

# International Migration and Family Policy: A Demographic Explanation of Social Policy Shifts in Europe and America

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# Introduction

- Family policy: what is it?
- Welfare state types
- Gøsta Esping-Andersen's (1990) Typology
- Immigration from developing nations
- Increases in family policy spending in Europe; decline in the USA
- Research based on my master's thesis:  
<http://search.proquest.com/docview/141877182>  
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*Chart source: Martin (2008)*



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# Family Policy in Europe

- Relatively high spending rates
- Broad areas of coverage (child care, early education, birth tax credits, etc.)
- Paid parental leave (for both mothers and fathers)
- Job return guarantees
- Spending is highest in countries with social-democratic welfare state typologies (Sweden, for example)



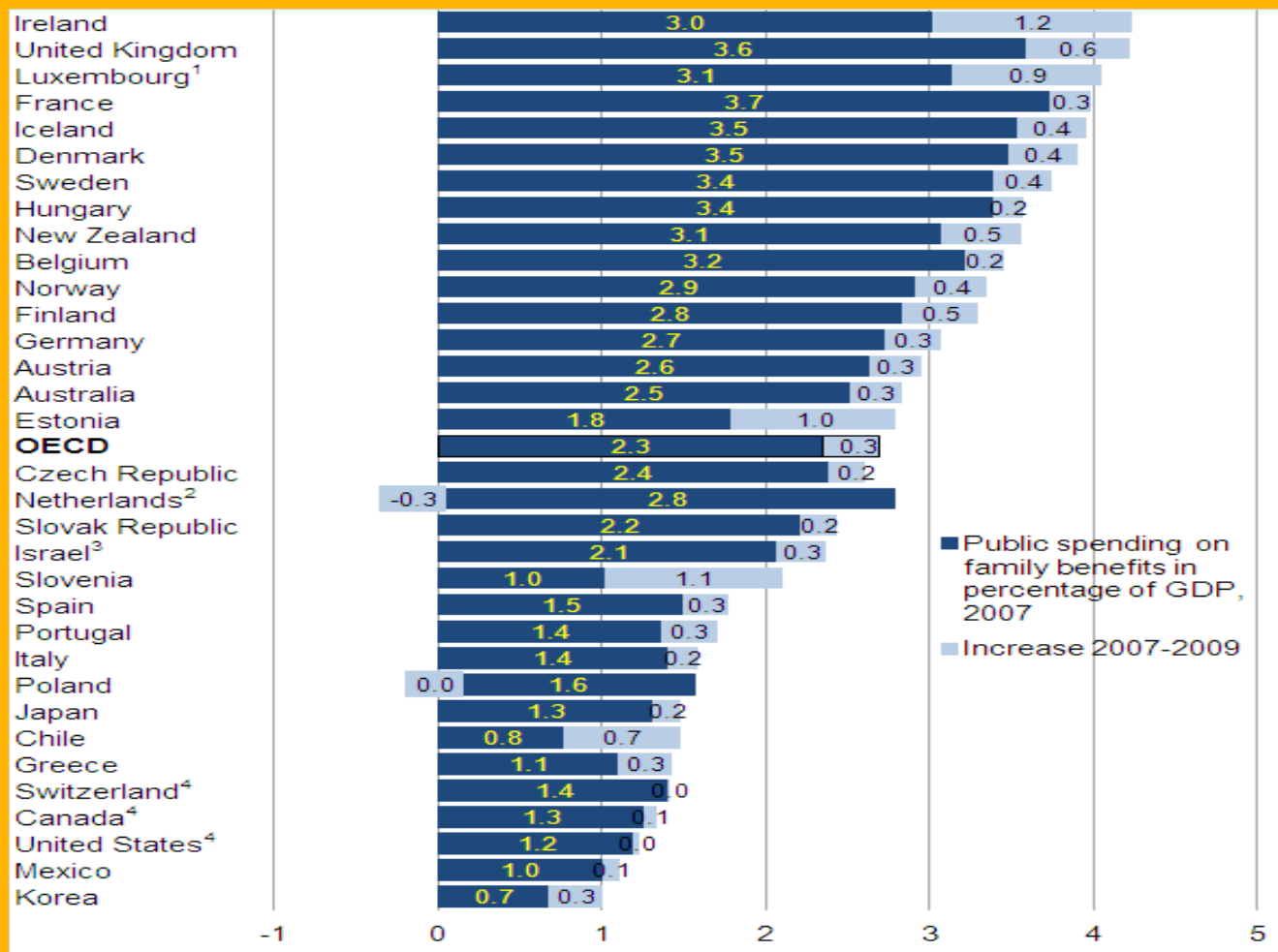
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# American Exceptionalism

