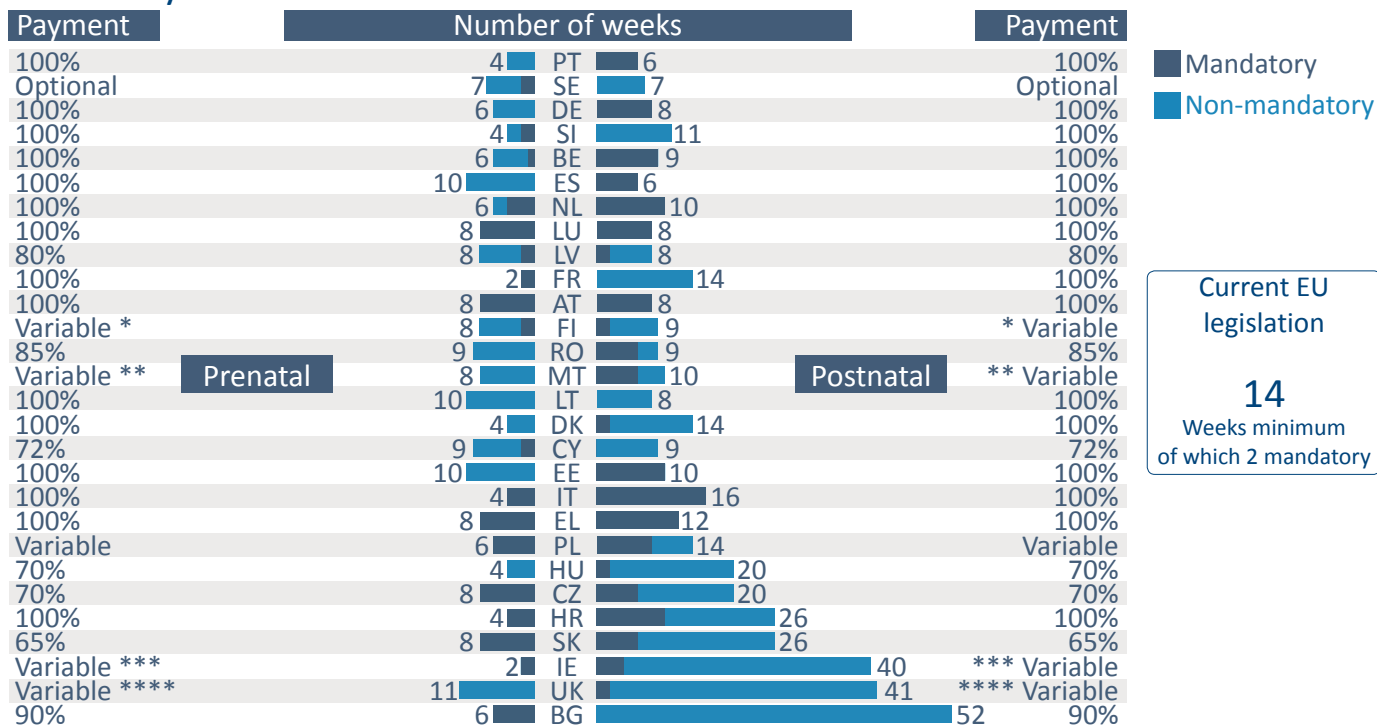


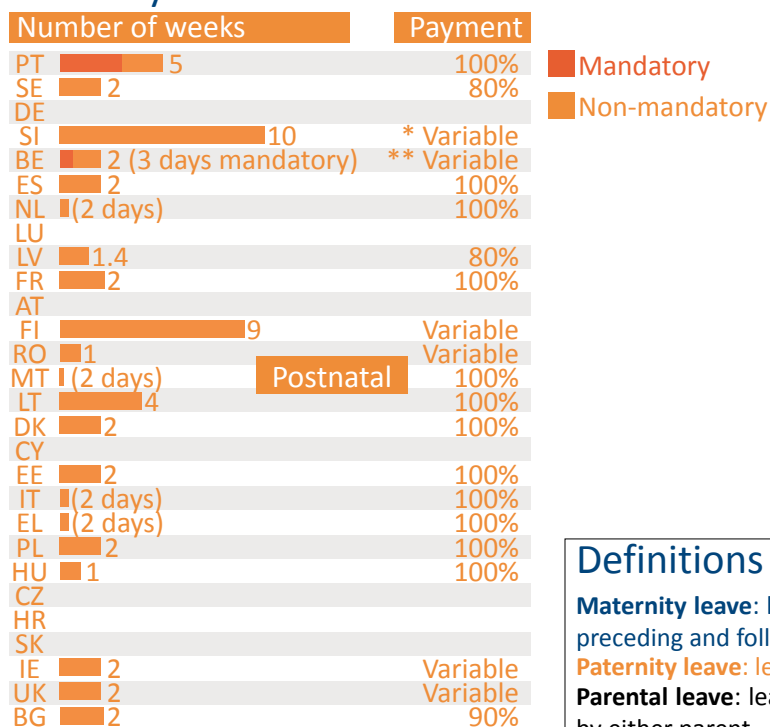
Maternity and paternity leave in the EU

This infographic aims to present the current state of affairs of maternity and paternity leave in EU Member States. Most EU countries also have an additional period of parental leave, but parental leave is not covered in this infographic.

