



# COMMISSION DECISION

of XXX

## on the implementation of working time and flexible working

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION,

Having regard to the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,

Having regard to the Staff Regulations of Officials (the "Staff Regulations") and the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants of the European Union (the "CEOS"), laid down by Council Regulation (EEC, Euratom, ECSC) No 259/68 of 29 February 1968<sup>1</sup>, and in particular Articles 1(e)(1) and 55 of the Staff Regulations and Articles 10, 16, 80 and 91 of the CEOS,

After consultation of the Joint Committee on prevention and protection at work in Brussels, the Security and Hygiene Committees in Luxembourg, Ispra-Sevilla, Geel, Karlsruhe and Petten,

After consultation of the Joint Committee on Equal Opportunities (COPEC),

After consultation of the Staff Committee,

Whereas:

- 1) Pursuant to Article 55 of the Staff Regulations, the normal working week shall range from 40 to 42 hours.
- 2) In line with Article 1(e) of the Staff Regulations, the present decision fully takes into account the standards set in European legislation in the area of health and safety at work, in particular Directive 2003/88/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 4 November 2003 concerning certain aspects of the organisation of working time. The present decision takes also into account the European Parliament resolution of 21 January 2021 on the right to disconnect.
- 3) The Staff Regulations allow for the setting up of flexible working time arrangements referred to below as "flexitime". Flexitime allows staff to vary the time at which they start and finish their working time. Flexitime also allows eligible staff to recuperate, under certain conditions, additional hours worked.
- 4) As a modern employer, the Commission is promoting a modern, digital and flexible work environment. This working environment ensures staff's wellbeing, enhances efficiency and enables work-life balance and a decreased environmental impact. This new way of working is based on hybrid working, i.e. a combination of working from an office provided by the employer and teleworking, where both modalities of performing duties are considered as equivalent.

---

<sup>1</sup> OJ L 56, 4.3.1968, p. 1

- 5) Flexible and hybrid working arrangements require staff to be autonomous, to have a sense of responsibility, to be well-organised and to meet deadlines. For the line manager, it means implementing objective-based and result-oriented management as well as developing efficient remote management and a culture of trust. Management methods need to be adapted to the management of remote and hybrid teams that use teleworking on a regular basis to ensure proper organisation of the work and integration of staff within such teams. In this respect, DG HR should play a key role in providing adequate guidance, training and material resources as well as streamlining good practices throughout the institution.
- 6) Except in cases of force majeure, teleworking should be performed on a voluntary basis. Teleworking patterns should be variable and flexible. Its implementation should take into account psycho-social risks such as those linked to digital overload, a blurred line between professional and private lives or social isolation. It should be accompanied by measures ensuring good working conditions and, where relevant, by targeted training and guidance.
- 7) Hybrid working should be implemented in a way that preserves an adequate welcoming of newcomers, transmission of knowledge and know-how, as well as effective teamwork in a multi-cultural context and informal collaborative exchanges that are a source of creativity.
- 8) Commission staff mostly carry-out knowledge-based activities, which are in principle compatible with telework. Tasks which require physical presence are unsuitable for telework. This includes notably receiving the public, working as a driver, catering, physical mail distribution, technical and logistical support to conferences and meetings that requires onsite presence, child care and certain medical services.
- 9) Directors-General/Heads of Service should have the possibility to define, within the margin offered by the present decision, more specific rules for their Directorate-General/Service to adapt them to the specific needs of their services. Line managers should take individual decisions in line with these specific rules.
- 10) All staff, regardless of the work pattern, should be treated equally and have access to equivalent means of working. Notably, this refers to the workload and performance indicators as well as entitlements to training and career prospects. Respect for the equality principle should include all diversity aspects, in particular disability, gender and age.
- 11) Teleworking is implemented with a view of enhancing the staff's efficiency and well-being, including a better work/life balance. Teleworking will also contribute to reducing CO2 emissions arising from staff commuting and the resulting congestion, particularly for those who drive to work, and will therefore contribute towards supporting the Commission's efforts, under the Green Deal, to become climate neutral by 2030.
- 12) Enhanced teleworking possibilities shall be in line with Article 20 of the Staff Regulations, which requires that staff reside either in the place where they are employed or at no greater distance there from as is compatible with the proper performance of their duties. The respect of this provision is of particular importance for the reputation of the Commission and the principle of good financial management, due to the financial benefits that are determined by the place of employment, including correction coefficients and expatriation allowance.

