

Austria⁵⁸

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N.B. Austria is a federal state.

For comparisons with other countries in this review on leave provision and early childhood education and care services, please see the [cross-country tables](#) at the front of the review (also available individually on the [Leave Network website](#)). To contact authors of country notes, see the [members](#) page on the Leave Network website.

1. Current leave and other employment-related policies to support parents

a. Maternity leave (*Mutterschutz*) (responsibility of Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- 16 weeks: eight weeks before the birth and eight weeks after the birth. It is obligatory to take leave; employed expectant mothers are prohibited from being employed during this time.

Payment, funding and taxation

- Maternity benefit (*Wochengeld*): 100 per cent of average net income for the last three months of employment before taking leave for employees, with no upper limit. Freelance workers receive an income-based maternity benefit: self-employed women who work in a trade or agriculture are eligible for 'operational support' (i.e. financial or other support to maintain their business) as a form of maternity benefit. If no operational support is granted, they can claim a flat-rate payment of €72.18 per day. Marginally employed, self-insured women receive a flat-rate payment of €12.19 per day. Eligible, unemployed women are entitled to 180 per cent of previous unemployment benefit (with the latter corresponding to 55 per cent of previous net income). Expectant mothers receiving the childcare benefit are entitled to 100 per cent of the childcare benefit if their Maternity leave starts before the childcare benefit ends.

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- Payments are not taxed.
- If the protection period comes into effect during a period of Parental leave and childcare allowance is no longer being received, women have no entitlement to maternity benefit but to a 'Special maternity benefit' ('*Sonderwochengeld*'). The benefit is payable at the rate of the increased sickness benefit, which guarantees financial security even in the event of prolonged sick leave.
- Both benefits are funded by multiple sources: 70 per cent by the 'Family Burden Equalisation Fund' (FLAF – *Familienlastenausgleichsfonds*) which is financed by contributions from employers (3.9 per cent of each employee's salary bill), by general taxes, and by federal states; and 30 per cent by public health insurance. In 2024, total expenditure on Maternity leave (i.e. maternity pay and the payment for operational support) was €662 million.

Flexibility in use

- None.

Eligibility (e.g. related to employment or family circumstances)

- All employed women are entitled to Maternity leave and the maternity benefit, except for short-term employed women and self-employed workers who are eligible for Maternity leave only if they have a voluntary affiliation with the statutory social health insurance (SHI). Unemployed women are only eligible for maternity benefit if they have completed 3 months' continuous employment or have been affiliated to the statutory SHI for 12 months within the last 3 years.
- Expectant mothers receiving the childcare benefit are entitled to 100 per cent of the childcare benefit if their Maternity leave starts before the childcare benefit ends. If the income-related childcare benefit has already ended and expectant mothers have not started to work again or are still on Parental leave (see 1c for details), they are not entitled to maternity benefit.
- If a child is stillborn or dies during birth and if, and only if, it weighs 500 grams or more, this constitutes a stillbirth, and the mother is prohibited to be employed for eight weeks after the birth. The special protection against dismissal and termination ends four months after the stillbirth. There is no entitlement to Maternity leave after a miscarriage (birth weight of less than 500 grams). However, there is a four-week period of special protection against dismissal after a miscarriage, a possibility of sick leave and midwife assistance is granted if a miscarriage occurs after the 18th week of pregnancy.
- From the beginning of pregnancy until four months after the birth, female employees are protected against dismissal and redundancy.
- In the event of a miscarriage, this protection against dismissal and redundancy ends four weeks after the miscarriage; in the event of a stillbirth, it ends after four months.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g. multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent) or delegation of leave to person other than the mother

- In case of danger to the health of the mother or unborn child, women are eligible to take leave earlier than 8 weeks before delivery; in the case of premature births, multiple births, or births by Caesarean section, women remain eligible for 12 weeks after birth (in exceptional cases, 16 weeks).

