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## Mothers' employment in wealthy countries: How do cultural and institutional factors shape the motherhood employment and working hours gap?

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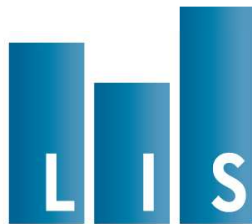
# LIS

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### **MOTHERS' EMPLOYMENT IN WEALTHY COUNTRIES: HOW DO CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS SHAPE THE MOTHERHOOD EMPLOYMENT AND WORKING HOURS GAP?**

Irene Boeckmann, Joya Misra and Michelle Budig



CROSS-NATIONAL  
DATA CENTER  
*in Luxembourg*

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**Luxembourg Income Study (LIS), asbl**

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## **Mothers' Employment in Wealthy Countries: How Do Cultural and Institutional Factors Shape the Motherhood Employment and Working Hours Gap?**

### **Abstract**

*Existing research shows that women's employment patterns are not so much driven by gender, as by gendered parenthood, with childless women and men (including fathers) employed at substantially higher levels than mothers in most countries. We focus on the cross-national variation in the gap in employment participation and working time between mothers and women without children in the same household. This variation remains salient, even when we control for individual and household-level factors, such as human capital, partnered status, and household income. We provide evidence that institutional and cultural contexts shape their opportunities in important ways: more generous paid leaves, publicly supported childcare services for very young children, and cultural support for maternal employment predict lower differences in employment participation and working hours between mothers and childless women, while the length of job protected leave is associated with larger motherhood employment gaps.*

Mothers' employment has sparked many debates over the last decade. In the U.S. popular press, Lisa Belkin's (2003) *New York Times* article "The Opt-Out Revolution" raised questions about mothers' ability to maintain careers, Anne-Marie Slaughter's (2012) essay "Why Women Still Can't Have It All" further emphasized the challenges faced by working mothers, while Sheryl Sandberg's (2013) book *Lean In* suggests how mothers can and should remain engaged in employment. Similarly, academic research analyzing employment participation of women and mothers reflects these concerns (Boushey 2008; Damaske 2011; England 2010; Goldin 2006; Jones 2012; Percheski 2008; Stone 2008; Williams 2000). The questions that seem to fuel these debates are: What factors support or limit maternal employment? Is work-family conflict

inevitable? And to what extent do these conflicts reflect cultural and structural barriers?

We look beyond the United States to consider maternal employment across nineteen wealthy countries. Although mothers' employment rates have been rising, these gains have been uneven across countries (England 2006; Lewis 2009; Rubery et al. 1999; Tranby 2008), and much growth reflects part-time employment (Blossfeld and Hakim 1997; Gornick and Heron 2006; Pettit and Hook 2009; Rubery et al. 1999; Tranby 2008). There is cross-national variation in whether mothers leave employment or cut back hours, and whether these behaviors are temporary, or long term (Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development 2002a). As a result, there remains substantial cross-national variation in mothers' employment participation rates and working hours (Gornick et al. 1997; Stier et al. 2001).

The question of who cares for children when they are young is central to our understanding of maternal labor market outcomes. Although boasting comparatively higher rates of full-time employment, the United States has fallen behind other wealthy countries in women's employment rates in part due to a lack of maternal employment supports (Blau and Kahn 2013). We focus on the gap in employment participation and working hours between mothers and women without children, to examine how institutional structures as well as cultural norms shape these processes. We address several challenges in the literature.

First, the measurement and conceptualization of women's employment varies across studies. Analyses of employment rates may not recognize that high levels of women's employment could mask very low weekly employment hours (e.g. the Netherlands). Similarly, a focus on outcomes among only the employed (such as wages, occupational gender segregation, or access to professional/managerial occupations) may miss that in some countries, relatively

few women are employed (e.g., Italy). We therefore explore *both* employment rates and employment hours.

Another challenge derives from a focus on the gender gap in labor market participation and outcomes (e.g. Blau and Kahn 2013; Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Pettit and Hook 2009), which may disguise inequalities based on gendered parenthood. We argue that to understand the gendered processes shaping employment and work hours, parenthood is a crucial axis of inequality. We consider differences among women, by comparing differences between childless women and mothers, rather than men and women.

And finally, cross-national differences in women's employment reflect different policy contexts. States have instituted measures aimed at addressing work-family conflict ranging from leaves to publicly provided childcare. Yet, these policies contain different gendered assumptions about the division of paid and unpaid work and care of children. Thus, not all work-family policies may be supportive of maternal employment; cultural contexts may matter as well. Using multi-level models, we investigate how specific policies and cultural attitudes are related to maternal employment.

We begin by describing cross-national patterns of women's employment and differences between childless women and mothers, and then identify individual, household, institutional, and cultural explanations for these differences.

### **Motherhood, Employment and Working Hours Cross-nationally**

Previous research documents the remarkable variation in women's and mothers' employment, cross-nationally (Misra, Budig, and Boeckmann 2011a; Misra, Budig, and Boeckmann 2011b; Pettit and Hook 2009). Figure 1 summarizes women's employment and working hours for women 25-45 in our countries. The black bars on the bottom show the

percentage of women who are employed for 40 hours or more each week, the dark grey bars the percentage who are employed 20 to 39.9 hours each week, the light grey bars the percentage who work for less than 20 hours per week, and the white bars the percentage of women who are not employed.

[Figure 1 About Here]

The stacked grey and black shaded bars show the dramatic cross-national differences between countries such as Sweden and Canada versus Spain and Italy, in terms of the proportion of women employed. In most countries, at least two-thirds of women between 25 and 45 are employed, yet some countries reflect lower levels. However, there is more to this story: the Netherlands and the Czech Republic have similarly high levels of employment, yet differ starkly in employment hours. Many Dutch women work part-time, while most Czech women work full-time. Likewise, U.S. women are more likely to work full-time than Swedish women, while Swedish women are more likely to be employed. This figure illustrates why both employment rates and hours matter to understanding women's employment participation.

Even so, childless women's and childless men's employment rates are converging, while mothers' employment rates and hours remain considerably lower than other workers in most countries (Pettit and Hook 2009).<sup>1</sup> Some scholars emphasize cross-national differences in individual preferences, human capital, and household specialization as driving the cross-national variation in women's employment (Becker 1981; Hakim 2004). Other scholars focus on the role of structural factors, such as work-family policies, taxation, and economic conditions (Eliason et al. 2008; Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009; Stier et al. 2001). A third argument suggests structural factors are mediated by cultural contexts (Auer 2002; Kremer 2007; Pfau-Effinger 1996, 2004).

### Preferences, Human Capital, and Household Characteristics

Individual-level explanations emphasize the importance of human capital in employment decisions, particularly for mothers. Less skilled/educated women command a lower wage, and may hold less rewarding jobs, making maternal care for children more attractive (Cogan 1980; Heckman 1974; Leibowitz and Klerman 1995; Morgenstern and Hamovitch 1976; Powell 2002). Highly educated women have higher opportunity costs, both in terms of wages foregone and in careers potentially derailed by working less. They are more likely to benefit from well-paid employment (Hicks and Kenworthy 2008; Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009), and find childcare affordable. From this perspective, cross-national differences in the effect of children on working hours may simply be responses to differential selection into motherhood, with less educated women being more likely to become mothers. The effect of children on employment participation and work hours may simply be due to different levels of human capital possessed by women with children. Similarly, other human capital measures, such as labor market experience, should be positively associated with women's and mother's employment (Heckman 1974, 1980; Henkens et al. 1993; Lehrer 1999; Powell 2002). Foregone experience is an important factor driving the motherhood wage penalty (Budig and England 2001), and could also lower subsequent employment probabilities, particularly full-time employment probabilities.<sup>2</sup> We control for educational attainment, though we are unable to control for labor market experience with our data, controlling instead for age, which, to some extent, reflects labor market experience. Age also takes into account that older mothers who are more established in the labor market may find it easier to take time off from paid work to care for children (Ondrich et al. 2003), and controls for cohort differences in employment participation.

From a household specialization perspective, women's choices to be wage-earners may



be based in joint economic calculations with their partners, regarding each partner's mix of human capital and pre-existing gender differentials in pay in the relevant labor market (Becker 1981). This approach assumes that households choose to have the person who commands the highest wages doing paid labor, while the other partner does the unpaid labor necessary to maintain a household (Verbakel and De Graaf 2009). Indeed, research shows that work hours are greatly influenced by how many hours a partner *wants* the other person to work (Gerstel et al. 2007). Yet, not all women are partnered, and partnership may have varied effects, depending on the partner's resources (Abroms and Goldscheider 2002). Household specialization may mean that women (particularly mothers) with partners are likely to be employed for fewer hours.

In addition, women who live in households with higher levels of household income other than their own earnings may work fewer hours. Scholars suggested that having a partner who earns more reduces the financial incentives for partners to work (Abroms and Goldscheider 2002; Cogan 1980; Heckman 1980; Henkens et al. 1993; Lehrer 1999; Leibowitz and Klerman 1995; Morgenstern and Hamovitch 1976; Powell 2002; Schultz 1980; Bernasco et al. 1998; Verbakel and de Graaf 2009). Transfer income from the state also may affect women's hours (Flood et al. 2004; Schultz 1980). The additional income from a partner, other household members, or transfer income from the state or kin may enable women to choose to spend time caring, rather than being employed or employed full-time outside the home. Finally, other adults in the household influence whether and how many hours mothers are employed by providing childcare (e.g. Lyonette et al 2011).

We first look to see whether cross-national differences in women's human capital (education, and age serving as a proxy measure for labor market experience), their partnered status, other household labor income, (non-family related) transfer income, and the presence of

adults other than the woman and her partner aged 18 to 65<sup>3</sup> might explain the cross-national differences we see in the gap between mothers' and childless women's employment and working hours. Once we control for these individual level factors do we still find cross-national variations in the motherhood employment and working hours gap? If so, do institutional and cultural explanations help explain at least part of the remaining variation?

### *Institutional Supports for Women's Employment*

One set of institutional explanations focus on how welfare state policies, notably work-family policies, may affect women's employment opportunities. Favorable labor market conditions and work-family policies particularly affect maternal employment (Rubery et al. 1999). In light of ever decreasing fertility rates, labor market and social policies in European countries have focused on alleviating parents' work-family conflict, either by supporting (maternal) care giving in the home, or by supporting mother's labor force attachment. These policy responses reflect concerns that welfare states will only be sustainable with high levels of employment and a sufficiently large workforce, but it also reflects changing gender norms around women's employment (Esping-Andersen et al. 2002; Kenworthy 2008).

