

## EU Parliament in Favour of Increased Maternity Rights

The European Parliament has voted in favour of several measures which would strengthen maternity protection.

The key proposals are:

- An increase in maternity pay to full pay for the first 20 weeks.
- An increase in paternity pay to full pay for 2 weeks.
- Prohibition from the dismissal of pregnant women from the start of the pregnancy until 6 months after the end of maternity leave.
- Removing any obligation to carry out night work or overtime for pregnant women during the last 10 weeks of pregnancy; on pregnant women with health problems during pregnancy and on breastfeeding mothers during the entire time that they are breastfeeding.
- The extension of compulsory maternity leave from 2 to 6 weeks.

Before the proposals can become law the proposals must be approved by the EU Council of Ministers.

The maternity pay proposals are particularly controversial and there have been significant concerns from businesses about this aspect. It is, however, reported that the UK government is lobbying against the proposals and it therefore seems unlikely that the EU Council will approve the proposals without amendment.

Pitmans aim to keep you updated on any changes in employment law which may affect you or your business.

If you would like more information on the above or if you would like to discuss how this might affect you and your business, please do not hesitate to contact the Employment Department at Pitmans.

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