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PUBLIC OPINION TOWARD LEAVE POLICIES IN 27 OECD COUNTRIES

Isabel Valarino

International Labour Organization & University of Lausanne

14th Leave Policies and Research Annual Seminar

21-22 September 2017, Prague

Context of the study

- Leave policies are often studied in relation to their policy development or their outcomes but less frequently in relation with individuals' preferences
- There is substantial heterogeneity regarding the length of statutory paid leave across countries and whether parents are encouraged to share entitlements
- **What is considered a “good” leave policy ? Are there country differences? How satisfied or dissatisfied are individuals? What factors influence these attitudes?**
- Macro perspective on attitudes toward leave policies
 - Data from an international comparative survey on attitudes (ISSP)
 - Data from the International review of the network
 - Total post-natal paid leave length available (incl. maternity, paternity, parental and childcare)

Welfare regimes	Countries	Total post-natal leave length with some compensation (full or partial salary, flat rate)	Father incentives (paternity and/or individual paid parental leave, quotas)
Social-democratic	Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden	9-16 months NB: Finland 36 months	Gender equality focus: paternity leaves, quotas, bonus
Conser-vative	Austria, Belgium, France, Germany Israel, Portugal, Spain	North : 12-36 months South : 3-11 months	Some incentives, depending on context; different stages & paths of family policy development
Liberal	Australia, Canada, Ireland, UK, USA	0-12 months	None
Post Commu-nist	Croatia, Czech Rep., Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, Russia,	12-36 months	Focus on maternal care; some incentives ; especially in Croatia & Slovenia
Hybrid	Japan, Netherlands, Switzerland	3-14 months	Some incentives

(Aidukaite, 2009; Esping-Andersen, 1990, Ferragina & Seeleib-Kaiser, 2011; Moss, 2012, 2013, 2014)

Research objectives and framework

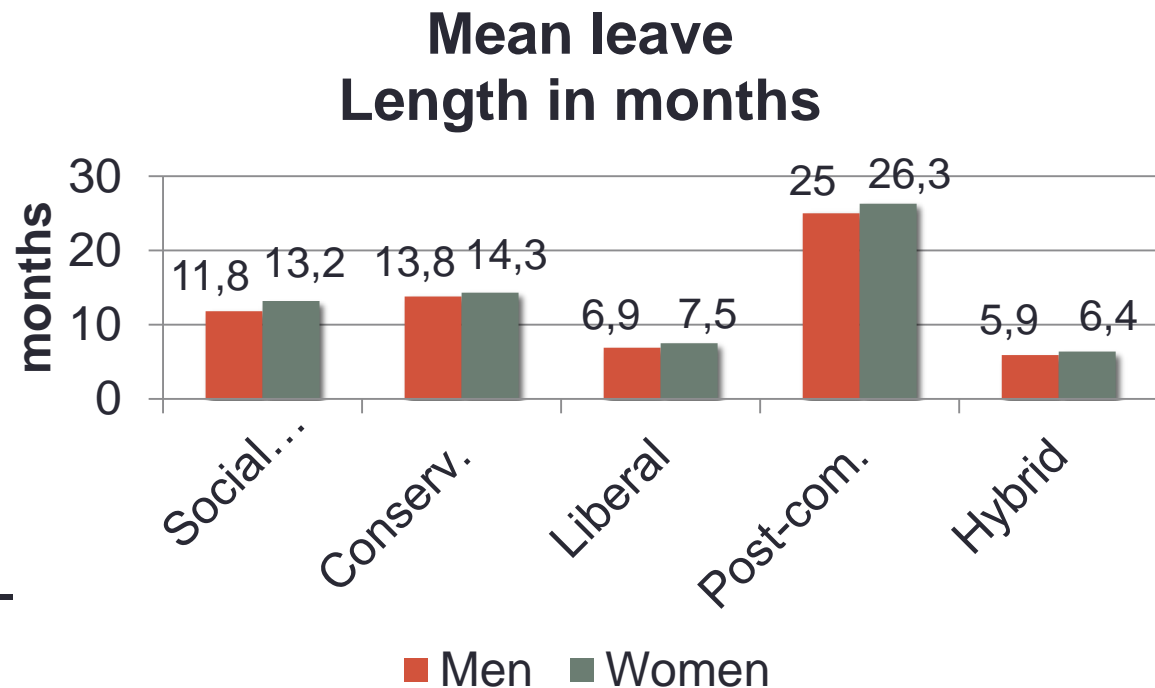
- **Objective 1 :** Describe leave policy preferences regarding the ideal leave length and gender division of leave in a comparative perspective
- **Objective 2 :** Identify the factors associated with individuals' dissatisfaction across welfare regimes
- Following welfare attitudinal literature, three dimensions are expected to influence leave policy preferences
 - Institutional and leave policy context
 - Self-interest mechanisms
 - Ideas and values
- Research results on attitudes toward family and leave policies
 - Mixed results for the institutional influence on leave policy preferences
 - Confirm the influence of age, parenthood and sex
 - Confirm the influence of values (gender ideology, political views, religion...)

