

Switzerland

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NB. Switzerland is a federal state

1. Current leave and other employment-related policies to support parents

Note on Swiss federal, cantonal and communal government: Switzerland is a federal state with three political levels: communes, cantons and the Confederation. Family policy follows the principles of federalism and subsidiarity: the Confederation cedes responsibility for all areas of family policy to the cantons and communes, insofar as they are able to perform these tasks, and retains a purely ancillary and enabling role. The Swiss Constitution defines the areas of responsibility of the Confederation. Article 116 stipulates that, in fulfilling its tasks, the Confederation shall take due account of the needs of the family and may legislate on family allowances; this article provides the legal basis for maternity insurance.

Family policy may be organised very differently from one canton to the other. Various cantons have also set up special family commissions. In their respective areas of responsibility (e.g., schools, childcare), many cities and communes also implement family policy measures. Many non-governmental organisations are in part subsidised by the state and carry out specific tasks related to family policy. The division of responsibilities among political levels and the number of actors involved is, therefore, complex. For instance, each political level intervenes in early childhood education and care: for example, though most childcare services stem from the market, they are regulated and partially subsidized by the communes and/or the cantons. Finally, the federal level is also involved through a temporary programme, which subsidizes new childcare initiatives and the creation of additional places for pre-school children.

The Swiss political system is a direct democracy: through referendums and initiatives, citizens may challenge any law passed by parliament and propose amendments to the federal constitution. In the case of an amendment proposed to the federal Constitution, referendum is mandatory.

a. Maternity leave (*Allocation de maternité*) (responsibility of the Federal Department of Home Affairs, Federal Social Insurance Office)

Length of leave (before and after birth)

- 98 days (fourteen weeks) of leave: the entitlement starts on the day of delivery. It is obligatory to take eight weeks leave.
- Absence from work is mandatory during the first eight weeks following birth.
- Employed women can be exempted from work before birth for medical and health reasons upon presentation of a medical certificate; in this case, full salary payment continues for a limited period of time.

Payment and funding

- Eighty per cent of earnings, up to a ceiling of CHF196 (€155¹⁰⁸) per day which is equivalent to a monthly income of CHF7,350 (€5,740) for employees or an annual income ceiling for self-employed workers of CHF88,200 (€68,885).
- The leave is funded by the Loss of Earnings Compensation fund, which also provides benefits for people carrying out military service, civil defence or civilian service. It is financed by equal contributions from employees and employers (each pay 0.5 per cent of earnings).

Flexibility in use

- None.

Eligibility (e.g. related to employment or family circumstances)

- All employees; self-employed workers; women working in their husbands' or partners' businesses or that of a family member and who are paid a salary; women benefiting from unemployment, sickness, accident or invalidity allowances.
- Women must have a record of nine months of contribution to the Old Age and Survivors Insurance; and must have worked for a minimum of five months during the nine months preceding birth.

Variation in leave due to child or family reasons (e.g. multiple or premature births; poor health or disability of child or mother; lone parent); or delegation of leave to person other than the mother

- None.

Additional note (e.g. if leave payments are often supplemented by collective agreements, employer exclusions or rights to postpone)

- Maternity leaves are often supplemented by collective agreements, which grant full wage replacement and/or extended lengths of leave (approximately two additional weeks, i.e. sixteen weeks of paid Maternity leave). Companies, which often take out private supplementary insurance for such cases, cover these expenses.
- The Confederation, cantonal public employers and communes are not subject to the basic legislation, but to specific regulations of their own. However, these regulations generally provide more generous maternity benefits to their employees, i.e. 16 weeks of leave at full earnings. A minority of cantonal employers grant four additional weeks for mothers who are breastfeeding, bringing their leave up to twenty weeks.
- In the canton of Geneva, all working mothers are granted 112 days (sixteen weeks) of Maternity leave, paid at eighty per cent of earnings. A cantonal Loss of Earnings Compensation fund pays for the two additional weeks, which are not covered for by federal dispositions.
- The canton of Fribourg will soon implement a maternity allowance targeted at all resident mothers, including adoptive and home-making mothers. The monthly allowance will be of CHF1,140 (€890), paid over 14 weeks. Part-time working mothers

¹⁰⁸ Conversion of local currency into Euros undertaken on 3 May 2011, using <http://finance.yahoo.com/currency-converter/>

who receive less than this amount through the federal entitlement will be entitled to the difference through this cantonal insurance.

b. Paternity leave

No statutory entitlement.