Welfare state policies such as maternity leave, parental leave, and childcare provisioning have shaped women's employment. As Guerrina (2002) notes, reconciliation policies actually target women "despite the artificial gender neutrality enshrined in the language" (63). Most of the research from a welfare state perspective considers either how a certain complex of work-family policies (visible in clusters of countries) or how specific policies shape women's employment. For example, Jane Lewis' (1992) early formulation described countries as either strong male-breadwinner, modified male-breadwinner countries, or weak male-breadwinner in orientation, with associated differences in women's employment rates. Since

then, the relationship between women's employment and welfare state policies, including work-family policies have been studied by many scholars; most argue for a positive relationship between generosity of policy and employment effects (Daly 2000; Gauthier 1996; Gornick et al. 1997; Gornick and Meyers 2003; Kenworthy 2008; Korpi 2000; Mandel and Semyonov 2005; O'Connor et al. 1999; Orloff 2002; Pettit and Hook 2005; Stier et al. 2001).

Maternity and parental leave policies may maintain women's labor market attachment; rather than quitting their jobs after giving birth, the leaves make it possible for them to return to the labor market. Well-paid parental leaves of short duration (less than one year) help mothers negotiate the early months when infants require substantial care, without risking their jobs. Yet, long leaves or poorly compensated leaves, often geared towards supporting maternal caregiving at home, may have a paradoxical effect, dampening women's employment and weakening their opportunities in the labor market (Bainbridge et al. 2003; Kenworthy 2008; Lewis 2006; Morgan and Zippel 2003; Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009; Rønsen and Sundström 2002; Tranby 2008).

Beyond the potential to lower mothers' labor market experience, very long parental leave entitlements might reinforce expectations that mothers will spend long periods outside of the labor market. Employers may be less likely to want to support workers who are likely to leave for long periods, and dismiss mothers upon return after the job protected period (Glass and Fodor 2011). This leads us to the following expectation:

*Hypothesis (1) Parental leave that is well paid and job protected should help mothers keep their attachment to the labor force and their jobs. No leave entitlements and very long leaves tend to weaken women's labor force attachment.*

We do not formulate an expectation regarding working hours, since the literature is unclear about this relationship.

There is also clear evidence that childcare services with opening hours corresponding to regular working hours has positive effects on women's employment (Korpi 2000; Lewis 2009; Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009; Stryker and Eliason 2004). Yet, quality childcare is costly, and the costs for childcare, particularly for more than one child, may exceed the potential wages parents might earn. When childcare is subsidized or provided by the government, and universally available, cost to parents goes down, while also stimulating job growth through childcare workers. Public provision of childcare, particularly for very young children (aged 0-2), appears to increase women's employment rates (Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009; Tranby 2008). Market-provided childcare may also encourage women's employment, though childcare costs may suggest a trade-off in terms of childcare quality (Morgan 2005). Research also shows that childcare costs have a significant negative impact on mothers' labor supply (Han and Waldfogel 2001; Powell 2002).

*Hypothesis (2) Childcare provisioning that is supported by the state should help mothers keep their attachment to the labor force and work longer hours.*

In a twist in this literature, Mandel and Semyonov (2006), argue that "the welfare state contributes to increased labor force participation, enhances the economic independence of women and mothers, and strengthens their power within the household and with society at large," yet that "none of [these state actions] seriously challenge the traditional division of market-family responsibilities between men and women" (1911). Although more focused on the glass ceiling that public sector employment and family policies may produce, Mandel and Semyonov (2006) examine women's labor force participation as well as their part-time employment. They find that "well-developed" welfare states (defined by maternity leave policies, childcare, and public sector employment) have higher employment rates, but also more

part-time employment. In supplementary analyses they also note that women in these well-developed welfare states reduced their hours of employment (while women in countries without a well-developed welfare state, like the U.S., instead increased hours). Their arguments are worth examining more closely, yet with separate policy measures, since combining measures of generous parental leave, childcare and public sector employment may make it difficult to assess what is happening, especially when these factors may have differing effects on women's employment. We examine whether work-family policy effects are robust to the inclusion of the size of the public sector.

### *The Importance of Cultural Factors in Shaping Employment Levels*

Institutional explanations may not fully explain the remarkable variation found in women's labor market participation and employment outcomes. For example, the United Kingdom has somewhat better work-family policies than the United States, with lower levels of women's employment. A number of scholars have posited the importance of cultural factors to understanding these patterns. Pfau-Effinger (2004) also notes that statistically significant associations such as between childcare and women's employment do not necessarily identify causal relationships. For example, childcare availability may go up in *response* to high levels of women's employment, rather than childcare availability driving women's employment.

Monique Kremer (2007) suggests that welfare states promote certain "ideals of care," which define both what good care is and who provides it, arguing that these ideals are embedded in the welfare state policies. For Kremer (2007), women's employment is not merely driven by their wish to work, but by gendered cultural norms around the appropriate care for children. Birgit Pfau-Effinger (1998, 2004) similarly argues that women's employment must be read in relation to the gender culture (values), the gender order (institutional arrangements), and the

gender arrangements (gender divisions of labor in the home). Indeed, Budig et al. (2012) show that work-family policies are associated with higher maternal earnings in contexts where cultural support for maternal employment is high – but have less positive or even negative relationships where cultural ideals reflect maternal care and paternal breadwinning.

*Hypothesis (3): Ideals of care, particularly ideals regarding maternal employment, will condition mother's employment, as well as the number of hours worked by women. Where support for maternal employment is high, mothers will be more likely to be employed, and work longer hours.*

#### Other Institutional and Economic Factors Shaping Employment Levels

Finally, explanations for variation in women's employment rates cross-nationally may include a variety of other institutional and structural economic conditions, such as taxation policies, the business cycle, economic performance, and public sector employment (Eliason et al. 2008; Huber and Stephens 2000; Pettit and Hook 2005, 2009; Tranby 2008). Higher taxation of second earners' incomes have been shown to be associated with lower women's employment and full-time employment participation cross-nationally (Jaumotte 2003), however, studies of tax reforms in different countries show complex relationships between income taxation and employment, with uneven effects across different types of households (e.g. Francesconi et al. 2009).<sup>4</sup> Unemployment should theoretically depress women's employment rates (though its effects on working hours are less clear), while economic performance should stimulate it. Public sector employment, especially public sector service delivery, is often filled by women, and therefore associated with women's employment (Eliason et al. 2008; Huber and Stephens 2000; Tranby 2008). While we do not focus on how these economic and structural factors mediate differences in working hours between mothers and childless women specifically, we do control

for economic performance (GDP per capita), the size of the public sector (percent of the labor force employed in the public sector), men's unemployment rates, and second earner's income taxation to test, whether the relationships between maternal employment and policies and cultural norms are robust under different economic and structural conditions.

## **Data & Methods**

We use multiple data sources. The individual-level data comes from the Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg (LIS). LIS harmonizes national survey data on households, income (including transfer income), and employment.<sup>5</sup> We mainly use data from around the year 2000 (wave V) for 18 countries. We examine former East and West Germany separately, due to the persistent differences in employment patterns and policy legacies (Rosenfeld et al. 2004), resulting in 19 cases included in the analysis. For the main analysis, the sample is restricted to employed women aged 25 to 45 (prime years for childrearing), who are neither in the military nor self-employed.<sup>6</sup>

Other individual-level independent variables include relationship status (=1 if cohabiting or married, reference category “single”), the presence of other adults aged 18-65 in the household (in employment models), respondent's age (in years), educational attainment, other household income (total household earnings minus respondent's earnings), and non-family transfer income. We measure educational attainment as a set of three dummy variables indicating high educational attainment (specialized vocational education and no less than university/college education), medium educational attainment (secondary general or vocational education, and post-secondary education), and lower educational attainment (compulsory education, initial vocational education or less; reference category). These individual-level control variables capture the factors that matter

for the household specialization argument: parenthood, marriage or cohabitation, low human capital, and high other household income should all reduce the probability of employment, and of working hours.

The policy measures are taken from the Work-Family Policy Indicators database (Boeckmann et al. 2012). The policy measures are matched to the LIS survey years for each country. Generally, the measurement of the policies is lagged two years prior to the survey year.<sup>7</sup> We focus on publicly supported childcare for children 0-2 and 3-5, leave generosity, and maximum length of job protected leave available to women. For leaves, measures include leave generosity, i.e. the number of paid weeks of leave available to women multiplied by the level of benefits (maternity and parental leave combined), and the maximum number of weeks of (paid and unpaid) job protected leave available to women. Following current practice (Gornick and Meyers 2003; Mandel and Semyonov 2006; Pettit and Hook 2009), the childcare policy measure includes the percentage of children age 0-2 and 3-5 in publicly supported care, which taps the availability of government-sponsored childcare slots. The country-level measures of attitudes regarding maternal employment are taken from the 2002 Family and Changing Gender Roles modules of the International Social Survey Program.<sup>8</sup> Although this data was collected slightly *after* our period of interest, we prefer these data to the earlier (1994) wave, since these measures of cultural values regarding women's roles changed substantially over time in some countries. We focus on two questions: the percentage preferring that a "woman should work full-time when the youngest child is preschool aged", and "when the youngest child is school aged."<sup>9,10</sup>

Country-level control variables are taken from various sources: Public sector employment is taken from the International Labour Organization (2012),<sup>11</sup> and male unemployment rates as well as GDP per capita (in current US Dollars) from the OECD (2012). The taxation measure



we use is the proportion of the second earners' income that contributes to paying increased household income taxes for a household where the first earner's wages equal 100 percent of average production workers' wages (APW), and the second earner takes up employment earning 100 percent of APW (Jaumotte 2003).

To examine the associations between institutional factors, cultural factors, and the motherhood gap in employment participation and weekly hours, we use multi-level models that allows us to model individual-level and country-level characteristics simultaneously, and account for the nested nature of our data (Diprete and Forristal 1994; Raudenbusch and Bryk 2002). Our outcome variables are a dichotomous variable indicating employment status (1= employed, reference category "not employed"), and the number of usual weekly working hours *among employed women*. The independent variable of interest is a dichotomous variable indicating whether the respondent has children living at home (mother=1, childless=0).<sup>12</sup>

To examine differences in employment participation between mothers and childless women, we estimate random-intercept logistic models. The limited country-level sample size does not allow us to estimate random-slopes models, which would estimate the variation of the motherhood employment gap across countries and examine whether there remains significant variation in this gap after controlling for individual-level differences among women. To check, whether significant motherhood gaps in employment and work hours remain after controlling for individual-level covariates, we estimate separate logistic regression, and OLS models for each country. Subsequently, we estimate multilevel models based on the pooled sample of all countries. These models can be written as follows:

$$\log(p_{emp\_ij}/(1-p_{emp\_ij})) = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10} * MOM + \boxed{\gamma_{11} Z_j * MOM} + \gamma_{01} Z_j + \gamma_{20} X_{ij} + u_{0j} + r_{ij} \quad (1)$$

$$Hours_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{10} * MOM + \boxed{\gamma_{11} Z_j * MOM} + \gamma_{01} Z_j + \gamma_{20} X_{ij} + u_{0j} + r_{ij} \quad (2)$$

The dependent variable in Model 1 is the log-odds of women's employment for individual  $i$  in country  $j$ ,  $\gamma_{00}$  is the average log-odd of employment across countries, the coefficient  $\gamma_{10}$  associated with the motherhood dummy variable estimates the gap in employment (in log-odds) between mothers and childless women. In Model 2, the dependent variable is the usual weekly working hours among employed women, with  $\gamma_{00}$  estimating average women's weekly hours across countries, and  $\gamma_{10} * \text{MOM}$  the gap in weekly employment hours between mothers and childless women. In both models,  $X_{ij}$  and the associated coefficients is the vector of individual-level variables.  $Z_j$  and its coefficient is the main effect of the country-level policy or cultural indicator.  $u_{0j}$  and  $r_{ij}$  represent the error terms at the country-level and individual-level.

