

# EUROPEAN POLICY BRIEF



## WORKCARE SYNERGIES

Political Implications of WORKCARE SYNERGIES, an EU-funded support action with the aim of disseminating research findings of previous EU Framework Programme projects in the field of work and care in the following seven EU countries: Austria, UK, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Italy and Portugal.

December 2011

### INTRODUCTION

#### Creating local awareness for EU research findings on work-care tensions

There are many interesting findings in the field of work and care not yet well known or put into use at local level. Research often offers country comparisons and best practice examples that might help local actors in their decisions and promotion of policy measures.

#### Discuss findings and local relevance with local actors

Based on **selected findings of various EU research projects** we discussed changing family structures, (new) expectations of work and cultures of care as well as resulting work-care tensions and solutions. We also looked into the quality of work and life, work-life balance across the life course, social quality in work and care, labour market transitions as well as citizenship, flexibility and diversity in work-care relations. We investigated family policies, working time flexibility and social cohesion, gender elites and work-care relations, social care and work-care balance and tried to map work-care orientations for gender equality in private and public contexts.

We held **seventy-seven local information and discussion events** where the vivid discussions that usually followed our presentation of research findings, facts and film viewings quickly showed that local actors were quite interested to learn about EU research results, especially if these helped them to better evaluate local decisions, proved their point or supported local implementation issues.

In this context, the preparation and transformation of academic findings into accessible and understandable material for "everyday use" by local non-researchers played an important role.

**Highlights** of the outcome of our local discussion rounds in Austria, the UK, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Italy and Portugal are described below. Otherwise refer to the separate country policy briefs.

## KEY OBSERVATIONS

### AUSTRIA: Work-care tensions – an old and new issue ...

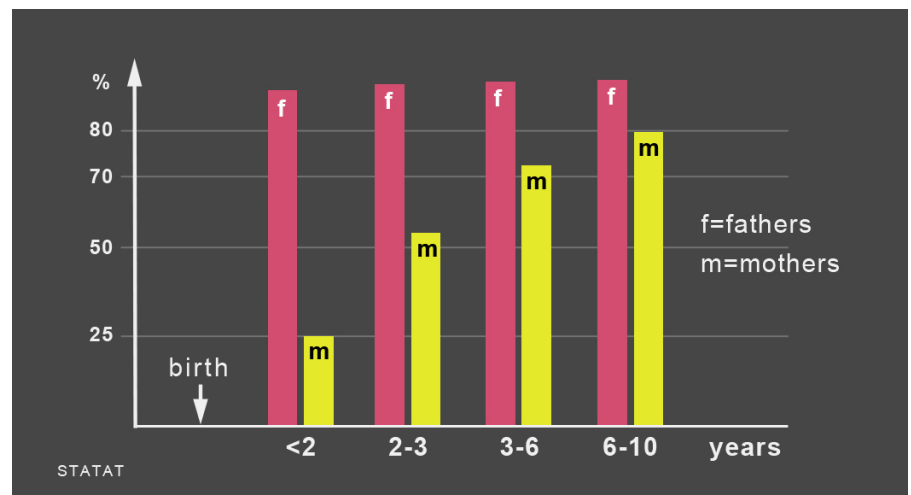
The attainment or lack of reconciliation of work and family life is not only determined by job flexibility and the sharing of household and care responsibilities within the family. Many other interlinked issues play an important role too: gender wage gaps, role models, attitudes, traditions, social networks and local support structures, availability of external childcare, after school services (including learning support) and old age care but also the parent's level of education and life style, jobs and usual working hours.

### How men and women see it differently

Not unexpectedly, **men** often have more traditional perceptions of the situation and quite frequently, fathers feel less concerned or do not see a problem at all. While (most) men see their **identity** dominantly determined by their jobs, relation to colleagues and status within their firm, they assume that women are interested in family life first, with job and career coming second only. For them, the sharing and division of domestic tasks between partners is therefore often a(n unwanted) re-definition of their social identity and responsibilities – to be avoided if possible.

Yet, **young men and women** seem to have new expectations concerning job and family. Nevertheless, in Austria, once the child is born, parenting for mothers still means a reduction of working hours while fathers continue to work full time. On the other hand, more and more mothers are soon back in (part time) jobs.

### The Austrian example



### How to replace “lost” grandmothers?

In this context it is important to realize that **higher female employment results in less grandmothers being available** for regular family support. Thus, the provision of good external services (e.g. childcare, after school care, old age care) becomes a necessary precondition for family reconciliation.

