



**SECTOR
PUBLICATION
JC 209
METAL
CONSTRUCTION
CBA 2025-2026**

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INTRODUCTION

Employers and trade unions in your sector recently negotiated with the aim of improving working and pay conditions for workers.

Not everyone started from the same position since employers received generous gifts from the government such as a relaxation of restrictions on night work, the introduction of more overtime hours with no bonus, no possibility of increasing wages, etc. And while large companies are raking in huge profits, the wage norm law hinders free collective bargaining and, as a result, our wages.

The difficulty of reaching sector agreements is clear.

This time around, there is no agreement for the metal construction sector because employers and trade unions could not reach an agreement. We thus miss out on many advantages which are the results of sector agreements every 2 years.

We still wish you to inform you through this sector publication. You will find detailed information on working and pay conditions in your sector. Please note: this publication reflects the situation at the time of writing. To find all the latest updates, please check our website: www.acvcsc.be.

Enjoy the read!

ACV-CSC METEA

REMUNERATION

INDEXATION

In the metal construction sector, wages are indexed on 1st July in accordance with the sectoral system.

The current mechanism in the sector provides that, on that day, wages are adjusted according to the 'real inflation' (= adjustment to the cost of living).

To determine the real inflation on 1st July, the health index from June is compared with the one from June of the previous year.

Because of the automatic wage adjustment according to the index, wages normally should have increased by 2.81% on 1st July 2026.

Please note: for 2026, the automatic wage indexation as we know it has been replaced by the cent index (capped wage indexation).

Since 1st June 2026, because of a change in regulations, the indexation of some wages will temporarily be limited. The cent index applies to the first 2% of the indexation and on the gross wage above EUR 4,000.

Concretely, what does it mean?

- If your gross wage is lower than or equals EUR 4,000 a month, nothing changes: you receive a full indexation. Your wage will increase by 2.81% on 1st July 2026.
- If your gross wage is above EUR 4,000 a month, the cent index is applied to the first 2%. For the part above the 2%, normal indexation applies.

Which means the following:

- Your wage up to EUR 4,000 is fully indexed: a 2.81% increase on those EUR 4,000.
- The indexation on the part of your wage above EUR 4,000 is limited:
 - The first 2% are not applied.
 - The remaining percentage is properly applied: so, the part of your wage above EUR 4,000 increases by 0.81% ($2.81\% - 2\% = 0.81\%$).

Example: if you receive a EUR 5,000 gross wage on 30 June 2026, it increases as follows:

- EUR 4,000 increase by 2.81% ($\text{EUR } 4,000 + 2.81\% = \text{EUR } 4,112.40$).
- EUR 1,000 increase by 0.81% ($\text{EUR } 1,000 + 0.81\% = \text{EUR } 1,008.10$).
- The indexed wage amounts to EUR 5,120.50 gross from 1st July.

This measure is first applied in 2026 and will be applied again in 2028. If the government does not modify the indexation mechanism again, your whole wage will be fully indexed on 1st July 2027.



Scan this QR code to find out more about current wages.

SALARY INCREASE

The wage norm is the percentage by which wages may increase, in addition to automatic indexation. Social partners can negotiate it every 2 years.

The percentage level is set out in the wage norm law. This law is meant to prevent the wages in Belgium from rising faster than in neighbouring countries.

The wage norm for 2025-2026 is zero per cent. This means that we have not been able to negotiate a collective pay rise in addition to automatic indexation.

ACV-CSC METEA continues to campaign against this wage norm law, as it prevents free negotiations over wages from taking place.

GUARANTEED AVERAGE MINIMUM MONTHLY INCOME

The guaranteed average minimum monthly income for a full-time employee amounts to EUR 2,648.62 since 1st July 2026.

This sum increases each year on 1st July.

MINIMUM WAGES

Beside the guaranteed average minimum monthly income, there also national minimum wages per function category in the sector. Those minimum wages also increase every year, at the same time as effective wages.

