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Choices, opportunities and constraints on partnership, childbearing and parenting: the policy responses

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CHOICES, OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS ON PARTNERSHIP, CHILDBEARING AND PARENTING: THE POLICY RESPONSES

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I. INTRODUCTION: GENEVA, CAIRO, AND THE POLICY CONTEXT

The UNECE 1993 European Population Conference and Cairo's 1994 ICPD Program of Action emphasized the need for actions and policies directed at the promotion of gender equality, the reconciliation of work and family life, the respect and support for the diversity of family structure and composition, and the socio-economic support of the family.² In particular, the recommendations of the 1993 European Population Conference included:

- The promotion of a more child-friendly and family-friendly environment (Recommendation 3);
- The support of parents in their combination of professional life and parental roles (Recommendation 4);
- The financial support of families particularly for those with limited resources (Recommendation 5);
- The equality between men and women including equal opportunities for employment and equality in family responsibilities (Recommendation 6).³

As to the ICPD Program of Action, it included references to:

- The adoption of laws, programs and policies to enable employees of both sexes to harmonize their family and work responsibilities (Chapter IV);
- The promotion of equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including, among others, responsible parenthood, (...) and shared control in and contribution to family income and children's welfare (Chapter IV);
- The provision and promotion of means to make participation in the labor force more compatible with parental responsibilities (Chapter V);
- The formulation of policies which are sensitive and supportive of the family (Chapter V).⁴

How have countries fared in the promotion of these aims during the past ten years? What has been the place of family and children issues on the political agendas? And what has been the impact of these policies on families? These questions are at the core of this paper. Through a review of policy initiatives since 1994, this paper aims at assessing the extent to which the member states of the UNECE have moved closer to creating a child- and family-friendly society.

² Some of these recommendations were also included in subsequent documents among others the 1998 UNECE Conclusions of the Regional Population Meeting, the 1999 UN review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD, and the 2002 UNECE Ministerial conference on Aging.

³ Adapted from the UNECE, European Population Conference Recommendations, March 1993. Online: <http://www.unece.org/ead/pau/pau/epc.htm>

⁴ Adapted from the ICPS Program of Action. Online: <http://www.unfpa.org/icpd/summary.htm>

The paper is divided in seven sections: Section II reviews the social, demographic and economic context of countries since 1994 and discusses some of the main responses. Section III discusses more specifically some of the policies and initiatives that have been introduced since 1994 and discusses the importance given to family issues by national governments. Section IV reviews the trends in financial assistance to families since 1994 and Section V reviews the trends in state support for working parents. Section VI reviews empirical evidence regarding the effects of policies. Finally, Section VII concludes the paper and speculates on future trends in state support for families.

At this point it is important to stress that reviewing the efforts of countries in the field of state support for families is a daunting task – and this, for two main reasons. First, there is no systematic monitoring and reporting of state measures to support families. The information and data reported in this paper were compiled from various sources: the results of several weeks of work.⁵ As a result, the paper is relatively complete when it comes to cash support for families and support for working parents. However, the paper fails to capture the total level of state support for families as it omits key areas such as health, education, family law, and housing which coverage would have been impossible to include in a short paper and for which cross-nationally comparable data is limited. Policies in the field of pension, employment/unemployment, social assistance, transport, agriculture, etc. are also excluded even though they may theoretically have impact on partnership, childbearing and parenting. Second, support from national governments is not the only source of support for families: state, provincial, regional or local governments may also be key players. This is however something that is not covered in the paper as we focus strictly on national-level support.

II. AN OVERVIEW OF THE SOCIAL, DEMOGRAPHIC AND ECONOMIC CONTEXT AND THE POLICY RESPONSES

Member states of the UNECE have been facing very different economic contexts in the past ten years: contexts that have constrained in some cases the ability of governments to support families and contexts that have also called for a reordering of governmental priorities. For this reason, any attempt at generalizing trends across member states is bound to distort the specificities of national realities. One common point, however, has been the competing demands for public moneys in the context of declining revenues and population ageing. The sectors of pension, family policies, unemployment, health, education, and social assistance have all been competing for public moneys. The policy response to this situation has varied across countries:

- Some countries have preserved their level of support for families;
- Some countries have maintained their support for families but have targeted it to families in greatest needs;
- Some countries have been forced to reduce their level of support for families, especially with regard to cash transfers to families.

⁵ Table A1 in Appendix lists the main sources of information to analyze from a comparative perspective state support for families. This information is included for information only and shows that some areas of welfare policies and state support for families are badly covered and therefore restrict cross-national research.

Norway illustrates well the first of these responses. Despite the fluctuations of the market during the past ten years, the Norwegian government has maintained its level of support for families. For example, expenditures on family cash benefits remained relatively constant throughout the 1990s (OECD data). Other countries seem also to have been able to preserve their support for families despite competing demands. For instance, the analysis by Gornick (2002) on patterns of social expenditures in fourteen western countries suggest that –on average--- countries have increased their spending on family cash transfers per child throughout the 1980-1995 period.^{6,7} The increase on family cash transfers has not been as strong as that on old-age spending per elderly, but nonetheless reflects a commitment of governments to state support for families.^{8,9}

In some countries, governments have also maintained their support for families but have substantially changed its nature by targeting it to families in greatest needs. While in the 1980s family allowance programs were universal in most countries, a large number of countries have since subjected these programs to means-tests. Canada did so in 1992, Italy in 1988, Kazakhstan in 2001, Kyrgyzstan in 1999, Lithuania in 2000, Malta in 1996, the Russian Federation in 1995, Slovakia in 1994, Spain in 1994, and Turkmenistan in 1998. This radical change in the nature of state support for families has been a response to budgetary constraints, but has also been a response to the problem of child poverty. The success of this policy change is however unclear especially since the family allowance rates in several countries are too low to lift families out of poverty. For example, estimates from Hungary suggest that more than one-quarter of households who receive social transfers remain below the poverty line (Allison and Grooteiot 1996).

Finally, some countries have been forced to reduce public expenditures in key areas such as cash transfers to families, education and health. This was especially the case in Eastern and Central Europe in the years immediately following the end of the socialist regime. For example, child allowances in Romania, which represent the largest governmental cash transfer program, declined from nearly 3 percent of GDP in 1989 to less than 1 percent in 1994 (World Bank 1997). The impact has been considerable on families, resulting in rising levels of poverty. There are however signs that the situation has since improved – at least in some countries. For example, in the Slovak Republic state expenditures on child allowances amounted to around 370-400 million USD per year in the 1982-1990 period. They then decreased to 175 million USD per year in 1993, and have since steadily increased to reach around 350 million USD in 1998 (Bednàrik 1998).

In summary, the economic context of the 1990s has prevented countries from vastly expanding their support for families. Instead it has forced countries to either maintain (but not expand) their support, or even to substantially reduce it. In some countries the result has been an increasing gap between what the public demands in terms of state support for families, and

⁶ Since then the OECD has released the data for 1997. But more recent data is not available.

⁷ The fourteen countries were: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the UK, and the USA.

⁸ Data for Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands however revealed a decrease in family cash spending per child during the 1980-1995 period.

⁹ This increase in state support for families is significant as it suggests that population ageing may not necessarily translates in declining support for families as was suggested by Preston (1984).

what it is actually getting: a situation summarized in Estonia by a ‘conflict between expectations and the actual policy’ (Estonian Human Development Report 2002).

Competing demands for public moneys have also resulted in a shift in state support for families. Although fertility is now below replacement in nearly all UNECE member states, no active pronatalist policies have been pursued in recent years. Instead, during the past ten years the key priorities of governments have been to (1) combating child poverty, and (2) reconciling work and family responsibilities. These two priorities are discussed further below. But first, I reflect on other family-related initiatives launched by national governments since 1994 and which reflect the importance attached to family issues.

III. THE STATE OF STATE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES IN UNECE MEMBER STATES

Very few countries have an explicit family policy. All countries have policies and infrastructure in place to support families, but in most cases these policies are not part of a comprehensive family policy or a comprehensive strategy to support families.¹⁰ In this section, I review various initiatives launched by national governments since 1994 as a way to capture the political importance attached to family issues, and as a way of illustrating the priorities and directions of state support for families in UNECE member states. More detailed information regarding financial support for families and support for working parents will be provided in the next sections.

Since 1994, most governments have launched initiatives related to families: these initiatives are varied and range from the set up of a parliamentary or ministerial commission to study families to the adoption of new policies. Table A2 in appendix lists such initiatives. Generally speaking, they fall into three main categories: (1) Adoption of a family policy or creation of administrative or political institutions for families; (2) Actions related to gender equality and work-family reconciliation; and (3) Actions related to children including children’s rights and early childhood education.

Family policy or new institutions for families

Since 1994, only two countries have adopted a new family policy, Slovakia and Spain, and a third one, Norway, has produced a white paper on family policy (in 2003). The scope of these policies is wide. In the case of Spain, the policy, adopted in 2003, covers tax and housing policies, family law, social and cultural participation, and policies relating to balancing work and family life.¹¹ It is a 3-year initiative that was in part motivated by the country’s very low

¹⁰ Historically, France was the only Western European countries with an explicit and comprehensive family policy (Gauthier 1996). In contrast, numerous Central and Eastern European countries had such a policy throughout the 1970s and 1980s. Since the fall of the socialist regime, however, the family policy in Central and Eastern European countries has been mainly dismantled. It should also be noted that some provincial and regional governments may have in place a family policy, such as the Province of Québec in Canada, but these policies are not covered in this paper.

