

## Invitation

### Joint UNI Europa / FES Webinar

### Remote Work: Who will be the real winners?

*Thursday, 17 June 2021, 10am – 12pm CET*

Working from a distance is not a new phenomenon,<sup>1</sup> although before the COVID-19 outbreak, there was clearly a wide gap between the number of people who could work from home, and the number who actually did so. In 2019, around one in twenty workers worked from home regularly.<sup>2</sup> Since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic working from home has become the norm for millions of workers in the EU and worldwide. Nearly 40% of those currently working in the EU began to remote work fulltime as a result of the pandemic.<sup>3</sup>

The outbreak of the pandemic has revealed large differences in the prevalence of remote work across EU Member States, sectors and occupations. In many EU countries, more than half of the workers who have started working from home since the pandemic had no prior experience with remote work.<sup>4</sup>

Despite multiple challenges, it is evident – remote work is here to stay. The emerging evidence suggests that over the three-quarters of EU employees wish to continue working from home at least occasionally once the pandemic is over. Many employees attribute positive characteristics to remote work such as increased efficiency and a lower risk of burnout. The results also suggest that the overwhelming majority of the surveyed employees believe that remote work (85%) and digital conferencing (81%) are here to stay.<sup>5</sup> However, the Covid Pandemic has also shown risks linked to remote work, such as increased isolation, lower levels of innovation and creativity, intensified workloads and longer working hours.

Furthermore, many employers were in favour of the remote or hybrid working arrangements a long time before the COVID-19 outbreak by emphasising the cost benefits of a remote workforce<sup>6</sup> and we are sure to see more and more cases of remote work being

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09585199400000010>

<sup>2</sup> <https://euagenda.eu/upload/publications/wpef20020.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/jrc120945\\_policy\\_brief\\_-\\_covid\\_and\\_telework\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/jrc120945_policy_brief_-_covid_and_telework_final.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/jrc120945\\_policy\\_brief\\_-\\_covid\\_and\\_telework\\_final.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/sites/jrcsh/files/jrc120945_policy_brief_-_covid_and_telework_final.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.iza.org/publications/dp/13229/the-covid-19-crisis-and-telework-a-research-survey-on-experiences-expectations-and-hopes>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/insights/multimedia/infographics/telework-savings-in-government.html>

imposed by employers as an excuse to cut jobs and pay, digitally off-shore and restructure on a large scale.

This joint UNI Europa / FES Webinar aims to address the issue of remote work by looking beyond a simplistic discussion of the costs vs benefits. The key question is **Who will be the real winners?**

In addressing this question, the webinar will focus on the workers' rights by highlighting the gaps in existing legislations and calling for a new coherent legislative framework at the EU level.

- Remote work raises the prospect of more staff **monitoring and surveillance**<sup>7</sup>
- Remote work blurs **the distinction between private and professional life**<sup>8</sup>
- Remote work has an impact on **work organisation**

We cordially invite you to the joint webinar by **UNI Europa** and **FES Competence Centre on the Future of Work**, to discuss together with experts from European institutions and Trade Union organisations the key challenges of remote work.

Please find the detailed agenda below.

#### **General information:**

<b>Title:</b>	“Remote Work: Who will be the real winners?”
<b>When?</b>	June 17 2021, 10am-12pm (CET)
<b>Where?</b>	Online, zoom link will be provided after registration

Please register [here](#) (Deadline: June 14, 2021).

*Please note, the zoom link will be provided after registration, shortly before the event.*

Translation will be provided in English, French, Spanish and German.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://theconversation.com/remote-working-has-led-to-managers-spying-more-on-staff-here-are-three-ways-to-curb-it-159604>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/society/20210121STO96103/parliament-wants-to-ensure-the-right-to-disconnect-from-work>

## Agenda

### Remote Work: Who will be the real winners?

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10H00 – 10H10 Welcome speeches: **Oliver Röthig**, UNI Europa; **Matthias Weber**, FES

#### Introduction

10H10 – 10H20 **Birte Dedden** (UNI Europa ICTS) and **Maureen Hick** (UNI Europa Finance) to present [UNI Key Principles](#) for ensuring workers' rights when working remotely

#### Part I: Surveillance of workers

10H20 – 10H30 UNI Europa ICTS affiliate: **Mike Eatwell**, Unite, UK & acting UNI Europa ICTS President

10H30 – 10H40 EU institution view: **Iban Garcia del Blanco**, MEP, S&D

10H40 – 10H50 Discussion

#### Part II: Right to Disconnect and Work/Life Balance

10H50 – 11H00 UNI Europa Finance affiliate: **Nuria Lobo Aceituno**, CCOO Servicios, Spain

11H00 – 11H10 EU institution view: **Oliver Röpke**, President of the Workers' Group at the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)

11H10 – 11H20 Discussion

#### Part III: The impact of remote work on working conditions in Europe

11H20 – 11H35 **Oscar Vargas Llave**, Research Manager-Working Life at Eurofound

11H35 – 11H45 Discussion

#### Part IV: Remote work and the EU legal framework

11H45 – 11H55 **Anna Banczyk**, Deputy Head of the Employment Strategy unit at DG EMPL, European Commission

11H55 – 12H00 Concluding remarks by UNI Europa and FES

Moderation: **Rowena Hennigan**, TU Dublin