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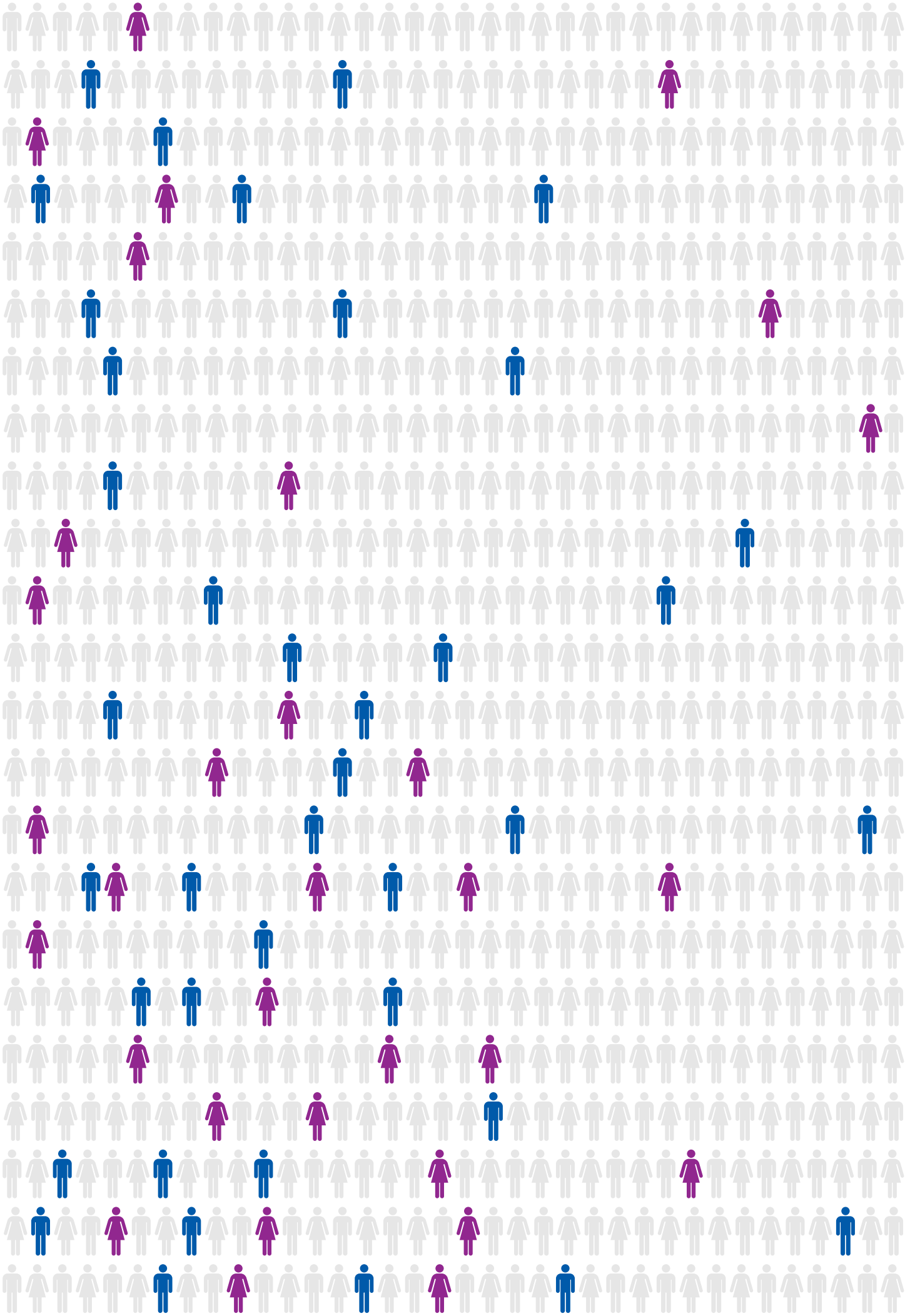
The Fatherhood Report 2010-11

The Fairness in Families Index

An international index to measure egalitarian parenting in high income countries

December 2010



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Introduction

Rob Williams
Chief executive,
The Fatherhood Institute

The Coalition Government came to power with a strong commitment to families and children, an aspiration to make this the most family friendly country in Europe, and a pledge to support shared parenting from the earliest stages of pregnancy.

But families are something of a moving target in the UK and elsewhere. We are seeing huge and fundamental changes in the way that mothers and fathers carry out their roles as parents - and more parents than ever are separating before their children have grown. Family policy needs to keep up with changes in the ways that families operate in the real world, or risk undermining today's parents.

The rise of the hands-on dad

One of the biggest changes in family behaviour, now well-documented by academic research, is the rise of the hands-on father. The roots for this change can be traced back to the emergence of women as a force in the labour market, with mothers having less time to spend at home and aspiring to greater sharing of the domestic workload. But we should acknowledge that this change is something broadly welcomed by fathers themselves. Many men treasure the opportunity to have a more significant role in their children's upbringing.

This is not always an easy change to negotiate. Our current rules on maternity and paternity leave, for example, are based on an assumption that the man's role is to work to support the family, whilst the mother's place is at home. And both women's and men's choices remain constrained by the expectation that men should carry the main responsibility for breadwinning.

When a man does the laundry, or changes a nappy, we still view him as engaging in an activity which is not entirely in keeping with his masculinity. Caring and nurturing behaviours are seen, by some at least, as coming more naturally to mothers, and as requiring men to act 'outside of' their natural inclinations.

As men demonstrate their capacity to provide high quality parenting across the range of skills required, our understanding of what masculinity is all about is beginning to change..Crucially, there is a large and widely supported body of evidence which shows that when fathers provide sensitive and competent care above and beyond the role of breadwinner, we see many positive outcomes for their children including:

- fewer behaviour problems
- lower criminality and substance abuse
- higher educational /occupational mobility relative to parents' employment
- capacity for empathy
- better peer relationships
- and higher self-esteem and life-satisfaction

Such benefits are also found when parents separate, with substantial, positive father involvement one of the most powerful predictors of positive outcomes for children.

Building fairer families

We know from the research that parents who avoid a stark division between breadwinner and carer, and who each contribute substantially to both roles, are happier and more likely to stay together for longer. We also know that today's young men and women aspire to a more shared division of caring and breadwinning roles than their parents did.

But how good are we at creating an environment in which hands-on fathering can flourish? This report introduces the Fairness in Families Index - the first attempt (not just in the UK, but anywhere in the world) to find out.

The index pulls together a broad range of indicators giving an insight into how fathers and mothers are sharing their parenting in 21 upper income countries – and the contexts in which they make their choices.

There are some measures which we have been obliged to miss out of the index because of lack of comparable data. Important among the omissions is the reality of how many men actually take significant periods of parental leave. This is difficult information to collect in a robust way from each of the study countries. For the purposes of this study we are limited to examining the systems of leave which make it possible for this to happen to varying extents in different countries. We would like to look in more detail at this and other questions in future versions of the index.

Even with the acknowledged gaps in our dataset, the basket of indicators we have been able to collect gives a convincing account of the legal, policy and personal situations in the 21 countries we looked at.

Governments might feel they have little control (or legitimacy) when trying to change what happens inside families. But they do have significant power over the framework within which families go about their daily business. From tax and benefits to maternity and paternity leave, public services and equalities legislation – and through policy design and implementation across the health, housing, education and welfare sectors - governments have a huge influence on fathers' and mothers' ability to share earning and caring roles. The configuration of multiple policy levers can either pave the way for social change to continue, or create barriers to the changes that people want to make in their own lives.

The Fairness in Families Index captures countries' attempts to establish frameworks which suit modern day family aspirations. Some have set out early and with a specific agenda. Sweden, top of the table, is committed to shared parenting, not just because of what parents want but also because it has a belief that shared parenting is good for children and relationships, coupled with a strong vision of gender equality. Other countries seem to be more in the mould of responding to what people appear to want, while some continue – intentionally or not – to deliver policies suited to traditional models of family life.

How does the UK fare?

The index suggests that the UK is lagging behind most upper-income countries in establishing a framework for parenting and earning to be shared. The Coalition's commitment to supporting shared parenting would imply that the UK should be moving up this FiFI league table over the next few years.

The fact that we start this journey in 18th place out of 21 shows that we have a lot of work to do. But the good news is, we know there are policy levers we can pull – to create a more equitable parental leave system, close the gender pay gap and develop more father-inclusive children's services – and there will be policy ideas to investigate from countries in the top half of the table.

Establishing a framework in the UK to support more egalitarian earning and caring will not be flying in the face of public opinion or personal aspiration – far from it. Study after study has shown that the old concepts of man as breadwinner and woman as home-maker are not at all what young couples aspire to – and enabling mums and dads to share roles and focus more effectively on both being great parents will be of huge benefit to children, especially those in more vulnerable families.

The Fatherhood Institute has done much over the last ten years to bring forward the evidence about how fathers impact on their children, and to advise policy makers and practitioners on the best ways to ensure that all children have the benefit of a positive father or father figure in their lives. A big part of our work is helping to remove the barriers to fathers engaging with services, finding flexibility at work, and having the the confidence to become a fully engaged parent. We look ahead with optimism to the next developments in the rise of the hands-on father.

Rob Williams
Chief executive,
The Fatherhood Institute

About the Fairness in Families Index (FiFI)

Across the world mothers and fathers, women and men, are expressing the desire to share care of their children, and providing for them, more equally[1].

UK RANKING: 18/21

To what extent are these aspirations being met? And what are governments doing to support, or undermine, the struggles of this new generation of parents?

The Fatherhood Institute's Fairness in Families Index (FiFI) has been established to find out. This is the first time an index has been constructed to measure the extent to which egalitarian parenting is possible cross-nationally. The Index consists of a compilation of research data relating to 21 industrialised countries, summarising how well they are doing in promoting and sustaining greater equality in men's and women's division of labour at home and in the paid workforce.

We have selected a range of measures – some assessing policy direction, some evaluating outcomes - which demonstrate at a glance how countries are faring. The indicators we have compiled demonstrate men's and women's positions relative to one another in the workplace and at home. We see the Index as an ongoing project, and look forward to expanding its scope, reach and depth in future years.

We have ranked our 21 countries on ten indicators of gender equality which affect fairness in families. These are:

- Gender equality in parental leave
- Gender pay gap
- Percentage of men in the part-time workforce
- Percentage of women sitting in parliament
- Percentage of women in management positions
- Percentage of children in lone parent families
- Percentage of GDP spent on childcare and education of children under 5
- Ratio of men's to women's time spent caring for children
- Ratio of men's to women's time spent on unpaid work
- Maximum FTE[2] leave available for fathers

The Fairness in Families Index: overall ranking on 10 indicators of gender equality

Overall rank	Country	Average ranking across 10 indicators
1	Sweden	4.00
2	Finland	4.90
3	Norway	5.00
4	Denmark	6.78
5	Portugal	7.44
6	Belgium	7.67
7	Greece	8.89
8	France	8.90
9	New Zealand	9.50
10	Italy	10.11
11	Netherlands	10.33
12	USA	10.44
13	Spain	10.50
14	Germany	10.80
15	Canada	11.50
16	Ireland	11.75
17	Australia	12.13
18	UK	12.20
19	Japan	13.25
20	Austria	14.43
21	Switzerland	15.71

By using OECD survey sources we have ensured comparability of data across countries, and although this has sometimes meant using older data than is available in individual countries, it means that our scores and rankings on FiFI are consistent and robust.

We calculated each country's average ranking across the ten indicators to arrive at the overall rank order of countries on FiFI, moving from the most equal, Sweden (average position 4th across all indicators), at the top of the Index to the least equal, Switzerland (average position between 15th and 16th across all indicators), at the bottom.

The Fairness in Families Index is not only a useful tool for assessing where we in Britain stand in enabling men and women to choose 'who does what', but also helps us identify significant areas in need of improvement and see where we should be going next to make the UK the most family-friendly country in Europe, as the Coalition government has pledged that we are to become. The UK's ranking, at 18 out of 21 countries examined, suggests that we have some way to go. The journey can begin with the Fairness in Families Index opening up debate as to what fairness could – or should – look like.

