

Workplace Investigations

Contributing Editors

Phil Linnard at Slaughter and May
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01. What legislation, guidance and/or policies govern a workplace investigation?

Portugal

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Pursuant to article 98 of the Portuguese Labour Code, the employer has a disciplinary power over its employees during the employment period. This is enforced through the initiation of disciplinary procedures – which can include a preliminary workplace investigation as provided for in article 352(1) of the Portuguese Labour Code – and ultimately the application of sanctions laid down by law or in an applicable collective bargaining agreement.

The Portuguese Labour Code governs disciplinary procedures, which can include a preliminary workplace investigation, in two different sections. On the one hand, articles 328 to 332 establish general rules regarding the imposition of disciplinary sanctions; statutory deadlines and statutes of limitations involved; decision criteria; penalties; and disciplinary records. On the other hand, articles 351 to 358 lay down the rules applicable to dismissals with cause, which are also widely understood to be applicable concerning conservatory sanctions (i.e. those that enable the continuity of the employment relationship).

Additionally, collective bargaining agreements may provide for different disciplinary penalties, as long as the rights and guarantees of employees are not impaired.

Workplace investigations must also abide by the general rules laid down in the Portuguese Constitution, Portuguese Civil Code and Data Protection Laws (including guidelines issued by the Data Protection Agency), as regards the personal rights of the employees.

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Switzerland

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There is no specific legal regulation for internal investigations in Switzerland. The legal framework is derived from general rules such as the employer's duty of care, the employee's duty of loyalty and the

employee's data protection rights. Depending on the context of the investigation, additional legal provisions may apply; for instance, additional provisions of the Swiss Federal Act on Data Protection or the Swiss Criminal Code.

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Turkey

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There is no specific legislation governing workplace investigations in Turkish law. However, there are general principles stemming from Labour Law No. 4857 as well as good practice principles. Data protection laws also occasionally intertwine with these. The internal codes and policies of the company should also be followed throughout the process.

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