

## Reconciling Work and Care: Supporting Working Parents

### 1. Work-Family Balance, Gender and Policy

J. Lewis 2009 Edward Elgar, Cheltenham

Book focused on policy for reconciling work and care. Focuses on childcare, flexible working patterns and entitlement to leave from work in order to care in EU15.

Informed by work for CINEFOGO, WORKCARE and RECOWE.

J. Lewis, Mary Campbell and Carmen Huerta (2008) Patterns of Paid and Unpaid Work in Western Europe: gender, commodification, preferences and the implications for policy, *Journal of European Social Policy*, 18, 21 – 37

J. Lewis and Susanna Giullari (2005) The Adult worker Model Family, Gender Equality and Care: the search for new policy possibilities and the problems of the capabilities approach, *Economy and Society*, 34, 76 – 104

- Policy makers perspective = justification for policies to enable mothers and fathers to balance paid employment and care. Also if justification what policies – target work or care and what form take. Activation of women. Social investment – ageing population, fertility, child poverty, children’s educational achievement. Also modernise working practices (flexibility). Focus on paid work – economic and productivity issues.
- Employers want to control absenteeism and turnover, retain valued workers and to promote job commitment and performance.
- Parents seek to reduce stress and ‘pressure’, and, more positively achieve a ‘balance’ that is satisfying. Concerned about paid and unpaid work and how they manage these – parental leave and flexible working arrangements.. Concerned about welfare of family.
- EU state support but not US. In latter dual working encouraged and strong anti-discrimination legislation but little state support for care responsibilities. Seen as a private family matter and work-life balance matter for individuals and firms not for collective expenditure by state.
- Spending on family policy seen in US as inimical to economic growth etc (neo-liberal) but Finland tops World Economic forum Growth Competiveness Index and it has the most equal distribution of income.
- Structural, social and economic changes all important in driving policy changes in 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
- Main policies = childcare, parental leave and flexible working.
- Family policy, provision of variety of cash benefits and services, expanded significantly under last Labour Government in UK. Task of reconciling care and employment seen legitimate area for government intervention.
- Gender inequality = ‘care gap’ and ‘care squeeze’ but policy focused on achieving care goals – need to address role of men as well as women – parental choice policy obscures both different interests and power of men and women in the family.

- Need to address quality of care, and of rewarding and sharing care work. Promotion children's welfare legitimate policy objective but research suggests children unlikely to do well if their parents do not.
- No agreement as to what constitutes work-life balance for parents etc
  - UK, Germany, Netherlands, Austria pt work way of reconciling work and care for mothers with long working hours for fathers except in the Netherlands
  - In Southern Europe except for Portugal employment rate for mothers low but those who are in paid work tend to work ft.
  - Scandinavia, France and Belgium high employment rates for mothers are high and work ft or long pt.
- Importance of grandparents in providing care – also use of number of care arrangements, formal and informal.
- Governments need to decide if want to support what families doing /want to do or induce change with policies. Governments in EU accepted lifelong worker model but differ in terms amount of legislative effort and public expenditure put into work-family policies, balance of policy instruments used and in the calibration of these instruments. Difficult to identify causal relationship between policies and changes in behaviour:
  - Scandinavian countries range of policies, job protection, parental leave etc and have relatively high ft working rates for mothers and high fertility;
  - In Southern Europe family left to take make own arrangements – fertility rates and working mothers remain low.
- Policy learning likely to be at level of calibration – implementation rather than at the level of policy package as a whole. EG. Scandinavian countries shown fathers unlikely to take parental leave unless it is a tied entitlement. Also issue of wage compensation.
- Labour market policies tend to meet the needs of mothers as carers – and culturally acceptable rather than change the behaviour of men and fathers. Work-family policy packages been concerned to permit mothers to shoulder their dual burden and often conflicting responsibilities for paid and unpaid work rather than to enable them to make real choices.
- However, women's responsibilities for care work will continue to disadvantage them materially. But, women tend to want to do the work and men may not do it as well to the disadvantage of those cared for. Care work cannot be completely commodified as it is a labour of love. Care work needs to be valued – recognised as important.
- A more equal division of care work between men and women in household more likely to increase women's economic power than attaching material value to care work. Need to recognise women's choices constrained by power (dominance of men). More equal sharing of care work in HH increases women's collective economic, political and discursive power. Capability approach to gender empowerment.
- Even in Sweden with a high commitment to gender equality there is still occupational segregation and a glass ceiling.
- Choice requires equal support for paid and care work. Also importance of those cared for – human flourishing – need for genuine choice. Recognition and valuing of care in private and public spheres.
- Need strong anti-discrimination legislation (as in US) and support for working mothers.
- Also suggests shorter working day and week (stop long hours culture amongst fathers), also that pt work does not pay less and is more precarious than ft.
- European approach makes work and care possible for mothers but there needs to be stronger anti-discrimination legislation.

