

Statutory other measures: April 2024

Most countries include some provision to take **leave in the case of the illness of a child**. There are a few exceptions, e.g. China, Iceland, Mexico, Turkey, Uruguay. However, in Iceland, most of the parents are covered via collective agreements. In Malta, the right is limited to the public sector, and not available for private sector employees. For **European Union** member states, the **Work-life Balance Directive** gives all workers an entitlement to 'time off from work on grounds of force majeure for urgent family reasons in cases of sickness or accident making their immediate presence indispensable,' yet without specifying minimum requirements for length of time or payment. In some cases, leave is allocated in the number of days in total in a given year; in others, it is allocated in terms of number of days per illness. Leave is often paid and often at a high level of income replacement, usually without an upper limit. In some cases, the length of leave entitlement decreases as children get older. Along with length, payment varies considerably.

Many countries also offer **additional leave entitlements to care for their family members**, in some cases for public sector employees only (e.g., Brazil, Malta). Conditions for taking leave vary, from countries where leave is available in the case of ordinary illness, through to countries where it is confined to the serious or terminal illness or care of a very dependent relative. There may be further provisions to care for dependants with disabilities (for these, please consult the country notes). Length, payment, and other dimensions of leave also vary considerably.

Legislation which entitles parents to **reduce working hours** specifically during their child's early months is fairly common across the countries in the review. In some cases, usually focused on the period shortly after childbirth, this is intended to **facilitate the (breast-)feeding** of the child by the mother; but in several cases, this reduction has evolved into a general right that can be taken for any reason and/or by the father (e.g., Japan, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain). Parents who are allowed to reduce their working hours in this way are usually entitled to earnings compensation. In Spain, reduced daily hours can be consolidated into full-time leave, thus, in practice, extending Maternity leave by between 2 to 4 weeks. In other cases, parents have the right to reduce working hours, extending beyond the early months after childbirth, and intended to support **combining care and (part-time) employment** (e.g., in Austria, Germany, Croatia, Finland).

Finally, in a growing number of countries – which is also stipulated by the EU Work-Life Balance Directive – the parents have a legal **right to request flexible working** (often in a specific form) from their employers. Typically, employers must consider their request and may only refuse it if there is a clear business case for doing so. In Bulgaria, mothers of children under the age of six have – in

principle – the right to work from home. We may expect rights to work (partially) from home to be further expanded, in particular in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and growing attention given to flexible working arrangements. In some countries (e.g. Iceland), employers are required to make the necessary arrangements to enable employees to balance family life and work, including the arrangement of work in a flexible manner.

Table 5: Statutory other measures (April 2024)

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Argentina Private sector	✗	✗	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day	✗	Yes: Teleworkers who provide care for children under the age of 13 years or for disabled or older adults who require specific care have the right to have work schedules that are compatible with their care responsibilities, as well as to have breaks in their working day.
Public sector	■■■ 20 days per worker per year	■■■ 20 days per worker per year	■■■ two 1-hour breaks per day; or reduce working day by 2 hours	✗	✗
Australia	■■■ 10 days per worker per year	■■■ 10 days per year for immediate family	✗	✗	Yes: until child is 18 and all with caring responsibilities
Austria	■■■ 2 weeks per employee per year or ■ 9 months for a seriously ill child	■■■ 1 week per worker per year or ■ 5 months ■■ 4 weeks	■■■ 90-minute break per day	■ to 7 years (larger employers)	✗

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Belgium	■ 10 days per worker per year	■ 10 days per year or ■ 1 to 12 months for a severely ill family member or ■ 2 months for palliative care	■■■ 30-minute break per day if working up to 7.5 hours; 1 hour if working longer	×	■ 4-day working week
Bosnia and Herzegovina ³	■■■ varies by place	■■■ varies by place	■■■ time for break varies by place	■/■■■ right to work part-time and payment vary by place	×
Brazil	■■■ up to 60 days per illness + 30 days unpaid [public sector only]	[public sector only] ■■■ up to 60 days per illness for spouse or family member + 30 days unpaid	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day to 6 months	×	×
Bulgaria	■■■ up to 60 calendar days per year	■■■ up to 60 calendar days per year for family members (incl. children)	■■■ 2 hours per day for full-time work, 1 hour per day for part-time	■ Right to <i>request</i> when returning to work after leave	Yes: Right to work from home (in principle ⁴) for mothers of children under 6

³ Bosnia and Herzegovina: While there are no statutory entitlements at the state level, leave to care for sick dependants and reduced hours for breastfeeding are regulated at the entity and cantonal levels (see country note for details).

