

Denmark¹

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For comparisons with other countries in this review on leave provision and early childhood education and care services, please see the [cross-country tables](#) at the front of the review (also available individually on the [Leave Network website](#)). To contact authors of country notes, see the [members page](#) on the Leave Network website.

1. Current leave and other employment-related policies to support parents

Note on terminology: With the implementation of the EU Directive 2019/1158 from August 2022, the term *Leave* is commonly used in the general guidelines. For the sake of clarity, the following terms are applied in the report: *Graviditetsorlov* (Pregnancy leave) is the leave to be taken by the mother before birth; *Barselsorlov* (Maternity leave) the leave reserved for the mother after birth; *Fædre/med-moderorlov* (Paternity/co-mother leave) the leave reserved for the father or same-sex co-mother after birth; and *Forældreorlov* (Parental leave) the leave available for both parents after birth.

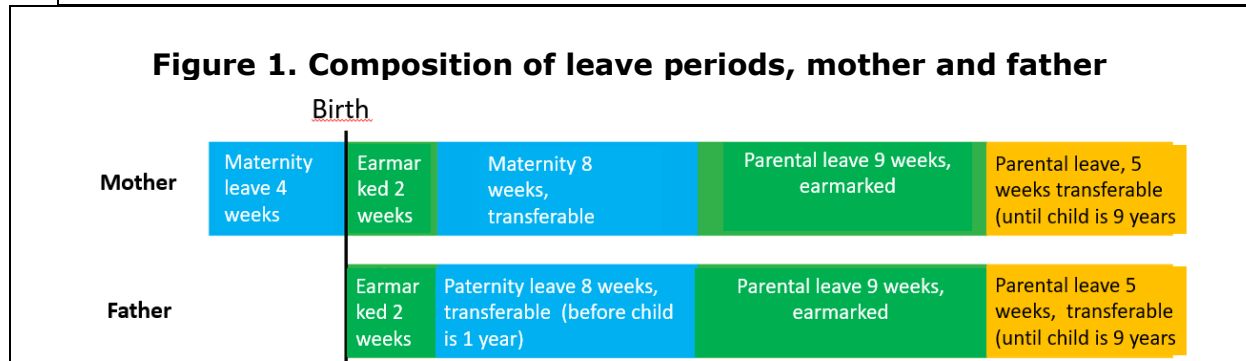
Note on total leave period: After the implementation of the EU Directive from August 2023, the total leave period following birth for each parent is 24 weeks. This means that the child can be cared for at home until it is 48 weeks old, which is the same as before the reform.

The leave period is composed as follows (see Figure 1):

- Two weeks non-transferable earmarked leave for each parent (Maternity and Paternity/co-mother leave),
- Thirteen weeks transferable leave for each parent (for the mother eight weeks Maternity and five weeks Parental leave, and for the father eight weeks of Paternity and five weeks of Parental leave)
- Nine weeks of non-transferable, earmarked leave for each parent (Parental leave).
- In addition, there are four weeks non-transferable, earmarked prior to the birth for the mother (Pregnancy leave).

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- As described in the note below, there is a variation of eligibility and flexibility rules across the different leave schemes.



a. Pregnancy and Maternity leave (*Graviditets og fødselsorlov*: see 'note on terminology') (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- Fourteen weeks: four weeks before the birth and ten weeks following birth.
- It is obligatory to take the first two weeks after birth.
- Prior to the implementation of the EU Directive in August 2022, the mother was entitled to 18 weeks in all. However, the total length of leave stays the same after the changes.

Payment and funding

- All employees and self-employed persons are entitled to a daily cash benefit based on former earnings, up to an upper limit of DKK4,55 [€0.61] per week for full-time employees, before tax. This is the same amount paid in unemployment and sickness benefit.
- Payments are taxed, typically between 38 to 41 per cent
- The cash benefit scheme is funded by the state from general taxation, except for first eight weeks when municipalities bear half of the cost.
- Under collective agreement and/or work contracts, full earnings may be paid during leave. However, a number of collective agreements and work contracts have the requirement that the employee must have been employed in the company for a certain period, for instance 18 months. This positions young women poorly in regard to their right to full pay but also for taking up work elsewhere².

