



ELECTORAL PROGRAM

Brussels Staff Committee Elections 2025

Welcome to the Independents' territory !

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1 NEXT GENERATION

TELEWORK

The European Commission must assess teleworking, now a standard practice, and define the future of modern public administration. We are at a crossroads and must evolve to make our workplace more attractive, efficient, and healthy.

TAO FOR A FAIR AND MODERN REMOTE WORK

For years, **TAO** has pushed for a modern, flexible workplace. We've challenged outdated models, fought against rigid hotdesking, secured telework from abroad, and defended the right to disconnect. The future of work isn't one-size-fits-all—**TAO ensures it works for everyone.**



TAO calls on the European Commission to integrate the following priorities :

- **EFFECTIVE RIGHT TO DISCONNECT**

This fundamental right of social law must be autonomously framed and monitored to materialize.

- **MORE TELEWORK FROM ABOARD**

TAO proposes 5 working days of telework per month (up to 60 per year, plus 5 combined with annual leave) as a reasonable compromise, ensuring legal integrity and trust in our staff.

- **URGENT UPGRADE OF WORK TOOLS**

Promoting sound hygiene with approved microphones to ensure videoconferencing is a safe, efficient, and reliable teleworking tool.

- **HYBRID WORK CULTURE**

Telework and videoconferencing should be distinct; the latter must complement, not replace, in-person interaction, ensuring a natural and effective experience.

- **FLEXI-TELEWORKING**

Telework should be flexible, allowing selective teleworking at different times of the day, enhancing work-life balance and reducing traffic congestion.

- **TELEWORKING & BURNOUT**

Urgent review of excessive videoconferencing with rules: no meetings on Mondays or Fridays, 90-minute max with breaks, no lunch meetings, and a right to disconnect after 4 pm on Wednesdays and Fridays.

- **TELEWORKING & SOUND**

Overprocessed sound in videoconferencing causes fatigue; using proper microphones, disabling enhancements, and wearing headphones can improve the experience.

TAO takes a keen interest in teleworking trends, their potential and their health and safety implications at the workplace.

EFFICIENCY

Work performance based on flexibility

EMPATHY

Staff as human beings not a factor of production

HEALTHY & SAFETY

Precautionary principle and duty of care



JOIN THE INDEPENDENTS TERRITORY

Thanks for your vote!

Let's TAO !

A HEALTHIER TOMORROW WITH TAO

TAO aims to improve staff healthcare in and outside Brussels. Minor adjustments are no longer enough—colleagues' health is at stake. In 2023, after 17 years, JSIS reimbursement caps were raised:

- Consultations: EUR 42 (general), EUR 64 (specialist)
- Dental care: Some procedures up to EUR 350
- Hearing aids & incontinence supplies: EUR 1,800 & EUR 1,320
- Medically assisted procreation: Expanded access & revised caps

However, these increases remain insufficient. Further action is needed to keep pace with inflation and ensure an efficient system.



COLLEAGUES' HEALTH IS AT STAKE.

It is no longer possible to make minor adjustments as in 2023.

- **A FRAMEWORK BASED ON THE BELGIAN HEALTH INDEX**

This fundamental right of social law must be autonomously framed and monitored to materialize.

- **A EUROPEAN RCAM CARD**

Introduce a European RCAM card, similar to the EHIC, to streamline healthcare access across EU member states.

- **REVISING ARTICLE 72**

Update the sickness scheme framework to reflect current realities and align with the Treaty provisions.

- **REIMBURSEMENT AUTOMATION**

We support automating reimbursements with the Belgian system, reducing upfront payments and bureaucracy while easing PMO's workload. Implementation is expected in the Spring.

- **ELDERLY CARE INSURANCE**

Create an elderly care insurance plan to address the growing pensioner population.

- **HIGHER DENTAL CARE CEILINGS**

Raise dental care caps, which haven't changed in 17 years, as current prices surpass the existing limits.

- **REIMBURSEMENT AUTOMATION**

Streamline reimbursements, integrating with the Belgian system to reduce upfront payments and administrative workload.

- **MODERNIZING OPTICAL COVERAGE**

Revise ceilings for lenses and frames, last updated in 2007, to reflect current healthcare costs.

- **URGENT JSIS THRESHOLD REVISION**

Revise JSIS thresholds urgently, including coverage for conditions like Lipoedema, affecting many women.

- **AUTOMATED REIMBURSEMENT ALERTS**

Implement automated alerts for members when non-refunded expenses exceed set thresholds.