⁴ Although there is this statutory right of remote working for mothers with children under the age of 6 years, in practice this is non-applicable. This is because employers in the private sector refuse flexible or remote working, based on the argument that private sector jobs require strict working hours and physical presence. This affects the majority of young Bulgarian women who primarily work in this sector. See additional comments in the Bulgarian country note.

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Canada	■ 3 to 10 days in 3 provinces ⁵	■ 8 to 28 weeks if 'significant risk of death' for a family member	×	×	Yes: Federal workers only (1 of 14 labour law jurisdictions)
Québec	■ 10 days per worker per year	■ 10 days per worker per year	×	×	×
Chile	■■■ children under 1 year have length of leave determined by doctor; for older children, 10 days of leave (or equivalent hours)	■ 10 days per year to care for a disabled person	■■■ 1 hour per day to 2 years	×	×
China	×	×	■■■ 1 hour per day, 2 hours for multiple births and nursing leave (in Yuannan and Shaanxi)	×	×
Colombia	■■■ 10 days per year per parent for serious illness of child under 18 years	■■■ for 'grave domestic crisis'; no specified length	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day to 2 years	×	×
Croatia	■■■ 20 to 60 days per illness per family	■■■ 20 days for illness of spouse + 7 days per year for serious illness of immediate family member ■■■ Force majeure leave	■■■ two 1 -breaks per day to 12 months	■ to 3 or 8 years for child with extra care/ developmental needs	Yes: until a child is 8, or to care for a dependant with a severe illness/ disability

⁵ Canada: a federal benefit lasting up to 35 weeks is available for parents with a critically ill child under 18 years of age; most provinces have legislated for a matching leave period.

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Cyprus	■ 7 days per year	■ 7 days per year	■ 1 hour per day to 6 months after Maternity leave; or arrive 1 hour later/leave 1 hour earlier	✗	Yes
Czech Republic	■■ 9 days per illness	■■ 9 days per serious illness for relative at home	✗	✗	Yes: for care of a child under 15
Denmark ⁶	■■■ 1 to 2 days per illness	✗	✗	✗	✗
Estonia	■■■ 14 days per illness per family	■■■ 7 calendar days for illness of a family member ■■ 5 working days per year to care for a relative with a severe disability	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day or one 1 hour break to 18 months	■■■ up to 10 days' additional paid leave plus a further 20 days unpaid ■■ 3 to 6 days' supplementary holiday	Yes
Finland	■■(■) ⁷ 4 days per illness for a child up to 10 years. Special care allowance up to 2.4 months for severe illness, hospitalisation or rehabilitation	■■ Leave of absence (unpaid) to take care of a family member (duration not specified)	✗	■■ to end of second year at school	✗

⁶ Denmark: no statutory entitlement to childcare leave or career breaks, dependent on collective agreement or individual contract.

⁷ Finland: length of leave (4 days) is defined by law; level of payment is determined by collective agreements. An allowance of 70 per cent of earnings is paid if the parent cannot work because of the hospitalization of a child under seven years of age, a severely ill child between seven and 15 years of age, or the rehabilitation of a child under 16 years of age.

