

# LEAVE RIGHTS FOR FATHERS ?

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Analysis of policy proposals in Switzerland  
from 1998 to 2014

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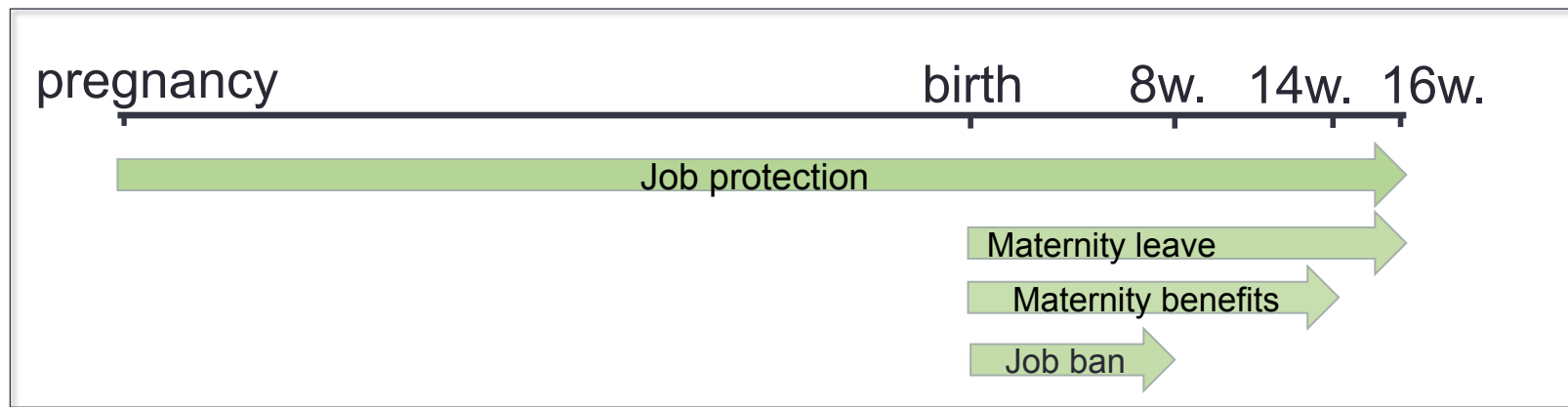
Stockholm University & University of Lausanne

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# Leave policies in Switzerland

- Delayed, minimal and gendered leave scheme
  - Maternity leave: 16 weeks (8 weeks compulsory)
  - Federal maternity benefits (LECA in 2005): 14 weeks paid at 80%



- No statutory parental or paternity leave
  - Exceptional situation (Moss, 2015)
  - Some leave through collective labor agreements or company regulations

# Institutional, political and social context

- **Swiss institutions:** federalism, direct democracy, outside EU
- **Partisan politics** and late entry of women in politics
- **Attitudes:** liberal ideology ; gendered representations of parenthood
- Emerging concern in the public sphere
  - Unions
  - Civil associations
  - Political parties
  - **Members of parliament**



# Research objectives

Study policy proposals submitted by members of the Swiss Parliament (MP) from 1998 to 2014

- ① Describe the content of proposals and leave supporters in Parliament
- ② Analyze the implications of proposals for gender equality and for parenthood representations

