

OECD review of family friendly policies: The reconciliation of work and family life - Australia's background report ^[1]

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Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development ^[2]

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AVAILABILITY

Available in print for order (see SOURCE) and online for download.

Full report in pdf ^[3]

Excerpt from full report: This report was prepared as background for the OECD Project 'Family Friendly Policies: The Reconciliation of Work and Family Life'. It is the result of collaboration between the Federal Department of Family and Community Services (FACS) and the (then) Federal Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business (DEWRSB), with assistance from the Work and Family Life Consortium. Over the last two decades, measures to assist workers with family responsibilities have become a more pronounced feature of the Australian workplace relations system. There has been steady progress through workplace relations law, agreement making and the award safety net in providing access to family-related forms of leave. Access to unpaid parental leave for an increasing proportion of the workforce has been important in encouraging women's retention in the workforce after their children are born. The economics costs to women of having children have diminished significantly through the 1990's, partly because women are returning to work more often and more quickly. Successive Australian governments have also placed a significant emphasis on supporting families, including in their engagement in work, through long standing policies such as child care and income support. Increasingly, a dynamic focus is being adopted which recognizes the 'paths' people take through their life courses, and the importance of maintaining workforce attachment in periods out of the workforce to care for children. The social security system provides a range of targeted assistance in the form of Family Tax Benefit, Parenting Payment, maternity and other allowances, a wide range of family support services, pharmaceutical benefits and housing assistance. Coupled with the provision of high quality, accessible and flexible child care options and the payment of Child Care Benefit, this assistance helps parents to combine their caring responsibilities with paid work. Many of these payments and allowances are in recognition of the additional costs of raising children from the time of the birth of a child, and importantly, as the child grows. Overall, the workplace provisions and government payments, detailed in this report, offer a range of support to families, allowing them to make choices about how they manage their work and family responsibilities according to their needs and circumstances. Government policies in this area form part of a complex system and work is continuing to improve the system's capacity to help families reconcile work and family effectively.

Region: Australia and New Zealand ^[4]

Tags: economics ^[5]

 funding ^[6]

 maternity and parental leave ^[7]

 mother's labour force participation ^[8]

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