



**EACH**

**EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR CHILDREN IN HOSPITAL**

**EUROPEAN SURVEY**

**2012**

**WHEN SICK CHILDREN NEED THEIR PARENTS AT HOME OR IN HOSPITAL -  
HOW ARE THEY SUPPORTED BY GOVERNMENTS OR EMPLOYERS**

**Provisions of the EACH Charter**

Art. 1: Children shall be admitted to hospital only if the care they require cannot be equally provided at home or on a day basis.

Art. 3 (2): Parents shall be entitled to leave with pay for the duration of the child's illness. Parents should not suffer loss of income or incur other costs due to staying in hospital with their child, full-time care of their child in hospital or daily care of healthy siblings at home by other persons, or travel costs and other expenses.

Country	Austria	Belgium	Czech Republic	Croatia	Finland
<b>Do legal regulations exist</b>	Yes – at home No – in hospital	Yes, starting Nov. 1, 2012 a new royal decree has come into effect.	Yes	Yes – at home No – in hospital	Yes
<b>How many days allowed</b>	10 days for each working parent for children under 12 years and regardless of number of children	One week up to one month for the same child	9 days for each different case of illness (16 days for single parents) – independent from calendar year.	Unlimited – when kids are sick at home or discharged from hospital.	60 days in hospital 60 days at home
<b>Paid / Unpaid</b>	Leave is paid by employer	Payment by ONEM (National Employment Office) also for employees of the private sector: € 178 for one week; € 771.33 for one month.  Leave can also be taken in the form of reduced working time to 4/5 <sup>th</sup> or 50%.	60% of average daily income for each day paid by government agency. If parents need/want more days they are entitled to unpaid leave  If parent stays with child in hospital: - First 3 days unpaid - Next 18 days 60% paid by employer - Next days 60% paid by government agency In hospital tax of € 4 per day for child and parent.	Governmental institutions or companies continue salary payment. No regulations for privately owned companies.  No paid leave when child is in hospital.	70% salary covered by national insurance upon doctor's recommendation By employer: at least 4 days a year (children under 10 years); without doctor's recommendation; depends on terms of employment contract
<b>For mothers: Fathers too:</b>	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes Yes (and other care persons)	Yes Yes	Yes Yes
<b>Acceptance by employer</b>	Depends on employer.	Legally the employer cannot refuse.	Usually ok. Some employers refuse to employ mothers with small children.	Depends on employer – see above	Usually the employer gives unpaid leave
<b>Feelings of parents</b>	Parents are reluctant, they are afraid to lose their job or are bullied at work.	As the decree is quite recent, future experiences are to be awaited.	Some parents are afraid that employer might perceive them as unreliable if children are often ill.	When employed by private companies parents are reluctant to ask for paid leave, as they fear to loose their job	Sometimes parents fear to loose their job (if formerly unemployed). Then parents take holidays or unpaid leave.
<b>Are legal regulations sufficient</b>	Laws are not adequate. Depends on good-will of employers.	See above.	Sufficient for most situations. In case of serious or chronic illnesses, parents may opt for a different scheme (financial benefit for long-term carers).	Sufficient (if accepted by all companies)	In case of a serious disease the national insurance will cover up to several months. This is rather sufficient.

Country	France	Germany	Iceland	Ireland	Italy
<b>Do legal regulations exist</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>How many days allowed per year</b>	7 days off per year (some companies allow more days)	<b>Paid:</b> 5 working days <b>Unpaid:</b> 10 working days 25 days max. if more children in a household For single parents: 20 days max. for 1 child, max. 50 working days for more children.	Mostly 7 days	none	3 days per month if the child is severely ill or handicapped.
<b>Paid / Unpaid</b>	7 days off by employer unpaid. Special conditions: Upon medical certificate that presence of parent is necessary, a daily allowance is paid by governmental agency for family support for any type of illness, accident or handicap: € 41.79 per day for families / € 49.65 for single parents. Max. duration 3 years	5 working days paid by employer upon doctor's prescription ("parent's presence medically necessary").	Yes by employer	In the absence of legal provisions, obtaining paid or unpaid leave is at the discretion of employer. Parents providing full time care for a dependent may be eligible to take unpaid leave, but the criteria are restrictive, and do not apply for care of a child in hospital.	Paid by employer, but only if leave is authorized by national social security.  Unpaid leave up to a max. of 180 days..
<b>For mothers: Fathers too:</b>	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes No	No No	Either one – but cannot be changed.
<b>Acceptance by employer</b>	According to the law parents get unpaid leave from employer and can resume their job after termination of allowance.	Despite legal regulations many working contracts exclude possibility of paid or unpaid leave for the care of sick children. Tendency to deny leave rising.	No problems	There is no allowance to take days off. Any time given – paid or unpaid – is at the discretion of employer. Ongoing hospital stays of the child might adversely affect the mother's career.	Usually no problems, but situation can differ from employer to employer.
<b>Feelings of parents</b>	See above	Parents are reluctant to ask for paid leave.	No problems to ask for paid leave	Parents are reluctant to ask for paid leave.	It depends on the employer (see above)
<b>Are legal regulations sufficient</b>	Allowance payments correspond to national minimum wage of € 1044 /month. For parents with a better salary, the allowance is insufficient.	No	7 days for all children under 18 in a household is not sufficient. More days for families with more children would be better.	In a 2004 CHI survey 60% of parents reported loss of income due to in-patient children ranging from € 70 to € 2900. Additional costs involve accommodation, meals, pay car parks.	There should be better flexibility in cases of more or less severe illnesses. Official information/texts are not very clear or quite cryptic.

