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Parenting, Peregrination, and Politics: A Study of Family Policy and Immigration in West European Welfare States

Jeremy Lee Jackson
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Parenting, Peregrination, and Politics: A Study of Family Policy and Immigration in West European Welfare States

By

J.L. Jackson

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ABSTRACT

The title of this thesis is “Parenting, Peregrination, and Politics: A Study of Family Policy and Immigration in West European Welfare States.” The author’s name is J.L. Jackson, a candidate for a Master of Science degree in cross-disciplinary studies (foci in sociology and political science) at Minnesota State University, Mankato, located in Mankato, Minnesota, United States. This thesis was published in 2013. This writing seeks to answer the question “does an increase in immigration cause family policy spending and coverage in advanced West European democracies to expand?” Qualitative methods, including content analysis, as well as quantitative analysis of existing data from scholarly sources. The finding is that immigration is linked to family policy spending and coverage expansion, yet more research is needed to determine the exact causal manner in which this occurs.

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GLOSSARY

Adult worker model – A family policy paradigm that encourages both women and men to take on full-time employment outside the home; the opposite of the male breadwinner model.

Defamilialization – the transfer of child care responsibilities from the private family to society at large, usually through the means of state-funded or state-run child care facilities.

Familialization – the opposite of defamilialization; the transfer of child care responsibilities from society to the private family.

Family policy – the set of government policies aimed at the social institution of the family. More specifically, family policies include, but are not necessarily limited to, marriage laws, parental leave arrangements, child tax credits, and the funding and administration of kindergartens and child care facilities.

Great Recession – a period of global economic downturn beginning in 2008 and continuing through 2013, largely sparked by the American and European housing crisis.

Male breatwinner model – A program of family policy that places emphasis on encouraging men to work full-time outside the home and women to serve as stay-at-home wives and mothers; the opposite of the adult worker model.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, MAJOR HYPOTHESES, AND METHODS

Introductory Overview

During the past decade, the European Union (EU) grew from 15 to 27 nations and millions of new immigrants continued to flood in from Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, and the post-communist states of Eastern Europe. Meanwhile, women's employment rates grew from an average of less than 50 percent to more than 60 percent in all Western European nations (Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011; 137-138, OECD 2012a, OECD 2012b). Beginning in the 1990s, European welfare states also underwent significant changes, including the retrenchment, individualization, and privatization of old-age pensions, the improvement of healthcare coverage, and the redesign of means-tested benefits and education systems.

Family policies, however, seem to defy the general trend of welfare state retrenching and defunding by undergoing both expansion in coverage and spending. Many scholars have shown that these social programs have expanded greatly throughout developed Europe, including countries representing a wide variety of welfare state models and regimes. For instance, Germany, a conservative-corporatist (Bismarckian) welfare state, traditionally favored male-breadwinner family policies and contribution-based social insurance. Sweden, a social-democratic welfare regime, concentrated on universal welfare coverage and family policies that encouraged female participation in the labor market. The United Kingdom (henceforth, UK or Britain), which represents a liberal welfare state tradition, supported means-tested welfare programs and limited

family policies that produced a de-facto male-breadwinner effect, often called "implicit familialism" (Steiner 2003, 12). Italy, representing the Southern European welfare family, championed policies similar to the Bismarckian model but with less social insurance and more emphasis on the male breadwinner paradigm.

Because in recent years all of these countries have seen expansion and growth in their family policy coverage and spending levels, some observers declared an emergence of some hybrid combinations of the social democratic and the liberal welfare state models across Europe (Naldini & Saraceno 2008; Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton 2011). All four countries also can serve as good examples of how family policies have been altered to increase the amount of paid leave for young mothers, grant fathers special rights to a paternal leave, open new state-run child care centers, subsidize privately funded daycare centers and in-home domestic aid, give more tax credits for families with children, and provide payments to parents for childrearing. Furthermore, both center-left and center-right governments have implemented such mixed and multifaceted policies. This evidence points to the potential causal effect of structural, not simply political, factors to explain this recent expansion of family policies across Europe, as discussed by Sainsbury (2006), Burlone (2007), Naldini and Saraceno (2008), Daly (2010), Engster & Stensota (2010), Fleckenstein and Seeleib-Kaiser (2011) Seeleib-Kaiser and Toivonen (2011), and Tunberger and Sigle-Rushton (2011), among others.

The nations of Europe are also undergoing significant changes in the area of immigration. Although the four traditionally culturally homogeneous countries analyzed

in this thesis witnessed modest levels of immigration prior to 1990 (with the exception of Italy, which was a country of *emigration* prior to 1990), they all began to receive an influx of migrants from post-communist Eastern Europe and the global South in the mid-1990s. This trend has only accelerated in later years, with hundreds of thousands of migrants arriving in these countries annually (OECD 2012). According to the OECD (2012d, 2012e), migration accounted for at least 45 percent of the growth in the labor forces of these countries over the 2000-2010 period, with Germany, Italy, and Britain all ranking above the OECD average of immigrant labor force growth during this period. The UK and Italy in particular saw exceptional leaps in immigrant, with international migration accounting for almost 100 percent of labor force growth during 2000-2010 (OECD 2012g). These economic migrants and humanitarian refugees, who make up a majority of the immigrants present in Europe today, have primarily settled in the environs of major cities such as Frankfurt, Berlin, Stockholm, Milan, and London. They have taken jobs in a wide variety of secondary and tertiary-sector occupations, including manufacturing, services, and basic unskilled labor. In addition, a large number of immigrants, especially women, have become child-care workers. This has been the case especially in Italy, where hundreds of thousands of migrant laborers work in this capacity (Naldini & Saraceno 2008; Seeleib-Kaiser & Toivonen 2011; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton 2011). In consequence, these latest changes in the composition of (primarily urban) populations and labor markets make immigration a highly salient issue to be considered in comparative family policy studies. This thesis seeks to contribute to the new and rapidly expanding scholarship on this significant relationship between family policies on

one hand and immigration policies on the other. The relevant literature includes studies by Fleckenstein's (2011), who explores the changing notion of Christian democratic family norms and policies in Germany, Diéz Medrano's (2005) study of mass immigration and changing conceptions of nationality and citizenship in Spain, Morgan's (2001) study of state-market-family relations and policies in Europe and the United States, and Bowen's (2012) analysis of the impact of Muslim migrants on the French welfare state and its social policy regime in general.

Definitions and Data Sources

In this thesis, I analyze the impact of immigration patterns on recent family policy developments in Germany, Sweden, Italy, and the United Kingdom (henceforth, UK or Britain). I define *family policy* as an area of social policy that is concerned with aiding parents with the economic costs, time commitments, educational necessities, and social needs associated with rearing children. Specifically, I concentrate on parental leave programs, child tax breaks, cash incentives for having children, marriage benefits, and state-run or state-subsidized child care programs. I define the immigration variable as the yearly volume of international migration into a given country, as measured by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (hereafter, OECD).

I have examined national laws and regulation on family policies during the relevant period, official declarations on family policy and/or immigration from mainstream, mass-participation party election manifestos of the governing political parties for the years between 1995-2013, mainstream news articles concerning public

policy in the four nations during the relevant period, and yearly spending data on family policies from the OECD and other government-based organizations. In addition, this thesis will make use of the existing quantitative data on total immigration numbers.

Thesis Summary and Literature Review

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that in advanced Western and Northern European democracies family policy coverage and spending have increased in response to the numbers of immigrants and their offspring present in these countries. A number of scholars have shown that in many Western European nations, since at least 1995, family policy has expanded in both spending and coverage (Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011, Daly 2010, Motiejuanite & Kravchenko 2011, OECD 2013) but the welfare state literature varies widely in identifying main causes of this phenomenon. Some studies, for example, point to a cultural shift toward gender equality (Orloff 2006; Daly 2010; Motiejuanite & Kravchenko 2011), others focus on an increase in employers' labor-supply needs (Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011), a rise in secularism with a corresponding decline in religious influence (Stadelmann-Steffen 2011), the pressure from civil society and political agency, and an economic shift toward post-industrialism and neoliberalism (Orloff 2006; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton 2011).

