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## Work-life balance: new leave rules for family care

**The European Parliament has adopted new rules to allow parents and carers to better reconcile their work and family lives.**

### Why new EU rules are needed

More adaptable working conditions and family and care-related leave would help working parents and carers balance private and professional interests and avoid the need to choose between family and career. They form part of the [EU's social](#) policies to improve people's lives and well-being.

### The impact on gender equality

Women, whose employment rate was [66.5%](#) (compared to 78% for men) in 2017, are far more likely to work part-time to take care of children and relatives and face career interruptions, which contribute to them being paid on average less and having [lower pensions](#) than men.

The new rules for a better [work-life balance](#), adopted on 4 April, aim to increase women's employment rate, create incentives for fathers to take family-related leave and promote [gender equality and equal opportunities](#).

### Next steps

EU countries will have three years to comply with the new rules.



New EU rules for a better work family balance

### Main elements of the new rules

The legislation would set new or higher minimum standards for parental and carers' leave.

Fathers would be entitled to at least 10 working days' paternity leave, paid at least at the level of sick pay. This would also apply to equivalent second parents, where recognised by national laws.

People would have the right to at least four months of parental leave, of which two months are non-transferable and paid. The level of compensation would be set by EU countries.

Workers looking after seriously ill or dependent relatives could claim five days of carers' leave a year.

In addition parents and carers would benefit from improved rights to request flexible working arrangements, for example flexible or reduced working hours.

### **More on what the EU does for workers' rights**

The EU is working steadily on [improving working conditions](#). In 2019, MEPs [back new rules introducing minimum rights](#) for all employees, including atypical forms of employment such as such as so-called gig economy temporary positions. They also adopted a reform of rules regarding [posted workers](#) in order to better protect them.

The EU has also set rules regarding [working time](#), [health and safety at work](#) and [social security](#) when working in another EU country.

### **Find out more**

[Procedure file](#)

[Briefing: a new directive on work-life balance](#)

[Infographic: maternity and paternity leave in the EU \(March 2019\)](#)