



The University of  
**Nottingham**

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Pascall, Gillian (2008) Gender and European Welfare States. In: Understanding European Social Policy. CasaVerde Publishing, Hong Kong/Taiwan. ISBN 978-986-80414-86

**Access from the University of Nottingham repository:**

[http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/807/1/Gender\\_and\\_European\\_Welfare\\_States.pdf](http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/807/1/Gender_and_European_Welfare_States.pdf)

**Copyright and reuse:**

The Nottingham ePrints service makes this work by researchers of the University of Nottingham available open access under the following conditions.

This article is made available under the University of Nottingham End User licence and may be reused according to the conditions of the licence. For more details see:  
[http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/end\\_user\\_agreement.pdf](http://eprints.nottingham.ac.uk/end_user_agreement.pdf)

**A note on versions:**

The version presented here may differ from the published version or from the version of record. If you wish to cite this item you are advised to consult the publisher's version. Please see the repository url above for details on accessing the published version and note that access may require a subscription.

For more information, please contact [eprints@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:eprints@nottingham.ac.uk)

## **Gender and European Welfare States**

Gillian Pascall  
School of Sociology and Social Policy  
University of Nottingham NG7 2RD

[Gillian.pascall@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Gillian.pascall@nottingham.ac.uk)

For *Understanding European Social Policy* (forthcoming 2008) Peter Abrahamson and Christian Aspalter (eds), Casa Verde Publishing: Hong Kong

## *Abstract*

How can we understand the varied ways in which gender assumptions underpin welfare states across Europe and how they are changing? Do the *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* encapsulate differences between gender regimes, or do we need a more targeted gender analysis, differentiating male breadwinner from dual earner models? And how do these models relate to those post-state socialist countries which have joined the EU since 2004? In academic debate and political reality, 'Europe' has tended to mean 'Western Europe'; but 10 of the 27 member states are now former state socialist countries, with profoundly different social, political and gender histories from those in Western countries. One argument is of a shift in Western Europe towards women's increasing labour market participation, away from a male breadwinner model, albeit in most countries more a one-and-a-half model and far from gender equality, and at most a one-and-three quarter. Another sees post-state socialist countries 're-traditionalising' towards a male breadwinner model, as supports for mothers in the labour market have been reduced under social and economic transformation since 1989. Does this mean that there are contrasting trajectories East and West? Or should they be better seen as converging, in the context of economic and social change and European Union policy? This chapter will argue that both theoretical approaches shed light on gender regimes in Europe, and on changes to them. Unpacking the male breadwinner model into component parts (paid work, care work, income, time, power) allows us to understand the way that gender has been at the heart of gender inequality in male breadwinner systems in Western Europe, and how – to different degrees – regimes have supported a move from the male breadwinner system towards gender equality in paid and unpaid work, income, time and power. In practice, the social democratic regimes have supported gender equality and the move away from the male breadwinner model much more positively than other regimes, albeit all 27 members have signed up to the European Union's gender policy. A more collective approach, including social support for children and for childcare, has underpinned policies for gender equality. Some countries of Central and Eastern Europe have retained social welfare systems which support gender equality, particularly through supports to motherhood, despite the move from state socialism, and through periods of social and economic turbulence. Systems of state support for gender equality, in particular through supporting the social costs of children and care, are at the heart of the success of the Scandinavian social democratic states as the most gender equal welfare states in the European Union, and – to a lesser extent - in some parts of Central and Eastern Europe which were formerly under state socialist domination.

## *Introduction*

How can we understand the varied ways in which gender assumptions underpin welfare states across Europe, how they are changing and the implications for gender equality? Gender equality is an important goal at the EU level, and member states (and other European nations) are committed to it. But the 27 states of the current European Union have contrasting histories and contemporary gender systems: in particular, gender models in former state socialist countries, where women's employment was strongly socially and economically supported, contrast with many Western European countries, where women's dependence on a male breadwinner has been a norm of gender inequality entrenched in social assumptions and social legislation. Are European welfare states becoming more gender equal or less? And which welfare states offer the best model for gender equality?

Across Europe, gender regimes - seen as the key policy logics of welfare states in relation to gender - have been challenged by transformations in families, in economies and politics. The male breadwinner model, which was a core underpinning principle of most Western European welfare states in the post-war era, has been undermined by women's increasing labour market participation: in the EU 15 countries together the employment rate (albeit measuring a very low level of one hour per week) rose over the decade from 1995 to 2005 from 49.7% to 57.4%, a trend which was shared by all the EU 15 members (Eurostat structural indicators). Women have joined the labour market, whether or not supported by government policies. In those countries with a stronger male breadwinner tradition, such as the UK, women's joining the labour market has taken place with little social support and fragmented childcare services (Lewis 2003, Land 2004). But even in the social democratic countries of Scandinavia, policies for support have often lagged behind women's needs and demands for childcare, resulting in a deeply divided labour market: this disadvantages women in paid work and pensions, and discourages men's participation in childcare (Leira 2006).

Most of all, the decline of marriage, and increase in births outside marriage undermine a male breadwinner system, which depended on low rates of divorce and illegitimacy (Creighton 1999). While these trends show changes in the social constitution of families in practice, the male breadwinner ideal has also declined (Lewis 2001a and b, 2002). Changes in families – increases in cohabitation and divorce, decreases in marriage and fertility – are also trends in common, though they started earlier in Scandinavian countries and have reached different points in different places. In post-state socialist countries, these trends are strongest in the Baltic States, and weakest in Poland (Pascall & Kwak 2005).

The dual earner model in those major parts of Europe which were dominated by state socialism has been challenged by the transformation. Under state socialism, women's labour was supported by government, through education, workplace nurseries, parental leave and benefits and kindergartens. Women's employment was effectively supported, producing very high levels of participation (around 80% in some countries at the point of transition) and low gender pay gaps (UNICEF 1999). While legislation about marriage

appeared to make women equal individuals, the lack of freedom in civil society inhibited the development of a women's movement and protected a gendered domestic division of labour. State socialist regimes therefore enhanced gender equality in employment and public life, while inhibiting it at home (Ferge 1998).

The transformation brought democratic freedom to the former state socialist regimes, but it also brought insecurity, inequality, and immediate losses of GDP and employment for both men and women. Gender regimes in the soviet era were built on very high levels of public expenditure around 55% in the Central European countries, reducing now to around 45% (UNICEF 2001). This brings reduced public spending on most social systems, including childcare, and more varied welfare instruments (Ferge and Tausz 2002). It has also brought changes in ideology, with room for doubt about the appropriate role of the state, reducing the legitimacy of the collective spending which supported women's employment and childcare.

Commentators have feared 're-traditionalization' in post-state socialist countries, with male breadwinning prioritised over women's, and over gender equality. Transition may bring both continuity and change in gender relations (Einhorn 2006: 95). Four decades of state socialist government might be expected to leave some residue in gender assumptions, even after transformation, while democratization has also brought divergence. Poland and Slovenia could be seen as the most extreme, with Catholic influence in Poland, bringing limits to abortion and some government pressures towards traditional motherhood, whereas Slovenia's 90 days' paternity leave and several indicators suggest a more gender equal tendency. The argument here is that post-state socialist countries – even Poland - are not going back to the past, but developing something new.

### ***Gender in EU social policy***

Should we expect to see increasing gender equality as a result EU policy and widening membership? Gender equality has been widely acknowledged as an important EU goal. The early commitment to equal pay for men and women, built into the Treaty of Rome in 1957, has developed into an employment strategy concerned with increasing women's participation. Directives on Part-time work, Working Time and Parental Leave, and more recently work-life balance policies and childcare targets show a concern with the domestic gender inequalities that underpin employment inequalities. At the Millennium, the Council and Ministers for Employment and Social Policy gave support to a 'new social contract on gender' which supported development of policies for 'equality of men and women in the public and private domains' (Council of the European Union 2000).

