

Back again ... Update No. 19 from the Staff Union

Dear members, dear colleagues,

Already November... We hope that you and your respective families are well and remain protected and safe. We have had a very challenging year so far, and the pandemic has disrupted most of our plans for much longer than expected. With a second wave well underway in some regions, national health measures have forced some of us out of our offices again. Indeed, mandatory teleworking is back for some regions, while it has never stopped for some others. In any case, we will continue to work hard, never giving up, continually trying to catch a glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel.

It is therefore all the more important to show solidarity with each other, as time may seem longer for some than for others. Solidarity is much more than a word; it is a generous but necessary act where everyone plays his or her part with humility. Call, check on your colleagues, and let us all look out for one another to help relieve the pressure.

It is also important to stress again and to recall – because once again some of us will be obliged to work from home and not all ILO duties are suitable for work from home – that staff are covered by Article 8.8 of the Staff Regulations. We also remind you that at any point, in consultation with your supervisors, you can make changes to your beginning of cycle forms to take new challenges into account.

Recalling our previous recommendations, made in the spring of this year, please try to find the right tools and solutions to work from home in an acceptable way. When we talk about work-life balance, the implication is that the “life” part needs to balance out the “work” part. A poor work-life balance can have all kinds of repercussions on our happiness, growth, and sense of well-being. Be cautious and strive to maintain a barrier between work time and personal time.

For its part, the Staff Union again requests the Administration to kindly remind managers to continue to be flexible during this time, and to accommodate the individual circumstances of their team members.

The Staff Union can also testify to the efforts made by the Administration, through the many draft directives it receives for consultation, most of which are sent at the last minute. The urgency is not the issue for the Staff Union. We are, however, more perplexed when after having worked twice as hard to add comments or improvements, these are barely considered and we witness helplessly the communication that emerges in the form of broadcasts which can be “as clear as mud”, often adding greater confusion in the minds of colleagues ...

The Staff Union is deeply convinced that a strong and reliable social dialogue must accompany any new business model in order to cope with the times we are living in, as this builds trust. We will continue to demand clarity, transparency and fairness. The Staff Union also believes that it is becoming urgent to work on the revision of the circular on teleworking, in order to cope with this new normal and, above all, as our DG has said, to make it a better normal in this area.

We have been here for you from day one with your concerns, engaging in dialogue with the Administration, even with some ups and downs. Your elected representatives stand in solidarity with you.

Stay safe, healthy, secure and connected. And don't forget to do the things that you enjoy.