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1 Executive Summary

The project “Workcare” helps to take us beyond individual country studies in the analysis of work and care to look at the “big picture” based upon large data sets on the one hand and the detailed experiences of households based upon qualitative interviews on the other. These help to provide a framework for social policies in work and care. The report is divided into sections according to the workcare policies, the cultures and values that shape work and care and the practices or the strategies that households actually adopt. Despite the considerable variations in policies and cultures across Europe the practices adopted by households were remarkably similar and often determined more by the degree of flexibility in the job, the social class (and access to material resources) of the household and the nature of their social networks than by the country.

Across the whole of Europe, raising children is a struggle for parents in managing different pressures upon them and this means that households need to adopt strategies involving all family members and perhaps also people outside of the nuclear family to manage work and care. These pressures were mitigated in some countries by better childcare provision; in others parents were thrown back on their own resources. Our findings showed that countries where there was extensive public childcare provision offered the best possibilities for managing work and care (these are the Scandinavian countries) although even there, parents also had to develop their own additional caring strategies outside of normal hours. Our findings showed that this was not necessarily any more expensive as a policy option than the “cash for care” policies that are increasingly popular as a way of encouraging women to stay at home and care for children, but had a much better effect on women’s labour force participation. Since the EU as well as many individual countries are concerned to raise labour force participation, it is important to realise that providing affordable child care facilities is better than subsidising women to stay at home.

European level policy, for example through the Lisbon Agenda, emphasises the importance of getting women, including mothers, into the labour market both in order to ensure the maximum productivity of the workforce but also to ensure access to benefits which come from employment. However, these pressures are sometimes not aligned with national policies, where for example, taxation regimes might encourage mothers to stay at home, or where the lack of affordable childcare makes it uneconomical for women to work.

Given the substantial variations in cultures of care and social policy traditions across Europe, we expected to find contrasting models of work and care among households. However, there was much less variation than we expected. Whilst attitudes might still reflect different cultural norms (with Southern families and Eastern European families being most conservative than northern ones) even these were converging to a great extent, especially when people reflected on their own situation. When we turn to practices – what households actually do – we find strong convergence across Europe towards the dual earner family, although more variation for those with children under three on account of the different maternal leave policies. In all countries, parents need to work – mothers like fathers need to be able to support their families. This pressure comes partly from the need for two incomes during the family build phase of the life

course and also because as benefits move towards the adult worker model of entitlement described by Jane Lewis (Lewis 2002) women need to have continuous work careers.

However, there were big differences in the extent to which they are supported to do this. The extensive childcare policies available in Scandinavian countries mean that parents there have more options in terms of managing work and care, whilst in Southern countries, the absence or regional variability of these childcare services means that households had to develop strategies to manage work and care using their own resources (although we recognise that in Portugal the full time working mother was also the norm). This benefitted middle class households, who could afford to buy in substitute care and to negotiate flexibility with their employers. Working class households, with few resources, were more likely to resort to a parental “shift” system whereby parents worked alternate daily shifts to ensure one carer was always at home. This is one way of coping, but imposes great strains upon the family.

There were also other respects in which there was convergence especially was the variety of family forms – even in traditionally conservative countries such as Spain or Italy, there are increasing numbers of single parents, for example. There was a substantial number of dual full time working parents in countries like Spain and Italy, despite the prevalence of the traditional male breadwinner norm. There is also a European convergence towards the small, nuclear family as numbers of children have fallen. Yet support from extended family (especially grandparents) was important in all countries too. It was perhaps more important in Southern and Eastern Europe, although this also reflected the fact that childcare services were also more scarce and less affordable in those countries.

Hence, across all European countries, the male-breadwinner family is being replaced by the dual-earner family. The dual earner family is increasingly becoming the norm, irrespective of the cultural values of the society, which are often more conservative than the practices of households. In this respect, attitudes are lagging behind behaviour and policies which try to reinforce traditional cultural norms are out of step with what people actually do. However, the form that the dual earner household takes varies between those where the woman is working full time and where she is working part time. These variations reflect country differences in the availability of part time work.

In all European countries, a high priority was placed upon family life. The cognitive and educational development of children was a major concern for parents and affected how they evaluated child care. It was not enough to find a place to keep children whilst the parents were at work; rather they looked for places that would offer quality care and in this respect the professionalization of childcare services in some counties (such as Denmark) was highly valued although not usually available elsewhere. It would seem that in an increasingly competitive world, where children are likely to spend longer periods of time in education or training, parents of all social classes were concerned to give them the best possible start. This was reflected in the demand for good quality care for pre-school aged children and suitable environments as the children progressed through schooling. This may also reflect the fact that with fewer children, there is more concern with the quality of their upbringing.

Because of this emphasis upon cognitive development, we find fathers taking an increasing role in child rearing, although not so much in the day-to-day chores of

childcare. Fathers wanted to spend more time with children and saw taking an active role in childrearing as important. Fathers recognised the importance of paternity leave, but were rarely able to take it on account of the need to maximise earnings as well as the poor statutory provision in most countries, despite government initiatives. Male wages are still higher in all European countries, reflecting a stubbornly persistent gender wage gap, irrespective of the higher labour force participation of women. Mothers were still more likely to sacrifice their careers for their children, even if they continued to work for most or all of their lives. In fact, we could argue that the situation for women is worse than in the past under the male-breadwinner regime: now they need to be employed, often full time, yet the household division of labour is still one whereby they need to do most of the unpaid household work as well.

Whilst the divisions between societies were eroding, divisions within societies continued to be important and in this respect there were also important similarities across European societies. Higher class households, with more material resources could afford to buy in child care in ways that working class and poorer households could not. Furthermore, higher class workers were able to negotiate flexible hours with their employers or to set up businesses which gave them flexibility and this time flexibility was very important for managing work and care for small children. For working class households there was less possibility to change working hours to suit household needs and the kinds of jobs they did would not allow for this (for example, it is easier for professionals to work flexible hours than for shop workers or waiters). People were not always aware of their rights to negotiate flexibility in this respect and in some cases flexibility was incompatible with the job.

Social networks were also important for managing work and care and extended family provided an important resource for people in all countries. For single parents especially, friends and neighbours were important. Despite conservative claims that these families reflect a “broken society” it was in these types of families that social ties were important to help them manage, if not along the lines of the traditional nuclear family.

We linked these findings about parenting with a general analysis of social quality to look at what determines the quality of society for people in Europe, and especially for parents. The findings were clear: people need a sense of economic and social security, they need to live in cohesive societies into which they are socially integrated into and they need to feel empowered to be able take action over their lives. Employed parents experienced a better quality of life than non-employed ones so integration into the labour force was important at whatever level, even though it imposed stress in managing work and care. We could predict with a high degree of accuracy which factors lead to higher quality of life in European countries, but in some countries these factors were more profuse than in others. They are: material security; living in a cohesive society with institutions and citizens they can trust; feeling socially integrated into their community and participating in their society; being empowered to be able to take control of their circumstances.

1.1 Project Outline

The project carried out between October 2005 and September 2009 focused upon how work and care are integrated across different policy and gender regimes in Europe. Although there are many aspects of care, this project focused explicitly upon care of children. The project was divided into eight workpackages, each with a deliverable, in

the form of a long report that can be downloaded from the website. Each report was issued with a summary and policy briefing, which is also available on the website (<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/socsci/research/nec/workcare>). The deliverables/workpackages were: 1 Literature Review; 2 Social, Demographic and Employment Trends; 3 Labour Market and Social Policies; 4 Orientations to Work and Care; 5 Qualitative Interviews with Households; 6 the Role of Flexible Employment Regimes in Managing Work and Care; 7 Household Capabilities, Organisation of Home Care and Employment; 8 Social Quality in Work and Care. Different teams were involved in each workpackage and this final report draws freely upon all of them. Whilst it was written by Claire Wallace (the project co-ordinator), it represents the work of the whole team. The project objectives are set out below.

1.2 Project Objectives

- To describe and explain a Europe-wide patterning of welfare, work and care using a variety of methods and sources.
- To develop and apply a social quality perspective, enabling a synthesis of macro and micro levels of analysis.
- To understand the nature and impact of European level policies for work and care.
- To explain the transitions between work and care on a comparative basis.
- To understand how households make decisions about work and care
- To determine how employment and social policies have impacted upon the organisation of work and care.

1.3 Scientific Approach

The research drew upon both qualitative and quantitative methods. Most of the workpackages used existing large scale data sets which compare European countries and included: ECHP (the European Community Household Panel Survey), ISSP (International Social Survey Programme with recurring modules on work and care), ESS (European Social Survey with a module on work and care), World Values Survey/European Values Survey, the EQLS (European Quality of Life Survey carried out in 2003 and 2007) and statistical sources for information about trends and policies including from EUROSTAT, OECD and the MISSOC data base. By using such large scale and recurring data sets, it was possible to paint “the big picture” of how work, care and welfare are managed in different European countries.

The qualitative research involved collecting primary data in seven European countries: Denmark, the UK, Poland, Hungary, Austria, Portugal and Italy. These countries gave us a picture of different welfare and work regimes as well as representing the different regions of Europe. In these countries interviews with a purposive sample were carried out – 15 households in each country with children of whom at least one should be below the age of 12. Both partners in the household were interviewed in depth separately and they were selected by household composition in terms of patterns of gender, work and care and educational level. The interviewers aimed to find a sample of male breadwinner households (where the household were dependent upon a male full time breadwinner with the female partner not working or working only part time), dual earner households (where both partners were working full time) and single parent families, where only one partner was present (in most cases this was the mother).

