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The Emergence of Parental and Paternity Leaves in Switzerland: A Challenge to Gendered Representations and Practices of Parenthood ?

Valarino Isabel

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Université de Lausanne – Suisse
Faculté des sciences sociales et politiques
Institut des sciences sociales

The Emergence of Parental and Paternity Leaves in Switzerland: A Challenge to Gendered Representations and Practices of Parenthood?

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par
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IMPRIMATUR

Le Conseil de la Faculté des sciences sociales et politiques de l'Université de Lausanne, sur proposition d'un jury formé des professeurs

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Abstract

The thesis addresses the issue of parenthood and gender equality in Switzerland through the emergence of parental leave policies. This is an original and relevant research topic, as Switzerland is one of the few industrialized countries that have not yet implemented a parental or paternity leave. I first describe the emergence of parental leave policies in the last ten to fifteen years in the political, media, and labor-market spheres. Secondly, adopting a gender and discursive theoretical approach, I analyze whether and to what extent this emergence challenged gendered representations and practices of parenthood. The multilevel and mixed-methods research design implies analyzing various data sets such as parliamentary interventions (N=23) and newspaper articles (N=579) on parental leave policies. A case study of a public administration which implemented a one-month paid paternity leave draws on register data of leave recipients (N=95) and in-depth interviews with fathers and managers (n=30). Results show that parental leave policies, especially in recent years, have been increasingly problematized in the three social spheres considered, as a result of political and institutional events. While there is a struggle over the definition of the legitimate leave type to implement (*parental* or *paternity* leave) in the political sphere, *paternity* leave has precedence in the media and labor-market spheres. Overall, this emergence contributes to making fatherhood visible in the public sphere, challenging albeit in a limited way gendered representations and practices of parenthood. Along with representations of involved fatherhood and change in gender relations, different roles and responsibilities are attributed to mothers and fathers, the latter being often defined as secondary, temporary and optional parents. Finally, I identify a common trend, namely the increasing importance of the economic aspects of parental leave policies with the consequence of sidelining their gender-equality potential. The dissertation contributes to the literature which analyzes the interconnections between the macro-, the meso- and the micro-levels of society in the constitution of gender relations and parenthood. It also provides useful tools for the analysis of the politics of parental leave policies in Switzerland and their effects for gender equality.

Keywords: parental leave; paternity leave; gender; fatherhood; welfare state; discourse analysis

Résumé

Cette thèse traite de la parentalité et de l'égalité de genre en Suisse à travers l'émergence des congés parentaux. Ce sujet de recherche est original et pertinent puisque la Suisse est à ce jour un des seuls pays industrialisés à ne pas avoir adopté de droit au congé parental ou paternité. Cette recherche décrit l'émergence des congés parentaux au cours des 10 à 15 dernières années dans les sphères politique, médiatique et du marché de l'emploi en Suisse. En combinant perspective de genre et analyse de discours, elle examine dans quelle mesure cette émergence remet en question les représentations et pratiques genrées de parentalité. Des méthodes de recherche mixtes sont employées pour analyser des interventions parlementaires (N=23) et des articles de presse (N=579) sur les congés parentaux. L'étude de cas d'une entreprise publique qui a adopté un congé paternité payé d'un mois s'appuie sur des données de registre (N=95) et des entretiens semi-structurés avec des pères et des cadres (n=30). Les résultats indiquent que dans les trois sphères considérées, les congés parentaux ont reçu une attention croissante au cours de ces dernières années, en lien avec des événements politiques et institutionnels. Alors que dans la sphère politique il n'y a pas de consensus quant au type de congé considéré comme légitime (congé *parental* ou *paternité*), dans les sphères médiatique et du marché de l'emploi le congé *paternité* semble l'emporter. Dans l'ensemble, l'émergence des congés parentaux contribue à rendre la paternité plus visible dans l'espace public, remettant en question—bien que d'une manière limitée—les représentations genrées de la parentalité. En effet, d'une part l'image de pères impliqués et de rapports de genre plus égalitaires au sein de la famille est diffusée. D'autre part, mères et pères continuent à être associés à des rôles différents, les pères étant définis comme des parents secondaires et temporaires. Finalement, l'analyse révèle une tendance générale, soit l'importance croissante accordée aux aspects économiques des congés parentaux, avec pour conséquence la mise à l'écart de leur potentiel pour l'égalité de genre. Cette thèse contribue à la recherche sur les liens entre les niveaux macro- meso- et microsociaux dans la constitution des rapports de genre et de la parentalité. Elle propose également des outils pour analyser les politiques de congés parentaux en Suisse et leurs implications pour l'égalité de genre.

Mots-clés: congé parental ; congé paternité ; genre ; paternité ; Etat social ; analyse de discours

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A thing long expected takes the form of the unexpected when at last it comes

Mark Twain

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List of Abbreviations

ArmA	Army Act
CHF	Swiss francs
CO	Swiss Code of Obligations
CSSH	Committee for Social Security and Health
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care (services)
EmpA	Employment Act
EU	European Union
FAA	Family Allowances Act
FCCF	Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs
FCWI	Federal Commission for Women's Issues
FOGE	Federal Office for Gender Equality
FSIO	Federal Social Insurance Office
FSO	Swiss Federal Statistical Office
FDHA	Federal Department of Home Affairs
FDJP	Federal Department of Justice and Police
GEA	Gender Equality Act
ILO	International Labour Organization
LECA	Loss of Earnings Compensation Act
MP(s)	Member(s) of Parliament
OASI	Old Age and Survivors Insurance (also referred to as Pension Insurance)
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
SECO	State Secretariat for Economic Affairs
SMEs	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
VAT	Value Added Tax
WPR	"What's the Problem Represented to be" analysis

Introduction

Several scholars have noted that the image of “new fatherhood” and “involved fatherhood” is increasingly accepted and diffused as a set of shared norms about men’s parenting. “New fathers” are said to be active participants in everyday childcare tasks, more expressive and affectionate with their children and to play a more important role in children’s socialization overall. Interestingly, “new fatherhood” is already a longstanding discourse in Western countries. Ralph LaRossa (1988) described it in the US context a quarter of century ago. At that time, he noted that there was an asynchrony between the “culture of fatherhood” and the “conduct of fatherhood”.

Nowadays, this asynchrony still persists. Even in the most gender-equal Scandinavian contexts, men’s share of unpaid work currently does not exceed 37% of that of women’s (Hook, 2006). In Western industrialized countries—but with some differences among them—the transition to parenthood represents a sharp increase in unpaid work for women as well as a decrease in their labor-market activity (Craig & Mullan, 2010; Sanchez & Thomson, 1997). In contrast, men’s occupational trajectories are not affected by parenthood or are even strengthened. In a study conducted in Europe about the meaning of fatherhood in late modernity, the authors concluded that “[p]arenthood still means something completely different to fathers and mothers in many European countries” (Schneider & Becker, 2012, p. 250).

Therefore, notwithstanding women’s—particularly mothers’—massive entry into the labor market in the last 30 to 40 years, persisting gender inequalities remain. Scholars consider that the gender revolution is “uneven” and “stalled” (e.g., England, 2010; Hochschild, 1989). Changes in the gender division of work have not been as spectacular in the home as they have been in the labor market and have affected different social groups unevenly. The gendered division of unpaid work in the family and the predominant attribution of childcare to women are one of the areas most resistant to change and represent serious barriers to achieving gender equality at large in society (Brighouse & Wright, 2008). Therefore, as gender equality is closely related to men’s involvement in the family, it is highly relevant to investigate the content of “fatherhood” and “motherhood”. From a feminist point of view, it is necessary to analyze the circumstances under which parenthood is defined and experienced in more equal ways for men and women. This is the driving motivation of this dissertation.

The dissertation focuses on the Swiss situation. In Switzerland too, an increasing concern for fathers and interest in “involved fatherhood” can be identified in various social institutions, such as government, the media, parliament and civil society associations. For example, in a newspaper interview in 2012 the Minister of Home Affairs Alain Berset declared his support for the implementation of a “real parental leave”, arguing that couples should envisage together the development of a family. He complained that as a father, he had only benefited from one day of leave on the birth of his children (Jean & Bailat, 2012). Similarly, in a letter to the editor to a newspaper, a reader stated, “[i]ncreasingly more men want to have more time to devote to the family. We do not want to be the breadwinner any more, a very ungrateful role. We want to spend time with our children, love them, accompany them and see them grow up” (Zahnd,

2004). Finally, in 2009, the extra-parliamentary Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs organized a forum entitled “Fathers, the forgotten parents of work-family life reconciliation”, arguing that increasingly more fathers were involved in everyday domestic life and childcare tasks (FCCF, 2009).

These discourses suggest, as in the US in the 1980s, that there are “new fathers” in Switzerland. Yet, there too, an asynchrony between the culture and the conduct of fatherhood can be noted. Although mothers’ labor-market participation has risen substantially—from 43.5% in 1992 to 70.3% in 2012 among mothers living in a couple with a child under six (FSO, 2013a)—the gap between the time devoted by mothers and fathers to household and childcare tasks in Switzerland has only slightly diminished. Between 1997 and 2007, men increased their participation from 24.3 to 31.5 hours per week, while women increased theirs from 57.6 to 59.1 hours per week (FSO, 2009b). Although many economic and structural changes have affected the structure of the family and the relations between its members (FSO, 2010b, 2012b), the predominant family model in Switzerland is the modified male-breadwinner family model (J. Lewis, 1992), where fathers work full-time and mothers work part-time.

The contradiction between fatherhood representations and practices—observed in Switzerland and in other countries—raises questions about the extent to which change within gender relations has really taken place. Is parenthood becoming less gendered? If so, under what circumstances? Are men and women, fathers and mothers, increasingly represented on equal terms, with equal responsibilities, abilities, and competences? I investigate these questions through the exploration of an emerging social policy issue in Switzerland: parental leave policies. By “parental leave policies” I refer to statutory parental and paternity leaves: forms of legally guaranteed and job-protected leaves—which may or not be paid—for individuals active in the labor market to use on and around the birth of a child.

There are several reasons which justify the choice of parental leave policies in order to investigate change in gender relations and fatherhood in Switzerland. First, the social meaning of parental leave policies precisely problematizes a key determinant for gender equality: men’s relation to paid work and to the family. Parental leave policies are at the junction of work and family, of what are referred to as “public” and “private” spheres (Ferree, 1990; Knijn & Kremer, 1997). Parental leave policies, when earmarked for men or accessible to them, can be considered as shifting the artificial line separating these two spheres. Statutory parental leave policies symbolically legitimate men’s care-giving activities in the home, instead of their wage work activities. What is usually considered as belonging to the private sphere becomes of public concern. Because statutory parental leave policies are determined and granted by the state, they play a part in setting norms about parenthood. They determine what are considered legitimate roles for fathers and mothers and how long it is appropriate for them to be at home, instead of at work.

The second reason for investigating parental leave policies is their exceptional situation in Switzerland, comparatively to other industrialized countries. As of 2013, statutory parental leave policies do not exist in Switzerland. For example, out of 34 countries considered, Switzerland is the only European country which does not have a statutory parental leave (in addition to the US, Brazil and South Africa) (Moss, 2013). Furthermore, statutory maternity insurance was only implemented in 2005, after sixty years of political struggle and long after

other Western countries had developed comprehensive leave schemes (FCWI, 2011). The absence of statutory leave policies accessible to men suggests that the Swiss leave scheme is gendered, and that fathers are not considered legitimate caregivers by the state, while women are. It raises many questions about Switzerland, such as the reasons for its minimal leave scheme and its relation to other family and public policies. How can we understand this extraordinary situation? What factors came into play to produce it? What does it mean in terms of fatherhood and motherhood representations and practices?

Finally, I argue that it is relevant to investigate parental leave policies, because notwithstanding their non-existence as statutory measures, they are emerging issues in the Swiss public sphere. In order to explore whether gender relations as well as fatherhood and motherhood are becoming more gender-equal in Switzerland, it is of great interest to focus on a situation which potentially triggers change. There are indications that parental leave policies are increasingly present in different spheres of social life. As the above example of the newspaper interview with the Minister of Home Affairs suggests, parental leave policies are issues covered by newspapers and therefore receive public attention. Also, some members of parliament have promoted these measures by submitting proposals to implement parental or paternity leaves. In the past fifteen years, over twenty different propositions have been made, ranging from one week of paternity leave to six months parental leave. It is also noteworthy that the Federal Council recently published a report (FSIO, 2013) assessing the (dis-)advantages of various statutory leave models, which indicates that the government is considering state regulation in this policy area.

In fact, the opportunity of benefiting from a few weeks of time off work after the birth of a child is currently already experienced by some fathers in Switzerland. For, while there is no legal obligation to provide parental or paternity leave, employers in the public and the private sector can grant more generous entitlements on a voluntary basis, through work contracts and company regulations. Also, collective labor agreements increasingly entail the right to take a few days (or in fewer cases weeks) of paid paternity leave and may also offer the possibility of taking unpaid parental leave for several months.

The emergence of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere constitutes the starting point of this research. I am interested in what this emergence implies in terms of representations and experiences of fatherhood and motherhood, and whether more gender-equal representations are triggered. The main research question of the dissertation is: to what extent does the emergence of parental leave policies challenge gender relations and gendered representations and practices of parenthood? This research question actually contains two main tasks. First, it is necessary to assess in a more precise way whether and to what extent parental leave policies are indeed emerging in the Swiss public sphere. For this, I determine a time span of 10 to 15 years (approximately 1998-2012) during which the evolution of parental leave policies is assessed. I also define three social spheres of interest in order to grasp the presence of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere: the media, the political, and the labor-market spheres. I expect there to be interaction mechanisms between these spheres which—by feeding into each other—increase the emergence of the issue overall. Although I address some of these mechanisms towards the end of the dissertation, my main interest lies in the analysis of the emergence in each individual sphere.

The second task consists in analyzing whether and to what extent this emergence challenges gender relations, in particular representations and experiences of fatherhood. The perspective I adopt to analyze gender relations and fatherhood is informed by gender and discursive theoretical frameworks. As regards gender theory, I understand the differentiation and inequalities between men and women, and by extension between fathers and mothers, as the outcome of social processes that occur on different societal levels. The “gender structure” (Risman, 1998, 2004, 2011; Risman & Davis, 2013) consists of the institutional, the interactional and the individual societal levels. These levels shape parenthood, very often reproducing difference and inequality between motherhood and fatherhood. For example, at the institutional level, discourses, laws and organizational rules contribute to define motherhood and fatherhood in gendered ways, assigning roles or distributing resources unequally. The leave scheme in Switzerland is a good example of how the institutional level of the gender structure shapes parenthood in gendered ways. On the interactional level too, social norms and cultural expectations guide behaviors and practices, often leading men and women to “do gender” (West & Zimmerman, 1987), and by extension to “do parenthood” differently. Finally, at the individual level, through socialization mechanisms, individuals often come to develop gendered identities and gendered conceptions of motherhood and fatherhood.

The gendered constitution of parenthood is often consistent throughout the different levels of the gender structure, yet in some cases, change within one of the levels can take place and potentially modify the other ones, towards more gender equality. For example, studies conducted in contexts where men have access to parental and paternity leaves (policies situated at the institutional level) have shown that gender-equality effects can take place at the interactional and individual levels. Relatively short periods of leave uptake have long-term effects on men’s involvement in childcare-related tasks such as feeding the child, changing diapers, getting up at night and bathing the child. For example, Maria del Carmen Huerta et al. (2013) observed that in diverse countries such as Australia, Denmark, the UK and the US, men who took two weeks or more of leave at the birth of their child were more likely to be involved in childcare when the child was aged between six months and three years than those who did not take any leave. Men’s leave uptake therefore creates more undifferentiation between fathering and mothering practices. At the identity level, the experience of leave uptake can prompt men to see themselves as primary parents and to value involved fatherhood—in addition to their occupational career and role of family provider. For example, a qualitative study conducted in Canada and the US showed that fathers who had taken at least three weeks of leave had developed a similar sense of responsibility to their partners as compared with fathers who had not taken a similar leave (Rehel, 2014).

I articulate this gender theoretical framework with a discursive approach. Discourse theorists argue that discourse does more than name or describe things; it constructs social reality (e.g., Bacchi, 1999, 2009). Discourses, which are interpretations of social reality, influence what can be said, thought and done, and therefore the way individuals interact and come to think about themselves. Discourses also have concrete consequences on people’s lives when they exclude particular groups from specific entitlements, for example men from parental leave policies. So, discursive mechanisms are involved in the constitution of fatherhood and motherhood on each level of the gender structure. They influence the way fatherhood and motherhood are defined (at the institutional level, for example through public policies and media products), and experienced in concrete everyday situations (at the interactional level, for example in the workplace and at

home) as well as at the individual level, in the way parenthood is perceived. Therefore, adopting a gender and discursive approach to parental leave policies means analyzing how policy proposals, media articles produced about parental leave policies and concrete leave opportunities offered to some workers—through the categories they create, the characteristics they assign to men and women, and the various and sometimes contradictory representations they propose of gender relations—contribute to reproduce or on the contrary to challenge gendered representations and experiences of parenthood.

The research question is explored empirically through a multilevel research design and mixed-methods analyses. The research design aims to address the different levels of the gender structure. The institutional level is explored through the political and media spheres, which give insights about ongoing cultural norms and discourses about fatherhood and motherhood. For the political sphere, I analyze policy proposals in favor of parental and paternity leaves submitted by members of parliament between 1998 and 2011. I also include reports and debates triggered by the political treatment of these policy proposals, which gives access to the representations of leave opponents. This data enables me to grasp competing conceptions of appropriate family models, and of what is considered the legitimate role of the state among the Swiss political elite. For the media sphere, I analyze newspaper articles published between 1999 and 2009 on parental leave policies. This enables me to explore with which themes parental leave policies are associated and how meaning is constructed around leave policies and parenthood. These political and media discourses can be considered as both reflecting predominant cultural norms about fatherhood and motherhood and simultaneously as contributing to their discursive constitution. As Jane Sunderland puts it: “Ongoing legislative changes relating to parental (including paternity) leave [...] may prompt discursual change; and legislation, employment patterns and social practices may in turn be shaped *by* discourse” (Sunderland, 2006, p. 524).

The interactional and individual levels of the gender structure are explored through a case study in the labor-market sphere on a work organization which has recently implemented a one-month paid paternity leave. I analyze register data about leave uptake and leave recipients between 2010 and 2012, as well as interviews with a subset of fathers who benefited from paternity leave and with managers who experienced leave uptake in their team. The influence of this policy change at the institutional level—through the implementation of a one-month paid paternity leave—on the transition to parenthood and more precisely on fathering practices and identities is investigated. The case-study approach allows me to focus on the negotiation processes at work in policy implementation, a dimension of analysis often overlooked in research.

I adopt mixed methods in order to analyze the different types of datasets and to fulfill the two tasks set for the research. The first task, as already mentioned, is to assess the emergence of parental leave policies. This implies describing in a quantified manner the presence of parental leave policies across time and assessing the trend. For this purpose, I apply content analysis, which enables me to systematically analyze data according to a set of predefined characteristics (Berg, 2001, Chapter 11). For example, I count the number of articles published in the media, according to their year of publication or main related theme. I also describe in a systematic way policy proposals submitted in Parliament according to the political party or sex of the political actor. I also estimate the proportion of public and private companies which grant paid paternity

leave or unpaid parental leave. In addition to this quantitative dimension, I analyze in a qualitative way the meanings associated with parental leave policies and parenthood. To do this I apply discursive analytical approaches such as the “What’s the problem represented to be?” approach (Bacchi, 1999, 2009) to analyze policy discourses, frame analysis (Entman, 1993) to analyze media discourses and thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) to analyze individuals’ discourses.

The thesis is composed of six chapters and is structured as follows. In Chapter I, I present the Swiss leave scheme, as well as the broader family policy and welfare state context. I systematically compare the Swiss leave scheme with other European and Western industrialized countries. I highlight the Swiss specificities which contribute to explain the minimal leave scheme in Switzerland, notably its political system and institutions. I also give an overview of the concrete division of paid and unpaid work within Swiss families. Chapter II develops the theoretical framework within which the research questions and design are embedded. After having presented the principles of gender and discourse theories and their articulation, I show through a wide range of research literature how gender relations and parenthood are discursively constituted within the gender structure. Turning to the relationship between the gender structure and parental leave policies, I also develop—making reference to studies conducted in many different Western countries—their potential challenging effects. For each level of the gender structure, I indicate how parental leave policies can either challenge or reproduce gendered representations and practices of parenthood. I then present in more detail my research design and the data used for each social sphere investigated.

Chapters III, IV and V correspond to the presentation of the empirical research and results for each social sphere investigated. The emergence of parental leave policies is analyzed and contextualized separately in the political arena, in the media agenda and in the labor market. Each chapter is organized in a similar way. After a contextual presentation, I describe in detail the data and methods used. I then first present the quantitative assessment of the emergence of parental leave policies in the sphere considered and then proceed to the qualitative discursive analysis. I start with the political sphere (Chapter III), in order to present in more depth the politics of maternity and parental leave policies in the second half of the 20th century. I analyze the increasing interest in parental leave policies as well as the considerable heterogeneity of leave proposals, revealing different representations of gender relations and of the role of the state. I then analyze the discourses mobilized by political actors to problematize parental leave policies. Chapter IV explores the media sphere and its coverage of the issue of parental leave policies. The emergence of parental leave policies is confirmed through the content analysis of press articles and the related themes are specified. I then analyze the ways parental leave policies are framed and how fathers and mothers are represented.

The last empirical chapter presents the investigation of parental leave policies in the labor market in Switzerland. Due to the number and volume of the datasets analyzed, Chapter V is the most substantial chapter of the dissertation. It starts off with the complex task of describing the situation of special leave entitlements in the private and public sectors of the Swiss labor market. This broad picture enables me to situate and justify conducting an “extreme” and “single” case study (Seawright & Gerring, 2008; Yin, 2009) in an *a priori* father-friendly work organization. Using register data from this company, I then analyze leave uptake and leave patterns, before turning to the qualitative analysis. On the basis of interviews conducted with

managers and fathers I explore leave implementation as well as the process of leave uptake and management. I also analyze the concrete use of paternity leave by fathers, and their conceptions of fatherhood.

Chapter VI presents an integrated interpretation of the results of each empirical chapter. It provides a transversal analysis of the results by taking up the two main questions of the thesis. First it assesses to what extent parental leave policies have emerged in Switzerland and whether or not they have become new legitimate public issues. Interaction mechanisms between the three social spheres which have contributed to the emergence of parental leave policies are highlighted. Secondly it develops the ways in which gendered parenthood has been challenged and reproduced in each social sphere. I also highlight potential risks for gender equality in the way parental leave policies are currently represented.

The conclusion provides a general summary of the main results of the dissertation and highlights what contributions it makes to research on gender relations and parental leave policies. Limitations of the research are highlighted, which open up on reflections for future avenues of research on parental leave policies and gender equality.

Chapter I - Switzerland in context

In the introduction, I established the starting point of the dissertation, namely the fact that Switzerland has not yet adopted a statutory parental or paternity leave. In contrast with most industrialized Western countries, men do not have any legal entitlement to take time off work when they have a child. Before presenting the theoretical approach that I develop to analyze this issue, I will address several questions which arise from this remarkable situation: How exactly does Switzerland differ from other countries with regard to its leave scheme (maternity, parental and paternity leaves)? How can we explain this peculiar situation? What kind of welfare state and family policies has Switzerland developed? How do families share paid and unpaid work in this context?

Using secondary data and existing research literature, I provide contextual information with regard to the Swiss institutional setting and gender relations. I show the role played by institutional, political, economic and attitudinal factors in the slow and layered development of the welfare state and parental leave policies. This chapter aims to show the relevance of addressing the emergence of parental leave policies and to highlight Swiss specificities. It also gives important background information for the analysis of the empirical data in the subsequent chapters.

1. The Swiss leave scheme

1.1. Defining leave policies

Leave policies are entitlements to job-protected leaves for parents around childbirth and during the child's first years. Leave policies concern mothers and fathers active on the labor market. They may be paid or not and may in some cases be used part-time. Benefits for mothers and/or fathers are sometimes also granted independently from wage work, but I do not include such policies under the label "leave policies". Different types of leaves are distinguished, according to the target recipients and the functions they are designed to fulfill. Usually maternity, paternity and parental leaves are distinguished. I refer specifically to paternity and parental leaves under the label "parental leave policies". The combination of all the different leave policies which enable parents to take time off work forms a "leave scheme".

In addition to these three main types of leaves, other children-related leaves such as childcare leaves, leaves for adoptive parents (adoption leave) and sick children leaves also exist. When these different types of leaves are guaranteed by law on a national scale and institutionalized by the state, they are called "statutory leaves". "Special leave entitlements" may also be provided in addition or as substitutes to statutory leaves. These special leave entitlements can either be "discretionary employer-provided" (Thévenon, 2011, p. 60) or "negotiated" by the social partners, i.e., employers' and employees' associations. Discretionary employer-provided leaves are implemented on a voluntary basis by employers and are inscribed in the work contract or in

company regulations, but are subject to the company’s will to maintain them. Negotiated leaves are inscribed in a collective labor agreement signed by the social partners. Negotiated leaves apply to a company, or more broadly to a branch or sector of activity. Collective agreements concern various aspects of working conditions—among other issues, leave policies. They are signed for several years by the social partners and must be renewed at the end of each period.

Table 1 provides general definitions for each type of leave policies (Moss, 2012, pp. 5-6). However, national contexts have their specificities and sometimes leave policies are defined differently. The tendency is to blur the distinctions between maternity, paternity and parental leaves (Moss, 2012). Mainly in Nordic countries, the generic term “parental leave” is increasingly understood as encompassing “maternity leave” and “paternity leave”. However, reserved leave periods for the mother and the father continue to exist independently within “parental leave” (Kamerma n & Moss, 2009, p. 3). The reserved (or earmarked) period of leave for the father within the parental leave is generally referred to as the “fathers’ quota”.

Table 1 - Overview of leave policies

Labels used	Leave policies	Description
Maternity leave	Maternity leave*	Usually understood as a health and welfare measure, intended to protect the health of the mother and the newborn child, to be taken often just before, during and immediately after childbirth.
	Paternity leave	Usually to be taken soon after the birth of a child, and intended to enable the father to spend time with his partner, the newborn child and older siblings.
Parental leave policies	Parental leave	Parental leave is addressed to mothers and fathers. It can take the following forms: a. non-transferable individual right; b. transferable (partially or totally) individual right; c. family right to be divided as parents choose. Parental leave can take either one of the three forms, or a combination of them. It is generally understood as a measure enabling parents to spend time caring for a young child. It usually starts after the end of maternity leave, during the child’s first years. In some cases, parents can use parental leave on a part-time basis.
	Fathers’ quota	The fathers’ quota is the reserved (or earmarked) period of parental leave for fathers only. It is the period of leave for the father which is non-transferable to the mother (described above under letter a).
Other children-related leaves	Adoption leave	Usually adoptive parents are entitled to the same rights as biological parents. Spouses who adopt their partners’ children are usually excluded from this right.
	Childcare leave	Addressed to mothers and fathers. Usually to be taken immediately after parental leave. Payment is often lower than during parental leave.
	Leave for sick children	This entitlement usually grants workers a number of (paid) days off per year in order to care for a sick child. In some cases it may be extended to include adult dependent relatives.

Source: based on Moss, 2012, pp. 5-6.

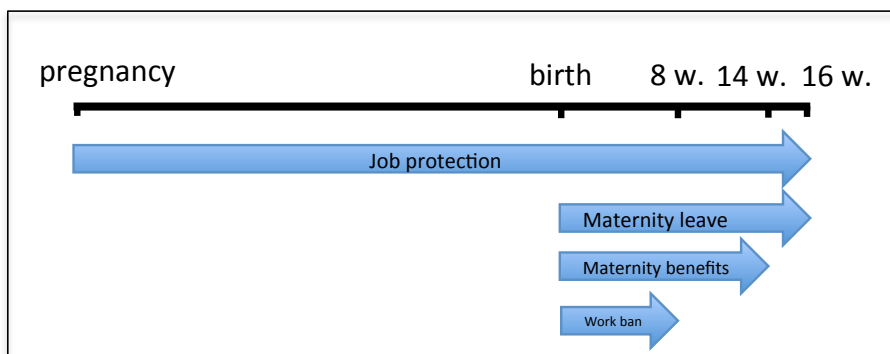
Note: *In some countries “maternity leave” can be transferred to other carers under special circumstances.

1.2. Leave policies in Switzerland

Maternity leave

Maternity leave is the only statutory leave policy that exists in Switzerland (Valarino, 2013). Employed women who have a child are entitled to 16 weeks maternity leave (see Figure 1). This leave is paid at 80% of the salary for 98 days, i.e., 14 weeks. Maternity benefits are guaranteed by the Loss of Earnings Compensation Act (LECA) for Persons on Military Service or Maternity (art. 16b ff.),¹ in force since July 1st 2005. The legislation considers maternity to be an impediment to wage work, and which therefore needs to be compensated for financially, as it is for people carrying out military service, civil defense or civilian service. Eligibility rules restrict the entitlement to women who are employed or self-employed and women benefiting from unemployment, sickness or invalidity allowances, who have a record of at least nine months of contribution to the Old Age and Survivors Insurance (OASI), and who have worked for a minimum of five months during the nine months preceding birth. Leave benefits cannot exceed a ceiling of CHF 196 per day for employees (equivalent to a monthly income of CHF 7,350) or an annual income ceiling for self-employed workers set at CHF 88,200. Benefits are funded by the Loss of Earnings Compensation fund, which is financed by equal contributions from employees and employers.

Figure 1 - Length of maternity leave and benefit in Switzerland



Maternity leave and benefits are to be taken as one single period, starting on the day of birth and ending with the return to work. Interruptions in maternity leave and benefits uptake or part-time work are not possible. Employed women can be exempted from work before birth for medical and health reasons upon presentation of a medical certificate; in this case, full salary payment continues for a limited period of time. Job protection during pregnancy and 16 weeks after the birth of the child was introduced in the Code of Obligations in 1989 (FCWI, 2001). The length of maternity leave therefore exceeds by two weeks the length of maternity insurance; meaning that employed women are allowed to stay an additional two weeks at home, although without receiving LECA benefits. The Swiss Employment Act (EmpA, art. 35 ff.)² aims to protect the health of pregnant women, women who have just given birth and women who breastfeed at the workplace. This translates on the one hand into the ban on work for women during the eight weeks after delivery. On the other hand, it grants them the right to demand the adaptation of

¹ http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/834_1/index.html

² <http://www.admin.ch/opc/fr/classified-compilation/19640049/index.html>

their working conditions concerning the length of the working day, dangerous tasks, standing activities, night shifts and breastfeeding time.

Before the 2005 implementation of the LECA, the 16 weeks job-protected maternity leave measure existed but payments to mothers varied, depending on their canton and sector of activity, on the collective labor agreements and work contracts they were subject to, as well as their number of years of service.³ The main problem was the non-concordance in time of the different laws regulating maternity (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 244-245). For instance, while mothers were forbidden to work during the first eight weeks after delivery, those in their first year of service received salary payment for only three weeks according to the Swiss Code of Obligations (CO, art. 319 ff.).⁴

Parental leave policies

As regards paternity leave and parental leave, there are no statutory leaves or benefits similar to those for maternity. However, some legal provisions in the CO are used by private work organizations as a basis for the development of leave measures, in particular for male employees. Article 329, paragraph 3, of the CO states that the employer “must allow the employee customary hours and days off work”, in addition to vacation leave and a weekly day off. This generic formulation encompasses a variety of situations such as personal (e.g., moving house) and family events “such as birth or adoption, death of close family members, marriage of the employee, etc.” (Carruzzo, 2009, pp. 353-354).

Employers seem to generally grant one or two paid days off in the event of the birth of a child of a male employee.⁵ However, the existence, length and payment of such leaves depend on the parties involved and the social partners through the establishment of individual agreements, standard employment contracts, collective employment contracts, or well established common practices (even if unwritten) in a company or a branch. In a similar way, a form of unpaid leave (referred to as “unpaid leave”, “sabbatical leave” or “parental leave”) can be granted to employed mothers and fathers through individual or collective work contracts but there is no statutory right or minimum length set in the law.

Other children-related leave policies

As regards other children-related leaves, there is a statutory leave for employed parents who have sick children. Parents are entitled to three days per illness episode in order to care for their sick child upon presentation of a medical certificate (EmpA, art. 36, paragraph 3). When two persons share parental responsibilities, only one should benefit from this provision (parents should decide who benefits from the leave, depending on the solution which suits them best). This leave is understood as time to organize prolonged childcare if needed (SECO, 2001). Leave payment is the norm, but not mandatory. There is no statutory leave or guarantee of salary payment in the case of prolonged leaves for seriously ill children.

³ In addition, different schemes of means-tested maternity allowances (for employed women and/or homemakers) existed in several cantons and still do (Dafflon, 2003).

⁴ <http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/22.html#22>

⁵ As will be developed below, there is unfortunately no national survey assessing this trend on a large scale.

There is no federal statutory adoption leave nor any childcare leave. Adoption leave is sometimes granted by employers through individual or collective work contracts and by some cantons.

Special leave entitlements

As the presentation of leave policies shows, at federal level there is only a statutory right to maternity leave and to sick children leave for employed parents. Access to different leave policies such as paternity, parental and adoption leave largely depends on the existence of special leave entitlements granted through individual or collective work contracts. A recent study also reports further differences regarding maternity leave (Aeppli, 2012, pp. 70-71). In 2011, the majority of surveyed working mothers (63%) in Switzerland had benefited from a longer leave than the 14 weeks of statutory maternity benefits. For almost half of them, the leave was paid by their employer and for 37% the leave was unpaid. This example shows that there are important differences between companies, sectors and branches of employment, which result in inequalities among parents. Collective work contracts are also decisive for public sector employees, as they are not subject to the CO, but to special public sector work regulations. As will be developed in Chapter V, in general they have overall better working conditions and leave schemes than employees in the private sector.

There are also cantonal differences in access to leave policies. Depending on the canton of employment, parents may have access to different maternity and adoption leave rights. This is the case for the Canton of Geneva, where more generous maternity benefits are available. All employed women are granted 16 weeks of maternity benefits paid at 80% of earnings, instead of 14 weeks as is the case at federal level. The reason is that this cantonal maternity insurance was implemented in 2001, before a federal solution was found. Since the implementation of the LECA in 2005, the cantonal insurance continues to finance the additional two weeks of maternity leave. In the Cantons of Geneva and Vaud, employed adoptive parents are also granted adoption leave, for 14 and 16 weeks respectively, paid at 80% of salary.

2. International comparison

The presentation of the Swiss leave scheme gains more meaning when it is compared with other industrialized countries. This is, however, a complex task as leave policies are multifaceted and changing over time. Therefore, I present the historical emergence of leave types across industrialized countries. An incremental process has taken place across all countries where maternity leave and insurance have been complemented, since the 1970s and 80s, first by parental leave and then by paternity leave.⁶ I also give an overview of existing leave policies as of April 2012. This is possible thanks to data and publications issued by the *International*

⁶ The trend has been an incremental and non-return path of parental leave policies development. However, cuts in leave policies (mainly concerning levels of payments) have been observed in several countries since the economic crisis of 2008-2009, as reported during the 2010 seminar of the International Network on Leave Policies and Research (Milan, October 7th-8th 2010).

Network on Leave Policies & Research (Moss, 2012).⁷ This network of researchers representing 34 countries in 2013 publishes up-to-date yearly information on leave policies and research in each country, as well as cross-country comparisons.

2.1. Leave policies

Maternity leave

The development of maternity leaves and benefits started at the end of the 19th century. For example, Germany introduced a paid maternity leave in 1883, Belgium in 1893 and France in 1894. By World War II, paid maternity leave had been implemented across almost all Western European countries (Kammerman & Moss, 2009, p. 262). Interestingly, Switzerland was among the first countries to implement a form of maternity protection: in 1877 a law on industry prohibited women's work for eight weeks (six at least after delivery) for women who had just given birth (FCWI, 2001, p. 3). However, not until 2005 did it provide a form of statutory maternity insurance. Switzerland maintained its own delayed path⁸ and did not, for example, adhere to the 1919 ILO convention on Maternity Protection (Convention No. 3).⁹ Furthermore, as Switzerland is not part of the European Union,¹⁰ it was not required to adopt in 1992 the European Council Directive on Maternity Protection (92/85/EEC).¹¹

Comparing current maternity leave entitlements across 33 industrialized countries (Figure 2), the Swiss maternity leave of 14 weeks (or 3.2 months) corresponds to the average leave length (Moss, 2012, p. 12). However, six countries (Australia, Iceland, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal and Sweden) out of 33 grant a form of maternity leave without designating it as such (it is included in the "parental leave"). Therefore, considering only the 27 remaining countries, Switzerland falls slightly under the average length, which is four months of maternity leave.

Four countries have substantially longer periods of leave (six months or more) and five countries have less than two months. All maternity leaves include some financial compensation. The majority of countries guarantee a high level of income compensation, defined as 66% or more of prior earnings. Countries with longer leaves tend to provide a lower level of coverage (e.g., United Kingdom, Ireland and Greece). Finally, the United States has a generic unpaid "family and medical leave" that is not universal; i.e., it does not apply to private employers with fewer than 50 employees.

⁷ <http://www.leavenetwork.org/>

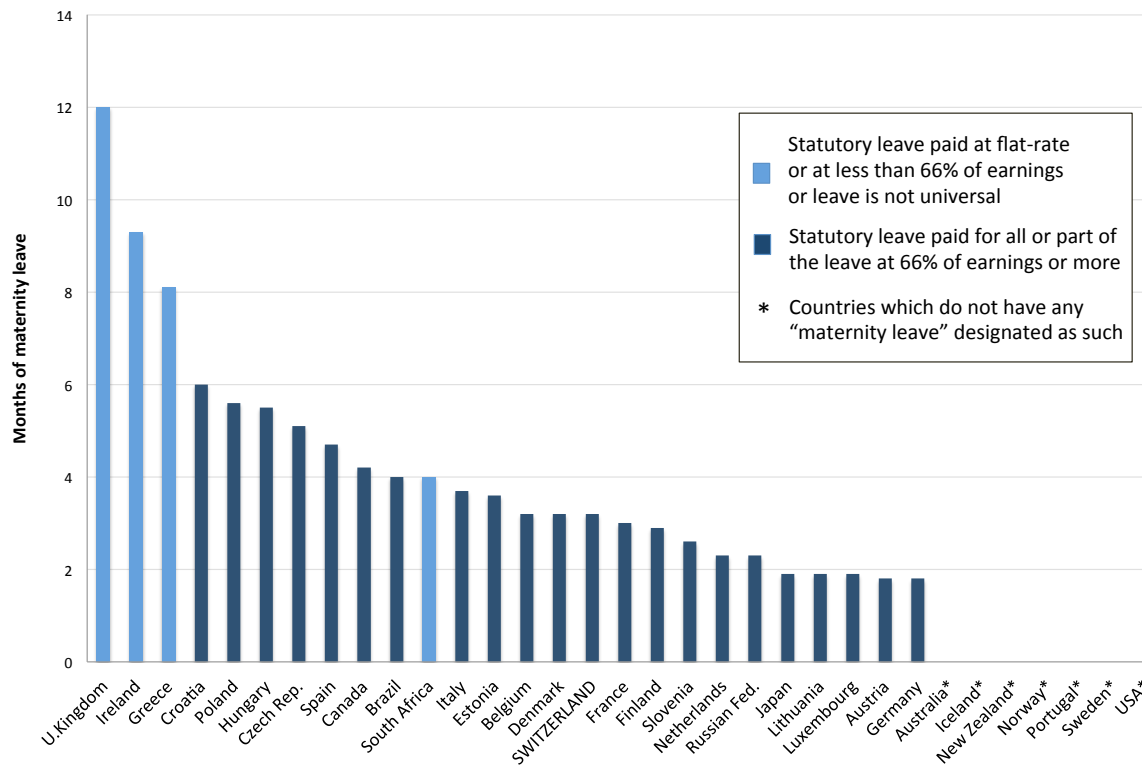
⁸ I expand on the politics of maternity leave implementation in Chapter III.

⁹ http://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C003. Since then, more up-to-date conventions (No. 103 & No.183) were adopted respectively in 1952 and 2000.

¹⁰ In 1992, the Swiss electorate rejected EU membership by national vote. Since then, bilateral agreements between Switzerland and the EU on specific policy areas have been privileged.

¹¹ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:31992L0085:en:html>

Figure 2 – Maternity leave length and payment in 33 countries



Source: Moss (2012), pp. 13-14. Data for 2012, except for the Russian Federation: 2010.

Notes: Leave lengths were calculated in months. The average of 4.35 weeks in one month was used. The leave indicated corresponds to the minimal length available to the majority of the workforce (e.g., when different, the private sector is indicated over the public sector, or the national scheme is indicated over regional specificities).

Parental leave

The average position of Switzerland concerning maternity leave must, however, be put into perspective with access to other leave policies. Statutory parental leave is generalized in almost all the other industrialized countries considered (see Figure 3). In 2012, only four out of 33 countries did not provide such a leave: Switzerland (the only European country), Brazil, South Africa and the US (Moss, 2012, p. 20).

Many countries started developing parental leaves in the 1970s and 80s, adding this new leave policy to the existing scheme. Austria, as a pioneer, implemented in 1957 an unpaid parental leave of six months, but limited it to employed mothers only (Rille-Pfeiffer, 2012, p. 61). In 1961, means-tested benefits were introduced (Marten, Neyer, & Ostner, 2012, p. 117). In 1974, Sweden was the first country to introduce a paid parental leave of six months¹² for mothers *and* fathers (Chronholm, 2009), which has since then been extended to 16 months (Haas, Duvander, & Chronholm, 2012). By the mid-1990s, the majority of countries which had implemented a parental leave legislation also offered some kind of financial compensation (Neyer, 2003, p. 56). Since 1996, there has been a European directive on parental leave (Fusulier, 2009), which was extended in 2010 from three to four months of minimum leave for each parent (2010/18/EU).¹³

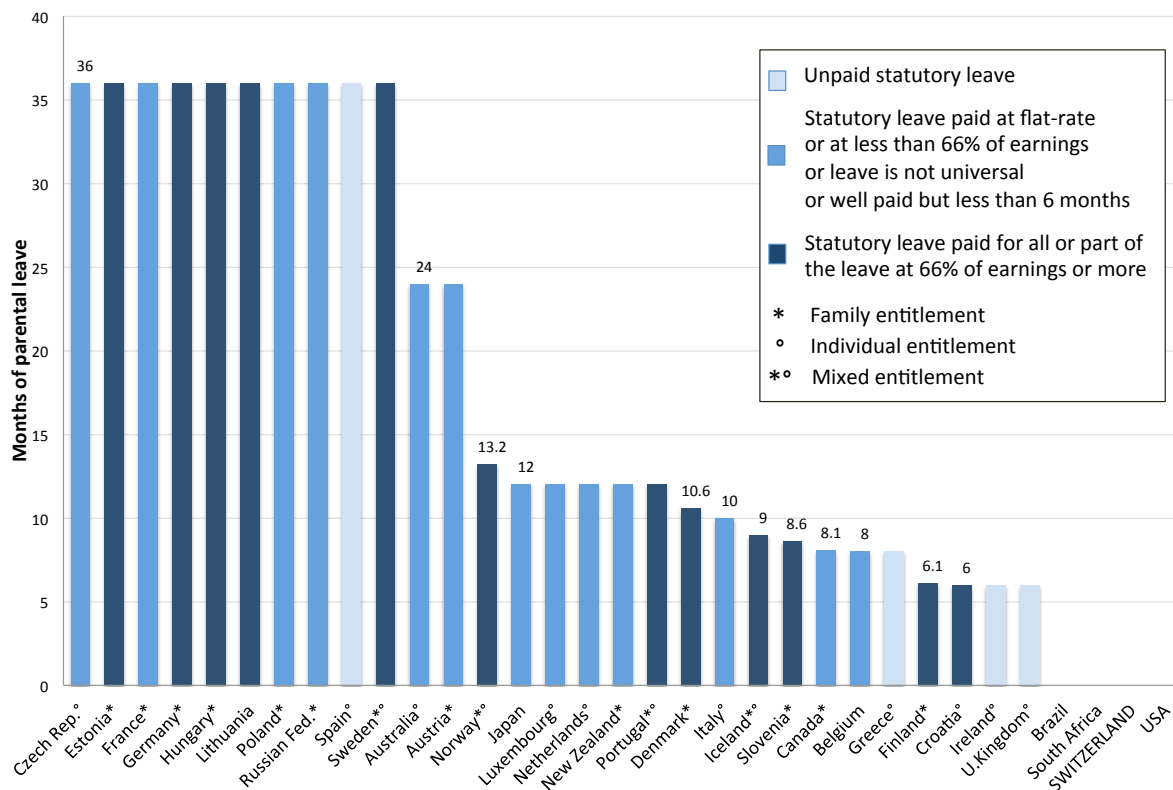
¹² The introduction of a “parental leave” in Sweden replaced the existing “maternity leave”.

¹³ <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2010:068:0013:0020:EN:PDF>

The directive recommends that leave should be individual and non-transferable, but it leaves the country members some latitude on this, as well as on determining its flexibility, eligibility and financial coverage.

Therefore, parental leaves vary greatly from one country to another according to these different dimensions, and also according to their length, as Figure 3 shows. Indeed, numerous EU countries exceed the minimum leave length they are constrained to by the EU Directive.¹⁴ Parental leaves vary from six to 36 months (three years). Entitlement depends in the large majority of countries on individuals' prior integration into the labor market. Exceptions are found in Austria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France and Germany, where parental benefits are also granted to parents outside of the labor market. The majority of countries (25) provide some financial coverage during leave, with the exception of Spain, Greece, Ireland and the United Kingdom (in light blue in Figure 3). Paid leaves vary considerably, from flat-rate benefits, to coverage at less than 66% of earnings, or coverage for less than six months (in medium blue) and leaves compensated at 66% or more of earnings for at least six months of leave (in dark blue). Only twelve countries provide leaves with high replacement benefits, and all of them impose maximum ceilings on benefit payments (Moss, 2012, p. 21).

Figure 3 - Parental leave length and payment in 33 countries



Source: Moss, 2012, pp. 22-25

Parental leave can generally be taken on a flexible basis. Parents can choose when they want to take it but within a maximum age limit of the child (up to eight years). It is also often possible to take leave in one block of time or several shorter blocks, or to take leave on a part-time basis.

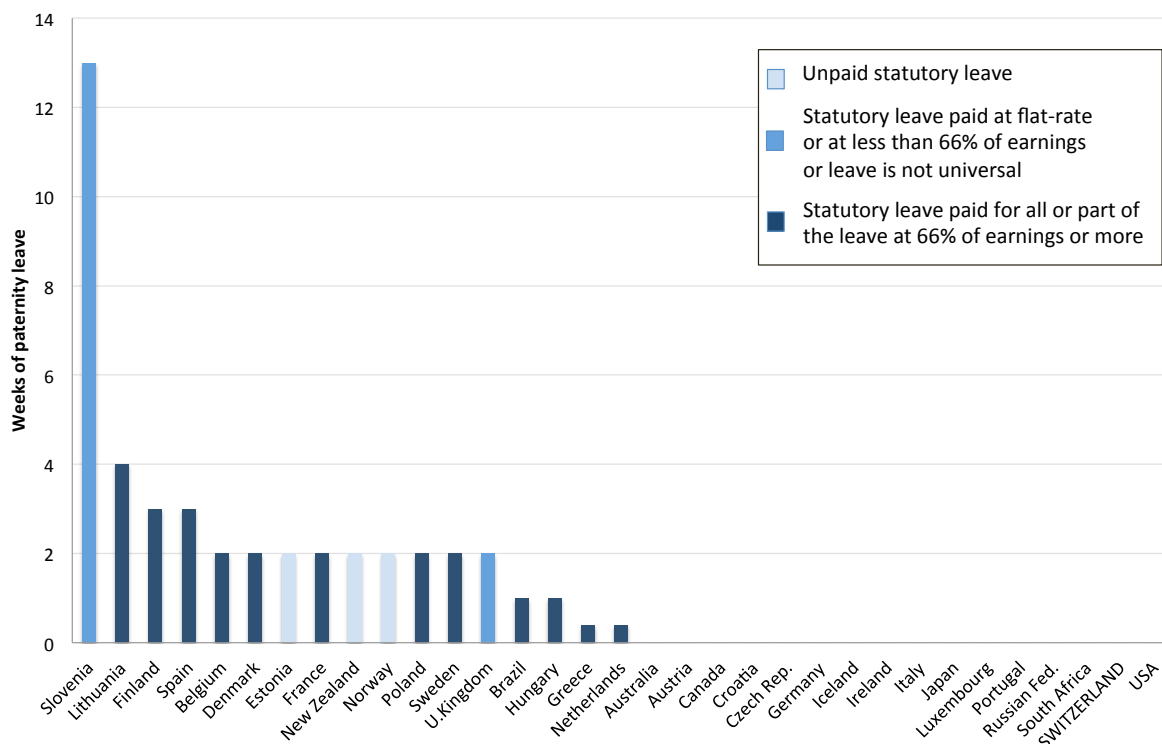
¹⁴ In 2012, Finland was not yet up-to-date with the implementation of the new directive: when it is a family entitlement, parental leave should add up to 8 months: i.e., 4 months per parent.

The type of entitlement varies too: leave policies are either addressed to the family as an entity and parents divide the leave between them as they choose (12 countries). In 11 countries leave is an individual entitlement, which can, however, in some cases be transferred to the other parent (e.g., in Croatia or Slovenia). Finally, in four countries (Iceland, Norway, Portugal and Sweden), parental leave is a mixed entitlement. For example in Sweden, out of the 480 days of paid parental leave, 60 days are reserved for each parent and cannot be transferred; this quota of leave is lost if not used. Half of the remaining 360 days are also reserved for each parent, but can be transferred from one parent to another, if agreed upon through a consent form. In addition, fathers also have a paternity leave; referred to as “daddy days”.

Paternity leave

Statutory paternity leave exists in approximately half of the countries considered. As in the case of maternity leave, in some countries there is no clear distinction between “paternity leave” designated as such and the quota of leave reserved for fathers within the parental leave (e.g., the case of Sweden just presented, except for the “daddy days”). The 17 countries in which a “paternity leave” is explicitly designated as such are indicated in Figure 4.

Figure 4 - Paternity leave length and payment in 33 countries



Source: Moss, 2012, pp. 16-19

In these countries, paternity leave often exists in addition to parental leave, and sometimes to the fathers’ quota. The majority of these countries provide a period of leave ranging from two days to two weeks, usually well-paid, on the same basis as maternity leave. Some countries, such as Spain and Finland (three weeks), Lithuania (four weeks) and Slovenia (13 weeks), provide fairly longer paternity leaves. However, in Slovenia only two weeks out of the 13 are well-paid.

Other children-related leaves

Switzerland is also an exception regarding other types of children-related leaves or care-related leaves. In most countries, **adoptive parents** have similar leave entitlements as other parents, which is not the case in Switzerland. Several countries provide the right either to **reduce working hours** (Austria, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden) or to request **flexible working hours** from their employers (Australia, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand and the United Kingdom) when they have children. Switzerland does not provide any comparable legal rights.¹⁵ The same applies to **childcare leaves**, which is, however, not very common either among the 33 countries under observation (it exists only in Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Iceland, Norway, Portugal and Hungary).

Most countries—this time including Switzerland—provide **leave in the event of sick children**. The EU parental leave directive gives all workers an entitlement to leave for urgent family reasons, without specifying minimum requirements. Among EU members, 14 provide ten days or more per year to care for sick children and the majority provides high replacement benefits. In Switzerland, wage-working parents are entitled to three days off per illness episode. Numerous countries also provide such leaves in the event of (serious) illness of close family members; which is not the case in Switzerland.

Finally, less than half of the countries provide paid **breastfeeding leaves**, in the form of a reduction of working hours (Moss, 2012, p. 26). In Switzerland a different system is in place: during the child's first year, the time spent breastfeeding on the company's site (and half of the time outside of the company's site) is considered as work time and therefore must not be compensated for by additional working time. Currently salary payment is not mandatory but legislative changes are underway to guarantee salary payment.

2.2. Comparative typologies

The comparative analysis of maternity and parental leave policies is complex. For this reason, several authors have developed typologies and indexes in order to group similar leave schemes together and take into account simultaneously leave length, coverage and gender dimensions (Moss, 2012; O'Brien, 2009; Ray, Gornick, & Schmitt, 2010). I present briefly some of them in order to better locate Switzerland within the variety of leave schemes.

Leave generosity

A central dimension of leave policies is the extent to which they are paid and for how long. Leave generosity impacts leave uptake rates and has combined gender and class effects.¹⁶ In many countries, there is a stark contrast between the total length of post-natal leaves (including maternity, parental, paternity and childcare leaves) available for parents and the actual number of months of leave which are well-paid (Moss, 2012, pp. 31-32). Following Peter Moss's

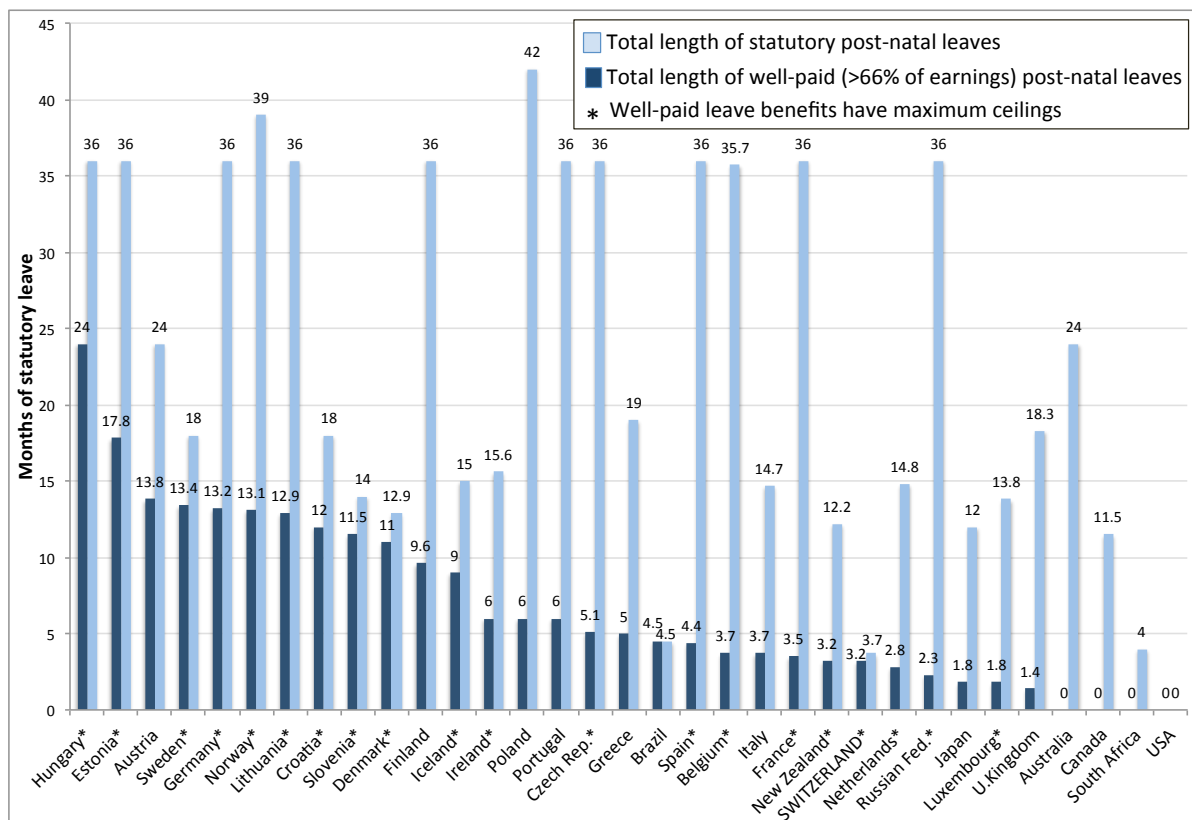
¹⁵ However, the Federal Council recently announced it would analyze the possibility of implementing a right for employed parents to reduce their working time by a maximum of 20% (see Appendix 11).

¹⁶ These issues will be developed in Chapter II.

classification, but based on my own calculations, the following four groups of countries can be distinguished (see Figure 5 and Appendix 1 for details):

- 9 months or more of well-paid leave: Eastern (Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania, Croatia and Slovenia) and Nordic countries (Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland and Denmark), as well as two Central European countries (Austria and Germany).
- 4-6 months of well-paid leave: A number of continental Western European countries (Poland, Portugal, Czech Republic, Greece and Spain) as well as Brazil and Ireland.
- 1-4 months of well-paid leave: Another set of continental Western European countries (Belgium, Italy, France, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Luxembourg), two English-speaking countries (New Zealand and the United Kingdom), as well as the Russian Federation and Japan.
- No well-paid leave: Three English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada and the USA) as well as South Africa do not provide any well-paid statutory post-natal leave to parents.

Figure 5 - Total length of statutory post-natal leaves and well-paid leaves



Source: Moss, 2012, pp. 31-34 and own calculations based on 33 country notes.

Notes: Following Peter Moss's definition, "post-natal leave" concerns leave available from the birth of the child and onwards. Therefore, portions of maternity leave which must be taken before the birth are not included in the calculations.

I indicate the length of total leave which can be spent with the child and not cumulated leave lengths. For example, when both parents are granted individual rights (e.g., 36 months), but leave can only be used until the child reaches the age of three, 36 months are indicated and not 72 months.

I indicate the minimum total leave available and therefore exclude bonus or extended leaves which are conditional for example on fathers using a part of parental leave, on multiple births or on the birth of a third or subsequent child.

Figure 5 shows that Switzerland is located at the lower end of the ranking of countries with regard to its generosity. However, contrary to the majority of countries observed, Swiss legislation does not create a large gap between the length of post-natal leaves available and the number of well-paid leaves.

Gender equality

Another key dimension of analysis of leave policies is their gendered aspect.¹⁷ Rebecca Ray, Janet Gornick and John Schmitt have developed a gender-equality index which takes into account the portion of leave available for fathers, reserved exclusively for them (fathers' quota), as well as the percentage of earnings replaced during periods of leave (Ray et al., 2010, pp. 201-202). A system of score attribution enables them to capture these two dimensions in a comparison of 21 countries,¹⁸ using 2008 data. Out of a 15-point scale, countries ranged from 13 points (Sweden) to 0 points (Switzerland). Authors highlight the fact that "generosity and gender equality are distinct features of leave designs [...] leave policies can be generous, or gender egalitarian, or both, or neither." (Ray et al., 2010, p. 207). Correlations for the 21 countries showed a modest but positive association between leave length and degree of gender equality and a strong association between levels of coverage and gender equality scores.

With a similar strong focus on fathers' access to leaves, Margaret O'Brien (2009) proposed a typology, which captures four different *statutory father-care-sensitive leave models*. I present below the main characteristics she proposed for each of the leave models. O'Brien's classification was based on 24 countries, using data for 2006 and 2007. The classification proposed in Table 2 is based on my own calculations using 2012 data for 33 countries (Moss, 2012).

The *extended father-care leave with high income-replacement* model (Model 1) gathers countries which propose in general both parental and paternity leaves with high levels of income replacement. Leave lengths targeted at men in particular range from 15 days (Spain) to three months (Iceland). Men also have the option to take parental leave (through individual or family entitlements), and often benefit from incentive systems which reflect policy makers' aim to promote men's leave uptake. For example in Norway, fathers have a reserved quota of 12 weeks from the parental leave, which is lost if they do not use it. In Germany and Croatia, incentives take the form of a bonus: if both parents take at least respectively two or three months (i.e., if men take at least two or three months), the total leave entitlement is extended by two months. Model 1 includes Nordic countries (except Denmark), but also, more recently, continental and Eastern European countries.

Model 2, the *short father-care leave with high income-replacement* provides well-paid but short periods of leave for fathers, from two to 14 days. This model concerns continental European countries, as well as Brazil, Denmark and the United Kingdom. Fathers generally also have access to parental leave (with the exception of Brazil) but there are no measures encouraging them to use it and it is often paid at low levels or unpaid. For example in the Netherlands, fathers

¹⁷ In Chapter II I review the literature on the effects of parental leave policies on gender relations.

¹⁸ Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, The Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States.

benefit from two days of paid paternity leave and an individual entitlement to parental leave equivalent to 26 weeks. Parental leave must be taken part-time and is unpaid.

Table 2 - Classification of countries according to the statutory father-care-sensitive leave typology (O'Brien, 2009)

Leave typology	Parental leave	Paternity leave	Father-care leave payment > 66%	Leave ≥ 15 days	Incentives for fathers	Countries
Model 1	X	X	X	X	X	Croatia; Finland; Germany; Iceland; Lithuania; Norway; Portugal; Slovenia; Spain; Sweden
Model 2	X	X	X			Belgium; Brazil; Denmark; France; Greece; Hungary; Netherlands; Poland
Model 3	X					Austria; Australia; Canada; Czech Republic; Estonia; Ireland; Italy; Japan; Luxembourg; New Zealand; Russian Federation; United Kingdom
Model 4						South Africa; Switzerland; USA

Source: Adapted from O'Brien, 2009. Classification of countries based on own calculations using 33 country notes (Moss, 2012).

Note: I define "high-income-replacement" as more than 66% of earnings (following Moss, 2012) and not 50% or more of earnings as defined by O'Brien (2009).

Model 3 gathers countries with *short or minimalist father-care leave with low or no income replacement* leaves. The majority of countries have no statutory paternity leaves, or only at low income-replacement levels. In New Zealand and Estonia, fathers have respectively one and two weeks' unpaid paternity leave. As regards parental leave, they are not father-targeted, and they are often minimalist in the sense that they are either low paid or unpaid. For example in Italy, each parent has six months of parental leave paid at 30% of earnings¹⁹ and in Ireland, each parent is granted 14 weeks of unpaid parental leave. A number of English-speaking countries are represented here, as well as Eastern European ones.²⁰

Finally, countries where there are *no statutory father-care-sensitive parental leaves* are a minority (Model 4). In these countries, fathers have no legal right to any kind of leave, paternity or parental. In South Africa and Switzerland, only maternity leave exists. In the USA, there is no universal right to leave, since only parents working in the public sector or in the private sector with more than 50 employees are entitled to twelve weeks of unpaid leave.²¹ According to

¹⁹ There is a bonus month of parental leave offered to fathers if they take three months of paternity leave (which is only granted under special circumstances).

²⁰ Austria is also classified in this model, because it proposes different options of childcare benefits (as a family entitlement): not only income related (at high replacement level, i.e., 80% of earnings during 12 months) but also various flat-rate/length combinations. Some incentives for fathers exist; flat-rate benefits options are not very appealing to fathers as they represent a significant loss of income.

²¹ This gender-neutral provision was implemented in 1993 with the adoption of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

O'Brien, within this model, the tendency "is to encourage informal and private solutions for the care of infants and children" (2009, p. 198).

The results from Ray et al.'s analysis as well as the adaptation of O'Brien's typology with up-to-date information on a larger set of countries shows that the Swiss leave scheme is one of the least gender-equal ones. It represents an exception: it does not guarantee any access to statutory leaves to men. This indicates that the Swiss welfare state is gendered; it currently only considers employed *women* as potential childcarers.

3. The Swiss welfare state

In order to understand the reasons for the comparatively limited and gendered Swiss leave scheme, I present below the broader context of the Swiss welfare state. The development of the main traditional social security schemes as well as of family and gender-equality policies in Switzerland was slow in European comparison. Swiss institutions as well as political and cultural factors played an important role in this delay. This section aims to present the particularities of Swiss political institutions, as well as to situate the Swiss welfare state context among other industrialized countries. Swiss specificities make it difficult to classify the welfare state within welfare regime typologies. However, it is necessary to contextualize the Swiss leave scheme within the welfare state and according to welfare regimes in order to understand its exceptional delay and limitation. Even more importantly, this contextualization is necessary in order to understand the research questions addressed in this thesis. It enables one to understand why it is relevant to analyze the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland. It also provides key information to the interpretation of the empirical results of this research.

3.1. The slow development of the modern welfare state

The modern Swiss welfare state is known for having developed slowly and in an incremental way. The foundation of the traditional Swiss social state was laid between 1925 and 1945, when the major social security schemes were adopted in the Federal Constitution (Armingeon, 2001, p. 149). However, their concrete implementation took place in the second half of the 20th century, considerably later than in other countries from the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-ordination and Development). Family policies have followed an even more delayed path, as they are developing mainly since the beginning of the 21st century. As with its leave scheme, Switzerland has limited family policies in comparison with other Western industrialized countries.

The genesis of traditional social policy schemes in Switzerland

Klaus Armingeon (2001, p. 149) identified four main periods in the development of the traditional social policy schemes (see Table 3). The starting point of the construction of the Swiss welfare state is situated at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

Influenced by the developments of social policies introduced in Germany by Bismarck, the executive government (also referred to as “Federal Council”) proposed to introduce in the Constitution the mandate to implement a health insurance and an accident insurance at the federal level (Bertozzi, Bonoli, & Gay-des-Combes, 2005). Since in Switzerland political power is divided into three levels (confederation, cantonal and communal levels),²² the federal state can only legislate in an area of policy if it is permitted to do so by the federal Constitution. The electorate accepted the principle of federal health and federal accident insurances in an obligatory referendum²³ in 1890. However, in 1900, voters rejected the corresponding laws which had been adopted by Parliament. Indeed, the Swiss political system enables citizens to pronounce on government and parliamentary decisions (through “optional referendum”). A popular ballot must be held if 50,000 signatures are collected within 100 days after the publication of a new legislation. After this failure, Parliament delayed and reduced considerably the scope of the health and accident insurances put to the vote. They were accepted and introduced respectively in 1912 and 1918. These two laws were not universal; they were based on voluntary affiliation. Health insurance remained voluntary until 1994, when the Swiss electorate finally accepted its compulsory form.

The inter-war period constitutes the second phase, during which the principle of a federal pension insurance was adopted. In the aftermath of World War I, and due to precarious living conditions and high unemployment rates, social dissatisfaction in the population led the Federal Council to propose constitutional articles in favor of pension and invalidity insurances. They were accepted by national vote in 1925. However, the proposition of a law for a universal pension insurance (called the First Pillar) failed in national vote in 1931. With World War II, prior concerns regarding earnings compensation for military recruits were revived. Also, fears of a diversification of systems across cantons acted in favor of the acceptance of a federal pension insurance by the electorate in 1947.

The third phase took place during the post-World War II period, with the adoption of a Constitutional article on the family (1945), as well as on unemployment insurance (1947). In 1952, a voluntary unemployment law was introduced which left considerable power to the cantons, i.e., they could decide whether to make affiliation compulsory or not.²⁴ The same year, family allowances were introduced, but only for farm workers and mountain farmers. This created considerable disparities with the rest of the population, which still depended on cantonal legislation. In 1960, invalidity insurance—which had already been adopted in the Constitution in 1925—was finally adopted by national vote.

The fourth phase of development, took place in the 1970s and 1980s. First, in the aftermath of the oil crisis in the 1970s, and the subsequent rise of unemployment rates,²⁵ the principle of compulsory unemployment insurance was accepted by national vote in 1976. However, it was only in 1982 that the parliamentary process finished and the law was enforced in 1984. During

²² Switzerland is a federal state where the political power is divided into three levels: the confederation, the cantons (26) and the communes (over 2500).

²³ Any amendment to the Constitution is subject to obligatory referendum; i.e., it must be accepted by a majority of the electorate and a majority of cantons.

²⁴ In 1975, only 22% of workers were affiliated to an unemployment insurance scheme (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 28).

²⁵ Levels of unemployment were not as high as in other countries, mainly because the work permits of foreigners were not renewed when they lost their jobs and also because women who lost their jobs tended not to be registered as unemployed, particularly when they were not entitled to benefits (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 28).

the 1970s, the revision of the Constitutional article on pension insurance also took place. The system of three pillars was adopted in the Constitution in 1972 on the initiative of both left and right parties. The First Pillar—which covers the vital minimum for all—was completed with the introduction of a system of compulsory occupational pension (Second Pillar) and a voluntary privately funded one (Third Pillar). The Second and Third Pillars were accepted in 1982 and came into force in 1985.

Table 3 – Historical overview of the Swiss welfare state development

	Policy measure	Year of Constitutional decision	Year of adoption ^a	Number of years until adoption	OECD average year of adoption ^b
Traditional social policy schemes	Accident insurance	1890	1918	28	1905
	Health insurance (compulsory)	1890 (1890)	1911 (1994)	21 (104)	1924
	Pension Insurance (2 nd and 3 rd pillars)	1925 (1972)	1947 (1985)	22 (13)	1917
	Invalidity insurance	1925	1959	34	-
	Unemployment insurance (compulsory)	1947 (1976)	1952 (1982)	5 (6)	1929
Family policies	Maternity insurance	1945	2004	59	1945
	Family allowances (harmonization and increase)	1945 (1945)	1952 (2006)	7 (61)	1944
	Early Childhood Education and Care services	-	2002 ^c	-	-
Gender-equality policies	Women's suffrage	1971	-	-	1941
	Gender equality	1981	1996	15	-

Source: adapted from Armingeon, 2001, pp. 148-149; Häusermann & Kübler, 2010, pp. 164-165; Bertozzi, Bonoli & Gay-des-Combes, 2005, pp. 23-31; Thoenen, 2010 and FCWI, 2001.

Notes: a. I indicate the year of adoption of a law. In order for a law to come to force, one or two additional years are usually necessary. b. This information was available in Armingeon (2001) only for traditional social policy schemes (except invalidity insurance). Average year for maternity insurance was indicated on the basis of Kamerman & Moss (2009, p. 262) and the average year of women's suffrage was indicated on the basis of Thoenen (2010). c. The Federal Law on Financial Support for Childcare—a temporary program for childcare infrastructure subsidy—was adopted without the existence of a Constitutional article.

The development of family policies in a comparative perspective

Welfare provision for families in need was in the pre-industrial period provided by the third sector; i.e., churches and private welfare organizations (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 24-27). With industrialization and World War I, an increasing proportion of the population faced poverty situations, which raised awareness of social policy needs. During World War II, the government was granted special powers because of war time, and implemented earnings compensations for military recruits in 1939 and family allowances for farmers in 1944 (Aebi, Dessoulavy, & Scenini,

1994, p. 41). On the impulse of a conservative popular initiative, a Constitutional article on families was adopted in 1945 by national vote. The article established the principle that the federal state should take into account family needs and determined several fields of competences including family allowances and maternity insurance (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 32-33). Therefore the principle of implementing a maternity leave as well as family allowances was accepted in 1945, in the second phase of development of the welfare state. However, federal family allowances—while they were partially implemented in 1952—were only recently harmonized across cantons and maternity insurance was adopted in 2004 only.

Considering the historical development of family policies (Table 3), it appears that the recent reforms at the turn of the 21st century represent a fifth, separate phase of welfare state development. This took place first with the adoption in 2004 by the electorate of a federal maternity insurance. As will be presented more in depth in Chapter III, maternity leave was a highly contested policy, and no fewer than four national votes were needed (1974, 1984, 1987, 1999) until a consensus on the issue was reached (FCWI, 2001, pp. 7-10). Secondly, as regards family allowances, as previously mentioned, the law adopted in 1952 was actually limited to farmers only. Cantons developed their own family allowance compensation funds, and by 1965, all of them had enacted such a law (FSIO, 2008, p. 1). It is only in 2006 that a Family Allowances Act (FAA) was adopted at the federal level. This law, which came into force in 2009, harmonized the levels of family allowances across cantons which varied in 2005, between CHF 160 and 260 per month (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 29). The FAA set a minimum allowance of CHF 200 per month per child under 16 years old. For children from 16 to 25 years old, an allowance for educational costs of CHF 250 per child per month was determined. Family allowances are granted to all employees, means-tested individuals and—since 2013—to the self-employed.²⁶

The Constitutional article on families²⁷ does not explicitly mention the provision of early-childhood education and care (ECEC) services. The Parliament recently proposed to amend the article and to introduce explicitly the possibility for the federal state to finance ECEC services, in complement to cantonal and communal provisions: “the Confederation and cantons encourage measures which enable people to reconcile family life and professional or educational life”.²⁸ Adopted by Parliament in 2012, the amendment project was put to the electorate in March 2013. The dual majority necessary for a Constitutional amendment was not reached. While a majority of voters accepted the amendment (54.3%), a majority of cantons rejected it (13 against 10).

Although the amendment was rejected, federal state intervention in the ECEC policy field had already occurred in the previous decade. In 2002 the Federal Law on Financial Support for Childcare was adopted.²⁹ The aim of this incentive program was to create more childcare places by funding public or private nurseries and after-school facilities. This law was initially voted for a period of eight years; it was extended for four more years in 2010 and will end by January 2015. These measures respond to a situation of lack of supply—a shortfall of approximately 50,000 childcare places in 2005 (Iten et al., 2005)—and low enrolment rates. In 2008, 47.5% of children aged between three and five years were enrolled in formal childcare and pre-schools,

²⁶ <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/themen/zulagen/00059/index.html?lang=fr>

²⁷ The article (art.34 quinquies) adopted in 1945 was reformulated when the 1999 New Constitution was adopted, it is now Article 116.

²⁸ Project for constitutional article, consulted in December 2012: <http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/ff/2012/5465.pdf>

²⁹ <http://www.admin.ch/ch/f/rs/8/861.fr.pdf>

while the EU-27 mean was 81.8% (OECD, 2011).³⁰ Childcare services costs nonetheless remain high. In 2004, they represented 39% of the average income of a dual-earner family, against only 8% in Sweden, 9% in Germany, and 15% in France (Marten et al., 2012, p. 121).

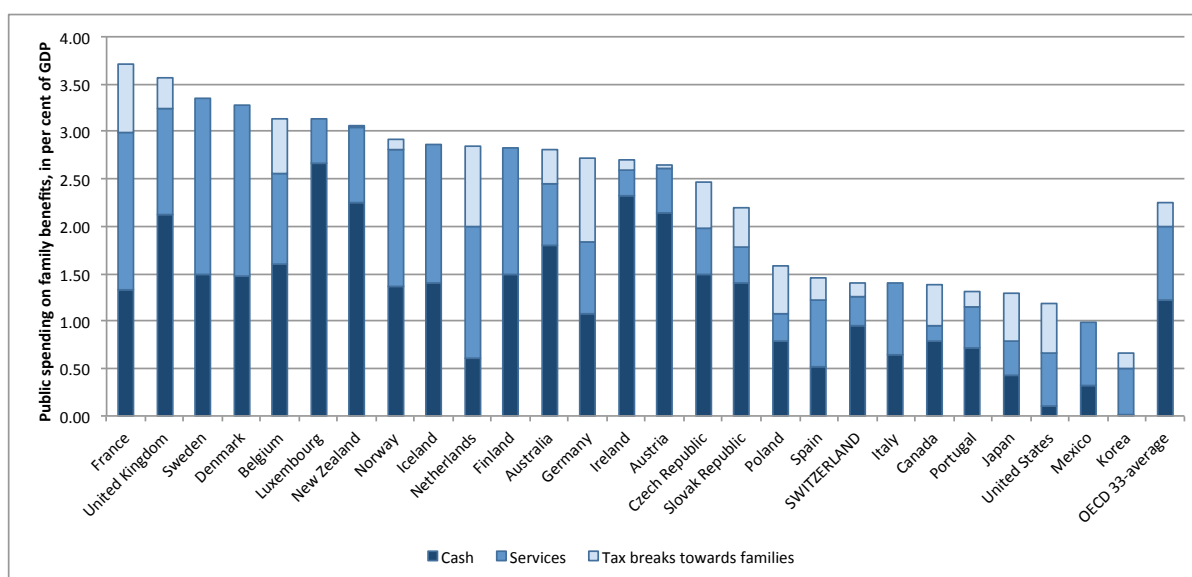
As regards early public education, it remains a cantonal prerogative. This means that public schooling starts around the age of six or seven year (depending on the canton) and that in many cantons, the school day is not continuous (children are expected to eat at home) (Marten et al., 2012, p. 128). Although there have been no Constitutional changes in this regard, in 2009 the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Education adopted an agreement which harmonizes the public obligatory educational system across signatory cantons—15 out of 26 (EDK, 2010). The agreement means that, by 2015, these cantons will implement mandatory schooling for children in their fourth year. The agreement also entails the promotion of block periods in elementary schooling, but no minimum hours of coverage per week are set, leaving the decision to cantonal governments.

Consistently with the previous observations on Switzerland's limited leave scheme in comparison with other industrialized countries, a similar situation can be observed concerning family policies. The comparison of expenditure rates among OECD countries regarding different types of family policy measures—in cash, services and tax breaks—reveals that in 2007 Switzerland allocated 1.4% of its GDP to family benefits (OECD, 2011). This is far from the average of 33 OECD countries, which is 2.2% (see Figure 6 and Appendix 2). The majority of expenditures consist in cash transfers (almost 1% out of 1.4%), as compared to services and tax breaks for families. This is characteristic of welfare states where the family's care responsibility for its members is considered as being best supported by cash transfers and by contrast as being weakened by state-provided services (Marten et al., 2012, p. 116).

With a particular interest in policies that improve work-family life reconciliation; i.e., leave policies, care policies and workplace policies, Olivia Thoenen (2010) compared 21 Western democracies according to an index which calculates the level of public support of family and employment life. Switzerland reached only 13% of the ideal value (100%), and—as observed by Thévenon—had similar scores to those of Anglo-Saxon countries (United States: 20%, Australia: 25% and New Zealand: 32%). At the other end, the Nordic countries such as Sweden (83%), Norway (71%), Denmark (67%) and Finland (66%) were the ones with the highest scores (Thoenen, 2010, p. 22).

³⁰ Even more relevant would be figures for children under age three, but these statistics are not available for Switzerland (FSIO, 2005) In terms of legislative changes the FSIO notes that five models can be implemented without any constitutional amendment (1, 4, 5, 6 and 7), while the others necessitate a modification. As regards the division of responsibilities between the confederation and the cantons, some models propose a federal solution only (4, 5, 6 and 7) while the others enable cantons to develop insurances in order to finance a parental or a paternity leave. Finally, as regards the compatibility of the leave models with the EU Directive on parental leave (models 4 and 5 are excluded as they propose a paternity leave), only models 2, 3 and 8 would conform to the EU prescription of a four-month parental leave entitlement for each parent.

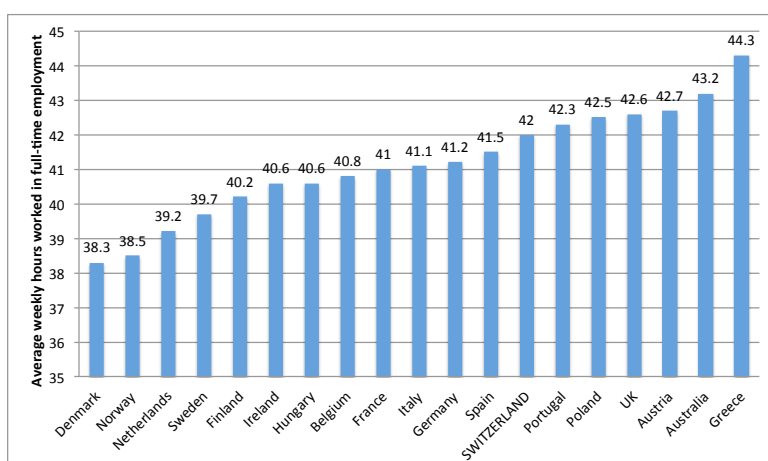
Figure 6 - Public spending on family benefits in 2007 in OECD countries



Source: Social Expenditure Database (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure), 2010, and ESSPROS, 2010.

Note: Only countries with complete data information were selected for display on the figure. See information for all 33 OECD countries in Appendix 2.

Figure 7 - Average usual weekly hours worked in a set of OECD countries in 2011



Source: extracted from OECD online database (<http://stats.oecd.org/>), consulted January 23rd 2014.

Note: The data concerns the average weekly hours worked on the main job for full-time employees (part-time employees are excluded).

Finally, working time regulations can also be considered as forms of work-family life reconciliation policies (Gornick & Heron, 2006). It is noteworthy that Switzerland has comparatively long working weeks; in 2011, individuals employed full-time were working on average 42 hours per week (see Figure 7). In contrast, some Scandinavian countries (e.g., Denmark, Norway and Sweden) and the Netherlands had average working weeks under 40 hours. In fact in some countries (e.g., France, Belgium and Sweden), reduced working weeks have been set by law or implemented through collective agreements (between 35 and 38 hours) (Gornick & Heron, 2006, p. 154). To a certain extent, these countries distance themselves from typically male breadwinner work-time regimes, which are characterized by long and standard working weeks. In contrast, in Switzerland, the Code of Obligations sets the maximum number of weekly working hours between 45 and 50 hours, depending on the employee's branch of activity

(CO, art. 9). Normal working weeks are also set through collective agreements. Instead of aiming to reduce the standard working week, the Swiss government considers that the flexibilization of work time and the promotion of part-time work are priority measures (FSIO, 2013).³¹ According to some authors (e.g., Figart & Mutari, 2000), such flexibilization measures actually reinforce gender inequality by increasing the gender wage gap and the gender division of work.

In sum, not only are policies enabling parents to externalize childcare (i.e., ECEC services) or to provide childcare themselves (i.e., leave policies) limited in Switzerland, but full-time employment is also comparatively more constraining than in many other countries. This results in a significant work-family time squeeze for full-time employed parents.

Gender-equality policies

Switzerland is also well known for its particularly late introduction of women's suffrage. Women were granted political rights at the federal level in 1971 (FCWI, 2001). This was the result of a long struggle, and one failure in a national vote in 1959. On the cantonal and communal level it was enforced completely in 1990 only, after a federal court decision imposed it on the last recalcitrant canton. After World War II, Switzerland was—beside Portugal (1976), Monaco (1963) and Liechtenstein (1984)—the only European country where women's suffrage had not yet been introduced. The main reason for the late introduction of votes for women is that—as for other constitutional changes—it had to be accepted in an obligatory referendum by the male electorate.

The principle of equality between women and men was included in the Swiss Constitution in 1981 (Sutter et al. 2001). This article aims to guarantee formal equality between men and women in all domains, notably work, family and education as well as its concrete realization. On the basis of this article, many laws which were discriminatory towards women were amended; for example matrimonial and family legislations as well as the pension insurance. Federal and cantonal gender equality offices were opened at the end of the 1980s. Following a report on women's situation in the labor market and gender wage gap, the federal Gender Equality Act (GEA) was adopted in 1996. It aims in particular to fight against direct and indirect gender discrimination in the labor market. The implementation of this law enabled punishment by law of many cases of gender discrimination as well as the funding of programs which promote equal opportunities in working life (Lanfranchi, 2012). However, according to Lucia Lanfranchi (forthcoming), within this implementation process, business interests have taken precedence over gender equality objectives; for example, participation in these programs is represented as flexible and is not binding for employers.

Thus many gender inequalities persist in working life. Regarding the gender pay gap, in 2010 the standardized gross salary in the private sector was CHF 5,176 for women and CHF 6,346 for men (FSO, 2013e, p. 23). This gender pay gap (18.4%) has been slightly decreasing since the mid-1990s. It is the result of many gender inequalities in the labor market. First, women are less represented in better-paid executive functions. In 2012, women occupied approximately one-third of management positions in the labor market (FSO, 2013e, p. 15). Secondly, in addition to this “vertical” form of gender segregation, horizontal segregation implies that women and men

³¹ See Appendix 11.

are distributed unequally among the different sectors of the economy. Women are more likely to be employed in sectors of the economy—such as the health and social activities sector (76.8% of female employees in 2001), in hotels, restaurants and other services (approximately 67%) and education (60%)—which propose lower salaries than sectors invested predominantly by men (FSO, 2003, p. 41). Conversely, there are proportionally very few women in the construction and agriculture sectors (respectively 12% and 19%), the industry (25.9%) and the transportation and communication (34.5%) sectors. Thirdly, education, age and seniority also impact the level of salary: employed women are on average less experienced and less educated than men (FOGE & FSO, 2013). However, it is estimated that approximately 40% of the observed gender pay gap cannot be accounted for by individual, company or sector-level characteristics and therefore, that it is the result of discriminatory practices in the labor market (FOGE & FSO, 2013, p. 10).

Women's position in politics is also still very unequal in comparison with men. In 2000, a popular initiative in favor of female quotas in politics was rejected in a national vote. It aimed to increase the proportion of women in the main political bodies (legislative, executive and legal) as well as in public administrations (FCWI, 2001). Since the 2000s, the Parliament had been composed approximately of one-fifth of women; since the last elections held in 2011, the Parliament is composed of 24.3% of women (FSO, 2013e, p. 33). As regards the executive government, the first woman was elected in 1984 and it is currently composed of three women and four men.

3.2. Situating the Swiss welfare state³²

After having described the development of the main social security schemes, as well as family policies and gender-equality policies, I will present how the Swiss welfare state currently compares with others. Welfare states are frequently described according to the well-known and debated welfare regime typology developed by Esping-Andersen (1990). In his seminal work *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, he identified three welfare regimes: liberal, conservative-corporatist and social-democratic regimes. The distinctive features of these three regimes can be summarized the following way (based on Arts & Gelissen, 2002, pp. 141-142; Esping-Andersen, 1990, pp. 26-29):³³

- The liberal regime is characterized by means-tested assistance, modest universal transfers or modest social insurance plans targeted principally at low-income state-dependents. There is a low level of redistribution of incomes and the state encourages the operation of the market, either by subsidizing private welfare schemes or by keeping social benefits low for the most needy. Typical countries identified by Esping-Andersen are the United States, Canada and Australia.
- The conservative-corporatist welfare regime is characterized by a moderate level of decommodification. It is marked by a strong tradition of corporatism and statism and

³² Some elements in this section, as well as in Chapter III were developed together with Lucia M. Lanfranconi in the context of a co-authored article to be published (Lanfranconi & Valarino, forthcoming).

³³ Esping-Andersen identified clusters of countries among a set of western welfare states by taking into account their degree of decommodification and social stratification. "Degree of decommodification" means the degree to which social rights enable people to maintain a livelihood independently of pure market forces. These two fundamental dimensions are both shaped by the nexus of the state and the market in the distribution system.

influenced by religious values. The aim is to provide income maintenance benefits related to occupational status, promote preservation of class and status differences and preserve the traditional family. According to Esping-Andersen, “the principle of ‘subsidiarity’ serves to emphasize that the state will only interfere when the family’s capacity to service its members is exhausted” (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 27). Typical countries identified are Austria, France, Germany and Italy.

- The social-democratic regime is characterized by universalism and high decommodification. The system is highly redistributive and not based on any individual contributions. “Social policy within this type of welfare state is aimed at a maximization of capacities for individual independence” (Arts & Gelissen, 2002, p. 142). As a consequence, women (independently of whether they have children or not) are encouraged to participate in the labor market and extensive public services are provided. Scandinavian countries are those which approach most closely this ideal-type.

Classifying Switzerland among one of these regimes has proven to be a challenge, given its heterogeneity, its evolution over time and the differences between policy fields, notably between the traditional social security measures and family policies (for comparative overviews, see for example Abrahamson, 1999; Arts & Gelissen, 2002; Levy, 2007; Nollert, 2007). Authors diverge as to whether Switzerland corresponds more closely to a conservative-corporatist regime (Lane, 1999) or a liberal regime (Esping-Andersen, 1990; Levy, 2007). Researchers seem to agree that Switzerland is the furthest from a social-democratic regime.

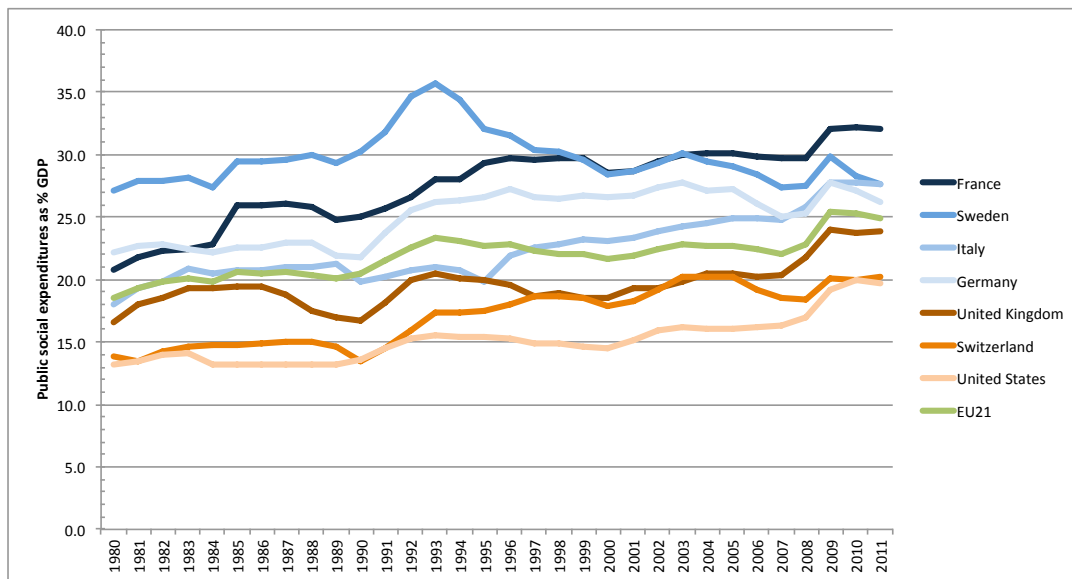
Some authors argue that Switzerland is moving from a liberal regime to a conservative-corporatist one, however, keeping some of its liberal traits (Armingeon, 2001; Obinger, 1998). This view is shared by Silja Häusermann (2010, pp. 212-215), who described how since the 1980s, the Swiss welfare state has gathered the main conservative-corporatist characteristics. First, access to the main social insurance systems is based on work participation and benefits tend to be earnings-related, “because the main goal of these welfare systems is not redistribution, but status protection and income replacement” (p. 213). Secondly, social insurances are to a large extent financed through wage contributions and not taxes; about 77% of the revenues of the welfare system come from contribution-payments (p. 213-214). Thirdly, the welfare system is decentralized and based on subsidiarity principles which involve a large variety of actors, not only sub-state levels, but also private welfare organizations as well as trade unions and business organizations. Fourthly, the Swiss welfare state is strongly gendered: “entitlements being heavily employment and contribution-related, women received much lower benefits throughout the pension, unemployment, accident and disability insurances” (p. 214).

So, even if Switzerland has—in comparison with other typical conservative countries such as Germany, France and Italy—low public expenditure levels (see Figure 8 and Appendix 3), it currently shares a set of common characteristics with these “Bismarckian” countries.³⁴ In my view, this is mainly true for traditional social security schemes but less so for family policies. Although they are in the process of reforming their family policies, conservative-corporatist

³⁴ “Bismarckian” and “Beveridgean” social policy models are often used in comparative social policy (Bonoli, 1997, pp. 356-358). The origin of “Bismarckian” is that, in the 1880s, the German statesman Bismarck implemented several social security schemes in reaction to the rise of the working class and the threat to social and political stability it represented. “Bismarckian social policy is concerned with income maintenance for employees, whereas Beveridgean social policy aims at the prevention of poverty” (Bonoli, 1997, p. 357).

countries historically invested in measures which reinforced traditional family values, notably promoting motherhood through long (flat-rate or low-paid) maternity and parental leaves, as well as through cash for care programs in order to promote maternal care. And yet, the Swiss leave scheme is far from fitting this picture. Stay-at-home motherhood is not actively promoted by the state through social policies and benefits. By contrast, the combination of statutory leave policies, ECEC services and other family policy measures situate Switzerland together with typically liberal countries such as for example Britain, the US and Australia (Thévenon, 2011; Thoenen, 2010).

Figure 8 - Public expenditures as percentage of GDP



Source: OECD, 2012 (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure), selected countries.

3.3. Understanding Swiss specificities

The overview of the development of the main traditional social policy schemes as well as the more recent developments of family and gender-equality policies point to the particularly slow process of policy implementation and change in Switzerland. Table 3 showed the considerable number of years between the adoption of a principle in the Constitution and its effective implementation through the adoption or amendment of a law. I present below the specificities of the Swiss context which contribute to explain this slow process. I also develop on possible reasons explaining the few reforms in family policy which have taken place since the beginning of the 2000s.

Institutional factors

Welfare state analysts (e.g., Armingeon, 2001; Häusermann & Kübler, 2010; Marten et al., 2012; Obinger, 1998; Obinger, Armingeon, Bonoli, & Bertozzi, 2005) agree on the fact that institutional factors, notably federalism and direct democracy, account largely for Switzerland's delay in developing its major social security schemes. As a federal state, Switzerland follows a subsidiarity principle where "everything not falling under the jurisdiction of the higher level is

the responsibility of the lower level” (Butschi & Cattacin, 1993, p. 362). And since the adoption of the 1874 Swiss Constitution, it has been mainly the cantons which have been responsible for social policy matters (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 270). This explains why extending the federal state’s role and developing a Swiss welfare state meant modifying systematically the Constitution.³⁵ As mentioned before, because Switzerland has a direct democracy political system, any modification of the Constitution must be submitted to obligatory referendum and accepted by a majority of the electorate and of the cantons. The institutional fragmentation was found to be particularly delaying for family policies. Reform debates tend to focus on the adequate state level of provision and financing and not on the policy content (Bonoli & Häusermann, 2011, p. 200).

Direct democracy also gives citizens powerful democratic tools such as optional referendums and popular initiatives. Optional referendums are similar to a veto: they delay the political process by blocking amendments or delaying their enactment (Federal Chancellery, 2009, p. 17). Between 1874 and 2000, the Swiss electorate had to decide on 27 optional referendums concerning social policies, which were exclusively launched by right-wing parties and/or business related organizations (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 271). The success rate of optional referendum is relatively high: on average, almost one in three succeeded in popular ballots (Federal Chancellery, 2009, p. 17). The interaction between federalism and direct democracy resulted in a “two-stage process” of social policy legislation, where “each phase was subject to an obligatory and/or optional referendum” (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 300).

Swiss institutions contributed to delay the construction of the welfare state in many other ways and oriented the path it followed. First, optional referendums encourage political agreement. In order to prevent that an optional referendum is launched, the government organizes a consultation procedure prior to the parliamentary decision-making process, with all interested parties (including cantons, political parties, business organizations, trade unions and NGOs). This procedure influences the crafting of legislations, towards compromises likely to be supported by a majority. Bottom-up constitutional amendments are also possible thanks to popular initiatives: citizens may request that the electorate decides on an amendment they want to make to the Constitution.³⁶ However, popular initiatives have very low success rates in comparison with optional referendums. The 19 initiatives launched by the Social Democrats and trade unions in favor of social policies between 1891 and 1999 were rejected (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 272). They did not strongly influence the development of the welfare state, but indirectly “the concerns they address often give rise to broad debate and are eventually translated, at least partially, into new laws” (Federal Chancellery, 2009, p. 17).

Secondly, the bi-cameral structure of Parliament also plays a role in the delayed development of the welfare state. Both houses of parliament—the National Council and the Council of States—are given equal power. However, the election principle leads to an overrepresentation

³⁵ And even so, the Swiss constitution allows for substantial regional differences in income tax levels and in the delivery of public services (OCDE, 2004). Because it is up to cantonal and communal governments to decide whether to provide benefits which exceed those available to all citizens through the federal legislations, scholars have identified different “worlds of welfare” within Switzerland (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 267).

³⁶ 100 000 signatures in favor of the proposal must be collected within 18 months.

of bourgeois parties in the Council of States.³⁷ Because both houses must accept a law or amendment in order for it to be adopted, this party composition of the Council of States was (and still is) detrimental to the development of the welfare state. Indeed, considering the different party composition of these two “institutional veto players” (Tsebelis, 2000), frequent disagreements on social policies take place between them (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 270).

Thirdly, the subsidiarity principle mentioned earlier influences the division of tasks among federal, cantonal and communal levels and the allocation of resources. This translates into a very weak fiscal power of the federal state: “apart from the contributions of the various social security schemes regulated at the federal level, the federal state has no permanent income from direct taxes” (Obinger et al., 2005, p. 267), which limits “the planning and adoption of long-term and expensive federal policy programs” (Obinger, 1998, p. 249). Furthermore, the subsidiarity principle also influences the relationship between the state and civil society (Butschi & Cattacin, 1993). This principle has governed (and is still governing) the development of the Swiss welfare state by giving priority to private initiative over state intervention. “When a problem first appears, it is addressed by the civil society either at the individual or organizational level. If private initiative cannot resolve the problem, state intervention is demanded by political and social groups” (p. 362). Butschi and Cattacin (1993, pp. 373-374) described how, historically, the principle of subsidiarity between the state and civil society has transformed, and how since the 1980s, a new practice of subsidiarity has installed where the state orients and subsidizes the creation of non-profit organizations for welfare provision, adopting thereby an “outsourcing strategy”.

The presence of multiple veto players in Swiss institutions, which are known to result in policy inertia and to reduce the possibilities of altering the status quo (Tsebelis, 2000), explain the delayed and limited development of the welfare state (and of family policies). Not only must both Houses (the National Council and the Council of States) agree on policy issues but, due to the federal and direct democracy system, further collective veto players such as parties, cantons, and other civil society and economic actors are involved in policy-making.

Political factors

Other key dimensions contribute to explain the slow development of the welfare state, notably partisan politics. Armingeon (2001) has shown that between 1960 and 1998, right-wing parties—who oppose welfare state expansion—have been stronger on average in Switzerland than in Western Europe. The Liberal party has been the dominant force in Switzerland since 1848 (Obinger, 1998, p. 244), whereas the Catholic center party was integrated in the political system at the end of the 19th century. The Social Democrats have a consistent presence in the federal government only since 1959 (Armingeon, 2001, p. 156).

If we consider the relative power of parliamentary factions for the 48th legislature (2007-2011), the most powerful one is that of the Swiss People’s Party (27.5% of seats), followed by the Christian-Democratic group (21%), the Socialist Group (20%) and the Radical-Liberal group

³⁷ The Council of States counts 46 members elected on a majority basis; i.e., two representatives by canton and one by half canton. Therefore, small and rural cantons, which often have more conservative ideas and are less prone to social policy expansion, have an important veto power in this House and have proportionally equal power as larger cantons.

(19%).³⁸ Extra-governmental parties are the Green party (10%) and the Conservative Democrat group (2.5%). The positions of the four main governmental parties regarding the role of the state in welfare state policies differ considerably. According to the Federal Chancellery description, the Swiss People's Party and the Radical-Liberal MPs are opposed to the extension of social benefits and aim at lowering taxes (Federal Chancellery, 2009, pp. 18-19). On the opposite side, the Social Democratic party is in favor of social justice and work-family life reconciliation. The Christian-Democrat Party is situated at the junction of these two poles; it is both in favor of a reform of the social security system and in favor of work-family balance. Considering the political alliances between parties, the power balance is clearly more in favor of the right-wing factions (46.5% of seats) which aim at restraining welfare state expenditure than of the left-wing ones (30%). Center groups (mainly the Christian Democrats) can play a decisive role as they represent 23.5% of the parliament and can, according to the issue under consideration, support some welfare policy developments.

Relevant for the slow development of family policies in particular is, as mentioned above, the late entry into politics of women (Thoenen, 2010). Although women cannot be considered as a homogeneous group—among other things, ethnic and class differences also orient women's voting attitudes (Lovenduski, 2005)—there is a tendency that they are more sympathetic towards social issues and in particular work-family life reconciliation issues (for example, see Bonoli & Reber, 2010). Women's late entry into federal politics and the related weak women's movement also explains why family policies have developed slowly (Thoenen, 2010).

Economic factors

The Swiss economy has several distinctive features which have influenced the development of the Swiss welfare state. It is said to have a liberal corporatist political economy, which combines economic flexibility and political stability (Mach & Trampusch, 2011, p. 12) and results in overall high economic performance: "Since the end of the nineteenth century, Switzerland has become one of the wealthiest countries of the world, exhibiting above-average performance in terms of unemployment, inflation, and [...] economic growth, despite the absence of natural resources and no sea access." (p. 19).

André Mach and Christine Trampusch (2011, pp. 19-20) consider that the economic Swiss success story results from a combination of three main factors. First, the privileged position of Switzerland in Europe and its neutrality status which avoided the negative consequences from the two World Wars. Secondly, its successful integration in the international economy, as well as liberal and flexible economic policies. It should be noted that although Switzerland is not part of the EU, it has engaged since the beginning of the 21st century in bilateral agreements securing this way its economic integration. Thirdly, the diversified structure of the Swiss economy, which combines highly competitive export and internationalized sectors (financial, banking and industrial sectors) and domestic-oriented sectors which remained partially protected against international competition. This high economic performance enabled Switzerland—particularly

³⁸ The number of MPs per faction is available at: <http://www.parlament.ch/E/ORGANE-MITGLIEDER/BUNDESVERSAMMLUNG/FRAKTIONEN/FRAKTIONEN-48-LEGISLATUR/Pages/default.aspx>. The period 2007-2011 was chosen in order to give an idea of partisan politics during the period under investigation. It should be noted that the 2011 election (49th legislature: 2011-2015) was marked by an increase of the center factions (notably with the creation of a Green Liberal faction) and a decrease of the number of both left and right wing MPs.

in the post-World War II period—to launch the development of its traditional social security schemes (Armingeon, 2001, p. 149; Obinger, 1998, p. 242).

According to Peter Hall and David Soskice’s “varieties of capitalism” approach, Switzerland has a coordinated market economy (CME) (2001, p. 20).³⁹ However, Mach & Trampusch (2011, p. 13) note that “there are strong liberal traits in the Swiss market economy that make Switzerland a rather peculiar case”. As regards industrial relations specifically, while it is true that corporatism and social partnership are characteristic of Switzerland (Armingeon, 1997; Mach & Trampusch, 2011), other elements indicate a distancing from typical CME countries such as Germany.

On the one hand, historically there has indeed been a strong preference among collective actors and associations for self-regulation mechanisms. This was due to the institutional context where the Federal government had limited power and where political decision-making processes were unwieldy. Employers are known to be particularly well organized and business associations are cohesive in Switzerland. Among business associations, there is the Swiss Business Federation *economiesuisse*, the Confederation of Swiss Employers, as well as the Swiss Union of Crafts and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). The latter union is particularly powerful as SMEs represent 99.6% of the employers and provide 66.6% of jobs in Switzerland.⁴⁰ As in typically CME countries, Swiss firms have in the past strategically contributed to the development of social policies (Mares, 2003). A case in point of the active role they have played is the creation by some employers, as early as the middle of the 19th century, of company-based pension funds for employees (Bertozzi et al., 2005, pp. 24-25). The cantons followed this trend until 1947 when finally, with the adoption of a federal pension insurance, these structures were centralized at the federal level.

On the other hand, and contrary to typical CMEs, trade unions in Switzerland are rather weak and show a limited coordination with the political left-wing (Mach & Trampusch, 2011, p. 12). According to OECD data, in 2010 the trade union density in Switzerland was only 17%, which is low in comparison with other countries such as Germany, the UK, Italy and Sweden, where the proportion is respectively 19%, 26%, 35% and 68% (see Appendix 4).⁴¹ Also comparatively low is the proportion of employees covered by a collective labor agreement in Switzerland, approximately 50% in 2006 (Lampart & Kopp, 2013; Oesch, 2012). Trade unions faced important challenges and underwent mergers in the early 1990s (Oesch, 2011). Currently there are two main umbrella associations (the Confederation of Swiss Trade Unions and Travail.Suisse) which represent almost 3/4 of union members in Switzerland (Rüegger & Ackermann, 2012).

Finally, contrary to the trend observed in other European countries, corporatism has not led to the development of the welfare state or to centralized public policies, because agreements were “settled in a decentralized manner, incorporating either industries or regions” (Armingeon,

³⁹ Hall & Soskice (2001) argue there are two main types of capitalist economies which differ from one another with regard to how firms coordinate their endeavours in the sphere of industrial relations, vocational training and education, corporate governance, and human resource management. “Coordinated market economies” (CMEs) rely mainly on strategic modes of coordination which imply non-market collective actors such as associations, networks, and the state while “liberal market economies” (LMEs) rely mainly on market relationships.

⁴⁰ SMEs are defined as employing up to 249 full-time equivalent employees.

<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/06/02/blank/key/01/groesse.html>

⁴¹ It should be noted that according to the main umbrella labor union in Switzerland, the Confederation of Swiss Trade Unions, trade union density was estimated slightly higher in 2011: 21% (Rüegger & Ackermann, 2012).

2001, p. 155). In addition, the classic corporatist package deals which consist in compensating unions for wage moderation with welfare state policies did not apply in Switzerland, first because wage moderation was not at the heart of corporatist bargaining and secondly, because of the limited power of the federal state, which would not have enabled such bargains (Armingeon, 1997, p. 172).

A further characteristic of the Swiss economy which has influenced welfare state development is its overall low levels of unemployment. Full employment in Switzerland was said to be “the load-bearing pillar[s] of the Swiss way of welfare”, justifying little need for state intervention (Obinger, 1998, p. 242). Switzerland has experienced five main economic crises in the past 40 years; in the 1970s, 80s, 90s, early 2000s and most recently, from 2008 to 2010. Although these crises were followed by a period of higher unemployment rates (Sheldon, 2010), Switzerland has seen comparatively very low unemployment rates. In 2011, 3.6% of the active population was unemployed, while this was the case of 9.3% on average in the European Union (see Appendix 5). In the past, Switzerland was able to maintain unemployment rates very low by strategically using specific social groups as “economic buffers” (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 70). For example the oil crisis in the 1970s led to a very limited increase of unemployment because temporary work permits granted to foreign workers were not extended. In addition, a large share of women withdrew from the labor market without registering for unemployment benefits (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 29).

In the 1980s and 1990s, different contextual elements challenged the welfare state (Bonoli, 2005; Häusermann, 2010; Mach & Trampusch, 2011). First, a context of austerity due to economic downturn and loss of productivity since the 1970s, simultaneously to the increase of social expenses due to rising unemployment put a strain on the welfare insurances. This, combined with demographic changes such as low fertility rates and the increase of life expectancy, impacted strongly the financing of the welfare state.⁴² A second structural change was post-industrialization and its effects on welfare and social needs. Atypical and unstable work relations as well as changes in family structures and mothers’ increased labor-market participation challenged the assumptions on which the Swiss welfare state was developed, i.e., the full-time, standard contract employed male-breadwinner family model (Häusermann, 2010, p. 218). In the 1990s, unemployment rates increased substantially, so as the phenomenon of working poor, which put a strain on public finances (Bertozzi et al., 2005, p. 71).

However, the economic downturn and increase of welfare state expenses did not, as in the other European countries in the 1990s, result in drastic retrenchment measures (Obinger, 1998, p. 242). Here again, the Swiss political system is responsible for influencing the development of welfare state policies in a specific manner. In Switzerland retrenchments were combined with modernizing reforms (Bonoli, 1999, 2005; Bonoli & Häusermann, 2011; Häusermann, 2006a, 2010). The cost-containing reforms consisted in “a gradual scaling back of eligibility conditions, contribution and benefit levels in the fields of unemployment benefits, the basic and second pillar pension schemes and disability pensions” (Häusermann, 2010, p. 218). The modernizing reforms concerned particularly “new social risks”, e.g., work-family reconciliation, single

⁴² The total fertility rate (TFR) has been constantly decreasing since the 1960s (FSO, 2009a) and in 2011, the TFR was 1.52 children per woman. Although it is not comparable with the lowest-low fertility rates observed in other European countries, a serious concern is emerging regarding the balance between the proportion of active and retired population. <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/01/06/blank/key/02/05.html>

parenthood and dependent relatives. The trend was to open insurance benefits to former outsiders and improve the minimum coverage of low-income groups. Furthermore, a focus on activation was promoted, especially aimed at female labor-market participation (Häusermann, 2010, p. 219). This political strategy and the formation of new political coalitions were adopted in order to reach a political consensus, essential in order to implement policy change in Switzerland. So Swiss institutions have on the one hand delayed the development of the welfare state but on the other hand, they have also contributed to limit the cuts and retrenchment measures in periods of austerity.

Attitudinal factors

Individuals' attitudes have also played a substantial role in welfare state development and family policies in particular. Individuals' attitudes reflect to a certain extent the wider cultural and ideological national context. Individuals' attitudes towards the role of government in society and the degree of legitimization and acceptance of state intervention in private life can vary greatly among countries. Results from a survey conducted in 1996-98 show that Switzerland has a very liberal ideology, i.e., individuals consider that the state has a marginal role in society (Armingeon, 2001, pp. 151-152). On average, only 19% of the Swiss population considered the state definitely responsible for providing jobs, health care, care for the elderly, care for the unemployed, reducing inequalities and providing decent housing. In contrast, this was for example the case for 54% of the surveyed population in Norway, 52% in Italy, 45% in France and 32% in West-Germany. "Together with Australia and the USA, Switzerland belongs to the group of countries where the population holds the most liberal views with regard to state intervention in society" (p.152). Similar observations about Switzerland's liberal orientation were made by Carina Marten, Gerda Neyer and Ilona Ostner (2012, p. 122). Using ISSP data (International Social Survey Programme) from 2002, they noted that barely 50% of Swiss respondents were in favor of granting financial support for childcare expenses to dual-earner families, while 60% or more of French, Austrian and German respondents were in favor.

The predominance of the ideas of individual responsibility and of preserving the private sphere from state intervention is often advanced to explain Switzerland's limited family policies (Ballestri & Bonoli, 2003; Dafflon, 2003; Pfau-Effinger, 2008; Wanner, 2008). For example Bernard Dafflon reported the discussions which took place about the legitimacy of state intervention in family affairs when the 1945 constitutional article on the family was debated in Parliament: "family is also about the individual, it is not only a social institution. For marriage and procreation, we cannot only think about the state's interests, we should also respect the individual liberty" (2003, p. 34). The debate about where to draw the line between the private sphere of individuals and the policies addressed to families has been present ever since and contributed to delay family policy development.

Cultural representations about gender relations and about what is considered the proper division of work within the family in Switzerland are further dimensions which affected family policy development (N. Martin, 2002). It is in the 1950s that the Swiss constitutional article on the family was adopted; the period during which the male-breadwinner model was at its peak. Family policies have therefore developed towards a traditional conception of the family where women have a primary responsibility for the family and men for breadwinning (Bertozzi et al.,

2005; Grossenbacher, 2004). Social and family policies were founded on gendered premises, based on a typically male full-time and linear labor-market participation (Studer, 1997, pp. 154-155). For example, comparing the relatively quick (even if partial) implementation of family allowances at the federal level (in 1952) and the extremely slow adoption of maternity insurance, Brigitte Studer (1997) argues that the different development of these two measures is related to their different conceptions of gender relations and of the role of the state. While family allowances aimed to support the male-breadwinner family model, maternity insurance challenged it by supporting married women's wage work.

Attitudinal differences and internal fragmentation within Switzerland regarding the role of the state and gender relations are, however, often highlighted. Switzerland is a heterogeneous country marked by linguistic and religious plurality. Diverse religious backgrounds—mainly Catholic (42%) and Protestant (33%)—are represented (Bovay & Broquet, 2004). Furthermore, the Swiss territory is divided into three main linguistic macros-regions: German-speaking (63.7% of residents' main language), French-speaking (20.4%) and Italian-speaking (6.5%) (Lüdi & Werlen, 2005).⁴³ This diversity has played an important role in the development of the welfare state. Comparing voting attitudes on a number of key issues (women's suffrage, gender-equality article, new marital legislation and maternity insurance), Elisabeth Bühler (2001) showed diverging voting attitudes between German-speaking and Latin-speaking regions as well as between rural and urban regions. The German-speaking electorate has proved to be more reluctant to extend welfare provisions and more conservative in its conceptions of gender relations than the Latin-speaking one, and so has the rural versus the urban electorate. These attitudinal differences have also resulted in diverging public policies between cantons (Armingeon, Bertozzi, & Bonoli, 2004) and across linguistic regions. These differences reflect differing cultural values about gender relations and about the role of the state (Bühler & Meier Kruker, 2002). They can also be partly explained by policy transfer mechanisms (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000) and transnational cultural influences from neighboring countries (i.e., from France and Italy to the Latin-speaking regions and from Germany and Austria to the German-speaking regions) (Bühler, 1998, pp. 36-37).

Explaining the recent family policy expansion

Even though Swiss family policy remains a laggard in European comparison (Bonoli & Häusermann, 2011), the few reforms that took place at the turn of the 21st century are remarkable considering its former situation. According to several authors (Häusermann, 2006a; Häusermann & Kübler, 2010; Kübler, 2007; N. Martin, 2002), it is the interaction within the political sphere of ideational factors and changing political coalitions which account best for the developments of family policies of the past decade. As Silja Häusermann and Daniel Kübler argue, institutional and political factors provide reasonable explanations of the delay of welfare state development; however, they are less helpful in explaining policy change, in particular the recent expansion in the field of family policy (Häusermann & Kübler, 2010, p. 166). Kübler (2007) argues that family policies such as maternity insurance and the federal program for ECEC services, were introduced at the turn of the 21st century due to a change of *beliefs* of political actors of the Liberal party and of interest groups of the economy. From supporting a "poverty-oriented" family policy (aiming to prevent poverty in families, based on means-tested benefits),

⁴³ There is a fourth national language: Rumansch, spoken by only 0.5% of the population.

they shifted their views in favor of a “gender-equality oriented” family policy, which enhances opportunities for women to reconcile work and family life. This change was the result of gender-equality advocates’ work of influencing the perception of problems in the field of family policy.⁴⁴ Kübler argues that “[b]y the end of the 1990s, [they] had successfully framed the perception that the expansion of family policy was in the genuine interest of both employers and professionally active women” (p. 234). Actors from the Liberal party and interest groups from the economy came to view family policies as enabling high-skilled women to remain or re-enter the labor market after childbirth and as a solution against the shortage of high-skilled labor force in the 1990s.

Häusermann’s analysis (2006b) of the evolution since the mid-1970s of political coalitions about family policy issues actually identifies three driving coalitions between political actors in Switzerland. These coalitions, which were more or less successful, formed according to the family policy issue at stake and its underlying family model. Firstly, a coalition between the Socialist and the Liberal parties supported measures in favor of a “working mother model” enabling a better work and care reconciliation (e.g., ECEC services). Secondly, a Socialist and Christian-Democratic coalition formed in favor of measures supportive of a family model where parental (i.e., maternal) care was recognized as work and subsidized by the state independently from labor-market participation (e.g., universal family allowances). Thirdly, a “new” and “old” left ⁴⁵ coalition—selectively supported by parts of the Liberal party and women’s organizations—took shape in favor of measures which aimed at a more profound transformation of social norms, gender roles and labor-market organization (e.g., job sharing, parental leave).

Yuri Ballestri and Giuliano Bonoli (2003) as well as Noémi Martin (2002) argue (respectively concerning policies in favor of daycare structures and policies in favor of women in general) that it is the role played by interest groups from the economy and the mobilization of employers’ unions in favor of work-family life reconciliation measures which also made a difference in the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s. Bonoli & Häusermann argue that the recent support for activation policies in Switzerland is comparable to that identified in the EU and the OECD which “turned the spotlight on family policy as a means of fostering employment performance” (Bonoli & Häusermann, 2011, p. 196).

Häusermann and Kübler (2010) further showed how the framing⁴⁶ of family policy reforms (parental leave, childcare and family allowances) have been central in their adoption or rejection at the federal state level. They argue that three frames structure current family policy debates in Switzerland: family policy as labor-market policy, as social policy or as gender-equality policy. They observed that “all successful reforms were eventually adopted by political

⁴⁴ These gender equality advocates were mainly the Social Democratic Party, associations in favor of family and youth and adolescences as well as gender equality offices.

⁴⁵ Häusermann distinguishes between the “old left”, i.e., traditional Social Democracy and trade unions, and the “new left”, i.e., mainly green parties and social movements for which the distributional class conflict had lost some of its salience. This is a relevant distinction, as it has been argued that parties and political actors’ policy preferences do not only differ according to the classical left-right redistributive dimension, but also according to a liberal-conservative social value dimension (see for example Hieda’s (2013) comparative analysis of the effect of partisan preferences on the development of childcare policies in OECD countries).

⁴⁶ Authors argue that “[f]rames provide possible meanings and interpretations of policy instruments. Actors use these interpretations to understand and articulate their own position, and defend it with regard to allies and opponents” (p. 188). Frame analysis will be presented in more depth in Chapters II and IV.

coalitions that based their support on different family policy frames” (p.184) and that “[r]eforms that appealed to a single policy frame only (such as paternity leave) lacked the sufficiently broad coalitional support to pass” (p.189). Three reforms aiming at work-family life reconciliation (maternity insurance, day care subsidies and day-schooling harmonization across cantons) mobilized a combination of policy goals pertaining to the labor market and the gender-equality frames. They were supported by a broad coalition between left-wing parties, employers’ organizations and parts of the Liberal and Christian-Democratic parties.

In order to understand the situation of parental leave policies—the current lack of statutory measures and their emergence as issues in the public sphere—it is important to keep in mind these Swiss specificities. Institutional and party politics certainly played a role in delaying their implementation, but ideational factors should also be taken into account in order to understand their emergence on the political agenda. In particular, the framing of policy measures as being economically efficient seems to be decisive in Swiss family policy-making.

4. The division of paid and unpaid work

After having situated the Swiss leave scheme in a broader context of the welfare state, I will now present how this institutional setting shapes individuals’ occupational and family trajectories and the gender division of work within families in Switzerland.

4.1. Gendered occupational integration

The occupational integration of men and that of women in Switzerland are very different from one another, depending on their specific family situations and life stages. According to representative statistics of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office,⁴⁷ in 2011 61% of the female population and 75% of the male population were active on the labor market (employed or unemployed, aged 15+).⁴⁸ Since the 1990s, the gap between female and male activity rates has slowly decreased. In twenty years, female labor-market participation has slightly increased from 57% to 61% and men’s labor participation has decreased from 81% to 75%. In comparison with other industrialized countries, Switzerland appears to be among the countries which have the highest female economic activity rates, just after Iceland (76%) and Norway (69%) (see Figure 9).

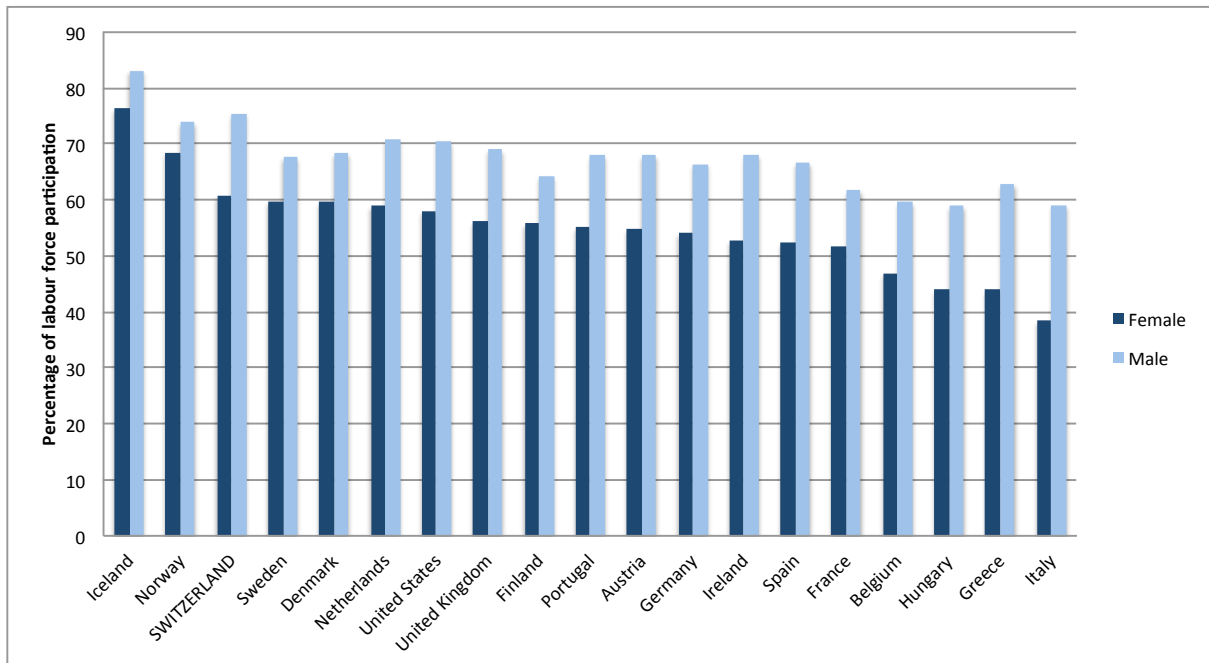
This relatively high female activity rate is due to the fact that in Switzerland, over half of the women active on the labor market work part-time: 58% of working women work less than 90%. Only 14% of men are in the same situation.⁴⁹ This share of women working part-time is very high in comparison with other industrialized countries (see Figure 10).