- 13) Hybrid working will require adaptation of the office working environment, including the size and the lay-out of the office space, in order to offer excellent, productive and healthy working conditions for staff coming to the office. Appropriate spaces should be available to staff in order to allow an activity-based use of the workplace. This will contribute to reducing CO2 emissions arising from buildings and lead to a greener and more flexible use of the office working space, while ensuring that staff have access to adequate infrastructure when working at the office.
- 14) DG HR will monitor the ratio of teleworking and working in the office with special focus on the use of teleworking per gender. By monitoring this ratio, and where relevant, DG HR will work on options to encourage the equal use of telework for men and women.
- 15) DG HR will have a special focus on the implementation of teleworking and its impact for staff with a disability, notably with regard to necessary equipment and reasonable accommodation.
- 16) The experience of wide-scale teleworking during the COVID-19 pandemic that was implemented within a very short period of time showed that the Commission was able to function effectively, and demonstrated that teleworking is an essential tool for ensuring business continuity in times of crisis. This unprecedented experience should be taken into account when analysing opportunities and risks linked to the implementation of teleworking.
- 17) Where relevant, the reflection on the lessons learned and the implementation of the present decision will include staff representation.
- 18) In line with the modernisation and the new HR strategy of the Commission, a new decision should be adopted to introduce adequate modifications based on the experience of the past years of implementing the current working arrangements and taking into account the lessons learned during the Covid-19 crisis. As the decision will entail significant changes in the working arrangements at the Commission, it should be evaluated after 18 months of implementation and adjusted if necessary to take into account the lessons learned.

HAS DECIDED AS FOLLOWS:

*Article 1 – Scope of application*

1. This Decision shall apply to all Commission staff covered by the Staff Regulations or by the CEOS<sup>2</sup>, regardless of function group or grade. It shall also apply to seconded national experts (SNEs) and local agents working in the Representations of the European Commission in the Member States.
2. This Decision shall not apply to Commission officials, temporary agents, contract agents, SNEs and local agents working in EU Delegations. Their working time arrangements shall be determined by the European External Action Service in close cooperation with the Commission, as foreseen in Commission Decision of 4 June 2013 on the exercise of powers conferred by the Staff Regulations on the appointing authority (AIPN) and by the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants on the

---

<sup>2</sup> Officials, temporary agents and contract agents

authority empowered to conclude contracts of employment (AHCC), [C(2013)3288], as amended<sup>3</sup>.

3. This Decision shall not apply to categories of staff working at the European Commission who are covered by working time arrangements defined and adopted by the competent authorities.
4. For the implementation of the teleworking policy as defined in Title II of this Decision, Directors-General are the Appointing Authority responsible in their respective Directorate-General in accordance with the present decision. The Director-General shall delegate the power to implement this teleworking policy to the line management.

Title II only applies to staff whose tasks can be performed remotely.

#### *Article 2 – Implementation*

1. Each Director-General/Head of Service ensures the implementation of the working time and hybrid working rules within their Directorate General/Service in accordance with the principles provided by this decision and the guidelines adopted by DG HR.
2. Directors-General/Heads of Service may adopt specific rules to implement the present decision in their Directorate-General/Service, within the margins offered by the present decision.
3. Line managers decide on individual working arrangements for their staff on working time and hybrid working arrangements in line with the present decision, the specific rules adopted on the basis of paragraph 2 (if any). These arrangements shall be in line with the interest of their service, taking into account staff's specific responsibilities and constraints.

