Remote Work and Residential Attractiveness Across the Centre–Periphery Gradient

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Abstract. Remote work, accelerated by COVID-19, is increasingly understood as a durable shift that can reweight how residential environments are evaluated. Using national survey data from Poland for employed respondents with defined remote-work capability (N = 870), this paper examines perceived change in residential attractiveness during the pandemic, assessed through the lens of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and a two-layer view of residential wellbeing that distinguishes dwelling satisfaction from locality satisfaction across a settlement gradient interpreted in centre–periphery terms. Descriptively, remote-capable workers more often report that their current place of residence became "more attractive" during COVID-19 (38.4% vs 24.0%), and positive revaluation is highest among suburban residents (52.6%) and lowest among large-city residents (14.7%). These patterns are confirmed in binomial-logit and proportional-odds ordinal models, which show that remote-work capability is associated with more positive residential revaluation net of settlement context. A centre–periphery reference specification using large cities as the baseline shows markedly higher odds of positive revaluation outside the core, including suburbs (OR = 7.11), while interaction tests do not support the claim that remote work reshapes the settlement gradient. The wellbeing results reveal a layered split: remote capability predicts higher dwelling satisfaction (OR = 1.51), but not higher locality satisfaction, which remains structured by settlement context. The findings support a post-pandemic interpretation in which remote work reinforces outward revaluation pressures while place-based advantages continue to shape the locality layer of residential wellbeing, highlighting the need for planning strategies that combine housing adequacy with neighbourhood functionality and accessibility.

Keywords: Remote Work · Residential Satisfaction · Residential Attractiveness · Centre–Periphery · Suburbanisation · Urban Resilience

1 Introduction

The post-pandemic city is not simply a city after a health emergency. It is increasingly a city after a rapid reconfiguration of work geographies, one in which remote and hybrid work have become feasible at scale and, in many sectors, socially and organisationally normalised. Telecommuting has long been understood as loosening the link between

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workplace and residence [1], but the COVID-19 period acted as an unusually powerful coordination shock that accelerated adoption beyond pre-pandemic norms [2]. Evidence from multiple countries further suggests that this shift has persisted in expectations, preferences, and planned working arrangements [3]. In this sense, the pandemic is analytically useful not only as a historical episode, but as a stress-test that made longer-term mechanisms newly visible.

When work becomes less tethered to a fixed office location, a classic metropolitan trade-off is reweighted. Urban theory has long framed residential choice as a tension between accessibility, often associated with central locations, and space or affordability, more often obtained farther from the core [4, 5]. If commuting becomes less frequent, the shadow cost of distance falls and the relative value of space, privacy, and environmental amenities rises [Brueckner et al., 2023]. Post-pandemic evidence from several countries is increasingly read in these terms, with stronger housing-demand growth in suburban and peripheral rings than in dense cores [6, 7]. In Poland, where suburbanisation has long interacted with fragmented spatial planning and governance, remote work has accordingly been discussed as a potential catalyst of renewed outward pressure [8]. This question is especially salient for metropolitan contexts such as Warsaw, where centre–periphery tensions are already central to debates on urban development.

Yet metropolitan restructuring is not driven only by relocation. It is also driven by re-evaluation: how residents reassess the adequacy and attractiveness of their current living environment under changed daily routines. Residential satisfaction research provides an important bridge here. Satisfaction is often interpreted in terms of the relationship between current conditions and desired standards, including the well-known have–want discrepancy perspective [9], and it is widely treated as a multidimensional component of quality of life [10]. Crucially, the literature distinguishes between at least two scales of residential evaluation: satisfaction with the dwelling and satisfaction with the wider place of residence [11, 12]. The first is shaped primarily by internal housing conditions such as space, privacy, comfort, and layout [13, 14]. The second depends more strongly on neighbourhood characteristics, service access, green space, safety, and everyday accessibility [15, 16]. Remote work is likely to intensify this distinction because it increases the functional demands placed on the dwelling while also potentially changing how locality conditions are perceived when more time is spent near home [17, 18].

