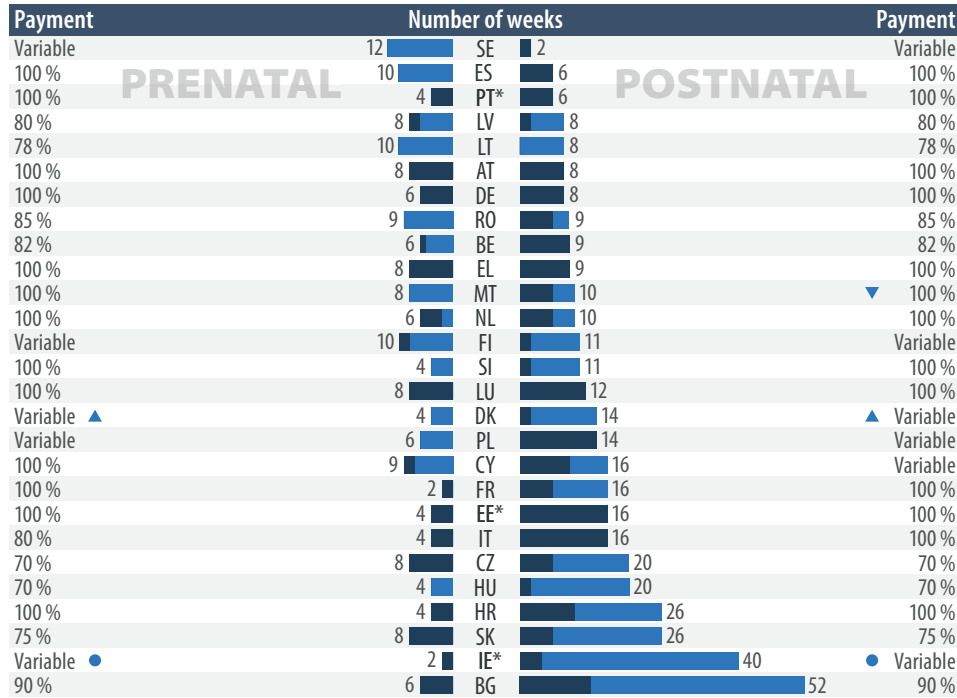


# Maternity and paternity leave in the EU

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

## Maternity leave

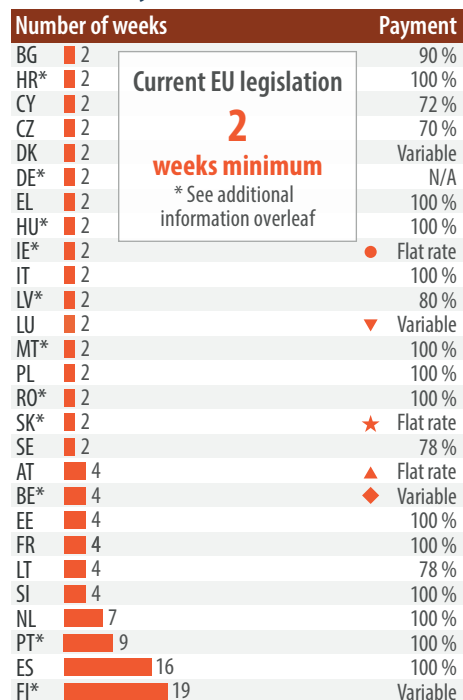


■ Mandatory  
■ Non-mandatory

Current EU legislation  
**14**  
weeks minimum  
of which **2** mandatory

\* See additional information overleaf

## Paternity leave



Current EU legislation  
**2**  
weeks minimum  
\* See additional information overleaf