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
France	■ 3 days per year or ■■ up to 3 years for serious disability or illness, with up to 310 days paid	■■ up to 3 years for care of terminally ill relative with up to 310 days paid	×	■■ child with disability; employees entitled to work part-time for family reasons	×
Germany	■■■ up to a maximum of 30 days at time, up to a maximum of 65 days per year for partnered parents (for working parents with statutory health insurance)	■ 10 days per illness + 6 months' long-term care for care-dependent relative	■■■ 60- to 90-minute break per day	■■ dependent relative with earnings re-allocation; right to reduced working hours for the 3 years following Elternzeit; additional 4 months of leave benefit ('partnership bonus') if both parents work long part-time hours	×
Greece Private sector	■■■ 6 to 10 days per year per parent for sickness plus 30 unpaid days for hospitalisation ■■■ 10 days per year per parent whose children (up to 18 years) need regular transfusion or dialysis, have cancer, or need a transplant funded. Parents of children up to 18 years of age who have significant learning difficulties, Down's	■ 5 days unpaid carer's leave per year for dependent family members ■■■ 2 x 1-day leave per year due to reasons of force majeure	×	■■■ 'Childcare' leave can be condensed to 3.6 months paid leave or to reduce hours for first 18 months of child's life.	Yes

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Public sector	<p>syndrome, or autism are also entitled to this leave.</p> <p>■■■ 6 to 10 days per year per parent for sickness plus 30 unpaid days for hospitalisation</p> <p>■■■ 22 - 32 days per year per parent whose children (up to 18 years) need regular transfusion or dialysis, have cancer, or need a transplant funded. Parents of children up to 18 years of age who have significant learning difficulties, Down's syndrome, or autism are also entitled to this leave.</p> <p>■■■ 2 days for care of child needing cancer treatment (2 days for each treatment)</p> <p>■■■ 6 days of leave for care of a child with a serious disability</p>	<p>■■■ 32 days for spouse with certain medical conditions</p> <p>■ 2 days for care of spouse needing cancer treatment (2 days for each treatment)</p>	×	<p>■■■ 'Childcare' leave can be condensed 9 months paid leave or to reduce hours for first 4 years of child's life.</p>	Yes
Hungary	<p>■■ unlimited to 14 days per family per year (according to age of</p>	×	<p>■■■ two 1-hour breaks per day to 6 months; 1-hour break to 9 months</p>	<p>■■ to 3 years for all and until youngest child turns 5, if 3+ children</p>	×

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
	child) plus additional leave days				
Iceland	✕	✕	✕	✕	Yes: employers required to support family/work balance
Ireland	■ ■ ■ 3 days per year per parent ■ 5 days per worker for serious medical reasons	■ or ■ ■ up to 104 weeks for dependents ■ 5 days per worker for serious medical reasons	■ ■ ■ 1 hour per day in breaks or reduced working day to 2 years	✕	Yes: on return from Parental leave
Israel	■ ■ ■ 8 days per parent per year from own sickness leave	■ ■ ■ 6 days per year for spouse or parents from own sickness leave	■ ■ ■ 1 hour per day to 4 months after Maternity leave; transferable to father	✕	✕
Italy	■ unlimited to 3 years; 5 days per year for children aged 3 to 8	■ ■ ■ up to 2 years across entirety of working life for serious family need	■ ■ ■ 1 to 2 hours per day until child 12 months; transferable to father in some circumstances	✕	Yes: until child is 6 years old or, if child has disabilities, until 18
Japan	■ 5 days per parent per year for child under CSA; 10 days if 2 or more children	■ ■ ■ up to 93 days over the lifetime of a family member with a serious illness or disability needing constant care for 2 weeks or more	■ two 30 minutes breaks per day to child 12 months	■ to 3 years	Yes: employees exempted from the entitlement to reduced hours to 3 years
Korea	■ 90 days per parent per year, minimum 30 days	■ 90 days per worker per year, minimum 30 days	■ ■ ■ two 30-minute breaks per day to 12 months	✕	✕
Latvia	■ ■ ■ 14 to 21 days per sickness episode for a child under 14	Carers leave of 5 working days (unpaid)	■ ■ ■ 30 minutes every 3 hours to 18 months; or reduce working day;	■ ■ ■ Up to 3 days' additional annual leave ■ to 14 years	Yes: pregnant women, women in postpartum period, breast-feeding