This distinction matters for post-pandemic urban policy because residential wellbeing is shaped not only by housing conditions, but also by uneven access to services and opportunities across the urban gradient. Accessibility research has shown that service provision, mobility burdens, and transport-related exclusion are distributed unevenly across metropolitan space [19, 20]. Remote work may therefore create differentiated advantages: for some households it increases the ability to optimise location and housing space, while for others it leaves fixed workplace dependence and accessibility constraints largely intact [21, 22]. The question is not simply whether remote work is beneficial, but how it reshapes residential evaluation across different spatial contexts.

Against this background, this paper examines how remote-work capability relates to perceived change in residential attractiveness during the COVID-19 period and to two layers of residential satisfaction, dwelling and locality, across a settlement gradient

interpreted in centre–periphery terms. Settlement context is measured through respondents' classification of their residential setting, which is treated here as substantively meaningful because it captures lived urbanity and metropolitan position rather than only administrative size [23, 24]. The empirical strategy then tests whether this perceptual gradient helps explain how remote work and residential evaluation intersect under post-pandemic conditions.

Accordingly, the paper addresses three linked questions. First, is remote-work capability associated with a more positive perceived shift in residential attractiveness under pandemic stress-test conditions? Second, is remote-work capability associated with dwelling satisfaction and locality satisfaction net of settlement context? Third, do the combined patterns support a two-sided reading of post-pandemic urban dynamics in which dwelling revaluation may strengthen outward pressures while place-based advantages of centrality continue to structure locality-level outcomes?

2 Data and Methods

2.1 Analytical Sample

The analysis draws on a national online questionnaire survey conducted in Poland in 2020. Data were collected from respondents of productive age (18–64) using a panel sample with quota controls for age, gender, education, and voivodeship to ensure comparability with the national population structure. The questionnaire covered housing conditions, characteristics of the current place of residence, and residential preferences and perceptions related to the living environment. The full survey dataset includes 1,480 respondents.

Because remote-work capability was measured only for employed respondents, the present analysis is restricted to the employed subsample. Respondents with missing or "don't know" answers on remote-work capability were excluded. The final analytical sample comprises 870 employed respondents with defined remote-work capability, including 292 remote-capable respondents (33.6%) and 578 respondents without remote-work capability (66.4%).

2.2 Settlement Context

The main contextual variable is perceived settlement type, measured through respondents' classification of their residential setting into one of five categories: open rural area, village or small town, medium-sized city, large city, and suburbs of a large city (Table 1). This measure is treated as substantively meaningful because it captures perceived metropolitan position and lived urbanity rather than only settlement size. In the employed analytical sample, the suburban category is relatively small, accounting for 2.2% of respondents, and is therefore interpreted as an analytically distinctive perception group rather than as a basis for precise population-level inference.

As a robustness specification, settlement context is also operationalised using a self-reported settlement-size category ranging from rural areas to cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants. This alternative measure is more conventional than the perceived settlement-type classification, but it also relies on respondent report rather than external administrative coding.

Table 1. Analytical sample by perceived settlement type and remote-work capability

Perceived settlement type	All (N)	No remote (N)	Remote possible (N)
Open rural area	40	31	9
Village / small town	380	255	125
Medium-sized city	214	143	71
Large city	217	136	81
Suburbs of a large city	19	13	6
Total	**870**	**578**	**292**

2.3 Outcomes

First, perceived residential attractiveness during the COVID-19 period is measured through a three-category question asking whether the respondent's current place of residence appeared more attractive, unchanged, or less attractive than before the pandemic. The main binary specification captures whether the respondent reported "more attractive", while an ordered specification is used as a complement.

Second, residential satisfaction is measured through two five-point questions asking whether the respondent is satisfied with the dwelling currently occupied and with the place of residence in which they live, ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. These two items are treated as distinct layers of residential wellbeing.

Third, secondary attitudinal indicators capture agreement with statements that the pandemic made the respondent appreciate their place of residence more and made the respondent consider changing their place of residence. These variables are treated as supplementary rather than central outcomes.

