

06/01/2026

Sunday work and opening hours in retail and craft sectors

1. Extension of Sunday working hours

The Law of 19 December 2025 amending Article L. 231-4 of the Labour Code was published in Mémorial A No. 602 of 19 December 2025.

The Law came into force on 1 January 2026.

The exemption from the Sunday working prohibition provided for in Article L. 231-4 of the Labour Code is extended to all companies operating a “commercial or craft” activity referred to in Article 1 of the new Law of 19 December 2025 governing opening hours in the commercial and craft sectors (see point 2 below).

These companies are now allowed to employ their employees **for up to 8 hours on Sundays** (compared to a maximum of 4 hours before the Law) under the following conditions, depending on the size of the company:

? If the company has less than 30 employees: employees may work **up to a maximum of 8 hours without any special conditions.**

? If the company has 30 or more employees: employees may work up to a maximum of 4 hours. **A collective bargaining agreement (“CBA”) or social dialogue agreement will be required to employ those employees for up to a maximum of 8 hours.**

However, in the absence of an agreement, companies retain the option of having their employees work **up to a maximum of 8 hours with the authorisation of the Minister** for a maximum of 6 Sundays per year (i.e. the Sunday before Christmas, sales periods, etc.).

Key points for employers:

- > Be aware that you may now need to have a collective bargaining agreement or social dialogue agreement in force to employ your employees for more than four hours on Sundays.
- > The wage increase for hours worked on Sundays remains applicable.

2. Opening hours in the retail and craft sectors

The Law of 19 December 2025 governing opening hours in the retail and craft sectors was published in the Mémorial A No. 601 of 19 December 2025.

The Law will come into force on 19 June 2026.

This legal provision replaces the Law of 19 June 1995 governing the closure of retail shops in the commercial and craft sectors.

The main changes are as follows:

? The Law applies to commercial and craft activities that require a business licence and involve direct sales or the provision of

services to end consumers in a physical point of sale accessible to the public

Some activities are excluded from the scope of the Law (e.g. points of sale in cinemas, stations or airports; restaurants and bars, sports centres, etc.).

? The opening hours will now be as follows:

- > 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday to Friday;
- > 5:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Saturdays, Sundays, public holidays and the day before public holidays;
- > 5:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on 22 June, 24 and 31 December.

Opening hours may be extended until 1:00 a.m. **by CBA or interprofessional agreement.**

? All establishments covered by the Law are required to close on 1 May, 25 December and 1 January, except for butchers, bakeries, pastry shops, caterers and consumption rooms, which may remain open from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m.

However, establishments may open on 1 May, 25 December and 1 January from 5 a.m. to 7 p.m. if provided for in a **CBA or inter-professional agreement.**

? Companies will have the option of opening continuously for 24 hours twice a year (notification of the opening must be sent to the Minister through a secure electronic portal no later than one week before the planned opening date).

? For essential shops (i.e. sale of food, medicines and health products, books, newspapers and stationery, etc.), 24-hour continuous opening from Monday to Sunday inclusive will be possible under a **CBA or inter-professional agreement.**

? **Penalty for non-compliance with these provisions:** a fine of between EUR 1,000 and EUR 25,000. In the event of a repeat offence within 5 years, the establishment may be ordered to close for a period of between 6 months and 2 years.

Key points for employers:

- > Ensure that you comply with the provisions on working hours (compliance with normal and maximum daily and weekly working hours, compliance with daily and weekly rest periods, etc.).
- > Please note that opening all day on Sundays does not necessarily mean that your employees can work for 8 hours!

EXPERTISE

EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL

KEY CONTACT

Christian JUNGERS Partner

Anissa BALI Partner

Celine DEFAY Partner

Philippe NEY Partner

Christophe NEY Partner

Sandra RAPP Counsel

Laure WOEHLING Counsel

