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Leave and financial support for family caregivers in EU member states

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2016

https://doi.org/10.25595/1890

Veröffentlichungsversion / published version
Working Paper

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Hoyer, Sören; Reich, Nele: *Leave and financial support for family caregivers in EU member states*. Frankfurt a. M.: Beobachtungsstelle für gesellschaftspolitische Entwicklungen in Europa, Institut für Sozialarbeit und Sozialpädagogik, 2016. DOI: https://doi.org/10.25595/1890.

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Leave and financial support for family caregivers in EU member states

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Abstract:

This report shows which forms of long-term leave exist in several EU member states for family caregivers who care for a dependent relative at home. It also shows, whether there is some form of financial benefit available for the caregiver during the leave. The support arrangements of 14 member states of the European Union (EU) are presented in brief descriptions and overview tables.

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1 Introduction

Support arrangements for caregivers, such as leaves from work for the purpose of caring for a dependent person and financial benefits that the caregiver receives during the leave, can contribute to a better reconciliation of care and work. The support arrangement also has an impact on the division of care tasks within families and can contribute to a more equal sharing of these tasks between family members. Measures to enable caregivers to reconcile care and work as well as the sharing of care responsibilities is key for the future organization of family care most European member states.

This report shows which forms of long-term leave exist[1] in several EU member states for family caregivers who care for a dependent relative at home. It also shows, whether there is some form of financial benefit available for the caregiver during the leave. Support arrangements from Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Ireland, Croatia, the Netherlands, Austria, Portugal, Sweden, Spain, the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom are outlined. The arrangements in the 14 member states of the European Union (EU) are presented in brief descriptions and overview tables. The leave arrangements and financial benefits are divided into leave for the care of relatives in general (1.) as well as special leave models for palliative care (2.) and the care of minors (3.).

In all the member states considered in this overview, the eligibility criteria for general leave are in principle that care is provided for a dependent person who is in need of care due to age, disability or serious illness (1.). The special leave for palliative care can be claimed in case a dependent person is dying or in need of care due to a life-threatening illness (2.). The second special leave for the care of minors can be claimed to care for a child who has either a disability or a severe chronic disease (3.). Parents or, in some countries, grandparents are eligible caregivers. If there are further eligibility criteria in the EU member states that go beyond these basic prerequisites, these are specified in the country-specific overview tables.

The overview tables are organized by member states. More detailed explanations on the level of benefits, the question of means testing or the minimum number of contribution months for social insurance etc. are given in the brief descriptions. The basic design of the long-term care system of each member state is outlined in a brief paragraph. In addition, the "Indirect financial support for family care" is listed. This includes benefits which cannot be claimed directly by the caregiver but which can indirectly contribute to the financial support of informal care. An example is the German care allowance, which is granted to the dependent person and is intended to cover home care expenses.

In the overview tables, the type of leave is specified and whether a legal right exists. In the following, eligibility criteria are listed, information on duration and the possibility of combining partial leave with part-time work are listed. The overview tables also include information on financial support arrangements, specifying which conditions must be fulfilled (e.g. whether full leave from work is mandatory or the leave may be taken as a partial leave from work), the

1 Short-term leave was not taken into account.

scope of financial support (e.g. flat rate, wage-replacement or income dependent benefit[2]), and how long the financial support is granted. It also specifies whether self-employed workers are eligible for the benefit and whether there are special regulations targeting the marginally employed. Finally, the question of flexibility in take-up, the possibility of repeated take-ups and whether there is the possibility that several persons take leave form work to care for one and the same dependent person and/or receive financial benefits for the care of one and the same dependent person is explained. If no information has been available, this is indicated as No data (N.D).

The study "Work-life balance measures for persons of working age with dependent relatives in Europe" as well as its country reports (Bouget et al. 2016) were used as a basis for this overview. The overview helps to systematically record the diversity of support arrangements for caregivers in selected member states. It is the starting point for a comparative analysis and can be a stimulus for possible reform efforts in the individual member states of the EU.

2 Income-dependent in this case means that if a certain income ceiling is exceeded the benefit will be reduced or the benefit will not be available at all.

2 Belgium[3]

In Belgium, the reconciliation of care and work is supported by means of leave entitlements for the care of dependent relatives – adult and minor – as well as for palliative care. The Belgian time credit leave is based on tariff agreements at national level and is supplemented by the special leave for medical assistance and palliative care regulated by law (thematic leaves). The Belgian trade unions are also working on sector-specific agreements, such as telework, which can further improve the reconciliation of care and work.

2.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Career break in the context of leave for medical assistance (*Loopbaanonderbreking in het kader van de medische bijstand / Interruption de carrière dans le cadre d'un conges pour assistance médicale*): Employees can take a partial or full-time leave from work to care for dependent relatives. In the case of full-time leave from work, the duration per dependent person is limited to a maximum of 12 or 24 months depending on the individual case. Partial leave from work can be claimed for 24 or 48 months, depending on the individual case.

Financial support

In the case of full-time leave from work for medical assistance, a flat rate of € 787 (gross) per month is paid by the Employment Office *(RVA / ONEM)*.

2.2 Leave for palliative care

Career break in the context of leave for palliative care (*Loopbaanonderbreking in het kader van palliatief verlof / Interruption de carrière dans le cadre pour soins palliatifs*): Employees can claim a partial or full-time leave from work for the palliative care of relatives. The leave can be claimed for a maximum period of two months per patient. The dependent person must have an incurable disease and be dying.

Financial support

In the case of full leave from work for palliative care, a flat rate of € 787 (gross) per month is paid by the Employment Office (*RVA / ONEM*).

Palliative care by self-employed persons (*uitkering mantelzorg / allocation d'aidant proche*): Self-employed persons can suspend their work completely or partially (at least 50 per cent) in order to accompany family members in the last phase of life.

Financial support

The amount of the flat rate depends on the extent of the leave. For partial leave (at least 50 per cent), it will be € 546 per month. For full-time leave from work, a flat rate of € 1092 per month will be paid. In the case of full-time leave for at least three months it is possible to obtain an exemption from the social security contributions for one quarter (without loss of entitlements).

3 De Wispelaere/Pacolet (2016); see also Eurofound (2015).

This exemption can be claimed for a maximum of four quarters throughout the entire working life. In total, the financial support is granted for a maximum of 12 months during the entire working life of the caregiver.

2.3 Leave for the care of minors

Time credit leave (*tijdskrediet / Crédits temps*): Employees can also use the time credit leave for partial or full leave from work for the care of a child with a disability for a maximum period of 48 months.

Financial support

The maximum benefit for full-time leave is approximately € 641 per month, given that the caregiver has a record of employment of at least five years.

Care of children with disability by the self-employed (*uitkering mantelzorg / allocation d'aidant proche*): Self-employed persons can also suspend their work completely or partially for the care of a child with a disability (under 25 years).

Financial support

See financial support for palliative care by self-employed persons. The periods of the leave for palliative care and the care of children are aggregated and, in total, a maximum of 12 months is available for the caregiver during his/her entire working life.

2.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Monthly allowance for assistance to the elderly *(Tegemoetkoming voor hulp aan bejarden / Allocation pour l'aide aux personnes âgées):* The allowance is granted to elderly people (65 years and older) with extensive care needs. The amount of the monthly allowance is based on income conditions and the degree of dependency (categories 1 to 5). As of 1 June 2016, the allowance amounts to a maximum of € 1001 for category 1 and a maximum of € 6722 for category 5. Since 2014, the allowance is managed in the regions and communities.

Integration allowance (*Integratietegenmoetkoming / Allocation d'intégration*): People with a disability aged 21 to 65 years can receive the allowance to mitigate additional costs arising from their disability. The amount of the monthly allowance is based on income conditions and the degree of dependency. Per year, the allowance for category 1 amounts to a maximum of € 1148.76 and for category 5 € 10337.70. The allowance is administered at national level.

Personal assistance budget for people with disabilities. In the Region of Flanders, people with disabilities who want to live at home receive a personal budget from the Flemish Agency for People with a Disability *(Vlaams Agentschap voor Personen met een Handicap, VAPH)*. In Wallonia, the Walloon Agency for the Integration of Disabled Persons *(Agence pour une Vie de Qualité, AViQ / AWIPH)* pays similar benefits. The benefits of PHARE *(Personne Handicapée Autonomie Recherche)* are paid for the French-speaking population in Brussels.