# Theoretical and empirical framework

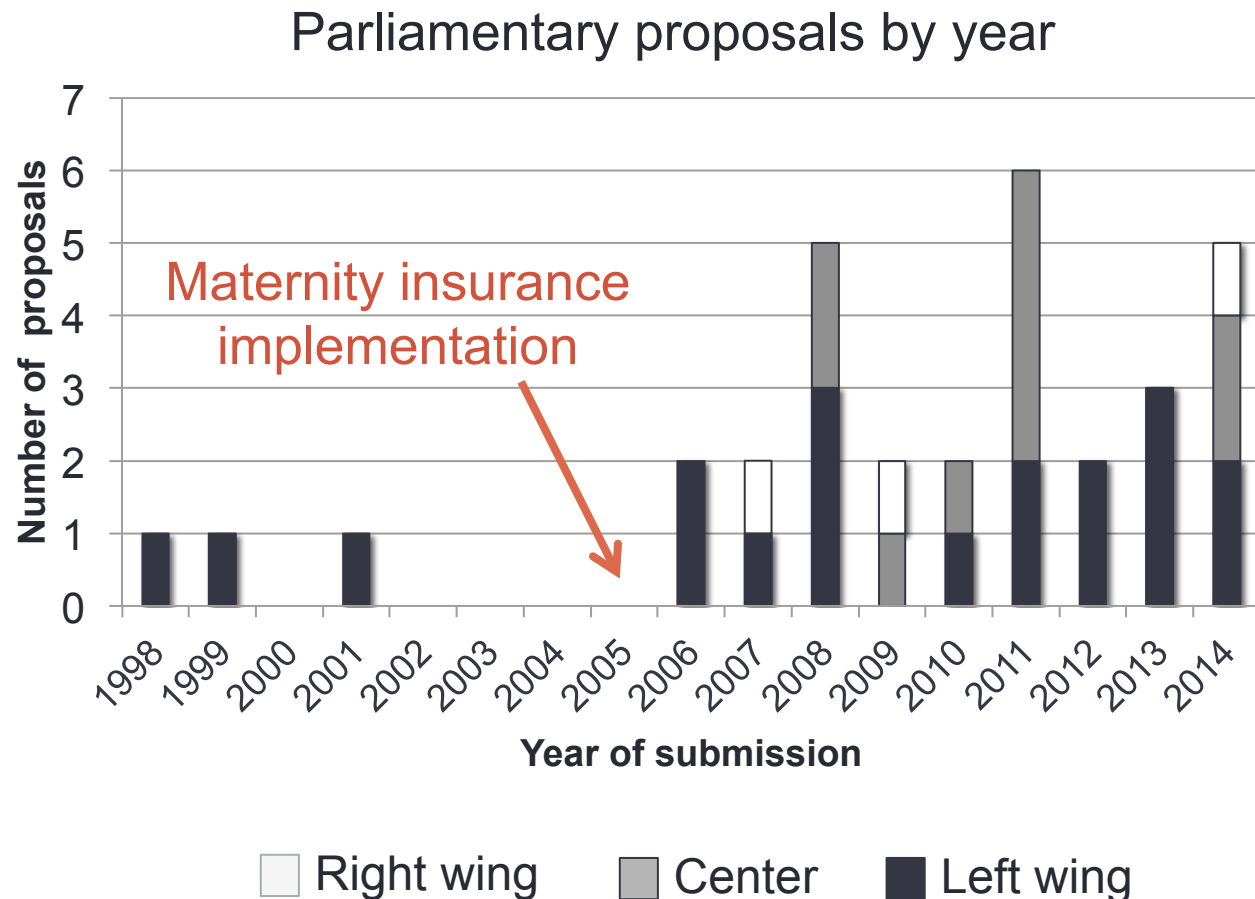
- Gender approach of the welfare state and public policies (e.g., Risman, 2004)
- Laws and public policies promote family models and distribute resources (un-)equally (e.g., Lewis, 1992; Orloff, 1993, 2009)
- Fathers' leave uptake increase involvement in childcare (e.g., Huerta et al., 2013; Haas & Hwang, 2008; Rehel, 2014)
- Leave schemes define motherhood and fatherhood (e.g., Hojgaard, 1997; Rostgaard, 2002)
- Leave design is crucial for gender equality outcomes (e.g., Haas & Rostgaard, 2011; Ray et al., 2010)

# Data and methodology

- 33 parliamentary proposals (1998-2014)
- Additional documents
  - Responses from Federal Council (government)
  - Reports from the committee for social security and health
  - Parliamentary debates and votes
- Content analysis
  - Year of submission, type of leave and leave modalities
  - Political party, sex and linguistic region of origin of the MP
- Gender equality degree of proposal (Ray et al. 2010)
  - State intervention
  - Father-care-sensitivity (O'Brien, 2009)

# ① Description of policy proposals

- Recent concern
- Left wing: 60%
- Center: 31%
- Right wing: 9%
- Over-representation:
  - Female MPs
  - MPs from the French-speaking region



# No consensus on a leave policy solution

- **Leave type:**  
parental OR  
paternity leave
- **Leave length:**  
from one week  
to 1,5 years
- **Leave model:**  
5 main solutions  
proposed

Leave solution		No.
Extension	Extend LECA benefits to fathers	13
Substitution	Modify existing programs and redistribute benefits	8
Unpaid	Unpaid statutory parental or paternity leave	4
Cantonal	Enable cantons to implement paid par. or pat. leave	4
Private leave insurance	Implement a tax-deductible voluntary private parental insurance	2



