



Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

# Reconciliation of private and professional lives

## German system and reforms



# Current trends and challenges

- | Mothers have an increasing desire to work or to work more than they do,
- | A growing number of fathers want to play a greater role in family life.
- | Equal share of family responsibilities may conflict with prevailing conditions.
- | Current surveys show: many parents feel extremely pressured and in many cases, mothers and fathers find it difficult to meet their self-imposed expectations.
- | Main problem: **lack of time.**



# A new approach to the reconciliation of work and family life

- | Federal Government relies on **established benefits** and develops **new options** in order to support young parents to live family and career on a partnership basis:
  - | **Parental allowance**
  - | **Childcare in ECEC centres and in family day-care**
  - | **Child benefit / supplement to child benefit for low earners**
  - | **Maintenance payments for single parents**
- | Equal opportunities in the labour market for women and men, flexible working hours and needs-based and qualitative childcare and long-term care are further keys in providing greater support for families.



# Parental allowance (PA)

## I Parental allowance (2007)

- for fathers and mothers for a maximum of 14 months
- they can divide this time up between themselves (from 2 to 12 months each) + 2 extra months if both partners participate (“partner months”)
- single parents: full 14 months parental allowance
- The parental allowance replaces the loss in income by 65 to 100 percent of the net income before birth
- Minimum €300 to maximum €1,800



# Parental allowance

- | Or: Parental allowance **Plus (PA+)**, since 2015 → part-time work:
- | With PA+ parents can extend the entitlement period: 1 PA month becomes 2 PA+ months = **twice as long** as basic parental allowance.
- | PA+, like PA, replaces income loss by 65 to 100 %.
- | maximum half of the monthly PA sum to which parents without part-time income would be entitled.
- | -> more flexibility over and above the 14th month in order to combine the needs of the child with the requirements of parents' jobs
- | -> **Single parents** will benefit in just the same way as mothers and fathers with differing living arrangements.



# Parental allowance

- | + Partnership Bonus, since 2015 → part-time work:
- | If mothers and fathers **both** decide to **work part-time simultaneously** – for 4 months in parallel and between 25 to 30 hours per week – they will receive **4 additional PA+ months each**.
- | In this way, families remain financially secure for longer when holding down a part-time job, and are better able to divide tasks within the partnership.
- | Rules regarding parental leave have also been made more flexible.



# Parental allowance: facts and figures

I Since the introduction of the Parental Allowance in 2007, the father's contribution to parenting has increased continuously, reaching 32 percent as the national average in 2013

I Fathers' share of Parental Allowance (nationally):

2010: 25.3%

2011: 27.3%

2012: 29.3%

2013: 32%



# Parental allowance: facts and figures

- I The participation of fathers and, in particular, of mothers in the labour market has clearly increased since the introduction of the Parental Allowance. Amongst mothers whose youngest child is between one and eight years old – i.e. who were able to benefit from the newly introduced benefits from the beginning – the proportion of those employed has **increased by over 10% since 2006**.
- I PA+: 4th quarter of 2015 (6 months introduction of PA+), **16,3 % of parents** opted for PA+.





# Parental allowance: Objectives

- | To give parents more time for the family
- | To support a compatible partnership of family and vocation
- | To promote shared parenting
- | To ensure the livelihood of mothers



# Childcare in ECEC centres and in family day-care

- | Since **August 2013**, every child between the ages of one to school entry age has the **legal right to early childhood education and care (ECEC) in an ECEC centre or in family day care**.
- | Although the German states (*Länder*) and municipalities are primarily responsible for providing childcare centres or in family day-care, the Federal Government provides **extensive financial and qualitative support** for the needs-based expansion of day care services for children younger than three years.
- | Moreover, the Federal Government has started a quality dialogue with the states in order to define common quality goals and foster their implementation.



# Reconciliation of family, care and work

- | **Since January 2015:** new regulations in the **Family Caregiver Leave Act** and the **Caregiver Leave Act:**
- | **short-term absence from work and carer's grant** (care situation occurring at short notice and wage compensation benefit): close relatives can stay away from work for up to 10 working days in order to organise appropriate care.
- | **Caregiver leave:** a complete or partial release from work for up to 6 months in order to care for a close relative in need of long-term care at home; **NEW:** interest-free loan in order to cushion the loss of income
- | **Family caregiver leave :** a partial release from work for up to 24 months + interest-free loan



# Advisory services

- | **High-quality and nationwide** range of advisory services provided by different institutions and bodies for questions regarding the education of children and living together as a family.
- | Advice is given **free of charge** in more than 1,000 education and family advice centres (Erziehungs- und Familienberatungsstellen) and is generally **open to everyone**.



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# Thank you very much!

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