

Olga Zajkowska

ORCID: 0000-0001-6520-1303

Warsaw University of Life Sciences—SGGW
Faculty of Applied Informatics and Mathematics
Department of IT Applications and Mathematics¹

Parental leaves in Poland: goals, challenges, perspectives²

Summary

The aim of the paper is to describe availability and usage of parental leaves for women of reproductive age. We show the motivation for introducing the leaves and their history in Poland. Based on data from the Central Statistical Office (CSO; Polish: GUS), Social Insurance Institution (SII; Polish: ZUS) and Labour Force Survey (LFS; Polish: BAEL), the use of maternity leave in Poland are presented and potential problems related to it are discussed.

Key words: maternity leave, parental leave, LFS

¹ Szkoła Główna Gospodarstwa Wiejskiego w Warszawie, Wydział Zastosowań Informatyki i Matematyki, Katedra Zastosowań Matematyki, ul. Nowoursynowska 159, 02-776 Warszawa; author's email address: olga_zajkowska@sggw.pl.

² The work was created as part of the PRELUDIUM 9 Parental leave—short-term effects of reforms in Poland (UMO-2015/17/N/HS4/02925).

Introduction

Parental leave is an important element of family policy (Kurowska, 2013). The group of parental³ leaves includes: maternity leave, leave on maternity leave conditions, additional maternity leave, additional leave on maternity leave conditions, paternity leave, parental leave being a continuation of maternity leave, however, directed to both parents, leave on maternity leave rights and parental leave. The parental leave is designed to meet social objectives and correct labour market failures, i.e. to support procreative decisions and reduce the negative impact of parenthood on parents' careers and to enable a balance to be struck between work and family life. The reasons behind the introduction of parental leave, especially maternity leave, are divided into three categories: macroeconomic, microeconomic, and social. Each of these may be analysed both in the long and short run. From a macroeconomic point of view, parental leave is necessary to restore generational replacement and to maintain the labour force resources in the long run by increasing fertility and not restricting the labour force participation of women making procreative decisions in the short term (Dahl, Løken, Mogstad, Salvanes, 2013). Microeconomic reasons for the creation of maternity (and parental) leave in general include aspects related to the labour market (Broadway, Kalb, Kuehnle, Maeder, 2015; Waldfogel, Higuchi, Abe, 1999), the health of women (Baker, Milligan, 2008; Hewitt, Strazdins, Martin, 2017) and children (Broadway et al., 2015; Staehelin, Bertea, Stutz, 2007) and the children's development (Danzer, Lavy, 2018). Maternity leave allows work continuity and thus childbirth recovery for the first six weeks after labour, reducing stress levels and reducing the risk of depression (Beuchert, Humlum, Vejlin, 2016). It also provides an opportunity to establish a psychological bond with the child and to feel satisfaction from the opportunity of caring for the child at the earliest stages of its cognitive and behavioural development (Rasmussen, 2010). It also allows to maintain the family's material status, at least at the initial stage of the child's development. In the long run, parental leave also contributes to improving health and well-being of both the mother and child (Beuchert et al., 2016; Hewitt et al., 2017). Moreover, with the leave it is easier to reconcile the professional and family roles of young mothers (Guendelman, Goodman, Kharrazi, Lahiff, 2014), however, it is often at the cost of their lost opportunities for professional promotion or lower wages (the so-called motherhood penalty or 'mommy track') (Phipps, Burton, Lethbridge, 2001; Schönberg, Ludsteck, 2007). Parental leaves are supported by parental benefits, varying in amount and conditions of granting according to the type of leave.

However, parental leave may also have negative externalities. They are often exacerbated by the leaves' suboptimal design or implementation (Dearing, 2016). If the replacement rate of the parental benefit is below 100% of the parent's wage, then there is a strong incentive for the lower-paid parent, usually the child's mother, to take leave and

³ The Polish legislation is inconsistent with the nomenclature adopted in the state of the art. In this article, parental leave is defined as leave following additional maternity leave. A parenthood-related leave should be understood as all solutions related to parental care for a child in its first year of life (including parental leave).

benefit. Thus, seemingly neutral parental leave may push women out of the labour market disproportionately more often than men (Han, Waldfogel, 2003). Moreover, if the cost of replacing an employee on parental leave (and especially maternity leave) is relatively high, employers may be less inclined to hire people “at risk” of such leave, mostly women (Das, Polachek, 2015). In addition, the question of the nomenclature of the proposed solutions is important. A negative example is the additional maternity leave, which is potentially available to both partners, but its name suggests that only the mother is eligible for it. The way to equalise opportunities for women and men is, on the one hand, to grant men the right to participate in the parental leave and, on the other, to grant them a non-transferable right to parental leave. This eliminates the unattractiveness of young mothers in the labour market and at the same time increases men’s involvement in care and performing other duties related to running a household (Kotsadam, Finseraas, 2011).

The aim of the article is to present theoretical premises for the introduction of parental leaves, discuss the history of parental leaves in Poland based on historical sources and an attempt to describe the availability and usage of these leaves in Poland in 2012–2018 based on the contemporary statistical data.

