

Comparing long-term care leave schemes in Europe

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Content

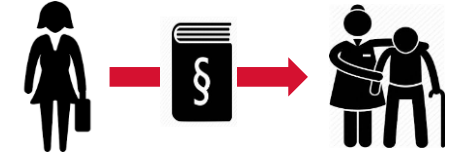
1. Long-term care & long-term care leave
2. Comparative data review
3. Long-term care leave policies in comparison – the project in a nutshell
4. First project part: Dataset on LTC leave schemes in 27 EU countries
 - Dataset
 - Framework
 - Variables

Long-term care (LTC)



- Long-term assistance with daily activities due to physical and/or mental impairments
- Need for LTC mainly in old age → increasing relevance
- Formal (professional, paid) and/or **informal (familial, unpaid) LTC**
 - EU: 2/3 of informal care givers of working age are employed (SPC & EC 2021)
 - Social risks for informal care givers e.g. lost (future) income and social protection; effects on health and well-being
- LTC systems vary across countries, offering e.g.
 - LTC services (home- and community-based services, residential care)
 - Cash benefits
 - „Regulatory” benefits, e.g. care leave; social security credits for informal care

Long-term care leave

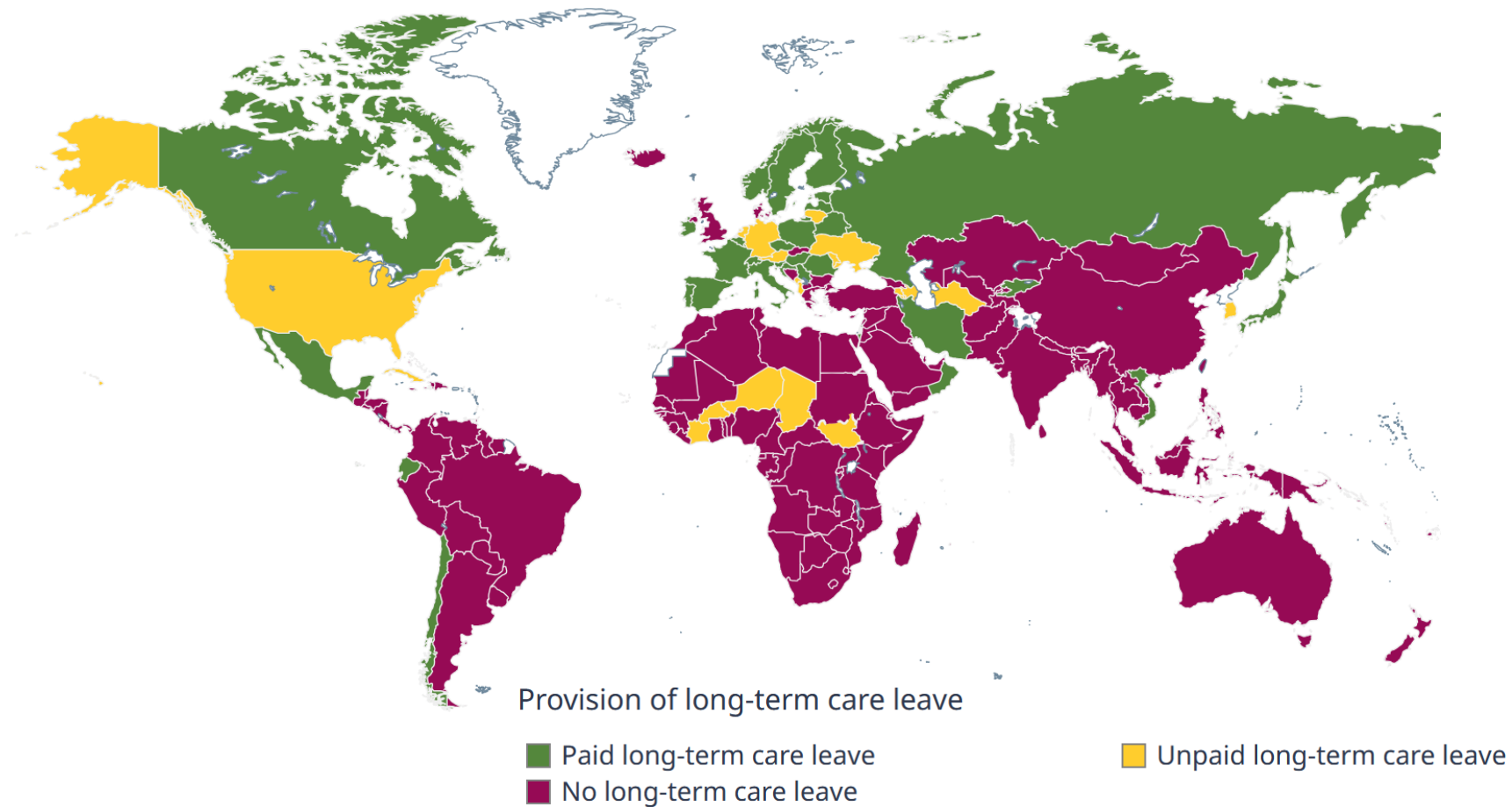


- **Care leave** = absence from the workplace to provide care to (terminally) ill, disabled, or otherwise dependent relatives, neighbours, friends or otherwise socially close persons. (Schmidt et al. 2016: 13)
 - **Long-term care leave** = specifically to care for persons with LTC needs
 - Related terms and overlapping concepts: **Carer leave**; **family leave**; **family medical/sick leave**; **palliative care leave**; etc.
- Heterogenous leave schemes
 - **Length**: Short-term (few days) vs. long-term (several months/years)
 - **Population group** and care need definitions: e.g. general; for children; end-of-life
 - **Paid vs. unpaid**

LTC leave in Europe: What do we know empirically?

- Most European countries have established some (long-term) care leave, presumably increasingly in the last few decades (ILO 2023; Heymann et al. 2024; OECD 2018; Bouget et al. 2016)

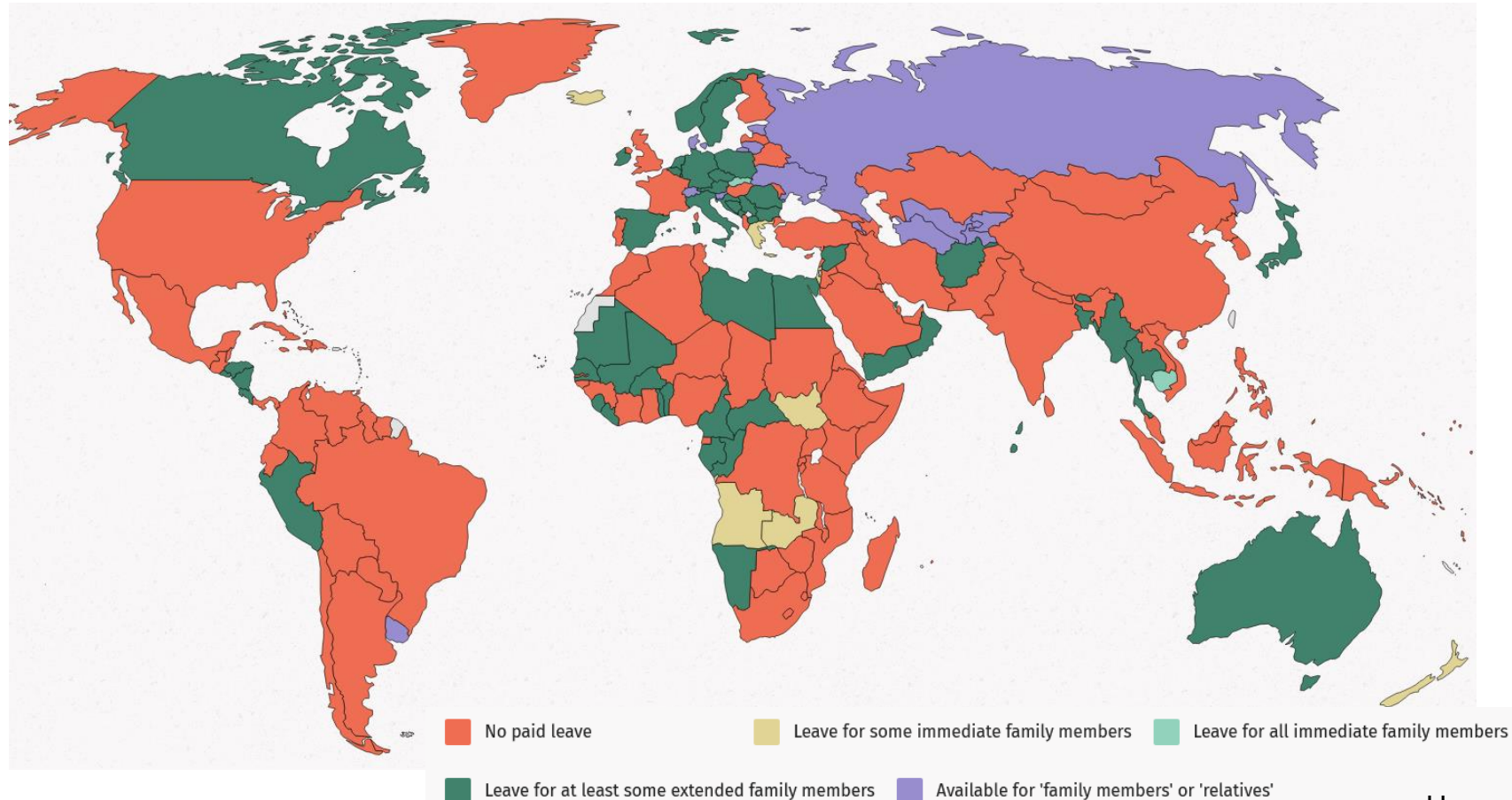
ILO Global Care Policy Portal: Long-term care leave



