MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR DEMOGRAPHIC RESEARCH

Konrad-Zuse-Strasse 1 · D-18057 Rostock · Germany · Tel +49 (0) 3 81 20 81 - 0 · Fax +49 (0) 3 81 20 81 - 202 · www.demogr.mpg.de

MPIDR Working Paper WP 2024-031 I October 2024
https://doi.org/10.4054/MPIDR-WP-2024-031

Time *and* money: Parental leave generosity and first-time parents' uptake of leave across 23 European countries

Nathan Robbins I robbins@demogr.mpg.de

This working paper has been approved for release by: Nicole Hiekel (hiekel@demogr.mpg.de),
Head of the Research Group: Gender Inequalities and Fertility.

Time *and* money: Parental leave generosity and first-time parents' uptake of leave across 23 European countries

Nathan Robbins

Cornell University

Abstract

As couples transition into parenthood, they face many decisions regarding the division of paid and unpaid labor. A key factor in navigating these divisions is whether – and for how long – each partner takes paid parental leave. Previous studies have shown that more generous leave policies lead, in general, to more uptake of leave, but little data exists on the association between leave generosity at the household level. This study assesses the association between paid parental leave generosity on the leave-taking behavior of new parents across 23 European countries, using data from the 2018 European Union Labor Force Survey. I examine how the two key leave policy levers, time (the number of job-protected weeks available) and money (the wage-replacement rate paid), influence whether first-time parents take leave and for how long, and whether these results differ across income groups. Using multilevel regression analysis on a sample of n = 16,161 couples, I assess the association between time, money, and a measure account for both together. Results indicate a positive relationship between generosity and uptake among both mothers and fathers, but with outcomes twice as large for fathers. I also find differences in results across income groups. The findings highlight the role of paid parental leave in promoting gender equality in household labor division, and the need. The study suggests that enhancing leave policies, especially for fathers, could encourage a more equitable sharing of parental leave and, consequently, the division of paid and unpaid labor.

Time *and* money: Paid parental leave generosity and first-time parents' uptake of leave across 23 European countries

In the transition to becoming new parents, mothers and fathers face a variety of decisions regarding paid labor, housework and childcare. The initial arrangement of who takes parental leave and for how long has a lasting impact on how labor inside and outside of the home are divided. The increased demands that come with children require couples to navigate through individual- and couple-level expectations regarding gender, parenting, employment and childcare, institutional demands and norms regarding leave and duties as employees, and a policy context that reinforces cultural ideas regarding traditional and egalitarian divisions of labor. Given these influences – and often in spite of increasing egalitarian attitudes and intentions – most couples ultimately trend toward traditional male breadwinner/female caregiver household orientations (Hook, 2006; Jessen, 2022; Miller, 2011; Moberg & van der Vleuten, 2022). This division of labor perpetuates gender inequality in and outside of the home and ushers in a host of potential negative outcomes for mothers, fathers, and their children, from relationship instability and dissolution (Kaufman, 2000) to low levels of wellbeing (Hagqvist et al., 2012). The transition into parenthood has a profound impact on employment, earnings, and the wage gap between mothers and fathers. Motherhood is associated with lower earnings and an increasing gender-wage gap (Budig & England, 2001) which persists across policy contexts (Budig et al., 2012) and years into the mothers' career (Musick et al., 2020).

On the other hand, more egalitarian division of labor provides many positive outcomes for families. Parents who share leave equally rate their coparenting quality and satisfaction with their partner's caregiving more highly (Lidbeck & Bernhardsson, 2019). Fathers who are more involved in caregiving rate their parenting as more fulfilling and report better relationships with

their children (Brandth & Kvande, 2018; Rehel, 2014). Women are much more likely to resume employment when fathers increase their involvement in childcare (Norman, 2020), improving the economic well-being of the family.

Conceptually, egalitarian relationships arise from both increased participation of mothers in the workplace (with full-time employment as the gold standard) and increased involvement among fathers in both housework and childcare. One key predictor of progress in both of these dimensions is fathers' uptake of paternal leave (Almqvist & Duvander, 2014; Schober, 2014), particularly when the leave is longer than two months (Bünning, 2015). However, fathers' leave taking across the European Union and United Kingdom remains low, and far behind mothers both in terms of length of leave and the likelihood of taking any leave at all. Numerous factors, such as the individual and household context, employment, and policy generosity have been found to influence men's take-up rates and length of leave, with much of it boiling down to whether or not the father can afford to take leave as the de facto primary provider of the household. The ability to afford leave depends on the employment characteristics and income of the household (Bose et al., 2020; Geisler & Kreyenfeld, 2011; Lappegård, 2012), as well as the generosity of leave – measured by the duration and wage replacement level paid to parents. And though countries with more generous leave policies tend to have higher participation from fathers (Karu & Tremblay, 2018), little research exists on the relation between leave generosity, take-up rates, and duration at the household level.

The purpose of this paper is to better understand how paid leave generosity influences working mothers' and fathers' use and duration of leave in the years following the transition to parenthood. What influence, if any, does the macro-level family policy of the duration and replacement wage rate have on couple-level decision making as first-time parents navigate who

takes leave and for how long? Using data from 23 countries in the European Union Labor Force Survey (EU-LFS) and from the 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation ad-hoc module, I examine couples who recently (within five years) made the transition to parenthood, their likelihood of taking any leave of one month or more, and the overall length of the leave they take in relation to the generosity of paid leave available to them, measured by the amount of weeks offered *and* the rate at which it is paid. This paper contributes to the literature by helping to describe how macro-level policies influence household decision-making as new parents navigate decisions around leave and employment.

Background

Mothers' and father's division of paid and unpaid labor has been converging over the last several decades with men increasing time in both housework and childcare (Bianchi et al., 2000). However, mothers still do the majority of unpaid work, independent of their employment status, often resulting in a "second shift" for fully employed mothers (Hochschild & Machung, 2012). As men's increases in involvement in the home have tapered off, scholars note a stall in achieving more egalitarian and gender equal divisions of labor (England, 2010). These differences in paid and unpaid labor often begin as minimal among childless couples, as each are more likely to be employed and share responsibilities in the home. However, during the transition to parenthood, in response to role uncertainty and increased stressors, many couples default into more traditional roles (Miller, 2011). These losses in equal shares of work and parenting can be prevented when fathers stay home after the birth of a new child (Rehel, 2014), and thus paid parental leave and its uptake is important to promoting gender equal sharing of paid and unpaid responsibilities throughout the childrearing years.

Egalitarian Division of Labor

The division of paid and unpaid labor between partners can take many forms, but are generally conceptualized along a spectrum between more traditional and more egalitarian. In traditional households, men either increase or maintain their level of employment and/or income in an effort to fulfil the male breadwinner norm of financial provision for his family (Weinshenker, 2015). In response, the mother typically takes relatively longer periods of parental leave, particularly in countries where longer leave periods are available (Pettit & Hook, 2009). Egalitarian division of labor is promoted through equal sharing of leave policies, the use of childcare (particularly government provided or subsidized care), and through resumption of full-time employment by both mother and father.

