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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fathers %</th>
<th>Mothers %</th>
<th>Total %</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>96.1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>493,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>95.9</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>455,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data: ONPE, 2015, 2016
Number of Beneficiary Fathers with a Single Child Nearly Doubled and their Share among the Total of Beneficiaries Increased

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beneficiary fathers with a single child</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>970</td>
<td>1480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% among the total of beneficiaries with a single child</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>5,1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Beneficiary Fathers: Working Time according to the Number of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Fathers with a Single Child (%)</th>
<th>Fathers with at least 2 Children (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Part-time</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working full-time</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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