

France

Distinctive Features: Explicit family policy; generous cash benefits, both universal and income-tested; emphases on social justice, parental choice, and early childhood education and care (ECEC) services.

Maternity / Parental Leave

Benefit	Cash benefit and job-protected maternity leave
Eligibility Criteria	Maternity: working mothers, universal; Parental: working parents, 2 or more children; income tested.
Duration of Leave	Maternity: 16 weeks for first 2 children (at least 6 weeks before birth, 10 weeks after), longer for subsequent children. Paternity: 11 working days. Parental: up to 3 years.
Compensation Rate	Maternity: 100% of wages; Parental: Unpaid for first child, flat rate for + children
Other Leaves	Adoption leave and sick child care leave.

Early Childhood Education and Care

Age Group Served	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : 2-6; <i>Crèche</i> : 3 months to 3 years.
Eligibility Criteria	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : universal; <i>Crèche</i> : working parents or w/ special needs.
Fees	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : free; Wrap-around services at subsidized and income-related fees; <i>Crèche</i> : income-related parent fees, max. 25% of costs
Locus of Care	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : preschools; <i>Creche</i> : centers, FDC homes.
Funding Strategies	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : govt; <i>Creche</i> : Mix of govt, family allowance funds, parent fees
Access/Coverage (%)	<i>Ecole Maternelle</i> : 99%; <i>Creche</i> : 0-3 (35%)

Family and Child Allowances

Benefit & Eligibility	Universal cash benefit for each child beginning with the second up to age 20; Multiple income-tested categorical benefits.
Benefit Levels	Basic benefit: Formula based on the number and age of children.

Child and Family Tax Benefits

Tax Deductions/Relief	Family unit is filing unit. Childcare tax credit
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Child Support

Benefit	Guaranteed minimum support
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Other Child-Conditioned Income Transfers

Benefits	Single-parent allowances, means-tested
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Child and Adolescent Health

Access to Coverage	Universal coverage through national health insurance system. Extensive free maternal and child health services.
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The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth, and Family Policies at
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Housing Benefits

Benefit	Housing allowances
Eligibility Criteria	Income-tested

School-Age Children Policies

Compulsory School	Ages 6 – 16
School Hours	8:30 – 4:00 or 4:30

Youth Policies

Distinctive Features	Mandatory sex education, school-based counseling and contraceptive services.
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