¹¹ Information from The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth, and Family Policies.

fertility rate: itself perceived to be the result of the absence of a coherent family policy and the result of the country's low support for families, especially working mothers.

Slovakia's 'Strategy of State Family Policy', adopted in 1996, was also partly motivated by the country's demographic situation. However, as the Spanish one, it goes beyond the demographic dimension and covers other dimensions in this case human rights, parents' rights to decide on the number of children and spacing of their birth, children's education, and support for young people (Magvasi 1999).

If very few countries have adopted a comprehensive family policy during the past ten years, several countries have, on the other hand, created specific institutions for the family or the child. Examples of such initiatives include a National Council for Children (in Denmark), A Ministry of Child and the Family (in France), a Family Council (in Iceland), an Ombudsman for children (in Iceland), a Standing Committee on Family Affairs (in Italy), a High Commissioner for the Promotion of Equality and the Family (in Portugal), and a Ministerial Group on the Family (in the UK). And while the impact of these initiatives is bound to vary depending on their mandate, power, and budget, their set up reflects the fact that some level of attention has been paid to the family by national governments since 1994.

Actions related to gender equality and work-family reconciliation

Of all the family-related initiatives launched since 1994, the areas that appear to have received the highest level of priority are that of gender equality and work-family reconciliation. This may not be surprising considering the visibility given to these areas in international events such as the 1994 Cairo conference and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995. Initiatives in these areas were also prompted by the adoption of specific recommendations by the European Union (more details in Section V). The country-specific initiatives are again varied and include the adoption of a National Plan for Equality (in Portugal), the adoption of a National Plan for Employment – Reconciling of Family and Working Life (in Spain) and the adoption of a Special Ban on Discriminating Against Workers on Parental Leave (in Sweden). What these various initiatives reflect is the recognition that working parents require special support and that in absence of such support gender equality cannot be achieved. As will be seen in Section V, since 1994 numerous countries have improved their provision regarding maternity leave and have adopted new parental leave schemes.

Actions related to children including children's rights and early childhood education

Ever since the adoption of the 1989 Declaration on the Rights of the Child, the issue of children's rights has continued to receive the attention of governments and to lead to the adoption of specific policies and initiatives. The set up of the National Council for Children in Denmark in 1997 and the appointment of an Ombudsman for Children in Iceland in 1994 are good examples. During the past ten years, numerous initiatives related to early childhood education have also been launched. This includes the adoption of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement in Canada in 2000 and the adoption of a Government Resolution Concerning the National Policy definition on Early Childhood Education and Care in Finland in 2002. It is beyond the scope of this paper

to examine in detail specific initiatives related to early childhood education. Interested readers are referred to the OECD early childhood education and care initiative¹², the Early Child Development initiative of the World Bank¹³, as well as various UNICEF and UNESCO documents. What is however important to mention here is that the emphasis on children and early childhood education has dominated the agenda of some countries and has eclipsed other family issues. For example, the Canadian government has never adopted an explicit family policy and has no nation-wide policy on childcare. However, the adoption of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement in 2000 has rallied the different political parties and has laid the grounds for initiatives related to children's education and children's development.

IV. TRENDS IN FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO FAMILIES SINCE 1994

I have already referred in Section II to financial constraints that have forced some countries to curb their cash support for families and/or to impose means-tests. As of 2002, family allowance schemes were means-tested in 20 countries as compared to about half that number in 1993. As to the actual level of cash support, programs are difficult to compare because of cross-national differences in eligibility conditions, family allowance rates, and cost of living. Nonetheless, data on expenditures on family cash benefits as a percentage of GDP reveals large cross-national differences from a minimum of 0.22 percent in the United States to a maximum of 2.40 in Luxembourg (in 1988) (among the OECD countries).

Data on different indicators of family cash benefits are reported in Table 1. Data on family cash benefit expenditures as a percentage of GDP reveal a general decline between 1993 and 1998 (latest year available). Only in Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland, and Turkey were increases observed. However, the general downward trend in family cash benefits may well reflect a decline in the number of children. As discussed in Section II, analyses on family cash expenditures expressed per child in selected OECD countries for the period 1980-1995 had instead revealed an increase in expenditures (Gornick 2002). The alternative indicator reported in Table 1 expresses cash support for 2-child families as a percentage of the disposable income of single earners. According to this indicator, cash support for families has increased in about half the countries between 1990 and 1999.

[Table 1 about here]

When looking at these indicators, one should however not lose sight of the fact that for Central and Eastern European countries, the changes in cash support for families took place in the context of major economic challenges which have resulted in rising family poverty and which have also radically changed the funding of key services to families including health care and childcare facilities. A more accurate assessment of trends in cash support for families would therefore require one to also consider other forms of cash and in-kind support for families including social assistance (which is not formally part of family allowance

¹² OECD early childhood education website:
http://www.oecd.org/linklist/0.2678.en_2649_34511_2735951_1_1_1_1.00.html

¹³ World Bank: <http://www.worldbank.org/children/>

schemes in several countries). In the absence of such data, one can indirectly assess the trends in state support for families and in the economy by looking at trends in infant mortality rates. Between 1989 and 1993, infant mortality rates stagnated or even increased in nearly one dozen Central and Eastern European countries. And while the situation improved during the following years, infant mortality rates in several Central and Eastern European countries are still above the average observed in Western European countries.

The trends in financial support for families during the past ten years are therefore mixed. On the one hand, and despite competing demands especially from population aging, numerous countries have maintained or even increased their financial support for families. In some cases however, this trend has been accompanied by a targeting of support to families in greatest needs through means-tests. On the other hand, it is clear that the area of financial support for families has been badly affected in Central and Eastern Europe in the years immediately following the collapse of the socialist regimes. Since then, state support for families has been gradually restored but its expansion has been limited by financial constraints and other competing demands especially child and family poverty.

V. TRENDS IN STATE SUPPORT TO WORKING PARENTS SINCE 1994

In spite of the economic constraints discussed in Section II, state support for working parents has been expanded in several countries since 1994. Below, I briefly review the factors that have been driving the increase in state support for working parents. I also review the trends in the actual state support for working parents, and assess the extent to which the current provisions meet some of the international recommendations.

The driving forces

Two main factors appear to have driven the trend towards increased state support for working parents: (1) the continuous increase in female labor force participation including women with young children, and (2) the call for gender equality.

The increase in female labor force participation is obviously not a new phenomenon and was observed since the 1960s in most countries. It was in fact one of the key impetus behind the introduction of Sweden's first maternity leave program and eventually its parental leave program in 1974 (Gauthier 1996). In Central and Eastern Europe, female labor force participation has traditionally been higher than in the west. Under the socialist regime, women were encouraged to be part of the labor force in order to contribute to the economy (especially in the after-war period) and also as a way of bringing greater gender equality (which was a central tenet of the socialist regime). But women under the socialist regime were also crucial to the demographic reproduction of these countries and numerous programs were therefore put in place in the immediate post-war period as a way of allowing women to combine their dual role of mothers and workers (Klinger 1985).

In more recent time, female labor force participation in the west has continued its increase. This has been particularly noticeable in countries such as the Netherlands and Luxembourg where female labor force participation had been below the average of other Western countries until recently. This increase in the participation of women in the labor force has undoubtedly

contributed to the political importance attached to the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities (see below).

The second driving force has been the call for gender equality especially in the context of increasing female labor force participation. While in the 1970s the issue of gender equality was mainly focused on equality in employment opportunities and in pay, in the 1990s it was focused on the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities. The European Commission and the European Union have been very active in this field in the past years through the adoption of several key policies including:

- The 1992 Council Recommendation on childcare
- The 1996 Council Directive on the framework agreement on parental leave
- The 1998 Employment Guidelines, Council Resolution (which includes a section on “reconciling work and family life”)
- The 2000 ‘Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers for Employment and Social Policy on the balanced participation of women and men in family and working life’

And while not all these policies have binding powers, they nevertheless reflect the importance attached to the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities by the European Union. In fact, several of the parental leave programs adopted in recent years by EU member states were in direct response to these policies (these programs are discussed in more detail below).

State support for working parents

State support for working parents covers a wide range of programs. Below, I review the trends with regard to: maternity leave, parental leave, and childcare provision.¹⁴

Maternity leave

In 2000, the International Labor Office adopted the Maternity Protection Convention (C183) which stipulates that maternity leave of no less than 14 weeks should be provided, with cash benefits that provide a suitable standard of living. As of 2002, all countries but Azerbaijan, Israel, Turkey and the United States did comply with the ILO recommendation in terms of the duration of the leave. Azerbaijan provided 10 weeks of leave, Israel and Turkey provided 12 weeks of leave, and the United States provided 12 weeks of unpaid leave (only to employees in firms with 50 or more workers).

In 2000, the International Labor Office also adopted the Maternity Protection Recommendation (R191) which raised the bar beyond that of its sister’s Convention. In particular, the Recommendation stipulated a minimum duration of maternity leave of 18

¹⁴ There is no unanimity in the literature regarding the definition of these programs. Maternity leave normally refers to the leave granted to mothers immediately before and after childbirth. In some countries this leave is also called parental leave to reflect the fact that fathers are also eligible to it. The duration of this leave is usually of 3 to 4 months although it is longer in some countries. In contrast, parental or childcare leave usually refers to the additional leave granted until the child is 1, 2, or 3 years old. In some countries this leave is unpaid or is paid at a lower rate than maternity leave.

weeks with cash benefits equal to 100% of previous earnings. Several UNECE member states have provisions which exceed those contained in this ILO recommendation including Estonia, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. As such, these former socialist countries extend a long tradition of state support for working women introduced at the time of the Second World War (Hecht 1986).