⁴⁷ The Swiss Federal Statistical office edits updated statistics, which are available on their website (<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index.html>). In the following section, I indicate the link to the relevant page of the website in order to indicate the source of the statistics presented.

⁴⁸<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/erwerbstaetigkeit/erwerbsbeteiligung.html>

⁴⁹ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/erwerbstaetigkeit/teilzeitarbeit.html>

Figure 9 - Female and male economic activity rates in a set of industrialized countries

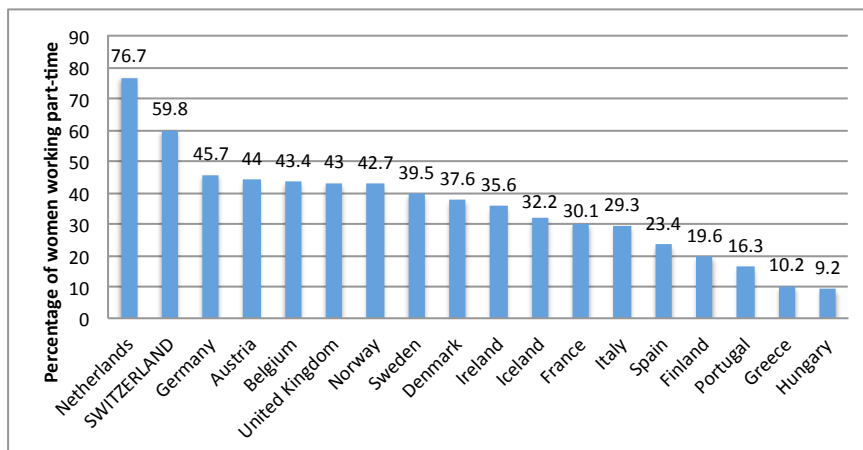


Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from national and international (Eurostat and ILO) official sources. Data for 2011, retrieved January 23rd 2013:

http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/dialog/varval.asp?ma=001_GEWELabourActivity_r&path=../database/STAT/30-GE/03-WorkAndeconomy/&lang=1&ti=Labour+force+by+age+and+sex

Note: The labor force/economically active population includes all residents who are either employed or unemployed. The economic activity rate is the share of the labor force (employed + unemployed) in the total population aged 15+.

Figure 10 - Percentage of female part-time work in a set of European countries in 2011

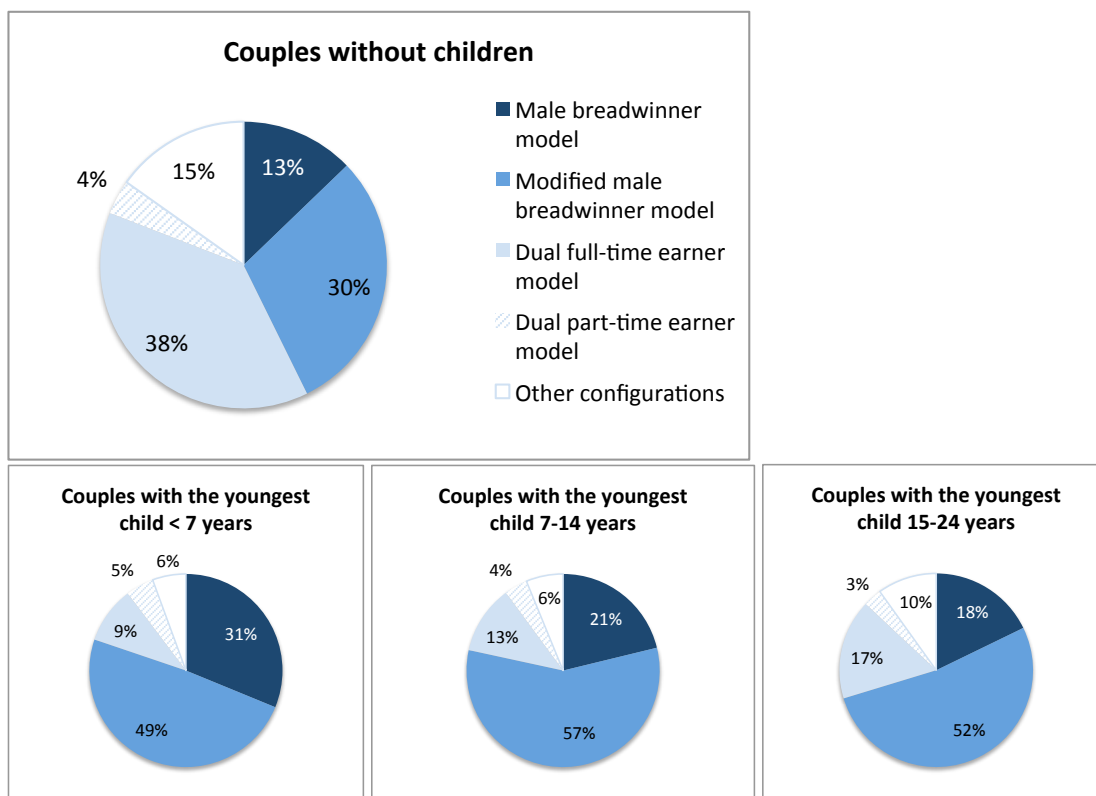


Source: UNECE Statistical Database, compiled from national and international (Eurostat) official sources. Data for 2011, retrieved 23rd January 2011: <http://w3.unece.org/pxweb/database/STAT/30-GE/03-WorkAndeconomy/?lang=1>.

Note: A part-time worker is an employed person whose normal hours of work are lower than those of comparable full-time workers. In most countries, the distinction between part-time and full-time work is based on self-declaration. In a few countries, work is defined as part-time when the hours usually worked are below a fixed threshold.

Looking at the family situation of these women, it is clear that part-time work is a specificity of working *mothers*. In 2011, 60% of mothers with at least one child under 25 years were working part-time, while only 7.9% of fathers were in the same situation.⁵⁰ Further differences regarding work integration exist according to the mothers' couple situation. The proportion of mothers with at least one child under 25 years living without a partner and working full-time is higher than for mothers living in a couple (32% versus 14%), and conversely, there is a smaller proportion of stay-at-home mothers among lone mothers (9.9% versus 24.8%). The same proportions are observed when specific age ranges for children are considered (for details, see Appendix 6).

Figure 11 - Models of occupational activity among couples in 2011



Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, website consulted 23rd January 2013:
<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/03.html>

Comparing models of occupational activity among couples with and without children, the previous indications are confirmed (see Figure 11). While the dual full-time earner model is the predominant model among households with no children (in 2011, 38.2% were dual full-time earner, 29.9% had a modified male-breadwinner organization and 12.8% had a male-breadwinner organization), it is only a minority pattern among couples with children.⁵¹ Thus, only 9.5% of couples with the youngest child under seven adopt such an organization and slightly more when they have elder children (11.5% of couples with children from seven to 14 years old and 16.7% of couples with 15 to 24 years old children). The predominant pattern for couples with children is the “modified male-breadwinner”: in 2011, 49% of households with at least one child under seven were composed of a man working full-time and a woman working

⁵⁰ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/01.html>

⁵¹ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/03.html>

part-time. This proportion rises to 57% in families with at least one child aged from seven to 14 years. Approximately 31% of households with at least one child under seven correspond to a male-breadwinner model: only the man is active on the labor market. This proportion decreases to 21% among households where the youngest child is aged between seven and 14 and to 18% where the youngest child is aged between 15 and 24. Households where both partners work part-time are still a minority, whatever the family situation.

In terms of household income, this implies that among couples with children, the majority of women contribute financially less than men. In 2004, in approximately 46% of households with at least one child, women contributed less than a quarter of the total household income and in only 7% of households, women contributed at least in equal proportions to men.⁵²

Finally, in addition to the cross-sectional depiction of the division of paid work in Swiss families, a life-course approach is highly relevant to assess the gendered mechanisms which take place at the transition to parenthood. Several longitudinal studies, using representative samples for Switzerland, confirm that family events are central in shaping gendered trajectories in Switzerland (Giudici & Gauthier, 2009; Levy, Gauthier, & Widmer, 2006; Widmer, Levy, Pollien, Hammer, & Gauthier, 2003). For example, René Levy et al. (2006) observe that while there is one predominant life-course trajectory for men, characterized by full-time employment (72% of sample), there is more variety in the observed trajectories for women. In addition to the full-time trajectory (shared by 34% of women of the sample), authors distinguish additional trajectories such as the part-time work trajectory (23%), the stay-at-home trajectory (13%) and the temporary interruption and return to work trajectory (30%).

Regression analyses performed on these types of trajectories show that the probability to pertain to one or another depends on a number of variables. Men with children and living in couple, of average and higher age, with medium education level and medium to high income levels are more likely to adopt a full-time trajectory than others. Well-educated and higher social class women are also more likely to fall in this trajectory type: however, they are more likely to be of younger age and it is the reverse concerning their family situation: they are more likely to be single and to have no children. The presence and number of children plays a significant role in the likelihood for women to pertain to the part-time and stay-at-home trajectories. While women with higher educational qualifications are more likely to have a part-time trajectory, women with low education are over-represented in the stay-at-home trajectory. Beyond the level of education, Francesco Giudici and Jacques-Antoine Gauthier (2009) showed that the characteristics of the individuals' employment histories (years of experience, employment rate, prestige and gender-typification of the occupation) until the transition to parenthood also impact the type of trajectory they are likely to follow afterwards.

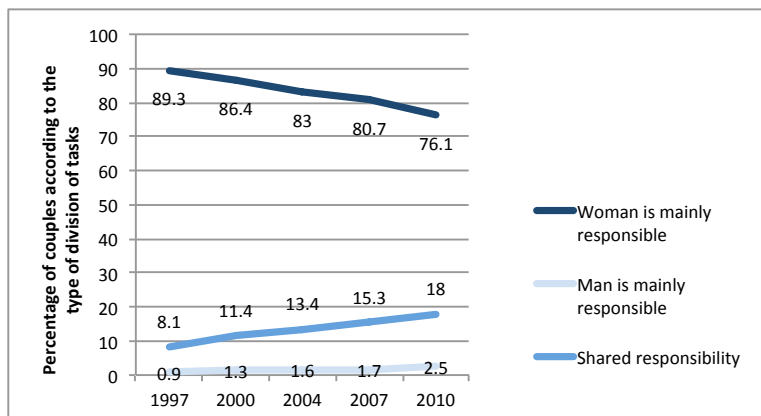
4.2. Division of domestic and childcare work

As the division of paid work becomes gendered at the transition to parenthood, the same dynamic is observed concerning the division of unpaid work among heterosexual couples with

⁵² <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/beitrag.html>

children.⁵³ By unpaid work, I refer both to the completion of the domestic chores of a household (e.g., cleaning, cooking, grocery shopping and administrative work) and to childcare tasks (e.g., looking after the child, feeding, changing and bathing him/her). This is observed with results of a small scale longitudinal study comparing the division of tasks before and one year after the birth of the first child (Le Goff, Levy, Sapin, & Camenisch, 2009) and confirmed by cross-sectional representative data. The unequal gender division of domestic tasks tends to decrease slightly over time (see Figure 12). However, in 2010, within 76% of households with children under seven years, predominantly women were still mainly responsible for these activities.⁵⁴ Only 18% of couples declared sharing equally domestic tasks. This proportion is higher for couples without children, approximately 31%.

Figure 12 - Evolution of the division of domestic work among couples with children under 7 years



Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, website consulted January 23rd 2013:
<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/02.html>

As regards the average time spent on both domestic and childcare work, in 2010 women living in a couple with at least one child under seven years devoted almost twice as much time as men to these activities (respectively 55.5 hours per week and 29.4 hours).⁵⁵ The tendency from 1997 to 2010 has been the slight convergence of the number of hours devoted to family and domestic tasks by mothers and fathers, however limited, as Figure 13 shows. Even when there are no children in the household or when children in the household are older, a considerable gap remains between the time spent in domestic (and family) tasks by women and men.

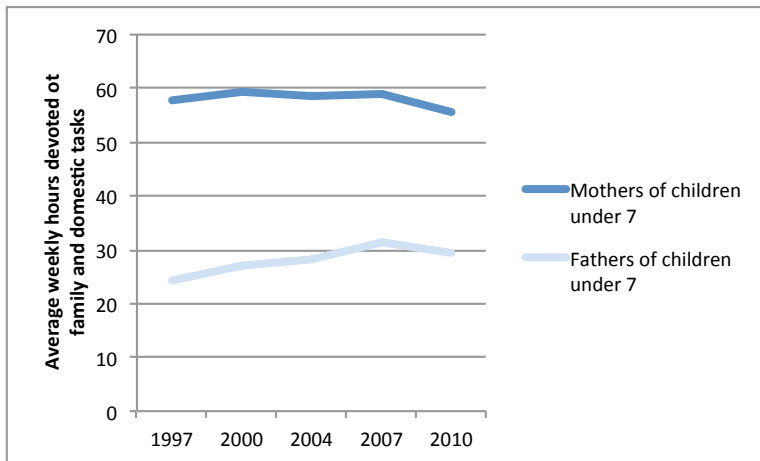
As regards the comparison of the Swiss situation with other European countries, it seems that the gender gap in the time spent by mothers and fathers in unpaid work is a widespread phenomenon. Mothers spend between 1.5 and 3 times more daily time than fathers on domestic and childcare tasks (see Figure 14).

⁵³ I do not enter here into the causal relation between the two mechanisms. Do women withdraw from the labor market because of the large share of domestic and childcare they take on—incompatible with full time paid work—or do they perform the bulk of unpaid work because they have withdrawn from the labor market in the first place?

⁵⁴ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/02.html>

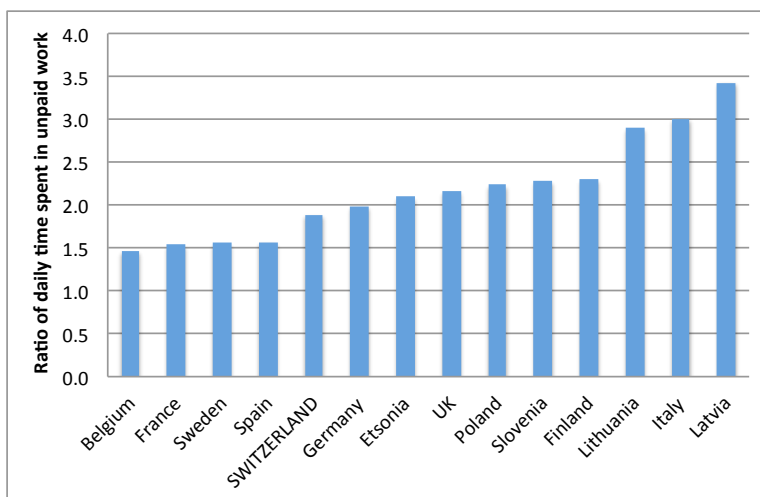
⁵⁵ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/04/blank/key/haus-und-familienarbeit/Zeitaufwand.html>

Figure 13 - Time devoted to family domestic tasks by parents of children under 7



Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, website consulted 24th January 2013:
<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/04.html>

Figure 14 - Ratio of the daily time spent by mothers as compared with fathers in unpaid work



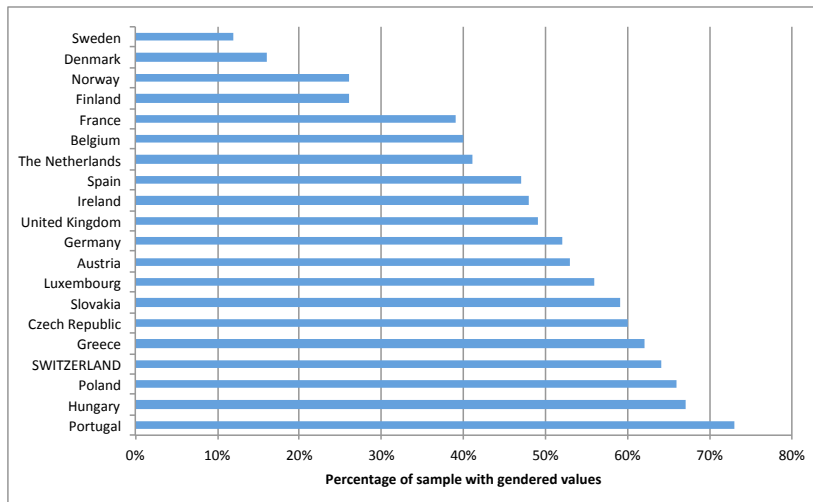
Source: For all countries except Switzerland, the data was extracted from (Fagan, 2010, p. 13), using data (1998-2004) from the Harmonised European Time-Use Survey. For Switzerland, the data stems from the Swiss Labor Force Survey for the year 2010. See details in Appendix 7.

In Switzerland it seems that gendered representations of family roles and mothers' main responsibility as parents are the predominant norm. Although new attitudes about involved fatherhood—defining fathers' role not only as breadwinners, but also as providers of care and affection—seem to be shared, their concrete realization is still rarely observed. A qualitative study conducted in the French-speaking part of Switzerland shows that the degree of involvement is very different from one case to another and that, contrary to mothers, fathers are still in a position to choose the extent to which they wish to participate (Modak & Palazzo, 2002).

Survey results also point in this direction. For example, using the European Social Survey, Felix Bühlmann, Guy Elcheroth and Manuel Tettamanti (2009) computed for 20 countries the percentage of surveyed individuals which hold gendered family values. Calculations were based on responses to three questions which tackle the extent to which individuals consider that a

gendered division of paid and unpaid work within the couple is legitimate or not: “A woman should be prepared to cut down on her paid work for the sake of her family”, “Men should take as much responsibility as women for the home and the children” and “When jobs are scarce, men should have more right to a job than women”. For each country, respondents were divided into two groups, according to whether their average score on the three items was above or below the general median of the 20 countries. As Figure 15 shows, Switzerland is among the countries with the largest share of individuals who hold gendered family values (64%) (Bühlmann et al., 2009, p. 8).

Figure 15 - Proportion of population with gendered family values in 20 countries



Source: extracted from (Bühlmann et al., 2009, pp. 6-8), data based on European Social Survey 2004.

Another representative study (Levy, Widmer, & Kellerhals, 2002) conducted in 1998 in Switzerland showed that 61% of respondents considered that in the case of a special event (relocation, illness or kinship reason), it would be the woman who would durably change her activities in order to maintain the common life situation. Only 12% of respondents considered that the man would do it and 27% were unsure or said it could be one or the other. Authors argue that on the normative level, “the adjustment of the employment to the family needs is considered to be the woman’s duty” (Levy et al., 2002, pp. 10-11). Finally, 2002 ISSP data indicated that the large majority of surveyed Swiss residents considered that mothers of children under school age should either work part-time or not work at all on the labor market (Marten et al., 2012, p. 126).

Gender attitudes and family values can also be inferred from the percentage of births out of wedlock. Although the proportion has almost doubled in the last decade, in 2011 the proportion of births out of wedlock was still of 19.3% only.⁵⁶ This proportion is extremely low in comparison with other countries. In 2006, only three countries (Switzerland, Greece and Poland) out of 18 had less than 20% of out of wedlock births (FSO, 2008, pp. 8-9). At the other end of the ranking, countries such as France, Bulgaria, Norway and Sweden indicated percentages of over 50% of births out of wedlock. Jean-Marie Le Goff & Valérie-Anne Ryser (2010) have highlighted that the importance of marriage for men in particular at the transition

⁵⁶ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/01/06/blank/key/02/03.html>

to parenthood is both linked to conservative views on the family, but also because Swiss institutions do not legitimize fatherhood outside marriage.

While it seems clear that, overall, Switzerland has comparatively conservative views on the family, they should be contextualized within the institutional constraints faced by individuals. A small scale longitudinal research conducted in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (Le Goff et al., 2009) suggests that in many cases the adoption of an unequal division of household and childcare tasks is to some extent involuntary. Results show that even among the couples who have egalitarian intentions before the transition to first-time parenthood, unequal practices take place several months after the birth of the first child. The dynamic relationship between values and practices at the transition to parenthood has proved to be sensitive to the welfare state context in which individuals are embedded (Bühlmann et al., 2009). In countries classified as “conservative”, individuals are more prone to change their values from egalitarian to non-egalitarian a few years after the transition to parenthood, probably in order to avoid incoherencies with the unequal division of work which has taken place in the couple following the birth of the child.

Such mechanisms call for greater attention to be paid to the institutional context within which individuals are embedded. This social policy context contributes to shape individuals’ concrete opportunities to share family work, but also their views about what they consider a proper family organization and gender division of tasks. This relation has been established through a comparative research of 13 industrialized countries (Sjöberg, 2004). It showed that there is a correlation between the degree of generosity of institutionalized family policies and the average aggregated gender-role attitudes among countries. While it is difficult to disentangle the direction of causality, such observations justify the relevance of analyzing the Swiss institutional context (notably leave policies and the lack thereof) and gender representations and relations.

5. Summary

In this chapter I have shown that the leave scheme is minimal in Switzerland; there is only a statutory maternity leave and insurance and no statutory parental or paternity leaves. Individuals may nonetheless have access to special leave entitlements depending on their canton of employment, their employer or the collective labor agreements signed. In comparison with other industrialized countries, Switzerland is one of the only countries without any statutory parental leave. Other countries have followed a three-phase development of their leave scheme: 1) maternity leave implementation by the 1950s, 2) adoption of a parental leave in the 1970s-90s, and 3) development of uptake incentives for fathers (e.g., paternity leave, father’s quota) in the recent decades. Even if parental leave policies are very different from one context to another regarding their length, payment and targeting of recipients, it is remarkable that Switzerland is one of the rare countries in which men do not have any access to any kind of statutory leave when they have a child. This situates Switzerland among the countries which have no “father-care sensitive leave policies” (O’Brien, 2009).

The limited Swiss leave scheme can be better understood when contextualized within the Swiss welfare state, its origins, specificities and development. Institutional, political, economic and attitudinal factors account for the slow development of the modern welfare state. Family policies and gender-equality policies are particularly lagging behind. However, in the last decade family policies in particular have developed considerably. Reforms in the field of ECEC services, maternity leave, and childcare allowances have recently been adopted. However, they have not yet challenged the division of paid and unpaid work within families in Switzerland, which remains gendered.

The predominant family in Switzerland corresponds to what Levy and colleagues label “modernized family traditionalism”, that is a family where “the sexist gender order in the family has become flexible, but [it] remains largely alive in a modernized form” (Levy et al., 2002, p. 33). Recent statistics from the FSO reveal that employed parents who are living in heterosexual couples predominantly have a gendered occupational integration. Although women are generally integrated in the labor market, they predominantly work part-time and contribute to a lesser extent than men to the household income. Men’s occupational trajectories are on the opposite reinforced by the presence of children and men continue to be the main breadwinners within families. Unpaid work is also unequally shared among couples, mothers devoting almost twice as much of their time to domestic and childcare tasks than fathers. Gendered attitudes towards parental roles persist: mothers continue to be more strongly associated with the family and fathers with paid work.

In sum, the description of the leave scheme and welfare state shows that the Swiss institutional context is gendered. Men and women are subject to structural constraints which influence differently their opportunities to articulate wage-working activities and childrearing obligations. These constraints translate into a gendered family organization as well as conservative gender-role attitudes. This observation is the starting point of this research and justifies the choice of my research object. Does the emergence of parental leave policies change anything to the above observations of a gendered institutional context and of gendered representations and practices of parenthood? In the next chapter I present in detail the research framework which guides the research process and questions.

Chapter II - Research framework

Having set the institutional context of the minimal statutory leave scheme in Switzerland, I present the framework within which this dissertation is embedded. By “research framework” I mean the theories and the existing research literature which, altogether, have come to make me think about parental leave policies and parenthood in the way I do. I attempt to answer questions such as: What is gender? How and where are gender inequalities produced? How are differences between motherhood and fatherhood constituted? Can parental leave policies have gender-equality effects on parenthood?

I proceed in a systematized way, first presenting the theoretical framework I adopt, which articulates gender and discourse theories. I present how a discourse analytical approach is relevant for understanding the way parenthood is constituted. Secondly I show concretely—through a review of the literature on the topic—how differing meanings are attributed to fatherhood and motherhood through discourses and policies produced by social institutions (e.g., the media, the legal system, the government), within interactions, and through identity processes. Thirdly I review the empirical literature on the relationship between parental leave policies and gender relations, indicating how parental leave policies can challenge gendered representations and practices of parenthood. This section gives an empirical backing to my choice of research topic and research question, i.e., the extent to which the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland challenge gendered representations and practices of parenthood. These sections lead me to finally present the research design as well as the data and methods used for the empirical analysis.

1. Gender and discourse theoretical perspectives

1.1. *Sex, gender and the “gender structure”*

The description in the previous chapter of the gendered division of work and of gendered representations of parental roles is not specific to Switzerland. For example, in an international comparative assessment of the division of domestic work, Jennifer Hook noted that the division of domestic work varies considerably from one national context to another, but even in the most egalitarian contexts, men’s share of unpaid work does not exceed 37% (Hook, 2006, p. 654). Anthropologists have noted that in almost all societies, the division of work is structured along membership of a sex category (e.g., Héritier, 1996). However, it has also been shown that the roles and characteristics associated with men and women vary historically and geographically and that reversed gender relations, or gender-neutral ones, exist or have existed in some communities (e.g., Mead, 1935). This suggests that membership of the sex category “male” or “female” is central for explaining the division of work and related inequalities, but that as variation and change are observed, it is not a good-enough explanation *per se*. The concept of “gender” represents the starting point of theories which aim to understand and explain the social mechanisms which prompt an unequal division of work between men and women.

From “sex” to “gender”

Findings from anthropological studies challenge the idea of naturally differentiated sex roles and highlight their social construction. They suggest that social relations between men and women are constructed differently according to spatio-temporal characteristics. In order to problematize this opposition between “biological” and “social” differences between men and women, feminist and gender studies scholars operated a conceptual distinction between “sex” and “gender”. While “sex” refers to the “fact” of being endowed with male or female genitals, “gender” refers to the social mechanisms through which these “genital-holders” are assigned differentiated characteristics and positions in the social structure.

However, the existence of binary male-female biological sex categories has also been the object of deconstruction and critique (Parini, 2006, pp. 25-29). Scholars have convincingly shown that not only gender, but sex and sex categorization are the product of social activity (Butler, 1990; Delphy, 1991). For example, the social intervention through medical surgical sex assignment on individuals whose genitals are not clearly identifiable as “male” or “female” (according to socially constructed medical standards) is a case in point of the social processes at work in the sorting of individuals into two sex categories. The bicategorization of male and female also has the effect of maintaining the norm of heterosexuality. Through her research on intersexuality, Anne Fausto-Sterling (1993, 2000) suggested that there are at least five sexes and argued that sex-membership should best be conceptualized as a continuum between male and female genitalia.

Therefore gender *and* sex should be considered as resulting from social activity and perception; and analyzed as a “social fact” (Parini, 2006, p. 29). Being endowed with specific reproductive attributes (and being assigned to a specific reproductive function) cannot account for and justify the differences observed among men and women in all spheres of social life; for example wearing make-up or a tie, becoming a CEO or a nurse, or preferring romantic versus action movies (Guionnet & Neveu, 2005, p. 5). These observed differences between men’s and women’s behavior and preferences, as well as unequal access to specific social positions are the result of complex social processes which produce gender inequalities.

Theoretical perspectives on gender

There are different theoretical perspectives in the feminist and gender studies literature. A primary distinction must be established between those which postulate that men and women are ontologically the same (i.e., the “male” and “female” sexes are equal) and those which argue that there are essential differences between men and women on the basis of sex-category membership. The latter perspective, referred to as “essentialist” or “differentialist”, argues that men and women are different by nature (Parini, 2006, pp. 87-89). In this view, gender *equity* (and not equality) is achieved by supporting and valuing women’s expression of their difference, on the basis of their specific needs and interests. The other theoretical perspectives rest on the assumption—which I share—of sameness between “male” and “female” sex categories. Within the latter theoretical perspectives, gender is conceptualized as the result of, first, the social construction of difference between men and women and secondly the organization of unequal

social relations between men and women on the basis of this difference (e.g., Parini, 2006, pp. 23-25; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004b, p. 510; Risman, 2004, pp. 430-431; Scott, 1986, p. 1067).

There are, however, different theoretical explanations depending on the societal level in which the social processes which produce gender inequality are said to take place. According to Barbara Risman and colleague (1998, 2004, 2009, 2011; Risman & Davis, 2013), over the past 40 years, sex and gender have been conceptualized in three main ways: one that focuses on gendered selves (microsocial societal level), a second which highlights the role of the social structure in shaping gender behavior (macrosocial level) and a third which considers gender as produced within interactions (mesosocial level). While scholars were initially (and many still are) engaged in assessing the theory that could most accurately explain gender differentiation and inequalities, a fourth tradition integrating the three of them has emerged, conceptualized by Barbara Risman as the “gender structure”. I will briefly present below these different research traditions.

The first overarching tradition gathers theoretical perspectives which analyze **gendered selves** and locate the development of sex category based behavioral differences within individuals. Maleness and femaleness are considered as being the property of individuals, whether following biosocial arguments (i.e., the interaction of biological predispositions and the social environment) or socialization arguments (Risman, 1998, pp. 13-14). A large body of research literature on sex-role socialization has investigated how early-childhood socialization within the family creates “feminine women and masculine men”. Psychological processes (e.g., reinforcement theory during childhood) and psychoanalytical dynamics (e.g., types of relations developed by the mother with sons and daughters during the pre-oedipal period) are said to shape gendered selves. These “individualist theories” posit that by adulthood, men and women have developed respectively “competitive and work oriented” and “nurturant, person-oriented and child-centered” personalities (Risman, 1998, p. 16).

Risman summarizes three main criticisms made of these theories (1998, p. 17). First, the assumption of behavioral continuity throughout the life course is said to be unfounded. For example, depending on the context, women can be competitive and men can be the main carers of their children. Secondly, there is a lack of consideration of how individual development may alter behavioral outcomes, which are not necessarily in line with what socialization theory would have predicted. Thirdly, the de-politicization of gender inequality through the reification of the male/female dichotomy is considered problematic. In reaction to these criticisms, many scholars have followed opposite theoretical perspectives, aiming to analyze why sex differences exist through a structural approach.

This second theoretical tradition gathers authors who analyze the role played by **social structures**. They argue that observed differences between men and women rely mainly on the structural positions they occupy. “[M]en and women behave differently because they fill different positions in institutional settings, work organizations, or families” (Risman, 1998, p. 19). Structuralist feminist authors (including Risman herself in her earlier research) argue that observed behavioral sex differences disappear when men and women fill the same positions. Risman draws on different empirical studies to show that when women benefit from the same opportunities as men in the labor market, they follow comparable upward mobility trajectories and adopt similar behaviors to men. Similarly within the family, when men cannot rely on a

female partner, they take on childcare responsibility in similar ways as women. Other studies have shown that “[a]dolescent plans and sex-role socialization did not predict adult choices” (p. 21). This suggests that individuals’ personal orientations towards family and work can change during adulthood, according to labor-market experience and opportunities as well as marital stability and income; in other words according to individuals’ position within social structures. Nonetheless, Risman observes that the structuralist approach also entails weaknesses and does not sufficiently take into account the fact that the labor market and the family are still subject to gendered expectations and norms. Risman concludes that “[d]espite the importance of structural variables in explaining behavior in families, the sex category itself remains a powerful predictor of who does what kind of family work “ (Risman, 1998, p. 22).

A third tradition enables one, according to Risman, to understand why “[g]ender stratification remains even when other structural aspects of work or of family life are divorced from sex category” (Risman, 1998, p. 22): the **“doing gender” approach**. This approach, conceptualized by Candace West and Don Zimmerman (1987), posits that individuals are accountable for behaving according to the sex category they belong to. Based on symbolic interactionist premises (Blumer, 1969), individuals “do gender” because it facilitates interactions. By conforming to perceived expected norms of behavior, individuals can interact with more ease. West and Zimmerman argue that doing gender is unavoidable, and that individuals always risk gender assessment (West & Zimmerman, 1987, pp. 136-137). Contrary to the individualist approach to gender relations, gender is not considered as a personal characteristic but as something people do, according to the interactional context they are embedded in. This includes “participants’ self-definitions, the expectations of others, and the cultural expectations attached to the context itself” (Risman, 1998, p. 23).

Although Risman agrees with the doing gender approach, she argues that a theoretical link between situated behavior, material constraints and gendered identities is lacking. This is why she subscribes to a fourth theoretical tradition that aims to reunite these different perspectives, which she does not view as necessarily incompatible.

The “gender structure”: a multidimensional theoretical perspective

As several other scholars, Barbara Risman argues that the analysis of gender relations and inequalities would benefit from an approach combining the three levels presented above, by adopting a multidimensional perspective. While she has conceptualized her theory under the label “gender structure” (Risman, 1998, 2004, 2009, 2011; Risman & Davis, 2013), others chose the terms “gender system” (Ridgeway, 2009; Ridgeway & Correll, 2004b; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999), “gender institution” (P. Y. Martin, 2004) or “gender order” (Connell, 1987). The common point of these approaches is that they take into account the multidimensional effects of gender and wish to integrate the apparent tensions there are between structural and actor-based approaches explaining gender relations and inequalities. For the sake of clarity I will continue to draw on Risman’s work and use her terminology: “gender structure”. Risman argues that “[j]ust as every society has a political structure (e.g., democracy, monarchy) and an economic structure (e.g., capitalist, socialist), so, too, every society has a gender structure (from patriarchal to at least hypothetically egalitarian)” (Risman, 2011, p. 19). By using the term “structure”, Risman makes several assumptions about its characteristics. First, a social structure

is external to the individual, independent of personal desires and motivations and it constrains and/or enables action. Secondly, not only is the structure external to individuals, but individuals also internalize it: the structure indirectly shapes actors' perceptions of their interests. Thirdly, following Giddens (1984), change is possible: the structure shapes individuals and in return human action shapes the structure.

Risman (1998, 2004, 2009, 2011; Risman & Davis, 2013) defines the gender structure as a basis for stratification, differentiating opportunities and constraints for men and women on three levels:

- 1) at the individual level, for the development and construction of gendered identities and selves
- 2) at the interactional level, as men's and women's social roles are shaped and performed differently within everyday social interactions according to cultural expectations, even if they fulfill identical structural positions
- 3) at the institutional level, where laws, rules and organizational norms distribute material resources differently to men and women, and ideological discourses constitute them differently.

Risman (2004) argues that this conceptualization has several advantages. First, it is an integrative model, which aims to capture the complexity of gender relations and gender inequalities. Instead of testing which is the most powerful explanatory theory, the gender structure proposes a more enriching approach to social phenomena. The complexity of the gender social structure is analyzed through the interconnections between the different levels, that is between "the gendered selves, the cultural expectations that help explain interactional patterns, and institutional regulations" (Risman, 2004, p. 433). Secondly, the multidimensionality of the model also calls for the analysis of the strength and direction of causal relationships. For example, it is likely that socialized femininity influences how individuals do gender, but it is also possible that how they do gender influences on the long term how they construct gendered selves. Another example concerns the institutional and the individual dimensions: anti-discrimination measures in the labor market may open up career opportunities for women in certain sectors, which may in turn influence how girls raised in the next generation will come to think about themselves and about their career options. These examples illustrate the third advantage identified by Risman, the dynamic nature of the theoretical model. Gender structure may be consistent across the three dimensions, but it is not necessarily the case. As in all systems, because dimensions are connected to one another, change in one of them possibly affects the others.

Following this approach, change towards more gender equality refers to any social mechanism which implies less differentiation on the basis of sex category membership within one of the levels of the gender structure. In this sense, it subscribes to the theoretical assumption which posits that "male" and "female" categories are ontologically equal. Social processes which reduce differentiation between men's and women's conception of the self, gendered expectations within social interactions, societal norms and discourses as well as formal laws and informal rules regulating gender relations contribute to more gender equality. Because gender inequalities are based on supposed differences between men and women, deconstructing these differences seems a necessary condition for the reduction and elimination of gender inequalities. Challenging existing representations about differences between "men" and "women", "boys" and

“girls” or “mothers” and “fathers” or providing opportunities to reduce distinct behaviors may be considered as potentially challenging the gender structure as a whole.

A situation where full gender equality would be achieved would mean that sex-category membership and therefore gender would no longer be a central organizing principle of social life and would no longer be relevant for understanding and explaining social relations and social inequalities. Sex-category membership would be comparable to other perceived physiological differences such as an individual’s height or hair color. Gender would no longer be relevant for interacting in social life, determining social rights, or thinking about oneself. Such a hypothetical gender free society—by removing one of the primary cultural frame which shapes social relations (Ridgeway, 2009)—would probably create “gender vertigo” for a period of time (Risman, 1998, pp. 151-162). However, the end of gender would also supposedly mean the end of gender inequalities.

1.2. Social constructionism, poststructuralism and discourse analysis

There are many understandings and conceptualizations of “discourse” and forms of discourse analytical approaches, such as conversation analysis, Foucauldian discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, “What’s the problem represented to be” approach, frame analysis and discursive psychology (Bacchi, 2005; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002). Instead of presenting what differentiates them, I will first concentrate on a few key features which they have in common and secondly present briefly the approaches which I will be referring to in my empirical work.

Discourse analysis principles

Just as in feminist and gender studies scholarship, discourse has also been theorized in many different ways within different research traditions. Therefore proposing an overarching conceptualization of discourse is a difficult task. Discourse analytical approaches share, however, social constructionist premises (Berger & Luckmann, 1966), which have been summarized by Jorgensen & Philips (2002, pp. 4-6) as follows:

- Reality is a social construction: there is no reality standing outside subjectivity. The knowledge and representation individuals have of the world is the product of their—and that of institutions—ways of categorizing it. All individuals have access to (including social analysts) are interpretations of reality
- Individuals’ worldviews and knowledge are historically and culturally contingent and situated: they are not fixed. However, they are relatively inflexible when restrictions are placed on the identities which an individual can assume and on the statements which can be accepted as meaningful
- Knowledge is created through social interaction: common truths are constructed and competitions about what is true and false take place. Individuals’ ways of understanding the world are created and maintained by social processes
- There is a link between knowledge and social action: within a particular worldview, some forms of action become natural, others unthinkable. Different understandings of the world lead to different social actions. The construction of what is “true” and “false” has social consequences.

Discourse analysis principles also stem from structuralist and poststructuralist linguistic theories, as well as from Michel Foucault's writings (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 6). Discourse analytical approaches share poststructuralist views of language and of the subject. Access to reality is said to be always mediated through language use. The relation between discourse and reality is comparable to that between the meaning of a word and the word itself: it is arbitrary (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 10). Language is not only a channel through which information is communicated; it ascribes meaning and works to constitute the world, identities and social relations. Therefore, the social world can be reproduced but also changed through discourse. Discourse is understood as a *practice* and it has concrete effects, it "carries all sorts of implications for how the issue is thought about and for how the people involved are treated, and are evoked to think about themselves" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 1).

In a Foucauldian approach, discourses "are socially produced forms of knowledge that set limits upon what it is possible to think, write or speak about" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 35). Foucault aimed to investigate the regime of knowledge which predominated in specific historical epochs; i.e., which statements were accepted as meaningful and true (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 12-14). He argued that when the knowledge produced within discourses is commonly accepted as truth, it makes it difficult to speak or think about people and social relations outside specific terms of reference. Many discourse analytical approaches are attentive to the different discourses which co-exist or compete for the right to define what is true or false. For Foucault, knowledge is closely related to power—which is considered both productive and constraining. On the one hand, power produces the social world; it constitutes discourse, knowledge, and subjectivities. On the other hand, power also constrains the ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking.

Poststructuralism and Foucault's contributions are also at the origin of the discourse analysis understanding of the subject. Subjects are viewed as created in discourses. In a deterministic approach, subjects are not considered as using discourses, but as being spoken by discourses; i.e., "[t]he individual self becomes a medium for the culture and its language" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 14, citing Kvale, 1992, p. 36). In reaction to this deterministic approach to the subject—passively absorbing and decoding supposedly uniform meanings—many discourse analytical approaches accept (to different degrees) subjects' agency, their possibility of resistance and relative freedom of action (Bacchi, 2000, pp. 205-206; Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 16). Different discourses may give the subject different and possibly contradictory positions from which to speak. For example, discursive psychology highlights that people may selectively use discourses, or use them as resources with which they may create new meanings. Thus individuals may be agents of discursive and cultural change.

Discourse analytical approaches

I present below more specifically the discourse analytical approaches I use in order to address the different sets of data in this research. The "What's the problem represented to be approach" (Bacchi, 1999, 2009) is particularly suited for analyzing social policies and policy-making processes. The framing approach (Entman, 1993) is well adapted for media data. Finally, insights from thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and discursive psychology (Jorgensen &

Phillips, 2002 Chapter 4) provide useful approaches for a discursive analysis of individuals' accounts of their personal experiences.

Carol Lee Bacchi's **"What's the problem represented to be"** (Bacchi, 1999, 2009) approach (hereafter WPR approach) stems from political sciences. The aim of the approach is to understand how social order is maintained. Bacchi contends that governments have a central role in the shaping of knowledge about social reality. Because their interpretations of social reality and of "social problems" often take the form of fixed policies, "[t]hey exist *in the real*" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 33). She argues policies should be considered and analyzed as discourses (Bacchi, 2000). The key idea of the WPR approach is that social policies create social problems simultaneously as they propose solutions: problems are endogenous (created from within), rather than exogenous (existing outside) to the policy-making process (Bacchi, 2009, p. x). The discursive analysis of social policies consists in identifying what is the problem represented to be (which I will also refer to as "problematization" or "problem representation") in a specific policy. When social policies are reformed or debated, there may be many competing representations of what needs to change. It is important to reflect upon the representations offered both by those who describe something as a problem and by those who deny an issue the status of "social problem" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 4).

The WPR approach analyzes the presuppositions and assumptions underlying problem representations. The aim is to analyze why it is possible for a specific policy to be proposed or enforced; "what meanings need to be in place for something to happen" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 5). This can be achieved through analyzing discourses, the ways in which meaning is created through particular language uses, such as binaries, key concepts and categories operating within a policy (Bacchi, 2009, pp. 7-9). However, the WPR approach also aims to highlight aspects which are silenced or left untouched by a problem representation, for example power and gender relations (Bacchi, 1999, p. 60). Existing policy proposals are therefore the starting point for analyzing what is not problematized, to draw attention to silences in existing political agendas.

The WPR approach also aims to understand how some problem representations come to be hegemonic. A thorough analysis of the context is necessary in order to understand the practices and processes which have led to the dominance of a particular problem representation. It shows how "social problems" are constituted differently due to "location-specific, institution-specific and history-specific factors" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 7). The analysis of the processes which have led specific discourses to become dominant takes into account who has the power to speak and the institutional location of discourses (Bacchi, 1999, p. 43). Existing power relations contribute to legitimize certain discourses and the social actors who create them. Meaning arises from language use made by individual and institutional actors, and their position in the social structure (Bacchi, 1999, p. 41).

Finally, the WPR approach analyzes the effects produced by the problem representations identified. Bacchi (2009, pp. 15-18; 40-43) identified three types of effects; i.e., discursive; subjectification, and lived effects. *Discursive effects* are effects that "follow from the limits imposed on what can be thought and said" (Bacchi, 2009, p. 15). For example, defining an issue as a "social problem" has consequences with regard to its political treatment; it suggests that experts can or ought to do something about it. And the specific ways in which the problem is represented (the assumptions and presuppositions) may restrict (or silence) particular ways of

thinking and limit the political intervention to some dimensions. *Subjectification effects* concern the ways in which (policy) discourse makes subject positions available and constitutes subjectivities. Groups (e.g., single mothers, illegal immigrants) are assigned positions within discourse, which contributes to the way members of these groups make sense of the social world from this standpoint and how they feel about themselves and others. Problem representations often work through “dividing practices” (Bacchi, 2009, p.16, citing Foucault, 1982, p.208), setting groups of people in opposition to one another and stigmatizing some of them while exonerating others. By targeting specific categories of the population, policymakers define for example what is “need” (e.g., setting income thresholds for means-tested benefits) and what is “disadvantage” (e.g., defining what is handicap for access to special measures) (Bacchi, 1999, p. 45). The *lived effects* of discourses concern the material impact of problem representations. How problems are represented directly affects people’s lives. For example, the criteria set for benefiting from full unemployment allowances may disadvantage some categories of the population (e.g., employed mothers). “There are real bodies and real people living the effects of discursive conventions, and it is essential to attend to the harms they experience” (Bacchi, 1999, p. 46).

“**Frame analysis**” has been developed within the field of sociology of social problems, social movements and communication sociology (Blumer, 1971; Entman, 1993; Gamson, 1989; Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, & Sasson, 1992; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). Frame analysis is particularly suited for the analysis of the mass media and the way issues and events are framed. The communication process is seen as a structure produced and sustained through the articulation of linked but distinctive moments: production, circulation, distribution/consumption and reproduction of meanings and messages (S. Hall, 2001 [1973]).

The production of messages entails transforming a “raw” historical event into a *story*—through the use of symbolic vehicles constituted within the rule of language—in order that it can become a *communicative event*. In this approach, what is considered “news” is the product of social construction and framing processes. According to Entman, “[t]o frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation” (Entman, 1993, p. 52). “Framing” refers to the ways in which the media attribute particular meanings to events and to how meanings are organized. For Gamson & Modigliani (1989), media discourse is a set of “interpretive packages” that give meaning to an issue. These “packages” or “framings” are manifold and give rise to controversies. Within this research tradition, the mass media is considered as contributing to the construction of reality, but the reception and interpretation by the audience of these messages is also considered as mediating their effects (Scheufele, 1999, p. 105).

Framing processes are often analyzed within the broader aim of investigating the *agenda-setting* (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). *Agenda* refers to the “awareness of the existence of an object and the relative importance we think it has; it takes the form of a hierarchical list of themes of preoccupation” (Charron, 1995, p. 81, my translation). An efficient framing makes it possible to attract the attention and the interest of the political, media or public spheres. It positions an issue at the top of the corresponding agendas. The process consists of transforming any difficult situation—there are an infinite number of them—into a public issue.

However, the space within political and media agendas is limited, as is public attention. Potential public problems are therefore in competition with one another (Jones & Baumgartner, 2004). They depend to a large extent on the mobilization of efficient *causal stories* by actors who are active in the framing processes (Stone, 1989). These actors aim at depicting a situation as unacceptable and attribute the responsibility to individuals or groups: “Problem definition is a process of image making, where the images have to do fundamentally with attributing cause, blame, and responsibility” (Stone, 1989, p. 282). The resolution of the problem is often presented as involving state intervention. However, agenda-setting is the object of power relations, which take place between informants (sources), the media, and the interactions between them (Reese, 1991).

Frame analysis is also attentive to the way news and events may be strategically framed by actors in order for them to catch more public attention or reach specific objectives. While the WPR approach is more focused on analyzing the effects of specific problem representation in policy-making, frame analysis often implies investigating the strategic intentions in the production of news.⁵⁷ This does not mean that the analysis of the assumptions underpinning frames should not be performed.

Discourse analytical approaches such as “**thematic analysis**” and “**discursive psychology**” are used to investigate individuals’ experiences through interview material. In their presentation of thematic analysis, Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006) distinguish between the semantic (or explicit) and latent (or interpretive) levels in the analysis of interview data. In the semantic level of analysis it is the description of themes, i.e., patterned responses or meanings identified in the dataset, which is the predominant focus. In the latter interpretive level of analysis, it is the identification of the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations which shape and inform the semantic content of the data which is targeted (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85). Both types of analysis can be conducted, but they respond to different research aims. For example, explicit thematic analysis fulfills a descriptive aim of individuals’ experiences and motivations, while interpretive (or latent) analysis focuses on the sociocultural and structural shaping of individuals’ accounts.

Discursive psychology rejects the idea that the individual self consists of a single, and stable identity (for example as the product of socialization) but instead conceives it as made up of multiple, discursively constituted identities (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, Chapter 4). Within this tradition, language is seen as “a dynamic form of social practice which shapes the social world including *identities*, social relations and understandings of the world” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 96 emphasis added). Individuals’ subjectivities are not inner properties, separate from the sociocultural context, but more so produced by this context and the discourses available: “language does not merely express experiences; rather, language also constitutes experiences and the subjective, psychological reality” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 102). In their everyday lives and through narrative and discursive practices within social interactions, individuals construct their “self”. “We give meaning to experiences by virtue of the words which are

⁵⁷ Bacchi (1999, pp. 50-58) is critical of the sociology of social problems approach. She argues that scholars tend to adopt a relativist position (implying that all frames are equivalent) and to believe that it is possible, as social analysts, to make assumption-free descriptions of the social construction of social problems. She is also critical of the tendency to concentrate the analyses mainly on issues about which individuals or groups make demands, forgetting less publicized issues.

available, and the resulting meanings contribute to producing the experience rather than being merely a description of the experience or an “after-the-event” occurrence” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 103). As there is no neutral, real or objective way of depicting social reality, “[e]xperience is never *raw experience*; rather, as it occurs it is intellectualized, rationalized, categorized, and analyzed” (Blain, 1994, pp. 540-541). Researchers only have access to individuals’ rationalization and categorization of their experiences through language use.

Authors diverge concerning the extent to which subjects can be agents and not only be “spoken by discourses”, but also “speak them”. Discursive psychology combines the somewhat deterministic poststructuralist understandings of the self with an interactionist approach which contends that people can use discourses actively as resources (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, pp. 104-106). In this view, people construct accounts about themselves in interaction with others. “They are limited by the words which exist as resources for talk but use them as flexible resources in arguing and, by combining them in new ways, can contribute to change.” (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 110). The concept of “interpretive repertoires” is sometimes used in order to highlight the fact that individuals are seen as active agents who can “choose” from existing discourses. However, the production of meaning and identity construction are constrained by the discursive resources available to individuals, themselves contingent on individuals’ social and cultural position (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 112).

1.3. The articulation of gender and discourse theories

The description of gender and discourse analytical approaches suggests that there are many points of connection between these two theories. I present below how they can be articulated to form together the theoretical framework for the analysis of the emergence of parental leave policies and gender relations.

First, both theories are based on the idea that the perception of the world, social relations and identities are socially constructed. Discourses, as constitutive social practices, contribute to the creation and the organization of gender relations according to sex-category membership. The bicategorization of individuals into “men” and “women” is a case in point of the discursive production of knowledge about these categories as being “objective facts” which imply different social roles, behavior, preferences, identities etc. The discursive processes involved in the creation of sex and sex-category membership as organizing principles of social activity conceal the social construction of these categories. The production of this “truth” results in the justification of unequal social relationships. Institutional, governmental and medical discourses contribute to the production of this binary distinction. Further discourses—such as media discourses and other expert discourses—also contribute to the constitution of what is viewed as typical characteristics of femininity and masculinity. Discourses also constitute male and female subjectivities; i.e., the way individuals come to see themselves and produce specific subject positions.

Secondly, gender and discourse theories are both concerned with analyzing social effects. Discourse theory is concerned for example with how specific discourses legitimize certain groups or worldviews, while other (alternative) representations and (disadvantaged) groups are

stigmatized or silenced. Gender structure theory contends that the consequence of gender differentiation is the justification and maintenance of gender inequalities. Therefore, the ways in which men and women are constituted through discourse are central for the maintenance or the challenging of the gender structure and gender inequalities. Drawing on the different types of effects considered in discourse analytical approaches, it is relevant within gender theory to analyze the discursive effects of discourses on gender relations. How do they enable us to think about relations between men and women? What limits are set to the way gender relations are envisaged? The effects of these discourses on individuals' subjectivities are also relevant for studying the gender structure. What subject positions are made available through discourses on masculinity and femininity? How may this influence how men and women come to think about themselves and the world? Concrete material effects of discourses and the way they may affect differently men and women, as well as the relation between them must also be investigated. How are women and men granted different access to different resources and how does this influence gender relations?

Thirdly, and related to the former point, discourse and gender theories are both attentive to power relations and social inequalities. The conceptualization of discourse as a *practice* suggests that discourse is viewed as producing knowledge and claiming truth. It is embedded in power relations and is the outcome of social processes. Discourses stemming from specific social institutions, such as the government or the media, are more likely to (re-)produce dominant representations of masculinity and femininity. Discourses presenting men and women as being different by nature contribute to (re-)producing this knowledge and maintaining it as a valid claim. Such discourses and production of knowledge prevent from thinking and speaking in terms outside of gender difference and therefore contribute to maintaining unequal gender relations. It also limits the way individuals' subjectivities are produced. However, discourse theory also contends that individuals may be reflexive about such discourses and use them in alternative ways, and as resources.

This brings me to the fourth common point identified between gender and discourse theories: social change. Both theories are attentive to the ways in which social change can happen. Although discourse theory contends that it is impossible to "step outside discourse", the idea that individuals have a certain room of manoeuvre and can use discourses strategically, in order to pursue their own agenda, is also accepted. Changes in discourses about men and women may bring changes within the gender structure at the individual, the interactional or the institutional level. The gender structure is also conceptualized in a dynamic way and changes affecting a dimension of the system are expected to potentially modify other dimensions. Therefore one can hypothesize that for example, changes in the way men and women are discursively constituted may modify their subjectivities, the way they see themselves, which may in turn influence their interactions.

Bringing gender and discourse theories together also calls for caution and reflexivity as a researcher. Discourse analytical principles posit that individuals, including social analysts, cannot stand outside discourse and therefore cannot produce objective accounts of social reality or propose a "true" account. Feminist and gender scholars are concerned with the social mechanisms at work in the maintenance and the reduction of gender inequality. Therefore they have an agenda for change and analyze discourse against their potential effects for gender equality. Affirmative postmodernists "still believe the effort to represent the social world is

worthwhile while it will be inexact [...] and insist on the ability to judge the impact of texts on a world in some way 'outside'" (Bacchi, 1999, p. 38). Even if all evidence is itself a construction, problem representations should be evaluated against evidence (even if approximate), and analyzed within their context.

2. The discursive constitution of parenthood in the gender structure

After having presented the theoretical framework which will be used for this research, I present more specifically the way gender relations in general and parenthood in particular are discursively constituted within the gender structure.⁵⁸ The aim is to show how mothers and fathers, as well as motherhood and fatherhood are discursively constituted on each societal level, whether in similar or different ways. I do so by drawing on existing empirical research, mainly concerning heterosexual intact families.⁵⁹ The institutional level concerns formal regulations (e.g., laws, public policies, distribution of resources, working hours regimes, industrial relations, childcare services etc.) as well as organizational practices and ideological discourses (Risman, 1998, p. 41; 2004, pp. 436-437; 2011, pp. 19-20). I draw on research addressing these different aspects, but I highlight in particular how social policies, as formal regulations, and media and expert discourses, as ideological discourses are implicated in the maintenance or challenging of gendered parenthood. I then develop how on the interactional level, motherhood and fatherhood can be viewed as situated accomplishments, within which discourses play an important role. Finally, I present some studies which have addressed the question at the individual level, showing how mothers' and fathers' subjectivities are discursively constituted.

2.1. The institutional level: shaping motherhood and fatherhood

Social policies and welfare states

Feminist welfare state scholarship has largely documented how welfare states and social policies shape parenthood, in particular how the state-market-family nexus organizes paid and unpaid work within families (e.g., J. Lewis, 1992, 1997, 2002; O'Connor, 1993, 1996; Orloff, 1993, 1996, 2009).⁶⁰ This literature shows how welfare states influence concretely the material

⁵⁸ Among discourse analysts, many consider that discourse is not the only way through which the social world and social relations are organized (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 127). I follow this perspective, and in this sense, it should be noted that parenthood is not only constituted through discourse, but through other institutional practices and social structures.

⁵⁹ Literature about homoparental families as well as other family forms (e.g., lone parents, step families) often reveals more challenging discourses and practices of gender relations and parenthood. However, covering this literature goes beyond the objective of this chapter.

⁶⁰ While mainstream comparative research analyzes the way welfare states order social relations and influence stratification according to different logics of status preservation and income redistribution (e.g., Esping-Andersen, 1990; Korpi & Palme, 1998), feminist scholarship premise the importance of gender in social and political life and aim to correct for the gender-blindness in welfare state comparative analysis (Orloff, 1993, p. 304). Life-course researchers (e.g., Kohli, 2007; Mayer, 2004; Mayer & Schoepflin, 1989) have also analyzed the ways in which the state

opportunities for mothers and fathers in various ways through specific public policies.⁶¹ For example, publicly available childcare services contribute to shift the burden of family work from the family (i.e., mothers) to the state. But family work can also be reorganized within the family, from women to men, for example by implementing a paternity leave.

Welfare states also shape gender relations through the way social policies regulate access to resources and social benefits. Typically, the extent to which social benefits are dependent on prior labor-market participation is crucial. While it is true that the majority of women are now likely to work for pay even when they have children, their specific patterns of labor-market participation—due to parenthood as well as horizontal and vertical segregation on the labor market—still influence their access to social benefits, as well as the amount of these benefits (e.g., pension, unemployment insurance). In contrast to social policies which depend on employment status or means-tested eligibility criteria, welfare states may base social provision on universal citizenship. As mentioned in Chapter I, this is particularly the case in social-democratic regimes, mainly found in Nordic countries. For example, all residing children in Denmark (notwithstanding their parents' work status) are entitled to a subsidized place in a daycare structure (Rostgaard, 2012). Such policies may contribute to reduce gender and class inequalities because they are not based on labor-market participation or on the level of income.

Welfare state policies concretely shape individuals' parenthood roles; they recognize and offer institutionalized support to some family models and sanction others (Orloff, 2009, p. 328). For example, in the past decades state intervention supporting "responsible fatherhood" has taken place, resulting in both fathers' strengthened (financial) obligations towards the family and child(ren) as well as increased their rights, for example regarding parental authority outside marriage or access to leave policies (Collier, 2012; A. Gregory & Milner, 2011; Hobson, 2002). In one of the first attempts to qualitatively compare the shaping of family models across different national contexts, Jane Lewis (1992) showed that the full-time and life-long male-breadwinner employment model—against which modern welfare state systems were established⁶²—developed in different directions in different countries. Ireland and Britain remained "strong" male-breadwinner states, where the lack of childcare services and minimal maternity rights, as well as unequal access between men and women to social security translated into part-time work and low status jobs for mothers. A firm line was drawn between what were considered private and public responsibilities. It was assumed that the family (i.e., women) would provide most of the childcare. France was identified as having developed towards a "modified" male-breadwinner welfare state, where women were more attached to the

and its institutions shape life courses and to some extent standardize them differently in different contexts and historical periods. Institutions such as public education, the labor market, retirement and unemployment insurances channel individuals through different sequences of life stages, according to different age norms, and provide them with different resources. Some authors take into account the gendered effects of the institutionalization of the life course (e.g., Han & Moen, 1999). However, in this section I concentrate on the gender critique of welfare state literature.

⁶¹ I do not develop in detail the reasons identified for the historically different development of welfare states and the corresponding different gender relations. Mainstream scholars have mainly analyzed institutional characteristics (e.g., Castles, 1993) and political constituencies, in particular the power of the labor movement (e.g., Esping-Andersen, 1990). Feminist scholars developed a critical analysis and also took into account the development and role played by women's movement, suffrage and political power for the securing of women's access to social benefits and shaping of the welfare state (J. Lewis, 1992; Orloff, 1993, 2009).

⁶² Historically, the development of the welfare state was simultaneous to the dominance of the male breadwinner model and social benefits were therefore oriented to securing the family wage of the head of the household (Orloff, 1996, pp. 318-319).

labor market and whose demands as workers (and not only mothers and wives) were recognized by the state. Finally, Sweden characterized as a “weak” male-breadwinner model, where the state had come to actively promote women’s “individual potential” and mothers’ integration into the labor market through separate taxation, parental leaves and by increasing childcare provision. More recently, a shift towards social policies supporting an “adult worker model”—i.e. policies treating women and men as individual workers—was identified in European Union policies and its country members (Daly, 2011; Jenson, 2009). However, these authors note that the detachment from a “male-breadwinner model” has resulted mainly in the commodification of previously unpaid family work, as well as a double burden for women, and not in a more equal share between men and women (see also Leon, 2005, pp. 208-209).

This literature shows how the institutional context in which men and women are embedded shapes their concrete opportunities as mothers and fathers, often—but not always—in the direction of gendered family roles. Many welfare state feminist analysts have explored further the role “ideational processes” play in the way welfare state policies are crafted and how they influence gender relations (e.g., Häusermann & Kübler, 2010; Jenson, 2009; Knijn & Smit, 2009; Kübler, 2007; Lombardo & Meier, 2008; Pfau-Effinger, 2005, 2008). The generic term of “ideational processes” entails the analysis of the role played by “cultural assumptions”, “categories”, “ideologies”, “frames” and “discourses” (depending on authors) on welfare state policy development and gender relations (Padamsee, 2009).

The support of specific family models—including a gender egalitarian one—depends largely on contextually situated ideologies about motherhood and paid work, the definition of public and private responsibilities and cultural values about informal care; i.e., the care provided informally in the family (Knijn & Kremer, 1997; Orloff, 2009; Pfau-Effinger, 2005). For example, discourses about the separation of private and public spheres of life create a form of knowledge, which justifies state intervention in certain areas and not others. Cross-national comparative analysis shows that discourses about what is “private” and “public” vary, producing different care regimes (e.g., Knijn & Kremer, 1997; Orloff, 2009, p. 326). For example, while the Nordic countries define care (both childcare and elderly care) as a public responsibility, until recently the majority of continental countries considered the care of children as a private family matter (Orloff, 2009, p. 326). It is only since the 2000s that ECEC services have been actively promoted in continental Europe.⁶³ In North America, the issue has been defined as the free “choice” of families, relying on the availability of market childcare options, albeit of unequal quality.

On the same line, Birgit Pfau-Effinger (2005) argued that national care policies are embedded in different development paths of cultural values in relation to informal care. According to Pfau-Effinger, some countries traditionally prone low informal care and others are characterized by high levels of informal care. On the same topic, Bacchi (1999, Chapter 7) showed that the way childcare policies are crafted depends on different problem representations, i.e., whether institutionalized childcare is considered necessary to facilitate women’s workforce, whether it is seen as a welfare measure for needy families or whether it is seen as part of early-childhood

⁶³ It should be noted that outsourcing of care work does not fundamentally challenge the construction of childcare as a gendered and lower valued activity. Thus the care sector activity is characterized by female (and often migrant) labor force and low paid and flexible positions (Orloff, 2009, p. 329). Relations of power continue to structure the organization of childcare, even if it is integrated to the labor market.

education policies. Such problem representations entail different conceptions of gender and class relations, as well as of what is considered legitimate state intervention.

Expert discourses

While policies and policy-making represent an important field at the institutional level where fatherhood and motherhood are discursively shaped, further arenas contribute to produce knowledge and ideological discourses about parenthood and contribute to its constitution in gendered terms. This is the case for expert discourses produced by governments, as well as various scientific discourses produced about parenthood and the family. Deborah Lupton and Lesley Barclay (1997, Chapter 2) analyzed the historical evolution of hegemonic discourses about parenthood in Australia, the US and the UK. In their view, the production of scientific knowledge on parenthood by governments was initially linked with objectives of monitoring, regulating and normalizing the population. Their historical analysis shows that until the early decades of the 18th century, the father was considered more important than the mother for the care and education of children. The 19th century, marked by industrialization and urbanization, operated a shift in the definition of parental roles: mothers were assigned to childrearing activities in the home and fathers outside the home to breadwinning activities. At the turn of the 20th century, institutional intervention within families was represented as a child protection issue, with the underlying assumption that “neglecting parenthood” concerned primarily (working-class) mothers. By the 1950s the regulatory strategies for childrearing had become more permissive, but were still considered primarily the mothers’ role. However, middle-class men in particular were encouraged to work towards a new conception of fatherhood, more nurturing and involved. This was in part related to the general individualist trend, which highlighted personal growth and self-realization through a close and emotional father-child relationship. However, the urge for more father involvement was also related to the emergence of a new concern; i.e., neglected “over-feminized boys” in need of more masculine presence. Lupton & Barclay observe that what are often nowadays hailed as “new” images of involved fatherhood, or “new fatherhood” were already a concern during the first half of the 20th century (Lupton & Barclay, 1997, p. 41).

Lupton & Barclay (1997, Chapter 2) also analyzed in more depth expert discourses stemming from psychology, social work and sociology on parenthood and the family. They noted that psychology had a particularly strong influence on popular ideas about motherhood and fatherhood. Based on developmental psychology premises, the idea that the mother-child relationship in the first years is determinant for the child’s later psychological and emotional development is of prior importance in the shaping of normative representations of motherhood. Since the middle of the 20th century, this literature has suggested that mothers should have constant contact with their child in order to construct instinctive bonds with the child following birth. This “attachment theory” was based on research often involving primates, to support theories about the detrimental effects on human infants of maternal neglect. Such research promoted the idea of the necessity of a primary carer for the healthy development of the child. At the end of the 20th century, the idea that the father-child relationship was also important for the child’s development emerged in this field. Overall, psychological research on fatherhood was less abundant than on motherhood, but since the 1970s it has focused on identifying the physical, psychological and social problems faced by children in event of an absent father.

Research tended to emphasize differences in interaction styles between mothers and fathers, constructing a model of complementarity that supported traditional gender roles. Lupton & Barclay note that overall, within psychology studies, fatherhood is conceptualized as universal and analyzed in a disconnected manner from its contextual setting.

As regards family health and welfare literature, Lupton and Barclay (1997) observed that it analyzes mainly the pathological experience of fatherhood and focuses particularly on groups which are defined as potentially problematic, such as single, widowed, divorced or adoptive fathers, stepfathers, gay fathers, teenage fathers etc. This literature often implies that fathers' stress and role strain should be solved with individual solutions. Authors in this field tend to highlight parenting differences between mothers and fathers and to legitimize it as normal. This literature provides a highly normative perspective on fatherhood by advocating appropriate behavior, although Lupton & Barclay note some attempts to present fatherhood as a cultural construct.

Within the field of sociology, Lupton & Barclay argue that the functionalist theory on the family proposed a conservative view of complementary sex roles, which oversaw power differentials and replicated gender stereotypes. Since the 1970s and 1980s, feminist and Marxist approaches of the family have questioned the division of labor between men and women in parenting and problematized its relationship with the economic system and the labor market. Feminist literature has depicted parenting tasks as reproducing and reflecting gender inequalities. Sociological literature documented men's lack of participation in childcare, called for more father involvement and asserted the need for more flexibility in work and leave provisions. According to Lupton & Barclay, with some exceptions, sociology tends to consider parental roles as fixed, and parenting norms as clearly identifiable. Few studies investigate individuals' construction of meaning of motherhood and fatherhood, their reproduction and challenging of norms and the importance of the dominant meanings and discourses circulating about "good motherhood" and "good fatherhood".

The media

The media also contribute to the discursive constitution of fatherhood and motherhood. Media discourse may draw on expert discourses and provide a vulgarized approach to the knowledge produced by academics. This relation was explored for example in France by Gérard Neyrand (2002) who highlighted the influence of developmental psychology and psychoanalysis on the social construction of parenthood and childhood in broad public and specialized written press. He observed that in an over simplified form, these discourses were used to fulfill entertainment and commercial objectives and in more rigorous developments, they had pedagogical objectives. He noted a modern representation of the family, but with the persisting assumption that mothers and fathers fulfilled complementary roles: the mother was mainly in charge of children and the father was involved in an intermittent and secondary manner (pp. 47-48).

Several scholars (Gentry & Harrison, 2010; Kaufman, 1999; Prinsloo, 2006) have noted that overall, images of fatherhood and even more so of involved fatherhood, are scarcely represented in the media. A growing tendency to represent fathers, or to speak in gender-neutral terms of parenthood has nonetheless been observed. For example, analysis of the US press from 1900 to

1989 shows that there is a significant trend towards addressing “parents”, rather than “mothers” (Atkinson & Blackwelder, 1993). This tendency is also noted by Jane Sunderland (2006) in her analysis of parenting craft books. However, she shows that the final target public are “mothers” rather than “mothers and fathers” indistinctly. A discourse analytical approach enabled her to reveal the assumptions underlying discourses in parenting books and magazines. She observed that fathers were rather represented as having a secondary role in parenting activities while mothers had the primary role (Sunderland, 2000, 2006). In their analysis of a Canadian newspaper chronicle on the family, Glenda Wall and Stephanie Arnold (2007) identified assumptions about differing motherhood and fatherhood responsibilities and experiences. Expectations of greater commitment were associated with mothers, so as the responsibility for managing work and family responsibilities.

In a study carried out on US television commercials, Gayle Kaufmann (1999) observed that men are less often represented in the company of small children and in care situations than women. Furthermore, when men are represented in family contexts, it is predominantly in gendered stereotyped activities (educative and play activities). In the same line, Scott Coltrane and Michele Adams (1997) observed that men are mainly represented as workers and women as sex objects. James Gentry and Robert Harrison’s (2010) observations are more moderate: results differ according to the target audience of the medium considered (male-oriented or female oriented).

Lupton & Barclay (1997, Chapter 3) analyzed the representations of fatherhood in English-speaking television comedies and popular films from 1950s to the 1990s. They observed that different archetypes of fatherhood were to be found: the “father as authoritative figure”, “the father as wise figure”, “the father as main economic provider”, “the father as fun figure” and “the father as nurturing and affectionate figure”. They noted that fathers were increasingly depicted with nurturing and affectionate characteristics—typically associated with the image of “new father”. However, traditional figures were also still identified in the more recent decades. They further noted that the new father was more likely to be portrayed in drama than in comedy and concerning single fathers than intact families. Fatherhood was portrayed as being potentially rewarding, but also problematic because of the interference with professional objectives and demands. Authors also highlighted that class differences existed: (white) middle-class fathers were represented as more affectionate than working-class fathers, who were often derided and represented as having little authority over their children.

Finally, in their comparison of representations of fatherhood in the popular media in France and the UK, Abigail Gregory and Susan Milner (2011) also observed that in both contexts, a conservative representation of fatherhood still dominates, and that “although new forms of masculine identity based on new behaviors in the public and private spheres of work and family may be observable in everyday life, they are not (yet?) culturally dominant or even mainstream”. (p. 600). They conclude that the repertoire of what the media consider “normal” family practices and “good fathering” has broadened, but the simultaneous praise and ridiculing of “new” or “involved” fathers reflects the media’s unease and uncertainty about how to deal with men’s changing family roles.

2.2. The interactional level: doing motherhood and fatherhood

Gender beliefs about parenthood

Connected to the institutional level (public policies, discourses and knowledge which shape fatherhood and motherhood) is the interactional level of the gender structure. As mentioned in the presentation of West and Zimmerman's (1987) "doing gender" approach, gender can be understood as "the activity of managing situated conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one's sex category" (West & Zimmerman, 1987, p. 127). From this theoretical standpoint, many scholars contend that if men and women "do gender", they also respectively "do fatherhood" and "do motherhood" (e.g., Brandth & Kvande, 1998; Coltrane, 1989; Plantin, Månsson, & Kearney, 2003; Walzer, 1996), according to normative conceptions on fatherhood and motherhood. Therefore discourses on motherhood and fatherhood can be considered as influencing interactions and parents' situated practices. These "normative conceptions"—also referred to by others as "cultural rules", "cultural expectations", or "cognitive images" (Risman, 1998) as well as "gender beliefs" (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004b)—are understood as rules for social action which "define the distinguishing characteristics of men and women and how they are expected to behave" (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004b, p. 511). According to social interactionist premises, within any social relational context, individuals need to define self and other in order to comprehend the situation and act. Individuals do so primarily and unconsciously through sex categorization,⁶⁴ which in turn activates gender stereotypes and influences behavior and judgment (Ridgeway, 2009; Ridgeway & Correll, 2000, 2004b; Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999).

Based on a literature review, Cecilia Ridgeway and Shelley Correll (2004b, p. 513) described gender beliefs about men and women: women are said to be more communal, less competent but nicer than men. Men are said to be more agentic and instrumental, more status worthy and more competent at the things that "count most".⁶⁵ Gender beliefs about differences between men and women are closely related to gender beliefs about fatherhood and motherhood. Because women are seen as better at communal tasks, they are represented as more fit for childcare, which imply nurturing, care and emotional work. Francine Deutsch (2001) analyzed the cultural image of the "good mother" as "ever-available", "endlessly patient", "exclusively responsible" and as prioritizing the children's needs (p.25). Cultural myths about mothers having a special bond with their children (based on essentialized differences between men and women) and men not being able to nurture their infants in similar ways to mothers contribute to the creation of these differences. As men are seen as more agentic and instrumental, they are considered as being

⁶⁴ Gender usually functions as a "background" identity, while further categorizations are operated and enmeshed with gender, depending on the social relational context and relevant identities and roles (e.g., according to age, ethnicity, or institutional role). Several authors have shown that gender intersects with other systems creating difference and inequality (e.g., class, race and sexuality) which influence individuals' social positions and experiences (Crenshaw, 1989, 1991; Hancock, 2007a, 2007b; West & Fenstermaker, 1995).

⁶⁵ These universal depictions of women and men through a narrow set of features present an abstract understanding of what the "typical man" and the "typical woman" are. These gender beliefs are said to be hegemonic because individuals are always aware of them, even if they are committed to alternative beliefs or even if they transgress them (Ridgeway & Correll, 2000, p. 113). These understandings are related to existing power relations and describe most closely white, middle-class, heterosexual men and women (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004b, p. 527). Although there is a progress towards gender equity, these gender beliefs are said to be resilient and still valid nowadays. Since the 1970s, peoples' self-reports of their own instrumental and communal traits have become less gendered, but estimates of the "typical" man or woman are still valid nowadays.

better prepared for fulfilling the role of main breadwinners, protector of the family, as well as fulfilling an authoritarian, educational and sometimes recreational function with their children.

Consequences in the work context

Researchers have investigated the consequences of these gender beliefs on interactions within work organizations, among close family and friends, as well as within the couple relationship. Within the work context, several social psychology studies showed that mothers and fathers face different expectations and evaluations. Because fathers are culturally expected to be the main breadwinners for their families, and unless they show signs of being involved caregivers (e.g., leaving early to pick children from daycare or taking time off to care for a sick child), they will be seen as more committed to work than mothers (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004a, pp. 695-696). Because mothers are expected to engage in intensive mothering and to prioritize their children's needs over all other activities, they are considered less available, making less effort for work demands and being less competent workers than other employees (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004a, pp. 690-692).

Representations of the "good mother" collide with that of the "good worker"; i.e., the committed and unencumbered ideal worker whose performance is evaluated on the basis of long working hours and "face time". Joan Acker (1990) argues that in organizational logic, job content, responsibility and hierarchy are defined in abstract terms and expected to be fulfilled by a disembodied worker. In this conception, the good worker is an abstract worker who supposedly exists only for the job and is free of other imperatives, such as family obligations. Acker argues that "[t]he closest the disembodied worker doing the abstract job comes to a real worker is the male worker whose life centers on his full-time, life-long job, while his wife or another woman takes care of his personal needs and his children" (Acker, 1990, p. 149). Mothers do not fit with the abstract job description, and because they are expected to divide their commitments between work and family they are ranked lower within the organization.⁶⁶ Amy Cuddy, Susan Fiske and Peter Glick (2004) have shown how the transition to motherhood does not have the same consequences as fatherhood within the work context: when employed women become mothers, they lose perceived competence and gain perceived warmth, while men maintain perceived competence, gain perceived warmth and are not penalized for future career advancement.

Consequences for personal life

As regards interactions with family members and friends, gender beliefs about parenthood also play a significant role. For example, good parenting is rated differently for mothers and fathers: in order to be qualified as such, it is expected that mothers do more parenting than fathers (Kobrynowicz & Biernat, 1997). Fathers can choose their degree of involvement in childcare (Miller, 2011a; Modak & Palazzo, 2002; Ranson, 2001) and are not judged incompetent if they do provide a lot of help, as long as they continue to earn a good living (Deutsch, 2001, p. 26). This double standard of evaluation of motherhood and fatherhood is also noted by Francine Deutsch

⁶⁶ This is also related with beliefs about the lower value and competence attributed to part-time workers (Eagly & Steffen, 1986).

and Susan Saxon (1998). These authors observed that men's and women's gender norm violations are not equivalent. Fathers are more likely than mothers to be criticized if they are involved in family work at the expense of work. They are also more likely than mothers to be praised for doing childcare work (e.g., feeding, diapering their child). Mothers are more likely to be criticized than fathers if they are employed full-time or if their children are in day care. However, they do not receive much praise for contributing to the household income, "which may reflect the potential threat to men's egos when their wives earn money" (Deutsch & Saxon, 1998, p. 679). Authors conclude that this double standard of praise and criticism does not serve gender-equality objectives. The disproportionate amount of praise men receive for their involvement in parenting suggests that their contributions are more valuable than that of their partners, reproducing inequality of value of men's and women's work.

Gender beliefs about parenthood also shape couple interactions. Risman (1998) and Deutsch (2007) draw on several studies which show that even if women and men benefit from similar resources and contribute equally to the household income, an unequal division of work is adopted within the couple. They argue that the persistence of unequal division of unpaid work results from partners "doing gender". That is, in order to counter their transgression of traditional gender norms about the male provider role, mothers invest their expected role within the family while fathers opt out of typically feminine household tasks. However, the same authors have also shown that under some circumstances, parenting behavior needs not be gendered. Although gender beliefs are resilient, there is a certain degree of uncertainty within interactions, which implies a "constant negotiation and incipient conflict" (Risman, 1998, pp. 32-33).

Gender-equal parenting interactions

The relatively clear-cut picture presented above on gender beliefs about motherhood and fatherhood is enriched when considering how competing discourses can shape interactions in alternative ways. Deutsch (2007) in particular argues that empirical analysis should also focus on situations where change occurs; when social interactions become less gendered and when gender is "undone".⁶⁷ Competing discourses about fatherhood and motherhood and the blurring of norms about parenthood have been noted by several scholars. For example, Barclay & Lupton (1999), contend that discourses related to the idea of "new fatherhood" (i.e., nurturing and caring role) did not replace discourses about "traditional fatherhood" (i.e., provider and guidance role) but supplemented them. Risman (1998, p. 47) also noted that involved fatherhood does not necessarily challenge the idea that mothers are primarily responsible for children. Tina Miller (2011a, p. 1096) argued that discourses about fatherhood are rooted in the construction of hegemonic masculinities as well as in the more recent discourses about the "involved father".

Acknowledging these competing discourses about parenthood, several scholars have documented the ways in which they are drawn upon within interactions, reproducing as well as

⁶⁷ Deutsch rejects the theoretical proposition of West & Zimmerman's that doing gender is unavoidable, because she argues that it rules out any possibility of resistance or change. More generally, she is critical of scholars who have referred to the doing gender approach by emphasizing how—even when women or men are in atypical gender contexts—their actions are (modified) ways of doing gender.

challenging gendered parenthood. For example, a study comparing men's experiences of fatherhood in Sweden and England, showed that while the discourse of involved fatherhood was understood and responded to by fathers in both contexts, it was not as well accepted in England as it was in Sweden (Plantin et al., 2003). The reason identified was that while discourses and policies in favor of active and equal parenting had been actively promoted in Sweden for 25 years, this was not the case in England. This implied that fathers' interactions in Sweden and in England were not constrained by the same gender beliefs about parenthood. First, when English men were involved in fathering activities, they often met resistance from colleagues and family members. Secondly, the discourse of involved fatherhood was predominantly adopted by middle-class English men, while no class differences were observed among Swedish men. Thirdly, at the identity level, English men had trouble reconciling ideas of involved fatherhood with persistent traditional views on masculinity, while this was not the case for Swedish fathers.

Focusing on fathering practices of Norwegian interviewees, Brandth & Kvande (1998) observed that a masculine way of parenting was developed: men established a friendly relationship with their children, taught them independence (in contrast to mothers' protective relationship) and relinquished to take on housework, marking a difference with maternal care. Furthermore, the authors noted that partners as well as friends and colleagues praised masculine care higher than maternal care. According to the authors, this suggests a modified way of doing gender; childcare had been integrated in interviewees' masculinities, without, however, challenging gender inequalities in the household. Finally, Miller (2010, 2011a, 2011b) compared men's fathering intentions prior to birth (being involved and "being present") with their concrete practices during the child's early weeks in the UK. She analyzed how gender was done and undone, by noting not only the contradictory normative expectations which shape fatherhood (being involved and being a breadwinner), but by also taking into account structural constraints. She noted that as soon as men returned to work after a short paternity leave (two weeks in the UK), parents "fell back into gender" and performed parenthood in gendered manners.

These few studies analyzing "doing parenthood" show that the institutional setting as well as discourses about fatherhood and motherhood shape interactions. They constrain, as well as enable within limits, the way individuals act as parents. This research literature also shows how the institutional, the interactional and the individual levels of the gender structure are interrelated.

2.3. The individual level: mothers' and fathers' subjectivities

The role of socialization for gendered identities

The gender structure also takes into account the fact that thinking about oneself and about others in a gendered way contributes to maintaining gender differences and inequalities. There is a substantial research literature which analyzes the effect of socialization on the construction of gendered selves, considered as the basis for the further development of gendered parental identities. Among early socialization entities, parents, peers, childcare and school environments, as well as cultural products such as games, books and movies have been identified (Duru-Bellat, 1989, p. 113). Research literature shows that parenting behavior shapes and encourages boys

and girls in different activities and fosters different traits of their personality (Cunningham, 2001b, p. 185). These personality traits prepare them to fulfill different social roles, i.e., boys are better prepared and willing to engage in competitive environments and girls, although they are also expected to achieve education and join the labor market (Risman, 1998, p. 15), are oriented towards and more keen to engage in nurturing activities than boys. The family context within which children grow (the division of work among parents and their gender-role attitudes) provides role models and influences their own attitudes and division of tasks at different stages of their adult lives (Cunningham, 2001a, 2001b). In contexts where family ties are particularly important such as Italy, the family configuration (and the presence of maternal female kin members in particular) has proven to influence young women's attitudes about gender relations and family formation, even after they had moved out of home (Bernardi & Oppo, 2008).

Through the development of gendered identities, men and women come to see parenthood as having a different meaning in their lives and identities. For example, in an exploratory study about mothers' identities in Switzerland, Rachel Fasel and Dario Spini (2011) showed that notwithstanding women's occupational status, motherhood was the most salient and most important role identified. In another analysis, the authors compared the place of parenthood in men's and women's identities approximately one year after the birth of the first child and observed that they similarly placed motherhood and fatherhood at the center of their identities (Fasel & Spini, forthcoming). However, men and women conceived the role of their respective partners in gendered terms. Women predominantly saw their partners as breadwinners and men predominantly saw their companions as mothers.

In a literature review on gender and parenthood, Thompson & Walker (1989, pp. 860-863) reported on the differences observed in parenting experiences by mothers and fathers in the US. Mothers typically saw their role as tiring and frustrating, but also found meaning and fulfillment in this activity. Intensive parenting was seen as imperative for mothers and optional for fathers. Both parents tended to consider fathers as "helpers" and associated fatherhood with the provider role. Mothers were seen as protective, soothing and comforting while fathers more often saw themselves as playmates for their child(ren). All in all, these different social processes resulted in gendered fatherhood and motherhood identities.

Research exploring the individual level factors which influence the development of specific fatherhood roles and fathering practices often relies on men's "gender ideology" or "gender attitudes", i.e., what they view as appropriate behaviors and roles for men and women. For example, Ronald Bulanda (2004) showed that men who hold a gender egalitarian ideology are more likely to spend more time in childcare activities than men with a traditional ideology. In a similar vein, women's orientation towards paid work and family work have been conceptualized as "preferences" by Catherine Hakim (1998). She argued that women's preferences for unpaid family work, work orientation or in-between "adaptive" orientation were the driver of their labor-market participation patterns.

The interaction between discourses and identities

A critical view of the various studies presented above about mothers' and fathers' identities and attitudes calls for a greater attention to institutional contexts and ideological discourses. As

mentioned in Chapter I, research shows that gender attitudes are not only the outcome of gendered socialization or individual characteristics, but also contingent on the cultural and institutional context individuals are embedded in (Schneider & Becker, 2012; Sjöberg, 2004, 2010). Research attentive to the discursive constitution of gendered identities enables one to adopt a more dynamic conceptualization of motherhood and fatherhood identities. It considers that the self does not pre-exist social and cultural processes but that it is a product of these processes (Lupton & Barclay, 1997, pp. 8-9). Individuals draw upon discourses that circulate in wider society and within specific social contexts in order to think about themselves. For example, Michelle Lazar contends that “there is nothing inherently fixed about the identities of “mother” and “father”” (Lazar, 2000, p. 376). More so, how we perceive these identities (e.g., motherhood as natural and fatherhood as social) or the relations between them, is the result of discursive practices which have led us to think and talk about them in conventional ways. In a discourse analytical approach, “[w]hat is fixed, therefore, can be analytically un-fixed or dismantled”, with the aim of analyzing the socially constructed nature of these identities and relations, and problematizing how they serve particular interests while subordinating others (Lazar, 2000, pp. 376-377).

In a study conducted in Canada with dual-earner couples, Jenny Blain (1994) investigated how the “institutional discourses of family become part of the discursive practices of women and men as family members” (p.515). She analyzed “couples’ myths”, that is men’s and women’s justifications for unequal division of domestic and childcare work. For example, she observed that interviewees tend to explain men’s smaller share of domestic and childcare work because of their incompetence, or because of their own greater ability at these tasks. These explanations can be seen as coping mechanisms to avoid conflict within couples. However, as these rationales were recurrent among the couples interviewed, it suggested that they were “discursive products”, not created by individual participants but in part also the creation of institutions, acting to maintain gendered social structures of inequality (Blain, 1994, p. 522). Individuals’ talk was “constituted from the conceptual apparatus available for respondents to *think* about their lives, not always coherently, to interpret their own actions and those of others, to perceive what actions are appropriate or possible” (Blain, 1994, p. 540).

Blain identified four discourses: “personal preferences and choice”, “abilities of women versus men”, “roles and socialization” as well as “natural bonding of mother and child”. The first two discourses justify a traditional division of tasks without problematizing external pressures or constraints on partners. This suggests that the division of work is chosen freely, outside power relations and according to gendered personal skills. The discourse of roles and socialization has clear links with sociological and psychological literature. It draws on a functional conception of the family, where the division of roles between an instrumental breadwinner and an expressive nurturer is necessary. Finally, the discourse of natural bonding is—as we have previously mentioned—related to medical and psychological literature and is widely referred to in parenting magazines. Such discourse stresses the importance for the child of intensive maternal care, the special mother-child relation, and the dangers related to maternal employment. The majority of interviewees referred to all of these discourses, even if they sometimes contradict one another. For example, mothers were caught up between acting according to personal preferences (free choice discourse), but also guaranteeing a strong-enough attachment with their newborn child (natural bond discourse). These discourses and the subject position they produce, created a tension at the identity level and feelings of guilt among interviewees.

Julia Nentwich (2008) identified four scenarios of heterosexual parenthood in her discursive analysis of interviews conducted with Swiss individuals. She showed how these scenarios made available different subject positions for parents, revealing motherhood and fatherhood identities which to various extents troubled gendered representations of parenthood. In the “traditional” scenario of parenthood, being a mother or a father was a natural consequence of being a heterosexual woman or man; women stressed their relation to the child and men to paid job. In the second scenario (“balancing the double burden”), the notion of active father and the working mother were present, but the gendered representation of parenthood was reified because women and men had to justify that they were doing more of their counterpart’s stereotypical role. The third scenario (“equal parenthood”) constructed mothers and fathers as equals and blurred gendered representations of parenthood by representing the balancing of work and family as a gender-neutral objective. However, although mothers and fathers were expected to do the same things, they were not considered the same. The ontological differentiation between motherhood and fatherhood was not questioned. Finally, Nentwich considered the “single breadwinning mother” scenario as the most challenging for gendered representations of parenthood because mothers’ labor-market participation was not even raised as an issue during interviews.

Karen Henwood & Joanne Procter (2003) analyzed the ways in which fathers in the UK responded to the discourse of “new fatherhood” and how it influenced their understanding of their fatherhood identities and of fatherhood in general. “New fatherhood” took on different meanings for them—often in an intertwined way—such as an opportunity to transform the self and to progress outside fixed gender roles; a threat to traditional family values; a confusion for one’s sense of masculinity; or a new, valued form of masculinity which did not fundamentally curtail their privileges. A Finnish study also analyzed the relationship between first-time fathers’ narratives and the metanarrative (or cultural discourse) of “new fatherhood” (Eerola & Huttunen, 2011). Authors observed that within each of the different types of narratives identified (modern, transition and post-modern) the “new father” metanarrative was reflected upon, which according to them indicated its culturally dominant position in contemporary Finland.

Finally, in her discursive analysis of the ways in which mothers in Finland and Great-Britain make sense of their everyday life, Katja Repo (2004) took into account the influence of the institutional and cultural framework, notably family and motherhood ideologies. She observed that shared parenting was something British mothers considered they had to “fight for” and as a feminist issue, whereas Finnish mothers connected shared parenting with everyday practices and were also concerned with not abusing their partners’ participation. Finnish mothers could count on many different resources (the partner, formal and informal care arrangements, flexible arrangements at work) to juggle work and family demands while British mothers experienced it as an individual issue, to be solved through their own adaptation.

2.4. Summary

This section presented the ways in which parenthood is discursively constituted on each level of the gender structure. It gives empirical support to the theoretical framework I adopted, which articulates gender structure theory and discourse analysis principles. This framework enables one to understand the way motherhood and fatherhood are (re-)produced as two different categories, entailing distinctive practices and experienced differently. However, research shows that in some cases, the reproduction of these differences is challenged and that the content of motherhood and fatherhood is constituted in more equal ways.

On the institutional level, social policies shape mothers' and fathers' roles, access to resources, and opportunities to pursue wage work and family lives. Depending on the set of policies developed and their underlying assumptions, welfare states may support different normative family models, from a strong breadwinner model to an adult worker model. Other social institutions producing discourses about parenthood, such as governments, academic experts from different fields (psychology, sociology, social work) as well as the media are also influential. They make available different knowledge about motherhood and fatherhood, mainly pointing out differences which oppose them. Since the beginning of the 20th century, mothers' natural bond and main responsibility for children's well-being has been emphasized. While discourses of new and involved fatherhood are increasingly highlighted by these different social institutions, they have not replaced the traditional male-breadwinner role. Competing discourses about fatherhood are juxtaposed.

Because the gender structure permeates all spheres of life, it also shapes individuals' interactions. Gender beliefs about parenthood imply that motherhood and fatherhood are associated with different expectations of behavior and trigger different reactions during social interactions, whether in the work environment or in personal relationships. Systematically, more involvement and devotion is expected from mothers than from fathers. Mothers are seen as naturally more inclined and better at caring for infants. Fathers are seen as less competent in these tasks but more fit to take on an educational, authoritative or recreational role. They are praised when they participate in childcare tasks. Mothers' childcare responsibility is taken for granted which has negative collateral consequences for their working-life perspectives. Beyond this clear-cut picture, some studies show that depending on the context, individuals do fatherhood and motherhood in more gender-equal ways. This is particularly the case when they can draw on gender-equal cultural values and structural opportunities to reconcile work and family lives at the institutional level.

Finally, at the individual level, many studies suggest that mothers and fathers come to see themselves differently as a result of socialization mechanisms which tend to prepare them to embrace different family roles. Family and occupational lives have both become important in men and women's identities, but motherhood is still more central in women's identities than fatherhood is in men's identities. However, research taking into account the influence of discourses available in society for mothers' and father's subjectivities shows the interaction mechanism between the individual and the institutional levels. Individuals make sense of their experiences as parents through the existing (and sometimes competing) discourses about motherhood, (new) fatherhood and gender relations. Discourses also provide possible alternative ways of thinking about the self.

3. Parental leave policies and gender equality

The previous section shows that discursive mechanisms are at play within the gender structure for fatherhood and motherhood constitution. At the institutional level, governments—among other social institutions—contribute to the construction of parenthood, by implementing social policies which influence parenthood in more or less gendered ways. Among these social policies, the effects of parental leave policies on gender relations are of central interest for my research. Indeed, my research question tackles the potential challenge the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland represents for the gender structure. Therefore, it is necessary to explore—on the basis of existing research in countries which have already implemented parental leave policies—what effects for gender equality can be expected from this emergence.⁶⁸ This section will therefore develop how parental leave policies may either challenge or reproduce the gendered constitution of motherhood and fatherhood. I show how in other national contexts, and depending on a series of structural, ideological, organizational, family and individual factors, parental leave policies can modify the way parenthood is constituted at different levels of the gender structure.

3.1. Uptake and use of parental leave policies

Gendered use and effects of parental leave policies

A very important issue regarding the potential effects of parental leave policies on gender relations concerns the way they are used by mothers and fathers. The first and most important challenge consists in supporting the uptake of parental leave policies by fathers. Several studies have investigated take-up rates according to the sex of leave recipients, as well as the average length of leave uptake by men and women. For example, in a comparison of eight countries, Gwennaële Bruning and Janneke Plantenga (1999) concluded that in the mid-90s, men took parental leave far less frequently than women. There were considerable national differences, but even in Finland, Norway and Sweden, where more than half of fathers actually used some of the parental leave, they still took shorter periods of leave than mothers (Bruning & Plantenga, 1999, p. 204).

In a survey assessing parental leave uptake and use in companies in 21 EU member states in 2004-2005, authors observed that only 30% of the establishments surveyed had a recent experience of a male employee taking parental leave in the previous three years (Anxo, Fagan, Smith, Letablier, & Perraudin, 2007, p. 22). Companies most likely to report leave uptake by men were in Sweden (69% of companies), Slovenia (66%) and Finland (59%), while those least likely were in Cyprus (1%), the Czech Republic (2%), and Hungary (5%). Recent data on leave uptake by men confirms this discrepant pattern of leave use between mothers and fathers. For example in Germany only 25.7% of fathers took parental leave in 2010 (Blum & Erler, 2012). In France, mothers represent 98 to 99% of parental leave recipients (Fagnani & Boyer, 2012). In Sweden, the overwhelming majority of fathers—90% of men who had children in 1998—make use of

⁶⁸ Researchers investigate parental leave policies' effects on different areas of social life, notably on fertility behavior, child development, couple satisfaction and gender equality. I focus this review of the literature on gender equality alone, because it is the object of my research question.

parental leave; however, mothers still take most of the parental leave days. In 2010 they used 76.9% of the total amount of parental days available, while men used 23.1% (Haas et al., 2012).

Such a gendered use of leave policies can contribute to maintaining the gendered division of unpaid work between mothers and fathers by supporting a specialization of tasks in the family. It can also have long-term consequences for women's occupational trajectories when they use a large share of leave and are absent from the labor-market for a prolonged period of time. Parental leave has negative consequences for mothers' career advancement (for Sweden see Evertsson & Duvander, 2010), is negatively correlated with mothers' employment re-entry rates (Lalive & Zweimüller, 2009; Pettit & Hook, 2005, for a comparative analysis of 19 countries), and reduces women's relative wages (Ruhm, 1998, for a comparison of nine European countries) if it has been used for a long period of time. However, the threshold lengths are different according to the variable measured and the national context investigated. For example, in Sweden results indicate that women taking leaves of 16 months or more were less likely to experience an upward occupational move once back on the job (Evertsson & Duvander, 2010). Rafael Lalive and Josef Zweimüller (2009) take into account reforms of leave length in Austria (from 12 months before 1990, to 24 months between 1990 and 1996 and back to 18 months after 1996) and observe that the extension of parental leave from 12 to 24 months had short-term negative consequences on women's return to work, but observe no long-term negative employment and earnings effects.

On the other hand, it should be noted that if parental leave is not used for prolonged periods by women, it is far from being entirely negative for them. In Nordic countries, the existence of statutory parental leave contributes to avoid that women drop out of the labor market before the transition to motherhood (Rønsen & Sundström, 2002). In the US, the introduction of a 12 weeks' unpaid leave and job protection (the Family and Medical Leave Act was implemented in 1993), had the effect of accelerating women's return to work after birth (Hofferth & Curtin, 2003). Finally, in Sweden when fathers use a comparatively long share of parental leave, women's career interruptions were found to be shorter (Pyökkänen & Smith, 2003).

Factors influencing fathers' leave uptake

Because leave uptake by fathers is the main obstacle to gender-equality effects, intensive research has been conducted to understand the variables which influence their likelihood of using parental leave policies. There are three groups of factors which contribute in a decisive way to the use fathers make of parental leave policies: 1) the design and modalities of access and use of parental leave policies; 2) workplace related factors, including the role of managers; and 3) further family and individual-level variables such as the socio-economic situation and gender attitudes.

Many scholars have demonstrated that one of the strongest factors of statutory leave uptake by men is the **design and the modalities of access and use** of parental leave policies (e.g., Haas, 2003; Haas & Rostgaard, 2011; Moss, 2008; Ray et al., 2010). The most relevant aspects identified are:

- the individual and non-transferable nature of the entitlement

- the universal access,⁶⁹ independent for example of seniority, branch of activity or collective agreement
- high earnings compensation (versus low paid, unpaid or flat-rate benefits)
- the flexibility of the leave, for example concerning the time frame to use it and the possibility of partitioning it and using it part-time
- and other incentives for fathers, such as extra leave weeks if the father uses a minimal portion of the joint entitlement, or financial advantages such as tax rebates.

In a review of the evolution of parental leave use in Norway since its implementation in 1977, Berit Brandth and Elin Kvande (2009, p. 184) noted that in the late 1980s, less than 1% of fathers used parental leave, a proportion which increased very slowly during the time parental leave was a joint entitlement. When a quota of paid parental leave in favor of fathers was introduced in 1993, the proportion of fathers using parental leave jumped from 4% to 85% in 2000. These authors argue (Brandth & Kvande, 2001, 2002, 2009) that the fathers' quota—also referred to as “compulsory”, or “gendered” leave because of the targeting of men—is a necessary “gentle force” to foster fathers' take-up rates. When parental leave is a joint entitlement and parents are free to choose how to share it, fathers tend to forgo their right and mothers tend to use an overwhelming part of the entitlement. By contrast, when the leave follows a “use-it-or-lose-it” principle, men tend to use up the leave they are entitled to.

This point is further supported by a cross-national comparison of the gendered division of leave among different Nordic countries (Haas & Rostgaard, 2011). Authors assessed countries' parental leave schemes' gender equality and their evolution from 1998 to 2010. They observe that it is the introduction (in Iceland) or the increase (in Sweden and Norway) of the fathers' quota which had greatest effect on the increased take-up of parental leave days by fathers. Flexibility, incentives, universality and amount of joint leave entitlement were less decisive for fathers' use of parental leave. Nordic fathers take almost full advantage of the fathers' quota where it is offered. It is in Iceland that the proportion of parental leave days taken by fathers increased most dramatically, as a result of the introduction of the fathers' quota; from 2.3% in 1997 to 31.2% in 2008. However, in all countries, fathers tend not to take advantage of the shared parental leave entitlement beyond the fathers' quota. In Sweden, only 9% of parents of children born in 2006 shared equally the portion of leave which is a joint entitlement for parents (excluding the quota).

Brandth & Kvande (2002) argue that the efficiency of shifting the decision about how to divide the leave from the family to the state reflects the fact that “[f]athers need help from the ‘state’ to set limits and make it legitimate to take leave from work. Thus schemes based on wide flexibility and options become unsuitable as they leave too much of the negotiations to ‘father and company’” (Brandth & Kvande, 2002, p. 201). A survey conducted in Norway assessing the reasons why men had forgone the father's quota right indicates that the predominant reason was they considered leave uptake could not be combined with their job (64% of respondents who had not taken the leave considered this an important reason) (Brandth & Kvande, 2001, pp. 260-261). Haas & Hwang's (2009, pp. 305-306) review of the research literature in many

⁶⁹ Eligibility rules are, however, always subject to a minimum period of contribution to the labor market. For example, in Denmark the minimum is set to 120 hours of employment in the 13 weeks prior to leave, and in Sweden, 240 days of employment prior to the expected due date (Haas & Rostgaard, 2011, p. 182).

European countries confirms that workplace barriers are often mentioned by fathers as reasons for giving up or making limited use of parental leave policies.

This reason refers to the second set of factors, which in addition to leave modalities, influence fathers' leave uptake, namely **workplace characteristics**. First, leave uptake rates differences are observed between sectors of the economy, male employees working in the public sector showing higher uptake rates than those in the private sector (Anxo et al., 2007, for a comparison of 21 European countries; Brandth & Kvande, 2002, for Norway; Bygren & Duvander, 2006, for Sweden; Whitehouse, Diamond, & Baird, 2007, for Australia). Secondly, the branch of activity is also correlated with leave uptake by fathers. Service sector companies (i.e., public administration, financial intermediation or business services) are more likely to have had recent experiences of fathers on leave than industrial companies (Anxo et al., 2007). In a study conducted in Sweden, the service sector was also found to provide more informal support to male employees than in other companies (Haas & Hwang, 2009).

A third factor influencing fathers' propensity to use parental leave is the size of the company, probably because large companies are more prepared and used to dealing with employees' absences. Men employed in large companies were found to be more likely than others to take leave in Australia (Whitehouse et al., 2007) and in Sweden (Bygren & Duvander, 2006), as well as in a European comparison of companies in 21 countries (Anxo et al., 2007). Fourthly, the share of women in top management also impacts the company's responsiveness to fathers' leave use (Haas & Hwang, 2009). Results are less clear as regards the impact of the sex composition of the work force in the workplace. Female-dominated work environments were found to be associated with men's higher parental leave uptake in Sweden (Bygren & Duvander, 2006). However, Dominique Anxo et al. (2007) found the opposite relationship; female-dominated work environment were less likely to report fathers leave uptake. Finally, when companies have implemented other family-friendly policies such as flexible work schedules or childcare centers, they are also more likely to have experienced men's leave uptake (Anxo et al., 2007).

In addition to these structural characteristics, several studies have been attentive to the company culture and its effects on employees' use of parental leave. Linda Haas and Philip Hwang (1995) showed that companies' father-friendliness—calculated as an index examining formal policies and programs, as well as informal company flexibility and support for fathers—was significantly related to levels of leave uptake by male employees in the 200 largest companies in Sweden in 1993. However, in almost half of the private companies surveyed, only 10% of fathers or fewer took parental leave. A follow-up survey conducted in 2006 showed a considerable increase in corporate support compared with 1993 (especially formal policies and informal support shown by co-workers and managers and the establishment of a norm for fathers' leave-taking), but overall still weak support of fathers' leave uptake (Haas & Hwang, 2009). Work organizations are overall still characterized by rather gendered corporate cultures: gendered representations of the division of work in the family and representations of an ideal, family obligations-free worker, working full-time, willing and able to work overtime and to travel for the sake of the company. Haas & Hwang (2007) contend that companies subscribe in different degrees to ideologies concerning the assumed separation of work and family spheres, as well as concerning men's "legitimate" monopoly of power in the workplace. They show how companies' organizational cultures influence the extent to which they are responsive to fathers and the level of formal and informal support they provide to them.

In another study surveying 317 fathers employed in six Swedish companies, Haas et al. (2002) identified the aspects of organizational culture which had strong independent effects on men's likelihood of taking parental leave. This concerned the extent to which companies' values were based on an ethic of caring, the existence of father-friendly policies and programs, the support of the company for women's advancement, and to a lesser extent, men's perception of support from top management. Work group culture (perception of flexibility, adaptation and evaluation of work based on task and not on time spent at work) also resulted in more leave uptake and/or longer leave taken by male employees. Similarly, Magnus Bygren and Ann-Zofie Duvander (2006) noted in a study conducted in Stockholm that prior leave uptake by other fathers in the company fostered employed fathers' likelihood of using parental leave. This indicates that "fathers choose to limit their parental leave taking if they are likely to face costs associated with leave taking at their workplace" (Bygren & Duvander, 2006, p. 370).

Several studies investigated, at the intermediate level of work organizations, the mediating role of managers in leave uptake by fathers and their role in parents' ability to reconcile work and family life. In their review of the literature, Laura den Dulk and Bram Peper (2009) show that managerial support is central when it comes to the use and effectiveness of work-life programs, may they be statutory, based on collective agreements or implemented by the company. They also note that the tendency is to decentralize personnel management from Human Resource (HR) managers to line managers. It is the latter who are now increasingly responsible for communicating, implementing and managing work-life policies, and therefore of approving or rejecting employees' requests for benefits. Therefore, middle managers are of central importance in the implementation process of work-life policies. Overall, den Dulk & Peper note that there are a great variety of management styles: managers use discretionary power and give support to employees' requests to various degrees. They may actively support and search informal solutions to employees' requests, strictly apply company policies, or even discourage employees from making use of them. When policies are newly implemented and not yet institutionalized and taken for granted, the discretionary power of managers increases and their responses vary.

Research results have also shown that middle managers are often unaware of the existing work-life policies in the company, their implications, the ways employees can use them and their obligation to grant them. For example, Sue Bond & Sarah Wise's (2003) analysis of leave uptake management in four financial sector companies in Scotland, showed that line managers had incomplete and sometimes mistaken knowledge of the existing statutory leaves and company-level provisions. Authors concluded that line managers had received limited training in family-related personnel policies and that they consulted HR managers only in very special circumstances. Therefore, very unequal applications of measures were observed, creating unequal treatment among employees.

Managers' attitudes are highly contingent on the organizational and national contexts. National contexts where statutory provisions have been implemented may prompt employers and managers to show more support and be more positive towards employees' requests. However, national differences may still exist regarding the leeway left to organizations and managers in the implementation of policies (Dulk & Peper, 2009, pp. 15-16). For example, in Norway and Sweden, employees are more firmly entitled to measures than in the Netherlands, the UK and

Portugal, where managers have more discretionary power and where work-family entitlements depend on the condition that business interests are not at stake. In contexts where work-family arrangements are not statutory, trade unions may play an important role in prompting organizations to implement such policies and to reduce managers' variations in their responsiveness to employees' demands.

Prevalent gender ideologies about family models may also influence managers' responses, as they face their peers' approval or disapproval in their management strategies. For example, a comparative research in 20 European countries showed that the degree of national gender equality (measured with the United Nations index) is positively related to the degree of organizational support for work-family balance, which is in turn related to employees' use of these measures (Lyness & Kropf, 2005). Research results are less conclusive on managers' tendency to grant more easily work-family life requests to female employees than to male employees (in accordance to traditional family model conceptions) (Dulk & Peper, 2009, p. 9).

A study conducted in Belgium among 137 (mainly male) managers in a large industry company do show clear attitudinal differences among them with regard to parental leave uptake by male and female employees, but also between lower versus higher occupational positions (Fusulier, Laloy, & Sanchez, 2007). Authors note that maternity and paternity leaves (respectively 15 weeks and 2 weeks) are overall judged acceptable or totally acceptable for all employees. However, leave uptake legitimacy decreases with the status of the employee considered, managers being considered less legitimate than lower ranked employees to use this leave.

Managers' attitudes towards work-life policies also depend on the fact that these policies may conflict with the company's organizational culture (e.g., overtime as a sign of productivity). Research has shown that managers often find themselves in a dilemma between prioritizing their subordinates' needs or fulfilling organizational goals (Dulk & Peper, 2009, p. 18). As a result, they may for example, send mixed messages regarding the use of policies, thereby reducing the sense of entitlement of employees,. They may also ask employees to bear the practical consequences of their requests (e.g., not diminish their workload while reducing their working hours), and/or be very demanding on a daily basis in compensation of the requests they accept from time to time (e. g., leave on short notice). Also important in managers' decision-making process is the combination of their evaluation of the degree to which the employee's request disrupts the work flow and the degree to which the manager values and is dependent on the employee's work and fears losing him (particularly when the labor market is tight).

Regarding the evaluation of the workflow disruption, managers tend to be more positive when they manage departments that perform skilled professional work and where employees' work is more autonomous, project-based and judged on output. Therefore they tend to evaluate the requests also on the basis of the nature of tasks, skills and responsibilities of the employee making the request. Managers also express a certain dependency towards their employees. Den Dulk and Peper argue that managers may have negative attitudes but reach a positive decision, taking into account more long-term concerns about the employee leaving the department or the company (Dulk & Peper, 2009, pp. 16-17). Such mechanisms can create inequalities among employees making work-family requests. Finally, managers' own work-life experiences may also affect their attitudes and behavior towards their employees' work-life issues. As role models, their own use of work-life arrangements also contributes to set examples and to implement

change (Murphy & Doherty, 2011, p. 259). Managers are said to be particularly sensitive to their work group peers in the way they use work-life policies (Dulk & Peper, 2009, p. 19).

Discourses at the level of companies and the ways they contribute to shape the meanings associated with family-friendly working arrangements and parental leave policies in particular also contribute to understand the gendered use of the measures. Erika Kirby and Kathleen Krone (2002) analyzed the daily discursive practices of organizational members regarding the implementation and use of work-family policies in the US. They observed that co-workers' discourses—which are shaped by material working conditions as well as discourses, policies, and ideologies about work and family at the organizational and societal levels—undermine the use of work-family policies as they formally exist. Authors noted that these policies were considered by a majority of (childless or single) employees as granting preferential treatment and that resentment was expressed towards those using them because they had to take up additional work. Analysis of discourses also revealed informal norms about what was considered “legitimate use” versus “abuse” of the policies, thereby creating peer pressure about how to use them. Maternity leave uptake was perceived as more legitimate than paternity leave uptake, which was more open to scrutiny because not based on “similar biologically based reasons” (Kirby & Krone, 2002, p. 61). However, women in the study still suffered consequences; they were perceived as less dedicated to the organization. Authors concluded that these discourses were underpinned by gendered expectations, as well as by individualist and meritocratic values.

Macro-level factors also influence the degree to which male employees are likely to use and respond to company policies. Several scholars highlighted the importance of male employees' sense of entitlement in the use they make of parental leave benefits. If the broader socio-political and cultural context does not support actively such policies, it is likely that even if formulated in gender-neutral terms, they will be regarded as specifically designed for mothers and as limiting career evolution (Haas & Hwang, 2007; S. Lewis, 1997). Suzan Lewis noted that when governments legislate on family-friendly policies, employers tend to supplement them by proposing measures which go beyond. In the case that only employers and not state governments implement family-friendly provisions, these remain limited and are not embedded in a broader family-friendly context (S. Lewis, 1997, pp. 17-18).

Finally, micro-level variables are systematically assessed and controlled for in the analysis of leave uptake determinants. **Individual and family variables** such as being from a younger cohort, being married, having egalitarian gender attitudes, having a partner willing to share the leave, having a high level of education and a high income, so as having a partner with equally high education and income are expected to influence positively men's leave uptake (Haas et al., 2002; Hyde, Essex, & Horton, 1993; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). Using data from the Swedish register of parental leave uptake for children born in 1994, Marianne Sundström and Ann-Zofie Duvander (2002) observed that it is only the combination of men's high education with high earnings which affect positively their leave use (i.e., their number of years of schooling alone have a negative effect). Above-average income of fathers has a very strong positive effect on leave use, however, passed the maximum ceiling of benefit payments, the effect is negative.

Therefore it seems that parents who do well financially (up to the ceiling) are better able and more willing to afford fathers' leave uptake even if it is more costly in the short run.⁷⁰

The importance of men's working conditions for using parental leave beyond father-only leaves (six weeks in total of daddy days and fathers' quota) has been further noted by Brandth & Kvande (2002) in Norway, using data from a survey with men who had become fathers between 1994 and 1995. Fathers who have a lower occupational status and who are self-employed tend not to share leave with the mother beyond the six weeks. Having management duties also restricts the sharing of the leave and senior managers (as compared with middle managers) even tend to forgo the six weeks of leave benefits they are entitled to. High expectation of overtime work reduces the use of the leave by fathers while it appears to be easier to use one's rights as a father when there is little expectation for overtime work.

The partners' workplace characteristics are also associated with men's use of parental leave. In Sweden, Bygren & Duvander observed that fathers used less parental leave when their partner was working in a female-dominated workplace (Bygren & Duvander, 2006, p. 370). This suggests that when the career costs of using parental leave for the mother are low (due to the frequency of leave uptake), fathers use less of it. The number of children is also relevant for fathers' leave use; they take a considerably larger leave fraction if the child is respectively, first-born rather than second-born, and second-born rather than third-born or higher order children (Sundström & Duvander, 2002).

3.2. Effects of parental leave policies on the gender structure

After having presented the variables which influence the likelihood of men using parental leave policies, I develop how the use of these leaves may have gender-equality effects. I present these effects according to the different levels of the gender structure.

Institutional level: defining parental roles in gender-equal terms

I have suggested earlier that social policies and parental leave policies in particular construct gender relations and parenthood in specific ways. Leave schemes (their design and modalities) do not only influence leave uptakes by men, but also reveal societal ideological conceptions about the role of the mother and the father. This is illustrated by Tine Rostgaard's (2002) analysis of parental leave schemes' development and their ideological underpinnings in Scandinavia. In Denmark, leave policies were developed with the aim to support the mother, her ability to participate in the labor market and to care for the child at home. Fathers' rights were seen as less important and presented as assistance to the mother. Therefore, notwithstanding a gender-neutral parental leave scheme, care work is still seen as women's work and father's leave uptake is not encouraged (there is only a 2-weeks paternity leave, but no fathers' quota). Fathers and mothers are seen as having equal power in the family and the negotiation over care time is considered a private matter. The idea of "free choice" (which implicitly stresses motherhood)

⁷⁰ In Sweden, from 1995 to 1998, the level of benefits was between 75 and 80 percent of prior income. As men have on average higher wages than women, their leave uptake means a higher loss of earnings for the household than if mothers use it.

was also prominent in Norway, where gendered norms about men's and women's complementary roles are still strong. Motherhood was the main focus until recently; before fathers' individual rights were introduced, eligibility was based on mothers' labor-market participation and earnings. The introduction of a fathers' quota of four weeks⁷¹ did not trigger major debates, suggesting that it was "not regarded as a significant challenge to the gender balance in paid and unpaid work" (Rostgaard, 2002, p. 360). Finally, the 1974 implementation of a gender-neutral parental leave in Sweden was underpinned by concerns of equal opportunities of mothers and fathers on the labor market, and aimed to increase women's labor-market participation and gender equality in the home. Commissions, trade unions and men's groups stressed the importance of the father-child relationship from an early age. Fatherhood enjoys a strong position in the leave scheme (i.e., in addition to a well-paid gender-neutral parental leave of 12 months, there is a fathers' quota of eight weeks) and is more visible in the Swedish organizational life than it is in Norway and Denmark. Furthermore, in Sweden, parental leave has been supported since its implementation by a governmental campaign encouraging men's use of parental leave (Klinth, 2008). Rostgaard argues that leave policies do not only grant entitlements, "they determine our conception of what are 'normal' gender roles" and "create norms as to what it means to be a 'good' parent" (Rostgaard, 2002, p. 351).

In her discursive analysis of the construction of parenthood through parental leave policies in Scandinavian welfare states, Lis Hojgaard (1997) distinguishes between two periods. A first one during which—following gender-equality objectives—the facilitation of women's entry into the labor market was pursued through leaves targeted at mothers. A second period starting in the 1970s and 1980s, aimed at encouraging fathers' participation in family life through the inclusion of men in the leave schemes. Scandinavian countries put different efforts into these objectives, as Rostgaard's analysis showed, and were underpinned by different social definitions of gender equality. Hojgaard notes that on the one hand, the change of principle from maternity leave to parental leave indicates a shift in the perception of gender equality by the welfare state. Granting men a statutory access to childcare marks the recognition of the importance of gender equality in the home (in addition to the labor market). On the other hand, casting responsibility for children in gender-neutral terms conceals the structural conditions which make it unlikely—as the previous section has showed—that the leave will be used equally by mothers and fathers. Gender-neutral leaves can thus also be seen as a new form of gender segregation (women still bearing most of childcare) which leaves power relations unchanged.

By contrast, the recent development of paternity leave and the fathers' quota—which constitutes in my view in itself a third phase—does not cast parenthood in gender-neutral terms and cannot be taken by the mother instead. It gives a clear signal that employed men are also fathers and introduces a change in the construction of fatherhood, transgressing the "symbolic order of masculinity and femininity" (Hojgaard, 1997, p. 253). However, because these leaves cover a relatively short period, are not always paid and often represented as an option, the state also perpetuates a gender symbolic order where motherhood and fatherhood are constructed differently. Hojgaard argues that the combination of gender-neutral and targeted leave policies creates an ambiguous construction of gender relations, where men are partly represented as "fathers" and partly as "parents". However, "[t]he creation of a gender-neutral social space, parenthood, is a discursive and practical solution to the problem of blurred gender distinctions

⁷¹ The fathers' quota has now been extended to 12 weeks (Brandth & Kvande, 2012).

as well as a way of preserving a traditional gender order in a time of social and political pressures towards gender equality” (Hojgaard, 1997, p. 258).

In her analysis of the parental leave scheme in Sweden, Sarah Brachet (2007) is also critical of the transformation of maternity leave into a gender-neutral parental leave. She argues that although it aimed to define parenthood as a gender-neutral status which could be performed indistinctly by the mother or the father, it actually conceals the physiological need of mothers to recover from pregnancy and childbirth. Therefore, by replacing maternity leave by a gender-neutral parental leave, leave uptake is simultaneously implicitly made necessary for mothers (reinforced by the medical discourse of the importance of breastfeeding), but only facultative for fathers. Furthermore, the flexibility of the leave (possibility of taking part-time, in blocs, at the ends of weeks) supports the maintenance of male occupational activity as the structuring principle of leave uptake and does not challenge their primary involvement in paid work.

In the same line, Harry Brighthouse and Erik Olin Wright (2008) conceptualized three different types of statutory leave policies, highlighting their ideological assumptions. They argue that mother-only leaves and unpaid gender-neutral leave policies—although they may improve the quality of life for the women who take advantage of them—are nonetheless *equality-impeding*. They sustain inequality in the gender division of labor within the family. Generous gender-neutral paid parental leaves are *equality-enabling* because they reduce obstacles for women to be in the labor market and simultaneously have children and may also prompt more father involvement if men choose to do so. However, the state puts no particular pressure on families and the division of the leave is considered a private issue. Finally *equality-promoting* leaves create incentives to move toward a more egalitarian gender distribution of care-giving activities within the family through individualized and non-transferable leaves for men and women. Leave schemes which have integrated fathers’ quota and paternity leaves run in this direction. The assumption of “equality-promoting” leaves is that the state should actively promote policies which, through the reduction of institutional barriers, would contribute to transform social norms and reduce inegalitarian gender relations.⁷²

Interactional level: supporting father involvement in childcare

Researchers have also set out to analyze the effects of parental leave policies on the interactional level of the gender structure; mainly on men’s fathering practices. Several quantitative studies have investigated the effects of men’s parental leave uptake on their subsequent involvement in childcare tasks. Such research concern mainly Sweden, the US and the UK, as well as some continental European countries. Involvement in childcare is usually assessed through measuring responsibility for different childcare tasks (e.g., preparing food and feeding the child, changing diapers, putting the child to bed, comforting, playing, teaching and taking the child to the doctor), the time spent and/or frequency of performance of these tasks, and sometimes the emotional relationship with the child. The underlying hypothesis is that as fatherhood is the result of interactional processes, the opportunity to perform childcare activities during parental leave will enhance fathers’ skills and attachment to the child and in turn increase their

⁷² This conceptualization will be used in Chapter III to analyze the empirical data. It should be noted that authors propose another parental leave scheme which they label “radical”, where after a period of maternity leave to recover from childbirth, mothers’ subsequent leave would be conditional on the amount of leave taken by fathers (up to 6 months, if the father takes 6 months, or less if the father takes less).

involvement in the long term (Haas & Hwang, 2008; Hosking, Whitehouse, & Baxter, 2010). The principal difficulty in these studies is to ascertain the causal relationship between leave uptake and subsequent father involvement. In order to do so, the majority of studies take into account the socio-economic variables which usually explain father involvement (independently from leave uptake) and control for them in statistical analyses. However, it remains a challenge to control for all the characteristics which differentiate fathers and which may influence their involvement. The quality and measurement of data also seems to be an issue.

