

Family policies in Russia and Ukraine in comparative perspective

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Abstract

This study analyzes the institutional setting of family policies in the two most populous countries of the former Soviet Union – Russia and Ukraine – in comparison with longstanding welfare democracies as well as post-communist countries. Against the background of low birth rates and the identification of this demographic process as detrimental by politicians and policy makers in both Russia and Ukraine and as research has demonstrated that family policies can influence childbearing decisions it is important to analyze the institutional structure of family policies in a more systematically comparative perspective. Large scale institutional comparisons of family policies in Russia and Ukraine with longstanding welfare states have so far been lacking in comparative welfare state research. Also other East European post-communist countries have seldom been analyzed in such systematic manner. Our analyses are based on a social rights approach that captures the content of legislation instead of only focusing on social expenditures. We also use a multidimensional family policy approach and strive to locate the wider structure of contemporary Russian and Ukrainian family policies in relation to other countries. The data collected for this purpose include conditions, duration and replacement rates for a wide range of cash family policy transfers; we also bring in fiscal family policy benefits and public daycare for the youngest children into the analysis.

To what extent can public family policy programs influence the well-being and capabilities of citizens in modern welfare states? This issue has been extensively debated in comparative welfare state research and conclusions largely depend on what aspects of family policy we refer to; and how we specify links between different policies and the socioeconomic and demographic outcomes related to gender divisions of employment, care, and childbearing.

In Western countries family policies have typically been expanded during a time when other parts of the welfare state have been subject to retrenchment. Since the early 1970s this expansion does not appear to have been linear, but instead seems to be multidimensional, to large extent reflecting different power balances and underlying motives of policy makers. The different policy choices are in turn related to partly different intended and unintended outcomes, not least concerning female employment and fertility. In post-communist countries, including Russia and Ukraine, family policy trajectories have been depicted as somewhat different. Family policies were in the latter context fairly well-developed during the Soviet era, but have in several ways been subject to extensive restructuring after the transition from state socialism.

This study analyzes the institutional settings of family policies in Russia and Ukraine – the two most populous countries of the former Soviet Union – and places their family policies in the wider context of the longstanding welfare states and other post-communist countries. Against the background of low birth rates and the identification of demographic processes as detrimental by policy makers and scholars alike in Russia and Ukraine and as research has demonstrated that family policies are very likely to influence childbearing decisions it is important to study the institutional make-up of family policy legislation in Russia and Ukraine from a wider comparative perspective.

Our analyses are based on a social rights approach that captures the content of different legislated policies instead of focusing only on social expenditures. The data we have collected for this purpose include conditions, duration and replacement rates for a wide range of cash family policy transfers; we also bring in fiscal family policy benefits and public daycare for the youngest children into the analysis. In total 33 countries are covered,

of which most are members of the European Union (EU).¹ With this data we aim to, in the first step, comparatively evaluate the position of Russia and Ukraine concerning separate family policies. In the second step we use a multidimensional policy perspective to locate contemporary Russian and Ukrainian family policies in the broader space made up by different family policy dimensions. Such systematically comparative analyses of Russia and Ukraine have so far been lacking in the comparative welfare state literature, where the main research focus typically has been on welfare states with a long history of democratic rule.

The study is structured as follows. Next, we give a brief overview of the development of family policies in Russia and Ukraine before and after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Thereafter we discuss different attempts drawing on family policies in comparative welfare state research, which is followed by a discussion of data and methodology. In the empirical section we first analyze separate family policy institutions in Russia and Ukraine from a comparative perspective, and second combine these policy institutions along different policy dimensions to evaluate the position of both countries in a multidimensional space. The study is concluded with a discussion.

Family policies in Ukraine and Russia

Russia and Ukraine share the Soviet heritage of family policies. According to Teplova (2007), the development of family policies in the Soviet Union changed according to shifting ideological goals and the perception of women's main role in society, as mothers or as workers. A few months after the 1917 revolution several decrees were issued dealing with social insurance of the population, or rather of workers, amongst them a decree guaranteeing insurance in case of pregnancy (Iarskaia-Smirnova and Romanov 2009). Only a few years later the rights of female workers were extended to include vacations and financial support at childbirth and the right to collective childcare. During the first post-revolutionary years the rights given to women and mothers often only held in theory, while

¹ Besides Russia and Ukraine the following 31 countries are included: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, the Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, the United States.

during the years of the New Economic Policy (1921-27) conditions improved and the practice of social policy increasingly was on par with the intentions stated in the law.

Stalin's reign made industrial growth the main priority of government. The increase of the labor force was high on the agenda and social policy was adjusted according to that goal. Measures taken were, for example, the abolishment of unemployment benefits and the tight coupling of all benefits and rights to an uninterrupted employment record, amongst them benefits and rights connected to pregnancy and childbirth. Women were seen as potential labor force and thus their employment was encouraged, although kindergartens and nurseries were initially not well developed. As birth rates later decreased, the role of women as mothers was again emphasized, although without relinquishing the demand on women to be in employment (Iarskaia-Smirnova and Romanov 2009).

At first financial aid for families with children was aimed at large families; in 1936 family allowances were given to families with 7 children or more. The new family law of 1944 extended family allowances to families with at least three children and introduced both a lump-sum maternity grant from the third child upwards and monthly allowances from the fourth child on until the child's fifth birthday (Heer and Brydon 1966, Heer 1977). Moreover, maternity leave was extended from 9 to 11 weeks, and medals for mothers with many children were established (Zakharov 2008).

As all benefits were reduced by half in 1948 and as those new lower amounts still were in place several decades later, the financial help to families to a high degree diminished in relation to average wage increases (Heer 1977). Thus, while Zakharov (2008) describes Soviet family ideology as pro-natalist, Heer and Brydon (1966) regard actual family policies as pro-natalist only in theory, but not in practice. The latter authors in fact describe family policies as more or less anti-natalist due to legalized abortion, the encouragement of female labor force participation and diminutive spending on housing, combined with the fact that provisions of childcare facilities were inadequate and of poor quality (Heer and Brydon 1966).

According to Teplova (2007), Soviet family policy since the 1960's was simultaneously trying to achieve high fertility rates and high female labor force participation. Paid maternity leave was expanded gradually both in duration and wage compensation. In the beginning of

the 1960's maternity benefits were payable for 8 weeks before and 8 weeks after childbirth and 2/3 up to 100 percent of the wage was replaced depending on continuous employment record (Social Security Bulletin 1959). In the 1970's financial assistance for families with low income was introduced, maternity leave was paid at 100 percent of former wage from 1973, and more compensated days for care of a sick child were given (Simanis 1972).

During Soviet times, family policy measures were funded from general revenue and by employers, no contributions were deducted from workers' wages. In the late 1980's reforms were adopted by the Gorbachev government in order to introduce a more pluralistic approach to income security and to "modernize" social security. The ambition was also to improve family allowances by raising their amounts, linking them to minimum wages, adjusting them according to inflation, and extending coverage. Several options for childcare leave were introduced; for example paid maternity leave was extendable until the child was 18 months, and unpaid leave was given until the child's third birthday. The implementation of reforms was problematic as the break-up of the Soviet Union was near and revenues collected by state governments often were not sent to the Union government but instead used locally (Liu 1993).

