

The social politics of fatherhood. European policies and father's use of leave arrangements. The French and Spanish cases in EU context

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The social politics of fatherhood

The social and institutional construction of fatherhood in relation to the welfare state:

➤ **The development of paternal leave: fathers entitlements (quotas, individualisation of entitlements) and fathers practices (symbol of paternal implication)**

➤ **Men in child care services**

➤ **The introduction of joint legal custody and shared residence arrangements after divorce**

Parental and care leave: a regulatory mechanism between individuals in families, the labour market and the state

- **A heuristic tool** to analyse this complex changing relationship
- **Parental leave is particularly interesting as deals with family formation and social change**, the emergence of the children rights and child investment discourses
- **Shaping new forms of motherhood, fatherhood and caring relations**

Parental and care leave as a piece of the European welfare architecture

Individualised earnings-related parental and care leave are becoming a piece of a new “workcarer” citizenship model. In connection to social care services, they constitute public systems of care.

➤ Providing de-commodification and supporting family formation while lessening conjugal dependencies and enhancing a pluralistic approach to care.

➤ One of the policy mechanisms for a new gender and intergenerational contract at the basis of what could constitute a European welfare model (Esping-Andersen, 2002).

Parental leave in the family and welfare state debate

- Leave arrangements are at the centre of the academic debate on gendered and family welfare regimes.
- Well paid parental leave has been interpreted in terms of de-commodification; of de-conjugalisation of income-pooling and re-parentalisation of care
- This analytical distinction of the familialisation/de-familialisation concept (Esping-Andersen, 1999) may help to anticipate the effects of different types of leave arrangements.
- Their relative contribution to family formation and to family change

Leave for parenting and caring is...

Regulated & limited absence from normal work, providing:

1. **Time to care**
2. **Job protection**
3. **Economic support** (earnings-related, flat rate payments or tax allowances)
4. **Social Protection** (individualised or family entitlements)

⇒ They constitute a **flexicure mechanism** to deal with life transitions (**transitional labour markets**)... challenged by **atypical employment**

History matters: 4 stages in development of leave policies

(Kamerman & Moss, 2009)

1883-1960s: short maternity leave for maternal-infant health
(Germany, 1919 ILO 3rd Convention, 130 countries exc.USA)

1967-1980s: childrearing flat-rate paid leaves (Hungary, 1967) or **earnings-related parental leave** (Sweden, 1974)

1990s: care & parental leave with growing attention on gender
(individualisation and father's quotas, Norway 1993, Sweden 1995, the Icelandic 2000 3+3+3 system) **Father's share: % of total paid leave time used by fathers per year** (e.g. 33% IC, 20% SE, 9%NO, 6% DK & FI, NOSOSCO)

2000's: expansion of ECEC comparative policy methods (EU, OECD, UUNN) in a context of globalisation (Paradigm shifts? Path dependency?) **Focus on fathers** (European Parliament, 20/10/2010)

Comparative categories of care leave schemes are:

1. **Maternity leave** (14-18 weeks, well paid) **(20 weeks European Parliament, 20/10/2010)**
2. **Paternity leave** (up to 3 weeks, well paid) **(2 weeks European Parliament, 20/10/2010, 20 countries have it 2-90 days)**
3. **Adoption leave** (integrating family diversity)
4. **Parental leave** (full or part-time, earnings-related)
5. **Child care leave** (full or part-time, low flat rate)
6. **Leave to care for a sick child** (crucial)
7. **Leave to care for a sick or dependent adult relative** (urgent or long-term, full or part-time)
8. **Wider purposed career-break schemes**

Using and contrasting different typological analysis strategies...

Wall & Escobedo (2012) empirically based typology of leave models:

1. The 'one year leave' gender equality orientated model

(Sweden, Iceland, Denmark and Slovenia)

2. The 'parental choice' orientated leave model

(Norway, Finland, France and Belgium)

3. The 'long leave' mother home-centred model

(Austria, Hungary, Czech Republic, Estonia, **Germany in transition 2007**)

4. The 'short leave part-time mother' model

(UK, Ireland and The Netherlands)

5. The 'short leave' model linked to traditional family patterns of extended family care

(Italy, Greece and **Spain initiating a transition in 2007**)

6. The 'early return to full-time work' leave policy model (Portugal in transition 2009**)**

Comparative context for France and Spain

The contrast between the significance of family policy in France and Spain may be easily visualized by looking at different rates of social expenditure in family and children in these two countries. Whereas Spain only devotes to family and children 1.50 % of GDP (358 € per inhabitant), the resources spent by France in this area are much larger: 2.47 % of GDP and 749 € per inhabitant (2008)

Fertility around 2 in FR vs around 1.4 child per woman in ES
Female employment 77% in FR vs 64% in ES (25-54 age group 2009, one quarter part-time)

The development of Paternal Leave in Spain and France

France

- 1985 parental leave scheme (Congé Parental d'Education) associated to flat rate benefit (Complément Libre Choix Activité) full or part-time (3.7% male users in 2009)
- 2002 Paternity leave 3+11 days (2 thirds of fathers)

Spain:

- 1980 gender neutrally defined unpaid parental leave (4% of very low use) and reversible working time reductions
- 2007 Gender Equality law extends paternity leave 2+13 days (58% newborn - 75% entitled fathers)

Conclusions

1. **FR & ES have similarities in leave arrangements design from a male perspective (clear gender gaps and path dependencies), with a little more choice for French fathers (variety of schemes and more users) but in a very gendered system**
2. **Choice in Spain can be rather found in part time arrangements which require specific data (Meil presentation)**
3. **The research question on specific use by lone fathers of work-family arrangements in ES remains open (a bit older children , qualitative research)**
4. **Spain was leaving behind a short leave model linked to traditional extended family care... but with the crisis benefits (except the 2 weeks of paternity leave) are being cut. Will there be room towards a choice-oriented model?... is there enough public funding to protect real choice?**

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INTRODUCING THE NETWORK

The network has members from 25 countries – mostly in Europe, but some from beyond including Australia, Canada and the United States. They share an interest in and knowledge of leave policies and research into these policies.

The network was established at a seminar held in Brussels in October 2004, organised jointly by the Flemish Government's Centrum voor Bevolkings- en Gezinsstudie (CBGS - Population and Family Study Centre) and the Thomas Coram Research Unit (TCRU), at the Institute of Education University of London. This seminar was attended by researchers from a dozen countries, and built on earlier collaborative cross-national work with which the network coordinators – Fred Deven (from CBGS) and Peter Moss (from TCRU) - had both been involved. This collaboration began with the European Commission Childcare Network, an expert group that between 1986 and 1996 undertook studies on a range of issues related to the reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities, including leave policies. When the EC Network ended in 1996, collaboration continued, first with an international seminar convened in Brussels in 1999 that led to an edited book *Parental Leave: Progress or Pitfall?*; an article overviewing leave policy and research (*Marriage and Family Review*, special issue on Family Social Policy, 39/3-4, 2006); and then with a special issue of the journal *Community, Work and Family* (2002, 5/3) on the theme of leave arrangements for parents.

AIMS OF THE NETWORK

- The exchange of information about leave policies adopted in individual countries and by international organisations;
- The cross-national analysis of such policies;
- The exchange of information about research on leave policies, including findings and conclusions;