### **Title I – Working time**

#### *Article 3 – Working Time Regime*

1. The normal number of working hours shall be 40 hours per week, spread over five working days, from Monday to Friday. Thus, the normal working time shall be 8 hours a day and 4 hours for a half day. These hours apply on a pro rata basis for persons authorised to work part-time.
2. The default working time regime applicable to Commission staff shall be flexitime. Flexitime allows staff to vary the time at which they start and finish their working time. Flexitime also allows eligible staff to recuperate additional hours worked, under the conditions laid down in Article 6.
3. Directorates-General and Services with specific service requirements may need to adjust or complement working time provisions, following consultation with the Staff Committee.

---

<sup>3</sup> Decision C(2013)9056 of 16 December 2013 amending Decision C(2013) 3288 of 4 June 2013 on the exercise of powers conferred by the Staff Regulations on the appointing authority (AIPN) and by the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants on the authority empowered to conclude contracts of employment (AHCC).

Due to particular service requirements linked to the nature of their duties, Directorates-General and Services, after consultation with DG HR, may exclude certain groups of staff from applying flexitime and determine alternative/fixed working hours for these groups. The Staff Committee (SC) shall be consulted before adoption of such decision.

4. Only in cases of urgency linked to “force majeure”, decisions concerning the working hours or flexitime can be adopted before the Staff Committee renders its opinion.

#### *Article 4 – Basic principles*

1. Managers, in consultation with staff, shall ensure that the overall work assigned to their staff is manageable within the context of a standard 40-hour working week, while having regard to peak periods during the year.
2. In cases where excess hours are imposed by service needs, staff can offset accordingly by working less the following days or months, or recuperate extra hours in the form of a full or half day, as defined in Article 6.
3. Registered working hours must correspond to the work actually performed. Managers are responsible for ensuring that individual staff members placed under their authority know and respect the applicable rules.

They shall clarify beforehand and agree with their staff their expectations regarding working time and flexible working arrangements and the conditions under which excess hours can be offset or recuperated.

The evaluation of consistency between hours registered and work performed shall be output based.

Line managers apply the principles of trust-based management. In cases where the staff member would not respect those principles, line managers have the possibility to determine working hours in the interest of the service.

4. Line managers and staff members may turn to their HR Business Correspondent for guidance on the implementation of the working time and flexible working arrangements set by the present decision. Business Correspondents will be supported by DG HR to interpret and implement the rules in a consistent manner.
5. While managers may delegate the execution of administrative tasks related to the implementation of this Decision, they are responsible for verifying that the hours recorded correspond to the work actually performed. If a manager notices discrepancies between the number of hours registered and the assigned tasks and corresponding output they should discuss it with the staff member before validating the timesheet. They should reject registered hours not corresponding to effective work.

#### *Article 5 – Daily working hours*

1. Staff should work mainly between 8.00 and 19.00.

Within this bandwidth, staff should be available for interaction with other colleagues between 9.30 – 12.00 and 15.00 – 16.30 (16:00 on Wednesdays and Fridays). By derogation, under the delegation of power set in Article 3 of the present decision, staff in agreement with their line manager, may decide to fix other hours within the bandwidth.

For the remainder of hours, staff have the flexibility to choose how to spread their time daily, in agreement with the line manager depending on the needs of the service. Outside this bandwidth, staff, in agreement with the line manager, may choose to work. In that case, they should focus on tasks that do not require immediate interaction with other colleagues.

The bandwidth cannot be considered as stand-by duty: staff shall only be working and reachable by their hierarchy and colleagues during their actual working time. Staff may not be contacted or expected to be reachable outside the agreed working time, except in duly justified situations as defined under paragraph 5.

