

Inese Upite (Ministry of Welfare of the Republic of Latvia)

April 2026

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 (*grūtniecības un dzemdību atvaļinājums*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- 112 calendar days: 56 days before the birth and 56 days after.
- It is prohibited to employ a pregnant woman 2 weeks prior to the expected birth and a woman 2 weeks after the childbirth. The time of the expected birth and the fact of birth must be certified by a doctor.

Payment, funding and taxation

- For employed women: 80 per cent of earnings calculated based on the average salary on which insurance contributions have been paid for a period of 12 calendar months, ending 2 months before the month in which the leave begins.
- For self-employed women: 80 per cent of the gross insurance contributions made during the period of the 12 calendar months ending one quarter before the quarter in which the leave begins. The benefit is paid in 2 parts: the first part is calculated for the 56 calendar days (or 70 calendar days) before the due date, and the second part is calculated for the 56 calendar days (or 70 calendar days) after the actual birth date.
- The average amount of the maternity benefit (in total) in 2025 was €3,403.51 for the first part of the leave and €3,005.15 for the second part of the leave. The number of recipients during the year was €10,785 (around 899 per month).
- Payments are not taxed.
- Funded from social insurance, which is financed by contributions from employees (9.25 per cent of earnings) and employers (20.77 per cent).

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Flexibility in use

- If women have given birth before the prenatal leave, she is entitled to paid prenatal and postnatal leaves after the childbirth. Similarly, where the child was born before the prescribed date of birth, the period of Maternity leave and benefit will be extended accordingly.
- Flexibility regarding the start of the prenatal and the end of postnatal leave is agreed with the doctor and the employer.

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

- All women who have paid social insurance contributions in Latvia for at least 3 months in the period of the last 6 months before the first day of Maternity leave or for at least 6 months in the last 24 months.
- All women who are spouses of a self-employed man and who have joined the social insurance system voluntarily.
- In a case where employment has ended due to the company's liquidation, the benefit is provided if the leave has started no later than 210 days after the end of employment.
- All women who have lost the status of an employee or self-employed no later than 60 days before the first day of Maternity leave.
- For the period after childbirth, the father of a child or any other person who takes care of a new-born at home and fulfils the social insurance criteria is entitled to paid Maternity leave of 56 or 70 days if:
 - the mother is unable to take care of the child until the 42nd post-natal day due to sickness;
 - the mother has refused to take care of the child;
 - the mother has died during childbirth or before the 42nd post-natal day;
 - the child is a foundling (the child has been abandoned, and the mother is unknown).
- The right to the Maternity benefit ends 6 months from the first^t day of the first part of the leave (if the eligible person fails to apply until the end of that period, the right cannot be exercised).

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

- If the mother has required medical supervision due to the pregnancy (no later than at the 12th week of the pregnancy), 14 extra days of leave before the birth of a child are provided.
- In the case of multiple births or complications during pregnancy, childbirth, or the postpartum period, 14 extra calendar days of leave after the birth are provided.
- In the case of premature birth, the maternity benefit is paid in the same amount as it would be if the birth would take place at the due date.
- If a person is entitled to the unemployment allowance and Maternity benefit for the same time period, the unemployment allowance is suspended for that particular period, that is, only the Maternity benefit is paid.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

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

- None reported.

b. Paternity leave (*atvaļinājums bērna tēvam*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- 10 working days.
- The leave has to be requested no later than 6 months after childbirth; the benefit has to be requested no later than 6 months after the first day of the leave.

Payment, funding and taxation

- For employed men: 80 per cent of previous earnings, calculated based on the average salary on which insurance contributions have been paid for a period of 12 calendar months, ending two months before the month in which the leave begins.
- For self-employed men: 80 per cent of the gross insurance contributions made during the period of 12 calendar months, ending one quarter before the quarter in which the leave begins.
- Payments are not taxed.
- Funded from social insurance, which is financed by contributions from employees (9.25 per cent of earnings) and employers (20.77 per cent).

Flexibility in use

- Leave can be used within 6 months after childbirth.
- The leave can be divided into parts as agreed with the employer.