These combinations were not necessarily typical for all countries - for example, in Austria it was difficult to find dual earner families with small children and in Denmark it was difficult to find male breadwinner households. In all countries it proved difficult to interview households from lower socio-economic groups. The final distribution of the sample was as follows in Table 1:

Table 1: Final Distribution of Sample

	Dual earner	One-and-a half earner or male breadwinner	Single parent		Total respondents	Total households
			Female	Male		
Austria	4	3	1	1	16	9
Denmark	4	3	1	1	16	9
Hungary(*)	4	4	2	1	13	11
Italy	4	3	2	0	16	9
Poland	5	3	1	0	17	9
Portugal	5	2	1	1	16	9
United Kingdom	4	4	1	0	17	9
Total	30	22	9	4	111	65
*in Hungary only one partner was interviewed						

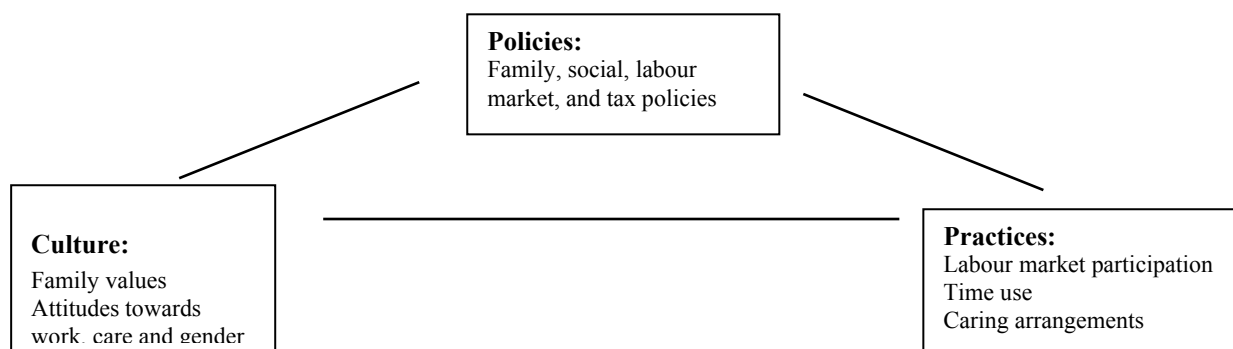
All interviews were recorded, fully transcribed and translated into English then made available on the intra-net web site for the use of all the research team. They were precoded using NVivo according to agreed categories and the main report was written by the Italian team lead by Rossana Triffiletti (see Deliverable 5). In this way insights provided by the large scale data analysis could be elaborated and clarified using the qualitative interviews to give a better idea of why different strategies emerged.

2 Main findings

In the next section we summarise the main findings under the headings: policies, culture and practices. The results draw upon the various workpackages and a summary of the main findings is produced at the end.

Following the initial project orientation, work and care were considered in terms of three analytical factors: policies, cultures and practices (Haas 2005). Firstly in terms of *policies*, the institutional conditions that frame work and care in different countries were considered at both a national and an international (EU) level. Secondly, in terms of *cultures* we looked at the values and norms governing work and care in different national contexts (OECD 2002). Do families prefer women to go to work or stay home and look after children? To what extent are fathers expected to be involved in these arrangements? Finally, in terms of *practices* we considered what sorts of arrangements families actually made, recognising that this will be to some extent an outcome of institutional arrangements and cultural orientations, but will also reflect pragmatic necessities of managing work and childcare under different circumstances. The results draw upon a combination of qualitative and quantitative materials analysed in the various workpackages.

Figure 1: Analytical levels



We recognize these dimensions as being equally important on a theoretical basis and that we have to treat them separately as well as analysing their interdependencies. The final report follows these main dimensions.

2.1. Policies

In terms of policies we first of all draw upon Deliverable 3 to describe the typology of work and care policies. Then we summarise the findings for European policies with a focus upon flexicurity and finally we look at what policies encourage mothers back to work (Deliverable 6).

2.1.1. A typology of workcare policies for Europe

In order to provide a framework for policies across Europe, we turned to a classification of work and care regimes (for full report see Deliverable 3 written by Thomas Boje and Anders Erjnaes). Typologies of policies are a common way of understanding the variations across Europe (Esping-Andersen 1990; Bonoli 1997), but this is the first attempts to comprehensively classify work and care policies in terms of “regimes” based upon empirical data of EU studies of family policy and the European Social Survey for 2004. The typology of work and care was developed using four variables measuring different aspects of the strategies pursued by European households in coping with the work-family balance – childcare take up for children aged 0-3, effective parental leave, take-up of part-time among women and finally spending on family policy. Based on these four indicators the 27 EU Member States were clustered into five groups representing different caring models.

The typology is based upon three policy areas, which have had impact on the nature of the work-care relationships in the families and on the patterns of work take-up among men and women in the EU Member States. The policy areas were:

- Family policy and working time. The welfare systems differ in terms of how strictly the labour market and the working hours are regulated. Here we will primarily focus on how to balance time for work and for caring through part-time work.
- Parental leave schemes are one core element of family. These schemes differ widely in terms of eligibility, duration and benefit. The parental leave schemes are typically extended in countries where family policy highly emphasizes family care
- Childcare system is prioritised in countries where women’s take up of gainful employment is strongly emphasized. Also here we find great differences among the EU Member States concerning provision, types of childcare and governance of childcare.

Based on these variables, 21 EU Member States were clustered (this excluded Cyprus, Malta, Bulgaria, Rumania, Slovak Republic, and Ireland due to insufficient data sources). Five different clusters were identified based on the chosen variables. Below is a short description of each cluster based on the variables used in the analysis.

Cluster 1: Extensive family policy model

Four countries are included in this cluster: the two Scandinavian countries (Denmark and Sweden) and the two countries normally characterized by a pro-natalistic family policy (France and Belgium).

This cluster is characterised by a high level of childcare take up among children aged 0-3 years combined with comprehensive rights to parental leave in combination with generous payment during most of the parental leave period. The level of spending on family policy is high. These countries are in Lewis’s (1992) breadwinner-typology classified as modified or weak breadwinner countries. In all four countries there is a strong drive for women’s integration into the labour force and towards women’s social and economic independence. In Sweden children have nearly no impact on women’s rate of employment while employment rates for Danish mothers with one child are even higher than for non-mothers (Abrahamson, Boje et al. 2005). Mothers with children aged 0 to 5 in France and Belgium have employment rates lower than in Scandinavia. For French women it is especially the case among mothers with two or more children. On the other hand a relatively high proportion of women in the four countries are in part-time employment. About one-third of the female employees in all four countries have part-time jobs, when “part-time employment” is defined as self-declared

part-time. However the majority of women in part-time jobs in this cluster of countries are working long part-time - more than 20 hours a week.

Cluster 2: Short leave, part-time model

The Netherlands and the United Kingdom are both characterised as a short-leave, part-time regime. In both countries the period of parental leave is short and badly paid. There is a modest level of public childcare for children aged 0 – 3. The childcare take up is typically combined with women working part-time. When it comes to the labour market system the two countries differ both in relation to social protection and regulation of flexibility.

The UK is characterised by a market-driven labour market with low social protection and there are very few restrictions for employers employing workers on low wage and variable working hours. If employees are low paid or in part-time jobs they are not eligible for social security and the employers are not required to pay social contribution (OECD 2005:214). Furthermore, British women are often forced to take up the low paid part-time jobs after maternity leave because of insufficient paid leave and lack of childcare facilities (Plantenga and Hansen 1999; OECD 2005).

The Netherlands is characterised by a working-time regime, which is more regulated than the British labour market concerning employment contract and social protection. The social partners are highly involved in regulating the working condition as in the Scandinavian countries, but in recent years the Dutch labour market system has become more deregulated in an attempt to balance flexibility and security in employment relations. This has encouraged individualised arrangements but without a comprehensive family policy for parental leave and with lack of childcare facilities it has been impossible to achieve even a modest level of gender equity in terms of work and care. Consequently the Netherlands holds a position in the bottom among the European countries on equal opportunities.

Since the period that this clustering was done, however, the UK has provided better childcare facilities with a longer period of maternity leave.

Cluster 3: The long-leave, part-time model

This cluster includes Germany, Austria and Luxembourg, which in other typologies are characterised with a strong breadwinner model (Lewis 1992; Esping-Andersen 1999) and Esping-Andersen 1999). These countries have long parental leave, which is relatively well paid. Therefore, the level of spending on family policy is high due to generous paid parental leave for a long period.

For most mothers the period on parental leave has traditionally been followed by a longer period outside the labour market caring for the children. Part-time employment is especially widespread among mothers when they take up gainful employment after years of caring. In both countries it is part-time employment in unstable jobs with few weekly working hours. Typically mothers in these countries have been forced to leave the market to take care of the children because the provision of childcare facilities is very restricted and that which is available, assumes primarily part-time caring.

During recent years a growing number of women in both Germany and Austria have taken up part-time work combined with caring for children, but their part-time jobs are typically short-hours in order to reconcile them with the caring obligations. Problems of getting back into regular employment having been out of work for a long period because of care obligations seem to be more serious among mothers in countries within this model, primarily because of the extended period most mothers stay on parental leave. Another serious problem for mothers who want to return to work after parental leave is the lack of part-time jobs fitting

into the operating hours of the childcare institutions, which are typically only open during a restricted number of hours. Furthermore the number of childcare places is restricted and child caring has to rely on grandparents to a large extent.

Cluster 4: Family Care Model

Included in this cluster is all the Southern European countries (excluding Portugal) and two Baltic countries. There are countries characterized by a low proportion of women in gainful employment and consequently few women in part-time jobs. The period of parental leave varies among these countries but in all countries the parental leave is badly paid, forcing most mothers to rely on a male breadwinner. In the Southern European countries the provision of childcare facilities is low and when they are available it is normally on short opening hours and often they are expensive. As a consequence of low payment of parental leave and restricted provision of public childcare facilities, the spending on family policy is low in the countries covered by this cluster.

Cluster 5: Extended parental leave model

This cluster is characterised by countries with very long periods of effective parental leave. Included in the cluster are the three Central European countries Hungary, Poland and Czech Republic plus Lithuania and Finland. The extended parental leave usually finishes when the child is three years old and entitled to go to kindergarten, which is extensively provided in these countries. All countries in this model have low levels of take up of childcare and relatively few women in part-time work. Finland deviates to some extent having a higher childcare coverage and more women in part-time jobs than the other countries but still have possibilities of extended parental leave. In countries classified under the extended parental leave model women typically stay at home three years or more caring for their children. After the period on parental leave the children are cared for mostly by family arrangements or privately organised childcare.

