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## **EU OKs mobile phones on planes**

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## THE ARTICLE

The European Union has given the go ahead for airplane passengers to use their cell phones in the skies over Europe starting later this year. This green light for mobile phones gives air travelers greater connectivity than ever before. People will now be able to keep in touch with those on the ground while 10,000 metres in the air. Business travelers in particular will benefit from staying in contact with clients, colleagues and managers. Europe becomes the first region in the world to lift the ban on using phones on planes. EU officials stressed the use of mobiles on planes will not in any way affect safety. The phone service will be disabled during takeoff and landing and the captain will have the power to turn the system off at any time. This falls in line with the current rules on using laptop computers or music players on flights.

Not everyone is happy at the prospect of an airplane full of mobile phone chatter. The friendly skies might now be a place where tempers become thin if passengers do not respect others. The EU has urged airlines to put in place flight etiquette rules to make sure passengers who want peace and quiet are not disturbed. This could include having to put phones on silent, encouraging text messaging instead of voice calls or banning calls on night flights. The EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding said: "I call on airlines to create the right conditions on board aircraft to ensure that those who want to use in-flight communication services do not disturb other passengers." She also warned airlines against charging high prices for mid-air calls. "If consumers receive shock phone bills, the service will not take off, she said.

# WARM-UPS

**1. MOBILE PHONES:** Walk around the class and talk to other students about mobile phones. Change partners often. After you finish, sit with your original partner(s) and share what you found out.

**2. CHAT:** In pairs / groups, decide which of these topics or words from the article are most interesting and which are most boring.

*giving the go ahead / cell phones / connectivity / take off / laptop computers / chatter / tempers / etiquette / text messaging / do not disturb / phone bills*

Have a chat about the topics you liked. Change topics and partners frequently.

**3. FLIGHT ETIQUETTE:** What would you do if the things in the table happened on an airplane? Talk about this with your partner(s). Change partners and share your ideas.

Things	What I would do if .... is ....
someone talking loudly non stop on their mobile phone	
someone sleeping on your shoulder snoring into your ear	
someone drunk trying to talk to you	
someone who takes over your leg space	
someone with children who scream and cry non stop	
someone who gets out of their seat every 20 minutes	

**4. PHONES:** What functions would you like a mobile phone to have? Talk about the things in the table with your partner(s). Rank them from 10 (highly important) to 1 (totally unnecessary). Change partners and share your ideas.

- text messaging
- Internet
- camera
- satellite navigation
- mp3 player
- English dictionary
- shows date and time
- shows current temperature

**5. RECESSION:** Spend one minute writing down all of the different words you associate with the word 'recession'. Share your words with your partner(s) and talk about them. Together, put the words into different categories.

**6. QUICK DEBATE:** Students A **strongly** believe that mobile phone calls should never be allowed on airplanes; Students B **strongly** believe it's our right to make calls in mid air. Change partners again and talk about your roles and conversations.

# BEFORE READING / LISTENING

**1. TRUE / FALSE:** Look at the article's headline and guess whether these sentences are true (T) or false (F):

- a. Passengers can soon make mobile phone calls over European skies. T / F
- b. There will be a special green light on phones that use this service. T / F
- c. Europe is the second region in the world to lift the ban on mid-air calls. T / F
- d. People will not be able to use their phone during take off and landing. T / F
- e. All air passengers are happy that they can use their mobiles. T / F
- f. There is a law that says phones must be kept on silent. T / F
- g. A telecom official asked passengers not to disturb phone callers. T / F
- h. It is likely that mid-air calls will be cheaper than those made on land. T / F

**2. SYNONYM MATCH:** Match the following synonyms from the article:

- |                       |                     |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. given the go ahead | a. conversation     |
| 2. keep in touch      | b. emphasized       |
| 3. stressed           | c. make certain     |
| 4. disabled           | d. maintain contact |
| 5. power              | e. encouraged       |
| 6. chatter            | f. be successful    |
| 7. urged              | g. okayed           |
| 8. banning            | h. deactivated      |
| 9. ensure             | i. authority        |
| 10. take off          | j. prohibiting      |

