

Travelling to and from work is work, says EU .

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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.

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