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are supplemented by collective agreements, employer exclusion, or rights to postpone)

- None reported.

b. Paternity leave (responsibility of Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- Employed parents who live in the same household with the child and the second parent who is on Maternity or Parental leave have a legal claim to a Paternity leave called 'family time' ('*Familienzeit*') if they were employed for at least 182 calendar days before this. These parents have to interrupt their employment for a full-time leave period between 28 and 31 days within the first 91 calendar days after the birth of the child. For 4 months before, during and 4 weeks after the 'family-time' these parents are protected against dismissal.
- Parents are entitled to take 'family-time', regardless of their parental status (i.e. as biological, adoptive, or foster parents), partnership status, or sexual orientation. Only legal residence in Austria (not citizenship) and a shared household of both parents and the child is required in order to obtain this form of Paternity leave.
- Other collective agreements may provide a few days of special leave for fathers immediately after the birth of a child, during which time fathers receive full earnings replacement.

Payment, funding and taxation

- Parents on 'family time' are entitled to a monetary benefit called 'family-time bonus' ('*Familienzeitbonus*') which amounts to €54.87 per calendar day, thus amounts up to €1,700 in total.
- Payments are not taxed, and the family-time bonus is automatically compensated for inflation in January every year.
- Funded by the FLAF; see 1a for more details. In 2024, total expenditure on family-time bonus was €27 million.

Flexibility in use

- Entitled parents can choose a full-time leave period of interrupted employment between 28 and 31 days flexibly within the first 91 calendar days after the birth of the child.

Eligibility (e.g. related to employment or family circumstances)

- Only employed parents who live in the same household with the child and the second parent who is on Maternity or Parental leave are eligible.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g. multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent) or delegation of leave to person other than the mother

- If the child or the other parent is hospitalized for medical reasons, a joint household is exceptionally assumed under the following conditions:
 - If the child is hospitalized: The father must take over the personal care and supervision of the child together with the other parent for an average of at least 2 hours a day.
 - If the other parent is in hospital: the father must, in the presence of the child, provide personal care and supervision of the other parent for an average of at least 2 hours a day.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are supplemented by collective agreements, employer exclusion, or rights to postpone)

- Federal employees are entitled to the 'family-time bonus' during so-called early parental leave ('*Frühkarenzurlaub*').

c. Parental leave (*Elternkarenz*) (responsibility of Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection and Federal Chancellery/Women, Family, Integration, and Media)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- Parental leave is an entitlement per family. It lasts until the child reaches two years of age if both parents take leave for at least 2 months each or for single parents.
- If only one parent takes parental leave (except single parents), the leave lasts until the end of 22nd month of the child's life at the latest.
- If both parents take one month of parental leave at the same time, the parental leave can last until the end of the child's 23rd month of life at the latest.

Payment, funding and taxation

- A childcare benefit ('*Kinderbetreuungsgeld*') is available to all families who meet the eligibility conditions, whether or not parents take Parental leave.
- For their youngest child, parents can choose between the flexible flat-rate childcare benefit account and the income-related childcare benefit. The flexible flat-rate benefit (*childcare benefit account*, '*Kinderbetreuungsgeldkonto*') enables parents to distribute an overall sum of about €15,020 (if only one parent receives the benefit) or €18,762 (if both parents receive the benefit) over a chosen time span, calculated in days. If only one parent applies for the childcare benefit, he or she might spend the overall sum across a period from 365 days (at an amount of €41.14 per calendar day), up to a maximum of 851 days (at an amount of €17.65 per calendar day). If both parents receive and share the childcare benefit

(respecting a minimum of 20 per cent non-transferable days of all childcare benefit days requested), the money can be used within a time span between 456 days (at a daily amount of €41.14) and 1,063 days (at a daily amount of €17.65).

