

# **Individual parental leave for fathers - promoting gender equality**

15th LPR Annual Seminar in Toronto

**Professor Elin Kvande,  
Department of Sociology and Political Science  
Norwegian University of Science and Technology**



## **Development of leave systems in Norway. Important changes.**

- 1909 : Paid maternity leave(6weeks)
- 1977 : Paid parental leave (18 weeks)
- 1993 : Father' s Quota system and  
increase of parental leave to 52 weeks



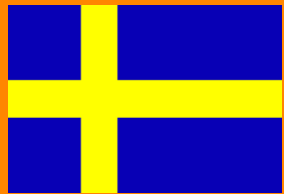
## **Father's Quota system:**

- Individual leave
- Ear-marked
- Non-transferable
- Earnings-related social insurance
- Full wage replacement
- Tax-financed

# Fathers' quotas in Nordic countries



Norway 1993



Sweden 1995



Denmark 1998 (abolished in 2002)

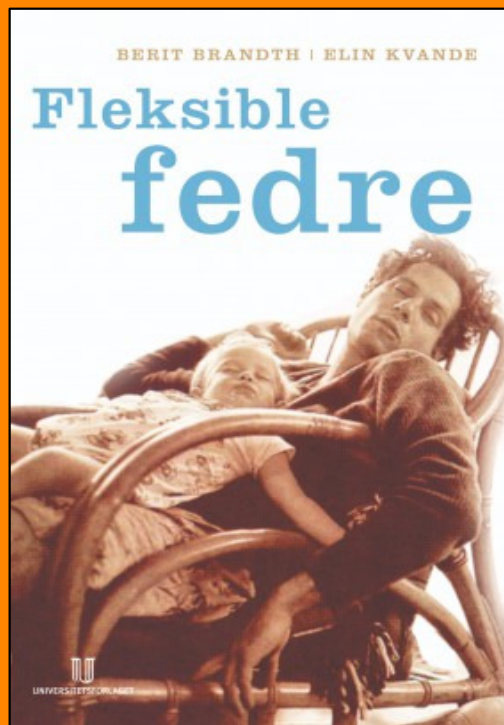


Iceland 2001



Finland 2013


# The Father's Quota in Norway 1993-2018



2003



2013



## Reasons for introducing the Fathers' quota.

- The child's contact with the father
- The father's contact with the child
- Equality between mothers and fathers

# Development of the Norwegian parental leave scheme 1993-2018. Number of weeks.

Total number of weeks	Before birth	Mother's part	Sharable part	Father's quota
1993: 52	3	6	39	4
2013: 59	3	14	28	14
2014: 59	3	10	36	10
2018: 59	3	15	26	15

# Increased quota leads to increase in father's use of parental leave

- From **4%** in 1993 to **85 %** in 2000
- Later continuously **90+** percent
- Everytime the quota has been increased the father's uptake has also increased
- Which means : **More fathers taking longer parental leave**





## Brighthouse and Wright 2008:

- Family based parental leave **enables** gender equality
- Individual entitlements **promotes** gender equality



## **BARNEFAMILIEUTVALGET**

opprettet ved kgl.res.19. juni 2015

# NOU 2017: 6 Offentlig støtte til barnefamiliene

*Utvalget for utredning av støtten til barnefamiliene*



# The fathers' quota as a norm

- “For fathers to have 14 weeks is quite natural in a way.... It has become incorporated”.
- “ “Society reacts if you don't take it, right”,
- “ It feels like something you ought to ... that it's something you should take, really.... It feels like there's pressure on you to take it. That ... if you want to be a good parent, or a good father, then you have to take the daddy leave.”



# Empowered as caregivers

- It is quite unfair that only mothers are regarded as important for the children. Speaking as a man I think this is a new situation for gender equality.... I have been able to prove that I can be just as good a carer as the mother. I think it is super important! It increases men's self-confidence and society's confidence in men as caregivers," Erlend
- "Being home on leave has in a way laid the foundation for the contact we [father and child] have today. A lot will happen later in life, but this is the basis," Didrik

# Design matters!

## Why does the Father's Quota work?

- Individual right for employees
- Statutory right
- Earmarked- Non-transferable
- Generosity (duration and benefit level)

## References

- Brandth, B. and E. Kvande (2016): Masculinity and Fathering Alone during Parental Leave. *Men and Masculinities*. Online first. DOI: 1011771097184X16652659
- Brandth, B. and E. Kvande (2016): Fathers and flexible parental leave. *Work, Employment and Society*.30(2): 275-290
- Kvande, E. and B. Brandth (2016): Individualized, non-transferable parental leave for European fathers. Migrant perspectives. *Community, Work & Family*. 20 (1) : 19-34
- Kvande, E. and B. Brandth (2016) Les pères en congé en Norvège. Changements et continuités. *Revue des politiques sociales et familiales*. 122(1-2):11-18
- Kvande, E. and B. Brandth (2016): Constructing male employees as carers through the Norwegian Father's Quota. In Oechsle, M. and B. Liebig (eds.) *Fathers in Work Organizations: Inequalities and Capabilities, Rationalities and Politics*.
- Kvande, E. and B. Brandth (2016): Fathers on Leave Alone in Norway: Changes and Continuities. In O'Brien M. and K. Wall (Eds.): *Comparative Perspectives on Work-Life Balance and Gender Equality. Fathers on Leave Alone*. Springer.
- Kvande, E., B. Brandth and S. Halrynjo (2017): Integrating work and family: changing institutions and competing logics. In Brandth B., S. Halrynjo and E. Kvande (eds.) *Work, Family Dynamics. Competing Logics of Regulation, Economy and Morals*. London: Routledge.
- Brandth B., S. Halrynjo and E. Kvande (eds.) (2017) *Work, Family Dynamics. Competing Logics of Regulation, Economy and Morals*. London: Routledge.
- Brandth B. and E. Kvande (2018): Enabling or Promoting Gender Equality through Parental Leave Policies. *RES Revista Espanola de Sociologica*. Ultimo numero (Mayo 2018)