The economic situation in Central and Eastern Europe forces both the man and the woman in the household to contribute to the survival of the family economy. Due to low level of wages it has been a condition for a decent standard of living that both adult household members were full-time earners and for many low wages have forced them to take up an extra job in the 'second economy'. The high level of employment for both men and women in Central and Eastern Europe has, however, not been transferred into a more equal division of labour within the family. Consequently, women remain the principally responsible for care and domestic life both when they are on parental leave and during periods when they are in full-time employment.

Finland deviates in some respect from the other countries. Here we find a real choice between paid family care where one of the parents is paid for caring the child at home or formalised childcare in public institutions. These arrangements – both family care and public childcare - are relatively generously paid, which also explains the high level of spending on family policy in Finland. The parental choice in Finland between family care and public childcare is also the main reason for the relatively high level of part-time employment among mothers with small children. Therefore, the typology differs from other social policy classifications which tend to put the Nordic countries into one group.

The UK and Portugal do not fit comfortably within the typology either. In Portugal women are more likely to return full-time to work, even though maternity benefits and public childcare facilities are limited. In the UK, the Labour government has extended the period of maternity leave and provides more public childcare facilities, albeit within the "liberal" model.

The results are summarised in Table 2, along with the spending on family policy as a percent of GDP in the different countries

Table 2: Typology of work and care policies

Work-care Regime	Spending on Childcare	Key Features ²
Extensive Family Policy	Sweden (3.1%) ³ , Denmark 3.9%), Belgium (2%), France (2.5%)	High level childcare 0 -3 years, with generous payment of parental leave. High proportion women working part-time
Short leave, Part -time	UK (1.7%), Netherlands (1.2%)	Short period of poorly paid parental leave, low provision of public childcare for 0 – 3 year olds and high proportion of mothers working part-time.
Long Leave Part-time	Germany (2.9%), Austria (3.0%), Luxembourg (3.9%)	Long period of relatively well – paid parental leave followed by mothers who do return to the labour market working part-time.
Family Care	Estonia (1.7), Slovenia (2.0), Spain (0.7%), Latvia 1.2%), Greece 1.7%), Italy (1.2%), Portugal (1.3%)	Period of parental leave varies but badly paid . Mothers either withdraw from the labour market or return to the labour market after a short maternal leave ⁴ .
Extended Parental Leave ¹	Hungary (2.5%), Poland (0.9%), Czech Republic (1.6%), Lithuania (1.1%), Finland (2.9%)	Long period of parental leave with women returning to full-time employment when they have exhausted their entitlement to leave. Finland deviates someone what as there is a greater provision of public care for 0-3 year olds and more women working part-time.

1. Bulgaria also has this regime but was not included in the Workcare analysis.

2.Part-time work is working less than 30 hours a week. In the Scandinavian countries, including Finland, part-time is generally relatively secure long-part-time whereas in the UK, Netherlands , Germany and Austria many women work in short-part -time jobs which with the exception of those in the Netherlands are often marginal and insecure.

3.Figure in brackets % GDP spent on Family policy

4. Portugal and Slovenia are different from the other countries in this group because the activity among mothers in these countries is relatively high. On the other hand, both countries are characterised by a strong reliance on family care and a very limited institutional care for small children below 3 years.

In terms of our research findings the extensive family policy regime comes closest to one which is likely to meet European policy objectives and the aspiration parents have for combining paid employment and caring. In this respect an important finding is that the extensive family policy model is not invariably the most expensive option; the long leave, part- time and extended parental leave models are comparable in costs. The ‘cheap’ alternatives are when there is a very low level of public support for families. The highest level of public investment in supporting families is in Denmark (3.9% GDP) and the lowest level in Spain (0.7% GDP). However, the levels of investment are much the same in Sweden (3.1% GDP) which provides high levels of support for families to work and care and Austria (3%) which encourages fathers to have paid employment and mothers to become full-time carers. The costs of the extended family leave model are not much below the costs of the extensive family care model (in effect long leave for mothers).

2.1.2 What policies can help get mothers back into work?

The Lisbon Agenda set out in 2000 was concerned to raise the labour force participation rates of people in the labour force across Europe, especially those of women, which varied significantly between countries. For women, having children was often incompatible with maintaining a continuous career in the labour force and was the main reason why women dropped out of work. Once out of work, it was often difficult for them to re-enter employment and their choice of jobs might be limited.

All governments have been concerned to develop policies to improve the participation rates of women and tackling the working situation of mothers was one of the main targets of their policy agendas. Yet there were very different ways of doing this and the different policy options fitted with different welfare regimes. Some governments, such as France or the Scandinavian countries offered comprehensive childcare facilities for working mothers to enable them to combine work and family. The role of parental leave policies including wage replacement during the first period of child care is also an important pillar of the Nordic model and is increasingly promoted by the European Commission as well. Other governments, such as the UK, offered tax incentives but left it to families to seek their own solutions on the private market. Yet other governments, such as those of Southern Europe assumed that families would care for young children somehow and this was therefore not a concern for the government. But what was the best policy?

The results are described by Janos Köllő and Ágota Scharle in Deliverable 6, where they investigated which of these policy options was really most successful in raising the labour force participation of women by looking at the effects of both cash income supports and child care services on mother's labour supply across Europe using the Labour Force Survey.

They found that providing day care was the most effective way of getting mothers into work, but this varied by educational level. Providing day care services had a strong effect on getting low educated mothers into work, whilst providing cash for care was a disincentive. Among highly educated mothers, by contrast, neither cash nor day care had much effect on return to work, except in transition countries. A plausible explanation for the strong positive coefficient for higher educated women in CEE might be that the private provision of child care is less developed in these countries, so that public facilities are important even for those families who could otherwise afford private services as well. Among mothers with middle levels of education, a conversion of cash transfers into child care would yield the highest employment rate, especially in transition countries.

János Köllő then tested this proposition even further by taking Hungary as a test case and using both survey and administrative data for analysis. Hungary has the highest level of per-child per-GDP cash expenditure on parental leave in the OECD – a level three times the OECD average, two times that of Austria and 1.5 times that of Sweden. The child support system is heavily biased towards cash payments with a small proportion of children enrolled in day care institutions under the age of 3.

This is a result of a series of reforms introduced by the Hungarian government to encourage fertility, cut potential unemployment and support mothers at home. In 1995 a reform was introduced whereby maternity leave grants were extended to three years and available on a means-tested basis, but also cut the level of benefit compared to what had been available previously. In 2006 this was changed into a universal benefit available to all mothers irrespective of labour market status. Neither of these reforms had much impact on levels of labour market participation due to the high costs associated with maternal employment (travel costs, day care costs), the low quality of day care institutions and high returns on home production.

The authors concluded that manipulating the costs of cash policies is not an effective way of getting women back to work after having children and that maternal employment could be better supported by the development of day-care institutions and active support for working mothers. Consistent with this, they find that Hungarian levels of maternal participation in the labour force are among the lowest in the OECD as well as in Europe generally. Maternal employment is not only low, but it fell substantially in the period between 1993 and 2005 when the reforms were introduced.

The evaluation of such policies with respect to the labour market participation should take into account that child-related public policies are often designed to attain other purposes: for example to tackle child poverty or to influence fertility decisions. Even though the main aim is related to labour market participation, there can also be unintended consequences.

In this respect the authors looked at what percentage of GDP would be needed to be shifted from cash to day care in old member states on the one hand and new member states on the other (using the Labour Force Survey). They found that the amounts would vary according to the educational level of the mother. For primary educated mothers, it would require a shift of 1.9 per cent for those from old member states and 12.6 per cent for new members states. In the case of secondary educated mothers it would require a 1.7 per cent shift in the old member states and 14.2 per cent in the new member states. For graduate mothers the amounts would be 1.3 per cent and 15.5 per cent for old and new member states respectively. Therefore, it would take much larger shift of resources in new member states than in old ones to get women with small children back into work and a larger shift to get higher educated women back into work than lower educated ones. The low wages and lack of child care facilities are partly behind this finding.

2.1.2 EU Policies for work and care: flexicurity and the need for a gendered approach

EU policies have been focused upon raising labour force participation generally and among women in particular. This is reflected in the Lisbon Agenda in 2000 with its targets for male and female workforce participation and is reinforced more recently in the Renewed Social Agenda. At the same time the EU has been concerned to sustain the quality of life for families and for workers and to combat falling fertility rates which threaten the sustainability of the European welfare states. One solution to these sometimes contradictory policy goals is to promote labour market flexibility but also security of employment sometimes called “flexicurity”.

Whilst flexibility is often seen as necessary to ensure European competitiveness, it is mostly perceived as employer-led and a way of eroding workplace security and working conditions. However, flexibility can also be employee-led and our research shows that it is an important factor in managing work and care. It is clear from previous research that job insecurity is seen particularly negatively by employees and that the extent to which employees control this flexibility can be a factor in providing either positive or negative outcomes (Wallace, Haas et al. 2009). Flexicurity policies have been important in trying to enable flexible employment alongside employment continuity and social security. The countries that have become best known for introducing these policies are Denmark and the Netherlands, although they do it in very different ways.

Jane Lewis and Ania Plomien examine what these flexicurity policies mean at a European level as well as in those countries which are seen as the pioneers of flexicurity (Denmark and the Netherlands), but they find that on closer scrutiny these policies are not necessarily as positive as they first appear. Flexicurity has become a prominent policy strategy at the European Union (EU) level since the mid-2000s, dominating the European Employment

Strategy (EES), and also informing the wider approach to reform of labour markets and social policies, including proposals regarding labour law (Communities) 2006). The main idea of flexicurity is to promote flexibility and security simultaneously for paid workers – the policy documents employ gender-neutral language - using a combination of policy instruments. The policy strategy aims to promote greater competitiveness and growth: raising employment rates at all stages of the lifecourse and making workplaces more ‘adaptable’, by offering more flexible contract arrangements (external flexibility) and achieving more flexible patterns of work organisation (internal flexibility). Policy instruments intended to recast the work/welfare relationship, which has always been central to the workings of modern welfare states, are favoured.