- The income-related childcare benefit (*'Einkommensabhängiges Kinderbetreuungsgeld'*) refunds 80 per cent of net income in the previous six months, for 365 days (if only one parent receives the childcare benefit) and up to 426 days after the birth (if both parents share the childcare benefit, with 61 non-transferable days (which are around 14 per cent of all childcare benefit days requested). The amount of the income-related option ranges up to a maximum of €80.12 per calendar day (€2,400 per month).
- Although calculated in calendar days, the childcare benefit is paid out monthly.
- For the flat-rate childcare benefit account, a parent may additionally earn 60 per cent of the income he or she earned in the calendar year prior to the child's birth, or at least €18,000 per year. For the income-related option, additional earnings may not exceed €8,100 a year.
- In case of employed parents, the length of the childcare benefit does not have to correspond to that of Parental leave. However, health insurance corresponds to receiving the childcare benefit and ends even if the parent might still be on Parental leave.
- If parents share their childcare benefit at a minimum ratio of 40:60 and if each parent has received the benefit for at least 124 days, then each parent is entitled to a 'partnership bonus' (*'Partnerschafts-Bonus'*) payment of €500. Thus, together they receive a total of €1,000.
- Payments are not taxed, and the childcare benefit is automatically compensated for inflation in January every year.
- Childcare benefit is funded from the FLAF; see 1a for more details. Total expenditure on this benefit in 2024 was €1.28 billion, including total expenditure on 'partnership bonus'.

Flexibility in use

- Parental leave may be taken by one parent only (mother or father) or by both parents on an alternating basis (the whole period can be divided into a maximum of three parts alternating between parents, with each part spanning at least two months).
- One parent may take Parental leave alone until the child's 2nd birthday if they do not live with the second parent in the same household or if the second parent is deceased or does not acknowledge parenthood. Furthermore, if the parent who initially cares for the child is not entitled to parental leave, the other parent can take parental leave at the earliest two months after the Maternity leave. In this case, the Parental leave entitlement is extended until the end of the 24th month of the child's life.
- The parents cannot change their chosen childcare benefit option. Within the flat-rate childcare benefit account, they can change the duration once (which may lead to back payment or repayment demands). If parents choose the income-related option and one parent does not fulfil the employment or income requirements (i.e. was not employed or earnings were not high enough), he or she receives a childcare benefit of €41.14 per calendar day, which corresponds to the daily amount paid in the shortest duration of the childcare benefit account.

Eligibility (e.g. related to employment or family circumstances)

- All employed parents are entitled to take Parental leave, regardless of their parental status (i.e. as biological, adoptive, or foster parents), partnership status, or sexual orientation. The employer cannot refuse parental leave.
- A permanent (at least 91 days) joint household with the child and identical main legal residence at this address in Austria is required (not citizenship) in order to obtain Parental leave.
- There is no entitlement to take Parental leave for self-employed parents; however, they can claim both the childcare benefit options under the same conditions as applied to employees.
- All parents with a legal residence in Austria (incl. asylum-entitled applicants and their asylum-entitled children), regardless of their employment status and their citizenship, are entitled to receive the flat-rate childcare benefit account.
- Parents are eligible for the income-related childcare benefit if they were employed for at least 182 calendar days before this.
- Individuals granted subsidiary protection status under the Asylum Act 2005 are entitled to childcare allowance for their subsidiary protection-entitled children, provided they are employed (either as employees or self-employed).
- Individuals displaced from Ukraine who have been granted temporary residence rights under Section 62(1) of the Asylum Act 2005 (Displaced Persons Regulation) are entitled to childcare allowance from 1 November 2025 until 30 June 2026 at the latest, provided all general eligibility requirements are met and the additional requirement (employment or registration with the Public Employment Service) is fulfilled.
- In the case of parents living separately, but sharing custody of the child, both parents are eligible to receive and share the childcare benefit, in the same way as parents living together. There are no specific provisions for single parents.
- All parents are only entitled to the full amount of childcare benefit when they carry out mandatory health check-ups with their child by the time their child reaches the 15th month of age. Otherwise, the amount of childcare benefit will be reduced by €1,300 per parent for both models.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g. multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent; or delegation of leave to person other than parent)

- In the case of multiple births, the respective daily amount of the childcare benefit account (not the income-related childcare benefit) is increased by 50 per cent for each additional child.
- In the case of one of the two parents being prevented from using the childcare benefit due to death, a prison sentence, or other extreme circumstances, the available parent may receive the full amount of the flat-rate childcare benefit account (not the income-related childcare benefit) for further 91 days.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Single parents who do not yet receive alimony may receive the flat-rate childcare benefit account (N.B. not the income-related childcare benefit) extended by a further 91 days. After divorce/separation, custodial parents should receive alimony from their former spouses – if they do not, or the ex-partner does not pay, childcare benefit is extended.