- ‘Genuine choice’ for mothers and fathers requires a wide range of policies, time to care, cash for care, care services and regulation of working hours. Aimed at household level (cash and time for men and women to care) and collective level (services and cash, and workplace based changes, especially in terms of measuring work accomplished as opp hours put in). Policies generally aimed at enabling mothers to combine work and care but need to address issue of men caring.

## 2. **Combining Caring and Working: Achieving Work-Life Balance**

Linda McKie *et la* Glasgow Caledonian University, University of Strathclyde.

Policy brief for project funded by European Social Fund.

Research focused on women who work in food retail businesses and care for children and/or other relatives.

Most women relied on relatives to look after children and generally dealt with caring emergencies by shift swapping. Managers and supervisors found it more difficult to balance work and care than shop assistants. Most of the women did not know what their rights as employees with caring responsibilities were (or indeed their employment rights more generally). Most women were unable or unwilling to progress their careers because of caring responsibilities.

## 3. **Quality of Work, Policy Synthesis of EU Research Results**

EU Research in Social Sciences and Humanities

Series No 8

Heike Jacobsen

2007

Director General for Research, Citizen and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society

A review of 25 projects funded under the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Framework.

Policy recommendations relevant to workcare relate to gender equality, flexibility and security, inclusion and access to the labour market, diversity and non discrimination.

### **Specific policy recommendations:**

1. Labour markets should offer equal opportunity for men and women in respect of equivalent value jobs and in terms of life-time careers;
2. An appropriate balance between flexibility and security to encourage positive attitudes to change at the workplace and in the labour market;
3. Access to and inclusion in labour markets should be increased, including for those entering the labour market for the first time or after a period of unemployment or inactivity, and allow them to stay in the labour market;
4. Work organisation and work-life balance ;
5. Diversity and non-discrimination.

## 4. **Changing European Gender Relations: Gender Equality Policy Concerning Employment and the Labour Market**

EU Research in Social Sciences and Humanities

Series No 6

Juliet Webster

2007

Director General for Research, Citizen and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society

A policy review of socio-economic research under the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Framework relating to gender and equal opportunities in relation to employment and the labour market.

Main findings:

- There is a strong link between women's participation rates and the provision of care;
- The quality of jobs taken by women remains poor because of their caring responsibilities – poor prospects and opportunities for training etc. Gender equality requires attention is paid to quality as well as quantity
- Women remain the main carers and consequently in flexible employment arrangements Flexible working arrangements promote women's entry into the labour market but often associated with poor conditions of employment, prospects and protection arrangement. Often exclude employees from training and development provisions and from promotion opportunities. Flexible employment provisions can have unintended negative consequences
- Women are penalised in terms of welfare rights because of their interrupted participation in the labour market. Even when welfare arrangements such as unemployment benefits and pensions systems have been reformed to take account of flexible working arrangements they continue to miss the gender inequalities in such arrangements. Women have interrupted work histories, perform unpaid work and often when in paid employment it is low paid and part time.
- Policies that combine generous provision for parental leave and care options are supportive of mother's employment while those that provide poor or moderate childcare and generous entitlement to parental leave tend to perpetuate 'the male breadwinner model' or 'the one-and-a-half-earner household'.
- Part-time employment may be a positive choice for mothers enabling them to combine care and employment especially as not all mothers are happy about using formal childcare for young children;
- Availability of childcare important in making decision about employment but also availability of well-paid jobs, attitudes towards childrearing and gender roles, private sector/workplace provision, family-friendly policies, family support networks, perception of wider family obligations and the ability to combine different time schedules, access to public and private transport;
- Fathers spend little time in childcare or domestic work;
- Working parents generally combine a number of sources of formal and informal childcare;
- For mothers the availability of childcare seems to be the overwhelming determinant of if they work and state childcare provision seems to be preferred to financial benefits;
- Where women have a choice they do not want to take long leave or switch to part-time work because of negative impact on their careers (especially well-educated mothers);
- Most research takes an employer or parent (mother) perspective and not a child perspective.

**Policy implications:**

- There needs to be an increase in affordable and available care and public services need to be more closely geared to supporting the reconciliation of work and care. Policies need either to provide more affordable substitute care and /or increase men's contribution to caring work;
- Skills/vocational training for women especially women returners. Accreditation of skills and job evaluation. Need to avoid women returners paying a lifelong penalty for having time out of the labour market to care for children. More recognition and value needs to be given to the skills that women have, often non-accredited and gained outside the labour market;
- Provision for childcare should stress the pedagogical aspects as this makes it more acceptable to parents;
- The training and conditions of employment of care workers should be improved to ensure good quality and adequate provision;
- TUs have an important role in promoting gender equality re training, recognition of skills and flexibility;
- Measurers need to be taken to overcome the negative features of flexible working such as poor pay, lack of employment rights and poor social protection. Legislation necessary. Flexible working (insecure employment and poorly protected workers) has a negative impact on family formation , especially the case in UK;
- Policies that have a fixed number of working hours a week as in France benefit working mothers;
- Care work even if unpaid should be counted for pension entitlements;

## **5. Family and Welfare Research**

Policy Review Series 1: Family and Welfare

European Commission

Linda Hantrais

2006

Director General for Research, Citizen and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society

A review of FP4 and FP5 socio-economic projects on the theme of family and welfare.

