The United Kingdom
Margaret O’Brien, Sara Connolly, Svetlana Speight, Matthew Aldrich, and Eloise Poole

in Father Involvement In the Early Years: An international comparison of policy and practice

This chapter examines contemporary fathering practices in the UK liberal welfare state context, where recent legislation has expanded fathers’ access to work-family reconciliation rights, albeit rather minimally. Data are provided to explore whether the new cultural mandate for active fathers holds for the quantity and the quality of time fathers spend with young children. Time use and employment activity data does show an increase in British fathers’ care time and a reduction in paid work time over the decade. Since 2003 British fathers can take two weeks paid leave after the birth of a child, and by the end of the decade over 90% of fathers took significant post-birth leave. However, British fathers, continue to have one of the longest working weeks and highest level of work–family conflict amongst European fathers. In the absence of stronger work–family reconciliation measures, underlying maternalist and modified breadwinner cultures remain resilient.

Working time and caring strategies: parenthood in different welfare states
Thomas P. Boje

in Politicising parenthood in Scandinavia: Gender relations in welfare states

This chapter presents a comparison of Denmark and Sweden with the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. These countries have different...
work cultures and family policy systems, and the variation in the employment level and working-time strategies of parents shows social differences among groups of women. It discusses how the choices of work/care strategies can be explained by the different childcare policies. It then studies the subjective experience of work/family conflicts of parents, as well as the discrepancies between actual and preferred working times. The chapter ends with a section on the implications for gender equality of different strategies in organising working time and care.

**United Kingdom: leave policy and an attempt to take a new path**

Peter Moss and Margaret O’Brien

Peter Moss, Ann-Zofie Duvander, and Alison Koslowski (eds)

in Parental Leave and Beyond: Recent International Developments, Current Issues and Future Directions

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Item type: chapter

This chapter examines an attempt to transform UK leave policy, re-configuring it away from maternalism and towards greater gender equality, and why this attempted change of direction failed. It shows how the country introduced statutory leave at a late date, compared to other European countries, and adopted with little consideration a model centred on long and low paid Maternity Leave. After two decades of neglect, when leave policy came back onto the government’s agenda, this model became more established as Maternity Leave was further extended, while a newly introduced Parental Leave was marginalised. Attempted reform, in 2011-12, failed, due to insufficient support and understanding, leaving UK leave policy as a classic case of path dependency.

**Tackling men’s violence in families: lessons for the UK**

Hester Marianne

in Tackling men's violence in families: Nordic issues and dilemmas

Published in print: 2005 Published Online: March 2012
DOI: 10.1332/policypress/9781861346032.003.0011
Item type: chapter
This chapter links the themes from the previous chapters to current issues in the UK. It begins by briefly outlining some of the key developments in English policies and practices with regard to the tackling of men's violence in families. The chapter then reflects on the lessons and conclusions that can be drawn from the practices of the UK's Nordic counterparts.