Since the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 the development of family policy in Russia and Ukraine appears to have diverged somewhat although the countries were subject to similar pressures; with the turmoil of transformation, privatization of enterprises, and rising unemployment affecting citizens' social rights in both countries (Teplova 2007). According to Zakharov (2008), changes in family policy during the 1980's lead to a short-term baby boom in Russia which was mostly due to women giving birth to children earlier than anticipated or catching up with previously postponed births. During the economic crises of the 1990's the real value of family policy measures sometimes decreased considerably and simultaneously fertility rates plunged to very low levels. While there was some policy continuity, neo-familialist motives also affected policy development at the same time as childcare leave was expanded to fathers already in 1992 (Teplova 2007). Putin's speech to the nation in 2006 exhibited clear pro-natalist intentions. Not only were benefits increased but as the most important measure the so-called maternity capital was introduced in 2007, giving mothers the right to a non-monetary benefit worth around

250 000 roubles from the second child on (Zakharov 2008). Another development worth mentioning is the considerable reduction in the number of childcare facilities. In 1990 the number of kindergartens and nurseries in Russia was 87.9 thousand (Teplova 2007), a number that had decreased to 46.5 thousand in the year 2005 (Federal State Statistics Service 2010, p.361).

In Ukraine there has been a family policy expansion since 1991, although budget constraints, mismanagement and complicated application processes sometimes impede the actual benefit take-up (Perelli-Harris 2008). Perelli-Harris (2008) has described Ukrainian family policies as “one of the most generous but least effective family policies in the world” (p.1167). Although benefits increased and leave regulations were expanded, the amount spent on family policy was still relatively small. Bureaucracy may here hinder the effective implementation of the changes introduced to family policy and therefore affect the take-up of social rights (Perelli-Harris 2008). Also in Ukraine the number of childcare facilities has been severely reduced since independence. Between the years 1990 and 2005 the number of kindergartens and nurseries decreased, from around 25 thousand to 15 thousand (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2011, p.7).

Even though research has been conducted regarding the recent development of family policies in each of these two countries, there is great need for more systematic comparisons to evaluate the extent of different family policies in Russia and Ukraine also compared to other welfare democracies.

Family policy typologies and dimensions

When welfare states have been analyzed in the comparative welfare state literature different analytical approaches have been used to account for cross-national variation. The earliest such attempts categorized welfare states into different broader regimes that reflected different combinations of causal factors behind welfare states, institutional structures of social policies, as well as the outcomes of welfare state organization. Esping-Andersen’s (1990) seminal regime typology outlining three worlds of welfare capitalism is here perhaps the most well-known example. Later developments of this typology added new “worlds of welfare” such as the Southern European welfare regime (Ferrera 1996) and

the more recently democratized countries of Eastern Europe and the Baltic States (Deacon 1993). From a gender perspective the regime approach has also been developed in the direction of bringing in the combination of family policies and their gendered outcomes as a basis for welfare state categorization (Lewis 1992; Siaroff 1994).

While regime approaches are sensitive to qualitative differences between broader welfare state structures, and have proven useful for broad descriptions of welfare states, they also have some limitations when we are interested in the institutional content of welfare states and when we wish to study the causal links between policies and outcomes. One reason for such shortcomings is that regime typologies typically are based on an undifferentiated mix of causal factors, institutions and outcomes. Moreover, when regime labels are attached to countries we cannot sufficiently account for variations within regimes; and perhaps more importantly, regime labels have a static element to them that is insensitive to socio-political change.

When analyzing gender-related outcomes alternative approaches have in different ways attempted to bring in family policy institutions into the analysis to increase the explanatory power by not mixing in driving forces or the outcomes of policies that we are interested to explain. Sometimes such approaches draw on indicators of single policies and link them to outcomes. At other times different family policies are added together to measure the degree of “woman-friendliness” or “family-friendliness” of welfare states (Gornick et al 1996; Gornick and Meyers 2003; Mandel and Semyonov 2006). Such unidimensional perspectives have the advantage of viewing welfare states as matters of degree and not only of kind and may therefore be useful when analyzing differences within regimes. But one-dimensional institutional perspectives also have some clear limitations when we are interested in the processes where seemingly similar institutions generate opposite outcomes. In family policy this is common where some benefits are designed to sustain high gender divisions of labor and other institutions support gender equality.

A third approach has also been developed to analyze welfare states from gender perspective, combining the advantages of the two above described approaches; being based purely on family policy institutions and not bringing in outcomes in the basis of categorization, thereby at the same time accounting for qualitative and multidimensional

aspects of policies. The latter approach is thus at the same time sensitive to policy multidimensionality, policy change and within-regime variation. Sainsbury's (1996) categorization of countries into male breadwinner and individual policy models on the basis of multidimensionality of family policy institutions, is an early attempt to create such a typology. Using a similar perspective in the systematic analysis of 18 longstanding welfare states Korpi (2000) discerns two family policy dimensions; one sustaining traditional family patterns, through lower flat-rate cash and fiscal policies; and another dimension supporting more gender equal divisions of paid work through public daycare for the youngest children and earnings-related parental leave benefits. Depending on the degree of these dimensions, countries can be said to have different family policy models.

Korpi et al (2010) later added a third policy dimension, dual-carer support, which indicates the degree to which fathers are supported as carers through parental leave benefits. Dual-earner and dual-carer support dimensions are empirically, however, highly positively correlated. Countries with high dual-earner and dual-carer support but low traditional family support have so-called earner-carer models of family policy. Countries with high traditional family support but low support on other dimensions have traditional family models. Countries with low support on all family policy dimensions have market-oriented family policy models. Ferrarini (2006) outlines a fourth potential model, with high degrees of more gender egalitarian as well as more traditional family policies – a mixed or contradictory family policy model – which may be underway in several countries.

Earlier studies bringing in the family policies of the more recent democracies in Eastern and Southern Europe do of course exist (Rostgaard 2004, Szelewa and Polakowski 2008, Thévenon 2008, Saxonberg and Sirovátka 2006, Ferrarini and Sjöberg 2010, Billingsley and Ferrarini 2011, Bäckman and Ferrarini 2010). What so far has been lacking is a more systematic comparison that brings in a larger number of countries, including also Russia and Ukraine, into a coherent institutional framework. Before carrying out analyses of separate policies in Russia and Ukraine from a comparative perspective, and thereafter integrating these policies in a multidimensional framework, we will next pay some attention to methodological and data issues.

