



University of Zagreb



Eligibility to Parental-Leave Benefits in 21 European Countries: Social and gender inequalities in policy design

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Background: Social & gender inequalities in access to leaves

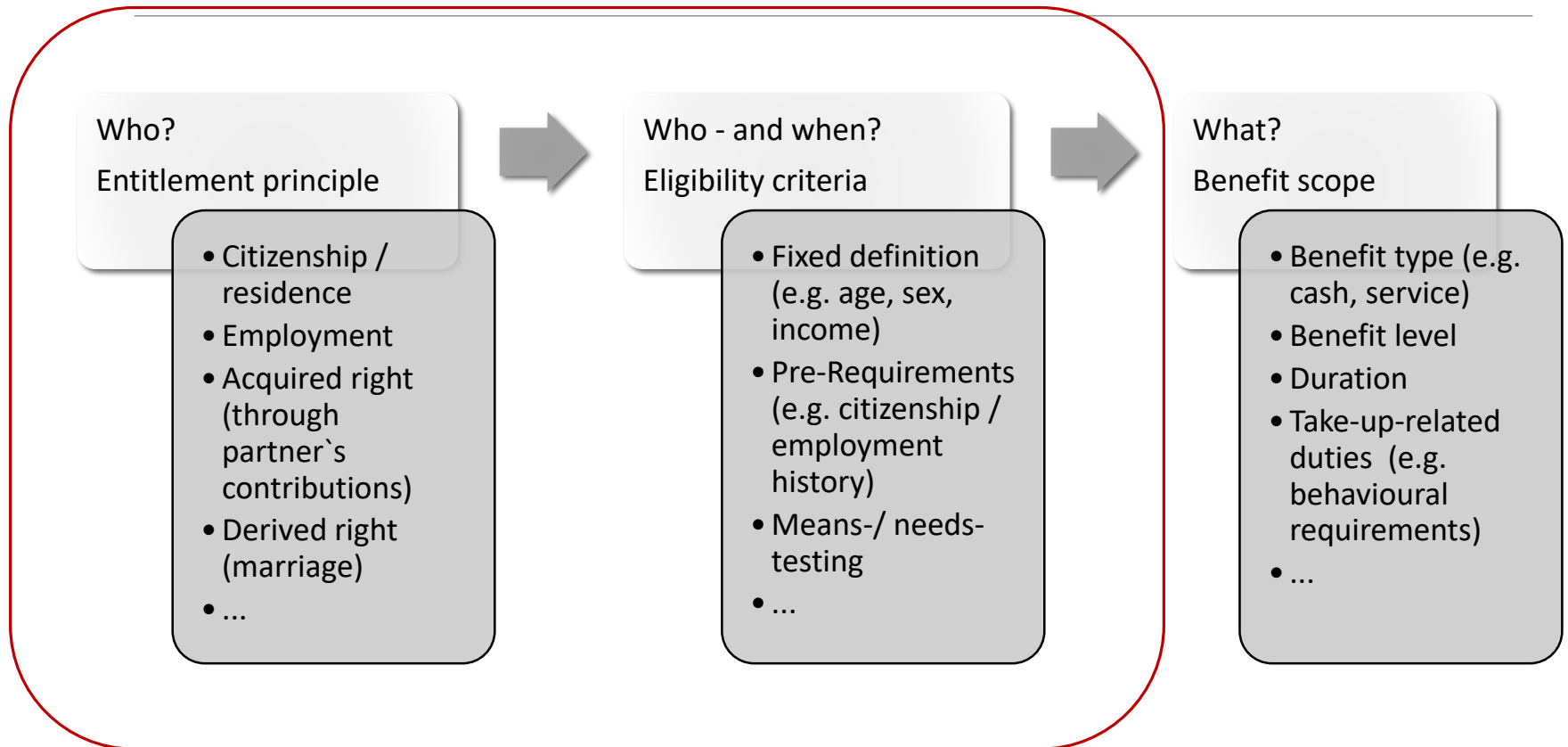
- Access to childcare-related leaves contingent on labour market inequalities & leave policies may differently disadvantage various social groups, and men and women (e.g. Cantillon, 2011; Ghysels & Van Lancker, 2011; McKay et al., 2016; Dobrotić & Blum, 2019)
 - Particularly relates to leave benefits
- Focus on benefit scope, while limited knowledge about eligibility (e.g. parents' employment histories)
 - Deeper understanding of statutory entitlements to childcare-related leaves
 - Growing precariousness at the labour market
 - Paradigmatic shift towards employment-oriented social investment paradigm

Aim?