- US family policy funding and coverage lags behind other developed nations (OECD 2012a; 2012h)
- Federal welfare reform in 1996 (PROWA)
- No paid parental leave (6 weeks unpaid)
- No federally funded child care
- No job return guarantees



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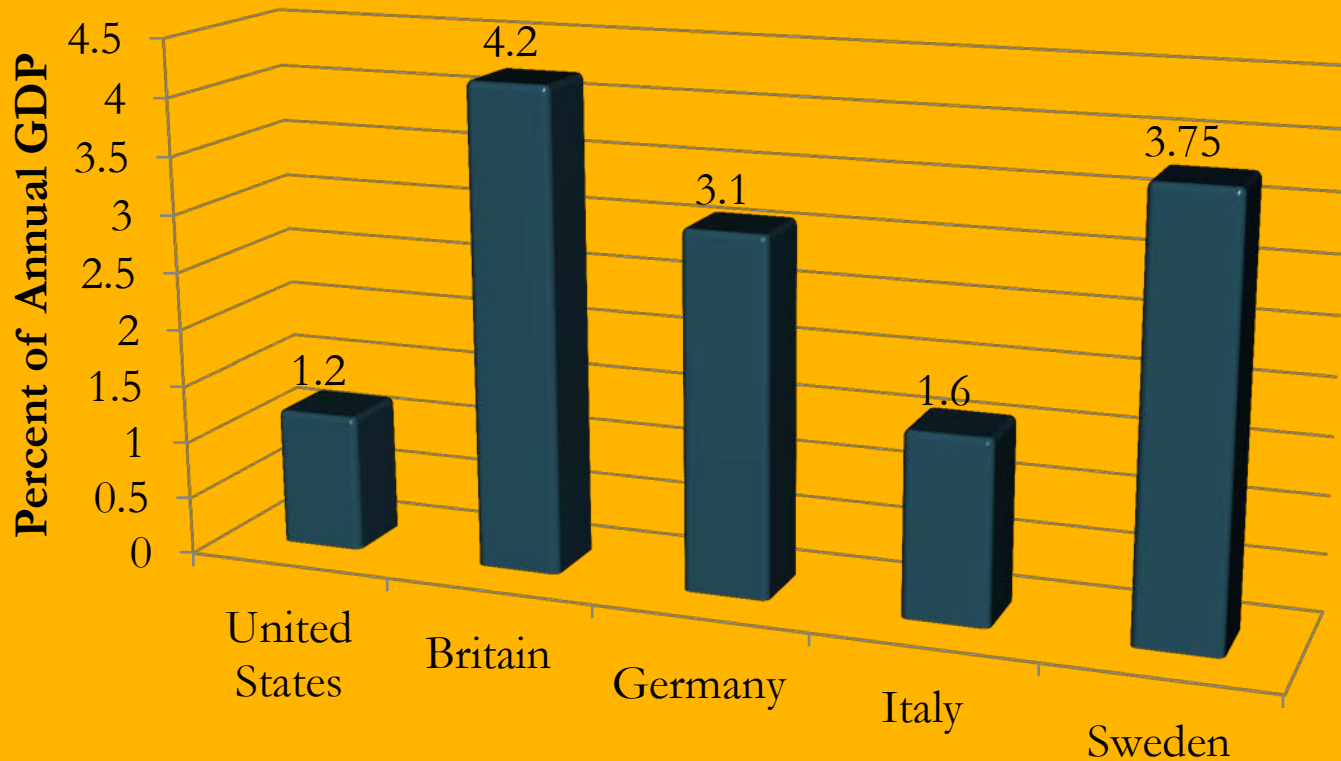
*Data source: OECD (2012), Social Spending Database, OECD, Paris*

*Chart source: OECD (2012)*



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## Total Family Policy Expenditures as Percentage of GDP, 2009

