



**Sustainability@Leave**

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## Parenting Leave Policies in Portugal and Inequalities





# Parenting Leave Policies in Portugal: Types of Leave and Design Elements



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal

- **Initial Parental Leave**

- Maternity Leave (mother exclusive days)
- Paternity Leave (father exclusive days)

- **Shared Parental Leave**

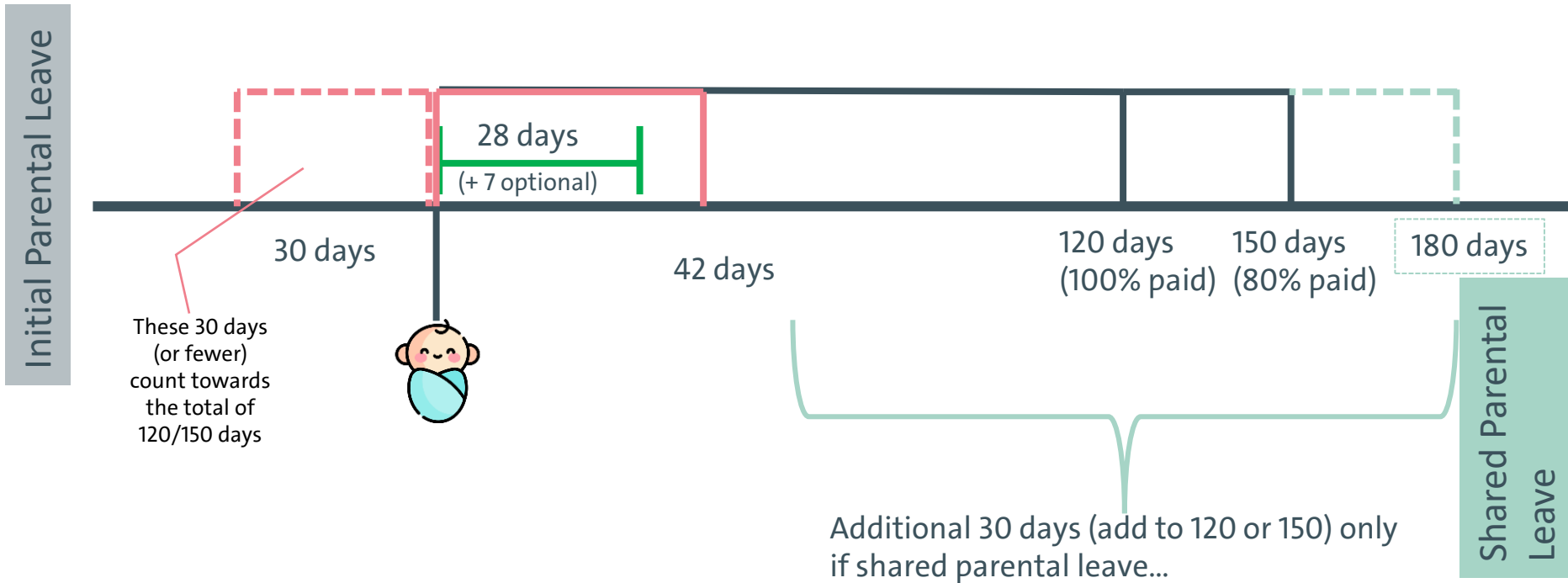
- Other leave types: extended parental leave, adoption leave, leave for pregnancy loss, breastfeeding leave



