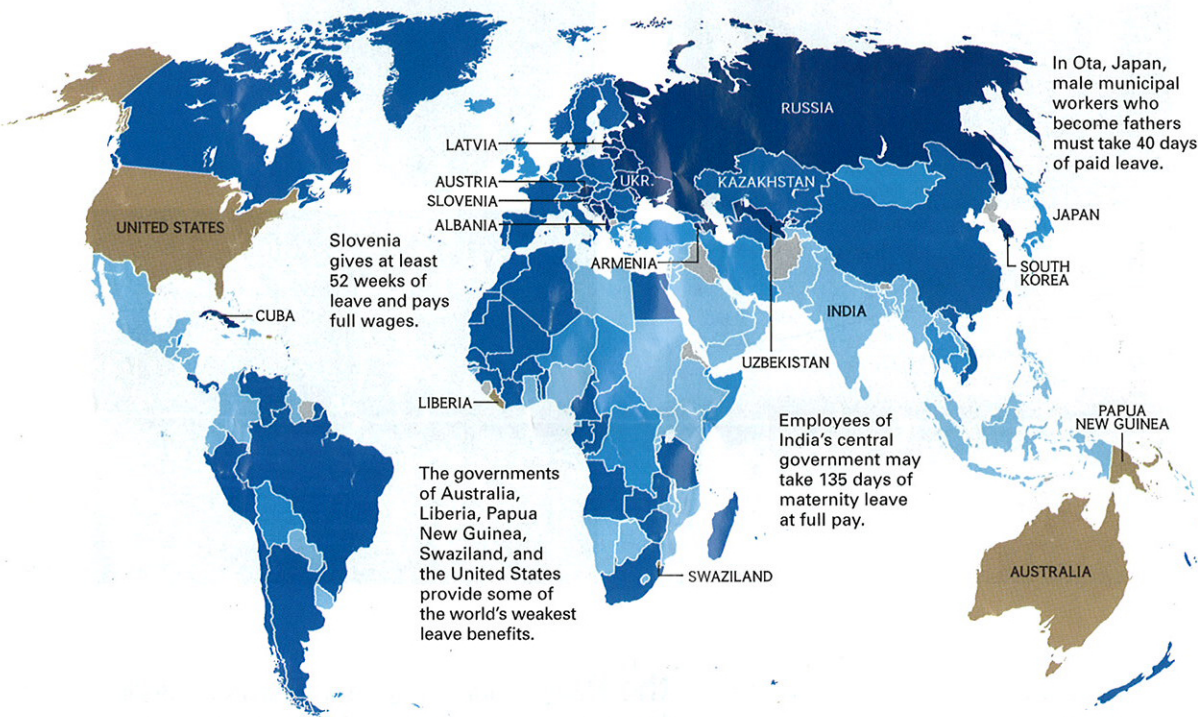


Who Gives Parents a Break?

Guaranteed Leave for Mothers, 2006



American moms-to-be might consider a move to Slovenia. While U.S. law guarantees a mere 12 weeks of unpaid leave under certain conditions, the least of any industrialized nation, the relatively poor central European country offers far more substantial benefits. Many nations give new mothers at least 14 weeks of leave from work around the time their child is born. Some 66 countries let dads take time off, too. The consensus is that bonding time with parents is good for a newborn's health and development. By that measure, places like Cuba, Uzbekistan, and South Korea earn high marks. And the U.S., says Jody Heymann, a social policy expert at McGill University, could definitely do better. —Neil Shea



In the U.S., Mark Vann III's lucky dad got a paid week off.