

Brussels, 28 juillet 2023

Outcome of negotiations on working time, teleworking and leave

Dear colleagues,

Union Syndicale already informed you about the negotiations on working time, teleworking and some modification of the leave rules in our [Flash](#) on 21 June 2023.

Now, at the end of the first consultation round, we share the analysis by R&D of the main achievements made through the negotiation on these matters in the context of the introduction of the new Sysper system. We thank R&D for their clear presentation of these achievements compared to the initial proposals from the administration and would stress that these achievements were obtained through good cooperation between the unions.

We regret that the decision-making process on Sysper, which had become urgent, did not allow sufficient time to address our ongoing concerns in relation to overtime, standby duties and respect of the maximum working time and minimum rest break provisions in the Working Time Directive. **Union Syndicale** expressed the desire to discuss these matters, but as our request was refused, we will revert to these matters in future negotiations or, if necessary, through court rulings.

Some concessions

The trade unions ended up making concessions on certain changes mainly due to the technical constraints of Sysper, including:

- a change of the deadline for the carryover of annual leave;
- individual timetable planning, which now has to be done outside the system, generating an administrative workload for both time managers and users, and a certain amount of legal uncertainty;
- work on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays, which will generate a maximum of 8 hours of deferred rest instead of the current 9 hours; and
- the credit of only 8 hours for work on mission days, instead of the current 9 hours, if actual working time on a mission day is not registered.

These changes show that the Appointing Authority's choice of Sysper is suboptimal and we regret that rules and practices have been adapted to software constraints, rather than the other way round.

Some achievements

Apart from that, our main concerns and requests were addressed and we have obtained some notable improvements. We particularly welcome the more flexible approach to, **and increased allowance for telework from "a greater distance"**, which was a key **Union Syndicale** demand, and a new article on the '**right to disconnect**', which we will expect line managers to facilitate.

Union Syndicale also welcomes some concrete improvements:

- the increase of the flexi counter ceiling to 100 hours, with no cut off during the month, but only at the end (i.e. the counter can be temporarily over the 100);
- the possibility of 4 flexi leave days every month, and
- the full counting of travel time for missions as working time.

We were, of course, determined to ensure that Friday evening work would continue to generate time off for health reasons. We also successfully opposed the Appointing Authority's proposal to allow line managers to impose non-standard working hours (before 8.30 and between 17.30 and 20.00). In addition, we secured **five days of additional leave after 20 years of service**, which previously only applied after 25 years of work at an EU institution.

Overall, we think **a good compromise** has been reached and we were able to give our agreement in principle on the two draft decisions (on leave arrangements and on working time and telework). We will also recommend that the staff endorse these draft decisions at a **General Meeting on 11 September** and will forward the final drafts once the detailed wording has been agreed.

We look forward to a large turnout of staff at the General Meeting to discuss these important new arrangements!



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