



European Civil Service Federation
Fédération de la Fonction Publique Européenne

TELEWORKING FROM THE PLACE OF ORIGIN DURING THE COVID PERIOD: TRUST, CARING AND ... PRODUCTIVITY



Dear colleagues,

Even if the Coronavirus situation generally appears to be developing quite favourably, teleworking continues to be, for the time being, the best solution to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and thus protect the health of colleagues, family and friends.

After 3 months of teleworking since the start of confinement, this working method has largely demonstrated its effectiveness. [A finding that our survey in May already revealed.](#)

The Federation was delighted to hear our HR Director General, Ms. Ingestad, acknowledge this and explicitly declare it in her online [dialogue on May 29 \(please listen to minutes 8 and 9 at the following link\)](#).

The fact is that during the various phases of deconfinement that we will go through, teleworking - which has made it possible to maintain a high level of productivity in the past months - will remain a central part of our daily routine.

Teleworking has shown its merits (but also its limitations), while at the same time raising many questions; many colleagues have naturally wondered about the possibility of teleworking from their place of origin or elsewhere in this period when intra-European means of transport are subject to a series of restrictions, specific rules and border closures.

For these reasons, some of which persist, **the Federation** invites management and HR to show understanding when colleagues ask to telework from their place of origin or elsewhere as part of the deconfinement in the coming summer months (notably July and August) and not to systematically insist on a return to the workplace (Brussels, Luxembourg or other).

The current rule is that telework should in principle be carried out at the workplace or at a location which allows the staff member to return to the office within a few hours. This provision must now be interpreted in a flexible, reasoned and responsible manner in the context of these exceptional circumstances.

Teleworking from the place of origin must here be understood as a purely temporary measure, i.e. a time-limited response to the exceptional crisis that we are still going through. It is clear that there is no question of this becoming the new long-term norm.

The Federation considers it essential to preserve our European public service identity and the team spirit in our DGs.

Thus in the coming weeks, permission to telework from the place of origin (or another location that is not the usual place of work) must be granted with human consideration and understanding, just as the [Director General of the](#)

[DG HR herself proposed in her online dialogue on May 29 \(minutes 26 to 32\).](#)

Granting permission to telework from the place of origin or to be with family is one way that the Institution can display confidence in the staff who serve it whilst also promoting greater efficiency and productivity.

Closer family ties are an essential part of the response to the enormous challenge of the present health crisis. For example, childcare support which can be provided by grandparents or other family members while parents telework.

Colleagues who have not been able to return to their place of origin for three months must be allowed to return and stay there while teleworking if this is not incompatible with the performance of their duties. Their record of work in these past months proves they deserve to be trusted.

In addition, **the Federation** speaks on behalf of colleagues who would not understand any managers who, even though DG HR invites them to do so, do not demonstrate flexibility and allow teleworking from regions and countries which have been much less affected by the pandemic. Indeed, many colleagues come from areas of Europe which have been relatively lightly affected by COVID-19.

The Federation invites the Institution to demonstrate that it is capable of meeting the challenges of the day by promoting productivity while maintaining the well-being of its staff. The flexibility it can demonstrate by allowing telework from a location that is not necessarily the workplace will surely strengthen the bonds of trust and solidarity that are dear to us.

THE FEDERATION

Your reliable source of information

You'll never walk alone