

PARENTAL LEAVE — WHERE ARE THE FATHERS?



Dr. JosAnn Cutajar
Gender Studies Department
University of Malta

Low uptake among fathers where parental leave is concerned
 In 2014 family friendly measures were mainly accessed by women

Family-Friendly Measures	Females	Males	Totals
Maternity Leave	600	-	600
Adoption Leave	4	0	4
Responsibility Leave	25	8	33
Parental Leave	473	13	486
Career Break	253	7	260
Leave to accompany spouse on government assignments abroad	3	1	4
Reduced hours	1234	82	1316
Teleworking	771	101	872
Flexible Work Schedules	610	323	933
Grand Total	3973	535	4508



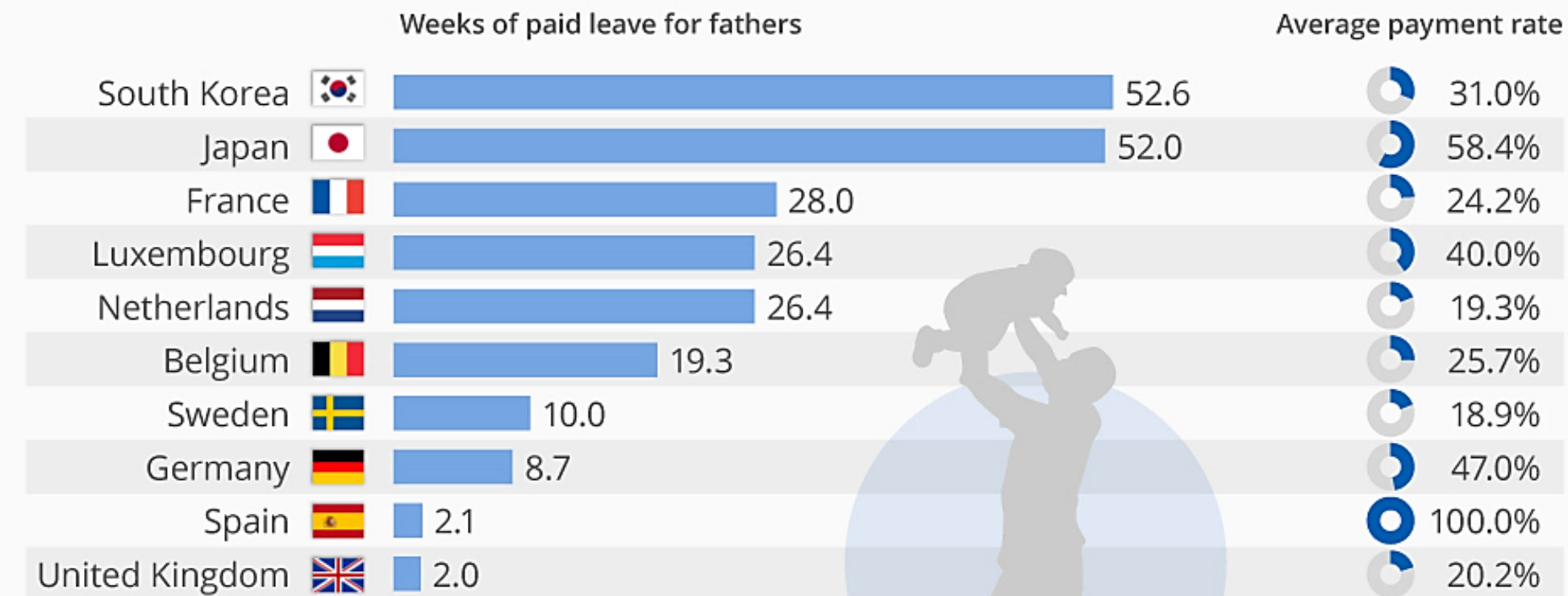
COUNTRIES WITH PAID PATERNITY/PARENTAL LEAVE FOR FATHERS

- In **Japan** and **S. Korea** **1 year of paid leave** is reserved for the father⁵
- **Quebec** – fathers and mothers can share 32 weeks
 - Fathers get **5 weeks of paternity leave** at 70% of their income
 - Mother may forgo 25 weeks of parental leave if she earns more money
- **Norway** – 9 out of 10 dads take at least **12 weeks** of paid paternity leave³
- In **Sweden** fathers need to use a minimum of **8 weeks** before they can transfer what remains of their 32 weeks paid leave to partner⁴
- In **Canada** men and women can share 25 weeks of paid parental leave at 55% of their income²
 - On top of this women get 10 sickness and 15 maternity weeks
- **Denmark** – 90% of dads take more than a **fortnight's** leave¹



