Macrostructural conditions of early versus late institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family: an international comparison

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Abstract

Same-sex registered partnership, marriage, and adoption open up the family as an institution to same-sex couples and, therefore, constitute a pathway to a broader definition of what is family. In the last 2 decades, a majority of Western countries have experienced an unprecedented institutional trend toward the provision of new rights to same-sex couples in the family. This swift process of institutional change has been, for the most part, accounted for in the literature by attitudinal changes expressing greater openness toward minorities, and a greater sensitivity to human rights (Engeli et al., 2012). By contrast, we propose an explanation featuring structural features of societies in the early 21st century. We hypothesize that a series of macrostructural conditions account for the precocity versus lateness of legislation favorable to the inclusion of same-sex couples into the family. Also, we expect that normative sex regimes opened to sexual activity between same-sex persons to have been favorable to such inclusion.

Reference


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Macrostructural Conditions of Early Versus Late Institutional Inclusion of Same-Sex Couples in the Family: An International Comparison

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ABSTRACT
Same-sex registered partnership, marriage, and adoption open up the family as an institution to same-sex couples and, therefore, constitute a pathway to a broader definition of what is family. In the last 2 decades, a majority of Western countries have experienced an unprecedented institutional trend toward the provision of new rights to same-sex couples in the family. This swift process of institutional change has been, for the most part, accounted for in the literature by attitudinal changes expressing greater openness toward minorities, and a greater sensitivity to human rights (Engeli et al., 2012). By contrast, we propose an explanation featuring structural features of societies in the early 21st century. We hypothesize that a series of macrostructural conditions account for the precocity versus lateness of legislation favorable to the inclusion of same-sex couples into the family. Also, we expect that normative sex regimes opened to sexual activity between same-sex persons to have been favorable to such inclusion.

KEYWORDS
Family change; QCA; family laws; family inclusiveness; same-sex couples

International comparison of institutional inclusion of same-sex couples into the family

Same-sex marriage and same-sex registered partnership have short institutional histories around the world of between 20 and 30 years. During this time, there have been substantial differences between countries regarding the precocity of the institutional inclusion of same-sex couples within the family. Registered partnership for same-sex couples was introduced in Scandinavian countries in the 1990s—in 1993 in Norway, in 1995 in Sweden, and in 1998 in Denmark. The legal institution of registered partnership by the Danish Parliament in 1998 paved the way to access to marriage. Laws on same-sex marriage were adopted in Norway and Sweden in 2009 and in Denmark in 2012. The same legal rights for registered partnership as for marriage were provided, including the mutual duties of maintenance, property rights and property division upon separation, and inheritance upon death of one of the partners (Merin, 2002). The registered forms of same-sex partnership and marriage in Nordic countries, so far, only concern same-sex couples and require citizenship or legal residence.

Another early mover was Israel, where same-sex partnership was institutionalized in 1994. In 2008, Israel granted the right for same-sex couples to adopt children. Although same-sex marriages are still, as of today, not performed in the country, Israel recognizes same-sex marriages performed elsewhere (Saez, 2011). In the Netherlands, another early mover, legislation allowing marriage and adoption by same-sex couples was approved in 2001. Very few differences have...
remained between same-sex marriage and registered partnership. One difference is that marriage can be dissolved only by the court, whereas a registered partnership can be terminated by the partners themselves (Merin, 2002). The Netherlands show a divide between civil and religious marriages, as only a civil registration of same-sex partnerships is allowed (Waaldijk, 2005).

During the first decade of the 21st century, same-sex partnership legislation took effect in Napoleonic code countries such as France, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium. Belgium was the second country to open up marriage to same-sex couples in 2003. Similar to the Netherlands, same-sex marriage in Belgium can only take place in front of a public officer (Waaldijk, 2005). In 1999, France institutionalized partnership outside marriage by introducing the Civil Solidarity Pact for both same-sex and heterosexual couples, albeit with fewer rights than marriage concerning paternity, adoption, inheritance, tax benefits, and citizenship. Same-sex marriage was approved in France only in 2013—quite late in comparison to early movers. In 2001, Germany legally recognized same-sex unions. Similar to Nordic countries, the new registered partnership in Germany was only aimed at same-sex couples and provided almost similar legal rights to partnerships as to marriage (Waaldijk, 2000). One difference is that, according to German legislation, registered same-sex partners are excluded from most financial rights and benefits, especially in the field of taxation (Merin, 2002). Same-sex marriage in Germany was legalized only in 2017.

