

Travelling to and from work is work, says EU

14th September, 2015



The European Union has ruled that workers with no fixed office should be paid for travelling to and from their first and last appointments of their day. This could have a huge impact on the payroll expenses of companies across Europe. The European Court of Justice said that the journeys of workers who do not have a fixed place of work, and who travel between their home and their customers' premises, are to be paid work. This means potentially higher salaries for care workers, sales staff, plumbers, nannies and other company employees who work from home. The court said it was to protect the health and safety of workers and ensure they did not work longer than 48 hours per week.

The ruling means that thousands of companies across Europe could be forced to change their business arrangements. Many will have to rearrange the working schedules of employees to ensure that their first and last appointments are near their homes. A British employment lawyer, Chris Tutton, told the BBC that: "Unless [bosses] adjust working hours or ask employees to opt out of the 48-hour working week, employees could quickly exceed the number of hours they are legally allowed to work. Bosses could therefore soon find that they are operating illegally and be at risk of facing costly claims against them." The ruling does not affect people's daily commute to their normal, fixed place of work.

Sources: *BBC / IrishExaminer.com / Yahoo.com*

Writing

Travelling to work is work and companies should pay workers for it. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

European Union / workers / office / traveling / appointments / journeys / customers / business arrangements / schedules / lawyer / illegally / be at risk / commute

True / False

- The EU ruling only applies to people with no fixed office. T / F
- The ruling applies to all workers' appointments throughout the day. T / F
- The ruling will not apply to care staff or nannies. T / F
- The EU wants ensure people do not work more than 48 hours a week. T / F
- Thousands of companies will have to change workers' schedules. T / F
- Companies will cancel the last appointments of workers each day. T / F
- Bosses will have to ask workers to work longer than 48 hours a week. T / F
- The EU ruling also applies to workers who commute to their offices. T / F

Synonym Match

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. ruled | a. safeguard |
| 2. impact | b. possibly |
| 3. fixed | c. modify |
| 4. potentially | d. effect |
| 5. protect | e. unlawfully |
| 6. forced | f. running into |
| 7. appointments | g. ordered |
| 8. adjust | h. made |
| 9. illegally | i. set |
| 10. facing | j. commitments |

Discussion – Student A

- What laws need to be introduced to protect workers?
- Will customers be happy about higher charges because of this new ruling?
- Why might a worker opt out of the 48-hour working week?
- What things do you dislike about working?
- What do you think workers in offices think about the ruling?
- What can companies do to reduce the effect of the ruling?
- How will this change those professions affected?
- What questions would you like to ask the European Court?

Breaking News English - The Mini Lesson

Phrase Match

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. workers with no | a. their customers' premises |
| 2. travelling to and from their first | b. arrangements |
| 3. payroll | c. risk |
| 4. travel between their home and | d. and last appointments |
| 5. protect the health | e. lawyer |
| 6. be forced to change their business | f. and safety of workers |
| 7. rearrange the working schedules | g. fixed office |
| 8. employment | h. the number of hours |
| 9. exceed | i. expenses |
| 10. be at | j. of employees |

Discussion – Student B

- What do you think about what you read?
- Should all workers get paid for travelling?
- What do you think companies feel about this new ruling?
- What effect do you think this will have on the economy?
- Should the traveling to work rate be the same as the working rate?
- Is this new ruling fair if a company goes out of business?
- How does this apply to the health and safety of workers?
- What do you think of the 48-hour limit on the working week?

Spelling

- their first and last ptetpoinansm
- have a huge tcaipm
- payroll npesexes
- their customers' meisrpse
- teayliptoln higher salaries
- nueser they did not work longer
- change their business aesernmtngar
- the working lsecsehdu of employees
- jsduat working hours
- ecdeex the number of hours
- operating yllgaleil
- people's daily ocetmum

Answers – Synonym Match

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

Role Play

Role A – Soldier

You think being a soldier is the best job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): care worker, teacher or flight attendant.

Role B – Care worker

You think being a care worker is the best job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): soldier, teacher or flight attendant.

Role C – Teacher

You think being a teacher is the best job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): care worker, soldier or flight attendant.

Role D – Flight attendant

You think being a flight attendant is the best job. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them why their jobs aren't so good. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): care worker, teacher or soldier.

Speaking – Jobs

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

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| • soldier | • secretary |
| • nurse | • store manager |
| • police officer | • teacher |
| • flight attendant | • care worker |

Answers – True False

a	T	b	F	c	F	d	T	e	T	f	F	g	F	h	F
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Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.