- New dynamics related to social & gender inequalities in access to (+ the scope of) leave rights for parents
- Explore recent developments in statutory entitlements to childcare-related leave benefits in 21 European countries (2006-2017)
 - Focus on parental leave entitlements
 - Identify the character of statutory entitlements & eventual shifts
 - Develops an *eligibility index* to measure the degree of universalism /selectivism in access to parental-leave benefits, next to the degree of (de-)gendered entitlements

Three dimensions of social rights

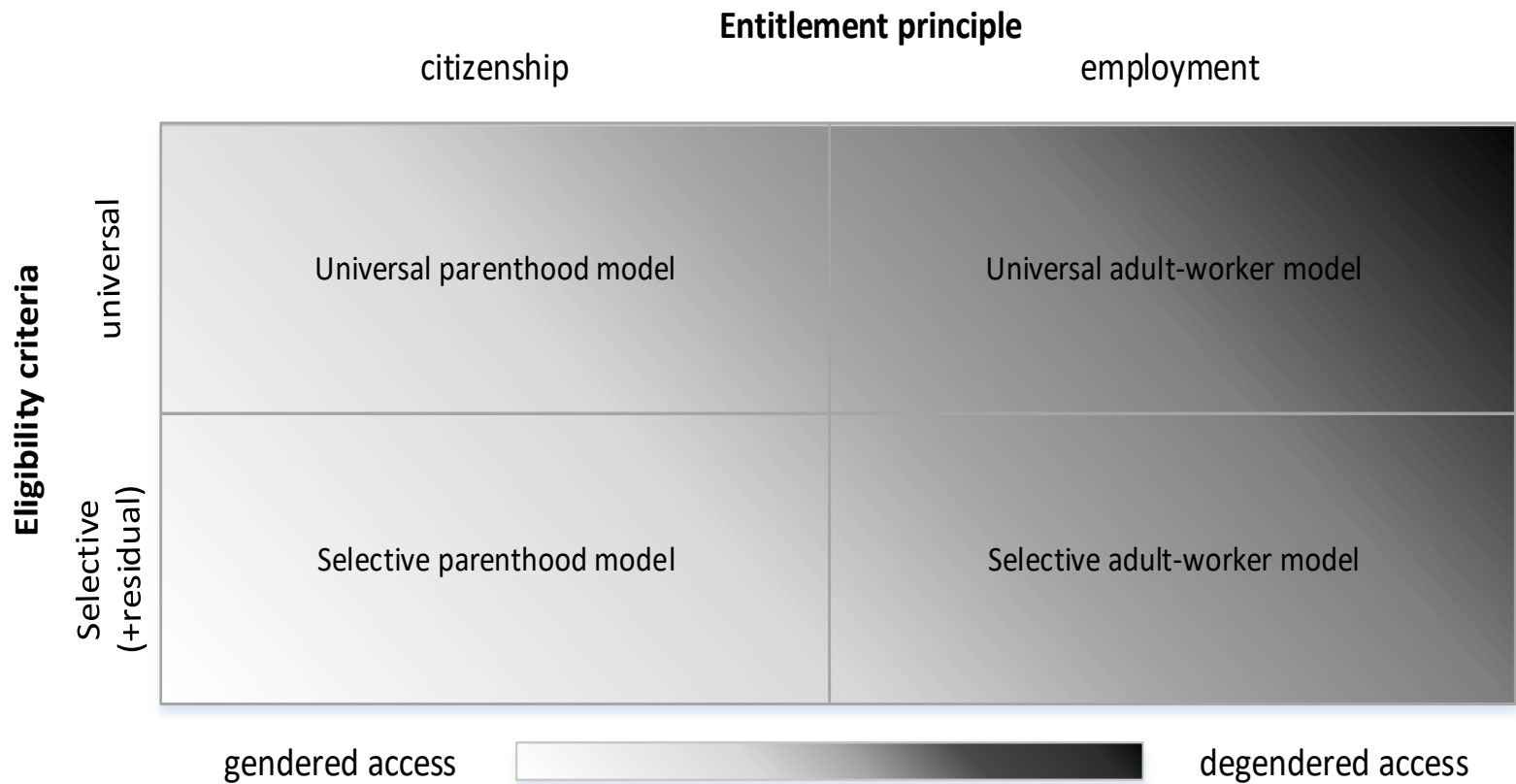
(Blank 2007, 2011; Clasen & Clegg 2007)