Article 329 of the Code of Obligations (CO) mentions that the employer 'must allow the employee the customary hours and days off work' in addition to vacation leave, which are generally understood as time-off granted to employees for personal reasons (e.g. 'family-related events, such as birth or adoption, decease of close family members, marriage of the employee, etc.'¹⁰⁹). However, the existence, length and payment of a Paternity leave depends on the parties involved and social partners through the establishment of individual agreements, standard employment contracts, collective employment contracts, or well-established common practices (even if not written) in a company or a branch. Regarding payment during these days off, it is generally understood that time off for the birth of a child should be paid; this is, however, not mandatory.

There is no representative survey on the number of days off granted to fathers on a national scale and if they are paid. However, there are some indications that the majority of collective labour agreements grant a minimum of one day off (the day of birth)¹¹⁰, and that it is predominantly paid for at 100 per cent by employers. Several small-scale research studies show that, increasingly, private companies and public administrations grant employees five days of paid Paternity leave (with full earnings compensation). More rarely, companies grant two or three weeks of paid Paternity leave and sometimes allow employees to take one or two additional unpaid weeks. This leave is generally to be taken at the birth of the child, but sometimes a longer time frame is given (e.g. during the child's first year).

c. Parental leave

No statutory entitlement.

There is some indication that a minority of companies in the private sector grant employees unpaid Parental leaves¹¹¹. A majority of cantonal public employers also grant unpaid Parental leaves - ranging from 1 to 24 months – but in a few cases with gendered eligibility criteria (leaves exclusively or predominantly addressed to female civil servants)¹¹².

d. Childcare leave or career breaks

¹⁰⁹ Carruzzo, P. (2009) *Le contrat individuel de travail. Commentaire des articles 319 à 341 du Code des obligations*. Zürich : Ed. Schulthess

¹¹⁰ Canning Wacker, N., & Dalla Palma, S. (2005) ; Pro Familia Suisse (2001) *Familles et entreprises. Résultats de l'enquête effectuée auprès des entreprises suisses*. Bern : Pro Familia Suisse ; Pro Familia Suisse (2011) *Was Männer wollen! Studie zur Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Privatleben*. Available at: http://www.sg.ch/home/staat_recht/recht/gleichstellung.Par.0018.DownloadListPar.0001.File.tmp/104868_ProFamilia_Studie_per_cent2009022011.pdf.

¹¹¹ Canning Wacker, N., & Dalla Palma, S. (2005) *Concilier activité professionnelle et famille. Enquête sur les mesures proposées aux employé-e-s par les organisations privées et publiques de l'arc lémanique*, [Electronic Version], 48. Available at: http://www.rezonance.ch/fs-search/download/Rapport_per_cent20Via2_per_cent2014.12.2004.pdf?version_id=621040.

¹¹² Fuchs, G. (2004) *Les administrations publiques, pourvoyeuses d'emploi attractifs pour les parents – Comparaison des régimes de congé parental de la Confédération, des cantons et des municipalités*. Available at : http://www.vs.ch/Press/DS_18/PUBL-2007-03-27-11717/fr/Administrations_publices_F_CSDE_Gesine_Fuchs_Bale_per_cent202004.pdf; Fuchs, G. (2008) *Prestations en cas de maternité et initiatives parlementaires sur les congés et prestations offerts aux parents (notamment congé paternité, congé parental et congé d'adoption): rapport sur la situation actuelle dans l'administration fédérale, les cantons et quelques municipalités* Available at : <http://www.equality.ch/f/publications.htm>

