

# FAMILIES THAT WORK

Policies for Reconciling  
Parenthood and Employment



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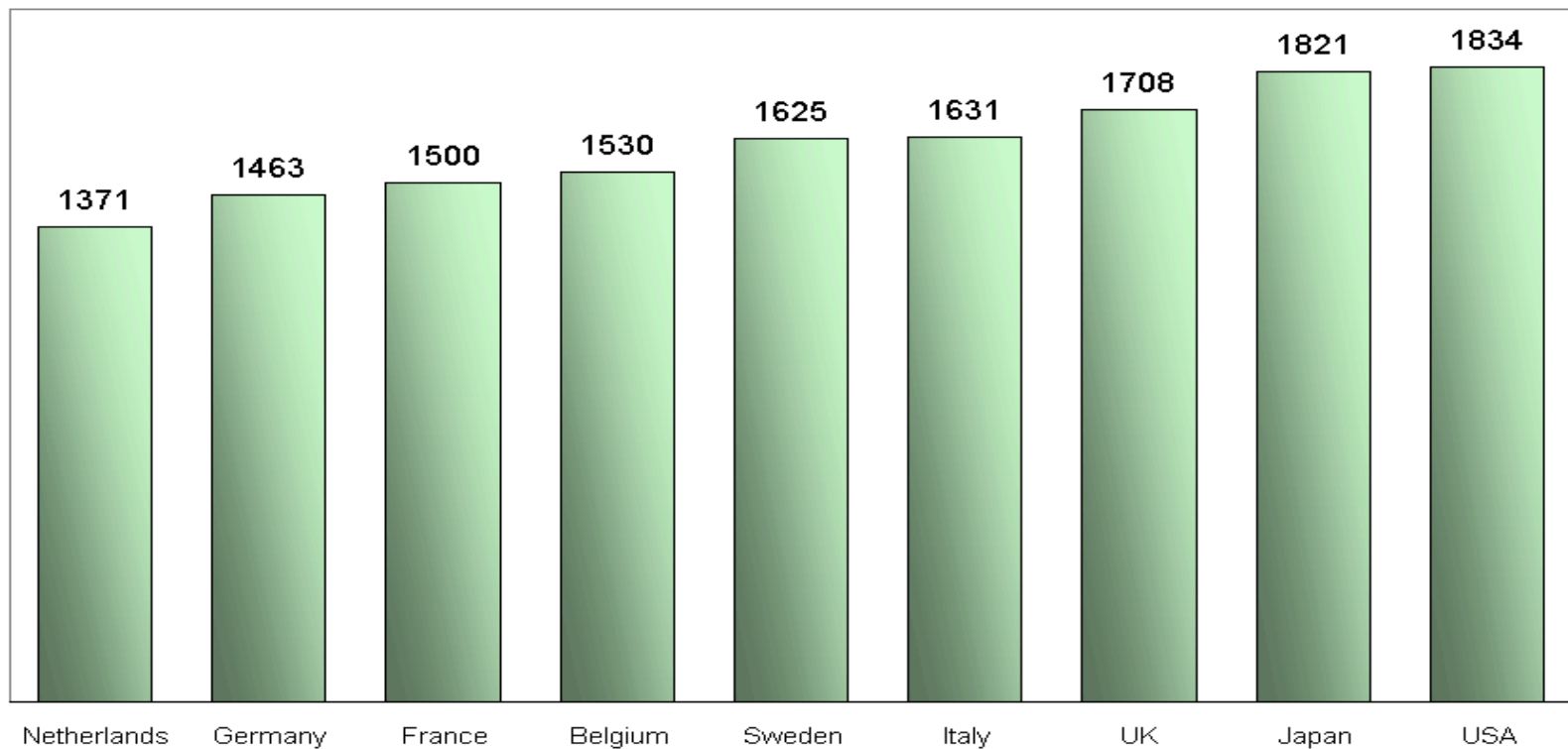
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Russell Sage Foundation  
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## US workers spend exceptionally long hours at work each year.

- 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 8<sup>th</sup> in the OECD in output-per-worker-hour.