To estimate how country-level factors mediate differences in employment participation between mothers and childless women, we include an interaction between the motherhood dummy variable and the country-level measure  $Z_j$ . Since the interpretation of interactions in logistic models is problematic (Allison 1999; Mood 2010),<sup>13</sup> we estimate average marginal effects. For ease of interpretation, we create a series of plots showing the marginal effects and the confidence intervals around them.

We use a two-step Heckman selection modeling strategy (Heckman 1979) for the models estimating motherhood gaps in weekly hours among employed women to account for differential selection of mothers into employment across countries. First, we run a series of Probit models predicting the likelihood of employment among 25-45 year old women within each country, using presence of a preschooler in the household, a dummy variable indicating that the respondent has some form of disability, high educational attainment (i.e. postsecondary education or occupational training leading to certification), age, non-family transfer income (in 2000 US Dollars), total household earnings minus the respondents earnings (in 2000 US Dollars) (instrumental variable).

Based on these models, we calculate a selection term (Inverse Mills Ratio). We include this selection term in our main models, limited to employed women, to adjust our estimates for differential selection into employment.

We enter each of the country-level measures separately, due to the relatively small number of country-level cases. Finally, we run a set of robustness analyses to test whether our findings hold if we account for cross-country differences in economic performance using Gross Domestic Product per capita (in 2000 US\$), male unemployment rates, the size of public sector employment, and taxation of second earner's income.

## **Findings**

We present means and standard deviations for our two outcome variables and individual-level control variables for mothers and childless women in Table 1.

[Table 1 About Here]

We use t-tests, non-parametric Wilcoxon-Mann-Whitney tests, and chi-square tests to test for group differences. With the exception of Russia, Sweden and Hungary, mothers are significantly less likely to be employed. Among the employed, mothers work fewer hours on average compared to childless women, although the difference is not significant in the Russian and Hungarian data. The size of the difference in employment rates and hours varies considerably across countries: In Luxembourg, Australia, West Germany, Ireland, and Spain, mothers' employment rates are between 28 and 35 percentage points lower than childless women's rates. On the other side of the spectrum, we find differences of 10 percentage points or less in Belgium, Hungary, Sweden, and Russia. Similarly, differences in weekly working hours vary between ten hours a week or more in Luxembourg, Britain, the Netherlands, and West Germany, to fewer

than two hours in the Czech Republic and Russia.<sup>14</sup> Smaller (unadjusted) motherhood hours gaps tend to be found in countries with longer working hours in general, such as in the United States and Eastern Europe. In these countries, working time flexibility tends to be lower and part-time work less common, even among mothers, compared to European countries such as the Netherlands, France or Sweden. In the United States this is linked to the lack of entitlement to health care and other benefits for part-time workers.

In all countries, mothers are more likely to be partnered and tend to be older than childless women. Childless women on the other hand are more likely to have specialized vocational education, a college degree or higher degree, while mothers are less likely to have completed lower secondary education or compulsory education. And finally, mothers tend to live in households with more resources, both in terms of earnings from other household members and transfer income, which is likely linked to their higher likelihood to be partnered. To what extent do these individual-level characteristics account for the differences in employment participation and working hours among women?

In Figure 2, we show the motherhood gap in predicted employment probabilities and average weekly hours net of individual-level and household-level characteristics. The shaded bars in the graph on the left hand side in Figure 2 show that in the majority of countries significant differences in employment probabilities between mothers and childless women remain after controlling for family structure, human capital, and other household resources.

[Figure 2 About Here]

Similarly, net motherhood working hours gaps remain in all but two countries as indicated by the solid bars in the right hand side graph. Figure 2 shows that net employment and hours motherhood gaps do not always map onto each other, though they are correlated. For example,

there is a smaller motherhood gap in employment hours among employed Italian women, but fewer mothers are employed in the first place. Or the differences in employment participation between British mothers and childless women are moderate, but among the employed, mothers work considerably fewer hours than childless women. To the extent that we are able to predict employment and work hours with our individual-level covariates, the remaining variation in employment gaps may be at least partially accounted for other institutional and cultural factors.

Next, we present the findings from the multi-level regression models. Figures 3 to 5 illustrate how family-policy and cultural measures mediate the size of the motherhood gap in employment probabilities (right hand side graphs), and predicted weekly work hours (left hand side graphs), net of individual-level controls.<sup>15</sup> These figures show the marginal effects (y-axis) across the observed range of values of the country-level measures (x-axis), and the upper and lower bounds of the confidence intervals (dashed lines). Differences in predicted employment probabilities and predicted hours between mothers and childless women are significant if the confidence intervals do not include zero at the observed value of the policy/culture measure, i.e. if the dashed lines delineating the confidence intervals do not cross the horizontal line indicating a difference of zero.

### Parental leave

In Figure 3 we examine how leave generosity, i.e. the number of weeks of fully paid leave (black line) and the maximum number of weeks of job protected leave available to women (grey line) are linked to the net gap in predicted employment probabilities between mothers and childless women, and the net motherhood gap in weekly hours. As expected by hypothesis 1, leave generosity tends to reduce the motherhood gap in employment participation, while length of leave has the opposite relationship. Yet, we do not find a curvilinear relationship between

*leave length* and the *motherhood gap in employment*.<sup>16</sup> The predicted gap in employment probabilities (net of individual-level controls) is 13.6 percentage points in countries with the shortest leaves and over 18 percentage points in countries with the leaves of over three years. Longer leaves may exacerbate lost job experience in connection with childbirth, which in turn may impact mothers' probability of employment.

[Figure 3 About Here]

Among employed women, leave generosity is also inversely related to the *motherhood gap in predicted weekly hours*. Leave schemes that grant attach financial benefits to the right to take time off from employment seem to reduce the motherhood gap in weekly working hours. Well-paid leave may strengthen mothers' attachment to the jobs held before childbirth. While the length of leave is also inversely related to the gap in working hours, the relationship is weaker. Additional analyses show (results not shown), that the three Eastern European countries may drive this relationship. In the Czech Republic, Russia, and Hungary, where differences in working hours between mothers and childless women are small, mothers are entitled to leave of approximately three years.<sup>17</sup> If these countries are excluded, longer leaves are in fact associated with larger motherhood gaps in working hours, though the association remains weak.

Still, the relationship between leave and work hours is complex. Countries' leave schemes differ in the flexibility they grant parents. Some allow parents to take leave on a part-time basis while receiving (reduced) benefits, which may facilitate reduced hours work for mothers. Yet, the specific conditions for part-time leave taking may differ considerably. For example, in Germany, parents may work up to 19 hours a week while on leave, while French parents are allowed to work between 16 and 32 hours a week (Pettinger 1999; Fagnani 1999).. Studies using panel data are better equipped to disentangle the relationship between leave taking

flexibility and women's work hours after the transition to motherhood. Taken together, our findings suggest that entitlements to take time off from employment, in and of itself, is less important than paid leaves if the goal is to maintain maternal employment, and perhaps longer weekly working hours.

### Childcare services

In Figure 4, we examine the relationship between the motherhood gap in employment participation, the gap in weekly hours, and the enrollment in publicly supported childcare, controlling for individual-level differences. In keeping with hypothesis 2, our findings show a similar relationship for both outcomes: Higher levels of publicly supported childcare for children below the age of three reduce the gap in employment and in hours.

[Figure 4 About Here]

In countries with only one percent of very young children enrolled, the gap in predicted employment probabilities between mothers and childless women is over 18 percentage points. In countries with the highest levels of enrollment, this gap becomes non-significant. Similarly, we estimate that in countries with 1 percent of under three year olds enrolled, the net motherhood gap in average weekly hours is five hours and forty minutes, and only 1.5 hours a week in countries with around 40 percent of children enrolled. On the other hand, we do not find a similar relationship between the motherhood employment gap and the enrollment of older preschoolers, as indicated by the flat slope of the line for 3 to 5 year olds. Likewise, we find a flat and statistically non-significant slope estimating the relationship between the motherhood hours gap and the enrollment of 3 to 5 year olds net of individual controls. This may be a result of the available measures of enrollment of preschoolers aged 3 and older. There are large differences within and across countries with regard to the time children spend in preschool. In

some countries, such as the Netherlands, or the Western part of Germany for instance, enrollment rates in preschools and kindergartens are relatively high. However, opening hours of these service are often limited to a few hours a day and do not match the schedule of a regular working day (Oberhuemer and Ulich 1997). While our measure captures the number of children enrolled (or places per 100 children in the age group), a measure capturing full-time enrollment of 3 to 5 year olds may reflect better to what extent childcare and preschool enrollment meets the needs of employed mothers. However, such as measure is not available for all of the countries in our analysis.

Our findings point to the central role of formal, affordable, good quality childcare for mothers' employment. Especially for young children, such childcare options are limited in most countries. In 12 out of the 18 countries in our data set, 10 percent or less of 0 to 2 year olds were enrolled in publicly supported childcare in the year 2000. However, our findings provide evidence that more widespread availability of such formal childcare has the potential to support maternal employment and longer hours. While we do not find the same for childcare enrollment of children aged 3-6, this may be related to how these programs are structured. Childcare services and preschool programs that are only open partial days or do not cover lunch periods are less supportive of maternal employment (Lewis 2009; Morgan 2005; Morgan and Zippel 2003).