All these may suggest a widening and deepening of EU concern with gender inequalities, bringing concern with gender equality at home as well as in employment. But the meaning of gender policy developments for member states, and for women in member states, is a matter for serious debate. Some see the Open Method of Co-ordination as bringing a new development of the social in Europe, bringing shared social objectives (Atkinson 2003), while others ask whether the Open Method of Co-ordination, which has replaced the legally binding directives, means that EU social objectives are becoming

softer (Rubery 2005). While work/family reconciliation policies may be seen as deepening gender policy, they may also be interpreted as serving an economic agenda, with increasing women's employment prioritized over gender equality at home or in employment. And while a narrow focus on equal opportunities, or work/family reconciliation may lead to a positive assessment of EU policy for women and for gender equality, a wider lens may interpret these policies as serving a market agenda rather than a social justice one (Lewis 2006b).

The weaker economic situation of transition countries, the socio-economic situation of women, its degradation in transformation, and declining fertility are common features of former soviet countries (European Commission 2004: 108), as is the freedom now to develop civil society. We may ask whether EU membership will protect policies which have supported women's position in the labour market, while widening concerns with gender equality in family, civil society and polity too?

In the attached tables, EU 27 data are given, where available, to cover the twenty-seven EU countries, including very recent accessions, Bulgaria and Romania. The Scandinavian, or Nordic countries are represented by Sweden and Denmark, the post-state socialist countries by Slovenia, Hungary and Poland, the Western European continental countries by France and Germany, and countries with a strong male breadwinner tradition by Ireland, the UK and Malta. Among European countries which are not EU members, EFTA countries are included in the published indicators: Norway and Iceland share much with those Social Democratic countries which are EU members, while Switzerland is more similar to its continental neighbours.

### *Gender in comparative frameworks*

The characterisation of gender regimes based on the male breadwinner/dual earner spectrum (Lewis 1992) puts gender at the centre of comparative analysis and is a starting point here. Gender regimes are understood as systems of gender equality or inequality through which paid work is connected to unpaid, state services and benefits are delivered to individuals or households, costs are allocated, and time is shared between men and women in households as well as between households and employment. The decline of the male breadwinner model has widespread implications (Creighton 1999, Lewis 2001a, 2001b). The decline of state support for dual earner arrangements in the new CEE member states is also momentous (Pascall and Lewis 2004, Pascall and Kwak 2005, Einhorn 2006). European welfare states are analysed here in component parts of the male breadwinner/dual earner spectrum: paid work, care work, income, time and power, asking to what extent they can be seen as systems of gender equality or as systems of traditional gender roles in each of these parts.

But we also need to ask about the level and nature of policy intervention. The *Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Esping-Andersen 1990) are relevant to gender, because the Social Democratic countries have had gender equality as well as social equality at their heart (Ellingsaeter & Leira 2006). Social democratic regimes have also underpinned gender equality with social policies, social spending and social commitment to parents

and children. Elsewhere, commitment to traditional gender difference or free markets may play a greater role than gender equality.

The welfare modelling business has been very fruitful in comparative debate and understanding (Abrahamson 1999). But models are simplifications. The UK has moved from male breadwinner assumptions, and from free market ones, in support for ‘universal childcare’ under the Labour governments of the period from 1997. Germany’s ‘red-green’ coalition also changed traditional assumptions about gender roles and families. And beliefs – especially among younger people – about gender equality in work and care, are often not consonant with their governments’ policies.

Are there alternative scenarios for a more gender equal future in Europe? The Dutch Combination Scenario (see below) offers a new vision, in which work is redistributed at the household level, with men as well as women envisaged as part-time workers and carers. The idea of making men’s lives more like women’s is also at the heart of Fraser’s Universal Caregiver model, in which all employees would be assumed to have care responsibilities, while developments in civil society would enable care to be shared (Fraser 1997). But it is argued here that gender equality needs more systematic support, beyond the capacity of civil society. The French working time model also has something to contribute to thinking about how to turn the one and a half earner model into a two x three-quarter one in which men and women have time to care as well as to work and to earn. Government commitments to gender equality need underpinning with regulation of time and with social investment. Comparative data clearly show that Scandinavian social democratic countries are the most gender equal: but they have still prioritized women’s employment over men’s care. In a model of Universal Citizenship gender equality would go beyond paid employment – important as that has been – and attend to gender inequalities in care, time, income and power: men’s and women’s obligations to paid work and care as citizens would be underpinned by regulation of working time and electoral systems and by social investment in citizenship rights.

### ***Gender in paid work***

Policies for equal opportunities in employment have been part of the EU agenda since the Treaty of Rome in 1957 brought a commitment to equal pay for men and women. More recently an employment strategy has focused on women’s employment, with participation targets agreed at the Lisbon summit in 2000, including increasing childcare provision. At the EU level, increasing women’s employment is widely seen as a key policy (Rubery et al 2001, Threlfall 2007), albeit also criticized as market and economic growth oriented rather than women and gender-equality oriented (Lewis 2006b).

At the nation-state level, policies of member states are constrained by EU directives, and by commitments to meet agreed Lisbon targets through the Open Method of Co-ordination. For new member states, joining the EU has meant accepting these agreements. European countries are therefore widely committed to increasing women’s employment. While EU policy has been to draw women into the labour market, which brings some convergence over time towards a dual worker model, there remain great differences between men and women, particularly in the quality of their employment, as

well as between welfare states in the extent and nature of support for women's labour market participation.

The literature suggests several ways to make cross-national comparisons in gender differences in employment to illuminate differences in welfare regimes (especially Korpi 2000, Van der Lippe & Van Dijk 2002, Daly and Rake 2003). Eurostat structural indicators allow comparison of gender gaps in employment and unemployment, and gender pay gaps across EU member states. Does women's increasing employment participation in Western countries bring equality in security, in women's ability to support themselves in the context of family change? And do changes in former state socialist countries represent generally increasing insecurity, or re-traditionalization, with women's employment marginalized in favour of men's?

[Table 1 around here]

In Western Europe, women's increasing employment has been closing the gap, but was still 15.5% below the male employment rate of 72.9%. Those countries with strong and long-established support for a dual earner model have the highest women's employment rates, with Sweden, Norway, Denmark and Iceland all over 70%, while Sweden has the lowest gender employment gap at 4.0%. At the other extreme, Malta's employment rate for women of 33.7% and gender employment gap of 40.1% shows a persistent male breadwinner system in a relatively small and new member state (Camilleri-Cassar 2005). In other countries with historically strong male breadwinner traditions, women may appear to be closing the gap, as, for example in the UK, women's employment has reached 65.9% and is 11.7% behind men's. But these figures include paid employment from one hour per week, and we have to look in more detail at working hours and pay to see how far women's ability to sustain themselves through employment remains below men's.

In the very large part of Europe dominated during the post-war period by state socialism, patterns of women's employment have been quite different. Gender equality under state socialism – even more than in other regimes – was about women's place in the labour market, with social investment in childcare and other services. Women's labour market participation was high by international standards, supported by occupational welfare: at the point of transition from state socialism in 1989, it was over 80% in the Baltic States, and Czechoslovakia, somewhat lower in Hungary and Poland, but everywhere well above France or the UK. At the point of political and economic transformation dual earner households were well established: women were in full time employment, with earnings not far below men's (UNICEF 1999). Has economic restructuring dominated, with markets putting gender politics in a back seat (Einhorn 2006)? In so far as policies supporting women's employment survive the transition from state socialism - how well do state socialist practices work in a capitalist market place?

Among post-state socialist countries, the highest level of women's employment is currently in Estonia, with 62.1%, with Slovenia close behind, while women's employment is particularly low in Poland, at 46.8%. These figures show an enormous change in women's employment compared with the soviet era. But the transformation



period reduced employment for men and women. Most post-state socialist countries have gender employment gaps below the EU average: even Poland, where women's employment is at its lowest, has a gap between women and men of 12.1%. This is well above Sweden's (4.0%), but below the gender employment gap in Ireland (18.6%) or Malta (40.1%). In this respect the dual earner model appears alive and well in CEE countries, with more equal participation in employment between men and women than in the EU 15, and a much lower gap than in countries with a male breadwinner tradition, such as Ireland and Malta.

[Table 2 around here]

Across the EU 27, greater insecurity of paid work for women is indicated by an unemployment rate for women of 8.8%, while men's is 7.1%. It had been particularly feared that the changing economic landscape in post-state socialist regimes would see women's jobs marginalized in favour of men's. But men have also been vulnerable to losing jobs in the transformation process, and gender gaps in unemployment are not in practice higher in post-state socialist countries than elsewhere. Poland's experience is the worst in Europe, with women's unemployment at 15.1%, but men's also very high at 13.1%.

