

# *The social-democratic road to maternity leave: revisiting the role of social groups in the development of Spanish family policies, 1900-36<sup>1</sup>*

Guillem Verd-Llabrés

*University of Barcelona*

## **Abstract**

How did social groups' mobilisation affect social policy design? This paper studies the case of the Spanish maternity leave in a period of regime change–1900-1936. It was implemented in 1931, covering all workers except domestic service and was funded by workers, employers and the State. Therefore, I study how the lobbying capacity of different groups affected this outcome. Using a new approach to the *public information* of 1927, it maps the revealed preferences of social groups –workers, employers, Catholics, doctors and women– and compares them within their broader historical process. The study finds that social democracy was at the centre of the implementation and development of Spanish maternity leave. It also suggests that their attitude changed between different political regimes and institutional constraints. Thus, they were reluctant to social policies before World War I and promoted non-contributory insurance during the crises of the oligarchical Restoration regime–1917-1923. Under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, social democrats agreed to fund the scheme, but with persistent workers' opposition. Although this opposition was beaten under the quasi-democratic Second Republic, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 reversed workers' attitudes towards a new refusal to fund the scheme.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a second version of the title accepted in the conference: *The long road to maternity leave: The role of the state and social groups in the formation of family policies in Spain, 1900-36.*

## 1. Introduction

In a seminal work, Alexander Hicks argued that ‘successive national manifestations of transnational social-democratic working-class movement [...] have driven welfare state development from Bismarck until today’<sup>2</sup>. This sentence summarises the dominant political interpretation of the origins of the welfare states. In a context of economic modernisation and democratisation<sup>3</sup>, working-class growing strength and organisation were central in explaining social policy expansion<sup>4</sup>.

However, the influence of the collective action of the different social groups on the formation of social policies is still an open-ended debate. Some authors argue that employers in high-risk sectors<sup>5</sup>, capital intensive firms<sup>6</sup>, or export-led family agribusiness<sup>7</sup> were crucial in social policy adoption, often in coalition with qualified working-class segments. Others contend that Catholicism or progressive liberalism –and their political platforms– also played a key role in explaining social reform<sup>8</sup>. Other authors stress the role political institutions and State traditions played in biasing social preferences<sup>9</sup>.

This paper contributes to the debate by studying the Spanish compulsory maternity leave. Implemented in 1931, it guaranteed to all women workers except the domestic ones a paid compulsory leave for the six weeks following childbirth and up to 6 weeks after it. It was funded by employers’ and workers’ contributions and subsidised by the State. It is a good case study for several reasons. First, this policy had relevant gender implications, transforming the protective legislation into social entitlements<sup>10</sup>. Second, Spain used to be absent in the most important comparative, historical accounts on the origins of the welfare

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<sup>2</sup> Alexander HICKS: *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*, Cornell, Cornell University Press, 1999, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> Peter H. LINDERT: *Making Social Spending Work*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Walter KORPI: «Power, Politics, and State Autonomy in the Development of Social Citizenship: Social Rights During Sickness in Eighteen OECD Countries Since 1930», *American Sociological Review*, 54, 3 (1989), p. 309.; Magnus Bergli RASMUSSEN: «Farmers and the Origin of the Welfare State: Evidence from 308 Roll Call Votes between 1882 and 1940», *Scandinavian Political Studies*, 2021, pp. 1-25.; Alexander Hicks, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

<sup>5</sup> Isabela MARES: «Economic Insecurity and Social Policy Expansion: Evidence from Interwar Europe», *International Organization*, 58, 4 (2004), pp. 745-74.

<sup>6</sup> Timothy T. HELLWIG: «The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Britain A Cross-Class Alliance Approach», *Social Science History*, 29, 1 (2005), pp. 107-36.

<sup>7</sup> Peter BALDWIN: *The politics of social solidarity. Class-bases of the European welfare state, 1875-1975*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990.

<sup>8</sup> Philip MANOW y Kees VAN KERSBERGEN: «Religion and the Western Welfare State- The Theoretical Context», en Kees VAN KEERSBERGEN y Philip MANOW (eds.): *Religion, Class Coalitions, and Welfare States*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

<sup>9</sup> Steve VALOCCHI: «The Relative Autonomy of the State and the Origins of British Welfare Policy», *Sociological Forum*, 4, 3 (1989), pp. 349-65; Max KOCH: «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context», *International Review of Social History*, 61, S24 (2016), pp. 243-62; Theda SKOCPOL y Edwin AMENTA: «States and Social Policies», *Annual Review of Sociology*, 12 (1986), pp. 131-57.

<sup>10</sup> The Spanish protective legislation –regulation of the employment of women and children– has its origins in the Dato Law (1900), which prohibited –without compensation– women’s paidwork after confinement.

states<sup>11</sup>. However, as a country with remarkable political regime changes, it can provide some interesting conclusions to the abovementioned literature.

Moreover, after the public pensions, maternity leave was the second compulsory social insurance passed in Spanish history and understood as a crucial Law in developing health insurance<sup>12</sup>. As argued by Comín<sup>13</sup> and Espuelas<sup>14</sup>, the sharp regime changes of this period seemed to have much to say in this development. During the Restoration regime (1875-1923), although bottom-up pressures began to arise –mainly because of the universal male suffrage (1890) and the growing labour movement– political corruption and the repressive preferences of economic elites hindered social policy development. The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1931) persisted in this general backwardness despite economic growth. Thus, the development of social insurance in Spain only accelerated during the Second Republic (1931-1936)<sup>15</sup> and was reversed after Franco’s victory in the Civil War.

Therefore, in Spain, social security systems seemed to be driven by left governments in a democratisation process<sup>16</sup>. The relative backwardness of this process is consistent with the literature that regarded Spanish social policies as underdeveloped relative backwardness and highly influenced by international conventions<sup>17</sup>. However, other authors have emphasised the role of social-Catholics as social policy builders, especially regarding family issues<sup>18</sup>. This is precisely the case of maternity leaves. In explaining its development, the literature has emphasised the role of high infant mortality rates and the rising male breadwinner ideology, pushed by Catholics, Hygienists and medicians<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Spain is absent in the classical *three worlds* of Esping-Andersen, the social democratic road to the *welfare capitalism*, and even in some of the gendered studies of the welfare regimes. Gosta ESPING-ANDERSEN: *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Policy Press, 1990; Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*; Jane LEWIS: «Gender and Welfare Regimes: Further Thoughts», *Social Politics*, 4, 2 (1997), pp. 160-77.

<sup>12</sup> Jerònia PONS: «Los inicios del seguro de enfermedad en España, 1923-1945», *Los orígenes del Estado del Bienestar en España, 1900-1945: los seguros de accidentes, vejez, desempleo y enfermedad*, Zaragoza, Pressas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2010, pp. 217-46.

<sup>13</sup> Francisco COMÍN: «Las fases históricas de la seguridad social en España (1900-2000)», *Revista de la historia de la economía y de la empresa*, 4 (2010), pp. 65-90.

<sup>14</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS: «Political Regime and Public Social Spending in Spain: a Time Series Analysis(1850-2000)», *Revista de Historia Económica/Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History*, 35, 3 (2017), pp. 355-86.

<sup>15</sup> Although the Republic lasted until its defeat following the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), the conflict finished with all possible normal functioning and, therefore, it is out of the scope of this paper.

<sup>16</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «Political Regime and Public Social Spending in Spain: a Time Series Analysis(1850-2000)».

<sup>17</sup> Mercedes SAMANIEGO: *La unificación de los seguros sociales a debate. La Segunda República*, Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1988; Josefina CUESTA: «El Ministerio de Trabajo en la II República española (1931-1939).», *Sociología del Trabajo*, 99, 2021, pp. 185-203.

<sup>18</sup> Feliciano MONTERO: «Los católicos y la reforma social», en Juan Ignacio PALACIO MORENA (ed.): *La reforma social en España: en el centenario del Instituto de Reformas Sociales*, Madrid, Consejo Económico y Social, 2004, pp. 99-128.

<sup>19</sup> Ángela CENARRO: «Entre el maternalismo y el pronatalismo: el Seguro de Maternidad en los orígenes de la dictadura de Franco (1938-1942)», *Ayer*, 102, 2 (2016), pp. 47-70; Inmaculada BLASCO: «Género y reforma

This study reassesses the social policy models endorsed by different social groups in a period of regime change by combining an in-depth, historical investigation with a new systematisation of an old source: the public information of 1927. It was a report gathered by the National Welfare Institute (INP in Spanish, for *Instituto Nacional de Previsión*)<sup>20</sup> to test the public opinion on the compulsory maternity leave Draft Bill developed by them. It contains the revealed preferences of different social groups –employers, workers, medicians, or women– and ideologies –Catholics, socialists, or progressive liberals– on the Draft. The results show a consensus about benefits on the insurance in the line proposed by the INP. The most polemic feature was funding, especially from non-Catholic workers and employers associations, who showed reluctance in paying their contributions. Another controversial issue was coverage, mainly among workers –Catholics or not– which claimed insurance covering spouses of the workers insured, and medicians, who argued for a more professionalised insurance covering all sectors –including the domestic workers. On average, employers and women’s opinions agreed with the Draft proposed, with notable exceptions –for example, republican feminist Clara Campoamor, who advocated for covering the domestic workers, and the abovementioned employer’s associations, who rejected to fund the scheme.

When comparing these results with the broader historical development, this paper argues that despite favourable opinions from other groups–such as Catholics or medicians, the actual driver of the development of maternity leave was social democracy. This relates to these groups’ relative power positions in the different political regimes. In the case of Catholics, they were prone to more ambitious maternity leave, with an unchanged preference on social insurance since, at least, 1917 –unified insurance covering health, invalidity and maternity, funded by contributions from the State, employers and workers, and covering insured workers and wives of the insured. However, although they gained influence under the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, they could not advance their model. In the case of employers, we find a contrast between individual employers who answered the information in 1927 –coming mainly from the northern industrial province of Guipuzcoa–, which were already providing maternity leaves, and employers associations who still refused funding the scheme.

By contrast, the social democratic working-class experienced noticeable changes in their preferences. Before World War I, they were unconfident about State provision and even hostile to social insurance. During the crises of the Restoration regime (1917-1923), they became closer to the INP and supported an insurance scheme covering a wide range of social risks but rejecting to contribute the schemes. Thus, in a context of high social conflict, public pensions were implemented (1919) funded by employers and the State only, but

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social en España: en torno a la elaboración del Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad (1915-1929)», *Ayer*, 102, 2 (2016), pp. 23-45.

<sup>20</sup> Established in 1908, the INP was the institution responsible for the development and implementation of the Spanish social policies.

compulsory maternity leave was paralysed and the unified health insurance abandoned. During the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera, workers linked to social democracy accepted to pay their contributions, but with a noticeable division between them. Here, compulsory maternity leave was passed but not implemented. During the Second Republic, with socialists as the major governing party in a progressive coalition, maternity leave was implemented, and unified health insurance was retaken. Then, in 1932 the national assembly of socialist union agreed to fund the insurances and, even anarchists and women, after initial protests, also conceded to fund it. However, after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, this support reversed, and new protests about paying contributions reemerged.

This story suggests that political regimes and dominant coalitions influenced the capacity of social democracy to enforce their political preferences. At the same time, the openness of the political regime affected social-democratic appeal for social policies. Therefore, increasing institutional influence went hand in hand with a broader acceptance of the insurance system and its economic costs. However, ending this situation also entailed a reversal of this acceptance.

This paper is organised as follows. The following section revisits the literature on social policy origins and builds the argument. Sections three to five examine the historical development of Spanish maternity leave in its broader social insurance and political context. Section six contrasts this story with other explanations of social policy expansion. The paper ends with some conclusions.

## 2. Existing explanations

What drove the development of new social policies in the formational period of the welfare states–1880-1945? In a recent book, Lindert<sup>21</sup> highlights the importance of economic modernisation and democratisation as the general drivers of this expansion. Capitalist economic development improved the State's capacity for rising social spending while, at the same time, generating social problems that ought to be solved. On the other hand, the democratisation process improved the low-income groups' political voice, resulting in higher social spending. However, as he argues, the specific mechanisms that explain differences in timing and models are still an open-ended debate<sup>22</sup>.

