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**Level 2** – 9th January, 2020

## Finland gives parents 7-month parental leave

**FREE** online quizzes, mp3 listening and more for this lesson here:

<https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2002/200209-maternity-leave-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0, 1 and 3. They are (a little) harder.

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# THE READING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2002/200209-maternity-leave-2.html>

New parents in Finland will have more time to spend with their babies. The government decided to give mothers and fathers seven months of parental leave. This is almost double the amount of its maternity and paternity leave. The new policy will give 164 days to each parent - about seven months. Parents can also give up to 69 of their days to their partner. This means one parent could take nine months of leave. Single parents will get all 328 days. Finland's current parental leave gives four months for maternity leave, and two months for fathers.

Finland said the new rules were needed to help families. The Minister of Social Affairs and Health explained the importance of the new rules. She said they put the child "at the centre of family benefits, and promote wellbeing and gender equality". It will also reverse falling birth rates. Births in Finland dropped for the past nine years. Last year saw the lowest number of babies born in the country since 1868. Finland's neighbour Sweden has the most generous leave. It offers 240 days per parent. The USA has no national paid leave for mothers or fathers.

Sources: <https://edition.cnn.com/2020/02/05/world/finland-parental-leave-policy-trnd/index.html>  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/elanagross/2020/02/06/finlands-female-led-government-gives-men-and-women-nearly-seven-months-of-paid-parental-leave>  
<https://www.npr.org/2020/02/05/803051237/finlands-women-led-government-has-equalized-family-leave-7-months-for-each-parent>

# PHRASE MATCHING

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2002/200209-maternity-leave-2.html>

## PARAGRAPH ONE:

- |                              |                      |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1. have more time to spend   | a. paternity leave   |
| 2. This is almost double     | b. to each parent    |
| 3. maternity and             | c. nine months       |
| 4. The new                   | d. the amount        |
| 5. give 164 days             | e. parents           |
| 6. one parent could take     | f. with their babies |
| 7. Single                    | g. leave             |
| 8. four months for maternity | h. policy            |

## PARAGRAPH TWO:

- |                                  |                        |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Finland said the new rules    | a. most generous leave |
| 2. promote wellbeing and gender  | b. birth rates         |
| 3. It will also reverse falling  | c. number              |
| 4. Births in Finland dropped for | d. leave               |
| 5. Last year saw the lowest      | e. equality            |
| 6. babies born in the country    | f. were needed         |
| 7. Sweden has the                | g. since 1868          |
| 8. The USA has no national paid  | h. the past nine years |

# LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2002/200209-maternity-leave-2.html>

New parents in Finland will have more (1) \_\_\_\_\_ with their babies. The government decided to give mothers and fathers seven months (2) \_\_\_\_\_. This is almost double the amount of its (3) \_\_\_\_\_ leave. The new policy will give 164 days to each parent - about seven months. Parents can also give up to 69 of their days (4) \_\_\_\_\_. This means one parent could take nine months of leave. Single parents (5) \_\_\_\_\_ 328 days. Finland's current parental leave gives four months for maternity leave, and (6) \_\_\_\_\_ fathers.

Finland said the new (7) \_\_\_\_\_ to help families. The Minister of Social Affairs and Health explained the importance of (8) \_\_\_\_\_. She said they put the child "at the centre of family (9) \_\_\_\_\_ wellbeing and gender equality". It will also (10) \_\_\_\_\_ rates. Births in Finland dropped for the past nine years. Last year (11) \_\_\_\_\_ number of babies born in the country since 1868. Finland's neighbour Sweden has the (12) \_\_\_\_\_. It offers 240 days per parent. The USA has no national paid leave for mothers or fathers.

# PUT A SLASH ( / ) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2020/202009-maternity-leave-2.html>

New parents in Finland will have more time to spend with their babies. The government decided to give mothers and fathers seven months of parental leave. This is almost double the amount of its maternity and paternity leave. The new policy will give 164 days to each parent - about seven months. Parents can also give up to 69 of their days to their partner. This means one parent could take nine months of leave. Single parents will get all 328 days. Finland's current parental leave gives four months for maternity leave, and two months for fathers. Finland said the new rules were needed to help families. The Minister of Social Affairs and Health explained the importance of the new rules. She said they put the child "at the centre of family benefits, and promote well-being and gender equality". It will also reverse falling birth rates. Births in Finland dropped for the past nine years. Last year saw the lowest number of babies born in the country since 1868. Finland's neighbour Sweden has the most generous leave. It offers 240 days per parent. The USA has no national paid leave for mothers or fathers.

# PARENTAL LEAVE SURVEY

From <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/2002/200209-maternity-leave-4.html>

Write five GOOD questions about parental leave in the table. Do this in pairs. Each student must write the questions on his / her own paper. When you have finished, interview other students. Write down their answers.

	STUDENT 1 _____	STUDENT 2 _____	STUDENT 3 _____
Q.1.			
Q.2.			
Q.3.			
Q.4.			
Q.5.			

- Now return to your original partner and share and talk about what you found out. Change partners often.
- Make mini-presentations to other groups on your findings.

## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

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## WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a) \_\_\_\_\_

b) \_\_\_\_\_

c) \_\_\_\_\_

d) \_\_\_\_\_

e) \_\_\_\_\_

f) \_\_\_\_\_