BELGIUM								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Career break in the context of leave for medical assistance *(Loopbaanonderbreking in het kader van de medische bijstand / Interruption de carrière dans le cadre d'un conges pour assistance médicale)* Legal right	Employee	Max. 48 months	Yes; Reduced working hours from 20 to 50%	<u>Thematic leave:</u> Prerequisite: none Type: flat rate benefit for full-time leave Maximum duration 36 months	No	N. D.	<u>Thematic leave: medical assistance</u> One-off claim per dependent person, duration depending on the care required.
2.	Career break in the context of leave for palliative care *(Loopbaanonderbreking in het kader van palliatief verlof / Interruption de carrière dans le cadre pour soins palliatifs):* Legal right	Care of relatives with severe illness	Max. 2 months / patient	see above	<u>Thematic leave:</u> see above	No, see below	N. D.	<u>Thematic leave: Palliative care</u> One-off claim per dependent person, maximum 2 months per patient

	Palliative care for self-employed persons *(uitkering mantelzorg / allocation d'aidant proche:*			Partial leave from work: minimum 50%	<u>Care allowance for self-employed:</u> Prerequisite: N.D. Type: flat rate depending on the extent of the leave Maximum duration 12 months during the entire working life	Yes		<u>Care allowance for self-employed:</u> Maximum 12 months during the entire working life
3.	Time credit leave *(tijdskrediet / Crédits temps):*		Maximum 48 months	Yes; Reduced working hours from 20 to 50%	<u>Time credit leave (general):</u> Prerequisites: Calculation based on age, civil status, number of years of employment, scope of the leave; limit of the benefit of full leave and 5 years of employment Maximum duration 48 months	No, see below	N. D.	
	Care of children with disability by the self-employed (*uitkering mantelzorg / allocation d'aidant proche*)	Care of a child with disability under 25 years		Partial leave from work: minimum 50%	<u>Care allowance for self-employed persons:</u> Prerequisite: N.D. Type: Flat rate depending on the leave; with full leave, three months exemption from social contributions for 1 quarter (maximum 4 quarters throughout the working life) Duration: See palliative care	Yes		<u>Care allowance for self-employed:</u> See palliative care

3 Denmark[4]

The formal care system is well developed and organized on the level of the Danish municipalities. Family members have no legal obligation to take care of dependent relatives and family care is not the first or only choice for the elderly. Many Danes are employed full-time. They rarely withdraw from the labour market in order to to care for a dependent relative. The flexible labour market – 45 per cent of all employees have flexible working hours – enhances the possibilities to reconcile care and work. Danish municipalities also offer an employment for family caregivers while on leave from work. This underscores that caregivers in Denmark usually remain in the labour market during periods of care-giving. As a rule, therefore, the financial benefits mainly target the dependent person. Exceptions are the care allowance in the case of palliative care as well as the compensation for loss of work income due to the care of a child with disability, which are directly paid to the caregiver.

3.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Leave for the municipal employment for care: Care-giving employees can be employed by the municipality for the duration of caring for a dependent or serious ill relative and can, to this end, claim full-time or part-time leave from work. The total duration of the leave is linked to the duration of the financial support.

Financial support

Employment of the caregiver by the municipality is possible, whenever the care requirement of the dependent person corresponds to the extent of a full-time job. The caregiver must meet the eligibility criteria for employment by the municipality; these criteria vary from municipality to municipality. Also self-employed persons can be employed by the municipality during a leave.

In the case of employment by the municipality, the caregiver receives a monthly care allowance (salary) of € 2200 (2016). For continued pension entitlements, the caregiver pays four per cent of the salary and the municipality pays 8 per cent in addition to the salary into the pension insurance. If the regular employer continues to pay the normal salary to the employee on leave, the employer receives the full amount of the care allowance. The care allowance can be paid for a maximum of six months, with an extension of three months. It may be divided into monthly units and, if the employer agrees, even into smaller ones. The care allowance can be shared with other persons, provided that they also fulfil the criteria for employment by the municipality. The salary / care allowance continues to be paid out to the caregiver even in case the dependent person is in hospital or in a care centre.

4 Kvist (2016); see also EU COM (2014a).

3.2 Leave for palliative care

Leave for palliative care: Employees can claim leave from work for an unlimited time in order to provide palliative care for relatives or friends; unless they are eligible to take holiday under other regulations.

Financial support

The care allowance is paid to any person who is eligible for leave for palliative care. Further prerequisites are that care is provided in the home of the dependent person and that there is a consensus between the dependent person and the caregiver concerning the provision of palliative care.

For dependent employees and the self-employed, the care allowance is 1.5 times the amount of the sickness benefit. However, it may not exceed € 840 per week (absolute ceiling) or the previous income (relative ceiling). People outside the labour market, such as students, unemployed persons as well as pensioners, receive a flat-rate care allowance of € 2010 per month. The municipality can grant higher amounts in individual cases. The care allowance is not compatible with other state support benefits. Two or more caregivers can share the care allowance and distribute it proportionally to each person's actual share of care. The benefit is unlimited. The payment, however, ends two weeks after the death of the dependent person.

3.3 Leave for the care of minors

Financial support

Compensation for loss of work income due to the care of a child with disability: Parents who care for a child with disability can receive a compensation for the loss of income, for example, due to accompanying the child for examinations or treatments. The child's disability must be accompanied by a severe and permanent reduction of functional capacity. The compensation payment is based on previous gross earnings. As a maximum a sum of € 3920 per month is paid, based on 37 working hours per week. These payments are subject to tax. There is no time limit on the compensation for loss of income.

3.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

The municipalities provide financial support for the care of relatives; these are usually earmarked for a specific purpose related to the care. The offers to support family caregivers vary from one municipality to another.

DENMARK								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Leave for municipal employment for care Legal right	Employee	6 months, extension of 3 months possible	No, full-time leave from work in monthly units (usually 3 months per block); split into smaller periods with employer's agreement	Care allowance; Prerequisite: The need for care corresponds to a full-time job; the caregiver fulfils the criteria of the municipality for employment (varying from one municipality to another) Type: Salary in form of a care allowance and pension contributions; if the normal salary is paid by the regular employer, the employer will receive the care allowance Duration: 6 months, extension of 3 months possible	Yes	N. D.	Care allowance; The benefit can be shared with other eligible persons
2.	Leave for palliative care Legal right	If an employee is not eligible for holiday according to other regulations (e.g. collective agreement)	Unlimited, normally between 2-6 months		Care allowance: Prerequisite: The person must be on leave for palliative care; care takes place in the home of the dependent person or of the caregiver Type: 1.5 times the sickness benefit; for unemployed, students, pensioners: Flat rate	Yes	N. D.	Care allowance; can be distributed among two or more caregivers according to their actual share of care

					Duration: unlimited; the payment ends 2 weeks after the death of the dependent person.			
3.					Compensation for loss of work income due to care for a child with disability: Prerequisite: the child's disability must imply a severe and permanent reduction of functional capacity Type: Wage-replacement benefit Duration: unlimited	N. D.		

4 Estonia[5]

Family care plays an important role within the Estonian long-term care system. The family is by Constitution obliged to provide care for dependent family members. As a result, there is a substantial care burden for many Estonian families. In many cases it also has a negative impact on the labour market participation of caregivers. Within the framework of the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023, reform proposals are being developed in Estonia which are expected to alleviate the care burden. However, a report from the working group will only be due in November 2017.

4.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Financial support

Caregiver's benefit (*hooldajatoetus*): A family member who supports a person with disabilities in everyday life, for example by organizing transportation and who provides care services at home, can be appointed by the local authority for the care of the dependent person and then receive a caregiver's benefit. The criteria as well as the amount of the benefit vary between municipalities. As a rule, the tax-free benefit corresponds on average to one tenth of the minimum wage (net) and is generally higher for the care of a child (average € 51 per month) than for the care of an adult (average € 25 per month). In some municipalities, it is possible to receive the caregiver's benefit and work at the same time; in other municipalities it is not possible to combine the caregiver's benefit with any form of employment. For caregivers who are not employed or who receive a pension, the municipality usually pays the minimum contribution for the state pension insurance and / or the social security contributions in order to provide health insurance.

4.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

4.3 Leave for the care of minors

Not available.

4.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Disability allowance: People with disabilities can receive a monthly benefit that varies according to age and degree of disability. Children with disabilities receive up to € 80.55 per month, persons of working age up to € 53.70 and persons who have reached the statutory pension age receive up to € 26.85 per month.