# No political majority

- No leave proposal accepted by both chambers of Parliament
- Left-Right opposition
- Increasing support from center MPs
- Main arguments of opponents (Lanfranconi & Valarino, 2014)
  - No policy legitimacy
  - Economic aspects
  - N.B.: gendered conceptions of parenthood not frequent

## ② Implications for gender equality - Methodology

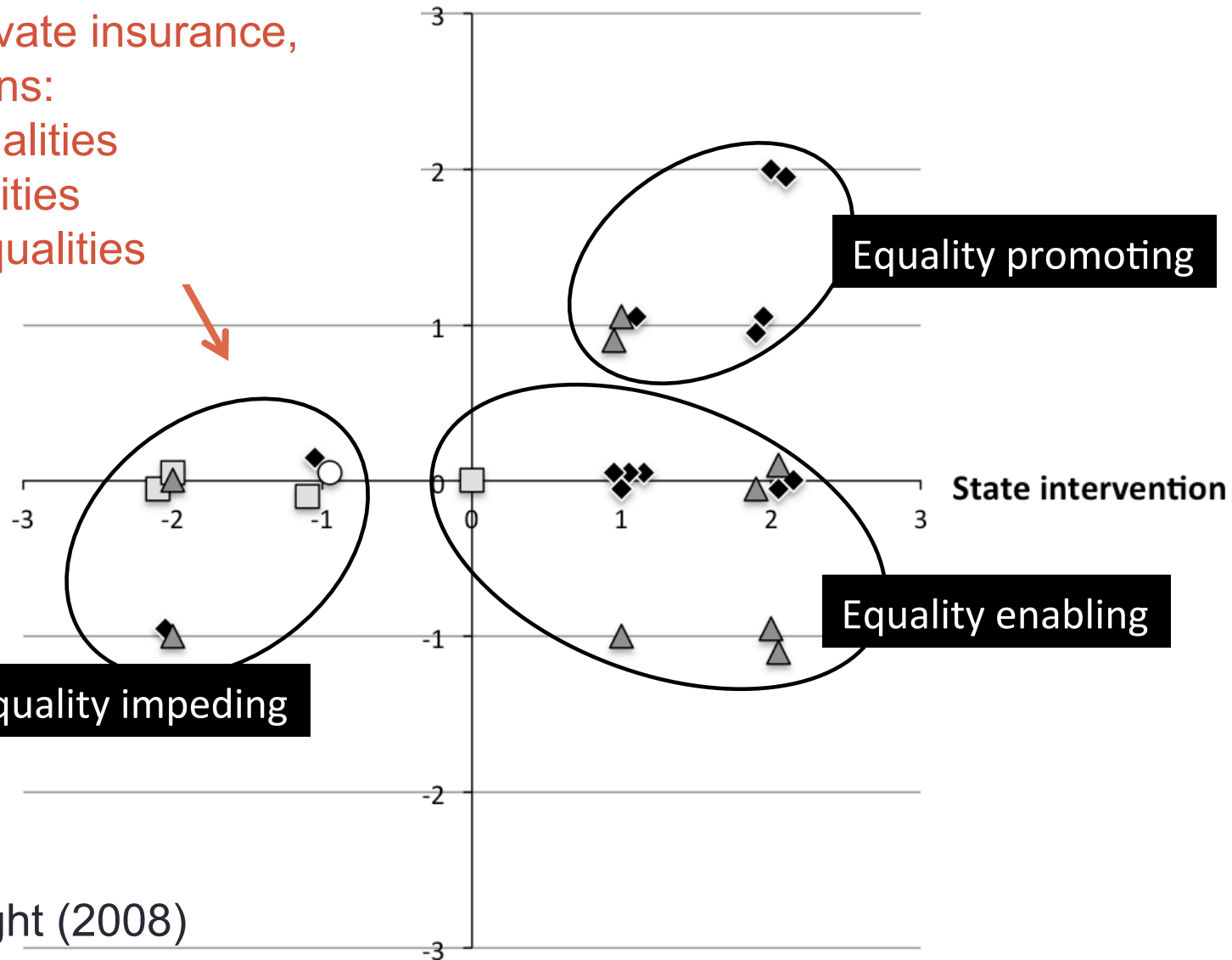
Axes		Components	
State intervention	Public policy development	+1	new statutory leave for employed parents
		0	modification of program / cantonal solution
		-1	private insurance / reduction of maternity leave
	Type of entitlement	+1	individual (pat. leave or non-transf. par. leave)
		0	family (parental leave <u>with quota</u> )
		-1	family (gender-neutral parental leave)
Father-care-sensitivity	Length reserved for the father	+1	very long: > 1 month
		0	extended: > 2 weeks and up to 1 month
		-1	short: ≤ 2 weeks / not specified
	Financial compensation	+1	well-paid (100%-80%), collectively funded
		0	private insurance with tax rebate
		-1	unpaid

