

“
What's in
it for
fathers?”



Finland's parental leave reform in Nordic comparison

The Finnish parental leave reform raised interest in international media



Aims of the parental leave reform

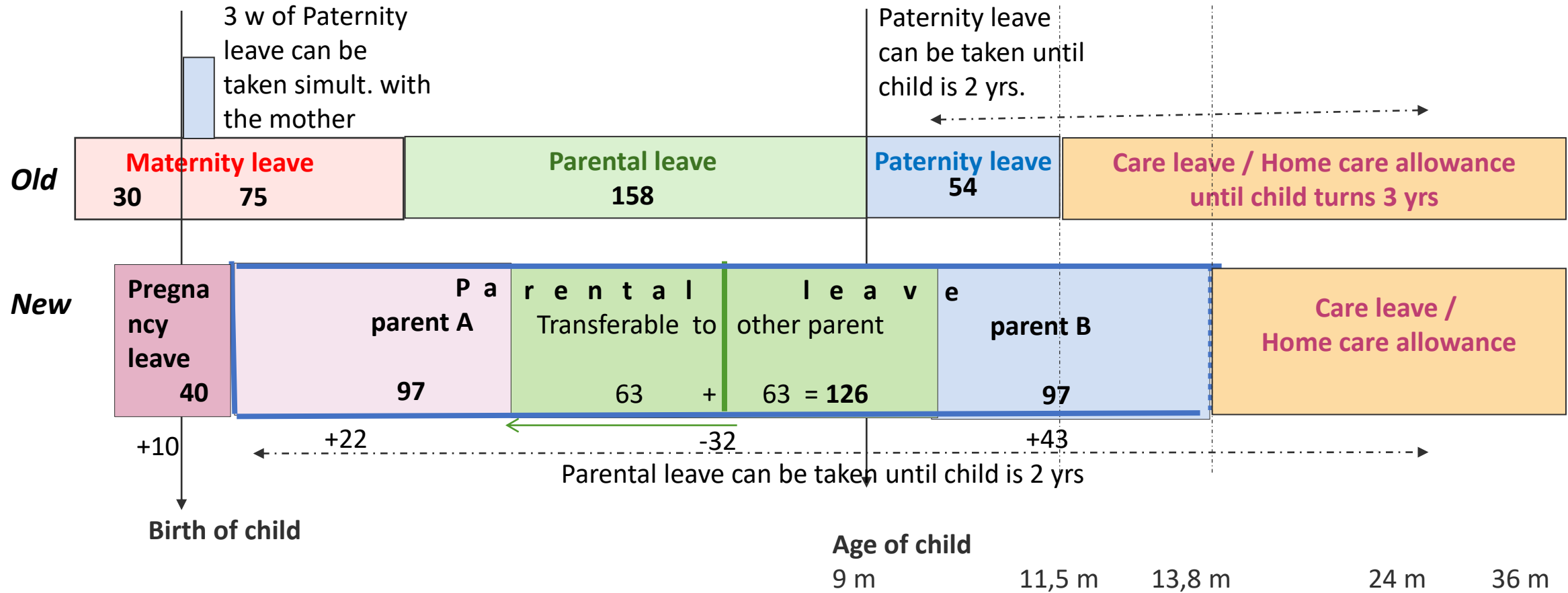
- more gender equality in parenting and working life
- better reconciliation of paid work and family life, including more flexibility and choice
- higher level of wellbeing in families with young children, including better family economy
- more equality between children living in different kinds of families (single-parent, adoptive, same-sex etc).

What changes in August 2022?

- Gender neutral terminology: from maternity/paternity/parental leave to *parental leave*
- Longer leave period with income-related benefit: from 10 months after birth to *13 months*
- Symmetric leave quotas for each parent (6,4 months) of which 2,5 months is transferable to the other parent/spouse/other guardian: from a nine-week father's quota to almost *4 months*.
- More flexibility in timing leave: from only fathers' to *both parents'* possibility to use leave until *child is two years old*.
- More flexibility in dividing leave in parts: from two parental leave periods per parent to unlimited number of benefit periods (leave take-up needs to be negotiated with the employer).
- Part-time parental leave: no longer need for both parents to take part-time leave simultaneously; possibility to save half days.

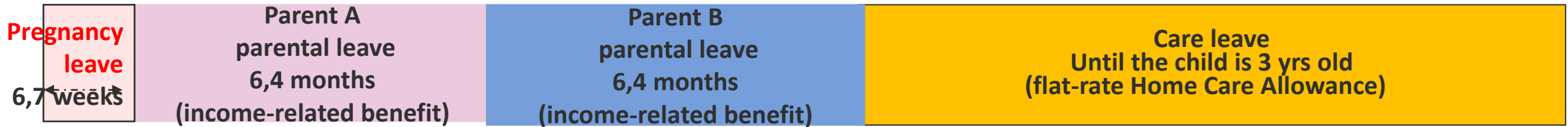
Old and new Parental Leave scheme in Finland

(days; 6 days = 1 week; 25 days = 1 month)

