



Work-Life Balance part 2: EU updates

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16th March 2020

Outline

1. The transposition of the WLB Directive
2. The Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2020-2025
3. EIGE: GEI and reports
4. ECEC & LTC

1. The transposition of the WLB Directive: Meeting of 10-11 December Commission-Member States

- The WLB Directive shall be transposed by MS by 2 August 2022, and by 2 August 2024 as regards the payment of the last two weeks of the minimum of 2 months of parental leave.
- The Commission has repeated that it will ensure that MS correctly transpose and implement the WLB Directive. It calls upon MS to go beyond the required minimum standards in reviewing their policies.
- The Commission has set up the implementation of the WLB Directive as a priority (inclusion in the Gender Equality Strategy for instance). 4 Commissioners will closely monitor the Transposition but two will primarily focus on it: Helena Dalli (Equality) & Nicolas Schmit (Jobs and Social Rights)
- The Commission first met with MS last 10-11 December in Brussels. Next meeting is scheduled in the last quarter of 2020 (TBC) and another one in 2021.

- On **10-11 December**, the Commission met with experts from all Member States in Brussels (UK included) to discuss the implementation of the WLB Directive.
- On **the 10th**: Workshop. General Presentation + 3 chapters were discussed
- **Chapter I**: Discussion on paternity and parental leaves. Raising different potential issues (who are the beneficiaries? What is a 2nd equivalent parent?, etc.) DG Just
- **Chapter II**: Discussion on Carers leave + Flexible Working Arrangements DG Empl
- **Chapter III**: Horizontal Provisions- Legal protection for the transposition Legal Service + 2 DGs
- On **the 11th** : Bilateral meetings. 30-45 mn/Member States to discuss specific issues regarding each Member States. 12 MS subscribed.

- All MS attended with the exception of Austria, Estonia, France (transport strike problem) and the UK. Norway and a representative of EFTA joined the meeting too.
- This 1st meeting was the occasion for the Commission to explain how it interpreted Recitals + Articles of the Directive.
- The Commission highlighted the issue of **adequate payments. Based on 2 criteria:**
 - 1- **1st earners:** does it encourage men to uptake their leaves 'rights? The EC will take a look of the different situation of the MS. It will ask statistics to MS + indicators of EMCO+EPSCO on leaves + FWA.
 - 2- The amount of the leave **must bring a decent level of life + has to be inciting to take the leave.**

- **Art 5. Parental Leave:** Definition of “*reasonable*”. To be further debated.
- The EC underlined that the payment and the leave are linked & indissociable
- **What is a carer?** Relatives or people who live in the same household? The Commission considers that both cases can be included
- Regarding FWA, Recital 34 of the Directive provides 3 methods: **remote working arrangements, flexible working schedules, or reduction in working hours.**
- The Commission underlines that all MS must comply with the 3 different methods. All the 3 must be offered to citizens, not only 1 or 2 (eg: CZ)

2. The Gender Equality Strategy (GES) 2020-2025

- The EC launched last 5th March the new GES, which sets out what the Commission will do, across all policy areas to work towards achieving gender equality.
- The Strategy includes a set of key actions. Those key actions will be regularly updated and supplemented, and their implementation will be monitored and progress in the MS will be reported on an annual basis. Data from Eurostat, Eurofound, EIGE, etc.
- COFACE monitored and replied to the 2 Consultations made by the EC: April 2019 & February 2020.
- Two key actions for the Commission:
 - enforce the WLB Directive to close gender gaps
 - Propose to revise the Barcelona targets for the provision of ECEC arrangements for children and propose a Child Guarantee focusing on barriers preventing children from accessing necessary services

3. EIGE: GEI and reports

- EIGE launched last October its Gender Equality Index 2019 which focuses on Work-Life Balance
- The Index contains a **Work-Life Balance scoreboard** presenting the situation in EU countries by indicators in six domains: parental leaves; access to affordable and good quality childcare services; informal care for older adults or people with disabilities, as well as LTC services; transport and public infrastructure; flexible working arrangements; and lifelong learning.
- These are useful information for the implementation process of the WLB Directive.
- 2 reports on WLB issues:
 - **Eligibility for parental leave** in EU Member States. The study provides eligibility rates for each of the Member States and an overview of the main eligibility criteria that they have set.
 - **Gender inequalities in pay and unpaid care in the EU** (to be launched in May-June)

4. ECEC & LTC

- The EC will revise the Barcelona targets to ensure further upwards convergence among MS of ECEC.
- The EC has proposed a **Child Guarantee** for 2021: break the poverty cycle and reduce inequalities.
- Last 21-22 January, the Secretariat attended the **ET2020 Working Group on Early Childhood Education and Care**, organised by the EC. The group has focused on the importance for ECEC staff to **work and engage with families**, and how to reflect the inclusion aspects of this relationship, as well as on the skills needed by **ECEC professionals to liaise in the best way possible with families**.
 - 1- What are the best strategies to make ECEC systems more accessible and inclusive for all children?
 - 2- How to professionalise further the ECEC workforce to ensure high quality ECEC systems?

- On LTC, the EC will launch a Consultation at the end of **2020 for a Green Paper on Ageing**.
- Focus will be on LTC, pensions and active ageing.

Questions...?

