

Interplay between leave policies and ECEC services

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High North – Extremely Different?

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Alignment

- Issue of statistics: national data masks regional and local differences
- Having the entitlements in place does not mean there are no gaps. E.g. Hungary
- Issue of eligibility for leave: only for those who have had the necessary length of time in employment?
- Issue of eligibility for ECEC services: who and for full-time or part-time services?

Alignment

- Is cash for care a solution to close the gap or are we talking about expecting services to be available?
- Issues of take up and implementation: not so much of a problem for leaves (except for the use by fathers) but for ECEC services for under 3's

Influencing factors

- Many factors influence the alignment of leave and ECEC services – most importantly, how countries think about children and families and/or women
 - Society: usually more consistent with, slow changes
 - Politicians/governments: less consistent, can change with every new government

Influencing factors

- Political will – and how long it lasts
- Systematic approach - Division/delegation of tasks within government: who is responsible for what and is there collaboration among players? Is there thinking in terms of comprehensive systems and strategies? Difficult enough to coordinate/integrate ECEC services
- Demography – which age group is in the focus of attention?
- What is considered best for children?
- Labor market conditions
- Financing possibilities

Questions

- How politics and rationales or aims of family support policies are related to situations of better alignment?
- What is the role of employers?
- Is the idea of providing choice for families to be achieved only with public support and investment? What is the relationship between public and private solutions?

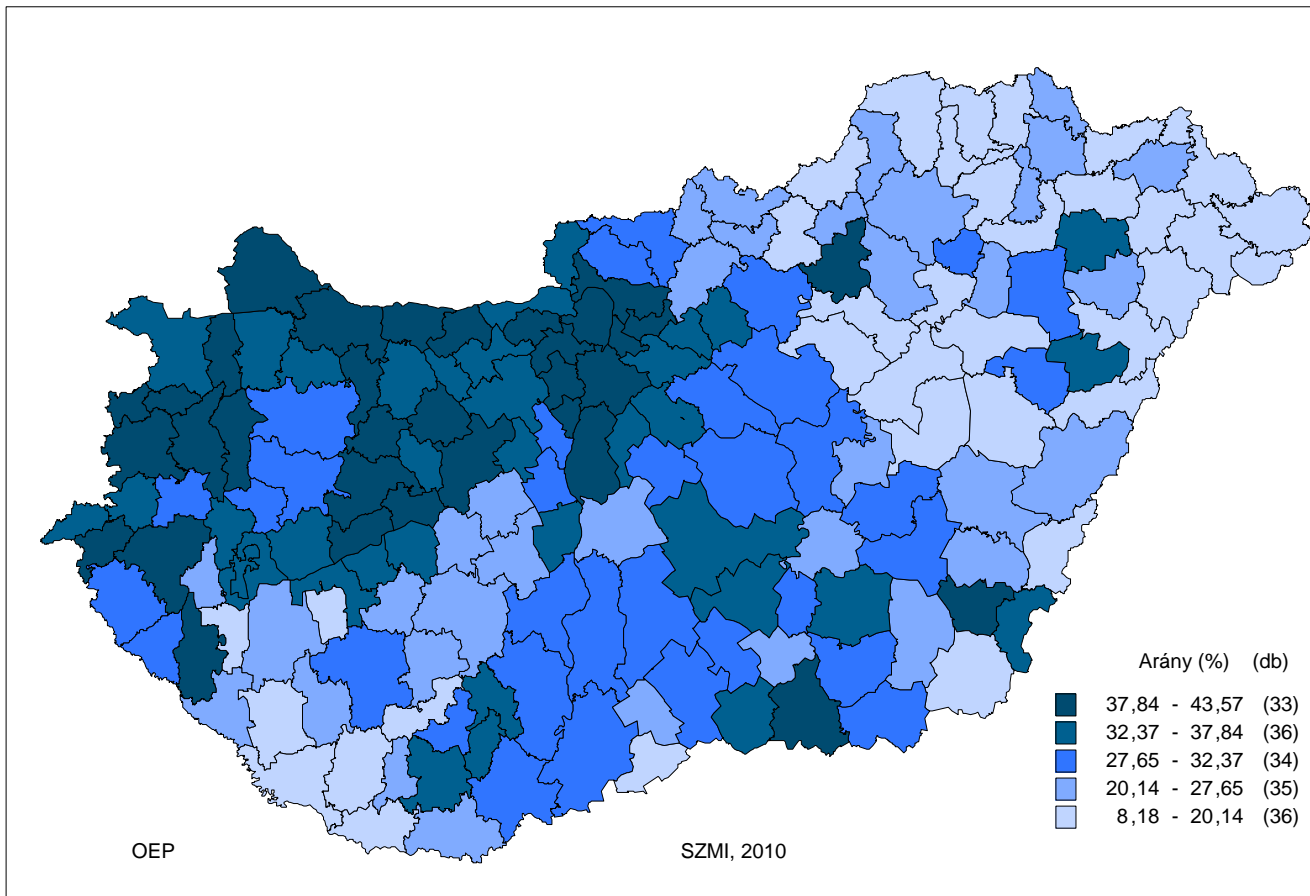
Questions

- How is alignment to be achieved?
 - To extend leave or,
 - To set up more ECEC services
 - Parental leave serves as a buffer! E.g. Hungary
 - Developing services cost more but the value of good quality provisions has been proved