#### *Cultural attitudes towards maternal employment*

In Figure 5 we show the relationship between the motherhood gap in predicted employment probabilities and predicted weekly hours (net of individual-level covariates) and the two measures of attitudes towards mothers' employment participation. Both measures provide evidence for hypothesis 3, that stronger cultural support for maternal employment is associated with smaller differences in employment participation and weekly working hours between women



with and without children. For example, in countries where very few people support the idea that mothers of children younger than school age should work full-time (e.g. Australia, West Germany, Britain), the difference in predicted employment probabilities is estimated to be almost 20 percentage points. The gap is reduced to less than 6 percentage points where support is highest (e.g. in Israel 27 percent support mother's full-time employment when children are below school age).

[Figure 5 About Here]

We recognize that cultural norms, and public policies are interrelated, however they are not perfectly correlated with each other. For example, while the enrollment of 0 to 2 year old children is positively associated with support for maternal full-time employment of preschoolers and school aged children, there are countries with high levels of support for maternal employment, but very low levels of publicly supported child care such as Spain, Canada, or the Netherlands. As Kremer (2007) argues, cultural ideals (for example regarding the care of children) may strongly influence women's choices to be employed, or to be employed full-time, even against institutional and structural supports. On the other hand, higher percentages of working mothers may normalize maternal employment, and influence perceptions thereof.

#### *Robustness Tests*

Finally, we test whether the relationships between the motherhood employment and hours gaps hold under different economic conditions, across countries with different tax policies, and extent of public employment. We enter each of our country-level control variables separately. All models show that the relationships between the motherhood employment and hours gaps, and our policy and attitude measures hold under different economic conditions (as captured by men's

unemployment rates and per capita GDP). The size of the public sector and the extent of the taxation of the second earner's income similarly do not change these relationships.<sup>18</sup>

## **Discussions and Conclusions**

We began our conversation with the oft-hear question, "Can women have it all?" Or, more to the point of our study, can mothers have it all more often in some places than in others? To shed light on these questions, we shift the focus from simple gender differences in employment, to cross-national differences in gendered parenthood. We find that institutional and cultural contexts matter in shaping seemingly individual choices regarding maternal employment. While debates continue, as to whether women opt-out, or are pushed out of employment after children are born, whether mothers ought to scale back on career aspirations to focus on the family, or whether mothers ought to "lean in" and make a difference in the workplace, our study takes a step back to consider the socio-political framework in which mothers make work and family decisions.

We considered the overall presence of women and mothers in paid labor, as well as the intensity of hours worked among the employed. While mothers are less likely to be employed and to work fewer hours compared to childless women in almost all the countries we examine, the extent to which motherhood impacts women's employment and their working hours varies strongly across countries. Our findings show that the motherhood gaps in employment participation and work hours are unlikely to be adequately explained by individual-level differences between mothers and childless women. Institutional conditions and cultural understandings of maternal care and employment are crucial to understanding these patterns.

We first considered how paid maternity leave and extended parental care leaves matter

for maternal employment. Job-protected leave, particularly paid leave, strengthens mothers' continued attachment to employment. More generous paid maternity leave entitlements may help mothers to stay in jobs where they work longer hours, by enabling a temporary period of maternal care for newborns. In contrast, mere entitlements to take extended unpaid time off from work appear to be detrimental to mothers' attachment to employment. Our findings indicate that the longer the period during which mothers can stay home without losing their job, the larger the difference in the probability of employment between mothers and childless women. The length of the job protected leave period is likely a mechanism that mediates mothers' labor market experience, and human capital depreciation, which in turn may affect their employment participation. The relationship between leave length and working hours however is less clear.

We find that publicly supported childcare for children below age three is associated with smaller differences in employment participation between mothers and childless women, and in working hours among the employed. Publicly provided or supported childcare is in some ways the flip side of the leave entitlements which tend to support maternal care of children in the home. Countries where mothers are entitled to long periods of leave tend to have less well developed childcare services, especially for very young children. Yet, there are countries which provide relatively well developed childcare services along with lengthy leave entitlements (e.g. France, East Germany), or countries that have both limited leave entitlements and publicly supported childcare services (e.g. United States, Canada). Our findings provide further evidence that publicly supported, good quality childcare is a linchpin in countries' work-family policy infrastructure that helps mitigate work-family conflict which mothers may otherwise address by leaving employment or by lowering their work hours.

Finally, broader cultural norms regarding maternal employment also matter. Our findings

indicate that greater acceptance of mothers' (full-time) employment is associated with smaller motherhood gaps in employment probabilities and working hours. While connected to the policy infrastructure of a country, cultural support for maternal employment may curb work-family conflict for mothers in ways that either go beyond or reinforce institutional support.

Mothers do not simply express preferences regarding employment; their preferences are shaped by the contexts in which they find themselves, even as these contexts may reflect cultural expectations. Mothers' employment hours increase in contexts with supportive paid leaves and childcare policies, as well as where there is greater support for mothers' employment. While we may not be able to untangle causal direction, we would argue that combinations of cultural and structural supports may provide our best answers to why mothers' employment varies so much cross-nationally, net of individual and household-level factors.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Among wealthy countries, the main exceptions to this are Spain and Italy, which have relatively low employment rates for childless women as well.

<sup>2</sup> Extended parental care leave entitlements may shape the extent of lost experience due to motherhood. Indeed, Ondrich et al. (2000, 2003) find that the extensions of parental leave entitlements in Germany in the 1980s and 1990s were associated with longer post-birth employment breaks, and thus more foregone experience.

<sup>3</sup> We cannot measure access to care by relatives who may live nearby with LIS. We can account for other adults who live in the household, excluding adults 65 or older who may need care themselves.

<sup>4</sup> Taxation policies are complex and their impact on household earnings may depend on various factors beyond level of income, including the presence of a dependent spouse, and children (Evans and Harkness 2010).

<sup>5</sup> Survey information, and sample sizes are listed in Supplemental Table 1.

<sup>6</sup> We exclude the self-employed because the working hours for self-employed workers are not consistently available across all the countries under study.

<sup>7</sup> Of course, the lagged effect may be longer, especially given our measurement of motherhood. Without longitudinal individual-level data, however, we believe that this is the best approach to take.

<sup>8</sup> For the Czech Republic, Italy and Canada, we use data from the 1994 survey because 2002 data was unavailable or because the survey date matched the LIS wave year more closely. These data are available through the Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences: <http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data/survey-data/issp/modules-study-overview/family-changing-gender-roles/2002/>. Data for Luxembourg is taken from the European Values Study.

<sup>9</sup> The measure of preference for full-time employment of mothers of preschoolers is not available for Luxembourg. While we include the maximum number of countries for which we have data in each model, we run jackknives to see whether including and excluding certain countries changes our results. There are no significant differences.

<sup>10</sup> Supplemental Table 2 presents country-level measures, including country-level control variables used in the robustness analysis.

<sup>11</sup> ILO data was supplemented by authors' own calculations based on LIS data where ILO data was unavailable.

<sup>12</sup> Due to data limitations, only mothers with children living in their household can be identified.

<sup>13</sup> In logistic models, the unexplained variance in the (latent) dependent variable is fixed. As a consequence, an increase in the explained part of the variance by the inclusion of explanatory variables, causes the total variance, and therefore the scale of the dependent variable to increase. The coefficients capturing the change in the dependent variable for a one-unit increase any explanatory variable will therefore also increase. In other words, the size of the coefficients depends on the degree of unobserved heterogeneity (Mood 2010). Interaction coefficients capturing group differences could only be meaningfully interpreted if we assumed that the unobserved heterogeneity is equal for the groups we compare.

<sup>14</sup> With the exception of Russia and Hungary, these differences in average working hours for mothers and childless women are statistically significant (t-tests,  $p < .001$ ).

<sup>15</sup> Raw coefficients from the multi-level regression models are available in Supplemental Tables 3 and 4.

<sup>16</sup> We test the model with a squared leave term against the model without a squared term. The model without the number of weeks of job protected leave squared fits the data significantly better (based on the Likelihood-ratio test, as well as the BIC and AIC).

<sup>17</sup> In contrast, the relationship between leave generosity, childcare enrollment, support for maternal employment and the gap in hours is robust to the exclusion of the Central and Eastern European countries.

<sup>18</sup> Supplemental Figures 1a – 1c show the findings of these robustness analyses for the relationship between the motherhood employment gap and policy/culture measures. Results for the motherhood hours gap are similar, and available upon request.