So far, however, few studies have attempted to gauge the impact of immigration on the recent family policy changes and reforms. I argue that this influence can be detected by measuring the change in total immigrant population, yearly immigration totals, immigrant birth rates, and the number of foreign nationals (both legal and

undocumented) employed in the child care sector in each of these countries during the 1995-2013 period. These types of data can help us discover the ways in which immigration is impacting the expansion of family policy and, by extension, European society as a whole. In addition, I use a qualitative content analysis of the rhetoric and commentary on the issues of immigration and family policy found in public newspapers, election manifestos of governing political parties, and legislation relevant to these two issues. These documents were all published between 1995 and 2013. This type of information is highly relevant to our understanding of how both political elites and the general public view the issues of immigration, family policies, and the institution of family as a whole, allowing us to get a better understanding of the impacts these factors have on each other than what could be gained from purely quantitative data.

As mentioned above, I have selected four countries for this small-n, comparative analysis: Germany, the United Kingdom, Sweden, and Italy. These nations were selected not only because they represent a cross-section of all major welfare state types (Esping-Andersen 1990; Fererra, Hemerijck, & Rhodes 2000) but also because of their contrasting conservative-traditional, liberal, and social democratic-egalitarian family traditions and policy structures (Burlone 2007). In addition, these nations were chosen according to Mill's criterion of similarity: they hold in common certain confounding variables, including economic development, post-industrialization, legal (and illegal) immigration, population size (with the exception of Sweden), and a parliamentary system of government.

My thesis explores several possible causal relationships that could indicate the

significant influence of immigration on family policies. First, I propose that regardless of the type of welfare state regime, all four European welfare states would show considerable expansion of family policy spending and coverage as the yearly volume of immigration increases. This effect would occur, at least in part, because immigrants, especially immigrant women, disproportionately serve as domestic aides and child care workers in Western European nations, including Italy, Germany, Sweden, and the UK (Naldini & Saraceno 2008; Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton 2011; McLachlan 2008; Cvajner 2012) and the governments would seek to regulate their employment and incorporate them into the state-sanctioned family policy. The presence of these workers—most of whom have children of their own—also encourages political actors and elites to pursue what Leitner (2003) called *defamilializing* child care policies, that is, those that allow mothers to leave their children at daycare centers or other care facilities while they work. Another family policy consequence of immigration might involve the expansion of certain types of means-tested benefits and services for low-income families and children. Women of immigrant origin tend to have more children and experience higher poverty rates than their native counterparts (Naldini & Saraceno 2008; Cvanja 2012). As a result, governments may pursue a mix of measures to address the needs of both the middle class citizens and the poor, including many immigrant families. A more costly option, for example, would be to make paid parental leave and child care more affordable and incentivize immigrant women to take up full-time employment and/or higher education (Orloff 2006).

Although neoliberal austerity has remained the prevailing trend in Europe,

especially since 2000 (Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011), the state has maintained a heavy, and sometimes even expanded, role of the state in at least some arenas of social policy, including family policy. This argument is backed up by evidence from the OECD (2012a), which recently released new data on family policy expansion

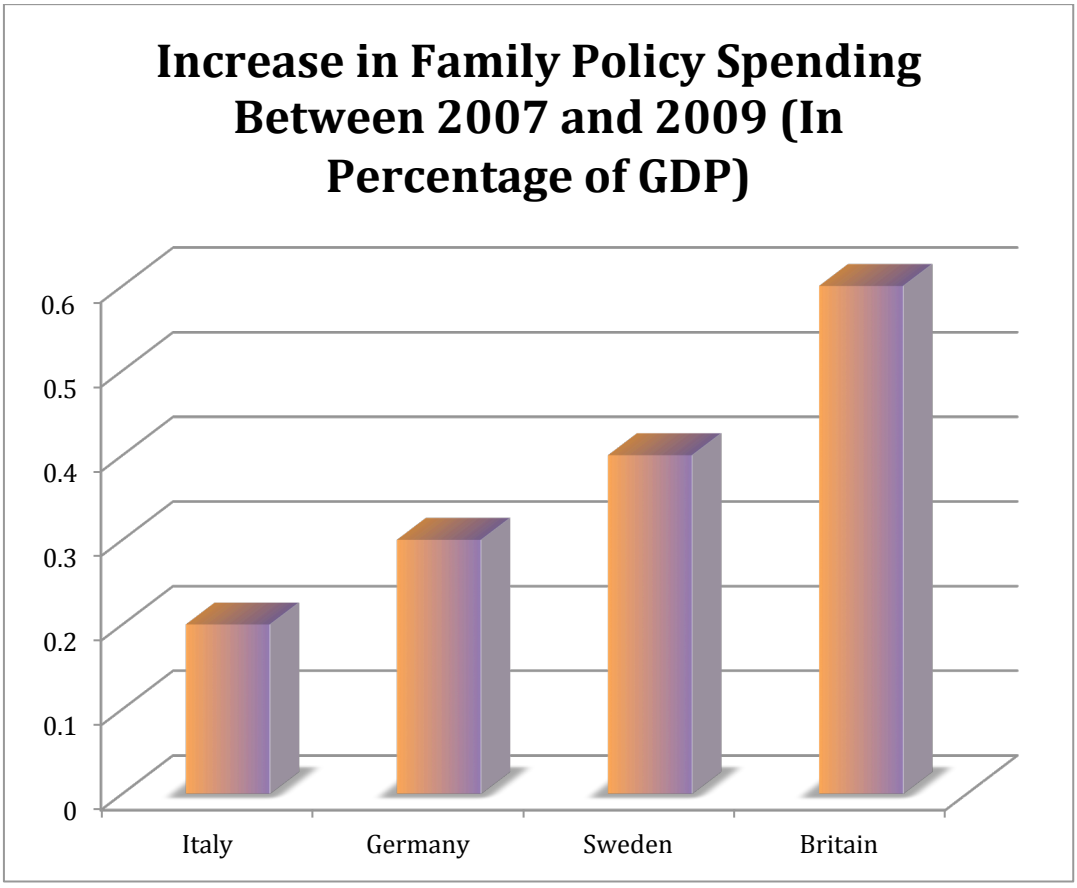

Figure 1.1. Data source: OECD (2012a), Social Spending Database.

and social spending increases since the global financial crisis of 2007-2008 and the ensuing *Great Recession.* The OECD (2012a) found that Germany, Sweden, Italy, and

Britain all increased spending on family policies, despite the fact that all these countries, with the exception of Germany, experienced a recession – a significant drop in GDP – and, later, slow growth – during this period. Specifically, between 2007 and 2009, Italy increased its family spending by 0.2 percent of GDP, Germany by 0.3 percent, Sweden by 0.4 percent, and the UK by 0.6 percent; the OECD average was 0.3 percent of GDP for the same period (OECD 2012a).

The null hypothesis assumes that immigration has no effect on the recent development of family policies in Europe. I would critically examine previous arguments pointing to other factors and will attempt to show that although immigration alone cannot account for all family policy developments, it nonetheless should not be ignored as an increasingly influential variable in the overall development of postindustrial welfare states. Sociologists Timo Fleckenstein and Martin Seeleib-Kaiser (2011, 17), for example, posit that western European nations are expanding family policies due to pressure from business organizations, which view employment-oriented family policies—especially affordable childcare, kindergartens, and 'working' parental leave (wherein parents may work full-time or close to full-time while receiving parental benefits)—as crucial to keeping qualified women in the workforce. These researchers point to pro-family-policy lobbying by business, trade unions, and interest groups in Great Britain and Germany during the 1990s, 2000s, and the current decade. Under this scenario, the immigration variable has no significant effect on governments' decisions to expand family policy spending and coverage but we must keep in mind that contemporary European labor markets are no longer dominated by traditional big

business and organized labor interests. This approach fails to consider the vast number of small businesses and service-sector establishments that overwhelmingly rely on both legal and undocumented immigrant labor, including numerous unskilled and low-skilled women, young mothers, and parents in need of financial assistance. Thus, based on this theory, the immigration variable may indeed play a more significant role than anticipated by Fleckenstein and Seeleib-Kaiser (2011) and other scholars using similar arguments.

