

# SwitchOff

Supporting worker's well being during remote work

Project No: 2022-1-PL01-KA220-VET-000085734



CC-BY-NC-SA



This document may be copied, reproduced or modified according to the above rules. In addition, an acknowledgement of the authors of the document and all applicable portions of the copyright notice must be clearly referenced.

All rights reserved.

© Copyright 2023 SWITCHOFF

Deliverable Lead and Editor: Institute of Development, Evie Michailidis

Contributing Partners: Crea360, University of Verona, Mindshift, Cardet, AHE, Happsy

Date: 15/05/2023

Dissemination Level:

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the National Agency (NA). Neither the European Union nor NA can be held responsible for them.



# Table Contents

Table Contents..... 3

Introduction ..... 4

Module: ..... 6

Tips & Practices for remote workers to switch off from work..... 6

    Chapter 1b: Tips for effectively using ICTs to psychologically detach from work ..... 7

    Chapter 2b: Best practices & tips that can enable employees to psychologically detach from work..... 19

    Chapter 3b: Useful Resources and Tools ..... 31

Appendix ..... 35



## Introduction

Over the last few decades, workplace digitalisation has enabled workers from various sectors to perform their work at any time and location (Eurofound and ILO, 2017). COVID-19 brought an exponential growth in teleworking and the extensive use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has led to opposing effects. On the one hand such technological advancements have led to increased efficiency, yet this shift has led to a “24/7 always on culture” having as such a toll on remote worker’s wellbeing.

Eurofound data suggest that remote workers are twice as likely to exceed the 48-hour working time limit and work in their free time (non-working hours). This data has put the spotlight on the need for a European legal framework directly defining and regulating the right of employees to disconnect (ETUC, 2021). The right to disconnect acknowledges the importance of work-life balance and the need for employees to have dedicated time away from work to rest, recharge, and engage in personal activities.

The present Toolkit has been developed in the framework of the SWITCH OFF project. The project aims at helping managers and VET trainers acquire the appropriate competencies and knowledge on how to facilitate recovery in the workplace and help remote workers disconnect from work and restore their personal resources (emotional, cognitive, physical) at the end of their working day.

### **The aim of this Toolkit Module is:**

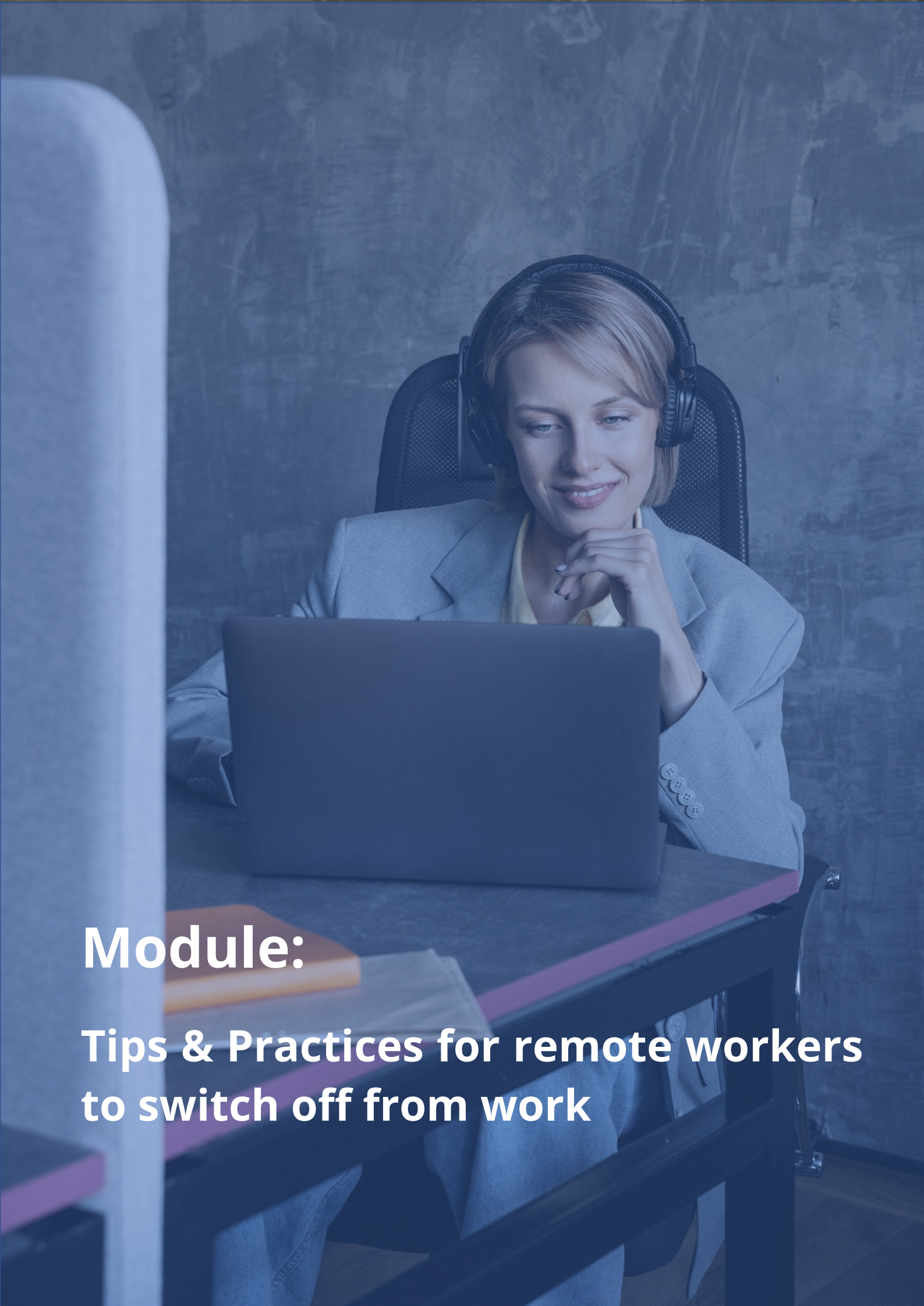
To provide remote workers with the necessary tips for effectively using ICTs and practices on how to psychologically detach from work.



