

# How Public and Private Institutions Can Address the Needs of Working Families in the Global Economy

Population, Work and Family Policy  
Research Collaboration Symposium

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# Findings from:

## Forgotten Families

Ending the Growing Crisis Confronting Children and Working  
Parents in the Global Economy

(Oxford University Press, 2006)

For further information on these studies contact:

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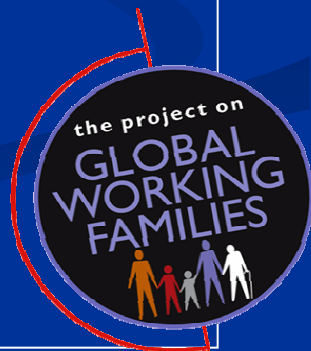
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# Research Program Components

- Mapping Global Trends: over 170 countries.
- In-depth Ethnographic Studies: more than 1,000 in-depth interviews in Mexico, Botswana, Vietnam, the United States, Honduras, and Russia.
- Statistical Analysis of National Household Surveys: 55,000 households from Botswana, Brazil, Mexico, Russia, South Africa, the United States, and Vietnam.
- Systematic Review of Legal and Policy Framework: examination of policies in 180 nations.
- Studies of companies in North America, Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia and Australia

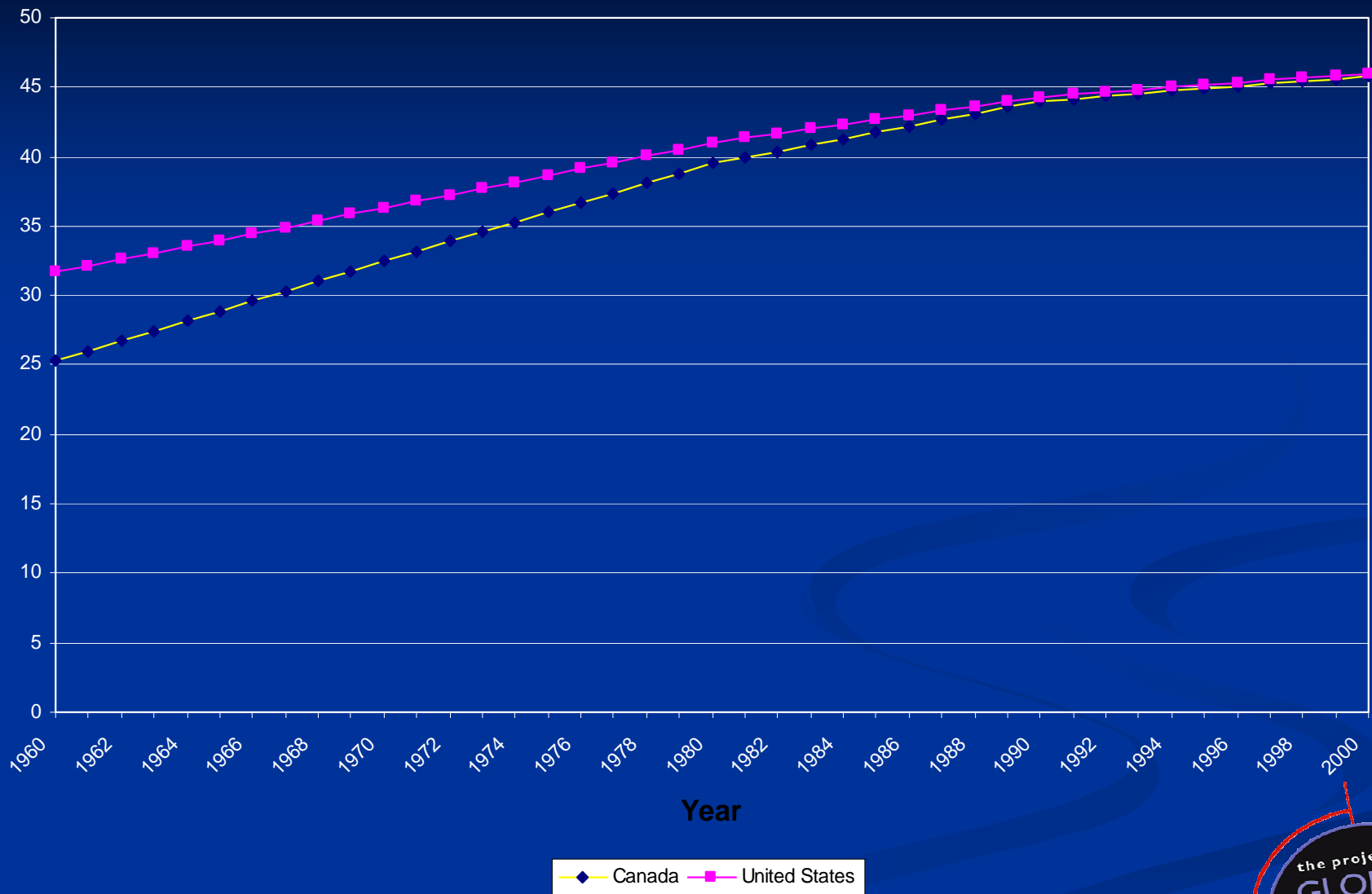


# Demographic and Laborforce Transformations

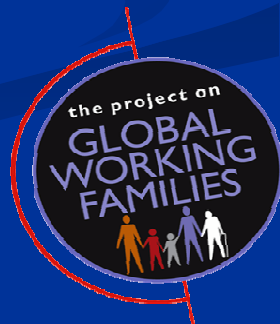
Movement away from laboring where children can accompany, away from work where adults control hours to work where supervisors determine hours and families not present.



