

**Explanatory notes**  
**"Reconciliation of work and family life"**  
*LFS 2025 module under IESS FR*

**INTRODUCTION**

This document presents the explanatory notes for the variables of the LFS module on “Reconciliation of work and family life”. This module will be implemented under the IESS FR in 2025 and will be repeated every eight years from that moment on. Its overall aim is to assess to what degree work and care responsibilities limit one another.

**OVERVIEW OF THE VARIABLES****Submodule 1: Childcare**

CHCARRES	Existence of regular care responsibilities for children up to 14	AGE = 18-74
CHCARAGE	Age of youngest child being taken care of	CHCARRES = 3-5
CHCARUSE	Use of childcare services	CHCARRES = 2-4
CHCAROBS	Main reason for not using childcare services	CHCARUSE = 2, 3

**Submodule 2: Care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities**

ELCARRES	Existence of regular care responsibilities for relatives aged 15 years and more who are ill, frail or with disabilities	AGE = 18-74
ELCARINT	Intensity of care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities	ELCARRES = 2-6

**Submodule 3: Flexibility of work arrangements**

CAREFFEM	Effect of care responsibilities on employment	(CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1
WORKOBS	Main obstacle at work to reconcile work and family life	(CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1

**Submodule 4: Career breaks**

CHNUMBER	Number of own children raised	AGE = 18-54
PARLEAV	Use of family leave	CHNUMBER = 01-98 AND (EMPSTAT = 1 OR EXISTPR = 2,3)
PARLENG	Length of used family leave	PARLEAV = 1-3

## CHCARRES

### Variable name

Existence of regular care responsibilities for children up to 14

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	327
Flow number	1

### Filter

18 <= AGE <= 74

### Filter labels

Everybody in the target population aged 18 to 74 years

### Codes or values

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1     | No care responsibilities for own or partner's children or grandchildren   |
| 2     | Care for own or partner's children, all living inside the household   |
| 3     | Care for own or partner's children, at least one living inside and one living outside the household                           |
| 4     | Care for own or partner's children, all living outside the household  |
| 5     | Care for own or partner's grandchildren (living inside or outside the household) (without care for own or partner's children) |
| Blank | Not stated  |
| 9     | Not applicable  |

### Purpose

The variable aims to provide a comprehensive picture of existing care responsibilities for own or partner's children or grandchildren younger than 15 years. Knowing whether child(ren) for whom the respondent takes care of, live(s) inside or outside the household, is a relevant information as this can significantly affect the work-life balance of the respondent.

### Definition

Care responsibilities for (grand)children are unpaid and reflect the provision of care or assistance to young children under the age of 15 years.

Care responsibilities for (grand)children consist out of personal care, support during bathing, dressing and eating but also playing games, helping with homework, reading a book, keeping company, giving a ride or support in administrative matters.

Care should be provided on a regular basis, i.e. at least some hours per week. If care is not provided every

week, e.g. care for a child alternating between two places of residence, care should be provided for at least several hours per week on average. In this context, one week is defined as a whole week, i.e. 7 days.

In the case of grandchildren, the care should also be provided for at least several hours per week on average. Care only provided during school holidays is not enough to be considered as regular care. The provision of care should be at least twice a month for at least some hours per month.

The **reference period** for this variable is the current situation/the reference week.

“Current situation” means the childcare over the last one to three months. This is operationalised as ‘the last four (to twelve) weeks preceding the end of the reference week’.

A **partner** is defined according to the legal or de facto partnership/relationship status. Accordingly, it comprises the following two subgroups:

- A **husband/wife/civil partner/spouse** is identified according to the legal marital status, i.e. the (legal) conjugal status of each individual in relation to the marriage laws (or customs) of the country (i.e. de jure status), including civil partners. Members of same sex couples can be “husband/wife/civil partner” if the marriage laws (or customs) of the country foresee this.
- **Partner/cohabitee** is identified according to the de facto relationship, i.e. the partnership/relationship status of each individual in terms of his or her actual living arrangements within the household.

The criterion of **living inside or outside the household** refers to the concept of usual residence as used in the core LFS.

### Implementation guidelines

The reference period reflects the normal and current situation, i.e. the reference week.

Care for (grand)children living outside the household should only be considered if care is provided on a regular basis, i.e. at least some hours per week. It can also be alternating, like every second week, but on average it should be for at least several hours per week.

If the respondent regularly takes care of the partner's children outside the household, this should be also counted. However, it should not be counted if the partner has children living elsewhere and the respondent does not or does only occasionally take care of these children: the respondent should have actual care responsibilities on a regular basis.

Interviewers should be well trained on the concept of care responsibilities, in order to properly guide respondents.

#### Care for own or partner's children:

- “Own children” means natural, adopted, foster and/or stepchildren. Legally seen, foster children are no relatives, but taking over care responsibilities for them is binding and has a significant effect.
- Children with disabilities up to the age of 14 should be counted as children.
- Grandparents who are *legal guardians* of their grandchildren should be considered as having care responsibilities for “own children”. The same applies for siblings, aunts/uncles and godfathers/godmothers being legal guardians of children.
- As care responsibilities are often shared in a family or household, questions on “children” include the ones of the spouse or cohabiting partner, referred as “partner’s children”.
- Care responsibilities for ex-partner’s children are assimilated to those for “partner’s children”.

#### Care for own or partner's grandchildren:

- “Own grandchildren” means natural, adopted, foster and/or step-grandchildren.

- Grandchildren with disabilities up to the age of 14 should be counted as grandchildren.
- As care responsibilities are often shared in a family or household, questions on "grandchildren" include the ones of the spouse or cohabiting partner referred as "partner's grandchildren".
- Care responsibilities for ex-partner's grandchildren are assimilated to those for "partner's grandchildren".

**Households with several generations:**

- Parents/grandparents who take care of both their own or partner's children AND grandchildren should answer considering only the children.
- Grandparents (who are not legal guardians of grandchildren) are expected to answer regarding care responsibilities for their own or their partner's grandchildren living inside the household, unless they do not fall in the situation described in the previous paragraph.

**Retrieving information from LFS core:**

- The variable is split into several questions. Q1\_chcarres does not need to be asked if the information can be retrieved from the LFS core. In a first step, Q1\_chcarres (if necessary) and Q2\_chcarres are asked to determine if there are care responsibilities for own or partners' children.
- Care responsibilities are assumed to exist for all respondents' and spouses' or cohabiting partners' children up to the age of 14 who live inside the household. Countries may retrieve the corresponding information from the LFS core for routing in the module and determining CHCARRES. They do not need to ask Q1\_chcarres and they can start the module with Q2\_chcarres.

**Living inside or outside the household:** To determine if the (grand)child is living inside or outside the household, please refer to the population and private household definition (see guidelines in the section "General definitions" at the end of the explanatory notes of the core LFS <sup>(1)</sup>).

**Out of scope:** If childcare consists out of financial support only, this should not be included. Care responsibilities have to be a combination of two or more caring tasks (see "Definition" above). Caring for non-relatives (neighbours, friends), care as a job, for charity or done as a volunteer are also not included.

## Model question

The question Q1\_chcarres serves as an introductory question for the module. If the information about the own or partner's children can be retrieved from the LFS core then it is not needed to ask this question. People having their own or partner's children living inside their household are supposed to take care of them regularly.

In contrast, questions referring to own or partner's children living outside the household (Q2\_chcarres and Q3\_chcarres) should be asked to all household members aged 18-74.

