

WORKING TIME

INTERNATIONAL AND EU LABOUR STANDARDS



► What is their aim?

- Secure **workers' safety, health and well-being**
- **Sustain businesses**
- Promote **decent work**

► How do they help?

- **Frame national level regulation on:**
 - max. duration of working time
 - breaks
 - min. daily and weekly rest
 - annual paid leave
 - night work
 - shift work
 - patterns of work
 - part-time etc.
- **Uphold the principles:**
 - labour is not a commodity
 - improvement of safety and health at work should not depend only on economic considerations

Concepts

Working time or hours of work

Any period during which the worker is available or carrying out work for the employer

Normal hours of work

No. of hours fixed by legislation or, where not so fixed, in excess of which: overtime should be paid; or forms an exception to rules / custom of an establishment / process

Rest

Any period outside working time

Adequate rest

Regular rest periods which are sufficient to ensure workers' safety, health and well-being

Night time or night work

Min. 7 hours period which must include the slot 00:00–05:00

Night worker

Any worker who works at night time at least 3 hours per work day (or a fraction of his/her annual working time, if defined in legislation)

Shift work

Method of organising work whereby workers succeed each other at the same work stations, requiring workers to work at different times over a given period of days / weeks

Shift worker

A worker who is engaged in shift work



Minimum safety and health requirements for the organisation of working time

Daily rest

At least 11 consecutive hours per 24-hour period

Breaks

For all workers whose working day exceeds 6 hours

Weekly rest

At least 24 uninterrupted hours per week preceded or followed by the 11 consecutive hours of daily rest

Working week

No more than 48 hours (including overtime)

Paid annual leave

At least **4 weeks**

Night work

No more than an average of 8 hours per 24-hour period.

In work with special hazards or heavy physical or mental strain: **no more than 8 hours** per 24-hour period



Night and shift workers' safety & health

Night workers are entitled to:

- **free and confidential health assessment** before and during their assignment
- **transfer to suitable daytime work** (whenever possible) **if they suffer from health problems** linked to night work
- **incapacity or other benefits** if transfer is not possible
- **protection against dismissal** if unfit for night work for health reasons
- **specific guarantees** if exposed to night-time work particular risks
- **urgent and appropriate treatment** if needed
- **compensation** (working time, pay, etc.)

Night and shift workers are entitled to:

- **safety and health protection** appropriate to the nature of their work
- **prevention services or facilities** available at all times, equivalent to other workers



Patterns of work

When organising work, employer shall consider:

- the general principle of adapting work to the worker (to ease monotonous work and work at a predetermined rate)
- safety and health requirements (e.g., breaks)



Maternity protection during night work

Pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding are entitled to:

- exemption from night work, subject to medical certification
- transfer to daytime work, where possible; or
- paid leave from work; or
- extension of maternity leave

More favourable provisions and level of protection

Ratification / transposition of international and EU labour standards on working time:

- do not prevent countries from adopting legislation or facilitating collective agreements more favourable to workers

- is not ground for reducing the level of protection already provided to workers

► ILO conventions

[Convention No. 1](#)
[Convention No. 14](#)
[Convention No. 30](#)
[Convention No. 47](#)

[Convention No. 106](#)
[Recommendation No. 116](#)
[Convention No. 132 \(Revised\)](#)
[Convention No. 171](#)

► EU directives

[Directive 2003/88/EC](#)
[Directive 2002/15/EC](#)
[Directive 92/85/EEC](#)

► Additional resources

- [Background paper](#)
- [Power Point Presentation](#)