A related argument emphasizes the changing place of women within the family, the labor market, and society as a whole. Social policy scholars such as Mary Daly (2010), Anne Revillard (2006), and Ann Shola Orloff (2006) state that voters' adoption of feminist values – such as gender equality, female careerism, and reproductive autonomy – placed pressure on politicians to enact comprehensive family policies that allowed women to balance career demands with family life. Specifically, this view asserts that lobbying, protest, and negotiation activities carried out by organized women's groups, female labor unions, and civil society organizations are in part responsible for the expansion of defamilializing policies, including subsidized in-home care, kindergartens, and working parental leave in West European welfare states. Immigration, however, can also play a significant role in this scenario as well. Women immigrants, including many young mothers, have entered the European workforce in increasing numbers since 1995 (Skinner 2009), and their presence, given their statistically higher rate of childbearing than their native counterparts, could have a significant impact on female-centered labor and civil society organizations' decisions to push for family policy reform. In addition, many of these women work in the child care sector, meaning that they would be directly

affected by reforms favoring family policy *defamilialization* – the transfer of child care responsibilities away from parents and to outside organizations – as they would be expected to work more hours (thus they must spend more time away from their children)

The final null hypothesis I will test in this study is the view that the declining position of the traditional nuclear family within advanced European societies is driving the expansion of family policies, as seen in Germany, Sweden, the UK, and Italy. Specifically, this view, espoused by Timo Fleckenstein (2011) and Ruth Lister and Fran Bennett (2012) among others, holds that conservative and Christian-democratic political parties, religious groups, and right-wing civil society organizations, such as large family groups and Catholic women's associations, push for *familialization* (the transfer of child care responsibilities from outside organizations to parents)—or at least pro-natalist—family policy expansions, such as increased cash benefits, kindergartens / early education centers, paid parental leave, and tax benefits and/or cash benefits for childbirth. In my earlier research, I found that such conservative, pro-nuclear family rhetoric and specific family policy expansion proposals were present in the 2005, 2007, and 2010 election manifestos of the German Christian Democratic Union (hereafter, CDU) and the British Conservative Party (Jackson 2012). Lister and Barrett (2012) came to similar conclusions in their recent study of British family policy, finding that the Conservative Party is responding to a perceived weakness of nuclear families in Britain by promoting both marriage (homosexual and heterosexual) and familializing and defamilializing family policies. In addition, a pattern of conservative civil society groups, religious organizations (especially the Catholic Church), and large family associations successfully

lobbying for family policy expansion has been demonstrated to exist in the East European nations of Poland, Hungary, and Romania in a recent study by Inglot, Szikra, and Rat (2012). While these countries are not the focus of my study, their citizens, especially Poles and Romanians, greatly contribute to the most recent immigration wave in Western Europe. As EU citizens, they also qualify to receive family policy benefits and services that often surpass, in quality and quantity, parental and child care support available in their home countries. This problem illustrates a much wider EU dimension of family policy expansion and the new ways in which migration might exert pressure on welfare reforms in the countries that take in large numbers of Eastern European immigrants. Finally, many immigrants from poorer nations somewhat paradoxically contribute to a general shift in European culture toward conservative "family values." In this way, immigration may play a political role in bolstering the constituency behind traditional, family-oriented social policies, at least in Catholic or Christian-democratic countries, such as Italy and, to some extent, Germany.

METHODS

Overview

This thesis uses a qualitative, small-n, comparative research design to study the impact of immigration upon recent (1995-2013) family policy reforms in the four countries of Sweden, Germany, Italy, and Britain. To accomplish this goal, this study uses three methods of inquiry: content analyses of political documents, comparative case analysis, and comparative analysis of quantitative data obtained from secondary sources.

This data has been gathered electronically using Minnesota State University, Mankato's library databases and archives, as well as general Internet searches, during the period of January 2012-March 2013. Specifically, as primary data, this thesis draws on content analyses of mainstream party manifestos and other political documents from mainstream politicians pertaining to family policies, family structure, and immigration. As secondary data, this thesis uses information from quantitative studies conducted by international economic and political organizations, including the OECD and International Monetary Fund, as well as studies conducted by the governments of these countries themselves. In addition, as secondary research data, this thesis draws upon information from existing academic studies on the subjects of immigration, social policy, and family policy.

Primary data collection

The party manifestos represent the largest part of my primary data. The 2010 Conservative Party (henceforth, CP) manifesto – the most recent as of the time of this writing – serves as the first section of my content analysis for the case of the United Kingdom, while the 1997, 2001, and 2005 CP manifestos were also analyzed, along with the manifestos from the same years from the center-left Labour Party. For the case of Germany, I analyze the 2009, 2007, and 1998 manifestos and party documents from the center-right Christian Democratic Party, as well as the 2009 and 1998 manifestos from the traditionally socialist, center-left Social Democratic Party. I also analyzed Sweden's center-left Social Democratic Party's election manifestos for the preceding three elections (2011, 2006, 2001), and did the same for those of the center-right Conservative Party.

Finally, in Italy, I examine recent election manifestos and political documents from the traditionally communist, social-democratic Democratic Party, the regional, right-wing *Lega Nord*, and the right-wing, nationwide *Il Popolo di Libertâ* (The People of Freedom) party. These comments come from officials in the national, and, in the case of Italy, regional governments, who have the capabilities to legislate or significantly influence social policy program design and implementation.

Secondary data collection, analysis, and methodology

In addition to the primary data, this study also makes use of a large amount of secondary data. This information – both qualitative and quantitative -- was gleaned from a wide variety of sources, including existing academic books and papers (all published between 1990 and 2013), The quantitative data, which consists of information on family policies, migrant occupation numbers, and yearly immigration volume statistics, comes from sources including the European Union, the OECD, and the national governments of the four states. In addition, this thesis makes use of existing academic literature and studies as evidence to support its arguments; such papers contain information directly relevant to the hypotheses tested by this study. All such information was gathered between January 2012 and April 2013. This thesis uses a number of different methods and techniques to analyze both the primary and secondary data that was collected. The main method of analysis used throughout this thesis is pure comparison: examination of the different data and documents for context and content, and discovering how they relate to one another.

CHAPTER 2: AGENDA SETTING FOR FAMILY POLICY AND IMMIGRATION: LEADING POLITICAL PARTIES IN WESTERN EUROPE

Chapter Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the results of the content analysis and secondary research I performed on the link between family policy and immigration in Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, and Sweden. I examined parties' election manifestos and public statements, and existing quantitative data from the OECD and other governmental organizations. I determined how and why their stances on family policies, including childcare allowances, parental leave, and elderly care allowances, have changed over the past two decades, and how these changes related to immigration. In addition, through analyzing the above information, I will explore how the issues of immigration and family policy agendas can intersect. The data arising from this content analysis may point in the direction of significant correlational and even possible causal connection between increasing immigration and growth in family policy coverage and spending that may be further explored in future research.

This chapter is organized by country, rather than by topic or research method. After a historcal overview of the topics of family policy and immigration in Western Europe, it includes a discussion of these two subjects in the contexts of Germany, Italy, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. Each country section includes an examination of data pertaining to the changes in family policies over the past two decades, as well as analysis of both parties' official positions on the issue of immigration – discussing how these

political actors view the issue, how their orientations have evolved over the years, what strategies, if any, they seek to employ to integrate immigrants into their societies, and the trends in immigration policy over the past two decades. Finally, this chapter will include a discussion of data on the links between immigration and family policy expansion, attempting to show the way in which migration could have a causal effect upon the increase in family policy expansion and spending in the four nations.

Family Policy and Immigration in Great Britain

Immigration and family policy have both been controversial and dynamic issues within the United Kingdom over the past two decades. The UK has long been known as a destination for international migration. The country, which was once the head of the largest colonial empire in the world, has seen a steady flow of immigrants, largely from its former colonies in Africa, the Caribbean, and Asia, since the early 20th century. This trend has only accelerated since 1995, with the nation taking on over 300,000 migrants annually since that year (Office of National Statistics 2009). In the past two decades, migration from former British colonies has continued, while migration from other EU nations – especially Poland – has increased dramatically over the same period (Office of National Statistics 2009). During the 1990s, the center-right Conservative Party and the center-left, traditionally socialist Labour Party held significantly divergent views on immigration, with the former supporting increased restrictions and limits on migration and the latter supporting increased immigrant and refugee inflow (Conservative Party 1997, Labour Party 1997). These positions shifted during the first years of the 21st

century, as the Labour Party, responding to pressure from voters, began to support increased restrictions on immigration (Labour Party 2001, 2005, 2010), whereas the Conservative Party continued its traditional position (Conservative Party 2001, 2005, 2010).

