

Hungary¹

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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

Note on terminology: the Hungarian terms for the two elements of the Parental leave arrangements discussed in 1c – GYES and GYED – include the word *gondozás*, that is ‘care’. By contrast, GYET - available for families with at least three children, after the youngest child getting older than three (see 1d) - includes the word *nevelés*, that is ‘upbringing’. The Hungarian terms for these three leave arrangements (1c and 1d) literally refer only to the payment element, although in practice they cover both leave periods and cash benefits (e.g. GYES is *Gyermekgondozást segítő ellátás*, literally ‘allowance to support childcare’²). The payment related to Maternity leave, has been re-named as ‘Infant care payment’ (CSED – *Csecsemőgondozási díj*) in 2015.

a. Maternity leave (*csecsemőgondozási díj*, CSED) (responsibility of the Ministry of Human Capacities)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- Twenty-four (24) weeks: up to four weeks prior birth. Two weeks are obligatory.

Payment (csecsemőgondozási díj) and funding

- Seventy per cent of actual average daily earning, with no ceiling on payments. In cases when there has been previous employment (i.e. the pregnant woman is eligible), but no actual income can be determined on the first day of eligibility (e.g. the pregnant woman is on sick leave for several months, or is self-employed and does not have an actual income), the payment is twice the daily amount of the official minimum wage. In this case, the payment is made by the Treasury, not by the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF).
- CSED is treated as gross income and taxed at 15 per cent, but family tax credit can be applied; social security (health and pension insurance) contributions are not deducted from the gross amount of CSED.

¹ Please cite as: Gábos, A. (2018) ‘Hungary country note’, in Blum, S., Koslowski, A., Macht, A. and Moss, P. (eds.) *International Review of Leave Policies and Research 2018*. Available at: http://www.leavenetwork.org/lp_and_r_reports/

² The name of GYES has been slightly modified (previously *Gyermekgondozási segély*) since 2016, while keeping the acronym.

- Funded by the NHIF (National Health Insurance Fund), which is financed through contributions from employers, employees and general taxation; employers and employees both pay six per cent of gross earnings.

Flexibility in use

- The starting date can be from four weeks prior to birth up to the birth itself.

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

- All mothers are entitled to 24 weeks unpaid Maternity leave.
- Employees and self-employed women with an employment record of at least 365 days within two years prior to the birth of a child (and the birth is given no later than the 42nd day after the end of employment) are entitled to the benefit payment during the period of Maternity leave. The 365-days period may include: 180 days of secondary or tertiary school attendance, duration of CSED or GYED (excluding *diplomás GYED*).

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

- If the new-born is cared for in an institute for prematurely born infants for a year, the unused portion of the Maternity leave can be taken up after the child is taken home.
- Guardians who care for the child are eligible.
- The father (birth or adoptive) is eligible if the mother dies or is not present in the household due to health-related reasons.

b. Paternity leave³ (responsibility of the Ministry of Human Capacities)

Length of leave

- Five (5) days.

Payment and funding

- Hundred per cent of father's average daily wage, with no ceiling on payments.
- Funding as for Maternity leave.

Flexibility in use

- Leave can be taken during the first two months of the child's life.

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

- All employed fathers.

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

³ Paternity leave has no separate name in Hungarian; it is just listed as one of the eligible reasons for leave days in the Code of Labour legislation.

- Seven days in case of twins.

c. Parental leave (responsibility of the Ministry of National Capacities)

There are two types of leave and benefit: (1) for insured parents, *Gyermekgondozási díj* (GYED); and (2) for non-insured parents, *Gyermekgondozást segítő ellátás* (GYES). Both are family entitlements.

Length of leave

- **GYED:** from the end of the Maternity leave period until the child's second birthday, for insured parents.
- **GYES:**
 - a. From the end of GYED (child's second birthday) until the child's third birthday, for insured parents.
 - b. Until the child's third birthday for parents who are not insured.

Payment and funding

- **GYED:** benefit of 70 per cent of average daily earnings calculated for the last 180 days prior the birth, up to a ceiling of 70 per cent of twice the minimum daily wage (HUF138,000 [€432.64]⁴ per month; the amount of the benefit being max. HUF193,200 [€605.69]). This is a gross amount, income tax and pension contribution are deducted, but family tax credit can be applied. Funding as for Maternity leave.
- **GYES:** until the child's third birthday, a flat-rate benefit equal to the amount of the minimum old-age pension, HUF28,500 [€89.35] per month. For multiple births, two hundred per cent of this amount is paid in the case of two children, 300 per cent for three children, with similar increases for additional children. Funded by the Treasury from general taxation.