### Inclusion AND security!

A (more) equal sharing of work, household and care responsibilities will allowing for (better) social **inclusion and social security of both men and women**, fathers and mothers.

### DENMARK: Cuts in childcare threaten sustainability

The Danish model of family policy is in the European context characterized as an **extensive** family policy model combining comprehensive high quality childcare and well paid parental and maternity leave. It is often considered as best practice example.

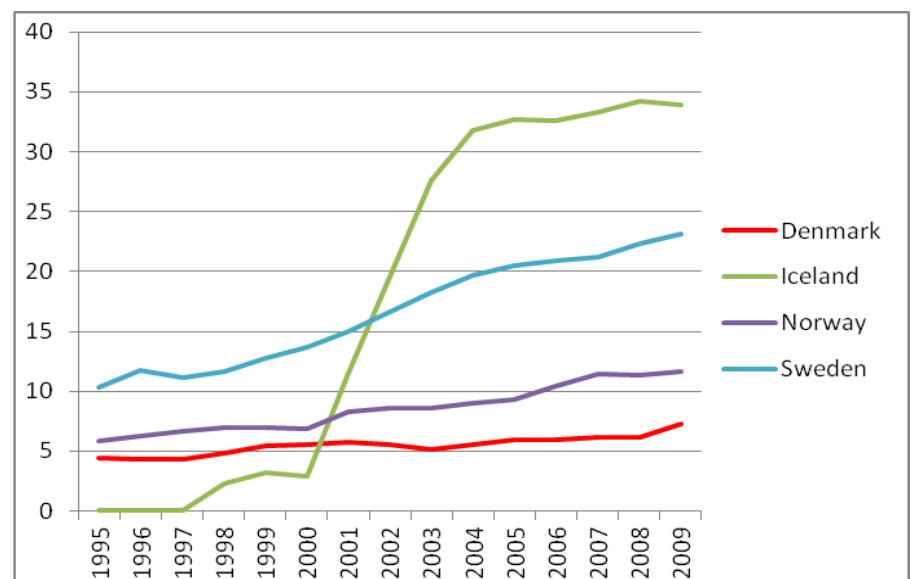
However, the **sustainability** of the Danish model is threatened. In our discussion with political parties, trade unions and researchers such concerns were often mentioned and debated.

In these discussions, we were able to register some important recent **trends in Danish society**: Cuts on childcare service provision will reduce the quality of the services in terms of staff-child ratio and opening hours. This will again make it more difficult for the families to reconcile family and working life. The cutbacks on childcare service will also deteriorate the professional care workers' working conditions and reduce the time they can spend with the children. They will have negative consequences for gender equality. They will increase the burden of care obligations placed on **women** in the family and reduce the status of **professional care workers** in the public sphere – which will also primarily concern women. In this respect women are hurt twice by the financial crisis – both in relation to the workload in the family and the working conditions in the labour market.

### Leave policies

Another crucial discussion in the Danish debate concerns how to develop **more equal conditions for fathers' and mothers'** participation in caring activities for their children. Despite the fact that Denmark has one of the highest rates of labour market participation among women, women are still the main providers of care work within the family. Numerous findings from European research show that in general family policy has a significant impact on women's involvement in paid work and caring activities but do not radically change fathers' involvement in paid work nor care, unless there is a specific legislation to support fathers' involvement.

### Percentage of total period of parental leave taken by fathers



Source: The Nordic council

It is remarkable that Denmark is the only Nordic country that does **not** have a period of the total parental leave reserved for the father. This has clearly implications for fathers' take up of parental leave, shown in above figure: Among the Nordic countries the fathers' proportion of the total parental leave is lower in Denmark than in any of the other Scandinavian countries.

If we compare the proportion of the total **parental leave taken up by the fathers** we find very different patterns in the Nordic countries. Danish men only take 7% of the whole leave and this proportion has been more or less stable over time during the last 15 years.

### AUSTRIA Work-Life Balance in a new world of work

Models for **flexible** working times could improve the chances to achieve a successful WLB, as long as they don't have to bow to the pressure for flexibility within companies (especially regarding last-minute overtime, which often causes time and energy-based conflicts). A large amount of **autonomy** at the workplace and **regarding the organisation of working time** could help to achieve a satisfying WLB. A culture of long working hours in combination with checks on attendance, on the other hand, hinders the chances to WLB.