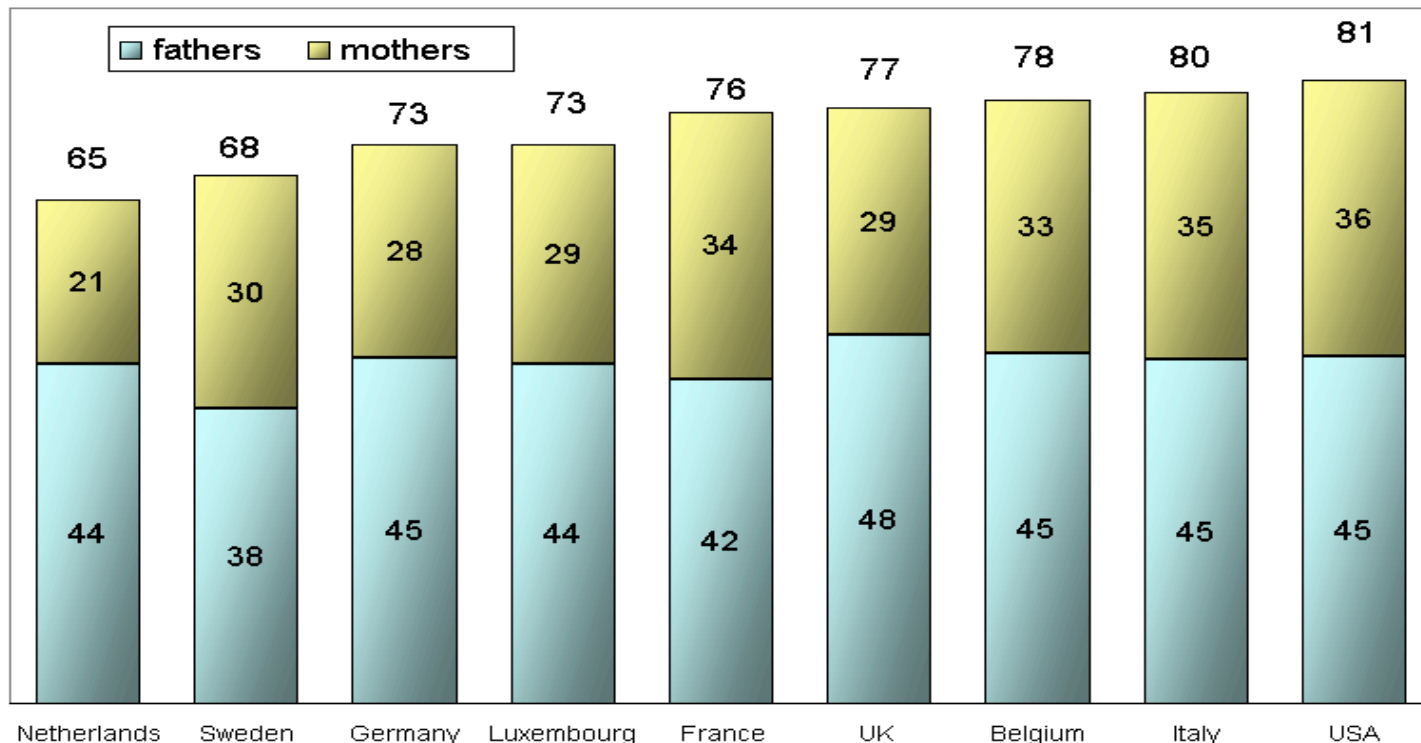
**Workers' Average Annual Hours in Paid Work**



## 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**



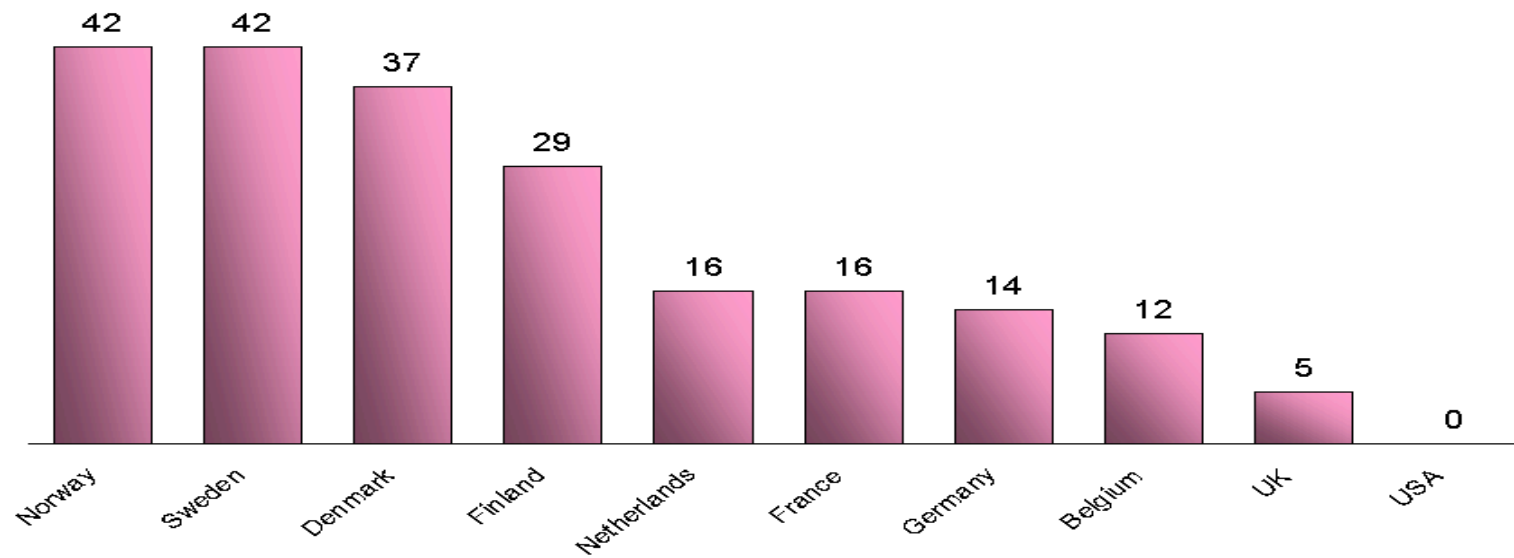
Public policy is a crucial vehicle for securing working parents time for caregiving, especially during children's earliest years.

