

Total statutory leave (including additional childcare leaves): April 2017

The table summarises (i) the total amount of **post-natal** statutory leave (Maternity, Paternity, Parental, Childcare) available in each country per family, as well as (ii) the total amount paid in any way, and (iii) the number of months of well paid leave, i.e. paid for all or part of duration to all parents at high flat rate (€1,000/month or more) or 66 per cent of earnings or more, the latter being an indicator used by the European Commission in monitoring member states' progress in meeting Employment Guidelines (European Commission (2010) *Indicators for monitoring the Employment Guidelines including indicators for additional employment analysis, 2010 compendium*, Table 18.M3. Available at: <http://www.nbbmuseum.be/doc/seminar2010/fr/bibliographie/risque/compendiumjul2010.pdf>

It is important to note that the total leave available per family does not always equate to the period of time after the birth of a child that parents in a family can take leave. For example, Paternity leave is usually taken by fathers at the same time that mothers are on Maternity leave, i.e. concurrently and not consecutively. While in some cases, both parents are entitled to a period of Parental leave but may only take that leave until their child reaches a certain age, e.g. in the Czech Republic and Spain both mothers and fathers can take leave until their child is 36 months old – so that the total leave available to the family is 72 months (36+36 months), but that leave can only be taken until a child's third birthday.

The **total amount of leave** offered in the countries (counting Canada and Québec, and the public and private sectors in Brazil and Greece separately) ranges from none to 132.1 months, while total paid leave ranges from none to 38.1 months. Applying the 66 per cent of earnings 'well-paid' standard the median length of leave seen across countries reduces, with four countries offering nothing and only 13 countries, plus the Greek public sector, offering 12 months or more.

On the basis of this indicator, countries can be divided into three groups:

- a. **Countries providing earnings-related post-natal leave (at two-thirds or more replacement rate) of nine months or over:** Austria, Bulgaria, Québec in Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Japan, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Sweden. In most cases, the earnings-related leave includes a period of Parental leave. In most cases, too, the earnings-related payment is subject to a ceiling, above which no payment is made.
- b. **Countries providing four to seven months of earnings-related post-natal leave, often confined to Maternity and a shorter Paternity leave:** includes a number of continental Western European countries, New Zealand (called Primary Carer leave) and Brazil.
- c. **Countries providing less than four months of earnings-related post-natal leave, often confined to Maternity leave:** includes five of the mainly English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, Ireland, United Kingdom, United States), plus Belgium, China, France, Israel, Italy, Korea, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, the Russian Federation, South Africa and Switzerland. It should be noted that Québec, which now has responsibility for its own leave policy, is on a par with the top group of countries; the rest of Canada offers up to 50 weeks of earnings-

related leave, but at 55 per cent of earnings it falls just below the EC indicator criterion; it also has a rather low ceiling. The United States is the only country to provide no period of paid statutory leave of any kind; while Ireland is the only country with statutory leave that does not include any period of high income-related payment.

Previous analysis has indicated a relationship between fathers' use of leave entitlements and the availability of **well-paid 'father-only' leave**: the more such leave there is, the more leave fathers take. The Table, therefore, includes (i) the total period of 'fathers-only' leave provided by each country, and (ii) the period of 'fathers-only' leave paid at two-thirds or more of earnings (although the qualification about ceilings on payments needs again to be borne in mind). Seven countries (Austria, Canada excluding Québec, Russia, Slovakia, South Africa, Switzerland and the USA) have no 'father-only' leave. Of the countries that do provide such leave, the range of the potential duration of leave is wide; from less than a week to three years. For the most important indicator - length of leave paid at two-thirds of earnings – only six countries offering more than two months (the Nordic states, plus Japan and Luxembourg).

Emphasis is placed here on payment for leave-takers, justified by the clear relationship between take-up and payment. How are these **payments funded**? Generally statutory leave payments come from some form of contributory insurance fund, financed by contributions from employers and, often, employees, and sometimes with contributions from general taxation; the costs are pooled or collectivised, rather than individual employers paying their own workers. In some cases employers may make 'top up' payments, adding to the statutory benefits received by their employees, as a result either of collective agreements or individual company policies. The main exception to this picture is when parents on leave receive a general 'childrearing' benefit that is paid to all parents with young children, not just confined to those taking leave; in such cases, payments usually come from general taxation. An exception is France, where such payments are funded by the family allowance fund, financed by contributions from employers and employees.