In a third set of moves, Spain recognized same-sex marriage and adoption at the national level in 2005. The legal recognition of partnerships for same-sex couples in that country began, however, much earlier, in 1998. In Spain, as in France and Belgium, the institutionalization of same-sex couples was closely associated with the institutionalization of partnerships outside marriage. In other Southern European countries, such as Portugal and Italy, the institutionalization of same-sex partnerships occurred later. Although Portugal has recognized de facto same-sex partnerships since 2001, the major institutional change took place only in 2010. In 2007, the Italian government approved de facto domestic partnerships, including same-sex couples, with the provision of health and social welfare benefits and an entitlement to inherit after a couple has lived together for at least 9 years (Boele-Woelki, 2008). However, the legalization of same-sex partnership in Italy only occurred in 2016.

In 2005, Great Britain and Northern Ireland enacted enabling laws on registered and civil partnerships, respectively. Same-sex marriages were legalized in Great Britain only in 2014; however, Northern Ireland has not yet statutory legalization of same-sex marriage. The cases of Australia and New Zealand vary from provincial states to provincial states for acceptance of same-sex partnerships. Only in 2012 were same-sex civil partnerships introduced at the national level in Australia. In New Zealand, same-sex civil unions have been legal since 2005, and same-sex marriage since 2013. Similar to Australia, the institution of same-sex legislation in the United States and Canada depends on state or local jurisdictions. Therefore, there is no nationwide consistency on the rights, responsibilities, and benefits granted to domestic partners. In 2005, the institution of same-sex marriages was approved at the national level in Canada, compared to 2015 in the United States. Law and policy differ with respect to same-sex marriages between the United States and Canada, especially with regard to the legacy or legal recognition of partnerships, with the United States featuring a less automatic attribution of health care and social benefits to partners than Canada (Merin, 2002).

In comparison with other countries, Eastern European countries have lagged behind. Although Slovenia and the Czech Republic, in 2006, and Hungary, in 2009, have legislated on same-sex partnerships, a proposal to introduce them in Poland was rejected in 2005. There is also no legal recognition of same-sex unions in the large majority of Asian countries, including Japan and the Philippines. Overall, there is much variation across nations in the timing of the inclusion of same-sex couples in family as an institution, by way of institutionalized partnerships, marriage, and access to parenthood. This is also true for the subset of so-called Western nations, as well as
within the European Union. Although the European Union legislation, namely through the European Union Court of Justice, has undertaken some initiatives for all European Union members to institutionalize same-sex registered partnership and marriage (Boele-Woelki, 2008), such institutionalization has been regulated by national rules of the individual member states.

On average, early mover countries for same-sex partnerships are also early movers for same-sex marriage and same-sex parent adoption, although there are quite a few exceptions. For instance, Israel and Great Britain were early movers for same-sex partnerships and late movers for marriage. Interestingly, Great Britain was also an early mover for adoption by same-sex couples. Therefore, this research will consider such dimensions of inclusiveness of same-sex couples in family one by one.