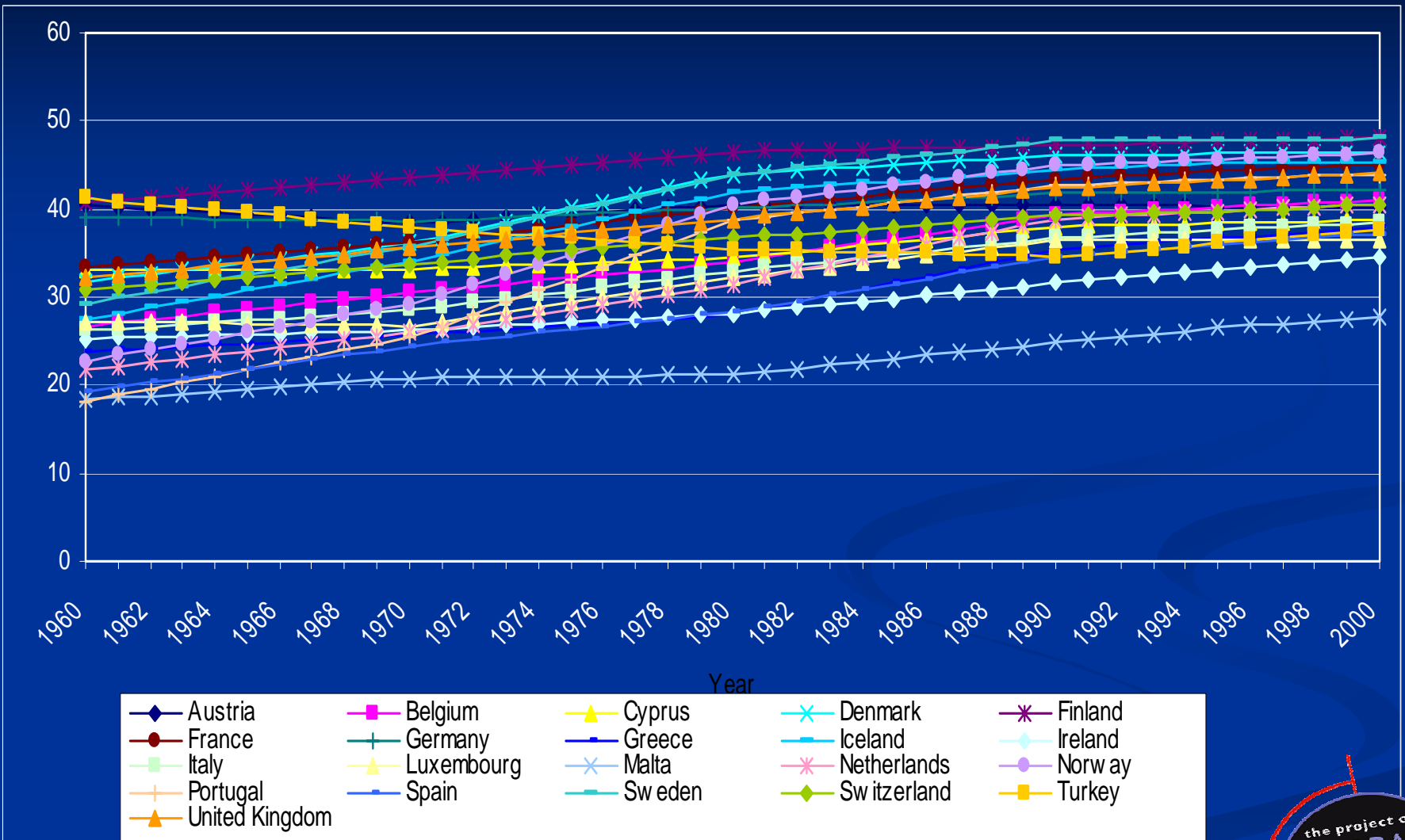
# Female share of total labor force (%) - North America



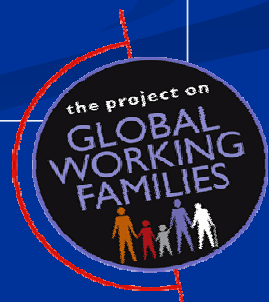
Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.