**The toolkit consists of the following Module and Chapters:**

**Module: Tips & Practices for remote workers to switch off from work**

- Chapter 1b** Effectively using ICTs to psychologically detach from work
- Chapter 2b** Best practices & tips that can enable employees to psychologically detach from work
- Chapter 3b** Useful Resources and Tool



**Module:**

**Tips & Practices for remote workers  
to switch off from work**



## Chapter 1b: Tips for effectively using ICTs to psychologically detach from work

### Key Learning Objectives:

- > Apply effective digital task management techniques to enhance productivity and achieve a sense of accomplishment.
- > Understand the role of task communication in achieving closure and psychological detachment from work.
- > Implement strategies for maintaining clear boundaries between work and personal email communication.
- > Practice mindful digital engagement to control information overload and create mental space for relaxation.
- > Utilize digital well-being features and manage notifications to improve work-life balance and reduce work-related distractions.



## Tip 1. Digital Task Management for Enhanced Productivity

<b>Brief description of tip</b>	Take advantage of digital tools and applications specifically designed for task management and productivity. Organizing your tasks, setting priorities, and checking them off your digital to-do list, you can effectively manage your workload. Completing your tasks and checking them off your digital to-do list gives a sense of accomplishment, allowing you to mentally detach from work with peace of mind.
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	This tip aims to help employees prioritize their tasks, complete them efficiently, and experience a sense of accomplishment. If employees have a clear overview of their tasks and progress, they can mentally detach from work, knowing they have accomplished what they set out to do.
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	<a href="https://trello.com/">https://trello.com/</a> <a href="https://todoist.com/">https://todoist.com/</a> <a href="https://monday.com/">https://monday.com/</a> <a href="https://asana.com/">https://asana.com/</a>
<b>Additional notes</b>	Encourage employees to break down tasks into manageable subtasks and allocate realistic deadlines. This will help them stay focused, motivated, and more likely to achieve a sense of completion.

## Activity 1 - Task Management Tool Evaluation

<b>Duration of Activity</b>	60 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	Enhancing your ability as an HR manager to assess and select the most suitable task management tool for your organisation's needs.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have provided you with a list of popular task management tools, such as Trello, Todoist, Asana, and Monday.com. Take some time to familiarize yourself with their features and functionalities.</li> <li>• Evaluate each tool based on criteria that matter most to your organisation, such as user-friendliness, collaboration capabilities, customization options, and integration with other tools you use.</li> <li>• Compare and contrast the tools, considering your organisation's specific requirements and preferences. Think about how each tool aligns with your team's workflow and goals.</li> <li>• Select the most appropriate task management tool for your organisation and create an implementation plan. Consider steps for onboarding employees and providing necessary training to ensure a smooth transition.</li> </ul>





Activity sheet						
Tool	User-friendliness	Collaboration Capabilities	Customisation Options	Integration	Overall rating (1-5)	Notes
Trello						
Asana						
Monday						
Todoist						

Outline the steps you will take to introduce the chosen tool to your team and ensure successful adoption.

Step 1:  
Step 2:  
Step 3:

Use this activity sheet to evaluate and compare task management tools based on the provided criteria. Rate each tool on a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest) for each criterion. Make notes on the strengths, weaknesses, or any specific features that stand out. Utilize the space provided to outline your implementation plan. Describe the steps you will take to introduce the chosen tool to your team, assign responsibilities, and ensure a successful transition. Think about considerations such as training, communication, and any necessary adjustments to existing processes.



Tip 2. Separate Work Email Account for Boundaries	
<b>Brief description of tip</b>	It is important to separate email account solely for work-related matters. This allows you to confine work-related communication to a specific account and establish clear boundaries between work and personal life. Effective communication is essential for remote work, but it's equally important to know when to disengage.
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	The purpose of this tip is to create a clear separation between work and personal email correspondence. When signing out of the work email account outside of designated work hours, employees can detach from work-related communication and maintain a healthier work-life balance.
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	N/A
<b>Additional notes</b>	It's essential to communicate the use of separate email accounts to colleagues, clients, and supervisors to manage their expectations and ensure effective communication channels.

Activity 2 - Creating Work-Life Email Boundaries	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	30 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	Help employees understand the importance of using separate work email accounts and provide guidance on communicating this practice effectively within the organisation.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin by explaining the significance of separating work and personal email accounts for maintaining work-life boundaries and reducing work-related stress.</li> <li>• Discuss the benefits of using a separate work email account, such as improved focus, reduced distractions, and enhanced work-life balance.</li> <li>• Encourage employees to reflect on their current email practices and assess if they have a clear separation between work and personal email.</li> <li>• Provide guidelines on how to create a separate work email account, including selecting a professional email address, setting up email filters and notifications, and synchronizing the account with work-related communication tools.</li> <li>• Discuss the importance of communicating the use of a separate work email account with colleagues, clients, and supervisors.</li> <li>• Provide tips on how to effectively communicate this change, such as sending a brief email explaining the purpose and benefits of the separate account.</li> </ul>



**Activity sheet**

Establishing Work-Life Email Boundaries	Your Company Name
Reflect on Your Current Email Practices:	Do you currently have a clear separation between your work and personal email?  What challenges or issues have you experienced by not having a separate work email account?
Separate Your Professional/Work Email Account from the private email account:	-Set up email filters to separate work-related emails.  -Adjust email notification settings to minimize distractions during non-work hours.
Communicating the Use of a Separate Work Email Account:	-Draft an email to inform colleagues, clients, and supervisors about your new work email account.  -Include the purpose and benefits of using a separate account.  -Address any concerns or questions they may have.



