

## FAQ on the 2026 Pay Raise and the Extension of Care Leave

During collective bargaining negotiations, we were able to secure not only a 3% increase plus 5 euros in the minimum wages stipulated in the collective agreement, but also a 40% increase in the duration of care leave (Pflegefreistellung) which amounts to two days for full-time employees. In addition, the age limit for children was raised from 12 to 14 years for the second week of care leave. The child allowance will be doubled in the future if increased family allowance for a child with a disability is received. Below, we address the most important questions regarding these points.

### 1. Salary

#### 1.1 Why was a fixed amount of 5 € negotiated, and what is its effect?

In addition to the 3%, all minimum wages under the collective bargaining agreement will be increased by a fixed amount of 5 € per month (14 times a year). This creates a progressive effect that promotes greater social justice: it has a stronger impact at lower salary levels, while its effect is less pronounced at higher levels. Instead of a uniform 3% increase, the results range from 3.08% to 3.21%.

#### 1.2 Why is every euro in the fixed amount so important?

Each of the 68,000 employees in the financial sector receives an additional 14 euros per year thanks to the 1-euro increase. At first glance, this may seem like a small amount for the individual employee, but for the sector it amounts to approximately 950,000 euros per year. It is important to note that social security contributions are also paid from this amount. Furthermore, it provides a better foundation for future increases.

This is precisely why the fixed amount of 5€ was so crucial in terms of its overall impact: These 5 euros amount to approximately 4.76 million euros annually and have a lasting effect for all employees in the financial sector.

#### 1.3 Will allowances that have been agreed on individually by each person also be increased?

These salary components are covered by company-wide or individual agreements and are not included in the collective bargaining agreement. Despite intensive negotiations, an automatic increase for these could not be achieved. The employer was not willing to agree to this.

Please check with your works council to see if your company has internal regulations or guidelines regarding adjustments to overpayments or allowances and how these are applied.



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## 2. Extension of Care Leave pursuant to § 16 (1) of the Paid Annual Leave Act

### 2.1 How does the 2-day extension of caregiving leave work?

Care leave is governed by law under § 16 (1) of the Paid Annual Leave Act. Accordingly, employees are entitled to paid leave from work if they are prevented from performing their duties due to certain caregiving obligations.

This applies to the following cases: the necessary care of a sick close relative, the care of a sick person living in the same household, the care of a child when the usual caregiver is unavailable, and accompanying a child during an inpatient hospital stay until the child reaches the age of 10. This statutory entitlement generally applies for the duration of the regular weekly working hours.

**The recently concluded collective bargaining agreement now expands this existing statutory entitlement.** Specifically, all employees receive **an additional two days of care leave per year (for full-time employees).**

### 2.2 How does the expansion of care leave apply to part-time employees?

The extension of care leave by 2 days pursuant to § 16 (1) Paid Annual Leave Act applies to part-time employees on a pro-rata basis according to their regular weekly working hours, just as with the basic statutory entitlement. Two days for full-time employees represent 40% of working hours. Therefore, for part-time employees, it is also 40% of the agreed-upon weekly working hours.

A 4-day workweek with 5 hours per day (20 hours/week) results in the following outcome:

The statutory basic entitlement under § 16 (1) Paid Annual Leave Act is 20 hours. The collective bargaining agreement extension of 2 days is calculated proportionally at 40%. In total, this means 8 additional hours are available. Therefore, 28 hours of care leave instead of 20 hours are available.

### 2.3 For whom can I take care leave?

If you are unable to go to work because you need to care for a sick close relative or a household member, you are entitled to paid caregiving leave.

Close relatives are:

- biological children, adopted children, and foster children
- biological children of spouses, registered partners, or domestic partners living in the same household
- spouses, registered partners, and domestic partners
- parents (including adoptive and foster parents)
- grandchildren and great-grandchildren
- grandparents and great-grandparents



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## 2.4 How can the additional days be taken?

The additional days can be taken under the same conditions as statutory care leave. Company policies apply.