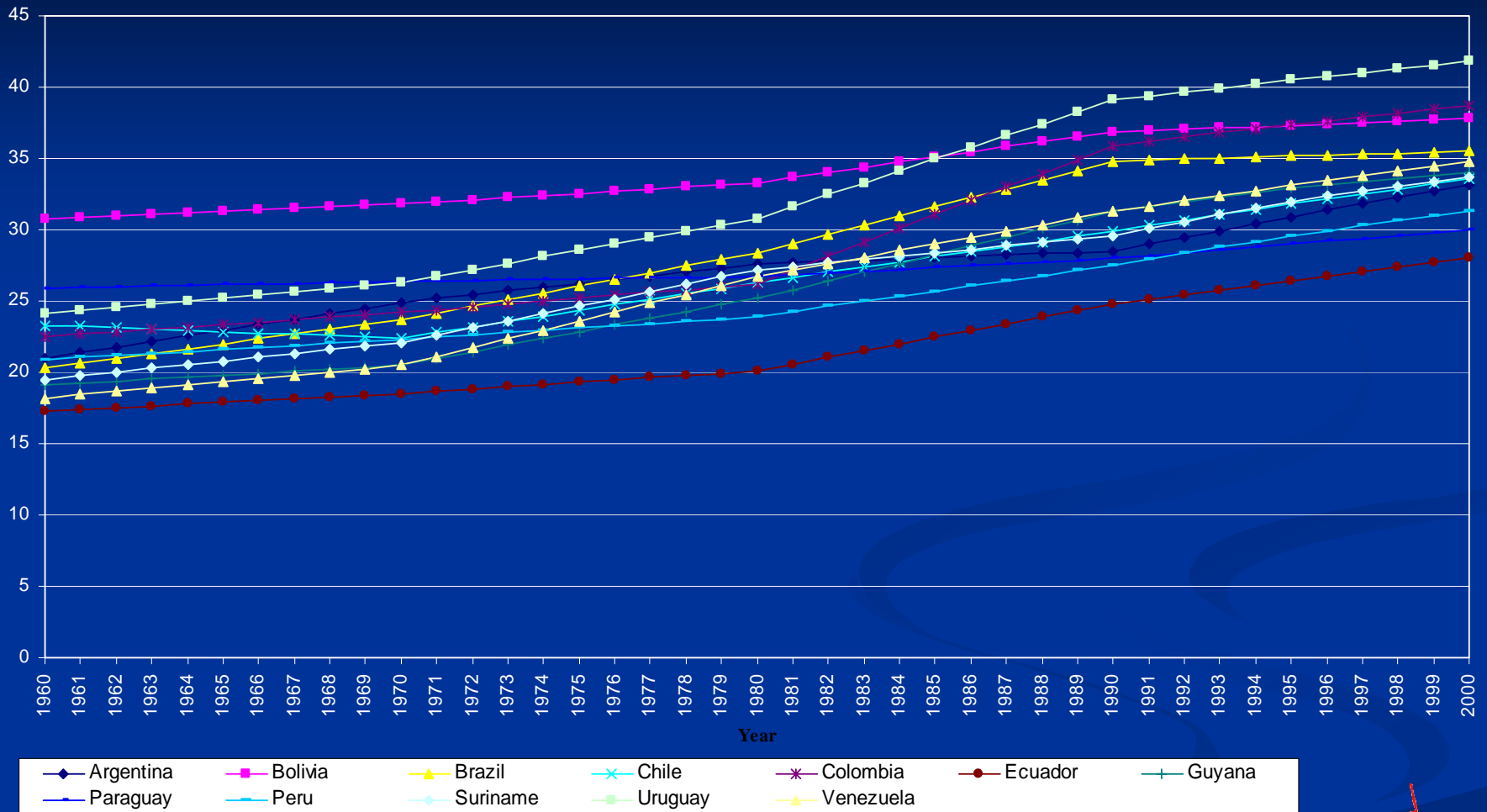
# Female share of total labor force (%) – Western and Southern Europe



Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.



