

# Demystifying Remote Work: Compliance for the new normal

With Bhagyashree Pancholy, Lawyer and Founder of All Remotely.

**Maddie Duke** 00:04

You're listening to *The State Of Work*, the podcast by Lano. *The State Of Work* is about finding your place in the changing world of work as an individual or an organization. In each episode, we dive into some of the benefits and limitations we face when it comes to remote and flexible work. We'll discuss how we work, how we hire and manage people, and how we live in this increasingly global workplace. I'm your host, Maddie Duke. And in this episode, we're going back to basics to demystify remote work and the word we use to describe it. Lawyer, compliance expert and remote work leader, Bhagyashree Pancholy joins me to answer some burning questions about what is and isn't remote work. Is work from anywhere truly possible. What's the difference between remote work and working from home? And how are these terms being misused? Bhagyashree has extensive experience in leading remote teams and is the owner of All Remotely, a consulting firm helping co-located teams scale up and transition to remote hybrid or work from home. Bhagyashree also sheds some light on some of the broader compliance risks businesses face when building and managing remote teams.

Welcome Bhagyashree. And thanks for joining me today on *The State Of Work*. It's great to be speaking with you.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 01:32

Thank you, Maddie. It's such a pleasure to be here.

**Maddie Duke** 01:34

So you're originally from India, and you've worked across London and Canada. Where are you joining us from today?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 01:41

Stuck like everybody else in India, at home with parents and just sailing my own boat through the pandemic.

**Maddie Duke 01:51**

Tell me about your experience working in those other countries. And I know you've got some experience. You know, you've been working remotely for quite some time. And you've managed quite large teams as well. Can you tell me a bit about that?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 02:06**

Sure. So I started working remotely back in 2012, as an external consultant to an all-remote company. And since I am a law graduate and an employment lawyer, I started working with them on their legal operational side. And that was my first stint with remote working and I fell in love with that. I love the flexibility. I love the fact that I could pretty much travel while working, I had a lot of time to spend with my family, I was newly married, so I wanted to spend more time at home, I pretty much had everything that I wanted. And from there, I decided that I would always actually look for remote jobs as opposed to going back into the office. But back in 2012, laws hadn't caught up. And what was happening was that, you know, even though I was looking for remote roles, I couldn't find any because people were not really accepting lawyers, as you know, remote consultants. So I switched to operations, because I'd got a background, and then I ended up managing a hybrid remote team that was globally distributed—62 members in eight countries, so much before the pandemic hybrid was cool for me, way back in 2015. So, yeah, so I worked from, I've worked from India, Argentina, London, Canada, US, Australia, and South Korea.

**Maddie Duke 03:35**

Wow. Okay, so quite a bit, you've worked from quite a number of places. That's pretty amazing. And before this huge surge in remote work that we've seen in the last year or so. Which kind of leads me to the big question I have for you, which is just that, you know, right now the world and a lot of companies are really hyped up on changing. were changing up where we work from and how we work. And we're seeing lots of words and terms being thrown around to suggest some kind of remote work, like work from home work from anywhere, you know, distributed teams, hybrid models, as you say, what I'd really love to do is kind of demystify these terms with you, are you um... yeah, what do these terms really mean?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 04:22**

Yes, thank you. This is such a great question Maddie because so much has been written about these terms in so many blogs over the internet, for way if you have actually paid attention to the legal definitions of these terms. And because I'm a lawyer, I would actually like to interpret these terms in the legal sense. And these are not my personal definition. So these definitions have come out from the law courts across the globe. So let's just start with first and that is remote. So remote is pretty much what we understand in the simple sense, working from any case, that is not the office. So it's the broad umbrella under which we could actually put in terms like work from anywhere work from home. regionally distributed hybrid teleworking, everything comes at a remote. Now coming to regionally distributed or globally distributed, that means that the team is spread in different time zones or across geographies. It, it necessarily means that these teams are spread in different jurisdictions than the one where the company is incorporated, that work from home and work at home are actually two terms that I really want to stress upon, because I