2.4 Analytical Strategy

The empirical analysis combines descriptive comparison with multivariable modelling. All data processing and statistical analyses were conducted using PS IMAGO PRO software, with IBM SPSS Statistics as the analytical engine. At the descriptive level, the paper compares the distribution of perceived attractiveness change and residential satisfaction across settlement categories separately for remote-capable and non-remote respondents, reporting counts and within-group percentages.

For binary outcomes, the analysis applies generalized linear models with binomial distribution and logit link, equivalent to logistic regression, estimated in SPSS using GENLIN. Robust covariance estimates are used, and results are reported as odds ratios alongside Wald χ^2 tests.

For ordered outcomes, the analysis uses cumulative logit ordinal regression, estimated in SPSS using PLUM. These models are reported using log-odds coefficients, odds ratios, likelihood-ratio tests against intercept-only models, and McFadden pseudo-R^2. Where available, AIC and BIC are reported as descriptive fit indicators.

Interaction terms between remote-work capability and settlement context are treated as exploratory, because interaction effects represent a higher-order claim and are more sensitive to sparse cells in some settlement categories, especially the suburban category, and to the relatively small number of negative evaluations.

3 Results

3.1 Stress-Test Revaluation: Perceived Change in Residential Attractiveness

Table 2 reports perceived change in residential attractiveness during the COVID-19 period ("more attractive", "no change", "less attractive") across settlement contexts, shown separately for respondents with and without remote-work capability. The outcome is based on the survey question: *"Considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, does your current place of residence seem less or more attractive than before the pandemic?"* Two patterns are visible. First, there is a clear settlement gradient: non-core contexts show higher shares reporting positive revaluation than large-city contexts. Second, within settlement categories, respondents with remote-work capability display a consistent shift towards the "more attractive" category compared with those without remote-work capability. In the employed sample (N = 870), the share reporting that the current place of residence became more attractive is 38.4% (112/292) among remote-capable respondents, compared with 24.0% (139/578) among non-remote respondents. Aggregated across work regimes, the suburban category shows the highest "more attractive" share (52.6%, 10/19), while large cities show the lowest (14.7%, 32/217).

Table 2. Perceived change in residential attractiveness during COVID-19 by settlement context and remote-work capability

Remote-work capability	Settlement context	More attractive	No change	Less attractive	N
No remote	Open rural area	10 (32.3%)	21 (67.7%)	0 (0.0%)	31
No remote	Village / small town	80 (31.4%)	169 (66.3%)	6 (2.4%)	255
No remote	Medium-sized city	30 (21.0%)	105 (73.4%)	8 (5.6%)	143
No remote	Large city	14 (10.3%)	114 (83.8%)	8 (5.9%)	136
No remote	Suburbs of a large city	5 (38.5%)	8 (61.5%)	0 (0.0%)	13
Remote possible	Open rural area	6 (66.7%)	3 (33.3%)	0 (0.0%)	9
Remote possible	Village / small town	62 (49.6%)	59 (47.2%)	4 (3.2%)	125
Remote possible	Medium-sized city	21 (29.6%)	44 (62.0%)	6 (8.5%)	71
Remote possible	Large city	18 (22.2%)	58 (71.6%)	5 (6.2%)	81
Remote possible	Suburbs of a large city	5 (83.3%)	1 (16.7%)	0 (0.0%)	6

These patterns are confirmed in multivariable models. Model M1 (Table 4) estimates the probability of reporting "more attractive" versus "no change/less" using a binomial-logit specification with settlement context, remote-work capability, and their interaction. The model is highly significant overall (LR $\chi2(9) = 72.59$, $p = 4.72e-12$; AIC = 60.74; BIC = 108.42). Both settlement context (Wald $\chi2(4) = 46.31$, $p = 2.12e-09$) and remote-work capability (Wald $\chi2(1) = 12.86$, $p = 0.000335$) are significant predictors, while the interaction is not supported (Wald $\chi2(4) = 2.82$, $p = 0.588$). In substantive terms, remote-work capability is associated with a higher probability of reporting improved attractiveness even after accounting for settlement differences, while the data do not support the claim that remote work reshapes the settlement gradient in this sample.