Structural and normative conditions of institutional inclusion of Same-Sex couples into the family

Structural conditions accounting for differences of timing in the institutional inclusion of same-sex couples into the family are only partly researched. Attention was mostly paid to attitudes expressing greater openness toward minorities, and a greater sensitivity to human rights (Engeli, Green-Pedersen, & Larsen, 2012). This focus is, of course, not irrelevant, but to some extent, it overlooks the fact that such attitudes are related to structural dimensions of societies. Research, indeed, stresses the impact of economic development on normative attitudes toward gay male and lesbian sexual orientation (Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Economic prosperity was shown to change the value system of citizens toward more openness to minorities (Inglehart, 1997; Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Social policies that limit economic inequalities, such as a progressive taxation and universal benefits in social democratic welfare states, encourage tolerant attitudes toward gay male and lesbian sexual orientation (Andersen & Fetner, 2008). Discrimination against gay men and lesbians is less likely when the overall society achieves material security (Inglehart, 1997). Instead of worrying about how to fulfill basic needs like food, shelter, and safety, societies with greater welfare become increasingly focused on issues related to subjective well-being, quality of life, and self-expression (Inglehart, 1997). Alternatively, declining living standards play an important role in making people more vulnerable to prejudice and discriminating attitudes toward minority groups, including sexual minorities (Smith, 1994). Negative attitudes toward same-sex relations also stem from traditional views regarding the roles of women in society (Agnew, Thompson, Smith, Gramzow, & Currey, 1993; Herek, 1984). Traditional gender roles stressing the role of men as breadwinners and of women as housekeepers and child rearers are negatively associated with the acceptance of same-sex marriage (Eskridge, 2000). Other studies stress that normative attitudes are strongly influenced by the religious institutional heritage of countries (Gerhards, 2010). Institutionalized religions promote specific attitudes toward same-sex relations. For instance the Catholic Church has been historically in strong opposition to homosexuality (Gerhards, 2010, Van den Akker, Van der Ploeg, & Scheepers, 2013). Such orientation has been regarded as immoral by the Catholic Church (Scheepers, Te Grotenhuis, & Van der Slik, 2002).

Such normative attitudes are also related to the role given to the family as an institution in each country (Ganjour & Widmer, 2016). In some societies, the family is a major mediator of social integration and social control. Individuals depend on family and kinship members for fulfilling their economic and social needs. Accordingly, they relate their identity with family and develop a we social identification in kinship-based groups (Elias, 1987; Elias & Scotson, 1994). The family is the main—if not the only—provider of help and protection for individuals in the case of poverty or disability, as the major institution responsible for taking care of their needs and framing their behaviors. By contrast, in other societies, individuals integrate into society by other institutional means. State protection and market participation are central for individuals’
economic sustainability, without much mediation by their family or kinship group. Social constraints and opportunities stem from welfare institutions or the market and directly engage the individual, rather than being mediated by the family as a group (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). Accordingly, the family somewhat loses its normative influence on individuals, and self-regulation is promoted as a mean of social control (Elias, 1987). In such social settings, family goals shift from mostly instrumental (social, economic, and demographic reproduction), with a high level of family control, to more expressive or relational, with a higher emphasis on individual autonomy and self-control (Burgess, Locke, & Thomas, 1963; De Singly et al., 1996; Elias, 1987; Elias & Scotson, 1994; Kohli, 1999; Parsons & Bales, 1956; Segalen, 1981). Factors such as wealth, generous welfare programs, and equality between women and men in education and the workforce promote a more open definition of family, which is focused on expressive ties, rather than on instrumental solidarity. As such, same-sex couples are no longer considered a threat to family, as family is defined mainly in reference to individual self-development, to which the free choice of one's sexuality belongs. We expect that the institutionalization of same-sex couples in the family is related to such macrostructural organization of solidarity and the meaning of family achieved by countries.