Tip 3. Mindful Digital Engagement for Information Control	
<b>Brief description of tip</b>	Practice mindful digital engagement by being intentional and aware of your online activities. Take regular breaks from social media, news websites, and other potentially distracting platforms.
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	The aim of this tip is to help employees minimize information overload and create mental space for relaxation and detachment from work. Controlling their digital interactions, employees can focus on their personal lives and reduce the temptation to constantly engage with work-related content.
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	<a href="https://www.headspace.com/">https://www.headspace.com/</a>
<b>Additional notes</b>	Encourage employees to set specific time limits for their social media and news consumption and explore mindfulness techniques to enhance their awareness and self-regulation.

Activity 3 - Mindful Digital Engagement Self-Assessment	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	15 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	To assess and reflect on employees' current digital engagement habits and promote mindful usage of online platforms for personal growth and supporting employees.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin by explaining the importance of mindful digital engagement for employees in supporting their own well-being and effectively assisting employees.</li> <li>• Distribute the Mindful Digital Engagement Self-Assessment activity sheet to employees.</li> <li>• Instruct employees to honestly assess their current digital engagement habits by rating each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 5 being "Strongly Agree."</li> <li>• After completing the self-assessment, encourage employees to reflect on their responses and identify areas for personal improvement and growth.</li> <li>• Facilitate a group discussion where employees can share their insights, challenges, and strategies for practicing mindful digital engagement while supporting employees.</li> <li>• Summarize the activity by emphasizing the importance of setting boundaries, taking breaks, and modeling healthy digital engagement for employees' well-being.</li> </ul>



<p>Activity sheet (if applicable)</p>	<p><b>Rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being "Strongly Disagree" and 5 being "Strongly Agree."</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am mindful of the time I spend on social media platforms.</li> <li>2. I regularly take breaks from checking emails and notifications.</li> <li>3. I consciously limit my exposure to news websites and online articles.</li> <li>4. I am aware of the impact of excessive digital engagement on my well-being.</li> <li>5. I practice mindfulness techniques to regulate my online activities.</li> <li>6. I set specific time limits for social media usage.</li> <li>7. I prioritize offline activities and personal relationships over online engagement.</li> <li>8. I am able to disconnect from work-related content during non-working hours.</li> <li>9. I actively manage the notifications I receive on my digital devices.</li> <li>10. I regularly evaluate and adjust my digital engagement habits.</li> </ol> <p><b>Total score:</b></p> <p><b>Total score less than 30: Low Mindful Digital Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This score range suggests that employees may benefit from implementing more mindful digital engagement practices. They may be experiencing a higher level of information overload and struggle to detach from work-related digital activities. It is recommended to focus on incorporating mindfulness techniques and setting stricter boundaries with digital platforms.</li> </ul> <p><b>Total score between 30 and 50: Moderate Mindful Digital Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This score range indicates that employees have some level of mindful digital engagement but may still encounter occasional challenges in managing their online activities. They can further enhance their digital well-being by refining their time management strategies, implementing regular breaks, and strengthening their self-regulation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Total score above 50: High Mindful Digital Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employees scoring in this range demonstrate a strong ability to engage mindfully with digital platforms. They have successfully established boundaries, manage information overload effectively, and prioritize their well-being. They can serve as role models for others and may consider sharing their strategies with colleagues to support a culture of mindful digital engagement.</li> </ul>
---	---



Tip 4. Digital Well-being Features	
<b>Brief description of tip</b>	Utilize digital well-being features on devices and applications to manage time spent on ICTs.
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	Digital well-being features, such as screen time limits and focus mode, encourage employees to be more conscious of their ICT usage. Setting restrictions and managing screen time, employees can improve their ability to switch off from work and foster a healthier work-life balance.
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	<a href="https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563222003624">https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0747563222003624</a>
<b>Additional notes</b>	Encourage employees to regularly review and adjust their digital well-being settings based on their evolving work and personal needs.

Activity 4 - Digital Well-being in action	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	20 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	To assess and improve employees' awareness and utilization of digital well-being features for better work-life balance and productivity.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce the concept of digital well-being to employees, emphasizing the importance of utilizing digital well-being features to manage ICT usage.</li> <li>• Choose and try one of the digital well-being features on your mobile phone Summarize the activity by emphasizing the importance of setting boundaries, taking breaks, and modeling healthy digital engagement for employees' well-being.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity sheet (if applicable)</b>	<p><b>Self-reflection:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How this help you to disconnect?</li> <li>• How often you can use it?</li> <li>• In which situation you can use it?</li> <li>• Think about setting up your phone and making the plan of using digital well-being features on your phone.</li> </ul>



Tip 5. Disable Work Notifications	
<b>Brief description of tip</b>	Disable notifications from work-related applications and platforms during non-work hours, including email notifications, project management tool alerts, and instant messaging apps.
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	This tip aims to reduce distractions and promote psychological detachment from work during non-work hours. If employees disable notifications, then they can avoid constant interruptions, allowing them to focus on personal time and activities. It helps create clear boundaries between work and personal life, enabling employees to switch off from work-related matters and enhance work-life balance.
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	N/A
<b>Additional notes</b>	Encourage employees to proactively manage their notification settings on different devices and applications to ensure that work-related notifications are silenced during non-work hours. This may involve adjusting settings within email clients, project management tools, and instant messaging apps.

