

13th LPR annual seminar  
Madrid, Spain, 29-30th September 2016

# Elderly care and leave policy in Spain

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Research project: **The social use of leave in Spain**. Main researcher: **Gerardo Meil**.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

- “Caregiver leaves”, to guarantee workers’ rights to care for dependent family members.
- Less developed than leaves for children.
- 1980: To care for “physically or mentally disabled” persons.
- 1999:
  - One-year leave of absence to care for a family member who is...
    - Unable to care for him/herself,
    - up to the second degree of kinship, and
    - engages in no remunerated activity.
  - Eligibles: employees with at least one year in a company.
- 2007: Two-years of part or full-time leave, guaranteed 100% social security coverage during the first year. Still not remunerated.

## 2. OBJECTIVES

1. To determine the rate of leave-taking to care for adults in Spain (2012).
2. To identify the reasons associated with a more frequent use of leaves.

## 3. CONTEXT

- A greater demand for family caregiving expected for the next decades.
- In 2007, 79 % of dependent Spaniards received care exclusively from family members; EU-27 average was 59 %. 7 % of dependent people had access to public service coverage.
- Leaves could address family caregiving and provide wellbeing, but...
- Leaves could also widen the gaps between men and women on the labor market.
- No studies for the case of Spain.

## 4. FACTORS CONDITIONING THE USE OF CAREGIVER LEAVES

1. Legislation (leave design).
  - Eligibility (situation of the employee).
  - Degree of kinship.
  - Remuneration.
  - Guarantee of post-leave employment.
2. Labor market situation.
  - Level of uncertainty.
  - Working conditions.
3. Cultural factors (gender norms). 89 % of caregiver leaves taken by women in 2012.
4. Family circumstances.
  - Adults degree of dependence.
  - Relationship.
  - Family support network.

## 5. METHODOLOGY

**Survey:** “Survey on the use of caregivers leave in Spain 2012”. Retrospective, cross-sectional.

### **Dependent variable:**

1. Identification of potential users of leaves, affirmative answer to: “Have you cared for (or are you presently caring for) a dependent person with an accident-related or other disability on a regular and unpaid basis in the last 12 years?”, and “Did you engage or are you engaging in paid work at the same time?”
2. Reasons for taking / not taking caregiver leaves.

### **Independent variables:**

1. Work-related factors (at the time of the interview): type of contract, sector.
2. Gender.
3. Family factors and context of care: kinship with the dependent person, degree of dependence, primary caregiver, years of caregiving, frequency of care.

### **Limitations:**

1. Small size of the sample of leave-takers.
2. Caregivers up to 60 years.
3. Changes in work situation.
4. Problems caused by memory.

## 6. RESULTS

**Table 1. Characteristics of caregiver leaves**

	Use among caregivers (%)	n	N
Reduction of working hours	2.4	22	896
Leave of absence	0.8	7	896
Total	3.2	29	896
	Mean	St. Dev	N
Hourly reduction per day	2.8	1.1	21
Duration of part-time work (years)	2.9	3.4	16
Duration of leave of absence (years)	0.5	0.4	5
Caregiver age	46.4	10.1	29
Dependent person's age	70.4	17.2	21

Source: Encuesta sobre el uso de permisos parentales en España 2012.

**Table 2. Percentage of caregiver leave users over total caregivers, 1999 to 2012**

	%	n	N	$\chi^2$ P value
<b>Caregiver sex</b>				0.001
Male	1.5	7	477	
Female	5.3	22	419	
<b>Caregiver marital status</b>				0.003
Partnered	3.1	17	553	
Single	9.6	9	94	
<b>Degree of disability</b>				0.000
Mild or moderate	2.4	8	339	
Severe	4.9	16	326	
<b>Primary caregiver</b>				0.000
Yes	6.7	22	328	
No	1.2	7	569	
<b>Support from other family members</b>				0.025
No	5.8	11	190	
Yes	2.5	18	706	
<b>Living with dependent person</b>				0.002
Yes	5.2	24	461	
No	1.5	5	342	

Note: none of the following variables was found to be significant at level 0.1: “duration of caregiving”, “support from non-family members”, “kinship”, “caregiver age”, “caregiver level of education”, “type of present employment contract”, “sector of present employment”, “existence of children”, “town/city size”.

Source: Encuesta sobre el uso de permisos parentales en España 2012.