Finally, questions referring to own or partner's grandchildren (Q4\_chcarres and Q5\_chcarres) should be asked to all household members not having children younger than 15 years living inside the household (Q1\_chcarres='No') and not regularly taking care of children younger than 15 years living outside the household (Q2\_chcarres='No' or Q3\_chcarres='No'). However, the question Q4\_chcarres can be imputed to 'No' for respondents aged less than 35 years under the condition that his/her partner is also aged less than

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<sup>(1)</sup> The last version of the explanatory notes for the core LFS are available at:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU\\_labour\\_force\\_survey\\_-\\_documentation](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_labour_force_survey_-_documentation)

35 years. If at least one of the two partners is 35 years old or more, then the questions referring to own or partner's grandchildren (Q4\_chcarres and Q5\_chcarres) should be asked to both partners because it can happen that only one of the two partners is having care responsibilities for the own or partner's grandchildren, the other partner having for example other activities.

FILTER: AGE = 18-74

**Q1\_chcarres**

*Do you or your partner have children younger than 15 years living inside this household? Please also consider the adopted, foster and stepchildren as well as the children for which you are the legal guardian.*

(1) Yes

(2) No

*Don't know / No answer*

**Q2\_chcarres**

→ **If Q1\_chcarres = 1:**

*Do you or your partner have **other** children younger than 15 years living outside this household?*

→ **If Q1\_chcarres = 2:**

*Do you or your partner have children younger than 15 years living outside this household?*

(1) Yes

(2) No

*Don't know / No answer*

**Q3\_chcarres**

→ **If Q2\_chcarres = 1:**

*Do you regularly take care of one or more of them, i.e. for at least some hours per week on average?*

(1) Yes

(2) No

*Don't know / No answer*

**Q4\_chcarres**

→ **If Q1\_chcarres = 2 and (Q2\_chcarres = 2 or Q3\_chcarres = 2):**

*Do you or your partner have grandchildren younger than 15 years living inside or outside this household?*

(1) Yes

(2) No

*Don't know / No answer*

**Q5\_chcarres**

→ **If Q4\_chcarres = 1:**

*Do you regularly take care of one or more of them, i.e. for at least some hours per week on average?*

(1) Yes

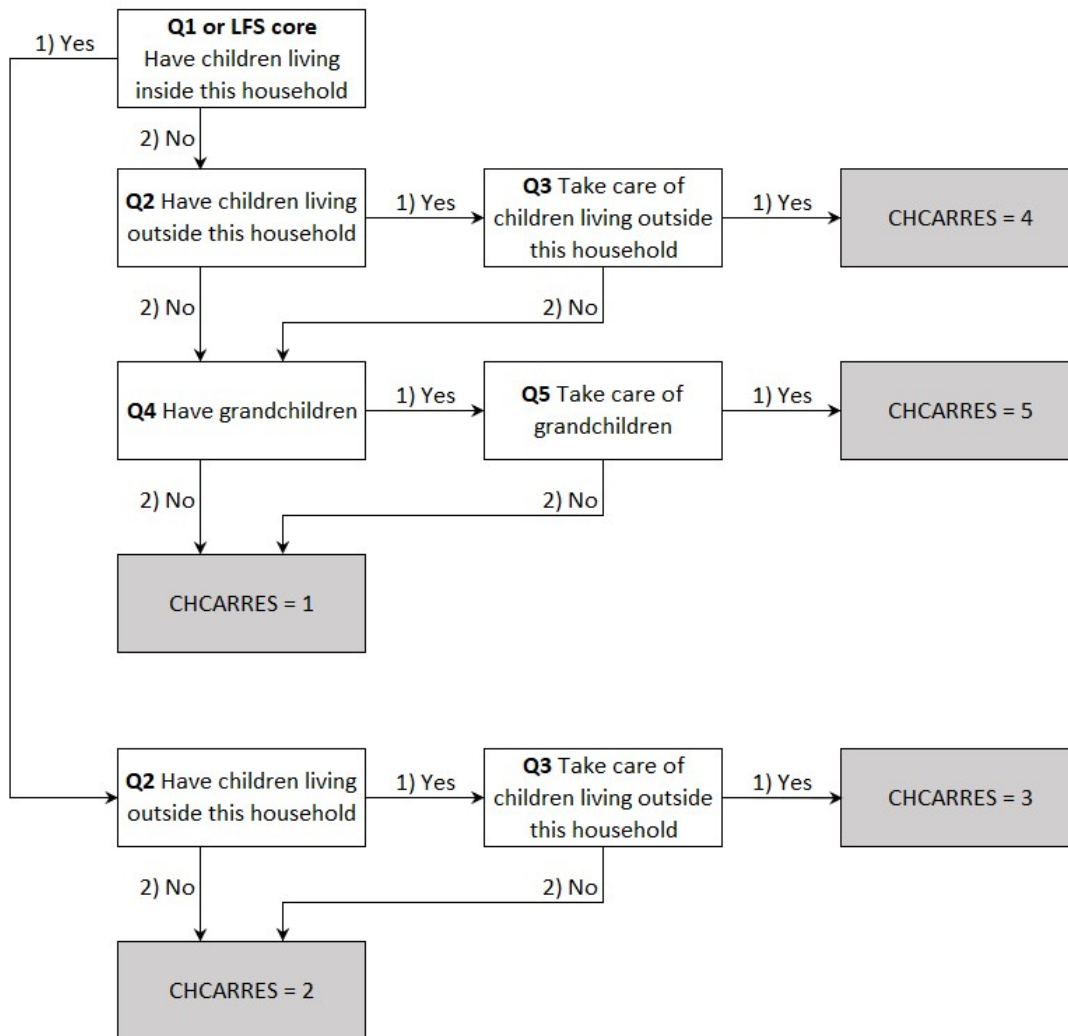
(2) No

*Don't know / No answer*

**Transcoding:**

<b>AGE</b>	<b>Q1 / LFS core</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q5</b>	<b>CHCARRES</b>
18 - 74	Q1 = 1 or LFS core – person or partner have children inside the household	2	-	-	-	2
		1	2, NA	-	-	2
		1	1	-	-	3
		NA	-	-	-	2
18 - 74	Q1 = 2 or LFS core – person or partner have not children inside the household	1	1	-	-	4
		1	2	1	1	5
		1	2	1	2	1
		1	2	2	-	1
		1	NA	-	-	Blank
		1	2	1	NA	Blank
		1	2	NA	-	Blank
		2	-	1	1	5
		2	-	1	2	1
		2	-	2	-	1
		2	-	1	NA	Blank
		2	-	NA	-	Blank
	NA	-	-	-	Blank	
	Q1 = NA	-	-	-	-	Blank
<18 or >74	-	-	-	-	-	9

Flowchart of CHCARRES.





## CHCARAGE

### Variable name

Age of youngest (grand)child being taken care of

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	328
Flow number	2

### Filter

CHCARRES = 3-5

### Filter labels

Persons who take care of at least one child living outside the household or one grandchild (living inside or outside the household)

### Codes or values

00-14	Age of the youngest (grand)child being cared of
Blank	Not stated
99	Not applicable

### Purpose

The variable aims to collect the age of the youngest child or grandchild a person takes care of.