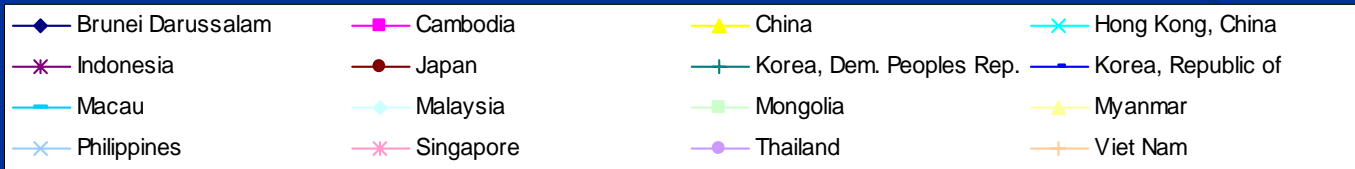
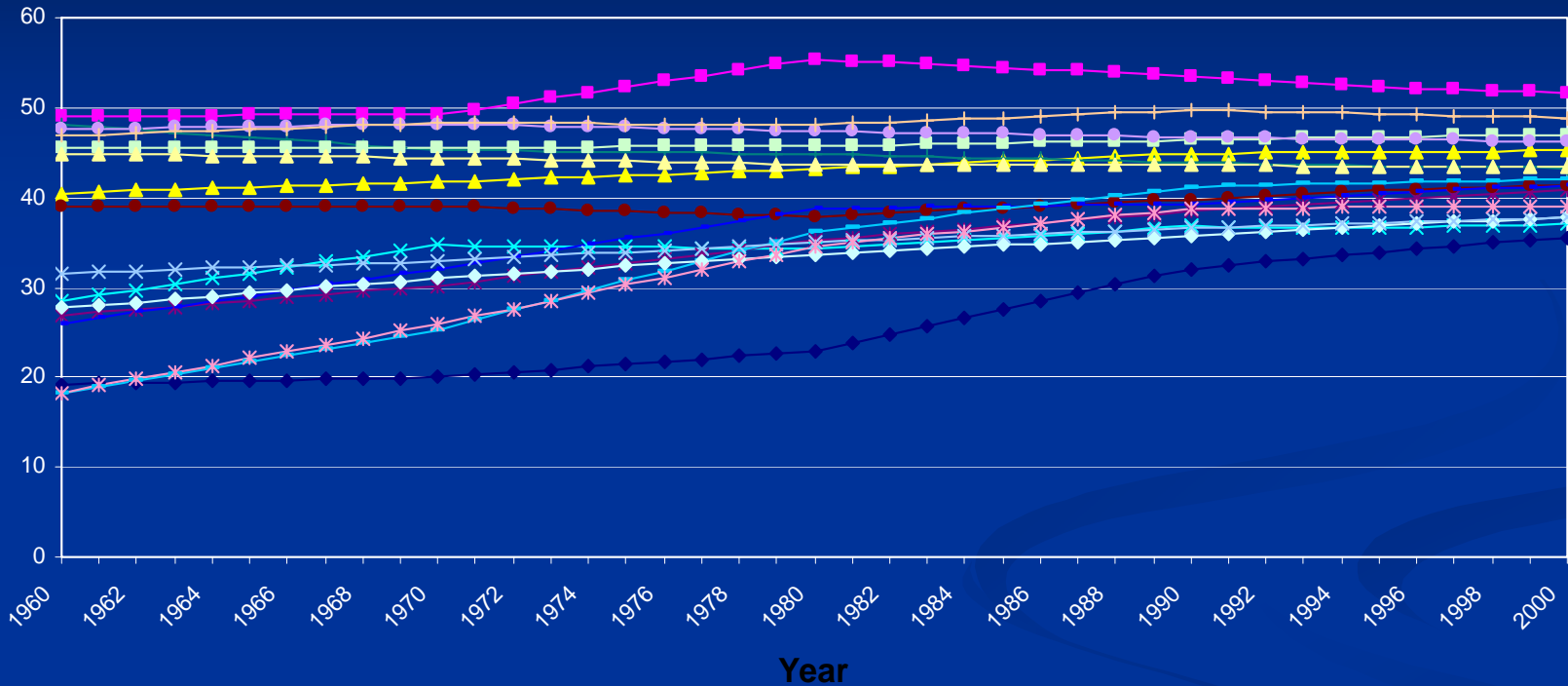
# Female share of total labor force (%) - South America



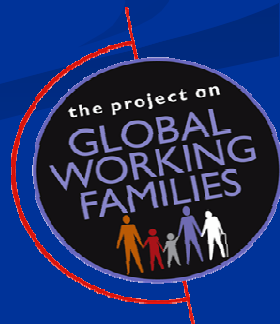
Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.