Beyond the macrostructural conditions associated with each country’s organization of ties and meaning of the family, the prevalence of specific normative sex regimes may facilitate or make the inclusion of same-sex couples within the family as an institution more difficult. Countries differ in their emphasis on marriage, heterosexuality, and sexual exclusivity as necessary conditions for legitimate sex (Buss, 1989; Christensen & Carpenter, 1962; Christensen & Gregg, 1970; Jones et al., 1985; 1986; Ross, 1985). Such conditions of sexual activity to be considered acceptable relate with the unequal importance, according to national contexts, given to the Christian definition of marriage as a bond between a man and a woman, sanctified by Church and monogamous, producing legitimate offspring and accordingly constituting the family (Houseknecht & Pankhurst, 2000), based on data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) 1994 survey, Widmer, Treas, and Newcomb (1998) drew normative sexual regimes, with three types and one residual category accounting for the variability in attitudes toward nonmarital sex across a set of 23 countries in the mid-1990s. The teen permissive regime, which encompassed Germany (East and West), Austria, Sweden, and Slovenia, had high levels of acceptance of teenage sex and premarital sex. Their acceptance of extramarital sex and sexual activity between same-sex persons, however, closely matched the average profile. The sexual conservatives regime, which included Ireland, Northern Ireland, Poland, and the United States, showed strong disapproval for all types of nonmarital sex. The so called homosexual permissive regime included the Netherlands, Norway, the Czech Republic, Canada, and Spain. What distinguished the countries in this cluster were high levels of acceptance of sexual activity between same-sex persons. They also accepted premarital sex but rejected teen sex and extramarital sex. Such country openness toward sexual activity between same-sex persons may be expected to have played a positive role for the institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family as an institution, as it assumes that legitimate sex exists beyond heterosexuality.

**Summary**

Evidence suggests that the institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family depend on structural conditions at the country level, as well as on the development in each country of the so-called called homosexual permissive regime in the near past. The family as an institution is rooted in the social, economic, and ideological features that countries develop over time. We, therefore, hypothesize that such conditions account for the early development of inclusive family laws at the beginning of the 21st century. Wealthy non-Catholic countries with an emphasis on social and gender equality are expected to have historically developed a broader understanding of what family is about and, therefore, to have been early movers for the integration of same-sex
couples into the family. We also hypothesize that countries where sexual activity between same-sex persons was part of the accepted sexual repertoire in the early 1990s to have had a swifter and more complete institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family than countries where the normative sexual regime was not receptive of sexual activity between same-sex persons at that time.

Data and variables

The outcomes to be accounted for refer to the early versus late institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family as an institution in each country. We focus on the year of acceptance in each country of the possibility of forming an institutionally recognized partnership with a same-sex partner, the possibility of getting married to a same-sex partner, and the possibility of adopting a child by two same-sex parents. To have updated information about institutionally recognized same-sex partnerships, marriage, and adoption, we used the International Lesbian and Gay Association (2017) official site (http://ilga.org/). We also used information on international law regulation of same-sex unions from the same source as Adamczyk and Pitt (2009), as well as other sources (Eskridge, 2000; Slenders, Sieben, & Verbakel, 2014; West & Green, 2002). Table 1 presents the years in which each of the 23 selected countries adopted legislation enabling same-sex couples to access legalized partnership, marriage, and adoption. Such information was recoded into the three outcome variables depending on the precocity of the country’s move toward inclusion. Early movers were countries among the 20% that adopted such legislations the earliest. Late or no movers were countries that were among the 20% that have adopted such legislations, the latest or the countries that have not yet adopted them in 2017.

Table 1. Institutional acceptance of same-sex relationship in 23 countries in alphabetical order.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Partnership</th>
<th>Marriage</th>
<th>Adoption</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2017 (late)</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>b.1991 (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
<td>2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>2017 (late)</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Britain</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>b.2012 (late)</td>
<td>b.2012 (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel</td>
<td>1994 (early)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>1998 (early)</td>
<td>2001 (early)</td>
<td>2001 (early)</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Zealand</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>2013</td>
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<td>Northern Ireland</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>1993 (early)</td>
<td>2009 (early)</td>
<td>2009</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philippines</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>b.1997 (late)</td>
<td>b.1997 (late)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
<td>NR (late)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>1998 (early)</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
<td>2005 (early)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>1995 (early)</td>
<td>2009 (early)</td>
<td>2003 (early)</td>
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<tr>
<td>United States</td>
<td>SR</td>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note. NR = not recognized, SR = recognized by the states, b.year = year in which the law is banned by parliament. We used the year when the law was accepted, at least by one of the territories of the country (e.g., the partnership in Spain accepted in Catalonia in 1998).
The country selection was based on the list of countries which were included in the typology of Widmer et al. (1998) about sexual normative regimes, which was deemed critical for capturing normative attitudes about non-marital sex in the late 1990s. These authors capitalized on data from the ISSP 1994, which was made available by the Zentralarchiv Fuer Empirische Sozialforschung, Koeln. Three distinct normative sexual regimes were considered: so-called homosexual permissive, teen permissive, and conservative (described previously).