In many respects flexicurity continues the established focus on employment-led social policy (O'Connor 2005) whereby the modernisation of social security systems has been urged since the end of the 1990s so as to tie cash benefits more firmly to labour market participation and/or training, in the effort to make social policy ‘a productive factor’ (Communities) 2000). The main aims of flexicurity are to secure labour market entry, maintain labour market attachment, and enable progression up the ladder for workers. The European Commission’s statement on the ‘common principles’ that should inform the pursuit of flexicurity in Member States stressed the importance of ensuring that workers were able to make ‘successful moves’ from job to job, and move into better jobs, as well as securing flexibility at the level of the firm (Communities) 2007). Thus security is geared above all to maintaining the adult’s status as a paid worker and to income security in the form of wages, the point being to promote employment rather than job security via programmes designed to provide support for getting into, or back to work (in the form of ‘life-long learning’ and ‘active labour market policies’), as well as benefits during what are envisaged will be short periods of unemployment. Security is depicted as an integral part of the package, and the Commission has thus sought to put distance between flexicurity and the ‘Anglo-Saxon’ model of ‘flexibility first’(Keune and Jepson 2007) which in parts of continental Europe is widely associated above all with greater insecurity in the labour market for employees and worsening working conditions.

The flexicurity strategy assumes an individualised ‘adult worker model family’ (Lewis 2001), with both men and women in the labour market. The 2000 Lisbon Council set a target of 60 per cent for women’s labour market participation in Member States by 2010 and the need to secure higher female employment rates has been written into the successive reformulations of the Employment Guidelines accompanying the EES. While the flexicurity strategy is expected to increase women’s employment rates, and women are already more ‘flexible’ employees than men, making 60 per cent of ‘transitions’ between jobs and in and out of the employment relationship, largely as a result of their responsibility for the unpaid work of care. They also tend to have flexible patterns of work, largely because such a high proportion work part-time. Given that the quality of women’s jobs and their pay levels are also often low, the emphasis on security alongside flexibility thus appears to have much to offer to this group of workers. However, neither flexicurity as a policy strategy, nor the academic analysis which has informed it, have addressed the issue of the relationship between paid work and unpaid care work (Jepson 2005), the profoundly gendered inequalities associated with it, or the kind of work and family policies that might be needed to address it. The flexicurity strategy has focused on the combination of policies needed to achieve an integrated approach to flexibility and security and, while insisting on the benefits for ‘weaker’ groups in the labour market, it has not differentiated the labour market position or needs of particular groups of workers within this category.

The flexicurity policy documents make little mention of gender and do not specify measures of gender equality. The tendency has been to assume that the rise in women’s employment

rates signifies increasing gender equality and greater economic independence. But these cannot be assumed, and nor are the policies advocated as part of a flexicurity package sufficient to ensure adequate progress towards them, focusing as they do on supply-side policies that are designed in the main to enhance human capital and re-balance rights and responsibilities in welfare states. The flexicurity policy strategy does not address institutional and structural barriers to greater equality in the labour market.

The two countries held up as exemplars of high flexibility and high security (Denmark and the Netherlands) both have high female employment rates, but are very different in terms of the position of women in relation to paid and unpaid work. The Danish model relies on, above all, high public spending on services and offers more to women by way of equality in the labour market, although there are problems of sexual segregation and career progression. Furthermore, as analysis of gender equality in the Nordic countries shows, only in Sweden are men as well as women given substantial encouragement to do unpaid work. The Netherlands by contrast has relied much more on the creation of atypical work for women, much of which has been made secure in terms of pro-rata pay and benefits. It has argued that the Dutch one-and-a-half earner model was built from the bottom-up and enjoys considerable popular support (something the attitudinal data also suggests)(Visser 2000), but voluntary inequality may still be a matter for policy.

However, there are important differences between the high paid and the low paid in terms of flexicurity on the one hand and women and men on the other. Flexicurity aims to improve both labour market access and job quality. Women have often secured access to the labour market via flexible jobs. In addition, non-standard careers and working days may serve to call into question the traditional male careers and working patterns, but it seems that the way in which flexibility is gendered threatens to exacerbate the patterns of sexual segregation and unequal pay that already exist. Carework, which is everywhere typical service work for women, is low paid, and no country has found a way of offering much by way of even adequate compensation for informal care work. It is therefore necessary that policies to promote gender inequality in the workplace and the issues raised by responsibility for care work be addressed by the flexicurity strategy.

2.2 The importance of good public childcare provision.

One finding to emerge from this policy analysis is that child care provision is more comprehensive in those societies (such as the Nordic ones) where children are seen as the responsibility of the whole society and not just of the parents. This is consistent with policies framed for children and youth in which they are seen as the potential citizens of the society as a whole and their growth and development as something to be nurtured to the highest professional standards (Wallace and Bendit 2009). In Southern countries, in the UK and increasingly in Eastern European countries, children are seen as the responsibility of the family and therefore it is assumed that the family will make private arrangements for their care.

In the qualitative interviews it also emerged that since the highest importance was attached to the cognitive and educational development of children, it was not just the provision of care which was important, but also the quality of care. Parents valued high standards of professionalised assistance in the care of their children, but this was seldom available. In most countries child care is seen as a low paid and low status profession. The Nordic countries are an exception in this respect and it is in these countries that parents have the most confidence in public childcare institutions rather than private ones.

However, it was also clear from the qualitative analysis (see the Deliverable 8 by Claire Wallace and Pamela Abbott) that parents valued flexible solutions because there were many contingencies and emergencies involved in bringing up small children which could not be foreseen. Even in countries with extensive childcare provision, this was not necessarily provided in a flexible way, so that parents still needed supplementary support.

3 Cultures of Work and Care

When we began the work on the project, we expected to find that there were distinct cultures of work and care across the European Union which would shape household strategies. This was in line with most of the research in this field which has stressed regional variations in social norms with regard to the family, with northern countries having more egalitarian family structures, southern countries being more family centred with women withdrawing from the workforce on having children and a strong emphasis on extended family, and continental European countries (Germany, Austria) having conservative “male breadwinner” regimes. What we found instead was that whilst attitudes did reflect these different cultural norms, they were not in fact as varied as we might expect and when we came to strategies for managing work and care (see next section of this report) there was in fact little difference for parents in different parts of Europe. The main findings from the analysis of cultures of work and care was that it was regarded increasingly normal for mothers to expect to work across the whole of the European Union, even in those countries where women traditionally stayed at home with children and despite the lack of childcare support in many European Union countries. However, there are still important regional variations in the way in which couples expect to organise themselves in different European countries. As mothers are increasingly found in the labour force, fathers are increasingly found in the home and we therefore conclude that there has been a shift in both directions within the families of parents with young children.

3.1 Working mothers increasingly seen as the norm

There is substantial evidence that there are regional variations in the orientations to work and care across the European Union, which some have termed “gender regimes” (Lewis 1992; Pfau-Effinger 2004). Traditionally it has been assumed that the Nordic countries are shaped by regimes which emphasise the full time employment of fathers and mothers and more egalitarian gender relationships, whilst in the South the “male breadwinner model” was more common with women expected to stay at home and care for children. In central European countries such as Germany the male breadwinner model also prevailed, whilst in the former communist Eastern European countries the lack of part time work meant that women left the labour market full time to rear children or they worked full time, but there was a retreat from the full time employment of women and extensive provision of day care that had characterised the former communist regimes.

Now we find a general movement towards the increasingly full time employment of women in many European countries, something which was aimed for in the Lisbon Agenda and in European policy generally and which represents a major shift in European labour market behaviour, although attitudes to care may not have changed so radically. One paper (Deliverable 4) written by Analia Torres, Bernardo Coelho, Ines Cardoso and Rui Brites Paula Jeronimo mapped these varying orientations to work and care in different European countries taking into account differences between men and women and between work and care, using three rounds of the European Social Survey (2002, 2004, 2006). It found that there was relatively little difference in the attitudes of men and women. Both men and women across Europe regarded employment as important and they were more likely to see it as enjoyable rather than stressful. Both men and women were likely to find time spent with the family as

enjoyable rather than stressful. Hence, both spheres were important for both sexes. The results are set out in Figure 1, showing not much variation across European countries in terms of the various questions about parental roles in the European Social Survey.

These propositions were tested by constructing a gender role index. Although the Nordic countries were more egalitarian in their attitudes, there was a remarkable consensus regarding work and care roles across Europe. Most people felt that a woman should cut down on work to care for her family, but they also tended to agree that a man's responsibility was just as important in the home. The majority disagreed that men had more right to work when jobs were scarce. Therefore whilst there were still differences across Europe in attitude to gender roles, with Nordic countries still being most egalitarian and Southern countries least so, these differences were not as striking as might be expected. When we turn to practices in the next section, we find these distinctions becoming even more blurred. Within countries, we find women have more egalitarian views as do the more highly educated.

However, when it came to whether women should be working if they have children under three, more varied attitudes emerged. In this respect it was clear that in the Nordic countries this was regarded as acceptable but not in the UK, Germany, Estonia and Switzerland. There was moderate approval in Belgium, Poland, Slovenia, Spain and Portugal.

The conclusion was that attitudes to the family are changing. Whilst women still do most of the work and are expected to give up their employment to care for children, we find that women are investing more of their lives in the workplace, whilst men are investing more of their lives in the home. This was brought home in the qualitative interviews too, where both men and women with young children took care of them (although women did so more) and the role of the father was seen as important, not just as a distanced authority figure, but as someone who was deeply involved in child care.

