

# Irish policy on parental leave is 'maternalist'<sup>[1]</sup>

**Author:** Moss, Peter

**Source:** Irish Times<sup>[2]</sup>

**Format:** Article

**Publication Date:** 26 Sep 2014

## EXCERPTS

The work-family issue - how men and women can manage the relationship between employment and care - has moved centre stage across Europe. For a brief historical moment, societies assumed a simple division of labour: women doing the caring, men as breadwinners. But that no longer holds and modern societies have to find new relationships between employment, care and gender, underpinned by measures to support employed parents and other carers.

One measure much touted has been statutory leave for parents - the right to take time off when children are young, with full job protection. The EU requires all member states to meet minimum standards on maternity and parental leave. In practice states vary greatly in what they offer, and most lag far behind leading countries, such as Sweden and Portugal.

Ireland, sad to say, is at the back of the pack, with 40 weeks of maternity leave (26 weeks paid at a low flat rate, the rest unpaid), no paternity leave and 18 weeks per parent of parental leave (all unpaid). Ireland is the only EU member state that provides no period of well-paid leave and the whole policy can be summed up as "maternalist", premised on the notion that women are still primarily responsible for the care of young children.

Some countries are challenging this assumption, offering paternity leave and designing parental leave to promote use by men through well-paid, father-only quotas or bonuses where leave is shared.

Ireland has much work to do. So it is good to see signs of renewed interest in leave policy, with today's seminar, Families and Work, bringing together the perspectives of children, mothers, fathers, workers and businesses.

...

Read online at Irish Times<sup>[2]</sup>

**Region:** United States<sup>[3]</sup>

**Tags:** maternity and parental leave<sup>[4]</sup>

---

**Source URL (modified on 27 Jan 2022):** <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/14/10/irish-policy-parental-leave-%E2%80%98maternalist%E2%80%99>

## Links

[1] <https://childcarecanada.org/documents/child-care-news/14/10/irish-policy-parental-leave-%E2%80%98maternalist%E2%80%99> [2]

<https://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/irish-policy-on-parental-leave-is-maternalist-1.1940295?page=1> [3]

<https://childcarecanada.org/taxonomy/term/7865> [4] <https://childcarecanada.org/category/tags/maternity-and-parental-leave>