5 Võrk et al. (2016).

ESTONIA								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.					It varies according to municipalities, not all municipalities allow to combine the caregiver's benefit with work	Caregiver's benefit Prerequisite: the caregiver must be appointed by the municipality; support for a person with disabilities in everyday life Type: Flat rate, varies according to the age of the dependent person and the municipality caregiver and dependent person live in Duration: unlimited		

5 Finland[6]

In Finland, there is no legal obligation to care for relatives older than 18 years of age. At the same time, Finland has a well-developed public system of long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities. The municipalities, which are responsible for the provision of care services, often provide a wide range of care services. The publicly expressed target is to enable people to continue to live at home as long as possible. Care related leaves focus on the care needs of minors; long-term care services for working-age and elderly people is mainly provided for by the municipalities. The current government, however, wants to further strengthen informal care and thus the role of families in the provision of long-term care.

5.1 Leave for the care of relatives

There is no legal right to leave form work for the care of a dependent relative. Employees can only ask their employers to allow a leave from work in order to care for a family member. The employer is not obliged to allow the leave and/or to continue to pay the remuneration during the leave. There is also no legal right of the employee for flexible working time arrangements or other forms of flexible work, such as remote work.

Financial support

Informal care support (*omaishoidon tuki*): A person who takes care of a dependent family member can be employed by the municipality to perform the care during an indefinite period. It is possible to receive informal care support and work at the same time. The amount of support is linked to the intensity of the care provided and is in 2016 at least € 387.49 per month. If the caregiver is unable to work due of her/his care responsibilities, a minimum amount of at least € 774.98 per month is paid to the caregiver. Informal caregivers also build up their pension entitlements, are insured and are entitled to take a number of days off.

5.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

5.3 Leave for the care of minors

Partial care leave: In addition to general parental leave, parents of children in the 1st and 2nd grade have the right to part-time leave; given that they have been working at least six month during the past twelve month. Parents of children with disabilities can claim one year of additional part-time care leave.

Financial support

Part-time homecare allowance *(osittainen hoitorah):* Parents who work up to 30 hours per week can receive a part-time home care allowance. The flat rate is currently € 98.09 per month

6 Kalliomaa-Puha/Kangas (2016).

and is liable to tax.[7] Parents can share the allowance if they take care of the child at different times during the day.

Special care allowance *(erityishoitoraha):* For parents of children under 16 years of age, there is a wage compensation benefit for a maximum of 60 working days per child and year. Under certain circumstances the duration can be extended to 90 days per child and year. The minimum amount is € 24 per day.

5.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Disability and care allowance (*vammaistuiki, hoitotuki*): Disability and care allowances are paid to people with disabilities and the elderly who have permanent (at least one year) restrictions on everyday tasks and their mobility and need help. It is intended to cover (partly) the costs of care and also serves explicitly to support care at home. Thus, a care giving family member could be paid or the financial support can be used to alleviate the care burden by, for example, paying for formal care services. There are three levels for two groups of recipients: For people with disabilities: 1: € 92.94 per month, 2: € 216.87 and 3: € 420.51. For pensioners: 1: € 62.25 per month, 2: € 154.96 and 3: € 327.67. The benefit is tax-free.

7 Also compare Kela (2015).

Finland								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Not available (the individual employee can ask their employer to allow a leave from work)			Partial leave is possible for informal care support (see financial support)	Informal care support: Prerequisite: Contract between the municipality and the caregiver Type: insurable employment			
3.	Partial care leave Legal right	Parents At least employed during 6 of the last 12 months	During first and second grade plus one year before or after	yes	Part-time homecare allowance: Prerequisite: The parent must work part-time with employment of a maximum of 30 hours/week Type: Flat rate; only paid for one child at a time Duration: see partial leave Special care allowance: Prerequisite: Child under 16 years of age in need of care Type: Wage-replacement benefit Maximum duration 60 working days (in some circumstances up to 90) per child per year		Special care allowance: Minimum amount	Partial care leave and part-time homecare allowance: Distribution between parents possible if care is not provided at the same time during the day

6 France[8]

In France there are leave models for all three categories considered: care of relatives, palliative care and care for minors. However, the corresponding financial benefits are usually significantly lower than the minimum wage. Only the leave for parents of children with disabilities and the financial support for it is comparatively generous. In France there is no legal entitlement to part-time work. Only in the public sector, there is a right to part-time work due to family reasons. There are no leave models for self-employed persons. Generally, the benefits that are available are not well known in public. Also the low flexibility in an emergency situation is criticized.

In August 2016, the French labour law was substantially amended. A number of amendments are intended to contribute to a better balance between work and family *(Congés d'articulation entre la vie professionnelle et la vie personnelle et familiale).* The labour law regulates minimum standards regarding work-life balance, but explicitly stipulates that the regulation by means of company or tariff agreements is the preferred.

6.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Carer's leave (*Congé de proche aidant*): Employees have a right to carer's leave to look after a dependent relative. With the amended labour law a leave from work can also be claimed to take care of a cohabitant or close acquaintance. Employees are eligible after having been employed by their current employer for at least one year before taking the leave (reduced from two to one year in accordance with the amended labour law). The duration of the leave is generally limited to three months. It is, however, renewable up to one year during the entire working life of the caregiver. The leave is unpaid. Tariffs and business agreements may include regulations on duration and multiple claims that go beyond the statutory minimum standard. Since 2016, there is the option to work part-time during the leave or to divide the leave into smaller units, given that employee and employer reach a favourable agreement.[9]

6.2 Leave for palliative care

Family Solidarity Leave *(Congé de solidarité familiale):* Employees have a right to take a leave from work for the palliative care of a relative or a person they live with. The duration is three months and can be renewed once for a further three months. The leave can also be realized as a partial leave and be combined with part-time work. The leave can be also be shared by multiple caregivers.

Financial support

Compensation for palliative care (*Allocation journalière d'accompagnement d'une personne en fin de vie*)**:** The compensation is a flat rate of € 55.21 per day (€ 27.61 for part-time work)

8 Le Bihan/Roussel (2016).

9 Compare also Service-Public.fr (2016a).

and is paid for a maximum of 21 days (42 in part-time). It can be split among multiple caregivers, simultaneously or consecutively.

6.3 Leave for the care of minors

Parental Presence Leave (*Congé de présence parental*): Employed parents with a dependent child who is ill or disabled and under 20 years of age have the right to take a leave from work for a maximum of 310 days (approximately 15 months) within three years. The leave can be split into blocks of full-time leave; a combination of partial leave and part-time work is not provided for. The child's need for care must require the presence of one of the parents. Renewed leave is possible if the condition of the child deteriorates.

Financial support

Daily Parental Presence Allowance *(Allocation journalière de présence parentale):* Parents who are forced to end their work due to a serious disability of their child under 20 years of age or a permanent need of the child for long-term care are eligible for the allowance. Self-employed persons are not eligible. The allowance may be obtained for a maximum period of three years. Parents are eligible for a flat rate of € 43.01 per day (€ 51.10 for single parents) for 22 days per month. The allowance can be shared by the parents.

Disabled Child Education Allowance *(Allocation d'éducation de l'enfant handicapé)*[10]: For parents of children under 20 years of age with a degree of disability of more than 50 per cent there is eligibility for an allowance. To qualify, parents must reduce their working hours or have stopped working entirely. The flat-rate amounts are paid up to age five of the child. However, the duration is indefinitely extendable if the condition of the child has not improved or is permanent. The flat-rate amounts are based on the degree of disability and the reduction in earnings: € 227.71 up to € 1234.30 per month (up to € 1669.39 for single parents). The allowance is not means-tested.

6.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Personal allowance for Autonomy *(Allocation personnalisée d'Autonomie)*[11]: The personal budget is available for dependent people 60 years of age and older and may be used to pay for professional or informal care (except spouses). Informal caregivers receive a salary and are insured with social insurance. There is universal eligibility of the dependent person. However, a reduction of the flat-rate amount can occur due to assets. Four degrees of dependency are distinguished. The assigned flat-rate amounts were significantly increased in March 2016 and now correspond to: Level 1 = max. € 1713.09 per month, level 2 = max. € 1375.54, Level 3 = max. € 993.88, level 4 = € 662.95.

10 Compare also Service-Public.fr (2016b).

11 Compare also Service-Public.fr (2016c).

Disablement Compensation Allowance (*Prestation de compensation du handicap*)[12]: This benefit is available to people with disabilities who are experiencing considerable daily limitations. It can be used to (partially) cover expenses associated with the need for care. For example, a family member may be paid a salary if full-time care is required. The salary is a fixed € 12.57 per hour, the compensation for employees or pensioners is € 3.69 or € 5.54 per hour with a maximum amount of € 941.09 per month.