[Table 3 around here]

Gender pay gaps in hourly earnings show women across EU countries earning on average 15% less per hour than men. Germany's pay gap is among the highest, at 22%, which might be expected from a country with conservative gender traditions; the UK's pay gap (20%) is above the EU average, reflecting its male breadwinner traditions and its preference for free markets. But Sweden and Denmark also show above average pay gaps, resulting from their segregated labour markets. Somewhat lower pay gaps appear in former state socialist countries, with Slovenia's at 8%, again suggesting that, while levels of employment are much lower than before the transformation, women's employment is closer to men's than it is in Western countries.

On a number of measures of job quality, women in Europe have a worse experience of work than men. The share of European women in low paying occupations is nearly twice that of men (Weiler 2005). Occupational segregation did not disappear under state socialism, but the labour market is less segregated in the east than the west, with more women in higher-level categories, as managers, and in technical occupations and skilled workers, and fewer in service and sales. There is also a higher proportion of women in higher paid jobs: 41% of women full time workers in the (then) acceding and candidate countries, compared with 20 % of full timers in the EU 15 (Paoli and Parent-Thirion 2003: 73-74). We ask below about part-time work (under Time) to help us to unravel the extent to which women are able to support themselves and about work-family reconciliation policies (under Care) such as parental leave.

Women's participation in employment has been growing in Western Europe, but it is still below men's; in former state socialist countries, the transformation has indeed damaged

women's employment possibilities, but they have held on more tenaciously to full time employment than had once been feared (Fodor 2005) and are a little more equal with men on most measures of work quality than their Western peers. But across Europe, the quality of women's jobs is below men's with a pay gap in hourly earnings averaging 15%, segregated labour markets and under-representation in higher-level positions. While EU nations are all committed to increasing women's employment, and to equal pay, there are great variations between nation states in the effectiveness with which they are achieving these. Social democratic countries sustain women's employment more systematically and effectively than elsewhere, though with deeply segregated labour markets, and lower pay for women, while former state socialist countries also have somewhat more equal employment than countries with a rooted male breadwinner tradition.

### ***Incomes***

Women are clearly seeking a more equal opportunity to earn, as they have increased their labour market participation, with or without support from governments. In individualizing societies, with increasing insecurity of relationships, and risk of divorce, earning is crucial to security. Equal pay, a fairer share of quality work, decent minimum wage levels, and sufficiency of work for self-support have been sought by women's movements in Western Europe, and are increasingly necessary everywhere. While governments have promised these, the reality is that women's earnings are below men's, even on an hourly basis, and on a lifetime basis, in some countries they may be much below men's. For example, in the UK, despite increasing employment, and changing government assumptions about gender, women's lifetime earnings are around half men's (Rake 2000). Social supports for families, against risk of unemployment, and for pensions in old age, are crucial to women's security, as well as to gender equality.

The European Union regulates but does not play a direct role in designing and implementing the redistributive systems of member states, and has relatively small social budgets. But there are shared social objectives, with a social cohesion agenda established at the Lisbon summit in 2000, to be achieved through the Open Method of Co-ordination. While many critics see the Open Method as too open, these developments can be seen as a positive commitment to social policy and redistribution. National governments are "not free to determine the objectives of *redistributive* policy ... their freedom lies solely in the choice of means towards commonly agreed ends" (Atkinson 2003). Social ideals have been turned into social indicators, with structural indicators on social inclusion, including poverty and income inequality with all indicators available by gender. While we may debate how effectively this social agenda will be implemented, we can use the indicators to understand how different now are European member states achievements in reducing poverty and inequality.

Exploring how regimes deal with poverty among men and women enables understanding of differences between them. Structural indicators allow us – in Table 4 - to compare poverty, before and after transfers, for representative regimes. These set the threshold at 60% of national equivalised median disposable income showing relative poverty: it is important to note that absolute standards of living in former state socialist countries are

well below the EU average. We might expect that countries with social security systems designed on the male breadwinner model, as the UK Beveridge system was, would be less successful in dealing with poverty among women than countries where women's employment is more established and supported by tax and benefit structures.

[Insert Table 4 around here]

A high risk of poverty among women and men appears as common in countries as different as Sweden, Denmark, the UK and Ireland, all with over 30% of women at risk of poverty. The risk of poverty before transfers is just greater on average in the EU 25 for women than for men. Overall, the impact of social transfers was to reduce poverty from 27% of women to 17% and from 25% of men to 15%. While welfare states reduced the risk of poverty, they did not – overall - reduce the gender gap. The main differences in welfare states are the extent to which they reduce the risks of poverty rather than the extent to which they reduce the gender gap in poverty risk. Sweden's very active welfare state reduces poverty risk among women from 30% to 10%, the lowest among the EU countries, though Iceland (not an EU member) had a post-transfer figure of 9%. Slovenia and Hungary, among the post-state socialist country examples, reduce women's risk of poverty to levels similar to these Social Democratic countries, at 11% and 13% respectively, while Poland leaves 20% of women at risk of poverty after transfers, figures comparable to the male breadwinner examples the UK (19%) and Ireland (21%).

These data show the great importance of welfare states' role in reducing the risk of poverty. Social support for families is also crucial for women, who are still likely to assume responsibility for care, despite changing ideals. Family allowances are particularly important to women in protecting family living standards with or without a male breadwinner. The state-socialist tradition, in which family benefits have formed a high proportion of family incomes and of GDP, has been a crucial support to motherhood, as well as keeping children out of poverty. Pressures on government spending, from international agencies and inflation, brought lower values and more targeting after the transformation. By the end of the 1990s, the typical pattern in Central Europe was for high coverage, but much lower value in relation to household income and GDP than had been usual under communism. In Hungary, family allowances were 8.1% of household income in 1991 and 3.8% in 1999, while in Poland they fell from 4.2% to 1.2% (UNICEF 2001: 42-4). Means-testing of family allowances in the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia, brings a more stringent and contingent system of support, with means-testing of childcare benefits also in Poland (Förster and Tóth 2001, MISSOC 2004). But protection for children and their parents remains strong by western standards, with the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland more successful than the UK and USA in using taxes and transfers to keep children out of poverty, as evidenced in various ways by the succession of Innocenti Research Centre Report Cards on child poverty and well-being in richer countries. Scandinavian countries fill most of the top places in the last of these reports (UNICEF 2001, 2005, 2007).

Pension reform – East and West - has brought trends towards individualisation (against rights through partners), towards equalization of pension ages, towards closer connection

between contribution and benefits, for privatisation and against redistribution. Equalising pension ages, and making benefits depend more closely on individual contributions, rather than on entitlements through partners may appear to offer gender equality: but these will only bring gender equality in old age if there is gender equality in working life and caring life. There are many threats to older women's security in these changes: the gender pay gap, giving time to motherhood, increasing divorce, women's tendency to live longer may all bring reduced protection and pensions to women. Women are increasingly being assumed to be able to earn their own pensions, but without sufficient attention to the processes that bring lower pay and capacity to contribute. These trends towards individualising risk and away from more socially oriented pooling of risk 'threaten to magnify gender inequality in later life income' (Ginn et al 2001: 230).

The great diversity of European systems of social support is reflected in measures of how successfully they are meeting needs in the context of family change and increasing insecurity, both in Western countries as well as in the post-state socialist societies. Across the EU 25 women were somewhat more exposed to poverty than men. But the Scandinavian countries, are achieving most in reducing these risks. Women in the post-state socialist countries have high risks of poverty, but state structures to reduce these have been better sustained through the transformation period than many feared.

### ***Care Work***

Women's employment in paid work has been shaped and constrained by their unpaid care work as mothers and carers. Everywhere in Europe women are more likely to be mothers, with primary responsibility for care, while men are more likely to be paid workers, with primary responsibility for employment. These patterns have been challenged and changed, and there is some convergence between men's and women's work (Gershuny 2000). But gender inequalities in care responsibilities and time are persistent and important factors underlying women's unequal position in labour markets of European countries. Here we ask about social policy support for care in and outside the family and for changing the gender relations of care in the family. Even in social democratic countries, policies for enabling women to do more paid work have been more extensive than policies for encouraging men to do more unpaid care work. In state socialist countries, women were conceived as workers and brought into the labour force. But this was done by state support for women's care work, and not by transforming the domestic division of labour, which remained unchallenged in soviet times by government or by feminist influences.