➤ Lack of knowledge on the 'obligations' side, particularly in childcare-related leave rights

Parental leave entitlement types

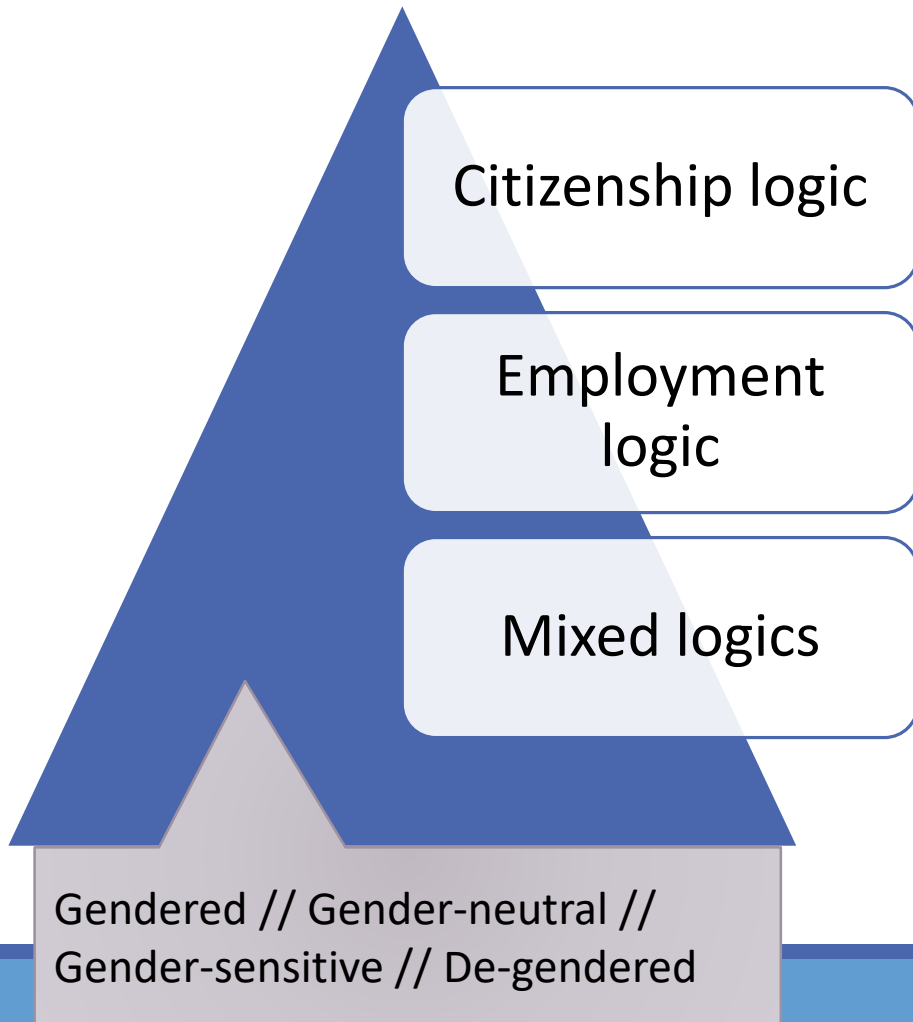
(Dobrotić & Blum, forthcoming 2019)