No statutory entitlement.

e. Other employment-related measures

Adoption leave and pay

- There is no federal statutory entitlement. Adoption leave is subject to employers' agreement or to collective labour agreements; for example, approximately one third of public cantonal employers grant paid adoption leaves; but often for shorter periods than maternity leaves. Some cantons have implemented gender neutral adoption allowances for working parents, available to only one of the adoptive parents; the cantons of Geneva and Vaud entitle adoptive parents to 14 and 16 weeks of pay, respectively, at 80 per cent¹¹³. Such cantonal allowances are provided only if one of the parents interrupts his/her employment.

Time off for the care of dependants

- Parents are entitled to three days per illness episode in order to care for their sick child upon presentation of a medical certificate. When two persons share parental responsibilities, only one should benefit from this provision (parents should decide who benefits from the leave for sick children, depending on the solution which suit them best). This leave is understood as time granted for lone parents or working parents in order to organise prolonged childcare if that is needed. Salary payment is suggested by the Code of Obligations as parents have a legal obligation to care for their dependent children; although salary payment seems to be a common practice, it is not mandatory.
- The same article should in principle be applicable to parents of seriously ill children who have to care for them for a prolonged period. However, there is no guarantee of salary payment in these cases.

Flexible working

- During the child's first year, the time spent breastfeeding on the company's site is considered as work time. Half of the time spent breastfeeding out of the company's site is considered as work time; the other half must not be compensated for and should not be deducted from vacation and rest time. However, salary payment during the time spent breastfeeding is not mandatory.
- There is no statutory entitlement to reduced or flexible working hours for employed parents. However, the Employment Law states that the employer should take into account the employee's 'family responsibilities' when fixing work and rest hours. Family responsibilities are defined as the education of children up to 15 years old and the charge of other family members or close members in need of care.
- Some collective labour agreements specifically include the right to reduced working hours for parents and there is some indication that a significant proportion of companies allow flexible working hours¹¹⁴.

¹¹³ Such provisions are possibly also proposed in other cantons, but there is no overall documentation available.

¹¹⁴ See Bühler, S. (2004), *Bébés et employeurs - Comment réconcilier travail et vie de famille. Version abrégée de l'étude comparative de l'OCDE portant sur la Nouvelle-Zélande, le Portugal et la Suisse : aspects suisses* (Vol. 1f). Berne: Secrétariat d'Etat à l'économie.

2. Relationship between leave policy and early childhood education and care policy

The maximum period of paid post-natal leave available in Switzerland is just over 3.2 months, all paid at a high rate of income replacement. There is no entitlement to ECEC at any age and levels of attendance at formal services for children over 3 years are well below the average for the 30 countries included in this review (there is no information for children under 3 years¹¹⁵).

3. Changes in policy¹¹⁶ (including proposals currently under discussion)

Maternity leave implementation

In 1945, the Swiss electorate accepted a constitutional article on family protection which gave a mandate to the Confederation to implement Maternity leave. Three attempts (in 1984, 1987 and 1999) were made to implement this mandate (by the Parliament and through popular initiatives), but on each occasion the Swiss electorate rejected these proposals in referenda. But in 2004, the 'Amendment of the Federal Act of 25 September 1952 on Compensation for Loss of Earnings for Persons on Military Service or Maternity Leave (LECA)' was accepted by 55 per cent of the electorate. The law, implemented on the 1 July 2005, considers maternity to be an impediment from waged work, which should be compensated for financially, just as for people carrying out military service, civil defence or civilian service.

Before this date, there was a measure of job protection but no federal statutory maternity leave benefits. Payments to mothers varied, depending on their canton and sector of employment, collective labour agreements and work contracts, as well as their number of years of service. In addition, several cantons had created different schemes of means-tested maternity allowances for the mother and/or the father¹¹⁷; which in part still exist.

