

Paper presented at the Wellchi Network Conference 1
**CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FACED BY EUROPEAN WELFARE
STATES: THE CHANGING CONTEXT FOR CHILD WELFARE**

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**Men's Fathering: Workplace cultures; work times regimes;
and Proactive Policies**

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Abstract

In nearly all advanced welfare states we see a weakening of the male breadwinner wage and the assumptions underlying it: full male employment and stable two parent families. Both global restructuring and retrenchment in welfare states have contributed to the weakening of the male breadwinner wage. Global economic pressures have undercut the protections for workers in the labor market and have shown the economic risks in dependence on a single earner family. The movement away from the single earner male breadwinner family has been a gradual process, and still not completed in many countries. Gender parity in labor market participation has only been accomplished in some of the Nordic countries, and even there, the dual earner family is a 1¾ model; most women in their early childrearing years spend between twenty and thirty hours a week in paid work, but are still doing the majority of unpaid work in the home.

Changes in women's participation in paid work have not meant less care and domestic work for most women, but rather a double shift for employed women. The exceptions are highly paid dual earner couples who can afford nannies and domestic help. This has led to a surge in non-registered exploited foreign labor in rich European societies, a care chain in which mothers from the low waged less developing countries in the South leave their own children to be cared for by others. Most lower- and middle-income families do not have this option. From numerous studies of maternal employment, we know that the rise in women's participation in paid work has led to burn out, long working days (of paid and unpaid work). To avoid this syndrome, employed women who "choose" the part time option are often stuck in low- paid dead-end jobs. Even in countries with highly developed subsidized daycare and generous parental leaves, such as in the Nordic countries, worklife balance is still understood in terms of women's reconciliation of employment with caring responsibilities; the result is statistical discrimination against all women and gender segregated workplaces with lower pay.

Men's participation in carework is a crucial link in developing policy formulas that universalize care work as citizen's work not women's work. There is a vast research focusing on different aspects of women's carework, worklife balance policies and household strategies around childbearing and childrearing. Peter McDonald, in analyzing the declining fertility of women in Western industrialized societies, interprets

women's decisions to forgo having children or delay childbirth as the result of the incoherence effect: the disjuncture between changes in women's economic roles and aspirations and the lack of change in institutions and family responsibilities. Rosemary Crompton has turned our lens to parent friendly working time regimes and employment flexibility in her analysis of how women in different professions and institutional contexts reconcile carework with employment. Only recently have we begun to look at men as fathers and the reconciliation of care and employment. For the most part, research on men's carework has been embedded in a household strategy approach: that is the extent to which men's care and domestic work affects women's choices around employment. Other studies, most often qualitative research, view men's fathering in terms of dominant cultural norms and values surrounding masculinities and fatherhood, a good example is Nicholas Townsend ethnographic study in *The Packaged Deal*. He concludes that male breadwinning as the measure of successful fatherhood has reproduced the absent father and "stalled the revolution in the family."

Research on men as fathers needs to broaden the framework of household strategies to include men's rights as carers, their parent friendly workplaces, and the variations across and within societies to create a worklife balance. A new research is emerging that treats fatherhood in terms of men's caring practices and the institutional context. The workplace is the focal point for this new research on men's caring rights and practices. By including men in the equation of worklife balance, we shift the perspective in most comparative welfare state research from an emphasis on the rights of workers in the workplace towards the rights of parents in the workplace to care for children and other family members, which includes their protections in terms of job loss during firm downsizing; their rights resume the same job; and the care penalty that men pay for taking time out to be full time fathers.

The purpose of this paper is to consider the opportunities and constraints for new father/citizens in welfare states in which there are specific policies and discourses to increase men's active fathering and to denaturalize care as a citizenship right and obligation. The first part of the paper provides some comparative data on how much men care across several societies representing different welfare regime clusters. These findings are analyzed in terms of working time regimes (average men's working times) and variations across and within societies considering variations among individual fathers, by age, education, income, and ethnicity (using the ECHP). Then I will focus on Sweden and the Netherlands: two societies that have promoted policies to increase men's rights to care for young children: Both have put into practice proactive policies to encourage men to be the main childcare parent. The policy incentive covers a short period of parenting-- for a month or two in Sweden (the months of parental leave reserved for fathers)-- or for several hours day (the reduced worktime option in the Netherlands). In the paper we present preliminary results on which fathers are sharing carework and which workplaces are most father friendly.