To make the centre–periphery contrast more explicit, Model M1b re-estimates the attractiveness-increase model using large cities as the reference category. This model is again highly significant (LR $\chi2(5) = 69.54$, $p = 1.28e-13$; AIC = 55.79; BIC = 84.40). Net of remote-work capability, the odds of reporting "more attractive" are substantially

higher outside the core: open rural areas (OR = 4.51, p = 5.92e − 05), villages and small towns (OR = 3.70, p = 3.49e − 09), medium-sized cities (OR = 1.90, p = 0.0113), and suburbs of a large city (OR = 7.11, p = 5.44e − 05). Remote-work capability remains independently significant (OR ≈ 2.17, p = 1.41e − 06). This specification makes the centre–periphery contrast explicit: the strongest revaluation signal is observed outside large-city contexts, including the suburban category, even when remote-work capability is held constant, although the suburban estimate should be interpreted cautiously because of the small subgroup size.

To ensure that the finding is not an artefact of dichotomising the outcome, the full three-category attractiveness-change measure is also estimated using a proportional-odds ordinal logit model (Model M2, Table 4). The model is highly significant overall (LR $\chi 2(5) = 66.72$, p = 4.91e − 13; − 2LL 144.50 → 77.78; McFadden R2 = 0.050) and confirms a robust association between remote-work capability and a more positive attractiveness category. The coefficient for "no remote" relative to "remote" is negative (B = − 0.644, p = 2.89e − 05; OR = 0.53), corresponding to approximately 1.90 times higher odds of a more positive category among remote-capable respondents. Taken together, the descriptive evidence and both modelling specifications support the conclusion that remote-work capability is associated with positive residential revaluation under stress-test conditions, while settlement context remains a strong structuring dimension.

3.2 Two-Layer Residential Wellbeing: Dwelling Satisfaction Versus Locality Satisfaction

Table 3 presents the two-layer pattern in residential wellbeing by comparing the distribution of dwelling satisfaction and locality satisfaction between respondents with and without remote-work capability, collapsed into dissatisfied (1–2), neutral (3), and satisfied (4–5) categories. The dwelling layer shows a clear remote-work difference: respondents with remote-work capability exhibit a higher satisfied share (80.1%) than respondents without remote-work capability (71.6%). In contrast, locality satisfaction is broadly similar in top-box shares (71.2% satisfied among remote-capable respondents versus 72.7% among non-remote respondents), although remote-capable respondents show a higher dissatisfied share (14.0% versus 8.1%). This split suggests that remote-work capability relates more strongly to the dwelling layer than to uniformly more positive evaluation of the wider residential environment.

Table 3. Dwelling satisfaction and locality satisfaction by remote-work capability

Outcome	Remote-work capability	Dissatisfied (1-2)	Neutral (3)	Satisfied (4-5)
Dwelling satisfaction	No remote (N = 578)	9.2%	19.2%	71.6%
Dwelling satisfaction	Remote possible (N = 292)	8.9%	11.0%	80.1%
Locality satisfaction	No remote (N = 578)	8.1%	19.2%	72.7%
Locality satisfaction	Remote possible (N = 292)	14.0%	14.7%	71.2%

Ordinal logistic regression models corroborate this split. In the dwelling-satisfaction model (Model M3, Table 4), remote-work capability is a statistically significant predictor of higher satisfaction categories (B = − 0.415 for no remote relative to remote, p =

0.00215; OR = 0.66, corresponding to about 1.51 times higher odds of higher dwelling satisfaction among remote-capable respondents). Settlement-context coefficients are not statistically significant in this specification, and overall model fit is borderline (LR $\chi2(5) = 10.46$, $p = 0.063$; − 2LL 176.79 → 166.33).

In the locality-satisfaction model (Model M4, Table 4), the model is significant overall (LR $\chi2(5) = 21.94$, $p = 0.000537$; − 2LL 196.10 → 174.16; McFadden R2 = 0.0096), but remote-work capability is not significant ($p = 0.760$). Settlement context does contribute; in this parameterisation, the large-city category is higher than the suburban reference ($B = 0.946$, $p = 0.031$; OR = 2.58).