There have been two changes since the 2005 Law was passed. First, the maximum daily allowance has risen from CHF172 to CHF196 (€155) (since January 1st 2009). Second, employers' and employees' contributions to the Loss of Earnings Compensation Fund have risen from 0.3 per cent to 0.5 per cent (since January 1st 2011). This rate will be applied until the end of 2015.

There have been several proposals for change from Members of the Federal Parliament. In 2008, for example, for extending Maternity leave allowances from 98 to 126 days (eighteen weeks), which was rejected in 2010. A 2007 parliamentary initiative, which demands the ratification of the Convention no 183 on the protection of maternity of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), has been accepted by the Committees for Social Security and Health of both chambers. After the consultation procedure, it will be submitted to the

¹¹⁵ A 2005 study estimated that only 13 per cent of children between 0 and 4 were attending ECEC services, but that there was a demand for 47 per cent to attend (INFRAS (2005) *Combien de crèches et de familles de jour faut-il en Suisse? Version abrégée de l'étude "Offre d'accueil extrafamilial en Suisse. Potentiels de demande actuels et futurs"*). Available at : www.nfp52.ch/files/download/Etudeabregeelten_F.pdf). A federal incentive programme for the creation of ECEC services is running until 2015.

¹¹⁶ As Switzerland has not been included in the international review before, this section provides an account of changes in leave policy in recent years.

¹¹⁷ Dafflon, B. (2004) *La politique familiale en Suisse : enjeux et défis*. Lausanne: Réalités sociales, Note that these provisions still exist on cantonal basis.

Parliament's vote; if the ratification is accepted, the Swiss Employment Act will be amended to make payment by employers during working mothers' breastfeeding breaks statutory.

Two additional motions have not yet been examined by the Parliament. One concerns the extension of job protection for mothers to 24 weeks following birth (instead of the current 16 weeks). The argument is that currently workers who wish to continue to breastfeed after Maternity leave (fourteen weeks) and after the period of job protection (sixteen weeks) fear to do so because of dismissal. The Federal Council (the federal government) recommends rejecting this motion.

The second motion proposes to modify the CO in order to clarify the payment of salary in case of breastfeeding or milk expression (fully compensated if performed on the company's site and compensated in part only if performed off-site); this right is guaranteed by the Employment Law, but the question of payment is not precisely addressed in the CO. The National Council (lower house of the federal parliament) has not voted on this motion yet. However, the Federal Council has already recommended rejection, arguing the matter should be left to jurisprudence and not be embedded in the law.

Paternity and Parental leave

Maternity leave implementation enabled new requests to emerge, in particular in favour of leaves targeting – or at least including – fathers. Since 2006, some twenty parliamentary interventions were made in favour of various Parental leave schemes. However, to date, none of these propositions has been accepted by the Parliament.

Currently, there are three proposals from members of parliament yet to be considered by the Parliament. One proposes a two week paid Paternity leave to be taken at birth. Another proposes a 'leave credit' of 20 days per parent to be used until the child's fourth anniversary. The third – by far the most ambitious one - proposes a 24 weeks paid Parental leave. This proposal came from the Green parliamentary group, in March 2011, who took up a Parental leave model developed by the Federal Coordination Commission for Family Affairs (FCCF). The FCCF is an advisory commission of the Federal Department of Home Affairs whose mandate is to inform, coordinate and propose voting recommendations as well as new policy measures.

In 2010, the FCCF issued a report on Parental leave and parental allowances, which proposed an overview of the Swiss family model and needs, as well as existing policies. A specific model of Parental leave was proposed and financially assessed. The model is for six months of paid Parental leave (at 80 per cent of earnings), including individual entitlements of four weeks for each parent and a common family entitlement of sixteen weeks to be shared between parents. The leave would be flexible: to be taken until the child's first day of school; to be taken in several blocks of time and part-time; and to be taken concurrently by parents if they both work part-time. The cost of this proposed leave scheme has been estimated at CHF1.1-1.2 billion (€860-€940 million), approximately double the cost of current maternity benefits. Two funding options are assessed: increasing employee and employer contributions from 0.5 per cent to 0.7 per cent; or increasing the Value Added Tax rate – currently 8 per cent - to 8.4 or 8.5 per cent.

