

# Parental Leave at Novartis - Guiem's Story

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At Novartis, we celebrate life and recognize moments that matter. One of the most life changing moments our associates experience is becoming a parent and welcoming new life into their lives.

And so from January 2021 all Novartis employees around the world, including in Ireland, can benefit from a minimum period of paid parental leave following the birth, or adoption of a child, effective from their first day of employment. By offering the same parental leave to all parents, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, we seek to promote greater equity for all parents and give everyone the flexibility and opportunity to make the choices appropriate for their families.

Guiem Cerdà Pons, Oncology Business Unit Head Ireland recently availed of parental leave following the birth of his second child Bianca. Here's what he had to say about it:

"I feel very proud to work for a company that offers equal parental leave. In fact, when I told my manager, then Kees Roks, we were expecting a new baby he immediately said 'we have to manage your parental leave' and was so open and supportive. Friends and relatives could not believe the company was offering such a long leave, at such an important time, for our family! Our daughter was born in March 2020, 3 days after the Covid lockdown, so we had a baby and a toddler at home and we were able to split the tasks between my wife and I. It was great for me as a Dad to have the opportunity to get off to such a great start with the new baby. In my opinion, Novartis also benefitted: another associate had the chance to step up into my role and gain new experiences and expand their network, and I returned to work fully energized and grateful. I believe this approach to gender equality will also break mental barriers for young people, and will make Novartis an even more attractive company. I would advise all new Dads in Novartis to avail of parental leave – if everybody takes it we will break the barriers – remember the organisation won't collapse without you (you just need to plan it well in advance and ensure proper transition in case somebody is temporarily covering for you)! It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and doesn't happen in every company. Bravo Novartis"

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