While some studies did not find any significant effects of men's leave uptake on father involvement (see Hosking et al., 2010, for Australia; Kluve & Tamm, 2013, for Germany), there are nonetheless substantial indications of moderate effects of leave uptake in different national contexts and for different leave lengths. In Sweden, analyzing survey data from 356 fathers working in large private companies, Haas & Hwang (2008) observed that the *length* of parental leave uptake influenced men's subsequent participation in childcare tasks. After controlling for socio-economic variables and gender attitudes, taking a relatively long leave (the average leave length was 47 days) was found significantly associated with more father involvement. Involvement concerned taking solo responsibility for the children, spending more time doing things for or with the children on workdays and being more engaged in childcare tasks. Just having taken the leave (versus not) did not have a significant effect of men's father involvement. Results from another study conducted in Sweden suggests that leave uptake is associated with men's less intensive employment patterns (Duvander & Jans, 2008). Fathers' parental leave uptake was associated with shorter working hours during the child's first year, compared with fathers who had not taken leave. Furthermore, the longer the leave fathers had taken, the fewer hours they worked per week. Similar findings were found in Norway (Rege & Solli, 2010) with longitudinal register data and cross-sectional time-use surveys. Fathers' increased involvement was measured firstly through the subsequent reduced income of men who took at least four weeks of leave (interpreted as the outcome of spending more time with the family and less at work) and secondly with time diaries data on childcare work.

In the US, results from a nationally representative panel study (sample of approximately 4,600 fathers) of children born in 2001 also shows a significant relationship between the length of the leave taken and fathers' involvement in childcare (Nepomnyaschy & Waldfogel, 2007). Men who had taken two weeks or more were found to be more involved in childcare tasks nine months after the birth. This was the case even after controlling for both partners' socio-economical characteristics, as well as pre-birth indicators of fathers' commitment to parenting (e.g., attending birth classes and presence at birth). There were no differences between fathers who took no leave at all and those who took one week or less of leave.

Other small scale surveys in the US also find significant results. Joseph Pleck (1993) took into account both formal paid and unpaid leaves when available, and "informal paternity leaves", that is, time off work in the form of vacations, recovery of extra hours and sick leave, as well as discretionary time off granted by supervisors. In surveys conducted in 1988, 1990 and 1991 with 142 American men with preschool children, he observed that a large majority had taken at least some days off work on the birth of their child; the average number of days being 5.3 days. He observed that in two of the three samples, the more days of leave had been taken, the more fathers were involved childcare at the moment of the interview. He argued that considering the

limited institutionalization and generosity of leave schemes in the US in comparison with other countries, a few days could make a difference.

Limited results were found in an exploratory study conducted on 38 couples (Seward, Yeatts, Amin, & Dewitt, 2006; Seward, Yeatts, Zottarelli, & Fletcher, 2006). Comparing father involvement of men who had not taken any leave with those who had, the authors observed that taking leave was statistically significantly associated with only three out of 21 measures of father involvement. Fathers who had taken leave had a higher likelihood of preparing the child's food, of taking the child to the doctor and of having a higher score of average involvement on all childcare tasks, approximately two years after childbirth.

Results from a study conducted in the UK go in the same direction. A large scale survey of fathers (N=9592) of children born between 2000 and 2002 assessed the influence of leave uptake by men on their daily or weekly performance of different childcare activities when the child was aged between eight and 12 months (Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007). The data did not enable authors to take into account the length of leave taken and only distinguished between "taking" and "not taking" leave (leave is typically known to last around one week on the birth of the child in the UK). Fathers who had taken leave were more involved in changing diapers, feeding the baby, and getting up at night. However, no effects were observed for the overall responsibility of the child.

A recent analysis conducted by Gerardo Meil (2011) using a European survey conducted in 2005 (approximately 6000 fathers of children of eight years or under) in 27 countries indicates that fathers who had declared having taken parental leave in the last year were significantly more likely to report devoting at least one hour per day to childcare activities than those who did not.

Finally, a recent study of four OECD countries (Australia, Denmark, the UK and the US) using representative and longitudinal datasets indicates similar mechanisms across nations (Huerta et al., 2013). In all countries, fathers (resident and in employment) who had taken two weeks or more were more likely to be involved in a set of childcare-related tasks when the child was aged between six months and three years, than those who had not taken any leave.⁷³ The effects were weakest in Denmark, where leave takers were found to be significantly more involved in activities such as feeding the child and changing diapers, but not in the other dimensions (i.e., bathing and playing with the child, putting the child to bed and getting up at night). Authors interpret this result as being related to Danish men's overall more gender-equal division of work, irrespective of their use of leave entitlements (p.32).

Qualitative studies investigating the challenging potential of fathers' parental leave uptake on gender relations run in the same direction. In a recent study, Erin Rehel (2014) compared fathers who took at least three weeks of leave, with fathers who did not, and analyzed the effects of their experience on their understanding of parenting. The fathers interviewed (N=85) were employed in the same multinational company but were living in three different cultural and policy contexts (the US, English-speaking Canada and the French-Canadian province of Quebec). The study emphasizes the influence of structural factors on men's leave uptake decisions, such as the design of the policy, concerns about reactions from supervisors, and financial limitations. Results show that fathers who took at least three weeks of leave participated significantly more

⁷³ In the UK, men taking a shorter leave (verses none) were also significantly more involved in childcare.

in childcare tasks, had similar carework capabilities to their partners and were found to have developed what Rehel calls a “co-parenting style” instead of a “manager-helper style” of parenting.

Several other qualitative studies indicate gender equality effects, but also emphasize the persistence of gendered parenting practices. Brandth & Kvande (1998) noted in their study conducted with ten fathers, that they tended to shape their own masculine form of care work—distancing themselves from maternal care—while their partners continued to bear most of the household tasks. Men’s care-giving activities appeared have to have been integrated as a new facet of masculinity, which did not challenge their work identity for those who were strongly attached to wage work. Authors also noted that masculine care was given more value by both men *and* women, therefore reproducing unequal social relations within the home.

In another qualitative study conducted with 30 couples, Brandth & Kvande (2002) identified types of fathering practices and diverse uses of the statutory leaves which are available to fathers in Norway (paternity leave, fathers’ quota and gender-neutral parental leave). While some fathers were highly motivated and took advantage of all three types of leaves and others did not manage to set limit to work demands and barely used some days of leave, the authors identified a group of fathers whose use of leave had a clear effect on their immediate involvement in childcare (the “rights-using practice”). These fathers reported that they would not have taken any of the parental leave (beyond the paternity leave) if the new scheme of fathers’ quota had not been introduced. However, as they were entitled to this new right, they took advantage of it and stayed at home with the child while the mother went back to work.

Hélène Trelle’s (2007, 2010) analysis of 27 men on parental leave in France also indicated a limited challenge of gendered family dynamics. In the French context where parental leave is barely compensated, very few fathers take advantage of this leave, and those who do are more likely to have less linear and successful educational and occupational trajectories than their female partners. The author notes that men’s leave uptake provides an innovative context for fathering practices and that men perform the majority of childcare tasks (although mothers remain involved after the end of the working day). Household tasks are shared among partners but a traditional division of tasks persists, for example men tend to perform more valued and masculine typed activities (such as DIY activities) than typically routine feminine household tasks.

Finally, it should be noted that an explorative qualitative research was recently conducted in Switzerland on men’s use of special paternity leave entitlements (Brandalesi, 2010). The research was based on interviews with five fathers, four of whom had benefited from a one- or two-weeks paternity leave. It concluded that paternity leave uptake was not perceived by fathers as a transgression of gender norms, but more so as an opportunity to spend time with the child and to establish a relationship with him/her. The division of childcare work remained gendered among parents, in concordance with the division of work in the broader Swiss context.

Some studies are attentive to the effects of parental leave policies at the interactional level, but more specifically in the workplace context. It is of great interest for example to investigate the extent to which leave uptake may challenge work norms. Based on the accounts of eight employees who had used parental leave in different organizational contexts in Italy, Murgia &

Poggio (2009) concluded that narratives challenging gendered fatherhood at work were limited. Authors observed that men taking parental leave disrupted in a limited way managerial practices. Managers regarded leave uptake as disloyal practice, incompatible with career advancement, and dismissed such practices as “feminine”. Men having taken leave were themselves attentive to conform—after the temporary absence from work—to the male-breadwinner norm and fully dedicated worker. Another research conducted in the US indicated that men requesting parental leave faced a “poor worker stigma”, with consequences for their career perspectives and from a “femininity stigma” (Rudman & Mescher, 2013). The “femininity stigma” implied that men—judged as transgressing gender norms—were perceived weaker, more communal, as well as less agentic and dominant compared with control targets.

Drawing on three case studies in Danish work organizations (gathering over 60 interviews with managers and employees), Hojgaard (1997) reports ambiguous effects of parental leave uptake. She observed through interviews with managers that the work culture recognized the rights of fathers to take paternity leave, but did not encourage men to take it and emphasized the male work norm. Interviewed men broke the gender symbolic order to varying extents by using the leave options offered by the state, but still often conforming to the norm of permanent availability. For example, they mainly saw parental and paternity leaves as an interruption in the stream of work and used them in ways as not to disrupt the workload. Hojgaard concludes that although “ambiguity is perpetuated, leaving the burden of negotiating the ambiguities into viable social practices to individual men [...] The fact that an increasing number of men are carrying their fatherhood into the work place using the possibilities offered by state policies making fatherhood visible [...] represent[s] a challenge to the meaning of masculinity and a change in the components of masculinity” (p. 257).

Supporting involved fatherhood identities

Some of the above cited qualitative studies tackle, in addition to the effects on fathering practices and on the division of work, the effects of parental leave policies on men’s identity and how being the main care provider was experienced. In particular Rehel’s study (2014) highlights the effect of a prolonged period of leave uptake (three weeks or more) on men’s understanding of parenting: “The availability of an extended period of parental leave allows fathers the opportunity to gain a sense of the ‘concerns’ of parenting, many of which are invisible and therefore might go unnoticed by a father who is back at work” (p. 122). Thus, fathers who had only taken very short parental leave at the birth of the child considered infant care undemanding and did not see the necessity of their presence around the child’s birth. As a result of their absence during this period, they also lacked confidence in childcare tasks and felt dependent on their partners. In contrast, leave takers saw themselves as responsible and as competent as their partners.

In the Norwegian study (Brandth & Kvande, 1998) on parental leave uptake, authors observed that the men who experienced most positively this period, were those who had the strongest ties to their work during leave. They argue that childcare had successfully been integrated in interviewees’ masculinities and therefore did not really challenge “hegemonic masculinity”, characterized by a strong anchorage in wage work. In fact, childcare was another facet of

masculinity and being able to master childcare was considered an important masculine attribute, especially for well-educated men.

Hélène Trelu's (2007, 2010) results for France go in the same direction. For some men, being on leave for a prolonged period of time was experienced positively: feelings of being a good father, developing a positive relationship with the child and considering themselves as "modern dads" led to a positive self-esteem and identity. For other fathers—often those who had previously been in a more vulnerable position in the labor market and who had a lower educational and/or income than their partner—the gender norm transgression was experienced more negatively and they more often suffered from the resulting social pressure.

Another study (Höfner, Schadler, & Richter, 2011), conducted in Austria with nine men before—and six months after—the birth of their first child aimed to analyze the changes experienced in men's identities. Authors identified three types of fatherhood experiences. A "breadwinning identity" characterized men who adopted a traditional gendered division of tasks, drawing on biological differences and on mothers' breastfeeding capacity. A "feminized fatherhood identity" was experienced by men on parental leave, who took on the main care-giving role for a period of time. On the one hand they suffered from societal pressure for transgressing gender norms, on the other hand, they felt proud to be the "exception" in their everyday female-dominated environment. They also referred to the figure of the "sexy" or "superhero" dad. Nonetheless, they tended to experience a "fragmentation of their male identity", lacking occasions to share experiences with other care-giving men, as well as missing social recognition for their caring skills. Finally, a "distinctive fatherhood identity" was experienced by men who defined themselves positively through difference. For them being the "other" (different from their own fathers and from other men) was something they valued because they aimed to reject hegemonic masculinity. These experiences concerned specific groups of fathers who cherished distinctive lifestyles overall, namely urban, well-educated, self-employed and/or unconventional men.

A study conducted in Germany with 36 couples sheds light on identity mechanisms among involved fathers. In the sample, a few fathers had adopted unconventional parenthood arrangements by taking extended periods of parental leave, working part-time or staying at home (Behnke & Meuser, 2012). These men did not suffer from not complying with the traditional pattern of career-oriented masculinity. However, the authors observed that in their narratives, they relied on other typical characteristics of self-confident masculinity, such as self-fulfillment, independence and courage.

These few elements indicate that there are varied experiences of fathers on leave, which depend on many individual and contextual characteristics, as well as on the characteristics of the leave. What stands out from the few results presented above is the frequent co-presence of transgressive and complicit discourses about fatherhood and masculinity. As Laura Merla (2008) noted in her analysis of stay-at-home fathers in Belgium, men adopt different strategies in order to maintain a positive self-image, which to varying extents challenge gendered representations of parenthood.

3.3. Summary

The relationship between parental leave policies and gender equality is the object of many studies. The extent to which these policies contribute to the double objective of securing women's participation in the labor market and prompting men's increased participation in family work depends on many variables. The main and principle obstacle identified is the low share of leave days taken by men. This pattern of leave uptake, generalized among the majority of countries endowed with such policies, can have negative effects for gender equality. Women's long leaves can contribute to the specialization of childcare tasks among parents and hinder their career trajectories. The main reasons explaining gendered leave uptake patterns are: leave modalities and the extent to which leaves are well-paid, individual and non-transferable entitlements; workplace characteristics and the extent to which the company culture and managers encourage men to use leaves through formal and informal measures; and couple and individual variables which influence men's likelihood of using parental leaves.

Distinguishing between the three levels of the gender structure, positive effects of parental leave policies for the constitution of parenthood in gender-equal terms can be identified in each of them. First, the existence and shape of parental leave schemes at the institutional level play an important role in the cultural norms about parenthood. Parental leave policies are based on ideological assumptions about motherhood and fatherhood and contribute to define what is considered a "normal" and "good" family organization. Although gender-neutral leaves are based on a priori gender-equal roles and responsibilities for mothers and fathers, such leave schemes silence the structural constraints which make it unlikely that leave will be equally used by mothers and fathers. Therefore, it is paternity leave and the fathers' quota which represent the most challenging form of leave scheme. These forms of statutory leaves are challenging for the gender structure because they contribute to define men's roles as fathers and make this role visible at the level of the state and in the workplace context. These measures are also the most challenging because, as previously noted, they are also more likely to be used by men.

Parental leave use by men influences to some extent the interactional level of the gender structure. This is the case concerning the interactions at home, by prompting more father involvement and at work, by making fatherhood more visible. Concerning fathering practices, there is evidence that men's leave uptake is associated with their subsequent higher degree of involvement in childcare in the medium term. Research results suggest that past a threshold of two to four weeks of leave uptake by men, gender equality effects (albeit often moderate) on their fathering practices are observed. Nuanced effects are reported from qualitative studies. Leave policies can prompt some fathers to spend more time in childcare than they would have if the policy had not existed and to develop similar caring competences as their partners. However, men on leave tend to retain power over the tasks they decide to do (dismissing housework) and to develop masculine forms of childcare. Resistances to gender norm transgression are observed on the side of men. Leave uptake is often associated with both the challenge of hegemonic forms of masculinity and their reproduction. At the individual level, leave uptake can lead fathers to view parenthood in a degendered manner. However, a variety of experiences are reported, depending on the context, men's socio-economic status and relation to work and the length of their leave. Authors note different strategies adopted by fathers on leave to maintain a positive self-image in relation to the gender identity.

4. A multilevel and mixed-methods research design

Based on research literature investigating the gender effects of parental leave policies, the previous sections have established that parental leave policies *can* have gender-equality effects in the way parenthood is defined and experienced. Therefore in this thesis, I investigate whether the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland challenges or modifies the ways in which parenthood is constituted, and whether this goes towards more gender equality. More precisely, I analyze whether parental leave policies give rise to situations where less “difference”, hence less “inequality” is produced between fatherhood and motherhood and between fathers and mothers.

This overarching research question actually contains two main tasks. First, it implies establishing whether parental leave policies are indeed emerging in the Swiss public sphere and to describe to what extent. I focus on three public spheres in particular; i.e., the political, the media and the labor-market spheres. For this purpose, the data selected should allow to give a quantitative overview of the presence of parental leave policies in these social spheres in order to estimate the main trend. Secondly, the research aims to analyze whether and to what extent this emergence challenges the constitution of parenthood within the gender structure. This implies being able to grasp, in a more qualitative way, the construction of meaning around fatherhood and motherhood at different societal levels, reflecting those of the gender structure.

In order to fulfill these two tasks, I adopt a multilevel and mixed-methods research design, summarized in Figure 16. Below, I give an overview of the data collected and analyzed to fulfill the two main research objectives. I also mention the methodology and the specific sub-research questions which I aim to address for each dataset. For a purpose of clarity, the detailed presentation of the data selection and collection process, as well as of the methodology is developed separately in each empirical chapter.

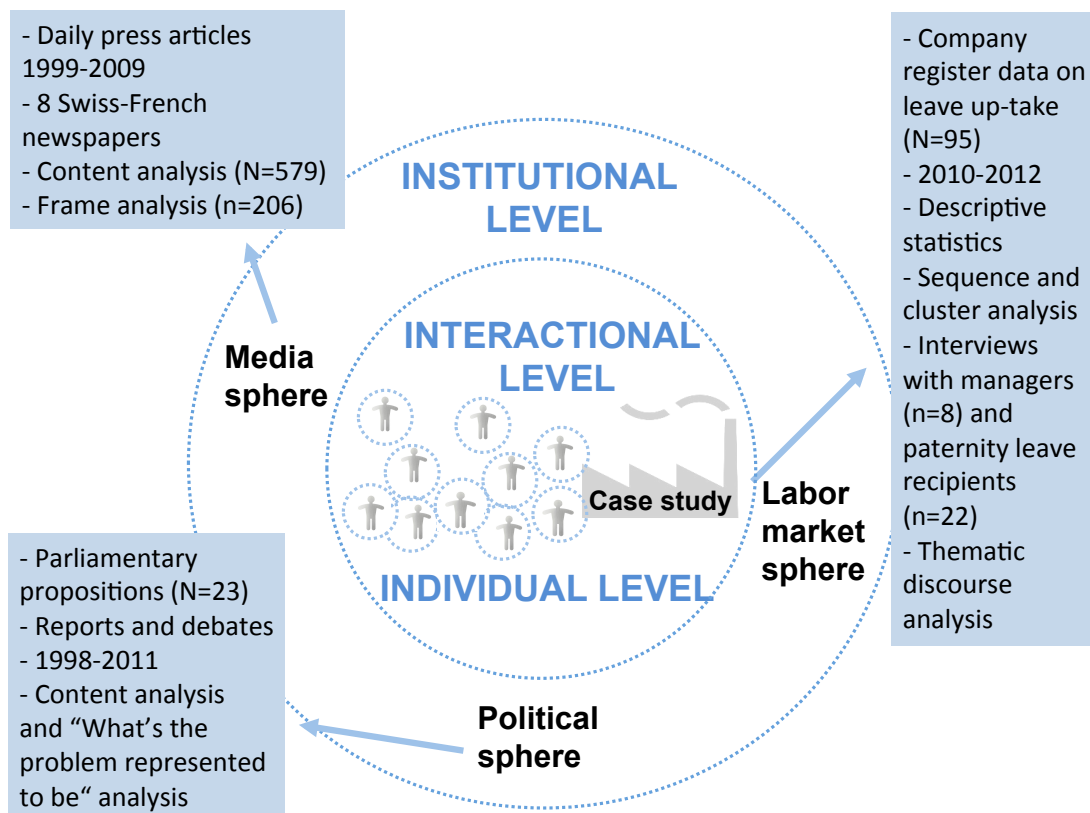
4.1. Political sphere

At the institutional level of the gender structure, I analyze the emergence of parental leave policies in the political sphere. The aim is to assess the presence and evolution of parental leave policies on the political agenda and to analyze the underlying representations of gender relations and fatherhood in particular. In order to analyze the political agenda, I use the parliamentary interventions submitted from 1998 to 2011 (N=23) at the federal level. Parliamentary interventions can take the form of motions or initiatives, asking for new policies to be implemented, or more general questions or requests. They are good indicators of the ongoing concerns of the Swiss political elite. The short texts submitted comprise proposals by MPs and their argumentation supporting it. They therefore give access to discourses about what should be the object of public intervention, what should change, on what grounds, as well as representations of what are the “problem” and the “solution”.

The research questions I seek to answer are: What are the place and the evolution of parental leave policies on the political agenda? What solutions are proposed and by which political actors? Using content analysis I aim to give an overview of the evolution of the concerns and policy solutions put forward by MPs. Applying the “What’s the problem represented to be”

methodology (WPR) to the data enables me to analyze the underlying representations and discourses about the role of the state, gender relations and fatherhood. I also integrate the reports and voting recommendations established—as part of the political procedure—by parliamentary committees and by the government. Parliamentary debates and votes are also included in the data set. This enables me to integrate discourses not only from political actors which support the implementation of parental, and/or paternity leave schemes, but also who are against them. The research questions I ask are: How are parental leave policies problematized by supporters and opponents of these policies? Is there an evolution across the almost 15 years investigated?

Figure 16 - Research design



4.2. Media sphere

I also analyze discourses about parental leave policies in the media sphere. I focus on daily press articles published between 1999 and 2009 which address the issue of parental leave policies. The aim is to investigate to what extent it is a concern shared in the public sphere, beyond the political arena. Because media productions are well diffused and reach a large audience, they can be considered as indicators of the cultural norms and values on the institutional societal level, through which meaning is attributed to events. The press articles were selected from national and regional newspapers, but they were issued only in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. This enables me to cover both regional and national news, but restricts me from making inferences for the German-speaking media content. The ten-year time frame enables me to

describe the development of the media coverage of the issue and to assess how emergent the topic is. The dataset was selected through keyword search (“parental leave” and “paternity leave”) in media databases and contains 579 press articles. I conduct a content analysis on these press articles in order to describe in a systematic manner the thematic content of these articles and their context of enunciation. I ask: How were parental leave policies mediatized from 1999 to 2009?

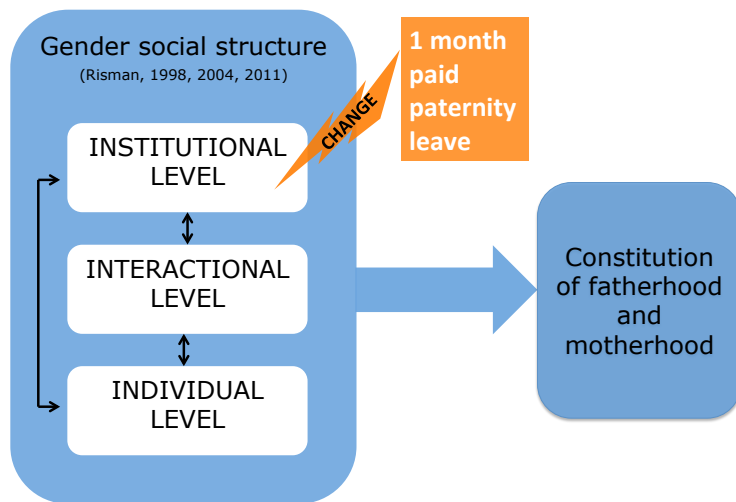
Through these articles, I also aim to grasp ongoing representations and values in Swiss society about parental leave policies, as well as the underlying norms and discourses about gender relations, family models and fatherhood in particular. Media discourses can be considered as both reflecting mainstream representations about parenthood and contributing to its discursive constitution. I analyze a subset (n=206) of press articles and conduct a frame analysis. I ask: How are parental leave policies framed? Does the framing of parental leave policies trigger gender-equal representations of fatherhood and motherhood?

4.3. Labor-market sphere

Finally, I also analyze the emergence and presence of parental leave policies in the labor-market sphere. I rely mainly on secondary data in order to picture broadly the emerging interest of private and public employers for parental and paternity leaves on the institutional level. Using available information about current collective labor agreements and work regulations, I do descriptive statistics in order to depict available types and lengths of leaves. I ask: How widespread are parental leave policies in the private and the public sector? After having set the labor-market context, I conduct a case study in a public work organization located in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The City of Lausanne (hereafter referred to as *Admin*) grants one of the most extended leave scheme in the Swiss context. *Admin* provides one month of paid paternity leave, the possibility of taking unpaid parental leave, four months of paid maternity leave, one month of breastfeeding leave, four months of adoption leave, ten days per year of sick children leave as well as a flexible working scheme.

Overall, *Admin* is *a priori* a father-friendly work environment. This case study enables me to tackle the three levels of the gender structure: the institutional, the interactional and the individual levels (see Figure 17). The introduction in 2010 of a one-month paid paternity leave represents a change on the institutional level of the gender structure, even if it is not generalized to the whole labor market. It is therefore of great interest to investigate through this case study whether this change on the institutional level affected the constitution of fatherhood, and by extension of motherhood, on the interactional and individual levels. Furthermore, it allows one to take a closer look at the negotiation mechanisms which take place in the frame of paternity leave implementation and the informal rules which may come into play in the use employees make of the leave.

Figure 17 - Multilevel research approach of the case study



In order to address this general question, I use different types of data. First, I use *Admin's* register data on leave uptake by male employees since the implementation of the measure in 2010 (N=95). I conduct descriptive statistical operations in order to describe leave use. I ask: Is paternity leave used and to what extent? Leave uptake patterns are also explored, through the use of sequence and cluster analysis techniques, in order to describe the timing and length of leave use.

Secondly, I rely on qualitative data with managers (n=8) and employees (n=22) who were involved with paternity leave uptake. This data enable me to address questions about the challenging impact of the measure introduced for gender relations and for representations and practices of fatherhood. I ask: Is fatherhood made more visible in this work environment? What is the status of fatherhood at work? How is leave uptake negotiated? I also address issues about the use of the leave by male employees: How do they use the leave? Does leave uptake trigger more gender-equal fathering practices? Does it influence their conception of fatherhood and their identities?

Chapter III - Parental leave policies on the political agenda

The theoretical framework I adopt posits that at the institutional level, social policies and laws contribute to constitute gender relations and parenthood. I address this dimension in this chapter by analyzing the emergence of parental leave policies in the political sphere and on the political agenda. I ask: What is the status of parental leave policies on the political agenda? How are parental leave policies problematized by leave supporters and opponents? What are the underlying assumptions about the role of the family and of the state?

I analyze historically the genesis of maternity leave and insurance and the political process which led to its implementation by the Swiss electorate in 2004. Thus the adoption of a statutory maternity insurance at the federal level was a necessary condition for the emergence of parental and paternity leaves as new issues on the political agenda. The political process, which led to the adoption of maternity benefits, is in many ways instructive in order to understand the debates about parental leave policies. However, a central difference is that while the principle of maternity leave had long been accepted before it was implemented, the debates about parental leave policies show that there is no similar consensus on their legitimacy as social policies. The chapter turns then to the empirical analysis of parental and paternity leave proposals submitted by members of parliament, revealing a progressive reduction of scope of these leave proposals from 1998 to 2011. Their political treatment and the debates they triggered are then discursively analyzed. I identify three main discursive dimensions which organize the debates among leave supporters and leave opponents, and discuss their consequences for gender-equality and for the development of parental leave policies.

1. The politics of leave policies in Switzerland: setting the context

In order to understand the politics of parental leave policies, it is necessary to adopt a historical approach and to situate them within the development of the Swiss welfare state and in particular of maternity leave and insurance.

1.1. The struggle for maternity insurance

Unequal situations between women

As presented in Chapter I, Switzerland implemented maternity leave benefits in 2005 only, some 50 years after the majority of Western European countries (Kamerman & Moss, 2009, p. 262). However, interestingly, at the end of the 19th century, Switzerland's maternity leave legislation was considered one of the most progressive in Europe. Together with Germany and Austria, it

was one of the first countries to implement a form of maternity protection (Neyer, 1997). The adoption in 1877 of the Federal Law on Factories introduced a ban from wage work of eight weeks, of which at least six weeks had to be taken after delivery (FCWI, 2001). However, this work ban was not financially compensated and it therefore represented significant financial losses especially for working-class women.

There were several attempts during the first half of the 20th century to promote maternity insurance schemes. In 1900, a new Health and Accident Act with maternity allowances, which had been adopted by Parliament in 1899—the “Lex Forrer”—was rejected by the Swiss electorate in national vote. Several attempts were also made by the Socialist party and by feminine (bourgeois) associations. However, in the aftermath of World War I and due to social and political disorders, the priority was put on other social policy schemes, notably pension insurance. The big depression in the 1930s also paralyzed initiatives in favor of statutory maternity benefits. Maternity benefits existed through optional subscriptions to a health insurance but it concerned only a minority of women: 7% of women in 1914 and half of them until World War II (FCWI, 2001, p. 4).

Before the acceptance of federal maternity benefits by popular vote in 2004, employed women who gave birth were unequally protected. There were considerable disparities in maternity schemes between cantons, employment sectors, collective labor agreements and work contracts, as well as among women depending on their seniority. Furthermore, women who subscribed to facultative health insurances could benefit from additional daily maternity allowances. Several cantons had also created very different means-tested maternity allowances for mothers (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 242-244). The main problem was the incoherence between the different laws which regulated maternity (Dafflon, 2003, p. 245). For instance, there was a salary payment gap between the minimal salary payment in the event of maternity (three weeks in the first year of service according to the Swiss Code of Obligations) and the ban on women’s work for eight weeks after delivery (Employment Law). This created situations where it was possible for an employed woman to face a loss of five weeks of salary. Furthermore, leaves were cumulative, i.e., previous absences for illness or accident reasons reduced the number of weeks women were allowed to take in the event of childbirth (Dafflon, 2003, p. 258). This situation perpetuated until July 1st 2005, when the amendment of the Loss of Earnings Compensation Act (LECA) which introduced maternity benefits for employed women came into force.

From the constitutional article to the implementation of the law

In 1945, 76% of the Swiss male electorate voted to introduce a new article on the protection of the family in the Swiss Constitution. This article (Art. 34^{quinquies}, al. 4 in the 1945 Federal Constitution)⁷⁴ gave the mandate to the Confederation to legislate on a maternity insurance. This article was impelled by a popular initiative submitted in 1941 by a conservative group (Aebi et al., 1994, p. 40). The initial version of the article resulted from concerns expressed in the 1930s already by a Conservative MP (Joseph Escher) about the protection of large families and of the male breadwinners at their head. This version, tainted with conservative, moral and eugenic objectives, was retrieved and it was Parliament’ version which was accepted. The latter defined in a more precise way three fields of competencies: maternity insurance, family allowances and

⁷⁴ Currently Art. 116 al. 4 in the 1999 Federal Constitution

family supportive housing policies. Notwithstanding the broad consensus in favor of the new article in favor of family policies, it took no less than 60 years until a form of maternity insurance was adopted by the Swiss electorate (see Table 4).

Table 4 - Description of the political process leading to the adoption of a maternity insurance

Proposal	Description	National vote	Decision
New constitutional article on the family	Art.34 ^{quinquies} gives the mandate to the federal state to support the family by implementing a maternity insurance, family allowances and housing solutions.	25.11.1945	Adopted by 76% of the electorate
Popular initiative “for a healthy health insurance”	The Socialist party and a labor union propose to implement an obligatory health insurance, which includes daily allowances during maternity leave for employed women.	8.12.1974	Rejected by 70.2% of the electorate
Popular initiative “for an efficient protection of maternity”	Leftist parties and feminist and women’s associations propose to implement a maternity insurance (16 weeks fully paid), maternity allowances (for all mothers) and a parental leave for employed mothers and fathers (nine months unpaid).	2.12.1984	Rejected by 84% of the electorate
Revision of the Health insurance (“Health and Maternity Insurance Act”)	The Federal Council proposes to revise the health insurance and to add maternity benefits for employed women (16 weeks at 80% of salary) and maternity allowances for all mothers. The proposal was accepted by Parliament, but an optional referendum was launched by opponents.	6.12.1987	Rejected by 71% of the electorate
“Maternity Leave Insurance Act”	The Federal Council proposes to implement a maternity insurance covering maternity benefits for employed women and adoptive parents (16 weeks at 80%) and means-tested maternity allowances for mothers and adoptive parents. The proposal was accepted by Parliament, but an optional referendum was launched by the Swiss People’s Party and economic lobbies.	13.06.1999	Rejected by 61.6% of the electorate
Revision of the “Loss of Income Compensation Act” (LECA)	The Federal Council takes up the parliamentary initiative “Triponez”, proposing the implementation of maternity benefits for employed women (14 weeks at 80%) through the revision of the LECA insurance. The proposal is accepted by Parliament, but an optional referendum is launched by opponents.	26.09.2004	Adopted by 55.4% of the electorate

Source: FCWI, 2001, 2011; Dafflon, 2003.

Various debates took place, several drafts were elaborated and five propositions of federal maternity benefits were submitted to the Swiss electorate between 1974 and 2004 (FCWI, 2001, 2011). Four of them were rejected, sometimes massively; there was between 61.6% and 84% of votes against the projects. In the aftermath of the 1999 failure of a maternity insurance in national vote, a major political mobilization took place in order to find rapidly a consensual solution. In 1999, no fewer than ten parliamentary interventions requested that the Confederation examined the reasons of the failure of the proposal and to work on a new proposition. In parallel, from 2000 on, several cantonal legislative bodies (Geneva, Zürich, Valais, Vaud) agreed on the principle of a cantonal maternity leave. In 2001, a maternity insurance of 16 weeks of leave covered at 80% of the salary came into force in the Canton of Geneva (French-speaking part of Switzerland).

In 2001, the Federal Council put into consultation two variants of a maternity insurance, but an alternative proposition was made by an alliance of MPs from the four governmental parties: Socialist, Radical-Liberal, Swiss People's party, Christian Democrats. This proposition was supported by 110 out of 200 members of the National Council. The parliamentary initiative was named after one of its promoters (the Radical-Liberal National Councilor Pierre Triponez) who was at the time the President of the Swiss Union of Crafts and Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). It was precisely this segment of the economy which had been the most opposed to maternity insurance projects in the past; therefore his mobilization indicated that a minimum agreement had been reached, including the economic lobby. The proposition aimed to amend the LECA, but benefits were limited to 14 weeks, paid at 80% for employed and self-employed women. This time no universal or means-tested maternity allowances for mothers were included in the project. However, the remaining leave opponents (mainly the Swiss People's party) launched an optional referendum against the LECA amendment. Finally the 26th September 2004, the Swiss electorate accepted by 55.4% of votes the adoption of a form of federal maternity insurance.

As this short summary and Table 4 suggest, the successive political projects upon which the Swiss electorate was called to vote recommended different legal frames to implement maternity benefits, proposed varying benefits and financing systems and targeted different populations. As the next sections will develop, there were many points of cleavage until a consensual minimal solution was found.

Different legal frameworks envisaged

Across the 60 years of political struggles to implement a maternity insurance, three different legal frames were envisaged. First, maternity benefits were subsumed in a Health insurance. As the implementation of a compulsory Health Insurance was a slow process,⁷⁵ the implementation of maternity benefits was also jeopardized. Furthermore, some political actors considered that merging maternity with health insurance was not adequate as it associated maternity to an illness. Therefore, implementing a separate legal frame was considered a better objective by many feminist and women's groups, as well as political actors. According to them, creating an independent maternity insurance was part of the broader social recognition of women's care-giving activities for society (Pannatier, 2000, p. 80). Such proposals were put to the vote in 1984

⁷⁵ A compulsory Health Insurance was adopted in 1996.

and 1999, without any success. The third legal frame envisaged—the Loss of Earnings Compensation Act—was the one which brought about a political consensus in 2004. In this approach, childbirth and its consequences represent an impediment to work for pay, comparable to the impediment faced by military and civil protection recruits who are on duty.

The LECA had initially been created in 1940 to enable families to maintain adequate living conditions while men were mobilized during World War II. The fund had been financed by wage contributions paid equally by employers and employees since then. The LECA solution was deemed adequate for different reasons (Dafflon, 2003; FCWI, 2011; Leimgruber, 2010). First, it made it possible to use an existing insurance program instead of creating a new one. Secondly, the post-Cold War environment and the reduction of the militia enlistment meant that the LECA fund had a surplus. Thirdly, because employed women had been contributing to the fund since its creation without benefiting from it, adding maternity to the LECA insurance was considered a fair solution. Fourthly, the revision of the law meant considerable savings for the economy. Not only would the maternity leave expenses be shared among all companies, but the LECA revision also entailed the increase of salary compensation rate for military recruits from 65% to 80%. As companies were often paying the surplus to their male employees so that they would receive full payment of their salary when they went on military service each year, the LECA reform would diminish many companies' expenses.

However, the preference for the LECA solution for implementing maternity benefits remains remarkable, as Matthieu Leimgruber notes: “such an explicit link between soldiers' income compensation and maternity leave benefits remains an exceptional occurrence among Western welfare states” (Leimgruber, 2010, p. 54). While the LECA insurance initially contributed to the perpetuation of the male-breadwinner family model,⁷⁶ paradoxically the program appeared as a convenient solution for financing maternity benefits more than sixty years later.

Defining the financing system

Closely related to the question of the legal frame within which maternity benefits should be implemented, was the question of the financing. This question was a central point and occupied an important place in all debates across the 20th century. Debates concerned on the one hand the Swiss welfare state capacity to finance a new insurance and on the other hand the concrete financing system to opt for. Until the 1950s it had been suggested that women alone should contribute to the insurance (Studer, 1997). However, the subsequent debates no longer questioned the principle of solidarity between men and women in the financing of the program. However, questions remained as to which social groups should contribute financially to the leave. Financing plans proposed alternatively to have a universal financing through value added tax (VAT) or to limit the responsibility to employers only, or to both employers and wage workers (through wage contributions). The difficulty of defining the groups that should pay for maternity leave benefits indicated the difficulty to assign responsibility within the public sphere.

⁷⁶ The LECA fund was implemented in 1940, thanks to special emergency powers granted to the Federal Council at the beginning of World War II (Leimgruber, 2010, p. 67). LECA benefits enabled families to maintain adequate living conditions while men were mobilized during the War and contributed to the maintenance of a traditional family organization: the “male citizen-soldier-breadwinner” was magnified and women's labor force integration was “selective and subordinate”. Although women did invest the labor market during wartime, their participation was made invisible, temporary and was limited in comparison with countries where such benefits did not exist.

All in all, Gaël Pannatier considers that the recurrent “technical” discussions about the financing system for maternity benefits had the effect of a political “non-decision”; i.e., although the prevailing political discourse was the acceptance of maternity benefits, no concrete implementation took place revealing a lack of political will (Pannatier, 2000, p. 71; 105).

Pannatier (2000) analyzed maternity insurance with a discursive and gender approach, focusing in particular on the debates which took place in the 1990s. She observed the recurring use of economic discourses among opponents of maternity insurance. Employers’ associations were opposed to any extension of the welfare state, arguing that the economic climate was problematic. The implementation of a maternity leave was also considered unnecessary and the current solution (health insurance and collective labor agreements) as satisfactory. Opponents also claimed that there were other political priorities regarding welfare state policies. Pannatier argued that the backdrop of this discourse, was the strong neoliberal trend in the 1990s about individual responsibility and in favor of a “social moratorium” (Pannatier, 2000, pp. 65-69). However, she observed that the debates about previous maternity insurance projects had also been marked by the strong presence of an economic discourse, which shows the strength of the liberal ideology in Switzerland. In her view, the economic discourse had several consequences. First, maternity leave supporters themselves often used this discursive register in order to advocate for their proposals (e.g., reasonable cost and economic advantages). Secondly, the predominance of the economic discourse enabled the opponents of maternity insurance to avoid debates about the *content* of maternity leave proposals and the necessity to implement the measure. It had the effect of silencing issues such as social justice and work-family life reconciliation. Thirdly, by framing debates about maternity leave as a gender-neutral issue—i.e., “welfare state development should be stopped”—leave opponents avoided problematizing gender relations and women’s substantial rights. The underlying representation was that of a traditional family where the male partner could provide for the expenses related to childbirth and women’s incapacity to work.

The reduction of the scope of policy proposals

The overview of the evolution of the maternity insurance projects put to the vote (see Table 4) also reveals that with time the ambition of policy projects decreased, eliminating the elements that had created discord in the past. This was the result of the fear of optional referendum (characteristic of the Swiss political institutions) and the successive failures in national vote. First, the length and compensation rate of benefits were limited, from 16 weeks with full salary compensation for working women in 1984, to 14 weeks at 80% of salary with a maximum ceiling for the 2004 LECA reform. Secondly, the definition of the target population was increasingly restricted. Policy projects of 1984, 1987 and 1999 entailed allowances for all mothers, including homemakers—even if they were sometimes means-tested. The reasons advanced were the social recognition and valuing of the role played by mothers for society and avoiding to create disparities among women. However, this aspect of the proposal was subject to internal cleavages among feminist associations, women’s groups and political parties and actors, following the argument that such benefits would confine women to a childcare role and jeopardize the acceptance of the insurance.

Further potential recipients of the policies were contested. This was the case for men. The 1984 project included a nine months unpaid parental leave, which was also said to have played a key role in its rejection in popular vote (Dafflon, 2003, p. 250; FCWI, 2001, p. 8). After the massive rejection of the proposal (84%), the demand to include a form of leave open to fathers disappeared almost completely from the political agenda. Adoptive parents were also source of opposition. In the parliamentary debates preceding the adoption of the 2004 maternity leave, adoptive parents were intentionally excluded from the targeted beneficiaries in order not to compromise the maternity leave project (FCWI, 2011, p. 3).

An essentialized definition of parenthood

This historical overview of the development of maternity insurance indicates that through the progressive exclusion of fathers and adoptive parents from a statutory form of leave and insurance, an essentialized and physiological conception—and not a social conception—of parenthood has been privileged in Switzerland. Only biological mothers are defined as legitimate leave recipients. This is surprising because the preference for the LECA legal framework over the health insurance framework to implement maternity benefits could have meant that the *social* and not the *physiological* aspect of parenthood was taken into account. The opinion paper published by the Federal Council (2003) about the LECA reform project in 2002 illustrates the essentialization mechanism at play in the process of implementing maternity leave:

*The protection of maternity is a task the State cannot avoid. It is a family policy imperative, a postulate of social policy and a fundamental principle of equality between women and men. It is necessary to grant a period of rest to the mother after childbirth, **in order for her to recover, to take care of the newborn child and to develop a mother-child relationship** without being harassed by financial worries. After childbirth, the mother cannot and should not be constrained to start a gainful activity again immediately. A break from work is necessary and imposed by the Federal Employment Act.⁷⁷ (Federal Council, opinion on Pierre Triponez's parliamentary initiative, November 6th 2002, emphasis added)*

This extract shows that, in Switzerland, health and childcare objectives are conflated under one type of leave (maternity leave) contrary to many other contexts where maternity leave—while considered a health measure—is complemented by other types of leaves which have childcare and educative objectives and which are open to fathers too (Moss, 2013). Here it appears that the childcare objective is tied to and associated with the health objective of the leave, which plays a part in constituting parenthood in gendered ways. Such a definition of maternity leave objectives implies that the policy is restricted to biological mothers. It has the effect of defining parenthood in a gender-specific and essentialized way which excludes other care providers from the circle of beneficiaries, such as fathers, adoptive parents or same-sex partners.

⁷⁷ La protection de la maternité constitue une tâche à laquelle l'Etat ne saurait se soustraire. Elle procède d'un impératif de politique familiale, d'un postulat de politique sociale et du principe fondamental de l'égalité entre femmes et hommes. Il importe d'accorder à la mère une période de repos après l'accouchement, lui permettant de récupérer, de s'occuper du nouveau né et de développer la relation mère-enfant sans être accablée par des soucis financiers. Après l'accouchement, la mère ne peut ni ne doit être contrainte de reprendre immédiatement une activité lucrative. Un arrêt de travail est nécessaire et imposé par la loi fédérale sur le travail (LTr; RS 822.11).

1.2. Parental and paternity leaves as recent political demands

The 1984 vote on maternity and parental leaves

As the previous sections showed, the Swiss electorate voted once on a policy proposal which included men in the targeted recipients. This was the case for the popular initiative rejected in 1984, which entailed a nine-month unpaid parental leave for the mother and the father. Five main criticisms were made of parental leave implementation (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 250-251). First, women on the labor market would potentially face discrimination because the employers would fear their prolonged absences.⁷⁸ Second, the equality objective declared by the proponents was dismissed. Parental leave was considered ineffective for the balancing of work and family obligations on the long term. Other measures, such as part-time work, were considered more urgent and more appropriate for fulfilling this objective. Third, parental leave was said to be detrimental to the child because of its limited length and the return of the parents to the labor market. It was said that the child's development necessitated one person to take care of him during his/her whole development. Fourth, the consequences of parental leave were considered unsustainable for the economy—both public and private—and putting at risk the financing of other family policies such as family allowances. Finally, the Federal Council deemed the initiative unnecessary, because a proposal of revision of the Health Insurance including maternity benefits was underway.

Further arguments were identified by Françoise Mayor Genevay (2005, pp. 70-84). The Federal Council argued that parental leave was an inappropriate policy for the time being—without mentioning any adequate moment in the future, or necessary conditions for its realization. The principle of equality was presented as a threat to the male-breadwinner family model, which was presented as a reference model. In her analysis of the representations of mothers and fathers in the political debates preceding the 1984 vote, Pamela Grandjean (2008) observed that the project was inscribed in the frame of the recent implementation of a Gender Equality Law (1981). The committee which promoted the proposal (feminist associations and the Socialist party) framed it as enabling—among other things—a more egalitarian division of work at home and criticized the representation of mothers as primary parents. On the side of opponents (mainly right-wing MPs), Grandjean noted that the idea of the primary role of women as homemakers and childcarers prevailed.

Overall, the 1984 vote gave rise to lively debates about parental roles and revealed strongly gendered conceptions of gender relations. In the aftermath of the rejection of the proposal, to which parental leave was considered to have greatly contributed, the subsequent proposals focused on maternity leave only. It is clear that a major reason for the very late emergence of parental and paternity leaves on the Swiss political agenda is the late adoption of a maternity insurance itself. The major cleavages about the representations of parental roles which arose in the 1980s may also explain why subsequent debates in the 1990s on maternity leave did not focus in similar ways on gender-equality issues but more so on “gender-neutral” issues, such as their financing aspect.

⁷⁸ This argument shows that in the MPs' representations, parental leave mainly concerns women and not men.

The emerging interest in parental leave policies within the political sphere

The implementation of maternity benefits at the federal level was a necessary condition for the emergence of parental and paternity leaves as new political demands. This can be observed through the number of parliamentary interventions submitted in favor of parental leave policies. As I will develop in the empirical part of this chapter, it increased substantially at the beginning of the 21st century, especially since 2006 when maternity leave had just been implemented. However, not only did MPs appropriate the question of parental and paternity leaves, but other collective political actors and civil society organizations did too. Thus actors such as political parties, labor unions, masculine associations, family and youth as well as religious associations were also active in the constitution of the lack of parental leave as a public problem. Although I will not be able to analyze systematically and in depth their role and positions as collective actors, I will present in a summarized way the broader picture of parental leave policies as a concern in the political and civil society sphere and some key events which contributed to the debates of parental leave policies in parliament.

Political parties have to different degrees expressed their position with regard to parental leave policies.⁷⁹ Left-wing parties such as the Socialist party and the Greens expressed their support to paid parental leave in position papers about family policy (Socialist party, 2002; The Greens, 2011) and were supportive of a paid paternity leave through press releases. In June 2009, the Socialist Party even surveyed its supporters and members in order to decide on popular initiatives to launch. The five projects concerned implementing a minimum salary, investing in renewable energies, adopting a flexible pension system as well as two projects regarding families: revising the taxation system of inheritance and implementing a paid parental leave of six to 12 months. However, only the first two projects were adopted and launched as popular initiatives. In June 2013 a similar procedure took place. One of the projects under consideration also involves family policy. However, this time the Socialist party considers launching a new popular initiative to revise the constitutional article in favor of the family; parental leave is no longer considered a central demand.⁸⁰

The Christian Democrats present themselves as the party in favor of families (Federal Chancellery, 2009, p. 19). In 2011, the Christian-Democratic party took a stand in favor of an unpaid parental leave of maximum six months (Christian Democratic Party, 2011). In addition, they proposed that refresher courses for the army should be replaced by a paternity leave for men during the first year of their child. The Liberal party considers that the family is a private affair and stresses parents' responsibility and freedom. In a 2012 position paper regarding family policy, the Liberals advocated for the increase of childcare structures but did not call for the implementation of any kind of leave (The Liberals, 2012). Finally, the Swiss People's Party considers the traditional family as the basis of society and is opposed to state intervention (The Swiss People's Party, 2011). The Swiss People's party is opposed to both parental and paternity leaves.

⁷⁹ I explored the websites of the four main governmental parties (Socialist party, Christian-democratic, Liberal, Swiss People's party) as well as that of the Green party on June 13th 2013. I went through the position papers edited by parties regarding their political line concerning family policies and browsed their press releases which concerned parental and paternity leaves.

⁸⁰ This project for a popular initiative is the follow-up of the failure in a national vote in March 2013 of the amendment of the constitutional article in favor of family and work life reconciliation (see Chapter I).

Among the other actors of the Swiss political sphere involved in family policy, there are two Extra-Parliamentary Committees: the Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs (FCCF) and the Federal Commission for Women's Issues (FCWI). In 2010, the FCCF issued a report proposing a model of parental leave and parental benefits for Switzerland (Baumann et al., 2010). The FCCF is an advisory commission of the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA) whose mandate is to inform, coordinate and propose voting recommendations as well as new policy measures. The FCCF parental leave model was the first concrete proposal for a parental leave scheme, including a cost estimation and a financing plan. It proposed to implement a six-month parental leave paid at 80% of earnings.⁸¹ The annual costs of this leave scheme were estimated at CHF 1.1-1.2 billion and two funding options were assessed (increase of wage contributions or VAT rate). On the side of the FCWI, parental leave and benefits were listed in the 2012 annual report as one of the themes to be investigated further in the following year (FCWI, 2012).

As regards **civil society associations**, the second largest umbrella labor union in Switzerland (Travail.Suisse) has since 2006 repeatedly issued press releases in favor of a paternity leave, proposing a statutory 20 paid days model. By contrast, the Confederation of Swiss Employers issued a press release following the publication of the FSIO 2013 report on parental and paternity leaves emphasizing its opposition to a statutory regulation of leave policies and supporting solutions negotiated at company and/or branch level (Confederation of Swiss Employers, 2013).⁸²

Several associations such as Pro Familia (an umbrella association for family associations) and Pro Juventute (a grouping of youth associations) took a stand in favor of paternity and/or parental leave parliamentary propositions. This was expressed on the occasion of the first Fathers' Day in Switzerland which took place on June 3rd 2007. Another association is actively lobbying in favor of paid paternity and parental leaves, i.e., the umbrella association Maenner.ch which gathers men's and fathers' associations. Maenner.ch—together with various MPs from different political parties—proposed in 2011 a model of private parental leave insurance.⁸³ Other civil society organizations were also associated with this proposal.

Further indications of the emergence of parental leave policies in the Swiss **political sphere** is the public position expressed recently by two Federal Councilors; Alain Berset, Minister of the Federal Department of Home Affairs (FDHA) and Simonetta Sommaruga, in charge of the Federal Department of Justice and Police (FDJP). They have expressed their support for the implementation of a form of parental leave. Parental leave has become an issue upon which political actors must have an opinion and take position. This can be observed through the

⁸¹ The FCCF model was taken up by the Greens in a parliamentary initiative submitted in 2011. The details of the model will therefore be presented and analyzed in the empirical section.

⁸² According to Isabela Mares (2001, 2003), this opposition need not necessarily exist. In coordinated market economies, and depending on companies' characteristics (skill profile of workforce, risk incidence, size), employers do not necessarily see welfare state extension as a constraint, but may have an interest in supporting specific social policies. Thus "a social policy that insures workers for employment-related risks also protects the investment made by *employers* in the skills of their workers" (Mares, 2003, p. 237, emphasis in original text). While Mares mainly addresses risks of unemployment, disability and sickness, the same logic could also be applied to family related reasons which make workers temporarily unavailable from work. The fact that business associations in Switzerland seem to be opposed to leave policies may reflect the fact that Switzerland is not a "pure" CME, as mentioned in Chapter I, but also shares characteristics with typically liberal market economies.

⁸³ Details about this proposal will also be presented in the empirical section as the model was submitted as a parliamentary intervention.

presence of this issue in 2011 on an online voting advice application. This online application provides a tool for citizens to compare their political positions with those of political parties and candidates. The 2011 questionnaire (prepared for the 2011 National Council and State Council elections) entailed a question about the adherence to the six-month parental leave model (inspired by the model proposed by the FCCF). This indicates that parental leave has become a topical and relevant issue among the Swiss social and family policies.⁸⁴

This section shows that the emergence of parental leave policies in the political sphere is also observable through, and shaped by, the activities and discourses of collective actors such as political parties, civil society associations, labor unions etc. I will take them into account in the analysis but I will concentrate mainly on the parliamentary interventions on parental and paternity leave; a dataset which I will present in the next section.

2. Data and methodology

2.1. Data presentation

The dataset was extracted from the website of the Swiss Parliament which provides online access to all the proceedings on parliamentary objects dealt with since 1995.⁸⁵ The keyword research with “parental leave” and “paternity leave” revealed 36 parliamentary interventions for the period ranging from 1995 to 2011.⁸⁶ Only in eleven of them both keywords were simultaneously used while for the rest, it was either “parental” or “paternity” leave that was mentioned. Of these 36 interventions, 23 concerned centrally parental or paternity leave (see Table 5 and Appendix 8 for details). In the remaining interventions, “parental leave” and “paternity leave” are mentioned in relation to other issues such as social rights, gender equality, work and family life reconciliation, maternity leave.

The 23 interventions addressing centrally parental leave policies constitute the basis of the dataset. These interventions are of different nature, as MPs and parliamentary groups are granted various tools in order to influence the legislation. A *parliamentary initiative* enables political actors to submit a draft bill for an act or to propose in general terms that such a text be drafted. It is subject to a preliminary examination by the Committee for Social Security and Health (CSSH). A *motion* obliges the Federal Council to submit a specific draft bill or decree or to take appropriate measures. It requires the approval of both chambers. A *postulate* requires that the Federal Council examines whether an act or decree needs to be drafted or whether other measures need to be taken (it may involve the presentation of a report). A postulate is binding once it is approved by one of the two chambers. Finally an *interpellation* enables members of the Federal Assembly to request information on matters related to foreign or domestic policy.

⁸⁴ The platform is called “smartvote”: http://www.smartvote.ch/11_ch_nr/election/index. Parental leave was one of the four questions concerning the topic “welfare state and family” in the short on-line questionnaire, together with the issue of retirement age; unemployment allowances; and family allowances (see http://www.smartvote.ch/11_ch_nr/questionnaire).

⁸⁵ Link to the curia Vista database: <http://www.parlament.ch/e/suche/pages/curia-vista.aspx>

⁸⁶ For information, in 2012 six additional interventions were submitted mentioning “parental” or “paternity” leave keywords. They were unfortunately not included in the analysis, due to time limitations and the necessity to fix the dataset in order to analyze it.

Depending on the type of intervention political actors choose to make, different procedures and political mechanisms are involved, triggering the production of new documents. These documents include responses from the Federal Council, reports prepared by the CSSH of the National Council or of the Council of States, as well as parliamentary debates. All documents triggered by each of the 23 parliamentary interventions are included in the dataset. In total, the dataset represents approximately 100 pages of text documents (examples of the data are provided in Appendix 9).

Table 5 - Parliamentary interventions on parental and paternity leaves from 1995 to 2011

No	Year	Political actor	Title of intervention
1	2011	Schmid-Federer, Barbara (ZH, Christian-Democrat)	European norms on parental leave
2	2011	Barthassat, Luc (GE, Christian-Democrat)	Replace military service with a paternity leave
3	2011	Hochreutener, Norbert (BE, Christian-Democrat)	Parental leave and family benefits provision
4	2011	Fetz, Anita (BL, Socialist)	Facultative parental leave and family benefits provision
5	2011	Schmid-Federer, Barbara (ZH, Christian-Democrat)	Unpaid paternity leave
6	2011	The Greens	Forward with parental leave and allowance
7	2010	Nordmann, Roger (VD, Socialist)	Support parents of young children
8	2010	Streiff-Feller, Marianne (BE, Christian-Democrat)	Two weeks of paid paternity leave
9	2009	Barthassat, Luc (GE, Christian-Democrat)	Replace military service with a paternity leave
10	2009	Hiltbold, Hugues (GE, The Liberals)	Parental leave
11	2008	Teuscher, Franziska (BE, The Greens)	Models for a paternity leave
12	2008	Canton of Geneva	For a paternity leave
13	2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara (ZH, Christian-Democrat)	Partial parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances
14	2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara (ZH, Christian-Democrat)	Parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances
15	2008	Nordmann, Roger (VD, Socialist)	Effects of paternity leave
16	2008	Hodgers, Antonio (GE, The Greens)	Possibility for the cantons to introduce and finance a paternity leave through the Income Compensation Allowances scheme
17	2007	Hodgers, Antonio (GE, The Greens)	Financing a paternity leave. Possibilities for the cantons
18	2007	Freysinger, Oskar (VS, Swiss People's party)	Federal law on Income Compensation Allowances in the event of Military Service and in the event of Maternity. Modification
19	2006	Nordmann, Roger (VD, Socialist)	A paternity leave to associate fathers from the birth of the child
20	2006	Teuscher, Franziska (BE, The Greens)	Modification of the Federal law on Income Compensation Allowances in the event of Military Service and in the event of Maternity. Extension of beneficiary rights to employed fathers
21	2001	Teuscher, Franziska (BE, The Greens)	To grant a parental leave to employed parents
22	1999	Teuscher, Franziska (BE, The Greens)	Parental leave for Confederation civil servants
23	1998	Jutzet, Erwin (FR, Socialist)	Paternity leave

Source: Curia Vista - online database of the Swiss Parliament since 1995

(<http://www.parlament.ch/e/suche/Pages/curia-vista.aspx>). Search with keywords "parental leave" and "paternity leave".

2.2. Methodology of analysis

The methodology of analysis follows the twofold objective of the research. First the aim is to describe the emergence of parental leave policies in the political sphere. For this purpose I make a content analysis of the 23 parliamentary proposals submitted by MPs between 1995 and 2011 which concern centrally parental leave policies. Content analysis enables one to describe and analyze systematically a dataset according to a set of predefined characteristics (Berg, 2001, Chapter 11). The characteristics considered concern the year of submission, the type of intervention, and modalities of the leave policies proposed (see Table 6 for an overview of characteristics). Information on the MPs who submitted the proposals is also systematically assessed, such as the political party and the canton and linguistic region of origin. Content analysis enables one to describe what the political elite considers to be relevant policy issues, and which questions and solutions they address. I also describe the profile of MPs who are concerned with parental and paternity leaves. Finally, it is also possible to explore the changes which have occurred in the last 15 years concerning leave proposals.

Table 6 - List of characteristics considered in the content analysis

Characteristics	Modalities
Year of submission	1998; 1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009; 2010; 2011
Type of intervention	interpellation; motion; postulate; parliamentary initiative; cantonal initiative
Policy type	statutory parental leave; statutory paternity leave; statutory parental and paternity leave
Model and financing system	paid; unpaid; private insurance; transformation of existing insurances; cantonal insurance
Eligibility criteria	employed and self-employed; civil servant; military recruits; adoption
Length	1 week; 2 weeks; 2 months; 4 months; 6 months; unspecified
Flexibility of the leave	block use; part-time; time frame for leave uptake
Political actor	MP; party; canton
Political affiliation of MP	The Greens; Socialist; Christian-Democratic; the Liberals; Swiss People's party
Sex of the MP	male; female
Region of origin of MP	German-speaking; French-speaking; Italian-speaking; urban canton; rural canton

Secondly, the aim is to analyze whether this emergence challenges the gender structure and gendered representations of parenthood. I explore the assumptions concerning gender relations in the leave proposals submitted and the debates they triggered. I also pay particular attention to the way the role of the state is problematized and to how discourses contribute to legitimize state regulation of parental leave policies or on the contrary how their definition as a public problem is denied. I analyze the data following two logics: first I analyze the content of the 23 policy proposals in a standardized way by assigning them scores. Secondly I conduct a discourse analysis of the whole dataset, including the additional documents triggered by the proposals; i.e., Federal Council responses, reports and debates.

The standardized analysis of policy proposals is conducted following a similar logic as that conducted by Ray et al. (2010) in a comparative analysis of leave schemes in 21 countries (see Chapter I). The authors attributed scores in order to capture the extent to which leave schemes were generous (length and level of income compensation) and gender-equal (incentives for fathers to use the leaves). I do so in a similar way but I concentrate on the parental and paternity leave proposals and distinguish between the assessment of *state intervention* and that of fathers' access to leaves, which I refer to under the label *father-care sensitivity* (see Table 7).

For the *state intervention* axis, I distinguish between different levels of state regulation, from the creation of a new leave scheme (+1), the modification of an existing program (0) or leaves which curtail existing rights for mothers or which rely on individual financing (-1). I also take into account the type of entitlement which is proposed by MPs, which reflect different conceptions of the role of the state in family policy. When a leave is proposed as an individual and non-transferable right for men, one point is attributed (+1). Prioritizing paternity leave over parental leave indicates that MPs—by targeting men specifically—wish to orient the way the leave is used within the family and to promote men's participation in family life. On the opposite side, gender-neutral parental leaves are attributed minus one point (-1), as they stress the free choice and liberty of couples to decide on the division of the leave. Parental leaves which are endowed with a quota or a reserved period for fathers receive zero point (0).

Table 7 - Criteria for score attribution for the standardized evaluation of policy proposals

Main axes	Components	Score attribution	
State intervention	State regulation	+1	new statutory leave for employed parents
		0	modification of existing program / cantonal solution
		-1	reduction of maternity leave / private insurance
	Type of entitlement	+1	individual (pat. leave or non-transferable par. leave)
		0	family (parental leave with quota)
		-1	family (gender-neutral parental leave)
Father-care-sensitivity	Length reserved for the father	+1	very long: more than one month
		0	extended: more than two weeks and up to one month
		-1	short: two weeks or less / not specified
	Compensation for the father	+1	well-paid (100%-80%), collectively funded
		0	private insurance with tax rebate
		-1	unpaid

The *father-care sensitivity* axis aims to capture whether the policy proposal reduces the constitution of difference between mothers and fathers and whether it gives incentives for fathers' leave uptake. The concept of *father-care-sensitivity*, presented in Chapter I, was developed by Margaret O'Brien (2009) in order to assess and compare the extent to which "the leave period formally allows fathers to be away from the workplace in order to undertake child and partner care obligations rather than engage in economic breadwinning functions" (p.194). She uses two components to measure this: leave duration reserved for fathers and financial compensation of the leave. These two aspects are crucial for men's leave uptake (see literature review in Chapter II). Following her typology I consider as "short" a leave of 14 days or less (-1) and as "extended" a leave of more than two weeks and up to one month (0 point). I add a

category (“very long”: more than one month, +1 point) in order to grasp leave proposals which reduce substantially the leave length differential between mothers and fathers. The level of financial compensation of the policy proposal also reflects the degree of *father-care-sensitivity*. It ranges from well-paid and collectively funded benefits (+1), to a private insurance with tax rebate which implies an indirect financial participation from the state (0), to unpaid leaves (-1).

Scores were attributed for each component and summed for each axis. In several cases, score attribution was subject to some interpretation (details are provided in Appendix 10). For example, a proposal mentions “a few weeks” of paternity leave (no. 19), which I understand as meaning at least two weeks, and therefore code as a “short” leave (-1 point). Another parliamentary initiative targets civil servants only (no. 22), which I consider as low state regulation because only a portion of the population would benefit from the measure (-1 point attributed).

The graphical representation enabled me to compare visually policy proposals with one another (see Figure 20). The interpretation of the figure was conducted using Brighouse & Wright’s (2008) conceptualization of the effects of leave policies on gender relations (also presented in Chapter II). The analysis was only performed on parliamentary interventions which proposed policy solutions and for which enough information were available, i.e., 21 out of 23 interventions (nos. 11 and 16 were not taken into account).

The discourse analysis of the data is conducted following Carol Lee Bacchi’s (1999, 2009) “What’s the problem represented to be?” methodology (WPR). This implies asking a set of questions when analyzing each document:

- What is the implied problem(s) in each policy proposal and within the responses, reports and debates they triggered?
- Are there recurring problem representations? What is their overarching logic?
- What presuppositions underlie them? What assumptions about gender relations and parenthood are made within each of them?
- What assumptions are made about the role of the state in parental leave policies?
- What are the origins of these problematizations? What is left unproblematic or silenced?
- What are the effects of the problematizations identified?
- Do specific political actors mobilize specific problem representations?
- Over the period analyzed, is there a change in the mobilization of specific problems represented to be?

The methodology for identifying the problem representations was a bottom-up process. It consisted in coding—using a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (Nvivo 8)—all the ways in which political actors (leave supporters and leave opponents) represented parental leave policies. A new code was created every time a new meaning was associated with parental or paternity leave. The aim was to identify every possible ways in which parental leave policies were interpreted by political actors and given meaning to, whether their implementation was deemed necessary or on the contrary rejected. I refer to these as “problematizations” or as “problem representations”. As the coding process was conducted in a detailed manner, it led to the identification of over 20 different problematizations. These problematizations were grouped together when they indicated a similar overarching logic. I refer to these grouped problem representations as “discourses”. In the coding process, I was particularly attentive to the way in

which motherhood and fatherhood were constituted through these discourses and the extent to which difference was reproduced, questioned or challenged. Finally, I also linked the discourses identified with the evolution of policy proposals and of the political actors involved in order to situate discourses within their context.

3. Results

3.1. Proposals for parental leave policies and their supporters

In this section I describe the results of the content analysis of parliamentary interventions in favor of parental leave policies. The aim is to have a general overview of how the issue of parental leave policies is addressed by members of parliament, what their concerns are and which policy solutions they propose. I also describe the political treatment of these propositions and their current state in the political sphere.

Year of submission

The presentation in Table 5 of MPs interventions in favor of parental leave policies between 1998 and 2011 shows clearly that it is a recent and emerging concern. Among the 23 interventions, only three were submitted before maternity leave was adopted in national vote (2004). The parliamentary initiative submitted in June 2006 by the Green MP Franziska Teuscher intervenes one year after the LECA reform came into force (July 1st 2005). It marks the beginning of a long series of heterogeneous propositions. This confirms the mechanism identified in the previous section on the delaying role played by the very late implementation of a maternity insurance.

Although parental and paternity leaves are emerging issues in Parliament, they are not at the very top of the agenda in comparison with other family and social policies. Table 8 gives a general indication of the presence of parental leave policies on the political agenda. Considering the frequency of parliamentary interventions containing specific keywords which characterize different family and social policy issues, it is clear that leave policies receive comparatively little interest from political actors. Maternity leave and family allowances have been the main focus of MPs as regards family policy issues in the last 15 years. Overall family policies remain a secondary topic in comparison with traditional social security schemes, to which MPs have devoted more political attention.

Table 8 - Frequency of parliamentary interventions about family and social policy issues from 1995 to 2011

Policy area	Issue	Keywords searched for	Number of parliamentary interventions
Family policies	Parental leave policies	“parental leave”; “paternity leave”	47
	Maternity leave	“maternity leave”	173
	Early Childhood Education and Care services	“crèche”; “extra-family childcare”	59
	Family allowances	“family allowances”	131
Selected traditional social insurances	Disability insurance	“disability insurance”	536
	Pension insurance	“OASI” (Old Age and Survivors Insurance)	749
	Health insurance	“health insurance”	1577

Source: Curia Vista - online database of the Swiss Parliament since 1995

(<http://www.parlament.ch/e/suche/Pages/curia-vista.aspx>).

Notes: The search was conducted with keywords in French: “congé parental”; “congé paternité”; “congé maternité”; “crèche”; “accueil extra-familial”; “allocations familiales”; “assurance invalidité”; “AVS”; “assurance maladie”.

The figures presented provide a rough indication which overestimates the number of parliamentary interventions submitted on the different policy issues: the keyword search was conducted on the whole text of interventions (some parliamentary interventions may not centrally address the issues considered) and some parliamentary interventions may be counted twice (when the search was conducted with different keywords). This explains why 47 parliamentary interventions were counted for parental leave policies, while the dataset actually entails only 23 interventions which centrally address parental and paternity leaves. In order to have roughly comparable figures for the different policy issues considered, 47 interventions are indicated in this table.

Type of intervention and current state

The majority of interventions in favor of parental leave policies were made in the form of motions (11 out of 23) and the rest was submitted as parliamentary interventions (5), postulates (4), interpellations (2) and cantonal initiatives (1). Both chambers must accept motions before the Federal Council drafts an act according to the requested measure. To date, none of the motions has reached a majority in the National Council and in the Council of States. Typically, motions (so as parliamentary initiatives) have been rejected by a majority in the first chamber they were submitted to, usually the National Council. Only one motion (no. 19) proposing the implementation of a few weeks’ paid paternity leave was accepted in the first place in the National Council, before being turned down by the Council of States. The motion had in the first place been debated on March 8th 2007, on the International Women’s Day, in the frame of a debate on the evaluation of the Swiss Equality Law, enforced in 1996. On this day, 43 MPs were absent, including which 31 MPs from the Liberal and Swiss People’s parties. This explains that a small majority was reached on this special occasion (78 votes against 74). However, the parliament’s party composition which usually gives precedence to the right-wing (against parental leave policies), explains the systematic majority against policy proposals (see also Figure 19).

Similarly, reports from the CSSH of the National Council and of the Council of States, as well as responses from the Federal Council were against the policy proposals. The Federal Council

systematically recommended that the motions or postulates in favor of parental leave policies be rejected. During the peak years (2008 and 2011) the Federal Council repeated from one response to another its negative recommendation expressed in the previous parliamentary interventions. There were two exceptions. First in 2008, when it agreed to examine an intervention in favor of an unpaid paternity leave of four weeks (no. 14). There was no follow-up on this positive recommendation as the postulate was filed after two years in abeyance.⁸⁷ Another exception was observed more recently with a postulate submitted in 2011 in favor of a private parental insurance (no. 4). The Federal Council recommended accepting the postulate in order to produce a report on Anita Fetz's parental insurance leave model, and the leave models previously proposed by other MPs. The postulate was accepted by the Council of States in September 2011. The report, prepared by the FSIO (2013) on behalf of the Federal Council, was issued in October 2013.⁸⁸ It represents an important milestone in the emergence of parental leave policies on the political agenda. The report evaluated eight different types of leave solutions as regards their possible costs and impacts for the economy, gender equality and in terms of legislative changes (see Appendix 11). The Federal Council nonetheless concluded that even if leave policies might facilitate work-family life reconciliation, they were not a priority for Swiss family policy.

Modalities of the policy proposals

Among the 23 interventions, paternity leave and parental leave represent both equally important issues in the eyes of MPs; both **types of policies** have respectively been addressed centrally 12 times each in Parliament. Interestingly, demands are almost always limited to one type of leave only. Only one intervention—submitted in 2008 (no. 14)—proposes different models of parental leave to be combined with an unpaid paternity leave. It should be noted that among the proposals in favor of a parental leave, three of them envisage a quota for each parent, proposing individual and non-transferable entitlements instead of a family entitlement. This is the case for the parental leave model which consists in two non-transferable months paid at 80% of salary for each parent (no. 21). The intervention no. 7 submitted in 2010 proposed 20 days of leave credit for each parent. And the parliamentary initiative submitted by the Green party proposed a 24 weeks parental leave model where each parent has a quota of four weeks (no. 6).

Overall, it is possible to distinguish five types of **leave models** and corresponding financing systems among the propositions submitted by MPs (see Table 9).⁸⁹ First, the *extension solution* is the most frequent model identified. The aim is to develop a paid parental or paternity leave by broadening the circle of eligible beneficiaries of the LECA benefits and to include employed men in addition to employed women. This means for example that a paternity leave (nos. 19; 20) or a parental leave (nos. 6; 10) of a few weeks would be compensated for at 80% of salary and financed through wage contributions, just as for maternity leave.

⁸⁷ It should be noted that in total, eight interventions out of 23 were filed without having been submitted to Parliament because they had been in abeyance for more than two years.

⁸⁸ This report was issued shortly before this dissertation was completed. It is not included in the empirical dataset as the period under study goes up to 2011. However, the publication of this report represents a key source of information and a summary is provided in Appendix 11.

⁸⁹ These models give an overview of the different policy solutions proposed by MPs from 1998 to 2011. On a different line, the models presented in the FSIO 2013 report are inspired by proposals previously submitted as well as new proposals (see Appendix 11).

Table 9 – Leave models identified in leave proposals submitted by MPs

Leave models	Description	Leave proposals
Extension solution	In addition to maternity benefits, extend LECA benefits and give access to fathers (and mothers)	6; 7; 8; 10; 14; 19; 20; 21*; 23*
Substitution solution	Modify existing laws (LECA or ArmA) and redistribute benefits to fathers	2; 5; 9; 13; 14; 18
Private insurance solution	Implement a private parental insurance funded voluntarily and tax-deductible	3; 4
Unpaid solution	Implement a statutory parental or paternity leave, without financial compensation	1; 5; 14; 22
Cantonal solution	Enable cantons to levy taxes and to implement paid parental or paternity leaves	12; 16; 17

Notes: Interventions nos. 11 and 15 are not indicated in this table, because they do not propose a concrete leave solution. Some interventions propose different possibilities and are therefore indicated in different leave solutions.

* These interventions were deposited before 2004, that is, before LECA benefits in the event of maternity existed. Propositions nonetheless run in the direction of paid entitlements for fathers (and mothers).

Secondly, other proposals also aim to implement a paid parental or paternity leave using the existing LECA financing system, but instead of widening the scope of the benefits financed, they propose to redistribute existing benefits. The *substitution solutions*—even if they imply a financial compensation for leave recipients—differ from the first type as they aim to limit social expenses. This is the case for interventions which propose the sharing of part of the existing maternity benefits between parents, thereby potentially reducing the length of mothers' benefits (nos. 13; 14; 18). Other proposals also envisage that military recruits, instead of performing their yearly military course, take a paternity leave and benefit from the LECA benefits during this period (nos. 2; 5; 9). Although this proposal also uses the LECA as a financing basis, it also implies a modification of the Armed Forces Act (ArmA). Its particularity is that benefits would be restricted to individuals subject to military or civil service, i.e., Swiss citizens aged between 18 and 30 years old.⁹⁰ Other fathers would be excluded from paternity leave benefits. Furthermore, it would potentially create inequalities among children, as second- and third-borns would be less likely than first-borns to have their father in the eligible age range.

Thirdly, some interventions (nos. 3; 4) propose a *private insurance solution*: that men and women make savings on a voluntary basis in the prospect of the birth of a future child and of the uptake of a parental leave. This private parental leave insurance would be tax-deductible. Therefore, leave uptake would be paid, but only if parents had previously saved up a sufficient amount of money in the previous years. The contribution of the state would be tax rebates in order to encourage such savings. This model is based on the existing third pillar pension system, which encourages individuals to make additional savings for their pension.

Fourthly, some interventions propose *unpaid solutions* (nos. 1; 5; 14; 22). A strong supporter of unpaid leaves is the Christian-Democrat MP Barbara Schmid-Federer who proposed in 2008 and 2011 to implement an unpaid paternity leave of four weeks maximum, which would entail a

⁹⁰ The ArmA determines the period during which citizens are obliged to serve for the army. This depends on the function occupied within the army, and ranges from age 30 (for soldiers and non-commissioned officers) to 50 for higher ranked positions.

modification of the Swiss Code of Obligations (CO). In a recent interpellation, she also suggested that Switzerland adopts a similar legislation as in EU member states, which are subject to the EU Directive on parental leave (four months of parental leave for each parent).⁹¹

Finally, the fifth leave model proposed is a *cantonal solution*, which would enable cantons to grant employed parents (no. 12) or fathers (nos. 16 and 17) with a paid leave. The federal legislation already enables cantons to grant more generous maternity leave to employed mothers, but there are legal blockages which prevent a similar solution for a parental and or paternity leave. The reason is that the EmpA and the CO legislate on the federal level access to leaves as well as payment obligations, which do not leave any space for further legislations on the canton level. The *cantonal solution* aims to make the necessary amendments to the federal legislation in order to allow cantons to develop cantonal leaves and benefits. These propositions stem from the National Councilor Antonio Hodgers (Geneva, The Greens) and from the Canton of Geneva itself. These political actions from the canton and parliamentary representative of Geneva prolong the pioneer role played by the canton regarding leave policies. As previously mentioned, the Canton of Geneva was the first to implement a cantonal maternity insurance system, before a federal solution was reached. In 2008 the parliament of the Canton of Geneva reached a majority in favor of a cantonal two weeks paid paternity leave and four months paid parental leave but was prevented to implement it because of the aforementioned legal blockages.⁹²

This overall picture shows that the **eligibility criterion** for the access to a federal statutory parental or paternity leave is in the large majority of interventions based on the status of activity (in employment, self-employed or in registered unemployment). More limited eligibility criteria are found with proposals which link benefits with military service (nos. 2; 5; 9), with the canton of employment (nos. 12; 16; 17) or with the sector of activity (no. 22). The latter proposition stems from the Green MP Franziska Teuscher who proposed in 1999 to implement—in addition to the existing maternity leave—a parental leave of four months and an annual sick children leave of ten days for civil servants employed at the confederation level. Some interventions also widen the scope of eligibility from biological parents to adoptive parents (nos. 6; 10; 22).⁹³

As regards the **length of leave** proposals, considerable variety can be observed, ranging from one week of paid paternity leave with Erwin Jutzet's 1998 motion (Fribourg, Socialist, no. 23), to six months of paid parental leave with The Greens' parliamentary initiative (no. 6) submitted in 2011. Several MPs do not determine the exact number of weeks of the leave proposed (e.g., Roger Nordmann, Vaud, Socialist, no. 19) leaving it open to the Parliament. Other MPs propose different models with different leave lengths (e.g., Barbara Schmid-Federer, Zürich, Christian-Democrat, no. 14). Luc Barthassat's (Geneva, Christian-Democrat, nos. 2; 9) parliamentary interventions do not explicitly mention a leave length, but as the proposal is to transform military courses' benefits into paternity leave benefits, it is the length of military courses which

⁹¹ Although the directive recommends this leave should be paid and non-transferable, member states are free to implement it in unpaid forms.

⁹² Link to the cantonal parliament debate and vote:

http://www.ge.ch/grandconseil/memorial/data/560402/10/560402_10_partie3.asp

⁹³ Adoption leave has in addition been the object of several parliamentary interventions submitted separately.

is applicable, i.e., 19 days. Private insurance solutions do not mention leave lengths as they are based on voluntary contributions and meant to be tailored individually.⁹⁴

Finally, several parliamentary interventions propose precise uptake leave modalities and stress the importance of its **flexibility** (nos. 3; 4; 6; 7; 19; 22). Leave can be taken part-time, in one block or partitioned in separate slots. The deadline defined for leave uptake by parents varies from the child's birth to its first anniversary and until his eighth anniversary. The flexibility of the leave is presented as being both an advantage for the family and for the employer.

Profile of leave supporters

All interventions except two (no. 6, the Greens and no. 12, the Canton of Geneva) are submitted by MPs. The **party affiliation** of these MPs is heterogeneous. They stem from the four main governmental parties—Socialist, Christian-Democratic, the Liberals, Swiss People's party—plus The Greens. This suggests that all parties have to some extent appropriated the issue of parental or paternity leave, although in different degrees and with different policy proposals. The Christian-Democratic MPs gather 36% of interventions, The Greens 32% and the Socialists 23% (see Appendix 12). With only one intervention each, the Liberals and the Swiss People's Party only count for 5% each of the total number of interventions submitted.

It is also worth noting that the same MPs often submitted several parliamentary interventions. This is the case for Franziska Teuscher (The Greens) and Barbara Schmid-Federer (Christian-Democratic) who each submitted four interventions, Roger Nordmann (Socialist) who made three propositions and Antonio Hodgers (The Greens) and Luc Barthassat (Christian-Democrat) who each made two propositions. This shows that specific political actors choose to invest energy to bring parental or paternity leave issues on the political agenda.

Figure 18 shows the number of parliamentary interventions deposited by aggregated political groups. It is mainly left-wing and center MPs who have been active with regard to parental leave policies in the last 15 years. Furthermore, considering the evolution of interventions, it seems that center MPs have been more invested in these issues in the recent years, while parental leave policies have mobilized left-wing MPs earlier on.

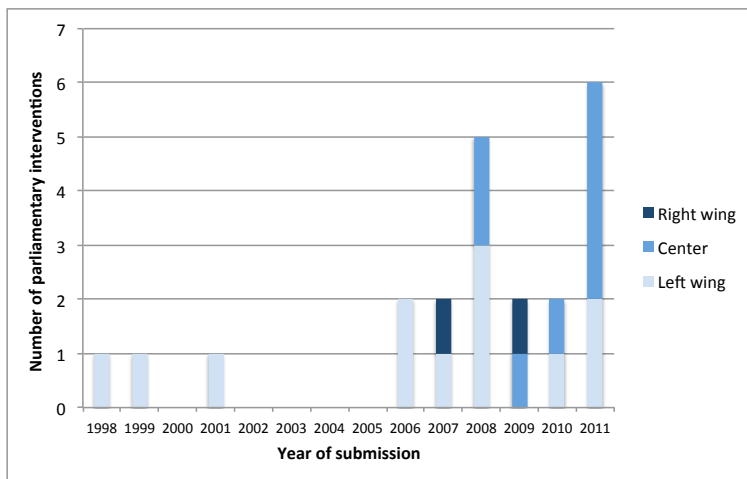
If we consider the voting behavior of MPs on the proposals submitted in the National Council, the following trend is observed (see Figure 19).⁹⁵ Left-wing MPs voted in favor of leave policy proposals and right-wing MPs voted against. Center MPs had a more divided voting strategy and dissident voters were systematically observed for each policy proposal which required a vote. Between one-fifth and two-thirds of center MPs—mainly from the Christian-Democratic Party—voted in favor of the projects. This division among Christian-Democratic MPs about parental leave policies can be related to their political program, which aims both at reforming the welfare state and containing social expenses and being the “party in favor of the family” (Federal Chancellery, 2009). This could explain why (only some) MPs—with families as their target

⁹⁴ The amount of savings accumulated until the child is born would determine the leave length it would be possible to take. Norbert Hochreutener's motion mentions the possibility for pension funds to be liable for the amount not yet capitalized in event a child were born (no. 3).

⁹⁵ Nominal details of votes are available only for the National Council, but not for the Council of States for which only the overall result (number of votes in favor and against the object) is communicated.

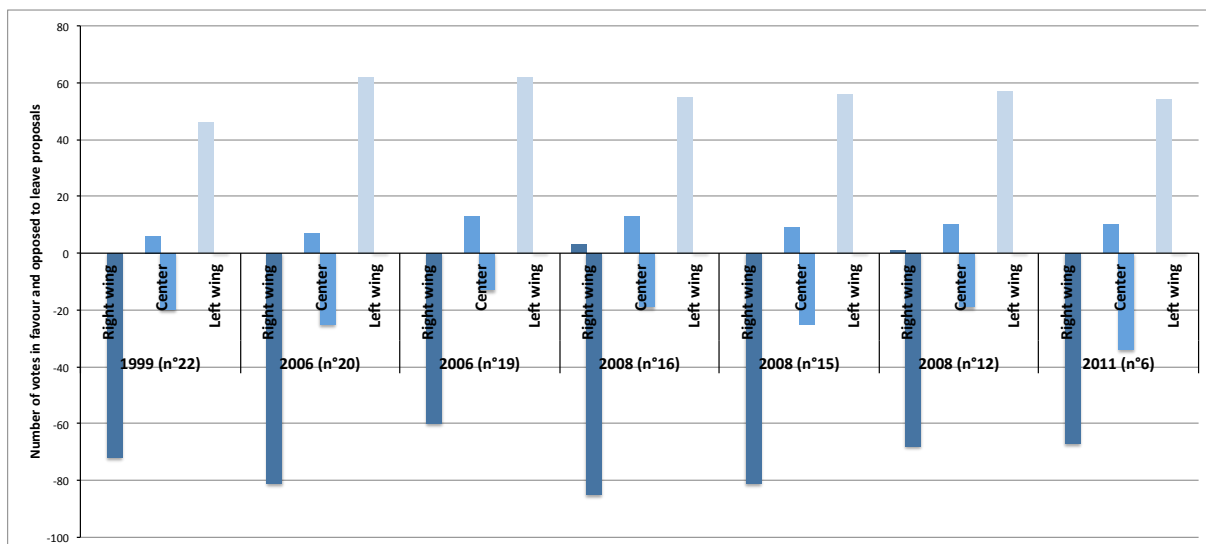
constituency—support leave policies. Also worth noting are the divided voting attitudes among other small center parties: the Conservative Democratic and the Green Liberals (formed for the latest legislature which runs from 2011 to 2015). Although the support of center MPs in favor of parental leave policies has until now been minority, it could well play a decisive role in the future. Considering the strong opposition of the right wing, only this way would it be possible to change the power balance currently in favor of leave opponents in parliament. This potential left-wing and center parties alliance is reminiscent of past coalitions which have taken place during modernization reforms of family policies, as identified by Häusermann (2006b).

Figure 18 - Parliamentary interventions by year and by political coalition



Note: Under “Right wing” I grouped the Liberals and the Swiss People’s Party; the Center corresponds to the Christian-Democratic Party and the “Left wing” includes the Socialist party and The Greens.

Figure 19 – Voting results on leave proposals in the National Council by political groups



Source: Results of nominal votes in the National Council for leave proposals nos. 6, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20 and 22; available online on www.parlament.ch.

Note: For the sake of clarity, the numbers of votes in favour of leave proposals are indicated with a positive sign and the votes against leave proposals are indicated with a negative sign. See Appendix 13 for details.

Further characteristics should be noted about MPs who have submitted parliamentary interventions. First, a slight difference regarding the **sex** of MPs can be noted. Out of the 21 interventions submitted by MPs, nine (43%) were “female MPs interventions”. However, as some MPs submitted several interventions, it concerns only four different women, out of a total of 11 political actors, i.e. 36%. Compared with the proportion of women in the Council of States (19.6%) and in the National Council (29%) (FSO, 2013c), female MPs are proportionally more invested in promoting parental leave policies than male MPs. Another specificity of leave supporters is their **linguistic origin**; 50% of interventions stem from MPs from French-speaking cantons, while they represent only 25% of seats in the National Council. The same proportion is observed if we take into account the number of political actors instead of the number of interventions (six French-speaking MPs out of 12 different political actors). Finally, it is striking to observe **regional** differences: all interventions are submitted by MPs who originate from urban cantons and none from rural ones.

To sum up, as one would have expected, the political actors which mobilize the most in favor of parental leave policies are affiliated with left-wing parties (Green and Socialist), and more recently, center MPs whose support could become decisive in the future. Also, there is a greater proportion of leave supporters among female MPs, as well as among MPs from a French-speaking canton and from an urban canton.

3.2. Policy proposals and gender equality

After having described the policy proposals according to several characteristics, I evaluate in a standardized way the policies proposed by MPs. I do so according to two main axes: the degree of state intervention proposed by political actors and the degree of *father-care-sensitivity* of the solutions proposed (see methodology in section 2.2.). The aim is also to describe the political parties from which they originate and to have an overview of the evolution of the policy proposals over the past 15 years.

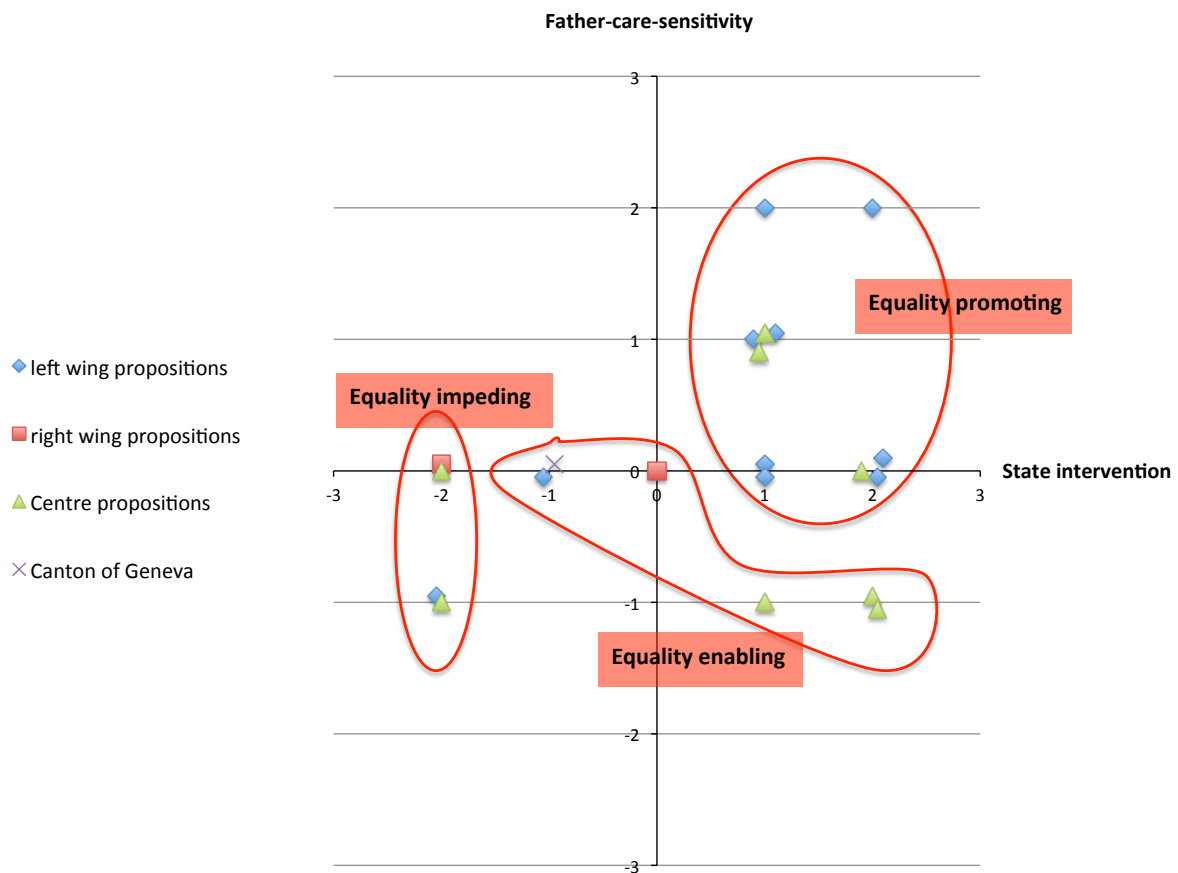
Evaluation of policy proposals

The attribution of scores following the standardized evaluation of leave proposals shows that they differ considerably from one another on both axes investigated: from -2 to +2 for the degree of state intervention and from -1 to +2 for the *father-care sensitivity* (see Appendix 10 for details). Their visual representation shows that there are similarities among them (see Figure 20).⁹⁶

Proposals on the lower left corner of the graph score low on both axes; they reveal low state intervention and little consideration for father-targeted policies, following a liberal welfare regime orientation. These leave proposals are ***equality-impeding leaves*** (Brighouse & Wright, 2008) because their design implies that they will usually be used by mothers only.

⁹⁶ The combination of high *father-care-sensitivity* and low state intervention scores (upper left corner) does not exist, because according to the criteria established for the analysis, leave policies' gender equality depend on the existence of individual statutory rights—that is a high degree of state intervention.

Figure 20 - Scores of policy proposals according to the degree of state intervention and father-care-sensitivity



Notes: For the sake of clarity propositions that had the same scores on both axes were slightly shifted in order for them to be visible on the graph. See Appendix 10 for the detailed attribution of scores.

Among them, two interventions (nos. 13; 18) deposited by center and right-wing MPs propose to transform (part of) the existing maternity benefits into parental leave benefits. Although this leave would be paid, it is very unlikely that it would be shared because it implies a curtailing of mothers' existing rights. It does not propose an extension of policy programs and does not secure any leave length for fathers. These *substitution solutions* are equality-impeding because mothers' and fathers' rights are in competition with one another.

The recent parliamentary interventions (nos. 3; 4) which propose *private insurance solutions* based on voluntary savings were submitted by a Christian-Democratic MP and a Socialist MP. This leave model—hitherto unseen and not found in other countries⁹⁷—has integrated liberal principles which promotes the mix of private and public financing of welfare policies. These proposals score low on the state intervention axis as they target indistinctly mothers and fathers and propose a minimal participation of the state in the form of tax rebates. Here the preference for individual choice and responsibility, as well as for a limited state intervention is clearly

⁹⁷ In the 2013 FSIO report on parental and paternity leaves, a parallel is established between this model and that implemented between 2005 and 2011 in the Netherlands. In that country, the statutory parental leave of six months for each parent (to be taken part-time, or full-time if the employer agrees) is not paid. However, a tax-deductible individual savings system was implemented during this period, to be used for various purposes such as parental leave, sabbatical leave, dependent relative leave and pre-retirement leave. Currently individuals on parental leave are entitled to a tax reduction (Dulk, 2013).

observable. Furthermore, the *father-care-sensitivity* score is also low because fathers do not have a reserved period of leave unless they actively decide to capitalize for the parental leave insurance long in advance. Also, the fact that it is a private insurance based on individuals' own savings assimilates it to a form of unpaid leave, which is known to be scarcely used by men. In addition to this gendered effect, there is a class effect: mainly medium- to higher-class parents are encouraged to subscribe to this kind of insurance.⁹⁸

The lower right corner of the graph gathers proposals where the state is given more power to regulate leave policies, but which do not consider gender-equality issues, as would typically do a conservative welfare regime. It corresponds to *equality-enabling leaves* (Brighthouse & Wright, 2008) which, consist in general in generous paid parental leaves granted as family entitlements but which put no pressure on families to use them in a gender-equal way. Leave proposals in this group imply state intervention by proposing new statutory measures, but some aspects of their design make it unlikely that fathers will use them, unless they actively want to. For example, some of these proposals do not provide paid leaves, even though the leave (or part of it) is specifically targeted at men. This is the case for example of the three parliamentary interventions submitted by the center MP Barbara Schmid-Federer in 2008 (no. 14) and 2011 (nos. 1; 5) in favor of *unpaid solutions*. Two of them are in favor of an unpaid paternity leave of four weeks. The third one asks for the implementation of the EU Directive on parental leave, which— although it imposes one non-transferable month—does not guarantee the payment of the leave.

The other policy proposals in this category suggest implementing a parental leave; however, state intervention is limited because it concerns a limited part of the population. This was the case for Franziska Teuscher's 1999 parliamentary initiative in favor of an unpaid non-transferable parental leave of four months for employees of the confederation. The cantonal initiative (no. 12) in favor of a cantonal paid parental leave also proposes a limitation of the federal state's intervention, delegating this responsibility to cantons and targeting parents residing in specific cantons. Finally, state intervention and gender-equality scores are also average (0 on each axis) for the motion submitted in 2009 by the Liberal Hugues Hiltbold (no. 10) in favor of a two-weeks' paid parental leave. Although the leave is paid, it is neither generous (two weeks is a short leave) nor father-care-sensitive (leave is not targeted at fathers).

In the upper right corner of the graph are located leave proposals which score high on state intervention and *father-care-sensitivity* axes, following social-democratic welfare regime types of policies. These leave proposals are mainly submitted by left-wing and center MPs. These *equality-promoting* (Brighthouse & Wright, 2008) leave proposals are designed in a way which encourages men to take up the leave and which encourage a more egalitarian division of childcare work in the family. These leaves take the form of individual and non-transferable paid leaves for men and women. However, as Figure 20 shows, there are important differences between them. Actually, the majority do not promote substantially gender equality: several parliamentary interventions score quite low (0 point) on the father-care-sensitivity axis. This concerns for example the interventions (nos. 16; 17) in favor of paid paternity leaves at the level of cantons (nos. 16; 17). Although these *cantonal solutions* imply paid individual leave

⁹⁸ It is interesting to note that this policy solution would mainly benefit couples who plan childbearing intentions well in advance. One can hypothesize that this measure would also impact on childbearing behavior, possibly delaying them.

entitlements for fathers, they do not guarantee minimum leave lengths.⁹⁹ Furthermore, this solution would imply that considerable inequalities would arise among fathers across cantons of employment. Also low on the father-care-sensitivity axis are three proposals in favor of paid paternity leaves for a short period; i.e., one or two weeks only (nos. 8; 19 and no. 23). Four leave proposals provide fathers with extended leaves, of approximately one month (they score +1 on each axis). Two of them—from a center MP—propose *substitution solutions* using military benefits (no. 2; 9), with the major drawback that they are linked to citizenship, introducing this way inequalities based on nationality as well as on age. The other two proposals are *extension solutions* stemming from left-wing MPs (no. 6 and 7) which both guarantee one month of paid leave for fathers.

Only two propositions score the maximum on the *father-care sensitivity* axis, and challenge more substantially gender inequalities than do the other proposals in this group. Not only are they well-paid and earmarked for fathers, but they also considerably reduce the leave length differential between mothers and fathers. To this day, only one leave proposal aimed to entitle mothers and fathers with the same amount of leave. The Green MP Franziska Teuscher submitted in 2001—before the implementation of the LECA maternity benefits—a parliamentary initiative in favor of a two-month non-transferable paid parental leave for each parent (no. 21). This is remarkable as it is the only attempt by a member of parliament to implement a leave scheme which defines motherhood and fatherhood in an undifferentiated way. Once the federal statutory minimum of maternity benefits was set at 14 weeks, (3.5 months), Teuscher submitted another parliamentary intervention in 2006 in favor of a two months paid paternity leave (no. 20). Although this proposal does not define motherhood and fatherhood exactly in the same terms, the leave differential is far smaller than the other leave proposals in the *equality-promoting leave* group.

Evolution of policy proposals from 1998 to 2011

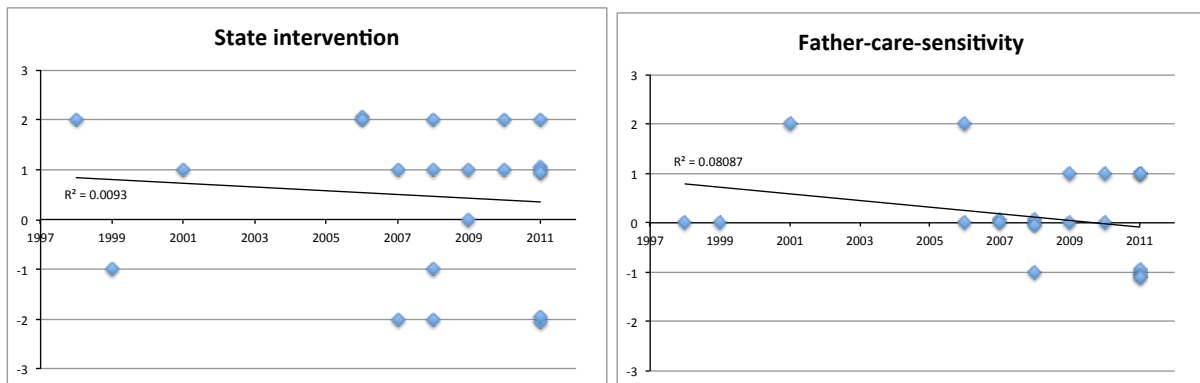
The analysis of the evolution of policy proposals and their scores on the two axis of analysis reveals a general downward trend. This can be observed with the regression lines represented on Figure 21. With time, MPs have tended to submit leave proposals which imply less state intervention and which are less *father-care sensitive*. The most progressive policy proposals with regard to gender equality and representations of motherhood and fatherhood were submitted at the beginning of the emergence of the issue on the political agenda. Since then—although many interventions have suggested implementing leave models with significant state intervention and targeting fathers—they have been more limited and less *father-care-sensitive*.

The progressive downgrading of the leave proposals should be put into perspective with the systematic negative recommendations of the Federal Council and of the majority of CSSH members against MPs' proposals. Furthermore, the political composition of the Parliament and power balance in favor of right-wing parties explains that more consensual and less far-reaching policy solutions are sought by political actors. This is a similar process as the one which took place with maternity insurance proposals. Another striking similarity between the political processes concerning maternity and parental leave policies is the fact that interparty proposals

⁹⁹ Leave lengths would be determined by the cantons, therefore these proposals were assigned (-1) point on the "length reserved for father" dimension as there is no indication of a minimum number of weeks for fathers.

tend to arise from the successive failures. I have mentioned that the LECA solution for maternity benefits stemmed from an interparty parliamentary intervention.

Figure 21 - Evolution of state intervention and father-care-sensitivity scores from 1998 to 2011



A similar strategy could be observed with the parliamentary interventions nos. 3 and 4, submitted respectively in the National Council by the Christian-democrat MP Norbert Hochreutener and in the Council of States by the Socialist MP Anita Fetz in favor of a *private insurance solution*. Both proposals are co-signed by MPs from other political factions such as The Greens, but also the Radical-Liberal and the Swiss People’s Party, usually opposed to leave policies. As mentioned in a previous section of this chapter, the idea of a *private insurance solution* actually stems from civil society (the national masculine and father association maenner.ch) and is the result of a common elaboration with the various MPs. This proposal was announced in a press conference before the Swiss Father’s Day (June 5th 2011) under the title: “Innovative, interparty and able to reach a majority: New proposition for a paternity leave and a parental leave”.¹⁰⁰

3.3. Discourse analysis of the dataset

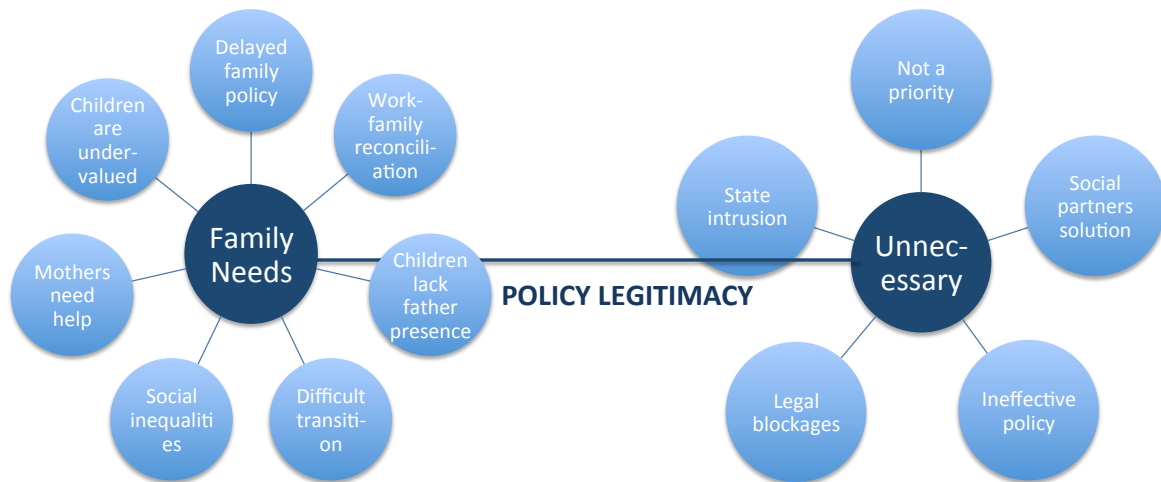
In the following section I present the discourse analysis of the leave proposals and of the text documents produced following their political treatment. The coding process of the data led to the identification of 26 different problematizations which either support or reject the idea of implementing statutory parental or paternity leave in Switzerland. It is possible to group them into three main discursive dimensions: 1) their policy legitimacy; 2) their economic aspect; 3) their implications for gender relations. These discursive dimensions structure the constructions of meanings about parental leave policies. Below, I describe them and highlight the underlying assumptions about the role of the state and about gender relations, as well as their potential effects (see Appendix 14 for a summary presentation of problematizations and their occurrence in the data).

¹⁰⁰ Innovatrice, interpartis et susceptible de réunir une majorité: Nouvelle proposition pour un congé paternité et un congé parental. Available at: http://www.maenner.ch/sites/default/files/communique_fr.pdf

Policy legitimacy of parental leave policies

Policy legitimacy is the main discursive dimension which structures policy proposals and debates about parental leave policies. There are two opposite discourses; the *family needs* discourse mobilized by those in favor of parental leave policies and the *unnecessary* discourse developed by opponents to leave policies.

Figure 22 - Policy legitimacy discursive dimension



In the *family needs* discourse, the different problematizations highlight the need there is in Switzerland for implementing parental leave policies. The current leave scheme is regarded as unsatisfactory. By European standards, the Swiss family policy is represented as lagging, a situation which requires policy change. Parental leave policies are also presented as legitimate because they improve the reconciliation of work and family life and ease the transition to parenthood. Further, fathers' access to statutory leave is justified by mothers' need for help after childbirth. Children are also represented as needing fathers' presence, which is said to be beneficial for their development and opportunities in life.

Delayed family policy

This problem representation presents Swiss family policies as being limited, in comparison with other countries. Its reduced leave scheme in particular makes Switzerland an outlier.

In comparison with other regulations in Europe, it is clear that Switzerland is lagging behind in this domain.¹⁰¹ (Report of the CSSH, position of the minority on Franziska Teuscher's 2006 parliamentary initiative)

The discretionary parental and paternity leaves negotiated by social partners are presented as unsatisfactory solutions. Supporters of parental leave policies refer to the EU Directive on parental leave policies and the OECD recommendation to implement parental leave policies as part of an economic strategy to support employment and work-family life reconciliation. This

¹⁰¹ En comparaison des autres réglementations en vigueur en Europe, la Suisse accuse un retard certain dans ce domaine. (P_06.448_IvPa_Teuscher_CSSH)

problem representation contributes to define parental leave policies as legitimate public issues which should be addressed by the government. However, considering Switzerland's distanced position toward the EU, the idea of exceptionalism is also valued in the Swiss political context. Comparing Switzerland with other countries in order to support policy change may not necessarily be perceived in a positive light by some political actors.

Work-family life reconciliation

The problem represented to be is that parental leave policies can contribute to ease work-family life reconciliation.

"It is necessary to improve the possibilities to reconcile professional and family life obligations, and the implementation of a real paternity leave would be a promising measure"¹⁰² (Postulate, Roger Nordmann, socialist, 2008).

The assumption is that men also face work-family life reconciliation difficulties, challenging the frequent representation which associates mothers in particular with this issue. Through this problematization, men's involvement in family life is addressed in the political sphere, with a more gender-equal and undifferentiated representation of parenthood. The origin of this problematization can be found in the increasing political acceptance in Switzerland in the last decade of the issue of work-family life reconciliation, as presented in Chapter II.¹⁰³ Linking parental leave policies to this issue could have positive consequence for its political acceptance and for constituting it as a legitimate policy. However, "work-family life reconciliation" is an issue which is undergirded by economic objectives, notably to activate female labor power (e.g., Silvera, 2010). And as the description of the *unnecessary* discourse will show, parental leave policies do not respond to this objective as clearly as childcare structures for example, and may therefore not contribute to its constitution into a legitimate public policy.

Children lack father presence

Parental leave policies are represented as potentially benefiting children, enabling parents—and fathers in particular—to be more present. The parent-child relation is considered very important for children's future development and chances in life. Some MPs also suggest that parental care and education can play a prevention role of children's and young adults' misbehavior on the long term.

It's important that the father can establish a relationship with his child from the very first days. If he sees his child only occasionally during the first weeks and that during this time he is mostly asleep, it's impossible that a real relationship is established.¹⁰⁴ (Motion, Barbara Schmid-Federer, Christian-democrat, 2011)

¹⁰² Il est nécessaire d'améliorer les possibilités de concilier les exigences de la vie professionnelle avec celles de la vie familiale, et l'introduction d'un véritable congé paternité constituerait une des mesures prometteuses. (P_08.3315_Po_Nordmann)

¹⁰³ For example, there was a political majority in favor of the introduction of a constitutional article supporting work-family life reconciliation. In its responses, the Federal Council repeatedly argues that it considers work-family life reconciliation a political priority.

¹⁰⁴ Il est important en outre que le père puisse établir une relation avec son enfant dès les premiers jours. Si, au cours des premières semaines, il ne voit son enfant qu'épisodiquement et que celui-ci est la plupart du temps endormi, il est impossible qu'une véritable relation se mette en place. (P_11.3361_Mo_Schmid-Federer)

This problem representation draws on expert discourse and vulgarized developmental psychology and psychoanalysis, which have influenced the discourse on early-childhood education and parenthood (Lupton & Barclay, 1997; Neyrand, 2002). This is observed through the use of specific vocabulary such as “development”, “relationship” and “bond” and the idea that the early-childhood period is determinant for future development. The effects of this problem representation are diverse. Children’s interests are problematized, which is a remarkable exception in comparison with the other problem representations. Problematizing children’s well-being could contribute to enhancing the legitimacy of parental leave policies.

In terms of gender relations, it is not clear on which assumptions the problem representation is based. Is father presence needed so that the child receives more attention (from two instead of only one person), or because it is a different kind of attention, a *paternal* one? Whereas the first interpretation would consider parental care—mothers’ and fathers’ indistinctly—as important for the child, the second interpretation would contribute to the reproduction of gendered parenthood. The latter assumption seems to be present in the representation of parental leave policies preventing children’s misbehavior, drawing on the traditional image of fathers as authoritative figures. Furthermore, homoparental and single-headed families are indirectly stigmatized in this problematization. Finally, by highlighting and valuing father presence, mother-presence is taken for granted, with the side effect of creating new gender inequalities in the family sphere (Deutsch & Saxon, 1998). The data does not allow a clear interpretation, and this problem representation as well as its potential effects for gender equality should be interpreted with caution.

Difficult transition

The problem represented to be is that the transition to parenthood is a difficult period; it is both stressful and tiring for the couple. The implementation of parental leave policies is presented as a way of easing this period by enabling both parents to have time to manage different tasks.

The arrival of a child in a family represents a moment of joy, but also a very emotional moment during which one has to overcome many difficulties, during the first few months of the child: sleepless nights, intensive care work [...] Paternity leave is a profitable investment, if you consider the prevention of future family difficulties and the costs they represent for society as whole.¹⁰⁵ (Motion, Roger Nordmann, socialist, 2006).

There are two variations of this problem representation, which are sometimes combined by MPs, as the quotation suggests. The first variation highlights the hard work entailed in childcare and the various activities that must be handled on the transition to parenthood. In terms of gender relations, it problematizes that childcare is hard work and that it should be shared by both parents. This contributes to value care work, traditionally silenced and taken for granted and to promote an equal division of tasks. Furthermore parental leave policies gain in legitimacy because their concrete necessity and use is expressed.

The second variation of the *difficult transition* problem representation is the suggestion that these difficulties could affect the couple relationship, and possibly lead to divorce. Based on

¹⁰⁵ L’arrivée d’un enfant dans une famille représente un moment de joie, mais aussi un moment très émotionnel pendant lequel il faut surmonter de nombreuses difficultés, lesquelles s’étendent du reste aux premiers mois de vie de l’enfant: nuits sans sommeil, soins particulièrement exigeants [...] Le congé-paternité constitue un investissement rentable, si on le mesure à l’aune de la prévention des difficultés familiales futures et des coûts que ces dernières engendrent pour la société dans son ensemble. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann)

political concerns about the regulation of society and inspired by family health and welfare expert discourse, this problematization draws on the fear of disruption of the traditional nuclear family and can be related to governments' objective to monitor the population (A. Gregory & Milner, 2011; Lupton & Barclay, 1997). Fathers' access to parental leave policies is presented as having a stabilizing effect for the couple, and preserving family stability, which can prevent further public expenses.

Social inequalities

Current leave schemes are represented as creating social inequalities among fathers. Fathers' access to paternity leaves and the leave length they are entitled to depend on their employers and on their work contracts. Furthermore, the fact that some companies entitle employees to take unpaid parental leave also creates inequalities between wealthy and less wealthy families.

Currently, in each canton, men do not have equal paternity leave rights; they are left to the goodwill of the social partners. This situation creates big differences between branches. It's a bit like: "Tell me where you work, I'll tell you which father you can be".¹⁰⁶ (Intervention of Liliane Maury Pasquier, socialist MP, during the parliamentary debate in the Council of States on the cantonal initiative submitted by the Canton of Geneva in 2008)

This problem representation is based on the principle of social justice and equality. The effect of this problem representation is to highlight unequal situations faced by men. However, it should be noted that this discourse is based on intrasex comparisons (between fathers), while intersex comparisons (between fathers and mothers) are very rarely mentioned. In terms of gender representations of parenthood, it reproduces the idea that motherhood and fatherhood are different and cannot be compared. Adopting an "intersex" comparative approach would reveal even greater disparities between men and women and reflect a more gender-equal approach to parenthood.

Mothers need help

The problem represented to be is that mothers who have given birth need help from their partner.

The father must be granted the possibility, on the birth of his child, to enter his new role, to support the mother, and if needed to help her care for the elder children. Responsibility of the education of children must be shared by both parents.¹⁰⁷ (Motion, Marianne Streiff-Feller, Christian-Democrat, 2010)

The underlying assumption of this problem representation is that mothers and fathers fundamentally have different responsibilities on the birth of the child. The subjectification effect of this problematization is that the mother is mainly responsible for the child and that the father is a temporary "helper". Indeed, this problem representation conveys the impression that the

¹⁰⁶ Or, à l'heure actuelle, dans chaque canton, les hommes ne sont pas égaux devant le congé-paternité, qui est laissé au bon vouloir des partenaires sociaux. Cette situation génère de grandes différences entre branches. C'est un peu: "Dis-moi où tu travailles, je te dirai quel père tu peux être" (P_08.330_Ivct_Geneve_Debat_CE)

¹⁰⁷ Le père doit avoir la possibilité, dès la naissance de son enfant, d'entrer dans son nouveau rôle, de soutenir la mère et, au besoin, de lui venir en aide pour la garde des enfants plus âgés. La responsabilité de l'éducation des enfants doit par ailleurs être partagée par les deux parents. (P_10.3700_Mo_Streiff-Feller)

help provided by fathers will be limited to the period of the leave. Although this problematization is based on the presupposition that childcare entails demanding work and that fathers should participate, it also suggests that mothers and fathers do not have the same parenting roles.

This problematization promotes the representation of a modified male-breadwinner model, where fathers have only a limited and secondary parental role in comparison with mothers. Fathers do not have an individual legitimacy to be granted a leave. It is only through their partners' need of help that they acquire it. This representation also plays against the idea of paternity leave being a fully legitimate public policy.

Children are undervalued

In this problematization, children's value for society is represented as not being sufficiently recognized. Implementing parental leave policies would symbolically acknowledge the importance of children and childrearing.

This measure would enable it at last to be acknowledged that having children is a contribution for one's homeland. Thus the latter are currently considered more as a burden than as the future of a nation. They are, however, the basis of our future prosperity.¹⁰⁸
(Motion, Luc Barthassat, Christian-Democrat, 2009)

This problem representation has the effect of valuing parents' childrearing work, defining it as a contribution to society and as a necessary condition for the country's future prosperity. It contributes to the representation of parental leave policies as legitimate policy issues. It is based on economical and demographical arguments, but it also has a strong nationalist dimension, as the quotation suggests. It echoes discourses identified in the middle of the 20th century in the political sphere about the development of family policies for the nationalist purposes.

Within the *family needs* discourse, the policy solutions proposed are to implement statutory parental or paternity leaves. Although there is no consensus on the length and payment of the proposed leaves, the state is defined as the actor who should take action. Even though the family needs discourse presents family models as changing towards more gender equality and that fathers are represented as having a role to play within the family, I identified many gendered assumptions about parenthood. For example, comparisons regarding access to parental leave policies continue to be driven by "intra-sex" and not "inter-sex" logics. This way differences between motherhood and fatherhood remain unchallenged. In the *family needs* discourse, fathers' role is often defined as secondary and temporary, while that of mothers' is taken for granted. A conservative and normative representation of the family is also identified. Parental leave policies are framed as instruments which enable the preservation of intact nuclear heterosexual families and their cohesive role for society. In some cases, the *family needs* discourse even revives nationalist concerns.

At the other pole of the *policy legitimacy* discursive dimension, opponents to parental leave policies develop an *unnecessary* discourse. They argue that there are legal and implementation

¹⁰⁸ Cette mesure permettrait de reconnaître enfin le fait d'avoir des enfants comme une contribution pour sa patrie. En effet, ces derniers sont actuellement plus considérés comme une charge que comme l'avenir d'une nation. Ils sont pourtant les fondements de notre prospérité future. (P_09.3943_Mo_Barthassat)

blockages to statutory parental leave policies and that they are ineffective and trivial family policy measures. The most dominant problematizations identified minimize the necessity and legitimacy of parental leave policies by arguing that they are not priority measures and that the current situation of negotiated and voluntary parental leave policies implemented at the level of companies and branches of activity are satisfactory.

Not a priority

The problem represented to be is that parental leave policies are not priority family policies. Other family policy measures are systematically advanced as having precedence: the reform of family taxation, the development of childcare structures and the promotion of flexible work schedules in companies. These measures are said to enable a better work-family life reconciliation than parental leave policies.

*The implementation of a paternity leave is not a priority from a social policy point of view. There are more essential domains within family policy which should be realized first.¹⁰⁹
(Response of the Federal Council to Roger Nordmann's motion, Socialist, submitted in 2006)*

It is also sometimes argued that because maternity insurance was implemented only recently, it is too early to extend the circle of recipients to fathers for example. This representation of the proposal as having a “bad timing” was also observed in 1980s debates about maternity and parental leave, so as their sidelining on the basis of their definition as having “less priority” than other measures (Mayor Genevay, 2005, pp. 70-84). This problem representation silences the fact that the definition of political priorities is a social construction and the result of power relations. It is also based on the assumption that family policies are mutually exclusive and that a selection should be made among them.

It is founded on the presupposition that family policies should all achieve the same objective: a better work-family life reconciliation. Other potential policy objectives such as the reduction of poverty or gender equality are silenced while work-family life reconciliation is set as a standard of evaluation of policies. It is interesting to note that policies which are defined as “priority” all seem to be oriented towards activating workers on the labor market. This indicates that within the political definition of what are “priority” and “secondary” family policies, are nested economic interests.

Social-partner solution

In this problematization, it is argued that parental leave policies should best be negotiated by social partners; i.e., organizations representing employers and employees. It is argued that no legal amendments are needed and that a legal basis for employers to implement parental leave policies already exists within the Swiss Code of Obligations (CO). This problem representation is frequently identified in the Federal Council's recommendations and the CSSH's reports. The existing—yet heterogeneous and limited—work regulations and collective agreements about parental leave policies are invoked in order to reject on principle the intervention of the state in that matter.

¹⁰⁹ L'introduction d'un congé-paternité n'est de surcroît pas prioritaire d'un point de vue de politique sociale; il faut d'abord réaliser des chantiers plus essentiels de la politique familiale. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_CF)

Considering that companies already have the possibility of granting their employees a leave on the birth of their child, the committee deems preferable that this question continues to be discussed and regulated by the social partners themselves.¹¹⁰ (Report of the CSSH, position of the majority on Roger Nordmann's 2006 motion)

This implies that the responsibility is delegated to other actors considered more legitimate, i.e., the market and the social partners. This discourse draws on liberal welfare regime cultural values, as well as on those characterizing conservative-corporatist welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). As mentioned in Chapter I, social partnership is characteristic of the Swiss welfare state development and of its industrial relations (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 25-26; Mach & Trampusch, 2011).