Therefore, the literature has emphasised the interaction of different social groups *vis-à-vis* the different political regimes in explaining these differences. Dominant political interpretations argue that working-class political mobilisation and left governments are the main drivers of the development of the welfare states<sup>23</sup>. However, some authors argue that

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<sup>21</sup> Peter H. LINDERT, *Making Social Spending Work*.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Magnus B. RASMUSSEN, «Farmers and the Origin of the Welfare State: Evidence from 308 Roll Call Votes between 1882 and 1940»; Walter KORPI, «Power, Politics, and State Autonomy in the Development of Social

employers in high-risk sectors<sup>24</sup>, capital intensive firms<sup>25</sup>, or export-led family agribusiness<sup>26</sup> were crucial in social policy innovations in Germany, Britain or Sweden, often in coalition with qualified working-class segments. Also, in France, employers pioneered family policy provision<sup>27</sup>. Other authors argue that Catholic groups and religious cleavage are relevant explanatory factors of policy differences<sup>28</sup>. Such pluralist accounts emphasise that different coalitions between social groups are responsible for different social policy models. Nevertheless, these coalitions also faced significant institutional constraints such as ideological cleavages, electoral systems, or political regimes.

In looking for these constraints, a growing number of investigations stress the relevance of the political regime and State mediation<sup>29</sup> in explaining different timing and models of social insurance. Amenta and Skocpol<sup>30</sup> argued that the state-building process and the rise of civil service improved social spending as it overthrows patronage-based politics, while Valocchi<sup>31</sup> or Koch<sup>32</sup> have challenged this view arguing the necessity of investigating the specific class bias of the State in each historical context. In a synthetic explanation, Hicks<sup>33</sup> defined welfare state development as a 'class-centred, if State mediated' one, given that although the social-democratic working-class led the way, it did so mediated by State configurations and political regimes.

However, if these different factors have been emphasised, the mechanisms that explain their influence on social policy formation are still an open-ended debate. Moreover, there is a need for more historical case studies in this scenario. Furthermore, some country-specific analysis seems to confirm Hicks's path, finding a positive, significant impact of democracy and left-wing parties over Spanish social spending in the 1930s<sup>34</sup>. Therefore, this paper aims to contribute to the debate by analysing compulsory maternity leave as a key policy in the evolution of the Spanish social insurance system during periods of regime change. Like other Spanish social policies, maternity leaves have been defined as an attempt

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Citizenship: Social Rights During Sickness in Eighteen OECD Countries Since 1930»; Gosta ESPING-ANDERSEN, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*.

<sup>24</sup> Isabela MARES, «Economic Insecurity and Social Policy Expansion: Evidence from Interwar Europe».

<sup>25</sup> Timothy T. HELLWIG, «The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Britain A Cross-Class Alliance Approach».

<sup>26</sup> Peter BALDWIN, *The politics of social solidarity. Class-bases of the European welfare state, 1875-1975*.

<sup>27</sup> Paul V. DUTTON: *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914-1947*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

<sup>28</sup> Philip MANOW y Kees VAN KERSBERGEN, «Religion and the Western Welfare State- The Theoretical Context».

<sup>29</sup> The literature defines 'State mediation' as the particular constraints by how formal institutions shifted power balance between one group or another depending on the dominant coalitions, thus limiting policy demands and outcomes. Max KOCH, «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context»; Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

<sup>30</sup> Theda SKOCPOL y Edwin AMENTA, «States and Social Policies».

<sup>31</sup> Steve VALOCCHI, «The Relative Autonomy of the State and the Origins of British Welfare Policy».

<sup>32</sup> Max KOCH, «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context».

<sup>33</sup> Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*, p. 27.

<sup>34</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «Political Regime and Public Social Spending in Spain: a Time Series Analysis(1850-2000)».

by a backward country to respect international conventions<sup>35</sup>. In this respect, authors such as Blasco<sup>36</sup> explain the development of this social policy as an up-down project, a response to demographic concerns –high infant mortality rates– in line with the male-breadwinner ideology.

These concerns were critical in France, where low fertility rates became a central fear of hegemonic pronatalist movements. These movements pushed the State to provide means-tested maternity allowances in 1913<sup>37</sup>, incorporating maternity leaves into the social insurance scheme in 1928<sup>38</sup>. In Sweden, where mass migration also led to demographic concerns, social democrats and feminists drove the development of maternity benefits within the national health system<sup>39</sup>. Nevertheless, in countries like Germany or Britain, where those fears were not apparent, maternity leave introduction arose from social insurance development. In Germany, it was part of the Bismarckian sickness schemes passed to countervail social democracy expansion and was later taken up and improved during the Weimar Republic<sup>40</sup>. In Britain, although Liberals introduced maternity benefits in the National Health Insurance (1911), they did not pay as much attention to developing the scheme, nor did the Labour Party<sup>41</sup>.

To sum up, while in France the origin of maternity allowance was linked to the coverage of poor mothers, in the other countries it was part of an insurance system covering –especially– industrial workers. Thus, further, development expanded both the benefits and the coverage of the scheme. Unlike these experiences, Spain developed a voluntary, state-subsidised maternity allowance in 1923 that transitioned into an isolated insurance scheme in 1931<sup>42</sup>. In this regard, the Spanish model was similar to that implemented in Italy in 1911<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>35</sup> Josefina CUESTA: *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*, Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1988; Mercedes SAMANIEGO BONEU, *La unificación de los seguros sociales a debate. La Segunda República*.

<sup>36</sup> Inmaculada BLASCO, «Género y reforma social en España: en torno a la elaboración del Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad (1915-1929)».

<sup>37</sup> MCDUGALL: «Protecting Infants: The French Campaign for Maternity Leaves, 1890s-1913», *French Historical Studies*, 13, 1 (1983), pp. 79-105.

<sup>38</sup> Paul V. DUTTON, *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914-1947*.

<sup>39</sup> Ann-Sophie OHLANDER: «¿El niño invisible? La lucha por una política familiar socialdemócrata en Suecia entre 1900 y la década de 1960», en Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE (eds.): *Maternidad y Políticas de género: la mujer en los estados de bienestar europeos, 1880-1950*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1996, pp. 115-35.

<sup>40</sup> Michael STOLLEIS: *Origins of the German Welfare State. Social Policy in Germany to 1945*, Berlin, Springer Berlin Heidelberg, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> Pat THANE: «The 'Welfare State' and the Labour Market», en Nicholas CRAFTS, Ian GAZELEY y Andrew NEWELL (eds.): *Work and Pay in 20th Century Britain*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007, pp. 178-202.

<sup>42</sup> Mercedes SAMANIEGO, *La unificación de los seguros sociales a debate. La Segunda República*.

<sup>43</sup> Annarita BUTTAFUOCO: «La maternidad como estrategia política: el papel del movimiento de las mujeres en la Creación de la Cassa Nazionale di Maternità», en Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE (eds.): *Maternidad y Políticas de género: la mujer en los estados de bienestar europeos, 1880-1950*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1996, pp. 309-37.

On the other hand, one of the key elements in the debate over social insurance was its contributory character. It has been the central element explaining cross-class coalitions in several countries<sup>44</sup>. In Spain, authors like Vega<sup>45</sup> emphasise the opposition that the compulsory maternity leave received by women workers who refused to pay its contributions. It was the same refusal that male workers exhibited in 1919 towards the public pensions<sup>46</sup>. We find the same concerns in other countries such as Britain<sup>47</sup> or Italy<sup>48</sup>. In all cases, opponents argued that women workers –in the British case, also low-income workers–were too poor to pay their part without creating significant problems for their subsistence. However, these oppositions were, in all cases, transitory.

Therefore, if we account for the multiplicity of factors –and actors– in welfare state development, the question that still arises is: What is the role of the different social groups in explaining the differences –in timing and model– between welfare states? What is more, *how* did their political mobilisation interact with institutional constraints and policy outcomes? This paper builds on the central argument provided by Hicks<sup>49</sup>. Besides considering the role of other groups –such as social Catholics– or ideological environment –the concern about infant mortality–, Social democracy was central to the development of the Spanish maternity leave. Following Hicks, its influence was more or less restrained according to the political regime, being more prominent under the Second Republic. Following Koch<sup>50</sup>, this institutional bias resulted from particular power constellations that altered the possible coalitions. Following Lindert<sup>51</sup> and Espuelas<sup>52</sup>, democracy was the central channel in shifting power balance from elites to the working class, thus facilitating its pressure.

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<sup>44</sup> In Sweden, at the heart of the coalition between workers and exporting farmers was the opposition of the seconds to pay contributions. In Britain, the contributory character of the British unemployment insurance came with the pact between capital-intensive companies and high-income workers. Peter BALDWIN, *The politics of social solidarity. Class-bases of the European welfare state, 1875-1975*; Timothy T. HELLWIG, «The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Britain A Cross-Class Alliance Approach».

<sup>45</sup> Eulalia VEGA: «Mujeres y asociaciones obreras frente al Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad durante la Segunda República», en Cristina BORDERÍAS (ed.): *Género y políticas del trabajo en la España Contemporánea (1836-1936)*, Barcelona, Publicacions i Edicions, Universitat de Barcelona, 2007, pp. 253-73.

<sup>46</sup> Due to this opposition, first Spanish public pensions were fully funded by employers and the State. Alexander ELU: «Las pensiones públicas de vejez en España, 1908-1936», en Jerònia PONS PONS y Javier SILVESTRE (eds.): *Los orígenes del Estado del Bienestar en España, 1900-1945: los seguro de accidentes, vejez, desempleo y enfermedad*, Zaragoza, Prensas Universitarias de Zaragoza, 2010, pp. 151-81.

<sup>47</sup> Pat THANE: «The Working Class and State “Welfare” in Britain, 1880-1914», *The Historical Journal*, 27, 4 (1984), pp. 877-900.

<sup>48</sup> Annarita BUTTAFUOCO, «La maternidad como estrategia política: el papel del movimiento de las mujeres en la Creación de la Cassa Nazionale di Maternità».

<sup>49</sup> Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

<sup>50</sup> Max KOCH, «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context».

<sup>51</sup> Peter H. LINDERT, *Making Social Spending Work*.

<sup>52</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «Political Regime and Public Social Spending in Spain: a Time Series Analysis(1850-2000)».

Moreover, I suggest that this institutional framework also affected working-class appeal for social policies. Thus, under more open political regimes –i.e., the Spanish Second Republic– social democracy was more prone to contribute to the scheme, aware of the possibility to develop it further.

### **3. Not enough with protective legislation: The debates over social insurance during the Restoration crises (1917-1923)**

The decades between the turn of the century and the inter-war period saw a growing fear about the demographic trends in most Western-European countries. The goal of reversing the decline of fertility rates contributed to the rise of pronatalist movements. In countries like France, this concern became apparent after the defeat against Prussia in 1871<sup>53</sup>, while in other countries, their momentum came after World War I<sup>54</sup>. These trends led to a growing concern over the protection of maternity. International discussions such as the Berlin Conference (1890) recommended the prohibition of women's work after childbirth, and the Zurich Conference (1897) stipulated that a state subsidy guaranteed this prohibition.

In Spain, persistently high infant mortality rates pushed demographic concerns. Following the international conferences claiming maternity protection, the Spanish first advisor institution for social reform –The Social Reform Commission (CRS in Spanish for *Comisión de Reformas Sociales*)– prepared a Bill that, passed in 1900 and reformed in 1907, established the prohibition of work after childbirth for women in commercial and industrial workplaces<sup>55</sup>. However, this legislation proved ineffective as both workers and employers had incentives to avoid it<sup>56</sup>.

However, and despite the foundation of important institutions such as the Institute for Social Reform (IRS, for *Instituto de Reformas Sociales*, founded 1903) and National Welfare Institute (INP, for *Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, founded in 1908)<sup>57</sup>, this growing concern did not translate immediately to public policies. The INP committed itself to promote voluntary insurances such as retirement pensions and maternity mutualities, aiming to aid

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<sup>53</sup> Paul V. DUTTON, *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914-1947*.

