



18 June 2009

EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS' REVISED AGREEMENT ON PARENTAL LEAVE: ONE EXTRA MONTH OF PARENTAL LEAVE

On 18 June 2009, in the presence of Vladimír ŠPIDLA, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the European Social Partners, have formally adopted an agreement revising their 1995 Framework Agreement on Parental Leave.

This is a milestone in the 25-year history of the European Social Dialogue as it is the first time that European social partners have agreed on the revision of a pre-existing Framework Agreement. It is their 7th Framework agreement since the original Parental Leave agreement was concluded in 1995, later transposed into a EU Directive in 1996.

The revised agreement improves several provisions of the pre-existing agreement, such as: an increase in the length of parental leave from three to four months and strengthening it as an individual right, by making a part of it fully non-transferrable; it offers workers a right to request flexible working arrangements when returning from leave; it calls on member States and/or social partners to establish notice periods to be given by workers when exercising their right to parental leave. It also strives to recognise increasingly diverse family structures and to promote an equal sharing of family responsibilities between men and women. Furthermore, it respects the diversity of measures taken by the Member States in areas such as leave facilities, childcare and flexible working arrangements.

The successful conclusion of this agreement illustrates the positive role of the European Social Dialogue in finding solutions to respond to important challenges facing Europe, also in times of crisis. It takes into account the needs of employers and workers and is fully in line with the objectives of the Lisbon strategy. It will contribute to a better reconciliation of professional, private and family life and is therefore a positive response to demographic ageing as it should help to increase the labour market participation of Europeans.

This agreement is to be implemented by a Council Directive on a proposal from the European Commission, according to article 139 in the EC Treaty.

For the full agreement / more information please use the contact information below:

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