This problem representation silences in my view many issues. First, the fact that the CO does not provide employees with a statutory right to parental leave rights. Secondly that there are no state incentives for employers to implement parental leaves. Thirdly, that unions do not represent all employed workers (only half of employed workers are covered by a collective labor agreement in Switzerland (Oesch, 2012)) and that there are power differentials between trade unions and employers' unions. Fourthly, parental leave policies are not necessarily regarded as social policy priorities by all trade unions and might therefore not even be demanded by them.¹¹¹ Finally, this problematization does not take into account the fact that since the 1980s, the trend in Switzerland has been for trade unions to prioritize and lobby in favor of public policy solutions and not private schemes (Trampusch, 2010). Therefore, while social partners are designated as the legitimate actors to regulate parental leave policies, this is not the preferred solution of trade unions.

Ineffective policy

The problem represented to be is that parental leave policies are ineffective for the objectives they were said to achieve. This is the case for example when opponents to parental leave policies question their influence on gender equality, fertility rates, work-family life reconciliation or the father-child relationship, as the following quotation suggests.

Do not believe that it is thanks to a paid paternity leave we will all of a sudden completely modify relations between fathers and their children.¹¹² (Intervention of the Liberal Federal Councilor Didier Burkhalter during the parliamentary debate on Roger Nordmann's 2008 postulate)

The underlying assumption of this problematization is that parental leave policies do not fulfill the declared objectives and are therefore inefficient. A similar problematization was observed in

¹¹⁰ Enfin, considérant que les entreprises ont déjà et de toute façon la possibilité d'accorder un congé à leurs employés à la naissance d'un enfant, la commission trouve préférable que cette question continue d'être discutée et réglée par les partenaires sociaux eux-mêmes. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_CSSS)

¹¹¹ For example, while Travail.Suisse is very active in bringing forward parental leave policies in the political sphere (as presented in the previous section), the main umbrella labour union in Switzerland (the Confederation of Swiss Unions) does not similarly invest in the issue. This difference may be due to the fact that Travail.Suisse mainly represents skilled service-sector employees, and may therefore be more prone to support work-family life reconciliation measures. By contrast, more traditional unions mainly representing male workers, which, as suggested by Häusermann, represent the "old left" (Häusermann, 2006b, p. 9), may be more impregnated with the male breadwinner family model and mainly focused on redistribution issues.

¹¹² Il ne faut pas croire que c'est avec un congé-paternité payé que nous allons tout à coup modifier fondamentalement les relations entre les pères et leurs enfants. (P_08.3315_Po_Nordmann_Debats_CN)

the 1980s debates when parental leave was represented as not solving adequately the work-family life reconciliation problem (Dafflon, 2003, pp. 250-251). The effect of this problem representation is to put into question the legitimacy and necessity of the measure altogether.

Legal blockages

The problem represented to be is that there is no Constitutional basis for the implementation of federal statutory parental or paternity leave, contrary to maternity leave.

The Federal Council rejects the idea of a similar paternity leave for a reason of principle. The legislator did not receive a constitutional mandate which obliges him to implement a paternity leave in the form of an insurance, contrary to maternity leave.¹¹³ (Response of the Federal Council to Roger Nordmann's 2006 motion)

The effect of this problematization is that parental leave policies are excluded from the realm of the legitimate sphere of action of the Federal state. The implementation of such policies can therefore be rejected on principle and the status quo preserved. This problematization is anchored in the Swiss political system and federal governance, which implies, as described in Chapter I, that the role of the state is subsidiary and that its sphere of intervention and responsibility is defined in the federal Constitution (e.g., Obinger et al., 2005). However, it silences the fact that first, the constitutional basis could be extended, and secondly that in the past, the federal state has already intervened without a clear constitutional basis (e.g., ECEC impulse program).

State intrusion

In this problematization, family organization is represented as a private matter, which should not be regulated by policies and which should not trigger social expenses.

We argue that family life and children are private issues and do not concern the state. [...] Who needs whom and when in a family should not be settled by politics. It is a private matter, because it is a choice of life style.¹¹⁴ (Intervention by the Liberal MP Urs Schweizer during the parliamentary debate held Roger Nordmann's 2006 motion)

The underlying assumption is that parental leave policies are measures which force men (and women) into specific roles that are not necessarily wished for by individuals. Men are represented as already having the possibility of investing time in childcare—for example by using their vacation and free time—but as not necessarily wanting to do so. The presupposition of this problematization is that individuals are actors who should be free to decide what kind of parents they want to be.

The effect of this problematization is to define fathering as a private issue, dependent only on individual decisions and preferences. This problematization is anchored in the principle of state

¹¹³ Le Conseil fédéral rejette l'idée d'un congé-paternité analogue pour des raisons de principe. Le législateur n'a pas reçu de mandat constitutionnel l'obligeant à introduire un congé-paternité sous la forme d'une assurance, à la différence du congé-maternité. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_CF)

¹¹⁴ Doch halten wir fest: Familienleben und Kinderwunsch sind private Angelegenheiten und nicht Sache des Staates. [...] Wer denn wen und wann in der Familie nötig hat, ist keine Abwägung von Interessengütern, welche die Politik zu regeln hat. Das ist Privatsache, weil eine Frage der zu wählenden Lebensform. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_Debat_1_CN_2)

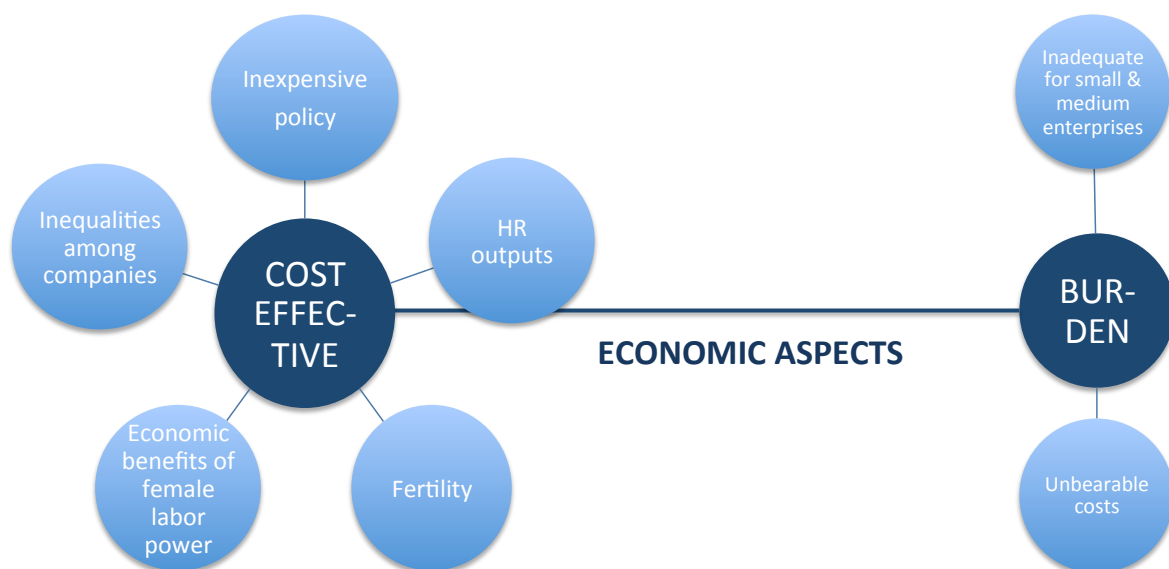
non-intervention in private matters, which has been strong since the development of the welfare state in Switzerland, particularly as regards family policies, as mentioned in Chapter I (e.g., Dafflon, 2003). This problem representation silences the fact that men’s and women’s behavior are anyway constrained and influenced by existent as well as non-existent public policies. Representing the division of work within family life as private matters has the effect of ignoring the structural constraints on individuals and keeping the *status quo*.

The proposed solution within the *unnecessary* discourse is that the regulation of parental leave policies should be left to the social partners. The legitimate actors are thus work organizations, trade unions and employers’ associations, who should negotiate collective agreements integrating parental leave policies. In a minority of cases leave policies are considered unnecessary in any form, because fathers are regarded as already being able to take time off through annual leave (see the “state intrusion” problem representation). The *unnecessary* discourse mainly adopts the point of view of employers, while silencing the unequal power relations which constrain employees. It is supported by the tradition in Switzerland to have a strong social partnership. Furthermore, drawing on strongly anchored liberal and individual responsibility values, state intervention is presented as too intrusive in family organization. The sexual division of work within families is considered as reflecting the couple’s preferences and as being part of the private sphere. These assumptions silence the structural constraints faced by families in their everyday organization and their gendered consequences.

Economic aspects of parental leave policies

The *economic aspects* of parental leave policies is the second most frequent discursive dimension observed. Parental leave policies are either represented as a *burden*, or as being *cost-effective* (Figure 23).

Figure 23 - Economic aspects discursive dimension



The *cost-effective* discourse represents parental leave policies as having positive outputs for human resource management at the level of work organizations, by increasing productivity and attracting highly skilled workers. Leave supporters also argue that parental leave policies contribute to increase fertility rates and female participation in the labor force, and therefore that they have positive macroeconomic consequences.

Inexpensive policy

Leave proposals are represented as being affordable, as not necessarily entailing an increase of public expenses and therefore being easily implemented. It is for example argued that financial resources are available or that the LECA fund can bear additional costs.

The savings realized by employers thanks to the implementation of a maternity leave should enable without any problem these very same employers to finance a paternity leave through an insurance system.¹¹⁵ (Intervention of the socialist MP Liliane Maury Pasquier during parliamentary debate on Roger Nordmann's 2006 motion)

Supporters of a *cantonal solution*, of a *private insurance solution* or of a *substitution solution* highlight the fact that their proposal will be cost-neutral. The effect of this problematization is to present parental leave policies as affordable and reasonable measures. However, it silences the fact that financially neutral policies often entail negative consequences in terms of gender and class inequalities. Again, the necessity to present parental leave policies as cost-effective policies finds its origin in the liberal orientation of the Swiss welfare state. It also echoes with the analysis of the debates which took place in the 1990s about maternity leave where financing issues occupied a central place in the debates (Pannatier, 2000).

HR outputs

In this problematization, working parents are represented as less productive and more likely to be absent from work when they are under stress. Parental leave policies can contribute to lower the stress they experience. Parental leave policies are also said to increase the chances of attracting highly skilled workers. This argument is observed in favor of statutory leave policies, when comparing the Swiss labor market with that of neighboring countries. This problematization is also identified about negotiated or voluntary leave entitlements adopted by some companies—especially in the public sector—which enable them to compete with others. Parental leave policies are therefore represented as enabling advantages for the economy and for the labor market at large.

Several companies are sympathetic to this demand; they probably know the study published by McKinsey in 2007, which proves that the economic performance of a company increases when it enables its employees – both men and women – to have a balanced life and considers their well-being.¹¹⁶ (Postulate, Franziska Teuscher, The Greens, 2008)

¹¹⁵ Les économies réalisées par les employeurs suite à l'introduction d'un congé-maternité devraient d'ailleurs permettre sans problème à ces mêmes employeurs de financer un congé-paternité par le biais d'une assurance. (P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_Debat_1_CN_2)

¹¹⁶ Diverses entreprises font montre de compréhension envers cette revendication; elles connaissent probablement l'étude publiée par McKinsey en 2007, qui prouve que l'efficacité économique d'une entreprise augmente lorsque

The effect of this problematization is to enhance the legitimacy of parental leave policies from an economic perspective. However, when it concerns the positive effects of social-partner solution leave entitlements, it minimizes their legitimacy as statutory leaves. As the quotation suggests, the problematization draws on the organizational literature which supports the business case of work-family life reconciliation measures and parental leave policies in particular. Highlighting the labor market's interests is a key strategy in the Swiss context where the economic lobby is a strong political actor. However, the risk of this problem representation is that parental leave policies as political demands are only assessed through the lens of productivity and efficiency for the economy. This implies that employees' interests and gender-equality effects risk being silenced when policy proposals are evaluated.

Fertility

This problem representation presents parental leave policies as influencing positively fertility rates. The underlying assumption is that fertility rates are too low and that it is a problem for the balance of social insurances.

The objective is to support childbearing and to create incentives and to promote families. When you look at the age pyramid and the situation of the pension fund, it's actually also in the interest of the country to support childbearing.¹¹⁷ (Intervention of the socialist MP Erwin Jutzet during the parliamentary debate on his 1998 motion)

This problem representation is based on causal relationships between parental leave policies, work-family life reconciliation and fertility behavior. Again, this problematization entails some risks for the legitimacy of parental leave policies, because if the chain of causal relationships is contested—as is the case in the *ineffective* problem representation—parental leave policies lose legitimacy. Also the problematization shifts the attention from parental leave policies to other social problems such as low fertility rates in Switzerland and the negative balance of the pension insurance. In terms of gender relations and gender equality, the *fertility* problematization does not directly challenge conservative representations of gender relations. It is, however, indirectly suggested that supporting work-family life reconciliation for both men and women will have positive consequences on fertility behavior.

Economic benefits of female labor power

Women represent an important labor force whose participation in the labor market is limited by their family obligations. Parental leave policies are represented as measures which can decrease the risk of women's exit of the labor market or anticipate their return to work. The assumption is that parental leave policies increase gender-equal practices in the couple, which in turn encourage women to return to work.

celle-ci permet à ses collaborateurs - hommes comme femmes - d'avoir une vie équilibrée et pense à leur bien-être global. (P_08.3953_Po_Teuscher)

¹¹⁷ Das einzig Gemeinsame sind das Fördern des Kinderhabens, das Schaffen von Anreizen, die Familienförderung. Wenn man die Alterspyramide und unsere AHV betrachtet, ist es eigentlich auch im Landesinteresse, das Kinderhaben zu fördern. (P_98.3043_Mo_Jutzet_Debat_CN)

The only argument against the implementation of a paternity leave is its high cost. This argument does not take into account the advantages of paternity leave. This leave encourages a partnership division of tasks between men and women, which facilitates the integration of the latter in working life; this way they do not lose their qualifications or their professional experience.¹¹⁸ (Postulate, Franziska Teuscher, The Greens, 2008)

The effect of this problem representation is to present parental leave policies as being cost-effective and as presenting advantages for the economy. As the quotation suggests, it is the labor-market participation of (highly) skilled women in particular which is represented as being fostered by parental leave policies. This problematization has some positive effects in terms of gender equality. First, the labor-market integration of mothers is presented as something desirable. Secondly, the role played by the sexual division of work at home and by men's involvement in family chores on women's labor-market participation is problematized. However, the risk of this problem representation is that gender-equal relations in the family are not represented *per se* as important or desirable, but are only supported because they have positive consequences for the economy.

The backdrop to this problem representation is the increasing concern, within the Swiss political sphere, with work-family life reconciliation, in particular with measures which support mothers' wage work. As mentioned in Chapter I, since 2000 Switzerland has witnessed increasing support (in particular from liberal MPs and business organizations) for family policies which promote mothers' employment (Häusermann, 2006b; Häusermann & Kübler, 2010; Kübler, 2007). This trend can also be put into perspective with mechanisms in European and Latin American welfare states where policy measures are envisaged through their potential for economic growth, at the expense of gender-equality objectives (Jenson, 2009).

Inequalities among companies

The problem represented to be is that the current leave scheme situation disadvantages small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). It is argued that only a parental or paternity leave in the form of a social insurance would guarantee a fair situation between large companies and SMEs. The latter ones are depicted as not being able to compete with large companies for highly qualified work force because they are not able to finance voluntarily implemented paternity and parental leaves.

Workplaces in Switzerland could lose their attractiveness in the eyes of young highly qualified employees because of bad working conditions for families, compared with the EU. This could result in the fact that large companies grant increasingly more benefits for young families [...]. As small and medium companies often do not have the means to grant similar benefits, it is indispensable that the Confederation takes measures, at least in the name of equality of opportunities.¹¹⁹ (Interpellation, Christian-Democrat MP, Barbara Schmid-Federer, 2011)

¹¹⁸ Le seul argument avancé contre la mise en place d'un congé de paternité est son coût trop élevé. Cet argument néglige cependant les avantages du congé de paternité. Un tel congé favorise en effet la répartition partenariale des tâches entre les hommes et les femmes, ce qui facilite l'intégration de ces dernières dans le monde du travail; elles ne perdent ainsi ni leurs qualifications ni leur expérience professionnelle. (P_08.3953_Po_Teuscher)

¹¹⁹ Les places de travail en Suisse pourraient perdre en attractivité aux yeux des jeunes employés hautement qualifiés du fait des mauvaises conditions pour les familles en Suisse, comparativement à l'UE. Cela aurait pour conséquence que les grandes entreprises offrent de plus en plus de prestations supplémentaires pour les jeunes familles [...]. Comme les PME n'ont très souvent pas les moyens nécessaires pour offrir de telles prestations, il est indispensable

This problem representation adopts the perspective of SMEs and highlights the advantages a social insurance would represent for them. This problematization has the effect of contesting the representation that parental leave policies are ill-adapted for SMEs. On the contrary it represents them as particularly favorable for them, as it reduces the disadvantages they face in comparison with large companies. This problematization shows the importance of the economic lobby in Swiss politics and of SMEs in particular. The central place the SMEs' interests occupy in the political sphere echoes with their powerful role played in the adoption of a maternity insurance, as previously described in this chapter.

The *cost-effective discourse* is mainly mobilized in favor of state-regulated parental leave policies, defining the state as the legitimate actor to take action. However, it is also identified in the support of company-level discretionary parental leave policies, where the labor market and companies are defined as the legitimate actors to regulate parental leave policies. The *cost-effective* discourse is therefore somewhat ambiguous and particular attention should be paid to its consequences for the legitimacy of statutory parental leave policies.

At the other extreme of the *economic aspects* discursive dimension, the *burden* discourse suggests that the costs of parental leave policies would be unbearable for Switzerland, especially because of the tight financial situation of social insurances. Statutory parental leave policies are also said to be inadequate for the labor market's flexibility needs, in particular for SMEs. The solution proposed is to maintain the current situation and to encourage social partners to negotiate parental leave policies.

Unbearable costs

The problem represented to be is the tight situation of social insurances and public finances in general. Reference to financial problems and crisis is also made by the CSSH, suggesting that the current situation prevents any additional social expenses. Financing problems and increases in contributions are already expected to occur; any supplementary expenses are therefore presented as "threats" to the stability of finances. This problematization opposes the *inexpensive policy* proposed by leaves supporters.

A new 20-day leave for each parent and taken for example in one block would represent approximately 400 million francs extra costs per year. In this case it would be needed to raise again the current contribution rate. The Federal Council judges such a measure inappropriate in the current context of social insurances whose financial balance is threatened.¹²⁰ (Response from the Federal Council to the motion submitted in 2010 by the socialist MP Roger Nordmann)

The underlying assumption of this problem representation is that parental leave policies are not worth public spending. It is connected with the *not a priority* problematization described above.

que la Confédération prenne rapidement des mesures, ne serait-ce qu'au nom de l'égalité des chances. (P_11.4060_Ip_Schmid-Federer)

¹²⁰ Un nouveau congé de 20 jours, octroyé à chaque parent et pris, par exemple, en une seule tranche engendrerait ainsi des coûts supplémentaires d'environ 400 millions de francs par an. Dans ce cas, il serait nécessaire de relever à nouveau le taux de cotisation actuel. Le Conseil fédéral juge inopportune une telle mesure dans le contexte actuel des assurances sociales dont l'équilibre financier est menacé. (P_10.4117_Mo_Nordmann_CF)

Similarly, it is suggested that a better moment in the future would be more appropriate; however, no concrete time frame or specifications are proposed. The effect of this problem representation is that any proposition in favor of parental leave policies which causes increased expenditure is considered impossible and is rejected on principle. It is probable that this problematization encouraged leave supporters to make leave proposals which entail no additional costs. However, *unpaid* and *private insurance solutions* have—as previously noted—negative consequences for gender equality.

Inadequate for small and medium-sized enterprises

Parental leave policies are represented as inadequate policies for SMEs. It is argued that because SMEs have fewer employees than large companies, they cannot manage their absence as easily as them and do not have comparable financial means to cope with temporary absences. This problem representation also presents parental leave policies as jeopardizing the Swiss labor-market flexibility, as the following quotation suggests.

Is it necessary and timely to inscribe in the law and make obligatory the model of parental leave and allowance elaborated by the Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs [...] The majority of the commission deems it is not; it thinks that the current dispositive which enables solutions with social partners has, overall, proven to be efficient and that the flexibility of the Swiss labor market should not be compromised by imposing fixed regulations.¹²¹ (Intervention of the Liberal MP Ignazio Cassis, reporting the majority position of the CSSH during the parliamentary debate on The Greens' parliamentary initiative submitted in 2011)

This problem representation rests on the assumption that SMEs cannot endure the same constraints as large companies. This is a potentially powerful problematization. First, as the Swiss labor market is mainly made up of SMEs, it implies that the whole labor market is compromised. Secondly, the discourse is supported by the Union for Crafts and SMEs, which is a powerful political actor, as previously noted.

This problem representation silences the fact that currently SMEs already manage the absence of male employees, due to the annual military training courses many are obliged to attend. As a consequence of this problematization, absence from work for childcare purposes is represented as less legitimate than for military service reasons. Also silenced is the fact that companies manage the absence of female employees who go on maternity leave. Here again, intersex comparisons would provide a more challenging approach to parenthood and of its constitution in the work environment. In terms of gender relations, this suggests that male employees' absence is more problematic than that of female employees, which are by extension presented as employees of less value.

Overall, the *economic aspects* discursive dimension occupies a central place in the way parental leave policies are problematized in the Swiss political sphere. While it is clear that leave opponents mobilize the discourse of *economic burden*, it is worth noting that the economic language is also used to support leave policies, as the *cost-effective* discourse illustrates. I argue

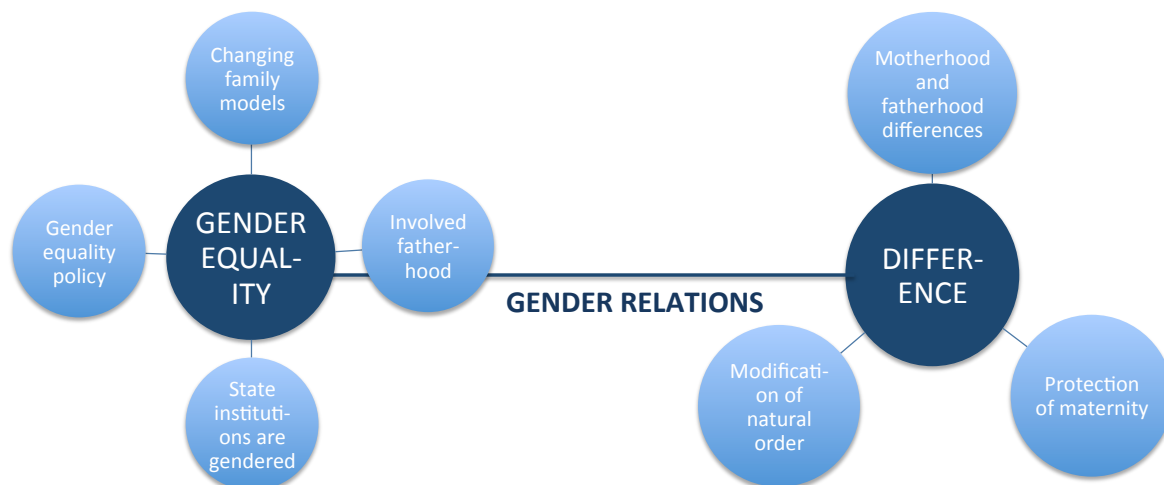
¹²¹ Est-il nécessaire et opportun d'inscrire dans la loi et de rendre obligatoire le modèle de congé parental et d'allocation parentale élaboré par la Commission fédérale de coordination pour les questions familiales [...] La majorité de la commission estime que non; elle estime que le dispositif actuel qui prévoit des solutions avec les partenaires sociaux s'est, dans l'ensemble, révélé efficace et qu'il ne faut pas compromettre la flexibilité du marché du travail suisse en imposant des réglementations fixes. (P_11.405_IvPa_Les Verts_Debat_CN)

that there are two main consequences to these results. First, the centrality of economic discourses entails the risk for parental leave policy proposals to be evaluated mainly according to their economic aspects and not according to gender-equality issues. Secondly, because the *cost-effective* discourse also supports *social-partner solutions* and not only statutory leave policies, this could play against the construction of parental leave policies as legitimate statutory measures.

Gender relations and parental leave policies

Gender relations represents the third discursive dimension and is comparatively the least identified one in the data. Two discourses oppose each other: the *gender-equality* and *difference* discourses (see Figure 24). The *gender-equality* discourse—which presents parental leave policies as enabling a more equal division of work between men and women—is most often observed while the *difference* discourse is rarely mobilized by leave opponents. In the *gender-equality* discourse, current policies are presented as ill-adapted to changing family models, which are said to be growing closer to a gender-equal model.

Figure 24 - Gender relations discursive dimension



Gender-equality policy

The problem represented to be is that gender equality in the family is not achieved. Parental leave policies are represented as fostering an equal division of work between men and women. The necessity to implement policy incentives which encourage father involvement in childcare is highlighted. Advantages of these policies for women's integration on the labor market are also emphasized. The current situation of voluntary and negotiated parental leave policies is represented as unsatisfactory.

In order to foster and support the participation of the latter [fathers] in childcare, parental leave and parental benefits should be public allowances, part of the family policy measures, and should not be left to the employers.¹²² (Parliamentary initiative, The Greens, 2011)

The assumption of this problematization is that gender-equality objectives should be pursued through the intervention of the state. It also problematizes the fact that social-partner solutions do not make it possible to achieve gender equality in the family. The effect of this problem representation is to present the state as an active actor of gender equality in the private sphere and as being legitimately in charge of promoting it.

Changing family models

In this problematization, policies are depicted as no longer being adapted to the current family organization in Switzerland. Women are represented as continuing to be active in the labor market after the transition to parenthood and fathers are represented as more active in childcare and education, or as willing to be.

Whether you want it or not, the natural evolution of Swiss society implies that on the one hand, women increasingly reach high ranked positions and on the other hand men, young fathers in particular, invest more in family life, notably with the education of their children.¹²³ (Intervention of the Green MP Antonio Hodgers during the parliamentary debate on his 2008 parliamentary initiative)

The underlying assumption is that the “male-breadwinner” model which assigns men to the occupational sphere and women to the family sphere is no longer dominant in Swiss society; it has been replaced by a more gender-equal model. Parental leave policies are represented as modern policies, adapted to this new family model. The effect of this problem representation is to present existing policies as ill-adapted to the current practices and to suggest that policies constrain the desires and the current practices of families. This problematization presents parental leave policies as options that should be made available for parents; it echoes with a liberal political philosophy which considers individuals as free actors.

Involved fatherhood

The problem is represented to be that fathers are involved parents who are not taken into account by existing policies. Fathers are represented as willing to be more involved, but as being prevented from it because of state policies or because of their working life. In fewer cases, fathers are represented as being already involved fathers.

¹²² Pour encourager et soutenir la participation de ces derniers [les pères] à la prise en charge des enfants en bas âge, il faut que le congé parental et l'allocation parentale soient des prestations publiques, relevant de la politique familiale, et qu'elles ne soient pas laissées au soin des entreprises. (P_11.405_IvPa_Les Verts)

¹²³ Qu'on le veuille ou non, l'évolution naturelle de la société suisse fait que, d'une part, les femmes accèdent de plus en plus souvent à des postes à responsabilité et, d'autre part, les hommes, les jeunes pères notamment, s'investissent davantage dans la vie de famille, notamment par l'éducation des enfants. (P_08.430_IvPa_Hodgers_Debats_CN)

Fathers would like to have a more active role in the family. They do not want just to fight for child custody when the family has fallen apart. They want take on an active role.¹²⁴ (Intervention of the socialist MP Jacqueline Fehr during the parliamentary debate on Franziska Teuscher's 2006 parliamentary initiative)

This problem representation draws on the cultural image of “new fatherhood” which represents men as being involved in care work from their child’s birth—not only with grown-ups and not only in play activities. On the one hand, this problem representation has a positive gender-equality effect because it challenges the stereotypical representations which oppose men and care activities. On the other hand, the diffusion of the image of “new fatherhood” has been said to be misleading, because it silences the fact that concretely, *practices* remain extremely gendered (Devreux, 2005; LaRossa, 1988). However, this problematization contributes to the constitution of the lack of parental leave policies as a public problem, because it presents involved fatherhood, and by extension parental leave policies, as a desire stemming from fathers. Representing men’s parenting behavior as constrained by existing state policies draws here again on the well anchored liberal ideology of individual freedom. It also contests the problem representation that parental leave policies impose undesired behaviors (the *state intrusion* problematization).

State institutions are gendered

The lack of parental leave policies is represented as resulting in the gendered assignment of parenting roles. State institutions are represented as excluding fathers. First, inequalities in terms of *access* to parental leave rights are highlighted and presented as a discrimination and a violation of the principle of gender equality. Secondly, the *effects* of the gendered policies on the sexual division of childcare tasks are also problematized; for example the fact that women perform the bulk of childcare tasks.

In order to avoid that childcare remains a simple “women’s issue” and to foster the implementation of partnership solutions between men and women, it is necessary that fathers and mothers benefit from a parental leave. For nine couples out of ten who have children under fifteen, it is women who take on the majority of domestic and educational tasks.¹²⁵ (Parliamentary initiative, Franziska Teuscher, The Greens, 1999)

In terms of gender equality, this problem representation highlights the influence of structures—in the form of family policies and leave policies in particular—on individuals’ behavior and on the gender division of unpaid work. It sets gender equality in the family as a political objective and defines the state as the legitimate actor to intervene. More generally, it problematizes the social construction of what is considered “private” and “public” and the blurred frontier between them. This problematization finds its origin in the feminist political movement which claim that so-called private issues are political (e.g., Gal, 2002, p. 78).

¹²⁴ Die Väter wünschen sich eine aktivere Rolle in der Familie. Sie möchten nicht erst dann, wenn die Familie auseinandergebrochen ist, ums Sorgerecht kämpfen, sondern sie möchten schon vorher eine aktive Rolle übernehmen. (P_06.448_IvPa_Teuscher_Debat_CN)

¹²⁵ Pour éviter que la garde des enfants reste une simple “affaire de femmes” et pour faire en sorte que des solutions fondées sur le partenariat entre hommes et femmes puissent voir le jour, il faut que les pères et les mères bénéficient d’un congé parental. Car, dans neuf couples sur dix qui ont des enfants de moins de quinze ans, ce sont les femmes qui assument la plupart des tâches ménagères et éducatives. (P_99.434_IvPa_Teuscher)

Within the *gender-equality* discourse, the solution proposed is to modify gendered state institutions by implementing statutory parental leave policies accessible to men. The legitimate actor to take action is defined as the state, which is considered partly responsible for the gendered division of work adopted by families. At the opposite pole of the *gender relations* discursive dimension, there is the *difference* discourse. This discourse is only rarely identified. It is based on essentialist representations of motherhood and fatherhood, which justify the claim to maintain a gendered access to statutory leaves.

Motherhood and fatherhood differences

The problem represented to be is that mothers and fathers cannot be treated on the same grounds (and therefore be granted equivalent leaves) because motherhood and fatherhood are different.

In addition, it [the Committee for Social Security and Health] considers that paternity leave cannot be compared with paid maternity leave because the situation of the mother after childbirth is different than that of the father. Moreover, this is the reason why women who have given birth cannot work for pay during the eight weeks after childbirth.¹²⁶ (Report of the CSSH on the parliamentary initiative of Franziska Teuscher submitted in 2006)

This problematization is based on physiological differences between mothers and fathers in the reproductive process, such as pregnancy, childbirth and breastfeeding. The assumption is that physiological differences in the reproductive process prevent any intersex comparisons between mothers and fathers. Rejecting on principle the comparison of the two sexes is what enables leave opponents to justify gendered access to leaves. This problem representation illustrates the (re-)production of difference between members of the sex categories and the organization of unequal social relations between them, on the basis of this difference. This problematization therefore contributes to the social process of gendering of parenthood. Mothers are simultaneously excluded from paid work during the eight weeks after delivery (through the job ban in the EmpA) and assigned the exclusive responsibility of childcare work (through their sole entitlement to the LECA). Leave opponents advocate in favor of the *status quo* on the basis of the distinction between the categories “mothers” and “fathers”.

This problematization also follows the idea of institutional “path dependency” (Obinger, 1998), which implies that past decisions and existing social policies orient their further development while excluding the possibility of alternative orientations.

Protection of maternity

Maternity leave and its objectives of maternity protection are represented as being jeopardized by parental leave proposals. Such problematization is identified as a response to *substitution solutions* which propose the extension or redistribution of existing LECA benefits to fathers.

The Federal Council also rejects the project of creating more flexibility for fathers after the birth of a child in the form of a parental leave which would enable parents to share freely

¹²⁶ À ses yeux, en outre, un congé de paternité ne saurait être comparé au congé de maternité payé, car la situation de la mère après l'accouchement est différente de celle du père. C'est d'ailleurs la raison pour laquelle les accouchées ne peuvent être occupées durant les huit semaines qui suivent l'accouchement. (P_06.448_IvPa_Teuscher_CSSH)

among them, with some restrictions, the time granted by maternity leave to care for the child. Models of this kind will empty from its substance the protection of maternity currently in force.¹²⁷ (Response of the Federal Council to the motion submitted in 2010 by the Christian-Democrat MP Marianne Streiff-Feller)

Chapter II has established that such leave models indeed have negative consequences for gender equality, and that *substitution solutions* would represent concrete losses for women. However, from a discourse analysis perspective, this problem representation entails gendered assumptions about parenthood and silences the fact that maternity leave defines parenthood in an essentialized way. It rests on the idea that through statutory maternity leave, the state is protecting mothers. However, as mentioned previously, maternity leave is defined not only as a health measure, but also as a childcare measure. On the one hand, it is clear that the rest needed after childbirth is specific to mothers and that curtailing their leave rights in order to redistribute it to fathers would represent a loss. However, childcare tasks could potentially also concern fathers. Therefore, this problem representation assimilates childbirth with childcare tasks and assigns this responsibility to mothers only. It is also based on the assumption that resting and providing intensive childcare are compatible activities. The consequence of this problematization is that under cover of “the protection of women’s interests” the state maintains gendered policies and gendered sexual division of work. Such mechanisms illustrate what Sylvia Walby (1989) refers to as the “patriarchal state”.

Modification of the natural order

The problem represented to be is that the implementation of parental leave policies would modify the natural sexual division of work between men and women.

Concerning the desire to feminize the masculine role: in our view, the child needs to differentiate roles in order to be able to structure itself and the father should not artificially be transformed into a mother who bottle-feeds. It should also be reminded that in certain societies more traditional societies, or in animal societies, the exclusion of the father is used in a protective manner.¹²⁸ (Report of the CSSH majority position by the Swiss People’s Party MP Dominique Baettig during the parliamentary debate on Franziska Teuscher’s 2006 parliamentary initiative)

The assumption is that mothers and fathers have physiological differences which justify the differentiation of their social roles as parents and in particular the assignment of childcare to women. It is based on an essentialist conception of gender relations and reproduces differentiation of parental roles. The effect of this problematization is to present parental leave policies as a constraint on the “natural” gendered family organization and to decrease its legitimacy.

¹²⁷ Le Conseil fédéral rejette également le projet de créer une plus grande marge de liberté pour les pères après la naissance d’un enfant sous forme d’un congé parental qui permettrait aux parents de partager librement entre eux, avec certaines restrictions, le temps accordé par le congé maternité pour s’occuper de l’enfant. Les modèles de ce type risquent de vider de sa substance la protection de la maternité en vigueur. (P_10.3700_Mo_Streiff-Feller_CF)

¹²⁸ Au sujet de l’envie de féminisation du rôle masculin: de notre point de vue, l’enfant a besoin de différencier les rôles pour pouvoir se structurer et il ne s’agit pas ici de transformer de manière factice un père en une mère qui donne le biberon. Il faut aussi rappeler que dans certaines sociétés plus traditionnelles ou les sociétés animales, l’exclusion du père est utilisée de manière protectrice. (P_06.448_IvPa_Teuscher_Debat)

Within the *difference* discourse, physiological differences between men and women justify that maternity is regulated by the state but not paternity, for which the family is designated as the legitimate actor to auto-regulate itself. It rests on the idea that the traditional male-breadwinner family model is the most adequate and “natural” one. However, this discourse is very rarely mobilized.

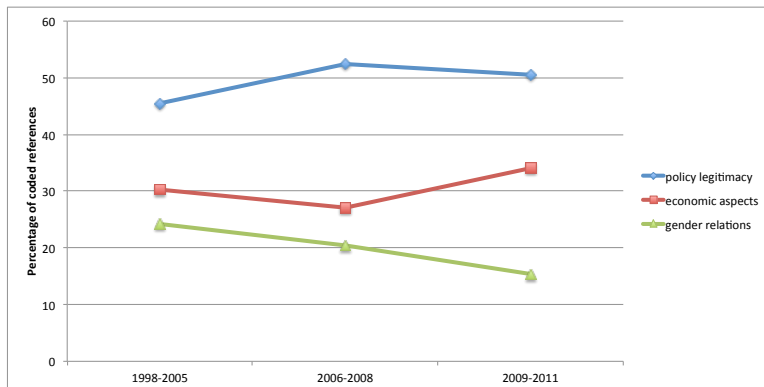
Contextualizing discourses and their effects

The *policy legitimacy* is the discursive dimension, which predominantly organizes meaning production about parental leave policies. It draws on many different arguments of principle, in favor (e.g., delayed family policy, children are undervalued, social inequalities) and against (e.g., not a priority, state intrusion, social partners, legal blockages) parental leave policies. This indicates that in the past decade, the main challenge for leave supporters has been to define the lack of parental leave policies as a public issue and to define the state as the legitimate actor who should intervene. There are fundamentally opposed positions within the parliament, as regards the legitimacy of statutory parental leave policies. The *policy legitimacy* discourse has even increased since 2006, after a maternity leave was implemented (see Figure 25). Therefore Switzerland can be regarded as being still in an early stage of constituting parental leave policies into a legitimate public policy. Leave opponents are still fighting to keep parental and paternity leaves outside the legitimate sphere of intervention of the state. This is a central difference with the political debates which took place in the 1990s about maternity leave. At this time, the principle of a maternity insurance had long been accepted as part of a new Constitutional article. However, many similarities in the debates about maternity leave and parental leave policies were noted. I observed comparable struggles about defining the legitimate legal framework, financing system, circle of beneficiaries and degree of generosity (Aebi et al., 1994; Dafflon, 2003; Pannatier, 2000). I also noted that similar problematizations (e.g., not a priority, ineffective and unbearable costs) were drawn upon by leave opponents in the 1980s and 1990s and in the last fifteen years (Dafflon, 2003; Mayor Genevay, 2005; Pannatier, 2000).

The *economic aspects* discursive dimension is also an important structuring principle of discourses about parental leave policies. It draws on problematizations which mobilize arguments of principle (e.g., inequalities among companies; unbearable costs), as well as more pragmatic arguments (e.g., inadequate for SMEs; HR outputs, inexpensive policy). Interestingly, leave supporters and opponents refer in equivalent proportions to the economic aspects of parental leave policies (see Appendix 15). As regards the evolution of the discursive dimension, it is clear that it has been increasingly mobilized in recent years (between 2009 and 2011, see Figure 25), especially the *burden* discourse. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that over time, leave supporters have increasingly mobilized the *cost-effective* discourse and less so *gender equality*. This could be interpreted as the result of leave supporters’ anticipation of power relations in the political sphere, given that the Federal Council, the majority of the CSSH, right-wing MPs and a proportion of the center MPs systematically rejected the proposals. The mobilization of the *cost-effective* discourse may also be related to the fact that the recent interventions were predominantly proposed by center MPs. Their proposals entailed leaves with little or no budgetary consequences (e.g., *unpaid solutions, substitution solutions*), prioritizing this aspect in their policy design. In contrast, in the previous years, left-wing MPs had predominantly

proposed *extension solutions* (paid leaves ranging from one to six months) and had strongly mobilized the *gender-equality* discourse.

Figure 25 - Evolution of the proportion of discursive dimensions



Note: The percentage of each discursive dimension was calculated on the basis of the number of the total coded references for each period considered. See Appendix 15 for details.

Finally, Figure 25 shows that overall, *gender relations* are the least mobilized discursive dimension. The problematizations identified draw both on arguments of principle (e.g., state institutions are gendered; modification of the natural order) and on pragmatic arguments (e.g., changing family models; involved fatherhood). *Gender-equality* discourse was mobilized mostly in the leave proposals submitted in the early years analyzed, between 1998 and 2005. These leave proposals were also those which scored highest in terms of *father-care-sensitivity*; they were submitted predominantly by left-wing MPs. From 2009, gender-equality issues were less present in the proposals and, as suggested above, less problematized by leave supporters in the debates. Interestingly, on the side of leave opponents, the *difference* discourse was very rarely mobilized. It suggests that even in the Swiss context marked by relatively gendered attitudes, such explicit gendered representations of men and women may not be considered politically correct discourse in the Swiss political field.

This contrasts with debates held in the 1980s in the frame of the popular initiative in favor of maternity and parental leaves which led to hot debates about family models and triggered conservative representations of gender relations (Mayor Genevay, 2005). However, it does not mean either that gender-equal representations of men and women and of motherhood and fatherhood were observed throughout the other problem representations identified. I have shown that within the *family needs* discourse many of the problematizations reproduce and maintain differentiated representations of mothers' and fathers' responsibilities and roles on the birth of a child, but in more subtle manners.

These results have two-sided consequences. As regards the construction of parental leave policies as legitimate public problems and the development of a statutory regulation, the mobilization of the *cost-effective* discourse could be favorable. Considering the political power balance in parliament, it can serve parental leave promoters to speak in economic terms in order to convince their opponents of the financial advantages of these measures. However, as regards the effect of parental leave policies for gender equality, the simultaneous decrease of the *gender-equality* discourse and increase of the *economic aspects* discursive dimension is preoccupying. It implies that the financial aspects of parental leave policies could become a decisive criterion in

the evaluation of leave schemes, at the expense of the gender equality criteria. As Chapter II showed, unpaid gender-neutral leaves do not promote a more gender-equal division of family work, as they are not used by men. Quite the contrary, they contribute to the specialization of parental roles.

4. Summary

The analysis of the political sphere reveals two main results: the increasing problematization of parental leave policies, as well as the growing importance attached to their economic aspects. As regards the first result, I observed that—although other family and social policy issues have comparatively triggered more political attention—parental leave policies are increasingly gaining attention from political actors, in particular from members of parliament. The large majority of parliamentary interventions were deposited in the recent years, between 2006 and 2011. The timing of this increase is clearly related to the new window of opportunity for parental and paternity leaves created by the implementation in 2005 of a federal maternity insurance. Also worth noting is the variety of political actors interested in parental leave policies, and the significant proportion of female MPs, MPs from a French-speaking or urban canton, as well as left-wing and center MPs. The fact that a clear minority of MPs from center parties has systematically supported parental leave policies during parliamentary votes suggests that an alliance between left wing and center parties could develop further in the future.

Although there is no consensus on the leave solution which should be adopted between a paternity and a parental leave, nor on the preferred leave model (*extension; substitution; private insurance; unpaid and cantonal solutions*), the increase of parliamentary interventions indicates that the absence of statutory measures enabling men to take time off work on the birth of a child is increasingly constituted as a public problem. The analysis of the development of parental leave policies and their political treatment revealed that in the early period and until 2007, leave opponents in parliament and in the Federal Council refused to consider parental leave policies as legitimate policy issues and advocated for market and social-partner solutions, revealing a liberal conception of the welfare state (with a limited and subsidiary role). More recently, there were several small breaches to this rigid position. For example a small majority was reached in 2007 in the National Council in favor of a few weeks of paid paternity leave and there was a slight shift in the government's attitude in 2008 and 2011 when it recommended accepting MPs' propositions and with the 2013 publication of the FSIO report assessing different models of parental and paternity leaves.

Although until now no leave proposal has reached a majority, I argue that these elements represent a subtle but significant increase of the legitimacy of parental leave policies in the Swiss political sphere. Symbolically it indicates that the possibility of implementing a federal legislation of fathers' absence from work can now be envisaged. Even if subtle, it represents a modification, at the institutional level of the gender structure, of the gendered constitution of parenthood. Furthermore, the support of the Federal Council to parliamentary initiatives has been identified as one of the key determinants in their further acceptance by Parliament

(Ballestri & Bonoli, 2003, p. 48). Although in its latest recommendation the Federal Council still considered parental and paternity leaves not a priority (FSIO, 2013, p. 64), thorough analysis of eight different leave models provides substantive ground for further debates in the political arena and beyond. It should, however, be noted that the economic consequences of leave models were a central issue raised in the FSIO report. Furthermore, the model which triggered the government's agreement to produce this report was precisely one which implies a limited intervention of the state and rests on individual financing (the *private insurance solution*).

This brings me to the second main result which indicates the increasing presence of economic aspects in parental leave policies' proposals and debates, at the expense of gender-equality issues. The evaluation of leave proposals revealed that a non-negligible number of leave proposals were "equality-promoting", as they were designed to encourage men to take up the leave (individual and non-transferable leaves). However, within this group only very few leave proposals challenged the gendered constitution of motherhood and fatherhood by reducing substantially the leave differential between mothers and fathers. Furthermore, the analysis of the evolution of leave proposals from 1998 to 2011 showed a tendency to the downgrading of leave proposals, with regard to both the degree of state intervention and of *father-care-sensitivity*. In 2011, it was mainly *unpaid, private insurance* and *substitution solutions* which were put forward by political actors.

The tendency to propose financially neutral leave schemes and the progressive reduction of the scope of leaves echoes with the maternity leave implementation process. It should also be interpreted in the light of the political composition of the parliament where a majority is against the increase of social expenses. Also, the most recent propositions stem mainly from center MPs, who are more moderate in their social and political demands. Furthermore the Swiss political system also implies the necessity to find a broad consensus beyond parliament, among civil society associations, and notably business interests. All these elements contribute to explain the tendency to reduce the scope of policy proposals. The majority of these policy proposals are, however, "equality-impeding" leaves: they are unlikely to be used by men and have therefore negative gender-equality and class consequences.

The increasing presence of economic aspects at the expense of gender-equality issues was also observed through the evolution of the discourses identified in the data. *Gender-equality* discourse—predominantly mobilized between 1998 and 2005 within left-wing proposals—decreased while the *cost-effective* discourse remained stable and the *burden* discourse increased. Leave proposals as well as the reports and debates about them focused on the way parental leave policies could either represent financial advantages for public finances, the labor market and companies or an additional burden. Within the *cost-effective* discourse, different policy solutions were identified, going either in the direction of state-regulated leave policies or of *social-partner solutions*. By contrast, the *gender-equality* discourse promotes more clearly statutory leave policies.

Interestingly even within the *gender-equality* discourse it was possible to identify traces of the liberal ideology which strongly pervades Swiss politics, in particular the valuing of individual freedom and responsibility, as well as the preservation of the so-called "private sphere". In this context, parental leave policies were frequently defined as policies which correspond to currently existing or desired gender-equal family organizations. Therefore, their emergence

challenge gendered representations of parenthood by spreading the image of gender-equal families as the current norm. However, gender equality was more rarely represented as an objective that the state should pursue, as is the case in other countries (e.g., Sweden, see Haas & Hwang, 2008, p. 86). Also, I observed that while the *difference* discourse was rarely mobilized, many problematizations (within the *family needs* discourse) rested on gendered assumptions about motherhood and fatherhood. These subtle gendered representations contribute to maintaining a gendered conception of parenthood.

The emergence of parental leave policies in the political sphere challenges in a limited way the gender structure. As no statutory parental leave policies have been adopted yet, no effects can be observed on the interactional and individual levels. It is only on the institutional level that some subtle challenging representations can be observed. First, the fact that the government and part of the Parliament are considering the possibility of implementing a form of statutory access for men to time off work on the birth of their child is noteworthy. It challenges the gendered representation that only women are childcare providers. Secondly, although the content of the majority of leave proposals do not entail a high potential for gender equality within the family, in some cases the discourses they trigger represent gender relations and parental roles in gender-equal ways.

Chapter IV - Parenthood and parental leave policies in the media

In the previous chapter, I showed that parental leave policies are increasingly promoted in parliament by some MPs and that it is an emerging issue in the political sphere. There are, however, political debates about the preferred policy solutions and no consensus as whether a *parental* or a *paternity* leave should be implemented. How are these questions covered by the media? Are parental leave policies also emerging issues in the newspapers? How are they represented? What about gender relations and fatherhood? I address these questions in this chapter by analyzing the media coverage of parental leave policies in Swiss French-speaking newspapers.¹²⁹

First I analyze whether parental and paternity leaves are frequently the object of press articles and whether they are high on the media agenda. Secondly I analyze the way they are framed, that is the way they are represented, the meanings attached to them and the causal interpretations as well as problem representations proposed in relation to them. In line with the central focus of the thesis, I explore whether the emergence of this issue in the media sphere challenges or reproduces gendered representations of parenthood. I also investigate the extent to which the non-existence of statutory parental leave policies is considered a public problem. Considering that parental leave policies may come to be the object of a popular vote in the medium to long-term, it is of great interest to document the way parental leave policies are framed in media productions accessible to the broad public.

1. The media, fatherhood and parental leave policies

According to the theoretical framework developed, not only do social policies, laws and public policies contribute to define gender relations at the institutional level, but also ideological discourses and cultural norms. Cultural norms about motherhood and fatherhood shape normative expectations about family relations and parental roles. The popular media are one of the social institutions, along with expert discourses, which play a part in producing meanings about parenthood and which participate in constructing social reality by framing issues in specific ways (Entman, 1993). It is possible to analyze cultural norms and discourses through media productions such as newspapers and magazine articles, books, TV shows etc. Following Ralph LaRossa (2012, pp. 41-42) who considers popular magazines and newspapers as “strategic material” for the analysis of the culture of fatherhood, it is therefore of great interest to explore parenthood representations in newspaper articles about parental leave policies.

¹²⁹ This chapter was developed in collaboration with Laura Bernardi, Professor at the University of Lausanne, in the frame of the 5th European Society on Family Relations Conference (Milano, 2010). It is the object of two publications (Valarino & Bernardi, 2010, 2011).

As developed in Chapter II, research on the representations of motherhood and fatherhood in the media reveals that men tend to be more represented as workers than women, and less as parents (Gentry & Harrison, 2010; Kaufman, 1999; Prinsloo, 2006). Also, parenthood tends to be represented increasingly in gender-neutral ways, but discourses often entail gendered assumptions regarding mothers' and fathers' responsibilities (Sunderland, 2000, 2006; Wall & Arnold, 2007). There are multiple and contradictory discourses about parenthood, which draw both on traditional characteristics as well as on more undifferentiated representations of parental roles (Lupton & Barclay, 1997). These contradictory discourses identified in the media reflect the fact that media articles do not necessarily entail uniform messages and that cultural images are multifaceted and pluralistic (LaRossa, 2012, p. 40; 44). Furthermore, media representations of fatherhood may change in different historical periods, but do not necessarily follow a linear evolution toward more gender egalitarian representations (LaRossa, 2012, p. 44; 46).

According to Ralph LaRossa (2012, pp. 40-41), there are different possible reasons for the recurring but already dated discourse about new and changing fatherhood in the media. First involved fatherhood may well resonate with consumers' desires and therefore its mediatization may simply represent an increase of market share. Thus the image of the "new father" is not only related to changes in social norms about gender relations, but it is also linked to the consumerist lifestyle culture about the "new man" (Aarseth, 2009). As a consequence of the "new man" discourse—which values self-fulfillment and enjoyment—fatherhood itself is presented as a means to achieve this, for example by appropriating the domestic sphere and making it a de-gendered creative project. Secondly, LaRossa (2012, pp. 40-41) argues that stories representing fatherhood as undergoing change and the contrast often highlighted by the media between past and present fathers are part of socially constructed collective memories. These discourses actually serve contemporary purposes, such as valuing current fathering practices and constructing positive father identities.

As regards the media coverage of parental leave policies, other social mechanisms are in play. As presented in Chapter II, mediatization contributes—by directing attention to certain issues and silencing others—to organize and hierarchize issues. The media coverage of an issue has therefore two dimensions, both quantitative and qualitative. The quantitative dimension concerns the frequency of coverage of an issue, its visibility and position on the media "agenda" (McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The qualitative dimension concerns the way an issue is framed and the meanings associated with it. According to Gamson, "[a] frame is a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant events and suggesting what is an issue" (Gamson, 1989, p. 157).

Media discourses therefore can influence both the issues one thinks about and how one thinks about them. They influence the ways in which specific issues may or not be constituted into public problems (Blumer, 1971; Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988; Kitsuse & Spector, 1973) as well as individuals' attitudes towards societal and political issues (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; McCombs, 2004; McCombs & Shaw, 1972). The kind of effects (strong or limited) and the role of the audience in the interpretation of media messages is part of an ongoing debate in the media sociology field (e.g., Katz, 1987; Kosicki, 1993). It remains, however, highly relevant to investigate the way parental leave policies are framed in the Swiss context, considering that these measures are not yet institutionalized by the state. As Chapter III has documented, there is a political struggle about the definition of parental leave policies, concerning their inclusion or

exclusion in the realm of legitimate state intervention. To this day, this political struggle has mainly taken place in parliament, but it could well be that in the medium to long term, the Swiss electorate will be called to vote on the adoption of statutory parental leave policies. Documenting the way the issue has been framed in the media is therefore important in order to understand the broader discursive context within which they may develop.

2. The written media in Switzerland

To my knowledge, to this day no research examining media representations of parental and paternity leaves in Switzerland has been conducted. This represents therefore a new area of research, probably because the issue is relatively new in the public sphere. However, media research adopting a gender approach has been adopted in Switzerland to analyze for example representations of men and women, as well as femininity and masculinity in advertisement (Pahud, 2009) and press articles (Durrer, Jufer, & Pahud, 2009).

Focusing on the written daily press is relevant in the Swiss context as newspapers are the most read written media in Switzerland. In 2008, among Swiss residents over 15 years old, seven out of ten read newspapers intensively; i.e., five to seven days a week (FSO, 2010a). Notwithstanding major upheavals due to the competition of other media and the reduction of press titles (FSO, 2013b), the reading habits of the population residing in Switzerland have remained stable in the past decade. In international comparison, in 2009 Switzerland ranked 6th out of 17 European countries with regard to the percentage of the population reading newspapers at least half an hour per day (FSO, 2013b). Written media are therefore important vectors of representations and meanings in Switzerland.

3. Data and methodology

3.1. Data description

In order to explore the extent to which leave policies are being covered in the Swiss media and how this media coverage is operated in terms of meaning construction around leave policies and representations of parenthood, I focus on daily press articles published on parental leave policies between 1999 and 2009 in the French-speaking part of Switzerland.¹³⁰ A ten-year coverage is a good compromise to give a reasonable overview of the evolution of press articles over the years and to identify key moments in the mediatization of parental leave policies and their construction as public issues.

The dataset entails 579 press articles published in nine daily newspapers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland (details in Appendix 16). Two newspapers are supra-regional with a Swiss

¹³⁰ Due to the need to limit the size of the data I focus on the French-speaking daily national and regional press. This data is not representative for Switzerland; it excludes Swiss-German and Swiss-Italian newspapers.

French-speaking identity, and six are implemented in a specific French-speaking canton and share a regional space of reference (Amez-Droz, 2007). These eight newspapers are sold. The ninth newspaper, which is supra-regional, is free of charge. These newspapers do not have a specific political or ideological orientation. Although some of them originally had for example a Catholic orientation (e.g., *Le Nouvelliste*) or a conservative position (e.g., *L'Express*), they do not currently differ substantially in this regard (Durrer et al., 2009, pp. 60-65). It is their respective regional anchoring which determines their audience and not their political orientation.¹³¹

The articles were published between January 1st, 1999 and December 31st, 2009. The dataset was collected through three different media databases¹³² in order to optimize access to articles for the full ten-year period. Press articles contain at least once the keywords “paternity leave” or “parental leave”. However, the dataset has some limitations, namely the fact that only three newspapers have been digitized and archived since 1999. Four newspapers are covered exhaustively from 2006 to 2009. Finally, two newspapers are covered only for 2008 and 2009.

3.2. Methodology

The aim of the research is to analyze the mediatization of parental leave policies and their qualitative framing. I therefore adopt two distinct methodologies which enable me to fulfill these objectives. First, as in Chapter III for the analysis of the political propositions, I applied content analysis, which enables me to systematically identify specific characteristics of the data. I assessed the number of articles published about parental and paternity leaves in the last decade and described their context of enunciation. For this purpose, each article of the total dataset (N=579) was coded according to a set of attributes and criteria. The context of enunciation is analyzed through the description of press articles’ newspaper source, year and section of publication, as well as the central issue and the general thematic context of the press articles (see details in Table 10).¹³³ These analyses were, as in Chapter III, also performed with a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software.

Secondly, I conducted a frame analysis (Entman, 1993) in order to explore the meanings associated with parental leave policies, as well as the discursive constitution of fatherhood and motherhood. This analysis was conducted on a subset of the total dataset, which only contains articles where parental or paternity leave is the central public issue addressed. This concerns 206 articles; representing 36% of the total dataset (see Table 11).

Table 10 - Attributes and criteria for the content analysis of press articles

¹³¹ In their analysis of French-language newspapers in Switzerland, Sylvie Durrer et al. (2009) provided a description of eight of the nine newspapers selected (all but *20 Minutes*). None of them was identified as having a political orientation. This can be explained by two main factors. Firstly, in his historical analysis of two French-language Swiss newspapers, Alain Clavier (2010) noted the progressive decline of “opinion journalism” since the turn of 20th century in Switzerland. Politically oriented newspapers were replaced by informational newspapers, which declared themselves politically neutral. In contrast for example to France, no daily newspaper in Switzerland is clearly marked as regards its political orientation. Uli Windisch (1998, p. 86) understands this as the outcome of newspapers’ anchorage in specific cantons, which implies their need for internal diversity in order to satisfy a heterogeneous audience. Therefore in the frame of this research—and contrary to other countries where newspapers are strongly marked politically—it is not possible to analyze media representations according to newspapers’ political orientation.

¹³² Lexis Nexis; Europress; Swissdox.

¹³³ Only the textual content of the press articles was analyzed as the database archives do not store articles in their original form, i.e. with original page layout and illustrations.

Attributes	Criteria
Newspaper	<i>Le Matin; Le Temps; 24 Heures; Tribune de Genève; La Liberté; Le Nouvelliste; Quotidien Jurassien; Express/Impartial; 20 Minutes</i>
Year of publication	1999; 2000; 2001; 2002; 2003; 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2009
Section in the newspaper	front page; editorial; international; national; regional; economy; society; letters to the editor; in brief; sports; other
Public issue (central issue addressed in the article)	paternity leave; parental leave; maternity leave; social policy; work-family reconciliation measure; equality; other
Related theme (general thematic context of the article)	politics; companies; parental role representations; fertility; other
Politics level	foreign; federal; canton level; municipality level; mixed level (federal, cantonal and municipal); lobby

Table 11 - Presentation of the dataset and the subset by public issue

Datasets	Public issue addressed in articles	Number of articles	Percentage of total dataset	Analysis performed
Parental leave policies subset (n=206)	Parental leave	46	8%	Frame analysis
	Paternity leave	160	28%	
Other public issues (n=373)	Maternity leave	33	6%	-
	Social policy	119	20%	
	Reconciliation measure	57	10%	
	Equality	28	5%	
	Other	136	23%	
Total dataset		N=579	100%	Content analysis

The qualitative coding of the articles was conducted following specific thematic axes, following a top-down approach:

- Representations of parental leave policies: discourses in favor of or against proposals to implement parental leave policies; discourses about leave recipients and leave use.
- Representations of fathers and fatherhood: discursive elements used to define fathers (and mothers); their responsibilities, activities, abilities and desires.

Within these thematic axes, coding categories were created following a bottom-up and inductive dynamic while exploring and coding the data. The coding was done in several stages, from more generic to more subtle specifications of the content. Codes were reorganized hierarchically until the coding grid became stable. One advantage of using software is the combination of a quantitative approach with a qualitative insight of the data. For instance, it was possible to assess which frames were predominantly or scarcely mobilized by comparing coding frequencies and percentages. It was also possible to analyze the construction of meaning in these frames, by establishing rapid connection of single extracts with the source articles in which they were embedded.

4. Results

I first present the results which describe the mediatization and the context of enunciation of parental leave policies. I then describe which main events triggered the production of press articles over the last decade. Turning to the frame analysis, I present the different frames identified in the subset and analyze the implications for the further constitution of parental leave policies as public problems. Finally I analyze the representations of parenthood identified in these frames and whether the mediatization of parental leave policies participates in challenging gendered representations or not.

4.1. An emerging issue in the media

Mediatization of parental leave policies¹³⁴

Year of publication

The first remarkable result is that a significant proportion of articles about parental leave policies were published in 2007. Approximately one-third (32%) of all the press articles in the dataset and almost half of the subset (45%) were issued during this year. The next section will develop more in depth the events which explain this particularly intensive coverage. Overall, since 2002, the volume of articles released on the topic has been increasing continuously, reaching a climax in 2007. In 2008, the number of articles fell by more than half, although in 2009, it rose again slightly (see Figure 26).

Public issue

The main public issue addressed in the total dataset is *paternity* leave. In 28% of the articles, paternity leave is the main topic of interest and constitutes the object of the article, while it is only the case for parental leave in 8% of the total dataset, as for example the titles of these articles suggest:

*The Christian-Democratic Party implements a paternity leave*¹³⁵ (*Le Matin*, January 10th 2007)

*The Greens launch a parental leave*¹³⁶ (*La Tribune de Genève*, September 4th 2007)

Articles addressing *social policy measures* in general concern 21% of the total dataset. In this case, *paternity* leave (more than *parental* leave) is mentioned as one of the various social policies from which workers benefit, together with salary increases, job protection, family allowances, reduced working hours and extended length of maternity leave. These articles often describe negotiations between labor unions and employers.

¹³⁴ See Appendix 17 for the detailed figures for each attribute and Appendix 18 for examples of press articles centrally addressing parental or paternity leave.

¹³⁵ Le PDC introduit le congé paternité (M_20070110_LM)

¹³⁶ Les Verts lancent un congé parental (M_20070904_TG)

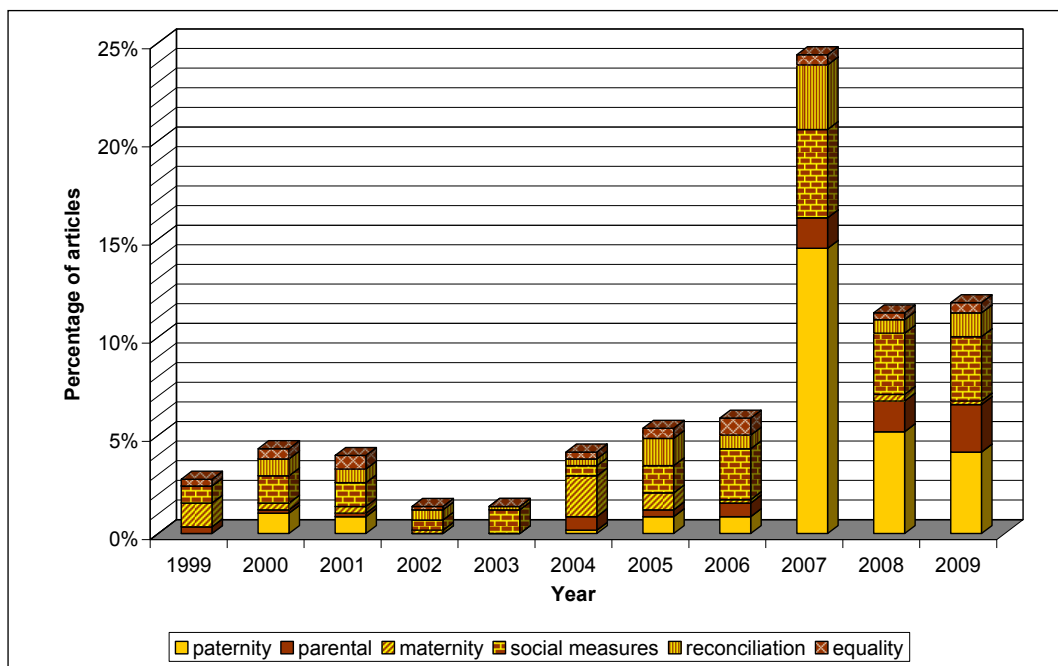
A group of assistants from the University of Lausanne have just launched a petition [...] [they] demand the introduction of the various leaves (four months of maternity leave, one month of breastfeeding leave, five days of paternity leave, etc.), a fifth week of vacation and the reduction of the working week by one hour.¹³⁷ (24 Heures, April 5th 2003)

Ten per cent of all articles concern work-family life *reconciliation* measures. In these articles, parental leave policies are presented as ways of better balancing work and family life demands.

A study demonstrates that measures favorable to the family are cost-effective for companies [...] The measures taken into account include ECEC services, paternity leave, and the extension of maternity leave, part-time work and working from home.¹³⁸ (Le Matin, November 1st 2005)

Finally, the “parental leave” and “paternity leave” keywords appear in articles that address *maternity leave* and *gender equality* (6% and 5%, respectively). Approximately one-fifth of the articles did not specifically treat a theme relevant for our research and were coded as *other* (not shown in Figure 26).

Figure 26 - Percentage of articles published by year and by public issue



Data: total dataset (N=579); collected with LexisNexis, Europress and Swissdix databases.

¹³⁷ Un groupe d'assistants de l'Université de Lausanne vient de lancer une pétition [...] [ils] réclament l'introduction des divers congés prévus (quatre mois de congé maternité, un mois de congé d'allaitement, cinq jours de congé paternité, etc.), l'obtention d'une cinquième semaine de vacances et la diminution d'une heure du travail hebdomadaire. (M_20030405_24H)

¹³⁸ Une enquête démontre que les mesures favorables à la famille sont payantes pour les entreprises [...] Les mesures prises en compte par l'étude vont de l'aide à la prise en charge des enfants au congé paternité, en passant par un prolongement du congé maternité, le travail à temps partiel et le télétravail. (M_20051101_LM_2)

Related theme

The “parental leave” and “paternity leave” keywords are primarily reported in articles addressing *politics* (66%). Among *politics* articles, 42% of the articles concern *federal level* politics, 26% concern politics at the *canton level*, and 15% concern *foreign* politics (e.g., parental leave policies in foreign countries). Other politics sub-themes are less represented in the data: *municipality level* politics and *lobby* (7% each), as well as *mixed levels* and *other* (2% each). The rest of the articles were published in relation to the following themes: *companies* (13%), *parental role representations* (11%), *fertility* (4%), and *other* (7%).

The comparison of the distribution of *paternity* and *parental* leave articles by related themes reveals interesting elements (for details, see Appendix 19). *Paternity* and *parental* leave articles are treated in approximately equivalent proportions in relation with all the themes, except for three criteria. First, only *paternity* leave is addressed in articles related to *companies*. Secondly, while both paternity leave and parental leave are predominantly addressed in relation to *politics*, *paternity* leave is predominantly related to *federal* and *cantonal* level politics, and *parental* leave is a central topic in articles that recount *foreign politics* (in addition to *federal* and *cantonal* level politics). 38% of *parental* leave articles actually concern news about parental leave reforms in foreign countries, while it is only the case for 3% of *paternity* leave articles. Thirdly, articles about *parental* leaves problematize proportionally more frequently than those about *paternity* leave, themes such as parental role representations (respectively 17% and 11% of articles) and fertility issues (respectively 13% and 1%).

Newspaper section

The articles of the total dataset are mainly published in *national* (24%) and *regional* (23%) sections. The rest of the articles are distributed in equivalent proportions (between 5% and 7%) among the *editorial* section (which also includes the comments and opinions of journalists), the *letters to the editor*, the *international*, the *in brief*, and the *economy* columns. The distribution of the subset articles reveals that *paternity* leave is predominantly addressed in the *national*, *regional*, and *in brief* columns, whereas *parental* leave is mostly represented in *international* columns. This corroborates the observation that Swiss news is particularly centered on *paternity* leave and that *parental* leave is a measure which is addressed in relation to politics in other countries.

Newspaper

There are important differences in the coverage of the issues according to the newspapers' target audience and identity. Because not all newspapers were covered for the same period, I compare supra-regional titles for the period 1999 to 2009 and regional titles for the period 2006 to 2009. Among supra-regional titles, the reference newspaper *Le Temps* published 24% of the total articles, whereas the broad public newspaper *Le Matin* covered only 13%. Reference newspapers tend to attribute more importance to politics than broad public newspapers. This could explain the difference of coverage observed, as parental leave policies are mainly related to this theme in the articles analyzed.

The comparison between five regional newspapers¹³⁹ from 2006 to 2009 reveals that there are significant coverage differences. *La Tribune de Genève* (25%), *24 Heures* (25%), and *La Liberté* (27%)—newspapers of respectively the Cantons of Geneva, Vaud, and Fribourg—have published more articles on parental leave policies than have *Le Nouvelliste* (16%) and *Le Quotidien Jurassien* (8%), published in the Cantons of Valais and Jura. These differences may be interpreted in relation to the type of canton they represent and the differing interests they may have in family policy measures such as parental and paternity leaves. Geneva and Vaud (but less so Fribourg) are typically urban cantons and the Cantons of Valais and Jura are more rural.

Key events of the media agenda-setting

Between 1999 and 2009, articles related to *parental* leave were covered mainly under the international current affairs section of the newspapers analyzed. There were just a few articles concerning *parental* leave projects at the national or local level, contrary to *paternity* leave, which was significantly present on the agenda. Between 1999 and 2006, the mediatization of parental leave policies was not regular and its fluctuation depended largely on the kind of events that were transformed into “news”. These events mainly concerned foreign countries (notably France, Germany, Austria, and Italy) and the ongoing modifications of their respective *parental* leave scheme. In 2002 and 2003, barely any press articles were published on parental leave policies.

For several weeks in 2007, *paternity* leave reached a priority position on the media agenda. The triggering factor for this peak was the proposal in January of 2007, from the Christian-Democrat Federal Councilor Doris Leuthard,¹⁴⁰ Minister of the Economy, to implement a paid five-day paternity leave, with the opportunity to take an additional twenty unpaid days for male civil servants of her department. This announcement was transformed in the following days into a political affair. The Minister was criticized for her proposal, as well as for giving a favor treatment to the employees of her department only and not the whole confederation. The issue was mediatized together with another political decision the Minister made concerning the Swiss fiscal policy. These two issues were framed as political mishandlings, made by a freshly elected young female Minister.

Some 40 articles covered this issue between January 9th and 19th 2007. Apart from discrediting altogether Doris Leuthard’s capacities as a Minister, the mediatization of the issue contributed to open a debate on paternity leave. The issue gained visibility and emerged as a new public issue. Thanks to the media attention it received, the issue of paternity leave emancipated itself from the event that had led to its mediatization. Articles tended to depart from the political affair and provided more general information on existing paternity leave measures in Switzerland in public administrations and in private companies. Paternity leave acquired public interest through this political affair, as further indications confirm. For example, some media conducted small surveys among their audience to assess public opinion about paternity leave (*Le Matin*,

¹³⁹ All regional newspapers were compared for 2006-2009, except *l’Express/L’Impartial* for which data was only available from 2008.

¹⁴⁰ Since August 2006, Doris Leuthard has been one of the seven Federal Councilors (executive power). From 2006 to 2010 she was head of the Federal Department of Economic Affairs and since 2010 she has been head of the Federal Department of Environment.

January 14th 2007).¹⁴¹ Also, when performing interviews with political actors, journalists asked them to position themselves with regard to paternity leave implementation (*24 Heures*, three articles published on November 5th 2007).

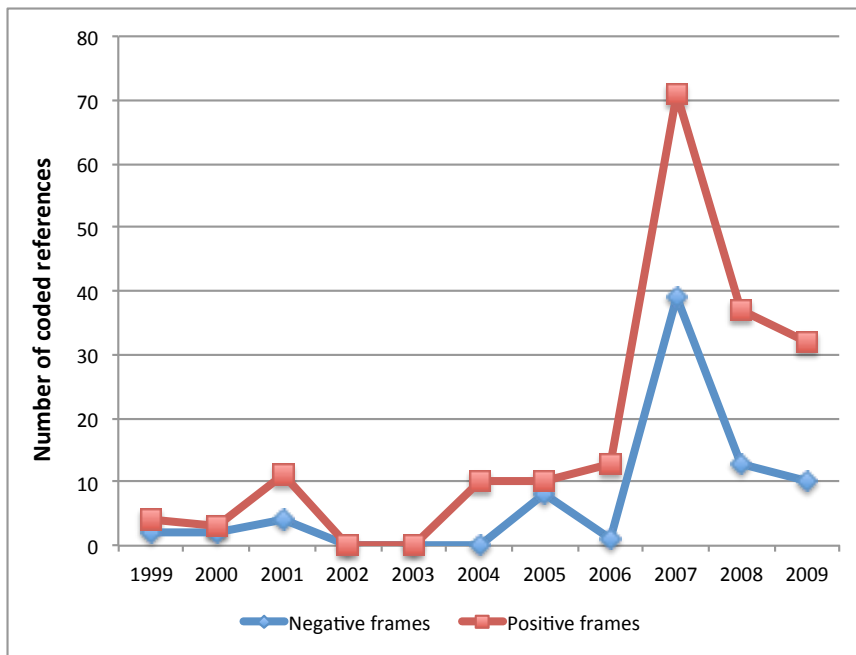
This mediatization peak did not last long. At the end of 2007, the production of articles on paternity leave followed—as before—the current affairs such as newly implemented leaves in companies and in public administrations, collective labor agreements, and political projects at the federal level. The volume of articles in 2008 was less than half as great as it was in 2007. The parental leave schemes of European countries came back onto the media forum, particularly the German case. In parallel, a group of Swiss associations (masculine, religious, feminist, youth, and family) put paternity leave back on the media agenda in 2008. At the occasion of the parliamentary debates about Roger Nordmann’s paid paternity leave motion (no. 19, see Table 5), these associations publicly declared their support for the proposition, by issuing a press release. This civil society initiative represents an exception in the mediatization process of parental leave policies. Finally, in 2009 parental leave policies were covered slightly more than in 2008, but the mediatization still followed external inputs. Overall, parental leave policies have dropped sharply on the media agenda-setting since 2007.

4.2. Framing of leave policies

In this section, I analyze the status of parental leave policies in press articles; the way they are framed and whether these frames picture leaves in a positive light or not. Leave policies are deemed necessary for different reasons, and are therefore framed in different ways (presented below under “positive frames”). A similar heterogeneity is identified within frames which represent parental leave policies in a negative way (hereafter “negative frames”). The fact that both positive and negative frames are identified almost systematically in each press article reflects media practices which consist in applying a “balance norm” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989). In general, journalists will report competing views on the same issue. However, as Figure 27 shows, positive frames are more frequently observed than negative frames. This suggests that parental leave policies are predominantly represented in a positive light.

¹⁴¹ Articles have identification numbers, which are indicated together with the original source in footnotes. For example, the identification code of this press article is: M_20070114_LM. The list of the newspapers’ abbreviations is available in Appendix 16.

Figure 27 - Positive and negative frames by year

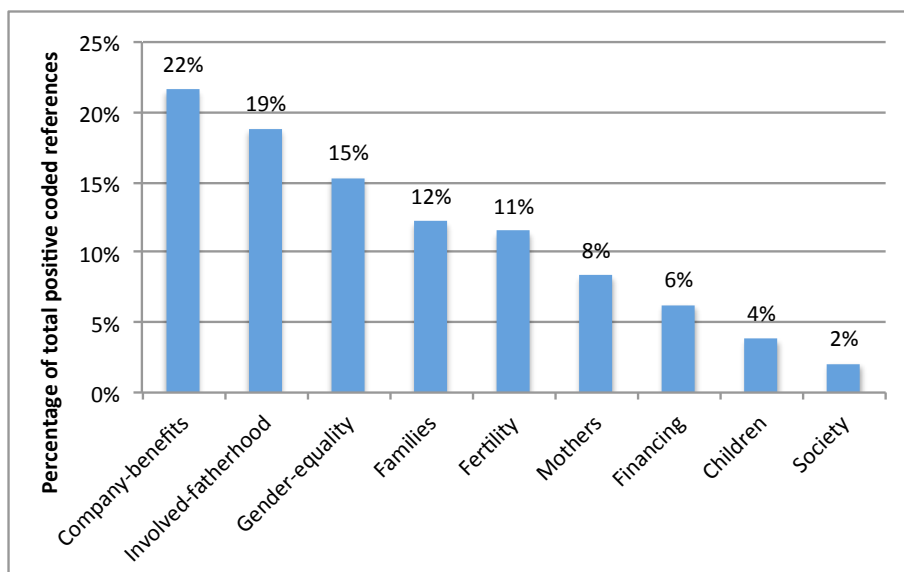


Data: subset of press articles (see Appendix 20 for details).

Positive frames

The most frequently identified positive frames in the subset present parental leave policies as being potentially advantageous for work organizations (22% of the coded references among the positive frames), for fathers (19%), and for gender equality (16%) (see Figure 28). Advantages for families and for fertility rates are relatively less present (respectively 12% and 11%). Among minority frames, parental leave policies are represented as being beneficial for mothers, children, society as well as being easily financeable (see Appendix 21 for a detailed view of the percentages of the coded references).

Figure 28 - Percentage of references coded by type of positive frame



Data: subset of press articles

Company-benefits frame

The predominant positive frame uses the economic lexical field; it refers to the advantages that parental leave policies—and *paternity* leave in particular—represent for public and private employers. Paternity leave is framed as a means of securing the loyalty of employees and increasing their motivation and productivity. Fathers are described as being unproductive after the birth of their child “because of the emotional shock” (*Le Temps*, April 1st 2000). They are also represented as being better employees if they have taken part in the birth of their child because they are said to have developed useful competences for the company. Expert discourse is used to ground these opinions:

*In Northern Europe, it has been shown that paternity leave is beneficial to employers, in public administrations or private companies, because the return on investments is obvious: reinforced employee loyalty, increased motivation, greater initiative, less absenteeism, stability of the family unit, etc.*¹⁴² (*Tribune de Genève*, March 18th 2009)

There are two variations of the *company-benefits* frame. The first one refers to *paternity* leave implemented on a *voluntary* basis by work organizations. The frame stresses the merits of paternity leave due to the positive effects it has on the image of the company and on the satisfaction of its employees (see quotation below). In addition, in the context of a shortage of a highly qualified workforce, paternity leave is said to facilitate recruitment. Leaves are represented as being flexible and not causing any organizational problems. Public employers develop specific arguments in this particular frame. On the one hand, they consider paternity leave as a way of enhancing their competitiveness with the private market in recruitment processes, where companies are often more generous in terms of social privileges and salaries. But on the other hand, they are also framed as wanting to set an example for private sector companies. As public employers, they should provide model working conditions.

*Why take this step when nothing forces them to do so? According to the Human Resource Director (HRD) of Migros-Geneva, Jean-Charles Buttomesso, it is the attractiveness of the company which is at stake: “The gains can’t easily be quantified. But the motivation of the employee is increased and this leave makes them more loyal to the company”.*¹⁴³ (*Le Temps*, February 15th 2008)

The second variation of the *company-benefits frame* refers to *statutory* paternity leaves. It stresses the fact that SMEs should be on an equal footing with large companies. The promoters of this frame argue that introducing a federal law would enable these companies to grant a paternity leave because it would be financed collectively through wage contributions. SMEs are said to be currently disadvantaged in the recruitment process because they cannot offer the same range of social benefits as larger national and international companies.

¹⁴² En Europe du Nord, il a été démontré que le congé paternité est bénéfique pour les employeurs, administrations publiques ou entreprises privées, car le retour sur investissement est évident: renforcement de la loyauté du collaborateur, augmentation de sa motivation, stimulation du goût d’entreprendre, diminution de l’absentéisme, stabilité de la cellule familiale, etc. (M_20090318_TG_2)

¹⁴³ Pourquoi faire ce pas alors que rien ne les y oblige? Selon le directeur des Ressources humaines (DRH) de Migros Genève, Jean-Charles Buttomesso, c’est l’attractivité de l’entreprise qui est en jeu: “L’apport est difficilement quantifiable. Mais la motivation de l’employé est accrue et ce congé permet de le fidéliser à l’entreprise”. (M_20080215_LT)

For the socialist Roger Nordmann from the Canton of Vaud who initiated a proposal of statutory solution in the National Council [...] this shows precisely the limits of a private insurance model. "The construction sector, predominantly male, won't have the financial means to pay for it," he argues. "We will create inequalities of treatment between companies and between employees. A national solution is necessary."¹⁴⁴ (La Liberté, March 30th 2007)

Involved-fatherhood frame

Parental leave policies are framed as being advantageous for fathers, in particular for their relationships with their children. But the frame takes slightly different forms according to the type of leave addressed. Articles that address *paternity* leave in Switzerland present the policy as beneficial because it gives fathers the possibility of taking care of their children. In this case, involved fatherhood is considered to reflect the aspirations of fathers themselves. In articles addressing *parental* leave in foreign countries, the policy is represented as an incentive for fathers to invest more in family life, through leaves which have a fathers' quota.

A common element of the *involved-fatherhood* frame is the concept of father-child bond. Parental leave policies are considered as means for fathers to develop an emotional bond with their children. Expert discourse and shared representations are used to justify this assumption:

All studies show that the presence of the father with a very young child is extremely important in establishing a strong bond.¹⁴⁵ (Le Matin, February 2nd 2007)

Gender-equality frame

The *gender-equality* frame can be principally identified in articles on *parental* leave. As mentioned above, a variation of the *involved fatherhood* frame presents parental leave schemes as designed to enhance fathers' family involvement. Articles that cover parental leave in other countries often use the *gender-equality* frame to represent the transformation of family structures and practices as an objective. An egalitarian division of tasks is set as a goal, as this comment on the German Ministry parental leave reform suggests:

By encouraging fathers to take care of their new babies, Ursula von der Leyen contributes to modify the relationship of Germans with family and work. The traditional division of roles in the couple is changing.¹⁴⁶ (Le Temps, October 31st 2008)

The use of the *gender-equality* frame in the Swiss context addressing paternity leave reveals a significantly different meaning: it refers to providing mothers and fathers with equal social rights. The implementation of paternity leave is seen as a legitimate policy change which would enable fathers to have access to allowances they have been excluded from. This variation of the

¹⁴⁴ Pour le socialiste vaudois Roger Nordmann qui a fait passer au Conseil national l'amorce d'une solution étatique (lire ci-contre), cela démontre justement les limites d'une assurance privée. "Le secteur de la construction, majoritairement masculin, n'aura pas les moyens de se l'offrir, note-t-il. On va créer une inégalité de traitement entre les entreprises et entre les employés. Une solution nationale est indispensable". (M_20070330_LL)

¹⁴⁵ Toutes les études le montrent, la présence du père auprès d'un très jeune enfant est extrêmement importante pour tisser des liens forts. (M_20070202_LM_3)

¹⁴⁶ En encourageant les pères à s'occuper des nouveau-nés, Ursula von der Leyen contribue à modifier le rapport des Allemands à la famille et au travail. La répartition traditionnelle des rôles dans le couple est en train de changer. (M_20081031_LT)

gender-equality frame conveys the idea that paternity leave is necessary, not because it can foster fathers' involvement in childcare, but because it is fair to men. This frame conveys the image that gender relations in Switzerland have changed and that men are already more involved in family life.

*Five days of leave, that's really too short to enable the father to bond with his child. It seems legitimate to me that both parents should be entitled to a real parental leave, of the same length for each partner. Gender equality is that too!*¹⁴⁷ (24 Heures, April 4th 2009)

Families frame

The *families* frame represents parental leave policies as beneficial for families. It suggests that these measures can facilitate their organization as well as the couple's life during the transition to parenthood. Paternity leave in particular is represented as enabling the family's "fulfillment", "good development", and "good start". It is said to support the family as a whole and to prevent family disruption.

*Knowing that the birth of a child is a factor that increases break-ups or divorce in a couple, it is central to give the family the means to constitute itself in appropriate conditions.*¹⁴⁸ (24 Heures, August 31st 2007)

Fertility frame

Within the fertility frame, it is mainly *parental* leave which is represented in a positive light. The measure is regarded as part of a broader set of family policies which aim to counteract low fertility. Individuals are represented as prevented from fulfilling their childbearing desires. Low fertility is also said to have negative effects on the economy and on the possibility of financing social insurances. Parental leave is represented as a solution to this social problem.

*Family policy is not only an issue that concerns society, but also the economy. Our companies need hands and a qualified workforce. And yet, in Switzerland, the number of children desired is higher than the number of children born. Statistics show that our country is no exception in birth rate decline.*¹⁴⁹ (Le Matin, April 14th 2006)

Society, mothers and children frames

To a smaller extent, parental leave policies are represented as being beneficial for society as a whole, as well as for mothers and children. *Paternity* leave is represented as beneficial for mothers, because it enables men to help their partners with the large workload resulting from the transition to parenthood. Women are represented as tired, depressed and dealing with major changes in their life. The beneficial effects of parental leave policies for children are

¹⁴⁷ Cinq jours de congé, c'est vraiment trop court pour permettre au père de nouer un lien privilégié avec son enfant. Il me semble légitime que les deux parents aient droit à un véritable congé parental, de même durée pour chacun des conjoints. L'égalité des sexes, c'est aussi cela! (M_20040419_24H)

¹⁴⁸ Lorsque l'on sait que la naissance d'un enfant est un facteur favorisant les ruptures ou divorces dans un couple, il est primordial d'offrir les moyens à la famille de se constituer dans des conditions convenables. (M_20070831_24H)

¹⁴⁹ Or la politique familiale n'est pas simplement un problème de société, mais également un problème de l'économie. Nos entreprises ont besoin de bras et de personnel qualifiés. Or, en Suisse, le désir d'avoir des enfants est plus important que le nombre d'enfants à naître. Les statistiques montrent que notre pays n'échappe pas à la dénatalité. (M_20060414_LM)

mainly problematized in relation to fathers' presence at home, as described in the *father involvement* frame.

It is difficult for a young mother after an agitated night, to take care of small children or school-aged children and to run the household on her own.¹⁵⁰ (Quotidien Jurassien, November 11th 2007)

Financing frame

Finally, the *financing* frame concerns predominantly *paternity* leave. The measure is represented in a positive light because it has a limited financial impact for the employer, or because it would represent a small proportion of public expenses if it were implemented as a statutory measure.

If the executive council were to implement a five-day leave, it would cost the Canton 400,000 francs per year; for a ten-day leave, approximately one million francs. It's not a symbolic amount, but it is easily bearable for the finances of the Canton of Bern, which has had an average yearly surplus of 150 million francs for the last eight years.¹⁵¹ (Quotidien Jurassien, June 8th 2007)

Negative frames

Turning to the frames which represent arguments against the development of parental leave policies, the predominant one is the *secondary measure frame* (26% of coded references among the negative frames). The arguments rejecting parental leave policies because of the problems they represent for *companies* represent 22%. The other frames identified are *state intrusion* (18%), *unsatisfactory projects* (15%), and *cost for society* (11%). *Disruption of traditional roles* (5%) and *against mothers* (3%) are minority frames (see Figure 29).

Secondary measure frame

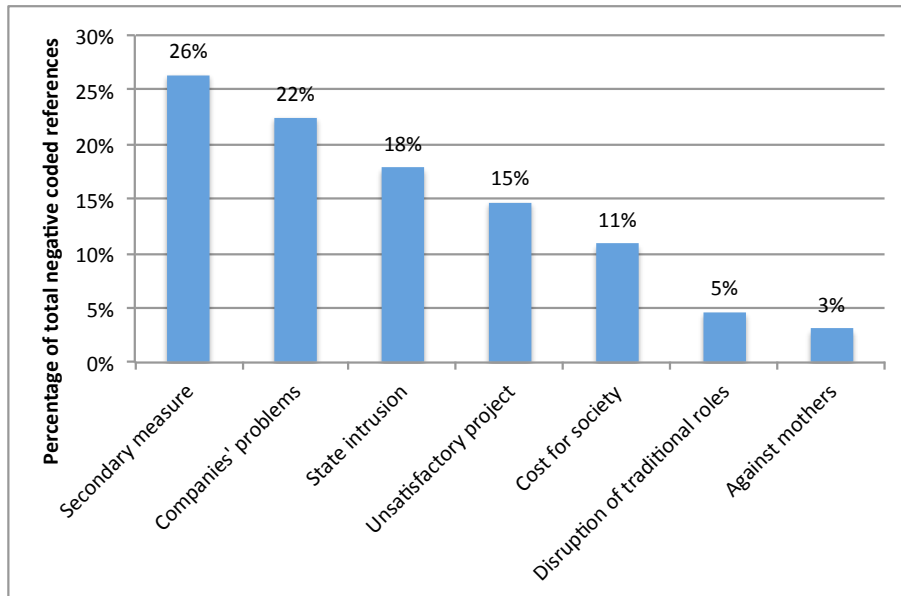
The main negative frame consists in denying the necessity of parental leave policies and presenting them as secondary measures. Some discourses suggest that parental leave policies are not a priority in comparison with other social insurances, which need financial stabilization. Another element of this frame—also noted in the political sphere—is the priority of other family policies, such as childcare structures and part-time work options. They are presented as more useful and important measures than parental leave policies. Moreover, in some articles published before 2004, the fact that maternity leave did not exist at the federal level was presented as a major drawback to the implementation of parental leave measures. Finally, parental leave policies are said not to be urgent because fathers and male employees do not demand them. These elements all support the *secondary measure* frame, which presents parental leave policies as acceptable ideas and hypothetical projects that should, however, be rejected at the present time.

¹⁵⁰ Il est difficile pour une jeune maman, après une nuit agitée, de s'occuper d'enfants en bas âge ou d'enfants scolarisés et d'assumer à elle seule un bon fonctionnement de son ménage. (M_20071113_QJ)

¹⁵¹ Si le Conseil-exécutif mettait en place un congé de 5 jours, il en coûterait 400'000 francs par an au canton; pour un congé de 10 jours, environ un million de francs. Sans être symbolique, ce coût est tout à fait supportable pour les finances bernoises qui dégagent en moyenne 150 millions de francs de bénéfices par an depuis huit ans. (M_20070608_QJ)

In the name of gender equality and family support, the left-wing at the Council of States advocated in favor of young fathers. In vain. The majority, including the Christian-Democratic Party adopted a pragmatic position. It argued, supported by Pascal Couchepin, that paternity leave would be a good idea, but that it is not necessary.¹⁵² (Le Nouvelliste, December 20th 2007)

Figure 29 - Percentage of coded references by type of negative frame



Data: subset of press articles

Companies' problems frame

The *companies' problems* frame draws on an economic approach, which is recurrent among the critiques of parental leave policies (see also the *cost for society* frame). Parental leave policies are represented as going against employers' interests and creating problems because of the additional costs they represent. The *companies' problems* frame makes extensive use of the lexical field of "burden" and "constraint".

A prospect which does not please employers, who consider that social security contributions are already too expensive in Switzerland and that companies should not be obliged to finance a hypothetical paternity leave.¹⁵³ (Le Matin, September 25th 2009)

Employers are represented—through interviews and reported speech—as victims constrained to finance new policies. Even when neutral financial options are considered, organizational problems are given as explanations for the rejection of parental leave policies. The absence of an employee is represented as a threat to the company's "organizational balance" (*Le Temps*, October 20th 2005).

¹⁵² Au nom de l'égalité entre les sexes et de la promotion de la famille, la gauche représentée à la Chambre des cantons a plaidé la cause des jeunes pères. En vain. La majorité, y compris le PDC, s'est voulue pragmatique. Un congé paternité serait certes souhaitable, mais n'est pas nécessaire, a-t-elle fait valoir, soutenue par Pascal Couchepin. (M_20071220_LN)

¹⁵³ Une perspective qui n'est pas pour réjouir le patronat, qui juge les charges sociales déjà trop élevées en Suisse pour qu'on impose encore aux entreprises le financement d'un éventuel congé paternité. (M_20050925_LM)

State intrusion frame

This frame represents parental leave policies as the institutionalization of practices that should best be organized within the family unit. It calls on the lexical field of “constraint”; with the use of vocabulary such as “interfere”, “constrain”, and “impose attitudes”. The title of an interview with a Federal Councilor illustrates such coercive representation:

*“I am in favor of a real paternity leave.”
MICHELINE CALMY-REY The President of the Confederation asks men to take charge of domestic tasks.¹⁵⁴ (Le Matin, March 18th 2007)*

The *state intrusion* frame is used to reject the projects of statutory paternity and/or parental leaves. Freely implemented parental leave policies are encouraged and social partnership is represented as the best option. Companies and unions should negotiate social measures and parental leave policies are one of the many benefits which can be implemented. This frame promotes a liberal vision of the role of the state in which collective actors and markets develop common solutions and the state interferes as little as possible.

Unsatisfactory project frame

The *unsatisfactory project* frame combines with the *secondary measure* frame. Here again, the principle of parental leave policies is not contested in itself, but is rejected for a number of reasons. The freely implemented parental leave policies are criticized because they create inequalities between employees of different companies and between companies themselves. SMEs cannot compete with larger companies. In some other cases, statutory parental leave policies are said to be unrealizable because of legal constraints. Finally, further critiques concern the length of leaves, which are often considered too long.

Thursday evening at the tribune, the Liberal Roland Divorve said the number of days granted was “indecent”, and noted that no small or medium-sized company could one day offer such a generous paternity leave.¹⁵⁵ (24 Heures, May 10th 2008)

Cost for society frame

In the *cost for society* frame, parental leave policies are said to imply unwanted costs for society and taxpayers. This frame is identified among the audience whose opinions are expressed through letters to the editor and through a survey of the readership, as well as among political actors. This is illustrated by the following excerpt from an interview concerning the political affair about Doris Leuthard’s proposal to implement a paid paternity leave for civil servants of her Ministry. It is interesting to note that for this political actor, paid paternity leave is assimilated to a pay rise:

Economic lobbies insist: “we are not against making a gesture for families” asserted the President of economiesuisse Gerold Bührer. But the Liberal National Councilor of the

¹⁵⁴ Original source: “Je suis pour un vrai congé paternité”
MICHELINE CALMY-REY La présidente de la Confédération demande aux hommes de s'occuper du ménage.
(M_20070318_LM)

¹⁵⁵ Jeudi soir à la tribune, le radical Roland Divorve a qualifié “d’indécent” le nombre de jours alloués, notant qu’aucune PME ne pourrait un jour offrir un congé paternité aussi généreux. (M_20080510_24H)

Canton of Schaffouse does not intend to grant “a pay rise and saddle the taxpayers with it”, as he put it.¹⁵⁶ (Le Temps, January 11th 2007)

This negative frame refers to an economic approach. It also highlights the fact that some propositions of parental leave policies do not entail financing plans. This lack of financial information contributes to discredit parental leave policy projects. Conversely, when parental leave policies are presented as reasonable and financially viable, projects are considered to be more concrete and, thus, feasible.

Disruption of traditional roles frame

In this frame, parental leave policies are said to go against the traditional male-breadwinner role. However, it is seldom used. It rests on an essentialist notion of masculinity and femininity. For example, it was used the following way by a Deputy during parliamentary debates about the implementation of a paternity leave for cantonal civil servants:

Dominique Baettig [Swiss People’s Party], who was categorically opposed to the “costly gadget” paternity leave would be, regretted that “one wants to impose attitudes that are possibly not desired”. Stating that “in the animal kingdom the father is sometimes excluded”, he brought about shocked murmurs and some outraged reactions.¹⁵⁷ (Quotidien Jurassien, October 25th 2007)

Against mothers

The *against mothers* frame is very rarely identified in the data. The frame criticizes *parental* leave in particular by highlighting the disadvantages it represents for women’s labor-market participation. It is mobilized exclusively in press articles relating Austria’s increase of *parental* leave length at the beginning of the 2000s and its deterring effect on women’s wage work, in particular from the lower social class.

The new law, by extending the length of parental leave to 30 months, encourages in practice mothers to stay even longer with their child, above all those (and they represent a majority) who have low salaries.¹⁵⁸ (Tribune de Genève, April 3rd 2001)

This frame opposes (long) parental leaves with the offer of childcare structures, regarded as more efficient in terms of gender equality.

¹⁵⁶ Les milieux économiques insistent: “Nous ne sommes pas contre un geste pour les familles, “affirme le président d’économiesuisse Gerold Bührer. Mais le conseiller national radical schaffhousois n’entend pas accorder de “hausse salariale sur le dos des contribuables”, selon sa formule. (M_20070111_LT)

¹⁵⁷ Dominique Baettig (UDC), qui s’est opposé catégoriquement à ce “gadget coûteux” que serait le congé paternité, regrettant qu’ “on veuille imposer des attitudes qui ne sont peut-être pas souhaitées”, rappelant que “dans le règne animal le père est parfois exclu”, a déclenché des murmures choqués et quelques salves indignées. (M_20071025_QJ)

¹⁵⁸ La nouvelle loi, en allongeant la durée du congé parental à trente mois, incite de fait les mères à rester encore plus longtemps auprès de leur enfant, surtout celles (et elles sont majoritaires) dont les revenus sont peu élevés. (M_20010403_TG)

Towards a definition of parental leave policies as public issues

The analysis of the representations of parental leave policies also reveals that the categories used to frame them stress their (1) topicality and their (2) progression. First, by topicality I mean that parental leave policies are depicted as highly contemporary and new issues, almost fashionable. This representation goes together with the framing of gender relations as changing towards more gender equality (see below). This conveys the idea that nowadays, in a new context of egalitarian family models, parental leave policy issues can finally be addressed.

The topicality of the issue is suggested by expressions such as “very actual”;¹⁵⁹ “more actual than ever”;¹⁶⁰ “Cablecom takes up”¹⁶¹ and “it is high time”.¹⁶² Secondly, news about parental leave policies is described in terms of a constant progression. Journalists frame the issue as gaining public and political attention, as shown by the following excerpts:

*within a few months it has progressed quite a bit*¹⁶³ (*Le Temps*, March 9th 2007)

*within two years, paternity leave has made a spectacular jump in Switzerland, following the European trend*¹⁶⁴ (*Le Matin*, May 13th 2007)

This progression is sometimes linked to the 2007 Doris Leuthard political affair mentioned above, as this title of a regional newspaper suggests:

*Doris Leuthard boosted the paternity leave era*¹⁶⁵ (*24 Heures*, January 26th 2007)

The adjectives used to qualify parental leave policies are predominantly positive; i.e. “good”, “proper” and “satisfactory”. The most frequent adjective used is “real” (12 occurrences); as for example shows the title:

*Towards a real paternity leave*¹⁶⁶ (*24 Heures*, December 4th 2008)

The adjective “real” refers mainly to paternity leave (more than to parental leave) and suggests that this measure is currently lacking, referring to the absence of statutory paternity leave in Switzerland. The representation of the emergence of a “real” paternity leave suggests that the current situation is unsatisfactory, and that this situation should—or, at least *could*—change.

I argue that the use of these adjectives to qualify parental leave policies, together with the representation of parental leave policies as topical and progressing issues, contributes to their construction into a new public issue. First, parental leave policies are *public* because they are emerging issues which concern an increasing number of people and work organizations. This idea of progression suggests that parental leave policies are “successful” in catching the public’s attention, which in turn justifies their place on the media agenda. Secondly, parental leave

¹⁵⁹ “très actuelle” (M_20070608_QJ)

¹⁶⁰ “plus que jamais actuelle” (M_20070904_LT)

¹⁶¹ “Cablecom s’y met” (M_20080207_LL). Cablecom SA is a private telephone company

¹⁶² “les temps sont mûrs” (M_20070330_LT & M_20090317_TG)

¹⁶³ en quelques mois, il a déjà fait un bon bout de chemin (M_20070309_LT)

¹⁶⁴ En deux ans, la cause du congé paternité a fait un bond spectaculaire en Suisse, suivant le mouvement amorcé en Europe (M_20070513_LM)

¹⁶⁵ Doris Leuthard a boosté l’ère du congé paternité (M_20070126_24H_2)

¹⁶⁶ Vers un vrai congé paternité (M_20081204_24H)

policies are constructed as new *issues*, because the media tends to frame their non-existence as a “problem” which needs some kind of change and solution. This is particularly the case when they are addressed in articles where the main theme is *politics* and not *companies*.

The close analysis of the subset of articles shows, however, that other elements of the framing of parental leave policies go in the opposite direction, playing against their definition as public issues necessitating state intervention. This can be observed with the use of some adjectives which suggest in a subtle manner that leave policies are a luxury or represent gifts made by some companies. This is suggested in particular concerning paternity leave, when the measure is decontextualized from its purpose and represented as free time offered to employees as “paid absence”,¹⁶⁷ “paid liberty”,¹⁶⁸ “pay rise”,¹⁶⁹ as well as “vacations”¹⁷⁰. In other cases, specific adjectives convey the idea of generosity such as “extended”¹⁷¹ and “long”¹⁷² paternity leave. The imagery of “gift” is recurrent in the data, especially in articles covering the implementation of paternity leave in private companies.

*The Protestant Social Center spoils its employees*¹⁷³ (*Le Matin*, February 3rd 2007)

*Certain companies are even more prodigal*¹⁷⁴ (*24 Heures*, February 15th 2007)

*Increasingly more companies make a gesture for fathers*¹⁷⁵ (*La Liberté*, March 30th 2007)

These representations have the effect of praising these companies and portraying them as generous and benevolent employers. Such positive media representation of the companies may be part of their motivations to develop such policies. This aspect will be addressed in Chapter V, analyzing the labor-market sphere.

4.3. Challenge to the gender structure?

In this section I analyze in detail the way fathers and mothers are represented in the subset of press articles. As will be developed below, some elements identified challenge gendered representations of parenthood, while others reproduce the conception of motherhood and fatherhood as entailing different responsibilities with regard to the child.

A breach in the male-breadwinner model

Press articles about parental leave policies often entail statements and discourses about the general situation of families in Swiss society. Several articles claim that there is nowadays a more equal division of work between men and women. A new family organization is depicted

¹⁶⁷ absence rémunérée (M_20070215_24H)

¹⁶⁸ liberté rémunérée (M_20070215_24H)

¹⁶⁹ hausse salariale (M_20070111_LT)

¹⁷⁰ vacances (M_20010209_24H) & (M_20080508_LT); pause estivale pour congé paternité (M_20091121_LT)

¹⁷¹ congé paternité étendu (M_20070830_LT)

¹⁷² long congé (M_20070203_LM2)

¹⁷³ Le Centre social protestant gâte ses employés (M_20070203_LM_2)

¹⁷⁴ Certaines entreprises se montrent encore plus prodigues. (M_20070215_24H)

¹⁷⁵ De plus en plus d'entreprises font un geste pour les pères (M_20070330_LL)

where mothers work for pay and fathers care for their children. Articles which cover the implementation of paternity leave in companies depict such events as the indicators of this new trend. When parental or paternity leave are addressed as policy projects, the new, egalitarian family model is presented as the justification for the implementation of the policy, as shows this quotation of a Liberal National Councilor interviewed by the *Tribune de Genève*:

*Nowadays, an increasing number of women work and fathers are more invested than before in children's education. A parental leave is necessary. In my case, when my son was born, I could adapt. But I am self-employed. Not everyone can be that flexible.*¹⁷⁶ (*Tribune de Genève, March 17th 2009*)

In some articles, the predominance of wage work in comparison with family life is questioned. These statements contribute to the criticism of the traditional male-breadwinner model. The pressure and overload related to wage work is acknowledged, and the provider role is devalued. Work-family life reconciliation problems are represented as concerning fathers too, and parental leave policies and part-time work are proposed as fruitful solutions. These criticisms are proposed by various voices such as reported discourses from letters to the editor, political actors and fathers as well as proposed by journalists themselves through editorials, as these two excerpts illustrate:

*We don't want to be the one who only brings money home any more; that's an ungrateful role. We want to spend time with our children, love them, accompany them and see them grow up.*¹⁷⁷ (*Letter to the editor, 24 Heures, April 19th 2004*)

*These two weeks to welcome one's child and spouse who just gave birth, aren't they just the vital minimum? Actually, this is only a small step for dads. For all these dads who would like to get rid of the label of working husbands which sticks to them!*¹⁷⁸ (*Editorial, Le Matin, February 2nd 2007*)

Involved fatherhood

Involved fatherhood is represented as an existing phenomenon which is becoming increasingly frequent. Involved fathers are described as being active in family life. The press articles analyzed document these behaviors and depict new fathers as an emerging reality:

*Look around you and you will see many young "smiling" dads taking the new baby for a walk or playing with the eldest*¹⁷⁹ (*Quotidien Jurassien, November 13th 2007*)

These involved fathers are often represented through interviews, testimonies and portraits.

¹⁷⁶ "Aujourd'hui, de plus en plus de femmes travaillent et les pères sont plus investis qu'avant dans l'éducation des enfants. Il faut un congé parental. Moi-même, quand mon fils est né, j'ai pu m'adapter. Mais je suis un indépendant. Tout le monde ne peut pas avoir cette souplesse." (M_20090317_TG)

¹⁷⁷ Nous ne voulons plus être seulement celui qui ramène l'argent au foyer, rôle peu gratifiant s'il en est. Nous voulons passer du temps avec nos enfants, les aimer, les accompagner et les voir grandir. (M_20040419_24H)

¹⁷⁸ Au fond, ces deux petites semaines pour accueillir son enfant et son épouse qui vient d'accoucher, n'est-ce pas tout simplement le minimum vital? En réalité, c'est juste un tout petit pas pour les papas. Pour tous ces papas qui aimeraient se débarrasser une fois pour toutes de cette étiquette de mari au travail qui leur colle à la peau! (M_20070202_LM_2)

¹⁷⁹ Regardez autour de vous et vous verrez beaucoup de jeunes papas "souriants" promener leur nouveau-né ou s'amuser avec leur aîné. (M_20071113_QJ)

These journalistic styles contribute to give a dimension of reality to the phenomenon, by giving them “voice”. The portraits present fathers who work part-time, who benefited from a paternity leave, or who intend to be more active fathers. Fathers often explain how important the time spent with their children is for them. They also criticize the too big prevalence of wage work in their life. Some testimonies show how fatherhood identities transform towards a more involved role. These testimonies contribute to spreading a caring and affectionate representation of fatherhood where time spent with one’s children is valued. Furthermore, care activities are also depicted as hard work and wage work is criticized for being too central in men’s lives.

Today, René Bourquin is a new man, or let’s say a new father, who thinks first before grabbing the newspapers or before “doing DIY around the house”. “I try to get home earlier, by working in the train between Basel and Biel. My objective is, at best, to be at home around 18h30, stay an hour at the dinner table, play with my daughter, help her with homework... Once she is in bed, I can do things for myself”¹⁸⁰ (Le Matin, January 23rd 2002)

“To be at home when the mother is there, or to be alone with a baby, is not at all the same, he says. You must have experienced that to understand to what extent we underestimate the work of housewives”.¹⁸¹ (Le Temps, March 8th 2004)

“For my first child, I took three weeks of vacation to be with my wife and my daughter. The company offered me several days for my second child. This makes a great difference. My three weeks of supposed vacations were in fact three weeks of interrupted sleep and I went back to work exhausted, and had taken the major part of my annual vacation”¹⁸² (Le Temps, February 15th 2008)

Involved fatherhood is presented as an existing family pattern—as well as an objective for many men—suggesting that a dual-carer model prevails in some families. However, because involved fatherhood is made salient and highlighted in press articles, I argue that it is only an emerging pattern. The image of involved fatherhood is far from being the norm in the media because if it were, it would not be worth the public’s attention and the testimonies by involved fathers would be irrelevant. Therefore, on the one hand the mediatization of involved fatherhood through the emergence of parental leave policies challenges gendered representations of parenthood because it makes visible men in caring activities and emotional work. On the other hand it confirms its unusualness.

Involved fatherhood is also represented within the data by using an informal lexical field from the family sphere. Men are often referred to as “dads” instead of “fathers” or “employees”. Other words referring to the sphere of childcare, such as “diapers”; “mollycoddle”; “baby’s bottle” and “pamper” are often used. While it contributes to the mediatization of involved fatherhood, it may also downplay the definition of parental leave policies as public issues and present them as trivial and/or private matters. As in the Swiss context, the private sphere is predominantly

¹⁸⁰ Aujourd’hui, René Bourquin est un autre homme, ou plutôt un autre père, qui réfléchit avant de se ruer sur son journal ou avant “de bricoler autour de la maison”. “J’essaie de rentrer plus tôt en travaillant encore dans le train entre Bâle et Bienne. Mon but est, au mieux, d’arriver vers 18 h 30 à la maison, rester une heure à table, jouer avec ma fille, l’aider pour ses devoirs... Une fois qu’elle est couchée, je peux faire des choses pour moi.” (M_20020123_LM)

¹⁸¹ “Etre à la maison quand la mère est là ou seul avec un bébé, ce n’est pas du tout la même chose, dit-il. Il faut l’avoir vécu pour comprendre à quel point on sous-estime le travail des femmes au foyer.” (M_20040308_LT)

¹⁸² Pour mon premier enfant, j’ai posé trois semaines de vacances pour être auprès de ma femme et de ma fille. Pour mon deuxième enfant, plusieurs jours m’ont été offerts par l’entreprise. La différence est énorme. Mes trois semaines supposées de vacances ont en fait été trois semaines de sommeil interrompu et je suis retourné au travail éreinté, en ayant consommé la majeure partie de mes congés de l’année. (M_20080215_LT)

represented as being separated and in opposition to the public sphere, it may discredit parental leave policies as worth of public intervention.

Fathers as secondary parents

Some of the above observations already suggest that the male-breadwinner model is challenged only in a limited way. Representations go towards a modified version of this model, but not towards an egalitarian model where mothers and fathers share equally paid and unpaid work. Fathers' caring role is *added* to their provider role; and while mothers' wage work activity is not contested, they remain the main referents for family matters. As mentioned previously, involved fatherhood is not the norm; it is presented as a new upcoming trend. I will develop below the empirical observations which further support these assertions.

First, involved fatherhood is described as characteristic for a specific category of fathers; i.e., those who have limited occupational responsibilities. Having a high ranked position is associated with difficulties for men to make use of parental leave policies. The fact that occupational obligations take over parenting activities is regarded in a different way for men and women. This can be illustrated through the media coverage of (a) the birth of the child of the former British Prime Minister Tony Blair in 2000 and (b) the transition to motherhood of the former French Minister of Justice Rachida Dati in 2009.

(a)

*Father of the nation or family father, Tony Blair hasn't decided yet.*¹⁸³ (*Le Temps*, April 1st 2000)

*"I will work less. I will try to reduce my official obligations", he promised. "If people want their political representatives to be sincere, they must know that I can't stop my Prime Minister functions. This job doesn't lend itself to it", answered the Prime Minister.*¹⁸⁴ (*Le Temps*, May 16th 2000)

(b)

*Rachida Dati took a paternity leave.*¹⁸⁵ (*Tribune de Genève*, January 8th 2009)

On the one side, Tony Blair's leave uptake is represented as a dilemma; he must choose between his occupational or parenting status. Thus the media coverage is about his decision to take or not a one week paternity leave—which in the end he will not take, as the excerpts show. On the other side, Rachida Dati is criticized because she returns to professional activities one week after childbirth. The reference to her use of a "paternity leave" can be interpreted as a negative representation of her behavior. This example shows how mothers' and father's behaviors are assessed according to different standards and how motherhood and fatherhood are constructed differently when occupational roles are in play. While maternity leave is taken for granted, paternity leave is subject to choice.

¹⁸³ Père de la patrie ou père de famille, Tony Blair n'a pas encore choisi (M_20000401_LT)

¹⁸⁴ "Je travaillerai moins. J'essaierai de réduire mes obligations officielles", a-t-il cependant promis. "Si les gens veulent que leurs hommes politiques soient sincères, ils doivent savoir que je ne peux arrêter mes fonctions de premier ministre. Ce métier ne s'y prête pas", a enfin assuré le premier ministre. (M_20000516_LT)

¹⁸⁵ Rachida Dati a pris un congé paternité (M_20090108_TG)

Secondly, this gendered representation of leave policies for men and women—optional versus taken for granted—can be further observed. As illustrated in the *father-involvement* frame, in articles which concern Switzerland mainly, paternity leave is framed as a new *right* from which fathers should benefit. But it is not represented as compulsory, nor is it represented as a way of enhancing fathers' participation in childcare. On the contrary, I have already mentioned that this is the case when parental leave is the object of press articles, covering foreign countries' news. The optionality of paternity leave use in Swiss media is illustrated by the following examples (bold characters added):

*Why should the **possibility** of spending time with the newborn child not also be granted to fathers?*¹⁸⁶ (24 Heures, April 19th 2004)

*Paternity leave contributes fundamentally to the recognition of the father's place in the family sphere. His **availability**, in a moment as important as the child's birth, allows reinforcing the couple's relation through the support he gives to his partner.*¹⁸⁷ (Tribune de Genève, January 23rd 2007)

This frame does not represent paternity leave use as an objective, but as an option. I argue that as a consequence, it is involved fatherhood itself which is represented as an option. It suggests that the degree of father involvement is a matter of choice.

Thirdly, fathers are represented as secondary parents. This was observed in the *mothers* frame which represented parental leave policies as necessary in order for fathers to “help out” their partners. The representation of fathers' roles is mainly supportive as the following examples show:

*Increasingly more companies are doing it, and “studies show the positive consequences of the fathers' presence on the newborn child”, the Deputy emphasizes. Not to mention the psychological and material support for the mother.*¹⁸⁸ (Quotidien Jurassien, May 7th 2007)

*The most important thing is to be able to organize leaves when they are most needed, that is not necessarily the first days after birth, but when the mother and the child are back home. Maybe that's when support would be most appreciated.*¹⁸⁹ (24 Heures, August 31st 2007)

Furthermore, the role of the father as a provider of support is not always clearly defined. In some cases, concrete activities are mentioned. Fathers are described as doing practical activities such as sharing domestic tasks with their partner; taking care of the elder children; changing diapers and accomplishing administrative work. They are also described as engaging in emotional work such as bonding and cuddling. However, fathers are frequently represented in

¹⁸⁶ Pourquoi la possibilité de passer du temps avec l'enfant qui vient de naître ne serait-elle pas aussi accordée au père ? (M_20040419_24H)

¹⁸⁷ Le congé paternité contribue de manière fondamentale à la reconnaissance de la place du père au sein de la cellule familiale. Sa disponibilité, dans ce moment si important qu'est la venue de l'enfant, permet de renforcer la relation du couple par le soutien qu'il apporte à sa compagne. (M_20070123_TG)

¹⁸⁸ De plus en plus d'entreprises le font, et “les études démontrent les conséquences positives de la présence du père auprès du nourrisson”, souligne la députée. Sans parler du soutien psychologique et matériel apporté à la mère. (M_20070507_QJ)

¹⁸⁹ Le plus important est de pouvoir organiser ces congés au moment où le besoin s'en fait vraiment sentir, c'est-à-dire pas forcément les tout premiers jours après la naissance, mais quand la mère et l'enfant se retrouvent à la maison. C'est peut-être là qu'un soutien serait le plus apprécié. (M_20070831_24H)

either passive and/or unclear activities. The most speaking example is the frequent use of the French verb “pouponner” which can be translated as “to play the doting father/mother”. It is an old fashion word which refers to the French word (“poupon”) for “doll” or “little baby”. The use of this verb can be interpreted in two ways. First, it can be interpreted as a recreational activity, suggesting that parental leave policies would enable men to “play at being a dad”. The consequence is to discredit parental leave policies. Secondly, it can be interpreted as a reference to a stereotyped motherly type of care: pampering and mollycoddling children. The consequence of this second interpretation is that involved fathers are primarily associated with stereotyped feminine forms of care-giving.

BIRTHS - The employees of the commune of Epalinges will be paid five days, or more, to play doting fathers. The Communal Council will decide tomorrow¹⁹⁰ (24 Heures, November 17th 2008)

There are several other representations which convey a passive and/or unclear representation of fathers' activities; such as the frequent reference of fathers' need to “be present” when the child is born; to “devote time” to family, to “welcome” the child; to “live fully” the child's birth and to be able to “watch the child grow up”. The following examples illustrate this point:

They propose a fifteen-day long paternity leave to allow dads too, to make the most out of the child's arrival.¹⁹¹ (Tribune de Genève, March 17th 2009)

The future dads employed by Swisscom will soon be able to play doting father as they wish: from January 1st on, they will benefit from two weeks of leave to welcome their new baby.¹⁹² (Le Matin, September 25th 2005)

Fourthly, the analysis of the representation of the potential leave beneficiaries also indicates that fathers and mothers are not considered equally likely to use parental leave. Parental leave is in principle a gender-neutral type of leave, which implies that either both parents can benefit from the leave, or that they can decide how to share it between them. I identified four different scenarios where leave beneficiaries are represented in more or less gendered ways. The last two scenarios suggest that it is mainly mothers who are envisaged as potential parental leave recipients.

- Gender-neutral beneficiaries: in this case, it is not possible to identify the sex of the potential leave beneficiary (e.g., “parents” or “the parent”). In many cases, the possibility of sharing the parental leave between the mother and the father is expressed.
- Statutory gendered beneficiaries: the press article presents the leave recipient as “the mother” or “the father” in accordance to the leave scheme specificities, such as the period of leave men and women are specifically entitled to.
- Explicitly gendered beneficiaries: parental leave beneficiaries are represented as “women” or “mothers” exclusively. This representation reveals a gendered assumption that the mother will be the parent using the leave. The consequence is to reproduce the

¹⁹⁰ NAISSANCES - Les employés de la commune d'Epalinges seront payés cinq jours, ou davantage, pour pouponner. Le Conseil communal tranche demain. (M_20081117_24H)

¹⁹¹ Ils proposent un congé paternité de quinze jours pour permettre aux papas de profiter aussi de l'arrivée d'un enfant. (M_20090317_TG_2)

¹⁹² Les futurs papas employés par Swisscom auront bientôt tout loisir de pouponner à leur guise: à partir du 1 er janvier prochain, ils bénéficieront de deux semaines de congé pour accueillir leur nouveau-né. (M_20050925_LM)

representations of childcare as a female prerogative.

- Implicitly gendered beneficiaries: the possibility of sharing parental leave among parents, and that both parents may use it is silenced. Parental leave is represented as concerning alternatively “the mother or the father”. The underlying assumption of this framing is that the work of caring for the newborn child is intrinsically the activity of *one* person, the mother *or* the father, who must devote full time to it. The consequence of such a framing is that it leaves open to the interpretation of the reader to determine who will be the beneficiary. I argue that the reader’s interpretation is likely to follow the predominant norm and pattern in Switzerland; namely a gendered family organization where it is mainly the mother who is charge of the newborn child.

All these elements contribute to spreading a gendered representation of parental roles. Even if images of “new fatherhood” are observed, father’ involvement remains represented as fairly new behaviors and subordinated to mothers’ taken for granted central role. These underlying gendered assumptions regarding parenthood—even in the context of discourses about change and gender equality in the family—echoes with media studies in other national contexts (Sunderland, 2000, 2006; Wall & Arnold, 2007). Discourses about “new fatherhood” potentially conceal persisting gendered assumptions about parental roles and do not challenge the essentialized conception of parenthood. In addition, I argue that by framing men as secondary parents, parental leave policies lose legitimacy concerning their definition as public issues. The necessity of state intervention in order to give men statutory access to leave policies is downplayed.

5. Summary

The content analysis revealed three main results about the mediatization of parental leave policies in the Swiss French-speaking daily newspapers in the last decade. First, the media do not cover paternity and parental leaves simultaneously, but independently from each other; which suggests these measures are in competition and regarded as mutually exclusive. Paternity leave is the predominant issue covered in the articles of the dataset, not parental leave. Indeed, only 8% of the total dataset concerned in a central way parental leaves, while it was the case for 28% with regard to paternity leave. Interestingly, this difference cannot be explained by a corresponding difference of treatment within the political sphere. Thus Chapter III showed that parental and paternity leaves were approximately addressed in equivalent proportions at the federal political level.