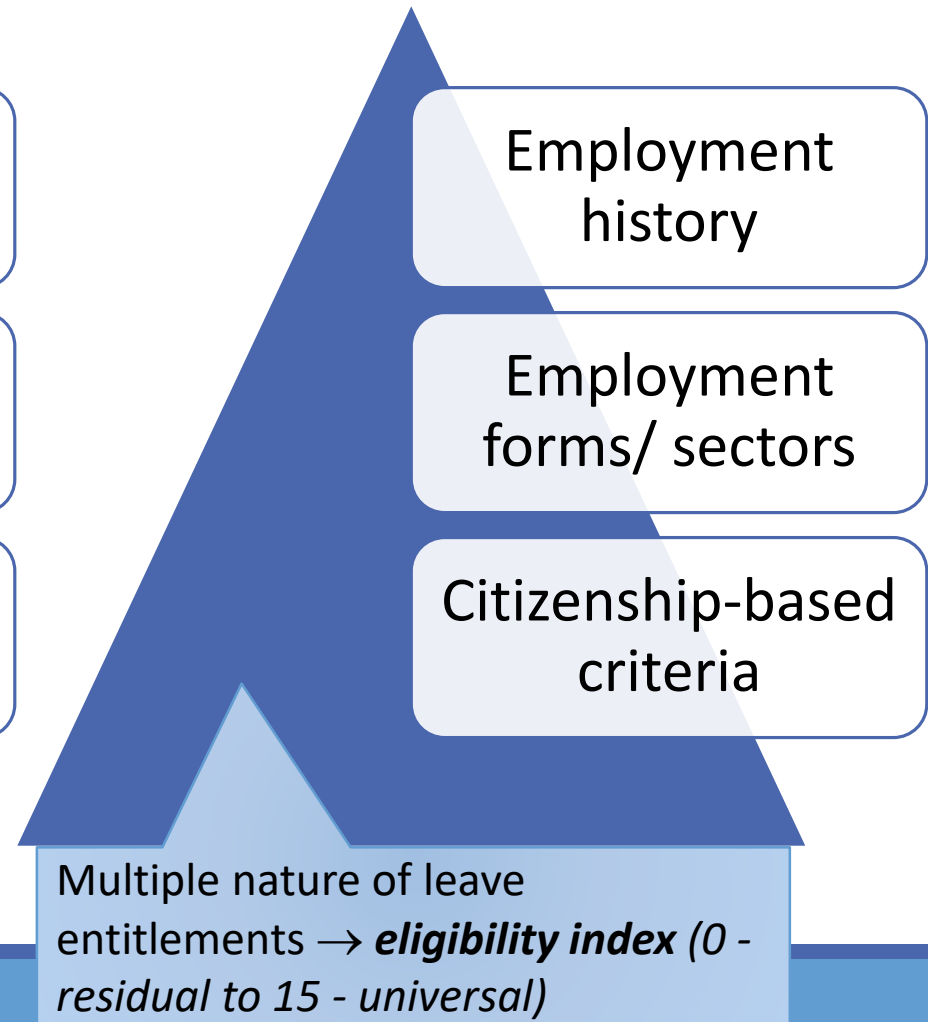
Classification of countries: Data & operationalisation

- Annual Report on Leave Policies (LP&R), cross-checked with OECD Family Database, MISSOC and national sources
 - 2006 & 2017
- Statutory entitlement at parental-leave benefits
 - Better capture gender dimension of leave policy design & benefit access of parents atypically connected to the labour market
 - Time rights less conditioned than benefit rights
 - State level

Entitlement principle (WHO?)



Eligibility criteria (UNDER WHICH CONDITIONS?)



Entitlement principles?

