
Mothers and Families: Challenges in a Changing World

International Day of Families
United Nations - May 14, 2009

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My comments today.

- Brief presentation from my research:
on mothers/parents, employment, and work-family reconciliation policy, with a focus on the US case.
 - Introduction to the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS):
a cross-national data archive and research institute.
 - Introduction to two new LIS projects:
 - New: Creation of national level indicators on economic gender equality (a joint project of LIS and the World Bank)
 - On the horizon: Addition of 15-20 middle-income countries
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FAMILIES THAT WORK

Policies for Reconciling
Parenthood and Employment



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US workers spend exceptionally long hours at work each year.

- We “outwork” our counterparts across Europe and even in Japan.
- We work longer hours each week and more weeks per year.
- Are we productive? The US ranks 8th in the OECD in output-per-worker-hour.

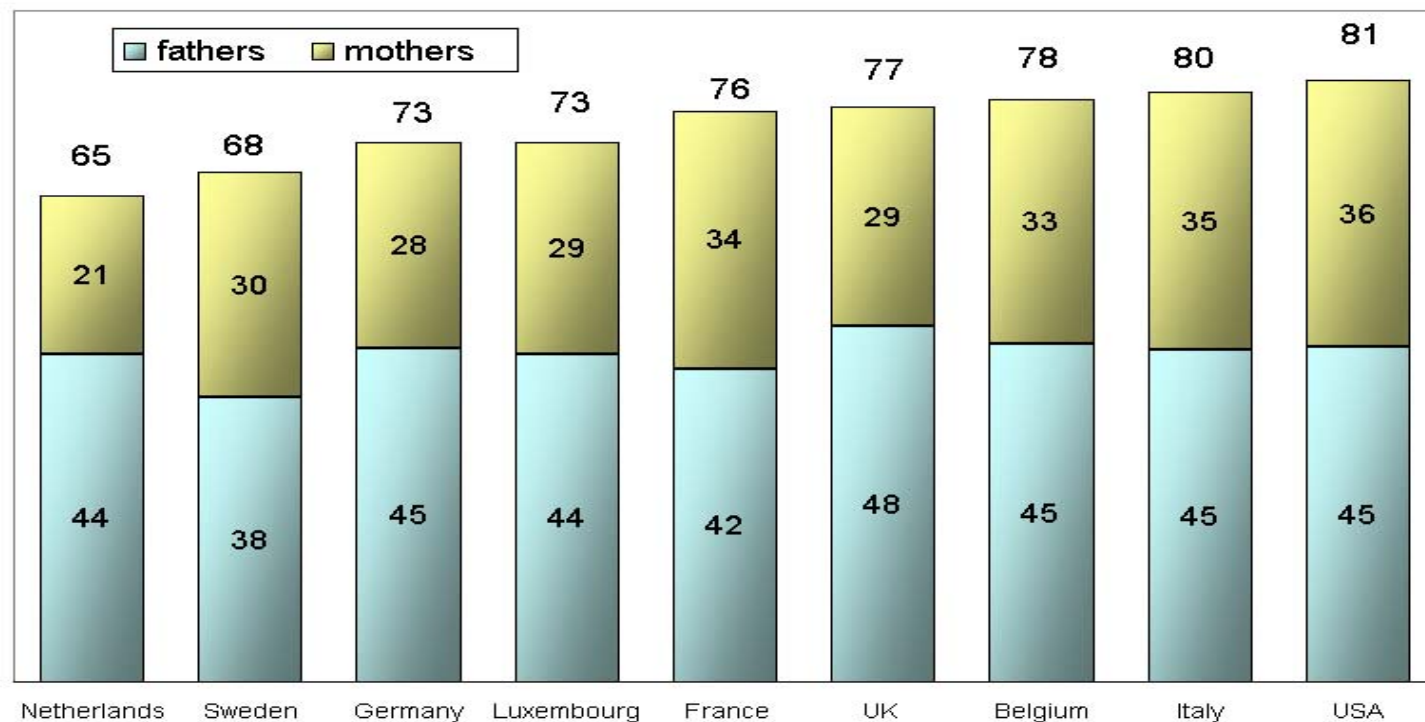
Workers' Average Annual Hours in Paid Work



US parents are no exception.