This variable does not concern respondents' children living inside the household, in order to limit the burden on respondents. Information on the age of children living inside the household can indeed be retrieved from the core LFS. However, if the respondent only takes care of grandchildren, the age of the youngest grandchild living inside or outside the household, is collected (given the risk that the age of the grandchildren, who live in the same household as their grandparents, is not always known in the core LFS).

This variable can be combined with CHCARUSE to allow analysis on the use of childcare structure by age of the children. This is crucial from a policy point of view, as different age groups have different care needs. In the context of the Barcelona targets, the following thresholds are important: (1) the age of three years, and (2) the (nationally defined) mandatory school age.

### Definition

The age of the youngest (grand)child being taken care of is defined as the age, in completed years at the end of the reference week, of the own or partner's youngest child or grandchild (younger than 15 years) being taken care of. For own or partner's children, only those living outside the household should be considered, while for own or partner's grandchildren, both those living inside and outside the household should be taken into account.

See the "Definition" section of the variable CHCARRES.

### **Implementation guidelines**

If the respondent has care responsibilities for his/her own or partner's children, the age of the youngest child, that the respondent is taking care of, living outside the household should be collected.

If the respondent has no care responsibilities for his/her own or partner's children, but has some for his/her own or partner's grandchildren, then the age of the youngest grandchild, that the respondent is taking care of, living inside or outside the household should be collected.

The **reference date** relevant for the age calculation in the LFS is the end of the reference week.

See the "Implementation guidelines" section of the variable CHCARRES.

### **Model question**

FILTER: CHCARRES = 3-4

#### **Q1\_chcarage**

*What is the age of your or your partner's youngest child, living outside your household, you take care of?*

*00 ... 14 years*

*Don't know / No answer*

FILTER: CHCARRES = 5

#### **Q2\_chcarage**

*What is the age of your or your partner's youngest grandchild you take care of?*

*00 ... 14 years*

*Don't know / No answer*

## CHCARUSE

### Variable name

Use of childcare services

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	330
Flow number	3

### Filter

CHCARRES = 2-4

### Filter labels

Persons who take care of own or partner's children living inside or outside the household

### Codes or values

1	Yes, for all children
2	Yes, for some children
3	No
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

This variable aims to record whether some or all children, a respondent is taking care of, are also looked after by professional childcare services. This information is useful to assess if parents' participation in labour market depends on the use of such services.

Even though the variable includes no explicit reference, it clearly focusses on the formal and professional services that are used by employed persons in order to combine employment and childcare responsibilities.

To determine the exact influence of childcare responsibilities on employment, it is preferable to identify the care situation for every child. However, as the number of variables in the module is limited, the so-called "at least one care intensive child"-approach is used as a proxy. With this approach, it is assumed that if one child is not receiving any professional childcare, this child would demand significantly more care from its parents, and this will consequently limit the parents' employment possibilities. This approach only requires to distinguish whether professional childcare services are used for all, for some or for none of the children.

### Definition

The variable refers to the use of professional childcare services for some or all children (younger than 15 years).

**Professional childcare services** are defined as all forms of care organised by private or public structures like the so-called centre-based pre-schools, nursery schools (which normally are assigned to ISCED level 0), day care centres and crèches, kindergartens or afterschool centres. Also included is organised family care (e.g. au pair) or care by professional childminders arranged with an intermediate service or directly employed by the family.

The care can take place in the household, at the carer's home or at a facility. Organised services are included irrespective of direct payments by the parents (could e.g. be subsidised by the state or the employer). Childminders, who are directly appointed by the parents, must be paid to be seen as a professional service and counted for this variable.

Professional means that the childminder is undertaking his/her job as a real profession (with an own registered business), and not as side-activity that provides some extra money.

The variable only refers to services that are received on a regular basis.

**Reference period:** The question relates to the normal and current situation. School holidays or singular situations should not be considered. It should be regular and can also be alternating like every second week. A minimum threshold is difficult to define because the use can heavily depend on the care responsibilities and employment characteristics of the respondent.

### Implementation guidelines

The variable refers to professional and formal childcare services that are used for own and/or partner's children living in- and outside the household up to the age of 14.

If the child is a pupil and if the school provides extra supervision outside regular school hours, this should be also considered. On the other hand, classes in the afternoon, e.g. tutoring, should not be considered as childcare services.

The use of childcare services should be counted no matter if it takes place on a part-time or full-time basis, as long as it is relevant for labour market participation.

If the child lives outside the household and a professional childcare service is organised by the other parent living outside the household, this should also count in this variable.

**Outside scope:** Other household members, relatives, friends or neighbours who look after children without the professional aspect, are *informal care* and should not be counted as professional childcare services. This also applies to occasional caring by babysitters, even if there is a payment. If children join sport clubs/lessons, language courses or comparable activities, this should not be considered as childcare services. Leisure activities and school-related activities, such as school trips, are also outside the scope of this variable.

## Model question

FILTER: CHCARRES = 2-4

### Q1\_chcaruse

*Do you normally use childcare services, such as kindergartens, crèches, pre-schools, after school centres or professional childminders?*

- (1) Yes, for all children*
- (2) Yes, but not for all children*
- (3) No*
- Don't know / No answer*

## CHCAROBS

### Variable name

Main reason for not using childcare services

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	331
Flow number	4

### Filter

CHCARUSE = 2, 3

### Filter labels

Persons using professional childcare services for none or only some of the children

### Codes or values

1	No service accessible or vacant
2	Cost
3	Quality or other service-related obstacle
4	Preference to arrange care alone or with partner
5	Preference to arrange care with further informal support
6	Children take care of themselves
7	Other (personal) reasons
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

This variable identifies the main reason why professional childcare services are not used or only used for some children that live in-or outside the household. The variable aims to catch the main reason for not using (more) professional childcare. A large number of parents do not demand more care services as they have organised care in another way that fits their needs, e.g. by the organisation of informal care support. Another possibility is that parents do not need additional help in caring for their children, since the latter are already old enough to take care of themselves.

The variable can provide policymakers insight in possible improvements needed to help parents to balance their work and family life in an even more efficient way. It can reveal the main issues (i.e. the services availability, cost or quality) parents face when looking for childcare services. For parents who do not face any problem, it can give a better understanding in how they have organised the childcare.

### Definition

The variable collects the main reason for not using (more) childcare services for own or partner's children. For the definition of "professional childcare services", please see CHCARUSE.

As regards the reference period, the variable also refers to the normal and current situation.

### **Implementation guidelines**

As the variable collects the main reason for not using (more) professional childcare services, the respondent must refer to the most important reason, even if there may be a combination of different reasons.

If professional childcare services are used for some but not all children, the answer of the respondent should refer to the child(ren) for whom no professional care is used.

If there are several children in a household who are not involved in professional care, and that the main childcare problem differs depending on the child (for example, there is no vacancy available in crèches for the youngest child, and the professional care for the older child is too expensive), the respondent should answer what he/she perceives as the most important reason or main limitation in not using professional childcare.

**Category 1 “No service accessible/vacant:** This code should be used when there is no service available in the perimeter of the household or when existing services have no vacancies. It might also be that a child has no access to the existing services because he/she is not eligible to use the service (e.g. child is too young, parents' income is too high or other social criteria, the child must belong to a certain confession, etc.). The relevant perimeter of a household depends on the personal assessment and possibilities of the respondent.

**Category 2 “Cost”:** This category refers to the situation where the respondent considers the costs of the childcare services as the main obstacle for not using them. It includes cases where the household cannot afford the fees, or where the direct and/or indirect costs (e.g. transport, meals or special clothing) are considered as disproportionately high.