Activity 5 - Notification Management Workshop	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	30 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	To guide HR professionals in managing work-related notifications to promote work-life balance and reduce distractions.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin by discussing the importance of disabling work notifications during non-work hours for better psychological detachment and work-life balance.</li> <li>• Distribute the Notification Management Workshop activity sheet to participants.</li> <li>• Encourage participants to complete the activity sheet by answering the questions and implementing the action plan.</li> <li>• Facilitate a group discussion where participants can share their experiences, challenges, and strategies for effectively managing work-related notifications.</li> <li>• Provide practical tips and techniques for adjusting notification settings on different devices and applications.</li> <li>• Conclude the workshop, summarizing the key takeaways and emphasizing the importance of proactively managing notifications to foster a healthier work-life integration.</li> </ul>



<p><b>Activity sheet (if applicable)</b></p>	<p><b>Notification Management Activity sheet</b></p> <p>How do work-related notifications impact your work-life balance? (Open-ended response)</p> <p><b>Reflect on your current notification settings:</b></p> <p>a) Which work-related applications and platforms have notifications enabled during non-work hours?</p> <p>b) How frequently do you receive work-related notifications outside of designated work hours?</p> <p><b>Action Plan:</b></p> <p>a) List work-related applications and platforms that should have notifications disabled during non-work hours.</p> <p>b) Outline specific steps you will take to adjust your notification settings on each device and application.</p> <p>c) Set a timeline for implementing these changes.</p>
--	--

<p><b>Tip 6. ICT-Free Period</b></p>	
<p><b>Brief description of tip</b></p>	<p>Designate a specific period each day or week where you disconnect entirely from ICTs. This can be during evenings, weekends, or any other time that suits your schedule. Avoid using digital devices for work-related activities during this period and instead focus on offline hobbies, quality time with loved ones, or self-care activities.</p>
<p><b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b></p>	<p>The purpose of this tip is to create dedicated time for employees to disconnect from ICTs and achieve true psychological detachment from work. Designating an ICT-free period, individuals can take a refreshing break from constant connectivity. This break allows them to rejuvenate, recharge, and focus on offline activities, promoting work-life balance and overall well-being.</p>
<p><b>Relevant online sources</b></p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Additional notes</b></p>	<p>Encourage employees to communicate their designated ICT-free period with colleagues, managers, and clients, ensuring that everyone understands their availability during this time. Setting clear boundaries and sticking to them is crucial for achieving the desired psychological detachment from work.</p>





Activity 6 - ICT-Free Period Implementation Workshop	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	15 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	To guide HR professionals in managing work-related notifications to promote work-life balance and reduce distractions.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin the workshop by explaining the concept and benefits of ICT-free periods in promoting work-life balance and psychological well-being.</li> <li>• Distribute the ICT-Free Period Implementation Workshop activity sheet to participants.</li> <li>• Instruct employees to reflect on their current work routines and identify a suitable period for their own ICT-free time.</li> <li>• Encourage participants to complete the activity sheet by outlining their designated ICT-free period, offline activities they plan to engage in, and strategies to communicate their availability during this time.</li> <li>• Facilitate a group discussion where participants can share their insights, challenges, and best practices for implementing ICT-free periods within their organisation.</li> <li>• Provide guidance on effectively communicating ICT-free periods with colleagues, managers, and clients, emphasizing the importance of setting boundaries and managing expectations.</li> </ul>
<b>Activity sheet (if applicable)</b>	<p><b>ICT-Free Period Implementation Workshop activity sheet</b> Reflect on your current work routines:</p> <p><b>Reflect on your current notification settings:</b> a) How frequently do you disconnect entirely from ICTs for personal time? b) What are the challenges you face in achieving psychological detachment from work?</p> <p><b>Designate an ICT-free period:</b> a) Identify a specific period each day or week for your ICT-free time. b) Determine the duration and frequency of your ICT-free period.</p> <p><b>Offline Activities:</b> a) List offline hobbies, activities, or self-care practices you plan to engage in during your ICT-free time. b) Prioritise activities that help you relax, rejuvenate, and detach from work-related matters.</p> <p><b>Communication Strategy:</b> a) Outline strategies to communicate your designated ICT-free period with colleagues, managers, and clients.</p>



	<p>b) Consider setting up automated email responses or out-of-office notifications during this time.</p>
--	--

### Short summary and key take home lessons

- > Breaking down tasks into subtasks and allocating realistic deadlines enhances focus, motivation, and a sense of completion.
- > Sign out of the work email account outside of designated work hours to detach from work-related communication.
- > Separating work and personal email correspondence, employees can prioritize their personal well-being.
- > Create designated folders or sections on your device for work-related and personal apps.
- > Visually separate work and personal applications to reinforce the boundary between work and personal life.
- > Establish clear boundaries between work and personal time to ensure a healthy separation and avoid burnout.
- > Silencing notifications, employees can fully switch off from work-related matters and focus on personal time and activities.
- > Designate a specific period each day or week for disconnecting entirely from ICTs.
- > Avoid using digital devices for work-related activities during the designated ICT-free period.



- > Inform colleagues, clients, and supervisors about the use of a separate work email account to manage their expectations and ensure effective communication channels.

## Chapter 2b: Best practices & tips that can enable employees to psychologically detach from work


### Key learning objectives

- > Learn how mindfulness practices can help you psychologically detach from work.
- > Learn how self-compassion can improve well-being, and contribute to a healthier and more productive workplace.
- > Discover how boundaries can help distinguish between work-related duties and personal time.

### Practical strategies

Practical strategies for disconnecting, including tips for setting boundaries, managing and establishing clear communication with colleagues and supervisors.