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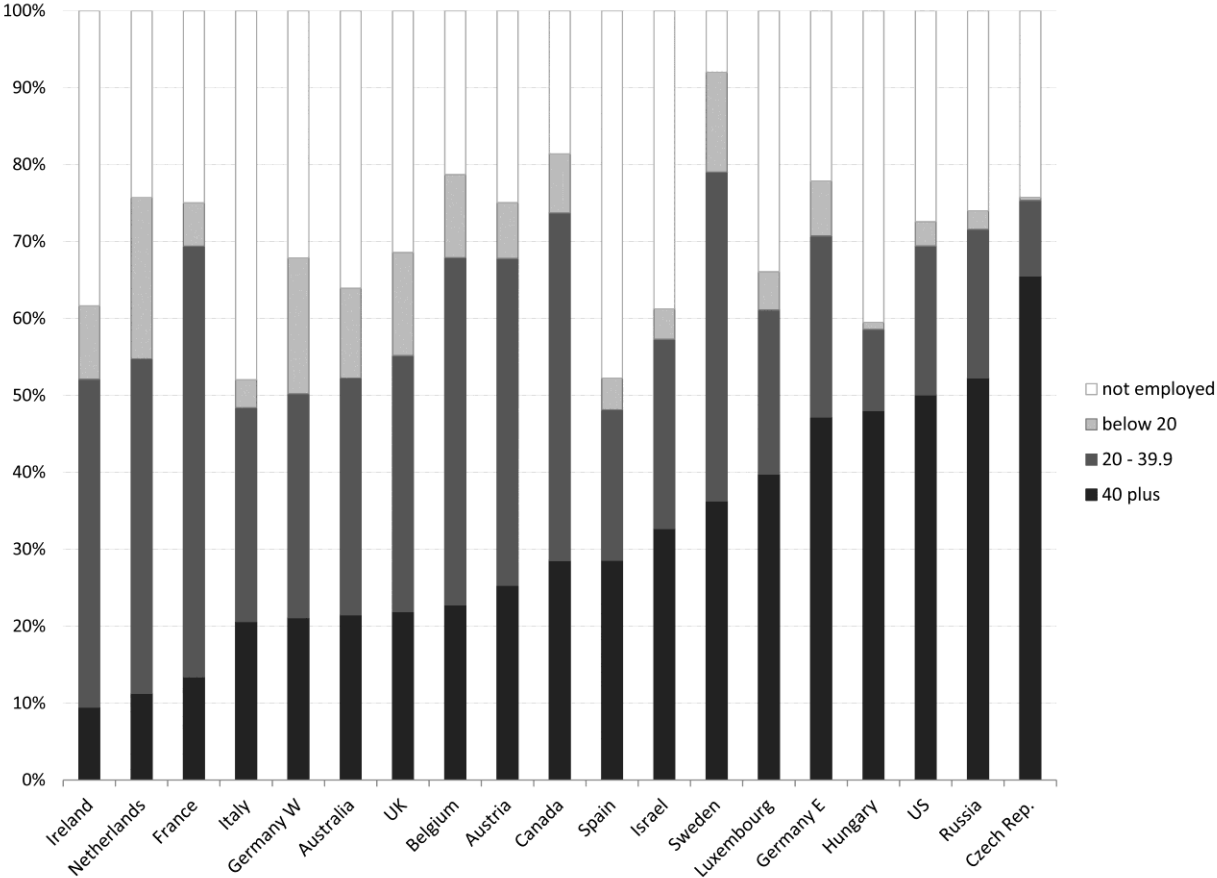
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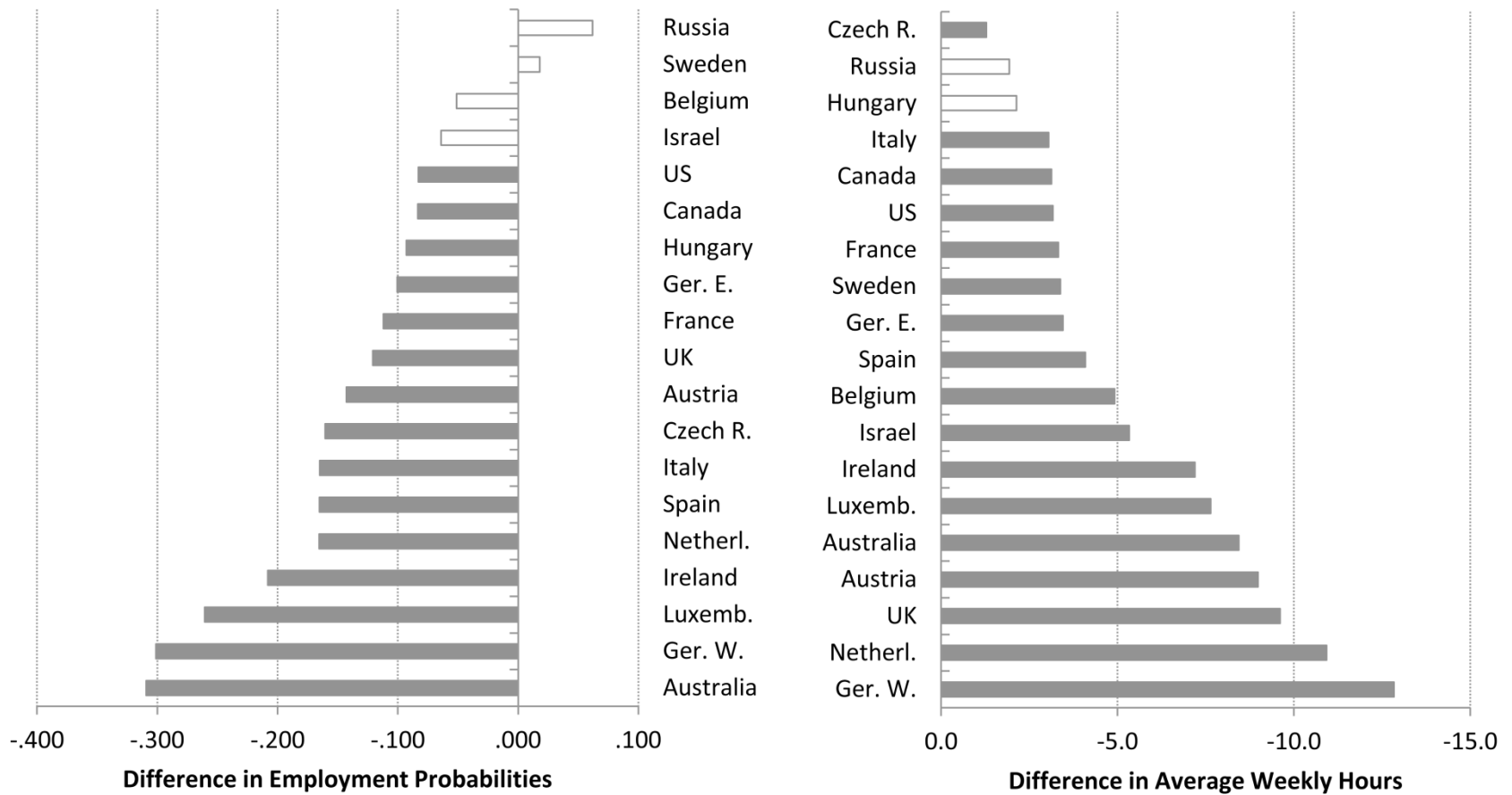
**Table 1. Individual Level Variables: Means and Standard Errors (in Parentheses)**

	Employment Rates		Weekly Working Hours		Partnered Relationship Status		Age		High Educ. Attainm.		Medium Educ. Attainm.		Low Educ. Attainm.		Other HH Labor Income in 2000 US\$		Non-Family Rel. Transfer Income in 2000 US\$	
	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.	Moms	Childl.
Austria	.721 (.449)	.896 (.306)	29.1 (11.0)	39.0 (6.8)	.900 (.300)	.590 (.490)	36.7 (5.6)	33.5 (6.5)	.090 (.290)	.250 (.430)	.710 (.460)	.670 (.470)	.200 (.400)	.080 (.280)	19,878 (14,839)	13,100 (11,902)	5,251 (4,389)	1,886 (4,567)
Australia	.563 (.496)	.867 (.340)	15.5 (16.9)	33.0 (15.7)	.776 (.417)	.623 (.485)	35.9 (5.2)	33.0 (5.6)	.150 (.357)	.312 (.464)	.306 (.461)	.308 (.462)	.543 (.498)	.380 (.486)	18065 (19592)	14112 (16454)	4,650 (4,422)	6,799 (5,002)
Belgium	.763 (.426)	.856 (.352)	32.2 (10.4)	38.3 (10.8)	.890 (.310)	.680 (.470)	37.1 (5.1)	33.0 (6.2)	.420 (.490)	.560 (.500)	.360 (.480)	.320 (.470)	.210 (.410)	.110 (.320)	21,416 (15,475)	13,668 (13,755)	5,458 (5,648)	2,522 (3,894)
Canada	.725 (.447)	.837 (.369)	33.4 (11.6)	37.0 (9.5)	.850 (.360)	.620 (.490)	36.6 (5.5)	33.7 (6.5)	.170 (.370)	.300 (.460)	.700 (.460)	.610 (.490)	.130 (.340)	.090 (.280)	24,175 (26,894)	16,220 (23,109)	3,861 (5,185)	1,953 (3,506)
Czech R.	.745 (.436)	.913 (.282)	40.7 (6.2)	42.1 (7.2)	.880 (.330)	.640 (.480)	35.7 (5.9)	34.9 (7.2)	.090 (.280)	.160 (.370)	.390 (.490)	.380 (.480)	.520 (.500)	.460 (.500)	5,118 (4,147)	3,326 (3,727)	920 (915)	296 (780)
France	.689 (.463)	.844 (.363)	33.0 (9.7)	36.5 (9.1)	.870 (.330)	.590 (.490)	36.5 (5.5)	32.6 (6.4)	.250 (.430)	.490 (.500)	.450 (.500)	.330 (.470)	.310 (.460)	.180 (.380)	15,157 (12,870)	8,934 (10,686)	4,733 (4,843)	1,755 (3,826)
Germ. E.	.775 (.418)	.886 (.319)	36.3 (12.1)	40.1 (12.1)	.860 (.340)	.640 (.480)	37.3 (5.3)	33.2 (6.7)	.360 (.480)	.410 (.490)	.580 (.490)	.550 (.500)	.060 (.240)	.040 (.190)	17,207 (13,909)	11,150 (12,731)	6,116 (5,110)	2,536 (4,014)
Germ. W.	.618 (.486)	.913 (.282)	24.3 (13.2)	38.7 (11.2)	.900 (.300)	.670 (.470)	36.7 (5.2)	33.5 (5.9)	.200 (.400)	.310 (.460)	.610 (.490)	.580 (.490)	.190 (.400)	.100 (.300)	28,160 (21,313)	18,478 (20,355)	4,722 (4,098)	1,443 (3,661)
Hungary	.696 (.461)	.767 (.426)	39.7 (9.6)	41.9 (8.7)	.920 (.270)	.680 (.470)	36.3 (5.8)	34.9 (6.9)	.180 (.390)	.260 (.440)	.330 (.470)	.320 (.470)	.490 (.500)	.420 (.500)	2,917 (2,633)	1,556 (1,871)	1,172 (986)	933 (1,202)
Ireland	.595 (.491)	.881 (.325)	28.2 (10.7)	37.5 (8.4)	.910 (.290)	.620 (.490)	37.3 (5.3)	32.5 (5.8)	.170 (.380)	.480 (.500)	.410 (.490)	.330 (.470)	.420 (.490)	.190 (.390)	20,215 (18,003)	15,920 (15,334)	3,572 (3,959)	1,949 (3,185)
Israel	.592 (.492)	.767 (.424)	35.9 (11.3)	40.9 (13.1)	.890 (.310)	.580 (.500)	35.6 (5.8)	31.5 (6.0)	.320 (.470)	.610 (.490)	.460 (.500)	.300 (.460)	.210 (.410)	.090 (.290)	20,174 (26,352)	15,312 (21,978)	5,170 (7,836)	2,418 (5,367)
Italy	.478 (.500)	.720 (.449)	33.8 (10.7)	36.6 (10.3)	.950 (.230)	.650 (.480)	37.6 (5.0)	34.8 (5.8)	.080 (.270)	.220 (.410)	.410 (.490)	.500 (.500)	.510 (.500)	.290 (.450)	10,678 (9,263)	7,390 (8,431)	932 (2,985)	1,791 (4,622)
Luxemb.	.565 (.496)	.922 (.268)	30.4 (12.3)	40.4 (7.4)	.920 (.270)	.660 (.470)	35.0 (5.5)	31.4 (5.5)	.180 (.390)	.420 (.500)	.450 (.500)	.450 (.500)	.370 (.480)	.130 (.330)	28,012 (18,620)	20,222 (19,148)	7,693 (6,615)	834 (3,570)
Netherl.	.719 (.449)	.919 (.272)	21.3 (10.5)	34.7 (9.3)	.920 (.280)	.720 (.450)	36.8 (5.2)	32.7 (6.0)	.230 (.420)	.430 (.500)	.520 (.500)	.460 (.500)	.250 (.440)	.110 (.310)	29,372 (17,737)	20,172 (16,585)	4,048 (4,704)	2,011 (4,262)
Russia	.809 (.393)	.772 (.421)	41.6 (13.0)	43.2 (12.6)	.830 (.370)	.540 (.500)	36.6 (5.8)	36.3 (7.0)	.540 (.500)	.610 (.490)	.360 (.480)	.280 (.450)	.100 (.310)	.110 (.310)	964 (1,738)	505 (1,200)	322 (1,045)	304 (422)
Spain	.445 (.497)	.718 (.451)	34.3 (10.7)	38.0 (9.7)	.950 (.210)	.810 (.390)	36.6 (5.4)	31.4 (5.0)	.160 (.370)	.330 (.470)	.280 (.450)	.380 (.490)	.560 (.500)	.290 (.450)	12,366 (10,252)	8,837 (8,355)	1,186 (2,599)	1,081 (2,773)
Sweden	.871 (.336)	.849 (.359)	31.8 (12.7)	34.3 (12.9)	.880 (.320)	.550 (.500)	36.5 (5.4)	32.5 (6.4)	.270 (.440)	.370 (.480)	.600 (.490)	.540 (.500)	.120 (.330)	.090 (.280)	26,086 (30,607)	14,169 (17,686)	9,308 (8,034)	3,700 (6,055)
UK	.635 (.481)	.857 (.350)	28.6 (13.3)	40.5 (9.8)	.760 (.430)	.700 (.460)	35.9 (5.4)	33.8 (6.2)	.130 (.330)	.320 (.460)	.590 (.490)	.520 (.500)	.290 (.450)	.160 (.370)	26,236 (38,037)	23,948 (28,582)	6,790 (7,483)	1,761 (4,448)
US	.693 (.461)	.819 (.385)	37.0 (10.6)	41.3 (9.6)	.810 (.390)	.600 (.490)	36.1 (5.7)	34.7 (6.4)	.340 (.470)	.500 (.500)	.520 (.500)	.420 (.490)	.140 (.350)	.070 (.260)	38,963 (49,625)	27,903 (41,004)	2,924 (5,828)	2,025 (5,910)