### Findings

- Policies to encourage more women with young children to remain in employment are in competition with policies to curb fall in birth rates and encourage childbearing.
- Key factors to take into account in reconciling work and care are: childcare provision; welfare state arrangements; wider economic environment; access to labour markets; pay and opportunities for career development; social and personal time organisation including flexibility of working arrangements; dominant societal and cultural norms regarding the employment of mothers with young children; availability of relatives; perceived benefits of employment; direct economic, social and economic costs of parenting , especially for women, and: individual preferences.
- Expectations of state support much higher in Scandinavia than CEE.
- Mothers prefer PT work where it is available. Flexibility can perpetuate gender inequality if men do not avail themselves of the opportunities available.
- Argue that childcare policy, described as 'family friendly' is more aptly referred to as 'work friendly'
- Working parents generally combine several sources of formal and informal care

- Parents usually combine several sources of formal and informal care
- Conclusion that if policy is to be effective needs to extend choice about family life.
- Need for more holistic and coordinated approach to policy development between political, economic and civil society actors – acknowledge impact of policies and objective of improvement in quality family life.

## 6. **Towards a New Organisation of Men's Lives – Emerging Forms of Work and Opportunities**

P5 Final Report

Gabriele Moser

2004 re job progression etc etc.

Director General for Research, Citizen and Governance in a Knowledge-based Society

### **Key findings**

- Men remain the 'bread winners' despite changing gender roles and labour markets.
- The number of men in standard full time permanent work is declining.
- Men in part time work face the same barriers as women
- Men who take on caring roles often feel insecure and 'out of place'
- It is difficult for men to take on non-traditional roles because of social attitudes etc but it can be done.
- Men and women generally share the total workload fairly evenly – men doing more paid work and women more unpaid caring and domestic work

### **Policy implications**

- Government policies can support 'new' fathers – e.g. paternal leave.
- Equality policies should tackle the background support for traditional and patriarchal – gender and masculinity patterns, in professional as well as private life.
- Importance of job security.
- Importance of childcare,
- Paternal leave.

## 7. **Chasing Work: The Mobility Dilemma**

European Policy Brief

FP6

Norbert Schneider, Johannes Gutenberg

2008

European Research Area

Policy implications of job mobility for family lives.

### **Key Findings**

1. Difficult to combine job mobility with being an active parent
2. Job mobility reinforces the traditional division of labour amongst couples especially those with children
3. Men are more likely to be mobile than women, fathers are as likely to be mobile as other men but mothers are rarely mobile.
4. In the case of mobile women their partners rarely take over an equal share of childcare and domestic duties. Whereas mobile men are frequently released from these duties by their partners.

(Mobility includes daily commuting of more than 2 hours each way, weekly commuting, spending 60+ nights a week away from home, migration, moving for a job)

Policy Implications

1. Provide childcare that makes it easier to combine parenthood and mobility.
2. Employers should offer employees more flexibility in terms of working hours and occasional working from home.

## **8. Rattling the Value Chain: Work in the Age of Flexibility**

European Policy Brief

FP6

Monique Ram

2009

European Research Area

- Flexible working can enable a better balance between work and family life but workers in Europe not yet benefitted.

## **9. Family, Kinship and State in Contemporary Europe**

European Policy Brief

FP6

Patrick Heady

2010

European Research Area

- Importance of grandparents caring for grandchildren. Should be incorporated in child care policies but it cannot be a substitute for state support.

## **10. Combining Work and Family Life: Removing the Barriers to Women's Progression**

Briefing

European Social Fund

Kay Standing

Liverpool John Moores University

- Pay gap especially for pt work;
- Women lack awareness of entitlement and there are low levels of take-up of parental leave and right to flexible working;
- Employer led;
- Informal workplace cultures, peers and managers all mitigate against flexibility;
- Lack affordable and flexible childcare;
- Lack of good part-time employment and 'hidden' barriers to promotion in FT work;
- Conclude that reconciling paid work and care for women requires changing the gender contract.

## **11. The Relationship between Family and Work: Tensions, Paradigms and Directions Working Paper on the Reconciliation of Work and Welfare in Europe**

FP6

Trudie Knijn and Arnoud Smit

2009

RECWOWE/PUDIAC on the internet: <http://www.socialpolicy.ed.ac.uk/recwowejudiac>

- Increasing pressure of working hours and of flexibility and temporary jobs on family life
- Good quality , affordable childcare may solve many of the problems families face in combining work and care – but q of economic realities (affordability) and policy failures
- Parental leave and employee driven flexibility important.
- Three policy paradigms: the social investment state (social democratic);; the transitional labour market model (corporatist); the personal responsibility perspective (neo-liberal).
- For balancing work and care – 1 = social provision focusing on accommodation mothers employment; 2 – flexibility; 3 = personal responsibility (saving).
- Risk sharing, linked lives, capabilities and inclusive citizen ways of conceptualising policy framework.
- Negative impact of employer driven flexibility and self-employment.
- Early retirement policies help working families because of support from grandparents.
- Importance of care package for parents – combining state, employer and self/family support.