**Table 3. Reasons for taking a caregiver leave**

	%	n
To spend more time with the family	71.0	21
To avoid placing the person in a home	55.0	16
To palliate the unavailability of public resources	43.2	13
To avoid overburdening other family members	37.1	11
To avoid paying for a caregiver or home	28.1	8
To reduce work-induced stress or fatigue	20.0	6

Source: Encuesta sobre el uso de permisos parentales en España 2012.



**Table 4. Reasons for not requesting a caregiver leave (multiple response)**

	%	n
Support from partner or other family members	60.7	378
Compatible working hours	44.2	275
Excessive loss of income	39.3	240
Inconceivability at place of work	21.5	133
Adverse impact on job security	19.2	100
Adverse impact on career	13.8	72
Dependent person's attendance at day centre	12.4	77
Preference to devote more time to work	6.8	42
Requests for such leaves frowned upon	6.4	40

Source: Encuesta sobre el uso de permisos parentales en España 2012.

**Table 5. Logit regression model for the likelihood of wielding different reasons for not taking a caregiver leave**

	Model 1. Excessive loss of income		Model 2. Adverse impact on job security		Model 3. Support from partner or other family members	
	<i>P</i> value	<i>OR</i>	<i>P</i> value	<i>OR</i>	<i>P</i> value	<i>OR</i>
<b>Years caring for the person (ref.: 2 or under)</b>	0.048		0.237		0.734	
2-6 years	0.757	0.927	0.149	1.651	0.818	1.057
Over 6	0.051	1.648	0.118	1.814	0.442	1.220
<b>Frequency of care (ref.: every day or nearly every day) Less frequently</b>	0.400	0.809	0.374	0.725	0.623	1.134
<b>Degree of dependence (ref.: mild)</b>	0.029		0.088		0.282	
Moderate	0.003	2.896	0.021	3.951	0.499	0.798
Severe	0.028	2.131	0.049	3.198	0.632	1.166
Initially mild/moderate. later moderate/severe	0.025	2.184	0.197	2.198	0.358	1.357
<b>Primary caregiver (ref.: Yes)</b>	0.026		0.738		0.000	
No	0.047	0.561	0.437	1.360	0.011	2.008
Respondent and other(s)	0.646	1.119	0.603	1.205	0.000	3.632
<b>Kinship (ref.: father/mother)</b>	0.015		0.875		0.099	
Father-/mother-in-law	0.923	0.972	0.762	1.125	0.246	1.443
Other	0.004	0.449	0.755	0.893	0.131	0.676
<b>Contract type (ref.: permanent)</b>	0.046		0.028		0.020	
Temporary	0.115	1.951	0.009	5.668	0.741	0.864
Non wage-earner	0.079	0.467	0.586	0.525	0.005	0.330
<b>Sector (ref.: public) Private</b>	0.509	1.148	0.000	3.129	0.050	1.520
<b>Sex (ref.: male)</b>	0.028	1.582	0.941	0.978	0.286	0.799
Constant	0.000	0.264	0.000	0.021	0.422	0.754
Coefficients	Chi-squared=47.551. p<0.000. Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup> =0.129. N: 501.		Chi-squared=37.532. p<0.001. Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup> = 0.143. N: 448.		Chi-squared=55.663. p<0.000. Nagelkerke's R <sup>2</sup> = 0.148. N: 508.	

Persons with the most **intense and long-lasting caregiving burden** were more likely not to request leaves for reasons of income loss or job security.

Job insecurity was more cited among **temporary and private sector employees**.

**Family support** was an important reason to not take leave.

Source: Encuesta sobre el uso de permisos parentales en España 2012.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

- Use of leave rises when there is...
  - An intense demand of care (severe dependence).
  - A weak support network (primary or sole caregivers).
- Main barriers:
  - Lack of compensation for the loss of income.
  - Anticipation of adverse effects in careers.
- Caregivers leaves are scantily used in Spain compare to leave for childcare. WHY?
  - Unpredictability of the onset of dependence.
  - Different social norms and satisfaction.
  - Less publicity and development.

**This presentation is based on:**

Rogero-García, J., & García-Sainz, C. (2016). Caregiver Leave-Taking in Spain: Rate, Motivations, and Barriers. *Journal of aging & social policy*, 28(2), 98-112.

**Thank you!**

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