

DIGIT staff in Brussels loves the space ... What about Luxembourg ?



Luxembourg, 20 December 2019

On the 17th of December, the Director General of DIGIT, in the presence of Mr. Becquet – Director of OIL, invited the staff in Luxembourg to inform them about the open space project in Drosbach. She wanted to stimulate the discussion but without taking into account the negative opinions!

Despite the attempt to reassure the personnel via a *certain transparency* (wiki, FAQ, etc...) and the testimony of colleagues from Brussels via videoconference, who all seemed very satisfied, the fact is that the models used for this operation are the Black-Pearl, B-28 and G-1 in Brussels. The same models which caused, when they were set up, the anger and dissatisfaction of the personnel for whom they were intended.

The Director General of DIGIT reaffirmed her desire to disregard the opinion of staff by organizing, for example, a vote. However, she made it clear that her door remained open and that she listened to her staff...

This complete renovation of the DRB building goes against:

- the European Parliament resolution of [26 March 2019](#), which calls on the Commission to carry out the most rigorous and most up-to-date analysis of the impact of the design of open spaces with regard to the effect on productivity and provision of decent workplaces and working conditions for the staff concerned; asks the Commission to inform the Parliament of the outcome of this analysis;
- the Commission's decision of 16 October 2019 “[workplace of the future](#)” and in particular point 9 “Staff affected should be involved throughout the process of conceptualising and implementing the new workspace”;
- the [Housing Conditions Manual](#), which states that "In cases of new occupancy of a building, a complete renovation or a change of use, the CSHT is consulted and its comments are taken into account as far as possible".

All these measures should compensate for the harmful consequences of open space, in particular on productivity and working conditions, as shown by the procedures in force at the Commission.

On top of that, recent scientific studies have shown that open spaces have the opposite effect to those desired, including reduced productivity and lower employee morale.

The signatories of this communication are not in favour of the systematic application of the open-space model. We believe that open spaces should be the exception and not the rule.

We request:

- The organization of a staff vote, **anonymous and transparent**;
- An amendment to the project, starting with a pilot phase, for example through the transformation of a small part of the building. This will give the possibility to **objectively** study the consequences on staff;
- **To respect the procedures**, in particular concerning the involvement of the CSHT;
- **To involve staff representation** in the final project.