Flexibility in use

- A parent taking **GYED** can work unlimited hours after the child becomes six months old, while still receiving the full benefit until the child's second birthday (*GYED extra*). If the parent takes up GYED and works, she can still access public childcare for children under three years (*bölcsőde*).
- A parent taking **GYES** cannot work until the child becomes six months old, but can then work unlimited hours while still receiving the full benefit until the child's third birthday. If the parent takes up GYES and works, she/he can still access public childcare for children under three years (*bölcsőde*).

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

- **GYED:** either of the parents living with the child is eligible as long as she/he has been employed for at least 365 days within two years prior the birth of the child; however, only one parent at a time can actually take GYED. Foster parents are not eligible.
- **GYED:** women who would not be eligible under the above listed criteria but completed two semesters at a higher education institution recognised by the state within two years prior to the birth of the child (*diplomás GYED*). In this case, they are eligible for one year of payment, beginning at the birth of the child. They receive a payment equal to the minimum wage valid on the first day of their eligibility (HUF138,000 [€432.64]

⁴ Conversion of currency undertaken on 13 June 2018, using: <http://finance.yahoo.com/currency-converter>

per month in 2018), except those studying for MA or PhD for whom the payment is 70 per cent of the guaranteed minimum wage (HUF96,600 [€302.85] per month in 2018).

- Self-employed parents are eligible if they fulfil all criteria, e.g. in the case of GYED, that they have been insured before the birth.
- As same-sex couples are neither allowed to marry or adopt, they are not eligible for Parental leave as a couple; if one of the partners has a young child, she or he is eligible in her or his own right, but her or his partner is not.
- **GYES**: all parents. Guardians are also eligible.

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

- **GYED**: The duration of the benefit lasts until the children's third birthday in the case of twins.
- **GYES**: parents of a child with a long-term illness or disability can take leave until the child's tenth birthday (or even longer in discretionary cases); parents of twins are eligible until the children begin elementary school and receive a double payment.
- **GYES**: can be taken by grandparents from the first to the third birthday of the child if the child is looked after in her/his own home and if the parents agree to transfer their entitlement. Grandparents taking GYES can work less than 30 hours a week, or without limitation if the work is done in the home and the child is older than three years.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

Either of the parents in a family with three or more children under 18 years, may take leave during the period between the third and eighth birthday of the youngest child (*Gyermeknevelési támogatás, GYET*). Benefit payment as for GYES. The person taking up GYET can work less than 30 hours a week, or unlimited hours if the work is done at home. While GYES and GYED are intended to promote childbirth and support reconciliation between work and childrearing, GYET is considered an acknowledgement of parenthood as paid work and consequently recipients are credited with social insurance contributions.

e. Other employment-related measures

Adoption leave and pay

- The same regulations regarding Maternity and Parental leave apply for adoptive parents as for other parents.

Time off for the care of dependants

- *Gyermekápolási táppénz* is part of the sick-pay system, the length of which depends on the age of the child: under one year, unlimited; 12-35 months, up to 84 days per child per year; 36-71 months, 42 days; six to 12 years, 14 days. Lone parents are entitled to a double period of leave. Leave is a family entitlement and a sickness benefit is paid at 50 or 60 per cent of actual earnings up to a ceiling.

Flexible working

- Mothers are entitled to two paid one-hour breaks per day for breastfeeding until a child is six months old; and to one one-hour break until a child is nine months old. The number of hours is doubled in the case of twins.

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

The maximum period of post-natal leave available in Hungary is three years (except for families with three or more children, where leave can be taken until a child is eight years); the last year is paid at a low flat rate, but until a child is two years old, insured parents taking leave are paid at a high earnings-related level. Attendance in ECEC (*óvoda*/kindergarten) from three years of age is compulsory (for at least four hours a day). Children under three years are also entitled to an ECEC service (*bölcsőde*/nursery) place if the parent studies full time or if the child becomes six months old. However, there is a shortage of spaces in Hungary; while legislation is in place, implementation varies. So although, by legislation, there is no gap between the end of Parental leave entitlement and the start of an ECEC entitlement, such a gap exists in practice due to a shortage of places in nurseries. Otherwise there is a one-year gap between the end of well-paid leave (GYED) and an entitlement for a kindergarten place for three-years-olds.