12 Compare also Service-Public.fr (2016d).

France								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Carer's Leave (*Congé de proche aidant*) Legal right	Care of adult relatives At least 1 year of employment with the current employer	3 Months	Yes	No	No	N. D.	Carer's Leave: Multiple claims possible, maximum 1 year during the entire working life
2.	Family Solidarity Leave *(Congé de solidarité familiale):* Legal right	Employee	3 months (extendable once)	Yes	Expense allowance: Type: Flat rate; can be combined with part-time Duration: Maximum 21days	No	N. D.	Family Solidarity Leave: Extendable once; can be shared between multiple caregivers
3.	Parental Presence Leave (*Congé de présence parental*) Legal right	Parents of children under 20 years with disabilities or permanent need for long-term care	310 days within 3 years	No	Daily Parental Presence Leave Allowance: Prerequisite: Full-time leave due to caring for own children Type: Flat rate Duration: Maximum 3 years Disabled Child Education Allowance:	N. D.	N. D.	Daily Parental Presence Leave Allowance: can be shared by the parents

					Prerequisite: Parents of children with disabilities (> 50%) under 20 years, reduced or completely stopped working Type: Flat-rate amounts depending on the degree of disability and reduction in earning capacity; not means-tested; can be combined with part-time work Duration: until the 5th anniversary of the child (in some circumstances it can be extended with no limit)			

7 Ireland[13]

In Ireland, working-age caregivers receive little state support to better reconcile care and work. In the Irish context, measures aim at meeting the need for care of dependent persons rather than enhancing the work-life balance of informal caregivers. In addition, care is primarily considered as (informal) full-time care, so there are hardly any part-time options that enable caregivers to combine care and work. There are not many measures to support carers of dependent minors, most measures are strongly focused on care for the elderly.

Care Alliance Ireland is therefore proposing the extension of the *Back to Work Family Dividend* (BTWFD), introduced in 2015, to care giving family members. The BTWFD supports parents who return from unemployment to work (employed or self-employed) for up to two years with a grant per child of € 29.80 per week. This benefit could be extended to caregivers who resume work after a care activity.[14]

7.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Carer's leave: Employees have a right to a temporary leave from work if they care for a relative who is in need of full-time care. To be eligible employees must have a record of employment of at least 12 months with the employer. Part-time employment is only possible to a limited extent: a maximum of 15 hours per week with a maximum net income of € 332 per week is possible. The duration of the leave can be between 13 and 104 weeks. The leave form work may be interrupted, but there must be a period of at least six weeks of work between two blocks of leave. Renewed leave form work for another dependent person is possible, but only after a six-month waiting period. For the first 13 weeks of the leave, there is a holiday entitlement.

Financial support

Carer's benefit:

The cash benefit is insurance-based and functions as an income support for caregivers who care for a dependent person, who needs full time care due to age, illness or handicap. The eligibility criteria stipulate that the caregiver must be between 16 and 65 years of age and have social security contributions of 156 weeks as a whole and at least 39 weeks of contributions in the last year. In addition the person must have been in insurable employment at least eight of the last 26 weeks with a minimum of 16 hours per week. Contributions by self-employed do not count and self-employed are therefore not eligible to claim the Carer's benefit. The caregiver must be involved in full-time care, i.e. can only be employed a maximum of 15 hours per week. The benefit can be claimed for a maximum of 104 weeks. The benefit is paid as a flat rate: € 205 per week (€ 307.50 if two persons are to be cared for). There is a supplement for dependent children of € 29.80 (single-parent) or € 14.90 (half-rate, if living in partnership, but

13 Daly (2016).

14 Care Alliance Ireland (2015).

it is means-tested, i.e. the partner cannot earn more than € 400 per week). The benefit is subject to income tax and entitlements are established in social insurance.

Carer's allowance: The allowance is a social benefit. It is a supplement for caregivers of dependent persons in need of full-time care who are either at least 16 years old or younger and receive a disability allowance (see below). In addition, the dependent person must need the full-time care for an estimated period of at least 12 months. The eligible caregiver must be at least 18 years old and may only be employed on a part-time basis, not exceeding 15 hours per week. The allowance is granted as a means-tested social assistance benefit. Income taken into account includes the caregiver's own income as well as that of the spouse or civil partner, including pension entitlements. Social insurance contributions are excluded. There are tax allowances of € 332 per week (€ 664 for partnered/married persons). The allowance is not limited. Where other social security benefits are claimed, the allowance may be paid in half, without losing any other entitlement. The allowance is paid as a flat rate with the following values: If the caregiver is under 66 years = € 204 per week for a person to be cared for (€ 306 for two or more persons), 66 years and older = € 242 (€ 363). Here, too, there is a supplement for dependent children (see Carer's benefit). The allowance is subject to tax and entitlements are established in social insurance. It is possible to split the allowance between two part-time caregivers. However, the care must be provided by each of the two persons from Monday to Sunday, either in a changing weekly rhythm or at different times of the day.

7.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

7.3 Leave for the care of minors

Financial support

Domiciliary Care Allowance: The domiciliary home care allowance is a monthly support for the full-time care of a child with disability under 16 years of age. It is a universal right and is therefore not means-tested. The flat rate currently amounts to € 309.50 per month.

7.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Disability allowance: Weekly flat rate benefits for persons aged 16 to 65 with a disability which severely limits their ability to work and which is expected to last for at least one year. The allowance is means-tested. Regarded as income is the own income and the partner's income as well as the property (with the assets there is an exemption threshold of € 50000 and an own home is excluded). The flat rate amounts to € 188 per month.

Homemaker's Scheme[15]: In support of care at home, the years which a person cares for a dependent relative are not included in the calculation of the average income for the pension.

15 Compare also Department of Social Protection (2016).

Part-time work is possible up to a (very low) income limit of € 38 per week. Both employees and self-employed persons are eligible.

IRELAND								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Carer's leave Legal right	Care of a dependent relative or friend at least 12 months employment by employer	between 13 and 104 weeks	Maximum 15 hours per week and maximum 332.50€ net income / week	Carer's benefit: Social security benefit Prerequisite: Minimum contribution periods; Only for full-time care, i.e. <15 / week Type: Flat rate Maximum duration 104 weeks Care allowance: Social assistance benefit Prerequisite: Full-time care, i.e. <15 hours/week Type: Flat rate amount, means-tested Duration: unlimited	No (Carer's benefit) Yes (Care allowance)	Yes, because the working time during at least a 12-month period of employment is not considered as eligibility criteria for Carer's leave and therefore even marginally employed persons are eligible.	Carer's leave: Can be divided into blocks Renewed leave for another dependent person only after a six month waiting period Care benefit: Can be divided into blocks Care allowance: Distribution between two caregivers possible, prerequisite: Care from Monday to Sunday Half of the allowance is paid in case it is combined with social benefits
3.					Domiciliary care allowance: Prerequisite: Full-time care of a child under 16 years of age with disability Type: Flat rate, it is a universal right and is therefore not means-tested.			

8 Croatia[16]

In Croatia, the basic assumption is that family members provide care for dependent relatives. There is no coherent system of options to take leave from work, social services or financial benefits for caregivers. With regard to the care of children with disabilities there are several leave options as well as financial benefits to support the caregiver. The Croatian labour market offers few opportunities for part-time work or flexible working hours, making it difficult to reconcile long-term care and work.

8.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Not available.

8.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

8.3 Leave for the care of minors

Time-limited right to work half-time: The right to part-time work can be exercised by a parent, either employed or self-employed, subsequent to parental leave and until the child is three years old. Parental leave covers from six up to 30 months and can be claimed for children older than six months. Before claiming the statutory right to temporary part-time work maternity leave as well as parental leave must have been used.

Financial support

Benefits for a related caregiver: A parent cares for the child part-time and receives the status of a related caregiver for the child (the status can be given to other persons, but only once per child). In addition, in order to receive the financial support, the child may not be cared for in full or in part by others or spend more than four hours a day in public education facilities. The care giving parent has a right to continued payment of wages by the employer according to the actual hours of work performed, as well as a flat rate paid by the Croatian Health Insurance Institute (*HZZO*). The flat rate equals half of the basic amount determined by law; in 2016 it is HRK 1633 (about € 219).

