

In the last few days there have been a number of articles in the UK press which have suggested that employer federations and unions in France have signed a new, legally binding agreement which means that staff are banned from checking their work emails after 6 p.m. This is not the case. The actual position is much more complex than has been reported.

The change in question is a new addendum to the existing SYNTEC national Collective Bargaining Agreement. This only applies to a specific category of executive-level employees with a “forfeit jour” (a flat rate salary for working a fixed number of days annually) who are employed by companies governed by this particular collective bargaining agreement. Furthermore, it only currently affects those companies which are members of one of the two federations of employers that have actually signed the addendum, and not to all companies governed by the existing SYNTEC agreement.

Contrary to press reports, the addendum makes no reference to employees having to “switch off” after 6 p.m. – the provisions are much more complicated than this and the new obligations on employers are in fact currently unclear.

We are currently preparing a detailed note on the changes and what they may mean for French employers. In the meantime, if you have any questions on this issue, please contact Jean-Marc Sainsard in our Paris office.

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