Gendered norms in the division of labor and in uptake of parental leave remain entrenched among opposite-sex coresidential couples. The traditional arrangement of fathers as breadwinners and mothers as primary caregivers persists across various contexts: adoptive and biological families, income (Moberg & van der Vleuten, 2022), occupation (Lappegård, 2012), and across nations (Hook, 2006; Olsson et al., 2023). Even in Sweden, widely regarded as one of the most gender equal countries in the world, women use 78 – 82% of leave available to both parents (Moberg & van der Vleuten, 2022). Still, there is much variation in how each predictor influences the division of labor, the uptake of leave, and the use of childcare at each level.

Individual Level Predictors

Education and employment are two of the most important individual level predictors of the division of labor in households and uptake of parental leave. Fathers of all education levels are increasing their time spent in housework and childcare, though gains have been the greatest among fathers with a college education (Ellingsæter & Kitterød, 2023). Higher educated fathers are more likely to use leave, especially when their partners are also more educated (Sundström &

Duvander, 2002). Highly educated fathers are also more likely to hold more egalitarian views regarding gender and have higher levels of participation in housework and childcare (Coltrane & Shih, 2010).

The likelihood of fathers reducing their employment responsibilities is dependent on economic factors. Younger and more disadvantaged men tend to increase their work hours in response to childcare responsibilities (Weinshenker, 2015) rather than taking leave, but they reduce their hours when their partners are employed (Hoherz & Bryan, 2020). The use of parental leave among fathers is sensitive to the economic situation of the family as well, with higher-earning fathers more likely to take leave (Sundström & Duvander, 2002).

Household Level Predictors

Household level factors, such as partner employment and income, and the number and age of children in the home also impact the division of labor between couples. Fathers are more likely to take leave when there are more children present and when the children are younger (Geisler & Kreyenfeld, 2011). They also take more leave when the mother is employed approximately the same hours as the father (Reich, 2011), or when she earns nearly the same income (Lappegard, 2008). Additionally, men's uptake of leave is the lowest when their education level is much higher than their partner's, and the highest when both partners have high levels of education (Duvander & Andersson, 2006; Geisler & Kreyenfeld, 2011), suggesting that fathers take leave only when it is economically feasible, and according to the gendered arrangements around paid and unpaid work in the household.

Country Level Predictors

The sharing of parental leave between mothers and fathers as they transition into parenthood is also shaped by country level family policies. Countries with long maternal leaves available lead to higher uptake and subsequently less labor force participation among women and

higher rates of part-time over full-time employment (Fuwa & Cohen, 2007; Pettit & Hook, 2009). Conversely, parental leave that is reserved exclusively for the father, and leave paid at or near complete replacement rates are the most supportive of men's leave taking (Castro-García & Pazos-Moran, 2016; Duvander & Johansson, 2012; O'Brien, 2009), which increases their involvement in childcare and housework (Almqvist & Duvander, 2014; Brandth & Kvande, 2018) and leads to higher levels of egalitarian division of labor in the household (Olsson et al., 2023). The gender equalizing effects of paternity leave are more pronounced for fathers who took more than two months of leave, or who took leave while their partner was working (Bünning, 2015).

The wage replacement rate, or the amount paid to parents while they are on leave, varies greatly by country. For example, in 2018 Ireland offered a flat rate of 240 € per week for paternity leave and no funding for parental leave, while Portugal offered a full 100% wage replacement for paternity leave, but for only 25 days, and a 25% replacement level for parental leave for 3 months thereafter. These rates may have a dramatic impact on the length of leave mothers and fathers are able to take, if they take any at all.

The level of gender inequality in a country also has far reaching effects on the uptake of leave. Adherence to traditional gender norms impacts decision making at the individual and family level, but it also informs policy making and policy uptake among families. Gender equality indices typically measure indicators such as the employment participation rate of women, their representation across industries, education levels, and the gender wage gap, to name a few. The association between gender equality at the national level and leave generosity is complex, with varying results by country in terms of leave length and the amount of pay offered

(Ray et al., 2010), though in general, generosity increases moderately with greater gender equality.

Differential Effects on Families

High- and low-income parents' experiences regarding employment and family policies often differ greatly. About 60% of countries associated with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) fail to provide wage replacement levels that are above the poverty line for low- and average-income families. Furthermore, parental leave that can be shared by both parents is paid at a lower rate in the majority of countries (Bose et al., 2020), which may lead to unequal uptake of leave among low- and high- income mothers and fathers.

The use of and availability of childcare may also differentially influence the use of parental leave along income distributions. Childcare is used more often by higher-income families because they are better able to afford it, especially in countries where there is less government support of childcare (Pavolini & Lancker, 2018), which further exacerbates the divide between low and high SES parents (Pettit & Hook, 2009).

Parental Leave Policy Offerings

Parental leave policies vary in the amount of leave available exclusively to mothers (maternity leave), fathers (paternity leave), and that which can be shared between parents (parental leave). The other main variation in policies is the amount that is paid, which generally takes the form of either a flat-rate amount per month, or a wage replacement rate based on the parents' wages before the birth of the child (Blum et al., 2018). Some countries have limits on the amount that is paid as a portion of wages, for instance Germany limits the amount to 1800 Euros per month while median household income was 4979 euros per month in 2021. The amount paid varies across maternity, paternity, and parental leave, and most countries have

policies which pay lower flat rates and replacement rates through parental leave (Bose et al., 2020).

Policy responses to increase uptake of parental leave among parents can include offering more weeks/months of employment-protected leave to each parent, though long periods of leave available to mothers can impede their labor force participation (Boeckmann et al., 2015; Hook & Paek, 2020), leading to more gender inequality in paid and unpaid work among families. There has been some success in implementing "daddy months" or well-compensated paid leave exclusively for fathers, or by making more time available to both parents when fathers take a certain amount of leave (Bünning, 2015), but attempts to roll out similar policies in some EU countries has led to little or no increased uptake among men (Karu & Tremblay, 2018). A second policy response would be to increase the amount of leave paid, particularly through the shared parental leave which could encourage more equal sharing of the leave available. Generally, mothers and fathers are both more likely to take leave, for longer periods, when compensation rates are higher (Karu & Tremblay, 2018), but with available lengths of parental leave ranging from 0 weeks (Switzerland) to 156 weeks (Slovakia), high-paid leave is not enough by itself. I argue that both the length of leave and the amount paid (ie generosity) are important in increasing leave uptake among parents.

