

# Lithuania<sup>1</sup>

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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 (*nėštumo ir gimdymo, motinystės atostogos*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Social Security and Labour)

*Length of leave (before and after birth)*

- 18 weeks (126 calendar days: 70 calendar days before the birth and 56 calendar days afterwards).

*Payment and funding*

- 77.58 per cent of previous net earnings (calculated based on the individual's earnings in the last 12 months), with no upper limit on payments. The minimum benefit cannot be smaller than €240 per month.
- Funded from the Social Insurance Fund, which is funded by contributions from employers and employees. Self-employed people are obliged to pay social insurance contributions. Women taking Maternity leave receive pension credits to maintain their pension rights.

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*Flexibility in use*

- None.

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

- All employed mothers who have paid at least 12 months of social insurance contributions during the last 24 months are eligible for Maternity leave. Self-employed women qualify for maternity benefit under the same conditions as employees.

*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 a person other than the mother*

- In the case of multiple or premature births or complicated deliveries, 14 extra paid days are provided.

**b. Paternity leave (*tévystés atostogos*) (responsibility of Ministry of Social Security and Labour)**

*Length of leave (before and after birth)*

- One month (28 calendar days) within the three months immediately following childbirth.

*Payment and funding*

- 77.58 per cent of previous net earnings, with an upper limit of the country's average wage as calculated quarterly. The minimum benefit cannot be smaller than €240 per month.

*Flexibility in use*

- None.

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

- Fathers who have paid at least 12 months of social insurance during the last 24 months.
- Same-sex couples are not 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 mother*

- None.

### **c. Parental leave (*vaiko priežiūros atostogas*) (responsibility of Ministry of Social Security and Labour)**

#### *Length of leave*

- Until the child is three years of age. Leave is a family entitlement and can be shared between parents. They cannot use the leave simultaneously.

#### *Payment and funding*

- Parents can choose between two options:
  - 77.58 per cent of net earnings until the child is 12 months of age, with an upper limit of the country's average wage as calculated quarterly. The minimum benefit cannot be smaller than €240 per month;
  - 54.31 per cent of net earnings until the child is 12 months of age, with an upper limit of €1,568.26;
  - 31.03 per cent of net earnings until the child is 24 months of age, with an upper limit of €896.02.
- The remaining period of leave until the child is three years of age is unpaid.

#### *Flexibility in use*

- Parents can work whilst on leave/collecting parental benefit. But, if parents choose to receive 77,58 per cent of net earnings until the child is 12 months of age and start to work, the benefit is reduced by the amount of income they have received. If parents choose to receive 54,31 per cent of net earnings until the child is 12 months of age and 31,03 per cent of net earnings until the child is 24 months of age and they start to work during the first year, the benefit is reduced by the amount of income they have received; during the second year, the benefit is not reduced.

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

- Parents are eligible for the parental benefit if they have paid social insurance taxes for at least 12 months during the last 24 months; as social insurance is compulsory for all workers, self-employed workers are eligible.
- Same-sex couples are not eligible.
- Unemployed parents are not 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 a person other than the mother*

- In the case of multiple births, parental benefit increases according to the number of children, but it cannot exceed a ceiling of two average wages in the national economy (currently €1,982.94 - €2,2026.86).
- The grandparent or any actual caregiver of a child (if parents do not use the leave themselves) is eligible for Parental leave, but not for parental benefit.

#### **d. Childcare leave or career breaks**

No statutory entitlement.

#### **e. Other employment-related measures**

*Adoption leave and pay*

- If a person adopts or takes a new-born baby into foster care, they are entitled to Maternity leave from the moment of adoption up to the child reaching 70 days of age. Maternity benefit is paid on the same grounds as it is to biological mothers. Adoptive parents or foster caregivers have the same rights to Parental leave and benefit as biological parents.

*Time off for the care of dependants*

- An employee with a child under 14 years of age can take two weeks of unpaid leave per year.

*Flexible working*

- The labour code describes different flexible working time arrangements, e.g. flexibility in employment contracts (project-based; job-sharing; seasonal; apprenticeship; and employment contracts for several employers), salaries, employment termination, etc. Concerning working time flexibility, individual arrangements can be requested (though there is no obligation for an employer to agree: e.g. flexible work schedule, individual working regime, overtime, and summary working time).