Based on the literature, we selected one condition related with wealth (GDP), one associated with income equality (GINI), one with gender equality (GII), and one with the Catholic Church. The information on wealth, GDP per capita net in dollars, was derived from The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) data (OECD, 2000) for all countries. The exception was Northern Ireland, for which the information was provided by EUROSTAT Regional GDP (Eurostat, 2000). The second condition, the GINI index, was obtained from the World Bank (World Bank Development Indicators, 2000–2004). The importance of the Catholic religion across countries was collected from the paper by Andersen and Fetner (2008) or, for some countries, from the International Religious Freedom Report for 2012 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2012).

For estimating the overall equality of gender relationships in each national context, we used the gender inequality index (GII; United Nation Development Program, 2010). The GII has been available in the Human Development Report since 2010. The GII index assesses gender equality in three important aspects of human development—reproductive health, measured by maternal mortality ratio and adolescent birth rates; empowerment, measured by the proportion of parliamentary seats occupied by women and the proportion of adult women and men aged 25 years and older with at least some secondary education; and economic status measured by the labor force participation rate of female and male populations aged 15 years and older.

**Analytical strategy**

We used qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) to determine whether the selected factors were related with the institutional acceptance of same-sex couples in the family. QCA is widely used in social sciences (Epple, Gasser, Kersten, Nollert, & Schief, 2014; Thiem, 2011; Varone, Rothmayr, & Montpetit, 2006). It makes it possible to relate the three indicators of institutional acceptance of same-sex couples in the family to a variety of configurations created by several macrostructural factors. It is a research method that allows the transformation of complex configurations of conditions into simpler ones by using the procedure of Boolean minimization. Boolean minimization is the central function of the QCA-enhanced Quine–McCluskey algorithm (McCluskey, 1996; Rioux & Ragin, 2009). The analysis is case-oriented; it shows the combinations of the conditions and the outcome variable for a specific set of cases. We used the QCA package of R (Thiem & Dusa, 2012). To provide information in a straightforward way, we chose to visualize it using tables and Venn diagrams (Chen & Boutros, 2011).

The first key stage in the realization of a QCA is the construction of a table of conditions created by normative sexual regimes and a variety of alternative explanatory factors (e.g., wealth, measured by GDP per capita; the GINI index; a religion assessment; and the GII). QCA requires that these conditions were dichotomized (see Table 2). The GDP is encoded high if the GDP per capita was higher than the mean GDP for the selected countries; it is encoded low if the GDP per capita was lower than the mean for the selected countries. The GINI index is encoded equality if it was lower than the mean GINI index across the selected countries; it is encoded inequality if it was higher than the mean GINI index across the selected countries. The religion is encoded Catholic if the main religion of the country was Catholic and 0 otherwise. The gender inequality index is encoded equality if it was lower than the mean gender inequality index for analyzing countries; it is encoded inequality if it was higher than the mean gender index across countries.
After estimating the initial conditions through the criteria of necessity and sufficiency for each outcome, the software produced a truth table that presents the combinations of sufficient conditions and the outcomes. We built six truth tables, two for early versus late institutionalization of same-sex partnership, two for early versus late acceptance of same-sex marriage, and two for early versus late institutionalization of adoption by same-sex parents. The functions of Boolean minimization produced three distinct solutions for each case: a complex solution, a parsimonious solution, and an intermediate solution. We describe the results of the parsimonious solution only, which presents the case in which all possible configurations of conditions are included in the analysis. The goodness of the “fit” of configurations is evaluated by two scores: raw coverage score and unique coverage score. (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009, p. 64). We limited the number of configurations to three in relation to their scores of inclusion and coverage of the observed cases.