Present Study

Across the transition into parenthood, mothers and fathers face many decisions regarding employment, the division of labor, and the uptake and duration of parental leave. These decisions are influenced by individual and household factors as well as macro-level indicators such as the amount and duration of paid leave available to both parents. This study investigates the relationship between paid leave generosity (weeks available and replacement rate) and leave

uptake among new parents. I include parents who were both employed at the birth of their first child so that each parent is eligible to take paid leave, and so that some level of negotiation and/or decision-making regarding leave and employment is required. I assess the importance of leave generosity and its influence on the likelihood and duration of leave among mothers and fathers with the following hypotheses:

H1 – paid parental leave generosity will be positively associated with the likelihood of taking leave and the duration of leave taken by both mothers and fathers.

H2 – paid parental leave generosity will be more important to the rates and duration of leave take-up among lower-income households.

Method

Data

I use data from the 2018 EU Labor Force Survey (EU-LFS) and the Work-Family Reconciliation ad-hoc module. The EU-LFS is a household-level survey that includes over 1,200,000 respondents across 35 participating countries. The Work-Family Reconciliation ad-hoc module contains questions about the use of parental leave and childcare. The EU-LFS is well-suited for the research question because it includes a representative sample of two-parent households for each country and assesses change in the division of labor for both parents as a result of new childcare responsibilities. Data on the individual and employment characteristics are provided for both parents.

I also include country-level indicators from additional sources. For data on Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita and national spending on family policies, I used data from the Office of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2024). Data on the length and replacement rates of parental leave policies were obtained from the International Network on

Leave Policies and Research (Blum et al., 2018). Finally, I attempted to use two different measures of gender equality: the Gender Equality Index, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), and a measure of gender attitudes derived from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP; Lomazzi & Seddig, 2020) to assess the level of various indicators of gender equality in each country. However, both measures were dropped from the models due to multicollinearity with other measures, as gender at the national level is strongly correlated with GDP, social spending and generosity in family policies.

Sample

The sample included households in which there were two employed parents whose first child was under five years old. The child could be biologically related to both parents, step, or adopted, but both parents reported having care responsibilities for the child. Both married and cohabiting couples are included, as data are not available to differentiate between the two relationship types. Only countries who reported on the ad-hoc module variables – changes in employment due to childcare responsibilities, and use of parental leave and childcare – were included in the final sample, resulting in a sample size of 16,161 households from 23 countries. The EU-LFS also provides household weighting variables by country which are used to obtain representative results at the household level.

Measures

Dependent Variable. The two dependent variables in the study are 1) any leave: whether or not the mother and/or father took any leave longer than one month, and 2) leave length: the duration of the leave. For any leave, the parent was asked “have you ever spent at least one continuous month not working to look after your children?” A follow-up question asks “was a part of that time when you did not work for childcare reasons taken as parental leave.” Only

parents who took leave to care for their children were included in the sample. The leave length was assessed with the question “In total, how long have you not worked to look after your children, please include maternity, paternity, and parental leave.” Responses were categorical: 0, 1-6 months, 6-12 months, and 1-2 years.

Independent Variable. The independent variable is parental leave generosity, which is measured as the number of months available to either parent times the replacement wage rate. This is known as full-time equivalent units, or FTE (Ray et al., 2010). For countries that offer a flat rate, I calculated the equivalent replacement rate at the 2018 median income for the corresponding country, assuming a full-time work week of 39 hours (see Ray et al., 2010).

Controls. I include various explanatory variables at the individual, household, and country level. Individual factors include age, income (in deciles by country), education (primary, lower secondary, or third level), and nativity. At the household level I measure the number of children under the age of 5, whether the family uses childcare services, the leave use of the partner, and whether the family lives in a city, suburban or rural area. At the country level, I measure GDP per capita, the percentage of GDP spent on social expenditures, and the percentage of GDP spent on childcare.

Analysis

I used multilevel regression to first examine the relationship between the individual association between the number of job-protected weeks of leave available, and the replacement rate at which the leave is paid. I then used the full-time equivalent measure of generosity to test the combined impact of these policy levers on taking any leave of one month or more, and the overall leave length, with separate analyses for mothers and fathers. Logistic regression was used to assess the odds of each parent taking leave of 1) less than one month or 2) one month or more.

Ordered logistic regression was used with the categorical measure of duration (0, 1-6 months, 6-12 months, and 1-2 years).

Results

Descriptive statistics for the overall sample are included in Table 2. Almost 80% of all mothers took at least one month of leave, while only 11% of fathers did. In the sample of 23 countries, only four offered paternity leave of over 4 weeks (Austria, Germany, Spain, and Slovakia). Notably, several of the Nordic welfare regime countries such as Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark were dropped from the sample because the ad-hoc portion of the survey was only given to one parent in each household. These countries are known for longer leaves for fathers with higher uptake rates, and this might partially explain the low uptake by fathers. Mothers' length of leave was somewhat even across the time segments, with 21% not taking a month or more, and 34% taking between 1 and 2 years. For fathers, the vast majority (89%) took no leave, and almost all of the rest (9%) took between 1 and 6 months.

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics of Mothers and Fathers in the First Five Years of Parenthood across 23 Countries (EU-LFS 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation Module, N = 16,161)*

Variables	Mean/%	SD	Range
Dependent Variable (%)			
Any leave (mothers)	79		
Any leave (fathers)	11		
Leave length (mothers)			
0	22		
1 – 6 months	25		
6 – 12 months	21		
12 – 24 months	32		
Leave length (fathers)			
0	89		
1 – 6 months	9		
6 – 12 months	1		
12 – 24 months	1		
Independent Variable			
Maternity leave weeks	21.6	9.1	14 – 59
Paternity leave weeks	3.3	4.8	0 – 16

Parental leave weeks	41.7	36.6	0 – 136
Maternity leave rate (%)	0.91	0.2	.2 – 1
Paternity leave rate (%)	0.78	0.4	0 – 1
Parental leave rate (%)	0.31	0.3	0 – 1
Maternity leave generosity (FTE)	4.8	2.1	1.4 – 14.8
Paternity leave generosity (FTE)	0.7	1.2	0 – 4
Parental leave generosity (FTE)	3.5	4.4	0 – 15.5
Controls			
Father's Age	37	7.5	17 – 52
Mother's Age	35	6.9	17 – 52
Father's Income Decile[1] (%)			
0	14.5		
1-3	10.3		
4-7	33.6		
7-9	41.6		
Mother's Income Decile[1] (%)			
0	27.7		
1-3	26.9		
4-7	27.9		
7-9	17.6		
Relative Income[1] (%)			
Father earns more	56		
Both earn near the same	23		
Mother earns more	21		
Father's Education (%)			
Lower secondary	17		
Upper secondary	45		
Third level	38		
Mother's education1 (%)			
Lower secondary	11		
Upper secondary	38		
Third level	51		
Relative education (%)			
Father higher	57		
Same	23		
Father lower	20		
Father Non-Native (%)	13		
Mother Non-Native (%)	14		
Number of children under age 5	1.3	0.4	1 – 4
Uses professional childcare services (%)	52		
Urbanicity (%)			
Cities	39		