- US fathers AND mothers have comparatively high employment rates.
- US dual-earner couples with children work the longest hours: 81 on average.
- 2/3 of US dual-earner couples work, jointly, more than 80 hours per week.

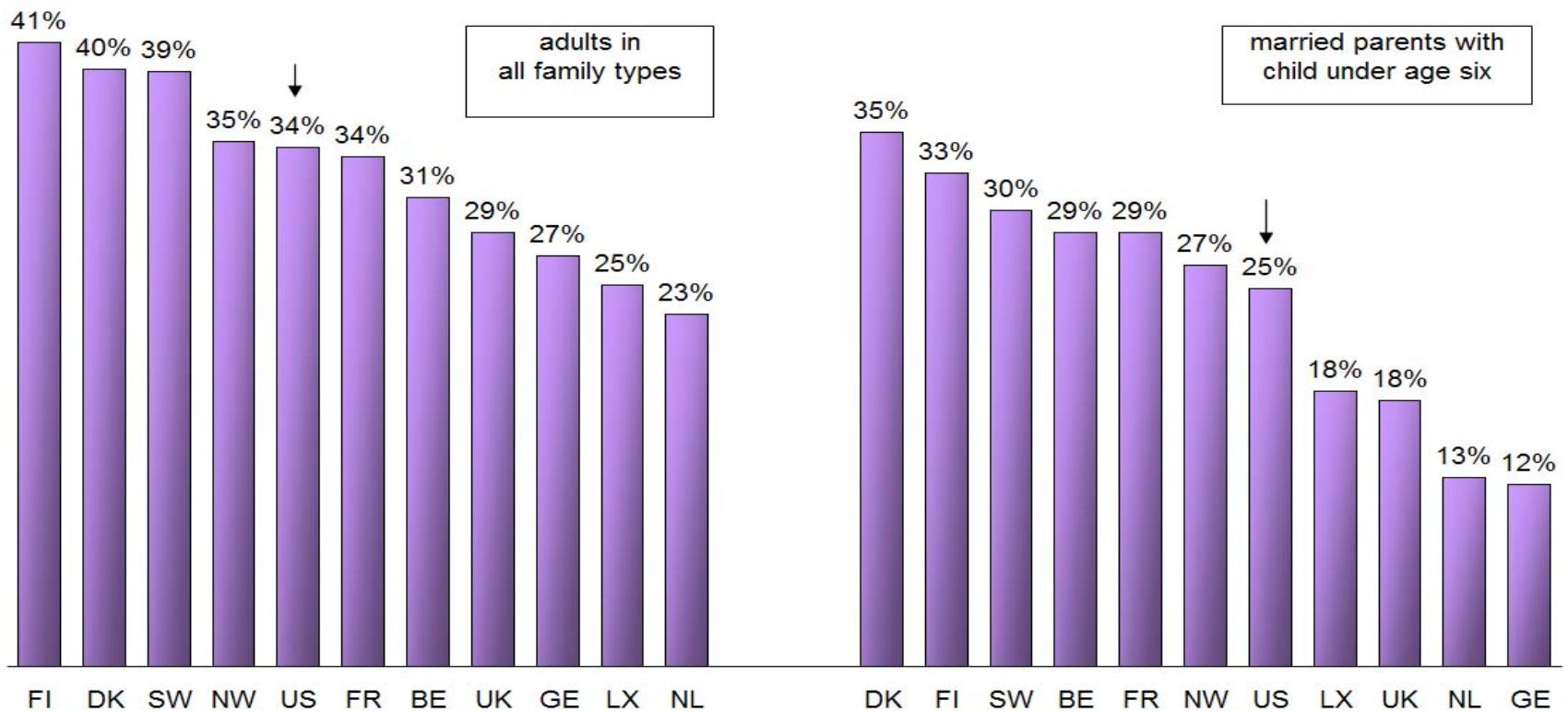
**Average Weekly Work Hours:
Couples, With Children, and Two Employed Parents**



Gender gaps persist – especially between mothers and fathers.