### **Managing work-life balance policies in European workplaces: explorations for future Research**

Laura den Dulk and Bram Peper

REC-WP 04/2009

- Employees often fail to take advantage of opportunities for flexible working even when need it.
- Managers attitudes important ‘management lottery’re facilitating – or not employees – regulatory and discretionary.
- Managers rarely take advantage of opportunities to work flexibly and this influences their attitudes and practice. Managers can be supportive (take a progressive approach), have a vague understanding, ignorant or hostile.
- More acceptable to permit women to work flexibly than men – attitudes of managers and fellow workers. Managers also influenced by organisational culture and national one – esp attitudes to women (mothers) having paid employment. Another factor is the extent granting request disrupts organisations work. E.g. requests those who supervise others less likely to be met managers delimma). Requests in emergency more likely to be granted than general requests.
- Middle managers more supportive than top executives, female managers than male and manager with caring responsibilities than those without.
- Extent to which managers allow flexibility depends on statutory provision – higher in Scandinavia where state has important role in organisational and working life and tightly implemented concrete measurers than UK where more freedom/discretion for managers
- More likely to be found in public sector and large organisations but even here frequently no embedded in organisations norms and practices and often conflict with norms and values e.g. long hour’s culture. Difficult to change organisational culture
- Four main types of work-life arrangements

<b>Flexible working</b> PT work Flexible hours Job sharing Teleworking/working at home Term-time working Banking hours	<b>Leave</b> Maternity leave Parental leave Paternity leave Leave for family reasons Adoption leave Career break scheme
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<b>Childcare arrangements</b> Workplace nurseries Childminding Childcare resource and referral Financial assistance Holiday play scheme/summer camp	<b>Supportive arrangements</b> Work-life management training Employee counselling/assistance Supply of information Research on employees' needs
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**Applying Sens's Capabilities Framework to work Family Balance within a European Context; theoretical and empirical Challenges**

REC-WP 03/2009

Barbara Hobson and Susanne Fahlen

- Framework of capabilities and agency freedom- WFB is a quality of life issue 'substantive freedom to choose the life one has reason to value' (Sen1999, p74). Other issues of wellbeing beyond the material and income including being able to have a family and be an active parent
- Trade off between employment and care
- Preference theory – Catherine Hakim- women have three broad orientations (assumes formed early and remain stable), family orientated, work orientated and adaptive. Adaptive (majority) are very responsive to government policies employment policy. Challenged re assumption that commitments long term and stable. In practice work orientation affects choices as does labour market choices. Orientation and agency are dynamic and responsive to opportunities and changing circumstances, individual and structural.
- Women seem to have little bargaining power re getting men to do more domestic labour even when high earning – deeply embedded cultural norms?
- Households may have strategies but need to consider relative bargaining power of members of HHs.
- Need to integrate an agency and institutional approach. Welfare states and employment practices that support dual earners are those most likely to reduce gendered agency inequality. Genuine ability to chose
- Importance of capabilities and rights – legal framework and how rights converted into practices – 1. A set of dimensions for possibility of achieving WFB and second is institutional forms and policies that promote an individual's capability for achieving it(interactive).

Individual Resources	Institutional Resources	Societal/Community Resources
Situating Agency Individual resources gender, ethnicity, age Human capital Income Partner's resources  Social networks	Welfare Regime Benefits/services/EU/National Laws: antidiscrimination, job security, flexibility Labour markets Social quality of jobs Firm/organisational culture  Union Strength	Norms Societal Community Family/friends Media/Public Debate  Social Movements/ mobilization

P 20

- Support for single male breadwinner model on wane – majority men across Europe think women equal right to employment but women are still seen as mainly responsible for car and domestic work.
- Family seen as more important than carer by men and women as is potential for combining work and family when choosing a job. But gap between what say and practice for men especially fathers.
- Working hours - length and flexibility Women would prefer to work less hours than men would given the option. However, both mothers and fathers would prefer to work fewer hours than they actually do (women work fewer hours on average than men – UK fathers work around 46 and would prefer 40 and mothers 29 and prefer 26 on average) Fathers with longest working hours also have greatest flexibility as in UK do those with low flexibility.
- Countries that provide greatest legal support for parenting (Scandinavian) ones in which fathers most likely to claim rights.

