

A guide to Labour Rights in Kosovo



The aim of this guide is to provide a clear and accessible overview of guaranteed labour rights in Kosovo, as well as protection mechanisms in cases of their violation.

The guide is primarily intended for young people, informal workers, and all individuals who wish to become informed about their rights in the world of work. It is of an informative nature only, and for detailed and individual legal assistance, contacting the competent institutions or qualified legal professionals is recommended.

“When work is fulfilling and dignified, when it respects our skills and nurtures our talents and soul, it becomes a source of satisfaction rather than a burden.”

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Introduction and Legal Framework

Labour rights in Kosovo represent a set of legal norms regulating relations between employees and employers, with the aim of ensuring dignified work, legal certainty, and social protection. The right to work, equal protection, and prohibition of discrimination are guaranteed by the Constitution of Kosovo^[1].

The main source of labour law is the Labour Law, which regulates the establishment, duration, and termination of employment relationships, the rights and obligations of contractual parties, as well as special forms of employee protection.^[2] In addition, labour rights are further regulated by laws on anti-discrimination, gender equality, and occupational safety and health.^[3]

Kosovo also relies on international standards, particularly the conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which form the foundation of modern labour legislation.^[4]

Employment Contract

An employment contract is the foundation of every employment relationship and the main instrument of legal security for employees.

The law stipulates that employment must be established through a written contract, which must contain all essential elements of the employment relationship.^[5]

The law distinguishes between: Open-ended employment contracts as the standard form of employment, and Fixed-term contracts, which may be used only when there is a justified and temporary reason.^[6]

Mandatory elements of an employment contract include:

- job description and type of work,
- place of work,
- duration of the contract,
- working hours,
- salary amount,
- conditions and deadlines for termination of employment.



[1] Constitution of Kosovo, Article 49.

[2] Labour Law of Kosovo, No. 03/L-212.

[3] Law on Protection from Discrimination; Law on Occupational Safety and Health.

[4] International Labour Organization (ILO), Fundamental Conventions.

[5] Labour Law of Kosovo, Articles 10-15.

[6] Ibid. (same source as above).



Working Hours, Breaks, and Rest Periods

Working hours directly affect employees' health and quality of life.

The Labour Law prescribes full-time work of 40 hours per week, with mandatory respect for daily and weekly rest periods.^[7]

Overtime work is permitted only in exceptional circumstances and must not be used as a regular practice.^[8]

Employees are entitled to:

- a daily break during working hours,
- a weekly rest period of at least 24 hours,
- additional compensation for overtime work.

Salary and Minimum Wage

Salary represents a basic economic right of the employee and must be paid regularly, in full, and in accordance with the employment contract.

^[9] Unlawful deductions from salary are not permitted, except in cases prescribed by law or with the employee's written consent.

The minimum wage is determined by a decision of the Government of Kosovo and aims to protect employees from exploitation and poverty.^[10] According to Government Decision No. 10/273 of 31 October 2025, the minimum wage is set as follows:

- €425 gross from 1 January 2026, • €500 gross from 1 July 2026. ^[11] ^[12]



[7] Labour Law of Kosovo, Article 20.

[8] Ibid., Articles 21–25.

[9] Labour Law of Kosovo, Article 56.

[10] Decisions of the Government of Kosovo on the Minimum Wage

[11] See at

[https://www.zeri.info/aktuale/607781/hyn-ne-fuqi-vendimi-i-qeverise-per-pagen-minimale-nnga-janari-425-euro-dhe-500-euro-ne-korrik/](https://www.zeri.info/aktuale/607781/hyn-ne-fuqi-vendimi-i-qeverise-per-pagen-minimale-nga-janari-425-euro-dhe-500-euro-ne-korrik/)

[12] The amounts refer to gross wages and may be subject to further amendments by Government decisions.

Annual Leave and Absences

The right to rest is one of the basic social rights of employees. The law guarantees at least four weeks of paid annual leave.^[13].

In addition to annual leave, employees are entitled to:

- sick leave with medical certification,
- paid leave for family and personal reasons,
- leave in case of work-related injury.

These rights aim to preserve employees' health and work capacity.^[14]

Maternity and Parental Leave

Protection of parenthood is one of the most important areas of labour law. The law guarantees women the right to maternity leave of up to 12 months, with combined financial support from the employer and the state.^[15].

During pregnancy and maternity leave, an employee may not be dismissed, except in exceptional cases prescribed by law.

^[16]. Fathers also have the right to limited parental leave, promoting a more equal distribution of family responsibilities.



Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment at Work

Gender-based violence and sexual harassment represent a serious violation of labour and human rights. Sexual harassment includes any unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that violates the dignity of the employee.^[17].

Employers are obliged to:

- prevent violence and harassment at work,
- establish reporting mechanisms,
- protect victims from retaliation.

These obligations are further strengthened by ILO Convention No. 190 (2019), which for the first time regulates violence and harassment in the world of work at the international level.^[18].



[13] Labour Law of Kosovo, Article 26.

[14] Ibid., Articles 27–32.

[15] Labour Law of Kosovo, Article 49.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Law on Gender Equality of Kosovo.

