The EU Part Time Workers Directive

Costs - £34m per year ([Open Europe](#))

Talking Points

Problems of public holiday entitlement

Public holiday entitlements are not a statutory right and therefore it is up to the employer to decide how to allocate bank holiday time. This therefore raises the issue of 'equal treatment' in the directive between part/casual and full time workers. It becomes costly for the business to give casual/part time workers equal public holiday time as full time workers as they work far fewer hours.

Less chance of firms employing part time workers

A survey by the Foreign Policy Centre and Federation of Small Businesses found that a quarter of firms were less likely to employ part time workers owing to the costs of the Directive. ([Source](#) p.16)

What is it?

A directive to ensure part time workers are not treated less favourably than those in full time work in the same company, doing the same line of work but on a full time contract. In addition, the Directive aims to promote the use of part-time and flexiwork.

Part time workers have been entitled to the same statutory protection as full time workers since 1995. This Directive, enacted in 2000 in the UK, aimed to go further.

The UK decided to opt out of the provisions in the directive that allowed the exclusion of casual labour from the regulations.

Under the directive, part time workers cannot be disadvantaged and must have the same access to:

- Professional training
- The same hourly rate of pay
- Company pension schemes
- Bank holiday entitlements
- Pro-rata holiday entitlement, including maternity pay, holiday and parental leave
- Promotion opportunities
- Working time laws as covered in the working time directive.

Accordingly, full time workers are entitled to request transfer to part time work. Permission for transfer to part-time work cannot be unreasonably denied.

The UK government gold-plated the directive to make it compulsory for employers to respond to accusations of unequal treatment within 21 days.