

PAID LEAVE FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH IN GERMANY

DURATION OF PAID LEAVE

Leave periods available	Months
Paid Maternity Leave	3,5
Paid Paternity Leave	0
Paid Parental Leave (mother or father)	12 (14)

ELIGIBILITY

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

TAKE-UP RATES

Leave type	%
Maternity Leave (% of eligible women)	100
Paternity Leave (% of fathers)	0
Parental Leave (% of mothers)	95
Parental Leave (% of fathers)	35.8

RESPONSIBILITIES

Maternity Leave

is covered by Health Insurance. The payments are transacted by the employer (if employed).

Paternity Leave

There is no specific Paternity Leave in Germany.

Parental Leave

is covered by the Federal Government.



History of leave policy and recent changes

In 2007, a new parental leave policy was introduced (*Elterngeld*). Before, leave benefits were paid in terms of cash for care at a low payment level. The new legislation provides income-related payments for 12 months, which are extended to 14 months if the second parent takes at least 2 months of leave. The reform had the explicit aim to raise the take-up of leave by fathers, and recently published data by the Federal Statistics show that the proportion of fathers taking parental leave has risen from 6% (2006) to more than 35% (2015). In 2013, a second parental leave legislation was adopted (*ElterngeldPlus*) that comprises the possibility to combine parental leave and employment more flexible.

Recently, in 2018, the Maternity leave protection for pregnant women / young mothers was enlarged.

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 FOR GERMANY

Reimer, Thordis (2019): Why fathers don't take more parental leave in Germany: comparing mechanisms in different work organizations. In: *Community, Work & Family* 36 (3), S. 1–20.

Blum, S. & Dobrotic, I. (2018): Wer hat Zugang zu Elterngeld? Soziale Rechte und Anspruchsbedingungen in vergleichender Perspektive. *Sozialer Fortschritt*, 8/9. 667–687

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