

Slovenia¹

Nada Stropnik (Institute for Economic Research, Slovenia)

April 2018

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 (*materinski dopust*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- One hundred and five (105) calendar days (15 weeks): four weeks (28 days) before the birth and 11 weeks following birth. It is obligatory to take 15 days of leave.

Payment and funding

- One hundred (100) per cent of average basic income on which Parental leave contributions were paid during the 12 months prior to the leave; the last of these 12 months is defined as the penultimate one before the month of the first application for leave. Not all income on which the contributions were paid is counted into the basic income (e.g. in-work benefits and other income received in addition to basic earnings). If the contributions were paid during a period shorter than 12 months, 55 per cent of the minimum wage² [€323.55 a month] is considered for the missing period.
- Normally there is no ceiling. But currently - and until the year following the year in which economic growth exceeds 2.5 per cent of the GDP and the annual increase in the employment rate in the age group 20-64 years exceeds 1.3 percentage points - the ceiling is two times the average wage³ [approximately €2,863 per month]; the minimum is 55 per cent of the minimum wage [€323.55].
- Women who are not insured at the time when the leave starts, but who have been insured for at least 12 months in the last three years before the start of Maternity leave, receive 55 to 105 per cent of the minimum wage

¹ Stropnik, N. (2018) 'Slovenia 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 uprated minimum wage as of 2006 is used as the basis wherever referred to in this overview.

³ Ibid.

[approximately €324 to €618 per month], depending on the period they have been insured for, in the last three years.

- Non-employed mothers/parents do not receive pension credits for childrearing but employed parents do (i.e. those who were receiving earnings compensation during the leave).
- Funded partly from Parental Protection Insurance that forms part of Social Security Insurance, contributions to Parental Protection Insurance are 0.1 per cent of gross earnings for employees and the same for employers. In 2008, Parental Protection Insurance covered 11 per cent of leave costs (estimated) and the remaining funds came from general taxation.

Flexibility in use

- The part unused before the birth may be claimed after childbirth if the birth took place before the envisaged date.

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

- The person must be covered by Parental Protection Insurance (which is part of Social Security) just prior to the first day of the leave. This insurance covers persons on employment contracts (both permanent and fixed-term, either full-time or part-time), the self-employed (including persons performing agricultural activities) and temporary agency workers. For the unemployed, see the *Payment and funding* section.

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

- Leave (80 days or fewer) can be delegated to the father or another person (who nurses and cares for a child if the mother dies, abandons the child or is incapable of living and working independently).
- The father or one of the grandparents is also entitled to Maternity leave with the mother's (and father's) consent, in cases where the mother who gives birth to the child is younger than 18 years and has the status of an apprentice, a pupil or a student. In that case, Maternity leave lasts 77 days less the age of the child (in days) when the father or the grandparent commences Maternity leave.

b. Paternity leave (*očetovski dopust*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities)

Length of leave

- Thirty (30) calendar days.

Payment and funding

- Ninety (90) per cent of average monthly earnings (or other base on which Parental protection contributions were paid) during the 12 months prior to the leave, if those earnings/base exceeded the actual minimum wage [€842.79 in 2017], and up to a ceiling of two times the average wage in Slovenia [approximately €2,863 per month]. The payment increases to 100 per cent for a father earning up to the minimum wage, with the same ceiling. Not all

income on which Parental leave contributions were paid is counted towards the basic earnings (e.g. in-work benefits and other income received in addition to basic earnings). If the contributions were paid during a period shorter than 12 months, 55 per cent of the minimum wage [€323.55 a month] is considered for the missing period.

- In the year following the year in which economic growth exceeds 2.5 per cent of the GDP and the annual increase in the employment rate in the age group 20-64 years exceeds 1.3 percentage points, the payment will be returned to 100 per cent and the ceiling will be returned to its normal amount of 2.5 times the average wage in Slovenia (expected to happen in 2019).
- Non-employed fathers (i.e. those who did not receive earnings compensation during the leave) do not receive pension credits for childrearing, but employed fathers do.
- Funding as for Maternity leave.