Suburbs	34
Rural	26

1 – For illustration purposes, not used in analysis

Full country-level data is available in Appendix 3.A., but I report here on the ranges of GDP, spending for all family programs, spending on childcare, family leave policies, and the gender equality index. GDP per capita (in 2018 US $1,000) ranged from 9.45 in Bulgaria to 80.63 in Ireland. Percent GDP on all family spending ranged from 1.5% in Romania up to 3.51% in France, while childcare spending ranged from 0 in several countries (Romania, UK, and Spain) to .6% in France. Leave policies varied greatly between countries, though EU policy requires at least four months of leave to be available to each parent, and leave can be taken at any point until the child is 8 years old. Typically, countries reserve specific amounts for mothers (maternity leave), fathers (paternity leave), and a separate reserve which can be taken by either parent (parental leave). Maternity leave ranges from 6 weeks in Portugal to 52 weeks in the UK, while paternity leave ranges from 0 in Croatia and 5 days in Romania and the Netherlands, up to 28 weeks in Slovakia. Parental leave ranges from 0 in Romania up to 183 weeks in Poland.

Regression Results

I first assessed the individual influences of number of weeks of leave available to each parent and the replacement rate on the likelihood of taking at least one month of leave, controlling for a number of factors, including the leave uptake of the respondent's partner. Results are summarized in Table 3. For each four-week increase in job-protected maternity leave, mothers were 32% more likely to take longer than one month of leave, while fathers were 65% more likely for the same increase in paternity leave. Mother were also influenced by the other types of leave, with 8% higher odds due to parental leave increases, and 20% *lower* odds for each four-week increase in paternity leave. The relative sensitivity of fathers to increases in weeks of leave offered may be due to the relative size of increase compared to what is already

offered. As noted in Table 1, average maternity leave across all countries was almost 22 weeks, compared to the average paternity leave of just over 3 weeks.

Table 2: *Multilevel logistic regression: association between parental leave weeks and replacement rate and any leave uptake of mothers (model 1) and fathers (model 2). Base category: < 1 month leave taken, (EU-LFS 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation Module, N = 16,161)*

	Model 1: Mother		Model 2: Father	
Variable	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)
Maternity leave weeks (x4)	1.32***	0.06	0.93	0.08
Paternity leave weeks (x4)	0.81**	0.06	1.65**	0.29
Parental leave weeks (x4)	1.08***	0.01	0.98	0.02
Maternity leave rate (%)	1.01‡	0.01	1.03*	0.01
Paternity leave rate (%)	1.01***	0.00	1.00	0.01
Parental leave rate (%)	1.00	0.00	1.01**	0.00
Own education[1]				
Upper secondary	1.63***	0.11	1.38***	0.12
Third level	2.56***	0.18	2.05***	0.20
Relative education[2]				
Same	0.81**	0.05	1.28***	0.11
Father lower	0.68***	0.05	1.58***	0.18
Respondent age	1.02***	0.00	0.99‡	0.00
Mother nonnative	0.60***	0.05	1.07	0.12
Father nonnative	0.79*	0.08	1.10	0.14
Both nonnative	0.52***	0.03	0.78*	0.09
Number of kids under 5	1.21***	0.05	1.27***	0.06
Use of professional childcare	1.71***	0.07	0.91	0.05
Urbanicity[3]				
Suburbs	0.97	0.05	1.00	0.06
Rural	0.95	0.05	0.88‡	0.06
Partner leave 1+ months	2.42***	0.19	2.41***	0.19
Country Level Variables				
GDP	1.02‡	0.01	1.04*	0.02
Total family spending	1.30‡	0.15	0.83	0.23
Spending on childcare	0.29***	0.09	1.25	0.92
Constant	0.01***	0.01	0.00***	0.00
Country Variance	1.06	0.03	1.47	0.20

‡ p <.10 *p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001

1 – Base category: Primary

2 – Base category: Father higher education

3 – Base category: Urban

Results regarding the replacement rate paid to each parent were somewhat surprising. Instead of increases in each parent's own leave being associated with their own leave taking, a 1% rate increase in paternity leave led to a 1% increase in the odds of mothers taking more than one month of leave, while a 1% increase in maternity leave led to a 3% increase in father's odds. Higher paid parental leave also predicted higher odds of fathers taking one month or more of leave. Other covariates in the model – partner's leave taking – may account for this surprising relationship: mothers and fathers whose partners stayed home had over twice the odds of taking one month or more of leave than their counterparts whose partners took less than a month of leave. Higher replacement rates for partners may make it easier for couples to negotiate more equal sharing of leave.

The second set of models (Table 4) used ordered logistical multilevel regression models to assess the relationship between the individual influences of time and money and the odds of taking the next higher category of leave length (less than one month, 1-6 months, 6-12 months, and over 12 months). A similar pattern as the previous models seems to hold, where the number of weeks offered led to higher leave uptake in both parents, but the associated was twice as strong for fathers than mothers. For example, a mother who took between 1-6 months of leave would have 30% higher odds of taking over 12 months of leave for every additional 4 weeks of leave offered in maternity leave. The related increase for fathers is 60%. The association between replacement rates and leave length is also similar to the previous models, where higher rates for partners led to respondents' higher odds of taking longer leaves.

Table 3: *Multilevel ordered[1] logistic regression: association between parental leave weeks and replacement rate and length of leave uptake of mothers (model 3) and fathers (model 4). (EU-LFS 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation Module, N = 16,161)*

	Model 3: Mother		Model 4: Father	
Variable	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)
Maternity leave weeks (x4)	1.31***	0.07	0.93	0.08

Paternity leave weeks (x4)	0.84	0.10	1.60***	0.28
Parental leave weeks (x4)	1.09***	0.02	0.98	0.02
Maternity leave rate (%)	0.99	0.01	1.03*	0.01
Paternity leave rate (%)	1.00	0.00	1.00	0.01
Parental leave rate (%)	1.02***	0.00	1.01*	0.01
Own education[1]				
Upper secondary	1.30***	0.06	1.42***	0.12
Third level	1.53***	0.08	2.16***	0.21
Relative education[2]				
Same	1.10*	0.05	1.30**	0.11
Father lower	1.38***	0.08	1.67***	0.18
Respondent age	1.03***	0.03	0.99*	0.00
Mother nonnative	0.78***	0.05	1.03	0.13
Father nonnative	0.91	0.07	1.07	0.08
Both nonnative	0.61***	0.03	0.74	0.06
Number of kids under 5	2.11***	0.06	1.20	0.05
Use of professional childcare	1.44***	0.05	0.95	0.06
Urbanicity[3]				
Suburbs	1.01	0.04	0.99	0.06
Rural	0.99	0.04	0.87	0.06
Partner leave 1+ months	1.24***	0.05	1.23***	0.03
Country Level Variables				
GDP	1.01	0.01	1.04*	0.02
Total family spending	1.25	0.23	0.84	0.22
Spending on childcare	0.24	0.12	1.37	0.99
Country Variance	1.21	0.07	1.44	0.18