see a lot of companies using these terms interchangeably in their employment contracts, workplace policies, and it could have massive legal repercussions. So work from home essentially means working from any place apart from the office, but within the same legal and tax jurisdiction, right. And it is, it is a longer, more permanent form of working while work at home is shorter. It could be a one time off arrangement, which essentially means that your location of work is fixed. And that is, in this case, the home. And then coming to the hybrid model, which essentially means that people would be working part-time from the office or a co-working space, and part-time from their home or again, from any place that is in the same legal and tax jurisdictions. So the important piece to remember here is that all of these are talking about legal and tax jurisdiction compliance, so you need to stay either in the same jurisdiction, if you're hopping those jurisdictions, there could be, of course, a lot of consequences. And coming to this most interesting term that was coined by so many companies in the last year was work from anywhere. It's such a beautiful concept, I personally would have loved to do that, you know, I could actually picture myself sitting on a beach with a Mai Tai in hand and a laptop with decent internet. But the funny thing is that work from anywhere is legally impossible. And we/I would love to elaborate more on that in the next questions. But I would just stop here to keep the suspense running.

**Maddie Duke** 07:23

Well, I definitely want to ask about that. I don't know about a Mai Tai in hand, though. Drinking on the job? Well is that allowed?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 07:33

...Now we're on the Zoom now, though!

**Maddie Duke** 07:36

That's yeah, that's, you know, you've really shed light on the fact that all of these terms do mean different things and implicates legal compliance and what language you use. I mean, one thing that I've really noticed is that is companies making claims in recruitment campaigns, or, you know, general marketing or PR campaigns or big announcements that we've seen from companies that is saying now, everyone is allowed to work remotely or everyone now from now on is permanently working from home or working at home. And I have to, you know, have to question like, are they offering what they're claiming to offer?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 08:22

Yeah, again, super, super interesting and super accurate question, because I'm so sure there are so many people who have actually fallen prey to these amazing marketing and clickbait titles, only to realize when they apply and they get rejected for not being in the right time zone, or in the right geographic location, or even on the right, immigration or visa status. So they're remote for a lot of companies right now is a pretty much ambiguous term. So they're using remote for pretty much any kind of setting. So they're not really pinpointing if they're allowing people to work from home. Or if it's a hybrid model. I mean, hybrid is totally different. You can't be using the term remote for it, but they're using it any which way. or remote could also mean that you are open to having employees from different jurisdictions that could be outside of the

same city outside of the same state outside of the same country. So it's a pretty ambiguous term. And when I've seen a lot of job seekers when they've applied, and then they have received this email saying, oh, sorry, we are hiring remote, but in USA only, and sometimes these Americans receive responses like Oh, sorry, we are hiring remote, but outside of California, Texas and some of these other states, right, so that's not remote by Yeah, okay.

**Maddie Duke** 09:47

What what should that be called then regional, that should actually be distributed or

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 09:52

i think i think we could pretty much call it remote but there needs to be a clear specification, as to where you need to be located, what timezone requirements are there or what your immigration or visa or eligibility requirements are because because what happens is like when a person is on a company-sponsored visa, they can't be changing their locations. So they have to be in that location by the time either they receive their permanent residence in that country or their citizenship. So for such people or for a lot of others, it becomes such a big ambiguous term that they only know what it truly means when they receive a rejection. And we all know that rejections are pretty, pretty sad. I mean, you've put in so much hard work applying, and then you just get rejected because you're not in the right time zone or location. So companies need to be very, very cautious and be very respectful of people who are applying and be very, very direct in how they advertise these positions.