Secondly, the media coverage of parental leave policies has increased in the last decade, with a mediatization peak in 2007. During this year were published almost half of the articles of the subset of articles. These two first results can be explained by the political affair triggered by the announcement of the Federal Councilor Doris Leuthard in 2007 to implement one week of paid paternity leave for civil servants in her Ministry. It is worth noting that it is a member of the federal executive body who has contributed the most to publicize the issue of parental leave policy in the Swiss French-speaking media. Less represented in the media coverage are the

parliamentary interventions on parental leave policies and the actions undertaken by lobbies in favor or against parental leave policies.

Thirdly, paternity leave (and to a lesser extent parental leave) is often covered by the media in relation to its implementation within public or private companies. Paternity leave is considered to be one of the many diverse social benefits that workers can be granted through work regulations and collective labor agreements. Therefore companies have also contributed in the past decade to problematize leave policies and to increase public attention on these issues. However, as the results from the frame analysis revealed, because these negotiated company-level solutions are represented as satisfactory solutions, they compete with the idea of statutory and universal parental and paternity leave policy solutions at the federal level.

The frame analysis of the media articles showed that parental leave policies were predominantly represented in positive terms. They were represented as topical and progressing issues in the public sphere, thereby contributing to their constitution into public issues. As regards the different frames identified, companies' interests—whether with regard to the advantages (*company-benefits* frame) or the disadvantages (*companies' problems* frame) parental leave policies represent for them—were very frequently mobilized. This result confirms the considerable power of the economic lobby in Switzerland described in Chapter I and observed in the political sphere analysis. The power of the social partners and economic lobbies is also observed through the predominance of the *secondary measure* frame and *state intrusion* frame which represent parental leave policies as unnecessary and unsuitable in the Swiss context. In terms of consequences, framing parental leave policies according to their economic aspects (may they be positive or negative) silences frames which problematize their gender-equality dimensions.

Nonetheless, parental leave policies were to some extent framed according to gender-equality objectives and parenthood was represented in a gender-equality perspective. The simple fact that men are represented in their fathering role through the mediatization of parental leave policies is noteworthy, as men tend to be mainly mediatized as workers (Gentry & Harrison, 2010; Kaufman, 1999; Prinsloo, 2006). The *father-involvement* and *gender-equality* frames represent together 34% of positive coded references. However, as I have also empirically shown, even within these frames, gendered representations of parenthood were still identified. The emergence of parental leave policies contributes to spread the image of involved fatherhood, but because of the paradox of mediatization, it remains an “exotic” and unusual phenomenon. Although family models are represented as changing towards more gender equality and the predominance of wage work for men is sometimes questioned, men are still represented as secondary parents. The frame analysis showed that fatherhood is represented as involving men's decision about their degree of investment in childcare and that fathers' role is often described in unclear or passive ways. These results confirm the argument proposed by several scholars (LaRossa, 2012; Lupton & Barclay, 1997) that the discourse and image of “new fatherhood” has not replaced but more so *supplemented* that of the “traditional” father, leading to complex and sometimes contradicting media representations.

All these elements contribute to give a mixed impression about parenthood, which appears to have become more gender-equal, but still bears signs of specialized roles and differentiated responsibilities. As a result of this differentiation, men's access to parental leave policies—while

overall represented in a positive light—is trivialized and the necessity of implementing statutory measures is downplayed. These observations are relevant, considering that it is likely that in the medium to long term, a larger public debate about may take place about their implementation. As noted by several media and social political scholars (Bacchi, 1999; Blumer, 1971; Gamson & Modigliani, 1989; Hilgartner & Bosk, 1988; Kitsuse & Spector, 1973; McCombs, 2004; Verloo, 2007), the ways in which an policy issue—in my case parental leave policies—is framed in the public sphere can contribute to shape future policy-making and influence public opinion.

Chapter V - Parental leave policies in the labor market

The third social sphere of investigation is the labor market. The political sphere analysis (Chapter III) revealed that statutory parental leave opponents wish to maintain a *social-partner solution*, where leaves are negotiated or implemented by companies on a voluntary basis. The media sphere analysis (Chapter IV) showed that parental leave policies are often covered in press articles in relation to their implementation in private and public companies. These results trigger questions such as: How widespread are parental and paternity leaves in the labor market? Which companies are more likely to develop leave schemes that go beyond the legal minimum? And in such cases, what are the effects of parental leave policies' implementation?

These questions are addressed in this chapter.¹⁹³ With existing but partial data, I give an overall picture of the extent to which parental and paternity leaves may be available to employees through collective labor agreements and work contracts. I then address the question of the gender-equality potential of parental leave policies' implementation through a case study in a work organization. Following the theoretical proposition that the gender structure can potentially be challenged when change occurs in one of the dimensions of the structure, I investigate the extent to which paternity leave (institutional change) challenges fatherhood practices (interactional level) and representations (individual level). I established in Chapter II that the most favorable settings for leave uptake and gender-equality effects are family- and father-friendly work environments. The case-study work organization is a public employer, the City of Lausanne, which has developed one of the most generous leave schemes in Switzerland—including a one-month paid paternity leave—and developed gender-equality and work-family life reconciliation policies. The use of different datasets collected provides an in-depth view of paternity leave implementation, use and meanings.

1. Unequal access to parental leave policies

In Switzerland, individuals face different situations with regard to their access to leave entitlements which exceed the federal legal frame. As I have developed in the previous chapters (I & III), these differences are not the outcome of the Swiss federal political system, because it is at present not possible to legally implement cantonal parental or paternity leaves. Differences stem from the various work regulations and collective labor agreements signed at the level of the branch activity employees are subject to. Documenting the emergence of parental leave policies in the labor market is a complex enterprise. The available data is very sparse and unfortunately it does not enable me to measure precisely the evolution of the implementation of

¹⁹³ Some sections of this chapter were developed together with Jacques-Antoine Gauthier, Senior Researcher at the University of Lausanne, and presented in the framework of a collaboration (Valarino & Gauthier, 2012) for the 6th Congress of the European Society on Family Relations (Lillehammer, 2012).

special leave entitlements in the last decade. Therefore I start off by giving some indications of the development of parental leave policies as a rising concern in the labor market. I then give a general picture of the currently existing parental and paternity leave measures in the labor market.

1.1. Emergence in the labor market

Documenting the emergence of parental leave policies in the labor market proves to be a complex task because of the lack of available data. Although reliable and up-to-date information exists for the public sector, the source of information is recent and does not provide archives for past years.¹⁹⁴ There is even less data on the measures granted in private companies or regulated through collective labor agreements. It is only possible to draw on some indications in order to grasp the emerging nature of parental leave policies in the labor-market sphere.

For example, it seems that labor unions consider parental leave policies as increasingly legitimate lobbying issue. This is in particular the case for Travail.Suisse, an umbrella labor union which represents 170,000 employees and 22% of union members (Rüegger & Ackermann, 2012). Since 2006, Travail.Suisse has published press releases on its website where it addresses the issue of parental leave policies, in particular paternity leave. Starting in 2006 and until 2012, they published 26 press releases.¹⁹⁵ Travail.Suisse emphasized the evolution of the adoption of paternity leaves among public and private administrations. In 2006, Travail.Suisse emphasized that the introduction of a maternity insurance represented savings for companies, which could be reinvested in parental leave policies. In 2007, it took an official position in favor of a statutory paternity leave of 20 paid days and ranked paternity leave as one of its four main political priorities—together with the extension of paid vacations, the right to continuing education, and support for alternative energy. Since then it has repeatedly taken positions regarding the political treatment of parental and paternity leave proposals in parliament.

Other indications show that paternity leave is a social benefit increasingly problematized in the labor-market sphere. For example, since 2009, the economic reference and general-public bi-monthly newspaper *Bilan*,¹⁹⁶ published in the French-speaking part of Switzerland, has conducted a ranking of the “best” employers of the region. The competition is open to all companies, but mainly large work organizations and public employers participate. It grasps different dimensions of the working conditions offered to employees, and among other things paternity leave and sabbatical leaves are considered relevant dimensions of the evaluation. In 2010, out of 68 participating work organizations of the French-speaking region, 53% granted between one and three days of paid paternity leave, 20% five days and 18% six days or more (up to 21 days). Furthermore, 91% of participating companies reported that employees had access to a sabbatical leave upon request, but it was not especially referred to in terms of parental leave and no specific lengths were indicated.

¹⁹⁴ The “Plate-forme d'information Conciliation travail-famille: Mesures cantonales et communales” was launched by the State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) and the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO) in 2009. The Platform is updated every year but yearly data is not archived.

¹⁹⁵ The website (http://www.travailsuisse.ch/themes/egalite/maternite_et_paternite) was consulted May 14th 2013.

¹⁹⁶ As an indication, here is the link to the latest ranking conducted by *Bilan* (2013): <http://www.bilan.ch/entreprises-les-plus-de-la-redaction/et-si-vous-changez-de-job-les-meilleurs-employeurs-romands>

The emergence of parental leave policies—and paternity leave in particular—in the labor market and its underlying mechanism in the private sector can be better understood thanks to a pilot interview I conducted in November 2011 with a Human Resource manager of a multinational energy company based in the French-speaking region of Switzerland.¹⁹⁷ During the interview, Peter Rogers¹⁹⁸ recalled that the paid paternity leave of five days granted in his company was implemented around 2008. He reported that the reason for adopting this leave was that the company defined its benefit package according to the market. Paid paternity leave was one element among many others (e.g., insurances, health programs, facilities, access to continuing education, etc.) forming the benefit package of the company. Peter Rogers explained that paternity leave implementation was the outcome of a general trend observed among other similar multinational companies.

*“So we base, we base our... our... the positioning of our benefits for our employees, we fix them according to the market. Here the market of similar companies, that is multinational companies, offer these types of benefits—it may be the pension fund, paid leaves, public holiday etc.—if the market offers in general this type of services, we follow the market. We typically observe the market and we try not to lag behind the market. But if there is a... a... significant number of similar companies, notably multinational ones, which grant this type of benefits, we'll grant it too. We have a position, a strategy that we call median strategy—Q2 for benefits—and this type of benefits conforms with this Q2 strategy.”¹⁹⁹
(Peter Rogers, Human Resource manager, multinational energy company)*

He argued that the benchmarking was not very well defined yet, because “with this kind of benefits, fairly new, at the beginning there is a considerable difference between the minimum and maximum”.²⁰⁰ He argued the company had adopted an empirical approach, on the basis of the contacts established with a network of other HR managers of similar companies. He estimated that five days of paternity leave positioned the company in the mean of the market, but that the company did not aim to stand out on this issue with regard to others.

The timing of the emergence of parental leave policies is difficult to establish without any longitudinal data. Results from a study investigating the economic effects of the implementation of LECA maternity benefits suggest that the adoption of a maternity insurance system did not prompt companies to invest in paternity leave (Aeppli, 2012). This nationwide survey conducted on 402 companies investigated how the financial savings realized thanks to the mutualization of maternity benefits were further invested. Results indicated that only 6% of companies reinvested the savings into a paternity leave and 4% for ECEC services. 23% of companies invested in providing more generous maternity benefits than the legal minimum (e.g., full pay

¹⁹⁷ Pilot interviews were conducted prior to the case study. Details are available in Appendix 27.

¹⁹⁸ All the names used are pseudonyms.

¹⁹⁹ “Alors nous on base, on base notre... notre... le positionnement de nos bénéfices pour nos employés on le base en fonction du marché. Ici le marché des entreprises similaires, c'est-à-dire des entreprises multinationales, offre ce type de bénéfices—ça peut toucher à la caisse de pension, ça peut que toucher aux congés payés, ça peut toucher aux jours fériés offerts etc.—si le marché offre en général ce type de services, nous on s'aligne au marché. Donc ça, on a tendance à observer le marché, et de ne pas être à la traîne du marché. Mais si il y a, je dirais à un... un... nombre significatif d'entreprises similaires, notamment de multinationales, qui offrent ce type de bénéfices, nous on va aussi l'offrir. Alors nous on a une position, une stratégie qu'on appelle stratégie médiane—Q2 pour les bénéfices—et ce type de bénéfices, se met en alignement avec cette stratégie Q2.”

²⁰⁰ “Je pense que sur ce genre de bénéfice, relativement nouveau, au départ il y a entre le mini et le maxi une assez grande différence.”

and/or longer leave) and 20% to finance the additional expenses for the replacement of the employee on leave (Aeppli, 2012, pp. 79-80).

In sum, parental leave policies, in particular paternity leave, seem to be increasingly promoted in the labor-market sphere. It is, however, important to recall that employers' associations (*economiesuisse* and the Swiss Union of Crafts and SMEs) have not promoted or publicized the issue as labor unions have. Indeed, the Confederation of Swiss Employers has voiced its disapproval of an institutionalized regulation of leave policies by the state (Confederation of Swiss Employers, 2013). There are some indications that companies are nonetheless increasingly implementing parental leave policies on a voluntary basis. However, there seems to be a very weak relationship between the implementation of a federal maternity insurance and the emergence of special parental leave policy entitlements. In order to understand the emergence of parental leave policies, it seems therefore necessary to investigate in more detail how widespread they are and the specificities of the companies concerned by this trend.

1.2. Differences in collective agreements

An important element of parental leave policies' implementation is the extent to which they are voluntarily adopted in companies' work regulations or whether they are negotiated through collective labor agreements. As previously noted, mechanisms of self-regulation by collective economic actors are important in Switzerland (Mach & Trampusch, 2011), and in 2007 approximately half of employed individuals were subject to collective agreements (Lampart & Kopp, 2013; Oesch, 2011). The content of collective labor agreements regarding parental leave policies represents a rich source of information to assess the extent to which these benefits are widespread in the labor market. Unfortunately there is no data documenting the content of collective labor agreements at the national level regarding parental leave policies. In order to have a general idea of the types of leaves granted through labor agreements, I explored the data provided by Unia, the largest labor union in Switzerland.²⁰¹

Among a selection of 98 collective labor agreements negotiated by Unia, in 2012, one-third of the collective agreements provided more generous maternity leave entitlements both in length (16 weeks or more) and payment (more than 80% of earnings) than the legal minimum (see Table 12). Access to these extended benefits was often tied to the condition of having worked at least one year in the company.²⁰² As regards paternity leave, a little over half of the collective agreements provided one or two days of paid paternity leave and 19% did not provide any leave at all. 20% of the collective agreements provided five to ten days of paid leave. Finally, unpaid

²⁰¹ Investigating all the collective labor agreements in the private sector would exceed the scope of this section. In 2009, there were over 600 collective labor agreements in Switzerland (FSO, 2012a). Exploring part of Unia's collective agreements represents in my view a reasonable compromise. Unia counts almost 200'000 members and concerns in particular construction and industry branches. It manages some 270 collective labor agreements for approximately one million workers (<http://www.unia.ch/Apercu.289.0.html?&L=1>). The research was conducted in November 2012, using the online data base (http://www.unia.ch/Service-CCT.3578.0.html?&no_cache=1&L=1) available for part of the collective labor agreements dealt by Unia (98 out of 270).

²⁰² If it is not the case, leave is either paid following the LECA minimum, or the additional weeks are not fully compensated (only at 80% for example).

parental leaves were extremely rare in collective labor agreements: only 7% provided this possibility (with sometimes indefinite periods of leave mentioned).²⁰³

This overview indicates that among the employees covered by collective agreements (approximately half of the employed population), there are important inequalities which depend on the branch in which individuals are professionally active. They have access to very different leave schemes, from minimal ones to more comprehensive ones. However, the predominant trend regarding paternity leave is to grant one or two days of leave. A more in-depth analysis of the collective agreements would be needed in order to explain these differences (e.g., depending on the branches of activity, the regions covered, the number of workers represented and the sex composition of occupations).

Furthermore, results should also be taken with caution, as the sample explored may not be representative for all collective agreements. For instance, Unia is known to be particularly active in the construction and industry branches. Also, the sample contains a large part of collective agreements for the French-speaking region. These specificities may influence the results presented above.

Table 12 - Parental leave policies in collective labor agreements

Parental leave policies	Length of leave	% of sample (n=98)
Paid maternity leave	Legal minimum (14 or 16 weeks, paid at 80%) ²⁰⁴	60%
	Generous leave (≥16 weeks paid at > 80%)	33%
	Other combinations ²⁰⁵	7%
	Total	100%
Paid paternity leave	0 days	19%
	1-2 days	53%
	3-4 days	8%
	5-10 days	20%
	Total	100%
Unpaid parental leave	No provision	93%
	Leave option (indeterminate length or up to 12 months)	7%
	Total	100%

Source: data consulted in November 2012 for 98 collective labor agreements signed by Unia. Online search: <http://unia.servicecct.ch/Search.aspx>.

²⁰³ Overall, this means that 44% of the collective agreements in the sample provide for at least one day of paternity leave and/or an unpaid parental leave (mean between 81% and 7%). The comparison of this proportion with that presented in the report published by the FSIO (2013, p. 12) suggests that it may give an overly optimistic picture. The FSIO analyzed collective agreements which concern at least 1000 persons; i.e., 132 out of 600. Only 35 out of the 132 collective agreements analyzed (i.e., 26.5% of the sample) were found to grant a paternity and/or a parental leave.

²⁰⁴ In the sample considered, 15 collective labor agreements concern the Canton of Geneva, which is legally bound to a cantonal statutory maternity leave minimum of 16 weeks paid at 80% (see Chapter II).

²⁰⁵ Other combinations entail maternity leaves of 14 weeks, paid at 100% (three cases) or longer leaves, but paid at 80% only (four cases).

1.3. Public and private sector differences

Differences with regard to the access to leave policies also depend on the sector of employment. Although the data available is not fully comparable,²⁰⁶ it seems that employees working in the public and the private sector do not have the same opportunities. Using data for 52 public cantonal and communal employers it can be observed that in 2011, 86.5% of the sample granted extended **maternity benefits** (see Table 13 and Appendix 22 and 23). This was the case for only half of the private companies surveyed in 2004 in two French-speaking cantons (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005).²⁰⁷

Table 13 - Special leave entitlements by public and private employers (selected cantons and companies)²⁰⁸

Type of leave	Public employers (n=52)	Private employers (n=265)
Paid maternity leave	86.5% grant 16 weeks or more	50% grant more than the legal minimum
Paid paternity leave	88.5% grant 2 days or more	26.2% grant between 2 and 5 days
Unpaid parental leave	75% grant a leave (indeterminate length, up to 2 years)	20% grant a leave (from 1 to 12 months)

Source: for public employers, data (as of 18.02.2011) extracted in November 2012 from the information platform "Work-family conciliation: cantonal and communal measures" (see Appendix 22 and 23 for details). For private employers, data extracted from (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005) for two French-speaking cantons in 2005.

Among public employers, the majority proposes 16 weeks (and up to 20 weeks) of fully compensated maternity leave, while only seven employers grant 14 weeks. Four employers grant an additional paid month of breastfeeding leave. However, at both the cantonal and communal levels, access to these extended benefits is often conditional. It is in most cases linked to seniority (from six months to two years) or in fewer cases linked to the return to work after the leave for a minimum time.

In the private sector, among the companies which grant more than the legal minimum, 79% of them provide an additional leave of 20 days or more, and 77% provide compensation during this additional leave (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005, p. 26). Results from a survey conducted

²⁰⁶ Exhaustive information on public administrations' parental leave policy provisions enables one to draw a fairly comprehensive picture of the public sector in 2011. It is less so for the private sector, for which there is no national survey on employers' practices concerning parental leave policies. Trends for the private sector are estimated on the basis of a survey conducted in two French speaking cantons addressing work-family life conciliation measures (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005).

²⁰⁷ A first bias of this survey is that it was conducted before the implementation of the LECA. Therefore, at the time of the survey, the federal minimum of 14 weeks of maternity leave, paid at 80% of earnings was not yet set. In the Canton of Vaud, it was the federal legal minimum which applied, depending on place of residency and years of seniority. In Geneva, it was the cantonal law on maternity leave adopted in 2001, which applied (16 weeks paid 80%). The results entail a second bias; the situation for the private and public sector are not systematically described separately. However, we consider them as representative of the trends going on in the private sector because 93% of the sampled work organizations are private ones.

²⁰⁸ For public employers, 26 cantonal administrations as well as 26 communal administrative centers are taken into account. For private employers, the sample is composed by 73% of companies implemented in the canton of Vaud and by 27% implemented in the Canton of Geneva. Approximately half of them count less than 50 employees and 19% count 250 or more employees. The majority of work organizations are active in the secondary sector as well as finance, IT, real estate and the rest are mainly involved in service activities.

nationwide in 2011 on 402 companies²⁰⁹ confirms that public administrations (but also banking, insurance, counseling and IT services) were significantly more likely to grant more generous maternity leaves than private companies active in industry, construction, transportation, hotel and restaurant industry as well as in health and social domains (Aeppli, 2012, p. 39). Daniel Aeppli (2012, pp. 39-42) also notes significant differences according to the regional location of the companies: companies based in the French-speaking and Italian-speaking part of Switzerland more often grant maternity leave provisions which exceed the legal minimum.

As regards **paternity leave**, 88.5% of the sample of public employers grant two days or more of paternity leave (see Appendix 22 and 23), while only 26.2% of private companies grant between two and five days (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005). Only three public employers do not provide any paid paternity leave and the maximum leave granted is 21 days. Among private companies, there are regional differences: 20% of the companies in the Canton of Geneva grant more than five days, while this is the case with only 6.5% of companies in the Canton of Vaud (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005, pp. 26-27).

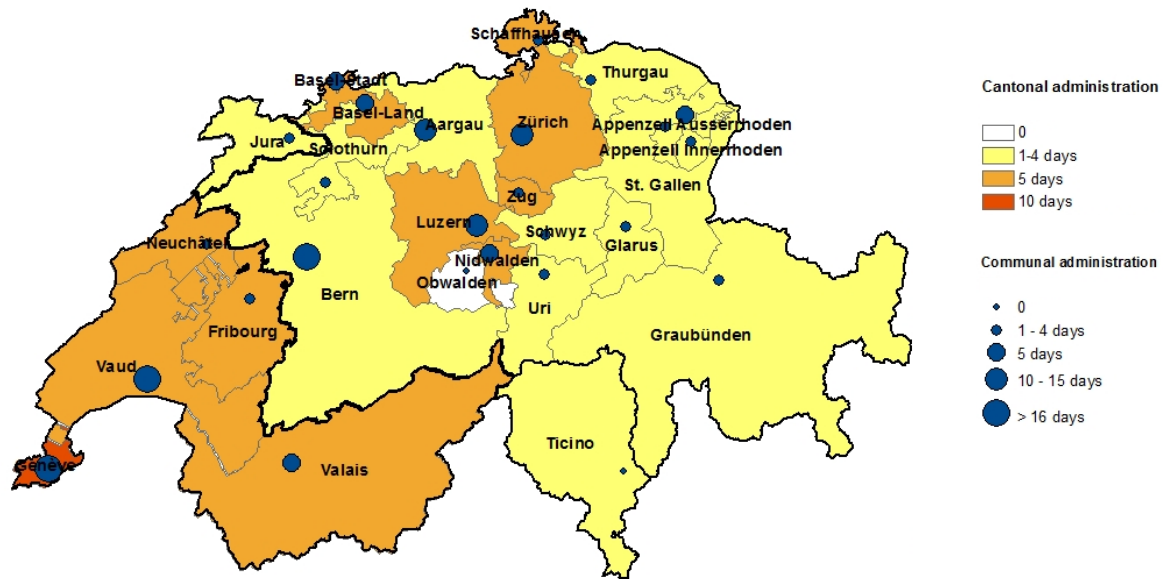
Considerable regional variations are also found among public employers. Figure 30 shows that the French-speaking cantons grant longer paternity leaves than the other regions (German-speaking and Italian-speaking). As regards paternity leave granted by communal administrations, the linguistic divide is less clear. It seems that it is the size of the communal administrative center which is more relevant for explaining leave length differences. The largest cities in Switzerland are Zürich, Geneva, Basel, Lausanne (Canton of Vaud) and Bern. It is these cities which have the longest paternity leaves (large dots in Figure 30).

Finally, forms of unpaid **parental leave** are also often provided in the public sector (see Appendix 22 and 23). 75% of the cantonal and communal administrations provide such a leave, ranging from two months to two years. In sharp contrast, only 20% of private companies grant such opportunities, the majority between one month and one year of leave (Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005, p. 26). There are several aspects about unpaid leaves which indicate a deterring effect on the likelihood of their use by employees. Unpaid parental leave is also often granted without any length specification. This makes unclear the extent to which unpaid leave is deemed legitimate in the work organization and it leaves open to negotiation the length of the leave the employees may claim from their employer. Also, in the majority of cases, these leaves are designated as “unpaid” or “sabbatical” leaves, which can be—among other reasons—used for childcare reasons. They are therefore not explicitly designated as parental leaves. Finally, these leaves are subject to the work organization’s approval, provided that the absence does not interfere with a smooth running of the organization.

Furthermore, among the cantons and communes under observation, which have adopted the principle of unpaid leave (44 out of 52), 34% have enacted gendered eligibility rules. That is, the leave is either targeted at mothers only or male civil servants are entitled to shorter unpaid leaves than their female colleagues. Figure 31 shows there are also regional differences with regard to the types of parental leave provided by public employers.

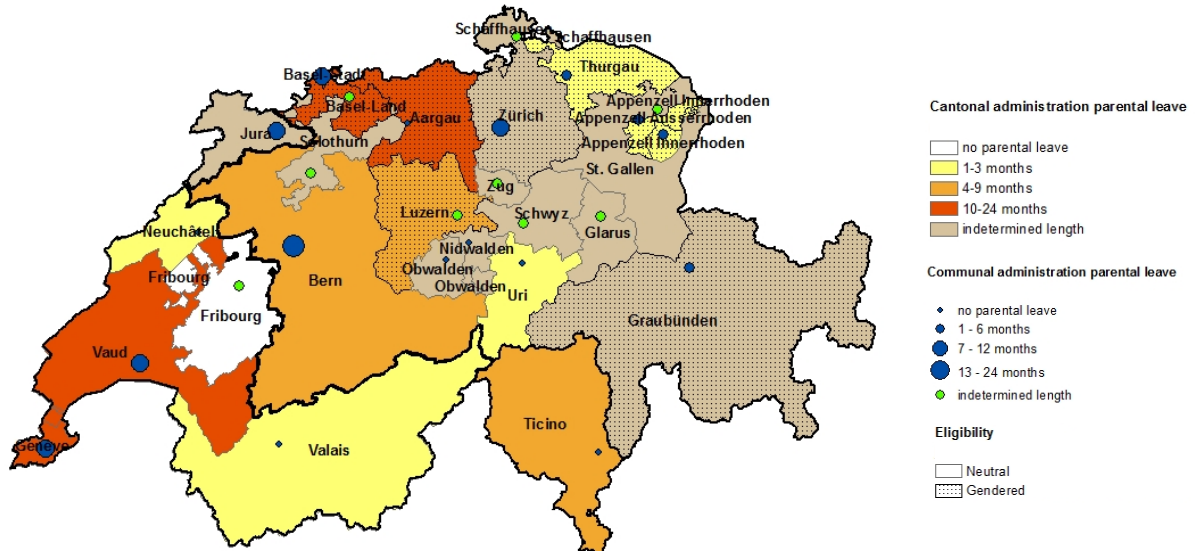
²⁰⁹ Data was collected in 2011. It mainly concerns the private sector; 10% of the sample are public administrations.

Figure 30 - Number of paid paternity leave days among public employers



Source: Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02.2012 for 52 public cantonal and communal administrations; extracted from: information platform “Work-family conciliation: cantonal and communal measures” SECO/FSIO;
 Note: the three main linguistic regions are delimited by thick lines on the map. The French-speaking region is located in the Western part of Switzerland (Cantons of Neuchâtel, Fribourg, Valais, Vaud and Geneva), the Italian-speaking region constitutes the southern part (Canton of Ticino) and the rest of Switzerland (central and eastern parts) is German-speaking.

Figure 31 - Number of unpaid parental leave months among public employers



Source: Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02.2012, extracted from: information platform “Work-family conciliation: cantonal and communal measures” SECO/FSIO.

The eastern part of Switzerland is more often marked by unpaid leaves which are specifically targeted at mothers and for which no length has been specified. For example in the Canton of Graubünden, because unpaid leave can only follow paid maternity leave, it is indirectly targeted at mothers only:

If no serious operational reasons speak against it, the office can grant, subsequent to the paid maternity leave, for unpaid leave if the employee so requests and if the employment relationship continues after the birth.²¹⁰ (Personnel regulation of the Canton of Graubünden, as of 2006)

In the Canton of Zürich, mothers are allowed to request an unpaid leave after the end of their maternity leave, with no maximum length. In contrast, employed fathers are allowed to request maximum one month of unpaid leave during the first year of the child.²¹¹ Public employers in central and Western Switzerland have more often adopted unpaid leaves with a definite period of time, but with very different lengths—up to two years in the Canton of Geneva and the city of Bern.

Overall, if we consider Figures 30 and 31, we observe leave generosity varies according to linguistic regions and types of settlements. These differences can be interpreted in the light of the Swiss specificities described in Chapter I. In the German-speaking part of Switzerland, individuals hold more conservative gender attitudes and are more reluctant to extend welfare provisions than those living in the Latin-speaking part (Bühler, 1998). Also, Elisabeth Bühler and Verena Meier Kruker (2002, pp. 308-309) have shown that traditional male-breadwinner family models are less common in the French-speaking region as well as in urban areas, as compared with German- and Italian-speaking regions and suburban and rural settlements. The stronger presence of more gender-equal family models in these contexts could explain that more generous work-family life reconciliation measures are implemented by public employers to meet these demands. Furthermore it is also likely that, considering that the Latin-speaking region is overall more keen to extend welfare provisions than the German-speaking one, policy transfer mechanisms (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000) take place specifically in the Latin-speaking regions. Following this line of thought, political actors at the cantonal and communal councils would be influenced by the leave schemes implemented in the neighboring countries (i.e., France and Italy), and encouraged to develop more generous parental and paternity leaves in the public sector.²¹²

Using a simple scatterplot method, it is possible to observe that public employers who grant more generous maternity leaves also tend to grant more generous paternity leave (see Figure 32). The positive regression line illustrates this. However, there is considerable heterogeneity among public employers who grant a median maternity leave (16 weeks) with regard to the paternity leave they provide.

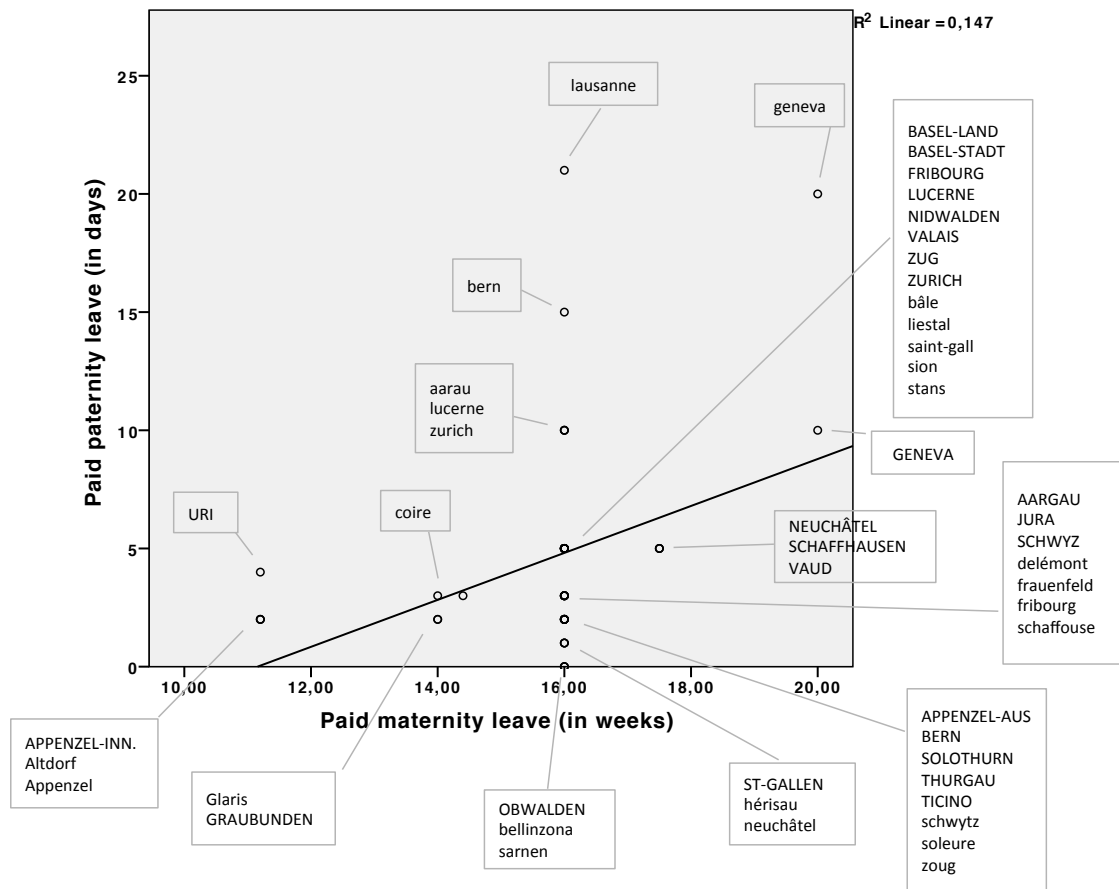
²¹⁰ Sprechen keine schwerwiegenden betrieblichen Gründe dagegen, gewährt die Dienststelle anschliessend an den bezahlten Mutterschaftsurlaub einen unbezahlten Urlaub, wenn die Mitarbeiterin dies beantragt und das Arbeitsverhältnis nach der Niederkunft fortgesetzt

wird. (<http://www.berufundfamilie.admin.ch/informationsplattform/files/001870/Personalverordnung.pdf>)

²¹¹ http://www.berufundfamilie.admin.ch/informationsplattform/files/005769/ZH_177.111_Vollzugsverordnung_Personalgesetz.pdf

²¹² This argument could be further explored by analyzing the propositions in favour of parental and paternity leaves submitted by political actors at the cantonal and communal levels and their distribution across linguistic regions. This however goes beyond the purpose of this section.

Figure 32 - Correlation between maternity and paternity leave generosity among public employers



Source: Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02.2012, extracted from: information platform "Work-family conciliation: cantonal and communal measures" SECO/FSIO.

Notes: Several public employers share the same combination of maternity and paternity leaves lengths, which explains that several cantons and communes are located on the same spot in the figure. Cantons are indicated in uppercase letters and communes in lowercase letters. Maternity leave lengths were calculated considering the length of fully compensated leave. For example, when maternity leave is paid at 80% of salary for 14 weeks, it is the equivalence of 11.2 weeks paid at 100% which is indicated.

Some researchers have investigated the factors influencing differences of leave provision among public employers. Gesine Fuchs (2004) showed that the presence of a cantonal gender-equality office influences the probability of the development of more generous leave policies in public administrations. François Charvoz (2010) found positive correlations between generous work-family life measures in public administrations (including leave policies) and the high proportion of women in politics at the canton level, a Protestant religious majority, as well as a plural party composition in the legislative chamber (favoring consensus).

In sum, according to the available data, only a minority of employees working in the private sector are entitled to even a short paid paternity leave. For example, 26% of employees subject to collective labor agreements (which already represent only 50% of employees on the labor market) are entitled to a paternity leave of 2 to 5 days. And even if the public sector provides more advantageous paternity leave and parental leave opportunities than the private ones,

variations according to gender, seniority and linguistic regions were noted, which indicate that there are very heterogeneous situations among civil servants too.

The development of parental leave policies in the public sector and in some branches of activity in the private sector correspond to what are referred to as “enclave social policies”; they benefit only specific sections of the population (Seeleib-Kaiser & Fleckenstein, 2009, p. 760, citing Pearson and Seyfang, 2001, p. 66; Root, 1982, p. 16). In this sense, although they represent an improvement of social policies in some sectors and for some individuals, they do not replace state institutionalized measures. For instance, these measures depend on companies’ willingness and possibly on a favorable economic context. When companies implement such “private social policies”, they “retain unlimited discretion over all policy decisions” (Mares, 2003, p. 235). Also, as already mentioned, they are conditional on labor unions’ sensitivity and interest in promoting them in the frame of collective labor agreement negotiations. These agreements have a limited longevity and are subject to renewal. Thus only statutory measures can secure individuals their rights and guarantee equal minimum conditions for all employees.

1.4. Public employers as pioneers

There are several rationales which prompt work organizations to develop parental leave policies and, more generally, family-friendly policies. Sarah Wise and Sue Bond (2003) argue that approximately since the 1990s, there has been a trend among employers to introduce voluntarily working conditions which go beyond the legal framework, to facilitate work-family life reconciliation. These measures consist in different types of leaves for family reasons, the possibility of changing working arrangements (e.g., working part-time or adopting a flexible work schedule), to receive practical help with childcare and eldercare as well as relevant information and training (Evans, 2001).

There are two main theoretical explanations for the development of such measures: neo-institutional and rational-choice theories (Dulk & Peper, 2007). First, neo-institutional theories explain companies’ behaviors by changes in the labor force (an increasing proportion of employed parents, i.e., mothers; a shortage of high-skilled workers) and institutional pressures from the state, as well as a public concern to address work-life reconciliation issues. Research conducted in English-speaking countries and continental European countries shows that large companies and public sector organizations are particularly sensitive to such pressures (Dulk & Peper, 2009, p. 9) and more likely to develop family-friendly policies (Evans, 2001; Lefèvre, Pailhé, & Solaz, 2008; Seeleib-Kaiser & Fleckenstein, 2009). The public sector may also be particularly sensitive to policy transfer mechanisms (Dolowitz & Marsh, 2000) and be influenced by social and leave policies developed in neighboring countries.

The development of corporate social and family policies depends on employers’ need of a workforce with high general skills. Because such skills are highly “portable”, employers have to attract these workers. Trade unions can also influence the development of corporate social and family policies (Seeleib-Kaiser & Fleckenstein, 2009, pp. 744-745; Trampusch, 2007). The development of extra-statutory measures by companies and companies’ preferences as regards social policies depend on a country’s institutional arrangements and political economy (Mares,

2003). John Evans (2001) investigated the relationship between statutory and extra-statutory maternity leaves in a set of industrialized countries. He suggests that the relation between national legislations and private provisions follows a reversed U curve. State-regulated leaves encourage the development of extra-statutory leaves up to a certain point and then tend to displace them. This is illustrated in the Nordic countries, where high national provisions and low firm-based provisions are observed. In continental European countries, high firm-based provisions and above-average national leave provision are observed. There is, however, more variance among southern European countries. Finally, English-speaking countries—“where economic support for the family has traditionally been considered to be both outside the public domain and also not the responsibility of the firms”—show overall low provisions of statutory and extra-statutory maternity leave (Evans, 2001, p. 23).

As noted in Chapter I, Switzerland is a hybrid welfare state model, oriented towards European continental “conservative-corporatist” countries, but with still strong liberal traits. Considering Evans’ (2001) description, the relation between statutory and extra-statutory leaves in Switzerland reflects this hybrid and complex character. On the one hand, maternity leave in Switzerland does follow the same trend observed as in other continental countries: statutory maternity leave is supplemented by more generous firm- or collective agreement-based leaves. On the other hand, as regards parental and paternity leave, while there are no statutory leaves (in line with the liberal approach to family policies in Anglo-Saxon countries) they are increasingly seen as the responsibility of firms.

The second theoretical explanation for the development of firm-level family policies is the rational-choice theory, also referred to as the “business-case” rationale, which posits that the benefits from such family-friendly arrangements outweigh their costs and are therefore considered beneficial by companies (Evans, 2001, pp. 24-26; Eydoux, Gomel, & Letablier, 2009). These measures are said to facilitate the recruitment process and the retention of employees, as well as to enhance their motivation by creating a supportive working environment (Wise & Bond, 2003). The improvement of work-family life reconciliation conditions particularly aim to attract and retain highly skilled profile employees, among others women with children. Further arguments concern the reduction of absenteeism and stress associated with work and family demands and therefore the enhancement of productivity (S. Lewis, 2010).

Such concerns are shared in the Swiss labor market. For example, several large private companies in Switzerland mandated a research report on the outcomes of work-family policies, for which a return on investment of 8% was found (Prognos, 2005). The return on investment was estimated taking into account companies’ reduced expenses due to lower turnover among employees, and the longer work hours they fulfilled after their return to work. It did not take into account other positive consequences such as the motivation, loyalty and availability of employees.

There are further mechanisms which prompt public employers in particular to implement work-family reconciliation measures. Public employers are said to pursue equity objectives, on the basis of their social role to be model employers and to set examples for the private sector (Fox, Ward, & Howard, 2002). Also, as Robert Gregory and Jeff Borland (1999) note, the public sector differs from the private sector because decision-making about wages and benefits lie in the hands of politicians and bureaucrats and not in a market environment. In addition to efficiency

goals, politicians may pursue equity goals. They are also, to a certain extent, under the pressure of the general public opinion and voters' control.

Also, public employers face the competition of the private labor market in a context of labor-power shortage (Äijälä, 2001). On the one hand, in many countries (including Switzerland)²¹³ there is a public sector wage premium, which gives a certain advantage to the private sector in recruitment processes (R. G. Gregory & Borland, 1999, pp. 3589-3594). On the other hand, this mainly concerns the bottom of the earnings distribution (i.e., lower and middle range positions). Private sector earnings are higher than in the public sector at the top of the earnings distribution (R. G. Gregory & Borland, 1999, pp. 3609-3610), which suggests that public employers may have trouble attracting highly skilled professionals and count on other dimensions of the work environment they offer to recruit these highly skilled employees.

Against this backdrop, the development in Switzerland of extra-statutory parental and paternity leaves implemented freely by employers or negotiated through collective agreements can be interpreted as part of the outcome of broader institutional influences and business-case rationales. Public employers can be seen as both aiming to be "model employers", as well as competing with the private sector for highly skilled labor. Therefore they have engaged to a greater extent in developing work-family life reconciliation measures than private companies. The public sector can therefore be considered a pioneer in this domain, and constitutes an interesting social laboratory for investigating the experiences of parental and paternity leave policy implementation and uptake in Switzerland. Furthermore, although the size of the Swiss public employment sector is small in comparison with other European and industrialized countries,²¹⁴ it nonetheless represents a significant proportion of the active population; i.e. 15.2% in 2005 (Koller, 2008). It is therefore of great interest to investigate how parental leave policies are implemented and used in these work organizations, as they concern a substantial number of employees, if not today, maybe in the future.

2. Case study of paternity leave implementation

The previous section showed that although public employers grant more generous leave policies than private ones, there is a wide variety among public employers. Among the cantonal and communal administrative centers, the commune of Lausanne has developed one of the most generous leave schemes in Switzerland, notably with the implementation of a one-month (21 days) paid paternity leave (see Figure 33). Therefore, in order to analyze the challenging potential of leave policies for the gender structure in Switzerland, it is relevant to conduct a case study within the City of Lausanne, a public employer which offers comparatively generous

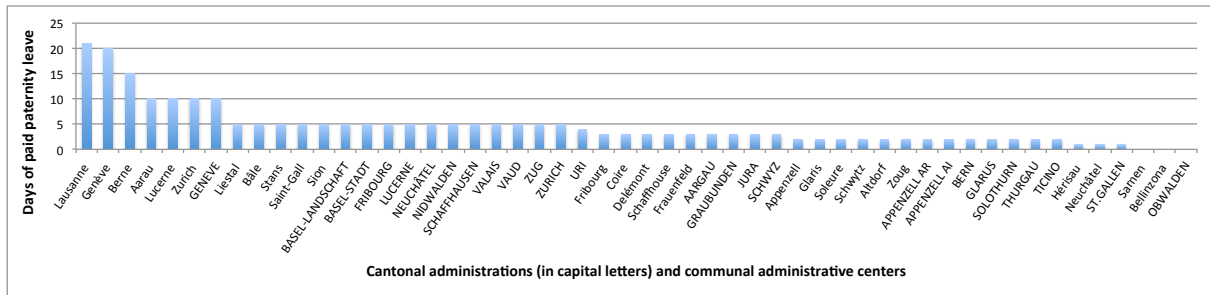
²¹³ In Switzerland, in 2010, the mean gross monthly income in the private sector was CHF 5,928 and amounted to CHF 7,460 in the public sector. This mean was calculated on the basis of the communal, cantonal and confederation average earnings:

http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/03/04/blank/key/lohnstruktur/im_oeffentlichen_sektor.htm

²¹⁴ In 2005, 15.2% of the active population in Switzerland was employed in the public sector, below the OECD mean and that of Scandinavian countries (>25%), France (21%) and Germany (18%). The cantons and the communes employ respectively 42% and 38% of civil servants, the rest is employed by the Confederation (Koller, 2008, pp. 11-12).

paternity leave. Below, I present in more detail the City of Lausanne and give an overview of the work organization and its working conditions. I also develop the reasons for conducting a case study and present the methodology applied and the data used for the analysis.

Figure 33 - Paid paternity leaves in 52 public administrations



Source: Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02.2012, extracted from: information platform “Work-family conciliation: cantonal and communal measures” SECO/FSIO.

2.1. A gender-equal and “father-friendly” employer?

The City of Lausanne

The public administration of the City of Lausanne—hereafter referred to as “Admin”—employs some 5,000 civil servants. The city, part of the French-speaking area, is the fourth in size of Switzerland and counts approximately 135,000 inhabitants. The agglomeration counts 170,000 jobs and is economically dynamic; among others, research, sports, finance, insurance and service work organizations are active. An elected body of seven communal councilors—the executive body of the city—runs Admin. Since the 1990s, left-wing parties (Labor, Socialist and Green) have dominated the legislative and the executive bodies of the city. In the current legislature (2011-2016), the Parliament is composed of 62% left-wing councilors and 38% right-wing councilors.²¹⁵ This political composition has impacted the development of the working conditions and social benefits granted to the employees of Admin, notably concerning work-family life reconciliation policies. One of the guidelines of the human resource management policy is the “individualization of working conditions”:

The Municipality of Lausanne favors flexible and adjustable working conditions in order to enable employees to reach a harmonious balance between occupational and personal life.²¹⁶ (Human resource management guideline, presented on Admin’s website)

Gender-equality and work-life reconciliation policies

The orientation of Admin towards gender equality and support of a father-friendly environment can be observed across three sets of characteristics: (1) a gender-equality policy program and

²¹⁵ <http://www1.lausanne.ch/ville-officielle/conseil-communal/composition.html>

²¹⁶ La Municipalité de Lausanne favorise des conditions de travail souples et adaptables afin de permettre à ses collaboratrices et collaborateurs d’atteindre un équilibre harmonieux entre vies professionnelle et personnelle (City of Lausanne website <http://www1.lausanne.ch/ville-officielle/travailler-a-la-ville/employeur-ville-de-lausanne/politique-du-personnel.html>)

work-life reconciliation measures (2) a comprehensive parental leave scheme (3) a gender-equality oriented paternity leave scheme.

(1) Admin has developed since the 1990s various gender-equality measures (de Montmollin & Berset, 2010) and promotes them actively on its website (see Appendix 24). Originally, it aimed to promote women in the work organization and to prevent sexual harassment. Various programs and measures were also implemented in order to increase the proportion of female civil servants, to improve their professional situation in terms of position and salary and to promote mixed working environments. The development of gender-equality policies in Admin was marked by the creation in 1993 of a permanent gender-equality officer position. In 1995, gender equality was inscribed in the personnel regulation (Art. 74, Regulation for the personnel of the communal administration, 2010). Policies were further developed to improve work-family life reconciliation measures and life quality at work. For example, a flexible work schedule, which enables employees to arrange individual working hours outside determined blocked working periods, was adopted. This scheme was progressively implemented from 2009 in all departments. Some sections—notably in the Security and Sports, Public Works and Youth & Social Services departments—were still in the process of implementation in 2012. A 2005 report by the Gender Equality Officer stated that a better work-life reconciliation should be promoted for both men and women, including for management positions:

This objective [work-family life reconciliation] depends on the increase of opportunities to work part-time and to adopt a flexible work schedule, for men as much as for women, and for management positions as well. The emphasis will need to be placed on the promotion of part-time work for men in general and in particular for fathers who wish to invest in the family sphere²¹⁷ (Ville de Lausanne, 2005, p. 8)

Admin also grants employees a comprehensive parental leave scheme, and an annual leave of ten days to care for sick children. Since 2008, employees' children have had access to ECEC services and since 2009 they have benefited from emergency daycare solutions for special circumstances when parents must attend work.

(2) Admin has a comprehensive parental leave scheme, which exceeds by far the legal minimum applicable to the private labor market, as well as that of the majority of other public employers (see Appendix 22 and 23, and Table 14).²¹⁸ Since 1991, civil servants have been granted four months of paid maternity leave and one additional month of breastfeeding leave, upon presentation of a medical certificate. In 1991, adoptive parents were granted two months of paid leave, and from 2007, the length was increased to four months.²¹⁹ Unpaid extended leaves (up to one year)—meant for training purposes or as parental leave—were also introduced in 1991. These leaves are granted “in exceptional cases” and upon special request (Art. 54, Regulation for the personnel of the communal administration, 2010). Since 1992, employed parents have been entitled to 10 days maximum annual leave to care for a sick or injured child. In 1998, five days of paid paternity leave were introduced, in addition to the day of birth which already existed.

²¹⁷ Cet objectif [conciliation travail et famille] passe par une augmentation des opportunités de travail à temps partiel et d'aménagement du temps de travail, autant pour les hommes que pour les femmes, et pour les postes à responsabilité également. L'accent devra être mis sur la promotion du travail à temps partiel pour les hommes en général et plus particulièrement pour les pères de famille souhaitant s'investir dans la sphère familiale.

²¹⁸ There are few other public employers which provide a similar leave scheme, for example the city of Geneva.

²¹⁹ If both parents work at Admin, one parent is entitled to 4 months and the other parent to 2 months.

Paternity leave is addressed to employed men as well as to female civil servants who are in a registered partnership and whose female partners gave birth. In 2010, paternity leave was extended by 15 days, summing up the leave to a total maximum of 21 working days (equivalent to four weeks and approximately one month of leave). This represents the longest paternity leave available in communal and cantonal public administrations (see Figure 33).

Table 14 - Leave scheme of the City of Lausanne

Type of leave	Benefits	Year of introduction
Maternity leave	4 months paid at 100%	1991
Breastfeeding leave	1 month in the event of breastfeeding (on presentation of a medical certificate)	1991
Adoption leave	2 months paid at 100% Currently 4 months paid at 100%	1991 2007
Extended leave	Up to one year of unpaid leave upon special request, for parental leave or training purposes	1991
Paternity leave	6 paid days to take within the first 3 months 21 paid days to take within the first year	1998 2010
Sick children leave	10 days per year paid at 100% in the event of sickness or accident of a child	1992

Source: de Montmollin & Berset (2010)

The extension of paternity leave was the result of Elisabeth Wermelinger’s motion, a Green communal councilor. Submitted in 2007, it was entitled: “The City of Lausanne sets the example! Motion requesting a better work-family life conciliation for civil servants, by increasing paternity leave” (Communal council of Lausanne, 2007, p. 581).²²⁰ It was accepted in March 2010 by a large majority of the Council (Communal council of Lausanne, 2010, pp. 325-333) and came into force in May 1st 2010. Wermelinger’s rationales for an extended paternity leave were improving the father-child bond and gender equality, facilitating the transition to parenthood for couples and positioning Admin as model employer in the Swiss labor market. The report-notice established by the Municipality—proposing the acceptance of the motion—highlighted gender-equality objectives:

*Paternity leave also plays an important role for gender equality in the couple; besides support for the mother, fathers’ availability enables an equitable division of parental tasks linked to the arrival of the child to be adopted during this key moment*²²¹ (Communal council of Lausanne, 2010, p. 330).

(3) The characteristics of paternity leave’s entitlement and payment are oriented towards gender equality and fathers’ leave uptake. The leave is paid at 100% and is an individual right addressed to fathers who have a fixed contract with Admin. Ad-hoc personnel can be hired to replace the employee, upon approval of the director in charge. The request to take paternity

²²⁰ La Ville de Lausanne montre l'exemple! Motion demandant une meilleure conciliation entre le travail et la vie de famille pour les employé-e-s de la Ville de Lausanne en augmentant le congé paternité.

²²¹ Le congé paternité joue également un rôle important en matière d'égalité dans le couple; en effet, la disponibilité du père, outre qu'elle permet de soulager la mère, rend possible que se mette en place, à ce moment charnière, une répartition équitable des tâches parentales liées à l'arrivée de l'enfant.

leave days must be addressed to the supervisor, as with the procedure for taking vacation days. The leave can be taken in one block, in weeks or in individual days. However, the following criteria must be respected:

- the first day must be taken the day of birth (the day is lost if childbirth happens during a non-working day)
- five days must be taken during the month after the arrival of the newborn child at home
- 15 days can be taken during the first year of the child

The Gender Equality and Life Quality at Work Officer—Ms. Véronique Bald—was involved in the development of these leave modalities and participated in the commission which proposed the adoption of the motion. She reports that gender equality was one of the reasons for adopting these modalities, and that it also aims to counter balance the gendering effect of maternity leave for the division of tasks in the couple.

To fulfill an equality objective, mainly, well, at least one week during [...] the first month [Yes, yes]. That's really an "equality objective", I mean that's hands-on fathering, straight from the beginning! And not that he waits that the child is better accustomed in his daily life.²²² (Véronique Bald, Gender Equality Officer)

During maternity leave, there is an organization which is put in place with the arrival of the child, around this reality: she's there to take care of the child. And to grant a paternity leave can reduce the impact of... [Yes, yes]... of what is adopted.²²³ (Véronique Bald, Gender Equality Officer)

The persistence of a gendered organizational structure

In comparison with other work organizations, Admin proposes a “family-friendly” and a “father-friendly” work environment. The description of the structure and composition of Admin shows, however, that gender inequalities remain. Over the last 20 years, the proportion of men and women working in Admin has converged, but in 2009, men still represented the majority of employees (57.8% men and 42.8% women in 2009, against 71.6% of men and 28.4% of women in 1989) (de Montmollin & Berset, 2010). Both a vertical and horizontal gender segregation can be observed. The increase of female work force concerns mainly employee positions, while men remain over-represented in managerial positions: in 1989, their share represented 86% (versus only 14% of women) and in 2009, it decreased slightly to 72% (versus 28% of women).

Horizontal segregation can be observed with the gender composition of departments (see Figure 34).²²⁴ Security and Sports, Public Works, Finance and Green Heritage as well as the Industrial departments are masculine; i.e., more than two-thirds of the employees are men. There is one predominantly female-dominated department; the Youth and Social Services department, which employs 78.6% women and 21.4% men. Finally, there are two mixed working environments:

²²² pour répondre à un objectif d'égalité, hein, surtout, euh au moins une semaine pendant [...] le premier mois...

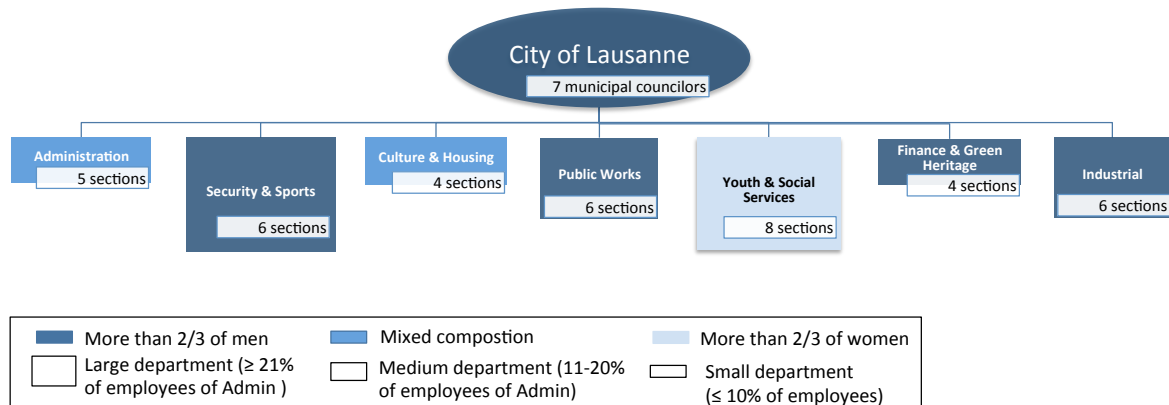
(Ouais, ouais) Voilà, ça c'est vraiment un objectif "égalité", c'est-à-dire que le papa il aille mettre la main à la pâte, tout de suite! Et pas qu'il attende que le gamin soit un petit peu mieux réglé dans son quotidien de vie...

²²³ en congé mat', et y'a une organisation qui se met en place à l'arrivée de l'enfant, autour de cette réalité là, elle est là pour s'occuper de l'enfant. Et le fait de donner un congé paternité ça peut diminuer l'impact de...*(ouais, ouais)* ...de ce qui se met en place.

²²⁴ Figures were provided by the Gender Equality Office (as of May 2012).

Administration and Culture and Housing departments. Comparing the evolution between 1989 and 2009, the Gender Equality Office noted the slow but constant increase of the share of women in typically male occupations, such as police (from 1% to 17%), architecture (from 11% to 35%) and truck driver (from none to 6%). Inversely, there were 11% of male kitchen aid in 2009 (there were none in 1989) and 6% of male early-childhood educators (against 3% in 1989) (de Montmollin & Berset, 2010).

Figure 34 - Organizational chart of the City of Lausanne



Notes: The organizational chart presents the situation as of July 2011, which was valid at the time the data was collected. In September 2012, a remodeling of departments was performed at the level of the Municipality. Sections are further divided in divisions, which are in turn divided into units.

Finally, another clear illustration of persisting gender inequalities in Admin is the proportion of men and women working part-time. As the Gender-Equality Office noted, full-time activity remains men's prerogative (de Montmollin & Berset, 2010). In 1989, 96% of men worked full-time and in 2009, this still concerned 91% of them. Only 9% of male civil servants work part-time. Women have tended to opt increasingly more for part-time positions: in 1989, this concerned 59% of female employees and in 2009, 72% of them. Interestingly, the proportion of men working part-time in Admin is lower than the average in the Swiss labor market, which in 2009 accounted for 13% of the male employed population. Conversely, there are considerably more women working part-time within Admin than in the Swiss labor market (72% versus 57.8%).²²⁵

Summary

In sum, Admin proposes a comprehensive work-family life reconciliation and gender-equality policies, within which parental leave policies are embedded. The extended paternity leave is the result of a long-term work-family life reconciliation policy rooted in a political will at the legislative and executive administrative levels to improve gender equality. It is important to note that it is not, as previously noted for some private companies, the result of the participation in a collective labor agreement or the result of a strategy of alignment on concurrent employers. However, this *a priori* favorable work environment for gender equality, work-family life reconciliation, and father involvement, does not translate into a fully gender-equal structural integration of men and women in the work organization.

²²⁵ <http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/erwerbstaetigkeit/teilzeitarbeit.html>

2.2. Case study methodological considerations

Conducting a *single* and *extreme* case study

Methodologically, conducting a single case study has many implications, and comprises both strengths and weaknesses. Conducting a *single case study*, as opposed to a *multiple case study* design (Yin, 2009, pp. 46-50), implies that only one work organization offering an extended paternity leave is investigated. This means that there is no empirical comparison possible with other work organizations granting a similar paternity leave, but which would differ from Admin on other potentially relevant dimensions, such as for example, the size (e.g., small or medium-sized instead of large), or the location (e.g., Swiss German instead of Swiss French). Also, no control work organization was investigated, which prevents making any empirical comparisons concerning fatherhood representations and practices in companies which do not grant any paternity leave. Furthermore, the results of this case study specifically concern civil servants. Employees working in the public sector can be viewed as being self-selected into a particular work environment, and having a specific work motivation. The research literature emphasizes that they differ from private sector employees as regards their personality and values (more altruistic and driven by the public interest and less motivated by monetary rewards) and that they spend on average less time at work and report lower levels of work-family life conflict than private sector employees (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007; Giauque, Ritz, Varone, Anderfuhren-Biget, & Waldner, 2011; Wright, 2001).²²⁶

Notwithstanding these weaknesses and keeping in mind these sampling biases, there are three major reasons which justify conducting a single case study on the City of Lausanne. One of the strengths of case study methodology—defined by Flyvbjerg (2011, p. 301) as intensive research which focuses on an individual unit with set boundaries—is the fact that it includes more details than cross-unit analysis. A single case study can be very rich and comprise embedded subunits (Yin, 2009, pp. 50-53). Admin is a large work organization composed of several departments and sections (see Figure 34) and counts some 400 different occupations represented. The analysis of this internal heterogeneity and of within-case characteristics can add to the comprehension of representations and practices of fatherhood and give insights about different work environments within the same work organization.

Secondly, case study methodology focuses on the relation between the case analyzed and its environment and context (Flyvbjerg, 2011, p. 301). This is precisely what I attempt to do in this research. Because the leave scheme is so minimal in Switzerland, the social processes around paternity leave (its implementation, its use and the normative assumptions about it) are still unknown. I argue that within the Swiss context, an intensive and exploratory analysis of a single case study is relevant. The aim is to investigate—through one example—the potential challenge to fatherhood representations and practices of paternity leave implementation.

²²⁶ However, Bradley Wright noted that results concerning the relation between employees' motives and the sector of employment were not always consistent and should be viewed with caution (Wright, 2001, p. 566). It should also be noted that in comparison with other countries, state employees in Switzerland are nonetheless a relatively heterogeneous group: they are hired for their professional or social skills (rather than on the basis of a specific education or a centralized competition), are generally not entitled to life-long tenure and do not have a particularly privileged social status compared to countries like France (Giauque et al., 2011, p. 233).

Thirdly, the selection of Admin as a single case study follows the principle of *extreme* case selection. An extreme case is selected because of “its extreme value on the independent (X) or dependent (Y) variable of interest. An extreme value is understood here as an observation that lies far away from the mean of a given distribution; that is to say, it is *unusual*” (Seawright & Gerring, 2008, p. 302). Admin was selected on the basis of its “extreme” and “unusual” family- and father-friendliness, in comparison with other work organizations and within the Swiss legal framework. Thus, as has been illustrated above, Admin grants a comparatively long paternity leave, embedded in a broader gender-equality and work-family life reconciliation policy which should *a priori* facilitate the articulation of private and professional lives of all employees—including men.

Case study process and limitations

The case study was conducted in collaboration with the Gender Equality and Life Quality at Work Officer, Ms. Véronique Bald, with whom the cooperation terms were negotiated. The Municipality agreed to provide access to anonymized register data on paternity leave recipients.²²⁷ The Municipality also supported the call for participation in interviews sent to employees who had benefited from paternity leave and among managers who had experienced leave uptake in their team. The support was logistic (spread of the call for qualitative interviews and register data compilation) and financial, as employees were allowed to do the interview during work hours. In addition, participants received a CHF 20 voucher for a department store.²²⁸ For confidentiality reasons, the call for participation in interviews was sent directly by Ms. Bald to civil servants. This implies a first bias in the sampling selection process, as the research was directly associated with the Gender Equality Office of Admin. This may have reduced the propensity to participate among civil servants who were critical of gender-equality issues and objectives.

Ms. Bald sent an email to employees who had used at least one day of paternity leave since the implementation of the extended paternity leave (May 1st 2010). The call for participation invited employees to exchange on their fatherhood and leave uptake experiences and to contact me for an interview (see Appendix 25). In order to approach all employees, including those without a fixed working location with a personal computer, HR respondents of each section posted leaflets in common rooms. The majority of interviewees responded by email, and fewer by telephone. This self-selection sampling strategy implied that mainly fathers who were most interested in fatherhood and paternity leave issues were included in the study. Even if incentives for participation may have broadened the circle of voluntary participants, including individuals who were also interested in the “advantages” offered by participation in the study (voucher and paid time off work), this probably implies that interviewees are comparatively more family oriented and may have more gender-equal attitudes than the other fathers in Admin.²²⁹

It should be noted that Admin only keeps track of employees who have used at least one day of

²²⁷ The decision of the Municipality to collaborate to the research was taken in a session held on February 9th 2012.

²²⁸ Vouchers were funded by the Institute of social sciences and the Gender Equality Office of the University of Lausanne.

²²⁹ As will be developed in the results section, the main indicator of a selection bias is the fact that all the fathers interviewed had used—or were planning to use—the total length of paternity leave, while approximately half of the total sample renounced to part of their leave.

paternity leave and childbirths of employees are not systematically registered by the administration. It was therefore not possible to contact fathers who had totally forgone their paternity leave rights. Employees who had not used any paternity leave were automatically excluded from the call and there is no trace of them in the register data. The lack of information about these fathers—their proportion and profile—represents a limitation due to the case study procedure.

Between May 2010 and 2012, 152 civil servants benefited from paternity leave, i.e., on average 2.5% of male employees per year.²³⁰ Out of these 152 employees, 31 responded positively to the call for participation in interviews, which corresponds to a response rate of 20%. However, only 22 fathers were interviewed. The limitation of the number of interviewees was decided during the fieldwork, when the responses started to outrun the time resources at my disposal for the case study. The first fifteen fathers were included in the sample without any selection, as they contacted me. The last seven fathers were selected in order to attain a diversity regarding the department where they worked, the changes in their working percentage following the birth and their occupation—in order to include individuals of a lower social class. A small screening questionnaire was sent by email for this purpose. Additional information was also taken into account. For example, an employee reported a conflictual reaction of his supervisor due to paternity leave uptake in the questionnaire and was included in the sample for this reason. All volunteers who were not interviewed had the possibility of answering a short semi-structured questionnaire by email on their leave use and experience. Four fathers returned it.

The process was slightly different for the sampling of managers. Ms. Bald sent all employees with a management position a standard email.²³¹ The call invited employees to exchange on their management of paternity leave uptake in their teams—if they had experienced one—and on their perception of work-family life reconciliation (see Appendix 26). I received 16 responses from managers, eight of whom were interviewed.²³² It is not possible to calculate a response rate for managers as I have no indication on the number of managers employed in Admin nor on the proportion of those who have experienced leave uptake in their team. I interviewed four managers without any selection criteria, while the next four interviews were selected in order to diversify the departments and sections represented, to prioritize managers who had experienced several leave uptakes in their teams (versus just one), to select managers with higher positions in Admin and finally, to have male as well as female managers. Thus, the only female manager who responded to the call was immediately included in the sample. The seven remaining managers who were not interviewed had the possibility of answering a semi-structured questionnaire by email; to which five of them responded.

All interviews were conducted from March to May 2012 and mainly took place at the interviewees' workplaces, which were scattered around Lausanne. Some interviews took place in a meeting room of the University of Lausanne, and more rarely in a restaurant and at the interviewees' homes. They lasted approximately between 45 minutes and two hours. Interviews with managers were shorter than the ones with fathers because the interview grid contained

²³⁰ In May 2012, 2997 men were employed at the City of Lausanne (data computed by the Gender Equality Office).

²³¹ There is a hierarchical ranking of positions at Admin. (a) 1A to 4: head of sections and executive managers; (b) 5 to 12: managers; (c) 13-21: graduate employee position; (d) 22-27: employee position. The call for participation was sent to managers from category (a) and (b).

²³² In few cases, the managers interviewed were the supervisors of sampled fathers, but this was the result of chance in the sampling process.

fewer questions and because the relationship established was more formal than that with fathers who shared more personal and intimate experiences.

2.3. Data and methodology

Quantitative sample

The register data was delivered by the Gender Equality and Life Quality at Work Office in July 2012, comprising information on employees who had taken at least one day of paternity leave since the implementation of the new 21 days regime (May 1st 2010) and until May 1st 2012. The uptake modalities of paternity leave imply that it is possible for employees to take the leave over one year and that therefore the data set was complete for one year only (May 2010-May 2011). All employees who had not taken 21 days in total from May 2011 were excluded from the data set. This reduced the data set from 152 to 95 individuals (hereafter referred to as “quantitative sample”).²³³ This data set comprises only those who had used all their leave days, or who had forgone their right to use the remaining days (i.e., the one year deadline had expired). The motivation for using this data set was my research interest in exploring patterns of leave use and potential gender-equality effects. As gender-equality effects are directly dependent on men’s use of leave policies and length of uptake, it was relevant to limit the data set to the individuals for whom the picture of leave uptake was complete.

In addition to paternity leave use, I requested from Admin further information on the use of vacation days by the leave recipients during the period after the start of their paternity leave. This request was the result of the first insights of the qualitative interviews which had started before the register data was delivered. Interviewed fathers mentioned that they used vacation days—sometimes interchangeably with their stock of paternity leave days. This reflects the Swiss context where every leave day seems to count, in contrast with countries where several months are granted to parents. The same concern is expressed by Joseph Pleck (1993, pp. 228-229) who argues in favor of analyzing, in the American context, what he calls “informal paternity leave”, i.e., vacation and sick days off, even if it amounts only to five or six days in total.

The register data contains the following information:

- Individual variables: age, seniority in Admin, working percentage and occupation.
- Work environment: department, section, and their respective size and gender composition.
- Paternity leave use: start and end dates of paternity leave uptake.²³⁴
- Vacation use: start and end dates of vacation day uptake during the period following the birth of the child.

Out of the 95 leave recipients of the quantitative sample, the majority of leave uptakes were

²³³ In some of the analysis, 96 cases are distinguished, because one employee had two children within the 2 years of observation period and benefitted from two paternity leaves.

²³⁴ I consider the first date of paternity leave use as the date of birth of the child. The exact date of the birth is not available. However, as the day of birth is lost if it is not used and as the first 5 days should be used within the first month, we consider that the first date available is a good proxy for the date of birth (with approximately one month of error margin).

concentrated in two departments: Security & Sports (40% of leave uptakes) and Public Works (27% of leave uptakes), two male dominated work environments. The rest of leave uptakes took place in the other departments (see Table 15).

Table 15 - Distribution of quantitative and qualitative sample by department

Departments	Size of department (Number of employees)	Gender composition of department (% of male employees)	Quantitative sample: percentage of leave recipients (N=95)	Qualitative sample: number of leave recipients (% of total)	Qualitative sample: number of managers
Administration	Small (236)	Mixed (53%)	2%	2 (9%)	0
Security & Sports	Large (1118)	Male (70%)	40%	5 (23%)	3
Culture & Housing	Small (417)	Mixed (34%)	4%	0 (0%)	1
Public Works	Medium (875)	Male (86.5%)	27%	5 (23%)	1
Youth & Social Services	Large (1711)	Female (21.5%)	9.5%	4 (18%)	1
Finance & Green Heritage	Small (446)	Male (81.5%)	7%	0 (0%)	0
Industrial	Medium (583)	Male (79.5%)	9.5%	6 (27%)	2
TOTAL	5386	Mixed (56%)	100%	22 (100%)	8

Notes: For the size of department, the following thresholds were determined: small department: 10% or less than the total number of employees; medium department: between 11 and 20%; large department: 21% or more. For the gender composition of the department, 2/3 (66.6%) or more of employees from the same sex category were considered as a male or female work environment.

The mean age of fathers who benefited from paternity leave is 36 years old, the standard deviation (i.e., the estimate of the average variability) is 5.5 years and the age dispersion goes from 23 to 57 years old. Regarding seniority, the mean number of years of employment in Admin is eight years, the standard deviation is six years and the dispersion goes from 1 to 28 years of seniority (see Appendix 28). There are two modes (i.e., the most observed scores of the distribution): one and three years of seniority, indicating that often, employees tend to have children soon after their start at Admin. Almost 90% of the sample works full-time, while the rest works part-time—at percentages ranging between 50% and 85%.

In order to capture the social class of leave recipients, the occupational labels indicated in the register data were coded into the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-88) 4 digit codes.²³⁵ In a second step, the codes were collapsed using the European Socio-economic Classification (ESeC) 3 class version (Rose, Harrison, & Pevalin, 2010, pp. 10-21). The higher social class, entailing the so-called higher and lower salariat (e.g., engineers, psychologists, policemen with a managerial position and social workers) represents 38% of the quantitative

²³⁵ <http://laborsta.ilo.org/applv8/data/isco88e.html>

sample. The intermediate class (e.g., policemen, administrative assistants and clerks) represents 28% of leave recipients. Finally the working class (semi- and non-skilled workers such as electricians, lumberjacks and locksmiths) represents 34% of the sample.

Methodological approach

The register data provides essential background information to the qualitative study as well as an overview of the general trends of leave uptake patterns. However, this data has some limitations, as it was not collected through survey methods and therefore not crafted for the purpose of the analysis. This reduces the scope of the analyses that can be performed. In particular, information about the income, civil status, the number of children, and the partner's occupational status are missing.

In a first step, descriptive statistics and simple correspondence analysis are performed. The aim is to give an overview of leave use (e.g., mean number of days used, standard deviation) as well as to describe the profile of leave recipients on the basis of individual and work-environment characteristics. Chi-square tests are performed in order to see whether there is a significant relationship between different leave uses (i.e., making a full use—20 or 21 days—versus an incomplete use of the leave) and individual and work-environment factors.

In a second step, the ways in which individuals use their paternity and vacation leaves in an exact, day-by-day chronological perspective is analyzed. To this end all respondents are attributed a specific status (“on leave”, “on vacation” or “at work”) for each day during the first year following the birth of their child. This allows building individual trajectories of leave uptakes for the corresponding period. Sequence analysis makes it possible to compare the degree of similarity between these trajectories (MacIndoe & Abbott, 2010) based on the resulting distance matrix. Cluster analysis (Ward, 1963) enables one to group these trajectories into homogeneous clusters that form a typology. This methodology enables one to distinguish groups of employees who combine paternity leave and vacation days in similar ways, by taking into account the timing, frequency, and the duration of leave uptakes.

Qualitative sample

Qualitative data was collected conducting in-depth interviews with a set of voluntary civil servants. The majority of interviewed fathers are part of the quantitative sample, but not all of them because some had not yet used all of their leaves at the time of the interview. The following main issues of interest were addressed during the interview:

- For fathers: educational and occupational trajectory of the respondent and his partner; couple and childbearing history; paternity leave uptake process and experience (uptake pattern and leave use); transition to fatherhood and fatherhood identity; attitudes towards paternity leave and other leave schemes; work-family life reconciliation in the work environment, as well as domestic and childcare division of work.
- For managers: occupational trajectory and current work position of the respondent; some indications of the family situation (civil status, children, occupational status of the partner); paternity leave uptake and management in the team; attitudes towards

parental leave policies; work-family reconciliation for fathers in Admin and type of management.

Interview grids were used as templates to guide the interview process and questions were formulated in open-ended ways (see Appendix 29 and 30). They had been tested in a prior phase of the research process during pilot interviews (Appendix 27). The interview context was presented as a free space where interviewees could decide not to answer questions, stop the interview at any moment and develop additional themes if they wished. However, the interview process was constrained by the time frame available. The approximate length of the interview had been announced in the call for participation—respectively 45 minutes for managers and 1 to 1.5 hours for fathers—which led me to sometimes restrain interviewees in their narratives in order to conform to the schedule.²³⁶

Data was collected following Jean-Claude Kaufmann's (2001) *entretien compréhensif* methodology. I highlighted the fact that I was interested in interviewees' personal experiences and perceptions, suggesting thereby that there was no right or wrong answer. I adopted an open and supportive attitude towards the respondents' narratives and was attentive not to emit personal and/or judgmental views. I tried, to a certain extent, to adopt an empathic attitude, as defined by Rogers (1975): "entering the private perceptual world of the other and becoming thoroughly at home in it. [...] To be with another in this way means that for the time being you lay aside the views and values you hold yourself in order to enter another's world without prejudice" (p.4). This was a difficult task, as I personally hold gender-equality views. During the interview, I simultaneously tried to understand interviewees' gender attitudes and practices *and* to situate them according to my theoretical approach to gender relations and parenthood.

The *entretien compréhensif* methodology problematizes the fact that the data generated is the result of a dynamic between the interviewee and the interviewer. Through the interview process, the interviewee constructs social reality and gives meaning and unity to his identity and to his individual history (Kaufmann, 2001, pp. 60-61). The interview context was an opportunity for interviewees—and leave recipients in particular—to construct and reflect on what they considered to be their fathering practices and their fatherhood identity. The majority of fathers was keen on doing so and took advantage of the opportunity to share their experiences and feelings. However, it should be noted that two (interacting) dimensions influenced the construction of interviewees' narratives: social desirability and my influence as an interviewer (Kaufmann, 2001, pp. 65-67). First, gender equality and parenthood are topics which can trigger politically correct answers. Parenthood and parenting practices are also highly sensitive topics, because they potentially question individuals' competences and their compliance with the image of the "good parent". As regards managers, there is also social desirability to present oneself as a sensitive manager and/or to make a good impression on one's management competences. Secondly, as a female researcher in my early thirties, it is probable that interviewees anticipated my views on the issue of gender equality and to a certain extent were willing to correspond to what they thought were my expectations. However, some researchers argue that interviewees feel more prone to share intimate experiences with a female interviewer than with a male interviewer (Williams & Heikes, 1993). My evaluation of the interview processes is overall positive: I had the subjective impression that interviewees felt relatively at ease in answering

²³⁶ One interview was conducted in two different appointments.

my questions and free to respond according to their views.²³⁷

Furthermore, it should be noted that interviews are not only the product of the interview situation itself, but depend also on interviewees' resources, including the discourses that are circulating within their sociocultural settings, acting in conjunction with their personal histories (Lupton & Barclay, 1997, p. 94). As developed in Chapter II, discourses both enable and constrain human action; i.e., they limit what can be thought and said as fathers and about fatherhood, but they also represent resources, from which meaning can be assigned to one's experiences.

In order to facilitate the interview process and to have access to interviewees' attitudes towards parental leave policies, gender relations, gender equality and fatherhood, I used printed visual support material. First, interviewees were presented cards with different leave schemes (see Appendix 31).²³⁸ They were asked their opinion on the different models (the most preferable one in their view), keeping in mind the model proposed at the City of Lausanne. The leave models presented differed according to the length of maternity, paternity and parental leaves, the financial compensation and the relative length of leave reserved for mothers and fathers. A second printed visual support material (Appendix 32) was mobilized; it was a press article entitled:

*Like Darius, fathers change the baby's diapers. Like the TSR presenter, new fathers are proud to play doting fathers. Initiatives in favor of paternity leave are increasing²³⁹
(Tribune de Genève, January 26th 2010)*

The press article shows a large picture of a well-known TV news presenter on the Swiss French-speaking public television (TSR) holding two big teddy bears. The respondents were asked to react on the idea of "new fatherhood", often expressed in the media in relation to the issue of parental leave policies.

The qualitative sample counts 31 interviews:

- 22 interviews with fathers having benefited from paternity leave from May 2010 to February 2012 (see Appendix 33 for a summarized presentation).
- eight managers having experienced at least one paternity leave uptake in their team from May 2010 to February 2012 (see Appendix 34 for a summarized presentation).
- A representative of the Municipality: Ms. Bald, Gender Equality Officer. She was the contact person and informant about the work-family life reconciliation policy at Admin and about the paternity leave implementation process (see interview grid in Appendix 35).

²³⁷ There was one exception, a manager (Etienne) who answered my questions in a defensive tone, as if he felt his management skills were being questioned.

²³⁸ The Swiss model was presented; it characterized the most minimal leave scheme in comparison with others. The French model in contrast represented the most generous leave model: up to 3 years of parental leave for each parent, but poorly paid. Finally, the Icelandic model symbolized a generous leave model as well: paid (although not fully), relatively long (9 months in all) and gender equal (3 months for each parent and 3 additional parental leave to share). Interviewees' opinions about the French and Swiss models—which attribute more leave to the mother than to the father—in comparison with the gender-neutral Icelandic model were also asked.

²³⁹ Comme Darius, les pères langent bébé. A l'instar du présentateur de la TSR, les nouveaux papas s'enorgueillissent de pouponner. Les initiatives pro-congé paternel se multiplient.

Due to the sampling strategy, the qualitative sample of fathers is not representative of the quantitative sample. For example it does not have the same distribution in terms of department of employment. Some departments are proportionally over-represented, for example there are six interviewees working in the Industrial department and four interviewees in the Youth & Social Services department (see Table 15). By contrast, there are no interviewees working in the Culture & Housing and Finance & Green Heritage departments and proportionally few from the Security and Sports (five were interviewed). As regards managers, two departments are not represented among the interviewees (Administration and Finance & Green Heritage departments).

Table 16 - Comparison of the quantitative and qualitative sample

	Quantitative sample (N=95)	Qualitative sample	
		Fathers (n=22)	Managers ^o (n=8)
Mean age	36 years	36 years	40 to 50 years
Mean number of years of seniority	8 years	7 years	17.5 years
Percentage of part-time workers	10.5% (10 cases)	22.7% (5 cases)	12% (1 case)
Percentage of high social class interviewees	38%	50%	not applicable
Mean length of paternity leave uptake	17.2 days	21 days*	not applicable

* Some interviewees had not yet used all their leave at the moment of the interview, but were planning to do so.

^o Personal information was not systematically asked to managers therefore main trends are indicated.

The aim of mixed-methods case study is not necessarily to achieve full representativity in the qualitative sample of the whole population, but more so to have an overview of the different situations experienced. This implies for example oversampling specific minority profiles. This is the case for part-time working male employees (see Table 16). Although they are a minority in Admin (9%) and in the quantitative sample (10.5%), they are well represented in the qualitative sample (22.7%). This comparatively large proportion of part-time male employees in the sample results from the self-selection bias. Among the five interviewees who work part-time, four work at 80% and one at 60%. All the managers interviewed worked full-time, except the only woman of the sample, who worked at 80%.

Fathers' mean age is 36 years and the age range goes from 27 to 44 years old. Two fathers are under 30, fifteen are between 31 and 40, and five are 41 or older (of whom three are first-time fathers). On average, interviewees had been working seven years at Admin at the moment of the interview. In contrast, the mean number of years of seniority of managers is 17.5 years. They have held their current position for at least 2.5 years and up to 12 years. Interviewed managers are on average older than the fathers interviewed. Most of them are intermediate managers, situated in one or two positions under one of the 37 heads of sections. They are in charge of teams of 15 persons on average.

There are proportionally more fathers from a high social class in the qualitative sample than in the full sample (50% against 38%). Furthermore, 36% of the qualitative sample is in the intermediate social class and 14% are in the working class. However, more information on the

educational background of interviewed fathers is available, because a short standardized questionnaire was completed at the end of each interview. Approximately half of the fathers have a secondary level education and the other half, tertiary education. Only one interviewee has a primary level education. Among managers, six had a secondary degree and two a tertiary degree.

Thanks to the questionnaire, additional information on the family and couple background of interviewees is available. All 22 couples are heterosexual; the majority (16 out of 22) is married and six are cohabiting.²⁴⁰ Half of the couples are first-time parents and the other half has two (eight couples) or three (three couples) children. Two interviewees were living with the children their partners had in a previous relationship.²⁴¹ At the time of the interview, children living in the household were between two months and 16 years old. The youngest child for whom interviewees had used the 21 days paternity leave was at that time aged between two and 21 months. Ten fathers had had their last child in 2010, eleven in 2011 and one in 2012. Two interviewees were going to have a second child (their partner were pregnant) and two other had the intention of having another child. Five couples were sure they would not have any further child and eight did not exclude this possibility in the future. The large majority of couples are from a Swiss origin. Two couples come from a European neighboring country and three couples are mixed; i.e., the interviewee is Swiss and the partner comes from an EU or extra EU country.

Information on the partners was also asked for. Two have primary education, twelve have a secondary qualification and eight have a tertiary degree. The majority of couples are homogamous (15 out of 22), five interviewees are hypergamous and two are hypogamous.²⁴² The majority of the women are active on the labor market (17 out of 22); 15 have a job and two are on unemployment insurance. There are three stay-at-home mothers, one mother on unpaid leave (one year, she will return to 40%) and one on health insurance because of a (post-partum) depression. None of the partners work full-time. Five of them work at high part-time percentage (70% or 80%), nine have moderate part-time percentages (50% or 60%) and three have low part-time activities (40% or under).

The family situation of managers was the following: five out of eight were married and had children, some of them already grown up. Four managers reported having benefited from the former paternity leave regime at the time they had their own children. At the time of the interview, two managers had a male-breadwinner family organization; the female manager had a dual-earner family organization; and three managers had a modified male-breadwinner organization, where their partners worked part-time.

²⁴⁰ The number of cohabiting couples with children represents 27% of the sample, a higher proportion than that observed in 2011 in Switzerland (19%) and in the Canton of Vaud (23.5%) (FSO, 2013d). This confirms the non-representativity of the qualitative sample.

²⁴¹ Two interviewees live in reconstituted families. Justin lives in a household composed of his two children he has with his wife and the child she had in a previous relationship. Oscar lives unofficially with his partner who is currently divorcing from her first husband. He spends a few nights per week in the household which comprises the child they have together and the two children from the partner's first marriage.

²⁴² In homogamous couples, both partners have the same level of education. In hypergamous couples, the interviewee has higher educational qualifications than his partner and in hypogamous couples he has lower qualifications than her.

Methodological approach

The main material for the analysis is transcribed interviews.²⁴³ Field notes are also used in a complementary manner for the analysis. Thus at the end of each interview, I wrote my impressions about the interview process, about what I considered the key elements of the interview and new questions which had emerged. The methodology applied for the analysis of the material follows principles of thematic analysis, “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). As presented in Chapter II, this approach distinguishes between the semantic (or explicit) and latent (or interpretative) levels in the analysis of interview data. In the explicit level of analysis, it is the description of themes, i.e., patterned responses or meanings identified in the data set, which is the predominant focus. In the interpretative approach, it is the identification of the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualizations which shape and inform the semantic content of the data which is analyzed (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 85).

I conduct both types of analysis. When describing leave implementation and uptake as well as leave patterns, I focus on the semantic level of the interviewees’ narratives. I analyze the way interviewees recall their leave uptake experience. When I analyze the potential challenge paternity leave implementation and uptake represents for the gender structure, I apply an interpretive thematic analysis. I am then particularly attentive to the way the sociocultural context and ongoing discourses enable and shape individuals’ specific fatherhood accounts and identities and whether they differ from gendered fatherhood representations.

Themes identified are the outcome of the coding process of the data and the analytical reflection on the categories produced. As for the other empirical analyses, in order to code systematically the data and to manage the large volume of data (approximately 650 pages of text), I also used a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software. This software enabled me to manage and code the data, as well as to analyze it according to interviewees’ characteristics, such as their work environment, or individual and couple level variables. It also enabled me to have a view of general trends—in a more quantitative approach—by generating the frequency of specific categories. The development of categories was based mainly on a deductive approach. The creation of categories was derived from the themes which were defined *a priori*, on the basis of theory (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Mayring, 2000). However, many categories were also inductively created, following an *open coding* procedure, as conceptualized in grounded theory (Strauss, 1987).

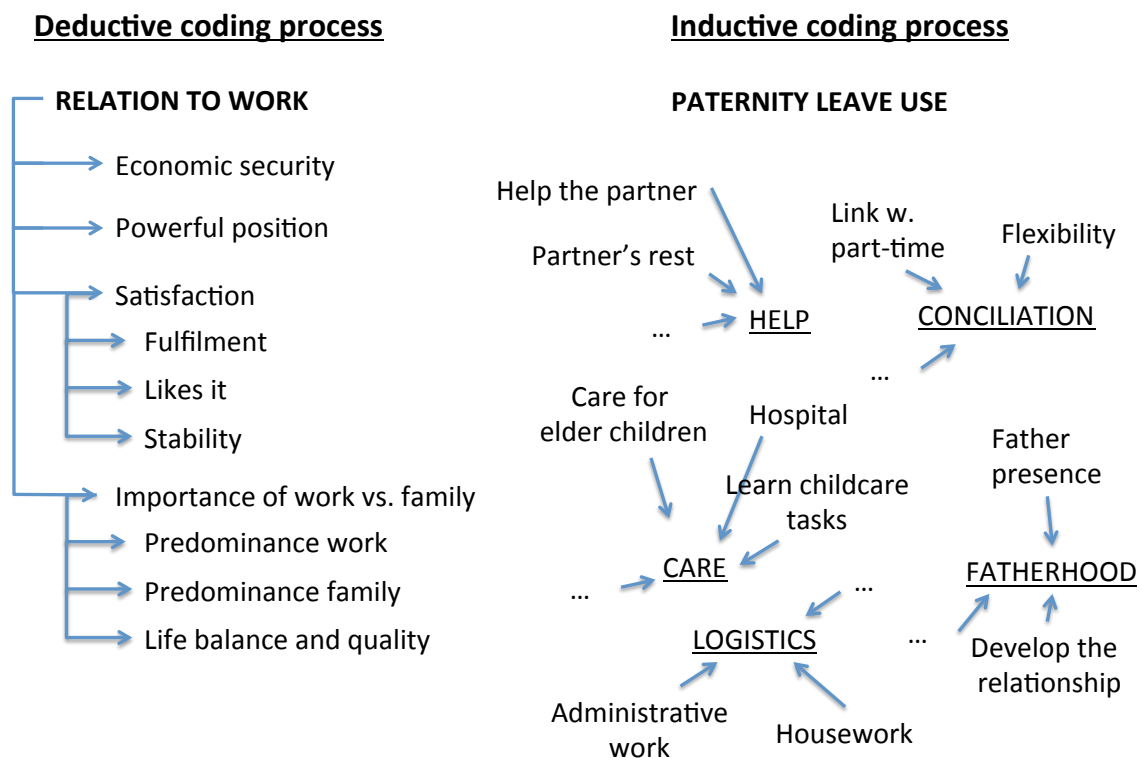
I therefore applied deductive and inductive coding principles (see Figure 35). For some categories, I started by tagging and naming selections of text, generating initial categories, and in a second step I coded the content of these categories in a more refined way, at a lower level of the coding tree (deductive coding process). For example I started by coding in a broad way every information which was related to the theme “relation to work”. In the process of analysis, I

²⁴³ Interviews were transcribed following a broad transcription procedure, where hesitations, laughter, emphasis on a word or phrase and talk overlap were nonetheless indicated. Interview transcriptions were anonymized; i.e., names, partners’ workplaces, former employers and cities were replaced with pseudonyms. Furthermore, considering the fact that I communicate, with the consent of the City of Lausanne and interview participants, that the case study was conducted there, details such as the name of the section in which interviewees work were also anonymized in order to improve privacy. For the participants who agreed, their anonymized interviews will be archived at the Swiss foundation for research in social science (FORS).

developed in more detailed categories such as “economic security”, “satisfaction”, and “importance of work versus family”.

An opposite process took place for the coding of the theme “paternity leave use”. As this was a key dimension of interest, I coded directly in precise categories interviewees’ answers. Categories were formulated in close terms to the material itself. This led me to generate a large number of very diverse categories, such as for example “learn childcare tasks”, “housework”, “hospital”, “father presence”, “partner rest”, “link with part-time” etc. Then in a more analytical phase and with the aim of reducing the complexity of the data, I grouped them together according to their thematic proximity. This process enabled me to describe in a more condensed way—through seven overarching categories—the uses and meanings attached to paternity leave by fathers (inductive coding process).

Figure 35 - Example of deductive and inductive coding processes



The generation of themes which enabled me to answer the research questions was achieved through reading and coding the interview transcripts, creating categories at different hierarchical levels and (re-)organizing them. In a dialectic way, the generation and organization of categories was complemented by the production of analytical memos about these categories. I analyzed and summarized the content of categories, choosing some key quotations in order to illustrate the trends identified. In order to assess the predominance or minority status of specific experiences or discourses, I considered the number of excerpts coded under specific categories, as well as the number of sources (i.e., interviewees) it concerned.

In parallel to the first round of coding of each interview transcript, and the category-centered analysis of the data which gives a transversal view across individual cases, I adopted a case-centered approach. For each interviewee, I wrote an individual summary with key information about the main interview themes and coding dimensions: the occupational trajectories of the respondent and his partner, the couple history and child project, changes in work arrangement since the transition to parenthood, use and effects of paternity leave, status of fatherhood in the work environment, representations of fatherhood and gender relations, childcare arrangements, division of domestic and childcare tasks, attitudes towards parental leave schemes. These summaries were used for the analysis of the logics of construction of fatherhood and the use and effects of paternity leave. An example of interview summary is available in Appendix 36.

3. Patterns of leave uptake

3.1. Descriptive statistics

The mean number of paternity leave days used in the qualitative sample is 17 days, with a minimum of one day and a maximum of 21 days (see Appendix 37). The standard deviation is 5.4 days. The median—the middle score of ordered observations—is 20 days. A little over half of the sample (51%) used the whole length of paternity leave, i.e. 20 or 21 days.²⁴⁴ This indicates that the other half of the sample has forgone part of the leave. 37.5% of fathers took between 11 and 19 days and 11.5% of the sample used ten days or less (see Table 17).

Table 17 - Length of fathers' paternity leave and vacation uptake in the quantitative sample

Percentage of employees taking a paternity leave of:		Percentage of employees taking vacation leave of:	
0 days	-	0 days	21.9%
1-10 days	11.5%	1-10 days	33.3%
11-19 days	37.5%	11-19 days	29.2%
20 or 21 days	51%	20 days or more	15.6%

As regards the use of vacation leave during the same period of observation as for paternity leave uptake, the mean length is ten days; values range from no vacation to 42.5 days and the standard deviation is nine days. 22% of fathers use no vacation days within the period of observation.²⁴⁵ Finally, if we consider the total amount of leave taken (paternity leave and vacation days) during the child's first year, the mean length is 27 days, with a minimum total of three days and a maximum total of 66.5 days.

²⁴⁴ Because the day of birth is lost if it falls on a week-end or on public holiday, I consider 20 days as a full use of the leave.

²⁴⁵ Employees are entitled to four weeks until their 47th birthday, 5 weeks from their 48th to 57th years and six weeks from 58 years old on, they can shift unused vacation leaves from one calendar year to another. Information on vacation leave should be interpreted with caution. Information on vacation leave was taken into account for the period after the first occurrence of paternity leave uptake. Depending on when the paternity leave occurred within the time frame of observation (May 2010-May 2012), fathers may have not had time to use their vacations yet.

In order to explore the possible associations between the fact of taking all the paternity leave (20 or 21 days) or forgoing part of the leave (less than 20 days), I conduct a chi-square test of independence with a number of individual and work-environment characteristics (cases were weighted by frequency) (see Table 18).

- There is a significant association between the fact of using all of the leave available and the social class of leave recipients. The value of the chi square (2, N=95) is 4.868 and it is significant ($p < .05$), showing a relationship between the social class of leave recipients and the extent to which they use the leave. Being in the working class seems to be associated with using 20 or 21 days of the leave, while being in the high social class is associated with taking less leave.
- There is a significant relation between the use of paternity leave and the sex composition of the section leave recipients work in, $\chi^2(2, N=96) = 4.798, p < .05$. Working in a female or mixed environment is associated with forgoing part of the leave, while working in a male environment is associated with a full use of the leave.
- There is a significant association between leave use and the occupation rate, $\chi^2(2, N=96) = 4.304, p < .05$. Leave recipients working full-time are more likely to use all the paternity leave available than those working part-time. However, because there are only ten fathers in the sample who work part-time, this result should be interpreted with caution.

Table 18 - Tests of association between paternity leave use and a set of variables

	Chi-square test of independence					Cramer's V test of strength of association	
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Value	Exact Sig.
- between paternity leave use and social class	4.868	2	0.088	0.041*	-	0.226	0.041*
- between paternity leave use and gender composition of work environment	4.798	1	0.028	0.037*	0.026*	0.224	0.037*
- between paternity leave use and the occupational rate	4.304	1	0.038	0.048*	0.039*	0.212	0.048*

Note: * significant at $p < .05$. No cell had expected count less than 5. See Appendix 38 for a detailed view of cross tabulations, chi-square and Cramer's V tests.

I also control the strength and significance of the association, using Cramer's V statistic. Values lie around 0.21 and 0.22, out of the maximum possible value of 1, which indicates that the strength of the association between paternity leave use and social class, sex composition of work environment and occupational rate is moderate. However, the values are significant ($p < .05$), which suggests that the strength of the association, even if moderate, is significant. The Cramer V test confirms the results of the chi-square test.

There were no associations observed with the age category of recipients, their degree of education, the number of years of seniority and the size of the section they are employed in.

3.2. Sequence and cluster analysis²⁴⁶

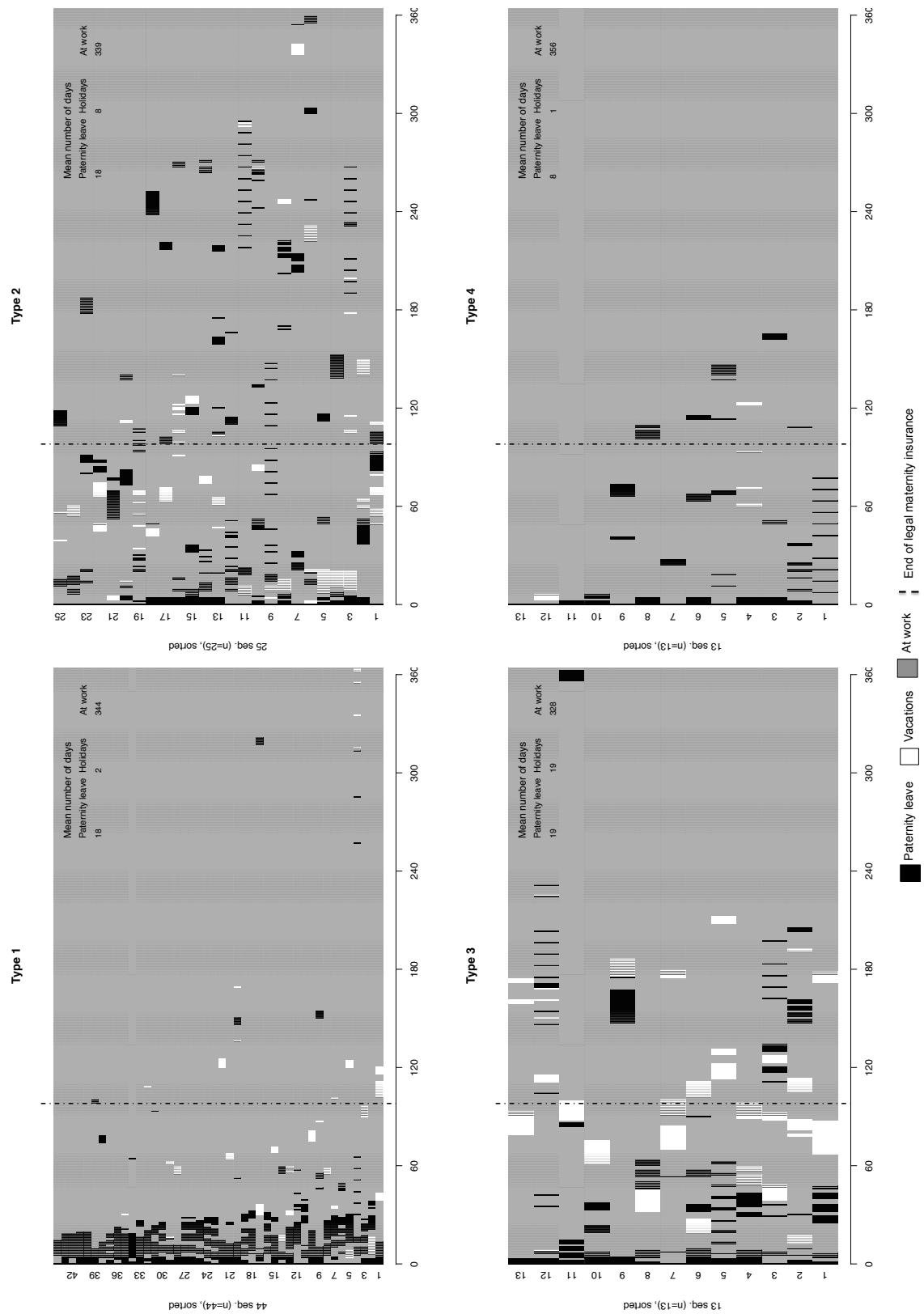
Results of the sequence and cluster analysis of the register data give a longitudinal view of the way fathers use their paternity leave and combine it with additional vacation days. Four clusters enable us to best analyze the sequences and the dimensions which differentiate them, i.e., the amount and timing of paternity leave uptake, as well as the amount of vacations taken during the child's first year (see Figure 36 and Table 19).²⁴⁷

- Type 1 is characterized by immediate, intensive and almost exhaustive use of paternity leave days (18 days), directly after the child's birth. Paternity leave is used within the period of 98 days of maternity leave, defined at the federal level. As regards the use of vacations, they are almost not used; 2 days on average. This pattern represents 46% of the sample.
- In Type 2, about the same amount of paternity leave days is used (18 days), but they are spread over a longer period of time. In contrast with Type 1, some of the leave is used after the end of the statutory maternity leave, suggesting that fathers of Type 2 may spend some solo time with their child. Leave is taken by week periods or by individual days. Vacations are also sparsely used, eight days on average. This type represents 26% of the sample.
- Type 3 is similar to Type 2, but a significant amount of vacation is added. This amounts to an absence of almost 40 days during the first year of the child. This pattern is shared by only 14% of fathers.
- In Type 4, also a minority pattern (14%), fathers make a sparse use of both paternity leave and vacation.

²⁴⁶ The sequence and cluster analyses were conducted by Jacques-Antoine Gauthier.

²⁴⁷ The highest silhouette value observed was for a 2 cluster solution (around 0.35). However, this solution does not provide a refined description of leave patterns, as do the 3, 4, and 5 cluster solutions, for which the silhouette values are similar (around 0.15). The 4 cluster solution was chosen because it represents the most meaningful one in terms of variation on the dimensions observed (paternity leave uptake and vacation leave uptake) and because it is the most sensible one considering the small size of the sample.

Figure 36 - Types of leave uptake patterns during the child's first year of life



Notes: The end of the legal minimum maternity leave period is shown as a rough indication, but no information on the labor-market activity of the partners of the leave recipients was available for the quantitative sample.

Table 19 - Patterns of leave uptake identified in the quantitative and qualitative samples

Leave patterns	Paternity leave days (mean)	Vacation days (mean)	Days in employment (mean)	Nb. of cases (N=95)	% of quant. sample	Description of patterns in quant. sample	Corresponding types in qual. sample	Nb. of cases (N=22)
Type 1	18	2	344	44	46%	Block use of leave, limited vacation	Block use	5
Type 2	18	8	339	25	26%	Scattered use of leave, limited vacation	Scattered weeks and Joker-days	7
Type 3	19	19	328	13	14%	Scattered use of leave, long vacation		10
Type 4	8	1	356	13	14%	Minimal use of leave and vacation	-	-

Note: the types of leave uptake for the qualitative sample are described in the next section.

Table 20 - Chi- Square tests of independence between the type of leave adopted and a set of variables

	Chi-square tests of independence				Cramer's V test of strength of association	
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Value	Exact Sig.
- between the type of leave uptake and years of seniority	10.162	6	0.118	0.006**	0.230	0.006**
- between the type of leave uptake and the size of the section	6.406	6	0.379	0.040*	0.183	0.040*

Note: * significant at $p < .05$; ** significant at $p < .01$. See Appendix 39 for a detailed view of cross tabulations, chi-square and Cramer's V tests.

Conducting chi-square tests of independence between the leave patterns and a set of individual and work-environment variables, the following associations are observed (see Table 20):

- There is a significant association between the leave pattern adopted and the number of years leave recipients have been employed in Admin (seniority), $\chi^2 (6, N=96) = 10.162, p < .01$. It seems that having started to work at least four years previously for Admin is associated with a higher likelihood of adopting leave Types 1 and 2—an almost exhaustive use of paternity leave, taken immediately after the birth of the child or in a more scattered way over the year. New employees who entered Admin in the last three years tend to have more diverse leave patterns.
- There is a significant relation between the leave pattern and the size of the section in

which leave recipients are employed, $\chi^2 (6, N=96) = 6.406, p < .05$. Working in a large section (representing 41% or more of the size of the department) is associated with leave patterns where employees make a full and immediate use of the leave (Type 1). By contrast, it seems that in small sections (counting 10% or less of the number of employees in the department), employees use the leave over a longer period, making use of the total days available, but spreading them (Type 2).

These results suggest that it is mainly work-level variables which affect the leave pattern adopted by employees and not individual characteristics. It should be noted that considering the small number of cases in leave Types 3 and 4, many cells had expected count less than 5, which implies that these results should be considered with caution. The Cramer's V test indicates moderate strengths of association between the type of leave and the years of seniority (0.23 out of 1) as well as with the size of the section (0.18), and both values are significant. No significant relationship was found between leave patterns and the social class, the age group, the degree of education and the occupational rate of leave recipients as well as with the gender composition of the service in which they work.

3.3. Insights from the qualitative sample

Fathers I interviewed followed—or were planning to follow—one of the first three leave patterns described. This means they had used or were planning to use all their leave days.²⁴⁸ Therefore, none of them adopted a Type 4 leave pattern (see Table 19). This is due to the self-selection sampling process, which, as previously mentioned, implies that fathers who opted to participate in the research were probably more concerned with the issue of paternity leave and childcare. But it is also due to the fact that Type 4 is a minority group in the quantitative sample (only 13 fathers). Type 1 corresponds to a *block use* of all the paternity leave available; it was followed by a minority of interviewees of the qualitative sample (five out of 22). Among fathers who saved some of the leave and used it over a longer period of time after the birth of the child (Types 2 and 3 in the quantitative sample), the fathers I interviewed either used the leave in week blocs (seven fathers who made a *scattered weeks use*) or used the leave as individual days (ten fathers who make a *joker days use*).

- *Block use*: this leave pattern concerns fathers (Stan, Elias, Antoine, Florent and Felix) who consume their paternity leave stock in one block, right from the birth of the child or when the mother and child come back home from hospital. This implies that they are absent at least one month in a row from work. Some of them add vacation days to this paternity leave month.
- *Scattered weeks use*: fathers adopting this leave pattern (Fabrice, Sylvain, Rick, Louis, Gabriel, Daniel and Justin) generally take one or two weeks on the birth of the child and then take up the rest of paternity leave as individual weeks (or more rarely concentrated weeks) over several months. These paternity leave weeks depend on family needs and are often combined with vacations.
- *Joker-day use*: within this leave pattern, fathers generally spend one or two weeks at

²⁴⁸ Only by conducting a longitudinal follow up of the qualitative study could I control whether they will indeed use up all the rest of the leave available to them.

home directly after the birth of the child (like fathers in other patterns) but save up the rest of their days and use them as individual, “joker” days, over several weeks or months. There are various logics for this use of leave:

- a. Emergency situations: Some fathers (Kraig, Pitt and Jérémy) use these days in order to cope with emergency childcare situations, special needs from the partner and/or the child or to have long weekends. In this case, joker days are used in a random, unpredictable way.
- b. Progressive return to work: Other fathers use these joker days in order to go back to work progressively and work part-time over several weeks or months after the birth of the child (Renzo, Samuel, Pitt and Oscar).
- c. Transition to part-time work: Finally, fathers (Paul, Jacques, Jules and Martin) who planned to reduce their working percentage used these days in order to delay the official start of their part-time work and this way also delayed the reduction of their salary. It also enabled them to bridge the gap with the partner’s return to work when daycare solutions were not yet finalized. In this case, paternity leave days follow a regular pattern and are spread over several months.

The adoption of these leave patterns is the result of a dynamic interaction between individuals’ desires, discussions held with the partner, but also for some interviewees, their perception of workplace constraints. I develop in more depth in the following section the leave uptake process, from the fathers’ and the managers’ points of views.

3.4. Leave uptake process and management

Paternity leave: a new measure

Both managers and fathers reported that the extended paternity leave regime was relatively new in their work environment. Several fathers were the first ones to benefit from the 21 days paternity leave in their unit, section or department and knew no other person who had benefited from the new leave scheme. For managers too, paternity leave management was something rather new, which they had experienced once or twice only since May 2010. Only one manager reported four cases of leave uptake in his team. This was the case for Yvan, deputy head of a section of approximately 100 employees. Overall, managers knew about the paternity leave length, but not necessarily about the uptake modalities, nor about the length and details of other types of leaves available (e.g., maternity and unpaid parental leave).

Notwithstanding the relative knowledge of managers about paternity leave, all the fathers interviewed reported that they knew about paternity leave, whether through the human resource service, internal information, the intranet or their supervisor or colleagues. Some fathers expecting a child at the time of the communal council’s debates on the extension of paternity leave reported having closely followed the evolution of the issue.

Leave uptake norms

Even if interviewed fathers were often the first ones to benefit from the 21 days paternity leave, none reported having felt unsure or uneasy about making use of the leave in its totality. Several interviewees stated that paternity leave was a new right they were granted and there was no question for them of not using it (see the example of Elias). Some fathers compared paternity leave to the legal right to take breaks during the day and the right to vacation days. Pitt, aged 34, who works as a statistician in the Administration department and is the father of two children, reported having felt proud and obliged to use his leave, because he considered it was the outcome of a political struggle. Half of the managers (Albert, Etienne, Alexis, and Yvan) also referred to paternity leave as a new right, which can be used without question by everyone.

There's nothing to be ashamed of in taking it, it's like the 15 minutes' break in the morning, It's a right.²⁴⁹ (Elias, 35, power station worker, married, two children)

I think that, when someone takes a paternity leave because he is entitled to it, this is something that's become common practice. I have never heard negative remarks on this issue about my employee who took paternity leave. I mean, it's something which seems... which seems normal. Something which has become obvious, I think it's... In my view, the question is not controversial any more, but I could be wrong.²⁵⁰ (Etienne, Culture and Housing department, head of division, five employees)

In parallel to the representation of paternity leave as a new *right*, there was the idea of an *opportunity*. Indeed, fathers and managers agree on the fact that a month of paternity leave is not common among other employers. For one manager, paternity leave is more a “favor” than a “right”. Alfred maintains that employees should first and foremost take into account the interest of the workplace:

[I]f I felt obliged to give... to give this access, it would bother me because I would feel there is a... a form of abuse. Because as I see it, paternity leave, more than a right, I see it more as a... a favor, a... a... [hesitation] an added value in the quality of life that the City of Lausanne grants to its employees. Now if the employee claimed it was an absolute right [mm...], I would have a problem with that, yes indeed.²⁵¹ (Alfred, head of unit, 15 employees)

Attitudes towards the extension of paternity leave from six to 21 days were overall very positive, both among fathers and managers. Several fathers argued that they could not imagine being under the same regime as in the private labor market and going back to work just one or two days after the birth of their child. Only one father considers the new 21 days paternity leave scheme unnecessary. Samuel considered that the six-day paternity leave regime was sufficient:

²⁴⁹ Y'a pas de gêne à prendre ça, c'est comme de prendre les 15 minutes de pause le matin. C'est...c'est dû.

²⁵⁰ Alors moi je pense que, que quelqu'un prenne un congé paternité parce qu'il y a droit, c'est quelque chose qui est rentré dans les mœurs. J'ai jamais entendu de remarques négatives à ce sujet sur mon collaborateur qui a pris un congé paternité. Je veux dire que c'est quelque chose qui paraît, qui paraît dans la norme, quoi. Qui paraît évident, moi je pense que ça c'est... A mon sens, la question ne se pose plus, mais je peux me tromper.

²⁵¹ si je me sentais obligé de donner... de... de donner cet accès-là, là ça me gênerait parce que je sentirais quand-même à mon avis une s... une forme d'abus. Parce que pour moi, je le vois plus, le congé paternité, plus qu'un droit, je le vois plus comme une... une faveur, une... une... [hésitation] une plus-value dans la qualité de vie que la ville de Lausanne offre aux collaborateurs. Si maintenant le collaborateur l'érigait en droit absolu (*mhm*), j'aurais de la peine avec ça (*d'accord, oui, oui*), effectivement.

They're giving me leave days, I'm not going to say "no, I'll stay at work", after... It's positive, but one could also take, I don't know, one could also take – take – devote one or two weeks of vacation to welcoming a child...²⁵² (Samuel, 40, IT manager, married, three children)

Managers reported they had positive reactions to the announcement of the extension of paternity leave. Among those who have children, some joked about feeling jealous because they themselves did not benefit from this extended leave. Some managers distinguished their positive reaction as parents from their more mitigated reaction as managers. Sophie, division manager of 25 employees in the Industrial department feared this new measure would create organizational problems, in terms of replacement and workforce shortage. She reported having had the following reaction:

[O]h my God, no! Why are they giving them more days [laughs]? We already can't cope with the teams we have.²⁵³ (Sophie, Industrial department, head of division, 25 employees)

Managers reckoned there were mixed reactions among their colleagues at the management level, and that some negative reactions were observed, particularly among the older generation who did not think the new measure was necessary.

For other heads of division, it's mitigated.... They will see it rather as a constraint. For some anyway... I would say those who are aged 50... even 55 to 60 today, they will see it as... rather as an opportunity they themselves did not have, and there's no reason why [laughs] others should. For them it's obviously a problem.²⁵⁴ (André, Industrial Department, head of division, 60 employees)

Leave uptake pattern: decision process and informal norms

On first impression and according to the large majority of both fathers and managers, leave pattern decisions were the outcome of couple and individual-level decisions. The majority of fathers reported they took the leave in consultation with their partner: they asked them when it would be most useful to be at home and took leave accordingly.

She was OK with it, I wasn't set on two weeks, if my wife had asked for more, I would have stayed more... If she had said "get out, you're in my way, I can manage", I would have shortened it too... I would have gone back to work earlier, so it was a deal...²⁵⁵ (Samuel, 40, IT manager, three children)

[W]e are not going to impose the date of paternity leave uptake. Because, for xyz reasons, maybe it's best to have the leave at the beginning, or after a certain period of time. So of

²⁵² On me donne des jours de congé je vais pas dire 'non je reste au bureau', après... Mais, c'est bien, mais enfin, on a aussi le droit de prendre je sais pas, on a aussi le droit – de prendre aussi – de consacrer 1 semaine ou 2 de vacances pour accueillir un enfant...

²⁵³ ah mon Dieu, quelle horreur! Mais pourquoi ils leur remettent encore des jours [rires], on sait déjà plus comment faire pour gérer les équipes.

²⁵⁴ Pour les autres divisionnaires c'est moyen on va dire. Ils vont voir ça plutôt comme une contrainte. Pour certains en tout cas... Je dirais ceux qui ont là 50...voire 55-60 ans aujourd'hui, ils vont plutôt voir ça comme...comme quelque chose qu'ils ont peut-être pas forcément eu eux comme possibilité, pis...y'a pas de raisons que [rire] d'autres en aient aussi. Pis pour eux ça leur pose un problème, évidemment quoi.

²⁵⁵ Bah c'était – ça lui convenait – moi j'étais pas fixé sur 2 semaines, hein, si mon épouse avait demandé plus longtemps, je serais resté plus longtemps... Si elle avait dit 'casses-toi parce que tu me marches sur les pieds, c'est bon je me débouille', j'aurais abrégé aussi, enfin...j'serais reparti au boulot plus vite, donc...c'était un peu...c'était un deal.

course the employee is free to choose.²⁵⁶ (Yvan, Security & Sports department, deputy head of section, 100 employees)

Some fathers had a clear view of the leave pattern they wished and report having followed their personal initiative. For example, for Jacques, Florent and Gabriel, it was important to be present right from the birth. Daniel wanted to have a “daddy month” and took his leave when his partner returned to work. Some of them also relied on the experience of friends or colleagues regarding the best way to make the most of the paternity leave, e.g., how to save the days for what were considered important moments and how much paternal presence was considered really necessary from the birth of the child. Only one father (Fabrice) took his leave according to the timing of his vacations.

Only in one case did the manager report herself setting the paternity leave pattern for the employees. Sophie imposes the dates of paternity leave for employees who have front office positions and who must guarantee a minimal operational service. She refused to let one of her employee take leave at a certain moment because she did not have enough workforce.

[W]e rather insist on their taking it either straight away, well, we manage a bit, within the month, as soon as we know the day of birth we impose on them these five days to suit us and we also impose on them the three weeks after during the year. So they really can't... afterwards, they ask a bit: "I'd like it rather than then..." We try to be accommodating, but in general, we have to decide in accordance with the smooth running of the team.²⁵⁷ (Sophie, Industrial department, head of division, 25 employees)

The case of Sophie is the only clear example of interference by a manager in leave uptake patterns. Other (potentially) problematic situations were identified. Boris and Alexis, managers in the Security & Sports department, report that guaranteeing operational service requires the presence of employees during duty shifts, and that it would not be possible to take paternity leave during this time. However, this scenario did not arise because it was avoided by the father himself, who offered to guarantee his duty shift. On the side of fathers, some interviewees report they felt some disapproval of the leave pattern they chose. For example, Renzo (36, administrative assistant, cohabiting, twins) used his paternity leave as *joker-days*, with short notice. He felt his supervisor would have preferred him to take all his leave relatively rapidly in a *block use*, so that the stock of leave would be gone and that he would not potentially be absent for other reasons than vacations. By contrast, Elias (35, power station worker, married, two children) felt his supervisor would have preferred him not to make a *block use* of his leave, but he did not feel any particular pressure to change his initial plan. There was one case of contentious negotiation. Oscar (36, cook, partially cohabiting, one child) reported that his leave pattern (*joker-day use*; one day of leave per week over several months) led to a difficult situation with his supervisor. The manager criticized this leave pattern, arguing that this demand was jeopardizing the operation of the unit. Oscar persisted in his request; he was convinced he was

²⁵⁶ on va pas nous imposer la date du congé paternité, parce que, pour des raisons xyz, peut-être que c'est mieux d'avoir le congé paternité peut-être déjà au début, ou après un certain nombre de temps. Donc on... bien sûr on laisse libre le collaborateur de choisir.

²⁵⁷ donc on leur impose un peu de prendre soit tout de suite, enfin, on gère un peu dans, dans le mois dès qu'on sait le jour de l'accouchement on leur impose ces cinq jours à notre convenance, et on leur impose aussi les trois semaines après pendant l'année (*d'accord*). Donc ils peuvent vraiment pas... après ils demandent un p'tit peu est-ce que je préférerais avoir là que là... On essaie d'être conciliants, mais en général, il faut qu'on regarde par rapport à la bonne marche de l'équipe (*oui*).

entitled to do so. He obtained his leave but at the price of tense working relationships with his supervisor.

It was frowned upon—by my supervisor so hum... not by the upper hierarchy, because... And then he talked to me about it over and over for... for more than a year.²⁵⁸ (Oscar, 36, cook, partially cohabiting, one child)

Apart from these cases, the overall impression is that the negotiation of leave uptake pattern was easy and non-conflictual. Both managers and fathers reported that several months before birth, a discussion took place in order to organize the future leave uptake. In fewer cases (Renzo, Pitt, Gabriel, Kraig), fathers were able to take paternity leave days on demand, giving their supervisor only short notice of their leave uptake (two or three days before or the very same day). In the cases where a negotiation took place, fathers made an offer to their supervisors with regard to the leave pattern they wished to adopt. Overall, they reported that negotiations were easy and that they obtained what they wanted. Several of them also mentioned that they would have been ready to adapt their request if specific work reasons demanded it. Managers also presented the negotiation process as a relatively easy one, where no particular problems were encountered.

3.5. Fitting paternity leave around work

Several elements indicate that the reason why no particular problems were felt or encountered is that, first, fathers anticipated work demands by using paternity leave flexibly. Managers did not have to pressure their employees because the latter anticipated the constraints of their position and requested leave patterns which they thought were compatible with the interests of their supervisors. Secondly, managers—thanks to their position—felt they (potentially) had the power to influence their employees' requests.

As regards fathers' anticipation of work demands, more than a third of the interviewees (Stan, Renzo, Fabrice, Kraig, Pitt, Sylvain, Jérémy and Martin) report having taken into account their work activities when deciding on their leave pattern. Many considered it important not to be absent for too long from the workplace. Several considered it was not possible to take the leave in one block. This was the case for example of Pitt, Sylvain and Jérémy, who work in small to medium-sized sections. This corroborates the results from the quantitative data which showed a relationship between the adoption of a *scattered* leave use (and not a *block use*) and the size of the section men were employed in.

[T]he ideal was that I should stay at home 20 days in a row... But on the one hand, we have a respect for the job, and we think that we have to be – at a certain moment, start working again, even at a low percentage, but find the rhythm again, be available if the need arises.²⁵⁹ (Pitt, 34, statistician, married, two children)

²⁵⁸ Ça a été mal vu – pour mon chef direct donc hein, pas par la hiérarchie supérieure, parce que...Pis il m'a répété ça pendant...pendant plus d'une année.