ǂ p <.10 *p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001
1 – Categories: < 1 month, 1-6 months, 6-12 months, 12-24 months
2 – Base category: Primary
3 – Base category: Father higher education
4 – Base category: Urban

According to these models, both mothers and fathers are sensitive to increases in time and, in a roundabout way, money, but assessing the associations individually might not be adequate, as they could potentially mask other underlying factors. The largest factor is the tendency of longer leaves to be paid at lower rates, and policies with very high (near or at 100%) to be relatively short. To remedy this, I assessed whether leave generosity, measured in full-time equivalents, was associated with longer leave taking. Due to similarity in the results in taking

one month or more of leave and the overall length of leave – and space constraints – I report only the results of the ordinal logistic regression (Table 4).

For each equivalent of four weeks' full-time pay given to mothers through maternity leave, they had 48% higher odds of taking a higher category of leave length. For fathers, one FTE increase in paternity leave was associated with 91% higher odds of taking longer leave. When parental leave increased by one FTE, mothers had 24% higher odds of taking longer leave, but there was no association for fathers. The results again point to a higher sensitivity of fathers to leave generosity, and specifically when paid through paternity leave policies.

Table 4: *Multilevel ordered[1] logistic regression: association between leave generosity (FTE) and length of leave uptake of mothers (model 5) and fathers (model 6). (EU-LFS 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation Module, N = 16,161)*

	Model 5: Mother		Model 6: Father	
Variable	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)
Maternity leave generosity	1.48***	0.10	0.87	0.11
Paternity leave generosity	0.84	0.13	1.91**	0.48
Parental leave generosity	1.24***	0.03	1.05	0.05
Father's education[1]				
Upper secondary	1.51***	0.08	1.42***	0.12
Third level	1.69***	0.10	2.17***	0.21
Relative education[2]				
Same	0.87*	0.05	1.30**	0.11
Father lower	0.80***	0.05	1.66***	0.18
Respondent age	1.02***	0.00	0.99*	0.00
Mother nonnative	0.78***	0.05	1.03	0.11
Father nonnative	0.91	0.07	1.07	0.14
Both nonnative	0.61***	0.03	0.74**	0.08
Number of kids under 5	2.12***	0.06	1.21***	0.06
Use of professional childcare	1.43***	0.05	0.95	0.05
Urbanicity[3]				
Suburbs	1.01	0.04	0.99	0.06
Rural	0.99	0.04	0.87	0.06
Partner leave 1+ months	1.25***	0.05	1.23***	0.03
Country Level Variables				
GDP	1.02*	0.01	1.02	0.02
Total family spending	0.91	0.21	1.02	0.40
Spending on childcare	0.31*	0.15	1.50	1.27

Country variance	2.72	0.13	2.35	0.64

ǂ p <.10 *p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001
1 – Categories: < 1 month, 1-6 months, 6-12 months, 12-24 months
2 – Base category: Primary
3 – Base category: Father higher education
4 – Base category: Urban

Compared to the previous models, the coefficient sizes and significance of the covariates in the FTE models become much more similar between mothers and fathers. Taken together, they point to higher leaves being taken by those in relative positions of privilege, such as higher – and more equal – education levels, being native to the country, the availability (and likely affordability) of professional childcare, and, for mothers, GDP and spending on childcare. The tendency for leave to exhibit the so-called Mathew Effect – where higher-income couples are able to afford greater leave benefits – could lead to leave generosity having different outcomes at different levels of income distribution.

In order to test this, I use income as a moderator to assess the impact it may have on the relationship between leave generosity and leave length (Table 5). Although income is measured at one timepoint up to five years after the couples' first child was born, studies generally find no effect of leave on fathers' income, though one study found a small (1-3%) decrease (Rege & Solli, 2013). I therefore include only fathers' income as a categorical variable, with low (0 – 2nd decile), middle (3rd – 7th decile), and high (7th – 9th decile) categories. Two countries – France and Czechia – included only household level income rather than individual income so they were omitted from this analysis, resulting in a sample of n = 13,372.

Table 5: *Multilevel logistic (Model 7) and ordered logistic regression (Model 8) predicting income as moderator between leave generosity and one month or more (Model 7) and overall length (Model 6) of father leave, (EU-LFS 2018 Work-Family Reconciliation Module, n = 13,810)*

	Model 5: Mothers		Model 6: Fathers	
Variable	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)	*b*: Odds Ratio	(SE)
Maternity leave generosity	1.42***	0.10	0.87	0.09
Paternity leave generosity	0.86	0.13	1.98**	0.48

Parental leave generosity	1.23***	0.03	1.04	0.05
Income category[1]				
Low	0.61***	0.07	1.14	0.10
High	1.08	0.09	1.06	0.09
Income x generosity[1]				
Low	1.09***	0.03	0.81***	0.04
High	1.02	0.03	0.97	0.04

*p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001 ǂ p < .10
Note: controls omitted due to space, but follow similar pattern as previous models
1 – Reference: medium income

Results of the interaction analysis point to differences in uptake in leave at low- vs medium- and high-income levels for both mothers and fathers. The positive relationship between leave generosity and length of leave is augmented for low-income mothers, with an additional 9% increase in odds for each unit of FTE. For low-income fathers, the reverse effect is seen: odds of taking longer leave increased at a rate 40% lower than their medium- and high-income counterparts.

Discussion

Using data from 23 European countries, I examined the individual, household and national contexts involved in dual-earner couples' decisions regarding leave taking and the role that leave generosity plays in this process. Previous studies have shown that, on the whole, countries with more generous leaves have higher uptakes, and others have found individual and household factors that matter to the take-up of leave, but this is one of the first cross-national studies that has examined which households, as well as which partners, benefit most from generous leave policies.

The first hypothesis of the study – that generous leave policies would be associated with both partners more likely to take leave and taking longer leaves – was supported. Policy generosity predicted higher odds of taking leave of longer than one month and longer periods of leave for both mothers and fathers. This is somewhat in contrast to with findings from the OECD

that women generally take whatever leave is available to them (Parental leave: Where are the fathers?, 2016). Mothers were more likely to take longer leave as generosity increased, but they were also more sensitive to other contextual factors involved in the household, like the number of children in the home, their partner's leave uptake, and the availability and use of professional childcare. This likely stems from, and contributes to, a persistent male breadwinner norm throughout EU countries (see Cooke, 2006; Gonalons-Pons & Gangl, 2018, Vitali & Arpino, 2016) that prescribes short leaves and quick returns for fathers, while mothers take the lion's share of parental leave.