Data and methods

- **ISSP 2012** *Family and changing gender roles IV*
- 27 countries ; N = 35,501 respondents aged 18+
- **Leave length preference** indicators based on item :
“Consider a couple who both work full-time and now have a new born child. One of them stops working for some time to care for their child. Do you think there should be a paid leave available and, if so, for how long?”
- **Gender division of leave preference** indicator based on:
“Still thinking about the same couple, if both are in similar work situation and are eligible for paid leave, how should this paid leave period be divided between the mother and the father?”
 - fully gendered (mother takes all) / partly gendered (mother takes most and father some leave) / gender equal (half each)
- **Methods** : descriptive statistics, correlations, chi-square tests, logistic regressions

Leave length preferences

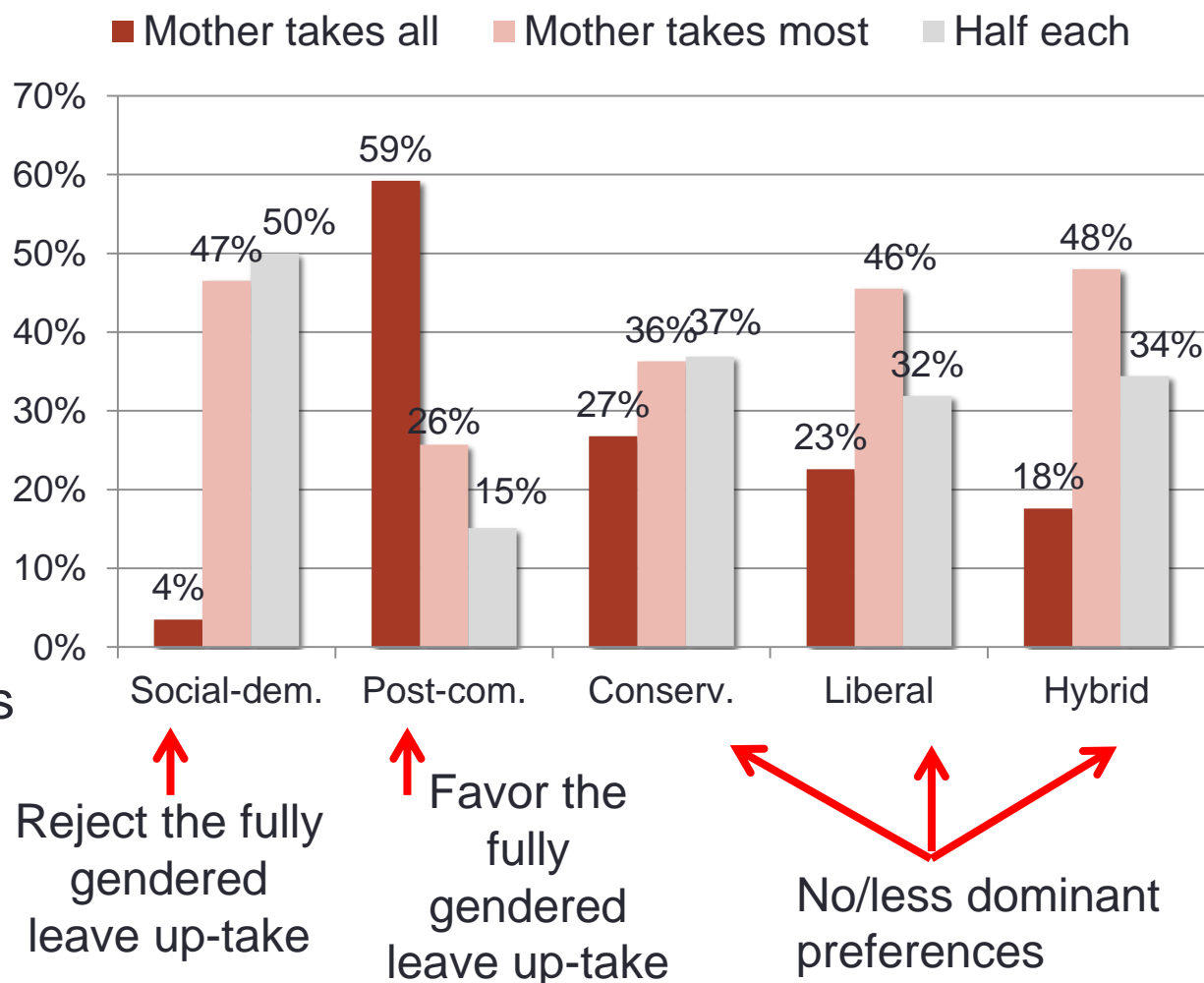
- **Large welfare regime differences**
 - Note: variety in post-communist countries
- **High consensus** (over 1/3 of sample agree on a specific leave length) : Social democratic & post-communist countries
- **Low consensus**, no predominant leave length expectations : conservative, liberal and hybrid regimes



