



Project news

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Our favorite links in May

Modern men in enlarged EU, led by Lithuania! www.dadcomehome.org
 Consulting teams for paternity leave in Austria: www.vaeterkarenz.at
 Father's experiences, fears and questions in Germany: www.vaeter.de

BREAKING PATTERNS

New role models for men in leadership

The Project "Breaking Patterns" provides support for men in leading positions to achieve and provide better reconciliation of family and work. The Project is conducted in the frame of the EU Community Action Programme to promote Gender Equality. The aim is to motivate society to anticipate in the change of gender roles and to overcome gender stereotypes, especially for men in leadership:

1. A TRAINING MODULE for men in (future) leadership positions is developed and implemented in existing leadership training structures in Austria, Sweden, Iceland, Estonia and Hungary.
 2. MENTORS from Iceland and Sweden are made visible as new role models for men, reconciling work and family life or providing specially family friendly policies in companies, organisations and institutions.
 3. VIDEOSPOTS and POSTERS are produced to sensibilise the public and especially boys about new role models of men in leadership.
- In late autumn 2005 the experiences of the partnership will be summarised and the outcomes will be discussed in the frame of a European Seminar in Austria.

How shall it be done?

Implementing the module in leadership training structures

The implementation of the module will take place in the leadership education system. Men and women, looking out for the prerequisites to be a good leader will learn in their training course how to *achieve* and how to *provide* better circumstances to reconcile work and family obligations.

During the training participants will meet men as new role models - as guests from abroad or just on the video - and find out some key factors for their success when combining voluntarily work and family responsibilities and what they get out of it.

Newsletter of the European Project Breaking Patterns

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Video & poster

The Project captures men's views, the perspectives from children, their mothers and friends in the videospots.

The image of the European leader of today will be shown in the context of reconciling work & family:

Reconciling men already exist, we just have to take a closer look, HOW they are doing it.

Strong competences, clear visions

The project partners and their role

The partners contribute to the European Project with their specific experience in Gender Mainstreaming, training and knowledge about equal opportunities.

Iceland: Equal opportunity office of the city council of Reykjavik

Sweden: Gender Management Institute of the Kvinnoforum, network and forum for women, men and equal participation

Estonia: Gender equality department at the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia

Hungary: MONA, Foundation for women in Hungary

Austria: The State Government of Lower Austria

The Austrian lead partner carries out the project management and the testing of the training module.

The partners quarterly meet in a transnational meeting to exchange their experiences, discuss the development of the training module and develop strategies how to implement it on the national basis.

The module shall complement existing training programs, courses, seminars, and other training measures for young leaders. In **Austria** the training institute of the administration of the state government of Lower Austria, the chamber of commerce, the chamber of labour, the trade unions, and other chambers of interests, as well as the political parties are addressed.

In **Estonia** and **Hungary**, the module will be tested as well; the summarised reflections of those two new member states of the European Union will serve especially to find new approaches in the enlarged EU to address men in leadership.

National expertise

National experts and educational institutions are identified in each country and invited to discuss the issue of reconciliation, involving at least 2 men in leadership positions in the respective country or region.

As an important side effect, a database of trainers for reconciliation of family and work is set up to provide interested institutions with European expertise on the issue, especially for men's training.

The partner in **Sweden** provides the trainer for the pilot training, **Iceland** the mentors, as in Iceland, parental leave has developed in an overwhelming way and almost 90 % of fathers use their right to take paternity leave.



*Hildur Jónsdóttir,
Iceland*

In addition to the training activities the partners of the project are approaching national networks in order to distribute the videospots and information materials, e.g. in Austria this happens in close co-operation with the women's round table for equal opportunity officers all over the country, the Austrian women's network of media and the Austrian women's online magazin CeiberWeiber, to sensibilise other decision making people, women's and men's organisations and the public in general.

Family friendly: how to be?

Family friendly policies help parents to match their care commitments with their own preferences to participating in the labour market, as the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) stated in their study "Bébés et employeurs. Comment réconcilier travail et vie de famille", Paris 2002.



But how to be family friendly? What kind of measures will help especially men to switch to paternity leave or just to face step by step some of the daily constraints mothers face in general?