The association between fathers' use of leave and policy generosity was, on average, two times higher than that of mothers. Fathers face a number of obstacles in taking longer leaves due to individual, household, and macro-level factors (see Ma et al., 2019; Wells & Sarkadi, 2012), but despite this their uptake appears highly sensitive to the level of generosity in both time and money. In the sample in this study, fathers earned roughly the same or more than their partners in 79% of households, and many families cannot afford for fathers to stay home for long durations, particularly when the wage replacement is low or zero. Increases in leave generosity, specifically in paternity leave and other father-quota schemes, may help new parents better navigate the division of household and paid labor.

The second hypothesis – that generosity will be more salient to households with lower earning fathers – was only partially validated. Mothers whose partners earned lower incomes had a higher likelihood of taking longer leaves than middle and high earners as generosity increased. And though fathers at all income levels were much more likely to leave as paternity leave generosity increased, these benefits were less pronounced for lower income men. This may be due to a variety of factors, such as employment and workplace characteristics (Marynissen et al.,

2019), gender attitudes and norms, or nativity (Carriero, 2021). More work is needed to understand the contextual factors that prevent these men from taking longer leave, but the relative difference is small in comparison to the association between generosity and overall leave uptake.

Fathers' uptake of parental leave is generally described in terms of desire, based on attitudes, culture and gender roles (see Duvander, 2014; Hyde, 1993; Hoherz & Bryan, 2016), and barriers that keep men from their desired use of leave (Haas & Hwang, 2019; Narvi & Salmi, 2019). That we see such a strong relationship between policy and generosity and use of leave provides evidence that men are particularly susceptible to financial barriers that may keep them from the level of leave and involvement with their families that they desire, and higher replacement wages and more time may be a remedy. Compounding the potential impact of generous leave, fathers who take longer leaves make it easier for mothers to return to employment (Schober & Zoch, 2018), which may be especially important for low-income families.

Fathers in the EU have varying access to three types of leave: 1) paternity leave, which is available to all men directly after the birth of their child and is paid at up to 100% of their income. The average length is 12.5 days, and ranges from 4 days to 4 weeks, 2) so called "daddy months" that are a portion of parental leave reserved for fathers, often in use it or lose it conditions to incentivize use, and 3) parental leave that can be shared with mothers. The majority of daddy months and shared parental leaves are paid below 100% replacement, going as low as 25% (van Belle, 2016). Offering complete wage replacement to fathers would guarantee that all men can take leave without economic repercussions and could help close the gap between uptake of parental leave by low and high SES men. Of course, many other factors influence whether and

for how long men take parental leave after the birth of their child/ren, but as more countries offer larger compensation, many of the stigmas, occupation and workplace barriers, and social norms keeping men from taking more leave may be reduced in the process (Kaufman, 2018).

Robustness Checks

Out of the 23 countries in the sample, 7 had income limits on the amount of paternity leave paid. To account for these caps, I calculated the replacement rate by the percentage of the cap on the average wage for each country. This leads to a percentage rate that would be higher for middle- and lower- income men than for high income men. As a robustness test, I ran separate analyses for low, middle and high earners, with similar results as reported in the study. I also included a control variable for whether there was a cap and it was not statistically significant.

To account for any differences due to policy regimes, I tested a nested model with individuals in countries, and then by policy regime. I used a more traditional policy regime configuration (see Esping-Andersen, 1990; Ney er, 2021) and one which more fully accounts for policy package differences across countries (Tendera-Właszczuk & Szymański, 2017). Neither of these configurations led to significant differences in the main findings.

Limitations and Future Directions

It is important to note that the results of this study are from cross-sectional data and do not establish a causal link between raising replacement wage rates and an increase in the likelihood or length of leave. It is impossible from this data alone, for example, to know if there is a specific level of leave length and/or replacement rate that would lead to the highest uptake from fathers while still being politically feasible and affordable. Further studies are needed to establish a causal link and define such parameters.

The LFS data also has a substantial number of countries that do not report on various variables that are key to the study, such as occupation, income, and leave. This resulted in a sample from 23 countries, rather than the full 27 countries in the EU – and 5 additional countries surveyed in the EU-LFS data – which would be more conducive to multilevel modeling for which a sample size of at least 30 is ideal. Due to the inconsistent reporting, the sample also included larger portions from the Southern welfare state regimes like Italy and Spain than countries with likely more egalitarian leanings, such as those from the Nordic welfare regime.

I avoid including income in the first models of the analysis, as income is measured at the time of the survey, between 0 and 5 years after the birth of the couple's first child. Because income is measured after the birth of the child, it is not possible to assess what impact the birth, and any related leave, had on the employment status and income of each parent. However, very little impact of parental leave on men's employment and earnings has been documented, with one study finding a small (1-3%) decrease in wages over time after taking leave (Rege & Solli, 2013). Future studies that can measure income from both parents before and after the birth of the first child would add greatly to our understanding of the role of income in the uptake of leave by both mothers and fathers.

One final limitation was regarding the analysis of gender equality. Any attempt I made at included national indicators of gender inequality led to multicollinearity and inconsistent findings. Gender attitudes and norms at the individual, household, and cultural level can be an important factor in how couples divide their paid and unpaid labor, and consequently, the way they share parental leave. Future studies may need to include individual and dyadic information on gender associated beliefs and practices in order to more fully capture its relation to leave behaviors and policy generosity.

Despite these limitations, results from the study are largely in harmony with previous findings regarding individual and household characteristics and their relation to the use of parental leave. Future research could make use of natural experiments where countries increased or decreased the wage replacement rate to measure the effects those changes might have had on high and low SES men's use of parental leave and their subsequent involvement in childcare and housework. Alternatively, EU countries may explore pilot programs where leave compensation, and particularly that for men, is increased to examine the effects it has on leave taking across incomes, backgrounds, and regions. The results of this study suggest that leave lengths will increase – and quite dramatically among countries with the lowest leave generosity – which would have a positive impact on families in various aspects of their well-being.

References

Almqvist, A.-L., & Duvander, A. (2014). Changes in gender equality? Swedish fathers' parental leave, division of childcare and housework. *Journal of Family Studies, 20*(1), 19–27. https://doi.org/10.5172/jfs.2014.20.1.19

Bianchi, S. M., Milkie, M. A., Sayer, L. C., & Robinson, J. P. (2000). Is anyone doing the housework? Trends in the gender division of household labor. *Social Forces, 79*(1), 191–228. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/79.1.191

Blum, S., Koslowski, A., Macht, A., & Moss, P. (2018). *14th international review of leave policies and related research 2018* (pp. 1–449). International Network on Leave Policies and Research.

