

FÉDÉRATION DES BARREAUX D'EUROPE

Summary

of the FBE Survey on the Social Rights of Lawyers



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1. Introduction

On October 24, 2023, the FBE (Fédération des Barreaux d'Europe) conducted an online survey focused on the social rights of lawyers among its esteemed Bar members. The survey questions were developed in collaboration with the Portuguese Bar Association and are detailed in Section 2.

2. Survey Methodology

2.1. Survey Questions Overview

1. Profession Identification
 - Indicate your profession.
 - Indicate your Bar Association.
 - Indicate your country.
2. Parental Rights and Paid Parental Leave
 - In your country, do lawyers have parental rights, specifically paid parental leave?
 - If yes, what is the duration of paid parental leave?
3. Benefits for Parental Leave
 - If parental leave is available, what benefits are provided, and for what duration?
4. Payer of Parental Leave Benefits
 - Who is responsible for paying these benefits? Options include the Public/National Social Security Office, the Bar, or a dedicated Social Security Scheme for lawyers.
5. Court Proceedings During Parental Leave
 - How are court procedural steps and legal deadlines managed during parental leave?
 - Is there a provision for the suspension/extension of deadlines or adjournment of court sessions?
 - Are there statutory or procedural provisions addressing this matter in your jurisdiction?
6. Social Support in Case of Incapacity for Work (e.g., illness)
 - Is a legal practice professional entitled to social support benefits in case of temporary or absolute incapacity for work, such as illness?
7. Sick Leave Benefits
 - If yes, what is the duration and amount of paid sick benefits?
8. Procedures During Sick Leave
 - How are procedural steps and legal deadlines ensured during the period of illness?
 - Are there provisions for the suspension of deadlines or postponement of due diligence?
 - Are there statutory procedural provisions addressing this matter?
9. Support in Case of Abrupt Income Drop
 - Is there any support available to lawyers in your country in the event of a sudden drop in income?
10. Financial Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement
 - If yes, what is the nature and value of financial support provided during such periods?

11. Death of a Close Family Member

- Is there any support for lawyers in your country in the event of the death of a close family member?

12. Impact on Legal Proceedings

- If yes, does such a circumstance grant the right to postpone proceedings or extend deadlines?

13. Pension Schemes

- In your country, does the legal profession have a private or public pension scheme?

14. Contributions to Pension Scheme

- Regardless of the type of pension scheme, how are contributions calculated?

2.2. Participating Jurisdictions

The responses collected in this survey originate from a diverse range of jurisdictions, including:

- Italy
- Poland
- Germany
- France
- Romania
- United Kingdom
- Spain
- The Netherlands
- Czech Republic
- Belgium
- Portugal

3. Presentation of Survey Results by Country

The following sections provide a summary of the survey results specific to each participating jurisdiction, shedding light on the social rights and benefits available to lawyers in these countries.

3.1. Italy

3.1.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers in Italy are entitled to paid parental leave, which includes:
 - 2 months before the birth.
 - 3 months after the birth.
2. The benefit received is a one-time allowance equal to 80% of 5/12 of the net professional income produced in the 2nd year prior to the child's birth.
3. This benefit is provided by the mandatory social security fund for lawyers in Italy (The National Lawyer's Social Security Organisation).
4. Court procedural steps and legal deadlines during parental leave are ensured through established protocols and there is no protocol to allow to suspend or adjourn or extend deadlines in case of paternity leave.

3.1.2. Sick Leave

1. Lawyers in Italy are entitled to paid sick benefits, but it applies primarily to serious illnesses and major surgeries and is based on the sick lawyers last yearly income.

2. The duration and amount of paid sick benefits depend on the seriousness and foreseeability of the illness. The totally and permanently unable lawyer is supported by a special pension.
3. Lawyers often have their own insurance for less serious illnesses.

3.1.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. Lawyers in Italy can receive financial support if they experience a significant and unforeseeable drop in income.
2. This support consists of a one-time payment, generally granted for serious economic hardships.

3.1.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. Lawyers in Italy receive support in case of the death of a close family member.
2. This circumstance can lead to the right to postpone proceedings and suspension/extension of deadlines.

3.1.5. Pension Scheme

1. The legal profession in Italy has a public pension but specially designated for lawyers.
2. The pension consists of two parts:
 - Basic quota, calculated using the retributive criterion.
 - Modular quota, calculated using the contribution-based method.