Data and method

In order to enable comparative analyses of both family policy institutions and their outcomes a first crucial step is to collect comparable institutional family policy indicators. By doing this we can begin comparing family policies of Russia and Ukraine with other countries and evaluate policies along broader policy dimensions. We here build on the long tradition of comparing social rights (e.g. Esping-Andersen 1990, Esping-Andersen and Korpi 1986, Korpi 1987). The social rights perspective aims to measure the content of policies through the generosity of different cash and fiscal benefits instead of using aggregate expenditures that do not capture the structure of legislative set-ups. This research has resulted in a database, the Social Citizenship Indicator Program (SCIP), containing institutional information on social insurances for 18 OECD countries. This data on the older welfare states is in the framework of the newly established Social Policy Indicator Database (SPIN) expanded to include also the new Eastern European membership countries of the European Union. Our aim is to further extend this comparison to Russia and Ukraine regarding social rights in connection with childbirth and childrearing. When finished up to 36 countries may be included in the analysis of contemporary family policies. In the current study we have access to data from 2005 for 33 countries.

Our analysis compares family policies in Russia, Ukraine and other countries with respect to conditions and duration for earlier stated kinds of family policy provisions as well as calculated benefit levels. Family policy transfers are based on a model family approach, where we calculate benefits for two-parent households with two minor children. Before the receipt of earnings-related parental leave benefits for the youngest child, the receiving parent has been employed earning an average production worker's wage. For the receipt of fiscal and cash flat-rate and lump-sum benefits we assume that one parent is a homemaker and that the other parent is full-time employed. All benefits are for reasons of comparability estimated net of income taxes, and the level of benefits is in percent of an average after-tax production worker's wage. Not only family benefits but also publicly provided daycare especially for young children, 0-2 years, will be taken into account in the comparison as this can be argued to be an integral part of dual-earner support, giving especially women the

possibility to an early return to the labor market and thus supporting the successful combination of paid work and childrearing.

Family policies in Russia and Ukraine in comparative perspective

In this section we first analyze separate family policies in Russia and Ukraine in 2005 as compared to other countries and thereafter evaluate which type of broader family policy orientation Russia and Ukraine have according to the position along separate family policy dimensions. We begin with the institutional characteristics of separate leave programs and continue with the analysis of different child and family allowances as well as the coverage of public daycare for the youngest children.

Leave programs

Parental leave programs described here are earnings-related parental insurance and flat-rate childcare leave allowances – benefits that may be used as alternative or complementary family policy strategies. To some extent such benefits have been designed with very different motives in relation to gender distributions of paid and unpaid work. Earnings-related parental leave benefits are part of a dual-earner family policy dimension, while childcare leave allowances are traditional family policies, which typically are not based on previous employments records and are paid in lower flat-rate amounts. The extent to which earnings-related parental leave can be shared by both parents as well as the number of compensated so called daddy days is considered to be part of a dual-carer dimension of the family policy also supporting the care work of fathers. Childcare leave that can be used by both parents is not taken into account for the dual-carer dimension as the low flat-rate amounts granted make it unlikely that especially fathers, who in many cases are the main breadwinners, will make use of the leave.

Figure 1 shows the duration of earnings-related leave in Russia and Ukraine compared to the average of other groups of countries: Eastern Europe, Continental Europe, Southern Europe, Northern Europe and the Anglophone countries.² The grouping of countries is made

² Eastern Europe includes Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia; Continental Europe includes Austria, Belgium, Germany, Switzerland, France, and the

due to space constraints and since our main focus here is on Russia and Ukraine in broad comparison with other regions. It should be mentioned that there in some instances are substantial within-cluster variations; we will later in the study return to more country-specific differences when evaluating broader family policy orientations in the last empirical section.

The duration of Russian and Ukrainian parental insurance is very similar to the typical duration of post-natal leave for all countries, while pre-natal leave is somewhat longer than that of other countries. Both our former-Soviet countries lack earnings-related leave payable to fathers, such as dual parental leave or daddy days. In 2005, women in Russia were entitled to paid earnings-related maternity leave for 10 weeks before and 10 weeks after childbirth (Council of Europe 2005a). In 2005, maternity leave in Ukraine was granted to women for 10 weeks before and 8 weeks after childbirth (Council of Europe 2005c). The difference between Russia and Ukraine and their closest geographical neighbors can mainly be found in that the latter countries on average direct substantial amounts of paid leave also to fathers³. This pattern is even clearer when comparisons are made with the Nordic countries, where the majority of leave is payable to both parents. The share of dual parental leave in the Anglophone cluster is mainly explained by Canada and New Zealand having such leave benefits.

(Figure 1 about here)

When it comes to the net weekly replacement rates, both Russia and Ukraine compensate 100 percent of the net weekly wage (Figure 2). Among other countries, the Anglophone group has the clearly lowest replacement rate around 40 percent of the weekly net wage,

Netherlands; Southern Europe includes Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece; Northern Europe includes Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden; the group called Anglophone countries includes Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, the United States. Although not being an Anglophone country, Japan has been grouped in this category due to their similar family policy strategies.

³ Of the countries included in the Eastern European country group Hungary has 80 weeks of dual parental leave, Latvia and Lithuania each grant 44 weeks of dual parental leave, and Slovenia directs 37 weeks towards both parents. We return to more detailed analysis of these differences in the last empirical section.

while the Nordic countries with fairly long duration of earnings-related leave on average compensate around 80 percent of an average production worker's weekly net wage.

(Figure 2 about here)

After parental insurance is terminated, Russia has a childcare leave paid until the child is 18 months old (Council of Europe 2005a), which is roughly on the same level as the average for Eastern European countries and slightly higher than Continental Europe (Figure 3). Unpaid childcare leave is then granted for 1.5 more years until the child's third birthday (Council of Europe 2005a). Ukraine has the considerably longer compensated childcare leave duration, which is paid until the child's third birthday (Council of Europe 2005c).

(Figure 3 about here)

The compensation of the Russian childcare leave amounts to 500 rubles per month. While the earnings-related benefit was reserved solely to the mother, unless she died or was unable to take care of the child for other reasons, childcare leave could formally be used also by fathers (Council of Europe 2005a). However, the very low amount compensated through childcare leave – around 7 percent of a net weekly wage – is precisely what makes men's leave use improbable (Figure 4). Also in Ukraine, earnings-related benefits were only granted to the mother, while both parents were entitled to childcare leave (Council of Europe 2005c). The average replacement rate in childcare leave benefits of 104 hryvnia per month (Council of Europe 2005c) means a somewhat higher than the typical replacement rate for all our countries, but still only around 15 percent of a net average weekly wage is compensated, which again makes the actual use of care leave much less probable for fathers.

(Figure 4 about here)

Maternity grants

Historically, lump-sum maternity grants have been a fairly common way of distributing resources to mothers in their role as caregivers. The amounts paid have varied. Today, extensive maternity grants are with few exceptions not that common among the longstanding welfare states. They are however somewhat more prevalent among the post-communist countries. Figure 5 shows that Ukraine's maternity grant takes an extreme position. In Ukraine a lump-sum maternity grant of 1550 hryvnia was given to the mother at childbirth; this amount was increased considerably in April 2005 to 8498 hryvnia (Council of Europe 2005c). This higher amount is divided into two parts; around 40 percent were paid at childbirth, while the remaining part was paid during the year following childbirth (Perelli-Harris 2008). In total over 70 percent of a net yearly average wage is compensated through this grant.⁴

In Russia the maternity grant given at childbirth amounted to 6000 rubles on the condition that the mother had registered with a medical establishment during pregnancy. For early registration she was awarded an extra 300 rubles (Council of Europe 2005a). Also in Russia's case the compensation of the net yearly wage is higher than in the other country groups. Still, the maternity grant compensates only around 8 percent of a net yearly wage, thus far below the replacement rate of the grant given to mothers in Ukraine. The design of the maternity grant in both countries could be said to reveal a common idea to improve maternal and child well-being besides directly providing families with extra resources.