Substitution, private insurance,  
cantonal solutions:

- ➔ Gender inequalities
- ➔ Class inequalities
- ➔ Regional inequalities

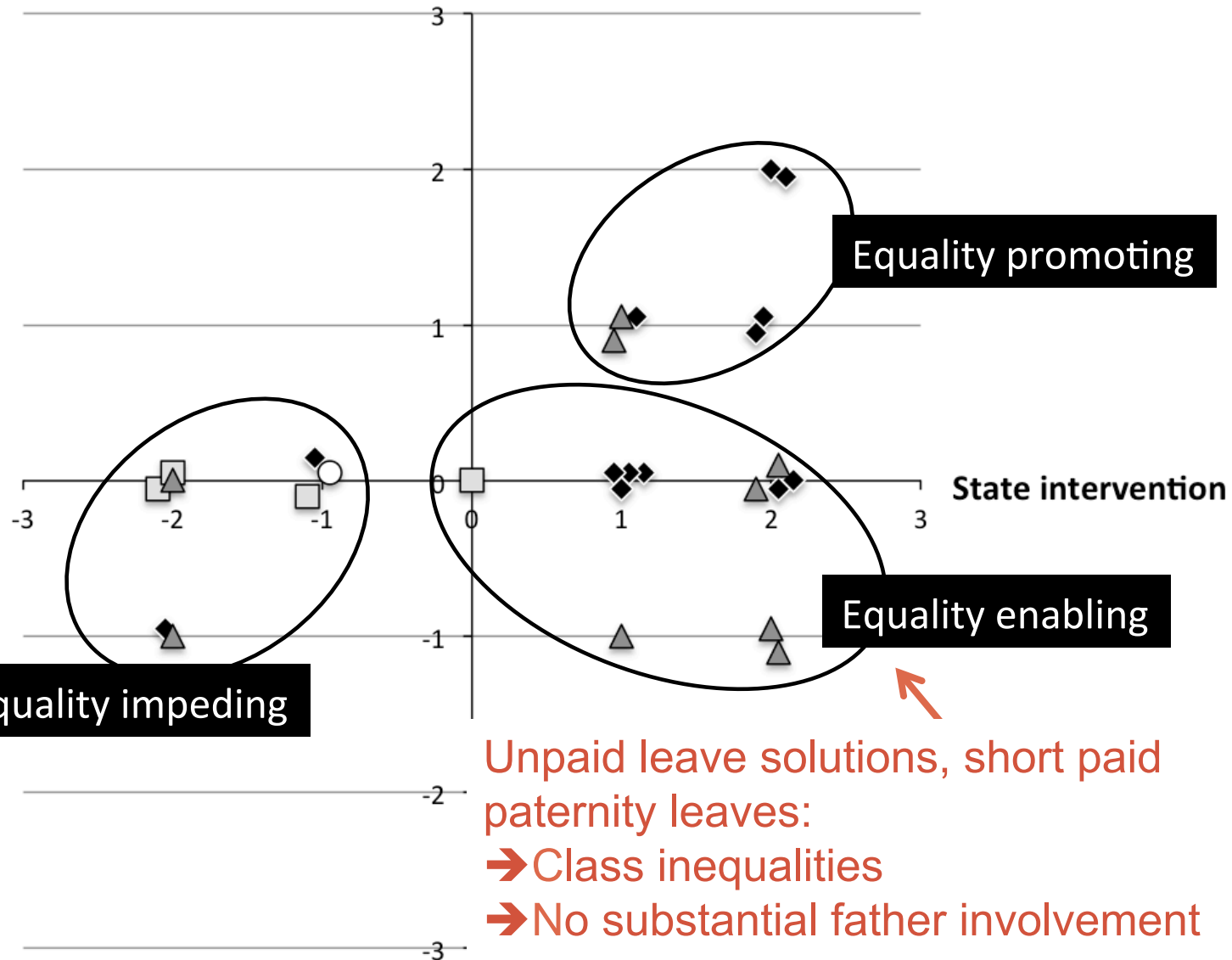


Father-care-sensitivity



Brighouse & Wright (2008)

