

Iceland's 12-Month Gender-Equal Parental Leave Reform (2021)

Gender Equality · Good practice · Iceland

Quality score: 96/100

Evidence strength: Observational / pre–post

Summary

Iceland's 2021 reform expanded paid parental leave to 12 months with 6 months per parent non-transferable, raising fathers' average leave use to 131 days and achieving 80–90% father uptake — the highest global benchmark for gender-equal care sharing.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Transferability / replicability	2/3
Impact on gender equality	1/1
Effectiveness	1/1
Efficiency	1/1
Evaluated outcomes	1/1
Sustainability	1/1
Achievement / evidence	1/1
Gender-mainstreaming embedding	1/1
Curator validation	1/1

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Directorate of Labour \(Vinnumálastofnun\)](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Icelandic government — Maternity and paternity leave](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[Nordic Council of Ministers — Parental leave in Iceland \(2025\)](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

[PMC — The 2021 Baby Boom in Iceland: parental leave reform effects](#) — accessed 2026-06-21

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