## Strategy 1: Mindfulness

<p><b>Brief description of tip</b></p>	 <p>Mindfulness is an effective method for encouraging psychological detachment from one's job. It entails deliberately focusing one's attention on the present moment while maintaining a non-judgmental and accepting attitude toward one's own thoughts and feelings. Employees can acquire a heightened awareness of their mental and emotional states by practicing mindfulness, helping them to detach from work-related stress and create a healthy work-life balance.</p> <p>Picture from prostooleh in <a href="#">Freepik</a></p>
<p><b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b></p>	<p>For remote workers, practicing mindfulness can be particularly beneficial in helping them switch off from work and create a clear separation between work and personal life. Consistency and intention are required for mindfulness practice. As a remote worker, you may build the ability to switch off from work, foster a healthier work-life balance, and nurture your general well-being by adding mindfulness practices into your daily routine. Employees who devote time to cultivating mindfulness can develop the skills and mindset required for psychological detachment from work, resulting in increased overall well-being and performance.</p>
<p><b>Relevant online sources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hülshager, U. R., Alberts, H. J. E. M., Feinholdt, A., &amp; Lang, J. W. B. (2013). Benefits of mindfulness at work: The role of mindfulness in emotion regulation, emotional exhaustion, and job satisfaction. <i>Journal of Applied Psychology</i>, 98(2), 310–325. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031313">https://doi.org/10.1037/a0031313</a></li> <li>• Hyland, P. K., Lee, R. A., &amp; Mills, M. J. (2015). Mindfulness at work: A new approach to improving individual and organizational performance. <i>Industrial and organizational Psychology</i>, 8 (4), 576-602. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2015.41">https://doi.org/10.1017/iop.2015.41</a></li> <li>• How to Practice Mindfulness Throughout Your Work Day</li> <li>• Mindfulness at Work: Create Calm &amp; Focus in the Workplace</li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional notes</b></p>	<p>Encourage employees to break down tasks into manageable subtasks and allocate realistic deadlines. This will help them stay focused, motivated, and more likely to achieve a sense of completion.</p>



## Activity

Activity 1 - Mindful Breathing	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	5-10 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	To guide HR professionals in managing work-related notifications to promote work-life balance and reduce distractions.
<b>Instructions</b>	Practicing mindful breathing can help workers generate a moment of stillness and present-moment awareness in the midst of their hectic workdays. It can be performed during a break or at the conclusion of the workday to aid in relaxation, stress reduction, and psychological separation from work-related thoughts and problems.
<b>Activity sheet (if applicable)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Observe without judgment: As you breathe, observe it without attempting to control or change it. Simply pay attention to the quality of your inhalations and exhalations, as well as the sensations that come with each breath.</li> <li>2. Guide your attention gently: It's normal for your mind to stray throughout this activity. When you sense your mind wandering, gently bring them back to the breath. Use your breath as an anchor to return your attention to the present moment.</li> <li>3. Cultivate nonjudgmental awareness: As you practice, keep a nonjudgmental attitude toward your thoughts and experiences in mind. If you notice any judgments or distractions, acknowledge them without getting caught up in them and return your focus to the breath.</li> <li>4. Practice for a specific amount of time: Begin with a modest period, such as 5-10 minutes, and gradually expand the length of your practice as you gain confidence. If necessary, set a timer or use a meditation app to keep track of the time.</li> <li>5. Gently bring your attention back to your surroundings at the end of the practice: When you're ready to end the practice, gently return your attention back to your surroundings. Consider how you feel after the practice and carry that sense of mindfulness into the remainder of your day.</li> </ol>



## Assessment

Question 1	
<b>Assesment type</b>	<b>tool</b> Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	What is mindfulness?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Paying attention to the present moment without judgment b) Engaging in deep relaxation techniques c) Multitasking and completing multiple tasks simultaneously d) All of the above

Question 2	
<b>Assesment type</b>	<b>tool</b> Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	How can mindfulness be beneficial for psychological detachment from work?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) By helping individuals stay fully present in the current moment b) By increasing self-awareness of work-related stress and emotions c) By cultivating a non-judgmental attitude toward work-related thoughts d) All of the above

Question 3	
<b>Assesment type</b>	<b>tool</b> True/False statement
<b>Questions</b>	Mindfulness is a practice that requires consistency and regularity to experience its benefits.
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) True b) False



Strategy 2: Self-compassion	
<p><b>Brief description of tip</b></p>	<div style="display: flex; align-items: center;">  <div style="flex: 1;"> <p>Self-compassion is an effective method for fostering psychological detachment at work. It entails treating yourself with love, tolerance, and acceptance, particularly in difficult or stressful times.</p> <p>Picture from nakaridore in <a href="#">Freepik</a></p> </div> </div>
<p><b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b></p>	<p>Workers who practice self-compassion can create a pleasant and supportive work environment, improve their general well-being, and contribute to a healthier and more productive workplace. It enables employees to bring their entire self to work, generating feelings of contentment, satisfaction, and resilience.</p>
<p><b>References/ online sources</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dodson, S. J., &amp; Heng, Y. T. (2022). Self-compassion in organizations: A review and future research agenda. <i>Journal of Organizational Behavior</i>, 43(2), 168-196. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2556">https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2556</a></li> <li>• Jennings, R. E., Lanaj, K., &amp; Kim, Y. J. (2023). Self-compassion at work: A self-regulation perspective on its beneficial effects for work performance and wellbeing. <i>Personnel Psychology</i>, 76(1), 279-309. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12504">https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12504</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">How to Bring Self-Compassion to Work with You</a></li> <li>• <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dmw1gceM5OY&amp;t=1403s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dmw1gceM5OY&amp;t=1403s</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Additional notes</b></p>	<p>By incorporating self-compassion into your work routine, you can cultivate a more balanced and caring relationship with yourself and your work. You can detach from work-related stressors, retain a better perspective, and promote well-being both inside and outside of the office by practicing self-compassion.</p>