Along with immigration, family policy has also been a hot-button issue in contemporary British politics. Initially, in the years following the Thatcher era, the Labour Party and the Conservative Party were highly divided on the issue, even more so than on immigration. The former preferred policies promoting gender equality, cash payments for poor families, and state-run child care and early education facilities, while the latter preferred those that helped male breadwinners financially provide for their wives (the party, at the time, opposed same-sex marriage) and children, including employment-related social insurance and tax credits for childbirth, as well as paid parental leave and means-tested benefits for single parents. The party's 1997 manifesto expressed strong support for the traditional family, calling it the bedrock of society and the center of British culture and social life (Conservative Party 1997). In addition, the party supported government policies – such as child tax credits – that aided in the perpetuation of the male breadwinner work arrangement and gendered division of child care (Conservative Party 1997). The Labour Party, in contrast, took positions on family policy in line with its traditional orientation as a social democratic, pro-poor political organization. Specifically, the party favored defamilialization in the form of publicly funded child care and early education centers, increased funding for schools, and gender-neutral paid parental leave (Labour Party 1997). In the United Kingdom, both the

socialist-rooted Labour Party and the right-wing Conservative Party (henceforth, CP, sometimes called the Tories) have taken policy initiatives aimed toward supporting families and children. However, due to ideological differences, the two parties have taken vastly different measures to reach this end. During the 1990s, Labour, owing to its socialist past, favored family policies that took the responsibility of caring for children out of the hands of parents and gave it to state-sponsored childcare centers and schools, while the Tories, echoing their past as traditionalistic political actors, supported policies such as increased parental leave, flexible working hours, and tax credits, all of which are designed to give parents the time and money necessary to care for their children themselves rather than relying on the state or private daycare companies. This following statement from the CP's 2001 manifesto expressed support for so-called traditional marriage and stay-at-home parenting, usually by women:

> "[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."
>
> (Conservative Party 2001: http://www.conservativemanifesto.com/2001/2001-conservative-manifesto.shtml#family)

In contrast, the Labour Party's manifesto from the same time period indicates its tradition toward providing state-subsidized, defamilialized child-care services and early education benefits (Labour Party 2001).

These general orientations, while they have largely converged on a *defamilialistic* perspective, have persisted into the present day. The next statement from the Labour Party's most recent manifesto in fact deemphasizes the importance of marriage as the

foundation of family policy support, which contrasts with the CP's position that explicates the centrality of marriage:

> "Children thrive best in families in which relationships are stable, loving and strong. We support couples who want to get married and for whom marriage offers the best environment to raise children. Marriage is fundamental to our society, but financial support should be directed at all children, not just those with married parents."
> (Labour Party 2010: 6:2)

Additionally, while the Labour Party's statements conceive of family support as a way to redistribute wealth from the wealthy to the middle income and poor, the Conservative Party's manifestos also mentioned providing moral support to families, in a belief that the traditional nuclear family structure is the best environment for raising children with solid moral values. Finally, the Conservatives, as of 2010, have altered their policy quite dramatically to show support for same-sex civil partnerships (equivalent to marriage in rights), LGBT adoption, and lesbian- and gay-led families, which constitutes a major break from their previous stance against gay marriage and LGBT rights (Conservative Party 2001; Conservative Party 2012).

These positions, however, began to change only during the 2005 election cycle, with both parties embracing family policies calling for increases in parental leave (for both sexes), the opening of state-run child care centers, and funding for kindergartens and early education centers. These same trends only accelerated further during the 2010 election cycle, with Labour continuing its support for progressive family policies and the Tories for the first time expressing full support for marriage equality and calling for increased state financial support for child care centers and early education facilities, as well as for cash benefits for struggling families. On the whole, this evidence points to a

growing policy convergence among the center-left and center-right in Britain.

My analysis of the Conservatives' 2010 manifesto, in particular, has led me to conclude that the party has taken a marked turn from its "Thatcherist" (1980s) anti-welfare, pro-traditional-family position. In this manifesto, the party endorsed a number of new measures for families, including an expansion of maternity leave, an introduction of paternity leave, and the expansion of state-run or state-funded private childcare centers (Conservative Party 2010). This is a break from the past, as the party favored retrenchment in family policies and support for more "personal responsibility," although they do pay some respect to this policy in supporting financial means testing for family benefits. This expansion of family policy stems from both the changes in the social structure—increase acceptance of gay rights, women's careers, and non-traditional families—and the economic crisis, which has served to shift the electorate away from pure liberal individualism and traditional familialism toward communitarian and even collectivist solutions, especially as it relates to the place of the family in society. However, many long-standing Conservative distinctions are still present, although in mutated forms. This is exemplified by the party's focuses on moral rehabilitation of wayward teens and single parents and encourages traditional two-parent marriage—both for same-sex and opposite-sex couples—as the bedrock for a responsible and ethical family structure (Conservative Party 2010).

The ideological differences between the CP and Labour are still evident in these new policies, however, as both parties have taken significantly different paths to increasing family support. Labour, owing to its socialist past, is in favor of more

defamilializing policies—policies that take the responsibility of caring for children out of the hands of parents and toward state-sponsored childcare centers and schools, while the CP, echoing its past as a quasi-religious, traditionalistic party, supported policies such as increased parental leave, flexible working hours, and tax credits, all of which are designed to give parents the time and money necessary to care for their children themselves. In addition, while Labour's statements conceive of family support as a way to redistribute wealth from the wealthy to the middle income and poor, including the immigrants, the Conservative Party manifesto also mentioned providing moral support to families. This is because the party held the belief that the traditional nuclear family structure is the best environment for raising children with solid moral values.

This difference, I feel, represents more of an ideological than a practical difference. The Conservatives, in line with their traditionalist history, are attempting to recreate the "solid, moral nuclear family" of the past few centuries, believing that such an institution is the best environment for the maintenance of the traditional political, social, and moral institutions of British society. In contrast, Labour's egalitarian ideology leads it to support policies that allow parents and children to live independently of the labor market and to increase their socioeconomic standing. More specifically, as a traditional advocate of democratic socialism, Britain's Labour Party has traditionally guarded the feminist vision of separating women from (and increasing the role of men in) child and elderly care duties, allowing them to pursue full-time careers outside the home. Instead, according to Labour's traditional position, care duties would be largely taken over by state-funded institutions such as retirement-nursing homes and children's daycare centers,

and parents (both mothers and fathers) would be given substantial paid time away from work. Additionally, Labour has traditionally supported social benefits—"welfare payments" in American parlance—for children, especially those from poor families.

However, despite these parties' general decline in support for most areas of social policy, both have continued to support increases in family policy spending and coverage. Immigration is likely a key factor behind such support for two primary reasons. First, these parties seek to respond to public demands to deal with the alleged problem of immigration by taking action to integrate immigrants into British society and the country's labor market. Providing financial support by incorporating migrant and migrant-origin families into the welfare state system is one proposed way to accomplish this goal (Wiener 2005, Sainsbury 2006, Abali 2009, Paniagua 2010, Fleckenstein 2011). Moreover, birthrates among immigrants in Britain are higher than those among UK citizens, making family policy key to allowing immigrant women to integrate into the labor market. Finally, family policies – especially pronatalist measures like paid parental leave and child tax credits – may increase birth rates (Inglot, Szikra, & Rat 2012), leading British parties to support them in order to allay public fears over the declining native population.

Family Structure and Family Policies in Germany

Germany's tradition as a Bismarckian, Christian-democratic welfare state has left a lasting legacy among the country's family policies. Originally conceived in the early 20th century as part of an overarching social insurance program to pacify the working

class from pursuing socialist revolution, after World War II Germany's family policy regime had evolved by the 1990s into a tool for perpetuating the traditional, patriarchal nuclear family, in which fathers worked full-time outside of the home and mothers served as homemakers and full-time carers for their children (Castles & Schierup 2010). Such a family policy regime, which consisted of tax credits for raising children, bonus payments for giving birth, and funded maternal leave schemes, were aimed at protecting the traditional family from the financial pressures caused by a growing and burgeoning capitalist market. Although originally implemented by the political right with conservative goals in mind, during the 1960s and 1970s the country's left-wing, historically socialist, and center-left social democratic parties also vigorously supported this family policy structure, seeking to protect social programs from liberal and, later also, neoliberal efforts at retrenchment and reform (Fleckenstein 2011). This trend toward protection of the traditional familial aims, however, started to abate during the 1980s, when Germany's leftist and social-democratic parties began to support a more gender-equal model, although the right continued to hold onto the traditional, male-breadwinner style model for a long time (Esping-Andersen 1990; Bonoli & Powell 2004; Maetzke & Ostner 2010).