**Maddie Duke** 11:03

Yeah. Are there any big examples that you've seen in the last 12 months or so? Where has it been a really inaccurate claim?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 11:12

Yes, yes, there have been companies, we pretty much do know, I mean, a lot of our listeners would do as well. They pretty much made headlines last month with their "work from anywhere" claims for their employees. And they wrote such beautiful articles around it. I mean, kudos to the content team, and their marketing team for making it such clickbaity and to their PR team for placing it in the right publications. But as I said, work from anywhere is legally impossible. Now, I would like to first take this approach from the employee side, and then we would come to the employer side. So let's first talk about the employee: as an employee, you are more or less responsible, so if you have jurisdiction, you have to pay local taxes in the geographic location where you are located. So that would actually mean that, you know, you have to do all these legal and tax compliances for individual employee taxes, right? And, law is not only tax compliance, but ergonomic and health and safety compliances/workplace assessments, the compensation requires restructuring, the benefits package requests restructuring, what are their leaves, like? How can they apply for leave, all sorts of things need to be reviewed and restructured. So that's a massive hurdle. And as an employee, like I said, previously, if you're on a company-sponsored visa, to work in the country that you're currently working in, and then you pretty much can't be availing this work from anywhere policy of your company. Because when you are on such a visa, you have to maintain your status quo. So you have to maintain your

official address, your residential address, your eligibility or employment eligibility criteria. So that essentially means that you can't really be working from Sweden, or Paris or any other beautiful, beautiful location, while your other colleagues could. And that could actually set in a lawsuit for discrimination in the workplace.

**Maddie Duke** 13:24

Wow. So interesting, how tricky it can get.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 13:27

Yes, it's very tricky. And then coming to the employer side, let's say just by sheer virtue of taking those people employees on your local entity, if you have multiple entities in the countries, so let's say if if, if an American employee wants to work from the French entity of the same country, it's easier for them, okay, so we will transfer you from our American entity to the French entity, and you can work from there. But what if that employee just by sheer nature of their job or by any other activity that they do while they're working for you make you liable for extra taxation in that country? Right. So corporate taxation is a massive gray area that a lot of companies haven't really thought about when they've rolled out these work from anywhere policies. And the third important thing is that a lot of countries have enacted remote work laws. And those have either been enacted as remote work laws, or they have been coming in as amendments to their existing employment and labor laws. And in all the remote work laws across the globe, be it the Irish one or the Spanish one or the Ukrainian, Croatian, Russian, Polish, English, anyone you pick. It pretty much uses an employer to fix the location of work, and that location needs to be documented and recorded, and has to go on the official records.

**Maddie Duke** 15:01

Yep.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 15:02

..and then they have to assess that workplace for health and safety, for ergonomics. Because if there were to happen, a workplace injury, the onus would be on the employer and not on the employee. And the employee could pretty much ask for work, workplace compensation claims. And the fourth major thing is your mobility challenges. When you allow employees to constantly have jurisdictions, the it flags, a massive, massive red flag around mobility that could actually make you liable for taxation. It could actually flag your company in the Immigration Department of respective countries, and your employees could be tracked by immigration officers. Sometimes they could just be people pinpointed, asked questions. If they do not have the right answers, they could be deported. Despite the fact that even if you have legal entities, they're big. And also because some of these employees may not have the right visa requirements to work in the country. Now they're working from.

**Maddie Duke** 16:11

Yep.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 16:12**

...so all of this is, all of this is navigable, definitely you can do that. But it's a massive hurdle. And the smallest of the loopholes could actually land you into big trouble. And that is the reason why I pretty much say that before you roll out your work from anywhere policies, you should speak with an employment lawyer, a tax consultant, and mobility consultant, and see if you are actually falling in any of these loopholes.

**Maddie Duke 16:41**

That's really interesting. Like we've spoken in a previous episode to Andrea Carlon, about compliance issues mainly to do with things like false self-employment or misclassification of workers. But it's so crucial, you're making such a great point here that there are other hurdles to do still kind of to do with legal compliance, that businesses need to find ways to navigate that are going to work for what they're aiming for. So it really highlights that there's always work to do and you know, your consulting business, All Remotely is one resource that can help people help businesses navigate that. Do you have any examples of some of these other compliance, or legal issues that are out there that that companies or employees or even freelancers are experiencing?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 17:40**