²⁵⁹ l'idéal c'était, je reste 20 jours à la maison, d'affilée... Mais d'une part, on a quand même ce respect vers la fonction, et pis on se dit on doit quand même être – à un moment donné reprendre ne serait-ce que euh...qu'à bas pourcentage, mais reprendre un peu le rythme, être quand même disponible pour les besoins.

Some fathers anticipated their absence by preparing work in advance, or fixing meetings before or after the leave. Some of them took care that the period of leave uptake should not be the busiest time for the unit (Fabrice, Jérémy) or that there should be as little impact as possible on its normal operation (Kraig, Martin).

I had to organize myself not to have important things coming up during these periods. So it's... I had to do some work ahead... to be able to take the week off, or catch up after... after the week. But... in the section... we have... peak periods and other periods when it is a little quieter, the workload. So that also allowed me during the quiet periods to easily take a week. Without really creating a problem...²⁶⁰ (Fabrice, 33, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

This anticipation of workplace constraints by employees is confirmed by several managers, who confirm that they had the impression fathers did not act exclusively according to their desires. Managers (André, Alfred, Boris, Yvan and Alexis) think that their employees took into account the constraints of the workplace and the responsibilities related to their position in the leave pattern they requested.

Yes, yes, he played by the rules. That is... he didn't... he didn't come saying "I want to take this week, that week", so he asked, we looked, we scheduled, we saw it would work, and... yeah.²⁶¹ (André, Industrial department, head of division, 60 employees)

*[W]e didn't even negotiate because, there weren't any let's say... problems. They are... as intermediate managers, they **themselves** are... have enough overview and distance to realize that they couldn't request something they knew very well would not be accepted.²⁶² (Boris, Security & Sports department, head of unit, 15 employees)*

[I]t's true that, when you have a high level of responsibility, the question could be raised [...] especially if one took everything as a block. Four weeks in a row, if you are head of section, it seems to me that's not serious.²⁶³ (Etienne, Culture & Housing department, head of division, five employees)

These quotations indicate that there are informal norms regarding leave uptake, especially for employees who themselves hold management positions. Managers expect employees to take into account work-related constraints and use the leave accordingly, i.e., by not making a *block use* of the leave (Alfred, Etienne and Alexis), organizing the absence well in advance and remaining available by phone or email in case of emergency during the leave (Sophie and Alexis).

²⁶⁰ pis j'ai dû un peu m'organiser pour pas avoir des choses importantes qui tombaient pendant ces périodes-là quoi. Donc c'est...j'ai du soit faire un peu d'avance...pour pouvoir prendre la semaine de vacances, ou soit rattraper par après...après la semaine. Mais c'était...dans le service on a des...un peu des périodes où y'a des pics de travail, et pis des autres périodes où c'est un peu plus calme, notre tâche de travail. Donc ça me permettait aussi pendant les périodes un peu plus calmes de facilement pouvoir prendre une semaine. Sans que ça pose vraiment de problèmes...

²⁶¹ Oui oui il a joué le jeu. C'est-à-dire il a pas...il est pas venu en disant 'je veux prendre cette semaine cette semaine', donc il a demandé, on a regardé, on a fait une planification, on a vu que ça jouait, pis...hein.

²⁶² On n'a même pas négocié parce que là, il y a pas eu disons de... de problème. Eux ils sont... étant cadres intermédiaires, ils sont eux-mêmes disons quand-même, ils ont assez de vista, de recul, pour se rendre compte que ils pouvaient pas faire une demande qu'ils [rire] qu'ils savaient pertinemment qui ne serait pas acceptée.

²⁶³ "Alors c'est vrai que, quand on est à un niveau important de responsabilités, là, la question pourrait se poser, oui, je pense [...]. Et surtout, si on utiliserait tout d'un coup, quoi. Quatre semaines d'un coup, si vous êtes chef de service, ça me semble peu crédible, quoi."

As regards managers' potential influence, several elements indicate that their position may have impacted—even in a subtle way—the leave pattern requests of employees. First, it should be noted that the negotiations which take place between the manager and the employee about the future leave pattern are underpinned by the hierarchical positions of both “parties”. Even if the negotiations are described as easy and non-contentious, they take place between individuals who hold unequal positions.

No, but I think that spreading it [the leave] like that, it was really... it was really nice of [the father] to offer it, but it's something I would have suggested if he hadn't himself.²⁶⁴ (André, Industrial department, head of division, 60 employees)

The underlying assumption in some of the managers' discourses is that they had the power—if they needed to use it—to reject the leave pattern requested by their employees. Boris and Alexis consider that they could have refused a specific leave pattern, or a bad timing of leave uptake. Etienne would not have allowed an employee to take four weeks in a row. As described above, Sophie did make use of her position to impose the leave pattern of some of her employees. Several managers (André, Alfred and Boris) think a *block use* of the leave would have caused major problems for the management of work. The following quotations from Boris and Alexis show that some constraints of the work organization are not negotiable and that employees themselves have internalized them, as previously suggested.

For example, if one of them had requested that particular day, it would not have been accepted. So either the employee [laughs] followed, or unfortunately, he had to look for a position elsewhere... that would suit him better. And it's not certain that a leave during the weekend would be accepted, at least not in the police—weekends are when we have most work to do...²⁶⁵ (Boris, Security and Sports department, head of unit, 15 employees)

So we... we had already thought through a bit how he imagined taking, dealing with his leave, and on our side, well, we looked at what we could give him, while respecting the regulations and reconciling the interests of the service. Because we are an operational service, and the service comes first [...]- But very quickly, he said “I will guarantee my duty shifts” [...]. So both parties benefited [...]²⁶⁶ (Alexis, Security and Sports department, head of unit, 17 employees)

In contrast, only a minority of managers (Albert and Yvan) stated that the employees' desires have priority and that it is the role of the manager to enable the employee to take the leave when he wants.

[F]or vacation or for paternity or maternity leave, insofar as possible I really disregard professional elements and if the employee had wanted to take his 20 days of paternity leave

²⁶⁴ Non mais je pense que de les étaler comme ça c'était vraiment une...c'était sympa de sa part [le père] de proposer, mais c'était quelque chose que je lui aurais proposé s'il l'avait pas fait.

²⁶⁵ Donc ce qui veut dire que là, par exemple, si on m'avait fait une demande sur ce jour-là elle n'aurait pas été acceptée (*oui, oui*). Donc c'est ou le collaborateur [rire] suivait, ou malheureusement il devait rechercher peut-être une place ailleurs qui... pour que ça lui convienne. Puis pour autant qu'on accepte justement le congé sur le week-end et ce qui était pas possible au niveau du corps de police, c'est quand-même là qu'on a le plus de demandes...

²⁶⁶ Voilà, donc là on a... on a un p'tit peu déjà, un peu réfléchi comme lui il imaginait prendre, gérer son congé et puis nous de notre côté, ben on s'est posé la question qu'est-ce qu'on pouvait lui donner, tout en respectant le règlement, et puis en conciliant les intérêts du service. Parce qu'on reste un service opérationnel, et le service prime. [...] Mais là très rapidement il a dit 'mais moi je vais assurer mes permanences' [...] Donc là, c'était tout bénéfice pour l'un et l'autre des parties [...].

and even one extra week from his vacation to really be with his wife and his child, I would have done everything to fulfill the employee's wishes.²⁶⁷ (Albert, Industrial department, head of division, 14 employees)

We were granted this month because we become fathers, and I think it is a right. One should be able to take advantage of it. Now we have to make this possible for the company, at the level of the organization. We have to be able to say "yes, you can take this month, divided as you like", we have to sort things out so that it works to replace the person, it's our role...²⁶⁸ (Yvan, Security & Sports department, deputy head of section, 100 employees)

These two quotations show the difference of attitudes regarding the priorities which should be set. While for Albert and Yvan, employers' interests have to fit around employees' fathering practices, in other cases, the reverse was observed, i.e., fathering practices have to fit around work-related constraints.

Managing absences

The majority of managers and fathers report that the predominant ways to cope with employees on paternity leave is internal replacement by colleagues or supervisors, as well as putting work on standby. Often, members of the team took up some of the most urgent work left by the father on leave. Work which could only be performed by the father on leave, or which could be interrupted, was left until the employee came back. Managers (Etienne, André, Alfred) reported that this organization had no serious consequences for Admin, except that some projects were slightly delayed. Only three fathers reported that a special replacement solution was undertaken. The replacement of Oscar (cook) once a week over several months required the appointment of external staff. Elias' *block use* of paternity leave and combination with vacation—resulting in a month and a half of absence from the power station—was covered with the contribution of an apprentice. Finally, Antoine's absence (*block use* of one month) was anticipated. He specially trained a colleague so that he could perform tasks which he is usually in charge of alone.

Only in one case does the manager (Yvan, deputy head of a section of 100 employees) report systematically evaluating each situation regarding the replacement of the employee on leave. His criteria for replacement are the tasks performed: whether the employee provides a service to the public or not. Replacement is provided either by the supply of staff hired to rotate between different divisions in the case of special events, illnesses or vacations or by hiring auxiliaries. For fathers with management positions, either the manager himself regulates his workload by working extra time before his leave for example, or his assistants take over some of his work during his absence. Yvan reports that replacements are not budgeted for because it is impossible to anticipate the number of leave uptakes for the next year. However, because the financial impact is very small, he feels entitled to commit expenses for this purpose. Thus he argues that

²⁶⁷ pour les vacances ou pour un congé paternité ou maternité, dans la mesure du possible je fais vraiment abstraction des éléments professionnels, et si le collaborateur avait voulu prendre 20 jours de congé paternité, et même une semaine supplémentaire sur ses vacances pour être vraiment auprès de sa femme et de son enfant, j'aurais en tout cas tout mis en œuvre pour réaliser le souhait du collaborateur.

²⁶⁸ On nous a octroyé ce mois parce qu'on devient papa, et je pense que voilà, c'est aussi un droit. Il faut pouvoir en profiter. Maintenant à nous de rendre la chose viable au niveau de l'entreprise, au niveau de l'organisation. C'est à nous de faire en sorte que, 'oui, tu peux prendre ce mois, réparti comme tu veux', à nous de nous débrouiller pour que ça joue pour le remplacement de la personne, c'est notre rôle...

paternity leave being a right in the staff regulations, the administration should be ready to cover the additional costs related to this right.

When questioned on the possibility of hiring additional workforce to cope with the absence of employees on leave, the other managers had different reactions. Some (Albert, Alfred) argued it was not necessary and that the additional work for the colleagues did not make an important difference.

[W]ell, perhaps we are lucky to have an office where we get along well, and where everyone is supportive, so as soon as there was the birth of the child of my colleague, we all took a little bit of his work so that he could come back in the best conditions possible. [...] and... to be honest, it was also not insurmountable.²⁶⁹ (Albert, Industrial department, head of division, 14 employees)

Others explain that it is either impossible (Alexis) or not worth the effort (Sophie). Alexis is manager of a division in the Security & Sports department and in his case, persons external to the division cannot replace the activity of a policeman of the section: judicial authority is necessary to perform the activities, and therefore, internal solutions must be found in order to deal with absences. For Sophie, hiring and training somebody to replace an employee working in the front office of the commercial section she manages would involve mobilizing major resources for just one month of leave. In addition, Sophie thinks that the head of section would not agree with such a replacement solution.

For one... for one month, I don't think they would give it. [Ok, yes, yes] I haven't tried... for one month, but surely the head of section, I think he would say: "no, for one month it's not worth it. You share out the work among the other employees and you sort things out that way".²⁷⁰ (Sophie, head of division, 25 employees)

The tendency observed among managers not to consider replacement solutions through the hiring of additional staff contrasts with the report made by the Gender Equality Officer. Ms. Bald reported that in the consultation procedure before paternity leave implementation, the committee of the Heads of sections precisely asked that the regulation specify the possibility of asking for replacement of the employee on leave.

That's why we put in the regulation the possibility of asking the director for replacement in case of need. This was something which was, uhm... very clearly asked for by the Association of Heads of sections.²⁷¹ (Ms. Bald, Gender Equality Officer)

Finally, it should be noted too that several fathers on leave kept contact with their workplace during their paternity leave uptake. For example, Renzo went to important meetings (for a few

²⁶⁹ ben, nous on a peut-être la chance d'avoir un bureau dans lequel on s'entend bien, et où tout le monde est solidaire, donc dès que y'a eu la naissance de l'enfant de mon collègue, on a tous pris un petit peu de son travail pour que il revienne également dans des conditions les plus optimales possibles. [...] et pour être franc, ça a pas été non plus insurmontable.

²⁷⁰ Pour un... pour un mois, je pense qu'ils me l'accordent pas. (D'accord, oui, oui) Alors j'ai pas essayé euh, pour un mois, mais à coup sûr, déjà rien que mon chef de service, je pense qu'il me dirait 'non, c'est pas la peine pour un mois. Vous allez... charger les... oui, vous chargez les autres collaborateurs qui sont présents pour le travail à faire et puis vous vous débrouillez...'

²⁷¹ C'est pour ça que dans la réglementation, on a mis la possibilité de demander au directeur le remplacement en cas de besoin. Ça c'était quelque chose qui a été euh...très clairement demandé par l'Association des chefs de service.

hours) during his leave, if he felt he had to. Pitt, Samuel, Jérémy, Martin and Antoine checked their email regularly during their leaves and were ready to respond to questions from their colleagues if needed.

Well... during the two weeks I took, honestly I had access to my PC, I checked my email... And in the end, I worked from home [...] I could have said "that's it [yes], I'm there for nobody"... But that's not my style either... so if there are emergencies, if I feel there are emergencies I will still involve myself²⁷² (Jérémy, 39, unit manager, married, two children)

Fathers reported that in general their work environment reacted in a very positive way to the announcement of the future birth and that they did not encounter any negative comments on the fact that they were going to take up paternity leave. In very few cases, a form of envy was perceived, in particular among older colleagues who had not benefited from the same leave regime. The majority of managers reported that even if employees had to take on work from a colleague on paternity leave, there were no negative feelings against him or against the manager, because of the considerable solidarity among the workers.

4. The construction of fatherhood

In this section I develop how the existence of paternity leave in Admin and leave uptake contributes to shape interviewees' construction of fatherhood; their representation and experiences of fatherhood. More precisely, I show how they use leave—what meanings they associate with paternity leave and for what purposes they use it—and in what ways these uses may or may not challenge the gender structure. Then I analyze interviewees' work environment (its underlying norms and the general attitude towards fatherhood) and how it may influence the way they understand fatherhood and their concrete opportunities for fathering practices. The objective is to analyze to what extent Admin is a father-friendly work environment, considering the larger offer of work-family life reconciliation policies and the extent to which male employees can legitimately use them. Finally, I present how interviewees discursively construct fatherhood, drawing on two predominant and contradictory discourses: *change* and *difference*. Addressing the question of gender structure challenge, I then analyze whether and how paternity leave implementation and use have triggered more gender-equal parenthood representations and practices.

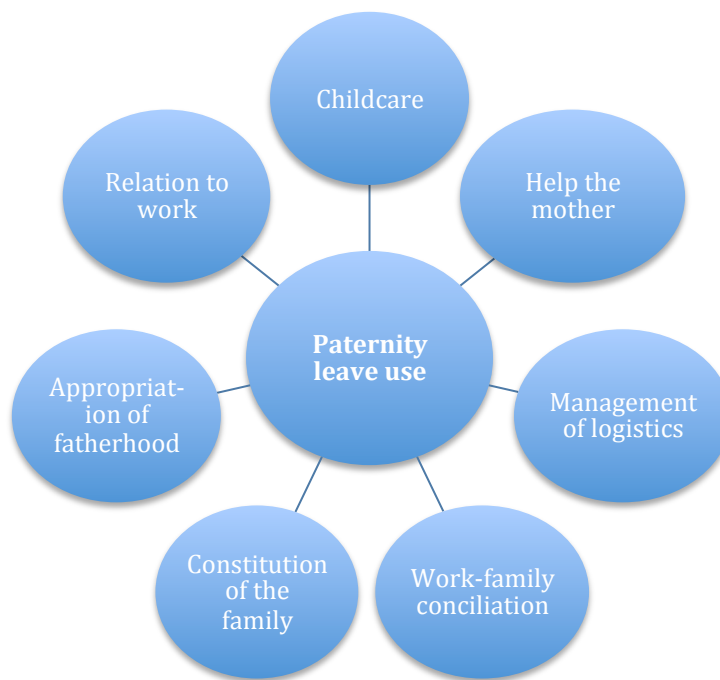
4.1. Leave use by fathers

Beyond the patterns of leave uptake observed, the interviewees attached several meanings to paternity leave and associated various purposes with it. I asked them how they used paternity

²⁷² Ben déjà dans... enfin déjà dans les deux semaines que j'ai pris, franchement j'ai eu accès à mon PC, j'ai eu accès à mes mails, j'ai... finalement j'ai travaillé depuis la maison [...] J'aurais très bien pu dire 'c'est terminé, putz' (ouais) 'je ne suis là pour personne'... Mais j'ai pas cette attitude non plus hein... Donc si y a des urgences ou je sens qu'il y a des urgences, je vais quand même inter-réagir.

leave days and what activities they performed during this time. Both fathers and managers were asked what they felt the purpose of paternity leave was and how useful it was. The coding process of the activities performed and meanings associated with paternity leave resulted in the compilation of over 30 categories (inductive coding process sketched in Figure 35). They were grouped together when they responded to similar logics. I distinguished seven different uses and meanings associated with paternity leave. Each interviewee mentioned several of these uses, which suggests that paternity leave has multiple functions and meanings for all fathers. I describe each leave use and highlight how it may or may not challenge gendered representations and practices of parenthood.

Figure 37 - Paternity leave uses



Childcare

Leave enabled all fathers to perform childcare activities and, according to them, to spend more time with their child(ren) than they would have if the leave had not existed. Several fathers estimated that they would have taken one or two weeks in total of vacation and/or recovered extra hours if they had not benefited from a paternity leave. The opportunity and use of a one-month paternity leave contributed to set a new norm with regard to the legitimate amount of time fathers should spend at home. Thus the majority of interviewees reported that the ideal paternity leave length was around one month.

So, I think if it still were six days, like for the first child, I would have taken.. I'd have combined vacation and extra hours. I might not have taken 21 days, because after I wouldn't have had any more extra hours or vacations left. It wasn't the goal either. But in

*any case I'd certainly have taken a week's vacation, maybe a week's extra hours, in order to have ten days.*²⁷³ (Stan, 35, policeman, married, two children)

During paternity leave, fathers learned how to perform childcare activities—changing, bathing, feeding and putting the baby to bed. Other types of care activities were also performed, such as spending time at the hospital with the mother and child right after birth, and using the leave to attend the baby's medical checks. However, fathers reported mainly that this time was useful in order to learn new childcare tasks, through hands-on parenting activities. Some fathers also mentioned that this time was particularly useful in order to keep up with the mother's rhythm of learning. Paternity leave uptake had the effect of shaping their self-perception as competent fathers and allowing them to perform childcare in more or less interchangeable ways with their partners.

*I think we lose the thread quickly after birth, there's, like I said the other day, the man in principle is a bit outside. And... it is vital to be able to get involved. It gives the – how shall I say, paternity leave can give time, but it is also, gives availability of the mind. [...] And I think that if we do not do it from the start, it is irretrievable... [...] habits are adopted in the couple, it's... it's very hard.*²⁷⁴ (Jacques, 42, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

Paternity leave offered a window of opportunity for fathers to engage with childcare activities and enabled them to develop their practical competences. However, a majority of fathers also reported that the mother remained the primary carer of the child in the first few months, in particular because of breastfeeding.

*I think... the... it's still... you cannot replace—the father cannot replace what is done in the first weeks. I mean... there is... breastfeeding... one can be present—but I have—I found it wasn't—it's a special role, there's this maternal bond that is created, we are there rather to give a hand...*²⁷⁵ (Sylvain, 41, plant manager, married, three children)

Another limitation of the challenge to the gender structure was the fact that the majority of childcare time was spent together with the partner. As noted by several fathers who spent time alone with their child, only these situations prompted them to take on full childcare responsibility. This was in particular the case with fathers who used leave as *joker-days*.

And me, as a man, with one day a week, well, I'm forced to get by "for real"... [Yeah] And the weekend we tend to let the woman get along! [Yeah] For everything... We are there, but she's the one who... You say "Oh well, you can go and change him..." or stuff like that... [Yeah] Sometimes you don't realize... one day alone, this is when you say "oh ok!" [laughs]

²⁷³ Alors, je pense que s'il était toujours à 6 jours comme pour le 1er enfant, j'aurais sûrement pris – fait une combinaison des vacances et pis des heures. Alors j'aurais peut-être pas pris 21 jours, parce qu'après du coup il me resterait soit plus d'heures soit plus de vacances. C'était pas le but non plus. Mais j'aurais sûrement pris en tout cas une semaine de vacances, peut-être une semaine en heures, pour avoir une dizaine de jours

²⁷⁴ je pense qu'on perd vite le fil après la naissance, y'a, comme je disais l'autre fois, c'est-à-dire que l'homme par principe, il est un peu à l'extérieur. Et...et c'est vital de pouvoir s'investir. Ça donne du – comment dire, le congé paternité ça permet de donner du temps, mais c'est aussi, enfin, aussi de la disponibilité au niveau de l'esprit quoi. [...] Et je pense que si on le fait pas au début, c'est irrattrapable... [...] y'a des habitudes dans le couple qui se prennent, y'a des...c'est...c'est très très dur.

²⁷⁵ Moi je pense que...le...c'est quand même...on peut pas remplacer – le papa il peut pas remplacer ce qui est fait les premières semaines. Ça je veux dire...on a...l'allaitement, on peut être présent – mais moi j'ai – je trouvais que c'était pas – y'a un rôle un peu particulier, y'a ce lien maternel qui se crée, ça, nous on est là plutôt pour donner des coups de main...

there's this, there's that, there's... we do—yeah [Yeah, yeah]... that's when you really realize...²⁷⁶ (Paul, 42, technician, married, one child)

Finally, there is a clear difference in the types of childcare activities performed between first-time and second- or third-time fathers. The majority of second- and third-time fathers reported having been mainly in charge of the elder children during their paternity leave, often doing outdoor activities, while the mother cared for the baby.

For the second, well, it changed a bit because, well, the first one was there, so... basically I got up, I took care of the first... and then I went for a walk with him... and I let her stay quietly at home with the little one.²⁷⁷ (Elias, 35, power station worker, married, two children)

Although *childcare leave use* participates in the involvement of fathers in childcare and family life, it simultaneously contributes to reproduce gendered conceptions and practices of parenthood through the specialization of tasks between mothers and fathers. It reinforces the practice and representation that mothers are better with infants and fathers bond more easily with older children, for example when they can play and talk. Only when first-time fathers spent time alone with their child were gendered parenting practices really challenged.

Helping the mother

Interviewed fathers systematically described paternity leave as enabling them to help out their partner. They highlighted their partners' need for rest following pregnancy and childbirth, and the importance of their presence for their partner. This leave use was often related to the *childcare* and *management of logistics* uses.

[I]t was at this time that there was really the need for the presence of the father, to relieve the mother a bit, help and so on [Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay] So it was a bit this idea of having a presence at home, and a little support [right from the start] yeah... Right from the start, yeah.²⁷⁸ (Felix, 37, archivist, married, one child)

Managers also agreed that paternity leave enables fathers to help their partners. Paternity leave is considered useful in particular in the first days and weeks after the birth and when the mother comes home from hospital.

[I]n my view... the way parental leave is considered, it is seen as a support for the spouse in a moment which is rather... rather demanding... in terms of energy, instead of considering it

²⁷⁶ Pis moi, en tant qu'homme, un jour par semaine avec, ben j'suis obligé de me débrouiller 'pour de vrai'... (Ouais) Alors que le weekend on a tendance à laisser la femme...se débrouiller quoi! (Ouais) Pour tous les trucs... On est là, mais c'est elle qui... On dit 'Ah ben tu peux aller le changer quoi...' ou des trucs comme ça... (Ouais) Des fois on se rend pas compte...un jour tout seul, c'est là qu'on se dit 'ah ouais!' [rire] y'a ci, y'a ça y'a, on fait – ouais (ouais, ouais) on se rend vraiment... compte quoi...

²⁷⁷ Pour le 2ème, bah là ça a changé un peu parce que ben du coup y'avait le 1er qui était là, donc...en gros je me levais, je m'occupais du 1er, et pis...c'est là que je partais en ballade avec le 1er, et pis...je la laissais plus tranquille à la maison avec le petit.

²⁷⁸ c'était à ce moment-là qu'il y avait vraiment le plus besoin de la présence du papa pour un peu soulager la maman, aider etc. quoi... (Ouais, ouais, ouais. D'accord) Donc c'était un peu dans cette idée-là d'avoir une présence à la maison, et puis pour un peu soutenir (dès le début) voilà ouais... Dès le début ouais.

*as time which the father can spend with the small child.*²⁷⁹ (Alfred, Youth & Social Services department, head of unit, 15 employees)

The representation of paternity leave as an opportunity to help the partner conveys the idea that the father's role is to assist the mother in tasks which are otherwise by default her responsibility. The representation of fathers as "helpers" clearly designates mothers as the main parent responsible for the child and household chores and reproduces the idea that fathers have a secondary role in these activities. It also suggests that father involvement is only temporary, limited to the time of paternity leave.

Management of logistics

For a majority of fathers, leave uptake at birth was used mainly or partly in order to manage and take charge of the household logistics, i.e., paperwork, grocery shopping, cooking and house cleaning. Fathers see their role as a practical one, in order to help their partner with these different tasks. This down-to-earth role is meant to enable the mother to rest and to focus on the care of the new baby.

*So I wanted to help my wife for two weeks. Because I imagined she would be tired, so I thought at least I could... do everything like food, I would say... being the cleaning lady... [Mhm] For her, so that she really could take care of the baby for two weeks full-time, and not worry about household chores...*²⁸⁰ (Daniel, 27, technician, married, one child)

The *management of logistics* has an underlying meaning similar to the *helping the mother* use. It again implies a specialization of tasks between mothers and fathers, with fathers this time leaving the care of the child totally to the mother. Here again the idea that mothers are better at caring for small infants was reproduced. This strong investment of the father in these logistical activities may also reveal the need on the part of fathers to contribute in a visible way to well-known activities, whereas getting more involved in the care of the baby requires engaging in activities which are totally new (for first-time parents). This has consequences in terms of the construction of the fatherhood identity and effects on gender relations. However, it should be also highlighted that it contributes to undo gender—albeit temporarily—in the division of housework tasks.

Work-family reconciliation

Paternity leave was in the majority of cases seen as a means to facilitate the reconciliation of work and family. Fathers described the leave as granting them more "comfort" and "flexibility" in their everyday organization and as a "safety valve" in emergency situation. Fathers felt they had more flexibility because they could go back to work progressively after the birth of their child, doing lighter working days or weeks.

²⁷⁹ à mon avis, le ressenti du congé parental, il est plus vu en tant qu'un soutien à l'épouse dans un moment qui est quand-même assez... assez exigeant, euh, en terme d'énergie, etc., que de dire vraiment que le papa puisse passer du temps auprès de... de son petit enfant.

²⁸⁰ Donc là je voulais aider ma femme pendant 2 semaines. Parce que j'imaginai qu'elle allait être fatiguée, tout, donc je me suis dit au moins que je puisse...faire tout ce qui est nourriture, je dirais...femme de ménage quoi... (Mhm) Pour elle, qu'elle puisse vraiment s'occuper 2 semaines à temps complet du petit, et pas s'occuper des tâches ménagères...

I'd have been running a lot more, and when I came home from work uh... I'd have been super tired and... I'd still have had to take care of the children without any time for grocery shopping and the like... I—yeah... [Yeah, yeah] it really would have meant changing the whole organization.²⁸¹ (Elias, 35, power station worker, married, two children)

We also expected... typical moments of sickness, or when we had to take him to the pediatrician and so on. So the idea was that I could take [leave days] when there really was a need... [Yeah, yeah] So not necessarily in a row, but to be much more flexible to... be available... [Okay, okay] And we took advantage of it several times, and also later on, when she went back to work [...] And then in that case, I could actually be at home while she went to work, when the kids were sick... [Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay] Or quite simply when he was really small.²⁸² (Pitt, 34, statistician, married, two children)

Fathers who took leave as *joker-days* particularly mentioned the *work-family life reconciliation* use. In these cases, the leave was either spent with the partner—still on leave and needing special support—or when the partner went back to work and the childcare solutions were not yet finalized. These two scenarios did not entail the same consequences for parenting practices. While in the first case interviewees used this time to help the mother, in the second, they were alone with the child and therefore the main parent responsible during this period.

Constitution of the family

Paternity leave was considered a period granted to spend time together with the mother and the child(ren). The birth of the child was associated with the idea that new habits must be found and a new (family) life created.

Mhm... we created a bubble of tranquility. We couldn't have done it otherwise... [Yeah] That's it. That's what I remember of it now, with a little bit of distance. Uh... For a while it was quiet. It... it was—yeah, it's a bit of a bubble like that, but... uh... that's what we created, then what... there was... watching the changes coming up. We wanted to do this in a serene way. Really quiet...²⁸³ (Louis, 36, vocational trainer, two children)

Paternity leave was described as enabling the father to participate in the process of family constitution. It was therefore used either directly on the birth of the child, going back home from hospital together, organizing practical things at home, but also just spending time together.

After we said that when she would return, I would take a whole week. Because, well... the return from hospital, home organization, we had already prepared everything at home, the

²⁸¹ j'aurais dû beaucoup plus courir, et puis justement bah quand je serais rentré du boulot euh...j'aurais été super crevé et pis...j'aurais dû m'occuper des enfants sans pouvoir forcément aller faire les commissions et autres, j'aurais - ouais... (Ouais, ouais) Il aurait vraiment fallu tout changer l'organisation.

²⁸² on s'attendait aussi à des moments typiquement...malade, ou quand il fallait aller chez le pédiatre et autres. Alors l'idée c'était que je puisse prendre selon les réels besoins... (Ouais, ouais) Donc pas forcément d'affilée, mais être beaucoup plus souple, pouvoir...pouvoir être disponible... (D'accord, ok) Et on en a profité plusieurs fois, justement par la suite aussi, quand elle a repris le travail [...] Et là en l'occurrence, je pouvais effectivement être moi à la maison alors qu'elle allait travailler, quand les enfants étaient malades ou... (Ouais, ouais, ouais, d'accord) Ou tout bêtement quand il était encore vraiment petit quoi.

²⁸³ Mmm...on a créé une bulle de tranquillité. Qu'on aurait pas pu avoir différemment... (Ouais) Voilà. Moi c'est ce que ça m'évoque maintenant, avec un petit peu de recul. Euh...voilà. Pendant un moment on était au calme. On...on s'est - ouais, c'est un peu une bulle comme ça, mais...euh...voilà qu'est-ce qu'on crée, enfin qu'est-ce que...pis là on a...on regarde un petit peu les changement qui arrivent. On voulait faire ça de manière sereine quoi. Vraiment tranquille...

small baby room... and all that goes with it... By the way it took me a lot of time. [laughs]... And we said, well, "when you come back", we wanted to all come back home at the same time. Two of us left the house, three came back. There we said, well "we really want to feel that—the child must feel that we are truly a family..." That for an entire week I am present... to help, to take care of him and really have—we really wanted to feel this presence.²⁸⁴ (Kraig, 35, sports facility manager, married, one child)

In some cases, there was also the idea that paternity leave is beneficial to the couple relationship, that it reinforces it, because of the fact that the partner feels supported and that the father is present. Paternity leave was also used a few weeks or months after the birth of the child in order to take vacations together and spend family time outside of the daily routine. The perception of paternity leave as contributing to constituting the family was often mentioned by fathers who adopted a *scattered weeks* leave pattern. In terms of gender relations, this leave use suggests that the father's presence at home around the birth of the child is legitimate and important. However, it does not have a strong potential for promoting gender-equal parenting practices, because when both parents are at home they tend to maintain a gendered division of childcare work.

Appropriation of fatherhood

Paternity leave was seen as time necessary for the father, in order for him to become conscious of his new status, and to appropriate his new identity as a father. Paternity leave represents time to appropriate the fatherhood role by "being present" as well as engaging in everyday activities. Both the passive and active roles of fathers are associated with paternity leave uptake.

And I enjoyed being with my daughter, it was wonderful. She grows while you're there, which is great. We see all her doings. No, it's really great. And to be with her during the day like that... that's rewarding [...] ²⁸⁵ (Oscar, 36, cook, partially cohabiting, one child)

[T]hose were important moments, because it is true that these contacts with the child that you have at the beginning, like that, there's something a little... uh it's magical, and it's really there... really where you form this contact with your child, you hold him in your arms, he is very small, that... yeah really... and it is... I think it must be—I can imagine that it must be very frustrating when you have just a few days, and after hop, you only see him in the evening... and maybe he's sleeping... ²⁸⁶ (Felix, 37, archivist, married, one child)

Among the more concrete activities enabled by paternity leave, fathers report first that they followed their child's development closely and did not miss important moments. For example Rick argues that—contrary to many fathers' views—he was very interested to follow his

²⁸⁴ Après, on a dit que quand elle rentrerait, je prendrais une semaine entière. Parce que ben retour de l'hôpital, organisation de la maison, on avait déjà tout préparé à la maison, petite chambre de bébé...et tous les coussi coussi qui vont avec... ça m'a pris du temps d'ailleurs. [rire] Et...on s'est dit ben 'quand tu rentres' on a voulu tous rentrer en même temps à la maison. On est partis à deux, on est revenus à trois. Là on s'est dit ben 'faut vraiment sentir - faut que l'enfant sente qu'on soit vraiment une famille, ben...' Que pendant une semaine entière je sois présent, l'aider...m'en occuper, et pis vraiment avoir - on a voulu vraiment sentir cette présence-là.

²⁸⁵ Pis j'en ai profité de ma fille, c'était magnifique quoi. Elle grandit quand t'es là, c'est super quoi. On voit tous ses faits et gestes. Non c'est vraiment super. Et pis être la journée avec elle comme ça, c'est...c'est enrichissant [...]

²⁸⁶ c'était des moments importants, parce que c'est vrai que c'est des contacts avec l'enfant qu'on a au tout début, comme ça, enfin y'a quelque chose d'un peu...c'est magique hein, pis c'est vraiment là que...vraiment qu'on forme ce contact avec notre enfant, qu'on l'a dans ses bras, il est tout petit, que...ouais, vraiment...et c'est...je pense ça doit être - je peux imaginer que ça doit être très frustrant que quand on a juste quelques jours, et pis après hop, on le revoit à la limite que le soir...si ça se trouve il dort...

children's development (e.g., a smile, the child's daily discoveries) from the very beginning and not only after they had reached a year or so. Secondly, many fathers highlighted the fact that paternity leave enabled them to bond with their child(ren). They were able to develop a relationship by participating in everyday childcare activities, for example putting the child to bed and bathing or changing him/her. Thirdly, paternity leave was described as necessary time for the father to find his place within the family, because fatherhood was considered less automatic than motherhood. Some fathers (Jacques, Renzo, Pitt and Florent) consider that paternity leave enables them to counterbalance the special bond between the mother and the child due to pregnancy and breastfeeding.

[A]s a father, you feel excluded anyway, uh anyway there's enough fusion with the mother, the mother is very... how should I put it? [pause] Since she's in principle more attuned to the child, let's say, knowing better, well, it's something I can understand, uh... the mother and child bond. And she's completely into that. Uhm for the father... it's hard to get into it, well, to say it's something we're playing as a threesome, not two plus one. And I think that if you have one day for the birth and three days on top, well, it is much more difficult to try to avoid that scenario...²⁸⁷ (Jacques, 42, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

The *appropriation of fatherhood* meaning assigned to paternity leave illustrates a different social construction of fatherhood and motherhood. While the time around birth is represented as necessary for the father to appropriate his place within the family, the mother-child relationship is essentialized through what is considered to be a more natural bond between them. The embodied dimension of motherhood (through breastfeeding and pregnancy) is an important topic in interviewees' reports of their experience of paternity leave uptake and fatherhood.

Relation to work

Both fathers and managers consider that paternity leave modifies the relation of employees to work. However, this runs in two opposed directions for fathers and for their managers, i.e., respectively distancing or attaching the employee to work. On the side of the fathers, some of them report that paternity leave modified their relation to their work environment. For example, Antoine reports that being able to take one month in a row enabled him to really distance himself from work, contrary to when he takes shorter leaves.

But it really helps you get out of work, and concentrate fully at home with the family. Because if you have one or two weeks of vacation in a row, you cannot switch off, at least this is the case for me.²⁸⁸ (Antoine, 37, policeman, married, two children)

Leave was also seen as a guarantee to be able to take time off work without any pressure or questions coming from the work environment. Some fathers reported that the existence of

²⁸⁷ en tant que père, on se sent de toute façon exclu, euh de toute façon c'est suffisamment fusionnel avec la mère, la mère étant...très...comment dire ? [pause] Etant par principe plus à l'écoute de l'enfant on va dire, sachant mieux, enfin, c'est quelque chose que je peux comprendre, avec le lien euh...mère-enfant. Pis elle est complètement dedans. Euh pour le père c'est difficile de... de rentrer, enfin d'essayer de se dire que c'est une chose qu'on joue à 3. Et c'est pas 2 plus 1. Et je pense que si on a 1 jour pour l'accouchement pis 3 jours derrière, bah c'est d'autant plus difficile d'essayer d'éviter ce scénario-là...

²⁸⁸ Mais ça permet vraiment de vous sortir du cadre professionnel, et de vous concentrer pleinement à la maison, à la famille. Parce que si vous avez une ou deux semaines de vacances d'affilée, enfin moi en tout cas personnellement j'arrive pas à décrocher.

paternity leave influenced the social norms regarding fatherhood in the workplace and improved the status of fatherhood. Paternity leave was said to influence the expectations of colleagues and supervisors who now have to officially reckon with the absence for one month of employees and who have become more tolerant in that respect. Like motherhood, fatherhood is now associated with a corresponding absence from work.

People here are fairly respectful from the day... "oh no, that's paternity leave, I'm... I'm not here" and that's it, there's not much discussion... [Yeah] And... so that means I could take [leave days] pretty fast, well, I mean, I didn't need to explain two weeks in advance that I wanted to take a specific day off.²⁸⁹ (Jacques, 42, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

Well, as soon as I told my colleagues that we were expecting a second child, I mean it's clear that everyone has in their mind—just like when a woman announces it, they think "ah maternity leave", well, they also think "paternity leave"²⁹⁰ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

On the side of managers, paternity leave is said to influence employees' relationship to work by creating a stronger attachment to work, a greater motivation to come back to work and a feeling of gratitude towards the employer. Managers argue that employees who have just become fathers are often very tired because of the demanding childcare work and lack of sleep. Therefore paternity leave enables employees to go back to work in better shape than if they had not benefited from this time off. Also, employees who benefit from paternity leave are said to be under less stress because they are able to better reconcile work and family life. In turn, they are better disposed towards work and provide more efficient work, as well as contributing to a better working atmosphere. Paternity leave and work-family life reconciliation measures benefit both the employee and the employer, and are therefore seen as "win-win" measures. It is mainly managers who associate this meaning with paternity leave, although one father mentioned that benefiting from leave impacted his motivation and willingness to give extra-help when needed, out of gratitude.

Uh... the employer, if he has... if he has staff that is, well, who have a harmonious private life, well, people are happier to come to work and then there is a working environment that is, which is favorable. And this climate, well, promotes efficiency or the... well, a good working atmosphere is something... which I think is very important, in a team.²⁹¹ (Etienne, Culture and Housing department, head of division, five employees)

The *relation to work* meaning attributed to paternity leave has mixed effects for the gender structure. At the interactional level it modifies the expectations towards male employees who have a child by making more legitimate their investment at home and making fatherhood more visible at work. Therefore on the one hand, the traditional figure of the full-time available male

²⁸⁹ ici les gens sont assez respectueux justement du jour... 'ah non là c'est congé paternité je... j'suis absent', et c'est, y'a pas trop de discussion... (Ouais) Et...donc ça veut dire que j'ai pu les prendre assez vite, enfin je veux dire, j'ai pas besoin d'expliquer 2 semaines à l'avance que j'voulais prendre tel jour de congé.

²⁹⁰ Bah dès que j'ai annoncé à mes collègues qu'on attendait un 2ème enfant, je veux dire c'est clair que tout le monde dans sa tête au même titre qu'une femme annonce, on se dit 'ah congé maternité' ben ils se disent aussi "congé paternité".

²⁹¹ Euh... l'employeur, si il a des... si il a un personnel qui est, enfin je sais pas, qui a une vie privée harmonieuse, ben on a des gens plus heureux de venir travailler puis, puis on a un climat de travail qui est, qui est favorable. Et ce climat favorise ben l'efficacité ou la...ben un bon climat de travail c'est quelque chose que... qui à mon sens est très important, quoi, dans une équipe.

employee is challenged, but on the other hand, managers simultaneously expect gratitude and enhanced availability and flexibility from employees on other occasions.

4.2. The status of fatherhood in the work organization

Admin officially promotes work-family life reconciliation policies and gender equality. It is therefore interesting to explore the status of fatherhood in the work organization, from the point of view of fathers and according to the experience of managers. Beyond paternity leave use, what is expected of male employees who become fathers? What are the norms about the use of other work-family life reconciliation policies?

A “family-friendly” work environment

The majority of interviewees reported that overall, Admin provides a work environment which enables working parents to reconcile family life and wage work satisfactorily. Good working conditions consist, according to fathers interviewed, in the possibility of having a flexible and advantageous work schedule (a comparatively short working week; i.e., 40 hours/week, the possibility of recovering extra hours) and to benefit from paternity and sick children leave. In addition to these opportunities, they reported that their supervisors are overall tolerant and open to their requests and emergency family situations.

And it happened to me several times... to be in a meeting, and as daycare centers tend to call in emergency... even if it's something little, but they, uh... because they don't want to contaminate everyone. Even during the meeting, they told me “if there is an emergency, go ahead” so... no worries about that. They know what it's like to have children, so...²⁹² (Pitt, 34, statistician, married, two children)

*Yeah, it can happen, but thanks to... thanks to the flexible work schedule, there is anyway considerable freedom given as to the time you arrive and leave from work. So, in general, people manage to find solutions through this arrangement, no problem [Yes, yes]. And otherwise, we are very... I mean, **if** there are clear reasons, we will not prevent someone from going to the doctor or go... it's... there are emergencies, regularly...²⁹³ (Etienne, Culture & Housing department, head of division, five employees)*

Managers highlighted the fact that they must regularly cope with emergency requests from their employees and that they are willing to accommodate them. They reported being responsive to their employees' needs and personal problems (Albert, Sophie, Alexis) and considered themselves “flexible” (Albert, Alfred), “generous” (Sophie) and “accommodating” (Yvan). Managers with children contend that their family situation influences the way they consider work-family life reconciliation: they better understand the needs of their employees (Boris),

²⁹² Et ça m'est arrivé plusieurs fois...d'être en séance, et pis comme les garderies ont tendance à...appeler d'urgence, même si c'est peu de choses, mais bon, euh...parce qu'ils veulent pas contaminer tout le monde. Même pendant la séance, on me dit 'si y a une urgence, allez-y' donc...aucun souci de ce point vue. On sait qu'est-ce que c'est que d'avoir des enfants, donc...

²⁹³ Oui, ça ça peut arriver, mais grâce à... grâce à l'aménagement du temps de travail, il y a quand-même une assez grande liberté qui est donnée quant à l'heure où on arrive au travail et on y repart. Donc, en général, les gens ils arrivent à trouver des solutions grâce à cet aménagement, sans problème (*oui, oui*). Puis autrement, nous on est très... je veux dire, si il y a des raisons claires, on va pas empêcher quelqu'un d'aller chez le médecin ou d'aller... c'est... il y a des urgences, régulièrement...

have experienced similar situations (André, Alexis), are less suspicious and readier to accept requests (Alfred). In the case of Sophie, the relation was reversed: because she was successful as a mother coping with the main responsibility of childcare while limiting her own absences from work, she expects her staff to be able to do the same. And because she (and not her husband) was mainly in charge of childcare when her children were young, she considers that a similar division of work among her male employees and their partners could take place.²⁹⁴ Managers' representations of parental roles and the gender division of work they adopt in their family influence their management style.

*[S]o of course it is clear that if I have an employee who says "I have to leave early today to pick up my daughter," maybe if I had none myself, I would say yes, well, it's because it's nice weather and he wants [Yes, yes] to enjoy the afternoon. So, no, no, of course, being **yourself** confronted with reconciling family life, you become more receptive to the demands you receive about it, yes, I think.*²⁹⁵ (Alfred, Youth & Social Services department, head of unit, 15 employees)

*No, it's clear that I watch a lot... sometimes a little too much in terms of myself, how I... I have my vision regarding the family. So it is true that the father who takes "sick child" day and all that, well, it's always me who took the... [...] I often take myself "as an example" [...] I say "if I can cope that way, the others can cope too." So it's true it plays a big role in [laughs] in my vision of balancing work and family...*²⁹⁶ (Sophie, Industrial department, head of division, 25 employees)

Among the measures provided by Admin that facilitate work-family life reconciliation, interviewees often mention the flexible work schedule system,²⁹⁷ regarded as giving considerable flexibility for managing family obligations, but also for personal life in general. Seven fathers were not benefiting from such possibilities at the time of the interview. This was the case for fathers working in the Security & Sports department (Stan, Antoine, Martin, Oscar, Kraig) and those working in specific sections of the Public Works and Industrial departments (respectively Gabriel and Justin) which had not yet implemented the measure. It is argued from the side of the fathers and managers that this system gives more transparency and legitimacy to workers' absences. Workers are less dependent on their supervisor's approval if they need to take time off because of family obligations; however, many may still formally ask for their consent. Few managers (Sylvain and Albert) report that there are also negative effects of the flexible work schedule (e.g., workers trying to generate overtime artificially), which necessitate a closer control of employees' activities.

²⁹⁴ Sophie's attitude towards fatherhood and work-family life reconciliation for male employees denotes both a gender traditional view on parental roles and a restrictive position as a manager. As she is the only female manager interviewed, I am cautious about further analyzing her case. It is nonetheless noteworthy that another qualitative study (Murphy & Doherty, 2011) observed that female senior managers in Ireland adopted hard management practices (comparatively to men) with their staff regarding work-family life reconciliation.

²⁹⁵ donc bien sûr, c'est clair que si j'ai un collaborateur qui me dit 'Je dois partir plus tôt aujourd'hui puisque je dois aller chercher ma fille', peut-être que si j'en avais pas moi-même, je me dirais oui, ben c'est parce qu'il fait beau et puis il a envie de (oui, oui) profiter de l'après-midi. Donc, non, non, bien sûr, d'être soi-même confronté au fait de devoir concilier une vie familiale ça sensibilise plus aux demandes qu'on peut recevoir à ce sujet, oui, je pense

²⁹⁶ Non, non, c'est clair que je regarde beaucoup... alors des fois un peu trop par rapport à moi comment je... j'ai ma vision des choses par rapport à la famille. Donc c'est vrai que l'histoire du père qui prend 'enfant malade' et tout, ben c'est toujours moi qui ai pris le... [...] je me prends souvent entre guillemets 'comme exemple' [...] je me dis 'si moi j'arrive à gérer comme ça, les autres doivent pouvoir aussi s'arranger'. Donc c'est vrai que ça joue un gros rôle dans [rire] dans la vision que j'ai de la conciliation travail et famille...

²⁹⁷ The flexible work schedule is called in French "Aménagement du Temps de Travail" (ATT). Working hours are recorded through a badging system. Fixed working periods are determined and the rest of work hours can be organized according to the needs.

[F]or example I have an employee [...] very often, on Friday, he has to leave early [...] so with ATT, nobody can say anything, because he comes... he comes early in the morning, he does his number of hours, that's ok [Yes, yes]. If we didn't have ATT, well, I certainly would have had people saying "yes, but anyway, often Friday afternoons he finishes at 2 p.m." [Yes, yes] "this is not normal... ". So ATT makes management very easy...²⁹⁸ (Alfred, Youth & Social Services department, head of unit, 15 employees)

Sick children's leave is another measure frequently mentioned, by both managers and fathers. Here again, there is an overall positive attitude towards this measure: it is useful and legitimate to use it. Thus fathers report having used this measure on some occasions—once or twice, maybe slightly more—since they have had a child or children. Norms about making use of this leave depend on the work environment. Six fathers report that they are encouraged to use this leave and that they do not feel embarrassed to take up the leave when they need it. However, other fathers report that there are informal norms and underlying rules about the legitimate way to make use of it (Paul, Stan, Renzo, Fabrice, Daniel, Gabriel, Oscar). It is suggested that using the maximum number of days allowed (ten per year) would be suspicious and that the use of this leave is the very last option to consider (after other private solutions, such as care provided by the partner or other family members). Fathers are conscious of these informal norms, which influence the way they use the measure. Managers also report that there may be situations where employees are suspected of abusing the system, or that the sick children's leave should be used only in specific situations (e.g., when both parents are employed or in cases of lone parenthood).

We also have ten days for sick children per year. And then he [head of section] says "but listen, you may have ten days available but that's not a reason to take them all"²⁹⁹ (Daniel, 27, technician, married, one child)

And that is frowned upon. Well, it's frowned upon, well, those who give the impression that they are abusing the system, it's frowned upon. I mean, the person who takes one or two days, that's thought normal. The one who uses the maximum of his right, is regarded... as someone who is abusing the system, yeah.³⁰⁰ (André, Industrial department, head of division, 60 employees)

Apart from the concrete examples of work-family life reconciliation measures offered by Admin, interviewees compare their work environment with the private sector in order to highlight the good working conditions available. Admin is described as being under less pressure for profit and under strict regulations, which give a more secure and friendlier workplace than the private sector. There is the idea that this frame gives more space for personal and family life. Although earning potentials are lower in Admin than in the private sector, work-family policy measures are seen as an added value and in some cases (Justin, Daniel) as the main reason for staying. For a majority of fathers the work-family life reconciliation measures represent an important

²⁹⁸ par exemple j'ai un collaborateur [...] très souvent, le vendredi, il doit partir plus tôt [...] alors avec l'ATT, il y a personne qui a rien à redire, parce qu'il vient... il vient tôt le matin, il fait son horaire, c'est bon (oui, oui). Si on avait pas l'ATT, ben, j'aurais certainement déjà eu des gens qui disent 'oui, mais quand-même, lui, très souvent les vendredis après-midi, il finit à 14 heures' (oui, oui) 'c'est pas normal...'. Donc, l'ATT rend très facile cette gestion...

²⁹⁹ on a aussi 10 jours maladie pour les enfants, par année. Et puis c'est du genre à dire 'mais écoutez, si vous avez 10 jours à disposition, mais c'est pas pour autant qu'il faut les prendre'...

³⁰⁰ Et c'est mal vu. Enfin c'est mal vu, enfin ceux qui donnent l'impression qu'ils abusent du système c'est mal vu. J'entends, la personne qui prend une ou deux fois, c'est quelque chose qui est considéré comme normal. Celle qui exploite le maximum de son droit, on les considère comme...comme quelqu'un qui abuse du système, ouais.

dimension of the evaluation of their current position versus another potential job offer. Employees value the recognition of personal and family life obligations by the work organization.

Yeah, I think it's really something important and... [Yeah] I'm not saying that it changes your life, but... [Yeah] It's really, compared with my old job, uh... it's really important... [Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay] Now I wouldn't come back for – even at the City of Lausanne... for a fixed schedule, except when it's three shifts but... [You wouldn't go back for...] for a fixed schedule where you have to be there at a fixed time...³⁰¹ (Elias, 35, power station worker, married, two children)

The persistence of the ideal male worker norm

Indications of some limitations on male employees' opportunities to reconcile work and family life are observed in the discourses of both managers and fathers. Among managers, some negative attitudes towards work and family reconciliation measures are observed. For example, Boris considers that in the new generation, private life is given exaggerated importance, which interferes with the employee role. For example, he thinks that part-time work is possible only if it concerns a small proportion of employees. Alfred explains that the flexible work schedule can be detrimental to the company's interest when employees work slowly. Sophie mentions the cases of employees who work in Admin for a purely financial reason (as a "day job") and who take advantage of all the benefits available while contributing minimally to the organization.

On the side of fathers, limitations are also reported. First, some interviewees report pressure from their supervisor resulting from their inferior hierarchical position. Paul, a technician in the Public Works department, and Martin, a policeman in the Security & Sports department, who have both reduced their working percentage to 80%, were asked to remain available in the event of an emergency during their day off. Daniel reports being often reminded by the head of his section, through "insinuations" and "small remarks", that he should stay involved in his work, notwithstanding his family life. Elias and Antoine report that their supervisors are eager to reassert their power to control their presence time.

Secondly, some fathers express the idea that work-family life reconciliation is possible as long as the work gets done. Employees have integrated the norm that there is a minimum work standard which they must guarantee, notwithstanding the family events and constraints they face. For example, Pitt reports that he felt he should provide a minimal service after the birth of his child and therefore not take 20 days of paternity leave in a row. Sylvain reports that leave should not affect the fulfillment of the workload and Paul thinks that such situations are accepted as long as they do not happen too often.

After all, it is one's responsibility to do one's job, not to jeopardize the goals and responsibilities of the position. Whilst reconciling professional life [...] After perhaps others,

³⁰¹ Ouais, je pense c'est vraiment quelque chose d'important, et pis... (Ouais) Je vais pas dire que ça change la vie mais... (Ouais) C'est vraiment, par rapport à mon ancien emploi, euh...c'est vraiment important... (Ouais, ouais, ouais. D'accord) Maintenant je reviendrais plus en arrière pour – même à la ville de Lausanne pour un...un horaire fixe, en dehors ben quand c'est du 3-8 ou autres mais... (Vous revendriez pas sur...) Sur un horaire fixe où faut être là de telle heure à telle heure

*managers or even workers, there is a moment well... there are things expected from them anyway to get the job done.*³⁰² (Sylvain, 41, plant manager, married, three children)

Thirdly, some interviewees report that some specificities of their work environment and their occupation put a strain on their ability to manage family demands. These specificities consist for example in positions which entail the guarantee of a minimal service to the public, as is the case in the police where standards are set and must be met (e.g., numbers available, 24/24 patrols at weekends). Another example of the constraints imposed on work-family life possibilities is the case of Kraig, who as a sports instructor must guarantee his lessons, which are fixed appointments. Elias and Justin, respectively working in a power station and in the electricity maintenance of the city, are assigned fixed duty periods outside office hours over the year. Antoine and Jérémy report that because they have highly specialized knowledge and tasks, colleagues cannot replace them easily in their function, which limits their scope for work-family life reconciliation. In a very few cases, interviewees argue that they are able to impose their work-family life requests because they hold a position of power (thanks to their competences and education), which makes them valuable to the work organization. This is expressed for example by Jacques who argues that his request to work at 80% in order to care for his child was accepted because of the current scarcity on the labor market of trained engineers in his field.

Several interviewees argue that the modalities of the work activity and the section where one is employed play an important role in one's ability to reconcile work and family lives. Interviewees associate their ability to reconcile their work and family life satisfactorily with the fact that their occupation and position provide them with a high degree of flexibility and independence. This flexibility consists for example in control over one's agenda, working with medium to long-term deadlines and not with daily objectives, working individually, being replaceable and having the opportunity to work from home.

The invisibility of visibly involved fathers

In order to analyze the status of fatherhood within Admin, I asked specifically how fathers who engaged visibly in family activities were regarded, through the examples of part-time work and the use of prolonged unpaid leaves. In such cases, while it is clear that employees bear the financial consequences of their involvement—by receiving a proportionally lower wage, and not being paid during sabbatical leaves—such behavior may also be interpreted as a threat to the ideal (male) worker norm of full-time availability and devotion to the company.

According to all interviewees, these two ways of visibly involving in fatherhood are very rarely observed and therefore invisible. Managers are responsible for divisions or units which are predominantly male and where full-time activity is the norm. Fathers employed in a male dominated environment confirm this trend and observe that the rare employees who hold part-time positions are women. The reverse situation—part-time being the norm—is observed by

³⁰² Après il en va de la responsabilité de chacun quand même de faire son travail, pour pas mettre en péril les buts et responsabilités du poste. Tout en conciliant la vie professionnelle quoi. [...] Après peut-être pour d'autres personnes, des cadres ou même des ouvriers, il y a un moment ben... il y a des choses qu'on attend d'eux quand même pour que le travail soit fait.

Jules and Pitt, who work in female-dominated work environments. Part-time work is associated by both managers and fathers with female forms of occupational participation.

So we have two... no more, we have several female colleagues who work part-time because they are mothers. I think the lowest is 60%, something like that. So they are open to it... [Yeah] Now for men, the question has not yet been raised. So I do not know if this is because there is nobody who is interested, or if it's simply not possible. But I know there are in any case three, four or five police colleagues who work – let's say almost all women in the judicial police work part-time...³⁰³ (Stan, 35, policeman, married, two children)

As mentioned previously, 10% of men work part-time, while this is the case for 72% of female civil servants. Interviewees who work part-time also experience normative reactions to their work participation. Jules' example is the most prominent. It reveals the existence of further norms about the rate of part-time work deemed appropriate for men. While 80% may still be acceptable, reducing to 60% is deemed inappropriate for a man both in the workplace and in personal life.

But... but I also found in my family circle etc... where people were a priori open, uh... when I told them about my project to work at 80% [...] to take care of the child, well, everyone thought it was great that I would take care of my son one day a week, it would be fantastic etc. And when I finally said I was working at 60%, uh... well, the reaction was quite opposite, like "but... is that enough? but... "then all of a sudden, it's funny how one day a week was admirable, and two days a week it was a bit..."but is it really serious, the work you do? " [...] And here at work too [...] everyone thought it was wonderful and it was very good for the child and for me, and it was all very positive, but when all of a sudden I was going to spend two days, then there... well, it was starting to be too much, and questions about, well, yeah, the investment in my work, well, and the image, and the income, and all this all of a sudden was shattered...³⁰⁴ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

Another form of visible involved fatherhood in the workplace consists in using long unpaid leaves. There are no statistics available of the number of unpaid leaves granted annually, but managers interviewed report only isolated cases in their departments, and not necessarily related to family life (training and vacations are also often reasons for this leave uptake). Managers report that they would be open to such leave requests, but many argue that it would depend on the position occupied by the employee (Alfred, Yvan, Etienne, Boris). For example, Alfred contends that taking a sabbatical year to care for one's child when one occupies a top management position would be inadequate. However, if the function enables it, and if the competences of the person are good, then it is reasonable—and advantageous for the

³⁰³ Alors on a 2...non, plus, on a quelques collègues féminines qui sont à temps partiel, parce qu'elles sont mamans. Je crois que le plus bas c'est 60%, quelque chose comme ça. Donc ils sont ouverts à ça... (Ouais) Maintenant aux collègues masculins, ça s'est encore pas posé. Alors je sais pas si c'est parce qu'il y a personne qui était intéressé, ou si simplement ça se fait pas. Mais je sais qu'il y a en tout cas 3-4, voire 5 collègues de la police judiciaire qui travaillent quasi – on va dire quasi toutes les femmes de la police judiciaire travaillent à pourcentage réduit

³⁰⁴ Mais...mais je trouve aussi dans mon entourage, que ce soit familial etc., où les gens sont à priori plutôt ouverts au départ, euh...quand le projet c'était de dire ben que voilà j'allais travailler à 80% [...] pour m'occuper de l'enfant, ben tout le monde trouvait très bien que je consacre un jour par semaine à m'occuper de mon fils, ça serait extraordinaire etc. Pis quand j'ai dit que finalement je bossais à 60, euh...ben la réaction a été plutôt inverse, de dire 'mais...mais c'est suffisant ? mais...' enfin tout d'un coup, c'est drôle comme un jour par semaine c'était admirable, et deux jours par semaine ça faisait un peu... 'mais est-ce que c'est très sérieux ce travail que tu fais ?' [...] Euh même ici au travail finalement [...] tout le monde trouvait ça admirable, et pis c'était très bien pour l'enfant et pour moi, et tout ça était très positif, mais quand tout d'un coup j'allais y consacrer 2 jours, enfin...bah là ça commençait à faire beaucoup et pis à se poser des question sur finalement ben, ouais, l'investissement dans mon travail, enfin, et pis l'image, et pis le revenu, et pis...et pis tout ça tout d'un coup qui commençait à être percuté.

company—to accept such a request and hire an auxiliary to replace him. Alexis thinks that managers understand such demands and do not bear a grudge against employees who wish to spend more family time, but are confronted with concrete organizational problems:

*So people fully understand it, because they—we would all do it. But on the other hand, well, it is true that at times it triggers a few questions... because people ask, “but if this guy goes on leave for five months, but how will I manage? This is a guy on my team...” but now, well, it never was, from memory, it was never experienced as a **criticism**.³⁰⁵ (Alexis, Security & Sports department, head of unit, 17 employees)*

All but three fathers knew about the possibility of taking an unpaid leave but did not consider it, either for financial reasons or because they thought they would not need it, especially now that they could benefit from the paternity leave. Additional reasons mentioned for not taking unpaid parental leave are the fact that this would have represented a too long interruption from work and that it would have been hard to return to work after a longer period than the 21 days of paternity leave (Jacques, Stan, Antoine). Some interviewees feared that it would have made them appear unreliable in the eyes of their supervisors (Jacques and Kraig); and that it would have caused problems for the employer if they had asked for a longer leave (Elias, Daniel and Oscar).

Yes I would have liked to spend more time with my son, that's for sure, but you know... This is the world of work, you have to work, I feel... [hesitation] we have benefits that others don't have... I didn't want to ask for more.³⁰⁶ (Daniel, 27, technician, married, one child)

Overall, visible and prolonged signs of involved fatherhood were not very marked, even in Admin, an employer which *a priori* represents a father-friendly work environment. Managers answered my questions about the perception of involved fatherhood hypothetically, because they did not necessarily have concrete examples to hand, apart from the use of paternity leave and the sick children's leave. Actually, part-time work was seen as having a negative impact on career opportunities and several problems were associated with it by both fathers and managers. The majority consider that there is a choice to make between being actively and visibly involved in family life and pursuing a career. Some respondents argued that it depends on the degree of responsibility taken on by the employee. Up to a certain degree of responsibility, it is possible to be a part-time worker, but working at less than 80% is incompatible with a position with responsibilities, because a daily presence is needed.

Managers argue for example that management positions require being able to react to emergency situations, make decisions, and that such positions entail a high workload which it is not possible to reduce (working part-time would mean working more hours than one is paid for). Reflecting on his own career, André concludes that he would not have been able to reach his current position if he had worked part-time. Alfred thinks that employees working part-time are not negatively considered in the work organization, but that they will not be favored when a new management position comes up.

³⁰⁵ Donc les gens comprennent complètement ça, parce qu'ils, on le ferait tous. Pis d'un autre côté, ben c'est vrai que de temps en temps ça amène quelque... quelques questionnements parce qu'il se dit 'mais tiens s'il part cinq mois machin, mais comment je vais faire ? C'est un gars de mon équipe...', mais voilà, ben, jamais ça a été, de mémoire, jamais ça a été vécu comme une critique.

³⁰⁶ Oui j'aurais voulu passer plus de temps avec mon fils, ça c'est indéniable quoi, mais après voilà. C'est le monde du travail, on doit travailler, je m'estime quand même...[hésitation] on a des avantages que ailleurs ils ont pas donc...je veux pas non plus leur demander plus.

At some point you must also make choices, one can be a good employee and ask for a reduction of work, but if you want... to climb in the hierarchy, I know few bosses and few supervisors working at reduced rates, on the contrary, I think leaders must work maybe a little more than the norm.³⁰⁷ (Albert, Industrial department, head of division, 14 employees)

4.3. The discursive constitution of fatherhood

Interviewees draw on two main discourses to give meaning to and make sense of fatherhood and to constitute their father identity. The *change* discourse draws on a generational change concerning practices and norms about parenthood and gender relations. The second discourse concerns persisting *differences* between mothers and fathers in the kind of relationship they have with the newborn child and their respective competences and abilities. This discourse relies on an essentialized conception of parenthood roles. After having presented each discourse, I suggest that their simultaneous use enables the contemporary image of “involved fatherhood” to be diffused and valued among interviewees, while adopting gendered family models.

Change discourse

Interviewees draw on discourses which express the idea that there have been important societal changes in norms about educational principles and gender relations. These changes—which are represented as being interconnected—gave space for the development of more involved forms of fatherhood. First, educational principles are depicted as having changed towards more relaxed and less strict attitudes toward children than in the past generations. Fathers note that their generation has adopted new standards of education, as compared with the way they were brought up by their own parents. They report adopting a less authoritative attitude toward children than they experienced themselves as children, especially as regards their relation with their own fathers.

I don't think I missed a dad, that wouldn't be true, my father... was always there and available, but it's true that I was a little afraid of him... he was the quiet bear, but when he got angry, you really had to... Whereas I, when I get angry, apparently it doesn't work... [laughs] Roles have changed a bit in that sense.³⁰⁸ (Pitt, 34, statistician, married, two children)

Interviewees are not necessarily totally opposed to a strict education (as will be shown later), but they also wish to develop a more caring and affectionate relationship with their children (e.g., Daniel). Some interviewees (Jacques and Louis) highlight that they wish to develop

³⁰⁷ A un moment donné il faut aussi faire des choix, on peut être un bon employé puis demander une réduction de travail, mais si on veut...un peu grimper dans la hiérarchie, je connais peu de patrons puis peu de chefs qui travaillent à taux réduit, au contraire, je pense des chefs ils doivent travailler peut-être un peu plus que la norme.

³⁰⁸ Ouais il faut dire que j'ai pas tendance à croire que j'ai manqué d'un papa, parce que ce serait dire des bêtises, parce que mon père...toujours là, disponible et tout, mais c'est vrai que...je le craignais un petit peu plus moi, c'était...c'était l'ours qui était calme, mais quand il se fâchait, alors il fallait vraiment...alors que moi même si je me fâche, apparemment ça passe pas... [rire] Euh...mais les rôles ont un peu changé dans ce sens.

emotionally close relationships with their child(ren) or that they want to follow their child(ren)'s development attentively. Other fathers (Rick, Daniel and Antoine) wish to express their emotions more openly in their educational style than their fathers did.

So my dad, well... he's... he's not someone who... how can I put it? Well, he's not very exuberant, he never showed his emotions. That's it. I can't recall, I can't recall hearing him telling me he loved me for example. I know it – I know he loves me, but he's very reserved, he'll never say it – he can't. It's impossible. Even with his grandchildren [...] But... well, I think I didn't want to reproduce – I didn't want to be the same person as my father. [...] My children, every night I tell them I love them.³⁰⁹ (Rick, 41, collection agent, married, three children)

In our couple we believe in demonstrative affection, ok? Which wasn't at all the case for me as a child. I can't recall having once told my mother or father "I love you", ok? We weren't at all in that trend, and that's something which has completely changed with our children.³¹⁰ (Antoine, 37, policeman, married, two children)

These excerpts indicate that the changes in educational principles are closely connected with changes in social norms about fatherhood and family models in general. Interviewees draw on their own parents' experience and on society at large to report on changes undergone in the family and its organization. The former generation is described in a traditional way: the father was the main breadwinner, the authoritative figure who had a distant relationship with his children and was present only on some occasions, for example for leisure time on the weekends. By contrast, the mother is presented as the main partner responsible at home and the one who raises the children.

This caricatural picture of the male-breadwinner model is described as being outdated. Against this picture, the current family norms and practices are depicted. The relationship between partners is said to have changed; men and women have more equal power in the family; men can no longer delegate domestic work to their partner. In addition, women's higher education and careers are highlighted. Family models are said to have become more gender-equal; men and women are more independent of one another and do more of each other's former tasks.

I think the couple is built differently. In the sense that I think that—well, I can't arrive home and say "well, they're your kids, you take care of them" [Mhm, mhm] [laughs] Whereas before, that happened more easily.³¹¹ (Renzo, 36, administrative assistant, cohabiting, twins)

³⁰⁹ Ouais, alors mon papa alors lui c'est...il est...c'est pas quelqu'un qui a été très...comment est-ce qu'on va dire ? Euh...pas exubérant, mais...euh...il a jamais démontré ses émotions. Voilà. Moi je me souviens pas à ce qu'il...je me souviens pas l'avoir entendu dire qu'il m'aimait par exemple. Je sais – je le sais, qu'il m'aime, mais il est énormément pudique, il arrivera jamais – il arrive pas hein. C'est impossible. Même avec ses petits-enfants. [...] Mais...je – voilà, je pense qu'en effet, y'a...il – voilà, je voulais pas reproduire – je voulais pas être la même personne que mon père. [...] Mes enfants, moi, tous les soirs, je leur dis que je les aime. Je veux dire...

³¹⁰ Euh complètement différente. Euh...ça...a rien à voir. Dans notre couple on prône un petit peu l'affection démonstrative, d'accord ? Ce qui n'était pas du tout le cas, moi, enfant. Je me rappelle pas avoir dit une fois 'je t'aime' à ma mère ou à mon père. D'accord ? Alors on était pas du tout dans ce trend-là, et c'est quelque chose qui a complètement changé avec nos enfants.

³¹¹ je pense c'est plutôt la manière dont le couple est construit qui est différente. Dans le sens où je pense que – quoi, moi je peux pas arriver à la maison pis dire 'ouais bon tes gamins tu t'en occupes'... (Mhm, mhm) [rires partagés] Alors parce qu'à l'époque ça se faisait plus facilement...

There's a huge difference. My father's generation and mine... There the roles were really well defined. Uhm... the father worked, maybe played during the weekend. But otherwise it really was the mother, for everything. Almost for everything. So yes, I think this has changed, yes.³¹² (Pitt, 34, statistician, married, two children)

Closely related to changes in educational practices and family models are changes regarding social norms about fatherhood. The majority of interviewees refer both to personal experience (their own fathering practices and that of friends, in comparison with that of their fathers, representing the former generation) and to a general observation of society, and argue that men are now more involved in childcare. These differences are explained by social norms which are said to have changed. Nowadays it is socially accepted that fathers are more involved with their children, but earlier they were prevented from doing so because it was not the norm.

The new fatherhood norms concern men's responsibility for children (before they would never be alone in charge of the child); their expression of emotions and the closeness of relationship with the child (fathers did not show their emotions, they were more distant with their child); their participation in childcare activities such as changing diapers, taking a stroll with the pram or fetching the child from the childcare center (previously, fathers would never take part in these activities). Some fathers highlight that nowadays grandfathers are ready to participate more in childcare tasks than they did for their own children. This shows that attitudes towards fatherhood have changed. Many interviewees argue that this change can be observed in everyday life: fathers spend more time with their children; are more involved in childcare tasks; exchange more with their children and are more interested and willing to do so.

I think it's... it's a reality. I mean... When I was saying before... I think that... almost 100% of the people I know who have children are more involved than my parents, well, at least than my father. Or than the majority of the people I know from the former generation, I mean, the average level... of involvement has nothing to do... we're no longer—it seems to me we have gone way beyond the breadwinner aspect.³¹³ (Jacques, 42, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

Before, I don't know if my father often took care of us for a weekend, of my sister and me, when my mother was not there [Yeah] I think that never happened. Whereas now it happens often in present-day society that the father looks after his children for a day or a weekend.³¹⁴ (Fabrice, 33, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

A minority of fathers (e.g., Paul and Gabriel) considers that these changes put a strain on men, as Gabriel's quotation illustrates. Men are said to have to fulfill many different expectations,

³¹² Y'a une sacré différence. La génération de mon père et ma génération...là les rôles étaient vraiment très bien définis. Euh...le père travaillait, jouait éventuellement le weekend. Mais sinon c'était vraiment la mère, tout. Presque tout. Euh...donc oui, ça a changé je pense...ouais.

³¹³ Mais je pense que c'est...c'est une réalité. Enfin je veux dire... Quand je disais avant j'ai...je pense que la...le quasi 100% des gens que je connais, qui ont des enfants, sont plus impliqués que mes parents, enfin que en tout cas mon père. Ou que la plupart de ceux que je connais des générations d'avant, enfin je veux dire c'est...le niveau moyen il a...—d'investissement, il a plus rien à voir, c'est-à-dire qu'on est plus—y'a...ouais, il me semble qu'on a largement dépassé le côté soutient financier

³¹⁴ Je pense que maintenant...bah à l'époque, je sais pas si mon père ça lui est arrivé très souvent de nous garder un weekend, moi et ma sœur, alors que ma mère était pas là. Je pense c'est jamais arrivé dans sa vie... (Ouais) Alors que maintenant c'est quand même courant dans la société actuelle que le père garde ses enfants une journée ou un weekend...

corresponding to the old *and* the new social norms about fatherhood, i.e., being strong, being a play-dad, being a breadwinner, participating in housework, etc.

I think that in our times, everybody, well... everybody does the same things! [Mhm] You don't really have a choice either. We're in a society, well, where you must do everything, actually. You have to help your wife, it's not like before when the husband did nothing.³¹⁵ (Gabriel, 30, foreman, married, two children)

Elements of the *change* discourse about fatherhood social norms are further observed in the way interviewees describe what they consider to be a “good father” and also in the way they describe their own fatherhood role. Among the characteristics which define a “good father”, the majority of interviewees mention that a father should be involved, that he should be present, spend time with his children, take part in childcare tasks, share experiences and activities. Some fathers highlight the importance of being attentive to children, to their development and emotions and developing a close and affectionate relationship. Some fathers also highlight that there is not one unique model of being a good father. The good father should simply try to do the best he can, even if he makes mistakes. Several fathers (Jacques, Kraig, Jules, Florent, Martin) describe fatherhood as an apprenticeship. Some interviewees compare this process of learning parenting tasks to what their partners go through (as the excerpt of Jules suggests), which contributes to describe motherhood and fatherhood in undifferentiated ways and to reduce gender differences in the construction of parenthood.

From one day to the next, she also had to look after a child all by herself... There aren't really more reasons for her to be more qualified for that than I am. Apart from the fact that she's a mother, and that one might think there are things which are learned or innate, or I don't know, well, what I mean is that she also had to learn, just as I had to learn.³¹⁶ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

I think the father has a very equivalent role in the upbringing of the child, and... and the child hasn't – you immediately notice that the child is not especially attracted to the mother and then, the father, well... He is the guy who brings home the money and that's it [laughs]. If you're there as a father, you see that the child divides itself completely between both, and both are essential. So... I think it's good that we finally admit that a man also has affection, also has love for a child, that he mustn't hide behind vague ideas like “a man doesn't show his feelings, etc.” Well, I really think that's absurd.³¹⁷ (Felix, 37, archivist, married, one child)

³¹⁵ j'pense que dans l'époque où on vit, tout le monde ben...tout le monde fait...fait la même chose quoi! (Mhm) On a pas trop le choix non plus hein. On est dans une société ben...que on doit tout faire en fait. On doit aussi aider sa femme, c'est plus comme à l'époque où le mari faisait rien quoi!

³¹⁶ elle a aussi dû, du jour au lendemain tout d'un coup se retrouver toute seule avec un enfant pis que...y'a pas forcément plus de raisons que moi qu'elle soit qualifiée à ce niveau. Euh...hormis le fait que c'est une mère, et pis qu'on pense qu'il y a des choses qui sont acquises et ou innées, enfin j'en sais rien quoi, euh mais je veux dire elle a aussi dû apprendre au même titre que j'ai dû apprendre.

³¹⁷ pour moi le papa a un rôle tout à fait...équivalent dans l'éducation de l'enfant, et...et d'ailleurs l'enfant il a pas – enfin on sent tout de suite hein qu'il est pas spécialement attiré vers la maman et pis le papa ben...c'est le type qui ramène l'argent et pis voilà... [rire] Et si on est présent en tant que papa, on voit que l'enfant se partage complètement entre les deux, et que les deux sont essentiels et etc., donc... Donc je pense que c'est bien qu'on arrive enfin à admettre que finalement un homme il a aussi de la tendresse, il a aussi de l'amour pour un enfant, enfin qu'il a pas à cacher sous des espèces de vagues idées qu'il faut être ‘un homme, qui ne montre pas ses sentiments et qui etc.’ enfin je trouve ça absurde quoi vraiment...

Difference discourse

Alongside the *change* discourse, interviewees simultaneously draw on a discourse which affirms the many *differences* between motherhood and fatherhood. These differences concern the characteristics, competences and abilities of mothers and fathers. The large majority of interviewees represent the mother-child relationship as being different than the father-child relationship. Mother and child are said to be inseparable and more strongly attached to each other. Some fathers consider that their role is to help this separation take place between the mother and the child (see for example Jules). Fathers illustrate the strong mother-child attachment for example with the difficulty for some mothers to return to work after maternity leave and put the child in a daycare center. The mother-child attachment is also used as an explanation for women's reduction of their activity rate, to reduce the difficulty of the separation. Underlying the representation of the strong mother-child attachment are the arguments of pregnancy and breastfeeding. The fact that interviewees did not share these experiences explains the difference in the relationship they developed with their child.

It's true that it's the whole story of childhood is to separate—the whole story of life some people argue, but—to separate from our parents, etc. above all from our mother apparently, and I really think that's our role, as a father, to be able to separate.³¹⁸ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

I think for a mother it's more difficult to be totally absent from home. I mean she needs more—she needs more to see her children than other people. That's what I think, it's my personal view... but I think for a mom it's difficult to think "Okay, Monday I start work at 8 a.m. and I see my children at 5 p.m."³¹⁹ (Stan, 35, policeman, married, two children)

I think that... it's still... you cannot replace—the dad cannot replace what is done during the first weeks. I mean... you have... breastfeeding, you can be present—but I had—I thought it wasn't – there's a special role, there's this maternal bond which is created, we're more there to give a hand here and there...³²⁰ (Sylvain, 41, plant manager, married, three children)

The role of the mother is therefore described as different from that of the father, at least during the very early stages of the child's life. Fathers assist and support the mother during this time, but their roles are different. Some fathers draw on the idea of maternal instinct, which differentiates the relationship their partner has with the child from their own. Mothers—thanks to their maternal instinct—better understand the needs of the child, they are more patient, gentle and comforting and are better at soothing them. They are also more worried about the

³¹⁸ ben c'est vrai que c'est toute l'histoire de l'enfance, c'est de se séparer—toute l'histoire de la vie hein, selon certains, mais—de se séparer de nos parents, etc., surtout de notre mère vraisemblablement, et je crois vraiment que ça c'est notre rôle à nous, de père, finalement, d'être capable de séparer.

³¹⁹ Je pense – après – après je pense que pour une maman c'est quand même plus difficile d'être totalement absente de la maison. Je veux dire elle a plus—ben voilà elle a plus besoin aussi de voir ses enfants, que certaines personnes. Je pense hein, après c'est mes idées à moi mais...je pense pour une maman c'est quand même difficile de se dire 'ben lundi je commence à 8h et pis je revois mes enfants à 17h.

³²⁰ Moi je pense que...le...c'est quand même...on peut pas remplacer—le papa il peut pas remplacer ce qui est fait les premières semaines. Ça je veux dire...on a...l'allaitement, on peut être présent—mais moi j'ai—je trouvais que c'était pas—y'a un rôle un peu particulier, y'a ce lien maternel qui se crée, ça, nous on est là plutôt pour donner des coups de main...

child's health and well-being and are more protective, while fathers are by contrast more detached and less anxious parents.

Well, it's the instinct—for me that's the maternal instinct, that is, until he can speak... you have to guess and [Mhm] And I think that she's—I think I trust her, I think she has a good feel for things, I trust her, so I leave it that way, yeah.³²¹ (Paul, 42, technician, married, one child)

All in all, the majority of fathers argue that the father can be replaced, that he is not totally necessary during the transition to parenthood, while the role of the mother is irreplaceable. Interviewees describe their partner as being the main person in charge of the child. This difference of responsibilities is represented as normal. Mothers are said to know better what is best for the child and to orient them in the way they should handle him/her. Some fathers also explain the primary role played by the mother, due to the fact that they spend more time with the child (e.g., Louis, Rick).

At the beginning, the three months, I... I was useless [Mhm] I realize I was almost useless. The baby, he couldn't bear me—well, yes, I don't know... if his mother wasn't there, I couldn't comfort him.³²² (Justin, 32, electrician, married, two children)

Today I see that... she's the principal element, honestly, in today's situation, the structure, the organization, she's central. She's really a real mom, and sometime it puts me—it worries me, because yes—I think you're a woman or a man before being a father or a mother, you have to stay it too.³²³ (Kraig, 35, sports facility manager, married, one child)

Complementary to this image of motherhood as a primary role and special relationship, fatherhood is constructed as secondary. This is expressed, as has previously been pointed out, by the fact that the father is represented as a help to the mother. Also contributing to the idea of secondary parent, fatherhood is represented as less binding than motherhood. Fathers choose the moment and the extent to which they want to be involved in childcare. Fatherhood is characterized by vague characteristics and duties, for example “being available”, “being around”, “being present” in case of need, but not necessarily as being actively engaged in childcare activities.

Even the bath, as I said before, it wasn't really my thing, but from time to time, well, I say “yeah, I'd like to bathe them”, and again I think “I want to do it”, so I just do it. And that's nice moments, because you have your two children in the water fooling around, and that's nice.³²⁴ (Stan, 35, policeman, married, two children)

³²¹ Ben c'est l'instinct—pour moi c'est l'instinct un peu maternel, c'est-à-dire tant qu'il parle pas et...qu'il faut un peu deviner et tout ça (mhm) Et pis que surtout, ben qu'elle—j'trouve que j'ai assez confiance, enfin j'trouve qu'elle sent bien les choses, enfin j'ai confiance en elle, donc...je le laisse un peu comme ça, ouais.

³²² On est vraiment dans une... au début les trois mois, moi je... je servais à rien (mhm). Je me rends compte que je servais pratiquement à rien. Enfin, le bébé... il me supportait p- enfin, oui, je sais pas si... s'il y avait pas sa mère, moi j'arrivais pas à le calmer

³²³ Moi aujourd'hui je vois que...elle, c'est l'élément principal hein, honnêtement de...aujourd'hui, dans la situation, dans la structure, dans l'organisation, elle c'est capital. C'est...vraiment une vraie maman, et d'ailleurs qui des fois me met un peu - enfin qui m'en inquiète, parce que...oui - je pense qu'on est femme ou homme avant d'être père et mère, il faut le rester aussi.

³²⁴ Même le bain, comme je disais avant c'était pas mon truc, mais de temps en temps bah, je dis 'ah ouais, je leur donnerais bien le bain', encore une fois je me dis 'ben j'ai envie de le faire' donc je le fais. Pis c'est des moments qui sont sympa, parce que c'est vos deux enfants qui sont dans l'eau, qui font les fous-fous, et puis ça fait du bien quoi.

Two other dimensions of fatherhood contribute to the idea of difference between mothers and fathers. They correspond to traditional gendered representations of parenthood. First, fatherhood is described by many interviewees as a new responsibility, which notably entails providing financially for the family, as well as being an authority figure. The idea that the father should be in charge of educational principles and exercise a stronger role in punishing and setting limits is often mentioned.

My son is 14 months old, my wife will tell him three or four times to stop, and I'll come—I don't want to say I'm Superman, not at all, but I like it that after three or four times, I go to my son, I raise my voice, maybe I hit him on the hands if he's done something I didn't want him to do, he cries a bit, I let him cry, I take him in my arms, I make myself clear, and after five minutes it's all forgotten. But he stops, you don't have to repeat things 15 times. So for me that's it, the role of the father is to set limits... [Yeah] But also to give a lot of love [Okay yeah] And to support the mother, above all.³²⁵ (Daniel, 27, technician, married, one child)

Secondly, differences regarding the type of activities performed by mothers and fathers are depicted, opposing care and play activities. The image of the “play-dad” is largely drawn upon. Fatherhood is envisaged through outdoors activities, games and sports. This aspect of fatherhood is also closely linked to the idea that fatherhood is more about interacting with children when they have grown up. Fatherhood is represented as becoming meaningful especially when children start to speak. Some fathers consider that children are less “interesting” and that it is more difficult to bond with them when they are very young (Samuel, Elias, Renzo).

Very small babies are not really my thing [Mhm] Uhm... getting the clothes on a baby aged two months... You have to find the...—okay... I do it but it's not what I prefer... On the other hand, now I prefer to spend time with my son, now we play games, he asks us to do things [...] As soon as the child is a bit more autonomous, as soon as you can do things with him I feel more comfortable... [Yeah yeah] And in my view, I realize myself better as a father in those moments...³²⁶ (Sylvain, 41, plant manager, married, three children)

My wife is culturally someone much more serious than I am... she's less easy going and does not fool around, so quite naturally, I tend to play a lot more with the child, I'm the dad who plays, laughs, we play games, I read him stories and that's it. She's much more into care work and things like that. [...] Although I also do it when... when it's necessary, when she's tired, when she has other things to do, I help out, but I have more this play-dad role.³²⁷ (Felix, 37, archivist, married, one child)

³²⁵ Mon fils, il a 14 mois, ma femme elle va peut-être lui dire 3-4 fois d'arrêter, je vais arriver—je veux pas dire que je suis Superman, loin de là, mais moi je suis satisfait d'arriver après 3-4 fois, je vais vers mon fils, j'élève la voix, à la limite je tape sur les mains parce qu'il a fait quelque chose que je voulais pas, il pleure un coup, je le laisse pleurer, je le prends dans les bras, je m'explique, pis après 5 minutes, comme si de rien était. Mais, il s'arrête, on a pas besoin de dire 15 fois les choses. Donc pour moi c'est ça, le rôle du papa c'est je dirais donner les limites... (Ouais) Mais donner aussi beaucoup d'amour quoi... (D'accord, ouais) Soutenir la maman, surtout ça quoi.

³²⁶ Les tous petits bébés, c'est pas trop mon truc... (mhm) Euh... moi mettre un body à un bébé de deux mois... Il faut trouver la... —ça c'est bon quoi... Je le fais, mais c'est pas mon plaisir... Par contre je préfère là avec mon fils, maintenant on fait des jeux, il nous demande des trucs [...] Dès que l'enfant il est un petit peu autonome, dès qu'on peut faire des trucs avec je suis plus à l'aise... (ouais ouais) Et j'arrive mieux à mon avis à me réaliser comme papa à ce moment-là...

³²⁷ Par contre c'est vrai que...mon épouse a—culturellement est quelqu'un de beaucoup plus sérieux que moi, elle...elle a moins ce laisser-aller à faire la folle, à faire...donc...donc du coup, de manière assez naturelle, c'est un peu parti dans le sens où moi je...je joue beaucoup plus avec l'enfant, je suis un peu le papa qui joue, qui rigole, on fait des jeux, je lui lis des histoires, enfin voilà et... Elle elle a beaucoup plus le côté soins et des choses comme ça, qui lui

Finally, other types of differentiations between interviewees and their partners also support the *difference* discourse. Some fathers mention that there are structural and occupational differences between them and their partner which explain why they take on different roles in the family. The fact that they have a better position and income in their working life than their partner is presented as a logical argument supporting a modified male-breadwinner family model form; where the mother is more in charge of children and works part-time. Fatherhood is therefore also constructed as the outcome of structural differences between men and women on the labor market which explain differences in parental investment. Men often argue that if their positions in the labor market were reversed, they would not mind adopting reversed roles with their partner, reaffirming in this way their adherence to the image of involved fatherhood.

- *She would like to start again [working]?*

- *Yeah... yeah she'd like to... I told her, "listen, ideally you should have the same job as me, or the same salary, or more [laughs] but not less, and then I... I would stop, no problem".³²⁸*
(Rick, 41, collection agent, married, three children)

Contradictory discourses and practices

Interviewees draw simultaneously on the *change* and the *difference* discourses in order to give meaning to fatherhood and constitute their fatherhood identities. It is striking to see how easily they reconcile apparently contradictory representations and practices. On the one hand, they draw on the *change* discourse and value and identify with the image of new fatherhood. On the other hand they maintain the idea of essentialized parenting roles by drawing on the *difference* discourse. I present below two illustrations of these contradictions and the way *change* and *difference* discourses are interwoven.

First, there is a striking contradiction between interviewees' discourses about their fatherhood identity (represented as involved) and their concrete family organization. As mentioned previously, the majority of interviewees adopted a gendered family organization and division of tasks. 17 out of 22 interviewees have a modified or a male-breadwinner family organization. Women have all adapted their occupational trajectories to the arrival of the child and are the primary carers. By contrast, the majority of fathers are employed full-time and invest in a limited way in childcare tasks and responsibilities. I argue that the persistence of the *difference* discourse in Swiss society, which coexists with the *change* discourse, enables the interviewed fathers to accommodate the disjuncture between their gendered family organizations and the construction of their father identity as involved.

A second illustration of the coexistence of *change* and *difference* discourses can be observed in fathers' representations of the ideal leave scheme. During the interview, fathers were asked to evaluate three different leave models (the Swiss, the French, and the Icelandic, see Appendix 31 for details), as well as the one proposed by Admin, and to explain what would be the ideal

parlent beaucoup plus. [...] bien que moi je le fais aussi quand...quand c'est nécessaire, quand elle est fatiguée, quand elle a...elle prise par autre chose ou comme ça...je dépanne aussi, pis moi j'ai plus alors ce côté jeux...

³²⁸ Elle aimerait recommencer ?

Ouais...ouais ce serait...elle aimerait... Ouais moi j'ai dit, "écoute, l'idéal, faudrait, ouais, faudrait que tu aies le même job que moi, ou le même salaire, ou plus [rire] mais pas moins, et pis moi...pis moi j'arrêteraï alors, sans problèmes"...

amount of leave they would have liked for themselves and for their partners. It was striking to observe that the majority of respondents argued that a month for the father—which they had received from Admin—was satisfactory and represented a sufficient amount of time. In contrast, they considered that mothers should be granted longer leaves than the current LECA minimum, around six months. Interviewees were specifically asked their opinion about leave schemes which differentiate between mothers and fathers in leave length entitlements (e.g., the French and Swiss model) and those which grant equal leave lengths for both parents (e.g., Iceland). For approximately two-thirds of interviewed fathers, a gendered leave scheme was considered legitimate.

- For me, to think “here you can have... three months of paternity leave” [...] that really seems a lot for a father. It seems a lot.
- And for the mother... is it justified?
- Uhm for the mother, yes, of course, it’s a minimum, three or four months
- But for what reasons then?
- It’s a minimum for... so that she recovers—some people have more trouble than others in recovering from childbirth or, or yeah in order to enjoy... if she wants to start working again, that she can enjoy her child as much as possible... I think yeah four months that’s a minimum [...] I think it should even be six months.³²⁹ (Rick, 41, collection agent, married, three children)

Two main explanations were given. First, a physiological reason, namely women’s need for rest after pregnancy and childbirth, was put forward. Secondly, the difference of the role played by the mother with the child was strongly emphasized. Not only did breastfeeding justify mothers’ primary role with the new baby, but—as suggested in the *difference* discourse—the altogether stronger mother-child relationship resulting from pregnancy was advanced by fathers. Although fathers subscribed to the idea that they should be granted more statutory leave than they are entitled to by the Swiss leave scheme, it did not challenge overall gendered representations of parenthood during early childhood. The confrontation of interviewees with leave schemes in other countries shows how policies shape the categories of thought available for individuals to make sense of possible fathering practices. As this citation illustrates, for many fathers in the Swiss policy context, being three months at home was inconceivable.

Finally, it is interesting to note that the image of involved fatherhood is appropriated and accepted by the large majority of fathers, as part of the current *change* discourse about social norms about fatherhood. When confronted with a press article reporting on a well-known TV presenter depicted as an involved father (see Appendix 32), the majority of interviewees reacted by arguing that this is normal, and that changing diapers is part of what being a father is, as this quote from Jérémy illustrates.

³²⁹ – [M]oi, d’avoir–de me dire ‘tiens, tu peux avoir...tu peux avoir 3 mois de congé paternité’ [...] ça me paraît beaucoup pour un papa je trouve quand même. Ça me paraît beaucoup.

- Pour la maman...c’est justifié pour la maman ?

- Euh la maman, ouais, tout à fait, oui, c’est un minimum. 3 ou 4 mois.

- Mais pour quelles raisons du coup ?

- C’est un minimum pour...bah déjà elle, je veux dire qu’elle se remette–voilà, y’a des gens qui ont plus de difficultés que d’autres à se remettre d’un accouchement, ou...ou...ouais, de pouvoir profiter quand même...si elle veut retravailler, ben qu’elle puisse quand même profiter un maximum de son enfant, enfin, au mieux...moi je – ouais, c’est 4 mois, je pense que...4 mois c’est un minimum [...] Moi...moi je trouve que ça devrait même être 6 mois.

Do you want me to read the article? [...] “Yesterday I learned how to change my child’s diapers. This first contact...” [laughs] “this first contact moved me deeply”... Yes, well, I’m less emotional [laughs], but it—it’s a totally normal approach, it seems to me... That’s a normal activity. (Jérémy, 39, unit manager, married, two children)

A slightly different type of reaction is observed among some fathers (Jules, Pitt, Florent). They react in a critical way to the image of involved fatherhood and its mediatization in press articles. They have a reflexive view on gender relations and point out that the standards of evaluation of what men and women do are different. They are critical of the fact that men tend to be disproportionately praised for their participation in childcare. Another father (Renzo) contends that the image of involved fatherhood is an upper-class concept, which cannot easily be attained by working-class men who have strict working hours, long and hard working days and no control over their agenda.

Now there’s a kind of glorifi...—I don’t know, I think it’s quite revolting, well, [laughs] it’s revolting because... there’s Mr.... a well-known man who diapers his child... and who speaks about it in the newspapers, and we say “Oh my God how wonderful”. While for tens, hundreds, or thousands of years women have been doing it in the shadows, without it being particularly highlighted.³³⁰ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

4.4. The case of visibly involved fathers

Some of the fathers interviewed did in fact reduce the gap between the image of involved fatherhood and their practices. Some couples adopted an egalitarian family organization after the transition to parenthood. It is of great interest to describe these cases in more detail and present the factors which led them to challenge the ideal male worker norm of full-time availability. There are five cases where both the mother and the father reduced their activity rate after the birth of the child. I present in a summarized way the trajectories of these fathers and their partners and their respective changes in working life since the transition to parenthood. I also show, in this context of the changes in work arrangement, how paternity leave was used, how the work context influenced or not the ability to reconcile work and family life and the meaning and importance assigned to family and work lives. I further analyze the common points between individuals’ and couples’ trajectories, in order to single out the factors which contributed to the adoption of visible involved fatherhood at work.

Dual-earner (and dual-carer) trajectories

Paul and Linda

Paul (40) is married for two years to Linda (41), whom he met seven years ago. The couple’s history was oriented from the beginning towards building a family and they moved quickly from one step to another (moving in together, buying an apartment, marrying, having a child), as they

³³⁰ Et pis maintenant ya une sorte d’espèce de glorifi – mais, je sais pas, je trouve ça un peu dégueulasse, même...enfin [rire] non mais je trouve un peu dégueulasse dans le sens que...euh...on a Monsieur...on a un monsieur connu qui va langer son gamin... pis du coup qui va en parler dans les journaux, et pis on va dire ‘ah mon dieu comme c’est magnifique’. Alors que ça fait des dizaines, certaines, ou des millénaires que des femmes le font finalement dans l’ombre, sans qu’on en parle particulièrement.

had, according to Paul, met quite late. The child was conceived with assisted reproductive technologies. He was one year old at the time of the interview. The couple does not envisage a second child because of their age and respective working lives.

Paul has been working for two years in Admin, in the Public Works department. He has an intermediate position in civil engineering and has a secondary education qualification. He worked for 20 years in private agencies in his field, and has no further career ambitions beyond staying in his current position until retirement. Paul's supervisor accepted his request to reduce his working percentage from 100% to 80% but with some reluctance. Linda has a PhD. in biology and works in a large multinational company. She earns a higher salary than Paul. She initially asked to reduce from 100% to 60%, but the employer conceded only 80%. She took a seven-month break after the birth of the child, combining maternity leave, vacations and unpaid leave.

The reason for their both reducing their working percentage was to increase the amount of parental care for the child, which was seen as important. In his explanation, Paul refers to Sweden, Linda's country of origin, where parents have one year of leave. Because such leaves are non-existent in Switzerland and Linda's career interruption would have been risky, part-time work was considered a good alternative. Paul takes full responsibility for the child once a week on his day off, but the division of tasks between him and Linda is overall unequal as she takes on the main parental responsibility. Paul strongly draws on the *difference* discourse and perceives that his fathering role will take on more importance when the child gets older.

Paul used paternity leave as *joker days*. He took one day per week from his stock of paternity leave in order to start part-time work earlier, when the child was six or seven months old and when Linda returned to work. Paul considers that Admin enables fathers to reconcile work and family life (notably through the flexible work schedule); however, the tolerance is limited and also depends on the attitude of the direct supervisor. He considers that family demands should not spill over onto working life too often and feels pressured to meet high work standards and investment.

Jacques and Natacha

Jacques and Natacha, both 42 years old, met seven years ago and are currently cohabiting. Natacha is divorced from a first marriage and does not want to remarry. On her impulse, they planned to have a child together and tried for three or four years, without any medical assistance. Just when they had abandoned the idea, she became pregnant. The child was eight months old at the time of the interview. Because of their age, the couple are not actively planning a second child. Jacques has a Master's degree in engineering and has been working as a project manager in a technical department of Admin for three years. Previously he worked for other public employers. Natacha has a secondary education qualification and works as an assistant manager in a private multinational firm. She earns a relatively high salary, but slightly less than Jacques. As her employer is in another city, she is considering changing job to avoid commuting. Although she had first envisaged interrupting her activity for a year or two after childbirth, Jacques reports that she is now pleased to be working.

After the birth of the child, Natacha lowered her working percentage from 80% to 70%, after a seven-month break (maternity leave, plus an unpaid month and vacations). When the child was three months old, Jacques considered lowering his working percentage, from 100% to 80%. The reason was the wish to reduce the amount of extra-parental care and to have the chance to develop a special relationship with his child during this "daddy-day". His request was accepted thanks to the support of his direct supervisor (although he thinks the head of section was

against the idea). He also thinks that the situation of labor shortage in his field and his qualifications worked in his favor. Jacques considers himself an involved father and has a strong *change* discourse; he regards paternity leave and his part-time job as opportunities to strengthen the father-child role and develop more gender-equal parental roles. Paternity leave was used as *joker-days* to relieve Natacha when she felt overwhelmed and to bridge the gap between Natacha's return to work and his official 80%. He considers his current position and work environment are favorable to reconciling work and family, thanks to his direct supervisors, who are supportive, and to the nature of his job, which entails a high control over his agenda. Jacques reports that there was recently a vacancy in his section which meant more responsibilities and which was incompatible with the part-time status he had just acquired and he therefore did not apply for it. He has put his career on hold for the moment but says he may consider such opportunities in the future.

Martin and Celia

Martin (44) and Celia (41) met 11 years ago and married two years later. They enjoyed life as a couple for several years (traveling, building a house) before starting a family. Celia had a miscarriage and the child project was delayed. After the birth of the child (20 months at the time of the interview), Celia suffered from breast cancer. For this reason, the project of having a second child was in jeopardy at the time of the interview.

Martin was a team manager in the police for ten years and has worked for 24 years in the Security & Sports department. This is where he did his apprenticeship as a policeman and obtained his secondary education qualification. Martin's position implies working shifts and sometimes at nights and weekends. Celia works in a multinational insurance company as an executive assistant and has a tertiary degree. It was clear for Celia that she would continue to work after childbirth, in order to broaden her encounters and experiences. After approximately five months of maternity leave, she reduced her work activity from full-time to 70%. Martin also reduced his activity from full-time to 80% when the child was one year old. His reduction of working percentage was well accepted by his line manager and the hierarchy, on the condition that Martin would potentially be available on his day off in the event of special needs. He is aware that, as a part-time working policeman he is an exception, but he does not feel pressured to conform to the norm.

The reason for reducing his work activity was to avoid using daycare centers and favor parental care. Thanks to his shift-work schedule, he can also sometimes take care of the child during the daytime. The reduction of his working time was initially seen as a temporary solution. Professional projects for the future are open; he may keep this part-time position or consider a full-time position if a job opportunity comes up. Martin used paternity leave as *joker days* in order to start part-time work several months before his official reduction and to test the solution. When his child was born, he was at home on accident insurance for two months, due to an injury. Martin draws on both the *change* and the *difference* discourses and regards his father-child relationship as close but is also looking forward to being the play-dad and doing outdoor activities with his son. He considers his role complementary to Celia's.

At the time of the interview, Martin and Celia were going to change to a modified male-breadwinner model. Celia planned to reduce her work activity from 70% to 35%. This change was due, according to Martin, to the cancer she had faced, which prompted her to reconsider her priorities in life and to wish to spend more family time.

Florent and Nadia

Florent (34) and Nadia (31) met seven years ago and have lived together for five years. They are not considering marrying for the moment, although Nadia is favorable to the idea. They decided—it was first Nadia's wish—to have a child, and the pregnancy came very quickly. Their daughter was seven months at the time of the interview. The couple plan to have another child, but not for another one or two years, when they have adjusted to parenting life and found time for the couple again. Florent has a PhD in social sciences and has worked for three years in the Youth & Social Services department as a vocational counselor. He is satisfied with his job for the time being—transition from University to labor market was difficult—but wishes to change occupation in the medium term for something more challenging. He is currently following a continuing education program in human resource management. He considers that his extra-professional life is more important than his work, in particular now that he has a child. Overall, Florent considers that his work environment offers good conditions for work-family life reconciliation. He has fixed appointments but works in an independent manner. Nadia has a tertiary degree in psychology and works in public education. Work is important for Nadia and she would not have imagined being a stay-at-home mother.

Nadia and Florent both reduced their working percentages from full-time to 80%. The reason was that they both have egalitarian views of gender relations and Florent wanted to develop his own relationship with the child as a father. Florent's supervisors readily accepted his request to reduce his work percentage, as well as his *block leave use*. This was intended to enable him to help Nadia, to bond with the child and to learn how to care for her. Florent has a strong *change* discourse. He grew up in a family with progressive views, but he reports that his attitudes about gender relations are due to professional experience during his studies in a gender equality office. Florent is very aware of social norms on parental roles in society and at work and is determined to counter them. He considers sharing domestic and family tasks equally with Nadia.

Jules and Béa

Jules (35) and Béa (34) have been together for almost eight years. They are cohabiting; Jules is critical about marriage. At the time of the interview, their first child Arnaud was almost two years old and Béa was pregnant with the second child. Childbearing plans became concrete when they entered their thirties, but were slowed down by the fact that Béa was diagnosed with a chronic illness. When the first child was finally born, plans for the second were accelerated as the illness imposed new medical constraints. They may consider having a third child in the future.

Jules has worked for two years in the Youth & Social Services department as a social worker and has several years' experience in this field. He obtained his tertiary qualification in social work after having decided to re-orient his professional life. His first training and occupational experience was in the banking sector; where he obtained a professional secondary qualification. His re-orientation was due to his dislike of intensive work norms and the culture of performance. Jules values balance between work and personal life and is critical of consumer society and the work-centered life style.

He considers that his career ascension is on hold for the next several years, as he cannot compete for higher positions in his work environment while working at less than 90%. Béa is a pharmacist and has a tertiary degree. She likes her activity and would not want to stop working. In addition to the 3.5 months of legal minimum maternity leave, Béa added vacation and took an unpaid leave, summing up to a six-months' break after childbirth.

Jules and Béa were both working part-time (80%) before the birth of Arnaud. They made similar changes to their working life following the transition to parenthood, further reducing their

activity to 60% each. Jules had always worked part-time (80 or 90%) since his professional re-orientation, both because he wanted time for himself and because part-time positions are the norm in this mainly feminine professional field. The work pattern adopted by the couple is due to their strong preference for full-time parental care over extra-family care (because Béa works on Saturdays, she is three days at home and he is two days). Financial calculations about daycare expenses and taxation also led the couple to adopt this solution.

Jules' work percentage reduction was well received by his hierarchy, as well as his paternity leave use (*joker-days* to start his 60% early). He considers work-family life reconciliation is easy in this highly feminine work environment and that his position gives him freedom to organize work as he wants. Jules is aware of the social pressure on men's work patterns. While his 80% was accepted by colleagues (as well as friends and family), reducing to 60% questioned his status as a worker and the value of his work (seen as unimportant, not serious). He is also critical of social norms regarding gender relations and reports that his mother was a feminist and educated him accordingly. He also reports prior experiences with children in his youth and during his social work studies. He therefore mainly draws on the *change* discourse and reports he has an equal division of family and domestic tasks with Béa.

Explaining visible father involvement

The analysis of these trajectories reveals that several common social mechanisms can contribute to explain the adoption of dual-earner and to some extent dual-carer family models as well as a visible form of involved fatherhood. These variables can be grouped in three sets, which are known to usually influence men's involvement in childcare: men's and their partners' socio-economic status, the family context and men's socialization (e. g., Yoshida, 2012). I also draw on the life-course approach (Elder, 1994), paying particular attention to the role of the timing of the transition to parenthood and its sequencing with the occupational trajectory of interviewees.

First, concerning socio-economic status, men's high social class and level of education are generally found to be associated with more involvement in childcare, because they are related with more gender-equal ideologies (Aldous, Mulligan, & Bjarnason, 1998; Bulanda, 2004). Among the five interviewees considered, Florent, Jacques and Jules have tertiary degrees and all but Martin are in the higher social class. In line with the relative resource perspective, based on Gary Becker's "new household economics" theory (for a summary, see Coltrane, 2000, pp. 1213-1214), the partners' level of education is also relevant for explaining men's involvement, high educational levels of the mother being associated with more paternal involvement. Martin and Paul are in a hypogamous constellation (i.e., their partners have a higher level of education than they do), Florent and Jules are homogamous and Jacques is hypergamous. Related to women's relatively high qualifications is their income. Paul earns less than his wife Linda, Jules has a similar salary to Béa and Jacques, Martin and Florent earn more than their respective partners.³³¹ It should be noted that overall, the women's salaries would enable them to be financially independent from their partners. Finally, it is worth noting that visible father involvement is not only characteristic of wealthy households (this concerns Martin, Paul and

³³¹ Paul's salary is two categories lower than Linda's (CHF 5,001-7,000 versus CHF 8,501-10,000). Jacques, Martin and Florent are one salary category higher than their respective partners.

Jacques), but also observed among average household incomes (Florent) and low household incomes (Jules).³³²

So it's... I think there are two elements; first it's in the couple, how much does the other person earn? [Mhm, mhm] I am lucky to have someone who works in a field where – well, she's pretty well paid. And then, well, I... I don't have a big salary but for here, it's acceptable. [Mhm, mhm] Which is not the case for everyone [Yes] there are some people who have lower salaries [Yes] So I think if they had a higher salary they would have done it [Mhm, mhm] Or if their partner had had a higher salary"³³³ (Jacques, 42, project manager, cohabiting, one child)

Secondly, as regards men's family context and its influence on their involvement in childcare, a striking observation is that all five fathers are first-time fathers. The number of children in the household is known to influence men's likelihood of spending time on childcare activities (Yeung, Sandberg, Davis-Kean, & Hofferth, 2001) and of taking longer parental leaves (Sundström & Duvander, 2002). Another common point about their family configuration is the fact that three of them are cohabiting (Florent, Jacques and Jules). While cohabitation is the most common form of union for couples without children, Switzerland is known for its high marriage rate in relation to childbirth (Le Goff & Ryser, 2010). Therefore couples who maintain a cohabitation union form can be said to denote an atypical, less conventional attitude towards the family.

Marriage in my view is something... rather religious, and I don't much believe in that... There's a kind of hypocrisy in doing it... well, I've been to several weddings these last years, those of friends, etc., which took place not in church but at the city hall [...] you give the registrar a philosophical or metaphysical dimension, and I don't see why I would give him that role... If I don't want to give it to the pastor or the priest, I want to give it even less to a civil servant.³³⁴ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

Thirdly, men's family socialization is also known to influence their subsequent childcare involvement (e. g., Cunningham, 2001b; Yoshida, 2012). More specifically, two elements appear to be relevant, in particular for Jules and Florent. The two interviewees report that their mothers used to work for pay when they were children—albeit part-time—which is not the case for the three other men. They also highlight the fact that they grew up in a context which endorsed gender-equality values. Florent describes his family context as “progressive”, at least in the ideas expressed (which was not necessarily translated into gender-equal practices). Jules reports that

³³² I defined a wealthy household with a monthly gross income of CHF 12,001 or more. Average income is situated between CHF 9,000 and CHF 12,000 and low household income is defined as CHF 9,000 or less. The categories were determined using statistics of the average income (from employed or self-employed activities) among households with children. In 2011, this average income was CHF 10,770 (see table no. je-f-20.02.01.41:

<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/02/blank/key/einkommen0/niveau.html>)

³³³ Donc c'est...je crois qu'il y a vraiment deux éléments; la première c'est, dans le couple, qu'est-ce que gagne l'autre ? (Mhm, mhm) Moi j'ai la chance d'avoir quelqu'un qui travaille dans un domaine où ça – enfin voilà, elle est assez bien payée. Et pis...et pis ben moi j'ai pas les – j'ai pas un gros salaire, mais pour ici j'ai un salaire acceptable... (Mhm, mhm) Et...ce qui est pas le cas forcément de tout le monde... (Ouais) Y'en a qui ont des salaires plus bas... (Ouais) Donc... Je pense que s'ils avaient plus de salaire, ils l'auraient fait... (Mhm, mhm) Ou si leur partenaire avait eu un salaire plus élevé.

³³⁴ le mariage à mon avis ça reste quand même une...quelque chose de plutôt religieux, et pis ayant assez peu de convictions là-dedans, enfin...je sentais une sorte d'hypocrisie à aller dans ce sens, enfin pff...j'ai eu pas mal de mariages ces dernières années, euh...d'amis etc., où finalement ça se passe pas à l'église, mais ça se passe chez l'officier d'état civil [...] on va confier à un officier d'état civil un côté un peu philosophique ou métaphysique comme ça, pff, qui m'échappe un peu, enfin je vois pas pourquoi je le confierai à lui, pis finalement si j'ai pas envie de le confier à un pasteur ou à un curé, j'ai encore moins envie de le confier à un fonctionnaire.

his mother was a feminist; she took part in political demonstrations and was also keen on transmitting her ideas and principles at home in the way she educated her children.

Well, I have a very feminist mother, I don't know if that has something to do with it, but it's true that my mother was one of those activists for the women's vote [...] and she only had sons [laughs] and she always said "Well, there's no reason why I shouldn't teach them how to cook, there's no reason they shouldn't share the cleaning..." And it's true that from when we were young, we always joined in housework....³³⁵ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

Further socialization agencies were relevant in their trajectories, namely the educational and occupational spheres. Jules and Florent both graduated in typically female educational domains and are currently working in female-dominated work environments. Florent graduated in psychology—a mainly feminine discipline³³⁶—and during his studies he was socialized and educated with gender-equality discourses as he worked for a gender equality office. Jules graduated from a university of applied sciences in social work, an equally feminine environment.³³⁷ Furthermore, they both work in the only predominantly female department of Admin: the Youth & Social Services department has only 21.5% male employees (see Table 15). Working in a female environment implies that part-time work is far better accepted than in male work environments. Therefore the legitimacy of making such a request is higher, as this excerpt from the interview with Florent shows:

Yes... yes... well, I had [laughs] I had told my supervisor that if he dared refuse it, although it had been accepted for four or five of my female colleagues [mhm] I would make a scene... Since the City of Lausanne promotes in its personnel regulation—equality between men and women—and so I wouldn't have accepted it [laughs] that's for sure, but I didn't have to fight for it at all. They accepted it.³³⁸ (Florent, 34, vocational counselor, cohabiting, one child)

Socialization agencies were less relevant for the three other interviewees who decided to opt for a visible form of involved fatherhood. In their cases, there is a clear life-course effect on the decision to reduce their working percentage. For Paul, Jacques and Martin, it is the timing of the transition to fatherhood—after the age of 40—which is relevant. The three of them met their partner slightly later than the other interviewees, which implies that the child project was itself delayed and even intensified by conception problems. The delayed timing of couple formation and child project has two related consequences (Bessin & Levilain, 2005). It implies firstly that they are more advanced in their life course. Secondly, interviewees' age is closely linked to their career stage. At the time they have their first child, they all already have a career behind them and have reached a more secure professional status. Therefore, pressure to build a career and

³³⁵ Alors j'ai une mère hyper féministe, je sais pas si ça a quelque chose à voir, mais c'est vrai que ma maman a vraiment été une des ces femmes qui a milité pour le droit de vote [...] et pis ben elle a [rire] eu que des fils, et pis du coup elle a toujours dit 'ma foi, y'a pas de raison que je leur apprenne pas à cuisiner, y'a pas de raison qu'ils participent pas à faire le ménage, y'a pas...' et c'est vrai que depuis tous petits, on a toujours participé aux tâches ménagères...

³³⁶ In 2012, among university students in humanities and social sciences, 71.9% were women (FSO, 2013c, p. 8).

³³⁷ In 2012, female students in social work represented 77.3% of registered students in Swiss universities of applied sciences (FSO, 2013c).

³³⁸ Oui... ouais... bon j'avais... je.... [rire] j'avais déjà dit à mon chef que s'il se permettait de me le refuser, alors que c'était accepté à quatre ou cinq de mes collègues féminines, (mhm) je ferais un scandale vu que la pe....la ville de Lausanne lance dans sa politique du personnel—toujours l'égalité entre hommes et femmes—donc, je me serais pas laissé faire [rire], c'est clair, mais j'ai pas eu besoin de me battre du tout, quoi. Ils ont... ils l'ont... ils l'ont accepté

climb up the occupational ladder may be weaker and allow them to adopt visible signs of involved fatherhood which are otherwise negatively viewed. This is particularly clear for Paul:

There is job security, and I like it [Yes] so yes, I entered [Admin] to stay [laughs]. It seems far away but... [Yes, yes it's...] I have had good experience up to now because I already have 20 years behind me where I worked in different offices so it's yes... [Yes] It's not as if I was aged 20 seeing myself at 60... [Yes] Because I'm 40, and I have a child, well, yes I see myself as staying around here.³³⁹ (Paul, 40, technician, married, one child)

Part-time work responds to partly similar, partly different logics for the five interviewees considered. Having a high educational level and having a partner with similarly high qualifications and equivalent incomes are associated with adopting such a family organization model. Beyond these common points, I observed two distinct patterns. First, the younger interviewees (Florent and Jules), who have been socialized with gender egalitarian ideals in their family and have evolved in female environments in their educational and professional trajectories. They have respectively low and average household incomes. Secondly, the older interviewees (Jacques, Martin and Paul), for whom it is the timing of the transition to fatherhood in the life course that appears to be a key determinant, both regarding the importance of fatherhood in personal life and the advanced career stage when the child is born. These men are part of a wealthier group.

A further common point can be observed for all five interviewees. They have a particular relationship with working life, they seem more distanced and detached from work than many other fathers from the sample. Their attitude corresponds to that described by Buelens & Van den Broeck (2007) with regard to civil servants who “want respect for their own working rhythms, their personal lives, their quality time, and their family priorities” (p. 70). This more distanced relation to the ideal (male) work norm of full availability is particularly well illustrated with Jules’ account of why he decided to re-orient his professional life.

When I started thinking of leaving the bank, it was also because I didn't want to... devote my whole life to a job, and it was pretty easy to understand that in this environment, there wasn't really a choice, as a man I had to, if I wanted to... well, follow the whole movement, I had to, well, work at 100% minimum, and actually be rather at 120-140-150%, in the end you don't really count your hours any more and that's it. It wasn't what I wanted for my life, so it's true that at that moment I decided to quit that environment, and I oriented myself differently at that point.³⁴⁰ (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

A correlate of this distanced relationship with wage work and emphasis placed on family life is the fact that they all have put their career development on hold. As mentioned above, Paul has

³³⁹ Il y a quand même la sécurité du travail, en plus il me plaît bien (*ouais*) donc oui, sur l'idée, dans ma tête, j'suis entré pour rester ouais [rire]. Ça me paraît loin mais... (*Oui, oui, c'est...*) J'ai quand même déjà bien vécu jusqu'à maintenant vu que j'ai déjà 20 ans derrière moi où j'ai fait plusieurs bureaux donc c'est... (*ouais*) C'est pas comme si j'avais 20 ans et pis que je me voyais jusqu'à 60... (*Ouais*) Vu que j'ai 40, et un enfant, ben ouais j'me vois...rester par là quoi.

³⁴⁰ Et c'est vrai qu'au moment où j'ai décidé de quitter la banque, finalement c'était aussi parce que je voulais pas...consacrer toute ma vie à un emploi quoi, et ça c'est vrai que ça a été quelque chose de relativement aisé à comprendre, c'est que dans ce milieu-là ben c'était pas vraiment le choix, en étant un homme je devais, si j'avais envie de...bah je devais suivre un peu tout ce mouvement, et pis finalement ben voilà, travailler à 100% au minimum, et pis en réalité tourner plutôt dans du 120-140-150%, finalement on compte plus vraiment ses heures, euh et pis voilà quoi. Pff...ben...être – ouais, c'était pas non plus mon souhait de vie comme ça, donc c'est vrai que j'ai décidé à un moment de quitter ce milieu-là, et puis je me suis orienté différemment à un moment donné quoi.

the feeling his career is behind him and imagines that he will stay in his current position until retirement. The other interviewees envisage this phase of their professional life as a “break” for the purpose of investing in childcare during the first few years. For example, Martin intended to have the 80% for a year only, in order to have a longer period of parental care in the early years of his son. He is aware that if he wants to advance his career, he may have to return to 100% work activity, an option he has in mind. This is also the case for Jacques. He intentionally did not apply for a higher position in his section because he knew he would not be able to stay at 80%. But this may change in the future; this will depend on whether he likes working at 80% or not. Florent considers he has already explored what his current position has to offer but he is currently not actively searching for another position because he just had a child and enjoys his current working conditions. Finally, Jules also envisages his working life over the long term. When the early childhood years are over (maybe when his children are around ten), he may well resume a higher working rate.

it's true that if I want a different job, it will be more difficult [...] depending on the position I have in the future, well, it will be a choice [Mhm] Maybe I'll have to [laughs] work at 100% because the position will require it, there won't be an opportunity to work 80% (yes, yes). I'll see as time goes by, in the years to come.³⁴¹ (Martin, 44, policeman, married, one child)

That's why I'm not particularly frustrated, to think that, well, now I've had a child, the second is coming, and we're in the middle of this phase of building a family, and that's where I want to invest my time, and I have more of a bread-and-butter subsistence job, even if I like it, I'm at ease, I'm very very very satisfied, but I think “well, maybe in ten years”, or in eight, or I don't know, when the children are in school, when they are more autonomous, well, yes, probably we'll think about increasing our working percentages, and maybe at that moment we'll make other choices.³⁴² (Jules, 35, social worker, cohabiting, one child)

Altogether, these observations question the extent to which Admin is a father-friendly employer. Not only do the majority of interviewees consider that part-time work is incompatible with a career, but the few fathers who adopted this work pattern also share this belief. These observations show that employed men have to choose between being a “good worker” or a visibly involved father. This is a “choice” women tend to make by default, as the high percentage of female part-time work in Admin and in Switzerland reveals. Motherhood and fatherhood are definitely not equivalent in the workplace, even within Admin.

³⁴¹ c'est vrai que si j'aspire peut-être à d'autres fonctions, ça sera peut-être aussi plus difficile [...] suivant aussi le poste que je peux occuper par la suite, ma foi ça sera aussi un choix (*mhm*). Peut-être aussi j'aurai besoin... j'aurai besoin d'être [rire] à 100% parce que le poste l'exigera, il y aura pas de possibilité de faire à 80% (*oui, oui*). Ça c'est à voir avec... avec les années, donc, avec les années à venir...