European childcare policy has been less developed than employment policy, but childcare is increasingly being seen in the EU as a pre-requisite for increasing employment, which is itself a strong priority. Current EU targets are for one third of under-threes and 90% of children from three to mandatory school age to have access to childcare by 2010, but only the Scandinavian countries are thought likely to meet these targets (Ellingsaeter and Leira 2006). National systems are varied. The most universal, supply-side childcare systems of the Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden and Denmark stand out in quality measures for childcare, especially for younger children: Sweden has University educated staff, high staffing ratios, with public funding at 100% for pre-school and 75% for

younger children. Public childcare covers 87% - 96% of 2-, 3-, 4- and 5- year-olds (Gornick & Meyers 2003, Nyberg 2004, 2006, Plantenga & Siegel 2005). Post-socialist countries have lost state and employer support for nursery-age children, but provision and support for pre-school children remain strong. Hungary's provision is strongest among these, with kindergarten enrolments sustained at 85% to 88% of 3-6 year-olds throughout the transition period (UNICEF TransMONEE database). Hungary's family support system – including family allowances and kindergartens – is close to the Nordic model, with extensive public responsibility, and has remained comparatively stable through political changes because people see children's care as a social responsibility (Szikra 2005: 12, 2006: 16).

Elsewhere in Western Europe public support for childcare and coverage are more limited. While in Sweden and Denmark, coverage for 0-3-year-olds is already twice the EU target (each with around two-thirds children), France is just short of the one-third target, and the UK and Germany have places for around 10% of the population or below. Coverage for pre-school children is higher, but often part-time (Plantenga & Siegel 2005: 14). The assumption of maternal care and responsibility may be strong, whether because family care is assumed to be better for children, or because parents are thought best able to make market choices. In the UK, until the end of the twentieth century mothers were assumed to be responsible for children: most fitted employment around children's needs. Current policy is for a mixed economy, which makes access and quality uncertain. Problems of trustworthiness, supply and affordability of childcare places still encourage discontinuous and part-time employment, especially among less qualified mothers (Lewis 2003). And for pre-school children the UK's 2.5-hour day is among Europe's lowest provision, contrasting with France, which has allowed mothers to choose employment more easily, partly through stronger public educational provision, with a pre-school day from 8.30 to 4.30. The UK's provision shows its male breadwinner history, despite ten years of government support for childcare and public funding through tax credits.

Childcare leave to enable parents to care for nursery-age children has been a strong feature of former state socialist countries. In 2002, the Czech Republic had the longest parental leave in Europe, until the child is four years old. At transition, as workplace nurseries closed, childcare leave schemes were made more attractive. Parents in the Czech Republic may have rights to four years' leave, but they also suffer 'a gradual erosion in the value of their qualifications and previous work experience, and find it more difficult to return to their jobs after such a long break', while childcare benefit is set at one fifth of average incomes and brings the risk of poverty (Kocourkova 2002). Shorter leaves may offer a better fit between the needs of children for parental care, the needs of parents to earn, and the requirements of gender equality (Gornick and Meyers 2003).

The Swedish system has been based on shorter periods of leave, which are strongly supported, with 80% income replacement: now 480 days of parental leave, which can be used flexibly on a full-time or part-time basis. This allows parents to care for their children at home for 16 months on average, before using other forms of childcare (Duvander et al 2005: 13). After this public support for childcare is extensive, as we have seen. Sweden's leave system has been rated as highest in Europe if measuring 'effective parental leave', to take account of payment levels, with Hungary close behind, Finland

and the Czech Republic following. By this measure, Germany and France are middle range countries, with the UK just above Ireland and the Netherlands, which have the shortest periods of effectively supported leave. Sweden also has one of the shortest gaps between the end of effective parental leave and pre-primary admission age (Plantenga & Siegel 2005: 9-11). Parents in Sweden also have a right to work reduced hours – 30 hours per week – until their children are twelve. Thus, Sweden's flexible system allows parents to stay at home during the first year and more, on high levels of replacement income. Along with other Scandinavian countries, these systems sustain women's labour market participation in a more continuous manner, and with stronger levels of social support, than other European countries.

So far, most parental leave policies have been designed to protect mothers and children through childbirth, and enable mothers to balance childcare with employment. While these arrangements have brought important benefits to mothers and children, they have also put mothers into a more vulnerable position in the labour market. Can parental leaves can be designed to support gender equality in employment, underpinned by increasing gender equality in care, rather than just supporting maternal employment?

Commitments to men's participation in care work are much weaker than European and nation states' commitments to increasing women's participation in paid employment. But since the 1996 European Parental Leave Directive, member states have been obliged to provide fathers' entitlement to care time (three months but unpaid) after the birth of a child, as well as mothers'. Scandinavian countries, beginning with Norway, had been developing stronger entitlements, to a paid, non-transferable Daddy month to give fathers an incentive to take parental leave. Sweden borrowed this policy in 1995, increasing the month to two in 2002. Currently, Iceland has the most developed policy, with a 3 x 3 system: three months for the mother, three for the father, and three for sharing between them. These policies are also the most effective in Scandinavia. They have encouraged a rapid increase in fathers' taking a share of parental leave, with three-quarters taking their three-month quota. Scandinavian parents are subject to contradictory pressures too, to work long hours, and fathers still take only a small proportion of parental leaves in Nordic countries, (Nyberg 2004, 2006, Ellingsaeter and Leira 2006, Lammi-Taskula 2006). However modest in effect, these are important changes, bringing new assumptions about men as fathers, in households as well as among policy-makers. European policy for work-family balance has put gender at home on the agenda as well as gender at work, but it has been a new year/new millenium resolution (Council of the European Union 2000) rather than a comprehensive commitment.

Beliefs about gender equality in care show widespread agreement that childcare should belong equally to men and women. Respondents across 28 countries (including Turkey, a candidate country) were asked about: playing, taking children to activities, dealing with nappies dressing, taking to the doctor, helping with schoolwork, reading, buying toys, publishing, putting to bed, answering important questions. The resulting index (from zero, wholly unshared) to 100 (fully shared) suggests that beliefs in gender equality in care are widespread in Western, Central and Eastern Europe, with an overall index of 81.8 in the EU 15 and of 76.6 in the new member countries: 'most people of Europe believe that childcare is basically a non-specific task: both mother and father are expected

to carry out childrearing' (Fahey and Spéder 2004: 60). Beliefs and practice may of course be very different, and some degree of disjuncture is to be expected between what people say they think should happen in childcare, and what actually does.

Fathers themselves have been spending more time on parenting, with paternal time now between a quarter and a third of maternal time (Eurostat 2004). However, this varies widely across countries, with very low levels of paternal time in Greece and Portugal. There is some evidence of greater gender equality in post-socialist households, with 31% of men involved in raising and caring for children, in the (then) Acceding and Candidate Countries, compared with 24% in the EU 15 (Paoli and Parent-Thirion, 2003: 78). In social democratic countries there is some evidence of fathers influenced by father-friendly legislation, with parental leave rights for fathers (not just to their families) and government encouragement to use them. But in liberal, free-market countries fathers may also contribute more time to their children, in response to an absence of social support (Smith 2004, Smith and Williams 2007).

European systems of support for childcare show great variety. In most countries mothers are still primary carers, and fathers are primary breadwinners, even where governments have established social rights for children's care. Scandinavian countries are clear leaders in parental rights and childcare services. But the systems of post-state socialist countries are less damaged than commentators have feared: nurseries have closed, but parents have rights to leave for nursery-age children and pre-school provision remains strong. The European Union's emphasis on increasing women's employment has supported childcare development, mainly through encouragement and targets, which are establishing new norms. Policies to encourage fathers to play a stronger role in childcare are beginning, but for the most part policy-makers follow the widespread belief in gender equality in this respect rather than leading it.

