



Family law related social services 2022

The number of family law related agreements has decreased – legislative amendments and a decline in the number of children the reason.

MAIN FINDINGS

- Paternity was established for 20,614 children.
- Acknowledgements of paternity before the birth of the child accounted for 86 per cent of the establishments of paternity.
- 1,419 forensic genetic paternity tests were conducted.

Agreements were confirmed as follows:

- Child custody 6,375
- Residence 12,053
- Right of access 14,012
- Child support 44,951

The number of family law related agreements halved between 2018 and 2022. The decrease has been the strongest in agreements on child custody, the number of which has declined to a quarter (-79%). As a result of the 2019 legislative amendment, joint custody is today becoming the default solution if parenthood has already been acknowledged during pregnancy. The number of other family law related agreements has also decreased, but more moderately. Only agreements confirmed by social services are included in the statistics – parents can also agree on the custody and residence of their children and access to the children between themselves.

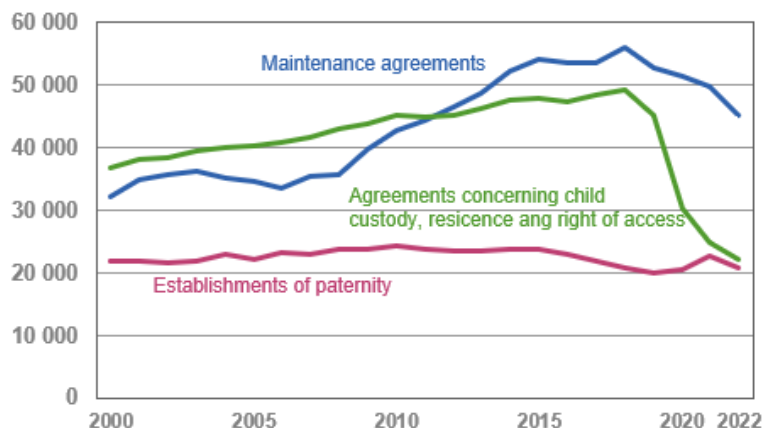
The number of children also affects the number of agreements. The number of children under 18 years of age decreased by 1% from 2021, but the number of children born by 9%. The number of many types of agreement has therefore decreased by about 10% from 2021, even though agreements are made for children of all ages, not just for newborns.

Parenthood is established separately if the parents of the child that will be born are not married. In 2022, paternity was established for 20,614 children. Paternity was increasingly acknowledged before the birth of the child and acknowledgements after the birth of the child accounted for only 13% of the cases. Maternity was established on the basis of consent to assisted fertility treatment for 190 children. Paternity was established by a court for 34 children in 2022. For approximately 1,200 children, paternity could not be established at all.

A total of 44,951 maintenance agreements were confirmed in 2022. The number of the agreements has decreased by 10% from 2021 and by 19% from 2018. The amount of child support in the confirmed agreements was most commonly between EUR 168 and EUR 235 (7,637 agreements). The euro amount of child support was left unconfirmed in 20,160 agreements. The maintenance agreement is confirmed to be zero, for example, in a situation where the maintenance capacity is below the child maintenance allowance paid by Kela. The proportion of zero agreements has increased by about 10 percentage points since 2018.

The name of the statistics and the data collection has changed. The name of the statistics was previously Custody and maintenance of a child and determination of parenthood. The data in the statistics are collected from the wellbeing services counties, the Digital and Population Data Services Agency and THL's Forensic Chemistry Unit.

Figure 1. Agreements under family law and cases of confirmed paternity, 2000–2022.



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