

Work Life Balance in Czech and European Union law

Abstract

Work-life balance is an important political and legal instrument with a significant impact on the employment rate, birth rate, work productivity and other key indicators. This thesis deals with the concept of work-life balance in the legal framework of the Czech Republic as well as the European Union, focusing on workers with care responsibilities. The aim of the thesis is to analyze legal instruments in favour of work-life balance, identify their shortcomings, consider possible ways of overcoming such limitations and assess the EU legal framework's impact on the national legal framework.

Work-life balance is closely linked to the concept of equal treatment between women and men. For this reason, the thesis focuses on legal instruments that are gender-neutral or that can contribute to overcoming the traditional perception of women as primary carers. The examined legal instruments were also selected based on their relevance in terms of ongoing discussions on both national and EU level.

The first part of the thesis should facilitate the reader's understanding of the EU work-life balance legal framework by exploring the origin and development of the concept, legislative and non-legislative instruments and case law of the Court of Justice of the EU. The second part serves as an introduction to the national legal framework of both work-life balance and equality between men and women. The third (and main) part of the thesis covers selected legal instruments primarily from a *de lege lata* perspective, but also includes partial *de lege ferenda* considerations. The thesis gradually covers atypical forms of employment, important personal obstacles to work (including social security benefits) and forms of childcare services. The author focuses on the analysis of the national legal framework, but to a certain extent also covers the content of eventual EU legal acts. In the case of recent directives which are yet to be transposed into national law, the author includes considerations on implementation possibilities required in order to safeguard the EU legislator's aim.

The thesis emphasizes the complexity of the work-life balance legal framework, its intertwined relation with other social fields and the need to constantly keep up with a dynamic society. Various EU legal acts also offer inspiration that national legislators can draw from in order to enhance work-life balance beyond the minimum requirements of EU law.