## **12. The Well-being of Children: The Impact of Changing Family Forms, Working conditions of Parents, Social Policy and Legislative Measures**

News Letter – report of 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of the WELLCHI Network, *Well-being of children and about markets in Europe. Different kinds of risks resulting from various structures and changes in the labour market* (University of Hamburg, 31<sup>st</sup> March – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006)

FP6

Lluís Flaquer

<http://www.climu.org/wellchi>

Findings of relevance to work and care include:

- Importance of social networks for children's wellbeing;
- Need for children to spend time with their parents, including common time as well as care time;
- Mothers, in contrast to fathers, often reduce their working time in order to care for children. Differences between European countries can be explained by different cultural values and ideas of parenthood and care responsibilities;
- Two trends in fatherhood can be observed, 'vanishing fathers' as more children are brought up in female headed lone parent households and 'caring fathers' as fathers become more involved with their children. 'Daddy months' were shown to have a major change on fathers taking on caring responsibilities;
- Model of 'active citizen' in welfare state policies makes it even harder for parents to spend common time with their children.

Policy recommendations:

- Advancement of child policies and flexibilization in order to reduce low incomes of parents and child poverty;
- Policies which contribute to reconciling work and parent's time with their children;
- Integration of rights of fathers to care for their children in parental leave schemes and right of parents to reduce working time temporarily
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## **13. Households, Work, Flexibility**

Final Scientific Report

FP5

Claire Wallace

2003

- Link study of flexibility and of work-family balance – differentiate between good flexibility and bad flexibility for employees.
- UK regulated flexibility which preferable to non-regulated flexibility but reinforces traditional family;
- Parents experience greatest conflict between work and family and flexibility potentially way of reconciling work and care. In UK fathers say difficult to fulfil family obligations because of work commitments.
- Importance of changing relations in households for gender equality to be achieved.

Policy Implications

- Flexibility should be regulated, possibly increase flexibility in working hours for fathers.

#### **14. EQUALSOC**

Background paper (Care, Social Citizenship and Conflict: Gender Matters)

Arnlaug Leira

[arnlaug.leira@sosgeo.uio.no](mailto:arnlaug.leira@sosgeo.uio.no)

- Distinction between ‘care’ and ‘domestic work’
- Role of state as well as family in care – reconciliation of work and family matter for welfare state policies – age compensation, parental leave, childcare services
- Debates on women’s role etc – domestic and paid employment – especially married women. Women’s social and economic rights.
- Commodification of childcare.
- Women as worker v carer – women still do the majority of caring
- Men as carers v breadwinners but poor take up of parental leave – benefits often insufficient
- Pre-school care remains a problem especially for very young children
- State support for earner and carer but dual career family still difficult to attain.

#### **15. European Network of Economic Policy Research Institutes**

Working Paper 49

Alternative Tax-Benefit Strategies to Support Children in the European Union: Recent Reforms in Austria, Spain and the UK

Horacio Levy, Christine Lietz, Holly Sutherland

2007

[Http://www.enepri.org](http://www.enepri.org)

- Concerned with issue of tax and transfer systems in support of child poverty;
- Compares Austria, Spain and UK. Austria has universal benefits, Spain provides support through tax concessions and the UK provides means tested benefits.
- Results show that dual earner households would be substantially better off under the Spanish or Austrian systems and that the UK system especially benefits non working parents and lone parent families. The Austrian system compared to the UK one is especially beneficial to families with very young children (0 -2 years).

- The UK system is most successful at reducing childhood poverty.

#### Policy Implications

- Policies which support parents with young children to take leave would have a positive impact in the UK on child poverty.

### 16. GeNET

Working papers:

Rosemary Crompton and Clare Lyonette (2008) *Family. Class and Gender Strategies' in Mothers' Employment and Childcare*, GeNet |Working Paper No 34

- Main determinant of outcomes was opportunities and constraints faced by parents;
- Need to improve the quality of employment as well as the quality of people and provide high quality affordable universal childcare – class inequality ;
- Professional and managerial men as traditional as other men re views on maternal care.

Rosemary Crompton and Clare Lyonette (2007) *Women's Career Success and Work-life 'Balance' in the Accountancy and Medical Professions in Britain*, GeNet Working Paper No 26, 2007

- For real equality and capacity for choice for men as well as women in dual-earner families require more equal sharing of domestic/caring work as well as reduction in working hours and work pressures – family friendly work policies.

Jacqueline Scott (2006) *Family and Gender Roles: How Attitudes are Changing*, GeNET Working Paper No.21

- Individualism and individual self-fulfilment
- Shift in roles of married women but little increase in involvement of men in family chores and care; - even when women working full-time little involvement of men in domestic work

### 17. European Foundation for the Improvement Of Living and Working Conditions

Irena Kotowska, Anna Matysiak, Marta Styrac (2010) *Second European Quality of Life Survey: Family Life and Work*

Key Findings

- EU policies encourage women to have paid employment and to increase fertility. Reconciliation policies are key responses to long-term economic and demographic challenges and to the need to stimulate economic growth.
- Women spend more time on unpaid caring work than men and the time spent by women on such work does not vary across Europe. However, the gender gap does and the extent of the gender gap seems to be related to perception of genders roles.
- Men confirm that they do less than their share of household tasks while women say that they do more than their fair share.
- Caring for and educating children takes up more time than domestic work
- People are more dissatisfied with the amount of time they spend with their families than they are with the time they spend at work.

