

Recent Reforms in Parental Leave Policies in France

Key issues, Rationales, and Outcomes

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Summary

1. Parental Leave Scheme: Description
2. Objectives and Rationales that Have Underpinned the Reforms
3. Reforms in Child-Rearing Benefit (CRB)
4. Outcomes in Terms of Gender Equality

The French Parental Leave Scheme

- Coupled with a Child Rearing Benefit (CRB): Fathers and Mothers are equally eligible until the youngest child is 3 years old
- Low amount (flat-rate) of the CRB : about 570 € per month if the mother or the father stop working
- Cost: 2.9 billion € in 2015/ 500 000 beneficiaries
- Financed by the Family Branch of Social Security

A low take up by fathers (2015):

Beneficiaries: 19,000 men versus 480,000 women

Explicit and Implicit Objectives of the Reforms

➤ *Explicit objectives:*

- Promoting gender equality in the family and on the labour market
- Encouraging fathers to be more involved in family life

➤ *Implicit objective:*

- Reducing public spending

The Reform: a « take it or loose it » approach

- Both parents are eligible but individually

Parents with a Single Child aged under 3:

Duration: 12 months until the child is one year old, reduced to 6 months if the parents don't share it

Parents with 2 or more Children (the youngest aged under 3):

Duration: 36 months reduced to 24 if the parents don't share it

CRB: Flat-Rate Benefit, Small Amount, No Change Introduced

- 577€ per month if the mother (or the father) does not work
- *Part time Job possible:*
 - 439 € if the recipient works part-time (less or equal to half-time)
 - 332 € if the recipient works between 50% and 80 % of full-time

Breakdown of Recipients by Gender: Before and After the Reform

	Fathers %	Mothers %	Total	
			%	Number
2014	3,9	96,1	100	493,000
2015	4,1	95,9	100	455,000

Data : ONPE, 2015, 2016

Number of Beneficiary Fathers with a Single Child Nearly Doubled and their Share among the Total of Beneficiaries Increased

Beneficiary fathers with a single child	2014	2015
Number	970	1480
% among the total of beneficiaries with a single child	3,3	5,1

Beneficiary Fathers: Working Time according to the Number of Children

	Fathers with a Single Child %	Fathers with at least 2 Children %
Working Part-time	77	72
Working full-time	23	28
Total	100	100

Source: ONPE, 2016

Conclusion

- Take-up rate by fathers remains very low
- Not a watershed reform, rather a piecemeal measure
- The reform failed to change the system towards a more egalitarian approach to parental leave policies
- Implicit objective however has been achieved: reduction of public spending from Euros 2,9 to 2,6 billion

Thank you for your Attention