Settlement-gradient diagnostics further clarify why the two layers behave differently. For dwelling satisfaction, the association with settlement context is not statistically significant ($\chi2(8) = 10.46$, $p = 0.234$; $N = 870$). Descriptively, the suburban category shows a lower satisfied share (52.6%) than large cities (77.9%), but the overall gradient is not robust. In contrast, locality satisfaction shows a significant settlement gradient ($\chi2(8) = 17.77$, $p = 0.023$; $N = 870$). Large cities report the highest satisfied share (81.1%), while open rural areas report the lowest (55.0%), with suburbs at 63.2%. Notably, this differs from the stress-test revaluation result, where the suburban category shows the highest share reporting that the place of residence became more attractive. Together, these results support a layered interpretation: under home-centred routines, the dwelling becomes a key functional platform and is more sensitive to work regime, whereas locality evaluation is more consistently structured by settlement context.

Table 4. Summary of models

Model	Outcome	Model type and fit	Key results
M1	Attractiveness increase	Logistic regression (GLM binomial-logit; robust covariance). LR $\chi^2(9) = 72.59$, $p = 4.72e{-12}$; AIC = 60.74; BIC = 108.42	Settlement context: Wald $\chi^2(4) = 46.31$, $p = 2.12e{-09}$; remote-work capability: Wald $\chi^2(1) = 12.86$, $p = 0.000335$; interaction: Wald $\chi^2(4) = 2.82$, $p = 0.588$
M1b	Attractiveness increase (large city reference)	Logistic regression (GLM binomial-logit; robust covariance). LR $\chi^2(5) = 69.54$, $p = 1.28e{-13}$; AIC = 55.79; BIC = 84.40	Relative to large city: open rural OR = 4.51 ($p = 5.92e{-05}$); village/small town OR = 3.70 ($p = 3.49e{-09}$); medium-sized city OR = 1.90 ($p = 0.0113$); suburbs OR = 7.11 ($p = 5.44e{-05}$); remote-work capability OR ≈ 2.17 ($p = 1.41e{-06}$)
M2	Attractiveness change (ordered)	Ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds; logit). LR $\chi^2(5) = 66.72$, $p = 4.91e{-13}$; −2LL 144.50 → 77.78; McFadden $R^2 = 0.050$	No remote relative to remote: $B = -0.644$, $p = 2.89e{-05}$; OR = 0.53
M3	Dwelling satisfaction	Ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds; logit). LR $\chi^2(5) = 10.46$, $p = 0.063$; −2LL 176.79 → 166.33	No remote relative to remote: $B = -0.415$, $p = 0.00215$; OR = 0.66
M4	Locality satisfaction	Ordinal logistic regression (proportional odds; logit). LR $\chi^2(5) = 21.94$, $p = 0.000537$; −2LL 196.10 → 174.16; McFadden $R^2 = 0.0096$	Remote-work capability: $p = 0.760$; large city relative to suburbs: $B = 0.946$, $p = 0.031$; OR = 2.58

3.3 Robustness Checks

Sensitivity checks confirm that the main conclusions are not driven by the choice of context operationalisation. When settlement context is represented using a self-reported settlement-size category rather than perceived settlement type, the core finding for locality satisfaction remains unchanged: the settlement-size model is significant overall (LR $\chi2(7) = 22.07$, $p = 0.00247$; $-2LL$ 251.43 $\rightarrow$ 229.36), while remote-work capability remains non-significant ($p = 0.738$). This supports treating settlement self-identification as a substantively meaningful context measure for perception-based outcomes, while showing that the key conclusions do not depend on this choice. A complementary regional check for Mazowieckie points in the same descriptive direction: respondents with remote-work capability more often reported improved residential attractiveness (37.5% versus 15.0%). However, model-based estimates remain underpowered because of sparse cells and smaller sample size, so the regional result is treated as supportive rather than conclusive.