Boeckmann, I., Misra, J., & Budig, M. J. (2015). Cultural and institutional factors shaping mothers' employment and working hours in postindustrial countries. *Social Forces, 93*(4), 1301–1333. https://doi.org/10.1093/sf/sou119

Bose, B., Raub, A., Earle, A., & Heymann, J. (2020). Can working women and men afford to take paid leave? A comparative study of the level of paid leave benefits and poverty thresholds in the OECD. *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis: Research and Practice, 22*(5), 422–439. https://doi.org/10.1080/13876988.2019.1629066

Brandth, B., & Kvande, E. (2018). Masculinity and fathering alone during parental leave. *Men and Masculinities, 21*(1), 72–90. https://doi.org/10.1177/1097184X16652659

Budig, M. J., & England, P. (2001). The wage penalty for motherhood. *American Sociological Review, 66*(2), 204–225. https://doi.org/10.2307/2657415

Budig, M. J., Misra, J., & Boeckmann, I. (2012). The motherhood penalty in cross-pational perspective: The importance of work–family policies and cultural attitudes. *Social*

Politics: International Studies in Gender, State & Society, *19*(2), 163–193. https://doi.org/10.1093/sp/jxs006

Bünning, M. (2015). What happens after the 'daddy months'? Fathers' involvement in paid work, childcare, and housework after taking parental leave in Germany. *European Sociological Review*, *31*(6), 738–748. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcv072

Carriero, R. (2021). The role of culture in the gendered division of domestic labor: Evidence from migrant populations in Europe. *Acta Sociologica*, *64*(1), 24–47. https://doi.org/10.1177/0001699320930073

Castro-García, C., & Pazos-Moran, M. (2016). Parental Leave Policy and Gender Equality in Europe. *Feminist Economics*, *22*(3), 51–73. https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2015.1082033

Coltrane, S., & Shih, K. Y. (2010). Gender and the Division of Labor. In J. C. Chrisler & D. R. McCreary (Eds.), *Handbook of Gender Research in Psychology: Volume 2: Gender Research in Social and Applied Psychology* (pp. 401–422). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-1467-5_17

Duvander, A., & Andersson, G. (2006). Gender equality and fertility in Sweden: A study on the impact of the father's uptake of parental leave on continued childbearing. *Marriage & Family Review*, *39*(1–2), 121–142. https://doi.org/10.1300/J002v39n01_07

Duvander, A.-Z., & Johansson, M. (2012). What are the effects of reforms promoting fathers' parental leave use? *Journal of European Social Policy*, *22*(3), 319–330. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928712440201

Ellingsæter, A. L., & Kitterød, R. H. (2023). Enabling family policies, changing gender norms: Increasing childcare and housework among Norwegian fathers from 1980–2010. *Journal of Family Studies*, *0*(0), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/13229400.2023.2179524

England, P. (2010). The gender revolution: Uneven and stalled. *Gender & Society*, *24*(2), 149–166. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243210361475

Esping-Andersen, G. (1990). *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Princeton University Press.

Fuwa, M., & Cohen, P. N. (2007). Housework and social policy. *Social Science Research*, *36*(2), 512–530. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2006.04.005

Geisler, E., & Kreyenfeld, M. (2011). Against all odds: Fathers' use of parental leave in Germany. *Journal of European Social Policy*, *21*(1), 88–99. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928710385732

Hagqvist, E., Gådin, K. G., & Nordenmark, M. (2012). Division of labor, perceived labor-related stress and well-being among European couples. *Open Journal of Preventive Medicine*, *02*(04), Article 04. https://doi.org/10.4236/ojpm.2012.24064

Hochschild, A., & Machung, A. (2012). *The second shift: Working families and the revolution at home*. Penguin.

Hoherz, S., & Bryan, M. (2020). Provider or father? British men's work hours and work hour preferences after the birth of a child. *Work, Employment and Society*, *34*(2), 193–210. https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017019870752

Hook, J. L. (2006). Care in context: Men's unpaid work in 20 countries, 1965–2003. *American Sociological Review*, *71*(4), 639–660. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100406

Hook, J. L., & Paek, E. (2020). National family policies and mothers' employment: How earnings inequality shapes policy effects across and within countries. *American Sociological Review*, *85*(3), 381–416. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420922505

Jessen, J. (2022). Culture, children and couple gender inequality. *European Economic Review*, *150*, 104310. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2022.104310

Karu, M., & Tremblay, D.-G. (2018). Fathers on parental leave: An analysis of rights and take-up in 29 countries. *Community, Work & Family*, *21*(3), 344–362. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2017.1346586

Kaufman, G. (2000). Do gender role attitudes matter?: Family formation and dissolution among traditional and egalitarian men and women. *Journal of Family Issues*, *21*(1), 128–144. https://doi.org/10.1177/019251300021001006

Kaufman, G. (2018). Barriers to equality: Why British fathers do not use parental leave. *Community, Work & Family*, *21*(3), 310–325. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2017.1307806

Lappegard, T. (2008). Changing the gender balance in caring: Fatherhood and the division of parental leave in Norway. *Population Research and Policy Review*, *27*(2), 139–159. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11113-007-9057-2

Lappegård, T. (2012). Couples' parental leave practices: The role of the workplace situation. *Journal of Family and Economic Issues*, *33*(3), 298–305. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10834-012-9291-6

Lidbeck, M., & Bernhardsson, S. (2019). Having it all – perceived coparenting quality and work-family balance in the context of parental leave. *Community, Work & Family*, *0*(0), 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2019.1704399

Ma, L., Andersson, G., Duvander, A.-Z., & Evertsson, M. (2019). Fathers' Uptake of Parental Leave: Forerunners and Laggards in Sweden, 1993–2010 | Journal of Social Policy. *Cambridge Core*. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0047279419000230

Marynissen, L., Mussino, E., Wood, J., & Duvander, A.-Z. (2019). Fathers' parental leave uptake in Belgium and Sweden: Self-evident or subject to employment characteristics? *Social Sciences*, *8*(11), 312. https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci8110312

Miller, T. (2011). Falling back into gender? Men's narratives and practices around first-time fatherhood. *Sociology*, *45*(6), 1094–1109. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038511419180

Moberg, Y., & van der Vleuten, M. (2022). Why do gendered divisions of labour persist? Parental leave take-up among adoptive and biological parents. *European Sociological Review*, jcac058. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/jcac058

Musick, K., Bea, M. D., & Gonalons-Pons, P. (2020). His and her earnings following parenthood in the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom. *American Sociological Review*, *85*(4), 639–674. https://doi.org/10.1177/0003122420934430

Neyer, G. (2021). Welfare state regimes, family policies, and family behaviour. *Research Handbook on the Sociology of the Family*, 22–41.