### New boundaries between work and life are required

The current **transition from time to target control** intensifies the "dissolution of boundaries between work and private life", carrying the risk of self-exploitation and absorption by the job.

### Privatisation in (elderly) care is problematic

What is needed is **more support** for private care of adults and a **greater choice of (consultation-) centres** (ambulant care), and **innovative forms of living** (e.g. multiple-generation houses). Area-wide coverage of organisations offering psycho-social assistance to carers is still lacking. Those involved in care work largely see the necessity for aid and assistance as limited to those who are being cared for, but they also may need assistance.

### Higher Quality in offers builds higher trust

Promoting **quality** could at the same time **build trust in institutional help and care** on part of the population.

Continued education and trainings of professional care and assistance staff are not only a necessary part of securing quality but could also generate employment and create opportunities for career advancement in the area of social work.

### We need more awareness- raising and reliable data and studies on the diversity of (elderly) care

The **social and economic value of unremunerated work** could be rendered more visible, for example in the form of public campaigns and awareness-raising activities.

We therefore need more information on **regional differences** in care, especially in **elderly care**. Who cares, for how long and under which conditions? What are the changes in demand, the quality of the organisation of care and the measures that are required to improve the situation?

## HUNGARY

### Family policies, flexible work arrangements and social cohesion

Being in part-time work helps women to deal with their work-life imbalance. Results suggest that while **reported work-family conflict increases with worked hours** and women experiences more intense conflicts. Also, **part-time jobs are able to reduce the work-life imbalance** experienced by women and therefore they might be seen as **effective policy tools** in reconciling work and family duties. No similar effect was observed for men.

### Low income is the main factor in the low Hungarian part-time employment rates

Part-time jobs **provide low earnings** - this is the main factors that bottleneck the spread of these work arrangements in Hungary (and the same might hold for other Central and Eastern European countries). Consequently, within these circumstances, part-time jobs **are not effective in avoiding poverty**, which provide disincentives for mothers to pick up such jobs.

### Earnings from part-time jobs mostly complement income from welfare benefits

Recent research results show that the incidence of the part-time jobs is highest among those **already having revenue from the welfare state**, mainly in form of pensions or child care allowance. This means that earnings from part-time jobs mostly **complement income** from welfare benefits.

### In the EU as a whole, mother's part-time employment considerably reduces the risk of poverty in the household

Part-time work promotes social cohesion not only by attracting inactive people to the labour market, but also by increasing income and **reducing the risk of poverty**.

This effect is considerably high in the EU as a whole, mostly in those countries where the incidence of part-time work high and therefore the 'one and a half breadwinner' model is relatively widespread. Contrarily, in countries where such **jobs are scarce**, like in most of the Central and eastern European countries, including Hungary, this **effect is less significant**.

### Cash benefits and child care have an effect on the labour supply of mothers

Day care **services** are more likely to **help increase** participation for **mothers with primary education**, while **cash transfers** have a **strong negative effect** on their probability of employment, at least in the Central and Eastern European member states.

By contrast, **higher educated mothers are less discouraged by cash transfers** and are practically not affected by the availability of day care services – except in transition countries. Highly educated parents **have more resources to cope with the situation** when the child needs care, while they also are **less responsive to financial incentives**.

### The availability and the affordability of public child care are the main problems in Hungary

The **availability** and the **affordability of public child care** are the main problems in Hungary. The supply lags far behind the demand and is a real **obstacle for increasing the labour market participation** of mothers with young children. While the public service is free of charge (excepting the food), affordability turns to be a real problem when private arrangements are considered.

### POLAND: Gender elites and work-care relations

Situation of **highly educated women** and men representing local as well as national elites needs to be analyzed in the context of reconciling parental roles and private life with professional goals.

