

Czech Republic¹⁹⁹

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For comparisons with other countries in this review on leave provision and early childhood education and care services, please see the [cross-country tables](#) at the front of the review (also available individually on the [Leave Network website](#)). To contact authors of country notes, see the [members page](#) on the Leave Network website.

1. Current leave and other employment-related policies to support parents

a. Maternity leave (*materska dovolena*) (responsibility of the Social Security system)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- Twenty-eight weeks: 6 to 8 weeks before the birth and 20 to 22 weeks following the birth.
- It is obligatory to take 14 weeks, including at least six weeks after the birth.

Payment (applied for the whole period of Maternity leave) and funding

- Seventy per cent of daily assessment base up to a maximum payment of CZK53,910 [€2,127.38]²⁰⁰ in 2024 per month.
- Payments are made to mothers by the Social Security Administration. Employees apply to their employer (including former employers), who will ensure that the application and other documents relevant to the benefit decision are forwarded to the relevant Social Security Administration.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Payments are funded from the sickness insurance scheme with contributions by employers, paying 2.1 per cent of earnings. From 1 January 2024, the employee also pays sickness insurance at 0.6 per cent of earnings.

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²⁰⁰ Conversion of currency undertaken for 15 July 2024, using: <https://data.ecb.europa.eu/currency-converter>.

Flexibility in use

- Leave can be started 6 to 8 weeks before birth.
- From the start of the 7th week after childbirth, either parent may use the leave, i.e., the mother may alternate with the father of the child, with no restriction on the frequency of alternation. If the father uses the leave, he must do so for at least 7 days.
- Parents on leave can work from the start of the 7th week after childbirth, but not on the same job from which they are taking leave.

Eligibility (e.g., related to employment or family circumstances)

- To be eligible for maternity benefit, an employee must have contributed to sickness insurance for at least 270 calendar days during the last 2 years. There are no further citizenship requirements.
- A self-employed worker must meet the same condition as an employee, and, in addition, have contributed to sickness insurance for at least calendar 180 days during the last year.
- Students are entitled to the benefit.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g., multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; single parent); or delegation of leave to person other than the mother

- In the case of multiple births, the length of leave is increased by 9 weeks.
- When the child is stillborn, the mother is granted 14 weeks of Maternity leave.

b. Paternity leave

Length of leave

- Fourteen calendar days.

Payment and funding

- Seventy per cent of daily assessment base up to an upper limit of CZK25,144 [€992.23] in 2024 per fourteen days.
- Payments are made to fathers by the Social Security Administration. Employees apply to their employer (including former employers), who will ensure that the application and other documents relevant to the benefit decision are forwarded to the relevant Social Security Administration.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Payments are funded from the sickness insurance scheme with contributions by employers, paying 2.1 per cent of earnings. From 1 January 2024, the employee also pays sickness insurance at 0.6 per cent of earnings.

Flexibility in use

- It can be taken at any time during the 6 weeks after the birth of the child. The period of the 6 weeks can be prolonged by the child's hospitalization period.
- All 14 days must be taken as one continuous period.

Eligibility (e.g., related to employment or family circumstances)

- Sickness insured workers, including employees and self-employed men.
- The recipient must be officially registered as the father.
- It is also payable to a father whose child was stillborn or died within 6 weeks of the date of birth.

c. Parental leave (*rodicovska dovolena*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Work and Social Affairs)

Length of leave

- Both parents can take leave until the child's 3rd birthday. Leave is an individual entitlement, but only one parent at a time is entitled to the benefit.

Payment and funding

- A parental benefit or **Parental Allowance** – *rodicovsky prispevek* – is available to all families who meet the eligibility conditions, whether or not they take Parental leave. It can be considered as a home-care benefit for at-home parents, as well as – partly – a benefit to subsidise care costs, since parents can work full-time or part-time while receiving this benefit (but access to publicly-funded childcare is then limited, see below).
- A parent who personally and duly cares for a child who is the youngest in the family is entitled to the Parental Allowance. The Parental Allowance is provided until the total amount of CZK350,000 [€13,811.61] has been drawn, before the child's third birthday. In the case of twins or more children born at the same time, the total amount extends to CZK525,000 [€20,717.41]. One time payment of the unused amount is provided if another child is born before drawing the entire amount of CZK350,000 [€13,811.61].
- A parent may choose the amount of monthly Parental Allowance they receive and thus the period of its drawing. The monthly amount of Parental Allowance is calculated based on the same daily assessment base as is used for the determination of Maternity benefit or Sickness benefit related to the child's confinement or adoption according to the Act on sickness insurance. If at least one parent in a family is a person participating in sickness insurance, the amount of Parental Allowance can reach 70 per cent of 30 times the daily assessment base (in 2024, CZK53,910 [€2,127.38] per month at the most). When the daily assessment base can be determined for both parents, the higher one is used for calculation. If the daily assessment base cannot be set for any parent, parents may select a monthly amount of

up to CZK13,000 [€513]. In the case of twins or more children born at the same time the monthly amounts are adjusted accordingly.

- While Parental leave can only be taken up to the child's 3rd birthday, the parental benefit is paid until the child's 4th birthday.
- Payments are made to the parent by the Labour Office of the Czech Republic.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Payments are funded from general taxation.

Flexibility in use

- The choice of the amount of Parental Allowance can be changed once every three months.
- Parents on leave can work without any limitation, but as they cannot make use of public childcare facilities, they are then responsible to ensure the care of the child by another person.
- Both parents can take Parental leave at the same time, but only one of them is entitled to the Parental Allowance. They can alternate in receiving the benefit as often they want.