[18] International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 190 (2019).

Protection Against Discrimination

Discrimination in employment and work is prohibited at all stages of the employment relationship, including recruitment, working conditions, promotion, and termination.^[19]

Protected grounds include sex, gender, ethnicity, language, age, disability, and family status. Employees who experience discrimination have the right to judicial and institutional protection.

Occupational Safety and Health

Safe and healthy working conditions are a fundamental right of employees and a legal obligation of employers. Employers are required to take preventive measures to reduce the risk of injuries and occupational diseases.^[20]

This area is particularly important in high-risk sectors, such as construction, industry, and security services.



Termination of Employment

Termination of employment must be lawful, reasoned, and conducted with respect for the employee's dignity.

Dismissal must be delivered in writing and in accordance with the law.^[21]

Unlawful dismissals may be subject to judicial protection and compensation for damages.

Trade Unions and Collective Bargaining

Workers have the right to freely organize into trade unions and participate in collective bargaining.^[22] This right represents a key element of social dialogue and protection of collective employee interests.

Institutional Protection and Legal Remedies

Employees may seek protection of their rights before the Labour Inspectorate, courts, and the Ombudsperson of Kosovo.^[23] The effectiveness of these mechanisms is crucial for the practical enforcement of labour legislation.



[19] Law on Protection from Discrimination of Kosovo.

[20] Law on Occupational Safety and Health.

[21] Labour Law of Kosovo, Articles 70–76.

[22] International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 87.

[23] Law on the Labour Inspectorate of Kosovo.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Do I have to have a written employment contract to be protected by law? ▼

No. Although the law requires a written contract, a person who actually performs work is entitled to legal protection. If you work under the employer's instructions, during fixed working hours and for remuneration, an employment relationship is considered to exist.

Can my employer dismiss me without explanation? ▼

No. Termination must be lawful, justified, and delivered in written form, in accordance with the law. Verbal or sudden dismissal without justification is not permitted. You have the right to seek legal protection and request a review of the lawfulness of the dismissal.

Does overtime work have to be paid? ▼

Yes. Overtime work must be paid separately or compensated with time off, in accordance with the law. Continuous overtime without agreement and compensation is not permitted.

Is delay or non-payment of salary a violation of the law? ▼

This constitutes a violation of the law. Wages must be paid in accordance with the employment contract and the law. Failure to pay wages or delays in payment may be reported to the Labour Inspectorate or pursued through court proceedings.

Competent Institutions

Institution	Functions and Responsibilities
Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers of Kosovo	The Ministry is responsible for the development and implementation of policies in the fields of labour, employment, and social protection. Citizens may contact this Ministry to obtain information on applicable regulations, labour rights, as well as public policies related to labour and social protection.
Central Labour Inspectorate	The Central Labour Inspectorate oversees the implementation of the Labour Law. Employees may contact it in cases of non-payment of wages, work without an employment contract, unpaid overtime work, unlawful dismissal, violations of working hours, as well as issues related to occupational safety and health. The Inspectorate may conduct inspections of employers and order the removal of irregularities.
The Ombudsperson Institution	The Ombudsperson Institution protects the human rights and freedoms of citizens in their relations with public institutions. Citizens may address the Ombudsperson in cases of discrimination, violations of rights by institutions, failure of public authorities to act, or abuse of official position. The procedure is free of charge and does not require a lawyer.
The Free Legal Aid Agency	The Free Legal Aid Agency provides legal advice, assistance in drafting legal submissions, and representation before courts and institutions to individuals who meet the statutory requirements. It is particularly important for citizens with low incomes who cannot afford a lawyer, including in cases involving violations of labor rights.
Osnovni sud u Mitrovici	The Basic Court in Mitrovica has jurisdiction over labor and civil disputes, including lawsuits related to unpaid wages, unlawful dismissal, and other violations of labor rights. Judicial protection is used when a dispute cannot be resolved through labor inspection or other mechanisms

Contacts of Competent Institutions:

Institution	Phone	Email
Ministry of Finance, Labour and Transfers of Kosovo „Lluan Haradinaj“ street, 10000, Priština	+ 383 (0) 38 200 34 008	zkp.mf@rks-gov.net
Central Labour Inspectorate Qamil Hoxha No. 30, 10000 Priština	+ 383 (0) 38 200 26 041	Vesel.Zhinipotoku@rks-gov.net <i>Acting Executive Director: Vesel Zhinipotoku</i>
Ombudsperson Institution of Kosovo (Head Office) "MIGJENI" No. 21, 10000 Priština	+383 (0) 38 223 782	info.oik@oik-rks.org
Regional Office in North Mitrovica "Sami Frashëri" St, Bosniak Mahala	+ 383 (0) 45 455 319	
Free Legal Aid Agency Regional Office Mitrovica, Isa Boletini Square No. 27	0800 11 777	Info.ANJF@rks-gov.net
Basic Court in Mitrovica Filipa Visnjca st, North Mitrovica	+ 383 (0) 3820017732	gjthmitrovice@rks-gov.net

Decent work is not a privilege, it is a fundamental

HUMAN RIGHT