In Table 2 below, provisions regarding maternity/parental leave are classified depending on the duration of the leave and the cash benefits received during this period. Note that unless indicated otherwise the table refers to the maternity/parental leave provision and does not include provision regarding additional childcare leave which will be discussed later. Note also that the table does not take into account the eligibility and coverage of programs. We know that in some countries a non-negligible proportion of women who are employed while being pregnant do not qualify for maternity leave benefits. Unfortunately information on the take-up rate and coverage is not available for all countries.

As can be seen in table 2, the majority of countries complied at least with the ILO Convention. This is in fact not surprising considering that the ILO had adopted its first Maternity Convention in 1919 and a revised one in 1952 – thus having for a long time been promoting the adoption of measures to support working mothers.¹⁵ What is however important to remember is that despite the economic constraints that have affected countries since the 1990s, most countries still meet minimum standards when it comes to maternity leave.

[Table 2 about here]

Parental/childcare leave

The ILO Maternity Protection Recommendation referred to above also recommends the adoption of parental leave to extend the period during which the mother or father can stay at home to look after their young child.¹⁶ As mentioned above, the European Union has also given its support to the adoption of parental leave through its 1996 Council Directive on the framework agreement on parental leave. In 1993, about one third of UNECE member states had already in place a parental or childcare leave program. By 2002, this was the case of half of them. Table 3 below classifies countries according to the nature of their parental leave, its duration, and cash benefits.

The introduction of parental leave schemes in a large number of countries did not take place in a vacuum. In particular, it may be explained by three factors. First, it is obvious that the recommendations and directives adopted by various international organizations and supra-national governments have laid the grounds for such programs. For example, the European Union Directive on parental leave had an undeniable impact on the introduction of parental leave in countries that did not have any such provisions. Second, and very importantly, the introduction of parental leave also responded to a demand from parents. For example, results

¹⁵ These earlier conventions were however more concerned with protecting the health of mothers and infants than promoting gender equality.

¹⁶ The article states that “The employed mother or the employed father of the child should be entitled to parental leave during a period following the expiry of maternity leave.” (ILO, R191).

from the Eurobarometer survey of 1993 indicated that 22 percent of respondents across the European Community identified parental leave as a high policy priority (Malpas and Lambert 1993). Furthermore, numerous studies on children's development have indicated the positive impact of parental presence at home during the first year of children's life (Ruhm 2002).¹⁷ Thirdly, the apparent popularity of parental leave programs among governments has also been a response to the increase in female labor force participation and has been seen as a way of reducing the demand for childcare. For example, the OECD report on early childhood education and care policy for the Czech Republic states that 'the political changes after 1989, particularly the introduction of an extended period of maternity leave, drastically reduced the demand for public child care outside the home' (OECD 2000). Similarly, Germany's extended parental leave has often been viewed as a response (or justification) for the very limited childcare provision (Gauthier 1996).

What should however not be forgotten is that extended parental leave often carries a heavy opportunity cost for parents in terms of foregone earnings but also in terms of degradation of human capital and missed opportunities for promotion. For these reasons, the take up rate for these programs is not 100 percent. For example data from Germany show that although more than 90 percent of parents who were employed prior to childbirth did take parental leave, only about two-thirds of mothers intended to use the full three years of parental leave (Pettinger 1999). Data also suggest that the take-up rate may vary with income and profession. For example, data from Finland reveal that 72 percent of blue-collar fathers took paternity leave in 1997 as opposed to 56 percent of fathers in a managerial position. On the other hand, 50 percent of fathers with low income took paternity leave as opposed to 70 percent for fathers in the higher income group (Samli and Lammi-Taskula 1999).

[Table 3 about here]

The gender dimension of state support for working parents

As mentioned earlier, the introduction and extension of state support for working parents were a response to the increase in female labor force participation and the continuous call for gender equality. When it comes to state support for working parents, gender equality is in fact a tricky issue. On the one hand, while maternity and extensive parental leave programs were initially introduced as a way of allowing women to combine work and family responsibilities, they have gradually shifted their emphasis away from working mothers and have instead been promoting gender equality regarding the division of both paid and unpaid work. This shift in emphasis is well illustrated by the change of the name of one of the ILO's initiatives. While in 1965, the ILO was adopting the Recommendation on Female Workers with Family Responsibilities, in 1981 it was instead adopting the Convention on Workers with Family Responsibilities – thus dropping the reference to female workers.

On the other hand, the reality is that parental and childcare leave programs have been mainly taken up by women and have thus contributed to the further enlargement of the gap between men and women in their division of paid and unpaid work. There is no systematic data on take-up rates by gender, but data from Sweden suggest that in the late 1990s only one third of fathers used parental leave, and that fathers accounted for only 10 percent of all days taken

¹⁷ These studies however also suggest that parental presence at home may be less important during the subsequent years. In fact, a large number of studies have shows the positive impact of mother's employment on children's development (Parcel and Menaghan 1994).

(Haas and Hwang 1999). The situation is even less equal, from a gender perspective, in Germany where the proportion of leave-takers among fathers is less than 2 percent (Rost 1999). The reasons given by fathers for not participating in parental leave are numerous but generally they fall into four main categories according to a study carried out in Germany: (1) profession-related reasons (e.g. 'I do not want to miss professional opportunities); (2) attitudinal reasons (e.g. 'I could not imagine staying at home'); (3) workplace-related reasons (e.g. 'I was worried about the reaction of managers and colleagues); and (4) financial reasons (e.g. 'the allowance would not have been enough to compensate for lost income') (Rost 1999: 255).

As a reaction to this situation, some countries have started to introduce an additional paternity leave and/or have earmarked part of the parental/childcare leave to fathers (as a non-transferable leave). Earmarking was the strategy adopted by the Norwegian government in 1993 when four of the 52 weeks of parental leave became reserved for the father. This is an individual entitlement that cannot be transferred to the mother (Leira 1999). This so called 'father's quota' has been a success: while about only 2 to 3 percent of Norwegian fathers shared parental leave with the mother in the past, close to 70 percent of fathers have claimed their father's quota after its introduction (Leira 1999). Other examples of such attempts at bringing more gender equality in the sharing of parental responsibilities appear in Table 4. In general, western European countries have been moving faster in this direction than other countries. Very likely, this is an issue that will be attracting more attention in the years to come.

[Table 4 about here]

Childcare and early childhood education program

Finally, another policy response to the increase in female labor force participation and the call for gender equality has been the provision of childcare and early education programs. Under the former socialist regime, countries of Central and Eastern Europe had in place an extensive system of public childcare and early childhood program. The fall of the regime drastically affected this provision. For example, the percentage of children aged 3-6 years old in pre-primary school programs declined in Armenia from 49 percent in 1989 to 25 percent in 2001. In Lithuania, the decline was from 54 percent in 1989 to 40 percent in 1993. Since then, however, the figure has increased and reached 66 percent in 2001 (see Table 5). The percentage of children enrolled in pre-primary school programs has in fact increased in several Central and Eastern European countries since 1993: a reflection of the improvement in the countries' financial situation and in some case a reflection of a shift to privately owned or Church-operated programs.

In other countries of the UNECE, the provision for childcare and early childhood education program has always largely varied, ranging from very minimal provisions to very extensive ones. Since the 1990s, these inter-country variations have been maintained. Several countries have increased their provisions for childcare and early childhood education, but the increases have been limited by severe budget constraints as well as political reservations concerning the role of the state in the provision of childcare.

[Table 5 about here]

VI. THE EFFECTS OF STATE SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

As discussed throughout this paper, state support for families encompasses a wide range of measures as well as different objectives. In this Section, I review the literature regarding the effects of policies on (1) child and family poverty; (2) work-family reconciliation and gender equality; and (3) fertility.

Effect on child and family poverty

Are the current cash transfer schemes effective in tackling child and family poverty? Empirical data shows that the current systems of cash transfers to families are indeed significantly reducing child poverty in some countries. For example, the pre-tax and pre-cash transfers child poverty rate in Poland in the 1990s was estimated to be around 44%. After tax and transfers, it was 15 percent (poverty being defined here as the percentage of children living in households with income below 50 per cent of the national median) (Unicef 2000). The comparable figures for Hungary are 38 percent and 10 percent respectively. A study on the impact of cash transfers on child poverty in the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland confirmed that social transfers in general, and family benefits in particular, did contribute to reducing significantly child poverty in these three countries (Forster and Toth 2001).

On the other hand, child poverty remains high in several countries even after cash transfers. Among the countries for which the data is available, child poverty was equal or above 20 percent in Italy, Turkey, the UK, and the USA (Unicef 2000). What this means is that although countries have been paying attention to Recommendation 5 of the European Population Conference regarding the provision of financial support for families particularly for those with limited resources, several countries still fall short of eradicating child poverty and of ensuring an adequate standard of living for all families with children.

Effect on work-family reconciliation and gender equality

Are the current maternity, parental, and childcare leave programs effective in helping families reconcile work and family responsibilities? And are they effective in promoting gender equality? As discussed in Section V, maternity, parental, and childcare programs tend to receive a large support in public opinion surveys. They are also effective in that they allow parents to withdraw from the labor market in order to care for their newborn and to resume work when children are older.¹⁸ Parents on leave face discontinuity in their careers but the opportunity cost of such discontinuities is partly compensated by job security and cash benefits. However, and as discussed in Section V, countries still vary enormously in their provisions of maternity, parental, and childcare leave programs, both in terms of their

¹⁸ There are cross-national differences in the degree of job protection given to parents on leave. In some countries, parents are allowed to resume exactly their same job, while in others they are guaranteed a similar job.

duration and cash benefits. In particular, some countries still do not meet some of the standards put in place by the International Labor Office.

