



Maternity and paternity leave: what are the implications?

An assessment of the likely impact of prolonging maternity leave to 20 weeks on full pay and introducing two weeks' paternity leave EU-wide was requested by Women's Rights Committee co-ordinators meeting on Monday. The plenary session vote on the proposal has been postponed.

"My political group asked that the vote be postponed to enable us to build a broader consensus in plenary. I have moreover received several requests from Member States expressing doubts, notably as to the costs of this directive. I therefore support this proposal", said rapporteur Edite Estrela (S&D, PT).

The impact assessment study will look at social, environmental, economic and budgetary costs and benefits prolonging maternity leave on full pay and introducing two weeks' paid paternity leave. Initially, the ECR group had requested an assessment of the impact of prolonging maternity leave to 20 weeks on full pay.

It will be commissioned by Parliament from an external company, and will take four to eight weeks to do.

In line with the Council/Parliament/Commission inter-institutional agreement on better law-making and Parliament's conference of committee chairs guidelines, Women's Rights Committee co-ordinators requested a first-reading impact assessment on the "substantive amendments" adopted by the committee on 23 February 2010.

The plenary vote originally scheduled for 25 March 2010 in Brussels has been postponed, pending on the availability of the impact assessment.

Procedure: first reading

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