**Figure 1. Percentage of Women Aged 25 to 45 Working 40 or More Hours per Week, between 20 and 39.9, below 20, and Zero Hours per Week**

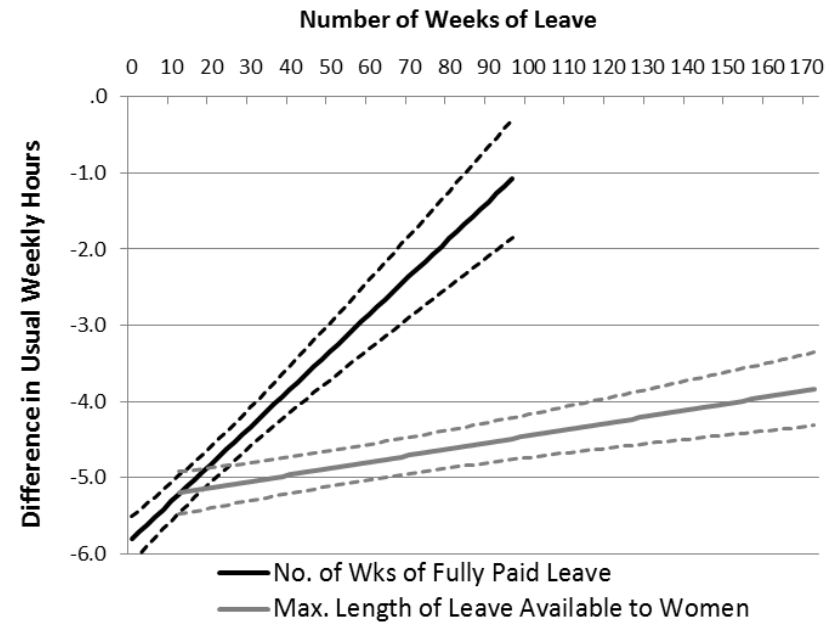
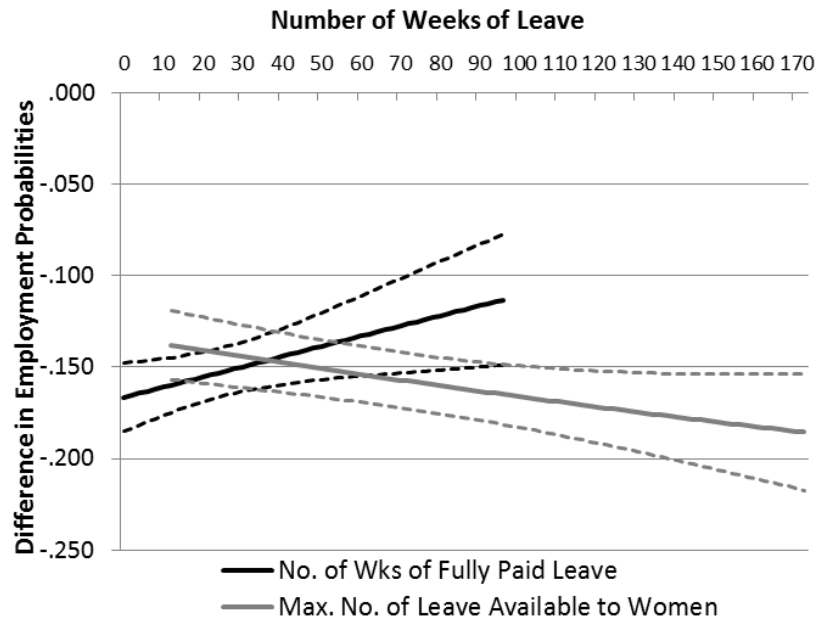


**Figure 2. Difference in Predicted Employment Probabilities between Mothers and Childless Women, Controlling for Individual and Household Characteristics**



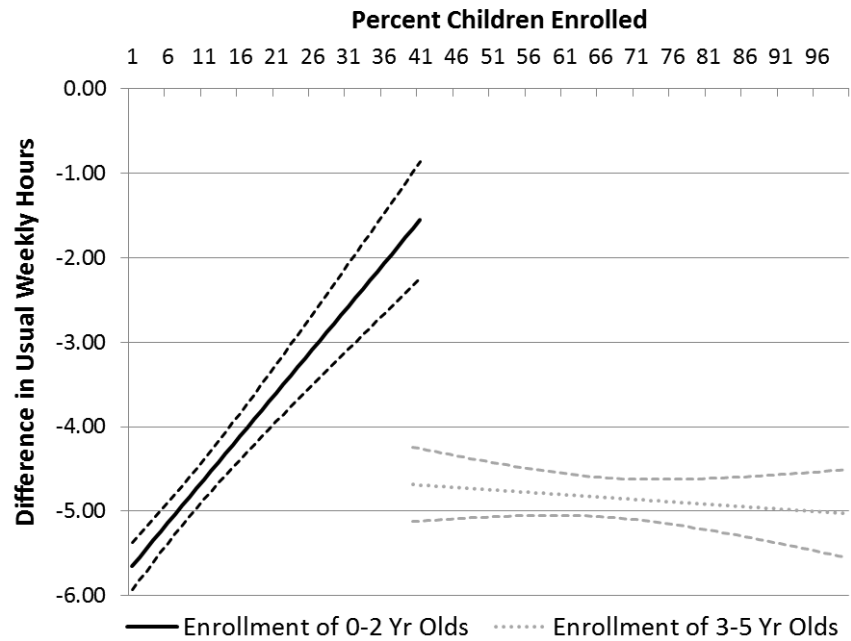
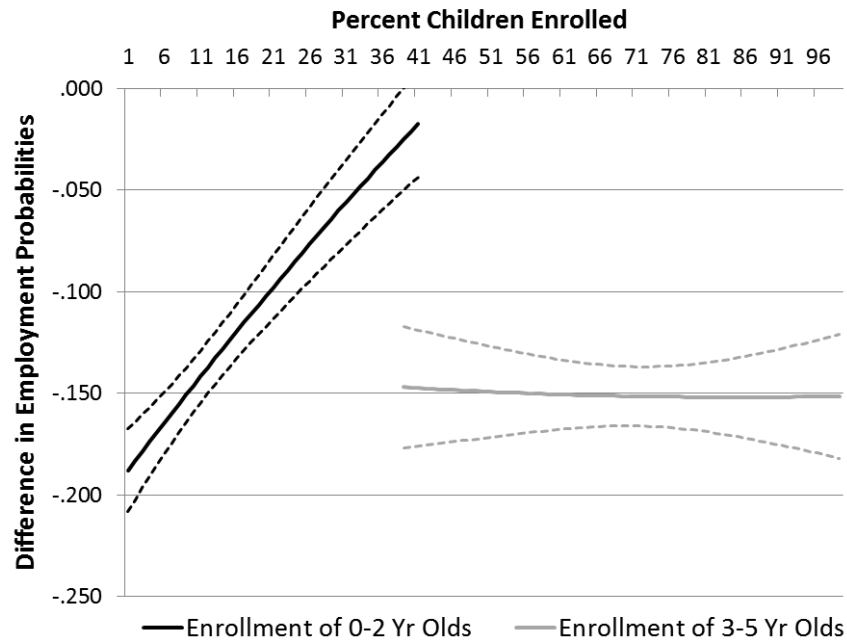
Note: Significant differences ( $p < .05$ ) are represented by solid bars.

