38-63.
- de Vaujany, F.-X., Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, A., Munro, I., Nama, Y., & Holt, R. (2021). Control and Surveillance in Work Practice: Cultivating Paradox in 'New' Modes of Organizing. *Organization Studies*, 42(5), 675-695.
- Eurofound (2023). The future of telework and hybrid work, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg. Accessed 8 July, 2024 at: <https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/en/publications/2023/future-telework-and-hybrid-work>
- Fleming, P. (2019). Robots and organization studies: Why robots might not want to steal your job. *Organization Studies*, 40(1), 23-38.
- Fineman, S. (2012). *Work: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gregg, M., & Kneese, T. (2019). Clock as a mediating technology of organization. In T. Beyes, R. Holt, & C. Pias (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Media, Technology, and Organization Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hughes, K. D., & Silver, W. A. (2020). Beyond time-binds: Rethinking work-family dynamics for a mobile world. *Human Relations*, 73(7), 924-952.
- Luckman, S., & Andrew, J. (2018). Online selling and the growth of home-based craft micro-enterprise: The 'new normal' of women's self-(under)employment. In *The New Normal of Working Lives* (pp. 19-39). Springer.
- Lyon, D. (2020) Place-making at work: the role of rhythm in the production of 'thick' places. In T. Edensor, U. Kothari & A. Kalindides (Eds.), *The Routledge Handbook of Place*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- OECD. (2018). *Embracing Innovation in Government. Global Trends 2018*. Paris: OECD.
- O'Mahony, S., & Bechky, B. A. (2008). Boundary organizations: Enabling collaboration among unexpected allies. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 53(3), 422-459.
- Ratner, H. (2020). Topologies of Organization: Space in Continuous Deformation. *Organization Studies*, 41(11), 1513-1530.
- Resch, B., Hoyer, P., & Steyaert, C. (2021). Affective control in new collaborative work: Communal fantasies of purpose, growth and belonging. *Organization Studies*, 42(5), 787-809.
- Rincón, G. B., & Martínez, Y. M. (2020). Work/family life by 2040: Between a gig economy and traditional roles. *Futures*, 119, 102544.
- Ropo, A., De Paoli, D., Salovaara, P., & Sauer, E. (2015). Why does space need to be taken seriously in leadership and organization studies and practice? In A. Ropo, P. Salovaara, E. Sauer, & D. De Paoli (Eds.), *Leadership in spaces and places* (pp. 1-24). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Schreyögg, G., & Sydow, J. (2010). Crossroads – organizing for fluidity? Dilemmas of new organizational forms. *Organization Science*, 21(6), 1251-1262.
- Sharma, S. (2014). *In the Meantime: Temporality and Cultural Politics*, Durham: Duke University Press.
- Snyder, B. (2016) *The Disrupted Workplace, time and the moral order of flexible capitalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Sorrentino, M., Tirabeni, L., & Toraldo, M. L. (2022). Reintroducing technology to the coworking debate: prospects and problematics. *Studi Organizzativi*, 2/2022, 70-94.
- Tyler, M., & Cohen, L. (2010). Spaces that Matter: Gender Performativity and Organizational Space. *Organization Studies*, 31(2), 175-198.

Submission and review process

- Deadline for full paper submission: extended on **February 16th, 2025**
- The journal accepts papers written in English. We welcome contributions from colleagues in and outside of Italy, those whose research concerns different national/cultural contexts, and from early career researchers.
- If you have an idea you would like to discuss in advance with one of the SI editors, please contact Anna Carreri (anna.carreri@univr.it), Sonia Bertolini (sonia.bertolini@unito.it) or Lia Tirabeni (lia.tirabeni@unimib.it).
- Manuscripts can be uploaded through the journal website: <http://ojs.franco-angeli.it/ojs/index.php/so/about/submissions>.
- Please refer to the editorial guidelines on the journal website for article length and formatting rules.
- Submitted manuscripts will go through the standard peer review process of the journal.
- The *Special Issue* is expected to be published as the n. 2/2025 of *Studi Organizzativi*.