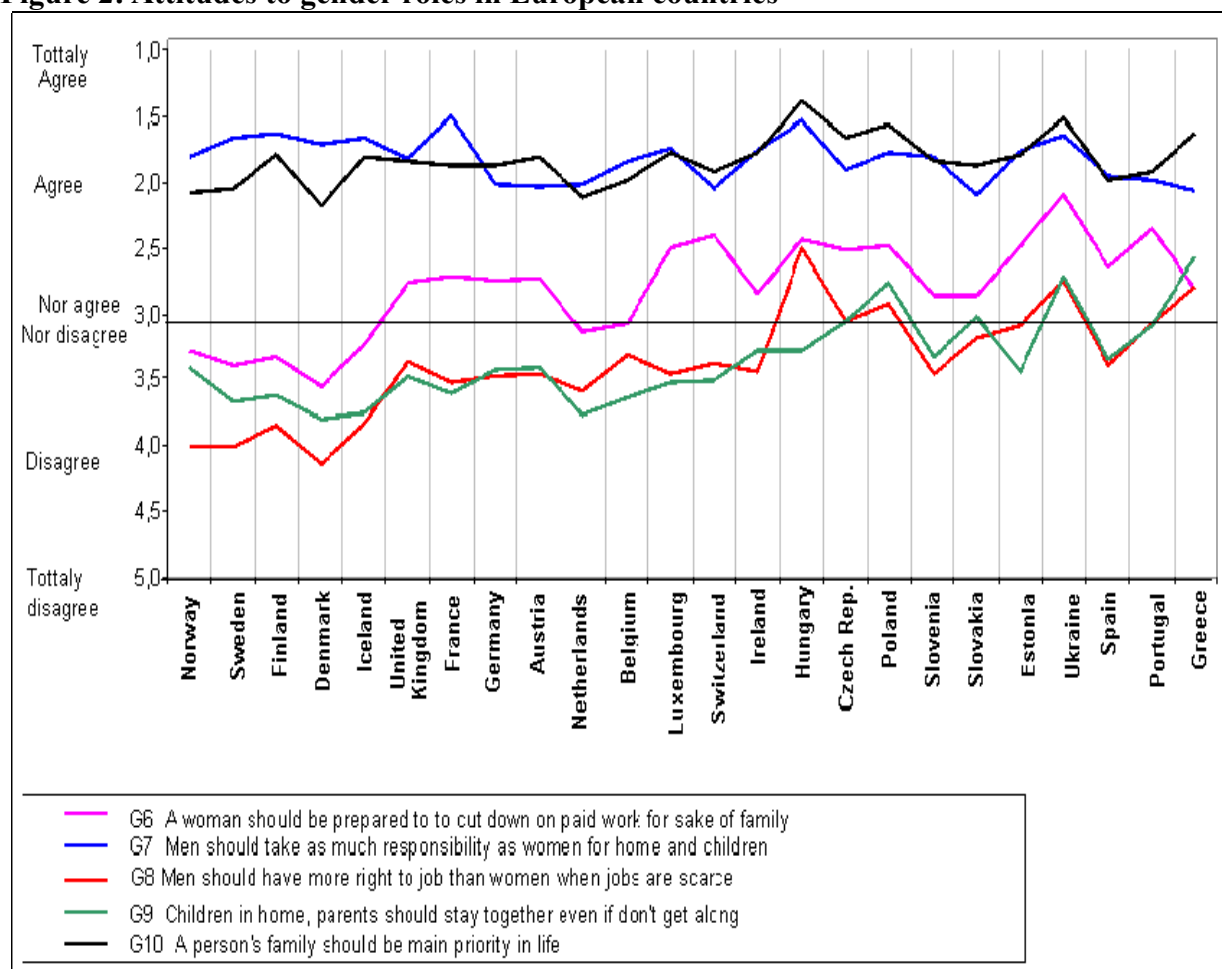
However, the decision for mothers to work depends not only upon care cultures but also upon the availability of formal care, its affordability and its quality (which is linked to the qualifications of the carers and how professionalised they are).

The work of Barbara Haas and Nadia Steiber in Deliverable 4 however emphasise that many traditional attitudes still persist at a normative level. Negotiations in the households and the decisions concerning the division of labour in paid work, unpaid work and caring are not only a result of socio-economic and institutional factors but also highly dependent of norms, values and practices in the societies (Pfau-Effinger 2004). Pfau-Effinger uses the term 'gender arrangement' to describe the complex interaction between cultural and institutional conditions in determining the different work-care models in Europe. Despite significant initiatives at national as well as European level in promoting a better balance between work and care obligations in the household the distribution of paid work, unpaid work and care is still characterised by the traditional gender contract and which is highly unequal (Plantenga, Schippers et al. 1999; Pfau-Effinger 2004; Haas, Steiber et al. 2006).

There has in this context been a growing recognition of the need to place households as a central focus of research. "Household strategies" (Wallace 2002) provides a centrifugal point where "decisions" are made usually between men and women concerning who is involved in paid employment or caring, and under what conditions. Which norms and perceptions concerning the 'gender arrangements' shape the choices and preferences for a gendered division of paid work and unpaid work. On the one hand, the outcome is very clearly influenced by the structure of welfare state provisions, tax regimes and transfers to family members, the opportunities for employment and "family-friendly" working arrangements (Gornick, Meyers et al. 2004; Crompton, Brockman et al. 2005; Crompton and Lyonette 2005). On the other hand, we should not neglect the importance of different gender norms and

preferences concerning work and care (Hakim 2000; Pfau-Effinger 2004). Here the article arising from the project by Steiber and Haas (2009) can be cited (Steiber and Haas 2009).

Figure 2: Attitudes to gender roles in European countries



Source: European Social Survey 2004

3.2 Fathers more involved in childrearing

Several of the workpackages have noted the increasing role of fathers in childcare but it is most clearly illustrated in the qualitative work, Deliverable 5 by Rossana Triffiletti and Luca Salmieri. There are a number of reasons for this. First, they note the increasing concern of parents for the cognitive and educational development of their children, something that fathers must contribute towards. Secondly, fathers perhaps contribute more because of the employment of their partners, although we should note that women still do the most caring work (see Deliverable 8 by Claire Wallace and Pamela Abbott).

Even if several scholars underlined that the parental roles of both fathers and mothers are changing precisely because their gender contract now has to be reformulated, it seems undeniable that the boundaries in which new fathers operate have been enlarged more considerably.

Fathers begin to describe their daily work-care balance in very similar terms of a tight constraint based on children's real needs, as the mothers alone used to do just a few years ago:

So that the afternoon with the children is really mine. She is sometimes there, such as today, but really only because our daughter is ill. Otherwise it's me. [...] Because that's when they

get tired, that's when they get grumpy. You then have to take care of dinner, and then you also have to have time for them, yes. So to continue working is only later possible, when they are already in bed and sleeping. And that, I mean, that is too. (Austrian father)

In some countries, this change in attitude involves being aware of the importance and worth of taking a paternal leave or a dedicated spell of parental leave:

[Would you recommend your friends to take parental leave?] Yes, definitely. And I would personally do it again if I were to have more children. It was worth all the minutes. [...] I got to know my children in a different way, although I already knew my children. But to be with them 24-7 where you are alone with them for 8 hours a day teaches you some new things. I have been alone in situations where I really didn't know what to do and then you just have to find out. (Danish father)

[How long were you at home? (leave)] 45 days. On one occasion I split them. [Why, you are able to split them?] Yes, on another occasion I took them all together, my motive was that it was the second child and so the work was outstanding and I decided to give my company a hand, for me it was about contact. [For you yes, for others no?] Because they don't evaluate the work for the reasons they should evaluate it. Now if your company or your work that won't let you do it, that's one thing, but if legislation prevents it. (Italian father)

However, in general fathers did not take paternity leave, even if they wanted to because it was poorly rewarded and would result in the loss of income for the household. Paternity leave is available in all European countries and yet the take up is low everywhere, except in Sweden where specific incentives are provided.

Nevertheless, this still involves less stress for fathers than for mothers, who in greater measure still make sure that their working needs can be compromised on the basis of their children's needs. The fathers are undoubtedly learning to engage with their young children with a presence that is not only playful or of leisure, but they mostly still do it within the 'legitimate windows of time' allowed by their jobs. In contrast mothers, if necessary, will even widen these windows or change working conditions that might even be convenient, if they go against the symbolic appointments:

At the same time it is still true that many "new fathers" continue to endorse a traditional attitude about kind the natural biological priority of mothers even in the gender egalitarian Nordic countries:

[Do you think that men and women have different ways of caring?] Yes definitely. And a child needs both. I think it is a matter of biology, too. The mother is closer to the baby the first 6 month because she breast-feeds them. That's also one of the reasons for saying that the children need a father, too. Sometimes when I collect them early, I look forward to spend time with them but in practice they often just have some fruit when we get home and then they play in their own room and then time quickly turns 5 without having played with them. I guess that's okay, too, but it would have been different had it been Marianne who collected them earlier. Then they would probably have been more with her. They can do that with me as well but not as much as with Marianne. (Danish father).

3.3 Attitudes to work and care

We can look at what we termed normative gender regimes using the European Social Survey and the International Social Survey Programme. This is reported in Workpackage 7 by Jackie O'Reilly, Tiziana Nazio and John MacInnes. Here the approach was to take three contrasting countries in terms of gender regimes: Denmark, Spain and the UK. A series of questions asked individuals about their own levels of approval or disapproval of non-traditional gender practices, and how they thought others would view these.

Although work and care has been extensively researched, there is still limited attention to the importance of attitudinal research on the perceived social stigma associated with maternal employment. The research found a difference between the attitudes held by individuals themselves and what they perceived others as thinking. In other words, their evaluation of the cultural norms of the society was more conservative than when they evaluated the situation for themselves. This indicates that there are still strong and recognised gendered norms of behaviour with regard to “gender regimes” but individuals would not necessarily apply them to themselves, and as we shall see in the next section, their actual behaviour did not necessarily fit with these norms. When comparing countries, attitudes in Denmark were the most permissive, and in Poland the most conservative, which is what we might expect based upon religion and gender arrangements. In communist countries, attitudes are generally conservative, despite the tradition of women working full time, on account of the fact that the domestic division of labour was never questioned and there was even a backlash against communist egalitarianism in the post-communist period (Watson 1993). British respondents had the highest proportions expressing neutral attitudes to non-traditional gender practices. Yet when asked about mothers with small children working full-time there was a core of approximately 30% of British respondents who disapproved of this, which was much higher than in all the other countries. Despite more conservative attitudes in general in Poland, there was less stigma associated with mothers with children under three working full-time. Therefore, when it comes to the situation of parents with very young children (less than three) we find more variation than is the case with older children. This partly reflects cultural norms but also the fact that there is often no childcare provision for small children in many countries. In countries that have adopted the “cash for care” policies that we saw earlier, such as Austria, Hungary and the Czech Republic, women are subsidised to stay at home and care for children over this period, as was described in the previous section of the report (Ungerson 1995).

