

The Economy Minister delivered an update in the Assembly on 28 April 2025 following publication of the Department's response to the Good Jobs consultation and its Way Forward proposals. The key changes are summarized in this table and compared with the equivalent position in Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland.

The Minister will now seek Executive approval for the Department's "Way Forward" proposals. Many of these require primary legislation, and the Minister intends to introduce a draft Good Jobs Employment Rights Bill (**Good Jobs ERB**) in the Assembly by January 2026, to be passed into law before the end of the current Assembly mandate in 2027. Certain proposals will be actioned through secondary legislation, codes of practice or official guidance, and will not follow the timeframe for the Bill itself. How the Department intends to deliver each proposal is distinguished in the Annex to the Way Forward proposal.

The majority of the original proposals which were part of the public consultation have been continued, though there are notable exceptions. The public consultation sought responses on whether TUPE should be amended to incorporate reforms made in GB in 2014 and 2023. In particular, these included relaxing information and consultation requirements for "micro" businesses. Since 2014, GB businesses with fewer than 10 employees have been able to inform and consult directly with employees during TUPE transfers. In 2023, this was extended to businesses with fewer than 50 employees or any transfer involving fewer than 10 employees. This reform would have a substantial impact on small businesses in Northern Ireland. The public consultation also sought views on reforming the requirement to split employment contracts when a business or service is transferred to more than one new business. The Department has confirmed however, that it will not bring forward any TUPE changes at this time given their complexity, the range of other changes and forthcoming consultation on TUPE reforms in GB.

The public consultation also sought views on the fitness of the current three tiered approach to employment status classification – employee, worker and self-employed. However, the Department has recognised that these classifications have substantial crossover with tax law, which is not devolved, and are expected to be subject to consultation in GB in the near future. The Department will develop new guidance for employers and engage with the UK government on this issue.

In Great Britain, a wide range of changes have been proposed by the Labour government in its Employment Rights Bill (**ERB**). With limited exceptions, these GB reforms will not extend to Northern Ireland due to the devolution of employment law. The GB reforms include significant "day one" unfair dismissal protection, which will not apply in Northern Ireland unless implemented by the Assembly.

Full details on the Good Jobs ERB proposals are available from:

[Public consultation](#)

[Consultation Response](#)

[The Way Forward](#)

## Comparative table

### THEME A: TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Proposal	NI April update	GB position	ROI position
<b>Written statement of employment particulars:</b> timeframe	Will become a day one right.	Introduced in 2020.	Core terms within 5 working days and full section 3(1) statement within one month.
<b>Written statement of employment particulars:</b> workers	Right will be extended to “workers”.	Introduced in 2020.	Already applies to “workers”.
<b>Written statement of employment particulars:</b> additional terms	Must include information on pay, working hours, paid leave, right to join trade union.	Extended in 2020 to cover paid leave, benefits, training, probation and working hours.	Pay, working hours, paid leave covered in section 3(1) statement.
<b>Zero hours contracts:</b> exclusivity clauses	Will be banned.	Banned in 2015.	Banned in 2018.
<b>Zero hours contracts:</b> right to banded hours	Right to a “banded hours” contract will be taken forward.	ERB includes right to request “guaranteed” hours	Introduced in 2019.
<b>Agency workers:</b> Swedish derogation	Will be abolished.	Abolished in 2020.	Swedish derogation applies
<b>Agency workers:</b> key information document with host, pay rate, schedule and holidays ( <b>KID</b> )	Right to receive KID will be introduced	Introduced in 2020.	For agency workers, the party who pays the wages is responsible for providing a written statement.
<b>Firing and rehiring:</b> reducing scope for fire and rehire	Will be automatically unfair to dismiss and rehire on new terms without agreement, unless this cannot be reasonably avoided due to immediate financial difficulty.	ERB will restrict firing and rehiring to restructuring required for business to remain viable with no alternative.	No current proposed changes.

### THEME B: PAY AND BENEFITS

Proposal	NI April update	GB position	ROI position
<b>Tips and gratuities:</b> payment to workers	Will be passed to workers in full (less required deductions) and the Department will introduce a statutory Code of Practice.	Introduced in 2023.	Equivalent right introduced in 2022 with WRC information guide.
<b>Payslips:</b> workers	Workers will have statutory right to itemised payslips.	Introduced in 2019.	Employees have statutory right to itemised payslips

<b>Calculating holiday pay:</b> reference period	Will be extended from 12 to 52 weeks.	Introduced in 2020.	Reference period average pay over 13 weeks
<b>Working time:</b> record keeping	Statutory requirements will not change, but Department and LRA will produce guidance.	WTR 1998 amended in 2023 to confirm employers must keep “adequate” records.	Employers must keep detailed recording of employees’ working time.
<b>Working time:</b> right to disconnect	Department will introduce a statutory Code of Practice.	Equivalent provisions were dropped from the ERB.	Code of Practice introduced in 2021.