Activity 2 - Self-Compassionate Break	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	5-10 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	This practice allows you to take a brief break from your workday to promote self-compassion and create a more supportive inner environment. It fosters well-being, resilience, and a healthy relationship with oneself at work by counteracting self-criticism.
<b>Instructions</b>	Practicing mindful breathing can help workers generate a moment of stillness and present-moment awareness in the midst of their hectic workdays. It can be performed during a break or at the conclusion of the workday to aid in relaxation, stress reduction, and psychological separation from work-related thoughts and problems.
<b>Activity sheet (if applicable)</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find a quiet and comfortable location where you can spend some uninterrupted time. Set a 5-10 minute timer.</li> <li>2. To center yourself, close your eyes or soften your gaze and take a few deep breaths.</li> <li>3. Consider a recent work circumstance that was difficult or unpleasant. Take note of any self-critical ideas or sentiments that come in relation to this scenario.</li> <li>4. Now, change your focus to a self-compassionate statement or affirmation that speaks to you. "May I be kind to myself in this difficult time," for example. "I am deserving of compassion and understanding." "I acknowledge my efforts and give myself permission to take care of myself." "May I accept myself as I am, with all my flaws and strengths"</li> <li>5. Silently repeat this self-compassionate statement to yourself, letting it soak in with each breath. As you continue to breathe, consider treating yourself with kindness and empathy, just as you would a close friend or loved one.</li> <li>6. Take note of any sensations of warmth, comfort, or relief that occur while you practice self-compassion. Allow yourself to receive and accept this self-compassion completely, embracing it as a source of support and encouragement.</li> <li>7. When distracting thoughts or self-critical judgments come, acknowledge them gently and without judgment before returning your attention to the self-compassionate statement.</li> <li>8. When the timer goes off, take a moment to reflect on how you're feeling.</li> <li>9. Carry the intention of self-compassion with you as you return to work, offering kindness and understanding to yourself in times of struggle or stress.</li> </ol>





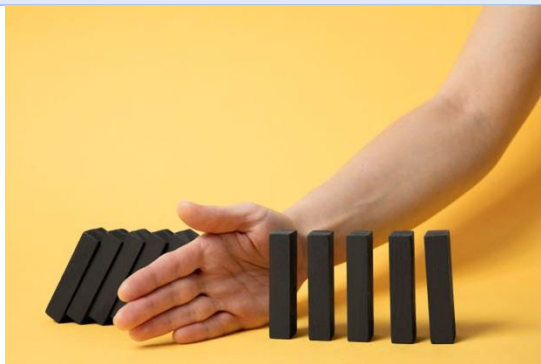
## Assessment tool

Question 1	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	What is self-compassion?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Treating others with kindness and understanding b) Treating oneself with kindness and understanding c) Criticizing oneself for mistakes and shortcomings d) All of the above

Question 2	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	How can self-compassion benefit workers in the workplace?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Reducing stress and promoting well-being b) Enhancing collaboration and teamwork c) Increasing self-criticism and perfectionism d) All of the above

Question 3	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	What is self-compassion?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Engaging in mindfulness practices b) Challenging negative self-talk and replacing it with self-compassionate thoughts c) Seeking support from colleagues or mentors d) All of the above

Question 4	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	True/False statement
<b>Questions</b>	Self-compassion can contribute to increased job satisfaction and resilience in the workplace.
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) True b) False

Strategy 3: Boundaries	
<b>Brief description of tip</b>	 <p>Setting limits can assist employees in psychologically detaching from their jobs. Employees can achieve a healthy work-life balance by establishing explicit limitations on work-related activities and devoting specified time to personal life. Defining work hours, avoiding unnecessary overtime, and restricting business-related communication during non-working hours are all part of setting boundaries. It enables employees to detach from their jobs, relieve stress, and participate in activities that promote relaxation and well-being. Employees can improve their mental and emotional well-being by applying this method, which leads to higher productivity and job satisfaction.</p> <p>Picture from nakaridore in <a href="#">Freepik</a></p>
<b>Purpose/Aim of tip</b>	<p>The strategy aims to establish a clear distinction between work-related tasks and personal time, allowing individuals to recover and rejuvenate outside of working hours. Employees can reduce burnout, improve mental health, increase productivity, strengthen relationships, and achieve work-life balance by creating limits.</p> <p>Overall, the goal of this strategy is to establish a more sustainable and rewarding work environment in which people may be productive and engaged while also preserving their mental and emotional well-being outside of work hours.</p>
<b>Relevant online sources</b>	<p>Thewordsmithm. (2022, January 25). How to say no to your boss and still be a team player-and other ways to set boundaries while WFH. CNBC.</p> <p><a href="https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/25/how-to-set-better-work-life-boundaries-while-working-from-home-.html">https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/25/how-to-set-better-work-life-boundaries-while-working-from-home-.html</a></p>

**SWITCHOFF: Supporting worker's well being during remote work**

Project No: 2022-1-PL01-KA220-VET-000085734



--	--



## Activity

Activity 1 - Boundary Setting Practice	
<b>Duration of Activity</b>	15 minutes
<b>Aim of Activity</b>	The aim of this activity is to help people to remember that setting boundaries is critical for keeping their well-being and establishing a healthy work-life balance.
<b>Instructions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Identify Your Boundaries:</b> Think about the areas in your life where you need to set boundaries. These could be work-related, personal connections, social obligations, or even technology usage.</li> <li><b>Define Your Boundaries:</b> Define your limits for each region clearly. Set boundaries such as not reading business emails after a particular hour, declining last-minute social invitations when you need personal time, or limiting phone usage during meal times.</li> <li><b>Communicate Your Boundaries:</b> After you've established your limits, communicate them to the people who matter in your life. Inform your coworkers, friends, and family about your limits so that people understand and respect your need for personal space and time.</li> <li><b>Practice Saying "No":</b> Setting boundaries frequently entails saying "no" to requests or invitations that contradict your established limits. Practice saying "no" assertively and respectfully when appropriate, without feeling guilty or unduly apologetic.</li> <li><b>Maintain Your Boundaries:</b> Maintain consistent limits. Unless absolutely required, make no exceptions. It may be difficult at first, but people will eventually accept your boundaries.</li> <li><b>Adjust and evaluate:</b> Assess how successfully you are keeping your boundaries and how they are affecting your well-being on a regular basis. Be flexible in altering your boundaries as your needs and priorities change.</li> </ol>