Why fairness in families matters

A growing body of evidence is showing that more 'egalitarian' partnerships (where the differential between the amount of 'cash' and 'care' that each parent contributes to the household is relatively small) are most satisfying to women and men, better for children and more stable over time[3]. The extent to which a country adopts policies and produces outcomes which are conducive to fairly shared parenting, is therefore a major factor in the quality of family lives and the health, happiness and achievement of today's children.

These days the breadwinner/homemaker model of full-time working father with mother at home looking after the children is a minority family form. Couples are more likely to comprise two parents working full-time, supported by an extensive childcare infrastructure (as is common in Scandinavian countries), or follow a pattern of one partner – usually the father – working full-time whilst the other – usually the mother – balances part-time work with a majority contribution to childcare, an arrangement prevalent in the Netherlands and the UK[4].

Why now?

High income countries across the world, as well as the European Union itself, are wrestling with gender issues in caring and earning – not least in the design of parental leave systems. Parental leave systems in individual countries have the potential to influence earning and caring patterns from the start of children's lives. As such, they are central to the assessment of fairness in families. Parents are entitled to an assortment of maternity, paternity and parental leave, and these entitlements are a key element in determining who cares and who earns from the beginning of a child's life. In the last five years many high income countries have adapted their systems of parental leave, often enhancing paternity leave entitlements, or allowing greater transferability of leave between parents. In this country, Additional Paternity Leave will come into force in 2011, and the Coalition has pledged to develop a flexible system of parental leave.

To what extent do different countries encourage flexibility in division of labour when children come along? How can we see patterns established early in children's lives playing out later, in more equal status of men and women at work and in more capacity for fathers as well as mothers to develop close caring relationships with their, children such that both parents participate substantially in family work and paid work? It is these questions which the Fairness in Families Index was designed to address, beginning with gender equality in parental leave (on page 8).

Notes

1. Gerson, K. (2010). The *Unfinished Revolution*. Oxford: Oxford University Press; Duncan, S., & Phillips, M. (2008). New families? Tradition and change in modern relationships. In *British Social Attitudes: the 24th Report*. London: published by Sage for NatCen; EHRC (2009) *Working better: meeting the needs of families, workers and employers in the 21st century.* London: Equalities and Human Rights Commission
2. FTE stands for full-time equivalent, whereby the pay for a duration of leave is calculated as the number of days/weeks the money would buy of average-waged full-time employment
3. For example: Craig & Sawriker (2006). in *Work and Family Balance: Transitions to High School*. Unpublished Draft Final Report, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales. found fathers more satisfied when they spent more time at home; and mothers more satisfied with housework share as they moved into doing more paid work; a Swedish study found that high take up of parental leave by Swedish fathers is linked to lower rates of separation /divorce, as is more equitable sharing, by a couple, of earning and caring roles: Oláh, L. (2001). Policy changes and family stability: the Swedish case. *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, 15, 118-134.

   Among cohabiting couples with newborns, both parents' beliefs that father-involvement is important plus fathers' actual involvement (measured in this study by regular nappy changing) were found to predict relationship stability Hohmann-Marriott, B (2006). *Father involvement and union dissolution in the United Kingdom and United States*. Pennsylvania State University Paper presented at the Fourth Conference of the European Network for the Sociological and Demographic Study of Divorce, Florence, Italy.
4. Although even in this model, fathers are, on average, far more involved at home than their own fathers were

FiFI INDICATOR ONE
Gender equality in parental leave

UK RANKING: 14/21

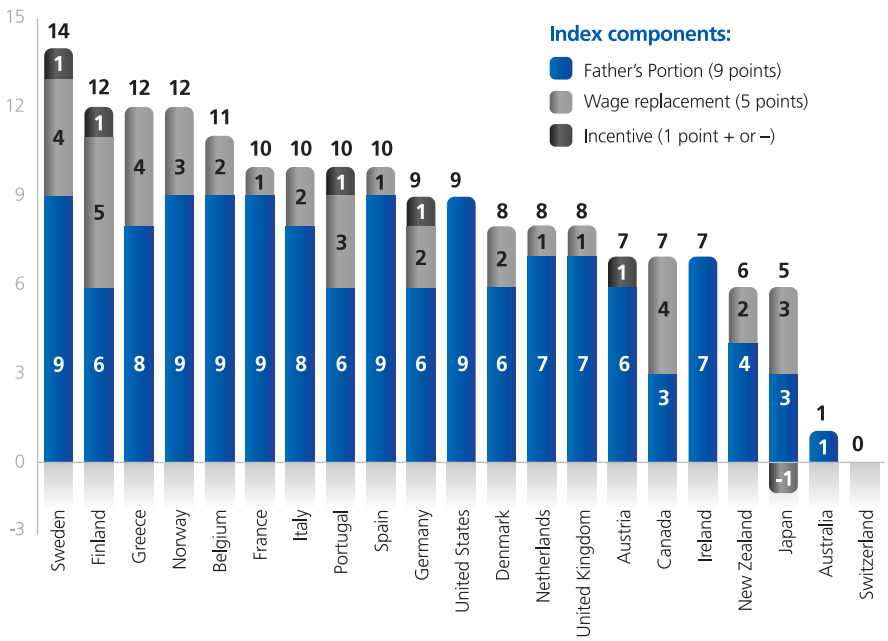
Choosing an indicator: representing complex parental leave systems

Parents' leave entitlements vary across countries in the extent to which the leave is distributed between mothers and fathers, and the extent to which it is transferable between them at different times after childbirth. As we are interested in the relative entitlements of men and women, it initially made sense to look at the comparison between maternity and paternity leave provision in each country. However, this strategy proved unsatisfactory as several countries (e.g. Germany and Italy) have no paternity leave, although men do have parental leave entitlements. When we use the term 'parental leave' we are often using it as an umbrella to cover maternity and paternity leave (granted to women only or men only at or immediately around the time of birth and in the case of women, to recover physically and breastfeed their infants) and parental leave (granted to either or both parents after the initial birth leaves have expired, and up to a variety of ages in childhood in different countries). Some confusion of terminology can arise because some countries use 'parental leave' to describe leave which can be used by either parent - or be transferred between them - in the post-birth period. We will distinguish between leave types as necessary.

The structure of paid leave varies enormously between countries, in terms of its duration; the proportion of wages paid; and the ceiling of earnings up to which it is paid. To complicate matters further, several leave systems contain specific incentives, whereby additional weeks of leave are awarded if couples share their entitlements in certain ways (notably if men take a given a number of weeks leave, the couple is awarded additional parental leave).

This complex picture means that comparing countries succinctly is a daunting task. Fortunately, we discovered that it had already been done by Ray, Gornick and Schmitt (2010) who constructed the Gender Equality Index from analysis of parental leave regimes in 21 developed countries. The Gender Equality Index looks at the portion of leave awarded to fathers; the wage replacement rate for fathers' leave and any incentives for fathers to take leave. Each component of the index is scored, and the figure below shows the results. In FiFI, the scores calculated by Ray et al (2010) are used as our indicator of gender equality in parental leave.

Gender Equality Index



Source: Authors' analysis Ray (2008), Ray et al (2008). Published in Ray, Gornick and Schmitt (2010). Who cares?: assessing generosity and gender equality in parental leave policy designs in 21 countries in Journal of European Social Policy, 0958-9287; Vol. 20(3): 196–216. Reproduced by kind permission of the authors.

Components of the indicator: accounting for complexities

The Gender Equality Index shows that countries can reach similar scores on gender equality in parental leave in different ways. Whilst Sweden stands out in first place in the Index (combining a generous portion of leave for fathers, a good level of wage replacement and additional parental leave should fathers use their entitlement) further down the Index countries bunch together with quite different strategies leading to the same score on overall equality of entitlement. For example, Finland scores weakly on leave reserved for fathers, but achieves a high score of 12, due to the generosity of wage replacement for parental leave (66% of salary), and built-in incentives to encourage men as well as women to use leave. Lower in the Index, the UK supersedes Finland's level of reserved leave for fathers, but the low pay and the lack of incentives for men to take it, keep us just below average on the Index score.

Many may be surprised to see Greece in the top four countries on this measure. This occurs because of the high level of wage replacement (57%), and the fact that the system allows men to take up to half of a couple's total leave entitlement. However, as Ray, Gornick and Schmitt (2010) point out, the Gender Equality Index does not reflect take-up. In our research to construct FiFI we confirmed that data on take-up is generally very weak cross-nationally, so for the moment at least it is appropriate to compare countries according to entitlement. Another issue which we have not accounted for on this indicator relates to coverage (the percentage of workers who are employed in establishments where they are covered by parental leave policies): in Greece, for example, high rates of self-employment and casual working mean that the proportion of fathers in covered establishments may be lower than elsewhere.

Sweden's wealth of equal parenting provision contrasts vividly with Switzerland's score of zero, calculated on the basis that there is no statutory paternity leave or parental leave at all in that country. Swiss mothers enjoy 16 weeks of employer-protected maternity leave if they are in insured employment for at least five months of their pregnancy.

A major barrier to paternity and parental leave-taking by fathers is the low level of wage replacement in many countries. In the UK the level of pay is set at below minimum wage levels for 2 weeks paternity leave following birth. Compared with the Scandinavian countries which score highly on Ray, Gornick and Schmitt's (2010) Gender Equality Index, and more widely on our Fairness in Families Index, our leave system is neither generous nor egalitarian. Compared with many of our European counterparts we have been slow to encourage men to take leave and to make leave for fathers financially viable. British mothers, by contrast, are entitled to a relatively long period of maternity leave (up to one year), with part of it at a good wage replacement rate. This means that the *difference* between men's and women's entitlements in the UK is particularly large, and this differential in entitlement acts as a major driver of gendered responsibility in earning and caring.

Linking parental leave and wider gender equality

Several countries have recently created more potential for egalitarian parenting through their leave systems. Germany has moved from a relatively conservative, mother-centred leave system, to a scenario where although there is no statutory paternity leave, fathers and mothers receive a 'sharing bonus' if *he* takes at least 2 months parental leave. The German system allows parents to take leave together or separately and to take it full-time over one year, or part-time over a longer period. This flexible approach opens up a wide range of choices in division of labour for parents and incentivises take-up by fathers. Although not included amongst our FiFI countries, it is worth mentioning the Icelandic experience, where an innovative approach to parental leave has apparently paid dividends in wider gender equity. Iceland reserves three months' leave for mothers and three for fathers, with a further three months to be used as suits – either his, hers or theirs. This 'parental leave' can be taken in one block, or half-time, or in several blocks up until the child is aged three. Alongside a large increase in the proportion of men taking leave (88.5 men for every 100 women in 2007; Icelandic men took about a third of all parental leave[6]) it is notable that Iceland has some of the best records in the world for sustaining breastfeeding; a high return-to-work rate for women and the greatest narrowing of the gender pay gap in 2009[7]. In 2009 the UK's gender pay gap actually widened, whilst British men take much less leave than Icelandic fathers. The gender pay gap is our second FiFI indicator, and on page we 10 look at how important it is in setting patterns for who earns and who cares.

