

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-004125/20**  
**to the Commission**  
**Jordi Cañas (Renew)**  
(10 July 2020)

*Subject:* European legislative framework for teleworking

When the public health situation brought about by COVID-19 led to the majority of Member States imposing confinement measures on their citizens, teleworking became the only way for public administrations, businesses, SMEs and the self-employed to continue working and thus to prevent the collapse of services and the economy.

This unprecedented situation has proven that teleworking can help overcome some current challenges, such as work-life balance, achieving an environmentally sustainable economy, rural depopulation and the integration of disabled persons in the job market. However, it has also made clear the risks of teleworking, including the abuse of working hours and conditions and the existence of economic, labour, social and territorial digital divides.

To offset the risks and step up capacity, administrations must comprehensively incorporate teleworking into their public policies.

Given that the 2002 European Framework Agreement on Telework needs to be updated and that working from home may be key to achieving an ecological and digital transition for the EU:

Will the Commission put forward a European legislative framework for teleworking this term?

**Answer given by Mr Schmit on behalf of the European Commission**  
(1 September 2020)

The European Framework on Telework is the result of the autonomous European social dialogue agreed in 2002 by the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), the Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe (UNICE, now BusinessEurope), the European Association of Craft, small and medium-sized enterprises (UEAPME, now SMEUnited) and the European Centre of Employers and Enterprises providing Public Services and Services of general interest (CEEP). It defines telework and sets up a general framework at European level for teleworkers' working conditions. It has a non-binding nature both at the national and EU levels, and confers the main responsibility for implementation to the signatory parties' member organisations at both national and sectoral levels, within the different industrial relations systems.

The European social partners BusinessEurope, ETUC, CEEP and SMEUnited also signed in June 2020 a new Framework Agreement on Digitilisation. The agreement has a non-binding nature both at the national and EU levels. It covers all workers and employers in the public and private sectors, in all economic activities. Measures include the provision of guidance and information on how to respect working time rules, teleworking and mobile work rules. Member organisations are invited to implement the agreement, and report on its implementation within three years after the date of its signature.

Finally, Directive 2003/88/EC regulating certain aspects of the organisation of working time <sup>(1)</sup> applies to all forms of work including telework. It is the responsibility of each Member State to ensure that all entities under its jurisdiction comply with laws, regulations and practices that transpose the directive.

---

<sup>(1)</sup> OJ L 299, 18.11.2003, p. 9.