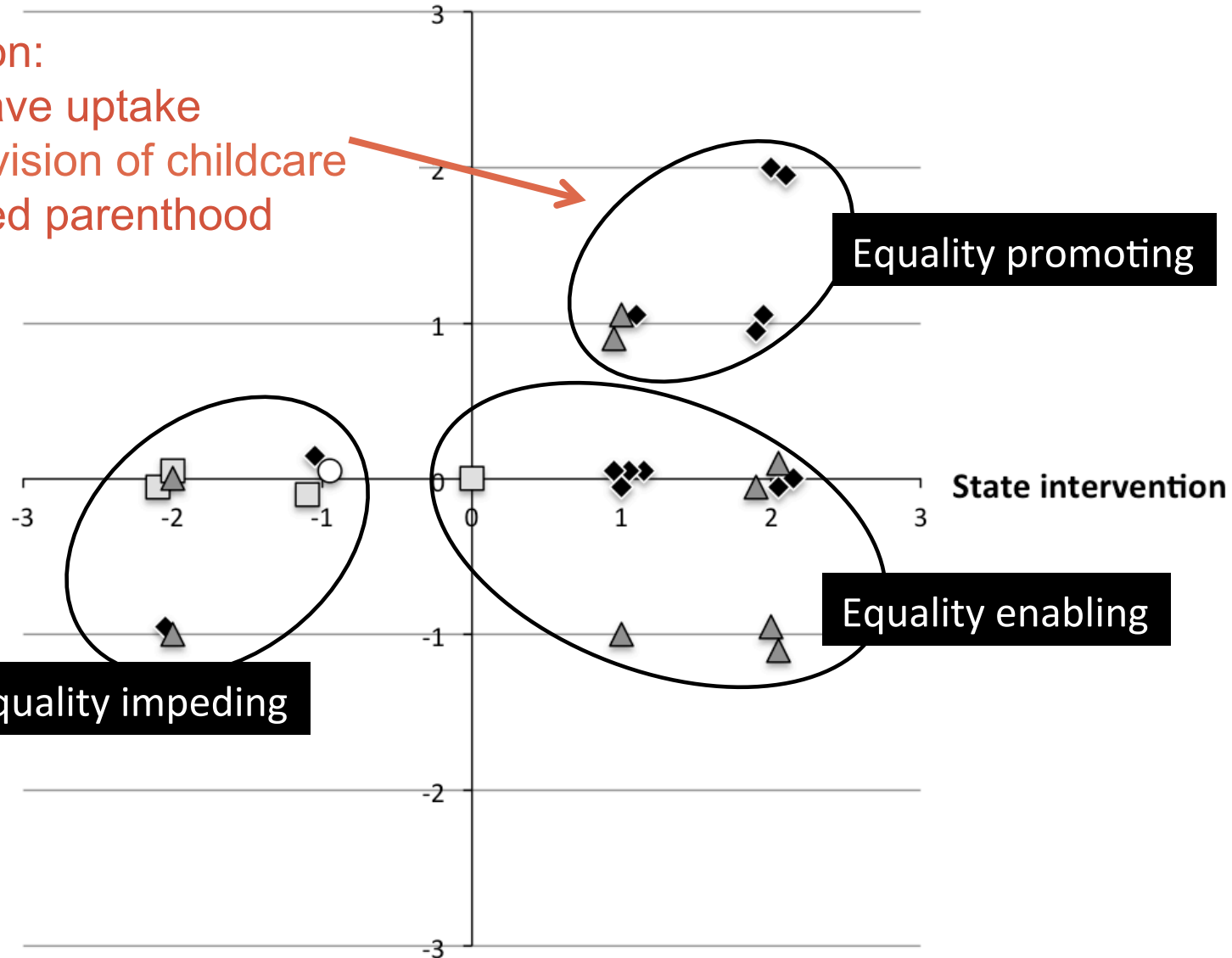
## Father-care-sensitivity



Extension solution:

- ➔ Encourage leave uptake
- ➔ More equal division of childcare
- ➔ Undifferentiated parenthood