- Balancing work and family life seems to be easier in the UK than in many other European countries probably due to the lower proportion of dual-earner couples and working single mothers. This in turn are not only due to cultural and societal effects but also result from lower availability of support measures for combining work and private life.
- The time squeeze is tighter the more children a family has and for those with very young children.
- In comparable work situations women feel more rushed than men and experience more strain.
- Couples with children who can rely on family support are happier than others lone parents have the lowest levels of life satisfaction.
- People who are employed are more satisfied than the unemployed even when they experience a high level of work-family conflict. However mothers who experience a high level of work-family conflict are less satisfied than mothers who work solely in the home.
- Those who report a satisfactory work-life balance are more satisfied than those who have an excessive workload as a result of either professional or family duties.
- Improving conditions for reconciling work and family life would result in a better work life balance and foster women's employment and increase fertility.

#### Policy Implications

- Policies to promote care redistribution between men and women in the home.
- Better childcare facilities
- Flexible working time, telework or job sharing are measures which support reconciling work and family life. Job security and working conditions are also important.

#### **Background Paper: Women at Work: Paths to Equality**

Changes made workplace more equal in gender terms but equality in pay, pension rights etc etc not yet achieved.

- Increased labour market participation of women – demand for the 'soft skills' that favour female workers and from service sector which traditionally been mainstay female workers.
- Policy initiatives such as maternity leave parental leave anti-discrimination legislations also important but they in part arise from the structural changes in the labour market which have increased the demand for female workers in the context of demographic stagnation.
- Segregation (horizontal and vertical) affect women's employment conditions and career development possibilities.
- Little if any evidence that men are taking on more responsibility for domestic work and childcare.
- Access to affordable childcare barrier to women's participation.
- Men's preferences for working hours not influenced by domestic responsibilities but women's are influenced by motherhood. Most men and women do not want to work less than 20 hours or more than 45 hours.

#### Policy Implications

- Flexible working hours – flexi-security.
- HR policies directed towards achieving optimal work-life balance for all.
- Support for working outside the office.
- Support for de-gendering career choices.
- Childcare work given greater value.
- Provision of affordable childcare that meets the needs of working parents.
- Encouragement to men of taking more responsibility for childcare.
- Old age poverty especially as women live, on average

**Info Sheet: *Employment Developments in Childcare Services for School-age Children***

- EU Council on 22 and 23 March 2005 concluded that there was a need to attract more people into the labour market, through an active employment policy, making work pay and putting in place measures to enable the reconciliation of work and family life.
- There is no specific childcare policy in place for school-age children and that lack of good quality affordable childcare for school aged children might be a barrier to mothers entering and remaining in the workforce.
- Childcare jobs are not well paid and that low pay, poor image and poor working conditions are barriers to attracting workers. The majority of child care workers are women.
- Where out-of-school provision is the responsibility of school teachers the pay and image of child care workers is higher.

**Policy recommendations**

- A need for a comprehensive childcare policy to ensure that out-of-school childcare for school-age children is a positive experience for parents and children.
- Childcare policies should aim to meet the needs of a diverse workforce and promote the successful integration of work and family life.

***Report: combining family and full-time work***

Anna Paernanen, Sutela, Susan Mahler

2007

- Reconciliation work and family life and work-life balance working parents increasingly important
- Flexible working can be both beneficial and negative for working parents (good and bad flexibility) – need to differentiate – employer driven and employee driven.
- Good working practices by firms support parents - child care, flexi time (employee driven), part-time work, flexibility working time cover emergency however parents with fixed and predictable working hours report the best work-life balance.s.
- UK culture PT work for women especially mothers
- Behaviour on labour market influenced by cultural and institutional factors. In case of latter especially availability and cost of childcare.
- Long , irregular hours and lack childcare barriers to reconciliation
- Unequal distribution of domestic work and caring – women do most of it.

### **Workshop Report: *Developing Support to Parents through Early Childhood Services***

- EU Barcelona summit 2002 – goal that Member States provide by 2010 childcare for at least 90% of children between 3 years and mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years.
- EU report *Tackling social and cultural inequalities through early childhood education and care in Europe*, 2009 and the conclusions from the EPSCO Council (*Key messages from the EPSCO Council to the Spring European Council*, 2009) point to the importance of strengthening the provision of accessible and affordable childcare in reducing child poverty and improving the educational performance of children from poor homes. (*Joint report on social protection and social inclusion of the European Commission*, 2009).
- UK spends about 0.6% of GDP on early childcare services, around the middle for OECD countries (P2). The highest spender is Denmark (just under 1.4) and the lowest Greece (around 0.1%).
- Importance of quality of services provided including qualifications of workers and their working conditions.
- Importance of enabling parents to reconcile work and childcare responsibilities.
- Need to keep reminding governments of the importance of childcare services and of the need to provide high quality and adequately resourced universal early childcare services.
- Importance of involving parents.