Germany has also had a tradition of immigration, although it has not seen nearly the numbers of foreign nationals as have moved to Britain or France in recent decades (Abali 2009; OECD 2012c). Since the end of World War II, the country has played host to a number of international migrants, including significant numbers of Turks, Middle Easterners, East Europeans, and Africans. The nation's Turkish community is quite large,

making up around nine percent of the German population (Abali 2009). Since the 1990s, however, German immigration has significantly increased, with immigrants continuing to pour in not only from the aforementioned nations but also from Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia. Today, Germany takes on more than 100,000 migrants annually, mostly from new EU nations such as Poland and Estonia, non-EU Eastern European nations, Turkey, the Middle East, and Africa (Abali 2009, OECD 2012d). This has had a significant impact on German politics, as over the past few decades many individuals have placed pressure on political parties to curtail the flow of immigration.

The nation's two primary political parties, the Christian Democratic Union (henceforth, CDU) and the Social Democratic Party (henceforth, SDP), have taken similar positions to their British counterparts on issues of family structure and family policy, while both have explicitly supported maintaining high immigration numbers and integrating immigrants into German society (Abali 2009). The CDU, long known as a religious, center-right party, has traditionally supported similar views to the British CP on family structure. Specifically, it has promoted the male breadwinner paradigm and supported child tax credits for families. In addition, it has promoted familialization in the area of child care, and so has traditionally promoted paid parental leave instead of state-run child care centers.

However, since 2000, the CDU has taken a more progressive turn on family policy benefits, supporting a greater deal of defamilialization, including state-run child care centers and kindergartens, as well as supporting a new, gender-equal parental leave program. On issues of family structure, however, it has remained very conservative, in

large part due to its religious affiliation. Specifically, it opposes marriage equality and adoption rights for same-sex couples; the party also implicitly continues to uphold the traditional belief that bearing children is a woman's duty to society. The English version of the 2007 CDU party program illustrates the party's continued homophobia and traditional religious values by reiterating its support for the restriction of marriage to heterosexual couples and providing religious justification for doing so (Christian Democratic Union 2009). In addition, the CDU's 2009 election manifesto – its most recent – reiterated its desire to depart from familialism and move toward increased spending on child-care, early education, and other defamilializing programs, along with gender-neutral paid parental leave. For example, it promoted expanding the half-time parental leave allowance from 14 to 28 months (Christian Democratic Union: 28), as well as supported expanding spending on kindergartens and state-run childcare centers, further expressing a departure from its traditional familialistic model. Moreover, the 2009 document expressed the party's desire to relax its reputation as an anti-gay, heterosexist party. While it expressed support for upholding the homophobic definition of marriage, it proposed creating civil unions that extend all the rights of marriage to same-sex couples, which is a departure from its traditional position on the issue (Christian Democratic Union 2009).

The Social Democratic Party of Germany (*Sozialdemocratische Partei Deutschlands*, SPD) is a traditionally socialist, mass-participation center-left party that has been, along with the CDU, hegemonic in German politics since the 1940s. The SPD, a non-religious party, takes a very similar position to Britain's Labour Party, espousing a

more progressive and socially liberal approach to family life and family policies than its Christian Democratic opposition. It has traditionally opposed the male breadwinner model, instead supporting female labor force activation as part of a policy of liberating women. It has also traditionally held progressive positions on LGBT rights, supporting full marriage equality and adoption rights since 2005. In addition, unlike the CDU, the SPD does not consider marriage to be, in the CDU's words, a "foundation of society." Instead, the party focuses on delivering family policy benefits directly to children, irrespective of their parents' marital status. In addition, the party has traditionally supported strong defamilialization of childcare, backing state-run childcare centers that allowed working professionals to have their children cared for outside the home at a low cost (Social Democratic Party of Germany 1998). Unlike the CDU, the SPD's position on family policy has stayed more or less the same over the years. In its most recent election manifesto, from the year 2009, the party also expressed a desire to expand spending on child care and parental leave. Like the CDU, however, the SPD supports increasing Germany's parental leave regime by strengthening parental leave in order to allow parents to care for their own children apart from outside facilities if they choose to do so. This is due in large part to its traditionally leftist orientation, but it also concurs with the general European trend of bolstering spending and coverage of family policies – especially those that seek better balance between work and family life. This points to some wider phenomenon pushing all Europe toward defamilialization, especially when it comes to parental leave expansion for mothers and fathers..

On the subject of immigration policy, the two mainstream German parties'

positions have also evolved significantly during the past two decades. Specifically, both Germany's center-left, traditionally socialist Social Democratic Party (SPD) and its center-right, religiously based Christian Democratic Union (CDU) supported the liberalization of the nations formerly highly restrictive naturalization, visa entry, and immigration laws. This trend toward greater liberalization of immigration has continued in Germany, despite increasing hostility toward immigrants among the general public (Wickboldt, 2003). Some political scientists and sociologists, such as Abali (2009) and Fleckenstein (2011), feel that this commitment to more liberal immigration policy results both from a desire to counteract the nation's racist past by incorporating persons of diverse backgrounds and a desire to better prepare the nation to compete in the global capitalist market by increasing the size of the skilled and unskilled labor force.

These family policy changes made by both the CDU and the SPD, and continued openness to immigration, indicate that the country of Germany is converging upon the social-democratic / liberal hybrid model also seen developing in the UK. Such a change points toward a large social trend across Europe as a whole, not confined to Germany alone. In line with my previous discussion of the British case, we can argue that the German governing parties, reacting to popular pressure, instituted these family policies as an attempt to integrate women of migrant origin into the labor market, thereby fostering both economic and social incorporation of international migrants into the culture and society of Germany. As the relevant party manifestos show the immigration policies and family policies are increasingly intertwined in domestic political debates.

Family Policies and Immigration in Sweden

Sweden's recent political history has been quite different from that of Germany, Italy, and Britain. Sweden, in contrast, was a traditional stronghold for social democracy, a capitalism-socialism hybrid that blends a highly regulated market economy with a large, highly unionized public sector and a universal welfare state providing coverage on the basis of citizenship, rather than means or earnings (Motiejunaite and Kravchenko, 2008; Turnberger and Sigle-Rushton, 2011; Olwig, 2011). The domination of the Social Democratic Party in Sweden during the post-WWII period until 2006 meant that the country never pursued male-breadwinner family policies, instead instituting egalitarian policies – such as publicly run or funded workplace child-care centers, state-run kindergartens, and paid maternity and paternity leave – with the goals of wealth redistribution and gender equality, rather than the maintenance of the traditional social order (Tunberger and Sigle-Rushton 2011). This makes Sweden quite distinct from the other three nations featured in this study, as it lacks a recent history of explicit or implicit familialism.

Of the four countries featured in this thesis, Sweden has been the most progressive in regards to family structure and family policies. Unlike the UK and Germany, as the archetypal social democratic welfare regime, Sweden has long supported the adult worker model, in which both women and men were encouraged to take on full-time outside employment. The center-left, formerly socialist Social Democratic Workers' Party (henceforth, SDWP), which has dominated Swedish politics since the 1930s, has traditionally supported defamilialization: it presided over one of the world's largest state-

run child care systems from the 1970s through the early 2000s (Olwig 2011). During the last decade, the party has remained strongly in favor of state-run defamilization. The following statements from the SDWP's most recent (2010) election manifesto (translated from Swedish into English) support this argument:

> "Preschool sets the foundation for lifelong learning. All of the preschools will have trained personnel and follow the curriculum. We want a modern preschool system that produces high quality early education for all children – not a conservative private preschool allowance. Municipalities have the resources to provide all children, including children of parental leave, the right to 30 hours per week in preschool . . . [a] modern work requires a modern childcare which is open when the parents are working."
> (Social Democratic Workers' Party 2010: 3-4)

With such comments, the party reiterated its commitment to the gender-equal adult worker model, in which women participate in the labor market and have access to state-run childcare and robust parental leave programs. In addition, the SDWP, in keeping with its traditional social-democratic model, is continuing in its promotion of subsidized, free state-run preschool education for all children, regardless of their parents' employment situation or economic status.

The other primary governing political party in Sweden is the Conservative Party (*Moderaterna* in Swedish), (henceforth, CPS). Like Britain's similarly named party, the CPS is a mass participation, center-right secular party that has traditionally relied on support from the middle and upper classes. Unlike their British counterparts, however, Sweden's Conservatives have traditionally taken a more moderate version of the SDWP's perspective on family structure, favoring women's activation in the labor market, defamilialization, and gender-equal parental leave policies. This trend continues to this day, with the most recent election manifesto calling for an increase in family policy

coverage in order to support people in the floundering economy, including more funding for child care centers, child tax funds, public schools, and other kinds of family centered services (Conservative Party of Sweden 2010).