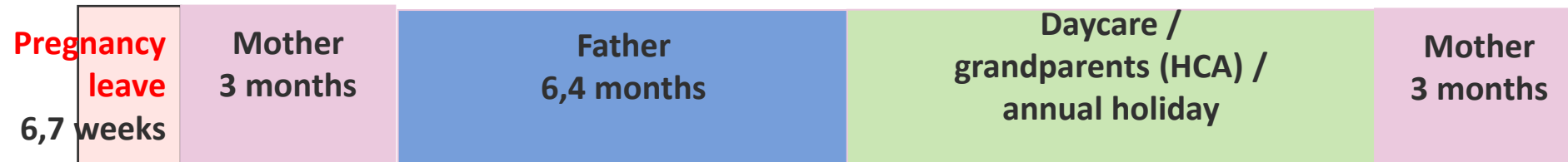
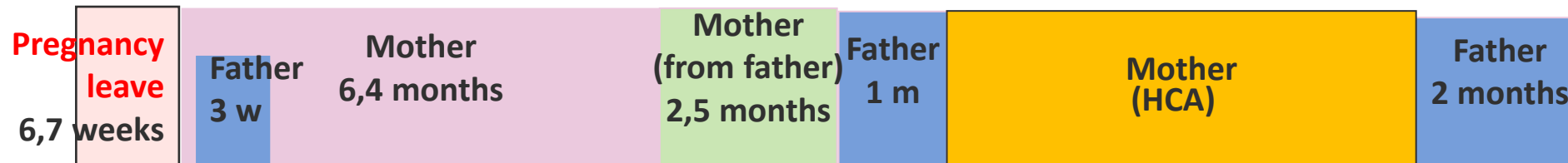


New Parental leave in principle & practice

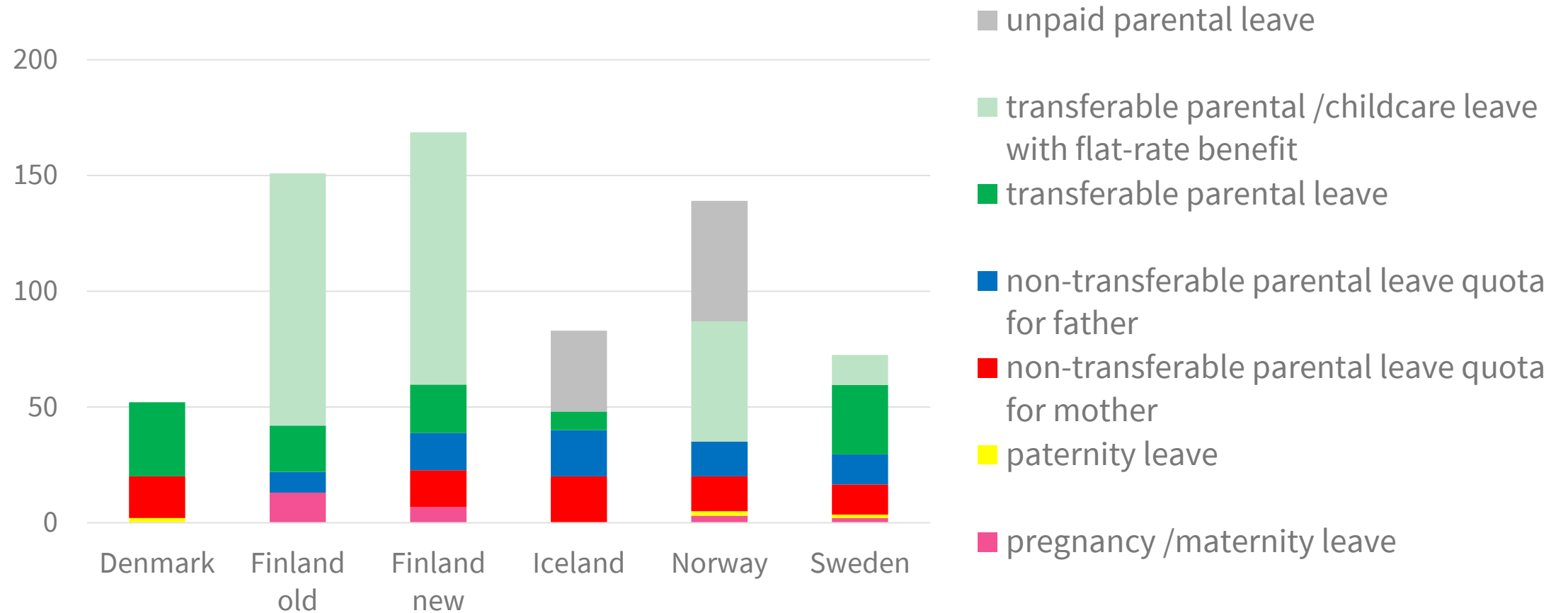
In principle



In practice, for example



Parental / child care leave in the Nordic countries (weeks)



The new parental leave in Finland is more "Nordic"

encourages parents to *share leave more equally*

- each parent gets an equal leave quota (but part of it is transferable)
- the non-transferable father's quota is longer than before

allows *more flexibility* in take-up of leave

- timing, blocks, part-time leave

provides better *support for family economy*

- leave with income-related benefit is longer than before

takes better into account *family diversity*

- children with single, same-sex, adoptive parents.

What's in it for fathers?



Longer father's quota

- sends a message that fathers have equal care responsibility and are equally important and capable carers for their children
- supports fathers' leave possibilities at the workplace
- strengthens father-child relationship
- increases father's happiness
- increases marital satisfaction
- may prevent tensions and separations related to unequal division of labour.

Thank you for your attention!

More information about the Finnish parental leave reform

<https://stm.fi/perhevapaauudistus>

<https://stm.fi/en/reform-aims-to-encourage-both-parents-to-take-family-leave>

Leave policies in 47 countries

<https://www.leavenetwork.org/introducing-the-network/>