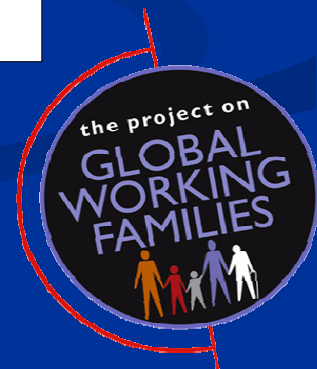
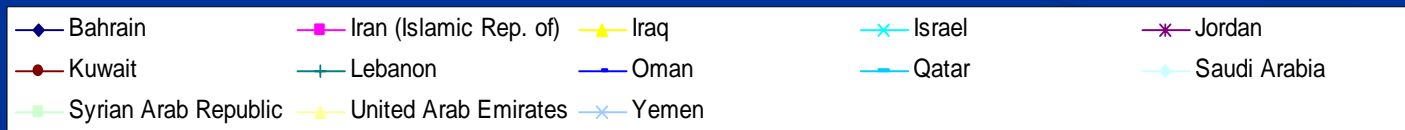
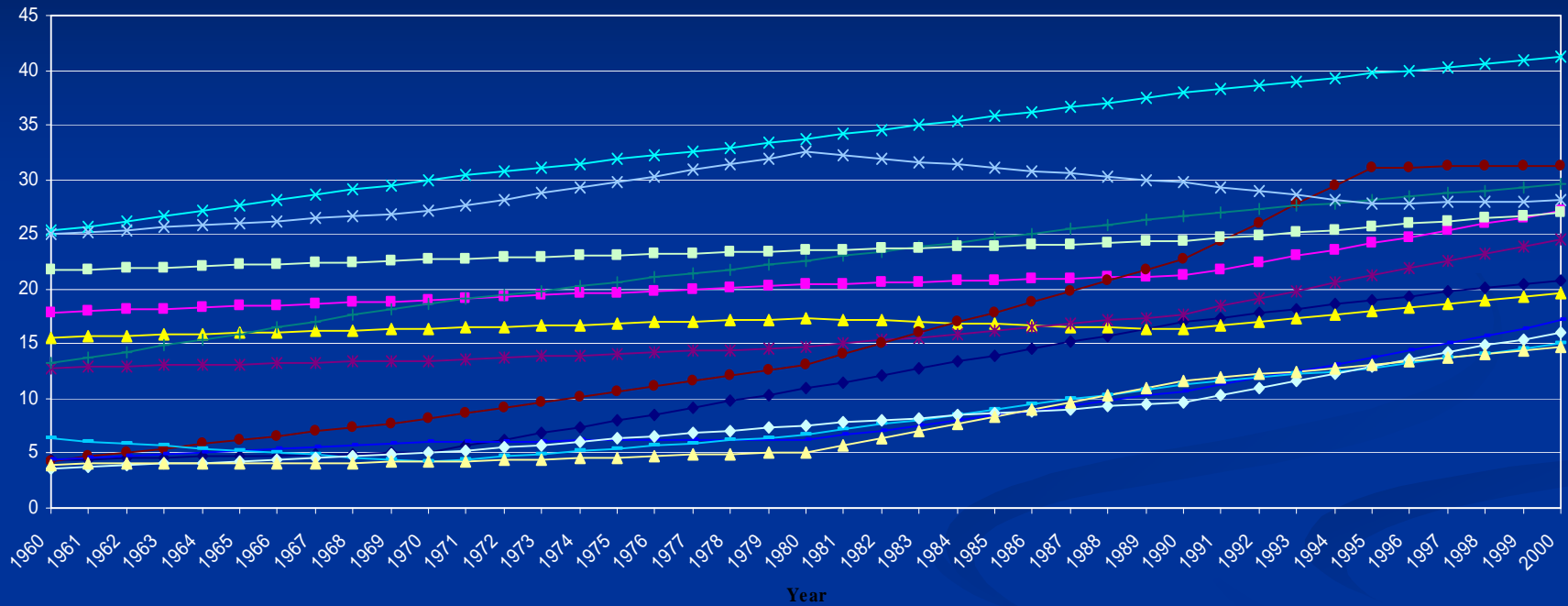
# Female share of total labor force (%) - East Asia



Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.



# Female share of total labor force (%) - Middle East



Source: World Bank. 2002. World Development Indicators 2002. Washington, D.C.

# Opportunities and risks

## ■ Labor transformation:

Opportunity: increased gender equality, opportunity to escape poverty.

Risk: parental constraints in the availability for caregiving.

## ■ Urbanization:

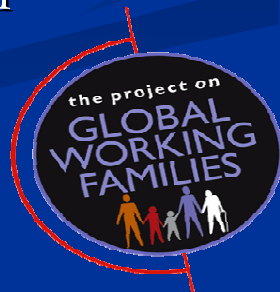
Opportunity: economic growth and new work possibilities.

Risk: separation from extended families.

## ■ Globalization:

Opportunity: international organizations could set standards for decent working conditions.

Risks: pressure on workers to accept low wages and inadequate working conditions.



## When Parents Lack Decent Work Conditions and Social Supports, School-Age Children Are More Likely to be Left Home Alone

- 80% of parents who lacked adequate working conditions and had no other caregivers in the household had to leave school-age children home alone, compared to 45% of parents with no other caregivers in the household who had adequate working conditions.



# Children's educational results and parents' working conditions

- 83% of parents who lacked adequate working conditions reported having children with academic or behavioral problems in school compared to 54% of parents with adequate working conditions.
- 59% of parents who had barriers at work preventing them from helping their children in their homework or participating in school events reported that their children experienced academic or behavioral problems at school, compared to 24% of parents who did not have barriers at work.