(Figure 5 about here)

Child and family benefits

Child and family benefits include both child allowances in cash and fiscal child and marriage subsidies granted in the form of tax deductions, benefits that previously have been categorized as being part of a traditional family support dimension. The reason for this categorization can be found in the way this policy measures influence gendered divisions of

⁴ In the analysis the sum of the maternity grant was weighted according to the period the respective amount was in effect (e.g. $3/12 \times 1550$ hryvnia plus $9/12 \times 8498$ hryvnia = 6761 hryvnia).

paid work and household work. Fiscal marriage subsidies are often granted to a married earner and a less economically active spouse and are thus considered to actively sustain female homemaking. Fiscal and cash child benefits, on the other hand, more often are neutral to the division of paid and unpaid work and can therefore be said to reproduce existing gendered divisions of paid and unpaid work (Montanari 2000).

Figure 6 shows that cash and fiscal child benefits were quite substantial in all other country groups, in total compensating between 12 and 14 percent of an average production worker's net wage. The Nordic countries had pure cash child allowance systems, while the other country groups combine cash and fiscal child allowance systems. Ukraine is the only of our countries lacking fiscal or cash child allowances paid to our model family. In 2005 Ukraine granted monthly cash child allowances for families with three children or more and families with one or more disabled child with the allowance amount varying from 50 up to 200 percent of the minimum wage per child and month for children below 16 years (Social Security Administration 2004, 2006). When it comes to fiscal child and marriage subsidies, single mothers have the right to special deductions (IBFD 2005b). As our type case family encompasses two parents and two children it is neither eligible to cash child allowances nor to fiscal subsidies.

In Russia our model family only receives a fiscal child allowance of around 1 percent of a yearly wage. Regarding fiscal subsidies for children and marriage, standard deductions for children are 600 rubles per month and child until the income reaches the limit of 40 000 rubles (Russian Tax Code 2003, 2012; IBFD 2005a). Families with an income per family member lower than minimum subsistence level received could receive a means-tested child allowance of 70 rubles per month (140 rubles for single parents) for every child below 16 years. Regional supplements were sometimes given, for example for families living in Moscow the regional child allowance was 500 rubles per month (Council of Europe 2005b). As cash child allowances are only given to families with low income, the type case used in the comparisons is not eligible to receive it.

(Figure 6 about here)

While marriage subsidies have been a quite common way to support more traditional family patterns in the longstanding welfare democracies, Figure 7 shows that neither Russia or Ukraine operate such fiscal benefits in 2005. Continental European countries have the most generous fiscal marriage subsidies with on average around 6 percent of a post-tax wage.

(Figure 7 about here)

Childcare provisions

Childcare provisions described here encompass public daycare for the youngest children measured as the enrolment rate of children younger than 3 years compared with the total number of children in the same age group.⁵ Publicly provided childcare for the youngest is part of the dual-earner family policy dimension as it is assumed that it gives parents, and especially mothers, the possibility to combine employment and childrearing.

According to Teplova (2007) the system of public childcare facilities in Russia collapsed between 1990 and 2000 with the number of childcare institutions declining from 87.9 thousand down to 53.3 thousand, a number that declined further to 46.5 thousand in 2005 as stated earlier making the total decline 47 percent (Federal State Statistics Service 2010, p.361). Thus, a shift took place from most of childcare being publicly provided during Soviet times to most of preschool children being cared for at home by the parents or relatives. Data for Russia for the year 2005 show that 20.6 percent of the youngest children were enrolled in public childcare (Federal State Statistics Service 2010, p.361).

For Ukraine, Perelli-Harris (2008) describes a deterioration of the quality of public childcare facilities as well as a considerable decrease in the number of nurseries and kindergartens fairly similar to that of Russia. Official statistics show a decline from 24.5 thousand in 1990 to 15.1 thousand in 2005, which translates into a decline of 38 percent (State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2011, p.7). This has forced families to provide childcare at home either by the parents themselves or by relatives. Data for Ukraine for the year 2005 show that 15.5 percent of children below 3 years of age were enrolled in public childcare

⁵ As far as possible data for publicly provided childcare was utilized. For some countries data for 2000 had to be used or data that included more than only publicly provided childcare.

(State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2011, p.14). Russia and Ukraine thereby have slightly higher public daycare enrolment of the youngest children than other post-communist countries where less than ten percent on average are in such daycare. The highest levels can be found in the Nordic countries with nearly 45 percent of children on average being in daycare. Other country groups show average figures between 20 and 25 percent.

(Figure 8 about here)

Constellations of family policy in Russia, Ukraine and other countries

So far we have only described the extent of separate family policies in Russia and Ukraine as compared to other country groups. Here we aim to evaluate in what ways family policies combine along the three different family policy dimensions discussed earlier: traditional family support, dual-earner support and dual-carer support. Traditional family support is here made up of the average of the net yearly generosity of following types of policies: maternity grants; childcare leave; marriage subsidies; cash child benefits and fiscal child benefits. The dual-earner dimension is made up the average of two components: the generosity of earnings-related post-natal parental insurance benefits and public daycare enrolment for children aged 0-2. The dual-carer dimension is made up of the yearly generosity of parental insurance benefits targeted at both parents and to fathers. Before combining the different policy aspects in the separate dimensions they have been standardized using the standard deviation with the mean set to zero.

Figure 9 shows how the three policy dimensions form separate family policy constellations. On the vertical axis we find dual-earner support; on the horizontal axis traditional family support is displayed, while the size of the diamonds reflects the extent of dual-carer support. While dual earner-support and dual-carer support are highly positively correlated, they also both show negative relationships with traditional family support. Several interesting differences can be found. Russia's family policy is positioned in a family policy constellation dominated by low degrees of all family policy dimensions, in what previously has been labeled as a market-oriented family policy constellation. In this policy constellation, where family policies are less developed lower income taxes are instead

prioritized, and parents have to rely on the market and on kin to solve conflicts between paid work and care. In the previous literature on the longstanding welfare states several Anglophone countries are typically found here together with Japan and Switzerland (Korpi 2000).

(Figure 9 about here)

Ukraine positions itself in a family policy constellation dominated by high levels of traditional family policies that more actively supports traditional family patterns while having low levels of gender egalitarian policies. The main reason for Ukraine's position is found in the fairly extensive flat-rate childcare leave benefit and in the very generous maternity grant. In a similar position we also find Austria, Germany and Italy of the longstanding welfare democracies. It is very interesting to note that when we bring in the more recent post-socialist welfare democracies, several of the older welfare states previously classified as having market-oriented family policies (Australia, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States) appear as more intermediate cases between the traditional family policy cluster and the market-oriented cluster.