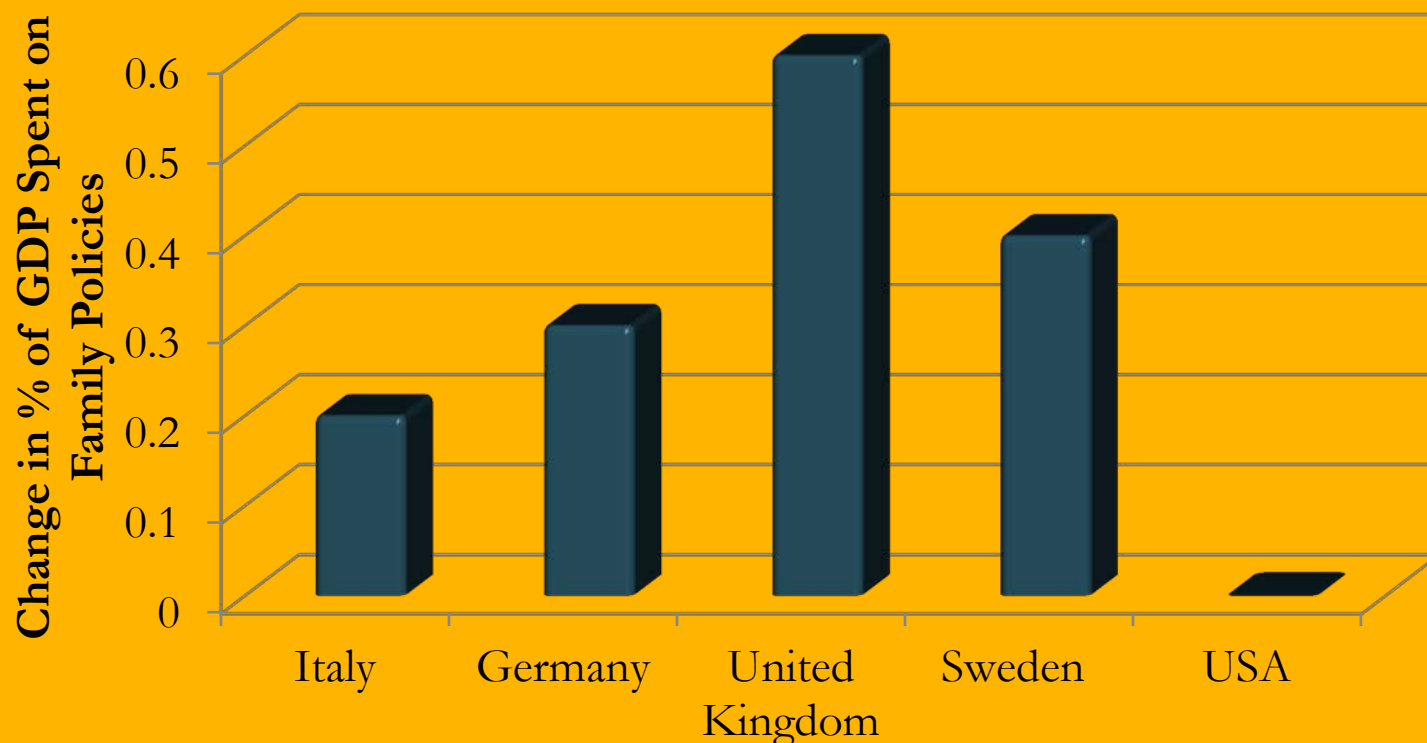


*Data source: OECD (2012), OECD Family Database, OECD, Paris*



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# Change in Family Spending; 2007-2009



*Data source: OECD (2012), OECD Family Database, OECD, Paris*



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# What Explains This?

- Ann Shola Orloff (2006): feminist politics and women's agency
- Timo Fleckenstein and Martin Seeleib-Kaiser (2011): pressure from business organizations
- Lister and Bennett (2011): traditional family decline
- My hypothesis: increased immigration rates encourages expansion of families policies in Europe but stagnation in America



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# Methodology and Methods

- Qualitative content analysis and grounded theory
- Party manifesto data – 1995-2013
- Secondary statistical data on immigration rates
- Comparative-historical sociology
- Conflict theory
- Brown's (2013) racial framing theory



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# Why Immigration?

- Migrants are usually poor; require social services: political parties increase spending to deal with this problem
- Conservative parties want to assimilate immigrants into local society
- Socialist parties want to show support for immigrants
- Feminist organizations advocate for immigrant women
- Conservative parties want to increase native-resident births (to compete with immigrants), so they attempt to make it financially easier to raise children



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# Party Manifesto Quotes

- UK Conservatives (2001): “[The Labour Party feels] the Government only values childcare if someone else is paid to provide it, and that it doesn't value marriage at all . . . also worry that, however hard they try to bring up their children well, the dangers of being drawn into crime and drug use are growing. And they fear that passing our values on from one generation to the next is harder than ever.”



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# Why is the US Different?