## Assessment

Question 1	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
<b>Questions</b>	Setting boundaries means isolating oneself from others and avoiding any social interactions.
<b>Possible answers</b>	True/False statement

Question 2	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
<b>Questions</b>	How can setting boundaries improve relationships with others?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) By dominating others and imposing your will. b) By avoiding any communication or interaction. c) By promoting open and respectful communication. d) By constantly changing your boundaries based on others' demands.

Question 3	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
<b>Questions</b>	Setting boundaries is essential for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and preventing burnout.
<b>Possible answers</b>	True/False statement



## Short summary and key take home lessons

- > Mindfulness is about being fully present in the present moment, without judgment or attachment to the past or future. Focus your attention on what is happening right now.
- > Practice non-judgment and acceptance: Approach your thoughts, feelings, and experiences with an accepting and non-judgmental attitude. Allow things to be as they are without resisting or changing them.
- > Bring awareness to your senses and completely experience the current moment through sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Engaging your senses helps you stay in the present moment.
- > By incorporating self-compassion into your work routine, you can cultivate a more balanced and caring relationship with yourself and your work.
- > Practice to set healthy boundaries can improve mental and emotional well-being, which leads to higher productivity and job satisfaction.



## Chapter 3b: Useful Resources and Tools

This section lists resources and tools that individuals and organisations can use to promote the right to disconnect, including apps, websites, and other technology tools, as well as books, articles, and other educational materials.

The purpose of this chapter is:

- > to explore the various tools and resources that employees can use to disconnect from work;
- > inspiration to look for various sources of knowledge about employees' disconnection from work;
- > self-improvement in acquiring knowledge and learning methods and tools for disconnecting an employee from work.

### Resources

Resource 1: Right to disconnect: Exploring company practices	
<b>Description of tool/Resource</b>	Eurofound has collected a selection of good practices that companies in EU implement in order to promote their employees right to disconnect. Good practices apply primarily to remote employees and are based on the assumption that both the mental and physical health of employees is extremely important and translates into the quality of functioning of employees and the entire organisation. The material has been prepared in pdf form, which is available to download. The report in PDF format is available for free download. Ordering a printed version requires payment.
<b>Target group</b>	HR professionals Specialists in employee wellbeing policies.
<b>Purpose/Aim</b>	The aim of this resource is to provide employees with a set of good practices relating to the right of employees to disconnect
<b>Usability of tool/resource</b>	By using this resource, HR professionals can get ideas on how to promote the right of employees to disconnect.
<b>Web link</b>	<a href="https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2021/right-to-disconnect-exploring-company-practices">https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/publications/report/2021/right-to-disconnect-exploring-company-practices</a>
<b>References</b>	Eurofound (2021), Right to disconnect: Exploring company practices, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg

## Resource 2: Successful Remote Working Succinctly

<b>Description of tool/Resource</b>	The material in the form of an e-book presents solutions on how to organize remote work. It is aimed especially at employees. The e-book aims to support employees in learning how to organize remote work, but also in managing their mental and physical health, so that it is possible to maintain work-life balance. The material has been prepared in pdf, mobi and epub form which is available for download.
<b>Target group</b>	Managers Remote workers Team Leaders
<b>Purpose/Aim</b>	The ebook can help the reader learn: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• how to organize a remote workspace at home,</li> <li>• how to manage time, stay engaged and collaborate with other remote workers,</li> <li>• how to manage a remote work team,</li> <li>• how to reconcile their personal life and work</li> </ul>
<b>Usability of tool/resource</b>	The manual can be recommended by the organisation as a self-education booklet for employees and managers.
<b>Web link</b>	<a href="https://www.syncfusion.com/succinctly-free-ebooks/successful-remote-working-succinctly">https://www.syncfusion.com/succinctly-free-ebooks/successful-remote-working-succinctly</a>
<b>References</b>	Barbieri, L. (2022), Successful Remote Working Succinctly, Syncfusion

## Resource 3: Individual strategies to overcome shortcomings in Work-Life Balance: Evidence from life-course interviews in seven European countries

<b>Description of tool/Resource</b>	The study presents the results of interviews conducted in several European countries. The results of the interviews provide information on possible practices to support employees' work-life balance.  The material has been prepared in pdf form, which is available for download.
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HR managers</li> <li>• Managers responsible for activities in the area of supporting the well-being of employees.</li> </ul>





<b>Purpose/Aim</b>	<p><b>The material can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inspire HR managers to create activities in the area of supporting employees' detachment from work,</li> <li>help managers in understanding the needs of employees,</li> <li>equip managers with ideas on how to support employees right to disconnect</li> </ul>
<b>Usability of tool/resource</b>	The resource can be an inspiration for organisations to create solutions supporting employees' right to disconnect from work.
<b>Web link</b>	<a href="https://euroship-research.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/EUROSHIP-Working-Paper-No.-22-Work-Life-Balance.pdf">https://euroship-research.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/EUROSHIP-Working-Paper-No.-22-Work-Life-Balance.pdf</a>
<b>References</b>	Ibáñez, Z., León, M., Maestriperi, L. (2022), Individual strategies to overcome shortcomings in Work-Life Balance: Evidence from life-course interviews in seven European countries , EUROSHIP Working Paper No. 22