In a constellation with more extensive dual-earner support, but also higher values on dual-carer support (as noted by the size of the diamonds) several Nordic countries are found; Denmark, with the highest levels of dual-earner support, Sweden and Norway. With somewhat weaker gender egalitarian orientations also Finland is situated near this policy constellation.

A closer inspection of the Figure also give at hand that the former communist countries of Eastern Europe take very different positions concerning their family support and their positions in various family policy constellations, in line with previous research (Szelewa and Polakowski 2008, Ferrarini and Sjöberg 2010) further rejecting any idea about a unified policy model in these countries. Slovenia and Latvia are found close to the Nordic countries with earner-carer constellations of family policy; Slovakia and the Czech Republic are found among a traditional family policy constellation; while Estonia, Poland and Romania are found in a market-oriented constellation. Belgium is an interesting case of a mixed family

policy, with highly developed traditional family support, but where dual-earner support also is clearly above average. Also the position of the Netherlands is notable with dual-earner support being above average but where dual-carer support is undeveloped.

Some of the findings may seem puzzling given the results from previous studies on the longstanding welfare states. To some degree such differences may be explained by the mere broadening of the sample to more recent welfare democracies, also affecting the relative positions of the older welfare states. In other respects the results may be affected by differences in the types of policies included. We have here for example not had access to data that enables a separation of the extent to which part-time or full-time public childcare is provided, where the former, in particular for older children have been considered part of a traditional family policy dimension whereas the latter is part of a policy supporting full time work of both parents.

Nevertheless, regardless of how we conceptualize family policy, or which welfare states we bring in, very similar broad patterns are shown and family policies appear to be multidimensional in character. The cross-national variations in the multidimensionality of family policy is likely to reflect a number of things; different power balances between organized class and gender interests; different underlying demographic and socio-economic factors, as well as the perseverance of historical policy legacies. The path dependency explanation of policies should however probably not be over-stressed. As can be seen even the post-communist countries with similar socio-political backgrounds have travelled in remarkably different directions. It should here also be pointed out that until the 1970s broader differences in family policy constellations among the longstanding welfare states were fairly small (Ferrarini 2006). The rapid changes in the field of family policy is in fact a strong case for avoiding placing countries only under typological regime labels, since such labels suppress variations within countries over time and between countries supposedly belonging to the same regime.

Moreover, we have in this study only addressed the design of policy, but not issues surrounding the take-up of benefits. Take-up may of course be expected to have a close relationship to policy-design, but as we have discussed previously it is also likely that in some instances, such as in Ukraine and Russia, other factors may come into play that

prevent use of family policy, including bureaucratic mismanagement and complicated application processes.

Concluding discussion (preliminary)

This study set out to analyze institutional settings of family policies in Russia and Ukraine, and situate their family policies in the wider context of the longstanding welfare states and other post-communist countries. We used an institutional perspective on family policy that in consecutive steps first analyzed several important family policy institutions with new comparative data. We thereafter combined policies into an analysis of multidimensional family policy constellations – traditional-family, dual-earner and dual-carer support – in Russia, Ukraine and 31 new and old welfare democracies around 2005. While Russia and Ukraine share a historical heritage that for long also was manifested in family policy we today find some important differences between these two countries, and also when we compare them to the other welfare states.

In Russia our findings evoke the impression that the traditional-family dimension, supporting male breadwinner families, is somewhat stronger than dual-earner support. Dual-carer policies, measured by the extent to which earnings-related parental leave can be shared by both parents as well as the number of days dedicated to the father in connection with childbirth, is hardly developed at all. However, due to the comparatively low generosity of all types of policies, Russia is empirically rather positioned in what Korpi (2000) called a market-oriented policy constellation, meaning that families either have to pay for childcare themselves or rely on family and kin to take care of the children if both parents want or have to return to work early. Motiejunaite and Kravchenko (2008) have described Russia's family policy model as a weak male-breadwinner model or "dual-earner/state-female carer model" (Motiejunaite and Kravchenko 2008). The broader comparative categorization we use, with more refined policy indicators, leads to a different categorization of Russian policies.

In Ukraine, the low enrolment rate in childcare for the youngest children and the low generosity of earnings-related benefits results in a below-average score on the dual-earner policy dimension of Ukrainian family policies. Instead it is the traditional elements of family

policy – such as the long period of paid childcare leave and especially the exceptionally high maternity grant – which explains the Ukrainian position in a traditional family policy constellation. Also in Ukraine dual-carer policies are virtually non-existent.

Demographers have studied the influence of family policies on childbearing and it has been argued that policies assisting the reconciliation of employment and childraising effectively may increase fertility rates in a country (e.g. McDonald 2006). In the years since 1991 Russia has experienced falling fertility rates which have spurred worries about a demographic crisis and has sparked policy responses from the Russian government (Government of Russia 2001). According to our analyses Russian family policies were not designed in a way that would help families to reconcile work and family life without losing a considerable part of their income if being dependent on two earnings. Since 2005 Russian family policies have been further amended. For example, in 2007 childcare leave, which can be shared by both parents, was changed into a weakly earnings-related benefit for employed (with flat-rate benefits for unemployed) and the remuneration was 40 percent of the average wage up to a rather modest ceiling. Also lump-sum maternity grants have been increased. But the most well-known amendment has been the introduction of the so-called maternity capital, which is a non-cash benefit with the value of 250 000 rubles that from 2007 was awarded for the birth of the second and each subsequent child. This benefit could only be used after the child's third birthday either for the education of the child, for housing or as additional contributions to the mother's pension. This amount has since been increased to more than 300 000 rubles (Council of Europe 2006;2010).

As childcare leave has been made earnings-related this could perhaps be argued that it strengthens the dual-earner/dual-carer dimension of family policies, however, a remuneration at 40 percent of an average wage is likely to not encourage paternal use of childcare leave to any greater extent. The maternity capital on the other hand, is directed primarily to mothers and thus this policy could perhaps be expected to strengthen a traditional orientation of Russian family policies. Moreover, the maternity capital is aiming at compensating especially mothers for lost years of income regarding their later pension or to compensate for childrearing costs. As it is a non-monetary benefit the impact of this measure on fertility rates is not easily predicted; Zakharov (2008) states that this measure

was not part of the recommendations by the demographers working with the demographic policy program for the years until 2020.

Regarding the actual take-up of benefits it is difficult to find reliable information. Kravchenko (2010) states in a compilation of family policy measures that data on the take-up of parental leave are very scarce and sometimes contradictory, with some sources showing very low actual take-up of parental leave while other sources indicate the opposite. When it comes to targeting of the means-tested child allowances, Alexandrovna and Grishina (2007) show that only around 65 percent of eligible households received allowances, while at the same time almost half of the actually receiving households were not eligible.