Results

Table 3 presents the configurations of sufficient conditions and the outcomes (same-sex partnership, marriage, and child adoption) for early movers (see Table 1). The conditions denoted in upper-case capitalization are expected to have promoted the inclusion of same-sex partnership, same-sex marriage, and the adoption of a child by same-sex partners; the conditions denoted in lower case are expected to have delayed the inclusion of same-sex couples in the family. In the next tables, GDP relates to a high value of GDP or wealth; gdp relates to a low value of GDP. GINI corresponds to social equality; gini corresponds to social inequality; RELIGION relates to a non-Catholic or mixed country; religion relates to the country as a historical stronghold of Catholicism. WEGALITY corresponds to gender equality; wegality corresponds to gender

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<td>other</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
<td>high</td>
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<td>Catholic</td>
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<td>low</td>
<td>inequality</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>inequality</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>equality</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>equality</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spain</td>
<td>low</td>
<td>equality</td>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>equality</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>high</td>
<td>inequality</td>
<td>other</td>
<td>equality</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>other</td>
<td>inequality</td>
<td>no</td>
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<td>no</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Note. Mean GDP (2000) for analyzed countries = $18,996 per capita; mean GINI index (2000–2004) for analyzed countries = 33.39; mean gender equality index (2010) for analyzed countries = 0.1382.
inequality. TYPE HOMOSEXUAL corresponds to the sexual regime of the mid-1990s approving of sexual activity between same-sex individuals; type homosexual corresponds to other sexual regimes. Likewise, TYPE TEEN corresponds to the sexual regime of the mid-1990s that approved of teenage sex and TYPE CONSERVATIVE corresponds to the sexual regime of the mid-1990s that was closed to any other sexual activities beyond heterosexual marriage.

Three configurations of sufficient conditions were selected for the early acceptance of same-sex partnership, according to the scores of inclusion and coverage of the observed cases. Large wealth, non-Catholic religion, and gender equality are the primary conditions that enabled early acceptance of same-sex partnership in Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, and Israel. The homosexual permissive regime (Widmer et al., 1998) played a crucial role in the early acceptance of same-sex partnership in Spain. The results for early institutional acceptance of same-sex marriage showed similar results. Again, large wealth and belonging to the homosexual permissive regime favored early adoption of same-sex marriage in the Netherlands, Norway, and Canada. The homosexual permissive regime again played a critical role for institutional acceptance of same-sex marriage in Spain, which stands out comparatively as an impoverished Catholic country, and therefore does not meet any of the structural conditions that were stressed in the theory section. The normative homosexual permissive regime and social inequality are sufficient conditions for accounting for early acceptance of same-sex marriage in Canada. Wealth, being a non-Catholic country, and gender equality turn out to be the primary conditions that dictate the early institutional acceptance of adoption by same-sex couples. Again, Spain turns out to be an outlier, which is accounted for by its normative sexual regime. Note that social equality never shows up as an institutional condition for early inclusiveness of same-sex couples in the family. Venn diagrams (Figures 1 to 3) provide a visual representation of configurations of conditions for each of the three outcomes.

Each ellipse represents a peculiar combination of sufficient conditions. The intersection between the ellipses marks the countries in which combinations of sufficient conditions meet. The right ellipse in each diagram represents the primary set of sufficient conditions for the outcome, and the inside ellipses present a set of supplementary conditions. The overlaps with the left ellipses in each diagram are of particular interest because they reveal which combinations are primary or supplementary sets of combinations. Figure 1 shows that high GDP, non-Catholic religion, and gender equality favor the early acceptance of same-sex partnership in the case of Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, and Israel. The intersection with the two other configurations of conditions favoring the early acceptance of same-sex partnership occurred in Spain. In this