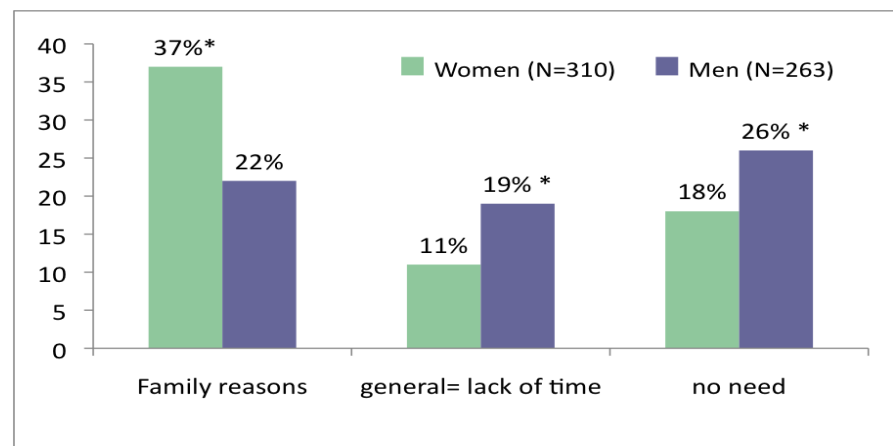
The fact that caring responsibilities may strongly **hinder** one's possibilities to pursue a **career** in science, business or politics is especially true for women, who are still more engaged in caring than their partners. It often results in highly educated women withdrawal from the labour market, which is a serious **loss** of human capital, both from the perspective of the society and the economy. Taking into account wider socio-economic conditions of European countries, as well as individual preferences, people who invested in their education should be able to stay on the labour market, without having to **decide between professional career and family**.

### Social expectations still traditional

There is a strong belief (not confirmed in research data) that children **under 3** should be cared for by a family member (preferably mother), to allow proper intellectual and emotional development. Although this approach is less popular among women belonging to social elites, they are still under social **pressure** to stay at home for as long as possible after childbearing. Hiring babysitters for pre-kindergarten children is relatively unpopular in Poland – and social expectations strongly influence women's labour market drop-out rate.

### Academic careers versus family responsibilities

In case of **young scientists**, family responsibilities can influence research productivity as well as willingness to apply for grants and stipends, therefore hindering the chances of developing a scientific career. Reasons for not applying for stipends/grants (Careers of young scientists, Pentor 2005) are



### Socialization as tool for long-term change

Underlining working mothers' accomplishments in professional life and the public sphere help to establish a new **pattern of behaviour**, to be followed by children in their own lives. From the **earliest stages of educations** girls and boys should be taught that their individual abilities and effort decide of their future, not their gender.

### Individualization of family support

**Supporting families in their caring responsibilities** seems to be one of the best ways to keep the educated women on the labour market. However, the needs and preferences of individuals differ, as

do their careers and families. Therefore, it is a mistake to impose one model of reconciliation of work and care on everyone. Individuals should be able to **choose from different types of support** to be able to realize the preferred model.

### Equal involvement in caring

To deal with problems of work and care reconciliation, both women and men need their **partners' involvement and active participation in caring and domestic tasks**. It should be real partnership in all aspects of everyday life, not sporadic help.

---

### UNITED KINGDOM: Labour Market Transitions: Making Moves @ Work

Traditionally, **vulnerable groups** included both younger and older workers, those with low skills and caring responsibilities. The current crisis has exacerbated the risks for these groups; it also impinges on employees who thought of themselves as being in secure employment. In this context, there is also an additional need for older workers to remain in employment, resulting from changes to policy and increases in life expectancy.

### Education and work transitions

A key finding of this project has been the problem of **low skilled** individuals getting access to education and training that is relevant for the labour market, in a context where employers are more likely to invest in highly skilled employees.

The UK Wolf Review into vocational education and training for 14-19 year olds reported to the Department of Education in the Spring of 2011. The remit was to review provision and costs, as well as transitions between different levels of qualifications. The challenge looking forward is to **ensure those most in need of education and training acquire the skills they need**. This will not be made easier by the abolition of the Educational Maintenance Grant to 16-18 year olds from low-income backgrounds in education.

### Care and Employment Transitions

Whilst the **rise in maternal employment** in the UK has met the Lisbon goals, research identifies significant concerns about the quality and remuneration of paid work that mothers with caring responsibilities are able to access. The UK government has extended and made parental leave more flexible, with higher remuneration, and an extension to fathers; however, there still remains a significant **pay penalty** for those who interrupt working in order to care for others.

The **changing structure of the care economy** highlights new demands, not only for early years educational provision through pre-school nurseries, but also the need for a variety of elderly care providers. Key issues for future policy identified by research revolve around flexible working time, leave arrangements and care provision.

