

For the Attention of Mr GARCIA FERREIRO Fernando
Director Health & Wellbeing - Working Conditions
Digital Burnout: Union Syndicale Proposal to Prevent iBurn...

Luxembourg, 29th March 2017



The recent **Union Syndicale** leaflet on the '[Right to Disconnect](#)' resulted in a very high number of alarming emails from staff who expressed serious concern on their experience of and fears for “digital burnout”. Several colleagues also [reported](#) pressure from their line managers who expected them to be reachable at all times, including during evenings, weekends and holidays. This situation **is against the Staff Regulations** and does not allow to fully disengaging from work and results in the feeling of being constantly tracked.

Union Syndicale invites the administration to carefully read some of the key messages received from staff – hereunder (without names, to ensure anonymity). This feedback is a very worrying signal that needs to be addressed as a matter of priority.

The increasing use of digital technology in our work and personal lives exposes all of us to a constant stimulation which is not only addictive, but exhausting. The internet is still in its infancy and we don't yet fully understand the full implications that its misuse can pose to our wellbeing (stress, anxiety, insomnia, depression, etc.). This growing problem of being constantly connected to work by mobile devices, emails or other digital formats also results in lost productivity and affects the quality of our work, and it is in the interest of the service to find a solution to this problem.

Union Syndicale proposals to prevent iBurn include:

- Organise a **round table discussion** with staff, mental health specialists, staff representatives, trade unions, and the administration to jointly identify the key problems and possible solutions.
- Based on the problem and stakeholders analysis, prepare a **Code of Conduct/Guidelines** for line managers and staff on the use of digital technologies and organise awareness raising events as well as ad hoc seminars to prevent digital burnout and improve the wellbeing of staff.

CC: Commissioner Oettinger, DG Souka, Roques



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