So again, you know, coming back to I think, Andrea's session of misclassification, that's actually a burning pain point. I would say 99% of the existing remote companies who've been remote for so many years, and we've heard that head of remote and head of people talk about how beautiful their companies and how they, how they value their remote employees and build up company cultures and stuff like that, most of them are actually misclassifying their workers. And a lot of people think that misclassification only happens when you know when you have the ABC checklist, which pretty much says that you how you review their performance, or how do you, you know, if they are full time workers, or if you promote them on the basis of their performance and stuff like that. That is not the only checklist you need to comply with when you are misclassifying. Or if you want to check if you're misclassifying. Something as simple as taking these people or paid team retreats could actually make them liable, as I mean could actually make you liable for misclassification lawsuits. And it could essentially say that these are not contractors, but employees because nobody takes contractors on paid team retreats, you only take your employees. Another thing is providing them equity and stock options of your company. That's again, classic misclassification case. Um, giving them paid time off. Or, you know, these health insurance plans or offering them maternity and paternity leaves or you know, any of those benefits is, again, misclassification. And something very interesting that a lot of people don't know and I really want to go and record for the first time ever, apart from all my consultancy sessions. So this is like the first time I'm actually putting this out in the public forum. If you have, like a lot of companies do believe that we are hiring full time long term contractors. So they do advertise the roles as full time long term contractors in many countries across the globe, especially in the European Union, which is a very tricky region to navigate, and very, very strict labor and employment laws. If you have people who are working for you as contractors for more than one year, they acquire the same rights as that of the employee. And then they have to be taken on board in a separate contract. As employees, they no longer remain contractors for you.

And the other way you are also misclassifying is even if you do not have them working for you for one year, but under the same contract agreement, you provide them new or additional tasks to perform, then again, you're misclassifying them, and they are employees and not contractors. So if they are a contractor, every time you give them a new task, you have to draw up another contractor agreement.

**Maddie Duke** 20:34

Yeah. I mean, thank you for sharing that with us and making this your forum to go public with this information. Yeah. What do you think that on the one hand employers, but also employees or candidates can do to better understand their rights and responsibilities with all of this?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 20:57

Definitely reach out to me at All Remotely, I do that, but there are beautiful resources available on the internet. I know Lano has a lovely blog where they have mentioned this. And you should definitely check out Lano's blog for this. They have, so there's a checklist, it's actually called the ABC checklist. It was a checklist that was provided by the Supreme Court of California, in Uber versus Lyft. case. And that was essentially replicated in part or in full by the British courts recently in again, a different case by you. And it came out as IR35. Of course, that's another thing in the UK that you can check into. So if you are actually checking any of the block in that checklist, you are an employee, you should immediately go to your, I want to say employer, but that's not the right term, the company for whom you're working, and tell them that see, I'm being misclassified, what do you want to say? And sometimes I do understand that people don't want to be employees, they want to be contractors. So even if you want to do that, clear it up between the person who has actually who's providing you work, and you know, of course with your company, or if you're an individual doing it and make it clear so that none of you are at risk or none of you run into some legal or tax trouble later on.

**Maddie Duke** 22:29

Yeah. And I yeah, great advice. And I mean, as someone who's worked both as an employee and as a freelancer, there are, you know, there is such a difference. It's such a different relationship. And it's not just in terms of the interpersonal relationship with the client and the worker, but yeah, when it's an employee, you get that, yeah, you're getting benefits and you're getting taken care of in a certain way, and...

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 22:57

....absolutely, you know, because Maddie, I see that a lot of people who are being misclassified, they're just being fired, they have no real job security. And when you put in so much hard work for the person who's you know, employed you or who's making you work for their company, it's dignity of labor. It's basic human right, it's basic respect and courtesy, they should be rewarded for their time, energy and hard work. And this is how you do: you just don't fire them. Of course, you have a lot of legal protection around it. So if you do prove it to the court of law that you were misclassified, you can receive redundancy claims, you have so much legal protection, or for that to happen you yourself first need to know if you will be misclassified or not.