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal

Mothers  
Exclusive

Fathers  
Exclusive



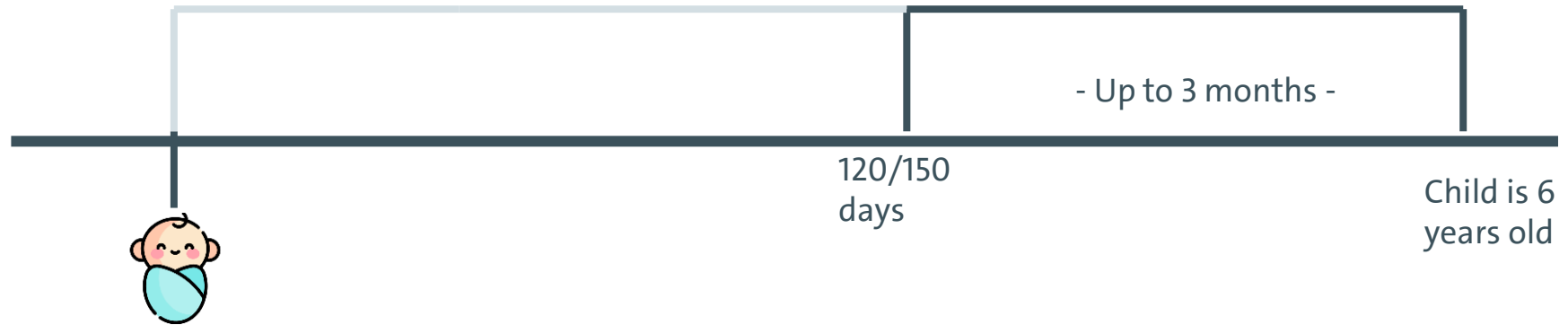
# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: Additional notes

- If parents choose to **take leave simultaneously** (both at home at the same time), the leave days are counted double
  - As a result, a 120-day leave is exhausted in only 60 consecutive days
- **Multiple births** (twins, triplets):
  - +30 days added to the base leave (120 or 150 days) for each additional child
- **Preterm birth**
  - If the birth occurs up to 33 weeks of gestation the leave is extended by the entire hospitalization period + additional 30 days after hospital discharge



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal

## Extended Parental Leave



- Can be taken immediately after the initial parental leave ends, or at any time until the child turns six years old (Paid at 30%)
- Each parent has the right to take the full three months if they wish (if both parents each take the full leave- 3 months – 40% paid)



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal (other leaves)

- Extended part-time parental allowance
- Initial parental leave allowance for a parent due to the indisposition of the other parent (e.g. physical or mental incapacity, death)
- Grandchild leave and care allowance
  - If one of the parents is under 16 years old, working grandparents living with the baby are entitled to a period of leave of up to 30 consecutive days after the birth