- Single parents who are entitled to childcare benefit account and earn no more than €8,100 per calendar year can apply for a subsidy of €6.06 per day. Receivers of income-related childcare benefit are not eligible.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

Additional note (e.g. employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- Each parent has the possibility of postponing three months of Parental leave, up until the child's seventh birthday (or school entry).

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

- Employees have the possibility of taking between two and 12 months off for private reasons (e.g. further education or family reasons). It is based on labour legislation, a mutual agreement between employer and employee, and is, therefore, not a statutory entitlement. This leave period is unpaid.

e. Other types of leave and flexible working

Adoption leave and pay

- For adoptive and foster parents, the same regulations for Parental leave and the childcare benefit apply as for other parents.

Time off for the care of dependents

- Employees have a legal claim to take **days or hours off to care for either all sick persons who live in the same household, or for sick close relatives** who are not living in the same household ('*Pflegefreistellung*') and who are relatives in the ascending or descending line, i.e. biological, adopted or foster children, grandchildren, parents, and grandparents. Employees can take the hours of 1 (average working) week off per year to care for other household or family members; for sick children under the age of 12 years, employees are eligible for the hours of 2 (average working) weeks, with full earnings replacement.
- It is possible to accompany a child under the age of 10 years during an **inpatient stay at the hospital** ('*Begleitungsfreistellung*'). Employees are further entitled to accompany a child up to the age of 14 years during an inpatient rehabilitation stay for up to a total of 4 weeks per year ('*Freistellung für Kinderrehabilitation*'), provided that this accompaniment has been approved by social insurance. During this time, there is a legal entitlement to care leave allowance ('*Pflegekarenzgeld*') described below.
- If the **child's main carer falls sick or becomes unavailable** (e.g. grandmother), parents are also entitled to stay at home with their child (based on the respective law *Urlaubsgesetz §16*). A shared household is not required.
- Employees who have worked in companies with more than 5 employees for 3 preceding months are entitled to take **long-term care leave** ('*Pflegekarenz*') or **part-time care leave** ('*Pflegezeit*'). This leave allows caregivers to provide (informal) care or organise (formal) care for sick

or frail dependants, close relatives, or family members for a duration of one month to three months (initially) per dependant. Long-term or part-time care leave for up to 6 months can be agreed with the company on a voluntary basis. Slightly different regulations apply for public sector employees, but self-employed persons are not eligible for these care leave models. A shared household is not required.

Although employees should seek an agreement with their employer, they have the right to take a (long-term or part-time) care leave unilaterally and initially for 2 weeks, with possibility for extension of another 2 weeks. If employers refuse or postpone long-term or part-time care leave, they must give factual reasons in writing. In principle, a person can only apply once for long-term or part-time care leave for a person in need of care. However, several people can take long-term or part-time leave for the same person in succession: For example, two siblings can apply for care leave for the same parent in different periods.

- Employees have a statutory right to take a maximum of six months' **family hospice leave** (*'Familienhospizkarenz'*) for the purpose of nursing terminally ill family members. If the leave is taken for severely ill children, it can be extended to 9 months. The leave for care of severely ill children may be renewed twice (i.e. in total up to a maximum of 27 months). Again, a shared household is not required.
- Family caregivers who have been primary carer for at least 1 year and are unable to provide care due to illness, vacation or other important reasons can be granted financial support for people who temporarily undertake substitute care (*'Ersatzpflege'*). Financial support is available for substitute care from the very 1st day of the caregiver's absence, but there is a maximum daily limit of substitute care (based on the level of care allowance). The group of substitute carers includes close relatives but also partners of daughters or sons, or the mother or father of the person in need of care, foster parents, aunts and uncles.
- During long-term or part-time care leave or family hospice leave to care for sick children, dependants or family members, employees are entitled to care leave allowance (*'Pflegekarenzgeld'*). Eligible family members are relatives within the direct ascending or descending line, including siblings, adoptive parents, step-parents, step-children, partners or registered partners of a parent, and in-laws. The basic amount of the care leave allowance is income-dependent and is payable at the same level as unemployment benefit (55 per cent of the daily net income), but at least at the level of the monthly marginal earnings threshold (2025: €551.10). Child supplements are payable for dependent children who care for close relatives.