### *Time*

Time is integral to gender systems: traditional male breadwinner regimes depended on men's full-time and lifetime paid employment. Britain's post-war social security system was devised by Beveridge on this model of a male working life, while allowing for married women to be full-time carers, dependent on their husbands for income and pension contributions. The working time models that have emerged from the ashes of the male breadwinner model – most often one and a half earner, with mothers in part-time work – have rarely brought gender equality in time (Lewis 2001a). Even in the weakest male breadwinner states, women do shorter hours of paid work than men, and longer hours of unpaid. In contrast, state socialist working time regimes meant full-time work for men and women: parental leaves and non-competitive conditions, allowed mothers to exit and re-enter work to meet their children's needs. Both time systems now bring risks to parents, as mothers can no longer rely on marriage and male breadwinners to bring security, income or pensions, while post-state socialist countries bring competitive conditions in which women cannot safely use their rights. Increasingly, policy strategies include time regulation.

Hours for full-time employees are nearly gender equal, with a 41-hour week for men and 39-hour week for women in the EU 25: gender differences are greatest in the UK, where men's working week is 44 hours, four hours longer than women's, while Sweden, Bulgaria and Luxembourg record equal full-time working hours (Eurostat 2007). The major gender differences in Western European countries are in part-time work, which is the way that women in countries with a male breadwinner tradition have joined the labour market, fitting paid work around unpaid care responsibilities. In the (mainly western) countries covered by Eurostat (2004) women aged 20 to 74 spent more time on domestic work than on paid work, while the opposite was the case for men.

Working time arrangements in former state socialist countries are distinctive. First, working hours are longer than in the EU15, averaging 44 hours rather than 38. Second, very long working weeks are commoner, 38% working more than 45 hours a week, against 21% in the EU15. Thirdly, fewer people work short hours, fewer work part-time, and part-time hours are long, at 32 hours on average (Paoli and Parent-Thirion 2003: 45). There is more gender equality in working time in these new member states than in Malta, but this kind of gender equality makes reconciling work and family a challenge, especially for mothers. There is little debate about working time in the new CEE member states, or making space for women or men to engage in care: employees need full-time incomes for living standards and future pensions. Working time is also less flexible than the EU15 (Weiler 2005). These countries appear to follow their state socialist predecessors: men and women are expected to be in the labour market, equally in full time jobs with long full time hours. But the conditions under which they do this have become more challenging, with inflexibility and competition for jobs. Now mothers find difficulty using parental leaves, or re-entering after childbirth. While men appear to be playing a more serious role in these obligations, they are still primarily mothers' obligations, bringing serious difficulties in keeping jobs and caring for children (Pascall & Kwak 2005).

[Insert Table 5 here]

Women's part-time work is a crucial way in which they may be marginalized and disadvantaged by caring responsibilities (Rubery 1998, 1999). Very high levels of insecure, low paid work, with short hours and limited rights: these were one of Jane Lewis' key reasons for describing the UK as a strong male breadwinner model, while Swedish women were likely to do part-time work, but with longer hours and conditions equivalent to full-time work (Lewis 1992). The EU Part-Time Work Directive has improved rights, but part-time work remains one way UK women bend their employment to their family, and suffer the consequences in terms of life-time earnings half men's (Rake 2000). In Western Europe, 33.5% of total employment is women's part-time, over five times men's. Table 5 shows how much part-time work is women's work. The ratios of women's part-time employment to men's show women in Western Europe with around five times the rate for men, and even Sweden around three times. Distinctive differences between East and West also persist here. Poland's women part-timers contribute the highest rate to total employment among post-state socialist countries at 13.4%, but this is



much below western countries, and further below traditionally male breadwinner countries, the UK and Ireland.

What routes are there to more equal working time? The Swedish route has been to support full-time employment – or nearly full-time employment - for women and men within a dual earner model, through high public spending on childcare and parental rights and leaves. These include the right to a six-hour working day for parents of young children, introduced in Sweden in 1979. One consequence of parental rights introduced in the 1970s has been a deeply divided labour market, in which women are more likely to use parental leave and to work shorter hours, and to have lower paid public sector jobs. More recent policy developing strategies – including dedicated ‘Daddy leave’ in the 1990s - to encourage men to use parental leave has been one response, with the assumption that both paid and care work should be shared. Among Nordic countries Sweden is seen as coming the nearest now to a model which facilitates ‘the dual-earner, care-sharing family, in which both mothers and fathers are economic providers and carers for children’ (Leira 2006: 44).

A part-time route to more equal working time has been pursued by the Netherlands. The ‘Polder model’ adopted part-time work for economic goals, to share employment, and enabled the absorption of women into the economy, but was not specifically a model for gender equality. However, the ‘Combination Scenario’ - adopted as a guideline for work and family policies in 1995 - brought an ideological commitment to gender equality in care work as well as paid employment, challenging ‘not only women’s gender position but also men’s’ (Knijn 2001: 170, Knijn & Selten 2002). Part-time work was integral to the ‘Combination Scenario’ whose core concepts are the equal valuation of unpaid care work with paid employment, a balanced combination of care and paid work, and gender equality in both care and paid employment. In the Netherlands, women’s move into part-time work has been rapid. Men’s part-time work has increased, but as younger and older workers rather than as parents (Plantenga 2002). Both men and women in the Netherlands have the highest part-time rates in Europe, but women’s at 75.1% is over three times men’s at 22.6%. The official ideal is still far from reality, and the Netherlands is a distinctive version of the Western European norm of a one and a half work pattern, with women as the half, rather than transforming the gender division of time.

A shorter working week, making more room for care, is an alternative strategy for gender equality, with policies in several Western European countries. France has national legislation for a maximum 35-hour working week, beginning in larger firms in 2000 and in smaller firms in 2002. As in the Netherlands, this started as a policy to share employment, at a time of high unemployment, but more equal sharing of paid and unpaid work in families was also an objective (Fagnani & Letablier 2004, 2006). Despite significant difficulties, especially for low earners, early research suggests that the 35-hour week enables work-family reconciliation. Among parents with at least one child under six, 59.5% of women and 55.2% of men replied that the 35-hour week law had made reconciling their working life and family life easier (Fagnani and Letablier 2006: 86). Parents were more positive when working within a family-friendly working climate, reducing hours on a weekly basis (71% positive), and – in the context of legislation not

fully implemented at the time of this research - actually working near to the 35-hour norm (65% positive). Negative responses were associated with employers not being perceived as family-friendly, reduced working time not arranged to produce a 35-hour week (instead being annualised and giving longer holidays), or working hours above the 35-hour norm (Fagnani and Letablier 2004: 560-566). In another study, public sector employees with children under 12 are reported as spending more time with their children: 90% of fathers and 87% of mothers (Fagnani & Letablier 2006). There is also evidence of preferences for more equal working time, with the current French model not far from widespread preferences in Europe (Fagan & Warren 2001).

These three routes could be characterised as Sweden making women's working lives as far as possible like men's, the Netherlands making men's working lives more like women's, while France offers a mid-point between men's lives and women's. In Western countries some residue of the male breadwinner model remains, as men are more tied to their jobs and women more tied to childcare, but this varies a great deal. Sweden is clearly the leading country, in Scandinavia and in Europe: here gender equality policy is the most deep-rooted, with rights for parents developing since the 1970s, and a strong women's movement. Incentives for men to care since the 1990s mean that Sweden now offers official and financial support for men to care as well as for women's employment.

### ***Gender and power***

Gender systems are also systems of power: welfare states affect gender relations, women's autonomy as individuals, their ability to support themselves and their place in public politics. Equality legislation has brought women important rights, but inequalities in paid work, care, income and time bring unequal voice in households, civil society, local politics, state and European governments. In households the continuing gender division of labour suggests that women's voice is weaker, and their lower incomes may give them less say in major decisions than men. Women's political representation in national parliaments has been shown to relate positively to their level of employment, education compared with men, length of time since enfranchisement, secularization, social democratic political parties and electoral systems based on proportional representation. But even where women's employment, education and mobilization have brought steady improvements in representation, these have not brought parity with men. Increasingly women's low level of political representation is being targeted by quotas (Dahlerup 2006, 2007).

Women's representation in European parliaments (EU 25) is now 23% on average, despite commitments to international conventions such as CEDAW, and EU persuasion to member states to increase representation of women in decision-making positions. Countries vary widely, from Sweden's 45% to Malta's 9%. On this measure, Germany is somewhat above average, and the UK and France somewhat below. Malta shares its low position in women's representation with Ireland, another traditionally male breadwinner state, and with former state socialist countries, Hungary and Romania, which also have around 10% women in their parliaments.