- **Positive correlation** between country average preferred lengths and country statutory paid leave lengths
 - The longer the statutory paid leave, the longer the average preferences

Gender division of leave

- “Clear” patterns in social-democratic and post-communist regimes
- More heterogeneity in other regimes
- Chi-square test result:
 - significant association between living in a country with father incentives and wanting a gender equal leave
 - Odds are twice higher

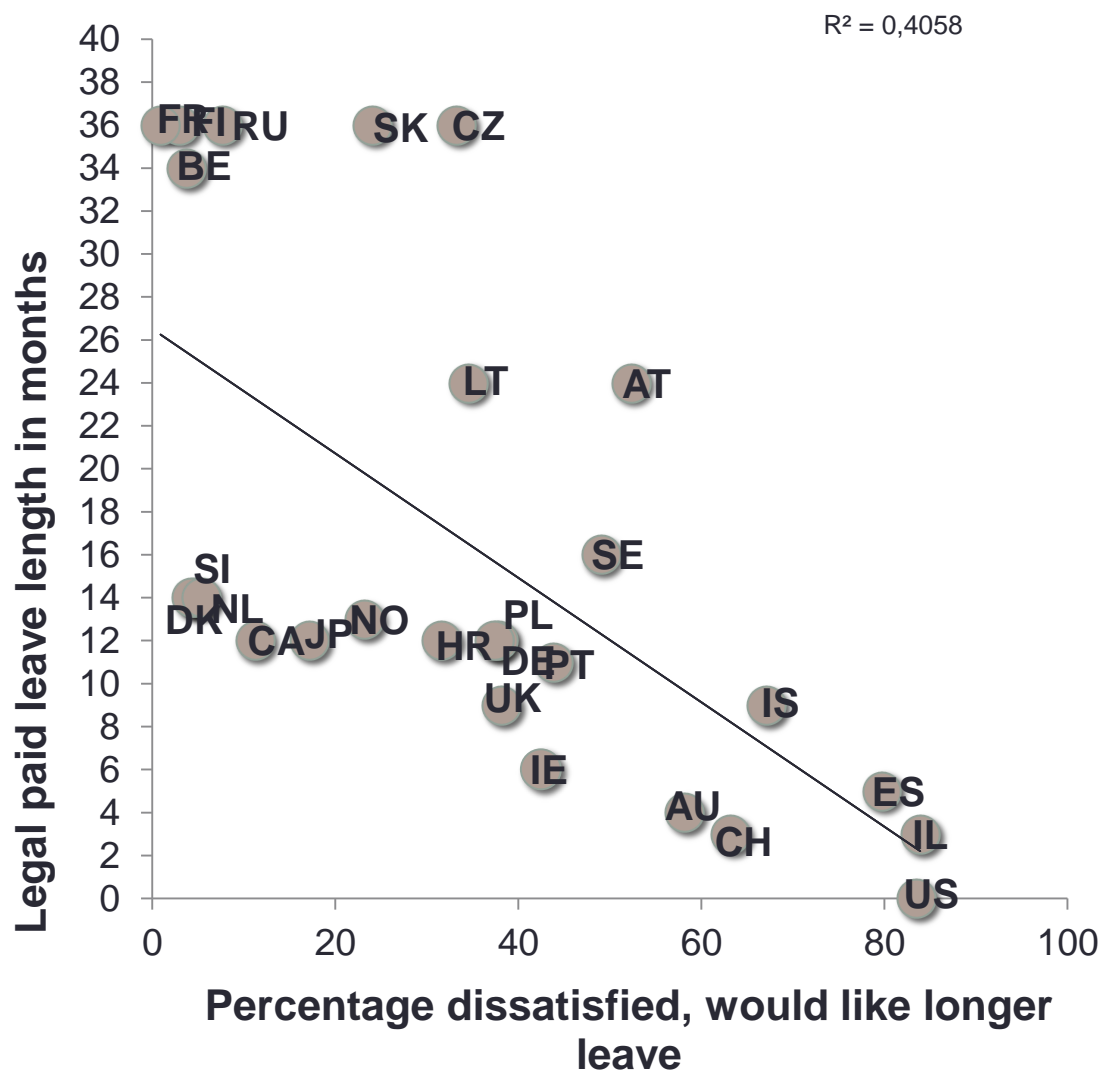


Dissatisfaction with leave length

“Dissatisfaction”:
respondent’s preferred
leave length exceeds
the existing legal leave
in his/her own country

Countries with the
shortest legal paid
leaves have the highest
proportion of dissatisfied
individuals

- e.g., liberal, hybrid and southern european welfare states



Correlates of dissatisfaction

	Social-dem.	Post-com.	Conser-vative	Liberal	Hybrid
Sex (man ref.)					
Woman	1.75***	n.s.	1.25***	1.33***	1.46***
Parenthood (no child ref.)					
Child < 18 yrs	2.68***	1.38***	1.60***	1.49***	1.32*
Child > 18 yrs	1.99***	1.25*	1.20*	n.s.	n.s.
Age (41-65 yrs (ref.))					
18-40 yrs	1.23*	n.s.	1.16*	1.92***	1.33*
65 + yrs	0.53***	0.83*	0.72***	0.64***	n.s.
Education (primary ref.)					
Secondary degree	n.s.	n.s.	1.17*	n.s.	n.s.
Tertiary degree	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	1.90***
Employment (outside ref.)					
In paid work	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
Gender ideol.	1.17***	1.27***	1.26***	0.92*	0.89°

- Women, parents, the young cohort have higher odds of being dissatisfied
- Opposite effect of gender ideology depending on welfare regime
- Limited /no effect of education and employment