Note on Table: the '**total amount**' column sums the maximum leave available to mothers and fathers in a two parent family from Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Childcare/Time Credit, **including** any Parental leave bonus, leaves but **excluding** leave to care for sick children. As parents may take some of this leave concurrently (e.g. Paternity leave at the same time as Maternity leave), it does not indicate the child's age when all leave ends.

Key

Total amount of post-natal leave available to two-parent family. Paid: payment may be flat rate and/or earnings-related. The generosity of flat rate payments relative to individual earnings varies across and sometimes within countries. See country notes for more detailed information.

Well paid: earnings-related payment at 66 per cent of earnings or above; **✗**: not paid or not well paid; *****: ceiling on earnings-related payment.

Country	Total amount of post-natal leave available to two-parent family (months)			Period of 'father-only' leave (months)	
	Total	Paid	Well paid	Total	Well paid
Australia	24.0	4.7	×	12.0	×
Austria ¹	24.0	35.0 (incl. 7.0 bonus)	14.0 (incl. bonus 2 for Parental leave)*	×	×
Belgium ²	11.3 plus Career break	11.3 plus Career break	3.3*	4.5	0.5*
Brazil ³	4.2 to 6.5	4.2 to 6.5	4.2 to 6.5	0.2 to 0.5	0.2 to 0.5
Bulgaria	36.0	24.0	12.0	1	×
Canada	12.0	11.6	×	×	×
Québec ⁴	12.8	12.8	11.2	1.2	1.2
China	2.7	2.7	2.7	(7 to 30 days)	(7 to 30 days)
Croatia ⁵	46.0	14.0	6.0	4.0	×
Czech Rep ⁶	72.0	36.0	24.0*	36.0	×
Denmark ⁷	14.4	14.4	11.2*	7.9	7.9*
Estonia	36.5	36.5	18.5*	0.5	0.5*
Finland ⁸	38.1	38.1	11.1*	2.1	2.1*
France ⁹	72.5	9.8 to 36.5	3.8*	36.5	0.5*

¹ Austria: Flat-rate payment options are flexible over a certain time-span. There is also an income-dependent option available to some parents, with payment at 80 per cent of earnings for 12 to 14 months; in this case, the total length of well-paid leave would increase to 15.8 months. Payment periods are extended if both parents use some of the benefit period.

² Belgium: In addition to Parental leave, men and women are entitled to at least one year of time credit/career break (per working life) paid at a low flat rate.

³ Brazil: Longer for some public and private sector employers; less for remainder.

⁴ Québec: Parents can opt for shorter, higher paid leave or longer, lower paid leave.

⁵ Croatia: In the case of twins or other multiple births or for the third and every subsequent child, parents are entitled to improved leave, 36 months at 100 per cent of earnings, with no ceiling for six months of Maternity leave but with a ceiling for the subsequent period of leave, the ceiling reducing after six months.

⁶ Czech Republic: Parents can choose to receive Parental benefit at 70 per cent of earnings until their child is 24 months, though with a low ceiling; or at a lower rate for a longer period.

⁷ Denmark: Parents can opt for shorter and higher paid Parental leave or longer and lower paid leave; each parent is entitled to 32-46 weeks of Parental leave, but the total period cannot exceed 32-46 weeks per family.

⁸ Finland: Total post-natal leave includes period of low paid Childcare ('Home care') leave. Maternity, Paternity and Parental leave paid at 70-75 per cent of earnings, but proportion is lower for higher earnings.