## Low-income Parents at Greater Risk of Experiencing Difficulties Caring for Their Sick Children

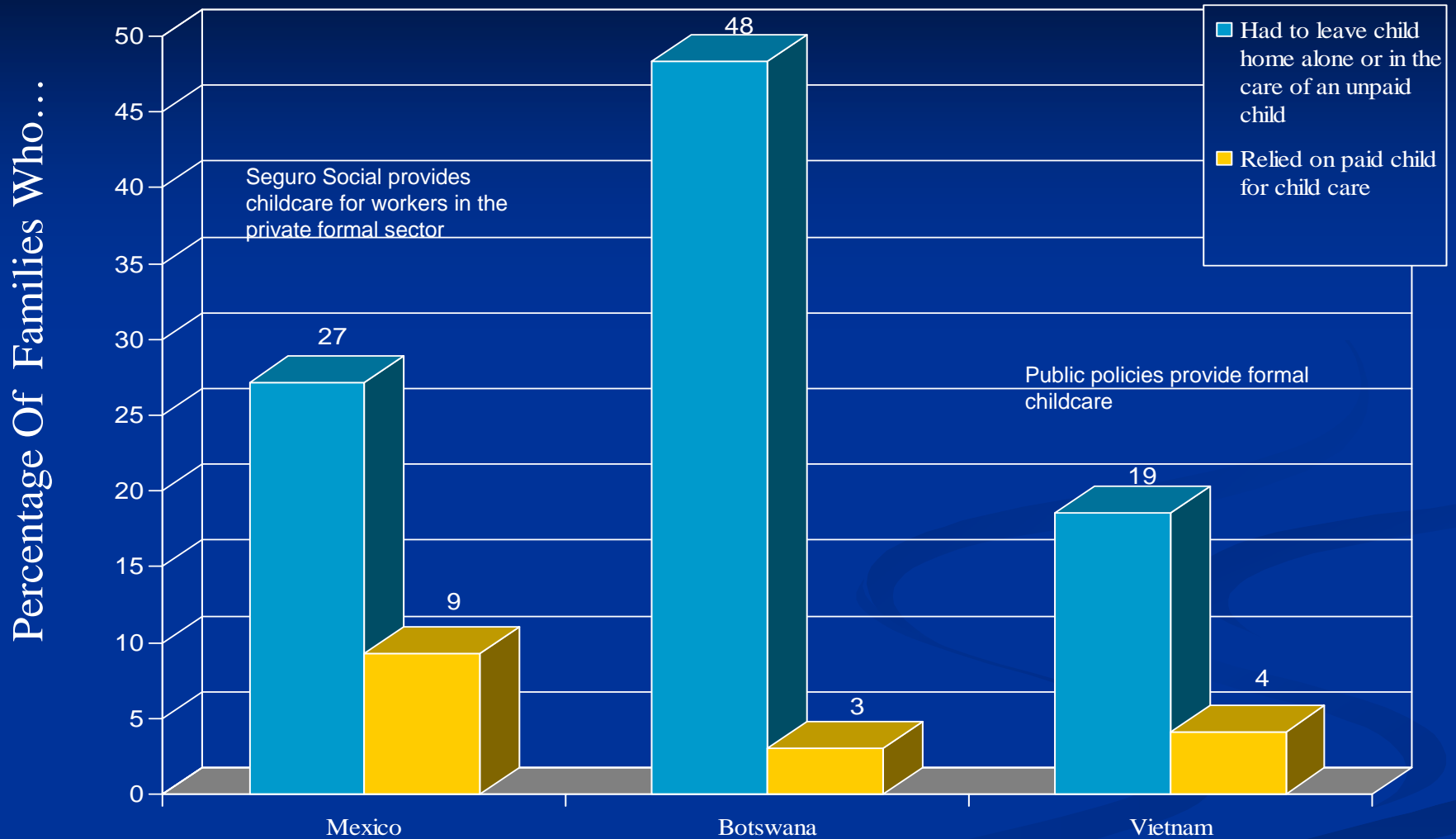
- 67% of low income parents surveyed lost income because of the need to care for a sick child compared to 46% of other parents.
- Low-income parents have higher probabilities of having difficulties in caring for a sick child because of work.