Sectoral minimum wages since 1st July 2026:

ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES			
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,756.34	EUR 2,948.60

TECHNICAL EMPLOYEES						
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7
EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,756.34	EUR 2,778.26	EUR 2,948.60

DRAUGHTSMEN				
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,648.62	EUR 2,948.60	EUR 3,119.14	EUR 3,502.97

FOREMEN		
Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
EUR 2,650.16	EUR 3,119.14	EUR 3,375.25

TRACERS FOR BOILER WORK	
Step 1	Step 2
EUR 2,948.60	EUR 3,097.98

STUDENT WAGES

Since 1st January 2024, underage employees with a student contract receive a percentage of the minimum wage of employees of age from the company who do the same tasks as the student:

- 18 and over: 100%
- 17.5 and over: 95%
- 17 and over: 90%
- 16.5 and over: 85%
- Under 16.5: 80%

END-OF-YEAR BONUS

The basic rules on the end-of-year bonus are set out in provincial/regional CBAs which explains the many differences in terms of end-of-year bonuses across the sector. Of course, at company level, you may be entitled to a more generous bonus than the one agreed for your province/region.

Possibility to Convert the End-of-year Bonus into Extra Leave Days and/or a Bike Lease

In provinces and regions where the sector end-of-year bonus represents at least a full month wage, CBAs are to be adjusted to allow the conversion.

The provinces in question are Antwerp, Limburg, East Flanders, West Flanders and Flemish Brabant.

The conversion into leave days and/or a bike lease is possible under the following conditions:

- Amounts maximum to the half of the end-of-year bonus,
- If a company CBA is concluded,
- Is voluntary (individual agreement with the worker on top of the company CBA),
- Cost neutrality (the conversion of a part of the end-of-year bonus cannot result in the employer saving up),
- Prior information to workers on the consequences of converting their end-of-year bonus.

In multi-site companies with operational sites in different provinces, at least one of which is situated in one of the provinces mentioned above, the regional scope may be extended by means of a company CBA.

ECO-VOUCHERS

Currently, eco-vouchers cannot be converted into another advantage.

In companies where eco-vouchers remain, the following rules apply:

- To grant eco-vouchers, the employment of the workers between 1st October and 30 September is considered (= reference period).
- If the worker has not worked all the time during the reference period, assimilations may happen in some cases (assimilations based on the national CBA 98 extended with the assimilations of the sector):
 - Every day of maternity leave,
 - Every day of absence for which the worker receives guaranteed wage,
 - Every day of annual holiday (also applies to youth holiday, senior holiday and extra holiday).
- Extension to the sector assimilations:
 - Every day of temporary unemployment,
 - Every day of time credit granted according to the dispensations provided by the 5% threshold,
 - Every day of absence because of an industrial accident,
 - The first 3 months of unfitness for work during the reference period, after the period of guaranteed wage,
 - The whole period of birth leave,
 - Every day of prophylactic leave (= exclusion from work of a pregnant woman), foster leave and adoption leave.
- In any case of incomplete employment during the reference period, a pro rata adjustment applies.
- Temporary workers are entitled to the same rights as permanent workers from the company.

Please note!

- The above provisions regarding purchasing power do not automatically apply to managers. However, most companies do grant these benefits to their managerial staff.
- The last three sector agreements stipulate that the employees' union delegation may negotiate with the employer regarding the granting of sectoral purchasing power increases to managers.
- The elimination of this unjustified discrimination between workers remains a key demand for us!

TRANSPORT COSTS AND BICYCLE ALLOWANCE

National regulations provide for the reimbursement of transport costs between home and work. In this sector, the following is specified, without prejudice to any more favourable company regulations, which may, of course, be retained:

Public Transport

Since 1st February 2026, sums (defined by CNT/NAR CBAs 19/9 and 19/11) increased. In these CBAs, you can find a table of the employer's contribution for transportation by train. CBA 19/11 also contains an indexation clause thanks to which the employer's contribution for transportation by train increases each year on 1st February.

Companies are advised to use the third-party payer system. In this case, you train abonnement is free in 2nd class and it also applies to STIB-MIVB (but not to De Lijn nor TEC). Your employer pays 80% and the government the remaining 20%. To do so, your employer must conclude an agreement with SNCB-NMBS.

Bicycle Allowance

EUR 0.27 per kilometre travelled between your home and your workplace, with a maximum of EUR 10.80 a day (see table).