[Insert table 6 around here]

Restriction of social, civil and political action under state socialism limited women's politics, and challenges to patriarchal families from within (Molyneux 1990: 44-8). But the democratization that came with the end of soviet authority has been a gendered process and has not opened space for women's participation to the same extent as men's. Amid all the priorities of economic upheavals and the development of class differences, gender and women's political action may have taken a back seat (Ferge 1997, 1998, Watson 1997, 2000). Women tend to be doing better in civil service positions, with several countries above the EU average, and Slovenia exceeding Sweden's representation. Women's position in employment, perhaps the legacy of state socialism, appears to give them better access to decision-making within government departments than in many western countries, while access to formal political positions is more restricted. Accession to the EU has put gender equality on the political agenda of post-state socialist countries, and is enabling civil action. But gender equality as a political norm, and the civil action to achieve it in post-socialist countries have still a distance to travel.

Accumulated evidence points to discriminatory processes as the key to women's continued under-representation, rather than women's choices or poorer qualification for election (Phillips 1991). In this case solutions may be found through changing political processes. Proponents of the parity principle argue democratic representation is not democratic unless both men and women are equally represented. Proposals for gender quotas come in many forms, and are designed to ensure a minimum proportion of women are elected, or to give parity between men and women. A 'parity law' has been used in France to regulate the proportion of women candidates in local regional and European elections, though not in national parliamentary ones: it increased women's representation from 22 per cent to 47.5 per cent in the cities in March 2001 (Squires and Wickham-Jones 2001).

Nordic countries are used to being at the top of gender leagues. They have adopted strategies to foster more equal representation of women in parliaments. The long, unbroken women's movement has worked to increase acceptability of stronger women's participation and the unacceptability of men's over-representation. Women's stronger position in employment, proportional representation, social democratic party dominance and party quotas – though not compulsory legal quotas - have increased women's representation in parliamentary politics. This has been gradual process built on consensual politics over decades. Sweden is still at the top of European countries, with its 45% of women parliamentarians. But Nordic feminists are now surprised to find their position at the top of the international league taken by Rwanda, bringing debates in Scandinavia about whether the consensual process has been too gradual (Dahlerup 2006, 2007, Freidenvall et al 2006). New parliaments in Scotland and Wales have also offered opportunities to build systems in which women can win seats in Europe too (albeit at a devolved rather than UK level) and have reached 50% in Wales. Quotas are rapidly growing as a means to avoid a hundred-year wait for women to be fully represented, though they face barriers in some developed democracies, particularly those without proportional representation, with entrenched male MPs and party selection processes, and

where the dominant ideology is based on liberal ideals emphasizing equal opportunity rather than equality of result.

Women's political representation in formal politics is clearly below men's. But there are great differences. Scandinavian countries remain the leaders in Europe from women's point of view, with women in Sweden challenging men in parliamentary representation, while Malta and Ireland have the fewest women in parliamentary politics. Women in former state socialist countries have had a disappointing transition to democracy, in their relatively low position in parliamentary politics. However, the tradition of women's employment does allow women in post-state socialist countries to achieve influential civil service positions, while the EU is enabling the development of women's organizations (and others) in civil society. The EU has offered advice to member states over increasing women's representation, but no binding directive: quota debates suggest a practical means to increasing women's representation at EU and national levels, to which in theory governments are committed.

### ***Conclusion***

The gender models underpinning state socialist societies in Eastern Europe, and the male breadwinner model in Western Europe have been challenged by social and economic transformation in the east, and by family change and individualisation across Europe. The soviet tradition was one of relative gender equality, particularly in employment, underpinned by social spending on children and families. Transformation has brought markets, and has reduced, but not destroyed the social systems that supported women's employment. In Western Europe, women have challenged the male breadwinner model by entering the labour market. But they have done so with very varied levels of state support, which has brought very different levels of gender equality and the ability of women to support themselves and their children through sustained high-quality employment. It has also brought very different power in national – and probably domestic - decision-making.

Analysing the male breadwinner model into its component parts – paid work, care work, income, time and power – allows us to compare countries with very different histories, to understand social policies across different elements. In any likely future scenario, European women are likely to want and need a stronger and more equal position in paid employment. But work is not the whole. Greater equality in paid employment will not bring gender equality unless greater attention is paid to gender differences in care, income, time and power.

We also need to consider the different qualities of regimes in terms of their commitments to intervention at different levels: to influencing the household division of labour, as well as to social spending and to equality. While European countries are all committed in principle to gender equality, their achievements are very different. This may be partly understood in terms of competing commitments to markets and to traditional families. The UK may be seen as a liberal example (though not an entirely consistent one) of commitments to markets often winning over commitments to gender equality, which has made gender equality a privilege for better-off and better educated women who can

afford to pay for care. Germany's conservative tradition may be seen as limiting its commitment to changing gender roles in families and outside them (again not entirely consistently). Among post-state socialist countries, Poland's commitment to traditional families has also brought more inequality, while Slovenia is more like the social democratic countries. Only the Scandinavian social democratic countries have made an ideological commitment to gender equality, supported by social spending, which puts them at the forefront in Europe for social policies designed to produce gender equality in employment, care, income, time and power, and in measures of these in practice. Even here there are costs to women in segregated employment, with lower pay than men's.

It will not be news to anyone interested in gender and welfare states that, while all European governments are committed to gender equality, the Nordic countries achieve it more consistently than elsewhere. But the evidence of the superiority of the Scandinavian model is now clarified by the structural indicators, which allow comparison across the wider Europe. Evidence also accumulates of the superiority of Scandinavian model in broader economic and social measures, as well as the child poverty data already mentioned (UNICEF 2007). In *Choosing to Grow*, reporting on the Lisbon Strategy, the Commission points to Swede, Denmark and Finland as consistently best performers, in terms of general economic performance, employment, research and innovation, economic reform, social cohesion and the environment (European Commission 2003b: 29). Similar conclusions are drawn by Goodin (1999) and by Panić, who compares seven contrasting regimes using a wide range of measures: 'The best performing industrial economies at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are those that have least in common with the neo-liberal model': the Scandinavian social democracies in particular (Panić 2007).

The European Union is committed to gender equality in Europe, and may bring convergence between its different member states. Gender equality in employment has been part of the EU since the Treaty of Rome in 1957. Debates about gender equality in Europe have been lively and effective in developing wider commitments by member states. But the European Union is not a consistent supporter of social Europe, often emphasizing markets, economic growth and employment rather than social objectives. And while member states are committed to increasing women's labour market participation, childcare and so on, many fear that current commitments may not be relied upon.

As the structures which underpinned state socialist and male breadwinner models have both transformed, new structures are needed in Europe. In Nordic countries as in the rest of Europe, gender equality policies have tended to start with women's employment, and have been much more active in supporting women's work than in supporting men's care. Scandinavian countries are now developing policies to encourage gender equality in care as well as in employment, and give the best lead towards a more gender-equal future in Europe. A Universal Citizenship model – in which men's and women's rights and obligations to care were recognised and supported - would emphasise the need to change men's employment as well as women's, to give men and women time to earn to support themselves. The research and policy agenda begins to include men as fathers and carers, with models such as the Netherlands' Combination Scenario and Scandinavian Daddy

leave. But policies for gender equality are hindered by gender inequality in decision-making, especially in politics, which could be transformed by quotas. The evidence about European people's desire for more equal working time, and belief in more equal obligations, is that Europeans are ahead of their policy makers in support for gender equality as more equal obligation and time to care and not just as increasing women's participation in employment

**Table 1: Female and male employment rates, as percentage of women and men aged 15 to 64, and difference between male and female, 2005<sup>1</sup>**

	Employment rate: female	Employment rate: male	Employment rate Male – female
Sweden	70.4	74.4	4.0
Denmark	71.9	79.8	7.9
Slovenia	61.3	70.4	9.1
Hungary	51.0	63.1	12.1
Poland	46.8	58.9	12.1
France	57.6	68.8	11.2
Germany	59.6	71.2	11.6
UK	65.9	77.6	11.7
Ireland	58.3	76.9	18.6
Malta	33.7	73.8	40.1
EU 27	56.0	70.8	14.8

Source: Eurostat structural indicators Europa NewCronos website 2006 and author's calculations

---

<sup>1</sup> The employment rates are calculated by dividing the number of women aged 15 to 64 in employment by the total female population of the same age group. The indicator is based on the EU Labour Force Survey. The survey covers the entire population living in private households and excludes those in collective households such as boarding houses, halls of residence and hospitals. Employed population consists of those persons who during the reference week did any work for pay or profit for at least one hour, or were not working but had jobs from which they were temporarily absent.