2. Staff are encouraged to take regular breaks, especially when working in front of a screen. There should also be a minimum of one rest break of at least 20 minutes per working day<sup>4</sup>.
3. Line managers respect the principles of trust-based management. However, they will have full control on determining the working hours in cases where staff fail to comply with the principles of trust-based management.
4. Line managers will ensure adequate planning of the daily and weekly work, so as to have service continuity, and show flexibility for staff's personal commitments and breaks.
5. The line manager and other staff may not contact or expect staff to work from 19.00 to 8.00 ("disconnection bandwidth"), unless it is an emergency or it was pre-agreed, or in cases where the nature of work or tasks dictate availability during such hours. The same right to disconnect applies for weekends, public holidays and during the staff's annual leave or other type of leave.

#### *Article 6 – Time Accounting and Recuperation*

1. In order to maintain staff health and wellbeing, the number of daily working hours may in principle not exceed a total of 10 hours, including for staff working part-time. When the needs of the service requires it, notably during the peak periods, staff members may exceptionally be authorised to perform hours beyond this limit.
2. Where a staff member has worked more than the normal working time, they are credited with the corresponding amount of time (credit), but if they worked less than the normal working time, the corresponding amount shall be debited (debit). Staff will be offered a user-friendly tool to record their "credit" or "debit" hours.
3. The balance of credits and debits shall be calculated at the end of each calendar month. Any credit balance is carried over to the next month. A debit balance shall not exceed 20 hours. The debit balance shall be carried over to the next month and shall be offset during the six following months.

By exception, a debit balance exceeding 20 hours at the end of the month may exceptionally be carried over to the next month where service reasons, sick leave or force majeure prevented the person concerned from adjusting the balance appropriately.

---

<sup>4</sup> Directive 2003/88/EC of 4 Nov. 2003 concerning certain aspects of working time, Interpretive Communication on Directive 2003/88/EC (2017/C 165/01)

4. As a general rule, a monthly credit balance shall be offset by subsequent shorter working time compared with the daily average of 8 hours, while a debit balance shall be offset by longer working time in the following accounting period.
5. Where the balance is in credit, eligible staff may request recuperation of the hours in credit depending on their grade and function group, within the limits set out in Article 55(4) of the Staff Regulations. No more than 2 full days or 4 half days may be taken as recuperation each calendar month.

Staff members to whom the provisions of the second paragraph of Article 44 of the Staff Regulations apply are not eligible for recuperation.

6. Upon an individual request for recuperation from a staff member, the line manager, having due regard to the basic principles as laid down in Article 4, shall approve it if the following conditions are both fulfilled :
  - a. excess hours are justified by the staff member's work;
  - b. it is compatible with the interest of the service.

#### *Article 7 – Time Accounting – Specific situations*

1. **Absences for annual leave, special leave and sick leave** shall be accounted for on the basis of a normal working day of 8 hours in the case of a full day and 4 hours in the case of a half day.

2. **Working hours during a mission** shall be accounted as normally.

Travel time is counted and registered as working time, including when taking place on a weekend or on a public holiday.

Where a mission finishes with an overnight flight and a morning return to the place of work, a half day of compensation shall be granted for that day. If it cannot be taken immediately upon return, this half day needs to be taken in due course following the return from the mission.

3. **Any other work-related activity** such as training or tasks related to personnel administration within the Commission shall be accounted as working time, provided that the line manager is in agreement and that the activity takes place in the interest of the service, or is required by the service's needs.
4. Participation to trade unions activities shall be dealt with in line with the Framework Agreement governing relations between the Commission and the representative Trade Unions and Staff Associations. Statutory representation is counted as working time.
5. Time-accounting provisions shall apply on a pro rata basis to persons authorised to **work part-time**. In such cases, the normal working time specified in Article 3(1), the time counted for absences under Article 7(1) and the time credited or debited as described in Article 6 shall be reduced in proportion to the reduced working time formula.

