

New EU proposal will earmark four months' leave for new fathers

A new proposal from the European Commission aims to make European men take more leave when their children are born. The proposal includes earmarked parental leave for new fathers.

According to Statistics Denmark, Danish fathers took an average of 25 days of paternity and parental leave in 2015. This applies to both the fathers who were entitled to paternity leave benefits during the leave and those who were not.

On the other hand, when only looking at fathers entitled to unemployment benefits during leave, the average leave period for Danish fathers in 2015 increases to 31 days. That is about 25% of the 122 days that the European Commission proposes earmarked for European fathers in the future.

According to Danish legislation, Danish parents today have the right to 32 weeks of parental leave with unemployment benefits, which the parents can divide between themselves as they please until the child is nine years old. If the new proposal from the Commission is adopted, a legislative amendment in Denmark will be necessary.

The European Commission's new proposal

- 10 working days paternity leave after the birth of the child, which we already have in Denmark
- Fathers and mothers each get four months of parental leave, which cannot be shared between the parents
- If the father does not take his four-month parental leave before the child reaches the age of 12, the father's part of the leave will be lost
- The leave can be divided into several periods
- Paternity leave benefits during parental leave must at least be equal to sickness benefits