Dear colleagues,

The year 2021 is rapidly drawing to a close. And there was quite a lot going on - both globally and in our immediate surroundings. It is difficult to know where to begin and where to end, but we can certainly mention these events: the Corona crisis (including lockdowns), which was and is a great challenge for many people; the flood disaster in July, which deprived so many people of family members, friends or homes.; the countless news stories about refugees and wars in many countries of the world; destruction of the rainforests; child poverty; climate change; federal elections, etc. And, of course, the current Corona wave that is driving us before it.

We have to question what we are used to and find ourselves once again in a Corona winter and a situation that constantly raises everyday questions. This forces each of us to make personal decisions: Do I attend a party? Do I go to the Christmas market? Which dates are still acceptable? How do we celebrate Christmas? How do I organise my, once again restructured, daily work routine? Who needs my help and support right now? What can I do for my family and myself to cope with the many questions and needs? Each of you could very well continue this list.

And so it was and is once again a great challenge for us as staff councillors to deal with these changed conditions. Naturally, we have also entered the digital world more and more, had to exchange face-to-face meetings for "tile communication", have restructured our work processes, work primarily out of the home office, make even more phone calls, write even more emails and make additional arrangements in the virtual space.

Unfortunately, for example, our general assembly with you has also fallen victim to the pandemic. Hopefully for the last time, because contact with you is important to us, and the opportunity for personal discussions is a central component in our self-image as advocates of your interests.

However, after the - admittedly - not so pleasant review of many events of the year, it is also worth noting what has been positive from the point of view of the PRwiss. So let’s take a look back as well as ahead:

Since December 2020 (we reported in the election minutes and in the annual report*), we have a large, committed new PRwiss council. Since then, we have been discussing and wrestling intensively about the issues that affect us all. We participate in committees, try to solve conflicts, exchange ideas with others, continuously and persistently present our issues to the rector and chancellor, the university administration or other involved persons.

Advising and informing colleagues about their personal issues and work situations is very important to us. We have been able to help, advise and support many colleagues by our interventions many times (even in very difficult situations). Important issues and long-standing "construction sites" could finally be brought to a close and implemented, such as the DV (service agreement) teleworking. This service agreement now allows for more individual and
flexible solutions - even beyond the pandemic. Modern working methods and family- and employee-friendly conditions are a key issue for us! We continue to interfere for you in matters that concern us. We are here for you! This is important in a large institution like a university, because the existing structures and hierarchies are susceptible to one-sided interests and unilateral decisions, which may have repercussions on individuals or even many colleagues.

We want you to know:
Despite the limitations due to the crisis, we have grown together well as a staff council and continue to look after you and the issues at hand, even in the face of headwinds, with commitment and - if need be - belligerence. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, would like to talk to us or need any information. You can contact us at any time!

We as the staff council of the academically employed wish you, your families and friends a Merry Christmas and a good start into a new year full of optimism and plans.

Your Staff-Council Team

Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches neues Jahr

*https://www.prwiss.uni-bonn.de/de