Methods

In the first part of the research, historical and current legal acts were analysed. The empirical part uses quarterly and annual data of the Social Insurance Institution available on the website of the Statistical Portal of the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) and LFS (BAEL)⁴ data. The years 2012–2018, i.e. the period starting one year before the introduction of the extended parental leave—the biggest reform of the childcare leave system—were selected for the analysis.

The history of parental leaves in Poland: 1918–1989

The maternity was leave introduced for the first time in Poland in 1920.⁵ Its scope spanned 8 weeks and involved a benefit of wage 100% replacement rate. In 1933, the Act on Social Insurance⁶ was passed, amended in 1934, and unified the social insurance system in the Second Republic of Poland. On its basis, the Social Insurance Institution was established (liquidated in 1955 and restored in 1960) (Malaka, 2013). After the Second World War, the pre-war social security system was resumed. In 1946, the 100% replacement rate of maternity allowance (then called confinement allowance) was restored (Makarzec, 2013). In 1948, a 12-week maternity leave with a 100% replacement allowance

⁴ The data for 2018 at the time of submitting the publications for printing were only available for the first two quarters.

⁵ Act of May 19, 1920 on the compulsory sickness insurance (Journal of Laws of 1920, No. 44, item 272), amended by the Act of 6 July 1923 on amending Articles 103, 104 and 105 (Journal of Laws of 1923, No. 75, item 589) of the Act of 19 May 1920 on compulsory sickness insurance.

⁶ Act of 28 March 1933 on social security (Journal of Laws of 1933, No. 51, item 369).

were introduced.⁷ In 1972, it was extended to 16 weeks (Durasiewicz, 2012; Polakowski, Szelewa, 2015). In 1968, unpaid family leave of 12 months was introduced, which in 1972 was extended to 3 years. It is worth mentioning that one of the August postulates was the introduction of a 3-year fully paid maternity leave (Polakowski, Szelewa, 2015). In addition, in 1972,⁸ maternity leave was extended to 16 weeks (Makarska, 2013). The Act on sickness and maternity benefits was subsequently repealed by the Labour Code and the Act of 1974,⁹ however, the length of parental leave was not changed. The length of maternity leaves has only been altered in 1999.¹⁰

After the Second World War, the dominant family model in Poland was the *double earner-double female burden* model. It assumed the professional activity of both partners, but the household chores and raising children were almost exclusively the responsibility of women. Therefore, the term ‘pseudo emancipation’ is often used in literature (Sheridan, 1992, in: Polakowski, Szelewa, 2015). There are few economic studies on maternity leave in Poland before 1989 (Graniewska, 1971; Durasiewicz, 2012). Works of legal (Godlewska, 1984; Kosztowna, 2016) and sociological nature (Kurzynowski, 1981) dominate. Maternity leaves and benefits were introduced, respectively, in the 1940s and 1950s. However, these solutions did not take into account the fathers’ role. In 1948, a system of family benefits was introduced, and in 1954, a care leave during the child’s illness was introduced. However, the cash benefits accompanying the parental leave did not appear in Poland until the beginning of the 1980s. And they concerned only mothers covered by insurance, who met the income criterion. It is worth mentioning that they were not common in the People’s Republic of Poland. Nursery care was provided to less than 5% of children under 3 years of age, while pre-school care was provided to no more than 50% of children aged 3–6 (Polakowski, Szelewa, 2015). After 1989, the state’s participation in the organisation and financing of social policy institutions, in particular nurseries and kindergartens, was significantly reduced (Graniewska, 2009).

Parenthood-related leaves in Poland after 1989

After 1989, family policy was not a priority in Poland, with little attention paid to family policy in the transformation process. At the same time, like in other post transformation countries, the second demographic transition took place, similarly to Western Europe, but its course was much faster and more intensive (Kotowska, 1999). Little effort has been made to mitigate the effects of this unavoidable phenomenon. In 1989, the length of

⁷ Act of 28 April 1948, amending the Act of 28 March 1933 on social security (Journal of Laws of 1948, No. 27, item 182 and 183).

⁸ Act of 6 July 1972 on prolongation of maternity leaves (Journal of Laws of 1972, No. 27, item 190).

⁹ Act of 17 December 1974 on social security cash benefits in case of sickness and maternity (Journal of Laws of 1974, No. 47, item 280).

¹⁰ Act of 25 June 1974 on social security cash benefits in case of sickness and maternity (Journal of Laws of 1999, No. 60, item 636).

parental leave was maintained at 16/18 weeks. Maternity leave was extended to 26 weeks only in 1999, when the decline in fertility rates became apparent. After reducing the length of maternity leave to 16 weeks in 2002,¹¹ from 2007 onwards the length of leave was systematically extended initially to 18 weeks¹², to 20¹³ weeks in 2009, and in 2010 the institution of additional maternity leave was introduced, the length of which in 2010–2011 was 2 weeks, in 2012–2013—4 weeks and 6 weeks from mid-2013. An important innovation was the introduction in 2010 of the possibility to take over a part of the maternity leave by the father of the child after the mother had completed at least 14 weeks of leave. In 2011, a two-week paternity leave was also introduced. It is worth mentioning that the Polish law the maternity leave is granted to a person adopting a child.

