



Norwegian Institute of Public Health

4-parent Engaging Fathers in Nurturing Care Issues Around Leave Policies & Uptake

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Parental leave in Norway

Parents have the right to:

- 49 wks leave with 100% payment,
incl. 3 wks to women before delivery



- 46 wks after birth



How is the 46 weeks parental benefit after birth divided between parents?

The period of parental benefit is divided into three:

- 15 weeks father
- 15 weeks mother
- 16 weeks shared



Why a paternal quota

- Long maternal leave leaves women behind in career and salary development
- Sharing child care and housework
- Father and child attachment

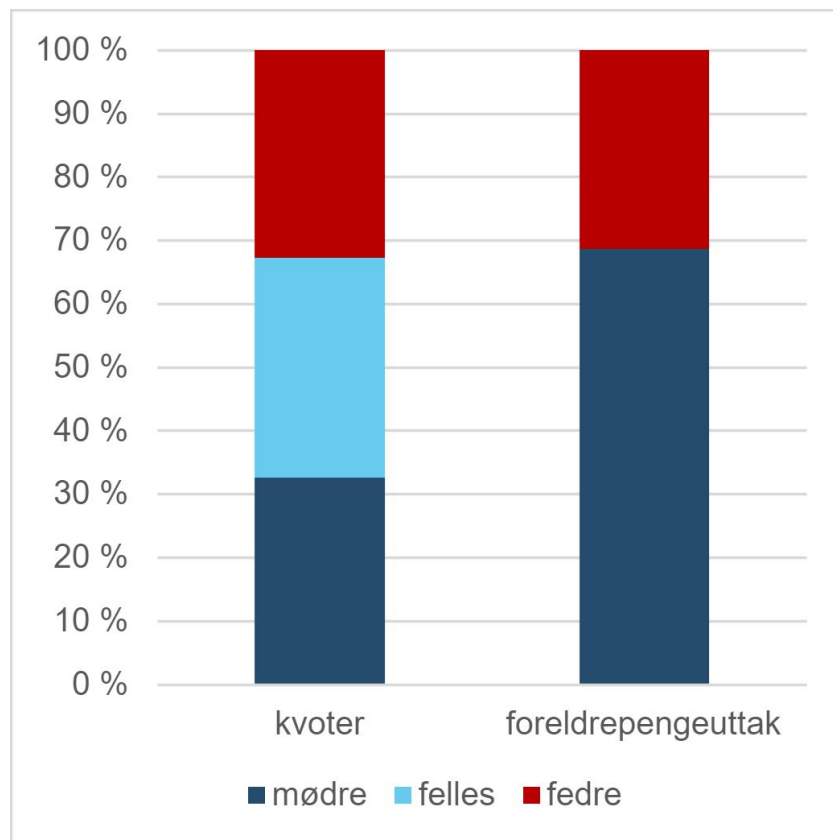


NOU 2008:06 Kjønn og lønn (Official Norwegian Report: Gender and salary)

White Paper: Gender equality and equal pay)

Sethna et al. Father-child interactions at 3 m and 24 mo: Contributions to children`s cognitive development at 24 mo. *Infant Ment Health J* 2017; 38: 378-90.

How is the parental leave used/shared?



Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. Parental benefit survey. Arbeid og velferd. 2022-1.

Fathers quota: Strengths

- Mothers and fathers are positive to the paternal quota
- Most fathers take the exact quota
- Fathers spend more time with their babies
- More equal sharing of future care work and household work (?)

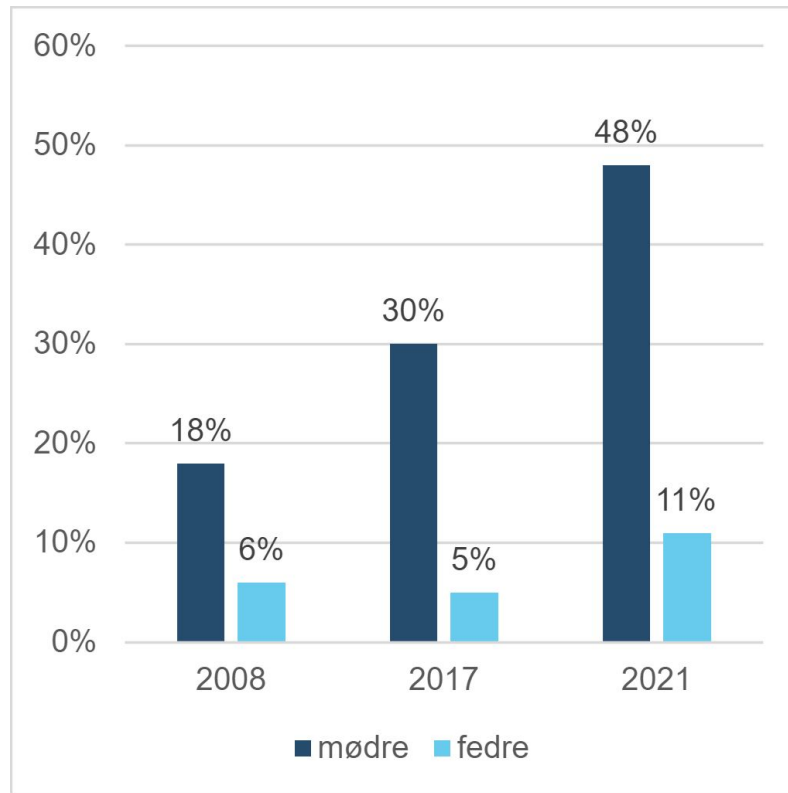


BUT

The extension of the paternal quota did not improve mothers salaries and careers.

Østbakken K.M. et al. Evaluation of the parental leave scheme – gender equality effects. Institute of Social Research, 2018.

Unpaid leave – increasing among mothers



implies losing earnings, seniority, employment rights/ rights for sick leave in this period, potential career risk

Breastfeeding contributes to good health of the population, food security and reduced climate footprints

Child

- Infections
- Overweight/obesity
- Diabetes type 2
- Leukemia
- Cognitive development
- Malocclusion



Mother

- Breast cancer
- Ovarian cancer
- Diabetes type 2
- Cardiovascular disease

Consequences for baby of shorter maternal leave

- Early introduction of solids
- Premature cessation of exclusive breastfeeding
- Less breastmilk
- Premature cessation of breastfeeding



Work-life Balance:

balance paternal quota towards mothers needs for breastfeeding their babies



Thank you!



Impact of paid maternity leave on maternal health

The introduction of paid maternity leave in 1977 (4 mo) in Norway improved i.e.:

- BMI
- blood pressure
- pain and mental health
- including health promoting behaviors such as exercise and non-smoking.

Larger effect in first-time and low-resourced

Bütikofer et al. Am Economic Journal 2021

Parental leave in Norway 1993-2018