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

- The father of a child if the Paternity leave is granted no later than 6 months after the birth. If the paternity of the child has not been acknowledged (determined) or the child's father has died, or the father's custody right has been terminated, another person who is not the child's mother has the right to a leave of 10 working days upon request of the child's mother.
- The same insurance period eligibility criteria needed as for Maternity leave.
- One of the adoptive parents until the child reaches eighteen years of age.
- The right to the Paternity benefit ends six months from the first day of the Paternity leave.
- No specific regulation regarding same-sex couples (i.e., the right to the leave and thus the benefit is attached to any person who falls under the eligibility criteria mentioned above).

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

- None.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

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

- None reported.

c. Parental leave (*bērna kopšanas atvaļinājums*) (responsibility of the Ministry of Welfare)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- 18 months per parent.
- Leave is an individual, non-transferable entitlement, but only one parent may receive payment, for a maximum period of 17 months.

Payment, funding and taxation

Parental benefit

- Only parents who are participating in the social insurance system are eligible.
- Parents are entitled to choose the total period of receiving the Parental benefit, which consists of the Parental benefit and the non-transferable part of the Parental benefit. It is possible to choose one of the following benefit periods:
 - i. 19 months, of which 15 months can be used until the child is 1.5 years old, with benefit at 43.75 per cent of previous earnings. The non-transferable part can be used by each parent until the child reaches 8 years of age;
 - ii. 13 months, of which 9 months can be used until the child is 1 year old, with benefit at 60 per cent of previous earnings. The non-transferable part can be used by each parent until the child reaches 8 years of age.
- The amount of Parental benefit is reduced to 75 per cent of the normal benefit granted if the beneficiary discontinues Parental leave in order to resume working.
- The period of payment of the postnatal leave, if the Maternity benefit has been granted to one of the parents, is included in the total Parental benefit period.
- Only one parent is able to use the whole period of Parental benefit, including the 2 non-transferable months: (i) if the child's paternity has not been determined; or (ii) the other parent has died; or (iii) custody rights have been revoked or discontinued for the other parent, or the

Orphan's Court has ruled that one parent is actually not raising or caring for the child.

- Parental benefit is not taxable
- Funded in the same way as Maternity and Paternity leave.
- The average amount of the Parental benefit in 2025 was €1,044.67 per month for parents who chose to receive the benefit 13 months (number of recipients: around 1,260 per month, 51.15 per cent of whom were women), and €787.70. for parents who chose to receive the benefit 19 months (number of recipients: around 10,900 per month, 81.34 per cent of whom women).
- Parental benefit payment period is extended by the period of the specified pregnancy leave if the child was born before the determined start of the pregnancy leave.

Child care allowance

- Paid to one of the parents or the legal guardian of a child if the child has been taken under guardianship, or one of the adoptive parents, or a foster parent.
- The benefit is €298 per month for each child until a child reaches 18 months of age and then €42.69 per month for each child until a child reaches 24 months of age if a child is born up to 2 November, 2026.
- The application for the child care allowance should be submitted within 6 months from the 1st day of the child's life or the day the guardianship has been granted.
- If the parent is not a socially insured person (non-working), the benefit is granted from the date of the child's birthday, provided that no maternity benefit, parental benefit or child care benefit for the same period has been granted to the other parent due to the birth and care of this child.
- If the parent is a socially insured person (working), parental benefit and child care allowance are granted simultaneously for the care of the same child. Both benefits can be received at the same time, unless a maternity benefit for the same period has been granted due to the birth of this child. Parental benefit and childcare allowance for caring for the same child, for the same period of time, are granted to one person. Therefore, the parents in the family must agree on who receives child care benefits, as both benefits are given to one parent at the same time.

Flexibility in use

- Both parents are entitled to 18 months of leave until a child reaches 8 years of age. Parental leave, upon the request of an employee, shall be granted as a single continuous period or in several periods (a period cannot be shorter than 1 calendar week without interruption).
- The employee has an obligation to notify the employer in writing one month before the beginning of the leave about the intention to use the leave, including the length of the Parental leave they plan to use (as a single period or in blocks).
- Employee has the right to request to use the Parental leave flexibly. An employer has the obligation to assess such a request and, not later than within 1 month from the receipt of the request of the employee, to notify the employee of the possibility of using the Parental leave in a flexible manner.
- The leave can be used simultaneously by both parents, but only one parent

can receive the benefit. The recipient is allowed to transfer the right to benefit to the other parent, if needed. Also, it is allowed to work and receive the benefit, however, in those cases, the amount of the benefit is reduced (see above).