Notes

5. This is the score on Ray, Gornick and Schmitt's (2010). Gender Equality Index. In Who cares?: assessing generosity and gender equality in parental leave policy designs in 21 countries. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 0958-9287; Vol. 20(3): 196–216.
6. Einarsdóttir, T. and Pétursdóttir, GM (2010). Iceland. Peter Moss (ed) *International Review of Leave Policies and Related Research 2010*. Employment Relations Research Series 115. Published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Available to download at http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/employment-matters/docs/i/10-1157-international-review-leave-policies.pdf .
7. Even though 36% of Icelandic mothers have returned to work by six months post partum, breastfeeding rates at that point are 74% O'Brien, M. (2009). Fathers and work-family friendly policies: taking stock of the evidence. Presentation at *Families in the balance: reconciling paid work and parenthood*. National Centre for Social Research: London 14 October 2009. In 2009, Iceland outstripped the rest of the world (including Norway and the other Scandinavian countries) in reducing the gender pay-gap; while Britain's gender pay-gap actually widened: Hausmann, R., Tyson, L.D., & Zahidi, S. (2009). *The Global Gender Gap Report 2009*. Geneva, Switzerland: World Economic Forum

FiFI INDICATOR TWO

Gender pay gap

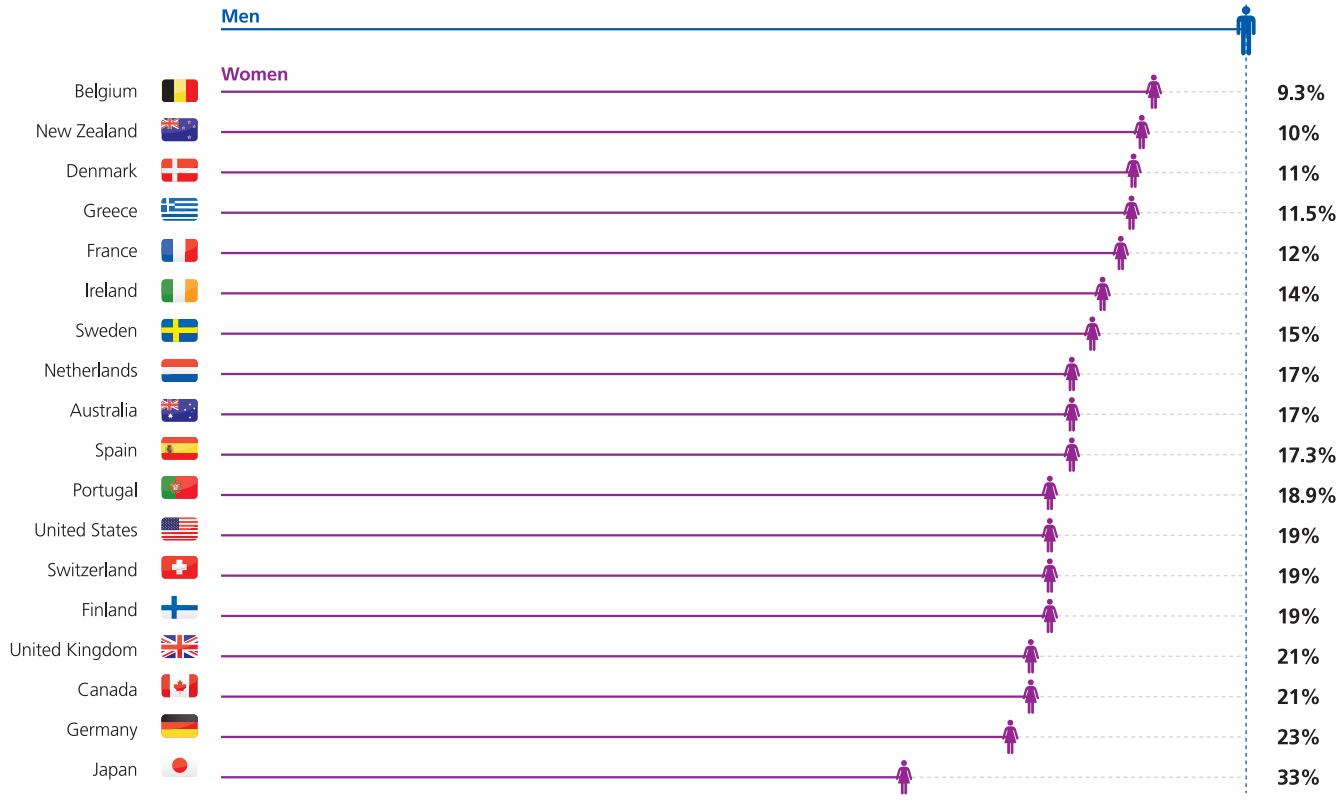
The gender pay gap describes the difference between average male and female earnings. It can be measured a number of ways, and we have chosen the OECD statistic, percentage difference in full-time median earnings between women and men, to gave us maximum cross-national coverage on our indicator. 'Full-time median earnings' is the average (midpoint) annual salary level for full-time employees.

UK RANKING: 15/18

The gender pay gap is an important factor to bear in mind when looking at the extent to which earning and caring can be fairly shared in families. In light of women's increased participation in the workforce and the passing of equal pay legislation in many nations, it is salutary to see that the narrowest gender pay gap (Belgium: 9.3% difference in earnings) is still approaching 10%. This gap between men's and women's earnings grows even larger if we look at evidence from longitudinal studies which measure earnings over time[9].

At 33%, Japan's gender pay gap is marked – with the biggest male/female differences occurring amongst the highest earners. This finding goes against the intuitive thought that better-educated, more highly paid women will be in more equal positions relative to men. In fact there is evidence that the trend of 'inequality at the top' occurs to some extent throughout the developed world. It is partly explained by minimum wage legislation amongst the lowest paid workers which narrows male/female earnings differentials for them.

Gender pay gap: percentage difference in FT median earnings between women and men[8]



No data for Norway, Austria or Italy

Even more important is the fact that women work across a narrower range of sectors than men in most countries, and are less likely to be in the highest-paid private sector jobs. The low standing of the UK on this indicator is a product of gendered patterns of employment across sectors. It may also be that our relatively high rates of part-time employment amongst women work to suppress full-time pay rates in female-dominated employment sectors (we explore the importance of gendered take-up of part-time jobs more fully with FiFI indicator 3 – see page 12). Large gender pay gaps lead to reinforcement of stereotyped roles (male breadwinner/female homemaker), especially when accompanied by parental leave systems which are gendered and poorly paid. When the mother's wage cannot replace the father's, this makes it more likely that couples will opt for mothers, rather than fathers, taking on the primary caring role in families. And this probably goes some way to explaining why women's careers are still more likely to be interrupted by parenthood than those of men.

A substantial gender pay gap isn't just bad for women and families, impacting as it does on women's pension entitlement and career advancement, and on society's return on investment in women's education and training; it impacts also on men who are forced - often unwillingly – into a primary breadwinner, secondary parenting role. These differing impacts influence a couple's ability to negotiate from positions of equal value and hence can influence relationship satisfaction. Should couples separate, the pattern is often set for even greater entrenchment of primary caring and primary earning along gender lines.

The economic realities of the gender pay gap go against the widely-held aspiration to share earning and caring. This is another reason why well-paid parental leave systems are so important in encouraging fairness in families, and in facilitating choice in roles both outside and inside the home. There is a link between men's take-up of leave and women's employment position: researchers in Sweden have shown that for every additional month of leave taken by a father, the annual income of the mother of his children increases by 7%[10].

This Swedish evidence relating take-up of parental leave by men to women's rates of pay suggests that it would be fruitful to improve the evidence base concerning take-up of leave in other countries, to see if the Swedish experience is part of a wider trend. If so, encouraging take-up of leave by men is a definite policy lever to press in order to enhance gender equality at work and in the home, throughout the developed world.

Of course, the relationship between the gender pay gap and men's entitlement to leave is not perfectly linear. The lack of convincing comparative data on take-up is an important gap in our knowledge. And there are other factors at work: for instance, it is noticeable that the more equitable Nordic countries that scored highly on our parental leave indicator are only middle-of-the road performers in terms of the gender pay gap. This seems to be because of quite highly gendered labour markets, where women's high employment rates are concentrated in public sector jobs with lower pay than the best of men's opportunities in private and more technical job sectors.

Notes

8. Source OECD Chart LMF1.5.A: Gender gap in median earnings of full-time employees, 2006 or latest year available Source: OECD Earnings database

   Raw data: downloaded from OECD Family Database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html as xcel spreadsheet 43199347[1].xls. Last accessed 5th November 2010

9. For example Rose, Stephen J and Hartmann, Heidi I (2004). *Still a Man's Labor Market: the long-term earnings gap.* Washington, DC: Institute for Women's Policy Research.(available to download at http://www.iwpr.org/pdf/C355.pdf) found that in the US, using a more inclusive 15-year time frame (1983-1998), and taking into account women's lower work hours and their years with zero earnings due to family care, this study finds that women workers, in their prime earning years, make only 38 percent of what men earn' (page 5) Last accessed 15th October 2010.

10. Johannson, E-A (2010). *The effect of own and spousal parental leave on earnings*. Working Paper 2010:4. Uppsala, Sweden: Institute of Labour Market Policy Evaluation.

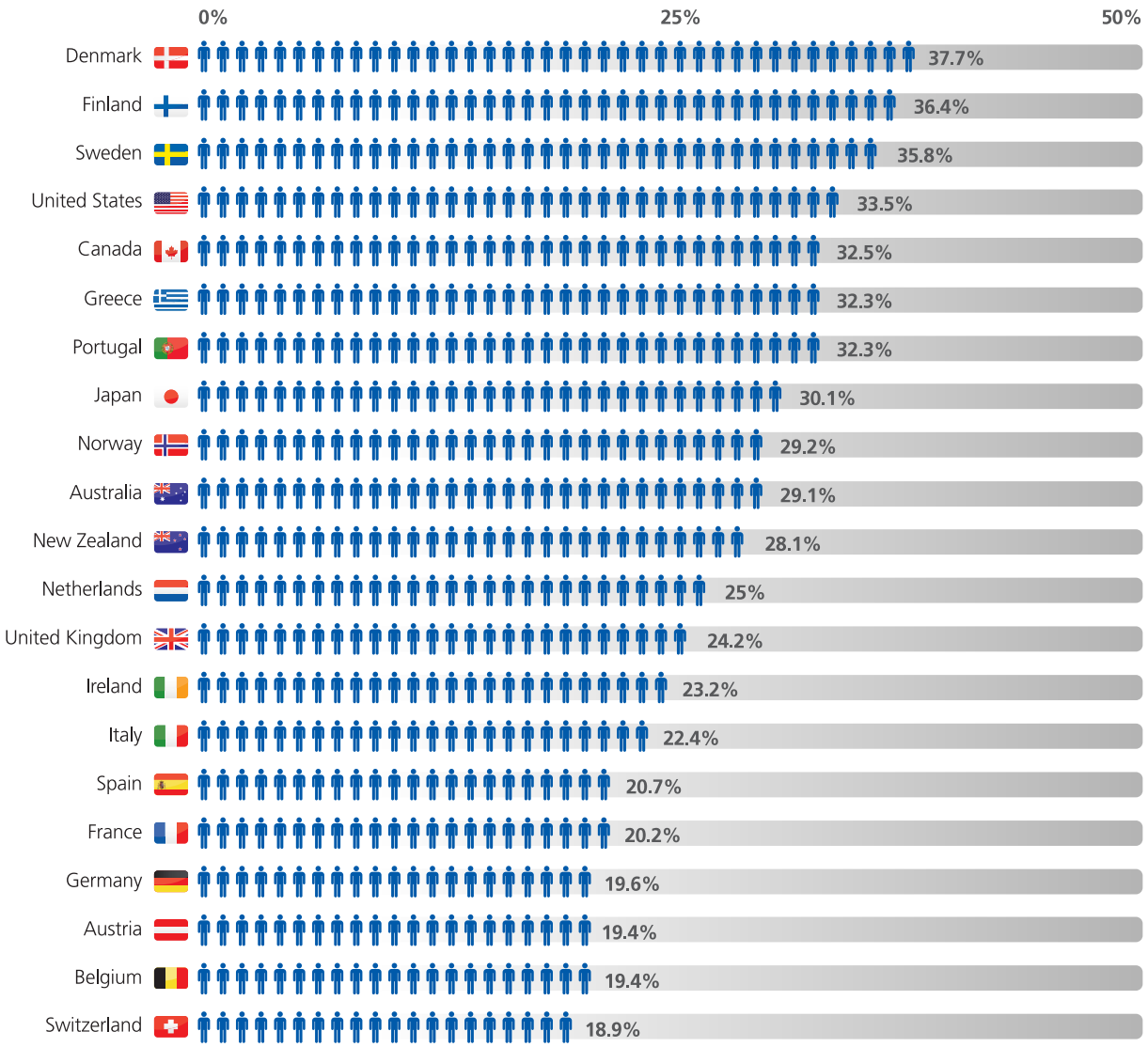
FiFI INDICATOR THREE

Men's percentage share of the part-time workforce

We decided to measure men's participation in the part-time workforce in the Fairness in Families Index because it raises interesting questions about gender equality in balancing work and care. It is still the case that parenthood is more widely associated with a reduction in working hours or a departure from the workforce for women and men.

