



#31 - January 2021

vision RH

HR Overview - Monitoring Human Resources news from France, Europe and around the world

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vision RH is a newsletter published by the French Directorate General for Administration and the Civil Service (DGAFP). It draws on information sources and reports issued by public administrations, the private sector, international organisations and the press, in several different languages. It aims to provide a broad view of current human resources and civil service initiatives.

The monthly focus of this 31st issue is dedicated to **environmental awareness** and more particularly the collective efforts to make the public service greener. As usual, we present you the last trends in several countries on this theme and the inspiring ways in which they are implementing them. Beyond the news, you will get acquainted with the **acknowledgement of a "right to make mistakes"** at Air France and how the **Japanese** government is facing the impact of presenteeism.

We stay at your disposal for your opinions, remarks or suggestions. Do not hesitate to write to us:

contact-visionrh@kiosque.bercy.gouv.fr

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<https://kiosque.bercy.gouv.fr/alyas/abo/edit/envisionrh>

We wish you a very good reading and a happy New Year 2021!

The vision RH editorial team

COVID-19 Il existe des gestes simples pour vous protéger et protéger votre entourage



Se laver les mains très régulièrement



Tousser ou éternuer dans son coude ou dans un mouchoir



Utiliser des mouchoirs à usage unique



Saluer sans se serrer la main, éviter les embrassades

Working together to create a more environmentally-aware civil service

Four years after the entry into force of the **Paris Agreement**, governments are working to fulfil their **commitments** to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions. Public administrations have an **important role** to play in this respect and must **set an example** in their choices for the protection of the environment.

As the **country's largest employer**, central and local authorities have a major influence on the **sustainable economy**. Each measure taken, applied in every department and throughout the territory, is therefore all the more **effective**.

In **Germany**, for example, the federal government has contractually agreed to **stop emitting greenhouse gases** by 2030, twenty years ahead of the deadline, a decision that applies to the entire country. A **coordination unit** is responsible for overseeing the implementation of this objective.

Air travel generates very high carbon emissions. To curb this, in early 2020, **Ireland** introduced a **carbon tax** (26 euros per tonne) on business flights taken by civil servants. It is levied on the **budgets** of all public services and is used to finance the country's **climate transition**.

Although the number of **face-to-face meetings** has decreased considerably over the past year due to the pandemic, some countries, such as **Sweden**, had already **foreseen this shift** for environmental reasons. Thanks to the REMM project, **videoconferencing** has become the norm. In addition to the tools to facilitate the use of videoconferencing, a **simulator** is used to calculate savings in order to raise awareness among public employees.

Given the quantities of **consumables** (paper, toner, etc.) used across all administrations, significantly reducing the use of these is already having a **considerable impact**. In 2018, **Portugal** decided to cut **orders by 25% as a first step**. This approach goes hand in hand with increased use of **paperless procedures** in various departments.

The **UK** has taken the initiative to **manage its procurement chain** by imposing strict rules on suppliers to ensure that all waste produced is **sent for recycling**. It has also decided to **change staff behaviour** by introducing **selective sorting** in offices. For a year now, Civil Service departments have been required to **completely avoid** dumping waste on landfill sites.

Norway has been a pioneer in this field: since 2016, it has been committed to vigorously combating **deforestation**. All public contracts now include a **certification clause** to this effect. Always on the lookout for **new environmentally-friendly solutions**, the country has just announced that the government's fleet of **vehicles** will be replaced exclusively by **electric models**.

Collective food services are also being addressed. **The Netherlands** has developed new **standards** for canteens and cafeterias. All utensils must comply with strict specifications, as must **food and drink supply systems**.

One European country that aims to become a benchmark in **green digital technology** is **Slovenia**. The capital, Ljubljana, is ranked as Europe's greenest city and the country has invested in the first "**State cloud**", reducing spending on energy-intensive computer servers by 27%.

In a bid to leverage the end of the crisis with an eye to encouraging the pooling of good practices and the mainstreaming of environmental policy, the **European Commission** has made this one of the **priorities** of its "**A public administration fit for the future**" programme, in which administrations are reminded of the **importance of their role** in achieving the objectives set (1).