Maternity leave



Paternity leave



Notes on payment

- * FI First 56 days, 90% of salary; remainder (49 days) 70%
- ** MT 100% of earnings (for 14 weeks) + 4 weeks flat rate
- *** IE Weekly rate (€230) paid for 26 weeks; the remaining 16 weeks unpaid
- **** UK First 6 weeks, 90%; next 33 weeks, flat-rate payments of either £138.18 [€165] or 90% of average gross weekly earnings (whichever is lower); the remaining 13 weeks are unpaid.
- * SI 20 days 'paid' 90%; next 50 days are paid through social security contributions based on the minimum wage
- ** BE 100% for 3 days (paid by the employer), 82% of salary for the remaining period

Definitions

Maternity leave: leave from work for mothers in the period immediately preceding and following birth.

Paternity leave: leave from work for fathers similar to maternity leave

Parental leave: leave after maternity/paternity leave which can be taken by either parent

State of affairs

Maternity leave policies in EU Member States are governed by the [1992 Pregnant Workers](#) Directive, which sets the minimum period for maternity leave at 14 weeks, with 2 weeks' compulsory leave before and/or after confinement and an adequate allowance subject to national legislation. In [2008](#) the Commission tried to replace this directive with a more suitable framework. The proposal was to extend the duration of maternity leave to 18 weeks in accordance with the guidelines of the International Labour Organization. At least 6 weeks would be compulsory after confinement, with an allowance amounting to full salary. This was accepted in [2010](#) by the Parliament, which extended the proposal to 20 weeks of maternity leave and 2 weeks of paternity leave under the same conditions. However, having been deadlocked in the Council since then, the proposal [was withdrawn](#) in July 2015. The Commission then announced a new, more holistic [package](#) as a replacement. The proposed package tackles the challenge of work-life balance of working parents and carers, which would be particularly beneficial for gender equality in the labour market.

Explanation of the graphs

Due to the complexity of national legislation and differences between the Member States, and to facilitate presentation of the data in graphic form, simplifications have had to be made in respect of a number of countries. The terms of legislation as it applies in the public sector are illustrated in cases where there is a difference with the private sector.

Countries are ordered by the length of leave granted.

Given that national legislation may express leave periods in months, weeks, calendar days or working days, for comparison, they are presented here in rounded weeks.

Some countries also have ceilings on the amount of money paid during maternity/paternity leave but these are not addressed in this publication.

When national legislation does not state exactly when the maternity leave is supposed to start, the earliest possible time was taken as the starting point.

Complementary information on selected Member States

Portugal	Portugal: no maternity or paternity leave, just parental leave. There is an option to take 120 or 150 consecutive days (150 if both parents share the leave). The father can take any part except the initial parental leave reserved for the mother, which is shown in the graph: up to 30 days of voluntary leave before the birth and 6 weeks of compulsory leave after it.
Sweden	Swedish legislation on this issue is more gender neutral than in other Member States. The most relevant birth-related leave is parental leave, rather than maternity leave. Parental leave can be taken immediately after the birth instead of maternity leave and this is in fact the usual practice in Sweden. The two compulsory weeks of maternity leave can be taken either before or after the birth.
Slovenia	The duration of paternity leave is decreasing. In 2017 paternity leave will be 7 weeks long, and from 2018 it will be 4 weeks long.
Spain	Fathers can take paternity leave of 13 days and birth leave of 2 days. In the public sector these two are considered as one. From 1 January 2017 paternity leave will be 4 weeks.
Luxembourg	Fathers can have 'leave due to extraordinary circumstances' (congé extraordinaire) of 2 days for the birth or adoption of a child. Covers 100% of earnings.
Austria	According to the collective agreement for public sector workers, fathers employed in this sector may take a month off work unpaid.
Estonia	Fathers can take paternity leave before or after the birth.
Poland	Maternity leave can cover either 80% or 100% of earnings. If 100% is chosen, the first 6 weeks of parental leave will be paid 100%, and the rest 60%. If 80% is chosen, the entire parental leave is also paid at 80%.
Czech Republic	After the sixth week of postnatal maternity leave, the father and mother can alternate the leave with no restrictions on the frequency of alternations. Paternity leave, one week long at 70% of earnings, is set to be introduced in early 2017.
Croatia	After obligatory maternity leave, the mother is entitled to additional maternity leave until the child reaches 6 months of age, which may be transferred to the father.
Ireland	Paternity leave payment amounts to either the illness benefit or €230 weekly (whichever is higher).
United Kingdom	Paternity leave may be 1 or 2 weeks long.

Sources: National legislation (e.g. [MISSOC](#)), websites of national institutions, [European Commission website](#), and relevant reports (e.g. [International Network on Leave Policies and Research](#)).

Revised version presenting the situation in the 28 Member States as known to us on 8 December 2016.

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