This report represents the first concrete and thoroughly thought through paid Parental leave proposal. It must first be accepted by the Committee for Social Security and Health of both chambers in order to be put to parliamentary vote.

If the various parliamentary interventions that have been rejected are considered it can be seen that:

- Approximately the same number of proposals were made in favour of Parental leave and Paternity leave. However, among the Parental leave propositions, three were limited to parents of seriously ill children (a form of childcare leave); in some cases, too, the proposed leaves were limited to a specific population, i.e., civil servants, men on military service and means-tested families. Only one proposition asked for the extension of leave to adoptive parents.
- The length of Parental and Paternity leave proposals that have been rejected varied from two to twenty weeks. The longest proposal originated from the canton of Geneva, which asked that legislative changes be made in order for cantons to be able to implement cantonal Parental leaves. At the moment, this is not possible because cantons are not allowed to deduct special contributions to implement Parental or Paternity leaves. Two additional interventions demanded that the possibility for cantons to implement cantonal Parental or Paternity leaves be examined or that the necessary legislative changes be made, but without any success.
- The majority of propositions stemmed from Socialists, Christian Democrats and Green MPs. However, the Liberal-Radical group and the Swiss People's Party were also represented among the sponsors of Parental leave policies. Parental leave policies seemed to be a political priority for French-speaking MPs, more than for German-speaking MPs, as well as for female MPs; approximately half stemmed from female MPs, which is more than the proportion of women in the Parliament.

The Federal Council has been systematically opposed to the introduction of Parental leave policies. The main and recurring reason is that other priorities have been set for family policy in general and for the reconciliation of work and family life in particular, such as supporting childcare services, promoting flexible working hours and reforming family taxation. The Parliament also follows this line of argument. In addition, the financial cost of such policies and a preference for arrangements between social partners over state regulation are mentioned. It is often argued, too, that maternity and paternity are not comparable. This line of argument includes physiological differences: mothers are said to need rest and to need to breastfeed. Finally, it is argued that the current Constitution only charges the federal Confederation to implement Maternity leave and does not mention other types of leave; therefore, implementing such leaves is not considered to be a federal mandate¹¹⁸.

New Constitutional article in favour of work and family life balance

Following a 2007 parliamentary initiative, the respective Committees for Social Security and Health of both chambers of the Parliament have agreed to the idea of creating a new Constitutional article in favour of the family. The amendment project is under consultation until March 2011, and includes a specific section on the reconciliation of work and family life: 'The Confederation and the cantons encourage measures in order to reconcile family life and wage work. They provide in particular an appropriate offer of extra-familial and extra-school childcare structures' (Project, Federal Constitution, Art. 115). After the consultation phase, which could lead to modifications of the present project, the article will be submitted to vote at the Parliament, and if it is accepted, to the Swiss electorate in a referendum.

The adoption of this new Constitutional article could give extra legitimacy to Parental leave policies. However, it should be noted that the present project explicitly mentions the need to create early childhood services, but does not do so for Parental or other types of leave.

¹¹⁸ This would suggest that Parental and Paternity leaves are not a federal responsibility, and that the principle of subsidiarity can be applied, making cantons and communes responsible. However, this solution has explicitly been rejected by the Parliament, which has turned down proposals for cantonal Paternity or Parental leaves.

4. Take-up of leave

a. Maternity leave

Approximately 70 per cent of women giving birth meet the eligibility criteria of maternity allowances and benefit from them¹¹⁹. The number of recipients has been increasing since Maternity leave was introduced, probably because of an increase both in births and female employment. In 2005, 28,102 mothers (this figure is for six months only – the law came into force on the 1st of July) benefited from allowances; in 2006, 54,769; in 2007, 56,381 mothers; in 2008, 60,394 mothers; and in 2009, 64,051¹²⁰. It is estimated that the majority of recipients take up the maximum length of leave (98 days)¹²¹.