- Parents are entitled to transfer the benefits right to one another, except for 2 non-transferable months.

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

- One of the parents (adoptive or biological) and who are participants of the social insurance system (see Maternity leave).
- Child's foster family member.
- Child's guardian or any other person who takes care of a child according to the decision of an orphans' court.
- Women who are not (self-)employed at the date when the benefit is requested but were (self-)employed no later than 60 days before the first day of the Maternity leave, or 210 days before the first day of the Maternity leave in case of company's liquidation, or have lost the (self-)employment status during the Maternity leave.

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

- A guardian, foster parent or adoptive parent has the right to request a change in the length of parental benefit if the biological parent has had already used the right to parental benefit (only a remaining leave can be used).
- If the next child is born before the previous has reached 3 years of age, the parental benefit cannot be smaller than the benefit a parent received for the previous child.

Regional or local variations in leave policy

- None.

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

- None reported.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

No statutory entitlement.

e. Other types of leave and flexible working

Adoption leave and pay

- Adoptive parents are entitled to Paternity and Parental leave. Payment and funding are provided on the same grounds as for biological parents.
- In addition, for a family that has adopted a child up to 18 years of age, one

of the adopters can take 10 calendar days of leave.

Time off for the care of dependants

- Parents who have joined the social insurance system (employed, self-employed, or parents whose spouse is self-employed) are entitled to **sick leave and benefit for a child** up to 14 years of age: 14 days per sickness episode if a child has been taken care of at home, or up to 21 days if a child has been admitted to hospital, or up to 30 days if a child has an injury caused by bone fracture.
- Parents who have a child up to 18 years of age are entitled to **temporary absence** in the case of the sickness of a child or an accident or for a doctor's appointment when it is not possible to undergo this examination outside working time.
- Parents whose **child has been diagnosed with a severe illness** and for whom the consilium has issued a respective decision; or parents who receive the allowance for the care of a disabled child if long-term hospital treatment is needed are entitled to sickness benefit for a period up to 26 weeks in case of a continuous sickness or for no longer than 3 years in a 5 years period in case of various sickness episodes. Grandparents, foster parents, guardians, or any other person who takes care of a child according to the decision of an orphans' court are also entitled to this benefit. The sickness benefit is calculated in the same way as the Maternity and Paternity benefit and is taxable.
- An employer must grant **caretaker's leave** if it is requested by an employee who has to personally care for a spouse, parent, child, or another close family member or the person who lives with the employee in the same household and who requires substantial care or support due to a serious medical reason. This unpaid leave is granted for a period not exceeding 5 working days per year. The employee has the right to use such leave in parts.

Specific provision for (breast-)feeding

- Parents (both mothers and fathers) with a child up to 18 months of age are entitled to a paid additional break for feeding their child – at least 30 minutes every 3 hours (or at least 60 minutes every three hours, if a parent has more than one child up to 18 months of age). Upon request, parents are entitled to combine these breaks, thus prolonging a lunch break or shortening their working day.

Flexible working for carers

- An employer shall provide part-time work if it is requested by (i) a pregnant woman; (ii) a woman during the period following childbirth up to 1 year or for the whole period of breastfeeding; (iii) an employee with a disability; (iv) an employee who has a child up to 14 years of age or a child with a disability up to 18 years; or (v) an employee who is a parent caring for an adult with a disability from childhood requiring special care. Upon the request the employer should transfer the employee from regular working time to part-time or vice versa if such possibility exists in the undertaking.
- An employee who has a child under 8 years of age or who has to personally care for a spouse, parent, child, or another close family member or the

person who lives with the employee in the same household and who requires substantial care or support due to a serious medical reason has the right to request the employer to set an adaptation to the organisation of the working hours.

Time off for antenatal appointments and care

- A pregnant woman is entitled to leave the workplace to undergo a health examination in the prenatal period if it is impossible to undergo it outside of working time.

