

***The right to disconnect is an essential part of
the generalisation of structural
teleworking***

The Federation warmly welcomes the initiative launched in this regard by DG INTPA and the guidelines presented in its “Digital workload and e-mail Policy”

***All DGs should do likewise
and
DG HR should take the lead to generalise these best practices and ensure equal treatment throughout the Commission***



The generalisation of telework, firstly as a result of the Covid crisis, will now be a long-term process.

Structural telework, previously a sparingly granted possibility, will soon become the norm for all or almost all of us, probably for up to 50% of working time.

Negotiations with the Administration to establish the new rules for telework have not yet begun... but the Federation's proposals are ready and based [on the opinions you expressed in response to our surveys](#).

This rapid and profound transformation of working conditions must be accompanied by actions firstly at the human level but also at the financial and organisational levels.

Voluntary action is essential to anticipate the consequences of these changes and to make the transition a success.

On the human level, psychological support and ergonomic advice were put in place at the beginning of the Covid crisis.

These means of information and assistance must be maintained, publicised, strengthened and adapted to accompany the transition to the new working arrangements and the establishment of the new work-life balance.

From a financial point of view, telework at home induces a transfer of costs from the Institution to the workers, which affects in particular those with the most modest incomes. These costs are financially compensated in Member State administrations and should therefore also be compensated in the Institutions. [The Federation has already called for an effort to be made by the Commission.](#)

To continue to be effective **at the organisational level**, generalised half-time teleworking will require a framework specifying clear and explicit time limits to ensure sufficient disconnection from e-mails and videoconferences.

Indeed, while keeping in mind the obvious benefits of digital technology, this "tele-workplace" has created its own new challenges.

Too much connectivity at home, known as hyper-connectivity, can lead to a situation where people are unable to separate work life from home life for themselves and their families - time needed for rest and recuperation.

This hyper-connectivity can have a serious impact on health.

It is therefore essential to introduce a right to disconnect in order to:

- ensure respect for home time and holidays;
- guarantee the balance between professional, personal and family life
- protect the health of colleagues.

Several DGs have become aware of this and have even developed, like DG INTPA, a fairly comprehensive set of rules to protect their staff. [The INTPA text is available here with additional suggestions from the Federation.](#)

The Federation has been asking DG HR for such a text for months and is naturally pleased by these first initiatives from proactive DGs with modern visions.

The objective now is to improve this system where necessary and to get DG HR to ensure that it is extended to the whole Commission.

All colleagues must be treated in the same way.

The Federation

You will never walk alone !