If they are effective in allowing parents to combine work and family responsibilities, these programs do not however have the same impact on men and women. As discussed earlier, mothers are usually the ones taking leave. They are the ones facing career discontinuities and they are the ones who assume the role of primary care-takers. Several countries have started to tackle this issue by introducing fathers' quotas (non-transferable leaves). The empirical evidence suggests that such programs are so far effective --- obviously not in bringing a complete equality in the sharing of childcare responsibilities --- but in encouraging fathers to take at least some time off work to look after their children. In other words, countries have been moving closer to supporting parents in their combination of professional life and parental roles (Recommendation 4 of the European Population Conference) and to bringing equality between men and women including equal opportunities for employment and equality in family responsibilities (Recommendation 6 of the European Population Conference). But countries have been endorsing these recommendations to different extent.

In terms of the actual impact of policies on employment, two different issues have been addressed in the literature. First, there is a large body of literature on the impact of policies on employment, with a focus on the possible work disincentives of welfare programs. This literature is mainly based on American data and suggests that, overall, welfare programs do carry some work disincentives and that these work disincentives come from the imbalance between welfare benefits on the one hand, and low wages and high childcare costs on the other (see the review in Blank 1997). The literature however also suggests that the impact of these work disincentives is small. In Europe, a recent paper by Dingeldey (2001) examines the possible impact of tax systems on family employment patterns and especially in their impact on dual-earner families. The study found no clear evidence that tax systems are promoting single-earner families as opposed to dual-earner ones. However, the study also notes the fact that contradictory incentives or restrictions may be present in other concurrent policies and complicates the analysis of the effect of tax policies on employment.

The second body of literature examines the effect of policies on women's return to work after childbirth. Literature from the United States and Scandinavian countries does confirm the impact of childcare cost and childcare quality on mothers' labor force participation (see for example Blau and Robins 1988 and Hofferth and Collins 2000). Higher childcare provision and lower cost do have a positive impact on mothers' labor force participation (Gustafsson and Stafford 1992). Results are however not unanimous in the literature. For instance, a study by Kreyenfeld and Hank (2000) on German data found no evidence that the regional provision of public day care had an impact on female labor force participation.

As to the link between parental leave and female labor force participation, a recent study on the employment patterns of women after their first and second births in Finland, Norway and Sweden by Ronsen and Sundstrom (2002) showed that women who are entitled to a paid leave have a much higher overall employment entry rate during the first three years following birth than non-eligible women. However, the study also stresses that long absence from work may have large opportunity costs in addition to reinforcing gender inequality. The authors write: 'very long leave entitlements and child-minding benefit programs could have negative consequences for women's career and earnings potentials and may preserve an unequal division of labor in the family' (Ronsen and Sundstrom 2002: 121).

Effect on fertility

As pointed out in this paper, although low fertility may have motivated the introduction of family policies or specific measures, explicit pronatalist aims are nowadays absent from most national policies.¹⁹ Nonetheless, the assumption that is often made by governments and some scholars is that part of the reasons why fertility is so low is that parents do not receive sufficient state support especially in their combination of work and family responsibilities. Is there however empirical evidence to suggest that state support for families can have an impact on fertility? First of all, it should be stressed that the link between policies and fertility is a complex one involving the visibility and aims of policies, female employment, economic context, and social norms regarding gender equality (Brewster and Rindfuss 2000; Demeny 2003). For these reasons, the quantification of the effect of policies on fertility has been plagued by methodological problems. Bearing this in mind, the papers by Gauthier (2001) and Sleebos (2003) provide extensive reviews of the empirical literature on the effect of policies on fertility. The conclusions are two-fold:

- (1) There appears to be indeed a positive –albeit very small- impact of cash benefits on fertility when the analysis is carried out at the aggregate level. For instance, Gauthier and Hatzius (1997) on twenty-two industrialized countries suggest that a 25 percent increase in family allowances would result in an increase of 0.07 children per woman. Similarly, the analysis by Whittington, Alm, Peters (1990) on aggregate fertility data for the United States suggest that tax benefits have a positive impact on fertility. On the other hand, mixed results are found when the analysis is carried out at the micro-level. The analysis by Cigno & Ermisch (1989) on the 1980 UK Women and Employment Survey confirmed that higher child benefits raise completed fertility. However, analyses based on American data and focusing on means-tested and other targeted benefits are inconclusive. For example, An, Haveman, Wolfe (1993) found that teenage girls whose mothers received welfare are more likely to give birth out of wedlock. However, the analysis by Acs (1996) suggest that welfare benefits have no statistically significant impact on subsequent childbearing decisions.

The literature also suggests that policies that support working parents can have an effect on fertility – although contrary evidence is also reported in the literature. The analysis by Hyatt & Milne (1991) on Canadian data suggests that a 1% increase in maternity benefits would result in a 0.26% increase in fertility. The analysis by Kravdal (1996) on Norwegian data suggests that a 20-percentage point increase in childcare enrolment rate would result in an increase in cohort fertility of .05 children per woman. And the recent analysis by Castles (2003) suggests a positive relationship between the provision of childcare and aggregated level of fertility in twenty OECD countries. On the other hand, some studies have found no evidence that work-related policies have an impact on fertility. For example, the analysis by Hank and Kreyenfeld (2001) on German data revealed no statistically significant impact of childcare availability on fertility. Similarly, the analysis by Andersson, Duvander and Hank (2003) on Swedish data reveals no

¹⁹ According to the UN 2001 National Population Policies data, 28 UNECD member states perceived their fertility level as too low and 20 claimed that they had implemented policies to raise fertility. However, the UN survey does not include information on the actual measures in place to raise fertility. On the basis of the evidence reviewed in this paper, it appears that pronatalism is not an explicit objective of most governments.

evidence that the provision of childcare has an effect on the probability of a second or third birth.

- (2) In analyzing the impact of policies on fertility, there is a need to distinguish between the short-term impact of benefits (on the timing of births) and the long-term impact (on cohort fertility). For example, the analysis of Ermisch (1988) on British data suggests that an increase in family allowances increases the chance of third and fourth births but that it also encourages early motherhood. Evidence of the impact of policies on the timing of fertility was also reported by Hoem, Prskawetz and Neyer (2001) in their analysis of the impact of policies on third births in Austria, and by Hoem (1993) on Swedish fertility.

I have already referred to methodological issues to which have been confronted studies on the impact of policies on fertility. These methodological issues include the difficulty of disentangling the impact of policies from other determinants of fertility, as well as the possible contradictory effects of different types of policies. There are two further issues that should be stressed. First, the empirical literature has also been limited in that it has often ignored issues of eligibility and receipt of benefits, especially employer-provided benefits. Data from the OECD suggests that in some countries a non-negligible proportion of employers offer extra-statutory arrangements regarding sick child leave, maternity leave, and parental leave as well as offering flexi-time and childcare (OECD 2001). The impact of these benefits on fertility has not been analyzed in the literature. And second, one may speculate that it is not only specific measures that may influence fertility but that it is instead the whole package of measures. As pointed out above, there is no encompassing measure of state support for families that is cross-nationally comparable. Consequently, although empirical studies have been able to test the impact of specific policies on fertility, they have not been able to assess the impact of whole packages of state support for families.

VII. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE TRENDS

I started this paper by referring to some key recommendations adopted by the UNECE including the promotion of a child-friendly and family-friendly environment, the support of parents in their combination of professional life and parental roles, the financial support of families particularly for those with limited resources, and the equality between men and women including equal opportunities for employment and equality in family responsibilities. Have countries implemented these recommendations? I offer three conclusions:

First, there is no way of measuring the degree of child- and family-friendliness in countries. However, it is clear that the majority of countries have been devoting resources to improving the well-being of families and children. In some countries, this has been done through the adoption of a comprehensive family policy, while in others it has been through the adoption of specific programs. The nature and the extent of these programs are an indication of the countries' level of support for families but also of the countries' priorities (themselves being partly dictated by the families' needs). Thus, while issues of child poverty have dominated the agenda of governments in Central and Eastern Europe, issues of gender equality and early

childhood education have dominated the agenda of other UNECE member states. From a researcher's perspective, the monitoring of these developments is however very difficult as there is no systematic reporting of policies and initiatives related to families. If the UNECE is serious about its recommendation concerning the promotion of a more child-friendly and family-friendly environment (Recommendation 3 of the 1993 European Population Conference), it should put in place the instruments to monitor and assess the developments in this field. This includes policies and programs related to cash support for families and support for working parents, but also a wider range of measures that may also influence partnership, childbearing and parenting including grant and subsidies for higher education, support for youth's employment, etc.

Second, with regard to the financial support of families particularly for those with limited resources (Recommendation 5 of the 1993 European Population Conference), data does not allow one to fully assess the extent to which programs are successful in lifting families out of poverty. What we have however seen in this paper is that financial support for families was badly hit following the collapse of the socialist regime in Central and Eastern Europe but that the situation has since gradually improved. What we have also seen is that several countries have moved away from universal cash benefit programs and have opted for more targeted programs. Again, it is difficult to assess the success of these programs. There is in fact a large controversy in the literature regarding the pros and cons of universal vs. targeted programs (see for example Battle and Torjman 2001).