**Figure 3. Relationship between Maternity/Parental Leave Generosity and the Maximum Number of Weeks of Leave Available to Women and the Gap in Employment Between Mothers and Childless Women**

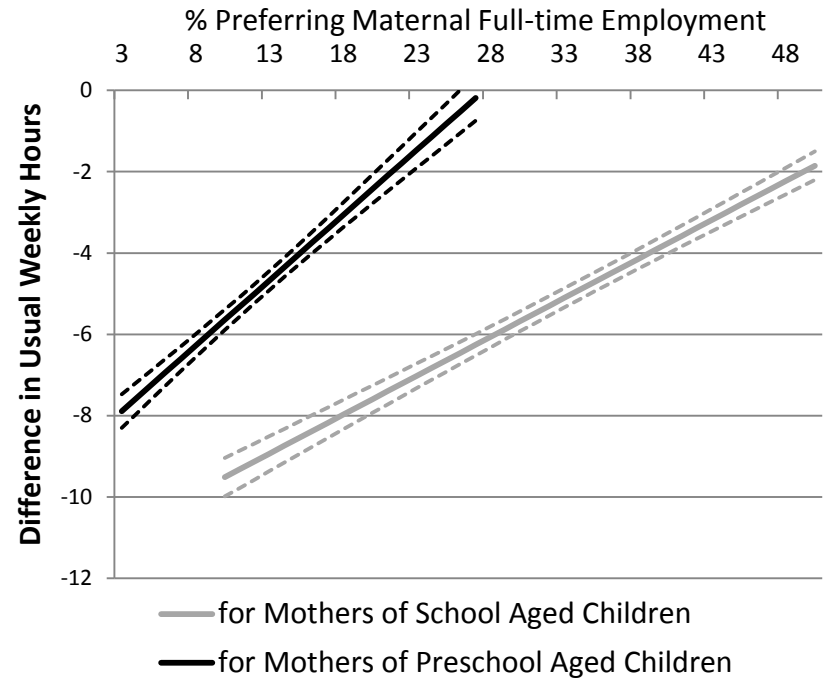
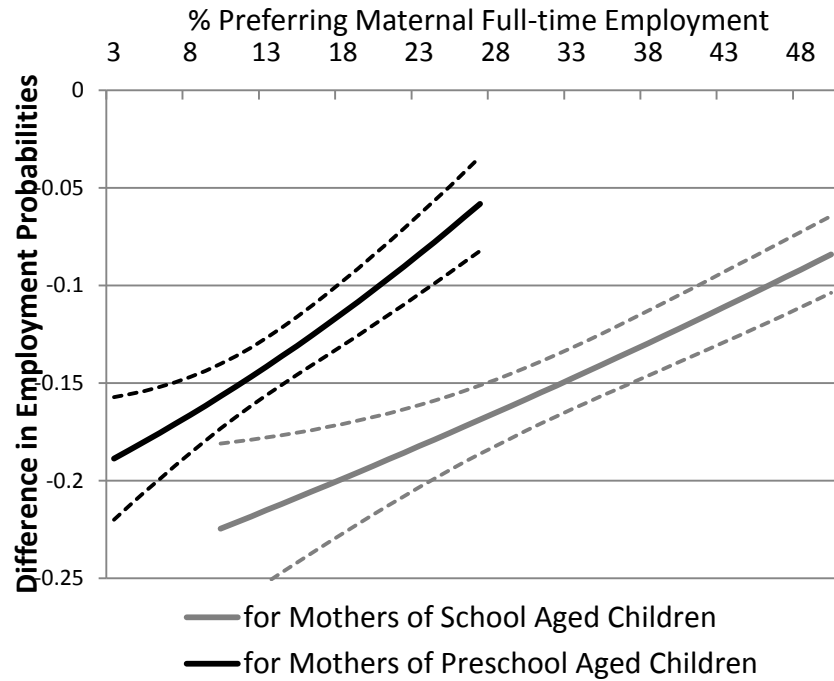




**Figure 4. Relationship between Enrollment in Publicly Supported Childcare and the Gap in Employment Between Mothers and Childless Women**



**Figure 5. Relationship between Attitudes Towards Employment of Mothers of Preschoolers and School Aged Children and the Gap in Employment Between Mothers and Childless Women**



**Supplemental Table 1. Origins of individual level data and sample sizes**

Country	Original Data Source	Survey Year	Full LIS Sample	Sub-sample I <i>25-45 year olds</i>	Sub-sample II <i>employed 25-45 year olds</i>
Australia	Survey of Income and Housing Costs	2001	13,183	2,267	1,450
Austria	European Community Household Panel (ECHP)	2000	6,845	770	581
Belgium	Panel Study of Belgian Households	2000	6,935	994	773
Canada	Survey of Labour & Income Dynamics	2000	72,850	9,745	7,887
Czech Republic	Czech Microcensus	1996	71,836	8,964	6,792
France	Household Budget Survey	2000	25,803	3,588	2,662
Germany East	German Social Economic Panel Study	2000	6,776	926	717
Germany West	German Social Economic Panel Study	2000	22,075	3,167	2,164
Hungary	Household Monitor Survey	1999	5,517	592	334
Ireland	Living in Ireland Survey / ECHP	2000	9,131	889	564
Israel	Household Expenditure Survey	2001	19,555	2,299	1,408
Italy	Survey on Household Income and Wealth	2000	22,268	2,307	1,188
Luxembourg	Socio Economic Panel	2000	6,240	973	638
Netherlands	Socio-Economic Panel	1999	12,445	2,011	1,571
Russia	Russia Longitudinal Monitoring Survey	2000	9,248	1,198	883
Spain	European Community Household Panel	2000	14,320	1,602	836
Sweden	Income Distribution Survey	2000	33,139	4,000	3,586
United Kingdom	Family Resources Survey	1999	59,010	8,181	5,614
United States	Current Population Survey	2000	128,821	17,164	12,434

**Supplemental Table 2. Country-Level Variables**

	Childcare Enrollment of 0-2 Year Olds	Childcare Enrollment of 3-5 Year Olds	Weeks of Fully Paid Leave	Maximum Length Job Protected Leave	Preference for Full-time Employment of Mothers of Preschoolers	Preference for Full-time Employment of Mothers of School Aged Children	Women and Men should contribute	Public Sector Emp.	GDP per Capita	Male Unemp. Rate	Taxation of second earner's income
Australia	13	41	0	52	3.5	18.0	44.5	16.4	19,053	7.0	32.0
Austria	8	77	24	85	4.3	11.0	79.4	27.4	24,194	3.4	29.4
Belgium	20	99	4	28	16.7	31.1	53.7	31.2	22,623	5.8	52.6
Canada	5	53	6	25	18.4	50.5	57.4	19.0	23,559	6.9	35.9
Czech Rep.	1	76	32	162	6.4	22.6	80.9	22.2	6,011	3.4	29.9
France	22	99	53	159	12.0	31.3	73.1	29.5	22,547	7.1	25.9
Germany E.	34	87	13	161	16.9	36.0	88.2	23.2	23,114	7.6	52.9
Germany W.	5	75	13	161	3.4	9.6	63.8	22.0	23,114	7.6	52.9
Hungary	10	88	73	159	6.5	31.2	80.5	36.7	4,692	7.7	30.1
Ireland	4	56	0	14	11.8	27.6	66.0	18.0	25,313	4.6	30.5
Israel	19	79	0	64	27.3	41.5	79.3	17.0	18,423	8.9	NA
Italy	6	85	8	48	5.1	17.1	80.7	15.5	19,269	8.3	38.8
Luxembourg	4	68	23	42	NA	NA	40.6	11.1	46,277	1.5	28.2
Netherlands	6	68	0	16	17.8	31.0	38.5	25.3	26,033	2.7	40.2
Russia	21	64	12	165	7.2	26.0	75.7	37.9	1,775	7.8	NA
Spain	5	77	0	161	21.0	40.7	88.6	25.7	14,421	9.6	23.3
Sweden	41	86	50	64	16.4	38.1	82.5	33.7	27,286	6.3	34.1
UK	1	71	0	18	4.9	20.0	56.6	19.2	24,993	6.7	24.4
US	6	53	0	12	14.4	43.0	56.9	15.8	34,600	3.9	29.7

**Supplemental Table 3. Raw Coefficients from Multilevel Models Estimating the Effect of Policy Measures on the Gap in the Log Odds of Employment Between Mothers and Childless Women Aged 25-45, Net of Individual-level Controls**

	Enrol. of 0-2 Yr. Olds		Enrol. of 3-5 Yr. Olds		Leave Generosity		Length of Leave		Pref. for Mom's FT Empl. (A)*		Pref. for Mom's FT Empl. (B)*	
<b>Individual-Level Covariates</b>												
Mother	-1.079	***	-.644	***	-.895	***	-.754	***	-1.362	***	-1.715	***
	.033		.110		.033		.034		.056		.073	
Partnered	.039		.051	*	.048	+	.054	*	.055	*	.058	*
	.026		.026		.026		.026		.026		.026	
Age	.045	***	.046	***	.045	***	.046	***	.046	***	.047	***
	.002		.002		.002		.002		.002		.002	
High Education	1.334	***	1.334	***	1.335	***	1.337	***	1.348	***	1.347	***
	.028		.028		.028		.028		.028		.028	
Medium Educ.	.843	***	.844	***	.845	***	.844	***	.856	***	.854	***
	.022		.022		.022		.022		.022		.022	
Other HH Labor Inc.	-.004	***	-.004	***	-.004	***	-.004	***	-.004	***	-.004	***
	.000		.000		.000		.000		.000		.000	
Non-Family Transfer Inc.	.000	***	.000	***	.000	***	.000	***	.000	***	.000	***
	.000		.000		.000		.000		.000		.000	
Presence of Other Adult in HH	.174	***	.193	***	.187	***	.197	***	.203	***	.216	***
	.046		.046		.046		.046		.046		.046	
<b>Country-Level Covariates and Cross-Level Interactions</b>												
Enrollment of 0-2 Yr. Olds	-.005											
	.008											
Mother * Enroll. 0-2 Yr Olds	.024	***										
	.003											
Enrollment of 3-5 Yr. Olds			.007									
			.006									
Mother * Enroll. 3-5 Yr Olds			-.004	*								
			.002									
Leave Generosity					.007	*						
					.003							
Mother * Leave Gen.					.000							
					.001							
Max. Length of Leave							.003	+				
							.001					
Mother * Length of Leave							-.003	***				
							.000					
Preference Measure A*									-.041	**		
									.014			
Mother * Pref. Measure A*									.039	***		
									.004			
Preference Measure B*											-.020	*
											.008	
Mother * Pref. Measure B*											.025	***
											.002	
Intercept	-.645	***	-1.142	**	-.856	***	-.825	***	-.195		-.019	
	.136		.440		.137		.163		.197		.274	
N	71637		71637		71637		71637		70664		70664	

Note: Standard errors in parentheses; + p<0.10, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001, two-tailed test

\*Preference Measure A = % of Respondents preferring maternal full-time employment when children preschool aged

\*Preference Measure B = % of Respondents preferring maternal full-time employment when children school aged

**Supplemental Table 4. Raw Coefficients from Multilevel Models Estimating the Effect of Policy Measures on the Gap in Working Hours Between Mothers and Childless Women Aged 25-45, Net of Individual-level Controls**