- **COVERAGE FOR ESSENTIAL HEALTH NEEDS**

Reimburse essential supplements, vitamins, and stress-related blood tests, currently excluded from JSIS.

- **BETTER MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT**

Expand coverage for psychological services to address the growing burnout crisis.

- **STREAMLINED ANNUAL CHECKUPS**

Simplify the annual checkup process for staff and their partners to encourage better health management.

- **RECOGNIZING RARE DISEASES**

An update in the recognition and treatment of rare diseases, providing adequate access to appropriate care.

Health care inflation in Belgium for many years and a partial revision adopted in 2007 results in an average reimbursement rate well below the 80 % and 85 % stipulated in the Staff Regulations (Article 72). **Let us fight the Commission addressed the situation.**

The Management Committee for Sickness Insurance reports a reserve of over EUR 305 million, rising to nearly EUR 400 million in 2024, which should be used effectively in line with the Staff Regulations.

These measures are crucial for ensuring equal and adequate health coverage, vital for staff well-being and the institution's smooth operation. TAO will persist in advocating for them. A Health Card recognized across all Member States would simplify access to treatment and protect the Commission from overpricing in health services.

3 JOB PROFILES NOT ELIGIBLE FOR TELEWORK

EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ALL STAFF

Changing working patterns have generated inequalities. Many workers cannot telework due to the very nature of their jobs. These professionals, indispensable for the functioning of the institution, deserve recognition for their commitment and availability. These following measures aim to ensure that all staff, whether working remotely or on-site, are treated fairly and equitably.



- **COMPENSATORY HOURLY CREDITS**

- Allocation of hourly credits to employees who are not eligible for teleworking, to carry out at home tasks linked to their job (development, planning, conception, ...) in agreement with the line-manager.
- Arrangements adapted by activity sector, regularly monitored for fairness.

- **IMPROVING WORKING CONDITIONS**

- Increased flexibility arrangements, such as flexible timetables, for a better work-life balance.

- **LEVEL PLAYING FIELD**

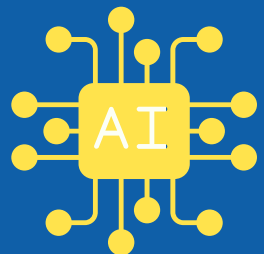
- Regular quality-of-life gap analysis between telework and in-person workers.
- Proposals for gap reduction, considering professional specificities.

4 ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

EQUITABLE TREATMENT FOR ALL STAFF

TAO has been the only staff association/trade union tackling this issue which will shape our future. We call upon our administration to urgently make public its prospects. The gradual implementation of IA will surely have an impact on staffing, professional profiles and learning needs. The corollary is clear, Management must involve staff representatives

TAO has organized a series of expert Conferences to discuss, propose and contribute the consequences in the short-medium and long term for the institution from the perspective of the staff members, their jobs, and their needs. The advent of AI should not dehumanize, but rather re-humanize. Automate the drudgery but allow humans to do what they are best at, human interaction. RE-Invest the savings in staff: training, working conditions, catering.



ADMINISTRATORS

AD officials, often overlooked by trade unions, are essential to the Commission and serve as pillars of the European civil service.

A genuine career and mobility service should be established, offering individualized career plans for all ADs. Career development must be accessible beyond networks and connections, with rotations between desk officer and coordination roles, and enhanced mobility within DGs and across institutions.

The Commission should limit reliance on external managers and offer career prospects for ADs in management positions. DG HR must facilitate training and assessments for senior managers, and unlock Senior Expert vacancies, ensuring a share of AD 13 and AD 14 promotions for this group.

ASSISTANTS

The career prospects of AST staff are insufficient, and their skills are often underutilized.

Despite some certification opportunities, results remain limited. Over time, AST staff have acquired higher levels of education, often surpassing the demands of their roles. Initially motivated, the lack of career progression can lead to demotivation. To address recruitment challenges and improve career paths, **TAO** proposes four solutions under the current Staff Regulations:

1. Create a comprehensive map of AST roles and colleagues' qualifications;
2. Enable departments to match colleagues with appropriate posts;
3. Increase the number of successful certification candidates;
4. Open internal AD competitions to qualified AST staff and offer individualized professional training programs for those seeking a career change.

CONTRACT AGENTS

Fundamental principle of EQUITY and equality of treatment must apply. The Commission cannot continue to squander the immense in-house talent at their disposal.

