

# Who is eligible for parental leave in the United Kingdom?

**Who is eligible for parental leave in the United Kingdom?**

Parental leave is granted to parents, usually after maternity and paternity leave, allowing mothers and fathers to take care of their young children without losing their jobs. Such a policy exists in all EU Member States and in the UK it is called Parental leave. The policy design and eligibility rules vary across the EU and not all women and men in the EU are eligible for parental leave.

**Parental leave in the UK is:**

- € (United Kingdom)
- 12 months
- Leave is an individual right and cannot be transferred between parents

**28 % of women and 32 % of men in employment are not eligible for parental leave**

This factheet is based on an eligibility study of how many women and men aged 20-49 would be eligible for parental leave if they had a child in 2017 and the reasons behind their non-eligibility (1).

**Who is eligible for parental leave in the UK?**

- ✓ Employees (self-employed)
- + Self-employed
- ✓ Same-sex parents
- ✓ Non-citizens (2) (Irish, EU, EFTA)

**In the EU-28 (3):**

- 15 countries restrict access to employees with short working durations before to 60 (including the United Kingdom)
- The self-employed are not eligible in 10 countries (including the United Kingdom)
- 11 countries do not allow access for same-sex parents (not the United Kingdom)
- 15 limit access to refugees or asylum seekers (including no access for asylum seekers in the United Kingdom)

**In the UK, self-employment and duration conditions for the employees restrict the access to parental leave.**

	Women	Men
EU-28	28% Not eligible, 72% Eligible	28% Not eligible, 72% Eligible
UK	28% Not eligible, 72% Eligible	32% Not eligible, 68% Eligible
UK (Employees)	10% Not eligible, 90% Eligible	10% Not eligible, 90% Eligible
UK (Self-employed)	18% Not eligible, 82% Eligible	22% Not eligible, 78% Eligible

**Footnotes:**

- 1) Reasons for lack of access (eligible, refugee and asylum seekers when the applicant is included in the categories of countries of origin eligible)
- 2) Worker status categories: Irish, EU, EFTA, UK, country resident, refugees and asylum seekers
- 3) The data are divided before the 2016 Brexit referendum

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## Read more

[Factsheet: Who is eligible for parental leave in the EU-28?](#)



[Factsheets: Eligibility for parental leave in EU Member States](#)



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## Downloads



[Who is eligible for parental leave in the United Kingdom?](#)

EN (PDF, 180.29 KB)

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