-- Gender equality in employment, as captured by the share of earnings commanded by women, is only fair-to-middling.

**Share of Total Labor Market Earnings Taken Home By Women
in the US and Ten European Countries**

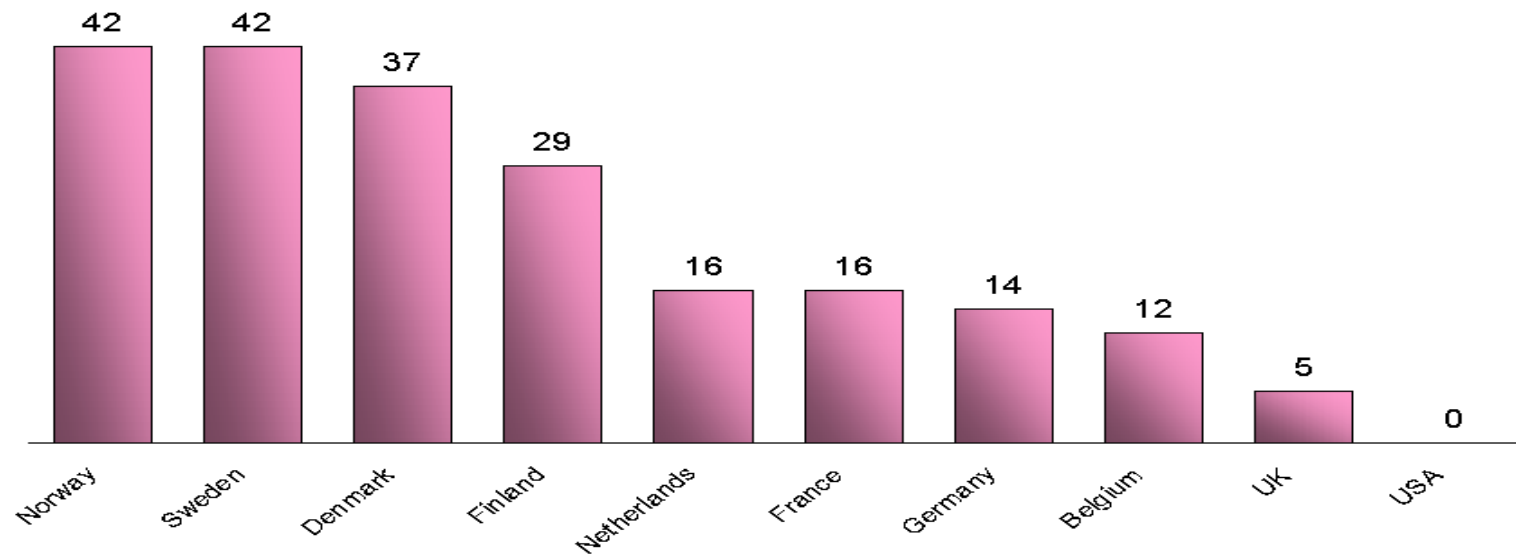


Public policy is a crucial vehicle for securing working parents time for caregiving, especially during children's earliest years.

- US family leave policy is exceptionally meager.
- The lack of paid leave restricts American parents' options. Many must choose between losing their pay or placing their newborns in child care.