Right to extended full-time parental leave: Parents can claim an extended parental leave for children younger than eight years, if both parents are employed or self-employed before and during the parental leave is taken. The parent, who claims the extended parental leave, takes a full-time leave from work. A medical commission of the *HZZO* decides in each individual case on the duration of the period of leave.

16 Stubbs/Zrinščak (2016); see also EU COM (2014b) and the European Platform for Investing in Children (2015).

Financial support

The extended full-time parental leave is supported by a flat rate. 65 per cent of the basic amount is paid to the caregiver on a monthly basis; in 2016 HRK 2100 (approximately € 276). The caregiver must have previously been employed for 12 months or for 18 of the last 24 months. A reduced flat rate is paid if these criteria are not met. It corresponds to 50 per cent of the basic amount.

The (unlimited) right to work half-time: A parent, employed or self-employed, can also claim the right to part-time work for the entire childhood (without a specific age limit) and thus enjoy an unlimited right to part-time work. In practice, a medical commission of the *HZZO* decides on a case to case basis how long the partial leave is possible. An eligibility condition for the leave from work is that both parents are employed or self-employed before and during the leave. The prerequisite for employment also applies to single parents.

Financial support

Employees receive half of the salary (net salary, from the previous month). A proof of the employer's remuneration must be provided. Self-employed workers receive half of the minimum social insurance level. They must have paid social insurance for at least six months.

8.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Disability benefit *(osobna invalidnina):* A commission of the Agency for Vocational Rehabilitation (part of the Ministry of Labour) examines the entitlement of the dependent person and gives a recommendation to the Ministry of Social Affairs. Persons with no own income requiring care receive a monthly allowance equivalent to 250 per cent of the basic social security; in 2016 HRK 1250 (approximately € 164). If there is any form of income, the difference to this amount is paid out. Certain allowances, such as basic social security, housing allowance and child allowance, are not considered as income.

Assistance and care allowance (*doplatak za pomoć i njega*): People who depend on the aid of others for their daily lives can claim the allowance. Depending on the degree of disability, 100 per cent of basic social security (HRK 500, approximately € 71) or 75 per cent of basic social security (HRK 350, approximately € 46) is paid. The allowance is means-tested. A person living alone may not have earned an average of more than 250 per cent of basic social security in the three months prior to receiving the allowance. In a household, the income per household member cannot exceed the limit of HRK 1000 (approximately € 143).

CROATIA								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
3.	Time-limited right to work half-time	Parents, who have used their statutory right to maternity leave / parental leave	children younger than three years	Yes, part-time employment is allowed	Time-limited half-time: Prerequisite: one parent cares for the dependent child part-time Type: Half salary from the employer plus flat rate Duration: up until the child is three years old	Yes	N. D.	Time-limited right to work half-time and extended full parental leave: Can only be used by one parent at a time (employed or self-employed)
	Right to extended full parental leave	Both parents are in employment or self-employed before and during the activity	children younger than eight years	No, no employment allowed	Extended full parental leave: Prerequisite: Previous 12 months of employment (alternative: 18 of the last 24 months) Type: Flat rate; reduced flat rate also possible if all criteria are not fulfilled Duration: Individual case decision by medical commission	Yes		
	(Unlimited) right to work half-time	see above	Maximum entire childhood	Yes, part-time employment is allowed	Unlimited half-time: Prerequisite: Type: Employee: Wage-replacement, self-employed: Flat rate social security contributions Duration: Individual case decision by medical commission	Yes		

9 Netherlands[17]

Traditionally, there is a good supply of state-funded care services in the Netherlands. In 2015, more self-responsibility was introduced as a new element of the long-term care system. People should be able to live longer at home. As a result of this, informal care and civic engagement now play an important role alongside the public (care) services in order to cover care needs. There are, however, very few opportunities for family carers to take a leave from work. In 2015, a de-centralization of regulatory competences in youth and elderly care was carried out. In consequence, municipalities receive national funding which they can decide how to use. This leads to different services offered and differences in (financial) support for informal care and/or civic engagement across municipalities in the Netherlands.

Informal care for dependent relatives is often combined with employment in the Netherlands. Caregivers use flexible working time arrangements, which are widespread in the Netherlands, in order to reconcile care and work. Above all, women often work part-time. Since 2016, the Flexible Work Act (*Wet Flexibel Werken*) provides for a legal right to adapt the workplace or the allocation of working hours; in addition to the already existing legal right on part-time. The aim of the 2016 reform was to further strengthen reconciliation of care and work. Data suggest a good balance between care and work for (female) family caregivers due to a good mix of formal and informal care arrangements. This is especially true for well-qualified employees who care for dependent relatives.

9.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Long-term leave (*Zorgverlof*): Employees have a right to take leave from work to care for dependent relatives or acquaintances. Self-employed persons are not eligible. The reason for the care must be either a life-threatening illness or (since July 2015) long-term need for care due to illness or disability. The duration of the leave is a maximum of six times the weekly working hours per year (maximum 240 hours). In principle, the leave is unpaid. In many cases, however, there are collective bargaining agreements or working arrangements that provide for financial support during the leave. The leave may also be taken as a part-time leave.

9.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

9.3 Leave for the care of minors

Not available.

17 Van der Woude et al. (2016).

9.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Personal budget scheme (*Persoonsgebonden budget*): Dependent persons may apply for a personal budget if they prove that the services normally provided are not suitable for their individual demands. From the budget, informal care can be paid for. For this purpose certain criteria must be met, which differ from municipality to municipality. The payment does, however, not cover social insurance contributions for the informal caregivers, but must be taxed. Since the municipalities have been responsible for elderly care services (2015), there is a trend of higher eligible requirements for the personal assistance budget.

Support for marginally employed persons: Some municipalities refund the travel costs of informal caregivers who earn a minimum wage in their regular employment.

NETHERLANDS								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Long-term leave (*Zorgverlof*) Legal right	Dependent family members or acquaintances Dependent employment	Maximum six times weekly work time / year	Yes	Unpaid leave, but often collective agreements or company agreements provide for financial support during the leave	No	N. D.	

10 Austria[18]

Long-term care in Austria is characterized by a high proportion of informal care. The 24-hour care at home is considered a peculiarity of Austrian long-term care. Government support for care services is means-tested and part of social assistance. Therefore, there is pressure to organize care informally. Care leave is aimed to enable informal carers to organize a new care situation for a dependent relative and do not aim at carers' support for longer than three months. Reconciliation of care and work is strengthened by part-time working arrangements and wage-replacement benefits. Given certain conditions, voluntary medical and pension insurance contributions by family caregivers can be covered by the state for an indefinite period.

10.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Care leave (*Pflegekarenz*): Employees with at least three months of employment with their current employer have the possibility to agree with their employer a medium-term full-time or part-time leave form work, which usually is unpaid. There is however no legal right of the employee. A general prerequisite is, that the care need of the dependent person must amount to at least 120 hours per month. This corresponds to the care levels 3 to 7. For people with dementia or for minors, a care level from 1 upwards is sufficient (care need of up to 65 hours per month). In part-time care leave, the working time must be at least ten hours per week. It is not possible to adjust working hours during (part-time) leave. The care leave covers a period of one to three months and can be extended by up to three months if a higher care level emerges. Several relatives can apply for a leave for the same dependent person; an individual agreement between employee and employer forms the basis. During the care leave, health insurance is covered and pension entitlements are build up.

Financial support

Care-leave benefit (*Pflegekarenzgeld*): There is a legal right to financial support during care leave and family hospice leave (see below). Employees with a minimum of three months of social security accredited employment relationship (or unemployed persons in care leave or family hospice leave) are eligible for the benefit. Marginally employed persons are de facto excluded from support because they are not subject to social insurance. Since self-employed persons are not eligible for care leave, they cannot receive financial support either. The care-leave benefit is a wage-replacement benefit of 55 per cent of the daily net income (equivalent to the unemployment benefit) with a minimum amount of € 425.70 per month (corresponds to the minimum wage). Financial support is also paid in case of partial leave. The benefit then corresponds to 55 per cent of the loss of earnings. The benefit is paid for the duration of the leave. Several relatives can receive the care-leave benefit for caring for one and the same dependent person, but there is a maximum of six months for each caregiver and a maximum of twelve months as a whole. In addition, there is a child supplement of approximately € 10 per month, if the caregiver has dependent children.