Third, with regard to the support of parents in their combination of professional life and parental roles (Recommendation 4 of the 1993 European Population Conference) and promotion of equality between men and women including equal opportunities for employment and equality in family responsibilities (Recommendation 6 of the 1993 European Population Conference), most countries have been devoting effort in this field. The current provisions in most countries in fact exceed the minimum standards included in the ILO Maternity Protection Convention (2000). However, two points emerged from the analysis. First, it is clear that the provisions vary enormously across countries both in terms of duration of maternity, parental, and childcare leave and in terms of cash benefits. While in some countries parents may take up to 3 years of leave with some financial compensation, in other countries paid leave are restricted to the period immediately before and after childbirth. Second, it is also clear that countries have not endorsed the issue of gender equality to the same extent. While some countries have started to explore ways of encouraging more fathers to take leave and to care for their newborn, other countries have continued to promote a traditional gender division of labor. Again, this is something that should be monitored more closely but for which data is limited, especially when it comes to the take-up rate of parental leave.

Finally, where are countries heading? The evidence reviewed in this paper suggests that issues of child and family poverty, the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, and gender equality are issues that are not going to disappear from the political agenda as they are issues for which governments are highly committed to. However, during the past ten years countries have been restricted economically in the pursuit of these objectives and this is a situation that is unlikely to disappear either. In particular, there is always the threat that competing demands may eclipse state support for families on the agendas of national governments. Maintaining the visibility of family issues at the international level should therefore be a priority in order to maintain them on the political agendas of national

governments. International institutions should also develop better tools to measure and monitor state support for families and support provided by employers. Only with these tools can we start understanding the choices, opportunities and constraints offered to parents and to-be parents.

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Table 1. Indicators of cash benefits, selected countries and years

	Family cash benefits expenditures as a % of GDP 1993	Family cash benefits expenditures as a % of GDP 1998	Cash support for families as a % of disposable income 1990	Cash support for families as a % of disposable income 1999
Austria	2.48	1.92	23.6	26.5
Belgium	2.17	2.06	39.1	36.5
Canada	0.82	0.76	15.0	14.4
Czech Republic	2.13	1.61	n/a	n/a
Denmark	1.80	1.54	26.3	24.3
Finland	2.91	1.92	20.8	14.7
France	2.19	1.46	19.2	17.6
Germany	1.23	1.93	21.2	36.5
Greece	1.27	1.18	18.8	19.9
Iceland	1.50	1.23	n/a	n/a
Ireland	1.72	1.58	17.1	18.3
Italy	0.46	0.58	14.5	19.3
Luxembourg	2.25	2.40	34.1	36.5
Netherlands	1.10	0.81	16.5	18.3
Norway	2.35	2.23	25.7	17.7
Poland	1.59	0.93	n/a	n/a
Portugal	0.67	0.65	12.0	11.2
Slovakia	2.50	2.10	n/a	n/a
Spain	0.25	0.29	6.5	11.3
Sweden	2.26	1.63	15.0	12.4
Switzerland	1.16	1.20	14.1	17.1
Turkey	0.47	0.91	n/a	n.a
United Kingdom	1.88	1.73	12.7	10.8
United States	0.30	0.22	9.7	14.5

Note: Information on family allowance programs is reported in Table A3 in appendix.

Sources: Data on cash expenditures from the online OECD database

(<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/43/14/2087083.xls>). Data on cash support for families:

Author's own computation from published OECD data (for details see Gauthier's family policy database: http://www.soci.ucalgary.ca/fypp/family_policy_databases.htm).

Table 2. Classification of countries according to the duration of the maternity/parental leave and cash benefits paid during the leave

	Cash benefits equal to 80% of earnings or more	Cash benefits equal to 50-79% of earnings or more	Cash benefits equal to less than 50% of earnings
Duration of leave 18 weeks or more	Armenia Belarus Bulgaria Croatia* Estonia * Iceland Italy Kyrgyzstan * Liechtenstein Norway Moldova* Portugal* Romania Russian Federation* San Marino* Slovakia Sweden Ukraine* Uzbekistan*	Albania Canada Czech Republic Denmark Finland Hungary Ireland United Kingdom	Lithuania
Duration of leave between 14 and 17 weeks	Andorra Austria* France* Georgia* Germany* Latvia* Luxembourg* Monaco Netherlands* Poland* Slovenia* Spain* Turkmenistan*	Belgium Cyprus Greece Malta Switzerland	
Duration of leave below 14 weeks	Azerbaijan Israel*	Turkey	United States

Notes: ‘*’: denotes cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication ‘Social Security Programs throughout the World’. See Table A.4 in appendix for more details on the programs.

Table 3. Childcare/parental leave provision regarding the first child¹

<p><u>Paid leave of more than 2 years</u></p> <p>Austria Azerbaijan Czech Republic Estonia Finland France Germany Hungary Slovakia</p>	<p><u>Unpaid leave</u></p> <p>Belgium Georgia Greece Ireland Israel Netherlands Portugal Spain UK</p>
<p><u>Paid leave of 1 to 2 years</u></p> <p>Albania* Armenia Bulgaria Croatia Denmark Kyrgyzstan Lithuania Norway Poland Romania Russian Federation Serbia Sweden* Ukraine Uzbekistan</p>	<p><u>No provision for leave</u></p> <p>Andorra Belarus Cyprus Kazakhstan Latvia Liechtenstein Malta Moldova Monaco Switzerland Turkey United States</p>
<p><u>Paid leave below 1 year</u></p> <p>Canada Italy Luxembourg San Marino Slovenia</p>	

*: This provision corresponds to the maternity/parental leave one.

Note: 1- In some countries, more extensive provision is available for higher-order births.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication ‘Social Security Programs throughout the World’ as well as country-specific information from various sources. See Table A5 in appendix for more information on these programs.

Table 4: The gender dimension in parental/childcare leave programs in selected countries as of 2002¹

	Paid leave	Unpaid leave
Father's quota or individual entitlement	Belgium Denmark Luxembourg Norway Sweden	Greece Ireland Netherlands Portugal Spain UK
Both parents are eligible	Austria ² Finland ³ France Germany Italy ⁴	n/a
Only the mother is eligible	n/a	n/a

Notes:

- 1- Note that this information is not available for all countries.
- 2- Austria: If the father shares some of the leave, the duration of the leave is extended from 18 months to 24 months.
- 3- Finland: As of 2003, fathers are allowed to an additional two weeks of paternity leave, if they also use the last two weeks of the parental allowance period.
- 4- Italy: If the father takes at least 3 months of leave, the duration of the leave is extended from 10 months to 11 months.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication 'Social Security Programs throughout the World', in Moss and Deven (1999), as well as country-specific information from various sources.

Table 5: Provision of early childhood education expressed as the gross enrollment rate¹ and characteristics of the public early childhood education

Country	1989	1993	2001
Albania	42.5	27.8	43.0
Andorra	n/a	n/a	n/a
Armenia	48.5	29.1	24.6
Austria	70.3	74.7	83.0
Azerbaijan	21.6	16.2	24.0
Belarus	63.2	61.5	68.9
Belgium²	104.2	116.2	113.0
Bosnia-Herzegovina	n/a	n/a	8.7
Bulgaria	66.7	59.7	73.6
Canada	61.3	61.9	64.0
Croatia	29.4	26.1	42.4
Cyprus	57.0 ^a	63.0	60.0
Czech Republic³	81.3	76.7	86.6
Denmark⁴	96.5	84.0	90.0
Estonia	62.2	59.9	80.3
Finland⁵	33.4	36.7	54.0
France	83.4	83.9	114.0
Georgia	43.6	19.0	30.2
Germany	n/a	88.8	103.0
Greece	56.4	60.2	72.0
Hungary	85.7	86.2	86.4
Iceland	49.0 ^a	48.0	109.0
Ireland	100.6	105.4	n/a
Israel	83.0 ^a	81.0	113.0
Italy⁶	92.4	95.7	96.0
Kazakhstan	53.1	31.6	13.9
Kyrgyzstan	31.3	8.8	9.0
Latvia	53.9	40.1	65.6
Liechtenstein	n/a	n/a	n/a
Lithuania	61.0	33.3	52.6
Luxembourg	90.1	98.7	119.0
Malta	105.0 ^a	115.0	100.0
Monaco	n/a	n/a	n/a
Netherlands⁷	98.3	97.4	97.0
Norway⁸	83.1	93.7	79.0
Poland	48.7	44.3	50.4
Portugal⁹	36.1	57.5	70.0
Republic of Moldova	61.2	37.0	40.8
Romania	61.6	57.4	67.7
Russian Federation	73.4	62.8	66.4
San Marino	n/a	n/a	n/a
Serbia and Montenegro	24.1	24.6	44.0

Country	1989	1993	2001
Slovakia	77.9	61.2	69.5
Slovenia	56.3	62.8	68.3
Spain	57.1	69.9	102.0
Sweden ¹⁰	64.4	65.5	75.0
Switzerland	59.6	92.5	n/a
Tajikistan	16.0	9.4	5.9
FYR Macedonia	24.2	23.5	28.5
Turkey	5.0 ^a	6.0	6.0
Turkmenistan	33.5	28.3	21.4
Ukraine	64.2	54.5	43.9
United Kingdom ¹¹	51.4	27.8	81.0
United States ¹²	58.7	67.0	61.0
Uzbekistan	36.8	26.1	19.4

a: Data is for 1990; n/a: data is not available.