The CPS' beliefs on family structure and defamilialization are very different than those of other European center-right parties. This is due in large part not only to Sweden's long history as a social democratic state with centrist to leftist values, but to the overwhelming strength of the SDP in electoral politics. Specifically, the Conservative Party's political platform is forced to the left as a result of the hegemonic position of the Social Democratic Party. This results in a situation different than that in the UK and Germany, in that one side of the political spectrum is strong enough to reduce the influence of the other side.

Although its history on social policy differs from the other nations featured in this study, Sweden's immigration history is very much like that of Germany and Italy. For much of its modern past, Sweden was a country of emigration, with thousands of Swedes migrating to the United States, Canada, and South American nations such as Brazil, Uruguay, and Argentina (Wright and Bloemraad, 2012). That trend changed radically during the 1970s and 1980s, when emigration rates in Sweden, Germany, and Italy fell precipitously, and both countries began to receive an influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe, North Africa, South Asia, and East Asia (Olwig, 2011, Wright and Bloemraad, 2012). By the start of the new millennium, Sweden was among Europe's top immigration destinations, with the country taking on millions of new migrants between 2000 and 2010. According to the OECD (2012d, 2012e), migration accounted for at least 45

percent of the growth in the labor forces of these countries over the 2000-2010 period. These foreign nationals find employment in a wide variety of fields, with a disproportionate number of immigrant women finding employment in the child-care and domestic care sector (Tunberger & Signle-Rushton 2011). In addition, the *Great Recession* has led to a massive increase in unemployment rates for foreign nationals and their families living in Sweden and other OECD nations, with rates among adult migrants reaching 11 percent and unemployment among foreign-born youth (defined as age 24 or younger [OECD 2012b]) nearly 25 percent (OECD 2012b). According to the OECD (2012b), this presents a significant challenge to governments, which must attempt to carry out the politically unpopular task of socially integrating the unemployed immigrants into their societies. Such realities may influence governments to pass legislation increasing means-tested welfare benefits, child tax credits, and affordable child care funding, as these measures help relieve financial burdens on foreign-born and migrant-descended individuals and families, especially single women with children (Olwig 2011, Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011). Sure enough, this has indeed happened, with the evidence above indicating that Sweden expanded its traditionally generous family policy spending and coverage during the past two decades.

I posit that this is in large part due to the increasing presence of immigrants in Swedish society, as the government would need to expand spending and services to financially assist them – and their typically large families – and incorporate them into the Swedish universalistic welfare state model. In addition, growing popular discontent among Swedish citizens about the presence and status of foreign nationals in the country

makes immigrant integration a priority for political parties. My theory holds that the desire to address the concerns of (native) voters while also retaining a commitment to ethnic equality and economic growth gives both center-left and center-right parties like the SDP and the Conservative Party, respectively, a powerful incentive to expand family policy spending and coverage as an immigrant integration strategy. This illustrates a clear link with the situations of Britain and Germany, where evidence suggests a similar link between immigration and family policy at the level of local and national political debate.

Family Policies and Immigration in Italy

Unlike the previous three countries, Italy has a long history as a socially conservative, predominately Roman Catholic country. This religious and cultural history has traditionally led the majority of citizens, as well as mainstream political parties, in this Southern European country to embrace a nuclear, heteronormative, male-breadwinner model of family structure and a familialistic, pro-natalist, home-care model of family policies. In large part due to the influence of the Catholic Church's doctrines and social teachings, the social order that assigned men to the public sphere and women to the domestic sphere has traditionally been widely promoted by both the general society and the political sphere – not only by the right-leaning citizens and parties, but also by the centrist and left-leaning ones (Naldini & Saraceno 2008; Toffanin 2011). This order, once hegemonic in Italian society, has abated in recent years, as the narratives of gender equality and antagonism toward the male-breadwinner paradigm in favor of equal employment opportunities for women – in large part due to both the expansion of

neoliberal capitalism and the decline in religious adherence – have expanded in recent years, especially since 2000 (Toffanin 2011).

Another factor that distinguishes Italy from its European neighbors is its political party system. Unlike Germany, Sweden, and the UK, which all possess long-standing, stable party systems, Italy has seen the rise and demise of its major political parties in recent years, including the total collapse of two of the country's largest parties, the Communist Party and the Christian Democratic Party, during the 1990s, largely in response to corruption scandals. These parties, which existed since the fall of the Mussolini fascist regime near the end of World War II, were replaced by the center-left Democratic Party, made up of many ex-Communists and ex-socialists, and the right-wing *Forza Italia* (Go Italy) party, run in large part by the embattled former prime minister Silvio Berlusconi. In addition to these mass participation national parties, the right-wing regional party *Lega Nord* (Northern League), representing the interests of the wealthy northern part of Italy, has also been a major player in Italian politics since the 1990s, dominating the political scene of Italy's northern regions (Naldini & Saraceno 2008).

The issues of immigration, family policy, and family structure intersect in a number of ways in Italy. According to sociologists Naldini and Saraceno (2008), the majority of non-familialized child care service – whether through state agencies or private companies – is performed by women of immigrant origin. In addition, the *Great Recession* has led to a massive increase in unemployment rates for foreign nationals and their families living in OECD nations, including Italy, with rates among adult migrants reaching 11 percent and unemployment among foreign-born youth (defined as age 24 or

younger [OECD 2010]) reaching nearly 25 percent (OECD 2012b). According to the OECD (2012b), this presents a significant challenge to governments, which must attempt to carry out the politically unpopular task of socially integrating the unemployed immigrants into their societies and finding them jobs, if possible. Such realities could plausibly influence the Italian governing parties to pass legislation increasing means-tested welfare benefits, child tax credits, and affordable child care funding, as these measures help relieve financial burdens on foreign-born and migrant-descended individuals and families, especially single women with children (Olwig 2011, Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011).

Italy has seen a massive influx of both undocumented and legal immigrants since 2000, with the nation receiving four million legal immigrants per year, according to 2007 data gathered by Naldini and Saraceno (2008). The majority of these immigrants are young, unmarried, moderately educated men and women from developing nations in Eastern Europe, South Asia, and North Africa (Naldini and Saraceno, 2008; Fullin and Reyneri, 2010). Although some of these immigrants are refugees who entered Italy legally due to wars, genocides, or other unsafe conditions in their home countries, the majority have been economic migrants who relocated to the nation in search of employment. According to Naldini and Saraceno (2008), the majority of Italy's economic immigrants are residing in the country illegally, most having entered the nation through other European Union (EU) nations or by overstaying their Italian visitor, student, or temporary work visas (Naldini and Saraceno, 2010; Fullin and Reyneri, 2010; Castles and Schierup, 2010). Regardless of education level or prior work experience, immigrants to

Italy, like in the other countries discussed above but even to a greater extent, typically take work in low-wage, low-skill positions. There exists a significant gender division in labor among immigrant workers: men typically find employment in manual labor fields, while women tend to work in homes, often performing child- or elderly-care duties. Immigrant female workers, many of whom are in Italy illegally, affect a major influence on the Italian family care structure. According to Naldini and Saraceno (2008), an estimated 700,000 immigrant female child-, and personal-care providers work in Italian homes, a figure far above the EU average. These women, especially those without legal resident status, often work "under the table" for wages far below industry standards, and often below mandatory minimum wages (Naldini and Saraceno, 2008; Fullin and Reyneri, 2010). Such individuals provide a crucial support to Italian families, as the majority of employed Italian women with children use the services of immigrant childcare workers, and families with elderly or personal care needs often turn to such immigrant labor as well.

These factors combine to make Italy a unique country among advanced European democracies relative to family structure and the political sphere. Still, there are also some similarities with the other European countries when it comes to family policies and immigration. Most relevant, Italian center-right political parties, like their counterparts in Britain and Germany, have shown a similar progression from a promotion of the male breadwinner model to a more egalitarian family structure. The center-left parties have also adopted the adult-worker stance. While in the past the Northern League held more conservative opinions (Naldini & Saraceno 2008), its 2013 election manifesto illustrates a

change toward full support for women's workplace equality and defamilialization, although it is still openly homophobic and opposes marriage equality for LGBT Italians:

> The person and the family are at the heart of our program. Family support, natural community founded on marriage (between man and woman alone), promotion of human dignity and the protection of life, liberty, economic, educational and religious freedom, private property, the dignity of work, solidarity and subsidiarity will be the reference points of our legislative action.
>
> 1) A favorable fiscal regimes for the family: families of all income levels will pay less
> 2) A tax credit for having babies
> 3) State financial support for the development of daycares and nurseries
> 4) Tax credits for school and university tuition to promote freedom of educational choice for families
> 5) Make expenditure on education fully tax deductible
> 6) Financial supports for families to care for the disabled and the elderly
> (Northern League 2013: 12).

