

PAID LEAVE FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH IN BELGIUM

DURATION OF PAID LEAVE

Leave periods available	months
Paid Maternity Leave	4
Paid Paternity Leave	0,33
Paid Parental Leave	4+4

ELIGIBILITY

Group	Maternity Leave	Paternity Leave	Parental Leave
Employed	+	+	+
Self-employed	+	+	+
Student	-	-	-
Unemployed	+	+	+
Adoptive parent	+	+	-
Grandparent	-	-	-
Migrant (non labour market)	-	-	-

PAYMENT

Leave type	
Maternity Leave	€135/day (private); full salary (civil servant); €458/week (self-empl.)
Paternity Leave	Max. €110/day
Parental Leave	€721/month net

RESPONSIBILITIES

Maternity Leave

Is covered by the Federal Department of Employment.

Paternity Leave

Is covered by the Federal Department of Employment.

Parental Leave

Is covered by the Federal Department of Employment and Social Affairs.



History of leave policy and recent changes

Belgium has a generous system of paid leaves. As most other countries, it provides the standard maternity leave before and after birth. Paternity leave was initially three days and is extended to ten days of paid leave for fathers. Maternity leave is (partially) obligatory.

In addition, Belgium also provides a 4 month paid parental leave. The parental leave may be taken full time, half-time over 8 months, or one day a week (20 per cent) over 20 months. A 1/10th option is under construction.

The region of Flanders provides a supplemental time credit system of 1 year. The system is circumstantial with “care for children under 8 years” as one of the potential reasons to take up the time credit. The care leave is granted for 51 months across the total career.

The system is quite stable with no changes during the past years.

DEFINITIONS

MATERNITY LEAVE

Leave generally available to mothers only. It is usually understood to be a health and welfare measure, intended to protect the health of the mother and newborn child, to be taken just before, during and immediately after childbirth.

PATERNITY LEAVE

Leave generally available to fathers only, usually to be taken soon after the birth of a child and intended to enable the father to spend time with his partner, new child and older children.

PARENTAL LEAVE

Leave available equally to mothers and fathers, either as a non-transferable individual right, an individual right that can be transferred to the other parent, or a family right that parents can divide between themselves as they choose.

INTRODUCING THE NETWORK ON LEAVE POLICIES AND RESEARCH

The international network on leave policies and research, consists of over 60 members, all of whom are experts on leave issues and who come from 43 countries across the world. Members bring not only expertise to the network, but great commitment and enthusiasm, enabling the group to grow and flourish without any regular source of external funding and to provide a unique forum for exchange, dialogue and collaboration on issues of care, employment and gender.

Detailed Country Notes, Cross-country tables and definitions of leave policies are available at

www.leavenetwork.org/leave-policies-research/

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

- Van den Eynde, A., Vercruyssen, A., & Mortelmans, D. (2019). The experience of work-family conflict among divorced parents in Flanders. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, in press.
- Dubois-Shaik, F., & Fusulier, B. (2017). Understanding gender inequality and the role of the work/family interface in contemporary academia: An introduction. *European Educational Research Journal*, 16(2-3), 99-105.

CONTACTS

GENERAL INQUIRIES, MEMBERSHIP AND SEMINARS:

Ann- Zofie Duvander, Stockholm University

ann-zofie.duvander@sociology.su.se

Margaret O’Brien, University College London

m.obrien@ucl.ac.uk

ANNUAL REVIEW:

Sonja Blum, University of Hagen

Alison Koslowski, University of Edinburgh

Alexandra Macht, Oxford Brookes University

CONTACTS BELGIUM

PROF. DR. DIMITRI MORTELMANS

University of Antwerp
dimitri.mortelmans@uantwerpen.be

PROF. DR. BERNARD FUSULIER

Université catholique de Louvain
bernard.fusulier@uclouvain.be