

Portugal Limits Bosses from Contacting Employees

VOCABULARY WORDS

1. switch off /swiCH ôf/ stop the flow or operation of something by means of a valve, switch, or button.
Example: I switched off the gas.
2. incursion /in'kərZHən/ an unwelcome entering in or into (something, such as an activity or undertaking)
Example: The media was criticized for its thoughtless incursion into the domestic grief of the family.
3. remotely /rə'mōtlē/ from a distance; without physical contact.
Example: We can remotely operate it.
4. reimburse /,rēim'bərs/ repay (a person who has spent or lost money).
Example: The investors should be reimbursed for their losses.
5. incur /in'kər/ to experience something bad as a result of actions you have taken
Example: We incurred heavy expenses to repair the poor work done by the builder.



Technology is an important and necessary part of our lives. However, it can also be an unwanted 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 forms a "serious crime" and could result in fines.

The Portuguese government has introduced the new privacy law after receiving an overwhelming number of complaints during the coronavirus lockdowns. An increasing number of employees are now working from home **remotely** because of COVID-19. Remote workers according to Gartner doubled to represent 32 percent of the global workforce by the end of 2021, compared to 17 percent 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.

DISCUSSION

1. What's the most important technological tool you have?
2. What kind of relationship do you have with your boss?
3. Should bosses contact workers after hours?
4. Is it easy for you to totally switch off from work?
5. What complaints did you have during lockdown?
6. What tools should companies give to remote workers?