Total distance travelled (round trip), in km	Bike trip Amount per workday (in EUR)
1	0.27
2	0.54
3	0.81
4	1.08
5	1.35
6	1.62
7	1.89
8	2.16
9	2.43
10	2.70
11	2.97
12	3.24
13	3.51
14	3.78
15	4.05
16	4.32
17	4.59
18	4.86
19	5.13
20	5.40
21	5.67
22	5.94
23	6.21
24	6.48
25	6.75
26	7.02
27	7.29
28	7.56
29	7.83
30	8.10
31	8.37
32	8.64
33	8.91
34	9.18
35	9.45
36	9.72
37	9.99
38	10.26
39	10.53
40 or more	10.80

Private Means of Transport

Since 1st January 2024, the employer's contribution increased by 12.5%. Concretely, it amounts to:

- EUR 0.084 per kilometre travelled between home and work,
- EUR 1.69 per workday (up to 20 kilometres),
- A minimum of EUR 2.03 per workday (above 21 kilometres),
- A maximum of EUR 9.20 per workday.

(see table)

Total distance travelled (round trip), in km	Other means of transport Amount per workday (in EUR)	Total distance travelled (round trip), in km	Other means of transport Amount per workday (in EUR)
1 to 20	1.69	67	5.65
21 to 24	2.03	68	5.74
25	2.11	69	5.82
26	2.19	70	5.91
27	2.28	71	5.99
28	2.36	72	6.08
29	2.45	73	6.16
30	2.53	74	6.24
31	2.62	75	6.33
32	2.70	76	6.41
33	2.78	77	6.50
34	2.87	78	6.58
35	2.95	79	6.67
36	3.04	80	6.75
37	3.12	81	6.83
38	3.21	82	6.92
39	3.29	83	7.00
40	3.38	84	7.09
41	3.46	85	7.17
42	3.54	86	7.26
43	3.63	87	7.34
44	3.71	88	7.43
45	3.80	89	7.51
46	3.88	90	7.59
47	3.97	91	7.68
48	4.05	92	7.76
49	4.13	93	7.85
50	4.22	94	7.93
51	4.30	95	8.02
52	4.39	96	8.10
53	4.47	97	8.18
54	4.56	98	8.27
55	4.64	99	8.35
56	4.73	100	8.44
57	4.81	101	8.52
58	4.89	102	8.61
59	4.98	103	8.69
60	5.06	104	8.78
61	5.15	105	8.86
62	5.23	106	8.94
63	5.32	107	9.03
64	5.40	108	9.11
65	5.48	109	9.20
66	5.57	110 or more	9.20

Watch out!

Employees earning more than EUR 7,093.69 a month are not automatically entitled to an employer's contribution for their transport (by bike or private means) costs. Except for companies in Limburg, there is no wage limit.



Scan this QR code to find out more about current transport costs.

SUPPLEMENTARY PENSION

Employer's contributions enable the build-up of a supplementary pension for every worker.

Every metal company must affiliate their employees and managers to the sector supplementary pension regime. Companies who already had their own pension plan before the start of this regime are exempted if their plan equals or is more generous than the sectoral one.

Each year, every active worker receives a pension slip. This contains the capital already earned as well as the final amount of the supplementary pension at the end of the career, provided nothing changes. Everyone can also check a yearly inventory on the federal website: www.mypension.be.

Companies have to harmonise the situation of blue-collar workers and employees before 1st January 2030.

SUBSISTENCE FUND

Type	Modalities	Sums
Temporary unemployment for economic reasons.	• Receive legal unemployment benefit. • Work for a JC 209 employer. • Paid by the employer.	Since 01/10/2023: • Base amount: • EUR 14.15 per full allowance. • EUR 7.08 per semi-allowance. • Supplement: for each full slice of EUR 50 above the capped monthly wage (EUR 3,500.99*) provided by the unemployment regulations: • EUR 1.50 per full allowance. • EUR 0.75 per semi-allowance. (*) This sum will be indexed by 2% in September 2026 because of the crossing of the pivot index in June 2026. Duration: unlimited
Increased contribution in case of temporary unemployment.	• Be entitled to legal unemployment benefit. • Work for a JC 209 employer. • Paid by the employer.	Since 01/03/2026: Supplementary allowance of EUR 5.31 (full day) or EUR 2.66 (half day) if your gross monthly wage is not above EUR 4,284. If you earn more, the allowance is paid after the 27th day.
Temporary unemployment: • Annual holiday, • Force majeure, • Strike (if approved).	• Be entitled to legal unemployment benefit. • Have worked for a JC 209 employer. • Paid by the employer.	Since 01/10/2023: • EUR 14.15 full allowance. • EUR 7.08 semi-allowance.