### **Conference Report: *Families and Childcare Services***

- Need for pre-school and out-of school childcare services sensitive to the needs of parents;
- Need for renewed investment in childcare facilities and workforce;
- Childcare can be ranked along four dimensions: access, quality, resources and inclusive context – improving childcare and education is important

## **18. European Industrial Relations Observatory - EWCO**

### *High stress levels amongst workers with children*

Report of a study by the Danish National Research Institute and the Danish government's Family and Working Life Commission at a conference

[www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/11/articles/DK06110191.htm](http://www.eurofound.europa.eu/eiro/2006/11/articles/DK06110191.htm)

Trine Larsen

Findings:

- Parent's hours of paid employment and when they work has major impact on reconciling work and care;
- Parents often struggle to combine paid work with family responsibilities – about half suffer from stress;
- Organisation of working hours main factor that causes stress – especially working longer hours than would ideally wish to and being in employment where the employer can change the timing of work at short notice;
- Flexible working hours and the ability have a positive impact on parents' ability to manage work and care and reduce stress for mothers.

Policy Recommendations (at conference)

- Family-friendly policies in the workplace;
- Flexible opening of childcare centres.

## **19. Maternity Rights and Mothers' Employment Decisions**

Ivana La Valle, Elizabeth Clery and Mari Carmen Huerta

Department for Work and Pensions

Research Report No 496

2008

### **Main Findings**

- A round a sixth of mothers take less than their entitlement to statutory maternity leave and an additional 35 percent the minimum entitlement – probably because of no entitlement to maternity pay after 26 weeks.
- Mothers working for large employers or in public sector more likely to take more than 26 weeks (over 50%) compared to those working for small employers (36%).
- Mothers in professional and associate professional occupations and in top income groups more likely to take more than 26 weeks maternity leave (around 60%) than mothers in manual occupation and at the bottom of the income distribution (around a third).
- Mothers with partners at top of income distribution more likely to take more than 26 weeks maternity leave (68%) than those lowest income (31%)
- 52 percent of partnered mothers took more than 26 weeks compared to 35 percent of lone mothers
- 91 percent fathers took some leave around time of birth of baby. Better of fathers took more time and more likely to be paid. Self employed fathers least likely to take leave and if did to take fewer days.
- Better of mothers working for large companies, the public sector and unionised firms were those most likely to get SMP and OMP (41 %). Mothers in manual occupations, working fewer than 15 hours, in workplaces with no family friendly arrangements were those most likely to get no maternity pay (12%). About a quarter of these were entitled to MA.
- 76 percent of mothers returned to work within 18 months (same as 2002 study). Those most likely to return to work are those with employers with family friendly policies (86% v 42%), those who received SMP and OMP (87 v 41% none), 82 percent highest qualifications v 42% no qualifications, partnered 79% v lone 62%, been in job more than 2 years (80%, 56% 1-2 years, 30% less 12 months), low earning partner of top income groups.
- On return 37 percent mothers decreased working time, 63% FT before birth, 34% after
- Major role played by informal carers especially grandparents. 52% using grandparents, 27% a day nursery, 16% a nursery class and 13% childminder. Those in London more likely to use formal care than those outside.
- Most fathers provided no childcare support while mothers were at work.
- The mothers who did not return to work consisted of both those who reported barriers to taking employment (lack of substitute child care, lack of family friendly policies) and those who did not wish to return to work.
- Most mothers who returned to work indicated that their employers provided parental and emergency leave but 10% no flexible working arrangements , 20 percent no

emergency leave and 22 percent no help with childcare. Those least likely to have arrangements worked SMEs, no TU, lower occupations, temporary jobs and lone mothers.

- Flexible arrangements most commonly used, followed by childcare support.

## **20. Grand parenting in Europe**

Karen Glaser, Eloï Ribe Montserrat, Ulrike Waginger, Debora Price, Rachel Stuchbury and Anthea Tinker

Institute for Gerontology, King's College, London

2010

### **Main Findings**

- Grandparents play an important role in family life, providing support to children and grandchildren and also by becoming the primary carer when the parents are unable to fulfil this role;
- Legislation and social policies often do not take account of this pivotal role played by grandparents;
- Grandparents play an important role in caring for children while their mothers are working and this may be especially important for lone parents and those with a disabled child. In the UK about one in three mothers receives help with childcare from grandparents whilst working. Grandparents in Southern Europe are more likely to provide regular childcare (about 40%) whilst an even higher proportion provide help in Northern Europe but on a more irregular basis reflecting the differential availability of formal childcare provision ;
- In the UK it isles well off mothers who rely on grandparents (mainly grandmothers) especially when children are under five years;
- Better off older people in good health and living with a partner are more likely to provide support, financial and /or practical in Northern Europe;
- Active grand parenting promotes their wellbeing.