Flexibility in use

- Paternity leave may be taken as full-time or part-time leave. The duration of leave does not change, if taken part-time.
- For children born from 1 May 2018 onwards, at least 15 days of leave may be taken until one month following the end of Parental leave. Up to 15 days of the total of 30 days of Paternity leave, may be taken until the child completes the first grade of primary school.

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

- As for Maternity leave.
- The father is not entitled to Paternity leave if: the mother has given birth to a dead child; he was legally deprived of his parental right or prohibited from contacting the child; or if, according to the Centre for Social Work's opinion, he has evidently shown no intention to care for the child or is otherwise neglecting his parental responsibilities; or if, according to the physician's certificate, he is not able to nurse and care for the child.

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

- If the father does not use Paternity leave, the following persons are entitled to it: mother's husband or cohabiting partner, partner of either sex in the registered same-sex partnership, and other persons who are nursing and taking care of the child. The same applies to the spouse, cohabiting partner or partner in the registered same-sex partnership of the person using Maternity leave.

c. Parental leave (*starševski dopust*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities)

Length of leave

- One hundred and thirty (130) calendar days per parent. Leave is an individual entitlement.

Payment and funding

- As for the first 25 days of Paternity leave (see 1b).
- For persons not insured at the time the leave starts, but who have been insured for at least 12 months in the last three years before the start of leave (Maternity, Paternity or Parental, whichever taken first), see 1a.
- Non-employed mothers/parents (i.e. those who did not receive earnings compensation during the leave) do not receive pension credits for childrearing, but employed parents do.
- Funding as for Maternity leave.

Flexibility in use

- The mother is allowed to transfer 100 days of her entitlement to the father (30 days are the mother's exclusive right), while the father is allowed to transfer all 130 days of his Parental leave to the mother.
- The parents have to agree upon the use of Parental leave in writing 30 days prior to the expiry of Maternity leave. If the parents cannot reach an agreement, or their decision is not to the benefit of the child, the Centre for Social Work decides on this matter by taking into account what is in the best interests of the child.
- At least 185 days have to be taken as a continuous full-time or part-time leave; in the case of part-time leave being taken, the duration of leave is not extended proportionately. Up to 75 days may be taken at any time until the child completes the first grade of elementary school, full-time or part-time, but not more than twice a year, with each section lasting at least 15 days. If taken as individual working days, the length of the leave is equal to 70 per cent of the eligible calendar days.
- Parents can combine Parental leave (20 hours per week for the mother, 20 hours per week for the father) and take it at the same time.
- In rare cases, where the father is unknown and his entitlement cannot be transferred to the mother, a lone mother is entitled to all 260 days of Parental leave.

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

- As for Maternity leave.

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

- In the case of a premature birth, the leave is prolonged by as many days as the pregnancy was shortened.
- In the case of multiple births or adoption of multiple children, Parental leave is extended by 90 days for each additional child. It is also extended by 90 days in the case of a birth of a child in need of special care.
- Leave is extended by 30 days if parents already have at least two children who have not yet completed the first grade of primary school; by 60 days if they have three such children; and by 90 days if they have four or more such children.
- Additional leave for premature or multiple births or if parents have two or more younger children is a family entitlement, i.e. the parents must decide which of them will take the leave.

- Another person who actually nurses and cares for a child is entitled to Parental leave, reduced by the number of days the mother and the father have already used.
- If the mother is below 18 years of age and has the status of an apprentice, a pupil or a student, one of the grandparents (who himself/herself is insured for Parental leave) may take the leave with the mother's and the father's consent.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

No statutory entitlement.

e. Other employment-related measures

Adoption leave and pay

- All adoptive parents have the same entitlements to Parental leave as other parents (see section 3).
- Since 17 March 2018, there are 30 days of Parental leave in case of adoption of a child who has completed the first grade of primary school and is below 15 years of age.