**3. PHRASE MATCH:** Match the following phrases from the article (sometimes more than one combination is possible):

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. given the go                              | a. ever before                  |
| 2. greater connectivity than                 | b. way affect safety            |
| 3. the first region in the world to lift the | c. instead of voice calls       |
| 4. mobiles on planes will not in any         | d. full of mobile phone chatter |
| 5. This falls in                             | e. for mid-air calls            |
| 6. the prospect of an airplane               | f. place flight etiquette       |
| 7. a place where tempers                     | g. line with the current rules  |
| 8. urged airlines to put in                  | h. ahead                        |
| 9. encouraging text messaging                | i. become thin                  |
| 10. charging high prices                     | j. ban on using phones          |

# WHILE READING / LISTENING

**GAP FILL:** Put the words into the gaps in the text.

The European Union has given the go \_\_\_\_\_ for airplane passengers to use their cell phones in the \_\_\_\_\_ over Europe starting later this year. This green light for mobile phones gives air travelers greater connectivity than \_\_\_\_\_ before. People will now be able to keep in touch with those on the ground \_\_\_\_\_ 10,000 metres in the air. Business travelers in \_\_\_\_\_ will benefit from staying in contact with clients, colleagues and managers. Europe becomes the first region in the world to \_\_\_\_\_ the ban on using phones on planes. EU officials stressed the use of mobiles on planes will not in any \_\_\_\_\_ affect safety. The phone service will be disabled during takeoff and landing and the captain will have the power to turn the system off at any time. This falls in \_\_\_\_\_ with the current rules on using laptop computers or music players on flights.

*while*  
*lift*  
*skies*  
*particular*  
*ever*  
*line*  
*ahead*  
*way*

Not everyone is happy at the \_\_\_\_\_ of an airplane full of mobile phone chatter. The friendly skies might now be a place where tempers become \_\_\_\_\_ if passengers do not respect others. The EU has urged airlines to put in place flight \_\_\_\_\_ rules to make sure passengers who want peace and \_\_\_\_\_ are not disturbed. This could include having to put phones on silent, encouraging text messaging instead of voice calls or \_\_\_\_\_ calls on night flights. The EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding said: "I call on airlines to create the \_\_\_\_\_ conditions on board aircraft to ensure that those who want to use in-flight communication services do not \_\_\_\_\_ other passengers." She also warned airlines against charging high prices for mid-air calls. "If consumers receive \_\_\_\_\_ phone bills, the service will not take off, she said.

*disturb*  
*right*  
*thin*  
*quiet*  
*shock*  
*prospect*  
*banning*  
*etiquette*

## **LISTENING:** Listen and fill in the spaces.

The European Union has \_\_\_\_\_ airplane passengers to use their cell phones in the skies over Europe starting later this year. This green light for mobile phones gives air travelers \_\_\_\_\_ ever before. People will now be able to keep in touch with \_\_\_\_\_ 10,000 metres in the air. Business travelers in particular will benefit from staying in contact with clients, colleagues and managers. Europe \_\_\_\_\_ the world to lift the ban on using phones on planes. EU officials stressed the use of mobiles on planes \_\_\_\_\_ affect safety. The phone service will be disabled during takeoff and landing and the captain will have the power to turn the system off at any time. This \_\_\_\_\_ current rules on using laptop computers or music players on flights.

Not everyone is \_\_\_\_\_ an airplane full of mobile phone chatter. The friendly skies might now be a place where \_\_\_\_\_ passengers do not respect others. The EU has urged airlines to put in place flight etiquette rules to make sure passengers \_\_\_\_\_ are not disturbed. This could include having to put phones on silent, encouraging text messaging \_\_\_\_\_ banning calls on night flights. The EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding said: "I call on airlines to create the right conditions \_\_\_\_\_ ensure that those who want to use in-flight communication services do not disturb other passengers." She also warned airlines against charging high prices for mid-air calls. "If consumers receive shock phone bills, the \_\_\_\_\_, she said.

## AFTER READING / LISTENING

**1. WORD SEARCH:** Look in your dictionaries / computer to find collocates, other meanings, information, synonyms ... for the words 'mobile' and 'phone'.

<b>mobile</b>	<b>phone</b>
---------------	--------------

- Share your findings with your partners.
- Make questions using the words you found.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**2. ARTICLE QUESTIONS:** Look back at the article and write down some questions you would like to ask the class about the text.

- Share your questions with other classmates / groups.
- Ask your partner / group your questions.

**3. GAP FILL:** In pairs / groups, compare your answers to this exercise. Check your answers. Talk about the words from the activity. Were they new, interesting, worth learning...?

**4. VOCABULARY:** Circle any words you do not understand. In groups, pool unknown words and use dictionaries to find their meanings.