Also Ukraine has seen plunging fertility rates and policy makers have spoken about a “demographic crisis” and emphasized the need to encourage childbearing (see for example President of Ukraine 1997). The remuneration for childcare leave has been increased since 2005 taking into account the minimum subsistence level and the average total family income per family member. The already extensive maternity grant has also further been increased (Council of Europe 2010). Thus, the traditional dimension of family policies has been strengthened even further while dual-earner and dual-carer policies are still comparatively modest.

In the case of Ukraine this clear focus on a traditional division of paid work and childrearing presuming a male breadwinner might not encourage childbearing if economic necessity dictates otherwise. According to Zhurzhenko (2001) women in Ukraine in practice often have to engage in small-scale economic activity in order to ensure their families’ survival and thus it is not possible for them to choose to be full-time homemakers. This might be exacerbated by complicated bureaucratic procedures that may hinder the actual benefit take-up (Perelli-Harris 2008). Thus, the very generous benefits might fail to reach their pro-natalist aim not only because they might run counter to the actual need of policies that enable women to more easily combine paid work and childrearing. They might also fail to increase childbearing as the implementation of the policies in many ways is insufficient.

To return to the more general discussion of family policy models we can see that not only Russia and Ukraine end up in somewhat unexpected positions along broader family

policy structures. As for the transition economies as a whole, the findings indicate that they have chosen very different policy orientations. Some countries, like Slovenia and Latvia, seem to have introduced earner-carer models of family policy. Others, such as Slovakia and the Czech Republic, are found in a more traditional family policy cluster, while yet other post-communist countries, like Estonia, Poland and Romania, have less developed family policies along several dimensions, grouping in a market-oriented policy constellation. As discussed before, this underscores that there is no common model of family policy (and probably other policies as well) in the post-communist countries.

Some of the longstanding welfare states place themselves somewhat differently in the multidimensional space of family policies as compared to earlier studies. Some countries, of which several previously have been defined as having almost prototypical market-oriented ones, Australia, Ireland, the United Kingdom and the United States, in our analysis position themselves higher on a traditional family policy dimension. Other countries, such as Belgium, and to some extent France, are located in a more mixed position together with Hungary and Portugal. This adjustment of the positions of these countries is to some extent due to the inclusion of the post-communist countries affecting the relative positions of all countries along the three family policy dimensions utilized in this study. Moreover, some of the institutional policy measures used here differ somewhat from earlier studies, for example regarding childcare enrolment where we could not access reliable data differentiating between full-time and part-time public childcare.

The findings of this study underscore the fruitfulness of using a multidimensional and institutional perspective on family policy. With such a perspective we may begin to address questions about differences between countries that otherwise would be assumed to be in the same policy cluster. Compared to other approaches departing from gender structures of welfare states, and family policies, a multidimensional view may also be of importance when analyzing sociopolitical change, as well as when evaluating links between the degree of different policy orientations and demographic as well as socio-economic outcomes.

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Tables

Figure 1. Duration of earnings-related parental insurance benefits in weeks in Russia, Ukraine and other countries.

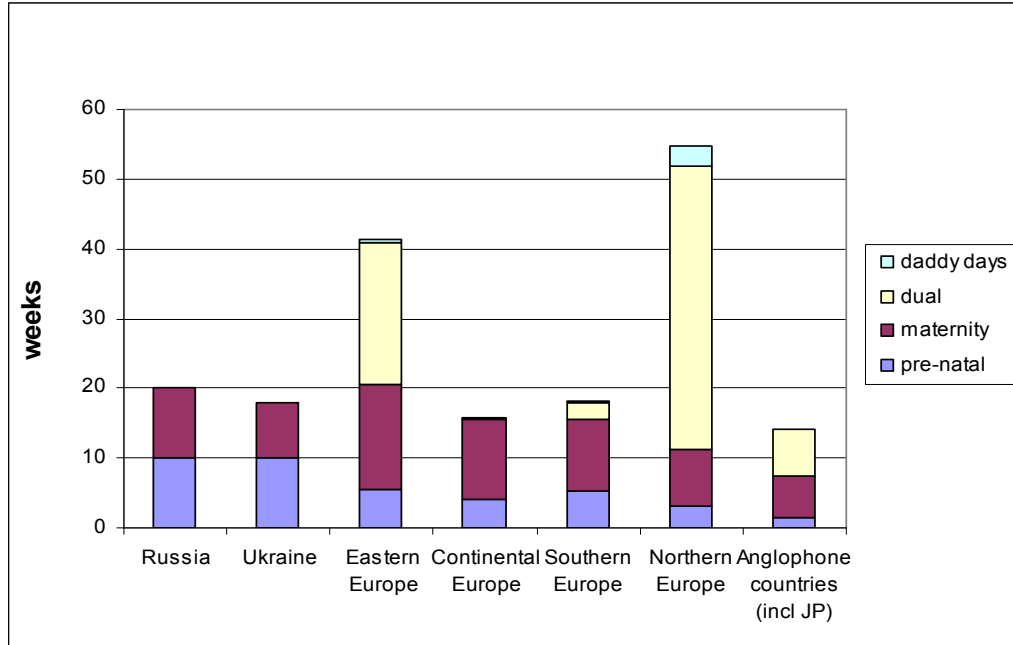


Figure 2. Net weekly replacement rate of earnings-related parental insurance benefits in weeks in Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Percent of net average production worker's wage.

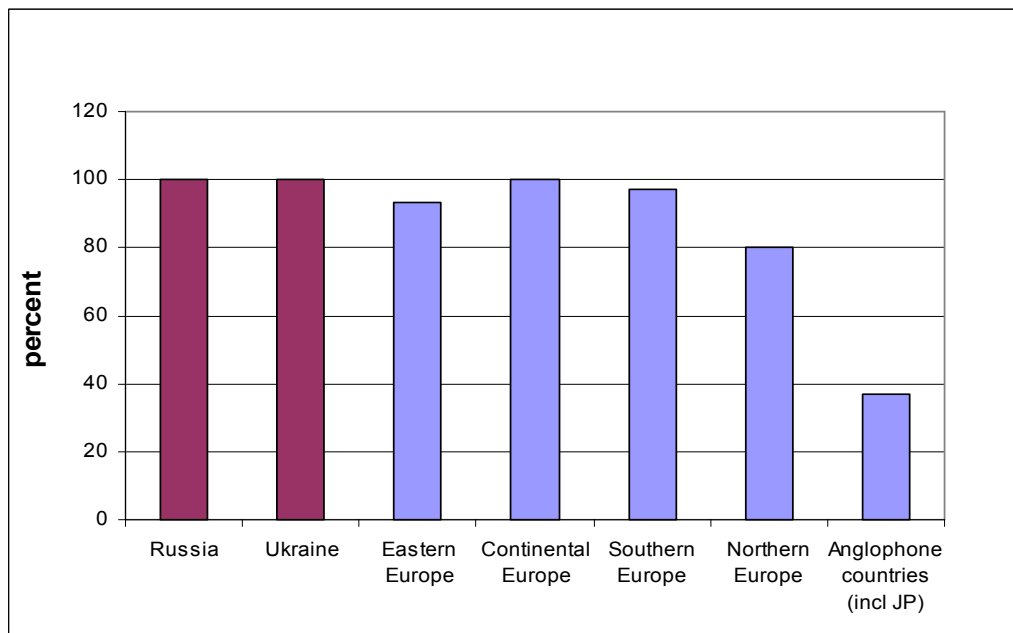


Figure 3. Duration of flat-rate childcare leave benefits in Russia, Ukraine and other countries, in weeks.