# Considering Potential Policy Approaches

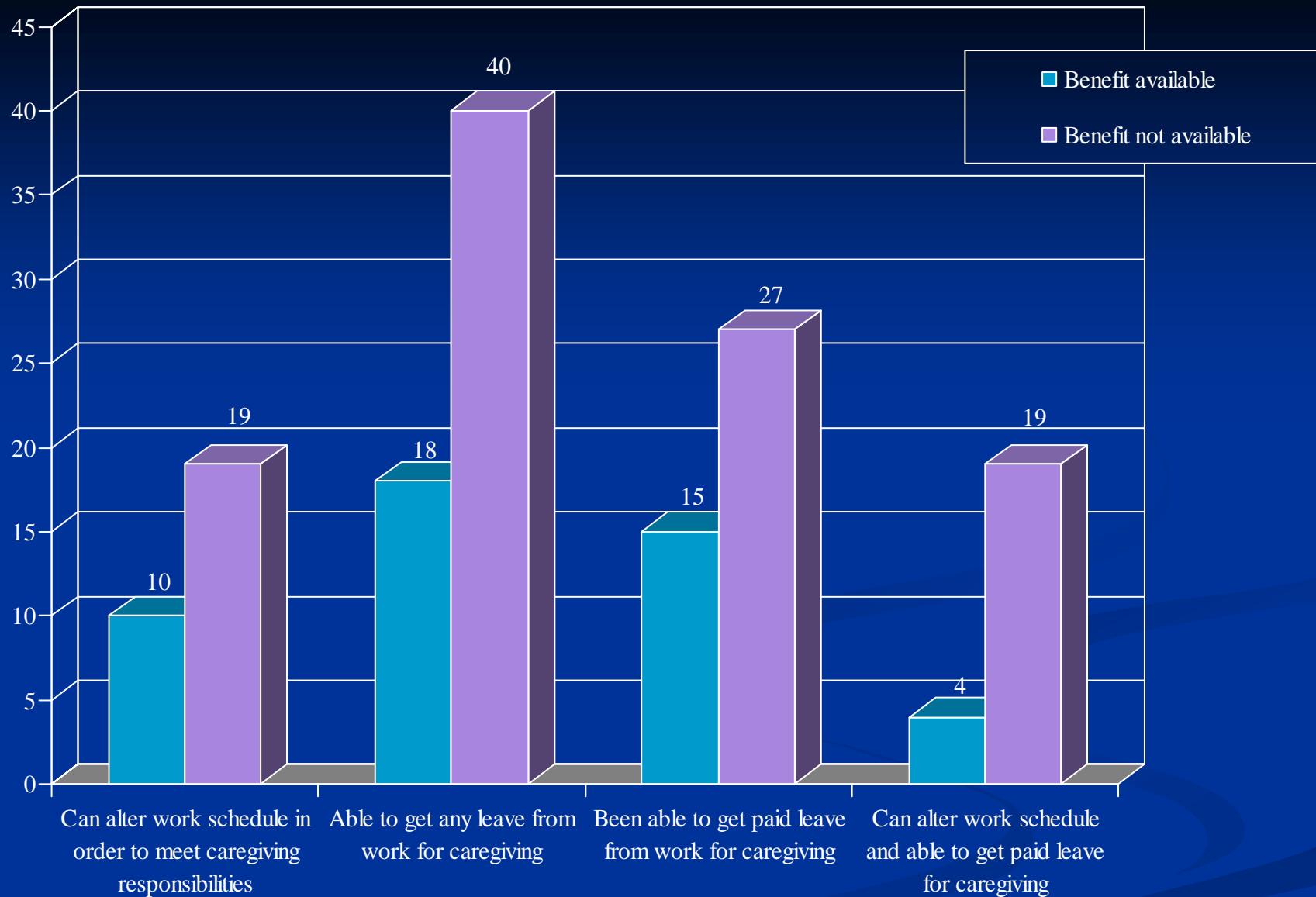


# Childcare policies can make a significant difference:



Frequency Children Are Left Alone or in the “Care” of Other Children

# Percentage of Parents Who Had to Leave Child Home Alone Sick



When Parents Have Decent Working Conditions, They Are Less Likely to Have to Leave Children Home Alone Sick

Source: Forgotten Families. Jody Heymann. Oxford University Press, 2006

# What are the policy priorities?

- Paid annual leave
- Paid sick leave
- Limits to mandatory overtime
- Adequate family wage
- Universal access to early childhood care and education
- Universal access to out-of-school care



