Individual parental leave for fathers - promoting gender equality

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Development of leave systems in Norway. Important changes.

- 1909: Paid maternity leave (6 weeks)
- 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
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of weeks</th>
<th>Before birth</th>
<th>Mother's part</th>
<th>Sharable part</th>
<th>Father’s quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993: 52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013: 59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014: 59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018: 59</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15</td>
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</tbody>
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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
NOU 2017: 6
Offentlig støtte til barnefamilene

Utvalget for utredning av støtten til barnefamilene
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


