



November 5, 2024,

Subject: Request for a meeting to discuss proposed improvements to the new *office policy*

Dear Sir/Madam, representatives of management,

Following the announcement of the new return to the office policy ("Office Policy 2.0"), employees at the Barcelona office have written an open letter highlighting the disadvantages of this new policy, as well as its apparent misalignment with the company's values.

To date, this open letter has been signed by 117 Back Makers, half of whom have provided detailed feedback on the impacts of the new policy. The concerns raised by employees include the following:

- The balance between personal and professional life is at risk due to the long commute between home and the workplace.
- The loss of flexibility has become a significant source of stress and anxiety for employees, whereas flexibility was a recognized strength at Back Market.
- The policy's impact on parents is considerable, as the additional commute time will reduce the time available to care for children, and the mid-year policy change disrupts already complex family schedules.
- Employees who are not from the country where they work will be unable to work remotely from their home country and reconnect with their families.
- For employees with disabilities, the new policy will make their daily lives more difficult, and any accommodations will inevitably single them out.
- The new policy results in a significant loss of autonomy in managing work schedules, undermining the reasons many employees joined Back Market.
- While the policy aims to bring employees together, the hot-desking system actually hinders team members from meeting in person.

As the Solitaires Informatique union section, we regret that the opinion of the CSE (Social and Economic Committee) at Back Market France was not taken into account, and that the legally mandated 30-day consultation period was not observed.

We observe a clear link between the poor quality of social dialogue on this issue and the extremely negative perception—bordering on rejection—of the new policy by Back Makers across all roles and countries.

We regret that the open letter from our colleagues in Barcelona has yet to receive a response from you. We also regret that not all concerns raised regarding the new office return policy have been addressed.

However, it is not too late to adapt the policy to make it more acceptable and less disruptive.

With that in mind, we would like to propose a series of recommendations that would help you achieve your goal of increasing office attendance while minimizing the most significant negative impacts on the well-being of Back Makers:

- 1. Do not track office attendance through automated systems based on physical or virtual badges.**

This method is infantilizing, intrusive, retrogressive, and undermines the trust that has always been central to Back Market's culture.

Instead, we propose that remote work days be self-declared by employees, as is common in many other companies.

- 2. Allow remote work from abroad, with no restrictions on location, provided office attendance requirements are met.**

It is important to maintain flexibility for employees, particularly expatriates, to work regularly from their home country, not just during full-remote weeks.

- 3. Allow two weeks of remote work per quarter, instead of one, or make all school holiday weeks eligible for remote work.**

This would address the need for employees to spend more time with their loved ones, beyond just holidays or summer vacation.

- 4. Allow employees to temporarily change their contract to full-remote, but only in this instance.**

This would be a reasonable counterbalance, given that the office return policy was introduced against the wishes of employee representatives.

- 5. Increase the number of flexidays to 9 per quarter.**

Many Back Makers are parents of young children, and others are likely to become parents soon. Flexibility is crucial in these cases.

Furthermore, many employees require remote work days for medical reasons (chronic illnesses, painful menstruation, viruses, etc.) that do not justify sick leave.

- 6. Implement a moratorium on the application of the new policy for parents until September.**

Parents face significant difficulties adjusting their family arrangements (e.g., daycare and nanny schedules) mid-school year. We also consider the specific challenges faced by separated parents, for whom any change in child custody must be approved by a family court judge.

7. Remove the requirement for a fixed office attendance day (currently Monday).

This would improve flexibility and reduce overcrowding and noise in the office. You may not be aware, but it has become increasingly difficult to find an available meeting room on Mondays.

In Paris, there is also a shortage of space for lunch—one Back Maker shared that they almost had to eat on the floor with a spoon because there were no chairs or forks available.

To facilitate further discussion on these constructive proposals, we respectfully request a meeting with you.

Given that the new policy took effect at the beginning of the month, it is important to demonstrate to Back Makers that their concerns are being heard and taken seriously. The sooner we can reach an acceptable solution, the sooner we can all refocus on what should be the primary priority at this time: the hot season.

We look forward to your response to our request.
Yours sincerely,

The Solidaires Informatique union section