The *Workcare* project was particularly keen to consider ideas of capability – not just if people had resources, but if they were able to use the resources to achieve the things they wanted to do (Sen 1999). Measures of well-being, capability (ability to do what one wants) and economic ease were higher in Denmark than in other countries, which meant that Danish parents had more options open to them. Therefore, both policies and economic resources enabled parents to be able to achieve their aspirations.

Part-time employment was seen favourably by respondents in the ISSP, but there were often fewer opportunities to take it up. This implies that part time working arrangements would be appreciated if they were more widespread across Europe. At present they tend to be limited to certain countries. However, we have to bear in mind that part-time workers in many countries suffer worse employment prospects and may have less social security than full time workers. Also, that in some countries, such as the new member states, people cannot afford to take on part time work. This relates to the general need for flexibility which is discussed later.

4 Practices

The third field which we explored was that of practices – how do parents actually manage work and care? This may not reflect their cultural attitudes and whilst it would certainly be influenced by the policy framework, this may be in ways that one could not predict from the policies themselves. In this section we consider transitions between work and care, the role of networks in managing work and care and the patterns of practices identified by our respondents in their accounts.

4.1 Transitions between work and care: the longer term perspective

In Deliverable 7 by Jackie O'Reilly, Tiziana Nazio and John MacInnes, the European Household Panel Survey was used to look at household transitions between work and care we were able to combine and compare the activities of both parents. Three types of transitions were studied in the three countries: Denmark, Spain and the UK: firstly, integrative transitions or moving from non-employed into part time or full time employment; secondly, maintenance transitions or staying in work but maybe changing working times and thirdly exclusionary transitions or falling out of employment.

The findings showed that opportunities for households to combine work and care arrangements were more limited in countries like Spain with the predominance of a strong male breadwinner model than in other countries examined. Furthermore, that dual earners with both parents working full-time were more common in Denmark. Nevertheless, in all countries there was more diversity within countries than established comparative frameworks have suggested in the past.

The UK illustrated the impact of a highly flexible labour market with household arrangements being more varied and transition patterns being more eclectic than in many other European countries. Many of these transitions were around part-time employment, and especially short hour part-time jobs.

A key factor keeping people in employment in all countries examined was being in public sector employment. The public sector was important for providing stable, if low paid jobs with relatively high levels of worker-lead flexibility.

However, there was a difference between "work rich" and "work poor" households (that is households with many earners and ones with few earners). Work poor households commonly moved to a traditional male breadwinner pattern of employment, if they found work. Work rich households, on the other hand were more likely to have a greater variety of employment arrangements, buttressed by the labour force participation of members of the household.

The impact of welfare policies, or the potential lack of them, were visible in the effect of male unemployment on female activity. In Denmark and the UK women with a non-employed partner were more likely to drop out of employment than was the case in Spain where they were more likely to stay in employment, reflecting the lack of social security nets in Spain.

A key issue for understanding the impact of social policies on activity rates is to examine these in terms of joint household decisions, rather than seeing their effect solely in terms of individuals. Hence, it was the activities of both partners and their complementarity that counted as part of the household strategy.

We should also note that practices often differed from attitudes, since O'Reilly, MacInnes and Nazio compared the same countries in terms of attitudes and practices. Whilst attitudes might reflect cultural norms in different countries and regions, practices tended to reflect what activities households actually undertook.

4.2 Networks as the basis for work and care

In the qualitative work described in Deliverable 5 by Rossana Triffiletti and Luca Salmieri, networks were important for supporting parents in managing work and care. In this respect three different kinds of networks were identified: poor networks, non-poor networks and rich networks.

In principle, all families combined formal and informal resources but with different richness and flexibility. Formal resources included childcare services and schools; informal resources

included babysitters, grandmothers, friends and neighbours. In Southern and Eastern European countries, grandparents were an important resource but, in all countries, they could be a source of emergency and also regular help. Different types of care networks emerged crossing the two dimensions of abundance of resources/ stability of the care arrangement: we will briefly illustrate each of them.

Respondents were asked to fill in a diagramme with concentric circles showing their main sources of help. This revealed that some households had poor networks with few people to rely upon. Thus an Austrian motorcar painter, father of two preschool children tells the following story:

We are only the two of us, well kindergarten it is. [Yes but in case, it could also be, that you, that for instance a grandmother or a grandfather pops in once a week or something like that.] No one. [Yes, I would like to ask you to write down the situation the way you see it. Who is the most for, involved in childcare so to speak, and who less. And also including the childminders from kindergarten, where you would see them, if this is the centre point so to speak.] Centre point is the kindergarten definitely. I'll write down there. kindergarten, there. The grandmother. [Is that your mother, or the?] My mother, yes. Yes, otherwise there is. I did say no one, well. We have only the two of us to rely on unfortunately, well. My mother is rarely, well she is employed and has no time. (Austrian father)

In the countries where extensive public childcare facilities were lacking (in our sample this was Austria, Poland, Italy, Portugal and the UK), some households managed through 'shift parenting' whereby care within the partnership was de-synchronised – as one partner came in from work, the other went out. Whilst providing a workable solution it resulted in a shortage of family time to spend together (Lewis 1992; Perrons, Fagan et al. 2006).

My partner works days so I look after them during the day if they are not at school and then I work nights [laughs] which means obviously that he is at home at nights...so...odd times [...]. Ok...a normal day would be my partner like today starts work at 9 o'clock ...so the kids go off to school ...he goes out for work for 9 and he would be back home for 6.30...I will do dinner, kids will get bathed...go to bed...I will get a shower, and I go to work at 10...and then obviously I get back home at 8 in the morning and kids go to school and my partner goes to work again ...and I normally sleep when the kids are at school and only wake up in the middle of the afternoon when they come back. (British mother)

On the other hand, some respondents benefited from having rich networks, ones with many sources of help from relatives, neighbours or friends. In general when help networks are constituted by relatives substituting or integrating the resource of childcare services they are much more flexible, because in a sense relatives observe and control the general efficiency of the system, in a chain of reciprocity:

When free time centre is not open my mother and my sister stay with her, and even at night if I need it. (Portuguese mother)

Family were more important in Southern and Eastern European countries, but in fact they were important to a greater or lesser extent everywhere and especially grandparents were a main source of informal care. However, what was more unexpected in the outer circle of occasional help, is that neighbours and friends often appear and may also offer a substantial help in a non-compulsory chain of exchanges which remains egalitarian and does not impose onerous obligations

In the case of lone parents, when they live in an extended family or succeed in organizing a rich network of helpers, it is usually primarily constituted of friends and brings together a vast variety of resources, approximating a multi-dimensional network, again with a lot of possible substitutes:

I suppose I had quite a few people around...I probably had quite a lot of friends and people who worked for me that helped out with Birgit, I mean I got mother who was quite close by and stuff like that, but not really, I did pretty much most of the time by myself. (British mother)

4.3 Strategies of work and care

The original intellectual foundations of the *Workcare* project were designed to look at household strategies for managing care, on the assumption that these are becoming more important in a society where parents need to work, often full time (Wallace 2002). The analysis of the qualitative interviews identified five strategies for combining work and care when interviews from the UK, Poland, Austria, Hungary, Portugal and Italy were examined. Here we focused upon households with parents working full-time (and having children under 12 years) because these appear to be a dominant emerging type in Europe. The household strategy involves both parents and frequently other household members/carers and relatives or carers outside the household as well. The household strategy can be seen as the way in which to see practices of childcare which have had to become increasingly self-conscious to accommodate the working lives of both parents.

Shift working. This is where parents worked different shifts so that one is generally available to look after the children. This was found in all countries, but was particularly relevant for people with poor networks or living in countries where there were few child care services – Austria, Poland, Italy and the UK. In all of these countries there was insufficient formal child care provision for children under three and in the case of Austria school finishes at midday meaning that it is difficult for both parents to work full time. Shift work enables parents to care for children as a couple without having to resort to outside help. It was also a resort for the working class parents who could not afford to access private childcare arrangements so easily. The strategy involved de-synchronisation of care.

Flexible working. This is where the jobs held by one or both parents enables them to ensure adequate childcare coverage because either they are able to work flexibly or because they are self-employed. This was the most common strategy in our sample and was found in all countries. We could say that these couples have adapted working life to the family needs rather than the other way round. In many families, one or other of the parents deliberately looked for flexible work so that they could manage family life in this way – for example by starting a business instead of taking regular employment.

Reliance on formal care. The hours that formal care institutions are open meets the needs of parents and/or carers are employed to work in the family home. This was also a relatively common strategy, used in all countries. It was more available to those with the incomes to pay for formal care.

Informal care networks. In this strategy, parents are able to draw on a network of informal carers, generally grandparents, with whom they share a family home or who they live in close proximity to. This was a relatively common strategy in Southern and Eastern European countries, where cohabitation is more common and family help a more established tradition. The availability of grandparents was an important element of this strategy, so it was more difficult for mobile couples.

Self-reliance. In this strategy, children are considered old enough to go home from school on their own and look after themselves until their parents return from work and was used by only two couples. This was possible only at certain points in the family life course.

The extent to which parents could turn to one or the other strategy depended upon their material resources – middle class parents were able to outsource caring work but poorer parents had to rely on social networks or shift parenting.

4.3.1 *The importance of social class*

The qualitative interviews brought out more sharply the issues of social class and the different capabilities of parents from different social strata. The report by Triffletti and Salmieri (Deliverable 5) as well as that by Wallace and Abbott (Delivarable 8) illustrated the fact that wealthier parents in all countries could buy in more care and therefore had more options open to them in arranging their work and care strategies. This was especially important in those countries where there was no extensive child care provision and households had to rely on their own resources. Those with rich networks could to some extent substitute for formal care services, but those with poor networks could not. Since middle class families often had to move to follow job opportunities, it was quite likely that they would find themselves with poorer networks, since networks take time to become established and the primary informal resources was grandparents. However, middle class families could compensate by paying for various kinds of caring services (nurseries, nannies, child minders, au pairs etc.), compensating for their lack of rich networks. Working class families without rich networks were therefore even more disadvantaged. Hence, the provision of extensive child care provision could therefore smooth out the inequalities otherwise present through social class.