### Transitions between employment and retirement

In future there will be an increasing need for people to **work into older age**. The rise in the State Pension Age from 2018 and the phasing out of the Default Retirement Age of 65 in 2011 is likely to increase the numbers working in their late 60s onwards. However, these policies alone will be insufficient to extend the working life. EU research identifies other areas where progression can be made.

---

**PORTUGAL:  
Family & childcare support  
policies increase quality of  
life**

The quality of family life is strongly related to the quality of the family policies and their flexibility. Little childcare provision causes great **strain** to families: Women have to shoulder double responsibility for employment and domestic care, on opposite good child care provision enables continuity of employment for men and women over time.

In **Portugal**, there is a shortage of good quality affordable child care especially for children under three years. Pre-school and school provision for children over three years is often for short hours and does not meet the needs of parents when both are in paid employment.

In the absence of affordable childcare it is generally **women** who take time out of the labour market to care and take on part time, insecure employment to enable caring commitments to be fulfilled. This has life time consequences for women's economic security and opportunities to have a career.

**Informal care** is the predominant form of care with negative financial and emotional strains on carers.

The greater the **security of employment**, the greater is **gender equality** in both paid and unpaid work.

**Fertility and employment**

Higher fertility rates in some countries are often associated with good childcare provision which enable women to fully participate in the labour market as well as raising children.

Thus, **participation of women in the labour market** is not a constraint to higher fertility rates; on the contrary, it is a factor that seems to enhance it. In countries with long term high fertility rates (Nordic) – mothers' of young children (under three) work full-time; they get back to work after a leave of one year.

**Gender equality and Labour  
Market**

**Vertical and horizontal segregation** is common. This is often justified on the grounds of gender stereotypes. There is strong persistence of both gender pay gaps and gender glass ceilings across European countries.

**Secure Employment versus  
Flexibility**

Flexible work brings more **opportunities** for achieving a work/life balance but may also be a **trap** of insecure jobs without career prospects.

Flexibility should be regulated. The de-regulation of labour market protection can lead to an increase in bad forms of flexibility.

Guaranteeing that flexibility in work is accompanied by **social protection** for workers and reinforcing control of employers' abuse of flexibility are two focuses of intervention recognised as essential in promoting quality of work.

## SCOTLAND: Flexible Working and Fatherhood

**Paternity leave** and **fathers' involvement** in family life more generally are high on the political agenda. The important role that fathers do and should play in childrearing is being increasingly recognised. Yet, paternity leave cannot be considered in isolation from other elements of family policy and employment policy more generally.

While trade unions in **Scotland** have reacted favourably to the announcement and the Confederation of British Industries has given it a cautious welcome, the reaction of small business has been hostile. Yet, their reaction seems to be more based on a traditional view of the role of fathers than the burden of implementing the regulation.

## Paternity Leave or Shared Care?

While fathers (in Scotland) are now entitled to two weeks paid paternity leave, a proposed reform would **enable parents to divide** the 52 weeks maternity leave between them, however they wished including taking leave together. The aim of the proposed policy seems to be to:

- enable fathers to play a **larger role** in childcare while their children are very young;
- make it more **acceptable** for men to take on a caring role;
- **reduce the burden** of childcare on women;
- **enable women** to return to work sooner thus reducing the negative impact of maternity leave on women's careers;
- benefit children who will be able to develop stronger **bonds** with their fathers.

## ITALY Social care and work-care balance

The WCS project in Italy aimed at making the work-life balance issue **part of the public discourse** not only by starting from a "simple" - so to speak - involvement of local policy makers, but rather from a discussion with the people who are or will be in the near future challenged by the issue, which means workers - from the profit and non profit sector (and in this second case also their representatives) - and youngsters, who in the future will probably have to face the challenges of balancing their work with their family lives and more generally their public and private lives. The research team, not being alone in this, found that a in-depth discussion on the theme could not be further postponed in Italy, not only since it is strongly linked to the **quality-of-life** issue of single citizens and communities, but also since it has a strong link to the **growth** and **development** model of our country from an economic and social point of view.

## Gender differences among youngsters

Boys and girls seem to clearly know that their future family experience will be influenced by **gender contracts** - some of them slightly renewed, the most quite traditional - somehow **imposed to them from the society** and which they only partially feel they fit in. Family models have a great influence too, either in the form of the models created by parents or the consumer society.