Pension payments

- The Danish pension system is based on three pillars: 1) a universal and tax-based public pension scheme, 2) occupational pensions which may be quasi-mandatory given the collective agreements, and 3) private pension savings.

² Politiken, 3 March 2023: *Vil virksomheder helst undgå unge kvinder med planer om at blive mødre?*

- The public pension is not affected by taking leave. If full earnings are paid, pension payments to the occupational pension scheme are not affected by taking leave either. If leave is awarded without full pay, occupational pensions are normally affected since payments from the employer and employee are discontinued. The collective agreement may, however, specify that the employer must continue payments. Special conditions apply for employees working in the state and municipalities where the employer must continue payments to the occupational pensions. Payments to the private pension scheme are entirely covered by the employee who may/may not decide to continue payments.

Flexibility in use

- The leave must be taken within the first ten weeks after birth.
- However, the eight weeks after birth can be postponed if the mother returns to part-time work and in agreement with the employer.

Eligibility (e.g. related to employment or family circumstances)

- Employees in municipalities and regions are entitled to eight weeks before birth and employees working in the state sector six weeks prior to birth.
- Eligibility to full compensation for an employee is based on a period of work of at least 160 hours in the four months preceding the paid leave, i.e. regardless of the partner's labour market situation. Workers must also have worked at least 40 hours per month in three of those four months, and they must be working up to the first day of the leave. Workers with temporary contracts are excluded only if they are not eligible for unemployment benefit.
- Eligibility for the cash benefit for self-employed persons (including helping a spouse) is based on at least part-time professional activity for at least six months within the last 12-month period, of which one month immediately precedes the paid leave. Likewise, the company must produce a profit. Eligibility also requires that the person is caring for the child on a daily basis. If the individual has recently started their company and has been self-employed less than six months, they can count regular paid work (not including various forms of public benefits) as work.
- People who have just completed a vocational training course for a period of at least 18 months, or who are doing a paid work placement as part of a vocational training course, are eligible for the cash benefit.
- Unemployed people are entitled to cash benefits from unemployment insurance or similar benefits (activation measures).
- Mothers who have child while studying are entitled to a total of up to 12 months' extra study grant, with the understanding that the 14 weeks of Maternity leave are covered via the study grant. Male students are entitled up to six months extra study grant.
- People on sickness benefit continue to receive this benefit which is the same amount as the Maternity leave benefit.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g., multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent); or delegation of leave to person other than the mother

- In the case of illness or death, the two weeks of compulsory leave can be transferred to the father or co-parent.
- If the mother is employed and returns to full-time work, there is the right to transfer up to eight weeks leave to the father or co-parent, if they were co-residing at birth. The weeks of leave must be taken within one year.
- There is no additional right to leave for multiple births as the right to Maternity (and Paternity and Parental) leave is related to the event of birth and not the number of children born.
- However, as of January 2023, parents with triplets or more children can apply for an extra 26 weeks of parental leave to be shared between parents. This leave cannot be extended or postponed.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- Leave is not only regulated via national legislation, but also via collective agreements in the labour market and agreements at company level. In 2018, 82 per cent of the total workforce was covered by such collective agreements (compared to 74 per cent in the private sector)³. These workers receive compensation during leave from their employer, up to the value of their former earnings, i.e., their employer supplements the state benefit. The percentage of the Danish workforce that is covered by collective agreements has remained stable since 2012 but has previously declined especially among the younger age groups, which means that fewer younger workers are ensured pay during leave via a collective agreement.⁴
- To help employers finance the costs regarding compensation up to the workers' former earnings (see above), different leave reimbursement funds have been set up. In 1996, a leave fund was set up to reimburse private employers' leave costs, so that the cost for compensation was pooled. Several municipal employers set up identical funds in the following years, and, in 2005, it was made obligatory for all municipal employers. Municipal employers pool the costs of employees' uptake of leave, so that a workplace with a predominance of female workers should not face higher costs.
- Since 2006, it has been obligatory for private employers to also be members of a leave fund. As illustration, in the largest private leave fund, DA-Barsel, private employers pay DKK1,200 [€161.09] per year for each full-time employee and receive reimbursement of up to DKK222.51 [€29.87] per hour

³ DA Analyse (2020) *I Danmark er de fleste dækket af overenskomst [Most are covered by collective agreements in Denmark]* Available at: <https://www.da.dk/politik-og-analyser/overenskomst-og-arbejdsret/2018/hoej-overenskomstdaekning-i-danmark/>.

