



This table provides an overview of labor and social policy measures specifically targeting the needs of women and mothers. Underscoring the importance of such measures in both German states, it reveals similarities (e.g., benefits for pregnant women) and differences (e.g., the greater availability of day nurseries in East Germany).

Work and Social-Policy Regulations and Basic Conditions Specific to Women

GDR	FRG
<i>Basics</i>	
Constitutionally guaranteed right for all to the free choice of a position in keeping with social demands and individual qualifications; obligation to perform a socially useful activity; right and obligation of all young people to learn a profession; legal obligation of the company to continue the employment; if a company terminated an employment contract, it was obligated to offer the terminated employee an alternative or transitional contract for a different acceptable job; independent decision of the woman regarding the continuation of a pregnancy during the first trimester [<i>Fristenregelung</i>]	Fundamentally guaranteed right to free choice with respect to training, career, and position; possible obligation of the company to continue the employment after completion of training; possible termination by the employer for reasons relating to the business or the person, insofar as it is not socially unjustified; expanded medically (socially) indicated abortion [<i>Indikationsregelung</i>], according to which an abortion will not be punishable during the first trimester, if medical (social) grounds are indicated and counseling was received.
<i>I. Protection Regulations</i>	
– Largely determined by the labor code	– No uniform code of law; labor law as an aspect of private or civil law
1. Special protection fundamentally laid down for women when starting and carrying out a professional activity.	1. Protection laid down in the <i>Mutterschutzgesetz</i> (laws protecting women before and after they give birth), in working hours regulations, etc.
2. Occupational safety regulations for women corresponding to their special physical and physiological features (carrying standards, etc.)	2. Employment prohibitions on the grounds of women’s safety (e.g., in building construction trades) and safety regulations for carrying out

or special regulations during pregnancy and in the period before and after giving birth (no night or overtime work for pregnant women and nursing mothers, etc.)	professional activities (e.g., no night work for female wage workers) and standards of the <i>Mutterschutzgesetz</i> for women before and after they give birth (no night, overtime, or holiday work, etc.)
– Regulations generally did not lead to disadvantages	– Protection rights are a handicap to hiring and promotion, since taking them into consideration can bring disadvantages for the calculation of personnel costs.
3. Regulations for protection during pregnancy and motherhood	
– Pregnancy leave and maternity leave from 6 weeks before to 20 weeks after delivery (pay: average net earnings)	– Pregnancy leave and maternity leave from 6 weeks before to 8 weeks after delivery (<i>starting in 1994</i> this time period is the EU minimum standard) (maternity leave pay: generally average net earnings)
– Protection against job termination for pregnant women, nursing mothers, mothers with children up to 1 year old; mothers/fathers on parental leave (“baby year,” see also no. 4) and single parents with children up to 3 years	– Protection against job termination for pregnant women and up to the end of the 4th month after delivery, and, as a rule, during the parental leave (see no. 4.)
4. Regulations for release from work and for the length of working time	
– Paid release from work after the maternity leave (in exceptional cases also for the child’s father or grandmother) * for the 1st and 2nd child: 1 year * for the 3rd and additional children: 18 months * for single parents: up to the child’s third birthday, to the extent that no daycare was available (unpaid for married parents) (pay: 70-90% of average net earnings)	– Federal Parent Allowance and Parental Leave Acts (mothers and fathers eligible) – 18 months parental leave for each child – parental allowance for interrupted gainful employment or reduction to a maximum of 19 hrs/week – DM 600 for 6 months independent of income; after that, income-dependent (limit for 1 child: DM 29,400 annual income, plus DM 4,200 for each additional child) is not credited against welfare or unemployment benefits or housing allowance, but is credited against the motherhood allowance – Single parents receive full parental allowance for the entire period of parental leave (up to an annual net income of DM 23,700 for one child plus DM 4,200 for each additional child) – Starting <i>Jan. 1, 1992</i> : for children born in 1992 or later, parents can take 3 years of parental leave; extension of the parental allowance period for births from <i>Jan. 1, 1993</i> , on from 18 to 24 months (income-dependent as of the first month)
– Far-reaching rights to return to the previous or an equivalent job after the period of release from work	– No entitlement to return to the previous job, but to an equivalent one – Later return to career is difficult due to insufficient daycare facilities (part-time work is a widespread strategy)

<p>– One paid day per month for household duties for women working full-time with their own household, if they were married, if at least 1 child up to 18 years old or family members in need of care lived in the household, or if she had reached her 40th birthday (for men only if they were single parents or had a wife in need of care)</p>	<p>– Regulations on a “household” day varied from state to state, which is hardly applicable anymore due to the prescribed working hours</p>
<p>– Paid release from work to care for sick children up to 14 years old (in exceptional cases also available for fathers or other persons)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * 4 weeks/year for 1 child (for single parents) * 6 weeks/year for 2 children * 8 weeks/year for 3 children * 10 weeks/year for 4 children * 13 weeks/year for 5 or more children (pay: 70–90% of average net earnings) 	<p>– Paid release from work to care for sick children at a rate of at least 80% of the average net earnings up to 5 workdays per parent and per child up to the age of 8 years (entitlement cannot be transferred between parents)</p> <p>– <i>Starting Jan. 1, 1992</i>: increased entitlement to sick pay for each child up to 12 years of age up to 10 workdays per calendar year (per parent for married couples, up to 20 workdays per child for single parents)</p> <p>– <i>Starting Jan. 1, 1993</i>: paid release from work until the child is 14.</p>
<p>– Reduction of the weekly working hours from 43.75 to 40 hours at full pay, if at least 2 children under 16 lived in the household or with triple-shift work (double-shift work: 42 hours)</p>	<p>– Dependent on the collective bargaining agreement, weekly working hours of 40 hours or less (average weekly working hours about 38.5 hours)</p>

Source: Heike Trappe, *Emanzipation oder Zwang? Frauen in der DDR zwischen Beruf, Familie und Sozialpolitik [Emancipation or Coercion? Women in the GDR between Profession, Family, and Social Policy]*. Berlin, 1995, pp. 40-45.

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