3.2. Spain

3.2.1. Social Security Coverage

1. All practising lawyers in Spain, whether employed or self-employed, must be covered by a social security system.
2. For employed lawyers, the General Social Security Scheme is the default, with the contracting company responsible for registration.
3. Self-employed lawyers can choose between the RETA and alternative social security mutual societies, which offer additional coverage but don't replace the Social Security Scheme.

3.2.2. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Legal professionals in Spain, whether in the general social security system or a mutual insurance company, have parental rights.
2. For biological mothers: 16 weeks of parental leave with compulsory 6 weeks immediately after birth and 10 voluntary weeks within the first 12 months of the child's life. For other parents: 16 weeks of parental leave with compulsory 6 weeks immediately after birth and 10 voluntary weeks within the first 12 months of the child's life.
3. Benefits for parental leave in Spain are regulated by Royal Decree 295/2009.
4. Under the Social Security System, a subsidy equivalent to 100% of the regulatory base is provided.
5. Under the Mutualidad de la Abogacía, benefits vary based on the situation (birth, miscarriage, or paternity) with specific maximum amounts.

Responsibility for Benefits

1. Both the Social Security system and mutual benefit societies share the responsibility for paying benefits.
2. The Social Security Institute (INSS) administers benefits under the general scheme.
3. Mutual insurance companies are responsible for benefits in the mutual scheme.

Procedural Steps and Legal Deadlines During Parental Leave

1. Recent amendments in Spain (June 2023) ensure procedural steps and legal deadlines during parental leave.

2. Article 183 of the Civil Procedure Act allows for the suspension of trials and hearings for family-related situations, including parental leave.

Article 183. Grounds for Suspension of Trials and Hearings

Reasons for Suspension: *If it is impossible for any of those who are to attend a hearing to do so on the appointed day, due to force majeure or other similar reasons, such as birth and care of a minor, serious illness and accident with hospitalization, death of spouse or of a person to whom he/she was united in a relationship analogous to marriage, death of relatives up to the second degree of kinship, death of relatives up to the third degree of kinship, death of the spouse or of a person to whom he/she was united in a relationship analogous to marriage, death of relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity, or sick leave certified by the social security or equivalent health or social welfare system, shall immediately inform the court.*

Providing Proof: *The affected party must provide full proof of the cause or reason preventing attendance and request a new hearing or resolution that takes into account the situation.*

This article outlines the circumstances under which trials and hearings in Spain can be suspended, allowing for flexibility in the legal proceedings when individuals involved are unable to attend due to various exceptional situations, including those related to family, health, or other force majeure reasons. It emphasises the importance of promptly notifying the court and providing evidence of the impediment, which can lead to the rescheduling of proceedings to accommodate the affected parties.

3.2.3. Sick Leave

1. Legal professionals in Spain are entitled to social support benefits in cases of temporary and absolute incapacity for work, such as illness.
2. Benefits vary based on the reason, with specific percentages and allowances depending on the cause.

3.2.4. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. Spain does not provide support for lawyers in the event of an abrupt drop in income.
2. Article 183(1) of the Civil Procedure Act addresses the impossibility of attending a hearing for various reasons, including the death of a close relative, allowing for the setting of new hearings or rulings.

3.2.5. Pension Scheme

1. The type of pension scheme depends on whether legal professionals are in the general scheme or the mutual scheme.
2. In the mutual insurance scheme, members are responsible for building their pensions based on their contributions.
3. In the social security system, the pension amount is determined by the state based on contributions and other factors.

Calculation of Pension Contributions

The calculation of contributions varies depending on whether it's the social security system or a mutual insurance scheme. In the social security system, it's based on the regulatory base and years contributed. In mutual insurance, members build their pensions based on their contributions.

3.3. Belgium

3.3.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers in Belgium have parental rights, including paid parental leave.
2. The period of paid parental leave is 12 weeks.

3. The benefits received are €800 per week before taxes.
4. The benefits are paid by the national social security system.
5. There are no statutory provisions for court procedural steps or legal deadlines during parental leave.

3.3.2. Sick Leave

1. Legal practice professionals in Belgium are entitled to social support benefits in case of temporary and absolute incapacity for work due to illness, similar to other self-employed individuals.
2. The first month of sick leave is not paid.
3. Subsequent compensation ranges between €46 and €76 per day, depending on family status.
4. There are no statutory provisions for suspending deadlines or postponing due diligence during illness. Lawyers may need to ask a colleague for assistance.