On 16th June 2013, the biggest change after 1989 in the parental leaves' scheme was introduced.¹⁴ Parents received an additional 26 weeks of parental leave.¹⁵ The additional maternity leave has been extended to 6 weeks. The parents were therefore given a total of 54 weeks of leave: 20 weeks of maternity leave, 6 of additional maternity leave, 2 weeks of paternity leave and 26 weeks of parental leave to be used within 52 weeks after the birth of a child or 6 weeks before the birth and 46 weeks after the birth. The financing scheme includes a replacement rate of 80% for the entire leave period or 100% and 60% for the first and second half of the leave, respectively.¹⁶ From 1 January 2016, the additional maternity leave and parental leave have been merged and function under the latter name.¹⁷ The Act entered into force on 17 June 2013 and initially covered mothers who were on maternity leave or additional maternity leave on that date or gave birth to children after that date. Therefore, the law did not cover the so-called mothers of the first quarter, i.e. women who gave birth to children in the first quarter of 2013. However, after the wave of protests, these women were also granted the right to parental leave.

The motivation behind the 2013 reform was, on the one hand, the low fertility rate and, on the other, the relatively low female employment rates. Both were prerequisites of introducing a solution that favours the work-family reconciliation by the parents of new-born children. At the same time, the problem of the insufficient number of places in crèches and other childcare facilities for children under 3 years of age has been solved

¹¹ See <https://www.infor.pl/wskazniki/prawo-pracy-i-ubezpieczen-spoecznych/urlopy/126,873,Wymiar-urlopu-macierzynskiego.html> [date access: 22.11.2018].

¹² Act of 16 November 2006 amending the Act—Labour Code and the Act on cash benefits from social insurance in case of illness and maternity (Journal of Laws of 2006, No. 221, item 1615).

¹³ Act of 6 December 2008 amending the Act—Labour Code and certain other Acts (Journal of Laws of 2008, No. 237, item 1654).

¹⁴ Act of 28 May 2013 amending the Act—Labour Code and certain other Acts (Journal of Laws of 2013, item 675).

¹⁵ The name of this leave introduced by the legislator may be misleading due to its convergence with the concept of parental leave used in the literature on economics and social policy, which covers a much broader category of rights.

¹⁶ A detailed description of the entitlements can be found on the government website <http://rodzicielski.gov.pl>

¹⁷ See rodzina.gov.pl

somewhat implicitly by transferring the care duty to parents. It also noted the need to involve fathers in care, but only partially. Additional maternity leave, although it can be taken by both parents with its name, indicates the mother as the actual addressee of the solution. In addition, the rate of replacement of maternity allowance below 100% of salary leads to a “rational” decision to take leave by a partner earning less, and therefore significantly more often by the mother.

Summarising the above considerations, it should be noted that the Polish law gives mothers of children much more rights than their fathers, but at the same time places a disproportionate burden on them. This effect is compounded by the pay gap¹⁸ and the reduction in the availability of care services, especially for children under 3 years of age. The state-of-the-art mentions care familisation and its decommodification (Esping-Andersen, 1999; Polakowski, Szelewa, 2015; Fahlén, 2016; Stier, Lewin-Epstein, Braun, 2001).

In the Polish literature, relatively few papers have been devoted to maternity and parental leave so far (e.g. Bągard, 2013) and the 2013 reform in particular. Godlewska-Bujok (2013, 2015), Wujczyk (2014) and Wiśniewski (2015) described the construction and functioning of the new solutions. Kurowska (2013) and Kurowska, Słotwińska-Rosłanowska (2013) made an initial attempt to assess and describe the potential effects of the new reform. Michoń (2008) presented the reform as an element of a larger whole and analysed new solutions in the context of the Polish family policy.

The main drawback of the 2013 reform is that it only covers some prospective mothers. Parental leaves are granted only to women employed under an employment contract or a cooperative employment contract, appointment, election or appointment. They therefore concern those employed under the definite- and indefinite duration contract of employment or under an order contract, as long as sickness insurance contributions were paid from that contract. The possibility of taking maternity and parental leave is excluded for self-employed persons, persons working under a contract for specific work, the unemployed and economically inactive persons. Moreover, in the case of contracts other than indefinite duration contracts, women are at risk of not renewing their contracts after the expiry of the protection period provided for in the Labour Code (Mishtal, 2009). Therefore, the decision to give birth to a child involves a risk of discontinuity in employment and income. Additionally, women insured in farmers’ social security fund (KRUS) and uniformed services¹⁹ are covered by separate, less favourable rules. A partial, but insufficient solution is the so-called “kosiniakowe”, i.e. a benefit in the amount of PLN 1,000, which from 2016 is due to mothers who are not covered by maternity leave, maternity or parental allowances.²⁰

Nevertheless, the duality of the Polish labour market induced by different types of contracts under which work is provided also implies a specific duality among mothers and potential mothers. Employers have lower propensity to hire young women under more

¹⁸ The pay gap between partners in the household with a replacement rate of less than 100% makes the household lose less financially if the benefit goes to the partner who earns less.

