

Cyprus¹⁸⁴

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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

Length of leave (prior to and following childbirth)

- 22 weeks, including 2 weeks before the birth.¹⁸⁵
- It is obligatory to take 11 weeks, including 2 weeks prior to the week of the expected birth and the rest following childbirth.

Payment, funding and taxation

- 72 per cent of earnings with no upper limit.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Payments are funded by the Social Insurance Services, with contributions by employers and employees (6.8 per cent of earnings from each) and the State (4.3 per cent).

Flexibility in use

- Maternity leave can start 2 weeks before the expected week of birth or from the week of the actual birth.

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

- Full-time and part-time female employees, as well as self-employed women and voluntarily insured women who are expecting a child, have adopted a

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¹⁸⁵ The Maternity Protection (Amendment) Law of 2024 (L. 14(I)/2024). Available at: https://www.cylaw.org/nomoi/arith/2024_1_014.pdf

child up to 12 years of age, surrogate mothers or mothers who have had a child through surrogacy are entitled to Maternity leave.

- Persons who have a permit or the right to reside and work in Cyprus are entitled to the benefits irrespective of nationality.

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 the birth of multiple children, the period of 22 weeks remains the same for the second child but is increased by 4 weeks for the third child (e.g., 22 weeks for twins and 26 weeks for triplets). Payment increases to 80 per cent, 90 per cent or 100 per cent of earnings for the second, third and fourth child respectively.
- In the case of premature labour or in any other case where the infant is hospitalised right after birth for health reasons, the mother is entitled to additional Maternity leave as follows: for the first 21 days that the infant is in an incubator, the employee is entitled to one additional week of Maternity leave. If the infant remains hospitalised after the first 63 days in an incubator, the employee is entitled to an additional week of leave for every additional 14 day period of hospitalisation up to a maximum of eight additional weeks in total.
- To be granted leave over and above a period of 22 weeks, the employee must provide her employer with written certification from the hospital and from a doctor with the relevant speciality.
- In the case of surrogate mothers, there is 14 weeks of leave starting two weeks before the expected week of confinement; and 22 weeks in the case of a woman getting a child through surrogacy, starting two weeks before confinement or from the same week. The leave period remains the same for the second child and extends to 26 weeks for the third or more children.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- For public sector employees, the first 12 weeks of leave are fully compensated, while the following 6 weeks are paid at 72 per cent of the employee's salary.
- Some private companies cover the remaining 28 per cent for the first child: in such cases, an employer can request the maternity benefit from the state on behalf of the employee, then add the balance, so that the employee receives a full salary from the employer.

b. Paternity leave

Length of leave

- 2 consecutive weeks.

Payment, funding and taxation

- 72 per cent of earnings with no upper limit.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Payments are funded by the Social Insurance Services, with contributions by employers, employees (6.8 per cent of earnings from each) and the State (4.3 per cent).

Flexibility in use

- Paternity leave may be used across any 2 consecutive weeks up to two weeks after the end of the Maternity leave, following the birth or the adoption of the child.
- The right to Paternity leave also applies in the case of childbirth resulting in the birth of a stillborn child.
- If the mother passes away before or during childbirth, or during her Maternity leave, the right to Paternity leave increases by the same number of weeks as the remaining weeks of Maternity leave that the mother would have been entitled to if she had not passed away.

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

- Paternity leave is granted to men whose partners have given birth or had a child through a surrogate mother; or have adopted a child under the age of 12 years.

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, payment increases to 80 per cent, 90 per cent or 100 per cent of earnings for the second, third and fourth child respective

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- None reported.

c. Parental leave

Length of leave

- 18 weeks per parent per child.
- Leave is an individual entitlement. A parent may transfer up to 9 weeks of unpaid Parental leave to the other.

Payment, funding and taxation

- 8 weeks are paid at 72 per cent of earnings with no upper limit. The remaining period is unpaid.
- The employee's social insurance contribution continues to be paid into their social insurance fund for the entirety of the leave period, directly from the Social Insurance Services.