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Score of inclusion</th>
<th>Score of raw coverage</th>
<th>Score of unique coverage</th>
<th>Countries</th>
</tr>
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<td>Early acceptance of same-sex partnership</td>
<td>GDP × RELIGION × WEGALITY</td>
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<td>0.200</td>
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<td></td>
<td>gdp × religion × WEGALITY</td>
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<td>0.200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Early acceptance of same-sex marriage</td>
<td>GDP × TYPE HOMOSEXUAL</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>religion × TYPE HOMOSEXUAL</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gdp × region × WEGALITY</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Structural and normative conditions that have favored early inclusion of same-sex couples in the family as an institution.
country, the homosexual permissive regime and gender equality are associated with low GDP and the Catholic religion. Figure 2 considers the institutional acceptance of same-sex marriages. Large GDP and the homosexual permissive regime are sufficient conditions that favor the early acceptance of same-sex marriages in Canada, Norway, and the Netherlands. Canada is also included in the ellipse of homosexual permissive regime and social inequality. Spain is included in the configuration where the homosexual permissive regime and Catholic religion overlap. Sweden is not included in the visualized configurations (limited to three by a Venn diagram). In the case of Sweden, one faces a more complex configuration of conditions, such as high GDP, non-Catholic religion, gender equality, and the teen sex permissive regime.

Figure 3 shows the intersection of ellipses for conditions promoting early acceptance of child adoption by same-sex couples: large GDP, gender equality, and status as a non-Catholic country. Such conditions are sufficient for explaining early access by same-sex couples to child adoption in Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and Israel. The intersection of two other
configurations of conditions occurs in Spain, where again belonging to the homosexual permissive regime played a critical role.

To include the counterfactual, Table 4 focuses on countries that were late in the process of institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in the family (late movers in Table 1). Interestingly, the reverse conditions of the ones developed for early birds apply to most such countries, as Table 4 shows. Indeed, the late or no movers are countries with low GDP and low gender equality. Low GDP is indeed associated with the late acceptance of same-sex partnership in several countries (Poland, Russia, and the Philippines). Social equality and gender inequality present a set of conditions that have delayed the inclusion of same-sex partnership in the family as an institution in Bulgaria and Japan.

Conditions that have delayed same-sex marriage are more diverse. Social equality associated with gender inequality delayed the institutionalization of same-sex marriage in Poland, Hungary, Bulgaria, and Japan. Membership in the teen-permissive sexual regime, in combination with wealth, delayed the institutionalization of same-sex marriage in Austria and Germany. The conditions that delayed the adoption of children by same-sex couples are also diversified. East
European countries, including Slovenia, the Czech Republic, Bulgaria, and Russia, came late (or not at all) to the process because of a configuration that mixed low GDP and not being a Catholic country (in that case being Orthodox). In other cases, sufficient conditions are gender inequality associated with social equality in Poland, Hungary or Bulgaria, and Japan or belonging to the conservative normative sexual regime and low wealth in Poland.

Discussion

For a long time, gay men and lesbians were considered a threat to the family as an institution. They were seen as endangering the basis of marriage by questioning its definition as between a man and a woman granting an exclusive channel to biological and social reproduction across generations (De Singly, 1996; Weston, 1991). The issue of the socialization of children was deemed critical by some conservative groups, in relation with enduring stereotypes about the threats that homosexuality poses to the youth (Farr, Forssell, & Patterson, 2010; Patterson, 2006, 2009). Since the mid-1980s, a broader understanding of family has emerged, first in relation to divorce and remarriage (Stacey, 1998) and later in relation to gay male and lesbian sexual orientation (Weston, 1991). Same-sex relationships, indeed, have become a showcase of social and later institutional reinterpretation of the very meaning of the family as an institution, away from its traditional patriarchal organization (Capdevila, Rouquet, Virgili, & Voldman, 2003; Chauvin & Lerch, 2013). To a large extent, what is at stake with the institutionalization of same-sex partnerships, same-sex marriage, and the adoption of children by same-sex parents is the institutional framing of family. If society grants rights to same-sex couples to partner, to marry, and to raise children, then family is no more defined as heteronormative by nature and its meaning as an institution is broadened. The access of same-sex couples to registered partnerships, marriage, and adoption is a move toward greater inclusiveness of what is meant by family, and therefore one important step for the development of family as a more neutral and broader social institution of late modernity (Giddens, 1991).