Norman, H. (2020). Does Paternal Involvement in Childcare Influence Mothers' Employment Trajectories during the Early Stages of Parenthood in the UK? *Sociology*, *54*(2), 329–345. https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519870720

O'Brien, M. (2009). Fathers, Parental Leave Policies, and Infant Quality of Life: International Perspectives and Policy Impact. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *624*(1), 190–213. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716209334349

Olsson, M. I. T., van Grootel, S., Block, K., Schuster, C., Meeussen, L., Van Laar, C., Schmader, T., Croft, A., Sun, M. S., Ainsaar, M., Aarntzen, L., Adamus, M., Anderson, J., Atkinson, C., Avicenna, M., Bąbel, P., Barth, M., Benson-Greenwald, T. M., Maloku, E., … Martiny, S. E. (2023). Gender gap in parental leave intentions: Evidence from 37 countries. *Political Psychology, Advance online publication,* 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1111/pops.12880

Pavolini, E., & Lancker, W. V. (2018). The Matthew effect in childcare use: A matter of policies or preferences? *Journal of European Public Policy*, *25*(6), 878–893. https://doi.org/10.1080/13501763.2017.1401108

Pettit, B., & Hook, J. L. (2009). *Gendered tradeoffs: Women, family, and workplace inequality in twenty-one countries*. Russell Sage Foundation. http://encompass.library.cornell.edu/cgi-bin/checkIP.cgi?access=gateway_standard%26url=https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=1069814&site=eds-live&scope=site

Ray, R., Gornick, J. C., & Schmitt, J. (2010). Who cares? Assessing generosity and gender equality in parental leave policy designs in 21 countries. *Journal of European Social Policy*, *20*(3), 196–216. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928710364434

Rehel, E. M. (2014). When dad stays home too: Paternity leave, gender, and parenting. *Gender & Society*, *28*(1), 110–132. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243213503900

Reich, N. (2011). Predictors of fathers' use of parental leave in Germany. *Population Review*, *50*(2). https://doi.org/10.1353/prv.2011.0011

Schober, P. S. (2014). Parental leave and domestic work of mothers and fathers: A longitudinal study of two reforms in West Germany. *Journal of Social Policy*, *43*(2), 351–372. http://dx.doi.org.proxy.library.cornell.edu/10.1017/S0047279413000809

Sundström, M., & Duvander, A. E. (2002). Gender division of childcare and the sharing of parental leave among new parents in Sweden. *European Sociological Review*, *18*(4), 433–447. https://doi.org/10.1093/esr/18.4.433

Tendera-Właszczuk, H., & Szymański, M. (2017). Distinct and yet not Separate: Revisiting the Welfare Models in the EU New Member States. *Entrepreneurial Business and Economics Review*, *5*(1), 131–149. https://doi.org/10.15678/EBER.2017.050108

van Belle, J. (2016). *Paternity and parental leave policies across the European Union*. RAND Corporation. https://doi.org/10.7249/RR1666

Weinshenker, M. (2015). The effect of fatherhood on employment hours: Variation by birth timing, marriage, and coresidence. *Journal of Family Issues*, *36*(1), 3–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X13493280

Wells, M. B., & Sarkadi, A. (2012). Do father-friendly policies promote father-friendly child-rearing practices? A review of Swedish parental leave and child health centers. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, *21*(1), 25–31. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10826-011-9487-7

Appendix

Appendix A. *Country-Level Data on GDP, Family Spending, and Parental Leave Policies*

Country	Maternity Weeks	Maternity Pay Rate	Maternity FTE	Paternity Weeks	Paternity Pay Rate	Paternity FTE	Parental Weeks	Parental Pay Rate	Parental FTE
Belgium	15	0.77	2.89	1.4	0.9	0.31	16	0.19	0.77
Bulgaria	59	0.9	13.28	2.1	0.9	0.48	104	0.15	3.92
Cyprus	18	0.7	3.24	2	0.7	0.4	18	0	0
Czech Republic	28	0.7	4.9	1	0.7	0.2	52	1	13
Germany	14	1	3.5	0	0	0	52	0.47	6.09
Estonia	20	1	5.0	1.4	1	0.36	62	1	15.5
Spain	16	1	4.0	16	1	4	0	0	0
France	16	1	4.0	2	1	0.5	104	0.12	3.17
Greece	17	1	4.3	0.3	1	0.07	17	0	0
Croatia	26	1	6.43	0	0	0	17	1.00	4.29
Hungary	24	0.7	4.2	0.7	1	0.2	84	0.70	14.7
Ireland	26	0.24	1.53	2	0.24	0.12	18	0	0
Italy	20	0.80	4.0	0.6	1	0.14	26	0.30	1.92
Lithuania	18	1.00	4.5	4	1.00	1.00	52	1.00	13
Latvia	18	0.80	3.20	4	1	1	52	1	13
Malta	14	1	3.5	0.1	1	0.2	52	0	0
Netherlands	16	1	4.0	0.3	1	0.1	26	0	0
Poland	20	0.8	4.0	2	1	0.5	32	0.80	6.4
Portugal	17	1	4.29	3.6	1	0.89	13	0.25	0.80
Romania	18	0.85	3.8	0.7	1	0.2	82	0.69	14.14
Slovakia	34	0.8	6.4	0	0	0	130	0.17	5.52
Slovenia	15	1	3.8	4.3	0.9	1	19	0.90	4.18
United Kingdom	39	0.9	8.8	2	0.23	0.11	18	0	0

Appendix B. *Country-Level Data on GDP, Family Spending, and Childcare Spending*

Country	GDP/Capita[1]	Total Family Spending[3]	Childcare Spending
Belgium	52.5	2.7	0.7
Bulgaria	23.0	1.8	0.8
Cyprus	29.3[2]	2.5	0.3
Czech Republic	42.0	2.1	0.4
Germany	55.2	2.4	0.5

Estonia	36.5	3.1	0.4
Spain	40.7	1.2	0.6
France	46.4	2.8	1.3
Greece	29.6	1.9	0.1
Croatia	29.1	2.1	0.4
Hungary	31.9	2.5	0.7
Ireland	86.4	1.7	0.4
Italy	43.4	1.4	0.7
Lithuania	36.3	2.2	0.6
Latvia	30.9	2.3	0.6
Malta	31.8[2]	1.0	0.6
Netherlands	57.8	1.5	0.9
Poland	31.6	2.5	0.3
Portugal	34.9	1.2	0.5
Romania	29.5	1.5	0.8
Slovakia	31.3	1.8	0.4
Slovenia	39.0	1.7	0.5
United Kingdom	47.1	3.0	0.8

Source: OECD, 2018; Statista, 2018

1 – Reported in 1,000 USD

2 – Source: Statista, 2018

3 – Percent of GDP, 2018