**Paid Family Leave:
Fully Paid Weeks Allowed, Following Birth or Adoption**

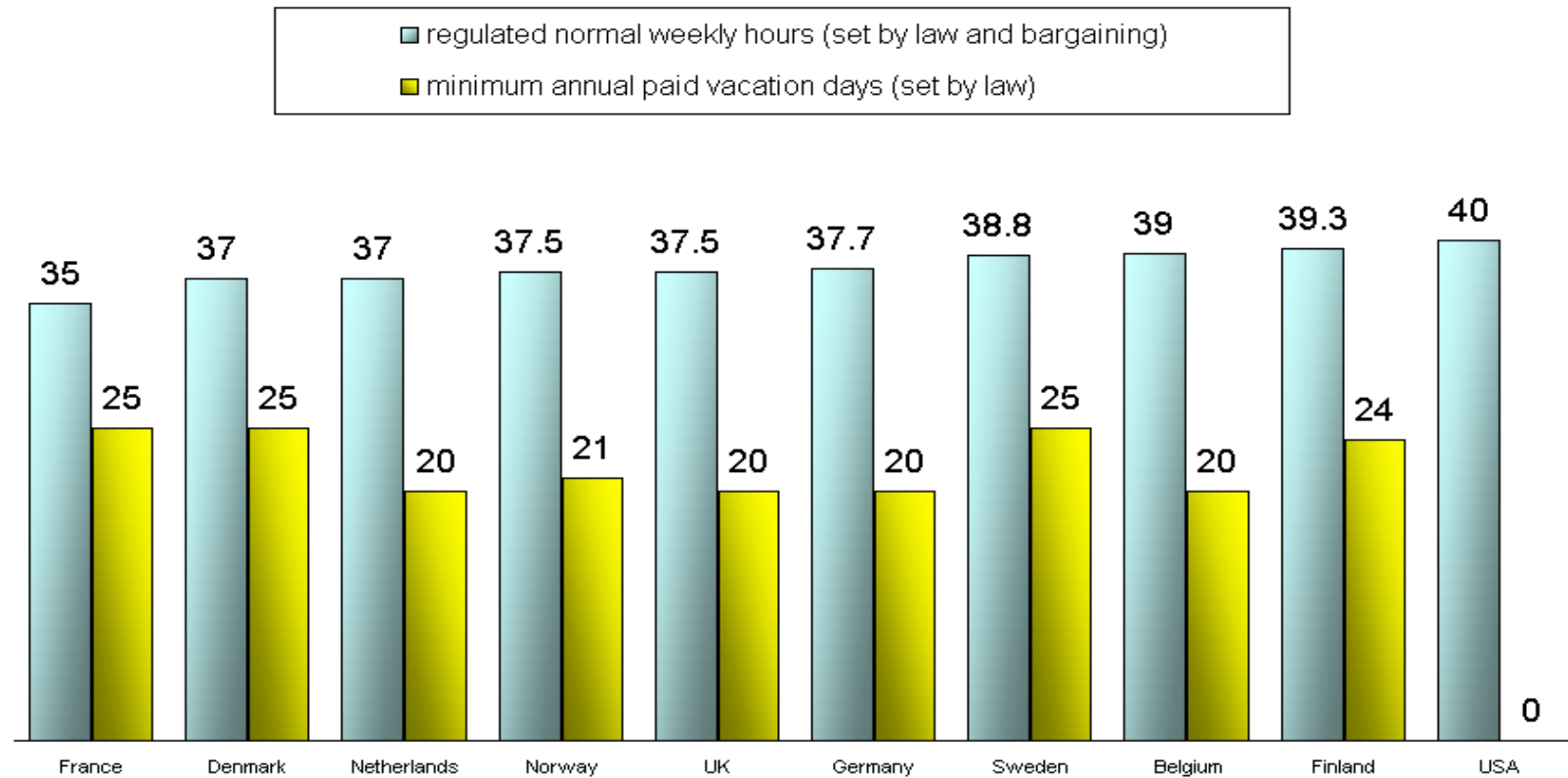
includes: national social insurance programs, earnings-related benefits



Public policy also shapes workers' weekly hours and annual work days.
Regulated hours are a strong predictor of actual hours.

- US public policy sets a long work week, and is silent on paid vacation.
- US public policy provides no protections for part-time workers.