³⁴² Et...c'est pour ça que ça me frustre pas particulièrement de me dire que probablement bah voilà, maintenant, j'ai eu un enfant, enfin...le 2ème est en route, euh c'est vrai qu'on est aussi un petit peu dans cette phase de construction de famille, et pis que ben voilà j'ai plus envie de mettre du temps là, et puis là ben je suis plus dans quelque chose d'alimentaire, même...même si ça me plait, pis que je suis bien dans mon élément, pis que je suis très très très bien là-dedans, mais voilà, pis de me dire 'bah peut-être que dans 10 ans' – ou dans 8 ans, ou j'en sais rien, quand les enfants seront à l'école, que ils seront un peu plus autonomes, ben oui, probablement qu'on réfléchira à ré-augmenter nos taux de travail, et pis voilà, peut-être qu'à ce moment-là, on prendra d'autres choix

5. Fatherhood and the gender structure

The case study of Admin made it possible to explore whether a change at the institutional level—namely the recent introduction of one month paid paternity leave—modified fatherhood representations and practices towards more gender equality on the interactional and individual levels of the gender structure. It allowed me to explore the relationship between the workplace and fatherhood. I will summarize the main results and interpret them taking into account the results of the research literature presented in Chapter II.

5.1. Lessons from the case study

Workplace environment influences on leave uptake and fatherhood

The results showed that the implementation of a one-month earmarked paid paternity leave granted by Admin to male employees was overall well received by employees and managers. Although information on men who did not use any leave at all was not available, it is likely that the register data is not far from reflecting the complete picture of leave use within Admin. By contrast, it seems that a very small number of employees used unpaid leave for family reasons.³⁴³ For example, none of the fathers interviewed used it. These results are in line with the well-known mechanisms of leave uptake by men (e.g., Moss, 2013; Ray et al., 2010).

On average men who took paternity leave used 17 days out of 21—or of 20, considering that the first day can be lost if the birth does not take place on a workday. This relatively high score could be interpreted as the result of Admin's family- and father-friendly work environment as well as civil servants' particular relation to work. However, if we consider that almost half of the employees (49% of the quantitative sample) renounced some of the paternity leave days they were entitled to, these results are rather surprising. Chi-square tests revealed this concerned men who do not have a typical male employment pattern; i.e., who work part-time and in female-dominated or mixed work environments. This result, similar to that observed by Anxo et al. (2007, p. 24) for men's use of parental leave in European companies, may be explained by the fact that it is in male dominated work places that men are more likely to have witnessed leave uptake by other men, a variable found significant by Bygren & Duvander (2006). Considering that paternity leave uptake is a new practice in the Swiss context, this variable may be decisive for men's sense of entitlement to use *all* the leave.

Using all the leave was also found more likely to happen among men belonging to the working class. This result may seem surprising in comparison with research results in other countries where lower social class fathers are generally found less likely than higher class fathers to use leave (Haas et al., 2002; Sundström & Duvander, 2002). However, the latter results concern the use of *parental leave*, and the decision of how to share leave in the couple. In the Swiss context, using paternity leave is more similar to the use of the father's quota in other contexts. For example, research in Norway showed that the use of such leaves (earmarked and paid) characterizes men who have a "rights-using" practice of leave policies: they only use the father's quota because it "has been given to them as a right, virtually equivalent to a reduction in

³⁴³ Register data provided no information on unpaid parental leave.

working hours” (Brandth & Kvande, 2002, p. 198). This logic could also be observed in the qualitative data, in the sense of entitlement to use paternity leave expressed by some working-class interviewees; notably Elias’ (power station worker in the Industrial department) view of paternity leave as a right comparable to the 15 minute break in the morning. In addition, lower social class men may also have fewer responsibilities and/or be more easily replaceable than middle and higher social class men, which would explain the fact that they feel more entitled to use all of their leave.

This observation triggers the question of the existence of equivalent pressure on female managers not to use all their leave, which would indicate that there is no gendered process at work but only the effect of individuals’ position in the social structure. Although similar data are not available to me, there are some indications that while there may be pressure, the majority of employed women still make use of all their leave days.³⁴⁴ For example, results from a survey (Aeppli, 2012, pp. 70-73) indicate that only 8% of mothers in the sample took less than the minimal legal 98 days (for 40% of them, this was due to the employer’s wrongful request). Although no information is given on the professional status of these women, further results from this survey show that highly educated women feel significantly more than lower educated ones that their leave uptake represents a burden for the company. This suggests that gendered social norms and mechanisms are at work in men’s leave uptake, depending on their position in the work organization. This conclusion is also supported by insights from the interviews with managers, who considered that fathers with a management position should adapt their leave pattern to the demands of the work organization. These results can be compared with those of Fusulier et al. (2007) in Belgium, who also observed that managers considered male employees with management positions were the least entitled to use parental leave.

Patterns of leave uptake vary because of the flexible leave modalities of paternity leave. This flexibility was captured by the sequence and cluster analysis, which revealed four different types of leave patterns. The prevailing one was a *block use* of the quasi totality of leave days taken directly after the birth of the child. This leave pattern implies continuous absence from work for one month. The second most adopted pattern is the *scattered leave* use which implies spreading the leave over a longer period of time and taking it in a partitioned way. The two other patterns were a minority; they implied either a minimal use of paternity and vacation leave or a maximal use of both. These leave patterns can be seen as the result of individual preferences and couple level negotiations, as insights from qualitative data showed. However, they are also influenced by the workplace environment, as chi-square tests results showed. The two minority patterns (Types 3 and 4) were more likely to be adopted by fathers who had recently been hired in Admin (in the last three years). By contrast, the two predominant patterns were adopted by more senior employees. This result suggests that new employees may adopt “extreme” leave patterns due to the lack of knowledge of the company culture and interpret what is regarded as the legitimate use of leave in very different ways. In contrast, employees with more seniority may feel entitled to taking the quasi totality of the leave, but may also share the informal norm that taking more leave in the form of vacation would be inappropriate. However, these are only my interpretations, and there are no further insights from the qualitative data.

³⁴⁴ National maternity leave uptake figures indicate that mothers take overall close to the maximum number of days of maternity insurance in Switzerland (Sottas & Millioud, 2008).

Furthermore, results indicate that adopting a *block use* leave pattern was significantly associated with being employed in a large section of Admin. *Scattered leave use* was more likely to be observed among men working in smaller sections. This suggests, in accordance with previous research comparing different work organizations (Anxo et al., 2007; Bygren & Duvander, 2006; Whitehouse et al., 2007), that not only the size of the company but the size of the section is relevant for understanding leave uptake patterns. In small sections, employees may either anticipate or be pressured to take their leave in order not to compromise the workflow, the *scattered leave use* being considered more appropriate. In large sections, potentially more work force is available to replace the father on leave and managers may have more experience in juggling absences. The qualitative data also showed that not only the size of the section but the job type of the father was relevant for understanding the type of replacement strategy managers adopt. For example, if fathers were providing a service to the public (e.g., being a policeman on shifts, being a sports teacher, being in a front-desk), their absence for paternity leave was monitored closely by managers. However, very different responses were also adopted by the managers interviewed, ranging from hiring temporary replacement to delaying men's leave uptake pattern.

This points to the mediating role of managers in Admin and calls for greater attention to be paid to policy implementation processes in companies in general. It appears from the qualitative analysis that managers have significant leeway to support, or on the contrary to pressure their staff in their leave uptake patterns. This goes in the same direction as results from the research literature of the ever growing role of line managers in the implementation of work-family life reconciliation measures, especially when the policy implemented is new, and when it is company-based and not statutory (Dulk & Peper, 2009; S. Lewis, 1997). These two dimensions apply to Admin and although interviewees reported few conflicts about leave uptake negotiations, managers' "discretionary power" took various forms, ranging from setting the employees' needs as a priority to imposing the moment of leave uptake. Considering the sampling selection technique for the interviews which was based on voluntary participation, it is probable that this study gives an overly positive representation of managers' practices.

The analysis of fathers' and managers' perception of work-family life reconciliation measures showed the existence of informal norms about what is considered a "legitimate use" and "abuse" (Kirby & Krone, 2002). Fathers were found to anticipate these norms and self-regulate themselves, not only regarding their pattern of leave uptake but also concerning their use of the sick child leave. The analysis also showed that although interviewees perceived there was an overall family-friendly work-environment, the ideal worker norm of full-time availability (Acker, 1990) and long working hours was still defining the condition of an upward career. The use of work-family life reconciliation measures such as unpaid leave and part-time work were considered by the majority of fathers and managers as incompatible with management positions, similarly to results from other studies (e.g., Drew & Murtagh, 2005; Murphy & Doherty, 2011). This result is somewhat surprising since, according to the case study sampling procedure, Admin is supposedly among the most family- and father-friendly public employers in Switzerland. This raises questions about the status of fatherhood and men's use of work-family life reconciliation measures in the private sector.

Effects of paternity leave at the interactional level in the workplace

Admin—while officially committed to supporting a better work-family life reconciliation for male employees—is still carrying the normative image of the good worker; “a disembodied worker who exists only for the work” and is free of family obligations (Acker, 1990, p. 149). Although some changes were noted, paternity leave implementation did not challenge in a spectacular way the status of fatherhood in the workplace. This is particularly striking considering that the public sector is known for enabling a better work-family life reconciliation for its employees (see for example Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007).

Results from qualitative interviews showed that the adoption of paternity leave contributed to make fatherhood more visible in the workplace. Some fathers reported that their colleagues and supervisors were now aware that the transition to parenthood also affects male employees' availability at work, and not only that of female employees. While there are informal norms about *how* to use paternity leave, it seems that using paternity leave is overall considered legitimate, whether as a “right” or a “chance”. Paternity leave extension has contributed to set a new standard for the legitimate amount of absence for fathers, that is, one month. However, similarly as observed in a Spanish study of fathers on leave (Romero-Balsas, Muntanyola-Saura, & Rogero-García, 2013), leave uptake is rarely considered as a “duty”.

On the other hand, as in other studies (e.g., Hojgaard, 1997, in Denmark; Murgia & Poggio, 2009, in Italy; Ranson, 2001, in Canada), the majority of managers consider that paternity leave uptake should fit around workplace demands and not the opposite, and that fatherhood represents a potential interruption in the stream of work. This is also observed through the (lack of) replacement strategies; which in many cases imply additional work for colleagues and putting work on hold. The absence of a clear policy concerning replacement has a possible negative consequence on men's sense of entitlement and managers attitudes towards leave. The issue of replacement staff was found to be one of the key barriers to leave uptake in an Australian case study (Whitehouse et al., 2007).

In addition, visible forms of involved fatherhood—which threaten the ideal male worker norm of full-time availability—remain anecdotal. Fathers use paternity leave, flexible work schedule and sick children's leave (within the limits of informal norms) but unpaid leaves and part-time work are still rarely used and negatively perceived. For example, only 10% of male employees in Admin work part-time. Interviews revealed that this work pattern is clearly interpreted as a female type of employment and negatively associated with career advancement. This is a similar result as Murgia & Poggio's (2009) analysis of leave uptake in Italy. It also echoes with Pleck's (1993) conclusions about men's use of family supportive policies in the US: “men use policies to the extent that their use (a) does not reduce their earnings, weakening their role and identity as breadwinners, and (b) does not cause them to be perceived as uncommitted to their jobs or unmasculine” (Pleck, 1993, p. 233).

Results from the qualitative analysis also indicated that paternity leave modified employees' *relation to work* on the birth of the child. Some of the interviewed fathers noted that the existence of paternity leave enabled them to distance themselves more from work and feel more

legitimate to be absent from work. However, managers attributed an opposite meaning to the measure; which implied a stronger attachment of the worker to the employer in the medium to long term. Paternity leave and other work-family life reconciliation measures were considered by managers as measures which strengthen the relationship between the employee and the employer and which benefit both. This “win-win” conception of paternity leave—which draws on the work organizational expert discourse of the cost-effectiveness of work-family life policies—corresponds to what other researchers labeled as the “give and take” rhetoric (Wise & Bond, 2003). Employees are described as happy to benefit from more flexibility from Admin, and managers in return count on their feelings of gratitude to make extra efforts when they need them. Such mechanisms may actually be particularly strong in contexts where work-family life reconciliation policies are not institutionalized by the state, but voluntarily implemented by work organizations, as is the case in Switzerland. Because fathers negotiate directly with their employer and direct supervisor—a negotiation from which the state is absent (Brandth & Kvande, 2002)—it is more likely that informal norms about future compensations are expected from them.

Overall, I observed that paternity leave uptake did not prompt interviewees to adopt in the medium term a less intensive wage-work involvement. On the transition to parenthood, the majority of men maintained their full-time employment while their partners reduced their activity or interrupted it completely. Three-quarters of the qualitative sample adopted a (modified) male-breadwinner model. The results of this small scale case study verify the mechanism of specialization of tasks between men and women on the transition to parenthood described by studies in Switzerland and elsewhere (Craig & Mullan, 2010; Kruger & Levy, 2001; Le Goff et al., 2009; Sanchez & Thomson, 1997), notwithstanding the implementation of a one-month paid paternity leave.

A few exceptions in the sample were observed, where a more gender-equal family model was adopted, in the form of a dual-earner (and to a certain extent dual-carer) model. For these five interviewees, paternity leave had mainly been used as a tool to achieve this model, and was not the triggering factor. For example, they used the leave as *joker days* before the official start of part-time work. Among all couples, both partners had relatively high educational levels and/or incomes. For the younger cohort, socialization agencies appeared to be most relevant for men’s gender-equal attitudes and practices. For the older cohort, it is the timing of the transition to fatherhood which was more determinant; men were more likely to invest more in fatherhood because of their advancement in their life course and in their occupational trajectory. However, it should be noted all these fathers considered that involving visibly in fatherhood, by working part-time, meant putting their professional career temporarily on hold.

Effects of leave uptake on men’s fathering practices

As regards the effects of paternity leave uptake on men’s fathering practices in the family, some effects on gender equality were noted, but in a limited way. This is in line with the often nuanced results observed in many other contexts, as it was highlighted in Chapter II. The effects identified in this case study only concern the period of leave uptake, immediately after the birth of the child and during his/her first year. The sequence analysis of the quantitative data showed that paternity leave is predominantly used during the legal maternity leave period, which

suggests that fathers use their leave in the co-presence of the mother. The qualitative data revealed that only in some few cases did first-time fathers spend some of their paternity leave days alone with their newborn child. During this time, they were in charge of the child and performed similar childcare tasks as their partners, reducing the specialization of tasks between them.

However, in the majority of cases, when fathers used leave in the presence of the mother, it did not fundamentally modify gendered practices and representations of parental roles. The main parent responsible for the child was the mother, as it was found to be the case in a quantitative study in the UK (Tanaka & Waldfogel, 2007). The analysis of paternity leave meanings and uses revealed clearly gendered practices during leave uptake. Because of the self-selection procedure of the study, and the fact that interviewees were probably more family-oriented and possibly held more gender-equal attitudes than the rest of the employees, this observation may actually be generalized to the wider population of leave takers in Admin. For example, the *helping the mother* leave use revealed a gendered construction of parental roles, the mother being the taken for granted primary parent and the father being the temporary and secondary parent. Within families with more than one child, men systematically used their leave to care for the elder children, engaging in typically masculine forms of parenting practices (outdoors activities and games). First-time fathers reported performing childcare tasks for the newborn child, but mothers were the main care providers. The fact that fathers can choose their degree of involvement denotes the maintenance of power differential in mothering and fathering practices (Modak & Palazzo, 2002; Ranson, 2001). The *management of logistics* paternity leave use, frequently mentioned by fathers also reflects a specialization of tasks between the mother and the father. Interviewed men on paternity leave in the Swiss context used leave to manage housework issues while leaving childcare to the mother. In contrast, results from a Norwegian research showed that men who took parental leave refrained from doing household chores: “[t]hey see themselves as active fathers, not as housewives” (Brandth & Kvande, 1998, pp. 310-311). This difference can be explained by the fact that paternity leave in Switzerland is short and potentially simultaneous to maternity leave and that, in Norway, leave is longer and implies solo care.

Overall the new paternity leave opportunity enables fathers to spend more time (approximately twice as much according to them) with the child and his partner than they would have if it had not existed. There are two possible interpretations of the above-mentioned results. On the one hand the analysis of how this time is used by men suggests that paternity leave actually reproduces gendered parental roles and encourages gender specialization in the family. On the other hand, while it is true that the care of the newborn child was systematically assigned primarily to the mother, men’s care of elder children and take-up of domestic tasks can also be seen as a challenge to the male-breadwinner type of father. Furthermore, even if first-time fathers were secondary carers for the newborn child, paternity leave enabled several of them to learn to care for the child and thereby to reduce the gap of competences and abilities with the mother, which tend to develop right after the birth of the child. Furthermore, while parental roles are specialized, men’s participation in childcare and domestic tasks on the birth of the child represents a reduction of workload for women and therefore an improvement of the conditions under which they bear children.

Effects of paternity leave at the individual level

At the individual level of the gender structure, paternity leave use modified to a certain extent interviewees' identities as fathers. Taking paternity leave was associated with a feeling of confidence in the ability to handle and take care of the newborn. Being able to learn to perform childcare tasks (on the interactional level) therefore influenced the individual level; i.e. men's sense of competence as fathers and *appropriation of fatherhood*. This result converges with Rehel's (2014) analysis of men on parental leave in Canada and the US. Being at home and spending time with the mother and child was also part of *constituting the family* and feeling part of it. These elements were particularly important for the majority of interviewees, because they considered that the mother-child relationship was more immediate and stronger than the father-child relationship.

Thus I observed that men's accounts of their father identity was constructed mobilizing discourses which both challenge *and* reproduce gendered representations of motherhood and fatherhood. The *difference* discourse stresses differences which distinguish fatherhood from motherhood: competences, abilities, types of relationships and roles. This discourse relies mainly on an essentialized conception of parenthood, based on physiological differences in the reproductive process: pregnancy and breastfeeding. Simultaneously to these representations which reproduce the gender structure I observed a discourse which highlights *change* in gender relations and which represents fathers and mothers in more undifferentiated ways. More precisely, fathers' characteristics were represented as having grown closer to the typically female carer profile, i.e., emotional, close, caring and involved. These results indicate that the rigid dichotomy between motherhood and fatherhood is fading, or as Lis Hojgaard argues, becoming increasingly blurred (Hojgaard, 1997, pp. 249-250). In accordance with several studies on fatherhood, I observed that "new fatherhood" has not replaced the traditional image of fatherhood, it has supplemented it, leading to both transgressive and conservative representations of gender relations and parenthood (Merla, 2008; Miller, 2011a, 2011b; Trellu, 2007). Fatherhood is represented as changing and more involved, but the degree of involvement is often subject to choice, as has also been noted in a Swiss study of fatherhood (Modak & Palazzo, 2002).

5.2. Feedback on the gender structure theoretical framework

In this dissertation, I adopted Risman's and colleague (1998, 2004, 2011; Risman & Davis, 2013) theoretical approach to the *gender structure*, according to which the institutional, the interactional and the individual societal levels are interconnected and together produce gender differences and inequalities. The case study was designed to explore the hypothesis according to which a modification of the structure, on one of the levels, can modify the others towards more gender equality. The previous section summarized the results of the case study by presenting the effects observed at the interactional and individual levels for the constitution of fatherhood.

From this summary I conclude that paternity leave implementation had some overall challenging effects on the gender structure, but of limited degree. Overall, the gendered constitution of parenthood was somewhat challenged on the interactional level within the work

environment, making fatherhood more visible and at the individual level, it opened up new ways of thinking about fatherhood and to some extent imposed a conception of more involved fatherhood. It seems that paternity leave was less challenging at the interactional level as regards fathering practices. While paternity leave enabled fathers to spend more family time and to perform childcare tasks, it did not give rise to undifferentiated parenting practices, and no effect of paternity leave was observed on men's work patterns in the medium term.

These limited results may in fact correspond to the limited extent to which the institutional level was actually challenged. First, it should be noted that the other dimensions of the institutional level of the gender structure—as conceptualized by Risman—remained unchallenged. Cultural norms about parenthood in the Swiss society remained unchanged. Also, the gender segregation and pay gap in the labor market continued to shape interviewed fathers' and their partners' opportunities. Secondly, while the institutional change in Admin represented a significant betterment of the leave scheme situation in the context of the Swiss labor market, the leave length differential and the modalities of leave uptake still contribute in my view to define motherhood and fatherhood differently. The leave length differential attributes four to five months of leave to mothers, while fathers are entitled to one month. The leave uptake modalities also constitute motherhood and fatherhood in different, even opposite ways.

On the one hand, motherhood is defined through the existing legal frame as constraining and intensive. Maternity leave is compulsory the first two months (according to the EmpA), it must be taken full-time and in one block, otherwise leave entitlements are lost (according to the LECA). On the other hand, fatherhood is constituted in a flexible and optional way. There is no legal minimum. Admin grants a paternity leave, whose pattern must be negotiated between the superior and the father. It can be taken part-time, in one block or in individual days.

The flexibility of Admin's leave reproduces gendered representations of motherhood and fatherhood. Results showed that because choice about the timing of leave uptake is possible and because there is space for negotiation, mechanisms such as informal norms and self-regulation by fathers influence men's decisions about leave uptake. In the Nordic countries, scholars have critically evaluated the flexibility of leave schemes, noting men's tendency to arrange leave uptake according to wage work activities and demands (Brachet, 2007) and to use it in parceled way, for example taking a few hours per day or one day per week (Brandth & Kvande, 2013, August). Such part-time use of the leave is said to reduce men's gender-equal parenting practices, in contrast to continuous responsibility and care for children, which were found to be the best setting for developing caring competences. Interestingly, in the Swiss context of limited statutory leave, the most challenging use of paternity leave for gendered practices of fatherhood were observed among men who made a *joker-days* use of the leave. These men actually used paternity leave as a transition opportunity to a part-time work pattern.

This suggests that leave flexibility has two-sided consequences depending on the institutional context. Symbolically, Admin's paternity leave flexibility contrasts with maternity leave's rigidity and reproduces gendered representations of parenthood. As regards its practical use, it also implies that men have to negotiate leave uptake with their superior. But when men wish to take on solo responsibility for the child, this flexibility is used in order to adopt more gender-equal parenting practices.

5.3. A few policy recommendations

Based on the results of the case study, a few simple recommendations can be made in order to improve the system of paternity leave in Admin. These recommendations assume that Admin will not change substantially the leave scheme; notably that the length cannot be increased.

- Inform and train all managers on the different leave schemes which exist and their modalities of uptake
- Give managers and fathers clear information about the status of paternity leave. Paternity leave is comparable to maternity leave (or sick leave): the timing of the leave is not negotiable (contrary to vacations). The leave pattern of the employee takes precedence over work demands
- Adopt a clear replacement policy in order to cover for paternity leave absences and inform managers and fathers about the policy. For example: add in Admin's budget an amount to cover for temporary replacements or implement an internal system of staff replacement. Think of specific replacement strategies for employees who hold a management position
- Two months before the end of the deadline for using paternity leave, send a reminder to fathers who have not yet used all their available days of leave.

Further issues about work-family life reconciliation policies were observed in Admin, for example the informal norms about not using all the sick children's leave, the non-use of unpaid leave and the status of part-time work. These elements would also necessitate improvement measures; however, this goes beyond the scope of this dissertation.

6. Summary

The analysis of special leave entitlements in the labor market suggested that they are increasingly implemented by employers and through collective labor agreements; nevertheless, they still concern a minority of employees. Also, although special leave entitlements are more widespread among public than private employers, there is considerable heterogeneity among public employers too. One of the most generous leave schemes is currently provided by the City of Lausanne, a local public administration in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. The case study enabled me to explore whether a change at the institutional level—namely the recent introduction of a one-month paid paternity leave—modified fatherhood representations and practices towards more gender equality on the interactional and individual levels of the gender structure. The answer to this question is not clear-cut. Some effects were observed, but they were subtle and entwined with persisting differentiations between motherhood and fatherhood.

At the interactional level in the work organization, I observed that paternity leave was predominantly used in one block from the birth of the child. Although fathers do not use up all their paternity leave days, interviews reveal that paternity leave enables overall fathers to spend more time with their children. However, leave use was not only the outcome of personal and couple decisions, but also depended on men's work environment, their perception of informal

norms, and their position and type of work. This indicates the dynamic relationship between the workplace (and especially the key role played by managers) and fatherhood. Paternity leave and other work-family life reconciliation measures are subject to informal norms, to which both managers and fathers conform. However, the extension of paternity leave has contributed to set a new norm of legitimate period of absence for male employees who have a child.

Within the family, the opportunity and use of a one-month paid paternity leave has not challenged men's work patterns (mainly full-time), nor their division of family work in the medium term. Various meanings and uses are associated with paternity leave by interviewees. However, many leave uses actually contribute to the specialization of roles between mothers and fathers. Only in rare cases did men use paternity leave to spend solo time with their newborn child. In all other cases mothers were the main parent responsible for the child. As regards men's identity, paternity leave contributed to their feeling of being part of the family and of appropriation of the new father identity. Although the image of father involvement was interwoven with discourses about persisting difference between men and women, paternity leave contributed to increase the sense of competence and sense of duty of interviewed fathers.

Chapter VI - “Public” versus “private” responsibility and gender equality

In the previous chapters I explored empirically the emergence of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere, focusing on the political, the media and the labor-market spheres. What do these analyses tell us about parental leave policies in Switzerland? How present is this issue overall? Were there interaction mechanisms between the three different spheres in the emergence of parental leave policies? What have we learned about the potential of parental leave policies for challenging the discursive constitution of fatherhood and motherhood?

In this chapter I aim to answer these questions, by making a transversal reading of the results developed for each sphere, highlighting similarities and differences between them. The first aim of the thesis was to describe the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland. Understanding the recent developments and increasing problematization of parental and paternity leaves is essential considering Switzerland’s delay with regard to its leave scheme. Furthermore, the separate empirical analyses for each social sphere call for a more general appraisal of the interaction mechanisms between them which have contributed to the increased problematization of leave policies in Swiss public life. In this chapter I also develop the idea that this increasing problematization reveals subtle shifts in the representation of parental leave policies and in the definition of what are considered “public” and “private” responsibilities. However, the question of which concrete policy solution is most likely to gather a consensus in Switzerland remains open. What is at stake in this question is also the gender and class (in-)equality outcomes such policy solutions may imply.

The second aim of this thesis was to analyze whether the emergence of parental leave policies challenged gendered representations of parenthood, towards more gender equality. I summarize results and answer this question for the three spheres. I show in particular how fatherhood, while being represented as “new” and “changing”, remains simultaneously depicted as optional as well as secondary in comparison with motherhood. I indicate how the limited challenge to gendered representations and practices of parenthood is connected to the significant presence of the economic aspects of parental leave policies. These results are put into perspective, taking into account specificities about the Swiss context and existing research about parental leave policies in other countries.

1. The emergence of a new public issue?

1.1. Increased presence of parental leave policies in the public sphere

This thesis aimed to document the presence of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere. The first transversal observation is that although the issue has not been at the very top of the media and political agendas, since the beginning of the period of observation (the turn of the 21st

century) it has undergone increased problematization. This trend was assessed by the empirical analysis conducted on parliamentary interventions and press articles.³⁴⁵ Due to data limitation, it was more difficult to assess concretely the development of parental leave policies within the labor market. But there are indications that over the last decade parental leave policies have also represented an issue of interest for some employers and unions.

A recent emergence

Parental leave policies have gained public and political attention mainly since the implementation of maternity insurance in July 2005. Indeed, in the media sphere, two-thirds of the press articles of the dataset were published in 2006 and onwards. In the political sphere, 20 out of 23 parliamentary interventions were submitted in 2006 or after. The late introduction of maternity leave can therefore be considered responsible for both the limited presence of parental and paternity leaves until its implementation and for the recent increase of public interest in these types of leaves. This pattern of development which focuses first on maternity leave and then on parental and paternity leaves is similar to that observed among other European countries (Hojgaard, 1997). Maternity leave was the first priority in all welfare states. Gender-neutral parental leaves in order for both men and women to provide care for the child(ren) came second on the political agenda. Paternity leaves and earmarked periods of parental leaves (or fathers' quota) were the last policy reforms adopted. The specificity of the Swiss case is that the development of the public and political interest in parental and paternity leaves has approximately 15 to 30 years of delay in comparison with European countries. On the bright side, Switzerland now potentially benefits from the many years of experience with parental leave policies in these countries and from scholarly evaluations of their effects on gender equality.

Within the labor market, there are also indications that parental leave policies have received increasing interest. This trend was driven in particular by the public sector. Public employers grant significantly more parental leave policies than private employers. Comparison of the results of existing surveys shows that 88.5% of public companies grant at least two days of paid paternity leave, while this is the case for only 26.2% of private companies. However, in contrast to the observations made for the media and political spheres, in the labor-market sphere the increasing interest in parental leave policies is not directly linked to maternity leave implementation. The financial savings made by the economy thanks to the implementation of a federal maternity leave insurance are very rarely reinvested by companies for financing a paternity leave (Aeppli, 2012, pp. 79-80). This trend should rather be understood in the broader context of companies' investment since the 1990s in work-family life reconciliation policies in response to labor-market and societal transformations, as well as institutional pressures (Dulk & Peper, 2007; Wise & Bond, 2003).

³⁴⁵ There is a slight mismatch between the periods covered for the media sphere (1999-2009) and political sphere (1998-2011). The reason why the political data covers a longer period is due to the fact that the data was available from 1998, and that I did the political analysis after the media one, during 2011-2012. This difference does not, however, affect substantially the comparisons which can be made of the two spheres.

The precedence of paternity leave over parental leave?

The second main result concerns the differences regarding the emergence of parental and paternity leaves within the three spheres. These two types of leaves, still non-existent as legal entitlements, are considered distinct issues and addressed separately in press articles and parliamentary propositions. Employers do not necessarily implement both types of leaves either. This suggests that these new types of leaves are not automatically considered in complementary terms. Parental leave and paternity leave are actually in competition with each other for public and political attention. This is best observed through the fact that at the political level, MPs usually propose to implement one type or the other, but rarely both. There is no consensus on the type of leave which is missing in the Swiss leave scheme.

This leads me to the third observation. Parental and paternity leaves do not receive the same attention in the three social spheres investigated. In the media sphere, the issue mostly covered from 1999 to 2009 was paternity leave (28% of press articles in the dataset), while parental leave was far less mediatized (only 8%). This different framing of paternity and parental leaves is not observed in the political sphere, where an equal number of propositions in favor of parental leave and of paternity leave were identified from 1998 to 2011.³⁴⁶ The media coverage of parental leave policies does not strictly follow parliamentary propositions about parental leave policies. The content analysis of the press articles revealed that media coverage followed predominantly the activity of the Federal Council (the executive government). This was particularly the case because of a political affair about the contested decision in 2007 of the newly elected Minister of the economy Doris Leuthard, to implement a paid paternity leave of five days in her department.

Within the labor market, as in the media sphere, paternity leave also seems to receive more interest than parental leave. Public and private employers tend to implement slightly more paternity leave than parental leave. As previously mentioned, 88.5% of public employers grant at least two days of paid paternity leave, while 75% grant unpaid (parental) leave. Furthermore, this unpaid leave is not systematically designated as a leave for childcare, but is often understood as a sabbatical leave for an indeterminate period. Among private companies, paid paternity leave is granted by 26.2% of surveyed companies, while only 20% provide an unpaid parental leave. Finally, it should be noted that other labor-market actors such as the labor union Travail.Suisse, have also taken a differentiated interest in both types of leaves. It is statutory paternity leave—and not parental leave—which is the object of their political claims. This is reflected in the collective labor agreements signed, which mainly provide paid paternity leave entitlements (81% provide at least one day), and barely for unpaid (parental) leaves (7%).

The predominant interest in paternity leave in the media and labor-market spheres and the indeterminate situation in the political sphere trigger a question about the future possible path for the Swiss leave scheme. Turning back to the standard three-phase development of leave schemes observed in European countries (see Chapter I), the elements gathered in this dissertation indicate that it is not clear whether Switzerland will follow the same development or skip directly from phase one (maternity leave) to phase three: earmarked leaves for fathers

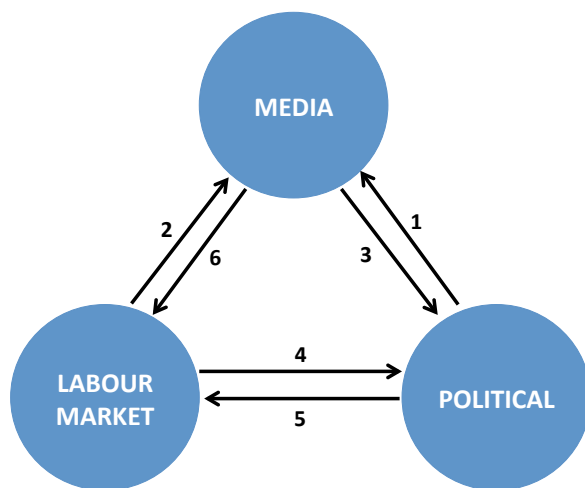
³⁴⁶ Interestingly, in the 2013 FSIO report presenting eight leave models, the majority of models concern parental leave and only two propose the implementation of a paternity leave (see Appendix 11). This may suggest that the government considers parental leave more legitimate than paternity leave.

(and mothers) and paternity leave. This would have different consequences for gender equality. On the one hand, paternity leave, as an individual, non-transferable and usually paid leave, is more likely to be used by men than a gender-neutral (unpaid) parental leave. On the other hand, paternity leave can be taken—unlike parental leave—at the same time as maternity leave. Results from the case study showed that in this configuration, specialized fathering and mothering roles are adopted in the majority of cases, even if fathers also participate in childcare tasks. In addition, paternity leaves are often conceived as shorter periods than parental leaves—a few weeks versus a few months. However, some policy proposals submitted by MPs in favor of longer paternity leaves showed that it must not necessarily be the case. These scenarios entail many questions for gender equality outcomes and for the institutional framing of fatherhood in Switzerland.

1.2. Interaction mechanisms between the three spheres

The analyses developed in the three empirical chapters indicate that there were interaction mechanisms between the different social spheres investigated which contributed to the increased presence of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere (Figure 38).³⁴⁷ Although these mechanisms (their theoretical foundation, direction, level and implications) are not the center of attention of this thesis, several elements have emerged from the analyses which are worth highlighting.

Figure 38 - Interaction mechanisms between spheres



From the political and labor-market spheres to the media sphere

The most evident mechanism concerns the relationship between the political and labor-market spheres on the one hand and the media sphere on the other hand. The media covered events related to parental leave policies in the political and labor-market spheres, which gave rise to an

³⁴⁷ This figure represents the spheres investigated in the research, but it does not represent in an exhaustive way all possible interactions in the constitution of parental leave policies as a new public issue. The civil society sphere is also active in this regard, notably through the activity of associations (masculine, feminine and youth associations), unions, political parties, as well as the scientific research on parental leave policies.

increased presence of the issue in the public sphere. The content analysis showed that 66% of the articles in the dataset were related to politics (relation 1 in Figure 38). However, while 42% of these articles concerned the federal political level, the cantonal and communal political levels were also the object of media coverage, so as foreign politics. Companies' implementation of parental leave policies was the main theme of only 13% of the press articles analyzed (relation 2). This suggests that the labor-market, while also a source of mediatization of parental leave policies in Switzerland, is less of a driver than the political sphere.

From the media and labor-market spheres to the political sphere

An opposite mechanism exists, going from the media sphere to the political sphere (relation 3). For example, I observed that policy proposals and MPs' interventions during parliamentary debates sometimes referred to surveys which had been conducted by newspapers concerning attitudes of the public towards parental leave policies. Political actors used these media excerpts in order to prove the interest of the large public in parental leave policies and to increase their political legitimacy.

It is also likely that MPs decide to support and promote leave policies anticipating the media coverage they will receive for this political action. MPs are engaged in *advertising* and *credit-claiming* activities in order to maximize their electoral support (Mayhew, 1974). The credit-claiming potential of family policies has been noted by several scholars (Ballestri & Bonoli, 2003, p. 41; Häusermann, 2006b, p. 30). It is for example worth noting that Christian-Democrat MPs started making policy proposals from 2008 on, right after the intensive media coverage triggered in 2007 by "their" Minister Doris Leuthard, the Christian-Democrat Federal Councilor. It is possible that the mediatization of Doris Leuthard's paternity leave proposal triggered further support among Christian-Democrat MPs in parliament. Although this is a hypothesis, it is clear that there is a relationship between the promotion of parental leave policies in the political sphere and its coverage in the media. It is in the interest of MPs to make their propositions visible in the media in order to make themselves visible in the public sphere to their targeted constituencies.

It was also possible to observe that there is a relationship between the political sphere and the labor-market sphere. MPs who submitted parliamentary interventions referred to the presence of parental leave policies in the labor market (relation 4). They frequently gave concrete examples of public and private companies leave schemes. These practices were used to illustrate the relevance and increasing necessity of these policies, acknowledged by companies themselves. However, they were also used as reasons to harmonize the conditions between companies and employees by implementing a statutory federal solution.

From the political and media spheres to the labor-market sphere

There are also several indications about interaction mechanisms between the labor-market sphere and the two other spheres. Research literature indicates that within the labor market, companies, in particular public sector organizations, are sensitive to institutional and political pressures of addressing work-family life reconciliation issues and to be model employers (Dulk & Peper, 2009; Evans, 2001; Fox et al., 2002) (relation 5). Public administrations, as they are led by politicians and bureaucrats are accountable to the broad public for the working conditions

they propose, and may to some extent pursue equity objectives. The increasing concern in the political sphere about parental leave policies may lead companies—in particular public ones—to develop such policies.

There are also interaction mechanisms from the media sphere to the labor market (relation 6). As noted previously, work organizations may consider parental leave policies as cost-effective investments (Wise & Bond, 2003). Their cost-effectiveness notably stems from the positive public image parental leave policies convey and the resulting increased attractiveness for recruitment. Therefore the prospect of receiving media coverage for the development of such policies may prompt employers to distinguish themselves from others by granting generous parental leaves. Information from the interview with the Véronique Bald, the Gender Equality Officer of Admin confirmed that the implementation of paternity leave was linked to the objective of fostering an attractive image of the employer. Furthermore, the interest of Admin in participating in the case study is probably linked both to an interest in the evaluation of its paternity leave extension, as well as to potential outputs for external communication about the company.

Finally, looking at the case study interviews, there were some interaction mechanisms between the emergence of parental leave policies in the media and political spheres and the interviewees' awareness of this emergence. Interviewees were asked whether they thought parental leave policies were topical issues in Swiss public life (see interview grids, Appendix 29 and 30). The majority of interviewees reported they had heard or read about this topic on some occasion. Although some interviewees did mention for example the adoption of leave policies by other public administrations or propositions at the federal level, overall they did not recall precise events. Interviewees considered that overall this topic was not a main preoccupation in the public sphere, but that it was nonetheless getting increased attention (and deserved to). In a self-reflexive way, several fathers reported that as they had been personally concerned by this issue (having received a leave and experienced fatherhood), they had become more receptive to its mediatization. The interviewees' perceptions actually correspond to the results outlined above. When paying particular attention to the phenomenon it is possible to distinguish an increasing problematization of the issue in recent years; nevertheless this does not mean that parental leave policies are at the center of attention in the Swiss public sphere.

1.3. Struggles over the legitimacy of parental leave policies

The increasing presence of parental leave policies in the political, media and labor-market spheres suggests that the issue is increasingly becoming a legitimate public issue in Switzerland. Parental leave policies, and paternity leave in particular, trigger more interest and have more political supporters than in the past. However, this observation should be moderated and contextualized. As mentioned above, parental leave policies are not at the very top of the political and media agenda. And in the labor market, they are implemented by specific employers only. Other social or family policy issues are far more central in public and political debates than parental leave policies are. The legitimacy of parental leave policies as the object of state-regulated measures is still highly controversial and there is no consensus on the policy solution which should best be adopted.

Competing discourses about parental leave policies

The empirical analysis showed that the main discursive dimension according to which parental leave policies are addressed in the political sphere is their political legitimacy. There is a struggle over the definition of parental leave policies. Are parental leave policies legitimate policies, which should be regulated and financed by the state? Or are they illegitimate public issues, which concern the private sector and which should be regulated by the social partners? What is at stake for leave supporters is to change the definition of parental leave policies and to shift the boundaries of what are considered “public” and “private” responsibilities (Knijn & Kremer, 1997). This observation is in line with the historical tendency in Switzerland to limit the sphere of federal state intervention, in particular regarding family policies (Dafflon, 2003; Obinger, 1998).

The discourse analysis revealed the fight, between parental leave opponents and supporters, to either maintain the definition of the sphere of state intervention as it exists (*unnecessary* discourse) or to shift its boundaries in order to include parental leave policies as a legitimate object of intervention (*family needs* discourse). The *unnecessary* discourse rejects the definition of parental leave policies as legitimate public problems in two ways. First, following the strongly anchored liberal ideology (Armingeon, 2001), it argues that regulating parental leave policies would represent too much intrusion of the state in the so-called private sphere, by modifying family and gender relations. Secondly, the *unnecessary* discourse also represents parental leave policies as the responsibility of the social partners and the labor market. This problematization also denies the state’s responsibility in parental leave policy regulation and delegates it to the labor market and the social partners. This problematization is grounded in the equally strong tradition in Switzerland of self-regulation by private actors regarding industrial relations and social policies (Mach & Trampusch, 2011). Either way, parental leave policies are defined by leave opponents as not being the responsibility of the state, but more so that of the family, social partners and the market.

Furthermore, in the three spheres explored, discourses which consist in representing parental leave policies as “generous” and “luxurious” measures also contribute in a more subtle way to the *unnecessary* discourse. For example, in press articles, companies were represented as granting “gifts” to their employees and were praised for their progressive policies. Such representations play against the definition of parental leave policies as public issues necessitating state intervention.

Subtle shifts

The analysis of the development of the political treatment of parliamentary proposals and the government’s responses indicates that a progressive and subtle shift in the definition of parental leave policies has taken place. In 2011, the government agreed to evaluate different leave models in a report. In 2013, this report evaluating eight different parental and paternity leave policy models was issued, assessing their advantages, disadvantages and costs. Although the Federal Council still considers these measures as not having priority (FSIO, 2013), this represents a significant milestone in the emergence of parental leave policies in the political

sphere. The report marks the recognition by the government of parental leave policies as being potentially a state responsibility and worthy of state regulation. It opens up the debate for a potential consensual leave model, among those envisaged to this day: *extension, substitution, private insurance, unpaid* and *cantonal* solutions. However, to this day, parental leave policies have only found a marginal support in parliament. As with alliances formed in the past (see Häusermann, 2006b), an embryonic coalition was identified between left-wing MPs and a minority of center party MPs in parliamentary voting results. A more substantial shift of position by center parties would potentially make it possible to reach a majority in favor of parental leave policies. But even so, the history of maternity leave has shown that a parliamentary majority is not enough to implement a policy in Switzerland. Due to the multiplicity of veto players (Tsebelis, 2000), and unless civil society and business associations are also convinced that parental leave policies are indeed legitimate state policies, such proposals are likely to fail in a national vote.

In the media sphere, a fight over the definition of parental leave policy legitimacy or illegitimacy was not observed to the same extent as in the political sphere. However, press articles about parental leave policies spread nuanced and mixed messages about the legitimacy or illegitimacy of parental and paternity leaves as state-regulated policies. The frame analysis revealed that parental leave policies were most often represented in a positive light, as progressive and topical issues. These representations suggest that a change in the current leave scheme would be necessary. On the other hand, I observed that fathers tended to be represented using an informal lexical field which refers to the family and to the private sphere. This may downplay the definition of parental leave policies as public issues and present them as trivial. Another issue is the frequent mobilization of the *company-benefits* frame—which emphasizes paternity leave advantages for companies and the economy. It actually promotes the benefits of a *social-partner solution* over a statutory parental leave policies solution. Finally, some negative representations of parental leave policies in the media sphere echo those identified in the political sphere. In press articles too, parental leave policies were framed as secondary measures in comparison with other family policies and as being too intrusive in family and gender relations. This is not surprising as journalistic practice, following the “balance norm” (Gamson & Modigliani, 1989), implies that opposing views on an issue are presented to the audience. It is therefore logical that some arguments from leave opponents in the political sphere are identified in the media coverage.

There is no similar struggle over the definition of parental leave policies in the labor-market sphere. This is probably due to the data I selected for the analysis. Analyzing the positions and discourses from labor-market actors such as trade unions and business associations would probably have revealed similar oppositions between labor unions—in favor of statutory parental leave policies—and employers’ associations, in favor of voluntary and negotiated solutions. Although labor unions such as Travail.Suisse actively lobby to define paternity leave as a public issue worthy of state regulation, their political power is rather weak (see Mach & Trampusch, 2011, p. 17). Notwithstanding this crystallized opposition among labor market collective actors as regards welfare state expansion, there are some elements in the data analyzed which nonetheless suggest ambiguous and changing representations of what is considered “public” and “private”. Currently, childbirth is envisaged in collective labor agreements and companies’ regulations together with many other “personal and family events”, defined as legitimate reasons for granting employees “customary hours and days off work” (CO).

One could consider that this implies that the birth of a child and its direct consequences for parents employed on the labor market is considered a public issue. However, considering the fact that it is given the same importance as other issues such as house moving, marriage or death of a family member (Carruzzo, 2009, pp. 353-354), it has a marginal status. The recent tendency to consider separately paternity leave and parental leave in work contracts and collective labor agreements, and to assign them longer periods of leave suggests they are acquiring a higher status than other personal and family issues, and thereby becoming “more public”.

A similar reflection applies to Admin, the case study work organization. With the implementation of paternity leave, Admin considers that the family life of its male employees is to some extent a public issue which concerns, to some extent, the responsibility of the company. Even if it is in favor of a company-based paternity leave solution (and not state-regulated solution), it contributes to define fatherhood as a public issue which justifies Admin’s intervention. This is an indication that in the labor market too, there is a slight shift in the definition of parental leave policies and that fatherhood *per se* is being defined as “more public” (and therefore “less private”) than in the past.

In sum, parental leave policies are increasingly present in the public sphere. Paternity leave has precedence in the media and labor-market spheres, while both parental and paternity leaves are proposed in parliament by MPs. Parental leave policies trigger competing representations about the definition of the legitimate responsible actor; i.e. the state or other actors such as the family, social partners and the market. In the last decade, we have witnessed subtle but significant changes in the problematization of parental leave policies. Their emergence contributed to modifying what is considered as state and non-state responsibility in the field of parenthood and gender relations.

2. The challenging of gendered parenthood?

The second objective of the thesis was to analyze whether the emergence of parental leave policies challenged, within the gender structure, gendered representations of parenthood. The transversal analysis of the results from the political, media and labor-market spheres suggests that within each of the spheres, there were indications of challenging aspects as well as persisting representations and practices of gendered parenthood. Parental leave policies—as news, policy proposals or concrete measures—simultaneously reproduce and modify gendered representations of motherhood and fatherhood. The gender structure was therefore challenged in a limited way. I will describe below how gendered representations of parenthood were transgressed, and how and on which level of the gender structure they were reproduced.

2.1. Challenging representations and opportunities for fatherhood

Gender equality

Parental leave policies challenge the gender structure because through their emergence in the public sphere, they bring to the fore motherhood and fatherhood and associate childcare issues

to gender equality. The analysis of the data in the media, political and labor-market spheres revealed that the emergence of parental leave policies triggered representations where gender relations and parenthood were presented as being more equal than in the past. Women's continued wage work activity after the transition to parenthood is represented as the norm. Contemporary families are described as having a gender-equal functioning and involved fatherhood as the current norm guiding men's behavior and desires. Against this backdrop, the access for men to parental leave policies is seen as legitimate and normal.

In each of the spheres investigated, parental leave policies are considered as measures through which gender equality can be achieved and fostered, notably by integrating men more in childcare tasks. For example in the political and the media spheres, parental leave policies (as statutory, voluntary or negotiated measure) are represented as *enabling* a gender-equal division of work within the family, following couples' desires. The underlying assumption is that couples want to adopt a gender-equal division of tasks, but are prevented to do so by constraining public policies, work environments and social norms. This is also the vision expressed by Véronique Bald, the Gender Equality Officer in Admin, who considers couples being prevented from adopting a gender-equal division of tasks.

Parental leave policies are sometimes represented as measures *promoting* gender-equality objectives in the family, by encouraging men to invest more in childcare. For example, within the political sphere, some problematizations highlight the role of state policies in the gendered division of work within the family and define gender equality as a societal or a political objective. Such discourse contributes to politicize the gendered division of work in the family and to problematize its macrosocial origins, contrary to discourses which focus on the microsocial level. However, this discourse is identified more rarely than the gender-equality *enabling* conception of parental leave policies. This probably reflects Switzerland's comparatively weak feminist movement in the 20th century, linked to the late adoption of women's suffrage (N. Martin, 2002). It is also connected to the previously mentioned strong liberal values of individual responsibility (Armingeon, 2001), as well as to the subsidiarity principle and federalist political institutions (Obinger, 1998; Obinger et al., 2005). This explains why in order for a new policy to be acceptable, the political legitimacy tends to be constructed as stemming from the bottom (from individuals, as well as from cantons or work organizations) and not as a top-down political objective imposed by the federal state.

Father involvement

Representations of the "new father" and the "involved father" were observed in all three spheres analyzed. Through these discourses identified in the Parliament, the media, and in men's narratives, it is the model of the male breadwinner, distanced from family life, which was questioned. The norm of the good worker, fully committed to the company's demands, was to some extent also disputed. In the media, interviews with and about involved fathers contributed to make fatherhood visible in the public sphere. Men were associated with childcare and work-family life reconciliation issues. This was also observed with the results of the case study. Within Admin, paternity leave challenged the normative expectations about male employees' behavior when they have a child. Colleagues and superiors were made aware that the transition to fatherhood was likely to trigger their absence from work for one month. The new regulation was

well received, even if there were informal norms about leave uptake, as I will develop in the next section. Nonetheless, the existence of paternity leave modified in some way the categories of thought available to men in order to think about their role as fathers. For some interviewees, paternity leave operated as a reminder of their fathering role and responsibility at home.

Men's accounts of their father identity integrated the image of the "new father" and drew on the discourse of *change*, arguing gender relations and parenthood had changed substantially in comparison with the former generation. The characteristics attributed to fatherhood did indeed resemble those typically associated with motherhood such as developing a strong bond and a close relationship through the expression of emotions and the investment in everyday childcare tasks. However, this is not the complete picture. The discourse of *change* was entwined with that of *difference*, and the image of new fatherhood was accommodated with the assumption that fathers still have a secondary role and the option to choose their degree of involvement. These results suggest that the image of "new fatherhood" has a "strategic identity purpose" for individuals (LaRossa, 2012, pp. 40-41).

A further critique of "involved fatherhood" can be made on the basis of the empirical results. First, the media analysis revealed the paradox of mediatizing involved fatherhood: by highlighting new fatherhood, they contribute to present it as an "exotic" phenomenon, and not as the norm. Reactions from some interviewees in the case study to press articles about "new fathers" highlighted a related second consequence: their disproportionate praise. Men's involvement in childcare should be (or according to some interviewees *is*) normal. Involved fathers should therefore neither be the object of media interest, nor be represented in an excessively positive light. This contributes to maintain what Deutsch & Saxon (1998) named "the double standard of praise and criticism for mothers and fathers". Mothers' involvement in childcare continues to be taken for granted, while that of fathers is exaggeratedly valued, contributing to reproduce unequal power relations in childcare-related work in favor of men.

2.2. Persisting gendered discursive constitution of parenthood

Essentialized differences

Gender equality was not the only discourse triggered by the emergence of parental leave policies. Discourses which reproduce gendered parenthood were also identified in the data. Here an important difference must be highlighted between the political and media spheres on the one hand, and case study interviews with fathers on the other hand. In the political and media spheres, the data analyzed revealed very rarely discourses which explicitly represent men and women as well as fathers and mothers in an essentialized way, by referring to their physiological differences. This was the case for example within the political sphere with the problematization of parental leave policies through the gender relations *difference* discourse and within the media sphere with the *disruption of traditional roles* frame.

By contrast, as suggested previously, a *difference* discourse was systematically identified among interviewed fathers. They thought about themselves as fathers and about their partners as mothers in different ways, so as the relation they respectively had with the child. The relationship between the mother and the child was said to be closer, stronger and more evident

than theirs. They explained this by referring to the different reproductive functions, mothers having borne the child and breastfed him/her. Such references to embodied differences between motherhood and fatherhood are often expressed by interviewed fathers, as reported by Andrea Doucet (2009) in the Canadian context.

The father as secondary parent

The more explicit gendered representations of parenthood among interviewees' discourses than within press articles and political propositions and debates does not mean that the latter two data sets were free of such representations. Gendered representations of parenthood were only more subtle. In all three spheres, parental leave policies were often considered through the advantages they could represent for the family as a whole. As I will develop below, the advantages of men's access to parental leave policies often entailed underlying gendered representations of the family and of the division of work between its members. Overall, mothers were represented as having the primary parenting role and fathers were represented as secondary parents.

This was the case in the discourses identified in the media and the political spheres, as well as in managers' and fathers' interviews which for example represented parental leave policies as enabling fathers to *help* mothers, suggesting thereby that mothers had the main responsibility for the child. This representation also implies that the legitimacy of fathers' presence at the birth of the child, independently from their partners' need of help, is downplayed. Results from the interviews indicate that on the interactional level, the large majority of fathers had indeed a secondary role with the new baby. They used paternity leave to take care of elder children and/or to take care of household logistics, making sure mothers could concentrate on caring for the new baby. Instead of less differentiation between mothering and fathering practices, a specialization in the division of parenting tasks took place.

Another common point observed in all three spheres was the representation of the activities performed by fathers during parental or paternity leaves in passive or unclear terms. For example, the importance for them of "being there" and "being present" was often stressed by Members of Parliament or by fathers themselves, similarly as in other contexts where the role of fathers is often described in vague terms (for Finland, see Eerola & Huttunen, 2011; for UK, see Miller, 2011b). I argue that such representations, in addition to representing fatherhood in a different way than motherhood, make unclear the necessity of men's access to parental leave policies. Also, the idea of *choice* and *possibility* for fathers to participate in childcare was often stressed in order to justify the implementation of parental leave policies in the political sphere and in press articles. This representation stands out in comparison with mothers' taken for granted role. I argue that representing fathers' access to parental leave policies as options, suggests that fatherhood itself (and the degree of involvement) is an option. Interviewees' discourse also reported to some extent the idea that they had the choice with regard to the amount and specific childcare tasks they performed. These results converge with other studies investigating the division of tasks at childbirth in Switzerland (Le Goff et al., 2009; Modak & Palazzo, 2002) and in Norway (Brandth & Kvande, 1998). Representations of fathers as secondary parents were also found in media data in the UK (Sunderland, 2000, 2006) and in Canada (Wall & Arnold, 2007).

2.3. Persisting differences between maternity leave and parental leave policies

Across the three spheres investigated, parental leave policies were mainly envisaged with different characteristics for mothers and fathers. I called this a “leave differential”. The most flagrant difference concerns the length of the leave envisaged for fathers and the resulting gap it represents with mothers’ leave, considering they are currently entitled to 14 weeks of paid leave (3.5 months). Further differences concern the modalities of leave uptake between maternity and parental leave policies which also reproduce gendered representations of motherhood and fatherhood.

Leave length differential

In the political sphere, the majority of parliamentary interventions proposed a parental or a paternity leave which implied longer leaves for mothers than for fathers. Only one policy proposals out of 23 claimed the implementation of strictly equal leave lengths for mothers and fathers. Otherwise, in the majority of cases, paternity leave was predominantly envisaged as a few weeks of time off, while maternity leave is a few months long. Gender-neutral parental leave proposals also imply an underlying leave differential between mothers and fathers, as the latter are only rarely granted a father’s quota. This leave differential was never highlighted through media coverage. Instead, any improvement of the leave scheme (even if minor) was represented as promoting gender equality. The analysis of press articles also revealed that in many cases, the recipients of parental leave were represented in explicitly or implicitly gendered ways. This suggests that parental leave is predominantly regarded as being a measure designed for mothers.

In the labor-market sphere, leave length differentials are also systematically observed. When implemented at the branch level through collective labor agreements or at the company-level, paternity leave amounts to a maximum of approximately one month, but in general it does not exceed a few days. An even more striking leave length differential takes place in the public sector through the frequent existence of gendered entitlements. Female civil servants are often granted longer parental or adoption leaves than their male counterparts. The case study work organization Admin—although it represents a comparatively father-friendly environment in the Swiss context—also has a leave length differential: mothers are entitled to four months of maternity leave and one month of breastfeeding leave, while fathers are entitled to one month (21 working days). In addition, I also observed that the majority of fathers and managers interviewed supported the idea of leave differential. Mothers were represented as needing a longer maternity leave than the current statutory minimum, while one month was judged sufficient for fathers.

This leave length differential reproduces a gendered representation of parenthood. It is interesting to note that even if a policy proposal or an existing leave measure entails a considerable leave length differential between mothers and fathers, such measures are represented as an advance in terms of gender equality. I explain this by the tendency to make intrasex comparisons and not intersex comparisons. This implies that any increase of leave for men will be judged progressive, in the light of the current situation. However, by not comparing men’s and women’s access to leave, a gendered conception of parenthood is reproduced. As a

consequence of the gender structure and of the differentiation of “men” and “women”, mothers and fathers are seen as “different kinds of people” which prevents comparing them and “seeing” gender inequality (Risman, 2004, p. 432). This leave length differential results in the reproduction of gendered representation of parenthood. In the early days of a child, more motherly than fatherly presence is represented as necessary. The leave length differential also suggests that mothers and fathers have different roles and responsibilities with the child. Concretely, it entitles mothers and fathers to different opportunities for investing in childcare, but also assigns them to different degrees to this task.

Differences in leave uptake modalities

Differences in leave uptake modalities also contribute to differentiate motherhood from fatherhood. Parental leave proposals submitted in Parliament, as well as paternity leaves implemented in the labor market and in Admin in particular all imply that in contrast to maternity leave, paternity and parental leaves are flexible. Parliamentary interventions propose to implement flexible parental leave policies, which can for example be taken in the first few years of the child and at a part-time rate. Paternity leave in Admin—although there are some limitations—is also designed to be flexible regarding the timing, the partitioning of the leave and its part-time use. This flexibility is said to be designed to meet parents’ heterogeneous needs and it is also sometimes presented as benefiting employers too. In contrast, maternity leave uptake modalities are rigid. They are defined by the Employment Act, which forbids women to work for eight weeks from childbirth. The LECA regulates maternity benefits, which must start on the day of the birth and cannot be interrupted until the last day of benefit. In other words, maternity leave must be taken in one block and full-time.

Overall, defining maternity leave in rigid and constraining ways and paternity leave in flexible and negotiable ways reproduces gendered representations of parenthood. Mother’s care is defined as intensive and constraining. Her full-time and long-term absence from the labor market is not only supported, but imposed by the legal framework. Fatherhood is in contrast represented as a flexible and optional activity which can be crafted taking into account different parameters, beyond the child’s well-being. Instead of being intensive and full-time, it can be a light and part-time activity. The different leave patterns also suggest that there are different ways of being a father, versus only one way of being a mother.

The negative consequences for gender equality of leave policy flexibility have been noted in Sweden (Brachet, 2007) and Norway (Brandth & Kvande, 2013, August). The definition of fatherhood in flexible terms actually benefits the economy and companies. Flexibility leaves men space for other social activities on the birth of their child, notably wage work. Although the father is not fully available for work, he can remain—if not a “good” worker—a not so bad one. Flexibility does not only enable fathers to adapt leave to the child’s and partner’s needs as it is often argued, but also to wage work demands. Results from the case study and the analysis of the policy implementation and negotiation processes between managers and employees show that leave flexibility creates informal norms about the legitimate leave uptake pattern, in particular for fathers with management positions. It gives significant leeway to managers to influence employees’ decisions of leave uptake. These results are in line with those of Fusulier et al. (2007) in Belgium. Interviews with managers and fathers also revealed that leave flexibility

entails that fathers anticipate work demands and adapt their leave patterns according to their perception of the constraints of their job.

2.4. Economic discourses and the sidelining of gender-equality objectives

Another common result identified in the media, political and labor-market spheres is the significant presence of what I refer to as an “economic discourse”, that is representations of parental leave policies in terms of their financial costs, their financing or their economic advantages.

The centrality of the economic discourse

The economic discourse is, not surprisingly, mobilized by leave opponents within the political sphere. This was observed with the *burden* discourse which rejects statutory parental leave policies because of the costs they represent for the economy and for the welfare state, as well as because of the constraints it imposes on small and medium enterprises in particular. A similar discourse was identified in the media sphere. The *companies' problems* frame was actually the second most frequently identified frame among the negative frames. Insights from the interviews with fathers and managers also reveal concerns about the costs and financing of a hypothetical more generous statutory leave scheme in Switzerland.

The frequent mobilization of an economic discourse in order to reject parental leave policies reflects the political power balance in Switzerland (majority of the right wing), which permeates political debates and policy-making in general (Armingeon, 2001; Obinger, 1998). This result also echoes with the analysis of the policy process in the 1990s about the adoption of a maternity insurance, when the debates focused on the expected negative economic outcomes of the policy, as well as on the technical aspects of its financing (Pannatier, 2000).

What is new about parental leave policies—in comparison with maternity leave debates—is that they are not only problematized in economic terms by leave opponents, but also by leave supporters. The economic discourse is also mobilized in order to support the implementation of the new measures. In the political sphere, the *cost-effective* discourse clearly draws on the financial advantages parental leave policies represent for society. For example by supporting female labor-market participation, influencing positively fertility rates, enhancing employees' productivity and facilitating recruitment processes for companies, and being inexpensive measures. These positive macrosocial economic outcomes are also mentioned in the FSIO (2013) report on parental and paternity leaves, which refers to OECD publications. In the media, the *company-benefits* frame is the most frequent frame identified among the positive representations of parental leave policies. In some cases, it is, however, the *social-partner solution* (and not the statutory solution) which is supported. Similar representations are identified in the labor-market sphere, about companies which decide to voluntarily implement parental leave policies. Drawing on a rational approach, the benefits of these policies, such as the positive image for the company, the recruitment and retention of highly skilled workers, the lower turnover and absenteeism as well as the higher motivation and productivity of employees, are regarded as outweighing their costs (e.g., Evans, 2001; Eydoux et al., 2009).

The centrality of the economic discourse has at least two possible consequences. It may be viewed as a strategic approach by leave supporters to represent parental leave policies in a positive light in the eyes of their opponents, and to “speak their language”; i.e., in terms of investments. In the Swiss context, considering the multiple veto players and the power of civil society and of lobbies, it is necessary to build a consensus in order for policies to be implemented (e.g., Obinger et al., 2005; Tsebelis, 2000). The policy process of maternity insurance showed how decisive the support of the economic lobby was for its adoption (FCWI, 2001, 2011). The progressive limitation of the scope of policies—noted for parental leave policies, as it happened for maternity leave—may well be an inevitable side effect of this reality in order to reach a consensus. But the consequence of the progressive limitation of policy proposals and the emphasis on their economic aspects is tied to a second consequence: the sidelining of gender-equality issues.

The sidelining of gender-equality issues

The sidelining of gender-equality issues can be observed at different levels. The discourse analysis of the parliamentary data revealed that the *economic aspects* discursive dimension had since 2009 taken more importance, to the expense of the *gender-equality* discourse. Parental leave policies were gradually less represented as means through which gender inequalities could be reduced and father involvement increased. Instead, parental leave policies were ever more problematized as costly policies (by leave opponents) and in the light of the benefits they could bring for society as a whole (by leave supporters). For example, they were said to be able to boost the economy by promoting female labor and contribute to balancing in the long term the welfare state financial situation. Companies’ interests, in particular small and medium ones, were addressed by leave supporters, highlighting the possible benefits for them. I argue that this development is detrimental to gender equality and for the challenging of the gender structure. As Gaël Pannatier noted for maternity leave (Pannatier, 2000), by focusing on economic aspects of leave policies, their gender-equality and social-justice dimensions are silenced.

Another indication of the sidelining of gender-equality issues in the Swiss context can be observed in the content of the policy proposals themselves. Probably as a result of the economic discourse and the systematic rejection of parental leave policies as legitimate policies in Parliament and government, leave proposals have become less gender-equal. Over the fifteen years considered, I have identified a decrease in the degree of state intervention and *father-care-sensitivity* (O'Brien, 2009). This indicates that in the pursuit of economic objectives, gender-equality issues may be forgotten. Indeed, the two types of objectives may be to some extent incompatible, as the comparative assessment by the FSIO of different leave models also highlighted (FSIO, 2013, pp. 60-63). For example, as established in Chapter II, in order for parental leave policies to be used by men (and potentially have gender-equality effects) it must be well paid (e.g., Moss, 2013; Ray et al., 2010). Furthermore, unpaid parental leave policies symbolically reproduce gendered representations of motherhood and fatherhood. While paid maternity leave represents motherhood as worthy of collective financing, unpaid parental leaves define fatherhood as less worthy and legitimate than motherhood.

The significant presence of the economic discourse across the three spheres, and particularly among leave supporters in the political sphere, as well as its negative implications for gender equality objectives, can be understood in the light of a more general trend in Swiss and European politics. Several studies analyzing recent policy reforms in Switzerland and in European countries have highlighted the shift of attitudes of some political actors from the center and right wing as well as of business associations to support extension of specific welfare policies and in particular family policies which concern “new social risks” (Bonoli, 2005; Bonoli & Häusermann, 2011; Häusermann, 2006b; Häusermann & Kübler, 2010; Kübler, 2007; Marten et al., 2012). On a similar line, policy observers of the EU and its member countries have also highlighted the trend which consists in framing social policies, in particular those which concern work-family life reconciliation, as investments (Jenson, 2009; Knijn & Smit, 2009). In such a “social investment” perspective, the state is represented as an investor instead of a spender. It invests in child-centered policies which aim to develop human capital, increase fertility rates and mothers’ labor-market participation and thereby societal and economic growth. However, while in this perspective welfare states are to a certain extent “gender aware”, this framing of policies is said to result in the sidelining of gender-equality demands as regards structural inequalities and the gender division of work in the family.

Thus the recent consensus in the Swiss parliament for inscribing the principle of work-family life reconciliation in the Constitution (and promoting the creation of ECEC services) fits well into this picture. However, political support is conditional on the expected outcomes of the reforms on activating the labor force, in particular highly skilled female workers. It is likely that the relative low success of parental leave policies in the political sphere until now is related to the difficulty of framing these measures as labor-market policies, in contrast with ECEC services which are more easily associated with mothers’ wage work (Häusermann & Kübler, 2010). This is what is suggested if one considers the recent recommendations of the Federal Council, following the publication of the 2013 FSIO report on parental and paternity leaves. Firstly it concluded that ECEC services provide more long-term work-family life reconciliation solutions and should therefore be privileged over parental leave policies (FSIO, 2013, p. 64). Secondly, it proposed to investigate the possibility of implementing, instead of parental leave policies, a statutory right for employees to reduce their working percentage by 20%.³⁴⁸ Although a discourse of improved work-family life reconciliation was mobilized in order to counterpose these two measures to parental leave policies, in my view, this position conceals economic interests. Thus in economic terms, supporting (mothers’) labor market activity is more productive than enabling (male) employees’ absence from the labor market for a period of time. However, as I have already argued, these measures need not necessarily exclude each other. Most importantly, they do not entail similar potentials for the reduction of gendered parenthood in the home. While ECEC services and (less so) part-time work mainly promote gender equality in paid work (by supporting female participation in the labor market), effectively designed parental leave policies can play a part in achieving a more gender-equal division of unpaid work between mothers and fathers.

³⁴⁸ See Appendix 11 and FSIO’s website: <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/aktuell/medien/00120/index.html?lang=fr&msgid=50638>

Conclusion and discussion

I started this dissertation by pointing out the contemporary discourses in Switzerland and elsewhere about fathers and their new, involved role in the family. The empirical work developed in the present research investigated more in depth the content of fatherhood and motherhood and whether parenthood representations and practices—triggered by the emergence of parental leave policies—were indeed more gender-equal. In the following conclusion, I summarize the main findings of the research regarding the challenging potential of parental leave policies. I then point out the main contributions of the dissertation and, reflecting on its limitations, I propose future areas of research on parental leave policies and gender equality.

Summary of the main findings

In this dissertation I have analyzed the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland and whether or not this emergence challenged gendered representations of parenthood. The empirical analysis shows that parental leave policies have been increasingly problematized in the recent years in the political, the media and the labor-market spheres. Overall this emergence contributes to make fatherhood more visible in the public sphere, however challenging in a limited way gendered representations and practices of parenthood.

The emergence of parental leave policies is connected to the implementation in 2005 of a federal maternity insurance, as well as to more global changes in the labor market, gender relations, and institutional pressures. Interaction mechanisms between the three spheres have contributed to the overall increased presence and visibility of parental leave policies in the Swiss public sphere. The analysis showed that parental and paternity leave do not receive the same attention in the different spheres considered. While there is no consensus among leave supporters in Parliament about the form of leave to adopt—parental or paternity—it seems that paternity leave has precedence over parental leave in the media and labor-market spheres. This triggers important questions as to the direction the Swiss leave scheme is most likely to take in the future. This will depend on many variables such as the power balance in Parliament and, because of direct democracy and the presence of multiple veto players, on achieving a larger consensus in the Swiss civil and economic society. It will also depend on the framing of parental leave policies, future alliances among political actors and prevailing cultural discourses about gender relations and the role of the state.

What is at stake through the emergence of parental leave policies in Switzerland is the definition of what belongs to the “private” and to the “public” spheres, and of who bears the responsibility for providing time for men (and women) to care for their children. I observed that through the emergence of parental leave policies, the boundaries between the public and the private were slightly shifted in the last years. Men’s care activities and responsibilities have been increasingly problematized in the three social spheres investigated. Fatherhood has become more visible in the Swiss public sphere, contributing thereby to challenge the gender structure. The empirical

analysis of the three social spheres revealed that the challenge was, however, of a limited and sometimes subtle nature.

For example, the increasing mediatization and politicization of parental leave policies contributed to spread representations of a more gender-equal division of paid and unpaid work between mothers and fathers and of “involved” and “new fatherhood” as a culturally valued norm. However, “involved fatherhood” remained an abstract ideal which was easily accommodated simultaneously with persisting gendered representations of parenthood. This was clearly observed in the results of the qualitative interviews of the case study. For example, even if men spent more time at home thanks to paternity leave, in the majority of cases they adopted gendered parenting practices. They also drew on both *change* and *difference* discourses in order to make sense of their identity as fathers. While these results are limited to a specific sample of interviewees, they show common points with the media and political spheres, where the coexistence of gender-equal and gendered representations of parenthood was also observed. Few explicitly essentialized conceptions of motherhood and fatherhood were noted, but different responsibilities and roles were nonetheless attributed to both parents. Mothering was taken for granted and represented as an intensive and constraining activity while fathering was represented as secondary, flexible, and temporary. This dichotomous representation was also observed in the content, length and modalities of parental leave policies themselves, which contrast strongly with the current existing statutory maternity leave.

Finally the empirical analysis of the three spheres of investigation enabled me to identify a common trend, namely the centrality of parental leave policies’ economic aspects. I observed that the legitimacy of parental leave policies as public issues is contested in the three social spheres. Thus, in the process of defining parental leave policies as public issues worth state regulation (or as the responsibility of the social partners), parental leave policies have increasingly been represented with regard to their economic aspects. This concerns both problematizations against *and* in favor of statutory parental leave policies. In the three spheres, parental leave policies were represented in relation to their cost-effectiveness (the advantages they represent for the economy, the welfare state and companies), with the consequence of sidelining gender-equality issues. This was mainly observed in the political sphere, where the scope of leave proposals has decreased, thereby proposing ever less state intervention and *father-care-sensitivity*. This trend, which consists in investing in specific policy measures, provided that they generate a return on investment, is not unique to the case of parental leave in Switzerland. It is symptomatic of a broader phenomenon identified in social policy-making in Switzerland, as well as in European countries.

Considering the specificities of the Swiss political institutions, it is, however, not new that economic aspects and lobbies are a driving force in policy-making. It is probable that the tradeoff necessary to build a consensus about a minimal statutory leave scheme will imply forgoing some gender-equality aspects of parental leave policies. In any case this is what the analysis of the different solutions envisaged, in particular the *private insurance* and the *unpaid solutions*, suggest.

Reflexive criticisms

I would like to make two reflexive criticisms on these results. It concerns first the finding I advance, namely that parental leave policies are emerging in the Swiss public sphere. It is clear that this dissertation can be considered as participating in the construction of parental leave policies as new public issues. Thus, by documenting the presence of parental leave policies in different social spheres and producing this dissertation, I contribute—through discourse in the academic sphere—to making these issues more visible and problematizing their absence in the legal frame. While I have attempted to mitigate and contextualize the “degree” of emergence of parental leave policies, it is clear that I have a personal interest, as a researcher and a citizen, in problematizing this issue in the public sphere.

My second reflexive criticism concerns the second main result of this research, namely the fact that the emergence of parental leave policies in the public sphere had a limited challenging effect on the gender structure. Formulated in a general way this result may seem unsurprising or trivial. I think the reason for this (obviously) disappointing result can be understood through the theoretical approach I adopted. I set out the task to investigate and document changes in gender relations, while adopting a critical discursive perspective. Gender relations in the home and the division of unpaid family and domestic work represent a bastion of gender inequality. Furthermore, cultural representations and norms change at a slow pace. It is therefore clear that the emergence of parental leave policies would not imply spectacular changes in the gender structure. However, from a feminist viewpoint, it is relevant to document and analyze empirically when, how and at which level of society gender inequality and possibly its reduction takes place (Risman, 2004). Secondly, adopting a discursive approach requires to critically evaluate policies and discourses “through scrutinizing the premises and effects of the problem representations they contain” (Bacchi, 2009, p. xxi). By definition, this theoretical and methodological approach implies highlighting the gendered assumptions about parenthood in discourses. But the approach is valuable in my view because it problematizes what is taken for granted or silenced, such as for example, the tendency to make intrasex and not intersex comparisons when evaluating policy proposals or the discursive and concrete consequences of parental leave policies’ modalities, notably their flexibility.

Contributions of the dissertation

This dissertation contributes to the flourishing research literature on parental leave policies in Western industrialized countries. Analyzing the case of Switzerland was stimulating for at least two reasons. The first reason is related to the fact that I had the feeling I needed to fill a void: parental leave policies have barely started to be analyzed in Switzerland and therefore many new territories are worth exploring. The second reason—related to the first, lies in the specificity of the Swiss case, namely the fact that parental leave policies are not yet institutionalized by the state. This peculiarity was an additional motivation to explore and understand parental leave policies in the Swiss context. I was convinced of the relevance of analyzing their emergence—which would reveal much about gender relations and the welfare state in Switzerland.

Concretely, I think this dissertation makes two main contributions to the research literature. The first one consists in the theoretical framework I adopted: the articulation of multilevel gender

theory and discourse analysis. In my view, it is a challenging but fruitful approach. For example, by reviewing some of the literature on parenthood for each level of the gender structure, I brought together different strands of research which are not often considered simultaneously (Ferree, 2010). I thereby contribute to shed light on the ways in which motherhood and fatherhood are constituted at different societal levels and through different social mechanisms.

The theoretical framework also implied to work with different sets of data and methodologies, in order to capture the different levels of the gender structure. Through the case study I paid particular attention to the negotiation processes at work within policy implementation. I was able to concretely test the theoretical proposition that the levels of the gender structure are interconnected and to show how a change on the institutional level can subtly challenge the interactional and individual levels. I thereby contribute to the empirical research which sets out to analyze the interaction mechanisms between the different levels of the gender structure in the shaping of gender relations in families and parental leave use (e.g., Brandth & Kvande, 1998, 2001, 2002; Hojgaard, 1997; Miller, 2011a; Rehel, 2014; Singley & Hynes, 2005). This research is original in the Swiss context; it is to my knowledge the first explorative case study on paternity leave implementation and use. From the results I retain a few concrete suggestions which would in my view improve the policy. For example, increasing paternity leave's status (with regard to workplace demands) and clarifying the replacement policy would contribute to assign more similar meanings to fatherhood and motherhood in the workplace context.

A second contribution of the dissertation is the analysis of the politics of parental leave policies in Switzerland, in relation with gender-equality issues. The historical and political contextualization of parental leave policies in Switzerland enables one to understand the Swiss extraordinary situation with regard to parental leave policies. It also gives tools to apprehend the future possible paths of development parental leave policies may take in Switzerland. It may well be that in the medium to long term, more concrete opportunities to implement statutory leave policies will come, for example in the forms of parliamentary projects of laws, or popular initiatives. I analyzed the different types of parental leave policy solutions proposed to this day and their possible consequences in terms of class and gender (in-)equalities. On the basis of an extensive review of the literature, I also propose a system of evaluation which enables one to analyze and systematically compare policy proposals according to their degree of state intervention and *father-care-sensitivity*.

Limitations and future areas of research

Now turning to the limitations of the research, I consider that there are many. In my view they are mainly due to my enthusiasm to give a comprehensive picture of parental leave policies in Switzerland instead of focusing on one aspect in more depth. The multilevel theoretical framework and the corresponding multilevel research design inevitably involved to limit drastically for each social sphere investigated the scope of the data analyzed. For each of the limitations I identified, I also suggest new possible areas of research.

The analysis of the political sphere was limited to the political activity at the level of Parliament. However, as I tried to sketch out in the introduction of the chapter, not only are MPs involved in debates about parental leave policies, but many other collective actors are too. For example,

political parties, civil society associations, as well as business and trade unions play an important role. Investigating more in depth their role in the constitution of parental leave policies into a public problem or their opposition to such measure would be very interesting. This is particularly true in the Swiss context where civil society and business associations play an important role in policy-making. It could also make it possible to investigate further the interactions and power relations between the state and social partners. It would be particularly interesting to explore the logics which underlie labor unions' and employers' associations' policy preferences as regards parental and paternity leaves (Mares, 2001, 2003). It would be a relevant starting point in order to identify the mobilization of the economic discourse and the gender-equality discourse.

Furthermore, adopting a comparative view of policy-making processes regarding parental leave policies in other countries is also a very promising area of research. Some mechanisms are certainly specific to Switzerland, notably because of the influence of Swiss institutions, and the fact that parental leave policies are not yet institutionalized by the state. But other points of convergence may exist. For example, Switzerland is not the only country where social partners play an important role in policy-making. Scholars have noted the importance of tripartite negotiations in Finland for example (Salmi & Lammi-Taskula, in press). Comparing discourses in the political sphere about parental leave policies and parenthood across different countries would also be a fascinating area of research. This would mean addressing the comparative research literature on welfare regimes and exploring the discourses which take place in different welfare states, characterized by different gender-equality policies and gender attitudes.

Another shortcoming of this research is the restriction in the media sphere of the analysis to the newspapers published in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. My results therefore depict the situation concerning the way parental leave policies, gender relations and fatherhood are framed in a (minority) part of Switzerland. Previous research has suggested that the French-speaking part of Switzerland is more progressive in terms of gender attitudes and also more prone to support welfare state extension than the German one (Bühler, 2001). The picture depicted in this research is therefore clearly partial and maybe even too optimistic. It would clearly benefit from a nationwide analysis including Swiss Italian, but mainly Swiss German newspapers.

Finally, the analysis of the labor-market sphere also suffers from several limitations. First, I was unable, with the selected data, to assess precisely the current existence and recent evolution of parental leave policies in the labor market. There is clearly a lack of information on companies' practices regarding the special leave entitlements they grant. National surveys on collective labor agreements do not either document such benefits. Conducting a large scale representative study in Switzerland surveying parental and paternity leaves as well as other company-based work-family life reconciliation policies would undoubtedly bring valuable information. It would provide considerable knowledge on the structural context within which men and women experience parenthood nowadays in Switzerland. It would also shed light on the structural inequalities which seem to exist between regions, sectors and branches of activity, size of company etc. (Aeppli, 2012; Canning Wacker & Dalla Palma, 2005). Such heterogeneity in access to leave entitlements is, however, not specific to Switzerland. In other countries, such as for example the US (Kameran & Waldfogel, 2013), Spain (Escobedo & Meil, 2013), Greece (Hatzivarnava Kazassi & Karamessi, 2013) or Canada (Doucet, Lero, & Tremblay, 2013),

employees face major inequalities with regard to the length and payment of leave provision they have access to, beyond the minimal legal framework.

Secondly, the case study itself leaves also many questions unanswered. For example, why did approximately half of the employees forgo part of their paternity leave days? The sampling strategy for the qualitative sample prevented me from interviewing these men. The register data made it possible to have a better idea of the socio-demographic profile of these men, but not to shed light on the social processes (e.g., low sense of entitlement, informal norms, fear of career consequences, inadvertent omission) which led them to renounce some days of leave. Alternative research designs could be imagined to achieve this objective. For example, focus groups are particularly useful in order to work out the social norms which may influence men's behavior. Also, one could consider conducting a short online survey with questions tackling the issue of leave non-use. The impersonal and rapid method of data collection would possibly enable access to a more diversified sample of fathers, including those who renounced some days of leave.

Thirdly, it is also clear that in order to compare the effect of workplace policies and workplace cultures on men's leave uptake, it would be best to adopt a multiple case study methodology. It would be interesting to compare the City of Lausanne with other work organizations, for example from the private sector, with different activities and different paternity leave lengths. Research conducted in Sweden (Haas et al., 2002; Haas & Hwang, 2007, 2009) has revealed significant differences of support for men's leave uptake, pointing to the importance of the workplace setting in the shaping of fathering practices.

Fourthly, the sequence and cluster analysis of the register data about paternity leave uptake has proven to be illuminating in order to describe the leave patterns of employees. However, because of data limitations, it was not possible to make the most of it. Due to the small size of the sample, some analyses were not possible or must be interpreted with caution. Also, relevant information on leave recipients and their partners—notably their employment status, the length of their maternity leave—is lacking. However, this technique is promising for the analysis of parental leave policies and gender equality. Parental leave policies' flexibility is a widespread characteristic in many countries. It is of great interest to be able to describe—even cross nationally—leave uptake patterns, and to analyze their socio-economic anchorage. With larger surveys, one could also explore whether there is a relationship between specific types of leave patterns and the level of father involvement in childcare. This is a particularly interesting question to explore, considering the issues raised by some scholars on the negative effects of parental leave policies' flexibility for gender equality (Brachet, 2007; Brandth & Kvande, 2013, August).

Finally, parental leave policies are only one the many policies which contribute to shape the context in which men and women become fathers and mothers. Gender relations are influenced by gender-equality and labor-market policies, as well as a broad set of family policies (e.g., ECEC services, family allowances, family law and the taxation system). Situating and comparing the emergence of parental leave policies in the broader context of the recent changes in Swiss family policies is also a promising avenue of research. I hope this dissertation showed that parental leave policies should be more systematically integrated in the analysis of the relationship between the Swiss welfare state, parenthood and gender equality.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Maternity, parental, paternity and total statutory leave lengths

	Months of maternity leave	Months of parental leave	Weeks of paternity leave	Months of total statutory leave	Months of well paid total statutory leave
Australia	0	24	0	24	0
Austria	1.8	24	0	24	13.8
Belgium	3.2	8	2	35.7	3.7
Brazil	4	0	1	4.5	4.5
Canada	4.2	8.1	0	11.5	0
Croatia	6	6	0	18	12
Czech Rep.	5.1	36	0	36	5.1
Denmark	3.2	10.6	2	12.9	11
Estonia	3.6	36	2	36	17.8
Finland	2.9	6.1	3	36	9.6
France	3	36	2	36	3.5
Germany	1.8	36	0	36	13.2
Greece	8.1	8	0.4	19	5
Hungary	5.5	36	1	36	24
Iceland	0	9	0	15	9
Ireland	9.3	6	0	15.6	6
Italy	3.7	10	0	14.7	3.7
Japan	1.9	12	0	12	1.8
Lithuania	1.9	36	4	36	12.9
Luxembourg	1.9	12	0	13.8	1.8
Netherlands	2.3	12	0.4	14.8	2.8
New Zealand	0	12	2	12.2	3.2
Norway	0	13.2	2	39	13.1
Poland	5.6	36	2	42	6
Portugal	0	12	0	36	6
Russian Fed.	2.3	36	0	36	2.3
Slovenia	2.6	8.6	13	14	11.5
South Africa	4	0	0	4	0
Spain	4.7	36	3	36	4.4
Sweden	0	36	2	18	13.4
SWITZERLAND	3.2	0	0	3.7	3.2
U.Kingdom	12	6	2	18.3	1.4
USA	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Moss, 2010, pp. 13-34.

For each leave type, please see corresponding notes indicated in Figures 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Data for total statutory post-natal (well-paid) leaves (Figure 5) is based on my own calculations, based on the country notes in Moss (2012). See the specifications for the following countries:

Hungary: the first year of well-paid parental leave can only be taken by mothers.

Estonia: there is a ceiling on parental leave benefits but not on maternity leave.

Austria: parents can choose between various flat-rate childcare benefits or an income related benefit paid at 80% (which is taken into account here).

Germany: there is a ceiling on parental leave benefits, but not on maternity benefits.

Croatia: entitlements in the event of the birth of twins or from the third child and on are longer and more generous.

Slovenia: there is no ceiling for maternity benefits, but for paternity and parental benefits there is.

Denmark: parental leave can be prolonged from 32 to 40 weeks (but with no additional payment).

Finland: for higher earnings, leave replacement is lower than 70%.

Iceland: an unpaid childcare leave (in addition to parental leave) of 13 weeks for each parent is included.

Ireland: only part of maternity leave is well paid (but with ceiling), the rest is unpaid.

Portugal: in addition to a parental leave of three months per parent (paid at low level), there is a childcare leave (available only for one parent and unpaid).

Czech Republic: each parent is entitled to three years of leave, but they can only take it after the child's third year (which limits the effective leave to 36 months).

Greece: there are two kinds of maternity leave; a basic and a special one. The latter is paid at the minimum wage. In addition to parental leave it is possible to work reduced hours or to take this kind of leave as a block, which adds up to three months of paid leave – this figure is used here. More generous entitlements are provided to civil servants.

Spain: Each parent is entitled to leave three years of leave, but both cannot use it entirely for leave can only be used until the child's third year.

Belgium: there is an additional "career break" possibility (for childcare or other reasons, unpaid) of six to 12 months, which is not taken into account here.

Italy: each parent is entitled to six months on parental leave, but the maximum length of leave which can be taken is 11 months (paid at 30% of earnings).

France: flat-rate benefits during parental leave exist, but they depend on the number of children.

Switzerland: job protection for mothers lasts during 16 weeks after childbirth, but maternity benefits only cover 14 weeks.

Netherlands: parental leave must be taken part-time (unless the employer agrees otherwise), which extends it to 12 months if taken at 50% (figure used here) and the benefit takes the form of a tax reduction.

Russian Federation: parental leave is paid at 40% of prior earnings (with ceiling) until the child is 18 months and then low flat-rate benefits are granted for the rest of the leave until the child reaches three years.

Japan: there are 14 weeks of well-paid maternity leave, but six weeks must be taken before birth, reducing well-paid post-natal leave to eight weeks (1.8 months). Parental leave of 12 months is paid at 50% of earnings. It can be taken at the same time by both parents, but within the child's 12 months (we use this figure here and not 24 months).

Luxembourg: parental leave is paid at flat-rate, although relatively high (1778 Euros per month).

Canada: maternity and parental leaves are paid at 55%. Québec offers better-paid leaves.

South Africa: the four months maternity leave are paid by unemployment insurance, but only at rates ranging from 31 to 59% of prior earnings.

Appendix 2 - Public spending on family benefits in cash, services and tax measures, in per cent of GDP

	Cash	Services	Tax breaks towards families	Total
France	1.33	1.66	0.72	3.71
United Kingdom	2.13	1.11	0.33	3.58
Sweden	1.49	1.86	0.00	3.35
Hungary	2.24	1.10	-	3.34
Denmark	1.48	1.80	0.00	3.28
Belgium	1.60	0.95	0.58	3.13
Luxembourg	2.66	0.47	0.00	3.13
New Zealand	2.26	0.79	0.02	3.07
Norway	1.36	1.45	0.10	2.91
Iceland	1.41	1.45	0.00	2.86
Netherlands	0.61	1.38	0.85	2.84
Finland	1.48	1.34	0.00	2.83
Australia	1.80	0.65	0.36	2.81
Germany	1.09	0.75	0.88	2.71
Ireland	2.32	0.28	0.11	2.70
Austria	2.15	0.45	0.04	2.64
Czech Republic	1.49	0.50	0.47	2.46
Slovak Republic	1.40	0.38	0.41	2.19
Israel	1.02	0.97	-	1.99
Cyprus	1.63	0.26	-	1.89
Slovenia	1.29	0.51	-	1.80
Estonia	1.34	0.33	-	1.67
Romania	1.03	0.63	-	1.66
Poland	0.79	0.28	0.50	1.58
Spain	0.52	0.71	0.24	1.47
Switzerland	0.94	0.32	0.14	1.40
Italy	0.65	0.75	0.00	1.40
Canada	0.80	0.16	0.42	1.38
Portugal	0.71	0.44	0.17	1.32
Japan	0.43	0.36	0.51	1.30
Bulgaria	0.89	0.36	-	1.26
United States	0.10	0.55	0.53	1.19
Lithuania	0.84	0.35	-	1.19
Latvia	0.97	0.20	-	1.17
Greece	0.69	0.39	-	1.09
Malta	0.93	0.09	-	1.02
Mexico	0.32	0.66	0.00	0.99
Chile	0.37	0.44	-	0.81
Korea	0.02	0.48	0.17	0.66
OECD 33-average	1.22	0.78	0.25	2.20

Source: Social Expenditure Database (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure), 2010, and ESSPROS, 2010.

Notes:

- Public support accounted here only concerns public support that is exclusively for families (e.g., child payments and allowances, parental leave benefits and childcare support). Spending recorded in other social policy areas as health and housing support). Spending recorded in other social policy areas as health and housing support also assists families, but not exclusively, and is not included here.

- Data missing for Turkey. Data on tax breaks towards families is not available for Chile, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Slovenia and non-OECD countries.

Appendix 3 - Public social expenditures as percentage of GDP

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011					
Australia	10.3	10.2	11.1	11.7	12.1	12.2	12.1	12.2	11.5	11.7	13.2	14.4	15.3	15.6	15.3	16.2	16.2	16.0	16.7	16.5	17.3	16.8	17.0	17.2	17.1	16.5	16.5	16.4	17.8	17.8	17.9	18.1					
Austria	22.4	m	m	m	m	23.7	m	m	m	m	23.8	24.1	24.8	26.2	27.0	26.5	26.6	26.6	26.4	26.8	26.6	26.8	27.0	27.6	27.5	27.1	26.8	26.3	26.8	29.1	28.8	27.9					
Belgium	23.5	25.1	25.7	26.0	25.2	26.0	25.8	25.6	25.4	24.6	24.9	25.6	25.8	26.9	26.3	26.2	26.8	25.7	26.0	25.9	25.7	26.1	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.0	26.0	27.3	29.7	29.5	29.6					
Canada	13.7	14.1	16.5	16.7	16.5	17.0	16.9	16.6	16.4	16.7	18.1	20.3	21.0	20.9	19.8	18.9	18.0	17.4	17.7	16.7	16.5	17.0	17.1	17.1	17.1	16.9	16.9	16.8	17.6	19.2	18.6	18.3					
Chile	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	11.1	11.9	11.5	11.9	12.7	12.8	13.0	13.0	11.7	10.6	10.1	9.3	9.4	9.6	11.3	9.8	9.5					
Czech Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	15.3	16.5	16.8	17.3	17.3	17.4	17.2	18.0	18.4	18.9	19.1	19.0	19.8	19.9	19.0	18.7	18.3	18.1	18.1	20.7	20.8	20.9					
Denmark	24.8	24.8	24.8	25.0	23.8	23.2	23.1	23.8	25.1	25.3	25.1	25.9	26.1	27.8	28.1	29.4	28.9	28.2	27.2	26.6	27.2	26.4	26.9	27.4	28.3	28.1	27.7	27.1	26.5	26.8	30.2	30.1	30.0				
Estonia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	13.9	13.1	12.9	13.0	13.5	13.1	12.7	12.7	15.8	20.0	20.1	18.8				
Finland	18.1	18.5	19.5	20.5	21.3	22.4	22.8	23.5	22.8	22.5	24.1	29.2	33.2	33.2	33.6	30.7	30.6	28.5	26.3	25.7	24.2	24.2	24.9	26.0	26.1	26.2	25.8	24.7	25.3	29.4	29.4	28.6					
France ²	20.8	21.7	22.3	22.5	22.8	26.0	25.9	26.0	25.8	24.8	25.1	25.7	26.6	28.0	28.0	28.0	29.7	29.6	29.7	29.7	28.6	28.6	29.4	30.0	30.1	30.1	30.1	29.8	29.7	29.8	32.1	32.2	32.1				
Germany	22.1	22.8	22.8	22.5	22.2	22.5	22.5	23.0	23.0	21.9	21.7	23.7	25.5	26.3	26.3	26.6	27.2	26.6	26.5	26.7	26.6	26.7	27.3	27.8	27.2	27.3	26.1	25.1	25.2	27.8	27.1	26.2					
Greece	10.3	12.4	14.6	15.2	15.5	16.1	16.0	15.9	14.7	15.6	16.6	16.0	16.2	17.1	17.1	17.5	18.0	18.1	18.5	19.3	19.3	20.7	20.3	20.0	20.1	21.1	21.3	21.6	22.2	23.9	23.3	23.5					
Hungary	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	21.6	20.7	20.4	21.5	22.5	22.8	23.0	23.1	23.9	22.6	21.8						
Iceland	16.5	16.6	17.2	17.4	16.8	21.1	21.3	20.5	19.2	17.6	17.3	18.2	19.0	19.0	18.6	18.1	17.0	16.0	15.0	14.1	13.4	14.4	15.3	15.8	16.1	16.0	16.1	16.7	19.7	23.6	23.7	23.5					
Ireland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m				
Israel ³	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m				
Italy	18.0	19.4	19.9	20.9	20.5	20.8	20.8	21.0	21.0	21.2	19.9	20.2	20.8	20.9	20.7	19.8	21.9	22.6	22.8	23.2	23.1	23.4	23.9	24.2	24.6	24.9	25.0	24.7	25.8	27.8	27.8	27.6					
Japan	10.2	10.7	11.1	11.3	11.2	11.1	11.5	11.5	11.2	11.0	11.1	11.3	11.9	12.6	13.2	14.1	14.3	14.5	15.2	15.9	16.3	17.1	17.5	17.8	18.0	18.5	18.4	18.7	19.9	22.4	m	m					
Korea	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	2.8	2.7	2.9	3.0	3.0	3.2	3.4	3.7	5.1	6.2	4.8	5.3	5.1	5.4	6.1	6.5	7.4	7.6	8.3	9.4	9.2	9.2					
Luxembourg	20.6	22.1	21.4	21.6	20.3	20.2	19.5	20.4	19.6	18.9	19.1	19.5	19.8	20.1	19.9	20.8	20.9	21.2	20.9	20.4	20.9	21.4	22.9	23.0	23.5	22.8	21.8	20.3	20.8	23.6	23.0	22.5					
Netherlands	24.8	25.5	27.0	27.4	26.0	25.3	24.7	24.3	24.0	25.6	25.5	26.0	26.1	24.7	23.8	22.6	21.8	21.4	20.5	19.8	19.7	20.5	21.3	21.2	20.7	21.2	20.7	21.1	20.9	23.2	23.5	23.7					
New Zealand	17.0	17.2	18.1	17.8	17.1	17.6	17.6	18.3	19.6	21.1	21.5	21.8	21.6	19.9	19.1	18.6	18.5	19.5	20.0	19.3	19.0	18.3	18.5	18.0	17.7	18.1	18.9	18.6	19.8	21.2	21.2	21.5					
Norway	16.9	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	20.9	21.9	22.3	23.3	24.2	24.1	23.9	22.6	22.2	21.4	21.6	20.5	21.9	22.2	23.7	24.7	23.0	20.5	19.8	23.3	23.0	22.6					
Poland	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	14.9	14.2	14.9	14.1	15.5	15.7	16.5	17.0	16.9	17.2	17.6	18.9	19.3	20.6	22.0	22.2	23.0	23.0	22.7	23.1	25.6	25.2					
Portugal	9.9	10.7	10.0	10.1	10.0	10.1	10.7	11.0	11.1	10.7	12.5	13.4	14.1	15.5	15.7	16.5	17.0	16.9	17.2	17.6	18.9	19.3	20.6	22.0	22.2	23.0	23.0	22.7	23.1	25.6	25.6	25.2					
Slovak Republic	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	18.8	18.4	18.0	18.1	18.6	17.9	17.6	17.7	17.2	16.4	16.3	16.0	15.7	15.7	18.7	19.0	18.0
Slovenia	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	m	21.6	21.9	22.0	21.8	21.9	22.1	21.6	21.2	21.1	20.8	19.5	19.7	22.6	23.5	24.0		
Spain	15.5	16.7	16.7	17.4	17.2	17.8	17.5	17.4	17.9	18.1	19.9	20.7	21.8	23.1	22.0	21.4	21.3	20.7	20.6	20.4	20.2	19.8	20.1	20.7	20.8	21.1	21.1	21.3	22.9	26.0	26.5	26.0					
Sweden	27.1	27.9	27.9	28.2	27.3	29.5	29.5	29.6	30.0	29.4	30.2	31.8	34.7	35.7	34.4	32.0	31.6	30.4	30.2	29.6	28.4	28.6	29.3	30.1	29.5	29.1	28.4	27.3	27.5	29.8	28.3	27.6					
Switzerland	13.8	13.5	14.3	14.7	14.8	14.7	14.8	15.0	15.0	14.7	13.5	14.5	16.0	17.4	17.3	17.5	18.0	18.6	18.7	18.5	17.8	18.3	19.1	20.2	20.2	20.2	19.2	18.5	18.4	20.1	20.0	20.2					
Turkey	3.2	3.3	3.6	3.9	3.4	3.1	3.3	3.4	4.0	4.7	5.7	6.1	6.3	6.2	5.9	5.6	7.2	8.0	8.3	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.9	9.9	10.0	10.5	10.7	12.8	m	m					
United Kingdom	16.5	18.0	18.5	19.3	19.3	19.4	19.5	18.8	17.5	16.9	16.7	18.2	19.9	20.5	20.1	19.9	19.6	18.7	18.9	18.5	18.6	19.3	19.3	19.8	20.4	20.5	20.3	20.4	21.8	24.1	23.7	23.9					
United States	13.2	13.5	14.0	14.1	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.2	13.1	13.2	13.6	14.5	15.2	15.5	15.4	15.5	15.3	14.9	14.9	14.6	14.6	14.5	15.1	15.9	16.2	16.1	16.0	16.1	16.3	17.0	19.2	19.9	19.7				
OECD-34	15.5	16.1	16.7	17.0	16.7	17.2	17.2	17.4	17.3	17.2	17.6	18.5	19.4	19.9	19.7	19.5	19.5	19.2	19.3	19.2	18.9	19.2	19.7	20.0	19.8	19.7	19.5	19.2	19.9	22.1	22.0	21.7					
EU21	18.5	19.4	19.8	20.2	19.8	20.6	20.5	20.6	20.4	20.0	20.5	21.5	22.5	23.3	23.1	22.8	22.8	22.3	22.1	22.0	21.6	21.9	22.4	22.8	22.7	22.7	22.5	22.1	22.8	25.4	25.3	24.9					

Source: Social Expenditure Database (SOCX) updated in 2012 (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure). Figures concern aggregated data for 2010 and 2011 and for all previous years, they consist in the addition of pension, health, income support and other social policies expenditures.

Notes: m = missing

1. Public social spending totals reflect detailed social expenditure program data for 1980-2009. Consistent with these historical series, public social expenditure totals were calculated for 2010 and 2011, and estimated for 2012, on the basis of national sources for non-European OECD countries, and/or the OECD Economic Outlook, No 91, May 2012, and the European Union's Annual Macro-economic database (AMECO), as of May 2012. Spending totals for 2010 and 2011 are subject to revision, but these are likely to be small (light shade); the estimates for 2012 are most likely to be affected by data revisions to spending and GDP (dark shade). For detail on the underlying methodology regarding

estimates for recent years, and the detailed social expenditure program data, see Adema, W., P. Fron and M. Ladaïque (2011), "Is the European welfare state really more expensive? Indicators on social spending, 1980-2012 and a manual to the OECD Social Expenditure database (SOCX)", OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Paper No. 124. data (www.oecd.org/els/social/expenditure).

2. Data on public spending on Unemployment compensation and Active Labor Market Programs are not available for France for the period before 1985.

3. Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>

Appendix 4 - Trade union density and collective labor agreement coverage in selected OECD countries

Country	Trade union density in per cent in 2010*	Employees covered by a collective agreement in per cent in 2006°
France	8	95
United States	11	13
Switzerland	17	50
Germany	19	63
Netherlands	19	82
United Kingdom	26	35
Austria	28	99
Italy	35	80
Sweden	68	92
Denmark	69	82

Sources: * data extracted from the OECD website, consulted February 5th 2014:

<http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?lang=en&SubSessionId=3348daae-74f0-4dc1-a00e-2318fb7805c8&themetreeid=13>.

° data extracted from Oesch (2012).

Note: Trade union density corresponds to the ratio of wage and salary earners that are trade union members, divided by the total number of wage and salary earners (OECD Labour Force Statistics).

Appendix 5 - Evolution of unemployment rates in Switzerland and in the European Union

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Suisse	1.8	2.8	3.7	3.9	3.3	3.7	4.1	3.6	3.1	2.7	2.5	2.9	4.1	4.3	4.4	4	3.6	3.4	4.1	4.2	3.6	3.7
EU-15								10.2	9.4	8.4	7.3	7.7	8	8.3	8.1	7.7	6.9	6.9	8.9	9.4	9.3	
EU-27										9.3	8.6	8.9	9	9.2	8.9	8.1	7	6.8	8.7	9.5	9.3	

Source: for Switzerland, Federal Statistical Office, Swiss Labor Force Survey; for the European Union, Eurostat.

Appendix 6 - Occupational situation of mothers according to the age of the youngest child

	Mothers living with a partner			Mothers living without a partner			All mothers
	Youngest child under 6 years	Youngest child 7-14 years	Youngest child under 25	Youngest child under 6 years	Youngest child 7-14 years	Youngest child under 25	Youngest child under 25
No occupational activity	30.80%	19.70%	24.80%	18.20%	9.00%	9.90%	23.00%
Part-time work	57.00%	65.80%	60.40%	61.90%	63.90%	58.20%	60.20%
Full-time work	12.20%	14.50%	14.80%	19.80%	27.20%	32.00%	16.90%

Source: Swiss Federal Statistical Office, website consulted 23rd January 2013, data for 2011, from Enquête suisse sur la population active (ESPA):

<http://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/portal/fr/index/themen/20/05/blank/key/Vereinbarkeit/01.html>

Appendix 7 - Daily time spent by mothers and fathers in unpaid work in a set of European countries

Daily time spent in unpaid work (in hours and minutes)			
	Mother	Father	Ratio - time spent in unpaid work
Belgium	3.51	2.39	1.5
France	3.55	2.31	1.5
Sweden	5.07	3.26	1.6
Spain	3.49	2.22	1.6
SWITZERLAND	7.92	4.2	1.9
Germany	5.07	2.55	2.0
Estonia	4.46	2.13	2.1
UK	5.21	2.41	2.2
Poland	5.36	2.4	2.2
Slovenia	5.54	2.43	2.3
Finland	5.06	2.2	2.3
Lithuania	4.37	1.51	2.9
Italy	6.04	2.01	3.0
Latvia	4.08	1.19	3.4

Source: For all countries except Switzerland, the data was extracted from (Fagan, 2010, p. 13), using data (1998-2004) from the Harmonised European Time-Use Survey (HETUS). For Switzerland, the data stems from the Swiss Labor Force Survey (SLFS) for the year 2010.

Notes: The HETUS data concerns the daily time (hours and minutes and per day) spent on domestic work (including childcare) by men and women living in dual employed couples with children aged 0-6 years. The SLFS provides data about the weekly hours dedicated by mothers and fathers living in a couple (but all employment situations confounded) with at least one child under seven years. The data for Switzerland (respectively 55.5 and 29.4 hours for mothers and fathers) was divided by seven, in order to have daily values. However, considering the comparability issue of the data (which is confirmed by the comparatively high amount of time spent by mothers and fathers in Switzerland), I use the ratio of time spent in unpaid work by mothers with respect to fathers in order to compare countries.

Appendix 8 - Chronological list of parliamentary interventions in the dataset

N°	ref. n°	Date of submission	Political actor	Canton (*french speaking region)	Political party	Title	N° of co-signers	Type of intervention	Description	parental leave	Current state	Types of documents		
												Federal Council response	CSSH report	Debates
1	11.406	12.12.2011	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	Zürich	Christian-democratic	European norms on parental leave	0	Interpellation	Question to the Federal Council about the increasing gap between Switzerland and the European Union concerning family policy and paternity and parental leaves in particular. What are the measures envisaged to implement in Switzerland an equivalent minimum of 4 months of parental leave as in the EU?	x	response from the Federal Council the 16.03.2012	x		
2	11.3666	17.06.2011	Barthassat, Luc	Geneva*	Christian-democratic	Replace military service with a paternity leave	18	motion	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament a modification of the Armed Forces Act, to enable the replacement of military courses by a paid paternity leave financed by the LECA fund	x	filed the 21.06.2013, after two years in abeyance	x		
3	11.3567	15.06.2011	Hochreutener, Norbert	Bern	Christian-democratic	Parental leave and family benefits provision	14	motion	Request that the Federal Council elaborates the legal bases enabling a private parental leave insurance, tax-deductible	x	filed the 21.06.2013, after two years in abeyance	x		
4	11.3492	06.06.2011	Fetz, Anita	Basel	Socialist	Facultative parental leave and family benefits provision	8	postulate	Request that the Federal Council studies and presents a report on different models of a private parental insurance and leave. The model - comparable to the existing voluntary pension insurance "3rd pillar" - would enable individual and voluntary financing of parental leave savings, with tax rebates. When the child is born, individuals could use these savings to finance their leave (part-time work also possible)	x	accepted the 14.09.2011. The Federal Council is producing a report evaluating the various parental and paternity leave models	x		x
5	11.3361	13.04.2011	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	Zürich	Christian-democratic	Unpaid paternity leave	21	motion	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament the legal modifications necessary for the implementation of an unpaid paternity leave of 4 weeks maximum. The possibility for fathers to be discharged from military courses during the 12 months following the birth of the child should also be proposed	x	rejected the 30.09.2011 at the National Council	x		
6	11.405	05.03.2011	Green	n.a	The Greens	Forward with parental leave and allowance	0	parliamentary initiative	Proposal to implement the parental leave and benefit model developed by the FCCF (in 2010). It is a 24 weeks parental leave (4 weeks of non transferable leave for each parent) paid at 80% for all employed parents	x	rejected 08.03.2012 at the National Council (101/ 64 votes)	x		x
7	10.4117	17.12.2010	Nordmann, Roger	Vaud*	Socialist	Support parents of young children	44	motion	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament the implementation of 20 paid days of leave for each employed parent to use for the care of the child until s-he reaches the age of 4. The leave can be used in bloc or in a flexible way and is not transferable	x	filed the 17.12.2012, after two years in abeyance	x		
8	10.3700	28.09.2010	Streff-Feller, Marianne	Bern	Christian-democratic	Two weeks of paid paternity leave	35	motion	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament the implementation of a 2 weeks paid paternity leave for employed men, financed through the LECA	x	filed the 28.09.2012, after two years in abeyance	x		
9	09.3943	25.09.2009	Barthassat, Luc	Geneva*	Christian-democratic	Replace military service with a paternity leave	19	motion	Request that the Federal Council modifies the Armed Forces Act in order to enable the replacement of military courses by paid paternity leave during the year of the child's birth of the year after	x	rejected the 11.12.2009 at the National Council	x		
10	09.3187	19.03.2009	Hiltbold, Hugues	Geneva*	The Liberals	Parental leave	5	motion	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament a paid parental leave of 2 weeks. Parents can share freely the parental leave. The leave is open to adoptive parents.	x	rejected the 12.06.2009 at the National Council	x		
11	08.3953	19.12.2008	Teuscher, Franziska	Bern	The Greens	Models for a paternity leave	21	postulate	Request that the Federal Council elaborates different models of paternity leave, presenting for each its (dis-)advantages, costs and possible financing systems	x	filed the 17.12.2010, after two years in abeyance	x		
12	08.330	09.12.2008	Canton de Genève Schmid-Federer, Barbara	Geneva*	n.a.	For a parental leave	0	cantonal initiative	Proposal to modify federal laws in order to enable the cantons to implement a parental leave financed through wage contributions levied for cantonal maternity leave	x	rejected the 02.03.2010 at the Council of States (22/11 votes)	x		x
13	08.3506	23.09.2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	Zürich	Christian-democratic	Partial parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances	14	motion	Request to the Federal Council that it submits to the Parliament a model of partial parental leave. With the exception of the 8 weeks of maternity leave reserved for the mother (period of job ban), the rest of the leave (6 weeks) would be shared freely among the mother and the father	x	filed the 01.10.2010, after two years in abeyance	x		

N°	ref.n°	Date of submission	Political actor	Canton (*french speaking region)	Political party	Title	N° of co-signers	Type of intervention	Description	parental leave	paternity leave	Types of documents		
												Federal Council response	CSSH report	Debates
14	08.3507	23.09.2008	Schmid-Federer, Barbara	Zürich	Christian-democratic	Parental leave. Modification of the law on Income Compensation Allowances	13	postulate	Request that the Federal Council submits to the Parliament the implementation of one or several of the following parental leave models: A. extension of the maternity leave to 16 weeks, with the possibility for parents to share 8 weeks (after the period of job ban for mothers). B. possibility for parents to share the 14 weeks of maternity leave (with the exception of the 8 weeks of period of job ban for mothers). C. unpaid paternity leave for employed fathers for 4 weeks maximum. Possibility to be discharged from the military service during the first year of the child	x	x	x		
15	08.3315	11.06.2008	Nordmann, Roger	Vaud*	Socialist	Effects of paternity leave Possibility for the cantons to introduce and finance a paternity leave through the Income Compensation Allowances scheme	13	postulate	Request to the Federal Council to produce a report on the effects of paternity leave on issues such as women's paid work, on the couple relationship, children, gender equality, the active population and the financing of social insurances as well as to produce an international comparison	x	x			
16	08.430	02.06.2008	Hodgers, Antonio	Geneva*	The Greens	Financing of paternity leave, Possibilities for the cantons to introduce and finance a paternity leave through the Income Compensation Allowances scheme	6	parliamentary initiative	Proposal to modify the federal laws which prevent cantons to implement a cantonal paternity leave and to levy wage contributions to finance a cantonal paternity leave	x	x	x		
17	07.3809	19.12.2007	Hodgers, Antonio	Geneva*	The Greens	Financing of paternity leave, Possibilities for the cantons to introduce and finance a paternity leave through the Income Compensation Allowances scheme	4	Interpellation	Question to the Federal Council regarding the (legal) possibility for cantons to implement a paid paternity leave	x	x	x		
18	07.3156	22.03.2007	Freysinger, Oskar	Valais*	Swiss People's party	Federal law on income Compensation Allowances in case of Service and in case of Maternity. Modification	15	motion	Proposal to modify the LECA in order to enable spouses to share freely among the mother and the father the existing 98 days of maternity leave.	x				
19	06.3662	11.12.2006	Nordmann, Roger	Vaud*	Socialist	A paternity leave to associate fathers since the birth of the child	32	motion	Proposal to modify the CO and LECA in order to enable fathers to take a few weeks of paternity leave paid at 80% to take during the weeks following birth, or in agreement with the employer, over the first 12 months.	x	x	x		
20	06.448	23.06.2006	Teuscher, Franziska	Bern	The Greens	Modification of the Federal law on Income Compensation Allowances in case of Service and in case of Maternity. Extension of beneficiary rights to employed fathers	0	parliamentary initiative	Proposal to modify the LECA, in order to enable fathers to benefit from LECA benefits (80% of salary) during at least 8 weeks after the birth of a child	x		x		
21	01.438	22.06.2001	Teuscher, Franziska	Bern	The Greens	To grant a parental leave to employed parents	0	parliamentary initiative	Proposal to implement a parental leave of 2 non-transferable months for each parent, paid at 80% of earnings (with cap) to take until the child is 2 years old. Part-time leave is possible.	x		x		
22	99.434	18.06.1999	Teuscher, Franziska	Bern	The Greens	Parental leave for Confederation civil servants	0	parliamentary initiative	Proposal to implement a parental leave of 4 months (individual right) until the child is 5 and a family leave (10 paid days per year to care for sick children) for civil servants of the confederation	x		x		
23	98.3043	23.01.1998	Jutzet, Erwin	Fribourg*	Socialist	Paternity leave	49	motion	Proposal to implement a paid paternity leave for employed fathers of at least one week at the birth of the child	x	x	x		

Appendix 9 - Examples of data in the political sphere

Parliamentary intervention

N° objet: 11.405 Iv.pa
Dépositaire: Groupe de Verts (Thérèse Frösch, porte-parole)
Parti: Verts
Canton: -
Titre: Aller de l'avant avec le congé parental et l'allocation parentale
Date: 03.03.2011
Chambre: CN
Etat des délibérations: liquidé
Co-signataires:-

Texte déposé

Nous fondant sur les articles 160 alinéa 1 de la Constitution et 107 de la loi sur le Parlement, nous déposons l'initiative parlementaire suivante:
Le modèle de congé parental et d'allocation parentale élaboré par la Commission fédérale de coordination pour les questions familiales (COFF) doit être concrétisé et mis en œuvre. Il prévoit une durée maximale de 24 semaines pour le congé parental. Chaque parent a un droit individuel de quatre semaines, qui est intransmissible. Le congé peut être pris durant la période allant de la naissance de l'enfant à sa scolarisation. Les deux parents peuvent faire valoir leur droit au congé parental, le critère déterminant étant le droit de garde. Dans tous les pays qui ont introduit un congé de maternité ou de paternité, le congé parental et les allocations parentales interviennent dans un second temps et ne doivent pas remplacer les dispositions prévues pour la naissance de l'enfant. Comme pour l'allocation de maternité, le taux de compensation du revenu est fixé à 80 pour cent, avec un plafond journalier.

Développement

Le congé parental et l'allocation parentale s'inscrivent dans une politique familiale qui est adaptée à l'évolution de la société et qui prend en compte le fait que la petite enfance exige une très grande disponibilité de la part des parents. Reconnaître les besoins spécifiques durant la petite enfance aide à concilier les tâches familiales et professionnelles. De nombreux pères ne veulent plus être pères juste pendant les loisirs. Pour encourager et soutenir la participation de ces derniers à la prise en charge des enfants en bas âge, il faut que le congé parental et l'allocation parentale soient des prestations publiques, relevant de la politique familiale, et qu'elles ne soient pas laissées aux soins des entreprises. Du point de vue de la politique de l'égalité, le congé parental et l'allocation parentale sont de nature à favoriser la répartition du travail familial et du travail rémunéré dans le sens d'un partenariat, mais aussi à éviter que les mères n'abandonnent complètement leur activité lucrative ou ne réduisent leur taux d'occupation jusqu'à perdre toute possibilité d'évolution de carrière.

D'après l'enquête de la COFF, l'instauration d'un congé parental et d'une allocation parentale est une mesure jugée largement positive du point de vue économique, bien qu'elle ait un certain coût. L'OCDE et l'UE la considèrent comme faisant partie intégrante de toute stratégie économique digne de ce nom. Car, aujourd'hui, la plupart des gens s'accordent à dire que l'accroissement de la productivité de l'ensemble de l'économie passe par une meilleure intégration des femmes sur le marché de l'emploi.

Source: P_11.405_IvPa_Les Verts

Response from the Federal Council

N° objet: 07.3156 Mo.

Dépositaire: Freysinger Oskar

Parti: UDC

Canton: VS

Titre: Loi fédérale sur le régime des allocations pour perte de gain. Modification

Date: 22.03.2007

Chambre: CN

Etat des délibérations: Liquidé (20090320 / CN / « en suspens depuis plus de deux ans; classement »)

Co-signataires: Baumann J. Alexander; Borer Roland F.; Dunant Jean Henri; Füglistaller Lieni; Hess Bernhard; Leutenegger Filippo; Mörgeli Christoph; Müri Felix; Pagan Jacques; Perrin Yvan; Reymond André; Schmied Walter; Schwander Pirmin; Veillon Pierre-François; Wobmann Walter

Avis du Conseil fédéral du 16.05.2007

L'introduction, en juillet 2005, d'une allocation de maternité financée par le biais du régime des allocations pour perte de gain et versée durant 14 semaines à toutes les femmes actives a permis de combler une grande lacune de protection sociale qui subsistait envers les femmes, à savoir la compensation de l'absence du travail pour cause de maternité. Désormais, la mère peut se remettre des fatigues de la grossesse et de l'accouchement, s'occuper intensément de son enfant et se consacrer à l'allaitement durant les premiers mois sans subir de pression due à la contrainte de reprendre le travail pour des raisons financières. Réduire le congé destiné aux mères pour le répartir en faveur du père consisterait à le vider de son sens même.

L'introduction du congé maternité repose sur un mandat constitutionnel qui vise clairement la création d'une assurance-maternité afin de protéger la mère et non pas l'introduction d'un congé parental sous la forme d'une assurance. Après de nombreuses propositions et de longs débats durant plus de cinquante ans, ce n'est finalement qu'une solution modeste, facilement applicable, se limitant à l'essentiel et ayant des coûts limités qui a rallié une majorité.

La répartition du congé maternité entre les deux parents ne serait pas réalisable sans coûts supplémentaires. Les dernières statistiques révèlent en effet que les salaires des hommes sont toujours nettement plus élevés que ceux des femmes (dans le secteur privé l'écart est de près de 20 pour cent) et, de plus, seulement 12 pour cent des hommes travaillent à temps partiel contre 56 pour cent des femmes. Cela étant, pour les hommes un jour de congé entraînerait un coût de 10 millions de francs en moyenne alors que pour les femmes il est d'environ 6 millions de francs.

En outre, une répartition des 98 indemnités journalières de maternité entre les deux parents, selon leur souhait, aboutirait à des changements de bénéficiaires ou de caisses compétentes difficilement gérables. La mise en œuvre du système préconisé serait surtout très contraignante pour les employeurs qui devraient alors organiser des arrêts et des reprises partielles de travail sur une courte durée. Enfin, un tel modèle risquerait d'inciter les parents à optimiser l'allocation de maternité, vu qu'il leur permettrait de choisir l'allocation la plus avantageuse pour eux.

Proposition du Conseil fédéral du 16.05.2007

Le Conseil fédéral propose de rejeter la motion.

Source: P_07.3156_Mo_Freysinger_CF

Report from the Committee for Social Security and Health (CSSH)

N° objet: 06.3662 Mo

Dépositaire: Nordmann Roger

Parti: Socialiste

Canton: VD

Titre: Un congé-paternité pour associer les pères dès la naissance

Date: 11.12.2006

Chambre: CN

Etat des délibérations: Liquidé (08.03.2007 / CN adoption à 78/74 voix; 19.12.2007 / CE rejet à 13/ 21 voix)

Co-signataires: Allemann Evi; Barthassat Luc; Berberat Didier; Bernhardsgrütter Urs; Daguét André; Dormond Béguélin Marlyse; Fasel Hugo; Fässler-Osterwalder Hildegard; Fehr Jacqueline; Frösch Therese; Germanier Jean-René; Graf-Litscher Edith; Gross Andreas; Gyr-Steiner Josy; Haering Barbara; Heim Bea; Huguenin Marianne; Janiak Claude; Kohler Pierre; Marty Kälin Barbara; Meier-Schatz Lucrezia; Pedrina Fabio; Rechsteiner Rudolf; Robbiani Meinrado; Rossini Stéphane; Roth-Bernasconi Maria; Schenker Silvia; Sommaruga Carlo; Stöckli Hans; Stump Doris; Vermot-Mangold Ruth-Gaby; Zapfl Rosmarie

Rapport de la Commission de la sécurité sociale et de la santé publique du 8 novembre 2007

Réunie le 8 novembre 2007, la commission a procédé à l'examen de la motion visée en titre, déposée le 11 décembre 2006 par le conseiller national Roger Nordmann.

