

The Fatherhood Institute 2016 Fairness in Families Index ^[1]

Capstone project

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AVAILABILITY

Full report PDF ^[2]

Introduction

Since 2010, the world has seen many changes regarding gender equality, from its higher visibility in social media, to the creation of a United Nations agency to address genderrelated issues. Among these changes, the promotion of active fatherhood has increasingly gained importance in many countries' agendas. However, gendered cultural norms along with economic and institutional barriers have hindered equal sharing of earning and caring roles. Gendered divisions of labour still prevail, reducing the participation of fathers in their children's care and education, and mothers' contributions to breadwinning.

In 2010, the Fatherhood Institute created the Fairness in Families Index (FiFI) to assess how well developed countries were fairing in relation to egalitarian parenting and earning. The findings of the 2010 FiFI confirmed that even the most developed countries have a long way to go before reaching equality between fathers and mothers. Six years later, this report looks again at this issue.

The 2016 FiFI aims to provide a more precise picture of the potential for mothers and fathers to share the provision of 'cash and care' in their families, through a revision of assumptions, methodology, sources, and indicators, and the addition of standardised scores and sub-indices. Countries are evaluated over nine key indicators across three dimensions of egalitarian parenting and earning: policies, social environment, and practices. The 2016 FiFI analyses 22 upper income nations, based on the most recent data available to date, across the following indicators:

- Parenting leave design
- The gender pay gap
- Men's percentage share of the part-time workforce
- Percentage of GDP spent on childcare and education for children under five years old
- Percentage of women sitting in parliament
- Percentage of women in management positions
- Ratio of men's to women's time spent caring for children
- Ratio of percentage of men to women in families caring for elderly people and persons with disabilities
- Ratio of men's to women's time spent on housework

Benefits are found for women, men, and children when fathers provide competent care beyond the role of breadwinner, and mothers participate substantially in the paid workforce. These benefits include but are not limited to, women's empowerment and the promotion of gender equality more broadly. The 2016 FiFI highlights the changes that have occurred since the publication of the 2010–2011 Index, and captures key policy developments and practices within the 22 countries. This report highlights the ranking across countries in these indicators, and provides context for some countries' performances through case studies. These enable a more in-depth understanding of how some countries have fared in relation to some of the indicators, based on their unique circumstances.

This report is developed using data from multiple sources, including the World Bank, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the European Quality of Life Surveys, and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This updated report also highlights some of the challenges posed in creating a policy-oriented multidimensional index and its respective indicators. In the next sections, we present the results for the 2016 FiFI, explain the new methodology and its challenges, discuss each indicator in some detail, and conclude with recommendations for future editions.

Related link: Canadian dads are more involved than ever, study says ^[3]

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