

## United States Trails High-Income Countries in Parental Leave Policies

### *U.S. 21st out of 21 economies in generosity of leave for two-parent families*

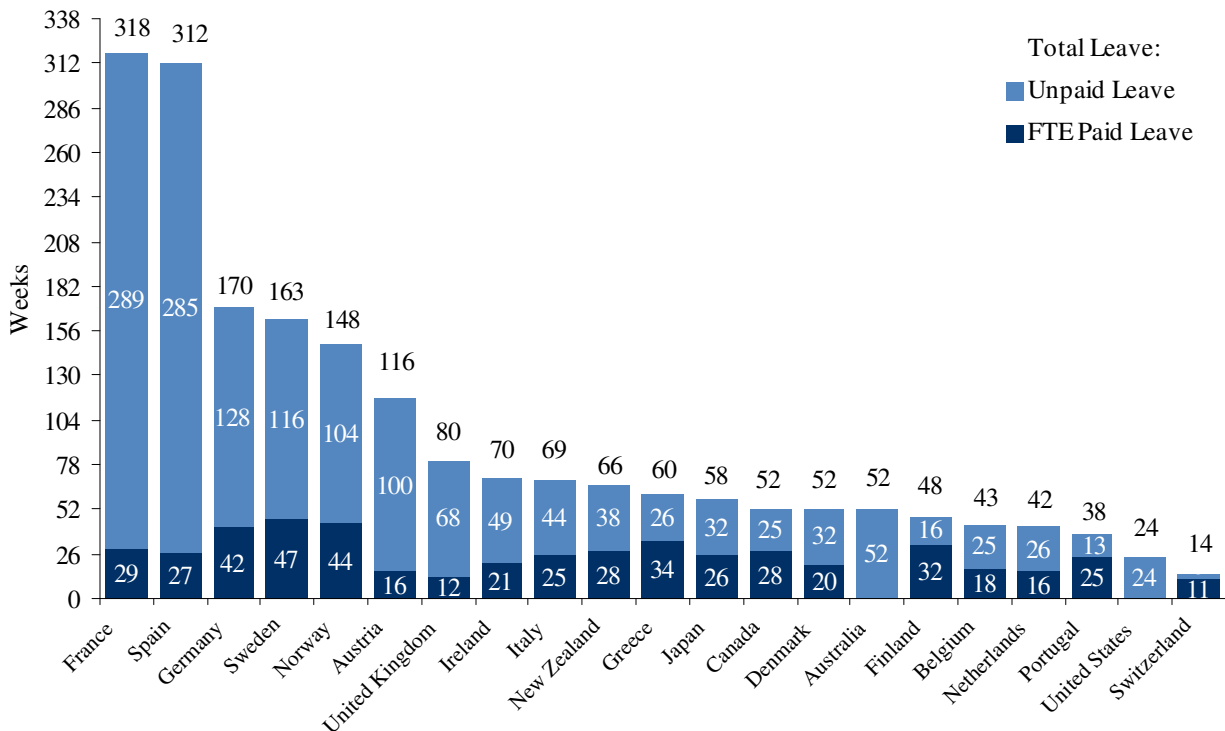
The Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) finds that the parental leave policies of the United States are the least generous among 21 high-income countries in the report, **Parental Leave Policies in 21 Countries: Assessing Generosity and Gender Equality** (see [www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/reports/parental-leave-policies-in-21-countries:-assessing-generosity-and-gender-equality](http://www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/reports/parental-leave-policies-in-21-countries:-assessing-generosity-and-gender-equality)).

The report focuses on the level of support provided to parents under national parental leave policies:

- The **U.S. ranks 20th out of 21** when it comes to the total **length of leave guaranteed to a two-parent couple** – 24 weeks. Only Switzerland provides less – 14 weeks – but 11 of those weeks are paid.
- The **U.S. ranks last among the 21 countries** when it comes to the **generosity of paid leave**. Neither Australia nor the U.S. have minimum standards for paid leave, but Australia gives new parents a \$3,000 "baby bonus."

"The United States has the least generous parental leave policies of all 21 economies compared in this study," said report co-author and CUNY Graduate Center professor Janet Gornick. "We pay a high price for our poor policy, though, because parental leaves improve the health and well-being of children and their parents and paid leaves provide families with crucial economic support at such an important time."

### Total and FTE Paid Parental Leave for Two-Parent Families



While the U.S. Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) sets a minimum standard for parental leave, that leave is unpaid. In addition, about 40% of U.S. workers are not protected by the FMLA. The FMLA does not cover workers in smaller establishments and also excludes employees with less than one year on the job.