

Working Conditions in Remote Work and the Right to Disconnect Must Be Secured in the EU

FinUnions, representing members of SAK and STTK, alongside European labor unions, defend the right to decent working conditions and legal protection in remote work, as well as the clear separation of work and leisure time.

FinUnions emphasizes that the provisions of labor legislation should be applied to remote work in the same way as to work performed on the employer's premises. Remote work is not a new form of work that falls outside the scope of current labor legislation. When creating regulations, the focus should be on the specific characteristics of remote work where the regulations are unclear, open to interpretation, or insufficient. It is essential to clarify regulations so that, for example, the risks associated with remote work can be better identified regarding occupational safety, and the employer's obligations for risk assessment and prevention in remote work are made clearer.

The employer must provide the necessary tools and connections for remote work, as well as the necessary guidance and training for their use. In the EU, the discussion on remote work has included the question of the Right to Disconnect. The right to disengage from work does not currently materialize as it should in today's working life because advanced communication possibilities have lowered the threshold for employers to contact employees during their free time.

The distinction between work and free time must be strengthened in a way that protects employees' genuine right and opportunity to disengage from work during their free time. While promoting the right



to disconnect at the EU level, it is also essential to ensure that this does not create an obligation to disconnect from work.

Two separate legislative projects

The discussion on the Right to Disconnect is related to psychosocial stress at work, but in terms of legislation, it should be viewed as a separate project. The Right to Disconnect alone does not solve problems related to psychosocial risks. Therefore, it is important to continue preparations for addressing psychosocial risks as a separate issue. FinUnions will clarify its position once the European Commission has made its proposal, considering the advocacy and preparatory work of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

Additional information:

- Susanna Salovaara, Head of Office, FinUnions, +32 488 479 508, susanna.salovaara@finunions.org
- Pekka Ristelä, Head of International Affairs, SAK, +358 40 5468781, pekka.ristela@sak.fi
- Maria Häggman, Head of International Affairs, STTK, +358 40 148 9091, maria.haggman@sttk.fi