**Category 3 “Quality or other service-related obstacle”:** This modality relates to the qualification of the personnel, the capability to serve particular care needs or the state of the facilities/building. Available services could have a specific confessional or pedagogical orientation (e.g. Montessori, Waldorf) that may not fit the household's preferences. If care services cannot be used because opening hours do not fit the needs of the household, this should also be counted in this category. For national purposes, countries can collect the “opening hours” reason as a distinct category.

**Category 4 “Preference to arrange care alone or with partner”:** If a household currently does not want or need (additional) professional care services, independent of the characteristics of the offer, the respondent should choose this category. It applies to couples that found their arrangement to take care of their children by sharing care responsibilities. The same applies to single parents who manage the care responsibilities on their own. It should be clear that this answer modality reflects the choice of the parent(s)/caregiver(s), i.e. it is the preference of the respondent (or of his/her partner) to arrange the care alone or with the partner. Is the respondent or his/her partner is jobless and is taking care of the child(ren), this category 4 applies.

**Category 5 “Preference to arrange care with further informal support”:** This code covers situations where the parents use additional informal care, such as grandparents, other relatives or friends/acquaintances. It should be clear that this answer modality reflects the choice of the parent(s)/caregiver(s), i.e. it is the preference of the respondent (or of his/her partner) to arrange the care with further informal support.

**Category 6 “Children take care of themselves”:** This modality refers to children who can already take

care of themselves. It also includes siblings that take care of each other, i.e. older sister who is taking care of younger brother.

**Category 7 “Other (personal) reasons”:** All other reasons that persons have for not wanting or needing professional care services should be including in this category.

**Optional rules:**

- Countries are allowed to collect more than one reason/obstacle but only the main one should be reported to Eurostat.
- Countries are free to use an additional question to determine the exact reason when the respondent chooses the category 7 “Other (personal) reasons”.
- Countries are also allowed to split any code into several items in order to meet specific national needs.
- If both partners are interviewed, countries are allowed to collect this variable for only one partner and to impute the answer given by one partner to the other partner.

**Model question**

FILTER: CHCARUSE = 2, 3

**OPTION A, preferred by Eurostat:**

**Q1A\_chcarobs**

*What is the main reason that you do not use professional childcare services (for at least some of your children)?*

- (1) There is no care service nearby or service is fully booked*
  - (2) They are too expensive*
  - (3) The quality of the service or other service-related issues*
  - (4) There is no need or interest*
- Don't know / No answer*

**Q2A\_chcarobs**

→ **If Q1A\_chcarobs = 4:**

*Why?*

- (1) Preference to arrange care alone or together with partner*
  - (2) Preference to arrange care with the support of grandparents or others*
  - (3) The children can take care of themselves*
  - (4) Other (personal) reasons*
- Don't know / No answer*



**OPTION B:****Q1B\_chcarobs**

*What is the main reason that you do not use professional childcare services (for at least some of your children)?*

- (1) There is no care service nearby or service is fully booked*
  - (2) They are too expensive*
  - (3) The quality of the service or other service-related issues*
  - (4) Preference to arrange care alone or together with partner*
  - (5) Preference to arrange care with the support of grandparents or others*
  - (6) The children can take care of themselves*
  - (7) Other (personal) reasons*
- Don't know / No answer*

**Transcoding:**

<b>CHCARUSE</b>	<b>Q1A</b>	<b>Q2A</b>	<b>Q1B</b>	<b>ELCARRES</b>
<b>OPTION A</b>				
2, 3	1	-	-	1
2, 3	2	-	-	2
2, 3	3	-	-	3
2, 3	4	1	-	4
2, 3	4	2	-	5
2, 3	4	3	-	6
2, 3	4	4	-	7
2, 3	4	NA	-	Blank
2, 3	NA	-	-	Blank
<b>OPTION B</b>				
2, 3	-	-	1	1
2, 3	-	-	2	2
2, 3	-	-	3	3
2, 3	-	-	4	4
2, 3	-	-	5	5
2, 3	-	-	6	6
2, 3	-	-	7	7
2, 3	-	-	NA	Blank
1, 9, Blank	-	-	-	9

## ELCARRES

### Variable name

Existence of regular care responsibilities for relatives aged 15 years and more who are ill, frail or with disabilities

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	332
Flow number	5

### Filter

18 <= AGE <= 74

### Filter labels

Everybody in the target population aged 18 to 74 years

### Codes or values

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 1     | No care responsibilities for partner or other relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities                             |
| 2     | Care only for the partner who is ill, frail or with disabilities, living inside the household                               |
| 3     | Care only for the partner who is ill, frail or with disabilities, living outside the household                              |
| 4     | Care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities, all living inside the household                                 |
| 5     | Care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities, at least one living inside and one living outside the household |
| 6     | Care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities, all living outside the household                                |
| Blank | Not stated  |
| 9     | Not applicable  |

### Purpose

The purpose of the module is to assess to what degree work and care responsibilities limit each other. In this context, the variable aims to provide comprehensive information of all existing care responsibilities for relatives (including the partner), aged 15 years and more, who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities.

The variable also aims to collect information on whether the partner and/or other relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities live inside and/or outside the household. This information is crucial for more in-depth analysis as regards the effect on employment and the need for additional structures.

Number of persons who take care or have to take care of relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities is expected to grow in the coming years, since family members are expected to be more and more obliged to take care of their relatives.

## Definition

The variable refers to the care responsibilities for partner who is ill, frail and/or with disabilities and/or for relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities. These care responsibilities are unpaid and reflect the provision of care or assistance to the partner and/or relatives aged 15 years and older.

**Care responsibilities** for relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (including the partner) can consist out of preparing meals, shopping for groceries or personal items, performing light or heavy housework, driving them to medical appointments, as well as support during bathing, dressing, eating, getting in and out of bed or a chair, or support in administrative or budgetary matters. It also involves keeping company by e.g. reading a book, playing games or having a walk with the person who receives the care or assistance.

The provision of care or assistance should be on a regular basis, i.e. at least twice a month, for at least some hours per month. Nevertheless, this includes care provided whatever the day in the week; care provided on Saturdays and Sundays should also be taken into account. The particular case of care provided on one full weekend (Saturday and Sunday) every month is also to be considered.

The **reference period** for this variable is the current situation/the reference week. "Current situation" means the care responsibilities over the last one to three months. This is operationalised as 'the last four (to twelve) weeks preceding the end of the reference week'.

The definition of partner is the same as for the variable CHCARRES. A **partner** is defined according to the legal or de facto partnership/relationship status. Accordingly, it comprises the following two subgroups:

- A **husband/wife/civil partner/spouse** is identified according to the legal marital status, i.e. the (legal) conjugal status of each individual in relation to the marriage laws (or customs) of the country (i.e. de jure status), including civil partners. Members of same sex couples can be "husband/wife/civil partner" if the marriage laws (or customs) of the country foresee this.
- **Partner/cohabitee** is identified according to the de facto relationship, i.e. the partnership/relationship status of each individual in terms of his or her actual living arrangements within the household.

A **person who is ill, frail and/or with disabilities** corresponds to someone experiencing consequences because of age, chronic health condition(s) and/or infirmity(ies). He/she benefits from and/or is dependent on provision of care and/or assistance.