## **Title II – Hybrid working**

### *Article 8 – Definition and basic principles on hybrid working*

1. Hybrid working is a combination of teleworking and working from the office.



2. Telework allows carrying out work by staff remotely with the help of digital tools. It applies only to tasks which, by their nature, can be adequately performed remotely.  
A register of types of posts incompatible with teleworking shall be set up by DG HR.
3. Working from the office and teleworking are considered equivalent ways of working.
4. DG HR shall adopt a guide on teleworking indicating criteria, procedures and good practices to achieve the objectives of this decision and set up monitoring tools. The staff representatives will be consulted on the Guidelines before their adoption.
5. DGs will develop working arrangement plans, monitoring the use of the new hybrid way of working, their performance, and will report to DG HR on a regular basis to be determined by DG HR.
6. DG HR will oversee the implementation of teleworking in all Commission services to ensure consistency through regular contacts with the Business correspondents and by issuing guidelines under paragraph 4.

#### *Article 9 – Hybrid working arrangements*

1. All staff whose tasks are compatible with teleworking may perform part of their working time remotely, under an arrangement agreed pursuant to the present Article with their line manager on a trust basis, considering the interest of the service and the wellbeing of staff.
2. Except in cases foreseen in Article 12, teleworking is only performed on a voluntary basis and staff have a right to come to the office every day without prior authorisation.
3. The presence of staff in the office should be evenly spread during the whole week, from Monday to Friday.

Line managers may decide that on specific day(s) during the week the whole unit/sector/team should be present in the office to facilitate team building, internal planning / organisation and brainstorming, as well as informal exchanges between colleagues. These days need to be communicated to staff in advance, except in cases of emergency.

Staff members pre-register where they will be working (office or telework) in the dedicated IT tool in line with the present decision and the rules defined by DG HR. This tool shall cater for flexibility for staff members but also for planning.

4. In line with the principles of trust-based working culture, staff shall ensure that the days/amount of presence at the office/telework are in line with what was agreed with the line manager. In cases where these principles are not respected by the staff member, increased monitoring may be performed by the line manager.
5. Staff members who wish to telework 20% of their weekly working time shall inform their line manager of their intention to telework and the corresponding day (or half days). For duly justified services reasons, line managers may ask staff to telework on another day. Such teleworking arrangements are granted for a renewable period of six or twelve months, or for the duration of the contract, if shorter.
6. Staff members who wish to telework more than 20% and up to 60% of their weekly working time have to agree on a working arrangement with their line manager,

including on the days chosen. For duly justified reasons, line managers may refuse totally or partially the request to telework for more than 20% and/or may ask staff to telework on another day in a given week. Such teleworking arrangements are granted for a renewable six-month period and in a way that ensures fairness and equal treatment, so that all staff can benefit from them, while guaranteeing balanced presence in the office throughout the week.

A teleworking arrangement may be modified at the request of the teleworker or by the line manager, after hearing the staff member concerned. It enters into force after a period of one month.

7. If there is a need and a clear interest of the service defined by the line manager, a staff member may be authorised to telework more than 60% during the week.
8. Staff members with temporary health issues impacting on their mobility but who are still able to telework may request to do so for the duration of their health problem precluding them from moving.

Such mobility issues need to be certified by a doctor and notified to the Commission's medical officer, who may proceed to any appropriate verification.

9. Staff may choose to come to the office even on days authorised to telework.  
In cases where the proper functioning of the service would be compromised, the line manager retains the right to require physical presence for all the relevant period, by invoking grounds related to the interest of the service.
10. Directorates-General shall ensure that the application of the teleworking arrangements are applied in a fair and equal way.

#### *Article 10 – Place of telework*

1. Except in cases foreseen in Article 11, telework is to be performed in the place of employment or at no greater distance there from, as is compatible with the proper performance of the duties, in line with Article 20 of the Staff Regulations. Consequently, staff need to be teleworking from a place allowing them to physically come to the office within reasonable time without being dependent on the hazard of transportation, in case of an unforeseen service need.