Time off for the care of dependants

- An insured person is entitled to take leave to care for an immediate co-resident family member (spouse and children, own or adopted) who is ill. Generally, seven working days of leave may be taken for each episode of illness per family, but 15 working days may be taken for a child of up to seven years of age or a moderately, severely or very severely mentally and physically disabled child. Exceptionally, if required due to the health condition of the sick family member, the period may be extended to 14 and 30 working days, respectively, or longer in extreme cases (up to six months).
- Leave is paid at 80 per cent of the individual's average earnings in the preceding calendar year. It cannot be lower than the guaranteed wage [approximately €238] or higher than the wage which the person would receive if he/she were working.
- A parent leaving the labour market in order to take care of four or more children – and who has been insured for Parental leave or an active job searcher for at least 12 months in the last three years - is entitled to have Social Security contributions (based on the minimum wage) paid from the state budget, until the youngest child completes the first grade of primary school.

Flexible working

- A parent who is taking care of a child below the age of three years, or of a child below the age of 18 years with a severe physical disability or a moderate or severe mental disability, has the right to work part time. The hours worked must be equal to or longer than half full-time working hours. There is no payment, but Social Security contributions⁴, based on the proportional part of the minimum wage, are paid for the hours not worked.
- A parent who is taking care of two children may extend the right to work part time until the younger child completes the first grade of elementary school

⁴ Social Security contributions include pension credits.

(and not only until it reaches the age of six years), with Social Security contributions paid based on the proportional part of the minimum wage for the hours not worked. One year of this entitlement is a non-transferrable right for each of the parents.

Specific provision for (breast-) feeding

- Breastfeeding mothers who work full-time have the right to a break during working time lasting not less than one hour a day, until their child is 18 months. Payment amounting to a proportion of the minimum wage is made until the child is nine months old; during the remaining period, only Social Security contributions are paid, based on the proportional part of the minimum wage.

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

The maximum period of Post-natal leave⁵ available in Slovenia is 12.1 months. Post-natal leave paid at a high earnings-related rate runs for a year. There is an entitlement to ECEC from the end of Parental leave, available on a full-time basis in centres. So there is no gap between the end of leave and an ECEC entitlement. Levels of attendance at formal services for children under and over three years are above the average for the countries included in this review and for OECD countries. 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)

Paid Paternity leave was extended by five days in 2018 (from 25 to 30 days), while unpaid Paternity leave has been fully abandoned. For children born from 1 May 2018 onwards, at least 15 days of Paternity leave may be taken until one month following the end of Parental leave. Up to 15 days of leave may be taken until the child completes the first grade of primary school.

Since 17 March 2018, there are 30 days of Parental leave in case of adoption of a child who has completed the first grade of primary school, and is below 15 years of age.

4. Take-up of leave

a. Maternity leave

As Maternity leave is obligatory, all employed women should take up some (normally all) leave.

⁵ This is a summary of Maternity leave and Parental leave (Paternity leave can be taken after Parental leave). For Slovenia, the time periods are: 77 days of Maternity leave (since 28 days must be taken before the foreseen delivery date), 30 days of Paternity leave and 260 days of Parental Leave. The sum is 367 days or 12.06 (12.1) months.

b. Paternity leave

Roughly four in five fathers take up to (and close to) 15 days of Paternity leave, while less than one in five leave-takers took more than 15 days – mainly because their earnings were not (fully) compensated during the rest of the leave before 2016. There are also obstacles from the employers' side⁶. A considerable number of fathers made use of their right to additional paid days (five days in 2016 and ten in 2017)⁷.

c. Parental leave

Some fathers take Parental leave, but mothers take it more variably: some take the entire Parental leave allocation, some take a good portion of it, while very few do not take it (usually due to health reasons). The share of fathers taking some of the leave increased from around five per cent in the mid-2000s to six–seven per cent in 2012–2016⁸. Considering the full wage compensation while taking leave (available until the end of May 2012), the reasons for fathers' low participation may be found in the traditional division of tasks within the family, attitudes in the society (not the declared ones but rather those that rule people's behaviour), the absence of a positive image of the father who takes over more family responsibilities, and employers' expectations of their male employees⁹ ¹⁰. Paternity leave provisions and fathers having the same entitlement to Parental leave as mothers, do not significantly influence mothers' earlier return to work after their leave period. Since fathers usually take only part of the leave (if any at all), women's professional careers continue to be affected by their absence from work created due to taking up Parental leave.