Note:

1. Defined as the number of pupils enrolled in the given level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the population in the relevant official age-group (see information below on the characteristics of the programs). This rate can exceed 100% in some countries. This also means that the data is not fully comparable across countries because the intake corresponds to children of different ages. The emphasis here is on the historical trends, and not so much on the cross-national differences in the provision of early childhood education.

Information on the characteristics of the early childhood education programs is not available in all countries. The information reported below is drawn from UN (2001).

2. **Belgium:** Free for children 2^{1/2}-5 years old (85% coverage at age 2^{1/2} and almost 100% at ages 3-4).
3. **Czech Republic:** Free for children 3-6 years old (66.5% of children enter public fee-paying, full-day pre-school at 3 years reaching 98% at 5-6 years old).
4. **Denmark:** For children 5-7 years old (98% of children of 5-7 years old are enrolled in free pre-school class. At the age of 4, 89% of children are enrolled in kindergartens or age-integrated centers).
5. **Finland:** Free for children 6 years old (78% of children of this age attend pre-school class. Among 3-6 years old around 68% are enrolled in childcare centers, and among those aged 1-3 about 24% are in early children education centers).
6. **Italy:** For children 3-6 years old (70-90% of children attend pre-school from the age of 3, reaching over 96% at age 5-6).
7. **Netherlands :** For children 4-6 years old
8. **Norway:** For children 3-6 years old (48% of children aged 1-4 years old are enrolled in some childcare center, and 80% of 4-6 years old are enrolled in kindergartens).
9. **Portugal:** For children 3-6 years old (60% enrolment in pre-school for children 3-4; 75% for children 4-5; and 90% for children 5-6 years old).
10. **Sweden:** For children 6-7 years old (91% of children of that age attend pre-school; 64% of children aged 1-6 attend a full-day pre-school).
11. **United Kingdom (England):** For children 3-5 years old (59% of children 3-4 are enrolled in early education centers)

12. **United States:** For children 4-6 years old (more than 60% of 4-year olds are enrolled in nursery schools, and 90% of 5-year olds are enrolled in kindergartens).

Sources: Data is from UNESCO's website, the UNESCO 1997 Statistical Yearbook, and UN (2001).

APPENDIX

Table A1. Sources of data on state-support for families and policies related to partnership, childbearing, and parenting

Sector	Specific type of policies and benefits	Sources of data
Education	Expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNESCO statistics ▪ OECD education database
	Grants and subsidies for higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No cross-national database
Housing	Benefits and provision of low-income housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No cross-national database
Cash support for families with children	Tax relief for children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OECD series on taxes and benefits
	Family allowances schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USA Social Security Programs throughout the World ▪ MISSOC ▪ Council of Europe
	Means-tested benefits for families with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USA Social Security Programs throughout the world ▪ MISSOC ▪ Council of Europe
	Expenditures on family cash benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OECD ▪ ILO Cost of Social Security (discontinued in 1999)
Health	Expenditures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OECD Health data
Support for working parents	Maternity leave and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USA Social Security Programs throughout the world ▪
	Parental leave and benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USA Social Security Programs throughout the world (incomplete information)
	Employers-provided benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No cross-national database
Childcare and early childhood education	Expenditure on pre-primary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ UNESCO ▪ OECD education database
	Provision of childcare and early childhood education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OECD (2001). Starting Strong.
General cash support	Policies related to guaranteed sufficient resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ MISSOC
Employment/unemployment	Unemployment benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ USA Social Security Programs throughout the world ▪ MISSOC
	Programs for long-term unemployed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ OECD

Sector	Specific type of policies and benefits	Sources of data
Family-related initiatives		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No cross-national database

Acronyms and related sources:

- MISSOC: Mutual Information System on Social Protection (European Union). Report on Social Protection in the Member States in the EU Member States and the European Economic Area. 2001 report online: http://europa.eu.int/comm/employment_social/missoc2001/index_en.htm
- UNESCO statistics: http://portal.unesco.org/uis/ev.php?URL_ID=5275&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201
- OECD education database http://www.oecd.org/statisticsdata/0,2643,en_2649_37455_1_119656_1_1_37455,00.html
- USA Social Security Programs throughout the World. 1999 online: <http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/progdesc/ssptw/1999/index.html>
- ILO Cost of Social Security (project terminated in 1999): <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/socfas/research/css/cssindex.htm>
- OECD Health data: http://www.oecd.org/document/44/0,2340,en_2649_34631_2085228_1_1_1_1,00.html
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Other useful cross-national resources:

- The Clearinghouse on International Developments in Child, Youth and Family Policies at Columbia University. Online: <http://www.childpolicyintl.org>
- Mannheim database of family policies: http://www.mzes.uni-mannheim.de/projekte/fpdb/family_policy_database.htm
- Luxembourg Income Study Family policy database: <http://www.lisproject.org/publications/fampol/fampolaccess.htm>
- Luxembourg Income Study Institutional Database (for taxes and transfers): <http://www.lisproject.org/publications/insitutiondata/institaccess.htm>

Table A.2: Selected family-related initiatives since 1994

Country	Year	Description of the initiative
Albania	1998	Baby Friendly Hospital Initiative
	1999	Promotion of Breast Feeding initiative
	2001	Safe Motherhood initiative
	2001	Committee on Equal Opportunity (CEO)
Andorra		n/a
Armenia	1998	State Committee for Women's Issues
	2000	Green Path Campaign
Austria		n/a
Azerbaijan		n/a
Belarus	1996	National Action Plan for the Improvement of Women's Status for 1996-2000
	1996	National Program "Women of the Republic of Belarus"
	1999	Adoption of the New Family and Marriage Code of the Republic of Belarus
Belgium		n/a
Bosnia-Herzegovina	2001	Gender Equality Committee was established within the House of Representatives of the BiH Parliamentary Assembly
Bulgaria	1996	National Action Plan for Women was created
	2003	Amendments to the Bulgarian Act on Social Assistance
Canada	1999	Adoption of the National Children's Agenda
	2000	Adoption of the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement
Croatia	1996	Introduction of Maternity Benefits
	1997	Application of the Social Welfare Act
	1997	Adoption of the National Youth Policy in 1997
	1998	Promotion of Breastfeeding
	1998	Happy Baby Kits initiative
	2000	Children's Allowance Act
Cyprus		n/a
Czech Republic	1995	Maternity Grant
	1996	Modification of the Child Benefit
	1997	Two New Acts concerning Heating Allowance and Rent Allowance
	1998	Amended Family Act
	1999	Establishment of the National Committee for the Family, Children and Youth
Denmark	1993	Adoption of the Action program to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family life proposed by the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Children
	1997	Set up of the National Council for Children
Estonia	1994	Two projects relating to the framework of national social programs were prepared
	1999	The General Concept of Child and Family Policy was completed
	2002	Pre-School Child Care Institutions Act was implemented

Country	Year	Description of the initiative
Finland	1998	Set-up of a Committee on Fatherhood
	2002	Adoption of a Government Resolution Concerning the National Policy definition on Early Childhood Education and Care
France	2000	Set up of the Ministry of Child and the Family
Georgia	1998	"Plan of Action for Improving Women's Conditions in Georgia for the period 1998-2000" was approved by the President
	1999	Parliamentary Sub-committee on Mother and Child Affairs was instituted
	2000	"Principles of Social Development of Georgia" was approved by parliament
Germany		n/a
Greece		n/a
Hungary	1999	Establishment of the Women's Representative Council
Iceland	1994	Appointment of an Ombudsman for Children
	1998	Set up of a Family Council
	2000	Adoption of the Act on Childbirth Vacations and Parental Vacations'
Ireland	1995	Set up of the Commission on the Family
	1999	Adoption of the National Childcare Strategy
	2001	Set up of Family Support Agency
Israel	1994	National Health Insurance Law
Italy	1992	Adoption of first Plan of action for children and adolescents
	1995	Set up of the Standing Committee on Family Affairs
Kazakhstan	1996	Council on Family, Women, and Population Policy was established
	1997	Government adopted conception of the policy on advancing women's status
	1998	The National Commission on Family and Women Affairs
Kyrgyzstan	1996	The State Commission for Family, Youth and Women's Affairs
	1998	The National Council on gender policy
Latvia		n/a
Liechtenstein	1994	Report on Families of 1994
	1996	Report on Children and Young People 1996
	1997	Report on Equality 1997
	1998	Portfolio of measures for promoting the equality of women and men was approved by the government
	1998	"Bureau of Equality" was created
	2001	Family day in Liechtenstein
Lithuania	1994	Law on the State Benefits for Families Bringing up Children
	1996	Programme on Family Policy
	1996	Law on reimbursement to the Individuals Deriving Low Income for Expenditure on Heating of a Dwelling Area (Individual House), Expenditure on Cold and Hot Water
	1999	Adoption of "Concerning Assistance to Adult Orphans and Persons Deprived of Parental Care" Resolution
	1999	Adoption of the National Action Plan for Employment (which includes a section on reconciling work and family life)