The slightly more progressive, but still center-right, *Forza Italia* party had a similar outlook on family policy as the Northern League. In 2001, the party was deeply in favor of the Bismarckian male breadwinner model and familialism, with pro-natalist policies and gendered parental leave policies (Forza Italia 2001). The party died off in the late 2000s, in large part due to a corruption and Mafia scandal that rocked Italian politics. The remnants of the party – including the leader, former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi – merged with another right-wing party to form *Il Popolo Della Libere* (The People of Freedom), a center-right party supporting austerity and traditional values. While the new party generally favored scaling back the welfare state, it still supported an expansion in family policies and parental leave.

Although the right dominates Italian politics, the country is still home to a diminished but active center-left party. After the political collapse and realignment of the 1990s, the *Partito Democratico* (Democratic Party, henceforth PD) became the primary center-left party in Italy. Born of fragments of the now defunct Italian Communist Party

and Social Democratic Party, the PD's political position is significantly to the left of *Forza,* The People of Freedom, and the Northern League. In 2013, the PD has fully embraced the gender-equal, adult-worker model based upon generous maternal and paternal leave and state-run childcare facilities. In addition, the party made an explicit reference on its website promoting the 2013 election to using the means of social policy to integrate Italy's millions of immigrants into the country's society. This evidence provides additional support for the central argument of this thesis (Democratic Party March 5, 2013). The PD feels that such policies help pull immigrants out of poverty and enable them to take part more fully in both the community and the labor market, both of which are key toward gaining full integration into society. Such a development demonstrates quite clearly that in Italy the new cross-party approach to immigration promotes family policy expansion.

Moreover, the situation in Italy resembles those of its European counterparts, with a few key points of distinction. Like in Sweden, Britain, and Germany, the rising numbers of immigrant families and public opinion shifts on international migration give Italian center-left and center-right political parties further incentives to use family policy expansion as a strategy to integrate foreign nationals into society. Italy's unique cultural heritage and welfare state history, however, opens up another way for immigration to affect family policy. Specifically, the decline of the traditional Italian Catholic nuclear family and the corresponding increase in female labor force activation opens up a new need for outside-the-home childcare, which drew in increasing numbers of immigrant domestic workers to the country during the 1980s and 1990s (Naldini & Saraceno 2008).

The presence of the increased need for child care among immigrant women, coupled with the inflow of an increasing number of immigrant families with children leaves political parties – especially those promoting neoliberal capitalism or social democracy, as the mainstream parties of Italy have during the past two decades – with strong motivation to increase family policy spending and coverage in order to facilitate labor force activation among native and immigrant women and also addresses the problem of growing poverty.

CHAPTER 3: COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE LINKS BETWEEN FAMILY POLICIES AND IMMIGRATION TRENDS IN WESTERN EUROPE

A number of political scientists and sociologists have provided widely diverging explanations for the growth in family policy spending and coverage in Western Europe. For instance, Fleckenstein (2011) and Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser (2011) argue that economic factors, especially the demise of industrialization in Western Europe and the mass entry of women into the labor market, promote both increased immigration and family policy expansion, but they do not analyze in much detail how these two trends can relate to each other. Better understanding of the interaction between the two phenomena can help us account for the seemingly contradictory trend: social spending and social program expansion taking place during the longest and most severe economic recession in recent history. Also family policy expansion contradicts many previous forecasts focusing on the general current of increasing retrenchment and privatization in many areas of welfare policy. One key way of accounting for these trends comes from political scientists Martin Seeleib-Kaiser and Tuukka Toivonen (2011), who posited that developed nations will expand family policies in response to more women choosing to join the labor force. Specifically, these researchers argue that family policy expansions in Germany are driven by the decisions of political elites to frame them as business-friendly or pro-economic, rather than socialistic or pro-poor. This removes the typical corporate opposition to welfare expansion, allowing German political actors to expand family spending and coverage (Seeleib-Kaiser & Toivonen 2011). Another researcher who has

put forth a similar explanation, Fleckenstein (2011), found that business' needs to employ large numbers of women led them to support increases in family policy spending and coverage in Britain and Germany, even while at the same time opposing other increases in social spending or welfare coverage. Fleckenstein (2011), like Seeleib-Kaiser and Toivonen (2011), also identified women's labor force activation and lobbying and political pressure from women's groups played a large role in the decisions of political elites to expand family policies over the preceding two decades.

Feminist scholars, such as Orloff (2006), Skinner (2009), and Daly (2010) have also identified women's interests as a key factor in the recent expansion of family policies throughout Western European countries. Nonetheless, unlike the previous researchers, they did not identify business interests as playing a significant role in said transformation. Instead, these sociologists found that lobbying campaigns, protest efforts, and direct action by women's groups, trade unions, and feminist collectives pressured the political elites, encouraging them to enact defamilializing family policies and child tax credits in order to give women greater freedom to pursue higher education and/or full-time careers. Specifically, these individuals posited that such groups made political elites in Germany, the United Kingdom, and Sweden fearful of losing women's electoral support, encouraging them to adopt their social such groups' demands in order to increase ruling parties' chances of reelection (Orloff 2006, Skinner 2009, Daly 2010).

The last prominent explanation mentioned in the social scientific literature for the expansion of family policy spending and coverage is the desire of Christian democratic and conservative parties, along with religious and socially traditionalist civil society

groups and 'pro-family' organizations, to address the perceived decline of the traditional, hetero-normative nuclear family in Western European societies. This explanation, favored by sociologists Lister and Bennett (2010), claims that such groups pass legislation for increased parental leave, marriage and childbirth tax credits, and government-run or funded child care centers and kindergartens in order to remove financial and time pressures from parents and encourage those who otherwise would remain childless to marry and have children. These actors support such policies, as pointed out by Lister and Bennett (2010) and Fleckenstein (2011), because they feel they will promote the formation and solidification of traditional nuclear families, which feature prominently in their conservative, Christian-based views of society and social order.

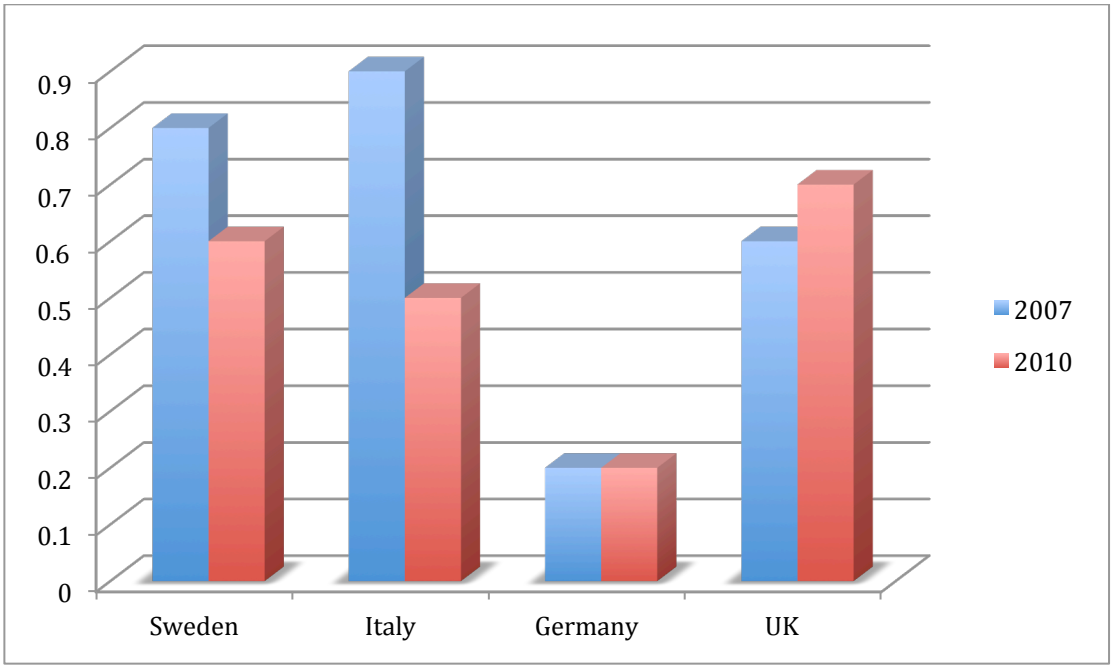

Figure 3.1: Yearly immigration inflows as percent of total population (OECD 2012e).

