

Exploring leave policy preferences: A comparison of Austria, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United States ^[1]

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Abstract

This study analyses preferences regarding leave length, gender division of leave, and leave financing in four countries with different welfare-state and leave regimes. Embedded in a gender perspective, institutional, self-interest, and ideational theoretical approaches are used to explore the factors shaping individuals' preferences (ISSP 2012 data). Findings show dramatic cross country differences, suggesting the institutional dimension is most strongly related to leave policy preferences. Self-interest and values concerning gender relations and state responsibility are also important correlates. The study identifies mismatches between leave preferences, entitlements, and uptake, with implications for policy reform and the gendered division of parenting.

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