



[Version en ligne](#)



[Online version](#)

## Teleworking

Telework is currently at the heart of discussions between DG HR and Staff Representation.

The revision of the decisions on working time and telework will lead to important changes in the way we work, already initiated with the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the 100% compulsory telework for more than a year.

There are many issues at stake:

### **Improving flexibility**

- Reduce the constraints linked to the timetable (we would speak of 8 hours/day for a working day and no longer of a fixed/variable timetable);
- If a standard number of days/weeks is defined (e.g. 3 days per week), it is necessary to be able to go beyond this number depending on the circumstances (strike, children, etc.);
- If staff wish, the recording of the timetable in SYSPER (flexitime) can be removed or, on the contrary, proposed and, in this case, the recording of timetables can be allowed even when working from home;

### **Reconciliation of private and professional life - Prevention and consideration of psychosocial risks**

- Guarantee a right to disconnection and respect for private life (if it is possible to telework everywhere and at more flexible hours, one should not fall into extremes (e.g. meeting at 8.00 p.m., availability at all hours/day with no regard for health);
- Consider the social dimension of the workplace (for some people telework is negative because of the social isolation it creates);
- Set up tools to better evaluate the good "health" and motivation of the staff;
- Take into account the many expatriates in our institution (and the need to be with their relatives in their place of origin under certain circumstances). Teleworking abroad should therefore be taken into account by granting a certain number of days (e.g. 30 days per year) without having to provide any justification;



### **Improve the relationship between management and staff**

Telework is above all a matter of trust between the manager and his or her staff. This is an essential prerequisite.

Without this, we quickly fall into a relationship of suspicion and control that is ultimately detrimental to the interests of the service because the disengagement of the staff and the malaise can be significant.

Telework must become a norm, a standard working arrangement not subject to negotiation or blackmail by the manager (we have known cases where certain working arrangements gave rise to certain pressures from the hierarchy and to injustices between colleagues).

- Implementation of tools to better assess these management-related risks;
- Offer mandatory training for managers to "manage a remote team";

### **Improving the practical aspects...**

- o Telework can also lead to a precariousness linked to its cost (equipment, bills, heating, etc.) which can be difficult to bear for some colleagues. It should be possible to help them via a fixed allowance linked to their income, for example;
- o Staff must be guaranteed to be properly equipped and regularly reminded (e.g. through video clips) of the importance of ergonomics (correct installation at the workstation), movement (physical activity is essential and staff **MUST** not sit at their workstation for 8 hours a day).

## **The buildings, they're moving!**

For months, the OIB, under the impetus of DG HR and the Cabinet, has been restructuring the DGs (moving) in the buildings. And it is not over yet!



According to a projection by the OIB, a major overhaul over the next 10 years will significantly change our location and the way we work.

This is in line with the "green" logic of reducing our environmental impact (by acquiring more modern and therefore less energy-consuming buildings), as well as by rationalising our workspaces, including through dynamic office layout (or "hot desking" / "flex desk"). It is also a question of reducing the current costs of leases by rationalising the spaces.

In concrete terms, it is a question of concentrating all the centres around the *Loi* axis and around the *Cinquantenaire*, and abandoning all the other sites such as Genève, *Beaulieu* and *Champ de Mars*. Outside the European Quarter, only the *Rogier* area would be maintained and developed to accommodate all the executive agencies.

At the time of writing, the final plan has not yet been adopted. While the aims are laudable, we regret that they are being carried out while the majority of staff are still teleworking (linked to the COVID context) and by the lack of involvement of the latter by the

hierarchy in the process of discussions and the changes envisaged (being presented with

### **But what is "hot desking"?**

With hot desking, there will be no more dedicated offices, each agent will join shared and modular spaces (probably keeping a certain coherence (DG / sector ...)).

At this stage, and unless we are mistaken, it would therefore be planned to eliminate 20% of the desks.

There will also be a thorough reorganisation of the canteen/cafeteria offer.

Indeed, with the reduction in the number of buildings, the generalization of teleworking, it is quite obvious that the canteens and cafeterias will follow the same logic of rationalization.

It is clear, even if no decision has yet been taken, that the current distribution will evolve and that the offer will be reviewed (canteens in the central areas (e.g. Berlaymont), and cafeterias offering small meals in the more outlying areas (e.g. cafeteria Mérode/Cour-St-Michel).

### And car parks too!

For some time now, the Commission has been aligning itself with the Brussels code, COBRACE (*Code Bruxellois de l'air, du climat et de la maîtrise de l'énergie*), which aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and control energy consumption.

For example, COBRACE's parking policy aims to reduce the number of parking spaces available in the vicinity of office buildings in order to discourage workers from using their cars for commuting.

The internal project therefore consists of drastically reducing the number of parking spaces (cars), the space thus freed will make it possible to develop spaces for so-called "soft" mobility and by increasing the number of showers.

While the project is laudable for reducing our environmental impact and to be encouraged, it is also important to take into account the different situations where no alternative to a motorised vehicle is possible such as:

- People with reduced mobility;
- People with medical conditions that prevent them from making physical effort;
- Elderly people;
- Pregnant women;
- People who have no alternative to public transport;

These people should be accompanied and not penalised!



**Stay connected:**



*This email has been sent to you from an official functional mailbox (REP PERS OSP...) authorized by DG HR to send "to all" communications to all staff. The SFE union uses the official lists available in the address book of your DG / Agency to do so. These lists belong to DIGIT and it is impossible for us to modify them or remove your professional email address.*