This provision is not an obstacle to live outside the country of the place of employment for staff working in Luxembourg or other places of employment which are in a similar geographical situation vis-à-vis neighbouring Member States.

2. Effective teleworking requires a reliable broadband connection and a working environment. Staff are expected to ensure compliance with data security, cybersecurity and to respect applicable confidentiality standards. In case of technical issues linked to connectivity or to their home office environment preventing them to adequately perform their duties, staff are required to come back to the office at their own expense within a reasonable time.

#### *Article 11 – Telework outside the place of employment*

1. All staff will have the opportunity to telework outside the place defined in Article 10 (1) up to 10 working days per calendar year upon their request and subject to the

agreement of their line manager. Directors-General shall supervise and ensure consistency of application of this paragraph. Directorates-General shall provide DG HR annually with aggregated data on the application of this paragraph.

2. In exceptional circumstances, such as duly documented imperative family reasons, an authorisation to telework outside the place of employment may be granted by DG HR for one month, after consulting the staff's line manager, renewable under the same conditions.
3. Staff should ensure that they have a suitable connection and a home office environment allowing them to adequately perform their duties. If they cannot perform their duties adequately, staff should either take annual leave if compatible with the interest of the service, or come back to the office at their own expense within 48 hours. The time where no work could be performed because of technical issues shall be discounted from the staff's working time.
3. In accordance with Article 5 of Annex V of the Staff Regulations, when the interest of the service would call for withdrawing annual leave of a staff member for complying with urgent work-related requests, line managers may authorise teleworking outside the place of employment.
4. Staff authorised to telework outside the place of employment communicate their temporary address to the administration before the start of the teleworking period.

#### *Article 12 – Force majeure and other special cases*

1. **At the request of a service or department** for duly justified reasons, DG HR is empowered to grant telework for an extensive and uninterrupted period for all or part of a service or department. The Staff Committee is consulted.
2. **In cases of force majeure**, DG HR is also empowered, after consultation of the Secretariat-General and the Legal Service and information of the staff representation, to require staff members to telework for extensive and uninterrupted periods, until further notice. The timeline for consultation shall be commensurate to the nature and extent of the force majeure.

#### *Article 13 – Equipment, technical support and connectivity*

1. Directorates-General and Services in collaboration with DG DIGIT provide teleworkers with at least a laptop computer. The laptop will have to be used both in the office and when teleworking.

As an employer, the Commission puts at the disposal of its staff adequate IT tools both for work at the office and telework. These tools shall enable staff to benefit fully from the opportunities of both working modalities, including virtual and hybrid meetings, in order to maintain staff motivation and efficiency. As a result, DG HR and DG DIGIT will support staff with additional equipment, depending also on their job profile, subject to budgetary availability<sup>5</sup>.

Specific needs of staff with disability on telework shall be catered for under the reasonable accommodation rules.

---

<sup>5</sup> This may for example include a keyboard, a mouse, a webcam, a headset/USB phone, a screen and an ergonomic chair.

2. If appropriate, DG HR may adopt a decision providing for a lump sum covering certain costs of teleworkers, subject to budgetary availability.

#### *Article 14 – Health and safety*

1. The Commission provides teleworkers with information on occupational health and safety, ergonomics, document security, use of IT equipment, precautions to be taken against damage and theft and other subjects relating to telework.
2. Management training will take into account the specifics of remote management of staff teleworking, including leading a team and building team spirit, monitoring performance and motivation of each team member as well as the possible risks and dangers of digital overload and digital burnout.
3. Staff on telework are covered by the insurance against accident and occupational disease provided in Article 73 of the Staff Regulations to the same extent as staff working at the office.

The Commission cannot be held responsible for health and safety at work in the teleworking environment, except for what concerns equipment provided to teleworkers by the Commission.