## 2.5 Can the additional care leave days also be taken on an hourly basis?

The specific way in which the leave is taken (by the day or by the hour) is governed by existing legal provisions. **The agreement itself only changes the extent, not the form, of how the leave is taken. Taking leave on an hourly basis is therefore possible.**

## 2.6 When does this expansion take effect?

For working years beginning on or after 1 July 2026, the expanded care leave applies in full. The working year generally begins on the beginning of the employment relationship. For example, if an employment relationship starts on 1 October, the working year runs from 1 October to 30 September of the following year. It is permissible to align the working year with the calendar year, the company's applicable policy governs.

If the working year starts after 30 June 2026, you will get the full extra allowance from that date. If the working year is still in progress on July 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, the extension also applies, but only for new caregiving situations. For ongoing working years, the entitlement may be prorated, but this is not mandatory. Please check with your works council regarding the company's procedure.

Example: If the working year begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 the extended care leave applies in full from that date. For the period from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2026 to September 30<sup>th</sup> 2026, full-time employees are entitled to a pro-rated allowance of 4 hours. Starting October 1<sup>st</sup> 2026, the full additional allowance of 16 hours will be available.

## 3. Extension of the age limit for extended care leave pursuant to § 16 (2) of the Paid Annual Leave Act

### 3.1 What exactly changes regarding the second week of caregiving leave for children?

§ 16 (2) of the Paid Annual Leave Act clearly states that you have the right to an additional week of caregiving leave, provided the first week under § 16 (1) has been used up. This is due to the necessary care of an ill child living in your household (adopted or foster child), or your biological child (registered partner or cohabiting partner) who has not yet reached the age of 12.



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**Under the collective bargaining agreement, the age limit for taking extended care leave has been raised from the statutory 12 years to 14 years.**

As a result, eligible employees with children up to age 14 will now be able to take the second week of leave as well.

### 3.2 What happens if a child turns 14 while an extended care leave is in effect?

The child must not have turned 14 by the start of the care leave. The entitlement to leave therefore continues up to the maximum limit even if the child turns 14 during the period in which they require care.

### 3.3 When does this extension take effect?

The same procedure applies as for the extension of care leave under § 16 (1) Paid Annual Leave Act (40% extension, 2 days for full-time employment).

### 3.4 Can the two extensions be combined?

Yes, the entitlements exist independently of one another. Please note that the second week of caregiving leave under § 16 (2) Paid Annual Leave Act can only be taken once the first week under § 16 (1) has been fully used.

Example: You work full-time and have two children (aged 13 and 9). Your new working year begins on 1 July 2026, so the extension applies fully. In September, your 9-year-old child is sick for seven days. You use the five days under § 16 (1) plus the two additional days from the collective bargaining agreement entitlement. Then your 13-year-old child falls ill. You have already used up your entitlement under § 16 (1), including the collective bargaining agreement extension, and the child is not yet 14 years old at the start of the leave. You can therefore take the second week under § 16 (2) (up to five days).

## 4. Double Child Allowance for Employees with a Disabled Child

### 4.1 What requirements must be met to receive the “double child allowance” for my disabled child?

To receive the double child allowance for a disabled child, two requirements must be met: First, you must be entitled to the regular child allowance under the collective bargaining agreement. Additionally, **increased family allowance** must be received for the child. If both of these requirements are met, you are entitled to the double child allowance.



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### 4.2 What exactly does “double child allowance” mean?

The basic child allowance entitlement specified in the collective bargaining agreement, which has been received for this child up to now, is doubled in these cases.

### 4.3 Does the double child allowance have to be applied for separately?

Yes. You must provide proof of receipt of the increased family allowance (notification from the tax office). The employer must receive the proof for the increased payment to be issued.

### 4.4 When does payment of the double child allowance begin?

If the requirements are met, an application for the increased payment must be submitted to the employer along with the appropriate proof. The higher child allowance becomes payable starting that month. It is therefore advisable to apply immediately, as there are no back payments or retroactive entitlements.

**Note: This information is provided for general informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice and is not legally binding.**



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