**“New fathers” and “new mothers”**

Putting themselves in the shoes of mothers and fathers, the juxtaposition related to gender roles becomes less heavy and the **need for a better equality becomes more evident**. Facing the need to care for a child, a **better equality** is sought either in terms of sharing duties and roles, either in terms of the joy to be parents, often considering a great shift in fatherhood from the past.

**Relationship youngsters have with the political system regarding work-life balance policies**

It clearly emerges that an **anti-politics** point of view hides the real possibility to see a welfare system which could really help youngsters make the right choices in becoming parents.

What is really thought is that the **State “cannot do much”** and even where it could make the difference, costs would be too high on citizens. The perception of a general indifference of politics and politicians for the real lives of citizens, which neither doesn't help in making work-life balance interventions to be perceived as a matter of civil rights, nor in creating a positive relation with local governors.

Workers mainly frame work-life balance as a problem linked to the **“time” factor**. Long hours and rigid schedules imposed by the working environment – especially where assembly lines are involved – are the first constraints workers have to face when in the need to solve family problems.

It is well known how much easier is to take a leave to care for a small child in respect to **take one to care for an old parent or relative**, but also how much this yet is (and more will be in the future) - a challenge both for female and male workers.

---

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY-MAKERS

### Work-Care Tensions

- Men and women need **support** to attain work-care reconciliation. This does not only concern childcare but also old age care.
- A high female activity rate has positive effects for a country's economy, especially when labour is scarce. Yet, if (working) **grandmothers** cannot support families anymore, external services (childcare, after-school care, old age care) are needed.
- **Reduce income disparities** (gender wage gaps) between men and women to avoid the reproduction of traditional role models. Ensure flexibility and security for **men and women** - not flexibility and security for men but flexibility without security for women.

### Flexibility in Work and Care

- **Labour market:** Better possibility regulating working hours over the life course – e.g. the possibility to shift between part-time work and full-time work in periods with heavy caring obligations
- Male dominated private companies must be encouraged by financial incentives to introduce family-friendly policies and men and women ought to be supported in sharing the entitlement for parental leave more equally
- **Leave policy:** More flexible parental leave, part-time leave, more options for postponing the take up of leave until children have reached the age of 8 (to take leave when the children change from crèche to pre-school, school etc)
- More days left for caring the children when they are sick
- A extended period of leave reserved specifically for the fathers
- **Childcare provision:** Extension of opening hours and elimination of closing days on normal weekdays - which again demand provision of more educated staff.
- Improved staff/child ratios in day care centers, especially when there are a high proportion of children from ethnic minorities.
- Closer cooperation between professional childcare workers, parents and other family members in providing the care service. Add policy recommendations

### Work-Life Balance

- On the side of demand for social services, **access** should have a **low threshold** and be **affordable** and flexible. On the long run, these measures could contribute to a **change** of mind regarding traditional role expectations towards men and women.
- Promoting **quality** (e.g. also through targeted campaigns) could at the same time build trust in institutional care on part of the population. Continued education and trainings of professional care and assistance staff are not only a necessary part of securing quality but could also generate employment and create opportunities for career advancement in the area of social work.
- The payment in this dramatically **underpaid** segment of the job market should also feature as a compulsory point on the discussion agenda. Low payment for all jobs in the area of caring

work belongs to the reasons for which fewer men decide to enter this profession.

### Social cohesion

- **More information is needed** on regional differences in care, on who cares, for how long and under which conditions, on changes in demand, the quality of the organisation of care and the measures that are required to improve the situation.
- The policy and institutional system linked to the issue of work-life balance and its main outcomes should be improved by making it as **flexible** as possible to be adaptable to **individual situations** at a large extent. Planning and implementing family strategies would require flexibility and **long-term calculability** in all parts of the related policy system: cash benefits, parental leave system, daily child care services, and employment policies.
- While keeping the level of expenditure at the current level in Hungary, there is a need to **shift resources** from cash benefits **to services**, in order to allow parents to combine child care with their duties at the workplace, and therefore to improve female participation and fertility.
- A key challenge in the field of policy practice is to increase the **coverage** of child care system **to reach the disadvantaged**.
- It would be crucial to ensure that the experience of those **projects** within the frame of **development programmes** supported by the European Social Fund will be processed in a systematic way and that the **best practices** will be made part of the standard institutional and policy system.