Slide 1

Men and Worklife Balance:
Which men, which policies and
which institutional contexts?

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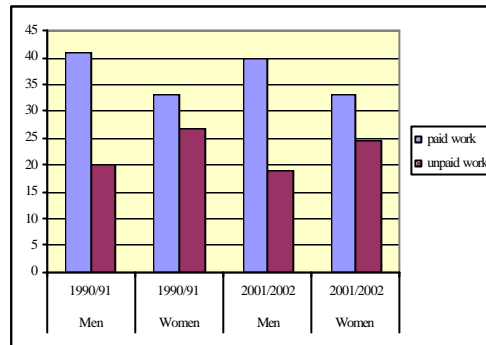
Slide 2

Background paper for a future
ESF Project

- *The changing relationship between work, welfare and gender equality in Europe: Developing a capabilities approach to transitions using quantitative and qualitative cross-national comparison between and within European countries*

Slide 3

Women's and Men's Paid and Unpaid Work, Weekly Hours 1990-91, 2000-01



Source: Statistics Sweden includes domestic work and childcare

Men

Slide 4

What I want to do in this presentation:

1. Consider the limitations of household strategies- the dominant framework for men and worklife balance.
2. Focus on two cases of proactive policies to increase men's care: both address the main question of these paper: which policies, which men, which institutional contexts?
3. Present an agenda and new strategies
A glimpse of the ESF Project

Contribution of Household Strategy Approach

- Empirical results have challenged efficiency models (Becker and others)
 - Research with Doing Gender Approach:
 - Challenge to preference theories
- Rather than internalizing gender identities, individuals act to make sense of norms in society in their own lives

Limitations: Household Strategies

- Mechanism: gender equality norm drives change
- carework and household work in the same model
- Assumes a bargaining model: more women work; more men participate in unpaid work
- Not only does Gender trump money, egalitarian norms empower individual (fathers and mothers)
- Does not include incentives for men to care:
- Men as subjects of policy; men in workplaces

Institutional Contextual Approach

- Policy matters for men's worklife balance
- Workplace Organization and Workplace Cultures are essential dimensions for fathering and carework
- Rubery and Fagan: working time regimes of men affect worklife balance of women
- Studies show that work cultures shape men's perception of care penalty—whether one's hours worked versus job done is criteria of a good worker (Haas et. al, and)

Findings on Workhours

- ECHP Dependent variable: men with kids under six: weekly hours of childcare
- Men's workhours the most important variable in analysis of 11 countries.
- Regression stepwise model 2001 wave: For every hour men worked, they decreased their carework by 15 minutes each week
- Institutional context matters as we see variation in our country-level analysis

Proactive Policies/institutional change

- **Job sharing: Dutch case**

Indirect strategy: create options for couples to have a more equal worklife balance

- **Targeted Daddy months: Swedish case**

--Direct strategy: use it or lose it policy.
Strong economic incentive structure

Dutch and Swedish Policymakers had similar long term goals

- Denaturalize care as a citizenship right and obligation
- Equalize the division of unpaid work
- Bonding between fathers and kids
- Both had extensive publicity campaigns
- Both at the high end of men's participation in carework

Table 1: Employment Patterns of Dutch Parents with Children

	1998	2000
single earner male	29	19
single earner female	4	2
1 1/2 main male	36	61
1 1/2 main female	1	2
shared breadwinner	4	9
dual breadwinner	16	6
No earner	10	1