¹⁹ Soldiers and uniformed services.

²⁰ The Act of 24 July 2015 on the change of the Act on family benefits and certain other acts.

favourable contracts (Das, Polachek, 2015). At the beginning of their careers, employees are relatively often employed on the basis of atypical contracts, which may result in delaying the decision to give birth to the first child until relative professional stability is achieved (Adserà, 2004).

Parenthood-related leaves usage in Poland, 2012–2018

The following part of this text will present data describing the availability²¹ and use of parental leaves in Poland in 2012–2018. First of all, the data provided by the Social Security Institution (ZUS) statistical portal on the number of women usage of available forms of leave related to childcare were discussed.²² In Table 1 they were compared with the number of children born in the following quarters according to the CSO data.²³ As long as the number of children born in subsequent quarters is approximately constant. At the same time, according to the Social Insurance Institution (ZUS) data, the number of women on maternity leave is systematically increasing in subsequent quarters. The percentage of mothers on childcare leave among mothers of children up to one year and up to three years of age is also increasing. However, the dynamics of these phenomena is worth to interpret with a large dose of caution because of the limited comparability of reported series. According to the ZUS Statistical Yearbook for 2012–2014, “Data on maternity benefits on account of: paternity leave, additional maternity leave and parental leave in the years 2012–2013” concern only the persons whose payments for these benefits were made by ZUS branches within the scope of own payments. This means that these data do not include persons to whom these benefits were paid by contribution payers, i.e. workplaces employing more than 20 people. From 2014 onwards, those figures shall be reported together with payments made by contribution payers.” At the same time, ZUS does not provide any additional information allowing for at least a rough estimation of the scale of differences between the two methods of counting the number of beneficiaries of maternity benefits. Therefore, data from ZUS before 2014 under estimate the number of women on maternity leave and cannot be the only source of data used in analyses on the use of parental leave. Furthermore, it should be noted that only about half of the mothers decides to take parental leave after the end of maternity leave and additional maternity²⁴ leave. Table 1 also presents quarterly data describing the use of paternity and parental leaves by men. A positive phenomenon is the increasing use of two-week paternity leave by fathers, but the dynamics of this phenomenon is relatively small.

²¹ Accessibility means the institutional possibility to take maternity or parental leave after childbirth. It depends on the probability of being subject to the Labour Code, i.e. being a full-time employee with an employment contract.

²² The quarterly “Number of persons receiving short-term benefits and benefits by gender, voivodships” lists were used.

²³ A certain difficulty in analysing fertility rates based on CSO data is a relatively considerable delay in the publication of current data and frequent corrections in the initial birth rate.

²⁴ Before it was included in the parental leave on 2 January 2016.

Table 1. Number of children born and maternity, parental and paternity leaves' usage in Poland in 2012–2018

Year	Quarter	Number of children	Maternity leave—number of mothers	Maternity leave—percentage of mothers	Parental leave—number of women	Parental leave—number of men	Paternity leave—number of men
2012	1	96772	179640	x	x	x	X
	2	97893	185402	0.9524	x	x	X
	3	102973	191247	0.9521	x	x	X
	4	88619	176301	0.9202	x	x	X
2013	1	90421	171690	0.9589	x	x	X
	2	92081	167073	0.9155	x	x	X
	3	99590	177364	0.4784	no data	no data	no data
	4	87484	222219	0.6013	no data	no data	no data
2014	1	90344	269634	0.7297	139560	2202	23306
	2	94194	290065	0.7806	160323	2439	32431
	3	101906	302122	0.8080	165652	2436	48389
	4	88716	301896	0.8047	166159	2288	42661
2015	1	90140	302293	0.8062	175143	2175	32347
	2	92039	304696	0.8173	178120	2056	35431
	3	99665	310909	0.8390	177727	1970	52070
	4	87464	307685	0.8331	174755	1911	44578
2016	1	no data	306133	x	186229	1827	33518
	2	no data	309980	x	201052	1755	33093
	3	no data	312149	x	208589	1798	50398
	4	no data	308131	x	204579	1793	50398
	1-4.	382257	x	0.8086	x	x	X
2017	1	100000*	309735	x	208877	1747	39492
	2	no data	315644	x	211150	1692	38377
	3	no data	323054	x	214048	1849	62998
	4	no data	322419	x	215581	1892	58452
	1-4.	402000*	x	0.7903	x	x	X
2018	1	96000*	322730	x	221644	1821	45555
	2	no data	323006	x	221208	1769	45494

* Based on CSO signal information.

Source: own work, based on psz.zus.pl.