### Elites and Work-Care Relations

- When planning public policy solutions it's crucial to take into account that there are **different family models** that depend on levels of parents' education and their life experiences, as well as availability of services.
- It's necessary to **develop and strengthen the role of institutional care-network** (e.g. day-care centres, kindergartens) as socializing institutions, taking into account a widespread model of "one child" families, which causes children's lack of experience in interacting with peers.
- **Overcome stereotypes** that the care of a child below 3 should be in hands of one person as precondition of his/her emotional development and feeling of security.
- Schools and media should stress that only **cooperating partners** can solve the problem of balanced division of obligations in the family.
- **Lifelong learning** can also play an important role in **changing accepted patterns of family, updating women's education/skills** allowing them and their partners to combine activities in private and public sphere.

### Labour Market Transitions (focus older workers)

- First, enhancing the **quality of available jobs for older people** would appear to be a productive way of encouraging employment, as indicated by the high levels of employment in Scandinavian countries.
- Second, possibilities for **gradual retirement** are a popular prelude to full retirement, although we need to understand much better how this can be deployed to encourage delayed labour market exit.
- Third, we need to explore policies that can **keep older peoples' skills up to date**, in a context where employers may be less willing to make investments.

### Work-care and gender equality in private and public contexts

- Social policy towards children is a **collective responsibility**. Children should be seen as the responsibility of the society as a whole rather than just the private responsibility of families. Comprehensive childcare is preferable to other policy solutions for raising children (such as extended child rearing leave) because they enable women to return to full labour market activity with minimum disruption and is not necessarily more expensive than paying women to stay at home.
- **Well-paid flexible parental leave** including 'daddy' leave should be available to enable parents to combine their caring responsibilities with paid employment.
- **Substitute Care** – child minders, nurseries, pre-school classes, school, after school and out of school provision should be affordable, professional, of high quality, adequate to meet the demand from all parents who want to access the services and the opening hours should be compatible with full-time employment and employment demands.
- **Gender equality** in the workplace and labour market must be progressed and in particular attention paid to measures to reduce the gender-pay gap.
- Demanding from the state **legal frameworks** and other incentives to promote gender equality and family friendly policies within the organizations and companies.
- Regulation of **flexibility** so that it takes place within the scope of the official economy and complies with employment regulations.

### Social Quality – Fathers' Leave

- If the Government wishes to introduce a **paternity leave scheme that will encourage fathers** to take up the leave and become more involved in child care then: (1) A period of leave of more than two weeks should be **reserved** just for fathers – take it or lose it; (2) Paternity leave should be well **compensated**; (3) Fathers should not be able to take paternity leave at the same time as mothers are on maternity leave; (4) The Government needs to **promote** the importance of men being involved in childcare and encourage employers to support men in taking paternity leave.

### Social Care and Work-Care Balance

- If the Government wishes to promote **fathers being more involved** in childcare more generally it also needs to (1) enforce **shorter working hours** to stop a long hour's culture among fathers and enable them to participate in family life; (2) amend legislation on entitlement to **flexible working** so that employers have to justify refusing requests and provide incentives for employers to introduce family friendly policies; (3) **compensate** parental leave for parents with children under five and a proportion of it should be ring fenced for fathers.
  - If the Government wishes to enable mothers and fathers to have paid employment and **share care** it also needs to (1) progress measures to promote **gender equity** in the labour market and especially to reduce the gender pay gap;(2) ensure that working parents have access to high quality affordable and flexible **childcare**, including after school and holiday care for school aged children.
  - A **specific intervention on youngsters during the last years of secondary schooling** is needed and it needs to be centred on the necessity to change the Italian society's developing model towards more gender equality and among generations and a better quality of life for all.
  - **Good practices on work-life balance** already exist within the Italian labour market, but they often are informal ones, based on the cooperation among colleagues and employees and employers. Those **should be favoured and helped in emerging** through economic support and de-taxation granted to employers who, especially in small and medium size companies, support them and allow them to become resources.
  - **Work-life balance** is a mainstreaming issue, and this is the reason why it **needs a consideration of the whole life course** and requires a re-qualification of the political action.
  - **We cannot improve in work-life balance without complex policies** which really implement an enabling Welfare State. What seems to be a crucial issue is that a wide range of combinational possibilities between caring, leaves and part-time, informal ways of care-giving should be granted with a proper public recognition and protection.
-

## PROJECT SETUP

### Project Objectives

**WORKCARESYNERGIES** was an EU-funded support action with the aim of disseminating research findings of previous EU Framework Programme projects in the field of work and care in the following seven EU countries: Austria, UK, Denmark, Hungary, Poland, Italy and Portugal.