Children from the age of 15 who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (including handicapped children) should be counted as '**relatives**' in need of care.

ELCARRES categories from 4 to 6 may include partner among relatives. Cases in which the respondents take care of both their partner and other relatives (Q1\_elcarres = 4) should be transcoded into ELCARRES values from 4 to 6, depending on the place where the persons being taken care of live, i.e. inside the household, at least one living inside and one living outside the household or all living outside the household.

### Implementation guidelines

The **reference period** is the current situation, i.e. the reference week. When a respondent has no care responsibilities anymore in the reference week, due to for example the recent death of the relative, he/she had taken care of, the respondent should answer “No care responsibilities” (code 1).

**Living inside/outside of household:** To determine if the partner or relative is living inside or outside the household, please refer to the population and private household definition (see guidelines in the section “General definitions” at the end of the explanatory notes of the core LFS <sup>(2)</sup>).

Care responsibilities for ex-partners, friends and neighbours, not being relatives, should not be considered.

### Model question

FILTER: AGE = 18-74

#### Q1\_elcarres

*Do you regularly take care of one or more relatives, including your partner and other family members, aged 15 years or over, who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities?*

- (1) No care responsibilities*
- (2) Yes, partner only*
- (3) Yes, relatives (including family members) but not the partner*
- (4) Yes, partner and other relatives (including family members)*
- No answer/Don't know*

#### Q2\_elcarres

→ If Q1\_elcarres = 2

*Is your partner living inside or outside this household?*

- (1) Inside*
- (2) Outside*
- Don't know / No answer*

#### Q3\_elcarres

→ If Q1\_elcarres = 3

*Are the relatives (including family members), you take care of, living inside or outside this household?*

- (1) All inside this household*
- (2) All outside this household*
- (3) At least one inside this household and one outside this household*
- Don't know / No answer*

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<sup>(2)</sup> The last version of the explanatory notes for the core LFS are available at:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU\\_labour\\_force\\_survey\\_-\\_documentation](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=EU_labour_force_survey_-_documentation)

**Q4\_elcarres**

→ If Q1\_elcarres = 4

Are your partner and other relatives (including family members), you take care of, living inside or outside your household?

(1) All inside this household

(2) All outside this household

(3) At least one inside this household and one outside this household

Don't know / No answer

**Transcoding:**

AGE	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	ELCARRES
18-74	1	-	-	-	1
18-74	2	1	-	-	2
18-74	2	2	-	-	3
18-74	2	NA	-	-	Blank
18-74	3	-	1	-	4
18-74	3	-	2	-	6
18-74	3	-	3	-	5
18-74	3	-	NA	-	Blank
18-74	4	-	-	1	4
18-74	4	-	-	2	6
18-74	4	-	-	3	5
18-74	4	-	-	NA	Blank
18-74	NA	-	-	-	Blank
<18 or >74	-	-	-	-	9

## ELCARINT

### Variable name

Intensity of care for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	333
Flow number	6

### Filter

ELCARRES = 2-6

### Filter labels

Persons with care responsibilities for relatives who are ill, frail or with disabilities

### Codes or values

1	Less than 5 hours per week
2	5 hours to less than 10 hours per week
3	10 hours to less than 20 hours per week
4	20 hours to less than 30 hours per week
5	30 hours to less than 40 hours per week
6	40 hours per week or more
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

The aim of this variable is to assess the average number of hours people spent on care responsibilities for all relatives, aged 15 years and older, including the partner, who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities. The number of hours includes travelling time.

The number of hours people spent on these care responsibilities can have a significant impact on the labour market participation and the maximum possible working hours. Spending on average more than 10, 20, 30 or 40 hours per week on care activities can have a significant impact on the possibilities to have a full-time or part-time job.

### Definition

The variable refers to the average number of hours per week spent on care responsibilities for all relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (including partner) aged 15 years and more.

This variable records the average number of hours per week spent on care responsibilities,

During the last four (to twelve) weeks preceding the end of the reference week'. People with care responsibilities varying from one week to another should be asked about their average time over the last four to twelve weeks.

All days in the week should be considered for the number of hours per week, even Saturdays and Sundays.

The number of hours spent on care responsibilities for partner or relatives living outside the household should also include the travelling time between the two places of residence.

For the definition of care responsibilities for relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (including partner), please see ELCARRES.

For this variable, as for ELCARRES, children from the age of 15 who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (including handicapped children) should be counted as '**relatives**' in need of care.

Please note that the rounded values (10 hours, 20 hours, etc.) are each time included in the upper class. This rule is in line with the harmonised approach for the EU-LFS variables under the IESS Regulations.

### **Implementation guidelines**

If the number of hours per week spent on the care responsibilities varies greatly from one month to another, an average number of hours per week estimated over 6 months preceding the end of the reference week can be taken.

If the respondent takes care of several relatives (including or not the partner and other family members), he/she should consider the total (sum) of the hours of care responsibilities for all relatives.

### **Model question**

FILTER: ELCARRES = 2-6

#### **Q1\_elcarint**

→ If Q1\_elcarres = 2

*On average, how many hours per week do you spend on caring for your partner?*

→ If Q1\_elcarres = 3

*On average, how many hours per week do you spend on caring for your relatives (including family members) aged 15 years and more?*

→ **If Q1\_elcarres = 4**

*On average, how many hours per week do you spend on caring for your partner and other relatives (including family members) aged 15 years and more?*

**Answer categories**

- (1) Less than 5 hours per week*
  - (2) 5 hours to less than 10 hours per week*
  - (3) 10 hours to less than 20 hours per week*
  - (4) 20 hours to less than 30 hours per week*
  - (5) 30 hours to less than 40 hours per week*
  - (6) 40 hours per week or more*
- Don't know / No answer*



## CAREFFEM

### Variable name

Effect of care responsibilities on employment

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	334
Flow number	7

### Filter

(CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1

### Filter labels

Persons in employment with care responsibilities for own or partner's (grand)children or for relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities

### Codes or values

1	Changed job or employer
2	Currently absent from work, including leave
3	Currently reduced working time, including part-time or less working hours
4	Currently working remotely on a regular basis
5	Currently adjusted work schedule, without changing working time
6	Currently working on less demanding tasks in job
7	Other work-related adjustments
8	No work-related adjustments
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

The purpose of the variable is to give information on the main work-related adjustments, persons who are currently in employment, have made to facilitate their care responsibilities. The variable is addressed to those who care for own or partner's children or grandchildren (aged younger than 15) and/or for partner/relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities (aged 15 years and more). The variable aims to assess whether the care responsibilities have affected the respondent's employment.

### Definition

The variable reflects the main work-related adjustment employed persons have made to facilitate care responsibilities.

The **reference period** for this variable is the reference week. The change in employment due to care

responsibilities can have taken place some time ago but the change should still apply. In particular, the change of job or employer could have happened several years ago.

### **Implementation guidelines**

It is recommended to implement the question in a way that all answer categories are visible to the respondent at once. For example, the answer categories should be read out loud completely before the respondent answers.

**Category 1 “Changed job or employer”:** This category should be chosen when the respondent changed job or employer in order to facilitate care responsibilities. The reason can be that it was not possible to reduce working hours or tasks in the previous job, or that the new job offers more working time flexibility or is located more suitably.