3.3.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. There is no specific support for lawyers in case of an abrupt drop in income, but they can request an exemption from paying the social security contribution, which is normally 20.5% of net income with a minimum of €875 every three months.

3.3.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. In the event of the death of a close family member, lawyers in Belgium can receive €100 per day for a maximum of 10 days if there is a complete stop of activity.
2. While there is no legal provision for postponing proceedings or suspending deadlines, the court tends to be understanding.

3.3.5. Pension Scheme

1. The legal profession in Belgium participates in the public pension scheme, similar to other self-employed individuals.
2. Contributions to the pension scheme are part of the social security contribution, which is normally 20.5% of net income with a minimum of €875 every three months.
3. Pensions are paid from the age of 67 years, and the amount depends on the duration of the career, ranging from €1,700 (for individuals) to €2,125 (for persons financially dependent on you) for a full career of 45 years.

3.4. Romania

3.4.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers in Romania have parental rights, including paid parental leave.
2. The period of paid parental leave is 2 years.
3. The monthly allowance is 85% of the average net income achieved in the last 12 months of the last 2 years prior to the date of the child's birth, and it is paid for 2 years.
4. The compensation is paid by the state (National Agency for Payments and Social Inspection), and Lawyers' Insurance House pays a monthly allowance of RON 1048 (€211).
5. There are no provisions for court procedural steps or legal deadlines during parental leave. Lawyers are responsible for ensuring their substitution to meet procedural deadlines and defend their clients' interests.

3.4.2. Sick Leave

1. Lawyers in Romania are entitled to medical leave for temporary incapacity for work, paid by the Lawyers' Insurance House.
2. If they have a contract with the Health House, they are also entitled to a medical leave allowance from this institution.

3. The period of the paid sick benefit is no more than 180 days within a year, counted from the first day of illness.
4. The monthly allowance is 75% of the sum of the gross income in the last 12 months before the occurrence of the risk, divided by 12.
5. Similar to parental leave, there are no provisions for suspending or postponing legal proceedings during sick leave. Lawyers are responsible for ensuring their substitution to meet procedural deadlines.

3.4.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. Lawyers in Romania do not have specific support in the event of an abrupt drop in income.

3.4.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. In case of the death of a close family member, Casa de Asigurări a Avocaților pays RON 7500 (€1511).
2. While there is no legal provision for postponing or suspending proceedings in such circumstances, courts may accept postponement in cases where the lawyer's presence is not mandatory, such as criminal cases.

3.4.5. Pension Scheme

1. The legal profession in Romania has a pension scheme.
2. Contributions to the pension scheme are calculated based on the contribution paid due to the activity year and a default value (pension point).

3.5. Czech Republic

3.5.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers in the Czech Republic have parental rights, including paid parental leave.
2. Parents can claim parental allowance for up to 3 years.

Benefits for Parental Leave

1. The parental allowance in the Czech Republic is the primary support for families with small children.
2. A parent can receive a maximum benefit of CZK 300,000, which can increase to CZK 450,000 in the case of twins or multiple births.
3. These benefits are provided by the public authority, the Czech Labour Office.

Court Proceedings during Parental Leave

1. There are no special legal provisions for handling court proceedings during parental leave.
2. Lawyers can request adjournments of court sessions as needed.

3.5.2. Sick Leave

1. Legal professionals (both employees and self-employed) in the Czech Republic are entitled to social support benefits in case of temporary incapacity for work due to illness.
2. Sickness benefits can be claimed from the 15th calendar day of temporary incapacity for work, lasting up to a maximum of 380 calendar days from the first day of the temporary incapacity to work or quarantine order.
3. During the first two weeks of incapacity, an employer provides wage compensation (in case of an employed lawyer). For more information, see: <https://www.mpsv.cz/web/en/sickness-insurance>.

Procedural Steps and Legal Deadlines during Sick Leave:

1. Lawyers can request adjournments of court sessions to manage procedural steps and legal deadlines during sick leave.

3.5.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. The Czech Bar Association has a provision for a one-off social contribution, which can be provided to lawyers or legal trainees facing financial difficulty.
2. The contribution can be up to three times the basic rate of the minimum monthly wage set by legislation.
A one-off social contribution may be provided up to three times the basic rate of the minimum monthly wage set by legislation to a lawyer or legal trainee who has blamelessly found himself in financial difficulty.