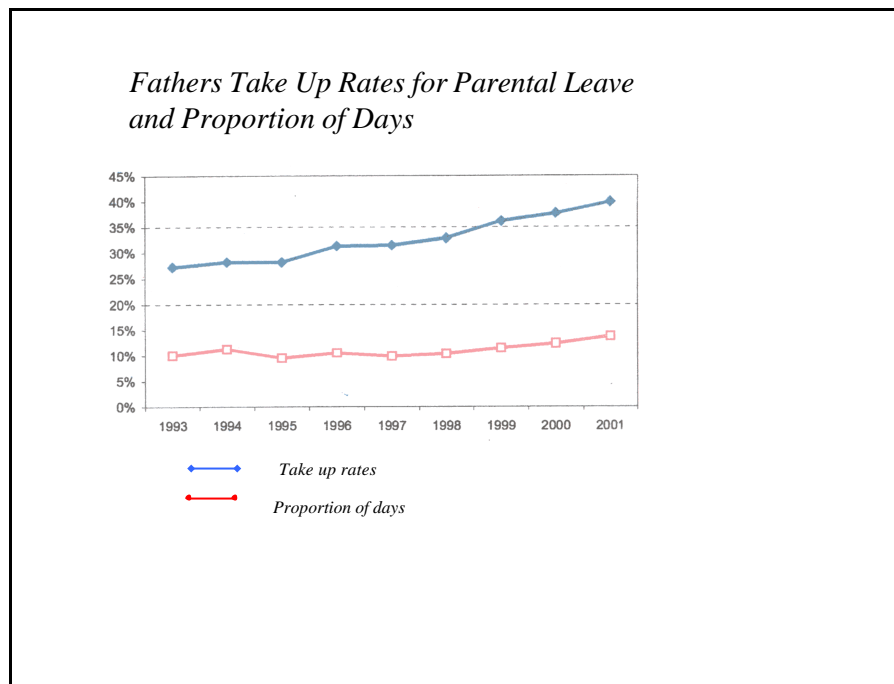
Dual earner, both employed max of 32 hrs

Dual breadwinner, both employed more than 32 hrs

Policies located in different institutional environments

- **Sweden**
- Paradigm weak male breadwinner
- Individualized tax, pension and social policy
- Extensive childcare
- **Netherlands**
- Belonged to Strong breadwinner group
- Still tax benefit for solo male earner
- Inadequate childcare

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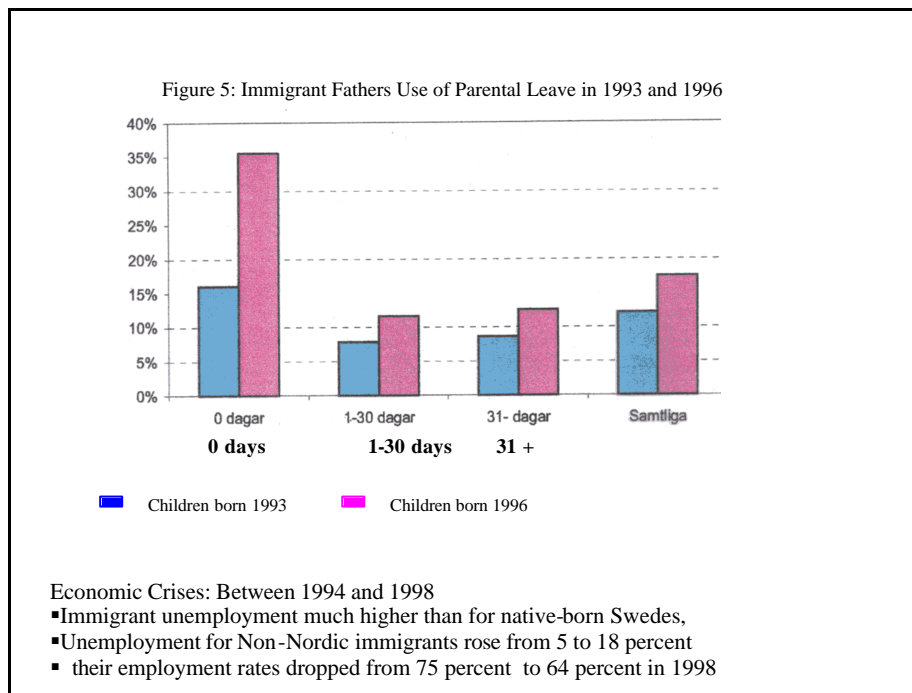
You can see here that since the Daddy leave there are more men taking leave, but not much change in the proportion of days men take.