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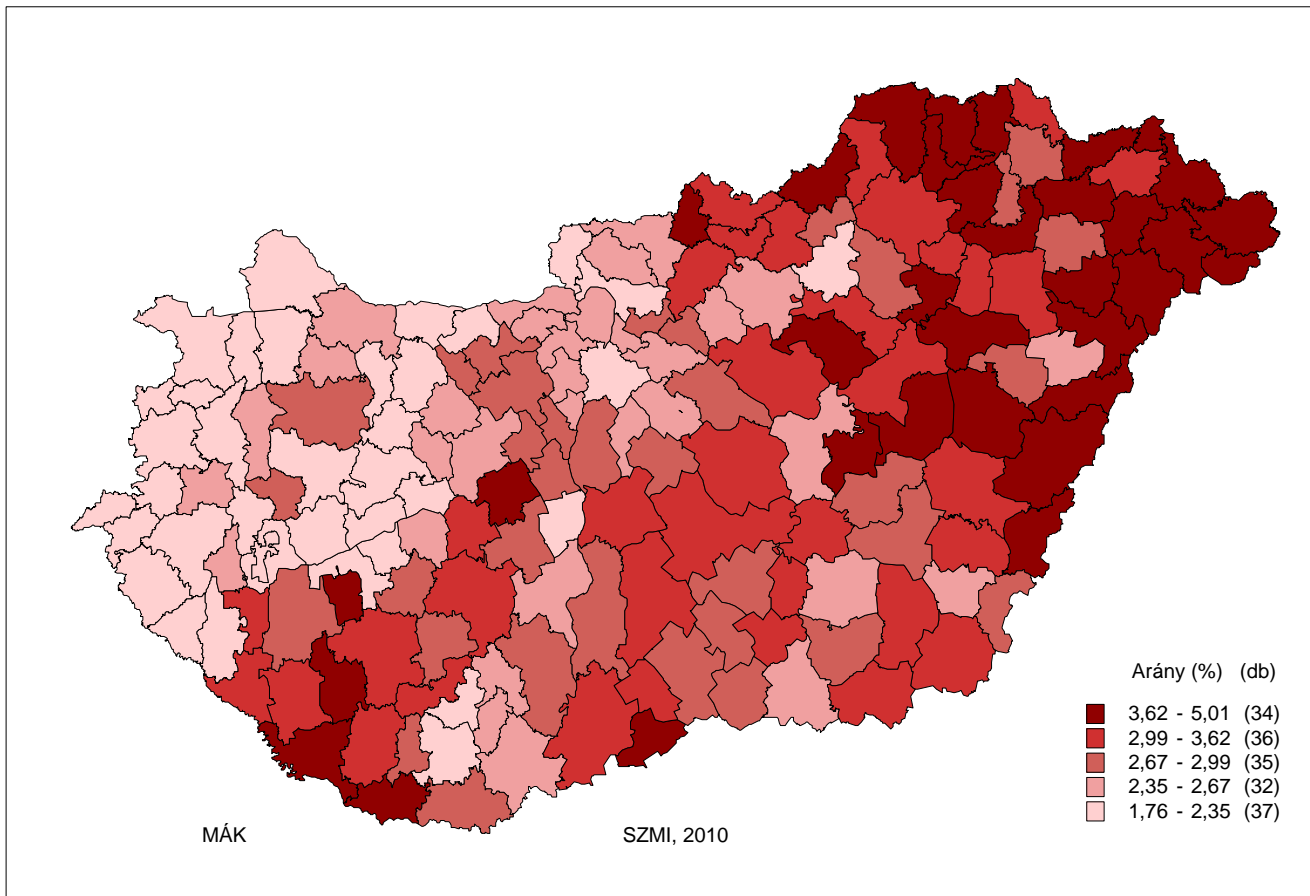
Childcare leave statistics GYED





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Childcare leave statistics GYES



Economic and financial situation in Europe's two halves

- Difference between Western Europe and Central and Eastern Europe (Berend, 2011)
 - Economic and social backwardness
 - CEE has been the „unfinished part of Europe“ up to the 20th century, remaining the agricultural half where infrastructure and income level (GDP per capita) hardly reached more than 1/3 to 1/2 of those in Western Europe.
 - In the 20th century CEE made attempts to industrialize and modernize – second half was the (unsuccessful) communist experiment
 - CEE is still behind, trying to catch up with a very few exceptions (e.g. Slovenia)