Teleworkers need to take reasonable prevention measures to avoid physical risks in the teleworking space and the Commission shall organise regular and adequate prevention campaigns on health and safety when working remotely.

### **Part 3 – Final provisions**

#### *Article 15 – Joint Committee on Flexible Working*

1. A joint committee is hereby established to monitor the implementation of the provisions in this Decision. The joint committee shall be known as the Joint Committee on Flexible Working.
2. The Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall be chaired by an official designated by the Director-General of DG HR. It shall consist of four members designated by the Director-General of DG HR and four members designated by the Central Staff Committee. The Chair and full members shall each have one alternate. The Chair shall be entitled to vote. The Joint Committee shall decide on its working methods and the frequency of its meetings.
3. The Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall notify and issue its recommendations addressed to the Director-General of DG HR in case it detects inconsistencies and/or unequal treatment in the implementation of this Decision by the Directorates-General, but it shall not have the power to hear individual cases.
4. The mandate of the joint committee shall be reviewed at the latest by 31 December 2023.

#### *Article 16 – Final provisions*

1. DG HR shall be responsible for monitoring the effective implementation and compliance of this Decision within the Commission, in consultation with the COPEC and the Joint Committee on Flexible Working foreseen in Article 15, and will perform an evaluation of the practical implementation after 18 months. Based on this

evaluation, the Commission will assess whether adjustments should be made to this decision, in concertation with the trade unions.

2. Commission Decision C(2015) 9151 of 17 December 2015 on the implementation of telework in Commission departments and the Commission Decision C(2014) 2502 of 15 February 2014 on working time are hereby repealed.
3. All existing structural teleworking agreements concluded on the basis of the previous Decision shall be terminated with the entry into force of this Decision.

*Article 17 – Entry into force*

This Decision shall enter into force on the ...

Done at Brussels,

*For the Commission*  
*Johannes HAHN*  
*Member of the Commission*

# ANNEX

to the

## Commission Decision on the implementation of working time and flexible working

### ANNEX I – JOINT COMMITTEE ON FLEXIBLE WORKING

#### *1 – Role of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working*

In accordance with Article 15 of the provisions, the Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall monitor the implementation of this Decision. It shall notify and issue its recommendations addressed to the Director-General of DG HR in case it detects inconsistencies and/or unequal treatment in the implementation of this Decision by the Directorates-General, but it shall not have the power to hear individual cases.

#### *2 – Composition and working methods of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working*

2.1. The Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall be chaired by an official designated by the Director-General of the Directorate-General responsible for human resources. It shall consist of four members designated by the Director-General of DG HR, and four members designated by the Central Staff Committee. The Chair and full members shall each have one alternate. The Chair shall be entitled to vote. The Joint Committee shall decide on its working methods and the frequency of its meetings.

2.2. The Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall adopt its own rules of procedure and decide on its working methods. The Joint Committee on Flexible Working may set up one or more intermediate joint working parties to carry out preparatory work. If necessary, the Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall adopt rules of procedure for these intermediate joint working parties and decide on their working methods.

#### *3 - Conflict of interests*

3.1. In accordance with Articles 11 and 11a of the Staff Regulations, all members of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working, including the Chair, shall carry out their duties and conduct themselves solely with the interests of the European Union in mind and shall not deal with a matter in which, directly or indirectly, they have any personal interest such as to impair their independence.

3.2. If any member of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working, including the Chair, has a personal interest in a matter such as to impair his or her independence in the handling of that matter, he or she shall be replaced by the appropriate alternate member and refrain from participating in the work of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working.

3.3. A conflict of interests shall be any circumstance which the member of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working, including the Chair, who is called upon to decide on a matter must reasonably understand as being such as to be seen by third parties as a possible source of impairment of his or her independence in that matter.

#### *4 – Confidentiality principle*

The deliberations and documents of the Joint Committee on Flexible Working shall be confidential.