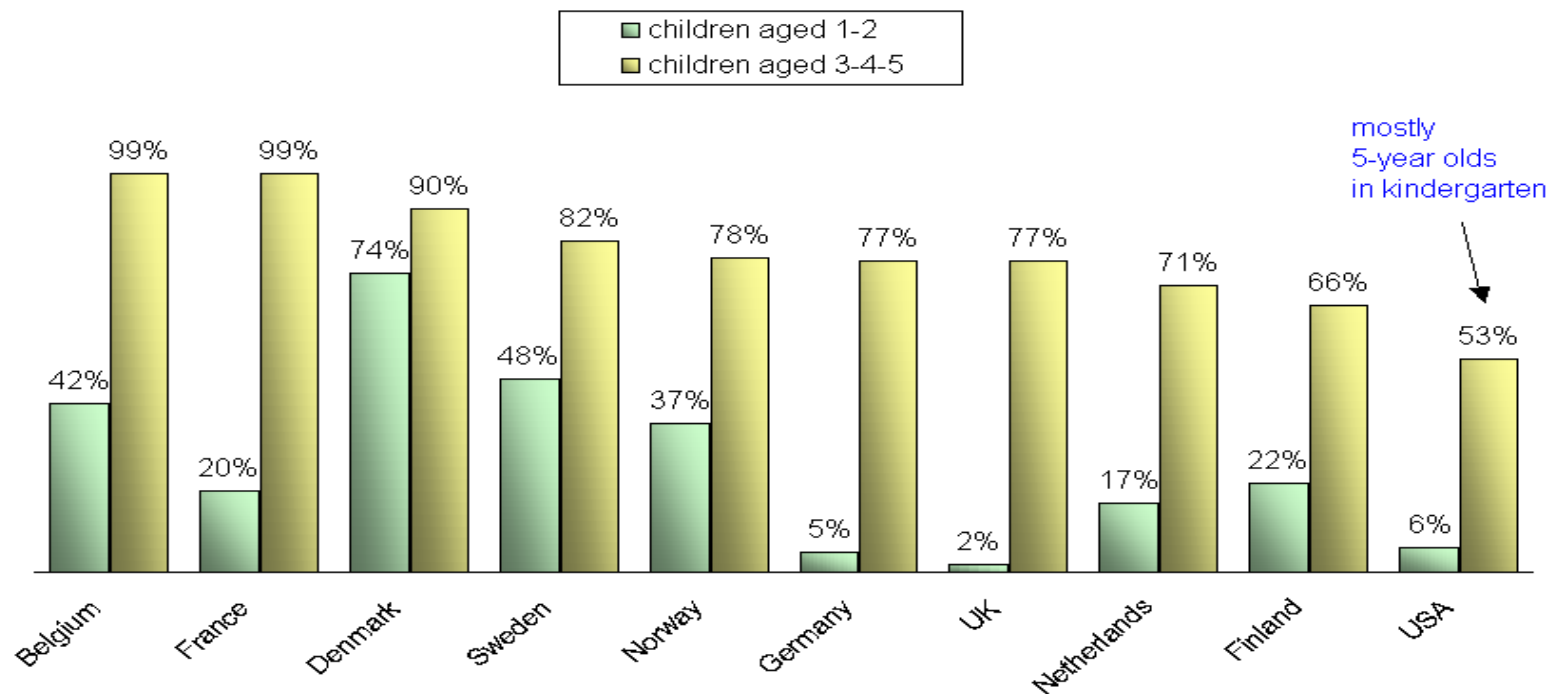
**Working Time Regulations:
Institutionalizing Hours Worked Per Week and Days Worked Per Year**



Public policy influences parents' ability to manage the time demands of employment and caregiving through the cost and quality of alternatives.

- US provides very little publicly-subsidized child care before kindergarten.
- The quality of private child care is highly variable and often poor.

**Early Childhood Education and Care:
Enrollment in Publicly-Provided or Publicly-Subsidized Care.**



The Luxembourg Income Study (LIS)

- A 26-year old cross-national data archive and research institute in Luxembourg, with a satellite at CUNY.
 - Offers access to microdata / 200+ datasets from 32 countries.
 - Used mainly for research on poverty, inequality, employment; gender inequality a cross-cutting theme
 - LIS also provides multiple services: annual training workshops, visiting scholar program, searchable database of public-access working papers, usersupport, e-newsletter.
 - See <http://www.lisproject.org/> *Luxembourg office*
and <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/liscenter/> *New York office*
for more information -- or contact us:
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New! Comparable cross-national data on economic gender inequality – a collaboration between LIS and the World Bank:

- “The Gender Key Figures” (LIS)

<http://www.lisproject.org/key-figures/key-figures.htm>

- “The Key Gender Employment Indicators” (World Bank)