## THEME C: VOICE AND REPRESENTATION

Proposal	NI April update	GB position	ROI position
<b>Trade unions:</b> access rights	Will introduce right to request workplace access, including digital access	ERB includes right to access for recruitment, organizing and collective bargaining, with statutory process.	Code of Practice on Employee Involvement in the Workplace
<b>Trade unions:</b> recognition	Threshold will reduce from 21 to 10 employees.	ERB will remove requirement to show support for recognition is likely, and requirement for at least 40% of eligible workers to vote for recognition.	Threshold for collective bargaining is 10% of the workforce with no minimum limit on the number of employees.
<b>Trade unions:</b> collective sectoral bargaining	Department will engage on how to promote collective bargaining with the aim of 80% coverage, including private sector.	ERB includes provisions for collective negotiation within adult social care, alongside recent consultation on a “fair pay” agreement.	<p>Sectoral Employment Order which applies in construction sector.</p> <p>Employment Regulation Orders apply to Contract Cleaning Industry, Security Industry, and Early Learning and Childcare Industry.</p> <p>Registered Employment Agreements apply to workers of class, type or group and can be registered with the Labour Court.</p>
<b>Trade unions:</b> industrial action	Minimum notice will remain at 7 days.	ERB will reduce notice from 14 to 10 days.	Minimum notice is 7 days.
<b>Trade unions:</b> e-balloting	Will be permitted.	Will be consulted on before introduction.	No specific rules on e-balloting

<b>Trade unions:</b> protections for representatives	Department will introduce a statutory Code of Practice on workplace relationships.	ERB will introduce statutory union equality representatives.	Duties and Responsibilities of Employee Representatives.
<b>Trade unions:</b> protections for employees taking part in industrial action	12 week limit on automatic unfair dismissal protection for taking part in protected industrial action will be removed.	ERB will also remove 12 week limit.	Dismissal of an employee for taking part in industrial action is unfair.
<b>ICE Regulations:</b> information and consultation requests	Threshold for requests will reduce 10 employees who are at least 2% of workforce.	No proposals to change current thresholds (at least 15 employees or at least 2% of workforce for businesses with 750+ employees).	No proposals to change current thresholds (15 employees who are at least 10% of the workforce, or 100 employees).

## THEME D: WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Proposal	NI April update	GB position	ROI position
<b>Flexible working:</b> eligibility	Will become day one right.	Introduced in 2024.	Day one right, but limited to parents and carers. Flexible arrangements can only start after 6 months' service.
<b>Flexible working:</b> request limit	Will increase to two per year.	Introduced in 2024.	No specific limitation.
<b>Flexible working:</b> acting reasonably	Employers must act reasonably when refusing a request.	Introduced in 2024. The ERB will require refusals to be reasonable.	Employer can consider its own needs and must comply with Code of Practice.
<b>Flexible working:</b> impact	Employees will not have to state the impact of their request.	Introduced in 2024.	Not required.
<b>Carer's leave</b> (unpaid)	Will be introduced on same terms as existing GB scheme.	Introduced in 2024.	Employees currently receive up to 104 weeks' unpaid carer's leave.
<b>Paternity leave:</b> eligibility	Will become day one right.	ERB includes equivalent provisions.	Day one right to unpaid leave.
<b>Paternity leave:</b> week blocks	Will be able to take leave in separate one week blocks.	Introduced in 2024.	Must be taken in two continuous weeks.
<b>Paternity leave:</b> notice	Will decrease from 15 weeks to 28 days	Introduced in 2024.	Four weeks' notice.
<b>Paternity leave:</b> timing	Period to take leave will increase to 52 weeks from 56 days post-birth.	Introduced in 2024.	Must be taken within 6 months post-birth.
<b>Neonatal leave</b> (paid)	Will be introduced on same (or very similar) terms as existing GB scheme.	Introduced in 2025.	Employees currently receive up to 5 days' unpaid medical care leave.

<b>Protection from redundancy</b> pregnancy and maternity	Protection and priority for suitable alternative employment will be extended from notification of pregnancy to 18 months from birth,	Introduced in 2024.	An employee cannot be made redundant during maternity leave.
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For more information, or should you have any queries, please contact a member of our Employment Team.



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