Germany	72.0	28 (incl. 4 bonus)	14 (incl. 2 bonus)*	36.0	✗
Greece ¹⁰					
Private sec	13.9	12.1	6.1	4.1	(2 days)
Public sec	132.1	12.1	12.1	60.1	(2 days)
Hungary ¹¹	36.2	36.2	24.2*	(1 week)	(1 week)
Iceland ¹²	17.0	9.0	9.0*	7.0	3.0
Ireland	18.1	6.0	✗	4.7	✗
Israel	12.0	3.3	3.3	12.0	✗
Italy	14.8 (incl. bonus 1)	14.8 (incl. bonus 1)	3.8	7.1 (incl. bonus 1)	0.1
Japan ¹³	26.0 (incl. bonus 2)	26.0 (incl. bonus 2)	13.9*	12.0	6
Korea	27.1	27.1	3.0* (or 6.0 if second parent takes Parental leave)	12.1	0.1 (or 3.1 if takes Parental leave after partner)
Lithuania	36.9	24.9	12.9*	0.9	0.9
Luxembourg ¹⁴	13.9	13.9	9.9	6.0	4.0
Malta					
Private sec	12.2	4.2	3.3	(1 day)	(1 day)
Public sec	76.4	4.3	3.3	4.2	(2 days)
Mexico	1.6	1.6	1.6	(5 days)	(5 days)
Netherlands	14.8	14.8	2.8	(5 days)	(2 days)
New Zealand	12.5	4.2	4.2	1 or 2 weeks	✗

⁹ France: Payment is made for six months to parents with one child or 12 months if both parents take a period of leave; or for 24 months to parents with two or more children or 36 months if both parents take a period of leave.

¹⁰ Greece: Total post-natal leave includes possibility of taking reduced hours working entitlement as a period of additional full-time leave. Total includes one period of Maternity leave; two periods (for mother and father) of Parental leave; and one period of flexible working entitlement taken as full-time leave.

¹¹ Hungary: A parent with three or more children may take leave paid at a low flat rate until the eighth birthday of the youngest child.

¹² Iceland: Includes period of unpaid Childcare Leave after Parental leave.

¹³ Japan: Each parent can take leave until a child is 12 months old, but this can be extended by two months if the leave is shared. The 26 months given here include the extra two months if leave has been shared.

¹⁴ Luxembourg: based on full-time employed parents, taking the option of full-time leave.

Norway ¹⁵	37.5	13.5	13.5*	2.8	2.3
Poland	48.5	36.5 ¹⁶	12.5	1.5	0.5
Portugal ¹⁷	37.0	13.0	7.0	4.0	0.9
Romania	24.0	24.0	24.0	1.25	1.25
Russian Fed.	36.0	18.0	2.3*	×	×
Slovakia	36.0	36.0	6.5*	×	×
Slovenia	12.7	11.9	0.8	1.7	0.8
South Africa	4.0	×	×	×	×
Spain ¹⁸	72.0	4.7 to 5.1	4.7 to 5.1*	36.0	0.93*
Sweden ¹⁹	36.5	16	13	3.3	3.3
Switzerland	3.7	3.3	3.3*	×	×
U. Kingdom	20.9	9.5	1.4	4.6	×
USA	×	×	×	×	×
Uruguay					
Public	3.1	3.1	3.1	(10 days)	(10 days)
Private	3.5	3.5	3.5	(7 to 10 days)	(7 to 10 days)

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¹⁵ Norway: Parents can opt for shorter and higher paid leave or longer and lower paid leave.

¹⁶ Poland: 48.5 months paid if two or more children. Total leave calculations include bonus month.

¹⁷ Portugal: Mothers can opt for shorter and higher paid Maternity leave or longer and lower paid leave. Fathers are entitled to four weeks 'Father's-only Parental leave', out of which two weeks must be taken immediately after birth; to receive payment, parents must take 'Additional Parental leave' immediately after 'Initial Parental leave'. This means that the 'Father's-only Parental leave' will be taken at the same time as 'Initial Parental leave'.

¹⁸ Spain: Includes period of reduced working hours after Maternity leave, which can be consolidated to add two to four weeks of full-time leave.

¹⁹ Sweden: Paid Parental leave is for 480 days, the denomination in days intended to indicate and encourage flexible use (e.g. a parent can take five paid days of leave for every one calendar week). In addition, each parent is entitled to take unpaid leave until a child is 18 months.