The maximum duration for the payment is 3 months per employee, or 6 months per dependent person, if the leave is shared and several relatives take care leave for the same person in succession. If the need for care increases by at least one level of care allowance (*'Pflegegeldstufe'*), care leave allowance can also be drawn again for the same relative after a new agreement on care leave. However, the total duration of the care leave allowance may not exceed 12 months for the same person requiring care.

Caregivers must submit the application for care leave allowance within 2 months of the start of care leave, but in any case before the end of care leave. Receivers of care leave allowance are protected against dismissal for

cause. Low-income families may apply for a hardship allowance during periods of family hospice leave, if the leave causes financial distress (funded from FLAF, see 1a). In 2025, there were 150 hardship allowance grants under the family hospice leave scheme, of which 54 per cent of recipients were male and 45 per cent were female.

- Family carers who have given up or reduced their employment due to their care for a close relative at home (and at allowance level 4 or higher) can apply for a relatives' bonus (*'Angehörigenbonus'*); some receive this bonus without additional requirements. A shared household with the person receiving care is not necessary. The bonus amounts to €134,30 per month.⁶⁰
- Care by relatives is accounted for under inheritance law in Austria. People who have personally provided unpaid, intensive care for a close relative for at least six months in the three years before the relative's death may receive a financial compensation after the relative's death.

Specific provision for (breast)feeding

- Mothers are entitled to 'nursing' leave of 45 minutes per day out of 4.5 to 8 working hours. If a mother works 8 hours or more, she is entitled to a daily nursing leave of two times 45 minutes (or one break of 90 minutes).

Flexible working for carers

- Parents have the legal right to work 'Parental part-time' (*'Elternteilzeit'*) until the child's seventh birthday (or school entry) if they live in the same household with this child, if they are working in companies with more than 20 employees, and if they have been continuously employed with their present employer for at least 3 years. The reduction in working time must amount to at least 20 per cent of their previous working time. It is not possible to work part-time for fewer than 12 hours per week or more than 32 hours per week. Parents working in companies with fewer than 20 employees may enter into an '*agreed Parental part-time*' with their employer, up until the child's fourth birthday.
- The regulations also include the right to change working hours within the day (e.g. from morning to afternoon) without reducing the number of working hours, as well as the right to return to full-time employment.
- Parents are protected against dismissal until their child's 4th birthday, starting 4 months before they start and during the period they work '*Parental part-time*' under the entitlement outlined above. During the remaining period of part-time work (i.e. until the child's seventh birthday or school entry) they are protected against dismissal without cause.
- An employee is not allowed to claim '*Parental part-time*' when their partner is on Parental leave.

⁶⁰ Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz (BMASGPK) (2025). Österreichischer Pflegevorsorgebericht 2024, p. 18f. Online available: <https://www.sozialministerium.gv.at/dam/jcr:b10ba457-7a8a-4f0f-b74f-67335657f8ce/Pflegevorsorgebericht%202024.pdf>

Time off for antenatal appointments and care

- None.

Other provisions of leave

- None reported.

2. Relationship between leave policy and early childhood education and care policy

The maximum period of post-natal Parental leave available in Austria is 24 months. There is an entitlement to ECEC from five years of age, for part-time attendance of kindergarten (20 hours per week). Attendance is obligatory. So, there is a gap of three years between the leave ending and ECEC entitlement beginning, and a gap of 46 months between the end of the income replacement benefit (if that option is chosen) and any ECEC entitlement.

For ECEC attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' on [cross-country comparisons](#) page.

3. Changes in policy since April 2025 (including proposals currently under discussion)

No changes reported.