Another drawback of the statistics presented by ZUS is that it is impossible to determine the socio-economic characteristics of beneficiaries and women potentially entitled to parental leave—it is impossible to determine whether and on the basis of which contracts women of childbearing age (15–49) work. Therefore, the data of the survey representative Labour Force Survey (LFS) are presented below. Quarterly data from 2012–2018 were used. Figure 1 shows the relation of the total number of women on maternity and parental leaves according to weighted LFS data²⁵ to the number of women receiving maternity benefits according to the ZUS.²⁶ The full comparability of both measures is achieved by mid-2014.

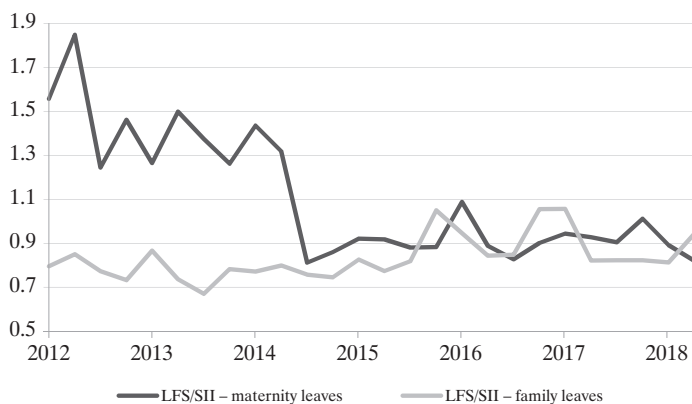


Figure 1. The relation of estimates based on LFS and register data of parenthood-related leaves in 2012–2018

Source: own work, based on LFS.

Table 2 presents employment statistics for women aged 18–44 in 2012–2018. The percentage of women who are employed and therefore entitled to parental leave does not exceed 70%.²⁷ Women employed for an indefinite period of time, i.e. those who, after giving birth to a child, can take full advantage of maternity leave and other privileges without fear of return to work, account for less than 40% of women of childbearing age. At the same time, the percentage of women on temporary contracts

²⁵ Women on maternity or parental leave are declared by women in the LFS questionnaire in questions 16.2 (“Why did you work shorter than usual during the reference week?”) and 17 (“What was the reason why you did not work during the reference week?”).

²⁶ Both people on maternity leave and people on parental leave are entitled to maternity allowance.

²⁷ Among the unemployed women there are those who are still in education or inactive for other reasons, but also unemployed women. The presented description does not take into account the self-selection of women for employment before making decisions on procreation and endogenous nature of both these phenomena. It only drafts the scale of the phenomenon.

is high (Figure 2). The structure of the question in the LFS survey does not specify whether the involuntary nature of the question is due to restrictions on the part of the employer or the employee. However, this means that more than half of women on temporary contracts are people who agree to lower social protection against their own preferences.

Table 2. Quarterly data on the number of women with children under the age of one, female employment statistics for women aged 18–44 and percentage of women on maternity and parental leaves in 2012–2018

Year	Quarter	N	Number of women having children up to a year old	Percentage of women with permanent contracts of employment	Percentage of mothers who have a job, with one-year-old children	Percentage of women on maternity leave	Percentage of women on maternity or parental leave
2012	1	6956	382	0.3510	0.5594	0.2529	0.2529
	2	6953	363	0.3444	0.5817	0.2722	0.2722
	3	6951	341	0.3467	0.5444	0.2486	0.2486
	4	6948	364	0.3489	0.5617	0.2728	0.2728
2013	1	6944	332	0.3432	0.5268	0.2482	0.2721
	2	6936	344	0.3431	0.5718	0.2886	0.3075
	3	6928	356	0.3522	0.5915	0.3319	0.3633
	4	6921	348	0.3536	0.6141	0.4211	0.4351
2014	1	6912	379	0.3494	0.6381	0.4153	0.4894
	2	6879	373	0.3480	0.6601	0.4345	0.4937
	3	6870	325	0.3490	0.6958	0.4429	0.5114
	4	6860	363	0.3538	0.6798	0.4415	0.4988
2015	1	6848	377	0.3510	0.6467	0.4055	0.4825
	2	6848	365	0.3540	0.6875	0.4686	0.5352
	3	6848	342	0.3576	0.6615	0.4641	0.5156
	4	6853	353	0.3579	0.6581	0.4529	0.4932
2016	1	6785	389	0.3591	0.6969	0.5060	0.5657
	2	6785	348	0.3702	0.7015	0.4976	0.5572
	3	6753	328	0.3710	0.6691	0.4701	0.5233
	4	6754	369	0.3717	0.6726	0.4386	0.5000

Year	Quarter	N	Number of women having children up to a year old	Percentage of women with permanent contracts of employment	Percentage of mothers who have a job, with one-year-old children	Percentage of women on maternity leave	Percentage of women on maternity or parental leave
2017	1	6710	366	0.3805	0.6602	0.4784	0.5295
	2	6710	395	0.3901	0.6410	0.4463	0.5023
	3	6670	395	0.3896	0.6180	0.4654	0.5125
	4	6650	402	0.3955	0.6830	0.5008	0.5579
2018	1	6611	380	0.4024	0.6566	0.4802	0.5232
	2	6588	373	0.4073	0.6231	0.4510	0.5195

Source: own calculations, based on LFS, data in thousands. The percentage of women with contracts for an indefinite period covers all women aged 18–44 who declare this type of contract to all women of that age. The other coefficients have the number of women aged 18–44 declaring the presence of a child under one year in the household in the denominator. Being on maternity or childcare leave is defined on the basis of the respondents’ declarations in the LFS survey.