⁴ http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/lo-om-15-aar-er-kun-hver-anden-medlem-af-en-fagforeni_20027.aspx?redir=newsletter&utm_campaign=guest_GammelA4_Ikkevalideret&utm_medium=nl_top&utm_source=newsletter_Morning&nid=NDQy&aid=20027

for up to 31 weeks^{5 6}. The additional cost of compensation for employees with higher hourly rates than this must be borne by the employer. Depending on the industry in question, the funds also cover full or parts of Parental leave. For example, within the industrial sector, each parent is entitled to full coverage for full wages during the whole period of Maternity, Paternity and Parental leave⁷.

- In 2010, an evaluation of the funds covering the private sector concluded that the funds seem to be beneficial for women – although employers did not believe that the fund had made them change their view on hiring women – and that more men seemed to take up leave as a consequence of receiving payment during leave. Employers tended to be more positive towards men taking leave than before, as well as being generally positive in their view of the fund. Only around one third of employers were unaware of the possibility of receiving reimbursement for 29 weeks – even in female-dominated sectors – and therefore failed to claim such reimbursement. This was clearly related to whether or not employers paid wages during leave for their employees (COWI, 2010⁸). Statistics from the industrial sector fund show an increase in the refunds for men's uptake of Parental leave – from 17 per cent in 2012 to 40 per cent in 2015. This increase is explained with reference to larger flexibility in men's use of Parental leave, due to the removal of a clause in the collective agreement for this sector (See section 1c 'Additional note')⁹.
- A reimbursement fund was also set up in 2006 to cover self-employed people, who were reimbursed for the equivalent 31 weeks for women and 23 weeks for men. As of 1 April 2016, the fund was abolished, the argument being that it was too costly to cover such a small group sufficiently. This was considered by one of the major unions to represent a blow to gender equality, given that Denmark has a very low proportion of female self-employees already.¹⁰ In Denmark, eight per cent of new enterprises are headed by a woman under 35 years of age. The fund was re-instated 31 January 2021. All self-employed earning more than DKK 231,920 [€31,133.13] annually are obliged to be a member. The fund received start-up funding of DKK10 million [€1,342,408.01] but is otherwise collectively dependent on members' fees. The members fee depends on the earned income at the maximum of DKK1,350 [€181.23] annually. Only self-employees working full-time are covered.

⁵ <https://www.dabarsel.dk/refusion/satser/> As of April 2022, the types of leave are reimbursed differently: Maternity Leave before birth and Paternity Leave (DKK199.26 [€26.75] per hour), Maternity after birth (DKK207.76 [€27.89] per hour), and Parental leave (DKK222.51 [€29.87] per hour).

⁶ See <https://www.dabarsel.dk/refusion/satser/> and <https://www.dabarsel.dk/bidrag/satser/>

⁷ <https://www.danskindustri.dk/vi-radgiver-dig-ny/personale/graviditet-og-barsel/betaling-ved-graviditet-og-barsel/>

⁸ See COWI (2010) *Evaluering af barseludligningsloven* [Evaluation of the Maternity Compensation Act]. Copenhagen: Ministry of Employment.

⁹ See http://www.ugebreveta4.dk/maend-i-skurvognen-skal-ud-med-barnevognen_20405.aspx?redir=newsletter&utm_campaign=guest_EU_Ekstralist_From_MorningNL&utm_medium=nl_top&utm_source=newsletter_Morning&nlid=NjY5&aid=20405

¹⁰ See

<http://magisterbladet.dk/news/2016/februar/slutmedbarselsfondogudvidetloenstatistik>

b. Paternity/co-mother leave (*Fædre/medmoderorlov*: see 'note on terminology') (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour)

Length of leave

- Ten weeks compulsory
- Two weeks is non-transferable leave, followed by 8 weeks of transferable weeks of leave.

Payment and funding

- Payment and funding are the same as for Maternity leave.

Pension payments

- Payments made in the same way as for Maternity leave.