TAO has conducted an unprecedented institution wide broad-scale dialogue, between the staff category colleagues and our representatives. Organizing several Conferences over the course of one year. We have set up an ad hoc task force, with periodic meetings with the colleagues, and regular contact with the administration to come up with a catalog of 12 concrete proposals to make current legal provisions work to our advantage.

TEMPORARY AGENTS

Recruited to provide the institution with valuable expertise are very welcome, allowing also remedy the current geographical imbalance

TAO has fought and will continue to fight so that the selection of these colleagues is fair and transparent, its career evolution is based on merits, and the career management is conceptualized and implemented with the overall perspective of the evolving needs of the institution.

AST-SC

AST-SC staff are vital to the institution, yet face limited career growth.

TAO advocates for internal competitions, updated promotion quotas, and recognition through revised job descriptions. These measures will provide clearer career paths and a fairer work environment. Efforts should also focus on increasing AST-SC access to roles in EU delegations and representations.

IMPROVING UNIT MANAGEMENT AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT



The HR management system aims to streamline the organization by reducing the number of units and fostering transparent, efficient leadership appointments. It emphasizes proactive recruitment, including internal talent, and introduces mobility and re-evaluations for unit heads every four years. The inclusion of Staff Committee members in leadership appointments ensures fairer and more inclusive processes.

The goal is to modernize HR management with better leadership structures, fair promotions, and accessible career advancement opportunities for all staff.

NURSERY

NURSE



RECOGNIZING THE HARD WORK OF NURSERY NURSES

Nursery nurses are pivotal in child development and family support, yet face challenging work conditions. The proposal calls for official recognition of their profession, along with improvements in workload, psychological support, and better salary structures to address these challenges.

Efforts to improve working conditions aim to align the importance of their role with better support, fair pay, and career longevity options.

DRIVERS

SUPPORTING DRIVERS THROUGH BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS

The proposal advocates for the formal recognition of drivers' roles, ensuring fair compensation and improved working conditions. It suggests regular evaluations and the formation of working groups to address specific needs like better uniforms and comfort in vehicles.

The goal is to ensure drivers are treated fairly and equipped with adequate resources to perform their essential work.

CATERING

SERVICES AT THE HEART OF STAFF

BETTER MEALS FOR STAFF WELL-BEING

TAO advocates for healthier, affordable meal options and the reopening of more canteens to improve employee satisfaction. The proposal includes subsidies for low-wage workers, offering plant-based choices and better meal variety to enhance staff welfare.

By improving catering services and accessibility, the initiative aims to enhance the overall well-being and satisfaction of the staff.





ALIGNING PARENTAL LEAVE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

TAO calls for an extension of paternity leave to match maternity leave at 140 days, supporting equal parental responsibilities. This change is necessary to remove outdated gender biases and foster work-life balance for both parents.

The reform would create a more inclusive and equitable work environment, supporting modern family dynamics.



UTILIZING THE EXPERIENCE OF SENIOR STAFF

The Talent 55+ program aims to harness the knowledge and expertise of senior staff for the benefit of the organization. It promotes senior staff mobility, mentoring roles, and participation in high-profile projects, ensuring continued professional growth and involvement.

This initiative seeks to ensure that senior employees remain valued assets within the organization, contributing to its success through their experience.



CHALLENGES AND URGENT NEED FOR ACTION

European Schools in Brussels face a severe overcrowding crisis, with student populations surpassing capacity, expected to reach 16,000 by 2030. Construction delays, like the 5th school site delayed until 2030, worsen the situation.

- Request the European Commission's intervention and press for faster construction of the 5th school.
- Secure Belgian authorities' commitment to the construction timeline and create a transition plan for new students.
- Hire additional psychologists and social workers, and increase seconded teachers.
- Develop an Education Plan 2040 with sustainable solutions and ongoing infrastructure assessments.

Immediate measures, combined with strategic long-term planning, are needed to tackle overcrowding and improve the learning environment.



WE NEED TO "MOVE"

The Commission's EV charging infrastructure is insufficient, with slow charging speeds and limited points. Improvements are needed for better mobility and reduced pollution.

- **EV Charging:** Expand charging points, improve speed, and address illegal parking in EV spaces.
- **Public Transport:** Advocate for 100% reimbursement of public transport season tickets to boost usage.
- **Cycling:** Offer a 100 EUR reimbursement for electric bicycles to encourage greener commuting.

VOTE FOR TAO The Independents



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VOTE LIST 5