

Changes of the Labour Code effective from 2025

At the beginning of this year, amendments to the Labour Code came into effect. While these changes are not of major significance, it is essential to review the most important ones, as their application is crucial in the daily practice.

Changes to the Rules on Paternity Leave

Parents are entitled to various types of leave in case of childbirth or adoption. One such entitlement for fathers is paternity leave, which remains 10 working days. However, under the new regulations effective from early 2025, this leave can now be taken until the end of the fourth month following the child's birth or the final approval of the adoption decision, instead of the previous two-month limit. It can still be taken in a maximum of two instalments. This effectively doubles the available period for taking paternity leave.

Expansion of Protection Against Dismissal for Executives

In connection with the above, from January 1, 2025, employers may not terminate the employment of executives during their paternity leave. This extends the dismissal protection to senior employees as well.

Additional Exemptions from Availability and Work Obligations

The Labour Code already specifies several circumstances under which employees are exempt from availability and work duties, such as periods of incapacity for work, mandatory medical examinations, the death of a close relative, or participation in legal or administrative proceedings, etc.

The following new exemption has been introduced to facilitate the exercise of voting rights in elections and referenda:

An employee is exempt from availability and work duties for up to two hours if they are scheduled to work more than eight hours on the day of:

- Parliamentary elections or European Parliament elections,
- Local government and mayoral elections, as well as minority self-government elections, or
- Local or national referenda.

Additionally, the time spent away from work to vote will count as time worked when determining leave entitlements. Employers must consider the entire working day as time worked in such cases. Employees absent from work for voting purposes are entitled to their regular absence pay.

Amendments to the Termination Rules for Extended Work Schedules

The modifications to work schedules affect employees in standby-type roles or those employed as family members of the employer or owner. In such cases, the daily working time under a mutual agreement may be up to 24 hours, and the weekly working time up to 72 hours.

For the future, employees will have more favourable conditions for terminating agreements on extended work schedules. If the working time reference period is shorter than six months, the termination rules remain unchanged. However, if the period exceeds six months, the employee may terminate the agreement at the end of a calendar month after the six-month period has elapsed, with a 15-day notice period. A collective agreement may establish different terms, allowing a maximum notice period of 30 days.

If an employee terminates an extended work schedule agreement before its original expiry date, both parties must settle any outstanding claims based on advance payment rules at the actual termination date.

Clarification on Overtime Pay for Public Holidays

With effect of January 1, 2025, it has been clarified that overtime work on a public holiday must always be compensated with a 100% wage supplement. This cannot be substituted with a 50% supplement or an additional rest day.