



# European Charter for Digital Workplace Wellbeing

The Future Workforce Alliance is proposing the adoption of the **European Charter for Digital Workplace Wellbeing** to address the challenges and opportunities presented by the rapid shift towards remote and hybrid work. Our goal is to inspire the creation and delivery of political, legal and technological frameworks that unlock a healthier, more inclusive and flexible future of work for all.

## Background:

In the space of two years we saw the role of the workplace dramatically change. Some regions in Europe recorded an over [30% increase in people working from home](#), according to the European Statistical Office, while the Office of National Statistics in the UK found that more than [8 in 10 employees plan to move to hybrid work](#) going forward.

Remote or hybrid working has **multiple benefits**: it allows workers to spend more time with loved ones and reduce their expenditure, and it makes the workplace more accessible to millions of people previously 'locked' out of employment, such as displaced people, carers and individuals with health conditions or impairments.

However, poorly designed remote work practices could exacerbate pre-existing threats to wellbeing, such as lack of supportive infrastructure, erosion of life-work barriers and increased loneliness and isolation.

## Aims of the charter:

By rethinking our approach to work and wellbeing, we can utilise new and exciting opportunities to combat the broader mental health crisis.

We can capture the historic opportunity presented by the pandemic by enabling **consciously designed digital workplaces**; focusing on the following four themes to inspire urgent policy action:

## 1. Life Beyond Work

The signees recognise that forward-thinking organisational design can **improve life-work balance**, countering the risk of any increased stress or burnout related to poorly designed remote work.

Therefore, the signees agree on:

- Creating official guidelines and best practices for organisations to create and implement remote work strategies and processes. Any guidelines must include strategies for ensuring that remote workers are not overlooked for career advancement opportunities in relation to their in-office colleagues.
- Ensuring any 'EU Right to Disconnect' legislation is fit for purpose in the remote work age; supporting workers' individual needs and preferences around a flexible life-work relationship.
- Changing the term 'work-life balance' to 'life-work balance' in all EU legal and political documentation to help shift the emphasis.

## 2. Social Connection

The signees recognise that, for some, home-working may contribute to the experience of loneliness and disconnection. This highlights the need for increased **access to coworking spaces**, serving as a viable alternative to offices, as well as community-based, non-hierarchical networks of social support. This would help to revive local community relationships while giving workers more flexibility by providing an effective 'third space' in which to work.

Therefore, the signees agree on:

- Creating official guidelines and best practices for coworking providers to build and run effective 'community workspaces'.
- Enabling cross-sector backing of effective community-based solutions that can be hosted in these hubs, such as peer support groups and mentoring.
- Giving workers the legal right to request coworking membership financial support.

## 3. Privacy & Trust

The signees recognise that the use of 'digital leash' technologies to track workers' every move online negatively impacts their wellbeing. These practices infringe on workers' rights and do not help establish trust and/or create a **positive workplace culture**, and therefore don't have a place in the future of digital workplaces.

Therefore, the signees agree on:

- Banning/restricting 'digital leash' worker surveillance technologies.

#### 4. Digital Wellness

The signees recognise a link between increased technology use and mental health issues, including attention and behaviour problems. Consequently, for all workers, an **intentional and healthy relationship with technology** is vital, both at the workplace and home.

Therefore, the signees agree on:

- Promoting the establishment of evidence-based, relevant legal definitions such as what constitutes a “healthy relationship with technology in the workplace”.
- Supporting the integration of this definition and related requirements into EU workplace health & safety legislation.
- Enabling cross-sector support of tools and practices that moderate technology usage to promote improved health and well-being.