Because the family as an institution is rooted in the social structures of countries, we expected that such moves toward institutional inclusion of same-sex couples in family be related with a set of structural and normative conditions. Results confirmed that countries that were wealthy, more gender equal, and predominantly non-Catholic, have promoted a swifter inclusion of same-sex couples within the family, making it easier for same-sex couples to develop legitimate forms of families. Therefore, family as an institution has become more rapidly inclusive in such countries. Overall, our expectations about the beneficiary effects of wealth and equality on the development of inclusive laws by countries were supported by the data; unlike gender equality, however, social equality did not turn out to be a meaningful condition for such development towards inclusiveness.

Another critical influence on the early inclusion of same-sex couples in the family is related to normative sexual regimes (Widmer et al., 1998). As expected, countries with a homosexual permissive regime in the early 1990s adopted early on legislations that favored the inclusion of same-sex couples in the family as an institution. According to the results, the impact of normative sex regimes was especially strong in the case of marriage. The legislation of same-sex marriages was strongly influenced by such norms; the legislation concerning same-sex partnerships and child adoption rather depended on other macrostructural conditions. Moreover, membership in the homosexual permissive sexual regime turned out to be a critical condition that accounted for the early move of several countries featuring otherwise rather unfavorable structural conditions. The most appealing case is Spain, which is a Catholic country with a comparatively low level of economic development, but which was an early bird for the inclusion of same-sex couples within the family. The country may have developed such an early adoption because fighting for gay rights was considered early on as part and parcel of a political engagement against the
conservatism of the Franco period (Platero, 2007). Due to its political history stressing opposition to Catholic moralism as a way to achieve modernity and escape from its past, large segments of the Spanish population promoted a set of normative attitudes that made it easier to implement laws enabling same-sex couples to enter the family than in other national contexts. Interestingly, teen-permissive countries (Germany and Austria) were late for the institutional acceptance of same-sex marriage because their normative focus was more on the society acceptance of early sexual intercourse in the life course. It is, therefore, not permissiveness about nonmarital sex overall that has mattered for the inclusion of same-sex couples in family, but—indeed—openness toward gay male and lesbian sexual orientation.

This research considered indicators of inclusiveness of same-sex couples in family one by one. Institutionalizations of same-sex partnership, marriage and adoption by countries are obviously interconnected, although not systematically, as the cases of Israel, Great Britain, and Germany show. Considering the three indicators together, rather than separately, calls for additional analyses, which combine the indicators of inclusiveness of same-sex couples in family into multidimensional profiles of social change, using for instance cluster analysis (Kaufman & Rousseeuw, 2009). Such empirical extensions are, however, nontrivial as the number of profiles to consider is large, which makes the conditions for the QCA to be applicable less likely to be filled (Rihoux & Ragin, 2009). One explanation to be tested is related with the differences concerning the status of churches (Catholic, but others as well) across countries: One may expect that countries in which one church has been institutionalized during history as the state church to be more reluctant to have granted same-sex couples early access to marriage, which regulation may be considered in such contexts as a joint responsibility of State and Church. Such countries may have been less reluctant to have provided same-sex couples access to partnerships than to marriage, as regulation of nonmarital cohabitation does not fall under the authority of the Church. This certainly explained the 10-year gap between the granting of civil partnership recognition in the United Kingdom (enacted in 2005) and the much later granting of same-sex marriage, tied up very much with the Church of England’s position as the state church.

Ultimately, one inescapable question concerns the reversibility of the institutional process underpinning the inclusion of same-sex couples in family. Namely, can such process be reversed in the future and same-sex couples be once again excluded from the family as an institution, if unfavorable configurations of structural conditions set in? Societies may become poorer, shift away from gender equality, and grant greater prominence to religious institutions, including the Catholic Church. In such cases, the presence in some countries of a normative sex regime that is open to sexual activity between same-sex individuals may prevent the societal shift back to the exclusion of same-sex couples from the family.

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**References**