In 2009, the average amount of the daily indemnities granted to mothers was CHF114 per day¹²², far from the ceiling of CHF 196.

According to Sottas and Millioud (2008), in 2006, 80 per cent of leave recipients were married, 15 per cent single and 5 per cent divorced. The majority of recipients were employees (83 per cent); 14 per cent were self-employed and 3 per cent inactive (eligible because they previously received unemployment, health or disability benefits).

b. Paternity leave

No statutory leave entitlement.

c. Parental leave and Parental benefit

No statutory leave entitlement.

5. Research and publications on leave and other employment-related policies

a. General overview

There are several publications on Swiss family policy and Parental leave policies. However, several are out-of-date, published before maternity leave implementation. Others have limited research scopes; this is the case for some Bachelor and Master's theses on the politics of Maternity and Parental leaves. There is little research on Maternity leave benefits and leave uptake by women, though there will soon be a report available on the effects of Maternity leave implementation (see 'ongoing research'). There is some research on special Paternity and Parental leave entitlements available in public administrations and on common practices and/or needs in the private sector. Here again, research literature is either not totally up to date (the most recent data for cantonal entitlements for civil servants are 2008), partial (surveys on reconciliation measures in private companies concern only specific cantons), or non-existent. For instance, to my knowledge, there exists no overall view of collective agreements or standard work contracts that grant paid Paternity leaves or unpaid Parental leaves to employees. No representative statistics are available either on the

¹¹⁹ Sottas & Millioud, p. 306 for 2006.

¹²⁰ <http://www.bsv.admin.ch/dokumentation/zahlen/00093/00434/index.html?lang=fr>

¹²¹ Sottas, G. & Millioud, P. (2008) 'Allocations pour pertes de gain en cas de maternité - premier aperçu', *Sécurité sociale*, Vol. 5: 304-307. The administrative data available provide information for calendar years. For this reason, the average length of leave is under-estimated because some recipients receive part of their allowances on one year and the rest on another.

¹²² This figure was obtained by dividing the total maternity leave expenditures in 2009 (CHF602.6 millions) by the number of daily indemnities (5,282,433).

proportion of working men and women who can benefit from such policies and who take advantage of them.

b. Selected publications since 2003

Dafflon, B. (2003) *La politique familiale en Suisse : enjeux et défis*. Lausanne: Réalités sociales.

This book retraces the principles and measures of Swiss family policy from an institutional perspective. A chapter is dedicated to Maternity leave. The book was published before the current Maternity leave scheme was agreed.

Fuchs, G. (2004) *Les administrations publiques, pourvoyeuses d'emploi attractifs pour les parents – Comparaison des régimes de congé parental de la Confédération, des cantons et des municipalités* Available at: http://www.vs.ch/Press/DS_18/PUBL-2007-03-27-11717/fr/Administrations_publiques_F_CSDE_Gesine_Fuchs_Bale_per cent202004.pdf

The author presents and compares the regulations with regard to Maternity, Paternity, Parental and Adoption leaves for civil servants of federal, cantonal and some communal administrations.

Canning Wacker, N. and Dalla Palma, S. (2005) *Concilier activité professionnelle et famille. Enquête sur les mesures proposées aux employé-e-s par les organisations privées et publiques de l'arc lémanique* Available at: http://www.rezonance.ch/fs-search/download/Rapport_per cent20Via2_per cent2014.12.2004.pdf?version_id=621040

Report of a survey conducted on a sample of public and private work organisations in two French-speaking cantons of Switzerland. The study gives an overview of the work and family reconciliation measures provided, including extended Maternity, Parental and Paternity leave policies.