None of these prominent explanations, however, mention the vast waves of immigration as a possible factor in the expansion of family policies and protections. As any discussion of the political party platforms in the four countries shows, immigration not only plays a prominent role in family policy, but in fact, can be seen as a major driver behind many reforms in recent years. Immigration can affect family policies through the mediation of political parties, especially those of a center-right persuasion, as they seek to pursue their social and immigration policy agendas increasingly in a more consistent and coordinated fashion in many countries. Specifically, center-right parties push for family policy legislation in order to better incorporate foreign nationals – who usually have higher birth rates than their native-born counterparts (OECD 2010) – into Swedish, German, British, and Italian societies. These parties react to pressure from anti-immigration voters by going to greater lengths to culturally and economically integrate immigrants, while at the same time seeking to appease business interests – who want a large, cheap migrant workforce – and oppose exceptionally stringent restrictions on immigration.

Moreover, the efforts by governments in the UK, Sweden, and Germany (Fleckenstein 2011; Tunberger & Sigle-Rushton 2011) to open or subsidize the opening of kindergartens indicates a commitment by elites to push early childhood education that has been strongly promoted in Sweden over a longer time period, but not in the other two countries. This shows new willingness by the political elites to respond to voter preferences for increased early education but also indicates governments' preference to support all families, including immigrant ones, even during austerity. In all cases, the

literature indicates the willingness of governments to pursue both marketized and non-marketized solutions to increase family care in a situation where immigration has continued to fundamentally reshape labor markets, creating more need for social inclusion of new types of low income families on one hand, and supplying a low wage labor force to spur "informal" defamilialization of childcare for middle class British, German, Swedish, and Italian famlies, on the other. This argument illustrates the importance of immigration as a permanent factor in the study of European social policy today.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Concluding Analysis

My research and analysis conducted so far suggests the existence of a possible causal connection between immigration and expansion of family policy spending and coverage. The first piece of evidence is the widespread convergence of three formerly distinct models – the liberal (British) model, defined by high familialization and low spending, the conservative (German and Italian) model, defined by pro-natalist initiatives and moderate spending, and the social democratic (Swedish) model, defined by defamilialization and high spending –possibly toward a new model of family policy based upon defamilialization, state-funded child care, and gender equal parental leave. This convergence could be related more directly to the recent immigration trends and their reaction to those trends by the major political parties in these countries. I have shown that political parties, particularly those on the center-right, seek to culturally and economically address the issue of immigrant integration by expanding family policy spending and coverage, which makes it easier for immigrant women with children to participate more fully in the labor market by providing them with affordable child care. In addition, as families of immigrant origin have more children, on average, than their native-born counterparts (OECD 2012b), providing paid parental leave allows professional migrant-origin women, who otherwise would have left the labor market, to take leave and return, further facilitating migrants' economic integration into their host countries.

The strong link between immigration expansion and family policy coverage and spending expansion in Western Europe cannot be denied even though more research needs to be done to show more clearly the policy emerging mechanisms and patterns of causation. As the data have shown, immigration in Britain, Sweden, Germany, and Italy began showing a strong upward trend around 1995, and family policy expansion started soon afterward (OECD 2012a, OECD 2012b). Furthermore, as immigration rates increased after the year 2000, the trend of increased spending on family policies continued in all four countries, accelerating with the advent of the Great Recession. While correlation alone does not indicate the existence of a causal relationship, the qualitative evidence – such as the statements from mainstream parties' political documents – provides additional support for the explanation that immigration contributed to, at least in part, the expansion of family policy spending and coverage throughout Western Europe.

In addition to my theory that immigration may contribute to family policy expansion, the research I conducted for this thesis also confirms the arguments of Ann Shola Orloff (2006), among other feminist scholars, that the rising position of women in European society encourages governments to enact defamilializing family policies and expand gender-neutral parental leave in order to more fully take part in the labor market. The explicit statements in favor of women's rights and women's equality by center-right parties in Germany and the United Kingdom further enhance the claims of scholars (Hartmann 2004, Orloff 2006, Daly 2010, Fleckenstein 2011) who have identified both the power of the political mobilization of women and the desirability of defamilializing

family policies to professional female workers. In addition, Fleckenstein's (2011) argument that women's groups, working in concert with the interests of business, push conservative parties toward defamilialization finds support in my research, as conservative parties in both Britain and Germany seem to be concerned both with business efficiency and gender equality in their recent social policy programs. Furthermore, I feel that the addition of the immigration variable strengthens Fleckenstein's thesis, as it adds another possible incentive for the rightist parties to expand family policies. I theorize that these conservative-leaning parties would want to expand family policies for three primary reasons. First, center-right parties, especially in Britain, Germany, and Italy, have traditionally held socially conservative positions in regards to the nuclear family and the role of women, men, and children in society. With the broad social changes of the late 20th century, these parties must adapt to changing views on women by promoting more gender-equal policies, yet they also – due to both public opinion pressure and historical legacy – are wont to hold on to their ideologies of supporting the nuclear family unit.

Moreover, the increase in immigration, coupled with the fact that migrant families are more likely to have higher numbers of children, places more pressure on these political parties to increase family policy spending and coverage. In order to accommodate both of these goals and account for the increase in immigrant female laborers present in their countries, they promote family policies that allow women to participate in the labor force and also facilitate marriage (between opposite-sex or same-sex couples), high birth rates, and nuclear family formation. Next, these parties, as

traditional supporters of the bourgeois class and business corporations, are driven to form policies that align with the interests of national and international capitalism. As business interests benefit from both female labor force activation (Orloff 2006, Fleckenstein & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011) and international labor migration (Fleckenstein, Saunders, & Seeleib-Kaiser 2011), it is in center-right parties' interests to promote defamilializing family policies such as increasing funding for child care centers and kindergartens to provide the preconditions necessary to support native and immigrant female entry into the labor market. Finally, conservative-leaning parties typically cater to voters who have lower levels of support for immigration than the portion of the electorate who votes for center-left or leftist politicians. Because of this, center-right parties have an extra incentive to promote social policies that incorporate families of foreign origin or recent immigrant descent into the social and economical spheres of their countries. Defamilializing policies such as subsidized child care and gender-equal parental leave accomplish this by encouraging both labor force participation, which is deemed by many scholars as a key measure of immigrant integration (Sainsbury 2006, Abali 2009) – and the social interaction of children with locals, allowing them to acculturate to their new countries.

In sum, a myriad of political, social, and cultural factors have combined to produce the expansion of family policy spending and coverage in Germany, the UK, Sweden, and Italy. I find that combining an immigration-based explanation with the feminist and business-based explanation of the aforementioned scholars could lead to a more robust theory that could potentially provide a complete and comprehensive

explanation for why family policies have expanded throughout Europe during a historical phase of welfare state retrenchment and neoliberal austerity.

Future Research Agenda

More research on the question of how immigration impact European family policy, and, on a more general level, European social policy in general, needs to be carried out to develop a better causal explanation and possibly a middle-range theory of the cross-fertilization of two different policy areas in the European context. In particular, the scholarly community could benefit greatly from a quantitative study on this subject that measures family policy spending in relation to immigration trends in all 27 European Union member states. Such a study would not only expand the analysis to see whether this trends holds throughout Europe, but would remove some of the ambiguity from this thesis' qualitative-research-based findings by providing solid, mathematically based results. In addition, a qualitative or quantitative study focusing on the impacts of both women's movements and international migration on family policy in Europe would be greatly helpful to the scholarly community, as evidence exists that these are two of the key drivers behind the expansion and transformation of family policies in Western Europe. In addition, the supranational dimension of the European Union is largely absent from this thesis, as it only focuses on the domestic politics of Germany, Sweden, Italy, and the UK. The EU, however, has been active in the family policy arena, including initiatives pertaining to the family in its 2010 Lisbon Declaration; the declaration also included points on the issues of immigration and globalization. Future research into how

the European Union impacts the formation and expansion of family policies could be helpful in determining the full impacts of immigration, and by extension, globalization, upon European family and social policy. During the course of my doctoral studies, I plan to write a dissertation that would expand on the research question of this thesis – how immigration impacts family policies in all 27 EU nations and the European Union as a whole, in order to contribute more comprehensive information on this pressing issue to the body of social scientific scholarly knowledge on contemporary welfare states in the developed countries of the world.

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