<sup>54</sup> Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE: «Introducción del editor», en Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE (eds.): *Maternidad y Políticas de género: la mujer en los estados de bienestar europeos, 1880-1950*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1996, pp. 19-50.

<sup>55</sup> The Law of 1900 established a compulsory rest for the 3 weeks following childbirth, and the 1907 reform extended this period up to 6 weeks, plus 4 weeks before confinement under medical prescription.

<sup>56</sup> Thus, employers sought to avoid workforce replacements, while women workers could not afford being banned from work without income compensation. Carolina GALA: «El seguro obligatorio de maternidad», en Josep CAÑBATE (ed.): *Segona República i món jurídic*, Barcelona, Càlamo, 2007, pp. 89-110.

<sup>57</sup> The first one committed to the labor regulation and the second one to social policies, these institutions were ruled by social elites from social Catholicism –conservatives that accepted the need for state intervention– and krauso-institutionalism–progressive liberals aimed at improving living conditions and education of the working-class. María E. MARTÍNEZ: «Epílogo. La fundación del INP. Las primeras experiencias de previsión social», en Feliciano MONTERO (ed.): *Los seguros sociales en la España del siglo XX. Los orígenes y antecedentes de la previsión social*, Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1988, pp. 251-330.

self-help. Thus, besides the growing influence of social-Catholics and Progressive Liberals and their goal to solve the 'social question', Spanish social insurances hardly advanced in that period. On the other hand, the labour movement, which was still weak, reacted to these initiatives with suspicion, if not hostility<sup>58</sup>. Although without totally rejecting improvements in life and working conditions, both socialists and anarchists organisations were hostile to the idea of being coopted by the capitalist State, which would impede revolutionary transformation of the society<sup>59</sup>.

This situation only began to change after World War I. The collapse of the international markets and Spanish neutrality allowed vast increases in production and exports. However, these profits relied only on increasing production, thus postponing reinvestment and productivity increases. As a result, the economic boom reversed to an industrial crisis once the conflict concluded<sup>60</sup>. On the other hand, economic growth produced high inflation rates without proportional wage increases. All together pushed up social unrest, beginning with the Crisis of the Restoration Regime (1917-1923)<sup>61</sup>.

The rising class conflict transformed Spanish unions into mass organisations. The socialist General Union of Workers (UGT, for *Unión General de Trabajadores*), founded in 1888, reached the number of 200.000 members by 1920<sup>62</sup>. Its political branch, the Spanish Socialist Worker's Party (PSOE, for *Partido Socialista Obrero Español*), founded in 1879, reached its first MP in 1910<sup>63</sup>. On the other hand, the anarchist National Labour Confederation (CNT, for *Confederación Nacional de Trabajo*), founded in 1910, achieved an even more impressive membership of 699.369 in 1919<sup>64</sup>. This context also saw the expansion of Catholic and Conservative unionism. The most important among these, the General Corporation of Labour-Association of Free Unions (CGT-USL, for *Corporación General del Trabajo-Unión de Sindicatos Libres*), commonly labelled as the *Libres*, was

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<sup>58</sup> María E. MARTÍNEZ: «El nacimiento de los seguros sociales en el contexto del reformismo y la respuesta del movimiento obrero», *Studia Historica. Historia Contemporánea*, 2 (1984), pp. 61-83.

<sup>59</sup> Pere GABRIEL: «Sindicatos obreros y reforma social en el siglo XIX. El reformismo antes de la reforma», en María J. ESPUNY, Olga P. TORRES y Josep CAÑABATE (eds.): *Un siglo de derechos sociales. A propósito del centenario del Instituto de Reformas Sociales (1903-2003)*, Barcelona, Publicacions Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 2006, pp. 81-110.

<sup>60</sup> Enrique MONTAÑÉS: «Industria y conflictividad laboral en España. La industria textil, 1914-1923», *Revista de Historia Industrial*, XXIV, 59 (2015), pp. 115-45.

<sup>61</sup> It was a period of high institutional instability and Government turnout. Unable to stabilise itself, the political system collapsed in 1923.

<sup>62</sup> José L. MARTÍN: *Historia de la UGT. Vol. II. Entre la revolución y el reformismo, 1914-1923*, Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2008.

<sup>63</sup> From 1910 to 1923, socialists built a coalition with progressive republican parties to overcome the barriers that Spanish political system imposed on outsiders –control of the electoral system by the elites and political corruption–, but they failed to achieve any relevant position. Miguel ARTOLA: *Partidos y programas políticos, 1808-1936. Tomo I. Los partidos políticos*, Madrid, Aguilar Ediciones, 1977.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*; Julian CASANOVA: «Auge y decadencia del anarcosindicalismo en España», *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. Serie V, Hª Contemporánea*, 13 (2000), pp. 45-72.

founded in 1919 and reached around 175.000 in 1922<sup>65</sup>. At the same time, and given the importance of women's mobilisation across productive and reproductive lines, the abovementioned factions struggled for incorporating them into their organisations<sup>66</sup>.

Nevertheless, the immediate goals of this mobilisation were overwhelmingly moderate, seeking the recognition of labour unions as interlocutors in the collective bargaining process and the improvement of working and living conditions<sup>67</sup>. Furthermore, since 1914 the socialists became more optimistic about the possibilities of the institutions where they had representation—the IRS and the INP. As a result, they were becoming more interested in social policies<sup>68</sup>. The UGT leader, Francisco Largo Caballero, used his position as a member of the IRS to raise a demand to the Government in 1919 of a Labour Code, including social insurance for sickness, maternity, and invalidity<sup>69</sup>. Also, the *Libres* and other catholic organisations advocated implementing compulsory social insurance<sup>70</sup>. In 1917, Catholic Action for Women required the Government to implement a paid maternity leave covering married working women funded by workers, employers and the State<sup>71</sup>.

In response, Restoration Governments tried to enforce their legitimacy through concessions such as the compulsory public pensions –financed entirely by the employers and the State– or the 8-hour working day<sup>72</sup>. International commitments also pushed governments into action. The Washington Convention, signed by the newly established International Labour Organization (1919), required the signatory States to approve paid maternity leaves for up to six weeks before and six after childbirth<sup>73</sup>.

Moreover, Governments and the INP promoted the social insurance conferences in Madrid (1917), Bilbao (1921) and Barcelona (1922). The most important was the National Conference on Sickness, Invalidity and Maternity Insurance held in Barcelona. The objective was to elaborate a first official document to prepare a Draft Bill for compulsory insurance covering health, maternity and invalidity with a broad representation of Spanish social

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<sup>65</sup> Arturo ZOFFMANN y Juan C. MARINELLO: «A Proletarian Turf War: The Rise and Fall of Barcelona's Sindicatos Libres, 1919–1923», *International Review of Social History*, 66, 2 (2021), pp. 243-71.

<sup>66</sup> Conchi VILLAR et al.: «Working Women and “De-Unization”: The Struggles for Autonomy», en Alison E. WOODWARD, Jean-Michel BONVIN y Mercè RENOM (eds.): *Transforming Gendered Well-Being in Europe. Impact of Social Movements*, London, Routledge, 2011, pp. 51-65; Inmaculada SIMÓN: *Mujer: Asociaciones y Sindicatos. España 1875-1939*, Madrid, Sanz y Torres, 2014.

<sup>67</sup> José L. MARTÍN, *Historia de la UGT. Vol. II. Entre la revolución y el reformismo, 1914-1923*.

<sup>68</sup> María E. MARTÍNEZ, «Epílogo. La fundación del INP. Las primeras experiencias de previsión social».

<sup>69</sup> José L. MARTÍN, *Historia de la UGT. Vol. II. Entre la revolución y el reformismo, 1914-1923*.

<sup>70</sup> Following the publication of the *Rerum Novarum* circular (1891), Catholics became increasingly committed to concealing capital, labour and family interests and thus accepted the need for public social provision. Feliciano MONTERO, «Los católicos y la reforma social».

<sup>71</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*.

<sup>72</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS: *La evolución del gasto social público en España, 1850-2005*, Madrid, Banco de España, 2013.

<sup>73</sup> LEAGUE OF NATIONS: *International Labor conference. First Annual Meeting (October 29, 1919-November 29, 1919)*, Washington [D.C.], 1919.

groups<sup>74</sup>. There, organisers proposed insurance covering 2,5 *pesetas* per day<sup>75</sup> for all workers except the domestic ones and funded from workers, employers and the State. In the case of maternity leave, the State would also provide a lump sum of 100 *pesetas* to afford childbirth expenses<sup>76</sup>.

Regarding this proposal, socialists agreed with all issues except coverage and funding. As socialist Manuel Vigil Montoto argued, the workers cannot afford the costs of contributions, so they should be exempted from it<sup>77</sup>. Regarding coverage, the scheme should also cover the wives of the insured workers. Catholics<sup>78</sup> agreed with socialists in coverage issues but accepted the need for workers' contributions. On the other hand, representatives from insurance companies and some speakers linked to the employers –employer's representatives did not speak– showed concern about too generous insurance maternity leave. An costly leave, they argued, could 'close the factory gates to married women'<sup>79</sup>. In the end, however, none of the complaints altered the INP's plans, approved by the conference without significant changes.

Nevertheless, these reformist attempts found fierce opposition from employers' associations and political allies, especially in Catalonia. They turned to the army and paramilitary in the streets to restrain socialist and anarchist unions. In Parliament, together with Conservative parties, they opposed reformist solutions intended by Liberal Governments, increasing institutional instability<sup>80</sup>. As for the health, maternity and invalidity insurance, the Government finally rejected the project and requested the INP develop an isolated compulsory maternity leave. In the meantime, they implemented, in 1923, a family allowance of 50 *pesetas*<sup>81</sup>. Finally, public order was reestablished by General Miguel Primo de Rivera, instituting a dictatorship that would last until 1931.

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<sup>74</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*.

<sup>75</sup> According to censal data provided by Núñez for 1927, this sum amounted to 84% of textile women workers medium wage. Maria G. NÚÑEZ: *Trabajadoras en la Segunda República. Un estudio sobre la actividad económica extradoméstica (1931-1936)*, Madrid, Ministerio de Trabajo y Seguridad Social, 1989.

<sup>76</sup> INP (ed.): *Conferencia nacional de seguros de enfermedad, invalidez y maternidad, II. Documentos de información*, Madrid, Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, 1925.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 267.

<sup>78</sup> Catholic women were invited, but only to the Conference's section about maternity insurance. INP (ed.): *Conferencia nacional de Seguros de Enfermedad, invalidez y Maternidad, I. Ponencias, actas, conclusiones*, Madrid, Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, 1925.

<sup>79</sup> INP (ed.), *Conferencia nacional de seguros de enfermedad, invalidez y maternidad, II. Documentos de información*, p. 304.

<sup>80</sup> Mercedes CABRERA y Fernando DEL REY: *El poder de los empresarios: política e intereses económicos en la España contemporánea*, Madrid, Taurus, 2002.

<sup>81</sup> They did so to keep with the Washington Convention which, although launched in 1919, Spain did not ratify until 1922. Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*.

#### 4. Competing schemes of compulsory maternity leave: The dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (1923-1931)

The new regime changed the power balance between social groups. Primo de Rivera launched a political party, the Patriotic Union, with the ambition of bringing together those who supported the status quo and public order in the forms period. Thus, he promoted social-Catholic parties and unions, such as the *Libres*<sup>82</sup>, Spanish nationalists, the nascent Christian democracy and industrial and agrarian interests representatives<sup>83</sup>. The dictator also incorporated distinguished Catholic women in his National Consultative Assembly<sup>84</sup>—a corporate institution designed to replace the Parliament<sup>85</sup>. On the other hand, the new regime also had to rely on the progressive labour movement, tolerating socialist activity—although restricting bargaining activities and strike actions— and incorporating the UGT leader Largo Caballero into the State Council<sup>86</sup>. Therefore, if limited, they maintained their presence in the corporate institutions and the INP under the dictatorship. Communists and anarchists experienced a much worse situation. After fierce repression in Barcelona, the dictatorship prohibited their organisations and persecuted their members. This situation limited their influence on social legislation and radicalised their attitudes towards the State and the reformist labour movement<sup>87</sup>.