Where Fathers Receive The Most Paternity Leave

Weeks of paid leave and average payment related to national earnings in 2014



PAID PARENTAL LEAVE BENEFITS

- Both Partners
- Children
- Companies
- Economy



HOW COMPANIES BENEFIT



- Benefit from high employee morale, loyalty and retention
- Avoid costly turnover and training costs
- Retain valued expertise, skills and perspectives¹
- Attract the best people
- Survey among 1,000 working fathers found that 9 out of 10 said that paternity leave was seen as important when it came to choosing a job. Paid parental leave benefitted small businesses who were able to attract talent but were not able to offer high wages²



ECONOMY



- Decline in **birthrate**, **postponing** having children – drastic consequences for economy
- Forward thinking companies take an active role in relieving pressures from young couples
 - Help them by **supplementing government paid parental leave**
 - Covering portions of fertility treatment and adoption costs
- **Fewer workers = fewer consumers**
- Contributing to better birthrate = **invest in business prosperity**



COSTS TO COMPANIES WHICH INTRODUCED PAID PATERNITY LEAVE

- 90% of employers reported **positive** or **no noticeable effect on profitability, turnover or morale**¹
- Survey among 253 firms in the USA showed that paid leave had **minimal** impact on business operations according to employers²
- 9 out of 10 had **neutral** or **positive** impact on business profits and employee productivity



BENEFITS FOR FATHERS



- The more fathers are involved with their children,
 - the less they will suffer from **depression** and **substance abuse**¹
 - Sustain healthier **relationship** with partner
 - Fewer divorce rates
 - Report **greater life satisfaction** and better physical and mental health (OECD, 2016)
 - Happy family lives mean happy **more productive employees**



BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN



- Better **child health** (Ruhm, 2000)
- Better **father-child relationships** when fathers take more than two weeks paternity leave (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007)
- Children enjoy **higher cognitive and emotional outcomes** (OECD, 2016)
- Paternity leave improved children's **performance at secondary school**¹
- **Daughters** flourish in the **workplace** when dads participated more at home (Croft et al., 2014)
- **Reduction of family poverty** when both parents can have children and stay in employment (OECD, 2016)
- When paternity leave is short and poorly paid, only **richer dads** can afford to take time off



PATERNITY LEAVE CAN HELP REDUCE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

- Maternity leave has an **adverse** effect on women's careers¹
 - Less job security
 - Motherhood penalty on wages
 - Less likely to be promoted
- For **every month** the father took paternity leave, the **mother's earnings increased by 7%**²
- ***Daddy quota*** in Quebec (five weeks of paid leave) helped mothers retain full-time employment³
- In Quebec women's earnings increased by 25% when partner used leave
- Fathers who took parental leave increased the time they spent on household duties



COMPANIES NEED TO ENCOURAGE MORE MEN TO TAKE PATERNITY LEAVE ³

- Offering flexitime¹
- Telecommunicating opportunities
- Organizing **support groups** and providing **informative collateral** (pamphlets, posters, flyers, workshops) to help **challenge traditional social** barriers that keep fathers from taking on caring roles
- Offering onsite daycare and/or after school childcare, new parent support network, **increase time limit** or the **salary percentage of parental leave**²



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY MAKERS

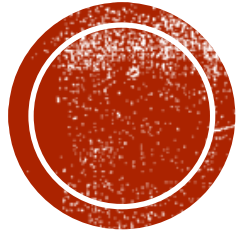
- **Provide financial incentives** - 86% of men surveyed said that they wouldn't use paternity/parental leave if they did not at least receive 70% of normal salary (Harrington et al., 2015)
- Uptake by men was higher when paternal leave was *paid around half or more of previous earnings* (OECD, 2016)
- **Reserve specific non-transferable periods for fathers/other partners**
 - Helps legitimize the concept
- Some countries offer **bonus periods to couple** when father uses a certain amount of sharable leave
- Ensure that there are **flexible or part-time leave arrangements**



ONCE ONE MAN HAS TAKEN PAID LEAVE, HIS COLLEAGUES ARE MUCH MORE LIKELY TO FOLLOW



**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYER AND
EMPLOYEE IS A TWO-WAY STREET – AND
SENSITIVE BUSINESSES ARE SAVVY BUSINESSES**



THANK YOU

PARENTAL LEAVE



Dr. JosAnn Cutajar



Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014 -2020
Project part-financed by the European Union
Co-financing rate: 80% EU funds; 20% National Funds