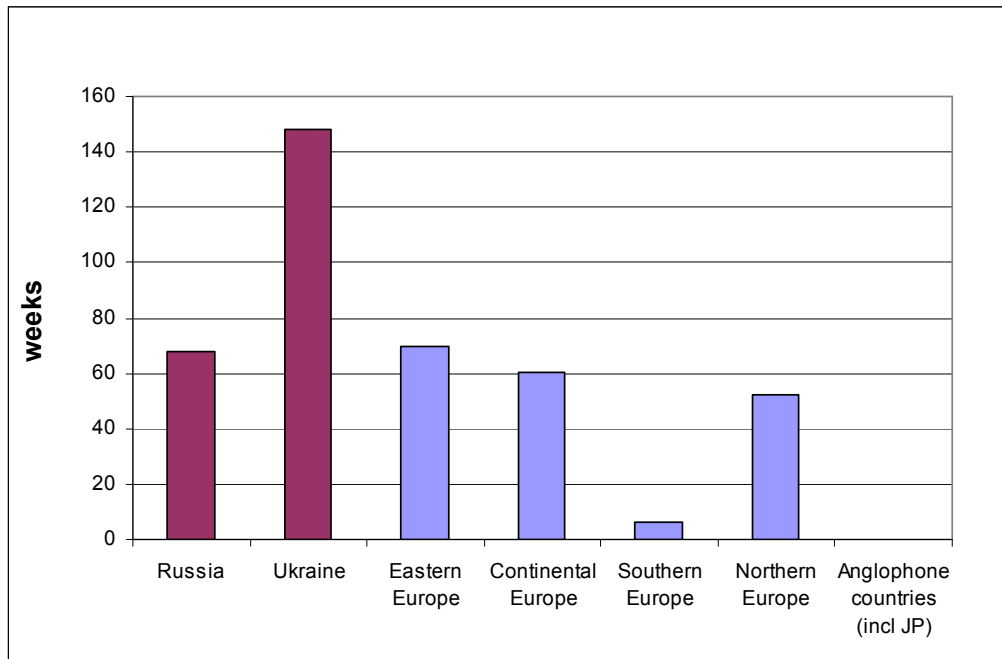


Figure 4. Net weekly replacement rate of flat-rate childcare leave benefits in Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Percent of net average production worker's wage.

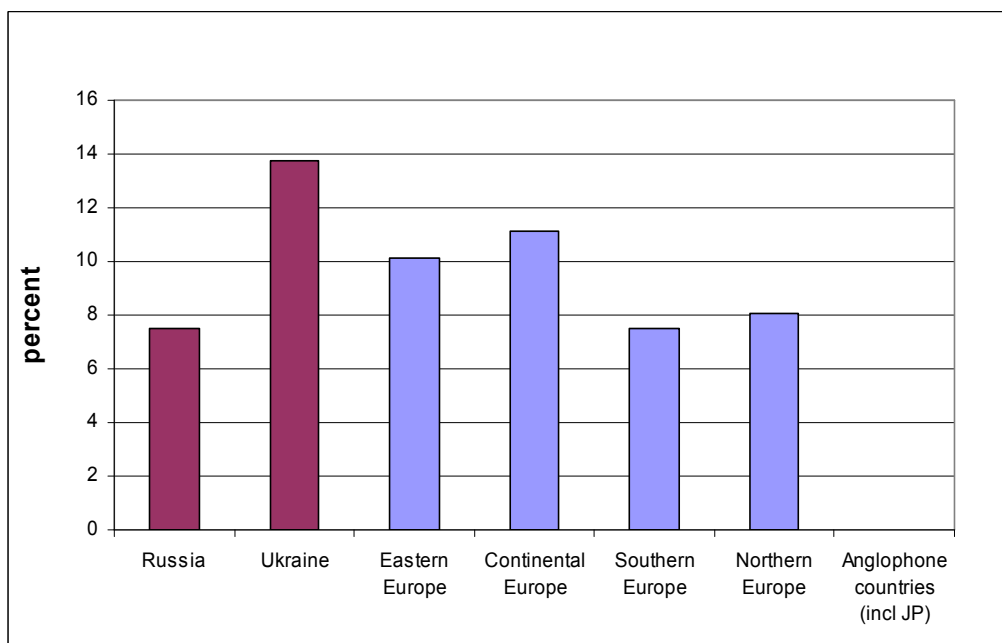


Figure 5. Net replacement rate of lump-sum maternity grant in Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Percent of net average production worker's yearly wage.

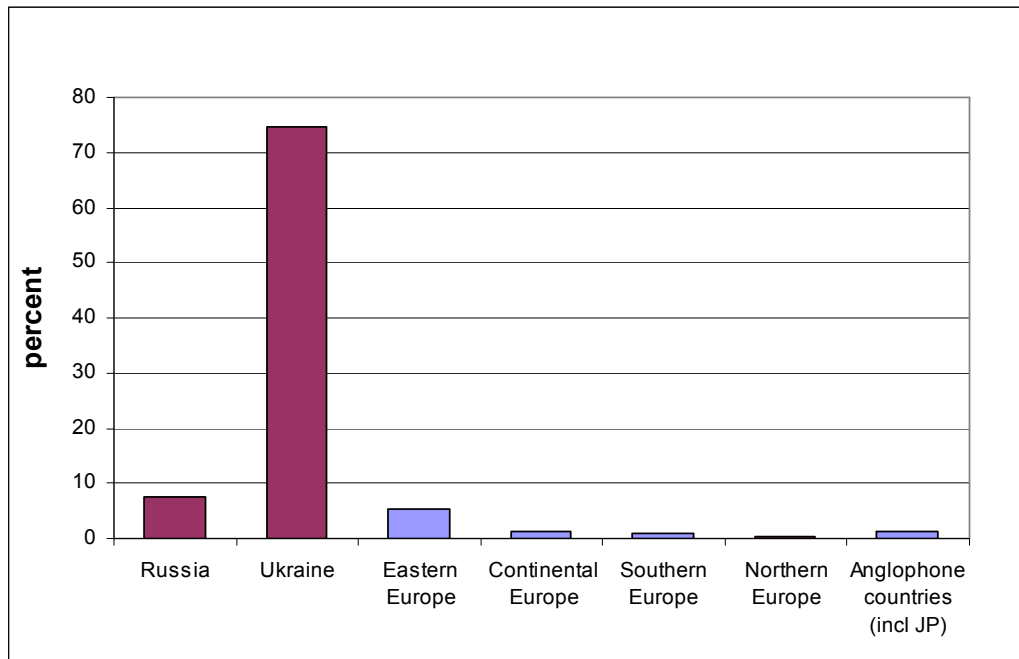


Figure 6. Net replacement rate of fiscal and cash child allowances in Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Percent of net average production worker's yearly wage.