4 Discussion

The results suggest that remote work is associated with a durable reweighting of residential evaluation rather than a purely temporary pandemic reaction. Remote-capable respondents are more likely to report that their place of residence became more attractive during the COVID-19 period, even after settlement context is taken into account. At the same time, the positive revaluation outcome is strongly patterned by settlement context, and the large-city reference specification shows substantially higher odds of positive reassessment outside the core. This combination is consistent with the idea that reduced commute frequency lowers the relative penalty of distance and increases the value of space and residential amenities [25]. The results do not demonstrate relocation or market restructuring directly, but they do indicate that post-pandemic residential preferences may generate outward pressure unless they are counterbalanced by housing supply and planning responses.

A central contribution of the paper lies in showing that this revaluation is not uniform across residential scales. Dwelling satisfaction and locality satisfaction do not respond in the same way to remote-work capability. The dwelling layer is positively associated with remote capability, whereas the locality layer is not. This split is theoretically important because it aligns with the long-standing distinction in residential satisfaction research between evaluation of the housing unit and evaluation of the surrounding residential environment [11, 12]. It is also consistent with the have–want discrepancy perspective, since remote work may make needs such as space, privacy, and functional workability more salient without necessarily altering service access, public-space quality, or neighbourhood accessibility [9]. In that sense, remote work appears to improve the fit between household needs and the dwelling more readily than it improves the fit between households and their wider locality.

The settlement-gradient diagnostics sharpen the interpretation of this two-layer finding. Settlement context strongly structures stress-test revaluation, with the highest positive revaluation in the suburban category and the lowest in large cities, yet the same settlement measure does not produce a robust gradient in dwelling satisfaction (χ^2 p =

0.234). This avoids a simplistic conclusion that suburbs are simply "better": revaluation of where one lives under home-centred routines can diverge from satisfaction with the housing unit. By contrast, locality satisfaction shows a statistically significant settlement gradient (χ^2 $p = 0.023$), with the highest satisfied share in large cities and the lowest in open rural areas. This indicates that the two layers are not only conceptually distinct, but empirically structured in different ways.

This difference helps explain why remote work does not dissolve the advantages of more central or better-served environments. Locality satisfaction remains structured by settlement context rather than by remote capability. This points towards place-based determinants that are produced collectively and institutionally, such as accessibility, service provision, public and open space, and perceived safety. Research on accessibility and transport-related exclusion has repeatedly shown that peripheral locations can carry everyday disadvantages when essential destinations are harder to reach [20, 26]. This interpretation is also consistent with local human development research showing that subnational trajectories can become increasingly uneven and polarized over time, even where aggregate development indicators appear more stable [27]. From this perspective, remote work may enable some households to improve their dwelling fit without removing the broader inequalities embedded in the urban system. The implication is not that remote work makes place irrelevant, but that it changes the balance between dwelling-based and locality-based sources of residential wellbeing.

These findings have direct implications for post-pandemic planning. If remote and hybrid work remain structurally present, housing adequacy becomes more than a private matter of comfort; it becomes part of the urban conditions that support everyday functioning, work, and quality of life. At the same time, locality-level satisfaction continues to depend on neighbourhood functionality, including service access, public-space provision, and safe everyday mobility. This matters particularly in contexts such as Poland, where outward growth has often been associated with governance fragmentation, infrastructure strain, and dispersed settlement [28, 29]. Planning responses therefore need to work on both levels at once: improving the adaptability of the housing stock, especially where compact urban dwellings are under pressure, while also strengthening locality conditions in both core and peripheral environments.