The institutions for social reform also had a problematic relationship with the regime. The Ministry of Labor, held by corporatist Eduardo Aunós, absorbed the IRS because of the employers' lobby<sup>88</sup> and, although the INP survived, it experienced a persistent lack of financial support during the whole period<sup>89</sup>. As a result, the institution devoted much of the time debating over existent or in process legislations—maternity leave and pensions.

This social context is essential to understand the delay in the compulsory maternity leave Bill and the pressure each social group could exercise over it. Interestingly, the INP collected a report in 1927, the *public information*, to test public opinion on their Bill project. It shows

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<sup>82</sup> Under its regime, the *Libres* reached its highest numbers with 200.000 members. Arturo ZOFFMANN y Juan C. MARINELLO, «A Proletarian Turf War: The Rise and Fall of Barcelona's Sindicatos Libres, 1919–1923».

<sup>83</sup> Miguel ARTOLA, *Partidos y programas políticos, 1808-1936. Tomo I. Los partidos políticos*.

<sup>84</sup> Susanna TAVERA: «Individualismo y corporativismo en el feminismo español, 1890-1937», *Arenal*, 16, 1 (2009), pp. 85-101.

<sup>85</sup> Socialist and progressive–liberal women refused to join this institution.

<sup>86</sup> José L. MARTÍN, *Historia de la UGT. Vol. II. Entre la revolución y el reformismo, 1914-1923*.

<sup>87</sup> Although the CNT always maintained a hostile attitude towards State intervention, in the years before the dictatorship a moderate tendency predominated in the union. Leaders such as Salvador Seguí, murdered in 1923, advocated the collaboration with other progressive forces and the strengthening of the labor movement, in contrast with the pure anarchist–terrorist ideal that prevailed after his death. Julian CASANOVA, «Auge y decadencia del anarcosindicalismo en España».

<sup>88</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*; María J. ESPUNY: «La labor del Ministerio de Trabajo durante la dictadura de Primo de Rivera, 1923-1931», *Sociología del Trabajo*, 99, 2021, pp. 167-84.

<sup>89</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*.

different social groups' preferences on how compulsory maternity leave ought to be<sup>90</sup>. As noted by Cuesta, although the number of organisations and individuals covered was relatively small compared to the Spanish associative network, it did include a relevant and diverse social and ideological sample<sup>91</sup>.

**Table 1. Surveyed respondents to the public information 1927 by typology**

Typology	General (nº)	General (% of general)	Catholic (nº)	Catholic (% of typology)	Women (nº)	Women (% of typology)
<b>Working-class</b>	49	29%	12	24%	7	14%
<b>Employers</b>	32	19%	0	0%	0	0%
<b>Medical sector</b>	46	27%	0	0%	2	4%
<b>Welfare Institutions</b>	9	5%	1	11%	0	0%
<b>Friendly societies</b>	8	5%	1	13%	0	0%
<b>Charity and philanthropy</b>	7	4%	1	14%	0	0%
<b>Mixed Unions</b>	3	2%	3	100%	0	0%
<b>Cultural and political associations</b>	8	5%	5	63%	6	75%
<b>Other individuals</b>	6	4%	0	0%	1	17%
<b>Total</b>	168	100%	5	0%	7	4%

Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

Table 1 shows this diversity. As can be seen, working-class (trade unions and individual representatives), employers' organisations (companies, chambers of commerce and employers' mutual benefit societies) and the medical sector (medical associations and schools, and individual doctors) were the three most important types of respondents. Among workers, we find some UGT provincial branches and the leading socialist figures Lucio Martínez Gil and Santiago Ramos Poncela<sup>92</sup>. Regarding the employers, most private companies (12 out of 21) provided maternity allowances to their workers, but they generally did not give any opinion on the Bill. However, the information did not record any answer from agricultural employers—a surprising fact considering the importance of agricultural employment among the Spanish labour force. This is consistent with the

<sup>90</sup> A first report was collected in 1925, but the scarce number of respondents forced the INP to repeat it. Josefina CUESTA: «Las encuestas del Instituto Nacional de Previsión sobre el seguro de maternidad en España (1925-1927)», en Arón COHEN (ed.): *El trabajo y sus riesgos en la época contemporánea. Conocimiento, codificación, intervención y gestión*, Barcelona, Icaria, 2012, pp. 287-331.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Lucio Martínez was at the time part of the National Commission that coordinated the UGT and the PSOE and, under the Republic, a member of the UGT executive. Santiago Ramos was a worker's spokesman at the INP. José L. MARTÍN, *Historia de la UGT. Vol. II. Entre la revolución y el reformismo, 1914-1923*.

constant problems that the INP and reformist Governments had in engaging the landowners in social policy expansion<sup>93</sup>.

Moreover, it is shocking that the report did not record the participation of any Insurance company, given the importance they had in earlier debates. Probably, the conflicts that the INP maintained with the General Insurance Board during the period<sup>94</sup> explains part of this omission.

The charitable and philanthropic category includes individuals and associations involved in private relief (mainly associations for child welfare and low-cost housing). Furthermore, information also includes opinions of welfare institutions and savings banks, friendly societies, and mixed trade unions (unions with the participation of employers and workers). The category “other private individuals” includes all those who do not belong to any of the abovementioned categories.

The survey also provides the opinions of female and Catholic representation. The proportion of Catholics is high among the mixed trade unions (not surprisingly, since most were actively Catholic) and among the cultural and political associations, notably linked to Catholic Action (*Acción Católica* in Spanish, a cultural-political apostolic organisation). They were also well-represented among workers, where we find remarkable organisations such as the Regional Confederation of the *Libres* in Northern Spain or the regional Confederation of Catholic Unions in Eastern Spain<sup>95</sup>. As for female representation, some of them overlapped with the Catholic ones, thus linked to Catholic Action for Women, the female branch of the abovementioned organisation, or to Catholic unions. There are also figures and organisations linked to the incipient (though weak) Spanish feminist organisations, such as Clara Campoamor, Victoria Kent or Julia Peguero<sup>96</sup>.

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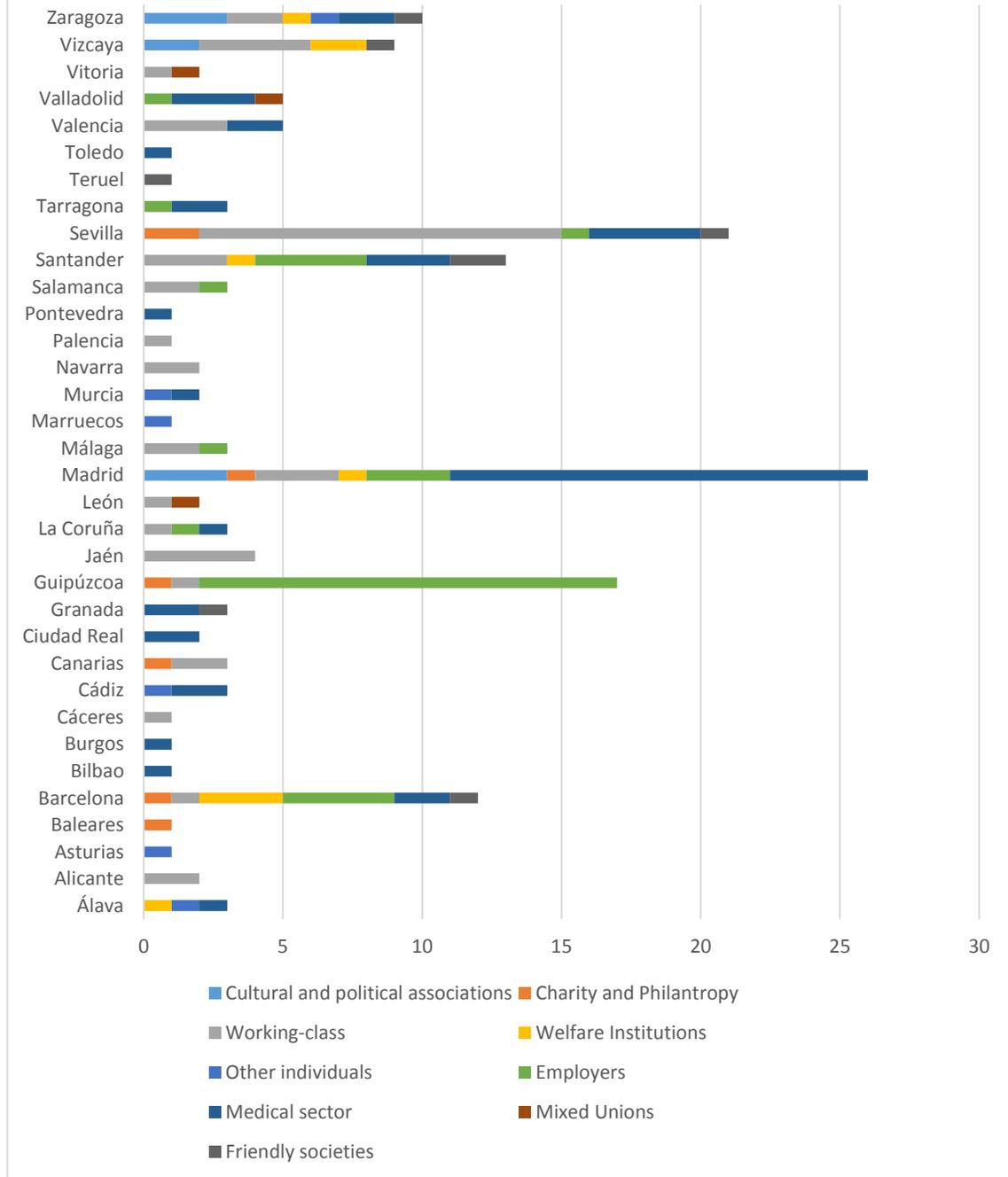
<sup>93</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS: «A Difficult Consensus: The Making of the Spanish Welfare State», *UB Economics Working Papers* 2018/384, 2018, pp. 1-22.

<sup>94</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*.

<sup>95</sup> The last organization reached 40.000 members in 1919.

<sup>96</sup> Clara Campoamor was the leading figure of the Spanish suffragettes. She and Victoria Kent –who would eventually oppose women’s suffrage years later– were part of the Women’s Lyceum Club (*Liceum Club Femenino*), and Peguero was a leading figure of the National Association of Spanish Women (*Asociación Nacional de Mujeres Españolas*).

**Figure 2. Surveyed respondents to the public information 1927 by province**



Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad (INP 1927)*

The report also provides some interesting evidence if we look at the geographical distribution of respondents, particularly of the three most important sectors –workers, employers and the medical sector. Together explain the apparent disproportion between

provinces, especially the low representation of Barcelona, which at the time clustered the bulk of potential beneficiaries<sup>97</sup>. The concentration of most of the medical sector in Madrid is not surprising given that it was the capital. In Barcelona, the response came from the Union of Doctors of Catalonia, representative of a large part of the regional doctors. In the case of employers, Guipúzcoa provided most answers from individual companies. In Barcelona, the most important came from the Federation of Manufacturers of Spinning and Textile Industries of Catalonia, the leading employer lobby in the sector. In Madrid, it came from the organisation Employer Commercial Defence—another of the country’s leading employers’ lobbies<sup>98</sup>.

The case of Catalan workers has a more problematic explanation. Only one –Catholic– organisation appears, the Women’s Workers Union Federation. This underrepresentation can be partly explained by the dictatorship persecution of anarchist workers and the weak implementation of socialist unions in Catalonia<sup>99</sup>.

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<sup>97</sup> Between 1923 and 1929, Catalan-balearic branch of INP concentrated 48,57% of the maternity allowance recipients. Jerònia PONS, «Los inicios del seguro de enfermedad en España, 1923-1945».