¹ *The (proposed) Regulation COM(2020) 408 establishing a Recovery and Resilience Facility sets a binding target of at least 37% of the plan's total allocation to contribute to the climate mainstreaming.*

Notes

For more information: ec.europa.eu





NEWS CIVIL SERVICE, HR POLICY AND INNOVATION

Germany: a more diverse and representative workforce for Berlin

The state of Berlin wants to be as representative as the population is diverse, and has set itself the goal that 35% of its 120,000 employees should have an immigrant background. This target is to be achieved by 2024. To make this happen, the city-state does not want to introduce a preference for hiring, but rather to persuade the many candidates who often do not apply because they are convinced that they won't be hired

Notes

For more information: berlin.de (in German), *(machine translation into English)*



France: introduction of carers' leave

In application of the Transformation of the Civil Service Act, caregiver's leave now enables a person to temporarily stop working or work part-time to help a disabled relative or a relative with a loss of autonomy. Carers now have the right to take unpaid leave of up to three months over a calendar year. This leave can be renewed up to a maximum period of one year over the course of a career. The employee receives a daily stipend paid by the French Family Allowance Fund (CAF).

Notes

For more information: service-public.fr (in French), *(machine translation into English)*



Finland: WorkLab 2.0, an agile and collaborative way to work

Launched just a few months before the first lockdown, the Worklab programme consists of an application and collaborative work spaces designed to encourage interaction between administrations. The project's designers aim to promote mobile working while retaining a strong human dimension, at once removed from the usual professional environment but enriching for the freedom it provides.

« *We have imagined an open environment, which above all promotes learning, interaction and networking* »

Notes

For more information: senaatti.fi (in Finnish), (*machine translation into English*)





NEWS RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SKILLS

Spain: discussions on changes to the hiring process

As part of efforts to attract talent, carried out in partnership with the country's universities, the Spanish civil service is launching a consultation to rethink the recruitment process and in particular the organisation of competitive examinations (the primary recruitment method). Even though there are still many candidates, it is clear that the exams are still far too academic and attract fewer and fewer young people.

Notes

For more information: mptfp.gob.es (in Spanish), (*machine translation into English*)



United Kingdom: Move: a new campus for the civil service

A sweeping overhaul of training is underway with a view to providing civil servants with the skills and knowledge that will enable the administration to develop its internal expertise in order to be less dependent on external consultants, the cost of which is considered too high in relation to the services provided. A common core curriculum, followed by sector-based specialisations will replace the current heterogeneous ministerial offers.

Notes

For more information: civilservice.gov.uk



Australia: bringing government wages in line with the private sector

Similar to what has already been achieved in Singapore, Australia has developed a new wage policy. The 2 per cent annual increase limit has been removed to allow wages to grow in line with (but not exceed) the private sector. The measure was justified by the need to be able to correct existing discrepancies for occupations facing labour shortages, but also to encourage mixed career paths.

« *Low income growth in the public sector had become a major constraint on both recruitment and mobility* »

Notes

For more information: apsc.gov.au





NEWS SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP, DIGITALISATION

Austria: a new ethics code

Entitled "Die VerANTWORTung liegt bei mir" (The answer/responsibility is mine), the new code of conduct for the civil service takes existing legal provisions and enhances them with practical examples of the situations that civil servants may face. It is the result of a joint effort by the various administrations, institutions, local authorities, trade unions and Transparency International.

Notes

For more information: bmko.es.gv.at (in German), *(machine translation into English)*



Belgium: more women on selection juries for top executives

By assembling juries in which men and women are strictly equally represented, the federal administration wants to encourage more balanced appointments. To this end, it is recruiting women, who are currently less represented in these bodies. This decision is in line with the Government's desire to take effective action in the area of equal opportunities and to better combat unconscious gender bias.

Notes

For more information: selor.be (in French), *(machine translation into English)*



France: a revamped site for apprenticeships and training courses

A few months after the arrival of *Place de l'emploi public*, the public service job board, and along the same lines, the website for apprenticeships and internships is getting a facelift. A more user-friendly interface and new search functionalities are intended to give a boost to this still little-known means of getting to know the public sector as an employer. By highlighting this form of getting individuals into the work force, it also bolsters the appeal of the public sector.

« *Both apprenticeship and internship are, through the immersion they provide, real assets to prepare for a public service competition* »

Notes

For more information: fonction-publique.gouv.fr (in French), (*machine translation into English*)





NEWS SOCIAL DIALOGUE AND QUALITY OF WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Italy: transparency concerning severance pay

Italian civil servants (the vast majority of whom are employed under contract) are entitled to severance pay when they leave their jobs. This is calculated on the basis of 6.91% of annual paid wages. The National Social Security Institute (INPS), which also pays out severance payments, has set up a simulator that enables each employee - after logging in - to find out the updated amount.