3.5.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. Similar to income support, the Czech Bar Association's resolution allows for a one-off social contribution to cover the funeral costs of a deceased lawyer or legal trainee.

3.5.5. Pension Scheme

1. The legal profession in the Czech Republic does not have a special pension scheme. General pension rules apply to lawyers.
2. Contributions to the pension scheme are governed by standard regulations; see: <https://www.mpsv.cz/web/en/pensions>.

3.6. Germany

3.6.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers in Germany have parental rights, including paid parental leave.
2. The period of paid parental leave is 14 months, max. 12 month per person, min. 2 month per person.
3. Benefits received during parental leave amount to 67% of the last salary for 12 months (from €300 per month to €1,800 per month).
4. The state pays these benefits.
5. There are no statutory provisions for court procedural steps or legal deadlines during parental leave. A recognised agent may be involved.

3.6.2. Sick Leave

1. Every lawyer is an obligatory member of the pension fund for lawyers. In case of an illness the lawyer can apply for an occupational disability pension.
2. As long as the profession cannot be practised. The amount depends on the amount paid into the pension fund.
3. For employees, sick benefits amount to 70% of the salary.
4. There are no statutory provisions for suspending deadlines or postponing due diligence during sick leave, the lawyer must appoint their representative.

3.6.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. Lawyers in Germany are not entitled to specific support in the event of an abrupt drop in income.

3.6.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. There is no specific support for lawyers in Germany in the event of the death of a close family member.
2. Such circumstances do not give rise to a right to postpone proceedings or suspend/extend deadlines.

3.6.5. Pension Scheme

1. The legal profession in Germany has both private and public pension schemes, but each Bar Association may have different schemes.
2. Contributions to the pension scheme are calculated currently 18.6% of the gross wage up to the current contribution assessment ceiling of €4,987.50.

3.7. Poland

3.7.1. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Legal professionals in Poland have parental rights, including paid parental leave.
2. Maternity leave for mothers lasts for 20 weeks, while fathers are entitled to 2 weeks of paternity leave.
3. Additionally, there is a shared parental leave option of 41 weeks.

Benefits for Parental Leave

1. The parental leave allowance is calculated based on paid security fees or salary, with the specifics varying depending on the individual's circumstances.
2. These benefits are provided through the public social security system.

Court Proceedings during Parental Leave

1. In Poland, there are no specific legal provisions for the suspension or extension of court proceedings during parental leave.
2. Lawyers are responsible for organising substitutes or managing their casework to ensure legal deadlines are met.

3.7.2. Sick Leave

1. Legal professionals in Poland are entitled to social support benefits in case of temporary and absolute incapacity for work, including illness.
2. The duration of paid sick benefits can extend up to 182 days.
3. The benefit amount depends on the social security contributions paid, which may be minimal for lawyers due to the nature of their work as self-employed individuals.
 - As a sole-practitioner you have no obligation to pay sickness contributions. However, if you choose to pay you will be entitled to sickness benefit.
 - The amount of the entrepreneur's sickness benefit is entirely dependent on the contribution assessment basis. The insured may declare any contribution base, however, it cannot be lower than the minimum ZUS contribution base applicable to businesses. In 2023, this amounts to PLN 4,161.00 (roughly €1000).
 - The assessment basis for sickness benefit is the average assessment basis of contributions from the last 12 months, reduced by an index of 13.71%.

Procedural Steps and Legal Deadlines during Sick Leave

1. There are no specific statutory provisions for suspending or extending court proceedings due to a lawyer's illness.
2. Lawyers are expected to manage their caseloads during sick leave, either by organising substitutes or handling their cases themselves.

3.7.3. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. Legal professionals in Poland can seek support through private insurance in the event of an abrupt drop in income.
2. Bar Associations may also provide financial assistance in emergencies, funded by lawyers' contributions to the Bar.

3.7.4. Death of a Close Family Member

1. Poland does not provide any specific support for lawyers in the event of the death of a close family member.
2. There are no provisions for postponing proceedings or suspending deadlines in such circumstances.

3.7.5. Pension Scheme

1. Legal professionals in Poland are covered by the public pension scheme, which includes both self-employed and employees.
2. Contributions to the pension scheme are calculated based on individual declarations for self-employed and based on the salary and insurance contributions for employees.