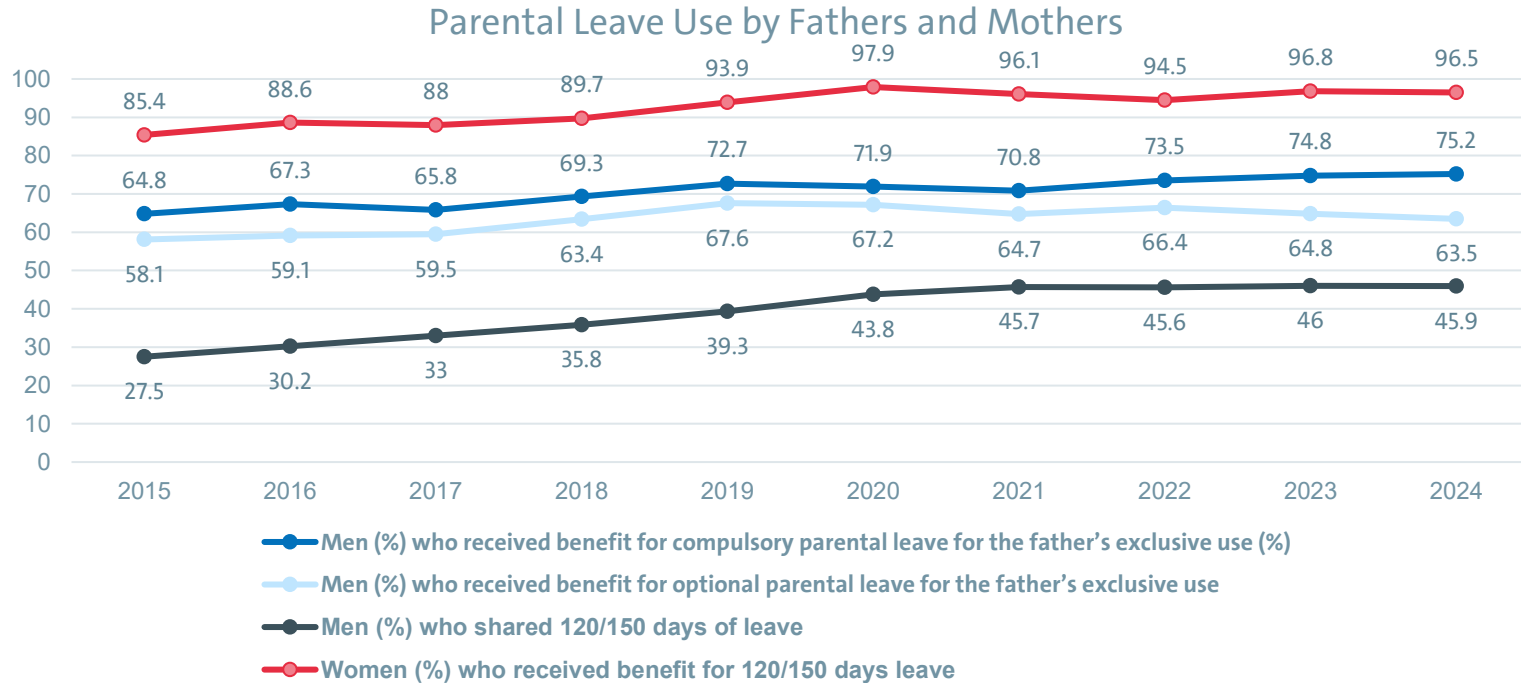


# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: Eligibility

- At the start of the leave period, one must have worked, with registered payslips, for at least six months, either consecutively or intermittently.
- If self-employed or covered by the voluntary Social Security scheme must have the Social Security contributions up to date (up to 3 months before the child is born).
- Payment is individual (not dependent on partner's income from work)



# What do we know about take-up rates?



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# Inequality-Reducing and Inequality-Generating Elements of Parental Leave Design in Portugal



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: Recent changes

- Changes in labour legislation strengthened fathers' leave rights (2009) shifting the focus to co-responsibility
  - Bonus month was first introduced
  - Initial parental leave instead of maternity/paternity leave
- Clear linkage between parental leave policies and gender equality policies



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: Recent changes

- Citizens' initiative taken to the national parliament requests an extension of the initial parental leave up to 180 days, paid at 100% regardless of being shared or not.
- Optional extension with reduced pay (210 days – 80%)



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: Key elements

- Tradeoff between time and income
- **Centered around coparenting**
- **Incentive to sharing** (if both parents take at least 30 days of leave separately, the total leave is extended by 30 days)
- **Father's exclusive time**
- Universal system (in principle)



# Parenting Leave Policy in Portugal: **Inequalities** elements

- **Wage differences** between partners influence who takes leave
- **Organizational culture** may discourage fathers from using their rights
- Access of **precarious workers and migrants**
- **Simultaneous** leave reduces the time available
- Mothers' use of leave is almost universal, and **disproportionate sharing**
- Father's “**bonus month**” is typically coupled with mother's “vacation month”



# Parenting Leave Policies in Portugal

- Overall, Portugal can be seen as a relatively progressive system within the European context
  - Framework oriented towards gender equality
- At the same time, there are important features that may reproduce inequalities.
  - Leave durations are short
  - Full sharing is limited
  - Father's individual time with the child remains limited



# Parenting Leave Policies in Portugal: Concluding remarks

- Stronger individual entitlements for fathers
- Better financial incentives
- Interventions at the organizational level

Parental leave policies reveal how societies value care



# Sources

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**Thank you!**

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