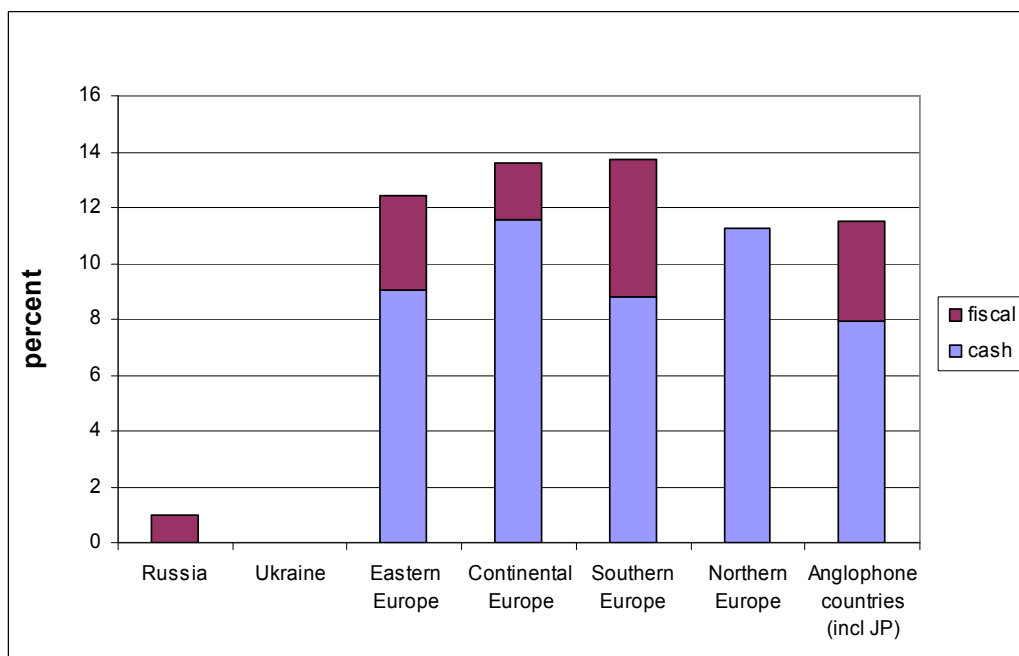


Figure 7. Net replacement rate of fiscal marriage subsidy in Russia, Ukraine and other countries. Percent of net average production worker's yearly wage.

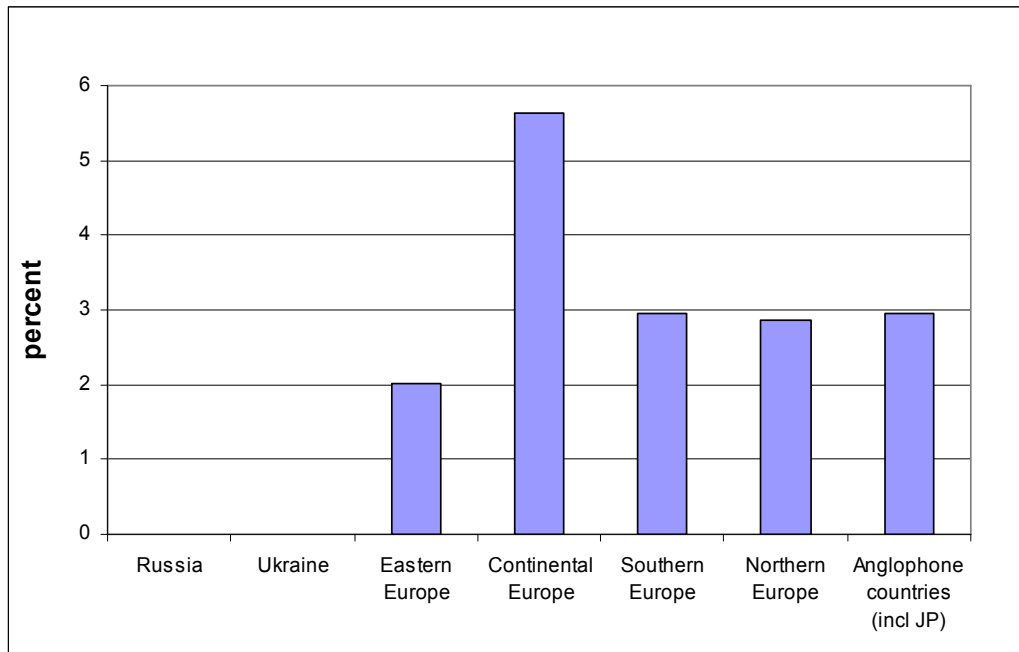


Figure 8. Enrolment in public childcare of 0-2 year olds. Percent of age group.

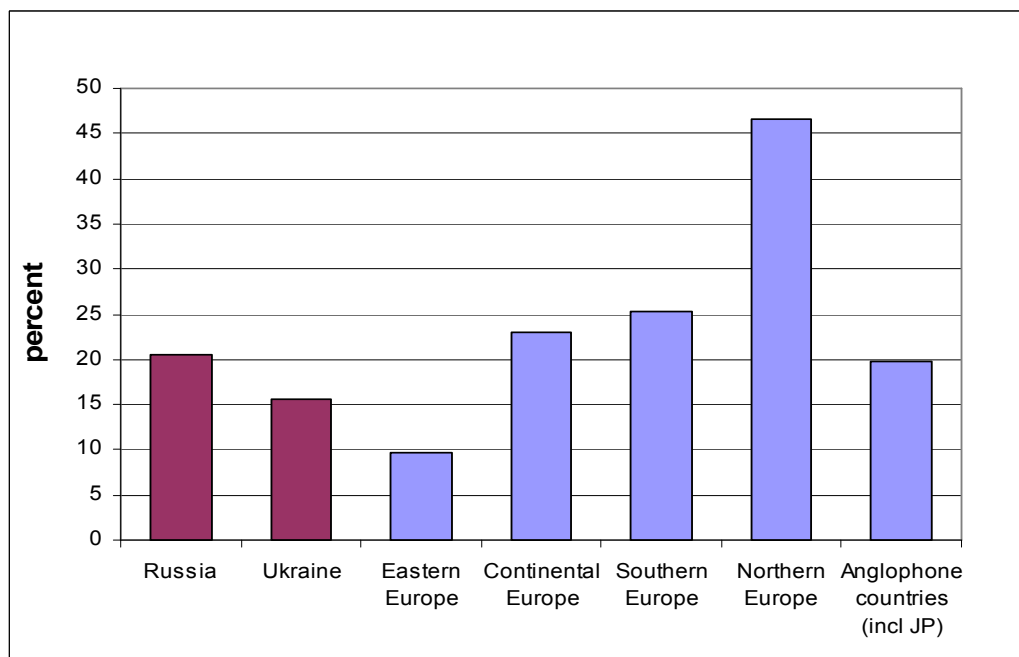


Figure 9. Family policy dimensions and constellations in 33 countries.