Conclusion

- Paid leave is a **very well accepted family policy instrument**
- But there are large **regime differences** in leave policy preferences
 - Average leave length preferences range from 6 months in liberal regimes to 3 years in some post-communist regimes
 - Opposite gender division of leave preferences in post-communist and in social-democratic regimes
- Leave policy preferences are **significantly shaped by the institutional context** and by existing leave schemes
- Consensus about what is a “good” leave seem strongest when leaves have been **institutionalized for a long time** and with clear objectives
- **High levels of dissatisfaction in some countries**, especially among liberal, hybrid and southern European conservative regimes
- In some contexts there may be ground for **reforming leave policies** by extending them and /or increasing or implementing father incentives
- Dissatisfaction is not only influenced by the institutional context, but also by **individuals’ gender ideology and family life course circumstances**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION!

Isabel.Valarino@unil.ch

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Limitations

- Leave dissatisfaction indicator:
 - Not clear what “paid leave” meant for respondents. Indicator was constructed from post-natal statutory paid leave with *any* kind of compensation. Estimates are conservative; substantially more would be considered as dissatisfied if the well-paid leave available was taken into account.
- Ideational variables in the model:
 - Other ideological dimensions such as political party or attitudes toward social redistribution or religious values could also play a role but were not included.
- Cross-sectional data:
 - There is an association between leave schemes and leave policy preferences. Cross sectional data prevents from making causal inferences. Feedback mechanisms may also exist! (preferences influence policies too)

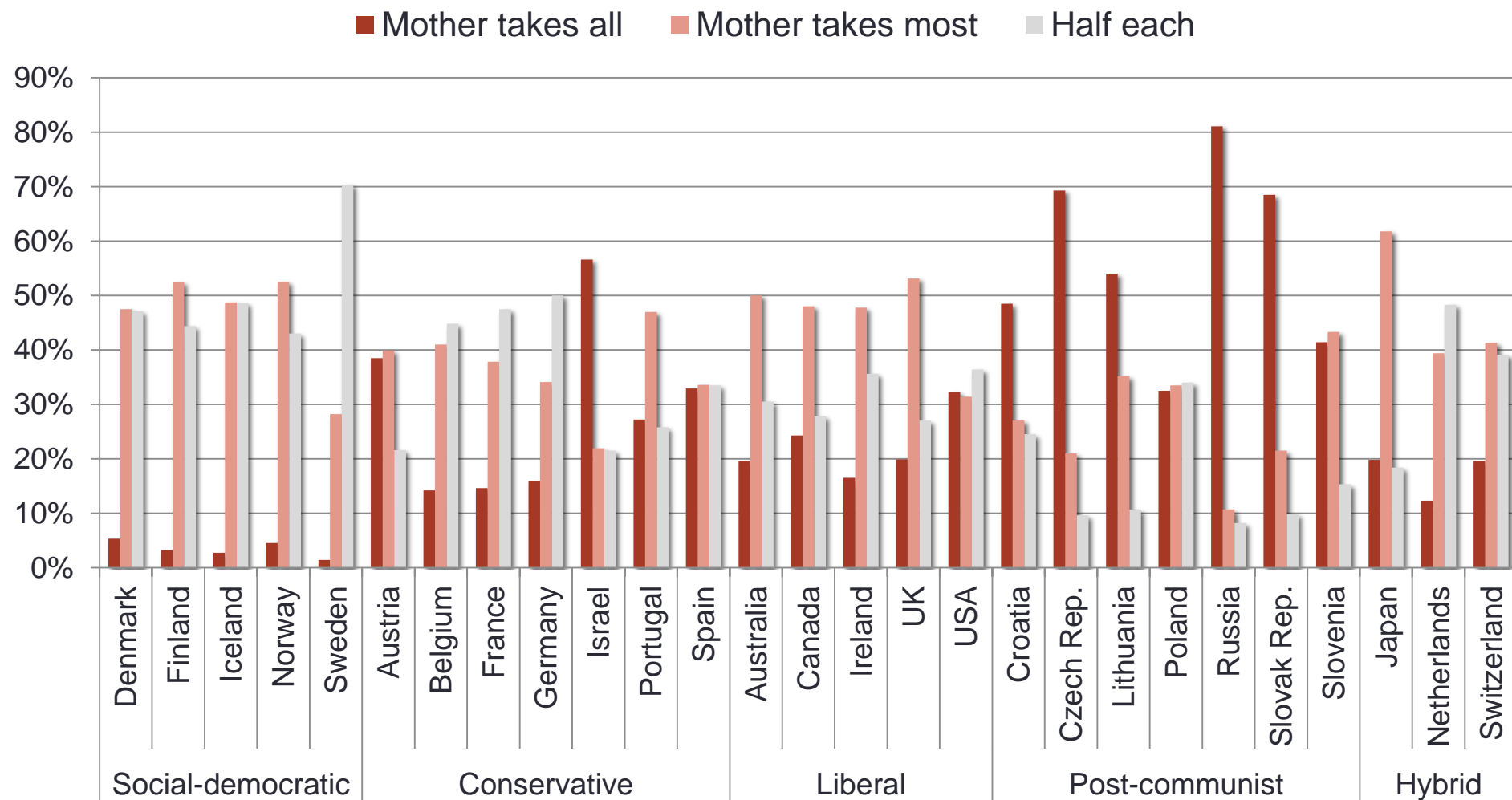
Legal leave entitlements and leave policy preferences (2012-2014)