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours (Breast)feeding ¹		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others		Other	
			father or mother can use the right		mothers, and workers with a child up to 14 (or 18 if child has a disability)
Lithuania	■ 2 weeks per year per worker with a child under 14 years	✗	■■■ 30 minutes every 3 hours; or reduce working day		Yes; all employees
Luxembourg	■■■ Up to 18 days per child per year (varies by age) or up to 52 weeks if child disabled or seriously ill	✗	■■■ 2 45 minute breaks per day or 1 90 minute break	✗	Yes: civil servants after returning from parental leave
Malta					
Public sector	■ up to 1 year per parent for care of disabled child	■ up to 1 year per parent for care of spouse or parents	■■■ 1 to 3 breaks per day up to 1 hour in total	■■■ 20 to 35 hours per week until child is 16	Yes: remote working, compressed hours (renewable yearly)
Private sector	✗	■ Carer leave of 5 working days (unpaid)	✗	✗	Yes: carers and employees with children under 8 can request flexible working
Mexico	✗ ⁸	✗	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day to 6 months	✗	✗
Netherlands	■■■ 2 x working hours/week per year ■ 6 x working hours/week taken part-time per year	■■■ 2 x working hours/week) per year ■ 6 x working hours/week taken part-time per year	■■■ up to 25 per cent of working hours to 9 months	✗	Yes: flexible hours and working from home for all employees; does not apply if employer has less than

⁸ Mexico: only exception is full-time leave paid at 60 per cent of earnings to care for a child under 16 years of age diagnosed with cancer, during the period the child is in hospital or in need of continuous treatment

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
	where long-term care needed				10 employees and can be refused
New Zealand	■■■ 10 days per year	■■■ 10 days per year	■ right to request a break, can be refused	✗	Yes: but can be refused
Norway	■■■ 10 to 15 days per parent of child(ren) under 12 years per year; 20 to 30 days for single parent	■■■ Up to 60 days if caring for terminally ill family member in the home; 10 days every year to care for sick parents or spouse/partner	■■■ one 1-hour break per day to 12 months	■ to 10 years but can be refused	✗
Poland	■■■ 14 days per year per worker ■ 5 days leave per year to care for family member	■■■ 14 days per year per worker for family member in same household; ■ 5 days leave per year to care for family member	■■■ two 30-minute breaks per day while breast-feeding continues	✗	Yes: in certain circumstances (e.g. a disabled or seriously ill child) but can be refused
Portugal	■■ 30 days per year per family if child <12 years; 15 days if child >12 years. Also 6 months (or longer) per child for chronically ill or disabled child	■ 15 days per year for close relative + 15 days for severely disabled or chronically ill spouse	■■■ 2 hours per day to 12 months; father or mother can use the right	■ to 12 years	Yes: entitlement to work flexible hours until child 12 years
Romania	■■■ 45 days per year per family for child under 7 years (or 16 if serious	■■■ 5 days per year for relative or living in same household; 45 days per year to accompany	■■■ two 1-hour breaks per day to 12 months;	■■■ to 12 months ■■■ caring for elderly dependent relative	Yes: but can be refused

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
	illness or 18 if living with a disability)	person with cancer to treatment, if nominated by that person	or reduce working hours by two hours per day		
Russian Federation	■■■ 45 to 60 days per child per year depending on age of child; 4 days per month for child with disability	✗	■■■ 30 minutes every 3 hours per day to 18 months	■ Pregnant women and parents with a child under 14 years of age (or a disabled child under 18 years) can ask for shorter working hours, which are unpaid	■ Every employee can apply to their employer for a flexible schedule [but] the employer is not obliged to agree
Serbia	■■■ up to 15 days per illness episode for sick or injured family member younger than seven years of age or a family member older than seven years with severe developmental difficulties; up to 7 days per illness episode for the care of sick or injured family member older than seven years of age; up to 18 years of age in the case of a family member with severe health conditions	■■■ 5 days per year	■■■ 90 minutes per day to 12 months	✗	✗
Slovakia	■■ max 14 days per spell	■■ max 14 days per spell	■■■ two 30-minute breaks to 6 months,	✗	Yes: Pregnant women and women and men taking

