

PAR TOUTATIS, ILS SONT FOUS CES RH !

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO THE "HOT-DESKING" SAGA AT THE EC TAO'S PROPOSAL



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Version française suivra

A lot of information concerning the *hot-desking* dossier has been circulating since TAO informed the Commission's personnel back in mid-January about our administration's plans to introduce *hot-desking* – dressed up as "dynamic

collaborative spaces” – for all staff of this institution.

This information, whose full final details only *Toutatis* knows, is surfacing gradually; it is incomplete, sometimes contradictory and often vague. In short, we are told that many of you feel **lost in translation**, and it’s no wonder!

TAO, *the association of Independents*, has decided to shed some light on the matter. We therefore give you the:

BEGINNER’S GUIDE to the hot-desking saga at the EC

- **WHAT IS “HOT-DESKING”?**

No fixed individual offices or personal workstations. Personal belongings to be stored in a locker on daily basis.

- **HAS A DECISION BEEN TAKEN?**

- Around 4,800 staff members have been told that they will be moving to new buildings as early as 2021.
- DG HR / DIGIT / SCIC / EPSO will move to “The One” and DG CNECT will move to “Copernicus”, both buildings are located on Rue de la Loi.
- DG BUDG will also move imminently to the so-called “Black pearl”, MO15.
- The overall goal is hot-desking for all, but the specific plans for other DGs are still being worked out.

- **WHAT IS THE REASON BEHIND?**

Clearly financial. The savings deriving from the reduction in the number of EC buildings in Brussels, between now and 2030, are estimated between €280 million and €440 million.

- **HAS THERE BEEN A CONSULTATION WITH STAFF?**

- NO
- The staff of the DGs concerned by this first “round” learned the news without any prior communication.
- A flurry of ex-post polls has been launched by DG HR ever since.
- HR/OIB have already visited some DGs to *inform* staff of the decisions taken.

- **HAS THERE BEEN A NEGOTIATION WITH STAFF REPRESENTATIVES?**

- NO

- One “informative meeting” took place on 15 February 2021.

- **ARE ALL DIRECTOR GENERALS IN FAVOUR?**

- NO, and it seems that they are only now starting to have their voices heard.

- In direct response to a communication to staff published by **TAO**, the Director General of DG MOVE told his personnel that he is against the plans (we thank him for that).

- What about the others? The information we have is that there is clearly no unanimity over this issue.

- **IS HOT-DESKING REALLY GOING TO BE THE WORKPLACE ARRANGEMENT FOR EVERYBODY?**

- In reply to a question specifically raised by **TAO**, the representative of OIB assured us that there will not be a “one-size-fits-all” approach, but he did not elaborate on this.

- It remains unknown at this point who they intend to allocate individual offices to, and on which basis.

- **HAS THERE BEEN A PILOT PROJECT?**

- NO

- **HAS THERE BEEN AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT TAKING INTO ACCOUNT ASPECTS SUCH AS HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND LONG-TERM EFFICIENCY?**

- NO /Not available.

- There is no solid evidence showing that the potential enhanced risks to health in the pandemic and post-pandemic scenarios have been properly factored in. Why doesn't the administration empirically test the approach rather than making an all-or-nothing dash to seal its *fait accompli*?

- **WILL HOT-DESKING CONTRIBUTE TO MAKING THE EU CIVIL SERVICE MORE ATTRACTIVE?**

- Can anybody really believe so?

In light of the above mentioned considerations, and based on the **following principles**:

1. **Commissioner Hahn’s personal political commitment:**
“Staff of the DGs and services will be closely involved and consulted for the lay out of their future offices as it should contribute to their wellbeing at work (Letter to the College, of 23 February 2021)
2. **Mandate by the Communication from the Commission *on the working environment of tomorrow* of the European Commission dated 16 October 2019 [C (2019) 7450 final]:**
 - “Before deciding on a particular office set-up, DGs, departments and teams should receive help and advice and help to look at options and decide what the best office arrangement is for their work” (principle 8);
 - “Staff affected should be involved throughout the process of conceptualizing and implementing the new workspace” (principle 9)
3. **Importance of the staff and social dialogue**
4. **Due consideration of the principle of prudence and duty of care.**

TAO’S 6 BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR AN ORDERLY AND EFFICIENT WORKPLACE ARRANGEMENT

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| 1 | Hybrid model for those willing to do telework for up to 4 days per week, and those willing to continue going to the office |
| 2 | Colleagues willing to opt for telework for up to 4 days per week can be granted a specific workplace arrangement after due negotiation with staff representatives and after a pilot project is done for minimum period of 6 months |
| 3 | The work arrangement for the staff willing/needing to work up to 4 days per week at the office needs to |

be assessed individually, taking into account the nature of the work carried out by each and every one of the staff members. Individual offices should remain if this is justified based on objective and transparent criteria

4 Director generals should describe in detail *who does what* at their respective DG to come up with an optimal collective game plan: individual offices justified on objective needs

5 Staff are to be formally consulted by their respective DG and by HR

6 Staff representatives have a role to play, according to the social dialogue rules in force. It is their job. Listen to their reasoned views

Raúl Trujillo Herrera
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TAO's previous communication on hot-desking:

-  [Hot desking a bad solution to make savings that could spell the end of the European civil service, 4/3/2021](#)
-  [Hot desking for all and now? Tao says no to policies based on "Faits accomplis", 2/2/2021](#)
-  [Hot desking for all and now?, 25/1/2021](#)

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