ILO 2023

WORLD policy analysis centre: Paid Leave for Family Health Needs

Are workers guaranteed paid leave to meet the health needs of all adult family members living in their household?



Heymann et al. 2024

LTC leave in Europe: What do we know empirically?

- Most European countries have established some (long-term) care leave, presumably increasingly in the last few decades (ILO 2023; Heymann et al. 2024; OECD 2018; Bouget et al. 2016)
- Most countries have **multiple parallel care leaves** (distinct schemes for sick/disabled children more common & generous (Bouget et al. 2017: 168; OECD 2020)
- **Short-term leaves** covering few days/weeks are more widespread & paid than long-term leave (Bouget et al. 2016: 19; Eurofound 2015: 36)



But open (descriptive) questions:

- Where do we have (extended!) LTC leave (also) for elder care?
- What is their design? How generous are they?

Project overview: Long-term care leave policies in comparison

Research question

Across Europe, where do LTC leave schemes exist and how generous are the inclusiveness and scope of benefit of the respective schemes?

Which explanatory factors – including care regimes, socio-economic and political conditions and ideas – influence the generosity design of LTC leave policies?

Project parts

WP 1: Dataset on LTC leave schemes in 27 EU countries

WP 2: Explanatory analysis of LTC leave generosity across EU

WP 3: Case studies on LTC leave policies in AT & DE



Dataset on LTC leave schemes in 27 EU countries

- De jure design of extended (≥ 4 weeks?) LTC-related leave
- Data collection from
 - Laws & government websites
 - Comparative sources/reports, e.g. Annual Review of Leave Policies; ESPN work-life balance reports; MISSOC/MISSCEO
 - Further secondary literature
- Content
 - 1. Detailed description → 2. Standardised coding (?)
 - Cross-time perspective of introduction and reforms?

Generosity framework: Inclusiveness and scope of benefits

Personal dimension: Inclusiveness Who and under which conditions?	Material dimension: Scope of Benefits What and how much?	
	High scope of benefits	Low scope of benefits
High inclusiveness	Generous leave	Inclusive leave
Low inclusiveness	High benefit leave	Non-generous leave

see also De Carvalho et al. 2024; Viero & Fischer forthcoming

Variable for the two dimensions

Inclusiveness		Scope of Benefits	
care recipient	care needs	time	duration
	age		flexibility
care recipient & giver	relationship	compensation	payment
amount of care provision	employment status		social security coverage
	scheme membership / insurance		job security and guarantee
	amount of care provision		other
	income		
	other		

Sources

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Thank you!

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