End-of-career employment for a long career & a heavy occupation.	• Switch from a full-time regime to a 4/5th or half-time one. • Be entitled to an interruption allowance from the ONEM/RVA/LFA. • Work for a JC 209 employer. • From the age of 58. • Paid by the Social Fund for metal employees.	Since 01/01/2022: • EUR 30 a month in case of 4/5th regime. • EUR 75 a month in case of half-time regime (if you started receiving an allowance from the Fund before 01/01/2025). Duration: Until the end of the end-of-career employment or until legal retirement age.
Feasible work – changes in the career – smooth end-of-career.	• Category A – switch to an ‘alternative function with pay cut’. • Category B – switch from a ‘shift or night work regime to day work with pay cut’. • Category C – switch from ‘full-time work to 4/5th work’. • Age for categories A and B = 58 • Age for category C = 60 Conditions: • 58/60 reached on the first day of the career switch. • At least 3 months of service within the company. • Effective wage loss due to the career switch. • Keep at least 4/5th actual work. • Paid by the social Fund for metal employees.	Since 01/11/2023: Sums = interruption allowance from ONEM/RVA/LFA for a 4/5th regime as part of a time credit: since 01/03/2026: • EUR 299.47 a month with a cohabitant. • EUR 361.39 a month as a single person. • EUR 361.39 a month as a single person with dependent children. Those sums increase by 2% when the pivot index is overtaken. When the gross pay cut is under 20%, the amount of the allowance is proportionally diminished (ex. 10% pay cut → allowance x 10/2).

CONTRACTS

NOTICE PERIOD

Unique Status

Since 1st January 2014 there is no distinction between blue-collar workers and employees anymore with regards to notice periods (unique status). The notice period is determined by seniority within the firm. For new contracts starting after 1st June 2026, the notice period is set to maximum 52 weeks.

For those with less than 6 months of seniority, the notice period will be set to one week from 1st August 2026 if you start working after 1st August 2026 (law of 3rd June 2026 – BG 15/06/2026).

Since 1st January 2014, the following notice periods are in force:

Seniority	Dismissal by the employer (in weeks) (sen. = 0 on 01/01/2014)	Resignation by the worker (in weeks) (sen. = 0 on 01/01/2014)	Counter notice by the worker after dismissal by the employer (in weeks)
0 < 3 months	1	1	1
3 months < 4 months	3 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)
4 months < 5 months	4 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)
5 months < 6 months	5 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)	2 or 1 (*)
6 months	6	3	3
9 months	7	3	3
1 year	8	4	4
1 year 3 months	9	4	4
1 year 6 months	10	5	4
1 year 9 months	11	5	4
2 years	12	6	4
3 years	13	6	4
4 years	15	7	4
5 years	18	9	4
6 years	21	10	4
7 years	24	12	4
8 years	27	13	4
9 years	30	13	4
10 years	33	13	4
11 years	36	13	4
12 years	39	13	4
13 years	42	13	4
14 years	45	13	4
15 years	48	13	4
16 years	51	13	4
17 years	54	13	4
18 years	57	13	4
19 years	60	13	4
20 years	62	13	4
21 years	63	13	4
22 years	64	13	4
23 years	65	13	4
24 years	66	13	4
25 years	67	13	4
26 years	68	13	4
27 years	69	13	4
28 years	70	13	4
29 years	71	13	4
More than 30 years	+ 1 week for each year of service started	13	4

(*) 1 week if you start working after 1st August 2026

The maximum notice period for a worker who resigns is 13 weeks. These rules apply to all workers regardless of their status on 31st December 2013.

Another regulation applies to workers who started before 1st January 2014 and are dismissed by their employer. Their rights are 'locked'. In concrete terms, this means that in this case their notice period consists of two parts:

- 1st part: the notice period based on seniority and the rules applied before 31st December 2013.
- 2nd part: the notice period shown in the table above and based on the seniority from 1st January 2014 until dismissal.