Country	Netherlands	Portugal	Sweden	Switzerland	UK
<b>Do legal regulations exist</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<b>How many days allowed</b>	Short term care at home if there is no other solution: Twice the number of hours worked per week Severe illnesses (at home or hospital): max. six work weeks (possibility to spread over 18 weeks max.) Does not apply for chronic illnesses	At home: 30 days per year (children under 12 years) 15 days per year (children over 12 years) + 1 day more for second or following children. No limits for children with disabilities or chronic diseases. In hospital: No limit per year	120 days, can be prolonged	Depends on agreement with employer. Usually 1 to 3 days are accepted per illness. Some companies are more generous than others.	Depends on agreement with employer – some are more generous than others.
<b>Paid / Unpaid</b>	By employer: 70 % of salary (doctor's confirmation might be requested) In case of part time work, hours worked are paid In case of full time parental leave no salary is paid.	65% of salary paid by social security. When salary is too low min. of € 11.18 per day. Social security admin. usually delays payment.	Paid, with a loss of salary of 60 – 80 %	Quite often parents use their regular paid holidays when a child needs care (at home or in hospital).	Parents use paid holiday.
<b>For mothers: Fathers too:</b>	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	For one parent	Yes In principle yes, but rather seldom used.	Yes For therapy, Yes – but not often
<b>Acceptance by employer</b>	No problem to obtain leave as it is a law.	Although paid leave is permitted by law, some employers do not respect it. There are cases where employers put pressure on employees to quit the job.	Usually no problems	See above.	As above.
<b>Feelings of parents</b>	Parents are not afraid to ask for leave.	See above.	Parents appreciate the system, but for some the financial compensation is too small.	For a mother or single parent with more children, frequent illnesses by children are a job risk factor. Usually a network of grandparents, relatives or friends is needed for support.	Parents are very torn between security of their job and wanting to be with their child.
<b>Are legal regulations sufficient</b>	Quite sufficient	Only 1 day extra from the second child on, may pose problems in the family dynamic.	Financial compensation could be better.	Definitely not.	No

<b>Country</b>	<b>Hungary</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Japan</b>
<b>Do legal regulations exist</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes - "Sick/Injured Child Care Leave" for men and women. But no regulation about payment.
<b>How many days allowed</b>	At home: under 1 year old: no limit 1-3 years: 84 day/year 3-6 years: 42 day/year 6-12 years: 14 day/year Not in hospital	Usually 3 days when child is hospitalized. Afterwards parents have to use paid holiday. If the child has a chronic or long-term disease parents can request for reduction of working hours (from 50% to 99.9% maximum). Duration depends on medical reports. This option includes care at home as well.	Mostly 7 days Up to 5 days/year for 1 pre-school child Up to 10 days/year if more than 2 children
<b>Paid / Unpaid</b>	Paid (60% of the salary)	In case of chronic disease payment is made by mutual work accident insurance of father or mother. Payment corresponds to his/her salary.	Yes, by employer (only mothers). Payment depends on company's rules – child care leave is often regarded as unpaid leave or absence. Many people therefore prefer to use their paid annual holidays.
<b>For mothers: Fathers too:</b>	Either parent can stay with the child up to the above mentioned days	Yes Yes	Yes In principle yes, but difficult to take
<b>Acceptance by employer</b>	Depends on employer (the state or municipal employer accept, there are problems in private companies).	There is no problem if the medical information is clear.	No problem.
<b>Feelings of parents</b>	Lots of them are afraid to stay at home, because they might loose their job	Parents of children with chronic disease are content with the option and avoid requesting undue sick leave.	No problem if regular holidays are used. But parents with children often keep their holidays in reserve in case children get ill.
<b>Are legal regulations sufficient</b>	The main problem is that after 12 years of age there is no sick leave for parents. Our Institute has proposed that the parent's sick leave should be entitled for hospital stay too, now the Ombudsman supports it.	This possibility exists since 2011 and is of great help for families with seriously ill children.	Existing regulations are not sufficient. Especially for pre-school children, as they become ill more often. More days would also be needed for families with more children. There are cases where the complete paid holidays were spent for looking after sick/injured children.