Slide 14

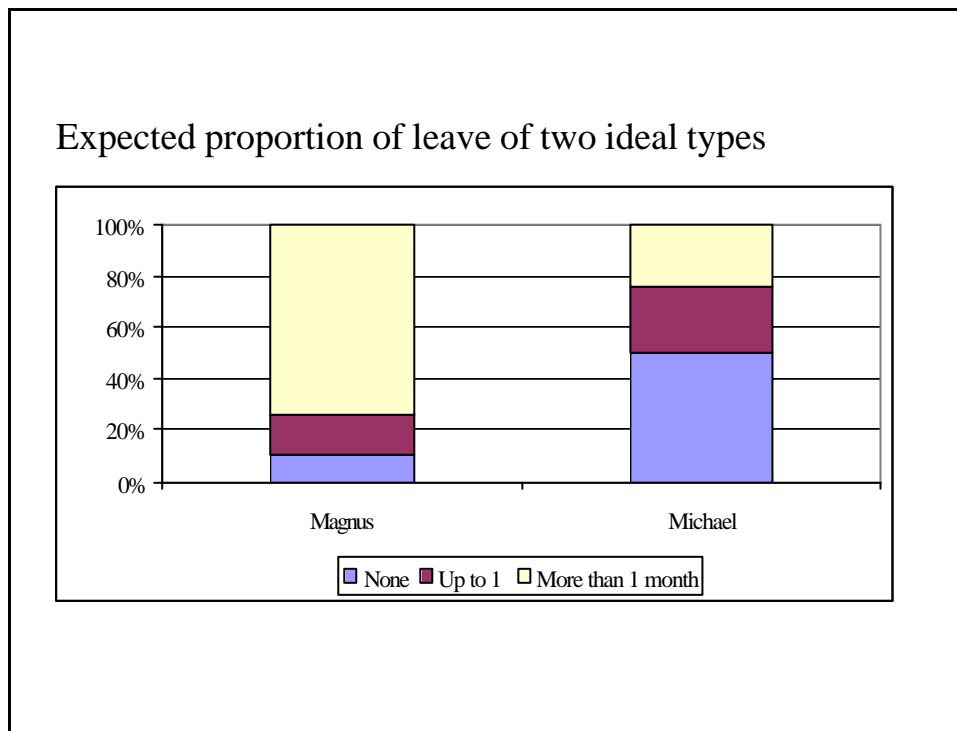
Which Men least likely to exercise their parental rights?

- ❖ **Fathers on social assistance , with poor economy**
low or no replacement rates (six month work requirement)
- ❖ **Immigrants fathers**
30 percent of fathers born outside of Sweden take no days of parental leave
--above Swedish father average of nonuser: 22 % .

Slide 15



Slide 16



Look at the possibilities of this different men to be in the no months, more than a month.

Work cultures and Work Regimes

Low take up rates for Private Sector

Men with high incomes in the Private Sector above the earnings ceiling (22,000 a month).

Not just income replacement (often firms top up)