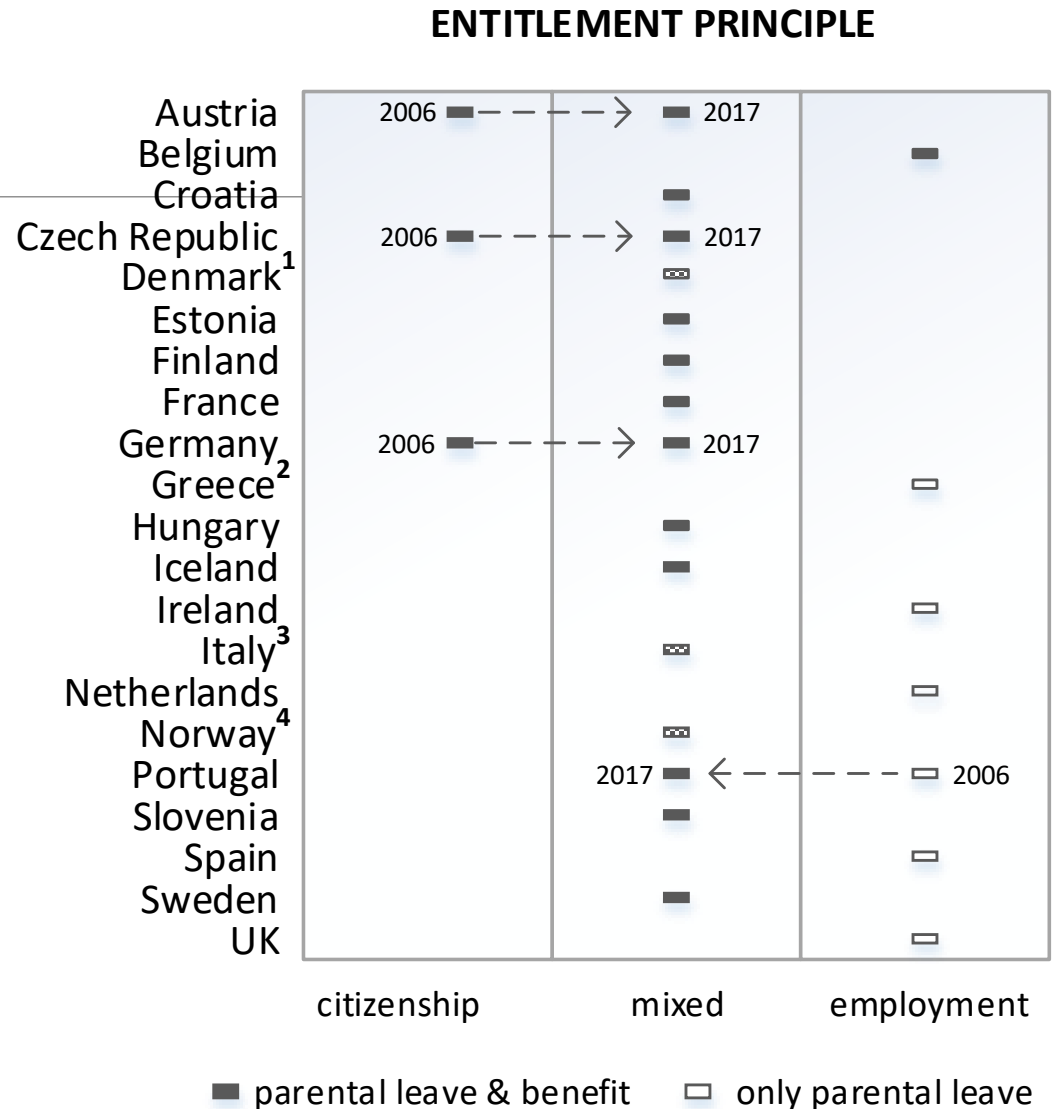
- Tendency to move towards „mixed systems”
- 6/21 countries employment-based system

1: Without typical citizenship-based parental benefit, but various groups of parents (unemployed, students, parents in vocational training) are covered with benefits

2: Parental benefit only in the public sector in the case of a third or higher order child