Until 31st December 2013, notice periods applicable for employees dismissed by their employer were as follows:

Employees	Dismissal by the employer	
Annual wage (EUR) 31/12/2013)	Progressivity	Minimum
≤ 32,254	3 months/period of 5 years started	3 months
> 32,254 ≤ 64,504	1 month/year started	3 months
> 64,504	1 month/year started	3 months

To calculate the notice period of employees who have been working there since before 1st January 2014 and get dismissed by their employer:

Locked rights on 31st December 2013 (1st part) +
seniority from 1st January 2014 until dismissal (2nd part)

In some cases, employees can also benefit from the compensatory redundancy pay (CRP). An inventory was made on 31st December 2013. Those who were blue-collar workers at the time receive the notice period (1st part) applicable for blue-collar workers as well as a CRP.

The worker must request their CRP to the payment agency. They are advised to always do so, even if they do not become unemployed and will therefore not file for unemployment benefits.

The CRP may be claimed immediately after the end of the notice period or after the period covered by severance pay. In any case, it must be claimed within 6 months of the end of the relevant period.

The CRP is paid by the ONEM/RVA/LFA through the payment agencies. It is a net allowance (thus exempt from ONSS/RSZ/LSS and withholding tax). This CRP cannot be combined with unemployment benefits. In case of medical RCC/SWT/SAB, the right to CRP is also opened.

Example of a notice period when you are dismissed by your employer

Employee JC 209

Started work: 12 January 1993

Dismissed: 16 February 2026

(a) **1st part of the notice period** (= locked rights on 31st December 2013 based on the legal notice period until the end of 2013):

Seniority on 31st December 2013 = 20 years, 11 months and 20 days:

- Annual wage 2013 ≤ EUR 32,254 → notice period: 5 period of 5 years started x 3 months = 15 months.
- Annual wage 2013 > EUR 32,254 → notice period: 21 years started x 1 month = 21 months.

(b) **2nd part of the notice period** (= based on the new legal notice period since 1st January 2014):

Seniority between 1st January 2014 and 16 February 2026 = 12 years → notice period = 39 weeks.

(c) **Full notice period** (= 1st part + 2nd part):

- Annual wage 2013 ≤ EUR 32,254 → 15 months + 39 weeks.
- Annual wage 2013 > EUR 32,254 → 21 months + 39 weeks.



Thanks to our calculation tool, you can also calculate your notice period yourself.

Suspension of the Notice Period

Some events can suspend the notice period. In these cases, the notice period either does not start or is put on hold. Suspension of the notice period is only possible when the employer dismisses their worker. If the worker resigns, the notice period is never suspended.

TEMPORARY AGENCY WORK

- If a company gives you a permanent contract directly at the end of the temporary or fixed-term contract, this period of work within the company is taken into account for the seniority. It is important for the working and pay conditions as well as the notice period when the worker is dismissed by their employer.
- If you work for the same employer for 1 year, you are entitled to the same rights as permanent workers when it comes to:
 - Training.
 - Outplacement after a dismissal or after the employer decides not to renew your contract (besides dismissal for serious cause), paid by the employer.

CONSULTATION IN CASE OF MULTIPLE DISMISSAL

The CBA 'work security' was extended for an unlimited period.

In order to proceed with collective dismissals, the employer must have informed the relevant bodies and held the necessary consultations to avoid dismissals. They must, among other things, check that all measures to preserve employment such as temporary unemployment, professional training, etc. have been exhausted.

What is 'multiple dismissal'?

- Any dismissal of at least 10% of the employees.
- For a period of 60 calendar days.
- In companies of less than 30 employees, a multiple dismissal occurs when at least 3 employees are dismissed.

If the employer does not respect the procedure, they must pay an extra sum to each worker dismissed on top of the legal notice period. This amounts to half the notice period, based on seniority since 1st January 2014.

Dismissals in case of closure are also seen as multiple dismissals.

MEDICAL CONTROL

The employer can always get an advisory doctor to check whether a worker is really incapacitated. The employee is obliged to submit to this assessment.

The law states that a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) (whether sectoral or company-wide) or the staff regulations may specify a 'period of availability'.

This period of availability is a time slot during for which the worker must be available to the advisory doctor, at their home. This slot of maximum 4 consecutive hours must take place between 7.00 am and 8.00 pm.

If there is no CBA at company level and no relevant clause in the staff regulations, the worker has the right to leave their home if their medical certificate allows it.

To protect workers in companies with no union delegation against excessive conditions from the employer, for example that they must always be at home and available, the 2015-2016 agreement provides that workers must only be available at home on the 2nd and 3rd day of their absence and between 9.30 am and 1.30 pm.