Flexibility in use

- Parental leave can be taken any time between the end of Maternity or Paternity leave up until a child turns 15 years old. Parents with disabled children can take Parental leave until their child reaches 21 years.
- Parental leave can be taken for between 1 day (minimum) and 5 weeks (maximum) per calendar year for one or two children, and 7 weeks (maximum) for three or more children.
- When one parent has taken Parental leave of at least 2 weeks in a year, they can transfer 2 weeks per year from the rest of their leave to the other parent.

Eligibility

- All employed parents with non-disabled children up to the age of 15 years or disabled children up to the age of 21 years, who have completed at least six months of continuous employment with the same employer and have been employed for a period of 12 months within the previous 24 months before the start of the period for which parental leave benefits are being applied.
- Same-sex couples cannot legally parent a child together in Cyprus. They cannot adopt a child together or be recognised as the parent of a child who was conceived by a female partner through medically assisted reproduction. They are also not eligible to apply for surrogacy.

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 the case of premature birth or the mother having health issues, Parental leave can be taken before the expected week of birth.
- The duration of paid Parental leave is increased by 10 weeks for the second child and 12 weeks for the third child.
- In the case of widowed parents or single parents, the leave can be increased to 23 weeks.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- None reported.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

No statutory entitlement.

e. Other types of leave and flexible working

Adoption leave and pay

- 20 weeks if the child is under the age of 12 years.
- 14 weeks for surrogate mothers and 18 weeks for mothers who have a child through a surrogate mother.

Time off for the care of dependants

- An employee is entitled to take 7 days per year of unpaid **leave on grounds of force majeure** (i.e., for urgent cases such as a dependant being sick or in an accident). A dependant is defined as a child, parent, spouse, or partner in a civil union, or a person living in the same household who requires care due to serious medical reasons. Such leave may be taken as one continuous period or in parts. For married couples, each spouse is individually entitled to such leave.

Breastfeeding breaks

- Following Maternity leave, for the purposes of breastfeeding, a working mother has the right to arrive at work one hour later, leave work one hour earlier, or take a one hour break during the workday for a period of six months.

Flexible Work Arrangements

- Working parents have the right to request flexible working arrangements for care reasons. This includes adjusting employment patterns through remote work, flexible schedules, or reduced hours. To be eligible, employees must have completed six months of continuous employment with the same employer. Employers must respond to requests within 1 month and have the right to reject or postpone the request, providing relevant reasoning for their decision.

Antenatal appointments and care

- Pregnant employees are permitted paid time off for antenatal examinations, provided that such examinations need to be carried out during working hours. They should give advance notice to their employers and provide a relevant doctor's note.

Other provisions

- None reported.

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

The maximum period of post-natal leave is six months, with well-paid leave lasting only 5.6 months (including the new Parental leave). Attendance at ECEC is obligatory for children from the age of four years and six months. The target is to decrease the entry age by one month each year until it will be four years. There is a gap, therefore, of just over four years between the end of leave and an ECEC entitlement, and even longer between the end of well-paid leave and 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 2024 (including proposals currently under discussion)

In November 2024, the President of the Republic of Cyprus presented a second package of 'family and demographic support measures', including:

- Paid Parental leave for the second child increased from 8 to 10 weeks, and for the third child from 8 to 12 weeks.
- The age limit for Parental leave to be taken increased from 8 to 15 years, or 21 years for children with disabilities.
- Young mother financial incentive: €200 a month for 24 months for first-time mothers under age 30 years.
- Pilot extension of opening hours for childcare centers to 19.30.
- Employer-based childcare subsidies for firms or organizations with over 100 employees.
- Income and asset criteria for child allowance were removed for families with five or more dependent children.

A third package of measures is under preparation and will foresee tax and pension system reforms and the nationwide expansion of full-day primary education schools.

4. Uptake of leave

a. Maternity leave

6,383 applications for Maternity leave were approved in 2023.

b. Paternity leave

3,754 applications for Paternity leave were approved in 2023.

c. Parental leave

3,084 applications for Parental leave were approved in 2023.