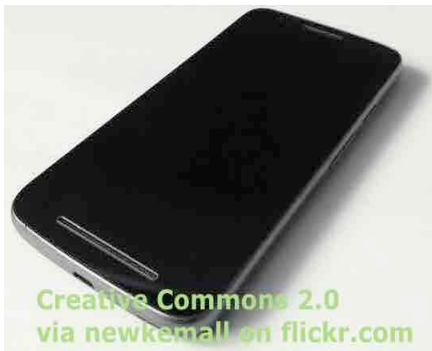


## Portugal bans bosses contacting staff after work

15th November, 2021



Technology is an integral and often indispensable part of our lives. However, it can also be an intrusive part, especially where the workplace is concerned. Many employers and bosses contact

employees outside of working hours. This means staff can never entirely switch off from work. The government in Portugal has taken steps to limit this incursion into the lives of workers. It has introduced a law that prohibits employers and bosses from contacting workers by email, message or phone outside of working hours. The law applies to companies with more than 10 employees. It states that any violation constitutes a "serious offense" and could result in financial penalties.

The Portuguese government has introduced the new privacy law after receiving a deluge of complaints during the coronavirus lockdowns. An increasing number of employees are now working from home remotely because of COVID-19. The research company Gartner estimated that remote workers will nearly double to represent 32 per cent of the global workforce by the end of 2021, compared to 17 per cent in 2019. Portugal's government said: "The employer must respect the privacy of the worker." The new law also requires employers to provide employees with the appropriate tools to work from home, and reimburse them with any costs incurred to assist with increased energy bills.

Sources: [cnn.com](https://www.cnn.com) / [washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com) / [euronews.com](https://www.euronews.com)

## Writing

Bosses should never contact employees outside of working hours. Discuss.

## Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

technology / workplace / employers / employees / working hours / email / penalties / government / complaints / coronavirus / research / double / privacy / energy bills

## True / False

- 1) The article says technology is making workers work longer hours. T / F
- 2) Bosses told workers they should never switch their phones off. T / F
- 3) A new law applies to companies with over 10 employees. T / F
- 4) Bosses could get fined if they message workers outside working time. T / F
- 5) Portugal's government received complaints during covid lockdowns. T / F
- 6) The number of people working at home has nearly doubled since 2019. T / F
- 7) The government said employees must respect employers. T / F
- 8) Companies may have to help workers with energy bills. T / F

## Synonym Match

(The words in **bold** are from the news article.)

- |                       |                 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <b>integral</b>    | a. approximated |
| 2. <b>entirely</b>    | b. help         |
| 3. <b>incursion</b>   | c. breach       |
| 4. <b>violation</b>   | d. flood        |
| 5. <b>financial</b>   | e. basic        |
| 6. <b>deluge</b>      | f. proper       |
| 7. <b>estimated</b>   | g. observe      |
| 8. <b>respect</b>     | h. completely   |
| 9. <b>appropriate</b> | i. intrusion    |
| 10. <b>assist</b>     | j. monetary     |

## Discussion – Student A

- a) What do you think about what you read?
- b) Would you be a good boss?
- c) What complaints did you have during lockdown?
- d) Would you prefer to work from home?
- e) What privacy issues are their regarding technology?
- f) What tools should companies give to remote workers?
- g) What will working life look like in 50 years from now?
- h) What questions would you like to ask bosses?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| 1. an integral and often indispensable    | a. serious offense           |
| 2. staff can never entirely               | b. incurred                  |
| 3. limit this incursion                   | c. penalties                 |
| 4. any violation constitutes a            | d. of complaints             |
| 5. result in financial                    | e. switch off from work      |
| 6. after receiving a deluge               | f. tools                     |
| 7. 32 per cent of the global              | g. part of our lives         |
| 8. provide employees with the appropriate | h. bills                     |
| 9. reimburse them with any costs          | i. workforce                 |
| 10. increased energy                      | j. into the lives of workers |

## Discussion – Student B

- How important is technology to you?
- What's the most important technological tool you have?
- Is technology ever intrusive in your life?
- What kind of relationship do you have with your boss?
- Should bosses contact workers after hours?
- Is it easy for you to totally switch off from work?
- How difficult is it not to work outside of working hours?
- What kinds of fines should bosses get?

## Spelling

- often bdeilsneasnip part of our lives
- it can also be an eiuinsrtv part
- staff can never eritynel switch off
- taken steps to limit this irinuncos
- any tioviajno constitutes a serious offense
- result in financial linstpeae
- after receiving a eugedl of complaints
- working from home rmeoetly
- research company Gartner tsteidmae that
- provide employees with the iroprpeaapt tools
- irerbemsu them
- any costs rurednci

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. e	2. h	3. i	4. c	5. j
6. d	7. a	8. g	9. f	10. b

## Role Play

### Role A – Cameras

You think cameras are the best form of technology. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): games consoles, microwave ovens or washing machines.

### Role B – Games Consoles

You think games consoles are the best form of technology. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): cameras, microwave ovens or washing machines.

### Role C – Microwave Ovens

You think microwave ovens are the best form of technology. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): games consoles, cameras or washing machines.

### Role D – Washing Machines

You think washing machines are the best form of technology. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them what is wrong with their things. Also, tell the others which is the least useful of these (and why): games consoles, microwave ovens or cameras.

## Speaking – Technology

Rank these with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- |            |                    |
|------------|--------------------|
| • Cameras  | • Washing machines |
| • Printers | • Microwave ovens  |
| • TVs      | • Smartphones      |
| • Watches  | • Games consoles   |

### Answers – True False

1 F	2 F	3 T	4 T	5 T	6 T	7 F	8 T
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.