Sottas, G. and Millioud, P. (2008) 'Allocations pour pertes de gain en cas de maternité - premier aperçu', *Sécurité sociale*, 2008/No.5: 304-307.

This report gives an overview of the uptake of maternity allowances shortly after Maternity leave implementation (from 2005 to 2007).

Fuchs, G. (2008) *Prestations en cas de maternité et initiatives parlementaires sur les congés et prestations offerts aux parents (notamment congé paternité, congé parental et congé d'adoption): rapport sur la situation actuelle dans l'administration fédérale, les cantons et quelques municipalités*. Available at: <http://www.equality.ch/f/publications.htm>

The author assesses whether the federal legislation on Maternity leave passed in 2004 had a negative effect on cantonal and communal leave regulations, which provided more generous policies.

Baumann, B., Bovay, M., Ermert, C., Knupfer, C., Krummenacher, J., Pfaffinger, M., et al. (2010) *Congé parental - allocations parentales. un modèle de la COFF pour la Suisse*. Bern: Commission fédérale de coordination pour les questions familiales. Available at: http://www.ekff.admin.ch/c_data/PDF_Elternzeit_f_100929.pdf

This report, published by the Federal Commission for the Coordination of Family Issues, gives an overview of the Swiss context with regard to Parental leave policies. It proposes a Parental leave model to implement in Switzerland and a plan for its financing. It also compares the proposal with the German and the Icelandic leave models (in terms of modalities and costs).

Commission fédérale pour les questions féminines. (2010) *Assurance maternité et congé parental*, and *Femmes Pouvoir Histoire 2001-2009*, 6. Available at: from http://www.ekf.admin.ch/dokumentation/00444/00516/index.html?lang=fr#sprungmarke0_1

This publication (also available in Italian and German) was issued by the Federal Commission for Women's Issues. It gives a brief overview of the political events concerning Maternity leave, Parental and Paternity leaves from 2001 to 2009.

Valarino, I. and Bernardi, L. (2010) 'Fertility discourse in Parental leave policies' media coverage: A frame analysis of French-speaking Swiss press articles from 1999 to 2009', *Population Review*, Vol.49, No.2: 47-69.

This article analyses the representations of Parental leave policies in French-speaking newspapers from 1999 to 2009, with an emphasis on the status of fertility arguments.

Pro Familia Suisse. (2011). Was Männer wollen! Studie zur Vereinbarkeit von Beruf und Privatleben [Electronic Version], 31. Retrieved 18.02.2011, from http://www.sg.ch/home/staat_recht/recht/gleichstellung.Par.0018.DownloadListPar.0001.File.tmp/104868_ProFamilia_Studie_per_cent2009022011.pdf

This report (in German) by Pro Familia, a civil association promoting family policies, was commissioned by the Canton of St-Gallen. Approximately 800 male employees of 35 small and medium-sized companies in this canton were surveyed in order to assess existing reconciliation measures (including Paternity leave) and the policies they would wish to be offered.

c. Ongoing research

Analysis of maternity allowances outcomes (2011). Currently out to tender; funded by the Federal Social Insurance Office.

This study on the effects of Maternity leave implementation will address three lines of questioning: the effects of maternity insurance on (young) women's and mothers' employment and activity; whether the federal Maternity leave has curtailed pre-existing more generous schemes, and whether the savings to these schemes due to the implementation of a federal maternity insurance have been reinvested in extended maternity (or paternity) benefits; and financial and administrative effects. Results should be available by the end of 2011.

Do parental leave policies challenge gender relations? Representations of parental leave policies in Switzerland (2009-2013). Doctoral thesis by Isabel Valarino, University of Lausanne, Institute of Social Sciences.

This research analyses the emergence and problematisation of Parental and Paternity leaves in the Swiss political and media spheres, as well as in work organisations. Case studies in work organisations granting discretionary leave benefits and interviews with fathers benefiting from such policies will be conducted. The research is scheduled to finish at the end of 2013.