Flexibility in use

- If the employer agrees, the eight weeks of leave can be taken part-time, as single days or single weeks, and must be taken within a ten weeks period.
- These eight weeks can also be postponed, subject to agreement with the employer and if the employee has returned to full-time work.

Eligibility

- Employees and self-employed people in a recognized partnership, including same-sex partnerships. The parental status must have been established. The provisions are the same as for Maternity leave.
- As of 1 July 2009, it was decided that children born into a female same-sex family can be adopted by the co-mother as a stepchild already from birth. This means that an adoptive mother who is the registered partner or spouse of a female biological mother is also entitled to the Paternity (and Parental) leave cash benefit. Male same-sex couples who have conceived children via a surrogate mother do not have the same possibilities. Legally, there can only be two parents, in this case the biological mother and father. The non-biological father can only adopt the child after two and a half years and does therefore not have eligibility for Paternity (and Parental) leave¹¹.
- Unemployed fathers receive unemployment benefit and people on sickness benefits receive sick benefit in the two weeks of Paternity leave.

¹¹ Semanda, F. (2017) *Normbrydende forældre-barn relationer i retlig belysning* [Norm-breaking parent-child relationships in legal perspective]. Det Juridiske Fakultet, Københavns Universitet.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- All male employees covered by collective agreements receive full earnings during the Paternity leave. However, as stated earlier (see 1a additional note) the percentage of the Danish workforce covered by collective agreements is declining, especially among the younger age groups.

c. Parental leave (*Forældreorlov*: see 'note on terminology') (responsibility of the Ministry of Labour)

Length of leave

- Fourteen weeks for each parent.
- Leave is an individual entitlement, of which nine weeks are non-transferable.

Payment and funding

- Payment and funding are the same as for Maternity leave.

Pension payments

- Payments are the same as for Maternity leave.

Flexibility in use

- If the employer agrees, the leave can be taken part-time, as single days or single weeks, and must be taken within a ten week period.
- There is the right to postpone up to five weeks of leave to after the child is one year. The leave must be taken before the child is nine years. Subject to agreement with the employer, more weeks can be postponed.
- The nine weeks of earmarked parental leave cannot be transferred. This leave must be taken within one year after the birth of the child, unless the parent due to special circumstances is unable to take-up leave.
- The five weeks of transferable parental leave must be taken within one year after the birth of the child.
- If leave is transferred, the employer must agree to postponing this period to after the child is one year.
- Between eight and 13 weeks can be taken later.
- Both parents can be on leave at the same time.
- Each parent can prolong their 32 weeks' leave to 40 weeks (for all) or 46 weeks (only employed and self-employed people). In this case, the benefit level is reduced over the extended leave period, so that the total benefit paid equals 32 weeks at the full rate of benefit (though this extended benefit can only be claimed by one parent, as benefit is per family and not per parent).
- It is possible to return to work on a part-time basis, with a reduced benefit payment spread over this extended period of leave (e.g. a parent may work

part-time and thus prolong the leave period from 32 to 64 weeks.) This is subject to agreement with the employer.

Eligibility (e.g., related to employment or family circumstances)

- As for Maternity leave.
- Fathers who are studying receive a total of up to nine months' extra study grant.
Same-sex parenting couples have the same eligibility as described above in section 1b. for Paternity leave.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g. multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent)

- For multiple births, see under Maternity leave
- With the implementation of the EU Directive September 2022, new rules apply for single parents. In the case that the mother and father/co-mother do not cohabit at the time of birth, do not have shared custody, or if the child only has one judicial parent at the time of birth (if the child is conceived by donor of the other parent has passed away), the single parent has a right to 46 weeks of leave after birth. From January 2024, it will be possible for single parents to transfer up to 13 weeks of leave to near family members.
- At the same time, leave rights will also be improved for LGBT+ families who will be able to transfer leave to so-called social parents (non-biological co-parents), so that can share leave between all parents, e.g. two legal parents and two so-called social parents. Social parents are defined as: the spouse of a legal parent, the cohabiting partner of a legal parent if they have lived together for a minimum of two years, a known donor with a parental relation to the child, or the spouse/cohabiting partner of the known donor if this person has a parental relation to the child. The legal parents can each transfer up to 13 weeks of leave to a social parent.