These findings point to three linked policy implications. First, housing policy should treat remote and hybrid work not only as a labour-market change, but also as a housing-adequacy issue. If the dwelling becomes a more important site of everyday functioning, then minimum standards, housing adaptability, internal layout, acoustic and visual privacy, thermal comfort, digital connectivity, and the availability of flexible work-capable space become more relevant to residential wellbeing [30–33]. This does not mean that every dwelling should be designed around a separate home office, but it does suggest that housing policy and design guidance should pay greater attention to whether dwellings can absorb changing domestic functions without intensifying crowding or inequality. Second, positive revaluation outside large-city contexts should not be interpreted as evidence that suburban or peripheral environments are sufficient on their own. The results on locality satisfaction indicate that wider place quality remains dependent on services, accessibility, public space, mobility options, and everyday infrastructure. Suburban planning should therefore connect residential growth with proximity-based

service provision, local centres, active mobility, and transport accessibility rather than allowing remote-work-enabled demand to reinforce low-service dispersal [34]. Third, because these pressures operate across functional urban areas rather than within single municipalities, they require metropolitan coordination. Post-pandemic planning needs to link housing supply, land-use control, transport, digital infrastructure, and service location; otherwise, remote-work-related residential revaluation may improve dwelling fit for some households while deepening uneven accessibility and infrastructure burdens across the metropolitan system [35].

The methodological lesson is more limited but still important. Settlement self-classification appears to capture a meaningful dimension of perceived metropolitan position that is not fully reducible to administrative size categories. The sensitivity checks do not overturn the main conclusions, but they suggest that administrative bins alone are a weaker lens for perceptual outcomes when suburban identity and lived urbanity are substantively relevant. For this paper, that is less a claim about measurement superiority in general than a claim about fit between context measure and outcome type.

Several limitations define the scope of this interpretation. The analysis is cross-sectional and therefore identifies patterned differences rather than causal effects or within-person change. Since the survey was conducted in 2020, the observed revaluation of residential attractiveness may partly reflect an acute response to lockdowns, travel restrictions, and intensified home-centred routines rather than a durable shift in preferences under stabilised hybrid-work arrangements. At the same time, this timing is analytically informative: the data record residents' assessments at the moment when the functional meaning of home and locality was being actively renegotiated, rather than reconstructed retrospectively. The findings are also limited to employed respondents with defined remote-work capability, and the small suburban category calls for caution when interpreting the magnitude of suburban-specific estimates, although it does not appear to drive the main results. Finally, the paper identifies outcome patterns rather than mechanisms: future research should test how crowding, dwelling size, private outdoor space, internet quality, and other housing constraints shape the relationship between remote work and residential evaluation. Further analysis of the same dataset could link revaluation to stated relocation intentions, but assessing whether such intentions translated into actual moves would require a separately designed panel study or comparable later cross-sectional surveys.

5 Conclusion

What emerges from the analysis is not a simple story of post-pandemic residential dispersal, but a more selective revaluation of residential conditions under altered work routines. Remote-work capability appears to strengthen the importance of the dwelling as a site of everyday functioning, making housing adequacy more consequential for how people judge where they live. At the same time, the wider locality does not become irrelevant. Its evaluation remains tied to settlement context and to place-based conditions that households cannot secure through housing choice alone. This is why the paper argues for a two-layer reading of post-pandemic residential change: one layer centred on the dwelling and its capacity to accommodate work and daily life, and another centred on the locality and its accessibility, services, and environmental quality.

This distinction matters beyond the immediate pandemic context. It suggests that the spread of remote and hybrid work may intensify pressure on urban systems not only through possible relocation, but through a reordering of what residents value in the first place. This interpretation must, however, be read in light of the timing of the evidence. The survey captures residential evaluations in 2020, when lockdowns, mobility restrictions, and intensified home-centred routines were still directly shaping everyday experience. The findings therefore speak most directly to pandemic-period residential revaluation, rather than to confirmed long-term relocation behaviour or fully stabilised hybrid-work preferences. At the same time, this timing is analytically valuable: if COVID-19 is understood as a stress test of residential conditions, then the survey captures evaluations at the moment when the functional adequacy of dwellings and localities became unusually visible in everyday life.

In that sense, the significance of remote work lies less in any single behavioural outcome than in the way it redefines the relationship between home, locality, and metropolitan position. For planning, the implication is straightforward: neither housing policy nor neighbourhood policy is sufficient on its own. The post-pandemic city will be shaped by how successfully both dimensions are addressed together.

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