UK RANKING: 13/21

Men's percentage share of part-time workforce[11]



Therefore charting gender differences in overall working hours would tell us little beyond common knowledge. The figures above show that men make up between roughly one fifth and just over one third of part-time workers in FiFI countries. This reflects the statistic that across all OECD countries on average one in four employed women and one in ten employed men work part-time.[12]

It is striking that the Nordic countries, with their relatively generous and flexible parental leave systems, have amongst the highest rates of part-time employment for men. Men make up 30%-40% of the part-time work force in Scandinavian countries, and while not all these men will be fathers of young children, included in this figure will be fathers using their paternity and parental leave entitlements to balance work and family life.

In the US and Canada, it is possible that higher proportions of male part-time workers are an artefact of more involuntary elements: the lack of social service provision outside of employer-insured schemes; a less regulated labour market and so on. However, the statistics showing American women's ability to attain management positions (FiFI indicator 5) and men's performance of unpaid work at home in the USA and Canada (FiFI indicator 9) show these countries faring well in terms of moving towards a fairer balance between men and women. Therefore the possibility of more North American men choosing to work fewer hours should not be entirely discounted – future FiFI research may re-visit these issues.

The key to a fairer picture in terms of take-up of part-time work is the extent to which women and men are able to move from part-time to full-time employment, and also the extent to which they face longer-term career penalties for opting to work part-time. It remains true that men are more likely to experience part-time working as transitional (moving back to full-time employment relatively quickly compared to women, or tapering hours until retirement). In different countries, the penalties for women's longer periods of part-time work vary (Fagan and Walarthy, 2007). OECD reports are unanimous that the UK shows signs of clearly gendered part-time working which results in persistent gender inequalities in our workforce[13]. Indeed, amongst parents of children aged up to 14 in 2007, other OECD data shows 55% of British mothers working less than 30 hours per week compared to only 4.3% of fathers. In Finland, the equivalent figures stand at under 10% of mothers and 2.9% of fathers – so the gender differential in working practices is much less. Unfortunately these statistics are not available for the majority of FiFI countries.

Arguably, fairness in families could better be secured in a future labour market where 'family-sized jobs' were a more normative expectation for all parents – fathers as well as mothers. In this model there would not be the dichotomy of opportunity which frequently still persists where parents choose between full-time and part-time work, with the latter posing challenges to career progression. A more flexible approach to employment hours across the lifecourse, combined with more flexible and long-term entitlements to parental leave, could transform the balance between mothers and fathers in the UK in their capacity to earn and care, and enable both to maintain rich and substantial relationships with their children, while also providing for them.

Notes

11. http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=FTPTC_I Incidence of FTPT employment – common definition By sex (2009)

    Data extracted 14 Sep 2010 09:44 UTC (GMT) from OECD.Stat Extracts.

12. OECD (2010). Position paper: *How good is part-time work?*. OECD: July 2010. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/15/16/45602882.pdf Last accessed 8th November, 2010.

13. Fagan and Walarthy (2007). *The role and effectiveness of time policies for reconciliation of care responsibilities.* Paper for OECD Working Party on Social Policy Seminar on Life risks, life course and social policy, June 2007, downloadable at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/47/57/38674910.pdf

    OECD (2002). Women and work: Who are they and how are they faring. *Employment Outlook 2002*. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/36/7/17652667.pdf

FiFI INDICATOR FOUR

Proportion of women sitting in parliaments

We have looked at the proportions of women in parliament in the countries on the Index because it acts as a useful measure of women's occupation of public roles in society, and also their ability to influence decisions and policymaking. Where women are well-represented in a parliament, it is often the case that issues related to fairness in families will come to the fore, given the history of gender differentiation in employment and family roles, and the contemporary desire for greater equality in those roles.

Our data shows that there is very wide variation in the proportion of women elected to parliament in FiFI countries: from between one in eight and just under one in ten for the countries at the bottom of the table, to approaching half in Sweden at the top. OECD researchers point out that women's political power is not dependent on the wealth of their country: indeed the USA lags conspicuously behind many less wealthy countries in the extent to which women have occupied senior office, and it is in lower and middle income countries that we find some of the best records in terms of women becoming leaders of nations[15].

One trend which does seem to have some bearing on the proportion of women in parliament is women's overall employment rate[16].

There does seem to be an association between women working at all, and their propensity to be elected representatives: so political representation of women goes alongside their occupation of an economic role.This relationship is reflected in our FiFI table, where we see the Nordic countries once again at the top, and where women's employment rates stand at between 69% and 75%. The gap between men's and women's employment rates is low in Scandinavia, standing between 4% and 8% for Sweden, Norway Finland and Denmark. By contrast, in Japan where only 9% of parliamentarians were women in 2005, the difference between men and women's employment rates in 2008 was over 20% and only 59.7% of women were working[17].

Our figures have come from the most recent data compiled and available through OECD, and in the time since 2005 several countries have held elections which led to the appointment of more women to positions of power. Notably Switzerland has recently found itself with a majority of women sitting on the Federal Council for the first time ever. Here in the UK we recently elected the highest proportion of women MPs ever (22%)[18] but the Coalition Cabinet has been criticised for being more dominated than in recent years by white males.

SWEDEN

RANK 1: 45.3%

BELGIUM

RANK 7: 34.7%

PORTUGAL

RANK 13: 21.3%

FRANCE

RANK 19: 12.2%

Notes

14. Raw data: downloaded from OECD Family Database www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html as excel spreadsheet 38181961(1).xls, , Last accessed 13th September 2010
15. http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/56/38172505.pdf OECD (2006). Brochure '*Women and Men in OECD countries*', page 22 Women in parliament. Last accessed 10th August 2010.
16. http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/18/56/38172505.pdf OECD (2006). Brochure '*Women and Men in OECD countries*', page 22 Women in parliament. Last accessed 10th August 2010.
17. OECD Chart LMF1.6.C: Gender differences in full-time employment rates, 2008 – figures for employment rates from xcel spreadsheet 43199375[1].xls downloaded via OECD Family database. http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

    Last accessed 5th November, 2010.
18. Source: House of Commons Information Office, Factsheet M4 Members Series, *Women in the House of Commons*. Revised June 2010. Available to download at http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-information-office/m04.pdf

UK RANKING: 15/21

NORWAY

RANK 2: 37.9%

FINLAND

RANK 3: 37.5%

DENMARK

RANK 4: 36.9%

NETHERLANDS

RANK 5: 36.7%

SPAIN

RANK 6: 36.0%

AUSTRIA

RANK 8: 33.9%

NEW ZEALAND

RANK 9: 32.2%

GERMANY

RANK 10: 31.8%

SWITZERLAND

RANK 11: 25.0%

AUSTRALIA

RANK 12: 24.7%

CANADA

RANK 14: 20.8%

UNITED KINGDOM

RANK 15: 19.7%

UNITED STATES

RANK 16: 15.2%

IRELAND

RANK 17: 13.3%

GREECE

RANK 18: 13%

ITALY

RANK 20: 11.5%

JAPAN

RANK 21: 9.0%

FiFI INDICATOR FIVE

Women in management positions

Another aspect of equality which is highly relevant to our Index is the extent to which working women are reaching more senior levels in their employer organisations. Women's propensity to reach management position reflects their ability to sustain employment, to obtain advancement and to have some control over workplace practices – all of which relate to their ability to balance work and family life, and hence to fairness in families. Ideally we would have liked to compare figures relating to mothers and fathers in management roles, but this is difficult to achieve easily for a large number of countries, and is another ambition for future roll-outs of the FiFI.

OECD published figures on the proportion of women and men in management positions in 2004. The country coverage on this indicator is not as full as we would have liked, and probably reflects the difficulties in standardising information about levels of seniority in employment across countries. This indicator measures people's own perception of their role, and whether they identify as managers - whether they do so varies a lot cross-nationally. For example, under 1% of Spanish women and only 2.5% of Spanish men report that they have management responsibilities, whereas the USA tops the table, with one in eight women saying they hold a management post (12.1%) and 15.6% of men saying the same. It is interesting to note that where there is more detailed comparative evidence concerning proportions of mothers in management, different patterns may emerge: Swedish researchers have shown that although more American than Swedish women are in management, a higher proportion of Swedish mothers are in managerial posts[20].

Based on the raw percentages of men and women reporting a management role, we calculated the ratio of women to men who said that they worked in management. This figure is the score for our indicator: just over three-quarters as many women as men describe themselves as managers in the USA, whilst in Denmark, at the bottom of the table, only one-third as many women (0.35) as men say that they have management responsibilities. We were interested in the ratio because it summarises how well women are progressing in the paid workforce relative to men within countries, and allows us to take at face value the reports of men and women in identifying themselves as managers, without having to account for the cultural differences which make the raw numbers so varied.

It is interesting that the Scandinavian countries, which present the most equal picture in terms of employment rates of men and women, fare worse on this indicator of in-work responsibility. This may be another indication of the persistent gender segregation in the Nordic countries' workforce: women tend to be employed in a narrower range of jobs than men, often in the public rather than the private sector.

Ireland's high performance on this indicator may be associated with the rapid growth of the female labour force during the 'Celtic Tiger' years of the 1980s and 1990s. The UK also ranks quite highly in terms of women in management positions relative to men, and this provides some encouragement in terms of gender equality at work, given the disadvantageousness of part-time working discussed under indicator number 4.

Overall it is clear that in all countries we still have some way to go before women's likelihood of progression in the workplace is the same as men's. Even in the top scoring nation on this indicator (the USA), women are between a quarter and a fifth less likely to be in management than men, and therefore have less control over what they do at work and how they work, both of which may be important factors influencing job retention when they become parents. The figures also mean that men are disproportionately in higher level roles at work which often make high levels of involved parenthood more difficult as there has historically been less flexibility and longer working hours in more senior roles. The extent to which women's greater equality at work in different countries may be balanced by greater participation by men in unpaid work and in childrearing, or by an infrastructure of affordable child care available to both working parents – or, indeed, both these things – is a question to be addressed more thoroughly in future versions of the Index.

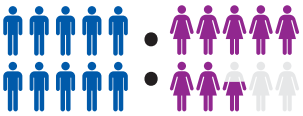
UK RANKING: 5/15

RATIO OF MEN TO WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS[19]

UNITED STATES

RANK 1: 1 : 0.77

IRELAND



RANK 2: 1 : 0.76

FRANCE

RANK 3: 1 : 0.70

PORTUGAL

RANK 4: 1 : 0.57

BELGIUM

RANK 5: 1 : 0.52

UNITED KINGDOM

RANK 5: 1 : 0.52

SWEDEN

RANK 7: 1 : 0.50

FINLAND

RANK 8: 1 : 0.44

NORWAY

RANK 9: 1 : 0.43

GREECE

RANK 10: 1 : 0.42

ITALY

RANK 11: 1 : 0.41

GERMANY

RANK 12: 1 : 0.40

NETHERLANDS

RANK 13: 1 : 0.38

SPAIN

RANK 14: 1 : 0.36

DENMARK

RANK 15: 1 : 0.35

Notes

19. Raw data: downloaded from OECD Family Database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html as xcel spreadsheet 38181961(1).xls, , Last accessed 13th September 2010

20. Magnus Henrekson and Mikael Stenkula (2009) found that 43% of American managers are women, compared to 32% of Swedish managers. However, only half (51%) of the American women managers are mothers, compared to 88% of the Swedish women managers. So overall, 28% of management positions in Sweden are held by mothers, and only 22% of American managers are mothers. See Magnus Henrekson and Mikael Stenkula (2009) *Why Are There So Few Female Top Executives in Egalitarian Welfare States*? FN Working Paper No. 786, 2009. Stockholm: Research Institute of Industrial Economics.