Cette motion vise à accorder aux pères quelques semaines de congé-paternité après la naissance de leur enfant ainsi que le droit au versement d'une indemnité pour perte de gains selon des modalités analogues à celle du congé-maternité.

Proposition de la commission

La commission propose, par 6 voix contre 3 et 1 abstention, de rejeter la motion, alors qu'une minorité (Fetz, Leuenberger-Solothurn, Ory) propose au contraire de l'adopter.

Rapporteur: Erika Forster-Vannini

Pour la majorité de la commission, l'instauration d'un congé-paternité, si elle est souhaitable, n'est pas vraiment nécessaire. De plus, en donnant droit à des indemnités, ce congé grèverait considérablement les comptes des allocations pour perte de gain (APG) et amènerait à augmenter plus fortement que prévu les cotisations finançant ces allocations. En outre, ces congés poseraient des problèmes aux PME, qui devraient compenser la diminution des prestations due à l'absence d'un employé et le manque à gagner occasionné. Enfin, considérant que les entreprises ont déjà et de toute façon la possibilité d'accorder un congé à leurs employés à la naissance d'un enfant, la commission trouve préférable que cette question continue d'être discutée et réglée par les partenaires sociaux eux-mêmes.

Une minorité a toutefois souligné combien la présence du père est importante au cours de la première année de la vie d'un enfant, non seulement pour l'enfant lui-même, mais également pour la mère, qui a alors besoin de soutien. Cette minorité considère donc, d'une part, qu'octroyer un congé-paternité avec une allocation contribuerait à relever le niveau de vie et à améliorer la qualité du travail et, d'autre part, que cet avantage constituerait un atout pour la Suisse, puisque cela pourrait permettre d'attirer sur le marché du travail suisse les personnes les plus qualifiées.

Source: P_06.3662_Mo_Nordmann_CSSS

Parliamentary debate

N° objet: 08.430 Iv. Pa

Dépositaire: Hodgers Antonio

Parti: Les Verts

Canton: GE

Titre: Possibilité pour les cantons d'introduire et de financer un congé paternité par le régime des APG

Date: 02.06.2008

Chambre: CN

Etat des délibérations: Liquidé (21.09.2009)

Co-signataires: Bänziger Marlies; Girod Bastien; John-Calame Francine; Moser Tiana Angelina; Nordmann Roger; Thorens Goumaz Adèle

Conseil national - Session d'automne 2009 - Onzième séance - 21.09.09-14h30

Antrag der Mehrheit

Der Initiative keine Folge geben

Antrag der Minderheit

(Fehr Jacqueline, Gilli, Goll, Meyer Thérèse, Moser, Prelicz-Huber, Rechsteiner Paul, Rielle, Robbiani, Rossini, Schenker Silvia, Weber-Gobet)

Der Initiative Folge geben

Proposition de la majorité

Ne pas donner suite à l'initiative

Proposition de la minorité

(Fehr Jacqueline, Gilli, Goll, Meyer Thérèse, Moser, Prelicz-Huber, Rechsteiner Paul, Rielle, Robbiani, Rossini, Schenker Silvia, Weber-Gobet)

Donner suite à l'initiative

Hodgers Antonio (G, GE): Qu'on le veuille ou non, l'évolution naturelle de la société suisse fait que, d'une part, les femmes accèdent de plus en plus souvent à des postes à responsabilité et, d'autre part, les hommes, les jeunes pères notamment, s'investissent davantage dans la vie de famille, notamment par l'éducation des enfants. C'est pour cela que, depuis quelques années, beaucoup de grandes entreprises suisses ont instauré un congé-paternité pour leurs employés. Il s'agit de tenir compte des nouvelles pratiques sociales. Et un employeur intelligent est un employeur qui sait que la satisfaction de son employé est un plus non seulement pour celui-ci, mais également pour l'entreprise. Ce congé-paternité est par contre, pour des raisons financières, plus difficile à assumer pour les petites et moyennes entreprises. Il est temps que notre Parlement tienne compte de cette évolution sociale et reconnaisse enfin la place du père auprès du nouveau-né.

En matière d'assurances sociales, la Suisse a souvent privilégié la carte du fédéralisme. Comme l'exemple du congé-maternité le montre, divers régimes cantonaux ont coexisté avant qu'une certaine unité nationale se soit formée. Et encore, la situation actuelle permet des congés-maternité différenciés selon les cantons, puisque ceux-ci ont la possibilité d'être plus généreux en la matière.

La présente initiative parlementaire reprend exactement ce modèle. Les cantons devraient pouvoir disposer d'une autonomie pour introduire un congé-paternité. Actuellement, plusieurs cantons prélèvent déjà des cotisations paritaires employeur/employé pour financer les suppléments d'allocations de maternité prévus par l'article 16h de la loi sur les allocations pour perte de gain. Ces montants sont très modestes. Par exemple à Genève, il s'agit de 0,02 pour cent du salaire pour couvrir quelques semaines supplémentaires de congé - deux ou trois -, des allocations légèrement plus élevées et le congé en cas d'adoption.

Je propose que le financement de l'assurance-paternité cantonale se fasse sur le même modèle. Le montant dépendrait des compétences des cantons, car le financement serait entièrement à la charge de ceux-ci. Il n'y aurait, par conséquent, aucune modification du régime des allocations pour perte de gain fédéral. Il est clair que cette initiative parlementaire donne tout simplement l'autonomie aux cantons, en fonction de leur réalité sociale, afin de choisir s'ils veulent, oui ou non, mettre en place un congé-paternité. Cependant, le Code des obligations suisse étant exhaustif en matière de droit au congé, la mise en pratique

d'un congé paternité cantonal n'est pour l'instant pas possible. Il convient dès lors de modifier le Code des obligations afin de le permettre. De plus, la possibilité d'instituer des cotisations paritaires cantonales pour financer le congé-paternité doit encore être clarifiée.

C'est pourquoi je vous invite à soutenir mon initiative parlementaire.

Fehr Jacqueline (S, ZH): Eltern möchten mehr Zeit für ihre Kinder, das wird rasch klar, wenn man sich in diesem Milieu bewegt. Insbesondere ist spürbar, dass junge Väter mehr Zeit für ihre Kinder haben wollen. Deshalb sind der Elternurlaub und insbesondere der Vaterschaftsurlaub ein immer drängenderes Thema. Antonio Hodgers will mit seiner Initiative nun für die Kantone die Möglichkeit schaffen, solche Elternurlaube einzuführen. Es geht also nicht darum, dass wir hier über einen nationalen Eltern- oder Vaterschaftsurlaub diskutieren, sondern es geht um die Kompetenzzerteilung, um die Möglichkeit für die Kantone, einen solchen Vaterschaftsurlaub einzuführen. Dies ist nämlich aufgrund der heutigen gesetzlichen Grundlage nicht möglich. Das ist eigentlich sehr erstaunlich. Wir sind hier nämlich immer wieder mit der Haltung konfrontiert, vor allem von bürgerlicher Seite, dass es richtig sei, dass die Kompetenz für die Familienpolitik bei den Kantonen liege. Konsequenterweise müsste dann auch die Kompetenz für die Einführung eines Vaterschaftsurlaubs bei den Kantonen liegen. Das ist aber nicht der Fall.

Wir haben in der Sozialpolitik eine lange und sehr bewährte Tradition, nämlich jene, dass man familienpolitische Leistungen zuerst vor Ort, eben in den Kantonen, einführt. Jene Leistungen, die sich bewähren, die sich in der Bevölkerung durchsetzen, die auch einen Nutzen bringen, werden dann allmählich national harmonisiert. Dieser Tradition sollten wir eigentlich auch hier nachleben. Es wäre wichtig, dass einzelne Kantone, beispielsweise der Kanton Genf, der das möchte, einen solchen Vaterschaftsurlaub einführen könnten. Damit könnten wir Erfahrungen sammeln, wir würden sehen, ob das von der Bevölkerung mitgetragen wird, ob die Bereitschaft da ist, die finanziellen Folgen mitzutragen, ob es positive Auswirkungen auf die Familienpolitik und auch auf die Familien an sich hat.

Es gibt in der Zwischenzeit sehr viele Unternehmen, die einen solchen Vaterschaftsurlaub eingeführt haben. Es sind logischerweise eher die grossen, die starken Unternehmungen, beispielsweise die Service-public-Unternehmungen, die damit erste Erfahrungen sammeln. Es ist höchste Zeit, dass auch die Kantone, beispielsweise der Kanton Genf, hier folgen können, sodass nicht nur jene Eltern begünstigt werden, die das Glück haben, in einem solchen Unternehmen zu arbeiten, sondern dass das generell möglich wird. Ich bitte Sie deshalb, der parlamentarischen Initiative Hodgers Folge zu geben. Damit sorgen Sie dafür, dass die alte Ordnung, wie wir sie kennen, gemäss der die Kantone in der Familienpolitik vorausgehen können, auch hier eingehalten wird und den Kantonen die Kompetenz erteilt wird, hier Versuche zu lancieren.

Baettig Dominique (V, JU), pour la commission: Le 4 mai dernier, à une courte majorité - 14 voix contre 12 -, la Commission de la sécurité sociale et de la santé publique a proposé de ne pas donner suite à cette initiative qui vise à modifier le droit fédéral de façon à permettre aux cantons d'introduire et de financer un congé-paternité par des prélèvements paritaires cantonaux.

Dans le cadre de la législation fédérale sur l'allocation et le congé de maternité de 2005, les cantons ont gardé une marge de manœuvre pour octroyer une allocation de maternité plus élevée, de plus longue durée, ou tenir compte d'une adoption. L'idée de l'initiative est d'accorder à des cantons urbains et plus progressistes une nouvelle liberté pour introduire un congé-paternité et de prélever des cotisations sociales séparées pour financer le congé-paternité au niveau cantonal.

De grandes entreprises et des administrations ont mis spontanément en place - dans l'esprit du temps - de tels systèmes de congé-paternité qui se révèlent parfois malheureusement trop coûteux ou trop compliqués pour les petites et moyennes entreprises. L'envie de nouvelles expériences sociales, motivée par de nouveaux besoins psychologiques ou culturels, fait demander à l'auteur de l'initiative d'étendre l'autonomie cantonale, ce qui nécessite néanmoins une modification du Code des obligations. Aucune conséquence financière directe ne s'ensuivrait pour la Confédération.

A une courte majorité, la commission considère que la révision du Code des obligations, s'il est donné suite à l'initiative, permettrait certes aux cantons de mettre en place un congé-paternité, mais les contraindrait à en assumer le financement par le biais de prélèvements paritaires cantonaux.

Ce sujet n'est manifestement pas mûr et ne constitue pas une priorité, sachant - c'est la constatation faite par certains membres de la commission - que dans notre pays on va déjà assez loin dans le domaine. De plus, une augmentation des prestations sociales est malvenue actuellement dans le contexte de la crise. Un congé-paternité devrait rester du ressort des partenaires sociaux et ce congé devrait être fixé dans les conventions collectives de travail.

On s'interroge aussi, au sein de la commission, sur les nouveaux besoins psychologiques et sociologiques

de certains pères - besoins certainement nés sous la pression de certaines mères, d'ailleurs - de voir leur rôle se féminiser, au demeurant pour une très courte durée. Les rôles ne sont pas systématiquement et obligatoirement interchangeables, mais relèvent de choix individuels à régler dans le couple ou à négocier avec l'employeur, par exemple dans le cadre de congés. Ce modèle ne saurait en aucun cas être généralisé et, surtout, la charge qui en découle ne devrait pas être mise à la charge de la collectivité.

Une minorité redoute quant à elle que l'instauration du congé-paternité, restant du ressort des partenaires sociaux, fasse apparaître de fortes disparités entre les différentes branches. Elle insiste aussi sur la nécessité de respecter l'esprit du fédéralisme en laissant aux cantons une large autonomie dans l'élaboration de leur politique familiale.

En conclusion, je vous propose au nom de la majorité de la commission de ne pas donner suite à cette initiative.

Abstimmung - Vote

(namentlich - nominatif; Beilage - Annexe 08.430/2951)

Für Folgegehen ... 69 Stimmen

Dagegen ... 104 Stimmen

Source: P_08.430_IvPa_Hodgers_Debat_CN

Appendix 10 - Score attribution to policy proposals

Reference n° of parliamentary intervention	Year of submission	State intervention			Father-care-sensitivity			TOTAL SCORE
		state regulation	father targeting	total score state intervention	length reserved for the father	compensation for father	total score gender equality	
1	2011	1	0	1	0	-1	-1	0
2	2011	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
3	2011	-1	-1	-2	-1	0	-1	-3
4	2011	-1	-1	-2	-1	0	-1	-3
5	2011	1	1	2	0	-1	-1	1
6	2011	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
7	2010	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
8	2009	1	1	2	-1	1	0	2
9	2009	0	1	1	0	1	1	2
10	2009	1	-1	0	-1	1	0	0
12	2008	0	-1	-1	-1	1	0	-1
13	2008	-1	-1	-2	-1	1	0	-2
14	2008	1	1	2	0	-1	-1	1
16	2008	0	1	1	-1	1	0	1
17	2007	0	1	1	-1	1	0	1
18	2007	-1	-1	-2	-1	1	0	-2
19	2006	1	1	2	-1	1	0	2
20	2006	1	1	2	1	1	2	4
21	2001	1	0	1	1	1	2	3
22	1999	-1	0	-1	1	-1	0	-1
23	1998	1	1	2	-1	1	0	2

Notes: My comments on score attribution in unclear cases:

Intervention no. 1: the EU Directive (2010/18/EU) on parental leave entitles each parent to four unpaid months, of which one is non-transferable. Payment of leave is not binding.

Intervention no. 3: The private parental leave insurance is not specially targeted at fathers and there is no minimum length mentioned in the project (it depends on the savings capitalized).

Intervention no. 12: The cantonal initiative does not mention anything about leave lengths or about reserved quotas for fathers.

Intervention no. 14: The postulate proposes a paid parental leave (at the expense of maternity benefits) and an unpaid paternity leave. The conceptual tool does not enable me to capture both aspects of the proposition. As the proposition of parental leave is made by the same author in no. 13, I attribute points for the additional proposition in no. 14: unpaid paternity leave.

Intervention no. 16: The parliamentary initiative does not mention a leave duration for cantonal paternity leave – I code it as short leave (-1).

Intervention no. 17: The interpellation does not mention a leave duration for cantonal paternity leave – I code it as short leave (-1)

Intervention no. 19: The motion mentions “a few weeks” of paternity leave, consider that it means a minimum of two weeks and code it as a “short” leave (-1)

Intervention no. 22: The parliamentary initiative targets civil servants. I therefore consider this a low state regulation as only a portion of the population would benefit from the measure (-1 point attributed).

Appendix 11 - Summary of the FSIO 2013 report on parental and paternity leaves

Context

The report entitled “Paternity leave and parental leave. State of the art and presentation of various models” was prepared on behalf of the Federal Council by the Federal Social Insurance Office (FSIO, 2013) and issued on October 30th 2013. It is the outcome of Anita Fetz’s (Socialist MP) postulate submitted June 6th 2011 in favor of the implementation of a tax-deductible private parental insurance. In its response to the postulate, the Federal Council considered that the “innovative” and “interesting” elements of this proposal justified further analysis. The Council of States agreed on September 14th 2011 that a report be prepared on this proposal as well as on the previous proposals which had been submitted, comparing their respective advantages and disadvantages.

Structure of the report

The report covers different issues related to leave policies and parenthood in Switzerland and adopts a comparative perspective.

1. It starts by presenting statistical information on employed parents in Switzerland.
2. It summarizes the various parliamentary propositions in favor of parental and paternity leaves at the federal and cantonal levels in the last decade.
3. It presents the current legal situation as regards maternity, paternity and parental leaves in Switzerland. It also gives an overview of the existing parental and paternity leaves granted by public and private employers and through collective labor agreements.
4. It presents the existing supra-national legislations (ILO, Council of Europe, EU) as regards parental and paternity leaves, and provides a brief comparison with ten EU countries.
5. It analyses the policy objectives pursued by countries which have implemented leave policies and their outcomes for families, the economy and gender equality.
6. It explores the possible legal frames for the implementation of a parental and/or paternity leave in Switzerland and describes eight different models and their family, economic and gender equality outcomes.
7. Finally the Federal Council gives its position with regard to the report and to parental and paternity leaves.

Hereafter I present a summary of the last three points and report the analysis provided by the FSIO.

Objectives and outcomes of parental and paternity leaves

The FSIO focuses on three dimensions of parental and paternity leaves and of their outcomes: the family, the economy and gender equality. The report notes that in other countries, parental leave and sometimes paternity leave too, are considered as integral part of family policy. These measures are regarded as contributing to acknowledge and support parents’ role and their specific needs and constraints at the birth of a child. As regards gender equality objectives, the FSIO concludes from other countries’ experiences and OECD and EU recommendations that leave policies should target specifically men (through quotas or other incentives) in order to prevent the reinforcement of the gendered division of work in families. Finally, as regards parental and paternity leaves’ relation with the economy, referring to the OECD’s perspective, the FSIO reports that leave policies contribute to economic growth objectives, as they facilitate work-family life reconciliation and mothers’ labor market participation. The FSIO also reports the diverging positions of employers’ unions (in favor of company-level and/or branch-level solutions) and employees unions (in favor of a statutory solution).

The FSIO reports briefly on parental and paternity leaves’ effects on the family, gender equality and the economy. It mentions for example that parental and paternity leaves’ uptake by men were found to have positive effects on fathers’ participation to family life, on children’s development, as well as on fathers’ and mothers’ health. It also notes the impact of leave uptake by men on their increased involvement with children. Finally, the FSIO lists different possible consequences for the economy: increased female labor market participation, increase of employees’ motivation and satisfaction, positive outcome for employers, positive effect for low income parents if the leave is paid, negative effect on return to work if the leave is long, negative effect on the Swiss economy’s competitiveness because of the increase of payroll expenses.

It is striking that the FSIO refrains to draw general conclusions about parental and paternity leave outcomes, arguing that there are methodological problems, lack of in-depth research, and inconclusive results. However the report is based on a very limited number of scientific articles (drawing on the list of references cited).

Leave models and their (dis-)advantages

The FSIO provides an overview of the legal frames within which parental and/or paternity leaves and insurances could be implemented and the legislative changes which would be necessary. The FSIO notes that according to the Constitution (in particular art. 116—which is the main article for Swiss family policies), the Confederation *can* legislate on parental and/or paternity leaves but is *not obligated* to do so (contrary to maternity leave). Among the eight different leave models evaluated, some of them take after proposals submitted by MPs while others are newly crafted for the purpose of the report. They all grant fathers and/or parents a statutory job-protected leave.

However substantial differences exist as regards the length, payment and financing of these models:

- Model 1: modification of the Code of Obligations (CO) in order to implement an unpaid parental or paternity leave for employed individuals. Length to determine. Income compensation could be proposed by the employer, negotiated by social partners or financed at the cantonal level.
- Model 2: modification of the 3rd pillar pension system, in order to enable individuals to benefit from their retirement savings to finance a 16 weeks parental leave. A modification of the constitution is necessary, so as the modification of the CO to grant individual rights.
- Model 3: implementation of a new tax-deductible private insurance system (similar to the 3rd pillar pension system), in order to finance a 16 weeks parental leave. After a certain period, if the couple did not have a child (or another child) the savings are transferred the 3rd pillar pension system. A new constitutional article is necessary. The CO needs to be modified.
- Model 4: One week of paternity leave for employed men paid by the employer. A modification of the CO is necessary to obligate employers to continue salary payment during one week of paternity leave.
- Model 5: modification of the LECA in order to finance a four week paternity leave for employed and self-employed men. The leave is paid at 80% of salary with maximum cap (as for maternity leave). The CO must be modified in order to grant employees four weeks leave after the birth of their child.
- Model 6: modification of the LECA in order to finance a 16 week parental leave for employed and self-employed parents. Each parent has a four-week quota reserved and the eight remaining weeks represent a family entitlement which can be shared among them. The leave is paid at 80% of salary with maximum cap (as for maternity leave). The CO must be modified in order to grant 16 weeks parental leave, distinguishing between individual and family entitlements.
- Model 7: implementation of a 24-week paid parental leave financed by the LECA. This model takes up the proposal of the Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs (FCCF) proposed in 2010. All employed and self-employed parents benefit from 24 weeks in total: 4 weeks are reserved for each parent and the 16 weeks remaining are shared between them. The leave is paid at 80% of salary with maximum cap (as for maternity leave). The model is financed by the LECA fund or VAT. This model necessitates a modification of the LECA or of the Constitution (depending on the financing solution) and of the CO.
- Model 8 (combines various parental and paternity leave models): each parent is entitled to a statutory 16 week-parental leave which is unpaid (model 1). The father only is entitled to four weeks of benefits paid at 80% of the salary financed by the LECA fund (model 5). In addition, employed and self-employed parents can use their 3rd pillar pension insurance savings to finance their leave (model 2). This model implies to modify the constitution (use of the 3rd pillar), as well as the CO and LECA.

The FSIO then provides a transversal evaluation of the different leave models proposed and their (dis-)advantages (see Table below). As regards leave recipients, only two models (4 and 5) are targeted at men only, while the others propose a parental leave. Model 1 can be used either to implement a paternity or a parental leave. Two models are limited to employees only (1 and 4), while the others include self-employed parents as well. Only one model does not grant any financial compensation (model 1). Two models are based on tax-deductible private insurance (2 and 3) and the rest provides a form of payment or loss of earnings compensation. The length of leaves varies between one and 24 weeks (in model 1, the length is to be determined). The models propose different financing solutions. There are no direct costs for the government and the economy in models 1, 2 and 3. Employers bear the expenses in model 4. The rest of the models (5, 6, 7 and 8) which are financed by the LECA fund are more expensive (they vary between 385 and 1772 mio./year).

As regards the impact of the different models on their use by parents, the FSIO notes that models 1, 2, 3 (and 8) are likely to be used only by well-off parents as they are not compensated. These models therefore do not concern a large population. As regards gender equality, the FSIO notes that models 4, 5 and 8 are particularly attractive for fathers as they are (or entail) individual non-transferable and well-paid leaves. Models 6 and 7 also comprise paid and reserved periods of leave for fathers, but the rest of the entitlement is likely to be used by mothers only. The FSIO concludes that models which are targeted at fathers, well-paid and which last at least four weeks would enable them to involve more in childcare and domestic tasks than they would have if they had continued their job at 100%. Leave models which target men would also contribute to decrease the discrimination at recruitment currently faced by young women by assimilating men more to childcare responsibilities. These models therefore contribute to a more gender-equal division of work in the family among men and women, at least temporarily. The FSIO concludes it is however difficult to evaluate long-term effects.

Turning to economic consequences, the FSIO notes that at the level of the company, leave models are likely to have negative organizational consequences especially when the employee is absent for more than four weeks (models 2, 3, 7 and 8). The FSIO also notes that some models create inequalities among companies, depending on the demographic characteristics of the employed population (model 4), while those which use the LECA fund share the costs among them (5, 6, 7 and 8). At the macro-economic level, the FSIO emphasizes the prevision of increase of expenses of the LECA fund in the future and the necessity to guarantee the financial balance of social insurances. It highlights the fact that the benefits of a paternity or parental leave should be put into perspective with the costs which will have to be taken on by the economy considering the increase of LECA contributions. The FSIO considers that an increase of taxes or fiscal deductions necessary to finance parental or paternity leaves will decrease Switzerland's competitiveness. However it also notes that the OECD considers parental leave can increase productivity.

Description	Advantages	Disadvantages
1/ Unpaid parental or paternity leave (length to determine)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No constitutional change - Statutory parental or paternity leave right and job protection - Potentially compatible with EU legislation - No direct costs for the government and for employers - Form of incentive for social partners or cantons to propose financing solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-employed individuals are excluded - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences) - Gendered effects if mainly used by mothers (discrimination in recruitment) - Social inequalities
2/ Use of private pension insurance savings for a 16 weeks parental leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory parental leave right and job protection - Employed and self-employed are concerned - Potentially compatible with EU legislation - No direct costs for the government and for employers - Minimal fiscal losses - Form of incentive for social partners or cantons to propose financing solutions - Could be extended to cover leaves for dependent relatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New constitutional basis is necessary - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences) - Social and age inequalities (young and low income individuals do not dispose of 3rd pillar savings) - Decrease of financial means at the moment of retirement in the case of use
3/ New private parental leave insurance system (16 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory parental leave right and job protection - Employed and self-employed are concerned - Potentially compatible with EU legislation - No direct costs for the government and for employers - Form of incentive for social partners or cantons to propose financing solutions - Savings are possible in addition to those for the 3rd pillar pension system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New constitutional basis is necessary - Significant fiscal losses - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences) - Social and age inequalities (young and low income individuals do not dispose of 3rd pillar savings) - Risk of abuse (by those who will not have a child or another child) - high income individuals are privileged (accumulation of fiscal deductions)
4/ One week paid paternity leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No constitutional change - Statutory paternity leave right and job protection - Short length and salary payment encourage men's leave uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-employed individuals are excluded - Employers bear all the costs (cost estimation ≈110 mio./year) - Inequalities among employers (more expenses for sectors employing predominantly men)
5/ Four weeks paternity leave paid by LECA fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No constitutional change - Statutory paternity leave right and job protection - Employed and self-employed are concerned - The wage contribution social insurance system avoids creating inequalities among employers (depending on the structure of their employees) - Gender equality effect for the division of work in the family - High income replacement encourages men's leave uptake 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase of payroll expenses (cost estimation ≈385 mio./year) - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences)
6/ 16-week parental leave to be shared among parents (with quota) paid by the LECA fund	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No constitutional change - Statutory parental leave right and job protection - Employed and self-employed are concerned - The wage contribution social insurance system avoids creating inequalities among employers (depending on the structure of their employees) - Gender equality effect for the division of work in the family - High income replacement encourages men's leave uptake - The four-week quota operate as an additional incentive for men to use the leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Not compatible with EU legislation - Increase of payroll expenses (cost estimation between 1005 and 1180 mio./year) - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences) - Gendered effects if mainly used by mothers (discrimination in recruitment) - Implementation difficulties: control of the use of the family entitlement by the government and negotiation issues among parents and between parents and their respective employer
7/ 24 week-paid parental leave (with quota) paid by the LECA fund or VAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Statutory parental leave right and job protection - Employed and self-employed are concerned - The wage contribution social insurance system avoids creating inequalities among employers (depending on the structure of their employees) - Gender equality effect for the division of work in the family - High income replacement encourages men's leave uptake - The four-week quota operates as an additional incentive for men to use the leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New constitutional basis is necessary if increase of VAT - Not compatible with EU legislation - Significant increase of payroll expenses or VAT (cost estimation between 1418 and 1772 mio./year) - Indirect costs for employers (management of absences) - Gendered effects if mainly used by mothers (discrimination in recruitment) - Implementation difficulties: control of the use of the family entitlement by the government and negotiation issues among parents and between parents and their respective employer
8/ Comb. of models 1, 2 and 5	See corresponding models	See corresponding models

In terms of legislative changes the FSIO notes that five models can be implemented without any constitutional amendment (1, 4, 5, 6 and 7), while the others necessitate a modification. As regards the division of responsibilities between the confederation and the cantons, some models propose a federal solution only (4, 5, 6 and 7) while the others enable cantons to develop insurances in order to finance a parental or a paternity leave. Finally, as regards the compatibility of the leave models with the EU Directive on parental leave (models 4 and 5 are excluded as they propose a paternity leave), only models 2, 3 and 8 would conform to the EU prescription of a four-month parental leave entitlement for each parent.

Federal Council's position

In line with its previous positions, the Federal Council is against the implementation of statutory parental or paternity leaves. Although it recognizes that such measures would facilitate work-family life reconciliation, and contribute to a more gender-equal division of work in the family, it considers that they are not priority family policy measures. In contrast to leave policies, ECEC services are considered as enabling parents to reconcile work and family lives beyond the immediate period around the child's birth, especially when the child is school-aged. Therefore it considers that the further development of ECEC services is a priority. The Federal Council will submit this report to the Parliament and proposes to file Anita Fetz's postulate.

Finally, in the press release issued October 30th 2013 announcing the publication of the report, the Federal Council makes a new proposition (<http://www.bsv.admin.ch/aktuell/medien/00120/index.html?lang=fr&msg-id=50638>). It charges the FDHA to examine until mid-2014 the possibility to introduce in Federal law a regulation which would enable employees to reduce their activity rate of 20% at most after the birth of a child, similarly to the current existing legislation for civil servants working at the Confederation. It is argued that although this measure does not strictly correspond to a parental leave, it would contribute to facilitate work-family life reconciliation.

Appendix 12 - Parliamentary interventions by year and by party affiliation of MPs

Year of submission	The Green	Socialist	Christian-democratic	Radical-Liberal	Swiss People's party	Total number of interventions by year	% of total number of interventions by year
1998	0	1	0	0	0	1	5%
1999	1	0	0	0	0	1	5%
2000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2001	1	0	0	0	0	1	5%
2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0%
2006	1	1	0	0	0	2	9%
2007	1	0	0	0	1	2	9%
2008	2	1	2	0	0	5	23%
2009	0	0	1	1	0	2	9%
2010	0	1	1	0	0	2	9%
2011	1	1	4	0	0	6	27%
Total number of interventions by political party	7	5	8	1	1	22	100%
% of total interventions by political party	32%	23%	36%	5%	5%	100%	

Appendix 13 - Voting results in the National Council by political group

Year of leave proposal (n°)	Political faction	Number of votes	
		In favour	Opposed
1999 (n°22)	Right wing	0	72
	Center	6	20
	Left wing	46	0
2006 (n°20)	Right wing	0	81
	Center	7	25
	Left wing	62	0
2006 (n°19)	Right wing	0	60
	Center	13	13
	Left wing	62	0
2008 (n°16)	Right wing	3	85
	Center	13	19
	Left wing	55	0
2008 (n°15)	Right wing	0	81
	Center	9	25
	Left wing	56	0
2008 (n°12)	Right wing	1	68
	Center	10	19
	Left wing	57	0
2011 (n°6)	Right wing	0	67
	Center	10	34
	Left wing	54	0

Appendix 14 - Summary of problem representations identified

Discursive dimension	Discourse	Problem representation	Description	coded sources/ coded references	
Policy legitimacy	FAMILY NEEDS	Delayed family policy	Switzerland's family policy lags behind—examples from other countries and institutions are given—and should be fostered through the implementation of parental leave policies	21/43	
		Work and family life reconciliation	Work and family life reconciliation is a difficult task for mothers and fathers which can be eased by parental leave policies	23/35	
		Children lack father presence	Father presence is beneficial for children's development and chances in life	16/29	
		Transition to parenthood is a difficult period	Transition to parenthood entails hard work and is a stressful and tiring period for the couple, which can also provoke family disruptions	12/20	
		Social inequalities	Parents face unequal regulations and are not all wealthy enough to use unpaid leaves	12/14	
		Mothers need help	Mothers cannot handle all the work just after having given birth, they need help from their partners	7/8	
		Children are undervalued	The importance of children for society is not valued enough	4/4	
	UNNECESSARY	Not a priority	Other family policies are more urgent to implement than parental leave policies (or already exist)	29/44	
		Social partners solution	Discretionary parental leave policies should be negotiated by social partners	21/29	
		Ineffective policy	Parental leave policies do not achieve the claimed objectives, e.g., work and family life reconciliation and father-child bond	13/19	
		Legal blockages	There is no Constitutional basis for the implementation of parental leave policies and no need to change the law	13/16	
		State intrusion	Family organization is a private issue which should not be influenced by policies and not be financed collectively	7/11	
	Economic aspects	COST-EFFECTIVE	Inexpensive policy	Parental leave proposal are affordable, they do not necessarily entail an increase of public expenses	18/23
			HR outputs	Parental leave policies can increase productivity and attract highly skilled workers	11/17
			Fertility	Parental leave policies can increase fertility rates and solve the financing problems of social insurances	9/14
Economic benefits of female labor power			Women's labor-force participation is limited by family obligations	7/8	
Inequalities among companies			Small and medium companies have smaller financial means than large companies and are disadvantaged	4/5	
BURDEN		Unbearable costs	The financing of social insurances is problematic, no supplementary expenses can be taken on	31/48	
		Inadequate for small and medium enterprises	Small and medium companies cannot manage the absence of their employees and the related costs	9/11	
Gender relations	GENDER EQUALITY	Gender-equality policy	Parental leave policies can achieve gender-equality objectives	16/28	
		Changing family models	Policies are ill-adapted to the current family organization which is more gender-equal	13/19	
		Fathers are involved parents	Men want to be more active fathers but are prevented by state policies	13/19	
		State institutions are gendered	Current policies assign gendered parenting roles to mothers and fathers	7/8	
	DIFFERENCE	Maternity and paternity are different	Mothers and fathers cannot be treated on the same grounds because of their physiological differences	7/7	
		Modification of the natural order	Parental leave policies would modify the natural sexual division of work between men and women	3/5	
		Protection of maternity	The objectives pursued by maternity leave would be at risk if the benefits were shared with fathers	2/2	

Appendix 15 - Evolution of the proportion of discursive dimensions and discourses

Period considered		1998-2005		2006-2008		2009-2011		TOTAL number of coded references
		Number of coded references	Percentage of coded references	Number of coded references	Percentage of coded references	Number of coded references	Percentage of coded references	
Discursive dimensions	policy legitimacy	30	45.5%	118	52.4%	46	50.5%	194
	economic aspects	20	30.3%	61	27.1%	31	34.1%	112
	gender relations	16	24.2%	46	20.4%	14	15.4%	76
	TOTAL	66	100%	225	100%	91	100%	382
Discourses	family needs	22	32.8%	66	28.8%	26	28.6%	114
	unnecessary	9	13.4%	58	25.3%	20	22.0%	87
	cost-effective	13	19.4%	29	12.7%	17	18.7%	59
	burden	7	10.4%	32	14.0%	14	15.4%	53
	gender equality	16	23.9%	33	14.4%	12	13.2%	61
	difference	0	0.0%	11	4.8%	2	2.2%	13
	TOTAL	67	100.0%	229	100.0%	91	100.0%	387

Note: Percentages take into account the total number of coded references by period and were calculated to indicate the proportion of each discursive dimension or discourse by period considered. In rare cases, the data was coded in both poles of a discursive dimension, which explains why there are slightly more coded references in the detailed description of discourses (387) than in the discursive dimension (382).

Appendix 16 - List of the newspapers in the dataset

Newspaper title (and abbreviation)	Covered from	Number of articles	% of the number of total articles	Supra-regional (S) /Regional (R)	Average circulation in 2009 (as a rough guide)*
<i>Le Temps</i> (LT)	1999	141	24	S	45,506
<i>24 Heures</i> - 4 editions (24H)	2005	103	18	R (Vaud)	81,566
<i>Tribune de Genève</i> (TG)	1999	107	18	R (Genève)	56,333
<i>Le Matin</i> - 2 editions (LM)	1999	76	13	S	252,450
<i>La Liberté</i> (LL)	2005	73	13	R (Fribourg)	38,761
<i>Le Nouvelliste</i> (LN)	2006	41	7	R (Valais)	41,996
<i>Quotidien Jurassien</i> (QJ)	2006	22	4	R (Jura)	20,016
<i>20 Minutes</i> - 3 editions (20M)	2008	8	1	S	229,729
<i>Express/Impartial</i> (E/I)	2008	8	1	R (Neuchâtel)	35,479

Note: * figures for 2009 were extracted from (REMP, 2009)

Appendix 17 - Distribution of dataset and subset according to a set of characteristics

Data characteristics	DATASET		SUBSET	
	N	%	n	%
Year of publication				
1999	19	3	2	1
2000	38	7	7	3
2001	28	5	6	3
2002	11	2	0	0
2003	15	3	0	0
2004	31	5	5	2
2005	37	6	7	3
2006	46	8	9	4
2007	187	32	93	45
2008	75	13	39	19
2009	90	16	38	18
Newspaper title	N	%	n	%
Le Matin	76	13	36	17
Le Temps	141	24	32	16
24 Heures	103	18	43	21
Tribune de Genève	106	18	35	17
La Liberté	73	13	28	14
Le Nouvelliste	41	7	12	6
Quotidien Jurassien	22	4	8	4
Express /Impartial	8	1	5	2
20 Minutes	8	1	7	3
Regional newspaper title (2006-2009)				
24 Heures	65	25	40	34
Tribune de Genève	65	25	28	24
La Liberté	71	27	29	25
Le Nouvelliste	41	16	12	10
Quotidien Jurassien	22	8	8	7
Section in the newspaper	N	%	n	%
Firts page	8	1	4	2
Editorial	36	6	14	7
International	32	6	11	5
National	136	24	57	28
Regional	130	23	36	18
Economy	38	7	9	4
Society	28	5	15	7
Letter to the editor	38	7	11	5
in brief	29	5	23	11
sports	16	3	0	0
other	76	13	21	10
Public Issue	N	%	n	%
paternity leave	160	28	160	78
parental leave	46	8	46	22
maternity leave	33	6	n.a.	n.a.
social policy	119	21	n.a.	n.a.
reconciliation measure	57	10	n.a.	n.a.
equality	27	5	n.a.	n.a.
other	135	23	n.a.	n.a.
Related theme	N	%	n	%
politics	380	66	154	75
companies	74	13	19	9
parental role representations	60	10	25	12
fertility	22	4	7	3
other	41	7	1	0
Politics level	N	%	n	%
federal	158	42	65	42
cantonal	100	26	39	25
municipality level	25	7	16	10
mixed level	9	2	6	4
lobby	25	7	11	7
foreign	55	15	16	10
other	7	2	1	1

Note: n.a. = not applicable

Appendix 18 - Examples of press articles by type of public issue addressed

Paternity leave

Titre: Le Matin

Le PDC introduit le **congé paternité**;
ENFANTS. L'exemple de Doris Leuthard fait école

BERNE Pourquoi seules les mamans pourraient-elles rester à la maison pour s'occuper de leur nouveau-né? Les papas ont aussi des droits. Plusieurs entreprises s'y mettent

Anne Dousseanne. dousse@edjpresse.ch

Le **congé paternité** n'est plus un tabou. Le PDC a décidé hier de l'introduire pour ses collaborateurs au niveau du secrétariat général du parti. Les futurs papas bénéficieront de 5 jours de congé payé et de 20 jours non rétribués. Ils pourront aussi travailler pendant deux jours depuis la maison. Les démocrates-chrétiens suivent l'exemple de leur conseillère fédérale. Doris Leuthard a annoncé lundi qu'elle avait en mise en place la même mesure dans son département («Le Matin» d'hier).

Les esprits évoluent

Si la ministre de l'Economie a créé la surprise au niveau de la Confédération, de nombreuses entreprises helvétiques accordent déjà à leurs employés un **congé paternité** payé. Le Blick a dressé un palmarès. Les premières places sont occupées par la Banque alternative et Mobility avec quatre semaines. IBM et le Théâtre de Zurich suivent avec trois semaines. Swisscom, Migros, Swiss Re et le Crédit Suisse donnent aux papas deux semaines. Et chez Manor, Novartis et la banque Coop, une semaine.

Les esprits évoluent également au niveau politique. «Le **congé paternité** répond à un besoin», martèlent aussi bien la socialiste Liliane Maury Pasquier (GE) que la PDC Thérèse Meyer (FR). Les deux parlementaires estiment qu'en Suisse, «le désir d'avoir des enfants est plus important que le nombre d'enfants qui naissent», d'où la nécessité d'agir.

La commission de la sécurité sociale du National se penchera prochainement sur une initiative de la Bernoise Franziska Teuscher (Verte), qui réclame que les pères touchent une allocation s'élevant à 80% du revenu moyen pendant huit semaines au minimum afin qu'ils puissent s'occuper de leur enfant après sa naissance et en assumer la garde avec leur partenaire. Si ce projet ne passe pas, Liliane Maury Pasquier avertit qu'elle reviendra à la charge avec une autre proposition.

De son côté, Thérèse Meyer déposera durant la prochaine session un postulat demandant au Conseil fédéral d'étudier la faisabilité d'un congé parental non payé mais avec l'assurance de retrouver son emploi. «Ce système marche bien en Autriche», souligne la Fribourgeoise.

Source: M_20070110_LM

Parental leave

Titre: Tribune de Genève

Les Verts lancent un **congé parental**

Le projet prévoit un congé paternité de deux semaines et un **congé parental** de 24 semaines à partager au bon vouloir des parents.

S'il naît un jour, ce sera un beau bébé bien joufflu. Et il fera un petit frère très complémentaire à l'assurance maternité et à son congé de seize semaines. On est toutefois encore loin de l'accouchement, puisque le projet de **congé parental** des Verts genevois vient juste d'être déposé devant le Grand Conseil.

Selon la députée Michèle Künzler, «la première étape a été franchie avec l'assurance maternité. Genève doit maintenant aller plus loin.» Plus loin, c'est un projet de loi qui donne aux pères la possibilité d'être plus présent auprès de leurs enfants jusqu'à 4 ans.

Techniquement, il s'agit d'une extension de la Loi cantonale sur l'assurance maternité. Elle offrirait aux pères un congé de deux semaines à la naissance et un **congé parental** de six mois. Dans les deux cas, 80% du salaire serait versé.

«Le **congé parental** est à prendre au libre choix des parents, mais au minimum quatre semaines chacun», spécifie la députée Mathilde Captyn. Mieux, il sera possible de prendre les six mois d'un coup ou de les fractionner.

Bien entendu, le système aura un coût. Les Verts ont calculé que le taux de cotisation devrait passer à 0,5%. La cotisation est payée à parts égales par l'employé et l'employeur.

Cela peut paraître beaucoup par rapport aux 0,05% du taux actuel pour l'assurance maternité. La différence est toutefois minime en regard du 0,4% qui avait été fixé lors de l'introduction de l'assurance maternité cantonale en 2001.

Source: M_20070904_TG

Appendix 19 - Theme of the article by type of parental leave policy addressed

Related theme	Paternity leave		Parental leave	
	N	%	N	%
Politics	122	76	32	70
Companies	19	12	0	0
Parental roles representations	17	11	8	17
Fertility	1	1	6	13
Other	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	160	100	46	100
Politics sub-themes	Paternity leave		Parental leave	
	N	%	N	%
Federal	56	46	9	28
Cantonal	31	25	8	25
Municipality	15	12	1	3
Mixed levels	5	4	1	3
Lobby	10	8	1	3
Foreign	4	3	12	38
Other	1	1	0	0
TOTAL	122	100	32	100

Source: subset of press articles

Appendix 20 - Number of positive and negative coded references by year

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total
Negative frames	2	2	4	0	0	0	8	1	39	13	10	79
Positive frames	4	3	11	0	0	10	10	13	71	37	32	191
Total number of coded references	6	5	15	0	0	10	18	14	110	50	42	270

Data: subset of press articles

Appendix 21 - Positive and negative frames (percentage of coded references)

Types of frames	Central policy issue addressed in the articles			
	Paternity leave	Parental leave		
Frames in favour of parental leave policies	Number of coded references		Total number	Percentage
Companies	57	5	62	22%
Fathers	39	15	54	19%
Gender equality	32	12	44	16%
Families	27	8	35	12%
Fertility	8	25	33	11%
Mothers	20	4	24	8%
Financing	14	4	18	6%
Children	7	4	11	4%
Society	5	1	6	2%
Total	209	78	287	100%
	Central policy issue addressed in the articles			
	Paternity leave	Parental leave		
Frames against parental leave policies	Number of coded references		Total number	Percentage
Secondary measure	23	11	34	26%
Companies	18	11	29	22%
State intrusion	19	4	23	18%
Unsatisfactory project	17	2	19	15%
Cost for society	11	3	14	11%
Disruption of traditional role	5	1	6	5%
Against mothers	0	4	4	3%
Total	93	36	129	100%
TOTAL coded frames	302	114	416	100%

Data: subset of press articles

Appendix 22 - Parental leave policies in cantonal administrations

Cantonal administrations	Paid maternity leave (in weeks)	Eligibility restrictions for extended maternity benefits*	Maternity leave salary compensation	Paid paternity leave (in days)	Unpaid leave (in weeks)	Gendered unpaid leave
Aargau	16.0	yes	100%	3	52	yes
Appenzell Ausserrhoden	16.0	no	100%	2	13	yes
Appenzell Innerrhoden	14.0	no	80%	2	13	yes
Basel-Landschaft	16.0	yes	100%	5	52	yes
Basel-Stadt	16.0	yes	100%	5	52	yes
Bern	16.0	no	100%	2	26	no
Fribourg	16.0	yes	100%	5	0	n.a.
Geneva	20.0	yes	100%	10	104	no
Glarus	14.0	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
Graubünden	16.0	no	90%	3	indet.	yes
Jura	16.0	no	100%	3	indet.	no
Lucerne	16.0	no	100%	5	26	yes
Neuchâtel	17.5	no	100%	5	13	no
Nidwalden	16.0	yes	100%	5	indet.	no
Obwalden	16.0	yes	100%	0	indet.	no
Schaffhausen	17.5	yes	100%	5	indet.	no
Schwyz	16.0	yes	100%	3	indet.	no
Solothurn	16.0	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
St. Gallen	16.0	no	100%	1	indet.	no
Thurgau	16.0	no	100%	2	13	yes
Ticino	16.0	no	100%	2	39	no
Uri	14.0	no	80%	4	8.5	no
Valais	16.0	yes	100%	5	13	no
Vaud	17.5	no	100%	5	52	no
Zug	16.0	yes	100%	5	indet.	no
Zurich	16.0	no	100%	5	indet.	yes
Mean length	16.1		Mean length	3.7		

Note: * for example, depending on the years of seniority, or on the condition of returning to work after leave

Source: Plate-forme d'information «Conciliation travail-famille: Mesures cantonales et communales» SECO/FSIO; Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02. 2012

Appendix 23 - Parental leave policies in communal administrations

Communal administrative centre	Paid maternity leave (in weeks)	Eligibility restrictions for extended maternity benefits*	Maternity leave salary compensation	Paid paternity leave (in days)	Unpaid leave (in weeks)	Gendered unpaid leave
Aarau	16	no	100%	10	0	n.a.
Altdorf	14	no	80%	2	0	n.a.
Appenzell	14	no	80%	2	12	yes
Bâle	16	yes	100%	5	52	no
Bellinzona	16	no	100%	0	0	n.a.
Berne	16	no	100%	15	104	no
Coire	14	no	100%	3	26	yes
Delémont	16	no	100%	3	52	no
Frauenfeld	16	no	100%	3	26	yes
Fribourg	16	yes	100%	3	indet.	no
Genève	20	no	100%	20	52	no
Glaris	14	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
Hérisau	16	yes	100%	1	26	yes
Lausanne	16	no	100%	21	52	no
Liestal	16	yes	100%	5	indet.	no
Lucerne	16	no	100%	10	indet.	yes
Neuchâtel	16	no	100%	1	0	n.a.
Saint-Gall	16	no	100%	5	indet.	no
Sarnen	16	yes	100%	0	0	n.a.
Schaffhouse	16	yes	100%	3	indet.	yes
Schwytz	16	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
Sion	16	yes	100%	5	0	n.a.
Soleure	16	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
Stans	16	yes	100%	5	0	n.a.
Zoug	16	yes	100%	2	indet.	no
Zurich	16	no	100%	10	52	no

Note: * for example, depending on the years of seniority, or on the condition of returning to work after leave

Source: Plate-forme d'information «Conciliation travail-famille: Mesures cantonales et communales» SECO/FSIO; Data from 18.02.2011, updated 24.02. 2012

Appendix 24 - Admin's gender-equality policy

L a u s a n n e

Agenda & actualités

Vous êtes ici: Lausanne officielle > Travailler à la Ville > L'employeur Ville > Egalité et qualité de vie au travail

Lausanne en bref

Lausanne officielle

Thématiques

Démarches

Rechercher dans les pages...

Tourisme

Egalité et qualité de vie au travail

Travailler à la Ville

- ▶ **L'employeur Ville**
 - ▶ Politique du personnel
 - ▶ Salaires
 - ▶ **Egalité et qualité de vie au travail**
 - ▶ 20 ans de politique d'égalité
 - ▶ L'égalité en chiffres
 - ▶ Les objectifs
 - ▶ Portraits
 - ▶ En histoire
 - ▶ Aide à la résolution de conflits
 - ▶ Structure du personnel
 - ▶ Associations du personnel
 - ▶ **Postuler à la Ville**
 - ▶ **Apprentissage**
 - ▶ **Concilier travail/vie privée**
 - ▶ **Carrière et formation**
 - ▶ **Santé et sécurité**
 - ▶ **Salaires et règlements**
 - ▶ **Service du personnel**

Coordonnées

Déléguée à l'égalité
Service du personnel
Place de la Palud 2
Hôtel de Ville
2e étage
Case postale 6904
1002 Lausanne

▶ **Situer sur le plan**
✉ **Ecrivez-nous**

Té debate: +41 21 315 23 62
Fax: +41 21 315 20 06

Lundi-vendredi
07h30-12h00
13h30-17h30
Vendredi
07h30-12h00
13h30-16h30

Fermé le mercredi après-midi
ti: Saint-François, Bel-Air
m1: Lausanne-Fion; m2: Riponne-M.
Béjart
LEB: Lausanne-Fion

En 20 ans, les résultats sont là!

La proportion de femme a augmenté en passant de 28,4% en 1989 à 42,8% en 2009.

La Ville de Lausanne a pour objectif de promouvoir l'égalité entre femmes et hommes, ainsi que la qualité de vie au travail en coordination avec les autres processus de gestion des ressources humaines.


Cette volonté agit prioritairement sur l'environnement de travail.

C'est en 1990 que la Municipalité de Lausanne décide de mettre en place une politique active de promotion de l'égalité et de créer un premier poste de déléguée à l'égalité. Durant les 20 ans qui suivent, quatre périodes d'action vont se succéder, au fil desquelles la perception de la problématique et des solutions à apporter se modifient, suivant aussi l'évolution de la société.


Facebook: 0 | Twitter: 0 | +1: 0

Source: picture of Admin's website as of February 10th 2013
<http://www1.lausanne.ch/fr/lausanne-officielle/travailler-a-la-ville/employeur-ville-de-lausanne/egalite-et-qualite-de-vie-au-travail.html>

Appendix 25 - Call for participation for fathers



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LIVES
RECHERCHE SOCIALE

Enquête auprès des pères

En tant qu'employé de la Ville de Lausanne, vous êtes invité à participer à une **recherche en sciences sociales menée à l'Université de Lausanne** par Prof. Laura Bernardi et Isabel Valarino (doctorante) :

Devenir papa et concilier travail et famille



Le but de la recherche est d'améliorer les connaissances sur la paternité et l'environnement de travail. La Municipalité de Lausanne soutient cette recherche et accorde le temps de travail nécessaire à l'entretien.

La participation consiste en un entretien confidentiel (de 1h à 1,5 h) qui abordera les sujets suivants :

- l'expérience de la naissance de votre enfant et les changements vécus au niveau familial et professionnel
- la prise du congé paternité
- votre expérience actuelle de conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille


NB : l'entretien est enregistré et anonymisé ; aucun nom n'apparaît dans la retranscription écrite de l'entretien ; la retranscription est uniquement utilisée dans le cadre de recherches et n'est pas diffusée hors du cercle scientifique.

Si vous avez eu un enfant depuis le **1^{er} mai 2010**, merci de bien vouloir prendre contact :


Isabel.Valarino@unil.ch

021 692 38 49



A titre symbolique et pour vous remercier de votre participation, une **carte cadeau Migros d'une valeur de CHF 20.-** vous est offerte.

Le rendez-vous sera fixé en fonction de vos disponibilités et à l'endroit qui vous convient le mieux.

Appendix 26 - Call for participation for managers



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Institut des sciences sociales



LIVES
RECHERCHE SOCIALE

Enquête auprès des cadres

En tant qu'employé-e de la Ville de Lausanne, vous êtes invité-e à participer à une **recherche en sciences sociales menée à l'Université de Lausanne** par Prof. Laura Bernardi et Isabel Valarino (doctorante) :

Gérer le congé paternité et l'absence des collaborateurs



Le but de la recherche est d'améliorer les connaissances sur la paternité et l'environnement de travail. La Municipalité soutient cette recherche en accordant le temps de travail nécessaire à l'entretien.

La participation consiste en un entretien confidentiel (env. 45 min.) qui abordera les sujets suivants :

- le déroulement et la gestion des demandes et de la prise du congé paternité dans votre équipe
- votre perception de la conciliation du travail et de la famille


NB : l'entretien est enregistré et anonymisé ; aucun nom n'apparaît dans la retranscription écrite de l'entretien ; la retranscription est uniquement utilisée dans le cadre de recherches et n'est pas diffusée hors du cercle scientifique.

Si un ou plusieurs de vos collaborateurs ont pris un congé paternité depuis le **1^{er} mai 2010**, merci de bien vouloir prendre contact :

Isabel.Valarino@unil.ch

021 692 38 49


A titre symbolique et pour vous remercier de votre participation, une **carte cadeau Migros d'une valeur de CHF 20.-** vous est offerte.

Le rendez-vous sera fixé en fonction de vos disponibilités et à l'endroit qui vous convient le mieux.

Appendix 27 - Overview of pilot interviews

	Name	Company	Interview	Remarks
Human resource manager	Ms Sanchez	University	oct. 2011	The employer grants one week of paid paternity leave
	M. Rogers	Multinational energy company	oct. 2011	The employer grants one week of paid paternity leave
	Ms Boller	Watch making industry	oct. 2011	The employer grants one week of paid paternity leave (interview was not recorded, but field notes were taken)
Leave recipients	Marcel	Confederation	nov. 2011	Benefitted from one week of paid paternity leave
	Michel	University	nov. 2011	Benefitted from one week of paid paternity leave and took 6 months of unpaid leave at 50%
	Frank	University	dec. 2011	Benefitted from one week of paid paternity leave
Partner of leave recipient	Louise (cohabiting with Michel)	n.a.	nov. 2011	

Appendix 28 - Individual and work-environment variables (quantitative sample)

Age

Statistics

Age

N	Valid	96
	Missing	0
Mean		35,88
Median		36,00
Mode		36
Std. Deviation		5,560
Variance		30,911
Range		34
Minimum		23
Maximum		57

Years of seniority

Statistics

AnneesAnciennete

N	Valid	96
	Missing	0
Mean		8,16
Median		6,00
Mode		3
Std. Deviation		6,260
Variance		39,186
Range		27
Minimum		1
Maximum		28

Part-time work

TempsPartiel

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid full-time	86	89,6	89,6	89,6
part-time	10	10,4	10,4	100,0
Total	96	100,0	100,0	

Social class

3classesESeC

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid salariat	36	37,5	37,9	37,9
intermediate	26	27,1	27,4	65,3
working class	33	34,4	34,7	100,0
Total	95	99,0	100,0	
Missing System	1	1,0		
Total	96	100,0		

Appendix 29 - Interview grid with fathers

Grille d'entretien – PERE

Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bonjour, je vous remercie d'avoir accepté de me rencontrer. Voici le bon Migros pour vous remercier de votre participation. - Je suis doctorante en sciences sociales à l'Université de Lausanne, et je fais une recherche sur l'émergence des congés parentaux en Suisse et la conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille telle qu'elle est vécue par les pères en particulier. - Je m'intéresse aux employeurs qui ont adopté des mesures de conciliation qui dépassent le cadre minimal ou les pratiques les plus courantes. La Ville de Lausanne est donc un employeur intéressant pour nous. - Je m'intéresse à la mise en œuvre et à l'utilisation de la mesure et je rencontre donc des employés qui ont bénéficié du congé et des cadres qui ont eu à gérer les demandes de congé dans leurs équipes. - La ville de Lausanne soutient la recherche, mais je ne suis pas mandatée par elle, la recherche est menée de manière indépendante. - Ce qui m'intéresse c'est votre expérience personnelle, comment vous avez vécu la naissance de votre enfant, comment ça s'est passé avec votre travail, et aussi dans votre couple ; les changements que cela a amenés dans votre organisation quotidienne... Sentez-vous libre de répondre comme vous l'entendez, de ne pas répondre ou d'interrompre l'entretien si vous le souhaitez, à tout moment. - Si vous êtes d'accord, l'entretien sera enregistré puis retranscrit, mais il sera anonymisé, c'est-à-dire que votre nom et celui d'autres personnes n'apparaîtront pas dans les retranscriptions et dans la recherche. - L'entretien sera uniquement utilisé dans le cadre de projets de recherche. Est-ce que cela vous convient ? - Est-ce que vous avez des questions concernant le déroulement de l'entretien ? 	
Traj. prof.	Position et emploi actuel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tout d'abord, pouvez-vous m'expliquer en quoi consiste votre travail pour la Ville de Lausanne ? - Dans quel service travaillez-vous ? Quelle direction ? - Quelle est votre fonction ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depuis quand ? - à ce poste là en particulier ? (Que faisiez-vous avant?) - A quel pourcentage travaillez-vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depuis quand ? Avez-vous toujours travaillé à ce pourcentage-là ?
	Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quelle formation avez-vous ? - degré d'études ? formations continues ? - Avez-vous eu d'autres employeurs avant celui-ci ? où avez-vous travaillé ?
Traj. Fam.	Sécurité emploi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Êtes-vous satisfait de votre emploi actuellement ? - Est-ce que votre travail est important pour vous, dans votre vie ? - Comment envisagez-vous votre avenir professionnel ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avez-vous des craintes ou êtes-vous plutôt confiant ?
	Projet d'enfant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vous avez combien d'enfants ? Quel âge a-t-il (ont-ils) ? Quand est-il né ? Comment s'appelle-t-il ? (sont-ils issus d'une première union ?) - Comment vous est venu le projet d'avoir un enfant (des enfants) ? Est-ce que vous pourriez me raconter ? - Depuis combien d'années êtes-vous avec votre femme/partenaire ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - êtes-vous mariés ? depuis quand ? Etait-ce important pour vous de vous marier ?
	Partenaire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que votre partenaire (femme) travaille ? Quelle est sa profession ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - à quel pourcentage travaille-t-elle ? - et avant la naissance de votre enfant ? - Comment s'est fait ce changement de pourcentage / ou le maintien de son activité ? En avez-vous discuté ? - Est-ce que son travail a une place importante dans sa vie ? - Combien de temps a duré son congé maternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a-t-elle pu bénéficier de mesures supplémentaire de son employeur, au-delà des 14 semaines de l'assurance maternité ?

1

Congé	Congé déroulement contexte prof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Et vous-même, vous avez pris un congé paternité, n'est-ce pas ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combien de jours avez-vous pris ? - A quel moment avez-vous pris votre congé ? Est-ce que vous l'avez pris en un bloc ou en plusieurs fois ? - (Est-ce que vous allez encore prendre des jours ?) - (Pour quelle raison n'utilisez-vous pas la totalité des 21 jours ?) - Etiez-vous au courant de l'existence de ce congé paternité ? de sa durée, des conditions d'utilisation etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment avez-vous appris l'existence de ce congé ? - Est-ce que l'information était disponible facilement ? - Comment ça s'est passé ? à qui vous êtes vous adressé ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avez-vous dû faire une demande formelle à votre supérieur ? - Quelle a été la réaction de votre supérieur ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vous êtes vous senti encouragé à prendre le congé ou pas ? - Quelle a été la réaction de vos collègues ? - D'autres collègues avaient-ils déjà utilisé le congé ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connaissez-vous quelqu'un qui l'avait demandé ? quelle position occupait-il ? dans quel service travaillait-il ? - Est-ce que vous avez pris un autre type de congé ? p.e.x. parental, ou alors des vacances supplémentaires non payées ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combien de temps ? Pourquoi ? - Est-ce que vous avez aussi pris sur vos vacances, ou alors rattrapé des heures supplémentaires, pour être plus longtemps auprès de votre enfant et de votre partenaire ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Combien de temps ? - (Et pour votre/vos autres enfants, comment ça s'est passé ?)
	Congé expérience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donc si j'ai bien compris, vous avez pris en tout ___ jours ? - Comment se sont passés ces quelques jours ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qu'avez-vous fait ? - Pouvez-vous me décrire une journée typique pendant votre congé ? - Comment est-ce que vous vous organisiez avec votre partenaire ? Qu'est-ce qu'elle faisait ? - Qui s'occupait principalement du nouveau-né ? - Est-ce que vous avez été en charge seul de votre enfant pendant votre congé paternité ? - Quel souvenir gardez-vous de votre congé ? - Est-ce que pour vous c'était important de prendre ce congé ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pourquoi ? - Est-ce que vous aviez parlé de la prise de ce congé avec votre partenaire ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment est-ce qu'elle avait réagi ? - Est-ce qu'elle vous a encouragé à le prendre ? - Est-ce que vous aviez parlé à votre entourage (parents, amis) de l'existence de ce congé ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment avaient-ils réagi ? - Est-ce que l'existence de congé a changé quelque chose pour vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vous pensez que vous auriez de toutes les façons passé ___ jours avec votre enfant si ce congé n'avait pas existé ?

2

	Congé attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Que pensez-vous de la durée du congé ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Etait-ce suffisant ? Quelle aurait été la durée idéale ? - Comment expliquez-vous que la Ville de Lausanne donne 21 jours de congé paternité, durée supérieure aux pratiques en Suisse? (<i>Montrer vignette Suisse</i>) - Que pensez-vous des congés parentaux tels qu'ils existent dans d'autres pays européens ? Je vais vous montrer quelques exemples ; le but est d'avoir quelques points de comparaison. <i>Montrer les vignettes France & Islande</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Que pensez-vous de la situation en Suisse ? Est-ce qu'elle vous convient (durée variable en fonction de l'employeur, pas de minimum...)? - Est-ce que ce serait souhaitable d'adopter en Suisse des congés comme il en existe ailleurs ? Quel modèle ? Pourquoi ? - Que pensez-vous de la différence de durée qui existe dans certains pays (la Suisse, la France) entre les congés pour les mères et les pères ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cette différence est-elle souhaitable ? Pourquoi ? - Quel congé est-ce que vous prendriez ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - De quelle durée ? et pour votre partenaire ? Pourquoi ? - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que les congés parentaux, c'est une thématique qui est débattue dans l'espace public ? qui est actuelle ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vous avez lu ou entendu des informations à ce sujet dans les médias ? Et sur le congé paternité de 21 jours adopté par la Municipalité ? - Etes-vous au courant des propositions politiques en Suisse en faveur de congés parentaux ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lesquelles ? Qu'en pensez-vous ? - Êtes-vous satisfait en général de la politique familiale en Suisse ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - D'après vous, est-ce que l'Etat devrait investir plus pour les familles ou est-ce aux familles de s'organiser individuellement ?
Paternité	Identité paternelle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment s'est passé pour vous cette transition à ce nouveau statut de « père » ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que c'était important pour vous d'avoir des enfants ? - Comment vous voyez-vous en tant que père ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment se passe votre relation avec votre enfant ? - Est-ce que cela correspond à l'idée que vous vous faisiez avant l'arrivée de votre enfant ? - Si vous comparez votre relation avec votre enfant et celle que vous aviez avec votre propre père quand vous étiez enfant, est-ce que c'est pareil, ou différent ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quel rôle a joué votre propre expérience avec vos parents dans la manière dont vous agissez avec votre enfant ? - Si vous vous comparez avec vos amis, connaissances qui sont aussi pères, que pensez-vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Etes-vous différent ? de quelle manière ? - Et si vous comparez votre rôle de parent avec celui de votre femme/partenaire, comment vous voyez-vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vos rôles sont différents ou pareils ? de quelle manière ? - Comment est-ce que vous avez l'impression que les autres personnes (famille, à la crèche, les amis etc.) vous considèrent en tant que parent, en comparaison de votre partenaire ? - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression qu'il existe une sorte de norme de paternité actuellement ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment la définiriez-vous ? D'où vient-elle ? - Ressentez-vous une pression à vous y conformer ? - Est-ce que vous pensez que la prise de congé paternité a joué un rôle dans le père que vous êtes actuellement ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que cette expérience à joué un rôle dans le type de parents que vous formez avec votre partenaire? - Pour revenir aux médias, il y a eu pas mal d'articles sur le sujet du congé paternité ces dernières années, souvent liée à la thématique des « nouveaux papas ». <i>Montrer la vignette</i>. Qu'est-ce que vous en pensez ? Est-ce que ça vous parle ? Vous trouvez ça bien ?

3

	Conciliation des rôles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que c'est facile de concilier votre rôle d'employé de la Ville de Lausanne et votre rôle de père ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Et pour votre partenaire ? - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que La Ville de Lausanne tient compte, de manière générale, de vos responsabilités parentales ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce important pour vous que votre employeur propose une politique de conciliation ? Vous y avez été attentif dans votre choix d'employeur ? - En général, avez l'impression que les parents employés à la ville arrivent à concilier de manière satisfaisante leur vie de famille et leur travail ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indépendamment de leur position ? du service dans lequel ils travaillent ? s'ils sont un homme ou une femmes ? - Est-ce que vous vous sentez libre d'adapter votre activité professionnelle aux imprévus familiaux qui peuvent survenir ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vous avez des exemples ? - Quels sont vos horaires de travail ? Est-ce que vous avez la possibilité d'aménager votre temps de travail ? Bénéficiez-vous de l'horaire flexible ? - Comment ça se passe lorsque votre enfant est malade ? - Pouvez-vous rentrer plus tôt lorsque vous avez un imprévu ? - Pouvez-vous refuser de faire des heures supplémentaires ? - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que c'est important, pour vos supérieurs que vous fassiez de longues heures de travail ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ou alors pouvez-vous organiser de manière flexible de votre travail, du moment que les résultats sont là ? - Avez-vous l'impression que c'est compatible de montrer que l'on s'implique dans sa famille et d'évoluer dans votre emploi, de faire une carrière ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - par exemple, prendre un long congé ou travailler à temps partiel, est-ce que cela serait possible pour vous ? - est-ce que cela aurait des conséquences sur votre carrière vous pensez ?
	Partage des tâches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - En ce qui concerne la prise en charge de votre enfant, comment vous organisez-vous ? - Comment se passe une journée typique, est-ce que vous pourriez me la décrire ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qui amène l'enfant à la crèche ? qui lui donne à manger ? qui le couche ? lui donne le bain ? qui l'amène chez le médecin ? - En ce qui concerne les tâches domestiques : nettoyage, lessive, cuisine et vaisselle, comment vous organisez-vous ? - Est-ce que vous avez de l'aide pour les tâches domestiques ? à quelle fréquence ? - Est-ce que la répartition des tâches avec votre partenaire a changé depuis la naissance de votre enfant ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comment vous organisez-vous avant sa venue ? - Est-ce que l'organisation actuelle que vous avez avec votre partenaire (répartition des tâches, taux d'emploi etc.) vous convient ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Et à votre partenaire aussi ? - Est-ce que vous avez parfois des conflits à ce sujet ? - Quelle organisation adopteriez-vous si vous n'aviez pas de contraintes financières ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - par exemple, est-ce que vous continueriez à travailler au même pourcentage ? - et votre partenaire ? que pensez-vous ? - A votre avis, quelle est l'organisation idéale dans un couple, en ce qui concerne le temps consacré au travail et le temps consacré à la famille ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - L'un des deux parents devrait-il consacrer plus de temps à la prise en charge de l'enfant et l'autre à son activité professionnelle ? - qui devrait faire quoi ? - Et qu'en pensez-vous votre partenaire, est-ce que vous en parlez ?
		<p>Voilà, nous avons fait le tour des questions. Est-ce que vous souhaiteriez encore ajouter quelque chose ?</p> <p>Je vous remercie beaucoup de votre participation. Nous avons presque terminé, j'ai encore deux documents à vous soumettre (<i>Demander de remplir le questionnaire & la fiche de consentement</i>).</p>

4

Appendix 30 - Interview grid with managers

Grille d'entretien – CADRES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bonjour, je vous remercie d'avoir accepté de me rencontrer. - Je suis doctorante en sciences sociales à l'Université de Lausanne, et je fais une recherche sur l'émergence des congés parentaux en Suisse et la conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille telle qu'elle est vécue par les pères en particulier. - Je m'intéresse aux employeurs qui ont adopté des mesures de conciliation qui dépassent le cadre minimal ou les pratiques les plus courantes. La Ville de Lausanne est un employeur intéressant, notamment du fait qu'elle a adopté un congé paternité de 21 jours. Je rencontre des cadres qui ont eu à gérer la prise de congé dans leur équipe et rencontre aussi des pères qui ont bénéficié de cette mesure. La ville de Lausanne soutient la recherche, mais je ne suis pas mandatée par elle, la recherche est menée de manière indépendante. - Ce qui m'intéresse c'est votre perception de la conciliation du travail et de la famille à la Ville de Lausanne ; votre expérience de la gestion des demandes de congé paternité dans votre équipe. - Sentez-vous libre de répondre comme vous l'entendez, de ne pas répondre ou d'interrompre l'entretien si vous le souhaitez, à tout moment. - L'entretien est confidentiel. Il est enregistré, puis lors de sa retranscription il sera anonymisé, c'est-à-dire que votre nom et celui d'autres personnes n'apparaîtront pas dans les retranscriptions et dans la recherche. L'entretien sera uniquement utilisé dans le cadre de projets de recherche. Est-ce que cela vous convient ? - Est-ce que vous avez des questions concernant le déroulement de l'entretien ?
Trajectoire prof. & familiale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tout d'abord, pouvez-vous m'expliquer en quoi consiste votre travail pour la Ville de Lausanne ? - Quelle est votre fonction ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Depuis quand ? - à ce poste là en particulier ? (Que faisiez-vous avant?) - Et où se situe le/la chef de service par rapport à vous ? - Combien de collaborateurs avez-vous dans votre équipe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quelle proportion d'homme et de femmes ? - travaillent-ils/elles tou-t-e-s à plein temps ? - Et vous-même à quel pourcentage travaillez-vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Avez-vous toujours travaillé à ce pourcentage-là ? - Quelle formation avez-vous ? - Avez-vous eu d'autres employeurs avant celui-ci ? où avez-vous travaillé ? - Avez-vous des enfants ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - combien ? quel âge ont-ils ? - êtes-vous marié ? - votre femme travaille-t-elle ? à quel pourcentage ?

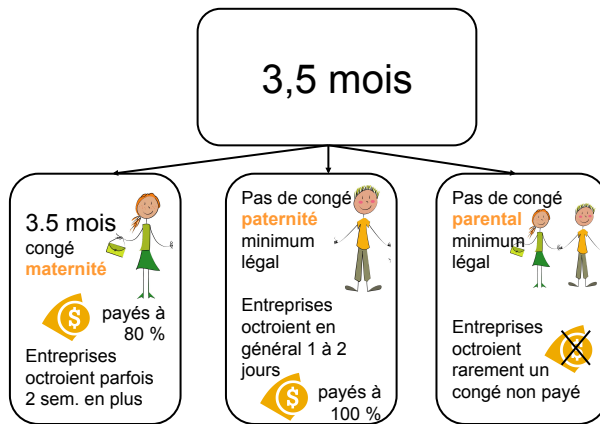
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Expérience de gestion du congé paternité	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Donc, un ou plusieurs de vos collaborateurs ont pris un congé paternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quand est-ce que c'était ? - Quelle durée a-t-il pris en tout ? Comment a-t-il pris le congé ? en un bloc ou en plusieurs fois ? - Est-ce que vous avez discuté au préalable de la manière dont il allait prendre son congé, ou est-ce qu'il avait déjà un plan en tête ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vous avez été prévenu longtemps à l'avance de l'utilisation du congé par votre collaborateur ? combien de temps ? - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que le collaborateur avait pesé les intérêts du service/de votre équipe dans la manière dont il a envisagé de prendre son congé ? - Est-ce que vous avez encouragé le collaborateur à prendre le congé paternité ? - Quelle incidence est-ce que l'absence de votre collaborateur a eu sur l'organisation de votre service/de votre équipe ? - Avez-vous dû le remplacer ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pouvez-vous / avez-vous sollicité des ressources pour le remplacer ? - D'autres personnes ont-elles dû faire plus de travail pendant un moment ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cela a-t-il créé des tensions au sein de l'équipe ? - Comment s'est passée cette période d'absence de votre collaborateur, de manière générale ? - Est-ce que cela aurait été possible qu'il prenne les 4 semaines en un bloc ? - Dans quelle mesure l'absence pour cause de congé paternité s'apparente-t-elle au congé maternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - l'absence en cas de congé maternité est-elle problématique dans votre service ? plus, moins ou autant que la prise du congé paternité ?
Attitude	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vous souvenez-vous de l'époque à laquelle le congé paternité a été introduit ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quelle a été votre réaction, qu'en avez-vous pensé ? - Est-ce que vous trouvez cette mesure utile ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pour l'employé ? pourquoi ? - pour l'employeur ? pourquoi ? - et autour de vous, quelle a été la réaction ? y a-t-il eu des réactions différentes parmi vos supérieurs ? - Comment la prise de congé paternité est-elle perçue au sein de la Ville de Lausanne/ de votre service ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce « normal » d'utiliser ces mesures lorsqu'on devient père ? - Est-il déjà arrivé qu'un de vos supérieurs prennent un congé paternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A quel niveau? pour combien de temps ? - A votre avis, pourquoi le Conseil communal a-t-il adopté cette mesure, qui va bien au-delà des pratiques des entreprises et des normes légales ? - Que pensez-vous de la durée du congé paternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - est-elle adaptée ? - nuit-elle à l'organisation et/ou la réalisation de la charge de travail ?
Comparaison modèles Congés parentaux	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Que pensez-vous du modèle de congés parentaux de la ville de Lausanne, en comparaison de la situation en Suisse et dans d'autres pays ? (<i>montrer les vignettes</i>). Il y a beaucoup de modèles différents, le but est d'avoir quelques points de comparaison par rapport à la Suisse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qu'en pensez-vous ? - A votre avis, est-ce envisageable d'instaurer en Suisse un congé similaire à celui de la Ville de Lausanne? - Et les autres modèles ? - Que trouvez-vous le plus adapté ? - Que pensez-vous de la différence de durée entre le congé maternité et le congé paternité, comme elle existe en Suisse, ou en France par exemple ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pensez-vous que cette différence soit normale ? pourquoi ? - Que pensez-vous du système islandais, où la durée de congé est égale pour le père et la mère ?

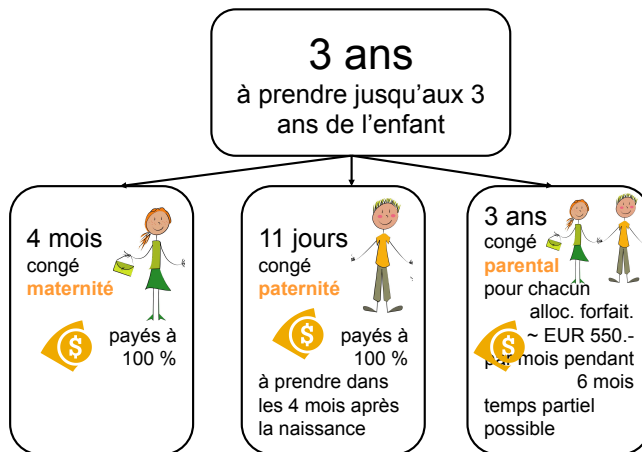
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Actualité	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que vous avez l'impression que les congés parentaux, c'est une thématique qui est débattue dans l'espace public ? qui est actuelle ? - Est-ce que vous avez lu ou entendu des informations à ce sujet dans les médias ? Et sur le congé paternité de 21 jours adopté par la Municipalité ? - Lorsque les médias se sont intéressés aux congés parentaux, le lien a souvent été fait avec la thématique des « nouveaux pères ». (<i>montrer vignette</i>) Qu'en pensez-vous ?
Types mesures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Etes-vous au courant des propositions politiques en Suisse en faveur de congés parentaux ? Lesquelles ? Qu'en pensez-vous ? - Connaissez-vous les autres types de congés qui existent à la Ville de Lausanne ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - le congé maternité - le congé parental ? - le congé pour enfant malade ? - les vacances supplémentaires non payées - Pensez-vous que les employé-e-s soient tou-t-e-s au courant de ces mesures ? - Bénéficiez-vous des mesures d'aménagement du temps de travail dans votre service ?
Conciliation Mesures formelles et informelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A votre avis, est-ce important pour la Ville de Lausanne, d'aider tous les employés à concilier l'activité professionnelle et les tâches familiales ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - indépendamment de la position hiérarchique ? et du service ? - De manière générale, comment pensez-vous que sont considérés dans l'entreprise les pères qui souhaitent s'investir dans la prise en charge de leurs enfants ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Par exemple, le fait de prendre un congé paternité et/ou parental, peut-il être considéré comme un désengagement du travail ? - A votre avis, les charges familiales jouent-elles en défaveur de la carrière ? - A votre avis, les charges familiales jouent-elles en défaveur du travail fourni par les employés ? - Comment est considéré le temps partiel ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce courant que les hommes occupent des postes à temps partiel ? pour quelle raison à votre avis ? - Et au sein de votre équipe, comment se passe la conciliation du travail et de la famille ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - avez-vous des exemples où s'est arrivé que des collaborateurs doivent s'absenter pour des raisons familiales ? - est-ce que cela arrive souvent ? - est-ce qu'ils s'absentent souvent pour amener leur enfant chez le médecin ? prennent-ils souvent le congé en cas d'enfant malade ? - Est-ce que votre propre situation familiale influence votre vision de la conciliation du travail et de la famille ? - Echangez-vous, entre collègues, à propos de votre vie familiale, de vos soucis etc. ?
Culture d'entreprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que toutes ces mesures de congés parentaux et de conciliation adoptées par la Ville de Lausanne sont compatibles selon vous avec les objectifs d'efficacité, de productivité ? - Dans votre service, cela pose problème ? - Par exemple, est-ce que la prise de congé paternité est compatible selon vous avec des postes à hautes responsabilités ? - et la prise de congé parental (durée prolongée) ? - En terme d'évaluation du travail de vos collaborateurs et des fonctionnaires en général, est-ce que les heures de présence sont importantes, ou est-ce que cela se fait plutôt sur les résultats, les tâches effectuées ? - Par rapport à d'autres entreprises, les objectifs qui sont fixés aux employés sont-ils orientés plus vers le long terme ou le court/moyen terme ? - Quel type de travail est encouragé ? plutôt en équipe ou individuel ?
<p>Voilà, nous avons abordé toutes les questions. Est-ce que vous aimeriez encore ajouter quelque chose ?</p> <p>Je vous remercie beaucoup !</p> <p><i>Donner la fiche de consentement à signer.</i></p>	

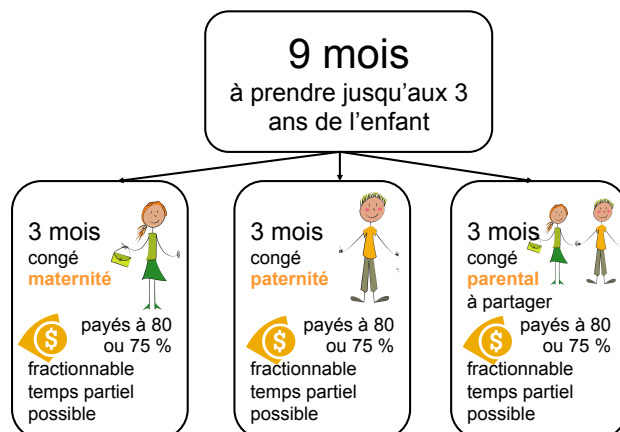
SUISSE



FRANCE



ISLANDE



MARDI 26 JANVIER 2010
TRIBUNE DE GENÈVE

Genève **Société**

Comme Darius, les pères langent bébé

A l'instar du présentateur de la TSR, les nouveaux papas s'enorgueillissent de pouponner. Les initiatives pro-congé paternel se multiplient.

AD LITA GENOUD

Darius Rochebin se défend d'être affligé du syndrome Rachida Dati. Pathologie ministérielle hexagonale qui consiste à reprendre ses activités professionnelles cinq jours après avoir donné la vie. En clair, il n'a pas déserté la salle d'accouchement pour présenter le téléjournal. «Je n'aurais pour rien au monde manqué cet instant exceptionnel», dit-il. Et puis, pour rappel, le week-end, le journaliste n'est pas de piquet télévisuel. Ainsi a-t-il participé activement aux joies de l'accouchement. Brèves puisque la petite Maia est venue au monde en trois heures vingt chrono.

Premiers regards

Darius Rochebin, père comblé, s'aligne sur la nouvelle génération paternelle. «Hier, j'ai appris à langer mon enfant et ce premier vrai contact m'a profondément ému. Nous avons d'ailleurs échangé notre premier regard, ce qui était particulièrement troublant», explique-t-il. Ensuite? Il a bien l'intention de marquer une pause. Les employés de la Télévision suisse romande bénéficient d'un congé de dix jours. «Que je prendrai sans doute en deux temps», confie-t-il encore. La star romande du tube cathodique n'a pas tiré d'autres plans sur la comète éducative. «La répartition des soins et des rôles entre ma compagne et moi-même se fera naturellement.» Même s'il se refuse à jouer les donneurs de leçons, Darius Rochebin penche du côté des pères actifs.

Autrement dit les nouveaux papas. Un mouvement né au

«Hier, j'ai appris à langer mon enfant, ce premier vrai contact m'a profondément ému»

DARIUS ROCHEBIN

ses fruits. Certes, l'économie privée avait anticipé le mouvement de fond en élargissant le congé octroyé aux pères. Ainsi,



Sance peluches. Darius Rochebin a fait le plein de cadeaux avant même la naissance de sa fille. (YVAIN GENEVA)

tournant des années 85. Jusque-là confinés aux tâches punitives, les initiés réclamaient légitimement le droit de participer à l'éducation et à l'épanouissement de leur progéniture. Près de vingt-cinq ans plus tard, ils revendiquent une extension du congé paternité. Cette tendance, dont l'accouchement fut long et difficile, commence à peine à porter ses fruits. Certes, l'économie privée avait anticipé le mouvement de fond en élargissant le congé octroyé aux pères. Ainsi,

Romandie Energie, Migros et les CFF proposent entre cinq et dix jours aux nouveaux pères de famille. Le secteur public, longtemps resté à la traîne (à de rares exceptions), s'agit à son tour sous la pression des lobbies pro-congé paternité. Par exemple, depuis le 1er janvier 2008, les employés de l'administration fédérale bénéficient de cinq jours (au lieu de deux). Une innovation portée par la ministre de l'Economie, Doris Leuthard, et applicable après la modification de la loi sur le personnel. Congé que les pères doivent prendre dans les six mois qui suivent la naissance de l'enfant et qui peuvent être assortis (selon conditions personnelles) d'une pause sabbatique.

La Municipalité de Lausanne et la Cité de Calvin planchent, elles, sur un projet qui allongerait le congé paternité de leurs collaborateurs de cinq à vingt jours. Tandis que le canton de Genève offre déjà deux semaines. Il n'empêche que ce droit accordé aux hommes a ses détracteurs. Lesquels objectent que le congé paternité doit être pris sur les vacances. A l'automne dernier, quatre conseillers nationaux romands avaient déposé une motion pour remplacer en cas de naissance les cours militaires de répétition par un congé paternité rémunéré. Du bricolage? Le droit suisse ne règle aujourd'hui que le congé maternité, pas les prérogatives des hommes. Dans la

pratique, le temps accordé aux pères dépend de la volonté de l'employeur.

Le retard helvétique

Or donc, la Suisse, qui multiplie les initiatives pour améliorer le sort des nouveaux pères est encore largement en queue du train européen. Ainsi, sa voisine allemande, qui mène une politique familiale proactive, octroie-t-elle quatorze mois de congé payé à répartir entre les deux parents avec un minimum de deux mois pour le papa. L'Espagne et la Finlande offrent trois semaines. La France et la Grande-Bretagne deux semaines.

L'Helvétie n'a encore accouché que d'une souris.

Appendix 33 - Overview of fathers interviewed

Interviewee and his partner	Interview code	Union type	Number of children (and age)	Department	Education and occupational activity	Activity rate of interviewee (before last birth)	Education and occupational activity of the partner	Activity rate of the partner (before last birth)	Couple occupational organisation	Household income (dependency of partner)	Paternity leave uptake pattern
Antoine (37) and Leila (35)	EP_18	Married	2 (6 years and 18 months)	Security & Sports	Secondary degree, policeman	100%	Secondary degree, policewoman	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Bloc use
Daniel (27) and Sandra (31)	EP_10	Married	1 (14 months)	Public Works	Secondary degree, technician in civil engineering	100%	Secondary degree, assistant	70% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Elias (35) and Britta (35)	EP_09	Married	2 (2 years and 5 months)	Industrial	Secondary degree, power station worker	100%	Primary degree, stay-at-home mother (saleswoman)	- (100%)	Male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Bloc use
Fabrice (33) and Mary (34)	EP_07	Cohabiting	1 (1,5 year)	Industrial	Tertiary degree, project manager	100%	Secondary degree, teacher	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Felix (37) and Tess (36)	EP_19	Married	1 (15 months)	Youth & Social Services	Tertiary degree, archivist	50% + 50%	Tertiary degree (unrecognized dipl.), on insurance (office clerk)	- (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Bloc use
Florent (34) and Nadia (31)	EP_14	Cohabiting	1 (6 months)	Youth & Social Services	Tertiary, vocational counselor	80% (100%)	Tertiary degree, teacher	80% (100%)	Egalitarian	Average (no)	Bloc use
Gabriel (30) and Nina (32)	EP_15	Married	2 (5 years and 11 months)	Public Works	Tertiary degree, foreman	100%	Secondary degree, secretary	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Jacques (42) and Natacha (42)	EP_02	Cohabiting	1 (8 months)	Public Works	Tertiary degree, project manager	80% (100%)	Secondary degree, assistant direction	70% (80%)	Egalitarian	Wealthy (no)	Joker days use
Jérémy (39) and Eileen (35)	EP_13	Married	2 (2,5 years and 2 months)	Industrial	Tertiary degree, unit manager	100%	Secondary degree, decorator	40% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Joker days use
Jules (35) and Béa (34)	EP_11	Cohabiting	1 (21 months) + pregnancy	Youth & Social Services	Tertiary degree, social worker	60% (80%)	Tertiary degree, pharmacist	60% (80%)	Egalitarian	Low (no)	Joker days use
Justin (32) and Pauline (35)	EP_16	Married	2 (4 years and 20 months) + 1 from the partner (16 years)	Industrial	Secondary degree, electrician	100%	Secondary degree, unemployment insurance (waitress)	60% (80%, 100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Kraig (35) and Sally (31)	EP_08	Married	1 (14 months)	Security & sports	Tertiary degree, sports facility manager	100%	Tertiary degree, unemployment insurance (PhD candidate)	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Joker days use
Louis (36) and Viviane (33)	EP_20	Married	2 (4 years and 14 months)	Youth & Social Services	Secondary degree, vocational trainer	100%	Secondary degree, secretary	50% - will soon reduce to 40% (60%, 100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Martin (44) and Celia (41)	EP_21	Married	1 (20 months)	Security & Sports	Secondary degree, policeman	80% (100%)	Tertiary degree, assistant direction	70% - will soon reduce to 35% (100%)	Egalitarian (will soon become modified male breadwinner)	Wealthy (no)	Joker days use
Oscar (36) and Fiona (33)	EP_22	Cohabiting (unofficially)	1 (18 months), + pregnancy, + 2 of the partner (6 and 8 years)	Security & Sports	Secondary degree, Cook	100%	Secondary degree, independent farm food producer	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Joker days use
Paul (42) and Linda (43)	EP_01	Married	1 (1 year)	Public Works	Secondary degree, technician in civil engineering	80% (100%)	Tertiary degree, biologist	80% (100%)	Egalitarian	Wealthy (no)	Joker days use
Pitt (34) and Anna (33)	EP_12	Married	2 (4 and 1,5 years)	Administration	Tertiary degree, statistician	100%	Tertiary degree, architect	50% (60%, 100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Joker days use
Renzo (36) and Stella (34)	EP_04	Cohabiting	2 (twins, 4 months)	Industrial	Tertiary, administrative assistant	100%	Tertiary, independent language therapist	Unpaid parental leave of 1 year - will return to 40% (60-70%)	Male breadwinner (soon modified male breadwinner)	Average (yes)	Joker days use
Rick (41) and Mona (42)	EP_06	Married	3 (9, 6, 21 months)	Industrial	Primary degree, collection agent	100%	Primary degree, stay-at-home mother (banking sector clerk)	- (50%, 80%, 100%)	Male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Scattered weeks use
Samuel (40) and Barbara (38)	EP_05	Married	3 (4,5, 2,5 and 1 year)	Administration	Secondary degree, IT manager	100%	Secondary degree, stay-at-home mother (cook & saleswoman)	- (40%, 50%, 100%)	Male breadwinner	Average (yes)	Joker days use
Stan (35) and Olivia (34)	EP_03	Married	2 (3,5 and 1 year)	Security & Sports	Secondary, policeman	100%	Secondary, assistant veterinary	20% (30%, 100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Low (yes)	Bloc use
Sylvain (41) and Joana (36)	EP_17	Married	3 (7, 5 and 1 year)	Public Works	Tertiary degree, plant manager	100%	Secondary degree, nurse	50% (100%)	Modified male breadwinner	Wealthy (yes)	Scattered weeks use

Note: All names are pseudonyms.

Appendix 34 - Overview of managers interviewed

Name	Interview code	Department	Function	Education degree	Seniority (current position)	Number of employees	Team composition	Position with regard to the head of section	Number of leave uptake cases	Family situation	Estimated age range
André	EC_01	Public Works	Head of division, full time	tertiary degree (civil engineering)	16 years (12)	60	mainly male, full-time	n+1	1	married, 2 children (12 and 14)	40-50 years old
Albert	EC_02	Industrial	Head of division, full time	secondary degree (apprenticeship as commercial employee)	7 years (2,5)	14	mainly male, full-time (one female employee at 80%)	n+2	1 (2010)	cohabitation with partner, no children	30-40 years old
Alfred	EC_03	Youth & Social Services	Head of unit, full-time	secondary degree (apprenticeship as commercial employee)	15 years (3)	15	2/3 of men, mainly full-time (female employees work part-time)	n+2	1 (2012)	married, 1 child (12)	40-50 years old
Boris	EC_04	Security & Sports	Head of unit, full-time	secondary degree (apprenticeship as policeman)	34 years	15	mainly male, full-time	n+2	2 (2010)	re-married, one adult child from 1st marriage	50-60 years old
Etienne	EC_05	Culture & Housing	Head of division, full time	tertiary degree	10 years (3)	5	4 men, 1 woman, full-time	n+2	1 (2012)	cohabitation with partner, no children	40-50 years old
Sophie	EC_06	Industrial	Head of division, 80%	secondary degree (apprenticeship as commercial employee)	10 years (4)	25	60% women (part-time) and 40% men (full-time)	n+1	2 (2011)	divorced, cohabitation with partner, 2 adolescent children	35-45 years old
Yvan	EC_07	Security & Sports	Deputy head of section, full-time	n.a.	23 years (7)	100	mainly male, full-time	n+1	3 or 4	married, 3 grown-up children	45-55 years old
Alexis	EC_08	Security & Sports	Head of unit, full-time	secondary degrees (apprenticeships as policeman, glazier and climate controlling)	25 years (8)	17	mainly male, full-time	n+1	1 (2011)	married, two children (5 and 8)	40-50 years old
Veronique	EC_09	Municipality	Gender equality and quality of life at work officer, 80%	tertiary degree, social and political science	10 years (10)						n.a.

Note: All names are pseudonyms.

Appendix 35 - Interview grid with the Gender Equality Officer of the City of Lausanne



Grille d'entretien – Déléguée à l'égalité de la Ville de Lausanne

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le but de l'entretien est d'aborder différents éléments liés à la politique du personnel et à la conciliation de l'emploi et de la vie familiale tels qu'ils se font à la ville de Lausanne, notamment les mesures de congés parentaux et leur utilisation pour les pères en particulier. - Si vous êtes d'accord, l'entretien sera enregistré puis retranscrit. - L'entretien sera uniquement utilisé dans le cadre de projets de recherche. - Voulez-vous qu'il soit anonymisé ou êtes-vous d'accord que votre nom apparaisse dans la retranscription et dans la thèse ? NB : la fonction vous identifie automatiquement puisqu'il n'y a qu'une déléguée à l'égalité... - Est-ce que vous avez des questions concernant le déroulement de l'entretien ? il faut compter environ une heure... 	
Adoption du congé paternité et parental	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Il existe un grand nombre de congés à la Ville de Lausanne : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Congé paternité payé de 21 jours ; congé parental de un an (non payé) ; congé maternité de (4 mois + 1 mois en cas d'allaitement) ; congé d'adoption (4 mois payé) ; congé pour enfants malades (10 jours, par maladie ou par année ?) ; semaines de vacances supplémentaires non payées (toujours d'actualité ?) - L'accès à ces mesures est-il soumis à des conditions spéciales ? p.ex. position dans l'entreprise ou ancienneté ? - Que pensez-vous de tous ces congés ? Qu'est-ce qu'ils apportent ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pour les employés ? - Flexibilité, conciliation, égalité... Les congés influencent-ils la manière dont les pères s'investissent dans leur vie familiale ? - Pour l'entreprise ? - Motivation, fidélité, attractivité, image ? Est-ce que vous êtes au courant de retombées dans la presse, par exemple ? - Comment est-ce que la durée des congés a été fixée ? (congé paternité et congé parental) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ces durées vous semblent-elles satisfaisantes/suffisantes ? - Que pensez-vous de leur rémunération ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le congé parental non payé ? - Est-ce que vous pensez que la durée des congés va changer dans le futur ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quel congé ? Vers une augmentation ou diminution ? Pourquoi ? - Quelle procédure les employé-e-s doivent-ils suivre pour pouvoir bénéficier des congés ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Délai pour déposer les demandes ? à qui est déposée la demande ? - Quels sont les critères pour l'acceptation ou le rejet ? - Est-ce que le moment de la prise des congés peut faire l'objet de discussions ? - Avez-vous eu à traiter des cas litigieux ? Pour quels types de congés ? - Comment est-ce que ça se passe lorsqu'un employé va devenir parent ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Des entretiens sont-ils prévus avec les RH ? les supérieurs directs ? - Pour les femmes et les hommes ? - Qu'est-ce qui est discuté ? - Est-ce qu'en général la prise de congés nécessite l'engagement de remplaçant-e-s ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dans quels cas ? Quels congés ? - Pensez-vous que les cadres qui gèrent le travail des collaborateurs et collaboratrices demandent systématiquement à ce que la personne en congé soit remplacée ?

1

Utilisations et perceptions du congé	Promotion et communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment se fait l'information aux employés par rapport à tous ces congés ? - A chaque fois que des mesures ont été adoptées ou modifiées, une information a-t-elle été diffusée à tous les employés ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Diffusion de l'information à tous les employés ? Sous quelle forme (newsletter, courrier, brochure, e-mail) ? - Diffusion uniquement adressée aux futurs parents (annoncés) ? - Information uniquement sur demande (auprès des RH ? De la déléguée à l'égalité et la qualité de vie au travail) ? - Quelles ont été les réactions suite à l'introduction de ces mesures ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le congé paternité de 21 jours en particulier (puisque c'est récent) ? - Pensez-vous que les employé-e-s soient tou-t-e-s au courant des différents types de congés ? - Existe-t-il des mesures qui visent à inciter les pères à utiliser les congés paternité et parentaux ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Si oui, lesquelles ?
	Raisons et motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment est-ce que vous expliquez que la Ville de Lausanne ait introduit toutes ces différentes mesures, qui sont plus généreuses que celles pratiquées dans d'autres administrations publiques ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pour quelle raison la Ville de Lausanne semble-t-elle progressiste en matière de conciliation ? - La motion d'Elisabeth Wermelinger était intitulée « La Ville de Lausanne montre l'exemple !... », y-a-t-il à votre avis l'ambition de « montrer l'exemple » ? A qui ? Pourquoi ? - Pensez-vous que les pratiques des employeurs publics influencent celles du privé ? - Y-a-t-il une volonté d'influencer la législation fédérale ? les mesures de congés pour toute la population active ? - Comment s'est passé le processus qui a mené à l'adoption de l'extension du congé paternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Par rapport à d'autres questions liées au conditions d'emploi du personnel de la ville, le processus a-t-il été plutôt facile ou difficile ? - Quel a été votre rôle dans ce processus ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Le congé paternité représentait-il un objectif pour vous en tant que déléguée ? Y-a-t-il eu concertation avec E. Wermelinger en amont du dépôt de la motion ? - Comment se sont passés les débats au conseil communal ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quelles étaient les résistances (acteurs, arguments) ? Comment les expliquez-vous ? - Quels ont été selon vous les facteurs qui ont fait que cette motion a abouti ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quels ont été les acteurs importants ? les arguments forts ? - Est-ce que les pratiques d'autres administrations ou d'autres contextes nationaux ont joué un rôle dans la mise à l'agenda du congé paternité étendu ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ou les demandes de la part d'employé-e-s ? la publication de résultats d'études ?
Utilisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Les statistiques de l'utilisation du congé paternité de 2005 à 2008 montraient que les employés n'utilisaient pas la totalité des 6 jours auxquels ils avaient droit (moyenne de 5.4 jours). Comment expliquez-vous cela ? - Est-ce que vous connaissez la tendance depuis 2009 ? - Et depuis l'introduction des 21 jours ? (demander les nouvelles statistiques) - Quelle utilisation du congé parental constatez-vous ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Durée moyenne du congé sollicité ? - Employés femmes et hommes ? - Pourquoi ? - Est-ce qu'à votre avis, les pères utilisent, en plus du congé paternité, une partie de leurs vacances pour rallonger la période ? ou alors est-ce qu'ils compensent des heures supplémentaires effectuées ? En tout, combien de temps pensez-vous qu'ils prennent à la naissance de leur enfant ? 	

2

	Perceptions des congés	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment la prise de congé paternité est-elle perçue au sein de l'administration ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce « normal » d'utiliser ces mesures lorsqu'on devient père ? - Et qu'en est-il du congé parental ? Est-ce que il est perçu de la même manière ? Pourquoi ? - Est-il déjà arrivé que des cadres de l'entreprise prennent un congé paternité ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A quel niveau de l'entreprise ? pour combien de temps ? Avez-vous un exemple ? - Et un congé parental ? Pourquoi à votre avis ? - Est-ce que cela dépend de la fonction et de la responsabilité occupée ? - En général, comment est-ce que les supérieurs hiérarchiques réagissent à la prise du congé paternité par un de leur collaborateur ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cela pose-t-il problème pour l'organisation ? - Pensez-vous que la prise de congé par les pères soit jugée comme plus problématique que l'absence des femmes en congé maternité ? - Et quelle est la réaction pour un congé parental ? - Est-ce que vous pensez que les employés sont encouragés ou découragés d'utiliser ces congés ? Les femmes et les hommes de la même manière ?
Autres politiques de conciliation travail/famille	Mesures formelles et informelles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - En ce qui concerne la politique de conciliation plus globale de la Ville de Lausanne, j'en ai pris connaissance grâce au document « 20 ans de politique d'égalité ». De manière générale, c'est important de communiquer, de rendre visible les mesures qui ont été adoptées en faveur de l'égalité et leur évolution ? Pourquoi ? - Comment décrivez-vous votre rôle, en tant que déléguée à l'égalité et à la qualité de la vie au travail ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment se fait-il que la dimension « qualité de vie au travail » s'est ajoutée à celle d'égalité (en 2002) ? - Comment décrivez-vous les conditions de travail et les possibilités de conciliation qu'offre la ville de Lausanne ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Par rapport à d'autres employeurs (et au secteur privé), comment situez-vous la politique ? Pourquoi ? - Comment est-ce que votre vision de la conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille a évolué en fonction de votre situation personnelle ? - Parmi les mesures de conciliation, j'ai relevé notamment - en plus des congés parentaux : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - « Système d'aménagement du temps de travail » : Comment ça marche ? est-ce que c'est disponible pour tous les employés ? - Crèches d'entreprises (44 places) et 2 places d'accueil d'urgence - Réduction du taux de travail ? est-ce un droit ?
	Statut des pères dans l'entreprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A votre avis, dans quelle mesure est-ce facile ou difficile pour les employés de concilier emploi et famille ? - Est-ce que les mesures de conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille sont adressées aux mères comme aux pères ? - Est-ce qu'il y a une réflexion ou une décision qui a eu lieu afin d'aider les hommes en particulier à combiner leur travail et leurs tâches familiales ? - D'après votre expérience, les employés qui sont pères utilisent-ils les mesures de conciliation de l'emploi et de la famille autant que les mères ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment sont considérées à votre avis les demandes qui proviennent d'hommes ? par rapport aux demandes qui proviennent des femmes ? est-ce qu'elles sont aussi légitimes ? - De manière générale, comment pensez-vous que sont considérés dans l'entreprise les pères qui souhaitent s'investir dans la prise en charge de leurs enfants ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Par exemple, le fait de prendre un congé paternité et/ou parental peut-il être considéré comme un désengagement par les supérieurs ou les collègues ? - A votre avis, les charges familiales jouent-elles en défaveur de la carrière? Est-ce que c'est valable autant pour les hommes que pour les femmes ? - D'après vous, est-ce plutôt facile ou plutôt difficile pour les employés masculins qui ont des enfants, de rester à la maison s'occuper de leur enfant en cas de maladie ou d'éviter de faire des heures supplémentaires ? - Comment est considéré le temps partiel ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce courant que les hommes occupent des postes à temps partiel ? pour quelle raison à votre avis ?

3

Positionnement modèle Suisse	Culture d'entreprise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Est-ce que toutes ces mesures de congés parentaux et de conciliation adoptées par la Ville de Lausanne sont compatibles selon vous avec les objectifs d'efficacité, de productivité ? - Par exemple, est-ce que la prise de congé paternité est compatible selon vous avec des postes à hautes responsabilités ? - et la prise de congé parental (durée prolongée) ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sur quels critères se base l'évaluation du travail des employés ? p.ex. en fonction des résultats, en fonction des heures de présence effectuées ? - Toujours par rapport à d'autres employeurs, les objectifs qui sont fixés aux employés sont-ils orientés plus vers le long terme ou le court/moyen terme ? - Quel type de travail est encouragé ? plutôt en équipe ou individuel ?
	Comparaison autres modèles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - J'aimerais maintenant avoir votre avis sur les congés parentaux tels qu'ils existent dans d'autres pays. Il y a beaucoup de modèles différents, je vais vous montrer quelques exemples (ex. France et Islande) ; le but est d'avoir quelques points de comparaison par rapport à la Suisse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Qu'en pensez-vous ? - Est-ce une solution envisageable d'instaurer en Suisse des congés similaires ? Pourquoi ? - Que pensez-vous de la différence de durée entre le congé maternité et le congé paternité, comme elle existe en Suisse, ou en France par exemple ? - Pensez-vous que cette différence soit normale ? pourquoi ? - Que pensez-vous du système islandais, où la durée de congé est égale pour le père et la mère ? - Que pensez-vous du fait que le congé maternité en Suisse n'est pas flexible ? (il ne peut pas être pris à temps partiel par exemple ou en différents blocs, contrairement au congé parental ou paternité quand ils existent). - Est-ce que la solution de l'assurance sociale vous semble une solution pour la Suisse à terme, ou les mesures adoptées ou négociées au niveau des entreprises ou des branches d'activité sont satisfaisantes ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Etes-vous au courant des propositions de parlementaires récentes en faveur de congés parentaux ? Lesquelles ? Qu'en pensez-vous ? - p.e.x. congé parental dans le régime des Allocations pour pertes de gains ; congé paternité non payé (CO), assurance privée (type 3^e pilier)?
	Rôle de l'Etat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Que pensez-vous du système Suisse où ce sont les entreprises (privées et publiques) qui introduisent les congés parentaux, alors que dans les autres pays, ce sont en général les gouvernements qui les ont introduits ? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - En Suisse, l'Etat laisse une large marge de manœuvre aux partenaires sociaux pour qu'ils règlent entre eux certains aspects de la réglementation du travail ? Qu'en pensez-vous ? - que pensez-vous du fait que pas tous les individus puissent bénéficier des mesures de congés parentaux ?
<p>Voilà, nous avons abordé toutes les questions. Est-ce que vous aimeriez encore ajouter quelque chose ?</p> <p>Je vous remercie beaucoup !</p> <p><i>Demander les informations statistiques et données supplémentaires</i></p>		

4

Appendix 36 - Example of interview summary

EP_06_Rick_F

Date of interview: 08.03.2012
Length of interview: 1h27

Place of interview: Lausanne, Vidy
Interviewer: Isabel Valarino

Age: 41 (Rick) and 42 (Mona)
Origin: French-speaking Switzerland

Civil status: married
Place of residence: rural
Birth: June 2010 (21 months; 9; 6 years)

Number of children: 3

Formation: primary

Job: collection agent

Activity: 100%

Department: Industrial Services (for 21 years)

Job partner: homemaker (banking sector employee)

Education partner: primary

Employer partner: (large company)

Activity partner: (100%, 80%, 50%)

Income interviewee: CHF 7,001-8,500 (class 15)

Income partner: -

Occupational trajectory of the respondent

Rick has worked for 21 years for the City of Lausanne in the Industrial services, and for 19 years as a collection agent. He was trained and worked several years after obligatory school as a postman and started in this job at the City of Lausanne. The change to work as a collection agent meant an upward move, in particular in terms of salary. There is currently a reorganization of his department which will probably allow a promotion. Rick is also very active at the municipality level in his town where he holds a political representative function.

Couple history and child project

Rick and Mona, married, had conception difficulties. Three years after the marriage, they consulted doctors and after four years of unsuccessful treatments, they finally had their first child (Oriane, nine years), then a second one three years later (Marco, 6 years) and a third one in June 2010 (Keny, almost two years old). Before the first pregnancy they had also started an adoption procedure which they interrupted.

Occupational trajectory of the partner

Mona has a qualification as a saleswoman and worked 20 years in the banking sector. She recently worked for several months in public administration at 40%, but abandoned this activity because of organizational problems for childcare. Rick thinks that in a few years they will certainly consider her working again, maybe at the municipality where there might be interesting opportunities. Childcare costs are described as the main obstacle to Mona's wage work activity.

Changes in work arrangements since the transition to parenthood

Mona was working full-time and after she moved in together with Rick, she reduced to 80% "so that she had a day for doing domestic chores, for her or for other activities... We never asked ourselves why she did it and not me"... After the birth of the first child she reduced to 50% and kept this activity rate with the birth of the second child. She quit when the third child was born. Rick never considered reducing his activity rate; he explains that by the fact that "she wanted to be with her children... to be a present mother..." and that he could benefit from good working conditions and a family-friendly employer. However, Rick explains that Mona is not the "homemaker" type, that she would like to work and is not satisfied with her current life (this worries him, she has already had two depressions). The main obstacle to her work is the costs of childcare and the salary she could expect on the market, which is lower than his. Rick argues that he would stay at home and take care of the children if Mona could bring in the same amount of money.

Use and effects of paternity leave

Rick benefited from the six-day leave regime for the first two births. Rick took time off (vacation or extra hours) for the delivery and then took the paternity leave week off when the mother and child were back home (after hospital time). When Keny was born, Rick repeated the same pattern (one week when mother and child were back home), went back to work approx. ten days and then took three weeks of vacation (she was the whole month of July at home). He then took one week in September, one week in October and the rest of paternity leave days around the Christmas break. Rick first describes his use of the 21 day

paternity leave as having mainly been devoted to the two elder children (going outdoors, at the pool, etc.) because it was during summer vacation. Then when asked, he argues that he and his wife were taking care of the new baby 50-50 during his leave. Rick was in charge of bottle feeding Mona (could not breastfeed) at nights for the three children until they went through the whole night (after one month already, not so fast for Keny, the last).

Status of fatherhood in the work environment

Rick enjoys his working schedule, it is possible for him to take some time off work in case of emergency. He is independent with his work and can organize himself with colleagues in case he need to be replaced. Rick considers that he is doing quality work and keeping deadlines and that no criticisms could be made by his superiors.

Representations of fatherhood

Rick could not have envisaged not taking paternity leave, because he and his wife wanted so badly to have children. He describes how important it was for him to be there the birth of his children, holding and feeding the baby... Being a father of three children—as a social status—gives Rick a lot of joy and pride. Rick describes himself as a “papa poule”, he doesn’t need to be authoritarian with his children (overall they obey but also, as all children, do stupid things and disobey). Rick acknowledges that Mona has to do more of the educational work because she looks after them the whole day and that he can enjoy having a nicer role. Rick did not want to reproduce his own father’s fathering style, he was very shy showing his emotions. For example, he never told Rick he loved him and he in contrast tells his own children every night. Rick is comfortable and happy with the father he is, there is no other model to follow. He finds an interest in small children as in elder ones, contrary to many persons he knows. Rick mentions that he would like to offer more (material and financial inputs) to his family but this doesn’t affect the representation he has of himself as a father.

Representations of gender relations

Rick mentions that times have changed and that men can well be involved with their children and that women can pursue their work. Rick tells an anecdote where normative gender relations were expressed: he was accused of being governed by his wife by his colleagues from choir. He explains that with his professional, political (he is a municipal councilor) and family (he wants to spend time with his children) obligations, he had to take a break from the choir. Rick also mentions that if his wife had an activity paid at a similar or higher rate, he would be happy to stay at home with the children; he is concerned with his wife not being satisfied with her current life (at home).

Childcare arrangements

Mona is full-time in charge of the three children as she is at home. When she was working at 50% with her two first children, she could benefit from the daycare structure of her employer and they also employed a nanny. The fact that Rick and Mona don’t have parents living nearby, nor close childcare structures because they live in the countryside and only have one car is given as a major problem for the family organization and has influenced the fact that Helen gave up her 40% job. Rick explains that “it’s not that I didn’t want to be involved but in doing so I was losing time in my activity” so that he was no longer able to save up extra hours to spend with his children.

Division of domestic and childcare tasks

Rick mainly does the cooking at home in the evenings and at weekends and does the cleaning of the house. Mona does the laundry, ironing and shopping. Mona is mainly in charge of childcare as she is at the moment at home full-time. However, Rick enjoys spending family time and takes extra hours with his children.

Attitude towards parental leave schemes

Rick thinks that the 21 days paternity leave is the perfect length and that it should be a federal law applicable to all employees. He is against the French model (he considers France doesn’t work well in general) and the Icelandic model (three months is too long for the father). He is in favor of a differential leave: at least six months for the mother, so that she can see her children before she returns to work and one month for the father (in addition, the four weeks of vacation bring the whole to two months, which is nice for a start).

Appendix 37 - Leave uptake statistics

Year of leave uptake

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 2010	53	55,2	55,2	55,2
2011	37	38,5	38,5	93,8
2012	6	6,3	6,3	100,0
Total	96	100,0	100,0	

Paternity, vacation and total number of days

	PaternityLDays	VacationDays	TotalLeave
N Valid	96	96	96
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	16,9719	10,0802	27,3062
Median	20,0000	8,0000	26,0000
Mode	21,00	,00	21,00
Std. Deviation	5,41928	9,16881	10,99277
Minimum	1,00	,00	3,00
Maximum	21,00	42,50	66,50

Distribution by category of length of leave

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid less than 20 days	47	49,0	49,0	49,0
20 or 21 days	49	51,0	51,0	100,0
Total	96	100,0	100,0	

Distribution by number of blocs of leave uptake

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1 bloc	10	10,4	10,4	10,4
2 to 4 blocs	47	49,0	49,0	59,4
5 blocs or more	39	40,6	40,6	100,0
Total	96	100,0	100,0	

Appendix 38 - Cross tabulations and chi-square tests for paternity leave length

Paternity leave use by the social class of employees

PatLeave * SocialClass3Cat Crosstabulation

			SocialClass3Cat			Total
			salariat	intermediate	working class	
PatLeave	less than 20 days	Count	23	11	13	47
		Expected Count	17,8	12,9	16,3	47,0
		% within PatLeave	48,9%	23,4%	27,7%	100,0%
		% within SocialClass3Cat	63,9%	42,3%	39,4%	49,5%
		% of Total	24,2%	11,6%	13,7%	49,5%
		Std. Residual	1,2	-,5	-,8	
	20 or 21 days	Count	13	15	20	48
		Expected Count	18,2	13,1	16,7	48,0
		% within PatLeave	27,1%	31,3%	41,7%	100,0%
		% within SocialClass3Cat	36,1%	57,7%	60,6%	50,5%
		% of Total	13,7%	15,8%	21,1%	50,5%
		Std. Residual	-1,2	,5	,8	
Total		Count	36	26	33	95
		Expected Count	36,0	26,0	33,0	95,0
		% within PatLeave	37,9%	27,4%	34,7%	100,0%
		% within SocialClass3Cat	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	37,9%	27,4%	34,7%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4,868 ^a	2	,088	,041
Likelihood Ratio	4,918	2	,086	,051
Fisher's Exact Test	4,814			1,000
N of Valid Cases	95			

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 12,86.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,226	,088	,041
	Cramer's V	,226	,088	,041
	Contingency Coefficient	,221	,088	,041
N of Valid Cases		95		

Paternity leave use by the gender composition of the work environment

PatLeave * SexuationService Crosstabulation

			SexuationService		Total
			male	female or mixed	
PatLeave	less than 20 days	Count	34	13	47
		Expected Count	38,2	8,8	47,0
		% within PatLeave	72,3%	27,7%	100,0%
		% within SexuationService	43,6%	72,2%	49,0%
		% of Total	35,4%	13,5%	49,0%
		Std. Residual	-,7	1,4	
	20 days or more	Count	44	5	49
		Expected Count	39,8	9,2	49,0
		% within PatLeave	89,8%	10,2%	100,0%
		% within SexuationService	56,4%	27,8%	51,0%
		% of Total	45,8%	5,2%	51,0%
		Std. Residual	,7	-1,4	
Total		Count	78	18	96
		Expected Count	78,0	18,0	96,0
		% within PatLeave	81,3%	18,8%	100,0%
		% within SexuationService	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	81,3%	18,8%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4,798 ^a	1	,028	,037	,026
Continuity Correction ^b	3,721	1	,054		
Likelihood Ratio	4,927	1	,026	,037	,026
Fisher's Exact Test				,037	,026
N of Valid Cases	96				

a. 0 cells (,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 8,81.
 b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,224	,028	,037
	Cramer's V	,224	,028	,037
	Contingency Coefficient	,218	,028	,037
N of Valid Cases		96		

Paternity leave use by the occupational rate of employees

PatLeave * Partime Crosstabulation

			Partime		Total
			full time	part-time	
PatLeave	less than 20 days	Count	39	8	47
		Expected Count	42,1	4,9	47,0
		% within PatLeave	83,0%	17,0%	100,0%
		% within Partime	45,3%	80,0%	49,0%
		% of Total	40,6%	8,3%	49,0%
		Std. Residual	-,5	1,4	
20 days or more	Count	47	2	49	
	Expected Count	43,9	5,1	49,0	
	% within PatLeave	95,9%	4,1%	100,0%	
	% within Partime	54,7%	20,0%	51,0%	
	% of Total	49,0%	2,1%	51,0%	
	Std. Residual	,5	-1,4		
Total	Count	86	10	96	
	Expected Count	86,0	10,0	96,0	
	% within PatLeave	89,6%	10,4%	100,0%	
	% within Partime	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
	% of Total	89,6%	10,4%	100,0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	4,304 ^a	1	,038	,048	,039
Continuity Correction ^b	3,029	1	,082		
Likelihood Ratio	4,558	1	,033	,048	,039
Fisher's Exact Test				,048	,039
N of Valid Cases	96				

a. 1 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4,90.
 b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	-,212	,038	,048
	Cramer's V	,212	,038	,048
	Contingency Coefficient	,207	,038	,048
N of Valid Cases		96		

Appendix 39 - Cross tabulations and chi-square tests for paternity leave Types

Years of seniority

LeaveType * GroupeAnciennete3cat Crosstabulation

			GroupeAnciennete3cat			Total
			1	2	3	
LeaveType	full and immediate	Count	8	20	16	44
		Expected Count	13,3	18,3	12,4	44,0
		% within LeaveType	18,2%	45,5%	36,4%	100,0%
		% within GroupeAnciennete3cat	27,6%	50,0%	59,3%	45,8%
		% of Total	8,3%	20,8%	16,7%	45,8%
		Std. Residual	-1,5	,4	1,0	
	full and spread	Count	7	11	7	25
		Expected Count	7,6	10,4	7,0	25,0
		% within LeaveType	28,0%	44,0%	28,0%	100,0%
		% within GroupeAnciennete3cat	24,1%	27,5%	25,9%	26,0%
		% of Total	7,3%	11,5%	7,3%	26,0%
		Std. Residual	-,2	,2	,0	
	full + vacation	Count	8	4	2	14
		Expected Count	4,2	5,8	3,9	14,0
		% within LeaveType	57,1%	28,6%	14,3%	100,0%
		% within GroupeAnciennete3cat	27,6%	10,0%	7,4%	14,6%
		% of Total	8,3%	4,2%	2,1%	14,6%
		Std. Residual	1,8	-,8	-,1	
sparse use	Count	6	5	2	13	
	Expected Count	3,9	5,4	3,7	13,0	
	% within LeaveType	46,2%	38,5%	15,4%	100,0%	
	% within GroupeAnciennete3cat	20,7%	12,5%	7,4%	13,5%	
	% of Total	6,3%	5,2%	2,1%	13,5%	
	Std. Residual	1,0	-,2	-,9		
Total	Count	29	40	27	96	
	Expected Count	29,0	40,0	27,0	96,0	
	% within LeaveType	30,2%	41,7%	28,1%	100,0%	
	% within GroupeAnciennete3cat	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	
	% of Total	30,2%	41,7%	28,1%	100,0%	

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	10,162 ^a	6	,118	,006
Likelihood Ratio	9,996	6	,125	,016
Fisher's Exact Test	9,471			1,000
N of Valid Cases	96			

a. 4 cells (33,3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3,66.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,325	,118	,006
	Cramer's V	,230	,118	,006
	Contingency Coefficient	,309	,118	,006
N of Valid Cases		96		

Size of the section

LeaveType * TailleService Crosstabulation

			TailleService			Total
			small (10% or less of the department)	medium (11%-40% of the department)	large (41% or more of the department)	
LeaveType	full and immediate	Count	5	15	24	44
		Expected Count	6,4	17,9	19,7	44,0
		% within LeaveType	11,4%	34,1%	54,5%	100,0%
		% within TailleService	35,7%	38,5%	55,8%	45,8%
		% of Total	5,2%	15,6%	25,0%	45,8%
		Std. Residual	-,6	-,7	1,0	
	full and spread	Count	6	12	7	25
		Expected Count	3,6	10,2	11,2	25,0
		% within LeaveType	24,0%	48,0%	28,0%	100,0%
		% within TailleService	42,9%	30,8%	16,3%	26,0%
		% of Total	6,3%	12,5%	7,3%	26,0%
		Std. Residual	1,2	,6	-1,3	
	full + vacation	Count	2	5	7	14
		Expected Count	2,0	5,7	6,3	14,0
		% within LeaveType	14,3%	35,7%	50,0%	100,0%
% within TailleService		14,3%	12,8%	16,3%	14,6%	
% of Total		2,1%	5,2%	7,3%	14,6%	
Std. Residual		,0	-,3	,3		
sparse use	Count	1	7	5	13	
	Expected Count	1,9	5,3	5,8	13,0	
	% within LeaveType	7,7%	53,8%	38,5%	100,0%	
	% within TailleService	7,1%	17,9%	11,6%	13,5%	
	% of Total	1,0%	7,3%	5,2%	13,5%	
	Std. Residual	-,7	,7	-,3		
Total		Count	14	39	43	96
		Expected Count	14,0	39,0	43,0	96,0
		% within LeaveType	14,6%	40,6%	44,8%	100,0%
		% within TailleService	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%
		% of Total	14,6%	40,6%	44,8%	100,0%

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	6,406 ^a	6	,379	,040
Likelihood Ratio	6,416	6	,378	,071
Fisher's Exact Test	6,256			1,000
N of Valid Cases	96			

a. 3 cells (25,0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1,90.

Symmetric Measures

		Value	Approx. Sig.	Exact Sig.
Nominal by Nominal	Phi	,258	,379	,040
	Cramer's V	,183	,379	,040
	Contingency Coefficient	,250	,379	,040
N of Valid Cases		96		