-- 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

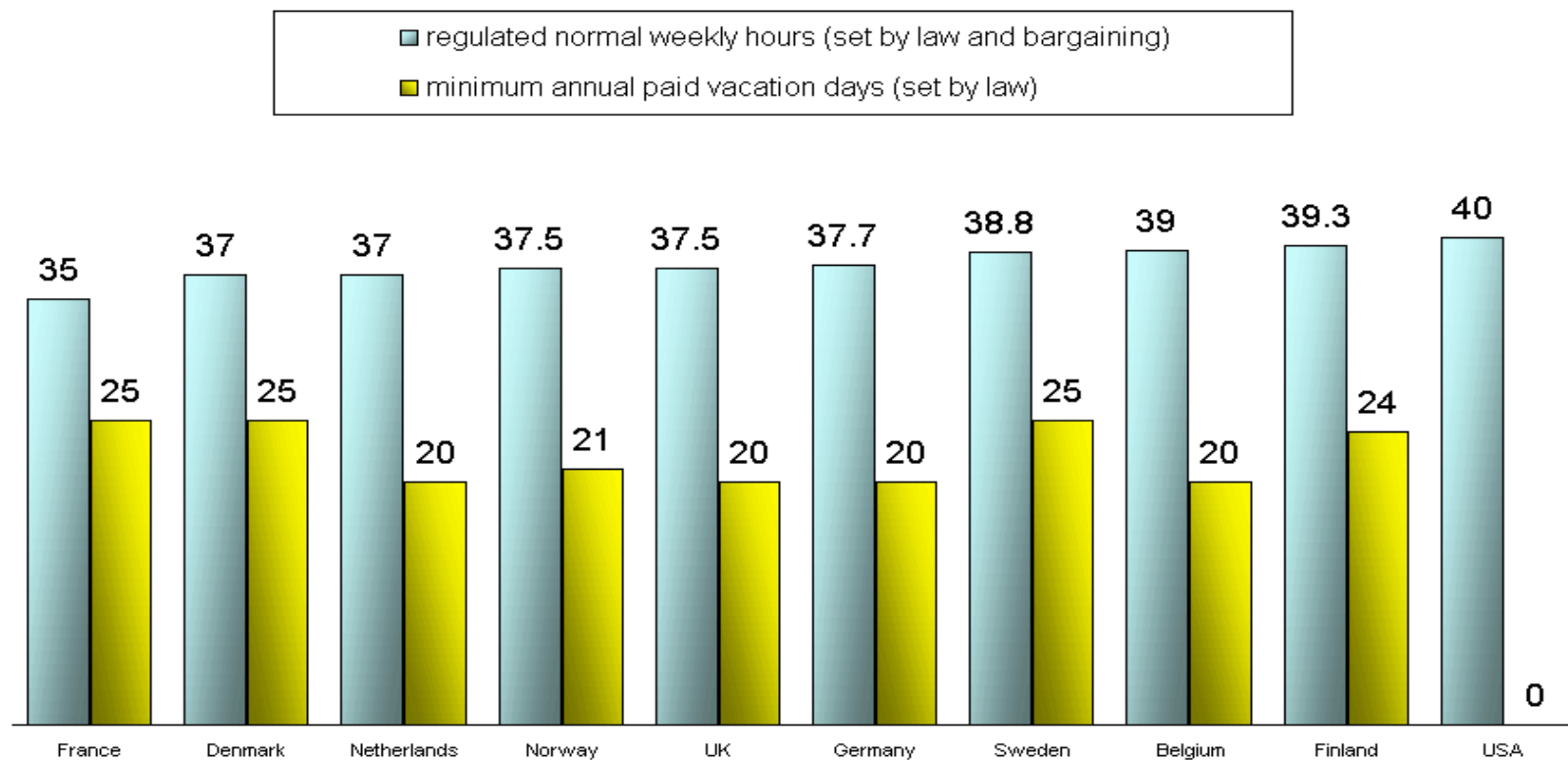


Public policy also shapes workers' weekly hours and annual work days.

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.**