#### Resource 4: Right to disconnect – film

<b>Description of tool/Resource</b>	<p>The study presents the results of interviews conducted in several European countries. The results of the interviews provide information on possible practices to support employees' work-life balance.</p> <p>The material has been prepared in pdf form, which is available for download.</p>
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HR managers</li> <li>Managers responsible for activities in the area of supporting the well-being of employees.</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose/Aim</b>	<p><b>The material can:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>inspire HR managers to create activities in the area of supporting employees' detachment from work,</li> <li>help managers in understanding the needs of employees,</li> <li>equip managers with ideas on how to support employees right to disconnect</li> </ul>
<b>Usability of tool/resource</b>	The video is a short and simple presentation that can support an information campaign about the right to disconnect.
<b>Web link</b>	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quVd-czO67c">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=quVd-czO67c</a>



Resource 5: Evaluation of 'Right to Disconnect' Legislation and Its Impact on Employee's Productivity	
<b>Description of tool/Resource</b>	This research report highlights the effectiveness of the right to disconnect on employees' productivity.
<b>Target group</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy makers</li> <li>• HR managers</li> </ul>
<b>Purpose/Aim</b>	<p><b>The aim of the article is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to scientifically explain the effectiveness of implementing the right to disconnect,</li> <li>• to highlight the relationship between the right to disconnect and the productivity of workers,</li> <li>• to provide recommendations on how organisations can implement internal policies on the right to disconnect.</li> </ul>
<b>Usability of tool/resource</b>	The article presents an attempt to scientifically explain the importance of the right to disconnection, which gives an empirical basis for promoting the issue
<b>Web link</b>	<a href="https://www.ijmar.org/v5n3/18-008.html">https://www.ijmar.org/v5n3/18-008.html</a>
<b>References</b>	Pansu, L.(2018), "Evaluation of 'Right to Disconnect' Legislation and Its Impact on Employee's Productivity ", International Journal of Management and Applied Research, Vol. 5, No. 3, pp. 99-119

## Short summary and key take home lessons

The Internet contains many resources for organisations and employees relevant to the right to disconnect. It is worth using those that have a scientific basis or those that are recommended by the European Union. In this chapter, we present some key resources that can be used by HR professionals, managers and employees who wish to benefit from the right to disconnect from work.



## Appendix

### Chapter 2b – Assessment tool correct answers

#### Strategy 1

Strategy 1 - Question 1	
Assesment tool type	Multiple choice question
Questions	What is mindfulness?
Possible answers	<p><b>a) Paying attention to the present moment without judgment</b></p> <p>b) Engaging in deep relaxation techniques</p> <p>c) Multitasking and completing multiple tasks simultaneously</p> <p>d) All of the above</p>

Strategy 1 - Question 2	
Assesment tool type	Multiple choice question
Questions	How can mindfulness be beneficial for psychological detachment from work?
Possible answers	<p>a) By helping individuals stay fully present in the current moment</p> <p>b) By increasing self-awareness of work-related stress and emotions</p> <p>c) By cultivating a non-judgmental attitude toward work-related thoughts</p> <p><b>d) All of the above</b></p>

Strategy 1 - Question 3	
Assesment tool type	True/False statement
Questions	Mindfulness is a practice that requires consistency and regularity to experience its benefits.
Possible answers	<p><b>a) True</b></p> <p>b) False</p>



Strategy 2 - Question 1	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	What is self-compassion?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Treating others with kindness and understanding <b>b) Treating oneself with kindness and understanding</b> c) Criticizing oneself for mistakes and shortcomings d) All of the above

Strategy 2 - Question 2	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	How can self-compassion benefit workers in the workplace?
<b>Possible answers</b>	<b>a) Reducing stress and promoting well-being</b> b) Enhancing collaboration and teamwork c) Increasing self-criticism and perfectionism d) All of the above

Strategy 2 - Question 3	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	Multiple choice question
<b>Questions</b>	What is self-compassion?
<b>Possible answers</b>	a) Engaging in mindfulness practices b) Challenging negative self-talk and replacing it with self-compassionate thoughts c) Seeking support from colleagues or mentors <b>d) All of the above</b>

Strategy 2 - Question 4	
<b>Assesment tool type</b>	True/False statement
<b>Questions</b>	Self-compassion can contribute to increased job satisfaction and resilience in the workplace.



Possible answers	a) <b>True</b> b) False
------------------	----------------------------

Strategy 3 - Question 1	
Assesment tool type	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
Questions	Setting boundaries means isolating oneself from others and avoiding any social interactions.
Possible answers	a) True b) <b>False</b>

Strategy 3 - Question 2	
Assesment tool type	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
Questions	How can setting boundaries improve relationships with others?
Possible answers	a) By dominating others and imposing your will. b) By avoiding any communication or interaction. c) <b>By promoting open and respectful communication.</b> d) By constantly changing your boundaries based on others' demands.

Strategy 3 - Question 3	
Assesment tool type	Select one option: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multiple choice question</li> <li>• True/False statement</li> <li>• Open Question</li> </ul>
Questions	Setting boundaries is essential for maintaining a healthy work-life balance and preventing burnout.



<b>Possible answers</b>	a) <b>True</b> b) False
-------------------------	----------------------------

[www.switchoffthework.eu](http://www.switchoffthework.eu)



# SwitchOff

Supporting worker's well  
being during remote work

Project No: 2022-1-PL01-KA220-VET-000085734



Co-funded by  
the European Union