Father-care-sensitivity



# Conclusion

- Federal maternity insurance has opened a window of opportunity for parental and paternity leaves
- No majority in Parliament but emerging concern among political and civil society actors
- No consensus among leave promoters on the solution to adopt
- “Cost-free” leave solutions are majority
  - ➔ Risks of gender, social class and regional inequalities
- Constraint of the Swiss political and institutional context

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				Canton (*french speaking region)		
N°	Date of submission	Political actor	Sex		Political party	Title
1	11.12.2014	Trede, Aline	F	Bern	The Greens	Parental leave
2	26.09.2014	Trede, Aline	F	Bern	The Greens	Family models of the Confederation. What now?
3	18.03.2014	Caroni, Andrea	M	Appenzell (AR)	The Liberals	Parental leave. More freedom without cost increase
4	12.03.2014	The Green- Liberals	n.a.	n.a	The Green- Liberals	Replace maternity allowances by a parental leave
5	21.03.2014	Candinas, Martin	M	Graubünd en	Christian- democratic	Two weeks paternity leave paid by the LECA
6	25.09.2013	Trede, Aline	F	Bern	The Greens	Study about paternity leave in Switzerland
7	12.06.2013	Hodgers, Antonio	M	Geneva*	The Greens	Possibility for the cantons to implement a cantonal paternity leave
8	10.06.2013	Gysi, Barbara	F	St.Gallen	Socialist	The opposition to paternity leave is in contradiction with the objectives of the legislature
9	29.08.2012	Piller Carrard, Valérie	F	Fribourg*	Socialist	Reserved time for fathers
10	29.08.2012	Gilli, Yvonne	F	St.Gallen	The Greens	Fathers who involve in family life put their life in danger
11	12.12.2011	Schmid- Federer, Barbara	F	Zürich	Christian- democratic	European norms on parental leave
12	17.06.2011	Barthassat, Luc	M	Geneva*	Christian- democratic	Replace military service with a paternity leave
13	15.06.2011	Hochreutener, Norbert	M	Bern	Christian- democratic	Parental leave and family benefits provision
14	06.06.2011	Fetz, Anita	F	Basel	Socialist	Facultative parental leave and family benefits provision
15	13.04.2011	Schmid- Federer, Barbara	F	Zürich	Christian- democratic	Unpaid paternity leave
16	03.03.2011	The Greens	n.a.	n.a	The Greens	Forward with parental leave and allowance
17	17.12.2010	Nordmann, Roger	M	Vaud*	Socialist	Support parents of young children
18	28.09.2010	Streiff-Feller, Marianne	F	Bern	Christian- democratic	Two weeks of paid paternity leave

19	25.09.2009	Barthassat, Luc	M	Geneva*	Christian-democratic	Replace military service with a paternity leave
20	19.03.2009	Hiltpold, Hugues	M	Geneva*	The Liberals	Parental leave
21	19.12.2008	Teuscher, Franziska	F	Bern	The Greens	Models for a paternity leave
22	09.12.2008	Canton de Genève	n.a.	Geneva*	n.a.	For a parental leave
23	23.09.2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	F	Zürich	Christian-democratic	Partial parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances
24	23.09.2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	F	Zürich	Christian-democratic	Parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances
25	11.06.2008	Nordmann, Roger	M	Vaud*	Socialist	Effects of paternity leave
26	02.06.2008	Hodgers, Antonio	M	Geneva*	The Greens	Possibility for the cantons to introduce and finance a paternity leave through the Income Compensation Allowances scheme
27	19.12.2007	Hodgers, Antonio	M	Geneva*	The Greens	Financing a paternity leave. Possibilities for the cantons
28	22.03.2007	Freysinger, Oskar	M	Valais*	Swiss People's party	Federal law on Income Compensation Allowances in case of Service and in case of Maternity. Modification
29	11.12.2006	Nordmann, Roger	M	Vaud*	Socialist	A paternity leave to associate fathers since the birth of the child
30	23.06.2006	Teuscher, Franziska	F	Bern	The Greens	Modification of the Federal law on Income Compensation Allowances in case of Service and in case of Maternity. Extension of beneficiary rights to employed fathers
31	22.06.2001	Teuscher, Franziska	F	Bern	The Greens	To grant a parental leave to employed parents
32	18.06.1999	Teuscher, Franziska	F	Bern	The Greens	Parental leave for Confederation civil servants
33	23.01.1998	Jutzet, Erwin	M	Fribourg*	Socialist	Paternity leave