Additional note (e.g., if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements; employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- All employees covered by collective agreements receive full earnings during part or all of the Parental leave period (a maximum coverage may be set in the agreements, however); see above in section 1a additional note.
- See section 1a regarding the reimbursement fund for the self-employed.
- From 2007, the industrial sector (representing 7,000 employers nationwide, including production, service, knowledge, and IT, and encompassing more than 500,000 employees) introduced a paid father's quota in Parental leave. The entitlement was up to nine weeks' Parental leave with payment. Three weeks of this Parental leave with pay for the father, three weeks for the mother, and three weeks for the parents to share – the weeks for the mother and the father respectively were quotas and, therefore, lost if not used. Later agreements have prolonged the period to first 4+4+3 weeks (in

2014)¹², to 5+5+3 weeks (in 2017) and from 2020, 8+5+3, i.e., the father has now the right to half of the earmarked weeks^{13 14}.

- In the 2012 agreement for the industrial sector, a clause was removed. This clause determined that pay during Parental leave was contingent on leave being taken immediately after the Maternity leave, i.e. week 15 after birth. The clause reduced the flexibility of use considerably; especially in the fathers' uptake of Parental leave (Bloksgaard, 2009¹⁵). Now, parents covered by this agreement can take Parental leave with pay within a year after the birth of the child.
- In spring 2008, a similar Parental leave model was also introduced for employees working in the public sector. If both parents work in the state sector, they are entitled to leave with full payment for 6+6+6 weeks' Parental leave – 14 weeks of Maternity leave and 18 weeks of Parental leave, all with full payment, making a total of 32 weeks. Six weeks was earmarked for the mother, six weeks for the father, and six weeks could be shared. As a part of the labour market negotiations in spring 2015, fathers employed in the public sector got one further week earmarked with full payment, making a total of seven weeks.
- After the introduction of the earmarked leave in September 2022 parents are now situated equally in regard to their right to Parental leave after divorce.
- Before September 2022 parents could be situated differently after divorce. In principle, they had identical rights to Parental leave. However, if the parents disagreed about how to share the leave, it was the parent with whom the child resides, who decides how the Parental leave is split, in most cases the mother. Also, a father who was not married to the mother or in a registered partnership could also risk losing his formal status as a father, and therefore the eligibility to Parental leave. This could happen if the mother finds another partner and registers him as the parent¹⁶.

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

- No statutory entitlement.

e. Other types of leave and flexible working

¹² <http://kooperationen.dk/media/69502/CO-Industriens-Overenskomst-2014-2017.pdf>

¹³ CO Industri & DI (2017) Industriens Overenskomst 2017-2020. <https://di.dk/Shop/Overenskomster/Produktside/Pages/Produktside.aspx?productId=6549>

¹⁴ CO Industri & DI (2020) Industriens Overenskomst 2020-2023, <https://www.danskindustri.dk/vi-radgiver-dig-ny/di-dokumenter-for-personale/personalejuras-dokumenter/overenskomster/industriens-overenskomst/>

¹⁵ Bloksgaard, L. (2009) *Arbejdsliv, forældreskab og køn – forhandlinger af løn og barsel i tre moderne virksomheder [Work-life, parenthood and gender – wage and leave negotiations in three modern Danish companies]*. Aalborg: Aalborg University.

¹⁶ Ibid

Adoption leave and pay

- For adoptive parents, the same regulations for Parental leave apply as for other parents, with the exception that there is a right to take two of the 48 weeks by both parents together.

Time off for the care of dependents

- Most working contracts and labour market agreements include the right to take one day off per sick spell to care for a sick child. Public employees are entitled to two days. Leave is paid.
- All employees may, depending on the assessment of the local municipality, be eligible for a care benefit (*Plejevederlag*) if they care for a terminally ill relative or close friend at home. The municipality decides the length and level of benefit payment. There is no entitlement to leave associated with this benefit.

Specific provision for (breast)feeding

- None.