	Enrol. of 0-2 Yr. Olds		Enrol. of 3-5 Yr. Olds		Leave Generosity		Length of Leave		Pref. for Mom's FT Empl. (A)*		Pref. for Mom's FT empl. (B)*	
<b>Individual-Level Covariates</b>												
Mother	-5.750	***	-4.459	***	-5.810	***	-5.308	***	-8.853	***	-11.426	***
	(.150)		(.484)		(.154)		(.156)		(.257)		(.319)	
Partnered	-1.137	***	-1.080	***	-1.146	***	-1.103	***	-1.095	***	-1.072	***
	(.129)		(.129)		(.129)		(.129)		(.129)		(.129)	
Age	.037	***	.039	***	.037	***	.037	***	.043	***	.049	***
	(.008)		(.009)		(.008)		(.009)		(.009)		(.009)	
High Education	1.773	***	1.770	***	1.768	***	1.761	***	1.809	***	1.817	***
	(.156)		(.156)		(.156)		(.156)		(.157)		(.157)	
Medium Educ.	.914	***	.924	***	.932	***	.930	***	.900	***	.879	***
	(.134)		(.134)		(.134)		(.134)		(.135)		(.134)	
Other HH Labor Inc.	-.010	***	-.010	***	-.009	***	-.009	***	-.010	***	-.011	***
	(.002)		(.002)		(.002)		(.002)		(.002)		(.002)	
Non-Family Transfer Inc.	.000	*	.000	*	.000	*	.000	*	.000	**	.000	**
	(.000)		(.000)		(.000)		(.000)		(.000)		(.000)	
Inverse Mills Ratio	-4.741	***	-4.874	***	-4.806	***	-4.886	***	-4.565	***	-4.450	***
	(.227)		(.227)		(.227)		(.227)		(.229)		(.228)	
<b>Country-Level Covariates and Cross-Level Interactions</b>												
Enrollment of 0-2 Yr. Olds	-.051											
	(.094)											
Mother * Enroll. 0-2 Yr Olds	.102	***										
	(.010)											
Enrollment of 3-5 Yr. Olds			.040									
			(.067)									
Mother * Enroll. 3-5 Yr Olds			-.006									
			(.007)									
Leave Generosity					.032							
					(.037)							
Mother * Leave Gen.					.049	***						
					(.005)							
Max. Length of Leave							.026	+				
							(.015)					
Mother * Length of Leave							.009	***				
							(.002)					
Preference Measure A*									-.250			
									(.160)			
Mother * Pref. Measure A*									.321	***		
									(.018)			
Preference Measure B*											-.044	
											(.097)	
Mother * Pref. Measure B*											.191	***
											(.009)	
Intercept	39.277	***	35.960	***	37.565	***	36.525	***	41.747	***	40.377	***
	(1.573)		(5.072)		(1.497)		(1.558)		(2.234)		(3.068)	
N	52082		52082		52082		52082		51444		51444	

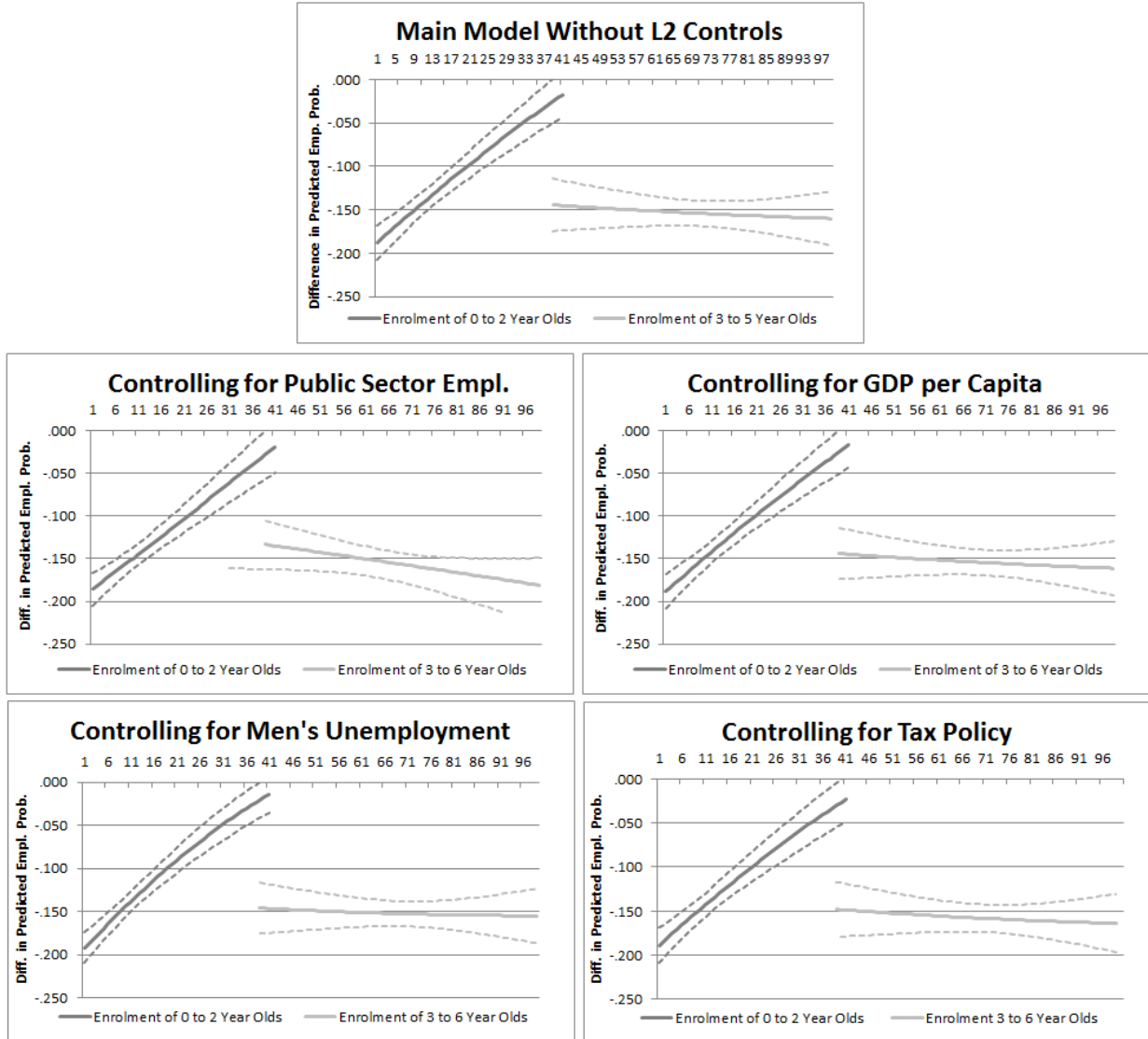
Note: Standard errors in parentheses; + p<0.10, \* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01, \*\*\* p<0.001, two-tailed test

\*Preference Measure A = % of Respondents preferring maternal full-time employment when children preschool aged

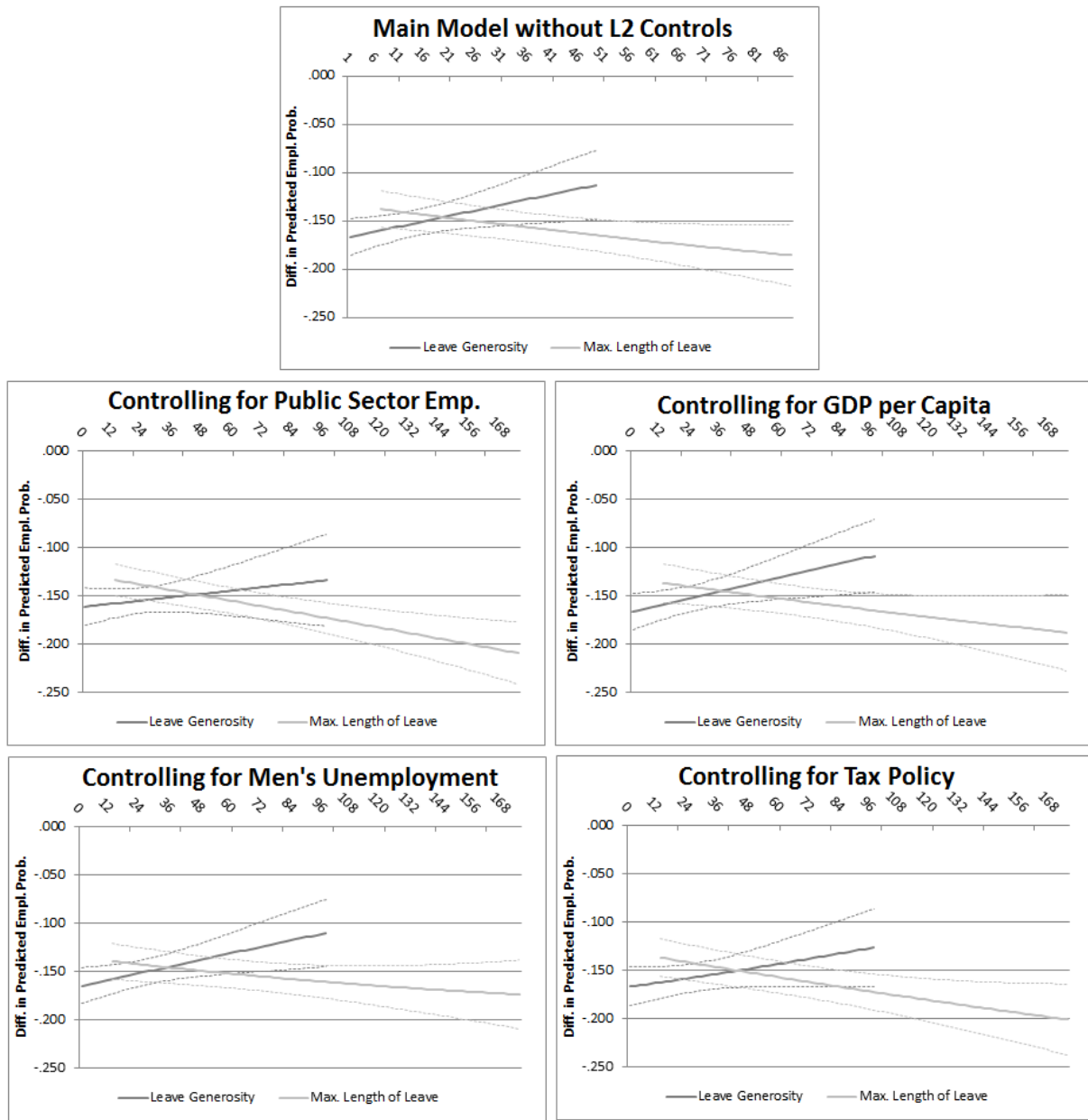
\*Preference Measure B = % of Respondents preferring maternal full-time employment when children school aged

**Supplemental Figure 1. Robustness Analysis: Difference in Employment Probabilities between Mothers and Childless Women, Net of Individual-Level Controls and Each of the Country-Level Control Measures**

**Figure 1a. Percentage of Children Enrolled in Publicly Supported Childcare**



**Figure 1b. Maternity and Parental Leave Policies**





**Figure 1c. Measures of Attitudes Towards Maternal Employment: Percentage of Respondents Preferring Maternal Full-Time Employment When Children Preschool Aged, and School Aged**