Social class was not just an issue of resources however. The qualitative interviews revealed that parents managed work and care by arranging flexibility in their jobs. This could either be done by negotiating with employers to have flexible hours. Many middle class jobs allowed this or could be arranged in such a way that part of the time could be spent working at home. Some respondents started small businesses or went self-employed in order to accommodate family needs flexibly. Working class jobs, by contrast, were mostly more fixed in terms of hours and place and parents had less scope for negotiation. For working class people, flexibility meant employer-led flexibility, that they could not control themselves rather than employee-led flexibility (Sik and Wallace 2009).

Furthermore, this had gender implications too, since as we have seen from the discussion of flexicurity, flexibility often meant insecurity for women and security for men.

5 Social Quality in Work and Care

The quality of life is a major EU policy goal (Beyond GDP 2007, Liddle and Lerais 2007) which is also increasingly recognised by other international policy actors (OECD2007). Whilst a great deal is written about patterns of work and care across Europe (and the different deliverables in this project have contributed to this literature) the contribution of the *Workcare* project was concerned to link this to the implications there are for the quality of life of European citizens, and more specifically for parents who have the daily task of managing complex arrangements in different environments. In Deliverable 8 by Pamela Abbott and Claire Wallace looked at quality of life using measures of life satisfaction, but also develop a new way of looking at the quality of society – the social quality model. This model was developed by a group of social scientists concerned to measure not just the quality of life of individuals (through subjective well-being) but to look at the quality of the society as a whole by bringing together a range of indicators which were theoretically coherent (Beck, Van der Maesen et al. 1997). We have used this approach because it goes beyond individual quality of life measures towards measuring the quality of society more generally. The relationships between the various elements of the social quality model are generally represented by four interrelated dimensions: socio-economic security, social cohesion, social integration and

social empowerment. The dimensions stretch between global processes and biographical processes on one axis and between systems and communities on the other.

In Deliverable 8 it is argued that social quality enables the development of a more theoretically informed analysis of life satisfaction by recognising that subjective satisfaction is both an outcome of the social system and a factor in its functioning. Subjective satisfaction is a key indicator of the quality of the social system and provides the basis for understanding what makes a livable society (Veenhoven 2008). People are embodied social beings, located in a given time and place, active in meeting their own needs in that context, and they need to be empowered to do so. While there are good arguments for social policy being informed by subjective as well as objective evidence – it is important to know what citizens want as well as to understand what they need (Veenhoven 2002) it is important to consider not just what is but what can be, bringing in a capabilities perspective.

In order to bring together the quality of life with social quality measures, subjective well being was used as a dependent variable in the first paper because this gives an indication of whether the quality of society can also improve levels of individual satisfaction. We show that in fact this is the case: a good society is also good for individuals in the sense that it can make them “happier”.

The model is tested using the European Quality of Life Survey carried out by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions in Dublin. The Foundation carried out surveys of the quality of life in all European countries (including candidate countries) in 2003 and then again in 2007. This represents a unique survey source because the survey is designed explicitly to measure the quality of life and to feed into policy discussions. However, we would expect the findings to be replicated in other surveys as well.

It considers how far the social quality model affects different groups of parents and how this might relate to policy regimes and cultures of work and care in different European regions. It finds that employed fathers have the highest levels of social quality in all regions, but that the extent to which employment affects mothers depends upon the cultures of work and care found in different regimes. In regimes where there is an expectation for women to work full time, employment or the lack of it affects women in similar ways to men (for example in the Scandinavian countries). However, in those countries where women are encouraged to have a more intermittent relationship with the labour market, mothers have similar levels of social quality to that of employed women.

Social quality identifies four domains or areas. Firstly, economic security ensuring personal security, based on a norm of social justice. Secondly, social cohesion ensuring social recognition and providing the basis for solidarity. Thirdly, social inclusion ensuring social responsiveness and equity. Fourthly, social empowerment enabling individuals to develop their capabilities and feel they have control over their own lives and the capacity to act (Figure 3). These are expressed as four quadrants which are the product of the relationship between global processes and biographical processes on the one hand and that between systems and institutions and between communities (Gesellschaft and Gemeinschaft) on the other. The up-down axis of the quadrant represents the relationship between the micro and the macro, the individual and the structural. The left-right axis of the Social quality quadrant represents the relationship between system and community, between system integration and social integration in the words of David Lockwood (Lockwood, 1999).

In Figure 3 the diagramme of the social quality model is shown and some correlation coefficients (standardised betas) are included to illustrate some of the results from 2007. The dependent variable is subjective well-being (a question asking people if they were generally satisfied with their lives). The indicators are the ones which were significant in the regression

analysis, which were entered in blocks to represent the different quadrants. Therefore the variance explained (R^2) in each box is cumulative – it shows how the variance explained increased as each block was added. We end with 40 per cent of the variance explained – a very significant result. In 2003 the indicators were even stronger – they explained more than 40 per cent of the variance.

In terms of socio-economic security, clearly people need resources over time to be able to cope with daily life, enjoy a dignified lifestyle and take advantage of the opportunities available to citizens. The first block, socio-economic security explained 28 per cent of the variance using a scale to measure deprivation (to what extent people had managed without various items such as consumer goods, holidays etc.) another scale measuring to what extent they were able to make ends meet and then finally if they were able to afford basic food. The results show that socio-economic security is very important for the quality of life. However, this was more than just a question of material well-being. It measured how far people felt secure in their ability to manage their lives.

Social cohesion is the glue that binds a society together and creates trust. It provides the rule of law essential for social participation. Social integration and interaction are not possible without shared norms and values and trust in social and economic institutions as well as other groups and individuals.

“Social cohesion concerns the processes that create, defend or demolish social networks and the social infrastructures underpinning these networks. An adequate level of social cohesion is one which enables citizens ‘to exist as real human subjects, as social beings’”. (Beck *et al* 1997: 284)

The second block measured social cohesion, and here the indicators were general trust (trust in people generally) as well as trust in government institutions and the extent to which they perceived conflict in their society. If we add this to economic security, we find we can now explain 33 percent of the variance in quality of life.

The third block represents social inclusion. Social inclusion in modern societies is the degree to which people are and feel integrated in institutions, organisations and social systems. It includes intimate relationships with kin and friends as well as membership of looser networks. It is thus a complex concept and requires recognising the need for pluralistic social cohesiveness/multi-inclusiveness (Phillips 2006) in order to facilitate the inclusion of individuals and communities. It means promoting equality of opportunity and respecting difference in order to enable all to reach their potential.

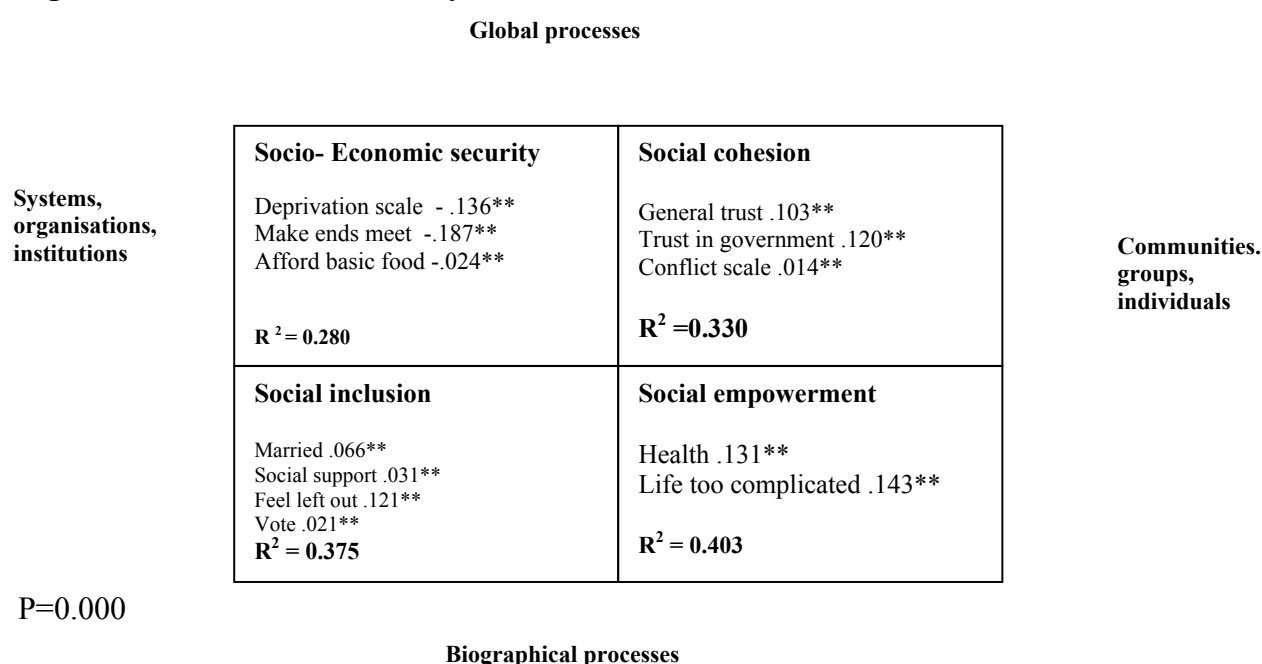
Here the indicators were whether a person was married, a scale for the levels of social support available to them, whether they participated in their society by voting and whether they felt left out of society. If we take into account these indicators, we can now explain 37.5 per cent of the variance in subjective well-being.

Social empowerment requires both that the objective conditions exist and that individuals have the ability to make use of the opportunities available to them. Empowerment is both a conditional factor for socioeconomic security, social cohesion and social integration and an outcome of their existence. There are three dimensions to empowerment – access, participation and control. Turning to the fourth block, we included health (since health is a condition for people feeling empowered) and a more psychological variable - whether an individual felt that life was too complicated for them to be able manage. By including these indicators, the variance explained rose to just over 40 per cent. A very significant finding.