4. Uptake of leave

a. Maternity leave

It is obligatory for employees to take Maternity leave and almost all mothers are eligible (see 1a); the take-up of leave, therefore, corresponds to the number of births.

b. Paternity leave

Statistics on take-up of 'family time' show an increase in numbers of fathers that claim 'family-time bonus'. From its introduction in 2017 through 2024, the number of children for whom the 'family-time bonus' was claimed increased markedly—from 4,144 births in 2017 to 19,799 in 2024⁶¹—corresponding to 15.3 per cent of all births in 2023.

c. Parental leave

Data show that almost all eligible (i.e. formerly employed) mothers – between 93 and 96 per cent – took up Parental leave in the final years of the previous scheme.

⁶¹ Kaindl, M. and Schipfer, R.K. (2025) *Familien in Zahlen 2025. Statistische Informationen zu Familien in Österreich* [Families in Figures 2025. Statistical information on families in Austria], Wien: Österreichisches Institut für Familienforschung an der Universität Wien. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.25365/phaidra.755>

Since replacing the Parental leave benefit with the new childcare benefit in 2002, there has only been information on parents' uptake of the childcare benefit, which is decoupled from Parental leave (see 1c). As there are no official statistics on the uptake of Parental leave, it is difficult to know how many fathers currently take it. Some studies address this issue, but the percentages vary significantly depending on the population under study.

Regarding the number of women and men receiving the childcare benefit, it is crucial to keep in mind the difference to Parental leave, i.e. both parents who are on leave and parents who are not on leave alike are able to receive a childcare benefit. Further, parents are able to decouple the duration of leave from the duration of receiving the childcare benefit. Thus, they might be on leave up to 24 months but might receive the childcare benefit for a shorter period of time (e.g. 12 months income-related benefit) or a longer period of time (e.g. if receiving the flat-rate childcare benefit account) (see 1c).

Recent statistics⁶² show that the share of parents who chose the flat-rate childcare benefit has fallen from nearly two thirds of *all* parents to 55 per cent. Among these parents, 34 per cent applied for 12 months and 27 per cent chose about 28 or more months. Despite access to equal sharing, 93 per cent of the principal recipients of the flat-rate childcare benefit were mothers only, in 7 per cent of the cases fathers also received a share of the flat-rate benefit. At the same time, 45 per cent of *all* parents applied for the income-based model paid for 12 to 14 months. The share of fathers in this model is significantly higher in the income-based model, in which fathers also applied for childcare benefit in 26 per cent of all cases. On average, fathers claimed for childcare benefit in nearly 15 per cent of all cases. Over the past years, the share of fathers claiming childcare benefit thus has decreased, while at the same time the proportion of parents who share childcare benefit at a ratio of 50:50 to 60:40 and, therefore, receive the 'Partnership Bonus' rose from 5.8 per cent for births in 2018 to 8.3 per cent for births in 2021⁶³. On average, however, mothers take 416 days of KBG funded parental leave following the birth of their first child, while fathers take just nine days.⁶⁴

⁶² Austrian Federal Chancellery (2026) *Auswertung Väterbeteiligung beim Kinderbetreuungsgeld für Geburten in 2022* [Statistics for Father Involvement in Childcare Benefit for births in 2022]. Available at: https://www.bundestkanzleramt.gv.at/dam/jcr:6ed46427-5a3b-46f3-8053-1d8264bcc0bc/vaeterbeteiligung_nach_bundeslaender_und_geburtsjahr_2022.pdf

Rille-Pfeiffer C. and Kapella O. (2022): *Evaluierung des neuen Kinderbetreuungsgeldkontos und der Familienzeit. Meta-Analyse* [Evaluation of the new childcare allowance account and family leave. Meta-analysis]. Available at: https://www.oif.ac.at/fileadmin/user_upload/p_oif/Forschungsberichte/FB_37_-_KBG_2021_Metaanalyse.pdf

⁶³ Riesenfelder, Andreas; Danzer, Lisa (2024) *Wiedereinstiegsmonitoring 2024. Kontinuitäten, Trendbrüche und Nachwirkungen der Covid-Krise* [Return-to-Work Monitoring 2024: Continuities, breaks in trends and the after-effects of the Covid crisis], Wien: Arbeiterkammer Wien, L&R Sozialforschung. Available at: https://www.arbeiterkammer.at/interessenvertretung/arbeitsundsoziales/familie/Wiedereinstiegsmonitoring_2024.pdf