*Specific provision for (breast)feeding*

- According to the Law on Safety and Health at Work, in addition to the general breaks to rest and eat at least every three hours,

breastfeeding employees can be given a half-hour break for breastfeeding. Under the mother's request, the breaks for breastfeeding may be joined together and used for shortening the working day. Breaks for breastfeeding are covered by the worker's average wage.

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

The maximum period of post-natal leave is three years, but only the first year is paid at a high rate; if the option for the second year of paid leave is taken, the second year is paid at a low earnings-related rate. There is no entitlement to ECEC at any age.

Levels of attendance at formal services for children under three years of age are below the average for OECD countries, but about the average for children over the age of three years. For actual attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' on the [cross-country comparisons](#) page.

## **3. Changes in policy since April 2020 (including proposals currently under discussion)**

The Ministry of Social Security and Labor organised several public consultations aimed to analyse and discuss, together with experts, the alternatives proposed by the Ministry of Social Security and Labor and the public on how to implement the EU Work-life Balance Directive. The discussion was centred around the suggestions received during the first public consultation - public survey and public suggestions – on how to introduce shared a Parental leave scheme within which some months (2-4 months) will be allocated only to fathers.

### **Policy responses to the Covid-19 pandemic to end April 2021**

#### *Childcare and schools*

- All childcare institutions and schools were closed on 16 March 2020. Since 27 May 2020 pre-schools and pre-primary and non-formal education of children were allowed to re-open if health requirements are met. As regards primary and pre-secondary education in schools, the school manager and founder of each educational institution decided on the case-by-case basis whether to continue on the remote mode.
- All childcare institutions were closed from 16 March 2020 until 18 May 2020. Only some institutions continued to provide services

for key workers, e.g. medical doctors, nurses, etc. Strict health requirements should be met. Limitations to the group size were introduced.

- With the beginning of the new school year, which started in September 2020, all childcare institutions have continued to work. Most schools were closed on 9 December 2020, and have continued to work in remote mode. Depending on the municipality and COVID-19 incidence rates, some primary schools (grades 1-4) started to re-open by the end of January-beginning of February 2021. Also, since 20 January 2021, the Lithuanian government allowed students of all grades who have difficulties with remote learning to return to schools. School graduates (grade 12) will be able to return to schools on 3 May 2021. School graduates are also among vaccination priority groups. In some municipalities, the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine has been already received by approximately 80 per cent of school graduates. Other schoolchildren will continue to learn remotely until the end of the academic year (June 2021).

#### *Parental leave*

- There were no modifications to Parental leave.

#### *Other measures for parents and other carers*

- During the first COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, all parents with children that attended childcare institutions, pre-primary and primary education have been entitled to up to 60 days of sickness benefit to care for children when educational institutions were closed due to quarantine, and parents were not able to work remotely. The benefit was paid by the Social Insurance Fund Board SODRA at 65.94 per cent of the beneficiary's earnings. All parents have been entitled to the benefit, both employed and self-employed. No previous employment history has been needed. All parents that care for a disabled child under the age of 21 have been entitled to sickness benefit for 60 days, also receiving the benefit at 65.94 per cent of earnings.
- During the lockdown from 16 March 2020 to 27 May 2020, it was advised to reduce working hours in those institutions that continued with their activity (grocery stores, pharmacy, etc.). In all the cases where it was possible, it was strongly recommended to work remotely. Flexible hours when schools/childcare/daycare centres/etc. were closed could be negotiated directly with the employer.
- In September 2020, the Lithuanian Parliament (Seimas) approved the incapacity for work and sickness benefit for the care of young children or children with disabilities when they must self-isolate due to travelling to a country affected by the coronavirus, had

direct contact with an affected person or ECEC/schools are closed. Such benefits will be paid for all children up to the end of fourth grade and for children with disabilities under 21 years of age when they are enrolled in a general or special education programme. Employees who have at least three months of sickness social insurance during the last year or at least six months during the last two years are entitled to sickness benefit. Sickness benefit for a child amounts 65.94 per cent of gross salary and can be paid to one of the parents, guardians or working grandparents for as long as the infection control regime lasts.

## **4. Uptake of leave**

### **a. Maternity leave**

According to the information provided by the Social Insurance Fund Board (SODRA), 100 per cent of employed women take their full entitlement to Maternity leave.

### **b. Paternity leave**

No information is available.

### **c. Parental leave**

According to the information provided by the Social Insurance Fund Board (SODRA) 2020, in 2020, mothers accounted for 75.6 per cent of all users of Parental leave, and fathers 24.4 per cent.

### **d. Other employment-related measures**

No information.