We say: There are 100 ways of combining family and work duties for a woman. Let's find out about how men do it! And let us encourage men to encourage other men doing it – the family friendly environment has to take into account the father's right of life & work balance.

There are **advantages for men** who take up more responsibility for the family. Going on paternity leave is one way of doing this. Another would be to work part time for a certain period. Positive effects are obvious:

- More gender equality is achieved if both partners take care for their children
- Fathers get closer relationship to their children
- Fathers become better leaders - they learn social competences and are more focused on the group than on their personal career path
- Children grow up with both parents which positively affects their development. When grown up, they do not stick to traditional role models as others

Erich Lehner, a psychologist involved in the project of Breaking Patterns, stated in a speech: "What it takes to be a 'real man', in future will not mean lifting up 100 kilos, but also the know-how to change nappies!"

Drop-off, pick-up, hurry & worry: today's fathers get stressed

Look around ...

There are already quite many men who participate in the daily stress of familywork. Especially when they are in leading positions they can arrange their time table more flexible to the circumstances than other men. At the same time they also accept the need of their active involvement in family duties, but they do not speak about it in public so often, the journalist Hilary Stout found out for the financial magazine Wall Street Journal Online. She describes some "snatches of conversation" out of her work in the article "The Daddies Diaries: Father juggle work, kids and stress, too". She talks about fathers who hurry out of the office to get home in time to bring their sons to a T-ball practice, who leave voice mail messages on phones already at 7:45 a.m. in the morning because they have to be at school at 8:00 for some events or make telephone calls from the airplane seat to tell their wives what they have prepared for the evening meal ...

Drop-offs, pick-ups, school work and sportspractice along with the job – fathers are stressed nowadays like working mothers. "It adds a new level of stress", a father tells. More and more men like him get aware of the challenges of combining job and family duties in their every day work. Competing pressures of career, kids and home are not any longer just women's burden. And that is good. Don't you think so?

Thank you, Mr. CSR!



The article of The Daddies Diaries was forwarded to us by the head of the department for Corporate Social Responsibility in the European Commission, Dominique Bé, a modern 'working father' himself.

Facts & figures

How to take parental leave ...

... in Estonia

The leaves for parents are granted under the 'Holidays Act'.

A father has the right to a paid 'child care leave' of 14 calendar days during the maternity leave of the mother or within 2 months after the birth of the child. For these 2 weeks fathers are entitled to the payment from the state budget that amounts to a fixed sum of 66 EEK (~4,22 EUR) per day.



A mother or a father is granted parental leave at his or her request for raising a child of up to 3 years of age. That leave may be used in one part or in parts at any time for raising a child of up to 3 years of age. For the duration of parental leave, an employment contract or service relationship is suspended and the employee is paid benefit pursuant to the Parental Benefit Act or child care allowance from the state budget resources according to the rate specified in the State Family Benefits Act and established for each budgetary year in the state budget.

Less than 1 % of fathers ask for parental leave



The Parental Benefit Act took effect on January 1, 2004. The idea behind the scheme is to compensate the loss of income for the caring family member during the first year of parenthood. The new benefit is a measure aiming at reconciling work and family life. The benefit is paid from the state budget. The remuneration level is 100% of the parent's previous earnings, but not less than 2 200 EEK (EUR 141) per month and not more than three times the average salary.

The parental benefit is paid to the working mother after the end of the maternity benefit. Fathers have the right to parental benefit beginning 6 months from childbirth, but few fathers have used their right to parental leave. Also non-working parents enjoy the right to the parental benefit.

Among all the persons who received the parental benefit during 2004-2005 only around 1 percent were fathers. The number of fathers was higher among those persons who received either 100% of the previous salary (1,8 percent in the first three months of 2005, that being 68 fathers) or the maximum benefit in the amount of three times the average Estonian salary (5,7 percent in the first three months of 2005, that being 16 fathers). The experts indicate that one of the reasons why so few men are using their right to parental leave is the poor compensation of the leave - as it is still very often a man who receives higher income. Loosing it, would deprive the family of necessary financial means. With regard to the first year of parenthood the situation has been slightly improved after introducing the parental benefit scheme.

Any questions or remarks for the project team? We will be happy to receive them!
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