3.8. France

3.8.1. Parental Rights and Leave

Length of Maternity Leave

1. Self-employed female lawyers are entitled to maternity leave, subject to specific conditions.
2. To be eligible for compensation, a self-employed female lawyer must take at least 8 weeks of maternity leave, which includes 6 weeks of postnatal leave. Failing to meet this requirement means no compensation.
3. The maximum duration of maternity leave is 16 weeks, consisting of 6 weeks before the expected date of delivery (prenatal leave) and 10 weeks after (postnatal leave). However, this duration can vary based on specific circumstances.

Compensation for Maternity Leave

1. Maternity leave for female lawyers is covered by the general health insurance scheme.
2. Compensation includes two components: daily allowances and a lump-sum allowance.
3. The daily allowances are calculated based on the lawyer's annual income. If the lawyer's annual income falls below a certain threshold, a higher daily allowance applies.
4. Some private organisations, group provident funds, or individual insurance policies may offer additional compensation for maternity leave.
5. There is also an exemption from basic pension contributions for the quarter in which the child is born. Maternity leave and having children count towards the pension. Contributions made during periods of maternity leave and the presence of children are considered when calculating a lawyer's pension benefits.

Protection Scheme for Female Associate Lawyers

1. Female associate lawyers are afforded special protections during and after maternity.
2. Their contracts with law firms cannot be terminated due to pregnancy, except in cases of a serious breach of professional rules unrelated to maternity.
1. If the pregnancy is announced within 15 days of receiving a termination notice, the termination is considered null and void.
2. Furthermore, the lawyer's employment contract with the firm cannot be terminated until 8 weeks after her return to work following maternity leave.

Parental Leave

1. The other parent (spouse or partner) can also take parental leave, suspending work for 4 to 5 weeks during the maternity period.
2. Maternity leave and the number of children have an impact on pension contributions for lawyers. Contributions made during maternity leave and the presence of children are considered when calculating a lawyer's pension benefits.

Suspension of Court Proceedings for Parental Leave

1. Courts are not obliged to postpone trials for women with pathological pregnancies or childbirth.
2. Agreement from the opposing lawyer is required for the postponement of court proceedings.

3. In cases where the opposing lawyer refuses to agree to a postponement without valid reasons, the matter can be referred to the President of the Bar for a confidential opinion.
4. Failure to comply with the Bar President's opinion can lead to ethical consequences for the refusing lawyer.

3.8.2. Pension Scheme

1. All lawyers are required to make compulsory contributions to an organisation called Caisse Nationale des Barreaux Français (CNBF), which is part of the national old-age insurance fund for liberal professions.
2. These contributions are made to the CNBF's basic scheme and take three different forms:
 - Pleading fees or an equivalent contribution.
 - A flat-rate contribution. The flat-rate contribution is progressive and increases over time. Specifically, it reaches €1,774 starting from the 6th year of legal practice.
 - A contribution based on professional income.
3. Maternity leave and having children count towards the pension. Contributions made during periods of maternity leave and the presence of children are considered when calculating a lawyer's pension benefits. This means that both the duration of maternity leave and the responsibility of raising children are recognised as contributing factors to a lawyer's pension entitlement.

3.9. United Kingdom

3.9.1. Tax and National Insurance for Self-Employed Lawyers

1. Lawyers with profits \geq £12,570/year pay Class 2 and Class 4 National Insurance.
2. They must complete self-assessment tax forms annually by January 31st, declaring the previous year's income.

3.9.2. Parental Rights and Leave

Maternity Allowance for Self-Employed Lawyers

1. Eligibility requires self-assessment registration for 26 weeks within the 66 weeks before the baby's birth.
2. Maternity Allowance is provided for up to 39 weeks.
3. The allowance amount varies between £27 to £172.48 per week, based on Class 2 National Insurance contributions.
4. Maximum rate (£172.48/week) requires at least 13 weeks of Class 2 contributions in the 66 weeks before the baby's due date.
5. Maternity Allowance is tax-free.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

1. A one-off payment of £500 for first child or multiple births when other children are present.
2. Eligibility depends on receiving certain benefits.
3. Must be claimed within 11 weeks of due date or 6 months after birth.
4. The grant is not repayable and does not affect other benefits or tax credits.