### **Policy Recommendations/Implications**

- Parental leave and child care allowances should be transferable to grandparents;
- In the UK from April 2011 grandparents who provide childcare for a child under 12 so the parents can work will be entitled to claim National insurance Credits towards their basic state pension.

## **21. UK Department of work and Pensions [http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/sum\\_index.asp](http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/sum_index.asp)**

Elsmore, K. (nd) *Caring and Flexible Working* (data from a 2009 survey)

- Awareness of the right to request flexible working low – 50% respondents did not know which employees had the right to request flexible working. Only 1 in 5 knew one or more of the groups covered by the right to request flexible working. Vast majority of respondents not aware of qualifying period.
- Respondents in groups that had the right to request flexible working no more likely to know about rights than other respondents.
- Nine in 10 employees said had one or more flexible working arrangements available to them.

- Nearly seven in ten employees currently worked flexible with the largest group (32 percent) working flexi-time and 29 percent part-time. In terms of availability 73 percent said part time working, 38 percent term time working, 46 percent job-sharing, 51 percent flexi-time, 37 percent compressed hours, 34 percent annualised hours, 24 percent work from home and 39 percent other flexible arrangements.
- Carers more likely to work flexibly.
- Those not working flexible - 49 percent said content with current working hours and 31 percent happy with work life balance. No difference between parents and others.

Maplethorpe, N., Chanfreau, J., Philo, D. And Tait, Claire (2010) *Families and Children in Britain: Findings from the 2008 Families and Children Study*

- 58 percent of the children of working mothers are placed in childcare. Use of informal childcare (44 percent) was more prevalent than formal (31 percent).
- Perceptions of affordability and quality of childcare were more positive than negative . 25 percent of mothers said there was not enough childcare. 59 percent said quality of childcare was very good or good.
- Quarter families with children lone parents Over two-fifths lone mothers did not work compared with a quarter of coupled mothers.
- Over half of children of working mothers and a third of children with non-working mothers used childcare. 76 percent of children nought to two years and 84 percent of those three to four years with working mothers were placed in childcare. Informal childcare predominated and formal childcare used mainly for pre-school children.
- Working families were more likely to say childcare was affordable compare to families were no-one worked.

## **UK Provision – support for working parents**

### **1. Help with childcare costs**

- Child benefit – universal benefit for all children under 16 year and those 16-20 in FE or on approved training course.
- Child tax credit – means tested benefit paid for children under 16 year and those 16-20 in FE or on approved training course – maximum income £58K or £66 if child under 1 year.
- Early years’ education – all 3-4 year olds are entitled to 2.5 hours a day or 12.5 a week for 38 weeks a year. Provided by approved day nurseries, playgroups, nursery classes, nursery schools, child minders who are part of an accredited scheme.
- Working tax credit – lone parents, dual working parents working at least 16 hours a week for children under 16 years. Means tested benefit that can cover up-to 80 percent of the cost of childcare.
- Employer supported childcare - benefit does not pay tax/NI on amount and employer does not pay NI. Can be in place of salary or in addition to salary. Workplace childcare (must be registered) , childcare vouchers, employer=contracted childcare (employer pays provider directly). All costs using employer provided childcare exempt from tax and NI. Do not have to pay tax and NI on up-to £55 a week of directly contracted childcare or vouchers. Both parents can claim directly contributed childcare or vouchers for the same child. Vouchers can be saved up and used during holidays. Worth about £1K a year.

- Options 5 – 11 year olds – extended services in schools – generally open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and may open later in the evening and at weekends. After-school clubs usually run 3.30 – 6 p.m. term time. Holiday playschemes may be run by schools as part of extended services.

## 2. Parental leave

- Statutory paternity leave – one or two weeks leave taken within 56 days of birth
- Statutory paternity pay – paid for up to two consecutive weeks - £124.88 a week or 90% of average weekly earning if lower
- Flexible working – parents with child under 6 years can ask to work flexibly. Not a legal entitlement. Reduce hours, flexi-time, annualised hours, compressed hours, staggered hours, job sharing, home working.
- Statutory maternity leave – 52 weeks , statutory maternity pay is for 39 weeks of leave. Does not have to be repaid if do not return to work Also employer schemes. SMP is 90% of average weekly earnings for first 6 weeks with no upper limit and whichever is lower of £124.88 a week or 90% of average earnings for 33 weeks. Can work for up to 10 days for normal employer without losing the benefit.
- Parental leave – up to 13 weeks unpaid leave for each child up to 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. Also right to reasonable amount of emergency leave.

## 3. Other

- Number of years contributions required to receive a full basic state pension reduced to 30 years from 2010. Those caring for a child can build up entitlement through weekly carer's credits