Levels of attendance in formal services for children under three years (nurseries and other similar forms of institutional care) are well below the average of both the EU countries and the countries included in this review; but it is above average for children over three years (in kindergartens). For actual attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' on [cross-country comparisons](#) page.

3. Changes in policy since April 2017 (including proposals currently under discussion)

None reported.

4. Take-up of leave

a. Maternity leave

Statistics⁵ are available only on the number of women receiving benefits. The average monthly number of mothers was 26,931 in 2016, which is 11.8 recipients per thousand women of fertile age. It is supposed that almost all eligible women take the leave.

b. Paternity leave

The total number of fathers taking leave during 2014⁶ was 21,914, using 109,382 days in total, i.e. most fathers taking leave used their full five-day entitlement.

c. Parental leave

Statistics are available only on the number of recipients of the benefits. The average monthly numbers in 2016 were: for **GYED**, 91,126, or 39.9 recipients per thousand women of fertile age; for **GYES**, 162,992, or 71.4 recipients per thousand women of fertile age; and for **GYET**, 33,381, or 14.6 recipients per thousand of women of fertile age. There is no

⁵ All statistics in this section are from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (*Központi Statisztikai Hivatal*) Yearbook of Welfare Statistics (see section 3) and HCSO STADAT online database (https://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_eves/i_fsp006.html). Data of download: 27 March 2018.

⁶ No data for 2015 are available yet.

information on the proportion of parents taking leave, how long they take or on the number of fathers taking Parental leave. An estimate can be made for 2015 on the basis that 0.3 per cent of children under one year, 11.9 per cent of those between one and two years, and 55.7 per cent of those between two and three years were in childcare centres in 2015, so the remainder probably had a parent (predominantly the mother) taking up one of the Parental leave options.

d. Other employment-related measures

In 2016, the total number of cases on paid leave to care for a sick child was 314,000 (27 percent of all paid leave cases), while the total number of paid leave days to care for sick children was 1,290,000 (5.1 per cent of all paid sick leave days)⁷.

5. Research and publications on leave and other employment-related policies since April 2017

Please be aware that this is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all publications or research in this area for this country. If you are aware of a publication or research that could be listed in this section, please contact the country note author(s) so that they can include it for the following year.

a. General overview

Research and publications on leave and employment related policies have been scarce in 2017, as in the previous year.

b. Selected publications since April 2017

Bartus, T. (2017) 'Az iskolai végzettség és a második gyermekvállalás Bizonyítékok az életünk fordulópontjai adatbázisból' ['Education and second birth. Evidence from the Hungarian Generations and Gender Survey'], *Demográfia*, Vol. 60, No.2-3: 149-172.

Previous research documented a U-shaped relationship between female education and second birth rates in Hungary. This paper examines two questions: (1) how is female education related to second birth rates? (2) is the relationship in question a causal one? In order to examine causality, the author controls for sample selection, time-squeeze and partner's education; and uses the first three waves of the Hungarian Generations and Gender Survey. Applying discrete-time event history models, estimated jointly for first and second births to control for selection bias, the author finds that the relationship between female education and second birth rates is indeed U-shaped. The relationship seems to be a causal one because it cannot be explained by time-squeeze and partner's education. Analyses using the couple's educational level show that second birth rates are highest among women with a primary education, on the one hand, and couples with tertiary education, on the other hand.

Központi Statisztikai Hivatal [Hungarian Central Statistical Office] (2017) *Szociális statisztikai évkönyv 2016 [Yearbook of Welfare Statistics, 2016]*, Budapest: Központi Statisztikai Hivatal. <https://www.ksh.hu/polc>

This yearbook contains detailed data on a wide range of welfare measures and services including: social assistance, family benefits, child welfare provision, child protection, social benefits, basic social care and childcare, social work activities and accommodation,

⁷ <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xftp/idoszaki/pdf/tappenz16.pdf>

rehabilitative employment, sick pay, retirement allowances and the social and guardianship authority administration in 2015, with a detailed methodology

c. Ongoing research

Kohorsz'18 Hungarian Birth Cohort Study by Hungarian Demographic Research Institute (of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office).

The research aims to follow a sample of children born in 2018/19. The survey is carried out on a sample of 10,000 children and their parents. The first contact with parents takes place during pregnancy and information on the development of these children is collected regularly later.