Welfare regime	Country	Legal leave entitlements ¹		Leave length preferences					Gender division of leave preferences ²		
		Paid leave in months	Incentive for fathers	Central tendency		Consensus Largest group with same answer (length in months)	Dissatisfaction ²		Mother takes all	Mother takes most	Half each
				Mean (months)	Median (months)		Want no leave	Want a longer leave			
Social-democratic Scandinavian countries	Denmark	14	✓	7.9	6	33% (12)	17%	4.8%	5.3%	47.5%	47.1%
	Finland	36	✓	15.1	12	30.5% (12)	9%	3%	3.2%	52.4%	44.4%
	Iceland	9	✓	12	12	47.8% (12)	1.8%	67.1%	2.7%	48.7%	48.6%
	Norway	13	✓	12.6	12	47.4% (12)	10.2%	23.2%	4.5%	52.5%	43%
	Sweden	16	✓	16.7	15	33.6% (12)	5.1%	49%	1.4%	28.2%	70.4%
	Pooled			12.5	12	38.7% (12)	9.1%	27.9%	3.5%	46.5%	50%
Conservative Continental European countries	Austria	24	✓	28.9	30	32.6% (36)	8.3%	52.3%	38.5%	39.9%	21.6%
	Belgium	34	✓	8.1	6	22.2% (6)	19.3%	3.7%	14.2%	41%	44.8%
	France	36	✓	13.2	12	24% (12)	15.4%	0.9%	14.6%	37.8%	47.5%
	Germany	12	✓	16.1	12	37.9% (12)	7.1%	37.4%	15.9%	34.1%	50%
	Israel	3		7.8	6	42.4% (6)	2.2%	83.9%	56.6%	21.9%	21.5%
	Portugal	11	✓	10.4	6	30% (6 & 12)	1.9%	43.8%	27.2%	47%	25.8%
	Spain	5	✓	15.9	12	31.8 (12)	5.4%	79.7%	32.9%	33.6%	33.5%
	Pooled			14.1	12	25.7% (12)	9.9%	39.9%	26.8%	36.3%	36.9%
Liberal Anglo-Saxon countries	Australia	4		6.5	6	30.1% (0)	30.1%	58.1%	19.6%	50%	30.5%
	Canada	12		9.3	12	42.1% (12)	14.4%	11.2%	24.3%	48%	27.8%
	Ireland	6		8.2	6	25.2% (12)	20.9%	42.5%	16.5%	47.8%	35.6%
	UK	9		8	6	32.5% (12)	11.4%	38.1%	19.9%	53.1%	27%
	USA	0		5	3	22% (6)	16.5%	83.5%	32.3%	31.4%	36.4%
	Pooled			7.2	6	26.3% (12)	20%	49.9%	22.6%	45.5%	31.9%
Post-communist Central and East-European countries (CEE)	Croatia	12	✓	17	12	54.6% (12)	0.8%	37.8%	48.5%	27%	24.5%
	Czech Rep.	36		36.2	36	39% (36)	2.4%	33.2%	69.3%	21%	9.6%
	Lithuania	24	✓	24.9	24	39.5 (24)	1.5%	34.5%	54%	35.2%	10.7%
	Poland	12	✓	16.3	12	46% (12)	1%	31.6%	32.5%	33.5%	34%
	Russia	36		28.9	36	43.7% (36)	2.4%	7.7%	81.1%	10.7%	8.2%
	Slovak Rep.	36		36.6	36	50.4% (36)	1.2%	24.1%	68.5%	21.5%	9.9%
	Slovenia	14	✓	10.1	12	65.6% (12)	14.4%	5.3%	41.4%	43.3%	15.3%
	Pooled			25.7	24	28.7% (36)	3.2%	24.6%	59.2%	25.7%	15.1%
Hybrid	Japan	12	✓	9.7	6	28.3% (12)	11.7%	17.2%	19.8%	61.8%	18.4%
	Netherlands	14	✓	5.7	4	24.8% (6)	24.2%	4.3%	12.3%	39.4%	48.3%
	Switzerland	3		6.3	6	27.3% (6)	11.7%	63.2%	19.6%	41.3%	39.1%
	Pooled			7.3	6	23.3% (6)	15.7%	28.8%	17.6%	48%	34.4%
Total sample				14.8	12	27.2% (12)	10.4%	34.8%	29.9%	37.6%	32.5%