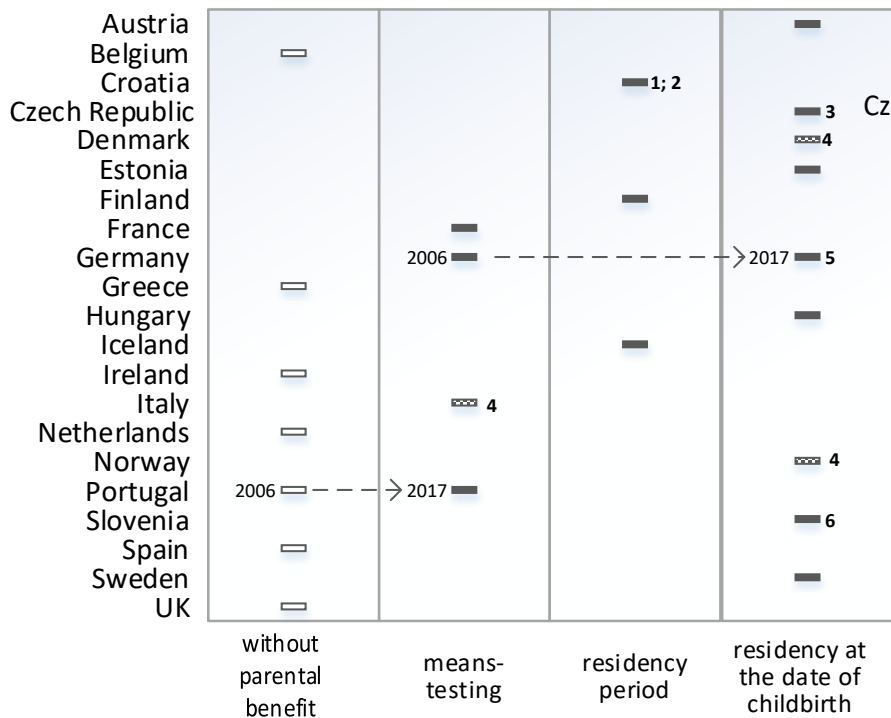
3: Non-working mothers are not entitled to parental benefit, but are entitled to five-months means-tested maternity allowance

4: Without typical citizenship-based parental benefit, but non-employed women are entitled to one-off payment of €6,427 per child

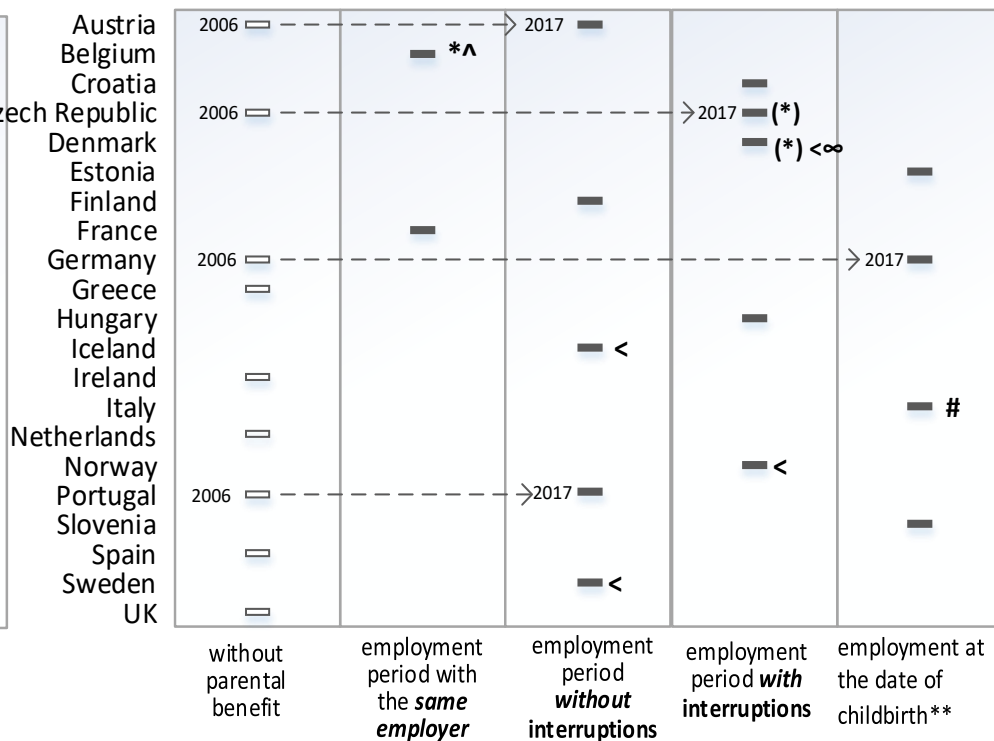


Eligibility criteria?