FiFI INDICATOR SIX

Percentage of children living in lone parent households

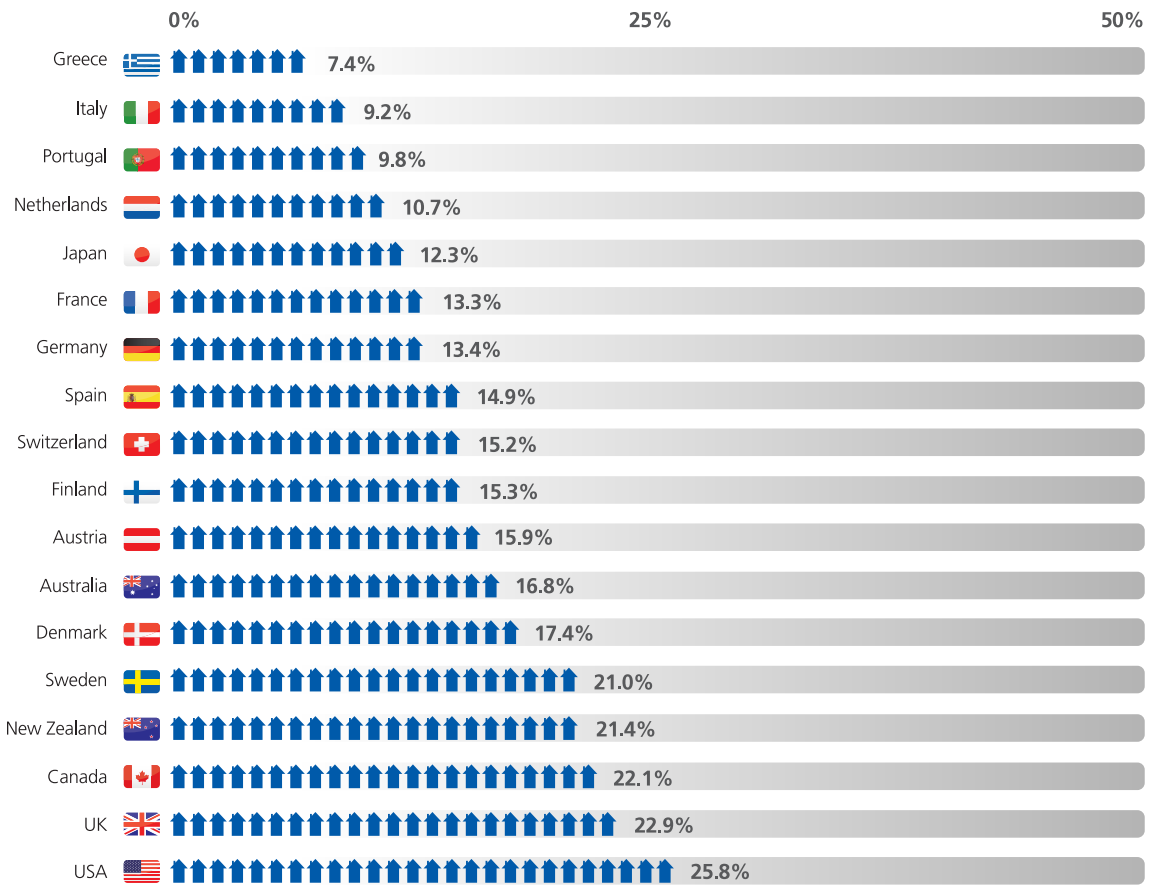
There are a number of reasons why high rates of lone parenthood should be of interest to anyone looking at fairness in families. Non-residence with a child is the single greatest predictor of low father or mother involvement[22]; and in many countries lone parenthood is associated with family poverty. Across the OECD only 15% of lone parent households are male-headed[23] and on average in the EU, 14% of children live with their mother only, compared with only 2% of children in father-only households.[24]

This means that substantially more mothers than fathers suffer disproportionate parenting overload and possibly poverty; and substantially more men than women face the loss of quality relationships with their children. We have placed countries with the lowest proportions of children in lone parent households at the top of the table, as parents have greater potential to share earning and caring under one roof when in intact relationships.

There are of course many cultural, social and legal factors to bear in mind when comparing rates of lone parenthood across countries. In the Mediterranean countries, with their strong religious heritage and family-oriented societies, we are less likely to see parents split up than in the Nordic, middle European and Anglo Saxon countries, which are more secular societies where divorce and births outside marriage have been more widely tolerated for longer.

UK RANKING: 17/18

Percentage of children in lone parent households (OECD)[21]



Indeed, the Nordic countries fall mostly in the most negative half of the table on this measure, perhaps partly because of the prevalence of cohabitation, which has higher breakdown rates than formal marriage, even where it is a majority practice. This is especially relevant because at least half of births occur outside marriage in Scandinavia.

However, not all lone parenthood is the same: a so-called lone parent can be solely responsible for the children for between 100% and 50% of the time. Clearly where there are higher rates of shared parenting across households, there is greater fairness in families. Shared parenting across households is likely to be more prevalent in countries where shared residence agreements are more widespread following divorce or separation.

In Sweden after their parents' separation, one child in three lives with both their parents in a 30% - 50% split. That's three times the number in the UK, where only 11% of separated parents share the care of their children to that extent. What this means is that although Sweden and the UK score close to each other in percentages of lone parent families, Swedish parents' experience is of far greater fairness in separated families. It is likely that the extensive paternity and parental leave available to men in Sweden translates not only to greater father-child involvement before separation but also afterwards – and indeed there is evidence that Swedish fathers who have taken parental leave tend to see more of their children after separation and divorce[25].

In the UK, where we have weak paternal leave entitlements, and high rates of lone parenthood (with relatively low levels of post-separation shared parenting) we also have a family justice system which is currently under review, at least in part due to demand for more egalitarian models of post-separation parenting. It is striking that in the UK fathers are participating more and more in their children's lives[26], but that post-separation the rates of shared residence remain so low.

An important aspect of fairness in families is that men's caring role is not routinely overlooked post-separation, and that services consider fathers as sources of support for mothers and children, whether they live with their children full-time or not. In future development of the Index we would like to include an indicator on patterns of residence/ how substantial shared residence arrangements are, after separation and divorce.

In the USA, where over a quarter of children live in lone parent households we have to ask why rates of relationship breakdown are so high for parents. Perhaps relative prosperity and high employment rates among women make the decision to live across households easier financially for some groups. However the prevalence of lone parent households in America's most disadvantaged communities, suggests that poverty remains a issue in family fairness, working both to put women residing with their children at risk of bearing childcare responsibilities disproportionately and being trapped in poverty, and constraining non-resident fathers from being able to easily fulfil a meaningful role in their children's lives.[27]

Notes

21. OECD Family database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

    OECD - Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Document SF1.2 *Children in Families* Table SF1.2A: Distribution of children aged 0-14 by household type, most recent year. Last updated 01/07/2010 Last accessed 3rd November, 2010
22. Flouri, E. (2005). *Fathering & Child Outcomes*. Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons.
23. OECD (2010). *Gender Brief Version: March 2010*, page 5. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/23/31/44720649.pdf Last accessed 5th November, 2010
24. OECD Family database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

    Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, Document SF1.3 *Living arrangements of children*. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/63/5/41919559.pdf Last accessed 3rd November, 2010.
25. Duvander, Ann-Zofie and Ann-Christin Jans (2009). *Consequences of Fathers' Parental Leave Use: Evidence from Sweden' Stockholm Research Reports in Demography_2008:9*. Stockholm: Stockholm University, Department of Sociology, Demography Unit. Available to download at http://www.suda.su.se/SRRD/SRRD_2008_9.pdf. Last accessed 5th November 2010.
26. Fisher, K., McCulloch, A. & Gershuny, J. (1999). *British fathers and children*. Working Paper. University of Essex: Institute for Social and Economic Research. – fathers spent 800% more time caring for children in 1997 than in 1975.
27. Tamis-LeMonda and McFadden (2010) show that in America's most deprived communities, non-resident fathers' own poverty limits their ability to contribute to children living elsewhere. Such fathers are often well-motivated and do contribute to their children's lives - but this can be impaired by worklessness or long working hours in poorly paid jobs. Low levels of education may make it harder for these fathers to negotiate co-parenting arrangements. See Tamis-LeMonda, Catherine S and Karen E McFadden (2010). Fathers from low-income backgrounds: myths and evidence in Lamb, Michael (ed) *The role of the father in child development*, 5th edition, Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley and sons. for a full discussion of this topic.

FiFI INDICATOR SEVEN

Percentage of GDP spent on childcare and education for the under-fives

A government's spend on services for young children is an important element in support for egalitarian parenting. If men and women are to divide earning responsibilities, there needs to be an infrastructure of care provision for children which can fit around parents' working hours and ideally accommodate flexible working arrangements.

State provision of such services is the most efficient way of ensuring affordability of care and education, so this indicator demonstrates a commitment to supporting both parents as earners. In future it may be pertinent to explore the issue of coverage of publicly-funded childcare in different countries.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Nordic countries are all in the top five on this indicator. There is an explicit commitment to gender equality in much of their policy formation, and facilitating women's employment through childcare provision is a key part of this.

Furthermore, there is an ethos in Scandinavia that sees children's participation in high-quality group childcare and education as beneficial to them and as a means of reducing social inequalities. It is also regarded as society's – not just parents' – responsibility to socialise children through such high-quality state-funded services – an ethos which is more difficult to achieve in countries with diverse and less regulated private provision. State-funded services in Scandinavia tend to be universally used, with the expectation that non-working as well as working mothers and fathers will take up places, at least part-time. In Sweden in particular there is incentivisation of a family model where both parents work full-time and use full-time subsidised childcare places[29].

France also scores highly on this indicator, having preserved a high rate of publicly-funded childcare, arising from a long history of government intervention to maintain and/or increase birth rates and enable employees to balance work and family life. The UK sits at OECD average level on this indicator, with a proportion of GDP spend standing at 0.6%. This is half the proportion spent in Denmark in this area, and illustrates the relatively high investment in young children through care and education in the Nordic states.

If we compare countries at the top and bottom of this table there does again appear to be a connection with women's employment rates. Countries such as Portugal and Greece, which score well elsewhere on FiFI, invest less in children's services. Whilst Portugal has rates of women's employment of around the OECD average level, in Greece female employment rates are much lower, with roughly half of women working. Employment rates will continue to be influenced by education and service provision throughout children's lives: in Germany, for example, half-day schooling is one reason for mothers' relatively low labour force participation. A fair model for integrating employment and childcare in families requires that both fathers and mothers can maintain employment and accommodate the schedule of their children's schooling and/or make use of affordable support to do so.

In a recent article exploring gender gaps in employment throughout Europe, Katrin Bennhold[30] has argued that one of the most effective strategies for Southern Europe in overcoming the effects of recession would be to mobilise the untapped female workforce: closing the gender employment gap would raise GDP substantially[31]. She cites evidence from Germany which suggests that the costs to government of public childcare are rendered neutral or better by the tax take of women returning to work as a result[32]. It therefore appears that there is a strong economic incentive for governments to support child welfare and gender equality through subsidised childcare and education.