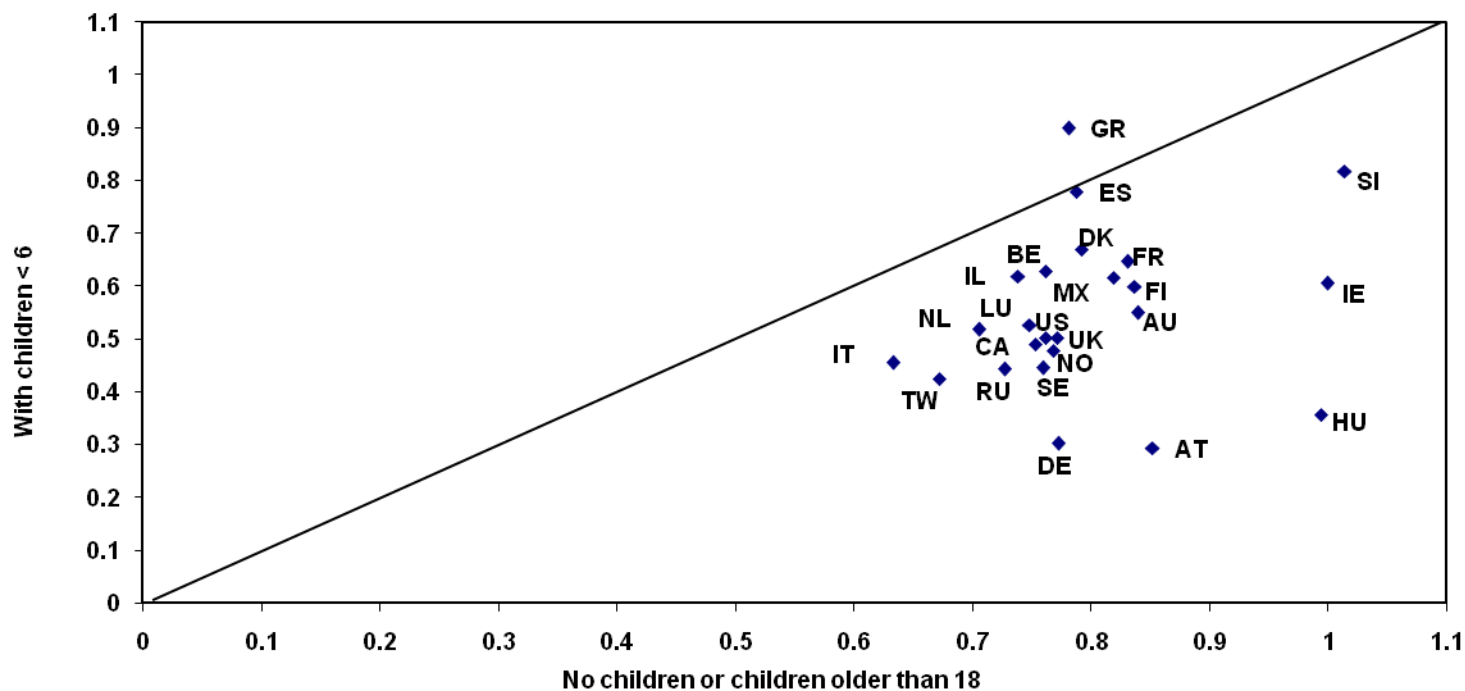
<http://go.worldbank.org/A2LTZUHGL0>

- Both have explanatory information, downloadable tables, and electronic table-makers.
 - Primary content: poverty rates, employment rates, hours worked, earnings ratios -- broken out by multiple covariates, including gender, partnership, parenting status and, where appropriate, employment sector. This first release includes 27 countries at about year 2000.
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Example of possible analysis:

The gender earnings ratio (female-to-male) is lower among adults with young children (younger than 6 years old) than it is among adults who are not parents. Only in Greece is the gender earnings ratio higher among the parents with young children.

■ The gender earnings ratio, by parenting status



On the horizon!

- During the next 3 to 5 years, LIS will add 15 to 20 middle-income countries, dramatically expanding our global coverage.
 - We will start this summer by adding five countries, from Latin America (a pilot).
 - After that, we will add selected countries, especially from Eastern Europe; Central Asia; East Asia; Southern Asia; the Middle East and North Africa. *Stay tuned!*
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