**Category 2 “Currently absent from work, including leave”:** This category refers to the situation where the respondent is absent from work for a defined or (still) undefined period of time. This absence can be a paid or unpaid leave. Examples are special leave, family leave (including maternity or parental leave), annual leave to take care of relatives or an unpaid career break. It can also be a combination of these absences. However, the absence is expected to be temporary, even if the length can be (still) unknown, and the respondent is expected to return to his/her job after the absence.

**Category 3 “Currently reduced working time, including part-time or less working hours”:** This category corresponds to the situation where the respondent decided, due to care responsibilities, to reduce his/her working time in one or all of his/her jobs. Examples are change from full-time to part-time job or simply change to less working hours.

**Category 4 “Currently working remotely on a regular basis”:** This category includes working arrangements allowing the work to be done at home, at the place where the care is provided or in another place. The terms “on a regular basis” means that the work is done remotely at least four days a month (on average once a week).

**Category 5 “Currently adjusted work schedule, without changing working time”:** This category is meant for respondents that have not changed working time due to care responsibilities, but continue their job(s) with the same total number of working hours using alternative working schedules that are convenient to reconcile their job(s) with their care responsibilities. Flexitime is included here: it can be that the respondent starts later in the morning and leave work later (or starts earlier in the morning and leave work earlier) due to care responsibilities. The respondent can also accumulate hours on some days in a week or in a month, and take days off when necessary to reconcile work and care duties.

**Category 6 “Currently working on less demanding tasks in job”:** This category reflects the situation where the respondent has received easier tasks in his/her job(s) in order to reconcile work with care responsibilities.

**Category 7 “Other work-related adjustments”:** This category includes any *work-related* adjustment not included in the previous categories (answer categories 1 to 6). Adjustments which are not related to work should not be considered in this category.

**Category 8 “No work-related adjustments”:** This category is for respondents that have not made any work-related adjustment to reconcile work with care responsibilities. Respondents who have made adjustments which are not related to work, for example private-related adjustments, should be included in this category, as well as respondents who have made no adjustments at all.

**Optional rules:**

- Countries are allowed to collect more than one adjustment but only the main one should be reported to Eurostat.
- Countries are free to use an additional question to determine the exact adjustment when the respondent chooses the category 7 “Other work-related adjustments”.
- Countries can impute CAREFFEM = 2 “Currently absent from work, including leave” for people having ABSREAS = 4 “Maternity or paternity leave” or 6 “Parental leave”.

**Model question**

FILTER: (CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1

**Q1\_careffem**

*What is the main work-related adjustment you have made to facilitate your care responsibilities?*

- (1) *Changed job or employer*
  - (2) *Currently absent from work, including leave*
  - (3) *Currently reduced working time, including part-time or less working hours*
  - (4) *Currently working remotely on a regular basis*
  - (5) *Currently adjusted work schedule, without changing working time*
  - (6) *Currently working on less demanding tasks in the job*
  - (7) *Made another work-related adjustment*
  - (8) *Made no work-related adjustments*
- Don't know / No answer*

## WORKOBS

### Variable name

Main obstacle at work to reconcile work and family life

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	335
Flow number	8

### Filter

(CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1

### Filter labels

Persons in employment with care responsibilities for own or partner's (grand)children or for relatives who are ill, frail and/or with disabilities

### Codes or values

1	Long working hours
2	Unpredictable or difficult work schedules
3	Demanding or exhausting job
4	Long commute
5	Other work-related obstacles
6	No work-related obstacles
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

This variable aims to assess whether the care responsibilities are made difficult due to the characteristics of the main job. Respondents should refer to the most problematic characteristic of the main job. The variable aims to shed light on the work-related side of reconciliation, and it complements the information coming from CAREFFEM and LEAVREAS (the latter variable is from the EU-LFS core). While CAREFFEM provides information about the effect of the care responsibilities on the current employment, WORKOBS shows whether the main job is experienced as a problem for properly fulfilling care responsibilities. It can also reveal whether persons who use or can use flexible work arrangements, report less problems.

### Definition

The variable refers to the main job characteristic making the reconciliation of work and family life difficult.

The **reference period** for this variable is the reference week.

### Implementation guidelines

It is recommended to implement the question in a way that all answer categories are visible to the respondent at once. For example, the answer categories should be read out loud completely before the respondent answers. In this way, it will be clear for the respondent what kind of obstacles are meant.

The variable should reflect the self-perception of respondents.

If the respondent sees several characteristics of the main job being problematic, he or she should choose the one having the most negative consequences.

**Category 1 “Long working hours”:** This category can be chosen by respondents who have long working days. It can include for example people working in the catering sector (waiters, bartenders, cooks, etc.).

**Category 2 “Unpredictable or difficult work schedules”:** This category refers to those who cannot (or can only partly) influence their work schedule. Here one should think of atypical working hours, like shift work, working during the evening or the weekend and so on.

**Category 3 “Demanding or exhausting job”:** Examples for this category are working under continues stressful circumstances, working a lot in overtime, having too many responsibilities, working under high demand with too little resources, etc.

**Category 4 “Long commute”:** When someone has a long commuting time (travelling back and forth between office and home, i.e. by car, public transport etc.), he/she can choose this category.

**Category 5 “Other work-related obstacles”:** This category includes all other work-related obstacles that are not included in the previous codes. For example, respondents who have a non-fixed working place and see that as the main obstacle to reconcile work and family life should be encoded in this category.

**Category 6 “No work-related obstacles”:** This code should be used when a respondent experiences no work-related obstacle or no obstacle at all.

**Optional rules:**

- Countries are allowed to collect more than one difficulty/obstacle but only the main one should be reported to Eurostat.
- Countries are free to use an additional question to determine the exact difficulty/obstacle when the respondent chooses the category 5 “Other work-related obstacles”.

**Model question**

FILTER: (CHCARRES = 2-5 OR ELCARRES = 2-6) AND EMPSTAT = 1

**Q1\_workobs**

*What is the main difficulty that you encounter to balance your job with your care responsibilities?*

- (1) *Long working hours*
- (2) *Unpredictable or difficult work schedules*
- (3) *Demanding or exhausting job*
- (4) *Long commute*
- (5) *Another work-related obstacle*
- (6) *No work-related obstacle*  
*Don't know / No answer*

## CHNUMBER

### Variable name

Number of own children raised

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	336
Flow number	9

### Filter

18 <= AGE <= 54

### Filter labels

Everybody in the target population aged 18 to 54 years

### Codes or values

00-98	Number of own children raised
Blank	Not stated
99	Not applicable

### Purpose

The number of children respondents have raised in the overall course of their lives, and/or are currently raising, can bring very useful information when crossed with information on the (length of) parental leave. This will enhance the policy interest of the variables on parental leave.

### Definition

The variable records the number of own children that the respondent has raised and/or are currently raising.

“Own children” means natural, adopted, foster and/or stepchildren. Legally seen, foster children are no relatives, but taking over care responsibilities for them is binding and has a significant effect. If grandparents are *legal guardians* of their grandchildren, the grandchildren should also be considered as “own children”. The same applies for siblings, aunts/uncles and godfathers/godmothers being *legal guardians* of children.

Raising a child should be understood as to rear, to care for, to bring up a child.

As for the other variables, children are defined as persons up to the age of 14 years (included).

See the “Definition” section of the variable CHCARRES for the childcare responsibilities.

### Implementation guidelines

The filter is restricted to those who are 18-54 in order to prevent recall issues for older respondents.

