Maternity leave and parental leave
Living in the Netherlands and working in Belgium

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If you live in the Netherlands and work in Belgium, and you are pregnant, you will be entitled to maternity leave. If you take maternity leave, you will receive a maternity benefit. You can also get a benefit if you have to stop working (or reduce your working hours) earlier than planned for health reasons. Fathers are entitled to paternity leave. After your maternity leave, you and your partner can take a longer period of leave. This is possible until your child turns 12.

### How much maternity leave will you get?

You can get 15 weeks of maternity leave: up to 6 weeks before the due date (prenatal leave) and 9 weeks after giving birth (postnatal leave). Fathers are entitled to 10 days' paternity leave.

### Postponing the start of your maternity leave

It is up to you when to start taking maternity leave, as long as the commencement date is at least one week before the expected date of delivery. You may be able to take unclaimed weeks of prenatal leave as postnatal leave. If you give birth prematurely before your maternity leave has started, your postnatal leave will start straight away and you will lose your entitlement to prenatal leave. If you give birth after the expected date of delivery, the total period of maternity leave will be longer.

### What type of benefit will you get?

- Maternity benefit. You will receive 82% of your wages for the first 30 days and 75% of your wages for the remaining period up to a certain maximum amount. (See the “Figures” appendix.)
- Paternity benefit. The employer pays 100% of the father’s wages during the first 3 days. The Belgian health insurance fund will pay 82% of the wages for the remaining 7 days, up to a certain maximum amount. (See the “Figures” appendix.)
- If you have to stop working or reduce working hours earlier than planned for health reasons or to protect the health of your baby, you will receive a benefit at 60% of the wages you lose. You can claim this benefit before or after giving birth.
How to apply for the benefit

You must apply to your Belgian health insurance fund for the benefit, and to your employer for leave.

Maternity grant

You qualify for a maternity grant because you work in Belgium. You must apply to your employer’s child benefit fund for a maternity grant, which is a one-off payment. The amounts are shown in the “Figures” appendix.

What if...

… you have a multiple birth?
In that case, you will be entitled to an extra 4 weeks of maternity leave, giving you a total of 19 weeks.

… you fall ill during your maternity leave?
In that case, your leave can be extended by one week, provided you have a medical statement from the doctor who is treating you confirming that you are ill.

… your child has to stay in hospital after the birth?
If your child has to stay in hospital for at least 7 days, your maternity leave will be extended by one week.

How much parental leave will you get?

You are entitled to a maximum of four months of parental leave, which you can take in different periods:

- **Full-time parental leave**
  Any parent who works full-time or part-time can take four months of parental leave.

- **Half-time parental leave**
  Any parent who works full-time can take eight months of half-time parental leave.

- **One-fifth time parental leave**
  Any parent who works full-time can take twenty months of one-fifth time parental leave.

What are the conditions for taking parental leave?

- Your parental leave must start before your child turns 12.
- You must have worked for at least 12 months in the 15 months before your application.
What type of benefit will you receive?

You receive a benefit from the Belgian National Employment Office (RVA).
- Parents of children born or adopted after 8 March 2012 will receive a benefit for four months of parental leave.
- Parents of children born before 8 March 2012 are entitled to a fourth month of parental leave but will not receive a benefit for the fourth month.

Incentive payments
In addition to your benefit, you may qualify for incentive payments from the Flemish government, depending on the sector you work in. You can apply for incentive payments on www.werk.be.

How to apply for parental leave?

You have to notify your employer in writing at least two months in advance. Download form C61 SV from the RVA website, complete it and send it by registered post to RVA, Dienst Loopbaanonderbreking.

What if...

... your child is handicapped?
The time limit for taking parental leave is extended to the child’s 21th birthday.

... your employer refuses?
The employer cannot refuse to grant parental leave but can postpone it by a maximum of six months.

... you adopt a child?
You can apply for parental leave from the moment the child joins your family.

Stay informed

This leaflet contains general information. Additional conditions and exceptions may apply to your situation, and rules and regulations are subject to change. We therefore advise you to check our website regularly (www.svb.nl/bbz).

If you have any questions, feel free to get in touch with the Bureau for Belgian Affairs. We will be happy to assist you.

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Other useful addresses

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Rijksinstituut voor Ziekte en Invaliditeitsverzekering
Tervurenlaan 211
B-1150 Brussel
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www.riziv.be

National Employment Office (RVA)
Rijksdienst voor Arbeidsvoorziening (RVA)
Dienst Loopbaanonderbreking
www.rva.be

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