Country	Year	Description of the initiative
FYR Macedonia		n/a
Malta	1994	Family Study and Research Commission was created
Monaco		n/a
Netherlands	1999 2001	Adoption of a report on 'Strategies for work-family balance' Work and Care Act
Norway	1995 2003	Day Care Institutions Act Parliamentary White Paper on Family Policy
Poland	1998	Report on the situation of Polish families
Portugal	1995 1999 2003	Appointment of a High Commissioner for the Promotion of Equality and the Family Adoption of a document on 'Renovating Policies for the Conciliation of Work and Family Life and for Equality of Opportunities between Men and Women' Adoption of the National Plan for (Gender) Equality
Republic of Moldova	1999 1999 2000 2001	Committee on Women and Family Issues was established The National Strategy Regarding Social Protection of Family and Child Report: Situation Assessment and Analysis of the Family and Child in the Republic of Moldova Department for Family Policy and Equal Opportunities was established as a subdivision of the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection
Romania	1995 2000	Directorate on Equal Opportunities between Women and Men, within the Ministry of Labor and Social Solidarity Directorate for Family Policies within the Ministry of Health and Family
Russian Federation	2000	Adoption of the document 'Major directions of the State social policy for 2000 on improving the state of children in the Russian Federation'
San Marino		n/a
Serbia and Montenegro		n/a
Slovakia	1994 1996 1997 1999 1999 2000 2000	Collection of Laws on child allowances and child allowance additions Adoption of the 'Strategy of State Family Policy' Analysis of causes of natality decline and a proposal of draft measures for stabilizing and promoting the population development in Slovakia was prepared Birth grant A new state social support benefit was introduced Collection of Laws on housing allowance fell effective Report on the State of the Family in the Slovak Republic
Slovenia	1998 1998	Law on Parenthood and Family Benefits New Parenthood and Family Allowances Act
Spain	1995 1998	Set up of a Parliamentary Commission on the Family Adoption of National Action Plan for Employment - Reconciling of Family and Working life

Country	Year	Description of the initiative
	1999	Adoption of Laws for the Reconciling of Family and Working life (includes maternity leave, parental leave and specific aspects of legal protection of pregnant workers)
	2003	Introduction of a National Family Policy
Sweden	1999	Publication of a document on 'Policy for gender equality in the 21st century'
	2002	Adoption of Special Ban on Discriminating Against Workers on Parental Leave
Switzerland		n/a
Tajikistan	1999	The Decree of the President "On Enhancing the Status of Women in the Society"
	1998	Government's Decision "On Raising the Status and Role of Women"
Turkey	1996	Seventh Five- Year Development Plan
Turkmenistan		n/a
Ukraine	1999	Approval of the Declaration on the General Principles of State policy of Ukraine on Family and Women and the Conception of State Family Policy
United Kingdom	1997	Set up of Ministerial Group on the Family
	1999	Adoption of a National Childcare Strategy
	2002	Adoption of the 'The Adoption and Children Act'
United States		n/a
Uzbekistan	1995	Social Protection of Family, Motherhood and Childhood was established

n/a: Information is not available.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in various country-specific documents.

Table A.3: Overview of family allowances as of 1993 and 2002^{1,2}

	1993	2002
Albania	Employment-related flat-rate benefits for non-agricultural employees and social insurance beneficiaries with 1 or more children	Two programs: Family allowances as social insurance program for disabled or unemployed parents with children: flat-rate benefits; Family allowance as social assistance for employed and disabled parents with children: flat-rate benefits
Andorra	1993 = n/a 1997 = No separate family allowances scheme, but assistance is made available by the government for identified cases of need.	Same as 1997
Armenia	1993 = n/a 1997 = Universal flat-rate benefits plus means-tested supplement	Same as 1997
Austria	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Azerbaijan	n/a	Means-tested benefits
Belarus	Means-tested benefits	Same as 1993
Belgium	Employment-related scheme with flat-rate benefits plus means-tested supplement	Same as 1993
Bosnia-Herzegovina	n/a	N/a
Bulgaria	Employment-related benefits with flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Canada	No monthly allowance, means-tested tax credit for children	Same as 1993
Croatia	1993 = n/a 1997 = Means-tested benefits	Same as 1997
Cyprus	Universal benefits for families with four or more children	Same as 1993
Czech Republic³	Employment-related system with flat-rate benefits (not means-tested)	Means-tested benefits
Denmark	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Estonia	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Finland	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
France⁴	Universal benefits for	Same as 1993

	1993	2002
	families with 2+ children plus means-tested supplements	
Georgia	n/a	n/a
Germany	Universal benefits with higher rates for low-income families	Universal flat-rate benefits
Greece	Employment-related scheme with means-tested benefits	Employment-related scheme with flat- rate benefits (not means-tested)
Hungary	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Iceland	Universal tax credit for children	Same as 1993
Ireland	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Israel	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Italy	Employment-related scheme with means-tested benefits	Means-tested benefits
Kazakhstan⁵	n/a	Means-tested benefits
Kyrgyzstan⁶	Universal scheme with flat- rate benefits	Means-tested benefits
Latvia	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Liechtenstein	1993= n/a 1997 = Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1997
Lithuania⁷	Social insurance and social security system with flat- rate benefits (not means- tested)	Means-tested benefits
Luxembourg	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
FYR Macedonia	n/a	n/a
Malta⁸	Universal scheme with flat- rate benefits (not means- tested)	Means-tested benefits
Monaco	1993= n/a 1997 = For employed persons (lower rates for less than full-time employed)	Same as 1997
Netherlands	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Norway	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Poland	Employment-related with flat-rate benefits	Universal flat-rate benefits
Portugal	Employment-related scheme with means-tested benefits	Same as 1993
Republic of Moldova	Means-tested benefits	Same as 1993

	1993	2002
Romania	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Russian Federation⁹	Universal scheme with flat-rate benefits (not means-tested)	Means-tested benefits
San Marino	n/a	n/a
Serbia and Montenegro	1993 = n/a 1997 = Employment-related scheme with means-tested benefits	Same as 1997
Slovakia¹⁰	Employment-related scheme with flat-rate benefits (not means-tested)	Means-tested benefits
Slovenia	Means-tested benefits	Same as 1993
Spain¹¹	Employment-related scheme with flat-rate benefits (not means-tested)	Employment-related scheme with means-tested benefits
Sweden	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
Switzerland	For employed persons: universal benefits	Same as 1993
Tajikistan	n/a	n/a
Turkey	n/a	n/a
Turkmenistan¹²	n/a	Universal flat-rate benefits
Ukraine¹³	Universal scheme with flat-rate benefits for families with 3+ children	Means-tested benefits
United Kingdom	Universal flat-rate benefits	Same as 1993
United States	Tax relief for children	Same as 1993
Uzbekistan	n/a	n/a

n/a: Indicates that no program was in force or that the information was simply not available.

Notes:

- 1- Universal schemes refer to schemes by which all residents are available. Employment-related schemes refer to schemes that may be reserved for employed people. Note however that numerous so-called employment-related schemes nowadays include special provisions for unemployed people.
- 2- Note that special provisions for single-parent and disabled children may exist but are not reported here.
- 3- Czech Republic: the means-test was introduced in 1995.
- 4- France: the publication 'Social Security Programs throughout the World' reports means-tested benefits for 2002. But this information is contrary to what is reported in other publications.
- 5- Kazakhstan: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 2001.
- 6- Kyrgyzstan: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1999.
- 7- Lithuania: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 2000.
- 8- Malta: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1996.
- 9- Russian Federation: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1995.
- 10- Slovakia: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1994.

- 11-** Spain: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1994.
- 12-** Turkmenistan: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1998.
- 13-** Ukraine: The current allowance scheme was introduced in 1994.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication 'Social Security Programs throughout the World', as well as country-specific information from various sources.

Table A.4: Overview of maternity/parental leave policies as of 1993 and 2002

	1993	2002
Albania	365 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of average daily wage for the first 180 days and 50% thereafter	Same as 1993
Andorra	1993 = n/a 1997 = 16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of earnings (90% of 1/180 of earnings for the past 6 months.	Same as 1997
Armenia	1993 = n/a 1995 = 140 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1995
Austria	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
Azerbaijan	N/a	70 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of gross average monthly earnings
Belarus	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of average monthly earnings	Same as 1993
Belgium	15 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% for the first week and 75% thereafter.	Same as 1993
Bosnia-Herzegovina	n/a	N/a
Bulgaria	4 to 6 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	135 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of earnings
Canada	25 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 59% of earnings	30 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 55% of previous average insured earnings (1999 data)
Croatia	1993 = n/a 1997 = 6 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of salary	Same as 1997
Cyprus	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 75% of average insurable earnings	Same as 1993
Czech Republic	28 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 67% of earnings	28 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 69% of the daily assessment base
Denmark	28 weeks of leave with flat-rate cash benefits equal to 2555 kr/week	52 weeks of leave with flat-rate cash benefits of up to 3,016 kr/week
Estonia	126 days of leave with cash	Same as 1993

	1993	2002
	benefits equal to 100% of the insured average income.	
Finland	105 workdays of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of earnings on annual taxable income (with additional 158 weekdays of parental leave)	105 workdays of leave with cash benefits starting at 70% of daily earnings (with additional 158 weekdays of parental leave)
France	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 84% of basic daily wage	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of net earnings
Georgia	1993 = n/a 1995 = 126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of wages	4 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of wage
Germany	14 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of net earnings	Same as 1993
Greece	105 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 50% of earnings + additional 10% for each dependent	119 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 50% of earnings + additional 10% for each dependent
Hungary	24 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of daily average net earnings.	24 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 70% of daily average net earnings
Iceland	6 months of leave with cash benefits equal to Ikr 25,090/month	6 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of average wages earned if full-time employed. Flat-rate benefits if less than full-time employed.
Ireland	14 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 70% of weekly earnings	18 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 70% of weekly earnings
Israel	12 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 75% of earnings.	12 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings
Italy	5 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of earnings	Same as 1993
Kazakhstan	n/a	N/a
Kyrgyzstan	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
Latvia	112 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of average earnings	Same as 1993
Liechtenstein	1993 = n/a 1997 = 12 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of covered earnings	20 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of covered earnings
Lithuania	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of salary	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 25% of the