Notes

For more information: inps.it (in Italian), *(machine translation into English)*



Europe: a study of trade union representativeness in local and regional authorities

Eurofound, the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, has just published a study on the changing face of trade unionism in the local and regional public sector (including social services). The representativeness achieved by these organisations justifies their right to be consulted, bolsters their role and effective participation in European sectoral social dialogue and their ability to negotiate agreements.

Notes

For more information: eurofound.europa.eu



Canada: raising awareness about disabilities, both visible and invisible

Many people in the workforce suffer from disabilities that their colleagues or superiors are unable to see. The federal government has launched a campaign to encourage self-declaration, particularly at the time of recruitment. This is, of course, not mandatory, but it is strongly recommended as a means of making the necessary job accommodations and ensuring employment equity.

« You highlight your skills and abilities and help improve the representation of people with disabilities »

Notes

For more information: canada.ca



At Air France, acknowledgement of the "right to make mistakes" is gaining ground

"An **admitted fault** is half-forgiven". However, in the business world – and particularly in France – we must admit that this is not the case. **Performance and success** seem to have little room for **mistakes** that occur naturally.

Despite the fact that Air France is currently going through some very difficult times, the company has sought to **change things in depth**. One very productive approach consists of eliminating negative, guilt-ridden attitudes and instead objectively analysing and learning from mistakes in order to turn them into a **real learning opportunity**.

The airline's "**Just and fair**" initiative was a trailblazing effort. What was the real origin of the mistake: was it **human** (inattention, forgetfulness, lack of skill) or **organisational** (unsuitable procedure, unplanned event)? The problem is then examined in order to understand, while maintaining a **positive attitude** which seeks not so much to sanction as to learn.

In a document (1), the Executive Committee undertook to "ensure a just and fair **managerial policy** and not to initiate disciplinary proceedings against an employee who has **voluntarily and promptly** revealed a breach, except in the case of an intentional or repeated breach".

To encourage them to do so, employees have at their disposal a **confidential discussion forum** where they are invited to share the mistakes they have made as well as the **difficulties or failures** they have had to face.

¹ *The "right to make mistakes" Charter.*

Notes

For more information: airfrance.com (in French), (*machine translation into English*)





The Japanese government's actions in the face of the impact of presenteeism

It is a phenomenon that has taken on enormous proportions. In the Land of the Rising Sun, it has a name - "**Karoshi**" (1) - and is increasingly stirring people's consciences.

The **work culture** in Japan is such that it sometimes jeopardises employees' health. With the world's highest **rate of overtime work**, often leading to serious and even irreversible consequences, the Japanese government has decided to **sound the alarm**, particularly since public employees are even more affected than those in the private sector, according to two studies conducted in 2017 and 2018.

Presenteeism has indeed taken on dangerous proportions. In the central administrations, there were **350 additional hours worked per year per person**, compared to a legal weekly working week of 38 hours and 45 minutes.

The same applies to **annual leave**. In these same departments, staff take on average only **two-thirds (13 out of 20)** of the number of holidays to which they are entitled.

The result is an exponential increase in medical leave due to **overwork**, which is accompanied by severe illnesses.



The National Personnel Authority (NPA), which is responsible for the state's HR policy, has begun to take strong measures in an attempt **to sustainably reverse this trend**.

An initial series of instructions have been issued to put the **well-being and health (physical and mental) of staff** back at the heart of the system, and to train the entire chain of command to diagnose as soon as possible **any work overload** that has no reason to exist. **Counsellors** have been specially trained to **support the departments** in this process.

While deeply-rooted **habits** may seek to survive, it is above all necessary to fight against every form of **unconscious discrimination** against those who no longer comply, but also to **set an example**. Managers are now **assessed** on their ability to comply with the rules themselves.

The first results are already in. The indicators show a real drop in the **pressure** that managers put on workers and/or that workers put on themselves. For example, a **campaign** has been launched to get people to leave the office early on Friday once a month at 3 p.m.

While this situation may seem extreme and remote, it is important to remember that **France** is the European country that is most affected by this problem.

¹ *Literally "death from overwork". It refers to sudden death from cardiac arrest, stroke or suicide as a result of overwork or excessive stress.*

Notes

For more information: jinji.go.jp (in Japanese), (*machine translation into English*)





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