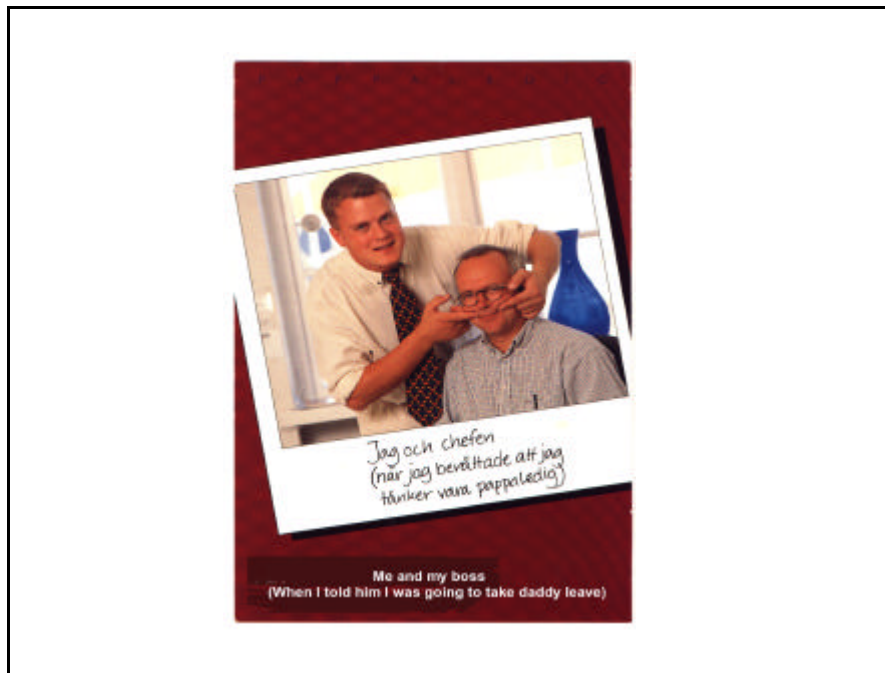
Work Cultures and Work time Regimes

Lowest in hierarchy—often younger men nonusers: fear risk.

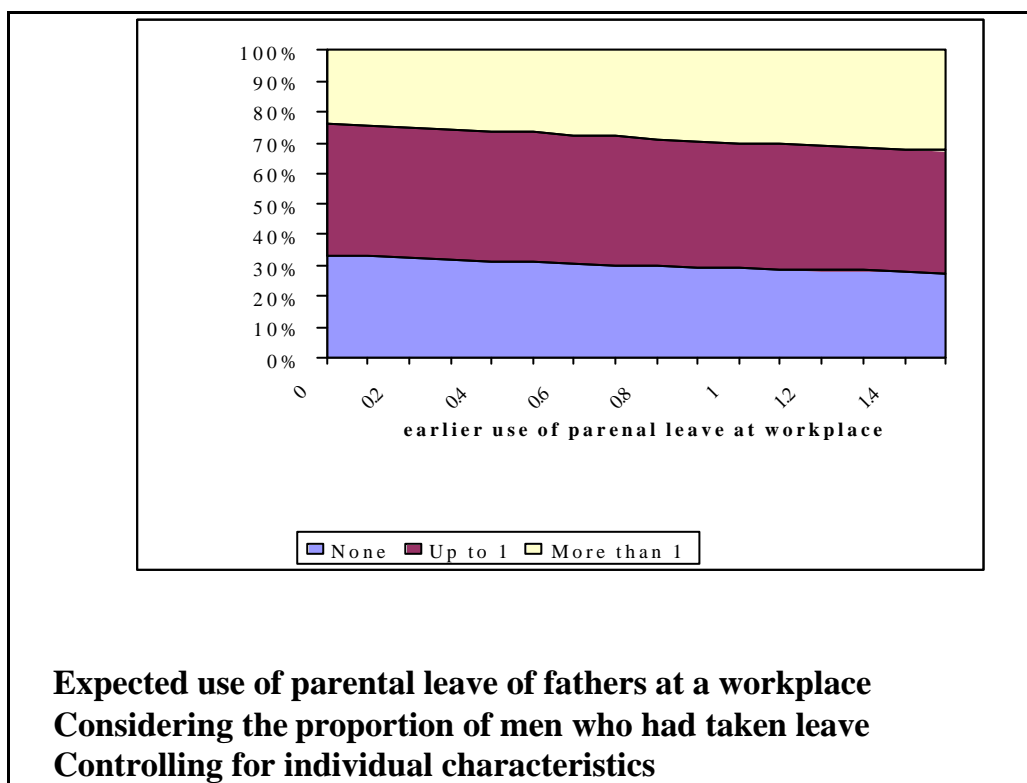
Most recent research is now focusing on the workplace. Men with high incomes and high education in the private sector at the start of their careers are more hesitant to take pappal leave. Whereas men at the top of the hierarchy tend to be more likely to take the leave (not a selection bias of men not attached to jobs)



Slide 19



Slide 20



Controlling for age, ed, income. This research finds that crucial variable is how many men have already paved the way. So how much if any, leave other men have taken is fairly good predictor of the likelihood as to whether a father takes pappa leave. And how much.

Survey of Swedish Firms and workplace culture

- Haas, Allard, and Hwang survey of five firms in West of Sweden (predominately male workers-- Tree, Chemical, Metal, Transport, Finance
- Differences in company cultures:
- Leavetakers: 83 % Chemical company compared to 29% in Tree company
- Workculture variables signifcant and explained 8% variance of which men took leave