	1993	2002
		average monthly insurable income
Luxembourg	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
FYR Macedonia	n/a	n/a
Malta	13 weeks of leave with flat-rate cash benefits equal to £6.30/week	14 weeks of leave with cash benefits paid at a flat-rate (Lm 17.50) for 13 weeks
Monaco	1993= n/a 1997 = 16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of the average salary	Same as 1997
Netherlands	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
Norway	52 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of covered earnings	Same as 1993
Poland	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
Portugal	90 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	210 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of average earnings
Republic of Moldova	n/a	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of the average wage
Romania	112 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 50% of the basis salary	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 85% of the basis salary
Russian Federation	20 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings.	26 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings
San Marino	1993 = n/a 1997 = 5 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1997
Serbia and Montenegro	n/a	3 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings
Slovakia	28 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of earnings	Same as 1993
Slovenia	105 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	Same as 1993
Spain	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 75% of benefit base	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of benefit base
Sweden	450 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of income	450 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of income for the first 390 days and a flat-rate cash benefit equal to 60 kr/day for the next 90 days

	1993	2002
Switzerland	10 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to an amount set by agreement between insurer and insured	16 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to an amount set by agreement between insurer and insured
Tajikistan	n/a	N/a
Turkey	12 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 2/3 rd of earnings	Same as 1993
Turkmenistan	1993 n/a 1995 provisions = 140 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	112 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings
Ukraine	122 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings
United Kingdom	18 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of average earnings for the first 6 weeks and a flat-rate benefits of 46.30 pounds/week for the other 12 weeks.	18 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 90% of average earnings for the first 6 weeks and a flat-rate benefits of 62.20 pounds/week for the other 12 weeks.
United States	12 weeks of unpaid leave (restricted to employees in firms of 50+ employees)	Same as 1993
Uzbekistan	12 weeks of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings	126 days of leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of wages

n/a: Indicates that no program was in force or that the information was simply not available.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication 'Social Security Programs throughout the World', as well as country-specific information from various sources.

Table A.5: Overview of parental/childcare leave policies as of 1993 and 2002

	1993	2002
Albania	None	None
Andorra	1993 = n/a	None
Armenia	1993 = n/a 1995 = monthly benefits equal to 100% of minimum wage until child is 18 month old	Child care leave: 2,360 dr. a month until the child is age 2.
Austria	24-month leave with flat-rate cash benefits	36-month leave with cash benefits equal to EUR 15/day
Azerbaijan	None	Child-raising allowance: 15,000 AZM a month until the child is age 3.
Belarus	None	None
Belgium	3-month unpaid leave as part of the 'Career break' scheme	No change
Bosnia-Herzegovina	N/a	N/a
Bulgaria	Additional leave paid at level of national minimum wage for first three children until the child is 2 years old, and for fourth and subsequent children until child is 26 months old. May be followed by leave without pay until the child reaches 3.	No change
Canada	10 weeks of parental leave (following 15 weeks of maternity leave) with cash benefits equal to 59% of previous average insured earnings.	35 weeks of parental leave (following 15 weeks of maternity leave) with cash benefits equal to 55% of previous average insured earnings.
Croatia	1993 = n/a 1997 = additional leave until the child reaches 1	Cash benefits payable until the child reaches of 1 (until the age of 3 for the third and subsequent child).
Cyprus	None	None
Czech Republic	Parents' allowance: 1200 crown a month if caring for child under 3 at home.	Parental allowance paid if caring for a child at home until the age of 3
Denmark	Each parent entitled to 13-week leave	Child care leave up to 52 weeks for either parent up to child's 8th birthday with cash benefits equal to 60% of wages
Estonia	Subsistence benefit: A parent on maternity leave or not working receives 50% of minimum wage for each child until the child reaches 18 months. A parent on	A monthly allowance is paid for each child at 1.5 times the child care allowance rate (1,200 EEK) to one parent raising one or more children up to 3 years old. In addition, 25% of the

	1993	2002
	maternity leave or not working with children aged 18 months to 3 years receives 30% of the minimum wage for each child.	child care allowance rate for each child between ages 3 and 8.
Finland	Flat-rate benefits until the child is 3 years old	A basic amount of €3,027 a year for one child under age 3 is paid when one of the parents cares for the child at home; an increase of €600 a year for each additional child under age 7 cared for at home.
France	Parental education allowance: Parent who stops work to raise 3 rd or subsequent children receives 2871 francs a month. Payable up to 36 months.	Child-rearing allowance: Paid to a parent who stops paid work or reduces paid activity to raise a second or subsequent child. The allowance is paid until the child reaches age 3.
Georgia	None	Maternity leave may be extended to up to 3 years without pay to care for an infant.
Germany	Means-tested flat-rate cash benefits payable until the child 3 rd birthday	No change
Greece	3-month unpaid leave for each parent	No change
Hungary	Childcare allowances equal to 65-75% of daily average net earnings payable until the child is 2.	Child care allowance: The minimum pension up to age 3.
Iceland	None	3 months of leave with cash benefits equal to 80% of prior wages
Ireland	None	14 weeks parental leave (unpaid)
Israel	None	9-month unpaid leave
Italy	Additional 6 months' leave for either parent at 30% of earnings.	Supplementary parental leave (employees): Six months' leave for either parent. The allowance is 30% of earnings and must be taken before the child is age 3. Parents are entitled to an additional 6 months' leave before the child is age 8. The allowance is 30% of earnings if the parent's income is less than 2.5 times the value of the minimum pension. If the parent's income is above this level, the parent is entitled to parental leave but without the payment of the allowance.
Kazakhstan	None	None
Kyrgyzstan	None	Family Allowance Benefits: 100% of the GM (The guaranteed minimum

	1993	2002
		standard of living) a month is payable for a mother on leave to care for a child under 18 months old; 100% of the GM if caring for two children under age 3; or 150% of the GM if caring for three children under age 16. All benefits are income-tested.
Latvia	None	None
Liechtenstein	n/a	None
Lithuania	An allowance to care for the child during the first 18 months equal to 0.7 times the poverty level and 0.35 times that amount from age 18 months to 3 years.	Child care benefit: Either parent may take official leave from employment for up to 1 year to care for the new infant and receive child care benefit equal to 60% of wages.
Luxembourg	No provision	Parental leave allowance: €1,611.10 a month, during a 6-month period.
FYR Macedonia	n/a	n/a
Malta	None	None
Monaco	n/a	None
Netherlands	6-month parental leave per parent (unpaid)	No change
Norway	Unpaid leave until the child is 1	Child rearing leave until the child is 2 years old, with flat-rate cash benefits
Poland	Additional leave of 24 months is possible with payment set at 25% of average monthly earnings.	Additional leave of 24 months is possible. Payment of maternity leave is set at 308.80 zlotys per month (491.00 zlotys for lone-parent).
Portugal	26-week unpaid leave	6 to 24 months parental leave (unpaid)
Republic of Moldova	For the care of a child aged under 18 months: monthly benefit at 100% of minimum wage payable to working mothers whose covered employment is at least 1 year, to mothers under age 18, and to mothers on leave from employment pursuing studies.	None
Romania	Maternity leave benefit available until child is 1 year old with benefits equal to 65% of earnings.	Parental leave: 85% of the basis salary (mean salary during the 6 months preceding the claim) and payable until the child is 2 years old (age 3 if child is disabled).
Russian Federation	Monthly benefits equal to 100% of minimum wage paid to employees on leave to care for children under 18 months old.	Parental leave: Monthly benefits equal to 200% of the minimum wage (the minimum wage for maternity benefits is R100) are paid to employees on parental leave to care for children

	1993	2002
		under 18 months old.
San Marino	n/a	After the 5 months of maternity leave, and during the following 7 months, mothers can remain on leave with benefit equal to 2 hours of earnings per day, or they can return to work and take leave up to 2 hours a day on full pay.
Serbia and Montenegro	n/a	Parental leave until the child is 1 year old
Slovakia	Families eligible for extended parental leave receive 1200 crowns per month per child under age 3.	Families that are eligible for extended parental leave receive 2,740 SK a month for each child under age 3.
Slovenia	See maternity leave.	260 days of childcare leave with cash benefits equal to 100% of earnings.
Spain	Unpaid leave until the child is 3	No change
Sweden	See maternity leave	See maternity leave
Switzerland	None	None
Tajikistan	n/a	N/a
Turkey	None	None
Turkmenistan	None	N/a ¹
Ukraine	Monthly benefits equal to 100% of minimum wage paid for maternity leave until child is 18 months old.	No change
United Kingdom	None	Both parents entitled to 13-week unpaid leave
United States	None	None
Uzbekistan	None	Working mothers are entitled to 3 years of unpaid leave. Mothers caring for children under age 2 are entitled to paid leave at the rate of 20% of the minimum wage a month.

n/a: Indicates that no program was in force or that the information was simply not available.

Note:

- 1- Turkmenistan: a child care allowance equal to 100% of the minimum benefit (rural areas) or 125% of the minimum benefit (urban areas) but we lack the information regarding the nature and duration of this program.

Sources: Compiled by the author from information contained in the publication 'Social Security Programs throughout the World', as well as country-specific information from various sources.