If your employer wants to introduce clauses on the subject in the staff regulations, we advise you to contact your ACV-CSC METEA secretariat. They will provide you with all the necessary information.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATE

From 2026 onwards, this remains possible twice a year. This exemption applies to both a single day of absence and to the first day of a longer period of absence. Companies with fewer than 50 workers may derogate from this rule, provided that a CBA or an amendment to the staff regulations is in place.

Even though a medical certificate is no longer required up to twice a calendar year, the following principles still apply:

- You must always notify your employer immediately of your incapacity for work, using the usual means.
- You must provide a medical certificate proving your incapacity if your employer asks for it, except on the first day of incapacity for two separate illnesses.
- If you are staying somewhere other than your usual place of residence, you must inform your employer immediately. This ensures that medical control remains possible (see above).

The work regulations are the main document for finding out more about the rules that apply in your company. You should therefore make sure you consult your company's work regulations.

Relapse after Work Resumption

A new regulation came into effect on 1st January 2026: after each period of illness for which guaranteed wage has been granted, there is a relapse period of 8 weeks. Previously, this period was 14 calendar days. If, as a worker, you fall ill again with the same illness during the relapse period, your employer is not obliged to pay you the guaranteed wage or the remaining part of it.

If you relapse during your period of gradual return to work, the conditions above do not apply to you. In this case, you receive immediately sickness benefits from your health insurance company, and you will not be entitled to a guaranteed wage.

Illness and Temporary Unemployment

For employees, regulations are unclear. Generally, the same rules as for blue-collar workers apply and you are not entitled to guaranteed wage for days of temporary unemployment. You will only receive guaranteed wage for the days on which you were scheduled to work. For days on which you were not scheduled to work and for which you are temporarily unemployed, you must submit a request to your health insurance company. You will receive sickness benefits for those days.

There are also arguments in favour of guaranteed wage to employees, but we have to wait and see if tribunals follow this stance. Therefore, it is safer to request sickness benefits.

CAREER

CAREER LEAVE

The 'career leave' was established in the sector on 1st January 2016. From then on, workers are entitled to 1 extra day of leave per year, from the age of 50 (and if they have at least 6 months of service).

Since 1st January 2022, a worker is entitled to a 2nd day of career leave when they reach 58.

Since 1st January 2024, a 3rd day was added, from the age of 60.

Companies which, on 1st January 2016, 1st January 2022 or 1st January 2024, already provided extra leave days and/or seniority leave for their employees have to grant the career leave on top of the already existing leave days.

Part-time workers are entitled to a pro rata adjustment.

Agreements can be concluded at company level on the modalities of those leave days.

UNEMPLOYMENT SCHEME WITH COMPANY SUPPLEMENT (RCC/SWT/SAB)

In theory, access to most schemes is no longer possible. This was decided by the government agreement. The only type of scheme still possible is for those aged 58 with at least 35 years of service, and for less valid workers and workers with serious health issues.

In certain circumstances, it is possible to request an exemption from the requirement to be available for work.

SWITCH FROM TIME CREDIT TO RCC/SWT/SAB

Since 1st July 2005, the supplementary allowance for RCC/SWT/SAB is based on a full-time wage, even after periods of working time reduced to a 4/5th or 1/2 regime.

SWITCH FROM RCC/SWT/SAB TO EARLY RETIREMENT

Someone in RCC/SWT/SAB who meets the age and career requirements for early retirement can request it. It is a possibility not an obligation.

RE-EMPLOYMENT

In case of re-employment with another employer, the supplementary allowance is still paid by your previous employer.

In this case, we recommend informing your ACV-CSC service centre.

TIME CREDIT

- The right to time credit with reason can be activated under different forms: working time reduced by 1/5th, working time reduced by 1/2, or full suspension of the contract for a maximum of 51 months, to care for someone, or a maximum of 36 months, for training.
- Flemish job bonuses still apply.
- The legal framing for time credit is defined by CBA 103. It provides a threshold (5% of the employees, head count) for the number of workers who can simultaneously benefit from time credit.

Please note:

If you wish to start time credit with reason, you must meet certain requirements. These include, among others, having a certain level of seniority within the company, working on a specified part-time basis, etc. Furthermore, these conditions vary depending on the reason for and type of leave (full-time or part-time). Therefore, before submitting your application, we advise you to seek further information from the trade union representative in your company or from the ACV-CSC specialised departments.

