This chapter addresses a number of legislative regimes creating rights that affect the balance between work and life outside of work. Specifically, the discussion focuses on rights to a guaranteed minimum wage; to rest breaks, paid leave, and a maximum 48-hour working week; to maternity, paternity, adoption, and other parental leave; and to request flexible working arrangements. Although not all of these rights can claim work-life balance as their original policy driver, they have come to be seen as representing a loosely coherent programme for ensuring that the process of earning a living does not preclude any worker from enjoying other aspects of life, especially family life. The chapter considers, singly, each of these work-life rights, and the policies and legislation behind them. Gender inequality forms a central theme of the chapter, noting that many work-life balance problems flow from unequal gender norms in the home, and that legislation should be judged according to how forthrightly it tackles these inequalities.
5. The work–life balance legislation

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