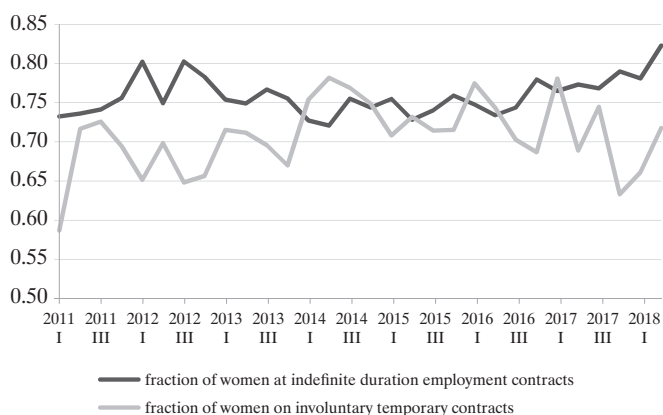


Figure 2. Women aged 18–44 with a child up to one year old on temporary involuntary temporary contracts

Source: own calculations based on LFS.

Based on the results in Table 2, it can be concluded that with 26 weeks of maternity leave and additional maternity leave, about 25% of women with children aged up to one year were on maternity leave, so about half of the mothers took six months of leave. After the leave entitlement doubled, slightly more than half of mothers of children under one year of age take it. It cannot therefore be said that the institution of maternity leave is a universal solution.

Figure 3 presents a comparison of the number of women receiving maternity benefit (and thus also taking maternity and parental leave) and parental leave on the basis of data provided by the ZUS. The nearly double drop of the number of women on parental leave is accompanied by a more than fourfold increase in the number of women on maternity allowance²⁸. It can be concluded that the institution of maternity and parental leave at least partially replaces the institution of parental leave—women switch to this form of leave later and take it shorter or resign from it at all.

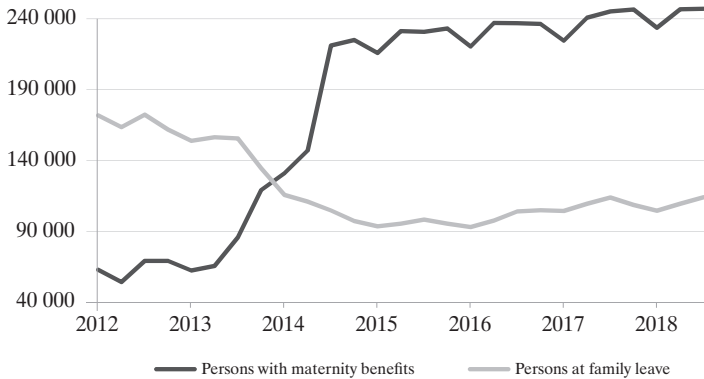


Figure 3. Maternity- and childcare leaves' usage in Poland in 2012–2018

Source: own work, based on LFS.

Conclusions

The article presents the conditions and historical changes in maternity and parental leaves in Poland. It discusses selected methodological problems related to the analysis of the dependencies between leaves, fertility and female labour supply. The need to combine premises and evidence based on different data sources were demonstrated. However, with some caution with interpretation, it is possible to describe these phenomena in Poland over the last few years.

Parenthood-related leaves, in particular maternity, supplementary maternity and parental leaves, are intended to be the solutions available widely to all working people. The aim is to make it easier for parents, including prospective parents, to reconcile professional and family roles and thus facilitate the decision to have the first or next child. However, the construction of the Polish leave scheme makes it selectively addressing parents. Childcare solutions for children under 3 years of age and family benefits are not compatible with the leaves. This leads to retracting care from the public to the private sphere, i.e. replacing market care services with informal care provided mainly within the family. The outcome is a relatively low percentage of mothers and fathers using the

²⁸ It should be noted that the maternity allowance is a benefit due both during maternity and parental leave.

available solutions—despite a significant increase after the 2013 reform, it is still about half of mothers of children aged under one year. It is therefore hard to expect that the solutions introduced, despite significant financial outlays, will contribute significantly to the desired increase in fertility, since their legal structure means that they do not pertain to all women. On the other hand, solutions for women who are not protected by the Labour Code²⁹ are much less financially beneficial. On the basis of the above considerations, it becomes clear that there is a need to harmonise the rules for parental leave in order to provide similar chances and opportunities for all parents. At the same time, a uniform leave scheme would not discourage employers from employing women on an employment contract basis, which is currently more risky and potentially more costly for the employer. A further issue beyond the scope of this article is the linking of leave arrangements with other family policy instruments preventing permanent inactivity of women and giving them the choice of participating in the labour market.

