



Telework: my right, my decision







Telework – a worker’s enemy?

Threats of unregulated telework

-  **Permanent & imposed telework**, motivated by employers’ attempts to save costs at the expense of workers’ wellbeing.
-  **Working Time**: Overtime which is not recorded and therefore unpaid needs to be controlled and properly regulated.
-  **Health & Safety**: Musculoskeletal complaints from non-ergonomic working conditions, long & irregular working hours, work-life imbalance, psychological strains due to lack of social interaction, and feelings of isolation.
-  **Surveillance & Privacy**: Increased use of invasive technologies which give employers unlimited possibilities to remotely monitor and control workers way beyond what is justified.
-  An **extra burden or a push to stay at home for women workers** who often bear the brunt of household chores, having to juggle between work, household and care responsibilities.
-  Telework is **not a substitute for leave**, such as maternity, parental, sick, or care leave.
-  A **threat to the collective community of workers** united through their workplaces and trade unions.

Telework – a worker’s friend?

Advantages of regulated telework

-  **Voluntary Principle**: Workers should have the right to choose to telework and to revert to the office.
-  **Happier workers**: Telework can lead to higher productivity, reduced absenteeism and greater job satisfaction provided it is not permanent and if presence at the workplace is still possible some days a week.
-  **A better work-life balance**: More flexibility and autonomy can benefit workers, provided it does not result in unpaid overtime, pressure to be flexible and always available, and huge psychological strains.
-  **Employers shoulder their responsibility**: They ensure equipment, pay workers’ health and social insurance, provide extra allowance for workers’ costs of teleworking (utilities, etc.), training, etc.
-  If **workers’ rights to form and join a union, as well as to collective bargaining** are guaranteed.
-  **Trade union representatives are involved in establishing telework regulatory frameworks** and provided with the necessary facilities and digital tools to defend workers on an equal footing with employers.



IndustriAll Europe's demands

for ensuring that telework benefits workers:

- ! **Telework must be regulated** through national regulation and/or collective agreements at all levels, especially where regulatory frameworks have not yet been established and where unions see it as necessary.
- ! The **voluntary principle must be fully respected**. Workers should have the right to choose between teleworking or working at the office. Telework and office work must be compatible.
- ! **Working time** needs to be in full compliance with national regulation and/or collective agreements. Working time conditions must be the same no matter where the work is carried out.
- ! The **right to disconnect** must be fully granted and respected.
- ! The **employer is fully responsible** for workers, providing good quality equipment, proper health and safety measures, health and social insurances, necessary training. An additional allowance to cover workers' expenses for teleworking must be paid (utilities, such as heating and electricity, etc.).
- ! **Teleworkers enjoy the same rights as all other workers**, including the right to form and to join a union, collective bargaining, training, promotions and bonuses, etc.
- ! **The employer must respect the privacy and autonomy of the teleworker**: limiting the collection of data to only what is necessary; a clear protection of worker's personal data in line with GDPR; full transparency of the scope and use of data collected and respect of the demand to keep humans in control.
- ! **Trade union representatives must be involved** in all the points outlined above and provided with the necessary facilities and digital tools to defend workers on an equal footing with employers.



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