END-OF-CAREER EMPLOYMENT

4/5th and half-time end-of-career employments are available from the age of 55 for those in physically demanding jobs (with 25 years of service) and for those with long careers (with 35 years of service).

If you wish to start end-of-career employment, you must meet certain conditions. These include, among others, a certain amount of seniority within the company, a minimum number of years of service, etc. End-of-career employment can also have an impact on your retirement (for example if you stop working before reaching the legal retirement age).

Before submitting your request, we advise you to seek information from the union representative in your company or the ACV-CSC specialised departments.

Smooth End-of-career

When a worker aged 58 or up starts a smooth end-of-career, they switch to lighter work or work less hours (need to be at least 60). In this case, the worker loses part of their wage but receives a (partial) compensation from the Sector Funds (FSEFM/FBZMN).

There are 3 possibilities:

- Switch from shift work to day work.
- Switch to another function, less heavy.
- Work on a 4/5th regime, for workers who do not qualify for end-of-career employment.

A smooth end-of-career is possible, subject to a written individual agreement between the employer and the worker, setting out the measures to reduce the workload. It is no longer necessary to conclude a sector CBA (as was previously the case) or a company CBA, or to amend the staff regulations.

SHORT-TERM ABSENTEEISM

The worker is entitled to take time off work for certain family events (such as a wedding, the death/funerals of certain family members). We call that short-term absenteeism.

During the 2023-2024 sector bargains, the following was decided:

- Relaxed rules for blended families, as long as the familial situation is clearly set (to be specified later).
- The day on which a farewell ceremony specific to one of the recognised faiths in Belgium takes place is now treated as a funeral day.

The CBA short-term absenteeism has not yet been amended.

Birth Leave

Every worker is entitled to take time off work when their child is born. Since 2023, this has been brought up to 20 days regardless of the worker's work regime (full-time or part-time). These days must be taken within 4 months of the birth date.

During the first 3 days of birth leave, the worker keeps receiving their full wage from their employer. For the remainder of the birth leave, the worker must request an allowance from their health assurance company (the allowance equals 82% of the capped gross wage).

Adoption Leave

Recently improved

A worker who adopts a minor child into their family is entitled to an individual right of up to 6 weeks of adoption leave. Adoption leave has been extended in recent years.

Until 31st December 2026 adoption leave is extended by 4 weeks. From 1st January 2027 onwards, these additional weeks will increase to 5. These additional weeks come on top of the individual right but are to divide between both adoptive parents.

The individual right to 6 weeks can be doubled if the child has a physical or mental disability.

The individual right can be extended by 2 weeks if several minor children are adopted simultaneously.

During the first 3 days of adoption leave, the worker keeps their wage. For the remainder of the leave, they receive a benefit paid by the health insurance company.

WORKING TIME AND FLEXIBILITY

The Arizona government has relaxed some rules when it comes to flexibility, to the detriment of workers.

VOLUNTARY OVERTIME

Until 31st March 2026, there were two types of voluntary overtime hours:

- Voluntary overtime: subject to a written agreement between the employer and the worker, a worker could work up to 100 hours of overtime per year. These overtime hours were paid with a bonus but there was no compensatory time off.
- Relance hours: an extra 120 hours of voluntary for which a written agreement between the employer and the worker was also required. There was no bonus or compensatory time off and they were paid on a gross=net basis.

Relance hours have been abolished after 31st March 2026.

From 1st April 2026, there will be 360 hours of voluntary overtime:

- 240 hours with no bonus (gross=net, no compensatory time off),
- 120 hours with bonus (no compensatory time off).

A written agreement between employer and worker is still required. This agreement is valid for one year with a tacit renewal.

INTERNAL LIMIT

The internal limit is set to 143 hours. This limit is intended to prevent workers from accumulating excessive overtime hours. Once this limit has been reached, the worker cannot exceed the weekly working time. And this applies as long as the overtime hours have not been paid or compensated (time off).

Please note: until 31st March 2026, the first 45 hours of voluntary overtime were not taken into account when calculating the internal limit. Since 1st April 2026, voluntary overtime is no longer considered when calculating the internal limit.

TAX-FAVOURABLE OVERTIME

Until 1st January 2026, the global quota for tax-favourable overtime was 130 hours per year and per worker. This quota was temporarily brought up to 180 hours in recent years. The government now intends to set it permanently at 180 hours of tax-favourable overtime for overtime carried out after 1st January 2026. We must now wait for the legislation that will enshrine these regulations in law.