References

- Adserà, A. (2004). Changing fertility rates in developed countries. The impact of labor market institutions. *Journal of Population Economics*, vol. 17, iss. 1, pp. 17–43.
- Baker, M., Milligan, K. (2008). Maternal employment, breastfeeding, and health: Evidence from maternity leave mandates. *Journal of Health Economics*, vol. 27, iss. 4, pp. 871–887.
- Bagard, M. (2013). Female Employment and Parental Leave: The Case of Poland. *International Journal of Management and Economics*, no. 40, pp. 155–178.
- Beuchert, L.V., Humlum, M.K., Vejlin, R. (2016). The Length of Maternity Leave and Family Health. *Labour Economics*, vol. 43, iss. C, pp. 55–71.
- Broadway, B., Kalb, G., Kuehnle, D., Maeder, M. (2015). *The Effect of Paid Parental Leave on Child Health in Australia*. IZA Discussion Paper, no. 8978. Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).
- Dahl, G.B., Løken, K.V., Mogstad, M., Salvanes, K.V., (2013). What Is the Case for Paid Maternity Leave? *NBER Working Paper*, no. 19595.
- Danzer, N., Lavy, V. (2018). Paid Parental Leave and Children’s Schooling Outcomes. *Economic Journal*, vol. 128, iss. 608, pp. 81–117.
- Das, T., Polachek, S.W. (2015). Unanticipated Effects of California’s Paid Family Leave Program. *Contemporary Economic Policy*, vol. 33, iss. 4, pp. 619–635.
- Dearing, H. (2016). Gender equality in the division of work: How to assess European leave policies regarding their compliance with an ideal leave model. *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 26, iss. 3, pp. 234–247.

²⁹ Here, we are talking about parental benefits parents are entitled to for 12 months after the birth of the child (the so-called “kosiniakowe”), which, according to the data of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy in 2017 were used on average by 94900 women per month, as well as maternity benefits for farmers insured in the KRUS, which according to KRUS data are used by less than 20000 women per month.

- Durasiewicz, A. (2012). Historyczne unormowania polityki rodzinnej. *Biuletyn Informacyjny Wiadomości Społeczne*, no. 1, pp. 14–27.
- Esping-Andersen, G. (1999). *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economics*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fahlén, S. (2016). Equality at home—A question of career? Housework, norms, and policies in a European comparative perspective. *Demographic Research*, vol. 35 (November), pp. 1411–1440.
- Godlewska, J. (1984). *Urlop i zasiłek macierzyński*. Warszawa: Instytut Wydawniczy Związków Zawodowych.
- Godlewska-Bujok, B. (2013). Urlopy rodzicielskie—o projekcie ustawy i jej (nie)konsekwencjach. *Praca i Zabezpieczenie Społeczne*, no. 3, pp. 9–12.
- Godlewska-Bujok, B. (2015). Uprawnienia związane z rodzicielstwem—nowa odsłona. *Praca i Zabezpieczenie Społeczne*, no. 9, pp. 17–22.
- Graniewska, D. (1971). Możliwości i potrzeba okresowej dezaktywizacji kobiet mających małe dzieci. *Problemy Zabezpieczenia Społecznego*, no. 4, pp. 1–5.
- Graniewska, D. (2009). Społeczne funkcje żłobków i przedszkoli. Obecnie i w przeszłości. *Polityka Społeczna*, no. 9 (426), s. 55–57.
- Guendelman, S., Goodman, J., Kharrazi, M., Lahiff, M. (2014). Work–family balance after childbirth: The association between employer-offered leave characteristics and maternity leave duration. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, vol. 18, iss. 1, pp. 200–208.
- Han, W.-J., Waldfogel, J. (2003). Parental Leave: The Impact of Recent Legislation on Parents' Leave Taking. *Demography*, vol. 40, iss. 1, pp. 191–200.
- Hewitt, B., Strazdins, L., Martin, B. (2017). The benefits of paid maternity leave for mothers' post-partum health and wellbeing: Evidence from an Australian evaluation. *Social Science and Medicine*, vol. 182, pp. 97–105.
- Kosztowna, N. (2016). Kobieta w zakładzie pracy w Polsce Ludowej i po 1990 r. Analiza stanu prawnego. *Annales. Etyka w życiu gospodarczym*, vol. 19, no. 2, pp. 93–108.
- Kotowska, I.E. (red.) (1999). *Przemiany demograficzne w Polsce w latach 90. w świetle koncepcji drugiego przejścia demograficznego*. Warszawa: Oficyna Wydawnicza SGH.
- Kotsadam, A., Finseraas, H. (2011). The state intervenes in the battle of the sexes: Causal effects of paternity leave. *Social Science Research*, vol. 40, iss. 6, pp. 1611–1622.
- Kurowska, A. (2013). Ocena zasadności założeń reformy urlopów i zasiłków związanych z opieką nad małym dzieckiem. *Problemy Polityki Społecznej. Studia i Dyskusje*, no. 21 (2), pp. 155–170.
- Kurowska, A., Słotwińska-Roslanowska, E. (2013). Zatrudnienie a pierwsze i drugie urodzenia wśród kobiet w Polsce. *Studia Demograficzne*, no. 1 (163), pp. 37–51.
- Kurzynowski, A. (1981). Demograficzno-społeczne determinanty wzorów zachowań młodych matek wobec pracy. *Biuletyn IGS*, no. 1/2, pp. 23–41.
- Makarzec, P. (2013). Ubezpieczenia społeczne w Polsce Ludowej. *Zeszyty Naukowe WSEI*, vol. 3, no. 1, pp. 103–115.
- Malaka, A. (2013). Ustawa scaleniowa—okoliczności jej uchwalenia i znaczenie dla rozwoju. In: *Ubezpieczenie społeczne—dawniej i dziś. W 80-lecie uchwalenia ustawy o ubez-*