<sup>98</sup> Employer Commercial Defence led the anti-tax employer’s protests during the crisis of the Restoration Regime. Fernando DEL REY: «La domesticación de los intereses económicos por el Estado. Las Cámaras de Comercio, Industria y Navegación», *Ayer*, 66 (2007), pp. 117-42.

<sup>99</sup> For a large part of the period, close to a half of the CNT membership concentrated in Catalonia. The UGT, in 1931, only got together 16.683 members in the region (representing only 2.41% of their militancy). Marta BIZCARRONDO: *Historia de la UGT. Vol. III, Entre la democracia y la revolución, 1931-1936*, en Santiago CASTILLO (ed.): Madrid, Siglo XXI, 2008.

<b>Table 2. Revealed preferences of the social groups</b>					
<b>Typology</b>	<b>Coverage</b>	<b>Benefits</b>			<b>Funding</b>
		<b>Leave extension</b>	<b>Type of payment</b>	<b>Replacement rate</b>	
<b>INP Bill Proposal</b>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Flat rate</i>	<i>Medium</i>	<i>Workers + Employers + State</i>
<b>Non-Catholic workers</b>	High/familiar	Medium	Flat rate	Medium	Employers + State
<b>Catholic/conservative workers</b>	High/familiar	X	Flat rate	Medium	Workers + Employers + State
<b>Catholic</b>	High/familiar	Medium	Flat rate	Medium	Workers + Employers + State
<b>Medical sector</b>	High/profesional	X	X	Medium	Workers + Employers + State
<b>Women</b>	Medium	Medium	Flat rate	Medium	Employers + State
<b>Employers</b>	Medium	Medium	Flat rate	Medium	Workers + Employers + State

Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

This report allows us to understand the revealed positions of the Spanish political constellation. Table 2 summarises the information collected in the information. It relies on workers (divided between catholic and non-catholic), employers and the medical sector, Catholics and women’s preferences. I rely on these groups because they showed competing preferences in earlier debates, both between them and with the model proposed by INP.

Therefore, this study collected their preferences on coverage, benefits (extension of the leave, payment method and replacement rate) and funding for summarising the model advocated by these groups. It focuses on these dimensions for several reasons. First, these have been relevant to the literature in comparing different social policy models<sup>100</sup>. Second, they were also central in Spanish debates about the model of maternity leaves in the

<sup>100</sup> For some examples, see Julia S. O’CONNOR, Ann S. ORLOFF y Shelia SHAVER: *States, Markets, Families. Gender, Liberalism and Social Policy in Australia, Canada, Great Britain and the United States*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1999; Candelaria GARAY: *Social Policy Expansion in Latin America*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

Barcelona Conference. Third, some of them would be polemic elements of the scheme in the future.

Selected features for synthesising the preferred models are the following. Coverage refers to the number of women that the maternity scheme would cover by sector or marital status. Thus, high coverage includes all women workers *or* the wives of insured men<sup>101</sup>. Medium coverage excludes the domestic workers<sup>102</sup>, the only sector excluded from the INP's proposal. Thus, this study considers coverage as "low" when it excludes even more sectors.

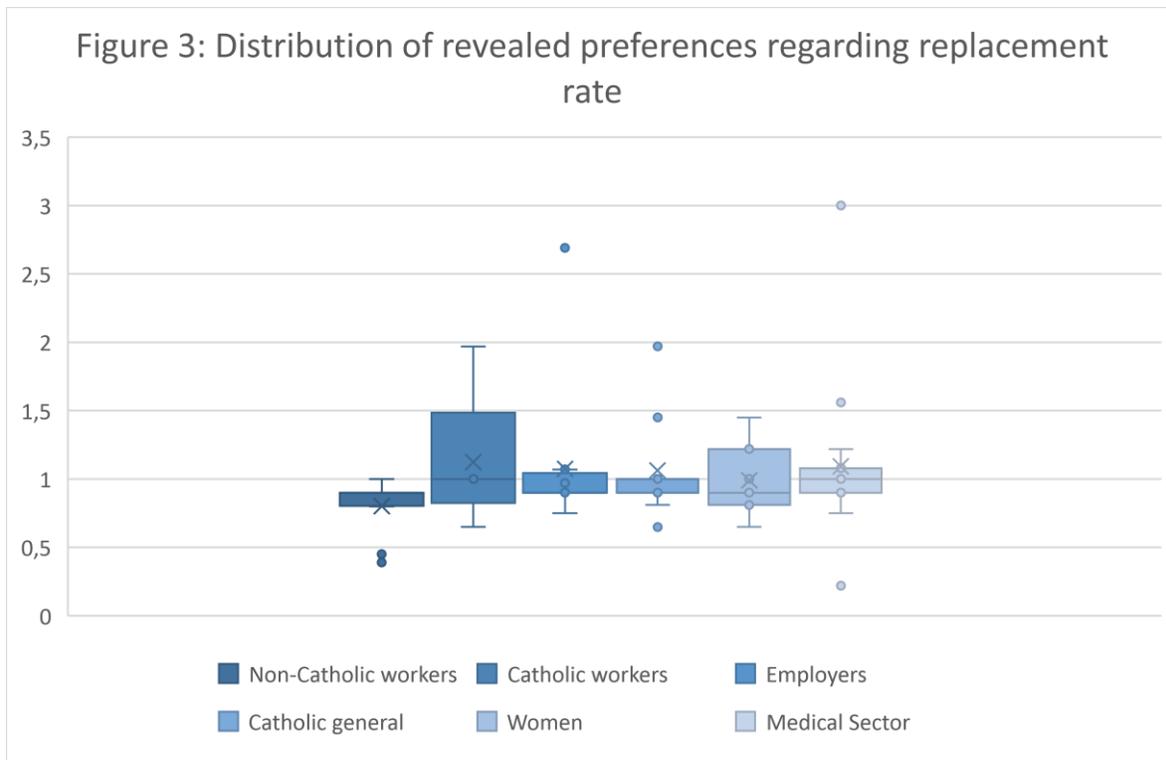
When considering benefits, leave extension is "medium" when offering a rest up to 12 weeks, the international reference set up by the Washington Convention and enshrined in the INP's proposal. Then, a "high" extension would exceed that period, while a "low" one would not reach it. As for the wage compensation, it is necessary to differentiate between a flat-rate benefit or proportional to wages. It is a relevant topic since a flat-rate benefit would be more redistributive than one proportional to the wages, thus benefiting lower wages. On the replacement rate (the proportion of wage compensated by the scheme), this paper uses the medium wage of women textile workers as a reference. Therefore, it considers a compensation lower than 80% as "low", between 80% and 100% as "medium", and higher than 100% as "high". Finally, I classified the category on funding depending on who contributed to the scheme because the contribution of workers and employers was one of the most polemic features in earlier debates.

Table 2 shows that different models arose regarding coverage and funding when comparing the different preferences. The issue of benefits exhibits more converging preferences with the INP's proposal. Twelve weeks leave, covered by a flat rate payment representing 80%-100% of medium wage of textile workers. This suggests a leading role of the INP establishing these features, with the agreement of the other groups involved.

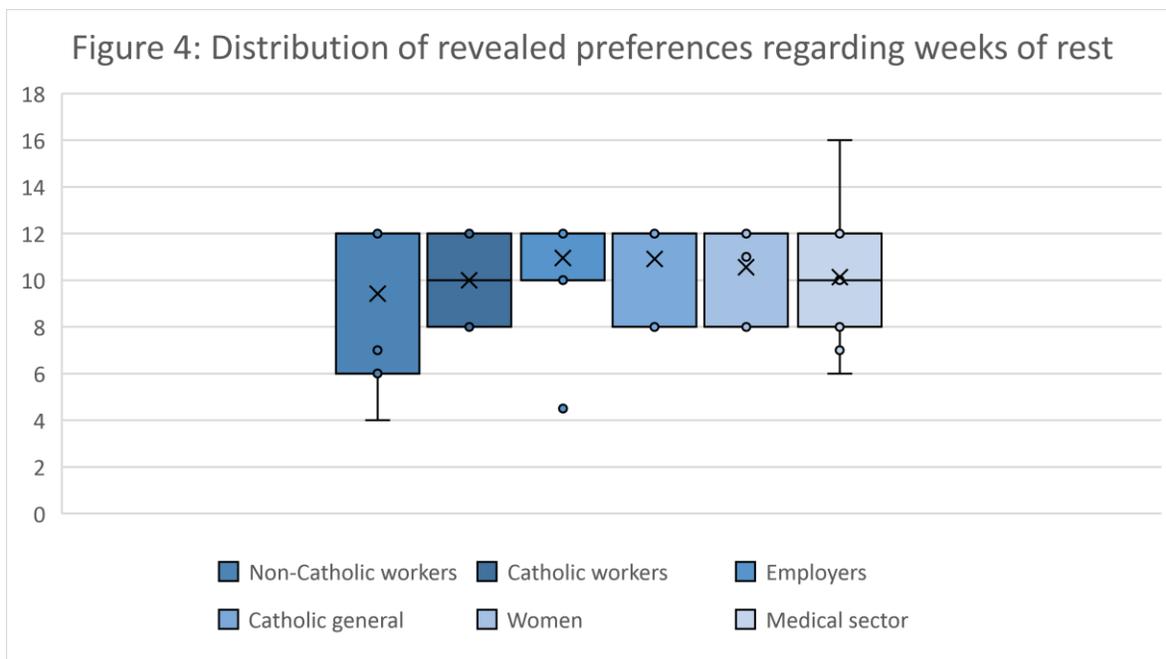
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<sup>101</sup> This proposal refers to the men covered by the public pensions.

<sup>102</sup> According to Núñez, domestic sector represented at the time the 31% of the Spanish female labour force. Maria G. NÚÑEZ, *Trabajadoras en la Segunda República. Un estudio sobre la actividad económica extradoméstica (1931-1936)*.



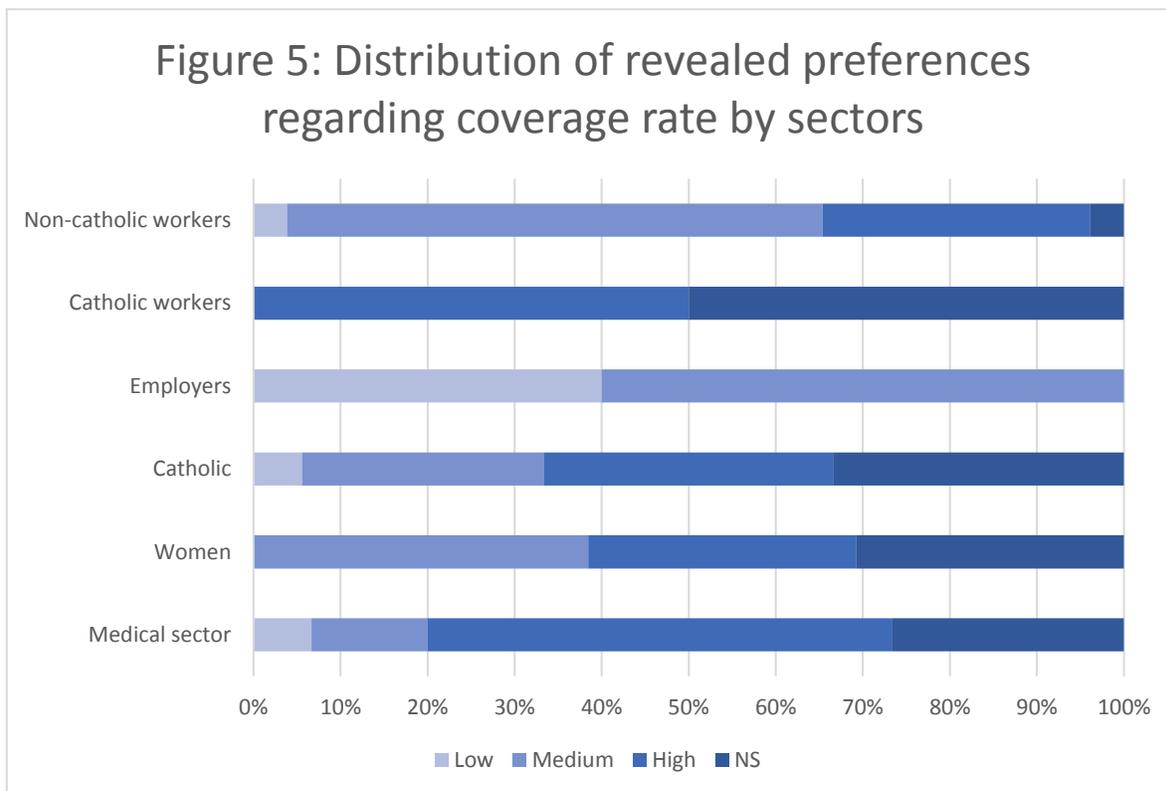
Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)



Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

Figure 3 presents in more detail these trends suggesting the abovementioned convergence. Figure 4 highlights that there were still relevant differences despite the general agreement

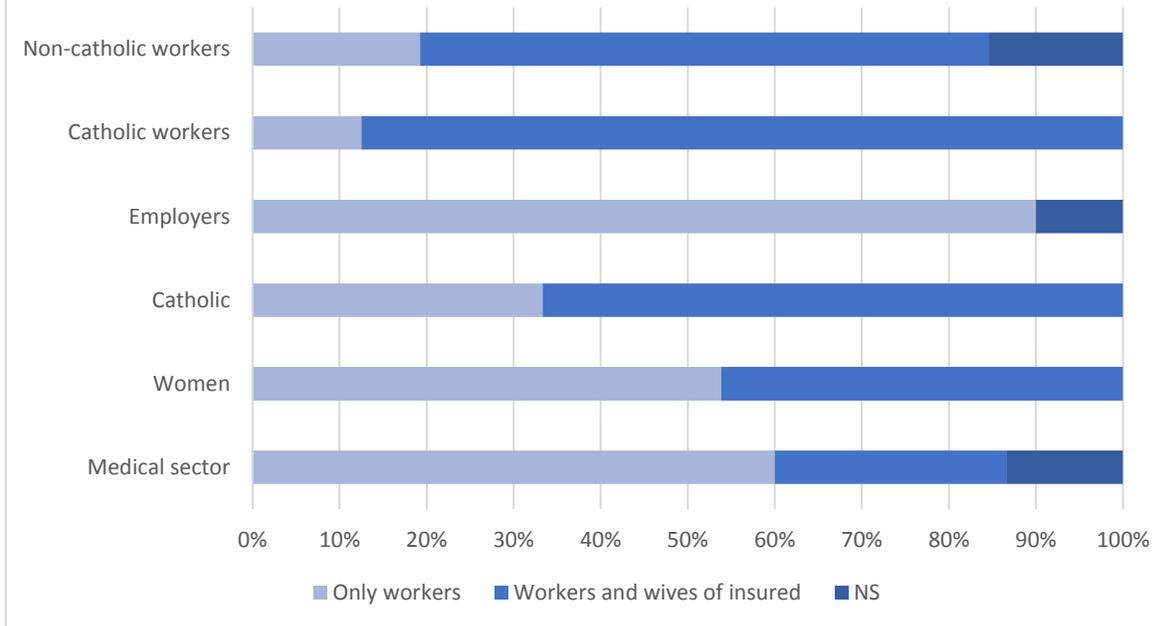
on a 12 weeks leave. This dispersion, high for Catholics and medical associations, lowered the median value of the sample, suggesting that the dissenting opinions were less ambitious than the INP draft<sup>103</sup>. In absolute terms, the lowest leave came from the socialist Lucio Martínez, followed by an individual company. Surprisingly, the lowest leave (8 weeks) among catholic workers came from women’s unions and the medical sector (6 weeks) from the Spanish Gynecological Association.



Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

<sup>103</sup> The only exception, came from the Granada’s health inspector César Sebastián, who asked for a leave of 16 weeks: 8 before and 6 after confinement. INP: *Resumen de la información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad*, Madrid, Sobrinos de Sucesora de M. Minuesa de los Ríos, 1927, p. 75.

Figure 6: Distribution of revealed preferences regarding coverage rate by family status



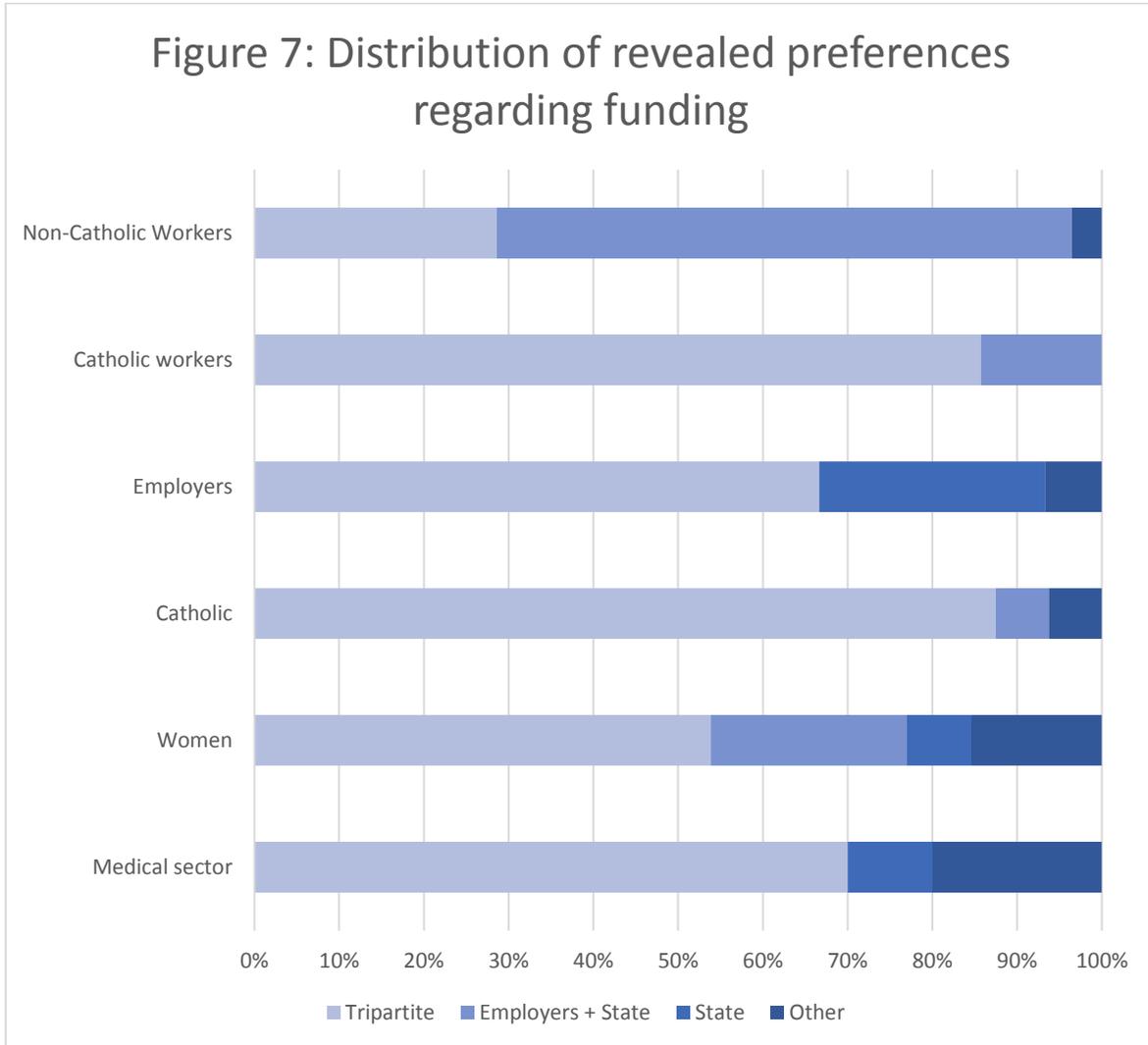
Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

As figures 5 and 6 show, Catholics –workers or not– were the most ambitious group regarding coverage, as they advocated for including both domestic workers –thus, covering all the female labour force– and the spouses of the insured male workers. Their inclusion of domestics is quite surprising, given the opposition that labour inspection in private houses caused among their employers and the sacred symbolism of home for Catholicism<sup>104</sup>. Non-religious workers generally advocated for the scheme one would expect from Catholics: covering wives of the insured but without including domestic workers. However, there are significant differences between them, as the representatives from the UGT, except Santiago Ramos<sup>105</sup>, favoured including these workers. On the other hand, the medical sector preferred a more *professional* type of insurance, covering all sectors but not the wives of the insured workers. The employers presented the most limited preferences for coverage, excluding the wives of the insured and the domestic sector, and even showed broad preferences towards a more restricted scheme. In this regard, the Federation of Manufacturers of Spinning and Textile Industries of Catalonia also advocated excluding

<sup>104</sup> Moreover, the INP feared that ‘efforts of including domestic workers [...] could cause resistances against maternity leave that complicate its normal functioning’, given that ‘without an effective inspection, the Law will be inefficient, and bureaucratic inspection inside private homes has always scared States’. INP: «El Seguro de Maternidad. Anteproyecto y justificación de sus bases. Continuación (2)», *Anales del Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, XXI, 80 (1929), pp. 175-95, p. 24.

<sup>105</sup> An unsurprising fact, given that Ramos was a representative from the INP.

home-based workers<sup>106</sup>. Finally, and perhaps surprisingly, women did not advocate for a more inclusive model. Even catholic women, such as Juana Salas or Rosa Urraca, defended excluding the insured's wives<sup>107</sup>. Preferences towards sectors covered were divided, with some essential feminists like Campoamor defending the inclusion of domestic workers.



Own elaboration based on *Resumen de la Información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad* (INP 1927)

Funding was the other issue that divided opinions. Figure 7 shows the crucial difference between non-Catholic workers –who strongly opposed their contribution– and all other respondents –even Catholic workers– who overwhelmingly supported a tripartite scheme. When comparing these results with other issues such as coverage, one can suggest that

<sup>106</sup> Although difficult to estimate, this sector represented many women workers, especially in the textile sector. Maria G. NÚÑEZ, *Trabajadoras en la Segunda República. Un estudio sobre la actividad económica extradoméstica (1931-1936)*.

<sup>107</sup> INP, *Resumen de la información pública sobre el anteproyecto de seguro de maternidad*.

most non-Catholic workers would accept a less universal scheme if they could not pay for it. A closer look at the revealed preferences of OGT representatives shows a sharp division on this matter. Although Lucio Martínez and Santiago Ramos still rejected it, federations from Cáceres and Biscay concede funding the scheme. A closer look also shows that the principal employer's associations in the sample –the Employer Comercial Defence and the Federation of Manufacturers of Spinning and Textile Industries of Catalonia– advocated for an entirely State-funded scheme<sup>108</sup>.

These facts suggest that this issue was even more polemic than leave's coverage. The INP managers finally beat the resistances the same year in the National Consultative Commission for Employers and Workers<sup>109</sup>, when employers and workers finally accepted the joint contribution to the scheme<sup>110</sup>. The Minister of Labour also defended the need for a triple contribution in the Consultative Assembly<sup>111</sup>. However, the results still show important resistances outside the Institute that would prove challenging in the future.

## **5. Maternity leave implementation and social insurance unification: The Spanish Second Republic (1931-1936)**

Finally, compulsory maternity leave was passed with minor changes in March 1929 and its regulation in January 1930. The Law established a compulsory leave of 6 weeks after and up to 6 weeks before the childbirth—under medical prescription. It covered female workers—although not the wives of insured male workers— except the domestic ones, guaranteed by a flat rate payment of 90 to 180 *pesetas*. The final compensation depended on the number of quarterly premiums satisfied by the insured worker—15 *pesetas* per quarter funded by workers and employers at 50%, being the minimum 6 and the maximum 12. The State provided a bonus of 50 *pesetas* on confinement and, in the first triennium, the difference needed to complete the lowest amount.