The variable can be highly sensitive, for example, a respondent's child can have passed away at young age. Countries should ask this question carefully.

**Reference period:** Persons should reflect their overall course of life, independently of their ILO status in the past/at present.

**Outside scope:** Care for grandchildren is excluded from this variable.

### Model question

This question served as an introductory question for the two following variables PARLEAV and PARLENG. In addition, very useful information is brought by this variable, e.g. when crossed with the labour force status and the income variable INCGROSS.

FILTER: AGE = 18-54

### Q1\_chnumber

*How many children have you raised? Please also include children that you are still taking care of. However, please only consider your own children, including children for which you are the legal guardian (excluding partner's children who are not yours).*

*00 ... 98*

*Don't know / No answer*

## PARLEAV

### Variable name

Use of family leave

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	338
Flow number	10

### Filter

CHNUMBER = 01-98 AND (EMPSTAT = 1 or EXISTPR = 2 or 3)

### Filter labels

People aged 18 to 54 years currently or previously in employment who raised at least one own child in the life course

### Codes or values

- 1 Only maternity/paternity leave
- 2 Only parental leave
- 3 Combination of family leaves
- 4 No family leaves
- Blank Not stated
- 9 Not applicable

### Purpose

This variable provides information on whether parents have taken parental leave and how they have combined it with maternity or paternity leave respectively. It reflects how frequently both forms of family leave are taken and if either partners or couples take advantage of it. It can also help to assess if family leaves influence the length of the interruption and the current labour market situation of the respondent.

Information on maternity/paternity is collected to complement the information on parental leave. In many countries, it is more than a mere protection of mother and child around the birth. Thus, there may be also complementary relations between maternity/paternity and parental leave.

### Definition

The variable records whether the respondent has taken maternity/paternity leave or parental leave.

“Own children” means natural, adopted, foster and/or stepchildren. Legally seen, foster children are no relatives, but taking over care responsibilities for them is binding and has a significant effect. If grandparents are *legal guardians* of their grandchildren, the grandchildren should also be considered as “own children”. The same applies for siblings, aunts/uncles and godfathers/godmothers being *legal*



*guardians* of children.

As for the other variables, children are defined as persons up to the age of 14 years (included).

**Parental leave** can be taken either by the mother or the father and is the interruption of work to bring up or look after a child of young age (which should correspond to the statutory period provided by the national legislation or by the contract). It reflects those persons on statutory parental leave (legal or contractual) but also covers self-employed people.

According to the national context, special leave to take care of a child of young age ("care leave") can also be considered as parental leave.

Adoption leave is also to be taken into account. Depending on the national context, adoption leave can be considered as maternity/paternity leave or parental leave.

The respondent should be in employment (employee, self-employed or family worker) at the beginning of the period of absence. If the parental leave period directly follows another period of absence, the status at the beginning of the overall period should be considered. If at the beginning of the period of leave the respondent was not in employment, the absence cannot be considered as parental leave.

### **Implementation guidelines**

This question is only asked to respondents who have indicated that they have had one or more children during their course of life and who are currently/previously employed.

The variable refers to the whole career of the respondent.

The difference between the maternity/paternity leave and the parental leave lies in the fact that the maternity/paternity leave is taken directly after the birth. Also, the length of the maternity/paternity leave is generally shorter than the length of the parental leave. Finally, the maternity/paternity leave is paid while this is not always the case for the parental leave.

Countries are invited to add national examples of the different types of parental, maternity and paternity leaves, in order to clarify the concepts for the respondents.

If nationally there is a grey area between maternity/paternity leave and parental leave, the fact that the maternity/paternity leave is taken directly after the birth and is paid should be taken as criteria for the maternity/paternity leave.

**Category 3 "Combination of family leaves"** refers to the situation where the respondent has taken during his/her whole career at least one maternity/paternity leave and at least one parental leave.

### **Model question**

FILTER: CHNUMBER = 01-98 AND EMPSTAT = 1

#### **Q1\_parleav**

*Since the beginning of your career, have you taken parental or maternity/paternity leave, considering all your own children?*

- (1) *Only used maternity/paternity leave (taken directly after the birth)*
- (2) *Only used parental leave*
- (3) *Used a combination of both*
- (4) *Neither of these*

*Don't know / No answer*

FILTER: CHNUMBER = 01-98 AND EXISTPR = 2 or 3

**Q1\_parleav**

*While working, have you taken parental or maternity/paternity leave, considering all your own children?*

- (1) Only used maternity/paternity leave (taken directly after the birth)*
- (2) Only used parental leave*
- (3) Used a combination of both*
- (4) Neither of these*

*Don't know / No answer*

## PARLENG

### Variable name

Length of used family leave

### Specifications

Topic	Labour market participation
Detailed topic	Reconciliation of work and family life
Standardisation	LFS variable
Periodicity	Eight-yearly
Minimum set of variables	No
Variable type	Collected
Column	339
Flow number	11

### Filter

PARLEAV = 1-3

### Filter labels

Persons aged 18 to 54 years who have taken up family leave

### Codes or values

1	Up to 1 month
2	More than 1 month up to 2 months
3	More than 2 months up to 6 months
4	More than 6 months up to a year
5	More than 1 year up to 3 years
6	More than 3 years up to 5 years
7	More than 5 years
Blank	Not stated
9	Not applicable

### Purpose

The variable aims to measure the overall length of maternity/paternity and parental leaves of respondents. Respondents should provide the sum of the durations of **all** interruptions related to maternity/paternity and parental leaves. The goal is not to get a precise length but an approximation.

The variable helps to assess the impact of care responsibilities on labour market participation as it measures how long a person stays away from work due to maternity/paternity and parental leaves. It can be expected that longer interruptions have a stronger, presumably negative impact on the labour market participation. Comparative analysis by gender, cohort, educational attainment or country can reveal the differing importance of such factors.

The two-month threshold is crucial in the context of the “Directive on work-life balance for parents and carers”, where an individual right to 4 months of parental leave (from which 2 months are non-transferable

between the parents and are paid) is mentioned <sup>(3)</sup>. On the other hand, the one-month threshold is important for the fathers who often have shorter family leave (paternity and parental leave).

### Definition

The variable records the total length of used parental or maternity/paternity leave in the life course.

See the subsection “Definition” of the variable PARLEAV.

### Implementation guidelines

Respondents should provide the sum of the durations of **all** interruptions related to maternity/paternity and parental leaves taken in the course of their life, i.e. for all their own children and for their whole career, as for the variable PARLEAV.

If the respondent has not returned to work in the reference week, the total duration until then should be counted.

### Model question

FILTER: PARLEAV = 1-3

#### Q1\_parleng

*Since the beginning of your career and considering all your own children, what is the total length of your work interruptions related to maternity/paternity and parental leaves?*

- (1) Up to 1 month*
  - (2) More than 1 month up to 2 months*
  - (3) More than 2 months up to 6 months*
  - (4) More than 6 months up to a year*
  - (5) More than 1 year up to 3 years*
  - (6) More than 3 years up to 5 years*
  - (7) More than 5 years*
- Don't know / No answer*

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<sup>(3)</sup> See <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2019/06/13/better-work-life-balance-for-parents-and-carers-in-the-eu-council-adopts-new-rules/>

## Consistency checks

In addition to the usual checks for entry filter and range of values / intervals, Eurostat is going to implement on the "Reconciliation of work and family life" micro-data the following checks for consistency between variables:

### Additional derived variables:

For the implementation of the consistency checks, three extra / derived variables are used:

1. Variable `Number_of_children_less_than_15` which is defined as:

The number of children less than 15 years old that a person has (and are living with him/her in the household). This variable is derived from variables `AGE`, `HHFATH` and `HHMOTH` of the core LFS. For example, we have a household with `HHNUM = 111111` and in that household we have the person with `HHSEQNUM = 01`. If, in this household, there are 2 persons aged less than 15 years old, who report in variable `HHFATH` the code 01, then the value of variable `Number_of_children_less_than_15` (for person 01) is equal to 2.