18 Fink (2016); see also BMASK (2014).

10.2 Leave for palliative care

Family hospice leave (*Familienhospizkarenz*): Family hospice leave is a right to leave from work for palliative care. Employed persons (or registered unemployed persons) with dying relatives or seriously ill children are eligible to claim the leave (in case of children the situation does not necessarily have to be a life threatening one). Both full-time and part-time leave is possible. In addition, a postponement of the normal working time (number of working days or hours) can also be requested. From the start of leave for palliative care up to four weeks subsequent to the leave, there is protection against dismissal. The leave is granted for a maximum period of three months, with a one-time option of extending the leave by three months (in the case of seriously ill children, a maximum of five plus four months). Several members of the family can claim the leave at the same time. Health insurance is covered and pension entitlements are build up during the leave.

Financial support

Care-leave benefit *(Pflegekarenzgeld)* see above. For family hospice leave several caregivers can receive the care-leave benefit at the same time.

Family hospice leave grant (*Familienhospizkarenz-Zuschuss*)[19]: Caregivers can apply for the grant in addition to the care-leave benefit. The prerequisite is the total loss of income of the caregiver and a weighted monthly per capita income of the household of less than € 850 net.[20] The grant corresponds to the income lost due to assuming caregiving responsibilities.

10.3 Leave for the care of minors

Not available.

10.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

LTC cash benefit: The LTC cash benefit is a financial benefit for people in need of long-term care. It is a universal right and is therefore granted regardless of income or assets. There are seven care levels with LTC cash benefits from € 157.30 to € 1688.90 per month. The LTC cash benefit is tax free. At the request of the dependent person, it can be paid to a family caregiver who takes full-time care leave or family hospice leave.

Promoting 24 hour care at home[21]: The cost of so-called 24-hour care, meaning care of a dependent person at home by a self-employed or employed caregiver, is state subsidized at care level 3 and higher. The person eligible is either the dependent person or a relative. In this

19 Compare also HELP.GV.AT (2016a).

20 The weighted monthly per capita income of the household is calculated as follows: Household net income including care leave allowance / household factor (composed of the number of persons and the age of persons living in the household). For a household of two parents with two children under the age of 15, the upper limit for the measured net household income is € 2550 (www.bmfj.gv.at/familie/finanzielle-unterstuetzungen/familienhospkarkarenz-zuschuss/beispiele-soeinksosogrenzen.html).

21 Compare also HELP.GV.AT (2016b).

way, indirect support is provided for family carers to reconcile care and work. The income limit for support is € 2500 net income per month. The amount of support varies between € 275 and € 550 per month for a carer (double for two carers).

Replacement care (*Ersatzpflege*): A caregiver, having provided care for a dependent relative for at least one year, who is due to illness, holiday or other important reasons at short notice not able to continue to provide this care can receive a financial compensation for possibly arising additional costs.

AUSTRIA								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Care leave (*Pflegekarenz*) No legal right but protection against dismissal if granted	Dependent person with care level 3 and higher At least 3 months employment by current employer	1 to 3 months (+3 months)	Yes (at least 10 hours/week)	Care-leave benefit: Legal right, if on leave Prerequisite: At least 3 months social security accredited employment Type: Wage-replacement benefit in corresponding to 55%, part-time Duration: 1 to 3 months (+3 months)	No	Care-leave benefit: Minimum amount HOWEVER: Restriction in form of minimum requirement of 3 months of social insurance accredited employment	Care leave and care-leave benefit: 3 months extension if higher care level emerges Several relatives are consecutively eligible
2.	Family hospice leave (*Familienhospizkarenz*) Legal right	Employed	Maximum 3 months (+3 months)	Yes	Care-leave benefit: see above Grant for family hospice: Can be requested in addition to the care benefit Prerequisite: Loss of income, a certain amount of the total income lost Type: Wage-replacement benefit	N. D.		Family hospice leave: Flexibility of working hours possible (number of working days, allocation of hours) Several relatives are simultaneously eligible One-time extension possible for 3 months (for children 5 + 4 months)

11 Portugal[22]

In Portugal, there is a legal obligation to help and support dependent relatives. Family care is an integral part of the Portuguese long-term care system. While there are possibilities to claim a leave from work for the care of children, which is also supplemented by financial benefits, there is no such possibility for the care of the elderly. The Portuguese Government, however, is pursuing reforms which, on the one hand, are intended to protect the right of the dependent person to freedom of choice regarding care provision and, on the other hand, to better support family caregivers. In October 2015, the Ministry of Justice presented a future strategy for the protection of the elderly.[23] The reform efforts include, among other things, introducing the status of "informal caregivers" and linking it to special rights and claims for family caregivers. The government's announcement has received broad media attention at the beginning of 2016.

11.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Not available.

11.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

11.3 Leave for the care of minors

Extended Child Care Leave (*Licença para Assistência a Filho*): Parents are eligible in principle for a two-year parental leave.[24] In the case of a child with disability, parental leave is extended to four years.

Right to flexible working hours and part-time: Parents of children with disabilities under one year of age may reduce their weekly working time by five hours or agree to other special working conditions that support reconciliation of care and work. In addition, there is the right to part-time work as well as flexible working hours. The reduction in working hours is accompanied by a corresponding reduction in remuneration. The employer can refuse the employee's request if it is not compatible with company requirements or if the employee is regarded to be indispensable.

Financial support

Benefit to care for disabled or chronically ill children: Parents who cannot be employed due to the care of a child with disability can receive the benefit for a period of six months. An extension of up to four years is possible. The parent who receives the benefit must prove that the other parent is employed and has not applied for the benefit or does not have the possibility to provide the care. Employees and self-employed persons are equally eligible to receive the

22 Perista/Baptista (2016); see also EU COM (2014c).

23 Ministério da Justiça (2015).

24 From the third child on the claim increases from two to three years.

benefit, given that they have paid social security contributions for at least six months. The benefit is 65 per cent of the reference wage from the last six months to the second month of claiming the benefit. The maximum monthly benefit may be the double of the Social Support Index *(Indexant de Apoios Sociais, IAS)*, i.e. € 838.44 in 2016. At least € 11.18 per day is paid, equivalent to 80 per cent of a thirtieth of the IAS, and in 2016 at least € 335.40 per month.

Disability supplement: The additional allowance can be claimed for children with disability younger than 24 years. The caregiver must have paid at least 12 months of social insurance in the last 14 months (except for pensioners). Alternatively, the allowance can also be paid out if there is a particularly low level of household income (<€ 628.83 per month). The monthly benefit rate varies according to the age of the child: until 14 years it is € 59.48, until 18 years it is € 86.52 and for young adults younger than 24 years it is € 115.96 per month. Single parents are eligible to receive an additional 20 per cent of this amount. The allowance is not liable to tax.

11.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Dependency supplement (*complemento por dependência):* The dependency supplement of the *National Network for Integrated Continuous Care (Rede Nacional de Cuidados Continuos Integrados, RNCCI)* is given in two steps: The care level 1 is given to persons who are not able to perform the daily life-related activities related to diet, exercise or body hygiene independently and whose pension amount does not exceed € 600. The benefit is a flat rate of € 99.77 for benefits in the general social security system and € 89.79 for benefits under other schemes. Persons who fulfil all requirements of level 1 and are, in addition, confined to bed or have serious dementia fulfil the requirements of care level 2. The benefit is a flat rate of € 179.58 for benefits in the general social security system and € 169.60 for benefits under other schemes. The dependency supplement is paid as long as the need for care persists.

Special Education Allowance (*Subsídio por frequência de estabelecimento de ensiono especial*): Children and young people with disabilities (under 24 years of age) receive special financial support for education. The financial support is paid to the caregiver and is to be used to cover expenses for the visit of special or general education facilities. The benefit rate is determined by the monthly fees of the educational institution, the household income, the number of persons living in the household and housing costs. No previous social security contributions are required.