**5. TEST EACH OTHER:** Look at the words below. With your partner, try to recall exactly how these were used in the text:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ahead</li><li>• green</li><li>• touch</li><li>• lift</li><li>• way</li><li>• line</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• prospect</li><li>• thin</li><li>• quiet</li><li>• voice</li><li>• disturb</li><li>• shock</li></ul>
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# STUDENT MOBILE PHONE SURVEY

Write five GOOD questions about mobile phones in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper.

When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.



# RECESSION DISCUSSION

## STUDENT A's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student B)

- a) What did you think when you read the headline?
- b) What springs to mind when you hear the word 'mobile phone'?
- c) Do you think this article brings good news or bad news?
- d) Do you think you would use your mobile phone on an airplane?
- e) Will the new rule make flying better?
- f) Don't you think it's silly that mobile phone calls are banned on airplanes?
- g) Do you need to take your mobile phone everywhere you go?
- h) Do you think other regions will follow the EU in lifting the ban on mobile phones?
- i) What are the pros and cons of mid-air phone calls?
- j) Do you think this service should only be available in business and first class?

*EU OKs mobile phones on planes - 9<sup>th</sup> April, 2008*  
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# RECESSION DISCUSSION

## STUDENT B's QUESTIONS (Do not show these to student A)

- a) Did you like reading this article?
- b) What do you think of mobile phone chatter?
- c) What do you think of the term 'the friendly skies'? Are they friendly?
- d) Do other people's mobile phones ever make your temper become thin?
- e) Do you always respect people around you when you use your mobile phone?
- f) What flight etiquette rules do you think are necessary?
- g) What things disturb you while you are on an airplane?
- h) Would you make mid-air calls if the costs were double the usual cost?
- i) What questions would you like to ask Viviane Reding?
- j) Did you like this discussion?

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# LANGUAGE

The European Union has given the go (1) \_\_\_\_\_ for airplane passengers to use their cell phones in the skies over Europe starting later this year. This (2) \_\_\_\_\_ light for mobile phones gives air travelers greater connectivity than ever before. People will now be able to keep (3) \_\_\_\_\_ touch with those on the ground while 10,000 metres in the air. Business travelers in (4) \_\_\_\_\_ will benefit from staying in contact with clients, colleagues and managers. Europe becomes the first region in the world to (5) \_\_\_\_\_ the ban on using phones on planes. EU officials stressed the use of mobiles on planes will not in any way affect safety. The phone service will be disabled during takeoff and landing and the captain will have the power to turn the system off at any time. This falls in (6) \_\_\_\_\_ with the current rules on using laptop computers or music players on flights.

Not everyone is happy at the prospect (7) \_\_\_\_\_ an airplane full of mobile phone chatter. The friendly skies might now be a place where tempers become (8) \_\_\_\_\_ if passengers do not respect others. The EU has urged airlines to put in place flight etiquette rules to make sure passengers who want peace and quiet are not disturbed. This could include (9) \_\_\_\_\_ to put phones on silent, encouraging text messaging (10) \_\_\_\_\_ of voice calls or banning calls on night flights. The EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding said: "I call (11) \_\_\_\_\_ airlines to create the right conditions on board aircraft to ensure that those who want to use in-flight communication services do not disturb other passengers." She also warned airlines against charging high prices for mid-air calls. "If consumers receive shock phone bills, the service will not (12) \_\_\_\_\_, she said.

**Put the correct words from the table below in the above article.**

- |     |                  |                |             |                |
|-----|------------------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1.  | (a) again        | (b) ahead      | (c) against | (d) attack     |
| 2.  | (a) amber        | (b) blue       | (c) green   | (d) red        |
| 3.  | (a) in           | (b) on         | (c) to      | (d) as         |
| 4.  | (a) particularly | (b) especially | (c) special | (d) particular |
| 5.  | (a) elevate      | (b) raise      | (c) lift    | (d) carry      |
| 6.  | (a) line         | (b) mine       | (c) pine    | (d) vine       |
| 7.  | (a) to           | (b) with       | (c) by      | (d) of         |
| 8.  | (a) than         | (b) thin       | (c) then    | (d) tin        |
| 9.  | (a) have         | (b) had        | (c) has     | (d) having     |
| 10. | (a) except       | (b) place      | (c) instead | (d) apart      |
| 11. | (a) with         | (b) on         | (c) by      | (d) from       |
| 12. | (a) take off     | (b) depart     | (c) land    | (d) taxi       |



# HOMEWORK

**1. VOCABULARY EXTENSION:** Choose several of the words from the text. Use a dictionary or Google's search field (or another search engine) to build up more associations / collocations of each word.