- pieczeniu społecznym* (pp. 7–24). Wrocław: Zakład Ubezpieczeń Społecznych, Polskie Stowarzyszenie Ubezpieczenia Społecznego.
- Michoń, P. (2008). Familisation and Defamilisation Policy in 22 European Countries. *The Poznan University of Economics Review*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 34–54.
- Mishtal, J.Z. (2009). Understanding low fertility in Poland: Demographic consequences of gendered discrimination in employment and postsocialist neoliberal restructuring. *Demographic Research*, vol. 21, pp. 599–626.
- Phipps, S., Burton, P., Lethbridge, L. (2001). In and out of the labour market: long-term income consequences of child-related interruptions to women's paid work. *Canadian Journal of Economics*, vol. 34, iss. 2, pp. 411–429.
- Polakowski, M., Szelewa, D. (2015). *Polityka społeczna PRL*. Warszawskie Debaty o Polityce Społecznej, 18. Warszawa: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Przedstawicielstwo w Polsce.
- Rasmussen, A.W. (2010). Increasing the length of parents' birth-related leave: The effect on children's long-term educational outcomes. *Labour Economics*, vol. 17, iss. 1, pp. 91–100.
- Schönberg, U., Ludsteck, J. (2007). Maternity Leave Legislation, Female Labor Supply, and the Family Wage Gap. *IZA Discussion Paper*, no. 2699. Bonn: Institute for the Study of Labor (IZA).
- Sheridan, D. (1992). Researching women's lives: Notes from visits to East Central Europe. *Women's Studies International Forum*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 91–95.
- Stahelin, K., Berteau, P.C., Stutz, E.Z. (2007). Length of maternity leave and health of mother and child—A review. *International Journal of Public Health*, vol. 52, iss. 4, pp. 202–209.
- Stier, H., Lewin-Epstein, N., Braun, M. (2001). Welfare Regimes, Family-Supportive Policies, and Women's Employment along the Life-Course. *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 106, no. 6, pp. 1731–1760.
- Waldfogel, J., Higuchi, Y., Abe, M. (1999). Family leave policies and women's retention after childbirth: Evidence from the United States, Britain, and Japan. *Journal of Population Economics*, vol. 12, iss. 4, pp. 523–545.
- Wiśniewski, J. (2014). Kilka refleksji dotyczących uprawnień pracowników związanych z rodzicielstwem w świetle znowelizowanych regulacji prawnych. *Studia z Zakresu Prawa, Administracji i Zarządzania Uniwersytetu Kazimierza Wielkiego w Bydgoszczy*, vol. 5, pp. 119–131.
- Wujczyk, M. (2014). Urlop rodzicielski—nowa instytucja ochrony rodzicielstwa. *Polityka Społeczna*, no. 2 (479), pp. 21–24.

Online sources

<http://psz.zus.pl/>

<https://bdl.stat.gov.pl/>

<https://www.infor.pl/wskazniki/prawo-pracy-i-ubezpieczen-spoecznych/urlopy/126,873,Wy-miar-urlopu-macierzynskiego.html>

<http://rodzicielski.gov.pl>

<https://www.gov.pl/web/rodzina>

<https://www.krus.gov.pl/niezbednik/statystyki/swiadczenia-pieniezne-z-ubezpieczenia-spoicznego-rolnikow/>

Urlop rodzicielski w Polsce: cele, wyzwania, perspektywy

Streszczenie

Celem artykułu jest próba opisanie problemu dostępności i wykorzystania urlopów macierzyńskich przez kobiety w wieku rozrodczym w Polsce. Opisane zostały przesłanki wprowadzenia urlopów związanych z rodzicielstwem oraz ich historia w Polsce. Na podstawie danych GUS, ZUS i BAEL przedstawiono wykorzystanie urlopów macierzyńskich w Polsce i omówiono związane z nimi potencjalne problemy.

Słowa kluczowe: urlop macierzyński, urlop rodzicielski, BAEL