PORTUGAL								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
3.	Extended Child Care Leave (*Licença para Assistência a Filho*) Legal right Right to flexible working hours and part-time work (agreement of the employer needed)	Employee	2 or 4 years 2 or 4 years	No Yes, e.g. reduction of the weekly working time by 5 hours	<u>Benefit to care for disabled or chronically ill children:</u> Prerequisite: the non-care giving parent must be working and must not have applied for the benefit; the care giving parent must have paid social insurance for a minimum of 6 months Type: Wage-replacement benefit Duration: 6 months, extension for a maximum of 4 years possible <u>Disability supplement</u> Prerequisite: Minimum social security contributions Type: Flat rate, varying according to the age of the child Duration: until the 24th year of the child	Yes N. D.	N. D. Yes, through the additional allowance for low household income (<€ 628.83)	<u>Benefit to care for disabled or chronically ill children:</u> No division between the parents

12 Sweden[25]

Sweden has a comprehensive public system of long-term care for people with disabilities and the elderly. Family care by relatives is seen as an addition to public services, but is not part of Swedish family policy. There is no legal obligation to care for relatives. Since the reform of the Social Services Act *(Sozialtjänstlagen, SoL)* in 2009, however, municipalities are obliged to support caregivers. In conjunction with a gradual decline in formal long-term care, as it has been seen in recent years, the care of the elderly is increasingly re-oriented towards the family. The resulting problems with regard to reconciliation of care and work are a relatively new phenomenon in the Swedish context. There are (so far) no policies that explicitly address the situation of family caregivers in Sweden.

12.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Financial support

Carers allowance (municipality employs a family member): A person who cares for a dependent relative can be employed by the municipality for an indefinite period. The family caregiver must meet the criteria for employment of the respective municipality. The remuneration and social insurance claims are usually designed in such a way that they correspond to an employment relationship in the municipal care service. The income is liable to tax. The dependent person must be under 65 years of age. In practice, however, the employment of family members by a municipality is a rather exceptional option to organise care for a dependent person. The model is, however, more widespread in rural areas and with regard to care of migrants, the employment of a family caregiver may ensure that culture sensitive care needs are met.

12.2 Leave for palliative care

Leave for care of closely related persons *(närståendepenning)*: Employees can benefit from a full-time or part-time leave for a maximum of 100 days per person with severe illness. There is a legal obligation for the employer to ensure a return to work after the leave. The caregiver provides direct support for the seriously ill person during the leave from work. Both relatives and friends can claim the leave for care of closely related persons.

25 Schön/Johansson (2016).

Financial support

The taxable benefit for care of closely related persons can be claimed for up to 100 days per patient. The financial support for full leave is 7.5 times the price base amount (*prisbasbelopp*) (2016 SEK 44 300, approx. € 4700).

12.3 Leave for the care of minors

Financial support

Childcare allowance (*vårdbidrag*): Parents of a child with special care needs due to illness or disability can receive the childcare allowance for a period of six months. The allowance can be paid for children under 19 years of age. It corresponds to 2.5 times the price base amount. The benefit is liable to tax. Parents build up pension entitlements during this period.

12.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Disability allowance *(handikappersättning):* People with disabilities who are dependent on third-party aid and who have special expenses in connection with their disability receive the allowance. The allowance is paid to persons between 19 and 65 years of age. Blind persons or persons with severe hearing impairments receive the benefit also after the age of 65, as long as the disability occurred before the age of 65. The monthly amount of the allowance is based on the scope of assistance needed and the related expenditures. There are three levels: 36 per cent, 53 per cent or 69 per cent of the price base amount. Other income, such as for instance a pension, is taken into account and may lead to a lesser amount.

SWEDEN								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Dura-tion	Part-time and support arrange-ment	Financial support	Entitlement of self-em-ployed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, re-peated use, mul-tiple beneficiar-ies
1.					Carers allowance (municipality employs a family member): Prerequisite: Contract between the munic-ipality and the family caregiver (dependent person under 65 years of age) as well as additional municipality specific require-ments Type: Social security insurable employ-ment Duration: unlimited	Yes	N. D.	
2.	Leave for care of closely related persons *(närståendepen-ning)* Legal right	Employee; care-giver takes over direct support of the dependent person; relatives and acquaint-ances	Maxi-mum 100 days / patient	Yes	Benefit for care of closely related persons: Requirements: see Leave for care of closely related persons Type: Flat rate Maximum duration: 100 days / patient	No	N. D.	Benefit for care of closely related persons: One-time claim per patient
3.					Childcare allowance: Requirements: None Type: Flat rate Maximum duration: 6 months	N. D.		

13 Spain[26]

In OECD comparison, Spain has one of the highest rates of informal carers (15 per cent of the population). The majority of informal carers in Spain are women. Only a few of these female caregivers are simultaneously employed, mostly for cultural reasons. This is, however, also the result of the fact that care services (day and night care, outpatient care, etc.) are missing or too expensive. Men rarely take leaves from work to care for a dependent relative. On the one hand, the leave is unpaid and, on the other hand, there are also cultural reasons why men do rarely assume caring responsibilities. Spanish law gives care services priority over money and benefits in kind. Therefore, cash benefits are only available for dependent persons in case services are not available or are unsuitable. Services and money and / or professional services are mutually exclusive and cannot be used simultaneously. In principle, the benefits depend on the level of care (care levels 1 to 3 are calculated according to need of care) and the assets of the dependent person.

The Estatuto de los Trabajadores (Labour law) includes a right to adapt and redistribute working hours (Art. 34.8) for reasons of reconciling family and work and is further regulated by collective bargaining agreements or individual agreement with the employer.

In Spain, all employed persons are subject to social insurance, also self-employed persons (special insurance system). The status of the marginally employed, i.e. not socially insured, does not exist in Spain. Therefore, leave claims and financial support are also available to marginally employed persons. Self-employed persons receive financial support for periods of leave in which they care for dependent relatives. There is also a wage-replacement benefit for the care of seriously ill children.

13.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Long-term leave on full-time *(Excedencia por cuidado de familiares)* **or part-time basis** *(Reducción de jornada*):[27] There is a legal right for employees to take a leave from work for the care of a relative who is dependent due to age, accident, serious illness or disability. The leave can be claimed for a maximum of two years (for civil servants up to three years). In the first year there is a same job guarantee, in the second year there is the right to return to a comparable position. In the first year, pension entitlements are build up. The part-time option entails a legal right to reduce working hours between 12.5 and 50 per cent. The leave can be divided into several blocks.

Financial support

Benefit for self-employed persons *(Bonificación a trabajadores incluidos en el Régimen Especial de Trabajadores en Cuenta Propia o Autónomos por conciliación de la vida profesional y familia vinculada a la contratación)*: Since 2015 self-employed persons can receive financial

26 Rodriguez-Cabrero et al. (2016).

27 Compare also Instituto de la Mujer y para la Igualdad de Oportunidades (2016).

support for the care of a dependent relative. The prerequisite is the reduction of their working time for the care of a child under seven years or another dependent relative, as well as the employment of a person for at least three months with at least 50 per cent of the working time in order to compensate for their own reduction of working hours. The employed person must be employed for at least three months. A pre-condition is that the self-employed person is insured in the social insurance scheme for self-employed persons (*Seguridad Social de Trabajadores por cuenta propia o autónomos*). If these conditions are met, self-employed persons will be paid their own social insurance contributions for up to twelve months (50 per cent if a part-time employee is employed). The benefit can be claimed only once per dependent person. For the care of another dependent person, the benefit can be claimed again. The specific goal of the benefit is to strengthen reconciliation of care and work also for the self-employed.

13.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

13.3 Leave for the care of minors

Financial support

Benefit for caring for children affected by cancer or other serious illness (*Prestación por cuidado de menores afectados por cáncer u otra enfermedad grave*): Parents of children with cancer or other serious illnesses requiring long-term care in the hospital can claim financial compensation. Both parents must be working and one parent must have reduced his/her working time by at least 50 per cent in order to care of the child. In addition, both parents have to prove minimum social insurance contributions, which are phased by age (<21 years = 0 days, 21 - 26 years = 90 days within the last seven years or 180 days in total> 26 years = 180 days within the last seven years or 360 days in total). The benefit can only be claimed by one parent at a time. The benefit is paid as a wage-replacement benefit and is available to both employees and self-employed persons. The loss of earnings due to reduced working hours will be replaced by 75 per cent. For this purpose, the daily net income from the month preceding the leave is used. The benefit is applied at two-month intervals and is valid until the child recovered or the child becomes 18 years old.[28]

13.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Monetary benefit for care in the family setting and support for non-professional carers (*Prestación de cuidados en el entorno familiar y apoyo a cuidadores no profesionales*[29]): Dependent persons can receive this financial support if they have been cared for by a family member for at least one year and care services are not available. The dependent person and the caregiver must live in the same household. The flat rate varies between € 153 and € 387.64, depending on the level of care needed and own assets. The caregivers builds up pension

28 Compare also Ministerio de Empleo y Seguridad Social (2016).

29 Compare also SAAD (2016a).

entitlements and retains health insurance during the care-giving period through paying voluntary contributions.