**Maddie Duke** 23:51

Lano makes it easy to hire the best talent on the planet. Companies of any size can hire and pay employees in more than 150 countries, backed by a network of top employers of record. Lano takes care of compliant contracts, local tax law and international payments. From full time to freelance the Lano platform has everything you need to grow your global team. Find out more at [lano.io](https://lano.io)

Would you say that independent contractors or freelancers are the only people that can truly work from anywhere?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 24:32

No, nobody could. I wish we lived in a world where people could just have jurisdictions and work from anywhere and everywhere. I would have been the first person to pack my bags and be on that plane. But unfortunately, the countries and their taxation rules are such that we cannot. Now coming back to these freelancers and independent contractors who essentially are in charge of their own taxes. Now when you are in charge of your own tax, you can pretty much work from the country where you are actually eligible to work from. But then again, if you move out of that country into another country without the right legal, you know, criteria eligibility criteria to work from that country, you are at risk of being taxed in that country and possibly deported. So if digital nomads, you know, generally have been guilty of doing this. And yeah, and “Bali Exodus”, this is what I want to call that situation, or I think Bali Exodus was I think the name that was given to what happened in Bali last year was that a lot of Instagram influencers dropshippers digital nomads left from Bali, right, and they were living in Bali on tourist visas, and they were earning money. So when the pandemic struck, all of those were acquired by their immigration department, the Indonesian immigrant officials, slapped with heavy fines and deported. And this essentially was termed as the “Bali Exodus”. And it's an important thing to remember that even if you're not even allowed to work... in certain countries, you may not become a tax resident, if you do not match the eligibility criteria of let's say, three to six months of staying there and earning money. But just because you are on a tourist visa and you're earning money in a different country, you could be in trouble. Of course, some of these have been relaxed by the digital nomad visas, or a lot of countries have brought in like...

**Maddie Duke** 26:40

...yeah, we wanted to mention that; Portugal, Estonia. Yes, we actually spoke to Alex Wellman from a residency as well, he's in part rolling out that program in Estonia. So yeah, lots of countries are starting to adapt.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 26:56

Yes. So these digital nomad visas would solve this problem, in part, but here's but not all of those digital nomad visas would actually safeguard you from tax from being taxed in the country. Some of them would. Again, it also depends on what kind of tax treaty your country and that country has. So sometimes countries have double taxation treaties, which would actually slide above the digital nomad visas. So it's again, it's not like tomorrow, I want to wake up and I want to work from Iceland, or Bermuda, that is, actually those two countries are offering digital nomad

visa, but I have to actually speak with my mobility consultant and tax consultant to see if I could do that or if I'm at the risk of being double taxed.

**Maddie Duke** 27:45

Yep.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 27:47

So it's not easy.

**Maddie Duke** 27:48

Wow, there's so much it's so I mean, I kind of knew the answer to my own question there. Because I know that you can't just work anywhere, you know, you have to have permits, as someone who's already moved to another country, I've gone through that in one country, and even just navigating one country's immigration office is difficult to put it lightly.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 28:10

Of course. I mean, the lawmakers have never made it easy. I received so many people and their arguments around the fact that other lawmakers should have made it easier. I was like, yes, if it was so easy, because if you don't pay tax, how does your country develop infrastructure that is always taxpayers money, so the tax can't go anywhere.

**Maddie Duke** 28:32

Yeah. And hence something like the yeah, Bali Exodus. I mean, I hadn't actually heard about that. But that's, yeah, that's something I think of, you know, with with digital nomads, and yes, it's a dream for some people to go and work somewhere like Bali or, you know, Southeast Asia or wherever they might be attracted to, but it's just not quite so simple. And it is important to be aware of these things. So what about things like other kinds of insurance, and maybe workplace injury when people are working from home as an example? How does that come into this?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 29:10