- Lack of a history of family policy (Esping-Andersen 1990; Orloff 2006)
- Cultural opposition to welfare
- Federal structure: welfare policies controlled by the states (Brown 2013)
- Political conservatism: even the Democrats are center-right by world standards



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# Election Program Quotes

- Democrats (1996): “We welcome legal immigrants to America. We support a legal immigration policy that is pro-family, pro-work, pro-responsibility, and pro-citizenship . . .”
- “We continue to firmly oppose welfare benefits for illegal immigrants. We believe family members who sponsor immigrants into this country should take financial responsibility for them, and be held legally responsible for supporting them.”
- Republicans wanted to destroy the food stamp and school lunch programs that provide basic nutrition to millions of working families and poor children. They were wrong, and we stopped them. Republicans wanted to gut child abuse prevention and foster care. They were wrong, and we stopped them. Republicans wanted to cut off young, unwed mothers -- because they actually thought their children would be better off living in an orphanage. They were dead wrong, and we stopped them. The bill Republicans in Congress passed last year was values-backward -- it was soft on work and tough on children, and we applaud the President for stopping it.
- Second, Republicans insisted on using welfare reform as a vehicle to cut off help to legal immigrants. That was wrong. Legal immigrants work hard, pay their taxes, and serve America. It is wrong to single them out for punishment just because they are immigrants. We pledge to make sure that legal immigrant families with children who fall on hard times through no fault of their own can get help when they need it. And we are committed to continuing the President's efforts to make it easier for legal immigrants who are prepared to accept the responsibilities of citizenship to do so.
- Republicans (1996): Bill Clinton's immigration record does not match his rhetoric. While talking tough on illegal immigration, he has proposed a reduction in the number of border patrol agents authorized by the Republicans in Congress, has opposed the most successful border control program in decades (Operation Hold the Line in Texas), has opposed Proposition 187 in California which 60 percent of Californians supported, and has opposed Republican efforts to ensure that non-citizens do not take advantage of expensive welfare programs.



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# Election Program Quotes

- Republicans (2012): “The Republican-led welfare reforms enacted in 1996 marked a revolution in government's approach to poverty. They changed the standard for policy success from the amount of income transferred to the poor to the number of poor who moved from welfare to economic independence. We took the belief of most Americans—that welfare should be a hand up, not a hand out—and made it law.”
- “Public policy, from taxation to education, from healthcare to welfare, be formulated with attention to the needs and strengths of the family.”
- Democrats (2012): “It's time we stop just talking about family values and start pursuing policies that truly value families. The President and Democrats have cut taxes for every working American family, and expanded the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. We believe that all parents and caregivers - regardless of gender - need more flexibility and support in the workplace. We support passing the Healthy Families Act, broadening the Family and Medical Leave Act, and partnering with states to move toward paid leave. We have invested in expanding and reforming Head Start and grants to states to raise standards and improve instruction in their early learning programs, and we support expanding the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit. We must protect our most vulnerable children by supporting our foster care system, adoption programs for all caring parents, grandparents, and caregivers, and protecting children from violence and neglect. We recognize that caring for family members and managing a household is real and valuable work.”



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# Framing Contexts

- European parties did not use racial framing in reference to family policies
- In the USA, Democrats used racial framing, while Republicans did not
- Democrats mentioned Hispanic identity in an *anti*-discrimination context, while Republicans failed to mention it at all
- Both American parties supported PROWA
- This finding stands in contrast to Brown (2013), who found Republicans to emphasize anti-immigrant racial framing



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# US in Sum

- Both parties had more mentions of welfare and immigration in 2012
- Democrats – 21 mentions of immigration, one mention of welfare; Republicans – 14 mentions of immigration, nine of welfare) than in 1996 (D – 21 mentions of imm., 28 of welfare, R – 18 mentions of imm, 28 of welf)
- This likely reflects political trends
- Family policy spending has stagnated, but it is not a popular issue



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# Europe in Sum

- Immigration encourages family policy expansion in all welfare state types
- This is because of both higher birth rates among immigrants (Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011) and desires to integrate migrants
- The trend of family policy expansion should continue, even as other welfare state services decline



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# Wrapping Up

- Immigration encourages family policy expansion in Europe, but not in the US
- Effect is strongest in conservative welfare states
- Brown's framing theory does not hold
- Path-dependency in US?



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# Limitations

- Research is preliminary
- No analysis of official documents or campaign speeches
- Limited use of statistics
- Small N (four countries)
- No cross-state comparison within the US



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# Any Questions?

- Questions?



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