



Inbjudan till journalistseminarium i Bryssel:

Obligatorisk mammaledighet i Europa

Vad innebär det omdiskuterade "mammaledighetsdirektivet"? Vad betyder förslaget för den svenska föräldraledigheten? Vad händer med pappaledigheten?

Det är några av de frågor som diskuteras under ett journalistseminarium på Europaparlamentet i Bryssel **den 24–25 mars**. Seminariet hålls i samband med att Europaparlamentet röstar om mammaledighetsdirektivet. Du kan på plats följa debatten och omröstningen om förslaget.

EU-kommissionen har föreslagit att miniminivån på mammaledigheten i EU-länderna ska höjas från 14 veckor till 18 veckor. Europaparlamentets jämställdhetsutskott vill att miniminivån ska höjas till 20 veckor varav det ska vara obligatoriskt för mamman att ta ut 6 veckor i direkt anslutning till förlossningen. Dessutom föreslår utskottet att en pappaledighet på 2 veckor införs.

I seminariet medverkar bland andra den portugisiska Europaparlamentarikern **Edite Estrela** (S&D), som är föredragande för betänkandet om mammaledighet, den svenska ledamoten och ordförande för jämställdhetsutskottet **Eva-Britt Svensson** (GUE/NGL) samt ledamöterna **Anna Záborská** (EPP, SK), **Siiri Oviir** (ALDE, ET), **Marina Yannakoudakis** (EFD, UK) och **Raul Romeva** (De gröna/EFA, ES).

Europaparlamentets informationskontor i Sverige har **tre resestipendier** att dela ut till yrkesverksamma journalister. Resestipendiet täcker kostnader för flyg i ekonomiklass. Dessutom tillkommer ett schablonbelopp på sammanlagt 180 euro för övriga kostnader (hotell, mat, lokala transporter i Bryssel). Resa och logi bokas av stipendiaterna själva. Det går naturligtvis också bra att delta i seminariet på egen bekostnad.

Skicka en kortfattad ansökan per e-post till epstockholm@europarl.europa.eu senast den 15 mars 2010.

För ytterligare information om programmet kontakta:

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Workshop for journalists

Maternity leave legislation in Europe

The view from the European Parliament

24 March 2010

10:00 - 13:30 hrs

Room 1 A 2, PHS Building, European Parliament, Brussels

Draft programme

- 10:00 Arrival and registration
- 10:30 **Opening:** introduction to the workshop
How decisions are taken in the European Union: the legislative procedures and how they apply to the maternity leave legislation
Yannis Darmis and Paula Fernández Hervás, EP officials, Press Service; Alexandros Karides, Visitors' Service (in English)
- 11:00 **Technical briefing on the maternity leave directive:** state of play and steps ahead
Off-the-record explanations with European Parliament and European Commission officials
An overview of the situation in different Member States, the Commission proposal and amendments of the parliamentary committees. Steps ahead. (in English)
Nora Chaal, EP press officer
Zoltan Petho, EP official, EP Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality
Petra Schott, European Commission official
- 12:00 **Maternity leave: the European approach and the political perspectives**
Exchange of views with Members of Parliament
MEP Eva-Britt SVENSSON (GUE/NGL, SE), chair of the Women's Rights Committee (tbc)
MEP Edite ESTRELA (S&D, PT, rapporteur) (tbc)
MEP Anna ZÁBORSKÁ (EPP, SK), shadow rapporteur (tbc)
MEP Siiri OVIIR (ALDE, ET), shadow rapporteur
MEP Marina YANNAKOUDAKIS (ECR, UK), shadow rapporteur
MEP Raul ROMEVA (Greens/EFA, ES) (tbc)
- 13:30 **Close**
Cocktail outside the meeting room

Background

The European Parliament press service is organising a workshop for journalists on the directive on maternity leave. The aim of the workshop is to discuss with journalists the current situation at EU level and the proposed changes. It also provides an opportunity to question Members of Parliament on their different views on this issue, and on what the different options are. EP officials will explain the procedures by which decisions are taken in the European Union, in particular regarding the European Parliament's role.

The draft directive on health and safety of pregnant workers, workers who have recently given birth or those who are breastfeeding - better known as the maternity leave directive - was put forward by the Commission in 2008, revising existing EU legislation in this field. The goal was to improve the work-life balance for both women and men.

The directive is subject to the ordinary legislative procedure ("co-decision"), which means that the European Parliament and the Member States in the Council must agree to their final formulation before it can become law. The seminar is taking place just before Parliament's first reading vote planned for March 25. The aim is to facilitate the understanding of journalists of the issues and the role of Parliament in the adoption of this major legislation.

The proposed text amends existing Directive 92/85/EEC and, in particular, its Articles 8 (Maternity leave), 10 (Prohibition of dismissal) and 11 (Employment rights). A major issue is the extension of maternity leave granted by the employer, **from a minimum of 14 weeks to 18 weeks**. Of these, at least six weeks would have to be taken by the mother after childbirth, instead of two weeks as at present. The mother would be free to choose whether or not to take the rest of the period. This corresponds to the length of leave provided for in the ILO Maternity Protection Recommendation and is intended to improve the health of mothers. Night work is not banned but, for ten weeks prior to giving birth, mothers should not be obliged to work at night or do overtime.

The **parliamentary committee** responsible for this matter (the Women's Rights Committee) has called for a longer period of leave to be granted by the employer: **20 weeks minimum**. As under the Commission proposal, the mother would be obliged to take six weeks after giving birth but would be free to choose whether or not to take the rest of the period.

MEPs in the committee also want Member States to introduce **paternity leave of 2 weeks**, although fathers would be free to decide whether to take this up. As for payment, the Commission recommended that the minimum of 18 weeks be fully paid, subject to any ceiling laid down by national legislation, and in any case not be less than the sick leave pay of the country concerned. The parliamentary committee's amendments call for the 20 weeks to be fully paid. At the moment, there is no EU legislation regarding fathers' leave or minimum pay. All these considerations are a minimum as Member States would be allowed to have higher levels of protection.

Parliament's amendments need a simple majority to be adopted. After the vote, and once the Member States have reached a compromise in Council, the issue will go back to Parliament for a second reading.

*Parliamentary committee vote: 23 February 2010
Plenary first reading vote expected: 25 March 2010*

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