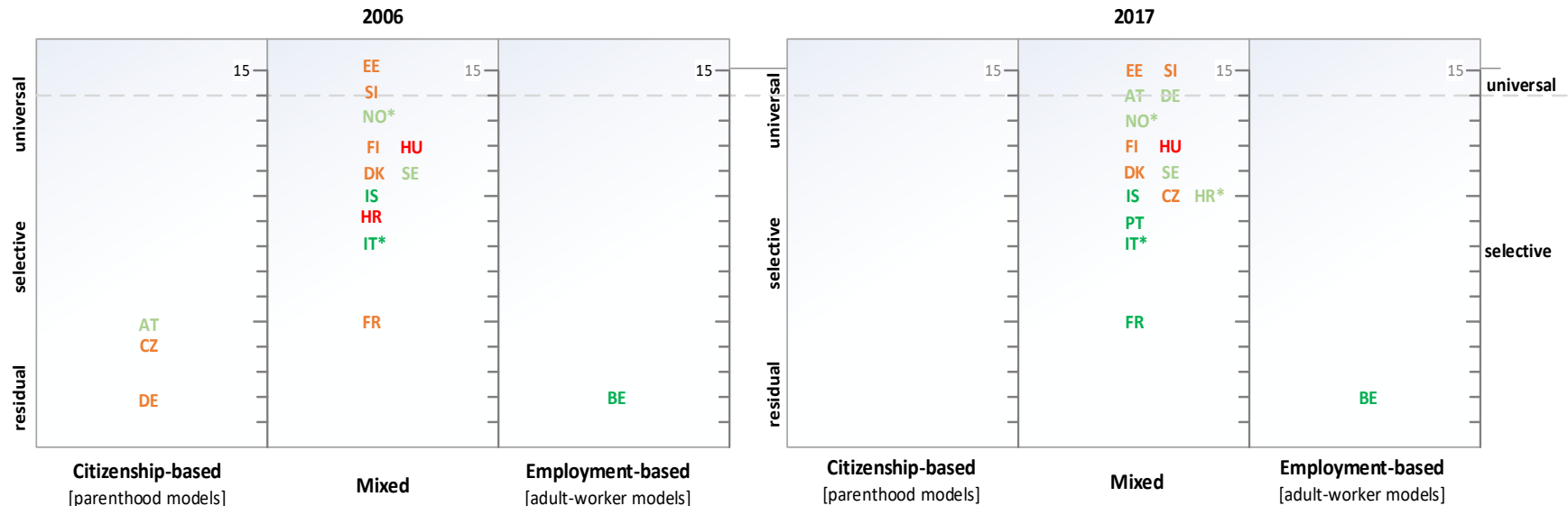
ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – CITIZENSHIP-BASED BENEFITS



ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – EMPLOYMENT-BASED BENEFITS



Entitlement types: *Eligibility index* and (de-)gendered access to parental-leave benefits 2006 and 2017



Notes:

Red – gendered; **Orange** – gender neutral; **Light green** – gender sensitive; **Dark green** – de-gendered; countries are placed at residual-universal line based on their score at eligibility index (ranking 0-5 for citizenship-based model and 0-15 for mixed and employment-based models): * access to citizenship-based and employment-based benefits differ on gender dimension – the colour at figure is based on employment-based variant, while specifics are elaborated in more details in the text

Figure does not include the five countries with only unpaid parental leave (additionally conditioned with previous employment in Ireland, Greece and UK, as well as earnings-test in UK), all of them having de-gendered leave design as the leave period is the same for both, mothers and fathers.

- Selective mixed systems dominate – varying degrees of universalism to selectivism
- Tendency to move towards selective mixed systems
- Tendency to move towards gender-sensitive & de-gendered entitlements

Concluding remarks

- Tendency to move towards mixed systems
 - More efforts to relate parental-leave benefit more closely to parents' labour market performance than to extend protection also to parents less attached to the labour market
- Eligibility criteria were *not* a subject of important reforms
 - vs. growing precariousness at the labour market – less stable career & more interrupted contribution periods
 - Higher social inequalities in everyday parenting practices?
- Increased focus on gender equality in leave design
- Convergence?