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
			one 30-minute break to 12 months		care of children under 15 may ask for shorter working hours. Employers may decline the request due to serious operational reasons.
Slovenia	■■■ 10 to 20 days per illness, longer in exceptional cases	■■■ 10 days per illness for a spouse, longer in exceptional cases	■■ 1 hour per day to 18 months	■■ until 3 years, or longer if child lives with disability ⁹	✗
South Africa	■■■ 3 to 5 days per year	■■■ 3 to 5 days per year	■■■ Two 30-minute breaks per day up to 6 months postpartum * ¹⁰	✗	✗
Spain	■■■ 2 to 5 days per illness per parent; 3 to 5 days public sector or ■■■ unlimited for seriously ill child in hospital or needing treatment at home	■■■ 2 to 5 days per illness per worker or ■■ 2 to 3 years (for public sector) to care for a seriously ill relative	■■■ 1 hour per day for 9 or 12 months (public sector); individual, non-transferable right of both parents ¹⁰	■ until child is 12 years old, or longer if child lives with a disability	✗
Sweden	■■■ 120 days per child up to 12 years old per year ■■■ Unlimited for seriously ill child	■■■ Benefit for care of closely related (adult) person who is seriously ill (100 days)	■■■ (duration not specified)	■ reduced by 25 per cent up to 8 years; extendable in case of special needs	✗

⁹ Slovenia: social security contributions based on the proportional part of average earnings in the previous 12 months (at least on the minimum wage and up to 2.5 times the national average salary) are paid for the hours not worked.

¹⁰ Spain: reduced hours until child is nine to 12 months of age may be consolidated as two to four weeks of full-time leave.

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
Switzerland	<p>■■■ 3 days per illness episode per family for children (no yearly maximum). For other family members it's 3 days per illness episode but 10 days max. per year.</p> <p>■■■ 14 weeks (7 weeks per parent if 2 carers) to care for children after an accident / in case of serious illness</p>	■■■ 3 days per illness episode and max. 10 days per year	■■■ 30 minutes to 1.5 hour per day (depending on hours worked) to 12 months	×	×
Türkiye	×	×	■■■ 1.5 to 3 hours per day to 12 months	■ reduced by 50 per cent to 6 years; can be refused for most of period	×
United Kingdom	■ 'reasonable time'	■ 'reasonable time'	×	■ paid time off for both parents for antenatal care	Yes: all employees
USA	■ 12 weeks for a seriously ill child (medium or large employers only)	■ 12 weeks for a seriously ill spouse or parent (medium or large employers only)	■ Reasonable break time in private place (larger employers only)	×	×
Uruguay					
Private sector	×	×	×	■■■ to 5 months	×
Public sector	×	×	×	■■■ minimum of 4 hours per day when baby is	×

Country	Leave to care for sick dependents		Reduced hours		Right to request flexible work
	Children	Others	(Breast)feeding ¹	Other	
				between 3 and 12 months	
Vietnam	■■■ 20 working days for children under three; 15 working days for children aged three to seven	×	■■■ 60-minute break per working day for mothers of children under 12 months	■■■ Leave for pre-natal check-ups: 5 working days (additional 2 for risky pregnancies)	×

Notes: 1=This includes a reduction in hours, specifically referring to infant (breast)feeding, as well as the right to reduce hours in the months immediately after Maternity leave (up to 12 months after the birth) with no specific reason given.

Key: ×: no statutory entitlement. ■: statutory entitlement but unpaid, including EU member states covered by *force majeure* measure in Parental leave directive; ■■: statutory entitlement, paid but *either* at low flat-rate (less than €1,000/month) *or* earnings-related at less than 66 per cent of earnings *or* not universal; ■■■: statutory entitlement, paid for all or part of duration to all parents at an earnings-related level of 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>