Nonetheless, the dictatorship never implemented the leave. The regime failed in enforcing its legitimacy, and when the coalition that brought Primo de Rivera to power turned away after 1929, the dictatorship collapsed<sup>112</sup>. The situation eventually led to the Spanish second Republic's proclamation in April 1931, when a socialist-republican coalition came to power. Such alliance was similar to the French formula of Popular Front established years later. The sharp regime change also resembles the Weimar Republic of 1919, where socialists became

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<sup>108</sup> The Employer Comercial Defence was the only organization that refused all forms of compulsory maternity leave, arguing to preserve the current maternity allowance scheme. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>109</sup> It was the principal corporate institution of the INP, with representation of employers and workers.

<sup>110</sup> CANPO: *IV labor del pleno: (21-24 de marzo de 1927): resumen de las sesiones celebradas, acuerdos, documentación anexa*, en INP (ed.): Madrid, Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, 1927.

<sup>111</sup> *Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados*, 29 de octubre de 1927, pp. 501-502.

<sup>112</sup> Mercedes CABRERA y Fernando DEL REY, *El poder de los empresarios: política e intereses económicos en la España contemporánea*.

crucial in making regime stability possible. The PSOE was the main political party, with the UGT leader Largo Caballero as the Minister of Labour and union membership dramatically increasing—they surpassed one million members in 1932<sup>113</sup>. This position enabled socialists and their allies to push for advancing social reform programs. As showed by Cuesta<sup>114</sup>, between 1931 and 1933, Spanish Governments ratified 21 of the 33 international conventions approved by ILO between 1919 and 1936.

On the other hand, they introduced extensive reforms on education, the relationship between the Catholic Church and the State, the army and land property<sup>115</sup>. On the other hand, the new regime expanded the civil, economic and political rights for women with a gender-equality program that included universal suffrage, the right to divorce, civil equality and the recognition of the right to work and maternity protection<sup>116</sup>.

In this context, compulsory maternity leave was finally passed in May 1931 and implemented in October<sup>117</sup>. From the beginning, many working women mobilised against its contributory character, advocating for a scheme funded only by employers and the State<sup>118</sup>. These demands received particular support in Catalonia from the anarchist CNT, the Women's Commission of the Communist Party of Catalonia and the Republican Left of Catalonia<sup>119</sup>—the leading party at the Catalan Parliament<sup>120</sup>. After a few months, the strike activity decreased, and the CNT engaged in collective bargaining to modify the scheme<sup>121</sup>.

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<sup>113</sup> Marta BIZCARRONDO, *Historia de la UGT. Vol. III, Entre la democracia y la revolución, 1931-1936*.

<sup>114</sup> Josefina CUESTA, «El Ministerio de Trabajo en la II República española (1931-1939).»

<sup>115</sup> With this process, republicans aimed to undermine the basis of the power of the traditional elites and, at the same time, expanding the social support to the new regime. Julian CASANOVA: *The Spanish Republic and Civil War*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010.

<sup>116</sup> Celia VALIENTE: *Políticas públicas de género en perspectiva comparada\_ La mujer trabajadora en Italia y España (1990-1996)*, Madrid, Ediciones Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1997.

<sup>117</sup> Additional dispositions complemented the scheme. The Government approved a prohibition for dismissal due to marriage, and introduced special contributions for home-based workers, a more precise definition of employers obligations—accelerating legal proceedings against defaulting employers. María G. NÚÑEZ: «La implantación y los resultados del Seguro de Maternidad en la Segunda República», en María C. GARCÍA-NIETO (ed.): *Ordenamiento jurídico y realidad social de las mujeres: siglos XVI a XX: actas de las IV Jornadas de Investigación Interdisciplinaria*, Madrid, Seminario de Estudios de la Mujer, Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 1986, pp. 363-76.

<sup>118</sup> Protests were important in Catalonia, Valencia, Galicia, Aragon, and Navarre. Eulalia VEGA, «Mujeres y asociaciones obreras frente al Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad durante la Segunda República».

<sup>119</sup> Catalan republicans advocated for a regional-based social insurance scheme entirely tax-funded. Francesc MACIÀ: «Un grandió acte a Sabadell», *La Humanitat*, Barcelona, 18 noviembre 1933, p. 5.

<sup>120</sup> The Second Republic recognised Catalonia as an autonomous region, with their own Parliament and a regional Government.

<sup>121</sup> Regionally, the CNT negotiated with the Federation of Manufacturers of Spinning and Textile Industries of Catalonia a collective bargaining agreement that would include modifications in the administration of the maternity leave—exempting workers from the contribution. Different branches of these organizations also negotiated modifications at the local level. INP: *Informe sobre el seguro de maternidad*, Madrid, Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, 1932.

Although they failed in introducing these modifications regionally<sup>122</sup>, they did accomplish some modifications at the local level. In Mataró –an important textile city in the Province of Barcelona– employers agreed to pay for their employees’ contributions and complement the maternity leave until 180 *pesetas*. In other localities, the leave’s funding was also modified but maintained worker’s contributions. Therefore, after the first months, the maternity leave developed without significant problems and, at the end of 1933, it covered 591.243 workers<sup>123</sup>.

The socialists did not support the resistance to the new social insurance. Instead, they sided with the other INP representatives defending the scheme and accusing the anarchists of coopting women against the republican regime<sup>124</sup>. Largo Caballero and his allies envisioned a comprehensive social insurance system covering health, invalidity and maternity and agreed that this would need the workers’ contribution to its funding. Thus, the UGT Congress in 1932 accepted, after fierce debates and for the first time in a left–wing union, the principle of workers’ contributions to fund social insurances<sup>125</sup>.

On the other hand, establishing a coordinated social insurance system also addressed the crucial debate over the coverage of domestic workers. Several voices claimed they had to be included. Feminist Clara Campoamor, who already defended this in public information, demanded the modification of the scheme once established<sup>126</sup>. In addition, the UGT included this demand in a letter written by the two prominent men in the union, Largo Caballero and Julián Besteiro, in 1930<sup>127</sup>. Socialists to increase their social support, for which recruiting domestic workers was essential<sup>128</sup>.

This attitude was gaining momentum even in the INP. In a document approved by its Corporate Commission, they advocated for the inclusion of domestic workers in all social insurance schemes. They argued that the traditional paternalistic barriers differentiating domestic from other workers had vanished with economic transformations. The domestic, they argued, were becoming more and more similar to the general labour force, and for this reason, they should not be excluded from the labour legislation anymore<sup>129</sup>. The process

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<sup>122</sup> The collective agreement stipulated the validity of the social legislation without changes. *Ibid.*, pp. 139-40.

<sup>123</sup> When compared with censal data provided by Nuñez, this represented the 78% of potential recipients–54% of women labor force. Maria G. NÚÑEZ, *Trabajadoras en la Segunda República. Un estudio sobre la actividad económica extradoméstica (1931-1936)*, pp. 164, 176.

<sup>124</sup> Eulalia VEGA, «Mujeres y asociaciones obreras frente al Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad durante la Segunda República».

<sup>125</sup> Enrique SANTIAGO: «Un turno en pro del Seguro de Maternidad», *Anales del Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, XXVII, 125 (1935), pp. 719-23.

<sup>126</sup> Clara CAMPOAMOR: «Recordatorios: El seguro de maternidad», *La Libertad*, Madrid, 1931.

<sup>127</sup> Julian BESTEIRO y FRANCISCO LARGO CABALLERO: «UGT a las secciones», *Boletín de la Unión General de Trabajadores de España*, Madrid, 1 abril 1930, p. 16.

<sup>128</sup> «Obreras del Hogar»: *El Socialista*, Madrid, 8 marzo 1932, p. 5.

<sup>129</sup> CANPO: *VII labor del pleno: (14-16 de julio de 1931): resumen de las sesiones celebradas, acuerdos, documentación anexa*, en INP (ed.): Madrid, Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, 1931.

materialised in the draft Bill presented by the INP to the Government and submitted to public information –the same that preceded the endorsement of maternity leave– in 1936<sup>130</sup>. The scheme would cover the domestic workers, as included in the Labor Contract Law of 1931<sup>131</sup>.

However, the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War aborted the process. The conflict resulted in a radicalisation of popular response and new resistance from the workers to pay their contributions<sup>132</sup>, which were particularly strong in Catalonia. As a consequence, the regional Government –which now included republicans, anarchists and communists– decided, in a Decree of October 1936, to release workers from paying their contribution.

Following the republican defeat, Francisco Franco’s Dictatorship did not recover the INP’s project of social insurance unification<sup>133</sup>. Even if leading social-Catholics such as Severino Aznar –which had been actively participating in the project– substituted the multi-ideological leading group of the INP, they could not enforce its further development<sup>134</sup>. Therefore, although they finally approved compulsory health insurance in December 1942 that formally covered the domestic service, this coverage was rarely enforced<sup>135</sup>. Together with the slowdown in social policy formation, the dictatorship was unable or unwilling to advance the projects of social reform undertaken under the republican regime.

## 6. Revisiting the development of Spanish maternity leave

This paper has revisited the development of Spanish maternity leave using a new approach to an old source: the public information of 1927. The analysis helps to discuss some features. First, as the literature has stressed, demographic concerns –in the Spanish case, infant mortality rates– were significant in explaining the cultural turn underlying the

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<sup>130</sup> INP: «Información pública sobre el proyecto de unificación de los seguros sociales-Orden del 25 de mayo de 1926 ("Gaceta del 28)», *Anales del Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, XXVIII, 135 (1936), pp. 567-76.

<sup>131</sup> INP: «Unificación de los seguros sociales: bases aprobadas en el pleno de la comisión asesora de diciembre 1934; Texto aprobado por el Consejo de Patronato del Instituto Nacional de Previsión, en sesión de 13 de septiembre de 1935», *Publicaciones del Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, 51 (1935); Mònica BORRELL-CAIROL: «La precarización del servicio doméstico en España 1900-1939. Factores institucionales», *Historia Social*, 96, 2020, pp. 113-28.

<sup>132</sup> Following the outbreak of the conflict, many workers proceeded to collectivise their companies and, by “claiming that, since the employer has disappeared, they have nothing to pay” Enrique DE SANTIAGO: «La solidaridad obrera, nuevo estandarte de la Previsión social», *Anales del Instituto Nacional de Previsión*, 28, 139 (1936), pp. 752-9, p. 753.

<sup>133</sup> Thus, the Dictatorship began a process of fragmentation of insurance providers into a myriad of relief institutions, mutualities and insurance companies. Francisco COMÍN, «Las fases históricas de la seguridad social en España (1900-2000)».

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Eider DE DIOS: *Sirvienta, empleada, trabajadora del hogar. Género, clase e identidad en el franquismo y la transición a través del servicio doméstico (1939-1995)*, Málaga, Universidad de Málaga, 2018.

debates over maternity leaves<sup>136</sup>. Maternity and infant mortality concerns shaped the arguments over this social insurance. However, this paper argues that demographic and cultural arguments are not enough to explain neither the timing nor the model of compulsory maternity leave. The first serious attempts of developing a compulsory maternity leave occurred during the highly conflictive period of 1917-1923 by volatile Governments aiming to enforce their legitimacy. Precisely the same reason that motivated the Primo de Rivera Dictatorship to pass the Law that, nonetheless, was finally enforced by the Republic.

Secondly, international conventions anticipated the debates in Spain over maternity protection<sup>137</sup>, and to some extent, they framed them. However, they do not explain why maternity allowance was passed in 1922 and maternity leave in 1929, especially as the Washington Convention was raised in 1919. Neither the argument of the Spanish backwardness, as argued by national literature<sup>138</sup>, and the Southern European welfare states literature predict<sup>139</sup>, seem to perform better if we look at the international scenario. For example, Germany, a first-comer in social insurance –and maternity benefits, ratified the Washington Convention only in 1927, while in France, a first-comer in family policies, the Convention only applied in 1928<sup>140</sup>.