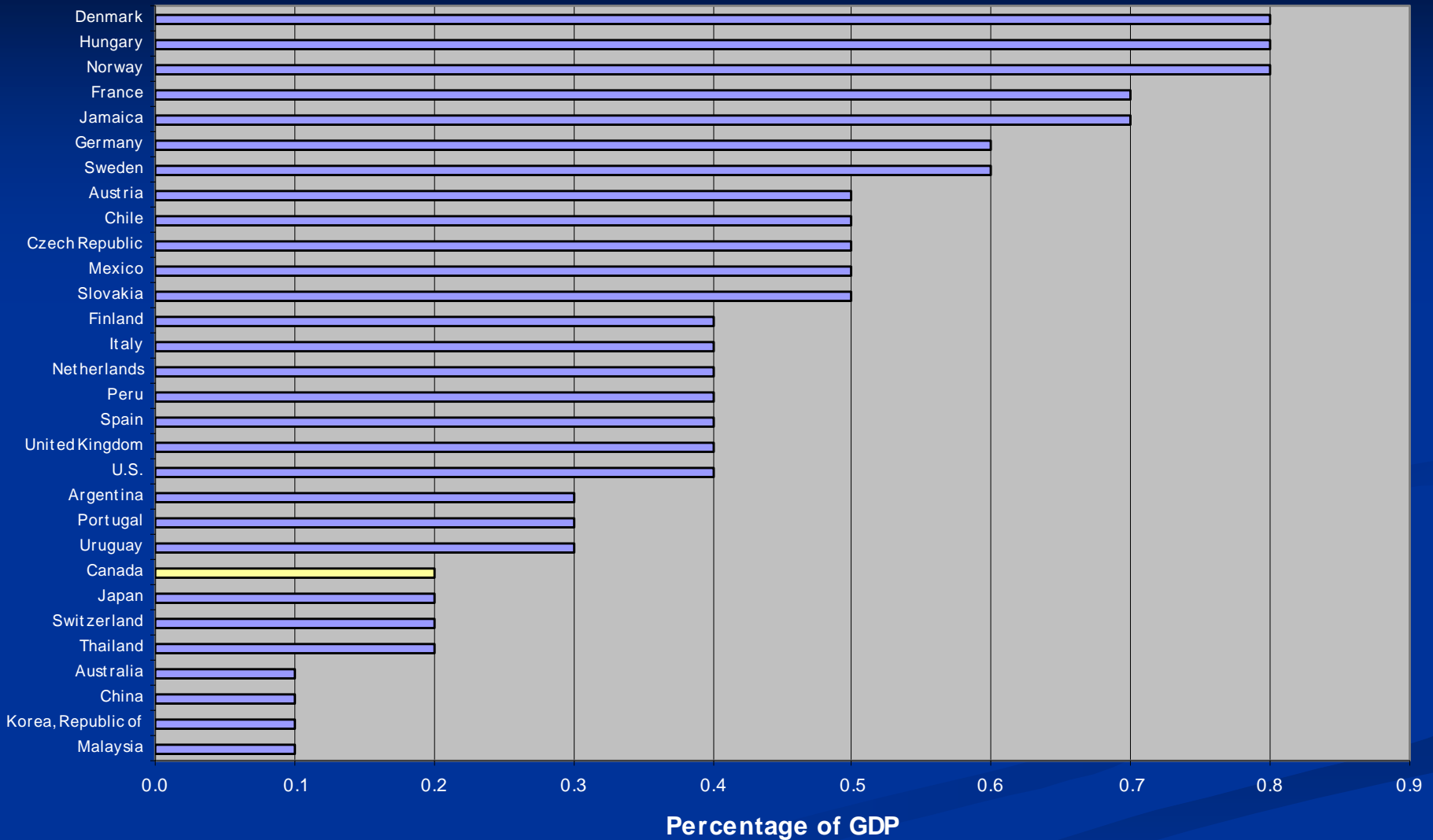
# **We are currently updating our 2004 study, the first to look globally at labor conditions for working families**

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## **Findings include among others:**

- Availability of Paid Leave for Mothers: Out of 173 countries studied, 169 countries guarantee paid leave to women in connection with childbirth.
- At least 96 countries protect women's right to breastfeed at work. Breastfeeding has been shown to reduce infant mortality several fold.
- At least 144 countries provide paid sick leave to employees.

## Percentage of GDP Spent on Preprimary Education



Source: [The Work, Family, and Equity Index: Where Does the United States Stand Globally?](#) The Project on Global Working Families, 2004.

# National Competitiveness

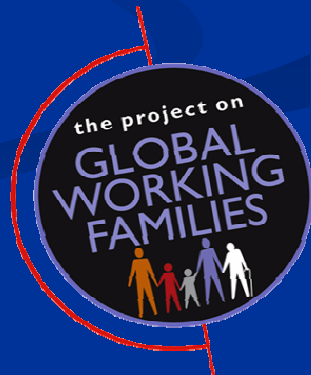
Countries can be strongly competitive while providing decent working conditions.

Examples:

- Those nations who provide overtime pay are as competitive as those who do not
- Those nations who provide evening wage premiums are as competitive as those who do not
- The most competitive countries provide, on average, longer parental leave
- The most competitive countries provide, on average, more leave to care for children

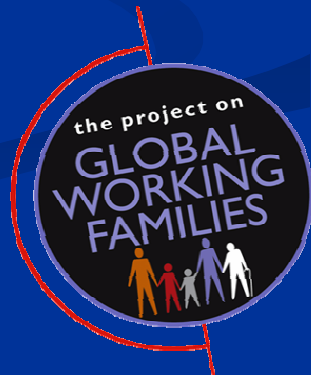
# Good employers can be found in almost every industry in which low-skilled people find employment...

- hotels and restaurants
- manufacturing
- retail
- manual labor
- call centers



... and in all geographic regions of the world. Our case study sites to date include:

- The United States: Alabama, California, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Washington
- Lima, Peru
- Dublin, Ireland
- Cape Town, South Africa
- Melbourne, Australia
- Tianjin, China
- Porsgrunn, Norway



# Myths Feeding Inaction

- Myth 1: We Don't Know What Works
- Myth 2: Improvements Can't Reach Workers in the Informal Sector
- Myth 3: No Affordable Solution
- Myth 4: Bad Jobs Are Better than No Jobs, and Action Threatens Bad Jobs
- Myth 5: Parents Can Solve the Problems Alone
- Myth 6: Individual Countries Have No Choice
- Myth 7: There's No Way to Move Forward Globally