

Government press conference, 2 June 2016

Speech by Stéphane Valeri,
Minister of Health and Social Affairs

This morning, I would like to provide an update on a key issue for the development of our economy, as well as for employment throughout the local labour market area: teleworking. I think it is also fair to say that this is an important subject for business owners and employees in the Principality.

This issue, which has been on the agenda of the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs for a number of years following the adoption of a draft proposal by the Economic and Social Council, is now on the point of resolution.

All that remains to be done before teleworking can be introduced in Monaco is for the National Council to adopt the two bills which have been submitted to it.

It took almost four years of discussions with France, through the Franco-Monegasque Joint Social Security Commission, to reach the agreement that was signed on 18 March 2014, which defined teleworking and established the principle whereby teleworkers resident in France could be subject to Monegasque social legislation for the duration of their employment as teleworkers for a company based within the Principality's territory.

In Monaco, the teleworking bill was then sent by the Government to the National Council on 18 July 2014.

The following year, on 4 August 2015, the Committee on Social Aims and Other Matters sent us 25 questions on the draft law, to which we responded on 30 September 2015. On 15 December 2015, two new questions and comments were sent by the National Council, to which the Government responded on 4 February 2016.

These questions served as the basis for three working meetings held in recent weeks between the Government and the National Council, and more specifically between my team, the team from the Department of Legal Affairs and the National Council Committee on Social Aims and Other Matters, chaired by Mr Thierry Poyet. The last of these meetings was held on 20 May.

These various discussions, which were intensive but fruitful, also involved Mr Jean-

Charles Allavena, the bill's rapporteur. We approached them with a shared desire to reach consensus through reciprocal concessions and as a result, I am now able to announce that it is highly probable that there will be a vote on the issue during the current spring session of the National Council, which ends on 30 June.

In parallel, the adoption of these new measures has required both chambers of the French Parliament (the National Assembly and the Senate) to vote on a ratification bill. This was promulgated very recently, on 23 May, and published in the Official Journal of the French Republic on 24 May.

As I have already emphasised on several occasions, this represents an important step forward for Monaco, for two reasons. Firstly, teleworking will make it possible to create several thousand jobs over the coming years.

As an appropriate response to the small size of our country and our high property prices, it will also result in increased revenue for our companies and, consequently, in higher VAT and corporate income tax receipts for the Government.

Moreover, this act will, at the same time, help to modernise the working environment, while satisfying employees' aspirations for a better work-life balance. Future teleworkers will, in effect, have more time to devote to their personal and family lives.

Teleworking should also lead to a reduction in everyday commuter traffic, and thereby help to protect the environment.

All of these reasons explain the high expectations that I sense in the country with respect to this new law.

Watch this space: the first teleworking contracts are set to be introduced from September.