Notes

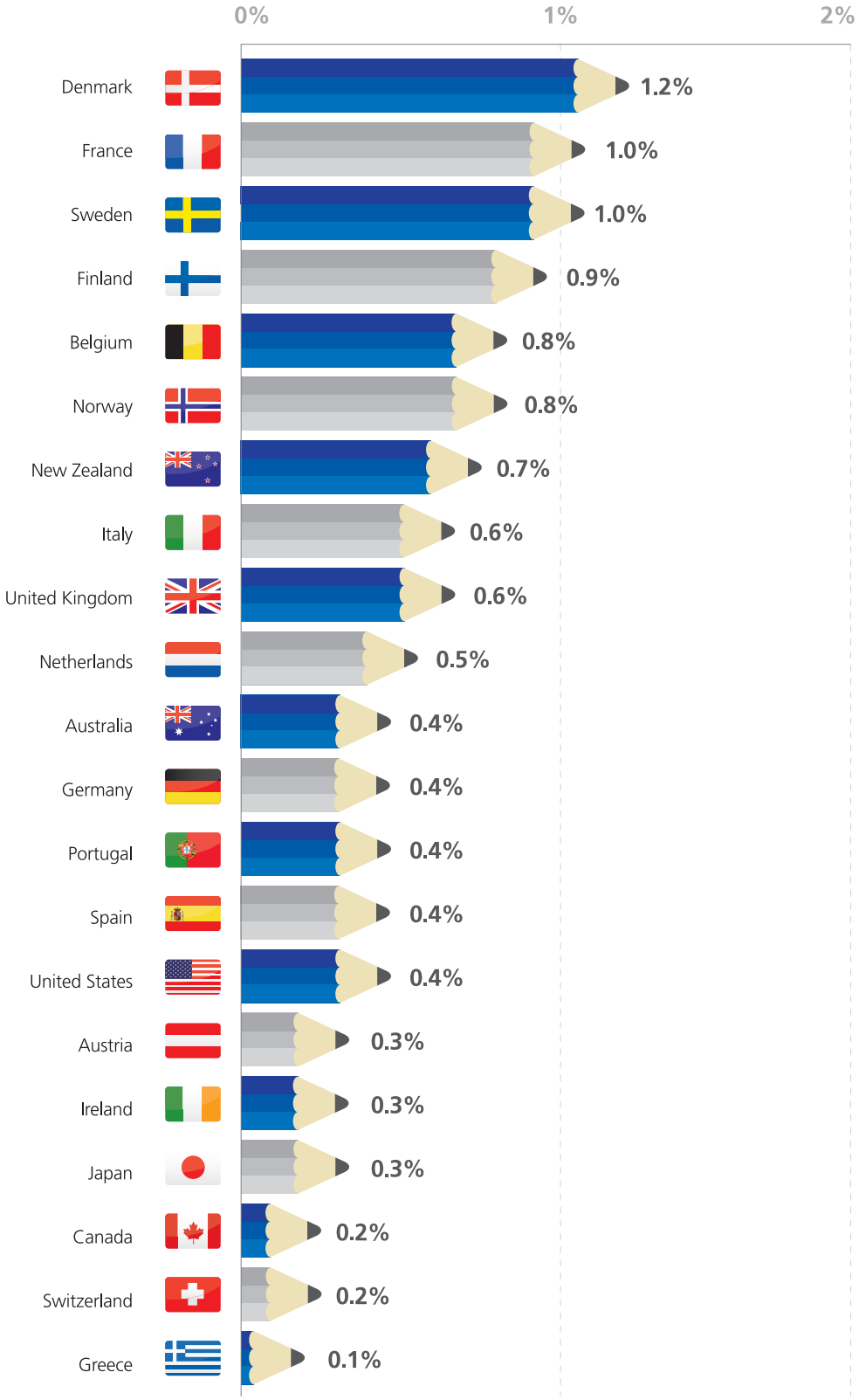
28. OECD Family database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

    Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, Document PF3.1 *Public spending on childcare and education*. Last updated 01/07/2010. Last accessed 5th November 2010. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/45/27/37864512.pdf

    Raw data downloaded from OECD family database as xcel spreadsheet 38954032[1].xls. Last accessed 14th September 2010.
29. Duvander Ann-Zofie and Ferrarini, Tommy (2010). Conflicting Directions? Outcomes and New Orientations of Sweden's Family Policy. SPADE WP 2010:4, Stockholm University. Available to download at: http://www.su.se/pub/jsp/polopoly.jsp?d=12097&a=53788. Last accessed 19th November, 2010.
30. Bennhold, K (2010). The High Cost of Machismo, published in The New York Times: Articles selected in association with The Observer. Observer, Sunday 10.10.2010
31. Bennhold, K (2010). op.cit. cites evidence from Kevin Daly (economist, Goldman Sachs) that closing the gender employment gap would raise GDP by 13% across the Eurozone and up to 20% in Southern Europe
32. Bennhold, K (2010). op.cit., 'a 2002 study by the German Bundesbank found that public investment in childcare on balance increased government revenues as more mothers returned to work'

UK RANKING: 9/21

Percentage of GDP spent on childcare and education for the under-fives[11]



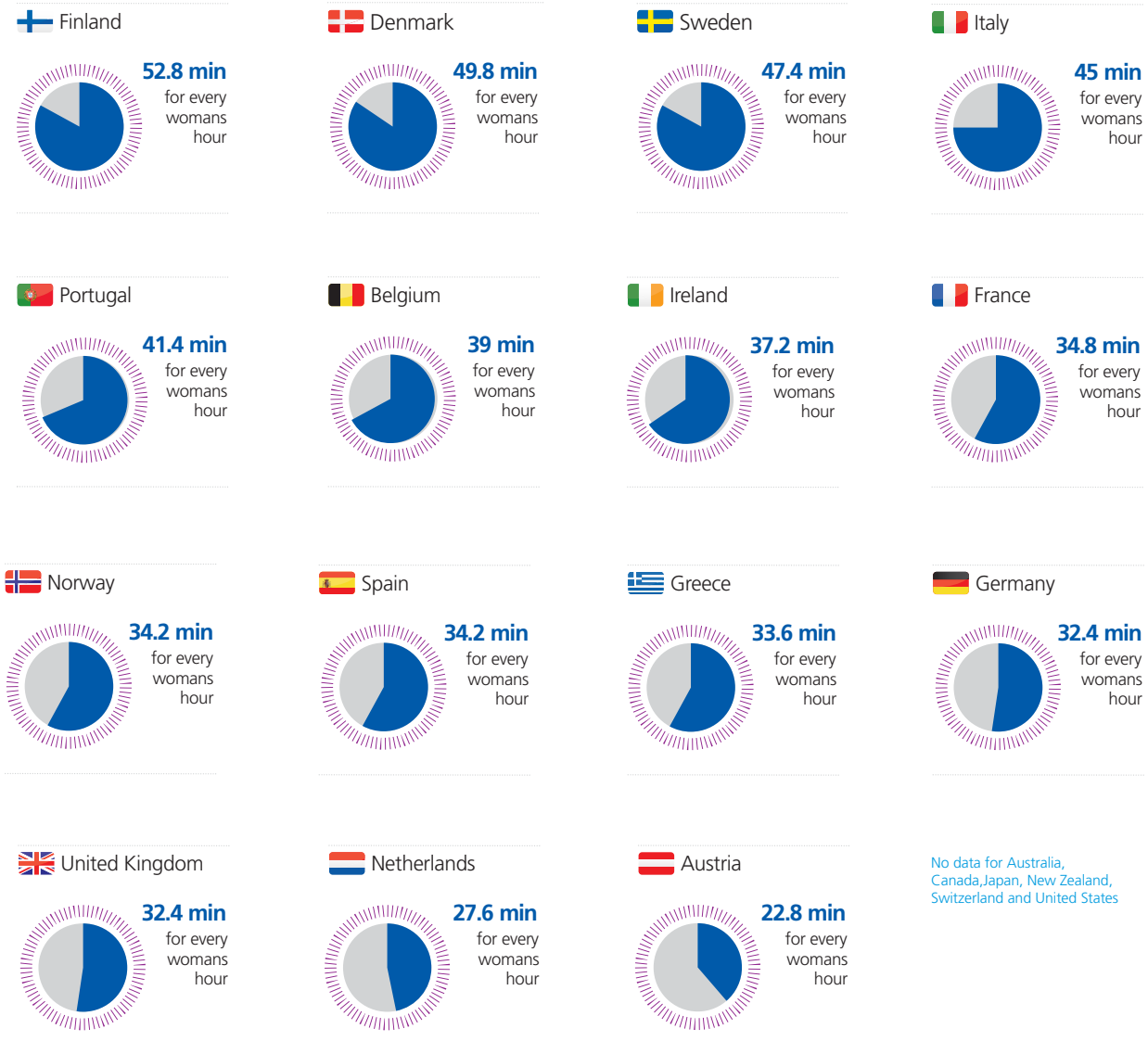
FiFI INDICATOR EIGHT

Men's and women's time spent on childcare

So far we have looked mainly at the public aspects of fairness in families and the extent to which policies may underpin women's capacity to earn and to sustain employment. In Fairness in Families indicators 8 and 9 we address the crucial issue of how work in the home is divided between men and women, looking at the extent to which men are sharing childcare responsibilities and other unpaid work with women.

UK RANKING: 13/15

Ratio men's: women's average weekly hours spent caring for and educating children (OECD, 2007)[33]



No data for Australia, Canada,Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland and United States

The data on childcare and housework comes from time use surveys, and there are often complexities in ensuring comparability between surveys in different countries. There was no one dataset which contained comparable evidence on childcare time from all our FiFI countries and so we used the best balance of consistency and coverage easily available, the OECD data for 2007, which is not available for Switzerland or the non-European countries in our index.

It has been clear for some time that men's involvement in childcare has been increasing. UK research shows that fathers today spend eight times more time with their children than was the case 30 years ago[34]. If we are to achieve a truly equal picture in terms of earning and caring amongst mothers and fathers, this increase is not only desirable but required, in order that women's opportunities outside the home are not hampered by lack of help within it. And if men are to get the more equal partnerships with women to which they aspire, and the closer relationships with their children to which they also aspire – and which improve outcomes for all the family – then more of their time should be invested in childcare.

This indicator shows Finland, Sweden and Denmark clearly heading the table, with fathers spending well over 45 minutes with children, for every hour spent by mothers. This contrasts with Austria at the bottom, where men spend just over 22 minutes of time in childcare for each hour given by mothers. This means that Austrian women still do nearly three times as much with their children as Austrian men, who spend half as much time caring as fathers in the three Scandinavian countries. Future FiFI research might also examine why Norway's performance in terms of fathers' caring for children appears to lag behind the other Scandinavian countries – it may be that changes in parental leave legislation there more recently will have an impact on future participation in childcare by men[35].

It should be said that even in a group of countries restricted to Europe alone, there are clearly different social and cultural factors bearing on the time spent with children by parents, whether mothers or fathers. The absolute amount of time spent caring for children varies immensely between countries. For example, in near equal Finland, fathers spend 15 hours per week caring for children compared to women's 17, while in Austria at the bottom of the table men spend 11 hours per week compared to women's 29. That means that not only is the Austrian picture less equal, but the total average time spent caring for children by either parent is eight hours longer (40 hours per week compared to 32).

In the UK and Ireland, total childcare time is longer still, standing at 54 hours divided 19:35 between men and women in the UK, and 52 hours divided 20:32 between Irish fathers and mothers. However, the relationship between total time spent caring for children and the equality of division of labour between parents is not linear: in Sweden men's and women's average weekly hours spent on childcare add together to 59 hours, but the 26:33 ratio means that men are doing nearly 80% as much as women, compared to 54% in the UK.

These large differences in the amount of time spent with children, and the distribution of who does what, warrant further investigation. We are still not at a stage where any country has reached a 50:50 split in terms of the likelihood of children being cared for by their mothers and their fathers. It may be that by understanding better the differences between countries, in terms of how total care time is influenced by childcare options, employment trends and cultural factors, we will gain a better appreciation of what fairness in families looks like, and how it is affected by public policy and social values.

Notes

33. Raw data for caring for and educating children – downloaded as xcel spreadsheet 43199651[1].xls Chart LMF 2.5 D via OECD family database http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

34. Fisher, K., McCulloch, A. & Gershuny, J. (1999). *British fathers and children*. Working Paper. University of Essex: Institute for Social and Economic Research.

35. In 2009 Norway's 'Daddy Month' (which had already increased to 6 working weeks or 30 days) of parental leave was extended to 10 weeks. For more information on how Norway's leave compares to other Nordic countries see Ann-Zofie Duvander (2009). Nordic mothers and fathers on leave: towards equal sharing in Erla Sigurðardóttir (ed) *Parental leave, Care Policies and Gender Equalities in the Nordic Countries Conference arranged by the Nordic Council of Ministers21-22 October 2009, Reykjavik, Iceland*. Available to download at http://www.norden.org/en/publications/publications/2010-539.

    Also Peter Moss (ed) (2010) Employment Relations Research Series 115. Published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. Available at http://www.bis.gov.uk/assets/biscore/employment-matters/docs/i/10-1157-international-review-leave-policies.pdf – both sources note that Norwegian fathers' leave is now moving in the direction of more individual entitlement, having been more dependent on mothers' employment status than in the other Nordic countries.