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

⁶ Rakar, T., Stropnik, N., Boškić, R., Dremelj, P., Nagode, M. and Kovač, N. (2010), *Raziskava o vplivih veljavnih ukrepov družinske politike na odločanje za otroke [Research on the impact of family policy measures on deciding to have children]*, Ljubljana: Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia. Available at: <http://www.irssv.si/publikacije/leto-2010/index.html>

Hrženjak, M. (ed.) (2016) *Spremembe očetovstva: moški med delom in starševstvom [Changing fatherhood: men between employment and parenthood]*, Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.

⁷ Stropnik, N. (2018). 'Thirty days of (fully) compensated Paternity leave in Slovenia from January 2018', *ESPN Flash Report 2018/7*, European Social Policy Network, February 2018. <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=ESPNFlash&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0>

⁸ MLFSAEO (2018), 'Statistika – Družinski prejemki, zavarovanje za starševsko varstvo' [Statistics – Family benefits, parental protection insurance], Ljubljana: Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Available at: http://www.mddsz.gov.si/si/uvveljavljanje_pravic/statistika/druz_prejemki_zavarovanje_sv/#c18828, own calculations.

⁹ Rakar, T., Stropnik, N., Boškić, R., Dremelj, P., Nagode, M. and Kovač, N. (2010), *Raziskava o vplivih veljavnih ukrepov družinske politike na odločanje za otroke [Research on the impact of family policy measures on deciding to have children]*, Ljubljana: Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia. Available at: <http://www.irssv.si/publikacije/leto-2010/index.html>

¹⁰ Hrženjak, M. (ed.) *Spremembe očetovstva: moški med delom in starševstvom [Changing fatherhood: men between employment and parenthood]*, Ljubljana: Mirovni inštitut.

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

The topics of gender roles, work/family life balance and equal opportunities on the labour market are of particular research interest.

b. Selected recent publications

Been, W. M., Van der Lippe, T., Dulk, L. den, Das Dores Horta Guerreiro, M., Kanjuo-Mrčela, A., Niemistö, C. (2017) 'European top managers' support for work-life arrangements', *Social Science Research*, Vol. 65: 60-74. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2017.02.004>

Hrženjak, M. (2017) 'A qualitative study of labour market precarisation and involved fatherhood in Slovenia', *Revija za sociologiju*, Vol.47, No.2: 207-232.

Humer, Ž. (2017) 'Sodobno očetovstvo med plačanim delom in skrbjo za otroke' ['Modern fatherhood between paid work and care for children'], *Časopis za kritiko znanosti*, 45(267): 158-170.

Humer, Ž. and Frelj, M. (2017) 'Work-life balance of employed fathers in Slovenia: challenges and visions of a pilot experiment in four organizations', in: *Making the invisible visible: transforming social norms among boys & men for gender justice in practice: report from the Nordic MenEngage Conference 2017*, Oslo: Kuben Vocational Arena, Oslo, pp. 19-20. Available at: <https://reform.no/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Making-the-Invisible-Visible-Reprt-1.pdf>

Stropnik, N. and Kapella, O. (2017) 'Interview about father-specific leave and challenges ahead in Slovenia and Austria', in: S. Hoyer (ed.) *New Fathers Wanted – How Father Involvement in Family Work is Promoted throughout Europe*, Newsletter, 2/2017, Berlin: The Observatory for Socio-political Developments in Europe. Available at: <http://www.beobachtungsstelle-gesellschaftspolitik.de/en/keytopics/familyandreconciliation>

Stropnik, N. (2018) *Thirty days of (fully) compensated Paternity leave in Slovenia from January 2018*, *ESPN Flash Report 2018/7*, The European Social Policy Network. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?advSearchKey=ESPNFlash&mode=advancedSubmit&catId=22&policyArea=0&policyAreaSub=0&country=0&year=0>

c. Ongoing research

None reported.