2. Variable `Number_of_children_of_less_than_7` which is defined as:

The number of children less than 7 years old that a person has (and are living with him/her in the household). This variable is again derived from variables `AGE`, `HHFATH` and `HHMOTH` of the core LFS, in exactly the same way as the previous one, but with the age limit of less than 7.

3. Variable `Number_of_children_of_any_age` which is defined as:

The number of children (of any age) that a person has (and are living with him/her in the household). This variable is again derived from variables `AGE`, `HHFATH` and `HHMOTH` of the core LFS, in exactly the same way as the previous one, but without the limitation on age.

### Additional checks:

1. If `Number_of_children_less_than_15 = 0` and `CHCARRES = 2, 3` -> Has no children in the household according to the information provided in core LFS, but in `CHCARRES` reports caring for own children in the household.

The logic of this "soft" check is that while in `HHFATH` (or `HHMOTH`) there is no reference to that person, the answer code in variable `CHCARRES` indicates that person has care responsibilities for own children living in the household.

2. If `Number_of_children_less_than_15 > 0` and `CHCARRES = 1, 4, 5` -> Has child(ren) in the household according to the information provided in core LFS, but in `CHCARRES` reports no care responsibilities of own children.

The logic of this "soft" check is that there is a member of the household (aged less than 15) that reports (in `HHFATH` or `HHMOTH`) that the respondent is his father (or mother), but the answer code in variable `CHCARRES` indicates that the respondent has no care responsibilities for own children living in the household – this is wrong since a person who has children less than 15 years old in his/her household has by default care responsibilities.

3. If SEEKREAS = 4 and CHCARRES = 1 and ELCARRES = 1 -> Main reason for not searching for employment is care responsibilities, but in the module has no care responsibilities.
4. If WANTREAS = 3 and CHCARRES = 1 and ELCARRES = 1 -> Main reason for not wanting to work is care responsibilities, but in the module has no care responsibilities.
5. If AVAIREAS = 3 and CHCARRES = 1 and ELCARRES = 1 -> Main reason for not being available to start working immediately or to work more is care responsibilities, but in the module has no care responsibilities.
6. If FTPTREAS = 3 and CHCARRES = 1 and ELCARRES = 1 -> Main reason for part-time work in the main job is care responsibilities, but in the module has no care responsibilities.
7. If LEAVREAS = 03 and CHCARRES = 1 and ELCARRES = 1 -> Main reason for leaving last job or business is care responsibilities, but in the module has no care responsibilities.

The logic of these "soft" checks (3-7) is that the respondent reported in some of the core LFS variables (SEEKREAS, WANTREAS, AVAIREAS, FTPTREAS or LEAVREAS) that the main reason for not participating (fully) in labour market is the care responsibilities. At the same time, the answer codes in CHCARRES and ELCARRES indicate that the person has no care responsibilities - these cannot be both correct. The only case that this combination of answers can be accepted is when the respondent has children 15 years old or more, which are in good health, and considers that has care responsibilities for them (so he/she answers accordingly in core LFS) but (since the children are 15 years old or more) answers 1 in CHCARRES.

8. If CHCARRES = 2 and Number\_of\_children\_less\_than\_15 = 1 and CHCARUSE = 2 -> Person uses professional childcare for some children but has only 1 child (this can be an "automatic" correction)

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in CHCARRES that has care responsibilities for own children living in the household and no care responsibilities for children outside the household. We know from the LFS core that the respondent has only one child less than 15 years old. In variable CHCARUSE the respondent answers the code 2 (uses childcare services for some of the children) -> this cannot be correct since respondent has only one child.

9. If ELCARRES = 1 then the values of CHCAROBS and NEEDCARE should be consistent.
  - a. If CHCAROBS = 1 then NEEDCARE in (1, 9)
  - b. If CHCAROBS = 2 then NEEDCARE in (2, 9)
  - c. If CHCAROBS = 3 then NEEDCARE in (3, 9)
  - d. If CHCAROBS in (5, 6, 7) then NEEDCARE in (4, 9)

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in CHCAROBS the main reason for not using childcare services. In the LFS core he/she answered the main reason why care of children or incapacitated relatives limits labour market participation. These answers should be consistent if person has only care responsibilities of children.

10. If CAREFFEM = 2 then WKSTAT = 2 -> Currently absent from work due to care responsibilities, then working status in LFS core should be „Absent from work or business during the reference week (self-declared)“

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in the module that he/she is currently absent from work due to care responsibilities, then the working status in the reference week should be „Absent from work or business during the reference week (self-declared)“.

11. If CAREFFEM = 3 and FTPT = 1 -> Currently reduced working time, including part-time or less working hours, but works full-time according to core LFS.

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in the module that he/she had to reduce working time due to care responsibilities, then mostly the main job should be part-time job. Full-time job (FTPT = 1) is also possible some cases. For example, person stopped working overtime or quit additional job due to care responsibilities.

12. If CAREFFEM = 4 and HOMEWORK = 3 -> Respondent works remotely due to care responsibilities, but never works at home.

The logic of this "soft" check is if the respondent answered working remotely due to care responsibilities, then he/she should mainly or sometimes work at home (variable HOMEWORK = 1 or 2).

13. If WORKOBS = 1 and (HWUSUAL + HWUSU2J) < 20 -> Works usually less than 20 hours and considers Long working hours as main obstacle.

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in the core LFS (variables HWUSUAL and HWUSU2J) that is usually working less than 20 hours a week in main and second job. At the same time, in variable WORKOBS reports that the main obstacle to reconcile work and family life are the long working hours – this seems illogical.

14. If Number\_of\_children\_of\_any\_age > 0 and CHNUMBER = 00 -> Reports that had not raised any children but is a parent.

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in the core LFS that has children living in the same household (of any age). At the same time, in variable CHNUMBER the respondent answered number of children = 0 -> these answers are contradicting each other.

15. If PARLEAV = 4 and ABSREAS in (04, 06) -> Answers in module that has not used family leaves but main reason of absence from work is maternity, paternity or parental leave.

The logic of this "soft" check is that the respondent answered in the core LFS (variable ABSREAS) that is absent from work due to maternity, paternity or parental leave. At the same time, in variable PARLEAV reports that never had any family leaves -> these answers are contradicting each other.

16. If Number\_of\_children\_of\_less\_than\_7 = Number\_of\_children\_of\_any\_age and CHCARUSE = 3 then CHCAROBS <> 6 -> all children in the household are less than 7 year old and no childcare services are used because children take care themselves.

The logic of this "soft" check is that it is known from core LFS that all children in the household are under school age, then they are too young for taking care of themselves.

**Countries are invited to implement these checks during the interviewing, as well as in the micro-data files, before sending them for validation. They are also invited to send any comment/correction on these checks and additional checks that they consider useful for the ad-hoc micro-data file.**