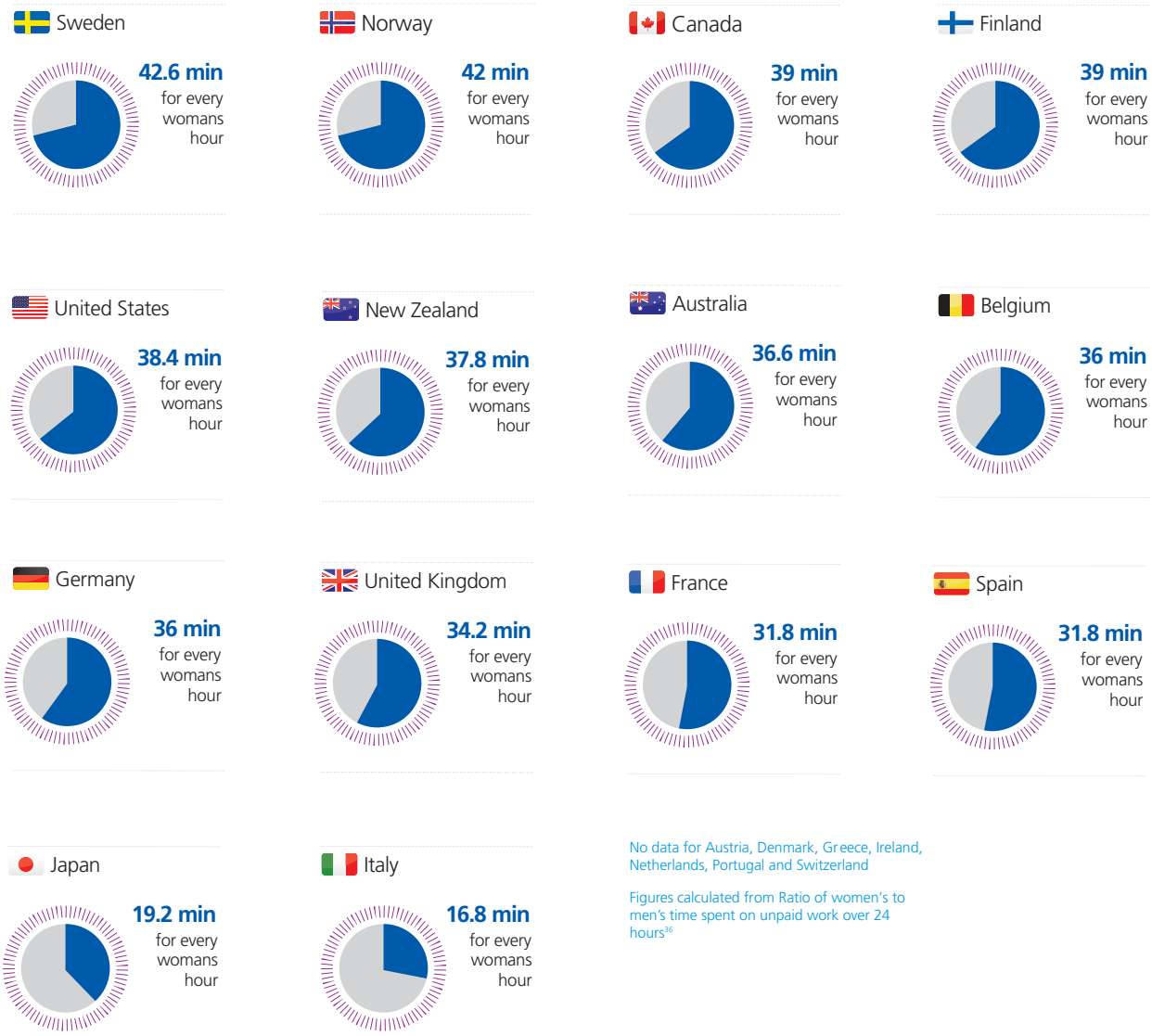
FiFI INDICATOR NINE

Men's and women's time spent on unpaid work

Like childcare, unpaid work in the home is an activity which has been highly gendered in the past and which can impede women's ability to work outside the home if there is little compensatory support from the men with whom they live.

UK RANKING: 10/14

Men and women's time spent on unpaid work



No data for Austria, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal and Switzerland

Figures calculated from Ratio of women's to men's time spent on unpaid work over 24 hours[36]

The evidence presented here again comes from OECD compilation of time use surveys, this time pertaining to a different subset of countries in the FiFI group. The definition of unpaid work includes household chores, shopping, cleaning, and repair work and does not 'double count' childcare. Neither does unpaid work here include care for the elderly or disabled relatives – in future work with the FiFI, given the historically gendered nature of this work, and its growing significance in ageing societies, we may endeavour to explore this as well.

It is immediately noticeable that the overall position in terms of fairness in families is slightly less equal with respect to housework than it is for childcare. On average men are spending 57% of the time spent by women on unpaid work, compared with their spending 63% of the time that women spend on childcare. So whilst strides have been made both in terms of active fatherhood and in men's participation in the daily business of household management/chores, both are still done more by women.

In some countries the difference between men's relative time spent on childcare and housework is very pronounced: it is striking that Italian men perform three quarters as much childcare as women, but only just over a quarter as much unpaid work at home, which suggests that gender roles remain quite strongly defined when it comes to household chores, but that a family-centred culture has perhaps reinforced the importance of fatherhood. Furthermore, at 22%, Italian women's time spent on unpaid work per day is unusually high – perhaps indicating more time spent on food preparation or less use of labour-saving devices than in other countries.

Scandinavian countries again come out on top in terms of a more equal division of unpaid household work between men and women – but even here the proportion of men's time devoted to chores compared to women's (under three quarters as much time) is less impressive than the comparative contribution of men to childcare, but quite impressive given the men's greater time spent in paid work. The evidence may also be reflecting generational differences in participation in domestic work, for whilst time use data related to childcare is limited to parents, data on unpaid work is collected on all adult households.

This may mean that the evidence here is underestimating the contribution of today's fathers to housework. On the other hand, fatherhood is concentrated in the period of life when men are likely to be working the longest hours, and so their out-of-work time may be prioritised towards their children rather than to domestic chores. Anecdotally at least, this is a recognisable picture.

With the exception of Japan and Italy, who appear as outliers at the bottom of the table with men devoting only around 6% of their time to unpaid household work, unpaid household work accounts for 9-11% of men's time internationally, compared to a dominant pattern of 14-17% for women. Until these figures move a little closer together, the traditional picture of women spending more out-of-work time on unpaid work and less time than men in employment or leisure will be difficult to erode completely - and children will continue to grow up seeing cleaning up as women's work.

Notes

36. OECD Family database
http://www.oecd.org/document/4/0,3343,en_2649_34819_37836996_1_1_1_1,00.html

OECD - Social Policy Division - Directorate of Employment, Labour and Social Affairs Document LMF2.5: *Time use for work, care and other day-to-day activities*. Data from most recent year available. Last updated 01/07/2010. Available to download at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/1/50/43199641.pdf Last accessed 5th November 2010.

FiFI INDICATOR TEN

Maximum full-time equivalent paid leave for fathers

Item 10 on the Fairness in Families Index brings us full-circle, back to the issue of parental leave and gender with which we began. Here, having looked at indicators which examine women's public activities and men's contributions in the private sphere of home, we return to a policy mechanism which has the potential to tilt the balance in favour of egalitarian parenting: namely the amount of leave that fathers specifically can take to support mothers and children at birth and beyond.

Using calculations by Ray, Gornick and Schmitt (2010) which show the maximum entitlement available through both paternity and parental leave for fathers in each country, we can see in this map that the picture is a highly uneven one, with five countries granting no paid leave whatsoever to fathers, and a huge range of entitlement in the remaining countries, from 0.4 weeks in the UK and the Netherlands (2 days of FTE[38] paid leave) to 40 weeks of FTE paid leave in Sweden. The UK actually provides 2 weeks paid paternity leave, but the level of pay is well below even minimum wage levels, so the FTE is equivalent to only 2 days at average full-time wages. Clearly, Sweden and Norway lead the field by some distance in this respect, but it is interesting to see that Germany and Japan, two countries whose policies have until recently been traditional in their approach to gender in families, appear quite high in this table. In Japan, during the first year of a child's life there is 52 weeks of parental leave which can be taken by either parent, paid at 30% of wage replacement. Again we must acknowledge that these figures do not tell us about take-up rates of leave by fathers in the different countries, and improving our knowledge in this respect is a key issue for future versions of the Fairness in Families Index.

As already outlined, the issue of the amount of paid leave available to fathers to care for babies and children is central to the encouragement of a greater balance of earning and caring roles for mothers and fathers. Throughout the items on the Fairness in Families Index it has become clear that neither gender equality in parenting nor in employment has been attained, even in the most progressive countries of the Nordic region of Europe. The truth remains that in the majority of families, men are higher earners than women, particularly after they become fathers, and more likely to work in better-paid sectors of the labour market, whilst women tend to earn less to start with – a situation that often becomes more pronounced after childbirth - when they also reconcile any paid work with greater responsibility for childcare. Against this background, *unpaid* leave for fathers is unlikely to change any unfairness in families today.

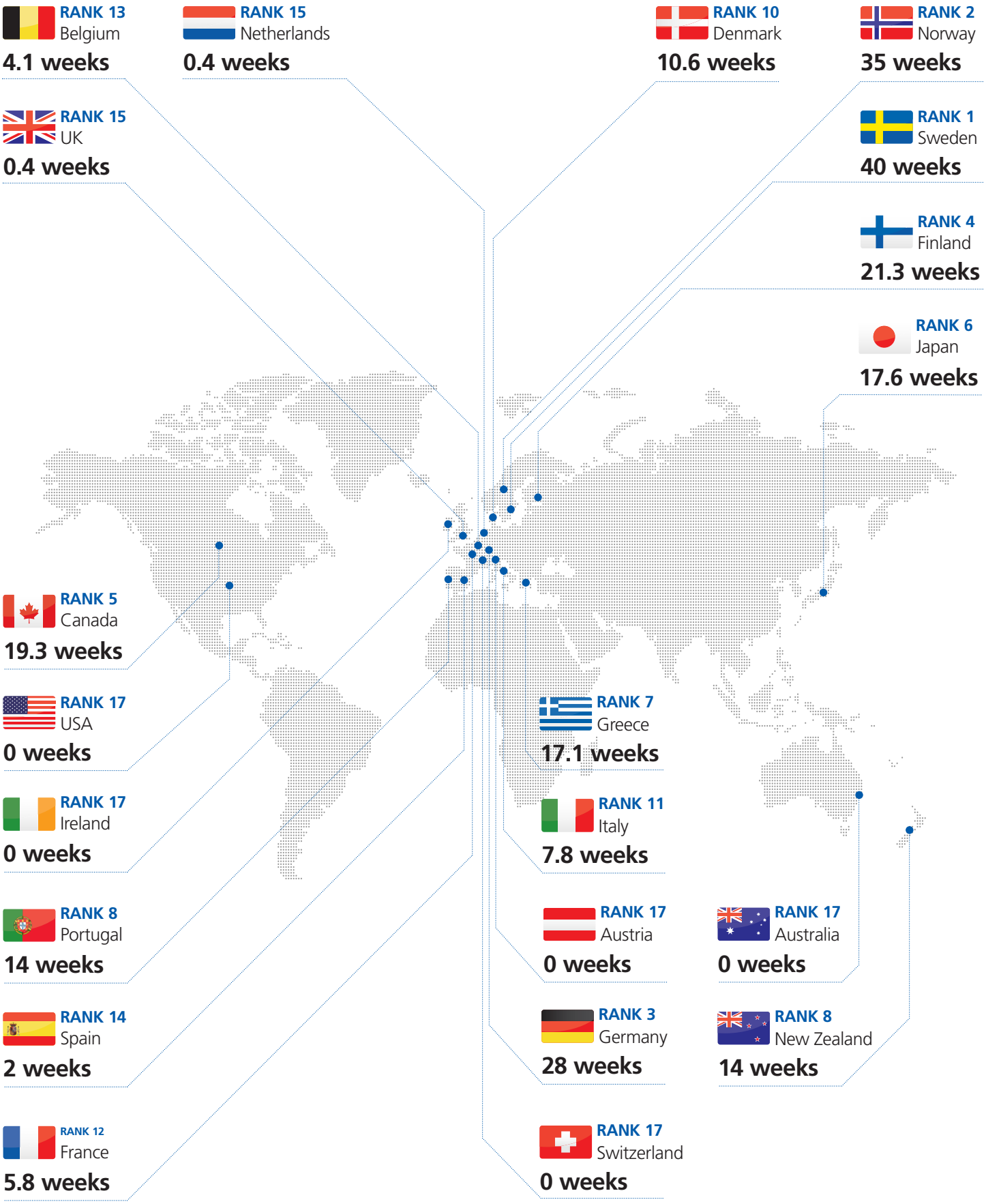
But *paid* paternal leaves (i.e. paid paternity or parental leaves) for fathers can make an enormous difference: Ray Gornick and Schmitt (2010: 206) cite OECD evidence showing that in 2000 when Portugal had no paid parental leave for fathers, 150 men took up any of their entitlement to unpaid leave; in 2003 following a change in the law to give new fathers two weeks of paid leave after birth, the number of men using their entitlement stood at 27,000. This type of behaviour change has occurred in many countries where well-paid leave has been reserved for fathers, with the Scandinavian countries acting as early adopters of such policies and as leading examples of how such policies can impact on family behaviour. And it is not simply of benefit to men and women's equality for such behaviour change to take place: all the evidence shows that where men get involved early in their children's lives, they are more likely to stay involved throughout[39]. This pays massive dividends, especially for disadvantaged children, in improved health, social and educational outcomes. It is for these reasons that the Fatherhood Institute campaigns for more paid leave to be available to British fathers: not only would there be more fairness in families, but the benefits of involved fatherhood would be more available to all.

