

3rd E- LEAFLET – CROATIA : “Telework: benefits, challenges, consensus”

Telework means using of information technology (IT) and telecommunications to replace work-related travel. Telework allows employees work at home or at a local telework center one or more days per week using communication tools, such as such as phone, fax, modem, Internet teleconferencing, e-mail or IM, to perform work duties from a remote location.

Telework is beneficial for both parties:

- Reduces Turnover (When employees are unhappy with their workplace, they might be more apt to call in sick—or look for another position that will allow them to work remotely and subsequently quit. Being happier in their jobs means that employees are much more likely to stay in their positions, which saves a company a lot of money in the long run.)
- Improves Morale (Let’s say that you’re caring for aging parents, and you need to take them for frequent doctors’ visits. By being able to work from home—and have a better work life balance—employees become happier and feel valued. In turn, that happiness turns into gratitude, causing employees to become more invested in the companies they work for—and work harder.)
- It’s Eco-Friendly (The vast majority of employees drive in to work each day. All that pollution can (and does) take a huge toll on the environment. In that way, both companies—and their workers — can greatly reduce their carbon footprint when employees work from home.)

With its numerous benefits, more and more companies are allowing their employees to work remotely. Not only does telecommuting greatly benefit the environment, but it strengthens a company financially and creates a more invested, cohesive and happy workforce.

Telework faces some challenges as well:

- **Employees may feel disconnected from the company** (Many don’t feel connected to their co-workers. There is a lack of social interaction, which could hurt a company’s culture. Plus face-to-face time tends to builds trust. It’s hard to read a person’s body language from a video conference call.)
- **No division between work life and home life** (Some employees have found it difficult to separate work and home life. Work tends to spill into personal time, which can aggravate an employee’s family life. Plus, the individual feels more stressed, overtired and has difficulty enjoying his/her time when work is done.)
- **Lack of discipline and motivation** (Although for some employees there is increased productivity, for others, they lack discipline and drive. There is less structure, and no one to look over their shoulder or support their successes. And then there’s the employee who needs the office camaraderie and connection to stay focused.)

Introduction of novelties requires wide consensus





Legislation does not always provide all the answers, especially in regard to newly introduced labour approaches. In the process of finding the proper solution to the challenge, wide consensus is required. Whereas trade unions can be valid partner at promoting telework and at co-creating sound legal solutions, telework has to have a solid support at company level as well. Teleworking encompasses wide range of labour law specific legal institutes, such as working hours and general working conditions, occupational health and safety... workers' councils can be ideal partner at introducing telework in the company.