Other provisions of leave

- **Bereavement leaves.** An employee is entitled to be absent from work for 2 working days due to the death of their spouse, parent, child, or another close family member. The employer is obliged to pay remuneration for such absence.
- **Supplementary leave.** Parents who have a child up to 3 years of age (or 18 years of age if a child has a disability) are entitled to annual leave during the summer months as a priority group or at any other time of their choice. Parents who have 1 or 2 children up to 14 years of age are entitled to annual paid supplementary leave of at least 1 working day. Parents who have 3 or more children up to 16 years of age (or up to 18 years of age if a child has a disability) are entitled to annual paid supplementary leave of 3 working days.

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

The maximum period of post-natal leave is 38 months, but only just over half of this is paid and only 1.9 months is well paid. According to the Law on Education, Article 17, municipalities are responsible for ensuring that all children from 18 months of age registered in their area receive Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) in an institution that is closest to the child's home; a child can also attend an ECEC institution in another municipality and receive the same financial support as those children who attend an institution in the municipality of their place of residence. In principle, therefore, there is no gap between the end of leave and entitlement to ECEC and a gap of around 16 months between the end of well-paid leave and an ECEC entitlement. However, in practice, there are no municipalities that can offer a place in a municipal ECEC institution for all children: for instance, in October 2025, there were around 2,405 children from the ages of 1½ to 6 years who did not receive a place in a municipal ECEC institution. The most difficult situation is in Mārupe municipality, with 587 children waiting for a place in a municipal ECEC, and Ķekava municipality – 470 children.

Since the uptake of Parental leave is mostly until a child reaches 18 months of age, municipalities provide financial support for fees in private ECEC institutions if no place is available in a municipal service when a child reaches 18 months of age. The amount of allowance is decided by calculating the average expenses for one child per month in a municipal ECEC institution and is thus different in each municipality. In 2026, the average support of municipalities for children from one and a half to four years of age is €484.35, and the local municipalities' support for

children who are undergoing mandatory preparation for primary education is €294.38.

In some municipalities, parents who choose to employ a childminder are entitled to a municipal allowance: the allowance is usually provided for children who are at least 18 months of age, until a place in a municipal ECEC institution is available. The allowance amount offered differs in each municipality. In 2026, 14 municipalities provide such support. Average support is €225.66, and the amounts vary from €125 per month in Liepāja municipality to €375.81 per month in Valmiera municipality. The allowance in Riga municipality is €242.66.

For ECEC attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' in the [cross-country tables](#) at the front of the review.

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

On 3 December 2025, the Law on Maternity and Sickness Insurance was amended so that from 1 January to 31 December 2026 parental benefit will be paid at 75 per cent of the granted benefit if the beneficiary discontinues Parental leave in order to resume working

On 27 November 2025, Parliament adopted amendments to the Law 'On Maternity and Sickness Insurance', which provide for:

- additional support from 1 January 2026 to parents of preterm children. For parents whose child is born after 1 January 2026, only the period of postnatal leave—i.e., 56 or 70 days—are included in the parental benefit payment period, thereby extending the duration of parental benefit payments by the period corresponding to how much earlier than the expected date of delivery the child was born.
- an additional criterion for granting parental benefits, so that from 1 July 2026 parental benefits will be granted for a child who has been assigned a personal identification number, whose status in the Register of Natural Persons is active, and who permanently resides in the territory of Latvia. If the child of a person insured in Latvia, for whom parental benefit is granted, resides in another Member State of the European Union, the Swiss Confederation, or a Member State of the European Economic Area, the parental benefit shall be granted in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 883/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 April 2004. The provision will enter into force on 1 July 2026.

4. Uptake of leave

Data on the uptake are from the State Social Insurance Agency, and the data on the average salaries are from the Central Statistical Bureau.

a. Maternity leave

In 2025, 10,785 persons received the maternity benefit, which is around 6.3 per cent less than in 2024.

b. Paternity leave

In 2025, 7,475 persons received the paternity benefit, which is around 7.3 in 2024. The average amount of the paternity benefit in 2025 was €865.93.

c. Parental leave

Most of the parents taking this leave in 2025 were women (76.7 per cent of the total number in 2025). However, most of the working parents who received parental benefits were men (83 per cent in 2025).

d. Other types of leave and flexible working

No information available.