Flexible working

- With the implementation of the EU Directive, a new right for parents (including co-mothers and social parents, see under Parental leave) was introduced to apply for changes in their work arrangements after the leave period. The new right entitles parents with one or more children under nine years old to apply in writing for changes in work hours, or work patterns in a specific period of time. Flexible work may include distance working, working from home, or a reduction in work hours.
- If the application is denied, the employer must argue why. The right against dismissal, which is in place during leave, now also encompasses when the employee applies for changes in the work arrangement.
- The changes were implemented from August 2022 for parents and co-mothers, and will be in force from 1 January 2024 for social parents.

2. Relationship between leave policy and early childhood education and care policy

The maximum period of post-natal leave is 18 months, or just under 11 months if taken full-time paid at the normal rate. There is an entitlement to Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) from when the child is six months of age, so there is no gap between the end of well-paid leave and an ECEC entitlement.

For ECEC attendance levels, see 'relationship between leave and ECEC entitlements' on [cross-country comparisons](#) page.

3. Changes in policy since April 2022 (including proposals currently under discussion)

The implementation of the EU Directive 2019/1158 on the work-life balance for parents and carers from August 2022 has had implications for leave policy, including:

- The common term *Orlov* (Parental leave) has replaced all other terms for leave.
- Each parent is now entitled to 24 weeks of leave, a total of 48 weeks for the family, and in addition there is four weeks prior birth for the mother. The main change consists in the introduction of non-transferable and earmarked periods of parental leave, nine weeks for each parent, in addition to the two weeks for both following birth.
- As of January 2024 LGBT+ families will be able to transfer some of their weeks of leave to non-biological co-parents and single parents will be able to transfer leave to near family members.

In January 2023, a Citizen proposal¹⁷ on the right for 26 weeks extended leave to parents with twins or triplets was made to Parliament. The proposal came to a vote in Parliament and was rejected by 63 votes against and 47 for.

4. Uptake of leave

Statistics on the uptake of leave do not provide data on the proportion of parents using either Maternity, Paternity or Parental leave. Instead leave uptake is grouped across the three forms of leave¹⁸.

Also, data on leave uptake for all Danish parents has only been available since 2015. Prior to this, data covered only those who were eligible for a cash benefit. As of 2021, 88 per cent of fathers and 84 per cent of mothers were eligible. Parents who are not eligible for leave often use instead annual vacation and it is difficult to estimate how much time they actually spend with the child. Therefore, most statistical accounts use data on parents who are eligible only and the following presentation will mainly focus on parents with eligibility for the cash benefit. Throughout this part of the report, we will refer to the latest available figures, which are for the most part from 2021 and therefore before the introduction of the European Commission Directive.

¹⁷ A Citizen proposal to the Parliament can be made on behalf of 50.000 or more Danish citizens signing a petition. The Parliament is obliged to discuss the proposal and in most cases a vote is casted.

¹⁸ Statistikbanken Danmarks Statistik - statistikbanken.dk/Barse104
<https://www.statbank.dk/BARSEL04>

a. Mothers on leave

As of 2021, 83 per cent of all mothers took leave with benefit.¹⁹ Focusing further on cohabiting couples who were both eligible for the cash benefit, in 79 per cent of cases both took leave (not necessarily at the same time).²⁰ Statistics indicate that in these couples where only the mother took leave, mothers' leave uptake is stable over time. Eligible mothers took on average 284.2 to 279.1 days between 2015-2021, while mothers who have taken leave alone took 303.4 to 302.61 days over the same period^{21 22}

Well-educated mothers take the shortest leave (in contrast, the opposite is the case among fathers; here, well-educated fathers). The education level of the mother and her position in the labour market is central to the division of leave between the parents. Mothers employed in agriculture take the longest leave, while mothers employed in information and communications take the shortest leave.²³ Danish research confirms that women in general still lose out in life-time earnings when they take leave²⁴.

While these figures reflect the situation before the implementation of the EU Leave Directive, there is indication that the introduction of the quotas has had its intended effect. A report from March 2023 surveying members of the Danish Society of Engineers shows that female members now either planned or took shorter leave than before the implementation of the EU Directive. After the reform, they on average planned or took 33.2 weeks, which is 4.4 weeks shorter than in a similar survey the year before.²⁵ The union concludes that the reform has been successful in that there is more gender balance in leave take-up.²⁶

¹⁹ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04>

²⁰ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel05>

²¹ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04>

²² The number of leave days from 2015-2020 differ from the 2020 report due to a change of reporting methods in Statistics Denmark. A day comprising just one hour's maternity counted for a full day in the previous report while it only counts for a fraction of a day in this report. Also, the number of leave days are only counted up until the child turns one year old.

