

# France Pioneers "Right to Disconnect" Movement with AfterWork Email Ban

*By Paige Towers • May 31, 2016 at 3:48pm*

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The French are saying to the obligation of handling workrelated calls and emails during afterwork hours. A new work conditions reform law (titled the 'El Khomri' law) passed by the French government earlier this month and, while it has proved to be among French citizens (it's thought to benefit companies more than workers), the law's Article 25 is the first of its kind to propose an employee's "right to disconnect."

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*au revoir*

highly unpopular

The El Khomri law stems from the growing idea that disconnecting from technology is essential for maintaining a good worklife balance, as well as for people's general well being.

As reported by Lauren Collins for The New Yorker,

Article 25 states: "The development of information and communication technologies, if badly managed or regulated, can have an impact on the health of workers. Among them the burden of work and the informational overburden, the blurring

of the borders between private life and professional life, are risks associated with the usage of digital technology.”

## Article 25 proposes that employers create policies to prevent work from seeping into their employee’s out of the office lives.

Perhaps inspired by which shuts down its servers after normal work hours, or Daimler (also a German auto company), which has a policy allowing employees to delete any work correspondence they receive on vacation — Article 25 proposes that employers create policies to prevent work from seeping into their employee’s out of office lives. This means that French workers now have the right to be left alone during nonwork hours so they can relax and recharge for the next work day.

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Volkswagen,

This innovative law has raised the question of whether this type of ‘right to disconnect’ policy could possibly be implemented in the U.S. — a country and little vacation time.

notorious for its long work days

The question certainly seems pertinent: in a study

published by the American Psychological Association in 2013, researchers found that 52 percent of employed adults checked their work messages before or after work, and 53

percent checked at least

once on both Saturday and Sunday. Additionally, 44 percent reported that they stayed plugged into work correspondence while on vacation, and 54 percent checked their messages even when home sick.

Whether a law similar to Article 25 is imposed in the U.S. or not, building in time to disconnect from technology may be crucial for people's health and wellness — particularly when it comes to sleep. Although the

recommends 79 hours for most healthy adults, slumber can quickly be undone by a buzzing or ringing smartphone with an after hours message from a boss or coworker.

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### National Sleep Foundation

Additionally, using our phones or other devices at night can lead to the , and those who work on a computer all day can suffer from

— a condition in which people experience burning, itching or redness in their eyes after overexposure to digital screens.

sleepdelaying effects of blue light

computer vision syndrome

On top of the wine, cheese and extralong maternity leave, this 'right to disconnect' from your phone after a long day's work is, perhaps, one more reason to embrace that infamous French lifestyle.