So like I said, all these remote work laws have actually made it mandatory for employers to assess the employee's place of work that could be home, that could be the co-working space or somewhere else that they want to work. I don't think that people would be wanting to work eight hours a day from a beach at a park, as projected in the pictures, are pretty much either they would work from co-working spaces or from their own home. So all of those spaces need to be assessed for injuries for health and safety. And that's by law. Even when these remote work laws weren't, weren't enacted. So before 2020, a lot of countries had this provision in their employment laws. So it's not something that was just created last year. Of course, these laws were created to further enhance the rights of teleworkers and flexible workers. But most of the laws or most of the clauses in those laws were in their local labor and employment laws as such. So this has become very, very important because workplace injury last year, I mean, there was like over 200% increase in workplace injuries, and workplace injuries not only lead to a lawsuit and compensation claim, but most importantly, employers lose out on talented individuals. There was a case that I worked on, and it was around a woman who was stabbed

from her basement while working from home. And the company said that while she was working from home, she wasn't in the "workplace" workplace. So if she is stabbed, it means that I mean, we don't have any liability. And it went to the court of law. And the judge ruled out that even the fact that she was working from a basement office for you makes you liable for that workplace injury, and our children would receive the compensation. So it was I know, it was a very sad incident, but it was a landmark judgment. And then in 20, I think it was, it was in 2019, December, Zurich court ruled that the employers would need to pitch in part of the utilities bills and even rent if an individual is working from home. So it makes it all the more tricky because utilities, and you know, pitching in the utilities bill is okay, you can pretty much make up. But how do you calculate rent? It's very tricky.

**Maddie Duke** 31:55

And especially if maybe there's more than one person in that residence working from home for different companies.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 32:02

Absolutely.

**Maddie Duke** 32:03

Yeah. I mean, that's obviously a very tragic example. But it does lead to a well, it's tragic, it's a thing that happens around the world that people do sometimes live in unsafe homes.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 32:19

And more often than not all of us don't have the luxury to live in huge suburban houses. Most of us are living with other flatmates in this area.

**Maddie Duke** 32:30

Yeah. And so, yeah, like, does, does the employer have a responsibility to ensure a person isn't living in a domestic violence situation or working in that environment?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 32:44

Exactly. So you know, I would quickly want to state one more thing. So the UK laws have now, I mean, the guidelines have come out that the British employers need to keep, you know, keep a track on the signs of domestic abuse and intervene before something nasty happens. It's a beautiful law. But it's so tricky. It's such a fine line to tread because at one point, you are just being cautious, you're being caring towards your employees. On the other hand, somebody could just say that you, you know, are invading my private space.

**Maddie Duke** 33:22

Absolutely. Yes. Wow.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 33:22

It becomes all the more tricky. Yeah.

**Maddie Duke** 33:25

And then I could just imagine all the training that needs to go into training the right people to recognize those signs.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 33:33

Absolutely. And it's very tricky, because a lot of people are now basing their hiring, a lot of companies have now moved to hiring remote workers. And they're basing their hiring decisions on personality based tests, like Meyer Briggs, which is one, not a validated test, shouldn't be used, two, a personality-based test could never ever help you understand if the person has the abilities to work remotely or not. Because you know, and then thirdly, I personally feel that it actually sets in an unconscious bias because you know, if somebody is an introvert or an extra word, the general perception is that introverts are more suited to work remotely. And extroverts can't work remotely. I am an extrovert, and I've been working remotely fine for nine years. So that unconscious bias does set in.

**Maddie Duke** 34:26

Yeah, and I can imagine that well, obviously not in an ideal situation. But I could also imagine if a home office assessment, like an ergonomic assessment of someone's space is included in the recruitment process, that there could also be some biases there. Like if this person is living in a space that isn't, like that requires a bit of a bit more of an investment in their setup.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 34:57

Absolutely,

**Maddie Duke** 34:58

...it might be two equally appropriate candidates and one already has the perfect setup and assistance with that, like, how do you stop that from swaying the judgment?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 35:07

Yes, absolutely it, I think it would come up definitely. Because the employers would want to ensure that they don't, they won't have to spend a lot of money assessing and providing the necessary equipment to an individual when they work from home. And this is what essentially they would be doing, they would perhaps very subtly assess a candidate's workspace, of course, after do, you know, permission by them. And then I think that would definitely weigh in. So here, this guy's radiator is too close to the table. Oh, he could just injure himself, oh, this guy, he doesn't have a radiator till like three feet near his desk. So why not go ahead with this guy, because then we don't have to break down his apartment and move the radiator. So I mean, all sorts of things could come up. And this is I think, yes, Maddie you brought up a very interesting thing, this would definitely come in definitely.