## Notes on payment

- ▼ MT Postnatal payment: 6 weeks, 100 %; 4 weeks, flat rate equivalent to the statutory minimum wage
- ▲ DK up to DKK 4 550 (€612) per week before tax based on former earnings
- IE weekly rate of €250
- ▲ AT 'family time bonus' amounting to €717 per month
- ◆ BE 100 % for 3 days (paid by the employer), 82 % of earnings for the remaining period
- IE weekly rate of €250
- ▼ LU 100 % for 2 days (paid by the employer), up to 5 times the social minimum wage (€11 284.77 per month)
- ★ SK €39 on average per day

## Definitions

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

**Paternity leave:** leave from work for fathers or recognised second parents, similar to maternity leave

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



## Current situation

Maternity rights are set out in the 1992 Pregnant Workers Directive. This EU legislation 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. A right to 2 weeks' paternity leave was introduced in a new [Work-life Balance Directive](#) for parents and carers, which entered into force on 1 August 2019. [Member States](#) had until 2 August 2022 to adopt the laws, regulations and administrative provisions necessary to comply with the directive. The right to paternity leave cannot be made subject to a period of work qualification or to a length of service qualification.

The European Commission [proposed](#) the new Work-life Balance Directive following the withdrawal of an earlier proposal for a [maternity leave directive](#), which would have extended the period of maternity leave. The new directive does not do so, but it is expected to be particularly beneficial for [gender equality in the labour market](#). As part of the [European Pillar of Social Rights](#) (Article 9), it aims to address women's under-representation in the labour market, help them balance their work and family lives more easily and encourage a better distribution of caring responsibilities between women and men. As such it takes a broader approach to modernising the existing EU legal framework in the area of family-related leave and flexible working arrangements, to take account of developments in society over the past decade.

## Explanation of the graphics

Given the complexity of national legislation, differences between the Member States, and the need to facilitate presentation of the data in graphic form, simplifications have been 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 maternity/paternity leave granted. Given that national legislation may express leave periods in months, weeks, calendar days or working days, for the purposes of 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.

### \*Additional information on selected Member States

Belgium	From 1 January 2023, paternity leave increased from 15 days to 20 days. The extension applies to employees as well as to self-employed workers and civil servants.
Croatia	As of 1 January 2023, employed and self-employed fathers may take 10 business days' paternity leave within the first six months of the child being born.
Estonia	On 1 April 2022, a new law entered into force for mothers, which provides for 60 to 100 days' leave; the rest (40 days) can be added to parental leave.
Germany	From 2024, fathers are to be given two weeks off after the birth of the child. It will be paid leave and will be enshrined in the Maternity Protection Act.
Hungary	From 1 January 2023 (retrospectively for all babies born as of 2 August 2022), fathers are entitled to two weeks' leave.
Finland	A new Act reforming parental benefits came into effect on 1 August 2022. Paternity leave ceased to exist in its original form. Instead the reform gave both parents an equal quota of 160 parental allowance days. Parents can agree to give up as many as 63 days of their entitlement to the other parent or some other person who provides care for the child.
Ireland	An additional three weeks of parent's leave and parent's benefit are available to each parent of a child born or adopted on or after 1 November 2019 (bringing the total to five weeks).
Latvia	From 1 January 2023, paternity benefits are calculated on the basis of working days (10) rather than calendar days. All paternity benefits already granted for children born from 2 August 2022 will be reviewed.
Malta	From 2 August 2022, employees (fathers or equivalent second parents) have the right to 10 working days' paternity leave, to be taken immediately after the birth or adoption of a child.
Portugal	There is no maternity or paternity leave, only parental leave. There is an option to take 120 or 150 days of leave: 120 days are paid at 100 % and 150 days at 80 %. An extra 30 days are available if parents share the leave period. The father can take any part except the initial parental leave reserved for the mother.
Romania	For any paternity leave request submitted on or after 29 August 2022, employees are entitled to 10 working days, to which five working days can be added.
Slovakia	From 1 November 2022, fathers are entitled to two weeks of paid leave, even if the mother receives maternity or parental allowance at the same time.

**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 27 Member States as known to us on 15 February 2023.

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