Eligibility (e.g., related to employment or family circumstances)

- There are no special requirements for leave; however, each parent must ask for formal approval of the employer.
- Parents can choose the period and amount of the parental benefit that they receive, on the condition that at least one parent in a family is a person paying sickness insurance.
- Non-Czech nationals must have been registered as resident for at least one year.
- Payment of the parental benefit is conditional: where there is a child under 2 years of age, parents must not use a publicly funded ECEC service for more than 92 hours a month. There is no limitation on service use for older children.
- Parental leave is available to registered partners.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g., multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; single parent); or delegation of leave to person other than the parents

- In case of multiple births, the maximum amount payable for the whole period is CZK525,000 [€20,717.41]. The upper limit per month is 1.5 times higher than in the case of a single birth. Accordingly, if a parent has not paid sickness insurance, the upper limit is CZK19,500 [€769.50].
- Parental Allowance can be taken by grandparents or other persons where they provide day care for the child and the parents agree to transfer their entitlement.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

No statutory entitlement.

e. Other types of leave and flexible working

Adoption leave and pay

- For adoptive parents, the same regulations for Parental leave apply as for other parents.
- Same-sex couples can legally adopt.

Time off for the care of dependants

- Employees can take leave to care for a sick relative at home (in all cases of illness for a child under ten years of age – otherwise, only in the case of a serious illness).
- Leave is paid at 60 per cent of earnings up to an upper limit of CZK1452 [€57.30] per day.
- A parent can take no more than 9 days of leave in one continuous period, but there is no limit regarding the frequency of taking leave. Parents may alternate with each other in taking leave to care for a sick child.
- There are no length of service requirements in order to be eligible.

Specific provision for (breast)feeding

- None.

Flexible working

- Only two forms are regulated by law, namely flexible working (§ 85, 97 and 98 of Act No. 262/2006 Coll. of the Labour Code) and part-time work (§ 80 of Act No. 262/2006 Coll. of the Labour Code). Moreover, according to § 241 of the Labour Code, in the case of an employee caring for a child under the age of 15, the employer is obliged to grant the request for part-time work unless serious operational reasons or the nature of the work prevent it. Homeworking is not yet regulated by law and therefore there is no legal entitlement to it. According to the amendment to the Social Security Contributions Act, part-time work should be easier for parents with children under 10 years of age, as it allows employers to receive a 5 per cent discount on the social security contributions they pay for part-time workers. However, part-time workers often have less opportunity for job advancement, less entitlement to employee benefits, less job security and less participation in company training programmes. There is also a disadvantage in terms of reduced income and the impact on social security, which is reflected in low pensions.

2. Relationship between leave policy and early childhood education and care policy

The maximum period of paid post-natal leave is three years, but the period of well-paid leave depends on how parents use the Parental Allowance. There is an entitlement to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) from three years of age

and attendance is compulsory from five years of age, one year before compulsory schooling begins. There is no gap, therefore, between the end of leave and an ECEC entitlement but a gap between the end of well-paid leave and the start of an ECEC entitlement.

For ECEC attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' in the [cross-country tables](#) at the front of the review.

3.Changes in policy since April 2023 (including proposals currently under discussion)

Since 1 January 2024 the parental allowance has been increased from CZK300,000 [€11,838.52] to CZK350,000 [€13,811.61] and the duration of its receipt has been reduced by one year to three years for children born from 1 January 2024 while for children born by the end of 2023, the parental allowance remained CZK 300,000 [€11,838.52] with the a duration of 4 years.

In April 2023, the government approved an amendment to the Labour Code which should improve the position of parents with children under 10 years of age, as they will be entitled to flexible working, part-time working and homeworking, unless the employer gives written reasons for refusing them. However, the amendment still needs to be approved by the Parliament.

4. Uptake of leave

a. Maternity leave

Nearly all mothers take Maternity leave.

b. Paternity leave

Over 40 per cent of fathers take Paternity leave, with the proportion of men taking Paternity leave increasing slightly since 2018 when it was introduced, i.e., from 38 per cent in 2018 to 43 per cent in 2021.

c. Parental leave

Legislation on Parental leave (so that fathers could take leave) was introduced in 1990, but truly equal conditions for both parents were not introduced until January 2001. However, the number of men receiving the parental benefit (Parental Allowance), in comparison to women, has remained negligible: in 2001, men accounted for 0.77 per cent of recipients of this benefit, and subsequently there was a slight increase, but only to 0.99 per cent in 2003, 1.4 per cent in 2006 and 1.5 per cent in 2008, when 5,724 men received the parental benefit (for context, 375,876 women received the benefit in that year). Since 2008, however, there have been no further increase: in 2010, 4,986 men received the parental benefit, compared with 328,777 women (i.e., 1.5 per cent of recipients were men, the same proportion as in 2008). Since 2011 a slight and continuous increase is apparent. In 2015, 5,100 men received the parental benefit (i.e., 1.8 per cent of

all recipients) and in 2016, 5,200 men received the parental benefit (i.e., 1.9 per cent of all recipients). Currently, the proportion of men drawing parental allowance is close to 2 per cent.

There is no information about how long women or men take Parental leave for. It is assumed that most parents taking leave do so only until their child's third birthday (when their entitlement to leave, although not the benefit, ends) as they prefer not to lose their jobs.