Therefore, the social quality model is not just a theoretical construct. By taking into account the factors specified in the model we can really explain a great deal of the quality of life in

Europe. This has very important implications for public policy as we shall show later, because if governments can secure the conditions of life on these parameters, they will be raise the quality of society and therefore significantly improve the quality of life for individuals.

Figure 3 The Social Quality Model



The Social Quality model is then concerned to specify the conditions for an inclusive, socially cohesive society that empowers citizens who can enjoy a decent standard of living that gives them social security. It specifies both the conditions for well-being and the conditions for building and sustaining societies that are able to ensure the well-being of their members.

5.1 Social Quality, Quality of life and Social Policy

Well-being approaches clearly have significant policy relevance. They clearly demonstrate that both social and individual well-being is influenced by more than economic factors. Policies designed both to support the social and economic development of a society as well as to enable the flourishing of individuals must take account of factors other than, on the one hand growth in GDP and on the other, income maintenance. Whilst it is evident that those in the poorest economic circumstances are most influenced by their material situation in evaluating their well-being it is also clear that social integration, social cohesion and the degree of freedom they have to act to secure their well-being all influence their subjective evaluation of their well-being. In other words the quality of a society as well as individuals position within that society influences well-being.

Combining, as we have the social quality approach with measuring what is important in determining individual life satisfaction, we can consider what social policy needs to encompass if it is both to meet individual needs and underpin the development of competitive, dynamic societies. With respect to the policy context, we need to gain a more holistic and accurate profile of what is important to people – the subjective understandings of citizens themselves. In other words, to understand the lived experience of citizens we need to relate agency to structure, ultimately the articulation between needs and capabilities (Doyal and Gough 1991; Nussbaum and Sen 1993).

The nature of well-being has to be considered in the context of the institutions, processes and policies that affect it. All real welfare regimes show a mix of market, state and family/community provision, but they differ in the proportions of the mix and, more importantly, in the rhetoric or discourse in which views about welfare provision are

expressed. Our understanding of people's needs and aspirations is constrained by our knowledge/understanding of what is possible. What we want or need in order to 'have a good life' is limited by what we think we know or understand to be possible. Wants may exceed objectively structural needs, but conversely they may fall short of what is objectively possible.

6 Relevance to Society and European Public Policy

The *Workcare* project, a cross-European study funded by the European Union, has furnished important new findings which provide pointers for developing public policy in the European Union. The recommendations made by the expert project team provide the basis for evidence-informed public policy to improve the lives of Europeans and enable the realisation of key policy objectives. These findings develop from ideas set out in the Lisbon Strategy and later reinforced in the Renewed Social Agenda adopted by the European Commission in July 2009. The Renewed Social Agenda is based upon three goals: creating opportunities, providing access and demonstrating solidarity and explicitly highlights the importance of reconciling private and professional life by improving parental leave arrangements, introducing new forms of leave and strengthening protection for pregnant women.

EU Policy is concerned to encourage as many people as possible, women as well as men, to be in the workforce combined with a commitment to policies to encourage an equal balance between men and women in paid employment and unpaid caring work. There is also concern to promote a high quality of life for the whole population and a commitment to promote equality of opportunity for men and women. Concerns about an aging population and the low fertility rate have also led to concerns about how to maintain high rates of employment with family building. This raises questions about how these policy objectives can be achieved especially when some of them seem to be in conflict with others.

How do we enable families with young children to combine work and care, to promote equality of opportunity for mothers and fathers and enable all members of the family to enjoy a high quality of life?

- The most comprehensive and successful childcare policies were found in those countries where children were regarded as the responsibility of society as a whole rather than only a private matter for families. Public policies should support families in carrying out their responsibilities as parents including meeting the social and cognitive development needs of children.
- There is a cross European trend for dual earner families to emerge as a normal pattern among parents, irrespective of the dominant social attitudes prevailing and the extent to which public policies and work places are family friendly. This is congruent with European public policy which is to encourage all individuals of working age, men and women to be in paid employment. However, it produces particular strains and pressures on those living in countries without substantial state supported childcare and for those who cannot afford paid support.
- Policies are often gender blind. It is important that a gender perspective is taken and a gender impact analysis of all new policies and recommendations. In particular policies should consider supply side as well as demand side of employment policies. Unless policies take account of the gendering of supply side factors policies may have unintended or unanticipated consequences. Examples of this are flexicurity policies

which may result in flexibility without security for women and entitlement to paternity leave which is not taken.

- Some of the countries with the highest fertility rates in Europe are those where public policies enable parents to combine paid employment with care for their children.
- Countries with the greatest degree of public childcare support are the ones which also have the greatest continuity of employment for men and women over time. In those countries with extended childcare leave it is often difficult for women to re-enter the workforce after having children.
- Men and women are independent citizens but policies must recognize that mothers and fathers have joint responsibilities for the family and develop negotiated strategies to enable them to carry out these responsibilities.
- Flexicurity policies often provide flexibility and security for men but only flexibility for women. This has a negative impact on women's access to employment, opportunities for support in re-entry to the labour market and economic and employment security across the life course.
- The extent to which people could control their work and care arrangements differed by social class. Better educated parents have a wider range of choices about how they organise work and care and generally prefer a joint earner strategy and formal, professional childcare. This is related to a greater command over financial resources and suggests that the options available to many parents are constrained by lack of financial resources. Many professional and managerial workers also have more flexibility in how they organise their work and the option of working at home for at least part of the time. By contrast, these are options that those in working class jobs do not have. One of their only ways to combine work and care in full time jobs where substantial childcare provision was not available was to work a parental shift system – one parent being present for part of the time and the other available the rest of the time.
- In all parts of Europe, the family is seen as important and family life is seen as a priority. Parents see family life as important in securing a high quality of a life and want to have quality time with their family.
- Fathers are substantially involved in caring for their children and want to be more involved. However, they are not always able to do so. This is often related to the long hours fathers have to work to support their families, to their higher earnings compared with their wives and to employer and societal attitudes not being supportive of fathers caring. Mothers may also need to be supported in accept that fathers can do caring work.
- Across Europe kin and friends provide important support and grandparents provide an important resource in emergencies, although in those countries without a good provision of affordable childcare there is a higher reliance on kin. Families without kin

to support them face especial difficulties. Kin are an important resource for enabling parents to make choices, the unavailability of kin makes it more difficult for parents to combine paid employment with care.

- All parents are greatly concerned about the cognitive and educational development of children. They want quality care by professionals that takes account of the changing needs of children as they grow older as well as the knowledge and skills to support the cognitive development of their children.
- There is a shortage in many European countries of good quality affordable child care especially for children under three years. Pre-school and school provision for children over three years is often for short hours and does not meet the needs of parents when both are in paid employment.
- In the absence of affordable childcare it is generally women who take time out of the labour market to care and take on part time, insecure employment to enable caring commitments to be fulfilled. This is a result of a number of factors including ideologies of care, normative expectations, the attitudes of employers and the gender pay gap. This has life time consequences for women's economic security and opportunities to have a career.
- All European countries have legal provision for maternity leave, paternity leave and parental leave. However the length of leave for mothers and fathers varies considerably as does the level of remuneration. Paternity leave tends only to be taken up when it is non-transferable and provides a high level of compensation and is under-utilised despite the professed wishes of fathers to spend more time with their children.
- There is a common European view as to what provides for a high quality of life – a view which is shared by men and women and across the life course. Europeans want a decent standard of living, an orderly society, to be socially integrated and to be empowered to take control over their own lives. This provides an important backdrop against which to develop public policies designed to support families.
- It is possible to identify a number of welfare regimes in terms of the ways they support (or not) parents combining paid employment with their caring responsibilities. These different regimes have very different consequences for how parents organise work and care and especially impact on women. However, all regimes have a negative impact on women's employment careers and lifetime earning potential and men's opportunities to care for their children. Some have a more negative impact than others.

7 Policy Recommendations

(a more detailed list of policy recommendations targeted at different user groups can be found in the policy brief, available on the home page)

- Governments need to invest in supporting families to enable them to combine their responsibilities for care and ensure that men and women are able to exercise their rights to securer and flexible employment. In this way EU policy objectives will be

achieved, including high levels of employment, social inclusion of men and women and the avoidance of precariousness, equality of opportunity for men and women, and increased fertility rates. Parents will be empowered in developing a joint strategy and as individuals in taking control over their lives and making informed choices.

- A gender lens must be used in evaluating all policy proposals and all subject to a gender impact analysis.
- Flexicurity is seen as a key aspect of European policy, but these policies must ensure flexibility and security for men and women. Not flexibility and security for men and a flexibility without security for women.
- Gender equality in the workplace and labour market must be progressed and in particular attention paid to measures to reduce the gender-pay gap.
- Employers must be encouraged to introduce family friendly policies and men and women feel supported in taking their entitlement.
- Policies must be informed by a life course perspective, for example the consequences for career, entitlement to social security benefits and so on for women and men of taking periods outside the labour market to care.
- Policies must recognise that reliance on informal care is precarious and may cause difficulties for parents and employers. An unintended consequence of encouraging older women to enter the labour market is likely to be a reduction in the availability of grandmothers to provide care, something they do in all countries at least in emergencies.
- Well-paid adequate maternity and maternity leave are essential to support families. Men must be encouraged and supported in taking paternity leave which should 'last' if it is not taken by the man.
- Well-paid flexible parental leave including 'daddy' leave should be available to enable parents to combine their caring responsibilities with paid employment.
- Substitute Care – child minders, nurseries, pre-school classes, school, after school and out of school provision should be affordable, professional, of high quality, adequate to meet the demand from all parents who want to access the services and the opening hours should be compatible with full-time employment.
- Support should be provided to support informal carers meeting the needs, including the cognitive development needs of the child(ren) they care for.
- Trade Unions need to make their members aware of their rights to ask for flexible working times and to fight for working times that suit the family obligations of their members

- Employers need to be aware of the need for flexibility of their employees with small children or others that they care for

8 List of beneficiaries

There is a large and diverse range of beneficiaries which are mentioned in the dissemination report. The list is too long to be repeated here.

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