3.9.3. Pension Scheme

1. Retirement age is 66 years.
2. Self-employed lawyers contribute to Class 2 or Class 4 National Insurance.
3. They can check contributions and credits to ensure qualifying years for the State Pension.
4. The pension rate ranges from £93.50 to £169.50, based on contributions.
5. Gaps in contributions can be filled with voluntary contributions.
6. Self-employed lawyers can also contribute to private insurance schemes for maternity and retirement.

3.10. Netherlands

3.10.1. Profession and Location

1. Attorney at Law in the Netherlands, associated with The Hague Bar Association.

3.10.2. Parental Rights and Leave

1. Lawyers have 4 months of paid parental leave; partners receive 5 weeks. The government, through the UWV (the State), pays the wages during this period.

Court Procedures During Parental Leave

1. There are no special provisions; however, courts usually grant requests for extensions.

3.10.3. Sick Leave

1. Lawyers are entitled to 2 years of sick leave, with 100% salary the first year and 70% the second. Employers must follow specific stages; penalties apply for non-compliance.

3.10.4. Abrupt Drop in Income and Bereavement

1. A minimum social security benefit is available for all citizens, approximately 1200 nett per month for individuals and 1700 nett for two-person households.

3.10.5. Death of a Close Family Member

1. A leave of absence scheme exists, but no other specific support. Requests for postponement of proceedings are usually granted.

3.10.6. Pension Scheme

1. There is no specific pension scheme for lawyers; they must privately insure pensions like other citizens. The previous public or private pension scheme for lawyers has been abolished.

4. Conclusions

The FBE survey on the social rights of lawyers across various European jurisdictions provides a comprehensive overview of the benefits and support available to legal professionals. Analysing the survey results, several key conclusions can be drawn:

1. **Parental Rights and Leave:** Most jurisdictions provide parental leave, with notable differences in duration and compensation.
2. **Parental Leave Duration and Compensation:** The length of parental leave and compensation levels vary significantly. Italy offers 5 months with 80% compensation, while Belgium provides 12 weeks with a weekly benefit. In contrast, Romania's extensive leave offers 85% of the average net income for two years.
3. **Sick Leave Benefits:** There's a general trend towards providing sick leave benefits to lawyers, with variations in duration and compensation. For example, Italy offers benefits based on the severity of illness, while Belgium provides a daily allowance after the first month.
4. **Handling of Legal Deadlines:** Most jurisdictions do not have specific statutory provisions for handling court deadlines during parental or sick leave. Lawyers often need to arrange for substitutes or seek adjournments, with Spain being an exception where procedural steps and legal deadlines are ensured during parental leave.
5. **Support for Income Drops and Bereavement:** Support in these scenarios varies. Italy offers one-time payments for income drops and support in bereavement cases, while Belgium and Poland do not provide specific support for income drops.

- 6. Pension Schemes:** There's a mix of public and private pension schemes across jurisdictions.
- **Public Insurance Schemes:** In several jurisdictions, lawyers are included in the general public insurance schemes applicable to all self-employed individuals or employees. For example, Belgium and Poland have public pension schemes where lawyers are part of the broader system for self-employed individuals.
 - **Combination of Public and Private Systems:** Some countries offer a mix of public and private systems. Germany, for instance, provides both private and public pension schemes, with variations among Bar Associations. Similarly, in Spain, self-employed lawyers can choose between the RETA and alternative social security mutual societies, alongside the General Social Security Scheme.
 - **Lack of Exclusive Private Insurance System:** None of the surveyed jurisdictions rely solely on private insurance systems for lawyers. This suggests a tendency towards integrating legal professionals into national social security networks, either through public schemes or a combination of public and private options.
 - **Variations in Benefits and Contributions:** Where combinations of public and private schemes exist, there are notable variations in benefits and contributions.
- 7. Contribution to Pension Schemes:** Contributions are either a percentage of income, as seen in Germany and Belgium, or based on a combination of factors, such as in France where it involves pleading fees, a flat-rate contribution, and income-based contributions.
- 8. Jurisdictional Differences:** Each jurisdiction exhibits unique approaches to social rights for lawyers. For instance, Romania's long-duration maternity leave, Spain's comprehensive parental leave policies, and France's special protections for female associate lawyers during maternity reflect diverse legal cultures and social security systems.

In summary, the survey reveals a varied landscape of social rights for lawyers across Europe, with differences in parental leave duration, sick leave benefits, pension schemes, and support during income drops and bereavement. These distinctions reflect the diverse legal and social welfare systems in each jurisdiction.

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January 2024