**2. INTERNET:** Search the Internet and find out about the EU's decision to allow airplane passengers to use their mobile phones on planes. Share what you discover with your partner(s) in the next lesson.

**3. ETIQUETTE:** Make a poster about the do's and don'ts of using mobile phones on airplanes. Show your work to your classmates in the next lesson. Did you all have similar things?

**4. MID-AIR CALLS:** Write a magazine article about problems caused by airlines allowing people to use mobile phones on airplanes. Include imaginary interviews with a business traveler who needs to use his/her phone for the whole flight and a passenger who just wants peace and quiet.

Read what you wrote to your classmates in the next lesson. Write down any new words and expressions you hear from your partner(s).

**5. LETTER:** Write a letter to the EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding. Ask her three questions about lifting the ban on mobile phones on airplanes. Give her three pieces of advice on what she should do to ensure passengers are not disturbed by phone chatter. Read your letter to your partner(s) in your next lesson. Your partner(s) will answer your questions.

**6. DIARY / JOURNAL:** Imagine you are a flight attendant on an airplane. Write your diary / journal entry for the first day that mobile phone calls are allowed on planes. Be sure to write about the opinions of passengers you talked to. Read your entry to your classmates in the next lesson.

# ANSWERS

## TRUE / FALSE:

- a. T      b. F      c. F      d. T      e. F      f. F      g. F      h. F

## SYNONYM MATCH:

- |     |                    |    |                  |
|-----|--------------------|----|------------------|
| 1.  | given the go ahead | a. | okayed           |
| 2.  | keep in touch      | b. | maintain contact |
| 3.  | stressed           | c. | emphasized       |
| 4.  | disabled           | d. | deactivated      |
| 5.  | power              | e. | authority        |
| 6.  | chatter            | f. | conversation     |
| 7.  | urged              | g. | encouraged       |
| 8.  | banning            | h. | prohibiting      |
| 9.  | ensure             | i. | make certain     |
| 10. | take off           | j. | be successful    |

## PHRASE MATCH:

- |     |   |    |                              |
|-----|---|----|------------------------------|
| 1.  | given the go                              | a. | ahead                        |
| 2.  | greater connectivity than                 | b. | ever before                  |
| 3.  | the first region in the world to lift the | c. | ban on using phones          |
| 4.  | mobiles on planes will not in any         | d. | way affect safety            |
| 5.  | This falls in                             | e. | line with the current rules  |
| 6.  | the prospect of an airplane               | f. | full of mobile phone chatter |
| 7.  | a place where tempers                     | g. | become thin                  |
| 8.  | urged airlines to put in                  | h. | place flight etiquette       |
| 9.  | encouraging text messaging                | i. | instead of voice calls       |
| 10. | charging high prices                      | j. | for mid-air calls            |

## GAP FILL:

### EU OKs mobile phones on planes

The European Union has given the go **ahead** for airplane passengers to use their cell phones in the **skies** over Europe starting later this year. This green light for mobile phones gives air travelers greater connectivity than **ever** before. People will now be able to keep in touch with those on the ground **while** 10,000 metres in the air. Business travelers in **particular** will benefit from staying in contact with clients, colleagues and managers. Europe becomes the first region in the world to **lift** the ban on using phones on planes. EU officials stressed the use of mobiles on planes will not in any **way** affect safety. The phone service will be disabled during takeoff and landing and the captain will have the power to turn the system off at any time. This falls in **line** with the current rules on using laptop computers or music players on flights.

Not everyone is happy at the **prospect** of an airplane full of mobile phone chatter. The friendly skies might now be a place where tempers become **thin** if passengers do not respect others. The EU has urged airlines to put in place flight **etiquette** rules to make sure passengers who want peace and **quiet** are not disturbed. This could include having to put phones on silent, encouraging text messaging instead of voice calls or **banning** calls on night flights. The EU telecoms commissioner Viviane Reding said: "I call on airlines to create the **right** conditions on board aircraft to ensure that those who want to use in-flight communication services do not **disturb** other passengers." She also warned airlines against charging high prices for mid-air calls. "If consumers receive **shock** phone bills, the service will not take off, she said.

## LANGUAGE WORK

- 1 - b    2 - c    3 - a    4 - d    5 - c    6 - a    7 - d    8 - b    9 - d    10 - c    11 - b    12 - a