⁶⁴ Reiter, C. and Spitzer, S. (2026) When Gender Trumps Skills: Employment Trajectories of Austrian Parents After Their First Birth, *Comparative Population Studies* 51, Available at: <https://doi.org/10.12765/CPoS-2026-01>

d. Other employment-related measures

The number of beneficiaries of care leave allowance for people on care leave ('*Pflegekarenzgeld*') has been steadily increasing since 2014 when it was introduced. In 2025, 5,540 people used this paid leave model compared to 2,323 in 2014 when the model was introduced. In 2025, 74 per cent of beneficiaries were female. Among the receivers, in 2025, 2,362 people used the long-term care leave model ('*Pflegekarenz*'); while 195 used the same model in part-time ('*Pflegezeit*'); and 830 used the family hospice leave model. In addition, 1,888 people were on care leave to provide support for seriously ill children (incl. part-time); and 485 people accompanied children during rehabilitation stays. (Double counts are possible, as one person may use both a long-term care leave and a family hospice leave.) With regard to substitute care ('*Ersatzpflege*') in 2025, a total of 10,663 people received an allowance for substitute care. Of these, 47 per cent were women and around 53 per cent were men.⁶⁵

The most recent study on long-term care leave ('*Pflegekarenz*') has revealed that two thirds of long-term care leavers are women. Caregivers who take a leave have a relatively low income and live in municipalities with a smaller population size.⁶⁶ Calculations based on estimates regarding the eligible number of employees show an uptake rate of 2.5 per cent⁶⁷, while others⁶⁸ report a take-up rate of 5 per cent among main caregivers. The average duration of long-term and part-time care leaves amounted to 87 days and 81 days respectively in 2021, i.e. slightly below the three months that this model allows for initially.⁶⁹ About 70 per cent of employees taking leave from work to care for frail or sick dependants/family members (i.e. long-term care leave or family hospice leave) are women. Reconciliation works only to a limited extent, according to a qualitative study carried out in 2015/2016.⁷⁰

⁶⁵ Information on 2025 provided by the BMASGPK (Bundesministerium für Arbeit, Soziales, Gesundheit, Pflege und Konsumentenschutz).

⁶⁶ Klotz, J. and Scharf, R. (2020) *Studie zur Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Pflege bei NutzerInnen von Pflegekarenz/-zeit: Integrierte Evaluierung durch Registerforschung und Befragung von NutzerInnen* [Study on balancing work and caregiving among users of caregiving leave/part-time: Integrated evaluation through registry research and user surveys]. *Sozialpolitische Studienreihe, Band 27*, Vienna: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection.

⁶⁷ Schmidt, A.E., Fuchs, M. and Rodrigues, R. (2016) *Policy brief: juggling family and work – leave from work to care informally for frail or sick family members – an international perspective*. Vienna: European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

⁶⁸ Nagl-Cupal, M., Kolland, F., Zartler, U., Mayer, H., Bittner, M., Koller, M., Parisot, V. and Stöhr, D. (2018) *Angehörigenpflege in Österreich. Einsicht in die Situation pflegender Angehöriger und in die Entwicklung informeller Pflegenetzwerke* [Care by family members in Austria. A look into the situation of family caregivers and the development of informal care networks], Wien: BMASGK.

⁶⁹ Data for 2022 from 'Parliamentary inquiry 10234/J on long-term and part-time care leave', ('*Anfragebeantwortung der Anfrage Nr. 10234/J der Abgeordneten Rosa Ecker, MBA und weiterer Abgeordneter betreffend die Inanspruchnahme von Pflegekarenz bzw. Pflegezeit*'), available under https://www.parlament.gv.at/dokument/XXVII/AB/9978/imfname_1447272.pdf

⁷⁰ Sardadvar, K. and Mairhuber, I. (2018) 'Employed family carers in Austria: the interplay of paid and unpaid work – beyond 'reconciliation'', *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Soziologie*, 43, 61-72.