

RESULTS OF SURVEY ON TELEWORKING AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A “NEW NORMAL” IN 2021



Many thanks to the record numbers of you who replied to the survey launched by **the Federation** on the modalities of teleworking: 4,880 responses were received. This unprecedented response demonstrates the importance you all attach to the subject.

The Federation warmly thanks all of the colleagues who took the trouble to send us their opinions and we are now communicating the results to everyone.

Your detailed recommendations will be defended by **the Federation** in front of the Administration as part of the discussions that will begin in 2021 to define the Teleworking rules for the "new normal" and to arrive at a correct balance between telework and presence in the office.

The distribution of survey responses reflects the proportion of staff at Commission sites: 70% came from Brussels and Geel, 14% from Luxembourg, 5% from Ispra / Seville and the remaining 11% from other Commission sites.

Your answers presented in percentages are provided in attachment.

And here is a summary of your opinions and expectations for the future of teleworking:

- **On the psychological aspect, two thirds of the staff have adapted well, or very well, to the current intensive telework.**

But 20% of the colleagues are suffering psychologically and their problems need to be treated seriously.

Their main problems concern difficulties in separating work and family life, the loss of integration into the real world of work, the resulting digital overload, and the feeling of isolation.

The Federation recently issued recommendations on these problems, described as "Team Out" ([see the corresponding tract](#)), and calls on the Administration to reinforce the efforts it has timidly begun with its "Boost your wellbeing" initiative.

- **In terms of equipment, more than three-quarters of the Staff request that the Administration provide more equipment: computer screen, printer, ergonomic chair...**

The Administration listened to **the Federation's** request and has launched a first programme to improve your equipment, but this only partially covers your needs.

<https://myintracomm.ec.europa.eu/coronavirus/Pages/my-home-office.aspx>

To enable more effective teleworking, **the Federation** echoes the Staff's request to the Administration for a more complete set of office and computer equipment to be provided by the Commission in 2021.

- **Again on the financial side, you rightly consider that the Administration is transferring many expenses (heating, electricity, internet, telephone...) to your charge and making massive savings on missions and soon on buildings and offices.**

Nearly 60% of staff believe that financial assistance should be granted to help cover these additional costs for all staff, and particularly to the most precarious staff.

27% of you believe these costs should be paid by the Commission, but only to the most precarious.

Many of you have shared with us examples of good practice in companies and administrations in our Member States.

In particular, here are three articles that you sent us which describe examples of employers bearing the costs incurred by structural telework.

<https://www.rsz.fgov.be/fr/employeurs-et-onss/mesures-coronavirus/indemnite-pour-travail-la-maison>

<https://www.lecho.be/monargent/travail/teletravail-pouvez-vous-demander-une-indemnite-a-votre-employeur/10217686.html>

<https://www.teletravailler.be/employeur/indemnites/>

The Federation calls on the **Administration** to follow these same practices in order to cover all these costs, at the very least for the most vulnerable colleagues.

Your expectations for structural telework which will be the future norm

- **Concerning the proportion of telework compared to presence in the office:**

There is a very broad demand for maintaining a high proportion of teleworking in the future.

More than 90% would like to continue teleworking at least 2 days per week.

67% would like to telework 3 or more days per week.

96% of colleagues are in favour of partial or full-time teleworking becoming a right. Staff ask for the right to decide for themselves to telework at least part-time, with the rest being left to the discretion of the Administration.

The Federation calls on the **Administration** to include in the new rules the right of staff to do structural telework 50% of the time (every other week) or 2-3 days a week.

- **Concerning the possibility of being able to telework a certain number of days per year away from the place of employment :**

At the legitimate request of the vast majority of colleagues, **the Federation** calls on the **Administration** to take inspiration from the model in force in other Institutions such as the Court of Auditors, and to include in the new provisions for telework in 2021 the right to telework away from the place of employment for a total of 30 days spread over the year with a maximum of 10 days per month.

Finally, numerous complaints from staff concern the increase in i) the number of meetings being held outside of "coretime" and ii) exchanges of e-mails at all hours which blur the separation between professional and private life.

Also, as part of the re-definition of the Teleworking rules, **the Federation** stresses the importance of introducing safeguards to ensure that the right to disconnect from IT and telecoms out of hours is respected.

The FEDERATION recalls that in these difficult moments, and in decisive moments such as these, full consultation between the Administration and the Staff Representative Organisations must be the rule.

Regarding the Administration's rules for teleworking at the end of this year when we are still in the middle of the Covid period, **the Federation** finds the Administration's proposal far too restrictive. Some colleagues (e.g. French) simply cannot return home earlier (not before 15 December at best for France) to take advantage of the Administration's offer of

the possibility to telework away from the place of work for ten days before Christmas. In view of all the uncertainties: differing COVID rules from one country to another, difficult transport conditions, and constraints linked to professional activities at the end of the year, the Federation calls on the Administration to review its guidelines on this point and show more flexibility, one might even say goodwill, during this Christmas period and allow colleagues to telework away from their place of employment for two weeks before or two weeks after the Christmas/New Year holidays.

The FEDERATION

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