Gender division of leave preferences by sex

	Gendered		Partly gendered		Gender equal	
	women	men	women	men	women	men
Social dem.	2.7 %	4.4 %	46 %	47 %	51.3 %	48.6 %
Conservative	24.7 %	29.2 %	36.1 %	36.5 %	39.2 %	34.3 %
Liberal	18.5 %	27 %	48.7 %	42 %	32.7 %	31 %
Post-communist	57.7 %	60.9 %	26.5 %	24.7 %	15.8 %	14.4 %
Hybrid	40.7 %	40.5 %	32.6 %	33.1 %	26.7 %	26.4 %

Gender division of leave preferences



Logistic regressions – being dissatisfied (wanting a longer leave) – Odds ratios

	Social-democratic	Post-communist	Conservative	Liberal	Hybrid
Sex					
Man	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Woman	1.75***	1.10	1.25***	1.33***	1.46***
Parenthood					
Childless	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Parent of child <18 yrs	2.68***	1.38***	1.60***	1.49***	1.32*
Parent of child 18+ yrs	1.99***	1.25*	1.20*	1.00	0.91
Age category					
15-40 years	1.23*	1.07	1.16*	1.92***	1.33*
41-65 years	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
65+ years	0.53***	0.83*	0.72***	0.64***	0.74
Education degree					
Primary	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
Secondary	0.98	1.05	1.17*	1.10	1.13
Tertiary	1.10	1.01	1.14	1.20	1.90***
Employment status					
Not in paid work	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.	Ref.
In paid work	1.01	0.97	1.06	1.00	0.94
Gender ideology score	1.17***	1.27***	1.26***	0.92*	0.89
N	5679	7865	10970	4977	3175
Model	X ² (df 13)=2078.64***	X ² (df 15)=786.10***	X ² (df 15)=5772.49***	X ² (df 13)=1526.90***	X ² (df 11)=1173.01***
Nagelkerke	0.443	0.141	0.550	0.352	0.437
Cox & Snell R square	0.307	0.095	0.409	0.264	0.309

Notes: Models control for the country effects in each group. Significance levels:
 p<0.001***, p<0.01**, p<0.05*