**Maddie Duke** 36:04

Yeah. Oh dear. So what can but what let's start with who's doing it right, like other other companies that are already doing this right, and using the right tools and resources that are

available to overcome these hurdles to actually achieve, like legally compliant working from working remote working policies and procedures?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 36:28**

Yes, actually, a lot of these large MNC (multinational companies). So you know, again, I would like to say that what we're doing right now is not actually true remote work, it's just, it's remote work induced by a pandemic, it's an emergency situation. It's an emergency style of work that we have all adopted. But in order for remote or hybrid, or work from anywhere, or work from home, whatever you want to call it, to work, right, it has to be a more strategic, well thought and planned approach, in order for it to be sustainable. And it's not new, what we're doing right now, it's not new, all the large MNCs have been doing it. So name it, IBM, Google, Facebook, Dell, HP, a lot of pharmaceutical companies, NASA, classic example of remote workers, militaries across the globe, because you know, the bosses are sitting in one place, and they're fighting wars in like some corner of the world or in the country, classic leadership, or remote leadership example. So they've been doing it for many, many years. And a lot of these large MNCs have actually got it right. They comply fully with the laws, they provide the right setup and equipment, they treat their employees. Facebook was recently shamed for saying that they would actually cut down on salaries if their employees decide to move out of San Francisco. But that's okay, this localized salary approach is very doable. It's something that is also the right approach to do. Because in some countries, that governments would also be capping salaries. So the fact that if you're sitting in a country, let's say somewhere, I'm not going to name the countries, but if you're sitting in a different country, and if you're earning New York or San Francisco base salaries, your government, essentially, because to maintain the social equity in the country, that would cap your salaries.

**Maddie Duke 38:25**

Really? Interesting.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 38:26**

Yes. So in these countries, you know, the localized salary approach is actually the right approach.

**Maddie Duke 38:36**

As someone who's worked across such a number of different countries, and you're familiar with the job markets in different countries, have you seen major differences in the remote work environments between India and say, North America? Or, you know, the UK, for example?

**Bhagyashree Pancholy 38:54**

Yes, massive. So India, India still thinks that a lot of roles that could be remote are either development or social media or you know, content writing roles. And of course, just because you're remote, you will not be paid well in India. That's the bitter truth here. But I used to think that the US has really adopted well done remote work, and there are actually companies based in the US who are offering flexibility and telework, and they're paying them at par with their in-house colleagues. But recently, I have started to see especially in the pandemic, the

European Union has emerged as the leader for me in the remote working industry, because, one, the laws are so strict, and I think people are more conscious of not misclassifying so they treat people with respect at par with each other. The salaries are of course, again, you know, in accordance to your employment status, add your expertise. And you know, with all Goldman Sachs A lot of these large banks, JP Morgan, saying that, you know, they would want to go back to the office, a lot of European banks and large societies. So nationwide in the UK and SocGen in France, they ruled out hybrid policies. So they are actually adopting remote work. So I think European markets would definitely emerge as the leader in this industry.

**Maddie Duke** 40:25

Interesting. Well, that's also such juicy information that you've shared with us. I'm really happy that we got to speak. And then we got to have you on *The State Of Work* to talk about all these things. Because, yeah, we really wanted to maybe look under the rug a little bit at this umbrella term remote work and what it really means and what companies need to do to protect themselves and what employees or candidates or even contractors need to do. And just to be aware of, or at least know where to look for information and what they need to be considering. And not just to get swept up in the hype of it all without thinking.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 41:13

Yes, thank you so much Maddie for having me and thanks to Lano for this opportunity as well. I am so happy to have spoken, my expertise, my knowledge, and I'm so hopeful that people would benefit from it.

**Maddie Duke** 41:27

Absolutely. Thanks so much for joining us, and I hope to speak to you soon.

**Bhagyashree Pancholy** 41:31

Thank you.

**Maddie Duke** 41:32

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Thanks for listening and see you next time on *The State Of Work*.

*Berlin, 14.06.2021*