

TELEWORK FROM ABROAD

TAO KEEPS INSISTING ON OUR PLEA FOR A MODERN, FLEXIBLE AND EFFICIENT ADMINISTRATION



Brussels, 24 November 2021

The massive support by the Commission staff to TAO-The Independents (TAO)'s petition on Telework from abroad (TWA) has left no one indifferent at our institution.

Thanks to the unprecedented involvement of more **than 4,000 colleagues** across the European Commission, indeed both the administration and all the trade unions started to understand one basic principle: **our institution needs to evolve!**

Following your clear “mandate” to us, we have had contact ever since with both the commissioner’s cabinet, and DG HR. In parallel, the “concertation” with the trade unions has continued its way since summer on the new Commission decision *on the implementation of working time and hybrid working*, where the new provisions on TWA will be regulated.

The elements I would like to underline for you today are the following:

- 1) DG HR does not appear to have at this point in time the political mandate to reconsider its current position of a maximum of up to 10 days of TWA per year, and this would be linked to annual leave;
- 2) Informal indication given to us by the cabinet would suggest that their main concern behind this approach would be the perceived “corporate image damage”, and the possibility that this could nourish the appetite of some Member States always eager to reform the Staff Regulations in a negative manner for the staff;
- 3) Whilst one can share as a matter of principle these concerns, I had the opportunity to state once and again -the last time at the occasion of the *Technical concertation* with Director General of DG HR last 28 October 2021- that the fundamental principles explicitly enshrined in the above mentioned draft decision of: Flexibility, Efficiency, Trust, and due consideration of the experience of the last 20 months do justify well **moving beyond the current 10 days position**;
- 4) Meanwhile, **TAO** has demanded publicly that the HR gives ten additional days over the period of Christmas of telework from abroad; on the same grounds that we have repeated upon insistently that **exceptional times require maximum flexibility**.

It is a fact that our petition, thanks to your massive support, has made big impact and triggered the reaction of even the most reluctant old trade unions. A “*concertation politique*” with Commissioner Hahn himself on the draft decision *on the implementation of working time and hybrid working* has now been convened. We shall say clearly again at this occasion that **10 days of TWA IS JUST NOT ENOUGH!**

TAO’s proposal and its justification are public and very well known by everyone, and now all the other trade unions keep referring to us as the inevitable reference.

It consists in essence:

TAO's: 60 + 5 teleworking days from abroad, based on the fundamental principles

- A real and effective hybrid work pattern is the most suitable and efficient system for an institution of its kind.
- Both ways are complementary taking into account the nature of tasks and the objective general interest: **physical presence where necessary, telework where possible.**
- An organisation like the European Commission is not a network of individual providers but a working community: physical presence is also necessary for a number of activities (socializing, creativity, innovation, learning, etc.).
- Remote working offers staff more flexibility in managing their work commitments and private life, whilst contributing to the wellbeing of the personnel and a greener Commission.



Link (above) to TAO's EC staff petition for 60 + 5 days of telework from abroad.

As stated in TAO's petition, we insist that **the best work pattern is one that encourages efficiency based on flexibility, and flexibility based on real trust with guarantees.** A results-oriented philosophy strengthens motivation and efficiency. HR's current proposal of 10 days per year of teleworking from abroad is manifestly insufficient, does not take into account recent experience, and – as we now know- is not what the staff would like.

Importantly, as no other Staff Association seems to have it in mind in their proposals: **the pandemic is not over yet.** TAO is proposing the insertion of a review clause after one year to take account of the evolution of the COVID 19, based on the same health parameters. The principle of precaution would require a reassessment with sufficient perspective.

Now, clearly, a massive support by everyone to this thesis of common and general interest is of crucial importance at the currently ongoing elections, it is the only way to express your discontent, and reinforce the staff association that makes an absolute priority of this goal.

We encourage you all to participate massively at the current elections by voting for TAO-THE INDEPENDENTS, LIST 5, **for a Telework from abroad pattern for a modern public administration**

We thank you for that!

Raúl Trujillo
TAO-The Independents
President

Link to vote : <https://webgate.ec.testa.eu/3/evote/clp>