**Table 2: Female and male unemployment rates, as percentage of the labour force, and difference between male and female, 2006<sup>1</sup>**

	Unemployment rate: female	Unemployment rate: male	Unemployment rate female – male
Sweden	7.3	6.9	0.4
Denmark	4.5	3.3	1.2
Slovenia	7.2	5.0	2.2
Hungary	7.8	7.2	0.6
Poland	15.1	13.1	2.0
France	10.0	8.2	1.8
Germany	9.1	7.7	1.4
UK	4.3	5.1	-0.8
Ireland	4.1	4.6	-0.5
Malta	9.2	6.5	2.7
EU 27	8.8	7.1	1.7

Source: Eurostat structural indicators Europa NewCronos website 2006, and author's calculations

---

<sup>1</sup> Unemployment rates represent unemployed persons as a percentage of the labour force = active population. The labour force is the total number of people employed and unemployed. Unemployed persons comprise persons aged 15 to 74 who were: a. without work during the reference week, b. currently available for work, i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment before the end of the two weeks following the reference week, c. actively seeing work, i.e. had taken specific steps in the four weeks period ending with the reference week to seek paid employment or self-employment or who found a job to start later, i.e. within a period of, at most, three months.



**Table 3: Gender pay gap in unadjusted form, 2005<sup>1</sup>**

(Difference between men's and women's average gross hourly earnings as a percentage of men's average gross hourly earnings)

	Gender Pay Gap
Sweden	16
Denmark	18
Slovenia	8
Hungary	10
Poland	10
France	12
Germany	22
UK	20
Ireland	11 (2004)
Malta	4
EU 25	15

Source: Eurostat structural indicators Europa NewCronos website 2006

---

<sup>1</sup> Gender pay gap is given as the difference between average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees and of female paid employees as a percentage of average gross hourly earnings of male paid employees. The population consists of all paid employees aged 16-64 that are 'at work 15+ hours per week'.

**Table 4: Risk of poverty, before and after transfers, male and female, 2005 (or most recent available figures)<sup>1</sup>**

	Before transfers Female	After transfers Female	Before transfers Male	After transfers Male	Before transfers Female - male	After transfers female - male
Sweden	30	10	27	9	3	1
Denmark	32	12	29	12	3	0
Slovenia	18	11	15	9	3	2
Hungary	29	13	30	14	-1	-1
Poland	29	20	31	21	-2	-1
France	27	14	25	12	2	2
Germany	25	14	22	12	5	2
UK	30	19	28	18	2	1
Ireland	34	21	30	19	4	2
Malta	22	15	20	14	2	1
EU 25	27	17	25	15	2	2

Source: Eurostat structural indicators, Europa NewCronos website 2007, and author's calculations

<sup>1</sup> The share of women and men with an equivalised disposable income below the risk-of-poverty threshold, which is set at 60% of the national median equivalised disposable income.

**Table 5: Part-time workers as percentage of total employment, 2005**

	Part-time rate: female	Part-time rate: male	Part-time rate female: male
Sweden	39.6	11.5	3.4: 1
Denmark	43.8	7.8	5.6: 1
Slovenia	11.1	7.2	1.5: 1
Hungary	5.8	2.7	2.1: 1
Poland	14.3	8.0	1.8: 1
Netherlands	75.1	22.6	3.3: 1
France	30.7	5.7	5.4: 1
Germany	43.8	7.8	5.6 :1
UK	42.7	10.4	4.1: 1
Ireland (2002)	30.4	6.5	4.7: 1
Malta	21.1	4.5	4.7: 1
Euro area	34.8	6.9	5.0: 1
EU 25	32.4	7.4	4.4: 1

Source: European Commission/Eurostat 2007 *Living conditions in Europe* (Table 3.2: 46) and author's calculations.

**Table 6: Women in decision-making**

	Percentage of women Senior Ministers in national government	Percentage of women members of single/lower house Parliaments	Percentage of women at one level below the minister	Percentage of women at two below minister
Sweden	52	45	40	45
Slovenia	7	15	41	67
Hungary	12	9	3	23
Poland	6	22	29	31
France	18	13	0	18
Germany	33	33	11	9
UK	27	18	21	18
Ireland	14	13	11	11
Malta	15	9	7	12
Average EU 25	23	23	16	24

Source: European Commission Database on Women and Men in Decision-making 2005

## **References**

- Abrahamson, P. 1999, "The welfare modelling business", *Social Policy and Administration*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 394-415.
- Atkinson, A. 2003 "Social Europe and social science" *Social Policy and Society*, vol 2 no 4, 261-272.
- Camilleri-Cassar, F. 2005 *Gender Equality in Maltese Social Policy? Graduate Women and the Male Breadwinner model*, Agenda, Malta.
- Council of the European Union 2000 "Resolution of the Council and of the Ministers for Employment and Social Policy on the balanced participation of women and men in family and working life", *Official Journal* 2000C 218/02.
- Creighton, C. 1999, "The rise and decline of the 'male breadwinner family' in Britain" *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, vol 23: 519-41.
- Dahlerup, Drude (ed) 2006 *Women, Quotas and Politics*, London: Routledge.
- Dahlerup, Drude forthcoming 2007 "Electoral Gender Quotas – Between Equality of Opportunity and Equality of Result" in *Representation, the Journal of Representative Democracy*.
- Daly, M. and Rake, K. 2003, *Gender and the Welfare State: Care, Work and Welfare in Europe and the USA*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Duvander, A-Z., Ferranini, T., and Thalberg, S., 2005, *Swedish Parental Leave and Gender equality: achievements and reform challenges in a European perspective*, Institute for Futures Studies, 2005:11.
- Einhorn, B. 2006, *Citizenship in an Enlarging Europe: from Dream to Awakening*, Macmillan, Basingstoke.
- Ellingsaeter, A.E. and Leira, A. (eds) 2006 *Politicising Parenthood in Scandinavia*, Bristol: Policy Press.
- Esping-Andersen, G. 1990, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* Polity Press, Cambridge.
- European Commission 2003 *Choosing to Grow: Knowledge, Innovation and Jobs in a cohesive society*, Report to the Spring European Council on the Lisbon strategy of economic and social and environmental renewal, Office for Official Publications of the European Commission, Luxembourg.
- European Commission 2004 *The Social Situation in the European Union*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Commission.

Eurostat 2004 How Europeans Spend their Time: Everyday Life of Women and Men: Data 1998-2002 Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Commission.

Eurostat 2007 *Living conditions in Europe data 2002-2005* Office for Official Publications of the European Commission, Luxembourg.

Fagan, C. & Warren, T. 2001, *Gender, Employment and Working-time Preferences in Europe: report for the European Foundation on Living and Working Conditions* Office of Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Fagnani, J. & Letablier, M. T. 2004, "Work and Family-Life Balance: the impact of the 35-hour laws in France", *Work, Employment and Society*, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 551-572.

Fagnani, J. and Letablier, M.T. 2006 "The French 35-hour working law and the work-life balance of parents: friend or foe?" in Diane Perrons et al eds, *Gender Divisions and Working Time in the New Economy*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

Fahey, T. & Spéder, S. 2004, *Fertility and Family Issues in an Enlarged Europe* Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg.

Ferge, Z. 1997a, "The Changed Welfare Paradigm - The Individualization of the Social", *Social Policy and Administration*, vol. 31, no. 1, pp. 20-44.

Ferge, Z. 1997b, "A Central European perspective on the social quality of Europe," in *The social quality of Europe*, W. Beck, L. Maesen and A. Walker (eds), Kluwer Law International, The Hague/London/Boston, pp. 165-181.