It “translated” (i.e. collect, summarize, make understandable and accessible) findings relevant for the local policy debate and addressed local NGOs, policy makers, trade unions, labour representatives, regional organizations and services, companies as well as other local actors and interested parties.

We held a total of over seventy local dissemination events in 2010 and 2011 where we presented selected research findings from EU Framework Programme projects related to **work-care** and initiated their discussion in a local context.

We also produced various documentary **films** on work-care and related issues that were shown and discussed in local events as well as uploaded to our project homepage for further viewing.

### Project Objectives

**What?** The teams discussed findings from existing research projects within the EU Framework Programs and initiated their discussion in a local context.

Chosen to reflect current local concerns and to make use of existing research findings, actual dissemination themes vary by country:

- **Austria:** “Work-Care Tensions”, “Quality of Work and Life” and “Work-Life Balance across the Life Course”
- **Great Britain:** “Social Quality in Work and Care”, “Labour Market Transitions in Comparative Perspective”
- **Denmark:** “Citizenship, Flexibility and Diversity in Work-Care Relations”
- **Hungary:** “Family Policies, Working Time Flexibility and Social Cohesion”
- **Poland:** “Gender Elites and Work-Care Relations”
- **Italy:** “Social Care and Work-Care Balance”
- **Portugal:** “Mapping Work-Care Orientations for Gender Equality in Private and Public Contexts”.

### Purpose of Events

**Why?** To support the current local policy debate on important work-care and related issues. To **inform** about and **discuss** findings with local community, with the aim to feed back policy recommendations to the EC.

## PROJECT IDENTITY

<b>Project</b>	<b>WORKCARESYNERGIES</b> – Dissemination of Synthesized Framework Programme Research Findings
<b>Coordinator</b>	<b>Dr. Michaela Gstrein</b> , <a href="mailto:gstrein@ihs.ac.at">gstrein@ihs.ac.at</a> <b>Dr. Liliana Mateeva</b> , <a href="mailto:mateeva@ihs.ac.at">mateeva@ihs.ac.at</a> Institute for Advanced Studies (IHS), Austria
<b>Consortium</b>	<b>Prof. Claire Wallace</b> , University of Aberdeen (UNIABDN), Scotland <b>Prof. Thomas Boje</b> and <b>Dr. Anders Ejrnaes</b> Roskilde University (UNIRUC), Denmark <b>Dr. Barbara Haas</b> Vienna University of Economics and Business (WU-Wien), Austria <b>Dr. András Gábos</b> and <b>Prof. Endre Sik</b> TARKI Social Research Institute (TARKI), Hungary <b>Prof. Renata Siemienska</b> , University of Warsaw (UWAR), Poland <b>Prof. Rossana Trifiletti</b> , University of Florence (UNIFI), Italy <b>Prof. Analia Torres</b> , CIES-ISCTE (CIES-ISCTE), Portugal <b>Prof. Jacqueline O'Reilly</b> , University of Brighton (UoB), UK
<b>EC contact</b>	<b>Monica Menapace</b> and <b>Marc Goffart</b> , DG Research and Innovation <a href="mailto:Monica.MENAPACE@ec.europa.eu">Monica.MENAPACE@ec.europa.eu</a> ; <a href="mailto:Marc.Goffart@ec.europa.eu">Marc.Goffart@ec.europa.eu</a>
<b>Duration</b>	January 2010 – December 2011
<b>Funding Scheme</b>	Seventh Framework Programme Theme 8, Socio-economic sciences and humanities (SSH), 8.1 Measures to support dissemination of research results
<b>Budget</b>	EUR 600.000
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.workcaresynergies.eu">www.workcaresynergies.eu</a>
<b>For more information</b>	Local events and materials, underlying FP research projects, short films, policy briefs, etc. can be found on the <b>website</b> , <b>detailed information on “work-care tensions”</b> in: <a href="http://workcaresynergies.eu/work-care-tensions/">http://workcaresynergies.eu/work-care-tensions/</a>
<b>Contact</b>	<b>Dr. Michaela Gstrein</b> , <a href="mailto:gstrein@ihs.ac.at">gstrein@ihs.ac.at</a> <b>Dr. Liliana Mateeva</b> , <a href="mailto:mateeva@ihs.ac.at">mateeva@ihs.ac.at</a>