Monetary benefit for personal assistance (*Prestación de asistencia personal*) or for **individual services** (*Prestación vinculada al servicio*):[30] The dependent person is eligible to claim the benefit. It is paid at a rate of € 300 to € 715 per month, depending on the level of care needed and own assets. It is earmarked for the employment of a personal assistance or the payment of a service. The benefit is granted when public services are not available.

Non-contributory family benefits for children with disabilities: For children under 18 years of age with a disability rate of at least 33 per cent, the family receives a grant of € 1000 per year. For children over 18 years with a disability rate of at least 65 per cent or at least 75 per cent and with need for an additional caregiver, the family receives € 4415 or € 6623 per year; given the child lives in the home of the parents and their income does not exceed the statutory minimum income. Apart from this ceiling, the benefit is not means-tested.

Severe disability pension: Social insurance benefit for a person with a disability younger than 65 years, a supplement of 50 per cent on the actual pension in order to pay for a caregiver.

30 Compare also SAAD (2016b).

SPAIN								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Long-term leave on full-time: (*Excedencia por cuidado de familiares*, or part-time basis: *Reducción de jornada)* Legal right	Employed	Maximum 2 years	Yes (legal right for reduction of working hours by 12.5% to maximum 50%)	<u>Benefit for self-employed persons:</u> Prerequisite: Reduction of the working time and the recruitment of a person for minimum 3 months with minimum 50% of the working hours Type: Reimbursement of social insurance contributions for the self-employed for one year (50% for part-time work)	Yes	Indirect (all employees are subject to social insurance in Spain)	<u>Long-term leave:</u> can be divided into several blocks <u>Benefit for self-employed persons:</u> Renewed claim for new dependent persons possible
3.					<u>Benefit for caring for children affected by cancer or other serious illness:</u> Prerequisite: Long-term care for children in hospital; reduction of working time by minimum 50%; both parents must be employed; minimum social security contributions; can be claimed by one parent at a time Type: Wage-replacement benefit corresponding to 75% Duration: unlimited (in 2 month sections) maximum until the child is 18 years old	Yes	No (no minimum amount)	

14 Czech Republic[31]

Long-term care is widely regarded as a family responsibility in the Czech Republic. There are no services which support the reconciliation of care and work. There are, however, plans by the government to introduce leave from work for the purpose of caring for relatives for three to six months including a financial compensation.[32]

14.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Part-time leave: Formally, there is a right to part-time work for relatives of dependent persons with a minimum of care level 2. However, this right is de facto not granted by employers.

14.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

14.3 Leave for the care of minors

Not available.

14.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Personal care allowance: Dependent people receive a personal care allowance. There are four levels of care, according to which the amount of the benefit is disbursed: € 30 to a maximum of € 444 per month[33] for over 18-year-olds and € 111 to a maximum of € 444 per month for minors. The personal care allowance is paid out as a universal benefit and is therefore not means-tested.

31 Jahoda et al. (2016).

32 Compare also Jahoda (2016).

33 € 444 is about half the average monthly income.

Czech Republic								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Part time leave Legal right, which is de facto not granted by employers Current plans to introduce a 3- to 6-month leave for care including financial support for the caregiver	Dependent person with minimum care level 2	N. D.	Yes	No	N. D.	N. D.	N. D.

15 United Kingdom[34]

In the United Kingdom, the *Department for Business, Innovation and Skills* (BIS) is responsible for designing leave entitlements, which set uniform rules for the care of relatives in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There is no legal obligation for the family in the United Kingdom to provide care for dependent relatives. Therefore, the financial independence of the dependent person and the caregiver is the vantage point for the calculation of means-tested support benefits. This is approach is further strengthened by means of financial benefits, such as care allowances and assistance for children with disabilities, which are directly paid out to the caregiver.

15.1 Leave for the care of relatives

Flexible working: Employees with care responsibilities can request flexible working hours since 2014. They must have been employed by their current employer for at least 26 weeks. Employers are encouraged to give favourable consideration to the application; since 2014, 96 per cent of applications have been granted. Flexible working hours can include changes in the number of hours, working times and the place of work, as well as hourly or wage time accounts.

Financial support

Care allowance: The care allowance is available to people who care at least 35 hours per week and earn no more than £ 110 (€ 145) per week (net, deduction of care costs while the caregiver is at the workplace and 50 per cent of the pension contribution). The caregiver must have lived in the United Kingdom for at least two of the last three years. The dependent person must receive financial support due to disability (*Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payment* or *Attendance Allowance*). The caregiver does not have to be related to the dependent person or live in the same household to receive the care allowance.

The financial support is a flat rate of £ 62.10 (€ 82) per week for 2015/2016 and does not increase if several people are cared for. The care allowance is also paid for up to 12 weeks in case of holidays, respite care and hospital stays. It will be taxed if a base amount of all income is exceeded and is accounted for as income for other means-tested benefits. The allowance is unlimited, but ends eight weeks after the death of the dependent person.

Caregivers who receive the care allowance also receive a *carer's credit,* over the entire period so that no gaps arise in the basic and supplementary pensions.

15.2 Leave for palliative care

Not available.

34 Glendinning (2016); see also GOV.UK (2016a, b).

15.3 Leave for the care of minors

Financial support

Disability living allowance: A child under 16 years of age must have had a special care need for at least three weeks and presumably continue to have it for six additional weeks in order to receive the disability living allowance. The prerequisite of the three months is not applicable if the child suffers an incurable illness. If the child is older than three years, he / she must have lived for at least two years in the United Kingdom for the last three years (13 weeks for children under six months, 26 for the last 156 weeks for children between six months and three years). In the case of an incurable disease, these preconditions are obsolete.

At the time of application, the caregiver can be either active or non-employed. The amount of the allowance depends on the extent of the care requirements in the two dimensions of care need and mobility. It is between £ 21.80 and £ 139.75 per week. A medical assessment may determine whether and to what extent eligibility exists.

15.4 Indirect financial support for the care of relatives

Personal independence payment*:* People with disabilities aged between 16 and 64 years can receive a personal independence allowance upon request. For at least three months, there must be a restriction with regard to everyday tasks and mobility, which is likely to continue for nine months. If there is an incurable illness, the prerequisite for the three months is no longer necessary. The allowance covers part of the additional costs resulting from the long-term illness or disability.

The amount of the allowance is between £ 21.80 and £ 139.75 per week and depends on the state of health and the disability affecting everyday life and mobility of the person. A regular re-examination with regard to both dimensions is carried out. In the case of an incurable disease with a life expectancy of less than six months the highest possible allowance is automatically paid.

UNITED KINGDOM								
	Leave	Eligibility criteria	Duration	Part-time and support arrangement	Financial support	Entitlement of self-employed	Support of marginally employed persons	Flexibility, repeated use, multiple beneficiaries
1.	Flexible working No legal right (Employers held to examine favourably)	at least 26 weeks of employment with the current employer	unlimited	Yes, exclusively; agreements can be made on the number of hours, working hours and the place of work, as well as hours / pay hours accounts	<u>Care allowance:</u> Prerequisite: the caregiver cares at least for 35 hours / week; earns no more than £ 110 (€ 145) net / week, dependent person receives own benefit due to disability / illness Type: Flat rate Duration: unlimited until maximum 8 weeks after the death	N. D.	Through specific care service (low net income as a prerequisite for the benefit reference)	<u>Care allowance:</u> The benefit does not increase if several dependent people are cared for
3.					<u>Disability living allowance:</u> Prerequisite: Child younger than 16 years of age with special care needs for 3 months and for a prospective additional 6 months Type: Flat rate according to care need Duration: N. D.			

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PUBLISHING INFORMATION

Publisher:

Institute for Social Work and Social Education
Office Address: Zeilweg 42, D-60439 Frankfurt a. M.
Phone: +49 (0)69 - 95 78 9-0
Fax: +49 (0)69 - 95 789-190
Internet: http://www.iss-ffm.de
E-Mail: info@iss-ffm.de

This is a publication of the “Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe”. The German Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth provides funding for the project “Observatory for Sociopolitical Developments in Europe”.
Homepage: http://www.sociopolitical-observatory.eu.

This publication does not necessarily reflect the opinions of the German federal government. The publisher and/or the authors of individual articles bear responsibility for its content.

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Agency responsible for the Observatory is:

Institute for Social Work and Social Education

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Circulation:

This publication is available only as a PDF file from http://www.sociopolitical-observatory.eu.

Date of Publication: This report was originally published in German in September 2016.

ISS
Gemeinnütziger e. V.