Ferge, Z. 1998, "Women and social transformation in Central-Eastern Europe: the 'old left' and the 'new right'," in *Social Policy Review 10*, Social Policy Association, Newcastle, pp. 217-236.

Ferge, Z. & Tausz, K. 2002 "Social Security in Hungary: a balance sheet after twelve years" *Social Policy and Administration* 36: 2: 176-99.

Fodor, E. 2005 *Women at Work: the status of women in the Labour markets of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland* Occasional Paper 3 Geneva: United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD).

Förster, M. F. & Tóth, I. J. 2001, "Child poverty and family transfers in the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland", *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 324-341.

Fraser, N. 1997, *Justice Interruptus: critical reflections on the "postsocialist" condition* Routledge, New York and London.

Freidenvall et al 2006 "The Nordic Countries: an incremental model" in Dahlerup, Drude (ed) (2006) *Women, Quotas and Politics*, London: Routledge.

Gershuny, J. 2000, *Changing Times: Work and Leisure in Post-Industrial Society* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Ginn, J., Street, D. and Arber, S. 2001 *Women, Work and Pensions: International Issues and Prospects*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Goodin, R.E. et al 1999 *The Real Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Gornick, J. C. & Meyers, M. K. 2003, *Families that Work: Policies for Reconciling Parenthood and Employment* Russell Sage Foundation Publications, New York.

Knijn, T. 2001, "Care work: innovations in the Netherlands," in *Care Work: The quest for security*, M. Daly, ed., ILO, Geneva, pp. 159-174.

Knijn, T. & Selten, P. 2002, "Transformations of Fatherhood" in B.Hobson (ed) *Making Men into Fathers: Men, Masculinities and the Social Politics of Fatherhood*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp 168-90.

Kocourkova, J. 2002, "Leave arrangements and childcare services in Central Europe: policies and practices before and after the transition", *Community, Work and Family*, vol. 5, no. 3, pp. 301-318.

Korpi, W. 2000, "Faces of Inequality: gender, class, and patterns of inequalities in different types of welfare states", *Social Politics*, vol. 7, pp. 127-191.

Lammi-Taskula 2006 Nordic men on parental leave: can the welfare state change gender relations? in Ellingsaeter, A.E. and Leira, A. (eds) *Politicising Parenthood in Scandinavia*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Land, H. 2004, "Women, child poverty and childcare: making the link" London, Daycare Trust.

Leira, A. 2006, "Parenthood change and policy reform in Scandinavia 1970s – 2000s" in Ellingsaeter, A.E. and Leira, A. (eds) *Politicising Parenthood in Scandinavia*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Lewis, J. 1992, "Gender and the Development of Welfare Regimes", *Journal of European Social Policy*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 159-173.

Lewis, J. 2001a, "The Decline of the Male Breadwinner Model: the Implications for Work and Care", *Social Politics*, vol. 8, no. 2, pp. 152-170.

Lewis, J. 2001b, *The End of Marriage: Individualism and Intimate Relations?* Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.

- Lewis, J. 2002, "Gender and Welfare State Change", *European Societies*, vol. 4, no. 4, pp. 331-357.
- Lewis, J. 2003 "Developing Early Years Childcare 1997-2002: the choices for mothers" *Social Policy and Administration*, 37: 3 219-238.
- Lewis, J. 2006a "Gender and Welfare in Modern Europe" *Past and Present*, Supplement 1, 39-54.
- Lewis, J. 2006b "Work/family reconciliation, equal opportunities and social policies: the interpretation of policy trajectories at the EU level and the meaning of gender equality", *Journal of European Public Policy* 13: 420-437.
- MISSOC 2004 *Social Protection in the 10 new Member States*, Europa website.
- Molyneux, M. 1990, "The "Woman Question" in the age of Perestroika", *New Left Review*, vol. 183, pp. 23-59.
- Nyberg, A. 2004, *Parental Leave, Public Childcare and the Dual Earner/Dual Carer-Model in Sweden*, Discussion Paper Swedish National Institute for Working Life.
- Nyberg, A. 2006, "Economic crisis and the sustainability of the dual-earner, dual carer model", in Diane Perrons et al. eds. *Gender Divisions and Working Time in the New Economy*, Edward Elgar, Cheltenham.
- Panić, M (2007) 'Does Europe need neoliberal reforms?' *Cambridge Journal of Economics* vol 31, no 1, Jan: 145-169.
- Paoli, P. & Parent-Thirion, A. 2003, *Working conditions in the acceding and candidate countries* European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin.
- Pascall, G. & Lewis, J. 2004, "Emerging Gender Regimes and Policies for Gender Equality in a Wider Europe", *Journal of Social Policy*, vol. 33, no. 3, pp. 373-394.
- Pascall, G. & Kwak, A. 2005, *Gender Regimes in Transition in Central and Eastern Europe*, Policy Press, Bristol.
- Phillips, A. 1991 *Engendering Democracy*, Cambridge, Polity Press.
- Plantenga, J. 2002, "Combining work and care in the polder model: an assessment of the Dutch part-time strategy", *Critical Social Policy*, vol. 22, no. 1, pp. 53-71.
- Plantenga, J. & Siegel, M. 2005 *Position Paper 'Childcare in a changing world' Part 1: European childcare strategies, Part 2 Country Files, The Netherlands*.
- Rake, K. 2000, *Women's Incomes over the Lifetime*, Women and Equality Unit, The Stationery Office, London.



- Rubery, J., Smith, M. Fagan, C. & Grimshaw, D. 1998 *Women and European Employment*, Routledge, London.
- Rubery, J., Smith, M. & Fagan, C. 1999 *Women's Employment in Europe: Trends and Prospects*, Routledge, London.
- Rubery, J. et al 2001 "The Future European Labor Supply: The critical role of the family" *Feminist Economics*, 7 (3) 33-69.
- Rubery, J. 2005 "Gender mainstreaming and the Open Method of Co-ordination. Is the Open method too open for gender equality policy?" In J. Zeitlin & P. Pochet (eds) *The Open Method of Co-ordination in Action: the European social inclusion and employment strategies in action*, Madison, Wisconsin: European Union Center.
- Smith, Alison J. 2004, *Who Cares? Fathers and the Time they Spend Looking After Children* Sociology Working Papers, Department of Sociology, University of Oxford.
- Smith, Alison and Williams, Donald 2007 "Father-friendly Legislation and Paternal Time across Europe", *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis*, 9, 2: 175-192.
- Squires, J. & Wickham-Jones, M. 2001, *Women in Parliament: A Comparative Analysis* Equal Opportunities Commission, Manchester.
- Szikra, D. 2005 'Family and Child Support in a Post-Communist Society: Origins of the Mixed Hungarian Welfare Capitalism', ESPAnet Annual Conference 2005, University of Fribourg.
- Szikra, D. 2006 'Schools as agents of social policy: Childcare in the Hungarian education system in a comparative and historical perspective' ESPAnet Annual Conference, University of Bremen.
- Threlfall, M. 2007 "The social dimension of the European Union: innovative methods for advancing integration", *Global Social Policy*, Issue 3 (December).
- UNICEF 1999, *Women in Transition Regional Monitoring Reports No 6*. UNICEF International Child Development Centre, Florence.
- UNICEF 2001, *A Decade of Transition, Regional Monitoring Report, No 8* UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.
- UNICEF 2005 *Child Poverty in Rich Countries 2005: Report Card No 6*, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.
- UNICEF 2007 *An overview of child well-being in rich countries 2005: Report Card No 7*, UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, Florence.
- Van der Lippe & Van Dijk 2002 "Comparative Research on Women's Employment" *Annual Review of Sociology*, 28: 221-241.

Watson, P. 1997, "Civil Society and the Politics of Difference in Eastern Europe," in *Transitions, Environments, Translations: Feminisms in International Politics*, J. W. Scott, C. Kaplan, & D. Keates, eds., Routledge, New York and London.

Watson, P. 2000, "Politics, policy and identity: EU eastern enlargement and East-West differences", *Journal of European Public Policy, special issue*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 369-384.

Watson, P. 2000, "Rethinking transition: globalism, gender and class", *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, vol. 2, no. 2.

Weiler, A. 2005 *Quality in work and employment* European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin.

### **Websites**

European Commission Database on Women and Men in Decision-making

Europa: Eurostat Structural Indicators

UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre TransMONEE database