²³ Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Statistiske efterretninger: Dagpenge ved graviditet, fødsel og adoption 2016* [Statistical overview: Unemployment benefits for pregnancy, childbirth and adoption] 2017: 9, København: Danmarks Statistik

²⁴ Kleven, H, Landais, C. and Søgaard, J.E. (2019) 'Children and Gender Inequality: Evidence from Denmark', *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, vol. 11, 4: 181-209. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1257/app.20180010>

²⁵ <https://ida.dk/om-ida/nyt-fra-ida/oeremaerket-barsel-virker>

²⁶ <https://ida.dk/om-ida/nyt-fra-ida/oeremaerket-barsel-virker>

b. Fathers on leave

Seventy-eight per cent of eligible fathers in 2021 took leave with benefit, and 68 per cent of the total number of fathers took leave. Overall, the proportion of fathers taking leave has not changed since 2015.

There has over time been a change in fathers' average take-up of leave days. Earlier accounts from 2007-2010 have shown an increase in the number of days that fathers take, when both the mother and the father take leave (not necessarily at the same time) – from 32 days on average in 2007 to 37 days in 2010 and data for 2011-2013 showed some stabilization in these figures.

This increase in fathers' leave days may be explained by the introduction of a fathers' quota in the collective agreements and (partly) by the removal of the clause in the collective agreement of the industrial sector, which led to larger flexibility in leave use for employees covered by this agreement, especially fathers²⁷ (see section 1c).

Applying new methods to account for leave uptake introduced in 2015, there appears again to be an increase in father's leave days. However, part of the explanation may be a change in statistical reporting^{2,5} Among couples where both are eligible and regardless of how the leave was shared, the average days that fathers took in the period from 2015-2021 increased from 29.7 -35.6 days²⁸. In couples, where both took leave, these days increased also, from 36.5-44.6 days. In the few families where the fathers were the only parent to take Parental leave, their leave uptake in 2021 was 53.4 days²⁹.

Statistics on fathers' leave uptake based on data from 2021 and most recent data also show that:

- Well-educated fathers and fathers with a high income take the longest leave³⁰. High educated eligible fathers take 52.3 days compared to 19.4 days among fathers with lower secondary education.
- Fathers living in the largest cities take the longest leave. E.g. eligible fathers living in Copenhagen city take on average 51.5 days, compared to 25.5 days in West-Jutland.³¹ The explanation is again found in the level of education with persons with higher education being concentrated in the larger cities.
- Fathers employed in the public sector take the longest leave period (50 days in 2014)³².
- Fathers employed in male-dominated branches take five days less than the average³³.
- Self-employed fathers take the least leave (16 days)³⁴.

²⁷ DR Nyheder (2014) 'Mænd i industrijob tager mere barsel', 25 January 2014.

²⁸ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04>

²⁹ Danmarks Statistik - statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04. Available at: <https://www.statbank.dk/BARSEL04>

³⁰ Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Fædres brug af orlov [Fathers' use of leave]*, København, Danmarks Statistik, p. 1

³¹ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04>

³² Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Fædres brug af orlov*, København, Danmarks Statistik, p. 1

³³ Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Fædres brug af orlov*, København, Danmarks Statistik, p. 1

³⁴ Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Fædres brug af orlov*, København, Danmarks Statistik, p. 1

- Fathers with well-educated partners take 60 per cent longer leave than fathers on average³⁵.
- Fathers share of the total leave increase from 6 percent in 2003 to 14 percent in 2021³⁶.

A report from March 2023 surveying members of the Danish Society of Engineers compared leave plans before and after the implementation of the EU Directive. The union concludes that the reform has been successful in that before the reform, fathers planned or took 9.5 weeks. After the reform, fathers planned to take or took 13.6 weeks³⁷.

³⁵ Danmarks Statistik (2017) *Fædres brug af orlov*, København, Danmarks Statistik, p.4

³⁶ <https://statistikbanken.dk/Barsel04>

³⁷ <https://ida.dk/om-ida/nyt-fra-ida/oeremaerket-barsel-virker>