Therefore, this study argues that the collective action of the different social groups is the key explanatory factor behind social policy expansion. The preferences revealed in the INP information suggest that although some individual employers supported and even provided maternity allowances on their own, employers' organisations supported a limited scheme and persistently opposed funding the scheme<sup>141</sup>.

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<sup>136</sup> Inmaculada BLASCO, «Género y reforma social en España: en torno a la elaboración del Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad (1915-1929)»; Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE, «Introducción del editor».

<sup>137</sup> This is the case of Berlin (1890) and Zurich (1897) conferences on Spanish protective legislation and the Washington Conference (1919) over paid maternity leave.

<sup>138</sup> Josefina CUESTA, *Hacia los seguros sociales obligatorios. La crisis de la Restauración*; Mercedes SAMANIEGO, *La unificación de los seguros sociales a debate. La Segunda República*; Jerònia PONS PONS, «Los inicios del seguro de enfermedad en España, 1923-1945».

<sup>139</sup> Maurizio FERRERA: «The “Southern Model” of Welfare in Social Europe», *Journal of European Social Policy*, 6, 1 (1996), pp. 17-37; John GAL: «Exploring the Extended Family of Mediterranean Welfare States, or: Did Beveridge and Bismarck Take a Mediterranean Cruise Together?», en Mimi AJZENSTADT y John GAL (eds.): *Children, Gender and Families in the Mediterranean Welfare States*, Dordrecht, Springer Netherlands, 2010, pp. 77-101.

<sup>140</sup> Irene STOEHR: «Las tareas domésticas y la maternidad: debates y política en el movimiento de mujeres de la Alemania Imperial y la República de Weimar», en Gisela BOCK y Pat THANE (eds.): *Maternidad y Políticas de género: la mujer en los estados de bienestar europeos, 1880-1950*, Madrid, Cátedra, 1996, pp. 367-99; Paul V. DUTTON, *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914-1947*.

<sup>141</sup> This is consistent with the opposition they lead –with their political allies– against social reforms during the crisis of the Restoration regime that eventually led to increasing political instability.

This source also shows that Catholics advocated for ambitious maternity leave schemes both in benefits and coverage, in line with their concerns about family and maternity<sup>142</sup>. Their defence of workers' contribution –a role assumed from the beginning and a significant cleavage between Catholic and non-Catholic workers– is not shocking if we attend to the corporate spirit of social-Catholicism<sup>143</sup>. However, in the periods when they had more political influence, as in the case of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera or even the Francoist dictatorship, they could not enforce significant advances in social policy.

The medical sector also supported an ambitious scheme that did cover all workers, although not covering wives of the insured ones. Although they do not seem to have enough influence during Primo de Rivera, it is difficult to assert their capacity during the Spanish Second Republic. In any case, as highlighted by the literature, we can assume that they were relevant as part of the middle classes who advanced society's concern over the social question and the politics needed to solve it<sup>144</sup>.

Therefore, the explanation suggested here relies on the assumption that progressive legislation needs progressive governments to be implemented. Although OIT international Conventions were important legal provisions for internal policy to be based on, it was not until the socialist Labour Minister Largo Caballero reached the office that many of these Conventions were finally ratified—or, in the case of maternity leave, enforced<sup>145</sup>. The explanation provided here builds on Hicks' claim that social-democratic working-class pressure, although looking for revolutionary transformation, was the key element in advancing a Progressive liberal agenda—i.e., social policies<sup>146</sup>. INP elites proposed various social policies to solve the 'social question', but social democratic parties and unions drove and implemented the schemes.

However, its influence varied according to the political regime, being more prominent as democratisation advanced. This is again consistent with Hicks's claim that in a first moment—in Spain, the crisis of the Restoration regime—social policy formation came as an up-down 'strategic response'<sup>147</sup> to working-class pressure. The leave implementation also responded to Hicks's 'social-democratic ascendance' advancing the reforms<sup>148</sup>. In the republican

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<sup>142</sup> Inmaculada BLASCO, «Género y reforma social en España: en torno a la elaboración del Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad (1915-1929)».

<sup>143</sup> Feliciano MONTERO, «Los católicos y la reforma social».

<sup>144</sup> Inmaculada BLASCO, «Género y reforma social en España: en torno a la elaboración del Seguro Obligatorio de Maternidad (1915-1929)»; see also Bernard HARRIS: *The Origins of the British Welfare State. Social Welfare in England and Wales, 1800-1945*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

<sup>145</sup> The republican–socialist coalition (1931-1933) ratified 21 of the 33 international Conventions approved by ILO between 1919 and 1936. Josefina CUESTA, «El Ministerio de Trabajo en la II República española (1931-1939).»

<sup>146</sup> Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

<sup>147</sup> Walter KORPI, «Power, Politics, and State Autonomy in the Development of Social Citizenship: Social Rights During Sickness in Eighteen OECD Countries Since 1930».

<sup>148</sup> Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

period, as in France, a Popular Front alliance between republican left and socialism emerged, but, as in Weimar's Germany, the main objective was to build a social insurance scheme, of which compulsory maternity leave was the key precedent.

Moreover, in Hick's interpretation, the State influence is defined as a contingent scenario shifting power balance either fostering or hindering working-class pressure. This study suggests that this institutional framework also influenced the expectations of social democrats and their appeal to social policies. Thus, if social democracy was hostile to social policies prior to World War I, their inclusion in corporate institutions for social reform –such as the INP and the IRS– made them more willing to accept and enforce this kind of legislation. At that time, workers were still unwilling to fund the schemes, hostility that vanished in a more integrative political regime where they could influence social policy expansion. This story explains working-class opposition to some initial welfare provisions stressed by the literature and the active role played by some employers in their development without overlooking their leading role in social policy expansion<sup>149</sup>. It is also consistent with other experiences, such as the French or the British, where Socialists and Labour lobbied for contributory social insurance schemes to exercise their influence<sup>150</sup>.

In other words, social democrats opposed their contribution until they were included in the political system as significant actors, meaning that they could lobby for more progressive social policies. In this story, Spanish compulsory maternity leaves played the crucial role of serving as a preparatory policy of a more ambitious social insurance scheme. It also explains that, following the coup of 1936, the opposition to fund social insurances rose again between workers.

Furthermore, the story presented here also suggest an explanation of the mechanisms by which institutional constraints boost or hinder bottom-up pressures by considering them class-biased<sup>151</sup>. In Spain, a ruling coalition between industrial employers and landowners emerged from the end of the nineteenth century to protect their products from international competence. This coalition had no incentives to accept additional costs by promoting labour legislation, welfare measures, or collective bargaining<sup>152</sup>, even if their opposition increased political instability. In this scenario, the only way for a progressive agenda to be implemented was to break down this power constellation and replace it with

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<sup>149</sup> Isabela MARES: «The Sources of Business Interest in Social Insurance: Sectoral versus National Differences», *World Politics*, 55, 2 (2003), pp. 229-58; Timothy T. HELLWIG, «The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Britain A Cross-Class Alliance Approach».

<sup>150</sup> Bernard HARRIS: «Social Policy by Other Means? Mutual Aid and the Origins of the Modern Welfare State in Britain During the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries», *Journal of Policy History*, 30, 2 (2018), pp. 202-35; Paul V. DUTTON, *Origins of the French Welfare State. The Struggle for Social Reform in France, 1914-1947*.

<sup>151</sup> Here, I build on the literature about the relative autonomy of the State. Steve VALOCCHI, «The Relative Autonomy of the State and the Origins of British Welfare Policy»; Max KOCH, «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context».

<sup>152</sup> This may explain also that social-Catholics's closeness to this ruling coalition made them unable to enforce ambitious social insurance schemes despite being committed with them.

another one. Together with the relatively small size of companies compared with other countries, this fact may explain why we do not find employer initiatives like German social insurances or French family policies in Spain<sup>153</sup>. The governments and institutions could not enforce cross-class coalitions such as British or Swedish between industrial workers and capital-intensive companies<sup>154</sup>. It also explains the problematic consensus that hindered the development of Spanish social policies throughout the twentieth century<sup>155</sup>.

## 7. Conclusion

By studying the revealed preferences of the different social groups in the broader, historical development of Spanish social insurance schemes, this paper argues that the social democratic working-class was their leading driver. It is especially salient if we look at the Spanish compulsory maternity leave as the key policy in developing a coherent health insurance scheme. Although other groups –such as Catholics or, in a sense, the medical sector– favoured inclusive and generous maternity leaves, their influence over the ruling political coalitions in social policy expansion was weaker. Social-democratic influence over social policy formation varied according to the influence they could exercise in the political regimes and, at the same time, their engagement to social insurance varied accordingly. Thus, in more democratic political regimes, the social democracy could exercise its influence at the same time that its resistance to the costs of social insurance weakened. However, this reversed in moments of institutional breakdown such as the Civil War, when new protests against contributing to the insurances reemerged.

This story has several implications. First, it provides some accounts on the development of the welfare states in a country with sharp regime changes. Therefore, and although it is consistent with middle-range theoretical accounts emphasising the role of the working class<sup>156</sup> and the mediation of the State over social policy formation<sup>157</sup>, it also argues that these exercised an influence over the attitude of social democracy towards social insurance. This also has implications on the literature that emphasises the opposition of some fractions of the working class to social insurance, increasing the significance of employer's politics

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<sup>153</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «A Difficult Consensus: The Making of the Spanish Welfare State».

<sup>154</sup> This coalition was even more difficult if we consider, first, the relatively limited scale of the companies and, second, the fact that maternity leave generally applied to labor intensive firms. Francisco COMÍN y Pablo MARTÍN-ACEÑA: «Rasgos históricos de las empresas en España. Un panorama», *Revista de Economía Aplicada*, IV, 12 (1996), pp. 75-723.

<sup>155</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «A Difficult Consensus: The Making of the Spanish Welfare State».

<sup>156</sup> Walter KORPI, «Power, Politics, and State Autonomy in the Development of Social Citizenship: Social Rights During Sickness in Eighteen OECD Countries Since 1930».

<sup>157</sup> Max KOCH, «The Role of the State in Employment and Welfare Regulation: Sweden in the European Context»; Steve VALOCCHI, «The Relative Autonomy of the State and the Origins of British Welfare Policy»; Alexander HICKS, *Social Democracy and Welfare Capitalism*.

over such policies<sup>158</sup>. At the same time, it offers an explanation for their opposition –the ruling coalition gave the employers more incentives for choosing the repressive alternative. However, the explanation of why this coalition took this form is out of the scope of this paper.

Second, it provides mechanisms explaining the positive effect of democracy on social policy formation found by quantitative literature in Spain<sup>159</sup> and elsewhere<sup>160</sup>. The rise of mass democracy channelled the influence of bottom-up pressures of the working class while, at the same time, a more inclusive political system helped to engage revolutionary politics within reformist policies.

Third, it provides some features on the southern European model of the welfare states. While most of the analysis stresses the importance of structural, long term factors such as the predominance of extended family, Catholicism or authoritarian tradition<sup>161</sup>, none explored in-depth historical change in Southern-European countries. During this period, the different political regimes experienced in Spain made it comparable with the conservative dictatorships from Portugal and Italy and other European experiences such as the French Third Republic or the German Weimar Republic. Therefore, this story suggests the relevance of contingent political factors in achieving better knowledge on the development of the European welfare states.

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<sup>158</sup> Isabela MARES, «The Sources of Business Interest in Social Insurance: Sectoral versus National Differences»; Timothy T. HELLWIG, «The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Britain A Cross-Class Alliance Approach».

<sup>159</sup> Sergio ESPUELAS, «Political Regime and Public Social Spending in Spain: a Time Series Analysis(1850-2000)».

<sup>160</sup> Peter H. LINDERT, *Making Social Spending Work*.

<sup>161</sup> Maurizio FERRERA, «The “Southern Model” of Welfare in Social Europe»; John GAL, «Exploring the Extended Family of Mediterranean Welfare States, or: Did Beveridge and Bismarck Take a Mediterranean Cruise Together?»