Notes

37. Source: Ray Gornick and Schmitt (2010). Who cares? Assessing generosity and gender quality in parental leave designs in 21 countries. *Journal of European Social Policy 0958-9287*; Vol 20(3): 196-216. See Table 3, page 206.
38. FTE stands for full-time equivalent, whereby the pay for a duration of leave is calculated as the number of days/weeks the money would buy of average-waged full-time employment
39. Duvander, Ann-Zofie and Ann-Christin Jans (2009). *Consequences of Fathers' Parental Leave Use: Evidence from Sweden'* Stockholm Research Reports in Demography_2008:9. Stockholm: Stockholm University, Department of Sociology, Demography Unit. Available to download at http://www.suda.su.se/SRRD/SRRD_2008_9.pdf. Last accessed 5th November 2010.

UK RANKING: 15/21

Maximum full-time equivalent paid leave for fathers in weeks[37]



Summary of countries' rankings

OVERALL RANK	FiFI INDICATOR ONE	FiFI INDICATOR TWO	FiFI INDICATOR THREE	FiFI INDICATOR FOUR	FiFI INDICATOR FIVE	FiFI INDICATOR SIX	FiFI INDICATOR SEVEN	FiFI INDICATOR EIGHT	FiFI INDICATOR NINE	FiFI INDICATOR TEN
1. Sweden	1	7	3	1	7	14	2	3	1	1
2. Finland	2	12	2	3	8	10	4	1	3	4
3. Norway	2	–	9	2	9	–	5	9	2	2
4. Denmark	12	3	1	4	15	13	1	2	–	10
5. Portugal	6	11	6	13	4	3	11	5	–	8
6. Belgium	5	1	19	7	5	–	5	6	8	13
7. Greece	2	4	6	18	10	1	21	11	–	7
8. France	6	5	17	19	3	6	2	8	11	12
9. New Zealand	18	2	11	9	–	15	7	–	6	8
10. Italy	6	–	15	20	11	2	8	4	14	11
11. Netherlands	12	8	12	5	13	4	10	14	–	15
12. United States	10	12	4	16	1	18	11	–	5	17
13. Spain	6	10	16	6	14	8	11	9	11	14
14. Germany	10	17	18	10	12	7	11	12	8	3
15. Canada	15	15	5	14	–	16	19	–	3	5
16. Ireland	15	6	14	17	2	–	16	7	–	17
17. Australia	20	8	10	12	–	12	11	–	7	17
18. United Kingdom	12	15	13	15	5	17	8	12	10	15
19. Japan	19	18	8	21	–	5	16	–	13	61
20. Austria	15	–	19	8	–	11	16	15	–	17
21. Switzerland	21	12	21	11	–	9	19	–	–	17

FiFI INDICATOR ONE: Gender equality in parental leave
FiFI INDICATOR TWO: Gender pay gap
FiFI INDICATOR THREE: Men's percentage share of the part-time workforce
FiFI INDICATOR FOUR: Proportion of women sitting in parliaments
FiFI INDICATOR FIVE: Women in management positions
FiFI INDICATOR SIX: Percentage of children living in lone parent households
FiFI INDICATOR SEVEN: Percentage of GDP spent on childcare and education for the under-fives
FiFI INDICATOR EIGHT: Men's and women's time spent on childcare
FiFI INDICATOR NINE: Men's and women's time spent on unpaid work
FiFI INDICATOR TEN: Maximum full-time equivalent paid leave for fathers

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Other Fatherhood Institute initiatives

The Dads Included campaign, led by the Fatherhood Institute, aims to transform children's, family and health services, including maternity services, pre-schools/nurseries and schools, into services which systematically engage with and support both fathers and mothers.

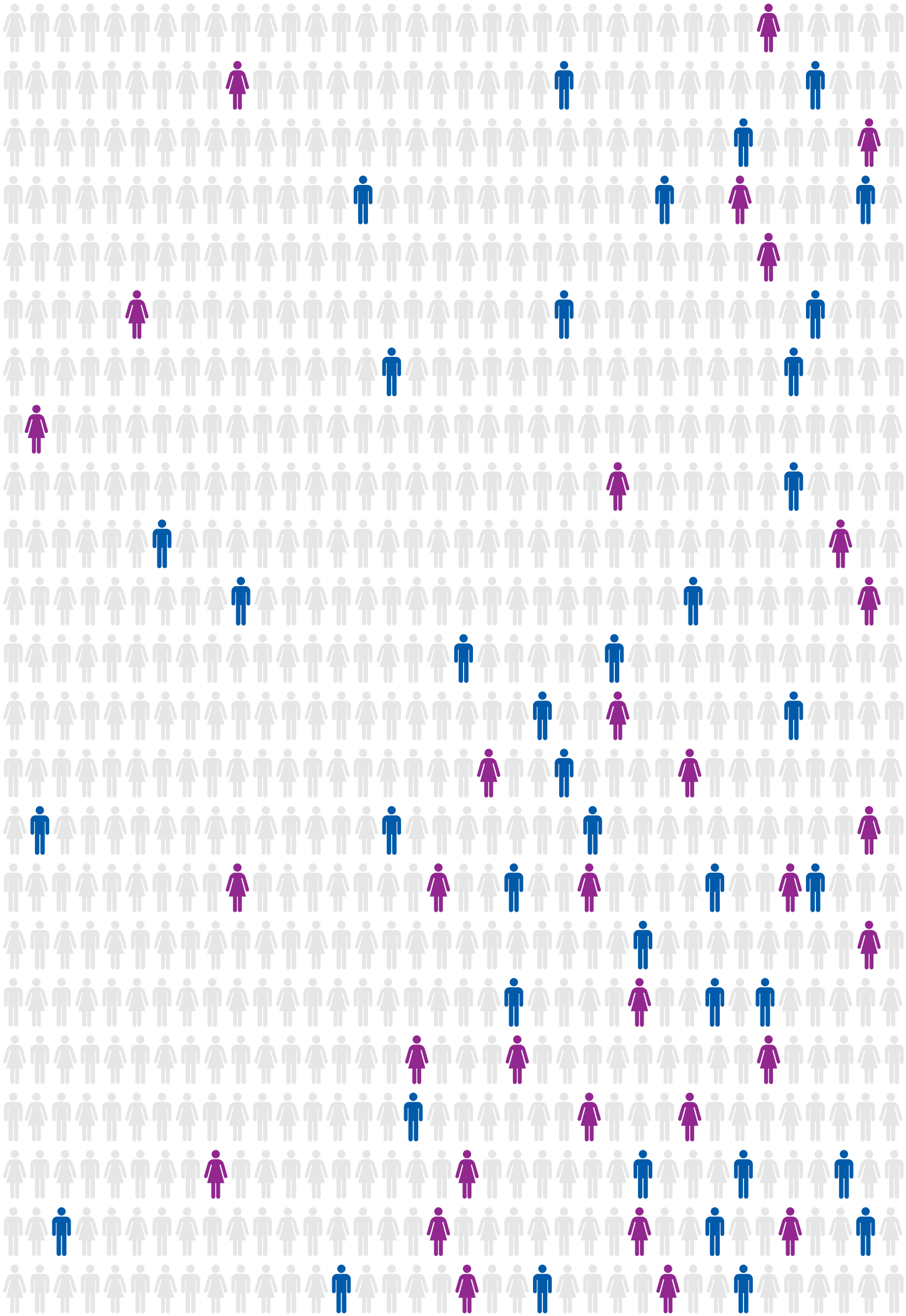
It is strongly supportive of the clear commitment by the new coalition Government to encourage strong and stable father-child and parental relationships. There is convincing research evidence that services which systematically engage with fathers and couples, and support both parents' relationships with their children, are essential to the achievement of these goals.

Join the Dads Included online community at www.dadsincluded.org.

Fathers' Story Week, organised by the Fatherhood Institute and Barnardo's, is an annual event held in schools, nurseries and other learning settings, in the week leading up to Father's Day. It offers a fantastic opportunity to get dads and children working and spending time together, using free resources developed by the Fatherhood Institute and education professionals.

Find out more at www.fathersstoryweek.org.

Follow Fathers' Story Week on Twitter @fathersstorywk



fatherhood INSTITUTE

The Fatherhood Institute is the UK's fatherhood think-tank. We are a registered charity (number 1075104) and we:

- collate and publish international research on fathers, fatherhood and different approaches to engaging with fathers by public services and employers
- help shape national and local policies to ensure a father-inclusive approach to family policy
- inject research evidence on fathers and fatherhood into national debates about parenting and parental roles
- lobby for changes in law, policy and practice to dismantle barriers to fathers' care of infants and children.

We are the UK's leading provider of training, consultancy and publications on father-inclusive practice, for public and third sector agencies and employers.

Our training and consultancy

We offer a range of 'off the shelf' and bespoke training courses for managers, staff and volunteers in a variety of settings including children's centres, maternity services, child protection, schools and family learning services, Connexions, child and adolescent mental health services, teenage pregnancy services and youth offending teams.

These include courses on how to engage with fathers of all ages and ethnic/cultural backgrounds and support their relationships with their children; how to deliver parenting services which are inclusive of fathers; and how to deliver Hit the Ground Crawling – a groundbreaking antenatal training programme for expectant fathers, available in the UK only from the Fatherhood Institute.

We also offer INSET training and mini-conferences for schools, to help them focus on engaging with fathers and mobilising them as a resource to support their children's learning and development.

To further support professionals in their work with fathers and families, we run Dads Included, an online community for sharing expertise in father-inclusive practice.

We also have vast experience of assisting local authorities and other agencies to transform their services at a strategic level – helping them to develop father-inclusive strategies, 'father-proofing' their policies and initiatives, devising and delivering training strategies, and conducting audits of services.

Our services for employers

We offer a suite of services for Britain's employers, including:

Fathers@ – a web-based support package designed to help fathers stay motivated at work, whilst dealing with the joys and challenges of parenthood

Workplace seminars – 60-90 minute daytime/evening seminars for male-only or mixed audiences, about various aspects of 21st century fatherhood/family life

Hit the Ground Crawling! – informal sessions for expectant and new dads (and mums)

Staying Connected – half-day seminars designed to improve staff retention by helping separated dads in the workforce stay connected to their children.

For more details about all our services, visit www.fatherhoodinstitute.org.

Follow the Fatherhood Institute on Twitter @fatherhoodinst

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