FLEXI-JOBS

Since 1st July 2026, flexi-jobs will be available in all sectors. Therefore, it will become possible to have a flexi-job in any sector as long as you meet the conditions (for example having worked at least 4/5th time during the quarter preceding the flexi-job).

In the metal construction sectors, no framework measure has been concluded to limit access to flexi-jobs. However, it is possible to rule differently at company level.

FEASIBLE WORK

RIGHT TO DISCONNECT

Every worker has the right not to be available for things linked to their work outside their working hours or the agreed hours during which they are to be available. This also applies to periods of authorised absence or suspension of the employment contract, such as holidays, periods of sickness, etc.

The aim is to ensure that rest periods and leave are respected, to promote a better work-life balance and to prevent psychosocial risks such as burnout.

Outside their working hours, employees must therefore neither read nor reply to work-related emails, phone calls or messages.

Only 3 exceptions are possible:

- Force majeure.
- An unforeseen emergency: a situation in which the functioning of the organisation, department or individuals is (or may be) seriously disrupted, potentially causing harm and requiring immediate or rapid action.
- Where necessary in the context of clearly defined legal obligations, such as, for example, the assessment of incapacity for work, the implementation of the recall scheme in the context of temporary unemployment, or the implementation of a return-to-work trajectory.

Consequently, an employee may not be penalised for being (digitally) unreachable outside their working hours or during periods of legitimate absence.

Employers must take concrete measures regarding:

- The practical arrangements for implementing this right.
- Guidelines on the use of digital tools to ensure that workers' rest periods, holidays, and private and family life are safeguarded.
- Training and awareness-raising initiatives on the responsible use of digital tools and the risks associated with excessive screen time.

These provisions must be incorporated into the staff regulations or into a company CBA.

In companies where this has not (yet) been done, employees may rely on the provisions of the sector CBA relating to the right to disconnect.

The Committee for Prevention and Protection at Work (CPPW) is responsible for monitoring and, where necessary, adapting the measures and agreements.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

INDIVIDUAL RIGHT TO TRAINING

Every worker is entitled to an individual right to training of:

- In 2025: 36 hours
- In 2026: 40 hours

At the end of the year, unspent training hours can be passed down to the following year. At the end of a 5-year period, the available training credit is reset.

Individual training needs should be discussed during an, at least, annual appraisal between the worker and the employer.

Employer as well as worker must take the initiative to (make) follow a training course in particular. Refusing a training course must always be justified by the employer as well as the worker.

If an employee has not followed any training course during 3 years of employment, they may take the initiative to arrange and plan their own training course. Except if they refused a training course with no valid explanation during that time frame.

Eligible training courses appear in the programme of the training sector funds.

Costs of training, travel expenses and the working time are entirely at the expense of the company.

TRAINING CV

The training courses completed are listed and kept up to date in the Training CV, subject to the 'count once only' principle. This is to avoid recording the same item twice.

TRAINING PLAN

In companies with 20 workers or more, the training plan must be ready by 31st March each year, after advice from the qualified bodies.

Companies that wish to be granted financial aid from the joint bodies must show proof that their training plan was discussed during a Works Council, with the union delegation, or during a CPPW.

UNION ADVANTAGES

UNION BONUS

Every member of ACV-CSC METEA working in a metal or textile sector is entitled to a union bonus.

The amount and eligibility criteria are set each year. In 2026, the bonus amounts to EUR 130. The payment was done in April 2026.

Workers with a time credit, unemployed people, workers in RCC/SWT/SAB, retired people and long-term ill people are also entitled to the bonus as long as they have worked for a metal company for at least one month during the reference period.

ACV-CSC METEA NEEDS YOU

ACV-CSC METEA is a powerful national industrial trade union. Members and representatives are the ones making our organisation so strong.

Being a member brings nothing but benefits:

- We protect your interests.
- Our information is clear and accurate.
- You can come to us with your questions, in complete confidence.
- Our representatives are always available. They care about your concerns.
- If bargaining is not enough, we jump into action.
- And if needed, we go to the labour court.



What's more, you can also save quite a bit of money on your holidays and leisure activities by showing your membership card to our partners. Find out more at www.quedesavantages.be.

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